

# **THE WOMAN**

screenplay by

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Based on their Novel

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MODERNCINÉ

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BLACKNESS...the sound of waves cresting and falling...

EXT. OCEAN SHORELINE - DAWN

IRIS SHOT...THE WOMAN walks along the beach, hand over a gaping KNIFE WOUND in her belly. She's badly hurt, but carries on, searching...

She kneels, picks through washed-up SEAWEED, smells some, discards it, smells another, seems satisfied. She gathers up more like it.

She looks up...directly at us...begins to walk towards us.

The IRIS pulls away as she nears...

WOMAN'S POV: The mouth of a SMALL CAVE.

She scents the air, pulls out a KNIFE.

Waves crest and fall, a soothing rhythm.

She moves towards the opening, knife ready, feet lifting and falling with each wave, masking the sound of her movement.

INT. SMALL CAVE - CONTINUOUS

She freezes just inside the opening, letting her eyes adjust to the darkness, breathing in unison with the waves.

WOMAN'S POV: Scanning the cave's interior which is barely illuminated by the FLICKERING LIGHT outside. The far corner is total BLACKNESS.

The Woman moves towards the black corner, still in unison with the waves, knife at ready, stealthy as a cat--

WHAM!!!!...A *HUGE WOLF* snaps out of the dark, teeth gnashing, demonic, ready to pounce.

Ready to eat.

The Woman freezes. Is she going to retreat?

No.

She leans forward with the sound of a wave, slow, eyes locked with the vicious WOLF and, as if answering a challenge,...

SHRIEKS RIGHT BACK...The animal pounces...so does The Woman...SLASHING forward with her knife...blade gleaming through blackness...the sound of FLESH TEARING...

INT. SMALL CAVE - A BIT LATER

The Woman sits in front of a small fire, SLICING a deep cut down the DEAD WOLF'S mid-section.

Title Card: **"The Woman"**

CREDITS ROLL OVER A SERIES OF GRUESOME SHOTS...

1) The Wolf's organs and intestines are removed, set in a pile.

2) The Woman's cold eyes as she dresses the animal down.

3) The Woman cuts long slits along the underside of the Wolf's legs.

4) Blood drips into the fire and sizzles next to the pile of intestines and organs. We see The Woman's injured stomach has been covered with a poultice made of seaweed.

5) Her muscles work as her hands dig under the slits in the Wolf's pelt. She tears and pulls. The skin starts to come free with a sickening sound.

6) The pelt is beneath The Woman's knees now, as she cuts meat off the carcass. She doesn't mind the stench of the dead animal -- The Woman is hungry. She holds a piece of meat over the fire with her blade.

7) ECU, meat sizzling, dripping, charring...

EXT. BACKYARD BARBECUE - DAY

Meat sizzles and chars on a giant gas grill at the center of a big FAMILY LAWN PARTY. Sunshine, lemonade, cannonballs. Children laugh and play around a big pool. Parents drink beer and shoot the shit.

Country living.

POOLSIDE...

We focus in on a pair of FLAWLESS FEMALE LEGS folded up inches away from the water. There's a big SPLASH and the legs are doused.

PEGGY CLEEK (16, soft, guarded, brunette) bats the water off her legs and scowls at a boy in the pool.

PEGGY  
Knock it off, Roger!

ROGER (14) hangs on the edge of the pool, head cocked in Peggy's direction. He's got a boner in his eyes.

ROGER  
Aw hell, Peg. Come on in! It's  
blazin' hot out there.

She is sweating. It's about 90 and she's wearing a hoodie over her one-piece.

PEGGY  
I'm fine.

She looks over to an OLDER MAN standing alone under a tree, smoking. He smiles at her. Roger follows her gaze, shakes his head.

ROGER  
(under breath)  
Stuck up bitch.

And he back flips back into the water, kicking his legs up, splashing her a bit more.

UNDER THE NEARBY TREE...

The older man puffs on his cigarette, watching Peggy. This is CHRIS CLEEK (40, casual -- but well dressed casual). His wife BELLE (36, slight, demure) brings him a beer.

BELLE  
Hon?

CHRIS  
Yeah, babe.

BELLE  
Dean wants to talk to you...

CLEEK'S POV: Chris looks over sees DEAN (50'S, balding, sloppy) sheepishly staring at him from over by a wind-tattered picnic table.

ON CLEEK AND BELLE

CHRIS  
(smiles at her, but his  
eyes are hard)  
Makes you say that?

BELLE

Well--I just...(spoke to him.)

CHRIS

He wants to talk to me, he'll come over and talk. I'll take a burger when the burgers are ready. Are they ready yet, Belle?

BELLE

I don't, um...I'll check.

CHRIS

And keep an eye on Darlin' over there, she's at that Clapp boy again...

Belle looks over and

BELLE'S POV: Sees DARLIN' (4, towhead, adorable) hanging on a very annoyed SLIGHTLY OLDER BOY. She's kissing him all over his face and he's trying nicely to push her off. She's giggling.

BELLE

God...damn. Darlin'!

Belle storms off, annoyed. Cleek watches her go, stubs out his smoke, lights another, takes a pull off his beer. He glances over and sees Dean walking towards him.

CHRIS

Dean.

DEAN

Chris.

CHRIS

Helluva day, huh?

DEAN

Can't ask for much better.

CHRIS

You said it. What's on your mind, Dean?

DEAN

That obvious?

CHRIS

How's Diane?

DEAN

The home is real nice. They're takin' the best care of her I think they...I want to thank you again for puttin' in the good word for us up there. The lower rate helps...a lot.

CHRIS

I'm glad to hear it. Diane's a fine woman, Dean. Deserves the best. She improving?

DEAN

(looks down at his feet)  
Well...she's more comfortable, but...

CHRIS

(sees this could go bad)  
Hey. Why don't ya take a swim, old man? Clog the drain with all that hair. Do you some good.

DEAN

(rubs his bald head, tries to lighten up)  
Heh...Yeah...

Chris leans against the tree, watching Belle yank on Darlin's arm. The little girl has the boy's face in her hands now and is kissing him on the mouth. The poor kid's in an agony of embarrassment. Chris smiles.

DEAN

You remember tellin' me to come to you first if I ever thought of sellin'?

CHRIS

Yeah. But I don't feel like losin' my best and only neighbor.

DEAN

I just...can't concentrate down at the feed store anymore. Can't find anyone that can handle the books the way Diane could.

(considers his beer)

New competition is killing me anyway. Y'know I lost customers I've had for 35 years over as little as 2 cents a pound?

CHRIS

They'll be the one's paying for it  
in the long run. Bet on it.

Dean carefully sets his bottle down next against the tree.

DEAN

I'm in a helluva jam, Chris. And I  
gotta be honest. I don't really  
have the heart to pry my way out of  
it. I spend as much time as I can  
with Diane up at the home, but I'd  
like to spend more.

CHRIS

Understandable.

DEAN

So. I'm...I'm 'onna sell it all off  
and get me a little one-bedroom up  
around there so I can be with her  
these last couple months.

CHRIS

Hell you say. That woman's gonna  
outlast us all, Dean.

Chris puts a consoling hand on Dean's shoulder. A true  
friend.

CHRIS

If you're really serious about  
sellin', I'm glad you came to me.  
C'mon down to the office on Monday  
and we'll see about drawin' up some  
papers. I can't give you the world  
for the place, but I'll give you a  
fair price.

DEAN

I know you will, Chris.

CHRIS

Good thing about old friends is,  
you don't have to worry about  
gettin' a lube job.

DEAN

It's why I come, to you Chris.

CHRIS

You were right to.  
(calling out)  
(MORE)

CHRIS (cont'd)  
Hey Belle! Get us a couple real  
drinks over here.

Belle walks back towards them, dragging Darlin' by the arm.

BELLE  
Bourbon?

Chris just looks at her. She gets the picture and

ANOTHER ANGLE

Yanks Darlin' towards the house.

BELLE  
(to Darlin')  
I told you. No. More. Kissing. It's  
inappropriate. Not to mention a  
good way to get sick. I catch you  
doin' that again, I'm gonna take  
you into the bathroom, hear me?

DARLIN'  
Course I hear you Mama, yer yelling  
in my ear.

BELLE  
Watch that smart mouth, young lady.

They disappear.

DEAN  
That little one is just about as  
cute as it gets.

CHRIS  
Heh.

DEAN  
Where's the little cowboy?

Chris looks around, shrugs.

EXT. TWO CAR GARAGE - SIMULTANEOUS

BRIAN CLEEK (13) sits under a driveway basketball goal  
surrounded by hedges on either side, nursing an iced  
lemonade, bouncing a basketball, watching three YOUNGER BOYS  
(10-ish) surround a girl (JENNY, 10). Deviling her.

YOUNG BOY #1  
C'mon Jenny, don't be a  
chickenshit.



He pushes her into a hedge.

JENNY

Stop!

YOUNG BOY #2

Show it!

Brian finishes his lemonade, sets it down next to him, bounces his basketball.

JENNY

(pushing back)

Stop!

Boy #1 grabs her by the arm and pushes her back into the hedge. She gets scratched.

JENNY

Ow!

YOUNG BOY #1

Show. It.

JENNY

What are you *talking* about!

YOUNG BOY #2

Your bush, stupid. Show. Us. Your. Bush.

JENNY

My what???

The boys laugh. Brian shoots a free throw, rebounds the ball, walks back to the line, casually watching the kids terrorize the girl.

YOUNG BOY #2

Grab her, Jimmy.

The third boy grabs the girl by the arms, she lets out a little shriek. Boy #1 pokes her in the chest with his fingers, hard.

She starts to cry. The boy starts to pull on her shorts.

MAN'S VOICE (OS)

Hey! Cut that out!

The boys turn and see a FAT MAN walking towards them with a hot dog in his hand.

FAT MAN  
What are you doing?

The boys turn and run, leaving the girl on the ground. Brian shoots another free throw.

Fat Man goes to the girl, helps her up, looks to Brian.

FAT MAN  
Why were you letting them do that?

BRIAN  
Sir?

FAT MAN  
Sir. Sir?

BRIAN  
Yes, sir?

FAT MAN  
Listen, you little smart ass...

BRIAN  
I was just shooting some free throws, sir.

FAT MAN  
You should've stopped them. They're all way younger than you.

BRIAN  
I really wasn't paying attention, sir.

The Fat Man takes the girl by the hand, walks her back to the picnic, exasperated.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - LATE AFTERNOON

Chris sits in the mini-van while Belle rounds up the kids. Darlin' sits in the back in her car-seat, zonked out, mustard smeared on her chin.

Brian gets in the car next to her.

CHRIS  
Hey, bud.

BRIAN  
8 for 10 dad.

CHRIS  
Consistently?

BRIAN  
Just the last time. But I think I'm  
getting the hang of it.

CHRIS  
Can't win games unless you hit your  
free throws.

BRIAN  
I know.

Chris looks over and sees Belle walking behind a sullen  
Peggy. Roger runs by, following his own parents.

ROGER  
See you at school, Peg.

PEGGY  
Whatever.

The boy scowls. Chris smiles at that. Peggy slumps in next to  
her dad. Belle gets in next to her and shuts the door.

Chris puts a fatherly hand on Peggy's knee.

CHRIS  
Never went in, huh?

PEGGY  
(looks at his hand)  
Chlorine makes my hair gross.

Chris laughs.

CHRIS  
Well, we wouldn't want that, now  
would we.

In the back Brian laughs. They take off for home.

INT. SMALL CAVE - NIGHT

The Woman sleeps on the wolf pelt, in front of the embers of  
a dying fire. She dreams...

INTERCUT...

DREAM POV...Night...Running through a thicket, on the hunt, the thrill of the hunt, alert, eyes wide, spear in hand, barrelling through, others from her clan mere shadowy shapes behind her, adult and otherwise...

SMALL CAVE...The Woman pulls her feet close to her, sleeps on...

DREAM POV...Inside a different cave. The Woman is mating with another of her clan -- FIRST STOLEN, doing it doggie-style, both grunting, straining, grimy with sweat. No fun here -- their mating is rough, serious business.

SMALL CAVE...The Woman turns over, hand going to her dressed wound, fist digging at it, the pain somehow bringing comfort in fitful sleep.

DREAM POV...a flash of the Cave Baby from last film, wailing, alone...a flash of The Woman, staring fierce at First Stolen...

WOMAN  
(Baby.)  
Babai...

Another baby, dead, trapped in a plastic bag hanging from a cave wall, bathed in flickering firelight...the wolf from our opening snarls at us...

SMALL CAVE...The Woman murmurs incomprehensibly under her breath...

DREAM POV...female screams (CLAIRE from the first movie?) ...a boy's head is thrust into a blazing fire and held there, showering the cave with sparks...gunfire...The Woman falling away, shot, a child spinning away, also shot...silence, then groans and the rattle of chains...a feather left by The Woman's hand on the cave baby, apparently dead, wrapped in a filthy blanket...

SMALL CAVE...The Woman's knuckles kneed her stomach...

THE WOMAN  
(...baby...baby...soul...  
baby...)  
...babai...babai...anam...babai...

The last ember in the fire flickers out and The Woman sleeps like the dead.

INT. CLEEK COUNTRY HOME - PRE-DAWN

Chris sits at the kitchen table, oiling a 7mm rifle, getting ready for a morning hunt. A cigarette smolders in his lips. Belle is spooning coffee into the coffeemaker.

BELLE  
You hear Peggy last night?

CHRIS  
Uh uh.

BELLE  
Sick as a dog.

CHRIS  
You fed the dogs?

BELLE  
It's Brian's turn. I'm pretty sure...

CHRIS  
Peg'll be alright. Don't worry.

She's clearly troubled. He's ignoring her. Just wipes down the rifle.

He packs up his hunting stuff, stands, and leaves without a word.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE NEAR OCEAN - DAWN

RIFLE SCOPE POV: A poor man's IRIS SHOT...scanning the terrain...birds...brush...not much.

Cleek sets his gun down, leans against a rock, lights a smoke, listening to the nearby ocean.

EXT. HILLSIDE - LATER

RIFLE SCOPE POV: Scanning along a stream...nothing...nothing...then, a flash of movement...

Cleek pulls the scope away, squints at the distance...he looks back into...

RIFLE SCOPE POV: Scanning...finding...THE WOMAN...kneeling by the water...

Cleek pulls the scope away again. Exactly what is he seeing here? He hunkers down, watches...

EXT. STREAM - SAME

The Woman kneels at the water, peeling off the poultice. It's sticky and dried.

She cups her hand, pulls water onto it, scrubs. It hurts, but so what, she's tough. Her eyes and body move and react to the environment around her, any movement in the brush, any smell.

CLOSE SHOT...her wound...looks like hell, but it's pretty much sealed up...a little fresh blood seeps out. She dowses it in water again.

EXT. HILLSIDE - SAME

RIFLE/SCOPE POV: The Woman removes her top, steps deeper into the water.

ON CLEEK

He wipes sweat off his brow, swallows.

RIFLE/SCOPE POV: The Woman washes herself, slow, shivering in the ice cold water and suddenly...SLASH!...pulls her knife out of nowhere and SPEARS A FISH with it...lightning quick...She strips the knife and tosses the fish to the shore.

ON CLEEK

Cleek is impressed. That was pretty damn amazing. Excitement in his eyes.

RIFLE/SCOPE POV: The Woman turns back towards the shore, walking half-naked towards Cleek. Onshore she stoops and impales the fish with her knife, smells the air. Does she know he's there?

No.

Cleek smiles. That's good. Real good.

EXT. GRASSY RIDGE - DAY

Cleek still watches her from afar, moving as stealthily as he can with his gear. He hunkers down again...

CLEEK POV: The Woman gathers more seaweed along the shoreline. She stands, stares out at the sunlight glistening on the ocean.

Cleek pulls out some jerky, tears some off, chews. He's having quite the time.

EXT. GRASSY RIDGE - LATER

He watches The Woman take her seaweed and her fish into the small cave. He watches the opening, waiting for her to come back out.

She doesn't.

He lights a smoke and makes himself comfortable. He's going to be there a while.

EXT. GRASSY RIDGE - NIGHT

Cleek still watches the cave opening. A thin line of SMOKE billows from within, a faint glow. It's getting chilly out there. He blows warm air on his hands, scanning the cave...

CLEEK'S POV - THE CAVE ENTRANCE

...rocks on all sides, a small grassy cliff over the top of it.

ON CLEEK

He stares, thinking. Planning. Figuring the angles.

EXT. CLEEK COUNTRY HOME - NIGHT

Chris walks by the old barn. Dogs bark loudly inside. Master is home. Brian is in the driveway, shooting free throws.

CHRIS  
How's the average?

BRIAN  
(turns, smiles)  
7 for 10. Pretty consistent.

CHRIS  
Good. Real good.

BRIAN  
(runs up to him)  
Get anything?

CHRIS  
Look like it? No need to ask about  
things you can see plain in front  
of your face.

BRIAN  
(nods)  
Mom's cookin' ham steaks.

CHRIS  
C'mon in with me. I got somethin' I  
need you all to do for me before  
dinner.

BLACKNESS.

The muffled sound of feet shuffling in the dirt. The sound of  
metal on metal. A door opens, revealing that we are down  
in...

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - NIGHT

A fruit cellar. We look up old stone steps, through a six by  
three prone door.

Cleek stands there, the whole family around him.

BELLE  
I should turn the steaks down...

CHRIS  
Then go turn 'em down. But then get  
on back here.

She walks away, obedient. Peggy steps into her place, next to  
daddy.

CHRIS  
I'm gonna need you all to get down  
there and clean out all the old  
jars and junk and things from the  
south end of the cellar. Sweep the  
floor.

PEGGY  
(torrential sigh)  
Before dinner?



CHRIS  
Yeah, honey. Before dinner.

PEGGY  
Why???

CHRIS  
(looks to Brian, smiles)  
Because I said so. You don't have a problem with it, do you Brian?

BRIAN  
Nah. Where you want me to put all that stuff?

CHRIS  
Throw it in the dump trailer. Put on some gloves. There's a couple-few pair out in the barn.

BRIAN  
Alright dad.

He walks off.

CHRIS  
(calling out)  
You feed the dogs today?

BRIAN (OS)  
It's Peggy's turn.

CHRIS  
(turns to her)  
Peg?

She groans, walks off to do it.

Chris stands there, looking down in the dingy old cellar.  
Darlin' peeks out from behind his leg.

DARLIN'  
Are there mice down there?

CHRIS  
Could be.

DARLIN'  
Should I get some cheese?

CHRIS  
(fatherly smile -- she's  
adorable)  
Nah.

INT. CLEEK COUNTRY HOME - LIVING ROOM - LATER

The kids and the wife are hard at work outside. Cleek sits watching them from his window like a king surveying his subjects, only half-reading a law journal. He sets the book down, satisfied with watching the family.

Belle comes out of the cellar with a box of old jars, hands it off to a sullen Peggy. Belle looks to Chris in the window, dusting off her hands, smiling at him.

Chris continues to watch, picks up an old corded phone, dials.

CHRIS  
Betty? I'll be in after lunch  
tomorrow, if at all. Dean  
Bluejacket comes in, tell him I'm  
tied up here and I'll meet him for  
lunch on Tuesday. If the phones are  
quiet, you can take off early. You  
too. G'night.

He hangs up, thinking, then...

A shrill SCREAM!

He looks up, sees Darlin' come running up out of the cellar, straight to her mom, hiding behind her legs. Behind her is Brian, holding a squirming little brown MOUSE by the tail.

Darlin' squeals, Brian laughs and taunts her with it. Belle sees it, squeals herself, laughing, and shoos him.

Brian runs up to his dad's window, shows him the mouse, dangling it at him. He pretends like he's going to eat it.

Chris smiles.

INT. CLEEK COUNTRY HOME - DINNER TABLE - LATER

The family chows down. Ham steaks, canned corn, baked beans. Peggy has barely touched her food. Brian is just mowing it down. Belle cuts up ham for Darlin' who swirls all her food around into a big goopy mess with her fork.

Chris takes a bite.

CHRIS  
Ham's cold.

Belle looks up at him, almost cracks a smile. He looks at her, dead-eyed.

BELLE  
Want me to nuke it?

He doesn't say a word, hands off his plate to her.

INT. CLEEK COUNTRY HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

Belle sleeps, alone in a giant bed. There's a loud bang outside and then some muffled hammering. She gets up.

INT. CLEEK COUNTRY HOME - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Belle tightens the belt on a robe, walks towards a window.

BELLE'S POV: Through the window...the fruit cellar door is right outside...it's open and light from below FLICKERS WITH MOVING SHADOWS...Chris is working on something down there. But what?

A well-used QUADRUNNER sits outside the barn, loaded with gear. Ready for a morning run.

VOICE (OS)  
What's he doing?

Belle jumps, looks over...Peggy is sitting in her dad's chair, in the dark.

BELLE  
Damn, Peggy. You scared the hell out of me.

PEGGY  
Sorry. Couldn't sleep.

BELLE  
Well try. School in the morning.

PEGGY  
What's dad doing?

BELLE  
(looks out the window)  
Go to bed, Peggy.

Peggy stands, looks like she wants to say something, but doesn't. She walks down the hall and closes her door behind her.

Belle watches the flickering light coming from the fruit cellar a moment more and then, she too goes to bed.

The dogs in the barn bark at the hammering and pounding in the night.

INT. SMALL CAVE - PRE-DAWN

The Woman wakes, pokes a stick at her nearly burned-out fire. She covers a few remaining embers with dirt. It's out. The blackened fish bones lie beside the wolf bones, all of them picked clean.

She looks down at her wound. It's purpling. That's good.

She stretches like a cat, trying to work out her soreness.

She lifts a piece of wolf pelt up. It's been fashioned into some sort of pack. Something that might hold a baby.

She stands, secures her knife in her loincloth, makes her way outside.

EXT. SMALL CAVE - CONTINUOUS

The Woman pushes aside weeds, steps out into the morning light, smells something odd, turns suddenly, looking above her and...

WHACK! A huge heavy weighted FISHING NET comes down on her. She's tangled, confused...

Enraged.

Cleek stands above the cave opening, holding a shotgun. He smiles at her. She howls at him.

THE WOMAN  
(Devil! I'll drink your  
blood! Devil!)  
Deamhan! Sainmahiniu liom fuil!  
Deamhan!

Chris jumps down, keeping a safe distance, shotgun at the ready.

THE WOMAN

Deamhan!!!

She lunges at him, howling, tearing, screaming, falling all over herself.

Cleek approaches her cautiously.

CHRIS

Afraid I can't understand a fucking word you're saying, lady.

She looks up at him, murder in her eyes as...

WHACK! He brings the butt of the shotgun down on her forehead.

BLACKNESS.

EXT. GRASSY RIDGE - A BEAT LATER

Cleek drags The Woman through the grass, her feet and legs bound with plastic wire-ties. He makes it to his Quadrunner, folds her up with great effort, picks her up and puts her on the back rack.

She stirs. He throws an elbow into her face. She's out again.

EXT. CLEEK COUNTRY HOME - DAY

Mini-van is gone. No one home. Dogs bark like crazy in the barn. The Quad is parked near the door to the fruit cellar. We travel to the cellar opening, and down, eyes adjusting to the darkness...

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - DAY

Cleek tightens nuts on PIPE FASTENERS around the unconscious Woman's ankles. Makeshift manacles, bolted into the old concrete and stone walls. Painful, sturdy.

He fastens more homemade manacles onto her wrists. These are connected to high-tension TOW CABLES. He locks them on tight, walks over to a hand-cranked WINCH which is also bolted to a concrete wall. He RATCHETS it and it pulls The Woman up into a standing position.

Through all this she's like a ragdoll.

She hangs limp, one breast falling free of her chest covering. He steps forward, cautious, covers her up proper again.

He looks at her hands. Calloused beyond belief. Nails thick and cracked and yellowed. Filthy. He runs a hand over the matted poultice on her side.

He looks at her collarbone, and breastbone. Covered in scars big and small, old and new. This woman has been through a lot.

He gets to her face, lifts her chin. She's still out cold, drool falling down her cheek. He looks worried for a second. Did he hit her too hard? He lifts an eyelid, looks for sign of brain trauma. Seems satisfied that she's just out.

Her lips lay slack, blackened teeth underneath. He moves a tentative hand toward her lips, lifts one back as if inspecting a dog.

Her teeth are sharp, jagged, disgust--

*SNAP! Suddenly she's awake! And she's BITING, snarling as she SNAPS off the tip of his finger between her teeth!*

He screams out in pain, blood gushing from his finger, involuntarily steps back, clutching at it.

CHRIS

Ahhhhhhhhh!!!! Fucking! Bitch!!!

Her eyes lock with his. She smiles, chews once, twice, chews a third time.

And swallows.

CHRIS

Fuuuuuck!

He can't believe what he's just seen. WHACK!...He PUNCHES her as hard as he can in the face. And still she's smiling, his own blood coating her scummy teeth.

Hit hits her again. And again. He's savage. She's bleeding from the mouth now but she takes it and holds her ground. This is the toughest goddamn human being he's ever seen!

He hits her one last time as hard as he can. And this time it looks like he's put her out.

He backs away, spurting blood, dazed, trying to breathe, trying to calm down. Gripping at his bloody hand.

CHRIS

That's just not civilized behavior!  
Jesus!!!

No response. She's gonna be out a while. He stumbles up the stairs, SLAMS the metal door shut. He's cursing and bellowing, going to find some sort of relief for the pain.

The Woman hangs limp on her manacles, blood dripping from her mouth, falling to the dusty floor.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

MISS RATON (early 20's) teaches basic geometry to a classroom full of teenagers. She's hot, fresh out of college, a bit too close in age to the students she's teaching. The boys are in love, and the girls are jealous, texting things like "what a b" and "zup wit hr skrt?" under their desks to each other.

Apathy abounds as...

MISS RATON

So, who can tell me what a scalene triangle is?

One boy blurts out...

BOY (JACK)

Three unequal sides.

Miss Raton walks over to him, an annoyed look on her face. She looks down on him, shaking her head.

MISS RATON

That's right. But didn't we forget to raise our hand, Jack?

JACK

Sorry, Miss Raton.

The kids snicker. What a brown-noser. Raton surveys the room with an exasperated smile. Peggy sits in a corner, lost in whatever she's doodling in her Peechee folder

MISS RATON

Okay, what other kinds of triangles are there?

Jack raises his hand with a smile. Raton ignores him, walks past, closer to Peggy. Peggy notices her coming nearer, looks up at her, with a sort of pained look.

MISS RATON  
(wry, but not mean)  
Peggy? Taking copious notes as usual?

Peggy looks around, sees everyone looking at her. She looks sick.

PEGGY  
Ummm...yeah...

MISS RATON  
So what other kinds of triangles are there, Peggy?

PEGGY  
Scalene...

The other kids laugh. Peggy clutches her stomach, something definitely not right here.

PEGGY  
May I be--

She can't get it all out. She gets up and walks out of the room in a hurry. The other kids snicker and wonder...what the hell?

Miss Raton watches after the swinging classroom door.

JACK  
(he just can't help himself)  
Isosceles! Equilateral! Right?

Miss Raton walks back to the front of the class, patting Jack on the head like a good little doggie as she goes.

EXT. MIDDLE SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY

A game of tether-ball is going down. A tall boy hitting the ball over the head of a tiny blonde girl(CYNDY). Big man. Big-shot.

"Free-throw" Brian stands next in line, watching the girl with sly interest.



Cyndy gets under the ball and starts pounding it to the sky, over the tall boy's head. She keeps at it, closing in with each wrap around the pole. Brian smiles as...

She wins.

All the boys and girls laugh at the tall kid. He slinks away in shame to the water fountain.

Brian steps up next, smiles at Cyndy as she serves. He hits it back. She returns. He returns. They seem a pretty even match.

She hits one over his head. He steps in. She tries to hit it over his head again. He returns it, fast, almost hits her in the face. She ducks, waits for the next go around, then starts slamming it. Pretty soon he's helpless.

She wins again. She smiles at him, pleased with herself. He humbly shrugs, walks off. She watches after him. Do they like each other? Kind of looks like it.

INT. CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Brian steps into the empty classroom. He walks over to his desk, pulls out his backpack, grabs a pack of gum. He takes out a piece and chews it up, casually walking over to...

A girl's desk. There's a hairbrush sticking out of an oversized Hello Kitty purse. He removes his gum from his mouth, presses it into the brush, under the bristles, smashing it flat.

The recess bell rings.

INT. CLASSROOM - A BEAT LATER

All the students are filing in from their break. Brian sits at his desk, doodling, in his own world.

Cyndy brushes past him, flushed and excited and a little sweaty, disheveled, bragging to her friends about all the boys she beat. She sits down at her desk, pulls her brush out of her purse. Needs to take the knots out of her hair. At the first stroke...

CYNDY

Owwwww!

Brian looks up. Her brush is stuck in her hair. She can't get it out.

Cyndy's girlfriends are appalled, a group of boys laugh.

Brian gets up and walks over.

BRIAN  
What's up, Cyndy?

CYNDY  
There's, like, glue or something in  
my...

He takes a look at it.

BRIAN  
Gum.

He looks around the room, at a group of "suspicious" looking boys. The tall boy sits in the middle, no idea what's happening.

BRIAN  
Dude. A girl beats you at tether-  
ball and you...

Cyndy looks at the tall boy, who's totally confused.

BRIAN  
It's okay Cyndy. I'll help you.

He reaches down and tenderly pulls on the brush.

CYNDY  
Owww! It hurts!

Brian looks so concerned.

BRIAN  
Sorry!

She looks up at him.

CYNDY  
It's...okay...thanks for trying...

He smiles down on her. A true friend.

She yanks it free. A good chunk of hair along with it.

CYNDY  
Damn!

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM - LATER

All Miss Raton's students file out. She looks over and sees Peggy's desk. Her folder still sits there as well as her backpack.

She walks over, looks down at the table...

RATON'S POV: She opens the Peechee folder...inside is a rough drawing...a small house within a small room...surreal...strange...

CLICK! The door opens and Peggy walks in.

MISS RATON  
You okay, sweetie?

PEGGY  
Yeah. Just need to get my stuff.

Peggy shuffles to her desk, head down, gathers her things and exits.

Miss Raton watches after her, troubled.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - DAY

The Woman slowly comes to. She tastes the dried blood on her lips, produces a weak smile. She shifts her torso, an empty shelf presses into the center of her back, bending her forward in the middle. Awkward, painful. But she's a friend to pain.

She looks up to her hands...held above her head by conduit clamps and cable. She's slept with all her weight on her hands so they are white and numb. She works them around, trying to regain feeling, surveying her surroundings...

WOMAN'S POV: Stone and concrete walls, dirt floor. The room is about 15 feet wide, 20 feet long with stairs leading up to ground level with a big metal door with only hints of daylight peeking in at the edges....Out of reach on a side wall...shelves full of dusty mason jars filled with tomatoes, peaches, jams, peppers. Most of it probably too old to eat.

She looks down between her manacled feet. A big plastic salad bowl sits there. Her pot to piss in.

She looks to the other end of the small dank room. An old trunk, with a few small-game animal traps on top laying in dust, next to an old welding chip-hammer. None of it within reach, but good to know it's all there.

The Woman looks up at the sound of feet shuffling. She hears a clank of metal and then the door at the top of the stairs open, flooding in too-bright daylight.

Chris Cleek stands at the top of the stairs, holding something in his hand. Too hard to make out what it is with all the blinding backlight.

He casually walks down the stairs, holding the unidentified object behind his back.

CHRIS

So. You like to bite?

The Woman stares at him, cold, defiant.

CHRIS

You can't understand a word I'm sayin'. I get that. But I can make you understand who's in charge here.

The Woman lunges at him...a whole six inches, hitting the end of her bindings, rubbing her wrists and ankles even more raw.

Chris pulls the mystery object from behind his back. It's a pair of hunting earmuffs. He puts them on, speaks loudly, pacing around the small room...

CHRIS

See, I've got kids to raise around here, lady, and disobedience is not something I want them to witness. They're very good kids, and I would very much like to introduce them to you, but if you're not going to be nice, if you're going to be disobedient, well, I can't do that, now can I.

The Woman just stares at him.

CHRIS

Plus, I need to feel better about losing the end of my finger.

He takes a .45 out of the back of his pants and pulls back the hammer.

He puts the gun up in her face.

CHRIS  
Ever see one of these?

The Woman pushes her head back. Yes. She's seen one of those.

CHRIS  
Makes a loud sound, right?  
(trying to scare her,  
jumping at her and...)  
Boom!

She just stares.

CHRIS  
Makes an even louder sound in a  
tight space. I'll show you...but  
first I need some sort of  
backstop...

He walks over, picks up a two foot long block of 6x6 from the  
dirty floor.

He holds the gun in her face, and sets the block on the shelf  
behind her, standing it up lengthwise. About 8 inches of wood  
sticks up over The Woman's shoulder from behind, right next  
to her ear.

Cleek steps back, aims the gun at the piece of wood, right  
beside The Woman's head.

She closes her eyes as...

KA-BLAM! Cleek fires the gun into the wood block, a deafening  
sound. The Woman's head rocks to one side from the  
concussion.

She whimpers, a low moan under her breath. She tries to  
contain it, opens her mouth over and over, as if trying to  
pop her ears. Blood gushes from inside her ear.

He's blown out her ear drum.

WOMAN'S POV: Cleek steps back, removes his earmuffs, smiling  
at her. Her left ear is ringing like hell and barely any  
sound is being registered there anymore.

CHRIS  
Now I feel a bit better about the  
finger. I'll be back in a while  
with the family. And you be nice,  
or...

He lifts the gun to the other side of her head, showing that he can easily blow out the other eardrum.

The Woman doesn't understand what he's saying, so she's thinking he's going to do the other one. She howls at him, ferocious, out of her mind in pain and rage.

He pulls back the hammer, raises at eyebrow at her.

She quiets immediately.

CHRIS

Good girl! See? You learn quick!

He turns and leaves, locking the door behind him.

The Woman tilts her head, trying to let the blood drain out of her ear.

WOMAN'S POV: The salad bowl beneath her is filled with piss, blood drops flowering into the mess.

INT. CLEEK COUNTRY HOME - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Chris enters with the .45, chambers a round, disarms the hammer, then pulls the clip.

CHRIS

Brian. One shy.

BRIAN

I heard. What ya shootin' at, Pop?

Chris doesn't answer.

Brian walks up, takes the clip, walks over to a cabinet, pulls out a box of shells, puts a fresh one in the top of clip, hands it to his dad. Chris puts the clip back in, safeties it, and stuffs it back in his pants.

He looks up. Belle, Darlin', and Peggy all stare dumbly at him from the kitchen. They're in the middle of making supper.

CHRIS

Alright. Everyone want to come on down to the cellar?

The girls look at each other, not moving. Brian smiles, runs out the door.

CHRIS

Ladies. You hear me?

BELLE  
C'mon girls. Do as your father  
says.

Peggy lets out a big sigh, heads for the door. Belle wipes her hands, produces a weak smile for her husband and takes Darlin' by the hand.

EXT. FRUIT CELLAR - A BEAT LATER

The family stands there, looking at the closed door.

CHRIS  
No touching. She's nowhere near  
tame yet.

BRIAN  
What is it? A mountain lion? Did  
you finally catch a mountain lion?

CHRIS  
(smiles)  
This is a helluva lot more  
interesting than some dumb ol' cat,  
boy.

Brian is bubbling with anticipation. Belle stands there with the girls. Mom hides her concern like a pro, but Peggy looks like she's going to be sick. Darlin' clings to her mom's leg, no clue as to what's going on.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - CONTINUOUS

The door opens. Brian is the first one down the stairs, running. He stops dead in his tracks, is struck speechless with wonder. Belle leads Darlin' and Peggy down, they stand behind Brian.

Belle looks dizzy. Peggy is in disbelief. Darlin' is just curious.

Chris steps down inside, sidles up to his son.

They all just stare for a long moment at...

The Woman...who looks up at them as if dreaming. What the hell kind of place has she ended up in? Who are these people?

PEGGY  
Mom...? What are we...(doing here?)

Belle gives Peggy a sharp, pained look that says...shut the hell up.

Darlin' steps out from behind her mom a bit.

DARLIN'

She needs a big band-aid.

Chris looks down at his daughter and laughs. Brian laughs too, finally starting to come out of his dazed amazement.

CHRIS

Okay. As with any new pet, each member of the family is going to have to share in the responsibility of taking care of her.

PEGGY

That's not a fucking pet-

BELLE

Peggy! Watch that mouth!

Peggy just shakes her head in disbelief.

CHRIS

But first. Ground rule number one.  
No. Touching.

He raises a finger at his family...what's left of it. Wags it.

CHRIS

I learned the hard way that our friend here likes to bite.

Brian smiles, impressed, looking The Woman over. His face says one thing...this is fucking AWESOME.

BRIAN

What are we going to do with her?

CHRIS

Train her. Civilize her. Free her from herself. Her baser instincts. I mean, what we have here is...well, I've never heard of anything like it anyway. This woman thinks she's an animal. Damned if I know how she got this way, but we can't have people running around in the woods thinking they're animals. It's not safe.



Peggy looks to Belle in total disbelief. Belle looks at the floor, not wanting to deal with this.

CHRIS

Hon?

Belle looks up, her eyes far away, trying to process, trying not to show her anxiety.

BELLE

Y-yes?

CHRIS

Why don't you run on up and put together a bowl of cereal or oatmeal, somethin' simple. Woman's gotta be hungry. All she's had to eat since I caught her is...

He raises his finger again. Brian shakes his head in wonder, looks back to The Woman. Her head lolls, still in pain from the blown-out eardrum.

Belle stands there, still a bit shell-shocked.

CHRIS

Hon?

BELLE

(snaps out of it)

Uh...okay...I think I have some...  
I'll be right...um...girls? Come help me?

Belle walks like a zombie up the stairs, the girls following.

Brian stands there with his father. The boy is transfixed by The Woman. He eyes her body. She's half-naked for chrissake.

Chris notices his son's wandering eyes.

CHRIS

Better than a mountain lion?

BRIAN

Boy. You said it.

CHRIS

Go grab a rake.

EXT. BARN - A BEAT LATER

Brian bounds up from the cellar, heads to the barn, opens the door. We hear dogs barking wildly inside, snarling.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - A BEAT LATER

Belle stands next to Chris, holding a steaming bowl of oatmeal. Peggy sits on a step, her head in her hands. Darlin' sits behind her, playing with her sister's hair.

DARLIN'  
Not feelin' good, sisser?

No response. Brian comes down the stairs with a rusty old bow rake, hands it to his dad.

Chris nods for Belle to set down the bowl of food.

CHRIS  
Now, I can't stress enough how  
important it is to keep your  
distance. So set the bowl down like  
so, and push the food over like...

He pushes the bowl over to The Woman's feet.

CHRIS  
Gotta give her a little slack so  
she can get down there and get  
some. I've got her on a winch over  
here.

He walks over to the winch. Brian follows him, soaking it all in. Apt pupil.

Chris lets out a little slack. The Woman slumps forward.

CHRIS  
Just enough so she can get to it  
and no more.

He lets out some more until The Woman's in a position to eat -  
- with her mouth, but not her hands. Her bleeding ear drips  
into the oatmeal.

The Woman looks up at Chris. He smiles at her, puts his hand  
up to his mouth, pantomiming "eat".

The Woman roars, brings her forehead down on the bowl,  
smashing it all over the place.

Cleek smiles at his family.

CHRIS

Well. I guess we should use plastic  
from now on.

Chris takes the rake, scrapes what he can of the bowl and  
oatmeal into a messy pile in front of The Woman. She looks at  
the mush, full of dirt and broken crockery.

CHRIS

She gets hungry enough, she'll eat.

Cleek walks over to his family, crouches down, his back to  
the captive.

CHRIS

This is our project. Our secret  
project. I shouldn't have to tell  
you to keep your mouths zipped, but  
I'm telling you anyway. Each of us  
is gonna have chores with this one.  
Same as taking care of the dogs.  
Someone's gotta feed her. Someone's  
gotta pick up after her and so on.  
Your mother and I will take care of  
anything...overly complicated.  
Right, hon?

Belle smiles weakly and nods, but she doesn't cotton to this  
at all.

CHRIS

Alright. That's enough for tonight.  
We'll get into a routine tomorrow.  
Dinner time anyone?

They all just stare at him.

CHRIS

C'mon now...

They all get up slowly and make their way up the stairs.  
Brian lingers, staring at The Woman. She looks right into his  
eyes. He loses the staring contest right away and follows the  
family. They shut the door.

INT. CLEEK COUNTRY HOME - DINNER TABLE - LATER

The family's eating. They are all solemn except Chris and Brian, who laugh at an obnoxious sit-com on a television they can see from where they sit. Peggy stares at her mom, who gives her nothing. Darlin' plays with her food.

INT. CLEEK COUNTRY HOME - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Chris walks down the hall, goes into...

INT. PEGGY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Peggy lies on her side in bed. Darlin' is on the other side of the room, crashed out, breathing deep. Roommates.

Chris walks over and sits on Peggy's bed, close, fatherly.

CHRIS

Everything okay at school?

PEGGY

Sure, daddy.

CHRIS

You're a good girl, Peg. I know it's hard being a teenager sometimes, but you gotta remember to look at the bright side of things. You'll have your license soon, right? Your grades are good. You'll be going to college. Think about that.

PEGGY

Okay, dad.

He leans down, slow, kisses her on the forehead, puts an arm over her, gives her a squeeze.

CHRIS

Love you, kiddo.

PEGGY

(pro forma)

Love you too, daddy.

He stands up looks at Belle, who stands in the doorway.

He smiles.

Off to bed.

INT. CLEEK COUNTRY HOME - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Chris joins his wife in the hallway, puts a tender hand on the nape of her neck, they walk towards their room, passing another door along the way.

CHRIS  
Night, son.

BELLE  
G'night, Bri.

INT. BRIAN'S ROOM - SAME

Brian looks up from bed, sees his parents passing by.

BRIAN  
Night.

INT. PARENT'S ROOM - SAME

Belle and Chris enter. He starts to get undressed. Belle walks over to him, her concern obvious.

BELLE  
(whisper)  
Hon, that woman...do you really  
think we should be--(doing this?)

WHACK! Chris smacks her in the face. Just hard enough to seriously get her attention. Then goes about getting the rest of his clothes off.

She stands there, holding her face.

CHRIS  
Let's get some sleep, Belle.

He walks over to the bed, lays down, looks at his wife just standing there. He smiles at her and pats her place in bed.

Mechanically, she starts to undress.

INT. BRIAN'S ROOM - SAME

He watches and listens for the lights to go out and everything to settle.

When it's quiet and dark, he gets silently out of bed and walks to his window...

BRIAN'S POV: The dingy fruit cellar door outside.

Brian stares at the door, smiles, and shakes his head. How can a boy sleep with all...that...down there?

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - SAME

The Woman hangs, staring at the mess of food and glass and blood in front her. She works her jaw, as if trying to pop her ears.

Movement.

She looks up. What is that sound?

She lifts her head up, scans the room, smells the air. A faint scratching sound...She looks up to the closed door. What is that...?

Mice. Scurrying towards her. Three of them. They find the food on the floor and start eating. The Woman just stares at them.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. SMALL TOWN - MAIN STREET - MORNING

Chris gets out of his car and walks up the street towards an office building. People pass by saying hello, good morning, etc. Everyone knows him and looks at him with respect and warmth.

INT. CLEEK'S LAW OFFICE - A BEAT LATER

Chris steps inside his office, smiles at his assistant DOROTHY. Early twenties, a little on the plump side, sweet as sugar.

DOROTHY  
Good morning, Mr. Cleek.

CHRIS  
Mornin', Dorothy. That paperwork finished?

She grabs a file, taps on it.

DOROTHY  
Yes. I think I have everything in order.

CHRIS  
Well, bring it on in the office along with a cup a' mud and we'll get into it.

She smiles and nods. A bit of a crush in her eyes.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELD - MORNING

A FEMALE P.E. TEACHER walks amidst a bunch of girls stretching out on the field.

P.E. TEACHER  
Okay. Eight laps today, ladies.

The teacher sees Peggy sitting on the bleachers, staring at her shoes.

P.E. TEACHER  
Peg? Not feeling well again?

Peggy looks up, shakes her head. The teacher nods curtly and leads the girls down the track. Peggy watches them go.

Peggy lays over on her side, using her backpack as a pillow.

EXT. BACK OF THE GYM - SAME

Miss Raton shares a cigarette with a BALD TEACHER.

MISS RATON  
So this is the spot, huh?

BALD TEACHER  
Been sneaking back here on my period breaks for ten years now. Smoke-free campus, my ass. Heh.

MISS RATON  
I just need a drag from time to time.

He hands the smoke to her.

BALD TEACHER  
Drag away.

She takes the smoke, inhales a long pull, looks over to the track where all the girls are doing their laps. Her eyes find the bleachers, where Peg is lying on her side.

What's going on with this girl?

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL CLASSROOM - SAME

A scrawny kid stands before his class, giving a book report. All the kids are pretty zoned out. We find Brian, who's doodling in his notebook...

BRIAN'S POV: He's drawn some very intense large eyes that are framed by wild black hair and is currently, painstakingly, concentrating on sketching some very large and very nice breasts beneath them.

INT. SUPERMARKET - SAME

Belle and Darlin' walk the soap and shampoo aisle. Belle finds what she's looking for...LAVA SOAP. She grabs a half dozen.

A petite woman named VICKIE pushes past with her singing two year old sitting in the cart.

VICKIE  
Howdy, Belle! When we gonna'  
barbeque?

Belle looks up, trying to not to seem as dazed as she feels.

BELLE  
Soon. Real soon. The weather's been  
perfect for it, hasn't it.

VICKIE  
Your place this time?

BELLE  
Oh. The place just a darn mess.

VICKIE  
With little ones, how can it ever  
not be?

BELLE  
You're right about that. But the  
big ones don't help much either.

Vickie laughs.



INT. CLEEK'S LAW OFFICE - LATER

Cleek sips his coffee looking over the paperwork Dorothy has prepared. She stands there, obedient, hoping he likes her work.

DOROTHY  
Everything okay?

He doesn't answer, flips a page, finishing his analysis.

He grabs a pen, signs the document with a flourish.

CHRIS  
Perfect. Now, you get this back to  
Dean promptly along with a check.  
And send him a case of Dewar's  
while you're at it.

She smiles, leans forward to take the paperwork from him.

DOROTHY  
Mr. Cleek? May I say something?

CHRIS  
Of course, Dorothy. What is it?

DOROTHY  
It's none of my business...but in  
this economy...are you  
certain...(this is a good idea?)

Cleek is just a bit rattled by this unexpected question.  
Could she be right? Is he overextending? But he's  
determined not to show it.

CHRIS  
I'm sure, Dorothy. Don't you  
worry. That's a nice perfume by the  
way. New?

She blushes.

DOROTHY  
You noticed?

CHRIS  
It's very nice.

DOROTHY  
Thanks!

She sees his bandaged finger. It's a big bandage. She comes around to his side of the desk, takes his hand gently.

DOROTHY

What in the lord's name did you do  
to yourself?

He takes back his hand, looks at it, and without skipping a beat...

CHRIS

Got too close to a pretty smellin'  
gal and she just...

He makes a chomping sound, snapping his teeth.

She laughs, shakes her head and walks out with a little too much swing in those biggish hips.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - SAME

The Woman eats a bite of the day-old oatmeal. It's disgusting, but it's food. She chews, stops, spits out...

A piece of broken crockery. Blood trickles out of her mouth. She licks it with her tongue. Bends down and continues eating. It's all about survival, after all. About will.

INT. CLEEK KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

WHIRRRRR! A stand-up MIXER swirls yellow batter. It turns off and the WIRE-WHIP is tilted back.

Belle unlocks the whip, taps it on the bowl, then swipes it with a finger, tasting the mix.

She looks out the corner of her eye...

BELLE

Mmmmmmm...

BELLE'S POV: Standing at her hip is Darlin', who looks at the wire whip, dead serious, impatient.

DARLIN

Hey!

Belle looks down at her innocent.

BELLE

What?

DARLIN  
Gimme some.

BELLE  
That's not a very nice way to  
ask...

Darlin' thinks about that, slides a chair over, gets up on it  
and fans her arms out....

DARLIN  
Please, Momma? I loooooove you.

Belle smiles, steps to her. Darlin' wraps her arms around her  
neck, kisses her on the mouth, making a big show of it...

DARLIN  
Mmmmmmmmm-wah!

Belle hands her the whip and Darlin' eagerly sets about  
"cleaning it up", not bothering to get down off the chair.

DARLIN  
Mmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm. Can we make the  
*little men*?

Belle walks to a cabinet and pulls out some different cookie  
cutters. A fish. A dinosaur.

BELLE  
(holds up the fish)  
This one?

DARLIN  
Nooooooooooo.

Belle holds up the dinosaur.

DARLIN  
Momma!

Belle pulls out the one shaped like a little man, wiggles it.

DARLIN  
Yeah!

Belle pours out the dough, starts working it over with a  
rolling pin.

Darlin' sits down, trying to get every microbe off that whip,  
getting a lot on her face in the meantime.

BELLE'S POV: Darlin' at the table. In front of her sits a neat stack of Lava soap, two plastic buckets, fresh towels and washcloths.

DARLIN  
(nods towards the window)  
You think that *aminal* lady will eat  
a little men?

BELLE  
I...You'll have to ask Papa about  
that.

DARLIN  
Why's the lady here?

BELLE  
Papa's helping her. You heard him.

To an adult this would not be particularly convincing. But Darlin' simply nods, easily accepting what mama says.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - SAME

The Woman stares at an EYE-BOLT driven into the concrete wall. One of the cables holding her in place runs through it.

She works her wrist back and forth, trying to loosen the bolt. It's solid.

She pulls harder and harder, her lacerated wrists start bleeding. She stares at the bolt, putting the pain away, focusing...

EXT. CLEEK DRIVEWAY - LATER

Brian steps off a SCHOOL BUS, starts running down the driveway.

EXT. CLEEK COUNTRY HOME - FRUIT CELLAR DOOR - SAME

Brian runs to the door, looks around to see if anyone is around, then tries to peek through the cracks on the side.

Can't see a thing.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - SAME

The Woman stops working the bolt, sensing something, looks up to the door, sees Brian's shadow flickering through a sliver of light.

She smells the air.

BRIAN (OS)  
(whispers)  
You in there?

EXT. FRUIT CELLAR - SAME

Brian tries to look in other spot...

BELLE (OS)  
Young man!

Brian looks up, sees his mom standing on the porch, an angry look on her face. Darlin' stands next to her with Little Man cookies in each hand. She bites the head off of one.

BRIAN  
I was just trying to see if she was  
(okay)--

BELLE  
That what you want me to tell Papa?

He doesn't have an answer, sighs and walks to his mother and sister. Darlin' bites an arm off the headless cookie.

DARLIN  
Wanna a little man?

Brian takes the whole one from her, lays it flat in his hand and gives it a chop, breaking it in half.

DARLIN  
Hey! Your s'posed to eat the head  
first!

BRIAN  
Me? I chop 'em.

Darlin' shakes her head and bites another arm off. Belle guides them both inside.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - SAME

The Woman stares at the cellar door, listening to them go inside.

It's quiet.

She goes back to working at that bolt. It wiggles. Just a tiny bit. But it's a start.

INT. CLEEK'S CAR - MOVING - DAY

Chris drives, talking on the phone. Peggy sits next to him, sullen, staring out the window, every bit an apathetic teenager.

CHRIS

I hated to have to write a check  
that cost me a good neighbor...but  
if someone had to, I'm glad it was  
me. Glad to be of service.

He listens.

CHRIS

(laughs)

Hell! I'll help you through one a'  
those bottles, but I've got a  
family thing at home tonight.

Peggy looks at her dad.

CHRIS

You gonna be around for a few more  
days, tying things up? No rush. I'm  
just askin'. Okay. Friday. Good  
man. Okay. I'll be talkin' to ya.

He hangs up. He lights up a smoke.

PEGGY

(frowns -- the cigarette)

Could you not? I mean, I don't  
think it's - (good for...)

Chris gives her a look, then flicks the smoke out the window.

EXT. CLEEK COUNTRY HOME - A BIT LATER

Cleek and Peggy get out of the car, walk towards the house. The dogs in the barn bark loudly. Brian comes bounding off the front porch. Eager beaver.

CHRIS  
There's my boy.  
(to Peg)  
Don't forget the dogs.

PEGGY  
It's Brian's turn.

Chris looks to Brian. Peg goes inside.

BRIAN  
(salutes)  
On it!

Brian jams to the barn. Chris glances at the fruit cellar door, stretches his arms out lazily, then goes inside.

INT. CLEEK BARN - SAME

Brian walks over to a drum barrel and unlocks the latch around the rim. He pulls the lid off, scoops up a bunch of dog food with a big old plastic cup, walks to...

A CHAIN-LINK DOG PEN...

There are three COONHOUNDS in there, barking to beat the band, jumping and slobbering and dying for food and attention. One of them is snapping viciously at the other two -- their mother. They give her plenty of personal space. They've been on the receiving end too many times.

BRIAN  
Hey, cut that out, bitch. You want  
the goddamn hose? Where's the  
baby? Where's the baby?

The two younger dogs jump around, sniffing the ground, finding their way over to a old plywood doghouse. They scratch and bark at it. Mom bares her teeth and snarls.

BRIAN  
She sleepy?

INT. CLEEK KITCHEN - SAME

Chris takes off his dress shirt and slacks. Belle hands him some cut-offs and a work shirt. He looks at the cleaning products on the table, sitting next to a plate of little man cookies.

CHRIS

Signed and paid for. Not another resident within three miles now.

BELLE

Well, you finally have your own little country don't you. My question is, can we really afford it?

CHRIS

(ignoring this)

Everything quiet around here today?

BELLE

I haven't heard a thing.

CHRIS

You look in on her?

BELLE

No.

CHRIS

Well, get some sloppy clothes on and boil some water for those buckets. Let's get to it.

INT. CLEEK BARN - SAME

Brian dumps food in the dog trough. The three hounds chow down, growling low at each other, but not fighting. Even nasty old mom is too intent on feeding.

Brian walks to the doghouse, kneels down in front of the dark opening...

BRIAN'S POV: Just barely visible...a dirty old blanket shakes a little, and we hear a strange panting sound. Pretty much sounds like a dog. Pretty much.

BRIAN

You gonna' eat baby? C'mon.



He dumps the remainder of the dog food on the edge of the little doorway.

We hear a sniffing sound, and a little whimper.

BRIAN  
C'mon girl...

RAWR! BOK! BOK!...A vicious sounding growling and barking coming from inside. Brian steps back away from it. Right into a pile of shit. He looks down at it.

BRIAN  
Goddamn!

INT. CLEEK KITCHEN -

Darlin' plays with little man cookies at the kitchen table, walking them around, making them jump, flip, etc.

DARLIN  
Rawr!

She grabs one and brings it slowly to her mouth.

DARLIN  
(little man voice)  
Noooooo! Don't eat meeeeeeeeeeee-

CRUNCH. She bites off its head, then laughs like a giant monster.

Peggy looks up at her from her magazine in the living room, annoyed, then puts her iPod earphones in, cranking the volume.

INT. CLEEK BARN - SAME

Brian grabs a poop scoop and pan off a hook on a beam. His eyes fall on...

BRIAN'S POV: An old hand cranked drill.

INT. CLEEK KITCHEN - SAME

Belle walks in, changed into her scrubby clothes. Tee shirt and shorts. She puts a big chili pot on the stove, fills it with water from the sink sprayer. She turns the burner on high.

EXT. FRUIT CELLAR - DOOR - DAY

Brian stealthily makes his way to the door, the drill in hand. He bites his lip, surveying the situation. He sees a spot that he thinks will work, looks around to see if anyone can see him from the house.

All clear.

He bends down and drills a small hole on the bottom corner of the door. He brushes off the shavings, bends forward to look...

BRIAN'S POV: Searching around the dark...finding...The Woman's legs...scanning up...she's staring straight at him.

Brian smiles, pops in a stick of gum.

BRIAN'S POV: The Woman just stares.

INT. CLEEK KITCHEN - SAME

Belle carefully dumps the boiling water into the wash buckets.

Cleek enters.

CHRIS

Ready?

Belle sets the chili pot back on the stove.

BELLE

Yeah.

EXT. FRUIT CELLAR - DOOR - SAME

Brian takes out his gum, rubs it in the dirt, covering the whole thing. He takes the gum and sticks it in the newly drilled hole and smooths it over. It's camouflaged pretty damn well. He stands, well satisfied.

CHRIS (OS)

Boy.

Brian looks up, totally innocent. Hiding the drill behind his back.

BRIAN

Hey pop.

Cleek stands on the porch, holding some of their cleaning supplies.

CHRIS

Get on in the house and help your mother with those buckets, then go get the scooper stuff.

Chris walks past him to the fruit cellar. Brian slips the drill under the porch where it won't be seen and then does as he's told.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - A BEAT LATER

The Woman looks up at the door. It opens and light floods in. It hurts her eyes.

Cleek saunters down, sets towels and soap down in the corner by the winch.

CHRIS

How we doin' today?

The Woman is still. The only thing moving is her eyes, which never leave her captor.

Cleek bends down, cranks the winch up tight, stretching The Woman up and uncomfortably tight. Blood oozes out of the wounds around her wrists.

He gives it one more crank...and we notice the EYE-BOLT she's been trying to loosen.

It moves slightly.

Belle and Brian come down the stairs with buckets of steaming hot water. Brian sets his down and then jams back up the steps to get the scooper.

Cleek takes a bar of soap, folds it in a wash-cloth, then dips it in the water. Damn. It's hot. He starts working a lather into the cloth, smiling at The Woman.

Belle walks over to her husband, waiting for instructions.

CLEEK

Goddamn she's filthy. Ever seen anyone...smelled anyone...like that before?

BELLE

Not a human being.

Brian walks in with the scooper, out of breath, totally pumped.

BRIAN  
Gonna scrub her down, Pop?

CLEEK  
Mom and I are. But not before you  
clean up her mess.

Brian sighs, but hey...at least he gets in on the action.

He walks over and scoops up the waste bucket underneath The Woman. Needless to say, she missed the Tupperware. Piss residue on the floor.

CLEEK  
We'll just have to clean up after  
her until we get her --

BRIAN  
(smiling)  
Potty trained?

Cleek chuckles, snaps on a pair of rubber gloves.

CLEEK  
Heh heh. Yeah. That's exactly right  
son.

Belle twists her wedding ring on her finger. Cleek gives her a smiling glance. No sense of humor? Too bad.

As Brian scrapes up the waste, we CLOSE IN on The Woman's right hand...The rest of her is totally still, but we can see that she is putting a lot of strength into pulling on that loose bolt...

Brian indicates her rotting food.

BRIAN  
This too?

CLEEK  
Yeah. Let her think on food for a  
while.

Brian nods, stands there with the scooper and the bowl, not wanting to leave the proceedings.

CLEEK  
Git.

BRIAN  
But I can help you...

Cleek just looks at him. Brian gets the picture and leaves, sullen.

Cleek turns to Belle.

CHRIS  
Alright. Grab a bucket.

She complies. They walk towards The Woman.

WOMAN'S POV: Cleek dips the soapy rag into the steaming water again, lathers some more.

The Woman smells the soap. Awful. (*She keeps applying pressure to that bolt.*)

CHRIS  
Okay. Here we go...

He lifts the rag to The Woman's forehead and the instant it touches her...

SHE GOES BATSHIT...VIOLENTLY SHAKING EVERY MUSCLE IN HER BODY...TRYING TO GET FREE...

WOMAN  
(Bastard! Son of a whore!)  
Bastart! Mac dar striapach!

Cleek jumps back, hitting the pail of water in Belle's hands...it falls straight down and when the bottom hits the floor, scalding water sloshes out all over Belle's naked legs.

Belle screams.

BELLE  
Ow! Ow! Ow!

INT. CLEEK LIVING ROOM - SAME

Brian sits at the window, staring at the cellar door. He jumps up at the commotion he hears coming from down there, starts towards the door.

PEGGY  
Hey! You're gonna catch hell if you go down there, Bri.

BRIAN  
Suck my dick, sis.

He runs outside. She shakes her head and turns her music up further, trying to drown it all out.

Darlin' sits on the carpet in front of the tv, watching "Burro Boy" cartoons. Oblivious.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - SAME

The Woman still thrashes...just completely...wild.

CHRIS  
That's how you want to play? That's it, huh? Okay fine...

In one motion, he bends down, picks up the bucket and flings it at her. Only about a third of it actually hits her. But it's enough...

Her shoulder, her neck, part of her face, her belly...it burns!

She screams out hoarse and guttural and then suddenly... Stops.

WOMAN'S POV: Cleek has picked up the second bucket of water.

CHRIS  
(trying to calm down)  
This what you want?

The Woman...for the first time, maybe ever, looks at him with humble fear, her eyes *pleading*.

Chris likes this sudden turn of events. It gives him confidence. Resolve.

CHRIS  
(finally, to Belle)  
You okay hon?

Belle sits on a step, nursing her leg. It's completely beet red.

BELLE  
(gritted teeth)  
Y-yes.

CHRIS  
(staring at The Woman)  
Good. Now. Let's try this again.

Belle shakes her head like this is crazy, but gets up to do her wifely duty.

EXT./INT FRUIT CELLAR - INTERCUT

Brian removes his dirt-gum from his peephole, peers inside.

BRIAN'S POV: Mom and Dad standing before The Woman, who has calmed down for some reason. She's smart. One dousing was sufficient.

BELLE  
Maybe we should let this cool down  
a bit before --

CHRIS  
Now, hon, you know as well as I do  
the only way to get something clean  
is with good hot water. Might as  
well be shufflin' germs around if  
we go cold. Remember...we are in  
control here.

He looks to The Woman, smiles, lazily flips a little water at her feet, burning them slightly. A reminder. The Woman dances the little bit she can. Her eyes say one thing. Enough.

Cleek approaches her with the steaming rag again. He puts it over the top of her head and squeezes it out.

BRIAN'S POV: Soap and hot water stream down The Woman's face and...oh dear lord of thirteen-year-old-boys...her *tits*.

CHRIS  
Good!

Cleek dips the rag in the water again, rinses it, rubs on some soap, brings it to The Woman's face, and scrubs.

CHRIS  
Look there. We got a clean spot.

The Woman looks up at him, her face slightly cleaner. She sniffs the soap, sneezes. She's miserable. Never had a civilized soap-and-water bath in all her life.

BRIAN'S POV: Dad washes The Woman's neck, getting closer and closer to...those *tits*.

The boy watches in teenage awe.

Belle breathes through her nose, not the least bit fond of the sight of her man touching another woman.

Chris dips the rag in her bucket again, turns away from The Woman, smiling.

CHRIS

Don't you go gettin' all foolish on me, Belle. It's just something's gotta be done.

Belle looks down at the steaming bucket of water in her hands. Is she thinking of throwing it at him?

**WHAM!** *IN AN INSTANT, THE WOMAN HAS PULLED FREE THE LOOSE BOLT AND HAS A CLAW-LIKE HAND AROUND THE BACK OF CLEEK'S NECK, FINGERNAILS DIGGING INTO HIS NECK.*

Brian jumps back from the peephole.

BRIAN

Dad!

He runs for the house like a bat out of hell.

The Woman has Cleek and is thrashing him around. Belle stands there, shocked, not knowing what to do.

The Woman's fingers dig deep into the muscles in the side of Cleek's neck, dangerously close to an artery when...

Light floods the room.

BRIAN (OS)

Hey!

Everyone looks up to the light. Brian stands there, the .45 raised in the air.

BLAM! He fires it. The Woman flinches, hesitates, and Cleek is able to pry her hand off him. He falls to the floor. Brian runs down the steps and points the gun right in The Woman's face.

BRIAN

Back off!!!



The Woman still has that free hand. This may be her only chance. She rears back and...

WHACK! Gets hit square in the forehead with a two-by-four.

Her lights go out.

Brian and Cleek look up and see...Belle, standing there with the two by four. You've got to protect your man.

Cleek takes the gun from Brian, holds it on The Woman.

CHRIS

Th-thanks, hon.

(turns to his son, trying  
to regain composure)

Go get a hammer and the hand-drill.

Need to drive a new one...

(regards The Woman)

Deeper.

BRIAN

(indicating the gun)

Dad...sorry, I know I'm not  
supposed to...(handle that.)

CHRIS

It's okay, son. You did good. Now  
go get me those tools.

Brian runs up the stairs. Belle looks to her husband. He's clearly shaken, but trying to cover it.

BELLE

You okay?

CHRIS

Yeah. Yes, I am.

CUT TO:

WHACK! WHACK! WHACK! The eye-bolt is hammered into a new hole all the way down to the loop. Sturdy as hell now. Cleek's doing the whacking while Belle holds the gun to the Woman's head by way of discouragement.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

CLACK. CLACK. CLACK. Kids file out of the classroom, all sorts of clacking from the girls' high heels.

Miss Raton watches them exit. All the girls wear short skirts and skimpy blouses, typical slutty high school attire.

Except for Peg who wears a pair of pants she's much too skinny for and an oversized hoodie. The kids she passes notice, snicker. She makes brief eye contact with the teacher, looks away.

RATON

Can I talk to you for a minute,  
Peg?

PEGGY

I don't want to be late for next  
period.

RATON

I'll write you a note. Sit down for  
a sec, would you?

PEGGY

Oh...okay.

All the other kids are gone. Peg sits down, slumps forward, like she's trying to crawl inside herself.

RATON

You alright?

PEGGY

I'm fine. Why?

RATON

(smiles)

How come you're dressing like this  
lately?

No answer. Raton frowns.

RATON

I'm sorry. But the only reason a  
girl your age would cover up that  
much is if she had something to  
cover up. You didn't until just  
recently.

PEGGY

I don't understand what you mean,  
Miss Raton.

RATON  
Nausea. Baggy clothes. Mrs.  
Stepansky tells me you've been  
sitting out in gym for weeks now.  
Peg. I'm not stupid.

PEGGY  
Why don't you mind your own  
business?

RATON  
You are my business. You're my  
student. Who's the father?

PEGGY  
F-father...Father? You're crazy.

RATON  
I'd like to speak with your  
parents, Peg.

Peg stands.

PEGGY  
No. Don't do that. Listen, I've got  
to get to class...

She turns to go.

RATON  
Wait. Let me write you that note.

Peg sighs, waiting.

Raton takes her time walking to her desk, scribbles out a  
note.

RATON  
I'd like you to consider confiding  
in me, Peggy. It helps to have  
someone to talk to sometimes,  
y'know.

Peg doesn't answer. Raton holds out the note for her.

FADE TO BLACK.

A SERIES OF SHOTS...

INT. CLEEK BARN - LATER

SHUNK! Cleek's barn door opens, Cleek walks in, Brian tailing him. The dogs bark like crazy.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. CLEEK LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CHUKKA CHUCKKA CHUKKA...Baby blue fabric is sewn together on a sewing machine.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. CLEEK BARN - CONTINUOUS

THWAP! Brian stands up an old piece of plywood. It's weather - worn, bone-colored paint chipping badly. We hear a small motor start. The dogs are going wild.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - CONTINUOUS

CREEEEEAK...The Woman pulls on her restraints. The bolts are driven too far in. No wiggle room. She looks up, hearing a strange sound...

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. CLEEK BARN - CONTINUOUS

KKKKKKKKCHHHHHH!...The plywood is blasted with water, the paint flies off it.

CLEEK

Dial it down. But not too much.

SQUEAK...Brian dials in a gauge that gives a PSI reading.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. CLEEK LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

SNIP. SNIP. SNIP...Belle cuts a piece of fabric, pins it to another piece.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - CONTINUOUS

THUMP, THUMP, THUMP...The Woman watches as Cleek and Brian drag something down the stairs. They roll it to a corner.

Cleek takes the last drag off a smoke dangling from his lips, tosses the BUTT on the floor. He looks to his boy.

CLEEK

Make sure the plug's still in up there and then go inside and fetch mom and Peg.

BRIAN

Can't I help?

CLEEK

You've helped plenty. Go on.

He starts messing with the machine. Brian looks to The Woman, smiles. He looks to his dad, whose attention is on the machine.

Brian leans down, picks up the BUTT his father discarded, quickly flicks it at The Woman. It hits her in the belly. Sparks fly.

She stares at him, imagining what his intestines would taste like.

Brian smiles at her again, then exits, shutting the door behind him.

INT. CLEEK LIVING ROOM - SAME

Belle continues to sew, working on a long line of buttons. Brian enters, walks up to her.

BRIAN

Dad's ready for you. He wants Peg too.

BELLE

Well, get her.

BRIAN

(yelling upstairs)  
Peg!!! Dad wants you!!!

Belle grits her teeth.

BELLE  
Brian, go up and get her. Do not  
scream in my house.

BRIAN  
Sorry.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - SAME

Cleek steps away from the machine. It's a PRESSURE WASHER...a device that uses high-pressure water to remove mold, mud, dirt, and paint from buildings and road surfaces.

Peg opens up the cellar door and she and Belle descend. Belle holds a dress she's made folded over one arm.

CLEEK  
There's my girls. All done?

BELLE  
Yes.

CLEEK  
Great.

He pulls a knife from his pocket, slaps open the blade, walks toward The Woman. She tenses, as do Peg and Belle.

RIIIIIIPPPP! He starts cutting her clothes off, pieces of them falling to the floor.

He finishes cutting off the top, takes brief note of her breasts, bends down, and starts working on the bottoms.

The Woman stares at Peg. Peg looks into The Woman's fierce eyes for the first time. The Woman's nose twitches...her gaze tilting down to Peg's belly...

WOMAN  
(very soft)  
(Baby.)  
Bah-bee.

Peg visibly flinches. Nobody else seems to notice.

Cleek finishes up and steps back, taking The Woman in.

She's covered in scars, and grime, and callouses, but she's got a damn nice body. She doesn't show an iota of shame or modesty. Belle's covering that base for her.

She's clearly uncomfortable, annoyed, and harboring a festering, growing mix of jealousy and anxiety.

CLEEK  
(to Peg, indicating the  
clothing)  
Take that up to the burn barrel.  
torch it, then come on back.

Peg gathers up the filthy rags and exits. Belle stares at Cleek.

CLEEK  
You got something on your mind?

BELLE  
Do we really need Peg down here?  
She's sixteen.

CLEEK  
You think she doesn't get an eyeful  
in the girl's locker room?

BELLE  
Those are girls, this is...(a  
woman.)

She looks at The Woman, and words fail her.

CLEEK  
Hey Belle?

BELLE  
Yes?

CLEEK  
Do me a favor and leave this to me,  
okay?

Cleek steps over to the Pressure Washer, turns it on, grabs the spray nozzle walks back towards The Woman.

He hits the trigger on the sprayer and high-pressure, soapy water blasts her, moving her skin like a wind-whipped flag.

He blasts her chained wrist. It's really cut up bad and the pressure is too much.

The Woman screams.

Cleek is surprised into a smile. He looks back at Belle. His face like a kid on a tilt-a-whirl. Belle smiles dutifully back at him.

EXT. CLEEK PLACE - SAME

Peg comes back from the smoking BURN BARREL, sees Brian shooting freethrows, little Darlin' trying to rebound for him. They hear The Woman screaming.

BRIAN

I always miss out on the good stuff.

Peg ignores him. Darlin' bites her lip and tries to shoot a basket. Only about five feet shy.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - SAME

Peg re-enters, looks to her father and then to The Woman, astonished. Cleek is blasting her breasts, her thighs, her belly. Blasting between her legs.

He starts up towards The Woman's face. She closes her eyes, holds her breath. Water pounds at her face.

In the center of the floor, water and soap and grimy blood wash down the old rusty drain.

The Woman is clearly being worn down, her body getting pummeled. She looks to the two women in the corner.

THE WOMAN

(Will you help me,  
mothers?)

Sainmhiniu an bhfeadfa cuidiu a  
thabhairt dom, mathairs?

Cleek moves the washer up her arm to the other wrist. Blood colors the water as he blasts it.

The Woman howls.

PEGGY

Please! Dad! Stop! She's hurt!

Cleek releases the trigger, looks back at Peg. Is he going to smack her?

PEGGY

Please! Dad. Please!

Belle is just as shocked as he is at her daughter's outburst.



So, in a way, is the Woman. She has not expected sympathy.

Cleek shakes his head, goes back to blasting The Woman's wrist. She screams.

PEGGY

Fuck this.

Peggy exits. Belle tries to stop her with a halfhearted grab.

Cleek turns off the sprayer, yells...

CLEEK

Get your ass back down here, Peg!  
Goddamn it--

But before he can go after her...

THE WOMAN

Puh...puhlease...

Cleek turns to her. Even Belle takes a step forward. Did she really say...?

THE WOMAN

P-puhlease...

Cleek smiles.

CLEEK

Well, I'll be a son of a bitch.  
(to Belle)  
Go get some towels. And the first  
aid kit.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. CLEEK LIVING ROOM - A BEAT LATER

Peg sits on the couch, quietly crying. Belle roots through cupboards, carrying the towels, finding the kit.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - A BEAT LATER

Cleek stands before the wet and shaking Woman. He looks her in the eye.

She looks beaten. Broken.

CLEEK  
Finally had enough?

THE WOMAN  
Puh-lease...

She looks up to her wrists. They look ravaged and awful.

CLEEK  
I take well to manners.

He walks over and kneels at the winch. He lets tension off her arms. They lower about halfway.

Relief washes over her.

Belle walks in, with the first aid kit and towels.

CLEEK  
Dry her.

BELLE  
You loosened her???

CLEEK  
Don't worry.

BELLE  
Says the man with nine fingers.

Cleek gives her a grim look, then bursts into laughter. Belle can't help but smile a bit. The Woman doesn't understand.

Cleek walks up, takes out his gun, puts the .45 To The Woman's temple.

DISSOLVE TO...

Belle carefully dries The Woman off, lingering a little too long at her breasts, her belly, between her legs. Something almost as perverse about her now as her husband. The Woman somehow understands this. And doesn't like it. Cleek watches with a contented smile.

CLEEK  
Dry as a bone now. Don't want her coming down with something.

DISSOLVE TO...

Belle holds the first aid kit. Cleek swabs antiseptic on one of The Woman's ankles, then wraps it with a clean bandage. He moves to the other ankle.

DISSOLVE TO...

He stands, considering The Woman's wrists. She flattens her hands, palms out...a gesture of supplication.

He cautiously starts treating one wrist. The Woman looks exhausted and grateful.

DISSOLVE TO...

Belle unfolds the dress she's made.

BELLE  
(holding up her project)  
It buttons up on the sides. So you  
don't have to untie her or  
anything.

CLEEK  
That's great, hon.

She walks over and carefully starts to put it over The Woman's head. The Woman shifts, smelling the horribly clean fabric. Belle flinches back a bit.

CLEEK  
Go on. She's not gonna do anything.  
All this is new to her.

Belle doesn't quite believe that, but she's obedient. She pulls the dress down over The Woman's head, until it drapes over her body.

Belle's shaky hands button each button up the side. The Woman is calm, watchful.

BELLE  
(relieved it's over)  
Okay.

Belle and Cleek step back and look at her.

It's a very conservative Menno-style dress. Baby Blue, very Old World, very rigid cuts, very clean, very incongruous on this savage Woman.

CLEEK  
She looks just like one of those  
polygamist-type ladies. That's  
great.

BELLE

It should be sturdy. That was the point.

CLEEK

You did good. Real good.

The Woman watches the complacent Belle...learning?

BELLE

Thank you.

The Woman looks at them. Now there is shame in her eyes. She was fine being naked, but this little bit of domestication is absolutely humiliating.

CLEEK

She cleans up pretty nice.

BELLE

Should we feed her?

CLEEK

Yah. Got any leftover stew?

BELLE

Yes.

CLEEK

Fine.

Belle exits. Cleek walks over to the old sink, fills a cup up with rusty water, walks over to The Woman.

She looks at the cup of water, her mouth moving. Cleek puts it to her lips and she sucks it down.

CLEEK

That's it.

He puts a tentative hand to her head, pets her hair. For Cleek, almost tender. She leans in, apparently savoring the contact.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - A BEAT LATER

Cleek feeds stew by the spoonful to The Woman. She's starving, swallowing the food without chewing, spilling it on her chin. Cleek scoops some off her chin with the spoon. Feeds it back to her. Like she's a baby.

She finishes the bowl. Cleek reaches forward and pets her head again.

Belle watches from the corner. She never gets this kind of treatment. Not even when she's ill. This festers.

The Woman starts hiccupping...wait...no...she's *crying*.

THE WOMAN  
(Thank you.)  
Go raibh maith agat.

CLEEK  
(prompting her)  
Thank you.

She doesn't get it.

CLEEK  
Thank you.

She does.

THE WOMAN  
T-aank you.

She breaks down. Tears of gratitude coupled with genuine despair.

Cleek turns to Belle.

CLEEK  
See there? She's learning.

FADE TO BLACK...

INT. WHISKEY DICK'S BAR - NIGHT

Miss Raton sits at the end of the bar, nursing a Dewars on ice. It's a pretty dead night. Only regulars. The cherubic bartender saunters over to her. ANDREW.

ANDREW  
Want something to soak that up,  
Lana? Mussels are excellent  
tonight.

RATON  
I'll just take some fries and mayo.

ANDREW  
One trip to Europe and you're  
eatin' like a frog?

RATON  
Ribbet.

He laughs, calls out the order to the cook, then sits down.

ANDREW  
Your little charges still giving  
you heartache?

She picks up a piece of paper, fingers it.

RATON  
They aren't so bad.

ANDREW  
Boys still oglin'?

RATON  
I tried dressing more like a nun,  
but nothing seems to work.

ANDREW  
Guarantee I wouldn't be able to  
identify a triangle from a circle  
if I was a boy and you were bending  
over your lesson plan.

RATON  
Think if I told them which way I  
swing, it would dampen things down  
a bit?

ANDREW  
Honey, that'll only make it worse.  
What's the paper?

RATON  
A phone number. Parents of one of  
my students. I'm pretty positive  
this girl is pregnant.

ANDREW  
You're telling her parents?

RATON  
Shouldn't I?

ANDREW  
That's a toughy. Could make things worse for her.

RATON  
You think so?

ANDREW  
I'd say 9 times outta' 10.

RATON  
But it's going to be very obvious very soon.

ANDREW  
Hey, your call. My dad always told me not to try and change a woman's mind once she's set on something. Think I'll heed the old man on this one.

A bell rings and he turns to pick up her fries. When he comes back, she's gone....he tracks across the bar...she's at the pay phone, dialing the number on the paper.

INT. CLEEK KITCHEN - NIGHT

The family's eating pie after a big dinner. Cleek is in a great mood. Cause -- the Woman's submission.

The phone in the hallway rings.

CLEEK  
Ah hell. Never fails at dinner time. Peg, you wanna see who that is?

Peg gets up, solemn, walks down the long hall. The machine picks up.

RATON (ANSWERING MACHINE)  
Hello. This message is for Mr. and/or Mrs. Cleek. Peggy is a student in my geometry...

CLICK. Peg cuts the message off, deletes it, and erases the number from the Caller ID.

INT. WHISKEY DICK'S BAR - NIGHT

Raton hangs up the phone, looks down at the piece of paper...

INSERT...The address to the Cleek place is under the number.  
She walks back over to the bar. Andrew sets another drink in front of her.

ANDREW  
You're up to your buy-back.

RATON  
Thanks.

ANDREW  
Well?

RATON  
I should let it lay, right?

Andrew shrugs.

She considers, then crumples up the piece of paper...but slips it in her pocket nevertheless.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. CLEEK COUNTRY HOME - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

The faint sound of a dog whimpering from inside the barn, but otherwise dead silent tonight. Almost peaceful...

INT. CLEEK MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Belle's asleep.

Cleek stands at his door, wearing boxers and an undershirt. He slides into soft slippers, opens the door quietly.

INT. CLEEK HALLWAY - SAME

Cleek moves towards the stairs, barely audible creaks from the floor.

INT. BRIAN'S BEDROOM - SAME

On hearing movement, Brian's eyes open. He sits up.



INT. CLEEK STAIRS - SAME

He sneaks to the top of the stairs, peeks down into the dark bottom floor...

BRIAN'S POV: Dad is headed out the open door.

Brian starts down the stairs, following...

EXT. CLEEK COUNTRY HOME - SAME

Cleek walks to the Fruit Cellar door, leans down to open it.

INT. CLEEK MASTER BEDROOM - SAME

Belle wakes to the sound of the fruit cellar door CREAKING open, sees her husband is gone, sits up, puts her head in her hands.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - SAME

Cleek walks down, flips on the light. The Woman is wide awake, staring at him.

Cleek walks over to the winch.

EXT. FRUIT CELLAR DOOR - SAME

Brian tiptoes to the cellar door, removes the piece of gum, peers in...

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - SAME

We pull back from Brian's eye in the peephole...

Cleek cranks the Woman's arms up over her head, then loosens her legs a bit.

He walks to her, stands eye to eye, lifts a hand, caressing her collarbone. She stares into his eyes. He avoids hers.

He leans down and unbuttons the side of her dress.

EXT. FRUIT CELLAR - SAME

Brian's mouth gapes open. Geez.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - SAME

Cleek pulls the dress up, drapes it over The Woman's shoulder. She's completely exposed, awaiting what she knew would eventually happen -- rape being just another part of life. Sometimes you dominate. Others times you submit.

Cleek runs a hand along the side of her breast, slides down around her back, grabbing her ass, lifting a little. With his other hand, he peels down his shorts.

He leans in and goes about working his entry.

EXT. FRUIT CELLAR - SAME

Brian can hardly breathe.

INT. CLEEK MASTER BEDROOM - SAME

Belle turns over on her side in bed, tears in her eyes, the silence outside deafening.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - SAME

Cleek is fully inside The Woman now, his head bowed, unable to look her square in the eye. The Woman's head tilts, her eyes focus on...

BRIAN'S PEEPHOLE...She knows he's there!

EXT. FRUIT CELLAR - SAME

Brian backs off for a second, startled.

But then he thinks about it. What's she going to do? Hell, she can't even talk to tell on him.

He leans into the hole again and continues to watch.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - SAME

Cleek's speed increases. He's in the middle, building to his climax, forgetting to keep so quiet, grunting, blood rushing in his ears...

CRICK. It's a slight sound, but only The Woman hears it.

The shelf pushing into her back MOVES...ever so slightly.

He clutches The Woman's breast, roughly, his other hand still holding her from behind.

And that's it. He's done.

EXT. FRUIT CELLAR - SAME

Brian sits back. The most amazing thing he's ever seen. He gets up, headed back to the house, a bit wobbly on his feet.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - SAME

Cleek pulls the dress back down, begins to button it. And now he does dare finally to meet her eyes.

What he sees there is cold, emotionless, empty of any regard for him at all.

That and his own shame. It passes across his face for a moment and then it's gone.

He finishes buttoning her up, turns the light off and exits, leaving her in the dark.

INT. BRIAN'S BEDROOM - SAME

Brian lays back down in bed, staring at the ceiling with eyes blazing.

INT. CLEEK MASTER BEDROOM - SAME

Cleek slips back into bed.

Beside him, facing away from him, feigning sleep, Belle quivers in silent angry disgust.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - SAME

The Woman shifts a bit, pushing against the shelf in her back. It's loosened enough to WIGGLE a bit. She shifts. So does the shelf.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. PEG AND DARLIN'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Peg hasn't gotten out of bed. The rest of the family is bustling around in the hallway outside, getting ready for their day.

Belle pokes her head in.

BELLE

What are you doing, Peg? Time for school.

PEGGY

Not feeling very good, mom.

This really disturbs her.

BELLE

There's nothing wrong with you, Peg. Get. Up.

PEGGY

It's only a half-day, mom. Please. If I get up I'm gonna be sick.

BELLE

(clicks her tongue)

I don't have time for this. Fine.

Peg watches her mom walk off in a huff, then curls back up under her covers.

EXT. CLEEK DRIVEWAY - A BEAT LATER

Cleek cruises by Brian standing at the sign that proclaims this to be a bus stop, gives him a salute. Brian smiles and returns it, admiration clear in his eyes.

## INT. MISS RATON'S CLASSROOM - DAY

The students all work quietly on a pop quiz. Raton's at her desk, zoning in on Peg's EMPTY ONE. The bell rings.

RATON

Enjoy your half-day of freedom.

The kids put down their pencils and get the hell out of there, dropping their papers in a stack by the door.

Raton sits alone. They sure can vacate quick. She pulls the crumpled piece of paper from her pocket, looks back to Peg's desk, and uncrumples it on her blotter.

## INT. SCHOOL BUS - MOVING - DAY

Maniac middle-school kids, loud, obnoxious, typical. Brian sits by a window, near the back, lost in thought.

CYNDY (whose brush Brian "gummed" earlier) slides over to him, sits down.

CYNDY

Hey Brian. We're going to the movies, wanna come along?

BRIAN

(distant)

Nah. I gotta get home. Got stuff I gotta do.

She's disappointed. The poor kid really likes him.

CYNDY

Okay then. Maybe next time.

BRIAN

Sure.

He's barely even looked at her. Her stop's coming up. She slinks away down the aisle.

## EXT. CLEEK DRIVEWAY - DAY

Brian's dropped off at his stop, the bus pulls away. He heads for the house.

INT. CLEEK LIVING ROOM - A BEAT LATER

Peg lays on the couch, covered in an old quilt, just her head popped out, reading a book.

EXT. CLEEK FRONT DOOR - SAME

Brian pulls a note off the front door...it's from his mom...

**NOTE: Darlin's eye doctor appt. Sandwich stuff in fridge.  
Feed Dogs, Bri. Home by 3. MOM.**

Brian turns and looks at the FRUIT CELLAR DOOR.

INT. CLEEK LIVING ROOM - SAME

Brian enters. Peg doesn't say a word, just watches him. He walks to the kitchen, grabs a cookie, mows it down. The keys to the cellar and spares to the house and the dog-cage dangle from a support beam. He pockets them and a couple more cookies and heads outside, no idea his sister is even there.

EXT. CLEEK COUNTRY HOME - SAME

He walks by the cellar door, moving toward into the barn. Peg peeks out at him from the window. Just feeding the dogs.

INT. CLEEK BARN - SAME

He feeds the dogs quickly, the dogs growling and snapping at each other as before, looks over, and spies his dad's old toolbox.

EXT. FRUIT CELLAR DOOR - A BEAT LATER

He exits the barn, stuffing something in his pocket. He heads for the cellar door.

INT. CLEEK LIVING ROOM - SAME

CREAK! Peg hears the cellar door open outside. She gets back up off the couch, sees Brian going down there.

This isn't good.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - SAME

Brian walks in, trying to act casual, but clearly nervous. He looks into The Woman's eyes. The eyes are hard. This is the boy who stares at her through the peephole, who flicked something burning at her.

He's nervous but, for now at least, his bravado holds. Just as he's seen his dad do, he unbuttons her dress. The only difference is that Brian's fingers are trembling bigtime.

The Woman hisses at him. Like a cat.

Scares the hell out of him. But there's really nothing she can do. So he continues.

He takes a cookie out of his pocket, breaks it in half, holds a piece up to The Woman's mouth. She won't accept it.

Brian doesn't like this.

BRIAN

What the hell's wrong with you?  
Who doesn't like cookies?

He eats that half and then the other. The Woman watches him carefully as his hand goes back down to his pocket. Another cookie?

Nope.

A pair of NEEDLE NOSE PLIERS.

He snaps them open and closed. The Woman shifts, the shelf in her back is still loosening, but not enough to mean anything.

Suddenly, Brian strikes forward, poking the woman in the side with the pointy end of the pliers. She inhales sharply.

Brian smiles. Does it a couple more times. Her belly. Her breast.

Fun.

Then he lifts the dress up over her. Just like Daddy.

He runs his hands over her breasts. The Woman squirms with distaste. And Brian doesn't like that either. He pokes her with the pliers again, hard, in the belly. He's relishing his power over her. Maybe the first time he's felt true power. He pokes her again and she howls, then growls at him, sniffing the air.

THE WOMAN  
 (Fresh meat. Pig-meat!)  
 Feoil ur. Muiceoil!

Nonsense, but Brian doesn't like her tone. Time to teach her a lesson. He reaches up with the pliers, takes hold of The Woman's nipple and...

Twists.

A sharp intake of breath again from The Woman. But stoic.

He twists again, smirking.

His free hand slides down his pants.

Glory.

He twists harder, barely able to contain himself.

WHACK! The Cellar door's flung open behind him.

PEGGY  
 Brian! *What* are you doing???

Peg storms down. Brian palms the pliers and backs away from The Woman. He's scared all right but determined not to show it.

PEGGY  
 You're in trouble now, you little shit.

BRIAN  
 You shouldn't be down here, Peg.  
 This is man's business.

PEGGY  
 Man's....??? I don't see any *men*  
 around here you little fucking  
 pervert.

He takes a step toward her. And that's when Peggy sees something in Brian's eyes...

Something cold and dangerous as a snake. It gives her pause for sure. But she's not about to be cowed by her little brother.

PEGGY  
 Get out of here, Brian. Our mother  
 is going to hear about this.  
 (MORE)



PEGGY (cont'd)  
Your *father* is going to hear about  
this. Get out of here *now*!

He hesitates, glances back toward The Woman, and then gives in, knowing damn well he's in trouble. He stalks away, brushing his sister's shoulder hard as he passes.

PEGGY  
Good, Brian. I'll tell them about  
that too.

Peg waits till she's sure he's on the stairs then turns to The Woman. She's loathe to do so but her innate decency wins the day -- she walks over, pulls the dress down over The Woman's nakedness and begins to button it.

PEGGY  
I'm...sorry. About all of this.

And The Woman recognizes this act of kindness.

THE WOMAN  
(Thank you, mother.)  
Go raibh maith agat, mathair.

INT. CLEEK KITCHEN - DAY

Cleek excepted, the entire family are seated around the kitchen table. Belle and Peg on one side, Brian and Darlin' on the other. The silence is like a wall between them. Belle is clearly in a quiet fury -- we've never seen her even close to this way. Peg glares at her brother with a mix of shame for him and indignation. Darlin' looks around at each of them in confusion -- she has no idea what's going on here. Brian simply stares down at the empty table.

We hear Cleek's car pull up outside.

BELLE  
Darlin'? Go to your room.

DARLIN  
(upset now)  
Why? I didn't...(do anything.)

BELLE  
Don't worry. This isn't about you.  
This is about your brother. Now go  
to your room like a good girl.

Darlin' sighs, slips off her chair and sulks her way out of the kitchen.

The front screen door slams shut. Daddy's home.

Cleek enters. Casual as ever. But he can see something's up. Something he isn't going to like.

Belle stands at the table. Glares at Brian, then at her husband.

BELLE

Do you know what your son did? Do you want to *know*????

CLEEK

Not sure I do. Goddamnit Belle. What the hell's going on?

BELLE

Your son! He didn't think anyone was home. So he went down there...with her. Had her dress off. Had her *naked*. He was touching her, *and* touching himself. If Peg hadn't caught him at it god knows what would have gone on down there!

Cleek looks to Brian, who still won't meet anyone's gaze.

CLEEK

That true, son?

Brian doesn't say a word.

BELLE

Peg *caught* him! Didn't you hear me? Why the hell are you asking him, is it true????

CLEEK

Calm down, Belle. He's just a boy.

BELLE

Just a...? *Calm*??? Calm down? He had one hand on her and the other shoved down his goddamn jeans, Chris!

Then Cleek does exactly what we'd expect him to...

He smiles. Brian looks up at him to see how he's taking it and sees that smile. He's in a lot less trouble than he thought. Cleek looks at him like "oh, really?". Brian's eyes are wide. Cleek might even be proud of him!

CLEEK

Ah well. Hey. No one's really hurt, right?

BELLE

No one...no one's...what????

CLEEK

He's a kid, Belle. An adolescent. Adolescents have urges. And cleaned up like she is, I gotta say, she's not half bad to look at, you know?

Belle flips her lid...

BELLE

I can't fucking do this anymore!!!  
You *can't* do this to us, Chris!  
Have you lost your mind??? You can't just stand there and smile when your own son thinks it's okay to--(rape, fuck...her.)

CLEEK

(still calm)  
Okay to what?

Belle can't contain herself.

BELLE

You're an officer of the *court*!!!  
She's a *human being*!!! Do you know what would happen to *all* of us if you got caught?

Cleek actually seems taken aback by Belle's outburst. This only fuels her fire...

BELLE

Even what's going on with the goddamn dogs out there would be enough to put you in *prison*!!! You can't just keep putting one thing on top of the other and expect to get away with it forever!!! That's it. I'm leaving, Chris -- and I'm taking the girls. You can have your little rapist son to yourself! You're already teaching him every goddamn thing he needs to know, aren't you?

(MORE)

BELLE (cont'd)  
 You can damn well burn together,  
 the two of you, but you're not  
 going to hurt these girls anymore.  
 It's finished. It's over. You hear  
 me? Right now!!! You can't do  
 this!!! I can't--(do this.)

POW! POW! POW! Cleek delivers three quick BODY BLOWS to Belle, and then...THUMP!...levels her with a PUNCH to the side of the head that would knock out a horse. She goes straight down. Out instantly.

The children are stunned.

CLEEK  
 (charged, leaning over  
 her)  
 I can't? I CAN'T????

Peg goes to her mom.

PEGGY  
 Mom! Mom? Mom!!!

Brian can't believe what he's just seen. Dad's his hero!

Cleek leans down, brushes Peg away.

CLEEK  
 Aww. She's okay.

He lifts her up and sets her in a chair, gentle.

CLEEK  
 Get a cold cloth, would you, Peg?

Peg is frozen.

CLEEK  
 Peg!

She snaps out of it, walks over to the sink.

DING DONG! Someone's at the door.

Cleek doesn't miss a beat.

CLEEK  
 (to Peg)  
 Wanna get that first? See who it  
 is?

Peg goes for the door, opens it, does in fact see who it is, and half closes it again.

PEG  
 (almost a whisper)  
 Miss Raton!?!

She doesn't know what to do with this apparition. It sure can't be good. CLEEK appears behind her.

CLEEK  
 Where's your manners, Peg? Please, come on in.

CLEEK's all hearty hospitality, completely up to this. RATON's never done remotely anything like this before -- gone to the parents' home on a student's behalf -- so her look's a mix of shyness and determination.

She enters.

CLEEK (CONT'D)  
 How are you, Miss Raton? Geometry, right? Remember you from Parents' Night. Good to see you. Please, have a seat. Can I get you a cup of coffee? Soft drink?

RATON  
 I'm fine, thanks.

They sit, CLEEK and PEG on the couch, RATON in a plush chair facing them. BRIAN stands in the doorway between the kitchen and the living room.

RATON (CONT'D)  
 May I talk to you and your wife privately, Mr. Cleek?

CLEEK  
 The wife's not feeling too well. Having a nap. This is about Peg, I gather?

RATON  
 Yes.

CLEEK  
 Then she should hear it, don't you think? My son too. No secrets in my family.

RATON  
 (hesitantly, but gathering herself up)  
 (MORE)

RATON (cont'd)  
 I've observed some...distressing  
 behavior of late, Mr. Cleek.  
 Peggy's not looked well. She's had  
 to rush off to use the rest-room  
 several times during class. She's  
 taken to wearing clothes much too  
 big for her.

CLEEK  
 She likes to borrow my sweats. So?

RATON  
 Does Peg have a boyfriend, Mr.  
 Cleek?

Peg's head sinks. This is it. Bad.

CLEEK  
 No. And I'd know it if she did.  
 Why?

RATON  
 (this is hard)  
 I believe...I...Peg is pregnant,  
 Mr. Cleek.

CLEEK  
 (flat)  
 Pregnant.

PEG  
 I am not!

CLEEK  
 (ignoring her, focused on  
 Raton)  
 What makes you think my daughter is  
 pregnant, Miss Raton?

RATON  
 She's *showing*, Mr. Cleek. Not very  
 much yet but that won't last much  
 longer...

CLEEK  
 Any of your colleagues concur with  
 that opinion, Miss Raton?

RATON  
 What? I-I wouldn't know. We haven't  
 discussed it. I thought it might be  
 best to keep it - (quiet)

CLEEK  
(getting mean)  
I thought teachers were supposed to  
listen. You don't listen too well,  
Miss Raton. I told you Peggy didn't  
have a boyfriend and that I'd know  
it if she did. Didn't I?

RATON  
Yes, but...

CLEEK  
(looks to Brian, smiles)  
You accusing her brother? He's just  
a boy.

RATON  
(looks to Brian, who  
smiles back)  
No, of course not...

CLEEK  
(real mean now)  
You accusing ME?

RATON  
No, I...

CLEEK  
You saying that? Are you?

RATON  
I said nothing of the sort, Mr.  
Cleck.

CLEEK gets up, walks over. Gets way into her personal space.

CLEEK  
(eerily calm)  
In my own home. You accuse me.  
Right here in my own home.

RATON  
I didn't...I never...

CLEEK  
Bitch!

He OPEN HAND SMACKS her, so hard that she's knocked clear off  
her chair, onto the floor, her head making an awful CRACK as  
it hits the floorboards. That's all it takes. She's out cold  
too, same as Belle. Cleek is having quite an evening.

PEG  
 (astonished)  
 No! Geezus!!!!...Daddy...what did  
 you...?

CLEEK  
 Shut up, Peggy. This is your own  
 damn fault you little slut! And you  
 know it! Get out of here. Go get  
 some rope.

PEG  
 Rope? What are you...(going to do  
 with rope?)

CLEEK  
 Go! Now!

SLOW FADE UP...

EXT. - CLEEK YARD - DAY

Cleek's dragging Raton across the yard toward the barn at the  
 end of a rope, tied by her wrists, hauled along on her belly.  
 She's slowly starting to come to, moaning, trying to push  
 herself up weakly, but Cleek's moving way to fast, Brian  
 right by his side, enjoying the spectacle.

Peg runs after her dad, jerks his arm, trying to get him  
 to...

PEGGY  
 Stop! Please! You can't do this,  
 daddy! It's crazy! She's my  
 teacher! She's-she's my --

CLEEK  
 Friend? That what you were going to  
 say? Your *friend* here comes here to  
 expose you for the little whore you  
 are?

They're almost to the barn. Raton is getting feistier,  
 pulling at the rope with all she's got. It effects his  
 balance for a moment, but not much.

PEGGY  
 Daddy, you *can't* -- (kill her) --

Cleek grabs Peg's arm with his free hand and WHIPS her to the  
 ground. She goes down hard. Daddy hauls the rope the final  
 few feet, lashes his end to the door-handle.



RATON  
Please...let me go...I  
won't...(tell anybody)

Brian picks up a stick, raps Raton on the head, almost playfully.

BRIAN  
(for Dad's approval)  
Shut up, lady!

Cleek strides over to Peg, who cowers under him in the dirt.

CLEEK  
(mocking)  
"Daddy, you can't. You can't. You  
can't!!!" I have fucking *had it*  
with the women in this family! Your  
mother, your idiot sisters, you!  
(looks to Raton)  
No, make that *all* women. I have  
had it with all you goddamn  
bitches!  
(back to Peg)  
You're leeches, every one of you!  
You suck a man dry. A man works  
like a dog, and you suck him dry.  
**You suck him dry!**

He grabs the neck of Peg's sweatshirt, yanks her roughly up to her feet. She flails, he shakes her, tearing the sweatshirt at the neck.

RATON  
(lucid now, her protective  
teacherly self)  
Stop! Stop this right now!

Brian slams her in the ear with the stick, harder this time.

Raton watches as Cleek reaches one hand up under his daughter's sweater, clutching her breast so hard she SCREAMS. She tries to pull his hand away. He only clutches harder. She looks to Brian, who smiles charmingly. Little goddamn snake.

CLEEK (CONT'D)  
You know what you're good for, Peg?  
You ridiculous whining *women* are  
good for one thing and one thing  
only. And half the time you're  
miserable at that. You think I  
don't know who you are? You think  
I don't?  
(MORE)

CLEEK (CONT'D)  
 You're no better than that thing in  
 there. That thing in the cellar.  
 That's where you *all* belong! Every  
 last fucking one of you!

He throws her to the ground. She's all knees and elbows,  
 going down rough. He turns and strides back to the rope,  
 unties it, then throws open the barn door and starts jerking  
 Raton inside.

CLEEK (CONT'D)  
 Come on, Brian. This one we handle  
 right away.

RATON  
 No no no no no no!!!

WHAM! The door slams shut. We hear the dogs inside...in a  
 FRENZY.

Peg gets to her feet, crying hysterically, and runs toward  
 the house.

INT. CLEEK BARN - SAME

Cleek drags Raton to the dog cage, ties the rope off to a  
 link.

BARK! BARK! BARK! Two dogs are right on the other side of the  
 fence, gnashing, growling, barking. Raton's trying to keep  
 her distance.

CLEEK  
 Hose!

Brian scrambles, grabs an old hose with a sprayer nozzle,  
 cranks on the water.

CLEEK  
 Get 'em back!

Brian sprays, half on Raton, half on the dogs, who retreat to  
 the other side of the cage.

Big Mama dog sits in front of the dog house, growling,  
 snarling.

CLEEK  
 You keep those two back there.

RATON  
 (final plea)  
 Mr...Mr.  
 (MORE)

RATON (cont'd)  
 C-cleek...please don't do this...I  
 won't say anything...about any of  
 this...none of this ever  
 happened...

Cleek ignores her completely, purposeful.

He unties the rope, drags her, struggling for her life, opens  
 the pen door, and starts towards...

The Dog House. Mama Dog tenses, growling, frothing, but  
 moving out of Cleek's way as he drops Raton in front of it.

Cleek tosses down the rope, turns back to the pen door. Mama  
 dog snarls at him so he lunges at her like he's about to hurt  
 her (he has, many times) and she backs away, barking.

Cleek slams the door shut.

INT. CLEEK LIVING ROOM - SAME

Belle starts to come to...the dogs are barking up a storm  
 outside... someone's crying nearby...who?

Peg. Standing by the support beam in the kitchen on which the  
 KEYS TO THE CELLAR dangle...

PEGGY  
 (to herself)  
 ...no more...this has got to  
 stop...not any more...

Belle tries to sit up.

BELLE  
 Ahhhhh!

Her ribs are broken. Peg is oblivious, grabs the keys.

BELLE  
 (grunting, in pain)  
 Peg...unh...what's...(going on)

Too late. Peg is out the door.

DARLIN (OS)  
 Momma? What's happened to the dogs?

Belle turns around. Darlin' stands in the doorway, quietly  
 terrified.

BELLE  
 Come here. Come here.

Darlin' runs to her, grabs her. Ahhhhhh! Ribs.

EXT. FRUIT CELLAR DOOR - SAME

Peg unlocks the door, opens it, rapidly descends.

INT. CLEEK BARN - SAME

Mama dog starts closing in Raton, slow...Raton sits up, backing away crabwise towards the dog house. Maybe she can get in there and kick the hell out of the damn dog until it goes away...

CLEEK  
Oh. Bad choice.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - SAME

PEG

Crouches at the Woman's feet. The Woman looks up at the open cellar door, hears the racket outside. Smells the dogs. Smells fear.

And that's when the last thing she's ever suspected to happen, *happens...*

Peg starts unscrewing her ankle restraints.

INT. - CLEEK BARN - SAME

Raton hears a low growl coming from INSIDE the doghouse! And before it can fully register...

**RAWR!!!**...OUT OF THE DARKNESS INSIDE THE DOGHOUSE LEAPS A DEFORMED CHILD...HAIRLESS, **EYES JUST EMPTY SOCKETS**, SKIN LIKE MELTED PINK WAX, OVER-SIZED ROTTEN BUCK TEETH GNASHING OUT...SINKING INTO RATON'S SHOULDER...YELLOW-CRACKED CLAWS DIG INTO HER ARMS...ALL THE WHILE, IT GROWLS LIKE A DOG...*It happens so fast, she can barely comprehend it.*

Mama Dog charges in.

CLEEK  
Brian! Hose Mama!

Brian is having a helluva time, spraying back three dogs now, while the child ravages the frantic Raton.

BRIAN

Okay, sis. Show us what you got!

The boys are having a grand old time.

INT. CLEEK LIVING ROOM - SAME

Belle pushes Darlin' away, holding her at arms length.

BELLE

Unh...Darlin'? Baby? Go to your  
room right now...lock the door and  
don't come out. Don't come  
out...unless it's Momma or Peg,  
okay?

Darlin' tries to push herself back into her mother's arms.

BELLE

Darlin'!...ahh...  
(that hurt)  
N-now! It's really really  
important...okay? Go!

Darlin' runs for the stairs. Belle sits there, trying to  
maintain through the pain. She's got to get up. Gonna hurt  
like hell, but THOSE SOUNDS OUTSIDE...what are they?

INT. CLEEK BARN - SAME

The child -- female, maybe ten years old but built like a pit  
bull -- is TEARING a huge piece of meat off Raton's  
back...Raton is out of her mind, screaming in pain and  
fighting for her life. She whips around, lands on her back,  
starts pushing with her legs the opposite direction, the rope  
starting to slip off her...

RATON

Getawaygetawaygetaway!!!

The child inches towards her, on all fours, growling and  
barking. This *thing* truly believes it is a dog. It smells the  
air, cocks its head, claws at the ground. Behind her, Brian  
has all three dogs pinned down with the hose.

Cleek watches as the child sinks its teeth into Raton's foot.  
Raton starts shaking and flailing so wildly that it's  
pathetic and exciting and ridiculous to the boys all at the  
same time.

But all this flailing *frees one of her arms.*

She sits straight up and SHRIEKING with life-threatened adrenaline...CLAWS the child's face...the child yelps, hands going to her face...

GROWL! BARK! BARK! The child's back into it, one EYELID TORN DEEP AND HANGING...and there really is no eye in there at all -- she was born without them.

Raton has freed herself completely now, struggles to get to her feet, half her back flayed. The child crawls/runs at her, rearing up on her "hind" legs, claws ready to return the favor...

Raton, desperate, holds a length of the rope out in front of her...the child sinks her teeth into that, starts tearing at it, and slashing at Raton with her claws at the same time so that...

One claw sinks in deep enough to TEAR THREE INCHES SKIN from her belly.

Raton claws and fights for her life, but she's going down.

CLEEK  
(grim, declaring endgame)  
Turn it off, son.

Brian turns off the hose and the other three dogs make their way to the party. The sound is HELL UNLEASHED.

INT. FRUIT CELLAR - SAME

Peg unlocks the manacle on the Woman's left wrist, steps back quickly, anxiously. The Woman shakes her arm to get the circulation going and then just lets it hang there. Looks at Peg as though to say, well? The other? Yes or no?

Peg gathers herself together, steps forward, and with shaking hands -- frees her.

The moment of truth. For a second their eyes meet and then...

Suddenly the Woman's hand seems to LEAP out at her and...*runs gently, slowly across her belly.*

Peg looks as though she's just seen a miracle. Gazes at the Woman in pure wonder.

BELLE (OS)  
Oh my God! Peggy what have you  
done???

Peg turns to see her mom, standing at the top of the stairs. The Woman is on the move in an instant...

She bounds up the stairs...(and as she does...all vision goes WHITE HOT BRIGHT AND SUPER COLOR BOOSTED...she's been in the dark for weeks)...

She hits Belle square in the mid-section, lifting her up and slamming her down in the dirt. Not too good for those ribs.

BELLE  
(in pain)  
Unh...unh...

The Woman straddles her, batting away her hands like pesky insects.

BELLE  
Please!...Please! Peg! Help me!

Peg peers up out of the cellar, still in a kind of daze.

Belle screams. It's all she can do. But there's no way the boys are going to hear her over that racket.

BELLE  
Chris! Brian!

The Woman reaches down, puts her palm across Belle's cheek, Belle shakes her head this way and that, so The Woman...(in bright full color)...

DIGS HER THUMB AND FOREFINGER DOWN INTO BELLE'S EYES...CREATING A HAND-HOLD IN ORDER FOR HER TO...

EAT BELLE'S FACE...She tears off a hunk of cheek, then some ear, then we don't know what because there's so much blood and gristle and bone and spastic movement...

The Woman stands up, howling down at Belle, amidst the sounds of carnage from the barn. Belle's not dead, but she sure ain't fighting anymore...her face is an incomprehensible MESS...

The Woman leans down, picks her up, and THROWS HER across the yard...so that she lands back-first on the porch steps with a sickening CRACK.

The Woman turns and looks to Peg, still standing shocked on the cellar stairs. She CHEWS. Looks around, sees...

A RUSTED OLD LAWN-MOWER BLADE leaning against an old water pump. She walks to it, hefts it. Feels good.

Peg finally snaps out of it, starts to get away, then remembers..

PEGGY

Darlin!

She runs for the house, forced to step over her mother's broken, mutilated corpse in the process.

INT. CLEEK BARN - SAME

Cleek and Brian watch as the dogs and the child fight madly over what's left of Raton. Pieces of meat and bone, some hair. That pretty, conservative dress...none of it makes sense as a person anymore.

BRIAN

Doesn't even look real anymore.

Cleek smiles.

CLEEK

It does to me.

WHACK! The barn door slams open. Cleek looks up and sees...

CLEEK'S/BRIAN'S POV: The Woman, standing in the doorway, orange haze of SUNSET blasting behind her, BLOOD covering her face, dripping. Behind her, yards away, lies the broken dead body of Belle on the porch steps. And then there's the matter of that nasty looking LAWN-MOWER BLADE in her bloody grip.

CLEEK

(barely audible)

Jesus wept.

Brian follows his dad's gaze, turning, slowly, the hose still limp in his grip and dripping, exactly level with his penis, almost like he's taking a piss.

The Woman howls, charges, raising the LAWN-MOWER BLADE...Cleek instinctively moves backwards, goes down in a mess of shovels and rakes...Brian is frozen, in awe of this savage Woman as she...

BRINGS THE BLADE DOWN FAST AND HARD, CHOPPING INTO THE SOFT SIDE OF HIS LOWER BELLY JUST ABOVE THE HIP...HITTING BONE. WITH LIGHTENING SPEED, SHE THROWS THE BLADE INTO HER OTHER HAND, COMES DOWN HARD ON HIS OTHER SIDE...SWITCHES AGAIN, STRIKES A THIRD TIME...

She's chopping him like a tree.



She switches hands one more time, staring into the boy's SHOCKED EYES...Cleek scrambles through shovels and rakes, trying to get to his feet...

WHACK! The Woman chops one more time and SEVERES BRIAN'S SPINE. He goes down -- in two very dead pieces.

The Woman looks at Cleek who is panicking, scrambling for *something*...the Child and the other dogs are going wild...The Woman howls at Cleek...

WOMAN  
(Weakling!)  
Mar-la!

He looks to her...

CLEEK'S POV: The Woman, staring directly in his eyes with all the rage he's earned. She tears at her dress, ripping it down off her shoulder. *Fuck you and your civilization, Cleek!*

INT. CLEEK KITCHEN - SAME

Peg drags Darlin' by the hand, swipes through an open drawer with her free hand, searching.

PEGGY  
Where are the keys? Where are the  
fucking car keys???

DARLIN  
Momma! I want Momma!

PEGGY  
(ignoring her, realizing)  
Shit! *He's got them!*

Darlin' can't comprehend what's happening. All she knows is that she's scared. She starts to cry.

INT. CLEEK BARN - SAME

The Woman charges...Cleek reaches into a dark corner...finds what he's looking for...a STOCKLESS SHORT BARREL 12 GAUGE SHOTGUN WITH A HANDLE GRIP...a paper towel sticking out of the end of the barrel to keep the dust out...

CLEEK  
*Fucking bitch!!!*

He swings the gun on The Woman, but she's too fast...

CHING! She whacks upward with her blade, knocking the gun straight back, right next to Cleek's head and...

BLAM! The gun goes off next to Cleek's ear, the towel shredded into the air like snow. He falls back to his knees, dropping the gun, clutching his ear...The Woman smiles...tit for tat...

INT. CLEEK KITCHEN - SAME

Peg looks up startled at the sound of the shot. Damn! Did Dad shoot her? What if he comes for us next? She slams the drawer shut.

Darlin's REALLY scared now, crying so hard she can hardly get her breath. Peg looks around for a distraction, finds a one-liter bottle of water on the shelf, shoves it into her hand.

PEGGY

Here. Don't drop this! Let's go!

Darlin' makes for the front door.

PEGGY

Stop!

Darlin' turns to her.

PEGGY

Back door.

INT. CLEEK BARN - SAME

The Woman stands over Cleek, holding her blade. He howls in pain, the side of his head spattered with buckshot.

She raises the blade. He raises a pleading hand...

CLEEK

Please...don't...

SHUNK! In an instant she's lopped the hand clean off.

Cleek raises his *other* hand, trying desperately to wave her off...

SHUNK! The hand tumbles through the air. He's not going to win any typing contests anytime soon.

He screams like a child as The Woman lowers the blade and..

SLICE! Brings it up fast, SLICING HIM OPEN FROM CROTCH TO STERNUM, STRAIGHT DOWN THE MIDDLE.

Cleek looks up at her, a perplexed look on his face. What just happened?

The Woman falls down on him, her hands slide inside the slit in his middle and she PULLS HIM OPEN, parts him like a curtain.

She bares her teeth and buries her head inside him, her head DISAPPEARS inside and then she...

Pulls up and out. Intestines. She tears out a length and spits it out. Not what she's looking for. She goes back in and...

Ravages his insides...Cleek looks down, howls out more in sheer horror than pain, shock already well upon him, reaches out with handless arms...as The Woman comes up with...

His *liver*.

She chews, in ecstasy. The bastard tastes good.

She digs back in with her hands and finds...

His *heart*.

CLEEK  
(wailing)  
N-no..n-no..!

SHRIK! She tears it out, sinks her teeth in deep, taking a huge bite. The dogs are going nuts now.

Cleek slumps, arms falling to his sides, eyes wide and empty, dead.

The Woman stands, staring into space a moment, eating Cleek's heart. Almost casual.

WOOF! The Woman looks over and sees the Child, clawing at the chainlink fence, barking at her.

What is this? It's almost like one of her former children.

The Woman opens the cage. The three dogs barrel past her and go directly for Cleek's corpse. The Child tries to slip by, but The Woman grabs her by the back of the neck.

She struggles, howls, whimpers.

The Woman slaps her. That gets her attention...

THE WOMAN  
(Be calm. Be calm.)  
Socraigh. Socraigh.

...and she hands the savage girl the remains of the heart...the Child takes it, savages it...

The Woman runs a hand along the top of the child's head...soothing. Then she walks to the open barn door and picks up her BLADE.

The Child listens, head cocked, and chewing, follows the sound of her.

EXT. CLEEK YARD - DUSK

The Child catches up, trotting along on all fours behind her. They walk past the cellar, up the steps, over Belle's corpse, the Child sniffing at the corpse but continuing to follow into...

INT. CLEEK HOUSE - SAME

They walk through. No one home. Silent. A place for ghosts now.

The Woman walks through the hallway, finds...

THE BACK DOOR, swinging open in the wind.

EXT. CLEEK HOUSE - BACKYARD - DUSK

The Woman descends the back steps, stops, listens to the quiet evening. The Child stays not far behind, exploring the outside. She's never experienced this freedom.

Quiet. Then...

A RUSTLING SOUND. Barely audible, but to the Woman. She cocks her good ear, the sound MAGNIFIES, then...

A short sharp CRY OF PAIN rings out. She follows the sound into the thicket...

EXT. CLEARING IN THE WOODS - A BEAT LATER

Peg sits in the grass, holding her foot. She's twisted her ankle badly. Darlin' kneels by her side, trying to help her get up.

SNAP! A twig breaking. The girls look up, see The Woman standing there bathed in moonlight. The Child sniffs the air, recognizes the smell of...one of her captors -- she *knows* this smell -- and begins to weave back and forth behind her, anxious, barking.

Peg looks into The Woman's eyes. Is this how it's going to end for her? Tears spill down her cheeks.

But The Woman doesn't charge, she simply walks towards them, stands a few feet away.

Peg's eyes shift away from hers. To that LAWN-MOWER BLADE.

The Child growls low and mean as she shifts anxiously about. Then suddenly leaps forward as though to charge the girls and...

WHACK! The Woman hits her with the flat side of the blade. She yelps and backs away.

Darlin' stands, looks up at The Woman, innocently unafraid. She steps forward. She lifts her bottle of water, an offering.

DARLIN

Here.

The Woman stares at the little girl, unreadable. She lifts a bloody finger, puts it in her mouth, tastes Cleek's blood, then...

Extends her hand to Darlin', a second bloody finger pointed outward...her own offering.

Darlin' takes her hand and her lips close slowly over the finger. She suckles it for just a moment and then lets go. The Woman is pleased.

Peg musters up her courage and stands carefully, hobbles over to Darlin, wraps her arms around her sister protectively.

PEGGY

Please. Please just let us...(go)

The Woman reaches her bloody hand out to Peg now, offering a third finger for her to taste. Peg doesn't know what to do...

THE WOMAN  
(For the child, mother.  
For the child.)  
Do na leanbh, mathair. Do na  
leanbh.

The Woman lowers her arm and puts her hand to Peg's belly. And as before in that cruel cellar, Peg is strangely calmed by this gesture.

THE WOMAN  
Bah-bai.

And now Peg's tears come again, but quietly. Not of fear or sadness but tears of a terrible, huge relief. The burden of that awful family lifted at last.

Then the Woman simply takes Darlin' by the hand and walks her into the woods. The Child follows behind them.

And finally, so does Peg.

They disappear together into...darkness.

THE END