

# *Petals on the Wind*

Teleplay by

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Based on the novel by

V.C. Andrews

FIRST DRAFT - 12/26/13

Cue the Dog Productions/Lifetime Television

**NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION**

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

1 EXT. FOXWORTH HALL - AFTERNOON - WINTER - VIRGINIA 1 \*

1972. Foxworth Hall has been restored to its full glory. Formal gardens boast gleaming statuary. Ivy creeps up the polished brick walls all the way up to the attic. \*

A WOMAN speaks. This is CATHY, now an adult, her teenage bitterness since tinged with strength, wisdom. \*

CATHY (V.O.)

*We were just children when we lost everything. Our parents, our home... our innocence and our hope. Once the envy of all our neighbors, now we were stranded at a bus depot, thirty dollars in our pockets and not a prayer in sight.* \*

We see A PLUME OF SMOKE streaming from the dormer windows. Suddenly, the GLASS SHATTERS. ANGRY FLAMES lick at windows and doors, spreading rapidly across the attic and down the stairs.

CATHY

*But God was looking out for us. And we learned to trust again, believe in second chances-- even me. Like a fairy tale princess, finding her happy ending.*

The entire estate is engulfed in an UNCONTROLLABLE BLAZE. Soon BLACKENING, COLLAPSING into a charred, unrecognizable heap.

CATHY (V.O.)

*Or the Phoenix, rising from the ashes...*

Her V.O. dissolves back to...

2 INT. FUNERAL HOME - SOUTH CAROLINA - TWO YEARS PREVIOUS 2

Greenglenna, 1971. CATHY, 24 and beautiful, is delivering a eulogy for DR. PAUL SHEFFIELD (late 40s), whose kind portrait sits above his closed casket, adorned in yellow flowers.

(CONTINUED)

CATHY

(continued from V.O.)

...That's how Dr. Sheffield found us ten years ago. Or as Paul liked to say, when we found each other. He took us into his home, adopted us, sent us to the best schools-- he became the loving father we'd lost. And well, I only hope we were the devoted children he'd so desperately wanted.

She glances at the front row where we see CHRISTOPHER (26) and CARRIE (17). Christopher's handsome and composed in a well-tailored suit. Carrie's pretty but remarkably small for her age-- and emotionally fragile, clutching her brother's arm for strength. Christopher gives a nod of support to Cathy, who continues.

CATHY (CONT'D)

Paul's gone to a better place now. I'm sure of that. But we'll never forget him...

Her voice trails off in grief. A beat as she collects herself, then looks up with a renewed, almost steely determination.

CATHY (CONT'D)

We will never forget our past.

SMASH CUT TO:

3 TITLE CARD: "PETALS ON THE WIND." 3

4 INT. FUNERAL RECEPTION - SHEFFIELD HOME - LATER THAT DAY 4

A traditional Southern brick house with overstuffed sofas, eclectic knick-knacks and welcoming veranda-- a far cry from the cold grandeur of Foxworth Hall.

Post-funeral, various MOURNERS offer their condolences and casseroles. A KIND SOUTHERN WOMAN (60s) hands Cathy a covered dish. \*

WOMAN \*

(re: casserole)

...Heat this at 350 for 45 minutes, then at 425 to brown the crust. \*  
And I like to add an egg wash for extra sheen...

(CONTINUED)

Cathy looks a bit lost. Christopher swoops in with Carrie, takes the casserole.

CHRISTOPHER

(gently teasing)

I'm afraid Cathy's talents don't lie in the kitchen.

CATHY

(explaining)

I'm a dancer. Well, I'm trying to be.

WOMAN

Oh yes. Dr. Sheffield used to brag to all his patients about your ballet.

(to Christopher and Carrie)

About all of your accomplishments.

(nods, to Christopher)

Guess I'll be calling you now every time my bad knee acts up.

CATHY

Oh, my brother's not a doctor yet.

CHRISTOPHER

One more year 'til I finish my training.

The woman finally leans down to Carrie.

WOMAN

And you must be the star pupil at Miss Calhoun's School for Girls. What grade are you in, honey-- sixth?

CARRIE

Eleventh.

Upset, Carrie skulks off. Christopher and Cathy quickly try to make light of the gaffe.

CHRISTOPHER

Don't let Carrie's size fool you. She's got a heart the size of Charleston.

CATHY

(lightly)

And a temper to match.

They all chuckle politely. The woman turns serious.

(CONTINUED)

WOMAN

It's a blessing to see how well  
you've all turned out.

(admiring)

Most siblings aren't nearly so  
close.

\*  
\*  
\*

Cathy enters with a wrapped casserole while Paul's kind,  
African-American housekeeper HENNY (50s) cleans up.

CATHY

Last guest just left, Henny. We're  
finally on our own.

As Cathy tries to make room in the crowded refrigerator;

HENNY

You sure you're gonna be okay, Miss  
Cathy?

CATHY

(nods)

I think we've got enough chicken  
and dumplings to last a lifetime.

Henny stops cleaning, puts her hand gently on Cathy's arm.

HENNY

I mean it. Who's gonna look after  
you all now? You're barely a grown-  
up yourself, and Christopher's  
always buried in his medical books.  
And Carrie...

(gingerly)

being sensitive like she is.

Cathy tightens. Henny's not wrong.

HENNY (CONT'D)

Surely you must have family  
somewhere. Distant cousins or a  
long-lost aunt--

CATHY

(cutting her off)

No. There's nobody.

(then)

Don't worry about us, Henny. We're  
survivors.

Cathy gets ready for bed. As she brushes her hair, she looks at some FRAMED PHOTOS of Paul over the past ten years (ballet recitals, high school graduation, Christmas, etc...) Clearly, Dr. Sheffield took good care of them.

Upset, Cathy SWEEPS the photos off her dressing table. Then stares at the telephone.

Bart and Corrine's upscale home. Bart (early 40s) and Corrine (early 50s), still married and aging well, are heading out in cocktail attire. Bart fiddles with his cufflinks while Corrine waits impatiently by the front door.

CORRINE

Bart-darling, everyone's waiting for us. We'll miss the silent auction.

BART

You and your charity parties. What's the cause this time--?

SFX: The phone rings. Corrine reaches for it, but Bart answers it first.

BART (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Hello? Uh, yes, she's right here.

Bart hands her the phone. Corrine looks confused, a little irritated. Who could be calling right now?

CORRINE

(into phone)

This is Corrine Winslow.

(no answer)

Hello? Hello...?

(frustrated)

Who is this? What do you want--?!

A beat then she hangs up. Tries to compose herself. But Bart sees she's shaken.

BART

Another prank call?

(she nods reluctantly)

That's it. I'm calling the police and having them trace the number.

(CONTINUED)

He reaches for the phone but Corrine stops him. Firmly.

CORRINE

No. Don't.

(blithely)

It-- it's probably just some kids'  
idea of a joke.

She quickly fixes his cufflink and ushers him out the door. \*  
Then surreptitiously reaches into her purse and takes out a \*  
bottle of prescription pills. Pops one or two. \*

INT. CATHY'S BEDROOM - SAME

Cathy holds the phone. There's only a dial tone.

CHRISTOPHER (O.S.)

You're calling her again, aren't  
you?

She whips around to find Christopher in the doorway. He's  
witnessed the entire thing. She quickly drops the phone into  
its cradle. Tries to play it off.

CATHY

(lightly)

What, are you spying on me? \*

She gets up and brushes past him, but he blocks her. \*

CHRISTOPHER

I'm serious, Cath. You agreed to \*  
stop. It's not healthy. \*

Cathy stops, looks ashamed. \*

CATHY

I know. Just-- don't you ever \*  
think about her? About what she \*  
did to us... to Cory? \*

CHRISTOPHER

Of course I do. But what's done is \*  
done. You have to forget about \*  
mom. Move on. \*

CATHY

I'm trying, Christopher, I am. But \*  
then I think: she's out there, \*  
married and rich... pretending like \*  
we never even existed. \*

CHRISTOPHER

Look, I'm trying to get on with my life. Make something of myself. And so should you.

(then)

It's what Paul would've wanted. And dad, too.

Cathy looks at her garnet ring -- the one her dad gave her years ago in FITA -- and fights back tears. He gently squeezes her shoulder.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)

It's been ten years since we escaped the attic, Cathy. It's over.

A local ballet company. Cathy and OTHER DANCERS train under the unforgiving scrutiny of the FEMALE BALLET TEACHER, 50s, with a severe bun and even more severe expression.

TEACHER

...To the front and jete, and back, fondu.

(snapping fingers)

One and two, and one and two, and-- pick it up, Natalie. Jane, watch your timing. Push yourself, Richard-- this isn't a grade school recital.

The dancers are sweating, nervous as the Teacher picks them apart. Only Cathy remains laser-focused on her movements.

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Perfection is not something you're born with. It takes practice, devotion... *pain*.

A MALE DANCER (20s) appears in the doorway. This is Julian Marquet, as arrogant as he is handsome. The other dancers take notice but his eyes-- and smug grin-- are aimed directly at Cathy.

JULIAN

The trick is to not *look* like you're in pain.

He sweeps past Cathy, who looks annoyed, and kisses the Teacher.



TEACHER

My son, Julian. Back from New York.

\*  
\*  
\*

She nods at him. Julian does a staggering *Cabriole* leap. He's the best dancer by far, and knows it.

\*

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Excellent.

\*

Next up is Cathy. She does a *grand pirouette*. The teacher shakes her head, dismissive.

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Weak.

But Cathy steps back to the floor. Anxious to get it right. A hint of defiance, even.

\*  
\*

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Try again?

Cathy nods. The music resumes. She spins again.

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Again. Again. Again!

Now she's testing her, trying to break Cathy. But Cathy keeps going. Faster, stronger and more focused with each spin-- astonishingly so. The other dancers watch-- impressed, scared. Even Julian's surprised by her determination.

Finally, the music stops. A tense beat as Cathy struggles to catch her breath. But refusing to bow down. Julian is impressed. But the teacher merely nods.

\*  
\*

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Better.

After rehearsal. The dancers are getting changed, icing muscles, etc.... Cathy peels off her ballet slippers and winces-- the back of the slipper has dug a GASH into her ankle. Julian approaches.

JULIAN

You're bleeding.

CATHY

(turning away)  
It doesn't bother me.

JULIAN

I noticed.

He pulls out a bandage and starts to wrap her ankle. She tries to stop him, pull out of his grip.

CATHY

I can take care of myself--

But he's stronger, in control-- and ignores her protests. When he's finished, she nods reluctantly.

CATHY (CONT'D)

Thanks.

The teacher calls out from the studio.

TEACHER

Julian-darling, I want you to run  
the "Sleeping Beauty" auditions  
with me next week.

\*

\*

He gets up, slowly brushing his hand up Cathy's leg.

JULIAN

Play nice and I can help you a lot  
more around here.

He exits. Several FEMALE DANCERS glance enviously at Cathy.

11 INT. CLASSROOM - MISS CALHOUN'S SCHOOL - SOUTH CAROLINA - DAY

INSERT VIDEO: A sex education film. A group of ADOLESCENT GIRLS play innocently (gymnastics, riding bikes, etc...) while a chirpy NARRATOR lectures on puberty.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

(on film)

...As you grow older, you may  
notice changes occurring in your  
body. Your hips are curving, your  
bust is filling out and your legs  
are lengthening...

PULL BACK TO REVEAL: A class of ADOLESCENT GIRLS (16), in prim uniforms, are watching. Unlike the "nice girls" on film, these teens are bored, restless-- way too precocious for this naive lecture.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

(on film)

Don't worry.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

This is all a perfectly *natural* and  
*necessary* part of becoming a  
woman...

Only Carrie stands out among her peers. She's half the size  
of her classmates, listening intently in the front row. \*

Suddenly, a NOTE gets thrown on her desk. She opens it up. \*  
It reads "FREAK." Carrie spins around to look at one girl, \*  
LACY ST. JOHN, the auburn-haired "queen bee", who shoots her \*  
an innocent smirk. The other girls hold back titters. \*  
Carrie turns back around, sinks lower in her seat. \*

Christopher and other MALE MEDICAL STUDENTS are doing their  
rounds, led by DR. REEVES (50s), the chief of staff.

DR. REEVES

(reading medical chart)

... The patient was admitted this  
morning with vague epigastric pain,  
that progressed to her lower right  
quadrant.

MEDICAL STUDENT #1

Could be appendicitis?

DR. REEVES

(re: chart)

Her appendix was removed last year.

The other students are stumped, then Christopher pipes in.

CHRISTOPHER

What about an ectopic pregnancy?  
It can cause severe abdominal  
cramps, even if the fallopian tube  
hasn't ruptured.

Dr. Reeves nods at Christopher, glares at the other students.

DR. REEVES

Glad to see *somebody's* cracked open  
their Gray's Anatomy.

Just then, a PRETTY GIRL (20s) in a sweater-set and pearls,  
approaches. She taps her watch sternly.

PRETTY GIRL

Dr. Reeves, I hope you haven't  
forgotten about our dinner date.

DR. REEVES

Be right there.

(to guys)

Don't let the pearls fool you. She can throw a real fit if I'm late.

PRETTY GIRL

(laughing)

Daddy!

She gives Dr. Reeves a peck on the cheek. Then notices the medical students.

PRETTY GIRL (CONT'D)

Aren't you going to introduce me?

DR. REEVES

Oh, my daughter, Sarah. These are my third-years-- Jack, Ed ... Christopher.

She looks at Christopher, a little taken aback.

SARAH (PRETTY GIRL)

You're the Christopher Sheffield my father's always talking about?

CHRISTOPHER

Nothing bad, I hope.

SARAH

No, just-- I thought you'd look more... studious.

Christopher grins sheepishly. The other students exchange looks.

DR. REEVES

We better get going, Sarah.

(to students)

See you gentlemen first thing Monday in the surgical ward. So easy on the martinis this weekend.

SARAH

(to Christopher)

Nice to meet you--

(catching herself)

All of you.

Dr. Reeves and Sarah head out. The other students immediately start teasing Christopher.

(CONTINUED)

MEDICAL STUDENT #1

(mocking)

"You're Christopher--? I thought you'd look more *studious*."

\*

\*

CHRISTOPHER

Knock it off. She seemed like a perfectly nice girl.

MEDICAL STUDENT #1

And don't you forget it. Dr. Reeves would keep her chained in a tower if he could.

(then)

Hey, you coming out with us tonight? We're going dancing with some of the ER nurses.

\*

CHRISTOPHER

Ah, I dunno.

MEDICAL STUDENT #1

Come on. All work and no play... Besides, the only reason they agreed to go out with us is 'cuz we said you were coming.

\*

The guys laugh. Christopher looks down the hall at the CUTE NURSES, giggling by the entrance. But he looks uncomfortable.

CHRISTOPHER

I can't. I have to study.

A back-alley dive with live music and cheap drinks. Cathy sits with Julian at a corner table. A WAITRESS approaches with two drinks, sizes up Cathy.

WAITRESS

Your usual, Julian?

Cathy's not sure if she means his drink or his date.

JULIAN

Thanks, Eunetta.

Julian hands her a tip, then takes a long swig. Cathy takes a sip and makes a face. Julian looks amused.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Never had moonshine?

(CONTINUED)

CATHY  
 (shakes her head)  
 Isn't it illegal?

JULIAN  
 That's what makes it taste so good.

CATHY  
 I wouldn't know.

A beat as Cathy takes in the atmosphere. She's a little uncomfortable-- this seedy club's a far cry from the 'pretty' ballet studio. Julian lights up a cigarette, looks at Cathy.

JULIAN  
 So what's your story, anyway?

CATHY  
 My story?

JULIAN  
 Sure, you come across as "Little Miss Perfect." Come in early, stay late. Don't get in anyone's business. You've got some natural talent, I'll give you that... but your training's crap.  
 (a little suspicious)  
 Where'd you say you studied again?

Cathy tightens, starts to get up.

CATHY  
 Maybe this wasn't such a good idea...?

But Julian pulls her back down. A little roughly.

JULIAN  
 I didn't say I didn't like you.

He waves to Eunetta for another round then looks Cathy squarely in the eyes.

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
 You're different than the other dancers around here. I knew the minute I saw you. You make the other girls look clumsy, dull. What's your secret?

CATHY  
 What's yours?

\*  
 \*  
 \*  
 \*  
 \*  
 \*

JULIAN

I want be the best, that's all.  
And I think you want the same  
thing.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

CATHY

You don't know anything about me.

\*  
\*

JULIAN

I know you're ambitious.  
Passionate. You've got bigger  
dreams than dancing in some po-dunk  
company before trading in your tutu  
for a white picket fence and a  
bunch of squalling kids.

\*

(then)

You're too good for this place. We  
both are.

\*  
\*

Cathy takes a long sip from her glass-- he's stirred  
something in her. That and the moonshine are slightly  
intoxicating.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

You thought about going to New  
York?

CATHY

Sort of. I mean, every dancer  
dreams about it but...

JULIAN

But *what?* New York is where it's  
all happening. You haven't seen  
ballet until you've seen it done  
there. The stage, the costumes,  
the orchestra... it's like nothing  
you've ever experienced before.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Cathy's intrigued, the wheels are turning. He notices.

\*

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Why don't you come back with me?

\*

CATHY

I don't know...

\*

JULIAN

I'm in one of the top companies.  
I'll introduce you to the director.  
He's always looking for new talent.  
And with our chemistry, it's only a  
matter of time before the whole  
world knows who we are.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

CATHY

Really-- you'd do that for me?

Julian puts his hand on the back of her neck, tips up her chin. Close enough to kiss her. Cathy bites her lip, excited. Instead, he just whispers seductively;

JULIAN

I'd do anything for you.

14 EXT. SHEFFIELD HOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT

14

Julian's SPORTS CAR races up the driveway. Cathy stumbles out, giggling and a little tipsy. The car PEELS OFF, the wheels kicking up a storm of dust and gravel.

At the entrance, Cathy fumbles through her purse for her keys when the door swings open. It's Christopher. He looks worried.

CHRISTOPHER

It's two a.m.. Where've you been?

CATHY

(annoyed)

Out.

She pushes past him, heads inside.

15 INT. HALLWAY - SHEFFIELD HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

15

Cathy heads to her room. Christopher follows closely behind.

CHRISTOPHER

Who was that?

CATHY

Nobody. A friend.

CHRISTOPHER

(notices)

And you've been drinking, haven't you?

He holds her face, tries to take a closer look.

CATHY

I'm fine, really--

\*

Cathy tries to squirm away. Henny steps out from the maid's quarters in her nightgown. Sees the siblings locked together.

\*

(CONTINUED)



HENNY

Everyone okay? I got such a  
fright.

Christopher and Cathy immediately separate.

CATHY

(laughing it off)

Sorry, Henny. Just-- Christopher  
still thinks I'm fourteen.

Cathy shakes them off, runs up to bed. Christopher stares  
after her, uneasy.

\*  
\*

Cathy gets ready for bed (taking off jewelry, etc...).  
Christopher appears in the doorway.

CHRISTOPHER

You deserve better than Julian.

CATHY

So you did know who I was with?

CHRISTOPHER

I'm only telling you this for your  
own good.

CATHY

Then you should be happy. *You're*  
the one who said I should make  
something of myself. Be  
successful. And Julian can help my  
career. We want the same things,  
we have the same goals...

\*  
\*

CHRISTOPHER

Look, I've heard things about him.  
He's dangerous. His drinking, his  
temper... The way he uses women.  
You really think you're the only  
one--?

\*

It dawns on Cathy what's really bothering Christopher.

\*

CATHY

This isn't about Julian.

\*

CHRISTOPHER

Of course it is.

\*

CATHY

You-- you're jealous. That I was  
with another man.

\*  
\*

His eyes flash with anger for a moment then he backs off.

CHRISTOPHER

Cathy, don't. We agreed never to  
talk about that.

But she ignores him. She has to get it off her chest.

\*

CATHY

I see the way you look at me. Ten  
years and you're still thinking  
about the attic. What we did  
together, how we felt...

CHRISTOPHER

Stop it--!

CATHY

(pointedly)

How you've never felt that way  
about anyone else.

CHRISTOPHER

That's not true.

CATHY

You're still in love with me...  
aren't you?

It's not a question-- more like a statement. A long beat as  
he stares at Cathy. Unsure, filled with anguish. It's  
clear from his pained expression that Cathy's hit the nail on  
the head.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

CATHY (CONT'D)

(softly)

You keep telling me to move on,  
but... you can't either.

He chokes back a sob. She reaches out to comfort him, hugs  
her tightly. But their comfort soon gives way to passion and  
they KISS.

\*

Soon they FALL BACK ONTO THE BED. The past ten years 'apart'  
has only made them hungrier, desperate. And more forbidden  
than ever.

Cathy stares at herself in the mirror, still groggy from the previous night. Incredulous of what she did. Then, behind her, she notices Christopher admiring her-- just like he did in the attic ten years earlier.

Only this time, Cathy's not flattered... or surprised. Instead, she looks regretful, ashamed. So does he.

CHRISTOPHER

(consoling)

I wanted it as much as you did.

CATHY

It doesn't matter.

(then)

After all these years, I've tried so hard to forget these feelings...

CHRISTOPHER

We both have.

(then)

It's just hard because it feels so right.

He moves closer, kisses her shoulder. She closes her eyes, sighs. In another context, it's almost romantic. But here, she quickly shakes it off with a shudder.

CATHY

But it's not. We can't do this again-- we can't be together. If anyone found out...

CHRISTOPHER

Nobody ever will.

Christopher nods and pulls back. Unhappy-- but he's knows she's right.

FROM THE DOORWAY -- we see CARRIE, who's standing behind the door, which is slightly ajar. She's overheard the entire conversation.

Christopher finishes up with A MOM and HER SON (11) in a fresh arm cast. He's kind but a little distracted.

MOM

He'll be normal again, won't he?  
Baseball season's around the  
corner.

\*

CHRISTOPHER

Oh, yeah. Few more weeks he'll be  
good as new.  
(to boy)  
Just promise you won't fly off any  
more roofs.

A CANDY-STRIPER approaches with a cart. It's Sarah.

SARAH

Hi, Christopher-- Dr. Sheffield.  
Would you like some sweet tea?  
(off his confused look)  
Sarah, Dr. Reeves' daughter. We  
met a few weeks ago.

CHRISTOPHER

Oh, right. Sorry, the uniform  
threw me.

SARAH

I just started volunteering I love  
kids, and well, I was hoping to run  
into certain medical students.

CHRISTOPHER

(not getting it)  
Oh yeah-- anyone I know?

She tips her head-- he's cute but odd. She hands him the  
tea.

SARAH

Well, I should let you go. You've  
got lives to save--

CHRISTOPHER

That's okay. I could use a break.

Sarah smiles. A RECEPTIONIST approaches with a message.

RECEPTIONIST

Dr. Sheffield, Henny just called.  
Something with your sister.

CHRISTOPHER

I hope Carrie's not in trouble in  
school again.

(CONTINUED)

RECEPTIONIST

She said it's about Cathy.

Now Christopher looks worried.

CHRISTOPHER

I gotta go.

He races off, barely looking at Sarah as he exits.

Christopher races up to find Cathy loading her bags into a TAXI.

CHRISTOPHER

Cathy-- stop!

CATHY

Christopher, what're you doing home?

CHRISTOPHER

Henny told me your plans. You can't go to New York.

CATHY

It's where all the major ballet companies are. If I want to have a real shot of making it as a dancer-- of achieving any kind of success or fame...

(then)

All those years we were locked up, this is what I was dreaming about. What I worked so hard for.

CHRISTOPHER

But you promised we'd always stay together-- me and you, and Carrie.

CATHY

We can't be our parents, Christopher. We can't make their same mistake. We have to focus on becoming successful, force ourselves to love other people...

From Christopher's hurt look, it's clear there won't be any others. But he concedes.

CHRISTOPHER

If this is what you really want...?

(CONTINUED)

CATHY

It's what I need. What we both  
need.

JULIAN (O.S.)

Cathy, you coming?

Christopher whips around to find Julian behind him, exiting the taxi. He stares at Cathy, who instantly pulls away from her brother. Christopher looks like he's been punched.

CHRISTOPHER

You're going with *him*?

JULIAN

(glaring at him)  
What the hell's that supposed to  
mean--?

CATHY

Julian, please-- I'll be right  
there.

JULIAN

Well, hurry up. We're gonna miss  
our flight.

Julian hops back into the taxi. Christopher looks pleadingly at Cathy, one last time.

CHRISTOPHER

He doesn't love you, Cathy...

"Like I do" is left hanging. Cathy looks torn, but quickly steels herself.

CATHY

I'm sorry, Christopher, but I won't  
be like mom. I have to make a life  
for myself.

Cathy joins Julian in the cab. As they pull away from the house, Christopher's left alone... devastated.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

20 EXT. BALLET STUDIO - NEW YORK CITY - DAY (A MONTH LATER) 20

A world-famous ballet company, evidenced by the large show posters and awards flanking its grand entrance.

BALLET DIRECTOR (O.S.)

Every young dancer dreams of coming to New York, of making it into one of the top companies, dancing on one of the most important stages... Having the whole world know who you are.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

We move inside to...

21 INT. BALLET STUDIO - NEW YORK CITY - SAME 21

A MASSIVE STUDIO filled with BALLET DANCERS, including Cathy and Julian. The place is bigger, more impersonal than the studio in South Carolina-- and far more competitive. The company's run by a tough-as-nails MALE BALLET DIRECTOR-- GEORGE KOROV (50s), who continues his lecture, weaving through the sea of well-trained DANCERS.

GEORGE (BALLET DIRECTOR)

(continued from O.S.)

...And for each one of you, there are a thousand more. Younger, stronger, more determined. Just waiting to take your place.

Next to Cathy is a beautiful dancer, YOLANDA LANGE, (early 20s), with dark, exotic looks and sexual confidence. She "accidentally" JOSTLES Cathy, who stumbles in front of George. Mad, Cathy hisses at Yolanda.

CATHY

Hey, watch it--!

But Yolanda's not paying attention-- her eyes are on Julian. And she likes what she sees.

22 INT. CATHY AND JULIAN'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT NIGHT 22

A shabby walk-up with mismatched furniture. Still, it's cozy, intimate. Julian and Cathy are having passionate, slightly rough sex-- far less "romantic" than with her and Christopher. Afterwards, Julian rolls over. Grins at Cathy.

\*  
\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

JULIAN  
(complimentary)  
You more intense than usual.

CATHY  
I'm just excited to be in New York.

He starts kissing her neck but Cathy's thinking.

CATHY (CONT'D)  
You think George even noticed me?  
There were so many other dancers.

JULIAN  
Yeah, sure.

He looks at her a moment, then;

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
But your hair.

CATHY  
What's wrong with my hair?

JULIAN  
It's so provincial... like a doll.  
You should dye it dark. Or cut it.

But Julian's hit a raw nerve. Cathy pulls away, angry.  
Defiant.

CATHY  
I like my hair *as is*.

George scrutinizes the dancers, who work in partners, practicing lifts. As he lectures, he taps several PAIRS, who leave the floor discouraged.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
...The "pas de deux" in "Sleeping Beauty" is designed for two dancers... with the idea they become one. They must be totally connected-- physically, creatively, and symbolically. To symbolise the powerful, all-encompassing connection between the prince and the princess.

He stops to watch Julian and Cathy, who go through their steps. Finally, Julian lifts Cathy, but they STUMBLE.



A tense beat as George considers them. He nods approvingly at Julian... then TAPS Cathy. She's mortified.

CATHY

I- I know I can do it. If we could just try again--

GEORGE

(ignoring her)

Julian, I want you to partner with... Yolanda.

Cathy steps aside as Yolanda steps into Julian's arms. She watches in dismay as they dance in perfect, sensual harmony. Even George is impressed.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Great dancers don't perform the "pas de deux." They become it.

Yolanda remains in Julian's arms a beat too long. Then brushes past Cathy with a victorious smirk.

YOLANDA

Don't feel bad, *bonita*. Someday you'll find your own prince.

Cathy and Julian unwind after their grueling day. Julian wraps his foot as Cathy makes herself a sandwich. As she's about to take a bite, Julian shoots her a look.

JULIAN

That such a good idea?

CATHY

I'm hungry.

JULIAN

(shrugs)

I guess you don't have to worry about lifts. None of the 'corps' dancers do.

Cathy puts down the sandwich, nibbles on just the lettuce and tomato. Then, simmering;

CATHY

It wasn't me, you know. Your hand slipped.

That gets his attention.

JULIAN

'Scuse me?

CATHY

Your hand slipped. That's why I fell.

JULIAN

Your mistake is my fault? Because I didn't hear Yolanda complaining.

CATHY

You were too busy running your hands all over her to hear much of anything.

That does it. Julian gets up, grabs Cathy's arm.

CATHY (CONT'D)

You're hurting me!

JULIAN

You begged me to take you to New York. You said you wanted to get as far away from South Carolina as possible. And this is what I get?

CATHY

Julian, stop it, calm down--

JULIAN

You would have nothing without me!

Angry, he SHOVES the table. The sandwich flies off the table, the plate SHATTERS. Now Cathy's frightened.

CATHY

Look, I- I didn't mean it like that, I swear.

JULIAN

You're mad that you can't hack it here and I can. Because not all eyes are on little Miss Perfect anymore! Well, this is my career. My life. My dream! And I don't need you messing it up! I don't need you at all!

He grabs her, presses her against the wall. She trembles.

CATHY

Stop. Please. I just--  
(deep breath)  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CATHY (CONT'D)

I- I want success. And happiness.  
For both of us.

Suddenly, he lets go of her, then CRUMPLES with remorse.

JULIAN

Oh God. I'm so sorry. I- I don't  
know what got into me...

Cathy feels bad, gives his shoulder a reassuring squeeze.

CATHY

It's okay. I shouldn't have said  
those things--

JULIAN

This was a mistake.

CATHY

What?

JULIAN

You should leave. Nobody's  
stopping you. Go home...  
(pointedly)  
Back to your loving brother.

\*

Cathy tightens. Then shakes her head.

\*

CATHY

I want to stay.

Julian shoots her a knowing grimace, then;

JULIAN

That's what I thought.  
(grabs his jacket)  
I'm going out.

\*

He exits. She chokes back tears and starts carefully picking  
up the shards of broken ceramic off the floor.

Morning service. The FEMALE STUDENTS, including Carrie, sing  
their daily hymn. When they finish, they sit for the  
headmistress, MISS CALHOUN (50s, proper) to deliver the day's  
announcements.

MISS CALHOUN

Good morning, girls.

GIRLS  
(in unison)  
Good morning, Miss Calhoun.

MISS CALHOUN  
In today's announcements, the Madrigals society will meet in the south courtyard. Sign up with Miss Pritchett for garden club. And next month is the junior cotillion with the St. Ambrose School for boys...

The girls buzz with excitement. Miss Calhoun shushes them with a warning.

HEADMISTRESS  
I do not need to remind you that you're young ladies now-- and as such, we require white gloves and proper lady-like behavior.

26 INT. LUNCH ROOM - MISS CALHOUN'S SCHOOL - NIGHT 26 \*

Over lunch, the girls chat eagerly about the dance. \*

GIRL #1  
...I can't decide between my coral chiffon or my yellow silk. \*

LACY  
Well, St. Ambrose colors are green and white. And my mother found me the most divine emerald dress at Dillard's. \*

The girls look over at Carrie, nearby, buried in a book.

LACY (CONT'D)  
What're you gonna wear to the cotillion, Carrie? \*

CARRIE  
(mumbles)  
I don't know.

LACY  
Well, I'm sure you'll look like a real doll... since you'll have to shop in the toy section. \*

The girls snicker. Carrie reddens, keeps reading. \*

(CONTINUED)

LACY (CONT'D) \*

Seriously, Carrie, why haven't you  
grown? You heard what that film in  
biology class said-- it's not  
*natural*. \*

(no response) \*

...Or were your parents freaks,  
too? \*

At the mention of her parents, Carrie looks up. Furious. \*

CARRIE \*

Don't talk about my parents! \*

She LUNGES at Lacy like an angry child, KICKING and CHOKING  
HER. A SCHOOL TEACHER quickly runs over. \*

SCHOOL TEACHER \*

Girls, stop it this instant! What  
is going on? \*

She pries the girls apart. Carrie is bright red, too angry  
to cry or speak. Lacy tries to catch her breath. \*

LACY \*

We were just talking about the  
dance and Carrie went... crazy. \*

The teacher knows Lacy's full of it, shakes her head  
sympathetically at Carrie. But she has no choice. \*

SCHOOL TEACHER \*

Alright, you're to go straight to  
the headmistress' office. \*

(then, off Lacy's smirk) \*

Both of you. \*

Heading off, Carrie grins to herself. Lacy looks outraged. \*

The maternity ward. Christopher finds Sarah, in a candy-  
striper uniform, gazing at the NEWBORN BABIES displayed  
behind the glass wall.

CHRISTOPHER

Come here often?

Sarah jumps, a little startled.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)

Oh, sorry.

SARAH

No, it's fine. I was just...  
(confesses)  
I like looking at the babies.

She turns red, a little embarrassed.

CHRISTOPHER

I do, too. With all the sick  
people around here, it cheers me up  
sometimes.

SARAH

Yes, exactly. They're so young and  
innocent... perfect. Hard to  
believe they'll all grow up  
someday.

CHRISTOPHER

(quietly)  
Not all of them.

She gives him a funny look-- what a morbid thing to say. She  
shakes it off with a smile.

SARAH

Well, the gift shop's probably  
wondering where I've wandered off  
to. And you've got real work to  
do...

CHRISTOPHER

Actually, the receptionist told me  
I might find you here.  
(then)  
I was hoping we could have dinner.

SARAH

(surprised)  
What?

CHRISTOPHER

I mean, together. On Saturday  
night. Like a date.

SARAH

(laughing)  
I know what you meant. And yes,  
I'd love to.

Happy, Sarah crosses away. Christopher looks back at the row  
of newborn babies-- at a SET OF TWINS. His face darkens then  
he quickly walks off.

Saturday night. Christopher and Sarah are on their date. Sarah chats breezily but Christopher seems a bit stiff.

SARAH

...I'm getting ready for my first cotillion, and my brassiere flat-out busted. So I had no choice but to send my poor widowed father to the intimates store. I swear, he was cursing my dear, departed mother's name up and back.

She chuckles, then notices Christopher's almost done with his food-- she's been talking way too much.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Look at me, going on and on. And you've barely said a word.

CHRISTOPHER

It's okay. I like it.

SARAH

C'mon. Tell me about you.

CHRISTOPHER

Like what?

SARAH

What do you like to do? Fishing... hunting? I know how you Southern men like your rifles.

CHRISTOPHER

I mostly just work.

An awkward beat, then she tries again;

SARAH

Well... how's your sister?

CHRISTOPHER

Oh, Carrie's doing just fine at school. In fact, she has her own first cotillion coming up.

SARAH

I meant, your other one. The dancer?

Christopher visibly tightens. Drops his fork.

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTOPHER

We haven't spoken in a few months.

The WAITER comes by.

WAITER

Any more drinks... coffee or tea?

CHRISTOPHER

(quickly)

Just the check, please.

EXT. REEVES' HOUSE - SOUTH CAROLINA

Christopher walks Sarah to her front door.

SARAH

Well, this is me.

She looks at him, waiting for something. He puts out his hand to shake.

CHRISTOPHER

(a little unsure)

Uh, thank you? I had a nice time tonight.

SARAH

(laughing)

Haven't you ever been on a date before?

Christopher grimaces wanly. Sarah realizes he hasn't.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Oh God. People at the hospital kept telling me you're "that way."

(off his confusion)

You know, funny... queer.

He looks taken aback.

CHRISTOPHER

That's what people think?

Sarah realizes her gaffe, feels bad.

SARAH

Well, I didn't think so. It's just talk, anyway--

CHRISTOPHER

I'm not.



Suddenly, he takes her by the shoulders and KISSES her. Passionately. A long beat as Sarah melts in his arms. He's definitely not "that way."

Suddenly, he pulls back-- surprised by what he just did. Contrite, even. He likes Sarah but we can tell his real passion lies elsewhere.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

He quickly heads down the path. But Sarah just grins to herself.

SARAH

I'm not.

The Junior Cotillion. GIRLS in elegant dresses and white gloves slow-dance with handsomely suited BOYS. Only Carrie sits alone on the side, shy and out-of-place in her frilly dress-- clearly from the Junior Department.

Finally, a SWEET-LOOKING BOY approaches her.

BOY

May I have this dance?

Carrie looks around-- is he talking to her? He is.

CARRIE

I-- um... are you sure?

BOY

Took me ten minutes to work up the nerve to even ask, so... yeah.

Carrie smiles, takes his hand.

A LITTLE LATER - Carrie dances awkwardly with the boy. She's self-conscious, because she's so much shorter than him.

CARRIE

Sorry, I have two left feet...?

BOY

Thomas. But people call me Tucker.

CARRIE

Tucker-- that's nice. I'm Tucker, Carrie. I mean Carrie, Tucker...

TUCKER

Nice to meet you, Carrie Tucker.

She laughs a little. A beat, then;

CARRIE

You weren't really nervous about asking me to dance, were you?

TUCKER

It's not every day I meet a girl with such pretty blue eyes. Your parents must've made a deal with the devil for those.

CARRIE

Yeah, I guess.

They continue to dance. He pulls her closer. Carrie's positively beaming. After a beat, he leans in closer. \*

TUCKER

Let's get outta here... Up to the roof. You have to see the view.

CARRIE

I dunno, I don't really like--

BOY

We'll leave separately. Nobody will find out. C'mon, Carrie Tucker-- just you and me.

CARRIE

Okay.

Tucker slips out a side door. After a beat, Carrie follows.

Carrie reluctantly exits onto the deserted roof. It's dark, high above the ground-- and she looks petrified. She stays close to the door, not daring to look around... or down.

CARRIE

Tucker... Tucker?

No answer. She takes a few more steps out when she hears the door swing open. Relieved, she spins around.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

Tucker, thank God, I thought you weren't--

But it's LACY in the doorway, along with her friends.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

Lacy. What're you doing up here?

LACY

I should ask you the same thing.

CARRIE

None of your beeswax.

Carrie tries to walk to the door, but Lacy blocks her.

LACY

Well, I certainly hope you weren't meeting a B-O-Y. Because Miss Calhoun would be very upset.

CARRIE

(realizing)

This was your idea. You made Tucker ask me up--

LACY

Carrie, you shouldn't let your imagination run wild. Or your temper. It's so unbecoming of a lady.

Before Carrie can stop her, Lacy exits, SLAMMING the door shut behind her. Upset, Carrie jiggles the doorknob-- but it's locked! A look of PANIC washes over her.

CARRIE

Open the door... OPEN IT! SOMEBODY GET ME DOWN FROM HERE! GET ME DOWN FROM HERE!

Her panic and humiliation quickly escalates into sheer terror. Carrie screams, howls, pounding and kicking on the doors until her knuckles and feet are bloody. \*

End of rehearsal. Cathy's stretching. There's a COMMOTION outside. DANCERS are squealing, laughing, even crying. A DANCER pokes her head in.

DANCER

It's up.

CATHY

What?

DANCER  
The casting list for "Sleeping  
Beauty!"

Cathy rushes out to find...

33 EXT. HALLWAY - DANCE STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

33

JULIAN is being congratulated. He looks almost shell-shocked by his news. He turns to Cathy, elated.

JULIAN  
I got it. I'm going to be the  
Prince!

CATHY  
I- I'm so happy for you.  
(then)  
Who got Sleeping Beauty--?!

She rushes over to the bulletin board, pushes past the other dancers to scan at the list. She searches further and further down for her name. It's clear she has a background role.

Disappointed, she turns around to find Yolanda standing behind her. Cathy swallows the ten pound lump in her throat, then smiles wanly.

CATHY (CONT'D)  
Congratulations.

Yolanda excitedly pushes her way to the bulletin board-- she's Sleeping Beauty! The other dancers start congratulating and hugging her. Cathy looks pained. Julian approaches.

JULIAN  
A bunch of us are going out to  
celebrate. You coming?

CATHY  
Um, I'm pretty tired--

But he hasn't even waited for her answer. He's halfway out the door, his arm hooked into Yolanda's.

34 INT. CATHY &amp; JULIAN'S APARTMENT - EARLY NEXT MORNING

34

Dawn. Julian stumbles in, drunk. Cathy's waiting on the sofa, her bags packed.

(CONTINUED)

CATHY

Fun night?

He doesn't answer. Goes straight to the sink. Splashes his face with cold water.

JULIAN

Make me some coffee, will you?

CATHY

I'm going home. The train leaves in an hour.

Now he looks up, notices the suitcase. Gets angry.

JULIAN

What?!

CATHY

Just for a week. Christopher's graduating from medical school. I'm his only family--

JULIAN

What about rehearsal? Or is my debut not important enough for you? \*

CATHY

I'm just background. I'll explain it to George--

JULIAN

You are NOT going anywhere... unless I say so!

He stumbles towards the bedroom. A beat, then she picks up her suitcase and slips out. \*

Graduation. GRADUATES and their PROUD FAMILIES celebrate, pose for photos. Cathy finds Christopher across the courtyard, approaches. He looks stunned.

CHRISTOPHER

Cathy? I didn't think you'd come.

CATHY

I couldn't miss this.  
(then)  
We're all we've got.

A charged beat as they look at each other, unsure what to say. The tension-- and longing-- between them is palpable.

CHRISTOPHER

How's New York?

CATHY

Good. Great. The dance company keeps me busy. We're doing "Sleeping Beauty" next month. Julian's playing the lead.

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah? And how 'bout you? He's good to you, isn't he?

Cathy chokes back her sadness and just nods. But she can't hold it in. She starts to reach out to him, her voice cracking.

CATHY

Christopher, I- I missed you--

Suddenly, Sarah appears with a bright smile, cuts Cathy off.

SARAH

You must be Cathy!  
(nudges Christopher)  
You didn't tell me your sister was coming!

CHRISTOPHER

I didn't know.

Cathy looks at Sarah, then to Christopher. He smiles wanly.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)

Sorry-- Cathy, this is Sarah Reeves.  
(loaded)  
My girlfriend.

Cathy sucks in her breath. Then attempts a smile.

CATHY

Nice to meet you--

Sarah ignores Cathy's outstretched hand and gives her a HUG.

SARAH

If you're anything like your brother, I know we'll be close.

In the background, GRADUATION MUSIC begins to play.

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTOPHER

Looks like procession's about to start.

SARAH

(to Cathy)

You're coming to the luncheon at our house tomorrow? My father's throwing it for Christopher... since your own parents couldn't be here.

CATHY

I'd love to but... I have rehearsal back in New York. I can't afford to miss more than a day.

Sarah links her arms in Christopher's, walks off. Cathy's grin quickly disappears.

Cathy arrives home to find the apartment is a mess. Empty bottles, dirty dishes. And TWO WINE GLASSES on the coffee table-- one with BRIGHT RED LIPSTICK (note: same shade Yolanda wears).

Just then, Julian stumbles in from the bedroom. She holds up the stained wine glass, accusingly;

CATHY

Whose is this?

(no reply)

Who have you been with--?

Suddenly, Julian WHACKS HER. Hard. She stumbles backwards.

JULIAN

Don't you ever leave me!

Cathy crumples to the floor as Julian's angry fists rain down on her. She's a prisoner of abuse... again!

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

37 INT. CATHY & JULIAN'S APARTMENT - NEXT MORNING 37

Cathy wakes up, alone, on the floor-- a little disoriented. It's painful but she gets up and heads to the bathroom to look in the mirror...

38 INT. BATHROOM - APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS 38

Cathy's face is SWOLLEN, her hair tangled, eyes red. She tries to move her arm and WINCES. Then unbuttons her shirt-- her shoulder is BLACK AND BLUE.

Just then, Julian enters with freshly bought YELLOW FLOWERS. He's soft-spoken, contrite.

JULIAN  
(re: her shoulder)  
Some ice and it'll be fine in a  
couple of days.

Cathy doesn't respond. Ignores the flowers, brushes past him to get to the freezer. But he gets there first. Pulls out an ice pack.

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
Let me.

CATHY  
(recoils)  
Don't--

But he's firm. Presses it against her shoulder. She grits her teeth, tries not to react but it HURTS. Her eyes well up, despite herself.

JULIAN  
I didn't mean it. Any of it. \*

CATHY  
What about Yolanda?

JULIAN  
She's nothing. I was just trying  
to get back at you for leaving. \*  
You know how important this show is \*  
for me. Dammit, Cathy, you know \*  
how much I need you right now. \*  
(then, softer)  
Please. What do I have to do to  
make this up to you. Just tell me.

(CONTINUED)



Cathy dumps the flowers in the trash, shoots him a cunning look.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CORRINE AND BART'S HOUSE - WEEKS LATER 39

CLOSE ON: A newspaper clipping announcing the New York City Ballet's upcoming debut of "SLEEPING BEAUTY" -- with Cathy in the title role.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL: Corrine reads this, stony-faced. She's just received the article "anonymously" in the mail. She quickly pulls out one of her pills. Bart comes up behind her, notices. \*

BART  
Another "headache"?

CORRINE  
My doctor gave them to me. To help me relax. \*

BART  
(lightly)  
Why aren't you relaxed? You spend all day shopping and having lunch. \*

CORRINE  
Not funny. \*

BART  
I'm sorry. I didn't mean it like that.  
(then)  
How about we take a trip? \*

CORRINE  
You know my mother's not doing well. \*

BART  
She hasn't been doing well for ten years.  
(notices article)  
We could go to New York for the weekend, soak up some culture... \*

CORRINE  
(draws him closer)  
I'd rather stay home and make our own fun. Besides, I've never been a fan of ballet. \*

She crumples up the article, throws it away. \*

Julian and Cathy rehearse a complicated LIFT from "Sleeping Beauty" under George's direction. This time, they're perfect together.

GEORGE

Very nice, you two. Excellent, Cathy.

(pointedly)

We can't have Sleeping Beauty keep *falling* out the Prince's arms.

He shoots a look to Yolanda, who watches on the side, furious.

YOLANDA

(to George, re: Julian)

I'm telling you, it was his fault. He was leaning back too far... He kept dropping me on purpose. It's not fair--!

But George ignores her. Cathy brushes past Yolanda with a smug grimace.

CATHY

Life isn't always fair.

She grabs a towel, water then SPOTS SOMEONE through the studio window. Her smile turns to worry. It's Carrie.

Cathy speaks privately with Carrie. Cathy looks upset.

CATHY

...What do you mean you've dropped out of school? You were getting straight A's...

CARRIE

It's complicated.

CATHY

(realizing)

It was the other girls, wasn't it? You said it was getting better. Oh God, Carrie, if they hurt you in any way--

CARRIE

No. They didn't.

(then)

Just-- with Paul gone, I want to be closer to my family. To you.

CATHY

Carrie.

CARRIE

I can finish school in New York. I'll stay on your couch, and help cook and clean up for you-- and Julian.

At Julian's name, Cathy tightens.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

Everything's okay with him, isn't it? I know Christopher said--

CATHY

Everything's great with us. But with our show coming up, he's under a lot of pressure...

Just then, Julian enters.

JULIAN

Cathy, we're rehearsing act two--

He sees Carrie. Looks confused. Cathy smiles tentatively.

CATHY

Julian, I don't think you've met my sister, Carrie.

CARRIE

Nice to meet you.

JULIAN

I thought you were in school. And the show's not for a few more weeks...

Cathy and Carrie exchange looks, then;

CATHY

Actually, she was hoping to stay with us... for a while.

CARRIE

I won't be any trouble, I promise. I'll do anything you want...

(CONTINUED)

A tense beat as Julian considers this. Sizes Carrie up. Then gives her a warm smile, squeezes her on the shoulder. \*

JULIAN

If it makes Cathy happy, then I am,  
too.

Carrie lights up. Cathy smiles with relief. Things are looking up!

Sarah and Christopher are finishing dinner. Henny clears the plates.

SARAH

Henny, your peach cobbler is divine as usual. I can never get my crust this flaky.

HENNY

You come over anytime and I'll show you how.

(hinting)

Somebody's gonna have to make it for Mr. Christopher when I've gone.

Sarah blushes, (not so) secretly delighted by the implication. Christopher just grimaces.

CHRISTOPHER

Come on now, Henny. You'll outlive us all.

HENNY

(ignoring him)

How 'bout next Saturday, Miss Sarah?

SARAH

I'd love to... but Christopher and I are going to Charleston.

CHRISTOPHER

What're you talking about?

Sensing trouble, Henny quickly crosses to the kitchen. Sarah turns to Christopher, nearly bursting with excitement.

SARAH

Honey, I told you about the charity garden party. Thrown by the Southern Junior League.

(MORE)

SARAH (CONT'D)

(doesn't ring a bell)

It's only the most exclusive event,  
with the who's who of Southern  
Society. I've been trying to get  
an invite for months.

CHRISTOPHER

I guess...

SARAH

(lightly)

What goes on in that head of yours,  
Christopher?

He looks a little uncomfortable, then;

CHRISTOPHER

Look, I'm sorry but... I can't make  
it.

Sarah's mild exasperation turns to genuine upset.

SARAH

What?

CHRISTOPHER

My sister Cathy has her debut in  
"Sleeping Beauty." Up in New York.

SARAH

Can't you go the next weekend?  
This party's important to me.

CHRISTOPHER

And this is important to Cathy.  
She's been dreaming of this her  
whole life. I *can't* miss opening  
night... I'm the only family she  
has.

Sarah instantly feels bad. She squeezes Christopher's hand.

SARAH

I'm sorry-- I'm being silly. Of  
course you should go.

(kisses him)

Besides, I think it's sweet how  
much you love your sister.

Dress Rehearsal. The place is buzzing with DANCERS and TECH PEOPLE, all frantically dealing with last-minute changes, costume fittings, etc....

Christopher slips in unnoticed. From backstage, he watches Cathy dance in full costume and makeup. It's the scene in Act One where Sleeping Beauty meets her various SUITORS. She's more breath-taking than ever. Finally, she receives the cursed spindle and PRICKS HER FINGER... tragically collapsing onto the floor. Christopher sucks in his breath. A woman approaches behind him.

WOMAN (O.S.)

She's not really dead, you know.

It's Yolanda, costumed as a background role. She's been watching Christopher stare longingly Cathy.

YOLANDA

(explains)

Just asleep, until the right man comes along. Maybe you?

CHRISTOPHER

No. I- I'm her brother.

YOLANDA

(smiles knowingly)

I see the resemblance.

(then)

And I just saw your other sister.

CHRISTOPHER

Carrie's here?

YOLANDA

By the dressing rooms. She likes to... help out.

Christopher looks around when he hears a familiar GIGGLE coming from one of the dressing rooms. He smiles to himself as he reaches the door, then looks in and STOPS IN HIS TRACKS.

CHRISTOPHER'S POV: Carrie's with Julian, in his "Prince" costume, who's showing her a dance move-- but his hands linger on Carrie's chest and down her back. Upset, Christopher interrupts them.

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTOPHER

Carrie--?!

Surprised, Julian immediately lets her go. Carrie bites her lip, a bit guilty. Brushes herself off.

CARRIE

Christopher? Cathy said you were coming tomorrow.

CHRISTOPHER

I took an earlier flight.  
(looking around)  
What're you doing here? Don't you have homework or something?

CARRIE

(trying to sound upbeat)  
I finished. So Julian promised to show me how to do a fish dive.

CHRISTOPHER

(glaring at Julian)  
So that's what you're calling it?

JULIAN

It's a classical ballet move.

CHRISTOPHER

Well it looks a bit dangerous. For someone Carrie's size.

JULIAN

Don't look so worried, Doctor. I'm not going to break her.

He brushes past Christopher, who's not so sure.

An elegant society function. WELL-DRESSED LADIES in hats and silk dresses, mingle over mint juleps and tea sandwiches. Sarah makes her way through the crowd, a little star-struck. Suddenly, her high heel STICKS in the grass and SHE BUMPS INTO A WOMAN, WHO SPILLS HER DRINK.

WOMAN

My dress--!

SARAH

I'm so sorry, my heel caught--

The woman whips around. It's Corrine. Her eyes flash with anger. Flustered, Sarah just blurts out.

SARAH (CONT'D)

You're Corrine Foxworth.

(confesses)

I- I follow you in the society pages every week. Oh God, I hope I didn't ruin your dress?! You always wear the most beautiful ones.

Corrine softens instantly. Smiles warmly.

CORRINE

Don't worry. The drink barely splashed it...?

SARAH

Sarah Reeves. Greenglenna, South Carolina.

CORRINE

Oh yes, my husband grew up around there. In fact, he's thinking of opening an office nearby... if your husband ever needs legal advice.

SARAH

Thank you. Actually, I'm not married-- not yet. My boyfriend can't commit to anything until he finishes his medical residency...

CORRINE

(impressed)

Well, I hope it works out. I've always wished I had a doctor in the family.

SARAH

Do you have any children?

CORRINE

(without missing a beat)

No. Never.

(then, exiting conversation)

Well, if you and your boyfriend are ever in Virginia, give us a call.

\*  
\*

Corrine hands Sarah a calling card and walks off. Thrilled, she tucks it into her purse.



The rehearsal continues. Christopher looks frantically around for Cathy.

STAGE MANAGER  
(calling out)  
Ten minutes to act three! Ten minutes!

Christopher finally spots her having her costume adjusted by a WARDROBE ASSISTANT.

CHRISTOPHER  
Cathy--?! I've been looking for you.

CATHY  
Christopher, hi, sorry. Dress rehearsal's always a little frantic. \*

CHRISTOPHER  
We need to talk.

CATHY  
I'll meet you back at the apartment after. Carrie's here, she can let you in. I think she's with Julian--

CHRISTOPHER  
That's what we need to talk about.

Cathy sees he's serious. Pulls Christopher aside. \*

CATHY  
What're you talking about? I really don't have time for one of your tirades against Julian-- \*

CHRISTOPHER  
Cathy, I saw them together. He was *touching* her. \*

Suddenly, Cathy turns ashen. \*

CATHY  
What? Are- are you sure? \*

CHRISTOPHER  
I caught them in the dressing room. The way he looked-- both of them. \*

(CONTINUED)

CARRIE (O.S.)  
It's not true.

They spin around to find Carrie nearby, looking angry. She's overheard their exchange.

CARRIE (CONT'D)  
Christopher's wrong.

CHRISTOPHER  
But Carrie, I saw you--

CARRIE  
Nothing happened.

CATHY  
Please, Carrie. We're not mad at you. But if he did something--

CARRIE  
You're always treating me like a child just because I'm small!  
Well, I'm not-- so leave me alone!

Carrie runs off. Julian approaches, impatient.

JULIAN  
Cathy, everyone's waiting.  
(notices the tension)  
What the hell's going on here?

CATHY  
Is it true about Carrie? Were you... touching her?

He hesitates for just a brief second, then;

JULIAN  
What?

CATHY  
Christopher said he saw you.

Julian turns and glares at Christopher. Shakes his head.

JULIAN  
What are you 'protecting' you sisters? Or maybe you're just jealous--?

Furious, Christopher SLAMS him against the wall. Practically choking him. Julian has no idea what's he's unleashed.

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTOPHER  
You goddamned snake--!

\*

JULIAN  
(struggling)  
Get... off... me!

CATHY  
(overlapping)  
Christopher, stop-- don't!

Cathy tries to stop him, but Christopher's temper's too hot, his grip too tight. Julian starts turning red... then white. A GROUP OF MALE DANCERS, TECH GUYS finally pry Christopher off, hold him back. Julian struggles to catch his breath. George runs over.

GEORGE  
Julian, are you alright? Can you still perform--?

CHRISTOPHER  
No, he's not alright! I saw him messing with my sister--!

\*

\*

All eyes turn to Julian. He's humiliated... and furious. He walks over to Christopher, SPITS in his face then STORMS OUTSIDE. Cathy looks upset.

\*

CATHY  
This is supposed to be my big day, Christopher. I know you never liked Julian, but Carrie said nothing happened--

\*

\*

\*

\*

CHRISTOPHER  
Or maybe you're too obsessed with your own success to care about your family.  
(pointedly)  
Just like our mother.

This makes Cathy lose her temper. Without thinking, she HITS Christopher across the face.

\*

CATHY  
I'm nothing like Corrine.

\*

Then she runs after Julian.

Cathy spots Julian getting into his vintage sports car.

(CONTINUED)

CATHY  
Julian, wait--!

Before he can pull away, she jumps in the passenger seat.  
Julian quickly drives off in a fury...

The sports car RACES through the streets, weaving through the city traffic, over sidewalks, past construction barriers... and the wrong way down a one-way street.

Suddenly, a TRUCK comes from around the corner. The car SWERVES to avoid it but TOO LATE-- he skids wildly, CRASHING into a telephone pole... and BURSTING into flames.

It's hard to imagine there will be survivors.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

49 INT. BALLET STUDIO - SOUTH CAROLINA - A FEW MONTHS LATER 49

CLOSE ON: A ballet barre. A graceful line of DANCERS move to the opening strains of Tchaikovsky's "Sleeping Beauty."

We PULL BACK TO REVEAL: It's a class of YOUNG GIRLS and Cathy is now their teacher. She watches the students, gently correcting them when necessary.

CATHY

Good extension, Elizabeth. Relax your arms, Julia. Let's finish with our pirouettes.

(as the girls spin)

One and two, and one and two, stay with the music... Very nice.

The music stops, the girls run to collect their things.

CATHY (CONT'D)

(over the din)

Girls, please remember to stretch at home. And bring your pointe shoes next week...

Suddenly, Cathy spots a BLONDE GIRL (12) run over to her mother... it's CORRINE! As they exit, Cathy follows after them and GRABS Corrine's arm.

CATHY (CONT'D)

Corrine, stop--!

Corrine whips around... but it's NOT Corrine. Just a random mother with a similar hairstyle. Cathy looks shaken.

CATHY (CONT'D)

I- I'm sorry. I thought you were someone else.

(then)

Since the accident, I-- I get confused sometimes.

The woman smiles sympathetically.

BALLET MOTHER

That's alright. I'm sure it can't be easy, losing your boyfriend like that. I heard it was a miracle you even survived.

Cathy smiles gamely, trying to hide her pain.

(CONTINUED)

CATHY

I guess I'm just lucky.

BALLET MOTHER

Actually, I've been meaning to tell you, my husband knows a knee surgeon in Charlotte--

CATHY

(shaking her head)

Believe me, I've been to every specialist on the Eastern Seaboard. I'm never going to dance again.

BALLET MOTHER

(re: her daughter)

Well, Sophie says you're a wonderful teacher.

CATHY

I do love all the girls.

BALLET MOTHER

Maybe someday you'll have a daughter of your own.

Carrie sings with a CHURCH CHOIR led by a kind-looking, young minister ALEX CONROY, (early 20s). They're singing a traditional hymnal "At Home, Let There Be Love."

CARRIE/CHOIR

(singing)

...May we be slow to an-ger and  
fast to for-give/may joy and pa-  
tience abound where we live...

Carrie's voice is sweet and clear, and surprisingly powerful for her size. Alex nods admiringly.

The various CHOIR MEMBERS mingle over tea and baked goods. Only Carrie, a bit shy, sticks to herself. Alex approaches, polishing off a pastry.

ALEX

I noticed you haven't touched any of the desserts. I wish I had your self-restraint.

CARRIE

I haven't got much of a sweet tooth.

ALEX

I suppose it's because you're sweet enough as is.

CARRIE

Oh, I don't know about that.

ALEX

Well, your voice certainly is. Everyone thinks so. Especially me.

Carrie reddens. Alex gathers his courage, then;

ALEX (CONT'D)

Listen, there's an outdoor choral concert at the park this weekend, if you're interested. We could have a picnic afterwards...

CARRIE

(a little suspicious)

You want to go on a date with me?

Alex turns ashen. Quickly stammers out an apology.

ALEX

I- I'm so sorry. Of course, you must have a boyfriend. I should have figured...

CARRIE

No, I don't. I'm just not used--  
(then)  
I'd be happy to go.

Christopher's finishing up his shift (putting away his scrubs, etc...) when Sarah approaches. She's all dressed up.

SARAH

Ready for our big celebration dinner, honey?

Suddenly, Christopher gets a worried look on his face.

CHRISTOPHER

Did I forget something? It's your birthday...?

SARAH

For you, silly. Getting picked to be "Chief Resident."

CHRISTOPHER

(shocked)

What?

Just then, Dr. Reeves walks over. Gives Christopher a proud pat on the shoulder.

DR. REEVES

Congratulations, Dr. Sheffield.

CHRISTOPHER

(thrilled)

Thank you so much, Dr. Reeves. I'm so honored... I can't believe it.

DR. REEVES

Just so you know, this has nothing to do with the fact that you're dating my daughter.

(half-joking)

But if you ever hurt Sarah in any way...

Sarah gives her dad a playful whack.

SARAH

Daddy! Nobody's as much of a gentleman as Christopher.

(then)

Now let's get going before the club gives away our table.

CHRISTOPHER

(realizing)

I- I don't have a tie.

SARAH

Don't worry, I brought one for you--

Sarah reaches into her purse when the contents accidentally SPILL onto the floor-- lipstick, compact, keys... and CORRINE'S CALLING CARD Sarah got at the Garden Party.

Christopher starts to help pick up her things-- and almost sees his mother's card! But Sarah, oblivious, grabs it first.



Carrie and Alex are on their picnic date. Alex is talking passionately about church hymnals.

ALEX

...Between the choir bake sales and the collection plate, we've raised almost enough money to go to the Choral Festival this spring.

CARRIE

(excited)

Down in Macon? Which hymn would we do?

ALEX

I enjoy "Praise His Name" but I was thinking of trying out "Children, Go Where I Send Thee"...

(she gets a funny look)

Unless you don't like that one?

CARRIE

Oh, no, that's one of my favorites. Just, my father-- stepfather used to sing it to me. Whenever I had bad dreams.

ALEX

It's hard to imagine any bad thoughts going through your head.

Carrie smiles wanly. A beat as Alex gazes at her. Almost reverentially.

ALEX (CONT'D)

You know, most girls your age are only interested in the latest hairstyle or movie magazine. But you're different... more innocent. Pure.

CARRIE

I just like singing, that's all.

A little embarrassed, Alex pulls back.

ALEX

You must think I'm a real square. Talking about choir music...

CARRIE

No, I don't-- really! I like it.

(CONTINUED)

She instinctively puts her hand on his knee. He examines her small, delicate hand, lovingly pressing it into his own.

ALEX

Carrie, you-- you're like a beautiful, precious doll.

CARRIE

Alex...

ALEX

It's only been a few months, but I know, deep in my soul, that you're good.

He pulls a small box from his pocket to reveal a MODEST ENGAGEMENT RING.

ALEX (CONT'D)

I'm not the richest or best looking or most exciting man in the world. But I'd be the proudest, if I had you by my side.

He looks to Carrie for an answer, but she's silent, doesn't know how to respond.

Carrie, anxious, speaks with Cathy.

CATHY

What do you mean, you're not sure? Alex is kind and generous.... And he clearly thinks you hung the moon.

CARRIE

I know all that.  
(then; softly)  
What if I'm not good enough for him?

CATHY

Carrie. How can you say that?

A long beat as Carrie gathers her courage.

CARRIE

Christopher was right about Julian. He did touch me.  
(then)  
And... I liked it.

A silent beat as Cathy takes this in. Upset.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

I knew it was wrong but I wanted it to happen. I liked the way he looked at me... how he made me feel. How can I be a minister's wife, Cathy?

(pause)

Maybe I really am the "devil's spawn"-- just like our grandmother said.

At their grandmother's mention, Cathy jumps up.

CATHY

No! Don't say that. That's not true.

CARRIE

And what if it is? I'm not six anymore. I've heard you and Christopher talk about mom and dad. How they weren't supposed to be together. What does that make us, Cathy?

(then)

Maybe that's why I'm so small? Not from the attic. But because of what our parents did.

Cathy's upset but swallows her pain. She wants to reassure Carrie as much as herself.

CATHY

We are not the sins of our parents. The best thing you can do is move on. Forget about mom, and the past. Never look back.

CARRIE

And what about Cory? Am I supposed to forget about him, too?

But Cathy doesn't have an answer for that.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

Truth is, I can hardly remember what he looks like anymore... but I don't want to let him go.

Cathy hugs Carrie hard. Trying to fight back tears.

CATHY

You have to, Carrie. Promise me  
you will....

But Carrie isn't so sure.

55 INT. CARRIE'S BEDROOM - SHEFFIELD HOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT 55

Late night. Carrie's deep in thought, staring at her engagement ring, still in its velvet box. Then picks up the telephone and dials.

CARRIE

(into phone; timidly)  
Hello...? Hi, um, it-- it's  
Carrie... your daughter.

56 INT. BEDROOM - CORRINE & BART'S HOUSE - VIRGINIA - SAME 56

Corrine speaks on the phone. Furious.

CORRINE

I don't have a daughter. Never  
call here again!

She SLAMS down the phone, practically ripping it from the wall. She quickly reaches into her purse for her prescription bottle-- but it's EMPTY. Bart enters from the other room. Corrine looks enraged, not even trying to hide it this time.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

CORRINE (CONT'D)

I want our number changed. First  
thing tomorrow!

\*

HENNY (O.C.)

(overlapping)  
Aaagh...!

57 INT. KITCHEN - PAUL'S HOUSE - NEXT MORNING

57

Christopher runs in to find Henny, perched on a stool. She's scared out of her wits.

CHRISTOPHER

Henny, what's wrong?!

She points to a TINY MOUSE huddled in the corner. Christopher shakes his head, scoops up the scared mouse.

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)  
It's harmless. See-- it's more  
scared of you.

He holds the mouse closer to her but Henny freaks out.

HENNY  
Get it away from me! Sweet Jesus,  
I was gonna poison it but... OOH!

\*

She gestures to a BOX OF MICE POISON on the counter. Upset,  
Christopher grabs it.

CHRISTOPHER  
Where'd you get that?! We don't  
poison mice in this house.

He grabs the box, heads outside with the mouse.

Christopher gently releases the mouse into the yard.

CHRISTOPHER  
Don't worry, little guy. We never  
poison mice.

The mouse scampers off. Then Christopher throws the box of  
poison into the trash can. Inside, he notices a stack of  
discarded NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS. Weird. He quickly rifles  
through them-- they're all VIRGINIA SOCIETY PAGES FEATURING  
CORRINE.

Cathy practices a simple dance move in front of her mirror--  
but WINCES, grabbing her knee in pain. Suddenly, Christopher  
bursts in.

CATHY  
Hey, try knocking--

\*

\*

CHRISTOPHER  
You're doing it again. You're  
obsessing over mom.

\*

CATHY  
What? No, that's not true.

\*

CHRISTOPHER  
Then what are these?

He shows her the clippings.

\*

CATHY

I- I don't know. They're not mine.  
I swear.

He looks at her, can tell she's being honest.

CHRISTOPHER

Then whose are they...?

Suddenly, it starts to dawn on Cathy... on both of them.

Cathy and Christopher enter the kitchen where Henny's cleaning up.

CHRISTOPHER

Henny, have you seen Carrie?

HENNY

Not since this morning. She was up  
real early, baking. Pastries or  
donuts?

CATHY

What--?

HENNY

I assumed it was for choir  
practice...

Christopher and Cathy exchange worried looks. Then RUN upstairs...

Christopher and Cathy burst into the room to find... Carrie's dead. She lies peacefully on her bed, more doll-like than ever in her Sunday finest, a light sprinkling of powdered sugar-- mice poison-- covering her pale, slender fingers. Next to her is a half-eaten plate of donuts.

Christopher falls to his knees. Cathy stands frozen in shock.

CHRISTOPHER

Carrie, no... God, no!  
(to Cathy)  
How could she do this? How could  
she hurt herself like this?

But Cathy just shakes her head. She stares over at Corrine's \*  
photo from the society pages, laughing and enjoying herself \*  
with Bart. Cathy's eyes blaze with hurt... and rage. . \*

CATHY

It wasn't Carrie... She didn't do \*  
it. \*

(then)

Mom did.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

62 INT. CATHY'S BEDROOM - PAUL'S HOUSE - DAY - A FEW WEEKS LATER

Cathy packs her bags with Henny's help.

HENNY

I sure wish you'd change your mind,  
Miss Cathy.

CATHY

I need to make a fresh start. This  
house is too sad with Carrie gone.

HENNY

It's not the house that's sad.  
(lightly)  
I better go check on those biscuits  
I'm making you. That's one thing  
you can't get up in Virginia.

Henny crosses off just as Christopher enters. He watches  
silently as Cathy packs her last suitcase.

CATHY

Almost ready. Can you give me a  
hand with the zipper?

He helps her shut the overstuffed suitcase, then, imploring;

CHRISTOPHER

Don't go.

CATHY

We've been through this.

CHRISTOPHER

It won't change anything. What's  
past is past...

CATHY

Maybe for you. You still have your  
dreams. You get to be a doctor.  
And I...

She trails off, glancing at her old ballet toe-shoes,  
abandoned on the dresser. Christopher looks anguished.

CHRISTOPHER

The car accident, it was my fault.  
I shouldn't have pushed Julian...  
Cathy, I'm sorry--

(CONTINUED)



CATHY

Don't you get it?! It's Corrine's fault. Cory's death-- now Carrie's. All of it. She's the reason all of this happened!

(then)

And now she's going to pay.

She grabs her bag, heads to the door. But he stops her. Takes her by the shoulders.

CHRISTOPHER

Don't stoop to her level, Cathy, we're better than that. \*

CATHY

Are we? \*

She KISSES him on the lips. This time, Christopher pulls away, upset. Cathy shakes her head knowingly. \*

CATHY (CONT'D) \*

I'm tired of pretending everything's normal. I can't forgive mom for what she did to us. I won't. \*

She pushes him away then exits. He calls after her. Pained. \*

CHRISTOPHER

If you do this... don't bother coming back.

CATHY

Believe me. There's no going back now.

INT. WAITING ROOM - LAW OFFICE - VIRGINIA - DAY (WEEKS LATER) \*

An upscale law office. Cathy waits patiently, flipping through a magazine. She wears a smart, form-fitting dress and heels, her makeup a shade heavier than usual. Finally, a SECRETARY approaches.

SECRETARY

Ms. Sheffield? We're ready for you now.

Cathy checks her hair, lipstick, then sweeps into the inner office to greet...

Bart Winslow, in business attire. He gets up from his desk, puts out his hand.

BART

A pleasure to meet you, Ms. Sheffield.

CATHY

(gently correcting him)  
Cathy. And the pleasure's all mine.

She smiles warmly, holding his hand a beat too long. Bart can't help but notice.

Dr. Reeves works on a file. Christopher pokes his head in.

CHRISTOPHER

Dr. Reeves, you wanted to see me?

DR. REEVES

Please, sit down.

Christopher sits down, a bit wary.

DR. REEVES (CONT'D)

Christopher, I realize it's hard to focus on your work since your sister died.

\*  
\*  
\*

CHRISTOPHER

(a little defensive)  
About the Thompson case, he didn't exhibit any signs of a previous stroke--

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

DR. REEVES

(stopping him)  
Nobody's perfect-- even doctors. Luckily, we caught it in time.

\*

CHRISTOPHER

Well, it won't happen again. I can promise you that.

Dr. Reeves takes a beat, then, more personally;

DR. REEVES

Look, being a doctor is a tremendous privilege. People treat you like a God. But with that, comes a great deal of responsibility... pressure.

(then, meaningfully)

What keeps you grounded-- what really matters-- is having a family to come home to.

Christopher takes this in, nods.

CHRISTOPHER

Of course, you're right. Just-- I don't think Cathy's coming back.

Dr. Reeves gives Christopher a funny look, then;

DR. REEVES

I was talking about Sarah.

Christopher exits the office. A RECEPTIONIST approaches.

RECEPTIONIST

Dr. Sheffield, about those old hospital records you requested last month?

CHRISTOPHER

Oh, yes?

RECEPTIONIST

I've called every hospital and clinic in Virginia. But there weren't any listed under the name you gave-- not in the past eleven years.

Christopher looks disturbed by this.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

I could try West Virginia or Maryland--

CHRISTOPHER

(shakes it off)

Don't worry about it. It's no big deal.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Corrine and Bart eat dinner. The conversation is a little forced-- like any old, married couple.

BART

I met a new client this week. From South Carolina, near where I grew up.

CORRINE

(barely listening)  
That's nice, dear.

BART

Made me think-- I'd love for us to go back and visit one weekend. See my brother and his kids?

CORRINE

I really don't have time right now.

BART

(rolls his eyes)  
With what-- another one of your luncheons or shopping sprees? Or does your dear, sweet mother need you to comb out her wig again?

\*  
\*  
\*

CORRINE

Actually, it does sort of involve her. All these years, she's refused to move out of Foxworth Hall, and it's just gone to seed. Well, I've finally had enough. I'm finally going ahead and restoring it.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

This gets Bart's attention. And he doesn't sound happy.

BART

Are you serious?

\*

CORRINE

Why not? My mother's not going to live forever. Her mind's a fraction of what it used to be so we can just work around her.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

BART

Corrine, this is an expensive proposition.  
(pointedly)  
And stressful.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

CORRINE

What's that supposed to mean?

BART

You know exactly what I mean.

(then, softer)

Look, honey, I just don't want you getting in over your head.

CORRINE

Foxworth Hall used to be of the finest houses in Virginia. With some money, and proper guidance, I can finally live in a suitable estate.

BART

(stung)

I didn't realize I was holding you back here.

Corrine puts on a sugary voice, smile. Rubs Bart's shoulder.

CORRINE

Oh, honey, I didn't mean it like that.

(then)

Just-- I have a responsibility to my family. If I don't carry on the Foxworth name, who will? There's nobody else.

Cathy waits in Bart's office. She looks at various framed photos of him and Corrine-- posing happily, on various trips. She picks up one photograph-- it's from the Christmas party ten years earlier, where she and Christopher were hiding.

Bart enters. He looks distracted. Cathy's startled, quickly puts on a smile.

BART

Hope I haven't kept you waiting. Just dealing with my mother-in-law. Another one of her nurses quit.

Cathy ears perk up, but she tries to sound casually sympathetic.

CATHY

Oh? I hope she's not too sick.

BART

Believe me, she'll outlive us all.  
Running my wife in circles seems to  
keep her going.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

CATHY

(re: Christmas photo)

Is this her--your wife? She's  
pretty.

\*  
\*  
\*

BART

Yes, very. But that was taken a  
while ago.

CATHY

(re: other photos)

I don't see any children...?

BART

No. She, uh-- Corrine couldn't  
have any.

Cathy senses something in Bart-- ambivalence... regret? She goes with it.

CATHY

Well, kids can be a real handful.  
Making noise, destroying your  
furniture... Getting in your way.

BART

Now you're starting to sound like  
her.

Cathy bites her lip. Busted.

CATHY

Actually, I was just saying that...

(then)

I really love children. I'm hoping  
to have a boy and a girl, no more  
than two years apart, maybe even  
twins--

(stops herself)

Uch, listen to me-- I don't even  
have a boyfriend yet. You must  
think I'm an awful kook.

BART

No. I- I think you seem great.

He smiles at her. Sincere, vulnerable, with a hint of longing. Cathy smiles back-- she can't help but like him. Then, back to business. Bart grabs her file.

(CONTINUED)

BART (CONT'D)

So I've looked over the additional insurance claim for your car accident. I can probably get it all wrapped up in a few days, keep your expenses down.

CATHY

No. Take all the time you need.

(then)

You come into a little money, you never know who's going to come out of the woodwork.

INT. REEVES' HOME - EVENING (A FEW MONTHS LATER)

Thanksgiving. Christopher celebrates with Sarah, Dr. Reeves and their EXTENDED FAMILY.

DR. REEVES

...I'll tell you what I'm most thankful for this year.

SARAH

(guessing)

Your family, friends... health?

DR. REEVES

Your pecan pie.

Everyone chuckles, including Sarah.

SARAH

Well, you can thank Henny for that. It's her recipe.

(turns to Christopher)

What do you think, honey? Is it as good as hers?

CHRISTOPHER

(distracted)

Yeah, sure.

Concerned, Sarah pulls Christopher aside.

SARAH

(sweetly)

You're thinking about Carrie, aren't you? I know how rough it is during the holidays...

(gingerly)

(MORE)

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

SARAH (CONT'D)

If you and Cathy would just talk--  
you two need each other at times  
like this.

\*  
\*  
\*

CHRISTOPHER

What? No. I'm fine.

(pulling back)

Just-- I ate too much, that's all.

\*  
\*

He gives her a quick kiss. But Sarah looks at his plate,  
worried-- he's barely touched his food.

INT. CATHY'S APARTMENT - VIRGINIA - AFTERNOON - A MONTH LATER

Cathy's getting dressed up-- slinky cocktail dress, makeup.  
She dabs some perfume behind her ears, then knees. Suddenly,  
there's a KNOCK on the door. That's odd. She opens it to  
find...

CATHY

Sarah? What-- what're you doing  
here? Sorry, come in...

Sarah smiles wanly, hands Cathy a Christmas gift.

SARAH

I'm up visiting a friend and I  
thought I'd drop off Christopher's  
Christmas present.

Cathy opens the gift. It's a SILK SCARF-- the kind Sarah  
often wears.

CATHY

(suspicious)

Christopher got this for me?

Sarah bites her lip, a bit guilty. Then confesses.

SARAH

He doesn't know I'm here. Seeing  
you.

They both take a seat.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Look, I know this isn't my place,  
but I was hoping you two could  
patch things up. I know he misses  
you-- I can tell.

CATHY

It's complicated...



SARAH

How? You're family. Isn't that the most important thing-- how much you need each other? Especially since Carrie died.

CATHY

(tightens)  
You wouldn't understand.

SARAH

(firmly)  
You don't know me.

Cathy looks at Sarah, surprised at her tone. Sarah continues.

SARAH (CONT'D)

It was right before Christmas. I was twelve, and my mother got us tickets to the Nutcracker in Charleston-- we used to go every year. But I was too old by then, wanted to go to a party with my friends... see some boy I had a crush on. She was upset, but I didn't care. I told her I'd rather *die* than go to some stupid children's show with her. So she went without me.

(voice cracks)

The next morning, there was an ice storm... the train derailed...

(looks in Cathy's eyes)

I wouldn't want anyone to live with that kind of regret. Not you, and especially not Christopher.

CATHY

I-- I'll think about it.

SARAH

Please, Cathy. Before our wedding--

CATHY

What?

Sarah breaks into a smile, flashes her ring finger-- there's a DIAMOND RING on it.

SARAH

We're getting married in a few months. And I was hoping you'd be my maid of honor.

(CONTINUED)

Cathy nods, a little choked up. Sarah hugs her, then checks her watch.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I wish I had more time but I'm meeting my friend-- unless you want to join us?!

CATHY

I can't. I have plans.

Now Sarah notices Cathy's cocktail dress, the perfume. Puts two and two together.

SARAH

I'm glad. You deserve someone who thinks you're special. Like your brother... the way he is with me.

An upscale restaurant. Sarah, a little nervous, approaches the MAITRE D'.

MAITRE D'

Good evening. Do you have a reservation?

SARAH

I'm meeting a friend--  
(spots someone across  
room)  
Oh, I see her.

Sarah eagerly walks over to greet... Corrine.

SARAH (CONT'D)

This place is beautiful. Thank you so much for inviting me.  
(notices)  
Your husband couldn't make it?

CORRINE

Bart had to work late. So it'll just be us girls.

Cathy and Bart, in a closed-door "meeting."

\*

CATHY

You sure your wife's not going to miss you tonight?

BART

The only thing my wife's concerned about these days is Foxworth Hall.

CATHY

What?

BART

Her family estate. She's got all kinds of plans to fix it up. From the ground up.

CATHY

Isn't... her mother still living there?

BART

(nods)

I think Corrine's doing it to spite her. Show her mother who's really in control. All these years, those two can't stand each other... and yet, something's keeping them together.

CATHY

(lightly)

The ties that bind.

(dawns on her)

Wait, surely you're not going to move in there--?

BART

That's what Corrine's hoping. Apparently being a lawyer's wife isn't "grand" enough for her.

(then)

Funny, but I was the one who planned out her father's legacy. Now I have to live up to it.

Cathy takes this in a moment, then;

CATHY

It's sad. Some women don't appreciate what they have... even when it's right in front of them.

BART

But not you?

(CONTINUED)

CATHY

No.

(sly smile)

I know exactly what I want.

She and Bart KISS... then fall back onto his couch!

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

73

INT. SHEFFIELD HOUSE - VIRGINIA - DAY

73

Henny helps Sarah carry in several boxes of wedding-related items (charts, menus, tulle, etc....)

SARAH

... I swear, Henny, this wedding is taking over my life. And we still have to decide on the menu, choose the flower arrangements...

(looking around)

Where is Christopher, anyway?

HENNY

Upstairs, taking a rest. He had a late night at the hospital, bless his soul.

\*

\*

SARAH

Just as well-- I can get a head-start on the seating chart. Lord knows half my family's in a snit with the other half.

They both chuckle, then;

HENNY

Did Miss Cathy ever get back to you?

Sarah's grin fades.

SARAH

Not yet.

HENNY

It's still a few weeks away. And I've been praying extra hard that she'll make it.

\*

\*

\*

SARAH

I hope so. It's the most important day of our lives. It wouldn't seem right not having his sister there.

Henny smiles sympathetically, then crosses off. Sarah settles down to work. After a beat, she hears Christopher YELLING. Worried, she runs upstairs to find....

Christopher's asleep in bed. He's having a nightmare, calling out in his sleep.

CHRISTOPHER

(upset)

Cory... Cory, you're gonna be okay!  
Oh God, Cory, no--!

Sarah shakes Christopher awake.

SARAH

Christopher, honey... wake up!

He startles awake. Looks shaken, out of breath.

SARAH (CONT'D)

It's okay. You were just having a bad dream.

She hands him a glass of water, wipes his brow.

CHRISTOPHER

Thanks. I guess I'm just under a lot of stress. With work, and everything.

SARAH

Of course, honey. I totally understand.

(then)

Who's Cory?

(off his look)

You were calling out his name.

Christopher takes a breath, unsure-- or unwilling to explain.

CHRISTOPHER

He was my brother. Carrie's twin.

SARAH

(hurt)

You never mentioned him.

CHRISTOPHER

He died eleven years ago. I'm sorry, I should've told you, but I- I don't like to talk about it...

Christopher looks pained. Sarah pulls him into a warm embrace, soothing him.

(CONTINUED)

SARAH

It's okay, sweetie. Now that we're going to be married, we don't have to have any more secrets.

Cathy and Bart lie in bed together, post-"Afternoon Delight." Bart gazes admiringly at Cathy, running his fingers down her cheek, then neck...

BART

Do you ever miss it-- dancing, I mean.

She looks taken aback. Bart feels bad.

BART (CONT'D)

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

CATHY

No, it's okay. Nobody ever asks me that.

(then)

But yes, a lot. Sometimes I dream I can still dance. I'm on a big stage, the orchestra's playing and I'm Sleeping Beauty, or the White Swan... or Giselle. That's the hardest part-- waking up and realizing I'll never be anybody.

Bart takes this in a moment, then;

BART

You'll always be somebody, Cathy. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise.

She looks into his eyes, kisses him tenderly. She's really falling for him. Their kiss heats up when Bart suddenly notices the time. He jumps out of bed, starts getting dressed.

BART (CONT'D)

Uch, I have to go.

CATHY

Can't you stay a little longer?

BART

I wish I could but I have to go to some 'society' party.

CATHY  
 (tugging at his belt)  
 Just say you have to work late.

BART  
 I've done that the last three  
 times. I promised Corrine I  
 wouldn't miss this one.

Frustrated, Cathy lies back in bed. Stews.

CATHY  
 She doesn't even care about you.  
 She just wants someone to show off.  
 Make her look good.

Bart looks at her. Puzzled. \*

BART  
 How would you know?

Cathy's flustered, quickly tries to cover.

CATHY  
 From-- from what you've told me.  
 (then)  
 I just think you deserve better.  
 Someone who wants what you want...  
 who can give you a family.

Bart tightens, gets a bit defensive. \*

BART  
 She's not so bad. \*

CATHY  
 (pushing him) \*  
 Then why are you with me? Or am I \*  
 just another "important client"? \*

BART  
No. Of course not. I've never \*  
 done anything like this before. \*  
 (then) \*  
 Truth is, Corrine and I have been \*  
 together for years but sometimes, I \*  
 feel like I don't really know her \*  
 at all. \*  
 (pulls back) \*  
 Look, Corrine has her issues, God \*  
 knows... but none of us is perfect. \*  
 Yet, there's something about her \*  
 that draws me in. \*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



BART (CONT'D)

How strong she is, and at the same time, so vulnerable... like a child who needs protecting.

(realizing)

In some ways, you remind me of her.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

A gracious home. Well-heeled SOCIETY-TYPES enter the festive cocktail party. Cathy approaches, somewhat (but not comically) concealed in a long coat and scarf. A UNIFORMED COAT CHECK greets her at the front door.

COAT CHECK

Welcome to the Hollingers. May I take your coat?

CATHY

Oh, that's alright. I'm only stopping by for a minute.

Cathy peers in, gazing at the BEAUTIFUL PARTY-GOERS, UNIFORMED WAITERS, free-flowing CHAMPAGNE. She's in awe-- much like she was at the Christmas party at Foxworth Hall a decade earlier. She almost gets lost in the grandeur when suddenly...

Corrine and Bart approach. Cathy DUCKS behind a doorway, eavesdrops.

CORRINE

... And the architect says he can restore all the original woodwork in the library--

BART

Can we please spend one evening not talking about Foxworth Hall?

Corrine freezes, stares at him. Then softens.

CORRINE

You're right. I've been so caught up in my own project... I've been completely neglecting you.

BART

(taken aback)  
It's okay, Corrine--

CORRINE

(laying it on thick)  
No, it's not.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CORRINE (CONT'D)

I want to hear about you. Tell me about your work... that client you've been working with so much... from South Carolina?

BART

(uncomfortable)

You know I can't talk about my clients.

Sensing his distance, Corrine goes in for the kill. She presses him against the doorway, within a few feet of Cathy on the other side.

CORRINE

Darling, don't you know how much I love you? I'd be lost without you. Please say you'll forgive me... that you love me, too.

\*

BART

Of course I love you.

Corrine leans in closer. Runs her fingers through the back of his hair, her lips brushing lightly against his ear. Bart starts to melt.

CORRINE

*Promise* that you'll never leave me.

BART

I never will.

They kiss. On the other side of the doorway, Cathy chokes back a sob. She knows Bart really means it.

\*

INT. COUNTRY CLUB - SOUTH CAROLINA - DAY - A FEW WEEKS LATER

Christopher and Sarah's rehearsal dinner. Various GUESTS mingle over drinks, appetizers. A MARRIED COUPLE (50s) chat with the almost-newlyweds.

WIFE

...I was so nervous the night before our wedding, I couldn't eat a thing.

\*

SARAH

I don't think I've eaten for a week! I just hope my dress still fits.

\*

\*

\*

\*

WIFE

Well, if this rehearsal dinner's any indication, I'm sure tomorrow will be perfect. \*

CHRISTOPHER

Oh, I can't take any credit. Sarah's done all of the real planning. \*

SARAH

Only because you're working so hard, honey.

(to guests)

Now if only his mean boss would give him a week off for the honeymoon.

Just then, Dr. Reeves approaches.

DR. REEVES

(joking)

My ears are burning.

He looks relaxed, proud-- gives Sarah a kiss.

SARAH

Daddy, can't you spare your star resident for a few measly days--?

DR. REEVES

(cutting her off)

Alright, I was going to surprise you later tonight but... I booked you two a week in Bermuda. You leave right after the reception.

He pulls two airline tickets out of his jacket. Sarah squeals with delight, hugs her dad. Christopher's surprised.

CHRISTOPHER

Dr. Reeves, you shouldn't have--

DR. REEVES

I'm just glad my daughter finally made an honest man out of you.

He throws his arms around Christopher. Suddenly, Sarah notices someone across the room.

SARAH

Cathy?

Christopher whips around. Cathy's standing there with her suitcase. Grimaces at Christopher.

CATHY

You didn't think I'd miss my brother's wedding?

78 INT. HALLWAY - SHEFFIELD HOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT 78

Late night, the house is silent. Cathy pads down the stairs in her nightgown. Heads to the kitchen where she finds...

79 INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 79

Christopher, awake, looking anxious. Nursing a glass of something that's clearly not warm milk.

CATHY

Guess I'm not the only one who couldn't sleep.

CHRISTOPHER

I'm fine. Just I have a lot on my mind, with work.

CATHY

Sarah's asleep?

CHRISTOPHER

(shakes his head)

At her dad's house. Bad luck to see the bride the night before the wedding.

Cathy sits down beside him. Christopher takes another swig of his drink. She notices, just shy of amused.

CATHY

Since when do you drink whiskey?

CHRISTOPHER

You don't know everything about me.

A tense beat, then, she tries to console him;

CATHY

Sarah's great, you know. She's sweet and caring. And she's so supportive of your career.

(hard to say)

And I bet she'll be a wonderful mother.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTOPHER  
 (trying to convince  
 himself)  
 Yes, definitely. She just wants me  
 to be happy. Just-- I'd be happier  
 if I knew you were okay.

CATHY  
 I am.

CHRISTOPHER  
 Cath, you don't have to say that  
 for me--

CATHY  
 I'm not.  
 (gingerly)  
 Actually, I'm in love. For real,  
 this time.

That gets Christopher's attention. He stares at her,  
 incredulous. Not *wanting* to believe it. She continues.

CATHY (CONT'D)  
 It started out as a way to get back  
 at our mother, but then, we grew  
 closer... I'm sure if you just got  
 to know Bart--

CHRISTOPHER  
 What--?!

Upset, he gets up from the table. Pounds his fist into the  
 wall. Cathy jumps up to comfort him.

CATHY  
 Please, you have to understand...  
 this is the best thing for both of  
 us--

But Christopher's overcome with jealousy. Coming apart after  
 holding it together for so long.

CHRISTOPHER  
 You can't love him. He doesn't  
 understand you. Not like I do.

He grabs Cathy by the shoulders. Pained, almost irrational.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)  
 When we were locked up together,  
 you said you would always love me.  
 Nobody would ever come between us.

CATHY

I know. And I do love you, but  
it's *wrong*. You know that.

\*  
\*

Distraught, Christopher falls into her arms. Cathy tries to comfort him, holding him in her arms. But their embrace quickly heats up again. They start to KISS, hands going everywhere, clothes being ripped off. Even Cathy gets caught up in the moment. Too caught up to notice when Sarah walks in.

\*  
\*  
\*

SARAH (O.S.)

... Christopher, I'm sorry to  
bother you, I just needed to grab  
some things for the honeymoon--

\*  
\*

Sarah stares at Cathy and Christopher for a moment, not quite understanding what she's seeing-- or not wanting to. Cathy and Christopher freeze, immediately drop what they were doing. But it's too late. Sarah's innocent but she's not dumb. And she's devastated!

END OF ACT SIX

ACT SEVEN

80

INT. LIVING ROOM - SHEFFIELD HOUSE - A WEEK LATER

80

Christopher, more solemn than ever, packs up his black doctor's bag-- it's new with shiny leather, silver hardware and freshly stitched monogram. Henny enters.

HENNY

The people from the church are here. For the furniture.

CHRISTOPHER

They can go ahead and take it. Even this--  
(hands her the kit)  
I won't have much use for it anymore.

Henny hesitates, then lays a gentle hand on Christopher.

HENNY

Sarah was wrong. What folks are saying about you and Cathy-- I know it's not true. You're good and kind and Godly, the way Dr. Sheffield raised you--

But Christopher stops her, anguished. Ashamed.

CHRISTOPHER

It's true, Henny. All of it.

A tense beat as Christopher waits for her horror, her disgust. But surprisingly, Henny pulls him into a tight embrace. Consoling him with affection, kindness.

HENNY

I don't care what anyone's told you, Christopher. The Lord is merciful to all his children. He will forgive you.

Cathy enters. Henny pulls her in, too.

HENNY (CONT'D)

Both of you.

Henny hugs them both. She loves them, no matter what. When she leaves, Cathy and Christopher lock eyes. Both too overcome to speak. Finally, Cathy picks up his doctor's bag. Hopeful.

(CONTINUED)

CATHY

You could still practice at a different hospital. Out of the county... or state. What we did shouldn't take away from all your years of hard work--

CHRISTOPHER

(firmly)

It's over, Cathy. Don't you get it? I'm finished. We both are.

CATHY

Don't say that--

CHRISTOPHER

It's the truth.

(then, calmer)

Look, I've been thinking about it all week. We'll go to California, start a new life together... where nobody will know we're brother and sister...

CATHY

Christopher, you know what you're asking-- you want us to live a lie?

CHRISTOPHER

It's not a lie. You're the only person I could ever love or trust. And I don't want to hurt anyone else.

She considers this but then;

CATHY

I can't.

CHRISTOPHER

Please, Cathy. What else is out there?

Cathy looks hard at Christopher. She wants to tell him something... but can't. Instead, she just shakes her head.

CATHY

I'm sorry but I'm done running from the truth.



81 EXT. FOXWORTH HALL - VIRGINIA - AFTERNOON - A WEEK LATER 81

The estate is undergoing a major remodel-- covered in scaffolding, tarps, etc... Cathy approaches gingerly, looking around-- but nobody's there. She pulls out an old wooden key-- the same key Christopher made ten years earlier.

A few tries and the door UNLOCKS. Cathy takes a deep breath then enters to find...

82 INT. FOXWORTH HALL - CONTINUOUS 82

The furniture is covered in sheets, tools and building materials litter the floor. It doesn't look abandoned-- more like a construction site. Cathy quickly heads upstairs to...

83 INT. ATTIC - FOXWORTH HALL - MOMENTS LATER 83

The kids' old 'stomping ground' which hasn't changed much. Their "fake garden" is still intact, as is their homemade swing, now covered in dust and cobwebs. She even finds the wall with her homemade calendar, lightly running her fingers over the faded X's and her child-like inscription. It seems so familiar and at the same time, from another lifetime.

Suddenly, she finds Cory's SNAIL CUT-OUT, the same one he showed off in FITA -- and a rush of memories come flooding back.

INSERT AUDIO: A random sampling of moments from FITA -- the kids playing, Cory finding the mouse, their grandmother screaming for help.

It's too overwhelming and Cathy quickly runs downstairs.

84 INT. HALLWAY/EXT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER 84

Cathy's heading out when she hears someone calling from a nearby bedroom.

WOMAN (O.S.)  
Martha, is that you--?!

Cathy freezes. It's her grandmother!

GRANDMOTHER (WOMAN) (O.S.)  
Martha, hurry up and fasten my gown! Mr. Foxworth and I are expecting guests!

She slowly opens the door to find...

Her grandmother lying in bed. She's ten years older-- frail, a scarf covering her thinning scalp, in a yellowed nightgown and confused expression. A tense beat as Cathy takes this in, then;

CATHY

I- I'm not Martha.

Olivia instantly snaps into focus, narrows her eyes at Cathy. She hasn't lost her wits entirely... nor her mean streak.

OLIVIA

I know exactly who you are.  
(grimaces)  
What's taken you so long?

CATHY

I've been living, making up for what you stole from me. From all of us. You talk about being Godly. But you made our lives a living hell for two years--

But the grandmother cuts her off. Lashes back.

GRANDMOTHER

Two years? Try sixty trapped in this godforsaken house. My husband turned against me, then my daughter... Only I didn't leave-- I wouldn't. I held the keys, and the power. And now...? I'm the prisoner. I always have been.  
(then)  
You have no idea how easy you had it.

Cathy softens, has a flicker of sympathy. Then remembers something.

CATHY

What about Cory? He was only six...

GRANDMOTHER

Then I'd consider him lucky.

Angry, Cathy grabs a poker from the fireplace, raises it over her head-- but the Grandmother doesn't flinch.

(CONTINUED)

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)

Go ahead. Do what you want. I'm dying anyway.

Cathy gathers her courage, raises the poker higher... The grandmother just sneers.

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)

But my blood will still be running through your veins. And Corrine will still be your mother. You are who you are. Who you will always be... the devil's spawn.

CATHY

I'm not like my mother! Like any of you. Blood or not, you're nothing to me. *Nothing.*

Angry, she throws down the poker and turns to leave. But the grandmother grabs Cathy's sleeve, hoists herself close to tell her one last thing. Calmly... knowingly.

GRANDMOTHER

You can leave Foxworth Hall. But you will never escape this family.

\*  
\*

INT. LOBBY - MOTEL - SOUTH CAROLINA - LATER

Christopher makes a call from the payphone.

\*  
\*

CHRISTOPHER

(on phone)

... You're sure there are no records? And you checked under all the different names, spellings...? Yeah, alright, thanks.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

He hangs up, despondent. Stares at the yellow pages, opened to "HOSPITALS."

\*  
\*

MOTEL CLERK

Hey, you've been on all day. Other guests gotta use the phone.

\*  
\*  
\*

CHRISTOPHER

It's okay. I'm done.

\*  
\*

87

INT. BEDROOM - CATHY'S APARTMENT - LATER

87

Cathy reads a a newspaper article announcing the Christmas party celebrating Foxworth Hall's restoration, including a photograph of Corrine and Bart together.

Upset, she tosses away the newspaper, along with all her family mementos-- photographs, souvenirs, clippings. Even the ring her father gave her.

Suddenly, Cathy clutches her stomach... and runs to the bathroom. Vomits.

88

EXT. FOXWORTH HALL - A WEEK LATER

88

The estate, now fully restored, is being prepped for the big Christmas party. Under Corrine's watchful gaze, SERVANTS hang decorations, polish silver, stack champagne glasses, etc....

89

INT. GRANDMOTHER'S BEDROOM - FOXWORTH HALL - LATER

89

The grandmother lies in bed, half-asleep, a pile of newspapers at her bedside. Corrine slips in, now wearing an elegant gown, her hair and makeup done to perfection. She holds up a garment bag.

CORRINE

I've brought you a new dress for the party, mother.

GRANDMOTHER

(sizing her up)

If it's anything like yours, I'd be better off in my dressing gown.

CORRINE

(tightens)

Now, now. We all have to put on our best face tonight. Even you.

GRANDMOTHER

Your father's not going to approve of all this, Corrine. Not after I speak to him.

CORRINE

Father's not here, remember? And besides, I'm the lady of the house now. I don't need his approval. Or yours.

(CONTINUED)

Corrine takes the wig from the wig-stand, tries to hand it to her mother. But she swipes it away.

GRANDMOTHER

You're nothing in this house.

This makes Corrine mad. She lashes back.

CORRINE

I am everything. Father left it all to me-- the house, the money and the name-- to do as I please.

(pointedly)

And in case you've forgotten, to pay for your care... or not.

Corrine glares at her mother, who just smirks back.

GRANDMOTHER

It's true, Corrine. My memory isn't what it used to be, but I haven't forgotten everything. I remember certain things quite well. The sweet smell of the wisteria in the spring... the acrid taste of your father's favorite bourbon. And the sound of children above. Laughing, playing... *crying*--

Corrine's face crumples. Upset, she throws the dress aside.

CORRINE

Enough! Stay in your room for all I care. Tonight is my night.

(dismissive)

Besides, nobody's interested in an old lady who spends her days screaming at nurses and poring through the obituaries.

Corrine heads out when her mother calls after her, pleading.

GRANDMOTHER

Corrine, please, wait--!

She turns to look at her frail mother, who seems scared, vulnerable even.

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)

You're right, Corrine, it's true. I- I'm not good for much anymore... But I did find one you might find interesting.

She reaches her shaky hand to Corrine, passing her one  
obituary from her nightstand-- it's Carrie's. \*  
\*

90 INT. FOXWORTH HALL - A LITTLE LATER

90

The party's in full swing. Free-flowing champagne, live  
music and admiring GUESTS. At center is Corrine, soaking up  
the attention and champagne in equal amounts. But she seems  
distracted, unnerved. Still, Bart proudly stands by her  
side, makes up for her (pharmaceutical) jitters. \*  
\*  
\*

BART

...Corrine and I fell in love at  
this same party eleven years ago.  
Didn't we, honey? \*  
\*  
\*  
\*

CORRINE

What? Yes, of course. I can  
hardly remember... \*  
\*  
\*

MALE GUEST

Well, it looks even more  
spectacular.  
(lightly) \*  
And I wasn't talking about the  
house. \*

They all laugh. Then Corrine notices something. \*

CORRINE

Oh, dinner's almost ready. I have  
to cue the band and pass out the  
sparklers-- and where is all the  
champagne? \*  
\*  
\*

Bart follows Corrine, who's already emptied her glass. Now  
he follows her to a corner, surreptitiously rifling through  
her purse (or a drawer) for some pills. \*  
\*  
\*

BART

Honey, I'll take care of  
everything. Try to relax and enjoy  
yourself... \*  
\*  
(re: pills, quietly) \*  
Without these. \*

CORRINE

(snaps) \*  
Not tonight, Bart. Please. \*

Corrine grabs a handful, walks back into the party. Bart  
looks unsure but backs off-- there are too many people  
around. \*  
\*  
\*

By the band, Bart speaks with the band leader, who starts winding down the music. Behind him, a woman approaches.

CATHY (O.S.)

Do they take requests? I'm in the mood for *Auld Lang Syne*.

Bart spins around... and turns ASHEN. It's CATHY-- in the same gold dress that Corrine wore ten years previous. But Bart's so panicked, he doesn't quite put it together.

BART

Cathy?! What're you doing here? You have to leave...

\*

CATHY

And miss the Foxworth Christmas party? It's a family tradition. So is the dress. Don't you recognize it?

\*

\*

\*

BART

I don't understand...

\*

CATHY

Ask her.

Cathy gestures to Corrine, a few yards behind him. Corrine's frozen in shock, staring daggers at Cathy. By now, the band's stopped playing, and the entire room has gone silent. If Bart hasn't recognized the resemblance (and dress), everyone else has. Everyone watches as Corrine manages to spew out a weak-if-venomous greeting.

CORRINE

You.

\*

BART

(perplexed)

You two know each other?

\*

Cathy nods, then grimaces at Corrine.

CATHY

Merry Christmas, mother.

There's a collective gasp as Bart quickly whisks both women to the library.

Bart frantically negotiates between the two women. Tries to reason with Cathy, hold his temper. \*

BART

...Look, maybe I led you on, Cathy, but I never told you I'd leave my wife. You have no right to try to come into my home... destroy my family. \*

CATHY

You mean, the way she destroyed her own family? \*

CORRINE

Don't listen to her, Bart. She's lying. She's just trying to get between us. \*

BART

How do you know her, Corrine? How does she know you? \*

CORRINE

She-- she's just some wannabe who reads the society pages. You know how girls become obsessed with women they aspire to be... who have what they want. \*

Bart doesn't know who-- or what to believe. But Cathy continues. \*

CATHY

I saw you together ten years ago. At this same party. She was wearing this same dress when you met her upstairs... and asked to see her 'famous' swan bed. \*

A flicker of disbelief, horror as Bart realizes Cathy might be telling the truth. Cathy continues, dead-calm. \*

CATHY (CONT'D)

Tell him, mother. How you locked up your own children-- four of us-- so you wouldn't lose your inheritance. \*

CORRINE

It's not true...

(CONTINUED)



CATHY

Tell him how we spent two years in that attic. How you traveled all over the world while we were beaten and starved...

\*

Bart stares at Corrine, who begins to falter.

BART

Corrine...?

\*

CORRINE

(weakly)

I-- I had no choice. You drew up my father's will-- if I told him I had children, I would've been left with nothing.

BART

How could you not tell me you had children?! I could've helped...

\*

\*

Desperate, Corrine tries harder to spin it her way.

CORRINE

I wanted to, I did... but I was afraid of what you'd say.

\*

(then)

I was doing it for them-- for all of us! I had a plan to get them out of the house, but they ran away first. Bart, you know how hard my father was. If he ever suspected, we would've gotten nothing. This was the *only* way, you have to believe me--!

\*

\*

Just then, the door swings open. Behind Corrine, a man speaks. It's Christopher.

CHRISTOPHER

What about Cory?

Corrine turns ashen. Cathy runs to her brother's side.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)

You poisoned him. Just like you were trying to poison us. Only he died.

\*

\*

CORRINE

That's not true. He had pneumonia, the doctor said--

\*

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTOPHER

There was no doctor, no hospital records either. I called every hospital and clinic in three states. There wasn't even a death certificate.

\*  
\*  
\*

Cathy lets out a sob-- it's the first she's heard this, too.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)

(to Cathy)

I just found out myself. I came up to Virginia to tell you... I'm sorry, Cathy. This isn't how I wanted you to hear.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Cathy turns angrily to Corrine.

\*

CATHY

You killed Cory. You didn't even try to help him. And then Carrie killed herself because of you. Because she'd rather be dead than be your daughter.

Christopher holds her tight. Corrine looks over at Bart, who backs away from her, horrified.

CORRINE

She's lying, Bart! You have to believe me. I'm your wife. She's nobody, she's *nothing* to you.

Now Cathy hits Corrine with the final blow.

CATHY

That's not true. I- I'm the mother of his children.

BART

What?

CATHY

I'm pregnant... with your twins.

Bart looks stunned... as does Christopher. And Corrine is utterly destroyed.

END OF ACT SEVEN

ACT EIGHT

93

INT. FOXWORTH HALL - LATER

93

The party's cleared out, as if by a sudden cataclysm-- with half-drunk glasses of champagne, ice sculptures melting onto abandoned trays of appetizers. Bart sits on the sofa, alone. He looks bereft. Cathy approaches tentatively.

CATHY

Bart, I-- I'm sorry.

BART

Sorry for what? Lying to me?  
Seducing me to get even with your  
mother... my wife? For making me  
fall in love with you? God, I  
don't even know what to believe  
anymore.

She sits beside him.

CATHY

Look, it's true I sought you out  
just to get back at Corrine but...  
that's not how I feel now. I do  
love you... More than you can  
imagine.

(then)

And I understand if you don't feel  
the same way. If I were you, I  
wouldn't either.

Bart looks anguished, turns to Cathy.

BART

Just tell me-- are you really  
having my children?

Cathy nods. Overwhelmed, Bart chokes back a sob.

94

INT. ATTIC - FOXWORTH HALL - SAME

94

Christopher's alone in attic, upset by Cathy's news. He looks around the familiar scene then LOSES his temper. He YANKS DOWN a few flowers, BREAKS the swing, tries to SCRUB OUT Cathy's calendar with his bare fists, etc... Finally, he crumples onto the floor, head in his hands, too agonized to keep going.

Just then, Corrine enters from the stairwell. She approaches gingerly, touches his shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

CORRINE

Darling, I- I've been looking for you.

He looks up at her, upset, his eyes red. What does she want?

CORRINE (CONT'D)

I'm so sorry. This is all my fault.

CHRISTOPHER

Please, don't.

CORRINE

I was selfish. You warned me but I  
I was too caught up in my own  
feelings to listen. If you'd just  
forgive me. You know how much I  
love you.

He softens a little-- he's been waiting a decade to hear this. But he shakes his head.

CHRISTOPHER

It's too late...

Still, she smiles encouragingly.

CORRINE

You're going to be okay. We both  
are. Don't listen to what the  
others are saying. We're going to  
start over.

CHRISTOPHER

How?

CORRINE

We'll move north-- to Pennsylvania  
or Connecticut. Where nobody will  
know we're half-niece, half-uncle.

CHRISTOPHER

Mom--?

Corrine smiles and clutches her stomach like she's pregnant.

CORRINE

I think it's going to be a boy.  
We'll name him Christopher-- after  
you.

She tries to put his hand on her stomach but Christopher flinches. Suddenly, it dawns on him-- Corrine's having a full-blown break with reality.

\*  
\*  
\*

Cathy tries to plead with Bart, who's unresponsive. Still trying to process all this.

CATHY

I'm sorry you had to hear this way.  
All these years, I've carried so  
much anger... shame.

(pained)

There's still so much you don't  
know about me. Things I've been  
through, and done. You deserve  
better, Bart. You always have.

She starts to walk away when he finally looks up.

BART

(softly)

I don't care.

CATHY

What?

BART

I just-- I wish I'd known what you  
went through. If only she'd told  
me back then... or if you'd found  
me--! How could I not *know*?

\*  
\*

CATHY

It's not your fault. We were so  
young, and scared. And we wanted  
to believe our mother. We wanted  
her to love us.

(pained)

Who could imagine anyone doing that  
to her own children? I could  
never...

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

She touches her stomach, protectively... instinctively. Bart hushes Cathy, wraps his arms around her.

BART

Cathy, I'm here for you. And our  
children. That's all that matters  
now. Just--

(darkens)

(MORE)

\*  
\*

BART (CONT'D)

I- I'm sorry for having loved your mother. At least the idea of her. The truth is, it never felt right. Like something was missing all along.

\*  
\*  
\*

CATHY

...a family.

BART

(shakes his head)

You.

He gazes into her eyes. Cathy chokes back a sob-- she knows he means it. Despite everything, Bart takes her in his arms and they KISS.

\*  
\*  
\*

Christopher staggers back from Corrine.

CHRISTOPHER

Please. You-- you don't know what you're saying.

But Corrine just gives him a sympathetic look.

CORRINE

Darling, I know we're giving up so much. But we can finally be together. Raise a family. Just like we always dreamed about.

Determined, she winds up the old Victrola, lights some candles. Shakes back her hair and smiles seductively.

CORRINE (CONT'D)

Just think-- we won't have to hide our love from the world anymore...

She tries to kiss him but this only angers Christopher. He finally shoves her away.

CHRISTOPHER

Stop it! Get away from me!

Corrine blinks-- a moment of realization. And horror.

CORRINE

Don't you love me anymore?

CHRISTOPHER

No.

Upset, Corrine swings the candle around, LIGHTING up one of the old, dry paper flowers. It catches fire. There's a chain reaction as the flowers start to ignite, one by one.

Corrine watches, intrigued but not quite understanding, as the flames take over the giant attic. But Christopher quickly pulls her down the stairs.

Bart and Cathy embrace when they sense something-- a loud CRACK or the smell of smoke.

CATHY  
What is that?

BART  
I'll check upstairs.

But before he can go, Christopher runs down, dragging Corrine with him.

CHRISTOPHER  
The attic-- it's on fire. You  
have to get out.

Cathy runs to the door with Bart, but he pulls away. Starts heading upstairs.

CATHY  
Bart--?

BART  
Your grandmother's upstairs. I  
have to get her!

CATHY  
Bart, no--!

But he's too fast, quickly flies up to the second floor. She tries to run after him but Christopher stops her.

CATHY (CONT'D)  
He can't leave me. Don't let him  
leave me!

CHRISTOPHER  
Cathy, don't! It's too dangerous.

She pounds her fists into his chest, but Christopher's too strong.

CATHY

Please, no... I love him. Let me go, Christopher! You have to let me go!

CHRISTOPHER

No, Cathy. It's too late.

Against her will, Christopher drags Cathy outside.

98 EXT. FOXWORTH HALL - MOMENTS LATER

98

As the estate is subsumed in flames, Cathy collapses into Christopher's arms. This time, there are no survivors.

99 EXT. BACKYARD - SUBURBAN, CALIFORNIA - SIX YEARS LATER

99

An idyllic family home with white picket fence. Several FAMILIES gather for a BBQ, with hamburgers, beer, red-checked tablecloths and general horse-play.

WIFE #1

...So I told Ed, if I have to host your entire family for Thanksgiving again, my mother's staying for Christmas and New Year's.

WIFE #2

Don't get me started on my in-laws.

Suddenly, ADORABLE BLONDE TWINS (a boy and girl, aged 7) run past with their father-- Christopher (now 30s).

CHRISTOPHER

Cory, Cory-- go long!

The little boy, CORY, runs and CATCHES the football. His sister tackles him.

CORY

No fair! Carrie tackled me.

CHRISTOPHER

Well, then I guess I'm going to have to... TICKLE BOTH OF YOU!

He runs over and starts tickling the kids. They're having a blast. Cathy appears in the doorway. She wears an apron over her casual jeans and shirt, holds up a fresh-baked pie.

(CONTINUED)



CATHY

I hate to break up the party but  
dessert's ready! Your dad's  
favorite-- homemade apple pie.

Christopher and the kids bound over.

CHRISTOPHER

That looks wonderful, honey.

CORY/CARRIE

Sure does, mom./Mmm, my favorite!

She grins, kisses them all.

WIFE #1

What's your secret, anyway? You  
Dollangangers are always so...  
perfect.

Cathy smiles, but with a hint of shame, regret in her eyes.

CATHY

No. Not always.

A NURSE fetches a DOCTOR, who's looking over a case-file.

NURSE

Dr. Hatcher, come quick.

DOCTOR

Room 107 again?

NURSE

We've tried everything but she  
won't calm down.

The doctor grabs his medical bag and heads quickly over to...

The hysterical mental patient, being strapped down by two  
ORDERLIES-- it's CORRINE. She's yelling and screaming,  
trying to claw her way out.

CORRINE

(upset)

Let me go! I need to see my  
babies...!

NURSE  
(to Doctor)  
She keeps calling for her children.

The doctor shakes his head as he INJECTS Corrine with a strong sedative.

DOCTOR  
That's strange. She never had any children.

On Corrine, desperately calling out for the children she abandoned decades ago, we:

FADE OUT.

END OF MOVIE