

GROWING FLOWERS ON THE MOON

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SUPER ON BLACK:

"Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind,
And therefore is winged Cupid painted blind..."

-- William Shakespeare

FADE IN

EXT. CARGILL HOUSE -- NIGHT

A long narrow drive leading to a great stone estate house.

A sleeting rain glistening the macadam.

Dark barely obscuring trees standing late-Fall naked along
the margins of the drive, Spanish moss swaying from their
limbs.

SUPER:

Cargill Family Estate House
Savannah, Georgia

A searing flash of lightning silhouettes a TALL FIGURE in a
trench coat standing in the drive, looking up through the
rain at the house. A bouquet of white flowers shimmers a
moment in the flash, held at the side of the shadowy form.

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- MASTER BEDROOM -- NIGHT

HELEN MACMILLAN, 75, sitting in a robe at a vanity. There's
an air of propriety about her...privilege. But something's
off...she's staring intently into her own eyes in the mirror,
a single tear tracing down her cheek.

A crack of thunder bringing her out of it. Gently dabbing the tear, dusting away its trace with powder. A final touch to her hair.

Rising, moving to a closet. Pushing a line of clothes out of the way, slowly pulling a dress bag from deep inside.

The bag to the bed, unzipping it, removing a black dress of somber style, laying it out carefully.

Her hand quickly to her mouth as she considers it, another tear escaping the corner of an eye.

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Lightning flashing outside the window overlooking the large room. Rain pelting the glass.

A large center island. A dozen glass-doored cabinets with all manner of dishware. Copper pots with blackened bottoms hanging over an old, iron, gas stove on which a whistling steel teapot sings.

FLORA ANTHONY, 70's African-American, entering from a pantry, a bag of cookies in her hand, an apron hanging loosely from her neck, untied.

Reaching for the steaming, screaming teapot...

FLORA

Shush, you. Makin' all that racket.

I know you're there.

Turning to the island, pouring the steaming water into a china teapot on a silver serving tray. A matching teacup, a silver sugar bowl, a folded linen napkin, a sterling teaspoon.

Arranging four cookies just so on a china plate near the teacup, straightening the napkin. Surveying her work.

FLORA

Alrighty then.

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- MASTER BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Helen, now in the black dress, checking herself in a full-length mirror. Draping a black shawl around her shoulders.

A final look, a sad smile. Turning and leaving the room.

EXT. CARGILL HOUSE -- NIGHT

The rain falling more intensely, sparkling in another flash of lightning.

The macadam drive is empty now, the Tall Figure in the trench coat gone. A single white gardenia blossom floating in a shallow puddle of rainwater.

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- KITCHEN -- NIGHT

A gust of wind slapping the rain against the window. Flora jumping at the sound, glancing up.

FLORA

Mm-Mm-Mm. May have to be looking
'round for old man Noah 'fore this
night is over...

Removing the apron, folding it exactly, resting it on the island. Lifting the tray and exiting the kitchen.

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- FOYER ENTRYWAY -- NIGHT

Helen descending the wide stairway into the Foyer, looking diminutive and isolated in the large, dimly-lit space.

Her footsteps echoing as she moves down the hall toward the Drawing Room. Opening the large doors and entering.

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- DRAWING ROOM -- NIGHT

Time stopped in here decades ago. Dated, overstuffed couch and chairs, walls of books and antique etcetera, tall windows with heavy, velvet drapes, a low fire snapping in the fireplace.

A sideboard with framed photos, maybe a vase with flowers, an old landline touchtone phone. A bar, populated with bottles, decanters, crystal.

Helen stepping in, closing the doors behind her. Crossing to an old desk across the room. A lingering touch to a small mahogany box center among an analog clock showing 7:03 pm and a calendar on February 8, 2018.

Turning to the bookshelves. Reaching for a specific book, taking it to an easy chair, sitting, opening it.

Lightning flashing through the partially-drawn drapes. The lights dimming and flickering with the thunder. A look to the windows, a shiver, the shawl drawn closer.

A beat later, Flora entering through the Dining Room archway with her tray.

FLORA

Nasty night blowing out there, Miss Helen.

HELEN

Yes, isn't it. Almost lost the lights again.

FLORA

Shoulda had that old fuse box replaced years ago. Hope I don't have to go down there again tonight.

Noticing the tea tray.

HELEN

What's this?

FLORA

Oh, you know. Some Mister Earl Grey to warm the blood a bit.

Her book to a side table as Flora sets the tray on the coffee table in front of her.

HELEN

You always know, don't you? I never have to say a word.

FLORA

Hard not to read a calendar, Missy.

HELEN

(a knowing smile, then...)
You'll join me?

FLORA

Maybe one of these shortbreads. You know tea keeps me up.

HELEN

Always has, hasn't it?

FLORA

It has, indeed. Strong stuff, that
Mister Earl.

Flora at the windows now, looking through the drapes at the
uncharitable night.

FLORA

Nasty, nasty, nasty. Wouldn't want
to be out there tonight.

HELEN

I was expected at the Foundation
board meeting this evening.

FLORA

They can do without you. Night like
this, catch your death.

HELEN

It wasn't that so much. Just didn't
feel right. Not tonight.

FLORA

No. Not tonight.

HELEN

I'm sure one of them will say
something, though.

FLORA

They should say 'Thank you', you
don't mind my saying...all the
money you give them. They can do
without you this one time.

(shivering, pulling the
drapes)

(MORE)

FLORA (CONT'D)

Whew! Chilly in here. You want me to poke up that fire a bit?

HELEN

The tea will warm me. Come sit.

FLORA

Maybe just a bit.

(to the couch)

Let me get that for you.

Pouring the tea, the cup to Helen.

HELEN

Thank you, Flora. You sure you won't have some?

FLORA

This will be fine.

A cookie, sitting back, a small bite. After a beat....

FLORA

You were reading something there.

HELEN

Nothing special.

FLORA

Uh-huh. Nothing special...

HELEN

No. Just passing the time on an...unfriendly...night. You know...

FLORA

I know I know that book, Miss Helen. Seen that cover many times.

HELEN

Have you?

FLORA

Mm-hmm. Book of poetry.

HELEN

It is, yes.

FLORA

Let's see...this time you're
reading ... I'm gonna say ... John
Keats.

HELEN

Shelley, actually.

FLORA

Shelley. Knew it was one or the
other.

HELEN

Yes.

FLORA

I know what day it is, too.

HELEN

Do you.

FLORA

Mm-hmm. Eighth day of February.

Eyes rising to meet...a beat of understanding.

FLORA

You read that book every year this
day.

HELEN

Every year.

FLORA

No other day. Just this one. Every year.

HELEN

And every year, you bring me Earl Grey.

FLORA

Yes I do.

HELEN

And every year, on this day, we have this conversation.

FLORA

That we do. Sad to say.

HELEN

Yes. It is sad. Every year more so, I think.

Helen rising, teacup in hand, taking the book to the bookshelves, fitting it into its empty slot, then moving to the desk.

Her teacup down, picking up the small mahogany box. Opening the lid slowly. A longing look inside.

HELEN

Fifty years today.

FLORA

Fifty. Lord. A lifetime...

HELEN

Still feels like yesterday to me.

FLORA

Does to me too, sometimes, truth be told.

Gently closing the box, setting it back in its place on the desk.

HELEN

I realized today that I've only marked all those years by these days, Flora. Fifty of them. Fifty February eights. That's all. There's nothing between them I can touch in my memory.

FLORA

Oh, Missy, the sun came out now and again.

HELEN

Maybe, but *those* days -- like *this* one -- they alone stand out. Just those fifty days. In this house. Fifty very long days.

FLORA

Maybe you ought'n dwell on it tonight. Let it go this one time.

HELEN

Now, you know I won't do that.

FLORA

S'pose I do.

HELEN

It's all I was left.

FLORA

Mm-hmm.

HELEN

I do worry about you though. You've passed all those days with me. A lot to have asked.

FLORA

Don't you worry none about that. I've not been much for the world either. I have my Bible and my garden and my kitchen. That's all I've needed.

HELEN

Well, it's been a comfort. You're a good friend. I'm grateful you've been here.

FLORA

Hope to always be, God willing.
(reaching for the teapot)
Let me warm up that cup for--

A door chime -- loud , intrusive, unwelcome -- somewhere in the house.

HELEN

Now, who would that be this time of night?

FLORA

Who's fool enough to be out *in* a
night like this is what you should
be asking.

Another chime, two. Insistent.

FLORA

(rising)

I'll see to it.

Flora through the door to the Foyer, closing it quietly
behind her.

Helen crossing to the fireplace.

Reaching up, taking down a large, framed picture.

INSERT: THE PICTURE

It's old, faded. A young man in uniform, standing in front of
what looks like a limousine or touring car. He's smiling.

BACK TO SCENE

Helen and the photo, locked together several beats, then...

HELEN

(softly)

Fifty years, David, my love. Every
single moment forever empty.

Kissing her fingers, touching the face in the photo, slowly
setting it back on the mantel.

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- FOYER -- NIGHT

Flora approaching the front door. The door chime again. And
again.

FLORA

I'm coming! Hold your water!

Turning the lock, opening the door.

An AFRICAN-AMERICAN MAN, mid-twenties, trench coat pulled over his head against the rain, entering swiftly without hesitation or invitation.

He will call himself DAVID. He's carrying a bouquet of white gardenias in one hand, a box of candy under the same arm.

A smile breaking as he sees her.

DAVID

Flora! My God, it's good to see you...!

Stamping his feet, shaking off the water...

DAVID

...You haven't changed a day! How have you been?

FLORA

Excuse me? I don't think--

DAVID

(shedding his coat)

So good to be home. Could have picked a nicer night to travel though. Very disagreeable weather...

FLORA

Mister, you can't --

Handing her the coat...

DAVID

Best hang that somewhere to dry.

FLORA

Now you just wait a minute--

DAVID

Sure looking forward to one of your
pot roasts. You don't happen to
have one going, do you? Been
dreaming about them, if you can
believe that.

FLORA

Mister! You can't come in here!

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- DRAWING ROOM -- NIGHT

Helen's face creasing with concern. Her eyes to the Foyer
door.

FLORA (O.S.)

There's been some mistake here! I
don't know who you think--

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- FOYER -- NIGHT

David moving toward the Drawing Room...

DAVID

Helen in by the fire?

FLORA

Where you think you're going? Miss
Helen...!

He reaches for the door...

FLORA

Mister! You can't go in there!

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- DRAWING ROOM -- NIGHT

The door bursting open. David striding in, a mix of confidence and anticipation, the flowers and candy in hand.

Flora grabbing his arm.

FLORA

I said you can't come in here!

Ignoring Flora's hand, his face brightening as his eyes find Helen.

DAVID

There you are! Lovely as ever!

(moving toward Helen,
offering the gifts)

I brought your favorites, my
love...gardenias and
truffles...scents and sweets...a
peace offering for my tardiness.

Helen recoiling. What's happening?

HELEN

What?! Who are...?! Don't! Stay
where you are!

DAVID

Darling...?

HELEN

I mean it!

David stopping, looking from Helen to Flora and back again.

FLORA

You need to leave, mister! Now!

DAVID

(smiling, a laugh)

You two. Very funny. If I didn't know it was you, I would think --

HELEN

There is nothing funny about this. Who are you...?

DAVID

(still thinking it's a joke)

Who am I? Darling...

HELEN

Don't call me that. Whoever you are, I wish you to leave. Now.

DAVID

Leave? Why would I (leave) ...?

HELEN

I have asked nicely, sir. Please. You're frightening us.

DAVID

Oh, come on. Frightening you?

HELEN

Yes. You are.

DAVID

Helen. What is this?

Flora crossing quickly past David to the sideboard.

FLORA

(pointing to David)

You stay where you are.

(to Helen)

I'm calling the police.

DAVID

The police? My God, what is going on here? Helen...it's me...

HELEN

I don't know you, young man--

DAVID

Don't know me...?

HELEN

No. I do not.

DAVID

I...

Looking at her...not knowing what to say...confusion rising in him...

DAVID

What's going on here?

HELEN

Exactly my question. I do not know you...we have not been introduced...in my memory...and even if we had been, it is highly inappropriate for you to call this time of night without prior notice. Certainly unsuitable to force your way in like this.

DAVID

Force my way--?

HELEN

Now, please, if you would just leave. Before anything more serious occurs--

DAVID

All right. This has gone on long enough. It's been an enjoyable little amusement--

HELEN

It has not been an amusement and there's been nothing enjoyable about it--

DAVID

Where's father? He's not part of this game too, I hope.

Helen and Flora exchanging a concerned and bewildered glance.
David catching it...

DAVID

What?

HELEN

Your father?

DAVID

Yes, of course.

HELEN

Why would your father be here, young man?

DAVID

Why wouldn't he be?

Helen, a questioning glance at Flora, then back to David.

HELEN

Your father isn't--

DAVID

At the club, is he?

HELEN

Young man--

DAVID

When will he return? I have much to tell him.

FLORA

There's no one here but us three, and one of us shouldn't be.

HELEN

Who is your father? How would we know him?

DAVID

(frustrated at this)

Seriously? My father...Walter Cargill. We're standing in his house.

A long beat, hanging like a weight. Then...

HELEN

(quietly, gently)

I find it highly unlikely he would be your father, young man. But that aside...Walter Cargill...is dead.

DAVID

Dead?! He...he can't be...My God!
When? When did this happen? Why
wasn't I told?

HELEN

Walter Cargill died forty-nine
years ago, long before you were
born.

DAVID

No. No, that's not poss--

Looking at them, reading the truth in their eyes.

DAVID

Oh, my God...

David setting the flowers and candy on the nearby bar. Moving
toward the fireplace, obviously distraught.

DAVID

What happened?

FLORA

Mister, I don't know what you think
you're up to, but--

DAVID

Please. What happened to my father?

Another glance between Helen and Flora.

HELEN

The man you referred to -- Mr.
Cargill -- took his own life...if
you must know.

DAVID

What?! No! He would never--

HELEN

He was destroyed by his son's
untimely death.

(a glance to Flora)

As we all were.

DAVID

But I'm obviously not dead. Who
would have told him such a thing?

My God...

Sitting in a chair, face buried in his hands, he begins
weeping.

DAVID

My God, my God...

He, weeping silently. Helen and Flora, uncertain as to what
to do.

HELEN

Young man...

(nothing, so more firmly)

Young man.

David straightening, wiping his eyes, trying to pull himself
together.

DAVID

I'm sorry. I just...I can't believe
this. I hope you weren't here when
it happened.

HELEN

I...

(a look to Flora)

(MORE)

HELEN (CONT'D)

...we...have been here fifty years, sir. Mr. Cargill left me this house in his will before he...before he passed. Flora and I are here by his kind graces. But I don't see how any of that is your business.

DAVID

My business? He was my father!

HELEN

That is simply not possible. Now, you are obviously upset, but we are not the ones to help you. Whatever it is, it has nothing to do with us. So please--

DAVID

No. I...My God, what is going on here? Helen, please--

HELEN

All right. Enough of this. Flora, please call the police.

DAVID

Wait. I think it's important that we--

HELEN

Important enough to get yourself arrested, young man?

Looking at her, straightening, then calmly....

DAVID

Yes. Under the circumstances, I certainly think it is.

HELEN

Well, then you may just get your wish.

(to Flora)

Flora...

Flora pulling the phone to herself, picking up the handset receiver.

DAVID

Helen...Flora...please. Don't do that. Can't we just talk about this?

HELEN

There is nothing I want to hear from a man who impertinently barges into our home this time of night without proper introduction or protocols.

Flora starting to punch in numbers.

A sudden, aggressive step toward her.

DAVID

Don't do that! Put the phone down!
Put it down!

The volume and stridency in his voice frightening Flora. She, slowly setting the receiver down, moving cautiously toward Helen.

FLORA

Missy...?

DAVID

Please. You don't want to do that.

HELEN

And why don't we?

DAVID

Look...I obviously seem a stranger to you -- God knows why. But please believe me. It's me...David.

HELEN

David? David who?

DAVID

(as...it's obvious)

David.

A glance flying between Helen and Flora.

HELEN

Dav...David? Not...my...David...

Helen's eyes shifting to the picture of the young man in uniform on the mantel.

David taking a step toward her.

DAVID

Yes. That David, Helen.

At the sound of her name again, Helen's anger rising.

HELEN

Stop this! Who the hell are you?!

DAVID

My God, how do I answer that? If you say you don't know me...

HELEN

I do not, sir.

DAVID

Then I am at sixes and sevens
here...I don't know how--

FLORA

Sixes and sevens?

DAVID

What? Oh...yes, sixes and...YES!

Yes, sixes and sevens! Dad...

(the pain of the loss hits
him again)

...He used to say that to us when
we were kids...remember, Flora?
About being confused! He would say--

FLORA

Mr. Walter Cargill used to say
that, yes, but not to you and me,
because we could never have been
children together. I'm old enough
to be your grandma, son.

(to Helen)

We need to end this foolishness.

DAVID

Please, we can figure this out.
Just give me ten minutes...

HELEN

I will not--

DAVID

Five minutes, then. Just five
minutes. Please...for me...that's
all I ask.

FLORA

You've had your chance.

Flora touching in the number. A pregnant beat, waiting for the connection. Helen considering the distraught young man in front of her. Then...

HELEN

Hang up, Flora.

FLORA

Hang up?

HELEN

Yes.

FLORA

Why? In God's name...

HELEN

Please, Flora. Put down the phone.

The receiver slowly back in its cradle.

FLORA

You know what you're doing, Helen?

HELEN

(to David)

They'll be here in five minutes if she calls back, young man. I will give you that much time to say whatever piece you think you must. Then you will leave.

FLORA

No, Helen. Let me call and *then* maybe--

HELEN

We'll give him his say, Flora. And then he will leave.

(to David)

Yes?

FLORA

This is wrong, Missy. This is way wrong.

HELEN

Maybe. We'll see.

Indicating the chair near the fireplace. David moving to it, sitting. Helen to her chair, sitting.

HELEN

You have your five minutes. And not one minute more.

A three-second silence that feels like ten hours, then...

DAVID

I'm really not sure where to begin, to tell you the truth. It's hard for me to believe that...Helen, you don't know who I am? It's so confusing...

Looking around the room as he's speaking, at the doors, the windows, the desk...remembering? ... reacquainting? ... familiarizing ... planning?

DAVID

Look, I apologize for not letting you know I was coming in late, but...I just made the train and I didn't have time to find a phone before boarding--

HELEN

You're tap-dancing. Get to it. What did you say about my David? Who are you?

DAVID

(frustration)

Helen. My love. It's *me*. David.

Helen rising, her temper barely in check.

HELEN

You will not say his name again!
How dare you come into my house...on *this day*...and say that to me. How *dare* you!

David opening his arms, sitting forward as if to rise.

DAVID

Helen, please...!

HELEN

Don't!...Stay there!

FLORA

Helen, this man is crazy. If you're not scared, I sure am. Let me call--

DAVID

(speaking quickly to stop
her)

All right. You're angry with me. I
can see that. But if we could all
just calm down a moment
and...and...and talk. 'No one wins
when passion and disquiet overwhelm
patience and repose.'

HELEN

(a beat, stunned)
What did you say?

DAVID

What? Say what?

HELEN

That last...about....What you just
said, about passion and
disquiet...it--

DAVID

It overwhelms patience and repose.
Yes.

HELEN

My David used to...he used to...

DAVID

I say it a lot, yes. It's one of my
favorite quotes. Remember? I wrote
it to you in a card once when we
had that small spat--

HELEN

How did...? Stop! Please stop!

(beat, quietly)

What is this?

Helen suddenly unsteady...can't take her eyes off the man in front of her.

David cautiously moving to the couch near Helen, slowly sitting. Reaching out toward her --

DAVID

Darling--

Flora swiftly swatting his hand away.

FLORA

Oh, no. No, sir, mister. You keep your distance.

(to Helen, taking her hand)

If he won't leave, then we should, Missy. Right now.

HELEN

No. Wait a moment... Just give me...

(quietly, to David)

Please. Tell me your real name.

Maybe we can help you in some way.

David, quiet a moment, then...

DAVID

(just as quietly)

I've told you.

HELEN

What you've told me is preposterous. And outrageous. You cannot be--

FLORA

ID. Show me some ID. Prove what you're saying.

DAVID

I...I don't have--

FLORA

A drivers license? A Costco card? Anything? Show us something or I call.

DAVID

I just have this...

Pulling a few crumpled bills from his pocket.

DAVID

The cab from the station took most of it. I seem to have lost my wallet somewhere, so my ID... but ... please...believe me. What I've told you is true.

HELEN

This is ludicrous. You can't just come here and claim--

DAVID

Where else would I go? This is my home. *Our* home.

HELEN

Oh, for the love of--

DAVID

Everything I feel, think,
see...every thought I have...I know
I am David Cargill. The same way
you know you are Helen MacMillan,
and she knows she is Flora Anthony.

Considering him a beat or two, then...

HELEN

(calmly, sadly)

The man you claim to be -- David
Cargill -- was killed in 1968 in
some godforsaken place called Hue,
in that senseless Vietnam War,
fifty years ago. Fifty years ago
today, in fact. He was twenty-five
years old. Which means, if you were
he, you'd be my age. You are not
seventy-five years old, young man.

DAVID

I know it sounds insane. I don't
understand what's happening here
myself. Maybe it's...I don't
know...some twist...some trick of
the universe, but I know who I am.
(beat) I can say, though...lately
there are times where I've felt
that I've been *in* places, but not
of them. Does that make any sense?

FLORA

Lots of us feel that way, sad to
say. Doesn't mean we can just be
somebody we're not.

DAVID

I can't explain whatever this is. I wouldn't know where to begin. I mean, why do I have the memories I have...

(to Helen)

...of you...

(to Flora)

...of you, Flora? Memories of conversations, people, moments in my life that are as real to me as this table--

FLORA

We all have things floating in our minds that have no business being there, son. I used to play like I wasn't me when I was little. Close my eyes, imagine myself all done up in a pretty pink dress, in a big car, going to a party, riding a pony. Doesn't mean I was gonna wake up the next day and be Princess Diana. It doesn't work that way. It just means I was a poor little black girl wishing things were different.

DAVID

I know it sounds crazy. But...why would I know this house, then?

(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)

That this room connects through there to a dining room that has an inlaid mahogany dining table and high-back Queen Anne chairs, and sideboards filled with antique blue and white china? And beyond that, a kitchen with a big island, and a gas stove over which hang a dozen copper pots with blackened bottoms? And upstairs, six bedrooms, all with ten-foot ceilings, and high casement windows with heavy blue velvet drapes, and walnut four-poster beds--

Helen raising her hands, turning away...it's too much.

HELEN

Stop!

(turning back to him)

What you are saying is impossible. You might as well be telling me you can grow flowers on the moon.

DAVID

I know it seems that way, but maybe I can -- Wait! I can show you! How would I know...

Quickly to the desk, pointing to the mahogany box.

DAVID

There. In this box. There's a dried pink rose, with a white ribbon around it.

(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)

And tied into the ribbon are two gold wedding rings...our wedding rings...the ones we never got to use. We put them there the day I left for Vietnam.

HELEN

Oh, my God...

DAVID

How would I know that if I wasn't David Cargill?

Helen's eyes to Flora, then back to David.

HELEN

Oh, my God...

FLORA

Don't believe him, Helen. There's all kinds of ways he can know that. He could have come in here some day we were out...

(moving for the phone)

It's time we got this man out of this house --

A sharp move toward Flora.

DAVID

Don't do that!

Helen quickly between them.

HELEN

Don't touch her!

DAVID

All right, all right. I just--

FLORA

(almost pleading)

Missy...Don't be listening to this man!

DAVID

Helen, please--

Helen torn between them, her eyes still on David, like if she looks away, the possibility of who he's claiming to be will disappear, like she's questioning her own eyesight, questioning reality, questioning hope. After a moment...

HELEN

Flora. Perhaps you could give us a minute. I think I should talk with him a bit more.

(carefully)

In private.

FLORA

(incredulous)

No! I will not leave you here with him for a second!

HELEN

Please, Flora. It will be all right.

(turning to David)

It *will* be all right, won't it?

DAVID

I'm not here to hurt anyone.

FLORA

(to David)

How do we know that?

(MORE)

FLORA (CONT'D)

(to Helen)

Miss Helen--

HELEN

It will be fine, Flora. Look, I think we need to check that the front door is locked, and that there's no one else on the front grounds. That's something that needs to be done, don't you think? Will you do that, take a look?

(looking at David)

We're just going to talk a moment while you do that. Please?

Flora looking into Helen's eyes, worry in her own. Helen nodding.

HELEN

It will be all right.

FLORA

(after a beat)

I won't be long. You holler if--

HELEN

(guiding her out the door)

I will. I promise.

Flora exits. Helen turns to David. Their eyes meet and lock.

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- FOYER HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Flora starting to move toward the front door, but stopping. Looking back at the Foyer door, hands wringing.

FLORA

Oh, Missy. What in the name of
Jesus are you doing?

Moving back to the door, leaning into it, an ear on the wood.

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- DRAWING ROOM -- NIGHT

Helen and David, still staring at one another.

HELEN

I haven't made a mistake, have I?

DAVID

I told you. I won't hurt you. I
couldn't.

HELEN

Then what is it you really want,
young man? We don't have money
here. Some jewelry upstairs, but
not much...

DAVID

My God. I'm not here for any of
that. I've just come home--

HELEN

This is *not* your home!

(calming herself...and her
voice)

You're...confused, I can see that.
Perhaps something happened -- a
bump on the head, maybe, or--

DAVID

I was right about the box, wasn't
I?

HELEN

That box has been there for years.
A dozen people could have known
about it, young man.

DAVID

Call me David, will you, please?

HELEN

I will not. That would be
ludicrous. There is no way you
are....my David.

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- FOYER HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Flora standing upright, nodding.

FLORA

No, he is not. You tell him,
Missy...

Turning, looking down the hall...probably should check, as
asked...

Beginning to move down the hall toward the front door.

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- DRAWING ROOM -- NIGHT

David, frustration mounting...

DAVID

All right. If I'm not David,
then...

Moving to the desk, picking up the box.

HELEN

Don't touch that, please.

But David opening the box, lifting out the dried pink rose with the white ribbon and the rings.

DAVID

...how would I know about this if I wasn't--

HELEN

Leave that alone!

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- FOYER HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Helen's cry stopping Flora...turning...

HELEN (O.S.)

(muffled, behind door)

I said leave that alone!! Put it down!

Running back toward the Foyer door...

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- DRAWING ROOM -- NIGHT

Helen crossing to David quickly, trying to take the rose from his hand.

But he, grabbing her hands in his, holding them tight.

DAVID

You have to believe me!

Helen's eyes snapping to his, something passing between them in the touch of their hands...an electricity...something.

A small, short scream from Helen. She appears near fainting, her body going limp. The rose dropping to the floor.

David pulling her to him, supporting her, keeping her from falling.

DAVID

Darling! Are you all right?

David guiding her to the nearby couch.

The Foyer door opening quickly, Flora rushing in, seeing...

FLORA

Sweet Jesus! What are you doing?!

David lowering Helen to the couch.

DAVID

She was falling...

FLORA

(rushing to the couch,
pushing him)

Get away from her!

DAVID

Yes! Okay! Just--

FLORA

Missy? You all right?

Helen...dazed...her eyes searching for David.

HELEN

Yes, I'm--

FLORA

(to David)

What did you do to her? I wasn't
even gone a minute!

DAVID

Nothing. We were talking, she
started to fall. I didn't want her
to hurt herself--

FLORA

Talking? You don't fall over from talking. Helen...?

HELEN

(composing herself)

I'm all right. It was nothing. A little lightheaded is all. Stop all this fuss...

FLORA

(at David, with spleen)

I didn't start this fuss. You want to help her, get her a glass of water.

DAVID

Yes. Of course.

David moving quickly to the bar...a glass, pouring water.

Flora sitting next to Helen.

FLORA

(whispered)

This has gone on long enough, Miss Helen. That man is after something...now this?

HELEN

I said it was nothing, Flora. It really was, and probably as much my fault as his.

FLORA

You can't mean that.

HELEN

I do, actually. And I want--

David returning, handing Helen the glass of water.

DAVID

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

HELEN

It's fine. I'm fine. Thank you for this.

(sipping the water)

Please -- can we just continue our conversation...quietly...without all the drama. Can we do that?

(looking from one to the other)

Yes? Now, I'm fine. I was a little unsteady. That's all. He was helpful.

Flora's discomfort still tightening every sinew in her body.

HELEN

Really, dear. It's fine. Finish up out front. Let us talk a moment more.

Flora rising, crossing to the Foyer door. Looking back at them, shaking her head, then exiting.

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- FOYER -- NIGHT

Flora pulling the Foyer doors closed, turning away. Wringing her hands. Looking up...a decision.

Moving quickly across the Foyer to the trench coat hanging on the coat rack near the front door. Finding a pocket, reaching in...

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- DRAWING ROOM -- NIGHT

David sitting across from Helen.

DAVID

Thank you.

HELEN

I didn't do it for you.

DAVID

All the same.

(beat)

I'm not here to harm you...either
of you. You have my word.

HELEN

It's that word of yours that's in
question, I'm afraid.

Helen picking the rose from the floor, crossing to the desk,
the rose delicately placed in the box. A long gaze at it. The
lid closing. The box back on the desk. Turning to David.

HELEN

I need a drink. Politesse dictates
I offer you one as well.

DAVID

No, thank you. I don't drink.

(as Helen moves to the bar
cart)

I never have.

Helen stiffening -- another true thing. Slowly picking up a
decanter and pouring.

HELEN

He never liked the taste of
alcohol. Said it tasted like how...

DAVID
...ether smelled.

HELEN
...ether smelled.

Head turning quickly, staring at David a long beat, then
slowly moving to the edge of the couch, glass in hand.

HELEN

How am I supposed to take this? How
would you know these things?

David leaning on the back of Helen's chair. Frustration.

DAVID

I don't know. This feels more
surreal to me than it must to you.

HELEN

Surreal doesn't begin to define it.
I feel like this is a nightmare I'm
going to wake from at some point.

(sitting on the couch)

Put yourself in my place, if you
can. You are asking me to accept
the impossible.

DAVID

How do I explain...?

(rubs his eyes)

I'm very tired. I haven't slept...

(indicates the chair)

May I?

Helen nodding, he sitting...

HELEN

Let's forget for a moment who you say you are. Let's start with this: How did you get here? To my house?

DAVID

I came on the train, like I said.

HELEN

Where were you coming from?

David looking at her a moment...Then...

DAVID

Nowhere I wanted to stay without you.

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- FOYER -- NIGHT

Flora finding nothing in the first pocket. Turning the coat, reaching inside the second. Her rummaging stops.

Withdrawing her hand.

INSERT: Flora's hands: Unfolding a crumpled bus ticket. It reads:

"February 6, 2018
GREYHOUND BUS LINES
From: Laplace, LA
To: Savannah, GA"

BACK TO SCENE

Flora closing her hand around the ticket.

FLORA

Lord, Lord.

Flora moving to a nearby door, entering.

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- DRAWING ROOM -- NIGHT

Helen rising, turning from him.

HELEN

That's not an answer.

David sighing deeply.

DAVID

Does it matter where I've been? I simply wanted to get home. To you. When I got to Savannah Station, I took a taxi. I couldn't find my key for some reason, so I rang the bell.

HELEN

You have a key to my house?

DAVID

Well, no more, obviously. I must have lost it with my wallet, but why wouldn't I have one?

HELEN

If you did, you shouldn't have.

Moving to the mantel. The picture of the young man in uniform.

HELEN

This was David Cargill, fifty years ago.

Handing the photograph to David. He, staring at it, brow furrowing, as if confused about what he's looking at.

HELEN

You are not the man in this picture. It's impossible. I can get a mirror, if you'd like.

DAVID

I don't look like him, yes, but why do I know everything of his life? If I am not David Cargill, then how do I remember --

HELEN

Remember what? How can you remember what you never lived?

DAVID

How do I answer that? Somehow, I am here again, Helen. I don't know why. I don't know how. Whatever this is, it's...But look! I know it all...

David jumping up, crossing to the windows. A drape pulled back, a look into the night.

DAVID

It was right there. In the drive, right there. My father's silver Bentley, remember?

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- LIBRARY/OFFICE -- NIGHT

Flora sitting at a large desk, a banker's light shining down on an oversized atlas in front of her, the bus ticket in her hand.

INSERT: A map of the Southern United States. Flora's finger tracing a line southeast from Savannah. The finger stops just west of New Orleans, tapping the dot labeled Laplace.

FLORA (O.S.)

Mm-hmmm. That where you're from,
mister?

BACK TO SCENE

FLORA

So what are you doing *here*?

Closing the atlas, rising, turning out the light.

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- DRAWING ROOM -- NIGHT

David, at the window, looking out into the night.

DAVID

I can tell you everything about
that afternoon.

EXT. CARGILL HOUSE -- FRONT DRIVE -- DAY -- 1968

YOUNG DAVID CARGILL -- the one in the picture on the mantel -- standing by a silver Bentley. He's wearing an Army green uniform, lighting a cigarette, looking off across the grounds at the sky.

DAVID (V.O.)
(speaking as if reciting a
poem)

It was just at dusk, the sky dark
as French burgundy above, the
reddish glow of the sunset on the
horizon, like a slash of
incandescent lipstick across the
upper lip of the earth...

Young David turning, looking up at the front of the house...

EXT. CARGILL HOUSE -- SECOND STORY WINDOW -- DAY -- 1968

YOUNG HELEN MCMILLEN, looking out the window at him.

DAVID (V.O.)
...you stood in this very window...
looking out at me by the car, my
leather satchel at my feet. You
wore a yellow dress, with a high,
white collar. You were holding a
cat...

Young Helen turning quickly from the window...

DAVID (V.O.)
You disappeared...

EXT. CARGILL HOUSE -- FRONT DRIVE -- DAY -- 1968

Young David tosses his cigarette as...

DAVID (V.O.)
...and a moment later, ran from the
front door into my arms. You held
me so tight I could barely breathe.

YOUNG HELEN

Don't go, David. Please don't go! I couldn't bare it if something happened to you...

YOUNG DAVID

Nothing will happen to me, my love. I can't see the universe being that cruel, can you?

YOUNG HELEN

It's not fair. We're just getting started and they take you.

YOUNG DAVID

It's only for a year. Hardly a wink. And I'll write you every day...I promise. I'll be back before you know it.

Bending and opening his satchel...

YOUNG DAVID

I have something for you...

Pulling a small mahogany box from inside, handing it to her.

YOUNG DAVID

Open it.

Young Helen, gently opening the lid, her fingers pulling a fresh pink rose from within, two gold rings tied to it with a white silk ribbon.

YOUNG DAVID

Our wedding rings, which we'll exchange upon my return.

(MORE)

YOUNG DAVID (CONT'D)

They encircle my heart, my love,
and will keep me safe, as long as
you keep them near. I will be back
for them...and for you.

She falling into him, a deep, encircling hug...

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- DRAWING ROOM -- NIGHT -- 2018

David, still at the window...

DAVID

That was our last moment
together...

HELEN

(breathless)
How do you know--?

DAVID

...and the last beauty I saw...that
sky...

(turning to her)

...and you...before the hell of...

(shaking off a memory)

...remember?

(smiling then)

You wanted a big wedding...the
church, the flowers, a dozen
bridesmaids, a white silk and
crinoline gown covered in pearls.

HELEN

Stop this! How do you--?

DAVID

(pushing on)

You wouldn't kiss me goodbye that day. You told me you were afraid it would be a last kiss...that if you saved it, I would have to return safely to collect it. I promised I would. You remember?

Helen turning from him, one hand to her heart, the other to her mouth.

HELEN

Oh, my God...

DAVID

I guess it's taken me fifty years to fulfill that promise.

A long beat. Helen not moving, her hands trembling, a mix of fear, despair, and confusion washing her face.

David approaching her, his hands gently to her shoulders.

DAVID

Darling, I--

HELEN

(spinning from him)

How do you know these things...these *private* things...!

DAVID

I don't know how, Helen. I don't know what. But somehow, in some way, I *am* David, and I *am* here, and I want--

HELEN

Why are you doing this?!?

Flora entering from the Foyer, seeing Helen's distress.

FLORA

Helen?

HELEN

It's all right. This is all
just...a bit unsettling, that's
all.

FLORA

Unsettling? How is it even
possible, Missy? Heaven and earth
have either turned upside down, or
this man is a liar. And I think I
know which it is.

(to David)

What's in Laplace, sir?

DAVID

What? La-what?

FLORA

Louisiana. Laplace, Louisiana.
Where you came from, isn't it?

DAVID

I don't...no, I...

HELEN

What are you talking about?

Moving to Helen, handing her the bus ticket. As she's looking
at it...

FLORA

Thought I'd check the pockets of his coat while I was out there. Found that in one of them. Bus ticket from Laplace, Louisiana to Savannah. Two days ago.

HELEN

(to David)

I thought you said you came by train.

DAVID

I...I did. I don't know what that is.

FLORA

It was in your pocket, mister. In the coat you wore in here.

DAVID

I found that coat on a bench at the station when I arrived. Someone must have left it there. It was raining, I needed something to stay dry. I didn't want to show up here soaking wet.

FLORA

That's a fool's story. Nasty weather, nowhere to go, you needed someplace to get warm and dry, maybe five-finger-discount a little this'n'that while you're there. You just pick us out of a phone book?

DAVID

I told you why I came here, whether you believe me or not. And I guess it had to be tonight.

HELEN

And how is that?

DAVID

Because whatever brought me back here, for whatever reason, it did it on the anniversary of my death...God! That sounds insane! How can I have died in 1968 and be standing here now?

FLORA

Because you are not Mr. Cargill, plain and simple. Besides, even if you could be, that's not how God designed things, son. When you go sit at His right hand, you do not get to come back. You wouldn't want to. So, you are not him, and what you are doing is a sin against my God, and an affront to Miss MacMillan here. So don't be looking for sympathy where none is deserved.

DAVID

You have always trusted in that God of yours, haven't you, Flora?

HELEN

Only thing in this world she does
trust in, judging by what I've
seen.

FLORA

Amen.

DAVID

I think I knew that the day we
hired you--

FLORA

You didn't hire me, son--

DAVID

Yes, well, my father, then. You're
right...I was just a child too.
Your daddy insisted my father come
to his church and talk with him
before he would agree to your
coming to work at Cargill House. I
tagged along, you remember? A
beautiful little church -- First
Bible Baptist, not six miles from
here.

FLORA

(to Helen)

How does he know--?

DAVID

Your daddy -- Tamarius Anthony,
wasn't it? I remember him as a good
man, Flora. A godly man.

(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)

I admired him, though at the time I thought it a little extreme that he wouldn't let you come to us until we declared before the altar of his church that we accepted Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and swore to live by the Ten Commandments. And he made my father buy us each a new Bible, too, remember? You still have yours?

FLORA

How do you know that? That was fifty years ago. My daddy's been gone longer'n you been alive. How do you know any of that?!

DAVID

I was there, Flora. I--

FLORA

You were not there! You were not!

Another bright flash of lightning, an even louder, deeper clap of thunder. The lights dim and flicker. Another lightning flash, another clap, and the lights immediately going out.

FLORA

Oh, Lordy, Lordy...

The only light in the room now coming from the fireplace. In that dim light, Flora moving to the mantel...

FLORA

Every time God sends the rain...

Taking down a chamberstick, picking up a twig from among the stack of logs nearby, lighting it in the fire, then touching the candle alive. Turning to Helen.

FLORA

You all right, Missy?

HELEN

Yes, fine. But I think that fuse is gone again.

FLORA

One of these days, this old house needs to grow up. I'm tired of going down in that basement on nights like this. Makes my skin crawl.

HELEN

(turning to David)

I'm sorry about this...

But he's not there...not in the room at all.

HELEN

Young man?

(no answer, then to Flora)

Where did he go? Young man!

(a beat, then)

David!

FLORA

You know better'n to be calling him that, Missy. He is not your Mister David. And don't believe that story about the ticket.

HELEN

Maybe he did find the coat, like he said.

FLORA

We shouldn't be looking for excuses for him, Missy. He is not who he says he is. He can't be. And that's enough to make me worry something mighty.

HELEN

He doesn't seem to be a threat, Flora. He just seems to be...confused...a little.

FLORA

You willing' to trust that? Where'd he go? What's he up to now?

(to the Foyer door)

He leave?

(opening the Foyer door)

Mister? Mister, you out there?

HELEN

You think he might have gone upstairs?

FLORA

He's in this house somewhere, Miss Helen, and I don't like it we don't know where.

HELEN

Maybe he left.

FLORA

Maybe we should, now we got the chance. Go out to the car, get away from here until someone can come out here who--

The lights flickering, coming back on. Helen and Flora looking at one another, then surveying the room.

FLORA

Least we can see now. Please, Helen, let's go.

HELEN

I don't know, Flora...maybe--

DAVID (O.S.)

That basement is as dank as I remember it. And more cobwebs than it's ever had.

David entering through the archway, a bottle of wine in his hand.

DAVID

We should give it a good cleaning, Flora.

(to Helen)

And that was the last new fuse, love. We'll need to get another box. But I did find this in the racks. A fine old port to warm you up. One of my father's favorite vineyards, I believe. Perfect for a night like this.

HELEN

You went to the basement?

DAVID

Of course I did. Had to change that fuse. Again. Every storm, it seems, doesn't it?

(moving to the bar)

Would either of you care for a glass?

HELEN

No. No, thank you. But...I appreciate your fixing the lights.

Setting the bottle on the bar, turning to them...

DAVID

Nothing I haven't done a hundred times.

Flora noticing, pointing to David's head.

FLORA

You're bleeding.

David touching his forehead, where a trickle of blood snakes down.

DAVID

So I am. Hit my head pretty hard down there. Harder than I thought, I guess. I forgot how low those beams are.

HELEN

Or you didn't know.

A stare between them, then...

DAVID

I knew how to get there, didn't I?
Where the fuse box was.

Ignoring him, Flora pulls a tissue from her sleeve, hands it to him, pointing to his head.

FLORA

I'll get you something for that.

DAVID

(as she's moving away)

Thank you, Flora. We've always
taken care of one another--

FLORA

(spinning to him)

No, sir, we have not. Not one bit.
And don't be mistaking human
kindness for acceptance, young man.
I don't know what's going on
here...

HELEN

Flora--

FLORA

...but I won't let you leave here
bleeding. Wouldn't be Christian.

(to Helen as she moves
toward the archway)

I'll be right back. Maybe you
should come with me.

Stopping Flora with a touch to the arm...a softer voice...

HELEN

I'm sure it will be fine. Now, God works in mysterious ways -- you've said that to me many times. Maybe God has sent this young man here for a reason.

FLORA

The Bible also tells us to 'be sober and be vigilant, for the Devil walks about.'

HELEN

I doubt he's the Devil, Flora.

FLORA

We'll see.

Exiting through the archway.

DAVID

She's always loved you, you know. From the first second she met you. Thought you were the most beautiful thing she'd ever seen. Told me so many times.

HELEN

She's always been the sister I never had. I'm grateful every day that she's remained with me. I don't think I'd have stayed without her.

DAVID

I get that. I wouldn't stay here without you.

HELEN

Please. Don't say things like that.

DAVID

Why not? It's the truth--

HELEN

Because none of this can be true.
As much as you or I may want it to
be...

A long look between them...what did she just say?

He indicates the couch.

DAVID

Sit with me a moment. Please.

HELEN

I'm fine right here.

DAVID

(beat)

I'm not sure what we do here.

HELEN

There's no *we*, young man. There's
never been a *we*, you and me. There
very much *was* a David. And for so
many years, I have lived with his
no longer being in this room, no
longer in my arms, no longer
whispering his love to...

(emotion steals her
voice...a long beat)

(MORE)

HELEN (CONT'D)

I have managed by letting the love
I still feel for him every day
surround the pain of his loss and
hold it at bay, not letting its
grief overwhelm me, as it most
assuredly could. And the only
reason I could do that was not
letting possibility feed hope. And
now you...Can you see what you are
doing?

DAVID

I can't explain why I am who I am.
How does one do that? But the
possibility of my being here
again...now...with you...*that* is
the hope that has sustained *me*. Can
we both not embrace whatever gift
this is?

HELEN

I--

Flora returning, a small bottle of hydrogen peroxide and a
bandage in her hands. Pointing to the couch.

FLORA

Sit there.

David moving to the couch. Flora cleaning and dressing his
wound. Silence as she does. When she's finished...

FLORA

I'll get that coat for you.

HELEN

Flora, it's...It's still raining out, and like you said, it wouldn't be Christian, now would it -- turning him out on a night like this. I think we can wait awhile until it stops.

Flora trapped in her own sense of right. Sighing, moving to Helen.

FLORA

I don't understand what you're doing, Miss Helen. This goes against nature and the order of things.

HELEN

He doesn't seem to be a danger, does he? And he's certainly been a help. I just don't...

(decision in her eyes)

Look, it's getting cool in here, dear. Perhaps we can use something warm.

Helen picking up the tea tray from the coffee table, handing it to Flora.

HELEN

Some more tea, perhaps? I would like some. Would you mind getting some for all of us?

FLORA

I will not serve this man, Helen. I will not. You're treating him like a guest, and we don't know--

HELEN

We cannot let fear overtake our sense of propriety, Flora. "A guest in our house will always--"

DAVID

"-- find family at his side."

Helen and Flora turning to look at David... a quote they remember....

Flora breaking from Helen, beelining into the archway, then a quick turn back...

FLORA

(to David)

You want us to believe you're a nice young man, son. You look like you could be. Someone I maybe would have liked to have met myself fifty years ago. But looks can deceive. And what you're doing here -- whatever it is -- it's an abomination, and I cannot forgive you for the pain you are visiting on my friend. If you will not leave on your own, I will call the ones who will see to it you do.

(to Helen)

You want tea, Missy, the kettle's still warm. I'll make it for you if you like, but I will not serve this man further. God forgive me for acting uncharitably.

And she's gone.

HELEN

Flora! Please...!

Helen moving to the archway.

HELEN

Can I leave you here a moment
without worry? I need to...

(indicating Flora)

DAVID

Yes, of course.

The archway empty now.

David watching her go, then a turn, a lean against the
mantel, a look up at the picture of David Cargill.

Rubbing his eyes, hanging his head, as if very, very tired. A
violent shaking of his head, then...

DAVID

(a whispered moan)

No, no, no...

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- DINING ROOM -- NIGHT

Helen crossing the room toward the kitchen.

HELEN

Flora?

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Helen entering. Flora standing by the pantry door, one hand
holding the wall phone receiver, the other ready to dial.

HELEN

Flora, please, hang up the phone.

FLORA

I will not.

HELEN

Please, Flora.

Eyes meet...it's the years they've shared that are asking.
The phone slowly hung up.

FLORA

Why are you allowing this, Miss
Helen?

HELEN

I'm...I'm not sure, but...

FLORA

Something about that man...he's not
telling us the real what's what.
That ticket's the proof. You know
well as I do.

HELEN

Maybe, but--

FLORA

No buts, Missy. He is not--

HELEN

Then how does he *know* these things,
Flora? These private things? Things
that happened *fifty years* ago? My
God, it's...it's...

Turning, leaning on the island, tears coming...

Flora moving to her side. A gentle arm around her.

FLORA

I can't answer that, Helen. I wish to my God I could. But you know he can't be who he says he is.

HELEN

I know, but...

(looking to her)

What if by some miracle he *is*?

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- DRAWING ROOM -- NIGHT

David crossing quickly to the desk. Opening the drawers, rifling through each, a furtive glance toward the archway now and again as he does so. The sideboard next, pulling out papers, quickly looking through them, replacing them.

Stopping, taking a deep breath, hanging his head.

Moving slowly to the bookshelves, perusing the book spines...no, no, no, Yes! This one. Pulling it from the shelf, opening it, reading. A smile slowly flowering on his face...

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Flora pulling a hankie from her pocket, handing it to Helen.

FLORA

(softly, gently)

I know who you *want* him to be. Lord knows life could use miracles like that these days.

(MORE)

FLORA (CONT'D)

Truth be told...when he said my
daddy's name just now...part of me
wanted to hear him say *my* name like
daddy used to...with that little
laugh he had when he said it, you
know? Just to talk to him again...

(straightening)

But that's just foolishness. My
daddy's gone. Mister David's gone.
And that man in there...he's
neither. I don't know *who* he is or
what he wants, but what he's saying
just can't be. And you know it...

A touch to the shoulder, a direct look...

FLORA

...Don't you?

A long look hangs between them, a look that says it all...

FLORA

Oh, Miss Helen...

Breaking her gaze with Flora, turning away and picking up the
teapot, starting to fill it with water.

HELEN

I promised tea.

Flora hanging her head, a slow shake back and forth...

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- DRAWING ROOM -- NIGHT

David leaning against the bookshelves, still reading.

Helen entering, carrying the small tray-- two china cups, a
small teapot.

The tray on the coffee table, sitting in her chair,

HELEN

I hope Earl Grey is all right.

DAVID

Yes. It's always been our favorite.

Helen looking up at him, watching him closely as he's moving to the couch, carrying the book, sitting.

DAVID

How is Flora? She all right?

HELEN

She's upset. You make her anxious.

The book on the table.

DAVID

But not you...not anymore, looks like. Why is that?

Considering him, pouring the tea, handing him a cup, taking her own.

HELEN

I don't know why, but you no longer frighten me. This doesn't mean you haven't upset me, however. These are old wounds you've opened, young man. Painful, dark memories, unhealed for so many years. What I don't understand is why you would do this. What purpose can it possibly serve?

DAVID

My only purpose was to come home to
you, darling.

HELEN

Please. Don't call me--

DAVID

Would it be better if I called you
Kitten?

Her teacup rattles, a sudden wash of emotion on her face.

HELEN

How...? It's not possible that
you...

Setting his teacup down, rising. A calm, gentle voice...

DAVID

That first time I met you,
remember? An afternoon party at
your father's place out along the
Wilmington River near the Sound. It
was July fourth, nineteen sixty-
six.

David rising, almost as if performing. Helen, transfixed.

DAVID

I was the guest of a guest...I
forget who. I'd even thought about
not going, but then I figured, why
not? It was a nice day to leave the
city. Much cooler out there.

EXT. MACMILLAN CAPE HOUSE -- DAY -- 1967

SUPER: "1967"

SERIES OF SHOTS:

-- HELEN'S FATHER welcoming the Young David Cargill with a handshake, showing him into the house.

DAVID (V.O.)

Your father was very gracious to a young stranger, welcoming me without question.

-- Young David walking across a manicured lawn to a terraced area.

DAVID (V.O.)

I wandered the grounds for a while before coming around to the terrace on the back of the house. I stood there looking at the water, then noticed something across the lawn toward the trees...

-- Young David's POV of Young Helen sitting in the grass.

DAVID (V.O.)

...a flash of blonde hair above a bright blue dress, sitting in the green grass in front of a large gazebo. I thought I was looking at a Monet painting.

-- Young David moving to Young Helen.

DAVID (V.O.)

I wandered over, stood near you.
You were playing with a pair of
bright orange, bobtail kittens. You
were unruffled by the presence of a
stranger, much like your father.

BACK TO SCENE

Young Helen smiles up at Young David.

YOUNG HELEN

Hello.

YOUNG DAVID

Good afternoon. I'm sorry, I didn't
mean to disturb you.

YOUNG HELEN

You didn't. Father loves his
parties, lots of people. Always a
hubbub. I come out here to catch my
breath now and again. It's
beautiful, isn't it?

YOUNG DAVID

(smiling at her)

It's all beautiful, yes.

A knowing smile back, she patting the ground.

YOUNG HELEN

Would you like to join me?

Young David sitting on the grass with her. She handing him
one of the kittens, them both laughing as it claws at his
shoulder, mewing.

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- DRAWING ROOM -- NIGHT -- 2018

David still at the window, then turning to Helen.

DAVID

You handed me one of the kittens.
You said, "Treat her right and..."

HELEN

"...she'll love you forever."

DAVID

Yes.

(beat)

And you have been my Kitten ever
since.

A deep silence. Eyes locked. Then her teacup to the coffee
table, her hands to her lap.

HELEN

It's not possible a stranger would
have knowledge of any of that.

DAVID

Because I am not a stranger, my
love. You know who I am. You feel
it, I know you do. That is why you
are no longer frightened of me.

Helen rising, but really nowhere to go.

HELEN

What I feel is the world turning
upside down. I've never seen you
before.

(MORE)

HELEN (CONT'D)

You come here unannounced and unexpected, claiming to be the most important person in my life...the only man I have ever loved...loved so deeply not another person or thing has entered my heart since...a man who has been dead for fifty years. You know private things only he and I would know. You are stretching the limits of not only credibility here, but possibility. Are you implying a possession of some sort? A reincarnation?

DAVID

Is that what this is? Maybe. Why not? All I know is what I feel, what I've told you. And I haven't been wrong, have I? About us meeting, about my leaving, about Flora, our wedding plans...

(pointing to the desk)

...the rose and rings.

(picking up the book from the coffee table)

And this. Remember this? Romantic poets. I read Coleridge, Wordsworth, Keats, and Shelley to you...sitting on a blanket right out there...

(pointing to an unseen area on the property)

...by the pond...your head on my lap, smoking cigarettes and feeling wicked and sexy for doing so.

(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)

How would I know all this if I
wasn't David Cargill?

HELEN

It can't be...

DAVID

However I am here, darling, I am
here. What more can I do to help
you believe that?

Her head shaking, hands wringing. A woman who wants to
believe with every fiber of her being, but the absurdity, the
impossibility, holds her back.

David to the desk. The mahogany box. Carrying it to her.

Opening the lid. The rose with the ribbon and rings between
them.

DAVID

Ask me why I gave you this.

No words.

DAVID

Ask me what I said to you when I
did.

HELEN

(small, almost childlike)

You said...I...can't...

Too painful.

DAVID

I said, "These rings circle my heart, my love, and will keep me safe, as long as you keep them near. I will be back for them...and for you."

(the rose out to her)

And now I have kept that promise, my love. I am here.

Her eyes to his eyes...nothing else exists...

HELEN

(very quietly)

How...How are you...?

DAVID

Because in your presence, my dearest Helen, I *am* David Cargill.

The dam bursting. Falling weeping into him, arms tightly around him. Both weeping now, locked, unmoving, holding so tightly to one another they dare not breathe. Ten seconds. Twenty. Time no longer has meaning.

DAVID

Are you all right now?

HELEN

I don't know. This is all so...

(looking up at him)

I can't tell you how many nights I cried to the heavens...cursed whatever God may be up there for taking you, for tearing my life apart in such an ugly way.

DAVID

I'm so sorry, my love.

HELEN

I cursed myself for letting you go that day. It was torture. Fifty years of longing so deep and overwhelming, I no longer felt a part of this world. I didn't want to be a part of a world that could take you away...leave me alone...

A shiver.

DAVID

You're shaking. Are you cold?

A nod.

His jacket coming off, draping around her, guiding her to the couch, sitting with her. His arms follow, holding her to himself.

DAVID

That better?

HELEN

It's...yes....

(her head to his shoulder)

Yes, yes, yes.

(beat, closing her eyes)

It feels...like the years have evaporated. Like a lifetime of wishing has magically lifted them. I'm afraid to breathe, I'm afraid to open my eyes and wake up and...

(her eyes opening, looking up at him)

(MORE)

HELEN (CONT'D)

I want to believe this is happening, that you are actually here, however it may be. I'm afraid I'm dreaming.

A moment's consideration, then...

DAVID

You asked if this may be reincarnation. I told you I don't know much about that kind of thing, but...when I was over there -- Vietnam -- I used to walk a lot. There were places I could go outside the base compound that were safe. I came across a monastery one day -- Tibetan monks -- and I spent many an afternoon there. It was calming, within the cool walls, away from the carnage, a world apart from the horror. One of the monks I met -- his name was Tenzin -- he was older, had been there all his life. We talked of many things -- life, religion, man's purpose on this earth...death. He mentioned reincarnation to me once or twice. What I remember...he said that certain things -- devastating traumas, resentments...

(looking to her)

...great loves -- can pass from one life to a new life if they needed to find resolution in some way. Maybe...I don't know...but maybe...

(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)
(touching her cheek)
Does it really matter now?

HELEN
No. No, it doesn't.

A long gaze, a pregnant beat, a profound quiet...

...Suddenly cut by the sharp sting of a door chime, the
thudding clunk of a door knocker.

Their gaze holding, but a second chime and knock break it.

Flora emerging through the dining room archway.

FLORA
This better not be another--

Seeing Helen and David on the couch.

FLORA
No, Miss Helen. No.

Helen sitting forward, straightening herself.

HELEN
It's all right, Flora.

Another knock. Insistent now.

HELEN
Did you call the police?

FLORA
No. But I should have.

HELEN
(to David)
Is whoever that is, connected to
you?

DAVID

No. I came alone.

HELEN

Get that, will you please, Flora?

No movement. Maybe a little judgment.

HELEN

Please?

A shaking of the head, a moving to the Foyer door, and Flora's gone.

HELEN

I'm a little worried about who else might be coming through that door.

A shared smile.

Helen noticing, reaching up to his forehead, where his bandage has come loose. A little blood.

HELEN

Your bandage. Let me fix that for you.

DAVID

(touching the wound)

It must be deeper than we thought. I'll take care of it, my love, let you attend to...

(indicating the Foyer)

...whatever that is.

HELEN

You'll find the tincture and
bandages in the restroom through
the dining room, before you get to
the kitchen.

DAVID

(a gentle smile)
I know where it is.

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- FOYER -- NIGHT

Flora down the hall, then opening the front door.

A MAN and a WOMAN standing in the portico. The Man raising
his arm, his hand holding a leather wallet on which shines a
gold detective's badge.

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- DRAWING ROOM -- NIGHT

Helen watching David go, then rising and moving to the Foyer
door.

Flora entering, escorting the two visitors: the Man, a
stocky DETECTIVE JIM OGDEN, suit too big, tie too tight.

The Woman, DOCTOR SYLVIA REYNOLDS, her clothes and posture as
professionally starched as her demeanor. Carrying a leather
portfolio.

FLORA

Miss MacMillan, this is Detective
Ogden, from the Savannah police
department.

OGDEN

Miss MacMillan.

HELEN

(to Ogden)

Detective.

(to Flora)

I thought you said you didn't call--

FLORA

I didn't.

OGDEN

Sorry to disturb you this late at night, Miss MacMillan, but I'm here on a matter brought to us by Miss--

Her hand interrupting like a knife stabbing forward.

REYNOLDS

Doctor. Doctor Sylvia Reynolds.

A tentative, uncertain handshake.

HELEN

A doctor and a detective.

FLORA

I told them you were otherwise engaged...but this one...

(indicating Ogden)

...insisted.

OGDEN

Yeah, well...like I said, I wouldn't normally have come this time of night, but it seems I wasn't going to be given a choice...

The glance to Reynolds says it all...

REYNOLDS

I didn't think it prudent to wait until tomorrow, under the circumstances.

HELEN

And what circumstances might those be?

REYNOLDS

(indicating the couch and chair area)

May we?

A nod from Helen with a glance at the archway where David had disappeared moments before. Moving to the couch area...

HELEN

I don't want to be rude, but Flora was correct. I *am* engaged in something.

OGDEN

Then I'll get right to the point. Has anyone you don't know come to your home in the last day or two? A stranger, not from around here?

Helen and Flora -- a glance. Ogden and Reynolds catching it.

OGDEN

Someone has, then?

REYNOLDS

It would have been a young African-American man--

FLORA

Miss Helen--

HELEN

(quickly cutting her off)
What does this pertain to,
Detective? You indicated it's
something pressing.

OGDEN

We believe it is, yes. Doctor
Reynolds here appeared at the
station earlier this afternoon,
asking for help in finding you.

HELEN

Me?

REYNOLDS

Well, not you, specifically--

OGDEN

Your address, actually. She
indicated that one of her patients -
- a, uh...

(looking for a page in a
notepad)

...Darryl--

REYNOLDS

Darius. Darius Arthur.

OGDEN

Yes...Darius Arthur. African-
American male, age 24. About six
foot, hundred-eighty or so pounds,
brown eyes, short hair.

FLORA

Oh, Lord...

OGDEN

He's been missing from the
institution where the doctor works.

HELEN

Institution?

A business card.

INSERT: THE CARD: It reads,

"Dr. Sylvia Reynolds, M.D.
Psychiatry"

BACK TO SCENE

REYNOLDS

I'm the Chief of Psychiatry at
River Place Behavioral Hospital in
Laplace, Louisiana.

FLORA

(a glance at Helen)
Mm-hmm. Laplace.

REYNOLDS

Yes. Mr. Arthur has been under my
care for several years now.

HELEN

He's a *patient* of yours?

REYNOLDS

Yes. Since he was eight years old.
Fifteen years. Almost sixteen now,
actually.

FLORA

This hospital...it's for crazy people?

REYNOLDS

We don't refer to our patients that way. They each have different mental issues we address with various protocols. It *is* inpatient, however...mostly involuntary.

FLORA

Lord, Lord, Lord...

REYNOLDS

In Mr. Arthur's case -- as a child -- we combined our psychiatric therapies with educational protocols. He was -- is -- quite intelligent, despite his condition. I thought we'd been making progress.

HELEN

May I ask what this Mr. Arthur is being treated for?

REYNOLDS

I'm not at liberty to discuss a patient's personal information, Miss MacMillan--

HELEN

You've come here this late at night, because you didn't feel it -- "prudent" is the way I believe you put it -- to wait until tomorrow.

(MORE)

HELEN (CONT'D)

This sounds serious, and perhaps time-sensitive, and as such, I think a little candor is in order.

OGDEN

(to Reynolds)

She has a point, Miss....Doctor. I think we need to share what we know.

REYNOLDS

I understand, but there are regulations...Federal and state privacy protocols that I must adhere to.

OGDEN

Well, this is a different state, and *my* jurisdiction, so if you're not comfortable sharing the information, I certainly am. Would you like me to--

REYNOLDS

All right. No. He's my patient.

(considering a moment,
then...)

Mr. Arthur suffers from a dissociative mental condition...a pretty severe case, in fact, brought on by prolonged violent physical and psychological trauma as a younger child.

HELEN

What...if I may ask...What kind of trauma?

REYNOLDS

Racially-motivated violence, I'm
afraid.

FLORA
Sweet Jesus.

HELEN
Oh, God...

EXT. RURAL LOUISIANA -- NIGHT -- 2005

SUPER: "2005"

A weathered shack on the edge of a meadow. The field tools of
a sharecropper spread about-- horse-drawn plow, rakes,
wheelbarrow. The myriad sounds of crickets, peeper frogs.

HELEN (V.O.)

Where was this?

OGDEN (V.O.)

Back woods Louisiana. A dark little
speck called Donner.

REYNOLDS (V.O.)

There was regular, prolonged abuse
and violence there -- daily
confrontations, threats,
intimidations, beatings. To both
Darius and his parents. It
escalated over time until one
night...

INT. SHACK -- NIGHT -- 2005

Candles illuminating the small room. A family -- DARIUS'S
FATHER, DARIUS'S MOTHER, YOUNG DARIUS -- sit around a
handmade table, eating a meagre dinner from tin plates.

DARIUS'S MOTHER

Finish up, Darius. Put your plate
in the tub. I want you to read your
lessons some before bed.

YOUNG DARIUS

Yes, Ma'am.

Darius's Mother smiles as he rises, moves to a washtub on the counter nearby. She looks to Darius's Father, but his attention has been pulled elsewhere.

The crickets and peepers have suddenly stopped.

Darius's Father rising quickly, moving to the shack's only door, peering out through a crack in the wood. He sees...

EXT. RURAL LOUISIANA -- NIGHT -- 2005

A dozen or so MEN standing around the huge oak tree near the center of the meadow. Several hold tall, flaming torches.

INT. SHACK -- NIGHT -- 2005

Darius's Father grabbing a chair, wedging it under the door latch.

DARIUS'S FATHER

Get back! Get the boy back!

EXT. RURAL LOUISIANA -- NIGHT -- 2005

Two of the Men throw heavy ropes over a limb of the oak. A pair of nooses swing down.

Four of the Men stride to the shack. One carries a torch, the others two-foot-long billy clubs.

They easily kick in the flimsy barricaded door. The Torch Man stands outside, the other three enter.

Screams. The violent sounds of furniture being thrown about, glass breaking.

DARIUS'S FATHER (O.S.)

Please! Don't hurt my family!
Please! We ain't done nothin' to
you...!

Darius's Father, dragged from the shack, stumbling to keep his footing.

DARIUS'S FATHER

Don't hurt my family--!

He's silenced by a crack across the skull. He falls to his knees.

MAN ONE

Shut up!

Darius's Mother is shoved through the door and kicked to the ground.

MAN ONE

Bring 'em over, boys. The kid too.

As his parents are dragged toward the oak tree, Young Darius is marched through the shack door by MAN TWO, held by his hair. He tries to fight, but the Man's grip is too tight.

Darius's Mother and Father are stood up under the limb, held tightly by the Men. The nooses are slipped over their heads and tightened.

Man Two holds Young Darius a few feet in front of them. The boy continues to try to squirm away.

YOUNG DARIUS

Daddy! Da-dd-yy!

Darius's Mother grabs at the noose around her neck.

DARIUS'S MOTHER

Don't hurt my boy! Leave him be!

He's just a boy! He's--

Her cry is cut off as Man One gives a signal and several other Men yank hard on the ropes, lifting Darius's parents from the ground, their feet kicking, their bodies twisting.

YOUNG DARIUS

Mommy! Daddy!

Man Two leans down, holds Young Darius's face toward the hideous sight so he can't look away.

MAN TWO

Look hard, little monkey. Look real hard. Take this message to the rest a' ya 'round here. This' our land. Always has been, always will be. No black sharecroppers gon' be taking it from us. So we gon' be decoratin' lots a trees with all y'all, you don't move on out. You tell 'em. You hear, little monkey?

By now, there's no motion from his parents hanging in front of him. Tears wash down Young Darius's face, agonized screams pour from his throat. His arms flail, his feet kick.

Man Two finally throws the boy to the ground.

MAN TWO

You tell 'em, you hear? You tell all the rest 'a y'all what I said.

Young Darius scrambles to his feet. He runs to his Father, wraps his arms around the dead man's feet. His screams echo across the meadow as the Men turn and walk away, laughing and slapping each other on the back.

INT. CARGILL HOUSE -- DRAWING ROOM -- NIGHT -- 2018

The room suddenly ice cold, the snapping of the fire the only sound.

REYNOLDS

From what I was told, Darius was found the next morning sitting up against the tree where his parents still hung. He was in a virtual catatonic state.

Helen slowly lowering to the couch, her face revealing the shock she's feeling.

REYNOLDS

After the funerals, he was taken in by an aunt in Laplace, but the prolonged trauma and...that night...had done its damage. His condition worsened over the course of months, and he was ultimately sent to us, where his specific disorder was diagnosed.

HELEN

What is this disorder you mentioned?

REYNOLDS

Dissociative Identity Disorder.
It's complicated, but it involves
the patient being so traumatized by
their own life that they simply
cannot be themselves anymore. They
take on another identity, another
personality altogether. In Mr.
Arthur's case, his dissociation was
quite severe.

HELEN

Why would this man come here?

A small leather book from her portfolio-- maybe nine inches
high, five inches wide -- old, weather-beaten.

REYNOLDS

Does this book look familiar to
you, Miss MacMillan?

Turning it over, but not opening it.

HELEN

I don't think so. What is it?

REYNOLDS

Look at the inside cover, if you
would.

The book opening, a look inside. A gasp of breath.

FLORA

What is it?

Gently taking the book from Helen's hands, looking...

INSERT: The book's inside cover, as Flora reads:

FLORA (O.S.)
"David Cargill, Savannah, Georgia."

BACK TO SCENE

FLORA
Oh, my sweet Lord.

OGDEN
You don't recognize the book? Never
seen it?
(off her head shake)
Is that Mr. Cargill's handwriting?

HELEN
I believe it was, yes.

REYNOLDS
Do you recognize any of the
entries? Are they something Mr.
Cargill may have written?

Flora trying to hand the book back to Helen, but she won't
take it. Flora opening the book, thumbing a few pages, then
reading...

FLORA
"No one wins when passion and
disquiet overwhelm patience and
repose. I wrote it in a card one
day..."

HELEN
Oh, my God...

Another couple of pages, reading again....

FLORA

"...I miss every atom of home. I can see in my mind the mahogany dining table with those damned uncomfortable high-back Queen Anne chairs, eating Flora's intoxicating pot roast on mother's old blue and white china..."

HELEN

No, no, no...

Another couple of pages, reading again...

FLORA

"...the sky was dark as French burgundy above, the reddish glow of the sunset on the horizon, like a slash of incandescent lipstick across the upper lip of the earth...That was the last beauty I saw...that sky and Helen with her cat..."

Helen's face falling into her hands...

One last turn of the pages...

FLORA

"...I said to her, 'These rings circle my heart, my love, and will keep me safe, as long as you keep them near...'"

HELEN

(weeping now)

Stop. Please stop.

OGDEN

Miss MacMillan...?

HELEN

(to Reynolds)

Where did you get that? What is it?

Reynolds taking the book from Flora.

REYNOLDS

It was found in Mister Arthur's room at the hospital after he went missing. It appears to be a detailed diary, a kind of memoir. The dates run from April, 1967 until February, 1968. The last entry is February 7 that year.

HELEN

This can't be happening....

REYNOLDS

You are mentioned a great deal, Miss MacMillan.

OGDEN

(to Flora)

As are you, Miss Anthony. Detailed descriptions of this house and grounds, recountings of incidents and occurrences, conversations. You can see why we might be concerned.

Reynolds sees Helen's distress, sits next to her.

REYNOLDS

Are you all right, Miss MacMillan?
Should we--?

HELEN

No. I mean, yes, I'm...
Please...continue.

REYNOLDS

Throughout my work with Mister Arthur, he always had this book with him, rarely let it out of his hands. It seemed very important to him. We didn't challenge him on it - - patients often have talismans of some sort that anchor them in some way. After he disappeared, I found it under his mattress. Why he left it, we don't know, but it seems he left hurriedly, with only a suit of clothes and some money his aunt had given him for sundries.

FLORA

Mr. David was gone long before this Darius was born. How would that book get in his hands all the way down in Louisiana?

OGDEN

We wondered the same thing. A quick search this afternoon of the name and location in the book brought us to your Mister Cargill. We also found his military death certificate and other records of his service. On the list of the men in his unit was the name Kendis Arthur, who turns out to be Darius Arthur's uncle.

REYNOLDS

It's highly probable the two men knew one another. May have gotten quite close, as men at war often do. Mr. Cargill was killed over there, wasn't he?

HELEN

Yes. Yes, he was.

OGDEN

Not a big stretch to assume the uncle brought the book back, maybe intending to get to the family here. Never did, obviously. The young kid probably found it, latched onto it.

REYNOLDS

And the life described in the diary was the escape he needed. Mister Arthur's condition grew more acute over time, despite my best efforts. Every time I brought him closer to that night, he went deeper. He left a note the night he slipped away. It said simply, "I'm going home." He signed it "David".

HELEN

He *thinks* he's David?

REYNOLDS

No. He believes it. Completely. To him, he *is* David Cargill.

DAVID/DARIUS (O.S.)

I am David Cargill. Is there something I can do for you?

David -- now identified as DARIUS ARTHUR, at the archway. All eyes swinging to him.

Helen rising, Reynolds with her.

Ogden looking to Reynolds. She nods.

Darius crossing, looking hard at Reynolds -- recognition? -- shaking it off, moving to Helen.

DARIUS

Sorry, darling. I hope I'm not interrupting.

Helen paralyzed...not so much out of fear, but out of conflict...her emotions, desires, and sense of reality incapable of resolving.

DARIUS

Is there a problem?

REYNOLDS

(calm, professional)

Hello, Darius. I've been worried about you.

DARIUS

(a frown)

I'm sorry.

(extending a hand)

My name is David. Have we met?

Reynolds unmoving...only a smile and calm tone....

REYNOLDS

It's Doctor Reynolds, Darius. You remember. From River Place.

DARIUS

No, I don't think--

REYNOLDS

I have something for you. You forgot it when you left.

The diary.

Darius immediately grabbing the book, like a child grabbing a toy from another child. Tucking it into his chest, as though protecting it, stepping away from Helen, but it's more putting space between himself and Reynolds.

Turning his back on the others, his face a mix of confusion and fear, his voice an overtone of desperation.

DARIUS

Where did you get this?

OGDEN

(stepping toward Darius)

Are you saying the book is yours, sir?

DARIUS

(blurting out)

Yes!

(then a quick...)

I mean, it's...

Looking to Helen, then Flora, then Ogden and Reynolds.

Reynolds seeing something in Darius she doesn't like...he's in trouble.

REYNOLDS

It's all right, Darius. No one's
going to --

DARIUS

(exploding)

NO! Don't call me that! I'm...I am
David Cargill!

(turning to Helen)

Please, Helen! Tell them who I am!

(to Flora)

Flora! You've known me all my life!
Tell them!

Silence.

Ogden moving to Darius, reaching for one of his arms.

OGDEN

Perhaps we should discuss this
calmly somewhere more appropriate,
Mr. Arthur.

REYNOLDS

Detective, that's not--!

Too late. Darius slapping Ogden's hand away, then shoving him
hard, moving further from him, behind the couch. Things
spinning out quickly.

HELEN

Please! Let him be! Don't hurt him!

FLORA

(moving to Helen, holding
her)

No, Helen! Let them take him!

REYNOLDS

It's alright, Darius! No one's going to hurt you!

DARIUS

I am *not* Darius Arthur! I am David Cargill! Get out! Get out of my house!

REYNOLDS

Darius, please! It's Sylvia!

Ogden, on Darius now, twisting an arm behind his back, pushing him across the back of the couch, pulling out cuffs...Darius screaming.

Helen breaking from Flora's grasp, moving to Darius, throwing herself across him, swatting at Ogden.

HELEN

Leave him alone! He is who he says he is! He is David Cargill! He is my fiancé!

Everything freezing. A heavy silence, a pregnant couple of beats....

Reynolds moving quietly to Ogden, backing him away from Darius and Helen.

REYNOLDS

Detective. Please. This is not helping.

OGDEN

The man is getting violent, Doctor.

REYNOLDS

And the harder you push, the worse
it will get.

Ogden backing off, his hands displayed in front of him. Not
the way he would handle things, but...

Helen embracing Darius, helping him stand upright.

HELEN

It's alright, David. They're
leaving now.

A flash of hard eyes directly at Reynolds and Ogden, as....

HELEN

They're leaving.
(to Flora)
Please, Flora, show them out.

FLORA

Oh, Missy, I don't think that's a
good idea. Let's let them--

HELEN

(eye to eye...)
Flora. Please. For me. Please.

Fifty years of everything shared and familiar passing between
them in an instant. Fifty years of pain, fifty years of
loneliness, fifty years of grief, companionship,
understanding...fifty years of love...

FLORA

Yes. All right.

Flora reaching up, touching Darius's shoulder, kindness in a
softened voice sliding through a smile.

FLORA

You all right, young man?

Darius looking at Flora, nodding slowly.

FLORA

You're safe now. I'll see to it.

Flora looking to Ogden and Reynolds, gesturing toward the door.

FLORA

Maybe you better.

Reynolds nodding, picking up her portfolio. Ogden replacing his cuffs on his belt as he's looking to Helen bringing Darius around the couch.

OGDEN

This is not a good idea, Miss MacMillan. I really think you should let me--

REYNOLDS

(quietly, to Ogden)

I think we need to give them some space, Detective. I think there's more going on here than we're fully aware of.

OGDEN

Meaning what?

Reynolds nodding toward a preoccupied Helen...

REYNOLDS

There appears to be more than one clinical issue here.

OGDEN

I don't follow.

REYNOLDS

I know you don't. We'll discuss it outside.

Ogden obliging, but as he's walking toward the door where Flora waits...

OGDEN

We'll be right outside, Miss MacMillan. We're not going anywhere. When Mr. Arthur has calmed down, we'll be back, and--

Flora taps his arm.

FLORA

Please, Detective.

Ogden and Reynolds exit. Flora looking to Helen and Darius.

FLORA

I'll show them out, talk to them, if that's all right with you, Miss MacMillan...

(looks to Darius)

...Mister...David.

HELEN

Thank you, Flora. We'll be right here.

Flora moving to the door. Looking back to Helen and Darius, now sitting together on the couch. A sad smile, then gone...

Helen linking her arm through Darius's, the diary still held tightly in his hand. A long beat, then smiling up at him...

HELEN

I kept everything the same. Did you notice?

Darius considering her words, the implication of them, then...

DARIUS

Yes. I thought it even smells the same...warm tea, old wood.

HELEN

It is old, isn't it? Flora was always teasing me that the house and I were starting to creak the same way. But I didn't want to change anything.

(a small laugh)

I was afraid that someday, someone would come in and find her and me sitting in these chairs, covered in dust.

(off his smile)

I'm glad you got back before that happened.

How she said it...the tone of it...the import of it...

DARIUS

Then...you...believe that I'm...?

HELEN

I'll tell you what I believe. Fifty years ago, this night, my life ended. The moment yours -- David Cargill's -- did. The world disappeared. Time stopped.

(MORE)

HELEN (CONT'D)

The man I loved, whose every heart beat and every breath may as well have been my own, was gone. I know you understand that kind of devastation. I considered ending my own life, in the hopes that I might find myself with you...somewhere. That thought has found its way into my mind almost every day since--

Turning to her, taking her hands, with great concern...

DARIUS

No, no. If my being here has brought that thought...

HELEN

It hasn't. And it won't. Because what you have given me tonight is a gift beyond any I could ever have hoped for...what I've wished for, for fifty years. Tonight... you ... you...have brought me back...my David.

He, beginning to respond, but she, touching a finger to his lips.

HELEN

(quietly, directly)

I don't care how. I don't care why.
I don't care what. None of that matters.

A nod toward the door where Ogden and Reynolds just exited.

HELEN

And whatever they say, whatever they do...it doesn't matter to us, right here, right now, this moment. It simply does not matter. Because right now, here with you, my heart beats again, my dearest. You being here has breathed life into me again. My David -- for however long it may be -- has returned to me.

Pulling him to her, kissing his cheek with feeling for a long beat.

Pulling back, his eyes on hers.

DARIUS

(quietly, sadly, the weight of truth)
They will take me away.

HELEN

(touching his cheek gently, with great tenderness)
Yes. They will.
(beat)
But that doesn't concern us now. We have something else we must do.

DARIUS

What, my love?

Helen rising, crossing to the desk. Picking up the mahogany box, returning to the couch.

Opening the box, lifting the rose and rings. The rose on her lap, gently untying the ribbon, removing the rings.

Sliding the smaller ring onto her left ring finger, taking Darius's left hand and sliding the larger ring onto his ring finger. Then, both his hands in hers.

HELEN

I've been waiting a long time to say these words.

(looking up into his eyes)

"With these rings, I thee wed...for better, for worse...for richer, for poorer...in sickness and in health...our hearts and lives melded...

DARIUS

...through this life and beyond...for time shall have no meaning...on this, our love's bond."

HELEN

...through this life and beyond...for time shall have no meaning...on this our love's bond."

A sweet, loving, shared smile, a long, slow, tender kiss, an embrace reaching to the soul level.

Helen picking up the book of poetry from the coffee table, handing it to him.

HELEN

Read to me, my darling. Like you used to by the pond.

DARIUS

(smiling, opening it)

What shall I read? Coleridge? Wordsworth?

HELEN

Some Shelley, I think. Find us something that speaks of the timeless nature of love.

She, nestling her head onto his shoulder. He, paging through the book.

DARIUS

Here's a good one.

A slow fade as he reads...

DARIUS

*See the mountains kiss high heaven
And the waves clasp one another;
No sister-flower will be forgiven
If it disdained its brother;
And the sunlight clasps the earth
And the moonbeams kiss the sea;
What is all this sweet work worth
If thou kiss not me?*

FULL FADE TO
BLACK

THE END