

Mind Trap

by

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EXT. STREET CURB - DAY (FLASH FORWARD)

WILLIAM, 31 and increasingly unstable, stands on a street corner, staring off into the distance. His sunken eyes make him appear older than he is.

From this distance, he blends into the bustling CROWD, appearing almost normal.

We ZOOM IN on his face. His mouth is agape. He takes deep, even breaths.

It is his eyes that are the most revealing. Red rimmed with pale blue irises. They are hauntingly tormented and dazed as he stares off into the distance, focused on nothing.

He wears the look of one who has seen the darkness and didn't make it out unscathed.

EXT. BRADSHAW HOUSE - DAY

SUPER: 9 MONTHS EARLIER

AMY, 28, a gentle, easy-going soul, stands next to a more lively William. Their backs are turned on a modest house.

AMY

I'm almost afraid to turn around. It still doesn't feel real.

William smiles at her wildly.

WILLIAM

I know. I can't believe we actually did it.

They slowly turn and face the house.

AMY

A house. We bought-

WILLIAM

Our house.
(beat)
In about twenty years or so.

Amy LAUGHS and nudges his shoulder.

AMY

It's still ours even if we're paying it off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILLIAM

Yup. Even if we have approximately
twenty cents to our name. It was worth
it.

AMY

(unsure)

Yeah...

They stare at the house in silence. A beat. They look at each other and smile weakly.

AMY (CONT'D)

Well. No turning back now.

They walk forward, still drinking in the house. They come to a stop at its wrap-around porch.

WILLIAM

I guess I should probably carry you in
bridal-style, huh?

She backs away, trying and failing to escape his outstretched arms.

AMY

No! Willia-

Amy's voice is cut off as William hoists her into his arms. She descends into a fit of LAUGHTER as he carries her into the house.

INT. BRADSHAW LIVING ROOM - DAY

Sunlight streams into the room, illuminating floating dust particles. Piled boxes are scattered throughout the room, some of them teetering, and all of the furniture is covered in sheets.

Amy stands at one of the boxes, holding a box cutter. She carefully SLICES it open.

Halfway through the slice, a box behind her SLAMS to the ground. Amy JUMPS, nicking her finger with the box cutter.

AMY

Fuck!

She winces, putting the finger in her mouth. A beat. With the finger still in her mouth, she begins pulling out the contents of the box.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

She pulls out: an unopened package of socks, a soap holder, a notebook and a picture frame. She sets each item aside and digs deeper in the box.

She frowns, pulling out an orange pill bottle. Her eyebrows are drawn as she studies the label.

As she reads, William walks in, holding a box.

WILLIAM

Hey, where do you want these-

She jumps, spinning around and holding the bottle guiltily behind her back. She tries to smile nonchalantly.

AMY

Anywhere's fine, hun.

William puts his box down. He looks at the box in front of Amy and then his gaze settles on her. A BEAT. He raises his eyebrows.

With a SIGH, she holds up the pill bottle.

AMY (CONT'D)

What's Ri-risperidone?

William looks around the room in discomfort, avoiding Amy's inquisitive gaze.

WILLIAM

A new medication my doctor gave me.

AMY

Well, obviously. But what's it for?

He snatches the bottle from her hand before kissing her forehead.

WILLIAM

Migraines, nosey.

AMY

It sounds very... I don't know.
Intense.

William tucks a fallen strand of hair behind Amy's ear. He gives her a sad smile.

WILLIAM

Yeah, well. The migraines are intense.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Amy frowns. William kisses her temple.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Don't worry about me. I'll be fine.

INT. BRADSHAW MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

William and Amy lie in a large bed together. Amy is curled against William's chest, sound asleep. William stares up at the ceiling, frowning deeply.

On a nightstand beside him, the time reads: 3:15.

A long moment passes. Slowly, William's eyes begin to lower.

INT. DARK ROOM (DREAM)

William sits at a table in a sparse, dimly lit room. His arms are tied behind his back.

Across from him is the outline of a dark shadow wearing a hat. The shadow has no discernible features but its stature reveals it to be a MAN.

William raises his head and eyes the shadow warily. He jerks at his bound wrists.

WILLIAM
Who are you?

The shadow lets out a menacing LAUGH but doesn't move.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
(more frantic)
Where am I?

The shadow man walks forward, extending its hand. Each finger is a sharp knife. He runs them along the table, getting closer and closer to William with each forward step.

William tries moving backward but his tied arms prevent him from moving too far. The shadow runs a finger down William's cheek.

He begins to SCREAM as the blades tear into his face. The blades dig deeper and deeper, causing blood to well up and pour down his face until-

END DREAM

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

INT. BRADSHAW MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

William springs up in bed, hyperventilating. Amy, already awake, sits up and rubs his back in slow, circular motions. William flinches.

A beat of heavy silence. Amy CLEARS her throat.

AMY

Do you want to talk about it?

William looks over at her and gives her a small, sad smile.

WILLIAM

Nah, it was just some dumb dream. Did I wake you?

Amy nods.

AMY

You were... screaming. It terrified me.

(beat)

I-I shook you but you wouldn't wake up.

William lies back down, pulling Amy into his arms.

WILLIAM

I'm fine now, love. I promise.

Amy SNORTS but closes her eyes. The bedside clock reads: 3:33. William once again stares at the ceiling with a frown.

In the corner of the room stands a shadow, overlooking the couple. It blends into the darkness but vaguely looks like the outline of a man wearing a hat.

INT. BRADSHAW KITCHEN - DAY

A modest, airy kitchen. Modern appliances fill the room with a kitchen island in the middle. White and blue checkered curtains billow in the breeze let in by the open window.

Amy pours a pot of coffee into a mug, staring at her open laptop as she does.

William walks in, shoulders slumped, dressed only in boxers. Amy frowns.

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CONTINUED: (2)

AMY

I take it you're not going into the office today?

William opens a few cabinets before grabbing a mug.

WILLIAM

(mumbled)

Called out.

He takes the pot of coffee out of her hands.

AMY

I thought we moved here for a fresh start.

(beat)

You said you wouldn't do this shit again.

William GRUNTS, his focus entirely on pouring the coffee into his mug.

AMY (CONT'D)

And anyway, isn't this supposed to be some sort of probationary-

WILLIAM

After last night, I wouldn't have been very useful to them anyway.

William sits at the island. Amy pauses, eyebrows drawn. A beat. She spins her wedding ring around her finger.

AMY

About that-

She is cut off by a loud KNOCKING on the door. William jumps up, relieved.

WILLIAM

I'll get it.

AMY

Don't think we're done talking about this, William.

Amy glares at his retreating back for several moments before finally SIGHING and walking after him.

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CONTINUED: (3)

INT. BRADSHAW LIVING ROOM - DAY

William walks up to the front door and pulls it open. It CREAKS, revealing ROBERT, 60s, portly and cheery, ETHEL, 50s, rigid, carrying a casserole dish wrapped in tinfoil and BOBBI, 15, gothic and angsty, dressed in all black.

Bobbi CHUCKLES and Ethel GASPS as they take in William's lack of attire.

ETHEL

Did we catch you at a bad time? We can come back-

WILLIAM

No, no, would you- uh, would you give me just a sec?

He closes the door without waiting for their answer and turns, colliding with Amy.

AMY

What's wrong? Who was it?

WILLIAM

Our neighbors. Or at least I think they're our neighbors?

(beat)

Can you take care of it while I-

He gestures to his body. Amy nods and CHUCKLES SLIGHTLY, pushing him in the direction of the stairs. When he's out of sight, she opens the door, forcing a practiced smile.

AMY

Hello! I'm Amy.

The trio stare at her a moment, wide-eyed. Ethel steps forward, extending a hand that Amy shakes.

ETHEL

Hello Amy. Pleased to meet you. I'm Ethel Sorento and this here is my husband, Robert and my daughter, Roberta.

Roberta/Bobbi steps forward, CLEARING HER THROAT.

ROBERTA/BOBBI

Actually, I go by Bobbi. With an i.

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Amy nods vacantly, taking in all that is Bobbi. Ethel glares at her daughter and extends the casserole to Amy.

ETHEL

Anyway. We made you both this
casserole to welcome you to the
neighborhood.

Amy takes the casserole, tucking it under her arm.

AMY

(genuine)

That's so sweet. Thank you.

Ethel nods, smiling. Waiting.

A beat of tense and awkward silence. Amy shifts uncomfortably.

AMY (CONT'D)

Well, um, I'd better head inside. I'd
invite you in but the place is still a
mess with all of the unpacking-

ETHEL

Oh, we don't mind, dear. Truly.

Another tense beat. Amy sighs and opens the door further, beckoning them in.

They follow behind her, shrewd eyes taking in every inch of the room.

Amy sets the casserole on one of the boxes and removes the sheet covering the couch. She turns to the Sorentos with an embarrassed smile.

AMY

Sorry about the mess.

BOBBI

Does your husband always walk around
naked?

William walks in right in the middle of her question, rubbing the back of his neck awkwardly. Ethel pauses from trying to peer into one of the half-opened boxes and CHOKES.

ETHEL

Roberta! Apologize. We do not-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

AMY

No, no. It's fine, really. We... we
just weren't expecting visitors-

William places a reassuring hand on Amy's shoulder.

WILLIAM

And I didn't sleep well last night.
Hence the pajamas at noon.

Bobbi's eyes light up.

BOBBI

It's 'cause of the ghosts, isn't it?

ETHEL

Roberta, for the love of-

AMY

(with more than a touch of fear)
Ghosts?

William pales, staring at Bobbi in concern.

WILLIAM

What do you mean?

Bobbi walks over to an available section of wall, running the tips of her fingers along it.

BOBBI

Didn't you hear? This house is ripe
with history. **It** practically oozes
from the walls.

She pauses for dramatic effect. Ethel huffs, crossing her arms and rolling her eyes. Robert sits on the couch, smiling fondly at his daughter.

BOBBI (CONT'D)

The first owners were a couple just
like yourselves. 'Cept it was the
1700s so the wife didn't do much
owning. She kept popping out girls
when her husband was set on having a
boy as his firstborn. He killed each
one right in front of her. I guess the
fifth time broke something in her. She
hanged herself right in the basement
three days later. He remarried and his
wife had a boy the first try.

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CONTINUED: (4)

William's eyes widen.

WILLIAM

Fuck.

AMY

That's terrible.

ETHEL

Jesus, Roberta-

Bobbi squats at an end-table, opening a drawer and riffling through it.

BOBBI

Things were quiet for a while. Fifty years later, townspeople started going missing. They'd be walking alone and bam! No one would hear from them again. Turns out, the man living here was torturing them in - you guessed it, the basement. He would bury their bodies on the property. Rumor has it that some of them haven't even been found yet.

William and Amy exchange a worried glance. Ethel glares at Bobbi. Robert lights a cigarette.

ETHEL

I mean it, Roberta-

ROBERT

Y'all don't mind if I light this right?

Amy tugs at her hair, eying first the cigarette and then darting her gaze around her new home.

AMY

Um, kind of-

Bobbi abruptly stands up, walking over to the bay window.

BOBBI

Another man snapped one day and killed his five-year-old daughter. The next one killed himself. Said in a note all of their voices drove him mad. And it was crazy because they were - all of them... they were normal. Before they

(MORE)

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BOBBI (CONT'D)

bought this house.

(beat)

It's cursed.

A tangible silence runs across the room. Robert exhales a cloud of smoke. Ethel's eye twitches. William wraps an arm around Amy, staring at Bobbi in horror.

AMY

That can't be true-

ETHEL

Oh, you really did it now Roberta-

BOBBI

For the thousandth time, it's Bobbi-

WILLIAM

All of those murders can't be tied - I mean the probability of that is-

Bobbi gazes out of the large bay window, a morbid smile gracing her lips.

BOBBI

They say each man is the same man reincarnated. Drawn back to this house time and time again. Crazy, huh?

ETHEL

That's it. We're leaving. And for god sake, Robert, put out the damn cigarette.

Ethel grabs Bobbi's wrist, dragging her to the door. She pauses on the way out, smiling apologetically and patting Amy's arm.

ETHEL (CONT'D)

I'm so sorry for my satanic spawn of a child, dear.

The Sorentos exit, Robert, still smoking, following in their wake, CLOSING the door behind them. Amy and William SIGH, shoulders drooping.

WILLIAM

What the fuck was that?

Amy plops onto the couch, staring at the ceiling.

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AMY
I couldn't tell you.

William takes a seat next to her.

WILLIAM
Do you believe any of it?

AMY
I don't know. She's a child. Who knows
what the truth is.

They sit in a few moments of heavy silence. Amy nervously tugs on her hair.

AMY (CONT'D)
It's a small town. All small towns
have stories like these, legends they
tell around the campfire. And besides,
we're in it for the long haul. No
turning back now, right?

William closes his eyes, leaning his head back against the couch.

WILLIAM
(uncertain)
Yup. No turning back now.

INT. BRADSHAW MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

The clock on the nightstand reads: 3:27. William tosses and turns, unable to fall asleep. Amy cracks an eye open, looking at him over her shoulder.

AMY
Again?

William nods. Amy smiles weakly, turning to face him.

AMY (CONT'D)
That has to be some sort of new
sleepless night record.

She rubs his shoulders.

AMY (CONT'D)
We should get you some Melatonin.

William CHUCKLES and kisses her forehead. He watches her eyes slowly close as she falls back asleep.

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He holds her, and when sleep claims him, it is sudden.

INT. BRADSHAW MASTER BATHROOM - NIGHT (DREAM)

William stands under a shower-head. The shower lets out a steady loud ROAR as it spews water onto him. The shower's steam has begun to fill the room.

WILLIAM (V.O)

I hear my heartbeat in my ears.

We hear the sound of his HEARTBEAT right along with him. As if it is ours. As if the pounding belongs to us.

WILLIAM (V.O) (CONT'D)

I count down the seconds before it happens. Because it will. It always does now.

A CREAK from behind him. As if someone has joined him but the shower is empty. He jumps. Opens his eyes.

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

I know before I turn around what I'll see.

He SUCKS IN a deep breath.

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

But I still turn around anyway.

He turns and YELLS. A YOUNG GIRL, 6, long dark hair a matted nest, crawls toward him, wearing a torn nightgown. Her body is contorted, limbs popping out of their sockets as she makes her way toward him. Blood runs from her eyes and the corners of her lips in rivulets, pooling in the water at his feet, staining it.

She reaches a mangled and bloodied hand toward him. He shrinks back, chest HEAVING. Her nails scrape down his leg. Blood follows its path as her nails settle deeper into his skin, ripping and tearing. His SHOUT amplifies, extending on and on until-

END DREAM

INT. BRADSHAW MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

William lies on his back, eyes staring up at the ceiling. Suddenly, his eyes widen. They bulge out of their sockets, petrified. His chest begins to heave. A slight WHIMPER,

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barely audible, escapes his throat.

Several moments pass as William's breathing becomes more and more labored. His body remains unmoving.

WILLIAMS POV: The vague outline of a white dress and black hair at the edge of his vision. A distant RINGING slowly getting LOUDER and LOUDER until it is EARSPLITTING.

The perspective shifts. William is once again staring up at the ceiling, his terrified eyes rimmed with tears.

Slowly, a child's hand emerges from the darkness and presses down on William's chest.

His breathing halts. His eyes dart around in confusion and fear. He forces a strangled GASP passed his throat.

The hand presses down harder and harder before it instantly retreats.

CUT TO:

William bolts upright in bed with a bloodcurdlingly broken SCREAM, eyes wild and deranged.

EXT. BRADSHAW HOUSE - DAY

Amy stands outside, strategically putting up Halloween decorations. She straightens a tombstone on her lawn before walking over to her porch and opening a bag of fake spider webs.

She stretches, rolling her neck and spotting Bobbi standing on the adjacent lawn. Bobbi is staring at a window of the Bradshaw house intently.

Amy waves. A beat. She waves again. This time Bobbi jumps and waves back, wearing a deep frown, before hurrying into her house.

Amy looks at Bobbi's house in confusion before shrugging and continuing to stretch spider webs across her porch railing.

She smiles slightly when William's car pulls in, frowns when he slams his door closed and brushes past her without acknowledgment.

She follows him into the house, shoulders drawn back in anger, throwing the spider webs onto the ground.

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INT. BRADSHAW LIVING ROOM - DAY

Amy walks in on William angrily shoving his blazer into a hallway closet. She closes the door gently and releases a long SIGH.

AMY

Listen, I know you're upset but-

William SLAMS the closet door closed.

WILLIAM

Upset doesn't even begin to describe how I feel, Amy.

AMY

Well how do you feel, William? Because however it is, you haven't been telling me.

William throws up his arms.

WILLIAM

What the fuck do you expect from me, Amy? Do you- do you want me to tell you every goddamn thought that runs through my head at any given hour of the day?

A beat. Amy stares at him blankly, eyebrows raised. She closes her eyes, releases a BREATH. Tugs on her hair once. Twice.

AMY

You wanna pretend there isn't something bothering you? That you don't wake up screaming every night? Fine. Go ahead. But you aren't going to talk to me that way.

She walks out the front door, head high, a slight tremor running across her shoulders.

William SIGHS, sifting a hand through his hair angrily.

He walks over to the bay window, watching through the glass as Amy picks up her discarded Halloween decorations. He pulls out his phone, fingers flying across the screen as he quickly dials and holds it up to his ear.

A beat. Amy pulls out her phone. She gazes down at it with a

(CONTINUED)

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scowl before looking up at him. He mouths the word "please" to her, causing her to look up at the sky and then drop her shoulders in resignation. She lifts the phone to her ear.

As they speak, we HEAR her voice over the line but can only see her mouth move.

AMY (CONT'D)

Give me one reason why I should even be entertaining this phone call right now, William.

WILLIAM

Look. I, I'm uh -

Amy goes to put the phone down.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Amy, wait. I'm sorry.

AMY

That's a step in the right direction. Go on.

William exhales a deep breath, clutching the phone in a white-knuckled grasp.

WILLIAM

(whispered)

I'm sorry. I'm scared, okay? I'm fucking terrified.

AMY

(softly)

I know you are, baby.

WILLIAM

(hushed)

I don't know what the fuck is happening to me. I feel like I'm losing my mind.

Amy rubs the bridge of her nose.

AMY

I want to help you. I really, really do. I feel so helpless when you don't let me in. We're supposed to be a team, remember?

William nods reluctantly.

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CONTINUED: (3)

WILLIAM

I know. I know but I just - I need
some time to process what's going on
up here-

He taps his temple with his index finger.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Before I pour it all onto you. I can't
pour if I don't even understand what's
trying to come out.

Amy smiles sadly.

AMY

Fine. Process away. Just don't leave
me in the dark forever, okay?

William nods, leaning his forehead against the window. He
watches as Amy ends their call and continues decorating their
yard.

He stands there for several moments, unmoving, face pressed
against the glass, uneven breaths causing the window to fog
up.

INT. BRADSHAW KITCHEN - NIGHT

Amy and William move around each other in the kitchen. Their
bodies seem to be almost in sync with each other.

They clear dirty dishes off their table, bringing them to the
sink and instinctively beginning to clean them.

One by one, William washes while Amy dries each dish.

AMY

You never told me how work was.

WILLIAM

Tedious.

William squeezes a heaping glob of dish soap onto one of the
dishes.

AMY

Hey!

WILLIAM

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

AMY

Too much.

She holds her hand out for the dish and they switch positions. William SIGHS dejectedly.

AMY (CONT'D)

Now I know why the soap goes so fast.

She runs the dish under the faucet, furiously scrubbing away the excess soap.

WILLIAM

Yeah, yeah. Hand me it, will ya?

She holds out the dish. William smiles, fingers bypassing the dish and trailing up her arm. He pulls their bodies closer together and kisses her neck.

A beat. The dish is awkwardly folded between them. Amy SIGHS, twisting her neck away from him.

AMY

Honey, I should probably tell you something.

WILLIAM

Oh no. Nothing good ever comes after a sentence like that.

Amy LAUGHS, setting the dish down. She pauses. Inhales.

AMY

(in a rush)

I invited the Sorentos over for dinner.

WILLIAM

The who?

Amy frowns.

AMY

The Sorentos.

(at his continued confused expression)

Our neighbors.

(beat)

They came to our house with-

William snaps his fingers, nodding.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

WILLIAM

Ah, right. The casserole.

(shuddering)

Why'd you invite them over for?

Amy SIGHS, wiping her hands on a towel and turning off the running water.

AMY

I don't know, William. I saw Ethel standing outside, staring at our house with - oh, well you know that look of hers. Like she can't stand the fact that our yard dares to align with her pristine property. And I wanted- I guess I wanted her to like it, for once. The house. Us.

William CHUCKLES, wrapping his arms around Amy.

WILLIAM

Sweetheart, there isn't a feast on earth that could make that woman like us.

AMY

I know. It just felt neighborly. And we can't exactly back out now. Lord knows that woman would never let us live it down.

They stand together for several moments, gently swaying, arms wrapped around each other.

WILLIAM

(mumbled)

When is it?

AMY

Hmm?

WILLIAM

Our feast with the Sorentos?

A beat. Amy bites her lip.

AMY

Tomorrow.

WILLIAM

Baby-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

AMY

Come on! You just have to show up.
I'll do all the rest.

William steps away from her, a look of hesitation on his face.

WILLIAM

I have to work late again.

AMY

Please, William? You've worked late
the past three nights.

WILLIAM

I need this job, Aim, you know that-

AMY

Fine.

Amy turns to leave, stopped by William's sudden grasp on her arm.

WILLIAM

That fresh start we wanted can't
happen if I don't have a job.

(beat)

I'll try to make it. You know I will.

Amy forces a smile, leaning up to kiss him.

AMY

You better. I can already imagine
Ethel and all of her questions if she
sees your empty seat.

INT. BRADSHAW MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

William stands outside of the shower, steam filling up the room. He takes off his shirt, wincing as his arms raise above his head.

On his chest are five small, circular bruises, clustered close together. They are dark blue and purple along the edges with a lighter yellow and green in the middle, blending together like watercolors.

He lightly runs his fingers over the bruises, wincing, before shoving his hands into the waistband of his pants and pushing them down.

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He stands in his boxers, frowning down at his leg. Turning it, he reveals three deep scratches, crusted over with dried blood.

He GASPS, eyes widening. A beat as he pauses, before ultimately SIGHING and stepping out of his boxers and into the shower.

INT. BRADSHAW MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

A pile of folded laundry is spread out across the bed. Amy grabs as much of it as her arms can hold and starts putting it away in her dresser.

Distantly, the sound of William's SHOWER can be heard.

Facing the dresser, back turned to the room, Amy continues putting away clothes, oblivious to the shadow man that emerges from the corner, stepping toward her.

INT. BRADSHAW MASTER BATHROOM - NIGHT

William rinses the soap off his body before reaching forward and turning off the shower knob.

He grabs a towel, quickly patting dry his body and wrapping it around his waist.

He pulls open the CURTAIN, drawing his shoulders back in surprise when he takes in the message written on the steamy mirror: **10**.

INT. BRADSHAW MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Amy continues to put away the clothes. William's SHOWER shuts off.

The shadow takes several slow steps forward, arm outstretched. A beat.

The arm hovers over her shoulder before leisurely coming down. It makes contact at the same time the bathroom door opens.

WILLIAM

Hey honey, did you writ-

She SCREAMS. William rushes over.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He places his hands on her shoulders, rubbing affectionately. Amy flinches at the contact.

AMY

I-I don't know. It felt like- God, I can't even explain it. I felt like I was being watched. Then it was like-like cold water being poured over my shoulder.

William holds her, rocking back and forth.

WILLIAM

It's okay. I'm here. You're okay.

INT. BRADSHAW KITCHEN - NIGHT

Amy, Robert, Ethel, and Bobbi, dressed in her usual all-black attire, sit around a large, rectangular dining table.

In front of each person is an empty plate. In the middle of the table are bowls loaded with food. Robert occasionally surreptitiously reaches forward, stealing food when he thinks no one is looking.

One seat at the table is noticeably vacant. Amy DRUMS her fingers next to her plate, staring at the clock across from her, chewing a fingernail.

A lengthy silence fills the room.

ETHEL

Where did you say he was again?

AMY

Working.

ETHEL

(lifting an eyebrow)

Ah...

A beat. Bobbi pulls out a nail filer and starts filing one long, black fingernail.

BOBBI

So like... how much longer do we have to wait?

Ethel looks pointedly at Amy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ETHEL

Good question, Roberta.

Robert SIGHS dreamily, staring at the bowls in front of him.

ROBERT

That food sure does smell heavenly.

BOBBI

I was kind of hoping to Skype Bethany at eight...

ETHEL

Tardiness is a telling quality in a man.

Amy LAUGHS uncomfortably.

ETHEL (CONT'D)

This is no laughing matter. When you invite guests over-

AMY

Look, his... tardiness is out of my control.

ETHEL

When you invite guests over-

AMY

I bet he probably ended up hitting traffic.

ETHEL

When you-

Amy throws up her hands.

AMY

I said we could go ahead and eat. Robert already is.

Ethel leans forward and knocks a dinner roll out of Robert's hand.

ETHEL

(screaming)

WHEN YOU INVITE GUESTS OVER A CERTAIN DECORUM IS EXPECTED AND WHEN THAT DECORUM IS VIOLATED THOSE GUESTS WHO ARE EXPECTING SOMETHING ONLY TO

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ETHEL (CONT'D)
 ULTIMATELY BE DISAPPOINTED FOR THE
 UMPTEENTH TIME IN THEIR STUPID STUPID
 STUPID STUPID LIVES-

She INHALES deeply. The room is eerily quiet. Amy tugs on her hair. A beat.

ETHEL (CONT'D)
 There is a certain respect between
 guest and host. And when that respect
 is tarnished, your guests have a right
 to be angry. And we are. We are very,
 very, very angry. Right?

She looks to her daughter and husband. The table is quiet, looking on at her with gaping mouths. Robert and Bobbi recover first, quickly nodding their heads robotically, eyeing Ethel like she is about to snap.

BOBBI
 Maybe we should just... reschedule?

ETHEL
 Reschedule? And risk the same thing
 happening again, Roberta?

An uncomfortable silence. Bobbi shrugs, once again filing her nails. Ethel's chest HEAVES. Amy SIGHS.

AMY
 I'm... sorry if I violated your guys'-
 (she gulps)
 Trust.

ETHEL
 Are you? Are you really? Because this
 is the first time we're receiving any
 apology in-

She glances at the watch on her wrist. Then at the clock on the wall. Then back at her wrist.

ETHEL (CONT'D)
 Forty-six minutes.

AMY
 (on the verge of tears)
 I-I-

Distantly, the SOUND of the front door slamming is heard.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Moments later, a disheveled William runs into the room.

He makes his way over to Amy without noticing the tension in the room. He leans in for a kiss but Amy turns her cheek. Confused, he leans back.

WILLIAM

I know, I know. I'm sorry. I really,
really am, Aim.

Amy avoids his gaze.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

They wouldn't let me out 'til after
five thirty and then with the traffic,
well. You know how bad it gets at that
hour.

Amy continues to stare stoically ahead. William looks up to find Ethel glaring at him.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Hey, Ethel...

He shoots her a bright, beaming smile.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Nice seeing you again. You look
ravishing. Robert better watch out.

He winks at Robert who is stuffing yet another roll into his mouth. A beat.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Well, whaddaya say we commence this
feast?

Ethel, still glaring, offers him a small smile. He SIGHS in relief and takes his seat at the head of the table.

Slowly, plates pile up with food. Bowls are passed around in silence.

William looks around in confusion.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Everything... alright?

AMY

Peachy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

Bobbi SNORTS. Ethel scowls at her. Silence descends once again.

ETHEL

So is this what you do every night?
Eat in silence?

AMY

No, Ethel. We don't-
(she plasters on a fake smile)
We're not used to having company.

ETHEL

(mumbled)
Clearly.

Amy angrily spears her fork into the food on her plate.

AMY

How was work, William?

WILLIAM

Oh. It was. Well, you know. Work.

Amy nods, eyes locked with Ethel. The air is uncomfortably tense.

Bobbi awkwardly pushes food around her plate. She stops, pausing as her eyes land on William. She takes him in, leaning forward.

BOBBI

(to William)
You okay?

WILLIAM

Uh, yeah. Why?

BOBBI

You look tired.

William raises his eyebrows, LAUGHING good-naturedly.

WILLIAM

Well, you're not lookin' like a ray of
sunshine yourself.

BOBBI

(smiling)
Shut up. I just mean-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

She gestures up and down with her hand.

BOBBI (CONT'D)
There's something off about you.

WILLIAM
You're really building up my
confidence, let me tell you.

BOBBI
Ugh. I guess the best approach is the
most direct one.

William looks at her in confusion, eyebrows drawn.

WILLIAM
Uhh-

BOBBI
Have the nightmares started yet?

ETHEL
Roberta! I told you, none of that
supernatural stuff tonight.

WILLIAM
(awkwardly)
Nightmares? What? Haha. Nightmares...

Ethel shakes her head, looking away from Bobbi.

ETHEL
I knew it. I just knew you couldn't be
trusted to behave yourself tonight.

BOBBI
It's not that big of a deal, Ma.

ETHEL
Not that big of a deal? Roberta-

Amy, who had been quietly watching the exchange, CLEARS HER
THROAT.

AMY
How do you know about the nightmares?

BOBBI
Oh, um...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

AMY

How, Bobbi? How would you know?

WILLIAM

Amy, I'm sure there's a reasonable explanation-

Bobbi crosses her arms, staring intently at William.

BOBBI

I bet you saw the man first, didn't you? He always ends up revealing himself first.

ETHEL

Never again, Roberta, never again-

WILLIAM

(laughing uncomfortably)
Alright. Well, I take it back. You were right, Aim.

BOBBI

And by now you must be seeing the little girl too. Right?

Amy and William stare at her, mouths hanging open. Amy looks over at William.

AMY

You're seeing a little girl?

BOBBI

The wife shouldn't have come yet. Nope. Not yet.

Ethel SLAMS her hands on the table.

ETHEL

One night. Just one godforsaken night, Roberta. And you couldn't even give me that.

Bobbi stares into her mother's eyes.

BOBBI

Some days it feels like if you call me Roberta just one more time - even one more fucking time, Ma, the world will cave in on me. It really does.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

She gets up and runs out of the room.

ETHEL

Oh, you did not just drop an f-bomb at me, missy!

Ethel gets up and chases after Bobbi. Amy shivers.

AMY

That girl gives me the creeps.

Amy looks over at Robert who continues to happily eat away.

AMY (CONT'D)

No offense.

Robert shrugs, piling food into his mouth.

WILLIAM

Yeah, well imagine how I feel.
(shuddering)
How could she have known?

Amy looks over at the entryway Bobbi and Ethel ran out of with a frown, shaking her head.

AMY

I don't know, William. I don't.

INT. BRADSHAW MASTER BATHROOM - NIGHT

William stands at his bathroom sink, staring at himself in the mirror. For several long moments, he picks at his face until it bleeds.

A beat. He slowly blinks, then opens the mirror. He reaches in, grabbing an orange pill bottle. He opens it, tossing back the pill that falls into his palm.

He closes the mirror halfway, looking into it. He notices Amy standing behind him and jumps, CHOKING on the pill.

Amy silently waits for the choking to stop.

WILLIAM

Wh-what's up?

A beat. Amy SCRATCHES HER HEAD.

AMY

I googled it. The mediation. Ri-
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

AMY (CONT'D)
risperidone?

William LAUGHS uncomfortably.

WILLIAM
What would make you do something like
that?

AMY
Was curious.

WILLIAM
Yeah?

AMY
Yeah.

A beat. They stare at each other in the mirror. William
SIGHS.

WILLIAM
Amy-

AMY
Do you trust me?

WILLIAM
You know I do.

AMY
Do I?

WILLIAM
Amy.

AMY
Why?
(beat)
Why didn't you tell me?

WILLIAM
Amy-

AMY
Hmm? Fucking migraines. Why didn't you
tell me it was an antipsychotic? And
when the fuck did you even get
prescribed-

She lets out a stilted, mirthless LAUGH and runs her shaky

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

hands through her hair.

WILLIAM

I've been on and off them for the last decade.

AMY

And you didn't think that was something you should tell me?

WILLIAM

I didn't know how Amy.

Amy's LAUGH is louder now, more unhinged.

AMY

You never know how, William. That's always your excuse.

WILLIAM

It's not a fucking excuse it-

He inhales deeply.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Why is it such a big deal? I didn't think you were the type to judge someone for-

AMY

For what, William? What are we dealing with here? Bipolar? Schizophrenia?

William spins around. They glare at each other.

WILLIAM

You have no idea what you're talking about. And would it matter? Huh? Would it change anything?

AMY

You have no idea just how much I know what I'm talking about.

(beat)

It isn't fair and you know it. I should have been allowed to make the choice for myself.

WILLIAM

The choice to what? Love me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

AMY
(whispered)
Maybe.

He looks at her, silent, eyes blazing with anger. Amy takes several DEEP BREATHS.

AMY (CONT'D)
It's not fair, William. And you know
it.

She turns, walking away.

William lets out a guttural CRY. He SLAMS the mirror closed, causing a jagged fissure to run diagonally across it.

INT. BRADSHAW LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Amy is sprawled out across a couch, a thin blanket covering her. She closes her eyes, pretending to sleep when William walks in.

His knuckles are wrapped in a white bandage. He sits down on the coffee table in front of her.

AMY
(without opening her eyes)
Go away William.

William studies her face for a long moment. He EXHALES, frowning.

WILLIAM
The first time was when I was twenty.
After a night of heavy drinking.

Amy opens her eyes, looking at him in confusion.

AMY
What?

WILLIAM
In the beginning it was a couple of
whispers only I could hear. But I knew
what it meant. I just couldn't bring
myself to-

He shakes his head. Closes his eyes. Amy sits up, reaching a hand forward before letting it awkwardly drop.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

So it got worse. Laughter. Maniacal laughter in my ear at night when I tried to sleep. I swear sometimes it was like it was in my head. Like- like fucking taking over the voice of my conscious or something.

AMY

William, honey, you don't have to-

WILLIAM

I didn't start seeing shit right away. It was just the voices. But the more I drank the worse it got. I started seeing-

He wipes his hands down his face, BREATHING labored.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Fucking shadows. Running everywhere I looked. And I drank to deal with it because how the fuck else does one deal with progressively losing their mind?

Amy blinks away tears. Fidgets. Squeezes his knee.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

I guess I ended up in a hospital somehow. They told me I tried to jump...

His VOICE trails off. He gets up and starts pacing.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Fuck. How could I... I've never even thought of-

He shakes his head, slowly back and forth in astonishment. A beat.

He walks back over to the table in front of Amy and ungracefully plops down.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

They said the drinking expedited it. The hallucinations. That it might have always happened but I set it into motion. So... there you go. I should have told you. I know but-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Amy climbs into his lap.

AMY

I just wish we didn't have to get to
rock bottom before you opened up to
me.

William SIGHS.

WILLIAM

I know.

AMY

I love you. I do. But sometimes it's
too much. I don't know how much more-

WILLIAM

I- fuck, Amy.

He exhales angrily.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

What can I do?

AMY

Are you seeing someone?

WILLIAM

Like a... shrink? No.

Amy pauses, biting her lip.

AMY

I think maybe you should.

WILLIAM

Hell no. No. Not happening.

AMY

Well how do you get those pills? Don't
you talk to someone to get more?

William SIGHS.

WILLIAM

I go to a psychiatrist once a month.
Tell him my symptoms and he makes
adjustments to the dosage. Then I
leave. Just like that. Like placing an
order at a drive-thru. I'm just
another customer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Amy frowns, wrapping her arms around his neck.

AMY

It all sounds so clinical.

She shakes her head.

AMY (CONT'D)

Well, alright. I'm not making any ultimatums yet. But I'd feel better if you go talked to someone, okay?

William nods, pressing their foreheads together. Amy closes her eyes.

AMY (CONT'D)

(whispered)

You never healed right after she died.

WILLIAM

Yeah? Well neither did you.

Amy freezes. A haunted look enters her eyes. William tucks a strand of hair behind her ear.

CUT TO:

INT. DARK ROOM (DREAM)

Darkness. Shallow, labored BREATHING that slowly gets LOUDER and LOUDER.

The SOUND of struggling. GRUNTS and SIGHS. Metal CLINKING against metal, SQUEAKING and RATTLING. A frustrated GROWL.

WILLIAM

Hello?

Silence. The darkness separates, spitting out a tall shadow figure.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

(whispered)

What the fuck?

More SOUNDS of William struggling. The metal CLINKING grows louder, more frenzied. The shadow walks closer.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Who are you? HELLO?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

William GROANS, the RATTLING becomes desperate. William lets out a STRANGLED SCREAM. The shadow LAUGHS. It is dainty and feminine and somehow all the more sinister.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Don't touch me!

Suddenly, a long, wooden match is STRUCK. A WOMAN, early 30s with long, knotted and tangled black hair, sits on top of William, who is chained to a bed's metal headboard bars. The match barely illuminates William's terrified face and her wide, curious eyes.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

(whispered)

Wh-who are you?

She leans forward until their lips are only a hairsbreadth apart. William's eyes widen in fear.

The woman runs the tip of her finger slowly down his face. They stare at each other, William frozen. A beat.

The woman's lips part. Black bile pours out from between them and is spewed across William's face. He bucks his body, trying to knock the woman off of him. In his haste, the match falls out of her grasp.

A moment of eerie silence, broken by a jagged SCREAM from William.

END DREAM

CUT TO:

INT. BRADSHAW MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

William is lying on his back in his bed, out of breath. He blinks, slowly, very slowly, turning his head. The woman is lying next to him, staring at him with her wide eyes. She reaches out a trembling hand toward him.

He flies off the bed, quickly walking backwards until he hits a wall.

WILLIAM

(desperate)

Get the FUCK AWAY FROM ME! Amy? AMY!
Where are you?

The woman walks forward, eyebrows drawn.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WOMAN

I am Amy, baby.

William LAUGHS hysterically.

WILLIAM

No the fuck you're not.

She comes closer.

WOMAN

Yes I am. You're scaring me.

She tugs at her hair in frustration.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Fuck. Maybe, I dunno. Close your eyes.
Listen to the sound of my voice.

He looks at her skeptically before squeezing his eyes closed. She reaches out a shaky hand, rubbing circles on his back. He flinches but doesn't move away.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

You're okay. It's me. I'm here,
William. I'm right here. I'm not going
anywhere. You're safe. You hear me?
You're safe.

As she talks, her voice and appearance slowly morph back into Amy. William opens his eyes. He takes in Amy kneeling before him, face red and blotchy, knees trembling.

William wraps his arms around her. His shoulders start shaking as he CRIES into her hair.

Amy holds him, face peeking over his shoulder. Her eyes are bloodshot and resigned.

INT. BRADSHAW KITCHEN - DAY

William and Amy sit at their kitchen table. Amy gazes down at the newspaper spread out in front of her. William watches her, sipping from his mug.

WILLIAM

Anything good in current events?

Amy ignores him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Sports? I forget who's going to the
World Series this year.

Amy flips the page. A beat.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
The weather sure is-

Amy SIGHS, closing the paper.

AMY
I don't want to make small talk with
you, William.

WILLIAM
Okay.
(beat)
Look, I know you're mad-

Amy LAUGHS, loud and uncontrollable.

AMY
My, how the tables have turned.

WILLIAM
What?

AMY
(in a low, mocking voice)
Mad doesn't even begin to describe how
I feel, William.

William pushes back his chair. It LOUDLY scrapes across the
kitchen tiles.

WILLIAM
Real mature, Aim.

He gets up and walks across the room to the coffee pot
sitting on the kitchen island.

AMY
What? Can't handle having your own
words thrown back at you?

William turns around abruptly, facing her. His coffee sloshes
out of his mug, spilling onto the floor.

WILLIAM
You want a divorce? Is that it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

A beat. They stare at each other in tense silence.

AMY

I don't know, William.

WILLIAM

"I don't know" isn't a fucking answer, Amy.

A beat. The stare-off continues.

AMY

I love you-

WILLIAM

Oh, I'm really feeling the love. Let me tell you.

AMY

Shut up. Just- just let me fucking speak. Okay?

William closes his mouth. A beat. He nods.

AMY (CONT'D)

When I close my eyes and envision the future, you're all I can see. You and- and our children in this house. You and I - us - living and growing old and falling more and more in love.

He smiles wide. Victorious.

AMY (CONT'D)

But-

Amy SWALLOWS. William's smile fades.

AMY (CONT'D)

But in this imaginary future, you're smiling. You're happy and healthy and here, William. Here. You're not *here* right now. Not really.

WILLIAM

I don't understand-

AMY

If you're serious about this, about us-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

WILLIAM

Fuck, Amy, of course I am-

She gives him a warning glance that stops him mid-sentence.

AMY

If you're serious, then I need you to get help.

WILLIAM

I am getting help. The medication-

AMY

Clearly isn't working.

WILLIAM

These things take time-

Amy gets up. She walks over to a notebook and starts angrily FLIPPING through it.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Uh, what are you doing?

She stops flipping. She takes a deep breath and RIPS the page out. She walks over to William and slaps it down in front of him. He looks down at it, frowning.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Dr. Dawgen? Who's- no. No, Amy.

AMY

She's good. Trust me. Cynthia recommended her.

WILLIAM

Yeah and look at Cynthia. She's fucking batshit-

AMY

Hey! She's doing a lot better now. And it's because of her sessions with Dr. Dawgen.

William shakes his head.

WILLIAM

Amy-

AMY

Look. Give it a try. That's all I'm
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

AMY (CONT'D)
asking for.

WILLIAM
I'll think about it.

AMY
William-

He holds up a hand.

WILLIAM
I said I'll think about it, Amy.

Amy tugs at her hair. A beat. She shakes her head.

AMY
Okay, William. You go ahead and think
about it. And when you're done
thinking, maybe then you'll finally
see how everything is burning down
around you.

She walks out of the room. William looks down at the piece of paper in front of him, tracing his fingers across Dr. Dawgen's number.

INT. BRADSHAW LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

William sits on a couch, remote in hand. He mindlessly flips through the channels. The television casts an eerie light throughout the dark room.

The blur of NOISES emanating from the television are a stark contrast to the silence of the house.

William's eyes begin to lower. Suddenly, a feminine SCREAM comes from the television. William jumps. He shakes his shoulders, changing the channel.

A few moments pass. William's eyes shut. They flutter open only to close again.

INT. LIVING ROOM (DREAM)

William stands, looking down at his sleeping figure. He lifts a hand and pinches his arm.

WILLIAM
Ow. Fuck. Wake up. Come on.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He doesn't wake up. The shadow figure emerges from the darkness, pushing William onto his knees. William winces.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
(desperate)
What the fuck, man? What do you want
from me?

The man knocks William forward. He face plants onto the floor. The man lifts William's feet and starts dragging him backward.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Whoa! Hey. Stop! STOP!

William tries to dig his fingernails into the wooden floorboards but they break and snap, leaving a bloody trail in their wake. He grabs onto walls and furniture, SCREAMING and YELLING but the man twists and turns Williams body away from each obstacle.

INT. BASEMENT (DREAM)

A large staircase leads down into a dark room. The man lifts William's body up and tosses him down the stairs.

William tries to get up but the man lifts a foot and steps on him. William lets out a strangled GASP.

WILLIAM
Stop. Please!

The man grabs William's foot, twisting it. He drags William's body over to a shallow grave, depositing William into it.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
What are you doing? Stop!

Dirt is piled onto William. He is paralyzed. His body violently twitches once, twice, before ceasing movement completely. Dirt fills his mouth before covering the entirety of his face.

Darkness reigns. We hear the sound of a shovel being DUG into hard packed dirt followed by the delicate laughter of a child.

MAN (O.S.)
I didn't mean for it to happen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LITTLE GIRL 1 (O.S.)
Yes you did. But I forgive you, daddy.

LITTLE GIRL 2 (O.S.)
I don't. You'll burn in hell for what
you did.

MAN (O.S.)
(strained)
Shut up.

WOMAN (O.S.)
Hell would be a reward for a man like
him, Dahlia. No. He'll suffer in other
ways, angel. Don't you worry.

MAN (O.S.)
SHUT UP!

The man's voice echoes, on and on until-

END DREAM

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

William opens his eyes. He is sprawled across the couch,
motionless. Distantly, the sound of a child's LAUGHTER is
heard. William WHIMPERS.

Slowly, William sits up. In the almost darkness, the shadow
man takes two steps forward. A beat. William blinks and the
man disappears.

A few moments pass. He stares at the spot the man once was.
William releases a short LAUGH before wiping his hands down
his face.

Dirt is wedged beneath his fingernails.

EXT. STREET CURB - PRESENT DAY

WILLIAM stands on a street corner, staring off into the
distance. His sunken eyes make him appear older than he is.

From this distance, he blends into the bustling CROWD,
appearing almost normal.

We ZOOM IN on his face. His mouth is agape. He takes deep,
even breaths.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

It is his eyes that are the most revealing. Red rimmed with pale blue irises. They are hauntingly tormented and dazed as he stares off into the distance, focused on nothing.

He wears the look of one who has seen the darkness and didn't make it out unscathed.

His haunted eyes look up at the building in front of him, taking a deep breath before finally stepping forward.

INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

A small, bright pink room. Chairs are scattered around. In one corner is an empty fish tank. In another, a water cooler. There are two doors, one orange, one blue.

The room is empty save for William, who sits in a chair, leaning forward. A magazine is spread open on his lap. He stares at the orange door for several moments, frowning and fidgeting uncomfortably.

Without warning, the orange door is FLUNG open. An older MAN, 50s, wearing business attire, comes running out, HYSTERICALLY CRYING. He doesn't look at William as he quickly opens the blue door and hastily exits. His SOBS follow him down the hallway.

When William turns to look back at the orange door, he JUMPS. DR. DAWGEN, 60s, unconventional, is standing barefoot. She rubs her chin, nodding at William.

DR. DAWGEN

Roger. Long time no see.

William CLEARS HIS THROAT, smiling uncomfortably.

WILLIAM

I'm sorry. Uh... my name is William.
This is our first session.

Dr. Dawgen stares at William. A beat.

DR. DAWGEN

Are you sure? Because I swear I-

WILLIAM

No, believe me. We've never met.

Dr. Dawgen nods, gesturing into the room hidden behind the orange door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DR. DAWGEN

Ah. Well. Come in, come in. Let's get this party started.

She walks into the room, leaving William staring in confusion after her.

INT. DR. DAWGEN'S OFFICE - DAY

William sits on a beige couch, staring around the room with an expression that is half awestruck, half horrified. It is stark white with black paint splattered on the walls. The decorations are minimal with a dying plant seated next to the beige couches that face each other.

Dr. Dawgen sits, smiling at William. She takes out her glasses and carefully puts them on.

DR. DAWGEN

Pretty neat, huh? I was a fine arts major in college before I switched to psychology.

WILLIAM

Yeah it's... definitely different from other therapist offices I've been in.

DR. DAWGEN

Ah. So this isn't your first rodeo, then?

William shakes his head. Dr. Dawgen pulls out a yellow legal pad and a pen, quickly jotting down notes. She glances up.

DR. DAWGEN (CONT'D)

I guess we should start with the basics. You filled out that form I left in the waiting room?

William nods, pulling it out of his pocket. He unfolds it before handing it over. Dr. Dawgen tosses it next to her without a glance.

DR. DAWGEN (CONT'D)

So I like to start out each new patient with a round of questions to get to know them better.

WILLIAM

You don't want to hear about my... issues?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DR. DAWGEN

Not yet. We likely won't even get to them this session. Anywho, if you were an animal, which one would you be?

WILLIAM

Oh. Uh...

William hesitates, thinking it over. Dr. Dawgen scribbles furiously on her notepad.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

I think maybe a wolf?

Dr. Dawgen nods, continuing to jot down notes. She looks up, adjusting her glasses.

DR. DAWGEN

Wolves are fiercely loyal and intuitive. They must trust their own instincts in order to survive. They thrive in packs, with an alpha pair leading each one.

(beat)

Perhaps you feel that your life lacks order and control. That there is an element of trust missing.

WILLIAM

I, uh, yeah. I guess. I mean, maybe? I don't really-

DR. DAWGEN

What's your favorite color?

WILLIAM

Gray-

DR. DAWGEN

That's not a color.

WILLIAM

I know but-

DR. DAWGEN

Pick. A. Color.

A beat. William stares at his hands.

WILLIAM

Green?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DR. DAWGEN

Why are you phrasing it as a question?
Do you not know your own favorite
color?

William SIGHS.

WILLIAM

No I- ugh. Green. It's green. My
favorite color is green.

DR. DAWGEN

Great.

More note taking. William frowns at her.

DR. DAWGEN (CONT'D)

How did your last relationship end? I
assume you're married from that ring
on your finger.

William's fingers spin the ring around self-consciously.

WILLIAM

Ah, well. Yes, I'm married. As for the
last relationship... I don't remember.
It was a long time ago.

She pauses her note taking, looking up. A beat.

DR. DAWGEN

Cop out.

WILLIAM

Excuse me?

Dr. Dawgen bites on the tip of her pen, studying William.

DR. DAWGEN

I'd bet money that your last
relationship is playing on a loop in
your head right now. What was her
name?

William sighs.

WILLIAM

Georgia.

(beat)

We dated for a decade. You know how it
goes. A deadly mixture of no longer

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

being in love paired with constant fighting. Couldn't stand each other by the end of it. I met Amy a few months after we split.

DR. DAWGEN

(nodding to herself)

So you didn't allow yourself very long to heal.

She goes back to taking notes. William frowns.

WILLIAM

No, I-

DR. DAWGEN

Ten years is a long time.

WILLIAM

Yes but-

DR. DAWGEN

And then to just jump right into another relationship-

William angrily runs his fingers through his hair.

WILLIAM

I didn't jump into any- look, I'm not here because of my relationships.

DR. DAWGEN

Fine. I'll take the bait. Why are you here, William?

WILLIAM

I'm pretty sure I've been having sleep paralysis. I, uh, looked it up. On Google? Anyway, I've been having nightmares. And I wake up not being able to move. And I see shit. Ah, sorry. Stuff.

Dr. Dawgen smiles.

DR. DAWGEN

What kind of shit do you see, William?

A beat. William DEEPLY inhales and exhales.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

WILLIAM

Started off as a man. Then it was a little girl and now I'm seeing a woman.

DR. DAWGEN

(nodding and writing)

And what does the woman say to you?

WILLIAM

The woman? Oh. She's only ever said something about suffering. But I don't think it was-

DR. DAWGEN

Could this woman be Georgia, William?

WILLIAM

Georgia? How could she be Georgia?

Dr. Dawgen stretches out one leg, then the other, flexing her bare feet. She shifts her shoulders then raises her arms above her head.

DR. DAWGEN

Perhaps your mind is creating this visual of a woman because of your unresolved issues with your ex.

WILLIAM

This woman is only one of many hallucinations, though-

DR. DAWGEN

Still. Perhaps you should-

WILLIAM

(forcefully)

I don't think that's the issue here, doc.

Dr. Dawgen takes her glasses off, setting them on her head.

DR. DAWGEN

Oh, excuse me. I didn't know you were the professional.

(beat)

What's your astrological sign?

WILLIAM

Cancer...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

DR. DAWGEN

Ah.

WILLIAM

What does that have to do with...

Dr. Dawgen writes in silence for a few moments before glancing at the clock.

DR. DAWGEN

That's all the time we have for today's session. I'll see you next week.

She glances at her notes.

DR. DAWGEN (CONT'D)

Does this day and time work for you?

WILLIAM

We're already out of time?

DR. DAWGEN

(without looking up from her notebook)

Yes. Go ahead and send the next patient in, okay?

William shakes his head, standing up.

WILLIAM

Yeah, uh. Okay. See you next week.

INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

William steps out from within the orange room. Sitting in the waiting room is a MOTHER, 40s, and a TEENAGE GIRL, dressed in all black. The teenage girl looks at the orange door in trepidation.

TEENAGE GIRL

(terrified)

Please don't make me go in there, Mom. Please.

The mother pats the teenage girl's hand.

MOTHER

If you'd stop engaging in certain behaviors you wouldn't have to see her, sweetie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TEENAGE GIRL
(screaming)
YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE!

The room is silent. William edges closer to the blue door.
Dr. Dawgen appears at the threshold of the orange door.

MOTHER
Dr. Dawgen is a master in her craft-

The teenage girl CHUCKLES maniacally.

TEENAGE GIRL
If she's a master, I'd like to see a-

DR. DAWGEN
Come on in, Rebecca.

TEENAGE GIRL
IT'S RUBY!

William opens the blue door and walks out without a backward glance.

INT. BRADSHAW KITCHEN - NIGHT

Amy sits at the kitchen table, pushing food around her plate.
She SIGHS. Across from her is an untouched plate of food.

Without warning, the door SLAMS open. A frustrated William walks in.

AMY
Everything... okay?

William takes a seat, lying his head down on the table.

Silence.

AMY (CONT'D)
How was work?

A beat.

WILLIAM
Took the day off.

AMY
You... what?
(beat)
William, we have bills to pay-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILLIAM

It was for a good-

Amy sets down her fork.

AMY

You know what? I don't care.

She takes a deep, cleansing breath.

AMY (CONT'D)

You can't just keep doing whatever the fuck you want. You have people other than yourself to-

William SLAMS his hand down on the table. Amy JUMPS.

WILLIAM

Can I speak?

Amy hesitates before nodding.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

I... saw Dr. Dawgen today.

A beat. Amy's smile, small at first, grows as his words sink in.

AMY

Really? That's good, William. I know it must have been hard, but trust me, you-

WILLIAM

I'm not going back.

Her smile fades.

AMY

What do you mean you "aren't going back?"

William scratches his face.

WILLIAM

I just don't think I know how to give a more precise definition of "not going back" other than to repeat it again. So. I'm not going back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

AMY

This isn't a joke, William.

WILLIAM

I know it isn't a joke, Amy.

They stare at each other in heavy silence. A beat.

AMY

I don't think you should jump to such drastic conclusions after only one session.

WILLIAM

You weren't there! The woman was incompetent!

AMY

How so?

William looks down at the empty plate in front of him for several tense moments. He looks up at Amy with a frown.

WILLIAM

She asked me what my spirit animal is.

AMY

Did she use the term "spirit animal?"

WILLIAM

(mumbled)

Might as well have.

AMY

Okaaaaay... what else?

A beat. William pinches his nose.

WILLIAM

And my favorite color.

AMY

Well, I'm sure that's telling-

WILLIAM

And my fucking astrological sign, Amy. What, exactly, does that tell? That I was conceived and born nine months later on a random month out of twelve possible-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

William's chest heaves. Amy smiles at him reassuringly.

AMY

Well, you're right about one thing.
It's honestly less about the month you
were born and more about your houses-

She is cut off by William's glare.

WILLIAM

My houses? Come on, Amy. I didn't
figure you'd be into that shit.

AMY

I had a roommate in college who- never
mind. The point is that this was the
first session and she probably just
wanted to get to know you.

William SIGHS.

WILLIAM

I don't know, Aim.

AMY

Give it one more shot. Please? For me.
And if it doesn't work out, we can try
to find you someone-

WILLIAM

She made me talk about Georgia.

Amy's fork CLATTERS onto her plate. She FREEZES.

AMY

Wh-what did she ask about her?

William, oblivious to Amy's shift in mood, stands, walking
over to the food spread out on the island and loading up his
plate.

WILLIAM

She just asked how my last
relationship ended. You know... the
usual housekeeping stuff.

Amy nods, staring intently at the wedding band she spins
around her finger.

AMY

And what did you say?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

WILLIAM

I told her the truth. We dated for
close to a decade and she...

Amy AUDIBLY SWALLOWS, staring blankly ahead.

AMY

Died. She died.

William walks back over to the table, sliding back into his
seat.

WILLIAM

She didn't just die, Aim. She took her
life because of me. Because of our
engagement. And I have to live with
that every day.

Amy squeezes her eyes closed, nodding.

AMY

I know.

(whispered, unheard by William)

Trust me, I know.

A tear slides free, streaming down her face. Or is it just a
reflection of light?

She ABRUPTLY stands, sliding back her chair with a LOUD
CREAK. Walking over to the trash, she clears her plate.

AMY (CONT'D)

Maybe talking about her will be a good
thing for you.

WILLIAM

(laughing cynically)

Yeah. Maybe.

(hushed)

The anniversary is coming up.

AMY

(tense)

I know.

Amy walks over to him. She leans up and cups his cheek. A
beat.

AMY (CONT'D)

One more session. Please?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

WILLIAM

(depleted)

Don't even get me started on how we
didn't even talk about the nightmares.

AMY

(tired)

William.

WILLIAM

Fine, Amy. I'll go to one more
session. But that's it.

Amy smiles at him, but it doesn't reach her eyes.

INT. DARK BEDROOM - NIGHT (DREAM)

Darkness. LOUD COUGHING. A beat. MUFFLED THROAT CLEARING
followed by several DEEP, GASPING BREATHS. The sounds are
loud and unforgiving.

Suddenly, light floods the space. It is disorienting at first
but gradually becomes muted, revealing a stark white, empty
room. William lies on his back, clutching his throat. He
stares up at the ceiling, chest rising and falling rapidly.

He hesitates before sitting up. Across from him is the woman
from his nightmares. She smiles sweetly at him, revealing a
row of missing teeth. Blood wells up in the gums.

They stare at each other in silence.

WOMAN

William.

WILLIAM

Who... who are you?

She pauses, offended.

WOMAN

You really don't remember?

WILLIAM

I mean, I remember you from the dream
if that's what you're asking-

WOMAN

Is that all you remember?

William nods.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILLIAM

I'm sorry.

She darts forward, crawling, closing the distance between them. She stops before their bodies touch.

WOMAN

You should be.

William eyes the woman warily.

WILLIAM

I've offended you.

WOMAN

(tiredly)

Of course you have.

WILLIAM

Will you ever tell me who you are?

WOMAN

What fun would that be?

A beat. He stares at her, eyebrows drawn.

WILLIAM

You look so... familiar.

WOMAN

Now there's a start.

WILLIAM

I don't understand.

WOMAN

You won't. Not yet. Maybe not ever.

WILLIAM

Can you at least tell me why I'm here?

She smiles, once again showing off her missing teeth. Reaching behind her, she grabs a length of rope and extends it out to William. He stares down at it with a frown.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

What is-

WOMAN

Join me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

WILLIAM
Join you where?

WOMAN
You asked why you're here.

WILLIAM
But what does that have to-

WOMAN
(screaming)
JOIN ME! JOIN ME! JOIN ME!

William shuffles his body away from her. The woman follows, crawling on her knees with the rope still extended.

WOMAN (CONT'D)
BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE! JOIN-

Her body is jerked backward. She SCREAMS. Shadows quickly crawl up the walls, eating away the white.

MAN (O.S.)
I told you to stay away from-

WOMAN
TEN!

She SCREAMS again, louder, but it is quickly cut off. A beat before the shadows completely engulf the white.

END DREAM

INT. BRADSHAW MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

William opens his eyes, unmoving. Next to him, Amy is awake, flipping through a book. They silently stare at each other.

AMY
You screamed.

William tries to nod.

AMY (CONT'D)
Was it a nightmare?

Slowly, William unfurls himself and sits up. He stretches, GROANING.

WILLIAM
I don't even know anymore, Aim.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

(beat)
I didn't get hurt so I guess that's a plus.

She stares at the BRUISES starting to form on his neck.

AMY
Yeah. At least there's that.

WILLIAM
What are you reading?

AMY
One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest.

William glares at her.

WILLIAM
Real funny, Amy.

AMY
I'm not even joking.

She shifts the book, showing him the cover. His glare intensifies. A beat.

AMY (CONT'D)
So what was your dream about?

WILLIAM
Do you honestly think I'm gonna tell you now?

Amy shrugs.

AMY
It was worth a shot. Hopefully you'll tell Dr. Dawgen next week.

WILLIAM
Oh, I'll be sure to. After the tarot reading but before we paint each other's nails.

Amy SNORTS. He smiles up at her.

EXT. BRADSHAW HOUSE - DAWN

William GROANS, dragging a garbage can to the front of his house. When he turns, Bobbi stands in front of him, wearing

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

black pajamas and heavy eyeliner. He JUMPS, SHOUTING.

WILLIAM

Fuck, Bobbi. Don't sneak up on me like that.

BOBBI

Sorry. It was a test.

WILLIAM

Did I pass it?

BOBBI

No.

WILLIAM

(sarcastic)

Great.

A beat. Bobbi stares at the bruises on his neck.

BOBBI

Mrs. Bradshaw must be into some kinky shit.

WILLIAM

Excuse me?

She points at his neck.

BOBBI

I wish my girlfriend would-

WILLIAM

Suddenly I feel the need to be literally anywhere else.

Bobbi grins.

BOBBI

How are the nightmares?

William stiffens, eyebrows raised as he appraises Bobbi.

BOBBI (CONT'D)

Must be getting pretty weird now, huh?
And personal.

Silence. William takes a step back, eyeing his front door.

She quickly grabs his arm, digging her nails in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BOBBI (CONT'D)

Don't listen to what they ask of you.
Promise me.

He yanks his arm away, rubbing it.

WILLIAM

What do you mean- and how do you know
so much? It's getting creepy.

BOBBI

(sarcastically)
Getting?
(beat)
William, I-

ETHEL (O.S.)

Roberta!

Bobbi looks over her shoulder, rolling her eyes.

BOBBI

I've gotta go. Sun's coming up.

William stares at her blankly.

WILLIAM

Is that a jok-

ETHEL (O.S.)

Roberta! Don't make me drag you in
here!

BOBBI

Coming, Ethel!

Bobbi turns to William, staring at him intently.

BOBBI (CONT'D)

Be careful, William.

She walks away.

ETHEL (O.S.)

YOUNG LADY YOU DID NOT JUST CALL ME
ETHEL. I SWEAR TO GOD, WHEN YOU GET IN
HERE-

BOBBI (O.S)

THE WHOLE NEIGHBORHOOD CAN HEAR YOU,
MA.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

ETHEL (O.S.)
 LIKE I REALLY CARE WHAT THE *BRADSHAW*
 THINK.

A door SLAMS offscreen. William rubs his neck.

INT. DR. DAWGEN'S OFFICE - DAY

William sits on the edge of the beige couch, leaning forward, glaring at Dr. Dawgen, who sits with her legs crossed on the couch across from him. Her pen and paper are discarded next to her.

The two are locked in a silent stare off, broken only by William's HEAVY SIGH.

WILLIAM
 How many times do I have to tell you
 I'm not here to talk about Georgia?

Dr. Dawgen nods, readjusting her glasses. She SIGHS.

DR. DAWGEN
 I understand that.

WILLIAM
 (hostile)
 Do you?

DR. DAWGEN
 I understand that you have no desire
 to discuss-

WILLIAM
 (loudly)
 Then why do you keep pressing it?

A beat. Dr. Dawgen straightens her shoulders, looking William directly in the eye.

DR. DAWGEN
 Fine. Let's talk about Amy, then. How
 did you two meet?

William sits back, smiling as he loses himself in his memories.

WILLIAM
 We met in a coffee shop. We were both
 regulars, saw each other almost every
 day but rarely ever spoke. I thought
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

she was beautiful. Like the dying light of summer. I wanted to bottle her up. I wanted to devour her.

He frowns deeply, digesting his thoughts.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

She was the first one to make me feel anything since I had broken things off with Georgia.

Dr. Dawgen takes off her glasses, staring intently at William.

DR. DAWGEN

How'd she die, William?

William stiffens. His hands clench into fists. His breathing stills. He remains like that for several tense moments.

DR. DAWGEN (CONT'D)

I've been doing this for so long now. Grief to me has an odor. A unique scent. I can taste it. Feel it. Touch it. And you're drowning in it.

Silence. The room is still. Neither move.

WILLIAM

(softly)

Sometimes I almost feel like... like if I don't think about it, it didn't happen.

Dr. Dawgen nods slowly.

DR. DAWGEN

That's no way to live. In fact, it's a surefire guarantee that when you are reminded of her passing, you won't have the necessary tools to properly handle it. You'll be stuck in a perpetual cycle of grief with no hope of healing.

William leans back, crossing his arms against his chest.

WILLIAM

Wow. That's the most professional thing you've ever said.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DR. DAWGEN

William.

WILLIAM

No, really. Are you feeling okay?

DR. DAWGEN

I-

WILLIAM

Because I almost thought - for a second there that you might have purchased that degree on one of those sketchy websites.

Dr. Dawgen smiles slightly.

DR. DAWGEN

It's okay if you don't want to tell me how she died. Perhaps I should just start guessing?

William frowns.

WILLIAM

That's not very-

DR. DAWGEN

Hmm. Let's start out with the obvious one, shall we? Suicide?

A beat. William drops his head back on his shoulders, eying the ceiling. He CRACKS HIS KNUCKLES.

WILLIAM

I found her hanging in the closet we used to share. She had these claw marks around her neck, as if she tried to...

He CLEARS his throat, breathing becoming erratic as he shakes his head.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Free herself? I don't know. And then her eyes and tongue... I still have nightmares about the way they were hanging out.

Dr. Dawgen SHARPLY INHALES. She smiles sadly in sympathy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Seems I've rendered you speechless,
doc.

DR. DAWGEN

I'm sorry, William.

William shakes his head as if trying to clear it.

WILLIAM

Yeah. Me too.

DR. DAWGEN

Was it before or after your current
relationship? Her passing?

William hesitates, once again spinning his wedding ring
around his finger.

WILLIAM

After. Shortly after.

DR. DAWGEN

Ah.

WILLIAM

What does that mean?

DR. DAWGEN

Nothing.

William straightens, glaring at Dr. Dawgen.

WILLIAM

Obviously you meant something by it.

(beat)

Do you think I-

DR. DAWGEN

I don't think you caused her to take
her life, no.

A beat. Dr. Dawgen CLEARS her throat.

DR. DAWGEN (CONT'D)

But I do think you blame yourself. You
carry around an unwarranted burden of
guilt-

William SIGHS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

WILLIAM

Is it unwarranted if she blames me
too?

Dr. Dawgen picks up her notepad and starts furiously jotting
down notes.

DR. DAWGEN

Does she talk to you, William?

William stiffens, eyeing Dr. Dawgen and her notepad.

WILLIAM

I'm not crazy.

DR. DAWGEN

I never said you were. And anyway, we
don't use that word in this office.

WILLIAM

I think she might be the woman I see
in my dreams.

Dr. Dawgen looks up from her notepad, shooting him a self-
satisfied smile.

DR. DAWGEN

Wonder what genius gave you that idea.
They truly must be-

William rolls his eyes.

WILLIAM

She doesn't look like Georgia in the
dreams. But the things she says...

DR. DAWGEN

Like?

WILLIAM

She pulled out a rope and told me to
join her.

Dr. Dawgen FREEZES, setting down her pen.

DR. DAWGEN

Are you thinking of killing yourself,
William?

WILLIAM

No! No. I-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

William INHALES deeply, drooping his shoulders.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

She just... that's how she ended up taking her life. There are certain moments where... I don't know. She feels like Georgia. Smells like her. If I close my eyes, her voice even sounds like her.

Dr. Dawgen nods, resuming her note taking.

DR. DAWGEN

And you said she blames you for her death?

William rubs his arms.

WILLIAM

It happened the night Aim and I announced our engagement.

(beat)

At first we thought it was just like any other time. This wasn't her first attempt. It happened so fucking often. But then the doctors didn't come out like they usually do. Relieved. Like the weight crushing their chest for hours had finally been removed. No. This time... they couldn't even look at us. And I knew.

(beat)

Amy took it harder than I did.

DR. DAWGEN

It isn't your fault, William.

WILLIAM

I know that. Logically, I know that. Sometimes it just feels like I didn't do enough. Death is so goddamn permanent.

Dr. Dawgen leans forward, handing him a box of tissues. He frowns, shaking his head.

DR. DAWGEN

I'm sure you did as much as you were able. The struggles of another person aren't anyone else's to bare.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

She rolls her shoulders, eying him.

DR. DAWGEN (CONT'D)
Were they close?

WILLIAM
Aim and Georgia?

Dr. Dawgen nods. William looks out the window.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
I think they met through me but sometimes... I don't know. Amy refuses to talk about it. Tells me they got close because she would visit Georgia in the hospital after each... you know.

(beat)
There were times where... there was this... familiarity about them. An intimacy almost? Like they had known each other for years.

DR. DAWGEN
I think their connection just made you uncomfortable.

WILLIAM
Yeah. Probably.
(beat)
Anyway, Amy doesn't talk about her. Shuts down completely even if the word Georgia is mentioned.

William CHUCKLES. Dr. Dawgen nods to herself.

DR. DAWGEN
I think I know what needs to be done.

WILLIAM
(confused yet hopeful)
You do?

DR. DAWGEN
I believe her spirit is haunting you, William.

William stiffens.

WILLIAM
You... what?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

DR. DAWGEN

Her soul isn't at rest. Her spirit has attached itself to you and if you don't do anything about it, you'll be in grave danger. Listen, I know a medium-

William LAUGHS hysterically, holding up his hand.

WILLIAM

I knew it was too good to be true. For a minute there, I was convinced you might actually be a real therapist.

DR. DAWGEN

I *am* an actual therapist. But I'm not foolish enough to believe there isn't a realm beyond our understanding that we don't have immediate access to.

William stands.

WILLIAM

This is ridiculous. Even for you.

Dr. Dawgen SIGHS.

DR. DAWGEN

It isn't. Think about it, okay? What other explanation could there be for everything that's happened to you?

William rubs his eyes.

WILLIAM

Sometimes I think you're the mentally ill one.

Dr. Dawgen's smile, when it comes, is more than a little unhinged.

DR. DAWGEN

I don't see why we can't both be.

WILLIAM

See you next week, Doc. I'll bring the sage. You bring the Ouija board and we'll conduct a full blown seance where we summon my dead ex from beyond the grave!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (9)

DR. DAWGEN

Well sage is more for cleansing
spirits away so maybe don't bring it
if you're trying to summon her?

William GROANS, storming away. Dr. Dawgen smiles at his retreating figure.

INT. BRADSHAW KITCHEN - NIGHT

William and Amy sit across from each other at their dining table, forks scraping against their plates. William leans forward, talking animatedly. Amy appears to be dazed, staring off into space.

WILLIAM

And then she was like... "her spirit
is haunting you."

AMY

(distracted yet stoic)
Maybe she is, hon.

William drops his fork. Amy pushes her food around her plate.

WILLIAM

Come on, Aim. You don't seriously
believe that after all these years
Georgia's finally decided now is the
time to torment me.

Amy reaches up, playing with her necklace.

AMY

I don't know what I believe, William.
But if you're so hung up on it, maybe
you should contact the medium.

WILLIAM

No way in-

Offscreen, a LOUD and persistent BANGING on the door.

Amy and William exchange a worried glance. William SIGHS.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

I'll get it.

INT. BRADSHAW LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

William pulls open the front door, revealing a frazzled

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Bobbi. She pushes past him, frantically running up the stairs.

BOBBI

I saw her!

WILLIAM

(calling after her)

Saw who? Bobbi?

Amy walks in, still dazed, wiping her hands on a dish towel. She takes in William standing next to the open door.

AMY

Who was it?

WILLIAM

Bobbi.

AMY

And she-

WILLIAM

Ran up the stairs.

AMY

Ah.

(beat)

Should we go check on her?

William SIGHS, slamming the door.

WILLIAM

I guess.

Amy CHUCKLES, slowly returning back to normal.

AMY

We're gonna make great parents.

William freezes.

WILLIAM

Wha-

Amy raises her eyebrows, appearing even more freaked out by her words than he is.

AMY

(laughing uncomfortably)

Oh I mean- you know. When the time

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

AMY (CONT'D)

comes.

(beat, whispered)

If the time comes.

William shakes his head, walking up the stairs.

INT. BRADSHAW MASTER BATHROOM - NIGHT

Bobbi is frantically searching the room. She looks behind the curtains, pulls open the closet, crawls on her knees to examine under the bed. Amy and William watch her tear apart their room from the doorway in silence.

Bobbi finally gives up, kneeling on the floor and looking around the room.

BOBBI

Come on! Where are you? You were just here. I haven't seen you in ages!

WILLIAM

Who was here, Bobbi?

Bobbi JUMPS, clutching a hand to her chest.

BOBBI

Fuck! You scared me.

WILLIAM

Who. Was. Here?

Bobbi slowly rises to her feet.

BOBBI

I'm sorry. In retrospect I probably shouldn't have come. But I haven't seen her in so long and there she was! Just standing in the window. Right over there!

She turns, pointing at a nearby window.

WILLIAM

(loud)

Who the fuck are you seeing?

AMY

William-

William holds up a hand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILLIAM

(growing slightly unhinged)

No, Amy. I'm fucking tired of her always knowing something I don't about my own damn house. So you're going to explain yourself, Bobbi. Once and for all.

He crosses his arms against his chest.

BOBBI

I know just as much as you do-

WILLIAM

Bullshit!

Bobbi looks to Amy, eyes wide and pleading. Amy SIGHS.

AMY

William, while Bobbi does know a terrifying amount of information about the house and your issues, I don't think cornering her in our room is the way to solve anything.

WILLIAM

(hysterical)

You're not the one losing your mind. She knows something that could help me! I know she does.

William walks forward, grabbing Bobbi's arm.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Tell me! What do you know!

AMY

William!

Bobbi tugs on her secured arm, trying to break free.

BOBBI

You're scaring me!

WILLIAM

Good! You've been scaring me for months!

AMY

William! STOP!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

William leans forward, getting in Bobbi's face. Amy shoves him, trying to free Bobbi but failing.

His eyes are wide and bloodshot as he leans toward Bobbi. She tries to recoil but is still held firmly in his grasp.

WILLIAM

(yelling)

Who is she? What does she want?

Bobbi twists her arm, breaking it free. She runs out of the room CRYING HYSTERICALLY.

Amy looks at William for a beat in disgust before running after Bobbi.

William stands in the center of the room, alone and unmoving.

INT. BRADSHAW LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

William sits on the couch, mindlessly flipping through channels. A beat. He tosses the remote next to him with a GROAN, reclining backwards.

Amy storms in without warning, furious.

AMY

I just spent three hours at the Sorentos trying to convince Ethel not to press charges against you for fracturing her daughter's arm.

William remains motionless on the couch. He doesn't acknowledge Amy's words.

AMY (CONT'D)

What the fuck has gotten into you, William?

WILLIAM

(almost robotically)

She knows something, Amy. You know she does.

AMY

So what if she does? You can't force it out of her, William. She's just a kid!

William turns his head from the television, eyeing Amy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILLIAM

She knows, Aim. She has from the very beginning. And I'm gonna find out. I need to.

A beat. Amy INHALES sharply.

AMY

You're fucking unhinged, William. You sound crazy-

WILLIAM

Dr. Dawegen says we shouldn't-

AMY

(screaming)

I DON'T GIVE A FUCK WHAT DR. DAWGEN SAYS.

William flinches. Amy's VOICE echoes on and on until there is only silence. It is stifling and tangible and consuming.

AMY (CONT'D)

I don't know how to help you, William. I really fucking don't.

WILLIAM

I don't need help, Amy. I need Bobbi to stop fucking around with my mind!

Amy drops down next to William, SIGHING.

AMY

(tired)

Bobbi is the least of your problems. You're sick, William. You need help.

Behind Amy, several shadows slowly emerge from the dark corners of the room. They creep closer as the fight progresses.

William shakes his head.

WILLIAM

I'm getting help-

AMY

Are you? Because you've only gotten worse since you've been in therapy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

WILLIAM

That isn't fair-

AMY

Watching another downward spiral isn't
fucking fair.

WILLIAM

You haven't seen the other ones-

AMY

Yeah. I haven't seen *your* other ones.

William reaches for Amy.

WILLIAM

Aim-

She stands, avoiding his hold.

AMY

You are going to do whatever the fuck
Dr. Dawgen says you need to do,
William. You will complete every step
or so help me God I will serve you
with divorce papers. I mean it this
time.

WILLIAM

I just feel like that's a little-

AMY

Or we can skip the steps and go
straight to the divorce. Up to you.

WILLIAM

I can't help the way my mind is, Aim.
It isn't right to treat me this way.

AMY

You're sick and denying yourself help.
I refuse to lose another person I love-

William GROANS, frustrated.

WILLIAM

What are you talking about? Who else
have you-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

AMY

It doesn't matter, William. Just answer me.

A beat. William watches as the shadows edge closer, mere feet away from where Amy stands in front of him. He closes his eyes.

WILLIAM

I'll do the steps.

AMY

And you'll apologize to Bobbi. With Ethel's supervision.

She turns and leaves before he has the chance to respond.

WILLIAM

(mumbled)

Great.

He sits and watches as the shadows catch up to him.

INT. DARK ROOM (DREAM)

Darkness. Several beats of silence followed by HEAVY BREATHING.

WILLIAM

(resigned)

I know who you are now.

Dainty, feminine LAUGHTER.

WOMAN

Took you long enough.

A BLINDING LIGHT illuminates the room. William is chained to a wall. The woman kneels in front of him, hair matted, bruises shaped like fingertips dotting her throat and arms.

WILLIAM

What do you get out of torturing me?
You were never like this when we were together.

The woman CHUCKLES.

WOMAN

There's something satisfying about watching you suffer. The same way you
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WOMAN (CONT'D)
made me suffer.

William tugs at his chained wrists.

WILLIAM
I didn't make you suffer, G. I moved
on. Like I hoped you would.

WOMAN
There was no moving on for me,
William.

She quickly rises up, grasping his throat in her hand.

WOMAN (CONT'D)
We were made for each other.

William COUGHS, shaking his head.

WILLIAM
No... we-

She tightens the pressure on his throat and SLAMS his head
against the wall.

WOMAN
We were! And now it's time for us to
be together again.

She releases his throat and stands up, pressing her lips to
his. He turns his head, trying to break the contact but she
bites down on his lip, hard. She licks away the blood that
wells up.

WOMAN (CONT'D)
(whispered)
You're gonna join me, William. I won't
rest until you do.

WILLIAM
I will never join you, Georgia. I
refuse to endure such an eternal hell.

The woman pulls away, smiling tightly.

WOMAN
I was kind enough to offer you a
choice before, William. I won't be so
kind again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

She walks over to a drawer and begins rummaging around in it.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

(while searching)

I don't understand it, truly. Never did. What she has that I don't.

WILLIAM

Stability, for one.

The woman looks at him with a glare.

WOMAN

I suppose we all want what we ourselves lack.

WILLIAM

Ouch.

(beat)

Tormenting me does nothing but prolong your suffering, Georgia. You deserve to be at peace.

Beat. Georgia nods slowly.

WOMAN

And you deserve to DIE.

She charges forward, length of rope clenched in her hand.

Right before she reaches William, the door opens and shadows spill in. They part, allowing the shadow man to enter. Georgia freezes.

MAN

I told you to stay away from him, my dear. He's mine.

WOMAN

I'm not your fucking dear.

The shadow man LAUGHS.

MAN

You're whatever the fuck I say you are.

He grabs the rope out of her hands, nodding at William.

MAN (CONT'D)

You want him to die?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

The woman nods, frowning at William.

WILLIAM

Don't do this, Georgia.

The shadow man walks forward, slipping the rope around William's neck. William freezes, paralyzed. The man pulls the rope tighter and tighter until-

(END DREAM)

INT. DR. DAWGEN'S OFFICE - DAY

William reclines on the couch, an arm thrown over his eyes.

WILLIAM

And after that I woke up screaming.

(beat)

I think I died.

Dr. Dawgen writes furiously on the paper.

DR. DAWGEN

You think you... died?

William nods, eyes still covered.

WILLIAM

Yeah. For a second, there was nothing. Just blackness. And then I was in my bed.

William removes his arm, staring vacantly up at the ceiling.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

It's getting worse. I don't know what to do.

DR. DAWGEN

I've told you what to do.

William turns, slowly looking over at Dr. Dawgen.

WILLIAM

I just don't think a medium is going to help anything.

DR. DAWGEN

What can it hurt? Your situation is only progressively getting worse.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

William SIGHS, long and loud. His gaze focuses on the window.

WILLIAM
(mumbled)
Fine.

DR. DAWGEN
What?

WILLIAM
Fine. I'll try the medium.

Dr. Dawgen smiles, victorious.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Don't get too excited. I don't have
much hope for it.

DR. DAWGEN
It'll be great. You'll see.

He looks over at her, eyebrows raised.

WILLIAM
Was that supposed to sound reassuring?

DR. DAWGEN
Yup. And I know just the person.

FADE ON DR. DAWGEN'S LAUGHTER

INT. BRADSHAW LIVING ROOM - DAY

Dr. Dawgen stands in the threshold of the house, shoe-less and wearing a cape. Her long grey hair is loose and wild, free from its usual bun. Wedged in the crook of her arm is a large basket.

William, who stands next to Amy, taking in the sight before him, SIGHS.

WILLIAM
I should have known you weren't a real
doctor.

Dr. Dawgen SCOFFS.

DR. DAWGEN
I'll have you know that I *am* a real
doctor. Licensed in '72, baby.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILLIAM

I just feel like the board might want
to review that decision?

Dr. Dawgen takes a step forward, shrewd eyes taking in every
inch of the room.

DR. DAWGEN

Hush. It's time.

WILLIAM

Time for....?

DR. DAWGEN

(whispered)

The cleansing.

She kneels down, setting the basket on the floor. She slowly
peels it open and begins unpacking it. In a neat row, she
takes out: several thick sticks of sage, a variety of
crystals, matches, a large leather-bound book, white candles,
a velvet pouch of salt, a long multi-colored feather, and an
aspergillum.

When the basket is empty, she stiffens, closing her eyes and
cocking her head.

DR. DAWGEN (CONT'D)

The darkness is stifling in here. I
could feel it as I turned down the
block. Beckoning me.

WILLIAM

(laughing)

Nice.

AMY

William! Take this seriously.

William closes his eyes, rubbing his neck.

WILLIAM

Sorry. What does that mean, doc?

Dr. Dawgen lets out a short, horrific CACKLE.

DR. DAWGEN

It means I have my work cut out for
me.

She rises slowly off the floor. As she does, the front door

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

is thrown open. Bobbi stands in the threshold, chest HEAVING, arm adorned in a cast.

WILLIAM

Bobbi? What the fu-

BOBBI

She's going to kill you!

William raises his eyebrows, slowly taking a step forward.

WILLIAM

Dr. Dawgen? She's just-

BOBBI

No! No, her. The woman! With the dark hair. She's going to kill you if you try to get rid of her.

William SIGHS.

WILLIAM

How do you know, Bobbi? And give me an honest answer for once. I'm sick of this shit.

Bobbi begins to SOB.

BOBBI

I just know. I can't explain it. She just speaks to me in here. They all do.

Bobbi rubs her fingers across the length of her chest.

WILLIAM

Oh great. So you're fucking c-

Dr. Dawgen steps forward, cutting William off.

DR. DAWGEN

You're gifted, my child.

Bobbi freezes.

BOBBI

Gifted? Oh I'm not-

DR. DAWGEN

Yes, child. You are. It takes a special seer to be able to communicate
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

DR. DAWGEN (CONT'D)
with the dead.

BOBBI
Listen, I'm not your fucking child-

DR. DAWGEN
She speaks to you, yes?

Bobbi nods cautiously. Dr. Dawgen looks around the room, lowering her voice.

DR. DAWGEN (CONT'D)
And the others do as well?
(at Bobbi's nod)
You're dangerous. A vessel. A bridge
between the world of the living and
the world of the dead. The power you
contain is immense.

The lights FLICKER. Dr. Dawgen eyes Bobbi.

DR. DAWGEN (CONT'D)
Come in, child. Let us continue. With
you here, we're bound to have an
encounter with the other side.

Bobbi enters.

MONTAGE

--Dr. Dawgen walks through the house, burning sage, billowing the smoke with a feather. She silently chants as Bobbi, William, and Amy look on in a mixture of confusion and terror.

--Dr. Dawgen walks around the perimeter of the basement, shaking her aspegillum and reading from her leather-bound book. She ignores the ground that slightly shakes. Bobbi, Amy, and William stand at the top of the stairs, each in varying stages of petrified.

--Dr. Dawgen sets her crystals on the windowsill in the kitchen. Bobbi reaches a hand forward to touch one of them but Dr. Dawgen grabs her wrist, digging her nails into the young girl's flesh and shaking her head.

END MONTAGE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

INT. BRADSHAW MASTER BATHROOM - DAY

Dr. Dawgen walks into the room, followed by William, Amy, and Bobbi. She lights the white candles, spreading them out and drawing a ring of salt around them.

DR. DAWGEN
Bobbi, come here.

Bobbi hesitates.

BOBBI
I, uh, I'm fine right here-

Dr. Dawgen glares at her. Bobbi SIGHS before slowly walking over.

DR. DAWGEN
Good. Now, when I ask, repeat what I say-

BOBBI
Why-

DR. DAWGEN
Now is not the time for questions, child.

Bobbi glares at her.

BOBBI
Whatever.

Dr. Dawgen opens the leather book and sets it out in front of them. She grabs both of Bobbi's hands.

William and Amy stand by the door, huddled together.

DR. DAWGEN
Spirits! This is not your home. It belongs to the Bradshaws now. It is time for you to move on.

The lights FLICKER, once, twice, before going out. The bed SHAKES. Bobbi SHRIEKS.

BOBBI
What the fuck!

DR. DAWGEN
Shut up! Repeat this: I order you to
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DR. DAWGEN (CONT'D)
leave now and find peace forevermore.

Bobbi GULPS.

BOBBI
I... order you to leave now and find
peace forevermore?

DR. DAWGEN
The land of the deceased welcomes you.

BOBBI
(whispered, awestruck)
The land of the deceased welcomes you.

DR. DAWGEN
I call upon the gods of this world and
the next to assist you on your
journey. You are no longer welcome
here. LEAVE. NOW.

The windows FLY OPEN. A LOUD AND PERSISTENT BANGING comes from the hallway. A woman WAILS. Everyone freezes before running out of the room.

INT. BRADSHAW HALLWAY - DAY

Bobbi, William, Amy, and Dr. Dawgen stand at the end of the hallway, staring on, mouths agape. We PAN DOWN the hallway, seeing what they do. Beams of sunlight streaming in through the window wage war with the shadows, trying to overwhelm them. The shadows swallow them whole and darkness reigns.

A beat. Bobbi SCREAMS. The shadows scatter and wither, leaving a blinding light in its place.

Silence. They look at each other in wonder.

WILLIAM
Jesus-

DR. DAWGEN
Did you feel that?

AMY
It was like-

Bobbi nods, eyes wide.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BOBBI
Like swallowing sunshine.

INT. BRADSHAW LIVING ROOM - DAY

The room is lighter now. Sunlight pours in through the open windows, bathing every corner of the room in warm light.

Dr. Dawgen packs her things as Bobbi stands over her.

BOBBI
That was so cool! I felt so powerful.

DR. DAWGEN
Yeah. You've got a real gift, kid.

BOBBI
But what do I do with it now that the ghosts are gone?

Dr. Dawgen pauses before rummaging around in her basket. She pulls out a white card with a number written on it.

DR. DAWGEN
Call me if you're serious about harvesting your raw, potential energy child.

Bobbi nods, staring at the card in wonder before walking away.

William and Amy enter, hand in hand. He walks up to Dr. Dawgen with a smile.

WILLIAM
So... it's over? Just like that?

Dr. Dawgen chuckles.

DR. DAWGEN
Yup. Just like that.

WILLIAM
I don't know how to thank you.

DR. DAWGEN
Don't. I haven't done a cleansing in years. Forgot how much I missed it.

She stands, grabbing the basket.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILLIAM

So. Monday? 2 pm?

Dr. Dawgen smiles, fondly patting William on the cheek before walking around him and leaving the house.

INT - DIM ROOM (DREAM)

Amy enters the room, walking over to a sink in the corner. She washes her face then straightens, staring at her reflection in the mirror. Slowly, the image in front of her morphs until Georgia stares back at her, smiling. Amy jerks back, eyes wide.

Georgia frowns, eyebrows drawn.

Amy takes another step back, crossing her arms.

Georgia's eyes flash in the mirror, becoming almost translucent. She lets out a single belt of unhinged LAUGHTER. Amy backs up further.

Georgia smiles, lifting a finger and pointing at a small, square television box in the corner of the room. It's ancient with knobs and dials and an antenna.

GEORGIA

If I'm forced to live with the memories, so are you.

The television screen comes to life.

INSERT: TELEVISION SCREEN

Georgia and Amy lay in bed together, naked, bodies intertwined. The sheets and blankets are tangled around their limbs.

Amy trails a path of kisses down Georgia's shoulder, smiling contentedly.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)

It's so hard.

AMY

Hmm?

GEORGIA

Not to hate you.

Amy sighs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

AMY

It's hard not to hate myself
sometimes, too.

GEORGIA

(laughing darkly)

I still think you're gonna choose me.

AMY

Baby-

Georgia turns, burying her face in Amy's neck.

GEORGIA

(muffled)

I don't know if I'm strong enough to
watch you love him.

Amy starts to CRY. She gently strokes the back of Georgia's
head.

Georgia looks up, kissing away Amy's tears. She smiles sadly,
cupping Amy's cheeks in both hands.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)

I love you. No matter what happens. I
always will. Even if you choose him.

Georgia trails her fingers down Amy's chest, stopping at her
heart and tapping it gently.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)

You'll always have my heart.

Amy presses her forehead against Georgia, eyes closed as she
SOBS.

END MEMORY

In the dream, the television SHUTS OFF. Amy turns to Georgia,
who stares at her, broken. A beat. Georgia begins to cry,
BREATHING LABORED. She lifts a finger covered in blood and
draws a heart on the mirror. Amy's tears flow freely from her
eyes.

MEMORY MONTAGE:

--Amy and Georgia in a college classroom, looking at each
other from across the room. They exchange a smile, coquettish
and coy, before looking away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

--Amy crying over Georgia's body on a hospital bed. Georgia opens her eyes, slowly lifting up her hand and stroking the other woman's hair.

--Georgia and Amy sitting across from each other at a candlelit dinner, leaning forward and exchanging a passionate kiss.

--Amy sobbing as Georgia holds her left hand, gaze angry and heartbroken as she zeros in on the ring adorning Amy's fourth finger.

END MONTAGE

GEORGIA (CONT'D)

Is forgetting still easier for you,
love?

Amy stares at Georgia, broken, sobbing uncontrollably.

AMY

(shaking her head)
I'm so s-

The mirror EXPLODES, the bloody heart BREAKING into pieces. Shards of glass propel outwards, piercing through Amy's chest.

END DREAM

CUT TO:

INT. BRADSHAW MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Amy wakes with a STRANGLED SCREAM. She flies upward, out of breath. Beside her, William sleeps peacefully.

She watches him, gently rubbing her chest.

INT. BRADSHAW KITCHEN - DAY

Amy comes into the kitchen, heading straight for the pot of coffee on the island. She raises up on tiptoe to reach for a mug in her cabinet.

Glancing over, she notices William looking at her with a smile.

AMY

Hey. How'd you sleep?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

William smiles brightly.

WILLIAM

Amazing. I haven't had a nightmare in weeks.

Amy turns, revealing just a hint of a deep scratch peaking above the neckline of her shirt. Dark circles stain underneath her eyes, stark against her sickly pallor.

She forces a smile.

AMY

That's great, baby. I'm so happy for you.

She turns, picking up the pot of coffee and pouring it into her mug.

THE END