

CHATEAU SAUVIGNON

Written by

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DRAFT #3  
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DRAMATIS PERSONAE :

NICOLAS -- our Protagonist  
ODETTE -- Nicolas' mother, The Matrone, or Head of the Estates  
BABY DAMIENNE -- Nicolas' sickly Sister  
EDWIGE -- Nicolas' Aunt, Odette's Sister, and Winery Sommelier  
CHARLES -- Edwige's Husband, and Hospice Manager  
CAROLINE -- Edwige & Charles' Daughter, and Winery Assistant  
ARTHUR -- Edwige & Charles' son  
PATRICK -- another Cousin of Nicolas, Head Vintner & Butcher  
DRONES -- farmhands and winery workers bred by the family

MARIA -- a psychology student visiting wine country  
MARK -- Maria's boyfriend  
ALEX -- Mark's Best Friend, Pomery's boyfriend  
POMERY -- Alex's girlfriend  
ELDERLY RESIDENTS -- Hospice residents and family victims

SETTING :

Alpine valley, south-eastern French wine country. Modern day.

LOGLINE :

As an isolated member of a reclusive vintner family that adheres to strict ancient traditions to forestall a rare blood disease, Nicolas is torn between obeying his mother Odette, an esoteric matriarch, and implementing innovation to aid his ailing kin.

NOTE :

The multi-award winning short film "Chateau Sauvignon: terroir" is a proof of concept for this larger feature in terms of plot, character, and visual aesthetic.

The story is told from the perspective of the killers with the victims playing a supporting role. This will allow the narrative to dive deeply into the family structure and motivations allowing for the subversion of typical horror tropes.

**INT. HOSPICE ROOMS - DAY**

A ramshackle, slovenly facility. Medical equipment beeping.

Pumping.

Dripping.

Cadaverous ELDERLY RESIDENTS (+80s) lay in their beds.

They GASP, MOAN as they start to stir.

Pills tumble from bottles into cups, fizz and dissolve as they're swirled about.

The residents inch off their beds and recliners, ache as they put on cardigans. Shoes. Hats...

They struggle to lift cups of pills to their mouths.

They shuffle out of their destitute rooms.

EDWIGE (V.O.)

A fine wine aged to perfection.

**INT. HOSPICE HALL - CONTINUOUS**

The elderly residents converge down a dingy hall.

CHARLES (50), a portly figure in a medical gown jots down notes on a clipboard.

He picks at his dead tooth with the pen.

HOSPICE NURSE CLARA (27) cajoles them along towards the exit.

EDWIGE (V.O.)

Constantly monitored. Tended to.  
After years of patience and  
maturation...

**EXT. HOSPICE ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS**

Elderly residents exit the hospice. Ambulate towards a van.

A well groomed man with biting eyes, NICOLAS (20s), assists ELDERLY MAY (85) into the van.

Nicolas turns to find Charles in his face.

Charles sucks his rotted tooth, hands Nicolas the clipboard.

Nicolas' stare follows Charles as he reenters the hospice.

EDWIGE (V.O.)  
 ...of cultivating the wildest  
 grapes from the most gnarled  
 vines...

**INTERCUT EXT. WINE COUNTRY / EXT. WINERY ESTATES / INT.  
 TASTING ROOM :**

Scenic panoramas of the breathtaking French countryside.

Nicolas' van trundles round the pastoral hillsides striated  
 with vines.

EDWIGE (V.O.)  
 ...we apply our centuries old  
 process that is entwined within  
 this microcosmic *terroir*.

CUT TO:

Fine glass stemware is placed on lined trays, consistently  
 keyed off with a sommelier's knife.

EDWIGE (V.O.)  
 They say you cannot pour new wine  
 into old bottles. Such is our  
 gospel.

CUT TO:

Nicolas's van lumbers through winding roads.

Over an old humped BRIDGE suspended above jagged rocks.

Surrounded by countryside landscapes, dotted with tiled  
 hamlet and stone ruins atop craggy hills.

EDWIGE (V.O.)  
 For the new wine will burst the  
 bottles, and both shall perish.

CUT TO:

A knife lacerates the foil of a wine bottle's lip covering.

A corkscrew plunges and twists into the cork.

EDWIGE (V.O.)

After all, no one who has drank old wine desires it new, for the old is divine in it's maturity.

CUT TO:

The van turns up a dirt driveway lined with tall trees.

Above, the smiling sky becomes progressively overcast.

EDWIGE (O.S.)

Prepare yourselves to partake in our legacy as we bring you a product unlike any you've sampled before.

CUT TO:

A short distance above a candle-flame, the wine bottle is emptied steadily into a decanter.

A serviette wipes a drip from the bottle's lip.

EDWIGE (V.O.)

Now with your expectations established, let us begin.

The decanter's contents are swished around gently.

EDWIGE (V.O.)

Can you smell it?

CUT TO:

The van rumbles past thick, medieval iron gates.

Advancing toward the FAMILY ESTATES. The Main House, The Vineyards, a Tree House, a Chapel...

A unkempt sign with a bony arrow reads: *TASTING ROOM*

Nicolas looks back at the Elderly Residents.

EDWIGE (V.O.)

The bouquet is seductive, it speaks to your tongue's desires...

The vineyards are scattered with DRONES (farmhands) toiling the fields. The Drones are shrouded from hood to boot, faces concealed by wicker masks.

DRONE ONE watches the hospice van drive up.

**EXT. COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS**

ARTHUR (8), an adorable rascal with a constant giggle, lights a long MATCH. He toys with the flame.

He brings it to an imprisoned spider. It burns.

EDWIGE (V.O.)  
 ...titillating your spirit's need  
 for pleasure...

CAROLINE (17), hauntingly beautiful, her skin like porcelain, steps through the entrance's doorframe.

She shoos Arthur.

He climbs up a large ladder into his Tree House.

The hospice van rolls up the long driveway.

EDWIGE  
 ...a sensation only akin to  
 dreaming.

Exiting the van, Nicolas briefly locks eyes with Caroline.

His attention is taken by Elderly May tugging for assistance.

**INT. TASTING ROOM - DAY**

A serviette chokes the decanter as it fills a stemmed glass.

The room is lavish, ancient, as if preserved from a by-gone age.

The Victorian décor matches the elegance of the vintage.

EDWIGE (O.S.)  
 But I digress. If not backed by a  
 truly ravishing flavor, this is  
 nothing but prattle...

Caroline stands by a gueridon, serviette on her arm.

EDWIGE (48), a gaunt lady of posture, saunters down a row of seated Elderly Residents spellbound by her every word.

EDWIGE (CONT'D)  
 Now, without further adieu, let us  
 savor it.

Edwige turns to face the room.

EDWIGE (CONT'D)  
*À Votre Santé!*

Edwige raises her glass. Sips the elixir.

EDWIGE (CONT'D)  
 What do we think?

The Elderly Residents SLAM face first against the table.  
 Unmoving.

Edwige takes another sip. EXHALES.

**EXT. COURTYARD - DAY**

Nicolas studies Caroline through the window:

EDWIGE  
 (to Caroline)  
 Come Caroline. Chop-chop.

Edwige exits the Tasting Room.

Nicolas traces his forearm with the clipboard as Caroline tidies up.

Caroline plucks a glass from Elderly May's hand.

EDWIGE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 Again Nicolas?

Nicolas jumps, startled.

Edwige stands within the shadow of the house. She DIGS the tip of a closed umbrella into the dirt.

NICOLAS  
 I- I was just-

EDWIGE  
 Wasting time.

Edwige motions for Nicolas to come closer. He obliges, walking through the daylight into the shadow.

She snatches the clipboard, riffling through the pages:

EDWIGE (CONT'D)  
 Did Charles say anything else?

Nicolas shakes his head "no". Edwige waits for a proper response.

NICOLAS  
No, Auntie Edwige.

EDWIGE  
Very well. Upstairs with you, she's  
waiting.

Nicolas motions towards the window.

NICOLAS  
For more like them? What good will  
it do her?

Edwige JAMS the tip of her umbrella into Nicolas' foot.

EDWIGE  
I haven't the time to entertain  
your asinine fantasies.

Edwige returns to the Tasting Room.

EDWIGE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
(to Caroline)  
Hurry will you?

CAROLINE (O.S.)  
Yes, Mother.

Nicolas tries to get a parting view of Caroline -- UUOOF.

He is PUSHED violently into the wall.

Nicolas whimpers, turning to his assailant.

PATRICK (35), an anabolic behemoth bred of solid stock,  
pushes a wheeled cart into the tasting room.

PATRICK  
(in passing)  
Useless dog.

Nicolas leaves with his tail between his legs.

**INT. KITCHEN - LATER**

Nicolas stands at a cast-iron stove.

He spoons remnants of a bone-broth stew into a bowl.

Nicolas opens an archaic fridge. He shifts near-empty blood  
bags, removes a mason jar.



He SCRAPES the last morsels of the jar onto a large plate, and sucks the spoon clean.

Nicolas uncorks a bottle of the FAMILY RESERVE, pours a healthy serving. It is thick and meaty.

**INT. SECOND FLOOR HALL - LATER**

Nicolas balances a loaded sterling silver PLATTER up the stairs and down a hall.

The lavish trimmings and furnishing of the house on full display. All seem captured from a different age in time.

**INT. ODETTE'S BEDROOM - LATER**

Rays of late afternoon light dance through drawn curtains of an austere bedroom highlighting:

Cobwebs stretch over outdated medical text books on the fireplace's mantel-shelves, flanked by dusty ornaments and a motionless mantle clock.

An ALCHEMICAL TABLE is fully stocked with powders, potions, and plants all encased in glass.

Outdated equipment pulsates near a CRIB draped in satins.

Nicolas sits at the edge of a CANOPY BED, spoon feeding ODETTE (50s) who remains obscured behind the bed's curtains.

Nicolas swabs a dribble of viscous vermillion PUREE from his mother's receded lip-line.

Nicolas fiddles with the napkin.

ODETTE (O.S.)  
What is it, my boy?

NICOLAS  
Our reserves are low. Again.

ODETTE  
Haven't we just acquired a fresh batch?

NICOLAS  
"Fresh"? Tsk.

Nicolas stands, pacing:

NICOLAS (CONT'D)

They were decaying before they arrived. I saw their charts. Those that aren't riddled with disease are so pumped full of preservatives they're basically embalmed already. Hardly nutritious...

Nicolas stops at a window.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)

Or satisfying.

Nicolas rubs his forearm delicately. He's found Caroline.

He watches her through a thin sliver between the CURTAINS.

**EXT. BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS**

Caroline hangs sheets on a CLOTHES LINE.

The breeze blows up through Caroline's white dress.

**INT. ODETTE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Nicolas grips the curtain tightly.

NICOLAS

How can you be expected to regain your strength when our remedies are so... tainted?

The wind picks up Caroline's dress, exposing her PANTIES.

Nicolas lurches forward, PULLING the curtain open.

Light beams into the room.

The sun strikes the crib's shrouds -- a blood curdling scream rings out.

ODETTE

Careful, your sister!

Nicolas yanks the curtain closed. He rushes to the crib.

He retrieves screaming baby DAMIENNE (1) completely wrapped in her blankets.

NICOLAS

Sorry! I'm so sorry, Damienne...

He cradles her, humming. Cooing.

Settles her back down in the crib.

ODETTE

You needn't worry about my  
strength, dear child.

NICOLAS

But I do. I worry for you both,  
mother.

ODETTE

The day my tendrils curl around the  
firmament of this world, I will  
join foremothers in *Empyrean  
Fields*. For now, this is but mildew  
on the vine, and I shall shear it  
before it rots.

NICOLAS

Then let me help! We could harvest  
more nutrient-rich provisions --

ODETTE

Nicolas. Have faith in me, in our  
ways.

NICOLAS

But they aren't working --

Odette interrupts with an AGONIZED whine.

Her skeletal figure retches from behind the bed's shrouding.

Odette's emaciated mauve-toned forearm droops out.

It is ravished in blistered lesions, but bejeweled with  
bracelets and rings of alternating luster.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)

Forgive me, mother.

Nicolas grabs a thick SYRINGE from the Alchemical Table. He  
removes a tar-like substance from a keepsake chest.

Nicolas breaks the vial, dribbles it's liquid onto a spoon.

He holds the spoon over a candle. The mixture fizzes.

Nicolas draws the solution into the thick SYRINGE.

Odette clutches Nicolas' side.

Nicolas pierces her necrotic elbow pit. Odette's GRASP eases.  
Nicolas sets the vial and syringe down.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)  
This cannot go on.

Odette's hand reaches listlessly to her son's face.

ODETTE  
Sweet boy. What runs through mine  
and your sister's veins is not  
malediction. **The gift**, it is  
testing me...to assure I am worthy.

Nicolas looks at his mother's withered hand, unconvinced.

ODETTE (CONT'D)  
I need only feed from the yield,  
until the day of my arborescence.  
Your sister will become a fine  
Matron, like her mother before  
her...

A light knock on the door:

EDWIGE (O.S)  
Sister?

Odette sits up. She is in control. She is Strong.

ODETTE  
Enter.

Edwige enters:

EDWIGE  
How are you feeling today, sister?

ODETTE  
Thankful.

EDWIGE  
Of course. And the food? To your  
liking?

ODETTE  
Nicolas is quite the culinary  
talent.

EDWIGE  
Yes, well, he was bound to excel at  
something.

Nicolas grips his mother's sheets tightly.

NICOLAS

A meal can only be as good as its ingredients after all.

ODETTE

I tire of your squabbles.

Beat.

EDWIGE

Let your mother rest. You've got a group to collect.

NICOLAS

There's another tasting today?

EDWIGE

Some students made the reservation last night.

NICOLAS

Students, that's perfect! Mother, we can harvest the --

EDWIGE

How many times must we have this discussion with you, boy?

ODETTE

Missing students could arouse too much suspicion. Their families, their friends, they'd come looking.

NICOLAS

But we could --

EDWIGE

It jeopardizes too much.

Nicolas scoffs. They never listen.

EDWIGE (CONT'D)

I'm headed to the hospice. Charles and I are interviewing prospective *ingredients*. Caroline will be in charge. Do not make things difficult for her, understood? Now, if you're done making a fool of yourself, I suggest you get going.

NICOLAS

Yes *Auntie* Edwige.

Edwige steps aside as Nicolas exits.

EDWIGE  
You are worsening, sister.

ODETTE  
Mind your tongue.

EDWIGE  
I mean no disrespect, darling. Just an observation. Perhaps you delay too long?

ODETTE  
My arborescence will come when Maiden Guvet deems it so, and not a moment sooner.

EDWIGE  
And when do you prophesize that will be?

ODETTE  
When a *capable* successor emerges.

EDWIGE  
Naturally. Well, if there's is anything I can assist you --

ODETTE  
You'd only assist me into an early grave, baby sister.

EDWIGE  
Such cruelty! You know I wait with baited breath for the exalted day you get what you deserve, Matrone Odette.

Edwige exaggerates her curtsy, and exits.

**EXT/INT. COURTYARD/VAN - LATER**

Nicolas GLARES at his mother's window from the driver's seat. He turns the key. Ignition. He STRANGLES the steering wheel.

MATCH CUT TO:

**INT. VAN / EXT. WINE COUNTRY - LATER**

The van becomes an outlet for Nicolas' rage. He tears through green pastures, speeding along cliff edges.

**EXT. OLD VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY**

Bustling cobbled streets of a once fortified medieval hold. Farmers and artisans pack arcaded passageways with their stands and wares.

Nicolas unloads crates from his van. SCRUFFY MERCHANT (45), chewing a cigarette butt, lends him a hand.

Nicolas and Merchant finish. Exchange inaudible pleasantries, and walk away in opposite directions.

Nicolas heads towards a fountain battling shoppers, chickens, and wheelbarrows. He approaches a group of STUDENT TOURISTS.

MARK (24), pasty-faced lanky hipster, is standoffish, but MARIA (22), effervescent and captivating, pulls his sleeve.

She turns to ALEX (23), sports and beer enthusiast, who cheers and POMERY (21), coy diamond-in-the-rough, who claps.

Nicolas directs them towards his van.

**INT. VAN - DAY**

Nicolas chauffeurs the students. He observes them.

Sizing them up. Contemplating.

Maria catches Nicolas through the rear-view mirror.

She checks her phone.

Maria gets out of her seat, climbing into the front.

She brushes against Nicolas. Mark notices.

MARIA

What's up with the service out here?

NICOLAS

--

MARIA

So...is it your family's vineyard?

NICOLAS

Yes.

MARIA

That's pretty lucky, huh?

NICOLAS

What do you mean?

MARIA

You know, living on a vineyard --

ALEX

All the wine you can drink!

Alex and Pomery shift closer, Mark looks out the window.

MARIA

Not just that, I don't know. Don't take it the wrong way but, like, the simple life, it seems nice.

NICOLAS

It's not so simple, not always.

MARK

Oh yeah, it's real hard. When was the last time you were in the fields? I bet you and your family sit in a big plantation house, being served food and drink all day, profiting off the fruits of cheap immigrant laborers.

ALEX

Jesus Christ dude.

MARIA

Mark, give it a rest.

NICOLAS

We are a family. All of us.

POMERY

What like, the farm workers too, they're related?

NICOLAS

Yes, even them.

MARK

(under his breath)  
Inbred fucks.

Alex taps Mark on the arm. Gestures hands to tone it down.



MARIA

Jeez, surrounded by family all the time? Sounds like hell on earth. Alex is right, thank god you have all the wine you can drink.

NICOLAS

I love my family.

Beat.

MARIA

Of course, it's just...family can be demanding. I know my family demands a lot from me, with school and everything, it's a lot of pressure. Sometimes you just wanna let loose. Be free, you know?

NICOLAS

You have no idea.

They share a smile.

**EXT. TREE HOUSE - DAY**

A baby RABBIT contorts, squealing. It is bound in a box atop the ashes of a spider.

\*SCRUNCH\* Arthur crushes the animal's chest. It suffocates.

The van pulls up the drive way.

**EXT. COURTYARD - DAY**

The van parks.

Nicolas steps out, looks up to his mother's window.

He goes to open the door for the group, but it swings -- SMACK into his fingers before he can grasp the handle.

MARK

Sorry bro, didn't see you there.

Nicolas winces. The four students step out of his vehicle. Before he can respond:

CAROLINE

Hi, Rambler group?



CAROLINE  
 (to MARK and Maria)  
 Are you engaged? We love to host  
 weddings here at the Chateau.

Oh god no. MARK Oh that's -- MARIA  
 Maria's head snaps toward Mark.

MARK (CONT'D)  
 It's an outdated institution.

CAROLINE  
 Pity.

**EXT. COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS**

Nicolas edges toward the window. Watching the tasting.

CAROLINE  
 (to Pomery)  
 My what a beautiful ring.

POMERY  
 Oh this? Thanks! Alex got it for me  
 in Valencia.

**INT. TASTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

CAROLINE  
 Oh, so you two are engaged?

Pomery and Alex look to one another, chuckle, blush.

POMERY  
 No no, it was just a gift!

ALEX  
 Yeah uhhh we want to get through  
 school first.

CAROLINE  
 I see. So romantic...

Caroline turns to the window as she speaks. Nicolas is gone.

Caroline presents the first bottle. Uncorks it.

She pours a round for the guests, then one for herself.

Holding up the glass:

CAROLINE (CONT'D)  
 Our first wine is our house  
 Cabernet Sauvignon. Full bodied.  
 Dark and opaque. It contains a high  
 concentration of color and tannins.  
 You'll want to pick up a bottle  
 before you go! Cheers!

The group CLINK glasses. SIP.

Nicolas moves towards the Tasting Room entrance:

**INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

Nicolas appears in the doorway. He motions Caroline to come.

CAROLINE  
 (to the group)  
 Take your time enjoying it. I'll be  
 just over here preparing your next  
 round if you have any questions.

Caroline approaches Nicolas. Hushed:

CAROLINE (CONT'D)  
 What.

Keeping his attention on their guests, Nicolas leads her to:

**INT. GRAND PARLOR - CONTINUOUS**

Murky gas lamps illuminate the once lavish room thick in  
 velvet curtains and rugs, complete with the ornate golden  
 trimmings a royal smoking room that have lost their luster:

Paintings dulled through decades of smoke, a dilapidated bar  
 area, tattered furniture recklessly aligned by a soot-coated  
 fire place.

CAROLINE  
 I'm in the middle of a tasting!

Nicolas crushes herbs and salts fetched from glass vials.

A pinch of this, a dash of that.

NICOLAS  
 We need more yield, yes?

CAROLINE

What?!

Nicolas begins mixing the herbs into the HOUSE RESERVE.

NICOLAS

We're harvesting them. Then they'll see. They'll see.

CAROLINE

Nicolas stop! You don't know what you're doing.

NICOLAS

Yes I do. I've watched you -- you and your mother do this time and time again.

CAROLINE

Yes exactly, my mother. What do you think she'll do to us if she found out we harvested a new yield without her permission?

MARK (O.S.)

*Madam-waziel* Caroline? We're finished. We'll take the next round whenever!

**INT. TASTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Maria rubs her finger around her empty wine glass rim:

MARIA

Miss her already?

MARK

And what's *that* suppose to mean?

MARIA

Please. I nearly slipped on a puddle of your fucking drool outside for "*Mademoiselle* Caroline."

MARK

Oh give me a fucking break. How about you? Hopping in the front seat to get a closer look at *Napoleon Boner-Part*, just to piss me off. Manipulative as always.

MARIA

Wow, *Boner-part*? God you're such a child, you know that?

ALEX

Guys, can you... please? You're worse than my damn parents.

POMERY

Serious, you promised when we left you wouldn't fight anymore...

Twisting in his chair, looking around:

ALEX

Where the fuck is she?  
(to Caroline)  
Hey! Hey, we're waiting --

**INT. GRAND PARLOR - CONTINUOUS**

MARK (O.S.)

-- d'you need a hand?

NICOLAS

Caroline, please. Trust me.

CAROLINE

She'll have your head. Mother would never permit this.

NICOLAS

When she sees the result, she'll have to.

POMERY(O.S.)

Everything alright? We'd like the next round please.

NICOLAS

(to guests)  
Be right there.

CAROLINE

(to guests)  
With you in a moment.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

And if she doesn't? I'm not taking the blame for this, Nicolas.

NICOLAS

I'd never put you in harm's way.

Caroline takes the poisoned wine from Nicolas. Sniffs it, winces. Adding some crystalline powder to it:

CAROLINE  
I'll tell them I didn't know. That  
you acted alone.

Caroline pours the wine through a sieve and into a DECANTER.

NICOLAS  
That's fine. Thank you, Caroline.

Caroline places the DECANTER on a tray beside new glassware.  
She steps back into the tasting room:

CAROLINE (O.S.)  
Sorry for the wait.

Nicolas sniffs the wine bottle, watching her exit.

**INT. TASTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Maria sits with her arms folded.

Caroline enters, breaking the uncomfortable silence:

CAROLINE  
Oh dear. I hope my dillydallying  
didn't upset you too much.

MARK  
Not at all, you've been wonderful.

Maria rolls her eyes.

Caroline sets the glassware down in front of them.

She pours them wine from the DECANTER:

ALEX  
Hey, not to be rude but, don't we  
get to see the bottle you're  
pouring us?

Caroline stops pouring. Maria eyes her.

CAROLINE  
Yes, typically, but...

POMERY  
Like present it with the label and  
stuff?

CAROLINE  
 (clearing her throat)  
 Well you see, this is from our  
 family's private reserve --

MARK  
 Ey, lucky us!

POMERY  
 But the brochure said --

NICOLAS (O.S.)  
 It's on the house.

Nicolas enters. They turn to him.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)  
 An apology gift for interrupting  
 your tasting and pulling Caroline  
 away. Our personal bottles remain  
 unlabeled I'm afraid.

Nicolas approaches Alex and smiles.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)  
 Think of it as a bonus.

ALEX  
 Well, I'm sold.

Caroline continues pouring. Maria shoos Caroline's hand away.

MARIA  
 I think I'm good.

MARK  
 C'mon, don't be rude. It's their  
 personal reserve.

MARIA  
 I said I'm good.

CAROLINE  
 C-come now. Yo-you must at least  
 try it. It's truly one of a kind.  
 You'd be missing out.

MARIA  
 (to Caroline)  
 Where's yours?

CAROLINE  
 Pardon?



MARIA

Your glass. Aren't you truly missing out?

CAROLINE

Oh, it's your tasting. I am merely the host. I shouldn't --

MARIA

But you drank the last one with us.

CAROLINE

Yes, well, you see, I have a dreadful tolerance...

POMERY

I'll have hers if she doesn't want it!

Nicolas locks eyes with Maria.

NICOLAS

Please, this is a special gift. We don't usually offer it to guests.

MARK

(to Maria)

Why are you being like this? Just try it. This whole tasting thing was your idea.

Maria takes her glass.

ALEX

There you go!

POMERY

Yeah girl!

Raising their glasses:

NICOLAS

*Á Votre Santé!*

FOUR STUDENTS

(to each other)

Cheers!

The students cheers and knock back the wine, savoring it.

Maria leans under the table and SPEWS it out into a spittoon.

MARIA

Oof, sorry. No offense, that just wasn't for me.

Caroline turns to Nicolas, panicked. He pours Maria another:

NICOLAS

Now, now, a fine reserve is meant  
to be experienced in full.

MARIA

No thank you.

ALEX

That was dope, can I have another  
too?

MARK

(to Nicolas)  
She said she didn't like it.

POMERY

(to Caroline)  
Where's your bathroom?

CAROLINE

--

Nicolas tries to put the WINE GLASS in Maria's hand:

NICOLAS

Drink, please.

Maria SHAKES her head.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)

You must drink.

Maria looks up, suspicious. Nicolas GRABS her hand.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)

DRINK IT NOW! NOW!

Mark, Pomery and Alex SLAM face first on the table.

Maria SCREAMS and splashes the WINE into Nicolas' eyes.

She SPRINTS into the Grand Parlor.

Nicolas and Caroline chase after Maria.

**INT. GRAND PARLOR - CONTINUOUS**

Nicolas catches up to Maria, blocking her way.

Maria turns, crashing into Caroline. They tumble DOWN.

Nicolas helps Caroline up. Maria SCUTTLES away:

CAROLINE  
Not me! Get *her*!

The cousins continue to chase after Maria, exiting the room.

Beat.

Maria doubles back to the Tasting Room. She faked them out.

**EXT. TREE HOUSE - DAY**

Arthur watches Maria rush out of the Tasting Room.

Through the courtyard, towards the vineyards. He is amused.

**EXT. VINEYARD - CONTINUOUS**

Drones continue to monotonously toil the fields.

DRONE ONE spots Maria barreling down the vines. Maria rushes towards the bent, hooded figures.

MARIA  
Help! Over here! Help!  
Help me please!!!

**EXT. COURTYARD - DAY**

Nicolas and Caroline run into the courtyard.

They look up, see Arthur perched in his Tree House. He points towards the vineyard.

**EXT. TREE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

Nicolas takes off in the direction Arthur points.

CAROLINE  
Stay up there, Arthur. You could  
get hurt.

Caroline rushes after Nicolas.

In the distance, EDWIGE'S CAR is pulled off the side of the driveway. The driver's side DOOR is open.

Charles stands out of the passenger side, looking fixedly down the vineyard.

**EXT. VINEYARD - DAY**

Maria stumbles as she sprints, shaking, stifling vomit.

MARIA  
Please! Help me!

DRONES TWO and THREE stop working. They stand at attention, immobile, toward Maria.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
Say something! Help me! Please!

Maria pulls and shakes Drone Two. It's mask FALLS off.

Drone Two calls out with a GURGLED SHOUT.

Maria looks into Drone Two's white eyes, it's mouth lined with jagged teeth.

Maria steps back, stunned. She turns -- BRATSH.

A wine bottle BREAKS against her skull. Blood wine and glass SPLASH on a cluster of grapes.

Nicolas arrive at the scene.

Edwige looms over an unconscious Maria, gripping a broken wine bottle.

Edwige's skin begins to TEAR, her scars and lesions opening and bubbling in the SUN.

The Drones return to work.

**INT. BUTCHER CELLAR - DAY**

WHAM -- Patrick beats Nicolas viciously.

BLAM -- Mercilessly.

Restraints, hooks, machinery, litter this timeworn dungeon. The room opens into a seemingly endless network of caverns.

Edwige paces between the hanging BODIES of Elderly Residents. They're upside down, connected to a network tubes branching off their major arteries.

Elderly May twitches. They're alive.

Maria, Mark, Pomery and Alex's unconscious bodies are heaped on Patrick's cart.

THWACK -- Nicolas sputters blood.

CAROLINE  
Mother, that's enough, no?

EDWIGE  
Be silent.

Caroline tries to divert her eyes. Edwige grabs her.

She must watch.

THUD -- Edwige holds Caroline in place. WHACK.

EDWIGE (CONT'D)  
This is the price of incompetence.

Charles leans awkwardly against a battered butcher block, avoiding the eyes of Elderly Residents.

Arthur jumps up and down excitedly. BIFF.

ARTHUR  
MORE MORE MORE!

Nicolas drops to the ground.

Patrick grabs Nicolas by the wrist. He plants his boot on Nicolas' cheek. Wrenching.

PATRICK  
Should I tear it off?

THOCK -- THOCK -- THOCK...

Odette's cane hammers the moist cobblestone floor. She waits in shadow.

ODETTE (O.S.)  
Cease this.

Odette trembles forward into the light. Her skin like wax poured over decaying bones.

She is riddled with bruises, scars and deep lesions.

Patrick lifts Nicolas off the ground, his injuries no excuse for lacking respect.

The family bows their heads.

ODETTE (CONT'D)  
 (to Patrick)  
 Tell me, dear nephew, why are you  
 brutalizing my son?

Patrick's grasp loosens. Nicolas frees himself.

PATRICK  
 I-I was just... I was, uh...  
 (looking at Edwige)  
 I thought --

ODETTE  
*Thought?* Thought you could lay a  
 hand on my boy without my say-so,  
 Patrick?

Patrick stumbles backward.

PATRICK  
 I, no-I-I --

EDWIGE  
 Sister, look what your boy has  
 done. The danger he has put us in.  
 He deliberately disobeyed you --

ODETTE  
 You. He disobeyed you. Not me.

Odette approaches Nicolas.

ODETTE (CONT'D)  
 Explain yourself.

NICOLAS  
 I was simply trying to freshen the  
 yield, for you, for us.

EDWIGE  
 The fool tried to harvest the  
 students. Had I not shown up that  
 girl would have escaped and we'd be  
 having a very different discussion  
 right now!

Odette cups Nicolas' bruised face.

ODETTE  
 My sweet child. Such a thoughtful  
 boy. Always so caring, thinking of  
 the family.

Odette looks up to the empty restraints.

ODETTE (CONT'D)  
Tell me, why aren't they being prepared?

PATRICK  
I was --

ODETTE  
Prioritizing punishing my son over preventing their escape?

EDWIGE  
Luckily, My Caroline managed to get three of them to drink the archanum tinctures. They won't wake for hours.

Odette shuffles over to the fresh bodies. Examining them:

ODETTE  
They do look quite spry. It seems your head was in the right place, Nicolas, even if you went about it foolishly.

EDWIGE  
He put us all at risk!

ODETTE  
(to Caroline)  
And you, young one. Were you not in charge?

Caroline takes a step back. Edwige takes a step forward.

EDWIGE  
That isn't fair --

Odette aims her CANE at Edwige.

Edwige retreats, gritting her teeth.

Turning to Caroline:

ODETTE  
Speak Girl.

CAROLINE  
Ye-yes.

ODETTE  
And you let this happen?

CAROLINE  
I-it was Nicolas' idea, I didn't --

ODETTE  
Is that the resolve of a  
prospective Matrone?

CHARLES  
I apologize for my daughter's  
insolence, Matrone Odette!

Edwige sneers at her spineless husband.

Turning to Patrick:

ODETTE  
I tire of this. Begin their  
preparations.

Smiling at Nicolas:

ODETTE (CONT'D)  
Our Perennial Harvest feast shall  
be *fresh*.

Odette motions for the family to exit. Charles, Edwige,  
Caroline, Arthur and Nicolas obey.

Patrick stays at the back of the cave, heaving the new  
arrivals onto RESTRAINTS hanging from a conveyor system.

He lifts Maria, ready to shackle her but is stopped:

ODETTE (CONT'D)  
Wait.

Patrick drops her back onto his cart.

Odette places her hand on Maria's forehead, trailing it down  
sensually. She stops below her waist, and squeezes.

ODETTE (CONT'D)  
Not this one.

PATRICK  
What, why?

ODETTE  
You question, me?

PATRICK  
N-no. Never, I just --



ODETTE

Good. Place her over there,  
separate from the rest. Be quick  
about it.

**INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT**

MARIA (O.S.)

(faint and continuous)

Let me out! Help! HELP!

The family sits at a long dinner table. Large serving dishes are barely full. Just enough for everyone.

Odette sits the head of the table, Edwige to her right, Caroline next to her.

Charles is seated beside Caroline and opposite from Arthur, who sits beside Nicolas.

Patrick enters. He flops a pair of blood splattered gloves on the table and fills the empty seat across from Edwige, to Odette's left-hand side.

Odette raises the MATRONE'S CHALICE high above the table.

ODETTE

May we thank Maiden Guvet for this  
meal, abundant in nourishment. May  
we drink long life to Her, and one  
another, from our first day, to our  
final day, and onward into the  
*Empyrean --*

She is stricken by a COUGHING fit.

Nicolas struggles to get out of his chair to aid her. Odette waves him away.

Edwige savors her wine.

ODETTE (CONT'D)

(clearing her throat)

*Empyrean Fields. Á Leur Santé!*

ALL

*Á Leur Santé!*

The family digs in, passing around bowls of meaty-stew, trays of seared entrails, plates of bones halved for their marrow.

Patrick grabs a bottle of THE FAMILY RESERVE. It has a sieve at the end to catch bits of pulp. He pours himself a cup.

Arthur rocks in his seat as Nicolas serves him ORGAN-STEW.

ODETTE

Tell me Charles. What news of the home?

CHARLES

Interviews went a bit long today.  
(to Edwige)  
Wouldn't you say, darling?

Edwige continues eating her meal.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

And fewer viable candidates than we'd hoped for. I fear the next harvest feast will be light.

ODETTE

And why is that?

CHARLES

Well you see... Hospitals, confusing insurance policies, more regulations, attentive families...

ODETTE

You are in charge of that facility to bestow yield onto us, not excuses.

PATRICK

And here I thought Nicolas was the one selecting our stock. Silly me.

EDWIGE

That's enough, Patrick. My sister has spoken on the matter.

ODETTE

Thank you dear. How considerate.

Nicolas glances across the table at Caroline as she pushes her food around her plate -- SHLOP

Goey meat-mash SPLATTERS into her eye.

Arthur is covered in his food. A piglet in shit.

CAROLINE

Argh! You little monster!

NICOLAS

Are you alright!?

EDWIGE  
She's fine.

CHARLES  
Arthur, we don't behave like this  
at the table.

Arthur continues slapping his food. Charles gives up.

PATRICK  
(to Arthur)  
Oye. Little Sprout. Did you see the  
fresh ones hanging downstairs?

ARTHUR  
I don't know.

PATRICK  
Come on. I know you saw them!

ARTHUR  
Mmh. Yeah.

PATRICK  
Behave yourself, after dinner you  
can help me prepare them. That  
sound fun?

ARTHUR  
Yay! Okay!

Arthur quiets down. Patrick winks at Edwige.

She licks her lips.

EDWIGE  
A batch of four to work through  
hmm, you boys should be busy all  
night long.

PATRICK  
Three.

NICOLAS  
Three?

PATRICK  
Did I stutter?

Patrick stops himself. He turns to Odette for permission to  
continue.

ODETTE

I have plans for one of them, the dark haired girl.

EDWIGE

And may the rest of us know what sort of plans these are?

ODETTE

You may. The girl will not be harvested.

CHARLES

But Matrone Odette, I examined her. Her body is health --

ODETTE

Fret not. Her body will be of use. She will serve as a *brood-maiden*, until she is no longer viable.

They look up from their plates.

PATRICK

(breaking the silence)

Great, it's been so long. I could definitely use the extra hands.

ODETTE

Our numbers have dwindled, what with the death of my husband, and **the gift** taking our sisters to the grave.

EDWIGE

Tragedies to be sure.

CHARLES

I think it's wonderful idea as well, Matrone Odette! Have you chosen her stud?

ODETTE

Yes. Nicolas.

NICOLAS

What!?

EDWIGE

Mind your tongue, boy.

Caroline stops pushing her food around.

NICOLAS  
 Me? With a *brood-maiden*? An  
 outsider? My blood will be tainted!  
 Our lineage, Mother --

EDWIGE  
 Diminished.

She looks to Odette, aware of her slip-up.

EDWIGE (CONT'D)  
 Besides your sister, Daminenne, of  
 course.

Silence hangs over the table once again. Caroline refuses to  
 meet Nicolas' gaze.

NICOLAS  
 This isn't fair.

EDWIGE  
 Are you questioning the Matrone's  
 decision?

NICOLAS  
 No, it's just --

ODETTE  
 It's just *nothing*. You will beget a  
 brood of Drones with the outsider  
 to ensure our traditions endure.  
 The purity of our house's heirs  
 will be engendered by Arthur when  
 he is of age, and Caroline. They  
 will deliver unto us our next line  
 of Matrones.

Caroline looks at her brother and mate-to-be.

Arthur gnashes his teeth against brawny bones.

NICOLAS  
 You can't do this!

The air is sucked from the room. Odette leers at her son.

Charles looks to Edwige. She motions her head to Patrick.

Patrick clutches Nicolas by the throat.

PATRICK  
 How dare you!

Patrick looks to Edwige for confirmation.

EDWIGE

(to Nicolas)

*Anthers* do not question the  
Matrone. Your purpose is to lift  
what we tell you to lift, go where  
we tell you to go, and pump your  
damned seed where and when we  
command!

ODETTE

That is enough, sister. The boy and  
I will discuss his blasphemy  
privately.

EDWIGE

Of course.

Edwige eyes her sister. Something isn't right.

ODETTE

I grow weary. Caroline, be a dear.

Odette motions for Caroline's assistance. Caroline helps her  
out of her seat.

They walk -- Odette COUGHS again. She turns back, wreathing:

ODETTE (CONT'D)

Patrick, do not forget to feed the  
*brood-maiden*. Charles, Nicolas,  
clean up.

PATRICK

Yes Matrone.

CHARLES

Yes, Matrone Odette.

Caroline and Odette exit.

Edwige locks eyes with Patrick. Patrick takes the hint.

Edwige finishes her wine. She stands, and exits.

Patrick grabs Nicolas by the collar:

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Feed your new bitch. Consider it  
foreplay.

Patrick grins at Charles as he leaves.

Charles and Nicolas share a look -- SHPLAT.

Arthur sprays viscid meat-matter over both of them.

**INT. KITCHEN - LATER**

Nicolas plates grizzly moldy mush for Maria's dinner. Charles scrubs deep pots.

CHARLES

You know, I was an outsider once.

NICOLAS

Yes Uncle.

CHARLES

I spent my summers on farm not far from here. Swimming in the creek. That's where I met my first love --

NICOLAS

How sweet.

CHARLES

Emily.

Nicolas is intrigued.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

She was an outsider too, Emily I mean. We would write letters to one another all throughout the winter, counting the days until we'd be reunited.

NICOLAS

What became of her?

CHARLES

She was careless. She pressured me into being careless as well. One day we went to the old bridge, she insisted we jump into the river below. I wanted to impress her, I wanted to be brave.

NICOLAS

And? What happened?

CHARLES

I jumped. When I resurfaced I saw she had jumped as well. Only she must have slipped. She landed on the rocks at the side of the creek. Her little body, bent and broken, it was horrific.

NICOLAS

--

CHARLES

Then *she* appeared. Down the hillside from the brush above. Her flawless white skin...I thought she was an angel, coming to take my Emily away, but she reached her hand out for *me*. That was the day I met the love of my life.

The beams above them start squeaking rhythmically.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

I was warned to never venture to this vineyard. That the vintners were all afflicted by disease...cursed blood they said. But when Edwige led me here, I saw the truth...

NICOLAS

**The gift.**

CHARLES

I tried to show my birth-givers, but they wouldn't listen. Shortly after, they abandoned me. Your grandmother, Eartha, she took me in without hesitation.

NICOLAS

I've heard this part, yes.

CHARLES

That night, Matrone Eartha, and your mother, your father, and my sweet Edwige - all gathered around for my first harvest feast. From that day forth, I was home.

NICOLAS

And we lived happily ever after.

CHARLES

Scoff if you like, Nicolas. But this family, the Maiden's **gift**, it's all bigger than you are. It's ancient...powerful... beautiful.

NICOLAS

Yes, Yes. I know.



CHARLES  
And you want that to go on, yes?

NICOLAS  
Of course.

CHARLES  
Then understand, certain  
concessions must be made. We  
*Anther's* must get our hands dirty,  
humble ourselves before the power --

The SQUEAKING gets harder, faster. They pause, taking notice,  
and resume scrubbing.

CHARLES  
Even if it hurts.

NICOLAS  
It seems I have a lot to learn from  
you, Uncle.

Nicolas pushes a load of food residue down a TRASH CHUTE.

**INT. BUTCHER CELLAR - LATER**

An elegant silver platter is placed before the tray-slot of a  
rusted cage.

Nicolas saunters towards the hanging Elderly Residents,  
completing his tour with Mark, Pomery and Alex.

They're TWITCHING, drugged but alive. The network of tubes  
attached to their bodies lead to a system of vats, which drip  
BLOOD, slowly and steadily, into a BOTTLING MACHINE.

Maria is in a CAGE, shackled, watching her friends die.

NICOLAS  
I've prepared your dinner.

MARIA  
--

NICOLAS  
I'm quite the chef, or so I'm told.

MARIA  
(hoarse from screaming)  
Fuck you.

NICOLAS  
How crass.

MARIA

What the fuck are you doing to them  
you sick bastard?

NICOLAS

Harvesting.

MARIA

What the fuck --

NICOLAS

Rest easy. This won't be your fate.

MARIA

What the hell does that mean?

NICOLAS

You and I are to breed.

MARIA

As if I'd let you --

Nicolas turns, sullen. Maria realizes.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Oh my god.

NICOLAS

Believe me, I take no pleasure in  
this.

MARIA

Is that suppose to make me feel  
better?

NICOLAS

--

Nicolas walks toward the cage. Maria sees his INJURIES.

MARIA

Jesus, did...did they do that to  
you?

NICOLAS

You wouldn't understand.

MARIA

But I do, I-I do, your family  
right? This isn't right, J-just let  
me go ok? I can help you.

NICOLAS

I cannot.

MARIA  
But-but why not!?

NICOLAS  
Because I am apart of something  
bigger.

Nicolas walks up the stairs. Maria throttles the bars.

MARIA  
(struggling to scream)  
Don't leave me down here! Come  
Back! Fuck! Come back you fucker!

Maria is left alone with the platter of a food.

She opens the cloche revealing Nicolas' delightfully plated human organs and flesh.

She SCREAMS.

#### **INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

The faint RATTLING of Maria's CAGE BARS can be heard.

Nicolas spots Caroline through a doorway.

Caroline lays draped across a coach in a Victorian nightgown. She gently rubs her exposed legs against one another.

She is captivated by her BOOK, the fireplace CRACKLES behind her, bathing her in soft light.

Nicolas' breathing becomes ragged. He adjusts his pants. Nicolas steps forward. Stops himself.

Nicolas pulls up his sleeve, revealing a deep row of self-mutilation scars.

He digs into his pocket for a CORK-PULLER. Nicolas cannot break his gaze from Caroline.

He jams the PRONGS into himself. Blood pours from the wound.

He shudders in an orgasmic trance. He lifts the wound to his lips and drinks.

#### **INT. EDWIGE'S BEDROOM - MORNING**

Edwige and Charles pray silently kneeling in front of an alter.

Edwige opens one EYE. Checking Charles' reverence. He is dozing off.

EDWIGE

In obscurum per obscurius.

Edwige stands. Shoving him.

CHARLES

In obscurum per obscurius.

Charles loses his balance, hits the floor. A beached whale.

**INT. ODETTE'S BEDROOM - MORNING**

Nicolas fills a SYRINGE with a murky liquid. Odette watches her son attentively as he works in silence.

Nicolas replaces an empty blood transfusion bag hanging from a bedpost with a partially full one.

Odette grips Nicolas' arm, exposing his self-inflicted injuries.

ODETTE

We spoke of this.

NICOLAS

I know, mother. I'm sorry.

Odette rubs Nicolas' arm gently:

ODETTE

What brought it on this time?

NICOLAS

I don't want to breed with the outside -- AHH.

Odette RIPS his scab open with a FORK. She coats it in blood.

Nicolas clenches, allowing Odette to do so. Odette relishes the taste. Licking the fork clean:

ODETTE

Your body, *all* of it, is mine. To use as I see fit.

NICOLAS

--

ODETTE

I cannot afford to constantly curtail your dreadful habits.

NICOLAS

I mean only to please you, mother.

ODETTE

Then you must obey me. A shadow looms over this family. My sister. She wishes to take from us what is rightfully ours.

NICOLAS

Aunt Edwige? She wouldn't dare stand against you.

ODETTE

Serpents do not stand, my son. She prays each day to our exalted Maiden of her rancorous desire to see the **gift** overtake me as it has our sisters.

NICOLAS

Then why do you delay your arborescence?

ODETTE

You would have me hand our family's future to her?

NICOLAS

But what of Caroline, she will be of age to lead soon, no?

ODETTE

**The gift** has yet to manifest within her, it has passed her over. There is no one else.

NICOLAS

Only until Damienne is of age...no?

ODETTE

--

Nicolas looks at the crib.

NICOLAS

Regardless, what does this have to do with the outsider and I?

ODETTE

My son, do you truly believe I'd forsake your seed to a line of Drones? I have prayed to Maiden Guvet. The outsider will eat from our yield. Become imbued with our power. You will sire a daughter with her, a line of daughters, each manifesting **the gift**. They will lead this family for generations.

NICOLAS

I don't understand! Even if I did sire a daughter, she'd be as young as Damienne is now, so what's the point --

Odette motions for silence. Nicolas obeys.

She beckons him. He approaches.

ODETTE

You remind me so much of your father. So inquisitive.

She cradles her son. Rocking gently:

ODETTE (CONT'D)

It is not your place to worry yourself over such matters.

She kisses his forehead.

ODETTE (CONT'D)

Let your faith be larger than your fear.

**INT. BUTCHER CELLAR - DAY**

An Elderly Resident's hollow cadaver is pulverized by an industrial DE-STEMMER machine.

Fleshy chunks fall into an aged barrel.

Edwige sits upon cushioned chair brought from upstairs, overseeing the operation.

EDWIGE

She's up to something.

PATRICK

Who?

Patrick unhooks and DROPS the first post-exsanguinated body onto his cart.

EDWIGE  
My sister, who else?

PATRICK  
Oh.

Arthur shadows Patrick, enthralled with the process.

A Drone stacks hollowed-out Elderly Resident's corpses onto a cart, wheeling them toward the de-stemmer.

EDWIGE  
Ever the conversationalist.

Patrick paces by Alex, Pomery and Mark. Examining them.

Their eyes drowsily track Patrick's movements.

PATRICK  
What can I say?

EDWIGE  
You fear her? Even as she withers?

Patrick fiddles with Mark's blood-tubes. He brandishes his pig-sticker KNIFE and SLICES into Mark's side.

Mark twitches, GROANS. He stares into Maria's cage. Crying.

Maria refuses to watch.

Patrick pokes his head out from behind Mark.

PATRICK  
(to Maria)  
It's best to harvest when they're  
alive. Really preserves the flavor.

EDWIGE  
(to Patrick)  
I'm speaking to you.

Patrick SLIPS his fingers into Mark's wound. He fishes around. Mark thrashes pathetically.

Patrick grabs his prize. He delicately removes Mark's KIDNEY.

Patrick presents the kidney to Edwige. She accepts.

Maria looks up at Edwige. Their eyes lock.

Edwige EATS the kidney as if it were a fresh picked apple.

Edwige MOANS. Such richness. It's exquisite. The best bite she's had in a long time.

Patrick relishes her satisfaction. Maria breaks down.

Patrick approaches the cage. He looks back to Edwige. She continues to feast, intoxicated.

PATRICK

Hmm, maybe that little shit was right after all.

EDWIGE

--

Patrick vulgarly sucks the blood from his fingers. Arthur emulates him.

PATRICK

(to Maria)

And maybe when he's done with you, we can have some fun.

**INT. GRAND PARLOR - DAY**

Nicolas assists Caroline as she prepares for a regular wine tasting. No Harvesting.

He polishes glasses, she places sealed bottles on the gueridon.

CAROLINE

Are you upset with me?

NICOLAS

Wh-What? No. Of course not.

CAROLINE

Then why are you so silent?  
Thinking of the outsider?

NICOLAS

Yes. Mostly.

CAROLINE

She's pretty, no?

NICOLAS

--

Nicolas diligently continues his work.



Caroline trails her fingers on Nicolas' cheek.

CAROLINE  
Your bruises have all but healed.

Nicolas grips his forearm, clandestinely.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)  
Such a pity to see you so sullen.  
You work so hard...and yet...

NICOLAS  
Yet?

CAROLINE  
If it were up to me, you wouldn't  
suffer so.

Edwige enters from the basement stairs. She dabs a bit of residual blood from her lips with a silken cloth.

She stops. Staring frozen daggers at her daughter. Caroline backs away from Nicolas.

EDWIGE  
Are they here?

CAROLINE  
Yes, they're settling in.

EDWIGE  
And have you finished preparing?

NICOLAS  
Nearly we --

EDWIGE  
Why must I constantly move you  
along like an invalid? Are you  
incapable of completing even the  
most basic tasks with any semblance  
of punctuality? You'd be more use  
to me if I had Patrick cleave your  
neck and turn your hollow skull  
into a decanter.

NICOLAS  
--

Edwige SNATCHES the tray and enters the Tasting Room.

EDWIGE (O.S.)  
Welcome guests. Welcome!

Nicolas shakes with rage. A boiling tea kettle.

Caroline kisses his cheek. His rage melts.

CAROLINE  
Pay her no mind, Nicolas.

Nicolas turns to her. He stares at her lips. So close.  
Caroline flutters her eyes.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)  
She's grown acrid with age.

**EXT. TREE HOUSE - DAY**

Arthur's Tree House is empty.

FLIES hover over a pile of RABBIT GUTS.

**INT. BUTCHER CELLAR - LATER**

Maria SCRATCHES a small stone against her shackles.

Footsteps approach. Nicolas appears in front of her cage food tray in hand.

He sees her previous meal untouched. He walks towards the hanging bodies.

NICOLAS  
You must eat.

MARIA  
Or what? You'll kill me? Would that be so bad?

NICOLAS  
They will force you. That will not be pleasant.

Tracing Mark's crudely sown-shut kidney laceration:

NICOLAS (CONT'D)  
As you can see, my family is quite adept at keeping the yield alive for as long as possible.

MARIA  
Yeah, I saw. You sick bastards.  
Fucking cannibals.

NICOLAS

--

MARIA

You know. One who eats their own kind?

NICOLAS

You are *not* my kind.

MARIA

The fuck -- of course we are! We're human.

Approaching Maria's cage:

NICOLAS

You are *livestock*. To be harvested for your *yield*. I am of the blood of Maiden of Guvet. She who ensnared *La Bête Incarnée*. I am the child of Matrone Odette. A bastion of **the gift** --

MARIA

What the hell are you talking about?!

NICOLAS

What this family is, what I am apart of, an outsider could never understand.

MARIA

I can understand how they treat you.

Nicolas deflates.

MARIA (CONT'D)

They beat you? Don't they?

NICOLAS

--

MARIA

Silence you? Ignore you?

Nicolas tries to leave.

MARIA (CONT'D)

I can listen to you.

Nicolas stops. He turns back, taking the bait.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Don't you want someone to talk to?

NICOLAS

You had said something. Back in the van, that interested me. I've been wanting to ask you...

MARIA

Of course. Ask me anything.

NICOLAS

You said something about, freedom. Freedom from your family.

MARIA

Yeah. I remember.

NICOLAS

Could you tell me more?

MARIA

Better yet. I could show you. You just have to let me out.

Nicolas glances at the door lock. Footsteps approach.

ARTHUR (O.S.)

No!? But I wanna! I wanna!

NICOLAS

I'll be back. I promise.

MARIA

Don't leave me here, not with them.

Nicolas is conflicted. He exits.

She punches the ground. Gritting her teeth. Almost.

Patrick and Arthur enter.

PATRICK

For the last time, no.

Arthur stomps and huffs.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

If your mother found we harvested them early, we'd both get a spanking.

Patrick checks the blood tanks. Sealing them. Replacing them.

Arthur hobbles over to Patrick with a wooden stool. Sits.

ARTHUR

Can't we harvest *one* of them now?

Patrick compares and contrasts the blood bottles.

PATRICK

Alright, alright. The weakest one.

Patrick chooses Mark. Sizes him up, removes his PIG-STICKER.

He stops.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Our little secret?

Arthur nods with excitement. Patrick motions him over. Patrick hands Arthur the knife and picks him up by his waist.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Right there, under the naval.

Arthur shoves the blade into Mark.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Gently now, don't damage the yield!

Arthur tries to calm down, guiding the blade down Mark's chest.

Patrick slowly lowers the boy, trying to guide him.

The cut is too deep, too jagged. Mark GRUMBLES.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Easy boy.

Arthur gets frustrated and begins SAWING into Mark.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Enough! Give me that.

Patrick pulls Arthur's hand off the blade, sets him down.

Patrick opens Mark's chest cavity with one deft SLASH.

Patrick reaches inside scooping an organ-cascade into a barrel below.

Patrick lifts the barrel, and motions towards a table. Arthur follows.

Patrick reaches inside, and removes Mark's liver.

PATRICK (CONT'D)  
What's this?

ARTHUR  
Mmh, a liver! Paté! Mmh!

Arthur rubs his belly, licks his lips.

PATRICK  
Very good. And this one?

ARTHUR  
The kidney!

PATRICK  
And how do you know?

ARTHUR  
Cause it's shaped like a bean!

PATRICK  
Not bad, not bad.

ARTHUR  
Shouldn't there be two beans?

PATRICK  
Mama had the other, she loves her  
meat.

Patrick tears veins from the organ, slurps them comically  
like spaghetti.

Arthur claps and laughs.

ARTHUR  
Mama loves meat! Mama loves meat!

PATRICK  
Why does she love meat?

ARTHUR  
Because it keeps her strong and  
healthy!

Tapping Arthur on the back:

PATRICK  
That's right, little sprout, and if  
we keep feeding mama her meat,  
she'll be healthy and strong  
forever.

Arthur beams. Patrick is proud.

PATRICK (CONT'D)  
Not a bad yield for a scrawny  
prick. Wouldn't you say?

Arthur nods approvingly. Patrick reaches into his trousers removing a pocket watch.

PATRICK (CONT'D)  
Shit, I'm late. Gotta go.

ARTHUR  
Can I come?

PATRICK  
No. You stay here, clean up. I'm  
off to give mama some meat.

Patrick places a handful of organs and guts into a smaller bucket. He pats Arthur on the head and exits.

Maria cowers in the corner of her cage. Chains rattle.

Silence engulfs the cellar.

Maria scans her surroundings. Mark's skin flaps are CLOSED.

ARTHUR  
BOO!

Arthur POPS his head out from Mark's chest cavity like a demonic jack in the box.

Maria jumps back. Catching her breath. Composing herself.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)  
Hello Outsider! I'm Arthur.

MARIA  
N-nice to meet you. Ar-Arthur.

ARTHUR  
I'm bored. Hey! Outsider! Wanna  
play?

MARIA  
Play? S-Sure. Yeah, let's play.

ARTHUR  
Yes! Let's play! Let's have fun!

MARIA  
What do you like to play?

ARTHUR  
Hmmm, hide and seek!

MARIA  
Oh, well. I don't think I can play that.

ARTHUR  
Why not!?

Arthur climbs out of the cadaver and approaches Maria's cage.

MARIA  
Well, it's going to be really hard for me to hide if I'm stuck in here. It wouldn't be fair, would it?

ARTHUR  
--

MARIA  
If you let me out, then I could hide all over the place. We could play all day!

ARTHUR  
Really!?

MARIA  
Yes! Of course! Just grab those keys over there.

Arthur takes the KEYS, approaches Maria's cage. Stops.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
Yes! Yes! That's it! Now just give them to me! I promise, we'll have so much fun!

Arthur raises the KEYS up to Maria's cage. Maria strains to grab them.

They're just out of reach. Her composure cracks.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
Please! C'mon kid! Give me the keys!!!

Arthur pulls the keys back, GRABS her hand and BITES her index finger in HALF.

Maria's SCREAMS. Arthur CACKLES wildly. A hideous duet.

Blood running down Arthur's mouth, piss down his legs.



He spits her FINGER back into the cage.

ARTHUR  
You're so stupid, outsider!

Maria CLUTCHES her bleeding hand. Arthur's LAUGHTER trails further and further away.

Maria ROARS.

AUDIO MATCH CUT:

**INT. EDWIGE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Edwige ROARS with orgasmic ecstasy. Patrick is giving her his MEAT from behind. Their mouths caked in blood, dripping down their chests...

They feast and fuck.

CUT TO:

**MOMENTS LATER**

Patrick stretches his suspenders over his shoulder.

Edwige lies naked on her bed, smoking an ELEGANT PIPE. Her SCARS and LESION exposed.

EDWIGE  
What could she be planning?

PATRICK  
Why does it matter? She's given up.

EDWIGE  
Think simpleton, Do you really believe she'd hand her power over to me so easily?

PATRICK  
--

EDWIGE  
We all know that pitiful baby of hers won't last another season...

PATRICK  
Yeah, I've already dug her a grave beside my mother -- your sisters.

EDWIGE

It must be something to do with the  
outsider and her son.

PATRICK

Aren't they just breeding Drones?

EDWIGE

Why then does the outsider eat from  
our yield? Why does my sister  
prolong the insemination?

Edwige spreads MAKEUP over her exposed SCARS and LESIONS,  
returning to her enameled form.

PATRICK

Maybe she's waiting for the  
Perennial Feast?

Edwige stops. It clicks.

EDWIGE

Yes, I imagine my sister has quite  
the ceremony in mind...

Edwige stares into the mirror. Licking her lips.

EDWIGE (CONT'D)

What a shame it'd be to ruin it.

She sees a Matrone staring back.

**EXT. TREE HOUSE - DAY**

Days have passed. A RABBIT CARCASS rots, decaying flesh  
sloths off exposed bone.

**EXT. BACK YARD - DAY**

New LAUDNRY ITEMS hang out to dry on the clothes lines.

**EXT. VINEYARD - DAY**

Drones amble along spreading FERTILIZER. Working the land.

**INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT**

The family has gathered for another meal. Food is passed  
around the table, conversations buzz...

Nicolas body is present, but his mind wanders.  
He'd rather be elsewhere.

**INT. BUTCHER CELLAR - LATER**

Nicolas appears before Maria's cage.

Her lodgings have improved, a bed made of straw, tattered blankets and a pillow.

NICOLAS  
I've brought you something.

Nicolas fishes through his coat, removing a LOAF OF BREAD.  
He slides the bread through the bars. Maria is apprehensive.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)  
It's just bread. I promise.

Maria greedily snatches the bread. Wolfs it down.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)  
I was thinking about what you said yesterday. Self...what?

MARIA  
(mouthful of bread)  
Actualization. The hierarchy of needs.

NICOLAS  
I don't understand.

MARIA  
Like, think of it as the building blocks you need to become a complete person.

NICOLAS  
--

MARIA  
For example...the big one? Patrick? He needs a kick in the teeth, preferably from a horse.

They chuckle.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
So, what do you need, Nicolas?

NICOLAS  
Well, my family --

MARIA  
Nicolas, we've talked about this.  
Not your *family*. You.

He searches his mind despite the answer coming immediately.

NICOLAS  
I'm in love.

MARIA  
Okay. That's great!

NICOLAS  
But it cannot be.

MARIA  
Why not?

NICOLAS  
Because she is promised to another.

Nicolas stares at Maria's poorly healed FINGER-NUB.

Maria covers it with her other hand.

MARIA  
It wasn't your fault.

NICOLAS  
Still, I wish no more harm would  
come to you.

MARIA  
I know, Nicolas, you aren't like  
them.

NICOLAS  
--

MARIA  
Why do they do this? Why eat --

NICOLAS  
We must. You wouldn't understand.

MARIA  
Try me.

NICOLAS

Within my mother, my sister, even my aunt, lies an ancient inherited **gift**. Mortal vessels cannot handle its power. It bursts through, decaying and tearing flesh. It must be sated by blood.

MARIA

It doesn't sound like much of a gift. I've seen your aunt, your mother, Nicolas. They're really sick.

NICOLAS

They need only feed from the yield, until they are deemed worthy. Then all will be well.

MARIA

You can't honestly believe that.

Nicolas pauses. Does he?

NICOLAS

I do not wish to speak of this anymore.

MARIA

Fine, fine. Okay.

NICOLAS

So, what should I do?

MARIA

About what?

Nicolas looks uncomfortable, she remembers.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Oh right, the girl. Love is a tricky thing, but I think, when you want something you should go for it.

NICOLAS

You think that will work?

MARIA

You do so much for them. Who are they to hold you back?

Her words stir in his mind. Maria inches forward.

MARIA (CONT'D)

You know, Nicolas. I remember how beautiful your vineyard was. Maybe we could take a walk together, just you and me? Talk more?

Maria places her hand on Nicolas thigh. Her loving touch is foreign, but not unwelcome.

He places his hand over hers.

NICOLAS

Soon, perhaps. Rest now.

Nicolas leaves. Maria bites her lip, her mask slipping.

She looks out into the cellar, the hollowed corpses of her friends greet her.

Tears stream down her cheeks. She doesn't make a sound.

The door shuts.

**INT. BASEMENT STAIRCASE - NIGHT**

Nicolas exits the basement. Odette waits at the top of the stairs. She beckons him with her CANE.

He obliges. Stopping on the stair below hers.

ODETTE

You spend too much time with her.

NICOLAS

What? I was --

ODETTE

Do not think you can hide from me, boy. Shirking off your duties to converse with her, sneaking her comforts. Do not forget she is an outsider.

NICOLAS

But what if she could be made to see the power of your **gift**, mother?

ODETTE

**The gift** is our treasure, and ours alone.

NICOLAS

But Uncle Charles was once an  
outsider too --

ODETTE

Speak not on matters that do not  
regard you.

NICOLAS

I thought she could join -- OOF

Odette BASHES Nicolas across the face with her cane. He  
TUMBLES down the stairs.

ODETTE

You are not to *think*. You are to  
obey, *Anther*. The *brood-maiden* will  
accept your seed on the night of  
Perennial Feast. After she bares  
unto you a daughter, she will be  
used again, and again, until her  
body fails her. Then, she will be  
disposed of.

Nicolas struggles to stand.

ODETTE (CONT'D)

That is the will of Maiden Guvet.  
*My will.*

**INT. ODETTE'S BEDROOM - MORNING**

Nicolas stands over Odette's Alchemical Table. Mixing and  
preparing the murky liquid. He fills a SYRINGE.

Caroline passes the doorframe. She stops, looks at the bed.

It's empty.

CAROLINE

Nicolas?

Nicolas turns to her, the SYRINGE behind his back.

NICOLAS

Good morning, Caroline.

CAROLINE

What are you doing in here? Matrone  
Odette is in the parlor

NICOLAS  
I know, yes. I was checking her  
stock, tidying up.

CAROLINE  
Always so diligent.

Caroline glides into the room. Nicolas sweats.

NICOLAS  
I've been meaning to give you  
something.

CAROLINE  
Oh? For me?

Nicolas removes Pomery's RING from his pocket.

NICOLAS  
Do you like it?

CAROLINE  
I love it! But mother always lays  
claim to the yield's trinkets...

NICOLAS  
Our secret.

Nicolas presents the RING. Caroline offers her hand, he takes  
it. He slowly slides the RING on.

It fits. He holds her hand. They admire its JEWEL.

She looks up to Nicolas. Beaming. Nicolas advances.

He grabs her wrist, pulls her close and KISSES her violently.  
Nicolas is lost in passion, ignoring her resistance.

She bites his lip. Nicolas recoils in pain.

CAROLINE  
How dare you.

NICOLAS  
But, I thought --

CAROLINE  
Are you mad? You dare advance on  
me? Put your hands on me?

Nicolas reaches out for her, she smacks his hand away.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)  
I am a Maid of Guvet, what are you?



NICOLAS

--

CAROLINE

You are but an *Anther*. I determine who indulges in the sweetness of my lips. Who imbibes in the bounty of my body. They are not your fruits to pluck.

Caroline removes the ring, DROPS it to the floor.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

Know your place.

Caroline storms off. Nicolas watches her go.

Rage boiling. Eyes twitching.

**INT. BUTCHER CELLAR - MORNING**

Nicolas is out of control.

NICOLAS

You lied to me!!!

Maria scurries deeper into her cage.

Nicolas storms over towards the hanging bodies. He grabs a HARVEST KNIFE from the butcher's table.

He STABS the corpses in a frenzy. He HOWLS.

Nicolas grabs his head in his hands, thrashing back and fourth.

The rage is possessing him. Nicolas turns his BLADE on himself.

He slashes at his arms. Across his chest. He WAILS in agony.

He turns to Maria's cage, pointing his KNIFE.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)

You.

Nicolas marches toward the cage, his rage focused.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)

You did this. You lied.

MARIA

Wha-what are you talking about?! N-  
Nicolas please.

NICOLAS

She rebuked me. She hates me.

MARIA

I'm sorry! I didn't lie! I don't  
know wha- Nicolas, you-you're  
bleeding. Badly, y-you need help.

Nicolas presses his head against the cage. Defeated.

NICOLAS

It doesn't matter now, does it?

Nicolas licks his wounds gingerly.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)

Our fates are sealed.

He fishes through his pocket, pulling out the SYRINGE.  
Nicolas kneels down and slides it into the cage.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)

Do not take it all at once. Spread  
it throughout the coming days. When  
the time comes all will be a dream.

Nicolas turns away.

MARIA

Nicolas...no...please, you can't!  
We-we can get out! Don't do this!

Nicolas drags himself up the stairs.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Don't leave me down here! Come  
back! Come back you piece of shit!!  
Nicolas!!!

The door shuts.

**INT. CHAPEL - MORNING**

Once a house of splendor, The Chapel now fights the rot of  
time.

Nicolas stands by a GOLDEN TABERNACLE, a bottle of uncorked  
SACRED WINE in hand.

Odette leans against an engraved wooden PULPIT's bannister.

A COPE richly embroidered adorns her shoulders, clasped at her clavicle by a huge jeweled MORSE.

She silences the room with a raise of her hand. Sermonizing:

ODETTE

Praise be to our Maiden Guvet for  
commanding us to kindle the highest  
heavenly aether. May her solitude  
grant us the prescience to live in  
same. It is said now as it was once  
before:

ODETTE (CONT'D)

In obscurum per obscurius.

ENTIRE PARISH

In obscurum per obscurius.

ODETTE (CONT'D)

Yore, our traditions recount the  
miracles the Anchorite wrought with  
marvelous virtues, enshrined herein  
forevermore.

CUT TO:

**INT. ODETTE'S ROOM - DAY**

A ray of sunlight narrowly avoids baby Damienne's CRIB.

The crib's VEILS flutter in a cross breeze.

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

Shawled in latticed coverings to  
cloak her blemished appearance, she  
devoted her life to the recreant  
people among whom her lot was cast.  
Offering her services freely to the  
sick and sorrowful. Thus she spent  
her life, far from the strife of  
the world, for which she had no  
taste. Nevertheless the fame of her  
good deeds spread far and wide...

CUT TO:

**INT. BUTCHER CELLAR - DAY**

Patrick turns an old manual winepress' LEVER.

The pressure-plate screws into a BUCKET OF FLESH CHUNKS.

Juices spirt out of the spigot into a SMALLER BUCKET.

He squeezes harder. More BLOODY JUICE is discharged. The extracted liquid is poured down a GRATED DRAIN.

In her cage, Maria forces putrid MEAT BITS into her mouth. She is broken. She must eat.

ODETTE (V.O.)

The King heard of her life's noble repute, and invited her to his palace. Maiden Guvet accepted the invitation, and to her delight, was well received by the monarch. Her piety greatly impressed him, so much so that he insisted she accept the Holy See, under the condition that she should remove her obscuring garbs and reveal herself to him as God intended.

CUT TO:

**INT. WINE CAVE - CONTINUOUS**

Caroline stands at a riddling rack of bottles, with her book.

She reads as she rotates each bottle quarter of a turn at a time.

ODETTE (V.O.)

For you see, pure as she was of heart, she could not escape the court's forked tongues, who spun poisoned tales into the monarch's mind of her witchcraft and harlotry. She grew tired of the court's incessant babbling. How she longed to return to the shelter of her mossy hamlet and the friendship of the poor vintners among whom her mission lay. Maiden Guvet informed the King of her soon-to-be return home.

CUT TO:

**EXT. HOSPICE ENTRANCE - DAY**

Charles stands behind the wheelchair of OLD MAN GARY (80).

Charles smiles warmly to GRANDCHILD NINA's (12). Charles shakes NINA'S PARENTS (40s) hands.

He wheels Gary away. Nina and her parents wave goodbye, exit.

Charles grimaces, checks a box on his clipboard: "NOT APPLICABLE - FAMILY".

**INT. CHAPEL - DAY**

Odette continues her sermon, becoming more and more animated.

ODETTE (V.O.)

Insulted, the King conspired to forcibly remove her shrouds, desiccating her under penalty of death. The moon hung high above Maiden Guvet's lodgings as she slumbered, unaware of the King's ill intent.

CUT TO:

**INT. NICOLAS'S BEDROOM - DAY**

Nicolas masturbates standing. Tears running heavily.

He covers his nose and mouth with Caroline's PANTIES. He inhales deeply. Stroking violently.

Nicolas crams the UNDERWEAR into his mouth -- climaxes into a SMALL GLASS JAR.

He opens the door to his cramped room. Patrick is waiting in the hallway.

Nicolas gives him the SMALL GLASS JAR.

ODETTE (V.O.)

Under the veil of the moon, she was approached by *La Bête Incarnée*. It warned of her fate, offering salvation through a merciful terminus. Rather, Maiden Guvet conversed with *La Bête*, enthralled it. Ensnared it. Their bodies coalesced in consecration, until her blood was imbued, with **the gift**.

CUT TO:

**EXT. VINEYARD - DAY**

Drones snip GRAPE CLUSTERS from the vines. The grapes are shriveled, feeble, and sparse.

Grape clusters are tossed into large wicker baskets.

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

The morning rose. Maiden Guvet rode out to meet her fate. The hubris-struck King made his demands. Maiden Guvet cast off her cloak, blinding the witless King in divine justification. She then flung her mantle over a sunbeam, whereupon the garment stayed suspended as though the shaft of light were solid! Casting all in it's wake in impregnable shadow.

CUT TO:

**INT. EDWIGE'S BEDROOM - MORNING**

Edwige is praying deeply at her ALTER. She Performs a RITUAL.

The SMALL GLASS JAR with Nicolas' seed sits on the alter.

ODETTE

The King and his court were stupefied for they did not understand. They prayed to God, but he heard naught. For before them now was no longer the emissary of the heavenly father. She wielded the power bequeathed to her from the one who took each of their lives thereafter in savage cruelty, *La Bête Incarnée*.

**INT. CHAPEL - CONTINUOUS**

Nicolas pours the SACRED WINE into the Matrone's CHALICE. Odette looks over her parishioners.

ODETTE

Eras on and still we reap the benefits of her offerings. We turn from the light, germinating in obscurity, through conviction, and adherence.

ODETTE (CONT'D) ENTIRE PARISH  
 In obscurum per obscurius In obscurum per obscurius

Nicolas hands off the CHALICE to Odette. Odette holds her CHALICE up.

ODETTE (CONT'D)  
 Divine Conceiver, Seraphic Maiden  
 Guvet, who worked miracles in those  
 days and these, anoint us with the  
 delectation of your rapture in  
 continuum.

Odette holds her CHALICE above her head.

ODETTE (CONT'D)  
 Á Leur Santé!

ENTIRE PARISH  
 Á Leur Santé!

Odette pours the SACRED WINE down a DRAIN opening within the PULPIT.

Odette looks out to her adoring worshipping parish.

Only The Family and a dozen or so Drones stare back.

**INT. BUTCHER CELLAR - NIGHT**

Maria lays in the fetal position. Her eyes spacey, dazed.

Patrick clears the large butcher table. Charles wipes down syrupy viscera from the tabletop.

CHARLES  
 Are you sure this is what Matrone  
 Odette wants?

EDWIGE  
 How many times must I repeat  
 myself?

Edwige SUCTIONS Nicolas' seed from the small glass jar into a primitive PIPETTE.

The padlock to Maria's cage unbolts. The door swings open. She lays motionless.

Patrick grabs Maria's foot - cracks open her shackles. He drags her out of the cage without resistance.

Patrick pulls Maria over to the table. Dead-lifts her up.

She is planted on the chopping block.

CHARLES

She doesn't look right.

Patrick props a small barrel under Maria's feet.

PATRICK

Would you shut the hell up already?

CHARLES

She hasn't moved or made a peep  
since we've been down here.

Patrick slaps the side of Maria's head, she doesn't react.

PATRICK

Maybe she's broken?

EDWIGE

She's fine. Spread her.

Charles holds Maria by the ankles, spreading her legs wide.  
Patrick runs his eyes down her body.

PATRICK

Their *sprout* might not be so ugly  
after all.

Edwige approaches with the insemination pipette, inches from  
Maria. She speaks through grit teeth.

EDWIGE V.O

Would you just grab her wrists you  
buffoon.

Patrick glares at Edwige. She doesn't back down. He scoffs.

Edwige moves the insemination pipette closer to Maria.

EDWIGE

(muttering)

Hark, Maiden Guvet. Hear your  
daughter now. Neglect your **gift**  
onto this swine, for she is  
unworthy of...

The pipette draws closer, and closer, dripping. Patrick leans  
over Maria body and grabs on her wrist.

Maria SNAPS to life. JAMMING the SYRINGE into Patrick.

PATRICK

Sonnova!



Patrick releases Maria and stumbles backward.

Maria WRENCHES her foot from Charles.

She KICKS the pipette into Edwige's EYE.

Patrick crumbles to the ground.

Charles catches Edwige, cradles her as she SQUEALS in pain.

Maria scrambles off the table. Runs to the hanging bodies.

Charles bobbles around as Edwige pushes him off:

EDWIGE

Useless *Anther!* Kill Her!!!!

Charles stumbles to his feet, grabs a PUNCH-DOWN STICK.

Charles lumbers towards the hanging bodies. Searching.

Maria's shadow moves ghost-like between hanging victims.

Charles pushes a body to the side -- SKLAM.

His face is BLUGEONED by the back end of a swinging MEAT HOOK.

Maria eyes the stairs. Charles cries, spitting TEETH.

Patrick fumbles with his pig-sticker knife. Maria hears the CLATTER on the floor.

She sees Patrick shambling toward her, drugged. Arms out. He lunges.

Maria narrowly shifts out of the way. Patrick trips, his arm JAMS in the de-stemmer.

He yanks his arm -- it's caught.

Patrick flails sluggishly. He accidentally swipes the activation LEVER.

He GARLGES, panicked, as the DE-STEMMER TEARS OFF HIS ARM.

Edwige rises. Falters. Staggeres against the butcher's table. She grabs a BONING KNIFE.

Patrick's arm continues to SCRUNCH and SQUITSH in the DE-STEMMER. He falls to the floor, sputtering blood.

Maria scurries toward the stairs. Edwige cuts her off.



NICOLAS

No one's come up, she has to be  
hiding in the caves.

CAROLINE

Where's cousin Patrick?

EDWIGE

Dead by now. Where's your brother?

CAROLINE

I don't know, his tree house?

EDWIGE

(to Caroline)

Guard these stairs. Arm yourself,  
and scream if you see her. Be  
careful, She's a crafty little  
witch.

(to Nicolas)

And you, you're coming with me.

Edwige pushes Nicolas towards to basement staircase.

**INT. BUTCHER CELLAR - NIGHT**

Patrick lies DEAD in a pool of his own blood.

Charles coughs up another tooth. His dead tooth remains  
intact. A hanging body murmurs.

Charles uses a dangling body to hoist himself, slipping on  
his own mess.

Edwige and Nicolas enter.

EDWIGE

Get up you imbecile!

Charles rises. Edwige walks towards the butcher table,  
dispensing BLADED WEAPONS.

EDWIGE (CONT'D)

The boy and I will search the  
caverns. You will stay here, in  
case she doubles back this way.

Edwige aggressively pushes a CLEAVER into Charles' hands.

EDWIGE (CONT'D)

Scream if you see her, is that  
clear?

CHARLES  
Yesshh, my lovth.

Edwige hands Nicolas a HARVEST KNIFE, making eye contact.

EDWIGE  
If you see her. Kill her. No  
hesitation. Understood?

NICOLAS

--

EDWIGE  
GO!

Edwige STOMPS passed Patrick's blood puddle. She and Nicolas exit.

Charles quivers, taking his post. The faint WAILS of the Elderly Victims assail him.

CHARLES  
Sh-shut up.

The Elderly Victims swing on their restraints, twitching.

Charles hyperventilates, looking into their eyes.

CHARLES (CONT'D)  
Stop looking at me!

**INT. BARREL CAVE - NIGHT**

Nicolas careens down the labyrinth of wine cellar rooms.

He stops at a barrel with fresh WINE STAINS running down it's sides.

Nicolas approaches it with caution, grabbing a nearby BARREL HAMMER.

He lifts the hammer high above his head. CRASH.

He SMASHES barrel into splinters-- wine spills, emptying onto the floor.

No Maria. He throws the BARREL HAMMER across the room.

NICOLAS  
How could I be so STUPID!?

Nicolas ventures deeper into the tunnels.

Maria's shadow slips out from a wine barrel and disappears into the darkness.

**INT. GRAPE RECEPTION - NIGHT**

Machines WHIRL and HUM.

Edwige CREEPS into the industrial room, searches it's contents:

EDWIGE

Where are you? Come out you little whore!

Behind vats, around barrels, under machines...

No Maria.

EDWIGE (CONT'D)

I'm going to spend the next week picking the bits of you from my teeth!

She continues deeper into the fertilizer room.

**INT. FERTILIZER ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Edwige approaches old RECEPTACLE BINS. She yanks the PADLOCK of one of the BIN LIDS -- it's locked firmly.

She scans the room. She finds an open vat.

Edwige arms herself with a broom handle. She sifts through the soupy decomposing human remains.

Nothing.

Edwige turns to exit. Stopping beneath a metal drainage grate.

She soaks in the moonlight. Pleading to the night sky.

EDWIGE

Damn it all.

Edwige exits.

The container's contents BUBBLE. A pair of EYES OPEN.

Maria pulls herself out of the putrid human compost.

**INT. GRAND PARLOR - NIGHT**

Caroline sits in a comfy arm chair by the fireside -- the same seat Edwige had moved into the cellar.

She flips through her book, enamored. Just another night.

Behind her, in the kitchen, the TRASH CHUTE opens. Two muck-covered arms PUSH through the threshold.

Maria pulls herself out from the trash chute -- CLUMPK.

Maria freezes. Holds her breath.

Caroline's eyes look up from her book.

Beat.

Caroline returns to her story.

Maria grabs a KITCHEN KNIFE. Slinks into the hallway.

**INT. ODETTE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Odette sits by the window, rocking Damienne's veiled crib.

ODETTE

*(singing in French)*

It's *La Bête Incarnée* who's  
crying.~

He's hungry and will eat

Raw and alive~

Without bread or butter~

All the babies~

Who aren't asleep~

Maria's blood soaked form coalesces in the room.

She tiptoes. KITCHEN KNIFE drawn. Closer. SNATCHING Odette:

MARIA

Scream and I'll fucking kill you.

ODETTE

You cannot hurt me, child.

MARIA

Wanna bet?

She presses the BLADE against Odette's throat.

MARIA (CONT'D)

How the fuck do I get out of here?

ODETTE  
Why would you want to?

MARIA  
Seriously?

ODETTE  
Dear, sweet child. You have no idea  
the power you reject. The power we  
can offer you.

MARIA  
--

ODETTE  
My son, he's fond of you, yes? You  
have proven capable. Perhaps even  
worthy of **the gift**.

MARIA  
Cut the shit. Car keys, a phone,  
anything to get me the fuck out of  
here --

ODETTE  
Join us, outsider. Consecrate your  
bond. Become a Maid of Guvet and  
embrace eternity.

Maria moves to Odette's front, locking eyes with her. Odette  
finishes the wine from her MATRONE'S CHALICE.

MARIA  
Listen grandma, I don't give a fuck  
about your inbred batshit crazy  
bullshit. Help me get out of here  
or I will fucking kill --

ODETTE  
Fool! You know not what you reject!  
Flowing in me is the blood of  
ancients! Power divinely bestowed  
by our --

Maria PLUNGES the kitchen knife into Odette unceremoniously.

Odette gasps, staring at the leaking wound. Silenced.

Maria peers into the crib. She covers her mouth.

#### **INT. BASEMENT CAVERNS - NIGHT**

Nicolas continues his rigorous search.

Desperately.

Hunting.

He spots a trail of bloody footprints. A lead!

He follows them, harvest knife drawn. They end at the bottom of the TRASH CHUTE.

Bloody HANDPRINTS are smeared all over the chute opening.

She's upstairs. So are his mother, his sister.

Nicolas sprints back towards the Butcher Cellar.

**INT. BUTCHER CELLAR - CONTINUOUS**

Charles stands on the stairs CRYING. Edwige enters.

EDWIGE  
Anything!?

Footsteps grow closer. They turn at the ready.

Nicolas CHARGES into the cellar. Edwige steps to him.

EDWIGE (CONT'D)  
Did you see -- OOF!

Nicolas shoves Edwige out of the way. Charles BLUBBERS down to her aid.

Nicolas dashes up the stairs.

**INT. ODETTE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Nicolas HIGHTAILS it into Odette's room.

Odette's mauve-toned forearm droops out from her chair. Blood drips down her still lifeless arm.

Nicolas fears the worst, rushing to her side.

She lives. Staring blanking, muttering, hemorrhaging.

NICOLAS  
(tending to her wounds)  
No no no.



ODETTE  
 Mine is the blood of Maiden  
 Guvet. Timeless. Eternal. **The**  
**gift** of the foremothers flows  
 within me for I am exalted in  
 their eyes...

NICOLAS (CONT'D)  
 Mother, please, save your  
 strength.

Nicolas runs to Alchemical Table. He stops.

The crib is EMPTY.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)  
 Where is Damienne? Where is my  
 sister?

ODETTE  
 ...Tamer of *La Bête* that protects  
 us...**the gift** empowers us...

Nicolas grabs his mother's shoulders.

NICOLAS  
 Mother, please, where is Damienne?!

ODETTE  
 (regaining lucidity)  
 In the clutch of wretched.

Nicolas looks toward the doorway, then back at her.

NICOLAS  
 The others will be close behind me.  
 They'll tend to you, I must --

ODETTE  
 You will stay.

NICOLAS  
 But Damienne --

ODETTE  
 She will die. I live. Your blood. I  
 need --

Odette coughs. Clawing at Nicolas' forearm.

ODETTE (CONT'D)  
 Now...I need...feed...

Nicolas rolls his sleeve up, gripping the harvest knife.

NICOLAS  
 Could you not protect her?

Odette grabs her son's wrists, gnawing weakly.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)  
Where is your power?

She looks pathetic. She looks Mortal.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)  
You couldn't save her --

ODETTE  
Because she was UNWORTHY!

Her illusion has been dispelled.

Nicolas SLITS her throat.

Odette EMPTIES. Her blood washing over her. Drowning her trinkets and robes.

Her chalice FILLS, runs over, and tips to the ground.

**INT. SECOND FLOOR HALL - LATER**

Nicolas exits his mother's room. He picks up a trail of bloody foot prints once again.

They lead to the window. Nicolas opens it.

A light emanates from Arthur's Tree House.

**INT. BASEMENT STAIRCASE / WINERY ENTRANCE - NIGHT**

Edwige runs up the stairs. She looks toward the front door.

It's unguarded.

EDWIGE  
Caroline! Where the *fuck* are you?!

**INT. GRAND PARLOR - CONTINUOUS**

Edwige finds Caroline. She is reading her book, unbothered.

EDWIGE  
What the hell are you doing!?

CAROLINE  
Reading about a horse named Willoughby and his misadventures.

EDWIGE

And why are you not searching!?

CAROLINE

I see no need in cleaning up your folly, mother.

EDWIGE

Excuse me?

CAROLINE

Tell me, how did Maiden Guvet ensnare *La Bête*? Did she tame him, break him on her yolk, or did she charm him?

EDWIGE

--

CAROLINE

You've played your hand mother, now I am playing mine. You won't be the savior.

Caroline turns the page.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

Nicolas will.

EDWIGE

You can't be serious.

CAROLINE

Do you take me for a fool? Did you not think I'd see how you tried to sire an heir with Cousin Patrick? One with a stronger manifestation of **the gift?**

EDWIGE

Hold you tongue --

CAROLINE

You meant to pass me over, didn't you?

EDWIGE

--

CAROLINE

He was your sword and shield. And now, you're defenseless. Your reign toppled before it began.

She turns the page.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

Unlike you, I've always seen the potential in him. He adores me, worships me. I rebuked him once, but that will only fuel the fire of passion bottled within him for me. And once I indulge him, I will be his every thought, his every desire and you...will be nothing.

Edwige steps back. Her world crumbles around her.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

The price of incompetence, mother.

Edwige stumbles out of the parlor. Caroline licks her finger and turns the page.

**INT. TREE HOUSE - NIGHT**

Arthur sees Maria running from the house, out through the courtyard, into the rows of vines...

**EXT. VINEYARD - DAWN**

Maria sprints through the vineyard.

Running.

Racing.

Baby Damienne's CRIES pierce through the night.

Maria stops by a small, crumbling STONE BARN. Catches her breath, looking over her shoulder.

ARTHUR (O.S.)

(singing in French)

I will pluck your head,  
I will pluck your head  
And your neck, and your neck,  
I'm the beast, the beast...

Arthur's voice emanates from the STONE BARN. Maria backs away peering into the darkness within.

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

I will pluck your head  
And your head, and your head,  
And your eyes, and your eyes...

Maria takes off. She trips. Her kitchen knife sent flying, she lands on Damienne.

Arthur scurries over Maria like a swarm of stinging insects, puncturing her with a CORKSCREW.

Slashing, stabbing, singing with delight.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)  
And your neck...and your belly,  
your belly...and your WINGS!

Maria covers up. She tries to crawl away.

Slashed. Stabbed. Slashed.

Maria SNAPS.

She turns over, KICKS Arthur in the chest CRUNCH, sending him skidding across the ground.

Arthur clutches his chest. Suffocating:

ARTHUR (CONT'D)  
M-m-ma...m-ma-ma...ma-mama...

Maria rises. Looks to her escape path.

She takes a step towards freedom. Stops. Turns back towards the stone barn. She grabs a LARGE STONE.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)  
M...Mama...N-no...no...Mama please.  
Where is Mama?

Possessed, Maria looms over the boy covered in tears and urine.

She raises the large stone above her head -- SPLATCH.

Blood splatters across Maria's face. Her lips part. Teeth clenched. A smile. Sweet satisfaction.

Revenge.

She retrieves her KITCHEN KNIFE. Nicolas arrives. He stares at his cousin's DENTED corpse.

His gaze climbs up Maria. He cannot recognize her.

NICOLAS  
What...what have you done?

Pointing the KITCHEN KNIFE at him:

MARIA

Stay back.

NICOLAS

He was...he had so many seasons  
before him.

Backing up:

MARIA

He's a fucking MONSTER. All of you,  
all of you sick FUCKS! I'll kill  
you all I swear to God!

Nicolas puts his hands up. Stepping forward:

NICOLAS

Whe-Where is she?...M-my sister?

MARIA

Stay back! I was trying to get it  
to a hospital...but...she...

NICOLAS

But...what --

Nicolas sees Baby DAMIENNE on the ground. Silent.

Not moving.

A DEFORMED ARM sticks out of her swaddle blanket.

Nicolas is frozen.

MARIA

It's over Nicolas, okay? J-just let  
me go.

Nicolas' predatory eyes shift back to Maria.

MARIA (CONT'D)

You aren't like them...

Nicolas POUNCES on Maria.

She swings the KITCHEN KNIFE. It SLICES his cheek open,  
exposing his full row of TEETH.

He tackles her to the ground, PINNING down her arms. He  
snarls. Roars.

He sinks his TEETH into her JUGULAR.

Nicolas RIPS out her TRACHEA.

Maria twitches under him as Nicolas GNASHES on her meat. He swallows, descends for more.

Nicolas claws at her body wildly. Ripping. Tearing. Slashing.

He SINKS his teeth into her JOWLS, chomping her tender meat.

Edwige arrives holding a closed umbrella. She spots the crushed corpse of her son.

Her umbrella falls to the ground. She runs to her boy. Cradling his lifeless body:

EDWIGE

My boy...no, no, no my sweet  
boy...my son...

Tears stream from her eye, blood from the empty socket. Sunlight descends on her exposed flesh. It FUMES.

She hears the meat TEAR and bones CRACK.

Nicolas is feasting on Maria's chest cavity.

EDWIGE (CONT'D)

You...h-how...how could you have  
let this --

Nicolas raises his head. He turns to her on all fours.

He is poised, ready to pounce again. Bestial. Eclipsed by the sun.

Edwige trembles. Her skin bubbles.

She stares into his blood soaked maw. She is broken.

This is not her nephew.

This is *La Bête Incarnée*.

Edwige screams as the sun rises over the vineyard.

FADE TO WHITE.

**INT. CHAPEL - DAY - SOME YEARS LATER**

THE NEW FAMILY gathers in the chapel.

Caroline is visibly pregnant. Charming as ever. Welcoming a host of new faces.

She wears Odette's COPE, with the ornate MORESE fully on display. It is refurbished.

Members of the New Family each scoop a portion of FAMILY RESERVE from a large vessel into their glasses.

They take their seats.

Edwige is slumped in the front row, wearing an eyepatch.

Her face, hands, and chest littered with SCARS and BLISTERS. No more makeup to hide behind.

She stares forward as though...lobotomized.

Caroline takes the stage, behind the PULPIT.

CAROLINE

My dear family. Welcome one and all. Tonight will be our greatest, most bountiful Perennial Feast yet. We are joined here, now, hand in hand, bonded in faith, and blood. Let us give thanks to Maiden Guvet.

Beat.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

Now, to guide our adulation, I call upon my beloved husband, Nicolas.

Nicolas enters. Sharp dress. Confident. Transformed.

Nicolas assists her down from the PULPIT. They kiss deeply.

Nicolas takes center stage at the PULPIT.

NICOLAS

Praise be to our Maiden Guvet for commanding us to kindle the highest heavenly aether. May her solitude in those times sanctify our blessings today, so we may spread our roots across new lands. It is said now as it was once before:

NICOLAS (CONT'D)

In obscurum per obscurius.

ENTIRE PARISH

In obscurum per obscurius.

#### **INT. HOSPICE - DAY**

HOSPICE NURSE ELOISE (22) stands in the upgraded, improved hospice center. She greets Grandchild Nina with open arms.



The sentiment is not reciprocated. Nina's Parents gesture, agitated.

Hospice Nurse Clara enters. She calms Nina's Parents.

Hospice Nurse Clara leads them towards a dark room, Hospice Nurse Eloise follows.

They enter. Hospice Nurse Eloise closes the door behind them.

She turns on the lights. The room is filled with DRONES!

The Hospice Nurses hold SYRINGES filled with murky liquid.

NICOLAS (V.O.)

All of us in this room. In this chapel. On this plain, and the next. We are missionaries that crawl through the canopy of night. Around world's edge and cross arched skies. That is TRUE power.

**INT. BUTCHER CELLAR - DAY**

The room is FILLED with fresh hanging bodies.

Young, old, entire families, fill the bloodletting and disembowelment areas of the cellar.

Grandchild Nina and Nina's Parents are being exsanguinated, Old Man Gary is en route to the de-stemmer...

Drone One unlatches the old winepress's BUCKET. Dumps the pressed pulpy remains down a sludgy CHUTE GATE.

CUT TO:

**INT. FERTILIZER ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

The human pulp SLOPS down the shaft, PLOPS into a full bin.

Drone Two stirs the organic sludge into a fertilizer vat.

CUT TO:

**EXT. VINEYARD - DAY**

Fertilizer vats are emptied along harrowed vineyards.

Drones plow the land. A BONE FRAGMENT sticks out of the dirt.

NICOLAS (V.O.)

For too long have we hoarded our treasures, when they were meant to be tendrils spread across this Earth. Touching the worthy, guiding them from the cursed light, nestling them in the bosom of capitulation, so they may hold in reverence the power of **the gift**, as we do.

**INT. POLICE STATION - DAY**

POLICE OFFICER (20s) smokes his cigarette, exhausted.

Behind him hangs armature sketches/reports of various sort of WOLF-LIKE-BEASTS.

GRIEVING WOMAN (40s) fills out a missing persons report.

She slides the REPORT and a PHOTO to Police Officer who receives them supportively.

Grieving Woman exits. Police Officer opens a drawer.

It is packed with PHOTOS. They show the new hanging victims in the Butcher Cellar.

The officer SHUTS the drawer.

NICOLAS

Far too long we have recused our power from the world, rather than let it germinate....

**INT. CHAPEL - DAY**

The parish chapel is FULL. Standing room only.

The family now includes, Hospice Nurses, Merchants, Lost Youths, Farmer-Types, and local Law Enforcement.

Nicolas peers to the front row, at Edwige.

NICOLAS

And though you have been given this opportunity to revel in true power, beware, for the unworthy may still be consumed by it.

**EXT. OLD BRIDGE - DAY**

Charles stands on the ledge of the old humped BRIDGE.

He steps off -- SPLUMT onto the JAGGED ROCKS below.

NICOLAS

But for those to whom the Maiden  
smiles, immortality awaits. Our  
vines blossom amongst those of our  
foremothers, who await above and  
below, in Her house dreaming.  
Frolicking within the Emyrean  
Fields, under the watchful eye of  
*La Bête Incarnée*. The pact  
fulfilled.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)

In obscurum per obscurius

ENTIRE PARISH

In obscurum per obscurius

Nicolas walks towards a GOLDEN TABERNACLE. He removes a  
bottle of the SACRED WINE.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)

Only grapes that overlook the water  
are capable of producing wines of  
great quality. But even the most  
gnarled vines may yet grow dead  
with black rot. Their once sweet  
juices turned acrid. Only through  
pruning can we preserve the  
grandeur of our *terroir*.

**INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT**

Nicolas and Caroline enjoy a candlelight dinner. They sit  
across from one another. They CLINK glasses.

The head of the table is VOID, Odette's seat removed.

Nicolas holds his empty glass to his side.

Edwige steps in, pours him more from the FAMILY RESERVE. They  
do not acknowledge each other.

Edwige steps into a corner, awaiting further instructions.

MATCH CUT TO:

**INT. CHAPEL - DAY**

Edwige's stare trails off as Nicolas pours the SACRED WINE into the MATRONE'S CHALICE.

NICOLAS

Yet we will never forget those that  
have tended our Earth heretofore...

Nicolas raises the CHALICE to eye level. The self-inflicted scars on his arms are HEALED.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)

Maiden Guvet, grant us your  
pristine fortitude to labor on.  
Pious Patron Hallow, who was given  
sanguineous milk by thine beastly  
servant, grant us your magnanimous  
generosity to think for each other  
and not just ourselves. Seraphic  
Saintly Guvet, who worked miracles  
in those days and these, anoint us  
with the delectation of your  
rapture in continuum.

Nicolas raises the CHALICE above his head.

The entire parish STANDS, glasses RAISED.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)

*À Leur Santé!*

ENTIRE PARISH

*À Leur Santé!*

Nicolas pours the SACRED WINE down a DRAIN opening within the PULPIT.

**INT. PIPES/ CAVES - CONTINUOUS**

The wine flows down eroding pipe shafts.

Turns.

Turns again.

The pipes run down the undercroft of the chapel. Through long and narrow CAVE SYSTEM.

The liquid diverges into different tubes that run through earth and stone, twisting around, until:

**INT. EMPYREAN FIELDS CRYPT - CONTINUOUS**

The interconnected system of tubes hang heavily across the decrepit stonework, pulled down by thickened cobwebs stretching across them.

Roots pierce through the ceiling, clinging to the tubes.

The blood trickles along the meshwork of tubes sprawling through a network of recesses and chambers.

The blood finally reaches a nozzle and drips into the agape mouth an awaiting ANCIENT MATRONE (1841).

She lays in a row amongst her foremothers, and those that came after. Undisturbed for centuries.

Their closed eyes flutter rapidly behind paper-thin lashes.

Their bodies quiver as though they were dreaming. The eternal reward reserved for Matrones.

Thinner capillaries creep along the wall into a small nook.

They lead to BABY DAMIENNE coddled in her usual BLANKET.

Her SCARS and DEFORMITIES finally on full display.

Her skin dried, segmented in diamond shaped plates. Her eyelids and lips mucilaginous, crimson, distended. Every portion of her distorted, a monstrous caricature.

Blood drips into her open mouth.

She dreams.

CUT TO BLACK.

**FIN**