

# TB



**EXCLUSIVE FILMS™**  
INTERNATIONAL

AN EXCLUSIVE MEDIA GROUP COMPANY

# THE WOMAN IN BLACK

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## WORLD SALES

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**HAMMER™**  
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Exclusive Media Group is a vertically integrated independent film studio with a library of over 550 film titles. Founded by strategic investment group, Cyrte Investments in May 2008, Exclusive actively develops, produces, finances and markets 3 - 4 high-quality commercial feature films per year under its two branded production labels, Exclusive Films and Hammer; as well as producing and marketing 2-3 iconic documentary films under the Spitfire Pictures brand.

Exclusive Films International licenses worldwide rights for the Group's production labels and rights acquired from third party producers.

Exclusive also owns US theatrical distributor, Newmarket Films.

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**HAMMER**

**NEWMARKET FILMS**



DANIEL RADCLIFFE

# THE WOMAN IN BLACK

EACH TIME SHE APPEARS,  
A CHILD DIES.

THE WOMAN IN BLACK  
THE FETTERED MURDERER OF  
EMILY WILSON  
WHO WAS ACCIDENTALLY KILLED  
FEBRUARY 27 1897  
AGED 20 YEARS  
DIED IN THE  
YET AGAIN SHE HUNG TO PREY HIM  
WHILE NO FATHER WILL FEAR IS HER  
AGED EMILY  
THE DETACHED WIFE OF THE ALBION  
WHO DIED FEBRU 17 1909  
AGE 71 YEARS  
PEACEFULLY SLEEPING

HAMMER

EXCLUSIVE FILMS  
BY  
AT THE  
AND

# TB

## THE WOMAN IN BLACK



<b>Genre:</b>	<b>Gothic Horror</b>
<b>Director:</b>	<b>James Watkins</b> ( <i>Eden Lake, Methuselah</i> for Warners/David Heyman)
<b>Cast:</b>	<b>Daniel Radcliffe</b> ( <i>Harry Potter 1 – 7, December Boys</i> )
<b>Producer:</b>	<b>Richard Jackson</b> ( <i>Rob Roy, Complicity</i> ) <b>Simon Oakes</b> ( <i>Let Me In, The Resident</i> )
<b>Screenplay:</b>	<b>Jane Goldman</b> ( <i>Kick-Ass, Stardust, The Debt</i> )
<b>Line Producer:</b>	<b>Paul Ritchie</b> ( <i>Brighton Rock, Nowhere Boy, Slumdog, The Descent</i> )
<b>Editor:</b>	<b>Jon Harris</b> ( <i>127 Hours, Kickass, Stardust, Snatch</i> )
<b>Cinematographer:</b>	<b>Tim Maurice-Jones</b> ( <i>Envy, Revolver, Snatch, Lock Stock</i> )
<b>Production Designer:</b>	<b>Kave Quinn</b> ( <i>Harry Brown, Layer Cake, Trainspotting, Shallow Grave</i> )
<b>Costume Designer:</b>	<b>Keith Madden</b> ( <i>Centurion, Perrier's Bounty, Eden Lake</i> )
<b>Hair &amp; Make-up:</b>	<b>Jeremy Woodhead</b> ( <i>Cemetery Junction, Nowhere Boy, Speed Racer, Dorian Gray, V For Vendetta (hair), Control, Alexander (make up)</i> )

### THE WOMAN IN BLACK – A new dimension in terror

Young lawyer Arthur Kipps leaves his son in London to settle the legal affairs of the recently deceased Alice Drablow. He discovers a series of inexplicable accidents and suicides have forced the parents of her village to barricade their children indoors, as if protecting them from an unseen foe. When Arthur stays the night all alone at the Drablow's foreboding house, he hears the screams of a drowning child and sees decaying children listlessly wandering the marshes. He will soon discover these haunting figures share the same date of death, and the same killer.

The ghost of a scorned woman, who was unable to save her beloved son Nathaniel from drowning, The Woman In Black takes on a horrifying form. Set on vengeance, her veil hides gaping sockets eaten away by scavengers and her curse hides an even darker secret ...whenever she is seen, a child dies.

In the face of hostility from the local residents, Arthur dredges up Nathaniel's skeleton and buries it with his mother, hoping the evil spectre will finally rest in peace. In a cruel twist of fate The Woman In Black turns her claws toward Arthur's young son. To avoid a fate worse than death, Arthur must now sacrifice everything he holds dear and save his child.



## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Guillermo Del Toro has said that the best horror films are sad and scary in equal part. These keynotes- heart and horror- will determine my direction. ***The Woman In Black*** is a story of love and loss. I want to make it into a film that is tender as well as terrifying.

First, foremost: terror. Let me be clear: I want to make an edge-of-your-seat ghost house ride. A film that teenagers would want to see on a Friday night. The story is set in the past, but the telling cannot be fusty. It must be accessible. I want to create a world, not a period. I want the audience to board the ghost train with Kipps in London and take them into a dark horror fairytale, closer in look to Tim Burton than *Pride And Prejudice*. I want to lead the audience on a delicious thrill ride through this world: jolts and jumps, chills and tingles, setpieces of unbearable tension that track through the shadowy corridors of the haunted house and the fog of the marshes. Dominating this landscape, the terrifying central figure of the ***The Woman In Black***, raging behind her veil. Like Sadako in *The Ring*, I think she can become an iconic horror character, a demon to invade people's dreams.

In *Eden Lake* I wanted to ground the horror in reality, so we shot with a raw aesthetic. Here the film should have an inky-black graphic novel sheen. The camerawork should be the complete opposite of costume drama: not stately, but subjective, peering deep into bitumen blacks, exploring our fears of what we cannot see. Production design is more about a dark sexiness than strict historical exactitude. I think we should explore a costume tie-in campaign with a British brand- like Burberry- that has a long history and contemporary style. All aspects of the production- from casting to marketing- should underline our modern take on this timeless tale of terror.

Kubrick famously said that all films about the supernatural are inherently consoling: they imply life after death. I want the film, with its heart-stopping ending, to offer this consolation in a way that moves the audience to tears.

To achieve this, attention must be paid to character. Everyone in the story bears their own scars: Kipps has lost his wife and wraps his son in cotton wool; the Woman in Black has lost her son and rages against the world; the villagers have lost their children and conspire to protect. For me the smothering dangers of such parental love- how far we will all go to protect our children- is the heartbeat of the film and I want to work at every stage to mine this emotion. Casting is key. Powerhouse actors who can capture these characters who, driven by loss, circle each other in a taut, psychological dance of death.

I have always been fascinated by our fears- I think we all are. With *Eden Lake*, I wanted to tap into our modern fear of kids. With ***The Woman In Black*** I'm interested in the flipside: every parent's fears for their children. The most relatable fear of all: losing those we love. I think this thematic and emotional richness will help the film reach out to a wider audience.

I want to make a dynamic and accessible film that combines the visceral kick of a ghost-train ride with the lingering emotional resonance of supernatural thrillers like *The Sixth Sense*, *The Others* and *The Orphanage*. In short, an elevated genre film that tugs at the heart and chills to the bone.

## JAMES WATKINS: DIRECTOR

James Watkins made his directing debut with the critically acclaimed thriller *Eden Lake*. Declared ‘the best British horror film in years’ [The Guardian], it won the Empire Award for Best Horror, the Jury Prize at Sitges Fantasy Film Festival and Best Director at Fantasporto.

Between 2001-2007 James had a first-look writing deal with Working Title Films. Under this deal, he wrote several scripts including: *My Little Eye*, a dark satire on the world of reality television, which was released theatrically in the UK in 2002 to critical acclaim and commercial success.

His other produced writing credits include *Gone* for Working Title films and *The Descent Part II* for Celador. James has also written scripts for Film Four and BBC Films.

James is currently working on writer-director projects with Warner Bros [producer David Heyman] and Pathe [producer Christian Colson].

James studied English Literature at Edinburgh University, graduating with the top first.

## SALES & MARKETING: GENRE

Horror is well established as one of the most commercial genres, with proven appeal and demonstrable worldwide returns from the box office and ancillary markets. This is in part because it strongly appeals to a younger, more media savvy audience within which the most frequent cinema goers can be found.

Key to success in this arena are strong characterisations and compelling scenarios and this of course is where the artistic pedigree of a literary adaptation can be relied upon.

Rank	Title	Studio	US Gross	Opening	Date
1	Van Helsing	Uni	\$120,177,084	\$51,748,040	05/07/2004
2	The Village	BV	\$114,197,520	\$50,746,142	07/30/2004
3	Interview with the Vampire	WB	\$105,264,608	\$36,389,705	11/11/1994
4	Sleepy Hollow	Par	\$101,071,502	\$30,060,467	11/19/1999
5	The Others	Mira	\$96,522,687	\$14,089,952	08/10/2001
6	Bram Stoker's Dracula	Col	\$82,522,790	\$30,521,679	11/13/1992

Of the Top 6 grossing Period Horror movies listed on boxofficemojo, only one, *The Village* is not an adaptation of a previously existing literary work. Having delighted readers and theatre audiences for years the quality and originality that make *The Woman In Black* so successful in these environments are the same qualities that will deliver success on the silver screen.

# TB

The Woman in Black

by  
Jane Goldman

Based on the novel by Susan Hill

Revised second draft 3.9.10

2 INT. GIFFORD ARMS - ATTIC ROOM. DAY 2

A sparsely decorated but pleasant-enough country child's bedroom - three small beds, a rocking horse, a window-seat beneath the open window.

THREE LITTLE GIRLS, 8, 10 and 11, and dressed in simple mid-period Victorian dresses and pinafores, sit on the floor playing tea party.

TEDDY BEARS and PORCELAIN DOLLS are seated, picnic-style, on a KERCHIEF as the girls cheerfully prepare them make-believe cups of tea in a china TEA SET.

Outside, we can hear the chatter of the market-day crowd.

Without warning, the three girls stop and look up simultaneously, their eyes fixed on something across the room, their faces suddenly, disturbingly, blank.

With steady, synchronised movement, the girls stand.

The things they had been holding - china tea cups, dolls - drop from their hands and laps, and fall to the floor.

In eerily perfect unison, the girls turn away from us to face the window.

As one, they step daintily towards the window, oblivious as they knock over toys, crush little china plates.

They climb onto the window seat and stand in the frame of the open window, silhouetted against the bright sky.

Then, they jump.

3 INT. ARTHUR'S HOUSE - BEDROOM. DAY. 3

Staring blankly at himself in a washstand mirror, ARTHUR KIPPS, 23, uses a cut-throat RAZOR to shave. His shirt is clean, hair neat, but he has a distracted, distant look.

He wipes his face with a washcloth

From O.S. We hear a soft woman's voice.

FEMALE VOICE  
Hello, angel.

Arthur closes his eyes a moment, finishes wiping his face, then turns slowly, wanting to prolong the moment.

The room is empty. No one but Arthur here.

Behind him is a LADIES' DRESSING TABLE. A brush, comb, hand-mirror, perfume and powder are laid out neatly, along with a dish of SUNFLOWER SEEDS.

Beside the dressing table is a BIRDCAGE. From within, a MYNAH BIRD looks at Arthur, its head cocked.

He moves towards it carefully.

ARTHUR  
(whispering to the bird)  
Again. Say it again.

Silence. Then the bird speaks, in a perfect imitation of Arthur's own voice.

MYNAH BIRD  
(in Arthur's voice)  
Say it again.

Arthur and the bird stare one another out.

MYNAH BIRD (CONT'D)  
(in Arthur's voice)  
Not my voice. Wretched bird.

Arthur shakes his head in bleak amusement and feeds the bird a couple of sunflower seeds.

Arthur turns his back on the bird and busies himself closing a SUITCASE that is lying on the bed nearby.

Now we hear a different voice OS, this time coming from outside the room. It belongs to Arthur's son's NANNY, 50s.

NANNY (O.S.)  
Mr. Kipps?

ARTHUR  
I'll be there in a moment!

Arthur slips on a waistcoat and moves to the NIGHTSTAND. He opens a drawer and brings out a HIP FLASK. He shakes it near his ear, and slips it into his trouser pocket.

From on top of the nightstand he picks up a FOB WATCH. Observant aficionados of Victorian mourning jewelry might note that the fob is woven from STRAWBERRY-BLONDE HAIR.

Arthur clicks open the cover of the watch. On the inside is a portrait of a YOUNG WOMAN with hair the same colour.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)  
Time to go.

He snaps the cover shut, leaves the room.

In silence of the empty room, the Mynah bird speaks again, this time in the same female voice we heard earlier.

MYNAH BIRD  
(in female voice)  
See you later, Angel.

4 INT. ARTHUR'S HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM. DAY. 4

A sheet of paper bearing a child's DRAWING: a stick-figure man waving to a stick-figure child outside a house. Below, an uneven square contains the word "Tuesday".

Over this we hear a child's voice. It belongs to Arthur's son JOSEPH, 3.

JOSEPH  
Do you like it, Daddy?

ARTHUR (O.C.)  
Very much.

Arthur sits in an armchair holding the drawing which, we notice, is bound together with other pictures by a ribbon. Joseph, frail and tiny, perches on the arm of the chair.

Arthur looks up as he hears: Nanny, just now entering the room holding Arthur's COAT. She stops and regards Arthur's smart appearance with genuine surprise. Arthur looks himself up and down.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)  
What?

Nanny shakes her head apologetically -- nothing. Joseph squirms impatiently for attention, pokes the calendar.

JOSEPH  
You didn't look at it properly.

ARTHUR  
Of course I did. Nanny, have you seen this? Joseph made me a calendar.

NANNY  
(winking at Joseph)  
No, sir. Made it all by himself, didn't you?

JOSEPH  
You can cross off the days 'til we're back together.

Arthur leafs through the other three pages... Wednesday and Thursday have just a named box.

ARTHUR

I will.

The final page, Friday, also bears a drawing: a stick-figure man carrying a stick-figure child. Beside them is a large train, clouds of steam billowing from it's engine.

The stick-man's face has a straight line for a mouth, a grave expression in contrast to the child's big smile.

Arthur peers at this, his attention caught now.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Why do I look so sad?

JOSEPH

That's what your face looks like.

ARTHUR

Oh it is, is it?

He scoops Joseph up onto his lap, into his arms and growls mock-crossly, playfully tipping him backwards - an attempt at playful rough-and-tumble that we get the impression doesn't happen very often.

They both laugh. But when the laughter dies, Joseph suddenly looks serious.

JOSEPH

I wish you didn't have to go away from me.

Arthur leans in to whisper to him.

ARTHUR

Me too. But we'll have the whole weekend in the countryside.

(flipping through the calendar)

See... Tomorrow, then Thursday, then we're together again. Not long at all.

(looking at the last drawing)

Which reminds me - your tickets.

NANNY

I... Mr Kipps, may I have a word?

She gestures at Joseph: not with him listening.

ARTHUR

Can you fetch Daddy's hat, please? The brown one?

Joseph trots away obediently. Alone now, Nanny looks grave.

NANNY

Are you sure about this? Joseph travelling in his condition? The doctor said -

ARTHUR

And I suppose the doctor reckons all this smog is just the thing for a bad chest, does he?

NANNY

Sir...

ARTHUR

Getting out of London will do him the power of good. You'll see.

Joseph runs in carrying Arthur's HAT. He is out of breath.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Don't run, darling! Don't run.

Arthur scoops him up and holds him close.

5

**EXT. LONDON STREET. DAY.**

5

The London street is filled with a thick yellow FOG, and the sound of HORNS blowing, DRIVERS and PEDESTRIANS shouting, as people try to negotiate their way through it.

At the open door of his house, Arthur hurriedly grabs his suitcase from Nanny. He looks at his pocket watch -- reacts in dismay. Clearly, he's late.

He hesitates as he looks out into the street. FIGURES loom out of the fog like ghosts, scarves and veils clutched to their faces.

A glowing light approaches, accompanied by the din of HOOVES and WHEELS, as A HANDSOME CAB clatters down the street towards us and fades into view.

Arthur registers this, hesitates a moment -- should he? -- then he hails it.

He looks back to Nanny to see on her face the disapproving expression he was obviously expecting.

ARTHUR

Don't worry - I won't be making a habit of it. I just can't be late. Not today.

She waves away his excuses with good-natured weariness.



BENTLEY

I'm sure you can.

Bentley stands - Arthur follows suit - and hands over an envelope.

BENTLEY (CONT'D)

The keys. And funds to cover your expenses.

(a beat)

I'm hoping that you'll seize this chance to prove your dedication to pursuing a future with this firm.

Arthur is slightly taken aback by this.

ARTHUR

I can't afford to consider a future without it.

BENTLEY

I know these last years have been difficult, Kipps. And I'm aware of your need to fund your son's medical treatment. You have my sympathy. But we cannot afford to carry cargo. And I'm increasingly concerned that cargo is what you have become.

(a beat)

You have an opportunity to prove me wrong. Make use of it.

8 OMITTED 8

9 **EXT. TRAIN. DUSK.** 9

Daylight begins to fade and rain falls lightly as a STEAM TRAIN cuts through the countryside.

10 **INT. TRAIN. DUSK.** 10

Inside, Arthur shares a carriage with a LITTLE GIRL, 4, and her exceptionally pretty uniformed NURSEMAID, 20s.

It's brightly lit in here, cosy.

Arthur holds a NEWSPAPER but doesn't read it, only stares out of the window, his mind wandering.

The child watches him. As if sensing this, Arthur glances over. Smiles vaguely. The little girl beams back.

Arthur pulls a face and she dissolves into giggles.

Arthur raises his newspaper before the Nursemaid notices, then, when she's looking away, lowers it to reveal another funny face. More giggles. Arthur hurriedly hides again.

The Nursemaid speaks playfully to child, but clearly for Arthur's benefit.

NURSEMAID

Are you flirting with the  
handsome man? Wait 'til I tell  
your Mummy and Daddy!

The child bounces, wanting to play more. Arthur complies.

The Nursemaid stares at him, smiling.

Arthur nods back politely and begins to read the newspaper, oblivious to the girl's irritation at his total lack of interest in her.

11

**EXT. COUNTRY STATION. NIGHT.**

11

It's dark, and the rain heavier, as Arthur carries the nursemaid's CASE and his own onto the lonely, windswept platform.

Then he lifts the boy from the train and passes him to her.

NURSEMAID

Thank you.

The child's face lights up as, down the platform, he spots his waiting FATHER and MOTHER. He wriggles from his nurse, runs to them and is happily scooped up in the man's arms.

Arthur watches wistfully as they leave.

Moments later, the train pulls away, the warm glow of the carriage interiors and smiling PASSENGERS within flashing past, then finally gone.

...And Arthur is left entirely alone on the empty platform in the darkness and rain.

Nearby, a CHALK BOARD reads:

Last train for the Northeast: 9 O'Clock.

Rain sluices down over the board, beginning to wash the letters away.

Arthur opens his POCKET WATCH and looks at the time in dismay before closing it again and sitting down on the solitary BENCH here, drawing his coat around him and holding his newspaper ineffectually over his head.



ARTHUR  
Is it...? May I...?  
(barging past)  
Stella?

DOCTOR  
Mr. Kipps.

16 **INT. ARTHUR'S HOUSE - BEDROOM. NIGHT.**

16

Arthur's attention is instantly stolen by the sight of Nanny standing by the door, holding a swaddled BABY.

NANNY  
It's a boy.

Arthur reaches out instinctively, too enraptured to notice her odd expression and tone. Gently, she hands it to him.

The baby stares at Arthur, and Arthur stares back in awe.

ARTHUR  
Hello...

In the bed beyond, Arthur's wife STELLA, 20, is propped against a pillow, her head bowed, long strawberry blonde hair hanging loose and damp with sweat.

She doesn't move.

Arthur looks to the sombre-faced doctor, to nanny, and then back to the bed again. He reacts in queasy horror and now we see what else he has seen, what he failed to see before:

The bottom half of the sheet is drenched in blood.

DOCTOR  
I'm so sorry, Mr Kipps.

Arthur clutches the baby close as the doctor leans Stella back, revealing her lifeless face, and draws the sheet up.

Over this image we hear another piercing SHRIEK...

17 **INT. UNWELCOMING TRAIN. NIGHT.**

17

...The train whistle wakes Arthur from his nightmare.

Arthur wipes the film of sweat from his forehead, shakes himself properly awake to realise --

A man is sitting opposite him now, staring. He is SAMUEL DAILY, 58, ostentatiously well-dressed. Accompanying him is his little dog, SPIDER.

The rest of the carriage is still empty.

Arthur pets the dog.

ARTHUR

Hello, boy.

DAILY

Her name's Spider.

For a while they ride on in silence as, outside, the rain lashes the windows. Daily peers at the file in Arthur's lap.

There's an air of unease in his eyes, in his voice when he speaks.

DAILY (CONT'D)

Alice Drablow.

ARTHUR

I'm her solicitor.

(a beat)

Did you know her?

Daily shrugs. We sense that his now-casual manner is an act requiring some effort.

DAILY

Crythin Gifford's a small place.

(a small, wry smile)

Supposed to sell Eel Marsh House, are you?

Arthur gives him a quizzical look. What did Daily mean by his "good luck with that..." tone?

DAILY (CONT'D)

You'll not find a local buyer.

ARTHUR

Really? Why's that?

Suddenly, Daily looks like he regretted bringing the subject up. And there's a sense of something unspoken in his reply.

DAILY

(shrugging)

It's not like the Drablows were ever planning to come back. Been empty all that time -- anyone wanted it, they'd have bought it by now.

Arthur looks away, stares out of the window. Silence again -- just the rain lashing against the glass and the occasional shriek of the whistle.

DAILY (CONT'D)

Staying at the Gifford Arms?

Arthur nods.

DAILY (CONT'D)  
Then allow me to drop you there  
on my way home.  
(extending his hand)  
Samuel Daily.

18 **EXT. GIFFORD ARMS. NIGHT.**

18

Daily's impressive AUTOMOBILE pulls up outside the Gifford Arms, the inn we saw earlier. Arthur climbs out, wrestling with his suitcase.

Daily hands Arthur a BUSINESS CARD. He shouts to be heard over the rain.

DAILY  
Why don't you join my wife and I  
for supper tomorrow? Don't get to  
see many new faces. We'd welcome  
the company. Besides --  
(re: the inn, disparaging)  
You don't want to eat here.

Arthur opens his mouth to protest, but it's too late - Daily has slammed the car door closed. He pulls away.

19 **INT. GIFFORD ARMS - ENTRANCE HALL. NIGHT.**

19

The inn-keeper, MR FISHER, late 30s, is at the desk. Arthur approaches.

ARTHUR  
Kipps. Arthur Kipps. I have a  
room booked until Sunday.

Fisher opens a LEDGER and runs his finger down a page. He shakes his head.

FISHER  
No. Not finding a booking. Let's  
see...  
(closing the ledger)  
I'm sorry Mr Kipps, it seems  
we're packed to the rafters.

Arthur looks at him, puzzled. O.S., we hear muted conversation from the bar, three or four people at most.

ARTHUR  
But... my offices telegraphed  
ahead and we were assured -

The inn-keepers wife - MRS FISHER, mid 30s - enters.

MRS FISHER  
Evening sir!

FISHER  
I was just telling this gentleman  
that we have no room at all.

She looks confused, then gestures to the bar with a weary,  
resigned look.

MRS FISHER  
Those loafers too soused to walk  
home again?  
(to Arthur)  
Well we can't have you out on the  
streets now, can we?  
(to Mr Fisher)  
We must have something. Just for  
tonight?

Fisher looks at her with disdain.

FISHER  
But we don't.  
(pointed, rhetorical)  
Unless you want to put him in the  
attic.

MRS FISHER  
(calling his bluff)  
Good idea.

She leads Arthur towards the stairs, her husband glaring.

20 INT. GIFFORD ARMS - UPPER HALL. NIGHT.

20

Arthur follows Mrs Fisher down the narrow hall.

ARTHUR  
...Actually I was hoping to stay  
for the weekend -- my son and his  
nanny are travelling up to join  
me.

MRS FISHER  
I see... That's... If a holiday's  
what you're after, sir, you'd  
honestly be better off further  
inland. Gets awfully cold, what  
with the frets. The sea mists.

At the end of the hall is a BIRDCAGE, a SHAWL thrown over  
it for the night. Arthur stops beside it.

We may notice, although Arthur doesn't, that there is a  
PHOTOGRAPH on the wall here: Mr and Mrs Fisher with their  
daughters, the girls from the ill-fated tea party.

Arthur looks at the covered birdcage.

MRS FISHER (CONT'D)  
Mynah bird. Hope you don't mind  
it. Lot of folk find them  
unsettling. The mimicry and all.

ARTHUR  
No, no. I like them well enough.  
My wife had one.

MRS FISHER  
What happened to it?

ARTHUR  
Nothing.

Mrs Fisher realises what he means. She looks away.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)  
They're a fine bird.

MRS FISHER  
They are. Nice to have someone to  
talk to.

Now it's Arthur's turn to read the upspoken, feel awkward.  
But in the silence, there's a moment of connection.

MRS FISHER (CONT'D)  
It's this way.

Arthur follows her up a tiny, narrow staircase towards a  
tiny landing, a single door.

MRS FISHER (CONT'D)  
How old is your son?

ARTHUR  
Three.

Mrs Fisher fumbles with a large bunch of KEYS; struggles to  
unlock the door and to fight a wave of emotion.

MRS FISHER  
Lovely age.  
(a beat)  
I'm afraid this room doesn't get  
used very often. It'll do for the  
night though, eh?

Arthur sits on a bed - there are three in here - and  
surveys the room.

It's undoubtedly the one we saw the three little girls in at the beginning, but many years have since passed. It's bare now, the curtains faded and tattered, the small bedsteads rusted, paint peeling from the walls.

In the corner is a pile of items covered by dusty SHEETS.

Arthur opens his case and gets out Joseph's calendar and his hip flask.

He takes a long drink while staring at the calendar.

He takes a pen from his pocket and draws a mark through the box marked "Tuesday". Then he rolls up the calendar and tucks it into the inside pocket of his COAT, which is hanging over the back of a nearby chair.

Finally, he takes his fob watch from his trouser pocket and lays it carefully on the night stand.

His fingertips linger on the watch.

ARTHUR

Goodnight.

He lies back on the bed, staring ahead. Thinking.

The white sheets covering the pile of hidden items are bright in the dim light of the bedroom. Intriguing, unsettling.

Curiosity piqued, Arthur, gets up and pulls off a sheet... to be greeted by an alarming old ROCKING HORSE, the paint peeling unpleasantly from its grimacing face.

Beside it is a box of long-neglected DOLLS and TOYS.

Looking again at the disturbing face of the rocking-horse, Arthur throws the sheet back over it and returns to the bed.

22

**EXT. VILLAGE STREET. DAY**

22

Arthur walks up the street. It's deserted, aside from some children in a front garden across the road.

They are VICTORIA HARDY, 7 and her brothers TOM, 8, and CHARLIE, 5. They stare curiously at Arthur through the gaps in their picket fence.

Behind them, their father GERALD HARDY, 30s, stares equally curiously through a front window.

Arthur smiles at the children.

They don't smile back.

Seconds later, Gerald Hardy emerges from indoors, fixing Arthur with a suspicious look. He shouts across the road.

Protectively, he pulls his children away from the fence.

HARDY

Yes? Can I help you?

ARTHUR

I'm looking for Mr Jerome?

HARDY

(nodding up the street)  
Next to the post-office.

22A **INT. JEROME'S OFFICE. DAY.**

22A

Arthur enters. There's nobody here.

ARTHUR

Hello?

No response... beside a faint SHUFFLING noise from beneath the floorboards.

Arthur's eyes move to a stairwell at the back of the room that appears to lead down to a CELLAR. The door is open. Arthur approaches slowly, looks down to see:

MRS JEROME, 30s, emerging from the cellar, looking anxious.

From outside, the sound of a PONY AND TRAP approaching.

MRS JEROME

Mr Kipps?

ARTHUR

Yes?

Mrs Jerome locks and bolts the cellar door behind her and begins to ascend the stairs.

MRS JEROME

My husband went to meet you at  
the Gifford Arms.

Beneath their feet, the shuffling noise continues. They both hear it. Mrs Jerome looks stressed. But both of them are soon diverted when --

The door to the street opens and MR JEROME, 40s, enters, fixing Arthur with a cold look.

JEROME

I made it clear to your firm that  
there was no need for you to make  
the journey.

Arthur waves away what he takes to be an apology.

ARTHUR

It was only a few minutes walk.

JEROME

The journey to Crythin Gifford, Mr Kipps. We could have sent all the relevant documents to London.

Arthur is lost for words. Jerome thrusts a FILE at him.

JEROME (CONT'D)

In any event, you'll find everything you need in here, except the deeds to the house. Couldn't lay my hands on them, I'm afraid. I'll send them on when they turn up. Mr. Fisher tells me you're leaving today.

ARTHUR

No, no. Not until I've taken care of Mrs Drablow's paperwork.

Jerome shakes his head, anxious. Points to the file.

JEROME

All in there. Like I said.

ARTHUR

No -- at the house. I'm told there's quite a substantial amount of it. I expect to be here until Friday at least.

Jerome's controlled facade slips even further, revealing an unmistakable sweaty anxiety.

JEROME

Not possible. The Gifford Arms is fully booked. For the week.

ARTHUR

(a frustrated sigh)

I'm going to have to contact my office. Do you have a telephone?

FISHER

Not even your friend Mr Daily has a telephone, sir. You'll not find one in Crythin Gifford.

ARTHUR

Fine. I'll send a telegram.

Arthur turns to leave. Jerome falls into step beside him.

JEROME

Post office is closed on a  
Wednesday morning.

(a beat)

The London train leaves in half an  
hour. My colleague Keckwick is  
waiting outside with your luggage.

At the entrance, Mr Jerome opens the door for Arthur and  
politely gestures for him to leave. Arthur steps out,  
confused and annoyed.

JEROME (CONT'D)

Pleasure to meet you, Mr. Kipps.

And with that, Jerome closes the door on him.

23 OMITTED 23

24 EXT. JEROME'S OFFICE. DAY. 24

Arthur stands before the closed door, speechless.

Not far from the entrance, a PONY AND TRAP is waiting.  
Sitting atop it is KECKWICK, 42, a weather-beaten man in  
threadbare country clothes.

Arthur's suitcase is on the back of the trap.

Fighting his anger, Arthur climbs up beside Keckwick.  
Arthur glances back at the closed door to Jerome's office.

ARTHUR

Mr Keckwick? Change of plans. I'm  
not catching the train. I need to  
get to Eel Marsh House.

KECKWICK

Jerome paid me to take you to the  
station.

Arthur fishes in his pocket and produces the envelope  
Bentley gave him. He offers Keckwick a COIN from it.

Keckwick stares at it, unimpressed, and gestures to the  
envelope.

KECKWICK (CONT'D)

Make it six and I'll think about  
it.

ARTHUR

Six shillings?

KECKWICK

You'll not find anyone else willing  
to take you.

Keckwick's face tells us that he's serious. Arthur digs  
resentfully into the envelope and hands over the cash.

25 **EXT. CRYTHIN GIFFORD. DAY.**

25

Arthur and Keckwick ride silently through the town.  
VILLAGERS stop to stare at Arthur as the trap passes. There  
are many weathered old faces here, giving Arthur - and us -  
an uneasy sense of rural 'otherness'.

As we pass one small cottage, Arthur glances up to notice A  
CHILD looking mournfully out of an upper window.

But he attaches no significance to this, and looks away  
again, his attention drawn now a bag of ROTTING APPLES that  
sits between him and Keckwick, attracting flies.

ARTHUR

Not planning to eat those, are  
you?

KECKWICK

For the pony.

They ride on in silence.

26 **EXT. MARSHES. DAY**

26

At the end of a road, the pony trap arrives at the start of  
a causeway - a narrow path snaking across an incredible  
vista of shining marshland, with EEL MARSH HOUSE, perched  
on it's little island, lying at it's distant end.

Arthur looks around in awe.

Keckwick pulls hard on the pony's reins, barks a cautionary  
noise of command as it veers a little off the pathway.

Arthur steadies himself.

ARTHUR

Bet these marshes can be  
treacherous.

Keckwick fixes Arthur with a look, then picks up one of his  
moldy apples and tosses it onto the apparently solid ground  
beside the causeway.

Within seconds, it has been sucked down, swallowed. Gone  
without a trace. And likewise Arthur's amusement.

KECKWICK

Ask them what they reckon.

He points ahead to where a TALL WOODEN CROSS is erected in the marsh, a few feet from the causeway.

Silence reigns once again as they ride on, broken only by the eerie WHOOPS of the birds circling overhead.

27

**EXT. EEL MARSH ISLAND. DAY.**

27

Keckwick halts the trap at the beginning of the driveway leading up to Eel Marsh house. Arthur looks at him, puzzled, and nods towards the house.

But Keckwick doesn't move. He points up toward the house.

KECKWICK

Storehouse is to the East by the kitchen garden. Should still be some oil in there for the lamps.

ARTHUR

I didn't realise you knew the house so well Mr Keckwick.

KECKWICK

My father worked here all his life.

ARTHUR

Perhaps you could show me around?

Keckwick shakes his head.

KECKWICK

Need to get back to the mainland before the tide comes in, else I'll be stuck here for the day. It'll be out again by five, I'll come back for you then.

ARTHUR

The causeway won't be passable again until five?

KECKWICK

Not unless you like swimming.

(off his look)

Still have plenty of time to get to the station for the late train.

Arthur stares at Keckwick, realises that he really isn't going to go any closer, and climbs off the trap, unable to keep from laughing at the absurdity of the string of obstructions he is meeting.

28 EXT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - GROUNDS. DAY. 28

The sound of the pony and trap recedes further and further as Arthur walks up the drive, carrying his bag. He notes, to the East, a crumbling FAMILY GRAVEYARD.

But his attention is drawn away again by the imposing sight of EEL MARSH HOUSE itself looming up ahead of him. Vast, grey and magnificent against the open sky and marshland.

29 EXT. EEL MARSH HOUSE. DAY. 29

Silence now, but for the birds. Arthur reaches in his pocket for key. As he searches, he notices:

A few small, MUDDY HANDPRINTS low down on the front door. Child-sized, child-height.

Arthur lets himself in.

30 INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - ENTRANCE LOBBY. DAY. 30

A dark entrance hall. Arthur inches along the wall until he finds a LAMP. He fumbles with it, but it doesn't light.

He opens the first door he finds.

31 INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM. DAY. 31

Faint rectangles of daylight glow around the shuttered windows, but still we can't make out much detail in here.

Arthur moves to the closest window, tries to open the shutters, but they're wedged fast, warped with age.

The other set of shutters is also stuck firmly closed.

Arthur tries a nearby WALL LAMP. Nothing.

Something - it sounds like a pile of papers - falls to the floor as Arthur fumbles with a DESK-LAMP. This too fails.

32 EXT. EEL MARSH HOUSE. DAY. 32

Arthur walks around the East side of the house, past a barren KITCHEN-GARDEN...

33 EXT. STOREHOUSE. DAY. 33

Arthur arrives at the STOREHOUSE that Keckwick mentioned.



- 38      INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - ENTRANCE LOBBY. DAY.      38
- Arthur closes the door behind him, hesitates a moment, then bolts it shut.
- 39      INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM. DAY.      39
- Canister of oil in hand, Arthur stumbles into the darkened room.
- We may make out a slight tremble in Arthur's hand as he uses the canister of oil to fill the desk lamp.
- He lights it...
- And surveys the now-illuminated room, an untidy testament to Mrs Drablow's unstable mental state. The entire surface of the desk is covered with LETTERS and DOCUMENTS.
- He picks up a POKER from the fireplace and uses it to crow-bar open the stuck window shutter.
- Light streams in. Arthur looks around and sees now --
- In fact, every surface in the room is covered is dusty stacks of PAPERS. Bills, receipts, letters, pamphlets...
- This is a thousand times worse than Arthur imagined.
- 39A      INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - STUDY. DAY.      39A
- Another room. Arthur enters, looks around. His face falls.
- The shutters are open in here and all around the room we can plainly see: more untidy piles of PAPERWORK.
- Arthur sifts through a few items on the desk.
- Bank statements, estimates, prescriptions, postcards...
- Arthur gathers up a large armful, as many as he can carry, and leaves the room.
- 39B      INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM. DAY.      39B
- Arthur places a pile of papers on a large table.
- 39C      INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL. DAY.      39C
- Arthur exits another room with another armful of papers.

39D

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM. DAY.**

39D

The large table is now covered in stacks of paperwork. Arthur sets down the ones he is carrying.

He looks around the room, taking in the enormity of the task ahead. Overwhelmed. Utterly dismayed.

Among some of the debris nearby he notices:

A DECANTER of brandy and TWO GLASSES, thick with dust.

40

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - KITCHEN. DAY.**

40

DIRTY WATER chokes in noisy spurts from a faucet into a long-unused SINK. Somewhere distant, in the walls of the house, pipes THUMP and RATTLE in complaint.

Arthur, pumping the handle, sighs and abandons his efforts. The kitchen is bleak, under three decades of dust. On the counter is the decanter and a glass from the drawing room.

Arthur grabs an old DISHCLOTH and beats it on the counter, sending thick clouds of DUST dancing in the shafts of light that stream through the grimy windows.

He wipes the glass, pours a large brandy and drains it.

41

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - STAIRCASE. DAY.**

41

Arthur climbs the stairs. The walls here are dotted with PORTRAITS and PHOTOGRAPHS. He glances at them as he walks.

A formal portrait of MR AND MRS DRABLOW AND THEIR SON, 6.

A formal portrait of THE SON, alone.

A framed formal photograph of the three DRABLWS standing outside Eel Marsh House.

42

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - UPPER HALLWAY. DAY.**

42

Arthur walks the upper hallway, trying each door in turn. The first on his left reveals a EMPTY ROOM, devoid of furniture or window-dressings. And, most importantly, paperwork.

He breathes a sigh of relief, opens the next door along. Behind it:

A JUNK ROOM. Filled with TRUNKS, BOXES... And more DOCUMENTS.

Arthur's heart sinks. He doesn't even bother to enter for now, instead continuing down the hallway on his inspection, his steps growing increasingly heavy.

The third door, at the very end of the hallway, is firmly locked shut.

Arthur wrestles with the handle for a while, then eventually gives up trying to open it.

He returns down the other side of the hall.

The first door reveals a BOX ROOM - perhaps once a small bedroom for guests or staff. Just a bed, a closet and a built-in window seat. Mercifully free of junk, or paperwork.

The curtains are closed. Shafts of light slant in from above through exposed slats where a section of the roof has succumbed to the elements. He enters.

43

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - BOX ROOM. DAY.**

43

Arthur opens the curtains... the window affords a clear view down to the marshes beyond.

Arthur kneels on the window seat and peers out, scanning the landscape. He sees nothing untoward, but tenses a little when he hears a faint SCRABBLING noise nearby.

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - UPPER HALLWAY. DAY.**

Arthur opens the door to the next room. It's a small BATHROOM. The window affording the same view as the Box Room.

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - BATHROOM. DAY.**

As Arthur steps in, he hears the noise again. He freezes.

Nothing. Then the noise again. Arthur presses his ear to the wall dividing this room from the not-yet-investigated room next door.

A long pause, then the noise. It's definitely in there.

44

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - UPPER HALLWAY. DAY.**

44

Outside the closed door to the next room, Arthur gathers himself and turns the handle. The door fails to open, but this time the noise from within is not so much a scrabbling as a sudden THUMP. Arthur jumps back.

Gingerly, he turns the KEY that is in the lock beneath the handle. Almost immediately, another THUMP.

Arthur opens the door... to discover a BEDROOM. The curtains drawn. Dark, but for the same shafts of light through the ruined roof. And silent. He steps in.

45

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - BEDROOM. DAY.**

45

The shafts of daylight shine onto a dresser crowded with medicinal-looking BOTTLES. Dimly, we can also see a bureau that is covered with PAPERS.

Arthur stands very still, eyes darting around the room. The SCRABBLING noise is louder now, frantic, low to the ground.

Arthur scans the ill-lit floor.

A noise - though not the same noise as the one he heard before, this time a HIGH-PITCHED SQUEALING - leads Arthur deeper into the room, to the FIREPLACE where he finds:

A NEST filled with BABY BIRDS. Their beaks are wide open in the hope of receiving food. Eight wide, dark, gaping holes, out of proportion with their tiny bodies.

Arthur exhales, relieved.

Then he notices: one RUNTISH BABY BIRD has fallen out of the nest and is writhing on the hearthstone. It's both pitiful and creepy in its naked vulnerability.

Arthur bends down and replaces it in the nest.

Suddenly, an almighty FLURRY - this is the noise he heard before - and a BIRD flies past Arthur, THUMPING into the wall behind him. It drops to the ground, stunned.

Arthur reacts, shocked but - again - relieved. He looks up to the gaping ceiling, where the bird must have got in, then back at the bird itself.

Arthur moves to the window, where he pulls open the curtains...

Arthur steps back in alarm.

46

**EXT. EEL-MARSH HOUSE - GROUNDS. DAY.**

46

Arthur's distant, elevated POV, but still we plainly see:

In the graveyard, the WOMAN IN BLACK. Standing perfectly still. Dressed in the formal funeral garb of the mid-1800s, her bonnet and mourning veil concealing her face in a way that makes us nervous as to what might be under there.

Arthur stares, transfixed, until suddenly --

A loud THUMP as the bird flies at the window beside him. It falls to the ground by his feet, dazed.

Watching the bird, Arthur grasps the handles of the sash window and, with some effort, wrestles it open.

When he looks out again, the Woman in Black has gone.

The baby birds scream for food.

On the floor, the bird stands frozen in fear.

Distractedly, as he moves to leave, Arthur pokes it with his toe. He points to the window.

ARTHUR

You've got mouths to feed. Go.

47-48 OMITTED 47-48

49 **EXT. EEL MARSH HOUSE. DAY.** 49

Arthur bursts out into the daylight. A light MIST has begun to descend.

50 **EXT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - GROUNDS. DAY.** 50

Arthur heads down the drive, looking towards the graveyard, eyes searching for any sign of the woman he just saw.

She could be concealed by the mist, but for all that we - and Arthur - can tell, there's no one there.

Suddenly the silence is interrupted by the unmistakable sound, in the far distance, of A PONY AND TRAP.

Arthur checks his pocket watch. It's ten to five.

Arthur squints down towards the marshes, but the mist is growing heavier, the bottom of the driveway and the marshes barely visible.

As Arthur walks further down the drive, the steady rhythm of hooves and wheels is suddenly replaced by a CLATTERING.

Arthur stops in his tracks. This doesn't sound good at all.

A PONY whinnies in panic.

Arthur begins to sprint through the mist, towards the catastrophic sounds coming from the marsh.

A MAN cries out.

ARTHUR

Keckwick?

Now, what sounds like a child's SCREAM. And a woman's voice:

WOMAN (O.S.)

Keckwick!!

Horrified, Arthur runs blindly down the driveway into the white nothingness ahead, towards the anguished cries.

51

**EXT. NINE LIVES CAUSEWAY. DAY.**

51

The mist seems to be getting thicker still, and Arthur begins to move ahead a little more gingerly.

The mainland is entirely obscured from view. The only visible landmark is the faint, indistinct outline of the wooden cross out in the marsh.

Looking down, Arthur notes with dismay that he can no longer see the ground beneath him.

Reluctantly he looks back... only to find that the mist is all around now: he can see nothing in any direction.

The noise ahead - clattering, whinnying, screams, are horribly loud now. Treading carefully, Arthur steels himself and moves through the whiteness towards it...

ARTHUR

Keckwick!

...Panicking, Arthur finds his shoe mired the marsh. He pulls himself free and stumbles back onto the causeway. Through the shifting mist, he glimpses fragments of a horrific scene:

Wheels sink deep into the marsh.

A pony bares its teeth as it struggles.

Skirts billow as a woman tries to climb to safety.

CHILD (O.S.)

Mummy!

Arthur hears a loud THUMP. Like someone landing heavily on the causeway nearby.

We hear a child's piercing scream.

Arthur scrambles onward. He can no longer make out anything through the mist, but we can hear a woman SOBBING. And whispering.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Sorry... I'm so sorry...

But now her whispers are drowned out, lost in a louder noise: a ghastly SUCKING NOISE.

Then silence.

Arthur stops, chilled to the core.

He inches ahead in the whiteness, silence. Until out of the mist looms:

KECKWICK. On foot. Alive and well. Arthur bumps right into him.

52-54 OMITTED 52-54

55 EXT. POLICE STATION. DAY. 55

A small rural police station.

56 INT. POLICE STATION. DAY. 56

Arthur stands across a counter from an old policeman, P.C. ROBERT COLLINS, 60, who fills in a form very, very slowly, his calm demeanor providing stark contrast to Arthur's state of agitation.

PC COLLINS

No one's used Nine Lives Causeway for years, sir. No one visits Eel Marsh House - it's empty.

ARTHUR

I know what I heard, Constable.

PC COLLINS

But your companion heard nothing.

ARTHUR

So he said.

PC COLLINS

Well, at any rate, we can't get anyone out there until this fret lifts. As Mr Keckwick explained to you, causeway's not safe for a cart in a fret. Barely safe on foot.

ARTHUR

I know! For god's sake --

PC COLLINS

Leave it with me, we'll send someone.

ARTHUR

When?

Collins raises his hand, indicating for Arthur to wait. He writes some more, painfully slowly, until - from somewhere in a back room - a BELL rings. He downs his pen.

PC COLLINS

Excuse me one moment, sir.

Arthur can't hide his frustration as, very slowly, Collins shuffles away into a back room.

Just the sound of a clock TICKING now, as Arthur waits.

Momentarily, the front door opens to reveal Tom Hardy. The boy looks to the empty desk, then at Arthur.

ARTHUR

He'll be back in just a moment, I think. Is everything alright?

The boy shakes his head. With a growing sense of dread, Arthur looks behind the boy to see that, hanging back a few feet behind him are the younger boy, Charlie, and their sister Victoria. The girl looks horribly ill.

Arthur leaps to his feet.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

What happened?

Charlie and Victoria step in silently. The little girl is deathly pale and stares straight at Arthur; a blank, glazed, wide-eyed stare. None of the children speak.

Tom points at his sister.

The girl's eyes stay locked onto Arthur's as he drops to his knees and takes her gently by the arms.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

What's the matter?

(off her silence)

What's your name? Can you tell me your name?

TOM

Her name's Victoria Hardy.

ARTHUR

Can you tell me what's wrong, Victoria? Did something bad happen?

TOM

She drank some lye. Our mam was out.

CHARLIE

It's wash day.

ARTHUR

Lye? Oh god...

(shouting)

Constable!

TOM

Is she going to die?

ARTHUR

Constable!

CHARLIE

My cat died. He went to heaven.

ARTHUR

We need a doctor!

(softly, to Victoria)

It's alright, darling. It's going to be alright.

Eyes still fixed on Arthur, her face remaining expressionless, the little girl's jaw falls slack, and a stream of THICK, BLOODY VOMIT spills from her mouth and spatters down her front and onto the floor.

57

**EXT. CRYTHIN GIFFORD. DAY.**

57

Arthur sits on a low wall, shell-shocked.

Some distance away, up the street, we can see the police station. And outside it, a small CROWD that has formed.

Arthur watches numbly as, a woman, MRS HARDY, stumbles out of the police station, barely able to stand, supported by a DOCTOR and A FEMALE NEIGHBOUR.

Moments later, Gerald Hardy follows. He is carrying his daughter's BODY. Wrapped in a blanket.

The grief of these parents is almost unbearable to watch.

Arthur looks away, draws his flask from his inside pocket and goes to drink from it, not caring who sees, only to find that it's empty.

58

**INT. GIFFORD ARMS - ENTRANCE HALL. DAY.**

58

The entrance hall is deserted.

ARTHUR

Hello?

Receiving no reply, he walks through to the bar room.

59 INT. GIFFORD ARMS - PUBLIC ROOM. DAY. 59

The bar room is deserted, too. Not a soul here.

ARTHUR

Hello?

In the empty silence, Arthur can now hear a sound coming from upstairs. It's faint, but sounds distinctly like a woman sobbing.

60 INT. GIFFORD ARMS - ENTRANCE HALL. DAY. 60

Arthur wanders uneasily back into the entrance hall. The sound of sobbing is louder here, coming from upstairs.

ARTHUR

Mrs Fisher?

61 INT. GIFFORD ARMS - UPPER HALL. DAY. 61

Arthur makes his way down the hall, towards the sound...

It is a moment before he realises that it is coming from the birdcage.

Grimly fascinated, he stares at the mynah bird within. Its beak is open, utterly human-sounding sobs coming from it.

Now for the first time Arthur notices the family photograph on the wall here. The sobbing continues as he stares at it.

MRS FISHER

Mr Kipps?

Arthur turns, a little startled, to see Mrs Fisher emerging from a nearby bedroom, carrying a pile of folded sheets.

The bird continues its horrible imitation of her crying.

There's nothing either of them can say.

62 INT. GIFFORD ARMS - PUBLIC ROOM. DAY. 62

Mrs Fisher pours Arthur a large brandy.

MRS FISHER

Say when.

He stares at her. The glass fills. Still he says nothing. She stares back, still pouring. Her look says she understands.

She walks back to the bar, replaces the bottle and begins to busy herself wiping dust from the other bottles.

The cheerful demeanor she displayed when we and Arthur met her first is a distant memory. She seems troubled.

MRS FISHER (CONT'D)

There was nothing you could have done, you know.

He throws her a look. Oh really? It's one she recognizes.

MRS FISHER (CONT'D)

If you hadn't done this or that. Or been distracted. If the events of the day had shifted by only a minute. Everything would be different... Trust me, Mr Kipps, thinking that way can drive you to madness.

He drains his glass dry and tips it in her direction.

ARTHUR

Or drink. Join me for one?

MRS FISHER

It's getting late. You'll miss the London train.

ARTHUR

I still have work to do here.

MRS FISHER

My husband will be back soon.

Behind the bar, Mrs Fisher stands stock still. She's not going to be serving any more drinks. Arthur shakes his head in amused resignation and stands to put on his coat.

ARTHUR

I've never met a publican so hell-bent on avoiding custom.

MRS FISHER

He means well, I assure you.

Arthur smiles wistfully at her as he places a handful of coins on the bar and turns to leave. He is surprised when Mrs Fisher catches his arm, a little too tightly.

MRS FISHER (CONT'D)

Mr Kipps, Sir... You said you have a son?

ARTHUR

Yes...

MRS FISHER

Go home to him. Cherish him.

Arthur is taken aback by her odd change of mood, this strange statement. He wrests his arm from her grip.

ARTHUR

Believe me, Mrs Fisher, I wouldn't be here if it weren't for the fact that I love my son.

63 OMITTED 63

64 **EXT. CRYTHIN GIFFORD CHURCHYARD. DAY.** 64

Arthur walks at a brisk pace through the churchyard, past row upon row of GRAVES, many with recently-placed FLOWERS. He pays them no mind until he notices:

On one is a weather-beaten TEDDY BEAR. Threadbare and bleached silvery grey by years in the elements.

Arthur pauses, overcome with sadness. Then he walks on, now uneasily noticing details on the other plots he passes.

One reads: THOMAS BROWN May 25th 1861 - May 23rd 1872. The headstone bears the carved image of a lamb.

On the next grave, a shrivelled DAISY CHAIN is draped over the headstone.

On the next, a sleeping CHERUB STATUE and the inscription: "Taken from us too young"

The one next to that, someone has left a small WOODEN TOY TRAIN.

Though we put no emphasis on this, the observant among us may note that these last three graves bear the same date of death: May 23rd 1872.

Unsettled, Arthur checks his watch and picks up his pace.

65 **EXT. PICTURESQUE LANE. DUSK.** 65

Arthur stops at a set of wrought iron GATES.

Behind them is a sweeping drive, leading up to a MANOR HOUSE. Arthur opens the gates and sets off up the drive.

66 **EXT. DAILY'S HOUSE - GROUNDS. DUSK.** 66

Arthur is halfway to the house when Spider the dog bounds up to him.

ARTHUR

Spider! Hello girl.

Moments later, Daily emerges from an avenue of trees. Arthur calls out as he approaches.

DAILY

I was just on my way back. Just bidding my son Nicholas a good night.

The two begin to walk together, Spider following behind.

ARTHUR

Lives on the estate, does he?

Daily smiles ruefully and gestures beyond the trees. Arthur looks back to see that the end of the avenue lies a small white MAUSOLEUM.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

My condolences, Mr Daily.

DAILY

Please: call me Sam. And no need for condolences. It was a long while ago.

(re: the mausoleum)

Designed it myself. Just for him.

ARTHUR

It's beautiful.

DAILY

There's a place in there ready for me. And my wife. So one day we can all be together again.

Arthur smiles awkwardly, unsure what to say. They are close to the front entrance of the house now, but Daily stops.

DAILY (CONT'D)

May I ask you a favour, Mr. Kipps?

ARTHUR

Arthur.

DAILY

Arthur. I heard about the girl in the village. My wife... doesn't know. It'd be best if you could avoid the subject... Indeed the subject of children in general, if at all possible.

Before Arthur can speak, the door is opened by a BUTLER.

MRS DAILY, 58, appears behind the Butler, grinning broadly.

MRS DAILY

Mr Kipps! I've been so looking forward to meeting you!

ARTHUR

The pleasure's all mine.

The butler helps Arthur out of his coat.

Mrs Daily reacts, a little startled.

Arthur looks down to realise: he's looking pretty dishevelled. Mud on his trousers from his stumble on the causeway. Tiny spatters of Victoria Hardy's blood on his white shirt. He rearranges his jacket to cover them up.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

I... I do apologise for not changing. I seem to have found myself without a room.

MRS DAILY

Well then you must stay here, mustn't he, Samuel?

DAILY

Aye. Come on. Let me get you something to drink.

Daily steers Arthur towards the drawing-room.

MRS DAILY

Oh but first you must meet the twins!

(calling up the stairs)

Sarah! Emily!

DAILY

My dear, I'm sure Mr. Kipps doesn't -

He tails off as we hear a SCAMPING noise on the stairs, and two LITTLE DOGS bound down into the hall. Both wear immaculate little dresses and bonnets, with white mittens on their fore-paws, and patent leather booties on their hind ones.

The overall effect falls somewhere on the wrong side of the line between comical and disturbing, and Arthur tries to hide his discomfort.

MRS DAILY

Now now girls, what have I said about running about?

ARTHUR

What a... charming pair.

Mrs Daily scoops up one dog in either arm, cradling them on their backs, beaming with pride.

MRS DAILY

(to the dogs)

Say hello to Mr Kipps.

Arthur nods awkwardly. Mr Daily gives his wife a sharply disapproving look, which she ignores.

68

**INT. DAILY'S DINING ROOM. NIGHT.**

68

Arthur and the Dailys follow the Butler into the formal-looking room, but anger floods Mr Daily's face as he sees:

Two additional places - with TINY CHINA PLATES - have been set at the table before two infants' HIGH CHAIRS.

DAILY

(to butler, testy)

We have a guest, Archer. The...  
twins won't be dining with us  
this evening.

The Butler moves swiftly to begin clearing the tiny plates.

MRS DAILY

But, Samuel!

ARTHUR

(to Daily)

Truly, it makes no odds to me.

Samuel sighs and nods tersely to the Butler, who replaces the plates as Daily and Arthur take their seats.

Mrs Daily places the dogs in the high chairs and ties BIBS around their necks before sitting down in between them.

TWO MAIDS step in and serve the first course.

Mrs Daily begins to feed one of the dogs with a TEASPOON.

MRS DAILY

Are you married, Mr Kipps?

Before Arthur has a chance to reply, Mrs Daily looks sharply to her husband, who is looking away, stony-faced, feeding a table-scrap to Spider, who sits at his feet.

MRS DAILY (CONT'D)

SAMUEL! I have TOLD you not to  
feed that animal at the table!  
(MORE)

MRS DAILY (CONT'D)  
(brightly, to Arthur)  
Any children?

ARTHUR  
(avoiding Daily's eye)  
A son.

MRS DAILY  
Glad to hear it. You don't want  
to end up like this poor sap.  
Wealthiest man in the county, and  
no one to leave it all to. The  
good Lord's little joke.  
(a beat)  
Did he tell you about Nicholas?

DAILY  
Elizabeth...

MRS DAILY  
That's him.

She points across the room to a portrait on the wall. A rather tacky, chocolate-box number featuring a little blonde boy wearing a sailor suit in a pastoral setting, rendered slightly creepy by the presence of a heavenly "doorway" of bright white light near him, obscuring much of the sky.

Arthur looks at it uncomfortably.

ARTHUR  
A... handsome portrait.

MRS DAILY  
I painted it myself. I love to  
paint and sketch.

ARTHUR  
Well, it's excellent. You're -

MRS DAILY  
Nicholas loved to sketch, too.  
(a beat)  
He still does.

DAILY  
Elizabeth...

MRS DAILY  
(to Arthur)  
Nicholas wants to draw a picture  
for you right now.

DAILY  
Elizabeth, no!

Arthur looks at Daily in desperate confusion, then back to Mrs Daily... Whose eyes roll back into her head as she begins to have some kind of seizure. Her arms flail, and she knocks her plate to the ground. Her little dogs BARK.

Daily leaps up and runs from the room leaving Arthur alone.

Arthur watches in mute distress as Mrs Daily blindly grabs for her STEAK KNIFE. A beat, then she begins frantically to carve into the surface of the table.

All the while, the two dressed-up dogs bark in their highchairs.

Momentarily, Daily returns with the maid, who is carrying a bottle of LAUDANUM. The two struggle to subdue Mrs Daily and administer it. She fights them, still stabbing at the table until the knife is eventually wrested from her grip.

MRS DAILY

No! Nicholas hasn't finished!

Finally, the medicine administered, she falls silent. The dogs do, too. The maid loosens Mrs Daily's collar as Mr Daily stands up to leave the table. He gestures for Arthur to follow him.

ARTHUR

Is she going to be alright?

DAILY

Aye.

69

**INT. DAILY'S STUDY. NIGHT.**

69

The men sit by the fire drinking. On the table by Daily are a number of family PHOTOGRAPHS, mostly featuring his son.

DAILY

I'm very sorry, Arthur. I thought some youthful company might do her good.

ARTHUR

Please, think nothing of it.

DAILY

If she'd only take her medication... But she believes it's our son, using her to communicate. I take it you're not one for all this fashionable spiritualist claptrap?

ARTHUR

Tried it once. My wife wasn't in the habit of ringing bells and wobbling tables when she was alive, so...

DAILY

Forgive me, I didn't... Bloody charlatans. Preying on those most in need. Makes my blood boil.

ARTHUR

Well... It's good to meet a fellow sceptic.

DAILY

Likewise. They're in short supply round these parts. As you've no doubt found out for yourself.  
(off Arthur's blank look)  
You mean they let you go to Eel Marsh House without any nonsense?

Arthur's mind begins to race.

ARTHUR

What do you... What sort of nonsense?

But Daily isn't going to be drawn. He waves the subject away.

DAILY

You know... Country ghost stories. Glad they had the sense to realise a Londoner like yourself wouldn't abide them. I'm the same. Can't stand that rot.

(a beat)

You and your wife, me and Nicholas... we will be together again. When you die, you go up there. You don't stay down here.

ARTHUR

I'd like to believe that.

DAILY

I have to. Else how would I get out of bed.

INT. DAILY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM. NIGHT.

On the wall in this guest bedroom is another painting, presumably by Mrs Daily. A beach landscape featuring four little boys, their backs to us, wading in the sea.

One of the boys has the same pale blonde hair we recognise from the portrait of Nicholas Daily.

(Further up the beach, a woman watches them, her back to us also. We probably won't notice this detail, but if we do, we'll assume it is a motherly figure.)

Arthur studies the painting for a moment, then turns his attention to a large pair of PYJAMAS that have been left on the bed for him to borrow. He holds them up.

He removes his jacket, hangs it over the back of a chair and searches the inner pocket. It's empty.

Quietly, he opens the door and steps out into the hall.

INT. DAILY'S HOUSE - UPPER HALL. NIGHT.

As Arthur creeps down the hallway, he passes the open door to Mrs Daily's bedroom. At first his eye is drawn to two CRADLES, one empty, one occupied by a dog in a nightgown.

Then: a disconcerting glimpse of Mrs Daily sitting up in bed, cradling the other dog. Oh my god, is she nursing it?

Arthur hurries past, but it's too late - she's seen him.

MRS DAILY

Mr Kipps?

ARTHUR

(averting his eyes)

Sorry to disturb you. I needed to fetch something from my coat.

MRS DAILY

Someone close to you is ill.  
That's why you're still here.

ARTHUR

Excuse me?

MRS DAILY

Nicholas told me. He knows these things. And he says the situation is graver than you know.

ARTHUR

I... I see. I hope he's wrong.

MRS DAILY  
 Nicholas is never wrong, Mr  
 Kipps.

74 **INT. DAILY'S HOUSE - CLOAKROOM. NIGHT.** 74

Arthur's coat is hanging here. He rifles desperately in the inner pockets. Relief washes over him as he retrieves:

Joseph's calendar. He raises it to his face and closes his eyes, searching for the comforting scent of his son.

Then he turns the page, draws a PENCIL from his pocket and draws a line through the box marked "Wednesday".

He flips forward through the next page to the final one - Friday, the picture of himself, Joseph and the train. He presses the calendar close to his heart, then turns back to the blank "Thursday" page and rolls it up again.

75 **INT. DAILY'S HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL. NIGHT.** 75

Still holding the calendar, Arthur makes his way back towards the stairs. As he walks, however, his attention wanders to the open door of the dining room.

He reacts in alarm and fear at something within. With a sense of dread, he changes course for a closer look.

76 **INT. DAILY'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM. NIGHT.** 76

Arthur stops cold in the doorway as we now see:

The DRAWING, carved into the surface of the table by Mrs Daily. Incomplete, child-like, but easily recognisable as a depiction of the woman in black, a noose around her neck.

77-78 OMITTED 77-78

79 **INT/EXT. DAILY'S CAR. DAY.** 79

Daily's automobile drives through the deserted side streets of Crythin Gifford. It's eerily silent.

Inside, Arthur sits beside Daily with Spider on his knee.

ARTHUR  
 This is very kind of you.

DAILY  
 Pleasure. Good to feel useful.

The shops and offices we pass are closed, the houses dark.

Unsettled, Arthur looks back to see, in the window of one deserted home, TWO VERY YOUNG CHILDREN. They return his stare.

80 **EXT. JEROME'S OFFICE. DAY.**

80

Daily and Arthur climb out of the car.

Arthur knocks on the door to Jerome's office. No response.

DAILY

Like I said, market day.  
Everyone's in town. No sense  
waiting, could be hours.

ARTHUR

Even better.

Arthur opens the door.

81 **INT. JEROME'S OFFICE. DAY.**

81

Daily stands lookout by the door, peeking out onto the street while Arthur rifles through a drawer of FILES.

Within moments, he has produced a bundle of DOCUMENTS.

Arthur unties the STRING binding the bundle and waves the topmost DOCUMENT aloft, shaking his head in disbelief.

ARTHUR

The deeds are right here. Lying  
bastard...

DAILY

Jerome? A superstitious fool is  
what he is. Just like the rest. A  
frightened, superstitious fool.

ARTHUR

Frightened of what? They think  
Eel Marsh house is... haunted, or  
something?

Before Daily can respond, both men hear an unmistakable noise from beneath the floorboards. Spider barks and snuffles at the ground.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

(whispering)

That noise... I heard it before.  
There's someone in the cellar.

Daily and Arthur move towards the stairwell at the back of the room and Arthur ventures down the cellar steps, down to where he first saw Mrs Jerome.

82 OMITTED 82

83 INT. CELLAR STAIRWELL. DAY. 83

Arthur tries the door. It's locked. He puts his ear to it, but now all is silent within.

He puts his eye to the KEYHOLE and peers inside.

84 INT. JEROME'S CELLAR. DAY. 84

From Arthur's POV, we see a limited view of the cellar. It has been converted into some kind of room for habitation, with a bed in one corner. But it seems to be unoccupied.

We hear Arthur breathing, but gradually we realise that this is not all: someone else is breathing too.

A split second later, our view of the room is obscured by AN EYE looking back at us!

85 INT. JEROME'S CELLAR/CELLAR STAIRWELL. DAY. 85

Arthur leaps away in distress, and at the same time, we hear a SCREAM from within the cellar - the owner of the eye, just as shocked as Arthur.

Arthur braces himself to look again, and sees:

A PALE GIRL, 12, scuttling backwards, terrified.

ARTHUR

Wait!

The girl huddles in a corner of the cellar, silent.

Hearing the commotion, Daily and Spider run down the steps.

DAILY

What is it?!

ARTHUR

(low, to Daily)

There's a girl down here.

(through the door)

We're going to get you out.

DAILY

Arthur -

The girl stares at him, wild-eyed.

ARTHUR

I'm not going to hurt you!

PALE GIRL  
You killed Victoria Hardy.

Arthur reacts in shock, confusion.

PALE GIRL (CONT'D)  
GET AWAY FROM ME!

86 **EXT. JEROME'S OFFICE. DAY.**

86

A shell-shocked Arthur walks back to the car with Daily.

ARTHUR  
Do you think she's going to be  
alright?

DAILY  
Aye. As well as she can be with  
the Jeromes for parents.

87 **INT/EXT. DAILY'S CAR. DAY.**

87

Daily's car drives through the countryside.

Arthur sits beside Daily, Spider on his lap, hindering his efforts to leaf through the papers in the stolen file.

ARTHUR  
And here - look. Two attempted  
sales by Jerome himself. Buyers  
from outside the area.

DAILY  
I said he was fearful of visitors  
to Eel Marsh House. Didn't say he'd  
always been that way. People can't  
stand the idea that misfortune  
strikes without rhyme or reason.  
The need to explain bad luck can  
turn the wisest man into a  
superstitious fool.

ARTHUR  
Jerome has suffered misfortune?

DAILY  
All families suffer misfortune at  
some time, Arthur.

They round a curve. The marshes and causeway come into view ahead... Along with a line of people - Jerome, Keckwick, Fisher, PC Collins, Gerald Hardy, an ELDERLY MAN, and four other VILLAGE MEN - forming a human blockade.

Daily slams on the brakes and the car comes to a stop.

Daily and Arthur catch their breath and exchange looks.

The men walk towards the car.

JEROME (O.S.)

Your work here is complete, Mr  
Kipps.

FISHER

We don't wish you any ill. We  
just think it's high time you  
went home.

PC COLLINS

For your own good. For the good  
of us all. Turn this contraption  
around, Mr Daily.

ARTHUR

(to Daily, steely)  
Don't.

The mob stand, silent and menacing. A tense stand-off.

Finally, Daily puts the car into reverse.

The car continues to reverse erratically down the lane, away  
from the mob and the marshes. Arthur looks at him,  
incredulous.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Sam, what the hell...? I have a  
job to do.

DAILY

I know. Which is why I'm taking  
you to the one place the village  
idiots won't dare follow.

Daily changes gears and the car lurches violently forwards.

Daily's car veers off the lane and into a field,  
circumventing the mob entirely.

The men watch in disbelief as the car circles behind them,  
back onto the path and out onto Nine Lives Causeway.

88

**EXT. EEL MARSH HOUSE. DAY.**

88

Arthur exits the car. Daily passes him a small LUNCH SACK.

DAILY

I had cook make up some supper.  
Late tide's due at eleven. Shall  
I come for you half past ten?

ARTHUR

You're very kind, Sam.

Arthur begins to walk towards the house. Daily calls after him.

DAILY

Arthur? Do something for me? Take Spider. For company.

89 **EXT. EEL MARSH HOUSE. DAY.**

89

Arthur and Spider stand by the front door, dwarfed against the landscape as they watch the car shrink into the distance.

Arthur looks up at the house, hesitates. Then he turns the door handle.

90 **INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM. DAY.**

90

Standing beside a WALL CLOCK, Arthur checks the time on his pocket watch. He lingers a moment to look at Stella's portrait, as if drawing strength from it, then snaps the watch shut and resets the hands on the clock.

He winds it up. It begins to TICK loudly. The house is coming back to life.

Like a man going into battle, Arthur picks up the canister of lamp oil and fills the first of the wall-mounted lamps.

91 **INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - ENTRANCE LOBBY. DAY.**

91

Arthur fills another oil lamp and tests it. It comes on.

92 **INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - KITCHEN. DAY.**

92

Arthur fumbles inside the cooking range. It fires up with a loud WHOOF that startles Spider.

ARTHUR

It's alright, old girl. It's just the range. We'll be nice and toasty soon.

93 **INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - STAIRCASE. DAY.**

93

Arthur marches purposefully upwards, carrying a JUG OF WATER and a handful of CANDLES. Close to the top, he turns to see that Spider is still waiting at the foot of the stair. He pats his thigh and reluctantly, she follows.

- 93A INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - JUNK ROOM. DAY. 93A  
Arthur drags trunks and boxes out into the hallway.
- 94 INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - BATHROOM. DAY. 94  
Arthur places the jug of water on the wash stand and a candle in the CANDLESTICK beside it.
- 95 INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - UPPER HALLWAY. DAY. 95  
Arthur pulls the burnt-down CANDLE-ENDS from a wall sconce and replaces them with fresh candles.  
That done, his eye is drawn to the locked door again.  
He moves to it, tries it one more time. It's still locked.  
Spider watches, head cocked, as Arthur produces a bunch of KEYS and tries every one. None work. Fighting to keep his resolute mood, he pockets them and makes off down the hall.
- 96 INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - BEDROOM. DAY. 96  
Arthur stands in the doorway to the darkened bedroom. He hesitates, then strides in, though Spider remains outside.  
He pauses at the window, then grasps the drawn curtains and yanks them open... Relief as he sees: no one is outside.  
He looks over to the fireplace and sees that the baby birds in the nest are now dead. FLIES buzz around them.  
Arthur's face falls, saddened by the this sight. But he rallies himself and gathers the papers from the bureau.
- 97 INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - UPPER HALLWAY. DAY. 97  
The key is still in the lock on the hallway side of the bedroom door, as when he first visited. Papers stuffed under his arm, Arthur locks the door from the outside.
- 98 EXT. STOREHOUSE. DAY. 98  
Arthur emerges from the storehouse carrying an armful of LOGS and an AXE. Spider follows behind.  
Moments later Arthur is chopping the wood with considerable aggression, releasing some of his pent up nerves.

A fire blazes in the grate. Arthur sits at the writing desk, Spider at his feet, the previously-scattered papers on the desk now in some semblance of order, in tall piles.

Nearby, the trunk and boxes are empty.

On the large table behind Arthur are more neat piles of paperwork.

Arthur studies the first DOCUMENT from the pile on the desk. Then he screws it into a ball and tosses it in the WASTEBASKET.

The clock ticks.

Arthur studies a PAIR OF DOCUMENTS. His look suggests that finally he has found something useful. He places the documents directly into his suitcase.

The fire has burned low. Arthur throws on another LOG.

Arthur reads a LETTER. The pile on the desk is lower too.

Another balled-up document lands in the wastebasket.

The clock hand CLICKS to the four o'clock mark. It CHIMES four times, a nasty, hollow chime.

Arthur takes a SANDWICH and a bottle of BEER from the lunch sack. He opens the beer and takes a swig. As he eats, Arthur continues to go through the papers. Opening a large ENVELOPE, he finds a bundle of BIRTHDAY CARDS.

Arthur flips through a few, and we see that they belonged to Nathaniel Drablow. The last one in the pile reads:

"TO OUR DARLING NATHANIEL, HAPPY 7th BIRTHDAY, WITH LOTS OF LOVE FROM MUMMY AND DADDY".

Arthur puts down the sandwich, his appetite lost. He carefully places the cards back in the envelope.

The clock ticks.

Arthur reads, files and disposes of more documents.

The fire in the grate gutters and goes out.

The hands of the clock click into place. Ten to five.

The pile of papers has diminished considerably, but a daunting amount remains. A weary Arthur looks up at the clock, then back down to the remaining stacks of papers.

He reaches for another tattered ENVELOPE on the pile. It contains: TWO DEATH CERTIFICATES.

The first reads:

"NATHANIEL DRABLOW. AGE: SEVEN. CAUSE OF DEATH: DROWNING"

Arthur puts it aside hastily. Not wanting to think about it more than necessary. He reads the next:

JENNET HUMFRYE. AGE: THIRTY. CAUSE OF DEATH: SELF-MURDER.

As Arthur studies this, a SHADOW sweeps across the paper, like someone outside is passing across the window behind Arthur.

He wheels around, alarmed. But there's no one outside, and he's quite alone in the room.

He leaps to the window and peers out.

No one to be seen in any direction.

Regardless, Arthur gets up and leaves, followed by an eager Spider.

**EXT. EEL MARSH HOUSE. DAY.**

Arthur looks around. The grounds are deserted.

As he gazes down the driveway, contemplating heading back inside, Spider looks up at him optimistically - obviously hoping for a walk.

Arthur sighs.

ARTHUR

Come on then. Just a quick walk.

100

**EXT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - GRAVEYARD. DAY.**

100

Arthur wanders the silent graveyard with Spider. He glances around anxiously. But there's no one here.

He scans the names on the HEADSTONES. Most have been worn away by time and the salty air, but soon he finds a newer one, marked "JENNET HUMFRYE - DEAR SISTER OF ALICE DRABLOW".

Nearby, another newer addition: a MONUMENT bearing a simple stone cross. The plaque reads:

"IN MEMORY OF JOHN KECKWICK SR - 20 YEARS OF LOYAL SERVICE TO THE DRABLOW FAMILY. TAKEN FROM US TOO SOON."

Arthur turns, noticing now a STATUE behind him, close by: a disquieting STONE ANGEL with a worn-away face. Arthur bends to read the inscription.

It reads: IN LOVING MEMORY OF NATHANIEL DRABLOW. August 2nd 1863 - December 29th 1871"

The rest reads: "Beloved son of Alice and Charles Drablow.

However, someone has attempted to SCRATCH OUT this last portion.

Arthur moves away, deeply unsettled by this.

O.S., Spider begins to BARK.

101 OMITTED 101

102 **EXT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - GROUNDS. DAY.** 102

As Arthur returns to the path, he soon sees Spider, facing the causeway, barking furiously.

And we hear the same distinct sound of CHILDREN'S VOICES that he heard earlier.

But just as earlier, there are no children to be seen.

And suddenly, as if sensing - as before - that someone else is nearby, watching him, Arthur turns uneasily to look back toward the house.

In the upper window he sees: The Woman in Black. Looking out towards the causeway.

Arthur starts back toward the house, moving fast, purposefully, Spider at his heels.

103 OMITTED 103

104 **EXT. EEL MARSH HOUSE. DUSK.** 104

The sun is low in the sky. Arthur and Spider walk towards the house, their long shadows playing across the drive.

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL. DUSK.**

Arthur makes for the stairs.

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - UPPER HALL. DUSK.**

Arthur hesitates for a moment, getting his bearings, calculating which window belongs to which room...

Then swiftly he moves towards the box room, calling out.

ARTHUR

Hello?

**INT. BOX-ROOM. DUSK.**

Arthur enters cautiously. But it's just as he last saw it. No one here. Nothing has been touched.

He steps to the window, sits down on the window seat, and looks out across the marsh.

**EXT. EEL MARSH HOUSE. DUSK.**

From outside, we now see Arthur at the window - the same window at which we previously saw the Woman in Black.

After a moment, he steps away, out of sight.

105

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM. NIGHT.**

105

Arthur is hard at work, going through the papers.

The fire burns in the grate, the windows are shuttered and the room is lit by the oil lamps. And yet somehow, there is nothing cosy about this room.

He pulls out a desk drawer from the desk and empties out its contents, begins to shuffle the loose papers into a stack.

Among the debris: SEVERAL PHOTOGRAPHS. Most are of Nathaniel Drablow and his parents.

Arthur leafs through them quickly, only mildly interested -- this, after all, is not what he's here for.

Arthur begins to replace the drawer in the desk, but after going in a short way, it sticks.

He pushes it, jiggles it. But no. Something is blocking it.

Arthur removes the drawer again, puts his hand inside the desk to feel for the obstruction.

He reacts as he feels something, stuck to the underside of the desk. Deliberately concealed. He pulls it free.

A collection of DOCUMENTS, bound with a black ribbon.

Arthur unties the ribbon, unfolds the first document. It reads:

"CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION"

As Arthur scans it, we clearly see the typed words:

"NATHANIEL",

"ADOPTIVE PARENTS: ALICE AND CHARLES DRABLOW"

"BIRTH MOTHER: JENNET HUMFRYE".

The silence is suddenly broken as Spider leaps up and BARKS.

Seconds later we register another noise: an intermittent BUMPING, rumbling sound.

Spider runs to the drawing-room door and stands there, hair on end, growling.

Afraid now, but trying to suppress his fear, Arthur rises and gingerly opens the door, realising immediately, and to his great dismay, that the sound is coming from upstairs.

106

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - STAIRCASE. NIGHT.**

106

Arthur mounts the stairs. The upstairs hallway is in near darkness, illuminated only by the dim light from the oil lamps in the downstairs entrance lobby.

Again, Spider remains at the foot of the staircase. Arthur looks back, pats his thigh. But Spider doesn't move.

Arthur continues up the stairs alone.

But now, the bumping noise STOPS. Silence.

Arthur pauses on the stairs. Wonders now whether he imagined it. Decides to wait to see whether it will start again. But as he stands here, he notices:

The framed photograph of Eel Marsh House he saw earlier. The three Drablows standing before it. Something about the picture that Arthur hadn't seen before --

In the upper window: the Woman in Black is clearly visible.

Arthur hurries back down the stairs.

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM. NIGHT.**

Arthur seizes the envelope of photographs and tips them out onto the desk.

In several photographs of the Drablow family, or of Nathaniel on his own, the Woman in Black is somewhere in the background.

But Arthur barely has time to react before, from upstairs, the BUMPING sound begins again.

Arthur leaps to his feet and heads for the door.

107

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - UPPER HALLWAY. NIGHT.**

107

Arthur arrives at the upstairs corridor. The sound is much louder here.

It is patently coming from behind the locked door.

Arthur strikes a MATCH and lights the candles in the wall sconce. Their weak light makes precious little difference.

The noise continues as Arthur approaches the locked room.

Standing outside the door now, the rhythmic, bumping sound from within is ridiculously loud, absurdly clear.

A breath, and then Arthur's hand shoots out and grabs for the handle. The door is still locked fast...

He kicks at the door. It won't open. The noise continues.

112

**EXT. EEL MARSH HOUSE. NIGHT.**

112

Arthur exits the house into the pitch black night, a LANTERN in his hand, Spider yapping noisily at his heels.

The drive is deserted. He heads for the East of the house.

113

**INT. STOREHOUSE. NIGHT.**

113

In the storehouse, containers CLATTER to the ground and Spider yaps as Arthur fumbles in the clutter for the axe.

114

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - ENTRANCE LOBBY. NIGHT.**

114

Arthur downs the lantern, bolts the front door and, with determination and axe in hand, heads for the stairs.

Upstairs, the rumbling from the locked room continues.

115

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - STAIRCASE. NIGHT.**

115

This time, Arthur doesn't even stop to acknowledge that Spider has stopped following him. He marches on, shouting up the stairs as he approaches, wielding the axe.

ARTHUR

Enough!

116

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - UPPER HALLWAY. NIGHT.**

116

Arthur keeps going, the noise louder as he enters the hall.

ARTHUR

Enough of that bloody noise!

Arthur's words die on his lips and he stops in his tracks.

The door at the end of the corridor is now open.

Arthur lowers the axe in shock. Then he seizes a candle from one of the wall sconces, raises the axe again, and walks towards the open door.

117

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - NURSERY. NIGHT.**

117

The room is in complete darkness, but the noise continues.

Arthur steps in and, breathing unevenly, shines the small pool of candle-light around the room with an unsteady hand.

A BED. BOOKS. A TOY-BOX. TOYS. DOLLS. Some disconcerting AUTOMATA - mechanical monkeys in finery, protected under glass domes.

This is a nursery. And in stark contrast to the rest of the house, it is immaculate.

Finally, by the fireplace, Arthur at last sees the source of the noise: a ROCKING CHAIR. It's rocking. Hard, but with decreasing speed, as if very recently vacated.

Arthur reaches out nervously and steadies it into silence.

ARTHUR

(whispering)

Who's there?

Arthur looks frantically behind him. No one.

Spying a WARDROBE big enough to conceal a person, he pulls its doors open. But there are only children's clothes here.

Arthur studies them. Touches them. Row upon row of expensive, beautifully-made garments.

Folded piles of neatly starched and ironed undershirts.

Little pairs of polished shoes lined up side by side.

A neat row of wooden hangers bearing day clothes, formal clothes, play clothes. Little suits. A smart little coat.

Arthur picks up a small SAILOR JACKET in both hands, his fear replaced by a sense of sadness.

Slowly, he now moves around the room, touching the toys: the army of LEAD SOLDIERS, a beautiful TEDDY BEAR.

He turns the key on one of the automata, a MONKEY PIANIST. Then another, an ACROBAT. And another. Until the whole shelf is alive with movement and the room filled with a cacophony of different MELODIES.

With a heavy heart, Arthur places the candle on the nightstand and sits down on the little bed, his head in his hands.

Finally, he gathers himself and stands to leave. But as he reaches for the candle, he notices:

The bright circle of light has illuminated something strange about the wall behind the bed:

Where two sheets of patterned wallpaper meet here, there is a distinct difference in shade.

Arthur investigates further:

He definitely hasn't imagined this: The wallpaper around the nursery is faded by age, but two sheets of it -- the sheets behind the bed -- are newer. The same pattern, perfectly lined-up, but almost certainly replaced at some later date.

Compelled by curiosity and some grim, unknowable instinct, Arthur runs his fingernail under the edge of one of the newer sheets of wallpaper.

He peels a small section a little way back.

Underneath: the same wallpaper, but faded. Matching the paper beside it, the paper around the remainder of the room. Someone has covered something up.

Arthur peels off a little more of the wall paper.

Nothing.

In the background, each mechanical tune from the automata slows to a discordant stop. Silence now as Arthur tears a little further, revealing --

A BLACK MARK. Staining the faded wallpaper beneath the fresh one. What is it?

With a little more urgency, Arthur scrabbles at the paper around the black mark, revealing enough that we see:

It's a LETTER "Y". Daubed on the paper in black paint.

Now, in earnest, Arthur sets about revealing what else is hidden.

Arthur's nails claw at the paper.

We see snatches of black paint, more letters.

Torn paper drops onto the floor, the bed.

Finally, Arthur staggers back and looks on in mute horror at what he has revealed:

Defacing the pale wallpaper above the bed: a crudely daubed message, lettered in dripping black paint --

"YOU COULD HAVE SAVED HIM".

Arthur stumbles out of the room.

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - UPPER HALL - NIGHT.**

As Arthur enters the hall, he becomes aware that something is different out here. He looks around cautiously. What is it?

The Box Room. The door is open. The interior lit now by candle-light.

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - BOX ROOM. NIGHT.**

Arthur steps inside, just the sound of his breathing now. Afraid of what he might see.

Immediately, the source of the light becomes apparent --

On the window-seat someone has placed a CANDLE HOLDER. The candle is lit.

Arthur's eyes dart around the room. But there's no one here. He's alone.

He moves towards the window seat and sits down slowly beside the candle, trying to take all of this in.

Finally, he picks up the candle and stands to leave. As he does so, the surface of the window seat makes a bang, like the lid of a hinged chest.

Arthur looks behind him, stares at it, curious. He grabs the window seat to find that it is indeed hinged - it lifts easily. He opens it.

He peers down into the dark recessed space. There are things in here, but it's too dark at first to see exactly what.

Arthur moves the candle closer and sees --

This is some kind of SHRINE.

Propped against the back wall, in the centre, a photograph of Nathaniel Drablow. Surrounding it, a few sad, time-worn relics: a neatly folded blue BABY BLANKET, a pair of tiny knitted BOOTIES, a single TOY SOLDIER, a child's drawing, a stack of envelopes.

Arthur picks up the drawing. It depicts: A WOMAN. Scrawled above the image, the words:

"TO AUNTIE JENNET, FROM NATHANIEL"

Arthur replaces it and studies the envelopes now. Brown with age, and apparently never opened.

Carefully, Arthur opens one at random. Inside: A BIRTHDAY CARD.

He opens the card. Reads the inscription.

"DARLING NATHANIEL. HAPPY 3RD BIRTHDAY. ALL MY LOVE, MUMMY."

Arthur opens another envelope. Another card.

"FOR MY LITTLE MAN. HAPPY 4TH BIRTHDAY, DARLING. ALL MY LOVE, MUMMY"

Arthur opens the last card in the stack.

"FOR MY LITTLE NATHANIEL ON HIS 7TH BIRTHDAY. WITH SO MUCH LOVE FROM MUMMY xxxx"

As Arthur studies this last card, he becomes aware that he can faintly hear something: Hooves and Wheels. Far away, on the causeway.

He replaces the card with the others, closes the lid of the window seat and kneels up close to the window. He looks out.

There's a light mist outside now, hanging above the marshes, making it hard to see the causeway in any detail.

The sound grows louder.

And far out, close to the hazy outline of the distant cross in the marshes, we now see glimpses of an approaching PONY AND TRAP.

And now, Arthur hears the same catastrophic sounds that he heard before - first, a CLATTERING.

Through the mist, we see snatches of the trap as it veers off the causeway.

The Pony WHINNIES. The Man, Woman and Child CRY OUT.

WOMAN  
Keckwick!!

Distant flash of hooves, eyes and teeth through the mist and darkness as the pony struggles fruitlessly to free itself from the marsh.

Arthur can't bear to watch, but he can't look away.

Outside, through the mist, we see the trap nearly submerged in the marsh.

The Woman gathers her skirts and climbs up onto the frame of the trap.

Mist obscures our view now, but seconds later we hear a THUMP and we see:

The woman has jumped to safety. Landing heavily on the causeway.

A child's hand reaches out, screaming.

CHILD

Mummy!

Now Arthur closes his eyes, covers his ears, unable to stand any more.

Outside, there's a terrible SUCKING, churning noise. And finally, an even more terrible SILENCE.

When Arthur opens his eyes and looks reluctantly out of the window he is shocked to see:

The mist has GONE.

The marshes and the causeway are clear, deserted. The moon bright.

Arthur rests his forehead against the window pane, his head spinning.

His breath mists the window pane...

In the cloud of condensation, FINGERTIPS appear. Small, dainty, the mark of a woman's fingertips, pressed against the glass long ago.

A sickening realisation. Arthur whispers.

ARTHUR

Oh Jennet. You saw it happen.

118-120 OMITTED

118-120

108

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - BATHROOM. NIGHT.**

108

Arthur enters. It's pitch black, the view from the window brighter than the room within - the tide out, the causeway and mirror-like surface of the marshes lit by the moon.

Arthur strikes a match and lights the candle on the washstand, the view obscured now, the window glass reflecting the interior of the bathroom instead.

Pouring some of the water from the jug into the basin, Arthur splashes his face.

ARTHUR  
Come on, Arthur.

Wiping his brow dry with his sleeve, he peers at his reflection in the window behind the washstand.

Then something outside catches his attention. Arthur presses his face closer to the window.

109      **EXT. THE MARSHES. NIGHT.**      109

From Arthur's POV, we see the distant view of the marshes. Far away, in the previously smooth surface beneath the wooden cross, there now seems to be a tiny, irregular BUMP.

Intercutting, we see Arthur react in horror...

There is definitely a bump now. And it seems to be growing, rising out of the marshes.

Despite the distance, it soon becomes apparent that it is, unmistakably, a SMALL HUMAN FIGURE, covered in mud.

Now fully risen, it stands motionless under the moonlight for a few moments before beginning to lumber awkwardly towards the house.

110      **INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - BATHROOM. NIGHT.**      110

Arthur involuntarily takes a step back from the window, away from the approaching figure, but then he rallies himself.

He turns away, shakes his head, as if trying to shake sense into himself. He cannot possibly be seeing this. It must be his imagination.

And indeed, when he turns and looks through the window again:

The figure is no longer there.

121      **INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - DRAWING-ROOM. NIGHT.**      121

Arthur drains a large glass of brandy as outside, rain falls noisily. There is a distant rumble of thunder.

He looks again at the bundle of documents that were hidden. The rest of the pile seems to consist mostly of LETTERS.

The signature on the topmost letter catches Arthur's eye: JENNET. He tears off the ribbon and begins to read.

As he leafs through them, we see flashes of text:

"Dear Sister"

"Dear Alice"

"...Out of wedlock..."

"...our father insists..."

"If you let me stay, I swear never to tell him"

"But he is mine and can never be yours"

Arthur's eye lingers on the letter containing this last, unsettling statement.

He puts the letters down and picks up one of the photographs he discarded earlier.

Nathaniel. And, in the background, Jennet. Pain and longing writ large on her face.

Instinctively, Arthur reaches towards the photograph...

But just as his fingertips are about to make contact, the silence is shattered by a loud series of KNOCKS at the front door. Arthur freezes.

Silence. Then another knock.

122-129 OMITTED

122-129

130 **INT. ENTRANCE LOBBY. NIGHT.**

130

Arthur slowly approaches the door. Spider is there already, hackles up, a low, steady GROWL coming from her throat.

Another loud knock makes Arthur flinch.

ARTHUR

Who's there?

Arthur reaches the door. From the other side, we faintly hear a CHILD SOBBING over the sound of the torrential rain.

Arthur puts his ear to the door. The sobbing continues. Then another knock.

Arthur backs away, but the weeping continues until finally, unable to ignore it any longer, he opens the door.

...Nothing. Just darkness. And rain battering the driveway.

But Arthur has barely had a chance to register his relief when Spider bolts out past him and runs down the drive.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)  
Spider! Here, Spider! SPIDER!

Arthur walks out into the night.

131

**EXT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - GROUNDS. NIGHT.**

131

A full-blown storm is raging now. Arthur ranges around in the rain, drenched, but the dog is nowhere to be seen.

ARTHUR  
Spider!

He keeps moving... but slows to a halt when he hears, louder than when he heard them last, the soft chattering voices of CHILDREN.

And this time when he looks out toward the causeway Arthur sees, just faintly, through the darkness and rain:

A GROUP OF CHILDREN standing motionless by the edge of the marsh.

He freezes. Is he really seeing this?

But the group of small figures stay in plain view. Unsettling. Incongruous. The sound of their voices continues.

And to his queasy concern, he realises:

They are walking slowly towards him.

A lightning flash... and for a second they are illuminated. They are indeed children, but there's something not right about them...

Once again, there is darkness.

Then another flash.

They are coming closer now. And in the light, we and Arthur can now make out more detail:

Some of the children look sickly, others injured. Several appear to be victims of drowning, their hair wet, faces bloated and decayed.

Arthur remains rooted to the spot.

Darkness.

Then a double fork of lightning.

Now the children are close enough for Arthur to see that among their number is Victoria Hardy, chin and dress stained with a long streak of dark, bloody vomit.

Finally, Arthur turns and runs.

132 **INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - ENTRANCE LOBBY. NIGHT.**

132

Arthur slams the front door and throws his back against it, drenched and gasping for breath.

He sweeps his hair from his eyes and looks up to see:

A single set of little muddy FOOTPRINTS. They lead all the way from the front door to the staircase...

...and up the stairs, into the darkness of the upper hall.

Gripped by terror and compulsion in equal measure, Arthur picks up the lantern he abandoned earlier beside the door, and begins to follow the trail.

133 **INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - UPPER HALL. NIGHT.**

133

Breathing hard, Arthur stops at the top of the stairs and shines his lantern down the darkened hallway.

The light from the lantern quivers with the trembling of his hand and throws shadows down the hall, but even so, we can see where the trail leads...

Down the corridor, it goes. And all the way to the slightly open door of the nursery.

Only a dim light spills from within, the single candle that Arthur left burning on the night stand.

Clearly audible: the sound of THE ROCKING CHAIR.

No turning back now, Arthur continues down the dark hall. But as he nears the open door he is shocked by a burst of MUSIC, the kind made by the automata.

Arthur pushes the door open a little further.

Within the circular pool of candlelight on the wall, two distinct shadows are moving gently: the rocking chair, tipping back and forth. And a woman, hanging by her neck.

An otherworldly breeze blows through the hallway and the candles gutter and die, leaving only the light from Arthur's lantern and the splash of candle-light beyond the door with its horrifying shadows.

Then that light gutters, too, leaving Arthur marooned in the weak glow of his lantern with the sound of the rocking chair, and the mechanical music...

Arthur steps inside. Even in the darkness we can see: the nursery has been vandalized. The bed overturned, broken toys and clothes scattered, everything covered in mud.

With his lantern, Arthur illuminates first one spot then another in jerky, urgent succession.

As he streaks his light across the ceiling, we see that the low cross-beam is bare. No one hanging here. Not now, anyway.

Arthur touches the rocking chair, stills it. And we may realise now that its position beneath the cross-beam suggests an entirely more sinister reason for its movement than we previously thought.

Now just the broken mechanical music remains.

On the ground, Arthur quickly finds the source: an automaton - the monkey pianist - lies on its side, surrounded by the shattered glass from its protective dome. No longer in contact with its piano, the movements of its mouth, head and arms give it the grotesque appearance of something injured, echoes of the baby bird.

Arthur finds the CATCH that turns it off, and finally the toy is still, the music silenced.

The muddy footprints cover the ground, impossible to follow now. The intruder could be anywhere.

Arthur moves his lantern slowly across the back wall, illuminating the awful painted words. Nothing here.

Behind him he hears a scuttling movement.

Arthur swings round, and in the light from the lantern we catch, for just a moment, the briefest glimpse of something inhuman-looking.

His hand shaking, Arthur brings the light back. A streak of movement again as the moving thing quickly ducks down behind a chest of drawers. It is small, and entirely covered in mud - little more than a flash of eyes in the darkness - but unmistakably a CHILD.

Trembling, Arthur trains the lantern onto the chest. The eyes peer back at Arthur.

Arthur inches closer, his breath loud. The figure doesn't move.

But just as he reaches the chest, the lantern goes out.

Total darkness as we hear Arthur lurching out of the room.

135

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - BATHROOM. NIGHT.**

135

The candle on the washstand has blown out, but the moonlight outside allows us to see again, albeit dimly.

Arthur fumbles for a match and lights the candle...

...Revealing the child! Somehow, he's here now. Crouched behind the washstand.

Reacting in shock, Arthur turns and bolts into the hallway.

136

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - UPPER HALL - NIGHT.**

136

Arthur darts towards the bedroom next door and fumbles desperately with the key in the lock.

Glancing anxiously over his shoulder, he looks back to see:

...The silhouette of the muddy child, casting a long, thin SHADOW down the hallway behind him.

Finally getting the bedroom door open, Arthur grabs the key from the lock and hurries inside.

137

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - BEDROOM. NIGHT.**

137

In here, we can still hear the FLIES in the fireplace.

Arthur slams the door shut and scrabbles to insert the key and lock himself in.

This done, he pushes the dresser across the door and slumps to the floor, fighting to catch his breath.

But to his utter dismay, he now sees...

Little muddy FOOTPRINTS on the floor.

They lead right to the bed.

And in the bed is the unmistakable shape of someone small, hidden beneath the covers.

As Arthur stares, frozen in horror, we see a mud stain slowly spreading across the white sheet.

Then the shape begins to sit up.

Arthur darts to the door, struggling to move the dresser, groping for the key in his pocket as, behind him, the figure in the bed continues to heave itself upright.

Finally, he gets the door open and runs into the corridor.

138

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - UPPER HALL - NIGHT.**

138

...Only to be confronted by the mud-covered child standing right before him, blocking his path. The child's mouth is open, the flash of his eyes and little white teeth disconcertingly bright in the darkness of the hall.

Arthur cries out and pushes blindly past the child, toward the stairs.

139

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - ENTRANCE LOBBY. NIGHT.**

139

Arthur virtually falls down the last few steps of the staircase into the entrance hall, but he keeps his balance and dashes toward the front door.

But just as he reaches out to open it, he is scared out of his wits by another KNOCK at the door.

ARTHUR  
Leave me ALONE!!

This time, we hear a voice clearly on the other side.

DAILY (O.S.)  
Arthur? Arthur! It's me, Sam!

140

**INT. DAILY'S CAR/CAUSEWAY. NIGHT.**

140

The tide is out now, and Daily drives Arthur across the causeway through the storm, back towards safety.

Spider is on Arthur's lap. Arthur strokes her and stares straight ahead, a haunted look on his face.

DAILY  
(re: Spider)  
She must've recognised the sound of my engine from more'n a mile away, you know. Right over the other side of the causeway, she was. Running to meet me.

ARTHUR  
You don't believe me, do you?

DAILY  
I believe... that even the most rational mind can play tricks in the dark.

ARTHUR  
(frustrated)  
This wasn't...  
(MORE)

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

If Mrs Drablow endured a fraction of what I just experienced, I can fully understand why she'd leave for India at the earliest opportunity and never return.

They drive on in slightly tense silence. Then:

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Did you know why Jennet Humfrye committed suicide?

Daily nods.

DAILY

Crythin Gifford's a small place. Everyone suspected the boy was hers. And that accident -- terrible business. Mrs Drablow was the only survivor. Weren't even able to recover the bodies. The boy and the driver... Still out there, they are.

But something is bothering Arthur:

ARTHUR

Who are the children, Sam?

Daily rounds on him, stunned.

DAILY

Why... What's wrong with you? Why would you say something like that?

ARTHUR

I saw children... On the marshes.

DAILY

No. No more ghost stories. No more lies.

ARTHUR

(angry now)

I'm not lying. I saw them, Sam. Sick children. Drowned children. Children who are dead.

DAILY

My wife telling you tales?

(louder now)

Was she?!

For the first time, we sense Daily's bluff exterior melt away as he reacts, slumping in the driver's seat.

Arthur shrinks away from him, guilty and uneasy at having touched such a raw nerve.

They drive on in awkward silence.

The car takes a right turn onto Jerome's street.

Suddenly:

DAILY (CONT'D)

What in the name... Do you see that?

Grey smoke is billowing down the street towards them. They slow down, the smoke obscuring their view as drive on.

We can hear VOICES, COMMOTION, and a little way ahead, we can see FLAMES. Arthur peers into the smoke.

ARTHUR

Jesus!

Daily brings the car to a stop, and the two get out.

141-159 OMITTED

141-159

160 **EXT. JEROME'S OFFICE. NIGHT.**

160

The two men walk through the cloud of smoke to find Mrs Jerome in her night clothes, hysterical, being held back by the post-mistress and Mrs Fisher.

Jerome's building is ON FIRE.

Gerald Hardy, PC Collins, Fisher and the other village men we met earlier fruitlessly throw PAILS OF WATER onto the blaze and run off to fetch more. Other BYSTANDERS look on.

Keckwick emerges from the front door of the burning building, dragging a semi-conscious Jerome.

Mrs Jerome reacts in anguish, but it's not just this sight that is distressing her...

MRS JEROME

LUCY!!

Arthur's face reveals his horrible dawning realization.

He rushes towards the open door to Jerome's office and moves headlong into the thick smoke.

161 **INT. JEROME'S CELLAR/CELLAR STAIRWELL. DAY.**

161

Arthur fights his way through the smoke, a HANDKERCHIEF clamped over his mouth. He pulls open the cellar door.

Inside, the wood-beamed ceiling is on fire, fed by a tower of flames issuing from what seems to be a sizeable BONFIRE in the centre of the room.

Through the smoke and heat-haze, Arthur can just make out the pale girl, Jerome's daughter, motionless, in a corner.

The girl watches as Arthur inches closer.

ARTHUR

Come to me...

He reaches his hand out to her. The girl takes a single step forward, eyes still trained on Arthur.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

That's it, come on! Come to me!

Closer now, Arthur can clearly see the source of the fire: the bed has been dragged to the centre of the room, other furniture has been piled on top of it, and all of it has been set alight. This was no accident. The girl did this.

Arthur struggles to take in what he is seeing. He looks back to the girl, meeting her calm, unemotional gaze.

As Arthur tries to comprehend this, the girl's eyes finally leave his and she looks to the opposite side of the room.

Arthur snaps his head round to see:

The Woman in Black. She gives the child a firm nod.

Arthur watches in mute horror as the girl nods back...

Then, slowly, purposefully, launches herself onto the pyre.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

NO!!

He runs forward but is beaten back by the heat and smoke. We share Arthur's dreadful POV as she's consumed by flames.

A beam crashes down from above and catches light. The ceiling is coming down.

Arthur turns and runs for the door.

162

**EXT. JEROME'S OFFICE. NIGHT.**

162

As Arthur bursts out onto the street, gasping for air, Daily rushes forward to help steady him, lead him away.

From inside, a colossal CRASH as the ceiling collapses.

A still-hysterical Mrs Jerome and several others, including the Fishers, are attending to the still semi-conscious Jerome. None of them notice Arthur --

Except Mrs Fisher. She walks towards him, wanting to say something. But before she can, Fisher seizes her arm and pulls her away.

Fisher says something to her that we can't hear above the noise, and she shouts something back that makes him angrily release her arm and walk away to Jerome's side.

She follows, but looks back at Arthur with sorrow.

Coming round, Jerome surveys the crowd groggily, but when his gaze finds Arthur, his expression hardens.

When he speaks, his voice is cracked and altered, rasping through scorched lungs.

JEROME

See what... you've... done?!

Mrs Jerome continues to scream.

163

**INT. DAILY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM. DAWN.**

163

Arthur removes his blackened jacket and hangs it on the back of a chair, then - a thought - he digs into the inner pocket. He is relieved to find Joseph's calendar undamaged.

It is open to the page marked "Thursday".

There is a knock at the door.

DAILY (O.S.)

Arthur?

Arthur opens the door to find Daily holding a cup of cocoa.

DAILY (CONT'D)

Just wanted to see if you were alright. Brought you this, too, if you want it.

Slightly embarrassed, Daily hands Arthur the cup. He takes it silently and sits down on the bed, still shell-shocked.

DAILY (CONT'D)

Always used to give Nicholas cocoa when things were bad.  
(attempting levity)  
I put some rum in yours, though.

Arthur puts the cup down loudly on the nightstand and explodes, unable to keep up this pretence at normality.

ARTHUR

She was there, Sam. Jennet Humfrye.

Daily bristles.

DAILY

For gods sake! Jennet Humfrye is dead. You said yourself the girl started the fire. Being locked down there must have driven her out of her mind.

ARTHUR

No. I don't think she'd been down there that long... Just since I arrived. Threatening to disturb the status quo... Jerome was trying to keep her safe.

Daily's expression suggests that Arthur is onto something.

DAILY

God only knows what nonsense that madman believes.

ARTHUR

You heard what he said to me.

Daily stands up, distraught and irate.

DAILY

If you want to discuss old wives tales, Arthur, find yourself an old wife!

Arthur opens his mouth to protest, but Daily is already gone, storming out of the room, slamming the door behind him, leaving Arthur stunned and alone.

He lies on the bed, more confused and troubled than ever.

His eye wanders to the painting hanging opposite the bed -- the four little boys wading at the beach.

Seeing it again now, he notices the female figure watching the children. Not a mother... Her dark clothes, the familiar shape of her silhouette... Suddenly this scene has taken on an altogether different and more malevolent atmosphere.

And something clicks...

Queasy flash cuts as Arthur remembers:

- the nursery room at the Gifford Arms the with the old rocking horse hidden under it's sheet
- Gerald Hardy pulling his children away from the fence
- the very young children at the window, barricaded indoors
- Jerome's daughter scuttling away from the cellar door
- Victoria Hardy and the other ghostly children lit by lightning in the storm.
- The row of graves in the churchyard. We now see clearly that several share the same date of death - May 23rd 1872.

165      **INT. DAILY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM. DAWN.**      165

Arthur sits up bolt upright with a feverish gasp of breath.

166      **EXT. DAILY'S HOUSE - GROUNDS. DAWN.**      166

Arthur stumbles through the grounds and enters the avenue of trees, the Dailys' mausoleum in his sights at the end of it, bone-white in the pale morning light.

167      **EXT. DAILY'S MAUSOLEUM. DAY.**      167

Arthur runs to the engraved EPITAPH, his eyes darting to the last line where he finds exactly what he expected:

- MAY 23RD 1872.

Arthur runs his fingers over the letters, then sensing that he is being watched, looks up to see --

Mrs Daily. Standing a few feet away in her nightclothes, watching him. A portable EASEL in her hand, PAPER and CHARCOAL balanced on it. Arthur reacts in shock.

MRS DAILY

I didn't mean to give you a start, Mr Kipps. Just came down to sketch. Sometimes me and Nicholas sketch together.

Collecting himself now, Arthur faces her, determined.

ARTHUR

What happened to him, Mrs Daily?  
Your son, and the other children.

MRS DAILY

Playing at the beach with his friends.

(MORE)

MRS DAILY (CONT'D)  
Tide must have caught them off guard. That's what everybody reckoned, in any case.

ARTHUR  
And you... What did you reckon?

Their eyes meet.

MRS DAILY  
You've seen her, haven't you?

ARTHUR  
She was there tonight. With Jerome's daughter.

Mrs Daily nods.

MRS DAILY  
She's always there. She was there that day. Nicholas told me.

IN ARTHUR'S MIND:

The painting of Nicholas and his friends wading in the sea.  
We dissolve to:

**EXT. BEACH - DAY.**

An identical scene, real now. NICHOLAS DAILY and his friends wading in the sea.

Only they're not wading. Just walking straight ahead as if hypnotised. Deeper and deeper into the sea. Fully clothed.

Waist deep... Chest deep... Shoulder deep...

And then gone. Submerged beneath the waves.

**EXT. DAILY'S MAUSOLEUM. DAY.**

Arthur is lost for words.

MRS DAILY  
Nicholas says she's trapped.  
Looking for her son, never finding him. Nicholas says it makes her angry.

She reaches out, touches Arthur's arm.

MRS DAILY (CONT'D)  
You mustn't blame yourself. You didn't know. Jerome should understand that better than most.

ARTHUR

Blame myself... For what?

MRS DAILY

Not listening to the others. Not staying away. Jerome knew and he didn't listen. After Nicholas and his friends, no one went to the house. The Drablows left.

ARTHUR

I... Don't understand.

MRS DAILY

Ten years without a tragedy... Then Jerome took over his father's business.

ARTHUR

(dawning realisation)

He tried to sell Eel Marsh.

MRS DAILY

Took buyers from all over the county. She was there, of course. Then he believed. But it was too late. It's always too late.

ARTHUR

They'd seen her.

MRS DAILY

If she's seen, she'll strike before the next sunset. Within weeks, they were all gone.

171 **INT. GIFFORD ARMS - ATTIC ROOM. DAY**

171

The scene we saw at the start: The three little girls climb onto the window seat and stand in the frame of the open window, silhouetted against the bright sky.

They jump.

172 **EXT. DAILY'S MAUSOLEUM. DAY.**

172

The puzzle pieces in Arthur's mind are falling into place.

ARTHUR

The Fishers' daughters.

Mrs Daily nods.

MRS DAILY

Keckwick's son... Jerome's eldest... So many.

ARTHUR  
They all died?

Mrs Daily's eyes glaze, her breathing becoming uneven.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)  
Mrs Daily...?

MRS DAILY  
(her voice strange now)  
She tells us what we have to do.

173     **INT. JEROME'S CELLAR. NIGHT.**     173

The Woman in Black, through the flames and smoke, nodding to Jerome's daughter.

174     **INT. GIFFORD ARMS - ATTIC ROOM. DAY**     174

The Woman in Black, her back to us as the three little girls look up from their tea party to see her there.

175     **EXT. HARDY FAMILY FRONT GARDEN. DAY.**     175

Victoria Hardy crouches by a wooden WASH TUB as her brothers play nearby, oblivious.

She reaches for a TIN OF LYE. Looks up, as if for approval.

The Woman in Black stands over her.

Calmly, Victoria tilts her head back and brings the tin to her lips.

176     **EXT. DAILY'S MAUSOLEUM. DAY.**     176

Mrs Daily continues.

MRS DAILY  
There's a light. But she leads us  
away from it.

177     **INT. POLICE STATION. DAY.**     177

Arthur kneels on the ground holding Victoria Hardy. Bloody vomit stains her chin and the front of her dress.

She stares straight at him, even as her eyes take on the milky glaze of death.

ARTHUR  
No! Someone, please! Please help!



182

EXT. DAILY'S MAUSOLEUM. DAY.

182

Mr Daily struggles to hold his wife while the Butler attempts to administer medication. Arthur stands back awkwardly, wanting to help too, but having to dodge Mrs Daily's flailing arms and legs.

Finally, the butler gives her a slug of the medication, and she relaxes into Daily's arms. He lifts her up and begins to stagger down the avenue of trees, towards the house.

Arthur follows behind them. Silence now, just the birds.

Arthur turns to look back at the mausoleum. He stops, paralysed by what he sees:

On the side of the mausoleum is the word FRIDAY. And drawn above it in a childlike style: a man, a child, a train.

A perfect replica of the final page of Joseph's calendar.

183

OMITTED

183

184

INT/EXT. DAILY'S CAR/COUNTRY LANES. DAWN.

184

There's a purposeful air to proceedings as Arthur and Daily drive fast down the lane that leads to Jerome's street.

Arthur has his pocket watch open in his hand.

DAILY

As long as the telegram reaches  
your house no later than half past  
twelve... They'll not leave before  
then, I'm sure.

Arthur's anger has been simmering beneath his fear; hearing Daily's undisguised concern brings it to a sudden boil.

ARTHUR

How could you do it, Sam? Knowing  
I had a son! How could you take  
me to Eel Marsh if there was even  
a small part of you that feared  
the stories were true?

DAILY

I never believed.

ARTHUR

You didn't want to. There's a  
difference.

They turn into Jerome's street.

DAILY

I can know that Nicholas is in a better place, waiting for us to one day be reunited. Or that he is lost. Which would you choose?

ARTHUR

Forgive me, Sam, but... my son is alive! How could I chance that by letting him come here, I might condemn him to death?

Daily doesn't reply. His attention is on something outside. He stops the car, and his head slumps against the window.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Sam?

Now Arthur sees it too. He reacts in utter defeat.

185 **EXT. POST OFFICE. DAY.**

185

The Post office, located right next to Jerome's office, has been entirely gutted in last night's fire.

186 **INT. DAILY'S CAR. DAY.**

186

The two men sit in the stationary car. Now what?

DAILY

The next village is more than an hour away.

Arthur looks down at his watch. First at the clock face, and then at Stella's portrait. He stares at it, the reminder of his first loss almost too much to bear in the face of the unthinkable prospect of another.

Daily just stares straight ahead. The grimmest of silences.

And then Arthur's expression changes: he's had an idea.

ARTHUR

What time is the tide back out?

DAILY

Not until five... Why?

Arthur's mind ticks over. This could work. Besides, it's his only chance.

ARTHUR

We can't stop Joseph... So we must stop her...  
(MORE)

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

If we can reunite Jennet Humfrye  
with her son, perhaps she'll  
finally be at peace.

(off his silence)

I'm not asking you to change your  
beliefs. I'm talking about a  
proper burial.

DAILY

Arthur, if every man-jack before us  
failed to recover his body, how in  
god's name do you think we'll  
succeed now?

ARTHUR

Because you have something that  
the others never did.

187

**EXT. DAILY'S CAR/NINE LIVES CAUSEWAY. NIGHT.**

187

The car has stopped, its engine idling, and Arthur is tying  
a length of ROPE to the rear bumper. He tugs at it to test  
the strength of his knot, then gives Daily - still seated  
in the drivers seat - a nod.

Now, holding the lose end of the rope in one hand, Arthur  
gingerly steps first one foot, then the other, off the  
causeway and onto the marsh.

Immediately, he begins to sink. Panicking, he leaps back  
onto the causeway.

Determined, he steps off again and this time begins to run,  
his feet in contact with the ground as briefly as possible.

Bar a couple of dicey moments, he successfully reaches the  
large wooden cross.

Even as he clings to it, however, he begins to sink. He  
waves to Daily, putting on a brave face.

Daily waves back, but can't hide his anxiety.

Arthur is now knee deep in the marsh, and we realise that  
he is deliberately allowing himself to be drawn down.

He begins to flounder in the mud, clutching the rope,  
plunging his free hand beneath the surface and scrabbling  
urgently to feel for any sign of the pony trap.

Lower and lower Arthur goes, at a frightening speed - thigh-  
deep, waist-deep, chest deep - fighting to stay calm,  
feeling around for anything solid beneath him.

Finally, his face lights up.

ARTHUR

Sam! I feel it! It's beneath my feet!

Arthur's arms and shoulders vanish into the mud. He tips his head back, taking a few last deep breaths.

And finally, Arthur's head disappears from view.

188 **INT. DAILY'S CAR. NIGHT.**

188

From behind the wheel, Daily looks back over his shoulder, watching, desperate.

After a short time that still feels too long, he turns back, shifts the gear-stick and begins to drive.

WHINES of straining protest issue from the engine.

189 **EXT. DAILY'S CAR/NINE LIVES CAUSEWAY. NIGHT.**

189

The engine continues to whine as the rope becomes taut.

At last, Arthur emerges from the marsh, coated entirely in mud, clinging to the rope, choking for breath.

Suddenly, he begins to sink again.

ARTHUR

Keep driving!

Even from this distance the noise from the engine is loud, and clearly not healthy. But the car continues to creep forward, although we sense it can barely take the strain.

Finally, the other end of the rope emerges from the mud, and we see a KNOT, tied around the brace of A TRAP.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Don't stop!

The wheels on the automobile begin to spin, losing traction as the weight becomes too much...

But with another burst of acceleration, the front end of the trap rises from the marsh. A nightmarish contraption, rotted and skeletal, silhouetted against the wide open sky.

Arthur - and, back behind the wheel, Daily - stare at it in horror and awe.

Arthur clambers on to it, leans in, and shouts at Daily to continue, but now the wheels are just grinding fruitlessly.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Can you go any further?

DAILY

The pedal is on the floor! I  
don't think she can take any more  
weight!

But there is one last burst of acceleration...

The trap rises again... And, inches from Arthur, a HUMAN  
HEAD emerges from the marsh surface! It is alarmingly well-  
preserved by the conditions in the marsh, almost mummified  
beneath the layer of mud.

Arthur startles, but composes himself and calls to Daily.

ARTHUR

I think I've found Keckwick  
Senior...

The wheels continue to spin, the engine howls and clanks  
and white smoke begins to billow from beneath the bonnet.

DAILY

I can't hear you! The engine is  
overheating!

ARTHUR

Turn it off! And apply the brake!

Daily complies.

There is silence now on the marsh. Arthur plunges his arms  
into the mud, feeling urgently for any sign of the boy.

Presently, we realise that the trap is beginning to sink  
back into the marsh, and the car is slowly being dragged  
backwards by its weight.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

I said apply the brake!

DAILY

I have! You're going to have to  
hurry!

We intercut between the car rolling slowly backwards and  
Arthur's efforts on the sinking trap until finally, with  
little time to spare, Arthur grasps something beneath the  
surface...

With effort, he hauls out the remains of Jennet's son.

Besides his stillness, the boy looks much like the mud-  
covered child we saw in the house, and Arthur struggles to  
fight his fear as he gently holds the little body.

The car continues to drift backwards, closer and closer to  
the marsh, pulled by the weight of the sinking trap.

Cradling the boy with one arm, Arthur hauls his way along the rope, back towards the safety of the causeway.

He takes a heavy, muddy step out of the marshes and onto the road just in time to turn back and see...

The trap, sinking back into the marsh. Without a trace.

The rope slack again, the car comes to a stop and Daily climbs out. He recoils at the sight of the child.

Arthur looks down at the boy in his arms, then looks up at Daily, tears in his eyes. For a while, neither man speaks.

A light mist is beginning to descend. Daily looks around.

DAILY (CONT'D)

There's a fret brewing. Best get off the causeway while we can, and start digging the plot. We need to be at the station in an hour.

ARTHUR

If you don't mind making a start... I should take him indoors. Clean him up first.

DAILY

You could do with a bit of spit and polish yourself.

Both men try to smile at Daily's attempt at jocularly, but find it to be nearly impossible.

190 OMITTED 190

191 **INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - BATHROOM. NIGHT.** 191

Arthur - now clean, and wearing his clean clothes, his hair wet - holds the boy in his arms beside a BATH full of water.

He tips the boy back into the water, their position a poignant visual reminder of Arthur's more boisterous earlier play with his own son.

Gently, Arthur uses a WASHCLOTH to sponge the mud from the child's hair and face.

The boy's eyes are closed, and as the mud washes away, it becomes apparent just how well the conditions in the marsh have kept him preserved over the years.

Arthur stares at him with a mixture of sadness and fear.

Besides his bronzed, leathery skin, he looks like any regular little boy, asleep. We linger on his face, and may fearfully wonder if his eyes will open. But he remains motionless.

192      **INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - BEDROOM. NIGHT**      192

Arthur carries the boy - wrapped entirely in a clean sheet, face covered - into the room and lays him on the bed.

ARTHUR  
(to the boy, whispering)  
Nearly time now.

Suddenly, from downstairs, there is a loud BANG - the sound of the front door being flung open.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)  
(calling downstairs)  
Sam?

193      **INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - STAIRCASE. NIGHT.**      193

Arthur scrambles down the stairs and is shocked to see Daily sitting at the foot of the stairs, his back to him.

Something is clearly wrong. Arthur slows and steps toward him with some trepidation.

ARTHUR  
Sam?

Still Daily doesn't turn round.

Arthur touches his shoulder and finally Daily looks up at him. His face is wet with tears.

194      **EXT. EEL MARSH ISLAND. NIGHT.**      194

The fret is thick now out here, visibility low, as the two men crunch down the gravel drive, Arthur following Daily.

In the distance, we faintly hear children's voices.

Daily stops at the edge of the causeway, and the two men stand silently side by side.

Out on the marshes, we can see the faintly silhouetted forms of the spectral children in the mist.

Arthur touches Daily's shoulder.

ARTHUR

Perhaps... When she is at rest.  
Maybe then. Maybe when she has  
her boy, she can let them go.

Daily nods, wipes his eyes angrily. He forces a smile.

DAILY

Well... What the hell are we  
waiting for? I'll finish digging,  
you fetch the child.

195      **EXT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL. NIGHT**      195

Arthur steps inside, shivering from the chill of the mist,  
and shuts the door behind him. Almost instantly, he hears,  
from upstairs, the sound of the rocking chair.

196      **INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - UPPER HALL. NIGHT.**      196

The sound is louder up here, its dull, heartbeat rhythm  
striking fear into Arthur. He glances at the closed door to  
the nursery, but heads directly for the bedroom.

As he gets closer, he stops and reacts in dismay.

197      **INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - BEDROOM. NIGHT.**      197

The bed is empty. The child has gone.

Arthur sits down heavily on the bed, filled with rising  
fear. The sound of the rocking chair continues.

His expression turns to one of total dread as he sees:

Stretched across the small section of hallway floor visible  
through the open doorway is a long, thin SHADOW. Without  
limbs or form, but undoubtedly belonging to something  
alive. There's something deeply disquieting about the way  
it undulates, then stops. Undulates, then stops.

198      **INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - UPPER HALLWAY. NIGHT**      198

Arthur steps into the hall, dreading what he'll find.

At the far end of the corridor, the end opposite the  
nursery, stands a small figure shrouded in a sheet.  
Motionless. And then slowly twisting and writhing.

Still again, then moving. A small hand paws at the inside  
of the sheet.

The sound of the rocking chair slows.

Arthur looks to the nursery door, then back to the child.

ARTHUR

Go to her.

The shrouded child writhes again, and begins to move towards Arthur.

The sound of the rocking chair slows, almost to a stop.

The handle of the nursery door turns from inside.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

(toward the nursery)

He's here! I want to help you!

Arthur backs up against the wall and watches as the shrouded child shuffles strangely down the hallway, a horrible deformed stiffness to his movements.

Arthur jumps as - BANG - the nursery door is flung open. But there's no one in the doorway.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

I don't mean any harm! I want you  
to be together! Take him!

He turns back to the boy, only to see:

He's gone. In this direction, the hallway is now empty.

Arthur wheels back round in the other direction...

The Woman in Black! Somehow, impossibly, she is now right behind him, lunging at him!

At this close distance, we can see through her veil, revealing her wasted, sunken face as she SCREAMS in anger.

In abject terror, Arthur breaks away. The stairway blocked by the woman, he takes the only escape route now open to him: he throws himself over the balustrade.

199 INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - STAIRCASE. NIGHT.

199

Arthur lands on the stairs, falls down the remaining steps.

200 INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL. NIGHT.

200

...And lands at the foot of the stairs in the hall, unconscious.

We fade to black.

201

**INT. EEL MARSH HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL. NIGHT.**

201

From Arthur's POV, we see Daily's worried face.

DAILY

Arthur! What happened?

Arthur comes round groggily, sits up.

ARTHUR

He's gone, the boy's gone.

Daily looks at him, perplexed, then looks upstairs. Arthur follows his gaze.

Through the open door of the bedroom, we can see that the shrouded body is now back on the bed.

202

**EXT. EEL MARSH GRAVEYARD. NIGHT.**

202

Arthur and Daily stand in the mist before Jennet Humfrye's headstone, Arthur cradling the shrouded body of her son.

At the foot of the headstone there is now an OPEN GRAVE. Beside it, a pile of DIRT and a discarded SPADE.

As we follow Arthur's gaze into the hole, we see that Jennet's CASKET is visible.

Arthur hands the child to Daily and jumps down into the darkness of the grave.

203

**EXT. OPEN GRAVE. NIGHT.**

203

Straddling the casket, Arthur pries open its lid.

Inside we see JENNET'S REMAINS - just bones now, and shreds of her tattered black mourning gown and veil.

Daily hands the boy down to Arthur, who places the child gently into the coffin beside his mother.

One last look, then he replaces the coffin lid.

204

**EXT. EEL MARSH GRAVEYARD. NIGHT.**

204

Arthur and Daily stand by the now re-filled plot, their devastating task complete.

Silence now, besides the wind in the trees and the strange calls of the marsh birds. Arthur bows his head.

ARTHUR

May you rest in peace at last,  
Nathaniel.

(MORE)

ARTHUR (CONT'D)  
(pointed)  
And you, Jennet. You most especially.

Daily nods in agreement. Pats Arthur awkwardly on the back. Arthur acknowledges him with a grateful smile.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)  
The fret's starting to clear. We should get to the station.

205

**EXT. STATION - PLATFORM 1. NIGHT.**

205

The SHRIEK of a train whistle as Arthur stands on the station platform watching the London train pull in.

As the train grinds to a stop and PASSENGERS begin to spill out, Arthur scans the platform urgently.

Finally, not far away, he spots Nanny, standing beside two SUITCASES, carrying Joseph.

He runs to them and takes Joseph into his arms, hugging him close, flooded with love and relief.

ARTHUR  
My darling, darling boy.

A dawning sense that something is wrong, but it takes him a moment to notice the concerned expression on Nanny's face.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)  
What is it?

NANNY  
He... On the journey - he got worse. I can't wake him up... We need... Is there a doctor in Crythin Gifford?

Arthur gently moves Joseph away to take a better look.

The child is asleep, his lips colourless and his skin pale, with a sheen of sweat. He looks desperately unwell.

ARTHUR  
(rising panic)  
No! Not here! He shouldn't be here! We need to get away from Crythin Gifford. If we can just get away, he'll be fine!

Arthur hurries towards the BRIDGE that leads to the opposite platform. Nanny dashes after him.

NANNY  
I don't understand! Where are we -

ARTHUR

The other platform! The train  
returning to London arrives in  
five minutes!

Nanny looks back at the abandoned suitcases, then runs on.

206

**EXT. RAILWAY BRIDGE. NIGHT**

206

Arthur sprints across the bridge, whispering to the limp  
child.

ARTHUR

It's alright. We're going home.

Nanny stays in close pursuit, out of breath. She follows  
Arthur down the steps and onto the opposite platform.

207

**EXT. STATION - PLATFORM 2. NIGHT**

207

Arthur stands on the platform, cradling Joseph, looking  
urgently into the distance for any sign of their train.

He touches the back of his hand to the boy's forehead,  
tries to suppress his panic at its temperature.

He loosens the boy's collar, fans him.

Nanny finally catches up to Arthur, breathless.

NANNY

How is he?

ARTHUR

Hot. Burning up.

He looks at his pocket-watch.

NANNY

Will I buy some tickets and have  
a porter fetch the bags over?

In his turmoil, this hadn't occurred to Arthur. He nods.  
Fishes some COINS from his pocket and hands them to her.  
She dashes back to the bridge. Arthur whispers to Joseph.

ARTHUR

Daddy's going to take you away  
from here. You're going to be  
fine.

The train whistle SHRIEKS again and STEAM billows and  
drifts as the train begins to pull out of the station.

Through the windows of the departing train, we see rhythmic flashed images of the now-empty platform opposite, interrupted by the gleaming bodywork of the carriages:

Platform - carriage - platform - carriage - platform - carriage...

Through the next window that flashes past, however, we see that the platform opposite is no longer empty. The familiar flock of spectral children stand huddled together. (Including now the burned figure of Jerome's daughter).

Carriage - children - carriage - children...

Arthur squeezes his eyes shut and hugs Joseph close to him, willing this nightmare away. He shouts his protest over the HISSING and CLANKING of the departing train.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

NO!

Arthur keeps his eyes closed, clutching Joseph tightly as the sound of the train recedes into the distance.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

(muttering, mantra-like)

Not here. They're not here.

Silence now in the empty station, but for Arthur's fevered muttering.

And then, from the bridge, the echoing FOOTFALLS of a woman's light step.

It could be Nanny. But Arthur knows it's not. Despite himself, he opens his eyes and looks up.

The Woman in Black stops on the middle of the bridge and raises her hand.

Arthur looks down. Joseph's eyes open and, with a quick, deliberate turn of his head, the boy looks to the bridge.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Joseph...

The Woman in Black is holding her hand out.

Joseph, now fully awake, pushes Arthur's arms and wriggles energetically from his grasp.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

No!

Joseph - all trace of fatigue and illness vanished - begins to move fast away from Arthur and toward the bridge.

Arthur lunges forward and grabs the back of the child's coat. Joseph just shrugs the coat off and keeps moving.

Arthur throws the coat to the ground and begins to sprint after him. His far-longer legs mean that he's quickly able to catch up. He snatches Joseph back into his arms and presses him to his chest..

Arthur looks up at the Woman in Black and doesn't look away from her as he begins to walk towards the edge of the platform.

We follow him as, with calm determination, he jumps down onto the track.

He fixes his gaze ahead and begins to walk down the track.

From somewhere O.C., we faintly hear a woman SCREAM.

It's Nanny. Back on platform two, she stands watching, confused and hysterical, an equally horrified PORTER standing by her side.

NANNY

Mr Kipps!

PORTER

Sir! Sir!

But their voices are soon drowned out by the incrementally louder sound of the approaching train to London.

Arthur keeps walking, clutching Joseph tightly to him. The sounds of the train and the shouting muted. Peace now, the everyday world far away.

A smile spreads across Arthur's face - a smile of triumph and defiance. He looks up at the Woman in Black again and shakes his head at her slowly.

ARTHUR

He's mine. He can never be yours.

Without warning, the sound returns to a normal level again - a piercing WHISTLE, the thunder of WHEELS, a METALLIC SCREECH of brakes.

A STEAM TRAIN is coming toward us at speed, upon us in a second. But only for a moment.

Inside, at the front of the train, the deafening noise level sustains as the TRAIN DRIVER, his face a mask of pure panic, wrestles the BRAKE LEVER with both hands.

Silence. As jarring in its suddenness as any noise.

Arthur stands in front of the now stationary train, still holding Joseph. Both unharmed. The train just feet away.

Joseph looks around, and finally up at Arthur, who smiles.

JOSEPH

Daddy?

ARTHUR

Yes, my darling?

JOSEPH

Who's that lady?

Joseph's little finger points over toward platform one.

Slowly, and with a sense of dread, Arthur follows Joseph's gaze... And we watch as Arthur's expression of fear melts away, replaced by a moist-eyed smile.

ARTHUR

That... is your Mummy.

Arthur begins to walk towards platform one. OS, as we watch Arthur's face, we hear a soft woman's voice. Stella's voice.

STELLA (O.S.)

Hello, angel.

Back on platform two we see...

Nanny, the porter, the train driver and a STATION MASTER crowded at the edge of the platform, reacting in horror.

But the lips of the living move soundlessly, unheard by Arthur, or by us.

Arthur looks away again and begins to walk towards a set of maintenance steps that lead to platform one.

JOSEPH

Do you have to go to work again?

ARTHUR

No.

JOSEPH

So you can stay with me?

ARTHUR

Always.

Joseph smiles and nestles into Arthur's neck as they mount the steps.

The closer they get to the platform, the more strongly they are bathed in a soft WHITE LIGHT.

Though we don't see it directly, it becomes clear that this light is pouring through the archway that once opened onto the street outside the station, but which now leads to some powerful, otherworldly light-source.

On the platform, the light dazzling him, Arthur hesitates. Joseph wriggles impatiently.

JOSEPH

Come on, Daddy! Mummy's waiting!

Arthur carefully sets him down on the platform.

ARTHUR

Go to her. I'll follow. There's something I need to do.

Joseph smiles at him and trots happily away.

Arthur watches him go, then looks back over his shoulder.

On the bridge, the Woman in Black claws off her veil and opens her mouth in a soundless scream of dissent.

Arthur turns away from her, then crouches down to child-height and holds out his hand.

Further down the platform, the dead children wait. Lost.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

(fatherly, coaxing)

Come with me... Come on.

Slowly, they begin to move towards him, and the light.

The Woman in Black, still screaming silently, moves down the stairs of the bridge and onto the platform, her arms reaching out in protest.

But when she gets close enough for the light to fall on her, she begins to shrink back, afraid of getting too near. She clutches at the side of the station building, as if to stop herself being drawn any closer. Instead, she can only watch helplessly...

Like a kindly teacher, Arthur ushers each child past him. Victoria Hardy. Jerome's daughter. Nicholas Daily - his hair and clothes wet - pauses and looks up at Arthur.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Nicholas? Nicholas Daily?

The boy nods.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Thank you for the pictures. You  
knew I'd be here, didn't you?

He nods again, and gives Arthur a small smile as he walks on towards the light.

The three Fisher girls, holding hands sweetly, are the last to vanish into the whiteness. Alone on the platform now, Arthur looks back one last time at the Woman in Black.

A beat. And then, in a moment of humane forgiveness, he holds out his hand to her. An invitation to walk into the light and be free, an end to all of this.

She cocks her head a moment, as if considering it, then, with a malevolent look on her face, she turns her back on Arthur and walks away.

Arthur watches her go. Then he walks towards the light.

We follow him, seeing for the first time the burning whiteness beyond the archway.

Arthur moves into it, his form becoming less distinct the further away he walks, until, finally, he disappears from sight.

FADE TO WHITE.

\*