

ABOLITION OF THE SENSES

Written by

Carlos Burgaleta

Contact information:
carburgaleta@yahoo.es

WGA Registration Number: 1642278

BLACK SCREEN

SUPER: "NOTHING CAN CURE THE SOUL BUT THE SENSES, JUST AS NOTHING CAN CURE THE SENSES BUT THE SOUL." OSCAR WILDE

FADE IN:

INT. STOREHOUSE - NIGHT

A gagged girl wearing a hospital gown is seated against the back wall of a storehouse in shadows; her cheeks stained with dirty furrows, an iron collar placed around her neck and attached to the wall by a chain preventing her from escaping. It's YOUNG CELIA, 10.

MEMORY FLASH - EXT. FOREST - DAY

A male hand forcefully grabs a girl's arm.

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. STOREHOUSE - NIGHT

Tied up behind her back with a rope, Young Celia moves her hands frantically up and down.

The knot of the rope rubs against a broken pipe that sticks out from the wall.

MEMORY FLASH - EXT. BOAT - MOVING - DAY

The girl's arm hangs out of a wooden boat; her fingers brushing the water's surface.

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. STOREHOUSE - NIGHT

The rope keeps rubbing against the pipe until it breaks. Then Young Celia removes the gag from her mouth and starts to turn the fastener of the slave collar.

Firmly tightened, the screw turns slowly.

MEMORY FLASH - EXT. SMALL ISLAND - DAY

A slim, green and white striped lighthouse stands on a small island.

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. STOREHOUSE - NIGHT

Young Celia keeps trying to remove the screw. Drops of blood start to fall from her fingertips.

After a few more turns, she manages to open the clamp.

MEMORY FLASH - INT. ROOM - DAY

The male hand lasciviously strokes the girl's legs. Groans of fear and anguish are heard.

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. STOREHOUSE - NIGHT

Carefully, Young Celia pulls the iron collar from her neck and places it on the floor. Then she raises her eyes to a narrow, horizontal window high in a side wall.

MEMORY FLASH - INT. ROOM - DAY

The hand takes a sharp awl from a metallic briefcase.

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. STOREHOUSE - NIGHT

After standing up, Young Celia places a wooden stool near the side wall and nervously looks at the small window.

A NOISE OF CHAINS is heard.

The girl slowly turns around to look with anxiety at something unseen as the noise gets louder and louder...

MEMORY FLASH - INT. ROOM - DAY

GIRL'S POV as a MAN with a white, blind eye wearing a balaclava stares at her while giggling. Then he rushes towards her.

The screen turns to black. A scream of horror is heard.

FROM BLACK:

EXT. BOAT - MOVING - DAY

SUPER: MASSACHUSETTS BAY. TWENTY YEARS LATER.

It's a sunny morning. An old skiff makes its way through the sea.

CELIA, 30, a dark-haired Hispanic woman, fair of face and athletic of build, stands near the bow. A couple of full suitcases rest at her feet.

In the stern, a weather-beaten faced BOATMAN, 70, holds the handle of the outboard motor.

Celia notices something blurry in the distance, a piece of land that could be a small island with a lighthouse. Then her relaxed expression turns to seriousness...

BOATMAN
Is everything alright?

Celia nods with a forced smile. The boatman nods and turns back towards the sea.

BOATMAN
We're almost there. Let's go.

He guns the outboard motor and the boat moves faster.

EXT. SMALL ISLAND - DAY

The little rocky island with a green and white striped lighthouse, some seagulls fly around it.

Twenty yards north of the lighthouse, there is a small storehouse made of white brick; twenty yards south, stands the lighthouse keeper's house.

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM'S BALCONY - DAY

Leaning on the railing of a balcony, Celia thoughtfully stares at the ocean. A few seconds later, something breaks her concentration...

A German Shepherd Dog is licking her right hand.

Celia looks down at the dog and smiles as she caresses its head. Then she stares at the sea again.

MAN (O.S.)
Nice view, isn't it?

Hypnotized by the marine landscape, Celia doesn't hear the voice talking to her.

MAN (O.S.)
You like it?

Celia turns to her right and finds an older, slightly untidy, gray-haired man with glasses and holding a typed contract. It's BRIAN, 60. She smiles confusedly at him.

CELIA
(with a light
Hispanic accent)
Sorry, you were saying?

BRIAN
I was asking you about the landscape, but I see you're totally enchanted by it. Yeah, so much beauty can block our senses.

CELIA
Well, I'm afraid it's a bit
different in my case...

Celia points at her right ear.

CELIA
When I was a child, I suffered a
serious infection in this ear and
I can't hear very well. Actually,
I can't hear anything at all.

BRIAN
Oh, I'm sorry.

Brian passes behind her and places himself at her left.

BRIAN
Better this way, isn't it?

Celia smiles at him and nods. He hands her the contract.

BRIAN
Here's your job contract, Celia.
Have a good look at it. And if
everything is correct, please
sign at the bottom of each page.

Celia starts to read the first page of the contract.

BRIAN
As I told you, it's only for a
six month period, but it could be
extended if you feel good here;
and as long as the town council
doesn't carry out its threat of
automating this old relic.

Without taking her eyes off the contract, Celia pulls out
a pen from her down coat and clicks it.

BRIAN
How long have you been here in
U.S.? You speak English very
well.

CELIA
Barely two years. But some people
say that I have an aptitude for
languages.

BRIAN
Yeah, so it seems.

They smile at each other.

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S HOUSE FAÇADE - DAY

Accompanied by the dog, Brian and Celia leave the house. He locks the door.

BRIAN

Comfort, clean and quiet. That's what my mother always said about a good house. She was a very smart woman. Here, take the key.

Brian gives her the key of the keeper's house.

BRIAN

Lock it every time you leave, especially at night.

CELIA

Why?

BRIAN

Don't worry, nobody's gonna try to break into it. It's only that sometimes the town's boys... Teen pranks, you know.

Celia pockets the key. Then she glances at the small storehouse beyond the lighthouse.

CELIA

And that place?

Brian turns to look at the storehouse for a second. Then he turns back toward her.

BRIAN

It's nothing, just a storehouse. Junk and dust are the only things you'll find in there, especially the second one. It's not worth it.

(beat)

C'mon, follow me, I'll show you the rest of the island.

They walk away from the house.

EXT. PIER - DAY

Celia unties a rope from a wooden pier and tosses it to Brian, who is standing in a skiff with the dog. A second boat, older and smaller, is moored next to the first one.

Brian starts coiling up the rope as Celia raises her eyes towards the green and white striped lighthouse.

CELIA
I had never seen a lighthouse
painted like that before.

BRIAN
You like it?

CELIA
Yes, it's funny.

BRIAN
Just a tribute to my ancestor's
homeland: Ireland, the land where
the green is greener. Sadly, it
needs a new coat of paint. The
lighthouse, I mean.

CELIA
So it seems.

BRIAN
If you like the risk, I still
have a couple of harnesses and
some ropes in the storehouse. Do
you dare?

CELIA
Hmm... I think I'll decline for
now.

BRIAN
(smiling)
I understand.

Brian drops the coiled rope and approaches the rear of
the boat.

BRIAN
Why did you choose this job? A
pretty young Mexican woman like
you... I find it odd.

CELIA
Well, the recent year has been a
bit hard for me. I need some time
alone to...

(beat)
My parents died some months ago;
one after another, in a matter of
weeks.

BRIAN
Sorry to hear that. I also went
through something similar with
mine.

(MORE)

BRIAN (cont'd)

Sometimes couples are so close together that they end up becoming one person. If one falls, the other falls as well. Like dominoes.

(sitting at the stern)

Well, I guess it'll be good for you to spend a few months trying to recompose yourself. Sure you'll get it.

Celia nods. They exchange smiles.

BRIAN

I'll come back the day after tomorrow to see how things are going. Maybe I'll bring a little surprise for you... Yeah, I think you deserve a good welcome gift.

CELIA

Oh, don't bother.

BRIAN

It's no bother at all. You'll see, you'll see...

Brian starts an outboard motor. It sputters loudly.

BRIAN

Have a good first night, Celia! See you soon!

CELIA

Thanks, Brian!

As the skiff moves away from the pier, the dog starts barking at Celia. Confused, she watches the animal.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - LANTERN ROOM - NIGHT

It's a small circular lantern room. Celia cleans the Fresnel lens and the electric-filament lamps of the lantern with a cloth.

When she finishes cleaning, she opens a trap door and climbs down an access ladder to a lower room.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM - NIGHT

Once in the watch room, a circular room whose far wall contains a wide window, Celia pulls a billfold from her pocket and takes out a photo portrait of a smiling mature couple on light background. She kisses it and hangs it on the wall with a thumbtack.

Celia looks at the picture with a bitter smile. Then she approaches a radio station and picks up a small leather holster from there.

She pulls out a small handgun from the holster and checks its magazine. Then she puts the gun back into the holster and keeps it in a drawer.

Finally, Celia approaches a control panel and pushes some buttons and switches.

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM'S BALCONY - NIGHT

Celia enters the balcony and glances up at the lighthouse lantern. It shines luminously.

She smiles proudly and turns to gaze down at the island, her eyes focused on the storehouse..

FLASHBACK - INT. STOREHOUSE - NIGHT

Young Celia carefully climbs on the wooden stool and opens the small window's latch and the window.

A thick thread of blood runs down from her right ear.

The NOISE OF CHAINS is heard.

Young Celia turns again towards the noise, hesitation and fear on her face.. The noise gets louder and louder..

BACK TO PRESENT

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM'S BALCONY - NIGHT

Celia is no longer smiling. She turns around and comes back into the watch room.

EXT. SMALL ISLAND - DAY

A new day dawns over the island. The lighthouse lantern, still lit, is turned off.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

It's a small bathroom. Celia, in pyjamas and dressing gown, brushes her teeth..

A mysterious SINGING VOICE comes from a nearby room.

VOICE (O.S.)

"There's a school of fish way
down deep in the sea, where the
little fish studied geography."

Surprised, Celia turns toward the bathroom door.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Holding the toothbrush in her hand and with her mouth full of toothpaste foam, Celia cautiously enters a rustic living room.

A wooden TV stand houses an old television and a video tape recorder. Both are switched on.

TV SCREEN - It's the old "Captains Courageous" movie, just the sequence where Manuel (Spencer Tracy) sings the famous "Yeah, ho, little fish" song to Harvey (Freddie Bartholomew). His is the mysterious voice.

MANUEL

"There they write on a slate and they read from a book, learn to run with the bait then just leave them the hook." I got to sing every time I get mad. It 'drive' those flying fish out of my stomach, do you know?

Celia stares at the television, perplexed and motionless.

TV SCREEN - Manuel keeps singing while playing his hurdy-gurdy. Harvey watches him fascinated.

MANUEL

"Yeah, ho, little fish, don't cry, don't cry, you'll be a baleia, by and by..." Baleia, that mean big fish, like a whale, you know? "With fins and a tail to help you sail, and maybe some wings to help you fly. Yeah, ho, little fish, don't cry, don't cry. Yeah, ho, little fish, don't cry, don't cry."

Once the song ends, both television and video turn off all of a sudden by themselves. Then the VCR ejects a black videotape with no label.

Celia keeps staring at the now blackened screen, still more astonished.

EXT. STOREHOUSE FAÇADE - EVENING

Celia approaches the double door of the storehouse and looks at the padlock that keeps it locked. She reaches for one of the handles and shakes it. It's firmly locked.

She pulls out a small iron bar from her anorak and uses it on the padlock to lever the door open. It's too thick. Frustrated, Celia she the bar and hits the double door.

EXT. STOREHOUSE SURROUNDINGS - EVENING

Carrying a flashlight and a chair, Celia walks along the storehouse's outer wall. She stops just below a closed small window high in the wall and looks up at it. An expression of uneasiness appears on her face...

Celia places the chair on the ground and switches on the flashlight. Then she climbs onto the chair and tries to open the window. It's locked from the inside.

Resigned, she stands on tiptoes on the chair and points the flashlight beam toward the window to see inside the storehouse...

Everything is dark. The only thing she can see is some dirty and ruined furniture.

CELIA'S FEET - Celia's feet on tiptoe, the chair creaks..

Stretching out her neck, she keeps observing the inside of the building..

A loud CREAKING is heard. She falls off the chair.

Lying on the ground, Celia rubs her ankle as she looks at the chair. One of its legs is broken.

CELIA

Shit!

After standing up, she looks away from the window, to the sea. Then she sees something that surprises her...

Far from the island and wrapped in a mist, a wooden boat floats on the ocean. There is somebody standing still on it, a mysterious VISITOR that seems to be watching her.

EXT. ROCKY SHORE - EVENING

Celia approaches the rocky border of the island. Then she notices that the visitor wears dark clothes and seems to be a man. She raises a hand and waves to the stranger. He doesn't respond. She waves again.

CELIA

Hello!

The visitor doesn't react. Some seconds later, he sits down and starts rowing away from the island.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM - NIGHT

TABLET SCREEN - It's a photo viewer. Several photographs of a blonde woman with short hair and intensely blue eyes are displayed on the screen.

Seated at the radio station, Celia looks at the photos on a tablet computer while drinking from a bottle of Coke; an expression of sadness on her face...

A loud SQUEAKING coming from the bottom level of the lighthouse is heard.

Surprised, Celia puts the bottle and the tablet aside and stands up.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - SPIRAL STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Celia leans out over the balustrade and looks down the spiral staircase that leads to the bottom of the tower.

The squeaking sound is heard again; then a loud SLAMMING noise coming from the lowest level.

Celia straightens up. Then she hears a GIGGLE as she sees a fleeting SHADOW going up the stairs. Scared, she goes back to the room.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM - NIGHT

Celia closes the door and looks around for something. She hesitates. Then she takes the gun from the drawer and tucks it into her anorak's pocket.

After grabbing the Coke bottle, she places herself by the door hinges and waits nervously.

The giggle is heard again, now together with FOOTSTEPS going up the staircase.

Celia stands still near the door, holding the bottle, her breathing quick...

Just as they reach the other side of the door, the footsteps and the giggle cease.

The door opens slowly, inwardly, with a SQUEAKING sound and stops just when it is in a position making a right angle with the frame...

Hidden behind the door, Celia wraps her fingers around the bottle neck...

CELIA'S POV

Brian comes up in front of her.

BRIAN

Boo!

BACK TO THE SCENE

Celia, startled, jumps back. Brian smiles widely.

BRIAN

The hunter hunted! You wanted to scare me, didn't you? Confess, young lady, or I'll feed you to the sharks!

Celia sighs, relieved. Then she gives a hint of a smile.

CELIA

You said you would come back tomorrow.

BRIAN

Yeah, but I couldn't wait to give you your surprise.

CELIA

Oh, you didn't have to.

BRIAN

C'mon, get out of there. Someone very important wants to meet you..

Brian grabs Celia by the arm and draws her out of her hiding place.

BRIAN

Let me introduce you to Lucifer, the Lord of Darkness himself!

Celia stops just in front of the door, but she sees nobody.

CELIA

I don't see-

A MEOW is heard. She looks down to find a small black cat sniffing around at the doorway.

BRIAN

But he likes to be called just Luc.

Surprised, Celia squats down to better see the cat, which starts sniffing her. She smiles.

BRIAN

He's your welcome gift. As you can see, I'm a man of my word.

CELIA

He's lovely.

BRIAN

C'mon, don't just stand there, pick him up. Don't be afraid, he only bites priests and nuns.

Celia picks up the cat and holds him in her arms.

BRIAN
You like him? I thought he could help you to feel less alone.

CELIA
Sure. Thank you, Brian.

BRIAN
Oh, and that's not the only surprise...

Brian pulls out a bottle and a couple of glasses from a bag.

BRIAN
We have to celebrate your arrival as you deserve. And what better way to do it than with a few swigs of Mexican tequila?

Brian starts filling the glasses with tequila.

CELIA
(hesitating)
I don't know if I-

BRIAN
-Let me tell you what you don't know. You don't know the good time we're gonna have!

Brian hands one of the filled glasses to Celia.

BRIAN
As they would say in the old Ireland: Céad mile fáilte! A hundred thousand welcomes!

Brian and Celia raise their glasses and swallow the tequila in one gulp. They laugh. He starts pouring another round of shots.

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM'S BALCONY - NIGHT

Leaning on the railing of the balcony, Celia watches the storehouse with thoughtful eyes. Brian enters with two glasses filled with tequila and gives her one of them.

BRIAN
The last two swigs. They make smaller bottles every day.

Celia takes a sip of tequila while Brian places himself next to her good ear.

CELIA

How long have you worked here?

BRIAN

Thirty five years. My father and grandfather also did it. Three generations of lighthouse keepers that will end with me. Modernity sweeps away everything.

CELIA

It's a shame.

BRIAN

How about you? You told me your last job was as night concierge.

CELIA

Yes, I'm used to this kind of job. I like quiet and solitude.

BRIAN

Don't be too overconfident, young lady. A lighthouse like this is a very special place... When you spend weeks with no one to talk to, with no human contact... Every time you see a boat, you'll want to jump into the water and board it.

They briefly laugh.

CELIA

Speaking of which, I saw someone in a boat prowling around the island a few hours ago. Was it you?

Brian shakes his head.

BRIAN

Surely it was someone from the town, a fisherman.

CELIA

It's strange. He seemed to be watching me.

BRIAN

People in small towns are a bit nosy. Don't give it too much importance.

Suddenly, the lighthouse lantern stops spinning and the inner lamps turn off. They raise their eyes towards it. Then it starts flickering slowly.

CELIA
What happens?

BRIAN
Did you clean it?

CELIA
Yes, I did yesterday.

BRIAN
Then I'm afraid you'll have to
apply yourself a little more. If
you don't clean it thoroughly,
the tiniest speck of dust can
cause flickering or can even blow
the lamps. As I told you, it's an
old and ailing relic.

The lantern starts working normally again.

BRIAN
Well, this time we were lucky.

A MEOW is heard. They look down to see the cat rubbing
against Celia's legs.

CELIA
Hey! What about you?

Celia picks up the cat and holds him in her arms.

BRIAN
That's his way of telling us that
the party is over.

CELIA
(to the cat)
You're tired and this pair of
drunks doesn't let you sleep,
right?

BRIAN
I'm leaving. It's getting later
and my wife has the strange habit
of squeezing my privates when I
come home from drinking late at
night. A last toast?

They raise their glasses and swallow the tequila in one
gulp. Then they smile at each other.

BRIAN
Good night. See you soon.

CELIA
Good night, Brian.

Brian leaves. Holding the cat in her arms, Celia raises her eyes towards the lighthouse lantern, intrigued.

EXT. SMALL ISLAND - DAY

A new day dawns over the island. The lighthouse lantern is turned off.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Celia rummages around in a chest of drawers as if looking for something. She finds a paper clip and examines it.

She puts the clip into her pocket. Then something catches her attention in the same drawer...

It's a little notebook with strange notes written by someone. Celia glances through it.

There are several patterns of dashes and dots. Next to each pattern is a crossed out and illegible word.

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE DOOR - NIGHT

It's a windy night. Carrying a thermos of coffee, Celia enters the lighthouse.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM - NIGHT

The cat placidly sleeps in a basket.

TABLET SCREEN - A Morse code translator is maximized on the screen.

Seated with her feet up on the control panel and with the tablet computer on her thighs, Celia opens the notebook filled with patterns and starts tapping some keys.

TABLET SCREEN - A line of dashes and dots starts showing in the upper window of the translator program.

When the first pattern of dashes and dots is completed, Celia presses the Enter key to translate it.

TABLET SCREEN - The conversion to text pops up in the lower window of the program: PIG

Celia reads the revealed word, confused.

STOREHOUSE FAÇADE

A short and distressed GROAN is heard. It seems to come from inside the storehouse.

WATCH ROOM

The cat wakes up and cranes his neck.

Celia translates a new pattern.

TABLET SCREEN - A new message appears in the lower window, just below the code: BASTARD

Celia, intrigued, takes her feet off the control panel and starts translating a third pattern.

STOREHOUSE FAÇADE

The groan sounds again, rather longer and louder.

WATCH ROOM

The cat hisses. Celia turns to look down at him.

CELIA
Hey, what's wrong with you?

The cat hisses again and jumps out of the basket. Celia presses the Enter key to translate the new pattern.

TABLET SCREEN - A message pops up in the lower window: KILL YOURSELF

A chorus of blood curdling GROANS erupts outside the lighthouse.

Startled, Celia springs to her feet.

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM'S BALCONY - NIGHT

Celia runs out to the balcony and peers out into the night...

The groans, which have a childlike pitch, seem to come from inside the storehouse.

EXT. STOREHOUSE FAÇADE - NIGHT

Wrapped in her anorak, Celia reaches the double doors of the storehouse. The groans have ceased. Then she shakes one of the handles.

CELIA
Is there anybody in there?!

Nobody answers. The wind whistling and the splash of waves against the rocks are the only sounds now.

CELIA
Who's there?! Can you hear me?!

After some indecision, Celia gently puts her healthy ear to the door and listens...

She hears nothing.

Frustrated, she shakes both handles. Then she clicks her tongue and turns to head back to the lighthouse...

The lantern is flickering.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - LANTERN ROOM - DAY

Celia finishes replacing the electric-filament lamps of the lantern and starts cleaning the Fresnel lens with a rag. A BARKING coming from outside is heard.

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE DOOR - DAY

It's a sunny day. Celia comes out of the lighthouse. The dog approaches her. After stroking his ears, she meets Brian.

BRIAN
(smiling)
Buenos días, señorita! How are things?

Celia doesn't smile back.

CELIA
Well...

BRIAN
(worried)
Is everything okay?

CELIA
Just a small incident... I heard groans last night coming from the storehouse. I think something's going on inside there, Brian.

They stare at each other for several seconds, the woman demanding an explanation...

Unexpectedly, Brian starts laughing. Celia stares at him, bewildered.

BRIAN
Groans... Yeah, I know what you're talking about. Follow me.

Accompanied by his dog, Brian starts to walk toward the storehouse. After some hesitation, Celia follows him.

EXT. VIEWPOINT - DAY

Brian, Celia and the dog enter a small, balconied viewpoint placed just behind the storehouse.

A four-foot stone pedestal stands in the middle of the viewpoint. Embedded in the rock, there is an old and rusty flying witch weather vane.

BRIAN

I didn't show you this part of the island the first day, did I?

Celia shakes her head.

BRIAN

Then let me introduce you to an old and dear friend of mine..

Brian approaches the black metal weather vane and runs a finger over it.

BRIAN

The moaning Eileen. She adorned the top of the lighthouse for many years. But, as you can see, the poor witch was pretty rusty.. However, once she was replaced, I didn't want to get rid of her and I installed her here. You like it?

CELIA

What has it got to do with the groans?

BRIAN

Spin it.

CELIA

What?

BRIAN

Spin the weather vane. C'mon, just do what I tell you.

Celia grabs the weather vane by its lower half and tries to spin it. She can't move it. Second attempt... Nothing.

BRIAN

(joking)

I didn't know you were so weak. C'mon, move away, this is a job for a real American man.

Celia lets go of the weather vane. Brian grabs the iron arrow and spins it with some difficulty. A high-pitched CREAKING is heard.

BRIAN

Does it remind you of anything?

Celia, baffled, looks at him in silence.

Brian spins the weather vane again. Another loud creaking sound is heard.

BRIAN
Don't you recognize it yet?

Celia shakes her head as she purses her lips. Brian lets go of the weather vane, irritated.

BRIAN
You should.

CELIA
Why?

BRIAN
Because that's what you heard last night.

CELIA
The groans? You expect me to believe that?

BRIAN
Sure. Why would I lie to you?

CELIA
I don't know, but it sounds a bit ridiculous.

BRIAN
This is the part of the island where the wind blows strongest. Its changing directions usually cause the weather vane to sound like a train derailling. There's no mystery. Believe me, I've just proved it.

Celia nods, unconvinced.

BRIAN
You calmer now?

CELIA
So-so.

BRIAN
Then let me try to calm you down completely. Wait here.

EXT. STOREHOUSE FAÇADE - DAY

Brian slips a key into the padlock of the storehouse and slightly opens the double door. He enters.

Once the darkness swallows him, Celia approaches with curiosity and opens the double door a bit more...

Brian emerges from the darkness and looks at her angrily. Celia, startled, jumps back.

BRIAN
I told you to wait for me over there. Didn't you hear me?

CELIA
(ashamed)
I'm sorry.

BRIAN
Go back, please.

Celia leaves as Brian watches her go.

EXT. VIEWPOINT - DAY

As Celia watches him, Brian finishes tying two iron bars to the weather vane and the stone pedestal.

BRIAN
At the risk of being indiscreet, I'd like to ask you a somewhat personal question... Do you have a partner?

Celia looks at him in surprise.

BRIAN
Don't get me wrong, I already told you I'm married. It's just curiosity. I still find it strange to see someone like you in a lighthouse.

CELIA
I had one until a few months ago, but it didn't work out. Well, another loss in my life...

BRIAN
Sometimes loneliness is the way to happiness. Just don't throw in the towel and you'll find your Prince Charming before you know it.

They smile at each other. Then he tests his invention by trying to spin the weather vane. It doesn't move.

BRIAN
Done! Unless a tropical hurricane changes its course towards here, you'll never hear those groans again.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

The bathroom door opens slowly. Celia stealthily peers into the room, looking from side to side. Nobody.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

It's an austere bedroom. The door flies open. Celia comes in...

It's empty, but the window at the back of the bedroom is open. Celia approaches it cautiously while turning on her flashlight. She points it outside the house. There is no one there, but something catches her eye...

A small, empty boat goes adrift in the sea.

EXT. PIER - NIGHT

Celia arrives at the end of the pier and crouches down next to one of the mooring cleats. The second boat's mooring rope has been cut.

She stands up and turns to look at the sea. The boat moves away from the island.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Celia drops the handgun on the table and looks at the messy room again. She crouches down to pick up a...

Both the television and video switch on all of a sudden by themselves.

TV SCREEN - The "Captains Courageous" sequence again.

Celia looks at the TV, astonished. When Manuel's song finishes, the screen fades to black. Both the television and video turn off by themselves.

The VCR ejects the videotape.

EXT. VIEWPOINT - DAY

As Celia watches him, Brian dismantles the weather vane using pliers and screwdrivers.

BRIAN

It had to be a big one. Some of them are devastating. Did you know they're used in some places to generate electricity?

CELIA

(crisp)

There weren't any waves last night.

Brian finishes dismantling the weather vane and wipes his hands with a rag.

BRIAN

Then it had to be the wind. A sudden and strong gust of wind, it happens from time to time..

Celia doesn't answer. Her skeptical expression doesn't change.

BRIAN

Look, whatever the cause was, your worries end here.
(picking up the weather vane)
I'll give it to my nephews. They love this sort of thing.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Celia picks up a pile of clothes from the floor. Brian and his dog watch her.

BRIAN

I told you that you should lock the door at night.

CELIA

I did.

BRIAN

You sure? It wasn't forced open.

Celia drops the pile of clothes on the sofa, irritated.

BRIAN

They played the same dirty trick on me some years ago. Well, my case was worse. Those bastards even stole some of my money. They didn't steal anything this time, did they?

She shakes her head.

BRIAN

You were lucky. I guess they were the ones who broke the bars and cut the boat's mooring rope. If I ever catch one of those rats..

The dog barks twice.

BRIAN

Don't worry, Cujo, I'll give you all their bones and guts.
(MORE)

BRIAN (cont'd)
 (to Celia)
 Well, as you can see, there's
 always a logical explanation.

Celia approaches the VCR and picks up the black videotape with no label. Then she shows it to Brian.

CELIA
 I'm still waiting for a good one
 for this.

BRIAN
 Why? Where's the mystery? An old
 tape, an old VCR, an old TV... In
 fact, what would be inexplicable
 is if they didn't turn on and off
 by themselves. Give me that.

Brian grabs the videotape out of Celia's hands and breaks the ferromagnetic tape. Then he hands it back to Celia.

BRIAN
 (smiling)
 Case closed.

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM'S BALCONY - NIGHT

Leaning on the balcony's railing, Celia stares at the storehouse while sipping coffee. Everything seems calm.

FLASHBACK - INT. STOREHOUSE - NIGHT

Standing on the wooden stool, Young Celia looks concerned at something unseen as the NOISE OF CHAINS becomes louder and louder. She tries to speak, but she just mumbles.

BACK TO PRESENT

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM'S BALCONY - NIGHT

A few seconds later, something catches Celia's attention...

Some fifty yards from the island and wrapped in a mist, a wooden boat floats on the ocean. Celia notices the visitor which appeared a few days before standing on it.

They stare at each other for a long moment. Then the man sits down and starts to pull slowly away from the island...

LANTERN ROOM

The lighthouse lantern stops spinning and the inner lamps turn off. Then the lantern starts flickering frantically.

WATCH ROOM'S BALCONY

Surprised, Celia turns to look up at the lantern.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM - NIGHT

While the cat sleeps in his basket, Celia approaches the control panel and pushes several buttons.

A loud SQUEAKING sound is heard. It comes from the bottom level of the tower.

The cat wakes up and hisses. Then a loud SLAMMING door is heard. Celia grows pale.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - SPIRAL STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Celia timidly leans out over the balustrade and looks down the staircase leading to the bottom of the tower. There's nobody there.

CELIA

Brian?

Nobody answers.

CELIA

Is that you down there, Brian?

The silence is shattered by an explosion of CHILDREN'S LAUGHTER and FOOTSTEPS running up the spiral staircase. Celia's face turns to fear.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM - NIGHT

Celia quickly comes back into the watch room and closes the door. Then she pushes the barrel bolt to lock it...

It's stuck.

More laughter and footsteps coming closer are heard... Celia pushes the bolt forward with all her strength, but it doesn't slide.

The footsteps keep approaching, the laughter becomes louder and louder...

Celia lets go of the door bolt and dries her hands on her sweater. Then, desperately, she pushes the bolt with all her might.

The laughter and footsteps reach the other side of the door...

The bolt slides into the frame.

Celia steps away from the door. The laughter and footsteps have ceased.

Huddled in a corner, the cat is growling.

A few instants later, Celia takes the gun from the drawer. Then she cautiously approaches the door again.

CELIA
Who... Who are you?

Nobody replies.

CELIA
What do you want?

There is no answer. Celia breathes nervously, her eyes wide open and fixed on the door.

CELIA
Do you want something from me?

Suddenly, the trap door opens. The cat hisses at it.

The lantern turns on, flickers twice and turns off again. Surprised, Celia stares up at it.

CELIA
Do you... Do you want something
from me?

The lantern turns on and flickers a couple times again. Celia hesitates, confused. Then she breathes in deeply, trying to calm herself down.

CELIA
Does it mean...? If it... If it means
yes, make the light flicker twice
again.

The lighthouse lantern flickers twice again. Celia remains perplexed and speechless for some seconds.

CELIA
What do you want? Do you need my
help?

The lighthouse lantern flickers once.

CELIA
Does it mean no?

The lantern flickers a couple times. Celia hesitates.

CELIA
I don't understand. What do you
want from me then?

There's no response. She gulps nervously and takes a deep breath, weighing up the next question.

CELIA
Do... Do you want to hurt me?

BRIAN

Sorry.

CELIA

I'm serious. You already know what happened last night. You wanna hear it again?

Brian shakes his head and smiles condescendingly.

BRIAN

Look, I believe you. I know you witnessed something inexplicable. But you should be aware of your situation before judging what happened.

CELIA

What do you mean?

BRIAN

There isn't one lighthouse keeper that hasn't experienced something similar to you at least once. I myself could tell you stories much more terrifying than yours. My first days were hard too.

CELIA

This is different. I'm sure.

Celia approaches the window pane and watches the sea.

BRIAN

Keeping a lighthouse is not as easy a task as it may seem. Here you have to fight against one of the worst enemies of the human mind: isolation. It often causes our inner demons to come to the surface, and it takes some time to tame them.

Celia doesn't answer. As she stares at the ocean, Brian watches her as if he was looking for a vulnerable spot.

BRIAN

It's just a phase. Once you get used to the routine, your brain will stop playing games with you. Trust me.

CELIA

Perhaps that's the key. I don't trust you. I find it impossible to do so.

BRIAN
Why do you say that?

CELIA
I saw the man in the boat again.
I think it's you. Yes, I have a
feeling that you're somehow
behind all this.

BRIAN
I appreciate your sincerity, but
I'm afraid you're mistaken.

Celia glances down and turns slowly towards Brian. Then she raises her eyes and stares at him.

CELIA
I'm leaving.

Brian's face turns to concern.

BRIAN
What?

CELIA
Maybe you're right and all these
things are just mental illusions,
but I couldn't face another night
like the last one.

BRIAN
Wait, wait, please. Don't be too
quick to decide. It's just a
matter of time to-

CELIA
-My mind is made up. I'm leaving.

BRIAN
But-

CELIA
-Please, Brian, don't insist.

Brian doesn't answer. Then he glances down resignedly and clicks his tongue.

BRIAN
Okay, whatever you want. I can't
keep you here against your will.
Pack your things and go to the
pier. I'll wait for you there.

Brian opens the trap door and climbs down the access ladder to the watch room.

EXT. PIER - DAY

Carrying the cat into a pet carrier and her suitcases, Celia arrives at the end of the pier.

Five yards away from it, Brian stands on board his old skiff. He stares at her as he strokes his dog.

CELIA
(joking)
You want me to jump down there?
Don't put me to the test, I was
the best long jumper in my high
school.

Brian doesn't change his stern expression and keeps staring coldly at her.

BRIAN
You won't need to do that. You'll
stay here in the lighthouse.

CELIA
What?

BRIAN
I've changed my mind. You'll
remain in your post.

CELIA
Are you kidding me?

Brian shakes his head.

BRIAN
I'm doing this for your own good.
Some day you'll thank me for it.

Celia smiles listlessly.

CELIA
Yes, very funny... Now, please,
bring the boat up here and stop
doing-

BRIAN
-Why did you choose this job?

CELIA
Why do you ask me that? I already
told you the other day, I-

BRIAN
-This time I want to know the
truth. This is all too weird,
something doesn't smell quite
right.

CELIA
I don't understand.

BRIAN
You're looking for something here
in this lighthouse, aren't you?

CELIA
I just came here to work, and now
I want to come home.

BRIAN
Do you know you were the first
person to respond to the job
offer?

Celia shakes her head.

BRIAN
Yeah, you were very excited... You
wanted this job at any price and
even forgot to ask the pay rate.
It was as if you'd been waiting
for this a long time and finally,
by twist of fate, the day had
come.

CELIA
What're you implying?

Brian smirks. Then he starts the outboard motor of the
old skiff...

Celia pulls out her handgun from her anorak's pocket and
points it at Brian.

CELIA
Bring the boat here, Brian. Just
do it. Or you'll regret it.

Brian looks at her in surprise. Then his expression turns
to one of taunt.

BRIAN
So you were good at long jump...

Brian pulls something out from his pocket. They are the
bullets of Celia's handgun.

BRIAN
And what about diving?

Brian drops the bullets into the water. Astonished, Celia
checks the magazine of the gun. It's empty.

BRIAN
We'll talk another time.

After a few seconds, the boat moves away from the pier.

CELIA
 Brian! Come back here! Come back
 right now!

Brian doesn't pay any attention to her and increases the speed of the boat. The dog starts barking at Celia.

CELIA
 Brian! Brian!

Celia watches the boat growing smaller and smaller.

EXT. SMALL ISLAND - NIGHT

The lighthouse lantern shines in the night. It seems to be working perfectly.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM - NIGHT

Seated at the radio station, Celia presses some buttons as she listens attentively through headphones. An annoying BUZZING is the only sound.

CELIA
 Hello? Does anyone copy?

After several failed attempts to establish communication, Celia turns off the radio station and sighs disappointed.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

It's a small kitchen. Crouched down next to the cat, Celia finishes filling a bowl with dry food. Then she gently caresses the cat while he starts eating.

CELIA
 You like it? It tastes good,
 doesn't it?

A DOOR SQUEAKING is heard. It comes from the entrance of the house...

The cat hisses. Celia straightens, scared.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Celia enters the living room and cautiously approaches the house entrance. The door is ajar. She slowly opens it...

There is nobody. Then something at her feet catches her eye...

It's a dead seagull lying on a puddle of blood.

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S HOUSE SURROUNDINGS - NIGHT

Carrying a flashlight, Celia walks along the house's outer wall. Everything seems quiet.

CELIA

Is there anyone out here?

Nobody answers.

Seconds later, Celia turns to come back into the house.

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S HOUSE FAÇADE - NIGHT

Celia crouches down next to the dead seagull and wraps it in a newspaper...

Something written in blood on the white door catches her attention: WAITING

Celia grows pale, staring at the bloody word.

EXT. ROCKY SHORE - DAY

A group of seagulls peck bread crumbs at one of the rocky shores.

Seated on a rock, Celia looks over the notebook filled with Morse patterns and crossed out words.

NOTEBOOK - Some words and short phrases revealed by Celia's translation work: PIG, BASTARD, KILL YOURSELF, NO FORGIVENESS, BURN IN HELL...

The cat comes out of nowhere and jumps after the gulls. They fly away in fright.

CELIA

Luc!

The cat starts running after the birds. Celia tucks the notebook into her pocket and stands up.

CELIA

Where're you going? Come back!

The cat ignores her and keeps chasing the gulls.

EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE - DAY

Celia makes her way through the rocks of another shore. A few yards ahead, she sees the cat approaching the entrance of a small cavern.

CELIA

Hey, stop there! Don't even think about...!

The cat enters the cave. Celia clicks her tongue. Then she pulls a flashlight and walks towards the cave.

INT. CAVE - DAY

Guided by her flashlight, Celia walks through the dark, narrow cave.

CELIA
C'mon, Luc, come here!

Celia keeps walking while sweeping the flashlight beam around. A MEOW is heard.

CELIA
Where are you?

Once she reaches the end of the cave, she finds the cat sniffing a couple of dirty sacks and trying to get into one of them.

CELIA
What're you doing? Get out of there.

Celia picks up the cat and moves him aside. She crouches down to examine the sacks...

A scared seagull flies out from one of them.

Celia, startled, gasps and falls back to the ground. The gull flies away, chased by the cat.

After recovering from the scare, she stands up and dusts her trousers. Then she picks up the sack and shakes it. Something falls to the ground...

It's a wooden rosary.

Celia picks up the rosary and examines it. A few instants later, she empties the second sack; another rosary. But there is something else...

It's a small sheet of paper folded in half. It's clean, as if someone had recently placed it into the sack.

Celia picks up the sheet and unfolds it. There's something written on it. She reads it quietly.

CELIA
"The sacrifice of expiation is
that which tendeth to appease the
wrath of God."

Confused, she takes her eyes away from the paper and looks down at the wooden rosaries.

EXT. STOREHOUSE FAÇADE - NIGHT

It's a windy night. Celia tries to pick the padlock of the storehouse's double door using the paper clip she took from the house...

She makes a sharp wrist movement and the clip breaks in half.

CELIA

Shit!

Frustrated, Celia lets go of the padlock and throws the remaining clip on the ground. She tramples on it.

CELIA

Shit! Fuck!

Unable to contain her rage, she gives the double door a kick. Then she turns around...

A CLICK is heard.

Surprised, Celia turns to look back at the doors...

The padlock is open. The kick made the stuck clip move correctly. Celia smiles and glances up at the sky.

CELIA

Thanks, I owe you one.

INT. STOREHOUSE - NIGHT

It's a gloomy storehouse. The doors open, CREAKING. Then a CLICK is heard.

A bulb turns on, but it immediately blows.

After a few instants, another CLICK is heard. It's Celia's flashlight. Guided by its beam, she slowly walks through the building while looking around uneasily...

The furniture in the storehouse consists of dirty and ruined chairs, stools, chests of drawers and cabinets, all scattered around the floor.

When Celia reaches the far white wall, she finds something shocking...

There are a dozen iron slave collars on the dirty floor, all of them attached to the wall by thick chains. She crouches down to pick one of them up and carefully examines it.

After putting the collar back on the floor, Celia turns to look at the narrow, horizontal window high in the side wall. Something catches her attention below it...

Young Celia jumps up to reach the outer windowsill, crawls through the window and jumps down outside the storehouse.

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. STOREHOUSE - NIGHT

Celia remains open-mouthed, her eyes staring at the empty back wall and the chains on the floor.

The noise of chains gradually dissipates from her mind...

A loud CRASHING NOISE is heard. It seems to come from a nearby room. Startled, Celia turns towards there.

INT. STOREHOUSE - STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT

Celia enters a narrow storage room filled with dusty shelves and boxes of old clothes, harnesses ...

A small bookcase has toppled over.

Celia crouches down and starts examining some books, newspapers and old magazines with erotic content scattered on the floor...

A black camera strap sticks out among them.

Celia reaches out and tugs slightly on the camera strap. It's stuck under some books. After some hesitating, she removes them...

There is an old video camera and some dusty black VHS-C tapes.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Seated on a chair in front of the TV stand, Celia inserts a VHS-C tape into the video camera, which is on her thighs and connected to the television.

She presses the play button on the camera. It starts playing the tape...

TV SCREEN - A group of CHILDREN between six and ten years old seated at the back wall of the storehouse, wearing dirty hospital gowns, their cheeks stained with black dirty furrows.

Some of them cry quietly while the others look pitifully up at the camera. Iron slave collars placed around their necks and attached to the wall by chains prevent them from escaping.

The unseen video camera operator starts singing in a flutelike and sinister voice.

OPERATOR (O.S.)
 "There's a school of fish way
 down deep in the sea, where the
 little fish studied geography.
 There they write on a slate and
 they read from a book, learn to
 run with the bait then just leave
 them the hook. Yeah, ho, little
 fish, don't cry, don't cry..."

Celia stares at the television screen, her eyes wide with shock.

TV SCREEN - The camera moves over the children, zooming in and out. Most of them are crying in fear.

OPERATOR (O.S.)
 Why are you crying? Are you sad?
 Are you getting bored?

The children keep looking up in silence at the camera, full of panic and pain.

OPERATOR (O.S.)
 (cheerfully)
 Course not! You're fine here! And
 soon you'll be better still. Come
 on, smile, smile for me...

The children don't smile. They keep crying in horror.

OPERATOR (O.S.)
 What's wrong? Why don't you
 smile?

The children don't answer.

OPERATOR (O.S.)
 Oh, I know, I know... I know why.
 You want to keep playing, don't
 you? That's it! You haven't had
 enough fun yet! Okay, whatever
 you want, we'll play a few more
 games...

The unseen camera operator places the video camera on a chair. Then a HUMAN FIGURE wearing a long black cassock walks towards the children.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Celia collapses to her knees and throws up into the toilet. Once she has finished, she tears off a piece of toilet paper and wipes her mouth. Her expression is a mixture of overwhelming terror and repugnance.

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM'S BALCONY - NIGHT

Seated on a chair in the balcony, the cat on her lap, Celia stares at the starry sky. She looks blank, still shocked by the videotapes...

The lighthouse lantern stops spinning and turns off.

Celia drops the cat on the floor and stands up. Then she nervously glances at the lantern.

CELIA
Who... Who are you?

There is no response.

CELIA
Are you the children who...?

The lantern turns on and flickers twice.

CELIA
I can't... I can't remember it well.
You... You were down there in the
storehouse with me, weren't you?

The light flickers a couple times again.

CELIA
I've just watched the tapes. I
know what he did to you. It was...

Celia, moved, bows her head and covers her face with her hands.

CELIA
It was horrible. It was the most
revolting thing I have ever seen...
I'm so sorry...

She raises her watery eyes again, now with a look of anger on her face.

CELIA
But he'll pay for what he did.
You can be sure he'll do. If you
help me, I could try to find more
evidence against him. You agree?

The lantern flickers once, negative answer.

CELIA
(surprised)
Why not? I can do it. I just need
you to...

The lighthouse flickers once again.

CELIA
I don't understand. What do you
want from me then?

No answer. The lantern stays off for some seconds.

CELIA
What do you want? Please tell me,
I'm confused.

The lantern turns on and starts flickering again. This time the flickering frequency is irregular, alternating short and long flashes of light.

Celia stares at the lantern in silence. A few instants later, it turns off again.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Celia lies in bed, awake. Faint rays of sunlight manage to find their way to her face. She looks worried.

INT. STOREHOUSE - STORAGE ROOM - DAY

Celia enters the storage room and illuminates with her flashlight the dusty boxes and shelves...

She crouches down and starts examining the books and magazines scattered on the floor. Something catches her attention...

There is a closed trap door under the fallen bookcase.

Celia places the flashlight aside and lifts up the bookcase. The trap door is now accessible.

INT. STOREHOUSE - TUNNEL - DAY

The trap door opens. Celia walks down a stone staircase to a narrow, dark tunnel. Guided by the flashlight beam, she cautiously starts walking through the tunnel, her timid steps breaking the deathly silence...

INT. STOREHOUSE - CELLAR - DAY

Celia arrives at an old and small cellar filled with more broken furniture, boxes and bookshelves with piles of magazines. But something against one wall catches her eye...

It's a tall and rusty cabinet. She inspects it and tries to open it. The cabinet appears to be stuck.

Celia steps back and looks around. Soon she finds an open ended wrench in a corner and picks up it. Then she tries to break open the cabinet. After several attempts, she breaks in.

Celia drops the wrench and directs the flashlight beam into the cabinet. She finds several hanging tools like hand saws, pliers, awls, etc.

The edges of the tools are stained with dried blood.

She looks at the tools, uneasy. Then she directs the flashlight beam to a lower shelf. There is a white leather album. She picks it up.

The handcrafted cover of the album consists of an embroidered smiling little fish and the embroidered words "Little Fishes" below it.

Celia looks at the cover, confused. Then she opens the album...

The first page contains a photo portrait of a little boy and typewritten information including his name, age, height and weight. There's a "V" of approval stamped in a lower corner.

Celia turns to the second page of the album. It's another personal profile, now of a crying red-haired little girl. Below her personal details appears another big red "V".

A faint NOISE OF CHAINS coming from the tunnel is heard. Startled, she turns towards there.

INT. STOREHOUSE - TUNNEL - DAY

Carrying the white leather album, Celia steps into the tunnel while sweeping the flashlight around.

A MEOW is heard. She directs the flashlight beam to the ground...

Entangled in one of the slave chains, the cat rolls around while nervously meowing.

CELIA

Luc! What're you doing here?

Celia quickly crouches down and starts removing the chain from the cat while he keeps meowing and rolling around.

CELIA

Calm down, you'll be free in a moment...

Once the cat is free, Celia takes him into her arms and cuddles him.

CELIA

You're a very naughty kitty, you know? I'm going to have to keep you under lock and key.

Celia picks up the flashlight and the album and leaves.

CELLAR

The rusty cabinet remains open...

It slams shut.

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM - NIGHT

Seated at a radio station table, Celia leafs through the pages of the white album, all of them containing photo portraits and personal profiles. Then she finds something shocking...

It's a profile of a straw-haired girl. Her name is Celia. It's herself as a child. There is no "V" of approval stamped on the page. She watches it, open-mouthed.

The lighthouse lantern turns off.

Celia raises her eyes towards the lantern and stares up at it through the trap door. A moment later, it turns on and starts flickering.

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM'S BALCONY - NIGHT

In order to better observe the lighthouse lantern, Celia enters the balcony and stares up at the light.

The flickering frequency is irregular again, alternating short and long flashes of light.

CELIA

(scared)

What do you want from me?

The lighthouse lantern keeps flickering in the same way.

CELIA

Why do you do this to me?

The flickering frequency doesn't change; short and long flashes. It is like an inscrutable and repetitive code.

CELIA

I don't understand. Why do you...?

Suddenly, Celia's fear turns to astonishment. She remains open-mouthed, her eyes grow wider and wider. It's like she just made a fascinating discovery.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM - NIGHT

Standing next to the access ladder with the tablet in her hands, Celia watches the flickering lantern through the trap door.

The cat's tail sticks out from under the bed, twitching like crazy. She crouches down next to the animal.

CELIA
Hey, what're you doing down there?

She carefully picks up him.

CELIA
I hope you're not doing any..

The cat has no head.

Celia screams while a stream of blood flows out of the cat's neck stump. Terrified, she drops the animal and drags herself backwards until her back hits the wall.

The headless cat shakes on the floor.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM - NIGHT

Seated on a chair just below the trap door and with the tablet computer in her hands, Celia stares at the lantern, still shocked by the cat incident.

LANTERN ROOM

The lantern stops spinning and turns off. A few moments later, it starts flickering with an irregular frequency, short and long flashes of light.

WATCH ROOM

Celia lowers her gaze to the tablet and starts tapping some virtual keys.

TABLET SCREEN - A line of dashes and dots starts showing in the upper window of the Morse program.

When the long pattern of dashes and dots is completed, she presses the Enter key.

TABLET SCREEN - The conversion to text pops up in the lower window of the program: YOU DESERVED IT

Celia reads the message, appalled.

CELIA
Why? I didn't... I didn't do you any harm.

The lantern turns off. A few seconds later, it turns on and starts flickering again.

Celia watches the light as she keys the code of dots and dashes into the tablet.

TABLET SCREEN - The code appears in the upper window. Then the corresponding message pops up in the lower window: YOU DIDN'T COME BACK.

Celia shudders with fear in her chair.

CELIA
I... I couldn't. Everything was
erased from my mind. I didn't
remember anything.

The lighthouse lantern turns off briefly and then turns back on again to send out another flickering light code. She translates it.

TABLET SCREEN - The message pops up in the lower window: WE DON'T BELIEVE YOU.

Celia looks up at the lantern, which is turned off again.

CELIA
I swear. It was erased from my
mind as if it had never happened.
I didn't remember anything.

The light doesn't turn on. No response.

CELIA
You have to believe, I'm not
lying.

The lantern stays off. Seconds go by in silence...

The lamps start flickering again. Celia keys the code into the tablet.

TABLET SCREEN - Another message in the lower window: THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING.

Shocked, Celia raises her eyes towards the lantern. It turns off.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Celia lies in bed, awake. She looks at the photos of the blonde woman in the tablet's photo viewer.

A couple of seagulls sniff around outside the window. She looks away from the tablet to stare at them.

EXT. STOREHOUSE FAÇADE/ROCKY SHORE - DAY

Celia exits the storehouse with a pair of bike tires and some ropes.

After closing the double door, she walks back towards the lighthouse keeper's house..

BRIAN (O.S.)

Celia!

Celia turns to look at the nearest rocky border of the island. Some yards away from the shore, Brian stands on board his skiff with his dog.

BRIAN

What the hell were you doing in there?!

As soon as she recognizes him, she starts turning red with anger.

CELIA

Son of a bitch..

Celia drops the tires and runs towards the shore.

When she arrives at it, she picks up a rock and throws it at Brian. The stone hits the boat's hull.

CELIA

You bastard! I'm gonna tear your guts out and make you eat them!

Celia bends down and starts untying her shoes. Then Brian pulls out a shotgun and aims it at her.

BRIAN

If you put a foot in the water, I swear I'll blow your brains out.

She stands up slowly, intimidated.

CELIA

What did you do to those poor children, fucking pervert?

BRIAN

What have you found?

CELIA

Everything! I found everything! The video camera, the tapes and that photo album with all those children... Oh, my God, it's sickening!

Celia covers her face with her hands and snorts furiously. Then she shoots him a glare.

CELIA

I swear I'll kill you. Sooner or later I'll catch you and-

BRIAN

-Have you seen me in any of those video recordings or photos?

Celia hesitates. Then she shakes her head.

BRIAN

Then have the decency to not accuse me of anything.

CELIA

But this is your lighthouse!

BRIAN

Many people have dropped by this place; too many people.

CELIA

Who's that pervert then?

BRIAN

He was. He's dead now...

(beat)

Father Lynch, a priest.

CELIA

Did you know him?

Brian nods, ashamed.

CELIA

Why didn't you stop him?! Why didn't you call the police?!

BRIAN

If you calm down, I'll tell you.

Celia lowers her gaze and breathes in deeply. Brian puts down his shotgun and sits down.

BRIAN

It happened twenty years ago, during spring and summer...

FLASHBACK - EXT. PIER - DAY

With his back to CAMERA, a man wearing a long black cassock and carrying a metallic briefcase walks towards the beginning end of the pier. It's FATHER LYNCH, 50.

BRIAN (V.O.)

Father Lynch was a good friend of my family. He was a nice man, apparently; well-mannered, pleasant and charitable.

(MORE)

BRIAN (V.O.) (cont'd)
 One of those priests who are
 wolves dressed in sheep's
 clothing.

FLASHBACK - INT. STOREHOUSE - DAY

With his back still to us, Father Lynch walks through the storehouse while contemplating its dimensions. A younger man walks beside him. It's YOUNG BRIAN, 40.

BRIAN (V.O.)
 The fact is that he asked me to rent the storehouse for some months. It was an illegal deal, this place is publicly owned, but he offered me a lot of money and I was in financial difficulties.

Father Lynch and Young Brian shake their hands.

BACK TO PRESENT

EXT. ROCKY SHORE - DAY

Celia keeps attentively listening to Brian's story.

BRIAN
 I have two sons, you know? They were still babies then.

CELIA
 I don't care. Get to the point.

BRIAN
 Well, as I was saying, I rented out the storehouse to Father Lynch and-

CELIA
 -Didn't you ask him what he was going to use it for?

BRIAN
 He refused to answer me. If I wanted to see the money, I should comply with two conditions: first, don't ask him again about his use of the storehouse; and second, don't go in there for any reason. I thought he would be involved in art trafficking or something like that, but...

(beat)
 Yeah, the matter was a bit more delicate. It's a shame I didn't realize until months later.

CELIA
 How is it possible? I saw the
 children screaming and crying
 when he-

BRIAN
 -Cause I wasn't here.

FLASHBACK - EXT. PIER - NIGHT

Father Lynch moors his skiff to the pier. A small sheet-wrapped body rests at his feet.

BRIAN (V.O.)
 There was a third condition: If
 Father Lynch decided to spend a
 few nights here in the island, I
 had to leave.

Father Lynch drags the sheet-wrapped body along the pier.

BRIAN (V.O.)
 And it was during those nights
 when he brought new children and...
 Well, you've already seen.

FLASHBACK - INT. STOREHOUSE - NIGHT

A few gagged children seated at the back wall, their eyes half open, as if they were struggling to stay conscious.

BRIAN (V.O.)
 As for the rest of the time, he
 drugged and gagged them. I never
 heard anything suspicious. Yes,
 it was perfectly planned out.

BACK TO PRESENT

EXT. ROCKY SHORE - DAY

Celia keeps listening to Brian.

CELIA
 What did he do with the children
 after abusing them?

BRIAN
 Just what you're thinking of. In
 fact, if he hadn't done so, you
 wouldn't have heard all those
 groans and screams.

CELIA
 How did he kill them? Where are
 the bodies?

BRIAN

That's something too unpleasant to talk about, Celia. The only thing I'll tell you is that as soon as I found out what was really happening, I killed him with my own hands.

CELIA

Does anybody know about this?

Brian shakes his head.

BRIAN

Nobody. I don't wanna spend a bunch of years behind bars for taking down a pedophile maniac.

CELIA

What about the families? They'll still be looking for them.

BRIAN

I don't think so. They probably lost all hope years ago. Better to forget it.

CELIA

But they have the right to know what happened to their children!

Brian hesitates for a few seconds. Then he stands up.

BRIAN

I guess you're right. Yeah, maybe someday I'll have enough courage to report it. That's the reason I kept the tapes and the album. It's pretty clear evidence, isn't it?

Celia nods.

BRIAN

I admit my share of guilt, but I assure you that I'd never hurt a child. Never. You believe me?

Celia nods again. Brian sighs and smiles.

BRIAN

Thanks, Celia. You don't know how much this means to me.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Seated at the coffee table and under Celia's eye, Brian looks over the album's children profiles while sipping some coffee. The shotgun lies beside him.

BRIAN

I hadn't seen it for years but it still keeps turning my stomach. I hope that bastard is burning in hell.

CELIA

I guess you don't want to take a look at the recordings.

BRIAN

I'd rather eat my own shit than do it.

CELIA

Is there anything else apart from this and the tapes?

Brian shakes his head. Then he closes the white album and hands it to Celia.

BRIAN

Please get it out of my sight, it's giving me indigestion.

CELIA

Just a last question: Did any of the children manage to escape?

BRIAN

No, I guess not. Wait, maybe... Yeah, I remember something Father Lynch told me before I gave him what he deserved. It seems that one of the first children he kidnapped managed to escape. But the boy must have drowned since he never appeared. What a pity, isn't it?

Celia doesn't answer. Then she reopens the album and takes out her own profile.

CELIA

He was not a boy, but a girl..

Celia shows the album's profile to Brian, who watches it in confusion.

CELIA

And she survived.

BRIAN

How do you know?

CELIA

Her name was Celia.

MEMORY FLASHES - MONTAGE

- A) A male hand forcefully grabs a girl's arm.
- B) The male hand lasciviously strokes the girl's legs.
- C) The hand takes a sharp awl from a metallic briefcase.
- D) GIRL'S POV as a man with a white, blind eye wearing a balaclava insanely looks at her.

CELIA (V.O.)

She was a child just arrived from Mexico who was kidnapped by a monster hidden in a balaclava. After abusing her for hours, he perforated her eardrum with an awl. Thanks God, she managed to escape before things got worse.

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Under Brian's incredulous gaze, Celia stands up and keeps talking while bitterly staring at her own profile.

CELIA

However, Celia was not able to tell anybody the truth. For some reason, her mind blocked out the memory of those hours for many years...

(beat)

But one night a few months ago, something turned inside her and she started to remember. Then she decided to find out the truth about her past and life gave her the chance to do so. As you said, twist of fate.

BRIAN

You...?

Celia nods.

BRIAN

I knew you were hiding something. Yeah, I knew from the first time we met.

CELIA

I'm going to pack my suitcase, I guess you don't mind taking me to town now...

Brian nervously stands up.

BRIAN

Wait, not so fast... Let me think about it for some days. I can't make this decision lightly. It'd be risky for me.

CELIA

I'm scared, Brian. They killed Luc. Somehow, they think that I betrayed them. I won't say a word to anyone. I swear.

Brian hesitates while Celia looks down at the shotgun at his feet. He picks up the weapon.

BRIAN

Just be a bit patient. I'll find a satisfactory solution for both of us.

CELIA

But-

BRIAN

-Don't let yourself be influenced by this place's past. Just relax and everything will go better.

Brian walks away toward the house entrance and opens the door. Then he turns to look at her.

BRIAN

You know what the worst thing you can do in the presence of a ghost is?

Celia shakes her head.

BRIAN

Pay attention to him.

Brian leaves and closes the door from outside.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM - NIGHT

Celia locks the watch room. Then she approaches the control panel and pushes some buttons.

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM'S BALCONY - NIGHT

Celia stares down at the storehouse while sipping from a cup of coffee. Everything is calm.

The lantern stops spinning and turns off. Then it starts flickering.

Celia picks up her tablet computer and translates the light code.

TABLET SCREEN - The message pops up in the lower window:
WE ARE EVEN NOW.

Relieved, she sighs and closes her eyes.

A loud SQUEAKING sound is heard. She opens her eyes.

The storehouse double doors slowly open as if inviting her to enter...

INT. STOREHOUSE - NIGHT

Guided by the flashlight beam, Celia makes her way through the dark storehouse...

Everything is the same as the previous days: broken and dusty furniture scattered around the floor.

INT. STOREHOUSE - CELLAR - NIGHT

Celia examines a pile of newspapers and magazines on one of the bookshelves. After placing it on an upper shelf, she starts leafing through other magazines. Then she finds something...

It's an old Polaroid picture of a middle-aged man with little hair and a white, blind eye. He wears a long black cassock and clerical collar. The man, with his fingers intertwined at his chest, looks coldly at the camera.

Celia keeps examining the magazines. Some seconds later, she places a second pile of them on the upper shelf and reaches down for another pile.

A CREAKING sound is heard. Celia looks up again and notices that the upper shelf has partially broken.

CELIA

Damn it.

An instant later, the shelf breaks completely, causing the lower shelves to break too.

Finally, the bookshelf topples to the floor as Celia, startled, jumps back.

Still not recovered from the scare, she looks at the ruined bookshelf. Then something catches her eye on the lower part of the wall where the bookshelf was.

A small part of the baseboard has come off from the wall; a rectangular hole behind it.

Celia crouches down and removes the piece of baseboard. Then she carefully inserts her hand into the hole...

Seconds go by in silence. Then Celia's expression turns to bemused surprise. She quickly pulls back her hand from the hole.

It's another VHS-C tape, this one white.

INT. STOREHOUSE - TUNNEL - NIGHT

Celia puts the white VHS-C tape into her pocket and starts walking back through the dark tunnel.

A few yards ahead, her flashlight starts to flicker. Then it turns off. Darkness takes over the tunnel...

Celia clicks her tongue, irritated. Then she tries to turn on the flashlight. It doesn't work...

A sudden NOISE OF CHAINS is heard from the end of the tunnel, near the cellar. Celia gasps.

More noises of chains are heard, louder, coming closer...

In a panic, Celia shakes the flashlight, but it slips from her hands and falls to the floor. She kneels down and feels the ground.

The noises of chains keep coming closer...

After a few tense moments, Celia picks up the flashlight and turns it on. It works. Without standing up, she quickly turns around and points the flashlight towards the end of the tunnel.

There is nobody. Complete silence. Slowly, she stands up and looks around...

A faint GROAN is heard from the darkness ahead.

Celia directs the flashlight beam to the ground. What she sees there makes her heart stop...

Half a dozen sacks float in a pool of blood, just a few yards ahead of her. Something seems to move in them.

Celia steps back in horror. Then a chorus of GROANS bursts from the sacks. An instant later, they start slithering towards her...

A hanging noose falls from the ceiling and slides around Celia's neck. Before she can react, the rope knot tightens in her throat, strangling her.

While Celia struggles for release from the rope, the sacks keep coming closer and the groans get louder...

Her face starts to turn red due to lack of air. She grabs the noose with both hands and pulls it down...

Nothing. A second attempt...

Impossible, the rope is firmly attached to somewhere in the ceiling.

The sacks stop at Celia's tiptoeing feet as the groans increase still more.

Celia's face starts turning purple. Then her expression freezes, her eyes roll back, tears start rolling down her cheeks...

Unexpectedly, when all seems lost, the rope unties itself from the ceiling.

Once free, Celia collapses to her knees and coughs a few times. Then she picks up her flashlight and stumbles away from the tunnel.

INT. STOREHOUSE - STAIRS - NIGHT

Celia quickly climbs up the stairs leading to the storage room...

The trap door slams shut. She nervously tries to open it, but she can't.

A GIGGLE coming from the tunnel is heard. Celia turns around...

A small circular object comes rolling to the foot of the staircase. She points the flashlight beam down to it...

It's the cat's severed head.

Horrified, Celia starts hitting the trap door with all her might.

CELIA
Help! Help me!

A chorus of ghostly GIGGLES is heard while small shadows start approaching the stairs through the tunnel...

Celia keeps hysterically hitting the trap door.

CELIA
Help! Help!

A small, bloody hand slowly peeks out from the nearest corner to the stairs; fingers curl around it.

A little head also starts peeking out...

The trap door opens.

Celia quickly climbs up to the storage room.

CELIA
(scared)
No, I'm not going to do that. I
don't see why I should do it. I
didn't hurt you. I'm innocent.

The lantern turns on. Celia translates another code.

TABLET SCREEN - The message pops up in the lower window:
YOU WILL.

CELIA
I won't.

There is another flickering code.

TABLET SCREEN - The message pops up in the lower window:
IT IS NOT YOUR CHOICE.

The lantern turns off.

EXT. PIER/SEA - DAY

It's a sunny afternoon. Seated at the end of the pier,
Celia finishes building the improvised boat by tying
planks of wood to bike tires.

She stands up and pushes the boat out to the calm sea. It
seems to float.

Celia hesitates. Then she dives into the sea and grabs
one of the boat's wooden planks. After placing the upper
part of her body on the planks, she starts kicking her
feet to drive the boat forward.

Some twenty yards away from the pier, Celia briefly sees
something in the distance. She stops. Then she strains
her eyes to better see. There is nothing in sight. She
resumes her kicking...

Something rams the boat.

Celia loses her grasp and is swallowed by the water. A
few instants later, she comes to the surface and
nervously looks around...

There is nothing. She coughs a couple times and reaches
for the boat again...

A couple of blue shark dorsal fins break the surface just
a few yards ahead.

Filled with panic, Celia remains motionless while staring
at them. The sharks start approaching her...

Without wasting a second, Celia quickly starts swimming
back to the island...

Once she reaches the pier, Celia climbs up the ladder to the planked area and starts coughing hard to eject the seawater.

After recovering her breath, she sees the improvised boat being torn to pieces. She puts her hands over her face and cries dejectedly..

A hand rests on her shoulder.

Startled, Celia turns around to find a blonde woman with short hair and blue eyes. It's the woman of the tablet's photo viewer. It's NORAH, 35.

CELIA
(dumbfounded)
Norah..

NORAH
(smiling)
Is everything okay?

INT. LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Under Norah's watchful eye, Celia finishes packing her travel suitcase.

NORAH
Something told me you were in danger. It was an intuition, a strong feeling. I see I wasn't wrong.

CELIA
I couldn't take it anymore. I was going crazy. If not for you, I guess... I guess I'd have ended up..

Feeling moved, Celia sits on the sofa and presses her eyelids with her fingers.

Norah sits next to her and puts her arm around Celia's shoulders.

NORAH
That will never happen. Not while I live.

Norah gently kisses her on the temple.

NORAH
C'mon, it's all over. Everything is gonna be alright. You'll come back home and that bastard will spend the rest of his life behind bars.

CELIA
You saved my life.

NORAH
Well, I guess I owed you one.

They smile at each other. Then they kiss on the lips.

EXT. PIER - EVENING

Carrying her travel suitcase, Celia walks towards the end of the pier. Norah stands on a small white skiff. After exchanging smiles, Celia holds out her suitcase to Norah.

NORAH
First, untie the rope and throw me it.

CELIA
Why? Why don't you first...?

NORAH
C'mon, do what I tell you.

Still disconcerted, Celia drops her suitcase.

NORAH
Do you still not trust me? I'm not leaving without you. C'mon, Celia, do it for me.

Celia nods. Then she turns around and crouches down.

NORAH (O.S.)
Everything will change from now on.

Celia unties the mooring rope and turns again towards...

Norah and the boat have disappeared. No trace of them. Unable to believe her eyes, Celia drops the rope.

The lighthouse lantern turns on in the background and starts flickering.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM - NIGHT

Seated on the chair just below the trap door, Celia watches with teary eyes the flickering lantern. She translates a new code in her tablet computer.

TABLET SCREEN - A new message pops up below the code:
YOUR MIND IS CRUMBLING.

CELIA
I don't think so.

There is a new flickering code. She translates.

TABLET SCREEN - A new message pops up below the code:
NOW YOU KNOW.

Celia raises her eyes towards the light, confused.

CELIA
What? What do I know?

TABLET SCREEN - Another message: HOW IT FEELS BEING LEFT.

Celia bows her head, ashamed. There is a new code.

TABLET SCREEN: SHE IS DEAD.

CELIA
That's not true.

TABLET SCREEN: LIKE YOU.

CELIA
I'm not dead.

TABLET SCREEN: YOU WILL BE SOON.

CELIA
I don't think so.

TABLET SCREEN: KILL YOURSELF

Celia raises her eyes again.

CELIA
I'm not who kidnapped and
murdered you! I've already told
you a thousand times! It was
Father Lynch!

No answer. Silence. Then there is a new code.

TABLET SCREEN: KILL YOURSELF

CELIA
You can't blame me! I'm innocent!

TABLET SCREEN: KILL YOURSELF

Filled with anger, Celia stands up.

CELIA
You can't blame me! It was that
fucking priest! I was just a
little girl!

The lantern keeps turned off. No answer. She furiously
throws the tablet computer on the floor.

CELIA
I didn't remember anything! I was
terrified! I was traumatized!

There's no response. Celia sits down again. Then she puts her hands over her face and starts crying bitterly.

CELIA
You can't blame me... I was just a
poor little girl... You can't blame
me...

Celia wipes her tears with a handkerchief and stands up..

A light TAPPING is heard. Startled, Celia turns around towards the noise..

There's a LITTLE GIRL, 10, on the balcony.

The girl stands on the other side of the back window and stares somewhere into the watch room. Her pale face, cold expression, long straight red hair and dirty hospital gown give her a ghostlike quality..

Celia, terrified, watches her in silence.

The little girl, who seems not to notice Celia's presence, slowly starts to SCRATCH the window pane with her nails.

Celia steps back, stunned; her feet tread on the tablet, causing a faint CRUNCHING NOISE..

The little girl suddenly turns to glare at Celia, who straightens up in fear. Then she smiles sinisterly..

Threads of blood start running down from the corners of the girl's mouth. Thereupon her ears, nose, eyes and fingertips start bleeding too.

Furrowed with blood, the little girl keeps staring coldly at Celia. Then she starts laughing naughtily while drawing her finger across her throat..

A few instants later, she dissipates slowly.

Paralyzed with fear, Celia keeps staring at the now empty window.

EXT. ROCKY SHORE - DAY

After stacking some pieces of wood and newspapers in a pile, Celia nervously lights it up with a match.

Once the improvised bonfire starts burning and smoking, she stands up and looks at the sea. There is no one in sight. The ocean spreads out to infinity.

EXT. SMALL ISLAND - NIGHT

It's a stormy night, thunder and lightning cracking the sky. The lighthouse lantern works normally.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM - NIGHT

Celia hangs a wooden cross on one of the walls. Another cross, this one a golden crucifix, hangs from her neck.

The window in the back wall is now covered with rags and pieces of cardboard.

After sitting on a chair, Celia picks up two pieces of wood and some string. Then she forms another cross with the pieces and uses the string to attach them..

The lights start flashing. Then they go out. The watch room plunges into darkness.

A few instants later, Celia turns on her flashlight and nervously looks around.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - SPIRAL STAIRCASE, THIRD FLIGHT - NIGHT

Guided by her flashlight, Celia cautiously walks down the stairs while flashes of lightning briefly illuminate the tower.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE ENTRANCE/GENERATOR ROOM - NIGHT

Celia finishes going down the spiral stairs and walks towards an open door in a corner. Then she pushes a switch. There is no light.

After crossing the door, she sweeps the flashlight beam around..

It's a small generator room with an old diesel generator and some switchboards.

Celia approaches a power box on a wall and opens it. Then she pulls down a lever and presses a couple of buttons.

The light comes back on. Then she turns around..

There is a bald, thin MAN in the room.

Seated in a chair on the opposite side of the generator room, the man stares at her with a serious look. It's CELIA'S FATHER, 65. She looks at him in surprise.

* *Spanish.*

CELIA

Dad..

Celia's father doesn't answer.

CELIA
What...? What are you...?

CELIA'S FATHER
I'm angry with you, Celia, very angry. I'm ashamed of you.

CELIA
Why?

CELIA'S FATHER
All those poor children... Why didn't you tell us anything? You were a coward. You sentenced them to die.

CELIA
(nervous)
But I... I...

CELIA'S FATHER
You were a bad daughter, and not only because of your cowardice... Did you really think that God approved your relationship with that woman?

CELIA
I... I loved her...

CELIA'S FATHER
He made us pay for your sins, and your mother was hit the hardest. He turned all his anger on her.

CELIA
I... I didn't want...

CELIA'S FATHER
You don't know how much she suffered, you can't even imagine how much...

The lights start flashing again. Celia turns towards the power box...

There is a WOMAN just in front of her; her head down and her face covered by her long, grey hair. It's CELIA'S MOTHER, 65.

Celia jumps back in fear. Then her mother lifts up her face; bloody tears running down from her full black eyes.

CELIA'S MOTHER
I rotted inside, Celia; and all because of you...

A large spurt of blood comes from her mouth.

CELIA'S MOTHER
 (painful)
*It still burns! It's an endless
 pain! It will never end!*

CELIA
I didn't... I didn't want...

Celia's father approaches Celia from behind and seizes her by her shoulders.

CELIA'S FATHER
*You have to help me! We have to
 stop her bleeding right now!*

Unable to answer, Celia nervously gasps while looking in shock at her mother.

CELIA'S FATHER
*This time you won't be a coward,
 will you?*

Filled with horror, she breaks free from her father's grip and runs away from the room.

CELIA'S FATHER
Celia! Come back here!

Celia runs off upstairs.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - SPIRAL STAIRCASE, SECOND FLIGHT - NIGHT

Celia arrives at the second flight of stairs while the lights keep flashing and more thunders are heard.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM - NIGHT

Celia quickly comes into the watch room and locks the door. Then she turns around...

There is a noose hanging from the ceiling.

Celia cautiously approaches the noose. Just below it, a paper catches her attention. She picks it up. It is the photograph of Celia's parents. Someone has written some words on the background. It says "DO IT!"

She drops the photograph and steps back in fear...

A series of deafening KNOCKS on the entrance door echoes through the watch room.

CELIA'S FATHER (O.S.)
*Open the door, Celia! We have to
 stop the bleeding!*

Startled, Celia jumps back while the trap door flies open. The lantern starts flickering frantically.

CELIA'S MOTHER (O.S.)
*It hurts, Celia! It hurts like
hell! Please let us in!*

Celia runs to curl up in the corner of the room and covers her ears with both hands.

CELIA'S FATHER (O.S.)
*Open the door, Celia! Your mother
needs you! We have to stop the
bleeding right now!*

Anguished, Celia removes the golden crucifix from her neck and squeezes it with both hands. Then forcefully closes her eyes and hides her head between her legs.

EXT. SMALL ISLAND - DAY

Another day dawns over the island.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM - DAY

The window in the back wall keeps covered with rags and pieces of cardboard. Early morning rays of sun filter through gaps between them, landing on Celia's face.

Curled up in the corner and partially covered with a blanket, Celia wakes up suddenly like a startled deer; several crosses drawn on her face with a black marker.

The walls of the watch room are filled with crosses, some of them made of wood and the rest drawn with a marker.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Seated at the coffee table, Celia picks up a thimble filled with solid wax and uses a pocket knife to take out a wax earplug. Her hands tremble as if in distress.

After giving the earplug a conical shape, Celia puts it in her left ear. Then she picks up a pair of scissors from the table and a black t-shirt from the sofa. She starts to cut a long strip from the t-shirt.

INT. ROCKY SHORE - DAY

Seated at one of the rocky shores, Celia eats meatballs with a fork directly from a can. Her sickly complexion and blank look denote a state of mental collapse.

Something catches her eye on a nearby rock. It's a dirty sack like those she found in the cave.

Celia approaches the sack and examines it. Inside is a folded up piece of paper. She unfolds it. There is something written on the paper. She reads it.

CELIA

My apologies for not disembarking yet, but I'm afraid I wouldn't receive a very warm welcome. I'm glad to see you starting to understand... But don't settle for too little, there's still a long way to go towards full expiation.

Celia looks at the sea. There is no one in sight.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM - EVENING

The watch room remains filled with crosses and with the back window covered with rags, the only light comes from some lit candles on the floor. The noose keeps hanging in the center of the room.

Celia locks the door and drags a wood chest of drawers to reinforce it. A soft VOICE coming from the other side of the door is heard.

NORAH (O.S.)

Celia?

CELIA

(startled)

Who is it?

NORAH (O.S.)

It's me, Norah.

CELIA

What do you want?

NORAH (O.S.)

I have something to tell you.

CELIA

I'm not going to open the door.

NORAH (O.S.)

I'm not asking you to do it. I just want you to listen.

CELIA

You're not real. You're only in my mind.

NORAH (O.S.)

Maybe you're right. Then you'll have to listen to what your mind wants to say to you.

Celia places the chest of drawers in front of the door.

NORAH (O.S.)
 Stop fighting, Celia. They're
 already too strong, you cannot do
 anything. Your fear fed them.
 They won.

CELIA
 But-

NORAH (O.S.)
 -Everything is lost. You should
 give up.

CELIA
 I won't.

NORAH (O.S.)
 Just surrender, Celia.

CELIA
 I won't. Why should I believe
 you?

There is no answer.

CELIA
 Norah?

There is no response.

CELIA
 You still there, Norah?

Nothing. Celia drags aside the chest of drawers and slowly reaches for the door knob. Then she flings open the door...

There is nobody.

EXT. SMALL ISLAND - NIGHT

It's another stormy night, thunder and lightning cracking again the sky.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM - NIGHT

Curled up in the corner and covered up with a blanket, Celia shivers uncontrollably.

Her expression is extremely pained; the marker-drawn crosses still on her face, a wax earplug in her healthy ear, and her eyes blindfolded with the black t-shirt strip.

The lantern stops spinning and turns off. A few moments later, it starts flickering.

A loud KNOCKING coming from the entrance is heard. The locked door starts shaking from the pounding..

The bolt breaks. Then the door opens slowly, CREAKING, pushing the weak barricade of furniture away..

FOOTSTEPS and GIGGLES are heard.

Half a dozen small and bloody hands approach Celia, anguished and isolated from her senses. One of them lightly brushes her cheek..

Celia straightens, scared. The hand quickly moves back. The giggles turn to LAUGHTER.

Another hand touches Celia's face, moving away again immediately. She nervously waves her hands around her face as if she was shooing away a cloud of midges.

More hands start quickly touching the woman's forehead and cheeks as the laughter increases in volume.

Celia frantically shakes her hands and head..

Finally, one of the small hands tears the blindfold from her eyes.

EXT. SMALL ISLAND - NIGHT

A bloodcurdling SCREAM breaks the night. The lighthouse lantern turns off.

EXT. PIER - DAY

It's a sunny morning. Accompanied by his dog, Brian moors the skiff to the wharf. Then he picks up his shotgun and looks around attentively. There's nobody there.

BRIAN

Celia!

Nobody answers. Brian keeps peering at the surrounding area, trying to find the woman.

BRIAN

Celia!

He hears no answer. The dog starts barking. Brian shushes him. Then he ties the animal to the pier ladder with a leash and climbs slowly up to the planked area.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE ENTRANCE - DAY

The lighthouse entrance door opens slowly, squeaking. Brian, brandishing his shotgun, enters cautiously.

BRIAN

Celia?

There's no answer. Brian approaches the spiral stairs and raises his eyes to the upper flights. It seems there's nobody there. Then he starts to go up the stairs.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM - DAY

The watch room is shrouded in darkness. Faint rays of morning sunlight filter through gaps between the rags and cardboard pieces that cover the back window.

Waving his shotgun, Brian comes in the room and crosses silently to the window.

Once there, he removes the rags and cardboard pieces from it. The sunlight invades the room, blinding him briefly. He turns around..

He BUMPS into a motionless hanging body.

Frightened, Brian gasps as he jerks back. Then he raises his eyes to look at the face of the body..

It's Celia.

She is hanging by a noose from a ceiling beam; crosses drawn on her pale face, closed eyes, dropped jaw.

Brian looks at her, astonished. Moments later, his expression changes abruptly. A bitter smile spreads across his face.

BRIAN

Well, I hope those little bastards already got what they were looking for...

Brian puts the shotgun down on the floor, grabs a chair and places it under the hanged Celia. He looks up at the corpse again.

BRIAN

They wanted blood, and somebody had to provide it to them. I feel sorry for you, young lady.

Brian places one foot on the chair seat..

Celia opens her eyes.

With a quick and vigorous movement, she lifts her legs and traps Brian's head between her knees. Then she pulls out a pocket knife and cuts the rope over her head. They collapse on the floor.

Without wasting a second, Celia stands up and picks up the shotgun as Brian tries to regain his breath. Then she holds the shotgun in one hand as she removes her cardigan..

There is something around her torso, one of the harnesses used by Brian to paint the lighthouse stripes. She used it to simulate the hanging.

Brian stands up and looks at her, astonished. Then she removes the noose from her neck and pulls an iron slave collar attached to the harness.

Celia tosses the collar at his feet.

INT. STOREHOUSE - DAY

A hand inserts a white VHS-C tape, the last one found by Celia, into the old video camera.

The storehouse is shrouded in darkness. The only light comes from the half-closed double doors and a static television screen.

Brian remains tied to a chair in front of the television. Crouched at his feet, Celia presses the play button of the video camera. Then she stands up and looks at Brian.

CELIA

That's the last tape I found. It was pure chance. You hid it very well.

As Brian looks at her with fear and starts breathing nervously, the video camera starts playing the tape.

TV SCREEN - A group of CHILDREN seated at the back wall of the storehouse, scared, crying... The camera moves around them as the unseen operator whistles the "Yeah, ho, little fish" song. Young Brian is crouched next to a LITTLE GIRL, 10. He caresses her hair gently and smiles at her with lascivious eyes.

YOUNG BRIAN

She's at a good age, isn't she, Father? She's almost a woman...

Hidden behind the camera, Father Lynch lets out a nasty giggle. Brian starts caressing the little girl's neck.

YOUNG BRIAN

Look at this swan neck. And all these little freckles. I'd spend hours and hours licking these little freckles... She's like a nymph.

(to the girl)

You like it when I touch you like this?

Terrified, the little girl doesn't answer.

YOUNG BRIAN
 Yeah, you like it, you really
 like it... But you don't know why.
 That's why you're so scared.

After kissing her on the cheek, Brian stands up. Then he
 looks down at the frightened children with a smile.

YOUNG BRIAN
 Pay attention to how they look at
 us. They're trying to seduce us,
 I can feel it. They do it in a
 subtle way... Yeah, they're very
 subtle.

The image freezes with Young Brian smiling at the CAMERA.

Back to the storehouse, Celia turns to stare at Brian.

CELIA
 I guess there's no need to show
 you the rest of the tape.

Brian nervously lowers his head and keeps silent.

CELIA
 Haven't you got anything to say?

BRIAN
 Well, I... I admit... Yes, I molested
 some children... But only a few of
 them, I swear.

CELIA
 Did you take part in the murders?

BRIAN
 (raising his
 head)
 No, for God's sake! I'd never do
 something like that!

CELIA
 Did you allow them?

Brian doesn't answer. He lowers his head again, ashamed.

CELIA
 Didn't you hear me? I'm asking
 you a question, Brian.

BRIAN
 Yes, at first. I really needed
 the money. I had a lot of debts.
 I already told you I have two
 sons, they were babies... I know
 there's no justification, but-

CELIA
-How did he kill them?

BRIAN
Please don't force me to remember
that. It's not a pleasant thing.

CELIA
I want to know. Tell me.

Brian takes a deep breath and looks up at her fearfully.

BRIAN
He called it "Abolition of the
senses".

FLASHBACK - EXT. STOREHOUSE FAÇADE - NIGHT

Carrying a metallic briefcase, Father Lynch walks towards the storehouse, whose double doors are half-open. The lights are turned on, a stream of light shines out.

BRIAN (V.O.)
When Father Lynch considered one
of the children had been abused
enough by him, he proceeded to
initiate what he called his
"purification".

Father Lynch enters the storehouse.

BRIAN (V.O.)
Somehow, he thought that they had
caused what had happened to them.
They were responsible for their
own fate. Besides, he assured
that they had enjoyed being
abused... A full expiation was the
only way to save their souls.

The double doors slowly close.

FLASHBACK - INT. STOREHOUSE - NIGHT

FATHER LYNCH'S HANDS - Father Lynch opens the metallic briefcase on a table. It is filled with saws, pliers, awls, etc.

BRIAN (V.O.)
He believed that by reducing the
sensory capacity of them to a
minimum, they would leave the
material world alive and would
get in touch directly with the
deepest part of their beings. So,
in this way, the children would
be instantly free from their
carnal sins.

DISSOLVE TO:

FATHER LYNCH'S HANDS - Father Lynch takes an awl from the briefcase and starts cleaning it with a cotton ball.

BRIAN (V.O.)

The first was always the sense of hearing. Dirty words and obscene whispers constituted the first step in the corruption of the spirit.

DISSOLVE TO:

FATHER LYNCH'S HANDS - Father Lynch takes a sharp hooked tool from the briefcase.

BRIAN (V.O.)

The second was the sight. Eyes were the windows through which the Devil got into our souls.

DISSOLVE TO:

FATHER LYNCH'S HANDS - Father Lynch threads a thick needle with a thick thread.

BRIAN (V.O.)

The next faculty to neutralize was the sense of smell. Giving it up was, to a great extent, giving up sex.

DISSOLVE TO:

FATHER LYNCH'S HANDS - Father Lynch quickly opens and closes some surgical scissors several times.

BRIAN (V.O.)

Then the taste...

DISSOLVE TO:

FATHER LYNCH'S HANDS - Father Lynch assembles a hand saw.

BRIAN (V.O.)

And finally, the sense of touch.

FLASHBACK - EXT. PIER - NIGHT

Standing in his old boat moored at the pier, Father Lynch finishes tying up some full white sacks with ropes.

BRIAN (V.O.)

Once physically reduced to their minimum being, but still alive, he placed the children in sacks and threw them into the sea.

DISSOLVE TO:

FLASHBACK - EXT. PIER - NIGHT (LATER)

Half a dozen full white sacks float around the boat, where Father Lynch prays passionately.

BRIAN (V.O.)

They floated for several hours before they sank. It was during this time when they totally lost the notion of being something alive and physical, the notion of their own existence... Then they became totally purified.

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. STOREHOUSE - DAY

Astonished, Celia listens to Brian's account. He bows his head and sighs deeply.

BRIAN

That's all. I told you it wasn't a fairy tale.

CELIA

How did everything end up? How did Father Lynch die?

BRIAN

When I was able to raise enough money, I asked him to stop. But he refused. It was a sacred mission for him, his duty. We argued, we came to blows and... You know, a bad blow, a bad fall... As years went by, I tried to forget everything. I felt guilty. I fought hard to overcome the shame, they were difficult times. Finally, just a couple of years ago, I managed to leave it behind...

(beat)

But then the children came back.

CELIA

Tell me about them. They wanted to drive me mad and force me to kill myself.

BRIAN

They were trying the same with me... That's why this storehouse remained locked.

(MORE)

BRIAN (cont'd)

This way they were weaker, just a few light Morse code games and some groans and noises. But when you broke into here...

CELIA

I made them stronger.

Brian raises his eyes and nods.

CELIA

Why do they refuse to forgive me? It's too cruel to blame a little, traumatized girl for-

BRIAN

-They need to take revenge on someone to rest in peace. And since it's impossible for them to catch the big prize, they have to settle for the small ones, you or me.

CELIA

But I-

BRIAN

-Indirectly, you played a key part in their torment, such a horrible suffering that turned them cruel and vengeful. They're blinded by hatred, like beaten dogs...

(beat)

When you told me your story, I realized they were blaming you as well. So I just passed the buck to you. I had no other choice.

Brian bows his head again.

CELIA

Look me in the eye.

Brian obeys and looks at her contritely.

BRIAN

This lighthouse is my life! I had to recover it at any cost!

CELIA

You're disgusting.

BRIAN

Look, I'm sure we can come to some agreement.

(MORE)

BRIAN (cont'd)

First, we'll find a way to throw the children out of the island, a cleansing ritual or something like that. Then I'll compensate you. I've saved a lot of money during the last few years, you know?

They stare at each other for several seconds; Celia, sternly; Brian, with a hopeful smile on his face..

Unexpectedly, she delivers a hard punch to his jaw. He falls on his back to the ground.

EXT. SMALL ISLAND - NIGHT

Night falls over the island. The lighthouse lamp remains turned off.

INT. STOREHOUSE - NIGHT

The storehouse is shrouded in darkness. Then the light comes on.

Standing on a chair, Celia finishes screwing a bulb to a wire hanging from the ceiling. Brian is at her feet, tied up hand and foot and kneeling on the floor.

Once the bulb is firmly in place, Celia jumps down from the chair and fills a big bowl with dry dog food. Then she places it near Brian.

CELIA

As the days go by, it'll taste like caviar.

BRIAN

What're you planning?

CELIA

You'll remain locked up here for a week and will go through the same hell I had to go through.

Celia fills another big bowl with water from a hose and places it next to him.

BRIAN

Don't do this to me, please. I beg you, Celia. I didn't kill any children, I just... I needed the money! I stopped him as soon as I could! Please, believe me!

She slaps him on the back.

CELIA
Don't worry, it'll pass soon. Try
to be patient.

Celia walks away toward the storehouse entrance.

BRIAN
(crying in fear)
Please, don't leave me here! I
beg you! Please, Celia!

She stops in the doorway and turns to look at him.

CELIA
And don't forget what the worst
thing to do in the presence of a
ghost is...

She pushes a switch to turn off the light.

CELIA
Pay attention to him.

Celia closes the double door from outside.

EXT. PIER - NIGHT

Celia stands on board Brian's old skiff; her luggage rests at her feet. She ties the dog to the boat cleat and sits on the stern bench.

The dog looks towards the storehouse and howls. Then she starts the engine of the skiff. After a few seconds, the boat moves quickly away from the pier.

EXT. SMALL ISLAND - NIGHT

The lighthouse lamp remains turned off. Then it turns on.

INT. STOREHOUSE - STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT

The storehouse is in darkness. Labored BREATHING and the sound of someone CRAWLING across the floor are heard.

A camping light is turned on.

Brian is in the small storage room, tied up on his back and lying on the floor.

After grabbing a screwdriver from next to the camping light, he laboriously tries to cut the rope with it. The tool is too blunt. Then something catches his eye at the back of the storage room...

A small knife lies on the closed trap door.

Brian drops the screwdriver and starts to drag himself towards the trap door...

Unexpectedly, when he is just a few inches from the chained-shut trap door, it starts shaking as if someone was trying to get out. Brian stops crawling, scared.

BRIAN

Shit...

Brian, his face right next to the trap door, tries to drag himself backwards as the trap door keeps shaking. But he can't move...

His belt is hooked to a thick nail sticking out of the floor.

BRIAN

What the...?

He keeps trying in vain to crawl backwards. The trap door shakes harder as the BANGS grow louder and louder, the rusty chain is close to breaking.

Brian keeps trying to drag himself backwards, but he can't move an inch. His belt stays hooked to the nail...

The chain breaks.

Brian stops moving. Filled with fear, he slowly turns to look at the trap door; beads of cold sweat make their way down his forehead.

The trap door opens slightly...

Brian stops breathing, his scared eyes fixed on the trap door. Seconds pass in silence...

Suddenly, the CAMERA abruptly turns around to reveal a terrifying LITTLE BOY, 10, lying next to Brian; deathly pale, empty eyes sockets, blood spurting from his mouth.

The little boy groans in pain as he holds out his arms towards Brian.

EXT. STOREHOUSE FAÇADE - NIGHT

The double door of the storehouse remains closed and locked. A bloodcurdling SCREAM breaks the silence.

FADE TO:

EXT. PIER - DAY

Celia, healthier and wearing a short haircut, steers Brian's skiff accompanied by the dog.

When they arrive at the pier, the dog jumps up to the planked area, runs away onto the island and disappears.

Celia moors the boat, picks up the shotgun and stares at the storehouse from a distance, uneasy.

INT. STOREHOUSE - DAY

The double door of the storehouse opens, SQUEAKING. Celia enters and turns on the light. The bulb glows steadily.

Carrying the shotgun, she slowly starts to walk through the storehouse. As she does, she looks around. There is nobody. Just dry dog food scattered on the floor and some puddles of urine.

CELIA

Brian?

Nobody answers. Celia, bothered by the unpleasant smell, takes out a handkerchief and covers her nose as she keeps walking.

When she finally reaches the back wall, she approaches the small storage room..

The trap door to the cellar remains open.

INT. STOREHOUSE - TUNNEL/CELLAR - DAY

Guided by her flashlight and holding the shotgun, Celia cautiously walks through the narrow tunnel.

CELIA

Brian?

Nobody answers. Then something on the floor catches her attention..

It's the rope she used to tie up Brian, snapped in two.

Celia looks at the rope, surprised and uneasy. Then she resumes her walk through the tunnel.

CELIA

Brian? Are you there?

There's no response.

CELIA

If you're thinking of doing something stupid, I wouldn't recommend it. I'm armed.

Once in the small cellar, she examines the gloomy room by moving the flashlight from side to side, up and down.

There's nobody. She turns to walk back to the tunnel..

Just in front of her, the flashlight beam reveals a MAN standing motionless with his back to her.

Celia jumps back as she suppresses her shout. Then she aims the shotgun at him. Slowly, the man turns around..

It's Brian.

CELIA
(nervously)
Don't... Don't move, Brian...

Brian lifts up his face.

CELIA
Don't move or I'll...

He's deathly pale, empty eye sockets, awls poked in his ears, nostrils sewn shut, blood spurting from his mouth..

Celia gasps in fear and steps backwards.

Brian slowly holds out his arms towards her. The top halves of his fingers are amputated..

He tries to speak, but he just gurgles up blood.

An instant later, he collapses to the floor.

As Celia looks down at the motionless body, the dog comes running into the cellar and starts licking Brian's face.

She cautiously crouches down and takes Brian's pulse at his neck..

There's no pulse. Brian is dead.

EXT. PIER - NIGHT

Night falls over the island. After placing Brian's sheet-wrapped corpse on the bow of the skiff, Celia starts to untie the mooring rope from the pier.

A long and melancholy HOWL is heard in the distance. It's Brian's dog.

Celia shifts her eyes to the storehouse and looks at it in silence. Then, after clicking her tongue, she moors the boat again.

INT. STOREHOUSE - NIGHT

The storehouse is shrouded in darkness. The double door opens, CREAKING..

A CLICK is heard. The bulb turns on. Celia steps into the storehouse and looks around her..

The bulb blows. The room plunges into darkness again.

CELIA

Damn it...

After a few instants, another CLICK is heard. It's Celia's flashlight.

Guided by it, Celia starts to walk through the storehouse as she looks around for the dog. She whistles, trying to attract the animal.

Nothing. She stops in the middle of the storehouse.

CELIA

Where are you? Come out.

Celia crouches down and whistles again.

CELIA

Come out. We have to leave,
there's nothing to do here...

Out of nowhere, the dog rushes towards her and fiercely bites her hand. She shouts in pain; the flashlight slips from her hands and falls to the ground, turning off.

The dog runs away, out of the storehouse.

CELIA

Shit!

Celia picks up the flashlight and tries to turn it on. It doesn't work. She tries again. There's no light.

She puts the flashlight in her coat pocket, turns around and walks back towards the entrance...

A mysterious SINGING VOICE comes from behind her.

VOICE (O.S.)

"There's a school of fish way
down deep in the sea, where the
little fish studied geography."

Startled, Celia turns around...

The television, still in the middle of the storehouse from the week before, is turned on. She watches it, astounded.

TV SCREEN - It's the old "Captains Courageous" movie again. Manuel sings the famous song to Harvey.

Celia cautiously approaches the television.

MANUEL (O.S.)

"Yeah, ho, little fish, don't
cry, don't cry, you'll be a
'baleia', by and by..."

She crouches down and tries to turn off the TV, but to no avail. Then she stands up again..

Now there is a MAN standing next to the television.

Celia gasps while stepping back in horror.

It's a middle-aged man with wispy hair and a blind eye wearing a long black cassock, the man of the Polaroid picture in the cellar, the man in a boat that prowled around the island..

It's Father Lynch.

Wearing a sinister smile, the priest opens his briefcase on the television and checks his tools of torture as he sings in unison with Manuel..

A few moments later, Father Lynch slowly turns to look at Celia with feigned surprise. He starts to talk, his voice metallic and unnatural.

FATHER LYNCH

I always loved this movie. The friendship between the fisherman and the boy is so special.. It's a touching movie.

CELIA

(nervously)

You... You... Brian told me you were dead..

FATHER LYNCH

What makes you think I'm not?

Celia doesn't answer, shocked. Father Lynch glances back down at his briefcase and keeps checking his tools.

FATHER LYNCH

"With fins and a tail to help you sail, and maybe some wings to help you fly."

Without wasting a second, Celia quickly turns around and runs toward the storehouse entrance..

The double doors slam shut.

She nervously shakes the handles. The doors don't open.

FATHER LYNCH

"Yeah, ho, little fish, don't cry, don't cry. Yeah, ho, little fish, don't cry, don't cry."

Anguished, Celia turns again towards Father Lynch, who grabs a sharp awl from the briefcase.

FATHER LYNCH
 First of all, I must be grateful
 to you. My dear little fishes
 have got their revenge on Brian
 and they're gone forever. Now
 this place is safe for me again.
 All thanks to you, Celia.

Cornered against the closed doors, she stares in fear at the priest, who picks up a balaclava from the briefcase and puts it on.

TV SCREEN - After finishing Manuel's song, the screen fades to black. Then it turns static.

Father Lynch starts walking towards Celia, step by step, staring at her while waving his awl.

FATHER LYNCH
 Well, well... I think it's time to
 finish what we started that
 distant day, you remember? C'mon,
 let me take a look at your ears.

Celia nervously looks around for an exit.

FATHER LYNCH
 Don't be afraid, just relax and
 enjoy. It's going to be a long
 night...

Father Lynch keeps approaching her, threateningly. Then something catches Celia's attention...

The small window placed high in the side wall. The wooden stool stands on the floor below the window.

Without hesitating, Celia runs to that wall.

FATHER LYNCH
 Don't be stubborn, my little
 fish, don't try to avoid the
 unavoidable.

Standing on the stool, Celia reaches out to open the window...

The window's latch slides into place by itself.

Father Lynch giggles and heads towards her. Celia tries to draw back the latch to open the window.

She can't do it, the latch is stuck.

FATHER LYNCH
Your fate is written. You can't
change it, no matter what you do.

Unable to open the window, Celia pulls the flashlight from her pocket and starts hitting the window glass. After several attempts, she manages to break it.

FATHER LYNCH
It's useless, Celia. The door to
purification is already open for
you.

Celia jumps up to reach the outer windowsill. As she did when she was a child, she tries to pass through the small window. It's not so easy now. The window is too narrow...

Father Lynch grabs her by one of her trouser legs and sticks the awl into her right foot tendon. She screams with pain.

FATHER LYNCH
Just try to be patient, the way
towards full expiation is long
and painful...

He removes the awl from her foot.

FATHER LYNCH
Very long and painful...

Making a supreme effort, Celia manages to pass through the window and jumps down outside the storehouse while Father Lynch misses his second stab and sticks the awl in the wall.

FLASHBACK - EXT. PIER - NIGHT

Young Celia runs stealthily down the pier. There are a couple of boats moored at the end of it.

BACK TO PRESENT

EXT. PIER - NIGHT

Celia, clearly limping, arrives at the end of the pier and jumps on the skiff.

After stumbling over Brian's sheet-wrapped corpse, she approaches the stern and tries to start the outboard motor...

It doesn't run.

Celia makes a second attempt. The motor emits a low GROAN, but it doesn't start.

A hand grabs Celia by her hair and drags her back to the pier. It belongs to Father Lynch.

FATHER LYNCH
 You won't get away this time,
 little fish! I've been waiting
 for this moment for a long time
 and I'm not gonna let anything
 ruin it!

Holding Celia by the hair, Father Lynch unbuttons the top of his cassock. Then he presses her face to his exposed chest, scarred by hundreds of throbbing cigarette burns.

FATHER LYNCH
 We're all sinners, and we all
 need to be punished! It is the
 law of God!

Father Lynch lets go of Celia and stares down at her. Then he brandishes the awl.

FATHER LYNCH
 It's time for your purification,
 Celia..

A small, ghostly hand grabs him by his arm.

Startled, Father Lynch slowly turns his neck to look over his shoulder..

Just behind the priest, a group of children glare at him. They are the same children from the video recordings: pale, dirty, with slave collars around their necks..

FATHER LYNCH
 (scared)
 You... What...? What're you doing
 here? You don't..

Father Lynch tries in vain to break free from the grip of the children while more of them grab him. Finally, he falls to his knees.

FATHER LYNCH
 You don't have to be here! You
 should have gone!

The red-haired little girl puts an iron collar attached to a chain around Father Lynch's neck.

FATHER LYNCH
 No! No, please!

Absolutely terrified, Father Lynch tries pointlessly to pull the collar from his neck. Then he looks at Celia as if waiting for an explanation.

CELIA
It's time for your purification,
Father Lynch.

Some of the children drag Father Lynch along the pier while he screams in horror. Another group of them stay with Celia, staring sternly at her.

CELIA
(scared)
I... I fulfilled my part of the
deal.

FLASHBACK - INT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM - NIGHT

Seated on the floor, her blindfold pulled down, Celia looks up in fear at a group of children standing around her. They glare truculently at the woman.

One of the children takes a step forward and gives her the noose. Frightened, Celia refuses to take it.

CELIA
I can hand... I can hand them to
you. If you want, you could use
me as bait to catch Brian. I know
he was also involved. This way
you'll trick Father Lynch.

The children's eyes grow wider at the name of the priest.

CELIA
I know he's the man prowling
around the island. He'll come
after me if he thinks you're
gone. I'm sure he will.

The children keep staring at her in silence.

CELIA
If you forgive me, I'll hand them
to you. I promise.

The child drops the noose.

FLASHBACK - INT. LIGHTHOUSE - WATCH ROOM - NIGHT (LATER)

Standing on a chair, the harness around her torso, Celia finishes screwing an iron collar around her neck. Then she buttons her cardigan and puts her head through the hanging noose.

BACK TO PRESENT

EXT. PIER - NIGHT

Celia and the children keep staring at each other.

FADE TO BLACK

A WHISTLED MELODY is heard. It's the chorus of "Yeah, ho, little fish" song.

When it stops, Father Lynch's nasty GIGGLE is heard..

THE END