

# DEADLY ILLUSIONS

by  
Anna Elizabeth James

ALL WHITE SHOOTING SCRIPT 11.17.19  
Kiss and Tale Productions, LLC

1

**EXT. SMALL TOWN, BOOKSTORE - SUNRISE**

1

FOG THAT LINGERS. MORNING LIGHT BREAKS. From high above we float down, through a SEA OF TREES to a quaint CITY STREET.

We pass DOZENS OF EAGER PATRONS eagerly waiting in line to enter a QUAIN'T and CHARMING BOOKSTORE. As CUSTOMERS enter and exit we land on a CENTER TABLE featuring a COLLECTION of BESTSELLING BOOKS.

On the table, a SIGN -- "MUST READ SERIES' OF THE DECADE"

One SERIES stands out from the others:

**"MARY MORRISON, NEW YORK TIMES BEST SELLING AUTHOR. MILLIONS SOLD WORLDWIDE. *Passion, sex, lies, betrayal.*"**

CUSTOMERS peruse the array of books, picking up Morrison's more than the others.

One by one, Mary's books disappear from off the table.

As CUSTOMERS move back and forth, the camera pans over to reveal the last book of the SERIES: a PHOTO of a WOMAN'S HAND with a KNIFE behind her back, BLOOD DRIPPING to the floor.

The book entitled: **DELIRIUM, DARK PLACES.**

**CUT TO BLACK.**

1A

**MAIN TITLE: GRACE**

1A

2

**INT. MORRISON HOME, KITCHEN - MORNING**

2

SCRAMBLED EGGS. BROWN PAPER LUNCH SACKS. A WOMAN'S HANDS move briskly, accomplishing numerous tasks at once for the morning's routine -- BACON, DISHES, FRESH FRUIT. A BLENDER turns round and round blending GREENS into a HEALTH SHAKE.

HOMEMADE BREAD is cut into slices with a BREAD KNIFE.

Suddenly a KNICK of the finger -- a small drop of BLOOD.

WOMAN

Damn it.

(yelling upstairs)

Sam! Alex!

The WOMAN tends to the WOUND, sucking her finger.

Upper-middle class home, restoration style, minimalist lines with touches of femininity. Up-to-date kitchen, modern hardware -- all proof of a bestselling novelist's income.

This is MARY MORRISON (47) living her second best life as a stay-at-home mom. Intelligent yet restless. Mary enjoys her new chapter but sometimes finds herself not engaged in the task at hand, quietly suffering from a lack of stimulation.

She double checks the LUNCHES to ensure they're packed right.

TOAST pops up. ORGANIC BUTTER spread over top with GOLD PLATED SILVERWARE. Mary grabs a PEN, jotting down HANDWRITTEN NOTES for her TWO CHILDREN as if she were a CEO of a corporation needing to come up with something eloquent.

Just then her TWINS (6) enter.

Mary tucks the HANDWRITTEN NOTES in their Lunches.

SAM

Mom, do we have to go to recital tonight?

ALEX

Yeah, can't we skip just this once?

ALEX (CONT'D)

Pleeeeeease.

SAM

Pleeeeeease.

SAMUEL, a boy and ALEXANDRA, a girl -- are FRATERNAL TWINS. Both bright and smart, unaware of their privilege.

MARY

No, we can not.

(Beat)

Because we have to see things through. Kids in impoverished countries wish they had the same problems you did. Now sit and eat or we'll be late.

SAM

But we're never late.

MARY

Exactly.

The TWINS eat.

TOM MORRISON (40), dressed in an IMPECCABLE SUIT AND TIE enters, kissing his wife on the lips while playfully touching her bum without the Twins noticing.



MARY  
Love you too.

SAM  
Bye mom.

MARY  
Bye buddy. Have a good day.

Just then the WOMAN approaches. Mary rolls down her window.

ELAINE  
This fundraiser is going to be the death of me.  
(Beat)  
Coffee? I don't have to be in the office until noon.

MARY  
I wish. I have that thing this morning ...

ELAINE  
Oh that's right. How could I forget. Today's the day I get my hot mess of a friend back!

ELAINE (40) dressed in SLIGHTLY RIPPED JEANS, HIGH HEELS and TRENDY HAT -- is a good mother but not as doting as Mary. A free spirit. A friend you drink mimosas with on a Tuesday afternoon. Voluptuous, sassy style, and wicked smart.

MARY  
Ha. I'm retired, remember?

ELAINE  
Retired my ass. You and I both know what that means.  
(Beat)  
Every woman needs her own thing Mary.

MARY  
I only agreed to the meeting to ensure my residuals keep coming in.

ELAINE  
Decide on what you're wearing yet?

Elaine looks down at Mary in her SILK ROBE and SLIPPERS.

ELAINE (CONT'D)  
Better not be a pantsuit. You know how I feel about you and suits.  
(MORE)



7A **EXT. MORRISON HOME, DRIVE WAY - NEXT MOMENT** 7A

TWO ASSOCIATES exit their SEDAN and walk towards the MAIN FRONT DOOR. Mary spots them as they approach.

7B **INT. MORRISON HOME, COURTYARD FRONT DOOR- NEXT MOMENT** 7B

She OPENS THE FRONT DOOR, welcoming them --

MARY

Kioki, so good to see you!

An ASIAN MAN (35), wide-eyed and handsome, kisses Mary on the cheek. This is KIOKI MITSUTASHI, hard working and respectable -- longs to be the hero but caves to the bottom line.

KIOKI

Mary, dazzling as ever. I brought my new associate, Darlene.

MARY

Nice to meet you. Please come in.

8 **INT. MORRISON HOME, COURTYARD SEATING AREA - CONTINUOUS** 8

Mary escorts them to her FRONT SEATING AREA.

MARY

Please, have a seat. Let me grab us something to drink.

KIOKI

Looks as though you're keeping busy.

MARY (O.S.)

Very. You know how it goes. Between school committees, the twins schedules and managing the house -- I barely have time for myself these days.

KIOKI

Thank you again Mary for making the time to meet with us. We won't take long.

Kioki and DARLENE (30's) look around in awe as Mary grabs GLASSES OF WATER from the kitchen.

A VAST OPEN AREA with SUNLIGHT hitting a rectangular shaped WATER FEATURE, surrounded by GRASS and BIRCH TREES in the corners. MARBLE LIKE FLOORS, CHANDELIER LIGHT FIXTURES reminiscent of a popular furniture magazine.

Mary enters, holding THREE GLASSES and a bottle of PELLEGRINO WATER. She sits down and POURS EACH OF THEM WATER then slips on her DARK RIMMED GLASSES, her NOTEBOOK in front of her --

MARY

Shall we?

The two watch as Mary drinks her GLASS OF WATER readily.

KIOKI

Yes, of course. We've had a spectacular quarter. "Delirium" as you know, is still our bestselling series ...

MARY

You want to do a spin-off, hire a ghost writer? Go for it. You know how I feel about this.

KIOKI

Right. Well actually ... along those lines ... we thought ... we sort of had this idea you see ...

Finally, Darlene interjects --

DARLENE

We're struggling Mary. The publishing landscape has changed. We're in the middle of a massive transition, and could use your help.

DEAD SILENCE.

MARY

What is this?

KIOKI

We have an offer for you, one I think --

Kioki opens a PORTFOLIO FOLDER, taking out an ENVELOPE.



DARLENE

The numbers, they make sense. One more book in the series can put us over the edge, help us get through the transition.

KIOKI

And we think there's enough here to make it worthwhile for you.

Mary refuses, not looking at it.

MARY

Stop. Right there.

Mary breathes in, finding composure.

MARY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. This was a mistake. I should have never agreed to have you come here. I thought this was going to be something else Kioki. You misled me.

KIOKI

Mary, I --

MARY

You will find a way, I'm sure. We've been through this before.

Kioki and Darlene attempt to interject but it's no use.

Mary gets up, leading them out.

KIOKI

My apologies.

9      **INT/EXT. MORRISON HOME, COURTYARD FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS**      9

Kioki kisses Mary on the cheek, then before exiting --

KIOKI (CONT'D)

(in her ear)

Your check will continue to arrive every quarter.

He smiles and leaves, walking to his CAR. Darlene cordially shakes Mary's hand, then pauses to step closer --

DARLENE

Must be nice.

MARY

Pardon?

DARLENE

Not having to worry about your children, whether or not they'll have a roof over their heads or a good school to attend. You're Mary Morrison, the "bestselling author".

(Beat)

Yet there was a time when Mary couldn't even get one publisher to read her work -- so she resorted to writing salacious stories -- and now gets to sit back and rake in the residuals with no thought of how she got there or who put her there.

Beat.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

I am right, aren't I?

MARY

This is absurd. You have no idea what you're talking about. You know nothing about me. And should be fired.

Mary shuts the door on her, shocked by the audacity.

10           **INT. MORRISON HOME, COURTYARD FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS**           10

Mary stands motionless, upset. She replays the moment with Darlene, whom she never met before. She shakes it off, resuming to house duties then spots the ENVELOPE and grabs it taking it inside to the main house.

11           **INT. MORRISON HOME, KITCHEN - LATER THAT NIGHT**           11

MUSIC PLAYS from a RECORD PLAYER as Mary prepares dinner in the kitchen. Dressed in her favorite WORN APRON she dances to the beat as Sam and Alex do HOMEWORK at the kitchen island.

Just then Tom enters from work.

MARY

Hey babe!

(Beat)

Made your favorite.



Sam and Alex sit down at the table. Mary joins. Tom stands motionless, thinking. Mary gets up, realizing his puzzlement and approaches him from behind.

MARY (CONT'D)

(whispering)

I'm sorry. I had no idea. I wasn't trying to hide anything from you. This executive, she must have slipped it on my desk when they visited today ...

TOM

(whispering)

Never mind that.

(lovingly)

Mary, you have to seriously consider.

Mary, not wanting to --

Nods.

Tom kisses his wife ravenously, addicted to her in more ways than one. The Morrison's sit down to eat -- a *happy family*.

14

**INT. MORRISON HOME, MASTER BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT**

14

Under the covers, Tom pleasures his wife with his hand while LICKING her, moving from her groin up to her navel -- resting his chin on her stomach, pausing to look at her.

*A moment.* They kiss again, both naked and completely open. *Genuine love-making.*

Tom continues to pleasure her. Mary enters *ecstasy*. She attempts to stop him, wanting to pleasure him first.

But he refuses.

Tom grabs ahold of her arms, holding them up above her head against the pillow, FORCING her to remain there until he finishes the job.

HANDS CLENCHED in FISTS, Mary begins to CLIMAX.

After ORGASMING Mary ravenously goes for Tom's groin to return the FAVOR. Like a wildcat in the Sahara desert determined to pounce back, she begins SUCKING ...

Tom, now in *ecstasy*.

*The room, dark and indistinguishable. Our eyes strain to see what is happening but Tom's face tells it all.*

As he CLIMAXES, she finishes strong. Lying on the bed, Tom holds her, caressing her.

TOM

Mary, there's something I need to tell you.

Mary kisses him, then gets out of bed, grabbing something from out of her NIGHT STAND. Tom watches as her naked body is covered up by a ROBE and exits onto the BALCONY.

15

**EXT. MORRISON HOME, MASTER PRIVATE PATIO - NEXT MOMENT** 15

A CIGAR is lit. Mary puffs, looking out at their vast backyard. Tom joins, kissing her shoulder. He takes the CIGAR and puffs, giving it back. She looks into him, curious.

Tom struggles to find the words. Mary speculates, having no idea what he's about to say.

TOM

I messed up.

Avoiding her eyes, he finally looks up --

TOM paces back and forth, explaining.

TOM (CONT'D)

Barry ... he kept taunting me to go in with him ... convinced me it was the perfect opportunity ... so I did ... realized we were in over our heads ... we jumped too soon. The plan was to earn it all back before --

MARY

When?

Tom, confused. Her eyes watering.

MARY (CONT'D)

When did you make the trade?

Beat.

TOM

Six months ago.

MARY

God damn you Tom. You've waited six months to tell me this?

Tom tries to touch her, but she pushes him away.

MARY (CONT'D)

How much?

TOM

Nearly half.

MARY

Are you fucking kidding me?! You dipped into the reserves?

He nods. Then goes to touch her again, but she refuses.

MARY (CONT'D)

You promised. You said you would be more careful from here on out.

TOM

I know.

Seeing the anger in her eyes, he concedes and leaves her alone on the private patio and heads back inside.

Mary attempts to remain composed but is unable. A tear falls. As she continues puffing, she thinks about what they're up against, knowing all too well what this means, that she will have to take the offer from her Publisher.

She finishes the CIGAR, then picks up the ALUMINUM COMPACT containing SIX SKINNY CIGARS inside, and shuts it CLOSED.

16

**INT. SPA, STEAM ROOM - NEXT DAY**

16

Mary and Elaine lie NAKED on the bench looking up at the TILE CEILING. STEAM fills the room. OTHER WOMEN come and go. As they chat we follow the curvature of their legs, along their thighs, to their stomachs, up to their lips.

ELAINE

You are taking the offer love.

MARY

Ha. But you've never seen what I'm like while writing.

ELAINE

What does it matter? After you finish everything goes back to normal, right?

Elaine gets up, looking at her friend still lying down.

Mary thinks --

MARY

I become a different person.

The two get up, exiting.

17 **INT. SPA, WALKWAY - CONTINUOUS**

17

As they exit, both grab CLEAN TOWELS from off a SHELF and walk naked towards the SHOWERS passing MORE WOMEN along the way, also naked. A POSH LOCKER ROOM feel, more of a high-end spa for the super confident. Strong and uninhibited women.

***NOTHING QUITE VISIBLE, everything carefully BLOCKED and implied.\*\*\****

18 **INT. SPA, SHOWERS - CONTINUOUS**

18

We follow them as they enter TWO DIFFERENT STALLS side by side, talking to each other over the wall.

**CROSS CUT**

MARY

I told myself, after having the twins, I'd never go back -- that I would never put myself in that position again. If I were to write it would only be for what I wanted to write.

ELAINE

I hear you. But in the five years that I've known you, have you put anything down? This might be the perfect thing -- to kick your ass out the door.

Mary shuts off the shower, thinking. Both of them DRYING off.

ELAINE (CONT'D)

Think of it as momentum to enter a new chapter.

(MORE)

ELAINE (CONT'D)

To get you where you really want to be, so you can create what you really want to create.

EXITING the STALLS, they walk back to the LOCKERS, their hair and bodies wrapped in TOWELS.

19

**INT. SPA, LOCKER AREA - CONTINUOUS**

19

NUMEROUS WOMEN get ready. All shapes, ethnicities and sizes. Ambitious energy that is contagious. The type of locker room seen in movies where the men are having a good time -- *except this is with WOMEN*. Slipping on their bras and panties --

ELAINE

You know what you need? A full-time sitter.

MARY

You mean to say a nanny.

(Beat)

I didn't spend thousands of dollars to conceive these two children, only to spend thousands more and pay someone else to take care of them.

ELAINE

This client of mine, she's like a headhunter for sitters.

Searching her PURSE.

MARY

Here.

Mary looks at the WORN BUSINESS CARD.

MARY (CONT'D)

If she's so great then why aren't you using her?

ELAINE

Out of my price range. Plus, she only takes on certain clients --

Mary slips on a dress, turning around for Elaine to zip her.

MARY

Oh hell no. Those kids always end up with problems.



## ELAINE

I only work three days a week at the clinic but if I had to work full-time this is what I'd do for childcare. The girls she has -- they're different. They attend Ivy leagues, are fluent in at least two languages. Cook, clean, run errands, everything. She recruits the best and rewards them with full-ride scholarships for excellent work. I'm telling you, this is exactly what you need to get through Mary.

Mary analyzes the HIGH END NANNY SERVICE, thinking. Elaine begins blow-drying her hair at the VANITY, chatting with ANOTHER WOMAN beside her who is also getting ready.

20           **EXT. BUSY BOULEVARD, PARKING SPOT - LATER THAT WEEK**           20

Mary parks, checking the address. She looks down at the BUSINESS CARD then back up again. She checks again.

Confused, she enters.

21           **INT. CORPORATE BUILDING, ELEVATOR - NEXT MOMENT**           21

Mary pauses at a sign listing VARIOUS COMPANIES. DOCTOR OFFICES, FINANCIAL FIRMS, etc. Her eyes keep scanning until landing on -- HUNTSMAN ENTERPRISES, LLC. Room 201.

She presses the button, taking the elevator up.

22           **INT. ELEVATOR, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**           22

Mary rounds the corner, walking down a long hallway. Ahead of her, TWO YOUNG WOMEN, deep in conversation. Both dressed fashionably in STYLISH SHOES, DESIGNER JEANS and PURSES.

                  YOUNG WOMAN #1

                  (softly)

                  What was I supposed to do? I had to say something. I told her, "I think your son needs speech therapy."

                  YOUNG WOMAN #2

                  (softly)

                  Oh my god, what did she say? I would have been so afraid she would have fired me on the spot.

YOUNG WOMAN #1  
Just the opposite. If anything she  
trusts me more now.

YOUNG WOMAN #2  
Get out.

MARY  
Excuse me --

One of the YOUNG WOMEN looks up, realizing.

YOUNG WOMAN #1  
Wait.  
(Beat)  
You're Mary Morrison, the famous  
writer. I've read every single one  
of your books! You're like one of  
my biggest inspirations right now.

MARY  
That's so nice, thank you.  
(Beat)  
I'm looking for Huntsman  
Enterprises. Either of you familiar  
--

YOUNG WOMAN #2  
(whispering)  
Oh around the corner, straight down  
the hall.

MARY  
Thanks so much.

YOUNG WOMAN #1  
Hard to believe that's where it is,  
but that is where it is.

MARY  
Thanks again.

As Mary walks towards Room 201, the Young Women quietly freak  
out over their sudden run in with the famous author. Mary  
reaches ROOM 201. On the GLASS DOOR, HUNTSMAN ENTERPRISES.

Mary enters to find a FRONT DESK with a SIGN IN SHEET.

## OFFICE MANAGER

Welcome Ms. Morrison. Angela will be with you shortly. Please, have a seat.

## MARY

Thank you.

She signs then sits down, waiting. As she waits, a YOUNG BOY appears from behind SMALL GLASS BARRIER, his nose pressed against the GLASS. Mary smiles back, realizing he is happy.

A WOMAN appears, dressed sharp.

## ANGELA HUNTSMAN

Mary, so nice to meet you. Please, follow me this way.

23A

**INT. HUNTSMAN ENTERPRISES, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

23A

Mary follows Angela back to her office. As they walk, Angela pauses. Mary looks through GLASS WINDOWS to find CHILDREN of ALL AGES playing. A GLASS BARRIER between her and the play area prevents anyone from entering. Each child with one CAREGIVER, similar to the Young Women in the hall.

Awestruck by what she sees, Mary watches sweet moments between the CHILDREN and their PERSONAL NANNIES.

-- Resting on a PILE OF PILLOWS, under a TENT, a YOUNG WOMAN helps A BOY READ A BOOK. Motherly.

-- In another corner, a YOUNG WOMAN teaches a YOUNG GIRL to TIE HER SHOE, then exuberantly congratulates her.

-- At a TABLE, TWO YOUNG WOMEN sit with A GROUP OF CHILDREN, singing a NURSERY RHYME as they all PREP FOOD to cook.

Mary analyzes the BULLET PROOF GLASS BARRIER. Along the SEALED SEAMS her eyes travel to the MASSIVE LOCK that is only openable through code, key or eye-scan -- the room nearly impenetrable. SAFER than a government building.

24

**INT. HUNTSMAN ENTERPRISES, ANGELA'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

24

ANGELA HUNTSMAN (40), a clever business woman -- savvy yet also warm, is a pro at juggling children and corporatism.

Mary sits as Angela examines her SCREEN, reviewing Mary's info. The office, warm and inviting, is decked out with LEATHER CHAIRS, BOOKSHELVES, COMFY FURNITURE and PLANTS. A GLASS WINDOW on one wall reveals the PLAYROOM.

MARY

I must confess I'm not sure I want this sort of thing. You see --

ANGELA

Nobody knows what they want until they can't live without it.

(Beat)

Sam and Alex, tell me more about them?

MARY

Oh, they're good kids. Fraternal twins. Just turned six. Get along fairly well. Excellent readers. Sam, he sometimes gets overwhelmed, so I have ways, techniques you know, to calm him down. Alex, she's a tomboy -- thinks she can do anything her brother can.

ANGELA

Which she can.

MARY

Of course, which she can.

ANGELA

What are some of the techniques you use to calm Sam down?

MARY

Mainly distraction. Take him outside to play. Art projects. That sort of thing.

ANGELA

Any extracurriculars?

MARY

Both are in piano and soccer. I mean, I don't believe in overwhelming children too much -- so we have a lot of playdates instead.

ANGELA

Totally agree. I think you will be pleasantly surprised with what we can offer you Mary.

(MORE)

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Our young women come from  
impeccable backgrounds -- Many  
attend prestigious schools and are  
looking for creative ways to pay  
tuition. We provide them with  
scholarships based on performance.

MARY

Performance?

ANGELA

We check in with our parents to  
make sure they're satisfied and  
getting the results they want. If  
they are, we have a reward system  
in place.

(Beat)

We accept donations from our  
parents as well, to make sure each  
of our girls are taken care of  
financially.

MARY

I see.

ANGELA

This also prevents any nonsense  
from happening ... we pride  
ourselves on placing caregivers who  
carry the highest moral standards --  
plus we're not blind to what can  
happen, so we ensure the girls are  
incentivized to say no if ever  
placed in a compromising position.

MARY

Compromising. That's a good word.

Mary looks over through the glass at the Children playing.

MARY (CONT'D)

And this room?

ANGELA

Most parents prefer to have help in  
the home but if you need to go out  
of town and want supervision, we  
provide it.

MARY

I see.

ANGELA

How about I send over a few potentials for you to meet with? If none of them work for you, we can revisit and go from there?

Mary, hesitant.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

No need to commit to anything just yet. I want to make sure we find the best fit for you and your family.

Mary looks out the window at the CAREGIVERS being warm and caring with the children.

MARY

Okay, why not.

ANGELA

Great. I just need you to fill out a few more forms.

Angela gathers the FORMS for MARY. As she does, Mary pretends to enjoy the process, but is secretly skeptical.

25           **INT. MORRISON HOME, COURTYARD FRONT DOOR - DAY**           25

Mary gets up, straightening her outfit, then OPENS the DOOR. One by One the POTENTIAL CAREGIVERS enter and shake her hand.

25A           **INT. MORRISON HOME, LIVING ROOM - DAY**           25A

-- The first candidate pulls out HAND SANITIZER and WIPES HER HANDS CLEAN before shaking Mary's.

-- Another enters and sits down. In the midst of Mary asking questions, she secretly CHECKS HER PHONE numerous times.

-- Another TALKS NON-STOP. Mary tries to give the hint by yawning, then gets up to stretch in order to wake herself up. The potential Caregiver has no clue and keeps talking.

-- Another looks at the FRAMED PHOTOS on the BOOKSHELVES behind Mary and ASKS INVADING QUESTIONS, one after another.

-- Another DRESSES SEDUCTIVELY, crossing her legs, not paying attention to her rising and open SHORTS. Mary kindly stops the interview and tells her the position has been filled.

25B           **INT. MORRISON HOME - COURTYARD FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS**           25B

THE FRONT DOOR SHUTS as Mary says goodbye to her last POTENTIAL CANDIDATE. She looks out the WINDOW, realizing everyone has come and gone. Then sits down and sighs, making a call with her EAR BUDS in, resting back in a LOUNGE CHAIR.

**CROSS CUT**

26           **INT. DOWNTOWN BUILDING, ELEVATOR - SAME MOMENT**           26

MEN AND WOMEN, DRESSED PROFESSIONALLY, walk back and forth. Tom walks through the open space ...

TOM

Hey hun. Any luck with the interviews?

MARY

No one impressive yet. Nice girls though.

Tom enters the ELEVATOR and GOES UP.

TOM

Not one?

(Beat)

Think you're being a little too hard on them?

MARY

I don't know Tom. Maybe this isn't a good idea. Can't we get one of your coworker's daughter's, or what about one of those nice girls from church? Have them fill in for a few hours here and there --

27           **INT. DOWNTOWN BUILDING, CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS**           27

Tom enters, walking towards a window for privacy as OTHER EXECUTIVES ARRIVE, prepping for their morning meeting.

TOM

Mary. You're feeling anxious and apprehensive. You and I both know if you don't have someone to take care of the menial stuff it will absolutely kill you. Why not take a break for once, especially when we can afford it this time around?

(MORE)

TOM (CONT'D)

Plus, it could be good for the kids.

MARY

I just can't see anyone else taking care of them better than me.

TOM

This isn't easy for me either. You're the best mother. No one can replace you.

**CROSS CUT**

28           **EXT. MORRISON HOME, COURTYARD FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS**           28

Mary smiles. In her peripheral, she notices someone standing on the doorstep, waiting.

MARY

Oh wait, another girl is here.

TOM

Give this one a chance okay? Love you.

MARY

K, love you too. Bye.

28A           **INT. DOWNTOWN BUILDING, CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS**           28A

Tom hangs up and looks out. Eyes worried, he thinks.

28B           **EXT. MORRISON HOME, COURTYARD FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS**           28B

Mary hangs up with Tom and opens the door to find a MODEST YOUNG WOMAN smiling innocently back at her.

YOUNG WOMAN

Is this --

MARY

Huntsman Enterprises?

YOUNG WOMAN

Yes.

MARY

Please, come in.





YOUNG WOMAN (CONT'D)

But don't worry, I would never with the children.

MARY

Why not? It would be good for them to see a young person reading an actual book. Lord knows we need more of that these days.

The Young Woman smiles, drinking her TEA.

YOUNG WOMAN

Thank you. It was starting to rain a little so this is nice.

Grace notices Mary's looking at her Book Bag.

YOUNG WOMAN (CONT'D)

"Laddie" by Gene --

YOUNG WOMAN (CONT'D)

Stratton-Porter

MARY

Stratton-Porter.

MARY (CONT'D)

"A Girl of the Limberlost" I read eons ago. Never "Laddie". Just as good?

YOUNG WOMAN

Considering this is my third time ... yes. Porter has this extraordinary knowledge and passion for nature -- coupled with the rich girl/poor boy romance set in the countryside of the nineteenth century? Well, I might be a little obsessed.

(Beat)

There's this quote, the mother of the main character, she hangs it up in their home ... has nothing to do with the plot really.

(looking at a spot above)

*"The way to be happy is to be good."*

Mary looks at the spot and smiles.

YOUNG WOMAN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, I realized I never introduced myself.

The Young Woman reaches her hand out.

YOUNG WOMAN (CONT'D)

I'm Grace.

As their hands touch, a *surge of energy*. Mary ignores it.

MARY

Nice to meet you Grace. I'm Mary Morrison. Thank you for still showing up despite the rain. Tell me, where are you from?

GRACE

I grew up in a small town ... probably never heard of it, River Springs? Just outside the city about two hours or so. Anyway, grew up there in a large family.

MARY

Public school?

GRACE

Homeschooled actually.

MARY

Wow, and how was that?

GRACE

For the most part, good. I think? I guess the fact I don't know anything different is not so good? But we studied Latin and Hebrew. The classics. Music. I play the flute. Learned more than most kids so I can't complain.

MARY

Impressive.

(Beat)

So no make-out sessions in the backseat of your boyfriend's car then?

Grace confused.

GRACE

Right. No boyfriends.

Just then a phone call.

MARY

Excuse me dear, will you?

Grace nods.

Mary gets up, taking the call in the kitchen. Grace overhears as she looks across the way at the MYRIAD OF BOOKS behind the desk, her eyes spotting FAMILIAR CLASSICS but also new TITLES and recent BESTSELLERS. Grace gets up to study closer.

MARY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Wonderful news.

(Beat)

I'm fine with all those conditions.

(Beat)

Go ahead and send it over and I'll sign. Once the wire comes in I'll get started. Thanks for all your hard work on this. Appreciate it.

Just then the TWINS come running in. Grace looks over to find Elaine checking to make sure she can leave them safely there.

SAM

Mom!! Alex is being mean to me!!

ALEX

No I'm not. You're just being a big baby!

Grace jumps in to help.

GRACE

How is Sam being mean to you?

Alex and Sam look over, startled to see Grace standing there.

SAM

Who are you?

Grace walks over then bends down to their level.

GRACE

I'm Grace, a friend of your mom's.

ALEX

Mom!!!

Grace urges them to be quiet.

GRACE

Hey buddy. You're mom is on an important phone call.

(Beat)

Is that a drawing you have there?

Sam looks down at his DRAWING then hands it over to Grace. Grace looks at it, trying to figure out what it is.

32

**INT. MORRISON HOME, KITCHEN HALLWAY - SAME MOMENT**

32

Mary hangs up, exiting the hallway area to find --

GRACE (CONT'D)

And then the elephant said to the zookeeper, how dare you throw mud on me like that?! The elephant didn't like that very much so in one gigantic breath he BLEW as hard as he could -- drenching the zookeeper in water!

The Children LAUGH at Grace's impersonation of an elephant.

MARY

Alright you two, head upstairs so Grace and I can finish our meeting?

The Twins run down the hall to their room. Grace stands up, holding the book she was examining, *"Forever" by Judy Blume*.

Mary notices.

GRACE

Didn't realize Blume wrote other stories. If this were a library I'd check it out.

MARY

If you love that, then you'll love this.

Mary leads Grace to her PRIVATE OFFICE near her bedroom.

32A

**INT. MORRISON HOME, PRIVATE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

32A

A makeshift office. BOOKCASES overflowing. Fancy yet simple, a desk overloaded with PAPERWORK and FOLDERS to be organized.

Grace examines the shelf filled with different titles: *"Fear of Flying" by Erica Jong*, *"Rubyfruit Jungle" by Rita Mae Brown*, *"The Awakening" by Kate Chopin*, *"The Virgins" by P. Evans*. Mary watches Grace as she examines the TITLES.

A look of motherly love. Her eyes follow down the bridge of her nose to her cheekbones, to her neck. Mary notices a DIRT RING around her collar. A FEW HOLES in the sweater.

Just then Grace puts it together.

GRACE

Wait, you're a writer? These are your books?

MARY

Haven't written in a long time though.

GRACE

Wow. I can't believe I'm standing in the home of an actual writer!!

Grace puts the Book back she was holding and examines Mary's PUBLISHED BOOKS.

MARY

You know Grace I'm not sure I need someone full-time but if you're up for it, I do need someone next week? I have a new book I'm starting.

GRACE

Seriously? That would be incredible!

MARY

If you need to be looking for something more full-time though, I completely understand --

GRACE

No, no. Are you kidding? This is perfect! Your children are adorable and I'd love to help you with whatever I can. Organizing, cleaning, research -- whatever you need. Thank you. Thank you so so much!

Grace hugs Mary, clinging to her. Mary, touched.

MARY

Okay, great. We'll start Monday.

Grace gathers her things.

32B

**EXT. MORRISON HOME, COURTYARD FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS**

32B

Mary opens the door for Grace as she exits. Grace WAVES back before getting on her BIKE.

Mary shuts the door, watching Grace ride along, her skirt flying in the wind.

33

**INT. MORRISON HOME, WRITING ROOM - DAY**

33

Elaine helps lift DUSTY FURNITURE out of the LARGE SPACE.

The backyard, spacious. A LAWN and TREES at one end, a POOL in the center, the WRITING ROOM looking out at the vast view. The women set down the FURNITURE then look up at their CHILDREN sitting with Grace, having a picnic.

ELAINE

She can't be real.

Mary grabs more things. Elaine keeps watching. Grace, dressed in a SUMMER DRESS, has a LARGE PICNIC BLANKET set out for the Children. Using her BASKET she takes ITEMS out, surprising them.

Carrying BOXES, Mary sets them down then wipes the sweat from her brow. She pauses to observe Elaine still mesmerized.

ELAINE (CONT'D)

Need to get me one of these.

MARY

Don't get too excited. She's only here for the week.

Just then Elaine's son JOSEPH (5) runs up to them.

JOSEPH

Mom! Can we go swimming?! Please?! Please?!

The other Children, not far behind --

CHILDREN

Yes, can we!? Please!

Joseph stares at his mother with pleading eyes. Grace reaches the group, interjecting.

GRACE

I can take them if you like? I don't mind.

The Mothers hesitant. Elaine nods.

MARY

Oh alright.

CHEERS! The Children run inside to change.

MARY (CONT'D)  
I have something you can borrow  
Grace. I'll meet you inside.

GRACE  
Okay great.

Grace follows the Children inside to help. Mary stands with Elaine who is speechless. Mary thinks while Elaine arranges more things in the WRITING ROOM, clearing things out.

34

**INT. MORRISON HOME, MASTER BEDROOM - NEXT MOMENT**

34

Mary enters her closet, grabbing a HANDFUL OF SWIMSUITS. Grace enters as Mary sets them out on the bed. She looks around the room in awe of the FANCY THINGS.

After setting them out, Grace is hesitant. Mary realizes.

MARY  
You know, I have a one-piece in  
here somewhere.

Mary goes back into her closet, searching. Grace touches a couple of the TWO-PIECE SUITS on the bed. Then watches Mary search, mesmerized by the dream closet.

GRACE  
Your home. It's so beautiful.

MARY  
Oh thanks. Sort of a mess right  
now. Need to get organized.  
(Beat)  
Here it is.

Mary retrieves the ONE-PIECE SWIMSUIT, handing it to her.

MARY (CONT'D)  
You can change in here if you like.

With the door partially open, Mary watches Grace undress, seeing only her legs and feet in the reflection of the mirror. She looks away, slightly ashamed -- but curious.

Grace comes around the door, shy and inhibited. The ONE-PIECE SWIM SUIT, more revealing than anything she has ever worn.

Mary picks up on her apprehension.





35D           **EXT. MORRISON HOME, POOL AREA - CONTINUOUS**           35D

SAM

Dad!!

ALEX

Dad, watch this!

The Women watch from a distance as Grace shakes Tom's hand from in the pool. Tom, cordial, is pleased to meet her.

36           **INT. MORRISON HOME, KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER**           36

Tom, in the kitchen, opens a BOTTLE OF WINE while Mary says goodbye to Elaine and her Children at the front door. Mary enters the kitchen, joining him.

MARY

What's this about?

Tom looks out at their Children still playing in the backyard with Grace. Grace, wearing the COVER UP, is teaching them how to play a GAME OF CARDS on the LAWN.

Tom pulls her in, kissing her.

TOM

(whispering)

When is the last time we did it in the afternoon?

Mary smiles. Tom grabs ahold of her, taking her into ...

37           **INT. MORRISON HOME, PANTRY - NEXT MOMENT**           37

Yanking down her PANTIES, Mary unbuckles his PANTS. In control, Tom turns her around and takes her from behind. Mary shuts the door, wanting it.

37A           **EXT. MORRISON HOME, POOL AREA - CONTINUOUS**           37A

As the SOUNDS are heard, we slowly push in on Grace's innocence outside with the Children. Angelic. Both exit.

38           **INT. MORRISON HOME, KITCHEN - DAY**           38

Tom pours more WINE as Mary slips on her PANTIES. Just then Grace enters with the Children, wrapped in towels.

GRACE

If you don't mind, I'd like to get them in the bath and ready for bed?

MARY

Oh that's okay dear. I can --

TOM

That would be great.

Mary concedes. Grace takes the Twins upstairs.

TOM (CONT'D)

(holding Mary)

I feel like I'm getting my old girlfriend back. You have to admit, this is a little fun?

Mary cracks a smile.

39           **INT. MORRISON HOME, GAME ROOM BATHROOM - NEXT MOMENT**           39

Water runs from the shower. Grace plays make-believe with the Twins, helping them get washed up and dried off.

40           **INT. MORRISON HOME, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**           40

Mary sits at the kitchen table with a GLASS OF WINE, watching Tom cook happily, dressed in his WORN APRON. Goofy antics. She laughs. Grace appears, grabbing her things to leave.

TOM

Oh Grace, would you like to join us for dinner?

GRACE

That's so kind of you but I'm a firm believer this is important family time. They're up there playing, ready for bed. Today was so fun.

(to Mary)

See you first thing in the morning?

MARY

Yes. Thank you hun. See you.

Grace exits. Tom dishes up food for Mary, giving her a look.

MARY (CONT'D)

What?

41 INT. MORRISON HOME, TWINS BEDROOM - NIGHT

41

Mary, reading a CHILDREN'S BOOK, is full of energy. Not tired or worn out. Finishing, she tucks them in for bed.

ALEX

Mom, is Grace coming back tomorrow?

MARY

Yes she'll be here, helping me with things.

SAM

Will she be here when we get home from school?

ALEX

What about next week?

MARY

You two like her huh?

Both nod.

MARY (CONT'D)

Yes, she will be here when you get home from school but after this week I'm not so sure ...

ALEX

But why!

SAM

We want her to stay for longer.

MARY

Alright, time for bed.

Mary kisses them good night, standing at the door.

MARY (CONT'D)

Love you.

ALEX

Love you too.

SAM

Love you too.

Shutting the door, Mary pauses, thinking.

42 INT. MORRISON HOME, KITCHEN - NEXT MOMENT

42

Mary enters the kitchen to find Tom at the nearby DESK AREA, CRUNCHING NUMBERS on his LAPTOP, slightly stressed. She observes him then enters, massaging his shoulders.

MARY  
It'll be fine.

She sits in his lap, straddling him. He smiles, enjoying his new fun-loving wife. Mary begins kissing him on the neck.

43

**INT. MORRISON HOME, LIVING ROOM - ONE WEEK LATER**

43

Tom and Mary sit with the Twins on the couch.

TOM  
Now that mommy is starting her new book Grace is going to be here more, helping us out.

Cheers!

SAM  
Just for today?

ALEX  
No, like forever dummy.

TOM  
Hey.

SAM  
Really?!

TOM  
For awhile. We don't know how long yet.

More cheers!

TOM (CONT'D)  
In the meantime you two are going to start helping around the house more. Grace, nor your mother and I, are responsible for your messes. You're growing up so we'll be expecting a lot more from both of you. Understood?

Alex and Sam agree, not wanting to ruin the deal.

TOM (CONT'D)  
Now give your mom a hug. She has a lot of work in front of her.

Alex and Sam hug their mom tightly. Mary takes in the moment.

SAM  
Thank you thank you!

ALEX  
Yes, thank you mom!

44 **INT. MORRISON HOME, WRITING ROOM - NEXT DAY**

44

Mary places TWO PILLOWS on a COUCH then stands back to look at her finished space. LINEN FABRICS. BEAUTIFUL LIGHTING. An ANTIQUE DESK in the center near the FIREPLACE, a SMALL BAR CART in another. WOOD FLOORS painted white. Cozy yet sophisticated.

Mary dives onto the couch, exhausted, then looks up at the ceiling, thinking. Grace enters with a TRAY OF GOODIES.

MARY  
Oh Grace, you didn't have to do that.

Grace sets the TRAY down on the SMALL TABLE near the couch.

MARY (CONT'D)  
Really, you don't have to take care of me *and* the children.

GRACE  
But I like to. Please let me.

Mary smiles, fixing her TEA and SIPS.

GRACE (CONT'D)  
Goal today is the kitchen.  
Tomorrow, the front office.

MARY  
You're a godsend.

Mary watches Grace walk back to the kitchen.

Then lays back down, her eyes wandering over to the Desk. A STACK OF PLAIN PAPER, along with a PEN await her. She sighs, sipping Tea with no desire to write.

45 **INT. MORRISON HOME, KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER**

45

DISHES, GLASSES, PANS and OTHER ITEMS are strung all over the COUNTER as Grace cleans each cupboard immaculately, placing the DISHES back in a regimented manner. Eyeing perfection.

Just then a cry for HELP!

Grace pauses, running through the house to find ...

46

INT. MORRISON HOME, MASTER BATH - CONTINUOUS

46

Mary, standing by the BATHTUB with a towel around her body --  
BLOOD DRIPPING from her foot.

MARY

The candle. It fell and broke.  
Didn't realize glass went  
everywhere.

GRACE

Oh dear.

Grace quickly turns on the BATH and grabs a WASHCLOTH to help  
Mary with her foot. BLOOD FLOWS down the drain. Mary sits on  
the edge of the TUB as Grace examines her.

MARY

I can't believe I did that.

Grace finds a SHARD OF GLASS and pulls it out.

MARY (CONT'D)

Ouch.

BLOOD DROPS on the WHITE PENNY TILES.

MARY (CONT'D)

Sometimes a bath helps get the  
ideas flowing. I usually don't take  
one at eleven in morning but  
figured what the heck. Ugh. What a  
mess.

Grace wipes the BLOOD up.

GRACE

I think that's all of it.

Holding a BAND-AID in her mouth, Grace applies OINTMENT on the  
wound, then affixes the bandage. As she mends the cut, Mary  
can't help but see down Grace's bosom. Her breasts, youthful.

She watches as the sweet young woman tends to her foot --  
sending chills through her body.

Just then Mary notices Grace's TATTERED BRA.

MARY

You know what we should do today?  
(Beat)  
Play hooky.

Grace, concerned.





GRACE  
A little tight. But good.

Mary adjusts it more.

MARY  
How's that?

GRACE  
Better.

MARY  
Cute.

Mary grabs another BRA.

MARY (CONT'D)  
Here, lets try this one.

Grace UNSNAPS -- this time leaving her BREASTS exposed as Mary pre-adjusts the Bra. Mary notices the change.

MARY (CONT'D)  
I remember when mine used to look like that.

Grace, feeling awkward, doesn't know what to say.

GRACE  
I never understood why women would want to go bigger? I can barely keep these in order.

Mary laughs, helping her slip on the Bra.

Grace, unsure of how to fasten it, looks to Mary for help. Mary fastens it in the front, standing behind her, her fingers in between her BREASTS.

MARY  
At this age these suckers are an asset -- don't be afraid to use them. One day you'll be my age and wish you utilized them more.

Mary finishes fastening. Both of them examine the SECOND BRA, her BREASTS FULLER. Mary makes another adjustment. As she does, Grace grabs a hold of Mary's hand, placing it on her.

GRACE  
In case you wanted to remember.

Mary, unsure of what is happening, goes with it. She swallows. A feeling she's never felt before.



MARY

Forget it. You deserve this.

Mary grabs a handful of UNDERWEAR from a nearby TABLE, placing them on the counter.

MARY (CONT'D)

These as well.

The Store Clerk nods and smiles, handing MARY the RECEIPT. Grace grabs the BAG filled with NEW BRAS and PANTIES.

GRACE

You've spent more on me in one day than I make in an entire month!

MARY

Thanks for playing hooky with me. That was fun.

GRACE

Seriously. Way too much.

53

**INT. MORRISON HOME, MASTER CLOSET - DAY**

53

Mary enters her room to find Grace trying on her NEW THINGS in front of the MIRROR. She walks over to her VANITY and opens a DRAWER revealing a LARGE MAKE-UP COLLECTION.

She gestures for Grace to play dress up. Grace smiles, sitting down in front of the VANITY MIRROR in awe.

MARY

And here.

Mary grabs CLOTHES from her CLOSET, throwing them on the bed. Grace peruses the NUMEROUS SKIN CARE ITEMS, LOTIONS, LIPSTICKS and FRAGRANCES while Mary digs through her clothes.

MARY (CONT'D)

Too bad I don't wear any of this anymore.

GRACE

Why not?

MARY

Try them on and see if anything fits?

Grace, awestruck at the gesture, attempts to say thank you but just as she does, Mary is already gone.



MARY

Yep.

Alex eyes the BLANK PAGES.

SAM

But there's nothing on the paper?

(Beat)

When are you going to start?

MARY

I suppose when I have something to say.

Sam looks over at a table, discovering her OTHER BOOKS in the series OPEN and MARKED UP. On a BULLETIN BOARD, various IMAGES and NOTES -- tracking a CHARACTER throughout.

MARY (CONT'D)

What do you think? Any ideas?

SAM

I think ... this is ... boring. Can I go play my video game now?

MARY

Of course you can. But only after your homework is complete.

Just then Grace enters the backyard, spotting Sam.

GRACE

Sam! Come inside, your snack is ready!

MARY

Go ahead, love.

Mary affectionately ushers him out. Sam, excited to eat. After Sam exits, Mary leans back, breathing in -- the BLANK PAGES still haunting her -- the WALL OF IDEAS going nowhere.

55

**INT. MORRISON HOME, MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT**

55

Tom in bed, reads his iPad. Mary exits the bathroom dressed in a SEXY NIGHTIE.

MARY

Tom. What do you think of women who get surgery?

TOM  
 You mean fake boobs?  
 (Beat)  
 I mean ...

She laughs.

MARY  
 Or ... other things.

TOM  
 Like what? A fake butt?

They both laugh. He grabs her ass.

TOM (CONT'D)  
 I love your ass.

MARY  
 No, come on. Should I consider  
 getting work done? I'm not thirty-  
 five anymore you know. Maybe a  
 little pinch here, tuck there.  
 (pointing to her face )  
 What do you think?

Tom turns off his iPad and moves closer -- looking into her.

TOM  
 Listen. You want to know what gets  
 me off -- what makes me most  
 excited? Your brilliance. The fact  
 you are not only hot, and perfect,  
 and the most amazing mother to our  
 children -- but you have the most  
 creative and intuitive mind I've  
 ever interacted with -- and I get  
 to take pleasure in living with  
 this mind every day of my life.

MARY  
 Really?

Picking up his iPad again.

TOM  
 Yes, really.

Mary, appreciative of his loving manner, is still unsure as to why he has no desire to jump her. She shows MORE LEG, attempting to turn him on when ...

Mary can feel someone watching them. She quickly turns over to find Grace, standing outside their door. THROUGH A CRACK.

GRACE

Sorry, don't mean to interrupt.  
Just wanted to let you know Mary,  
I'll be in late tomorrow. I have a  
doctor's appointment. The kids are  
in bed, asleep.

MARY

Alright. Thanks luv. Goodnight.

GRACE

Night.

Mary and Tom look at each other. Mary keeps her sexual  
frustration to herself and rolls over, turning off the light.

MARY

Love you.

TOM

Love you more.

56           **INT. MORRISON HOME, MASTER CLOSET - NEXT MORNING**           56

Having just gotten out of the shower and wearing only a  
TOWEL, Mary frantically searches for something. Unable to  
find it she runs out ...

57           **INT. MORRISON HOME, LAUNDRY ROOM - CONTINUOUS**           57

In the LAUNDRY ROOM Mary digs through the DRYER as WATER  
DRIPS down her leg, her hair still wet from the shower. Grace  
appears, setting down her things to help.

GRACE

This?

MARY

Yes!

Grace opens the TUMMY FLATTENING GARMENT for Mary to step  
into. Taken back, Mary takes the offer. She FASTENS THE CLIPS  
-- near her GROIN. Mary, not expecting Grace to continue  
assisting, lets her -- afraid of hurting her feelings if she  
rejects the help. Unable to see the details, Grace's face  
tells us what is happening. With her fingers barely touching  
Mary ... she struggles to fasten the last CLIP. Mary watches.

GRACE

One more.

Grace fastens the last CLIP then notices water dripping down Mary's legs. She grabs the Towel and gently DRIES her off.

Innocently.

Mary watches as Grace dries her. SHOCK WAVES run through her body. She closes her eyes, the feeling overwhelming.

GRACE (CONT'D)  
There, that should do it.

Grace stands up. Mary exits the LAUNDRY ROOM.

MARY  
Thank you!

GRACE  
Anything else I can do to help get you out the door?!

MARY (O.S.)  
I'm good! Thanks again dear!

Grace turns back around, looking at the PILES OF CLOTHES that need to be folded and begins FOLDING them.

58

**INT. MORRISON HOME, COURTYARD - LATER**

58

Mary sits across from Kioki, Darlene and ANOTHER EXECUTIVE. Kioki rambles on about something -- his voice indistinguishable. Lost in thought, Mary is unable to shake the feeling of what recently happened with Grace.

KIOKI  
Mary, what do you think?

MARY  
I'm sorry?

DARLENE  
Of the mother being the killer in the end?

MARY  
You want our main character, to be the villain?

Blank faces.

MARY (CONT'D)  
That's your idea for the twist?  
(Beat)  
Okay.



DARLENE

It's on point with where everything is headed right now, don't you think?

KIOKI

Yes. Take this woman, who we made into a hero --

DARLENE

And flip it. Make her the anti-hero.

MARY

That's not exactly how it works, but --

DARLENE

I like it.

KIOKI

Just a thought. You're the professional. We trust you. You'll come up with something. Always do.

She sighs.

KIOKI (CONT'D)

Any other notes we want to give Mary while we're here?

The OTHER EXECUTIVE jumps in eagerly. Mary listens to him carry on, his words fading. All she can think about is the prior incident with Grace.

OTHER EXECUTIVE

I love how you paint the characters, your descriptions, the world ... you're excellent at this Mary. I just think there's an opportunity for you to show her darker side, that she is longing for something more. Your words are so vivid on the page - it's different from anything else you've ever written. If you can weave this into her back story, I believe we'll have something truly special.

**FLASH OF GRACE:**



ELAINE (CONT'D)

Then it could be all in your head.  
A subconscious fantasy.

MARY

In one instance it feels like she's  
this sweet innocent child -- in  
another -- a master seductress and  
I'm a lap dog waiting for the next  
hit.

The TRAINER assists, giving them both WORKOUT BALLS.

ELAINE

(to the Instructor)

Thank you.

(to Mary)

A lap dog? Better than being a son-  
of-a-bitch.

Mary's bursts into laughter. BOTH DO AB WORK on the BALLS,  
whispering to each other.

ELAINE (CONT'D)

Honestly, you're probably just sex  
starved.

MARY

But that's just it. Tom is great. I  
mean fucking fantastic. No  
complaints.

Elaine looks at her. The Trainer can't help but smile as he  
walks away to do something.

MARY (CONT'D)

(leaning in to whisper)

In this strange sort of sexual  
servant way -- I feel like she  
would do whatever I asked her to  
do. Is it bad of me to think that?

ELAINE

(whispering back)

Be careful love.

(Beat)

Maybe it's her plan. Get you hooked  
on her so she can overthrow your  
kingdom and take everything in it.

MARY

You think?

ELAINE

No! Kidding.

MARY

I told you, strange things happen  
when I write.

ELAINE

I'll say.

Elaine finishes her last rep then DRINKS WATER. Mary follows behind, DRINKING too. Both WOMEN stand beside each other, grabbing FRESH TOWELS, wiping off their SWEAT.

ELAINE (CONT'D)

Make her your muse then.

(Beat)

Use her, this thing that's going  
on, and write about it. You said  
you're having writer's block right?  
You're already paying her -- might  
as well get the most bang for your  
buck.

They both exit, waving bye to their Trainer.

61        **INT. GYM, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

61

As they walk --

ELAINE

Mary.

(Beat)

Just make sure she's not doing the  
same thing to Tom.

MARY

What? No way.

(whispering)

The poor thing -- she'd be  
mortified to see a ball sack hang  
next to a soft dick. Wouldn't even  
know what to do with it!

They continue walking, giggling.

62        **INT. MORRISON HOME, KITCHEN - LATER THAT DAY**

62

Home from her WORKOUT, Mary enters the kitchen to find Tom and Grace visiting outside on the patio, the FIRE LIT. Mary spots an OPEN WINE BOTTLE on the COUNTER. Grace on a LOUNGE CHAIR, has a BOOK in her lap, her legs curled up close to her. The Twins play a YARD GAME on the Lawn further back.

Skeptical, Mary slowly approaches.

62A EXT. MORRISON HOME, MAIN BACK PATIO - SAME MOMENT

62A

Tom, looking at Grace.

TOM

That is one crazy story. What a tough kid you were.

GRACE

As my grandpa used to say -- she's the grandson I always wished I had, and finally got.

Tom notices Mary.

TOM

Oh hey hun.

Mary comes through the SLIDING DOOR spotting ONE GLASS OF WINE for Tom. He sips.

GRACE

How was your work out?

MARY

Good. Sore.

Grace notices the Children getting into an argument and immediately she gets up to help them resolve it. Mary leans down to Tom, kissing him seductively.

TOM

Whoa. Instructor turn you on again?

MARY

We should go out tonight.

TOM

(teasing)

You mean, attend a fundraising dinner?

MARY

Oh shit.

(sitting in his lap)

That's tonight. How could I forget? Totally forgot to book a sitter.

Grace walks over, overhearing.

GRACE

I'm not doing anything -- if you need me to stay late, I can?

Tom looks at Mary, satisfied with this solution.

63

**INT. MORRISON HOME, MASTER CLOSET - NIGHT**

63

Mary exits her CLOSET in a COCKTAIL DRESS, HAIR UP. She leans towards the mirror, applying LIPSTICK. Grace secretly watches from the SIDE ROOM AREA as she folds LAUNDRY.

MARY

Grace could you help me with this?

Mary sits down beside her. Grace helps Mary with a NECKLACE.

GRACE

Stunning.

MARY

Really?

Grace nods.

TOM (O.S.)

(from downstairs)

Hey, we're gonna be late if we don't leave now!

MARY

(yelling back)

Coming!

Mary grabs her PURSE. Grace attempts to say something.

MARY (CONT'D)

What is it Grace?

GRACE

(eyes watering)

I ... I wanted to say thank you.  
This job -- you, Tom, the kids --  
it means the world to me Mary.

Grace hugs Mary tightly. Motherly. She looks into Grace, moving hair from out of her eyes, touching her CHEEK.

MARY

You're a special young lady, and  
we're grateful to have you.

Mary exits, walking downstairs.

64           **INT. MORRISON HOME, HALLWAY TO GARAGE - CONTINUOUS**           64

Tom and Mary look to Grace who is watching them leave.

MARY

Thanks again dear. We'll be back  
around midnight!

GRACE

No problem. Have fun!

Tom and Mary exit into the garage.

65           **INT. MORRISON HOME, GARAGE - CONTINUOUS**           65

As Tom unlocks the SUV, he walks over to Mary's door, opening  
it for her. Mary smiles at her GENTLEMAN OF A HUSBAND.

TOM

Did you know she is one of eight  
children?

MARY

(shaking her head)  
Knew she was homeschooled though.

66           **EXT. GARAGE, SUV - CONTINUOUS**           66

Shutting the doors, Tom turns on the car and backs out.

TOM

So odd. I don't know what her whole  
story is but from what I gather, I  
think she doesn't have anyone else  
but us babe.

(Beat)

You think we should make her more  
apart of the family?

MARY

Isn't she already? I hear you but  
we need our time too, right?

Mary caresses Tom's neck lovingly with her hand.

TOM

You're right.

MARY

Giving her a job is the best thing  
we could have done. Women need  
their own thing -- their own money.

67           **INT. MORRISON HOME, TWINS BEDROOM - SAME MOMENT**           67

As they drive away, Grace SINGS A LULLABY to Alex as she sleeps, caressing her brow.

68           **INT. FUNDRAISING DINNER, RESTAURANT - NIGHT**           68

Entering the fancy restaurant, Mary and Tom find Elaine and her husband, RICK (40) already seated. The TWO LAUGH, having a good time. Rick, a self starter and entrepreneur, loves his wife more than anything.

ELAINE

There you guys are!

Elaine welcomes Tom with a hug and a kiss, then Mary. Rick shakes Tom's hand then hugs Mary. The space, calm and soothing with subtle light on the tables, illuminating them.

MARY

(holding up a glass)

To the woman in charge -- and who looks fabulous while doing it!

Cheers! Everyone looks to Elaine.

ELAINE

Every seat, filled. Tonight, alone, will bring in more than the other fundraisers, combined.

MARY

That-a-baby!

RICK

How's the writing going Mary? I hear you're in the midst of adding another book to the series? All I can say is, finally.

Mary tries to hide her look of disdain.

ELAINE

Oh Rick, leave her alone. That's the last thing she wants to talk about tonight.

Elaine kisses him. The couple, affectionate.

**QUICK SHOTS:**

-- The MARRIED COUPLES EAT, enjoying their FIVE COURSE MEAL.



-- A BAND prepares to play. Elaine notices.

ELAINE (CONT'D)  
Live music is a rarity.

Tom takes the invite, standing up to join Elaine on the small dance floor. MUSIC PLAYS. The TWO DANCE.

MARY  
To answer your question, yes, I am  
adding another book in the series.  
(Beat)  
But one slight problem ...

Rick leans in.

MARY (CONT'D)  
I have no desire to write it.

They laugh. Rick pours her more WINE.

RICK  
Book four has to be my favorite.

MARY  
Of course it is. You and everyone  
else. Wrote it during one of the  
darkest time's of my life.  
(Beat)  
Now, not so easy.

RICK  
I love the twists and turns --  
couldn't figure out who the killer  
was until the very end.

Mary looks over at Tom in a drunken stupor, still dancing.

RICK (CONT'D)  
If you don't mind me saying Mary  
... lean into the dark. That's  
where your best stuff is.

Mary cracks a smile, drinking up.

RICK (CONT'D)  
Shall we?

Mary, feeling reluctant, joins the others to dance.

69

**EXT. MORRISON HOME, POOL AREA - DAY**

69

Mary lays out by the pool, smoking a CIGAR while jotting down notes in her NOTEBOOK. With her BIKINI TOP off, MUSIC PLAYS in her EAR BUDS. She takes a SIP from her GLASS OF WHISKEY.

Grace exits the house with a TRAY OF SNACKS, setting them down beside her. As she heads back in, Mary looks up.

MARY

(holding out Sunscreen)  
Grace, would you be a doll?

Grace sits down behind Mary on the LOUNGE CHAIR, rubbing SUNSCREEN all over her back. Mary remains in an alternate universe, jotting down ideas. Grace watches, curious.

As she continues rubbing, Grace's hands slowly reach around, under her BREASTS. Mary lifts up her arms to assist, closing her eyes -- caught off guard by the erotic massage.

Grace continues rubbing the lotion ... gently. SEDUCTIVELY.

Just then Mary opens her eyes and stands up, JUMPING INTO THE POOL! Grace laughs as Mary comes back up for air.

MARY (CONT'D)

Hate it when that happens.

Mary lifts her BIKINI BOTTOMS up, setting them on the edge.

MARY (CONT'D)

Gotta say, feels so good to just  
let it all hang out!

Mary swims naked, feeling ALIVE. Grace eyes the TWO-PIECE SUIT beside her. Mary notices.

MARY (CONT'D)

Well?!

(Beat)

Go ahead. Give it a try. No one can  
see you back here.

Grace, hesitant, decides to go for it.

She grabs the TWO-PIECE and walks behind a PILLAR, undressing. Mary, treading water in the DEEP END, secretly watches Grace through the bushes. Grace steps out of the water in the BIKINI. Slightly inhibited she walks over to the SLIDING GLASS DOOR to see her REFLECTION.

Her body, young and beautiful.

MARY (CONT'D)

Goddess!

GRACE

Really?

Mary nods. Grace cracks a smile, then turns around to JUMP IN! Laughter. The two swim innocently in the pool. Women acting as GIRLS. Mary steps out naked, grabbing a TOWEL.

Grace observes Mary's audacity and zero inhibition.

Mary throws a COVER-UP on over her naked body. She picks up her CIGAR, relights it, then sits down and PUFFS as Grace swims.

MARY

Broke the story. Through the woods.

GRACE

That's amazing! We should celebrate right?

MARY

Not yet.

(Beat)

Oh, maybe a little. Why not?

Grace steps out. Mary hands her a towel.

MARY (CONT'D)

For the both of us.

70

**INT. MORRISON HOME, WRITING ROOM - NEXT MOMENT**

70

Mary, still naked under her FLOWING COVER-UP, fixes TWO DRINKS at the BAR CART. Grace joins with a TOWEL around her.

MARY

Whiskey and Ginger?

Grace shrugs her shoulders, pretending to know. Mary MIXES then hands it to her.

MARY (CONT'D)

Wait. You're old enough?

Grace nods, eagerly taking the drink. Cheers. Grace reacts to the WHISKEY. Mary laughs. Mary pulls out a VINYL RECORD, placing it on the RECORD PLAYER. "Joey" by Concrete Blonde from the album "Bloodletting" begins to play.

Mary moves to the beat as she sips her DRINK. Grace watches as Mary opens up in her element -- *letting go*. She reaches her hand out to Grace, encouraging her to dance with her. Grace sets down the DRINK, joining.

The two act as TEENAGERS, living in the moment.

Moving to the beat and in harmony with each other, Grace starts to come *alive*, letting loose even more.

Mary sings the lyrics loudly.

MARY (CONT'D)

I was obsessed with this song when  
I was your age!!

They dance, connected -- despite age, time and space.

Mary sits down, tired. Grace joins, sitting beside her.

WARM SUNS RAYS hit their faces. CALMING.

Grace's eyes well up with tears. Mary noticing.

MARY (CONT'D)

Grace?

Tears began to flow.

GRACE

I've never felt more at home, more  
loved, more apart of anything --  
than being here with you.  
(more tears falling)  
Please, don't ever let go of me.

Mary holds her.

MARY

You have nothing to worry about.  
We'll always be here for you, I'll  
always take care of you.  
(looking into her eyes)  
I am so grateful for you Grace. Did  
you know you are the reason I broke  
my writer's block?

GRACE

(through the sniffles)  
Really?

Mary nods. Grace rests her head on Mary's bosom. Peaceful  
WIND BLOWS through the LINEN CURTAINS.

70A      **EXT. MORRISON HOME, POOL AREA - SAME MOMENT**      70A

PAGES from the NOTEBOOK ripple in the wind. TIME PASSES.

71      **INT. MORRISON HOME, WRITING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**      71

Mary awakens to being aroused. Her eyes closed, she INDULGES. The sucking sensation on her chest -- passionate and relentless. Thinking it is Tom, she opens her eyes to find ... *Grace*.

For a moment Mary lets go, thinking it is a dream. But then opens her eyes, realizing ...

But Grace is gone. She sits up. No sign of her *anywhere*. Mary, unsure if it was real, sits down at her desk and *begins writing* in a steady rhythm, her PEN not stopping.

72      **INT. PIANO RECITAL, STAGE - NEXT DAY**      72

Mary sits next to Tom, both watching Alex and Sam perform on STAGE for their RECITAL. PAN OVER to reveal Grace sitting down next to Mary, eagerly watching on. A SMALL GROUP OF PARENTS watching on.

The CHEMISTRY between the Women, palpable. Mary, unable to deny it, swallows -- her lips PARCHED. The TWINS finish, a grande finale. Cheers!! All three stand up, applauding.

Grace hugs Mary. Mary feels the brevity of the situation and is hesitant. As the AUDIENCE disperses, the TWINS run up to their parents.

GRACE

Here, let me take a picture of you  
altogether!

Tom and Mary, along with Alex and Sam, gather together as Grace takes their picture. CLICK.

ALEX

Now Grace, take one with us!

Grace shakes her head no.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Yeah, please!

SAM

Please Grace!

Tom ushers Grace along, encouraging her to take a picture with them. CLICK. Grace stands next to Mary, the Twins in front of them. Mary's smile unsure.

Grace congratulates the Twins.

Mary watches as her Children look up to her. Her angst dissipates, realizing what matters most are her kids. Both of them hug Grace, adoring on her. Mary looks over at Elaine who is talking with Tom. She speculates the visual -- both a bit too FLIRTATIOUS. She continues watching. Mary turns to see Grace observing too. Grace looks at her.

Beat.

MARY

Can we have a little chat outside  
in the hall?

GRACE

Sure.

Grace and Mary exit, leaving the Twins inside with Tom.

73

**INT. PIANO RECITAL, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

73

Grace, concerned. Mary finds the courage to speak.

GRACE

Is something wrong? Did I do  
something --

MARY

No, no. Nothing like that.

(Beat)

It's just, what happened the other  
day, it can never happen again. We  
can never speak of it Grace.

Grace, playing confused --

GRACE

What happened? I have no idea what  
you're talking about.

Mary, relieved, hugs her. Together they walk back in.

74

**INT. MORRISON HOME, MASTER BATH - DAY**

74

Mary runs a HOT BATH. STEAM RISES. Feeling good about her progress, she sinks into the soothing water. Just then a SMALL KNOCK at the door.

MARY

Come in.

Grace enters with a TRAY OF GOODIES: HOT TEA, FLOWERS, WARM MILK and CANDLES. Mary, a bit bothered at first, realizes it is innocent enough and relaxes.

GRACE

I've been waiting for this moment.  
May I?

Mary curious, nods. Grace POURS WARM MILK into the water. Then sprinkles EPSOM SALT and FLOWER PETALS all around her. Like a dance, Mary falls into a trance. Letting go, she watches the Young Beauty pamper her -- addicted to her alluring innocence.

Mary breathes in the FRAGRANCE of the FLOWER PETALS.

She CLOSES HER EYES. Grace bends down to WHISPER in her ear.

GRACE (CONT'D)

Open your mouth.

Mary, unsure, opens. Grace slowly feeds her a SPOONFUL OF HONEY. As the spoon releases from her lips, Grace runs her fingers over Mary's forehead, around her temples, down her nose -- along her neck. Mary attempts to stop her but Grace takes her hand and gently sets it back in the water.

GRACE (CONT'D)

(whispering)

Let me make you happy. All I want  
to do is to make you happy.

Mary's view, now BLURRY. A *daydream*. Grace continues the massage, running her fingers down Mary's BOSOM, to her breasts, around her NIPPLES ...

FURTHER DOWN. The water, MILKY. Obstructing our view ...

Unable to see clearly, Mary GASPS for air -- *the feeling overwhelming -- the WHITES OF HER KNUCKLES GRIP* the side of the TUB. Grace knowing exactly what to do.

Satisfying Mary under the MILKY WATER, Grace watches Mary's face -- her eyes still closed. ONE HAND PENETRATES her while the other grabs ahold of her hand on the tub's edge.

Transfixed on success, Mary hangs on. Until ...

MARY

Ahhhhh!!

And releases. The SOUND OF A DOOR SHUTTING. Mary OPENS HER EYES -- *relieved. Only a daydream.*

But then looks down to discover ... *FLOWERS PETALS* and *MILKY WATER* floating around her.

75

**INT. MORRISON BACKYARD, WRITING BUNGALOW - DAY**

75

Mary escapes. Zoning everything out, she focuses on the task at hand, entering the world on paper. A FAN BLOWS in the corner, a small relief from the heat. NUMEROUS NOTECARDS pinned to the BOARD. Various NOTATIONS. LIES. DECEIT. MURDER. Plot points and ideas.

Just then Tom enters with ICE WATER.

Mary, in the midst of a writing, tries not to pay attention to him SOFTLY KISSING her neck ... then LICKING her.

TOM  
(whispering in her ear)  
You're so hot.

With his hand, he slowly reaches down her bosom hoping to arouse her. For a moment Mary takes the bait but then ...

Stops him.

MARY  
I can't.

He kisses her sweetly on the head, understanding. And leaves.

75A

**INT. MORRISON BACKYARD, WRITING ROOM - TIME PASSAGE**

75A

SERIES of MARY - SEASON CHANGES TO FALL

Mary pauses, the SIDE OF HER HAND COVERED IN INK, HAIR DISHEVELED. For a moment she breathes a sigh of relief, then dives back in -- trying to keep up with the images flowing from her mind.

-- She stands up to stretch, moving NOTE CARDS around.

-- AFTERNOON SUN turns into SUMMER MOONLIGHT.

-- SUMMER MOONLIGHT turns into A SUMMER HARVEST.

-- The STACK OF BLANK PAPER grows smaller.

Mary leans back, satisfied. She kicks up her feet on the Desk dressed in her old BLACK BOOTS, a LONG FLOWING CAPE, and DARKER MAKE-UP. PUFFING ON A CIGAR she eyes her MASTERPIECE.

*The stack of handwritten pages sitting before her.*



Fishing through her LEATHER BAG, she retrieves a LAPTOP and opens it -- REWRITING from PAGE ONE. A sigh.

Time for a break.

76

**INT. MORRISON HOME, LIVING ROOM - DAY**

76

Sam peers out the SLIDING DOOR, curious to see how his mother is doing. Waiting for his moment to escape, he takes it only to be pulled back by Grace sharply.

SAM

Ouch! That hurts!

GRACE

You are not allowed to disturb her Sam.

Unbeknownst to Grace, Tom stands over them, having watched.

TOM

Grace is right.

SAM

But Dad.

Tom bends down.

TOM

I know you're missing her but listen bud, we have to support your mom by letting her do her work, okay? When she's done, you'll be able to bug her all you want.

SAM

Okay.

Sam walks back to the kitchen table, defeated.

GRACE

Oh no, have we made you late?

TOM

No, no. Taking the day off.

(Beat)

How about we drop the kids off at school and grab something to eat? I think both of us could use the break.

Grace eyes the DISHES and MESS in the kitchen.





GRACE  
They're good kids.

TOM  
They are. But so are you! Anyone  
would go mad without a break.

GRACE  
Hey, I'm no kid.

MIMOSAS and QUICHE are delivered. They drink.

TOM  
How old are you anyway?

GRACE  
How old do you think?

TOM  
Last week I would have said twenty.  
(teasing)  
Today, more like forty.

Grace throws a rolled up STRAW WRAPPER at him from her GLASS OF WATER. Grace stretches, revealing her BELLY BUTTON.

Tom shakes his head.

GRACE  
What?

Just then Grace feels someone watching them. She turns to look -- But no one is there.

83      **EXT. PARKING LOT, FRENCH BISTRO - SAME MOMENT**      83

Elaine calls MARY in her SUV. No ANSWER.

84      **INT. MORRISON HOME, WRITING ROOM - SAME MOMENT**      84

At the bottom of a page Mary writes, "*She grabs the scissors and plunges them into her neck,*" then sets down her Pen and leans back, basking in the morning sunlight. SATISFIED.

85      **EXT. MORRISON HOME, DRIVEWAY - LATER**      85

Mary, wearing a SUNDRESS and looking REFRESHED, smiles at her NEW BIKE leaning against the wall. Grace exits from the house carrying a BROWN LUNCH SACK.

GRACE  
 Hope you like sprouts on your  
 sandwich!

Grace places the SACK in her BIKE BASKET as Mary sets OTHER THINGS in hers. Both get on and ride off.

MARY  
 Yipppeeeeeee!!

Grace laughs, following along.

86 **EXT. NATURE AREA, BIKE PATH - DAY**

86

A FUN BIKE RIDE through a picturesque and peaceful PATH. Trees hang overhead as light dances above them. Mary, wearing a FLOPPY HAT, looks back at Grace.

MARY  
 What could be better than this!?

GRACE  
 Nothing!

SIDE BY SIDE the women ride with the wind in their faces, the feeling of being free and ALIVE. Grace passes Mary with GLEE, sticking her feet out. She looks back at Mary and laughs. Mary catches up, a playful race.

87 **EXT. NATURE AREA, BIKE SPOT - CONTINUOUS**

87

Reaching a RESTING SPOT they park near a TRAIL. Mary grabs her things from the BASKET; POETRY BOOK, NOTEBOOK, A BOTTLE OF WINE and leads the way. Grace, holding the BROWN LUNCH SACK, follows behind.

88 **EXT. NATURE AREA, RIVER - SUNSET**

88

Mary lays a BLANKET down on the soft ground.

MARY  
 How about here?

Grace catches up, in awe of the view.

GRACE  
 Perfect.

WATER TRICKLES by. LEAVES DANCE in the wind.

A beautiful nature setting. Together they sit on the Blanket. Mary SKIPS A ROCK on the water's surface then grabs the BOTTLE OF WINE and opens it with the WINE OPENER.

MARY  
 (eyeing the river)  
 Never know how I'll get to the  
 other side yet somehow I always do.

She pours. A TOAST.

GRACE  
 To an incredible woman and a  
 brilliant writer on her first  
 draft.

Mary, touched.

MARY  
 Awww, you're so sweet. To the best  
 partner a girl could ask for.

Cheers.

MARY (CONT'D)  
 Couldn't have gotten this far  
 without you Grace. Truly.

Both of them lie down, looking up at the CLOUDS. TEENAGERS walk by, creating noise. Both look over, ignoring it.

Mary opens her BOOK OF POETRY, "Devotions" by Mary Oliver. She turns to the poem, "The Gift".

Grace, curious, leans closer -- their heads touching.

MARY (CONT'D)  
 First time I discovered Oliver was  
 around your age.

Grace closes her eyes, listening.

MARY (CONT'D)  
 (reading)  
 Be still, my soul, and steadfast.  
 Earth and heaven both are still  
 watching though time is draining  
 from the clock and your walk, that  
 was confident and quick, has become  
 slow. So, be slow if you must, but  
 let the heart still play its true  
 part.

As she reads, Grace slowly moves her hand closer to Mary, hovering over the WINE OPENER, to her waist, running her fingers up her arm, to her neck, and around her lips.

MARY (CONT'D)

(reading)

Love still as once you loved,  
deeply and without patience. Let  
God and the world know you are  
grateful. That the gift has been  
given.

Mary turns to look at Grace.

MARY (CONT'D)

Grace.

Grace hushes her with her finger.

Then SLIPS HER FINGER into her mouth. Mary sucks, staring back at her.

Grace slips it out then back in again, back and forth ... the women closing their eyes, enjoying the sensation.

Leaning in closer, Grace touches her lips to Mary's ... gently. Lips barely touching.

Grace takes her hand and travels it down Mary's breasts, along her stomach to underneath her dress. Just as she begins to enter ...

Mary stops her.

Refusing to make eye contact, she sits up.

Watching the RIVER FLOW, she shakes her head solemnly.

Just then Mary turns to Grace, holding her face in her hands ...

And *kisses her passionately.*

Then releases.

MARY (CONT'D)

When I look into you, I see so much  
of myself. God, you're a vision.

Mary touches her cheek, perplexed by the Woman before her.

Grace leans in for more but Mary pulls away.

GRACE  
Did I -- ?

MARY  
No, no. You are perfect Grace.  
(looking into her)  
Simply perfect.

The two gather their things and walk back to the BIKE SPOT.

89           **EXT. NATURE AREA, BIKE SPOT - CONTINUOUS**           89

Grace catches up to find Mary in DISMAY. Not understanding, she looks down to discover ... their TIRES SLASHED.

MARY  
Fucking punks.

GRACE  
Who would do such a thing?

Mary shakes her head, calling Tom. NO ANSWER. They walk back, pushing their Bikes, chatting and laughing along the way.

90           **EXT. MORRISON HOME, DRIVEWAY - EVENING**           90

Mary and Grace push their BIKES up the driveway to find Tom and Elaine in an intense discussion.

MARY  
Tried calling you. Where've you  
been?

Elaine and Tom abruptly step away from each other.

TOM  
I'm sorry.  
(checking his pockets)  
Must have left my phone in the  
house.

MARY  
Wanted to get out, get some fresh  
air and --

Tom notices the FLAT TIRES. He bends down to examine.

TOM  
Jeez.  
(Beat)  
Where'd you go?



GRACE

To this magnificent place by the river. It was extraordinary.

MARY

You know that wooded path, the one we found awhile back?

TOM

Oh yeah. On the walk we took nearly two years ago.

MARY

Finally got around to exploring it today.

TOM

I guess you'll have to take me sometime.

MARY

Frustrating we had to walk all the way back though.

(Beat)

What have you two been up to?

Elaine and Tom look at each other. Tom kisses his wife on the lips. Elaine eyes Mary as if to say, "We need to talk." As Elaine pulls Mary aside, Grace explains to Tom where they went and what it was like. Mary confused.

ELAINE

It's probably nothing.

(she sighs)

Mary. I have reason to believe ...

Mary looks over at Grace, mesmerized by her.

Elaine hesitates, noticing her friend enraptured in her muse. Grace smiles at her.

MARY

What is it? Tell me.

Elaine encourages her to walk.

91

**EXT. MORRISON HOME, SIDE OF HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

91

Reaching her car, Elaine gets in.

ELAINE

When is the last time you and Tom were intimate?

MARY

Before I started writing ... I  
don't know ... maybe two months  
ago? Why?

Elaine gives her a doubtful eye.

ELAINE

You know what they say, if he's not  
getting it from you then where is  
he getting it from?

MARY

Come on. You honestly think Tom  
would ...

(Beat)

Oh I get what this is.

(Beat)

You're jealous.

ELAINE

What?

MARY

Can't believe I haven't figured it  
out until now.

ELAINE

Don't be absurd Mary. That's not  
what this is about.

MARY

(interrupting)

It's not? Are you sure about that?  
The way you've been looking at him -  
- flirting with him every time  
we're altogether -- and then just  
now, who knows what you two were  
talking about.

ELAINE

Stop it.

(Beat)

I came here to talk to him about  
you, alright?

MARY

Me? What about me?

Grace suddenly appears, watching. Elaine notices.

ELAINE

Let's talk when we can be in  
private.

(MORE)

ELAINE (CONT'D)

(Beat)

Listen. I love you. I only want what's best for you. You have to know that.

Elaine drives off. Mary, confused.

GRACE

Something wrong?

92

**INT. MORRISON HOME, MASTER BATH - LATER THAT NIGHT**

92

Mary turns on the shower. Undressing, she locks the bathroom door, wanting to take her mind off everything. Stepping into the HOT WATER, the stress washes away as the STEAM RISES. Shampooing her hair, she thinks. Turning off the shower, she opens the GLASS DOOR to GRAB a TOWEL and --

GRACE (CONT'D)

Warmed these up for you.

Grace holds out TWO PERFECTLY FOLDED TOWELS.

MARY

For the love of God Grace you can't just come in here without knocking!

Mary takes the TOWELS.

MARY (CONT'D)

Even Tom isn't allowed to do that.

GRACE

I'm sorry, I thought --

MARY

It's fine.

Encouraging her to go, Grace exits. Mary dries off looking at herself in the mirror, feeling bad.

93

**INT. MORRISON HOME, KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER**

93

Grace chops TOMATOES on a CUTTING BOARD as Mary enters dressed in her SILK BATH ROBE and SLIPPERS. Her HAIR DRY, Grace notices her natural glow.

MARY

Wow, smells good.

GRACE

One of my family's secret recipes. Something my Aunt used to make.

Mary looks in the POT to find CHILI, simmering.

MARY  
Tom and the twins are?

GRACE  
On a walk I think.

Grace grabs an AVOCADO and begins SLICING it open. Mary notices her clinching the KNIFE tightly, unsafely.

MARY  
Here, let me help you.

Mary takes the KNIFE out of Grace's hand and shows her how to cut the AVOCADO correctly. Finishing, she STABS the PIT then holds it up to Grace's eyes -- the KNIFE pointed upwards.

MARY (CONT'D)  
See. Now, no ER visits.

Grace smiles as Mary spreads the AVOCADO on the SALAD. She takes a SPOONFUL OF SOUP from the pot and blows on it, feeding it to Mary.

MARY (CONT'D)  
Mmm. That is good.

GRACE  
You're so beautiful, you know that?

MARY  
Tomorrow is Tom and I's anniversary.

GRACE  
When I'm older I hope I look as good as you.

MARY  
Ten years.

Grace eyes Mary, TOUCHING HER SIDE.

GRACE  
Did you hear me Mary?

MARY  
Got a new dress. Black, short -- very sexy. Open back.

Mary washes her hands, trying to ignore her advances. Grace moves closer, her hand entering through her ROBE.

GRACE

Mary.

Mary closes her eyes, wanting it but then steps away, drying off her hands. Grace walks over, attempting again.

GRACE (CONT'D)

(in her ear)

Please, you deserve this.

Suddenly *everything becomes a BLUR* for Mary. Feeling faint Mary is unable to articulate words. Grace drops out of view.

Numerous SHADES OF PINK go in and out of focus. PINK PEONIES in a VASE, resting on the COUNTER, stare back at her.

*Knees buckle.* She GRIPS THE COUNTER, holding on. Nearly reaching ecstasy ...

Until ... Tom and the Twins enter through the front door! Grace pops up, wiping her mouth. Mary recovers, standing upright.

TOM

What's for dinner? Smells delicious.

Tom opens the fridge, grabbing a PRE-MADE SHAKE then kisses his wife on the lips.

ALEX

Yeah, I'm starving.

SAM

Me too.

MARY

Suddenly not feeling well. Think I need to go lie down.

Tom quickly grabs a GLASS OF WATER.

94

**INT. MORRISON HOME, MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

94

Mary lies down on the couch, her LIPS PARCHED. Tom enters, handing her the GLASS OF WATER. She drinks, setting it down beside her. Tom pulls a BLANKET over her.

Mary grabs his hand, kissing it.

MARY

Love you.





Mary sits down at the table.

GRACE

As long as you survived, that's all that matters.

MARY

(under her breath)  
Yet to be seen.

TOM

(yelling downstairs)  
Alex! Sam! Time to eat!

The Twins appear from the basement.

TOM (CONT'D)

Hey, no more video games after dinner.

The Twins nod. Sitting at the table, CHILI is passed around.

MARY

Grace, I remember you saying this was special family time?

Tom and Grace look up at her.

MARY (CONT'D)

If that's the case then what the hell are you still doing here?

TOM

Mary? For the love of God, what has gotten into you?

GRACE

She's right.

Grace gets up to leave but the Twins plead for her to stay. Tom urges her to sit. Mary, in an altered state of DELIRIUM.

GRACE (CONT'D)

Must have been a pretty awful dream.

SAM

Teacher says a bad dream is actually a nightmare.

MARY

You and my husband were fucking. Right there. On the counter.



TOM  
 (slamming the table)  
 Damn it Mary?!

MARY  
 Felt so real.  
 (looking at Grace)  
 And you. You were *different* ...  
 like you were somebody else.

Grace GULPS, not knowing what to say.

ALEX  
 Daddy, mommy is scaring me.

TOM  
 Mommy isn't feeling well you guys.  
 (Beat.)  
 Mary, you're overtired. You need  
 rest.

MARY  
 (to the Twins)  
 I'm sorry you two. Sometimes when  
 mommy writes, the things she writes  
 about are so vivid in her mind --  
 she can't figure out what's  
 imaginary and what's real.

The Twins argue as Mary eats. Mary looks at Grace, wanting to pounce her in anger.

SAM  
 This is the real world!

ALEX  
 How do you know? It could be  
 imaginary!

SAM  
 I know because of this.

She PINCHES HIM.

ALEX  
 Hey, that hurt!!!

SAM  
 See. If it weren't real, that  
 wouldn't hurt.

TOM  
 Alright, that's enough. Enjoy the  
 dinner Grace so graciously prepared  
 for us.

Awkward silence as everyone eats. Mary stares into Grace.

97

**INT. MORRISON HOME, MASTER BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT**

97

Tom in bed, watches Mary as she gets ready for bed.

TOM  
 What happened to you down there?

MARY  
 (shaking her head)  
 I don't know. I'm not sure to be  
 honest.

He pats the bed, encouraging her to join him. Just as she's  
 about to, she stops herself.

MARY (CONT'D)  
 Actually I do know. That nightmare  
 is how I feel about you, about us --  
 about everything.

Slowly pacing.

MARY (CONT'D)  
 For the longest time I've taken the  
 back seat and let you drive. I've  
 supported you in everything you've  
 wanted to do Tom. I've dedicated my  
 life, my talents -- all of it, to  
 you and the kids, to this house --  
 so we could build something  
 together. And what do I get for it?  
 (Beat)  
 Oh god. What do I get for it.  
 (shaking her head in  
 between tears)  
 Fucking screwed. You ... you  
 betrayed me Tom! Crashed us into a  
 fucking brick wall -- and expected  
 me to pick up the pieces and make  
 it all better!

He reaches for her. She pulls away.

MARY (CONT'D)  
 No.  
 (Beat)  
 (MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

No, you do not get to be the hero  
right now.

Mary's eyes well up with tears. Tom sees her anguish.

TOM

Mary.

He reaches out to hold her again. She relinquishes.

TOM (CONT'D)

I'm sorry Mary. Come here.  
(in between her tears)  
I'm an imperfect man. I fucked up.  
I know that.  
(filled with anguish and  
guilt)  
You are my world, my everything.  
You and the twins.  
(looking into her with  
teared filled eyes)  
I'm going to find a way to make it  
up to you. I promise. And you're  
right, we're never going back to  
the way it was before.

Wiping away her tears.

MARY

Damn straight we aren't.

TOM

You know I love you more than  
anything?

She nods. He kisses her on the forehead.

TOM (CONT'D)

You're almost through. Let's not  
let this thing kill us on the way  
out, alright?

She nods again. They get into bed. Tom turns the off the  
LIGHT then snuggles up to Mary, SPOONING her. As Tom falls  
asleep, Mary thinks. Snoring, she gets out of bed and grabs  
her CIGAR CASE.

Opening the CIGAR CASE, she discovers it *empty*. She thinks  
back to the last time she opened it.

**FLASHBACKS:**





Mary glances down the hallway at Grace still working.

MARY

Pardon?

OFFICE MANAGER

I should have called you sooner.  
We've been terribly busy --

Mary moves to the corner of the room to whisper.

MARY

(mumbling)

Grace. You have a Grace right?

OFFICE MANAGER

What was the last name?

(Beat)

Sorry, we don't have anybody by  
that name.

(Beat)

Mary?

Mary, having already hung up, pretends to still be on.

MARY

Alright, thanks for letting me know  
it will be deposited soon. Goodbye.

Mary turns around, STARTLED to find Grace standing *there*.

GRACE

Was thinking of changing your  
master bedroom sheets -- since it's  
your anniversary?

MARY

Good idea.

Grace walks past carrying FRESH SHEETS.

MARY (CONT'D)

Grace, I want to apologize about  
last night. Not sure what came over  
me.

GRACE

I understand. Nightmares can feel  
so real sometimes.

Mary sits back down in her chair, thinking. Her eyes fall on  
the BOOK ON THE SHELF.

**FLASHBACK:**



Mary slips her a ONE HUNDRED DOLLAR BILL. The Librarian stares at it and thinks, then takes it.

LIBRARIAN  
Name?

MARY  
Grace.

LIBRARIAN  
Last?

Mary thinks.

LIBRARIAN (CONT'D)  
She's your best friend and you don't know her last name?

MARY  
She checked out a book recently, "Laddie" by Gene Stratton-Porter?

The LIBRARIAN searches.

LIBRARIAN  
The only person to check out "Laddie" in the last three months --

Mary leans over to read. A list of BOOKS with the name, "GRACE TAYLOR" at the top.

MARY  
Nope. The one I'm thinking of, she hasn't read yet. Great, this is just what I needed.

Mary scribbles on a PIECE OF PAPER and exits.

109

**EXT. LIBRARY, PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS**

109

Mary looks down at her PAPER. *"533 Peach Tree Lane, River Springs."*

Trembling, she calls Elaine.

MARY  
Elaine call me. We need to talk.

Mary continues REDIALING as she gets into her car.





114        **EXT. QUAIN T OFFICE BUILDING, COURTYARD - MOMENTS LATER**        114

Visibly shaken, Mary sits on a bench with a BLANKET around her as POLICE OFFICERS and FORENSICS tape off the area. Mary watches as Elaine'S BODY is taken out on a STRETCHER, wrapped in a BODY BAG. A DETECTIVE approaches.

DETECTIVE #1

Mrs. Morrison would you mind coming down to the station, answer a few questions for us?

MARY

Sure, whatever you need.

DETECTIVE #1

You're husband will meet us there.

Mary nods, agreeing to go.

115        **INT. POLICE STATION, QUESTIONING ROOM - LATER**        115

Mary sits at a table, alone, waiting.

116        **INT. POLICE STATION, BEHIND GLASS - SAME MOMENT**        116

A DETECTIVE watches Mary from behind the GLASS. A FOLDER is handed to him. He opens it, reviewing.

DETECTIVE #2

Pretty much an open and shut case.

DETECTIVE DAVID NEWHEART (50) a simple yet wise man tries to find the good in everyone despite their flaws. A firm believer in facts over feelings. He looks at Mary and sighs.

117        **INT. POLICE STATION, QUESTIONING ROOM - NEXT MOMENT**        117

Detective Newheart sits down across from Mary as she wipes her eyes with a TISSUE soaked in tears.

DETECTIVE NEWHEART

A writer then?

MARY

Something like that. Is my husband here yet? Would like to see him.

DETECTIVE NEWHEART

He's on his way Mrs. Morrison. In the meantime, you want to tell me what medications you're taking? Any psychosis you may have been diagnosed with?

MARY

Excuse me? What is this?

DETECTIVE NEWHEART

We have footage of you Mary, early this morning, around one am, driving to the location of the deceased.

MARY

You mean to say my best friend, and her name is Elaine.

DETECTIVE NEWHEART

We also have a witness, a neighbor of yours, saying you and Elaine were in some sort of argument yesterday evening outside your home.

MARY

Do I need my lawyer present? I thought this was going to be about me answering a few questions to help with the investigation?

DETECTIVE NEWHEART

And we have your fingerprints on the murder weapon -- the scissors Elaine was stabbed with.

MARY

What? That's impossible.

DETECTIVE NEWHEART

Mary. All the evidence is pointing one way. You either tell me something I don't know, or I'll lay it out for you.

The Detective #2 enters holding an iPad, showing Mary the FOOTAGE of a woman in a Trench Coat and Sunglasses, entering Elaine's Office.

MARY

Play it again.

117A **EXT. QUAIN T OFFICE BUILDING, COURTYARD - NIGHT** 117A  
**VIDEO SURVEILLANCE FOOTAGE**

-- A Slender Woman, dressed in a Trench Coat and Sunglasses walks through the Courtyard.

-- Minutes later, she exits, headed away from the building.

117B **INT. POLICE STATION, QUESTIONING ROOM - DAY** 117B

Mary shakes her head.

MARY

That could be anyone! You can't even see my eyes.

Detective Newheart motions to Detective #2. She hands him a FOLDER.

DETECTIVE NEWHEART

We found this too, among your belongings, hidden in your bedroom.

Mary watches as Detective Newheart opens the folder, revealing her HANDWRITTEN PAGES, tagged and marked. Shocked, she looks at her work, mangled. He flips to the page, "*She grabs the scissors and plunges them into her neck.*"

DETECTIVE NEWHEART (CONT'D)

Too many similarities between this made-up story and the one going on in real life, wouldn't you say?

Mary speechless, begins to tear up.

MARY

This doesn't make any sense.

DETECTIVE NEWHEART

Anyone else have access to your work Mrs. Morrison?

Mary thinks, her mind racing.

**FLASHES:**

118 **INT. GOTHAM PUBLISHING, BOARD ROOM - DAY** 118

Darlene, who confronted Mary at her DOORSTEP, reads PAGES at a LONG TABLE. Riveted, she keeps turning.



123

**INT. POLICE STATION, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

123

Tom and Mary sit down at a BENCH. The LAWYER speaks with Detective Newheart and Detective #1 and Detective #2 in the background.

MARY

Tom.

Shaking her head.

TOM

It's alright. We're going to figure this out.

MARY

Rick?

TOM

In shock. Doesn't believe you did it either.

MARY

Am I really the main suspect?

Tom shakes his head.

TOM

They don't have enough evidence to hold you.

MARY

But the fingerprints ...

TOM

Mine are on them too.

Mary looks at him confused.

MARY

How can that be?

Tom shakes his head, not knowing.

TOM

Mary, last night. Where were you?

MARY

(realizing he woke up and found her not there)

I was on the balcony. I saw a light on ... in the bungalow ... so I went downstairs to check.

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

Nobody was there. Locked it up then came back up to bed.

Mary sees the confusion in Tom's face.

TOM

You didn't go anywhere after that? After you checked on the bungalow?

(Beat)

Mary, you were gone for nearly three hours.

MARY

I came right back to you. Tom, you believe me don't you?

Tom nods yes but Mary senses doubt.

MARY (CONT'D)

What is it?

TOM

(reluctant)

The tires that were slashed? They found a Swiss Army Knife in the garage. Apparently the blade markings match the bikes' tires ... and Mary, only your finger prints are on the knife.

Mary thinks back to the BIKE RIDE.

**FLASHBACK:**

124 **EXT. NATURE AREA, RIVER AREA - DAY**

124

-- Mary slashes the TIRES with the SWISS ARMY KNIFE as Grace approaches from the RIVER, catching up.

-- Wearing GLOVES, Grace slashes the TIRES with a SWISS ARMY KNIFE as Mary heads towards the river.

**END FLASHBACK.**

125 **INT. POLICE STATION, HALLWAY - PRESENT MOMENT**

125

Mary looks up at Tom in dismay. He holds her tight. She looks back down at her hands. *Trembling*. She shudders at the thought of what she may have done.





127B **EXT. NATURE AREA, NEAR RIVER - DAY** 127B

-- Mary grabs the WINE BOTTLE OPENER from the BASKET then leads the way to the RIVER as Grace follows behind.

127C **INT. MORRISON HOME, KITCHEN - NIGHT** 127C

-- Slicing the AVOCADO, Mary holds the KNIFE up in front of Grace's eyes, the BLADE in front of their faces.

128D **EXT. NATURE AREA, NEAR RIVER - DAY** 128D

-- Mary acts in dismay at what she sees. Grace catches up, shocked to find their tires SLASHED.

127E **EXT. QUAIN T OFFICE BUILDING, COURTYARD - NIGHT** 127E

-- Wearing her TRENCH COAT, Mary arrives at Elaine's office at NIGHT, walking through the Courtyard.

127F **INT. MORRISON HOME, WRITING ROOM - DAY** 127F

-- PUFFING on a CIGAR and leaning back in her chair, Mary looks at her WALL OF NOTES, the PLOT laid out before her.

127G **INT. QUAIN T OFFICE BUILDING, ELAINE'S OFFICE - NIGHT** 127G

-- Elaine, in a THERAPY SESSION with a PATIENT, scribbles down thoughts, thinking.

**END FLASHES.**

129H **INT. POLICE STATION, HALLWAY - NEXT MOMENT** 129H

Mary shakes her head, not believing it. An idea.

MARY

I have to use the restroom.

Tom attempts to stop her then nods, reluctantly letting her go as the Lawyer approaches.

128 **EXT. POLICE STATION, DOORWAY - CONTINUOUS** 128

Mary exits the Small Station, quickly walking.

128A **EXT. POLICE STATION, PARKING LOT - DAY** 128A

The tire of her SUV PEELING OUT.

129 **EXT. SUV, HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS** 129

Driving fast, her mind wanders to the possibility of Grace being the MURDERER.

**FLASHES OF  
GRACE:**

129A **INT. PIANO RECITAL - DAY** 129A

-- Grace, wearing GLOVES, picks up the SCISSORS from off the table and places them in a BAGGIE inside her PURSE without anyone noticing. She then joins Mary in the AUDIENCE.

129B **EXT. NATURE AREA - RIVER - DAY** 129B

-- Grace's hand hovers over the WINE BOTTLE OPENER. She grabs ahold of it then lets it go, setting it back down. Her hand continues traveling over to Mary.

129C **INT. MORRISON KITCHEN** 129C

-- Making CHILI, Grace slices an AVOCADO with a KNIFE, holding the KNIFE fiercely. Mary stops her to teach her how to cut it properly.

129D **EXT. NATURE AREA - NEAR RIVER - DAY** 129D

-- Wearing GLOVES, Grace SLASHES the tires on their BIKES while Mary leads the way towards the RIVER.

129E **INT. MORRISON MASTER BEDROOM - DAY** 129E

-- Wearing the ANNIVERSARY GOWN, Grace takes the LAST CIGAR out of Mary's COMPACT and smiles slyly as she lights up and PUFFS.

**END FLASHES.**

129F **EXT. HIGHWAY, SUV - CONTINUOUS** 129F

A CELL PHONE rings breaking Mary's train of thought. A VOICEMAIL. She listens.



MARY

May I come in? Drove three hours  
and could really use the ladies  
room?

GRACE'S AUNT (60) examines Mary from behind the SCREEN. A HEAVIER SET WOMAN with AWKWARD EYES and THICK GLASSES -- hasn't showered in days -- evident by the RINGS OF DIRT around her neck and GREASY HAIR. She spots the Mercedes in the driveway and lets Mary in.

134 INT. DILAPIDATED HOUSE, LIVING ROOM/HALL - CONTINUOUS 134

Mary walks down the hall. Along the way she notices FRAMED PHOTOS of the TAYLOR FAMILY. TWELVE CHILDREN. A PHOTO OF GRACE with her AUNT as a teenager.

134A INT. DILAPIDATED HOUSE, BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 134A

She enters the bathroom and sits on the TOILET, overhearing.

GRACE'S AUNT (O.S)

I don't know what she wants.  
Something about Grace.

OLD MAN (O.S.)

Then what the hell did you let her  
in for?! For heaven's sake.

Mary quickly washes her hands and exits, joining them.

134B INT. DILAPIDATED HOUSE, LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN 134B

Mary exits to find Grace's Aunt waiting for her.

MARY

Terribly sorry for showing up like  
this. You see Grace works for me,  
watches my children. I was  
wondering if you could answer a few  
questions about her?

Mary looks around for the OLD MAN.

GRACE'S AUNT

Bloody hell! You ain't from around  
here are you?

Mary shakes her head no. Grace's Aunt gets up to fetch something from the KITCHEN.

OLD MAN (O.S.)  
Oh Christ, here we go again.

Mary leans over to see the Old Man. *But he is not there.*

Grace's Aunt opens a CABINET DRAWER and pulls out ARTICLES from the internet and CLIPPINGS from their LOCAL PAPER. Mary enters the kitchen and sits down at the kitchen table.

GRACE'S AUNT  
Grace was the oldest. After her parents were sent to prison -- for nearly starving their children to death and God knows whatever else they did to those kids -- she came to live here with me. The other children, scattered all over the place.

Mary looks at the CLIPPINGS. IMAGES of the large family altogether, 8 CHILDREN and their PARENTS all in matching POLO SHIRTS and BROWN KHAKIS. Grace stands solemnly in the photo, barely smiling. Mary scans the HEADLINES. *"Parents starve children as a form of discipline. Children chained to beds. REAL LIFE HOUSE OF HORRORS."*

GRACE'S AUNT (CONT'D)  
Once Grace turned eighteen she left. Last I heard she got a job at one of those hoity toity fitness clubs in the city.

Just then a DOG enters.

GRACE'S AUNT (CONT'D)  
(to the dog)  
I said no you idiot. Get back in there!

The Dog turns his ears down, frail and hungry. The Old Woman sighs, walking to the kitchen.

GRACE'S AUNT (CONT'D)  
Dumb dog.

The Old Woman feeds the Dog a small amount of FOOD then kicks him away.

GRACE'S AUNT (CONT'D)  
That's a good boy.



*Mary and Grace make eye contact for a brief moment.*

**END FLASHBACK.**

140 **EXT. HIGHWAY, SUV - CONTINUOUS**

140

Mary calls --

MARY

Tom, I'm headed back. Whatever you do, do not let Grace in the house! I've learned some things about her ... she could be very dangerous ... Listen to me, whatever you do --

But the CALL DROPS.

She TEXTS rapidly, eyeing the road. *NO SERVICE.*

MARY (CONT'D)

Damn it.

She keeps thinking.

**FLASH.**

141 **INT. HUNTSMAN ENTERPRISES, ANGELA'S OFFICE - BEFORE**

141

Grace sits across from Angela at her desk.

ANGELA

You have a lot going for you Grace. Many talents.

Grace smiles, anxious as Angela examines her RESUME.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Unfortunately ...

Just then Angela notices an AUTISTIC CHILD in the Playroom needing help and exits, leaving Grace alone in her office. Grace finds Mary's INFORMATION near the TOP OF THE PILE, and quickly jots it down in her BOOK. Angela re-enters.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

As I was saying, you are a delightful and talented young woman. Unfortunately we aren't taking on any new caregivers at the moment. We'll be sure to keep you in mind for the future though.

Grace gulps.

GRACE  
I really need this job.

Angela stands up to let her out.

GRACE (CONT'D)  
What is it, I'm not fancy enough?  
Didn't go to the right school?  
(looking through the  
glass)  
I'm over-qualified compared to  
those brats!

Angela stands up to let her out.

ANGELA  
I'm sure you'll find a nice family  
who needs you. Plenty of them  
exist.

As Grace stands up to leave --

GRACE  
Bitch.

END FLASH.

141A **EXT. HIGHWAY, SUV - CONTINUOUS**

141A

Mary shakes her head in disbelief, playing the possible  
scenario differently.

**REWIND the scene.**

**FLASH.**

141B **INT. HUNTSMAN ENTERPRISES, ANGELA'S OFFICE - BEFORE**

141B

ANGELA  
We'll be sure to keep you in mind  
for the future though.

GRACE  
Thank you so much. I really  
appreciate you seeing me so soon.

As Grace stands to leave, she reaches her hand out to shake.  
Angela shakes back -- a surge of energy runs through her.



GRACE (CONT'D)  
If you need anything at all, help  
in the office, cleaning, whatever.

ANGELA  
You're at the top of my list.

Angela lets her out. Grace exits.

**END FLASH.**

142      **EXT. HIGHWAY, SUV - CONTINUOUS**      142

Mary continues driving, dialing a PHONE NUMBER from off  
DETECTIVE NEWHEART'S BUSINESS CARD.

MARY  
Detective, please do a search on  
The Taylor family from River  
Springs! Grace, the oldest, is our  
nanny and I have reason to believe  
she is the one who killed Elaine.

Mary hangs up. Her mind racing again.

**FLASHBACK:**

143      **INT. SPA, STEAM ROOM - DAY**      143

Mary and Elaine chat on the benches.

ELAINE  
After you finish everything goes  
back to normal, right?

MARY  
I become a different person.

**END FLASHBACK.**

144      **EXT. HIGHWAY, SUV - CONTINUOUS**      144

HONK!! Mary nearly hits a car heading straight towards her  
from oncoming traffic. She SWERVES back into her lane,  
STARTLED. Regaining focus, she continues speeding.

145      **INT. MORRISON HOME, GAME ROOM - NIGHT**      145

A CHAIR is LODGED UNDER THE DOORKNOB.

The Twins, inside the game room, play a VIDEO GAME, not knowing they're being locked in.

145A      **INT. MORRISON HOME, MASTER BATH SHOWER - NIGHT**      145A

Tom turns on the SHOWER. Then checks his PHONE for a message from Mary. Nothing. And undresses.

145B      **INT. MORRISON HOME, KITCHEN - NIGHT**      145B

A WOMAN'S HAND grabs a KNIFE from the BUTCHER BLOCK.

145C      **INT. MORRISON HOME, MASTER BATH SHOWER - NIGHT**      145C

Tom gets in the shower. Wearing a TRENCH COAT and HEELS, the Woman walks in -- the KNIFE at her side.

Tom, in the shower, hears nothing. Standing at the BATHROOM DOOR with the knife behind her back, the WOMAN waits to enter. (SAME IMAGE FROM THE BOOK.) The BATHROOM DOOR swings OPEN. HEELS walk in. Only visible is the BOTTOM OF THE TRENCH COAT and the KNIFE at her side.

The WOMAN slowly approaches the SHOWER. Tom SHUTS OFF the WATER. Reaching for his TOWEL ...

He feels someone watching him.

TOM  
Babe, is that you?

WIPING THE STEAM FROM OFF THE GLASS DOOR ...

**He finds GRACE standing there -- staring back at him.**

GRACE  
Yep. It's me.

Taken back, Tom catches himself, spotting the KNIFE. Grace, dressed in Mary's lingerie, opens her coat to show off what's in store.

GRACE (CONT'D)  
I thought maybe we could have a little playtime?

TOM  
Grace. I told you already, I don't want to play these games with you anymore.

GRACE

You told me you loved games. All men love games.

Tom speculates the situation, realizing she might not be kidding around with the KNIFE.

GRACE (CONT'D)

You've been a terrible boy Tom. And it's time for you to pay. Are you sure you don't want to reconsider?

Grace lifts the KNIFE up at him, swinging it around carelessly as if it were a toy.

Tom backs away from her, the towel around his waist.

TOM

Now, listen ...

GRACE

No, you listen damn it! You'll do exactly what I say -- or suffer the consequences.

She eyes his groin, smiling.

TOM

Now, wait a minute! Are you fucking insane?

GRACE

One thing you need to know about me Tom is I'm completely insane. And -- I always get what I want.

In his peripheral, Tom spots a SMALL POTTED SUCCULENT PLANT. As Grace slowly walk towards him ... He THROWS it at her! She quickly ducks, missing. Tom awestruck at her reflexes.

Her pupils, nearly BLACK.

TOM

I don't want to hurt you but if I have to, I will.

GRACE

Ha, you hurt me? That's hilarious.

She LUNGES at him with KNIFE, SLICING his stomach. He touches the WOUND, looking down at the BLOOD. Then fights for the KNIFE. Holding it tightly in her hand, Grace finds a way to maneuver out of his grasp, SLICING him again.

And again. *And again.*

Light headed, Tom stumbles down to the floor. BLOOD EVERYWHERE. Grace watches in satisfaction.

GRACE (CONT'D)  
See, I told you. I always get what I want.

Just then a SOUND from downstairs.

MARY (O.S.)  
Tom?! Kids?!

Mary, back home. Tom watches on in horror as the MONSTER WOMAN before him changes back in her childlike self -- her demeanor, voice and body language all returning to normal.

GRACE  
Here! Coming.

Tom, sitting against the wall, holds on for dear life.

TOM  
(attempting to yell out)  
Mary.

146

**INT. MORRISON HOME, FRONT DOOR AREA - CONTINUOUS**

146

Mary enters, startled to run into Grace, now in MODEST CLOTHING and no longer in the COAT.

GRACE  
Oh, Mary I'm so glad you're here.

MARY  
Where are the twins? Where's Tom?

GRACE  
In the game room, safe. Tom ...

Mary pushes past her to run and find them.

But, Grace yanks her back.

GRACE (CONT'D)  
You don't want to go in there. It's a mess. I'll grab some rags to clean it up.

Mary, confused, pushes past her -- nearly knocking her down.

MARY

Tom?!

TOM (O.S.)

In here.

147

**INT. MORRISON HOME, MASTER BATH - CONTINUOUS**

147

Mary enters to find Tom holding his WOUND, the color from his face fading -- bleeding to death.

MARY

Oh my god! Tom!

Mary runs to his side.

TOM

Mary.

MARY

Tom. Stay with me.

Mary frantically rips CLOTHS to tie around his WOUND.

TOM

(softly)

You have to believe me Mary ... she seduced ...

MARY

It's okay. You don't have to talk.

Tom grabs ahold of Mary's hand, looking into her eyes.

TOM

(softly)

Mary. Please. Believe me ... I never meant ...

His eyes filled with anguish and remorse --

MARY

I believe you Tom! I believe you!  
Now stay with me.

Barely hanging on, Mary finishes tying the CLOTH. Mary notices Tom looking at something behind her. She slowly turns around to find ... Grace, standing there, holding RAGS and CLEANING SUPPLIES. She begins cleaning up the BLOOD.

MARY (CONT'D)

Grace.

GRACE  
I'm so sorry for the mess.

MARY  
I need you to call 911.

Trembling, Grace stops and grabs Tom's PHONE to call.

Tom and Mary watch in disbelief.

GRACE  
(practically in tears)  
We need an ambulance. There's been  
a horrible accident. A man, he's  
dying. He's been stabbed and will  
bleed to death if you don't hurry!  
Please hurry.

Grace hangs up.

MARY  
Grace, who did this?

Grace shakes her head, not knowing. Then begins to cry.

GRACE  
I tried to stop her. I told her you  
were good people and could help us.

MARY  
Who Grace? Who did you try to stop?

Grace slowly backs out of the bathroom, shaking her head.

Beat.

Her hand grabs something ... from in the HALLWAY. Suddenly,  
Grace's EYES SWITCH OVER.

GRACE  
Me, you cunt.

*To the other personality.*

GRACE (CONT'D)  
Margaret.

MARGARET lunges towards Mary! Mary quickly reacts, protecting  
Tom. The KNIFE close to her face --

GRACE/MARGARET  
(two personalities  
switching back and forth)  
Kill her bitch! *I don't want to.*  
(MORE)

GRACE/MARGARET (CONT'D)

*Please don't make me. I said kill her! She betrayed you. She doesn't really love you. Shut up! Yes she does. She does love me.*

MARY

Grace?

Grace, in tears, looks longingly at Mary.

Mary sees her anguish.

GRACE

Mary, I can't stop her. RUN!!

Mary bolts past, out of the bathroom.

148      **INT. MORRISON HOME, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**      148

To the kitchen. Just as she's about to grab a KNIFE, Margaret shoves her, knocking her to the floor. Mary gets up, stunned, touching the GASH on her head. Margaret lunges again, but Mary moves out of the way.

A STRUGGLE.

**CUT TO:**

149      **INT. MORRISON HOME, GAME ROOM DOOR - SAME MOMENT**      149

The GAME ROOM DOOR tries to open as sounds of WOMEN FIGHTING above can be heard. The Twins yell for someone to let them out, not knowing what is going on.

**CUT BACK TO:**

150      **INT. MORRISON HOME, KITCHEN - SAME MOMENT**      150

Mary holds Grace down, her head hanging over the counter. DIGGING her nails into her arm, the KNIFE FALLS to the floor. Grace SMACKS her! Mary SWINGS A PUNCH back! Grace recovers, leaning against the counter to catch her breath.

Mary lunges again, this time grabbing her neck, CHOKING her to death against the counter. As Grace fights to survive, Mary spots something on the COUNTER.

She FLIPS the SWITCH. Just then Grace's hair, hanging in a BLENDER ...

BECOMES SUCKED IN ... And is RIPPED OUT OF HER SCALP!!

GRACE/MARGARET

Ahhhh!!!

Screaming in pain, Mary watches in HORROR as Grace touches her bare SCALP -- BLOOD OOZING. Half her hair, gone.

GRACE

Mary, how could you!?

Grace, wailing in pain crawls on the floor in agony. Mary walks towards her, feeling badly. Helping her ... Grace switches back into Margaret.

MARGARET

You bitch!

And THWACKS Mary on the SHINS!

MARY

Owwwwwwe!!

Grace GRABS HER BY THE HAIR, pulling her along the WOOD FLOOR to the living room.

MARY (CONT'D)

Ahhhhh!

Mary fights back. Another STRUGGLE. Grace THWACKS Mary across the face. Mary falls to the floor, barely conscious. Grace, standing over her, smiles gleefully.

MARGARET

*Too bad so sad. Grace was actually starting to like you. Thought she could get rid of me, replace me with you ...*

*(back and forth between characters)*

*I did get rid of you! Leave me alone!*

*(Margaret)*

*Well, we know that can never happen now don't we? How would we ever get along in this world if it weren't for me?*

FLASHBACK.

151

**INT. GRACE'S CHILDHOOD HOME, BEDROOM - DAY**

151

YOUNGER GRACE (12) chained to her bed is reading a BOOK as her OLDER BROTHER (19) enters. Her room, sparse and stale, has the feeling of a warped fairytale.



Dirty edges with pink shades of yesteryear. PILES OF BOOKS. Grace, having not showered in weeks, ignores her Brother lying next to her.

MARGARET (V.O.)  
*I'm the survivor.*

OLDER BROTHER  
Scratch my back will you.

GRACE  
Not now Adam.

OLDER BROTHER  
Please.

Adam reveals a PACKAGE OF CRACKERS, teasing her. Grace eyes it with hunger.

MARGARET (V.O.)  
*I'm the one who got us through hell.*

Grace tickles Adam's back. As he closes his eyes, he holds her DOLL, rubbing it.

ADAM  
(whispering)  
Can we play our game?

Grace attempts to grab the SNACK but he yanks it away.

ADAM (CONT'D)  
You be Margaret.

Grace looks at her Doll then the Snack, and concedes. As she eats ravenously, Adam begins touching her like the Doll. She ignores him, famished.

**END FLASHBACK.**

152

**INT. MORRISON HOME, KITCHEN - SAME MOMENT**

152

Grace, still standing over Mary, fights Margaret internally.

MARGARET  
*And this whore thinks she can waltz in and erase me now? Because of love?*  
(laughter)  
Shut up. *This isn't love. Shut the hell up!! All people want is to use you ...*

(MORE)

MARGARET (CONT'D)

*eat you up and spit you out Grace  
... until their's absolutely  
nothing left of you. That's not  
true! And we can't let that happen  
now can we Grace? Go away! You know  
I'm right. Stop this. The bitch  
must die. No, this is wrong. It's  
the only way. I said stooooop!!*

Mary, now being CHOKED to DEATH, grabs a HEAVY PORCELAIN BOWL and smashes it on Grace's head. Grace tries to maintain her balance but falls to the floor. Lying there, Mary stands over her like a WARRIOR having just won the end of a major battle.

Barely conscious Grace looks up at her with *tender eyes*. Mary, full of disdain and hate, sees the true Grace come out. She bends down, holding her in her arms.

GRACE

Mary, I'm so sorry. I tried to make her go away. I thought I could escape her ...

MARY

Shhh, shhh, it's okay.

Mary, anguished by the sick girl before her, caresses her.

GRACE

Please don't give up on me ...  
please.

(Beat)

I love you Mary.

Grace's eyes fall closed. Tears fall down Mary's cheeks.

MARY

I love you too sweet girl.

SIRENS in the distance grow louder.

**FADE TO BLACK.**

**SUPER: ONE YEAR LATER**

**FADE IN:**

153

**EXT. MORRISON HOME, BACKYARD - DAY**

153

Tom, having mended from his wounds, kicks a SOCCER BALL around with Sam and Alex on the lawn. From the Bungalow, Mary watches, smiling at the sight. She finishes writing something down then joins them.

Altogether, the FOUR PLAY Soccer -- a happy family again.

154      **INT. HUNTSMAN ENTERPRISES, FRONT AREA - ONE YEAR LATER**      154

Mary signs in at the COUNTER as her Twins play with the OTHER CHILDREN and CARETAKERS in the PLAYROOM. The Office Manager quickly hides a BOOK she is reading -- not wanting Mary to know she is obsessed with her SERIES.

OFFICE MANAGER

Working on a new book in the series  
Ms. Morrison?

Mary turns before exiting.

MARY

Actually no. Working on something  
I've been wanting to start for a  
long time.

155      **EXT. GRAVESITE, PLACARD - DAY**      155

Mary places a TROPICAL LEI on Elaine'S GRAVE.

MARY

Finally finished it. You were  
right. Just needed to get my ass  
kicked out the door.

Then sets down a COPY OF HER NEW MANUSCRIPT, "For Elaine".

MARY (CONT'D)

All thanks to you.

156      **INT. HOSPITAL FACILITY, ENTRANCE - DAY**      156

Mary enters carrying FLOWERS ...

156A      **INT. HOSPITAL FACILITY, HALLWAY - DAY**      156A

Mary continues walking down the hall, reaching a PATIENT'S ROOM and enters.

157      **INT. HOSPITAL FACILITY, ROOM - CONTINUOUS**      157

Mary discards OLD FLOWERS from a VASE, replacing them with NEW ONE'S she brought. She turns to join the PATIENT who is sitting on the floor, playing a GAME OF CARDS by herself.

MARY

Deal me in?

Grace looks up, realizing it is Mary. She throws her arms around her as best she can -- her hands SHACKLED to the wall.

GRACE

Mary! I've missed you!!

MARY

Brought you something.

Mary pulls out a HANDFUL OF BOOKS from a BOOK BAG.

GRACE

Oh, you're the best. Simply the best!

Mary smiles as Grace examines the ARRAY OF CLASSICS.

Together they play CARDS. Mary enjoys being with the innocent side of Grace, the Grace she fell in love with a year ago.

As they play we MOVE BACK out of the room ..

Down the hall ... Through the front doors ...

To the front of the facility ...

Passing one FENCE, then another.

GUARDS on standby. A SIGN on the LAWN reads:

157A

**EXT. CLAREMONT PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - DUSK**

157A

Pan up to reveal the SUN RAYS, then back down again to Mary, dressed in her TRENCH COAT, GLOVES and SUNGLASSES, exiting the facility.

*Or is it?*

**THE END.**