



# ECHO LAKE ENTERTAINMENT

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# THE YELLOW WALLPAPER

Written by Taylor Streitz

Based on Charlotte Perkins Gilman's  
Short Story "The Yellow Wallpaper"

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BLACK.

We hear the faint sound of dead weight dragging itself across the wooden floor.

FADE IN:

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT**

OPEN ON the intricate pattern of the YELLOW WALLPAPER: a single, yellow flower in mid-bloom.

SLOWLY PULL BACK to see that it's one of many. The pattern repeats itself over and over again.

Just below frame, we hear the dragging sound.

*BAM-BAM-BAM!* The wall erupts in violent pounding.

GLIDE ALONG the wallpaper to see it's been clawed through, ripped apart, and gouged out in places.

*BAM-BAM-BAM!* The door shakes on its hinges. Then, it stops.

Through the door, hear the sweetest voice:

MICHAEL (O.S.)  
Little Goose?

The dragging sound stops. *Listening.*

MICHAEL (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Please sweetheart, open the door.

*BAM-BAM-BAM!* The door erupts again.

Then, FOOTSTEPS are heard thudding down the stairs, fading away until the room falls silent.

**INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT**

The hallway is empty. Blood is smeared on the door.

MICHAEL (early 40s) lurches up the stairs with an AXE. He's covered in BLOOD, seething like a madman. He takes a moment to compose himself and then he knocks.

MICHAEL  
Jane, baby?

He puts an ear to the door. His eyes narrow. Michael swings the axe back and --

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

*CRACK!* The axe blade splits the wooden door. STAY ON the door as Michael hacks through it.

His arm busts through an opening and unlocks the door. He charges inside and then suddenly stops short.

His fury melts into pure horror. He drops the axe.

MICHAEL

My God, Jane...

His eyes dart around the room as he takes it all in. His voice catches in his throat, barely above a whisper:

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

What have you done?

A SHADOW steps in front of him. Michael's horror deepens as he stares at the unfathomable sight before him --

**INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY/STAIRS/FOYER - SECONDS LATER**

Through the splintered door see the pitch black room. Only the dragging sound can be heard inside.

SLOWLY PULL AWAY, down the stairs and out the front door --

**EXT. THE HOUSE - NIGHT**

-- off the porch and down the driveway to REVEAL a massive fortress in the Hamptons.

CHYRON: **Based on a true story.**

FADE TO YELLOW.

Blooming flowers and twisting vines slowly fade in to form --

# THE YELLOW WALLPAPER

The flowers shrivel up, and as everything starts to die...

FADE IN:

(OVER) "MAMA TOLD ME" by Three Dog Night begins to play.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - 1973 - DAY

Emergency sirens wail through the crowded streets. Red brake lights pulse from YELLOW TAXIS as they stop and go.

ANGLE ON a YELLOW billboard of a SWIMSUIT MODEL, lying down on her side, her entire body runs the length of the building, but her face has been cropped out, cut off at the neck.

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK - WEST END - DAY

An ANGRY MOB protests, jabbing their signs into the sky: *Let God Decide. Abortion = Murder. Don't kill me Mommy!*

A PUDGEY OLD-TIMER puppets a giant grim reaper with dead babies dangling from its fingers.

Through the chaos, PICK UP with a WOMAN in a business suit, hurrying past the crowd while holding her pregnant belly.

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK - EAST END/NYU CAMPUS - DAY

A MALE STUDENT reads Nietzsche's "God is Dead" in the shade of a tree. TWO MALE PROFESSORS stride by, enthralled in each others' words. There isn't a woman in sight, except for one --

**DR. JANE STETSON** (mid-30s) has sharp features, intense eyes, and an intimidating presence. She wears a designer suit but carries a tattered briefcase. Jane's earned her place, yet she always feels like a wolf in sheep's clothing.

JANE (V.O.)  
 When bad things happen to us, we'd  
 like to believe we'd do anything in  
 our power to change the situation.

EXT. NYU CAMPUS - PSYCHOLOGY BUILDING - DAY

A windowless, black glass building with a single door marked: "DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY". Jane disappears inside.

JANE (V.O.)  
 But what if you were conditioned to  
 believe you had no power?

INT. PSYCHOLOGY BUILDING - AUDITORIUM - DAY

The auditorium is packed with STUDENTS, mostly men. PAN across the Students as they listen with rapt attention. Jane's on stage, giving the lecture.

JANE

The dog can see over the fence and  
has the ability to jump over it.

ON THE PROJECTOR is an illustration of a DOG lying down in an  
enclosed room which is divided by a small fence.

JANE (CONT'D)

Yet when Seligman administers a  
light shock, the dog makes no  
attempt to escape. Why?

NANCY, a bright young woman, raises her hand.

JANE (CONT'D)

Nancy?

NANCY

In the first experiment, the dogs  
were conditioned to believe there  
was nothing they could do to escape  
the shocks, so in the second  
experiment, they simply gave up.

JANE

Correct.

KURT, a baby-faced rich kid, shouts out an answer.

KURT

Yeah, but couldn't it just be that  
dogs are dumb animals?

GROANS from the crowd.

NANCY

Oh please. You see a pair of tits  
and you start foaming at the mouth.

KURT

Jesus, Nancy, relax. I'm not saying  
humans can't be conditioned. I just  
think we're less susceptible to it.

JANE

What makes you so sure?

KURT

Because we're smarter than dogs.

Nancy scoffs.

JANE

Are you familiar with the Stanford  
Prison Experiment?

KURT

No.

NANCY

(to Kurt)

You didn't hear about that? It  
happened a few summers ago.

JANE

Dr. Zimbardo, a psychology  
professor at Stanford, wanted to  
study prison life, specifically how  
people conform to their roles in  
society. So, he built a simulated  
prison and recruited about twenty  
men to participate. Half of them  
were assigned the roles of guards,  
and the other half were inmates.  
The guards were told to assert  
their authority by any means  
necessary.

NANCY

Except they weren't allowed to  
touch each other, no physical  
force.

JANE

Yes, but the psychological damage  
they inflicted was much worse. They  
harassed the inmates, deprived them  
of sleep, referred to them by their  
prison numbers, stripped them of  
their clothes, their masculinity,  
and when that didn't work, they  
resorted to violence.

KURT

I thought they couldn't do that.

JANE

They did it anyway, and because no  
one stopped them, the inmates  
started to believe they were in an  
actual prison. They started  
screaming, crying out, begging to  
call off the experiment, one even  
threatened suicide. And that all  
happened on day one.

(MORE)

JANE (CONT'D)  
By day three they had to call off  
the experiment.

KURT  
Jesus.

JANE  
What's interesting, is the dog  
didn't go insane nor did it fight  
back, why do you think that is?

NANCY  
Because it doesn't know any better.

KURT  
Yeah, like I said, we're smarter.

JANE  
But it's not about intelligence.  
The thing that separates us, and  
perhaps makes us more vulnerable,  
is our autonomy. Our awareness of  
it. We thrive on the power to make  
our own choices, to be in control  
of our lives. If you take that away  
from a person, there's no telling  
what they'll do to get it back.

**INT. CORRIDOR - DAY**

Jane weaves through a crowd of STUDENTS. Nancy rushes to  
catch up with her.

NANCY  
Dr. Stetson?

JANE  
Hi Nancy. Great work today.

NANCY  
Thanks, it's easy to speak up in  
your class. Some of the other  
professors can be real dicks.

Jane laughs.

JANE  
They'll come around.

NANCY  
We'll see. Are you coming back next  
semester?

JANE

Not for the spring, but I'll be  
back by the summer.

NANCY

Good. We can't afford to lose you.  
In fact, we need more like you.

JANE

Don't worry, I'm not going  
anywhere, they'd have to drag me  
out of here kicking and screaming.

**EXT. UPPER EAST SIDE - HIGH RISE CONDOMINIUMS - DAY**

Jane greets the DOORMAN with a warm smile. condominiums

**INT. HIGH RISE CONDOMINIUMS - ELEVATOR - DAY**

Mirrors line the walls of the elevator. Jane holds the door  
for an OLD LADY who's cradling a balding POODLE.

The poodle sees itself in the mirror and bares its teeth. It  
growls and yips and lunges at its reflection.

Jane rubs her temple. The barking is unbearable. As it builds  
to an ear-shattering pitch --

*DING!* The doors open to reveal an elegant hallway with only  
two condos on the floor.

**INT. HIGH RISE CONDO - WALK IN CLOSET - NIGHT**

Jane emerges in the reflection of a three-way mirror, wearing  
a sequin gown. She looks to her mother-in-law for approval.

**HAZEL STETSON** (late-50s) has critical eyes, a stiff posture,  
and a presumptuous authority that comes with new money. She's  
a conservative socialite polished to perfection.

HAZEL

You can't possibly think that's  
appropriate for the gala.

JANE

Why? What's wrong with it?

HAZEL

For one thing, it's too flashy.

JANE

It's fun, sequins are in right now.

HAZEL

You're showing too much skin and  
your breasts look obnoxious.

JANE

I think I look nice.

HAZEL

I'm sure you do, you didn't have a  
mother to teach you otherwise.

Jane stills.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

Which is not your fault, dear. You  
really shouldn't blame yourself.

ANGLE ON the jagged SCAR on Jane's neck -- three inches long,  
just above her clavicle.

Hazel disappears in the closet, Jane is left alone with her  
reflection. Jane scratches at her scar.

Hazel returns holding a long-sleeved, high-neck, black dress.

JANE

No. I'm not going to a funeral.

HAZEL

You're not going to a disco either.  
Really, Jane. Do you plan to dress  
like that when you're a mother?

JANE

I might.

HAZEL

Why does every woman insist on  
dressing like a harlot these days?

JANE

Because it's not 1950.

HAZEL

People will still talk, I don't  
care if you're in a poodle skirt or  
go-go boots. You're a woman, Jane.

JANE

I'm aware of that.

HAZEL

Are you? Because you don't act like it. I may not have a college education, but I know how cruel people can be, especially rich people. They're cannibals, dear. They are waiting for an excuse to rip you apart.

JANE

And are you included in that group?

HAZEL

Oh, I suppose if you were ever to jeopardize my son's reputation or my grandchild's future, then yes, I would be first in line.

Hazel fixes a smile on her face. Jane stares her down --

MICHAEL, the deranged madman from the opening, walks in.

**MICHAEL STETSON** (early 40s) is notably good looking with a million dollar smile and a small frame. He's slightly shorter than Jane, but acts like he's eight-feet tall. He's a control freak who values social status and money above all else.

MICHAEL

How are my girls doing?

HAZEL

Oh just gossiping up a storm, you know how we do.

Michael kisses his mother on the cheek first, turns to Jane's belly to greet the baby next, and then looks to Jane last.

MICHAEL

(disappointed)

I thought you were going to wear the red dress tonight?

JANE

Is there something wrong with what I have on?

MICHAEL

No, but you look sexy in the red one, I bought it for you for a reason.

HAZEL

It's not appropriate for the gala.

**INT. BANQUET HALL - NIGHT**

Crystal chandeliers hang over a sophisticated CROWD who keeps their voices to a controlled murmur. FIND Jane in a circle of WEALTHY WIVES, wearing the red dress and drinking a martini.

LISBETH

Oh my god, you're huge! Are you sure you're not having twins?

LISBETH is the thinnest and wealthiest. CHERYL is the semi-sassy, know-it-all. JODY is the Martha Stewart of Stepford.

CHERYL

Don't worry, the weight will come right off.

LIZBETH

Now you know to get Carnation formula and not Enfamil, right?

JANE

I was planning on breast feeding.

They all gasp.

JODY

Oh no, you can't. Ask any doctor here they'll tell you formula is much better for the baby.

CHERYL

Not to mention for your breasts.

LIZBETH

I'm sure Michael will do touch-ups after the baby is born?

JANE

That's not exactly a top priority.

CHERYL

The man's a pioneer in plastic surgery, you have to take advantage.

LISBETH

You can't let yourself go or they start to wander.

JODY

Look what happened to Suzanne.

LISBETH

I don't blame Mark for leaving,  
that woman has always been trash.

CHERYL

The trick is to keep it as tight as  
you can for as long as you can.  
Workout, eat right, no complaints.  
Nothing makes a man harder than a  
woman who can do it all.

JANE

Tell that to my women's lib group.

They fall silent, then cover with awkward laughter.

JODY

I forget that you're a *feminist*.

CHERYL

You're not planning on going back  
to work, are you?

JANE

Of course, why wouldn't I?

CHERYL

It's not a good look. You don't  
want people to think you work  
because you need the money.

JANE

But I love what I do, I don't know  
what I'd do without it, it's like  
that Dostoevsky quote, "Deprived of  
meaningful work, men lose their  
reason for existence; they go  
stark, raving mad."

They stare at her like she's a different breed of human.

JODY

Well, nothing brings more meaning  
to your life than having a baby.

Jane tunes them out. Her eyes drift across the room where she  
sees Michael flirting with a YOUNG WOMAN.

The Young Woman gazes at him with an intimate familiarity.  
She leans in to whisper something, caressing his lower back.

**INT. STATE MENTAL HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - DAY**

A BUZZER blares and a security gate slides open. A NURSE leads Jane down a long hallway.

**INT. STATE MENTAL HOSPITAL - DAY ROOM - DAY**

Jane sits at a white table that reflects a distorted version of herself. She watches as the FEMALE PATIENTS meander through the communal space, lost in their own reality.

ONE WOMAN stares out a locked window covered by a steel grate. Her hand is perfectly poised with a lit cigarette. Jane hones in on the red embers, watching the paper burn.

*SCREEECH!* A WOMAN in a stained hospital gown drags a metal chair across the floor and coolly sits down before Jane.

JANE  
Hello, Mother.

**RUTH** (early-50s) is beautiful and magnetic like an old-time movie star. She has a soothing voice, calculated mannerisms, and dark ravenous eyes. She's a fire that refuses to go out.

JANE (CONT'D)  
How are you? You look good. Nurse Flynn said you're doing water yoga?

Ruth takes out a pack of VIRGINIA SLIMS and lights one. Her fingernails are stained YELLOW.

JANE (CONT'D)  
I hear it's good for the baby. We could take a class together.

RUTH  
I'd rather burn in hell than get in the pool with these filthy women.

Jane averts her eyes. Ruth has a pang of annoyance.

RUTH (CONT'D)  
Have you and Michael decided on a name for the baby?

JANE  
Well, we don't know what the sex is yet. We want to be surprised --

RUTH  
It's a girl.

Ruth says it with such conviction it makes Jane laugh.

JANE

Oh Mother, you're being ridiculous,  
you couldn't possibly know --

RUTH

I'm being what?

JANE

Nothing, I only meant --

RUTH

I know what you meant, you better  
watch what you say to me.

Jane nods, nervous. Ruth smiles and takes a long drag of her cigarette, sucking all the energy out of the room.

RUTH (CONT'D)

When you choose to act that way,  
all you're doing is proving my  
point. That's how I know it's a  
girl. Because that's our lot in  
life, Little Goose. We are cursed  
women who must bore the daughters  
that will one day turn us into our  
mothers.

JANE

That's not true.

RUTH

And you would know better than me?

Ruth dares Jane to answer.

JANE

You know... I haven't forgotten  
what you were like. I'll never  
forget. You can make all the  
excuses you want, but me, I won't  
make the same mistakes you did.

A rapturous laugh bellows out of Ruth's throat.

RUTH

I said the same thing to my mother  
when I was pregnant with you. Same  
age, same hopes. Looks like you're  
right on schedule and do you know  
where you're headed next?

Ruth throws her hands up in dramatic display.

RUTH (CONT'D)  
Oblivion, a pretty little cage,  
just like the one you put me in.

JANE  
You put yourself here.

RUTH  
You put me here the day you were  
born. This is your fault. I could  
have saved us both.

She points at the scar on Jane's neck.

RUTH (CONT'D)  
I can still see it, you know?  
Stinking and pulsing. I can smell  
it rotting in your flesh --

Ruth lunges across the table. Jane narrowly misses her. TWO ORDERLIES rush over and wrestle her to the ground. Jane backs into a safe corner as a Nurse rushes over with a syringe.

RUTH (CONT'D)  
Please, no. I'll be good, I'll...

Ruth goes limp. The chaos is over.

**INT. HIGH RISE CONDO - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Jane stands naked in front of a full length mirror. She turns around and pulls her ass cheeks upward, then lets go. They fall back into place like hail-damaged pancakes. Michael passes by in the reflection. His body is in its prime.

JANE  
Next time, I think you should have  
the baby.

MICHAEL  
Next time? I was hardly able to  
convince you this time.

JANE  
Not like I had much of a choice.

Michael hands Jane a robe. Jane looks offended.

MICHAEL  
I don't want you getting cold.

She puts it on.

JANE

My diaphragm never did turn up,  
strangest thing.

MICHAEL

There's nothing strange about it,  
you lose things all the time.

JANE

I didn't use to.

MICHAEL

Let's just hope you don't misplace  
the baby.

JANE

That's not funny, that could really  
happen. You don't know what kind of  
mother I'm going to be.

MICHAEL

You're bugging out over nothing.

JANE

Aren't you the least bit nervous?

MICHAEL

You know I don't like to worry  
about things that haven't happened  
yet. Besides, I know you'll be a  
wonderful mother.

JANE

You don't know that.

Michael studies her face.

MICHAEL

Where is all this coming from?  
(then, realizes)  
Did you go see your mother today?

Jane averts her eyes in admittance.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I don't understand you. Why put  
yourself through it?

JANE

Well, because... she's my mother. I  
love her, she's a part of me.

MICHAEL

Let's hope it's a very small part.

Jane studies her reflection with a sense of foreboding.

JANE  
What if it's not? What if I'm more  
like her than I realize?

He wraps his arms around her.

MICHAEL  
You're in tip-top shape. I'm not  
going to let anything bad happen,  
and even if I wasn't here, I know  
that you'd never let anything bad  
happen either, right?

Jane doesn't answer. She isn't listening. She's looking at  
the lipstick on Michael's collar.

JANE  
What is this?

MICHAEL  
I don't know, I can't see it.

JANE  
It's lipstick.

His face gives nothing away.

MICHAEL  
Are you sure?

JANE  
I'm positive.

MICHAEL  
It's probably yours.

JANE  
It's not.

MICHAEL  
So then it's not lipstick, maybe I  
had something at lunch --

JANE  
For Christ's sake Michael, at least  
do me the courtesy of not treating  
me like an idiot. You don't think I  
know what make-up on a shirt looks  
like?

MICHAEL  
Now just wait a damn minute.

JANE

It's that girl, isn't it? From the gala, the little Mary Sue with the Marilyn tits.

MICHAEL

Are you listening to yourself right now? You've taken a tiny stain and turned it into an imaginary girlfriend. You're being crazy.

JANE

Was I being crazy last time?

MICHAEL

You're never going to let me live that down, are you? My god, I made a mistake, once, six years ago. You said it was behind us, you swore that you had forgiven me, but I guess that was a lie because clearly you're not past it.

Jane hardens, trying to steady her boiling temper.

JANE

Michael... You weren't wearing this shirt six years ago. You're wearing it today. And it very clearly has lipstick on the collar. Now unless you can give me a reasonable explanation as to how it got there, I can only assume the obvious. To believe otherwise, now that would be crazy.

Michael's at a loss for words. She's got him cornered, but then her face suddenly falls -- Her water just broke.

**INT. HOSPITAL - DELIVERY ROOM - DAY**

CLOSE ON Jane as she screams in pain, Michael stands by her, a DOCTOR is between her legs. She SCREAMS, pushing with all her might until she collapses back against the bed.

The BABY cries.

DOCTOR

It's a girl.

A NURSE hands Jane a tiny bundle wrapped in pink.

MICHAEL  
Welcome to the world Katherine Ann.

Jane stares at BABY KATY with severe indifference.

**EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY**

YELLOW BALLOONS are tied to Jane's wheelchair. She's parked by the curb, flowers in one hand, Baby Katy in the other.

Behind her, automatic doors slide open and close. The exit sign buzzes overhead. Jane is lost in a memory.

**INT. PINK BEDROOM - FLASHBACK (1945)**

*YOUNG JANE (4) looks at herself in the mirror. She points to the MOLE on her neck (the place where she now has a scar).*

*YOUNG JANE  
Look mama, I have a mole just like  
yours. Same spot!*

*RUTH (20s) drops down behind Jane in the mirror. She looks like a different woman: full of life, warm eyes, combed hair.*

*RUTH  
You're right. We're twins.*

*Young Jane beams with pride.*

**EXT. HOSPITAL - PRESENT DAY**

Jane's still at the curb. She's on the verge of tears. Her anxiety mounts. Her eyes dart around for Michael. Katy's tiny fingers curl around her finger. Jane quickly pulls it away.

A TAXI pulls up and relief washes over her as Michael steps out. He takes Katy and again Jane is left alone on the curb.

**INT. TAXI - DRIVING - DAY**

IN THE BACKSEAT, Jane holds Katy in her lap. Michael coos at her while Jane stares out the window.

**INT. HIGH RISE CONDO - NURSERY - LATER**

WIDE SHOT of Jane alone in the nursery, standing over Katy's crib, looking down at her with a hollow expression.

Michael hurries in with a POLAROID. He snaps a picture of Katy and throws an arm around Jane, he's practically glowing.

Jane looks dead inside. Katy begins to cry.

"MAGIC MIRROR" by Leon Russel takes us into --

**MONTAGE - VARIOUS SHOTS - NIGHT/DAY**

BEDROOM: Middle of the night. Jane gets out of bed as Katy screams from her crib. Michael stays in bed.

NURSERY: Early morning. Jane paces back and forth while Katy wails. She spits up and it runs down Jane's back.

LIVING ROOM: Mid-day. A record spins. Find Jane lying on the couch with Katy asleep on her chest. Jane nods off, and then, in a panic, she jolts awake and Katy starts to cry again.

NURSERY: Late afternoon. Jane's in a rocking chair trying to breastfeed, but Katy refuses to latch.

KITCHEN: Evening. Jane cooks dinner as Katy screams in her arms. Tears roll down Jane's face.

CLOSET: Night. Jane strips off her sticky, stained clothes. She looks at her ruined body in the mirror.

NURSERY: Night. Katy's asleep in her crib. Jane drifts off just as Michael comes in, home from work, and wakes Katy.

BATHROOM: Morning. Jane tears off a piece of toilet paper and winces in pain as she wipes. Katy cries from the next room, Jane pushes the bathroom door shut.

LIVING ROOM: Katy cries alone in her bassinet. Jane watches from across the room, smoking a cigarette.

END MONTAGE.

**INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - A WEEK LATER - DAY**

Katy continues to cry. Jane watches as DR. JENSON, a middle-aged MALE DOCTOR, examines Katy.

DR. JENSON  
Any colic symptoms?

JANE  
Just the crying.

DR. JENSON  
Are you swaddling her properly?

JANE  
Yes, my mother-in-law made sure of that.

DR. JENSON  
How are your breasts?

Dr. Jenson probes her breasts.

DR. JENSON (CONT'D)  
Are you making enough milk?

JANE  
Yes.

DR. JENSON  
No feeding issues?

JANE  
No.

Dr. Jenson goes back to Katy.

DR. JENSON  
It could be separation anxiety.

JANE  
It's not. I'm with her all the time.

Dr. Jenson is surprised by her conviction.

DR. JENSON  
Are you a doctor?

JANE  
I'm not an M.D., no.

DR. JENSON  
Then maybe you should leave the diagnosis up to me.

JANE  
Maybe you should go back to school. She's too young to have separation anxiety. Object permanence doesn't begin until four to seven months.

(beat)  
I'm sorry, I didn't mean to insult you, I'm just having a hard time.

He passes Katy back, but Jane puts her hand up in refusal.

JANE (CONT'D)  
Can you give me a second?

DR. JENSON  
I have other patients.

Jane takes Katy. Dr. Jenson reaches for the door when he reconsiders and turns back.

DR. JENSON (CONT'D)  
You know, Jane, maybe you should consider coming in to discuss sterilization options.

Jane's face falls, disappointed, but not surprised.

**EXT. NYU CAMPUS - PSYCHOLOGY BUILDING - DAY**

Jane's a disheveled mess. Dark circles under her eyes, bags slung over her shoulder, Katy cradled close to her chest.

She walks past TWO FRAT BOYS playing frisbee, laughing and carefree, while she struggles to hold on.

**INT. PSYCHOLOGY BUILDING - DEAN'S OFFICE - DAY**

Framed degrees and notable awards hang on the wall: HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL, APA for OUTSTANDING LIFETIME CONTRIBUTIONS TO PSYCHOLOGY, NYU DEPARTMENT HEAD OF PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT.

**DR. SILAS WEIR MITCHELL** (50s, silver beard, glasses, a disarming presence) sits behind a large desk. A picture of FREUD hangs on the wall behind him. He's hard at work.

There's a soft knock on the door. Jane appears with Katy, crying in her stroller.

JANE  
Sorry to bother.

SILAS  
It's no bother at all, come in. How are you?

JANE  
Fine. I guess. I wanted to drop off my syllabus for the summer session.

Silas eyes Jane closely.

SILAS  
You alright?

JANE  
Yeah, I'm just a little tired.

SILAS  
(re: Katy)  
Does she always cry like that?

JANE  
Only when she's with me.

Silas buzzes his secretary, CINDY.

SILAS  
Cindy, will you come in here for a  
moment please?

Cindy pops in.

SILAS (CONT'D)  
Would you mind watching the baby  
while I chat with Dr. Stetson?

CINDY  
Of course.

Cindy picks up Katy and she stops crying.

JANE  
See? She doesn't like me.

SILAS  
You don't actually believe that?

Jane says nothing. He gestures to a nearby chair. She sits.

SILAS (CONT'D)  
Talk to me, what's going on?

JANE  
Nothing, it's... nothing. I'm fine.

SILAS  
Jane...

JANE  
I just didn't expect it to be like  
this.

SILAS  
Like what?

JANE

So exhausting. Everybody makes it sound like it's such a wonderful experience, and... it's not.

SILAS

Why do you say that?

JANE

Because I'm not enjoying it. I'm miserable. I can't sleep, I cry all the time, she cries all the time, I'm completely overwhelmed.

SILAS

Newborns are exhausting.

JANE

I wanted everything to be perfect for her, but I feel like I can't do anything right. Like it's not enough, like I'm not enough. And it's so bizarre, sometimes I want to give her the whole wide world and other times I want to stuff a fucking sock down her throat.

Silas cocks an eyebrow.

JANE (CONT'D)

I'm joking. I would never.

(beat)

I just feel like I'm missing that bond with Katy, that profound love that mothers always talk about.

SILAS

You don't love Katy?

JANE

Of course I do. I'm sure that I do, I just can't feel it. I look at her and I feel nothing, but emptiness. I mean, I do get the sensation to protect her because she's a helpless infant. But would I die for her? Probably not.

(beat)

Does that make me a terrible mother?

SILAS

Of course it doesn't. I'm sure  
you're too exhausted to feel much  
of anything. Give it some time,  
you'll come around.

Silas buzzes Cindy in. She gives Katy back to Jane and again  
Katy starts to cry.

**INT. HIGH RISE CONDO - KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

CLOSE ON: A neglected pot of boiling water. The lid hisses  
and rattles as water spills over onto the flame.

Katy's red-faced and crying. Jane walks with her, sobbing.

JANE

Please stop crying.

Katy screams. Jane squeezes her, through clenched teeth:

JANE (CONT'D)

Katy, stop it. Please.

Rage courses through Jane. She puts Katy down and walks away.

JANE (CONT'D)

Give mommy a break. PLEASE.

Jane buries her face in her hands and screams. She begins  
tearing the cushions off the couch.

JANE (CONT'D)

STOP IT, STOP IT, STOP IIIIIT!!

She starts slapping herself in the face.

JANE (CONT'D)

I SAID STOP IT! STOP IT!

HAZEL (O.S.)

Jane?

Jane turns to see Hazel standing in the doorway, taking it  
all in: the screaming baby, the mess, Jane's meltdown.

Hazel turns off the stove and picks up Katy, as soon as she  
does, Katy stops crying.

JANE

She wouldn't stop crying.

HAZEL

Well, that's what babies do. You can't let yourself get so upset.

JANE

I didn't do it on purpose.

HAZEL

I'll take care of Katy and the mess, why don't you put some makeup on and make yourself presentable before Michael comes home.

**INT. HIGH RISE CONDO - KITCHEN - NEXT MORNING**

ANGLE ON a frying pan, two over easy eggs sizzling. Michael waits at the breakfast table, Katy's in her bassinet nearby.

Jane slides the eggs onto a clean plate and the yolk breaks.

She sets the plate down in front of him. He looks disgusted. He pushes his plate away and settles for just coffee.

MICHAEL

I spoke with Mother this morning.  
She thought it might be a good idea  
for us to get away for a while.

JANE

(hopeful)

Just the two of us?

MICHAEL

(laughs)

I think Katy's a little too young  
to be left on her own, don't you?

Jane looks at Michael with an immense amount of hatred. He hardly notices.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

No, she suggested the Hamptons,  
we're leaving this weekend.

JANE

It's the middle of March, it'll be  
freezing.

MICHAEL

I'm sure you can find something to  
do besides going to the beach.

JANE

The staff won't be there for  
another six weeks, I can't clean  
that house on my own.

MICHAEL

I'll hire a housekeeper, you won't  
have to lift a finger.

JANE

Are you taking time off work?

MICHAEL

No, but I'll come down on the  
weekends.

JANE

For how long?

MICHAEL

Until the fall, that'll give you  
plenty of time to rest and reset.

JANE

But I'm set to teach summer courses  
in May.

MICHAEL

My point exactly, you don't want to  
go back looking the way you do. Why  
don't you give yourself a break,  
catch up on your sleep, that way  
you can go back with a clear head.

#### I/E. STATION WAGON/THE HAMPTONS - DRIVING - DAY

CLOSE ON: Jane's somber face behind a closed window, she holds Katy on her lap and watches the scenery passes by.

"YOU AIN'T GOIN' NOWHERE" by Joan Baez plays on the radio.

Bare trees sway in the cold wind, mom & pop shops are boarded up for the winter, the ocean roars under the pale gray sky.

#### EXT. DRIVEWAY/THE HOUSE - DAY

The station wagon turns off the main road. Dead sticks crack under its tires and fallen leaves crumble into dust.

The driveway winds around to reveal a massive BEACH-FRONT HOME, isolated at the edge of the sea.

Dying vines cling to the shuttered windows. Yellow grass lines a rickety fence that leads down to the sandy beach.

Michael parks the wagon and leaves Jane to collect Katy.

She looks at the house through the windshield. A cold wind howls, beckoning her to come inside.

**INT. THE HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS - VARIOUS ROOMS - DAY**

TRACK Jane as she walks through the house with Katy. Each room is more foreboding than the next.

KITCHEN: a row of KNIVES hang on the wall.

LIVING ROOM: floor to ceiling windows, no curtains.

GRAND ROOM: sparse furniture covered in dusty sheets.

FOYER: hard tile reflects a second story banister.

STAIRWAY: a steep set of stairs leads to a large oak door.

**INT. THE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY**

The sweeping, grandiose room has been turned into a cluttered storage space for all the unwanted things in the house.

Every wall is covered in grotesque YELLOW WALLPAPER. A busy, floral pattern from an era long forgotten.

JANE

I've never been in here before.

MICHAEL

Really? Never?

JANE

Hazel always kept it locked.

Jane walks over and sees rusted rings that have been drilled into the wall over a metal bed frame.

JANE (CONT'D)

What are these things for?

MICHAEL

Those were used for bed canopies back in the day, you know, to hold up heavy fabrics.

JANE

Let's stay in our room downstairs.

MICHAEL

This is the biggest room in the house, we'll have our own wing.

JANE

It gives me the creeps.

MICHAEL

Because of the canopy rings? That's silly. If Granny were still alive she'd insist we stay in her room.

Jane stares at the wallpaper, suspicious. She reaches out to touch it when -- *DING DONG!*

**INT. FOYER - DAY**

Jane opens the door to find a stunning woman before her --

**ANGELA** (mid-20s, stylish, bold) is the embodiment of sexual liberation. Her clothes leave little to the imagination and her no-nonsense demeanor suggests an unshakable confidence.

JANE

Can I help you?

ANGELA

I was hoping it'd be the other way around. I'm Angela.

JANE

The housekeeper, yes that's right, Michael told me you were coming.

Jane notices the suitcases at her feet.

ANGELA

It's cool if I move in right? Michael said I could, my place is pretty crowded, plus with the commute.

JANE

It's fine, there are maid quarters in the back.

Jane's clearly uncomfortable with it, but she just smiles.

**INT. GRAND ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Jane leads Angela through the house. Angela gawks at its impressive size.

ANGELA  
(whistles)  
I should have asked for more money.

JANE  
I'm sorry?

ANGELA  
I'm only kidding, Mike was more  
than generous.

Michael and his sleazy, long-time friend STEPHEN (early 40s) come down the stairs carrying boxes.

**STEPHEN DORSEY** is east-coast, old money. He walks on water with unfounded arrogance. He's better dressed than he is good looking and slightly underweight from too much cocaine.

MICHAEL  
Angie, you made it!

ANGELA  
Took a couple subways, a train ride  
and a cab to do it, but I'm here.

Michael sets down his box to give her a friendly hug. Stephen stands close to Jane, admiring Angela's body.

STEPHEN  
(to Jane, re: Angela)  
Look at that stone fox.

Jane gives him a look.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)  
(flirty)  
Be careful looking at me like that,  
I may have to act on it.

Back on Michael and Angela:

MICHAEL  
I see you met Jane.

ANGELA  
Not officially.

They exchange an awkward handshake.

MICHAEL

This is my friend, Stephen. He lives next door. We were college roommates, long time ago, we used to really take it to the max.

STEPHEN

We still do.

ANGELA

Nice to meet you.

STEPHEN

Pleasure is all mine.

He goes in for the hug. She laughs, used to it. He lets his hand fall down her back and gives her hip a small squeeze.

MICHAEL

Can I get you something to drink?

JANE

I was just about to offer. We have tea or water?

ANGELA

Anything stronger?

STEPHEN

Right on, I like her.

ANGELA

I meant coffee.

STEPHEN

Wow, she's as boring as you, Jane. We'll allow that kind of behavior for now, but come summertime, I want a gung-ho attitude, ya dig?

He winks at Jane. She scowls at him and then offers a polite smile to Angela.

**INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER**

Jane cradles a screaming Katy in her arms while she struggles to make coffee. Angela watches on with alarm and pity.

JANE

So how do you know Michael, do you work at the hospital?

ANGELA

No, I work at Cujo's, the sports bar. Michael comes in for lunch sometimes.

JANE

Does he come in a lot?

ANGELA

Few times a week.

(beat)

Here, let me do that.

Angela takes Katy from her. Jane watches as Angela flawlessly soothes Katy and brews coffee.

JANE

Look at you, you're a pro.

ANGELA

Yeah, well, I've had a lot of practice. I have three brothers at home, all under the age of ten.

JANE

That's quite an age gap.

ANGELA

My mom had me when she was sixteen, and then, when she was thirty, she went camping one weekend and forgot her birth control.

JANE

Oh no.

ANGELA

She thought she was too old, but surprise-surprise, triplet boys.

Jane gasps.

JANE

Wow. I can't even imagine, I can barely handle one.

ANGELA

Yeah, she made it work. I helped her of course, but you know, when you don't have money, you don't really have the luxury to pick and choose what you're willing to do. You just do what you can to get by.

Jane suddenly feels embarrassed by her affluence.

JANE

Do you want to have kids of your own one day?

ANGELA

God no. I've done my time. Don't get me wrong, I love kids, but I just set myself free, I'm not trying to go backwards.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - LATER**

Jane yanks the shutters open and light floods the room.

Behind her, Michael and Stephen move an antique ARMOIRE away from the wall to reveal a large WATER STAIN in the corner.

JANE

Actually, leave the armoire there, it'll cover the water stain... or whatever that is.

Jane stares at it, GOOSEBUMPS snake along the scar on her neck.

**EXT. THE HOUSE - TWO WEEKS LATER - DAY**

YELLOW TULIPS open up to the warm sun. The gray-blue winter turns to a colorful spring. Everything is coming to life, but inside time seems to stand still.

**INT. THE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

ANGLE ON an old TELEVISION SET: "WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE" plays with the sound turned down.

"RAINY DAYS AND MONDAYS" by The Carpenters plays on the record player, the album cover sits nearby.

A cigarette burns in a yellow glass ashtray on the carpet. Jane's hand dangles above it as she lies on the couch.

Katy's on the ground, laying on her belly, trying to lift her head. Angela walks in with a handkerchief tied over her hair.

JANE

Do you need to clean in here?

ANGELA

I can come back if you're busy.

JANE

No, no. I'll get out of your way.  
Unless you want some help?

ANGELA

Kinda defeats the purpose of you  
hiring me.

JANE

Yeah I suppose it does. Well, do  
you want to take a break, we could  
go to the beach or get salt water  
taffy on the boardwalk?

ANGELA

I can't. I have a lot to do here.  
Sorry.

JANE

Oh, don't apologize. Grateful for  
the help.

Jane scoops Katy up. "Rainy Days and Mondays" continues to play as Jane walks off.

#### **INT. STAIRWAY - CONTINUOUS**

Follow Jane up the stairs as the song ends. She goes inside the room, the door shuts and we're enveloped in silence.

#### **INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY**

Jane is hunched over a small desk near a barred window. She tries to read, but the words seem to blur together.

Something BUZZES in the window.

She looks up to see a WASP trapped between the window panes, casting a shadow three times its size.

Jane scratches the scar on her neck.

The wallpaper scratches back.

Jane freezes.

Again, *something* scratches on the wall behind her, mimicking her scratch, inviting her to come play.

Jane slowly turns around...

Nothing is there.

Then, something scratches at the door --

**INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY**

Jane throws the door open. No one is there. She looks over the banister. Nothing.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - SECONDS LATER**

Jane's back at her desk. The wallpaper scratches again. This time Jane doesn't turn around, she just listens...

The scratching moves along the wall, growing closer and closer... *Scraaaatch* --

Jane whips around.

All is quiet.

She scans the room, frantic. Everything is perfectly still.

The air seems to move towards her, the presence of something sneaking up behind her, until it's over her shoulder...

Right by her ear --

*SCRATCH. SCRATCH.*

Jane stands, knocking her chair over.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NEXT DAY**

LOW ANGLE on the dark, tight space between the dresser and the wall. A FLASHLIGHT clicks on, exposing the wallpaper.

An exterminator, ED, is on his hands and knees inspecting the walls. Jane stands over him, wringing her hands.

ED

Good news. You've got no mice.

JANE

But I heard them.

ED

Probably just the wind. If it were mice you'd find some kind of droppings or see rodent roadways.

JANE

Rodent roadways?

ED

Mice run along the same path every night, and the dirt and oil from their fur leaves a trail, kinda like an oil streak along the wall.

JANE

Is it possible the mice just got in and haven't left any signs yet?

ED

Not likely. By the time you start hearing mice in the walls they've been here a while.

**EXT. NEW YORK CITY - CAFE PATIO - DAY**

LOW ANGLE on a phone cord extending across the patio where Michael is having lunch with his mother, Hazel.

A ROTARY PHONE is on the table. Michael laughs into the receiver. Hazel sits across from him, watching him closely.

MICHAEL

Don't tell me you're buggin' out already.

INTERCUT WITH:

**INT. GRAND ROOM - DAY**

In contrast to the city, the space is empty and quiet. Jane is on the phone. Angela is nearby, holding Katy.

JANE

Well something is in the walls, I heard it.

MICHAEL

It's an old house, it makes all kinds of strange noises.

JANE

I'm telling you, something is trapped in the wall, and when it dies it's going to stink in here --

MICHAEL

Oh now stop it, you're letting your imagination run wild.

JANE  
I know what I heard.

MICHAEL  
Did anyone else hear it?

JANE  
No.

MICHAEL  
Well there you go. Why don't you turn on the TV or something, then you won't hear it anymore.

Jane hangs up.

**EXT. NEW YORK CITY - CAFE PATIO - DAY**

Michael hands the receiver to the Server.

MICHAEL  
If she calls back again, tell her we've gone already.

Hazel watches Michael closely, waiting for an explanation.

HAZEL  
Is everything alright?

MICHAEL  
Fine. She's just bored, looking for an excuse to leave.

HAZEL  
Did you explain to her why she's there?

MICHAEL  
She knows she needs to rest.

HAZEL  
You have to be firm with her, explicit. She needs to learn to control herself and she had better do it soon, the Fourth of July party is around the corner. Can you imagine if she acted that way in front of the Jones' or the Dorseys? You'd be the laughing stock of the Upper East Side.

MICHAEL  
I'll take care of it.

**INT. THE HOUSE - FOYER - DAY**

Jane comes downstairs in a bathing suit. She stops short when she sees Stephen letting himself in through the front door.

STEPHEN  
What's happenin', sexy mama?

JANE  
You ever heard of knocking?

STEPHEN  
Don't be a square, everybody does  
it. Is Mikey here?

JANE  
You know he's not.

His eyes run over her body. He smiles at her, playful.

STEPHEN  
Where's the stone fox?

JANE  
She's in the next room with Katy.

STEPHEN  
Put in a good word for me?

JANE  
Get real.

STEPHEN  
Aw, are you jealous? I've got  
enough love to go around.

Jane's not in the mood.

JANE  
What do you want, Stephen?

STEPHEN  
Brought you a watermelon.

JANE  
Great. Thank you.

She tries to take it from him, but he pulls it back.

STEPHEN  
C'mon, don't you want a big strong  
man to cut it up for you?

JANE  
I'd rather stick hot needles in my  
eye.

Stephen laughs.

STEPHEN  
You're a firecracker. I love it.

He gives her a playful smack on the ass and brushes past her.

**INT. KITCHEN - DAY**

The roaring ocean is heard through a cracked patio door.  
Stephen slides it shut, enveloping the room in silence.

He takes a large knife off the wall.

STEPHEN  
Have you decided what you're  
wearing to my Memorial Day soiree?

JANE  
I don't think we're going this  
year, I have to talk to Michael.

STEPHEN  
No need, he already told me you  
guys were coming.

Stephen slices into the watermelon. Jane watches as pink  
juice runs over the counter.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)  
Seemed pretty psyched about it,  
think he needs to blow off some  
steam, if you catch my drift?

JANE  
Yeah, I get it.

STEPHEN  
You know, Jane, you can have fun  
too. It's allowed.

He bites into a luscious slice.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)  
In fact, it's encouraged.

He offers her a bite. She just stares at him. He lets out a  
long sigh.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)  
You can't play hard to get forever,  
although it will make for a better  
time when you do give in. My father  
always said the toughest horses to  
break were always the best to ride.

He sets the knife down on the counter and leaves.

**INT. FOYER - MOMENTS LATER - DAY**

Jane follows Stephen out. The door clicks shut and she locks it behind him. Katy cries from upstairs.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY**

Jane lies Katy down on a changing table: a metal folding table on thin legs with wicker-basket drawers underneath.

Katy continues to cry as Jane unpins the cloth diaper. She sets the open pins next to Katy and then disappears into the bathroom, leaving Katy alone on the wobbly table.

Hear the water turn on in the bathroom. It runs for a brief moment and then Jane re-emerges with a wet wash cloth. She uses it to wipe Katy clean.

Katy screams louder and louder.

Jane sets a clean diaper next to Katy and tosses the used wash cloth and dirty diaper into the hamper.

She unfolds the clean diaper, lifts Katy up by the legs, and then realizes the safety pins are gone.

Jane lifts Katy higher to check underneath, but the pins aren't there.

Jane checks the floor. She opens the wicker-baskets drawers. She looks underneath the metal table.

She begins mumbling to herself as she retraces her steps.

JANE  
(re: pins)  
I took them out, set them here, or  
did I bring them with me when...

Again, she wanders off into the bathroom and then re-emerges empty handed. Her frustration is mounting into anger.

She pulls the changing table away from the wall to check behind it. Katy rolls dangerously close to the edge.

Jane suddenly stops when she sees the water stain behind Katy's changing table.

She stares at it, baffled. She could've sworn that the water stain was in the corner, behind the armoire.

ANGLE ON the armoire, the empty mirror on the front door. Jane uses every bit of her strength to try and move it.

It won't budge.

She wedges her shoulder behind it, leans against the wall, and pushes... the armoire groans against the wood floor as she manages to move it a few inches.

It's enough room for light to hit the wallpaper and for Jane to see that the water stain is gone.

Jane looks back at the stain behind Katy's changing table. *Did it move to a different spot on the wallpaper?*

Angela walks in to see Jane, wedged behind the armoire, staring at the wallpaper.

ANGELA  
Jane? You alright?

JANE  
Oh, yes. I must look ridiculous.

Angela picks up Katy and she immediately stops crying.

JANE (CONT'D)  
I was changing her diaper and  
couldn't find the safety pins.

ANGELA  
There's two right here.

Angela picks up the pins off the table, right where Jane left them. Jane looks utterly stunned.

JANE  
I checked there, I swear. At least  
I thought I did.

ANGELA  
My mom was a total space cadet  
after the boys were born. I  
wouldn't worry about it.

JANE  
Yeah, probably just Mommy Brain.

Jane isn't convinced. She eyes the wallpaper, scanning it for any signs of foul play.

It seems to stare back at her, feigning innocence.

**EXT. HAMPTON'S BOARDWALK - DAY**

(OVER) "MOTHER AND CHILD REUNION" by Paul Simon plays.

Mom and pop shops open their doors. A PEACE SIGN hangs in the window. The empty BOARDWALK begins to fill with PEOPLE.

A GUY with long sideburns stands on a silver, metal ladder hanging black letters on a mustard yellow sign that reads: "CASINO BALLROOM WELCOMES THE ROLLING STONES".

**EXT. HAMPTON'S BEACH - DAY**

ANGLE ON a portable radio in the sand, silver antenna angled to the sky. TWO TEENAGE BOYS with long hair and mustaches walk by with a YELLOW SURFBOARD.

A YOUNG WOMAN in a BIKINI whistles as they walk by. She laughs with her FRIENDS. The Teenagers stop to talk to them.

FIND Jane in the shade of an umbrella, lying on a yellow, striped towel. Katy's on the ground next to her, asleep.

Jane flips through a "BETTER HOMES" magazine, the cover reads: "BEATING THE WINTER BLAHS". She stops on an ad for VIRGINIA SLIMS that reads: "YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY, BABY".

The sound of carefree laughter causes Jane to look up. She watches the Young Friends with envy, honing in on the woman in the yellow bikini, as pass around a joint.

Jane's eyes drift over to a YELLOW and WHITE STRIPED UMBRELLA where a MOTHER plays with her BABY, her face hidden by a hat.

The Mother begins digging a hole in the sand.

She carefully lays her baby inside the hole.

Then, covers it up.

Jane lurches forward, then stops --

The baby is fine, giggling in her Mother's arms.

Jane turns back to see Angela walking towards her.

ANGELA

You've been down here for hours, I  
was starting to worry.

JANE

I couldn't stand to be in that room  
for another minute. I hate that  
yellow wallpaper.

ANGELA

It is pretty ugly. You want some  
company?

JANE

I would love some.

Angela strips down to her bra and underwear. Jane tries not  
to stare. She lies down in the sand next to her.

JANE (CONT'D)

Can I ask you something?

ANGELA

Shoot.

JANE

But I want you tell me the truth.  
I'm not asking as your boss, but as  
a complete stranger, no strings  
attached.

Angela cocks an eyebrow.

JANE (CONT'D)

And I mean no offense, I just have  
to know for my own sanity.

ANGELA

Ask away.

Jane swallows, bracing for impact.

JANE

Have you ever slept with Michael?

ANGELA

No. Never. Not even a kiss.

Jane searches her face for the lie, but doesn't find it.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

You seem disappointed.

JANE

No, I... it's nothing, I just had to ask. Thank you for being honest.

ANGELA

Just so you know, if I had slept with him, I still would have told you the truth.

JANE

Thanks. I appreciate that.

Angela watches Jane closely.

ANGELA

Do you want to talk about it?

JANE

There's nothing to talk about, I'm being paranoid. My mind is restless and looking for something to worry about. Just having a hard time adjusting to this new life style.

ANGELA

Yeah I bet, being rich must be a real drag.

Jane smiles.

JANE

I meant not working.

ANGELA

I didn't know you worked.

JANE

Michael didn't mention it?

Angela shakes her head 'no'.

JANE (CONT'D)

Can't imagine he would, I am the better doctor.

ANGELA

Burn. Now we're getting somewhere.

JANE

I'm only teasing.

ANGELA

Mmm, I don't think you are.

JANE

No, I am. We're not even in the same field. He's a surgeon and I work in psychology.

ANGELA

You're a shrink?

JANE

Psychologist. I don't practice on patients, I'm on the research side, and I also teach at NYU.

Angela's impressed.

ANGELA

So then what the hell are you doing out here in no man's land?

JANE

Well, you know, I wanted to make my family a priority, be a good wife and mother.

ANGELA

Yeah, but aren't you bored out of your skull?

Jane can't help but laugh.

JANE

Not really. I love being with Katy.

ANGELA

Man, you're a bad liar. It's okay if you don't want to be around her all the time. Babies are boring, not great for mental stimulation.

JANE

Trust me, she's caused plenty of mental stimulation.

ANGELA

When do you plan to go back to work? You are going back, right? Please don't tell me you're one of those cliches.

JANE

Which cliche?

ANGELA

You know, girl meets boy, girl  
gives up her career for the collar  
and man lives happily ever after.

JANE

I haven't given up my career.

ANGELA

Not yet, it's a slippery slope. If  
I were you, I'd get back to work  
before Michael gets used to having  
you home all the time. Or before  
your mind turns to baby jargon and  
mush. You know what they say, if  
you don't use it, you lose it.

Off Jane as she contemplates Angela's advice --

**INT. TRAIN - DAY**

(OVER) "RIGHT PLACE WRONG TIME" by Dr. John plays.

See Jane's fractured reflection in the train car window as it  
roars into a tunnel. The thundering sound morphs into --

**EXT. NYU CAMPUS - DAY**

A cacophony of chatter as a wave of STUDENTS move across  
campus. Their energy is electric.

ANGLE ON JANE as she takes it all in, grinning from ear to  
ear, as she weaves through the crowd.

**INT. NYU CAMPUS - PSYCHOLOGY BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY**

Jane walks down a quiet hallway, anxious.

She peeks in the open doors to give a quick wave to her  
former COLLEAGUES. From one of the rooms, hear someone say:

COLLEAGUE (O.S.)  
Hey Jane, you're back.

A smile bursts out of Jane.

Dr. Silas Mitchell's secretary, CINDY (early 20s), passes by.  
She catches sight of Jane out of her periphery.

CINDY  
Dr. Stetson?

JANE

Cindy! Hey, how are you?

Cindy regards Jane with a mix of curiosity and concern.

CINDY

What are you doing here?

JANE

I'm here to get the summer schedule  
from Dr. Mitchell.

CINDY

Oh... I didn't realize you were  
coming back.

JANE

Of course. Why wouldn't I?

Cindy's mouth instinctively falls open, her eyes alight with information, ready to speak, but instead covers with a smile.

CINDY

I guess I was under the wrong  
assumption. Welcome back.

She gives Jane's hand a sympathetic squeeze and keeps moving. Silas pops his head out.

SILAS

Jane. You're here. Come in.

She follows him inside.

**INT. DEAN'S OFFICE - DAY**

Silas takes a seat behind his oversized, mahogany desk. Jane sits across from him in a flimsy wooden chair.

SILAS

So how are you? How's the baby?

JANE

She's good. Almost three months.

He whistles.

SILAS

Goes quick, doesn't it?

JANE

Not really.

SILAS

Look Jane, I'm just going to come right out and say it. We've hired someone else to teach your classes.

Jane nearly laughs, so stunned she can hardly believe it.

JANE

What do you mean? You gave my classes away?

SILAS

It's only temporary.

JANE

There's an allotted number of spots, are you planning on firing the new guy when I come back?

SILAS

Well, no. But --

JANE

We talked about this, you knew I was coming back. My students are counting on me to be here, I was counting on it.

SILAS

I know, but when we spoke last, you seemed so overwhelmed.

JANE

Are you punishing me for opening up to you?

SILAS

Of course not. I was worried you were spreading yourself too thin. I spoke to Michael about it and he said you needed more time.

JANE

That is my choice to make, not his.

SILAS

Well Jane, not if you're going to be a liability to our faculty and students. I can't have you acting like this in a classroom.

JANE

Do not turn this around on me, I have every right to be angry.

SILAS

You do, and I'm sorry. I made a mistake. I can contact the board and see if --

JANE

Don't placate me, Silas. You know as well as I do they're not going to make any concessions for me, not for a woman.

SILAS

What makes you think the new professor isn't a woman?

JANE

Is it?

Jane can tell by his face that it's not.

SILAS

Oh Jane, please don't be upset, we can figure something out.

She storms out. We FOLLOW her into --

**INT. PSYCHOLOGY BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY**

-- where the walls begin to breathe, bowing in towards Jane.

**EXT. NYU CAMPUS - DAY**

Jane keeps her eyes ahead, walking without looking, trying to ignore the overactive stimuli. STUDENTS pass by in a whirl of vibrant COLORS, their LAUGHTER booms and echoes around her.

**INT. PHONE BOOTH - DAY**

Jane fights back tears as she clutches a dirty pay phone. It rings and rings and then --

DENISE (ON PHONE)

Hello?

Jane puts on a cheery voice.

JANE

Denise, hi. It's Jane. Is Michael in, I need to talk --

DENISE (ON PHONE)  
He just stepped out. Would you like  
to leave a message?

Jane's crestfallen.

JANE  
No, that's okay. Thank you.

Jane hangs up and takes a deep breath to steady herself.

**INT. TRAIN - DAY**

The train car rocks back and forth. Jane holds on as the city whips by in the distance. The train passes through a tunnel --

Jane's reflection turns into something unnatural: an evil Jane with a twisted smile on its face. Jane doesn't seem to notice as her reflection watches her with malice.

The train comes out the other side just as Jane turns to see a normal reflection staring back at her.

**INT. THE HOUSE - STAIRWAY - DAY**

Jane slowly climbs the stairs. The oak door looms overhead.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY**

The door swings open and Jane saunters in. The space seems smaller, like the furniture is closer together.

Jane sits on the edge of the bed and lets out a sob. She quickly covers her mouth. Jane shakes as she sobs in silence.

**INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT**

Candle lit dinner. Jane sits alone at the end of the table. Katy is nearby in her bassinet.

Time passes, the candles are half-melted now. Jane looks at her watch, then at the clock on the wall.

**INT. GRAND ROOM - NIGHT**

Jane's on a rotary phone, twisting the cord in her fingers. It rings and rings. No answer.

Angela passes by, now holding Katy. Jane turns her back to them, embarrassed. The phone continues to ring.

Jane eventually hangs up.

**INT. MASTER BATHROOM/BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Jane keeps her eyes shut as she rubs soap all over her face. In the mirror, see the yellow wallpaper behind her.

She bends down to splash water on her face and when she comes back up, the pattern of the wallpaper is DIFFERENT.

Jane stares in the mirror, perplexed.

She turns around to look at the wallpaper: it's the same floral, damask pattern that she's grown to hate.

But in the mirror... it's different.

Jane leans in for a closer look: it's the same flowers, same ugly yellow, but the pattern is different somehow.

She walks over to the wallpaper to inspect it with her own eyes. It looks the same as it always does.

Jane turns back to the mirror, now at a distance, and the reflection matches the pattern before her.

But as she walks back to the mirror, the pattern starts to change again... like an optical illusion that comes into focus with every step she takes.

The pattern looks like bars of a cell.

Jane heads back to the paper. She traces the pattern with her finger, making notably large, sweeping curves.

Then she rushes back to the mirror where there are no curves, only straightened vines and flattened flowers.

Jane rushes back to the paper, her faces mere inches away from the wall as she traces the pattern again and again.

She whips around and in the mirror, she sees HERSELF STILL FACING THE WALLPAPER, tracing the pattern with its finger.

Horror drains Jane's face as she watches her reflection turn to face her, as if it were on a two second delay.

Suddenly she hears GRAVEL crunch in the driveway below. Jane rushes to the window to see Michael pull up.

Headlights flood the room, casting Jane's shadow onto the yellow wallpaper before she's left in total darkness.

**INT. FOYER - NIGHT**

ANGLE ON the front door as the dead bolt unlocks. Michael opens the door, surprised to find Jane waiting for him.

MICHAEL

Hey, what are you doing still up?

JANE

Where have you been?

MICHAEL

I had to work late.

JANE

I called the office, Michael. No one was there.

MICHAEL

I went out for a bite to eat and then went to the library to finish my proposal.

He kisses her on the cheek and brushes past her.

**INT. STAIRWAY/UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

Jane follows Michael up the stairs.

JANE

You could have finished your proposal here.

MICHAEL

It's quiet at the library.

JANE

It's quiet here.

MICHAEL

Can we not do this right now, I've had a long day. Let's get some rest and we can talk in the morning.

Michael tries to lead her into the room, but she pulls back.

JANE

Michael... Did you tell Silas to give away my classes?

He lets out a long sigh.

MICHAEL

We talked about it at length and we  
both agreed you needed more time.  
It's only until you get settled.  
You can go back in the fall.

JANE

I can't wait 'til the fall.

MICHAEL

What do you mean?

Jane teeters on the verge of tears.

JANE

I want to go home.

MICHAEL

We are home.

JANE

No. To our home. In the city.  
Please. We can leave first thing in  
the morning.

MICHAEL

I just got in, and what about  
Stephen's party tomorrow night?

JANE

You don't understand, I can't stay  
here, something is wrong.

MICHAEL

What's wrong?

JANE

I don't know.

Michael's visibly annoyed.

MICHAEL

If you don't know, then who should  
I ask?

JANE

There's something wrong with this  
house, that room, the wallpaper --

MICHAEL

Can you just stop it, please? I'm not in the mood for these passive aggressive games. Just be straight with me, tell me what's really going on.

Jane's stunned.

JANE

I am telling you.

MICHAEL

Today it's the wallpaper, tomorrow it'll be the furniture, then the weather, and then who knows? On and on we'll go. I don't want to do that. Why don't you just admit what this is really about?

JANE

(sarcastic)

I guess I don't know. Why don't you tell me?

Michael looks at her a long time, and then says it:

MICHAEL

You hate being a mother.

He waits for her to deny it. Jane is crushed.

JANE

I don't hate it.

Her voice cracks.

JANE (CONT'D)

I love Katy.

MICHAEL

Please don't get hysterical.

Jane steadies herself.

JANE

Something is happening to me, and I'm sorry that I can't explain it, but I'm telling you something is wrong.

MICHAEL

I'm tired of having this conversation.

(MORE)

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

There is nothing wrong with you.  
Except that maybe that you want  
something to be wrong.

JANE

Why would I ever want that?

MICHAEL

Because you want to go home. You  
want to throw in the towel and kick  
your feet up. So you can tell your  
friends you tried it for a few  
month, but it just didn't work out.

Jane's speechless.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Well, let me tell you something,  
that is not an option. You agreed,  
you promised me, you'd try. Now, I  
know it hasn't been as easy as you  
imagined it would be, it hasn't  
been easy on me either, but at  
least I'm trying. I'm honoring my  
commitment to make this family  
work. The least you can do is meet  
me halfway.

Michael leaves Jane in the hallway, stunned.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT TO DAY**

Jane lies in bed, awake. Michael sleeps like a baby, as does  
Katy. Jane stares at the wallpaper until the sun comes up.

**EXT. HAMPTON'S BOARDWALK - DAY**

(OVER) "SHAMBALA" by Three Dog Night plays.

MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND. Red, white, and blue banners hang  
outside local shops. Taped to the window is an anti-war sign:  
A POWER FIST over a map of VIETNAM.

Nearby, see a YELLOW RIBBON tied around an old oak tree. A  
PEACE SIGN HANGS IN THE WINDOW: "MAKE LOVE, NOT WAR."

A TRIO of WOMEN pass by on roller skates, one is wearing a  
YELLOW, tied crop top. Summer is in full swing.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY**

Jane sits at the window, rocking back and forth in a mindless trance, breastfeeding Katy.

Jane sees something on Katy's neck -- a tiny MOLE just above her clavicle. A rush of anxiety floods Jane's face.

She licks her finger and tries to wipe the mole away.

Angela knocks on the open door.

ANGELA

Hey, didn't you hear me calling for you just now?

JANE

No.

ANGELA

I'm running to the market to get party supplies, need anything?

JANE

Yeah, an excuse not to go tonight.

Angela laughs and heads off.

Jane notices the water stain is in a different spot. Before it was behind Katy's changing table, now it's by the window.

Jane hugs Katy close and hurries out of the room.

**INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER**

Jane plugs the drain and sets Katy down in the sink. Katy watches her mother with curious eyes. Jane smiles at her.

JANE

Hi baby, we gonna have a bath?

Katy babbles and coos, enjoying the sound of her own voice.

Jane swivels the faucet to the other side of the sink and lets the water run over her fingers, testing the temperature.

She hums a lullaby and moves the faucet back to Katy's side. Jane watches as warm water pools around Katy.

Jane notices the mole on Katy's neck. She tries to wipe it away with water, but it won't come off.

She tries soap, but it's no use. Jane grows frustrated, rubbing harder and harder --

She reaches for the scrub brush and the AJAX, when --

SOMEONE darts past the window.

Jane cranes her neck for a better look - a FLASH of YELLOW goes back in the other direction.

Jane wonders off outside.

Katy is left alone in the sink with the water still running.

**EXT. THE HOUSE - DAY**

Jane runs barefoot through broken branches. She rounds the corner, but no one is there. She looks around confused.

JANE

Hello?

**INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY**

The water is up to Katy's shoulders now.

Through the window, see Jane wondering around.

Katy starts to cry.

Jane disappears out of frame.

The water rises to Katy's chin.

Angela comes in, shocked to find Katy alone. She pulls Katy out and turns off the water.

Through the window, she sees Jane in a trance.

**EXT. THE HOUSE - DAY**

Jane stares at nothing. Angela's voice sounds like it's coming from the end of a tunnel.

ANGELA

Jane?

Jane doesn't answer. Angela turns her around. Jane's furiously scratching the scar on her neck. It's bleeding.

ANGELA (CONT'D)  
Jane, stop.

Angela pulls her hand away. Jane seems to come out of a trance. She looks at Angela, ashamed.

JANE  
I'm sorry. Sometimes I pick at it.

**INT. MASTER BATHROOM - DAY**

Angela dabs hydrogen peroxide on Jane's neck. Jane keeps her head down, her eyes on the floor.

JANE  
I don't know what happened. I can't believe I left Katy alone like that, she could have --

A sob catches in her throat.

ANGELA  
It's okay. It was an accident.

JANE  
I thought I saw someone, a woman, I was only gone a few seconds, or maybe it was longer.

ANGELA  
I didn't see anybody.

JANE  
I didn't imagine it. Or maybe I did. I've been so tired, maybe I slipped into some kind of trance, it's rare, but it does happen, under extreme stress or exhaustion.

Jane picks at her scar. Angela stops her.

JANE (CONT'D)  
Sorry, old habit.

ANGELA  
(re: scar)  
Can I ask what happened?

Jane searches her own mind.

JANE

I wish I knew. I mean, I know what happened, I just don't understand it. My mother... she used to think I had this evil thing living inside of me, always used say, 'I can see it burrowing its way out of you, even the demons want to stay away.'

(scoffs, hurt)

She still thinks that.

Jane rolls her eyes, trying to lighten the mood.

JANE (CONT'D)

It was just a mole, but she was convinced it was something else, and then one day, she tried to cut it out of me, as if the idea occurred to her out of nowhere.

ANGELA

Oh my God. That's terrible.

JANE

It's why I became a psychologist. I just wanted to get some answers, you know? Was she born sick, did something happen to her?

ANGELA

Or maybe it was something else.

JANE

Like what?

ANGELA

She could have been possessed. I'm serious. Your mom was in a vulnerable state, something could have easily infected her.

JANE

I don't believe in that sort of thing.

ANGELA

Doesn't really matter if you do or don't, it's whether or not that sort of thing believes in you.

Jane scratches her scar, unnerved by the possibility.

**EXT. STEPHEN'S HOUSE - DAY/NIGHT**

The sun sinks behind the black ocean. Colorful lights spill out of Stephen's house.

(OVER) "SUPERFLY" by Curtis Mayfield starts to turn up.

**INT. STEPHEN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

As the song plays, we move through a crowd of colorful jumpsuits, bell-bottoms, and low-cut, metallic dresses.

A WOMAN with feathered hair does a line of coke off a gold vein mirror. She hands the straw to a GUY in a paisley button down with a gold chain around his neck.

Michael's in a dark corner, nuzzling a YOUNG WOMAN who is in a YELLOW CROP TOP.

Across the room, find Jane alone. She steps out of the way as TWO WOMEN, still in their bikinis, pass by.

Stephen walks up with a Cheshire grin. He offers Jane a cigarette. Jane takes it. He lights it for her. They stand in a cloud of smoke.

STEPHEN  
You having a good time?

He knows she isn't.

JANE  
It's a great party.

STEPHEN  
I've got some primo grass inside,  
might help you chill out.

JANE  
Have you seen Michael?

STEPHEN  
Don't worry about what he's doing,  
you're here with me, think of the  
fun we could be having.

He drags his finger across her collarbone.

JANE  
Stephen, come on, don't.

STEPHEN  
I know you want me to.

JANE  
You're drunk.

He grabs her between the legs. Jane shoves him. He stumbles back and knocks a glass off a nearby table.

Stephen laughs.

STEPHEN  
Okay, okay. We'll do it your way.

Jane realizes PEOPLE are staring. She flashes a fake smile. They continue to stare. She searches for Michael.

FOLLOW Jane as a panic attack worms its way in. The crowd seems to close in around her. Glasses clink, PEOPLE cackle and guffaw. Her world tilts as their mouths gape open.

She spots Michael. She heads straight for him.

JANE  
We need to talk.

MICHAEL  
No. No more talking.

He turns to the Young Woman, STACY.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
What did I tell you? She wants to talk about everything. Everything we do is talking, we never do anything else.

He turns back to Jane.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Do we, Goose?

JANE  
Please don't call me that.

Jane looks at Stacy.

MICHAEL  
This is my friend, Stacy. Say hello.

STACY  
Hi, ya.

JANE  
Will you excuse us for a second?

MICHAEL

No, Stacy and I were having a conversation.

JANE

I'm ready to leave.

MICHAEL

So go. You're a big, strong, independent woman, you don't need me to walk you back.

**EXT. BEACH - NIGHT**

Jane walks alone down the long, dark stretch of beach between Stephen's house and hers.

**INT. THE HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT**

Jane comes through the front door to a quiet house.

JANE

Angela?

*CREAK!* The ceiling groans overhead. Jane listens. The dull sound of heavy furniture being dragged across the floor.

**INT. STAIRWAY - NIGHT**

Follow Jane as she slowly ascends the stairs. Behind the door, hear the wood creak under soft footsteps. Then, the sound of something heavy being shoved across the floor.

**INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Jane reaches the top and the footsteps inside the room stop.

All is quiet.

Jane lets out a shaky breath as she reaches for the doorknob. She turns it. The door creaks as it swings open.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Jane clicks the light on --

All the furniture has been shoved away from the wallpaper.

Katy's cribs sits in the center of the room. Jane rushes over to it. She looks inside --

Katy is sound asleep, perfectly still... *Too still.*

Horror and panic flood Jane's face. She hones in on Katy's chest, waiting for it to rise and fall.

It doesn't.

Tears stream down Jane's face. She slowly reaches out to touch Katy, when --

MICHAEL (O.S.)  
Jane, what are you doing?

Jane's stunned to see Michael in bed.

She's even more stunned to look down and see herself holding a pillow over Katy's face.

She pulls it back.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Jane?

From Michael's angle, he can't see what she's doing.

The silence is devastating.

Then, Katy begins to cry.

Jane picks up Katy and holds her close.

JANE  
I thought she wasn't breathing.

MICHAEL  
Did you do this to the furniture?

JANE  
No. I just got home.

MICHAEL  
What are you talking about, you came home hours ago.

Jane turns to look at the clock. It's 3:30am.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Don't you remember?

JANE  
(to herself)  
I must have been asleep.

Jane turns to Michael to confirm, trying to convince herself.

JANE (CONT'D)  
It was just a nightmare. I was just  
sleepwalking, that's all.

MICHAEL  
Well I'm glad we got that sorted  
out, now come back to bed.

Jane gets Katy nestled in her crib and then she crawls into bed with Michael, never taking her eyes off the wallpaper.

She stares at it until the sun comes up. It stares back at her as she finally starts to nod off.

**INT. GRAND ROOM - DAY**

Katy lies on her back, her legs and arms pump as if she were swimming. She squeals with delight.

KATY'S POV: Jane appears and disappears.

JANE  
Peek-a-boo.

Jane's enjoying it as much as Katy. She smiles down at Katy with manic, blood-shot eyes.

On the TV, in the background: PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY stands behind a podium, wearing a large pin that reads "STOP ERA."

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY (ON TV)  
Women have babies and men provide  
the support. If you don't like the  
way we're made, you've got to take  
it up with God.

Jane turns it off as Angela comes in.

ANGELA  
Hey, sunshine. I come bearing  
gifts.

Angela hands her a small velvet box. Jane opens it. Inside is a silver chain with a YELLOW DANDELION PENDANT.

ANGELA (CONT'D)  
As soon as I saw it, I knew I had  
to get it for you.

JANE  
What is it?

ANGELA  
It's a dandelion. My grandma always  
told me, if you want someone to  
live a long and prosperous life,  
you give them a dandelion. Plus,  
you kinda remind me of one.

JANE  
Of a dandelion?

ANGELA  
Yeah, you know the kind you see  
growing out of the sidewalk?

JANE  
Yeah.

ANGELA  
Well, at one point that flower was  
buried under a bunch of dirt and  
concrete, and somehow, it found the  
tiniest bit of sunlight and twisted  
and stretched and hung onto it  
until it made its way up through  
the sidewalk and out into the sun.

Jane's genuinely touched.

JANE  
It's beautiful. Thank you.

ANGELA  
You're welcome.

JANE  
Will you help me put it on?

Jane goes behind Angela to help. The yellow pendant sticks to  
Jane's scar until she adjusts it. It dangles freely.

ANGELA  
And, I will say, not that you  
believe in this sort of thing, but  
dandelions have been known to ward  
off evil spirits or bad dreams. My  
grandma believed dandelions have  
the power of the sun.

JANE

It's French. *Dent de lion*, it means  
"teeth of the lion."

ANGELA

Well then that suits you.

Jane grows quiet, deep in thought.

JANE

You don't actually believe in evil  
spirits though. Do you?

ANGELA

Yeah, I do. We're made up of  
energy, that has to go somewhere  
when we die and I think some people  
get trapped here.

JANE

Why?

ANGELA

Who knows. Unfinished business?  
Some kind of purgatory.

JANE

What about spirits that aren't  
human? Or never were. Something  
that's just purely evil.

ANGELA

What, like demons? Absolutely.  
There isn't a doubt in my mind.

JANE

How can you say that with  
everything we now know about modern  
science and mental illness?

ANGELA

But do we really know that much?  
There's a lot we can't see under a  
microscope.

JANE

It seems so ridiculous, I have a  
hard time believing it.

ANGELA

You know, the first time you told  
me that, I believed you, but now...  
You don't seem so sure.

Angela searches Jane's face.

ANGELA (CONT'D)  
Have you seen something?

JANE  
No. Of course not.

*DING-DONG!*

**INT. FOYER - DAY**

Through the frosted glass see the distorted image of someone on the other side of the door.

Jane opens it to find Hazel standing there, impatient, with packed bags at her feet. Hazel drags her eyes over Jane's appearance with exasperated annoyance.

She gives Jane a frigid smile and pushes her way inside.

JANE  
Hazel, hi.

Jane throws a concerned glance at Angela, who watches from the kitchen doorway with Katy.

JANE (CONT'D)  
What, uh, what are you doing here?

HAZEL  
Don't make that face, dear. It's unbecoming. Are you not happy to see me?

JANE  
Of course I am.

HAZEL  
Don't I get a hug and a kiss hello?

Jane gives her an awkward hug and kiss on the cheek. Hazel turns to Angela.

HAZEL (CONT'D)  
Take these bags to the room at the end of the hall, please. You can give the baby to Jane.

Jane takes Katy and offers an apologetic look to Angela. She takes the bags and starts to go off --

HAZEL (CONT'D)  
Before you come back, you'll need  
to put on a bra.

JANE  
Hazel.

HAZEL  
I don't care what movement you're  
trying to be apart of, this is my  
home, and under my roof women will  
dress like ladies.

ANGELA  
I'll see if I can find one.

Angela goes off. Hazel stares Jane down with a fixed smile.

HAZEL  
I spoke with Michael, he said you  
haven't been feeling well?

JANE  
I feel fine.

HAZEL  
Are you telling me the truth?

JANE  
I am.

HAZEL  
What happened the other night at  
Stephen's? I heard you caused a  
scene.

JANE  
A glass got knocked over.

HAZEL  
That's not what Michael told me.

JANE  
Well, Michael doesn't always tell  
the truth, now does he?

Hazel doesn't like it when people insult her son.

HAZEL  
I suppose another set of eyes on  
the situation will help then.

JANE  
I don't need a babysitter.

HAZEL

Yes, you do. That's what happens  
when you behave like a child.

**INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT**

Hazel and Jane sit at opposite ends of the table. Angela serves them their dinner -- small portions and fresh greens.

On portable radio, a BROADCASTER announces breaking news:

BROADCASTER (ON RADIO)  
Nebraska has just voted to revoke  
their ratification of the ERA.

Jane sets the radio on the table.

HAZEL

Not on the table dear. Give that to  
Maria.

JANE

Angela.

HAZEL

Close enough, I knew it had to end  
with an 'a'.

Jane gives it to Angela. Angela goes off.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

We've got a lot to do before the  
Fourth of July. Have you called the  
caterers yet?

JANE

Can't someone else host this year?

HAZEL

No, someone else can't host? It's a  
family tradition, not to mention  
the most coveted event of the  
summer, all the important people  
will be there. Everyone is dying to  
meet the baby and see how you're  
doing as a new mother. You don't  
want them to think you couldn't  
hack it, do you?

Jane says nothing.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

Don't worry, there's still time to get you back in shape. I'll write up a diet plan.

Jane picks at her food. Hazel purses her lips. She takes a small, controlled sip of wine.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

Michael told me that you two have been fighting lately. Is that true?

JANE

It's private. He shouldn't be sharing that with you.

HAZEL

Michael tells me everything.

JANE

So you're okay with him sleeping with other women?

HAZEL

Of course not. But you can't put all the blame on him, you've got to take some responsibility, too.

JANE

Responsibility for what?

HAZEL

From what I understand, you haven't been fulfilling your duties as a wife, you have to keep him happy.

JANE

Otherwise, it's my fault if he strays.

HAZEL

Don't take it so personally. You know how men are. You've got to let them off the leash every now and then. I'm not saying it's easy, it takes a strong woman to keep a loose marriage together.

JANE

I see. So, I'm just supposed to lie down and take it?

## HAZEL

What's the alternative? You want to be out there on your own? A second-hand woman in her mid-thirties? Not exactly a hot commodity. Sure you make a reasonable salary, for a woman, but is that enough to raise a child? That is assuming you get custody of the child. Judges typically favor the mother, but not always, they do consider things like class, wealth, mental health. So, either way you look at it, yes, you're going to take it lying down.

Anger boils inside of Jane. She watches Hazel cut into her steak with a knife. She hones in on the sharp blade.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY - FLASHBACK (1945)

*CLOSE ON: The tip of a large knife, dragging along the wall.*

## RUTH

*(sings)*

*Jaaaaaney. Come out and play with  
me, and bring your dollies three.*

*Ruth saunters down the hall in a long, yellow floral dress. She drags a bloody butcher knife along the wall.*

*In front of her, she sees the telephone line pulled tight across the hall, leading under a locked, closet door.*

*Ruth cuts the line and turns to the door.*

## RUTH (CONT'D)

*(sings)*

*Climb up my apple tree, slide down  
my rain barrel...*

*Ruth crouches down on all fours to peek under the door. She scratches at the wall with her fingernails.*

## RUTH (CONT'D)

*(sings)*

*Into my cellar door, and we'll be  
jolly friends, forever more.*

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

Jane's wide-awake in bed. She picks the yellow gunk out from under her nails.

The wooden floor groans.

Jane looks over to see the armoire move away from the wall.

*Something* moves behind it.

It scratches the wallpaper.

Jane gets out of bed and makes her away across the room.

The scratching becomes frantic, growing louder and louder, the closer she gets --

*CREAK!* A floorboard under Jane's feet.

The scratching stops.

Jane looks behind the armoire --

The space is empty.

Down near the baseboard, something catches her eye.

She squeezes back behind the armoire and crouches down on the floor for a better look --

JANE'S POV, extremely close to the wallpaper: a tiny piece has come away from the wall, curled up at the edges.

Jane picks at it and slowly peels a piece away from the wall.

Suddenly, THUDDING footsteps rush towards her --

*WHAM!* The wall erupts in a violent pounding. It knocks Jane backwards and she slams her head against the armoire.

She scrambles out of the cramped space.

The armoire crashes to the floor.

The wall continues to bang from the inside.

Jane crawls back into bed. She watches in horror as the wall violently shakes.

The door opens and the lights come on. Angela is there.

ANGELA

Jane, what is it? What's wrong?

Jane sobs and points at the wallpaper. Angela turns and sees nothing except the fallen armoire.

ANGELA (CONT'D)  
There's nothing there.

Hazel comes in next.

HAZEL  
What on earth is going on?

ANGELA  
Jane was --

Jane gives Angela a pleading, desperate look.

ANGELA (CONT'D)  
-- sleepwalking, and, when I tried  
to wake her up, she got scared and  
knocked the armoire over.

JANE  
Sorry to wake you, I hope I didn't  
break it.

HAZEL  
It'd give us an excuse to throw it  
out.

Angela helps Jane lift it to reveal a crack in the mirror.  
Jane stares at her reflection, now fractured in half.

(OVER) "ANGIE BABY" by Helen Reddy takes us into --

**MONTAGE - VARIOUS SHOTS - DAY**

TENNIS COURTS: Jane sweating in the hot sun, her head between her knees. Hazel makes her get up to play another round.

KITCHEN: Hazel makes a brownish-green smoothie and pours it in a tall glass. Jane chokes it down.

GRAND ROOM: Jane puts her leg up on a footstool so Hazel can measure her thigh and mark it in her journal.

BATHROOM: Jane looks at her gaunt reflection. She looks gray.

VERANDA: WORKERS arrive to hang Fourth of July decorations.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY: Jane's door stays shut while Workers are busy down below.

MASTER BEDROOM: The wallpaper stares at Jane while she lies in bed, exhausted and immobile.

FRONT PORCH: A Worker hangs a "Welcome" Star-Spangled banner.

END MONTAGE.

**INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY**

Angela walks up to the large, oak door and stops short when she sees the shadow of two feet pacing under the door.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY**

Angela comes in to see Jane in the corner, nose to nose with the wallpaper, tracing the pattern and mumbling to herself.

ANGELA

Jane?

Jane doesn't budge. Angela goes to her. Just as she's about to reach out, Jane follows the pattern around to see Angela.

They both jump.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Were you asleep?

JANE

No, I was trying to make sense of this wallpaper. The pattern doesn't repeat the way that it should. I studied design as an undergrad, and this breaks every design law in the book. It's a pattern, so you'd think it would repeat, but it doesn't, it just goes on and on. I've checked the entire room.

ANGELA

I take it the nap didn't go well?

JANE

Well I haven't been in here but more than twenty minutes.

Angela gives her a strange look. Jane looks at the clock, it's much later than she realized.

JANE (CONT'D)

I guess I was sleeping.

Angela isn't listening, she's got exciting news.

ANGELA

Get this, I was talking to one of those guys downstairs and I asked if he had any grass, you know for the party tonight, and he said, 'I've got something better' --

Angela holds up a little white pill marked 714.

JANE

Is that a Quaalude?

ANGELA

It is indeed. Between the insomnia and the Warden, I figured you could use a cheat day.

Jane looks delighted.

JANE

Hazel would have a feeding frenzy.

ANGELA

So, let that bitch eat cake.

JANE

I'd love to, but I can't. I have to be on my best behavior for this party.

She tries to hand it back, but Angela refuses to take it.

ANGELA

Save it for a rainy day.

**EXT. THE HOUSE - DAY**

Fourth of July decorations are up. CATERERS are arriving.

**INT. THE HOUSE - GRAND ROOM/KITCHEN - DAY**

Hazel moves with grace, weaving in and out of WORKERS and SERVERS as she coordinates prep for the party.

Michael makes a martini for Stephen.

"WALK ON THE WILD SIDE" by Lou Reed plays on the radio.

HAZEL

Will you boys pace yourselves? God only knows what condition Jane will be in. I can only manage one embarrassment at a time.

STEPHEN

How can anyone pace themselves around you?

He takes her around the waist. Hazel playfully pushes him away and keeps moving.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY**

Hazel enters without knocking. Jane isn't in her room.

Hazel sees the water stain near the open window, elongated, like the blurry image of a shadow caught in mid-motion.

Hazel's drawn to it, haunted by a memory. She reaches out --

JANE (O.S.)

Don't touch it!

Hazel jumps. Jane stays in the dark corner.

HAZEL

My goodness, you scared me half to death, where did you come from?

JANE

I've been here the whole time.

Jane steps into the light -- She's stark naked.

HAZEL

Jane! What are you doing?

JANE

Getting ready for the party.

HAZEL

Well cover yourself up, someone could come in here any minute.

Jane puts on a robe and sits down in front of a vanity set. Hazel takes out foam curlers and begins rolling Jane's hair.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

You have more energy than I know what to do with, Jane. You remind me of Michael's grandmother, Opal.

Jane looks in the mirror, past Hazel, at the wallpaper.

JANE  
How come you didn't like her?

HAZEL  
Who said I didn't like her? I loved  
Opal as if she were my own mother.

Jane catches Hazel's eye in the mirror.

HAZEL (CONT'D)  
I'll admit, we didn't always get  
along, but she was a particularly  
challenging woman.

JANE  
How so?

HAZEL  
She was always so busy, she could  
never sit still, just be happy with  
the simple things. She had to be  
the center of attention, always  
with the men, drinking and smoking  
and telling foul jokes. She thought  
she was a real pioneer.

Hazel scoffs.

HAZEL (CONT'D)  
She was an embarrassment is what  
she was. I married Michael's father  
when I was 17 and never in my  
wildest dreams would I have behaved  
in such a manner. But everyone  
loved her. When you're born rich,  
you can get away with murder.

In the mirror, Jane looks at the water stain.

JANE  
Do you know what that water stain  
is from on the wallpaper?

Hazel doesn't even look up.

HAZEL  
It's a sweat stain.

JANE  
Come again?

## HAZEL

It's from sweat. Not water. One summer Opal locked me in here because I didn't like the *precious* wallpaper she had picked out. She said I was going to learn to like it. She kept me in here for two days, and I just sat against the wall with my knees pulled up and my head down. I refused to look at it. And it was so hot that summer, I sweated through my clothes and onto the wallpaper.

Jane grows quiet. She watches Hazel in the mirror as she rolls the perfect curl and pins it to its proper place.

## HAZEL (CONT'D)

Much as I hate to admit it, she taught me a valuable lesson. Some things are out of your control. There's no sense in fighting it, you're only punishing yourself.

(OVER) "DELTA DAWN" by Tanya Tucker starts to play...

**EXT. THE HOUSE - DAY/NIGHT**

ANGLE UP on Jane at the window, looking down at the party as the sun sets on her face.

**INT. THE HOUSE - MASTER BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Jane applies red lipstick in the mirror. The yellow dandelion necklace hangs around her neck.

She looks at the QUAALUDE in her hand. She looks at herself in the mirror, the yellow wallpaper in the background.

She knocks the pill back and swallows it dry.

**INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY/STAIRWAY - NIGHT**

Jane comes out of her room and takes a deep breath.

She puts a pretty smile on her face, and as the music cranks up, she heads downstairs and disappears into the crowd.

**EXT. VERANDA - LATER**

Warm string lights dangle overhead. Soft LAUGHTER and the clink of glasses fill the air as GUESTS mingle. A SERVER passes by with a tray of champagne.

Angela is with Katy. WOMEN fawn over the baby. Angela watches Jane, who is starting to feel the effects of her quaalude.

Jane's in a small circle, smoking and chatting with the men, including Stephen. She lets him caress the back of her arm.

Hazel glares at Jane, threatening her with a look. Jane waves with a warm smile.

Angela walks over with Katy.

ANGELA

I'm going to put her down.

JANE

Oh no, is it bedtime already? Give mama a kiss.

Jane takes Katy and covers her in kisses, then starts to dance with her. Angela takes Katy back.

ANGELA

Okay then. That's enough playtime for Mommy.

(leans in, whispers)

Take it easy, Hazel's watching.

Angela starts to go when Jane grabs her by the arm, her eyes are black and glassy.

JANE

Thank you. For everything. I mean it, I'd be dead without you.

Jane kisses her on the mouth. Angela laughs, interest piqued.

ANGELA

I should give you drugs more often.

Hazel is utterly mortified. As Angela goes off with Katy, she marches over to Jane.

HAZEL

Are you on something, what did you take?

JANE

That, actually, is none of your business.

STEPHEN

Don't rain on her parade, she's having a good time.

JANE

Where's your sense of fun, *Mother*.

Hazel's not going to get ugly in front of Stephen and Jane knows it. They stare each other down.

Jane starts to dance, losing herself in the music. Stephen takes her by the waist. He pulls her in close --

Something WHISTLES like a missile shooting off into the sky --

*BOOM!* A firework explodes.

Jane's awestruck by the flood of light. The colors burst open and crackle and fall like stars through the black sky.

Jane sees SOMETHING crawling behind the rickety fence that leads down to the beach -- and then it's dark again.

*BOOM!* Again, the night is illuminated. Jane sees a SHADOW scurry up to the house and begin crawling up the side of it.

It's dark again.

Jane's cigarette burns her finger. She throws it down.

*BOOM!* Jane's fingernails are stained yellow. The falling fireworks begin to blur around her.

*BOOM!* Another one goes off. Jane looks up to see the Shadow inside her room with its back to the window.

Angela emerges from the house. Janes rushes over in a panic.

JANE (CONT'D)

Is Katy upstairs?

ANGELA

Yeah, why? What's wrong?

**INT. THE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Jane bursts in. The furniture is pushed away from the wall. She tries the light, but the lamps have all been unplugged.

The door shuts behind Jane and LOCKS.

Jane yanks at the doorknob.

Katy coos from her crib.

*BOOM!* A firework lights up the room. Jane sees the Shadow crouched behind the dresser.

She grabs Katy and backs away.

It falls dark again.

Then a loud WHISTLE outside, and *KABOOM!* Another firework.

Through the slats of the metal bed frame, see the Shadow crawling on all fours along the wall, towards Jane.

The firework dies and the room is enveloped in darkness.

Jane's breathing is heard in the pitch black. Then, the breathing of someone else --

*BOOM!* Light dances across Jane's face --

Behind her, a HAND reaches out for her. Rotten skin hangs from the dead fingertips. Hear bones crack and break as the Shadow reaches further and further...

Jane stares into the empty room, unaware of the hand.

It's mere inches away, black fingertips hover over the scar on Jane's neck and then reaches down to pick at it --

Jane SCREAMS.

#### **EXT. VERANDA - NIGHT**

ANGLE ON Angela as she hears Jane's scream.

#### **INT. THE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Katy's crying in Jane's arms. Jane pounds on the locked door. The Shadow is snaking along the wall, heading towards them.

#### **INT. FOYER/STAIRWAY - NIGHT**

A CROWD of people stare at the closed door as Jane cries out. No one makes a move to help. Angela emerges, pushing people out of the way. She hears Jane SCREAM again.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Angela opens the door to see Jane backing out of an open window with Katy in her arms.

ANGELA  
Jane, stop.

But she's too late --

Jane steps off the ledge and onto the roof below.

**EXT. ROOF - NIGHT**

Jane backs away just as Angela reaches out for her. She walks further out, her bare feet cling to the slanted roof.

**EXT. THE VERANDA - NIGHT**

Guests gasp as they see Jane on the roof with Katy.

Michael looks up to see Jane on the roof with Katy. He runs off. Hazel's right behind him

**EXT. ROOF - NIGHT**

Katy cries. Jane holds her close.

ANGELA  
Jane, stop. Please come back inside.

JANE  
I can't, she's in there. She wants to hurt Katy.

ANGELA  
No one is in here but me.

Jane stops. She wants to believe Angela, but she's terrified.

ANGELA (CONT'D)  
It's okay. I promise, come here.

Angela reaches out for Jane, but Michael pulls her away.

**INT. THE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Angela is shoved out of the way. Hazel corners her.

HAZEL  
What did you give her?

**EXT. ROOF - NIGHT**

Michael holds onto the window while he slowly sits down. He's terrified of heights. The earth wobbles down below.

MICHAEL  
Come back inside, Goose.

JANE  
I'm sorry.

MICHAEL  
It's okay, baby. Just come to me.

Jane makes her way back.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Good girl. Give me Katy

Jane holds her out for Michael to take.

Michael has to let go of the window and stand up to take her. His legs are like jello.

Katy kicks her legs, suspended in mid-air.

He takes Katy and quickly grabs the window. He slides back down to a sitting position and passes her off to Hazel.

He turns back to help Jane.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
C'mon, baby. Be careful.

She takes a step towards him, but her foot slips --

Jane slides down the roof and hits the concrete below.

CUT TO BLACK.

**INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

Jane looks terrible under the fluorescent lights. Sleep deprived and wild-eyed with a bandaged cut on her head.

The doctor wraps her arm in a cast. Hazel is close by.

**EXT. THE HOUSE - NEXT MORNING**

WORKERS are on ladders, installing iron bars on the windows.

**INT. THE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY**

Another WORKER nails down the furniture.

**INT. DEN - DAY**

Michael stares out the window, contemplative. Katy is asleep in her bassinet. Hazel enters.

HAZEL

They're wrapping things up now and then I'm sending everyone home.

MICHAEL

What about Angela?

HAZEL

I fired her and don't you dare give her severance pay, not after what she did.

MICHAEL

Someone should be here with you.

HAZEL

I have you, dear.

MICHAEL

I have to go back to the city, my proposal is due in two days.

HAZEL

Oh. Well, I can manage.

MICHAEL

You don't think they'll write about this in the newspaper, do you?

HAZEL

What is there to write about? She slipped off the roof. Her arm is broken, she isn't dead.

MICHAEL

Maybe she should see a doctor?

HAZEL

You're a doctor, you'd be the first to know if something was wrong.

MICHAEL

I mean a psychiatrist. I could have her placed on a 72 hour hold.

HAZEL

Absolutely not. I can keep this incident from hitting the papers, but not if you have her committed. Your name will be ruined.

Michael isn't entirely convinced.

MICHAEL

Okay then. But only if you're sure?

HAZEL

I'm positive. We'll be fine.

**INT. STAIRWAY/UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY**

Angela drops her bags by the front door and heads upstairs.

**INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY**

Angela stops at the large oak door. She's about to knock when she hears something...

She leans in close to listen. It's the faint sound of Jane's voice, mumbling incoherently to herself.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY**

Angela comes in to find Jane crouched down on all fours, her face inches from the wallpaper.

ANGELA

Jane?

She turns to Angela, thrilled like a girl with a secret.

JANE

She shouldn't have locked me in here, but it's good that she did because now I understand.

ANGELA

The door locks from the inside,  
Hazel didn't lock you in here --

JANE

Not Hazel. The woman in the  
wallpaper, she did it.

ANGELA

What woman?

JANE

I figured it out. It's a woman,  
she's trapped in the paper. That's  
why we're here, I have to set her  
free. Michael didn't think I'd see  
her, but I see her all the time.

ANGELA

Do you see her right now?

Jane's eyes glide past her to the wallpaper.

JANE

No. She stays very still during the  
day, but at night she gets out.

ANGELA

Does she tell you to do things?

JANE

I can't talk about that.

Angela speaks in a delicate manner.

ANGELA

Jane, I'm going back to the city.  
Would you like to come with me? I  
think you should see a doctor.

JANE

Mm, no. I don't want to go outside,  
it's green out there, I want to be  
in here where it's yellow.

ANGELA

I think you're sick and I want to  
get you some help, okay?

Jane looks scared. She leans in to whisper.

JANE

She won't let me leave.

ANGELA  
We'll come back for her.

Jane starts to cry.

JANE  
You're lying.

ANGELA  
She's not safe to be around, and I  
think deep down you know that?

JANE  
Yeah, she's dangerous. She scares  
me and she's always with me.

Angela takes Jane by the hand and leads her towards the door.

**INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

Angela comes out first. Jane steps out behind her. There's something different about her.

Follow behind "Jane", see her scar is on the other side of her neck (a reflection of the real Jane).

JANE  
(unrecognizable)  
You can't make me.

Angela turns back.

ANGELA  
What --

ANGLE ON Angela, horrified by what she sees.

Jane shoves Angela backwards.

Time seems to slow as Angela hits the banister and her feet fly up into the air. Then, time catches back up and --

*THWACK!* Angela's body smacks against the tile below.

LOW ANGLE on Angela's dead eyes, her limbs askew and her neck twisted sideways. Up above, a blurry Jane looks on.

**EXT. THE HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT**

Red lights flash to the sound of silence.

ANGLE UP on Jane, arm in a cast, watching from her barred window, as a bodybag is loaded onto a gurney.

Find Michael nearby, talking to a POLICE OFFICER.

POLICE OFFICER  
You say, she fell?

MICHAEL  
Yes. Frankly, I think she was on something. We've had a problem with her using drugs in the past.

PUSH IN on Jane watching from the window, a darkness churning inside of her.

**INT. THE HOUSE - LAUNDRY ROOM - NEXT DAY**

Soothing sound of a TUMBLE DRYER. Find Hazel folding laundry.

"COAT OF MANY COLORS" by Dolly Parton softly plays on the radio. Hazel hums along.

Something catches her eye: a stain on one of Jane's white blouses, a yellow smudge on the shoulder.

**INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY**

All the furniture has been shoved out into the hallway.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY**

Hazel comes in to find the room bare of furniture save for the metal bed frame. The floors are splintered and gouged out where the furniture was ripped up.

Hazel notices an oily-smudge along the wallpaper, about three feet off the ground, running the entire span of the room.

As Hazel turns, Jane comes out of nowhere (as if she came out of the wallpaper) dressed in a yellow, floral princess gown.

HAZEL  
What on earth are you wearing?

JANE  
Where's my baby?

HAZEL  
She's napping.

JANE

I want her.

HAZEL

I'm going to watch her for now,  
until you get better.

JANE

Am I sick?

Hazel ignores the question.

HAZEL

Dinner is at six.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Jane applies her make-up like a little girl. Smeared lipstick and heavy blue eye shadow. She checks herself in the mirror.

JANE

(sings)

*Janey, come out and play with me,  
and bring your dollies three...*

Her scar pulses... and then slowly starts to split...

Tiny black fingers sprout out of the scar and tear it open.

Jane's neck snaps to the side as a formless creature slowly begins to crawl out of her.

**INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT**

Hazel sets the table. Jane comes twirling around the corner in her yellow dress. She makes a beeline for Katy.

Hazel blocks her path.

HAZEL

Eat your dinner before it gets cold.

They eat in silence.

Jane rips through her meal like a ravenous animal. Grease glistens off her fingers, her tongue roams freely outside her mouth, licking the remnants off her face.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

It may not seem like it now, but you're making progress dear.

Jane brushes the hair out of her face and sits up straight to flash her best smile. Her teeth are stained yellow.

JANE

Really? You think so?

HAZEL

The difference is night and day.  
Soon, you'll be good as new.

Katy starts to cry. Hazel picks her up. Jane watches her with laser-like intensity.

JANE

Like you?

HAZEL

Absolutely, and to think you did it  
in spite of that yellow wallpaper.

JANE

Perhaps because of it.

Hazel forces a laugh. Jane lets out a boisterous laugh.

Surprised by the outburst, Hazel drops Katy's pacifier.

Jane cocks her head to the side as she watches it roll across the floor.

Jane slinks down onto her hands and feet and crawls across the room to pick up the pacifier.

She hands the pacifier to Hazel and takes her seat. She drums her fingers on the table, smacking her lips.

JANE (CONT'D)

I'll get the dessert.

Jane scurries off. Moments later, a racket erupts from the kitchen. Cabinet doors slamming shut, utensils clattering --

#### **INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Hazel comes in to find all the cabinets and drawers hanging open. Jane pulls pots and pans out onto the floor.

JANE

Hazel... Where are the knives?

HAZEL

I'll do it, I don't mind.

JANE  
I do. Where are they?

HAZEL  
You're getting upset, why don't you  
go upstairs and get some rest.

Jane slaps a dish off the counter. Her voice unrecognizable.

JANE  
I am done resting.

Jane closes in on Hazel.

JANE (CONT'D)  
Now tell me, where are my knives?

HAZEL  
You told me to hide them.

JANE  
From who?

HAZEL  
From you.

Jane's eyes glisten with amusement. She looks up in the direction of her room.

JANE  
That was very clever of me. And you  
didn't tell anyone?

HAZEL  
Of course not.

JANE  
Tsk. Tsk. Tsk. You've been helping  
her, haven't you?

HAZEL  
What?

JANE  
Have you been letting her out?

HAZEL  
I don't know what you're talking  
about --

Jane's head suddenly whips around.

JANE  
Shhh. Do you smell that?

She sniffs the air.

JANE (CONT'D)  
She's here.

HAZEL  
Who?

Fear suddenly washes over Jane. She regresses back into her old self and turns to Hazel like a frightened child.

JANE  
We can't let her out.

**INT. KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Hazel's on the phone. Katy's in her bassinet. Through a large window behind them, see Jane galloping towards the TOOL SHED.

HAZEL (INTO PHONE)  
Stephen? You need to come over.

**EXT. THE HOUSE - NIGHT**

Stephen rounds the corner to see Jane dowsing the side of the house in lighter fluid.

She lights a match and Stephen is on her in an instant. He wrestles her to the ground. Jane flails her arms.

JANE  
Let me go.

He pries the matches from her hand and throws them down. Jane dives for them, but he grabs her by the legs. Jane claws at the grass as he drags her back towards him.

**INT. THE HOUSE - FOYER/STAIRWAY - NIGHT**

Hazel watches as Stephen drags Jane inside, kicking and screaming. She desperately reaches for the handrail.

With every step, Jane grows more and more terrified. She bucks and screams, flailing her arms.

JANE  
Please, no.

He opens the door.

JANE (CONT'D)  
Don't put me back in the room. NO.

She clings to the doorway, kicking at Stephen, sobbing. He pries her fingers loose.

JANE (CONT'D)  
Stephen, no. Please --

He yanks her inside and the door slams shut.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NEXT MORNING**

Jane's arms and legs are strapped to the bed. She stares at the wallpaper in a catatonic state.

Stephen looks at her spread out and strapped down. He rubs the front of his jeans. Hazel comes in.

HAZEL  
Now, this isn't something we need to mention to Michael. Or anyone else.

STEPHEN  
I wouldn't dream of it.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - LATER**

Hazel comes in and unbuttons Jane's blouse to feed Katy.

JANE  
Let me hold her?

HAZEL  
Oh now you want to act like a loving mother?

JANE  
Please. I'm sorry.

Hazel ignores that.

HAZEL  
You know what occurred to me the other day. They should have locked your mother up a lot sooner than they did. To think of the impact she had on you, it's just terrible. It makes you wonder if you would have been better off without her.

Jane suddenly stills. A dark rage floods her face. Hazel buttons Jane's blouse and takes Katy away.

Katy cries. Jane watches as the door shuts and Katy's cries fade into silence.

Jane turns to the wallpaper with unbridled fury in her eyes. She begins clawing at her scar, trying to tear it open.

**INT. KITCHEN - DAY**

A MINT-GREEN BLENDER whirls to life. Hazel pours a greenish-brown smoothie into a glass and sets the blender in the sink.

She sets the smoothie on a breakfast tray. There's a tiny glass vase in the corner with a small, YELLOW FLOWER.

**INT. STAIRWAY - DAY**

Follow Hazel as she ascends the stairs with the tray.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY**

Hazel comes in and drops the tray.

Dishes crash against the floor.

HAZEL'S POV: The room is empty. Jane isn't in bed. The leather straps have been chewed through.

Behind Hazel, see Jane scurry out of the room on all fours.

**INT. DINING ROOM - DAY**

Katy's bassinet sits on the table.

In the distance, the shadow of Jane appears in an open doorway. She spider-crawls across the room and up onto the table to look in the bassinet --

No Katy.

Jane hurls the bassinet against the wall.

She looks around and then spots Hazel's closed bedroom door.

**INT. HAZEL'S BEDROOM - DAY**

Jane tries to open Hazel's door, but it's locked. Jane puts an ear to the door and hears Katy's soft COOS from inside.

Jane's eyes are wild with delight. She throws her shoulder against the door, she kicks and bangs on it.

But it's no use. She needs something to pry it open.

HAZEL (O.S.)

Jane?

**INT. GRAND ROOM/HAZEL'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

ANGLE ON Hazel as she rounds the corner to her bedroom door.

Jane is gone.

Hazel looks around, suspicious. She twists the door knob to double check that it's locked and then hurries off.

**EXT. THE BEACH - SUNSET**

The sun sinks behind the ocean. Stephen walks barefoot along the beach. Up ahead, the door to the tool shed hangs open.

**INT. TOOL SHED - SUNSET**

Jane stands before a wall of tools -- axe, garden sheers, curved arm saw, rope -- trying to decide which one to use.

The light on the wall is suddenly blocked out when the door to the shed slowly creaks shut.

Jane jerks her ear back towards the door, listening to the sound of someone locking it.

STEPHEN

You're not supposed to be outside  
by yourself.

Jane smiles as her hand glides over a work table, and almost indiscernibly, picks something up.

His gaze runs over her body. Jane doesn't move. She waits for him to come closer... He leans in close --

*WHAM!* She drives a SCREWDRIVER up into his groin.

He cries out and backs away.

Blood soaks through his jeans. His face turns white as he slides to the ground, gasping in pain.

Jane crawls over to him and hovers extremely close.

She yanks the screwdriver out, he lets out a blood-curdling scream. Blood pours out of his groin.

Through the open door, see Jane galloping towards the house.

**INT. THE HOUSE - KITCHEN - SUNSET**

Hazel on the phone. It rings and rings and rings --

JANE (O.S.)  
Frustrating, isn't it?

Hazel turns to see Jane standing behind her.

JANE (CONT'D)  
It rings and rings, and no one ever picks up. Makes you wonder why we even have this fuckin' thing.

She yanks the cord out the wall and turns to Hazel.

JANE (CONT'D)  
I need the key to your room.

HAZEL  
Get back upstairs.

JANE  
Not without my baby.

Hazel takes Jane by the arm. She sees the blood on her hands.

HAZEL  
Is that blood?

Hazel scans Jane's body for the wound, but doesn't see one.

HAZEL (CONT'D)  
Who's blood is this?

Jane plays with Hazel's hair.

HAZEL (CONT'D)  
Jane, I asked you a question.

Jane ignores her, twirling her fingers through strands of Hazel's hair. Her hand glides down towards her neck --

Hazel slaps it away. A flash of anger crosses Jane's face.

HAZEL (CONT'D)  
Answer me. Who's blood is this?

Jane's eyes are black. She blinks innocently and turns her hands over. Then, a mischievous smile spreads cross her face.

JANE  
Why Mother, it's yours.

Hazel makes a break for it. Jane grabs the blender out of the sink and brings it down hard on Hazel's head.

Hazel crumbles to the floor, her body now hidden behind the island. Jane stands over her and brings down the blender.

Again and again and again...

The room is deadly quite save for the sound of the thick glass smashing into Hazel's skull, over and over again.

Jane brings the blender over her head, blood slings through the air. She brings it down and blood splatters on her face.

The blender breaks. Thick glass scatters across the floor.

Hazel's feet go limp.

Jane slowly stands, breathing in the glorious moment.

Katy cries from the next room.

**INT. HAZEL'S BEDROOM - DAY**

ANGLE ON Katy as she cries from the top drawer of Hazel's dresser. A SHADOW suddenly falls over Katy.

KATY'S POV: It's Jane, completely unhinged.

JANE  
There there, mommy's here now.

**INT. MASTER BATHROOM - DAY**

Jane sings a lullaby, blood still splattered on her face, as she gives Katy a bath.

JANE  
(sings)  
*Kaaaaaty, I can't come play with  
you. My mommy's got the flu. Boo  
hoo hoo hoo hoo.*

She puts Katy in her crib.

JANE (CONT'D)  
(sings)  
*Ain't got no rain barrel, ain't got  
no cellar door, but we'll be jolly  
friends forever more.*

Jane drags Katy's crib to the middle of the room. When she does, something rolls out from under the wooden leg.

Jane stares at it for a moment before reaching down to pick it up -- it's the YELLOW DANDELION NECKLACE from Angela.

**EXT. THE HOUSE - NIGHT**

Night falls on the house. Michael's station wagon pulls into the driveway.

**INT. THE HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT**

The house is darkly lit and unusually quiet. A grandfather clock ticks forward one second at a time.

Michael walks through the front door, cautious.

MICHAEL  
Mother?

There's no response.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Jane?

He's grateful to be met with silence a second time. He sets his briefcase down and we track him through the house.

It is perfectly clean. No dust. Nothing out of place. The polished floor reflects Michael as he walks across the room.

He rounds the corner and goes into --

**INT. GRAND ROOM - NIGHT**

He turns on a small table lamp and walks across the room to the bar area in the back.

He takes a high ball glass down and checks for smudges. He opens a new bottle of whiskey and checks the ice bucket.

No ice.

Michael pours the whiskey neat and crosses into --

**INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Michael walks straight to the fridge, the island is on the edge of his peripheral vision.

He opens the freezer door, which blocks his view of Hazel's bloody body, splayed across the floor behind him.

He drops the ice into his glass and lets the freezer door swing shut on its own. As it does, he takes a long drink.

The ice clinks in the glass.

The freezer door shuts.

Michael looks up and the highball glass drops from his hand.

Blood covers the floor and the lower cabinets. Hazel's body is splayed out in the middle. Her face is badly beaten, beyond recognition.

As horror consumes him, a guttural roar rips through him --

MICHAEL  
MOTHER!

Michael slips in her blood as he goes to her.

He rocks her back and forth, sobbing.

Then fury sinks in.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
JANE!

He lays his mother down and tears off upstairs, drenched in Hazel's blood.

**INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Michael pounds on the door.

MICHAEL  
Jane, open this door.

He kicks and pounds, throwing his shoulder against the door. When she doesn't answer he bolts down the stairs.

**EXT. THE HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT**

Michael races across the yard towards the tool shed.

**EXT. TOOL SHED - NIGHT**

Michael tries to open the door, but it catches on something. He shoves his way inside.

**INT. TOOL SHED - NIGHT**

Michael fumbles for the light. He clicks it on to find --

Stephen's slumped over against the wall, a thick pool of blood has dried around him.

MICHAEL  
Oh God, help me.

Michael steps over the body and takes the axe off the wall.

**INT. THE HOUSE - STAIRWAY - NIGHT**

Michael takes the stairs two at a time. The axe by his side.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Jane hurries from one wall to the next, ripping down the yellow wallpaper. She claws at the stubborn pieces, even resorts to using her teeth.

Katy's crib is in the foreground, eerily quiet.

*CRACK!* An axe blade splits the wooden door. Light breaks into the room.

Hear Jane's voice, but it doesn't come from her mouth.

JANE (O.S.)  
You'd better hurry.

Jane rushes back and forth, pulling and tearing. She tries to move the bed, but it's nailed to the floor. She snarls at it, hops on the bed and bites at the bed post.

She yanks at the bed. The wood creaks as the nails try to hold on. Jane pulls harder, the nails start to come loose.

*CRACK!* A tiny stream of light breaks through the door as Michael continues to break it down.

Jane shoves the bed away from the wall to reveal --

The final piece of the wallpaper.

Jane gets a hold of the corner and slowly peels it away. Tears of joy stream down her face. She laughs, wildly.

The walls are completely bare now. A new Jane slowly stands up into the frame like a phoenix rising from the ashes.

Jane goes over to the bare walls. She runs her hand along it, until she leads herself down into a crouching position. She nestles her shoulder against the wall, where the oil smudge used to be and starts crawling around the room...

Over and over and over...

Michael's arm busts through the splintered panel. Jane picks up the pace, breaking into a gallop.

He unlocks the door and shoves it open.

Michael stops.

His rage devolves into pure horror.

MICHAEL  
My God, Jane --

MICHAEL'S POV: The room is exactly as it was the day they moved in. None of the wallpaper has been torn down. The chaos that was happening moments ago is gone.

SLOWLY WIDEN OUT TO REVEAL: Jane's body hanging from the rafters. She's been dead for hours.

Michael is stunned. The words catch in his mouth.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
What have you done?

A Shadow steps in front of him.

SHADOW  
I've gotten out of the wallpaper.

The WOMAN IN THE WALLPAPER steps into the light --

It's Jane.

JANE'S SHADOW  
I've gotten out Michael, and you  
and Jane can't put me back.

Michael stares at his wife's face in utter disbelief. Beyond it, Jane's body swings from a noose.

He tries to run, but slips on a small pool of blood. He smacks his head against Katy's crib and falls to the floor.

Jane's shadow drops to all fours. She crawls over the top of him, cocks her head to the side and then climbs over him and continues on her path along the wallpaper.

Round and round she goes while Jane's body swings overhead.

TILT DOWN past Jane's dangling feet to find Katy's crib.

A heavy silence hangs in the air.

Katy starts to cry.

Inside the crib, Katy wails at the top of her lungs as the shadow of her mother swings overhead.

Hanging on the crib is the dandelion necklace that Angela gave to Jane. A torch of hope to pass on.

Katy's cry morphs into police sirens. RED FLASHING lights whirl around the room.

Jane's shadow creeps back behind the wallpaper as a blur of bodies come and go -- POLICE, PARAMEDICS, BODYBAGS.

EXT. THE HOUSE - NIGHT

PARAMEDICS load a bodybag into an ambulance, next to Stephen who has an oxygen mask over his face.

COPPER  
That one still alive?

PARAMEDIC  
Barely.

COPPER

(re: Stephen's groin)

I'd rather be dead.

PARAMEDIC

Better him than the other guy. His wife and his mother? He has to live with that for the rest of his life.

PAN OVER to Michael on the curb holding Katy. He's in a daze, hardly able to comprehend everything that just happened.

**EXT. THE HOUSE - DAY**

Summer turns to fall. A "FOR SALE" SIGN appears in the front yard. A '74 YELLOW FORD MUSTANG pulls up.

**INT. THE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY**

Sunlight fills the room. The bedroom door hangs open. Hear the cheery voices of a YOUNG COUPLE touring the house.

The wooden stairs creak under their footsteps --

The REALTOR and the young couple, HANK and SANDY, step into the room...

REALTOR

There's plenty of space for when you start a family.

HANK

Oh this is great, huh babe, what do you think?

Hank loves it. Sandy is suspicious.

SANDY

Why are they renting it for so cheap?

REALTOR

The bank had to foreclose on it.

Sandy stares at the wallpaper, skeptical.

SANDY

Maybe something happened here.

The Realtor and Hank exchange a condescending smirk.

HANK

You'll have to forgive my wife, she  
loves a good horror story.

Sandy moves in closer, inching towards the wallpaper. She  
narrows her eyes, scanning the details --

HANK (CONT'D)

Honey?

REVERSE TO REVEAL: Jane's face pressed against the bars of  
the pattern, staring right at us.

REVERSE ON Sandy. She has no reaction. She doesn't see  
anything but the wallpaper. She merely shrugs.

SANDY

I thought I saw something.

Jane's yellow teeth reveal themselves in the dark as she  
smiles and sinks back behind the wallpaper.

FADE TO YELLOW.

(OVER) "I AM WOMAN" by Helen Reddy plays as CREDITS ROLL.

**THE END**