

BLOODLINES

TREATMENT

by

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ACT I

EXT. HACIENDA – NIGHT

A dark stormy night on a Philippine island. Up ahead, a decrepit old hacienda, overgrown and falling apart. As we move in closer, over the roaring thunder we hear a repetitive POUNDING.

INT. LIVING ROOM – NIGHT

A TV set is on in the dark empty living room, an old black & white horror movie playing. The pounding gets louder and louder as we move...

INT. KITCHEN – NIGHT

Close on hands preparing food. No utensils, just fingers tearing up herb leaves, pouring hot water. A traditional Filipino medicinal soup, Malungguay. Calamansi fruits squeezed out into a juice with honey in a plastic glass. A bottle of pills, tablets sorted out neatly on a tray next to the soup bowl. The pounding gets louder and louder as we hear an old woman's voice calling out "ANGELICA". We see the hands belong to the maid, Angelica, who mutters curses to herself in Tagalog.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM – NIGHT

She enters a dark, eerily lit bedroom with atop a large gothic bed the elderly clearly blind MARIA rests, stomping her cane against the floor, hands covered in thick rubber gloves. She curses Angelica's slowness, saying she should've known better than to employ the services of the mother of a "freak". She questions if Angelica even cleans the place or if she just leaves the vacuum running to fool her. Angelica apologizes, assuring her of her tidiness as we see piles of old rotting food and trash littered about the place, a thick layer of dust covering every inch. Maria gets up, grasping at ropes and strings fastened to the walls and bedposts going all over the place as guides. Angelica offers to help her to the bathroom, Maria yells at her not to touch her, never to touch her. She grabs Angelica's hand and berates her for her nails being too long, to file it down. Angelica looks like she just realized something. Maria picks up the bowl of soup and runs it through a sieve into another bowl and dismisses Angelica. In the sieve we see among the herbal leaves a lone razorblade poking through.

INT. BATHROOM – NIGHT

Maria enters, fumbling around the sink, looking for her dentures. The entire bathroom and sink is littered with junk and covered in dirt and grease, utterly disgusting. She finally finds her dentures, yellowed and horrific, puts them in and turns on the faucet to wash her face. The water is stark brown but she splashes it over herself unknowingly anyway. She opens the mirror

cabinet, fumbling around for a jar of facial wash as cockroaches scuttle past. The jar is almost empty. She takes off her gloves and starts scooping some of the cream out with her bare hand, deep red and spotty looking, and starts smearing it all over her face, but it's not enough. She struggles fitting her hand inside the narrow jar to get the last in the bottom. Suddenly, a record player in the bedroom starts playing, an old eerily sweet song of the 60s starts playing - the Bee Gees' version of Glen Campbell's *"Turn Around, Look At Me"*.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM – NIGHT

She pokes her head out, demanding to know who it is, feeling around in the room. A dark figure passes by in front of her. She calls out "who's there?" The music gets louder and louder.

Downstairs, Angelica is sitting, watching the old horror movie on TV, filing her nails. She files closer and closer, deliberately, while watching. She suddenly winces, dropping the nail file, she scraped her skin. It's bleeding. She sucks on it. The blood stained file rests on the floor.

INT. BATHROOM – NIGHT

Maria goes back to the bathroom, mutters to herself about Angelica being a bitch, faces the cabinet again, for a split second, we see a dark shape standing next to her in the mirror before it suddenly slams shut, making her drop the jar in the sink, breaking it in a thousand pieces.

INT. LIVING ROOM – NIGHT

Angelica is startled by Maria's sudden SCREAM. She rushes up the stairs.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM – NIGHT

The window is wide open, rain pouring in. The record player head is tapping empty as the record already played out. A figure in tattered rags is standing over the bed. As Angelica's footsteps come closer, the figure ducks out. Angelica opens the door, seeing Maria lying on the bed – her face distorted and disfigured, blood pouring out of every orifice, dead as a doornail. A ring in her hand drops on the floor – Angelica SCREAMS IN HORROR!

TITLE CARD

EXT. FERRY – DAY

Open ocean. It is early morning on unsettled murky seas off the Philippine coastline. We're on a ferry, a young woman, NINA, looking out over the railing uneasily. She looks Filipina but was raised in the US, dressing accordingly. Behind her the husband, RYAN, approaches, wrapping his arms around her waist. Ex-US Army carpenter/mechanic, pragmatic to a fault yet brighter than he thinks he is. Nina tells him "if you want to back out of this, we still can". Ryan responds he wouldn't want to miss seeing her birthplace and the last remains of her family. Nina laments that her grandmother, Maria, can't really be regarded as family since "after what happened with mom" Maria must've hated Nina as well as there was never a single postcard or phone call since the day they left the country. She asks him if he's really okay being there, in the Philippines with her for the first time, he jokes that the only issue is people judging him as a sex tourist next to her. The other passengers are elderly locals, looking at them with disdain. "They do have a point though" he jokes and starts feeling her up playfully. She pushes him off, complaining of nausea. Despite the rejection, Ryan looks hopeful for a moment before Nina shrugs it off as mere sea

sickness. She turns back to the ocean, the dark ominous tropical island fast approaching. She tells Ryan that due to red algae occasionally surrounding the waters around the island, blotting out fish and sea life alike, the Spaniards had a nickname for the place. The Island of Blood.

EXT. DOCKS – DAY

A short moustached but friendly local man in a cheap suit awaits, waving at them on the fast approaching ferry. He introduces himself as Ventura, the lawyer left in charge of her grandmother, Maria Vargas' estate.

INT. CARINDERIA – DAY

He takes them to a local carinderia, a small dingy-looking local cafeteria. He complains how it's the only restaurant in town and how bad the food is, how the people here are barely more than animals. Ryan nevertheless asks for their best seller as Ventura briefs Nina. Maria stubbornly never made out a will and as Nina is the only remaining living relative, she is entitled to all of Maria's possessions. The waiter serves Ryan a plate of Kamaru – fried crickets. He looks disgusted and asks what soups they have and picks the most innocuous sounding one – soup no. 5. Nina translates for him to the waiter to Ventura's surprise. Nina notes her Spanish is better than her Tagalog, given that she grew up in Texas. Ventura explains that Maria didn't have a lot of financial assets, but left them with a storage facility filled with old vinyl records. Nina notes her grandmother loved classical music and would play the piano. Maria also left her the entirety of her hacienda estate. Ryan receives his soup with horror – it's made of bull genitalia. He orders a coffee instead. Ventura specifies that the estate takes up the majority of the island – the size of twenty football fields, mostly jungle, but could potentially be worth a lot as a potential resort if developed. This peaks Ryan's interest, who asks if it would be possible to attract investors to at least build around the main building as they aren't particularly wealthy themselves. Ventura is sceptical "given the condition of the house". Nina promptly asks if they can see it.

EXT. HACIENDA – DAY

They go to the house, which in broad daylight looks even worse from the outside. Nina asks about two crosses posted in the back, it's apparently a burial ground for Maria's other two daughters, who both died young. Nina appears horrified as she didn't even know she ever had aunts.

INT. FOYER – DAY

Once they enter, both Nina and Ryan are taken aback by the sheer size of the place, noting there's even an old fashioned chandelier overhead. Ventura lists all the rooms of the house, noting there's a maids quarters and an attic. Nina asks about the maid, Ventura says Angelica discovered the body and since then won't go near the place. Nina heads upstairs as Ryan and Ventura explore the downstairs.

INT. LIVING ROOM – DAY

They enter the living room, TV is off, curtains drawn. Ryan nearly trips over a box on the floor. Ventura explains the old lady was a hoarder by accident. Ever since her blindness she hadn't been able to throw anything out. Ryan asks how long ago it was – 25 years. Ryan flips the light switch, the lights flicker on, revealing the walls lined with boxes and crates of stuff.

INT. HALLWAY – DAY

Upstairs, the lights flicker as Nina makes her way down the hall. We hear Ventura downstairs noting that the electrical systems are faulty, a result of retrofitting it to the house as it was built in the eighteen sixties by a Spaniard as a wedding gift to his fiancé, built atop church grounds.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM – DAY

Nina opens the door slowly. Maria's cane is still leaning against the wall. Blood stains on the stripped-down mattress. Nina looks queasy, sick to her stomach, backs down into the hall.

INT. DINING ROOM – DAY

Ryan asks how Maria died. Ventura says it was a stroke following years of illness, mental and physical. She was mortally afraid of blood, Ryan is notably surprised.

INT. HALLWAY – DAY

Nina leans against the wall, suppressing a gag reflex. She sees a door on the other end open ajar.

INT. NINA'S ROOM – DAY

It's a children's bedroom, left in pristine condition. A crib and alphabet blocks on the floor – spelling out "I AM NINA". Nina is in shock, a daze. Suddenly, a music box on the dresser pops open and starts playing. A ballerina twirling inside. She approaches it, suspicious.

INT. NINA'S ROOM – DAY [FLASHBACK]

As the music plays, we flashback to young Nina, four or five, playing on the floor with young Maria. "Grannie!" She smiles and hugs Maria. Nina's mother standing by the window, looking out, distantly rubbing her temple. "Why mommy no play?" "Mommy's not feeling well, honey." Maria looks concerned – we see the mother's fingers rubbing her temple raw and bloody.

INT. NINA'S ROOM – DAY

Back to the present, Nina notices an inscription in the lid of the music box – "for my girls". She picks up a black & white family photo on the dresser. Maria holding her infant daughter and the other two girls, eight and fourteen respectively, flanking her – Nina's mom as the younger one and the older, teenage girl. The older girl's face scratched out. Maria's ring clearly visible. Nina's eyes well up, looking out the window at the crosses in the back – what her mother was looking at in the flashback.

INT. STUDY – DAY

Ryan enters. All the furniture and paintings are covered in cloth. Ventura says Maria never really used the room since her husband died in a car accident. Ryan notices the cloth coming off the biggest painting in the room and pulls it off. It's a large portrait depicting a Spanish priest, circa 16th century. He asks about it, Ventura tries to brush it off nonchalantly.

"I think it's one of the first Spanish priests who came to the area. May have been a distant relative, Maria always did emphasize her European roots."

The priest, dark and sombre, has a cold, piercing glare making Ryan almost shudder. Then he notices a ceiling beam up above is cracked, broken. He asks Ventura about it, Ventura explains the Spaniard who built the place hung himself after finding out his fiancé was pregnant with another man's child. Ryan asks why no one repaired it, Ventura explains that supposedly they

did, numerous times. He explains it is a very superstitious country with a lot of ghost stories. He goes on to say that by law, he is obligated to mention that the Spaniard and Maria weren't the only ones to pass away in the house. Ryan asks how many. Ventura confesses 13 people lost their lives there. Additionally, there's a prerequisite to the inheritance. A DNA test by blood sample. Ryan is about to protest on behalf of his wife when Nina suddenly enters, teary-eyed, holding the picture. "I'll do it. This was my home. I want to know my family again."

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE – NIGHT

A small, dingy local doctor's office, walls covered in anatomical drawings. Nina is waiting anxiously, Ryan by her side. A middle-aged female doctor, Dra. Garcia, enters with a smile and disarmingly familiar demeanour with a large needle. Nina tenses up at the sight of it, noting she's not afraid of needles, but of blood. Ryan notes "same as your grandmother". Garcia disagrees, saying Maria was never afraid of blood. Only of bleeding. She draws blood, Nina winces, looking away. She says the test will take a few days. Nina asks how well she knew her grandmother, asking about her daughters. Garcia notes she knew Maria only as well as anyone would.

"Maria kept everyone, including my daughter Angelica, at arm's length. Funny, given that they're distant relations. As far as the girls go, the older one she never really let out. She was a disturbed young girl so I wasn't surprised. I only saw the youngest once before she died as a baby. Sad, really. Never heard how it happened. Your mother though, I knew her. What happened to her?"

"She died. Years ago though, in the States."

"Oh... I'm sorry. She was such a pretty girl growing up. You look like her, you know. You two planning on having kids yourself anytime soon?"

Ryan answers enthusiastically in the affirmative, Nina hesitates. Garcia tells them of a motel in town and invites them to stay there and attend the wake in the nearby church.

INT. MOTEL ROOM – NIGHT

Nina is getting ready, putting on makeup and fixing her hair, and discreetly taking a birth control pill, all while Ryan sits, waiting in the bathroom, pregnancy test in hand. "Has it been 3 minutes?" He asks. "Yeah, but you know it's still early. And you can't trust the local brands, probably made in some south Manila sweatshop." He looks disappointed, then questions her hesitation earlier in the doctor's office. She defends herself saying she just didn't want to tell people before she gets pregnant. Bad luck and all. It's a flimsy excuse but he buys it after she reassures him she agreed to have a child as well. She asks him how he is, if he's still taking his meds. He brushes it off, insulted almost. "I told you, I'm done with that. I don't need any pills to make me feel better about what I did, what I saw. I can do that just fine myself." She backs off, apologizing for questioning him. He kisses her and throws the test in the trash - negative.

EXT. MOTEL – NIGHT

As they leave the motel, we see a figure in tattered rags watching them at a distance.

INT. CHURCH – NIGHT

Ryan dips his fingers in the holy water, crossing himself. A devout catholic. Nina brushes past, greeting DON SALINAS, a friendly balding priest in his 30s, who welcomes them to town. He introduces it as one of the first Christian settlements in the country, with the entirety of the town

devoted church goes every Sunday. He talks mainly to Ryan, saying that he heard they're going to stay a while. "Word travels fast". Salinas asks him if they thought about selling the estate, Ryan replies they were thinking of developing it, seeking investors. Salinas seems very positive and supportive. He takes them inside, pointing out notable citizens – the owner of the local café, the baranguay captain, the baker, the mechanic etc. Nina questions why they're all there, as he thought Maria wasn't exactly the sociable type. Salinas explains that even though she wasn't popular, her passing is still something that should be honoured in the eyes of the Lord. Ryan quietly mutters that they could also be vultures looking to claim the estate for themselves. He gets some displeased looks from the locals. Nina notices a young boy pulling the arm of a young woman, rattling a bell to catch her attention – Angelica. He gestures something in sign language, she responds. He looks back at Nina, scratching at his scarf-covered neck.

INT. NINA'S ROOM – DAY [FLASHBACK]

For a split second, we flash back to Nina's mother rubbing her temple in a similar motion before returning to the present.

INT. CHURCH – NIGHT

The boy is gone. Nina looks around, surprised. Salinas notes that Maria's death didn't look like a stroke to him, pointing out "conflicting reports" from eyewitness Angelica, who he points out as she's leaving with the boy. Nina looks at Angelica urgently. Angelica casts her a quick glance going out the door, pulling the boy with her. Ryan picks up on it and questions if he thinks Angelica did it. Salinas assures him she's incapable of harming a fly, but that instead "she saw something, I'm not sure what". He does however note that this is the Philippines, the country of gossip and corruption so anything not from the horse's mouth should be taken with a grain of salt. Nina looks ahead to the open casket, approaching slowly as all sounds fade away, the lights dim, everything slows down...

The casket is filled with blood. Nina looks around herself, seeing she's suddenly alone. The sound of a baby crying starts to get louder and louder. She leans in over the casket, seeing her reflection in the giant pool of blood. Suddenly, a WOMAN bursts through the surface, rotting and decrepit, blood spraying everywhere in slow-motion, she grabs Nina by the arms and opens her eyes at her. Pitch black like a shark's.

INT. MOTEL ROOM – NIGHT

Nina wakes up with a jolt. Ryan tries to console her quietly, joking.

"I thought I was supposed to be the one with the wartime flashbacks."

"I dreamt about my mother again. Fourth time this week. Every night since we got here."

"Of course, everything here reminds you of her, it's only natural."

"It's not just that. This is how it started for her. Bad dreams, and it wasn't long until she didn't have to be asleep to have them. She also blamed this place, the house..."

"Stop. You're not her. You'll be so much better of a mom than she ever was."

He starts kissing her, she pushes him away, saying she's too tired, not in the mood, headache. He looks disgruntled as she lies back down, but goes back to sleep as well. Her eyes remain open for a few moments longer, regret in her eyes, before falling asleep. In the dark back corner of the motel room, we catch a glimpse of something. SOMEONE watching from the shadows.

ACT II

EXT. HOUSE – DAY

Nina signs the papers by the house with Ventura as the DNA test came back a match and as she is a dual citizen, the property is rightfully hers. He gives her the keys, explaining - main door key, kitchen entrance, master bedroom, guest bedrooms and attic. Nina points out that the catalogue specifies six keys, not five. Ventura seems confounded but assures her it must be a mistake.

INT. HALLWAY – DAY

Nina uses the keys to open up a walk-in closet – packed floor to ceiling with boxes of junk that come tumbling down. She bemoans it will take weeks to sort through all this stuff. She spots a dusty old wheelchair in the corner.

INT. LIBRARY – DAY

Nina and Ryan unlock a small bedroom turned library, books and loose pages scattered everywhere over the floor, all in braille. It looks like someone turned the place upside down. All old, yellowed and faded. A grand piano inside. Ryan plays a few notes – noticing a few strings are missing.

INT. HALLWAY – DAY

Ryan unlocks tries to pull down the hatch to the attic in the hallway as Nina looks on anxiously. It's just too high for his reach and he jumps up and down a few times with Nina just about to shrug it off when it comes flying open and the ladder comes crashing down, spraying dust and dirt everywhere, giving them both a jolt.

INT. ATTIC – DAY

They enter the attic, armed with flashlights, shining it around the place. It's murky and dusty, thin shafts of light from cracks in the ceiling, water dripping somewhere. Ryan pushes on into the darkness, finding an 8mm projector. He calls out for Nina "I think I found something!" when suddenly, the floorboards give way and his foot falls through the hole, his fall knocking over a box of old cans of film all over the floor. Nina panics, rushing to his side. Ryan struggles to get up. "Goddamnit. Not my day today. I'm okay, I'm okay. Just a bruise, nothing broken". He limps along, clutching his leg. Nina spots the old film cans, labelled "the girls '67" "summer '68" with dates going as far back as 1955. Nina starts to get excited, exclaiming "This is it! This is my family! This is my history!" Ryan is quick to share her joy, saying they should make a movie night out of it, celebrate.

EXT. HOUSE – DAY

Ryan throws out the old blood-stained mattress in the back as Nina stands clear, looking away. She spots the figure in the tattered clothes standing over the crosses in the back. It ducks out around the corner in an instant. Ryan asks her what's wrong "I just thought I saw someone...nevermind, it's probably just the heat getting to me". "And the blood", Ryan adds.

INT. LIVING ROOM – DAY

Ryan sets up the projector in the living room as Nina helps sweep the floor and clear stuff out.

INT. GROCERY STORE – DAY

Nina and Ryan, still limping, at the grocery store, a small dilapidated old supermarket with no aircon – all canned goods, cheap local foods and instant noodles. The meat section covered in flies. Ryan complains of Maria's weird phobia leading to not a single knife or sharp object available in the house, picking out some cheap cutlery. Locals look at them and whisper suspiciously, the shop owner stares them down coldly. Nina looks uncomfortable by it while Ryan remains blissfully unaware. Ryan picks out a few choice food items saying he read are good for conception, giving her a wink. Nina looks awkward, but smiles when she spots – boxed wine and some wine glasses. "Something better for pre-conception".

INT. KITCHEN – NIGHT

Ryan and Nina clear out the kitchen of all the trash and garbage, cleaning up in a quick montage before Ryan gets to work on cooking for the two of them. They laugh and goof around like a happily married couple. Ryan notices his hand is trembling while slicing tomatoes. He looks over at Nina, who doesn't notice. He shakes it off, resumes cutting but suddenly cuts himself. "Fuck. Not my week this week. Don't worry babe. I'll be ok". Nina looks nauseous at the sight and excuses herself, Ryan calmly says it's not so bad and he'll take care of it. Blood droplets hit the floor. He washes his bleeding finger off in the sink, the blood mixing with water down the drain.

INT. LIVING ROOM – NIGHT

Nina is on the floor in a sleeping bag, leaning up against a couch still covered in boxes, empty plate by her side. She's watching the old 8mm home movies of her grandmother and two of her daughters projected on the uneven cracked wallpaper. Their faces distorted and grainy, ghostly remnants of what once was. Ryan pours a couple of glasses of wine and looks through a bunch of old records, putting one on – the Bee Gees track. Nina looks disturbed by the sudden music, looks back at him. He smiles. She smiles awkwardly back. "I didn't know this was your kind of music". "Me neither. Never heard this one before, must be one of their early ones. I like it, makes me think of the days of harmony pop, French fries, Cadillacs and drive-ins that everyone likes to pretend to remember. It's sweet." He sits down next to her, snuggling up with two glasses of wine. "Hah. It's creepy is what it is. Listen to it, even The Police would find it stalker-ish. I can't believe my grandmother had it. It sounds familiar though." Ryan sees a young girl projected on the wall. Nina's mom as a young kid in the footage, smiling and playful, running around with her sisters. "She looks so different, your mom."

"Happy?"

"Normal. Not exactly what I expected."

The footage shows Maria returning from the hospital, baby in arms. The eldest daughter looks excited, happily getting the baby, carrying her. Nina's mom looks grumpy, upset, not into the baby at all. Nina looks glassy-eyed, distraught. "I can't believe she never told me of her sisters. I get everything else, but that I had two aunts is kind of a big deal to keep to yourself."

Ryan tries to rationalize, saying that her mom wasn't exactly there for her.

"I guess. I just wish I knew their names. The notes say nothing but 'the girls' until the tapes stop around 1972. When they died." He wraps his arm around her as she goes on. "They were so young, being in the prime of their lives wasn't even a concept for them. I can't imagine what

happened, how they died just like that.”

“Illness maybe? An accident? Most kids who pass away do so due to accidents. Or by someone close to them.”

“That’s awful. This is my grandmother you’re talking about!”

“You said it yourself, you barely knew her. What about the dad?”

“He passed away even before that. It was really hard on both my grandmother and her and then the girls... Imagine how they felt about it, imagine the survivor’s guilt...”

His bandaged thumb is around her shoulder, staining her shirt. She suddenly notices, flinching hard, she knocks over his wine glass, freaking out. “God, you’re bleeding again! You sure you don’t want to have it looked at?” “It’s fine, don’t worry about it.” He unwraps the bandage a bit to tighten it, blood drops on the floor where the spilled wine is. It seeps between the floorboards, draining out as Ryan goes off into the kitchen for tissues. Nina notices and crouches down for a closer look, her eye peering in, glimpsing something in the darkness.

INT. DARK SPACE – NIGHT

We see, looking up underneath the floorboards and pull back to reveal Nina is staring down a large cavernous black space, the little light there is coming from the gaps between the boards.

INT. LIVING ROOM – NIGHT

Ryan limps back in with more wine in hand for the both of them. He asks her, bemused, what she’s doing. She looks up at him, startled. She looks back down. The wine is still there, like nothing happened. “Nothing”.

INT. LIVING ROOM – NIGHT [LATER]

The projector is off now, late at night. Wine glasses and the box empty and discarded on the floor. Ryan is atop Nina on their sleeping bags, kissing her, running his hand along her thigh. She pulls away from him a bit, protesting feebly. Relentlessly, he starts kissing down her neck and torso, undressing her as he goes. Drunk, she drifts in and out of consciousness, alternating between protesting and going along with it. “C’mon honey, please...I’m too drunk, I don’t...” and gasping in surprise as he goes down on her. She moans and groans, his hand caressing her chest and face. His bloodied thumb going into her mouth. She sucks on it willingly, smearing blood over her lips as she nears ecstasy. She suddenly wakes up for a moment, holding his head as he goes back up, facing her. His eyes questioning if it’s ok. “I love you baby. I want this. I want this now.” He kisses her passionately as they make love.

DREAMSEQUENCE – TIMELESS

We fade in and out of dreamlike, abstract images. Nina standing in front of a casket in a dark empty space. Blood dripping. A timelapse flower blossoming. Blood drips in reverse. Fingernails claw against wood, breaking off. A rusty key entering a lock, seen from the inside. The sound of a baby crying. Nina nearer the casket. Piano keys playing by itself but no sound. Glass jars falling, breaking. A stomach expanding, growing into pregnancy. The ring wobbling against the floor. A centipede crawling along. Nina right by the casket. It’s filled with blood, overflowing. Gushing. Pooling on the floor. Nina grimaces. She looks down. The blood is coming from her womb. She screams, no sound. Desperate, panicking. She’s mute. A centipede crawls up her leg, underneath her skirt. She gasps suddenly, eyes widen in an extreme close up.

INT. LIVING ROOM – DAY

Nina opens her eyes suddenly, blinding early morning light in her eyes. It's early morning. She looks worse for wear, anxious and pale, sitting up covered only by the sleeping bag. "What was that last night? You haven't done that since we started dating." Ryan looks confused for a moment, fakes it "yeah, well...we had a lot to drink last night. Sorry." "Nothing to say sorry about, come on. Just..." "What?" "Nothing." He leans in, stroking her bare back, kissing her arm. "You ok?" "Yeah, it's just this place...it's a lot to take in, y'know? I don't even know where to start." "How about I cook us some breakfast? It's a start" His nails run down her back, she straightens up, chills. "Sure. Whatever." Ryan picks up on her distant mood and goes along with it.

INT. DINING ROOM – DAY

Ryan serves her corned beef and scrambled eggs. Pale and disgusting-looking. Ryan is wolfing it down, ravenous. She picks at it idly before pushing the plate away. "Sorry, I'm just not that hungry." "I was gonna have a run after this, if you wanna come with, it might shake off the hangover." She sighs. "What's that?" He points to a small, purple lesion on her neck. "What?" "Looks like a bruise. Probably from last night." Ryan looks at her curiously. Nina checks herself in the reflection of her knife.

INT. FOYER – DAY

Ryan and Nina strap up their sneakers. Nina looks less than enthused, Ryan's already stretching in all kinds of weird positions. She laughs at him "Did the army teach you how to do that?" "Do what?" "How to look like an idiot before PE?" Ryan frowns "It's PT and no, they didn't teach me that. I taught myself. You have no idea the amount of running involved when you're the only Italian in an all-black neighbourhood." "Oh yeah, I forgot all about the Bloods and the Crips of Newark", she quips before putting on her earphones, taking off. "Let's see the little white boy run!" He laughs, shaking his head as he runs after.

EXT. FOREST PATH – DAY

It's early morning, they run along dirt paths through thick jungle forest. Birds calling and insects buzzing overhead, fresh drips of morning dew on the leaves. The steady pounding of her running feet, Nina is by herself, jogging through. She's listening to Flower Duet from Lakmé by Leo Delibes. We hear running footsteps approaching from behind. Nina's lost in the music, looking around at nature. The footsteps are getting closer and closer, faster. Nina keeps jogging at a steady pace. Suddenly, Ryan runs up behind her, snatching the headphones straight out of her ears, dropping them in the dirt down the path. "Run Forrest, run!" She calls out after him, upset "Hey! Those aren't cheap, you know!" She slows down, catching her breath and quieting her frustration. Suddenly, a crack out in the deep dark woods. A heavy crack. Somewhat alarmed, she calls out "Ry? Honey? Is that you?" Another crack from behind her. "Ry?" Another, from another direction. It's all around her. She starts freaking out. She takes off running again, stepping over her headphones. Something moves along WITH her in the woods, bushes moving, birds scattering. She picks up speed, scared. Her heartbeat racing, sweat dripping from her face. The calling of the birds and noises of the forest gets LOUDER and LOUDER. She finally skids to a halt at a clearing, the path branching off into two, exhausted. She stops looking down the side path, Ryan standing by a house, talking to Salinas. She looks back from where she came and...nothing. She draws a sigh of relief. The men spot her and wave, calling for her, all smiles.

Exasperated, she nods, head between her knees. She looks down the path again. The figure in the tattered clothes in the distance, crossing the path, disappearing into the jungle. Nina looks around, startled. Ryan runs up to her with a bottle of water. "Sorry about the 'buds. You know father Salinas is our closest neighbour? Lives just down here.. You alright?" Nina is distracted. "Yeah...fine. That's great, someone to remind us of the collection plate even after church." "I know you're not much for the Almighty and all, but c'mon. Say hi at least." Nina reluctantly agrees and goes with Ryan, though still keeping an eye on the jungle.

INT. SALINAS HOUSE – DAY

Salinas brings them inside his humble abode, sheepishly admitting he does little but sleep and study scripture so it's not much to look at. Nevertheless, he offers them fresh coffee. Ryan heads toward a wooden door in the back, asking if he can use the restroom. Salinas points him to another direction saying "Sorry, the CR is this way. That's the wine cellar." "Wine cellar?" Nina seems surprised, Ryan rushes for the bathroom. "Yes, as far as I know the only basement on the island. It's a hobby of mine, I collect them." "Red or white?" "Red, mostly. Anything exotic. Please, sit."

INT. SALINAS HOUSE – DAY [LATER]

Ryan and Nina enjoy an awkward silence over coffee with Salinas, smiling at them. Nina notices a small portrait on the wall. The same Spanish priest. Ryan spots it, too;

"Isn't that the...?"

"Don Jeronimo de Guevara?"

"Yeah, Geronimo. Don Geronimo. Not the Indian."

"Jeronimo with a J. He was the first Catholic priest to set foot on the Philippine islands when explorer Miguel Legazpi first claimed it for the king of Spain."

"King Philip II." Nina chimes in.

"Hence the name, yes. Don Jeronimo established the first Catholic mission *here*, on this island."

"I thought that was Magellan's Cross in Cebu?"

Salinas takes out a pack of smokes and a zippo lighter.

"That's because they at least have a record of that burning down. I hope you don't mind."

"Go ahead."

Salinas lights a cigarette, taking a long drag.

"What happened to Don Jeronimo's church no one really knows, except that it disappeared around the time he did. God knows we looked for it."

"Disappeared? How can a church and a priest just disappear?" Ryan engages.

"Well, unlike Cebu, the Catholic faith wasn't as embraced here when the settlers first came. A lot of people believe the islanders turned on the mission after their treatment of the locals. You see, Don Jeronimo was also a grand inquisitor. Whenever the local populace would resist conversion to the gospel of truth, the inquisitors would make them convert either by force or superstition."

"What do you mean, superstition?"

"A lot of the so-called indigenous myths here were actually introduced by the Spaniards. Stories of aswangs, bloodthirsty mythical creatures that feed off the blood of newborns were intended to scare the natives into submission."

"So they turn to Christ for salvation. Protection."

"The priests based it off of Eastern European vampire mythos as well as whatever they picked up

while colonizing the Americas. Wendigos and shapeshifters, gaining the strength of their enemies by consumption of their blood. Cannibalism. Not too far from the more carnal pleasures of native man.”

“You know an awful lot about the dark side of the church, father.”

“True faith comes not only from the light we see in the world but also the darkness. Far too many believe that nonsense until today, including many from my congregation. I do my best to enlighten whoever cares to listen.”

“I’d say you have your work cut out for you, I didn’t see a single child in town. I guess people are too scared.”

“Too poor. A different beast altogether. Outside of the business districts of Metro Manila, this is still the third world and I’m glad people here aren’t catholic enough not to use contraceptives.”

Nina smiles, bemused, Ryan frowns.

“Still enough money floating around to buy you half of Southern France you got down there.”

“I’ve been blessed with the time to accumulate those little by little. You care to try some? After all... it’s five o’clock somewhere.”

Salinas smiles suggestively, picking a half-empty bottle of wine from the shelf. Nina and Ryan both laugh.

“You are a piece of work, father, you know that?”

INT. FOYER – DAY

In the house, a couple of delivery guys arrive with a mattress, carrying it inside as Ryan is giving directions. Nina enters from the living room. “I haven’t cleaned out the bedroom yet, it’s still a damn mess.” “That’s ok, they can just bring it upstairs and leave it outside anyway, right guys?” The two delivery guys just stare at him coldly as he directs them up the stairs. “Maybe you can get them some water, honey?” They lug the thick mattress awkwardly up, step by step, Ryan hovering over them with useless reminders to be careful.

INT. KITCHEN – DAY

Nina enters. Outside the screen door, a black cat is sitting, staring at her. She tries to shoo it, it just keeps staring at her blankly. She shakes her head and takes out a glass and puts it down in the dispenser. She hits the button, getting distracted by the cat as the glass is filling up slowly. The cats eyes are fixated eerily on hers.

INT. FOYER – DAY

The movers are struggling with the mattress going up the stairs. Suddenly, the top guy loses his grip.

INT. KITCHEN – DAY

Nina looks back at the glass anxiously. The water is turning into a brown muddy color. Then suddenly blood red. She recoils in horror and disgust, heading for the sink.

INT. FOYER – DAY

The mattress slams into the guy at the bottom of the stairs, pinning him against the corner post of the railing. The wood scraping against his skin before he falls down to the floor.

INT. KITCHEN – DAY

Nina tries to suppress a gag reflex but winds up vomiting. She looks surprised by it, disgusted. She looks back over to the glass still in the dispenser – it's normal water again. She looks at the cat. Still staring at her.

INT. FOYER – DAY

Ryan rushes over to help the delivery guy out. He's banged up, but ok. Blood smeared along the corner post and on the floor.

Nina enters with a couple of glasses of water as Ryan and the other delivery guy help the wounded man going out. "What happened?"

"One of the guys took a nasty fall, that's all. Don't worry, he's ok. I gave them some money."

"How much?" Nina sidesteps and tries to avoid looking at the blood smears.

"They asked for a thousand."

"That's ridiculous, what did he do, fracture his spine? These people are bloodsuckers, Ry, give them a hand and they'll take an arm and a leg."

"They're good people."

"Yeah, that's why every government here hounds the one before it on corruption charges. We don't have the money to spend."

"Alright, alright. Point taken."

She looks back over and the floor and post are clean again. She furrows her brow in confusion. Ryan asks if she's ok, saying she looks a bit pale. Nina shrugs it off as nothing.

INT. FOYER – DAY [LATER]

Later in the afternoon, the delivery guys are long gone. We hear loud music from the living room– the Bee Gees track.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM – DAY

Upstairs, Nina is cleaning, throwing large quantities of trash out. She follows the strings and ropes going from the bed to different objects. A record player. The closet. A drawer filled with dozens, if not hundreds of rubber gloves stacked on top of each other. The sieve with the razorblade still inside. She looks over to a nearby trash bin next to the bed. Filled with needles, nails, screws and other small sharp objects.

INT. BATHROOM – DAY

In the bathroom, she's cleaning out the cabinets, finding the broken jar in the sink. She looks disturbed by the thick red cream and flushes it down. She looks down and finds another string, leading into the bottom of the wall by the filth covered tub. She just tries to pull it when suddenly a LOUD CRASH startles her. Something struck the bathroom window behind her. She calls out for Ryan. No response, just the faint echo of the music.

INT. LIVING ROOM – DAY

Nina goes downstairs, agitated. She looks over to Ryan vacuuming the living room, music cranked up to 11. She calls out for him but he doesn't respond, can't hear her over the noise. She gives up and heads outside.

EXT. HOUSE – DAY

She looks around below the bathroom window, finding a dead bird, neck snapped. Flew right into the window she was standing by. She recoils in horror, looking away, but she fights it to pick up the bird by the tips of her fingers and throws it into the bushes, disgusted. She's sweating and looking nauseous still, catching her breath. "Nuisance, aren't they?" A voice startles her yet again. A middle-aged woman is right behind her, dressed all in black, scarf around her neck. She introduces herself, she's LUCIA, the new maid. She heard about Angelica's departure and decided to see if they needed help. She's her cousin and former maid of the house "I spent about a year here, in this house, decades ago". Something suspicious about her, a knowing gaze but a warm smile. Nina says thanks, but they have it under control. Lucia insists, saying that she's spoken to Ryan earlier about helping out. Nina looks in through the living room window, seeing Ryan looking at them, smiling and waving over the music. Nina hesitates, questioning Lucia, when she got to talk to Ryan and that he couldn't have hired her as they don't have much money to pay her. Lucia says she doesn't really need pay, just room and board and that Ryan agreed given that they have plenty of space and it would help as Lucia knows the place to avoid further accidents. Nina looks back at Ryan limping around inside, clearly in discomfort but putting up with it. Lucia pipes in "You know men, white knighting their way through any pain. Proudful and generous at once, at least the good ones are." Nina smiles wistfully. "Yeah, they are..." Lucia reassures her "I'll take care of him, dear. You rest. You don't look too well, you better lie down. A woman of your condition really should rest." "What condition is that?" "You rest, dear. I'll take care of everything." She hesitates, but clutches her stomach and goes along with it, returning inside.

INT. BATHROOM – DAY

Nina's hunched over the toilet bowl, throwing up in graphic detail when she hears the front door open downstairs. She wipes her face and peeks out the window.

INT/EXT. HOUSE – DAY

Ryan is clearing out branches and leaves outside the house. He stops, finding weird-looking handcrafts, stuff made out of animal bones, feathers and fur, all along the bottom of the wall. "What the..." Lucia brings him a tray with a pitcher of lemonade and a glass. Ryan starts picking up more and more of the handcrafts, looking at them sceptically "What the hell are these?". "I don't know, sir. Some kind of local custom perhaps?" Lucia looks up at Nina with a smile. Nina heads back to the bathroom. Her shadow a fraction of a second delayed.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM – DAY

Nina is lying down on the new mattress, now on the bed, facing away. Ryan sits down beside her, one of the handcrafts in hand.

"Found these things outside. Looks like some kind of tribal thing, I dunno what the hell they are but they look shit. Morbid. Not exactly sanitary... You feeling ok? I've barely seen you all day." The bruise on her neck is bigger now, worse looking. She covers up.

"Yeah, I don't know, I couldn't sleep. Felt sick to my stomach. Must've been something I ate."

"We ate the same thing last night and you didn't eat this morning." She looks irritable.

"Then I don't know, I guess your stomach is tougher than mine. I don't really care. And who the hell was playing the piano earlier?"

"What?"

“Someone was playing the piano all afternoon, I could hear it through the wall. Was it you?”

“No, but who else would it be? You sure you’re feeling alright?”

We hear a faint slamming noise repeating. She looks up.

“Okay, do you hear that?”

“Yeah... sounds like the screen door in the back. Did you leave it open?”

“No, why would I?”

“I dunno, I was just –“

Suddenly, Nina jumps hard in shock as the little boy from the wake peeks out from under the bed, scaring the crap out of her.

“JESUS CHRIST! What is this, Grand Central for people creeping up on you?”

“Hey! Who are you? What are you doing here?” No response from the boy.

“He’s Angelica’s kid, from the wake. I think he’s deaf.” Suddenly, the kid bolts, running out past Lucia, standing by the door. Ryan runs after.

“Hey! Get back here!”

Lucia corrects her; “He’s mute, not deaf. Not that it makes much difference to his mother.”

Suddenly, a voice outside, downstairs calling out for the boy.

“Bayani?” Nina is about to follow Ryan and the boy out of the room when Lucia stops her.

“Don’t. It’s not worth it. I know her. You can’t trust a word she says.”

“She’s your cousin, isn’t she?”

“Not by blood.” Nina insists, Lucia lets her pass.

INT. FOYER – DAY

Downstairs, Angelica is searching everywhere as the boy suddenly runs into her arms. She admonishes him in Tagalog “There you are! I was worried sick about you! You know you’re not supposed to be here.” Ryan approaches.

“Angelica, is it?”

“I’m so sorry, it’s just that he got used to hanging around here when I used to work here. I promise it won’t happen again.”

Nina suddenly calls out from the top of the stairs. “It’s ok. I’m Nina. This is my husband Ryan.”

“Nice to meet you, ma’am. Sir.”

Nina starts going down the stairs “How long did you work here?”

“About 2 years.”

“You knew my grandmother quite well?”

“I guess.”

“How did she die?”

Angelica suddenly looks scared, tense.

“Stroke, they called it.”

“What do *you* call it?”

Angelica starts backing up, the boy sheltered behind her. “I’m not sure I know what you mean, ma’am.”

“I think you do. Father Salinas said you saw something.”

“Father Salinas says a lot of things. The police didn’t believe me anyway --”

“What did you see?”

“...A person. A woman. I saw her, she climbed out the window the night your grandmother died. Her name is Caliso.”

“Wait, what?”

“You think she killed her?” Nina asks, concerned.

“I can’t say.”

Nina picks up on her hesitant glance. “Any idea who she is? If you know who it is, you should tell us.”

“She’s a witch. A local, she lives out in the woods. They say she’s crazy, playing around with dark spirits, evil things...”

“Hah!”

“Do you believe that?” Nina questions.

“I don’t know what to believe except I don’t want me and my son to spend another minute in this house. Excuse me...”

Nina stops her on her way out. Lucia watches from the bannister upstairs.

“C’mon baby, she’s bullshitting you. She probably killed the old bat herself hoping she’d get the house.”

Angelica curses at Ryan in Tagalog.

“Just because I’m poor doesn’t make me a criminal.”

“No, just ups the odds that you are.”

“Why are you so afraid?”

“I work here. I see things. I hear things. Things that aren’t supposed to be. More after the old woman died.”

INT. HALLWAY – DAY [FLASHBACK]

Angelica exits the master bedroom carrying out trays of trash and junk. Angelica suddenly stops, hearing footsteps running behind her.

“Bayani? Is that you? You know you’re not supposed to be up here!”

She looks around the corner, facing the closet. Door is open. The young boy standing in the middle of the hallway facing it. Frozen in place. The lights flicker.

“Bayani?”

She hears behind her a bell. She turns around slowly to face the boy standing behind her. She turns back around facing – a wheelchair where the boy figure used to be.

“Bayani...” She says without turning around. “Run.”

The wheelchair comes rushing down toward her on its own.

INT. FOYER – DAY

“That’s why I don’t come back here.”

“You think it was her? My grandmother?”

“Maybe. And something else.”

“You mean someone?”

“Not all things in here were born human. Please...”

Nina lets her pass with the boy. The boy looks at her while passing, scratching his neck. He points to her nose. Surprised, Nina checks her nose – she’s bleeding. She looks horrified as it suddenly starts gushing everywhere. She cries in horror, Ryan rushes to her side, handing her tissues, having her sit down on the steps and lean back to stop the blood flow. “Jesus, you sure you’re ok? Lean back, come on.” Lucia walks back down the upstairs hall as Ryan takes care of Nina.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE – DAY

Nina and Ryan are waiting. Garcia enters with a piece of paper.

“I have some good news and some bad news. Bad news is that nothing in your tests show any problems that can lead to your nosebleed.”

“What’s the good news?”

“You’re about a week pregnant.”

Ryan looks overjoyed. “You sure? Definitely pregnant?”

“Well, her hormone levels are just barely detectable this early on a blood test, but yeah, in all likelihood you’re having a baby.” Nina looks less than pleased.

Garcia continues that they should take care to stock up on supplies and board up the house as a typhoon is on its way. Nina cuts her off, saying she has a rash that needs medical attention. Ryan questions her as he hasn’t noticed a rash on her, she coldly says “it’s down there” and she needs it looked at. In private. Garcia tries to protest, saying she’s not an OB, Nina overrules her sharply, saying the nearest OB-GYN is miles away and it’s really bothering her. Ryan looks concerned, but exits. Nina questions Garcia discreetly, asking how it’s even possible she’s pregnant, she was on the pill until she ran out a few days ago and if it’s possible the test is wrong. Garcia appears concerned, saying there are no false positives, her hormone levels are elevated, but maybe something else could be affecting it. Going off the pill may have something to do with it, a hormonal imbalance of some sort, but she can’t guarantee anything either way. Nina nevertheless breathes a sigh of relief. Garcia is surprised, she thought they wanted a child together. “Don’t you like kids?”

“No, it’s not that. I love children. Under any other circumstances, we’d be procreating like cracked-out bunny rabbits.”

“Then what circumstances *are* you under?”

“My mother was a paranoid schizophrenic. She suffered from delusions, hallucinations, hearing voices and seeing people and... things that weren’t there. She refused treatment. She thought all doctors, psychiatrists, priests, even my grandmother were all part of a massive conspiracy to kill her and take me away, that they were after my everlasting soul. She’d jump at shadows, take anything anyone said as code for sublimation and lock me up in her closet to “protect” me from the unseen enemy. When I was fourteen she had a complete mental breakdown. I found her lying in the bathtub after school. She slit her wrists.”

“Hereditary schizophrenia with only one parent affected is still low –“

“I know the statistics. I don’t want to take a chance. If that happens to my child... I’d rather go through life childless than risk that.”

“You want your family name to die with you?”

“I want my family name to die with dignity.”

“No such thing.” She’s about to leave when Nina stops her.

“I do have a rash though.”

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE – DAY [LATER]

Nina’s on the bench, legs open. Garcia is shining a flashlight down between her legs. She has a nasty looking rash going down the entirety of her thigh.

“You definitely have a rash alright. What feminine wash do you use?”

“Lactacyd. Do you think it’s the wash?”

“I’m not sure.”

“When did this appear?”

“I started itching earlier today. Noon-ish. It’s getting worse.”

”This is just from today? Try just using water and hypoallergenic soap for now. I’m prescribing you calamine lotion. It’s over-the-counter, you can get it anywhere. Apply twice a day.”

EXT. TOWN – DAY

All the towns people are boarding up their windows and doors. Dark stormy clouds overhead.

INT. DINING ROOM – NIGHT

Nina and Ryan are arguing. Dinner is left uneaten on the table. The typhoon is raging outside. Ryan is upset that Nina is even arguing it’s a good thing that she may not be pregnant, given that they already talked about it and agreed on it.

Nina argues, violently scratching herself while doing so “I don’t see what’s the big deal with waiting until we’re at least financially stable! We don’t even have a home!”

“Then what do you call this place? It’s a house, it’s ours. Whatever job I can get in town, I’ll take it, I don’t care.

“You want to raise a child in the third world? You don’t know this place, you don’t know what it’s like here!”

“Neither do you! Look, we talked about this six months ago. I thought we were on the same page. Third world or not, we were gonna have a baby.”

“I think it’s pretty obvious neither of us are stable enough to take care of ourselves, let alone a baby. Look at this place. Look at us. Look at you.” Ryan’s hands are shaking, he tries to hide it.

“How many sessions have you missed now? How many times do you just lay in bed when we go to sleep, crying? I know you, Ry. I know you better than you know yourself and a part of you got left behind back there in the desert. A part of you I haven’t seen since.”

“Fuck you. I’m rehabilitated. You’re the one with the fucking neurosis, you’re jumping at shadows. Fuck it. Did you ever consider that you might still be pregnant? Did the thought ever occur to you how this discussion will reflect on you as a mother? That kid will grow up every day, looking at you, reminded that you never wanted him in the first place.”

“Ry...what’s this really about? Why are you pushing so hard?”

“I don’t want to be left alone, okay?! ...Between mom, dad and Iraq, I fucking lost everyone. I look at you and I think... you could be with anyone of those Ivy League pricks back home. You could be sitting there having your fucking strawberry macchiato, discussing poli-sci, having a laugh about the GOP and I’ll be in a fucking garage or woodshop somewhere doing fuckall. At least here I don’t have to feel like a fucking idiot next to you. At least here I don’t have any of your condescending bullshit college friends treating me like I’m some goddamn philistine. You taught me that word. I know how you see me and I know what I am. I just want to do something with my life that matters, have someone look up to me and tell me I’m ok.”

She leans in against him, intimately. “Of course you are. I married *you*. Not some douchebag Zuckerberg-wannabe.”

“I’m sorry. I never wanted to hurt you. They said I had to... You were always his favorite.”

“What?” She pulls back.

Ryan snaps at her, in an instant, his eyes are black.

“YOU WERE ALWAYS HIS FAVORITE!”

Nina jumps back, scared. Suddenly, the power goes out, adding to Ryan’s frustration.

“Great. Fucking terrific.”

Suddenly, a repeated banging noise somewhere in the house, startling Nina. “What was that?”

“What?”

“That noise. Sounded like something banging. Don’t you hear it?”

“It’s an old damn house. Everything makes noise. Probably just one of the windows caught in the wind. Told you we should’ve boarded the place up.”

“That didn’t sound like any window to me.”

Ryan relents, going out to check.

INT. FOYER – NIGHT

Ryan looks around, suspicious. Nina follows, apprehensive. She’s scratching the fold of her arms. The banging noise gets louder and louder.

“Hello? Anyone there?”

“Maybe it’s the maid, what’s her name.”

“She left this afternoon, remember?”

“Maybe she came back because of the storm. Maybe it’s someone else.”

“Relax, there’s no one else here.”

A LOUDER SLAM, scaring the both of them.

“You heard that!”

“Damn right I did! It’s coming from the study.”

They approach the door slowly, opening it...

INT. STUDY – NIGHT

Darkness. Nothing. Suddenly lightning strikes, lighting up the room. The black cat jumps down from the shelf, knocking down the picture of Nina’s grandmother. They both sigh in relief.

“It’s just a goddamn cat!”

They hear meowing from the other room, they look at each other questioningly as the cat runs off following the noise.

INT. LIVING ROOM – NIGHT

They open the door, revealing half a dozen cats gathered around the same spot in the middle of the floor. Where the sleeping bags were.

“What the...”

“Told you someone took shelter from the storm.” Nina quips.

Ryan shoos away the cats, they hiss and scatter.

“Ry!”

Nina calls his attention back to the foyer. Wet muddy footsteps on the floor. Ryan gets a baseball bat.

INT. FOYER – NIGHT

“What are you gonna do, Babe Ruth? Use their heads as a baseball and land us both in jail?”

“Shh!”

They stalk the footsteps back toward the study.

INT. STUDY – NIGHT

Nothing. Suddenly, Nina screams out.

INT. FOYER – NIGHT

The portrait of Don Jeronimo, ablaze, comes crashing down from the top of the stairs. Ryan ducks out of the way and smothers it with a blanket. Once it clears up, the lights flicker back on. Nina notices a key taped to the back of the painting.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM – NIGHT

Nina is sitting alone, nervous, on the bed. Knife in her hand, picking at her finger. Every light available on. Ryan enters. “Whoever it was, he sure isn’t here now. Doors and windows are locked.”

“He must’ve gotten out after.”

“Locked from the inside.”

Nina pauses. “That doesn’t make any sense.”

“Tell me about it. If you want, I can stay up beside you. Just to make sure you’re safe. We can go to the police station tomorrow and report it.”

“And tell them what? Someone we never saw broke in, torched a painting of someone we never heard of and disappeared into thin air? What can they do? It’s not like they have the resources to assign protection detail to old artwork. This is the Philippines, Ry. We’d be lucky if they don’t charge us for the damn crime just to squeeze money out of us.”

“How patriotic of you.”

“This country is a hellhole. People here are like the Stepford wives. I see why my mom left.”

“Look...we never resolved our issue earlier.”

“I really don’t want to talk about it. If I’m not pregnant, then great. If I am...I want an abortion.”

“You know it’s illegal here, right?”

“I don’t care. I don’t want this. I don’t want this life for a child. Any child.”

“Fine. Ladies choice.” Ryan sneers coldly at her. “If you want me, I’ll be sleeping downstairs.”

Nina picks at her fingernail, suddenly pulling it out. She looks disgusted and wraps tissues around it.

INT. LIVING ROOM – NIGHT

Ryan, fast asleep on the couch. His hand is shaking. Lightning strikes, his face twitches.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM – NIGHT

Nina is tossing and turning, awake. Scratching a red rash on her arm. Faint piano music starts playing, distracting her. Curious, she gets out of bed.

INT. HALLWAY – NIGHT

She approaches the library slowly, looking around as the music gets louder. She reaches for the doorknob. Hesitates.

INT. LIBRARY – NIGHT

She swings the door open, the music comes to a crashing halt. A metallic clink. She looks down on the floor by the piano. Her grandmother’s ring. The window opens slowly, the storm outside quieting suddenly. She sniffs the air, a familiar scent.

“...Grannie?” Nothing. Suddenly the door slams shut and the lights go out. Nina jumps back against the wall, knocking over books. She fumbles around in the dark, panting. She finds one of the strings along the wall, feeling around, trying to find her way, breathing heavily. She stops

cold and holds her breath. Hers is not the only breath audible, someone standing right behind her. She runs toward the door, yanking at the door knob. It's stuck. She starts banging on the door and screaming for Ryan.

INT. LIVING ROOM – NIGHT

Nina's screams only softly heard down there. The record player suddenly starts playing softly on its own. The Bee Gees. Ryan stirs in his sleep, turns to his side.

INT. LIBRARY – NIGHT

Nina stops banging, hearing the music from downstairs. She backs up. The heavy breathing starts again, louder than before. Her hair blows with it. She swings around, kicking it away. A loud crash with the grand piano going back on its wheels. It slams into the bookshelf, revealing a light coming from behind it. She runs up to it, tipping the whole shelf over. It comes crashing down, revealing a heavy metal door behind it, the light coming from within. She fumbles, finds the key and opens it.

INT. HIDDEN ROOM – NIGHT

She rushes in, pulling the key. It snaps in half inside the lock and she slams it shut behind her. It's a tiny room, a small study with a desk, a corkboard of newspaper clippings with needle point holes punched in each. Braille. It's all about missing children. She looks at it in shock. It dates back decades, to the turn of the century. On the desk, there's multiple birth certificates, children under the name Vargas. She finds one finally, the oldest, dated 1955. Caliso Vargas, daughter of Maria. She rummages through the others. They're all children of Caliso, dated 1966 onwards. Father unlisted. Attending physician: Dra. Garcia. Most of them stillborn. She recoils in horror at the revelation. She turns to the cabinet on the side, opens it – it's full of jars of dead infants, preserved in formaldehyde. She drops to the floor, overcome with shock.

INT. LIBRARY – DAY

Ryan is looking at the door. Nina nervously standing behind him, sickly pale. Its sealed shut.

"You couldn't bother leaving it open?"

"I told you, I did, it must've slammed shut when I went down to get you."

"Well, I dunno what to do except call a locksmith. I didn't see one in town though."

"We can get one from across the strait. It's important. It's evidence!"

"Yeah, of what exactly? Your grandmother pimping her daughter out as a baby machine? It doesn't make sense. If the certificates are legit, Dra. Garcia would be over 70 years old!"

"Then it was her dad, or someone with the same name! I'm telling you, something happened here."

"Yeah, 50 years ago. Whoever else was involved is probably dead by now."

"Not Caliso."

"You're saying your aunt is the crazy cat lady of the town?"

"Same name. Either way, we have to find out. In there, in those jars...they're my cousins. My stillborn cousins."

"Alright, alright. I'll try to call someone."

INT. LIVING ROOM – DAY

Ryan's on the landline.

“Phonelines are down.” He checks his cellphone as well. “No reception either. Storm must’ve knocked down the antenna.”

“God...welcome to the Philippines. What about the guy?”

“What guy?”

“The one who was in there, with me. The one who torched the damn painting!”

“The place was empty when I checked it and it’s empty now. And I didn’t hear any music or piano playing last night either. A dozen strings are even missing.”

“You’re saying it was all in my head?”

“I’m saying you’re tired and stressed out and your hormones are through the roof and...” He stops, noticing she keeps sucking on her own tongue. “You ok? What’s wrong?”

“No, nothing. Just a toothache. It feels weird.”

“Let me see.”

She opens wide, Ryan looks around in there.

“Jesus...”

“What?” He reaches in, poking around in her mouth. She grows anxious. “What? What is it?”

He pulls out a TOOTH, root and all. She pauses. Horrified.

“I don’t want to go to doctor Garcia anymore.”

INT. MASTER BEDROOM – DAY

Nina is sitting on the bed, holding her stomach. A slight bulge. Ryan enters.

“I asked around, the only other doctor nearby is across the strait and the ferry only comes twice a week.”

“How long have we been here? A week? Ten days?”

“Honey...we’ve been here a month and a half.”

Nina laughs, incredulous. “That’s impossible. I remember coming here Monday. ”

“Yeah, and the wake was Wednesday. Six weeks ago.”

She checks her phone.

“August? It’s...it’s supposed to be June. I...”

She’s in a thin blouse and shorts and she’s sweating. Ryan looks over, the aircon is at 16 degrees Celsius. Ryan feels her forehead. She’s burning up. He rushes over and gets a thermometer.

“I’m gonna get Dra Garcia.”

“No, I don’t want to see her!”

The thermometer beeps. 40 degrees Celsius.

“Oh god.”

She lifts her hands from her lap, seeing blood between her legs. She looks at him, helplessly in terror.

INT. KITCHEN – DAY

Ryan runs over to the fridge, getting all the ice and cold goods he can carry.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM – DAY

Nina is on the bed in her underwear, soaked in sweat, delirious. Ryan wraps a blanket around himself, it’s so cold he can see his own breath. He puts a bag of frozen peas on her forehead, she screams in pain. “Hold on baby, you’re gonna be ok!” She has a new lesion on her face.

INT. BATHROOM – DAY

He pours all the ice and frozen goods in the bathtub, water running on full blast. Frozen meat coloring the water red. He carries Nina inside, slowly putting her in the water. “This is gonna hurt baby, but you’re gonna be ok!” She looks down at the red water in horror. Her hands hits the surface and she screams, clinging onto Ryan for dear life. Suddenly the faucet in the sink turns on full blast on its own, the toilet starts running, the lights flicker. She whimpers into his ear. “Why are you doing this to me?” “I have to do this, baby. Be strong for me.” The faucet stops, the lights dial down to a gentle strobe. He puts her in, the red water overflows, spilling everywhere. She gasps, eyes wide open, arms flailing. She tears down the shower curtain and the curtain rod, hitting Ryan over the head before she goes eerily still, submerged in water up to her face. He touches the back of his head. Blood. “This is just not my month.” Blood drips onto the floor. Nina’s covered in the blood red water, only her face and hands and knees sticking out, arms outstretched to the ceiling.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM – DAY

Nina is all but completely knocked out in bed. Cold compress on her forehead, surrounded by a dozen electric fans. IV drip in her arm. Ryan is by the door, pacing. Dra Garcia by his side. “I’d take her to the hospital, but I’m afraid to move her. Her temperature has gone down a bit, but she’s not out of the woods yet. As far as I can tell, the baby is ok, but she’s severely anaemic and she’s gonna have to be bedridden for at least a couple of weeks.”

“What caused it? A virus?”

“Honest answer? I don’t know. Some pregnant women get fevers in their first trimester, but I haven’t seen anything like this before. I’d take some blood tests, but we don’t have the facilities to test for these kinds of diseases here, we’d have to send it over to the bigger hospitals across the strait.”

“Do it.”

“With the phone lines down, it’ll take a week to get an answer back.”

“I don’t care. She’s my wife, she’s carrying my child. Do whatever it takes, find out what’s wrong with her.”

“Our main priority is to get her blood count back up. I’ll put her on iron tablets and I know some homeopathic treatments, if you’re open to that.”

He nods.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM – NIGHT

Ryan and father Salinas are kneeling by her bedside. Praying. Lucia is standing in the doorway, watching. Concerned. Dra. Garcia enters with a bowl of herbal soup. She tries to feed it to Nina, half-conscious, Nina stirs. Ryan jumps to her side, gently caressing her. “She’s waking up! She’s awake! Baby, you’re awake! Thank God almighty.”

“God and a good immune system.” Salinas quips.

Nina pushes Dra Garcia away.

“Not Garcia... I don’t want Garcia...”

Garcia looks offended, Salinas turns suspicious toward her. “What is she saying?”

“Nothing. She just got paranoid over some old papers she found, it’s nothing.”

“The maid...call the maid...she’d help...”

“Angelica? You want me to get Angelica?”

“No...no, the other one...”

“What other one? There is no other maid, baby.”

Nina musters all her strength and points to the doorway. No one there. From her point of view, we see Lucia standing there still, smiling and teary-eyed with relief. Dra Garcia passes RIGHT THROUGH HER going out. Nina looks on in shock.

“No! No! That’s impossible!”

Ryan insists that she drink the soup, that it’ll make her better. “It’s organic, it’s harmless, don’t worry, I helped make it myself.”

She reluctantly gulps it down and passes out. The sounds fade. We hear Ryan calling for Dra Garcia.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM – DAY

Ryan approaches her bedside, she’s drifting in and out. Nina’s POV.

“I hired Angelica, like you asked. It took a lot of convincing, and a fair bit of money, but she’ll take good care of you, baby. I’ll take the ferry today and see some specialists in Cebu, I’ll try to convince them to go here to take a look at you, ok? I brought the TV up here so you wont feel so lonely. Try to get some rest, ok? I love you.”

He kisses her on the forehead. She groans. “You did this...you did this...”

INT./EXT. HOUSE – DAY

Out the window, we see Ryan pay off Angelica and her boy to stay at the house while he gets in a rental car.

INT. CAR – DAY

Ryan breaks down, crying. Beating the steering wheel in frustration. He gathers himself and turns the ignition.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM – DAY

Nina’s POV. Angelica enters with a cup of hot soup. Nina tries to protest. A repeated banging noise increasing in intensity.

“No...no...I’m not supposed to take that anymore...”

“Nonsense, it’s good for you. Not to mention the baby! Come on now.”

“I keep hearing that banging noise... from downstairs...the study...”

“I don’t hear anything. Come on now, eat.”

Nina tries pushing her away, but relents. She drifts out of consciousness again.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM – DAY [LATER]

Nina’s POV. Angelica’s boy is there. Lights flicker. He keeps signing something to her. He touches his face, as if to indicate something. She feels her own face, the boy smiles and makes a rubbing, scraping motion. She starts rubbing the side of her face more and more until suddenly she stops and looks at her hand. It’s covered in a huge patch of peeled off skin. We hear Nina freak out, hyperventilating, crying. The boy smiles and laughs silently, running off.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM – NIGHT

Nina’s POV. She’s calling Angelica. No response. She looks around, sees Maria’s cane and starts beating it onto the floor. In an instant, Angelica opens the door.

“Don’t do that.”

“Who’s that playing the piano?”

A phony polite smile creeps across Angelica’s face. Trying to contain her anger.

“You’re imagining things. No one is playing the piano. Now go to sleep.”

“I want to watch TV.”

“It’s late already. Your husband paid good money to make sure you rest.”

“My husband brought me that TV.”

Angelica’s smile fades. “Fine. Have it your way.”

Angelica turns on the TV, the lights start to flicker, nothing but chaotic static coupled with an ungodly screeching noise. On it, the abstract dream sequence. The centipede.

“No, turn it off, turn it off!”

Angelica turns it off, the lights return to normal, everything’s quiet.

“Thank your bitch of a grandmother for that!”

Angelica storms out.

INT. BATHROOM – NIGHT

We see clumps of hair all along the floor leading up to Nina standing in front of the mirror. Big gaps in her hair. She tiredly opens her eyes to look at herself. We see her, staring back at herself. Large lesions along her neck, chest and face. One even looking like a black eye. Her left eye looks cloudy. A loud pounding noise suddenly starts, repeating, like Maria’s cane. She suddenly smiles. Starts laughing in disbelief. Then coughing. She starts coughing BLOOD. In the sink, we see a couple of teeth fall out of her mouth. She looks back up at the mirror, woozy, just long enough to see Caliso standing behind her before she collapses.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM – NIGHT

As Nina drifts in and out of consciousness, Angelica peers in through the door, open ajar. Scared. The pounding starts again, the door slams shut, a cabinet slams into it, keeping it closed.

Angelica screams out in Tagalog “YOU’RE ALREADY DEAD BITCH! LEAVE ME ALONE!”

Caliso emerges from the shadows, arms covered in handcrafts, animal skulls. In her hands, a dead rat. She chants non-stop while staring at Nina with white cloudy eyes.

Angelica pushes the door open, sticking her face through, seeing Caliso.

“You! Ma’am, that’s the witch! That’s the witch that killed your grandmother! She killed her, I saw it myself!” Nina looks at her worriedly, then back at Caliso who cuts the rat open with a rusty knife.

Angelica reaches her hand in through, trying to push open the door. The cabinet pushes harder against the door, crushing her fingers. She screams in pain.

Caliso pours the rat blood into Nina’s mouth. Nina gasps, resists, struggling for air. Suddenly she sees Lucia standing by her side, calming her down. “It’s alright, dear. She’s trying to help.”

Caliso cuts her own arm and cuts Nina’s arm, holding them together, still chanting.

“Who are you?”

“Who the fuck are you talking to?” Angelica screams through the door.

“I’m her daughter. And sister. Your cousin. The one that lived long enough to be sacrificed. Not long enough for her to save me.” She pulls her shawl down, revealing a deep thin cut across her neck, ear to ear. Bloodless. Anaemic. Caliso doesn’t notice her at all. “Don’t worry. You’ll be ok.”

Nina looks down as Caliso pulls up her shirt. Her stomach looks at least 5 months pregnant already.

“Don’t you dare do something to that child!” Angelica screams, pushing her face in the door again.

Caliso smears mud in a strange pattern across her stomach, Nina looks horrified how big her stomach is already.

Angelica looks back at something behind her and smiles wickedly.

“Oh now you’ve done it. He’s coming for you, whore. Just like he came for your bitch of a mother!”

Caliso looks at her and hisses in response. Nina notices – the same cut across Caliso’s neck, except healed. Caliso goes on with the ritual.

“You weren’t good enough to save your little brat then, you’re not good enough now, freak... Daddy’s home.”

Suddenly, the door breaks down, flying open. The lights flicker and a dark shadow sweeps across the room going for Caliso, who’s only mid-ritual. Nina passes out.

ACT III

INT. DINING ROOM – DAY

Nina is sitting by the head of the table, a bowl of soup in front of her. She pushes it off. Ryan is in the corner seat next to her.

“You think I’m crazy, don’t you?”

“I think you’re sick baby.”

“Sick in the head, yeah.”

“I don’t think you’re crazy. I think you just had a really bad dream or something.”

“It wasn’t a goddamn dream! I saw it happen, I saw that thing come through the door and get her.”

“But the door doesn’t have a scratch on it. Angelica’s hand is fine. She didn’t see or hear anything.” We see Angelica standing in the doorway, looking concerned, the boy by her side.

“Look, I know how this sounds. I’ve been where you are. But I’m telling you...maybe I was wrong. Maybe my mom wasn’t batshit insane, maybe she got it right.”

“The part about some creature coming for you to drink your blood and steal your soul or the part about everyone around her being in on it?”

“Her older sister, Caliso...their dad raped her to breed sacrificial lambs, blood offerings. My grandmother, Lucia, her own child, they all tried to tell me, to show me what was going on, they wanted to save me and get this thing out of me!”

“Ghosts? The everlasting souls of a demented old woman and an infant child wanted to give you an abortion? That ‘*thing*’ inside you is our child, Nina!”

“She didn’t come to me as an infant, she came to me as the woman she would’ve grown up to be. I told you.”

“Why? What ancient Filipino deity requires dead babies to be worshipped? Dead babies born of incest, no less.”

“I don’t know, okay?”

“Remember what you told me about delusions? How they seem so real while you’re having them, but if you just take a step back to look at it, to really look at it like a story in a book, any logic and reason behind it falls apart. Look at what you’re saying. What you’re telling me. A young woman with an... *unwanted* pregnancy, bedridden with high fever and with a family

history of mental illness tells stories of conspiracy, ghosts and blood sacrifice and that her unborn child is evil. What's the Occam's Razor of this, do you think?"

"Explain why I'm obviously six months pregnant when we've only been here two months?"

"We had sex before leaving the States, of course --"

"I was on the pill. I didn't tell you, I'm sorry, I didn't want a child. I only ran out when we got here so it must've been while we've been here."

"Bullshit."

"Why? Because I can't possibly be this pregnant by now? My point ex--"

"Because we haven't had sex since we got here."

Nina is stunned silent.

"But...that night, in the living room...when you cut yourself?"

"We got drunk and we fell asleep watching the old home movies. I was passed out by 9 pm."

Nina holds her stomach and looks down, eyes filled with a dawning realization and utter terror.

She reaches for her handbag, rifling through it. She can't find her pills, starts going frantic.

"The Cebu doctors said it was just some kind of flu brought on by malnutrition so you better eat up." Ryan says coldly, leaving her to it.

INT. LIBRARY – DAY

Nina is sitting by the piano, staring at the hidden door. Lucia is watching over her.

"They're lying, you know. All of them."

"Shut up."

"That child inside you is no more human than I am right now."

"Come back when you have a real body and a voice that exists outside my damn mind."

"If you want to know, I can't prove it to you. If you want proof, I can't help you. If you want help...God help you."

She lays her hand down on Nina's shoulder. She has the same ring as Maria. Suddenly, she winces, clutching her head. A loud pounding noise coming from downstairs again. She heads out of the room.

We see the grand piano has no strings left.

INT. HALLWAY – DAY

Nina staggers out, clutching her head. She hears from downstairs in the kitchen...

INT. KITCHEN – DAY

Ryan is in the kitchen having coffee with Don Salinas.

"I just don't know what to do anymore."

"Mental illness is hard on everyone, not just the one afflicted. Based on what you've told me I have to be the devil's advocate here and suggest confinement. If not in a facility, then here. Get a professional caretaker. Keep her safe and secure and slowly begin to introduce the thought of treatment."

"I dunno... I mean...God, I know you're right but I guess I just don't want to be the one to tell her she's just like her mom."

"Yeah, I know. I knew her mom as well. I remember what that was like."

"You're kidding. You were what, 10 years old back then?"

"You flatter me, I'm a bit older than that."

"You sure don't look it."

INT. FOYER – DAY

Nina stops, considering what they're saying. She starts looking around but winces again, dropping to her knees in pain. The pounding continues. She looks downstairs, seeing the car keys hanging on a hook by the door. She considers making a break for it. Trembling, she starts making her way down the stairs. The pounding keeps getting louder and louder. Her steps are unsteady, getting rapid. She stumbles, she falls, rolling down.

INT. KITCHEN – DAY

Ryan hears the commotion and rushes out. Salinas follows.

INT. FOYER – DAY

Ryan picks her up, she's battered, bruised and blue. Salinas says he'll run and get help. Nina screams "NO!" and tears herself free from Ryan, standing up, heading for...

INT. STUDY – DAY

She enters the study, ripping away the cloth covering all the furniture and the other paintings. It's all depictions of Don Jeronimo. Even the desk is painted over with an image of Don Jeronimo hosting a communion with the native Filipinos. A cup with the blood of Christ in his hands. Scribbled, etched in the wood in mad, sprawling handwriting we read "*Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.*" – John 6:53-55
Nina collapses, clutching her head, screaming.

"It's HIM! IT'S HIM! NOW PLEASE MAKE IT STOP!"

INT. MASTER BEDROOM – NIGHT

Ryan is about to inject her IV with a tranquilizer. She's crying, looking at him.

"The piano... Can't you hear it?"

"Honey, there are no more strings. You must've ripped them out earlier."

"I'm sorry. I never meant to hurt you. I was just afraid of this. I didn't want a child because I wasn't afraid he'd be sick. I was afraid I would be."

"I know. I always knew. I found your pills in your bag six months ago. I replaced them with sugar pills because I knew that you were just afraid. But you don't have to be, we'll get you better --"

"Six months ago? I changed to a different brand. You didn't switch those. You couldn't have..."

Ryan hangs his head in frustration, containing his boiling anger.

"Don't start. You're having this damn child, even if it kills you!"

He storms out. The door SLAMS ITSELF shut behind him. He calls out for her from the other side of the door. The lights flicker again. We see the aircon temperature gauge suddenly go down, way down. Nina starts to shudder, her breath visible. Maria's ring starts wobbling on the nightstand. Whispering voices. "He's lying. They're all lying. It's not your child. Don't let him have it." She covers her ears, screaming in pain. "STOP IT! MAKE IT STOP! PLEASE!" Ryan starts slamming against the door, trying to break it down. Lucia emerges from the shadows, repeating "Don't let him have it! Don't let it live! Don't let him come back!" Nina screams in agony "GO AWAY! YOU'RE NOT REAL! LEAVE ME ALONE!" Ryan crashes the door in,

seeing LUCIA DISAPPEAR INTO THE SHADOWS. Nina SCREAMS loudly as blood gushes from her ears. A centipede crawls OUT OF HER EAR and scuttles across the floor until Ryan's boot comes down, crushing it. His face a look of total shock.

"You saw it? It was real?"

"We're leaving. Fuck this place."

Ryan starts throwing clothes, items, phones all into a big duffel bag as Nina stands in the doorway.

"My ring!" Nina exclaims, the ring is on the nightstand. Ryan goes over to get it when the bed and the window starts shaking. The roles and wires shoot across the room, blocking his way.

"Fuck grannie. Let's go!"

INT. HALLWAY – NIGHT

Ryan pulls her with him, heading toward the stairs. He stops cold as he hears a voice from downstairs. Nina's voice.

"Ry? Where are you? Ry? Please, help me. I'm so scared."

Ryan looks slowly back toward the hand he's been holding. It's MARIA, face bloody and rotting, eyes black as the night, speaking in Nina's voice.

"What's the matter baby? You're scaring me." Maria smiles creepily. "Where are you going?"

Ryan jerks away from her in terror. Maria drops to the floor, still smiling. Ryan runs down the stairs.

We pan back to Maria. She's changed back to Nina, teary-eyed.

"Where are you going? Ry! Don't leave me... Ry..."

INT. STUDY – NIGHT

Ryan enters the study, looking around. Finding no one. No source for the sound, calling out for Nina. Suddenly...

"Ryyyyy..." He turns around to face the source of the sound. The black cat. Behind him, we see piano wires descend from the ceiling.

INT. FOYER – NIGHT

Nina is crawling down the stairs when she suddenly hears Ryan SCREAM in horror. The pounding starts again, she calls out for him, no response. She rushes down the stairs, nearly taking a tumble again. The chandelier above rattles uncomfortably.

INT. STUDY – NIGHT

She enters seeing – Ryan is hanging from the broken ceiling beam, several piano wires around his neck, cutting into his skin. Blood is pouring from him. The repetitive pounding is from his dangling feet hitting the desk. The lights flicker and pulse, Nina starts crawling away in fear.

INT. FOYER – NIGHT

A DARK FIGURE appears behind her, stalking her. It's made of nothing but shadows and dark mist. She screams for it to "GO AWAY". The chandelier candles all light up on their own suddenly. Nina sees Lucia at the top of the stairs. Lucia smiles at her. Suddenly the chandelier comes crashing down on the dark figure, the mist scatters everywhere, the place bursts into flames. Nina runs out.

INT. FOREST PATH – NIGHT

Nina runs, stumbles and gets up again, running down the path, clutching her ever-growing stomach. The bushes and trees rattle in her wake, some ENTITY following her. Leaves and sticks fly with the wind in her face, cutting her everywhere with sharp edges and thorns.

INT. SALINAS HOUSE – NIGHT

Nina bursts in through the door, screaming for help. Salinas takes her in, shocked at her brutalized appearance. She's delirious, in shock. He tries to get out of her what happened, she keeps ranting that the house itself came alive and caught fire. He sets her down on the couch.

"The house is on fire? Where's Ryan?"

"He's...he's there...he's still there...Oh god!"

"Relax, I'll call for help!"

He picks up his cellphone, dialing. "I thought...no phones?"

"Shhh, just relax. I'll take care of it." He starts talking discreetly into the phone, walking out for some distance. Nina listens in. "Yeah...she's here...I think she set the place on fire. I don't know. Just come here, quickly, please." He hangs up and returns to Nina, grabbing a fire extinguisher. "I'll go check on the house, you just wait here. Help is underway."

Nina nods, Salinas runs out and off toward the house.

Nina breathes a sigh of relief for a moment. Suddenly, she winces, clutching her stomach in pain. She rolls up her shirt, seeing – the baby poking her. Big movements. She cries in pain.

"Bathroom...where's the damn bathroom?"

She stumbles, disoriented, into the back door, opening it.

INT. BASEMENT – NIGHT

It's a stairwell going down. She vomits right then and there. Vomits blood. Straightening up, she sees the light is on downstairs. A dripping sound.

"Hello? Anyone there?"

She slowly walks down the stairs and drops to her knees as she sees –

Caliso, flayed, hanging upside down from the ceiling, blood dripping into large buckets of it. Surrounded by freshly corked wine bottles.

She feels down between her legs. Her water just broke.

Suddenly, footsteps going down the steps again. She looks up – it's Ventura. Smiling at her, friendly.

"Ventura! Thank god!"

His smile fades. "Not exactly." He punches her unconscious.

EXT. HOUSE – NIGHT

Nina is half-awake, bruised. She is being carried from a car toward the house by Ventura and Dra Garcia and Angelica. The boy is even there, smiling at her, holding her hand up. Nina starts freaking out, stirring, looking around. All around the house the townspeople have gathered, hundreds of them, staring at the house, chanting softly. Their eyes black.

Salinas exits the house, standing by the steps, addressing the crowd.

"Please, stand back from the house. We're almost there, just let us do our job."

INT. FOYER – NIGHT

Nina is set down on the scorched floor as Salinas is using the fire extinguisher to blot out the last flames that spread to the living room. He stops suddenly, yells out.

“Sonuvabitch. IT’S HERE!”

She fades out again. When she comes to, Ventura is manning an axe, chopping away at the living room floor as Salinas takes a break from doing the same. Dra Garcia is between Nina’s propped up legs. “It’s a breach baby, I have to open her up!” Salinas authorizes her, Angelica helps by injecting her with a sedative. “Don’t worry, you won’t feel a thing.” They plunge the giant needle into her lower back, injecting the full load of sedative into her as she cries in agony.

The chanting outside is getting louder. Dra Garcia makes the first incision across Nina’s abdomen as Ventura starts clearing out the loose floorboards in the living room.

Angelica laughs. “All this time, it was right under that bitch’s feet.”

Nina stammers “Who are you people? What are you doing?”

Salinas looks down at her “We are your past. Soon to become our future.” He smiles smugly.

“For over fifty years, no one on this island has ever died. Ever gotten sick. Ever had as much as a common cold. Until your grandmother decided she didn’t want to play ball anymore. Until she saw what she herself had done and wanted no more.” “You killed her.” “No. *He* did. It was *he* who started this, four hundred years ago. He was the one who made the connection. He was the first of us to drink from the chalice of eternal life. Don Jeronimo. He found that by consuming the blood of children, one can live life everlasting. The younger they are, the more potent the effects, especially if you’re related. The locals turned on him and buried him alive here, under our feet until your grandfather found his writings and shared it with the rest of us.” “He raped his daughter to give you more.” “Your family are the direct descendants of Don Jeronimo. Your blood is the only thing that can revive him, to allow him to finish his research. Your grandfather did it for all of us. But when your grandmother found out where the blood was coming from, he suffered the consequences and she shut us all out. Now it’s time to correct that mistake.”

Dra Garcia opens her up, complaining. “She’s losing a lot of blood, she’s not gonna make it.”

Nina looks pale. Angelica suddenly rips off her son’s scarf, showing several small incisions, fresh and old, presenting the boy’s neck to Nina.

“Drink!”

Nina refuses but Angelica shoves the boy’s neck into her mouth. She starts to suckle on it. Her cheeks return to their normal color slowly and she starts sucking more and more hungrily.

Angelica gets wary and pulls the now nearly unconscious boy away. “Enough, don’t get greedy!”

“Get this thing out of me!”

Garcia opens her up, holding her abdominal cavity open with a shoehorn. She reaches into her bowels and pulls out a baby boy, clamping off the umbilical cord.

Ventura yells out “I’m through! Get me some rope!”

The baby is barely moving, still. “We don’t have much time!” Salinas responds “Close her up!

She’s the only one we have left if he dies, she can make more!” She hands off the baby to Angelica while she quickly stitches Nina up.

Salinas, Angelica with the baby, and Ventura rappel down the deep dark hole in the living room floor.

Garcia smiles to Nina “Don’t worry, you’ll be ok. I’ll fix you up good when we’re done.” She goes down the hole as well.

Nina is left alone on the floor, bleeding. She looks out the window. The locals are pressed up against all the windows and doors, staring in blankly. Chanting. She feels her abdomen. Uneven, jagged stitches sticking out. She looks relieved it’s over.

INT. CAVERN – NIGHT

It’s a large spacious caved-in old church. Rough looking murals, depicting human sacrifice and stone walls lined with idols of Jesus and the Virgin Mary. In the middle a large stone sarcophagus, its heavy lid weighed down by rocks. Dra Garcia lights candles everywhere while Salinas and Ventura rush to take off the rocks and clear the sarcophagus, while Angelica looks on cradling the child. They all start chanting as well. The child cries.

INT. FOYER – NIGHT

The cries echoes out, Nina reacts suddenly. Confused. Scared. Worried. She feels her suddenly flat soft stomach. A sense of loss.

INT. CAVERN – NIGHT

Angelica snaps at the baby “Shut up!” rocking him violently between chants. They uncover the sarcophagus, pushing off the lid, a dark abyss waiting inside.

INT. FOYER – NIGHT

Nina turns to her stomach. Wincing in pain, blood spilling everywhere. She looks toward the hole.

INT. CAVERN – NIGHT

Salinas draws a dagger, cutting his own arm, while chanting a spell in Latin. His blood drips down into the tomb.

We see the blood drip down, reaching a mummified figure deep at the bottom of the grave. The blood trickles between holes in skin and flesh, down into its shrivelled up heart. It starts beating again, slowly.

INT. FOYER – NIGHT

Nina starts clawing her way to the living room, dragging her limp feet behind, leaving a bloody trail. Her face is contorted in pain. The locals stare at her furiously from outside, they start shaking at the doors and windows to get in.

INT. CAVERN – NIGHT

Salinas hands the dagger over to Ventura, who cuts his arm, chanting the same.

The blood hits the flesh of the mummy, muscles reforming around it, fleshy tendrils shooting between bones.

INT. FOYER – NIGHT

Nina inches closer and closer to the hole, her nails scraping against the floor. The locals break in the windows and start to climb inside.

INT. CAVERN – NIGHT

Ventura hands the dagger over to Dra Garcia, who cuts herself and pours her own blood into the grave.

Skin starts to regrow on the mummy, filling out rapidly.

INT. FOYER – NIGHT

Nina is still several feet away, looking like she's about to give up. The pain is too much. She looks back up and sees a hand reached out to help her up. It's Lucia, her eyes welling up.

INT. CAVERN – NIGHT

Angelica steps up to the plate with the baby in hand. Salinas prepares a piano wire, wrapping around his fingers, ready to strangle the baby. Dra Garcia hands her the dagger. Just as her hands grab it, Nina appears by her side, plunging the dagger deep into Angelica's chest. They both drop to the ground. Angelica, mortally wounded, Nina weak and pale from the bloodloss. The baby falls, crying hard.

Suddenly, the mummified man, appearing like a flayed gangly creature, climbs out from his grave. His voice deep and hoarse, demanding in Spanish to know who disturbed him. Salinas, frightened at first, proudly steps up. "I did." "You are no son of mine" Don Jeronimo states and grabs him by the neck, his fingers plunging into Salinas' flesh. He bites down into Salinas' skull, blood gushes. Ventura makes a break for it, running for the rope. The locals stand above the hole as he's climbing up. He demands them to help him, one of them, the carinderia owner, reaches down and cuts the rope. Ventura falls, slamming his head into a rock. Dead.

Dra Garcia tries to plead with Don Jeronimo, saying she only went along with it because they made her. Don Jeronimo exclaims, still in Spanish "you lying whore!" and twists her head around a full 180 degrees. Don Jeronimo looks down at Nina, lying on the ground, one arm around her baby boy, trying to comfort him from crying. She sings to him. The Bee Gees song. Don Jeronimo is about to reach over "the child is MINE!" when suddenly, Nina reaches up with a candlestick, plunging it into Jeronimo's abdomen, setting him ablaze. He staggers back and plunges back down into the tomb again, screaming inhumanly.

The lid closes by itself.

Nina goes on whispering softly to the baby, who keeps stirring, wide awake. "Don't worry baby boy. Mommy's here. Mommy will always be here." Her eyes close slowly, her arm goes limp. The baby cries louder and louder.

We see the locals crowded around the hole, looking down anxiously.

EXT. PARK – DAY

A young mom is taking a small girl out to play. She lets the kid go ahead while she sits down to watch from a bench. She looks surprised when someone's suddenly sitting next to her.

“Sorry, I didn’t see you there!”

She sees the person is holding a young baby.

“Aww, how cute. How old is he?”

“Two months now.” It’s Lucia, holding Nina’s son. “His name is Ryan. After his father. His real father.”

We see the baby’s eyes open – pitch black.

THE END