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# Silo City

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Silo City

Anne Conron

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the  
Prerequisite for Honors  
in Cinema & Media Studies  
under the advisement of Winifred Wood

April 2018

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## **Introduction**

The following reflection piece details the process and thoughts behind the screenplay I chose to write for my senior thesis. I pursued a screenplay in the genre of science fiction, the primary interest being the exploration of a woman choosing to occupy an older body.

## **Timeline**

April 15, 2017: Thesis Proposal sent to Professors Winifred Wood and Maurizio Viano

June 2017 to November 2017: Research science fiction films and literature

September 21, 2017: Updated Thesis Proposal sent to Professor Winifred Wood

Wintersession 2017/18: Finalize treatment

February to March 2018: Write screenplay and reflection

April 2018: Re-write drafts and edit

April 27, 2018: Submit undergraduate thesis

## **Who I Am**

I was born in Buffalo, NY, and grew up in the Southtown of East Aurora. Growing up in Buffalo has had a major influence on my creative life and provided underlying themes for most of the work I do. I chose to attend Wellesley College in 2014 as an undecided major, and during my sophomore year felt compelled to major in Cinema & Media Studies.

## **Why I Wrote This**

Watching and analyzing film taught me the process behind it. During my junior year I studied abroad at King's College London in the Film Studies program. There I enrolled in a creative writing course where I wrote original stageplays and screenplays. This established my interest in writing screenplays myself. It gave me the desire to write a different kind of film.

By the end of my year in London I had already begun to compose in my mind an idea for an extended screenplay in the genre of science fiction. In the spring of 2017 I drafted and submitted a proposal which involved a female-led film centered around exploring the choices and reasons behind choosing an older body.

In the fall semester of 2017 I chose to enroll in a screenwriting course with Professor Margaret Cezair-Thompson. Over the course of the semester I wrote short sections of screenplays, edited my peers' work, and watched films and analyzed the films' scripts. This gave me an idea of the gaps between a finished film and a screenplay, as well as the proper formatting for a screenplay.

## My Interest in Science Fiction

Most of the media and literature I consumed throughout my childhood and teenage years has inadvertently been science fiction. I was never really aware that what I was reading or watching comprised a specific genre until high school, when I read classics of science fiction such as *Fahrenheit 451* and *1984*, and was taught the genre. At Wellesley I was introduced to *Metropolis*, having the pleasure to view it with a live orchestra my first year. Fritz Lang's lavish dystopian science fiction film was what really made me want to research and learn more about the genre of science fiction as I moved through my academic career.

## How I Define Science Fiction

Science fiction can be a difficult genre to define, as definitions have evolved within movements throughout the years. Prior to my research for my thesis, I saw science fiction in a very literal way. I thought of it as having to have some sort of futuristic element along the lines of alien life or a rough, dystopian society. Now, having read, watched, and researched the genre, I have to accept Chris McKitterick's view of science fiction as an incredibly broad and diverse mode that seeks to pose questions about "understanding the universe we live in" through imagining dissimilar worlds or situations.<sup>1</sup>

To better understand the historical context of science fiction, I consulted books such as *The History of Science Fiction* by Adam Roberts. In it, Roberts quotes literary critic Darko Suvin, who defines science fiction as "a literary genre or verbal construct whose necessary and sufficient conditions are the *presence and interaction of estrangement and cognition, and whose main device is an imaginative framework alternative to the author's empirical environment* (Suvin, p. 37)."<sup>2</sup> To be science fiction doesn't necessarily entail an entirely different universe, but, as Suvin asserts, rather the existence of a "novum," of something tangible or intangible that creates a "cognitive estrangement."<sup>3</sup> We imagine other worlds to ask, "what if?"<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Chris McKitterick, "Defining Science Fiction," Gunn Center for the Study of Science Fiction, February 20, 2015, <http://www.sfcenter.ku.edu/SF-Defined.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> Suvin is quoted in: Adam Roberts, *The History of Science Fiction* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 1.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Chris McKitterick, "Defining Science Fiction," Gunn Center for the Study of Science Fiction, February 20, 2015, <http://www.sfcenter.ku.edu/SF-Defined.htm>.

## How I Devised the Premise

My journey to my final treatment was a long one. When I approached my advisor in the spring of 2017, I knew that I wanted to write a screenplay that dealt with the mind, and with difficult choices. At the time I was interested in animation, as I was taking a class that used Photoshop to animate. I began my research process looking at films from Studio Ghibli and old animated films such as *Prince Achmed*; I had the idea that I would write a screenplay of an animated film that I would also create. I realized early on that my screenplay would be an endeavor that would take up the entire year, and I wanted to give it that time. Although I did not stick with the idea of an animated film, animation and the freedom it offered continued to influence my thought process.

From the beginning, I knew I set out to write a screenplay that dealt with the human consciousness and was female-led. I began with what I knew, which was Buffalo. My Uncle's pub is called Gene McCarthy's, located in Buffalo's Old First Ward. Because of this, I know the area well, and think of imagery of the Old First Ward when I think of Buffalo. This ward historically has housed poor Irish immigrants fleeing the famine. Many settled near the shores of Lake Erie to work in the grain elevators or on the Erie Canal. I researched the history of Irish immigrants in that area, using the book *Against the Grain: The History Of Buffalo's First Ward* by local Timothy Bohan. It is compiled from historical records of the lives of the immigrants; where they lived, what they did, who they married, and the struggles they faced.

The poor, sometimes illiterate immigrants settled in the Old First Ward. The poorest of the poor, those with no formal education, who couldn't read or write, were pushed onto the banks of Lake Erie, in an area called "the Beach."<sup>5</sup> The Buffalo River separated them from the mainland. Their location between the river and the lake meant their lives were dictated by harsh weather. Many froze or drowned. These conditions created great psychological stress over the generations, but also a great sense of community. I wanted to include these elements, intense weather, stress, and community, in my screenplay. In order to aid in worldbuilding I spent time walking around the Old First Ward myself, taking photos and going on history tours.

By the time the summer ended, I had come up with three possible treatments. One was a story of an Irish immigrant living in South Buffalo, who encountered a chemical that altered her consciousness. The second was inspired by Irish mythology and folklore, depicting a world infused with mythological animals and influenced by the anime I was watching. The third rejected much of my research. It centered around a young girl and boy struggling with the girl's decision to inhabit the body of an elderly woman. The girl had chosen to inhabit the body of an elderly woman in order to escape the sexist confines of her society.

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<sup>5</sup> Tim Bohan, *Against the Grain: The History of Buffalo's First Ward* (Buffalo: Bohane Books, 2012), 11.

I continued with the latter idea for a few weeks, eventually writing the first quarter of a screenplay. The world was a dystopian New York City, full of danger and mystery. The beginnings of the plot centered around a kidnapping. The main character, then called Lycra, as I was unaware that lycra was also a fabric, escaped a group of kidnappers trying to exploit her. She ran into a young boy, whom she fell in love with, finally having to let him go as she chose an older body. This idea was terrible. It contained so many gender-based tropes and awful Hollywood cliches. However, it showed how much I needed to unlearn about film. I had written what came to me most easily, and what came to me most easily was what I had been consuming my entire life.

Rather than leaving behind the idea completely, I began to strip it down to return to a strong, female-led science fiction film that dealt with a younger woman choosing to take on the body of an older woman. In my first draft, the main character chose to take on the body of an older woman because of outside factors such as sexism and sexual assault. By having my main character choose to take on the body of an older woman because she truly wanted to, not because she felt she had to, I created a much stronger plot. For location I made the decision to set my film in Buffalo. The environment and community of the area is so close and familiar to me, and the history so rich. *Against the Grain: The History Of Buffalo's First Ward* returned to my screenplay.

## **Behind the Title**

Silo City is the name for the group of abandoned grain elevators and silos along the Buffalo River. They are the backdrop of the Old First Ward. My main character Lara, like the Irish immigrants, has a special connection to this area. The silos are built on the Beach that the immigrants lived on. Lara, like them, is pushed off due to harsh weather and living conditions. Water removes her from her home and makes her move inland to the Old First Ward, but it is also water that gives a new meaning to her life.

## Research

The research conducted for this screenplay was extensive. I consulted many science fiction and fantasy films and novels, with the most influential being *Stalker* by Andrei Tarkovsky and *Under the Skin* by Michel Faber.

## Stalker

*Stalker* most impacted me through its world. Aside from the soldiers that guard the Zone, *Stalker*'s world contains no visible elements of any sort of supernatural nature until the very end. The eerie calmness of the environment, combined with the effect of the natural elements, especially water, create an unease in the viewer. The film has only three characters, the Stalker, Writer, and Professor, who attempt to reach the Room, where their deepest desires will be filled upon entering. Their journey is a stream of consciousness, perhaps “nonlinear.”<sup>6</sup> While watching *Stalker*, I felt myself begin to mirror the actions of the characters, falling asleep as they did and being alert when they were, due to the film's meticulous pacing. I was inspired by this slow pacing, and wrote my screenplay with an intention of long, lush shots and scenes.

I initially was apprehensive about using Buffalo as the location for my film. I thought it would be a bit of a cop-out, or trite, to locate my writing in a place that I knew so well. However, as my research progressed, I felt that it would be more trite to use a place I had no familiarity with. In *Stalker*, Tarkovsky himself draws deeply on themes of home and family, using the Zone as a home the Stalker can no longer return to.<sup>7</sup> In my screenplay, I used Buffalo as a home that no one could leave and no one could return to, in the sense that the disaster had changed it indefinitely. I decided to keep Buffalo anonymous to viewers within the film in order to preserve an otherworldly theme. The word “Buffalo” is never spoken or seen.

*Stalker* begins with an ambiguity: we never learn what has happened to create this Zone. Perhaps it was a nuclear fallout, perhaps it was some sort of “alien” invasion.<sup>8</sup> I was drawn to the idea of a world that was extremely familiar, but precarious in an indiscernible manner. Buffalo offers a distinct industrial landscape, having been built on the success of the Erie Canal and having been in part destroyed by the fall of that canal. Shipment trains that used to carry passengers run all over the south of the city. Next to railways sit abandoned steel factories. Five story high grain

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<sup>6</sup> Brad Weismann, “Stalker,” *Senses of Cinema*, September 2013, <http://sensesofcinema.com/2013/cteq/stalker/>.

<sup>7</sup> Ewan Wilson, “Tarkovsky's ‘Stalker:’ Deep as a Mirror,” *The Artifice*, January 15, 2014, <https://the-artifice.com/tarkovskys-stalker-deep/>.

<sup>8</sup> Mark Le Fanu, “Stalker: Meaning and Making,” *The Criterion Collection*, July 18, 2017, <https://www.criterion.com/current/posts/4739-stalker-meaning-and-making>.

elevators cast shadows along the river. There are times when the incredible bleakness of the weather combined with an industrial background makes Buffalo evoke Stalker's home outside the Zone. Aside from the main plot of switching bodies, I chose to never have an indication of anything supernatural. No glowing fields, no mutations. The audience can assume that the radiation from the disaster was from a nuclear bomb, but they can never be sure. They can assume that the changes to the main character's behavior and characteristics are in part caused by radiation, but they will never know.

I was intrigued by the use of the natural elements in *Stalker*. Wind blows viciously throughout sections of the film, breaking up the tranquil calm of the lush environment. Is it just wind or is it some supernatural event punishing the travelers for disobeying rules? Another strong element is water. It is used as a "neutralising force."<sup>9</sup> Bombs and guns are dropped into it, rendering them useless and transforming them into relics of the environment.<sup>10</sup> At the end of the film, the travelers decide not to enter the Room, because, as Ewan Wilson argues, they fear the truth of their "innermost desires."<sup>11</sup> When this decision is made, rain begins to pour down.

Buffalo is an area deeply influenced by weather (lake effect snow, heavy rain, high winds). I chose to incorporate rain, but instead of using it as a nullifying element, I wanted to use it as an element that ignites changes in the environment. The rain is meant to evoke the quality of *Stalker* that poses normal occurrences as possible supernatural events.

## Under the Skin

The most influential of the novels I read was *Under the Skin* by Michel Faber. It details an alien named Isserley working in Scotland in an unknown time period that rather resembles our contemporary present. Isserley has assumed the shape of a human woman by painful surgery, and drives around Scotland looking for hitchhikers no one will miss. Isserley then captures these hitchhikers, all male, and transports them back to the alien world to be used as food.

What struck me most from this novel was the description of Isserley in her *homo sapien* body, as well as the gradual reveal of Isserley and her motives. Isserley is one of the few aliens granted this surgery; she considers this new body a privilege of her profession. It is clear that she has been granted the body of a conventionally attractive woman, but Isserley describes her new body as something very uncomfortable and foreign. It is something she has to work at to feel used to. As time passes, Isserley's body begins to transform back into her original form. Thick hair grows

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<sup>9</sup> Ewan Wilson, "Tarkovsky's 'Stalker': Deep as a Mirror," *The Artifice*, January 15, 2014, <https://the-artifice.com/tarkovskys-stalker-deep/>.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

everywhere there is skin, and she is forced to shave to fit in. Her inner dialogue as she does this is resentful, revealing how averse she feels to her body. We don't find out about Isserley's occupation or world until a few chapters into the novel. It comes gradually, not as a big reveal, but as a necessity of telling the story.

While reading Isserley's musings in her new body, I was fascinated at how she described herself. Unconsciously, I wanted her to enjoy her beautiful, human body more, and her desire to be in her alien form confused me, even though I knew it was her true form and what she wanted most. This gave me a bit of insight into how to structure the theme of desiring to inhabit an older body in my script, as well as how to think and write about it. The way I reacted towards Isserley's choice of body reflects the most likely way the viewers will react to Lara choosing an older body. When crafting my main character, I tried to make her desires perhaps not something that the audience would understand, but something that the audience would sympathize with. The gradual information on the alternate world of the novel also influenced my introduction of key aspects of the script. I made sure not to write any dramatic reveals straight-away, but rather to act as though the world Lara lived in was normal, and for the audience to slowly learn the quirks of it.

## **Influential Films and Books**

In consultation with my advisor, I compiled a collection of films and books to aid my writing process. I looked not only at films classified under the science fiction genre, but also at films that pose questions about the self, memory, trauma, and the consciousness. The books pose similar questions, ruminating deeply on inner dialogue and thoughts.

- *Arrival*, 2016. Denis Villeneuve
- *Atomic Light (Shadow Optics)*, Akira Mizuta Lippit
- *Blade Runner*, 1982. Ridley Scott
- *Blade Runner 2049*, 2017. Denis Villeneuve
- *Caché*, 2005. Michael Haneke
- *Children of Men*, 2006. Alfonso Cuarón
- *Cloud Atlas*, 2012. Tom Tykwer and Lilly Wachowski
- *Cloud Atlas*, David Mitchell
- *Fukushima Mon Amour*, 2016. Doris Dörrie
- *Grave of the Fireflies*, 1988. Isao Takahata
- *Hiroshima Mon Amour*, 1959. Alain Resnais
- *Ivan's Childhood*, 1962. Andrei Tarkovsky
- *La Jetée*, 1962. Chris Marker

- *My Winnipeg*, 2007. Guy Maddin
- *Paprika*, 2006. Satoshi Kon
- *Persona*, 1966. Ingmar Bergman
- *Prince Achmed*, 1926. Lotte Reiniger and Carl Koch
- *Princess Mononoke*, 1997. Hayao Miyazaki
- *Secret of Roan Inish*, 1994. John Sayles
- *Solaris*, 1972. Andrei Tarkovsky
- *Spirited Away*, 2001. Hayao Miyazaki
- *Stalker*, 1979. Andrei Tarkovsky
- *Stories of Your Life and Others*, Ted Chiang
- *The Tale of Princess Kaguya*, 2013. Isao Takahata
- *Under the Skin*, 2013. Jonathan Glazer
- *Under the Skin*, Michel Faber
- *Zona*, Geoff Dyer

## Worldbuilding

I began by imagining the environment I know. It was important for me to capture the reality of Buffalo in my screenplay in order to create a world that appears familiar to the viewer. Every street, shop, and area in the screenplay are real, except for the harvesting fields. The next item was to begin to strip and add little bits to that world in order to make it science fiction. My first step was with the natural elements, as in *Stalker*. Because Buffalo is so defined by its weather, this was an obvious first move. I wrote in water as an influential element in the harvesting. Water would release the energy from the ground of the affected area, making the energy harvestable. I try not to verbally explain this phenomenon immediately, but rather have enough scenes with water and harvesting so that the audience begins to guess at a connection.

Because the world I'm building is one that's been affected by a type of radiation disaster, I began to research incidences of radiation throughout history. I looked at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and Fukushima. In Hiroshima and Nagasaki during the end of World War II, the uranium bomb dropped by the United States killed an estimated 90,000 to 166,000 people upon impact and in the following four months.<sup>12</sup> Effects from radiation killed another estimated 200,000 over the next five years.<sup>13</sup> Radiation sickness following the bomb included radiation poisoning, genetic mutations, and severe burns. Another noticeable residue left by the bomb was impact shadows. Shadows left by the bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki were a result of "the intense heat of the initial flash of the detonation."<sup>14</sup> The shadows depict outlines of buildings, objects, and people, and are still visible on some debris today.

I incorporated a smaller population, as well as barren areas, into my world; many areas of the city are damaged and sectioned off. It was important as well to make clear the anxiety and economic failings. People's worst fears were realized, and many had their secure lives taken from them. The hunt for work in order to survive became relevant, while other pleasures, such as music halls and museums, became less so. Because of the history of Roman Catholicism within the Old First Ward, I had some religious traditions, such as the Catholic funeral, survive the disaster.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> "Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki - 1945," Atomic Heritage Foundation, June 5, 2014, <https://www.atomicheritage.org/history/bombings-hiroshima-and-nagasaki-1945>.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Alan Taylor, "Hiroshima: Before and After the Atomic Bombing," *The Atlantic*, May 12, 2016, <https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2016/05/hiroshima-before-and-after-the-atomic-bombing/482526/>.

<sup>15</sup> "Prayers for Death and Dying," United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2007, <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/bereavement-and-funerals/prayers-for-death-and-dying.cfm>.

A more recent nuclear disaster occurred in Fukushima, Japan. In 2011 a tsunami hit Japan's coast, triggering a nuclear meltdown at a nearby power plant.<sup>16</sup> I had the opportunity of attending a screening of *Fukushima Mon Amour* with director Doris Dörrie. The film details a German woman in Fukushima following the 2011 disaster as she bonds with a local Japanese survivor. *Fukushima Mon Amour* echoes *Hiroshima Mon Amour*, and is also shot in black and white. The blend of images of the actual landscape and documentary footage from the disaster create an atmosphere of survival, resistance, and adaptation in a peculiar and devastating circumstance. Particularly interesting to me was the narrative between the two characters, and a storyline that often strayed away from the obvious disaster both people remembered while still maintaining the disaster as the center of the film. This measure made very serious the disaster and emotions surrounding it without always directly revealing them.

## **The Science Behind It**

A contentious topic within science fiction communities is the notion of fake science. In Christopher Nolan's *Interstellar*, Nolan strove to develop a story that rested on authentic science by consulting with physicist Kip Thorne. What bothers me is not that Nolan has created a universe in which things behave in an unknown manner, but that he proclaims these behaviors have scientific accuracy. In *Silo City* I created situations that are difficult or impossible to explain, such as freezing a body to become a Shell, and switching consciousnesses. However, I strove to write them in the same manner Tarkovsky wrote about neutrinos in *Solaris*. I don't bother to justify the situations with current science or explain how they happen. That is all chalked up to the "What If" of science fiction. For the time period and technology, I kept it ambiguous but clearly near future. I didn't want any technology present that dated the film precisely. No televisions, no phones.

## **Occupying a Different Body**

Lara's interactions with Maeve's consciousness can best be described as a state of heightened reality. I didn't want this to be a film where Lara becomes Maeve, but rather one where she interacts with her. The body as a vessel for an altered consciousness plays on themes of surrealism, and to develop this, I incorporated dreams and flashbacks into Lara's experiences. In this post-disaster world, survival is key, and certain emotions may not be felt to the same degree, if felt at all. When Lara enters Maeve's body she feels these sensations in such a higher degree. Being able to feel an emotion or have a memory, to experience different preferences and tastes, becomes almost like a drug to Lara. She cannot exist in her original body anymore. Age doesn't

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<sup>16</sup> "Fukushima Accident," World Nuclear Association, October 2017, <http://www.world-nuclear.org/information-library/safety-and-security/safety-of-plants/fukushima-accident.aspx>.

matter. She desires Maeve's body because of what it can give her, not what it looks like or how long it has left.

## Possible Production

Although I believe it could function as a television series on Netflix or HBO due to the ambiguity and plot possibilities, I chose to make *Silo City* a full-length film. The nature of the story, with its gradual build and ruminations on Lara's choices and experiences, deserves to be examined in length as a film. I wanted a slow build with my characters and their decision-making. I felt that a television series would perhaps chop that slow build off. Pacing was also incredibly important to me. I attempted to evoke the pacing of *Stalker*, in which audiences feel their bodies adapt to the timing on the screen. As a general rule, one page of a screenplay is equal to about one minute of screen time. I expect *Silo City*, with its lengthy action description, to run two hours.

In terms of production, I can see *Silo City* being produced in a similar nature to *Annihilation*. *Annihilation* ran on a budget of \$40 to 55 million under Paramount Pictures.<sup>17</sup> Although it only grossed \$42 million, it received critical acclaim and many attribute the low gross to a failure in advertisement or issues with production.<sup>18</sup> Ideally, *Silo City* would be produced under a production company such as Paramount Pictures or Focus Features. Unlike *Annihilation*, a large sum of the money could be saved through lack of special effects and extreme set design. *Stalker* was produced with a low budget of 6,000,000 RUR, although Tarkovsky did need to reshoot three times.<sup>19</sup> I would estimate the budget of *Silo City* to be between \$10 and 20 million, with a release in major US cities.

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<sup>17</sup> "Annihilation," IMDb, 2018, <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2798920/>.

<sup>18</sup> Elena Nicolaou, "Why is This Women-Led Sci-Fi Movie Being Pushed Aside?," Refinery29, January 31, 2018, [https://www.refinery29.com/2018/01/189605/annihilation-movie-release-netflix-paramount-studio-fight?bucketed=true&bucketing\\_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F](https://www.refinery29.com/2018/01/189605/annihilation-movie-release-netflix-paramount-studio-fight?bucketed=true&bucketing_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F).

<sup>19</sup> "Stalker," IMDb, 2018, <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0079944/>.

## Formatting the Script

In formatting the final version of the screenplay, I followed screenwriting rules I learned in Professor Margaret Cezair-Thompson's class, as well as the styles of screenplays I've read. The general rules for a screenplay are:<sup>20</sup>

1. Margins are one inch.
2. Font is Courier and 12 point.
3. Page numbers go on the top right and are followed by a period.
4. Indicate location change or scenes by slug lines.
5. Use Cut To or Dissolve to indicate the change of a scene or a transition.
6. Dialogue is indented and right-justified.
7. Character names above dialogue are indented and center.
8. Capitalize the first time a character name appears.
9. Capitalize sounds.

However, few screenwriters follow these rules exactly. In order to get a taste of the various types of screenplay styles, I read quite a few:

- *Adaptation*
- *Annihilation*
- *Blade Runner*
- *Double Indemnity*
- *Memento*
- *Midnight Cowboy*
- *The Shape of Water*

The most persuasive was the screenplay for *Annihilation*. It underlined and bolded slug lines, as well as transitions, making reading much easier. It also capitalized all occurrences of character names throughout the script. Because my screenplay is quite visual and not extremely dialogue heavy, I have a lot of action description. Initially, my action description was very lengthy, with full sentences and paragraphs. The *Annihilation* screenplay broke up the heavy action description by writing one thought per line. Complete sentences only occurred occasionally. I incorporated this style into my own script, shortening my descriptions significantly and streamlining the flow.

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<sup>20</sup> "How to Format a Screenplay," Final Draft, 2018, <https://www.finaldraft.com/learn/how-to-format-a-screenplay/>.

## Structuring the Script

In my previous screenwriting classes I've only written a maximum of fifteen pages of script. Writing a full length screenplay proved to be extremely difficult and required intense organization. I began by looking at my treatment and then dividing it into sequences. These sequences indicated a change in plot or mood. I wrote under each sequence the scenes I wanted to occur, along with their basic description. This approach was developed from the model done by Adrienne Ogle in her 2015 CAMS thesis:

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### Scene: Title

What do you want to accomplish in this scene?

- Main themes/ideas

Quick Summary:

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When writing the scenes I used the idea of thirds, as well as an A/B/C plot structure. The first third of the screenplay deals with the introduction of Lara and her world, as well as the first signs of Maeve. The second third deals with Lara beginning to consciously investigate these experiences. The final third deals with Lara making her decision about whether or not to stay in Maeve's body. The A/B/C plot structure assisted in the importance and appearance of my characters. Lara and her experiences with Maeve served as the A line, Deidre and her mother served as the B line, and Finn served as the C line.

When setting out to write a science fiction film, I aimed to create a story that differed from the typical narrative. *Stalker* influenced me heavily, but I see *Silo City* being released on a larger scale nationwide. Because of this, I looked at the opening of some popular science fiction films to see how they introduced their story and world. I want to emulate *Stalker*, but not completely adopt its slow, ambiguous nature. I found inspiration for my original opening in the opening of *Children of Men*. It portrays London in a post-apocalyptic world where women are infertile. The film provides major clues and background information about the world's past through television announcements and setting. I incorporated aspects such as sirens, news announcements, and public frenzy in order to communicate enough information while still keeping some ambiguity.

Through the editing process, however, my opening changed several times. I ended up keeping the major clues and background information, but gave the opening a softer feel reminiscent of *Thelma & Louise*. In the film's opening shot, the image slowly shifts from black and white to color. I removed the use of text to indicate time change and introduced this concept of shifting color.

## **Struggles and What I Learned**

These past few semesters have been the most intensive of my Wellesley Career. Through the process of writing a screenplay I have learned the depth of research and planning necessary to pull off such a feat. Ending the process was difficult as well, as I kept thinking about new ideas and possibilities up to the last day of writing. I know that I will continue to ruminate on the different paths my story can take. These characters and plot line have become personal; they have become what I think about before I go to sleep every night. Because of this journey I am a better writer, a screenwriter, and have learned how to bring the world in my head to life on the page. I am grateful for the opportunities provided to me that have allowed me to pursue this path, and extend my gratitude towards my wonderful advisor, Winifred Wood, for guiding the way.

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## Supplementary Materials

*Silo City*  
Treatment, 2018  
Anne Conron

### Logline

In a city ravaged by nuclear disaster, one woman chooses to give up her body and inhabit the body of a seventy-year-old woman.

### Characters

**Lara:** Woman in her early 40s. Grew up in South Buffalo. No family still living. Very curious and stubborn, and her curiosity leads her to often be selfish in her pursuits. A Harvester.

**Deidre:** Woman in her 40s. Grew up in South Buffalo. Has a strong moral compass and sticks by it. Is impatient and practical. Works in a soap factory.

**Finn:** Man in his 80s. Lives in North Buffalo in Elmwood Village. Bookish and passionate. Maeve's husband.

**Maeve:** Woman who owned the older body. A librarian who enjoyed music and the arts. Died at 75. Taken by the government to be a Shell for harvesting.

**Miss Shannon:** Deidre's mother who has dementia.

### Synopsis

Lara, a woman in her forties, lives in South Buffalo. The city exists under constant nuclear threat. One day the sirens go off; this threat has come true. Ten years later, a large area southwest of the city has been sectioned off by the government due to the presence of an unknown radioactive energy. The nuclear disaster has caused the weather of Buffalo to be constantly rainy and cloudy. Sun is rare. People struggle for work. Many pleasures of life are no longer feasible.

Lara has secured a position with the government's Department of Defense as a Harvester. The government operates out of a grain elevator graveyard called Silo City. Lara seems to have a strange connection to the place. On the days with rain, Lara harvests the radioactive energy for

research, as no one knows exactly what its effects are. In order to have every precaution, she is required not only to wear a hazmat suit, but to also undergo a process called the Transfer, in which she transfers her consciousness to a Shell.

Shells are unwanted bodies obtained by the government. When someone is about to die of a brain related injury, the government goes through a process of ‘freezing’ them so they become a shell to be occupied. They are assumed to be essentially dead. People receive better bodies based on their job status. Lara, a newer worker, has received the body of a seventy-year-old woman.

As she continues to harvest energy, Lara notices small changes in her behavior. She begins enjoying different foods and experiencing foreign emotions. These sensations are most prominent around the presence of water. One day Lara feels a pull, and walks an hour away from her apartment. She ends up at a house she’s never seen before, and can’t figure out what compelled her to go there. Lara confides this to her neighbor and friend Deidre, who is very concerned and reminds her that no one knows the effects of the radiation. Deidre has a mother, Miss Shannon, who suffers from dementia. Lara feels guilt as she knows her likely fate.

One day after harvesting Lara forgets to Transfer back into her original body. She falls asleep in the old body and doesn’t realize until she sees a reflection of herself in a window. Instead of admitting the mistake to her superior, Lara goes to hide in her apartment. She doesn’t want to risk losing her job and the opportunity to be in the older body.

Lara runs into Deidre at her apartment and confesses. Deidre instructs Lara to stay inside until Deidre finishes work. Lara ignores her, and explores her world in this old body. Lara feels the pull towards the house again and follows it. As she is standing outside of the house, an older man, Finn, opens the door. He cries out, “Maeve!” Panicked, Lara runs away. However, this experience of emotions makes Lara desire being in Maeve’s body even more.

Maeve begins to infiltrate Lara’s subconscious. Lara has a dream in which she mixes her own memories with Maeve’s. At a check-up at work, Lara enquires into Maeve’s life, desperate to know more. Deidre questions Lara on the fate of her mother. Lara lies and says she doesn’t know. Miss Shannon deteriorates quickly, only able to recite memories from her childhood. Lara unconsciously begins to relate, not realising those memories aren’t hers.

Lara begins to stalk Finn’s house. Deidre finds out, and they argue. Deidre wants Lara to get over this obsession with the body. Lara heads to Finn’s house in her original body, posing as a census worker. She gathers information about Maeve, but the sensations are too much. She plans on leaving her original body for Maeve’s, but is sidelined by the news of Miss Shannon’s death.

Lara takes care of Deidre for a few weeks, but comes to the conclusion that she can't live this life anymore. Deidre agrees to undergo the Transfer in order to understand Lara; Lara is all she has left. Lara performs the Transfer between her and Deidre, something never done between two live people before. Lara experiences images of her and Maeve's life, revealing that Lara was forced out of Silo City because of a flood as a child. Deidre understands, but won't join her.

Lara Transfers into Maeve's body, leaving her original one for good. She heads to Finn's house only to find he has died in his sleep. She mourns deeply and buries the body. Lara walks off into the city. After a while, an officer goes to her work house to check on Lara, and is shocked to find her original body hanging there.

## SEQUENCE 1

### SCENE 1: Introduction series of shots of disaster and harvesting

What do you need to accomplish in this first scene?

- Introduce the overall context of the aftermath of a nuclear disaster
- Begin to show the processes of Transfer and what a Shell is
- Introduce main characters

Quick Summary: Series of shots that move from black and white to color. Lara walks to work at General Mills when the sirens go off, indicating some sort of nuclear disaster unknown to the audience. She watches the news with her neighbor, Deidre. She looks for jobs and manages to get one with the Department of Defense. She has a flashback to herself playing in a grain elevator as a child. Lara trains for a few years and finally begins to harvest. She uses the body of an older woman.

## SEQUENCE 2

### SCENE 2: Marking off the calendar

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Introduce use of calendar

Quick Summary: Lara marks off the days on her calendar. The current day indicates that she has a lunch date with Deidre and her mother. The year on the calendar is always absent. Show Lara's handwriting so it is apparent later in the screenplay that it has changed.

### SCENE 3: Lunch with Deidre at Elderwood home

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Deidre's mom has dementia
- Show Deidre's personality

Quick Summary: Lara and Deidre bring sandwiches for lunch at the Edlerwood home. Lara makes polite conversation with Deidre's mother, Miss Shannon, but it is clear that she is uncomfortable. Deidre's mother has dementia, and doesn't recognize her daughter. Deidre and

Lara discuss Lara's job. Deidre knows that she is a harvester, but doesn't know about the Transfer or Shells.

#### **SCENE 4: Blips on the radar screen**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Show Lara's knowledge and behavior beginning to change in small, interesting, and unsettling ways
- Show her taking an unfamiliar path, one that is later revealed to lead to a house
- She is confused, unsure why she is feeling these things

Quick Summary: On the way back from lunch at Elderwood, she walks. She isn't paying too much attention, and soon she begins habitually following a path she's never gone down before. She realizes abruptly that she's on Elmwood Village - an hour away from her apartment. She doesn't know what the house she stopped at means to her.

### **SEQUENCE 3**

#### **SCENE 5: Testing the body**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Show Lara testing out her old body

Quick Summary: Lara heads back to work. After the workday, she takes extra time and tests out the body. She moves around, does stretches. She also does vocal tests, and sings some songs.

#### **SCENE 6: Grocery store part 1**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Show a baseline for what kind of food Lara is buying.

Quick Summary: Lara goes to the store to stock up on groceries. She grabs an apple because she can afford it now with her harvesting salary, which is still very low, but better than other jobs.

#### **SCENE 7: Dinner with Deidre**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Lara confides her trip to Elmwood Village to Deidre
- Emphasize Lara's introspectiveness, tenacity, curiosity, and persistence
- Show that Deidre is concerned but curious as well.

Quick Summary: Lara and Deidre make dinner together, something they do often. It's introduced where Deidre works, a soap factory. During dinner, Lara confides in Deidre that she walked to Elmwood Village. They can't come up with an answer, and Dee laughs it off. Lara finds it funny as well, but cannot forget it.

## **SEQUENCE 4**

### **SCENE 8: Harvesting Fields**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Uneasiness of the fields - unseen but penetrating radiation
- Show how exhausted Lara is. Harvesting is a long day of work in her old body

Quick Summary: Lara harvests energy in the fields. She is sweating, clearly exhausted.

### **SCENE 9: Forgetting to Transfer**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Lara is tired and forgets to perform the Transfer

Quick Summary: Lara performs her night routine with exhaustion. She falls into bed, forgetting the Transfer.

### **SCENE 10: Accidentally leaving in the old body**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Lara is beginning to get comfortable in this body
- She still doesn't realize she's in the old body until she sees her reflection in the parking garage

Quick Summary: Lara leaves the work house, still very tired. She drives all the way back to the parking garage and parks her car. She doesn't realize she's in the old body until she catches a reflection of herself. She doesn't want to be demoted for this mistake so she sneaks off, walking the long distance home.

### **SCENE 11: Running into Deidre**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Deidre finds out about the shell
- Show Deidre's loyalty
- Lara is becoming obsessed

Quick Summary: Lara tries to sneak into her apartment, but Deidre is leaving at the same time. Deidre questions a stranger entering Lara's apartment, and Lara confesses. Lara confides in her what happened and is worried she'll get fired. Deidre tells her to stay in the apartment while she goes to work, and that they'll talk about things later that night.

### **SCENE 12: Grocery store in old body**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Lara exploring her familiar places in an old body, almost like a rebirth
- She buys food that is different than what she bought earlier, indicating a change in taste

Quick Summary: Lara wanders back to the grocery store and adjusts to this new experience. She finds herself heading towards certain areas more, and feeling emotions towards different things. She purchases different types of foods.

### **SCENE 13: Following the path again**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Lara feels the pull towards the path again
- Pose question for audience- is this pull heightened because she's in the old body?

Quick Summary: Lara leaves her apartment again, this time drawn to walk back to the house in Elmwood Village. She acknowledges this pull, and lets it take her.

## SEQUENCE 5

### SCENE 14: Seeing the husband

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Introduce Finn, Maeve's husband
- Huge emotional moment as Lara fully feels emotions that aren't hers and emotions she's never felt, especially in a post-disaster society that potentially has not given her the opportunity to ever feel them
- Realization that she may be completely in over her head

Quick Summary: Lara arrives at the house and stares at it, trying to understand what it means to her. She is standing on the walk up to the porch when the door suddenly opens and an elderly man steps out. He stares at her in disbelief. Lara feels a wave of sadness and affection pour over her. She is shocked and steps back. The man cries out "Maeve?" to her. He begins to walk forward, but Lara catches herself and hurries off against his cries.

### SCENE 15: Holing up in her apartment

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Lara tries to process these emotions
- She's never felt them before

Quick Summary: Lara returns to her apartment, locking the door and pulling down the shades. She sits there in total shock, hyperventilating from such an intense emotional wave. After a while, she begins to sob.

### SCENE 16: Returning to work

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Lara needs to transfer out of the body

Quick Summary: Lara uses Deidre's bike to travel back to the parking garage. She returns to harvesting.

### SCENE 17: Mirror

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Lara falling in love with Maeve's body

Quick Summary: Lara examines herself in the bathroom mirror, naked. It is not sexual. Rather, it is loving. She caresses her face.

## **SEQUENCE 6**

### **SCENE 18: Dream**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Lara that night has a dream that mixes her reality with Maeve's past
- Her subconscious is beginning to interact

Quick Summary: When Lara goes to bed that night she has a very strange dream. She is walking through Silo City pre-disaster. A few people she doesn't know come up to her, telling her to follow them. She tries, but is too slow. She catches her reflection in a mirror, and sees that she is in Maeve's body. Deidre appears, yelling at Lara that she doesn't know her. Lara finds herself on top of a silo, surrounded by the same people from earlier. They pressure her to jump. She does, and when her feet smack the water she wakes up.

### **SCENE 19: Falling in the river**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Water is a strong element and theme
- Perhaps possesses some 'supernatural' qualities that tie into the unknown qualities of the radiation

Quick Summary: Lara stands outside the Silo City facility before her appointment. She gazes down at the water and it brings her into a trance. She can't hear anything else around her. Leaning forward, she falls in. Lara cannot swim, but is rescued by an employee who happens to be walking around.

### **SCENE 20: Inside the facility after Buffalo River**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Lara is intrigued about Maeve and who she is
- Shows that Lara isn't going to end this journey

Quick Summary: Lara waits to be evaluated in one of the medical rooms. She slyly asks questions of the nurse taking care of her. The nurse answers most of them, assuming it to be educational talk. Lara asks if there is a database and the nurse says that they have lists of assigned bodies to certain people, but once the process of becoming a shell is performed, personal information is wiped. The nurse says that they do keep files of potential shells.

### **SCENE 21: Deidre and Lara discuss Lara in Maeve's body**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Lara is now lying to Deidre
- The experiences she's having are becoming more important than their friendship
- Lara begins using speech from before the disaster, speech that has phased out

Quick Summary: Deidre begins to think that Lara's gone too far. She's worried about her. Lara mentions phones, which is confusing because they haven't been used since a while before the disaster. She questions Lara if she knows anything about what will happen to her mother. Lara lies to her and says she doesn't know, and that her checkup today cleared everything. They leave with Deidre thinking the entire thing is behind them.

### **SCENE 22: Visiting the Elderwood home**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Lara and Deidre visit Deidre's mom
- Lara is beginning to exhibit signs through her mannerisms and language

Quick Summary: Lara and Deidre visit the home to see her mother, who is deteriorating quickly. They have a conversation with the mother in which Lara exhibits signs. She connects with Miss Shannon on experiences from far before the disaster that she couldn't have possibly experienced. Deidre notices.

### **SCENE 23: Visits Finn's house**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Show how Lara needs to know information about Maeve
- Show how much her experiencing these odd happenings have affected her

Quick Summary: At night Lara stalks the house in her original body. She memorizes the habits of the older man and is now feeling the emotions she's getting as a sort of high.

## SEQUENCE 7

### SCENE 24: Deidre follows Lara to Finn's house

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Deidre grows suspicious of Lara
- Starts not to trust her

Quick Summary: Deidre follows Lara one night as she goes to stalk the house. Deidre is extremely confused and perplexed.

### SCENE 25: Confrontation with Deidre

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Deidre is losing trust in Lara
- She believes she can still help her
- Lara doesn't want to be helped

Quick Summary: Lara returns late one night from stalking the house. Deidre confronts her, saying she followed her earlier to the house. Lara is angry. She says Deidre can't possibly understand. Deidre's anger at Lara for getting a better job comes out. Deidre says I want to understand, I want to help you. She thinks Lara is probably damaging her body beyond repair. Lara says my body means nothing to me anymore. Deidre says how can you say that, you can't separate yourself from it. Lara's says I don't want to, I just want to give myself a different base, a different life. Deidre tells her to go visit the house and get the information she needs so she can get over this and be done.

### SCENE 26: Lara walks by a library

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Show the changes this society has gone through

Quick Summary: Lara walks back from Finn's house and passes a library. The doors are shut and bolted. It is out of use.

### **SCENE 27: Lara talks with Finn**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Lara tries to get information about Maeve
- Instead of ending it, it only makes her more invested

Quick Summary: Lara goes to the house again. She knocks on the door and pretends to be a government official asking some census questions. He is kind and lets her in, and they converse for a while. While he makes tea, she sneaks around the house. When Lara tastes the tea, Maeve's favorite, she experiences a flashback that isn't hers. Finn confesses he doesn't believe Maeve has truly left him, and Lara, feeling uncomfortable about her earlier meeting with him in Maeve's body, leaves.

### **SCENE 28: Practices speaking to Finn in the mirror**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Has decided to take on Maeve's body

Quick Summary: In Maeve's body, Lara practices what she'll say to Finn when she goes back to him.

## **SEQUENCE 8**

### **SCENE 29: Miss Shannon is dead**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Miss Shannon and Deidre are closer to Lara than she realizes
- She knows she can't leave yet

Quick Summary: Lara is beginning to pack her apartment up, fully intending to take on Maeve's body and move in with Finn. Deidre knocks and informs her that her mother has died, and Lara realizes she can't give up her world just yet.

### **SCENE 30: Miss Shannon's Funeral**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- There are still some traditions this post-disaster society holds on to, such as religion, although there is struggle to keep faith
- Deidre's grief
- Lara's guilt knowing Miss Shannon's probable fate, and that she is most likely not in the casket
- Lara's unexpected grief as well

Quick Summary: They attend Miss Shannon's funeral mass in the church, and then go to the burying of the casket. The priest reads a funeral sermon and then a prayer over the grave. The prayer over the grave mentions resurrection, which is fitting to Miss Shannon's fate.

### **SCENE 31: Supporting Deidre for a few weeks (Montage)**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Lara feels like she's obligated to help Deidre
- However, she gets antsy

Quick Summary: Lara tries to support Deidre through her grief.

### **SCENE 32: Philharmonic**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Deidre needs a reprieve from her life
- Lara experiencing sensations for the first time in a while
- Lara makes the decision to leave

Quick Summary: Deidre wants to go to the old Philharmonic for fun. Lara tells her it has been shut down, but Deidre wants to sneak in. Lara gives in. Deidre plays some old songs on the piano, one

of which touches Lara. It must have been a song Maeve loved. They leave, with Lara deciding she must leave this life.

## **SEQUENCE 9**

### **SCENE 33: Saying goodbye to Deidre**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Lara feels it's her obligation to tell Deidre she's leaving
- Deidre resists

Quick Summary: Lara has packed her entire apartment, and goes over to Deidre's to say goodbye. Deidre tells her that she'll attempt to understand by trying the Transfer device.

### **SCENE 34: Harvesting for the last time**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Lara says goodbye to her work

Quick Summary: Lara works in the fields for the last time.

### **SCENE 35: Lara finds Deidre at work and they perform the Transfer**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- The final goodbye
- Deidre doesn't agree, but understands, and is content with letting her go

Quick Summary: Lara finds Deidre at her work. She drags her to the break room to perform the Transfer. Deidre asks if she is Lara or someone else. Lara answers that it's not like that, it's just different, feeling emotions that she's never felt. Deidre asks how long she has and Lara doesn't know. Lara asks, is a long life what you want in this world? They share a goodbye.

### **SCENE 36: Finn's death**

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- All of Lara's plans have shattered
- She experiences intense pain and heartbreak
- The ambiguity of where Lara is going

Quick Summary: Lara in Maeve's body goes back to the house to see Finn, only to find out he has died in his sleep. She mourns, then buries him herself in the backyard. She takes one more look at the house, takes the Transfer device in her hand, and walks into the street.

## SEQUENCE 10

### SCENE 37: Shots of people

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Show the ambiguity of where Lara is - she exists everywhere.

Quick Summary: Shots of various place and people around the city.

### SCENE 38: Harvesting fields with Miss Shannon

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Ambiguity of what has happened to Miss Shannon

Quick Summary: Deidre moves around her apartment. Focus on a photograph of her mom. Cut to a harvester in the fields.

### SCENE 39: Lara's body hanging in the closet

What do you need to accomplish in this scene?

- Show what has happened to Lara's original body

Quick Summary: The staff member from the beginning notices that Lara's quotas have been empty recently. They travel to the work house and open the closet to reveal Lara's body hanging there.

**SILO CITY**

**FADE IN.**

**EXT. SOUTH STREET, BUFFALO. MORNING.** ##*Black And White*  
*Sequence##*

*Black and White Sequence slowly FADES to Color Sequence with each Dissolve*

A woman, LARA, walks down the sidewalk.

She dresses professionally, but at closer glance her clothes look second-hand and worn.

She is around thirty years old with unremarkable features twisted into a tense appearance. She would be easy to lose in a crowd.

Busy intersection in the far distance. Cars HONK and brakes SCREECH. South Street doesn't make such noise.

On the left side of the street runs the Buffalo River, calm and tranquil.

The houses keep multiple families in them and are in need of repairs. Potholes litter the road.

Behind the river lies Silo City, a graveyard for grain elevators. They tower over the houses on South Street, casting great shadows on the river. LARA looks at it out of the corner of her eye.

LARA stumbles over the uneven sidewalk. She HUFFS, aggravated.

A siren SCREAMS out.

LARA staggers in terror.

The intersection ERUPTS into chaos.

A voice SPEAKS alongside the siren.

ANNOUNCEMENT VOICE

PROCEED TO NEAREST SHELTER. EMERGENCY.

PROCEED TO NEAREST SHELTER. EMERGENCY.

The voice continues to repeat itself.

Families begin pouring out of the houses and running towards the intersection where the nearest shelter is located.

LARA runs with them in the street.

Her heel snags on a pothole, ankle breaking with a SNAP. LARA CRIES out in pain and frustration. No one stops to help her.

GRUNTING and PANTING, LARA tries to hobble and crawl her way to the shelter. She is alone on the street now.

Tears of anger leak out of LARA'S eyes. She won't make it in time.

She turns around and hobbles back to her apartment.

**INT. LARA'S APARTMENT. SAME.**

LARA stumbles through the door, shutting and bolting it behind her.

The apartment is small and barren, with one main room containing a couch and a bed. A door at the end of the room opens to reveal a small bathroom. Next to the bathroom is a kitchenette. No oven, just burners.

LARA reaches up and pulls down a rolling steel door. She moves to the window and does the same.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**INT. DEIDRE'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.**

LARA and DEIDRE sit on DEIDRE'S couch, both wearing surgical masks.

DEIDRE is tall and lanky, with short, curly dark hair. Her face is hard, attempting to mask fear.

LARA'S face portrays fear as well, but also a curiosity she can't mask.

They watch a broadcast that can be assumed to be displayed on a screen. The broadcast device is not seen.

BROADCAST (O.S.)

Safety of the citizens remains a top priority at the moment. The city advises all people to continue wearing medical masks even if your residential area has been marked safe. The effects are still largely unknown.

DEIDRE SCOFFS in disgust and turns off the broadcast. She walks offscreen.

As soon as DEIDRE is out of sight, LARA turns the broadcast back on, focusing intently.

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

... Areas still under evacuation rules are Tonawanda, Kenmore, Cheektowaga, Amherst, Clarence, and Lancaster. Members of these areas are prohibited from returning to their homes to collect personal items or look for any friends or relations. The evacuation teams are on full patrol. Please check City Hall for the continually updated status of family members.

DISSOLVE TO:

**EXT. SAINT CLAIR STREET. MORNING.**

LARA walks down St. Clair Street, stopping at broken telephone poles to look at ad flyers for jobs. Every tag is torn off. She SIGHS and continues down the street.

DISSOLVE TO:

**INT. PEROT GRAIN ELEVATOR. DAY.**

LARA swings open the door of the grain elevator with DEIDRE.

The inside is cavernous and massive. LARA stares.

The elevator is filled with people out of work. The atmosphere is chaotic.

People are dressed as if going to interviews, but their clothes are old and wrinkled.

Their faces are tired and hair messy. They clutch IDs and papers in their hands.

It is an odd sort of job fair, with tables and booths at the far end of the room.

One booth reads:

**Entry level position with Sector of Defense. Two years of work guaranteed. Ages 25-35. Bachelor's degree required.**

DEIDRE

Here, let's get in line.

They shove to the end of a thirty person line.

Minutes pass.

They wait anxiously. The room becomes filled with hundreds of people.

DEIDRE and LARA begin to sweat.

DEIDRE

Why isn't the line moving? All you have to do is swipe your ID.

LARA

I don't know. Is it getting full? Do you think they'll stop taking applications?

DEIDRE

No. The more applicants the better their pool.

An official steps out from behind the booth.

OFFICIAL

We will be taking the next ten applicants, only. Thank you for your patience.

DEIDRE

*Fuck.*

The crowd at the booth starts to panic.

People push and shove behind LARA and DEIDRE, trying to cut in line.

Within a few seconds, complete chaos ERUPTS.

People from the back stampede to the front.

A man careens into LARA and DEIDRE, separating them.

DEIDRE

Lara!

LARA doesn't hear her. She sees an opportunity to make it to the front and takes it.

Ducking and weaving between fighting people, LARA abandons DEIDRE, slamming her ID card onto the scanner and guaranteeing herself a chance.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**INT. PEROT GRAIN ELEVATOR SURGERY ROOM. DAY.**

One of the sections of the grain elevator has been transformed into a research lab.

LARA stands among ten other trainees.

Their clothes are old and bedraggled, nothing like the pristine scrubs of the surrounding medical professionals.

She carries a clipboard and pen. The label on her breast reads:

**#14052 Harvesting Program.**

In front of her lies a person on a hospital bed, about fifty years old.

The person is hooked up to wires and appears to be dead. However, an active iMRI (intraoperative magnetic resonance imaging) shows brain activity.

Doctors move around the body, checking vitals and adjusting wires.

HEAD DOCTOR

Someone tell me where to place the transfer modules.

TRAINEE

The temples.

HEAD DOCTOR

Correct. And are there any adjustments to make to the shell's current position?

LARA

Perhaps tilt the head back a bit more. And face the palms upward.

HEAD DOCTOR

Correct.

LARA breathes a SIGH of relief.

The trainees are tense and stressed, taking notes on everything they see and hear.

HEAD DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Bring in the test subject, please.

The sound of a door OPENING echoes off-screen.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. LARA'S APARTMENT. MORNING.** <<COLOR SEQUENCE>>

Ten years have passed since the initial disaster.

LARA opens the window despite heavy rain.

LARA moves to her kitchenette to make breakfast. Dehydrated milk, water, cereal. The cereal looks like Cheerios, but the box has no branding or description.

She watches Silo City through her window.

Behind her on the counter lie an array of miscellaneous items.

Dirty dishes, a jar of pens, a notepad. Behind them is a discarded surgical mask.

FOCUS on the mask.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. SAINT CLAIR STREET. DAY.**

The buildings of Saint Clair Street are completely abandoned. Many are in a state of disrepair. No more job flyers line the out-of-use telephone poles.

LARA walks across the Ohio Street bridge and into Silo City. She gazes at a clearing next to the silos.

The old grain elevators have been repurposed into the new government center for administration and research.

Silo City looks unchanged on the exterior except for the presence of vehicles and smoke. A sign out front reads:

**CITY RESEARCH FACILITY.**

LARA walks to the Perot Grain Elevator and swipes her ID. The ID displays her face and a large serial number:

**SERIAL #14052.**

LARA swings open the door.

**INT. PEROT GRAIN ELEVATOR. MORNING.**

The wide room that was once filled with screaming, jobless people is now eerily quiet.

Office desks and cubicles are set up with employees completing paperwork.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

LARA, a child, runs through the deep halls of the Perot Grain Elevator. She LAUGHS.

END FLASHBACK:

LARA walks through a long hallway. The walls of the hallway are the curved bodies of abandoned grain elevators.

LARA enters an office at the end of the hallway. A STAFF MEMBER approaches LARA.

STAFF MEMBER

Excellent. Everything prepared?

LARA nods.

STAFF MEMBER

We'll have you cleared and then we can head out.

LARA steps towards the front desk and walks under what looks like an airport TSA scanner. She gets a green light.

LARA follows the STAFF MEMBER to the far right side of the office, where an exit leads to a platform.

**EXT. TROLLEY PLATFORM. SAME.**

LARA and the STAFF MEMBER step onto a trolley. Four trainees and their accompanying staff members sit there.

No one speaks.

LARA watches the city pass by. Buildings are abandoned and falling apart, some in complete ruins.

No one lines the streets in these areas.

The trolley pulls further away from the city and the houses become spread out. Grass lawns separate them.

LARA gazes greedily at the lushness.

They pass a poorly built border wall securing the city.

Guards line it, all wearing surgical masks.

STAFF MEMBER

Masks on.

They arrive at the end of the trolley stop.

A large building juts out of the open land. Tents substitute for concrete on the outermost layers.

Colorful flowers decorate the surrounding earth.

They walk over to an adjacent parking garage.

LARA and her STAFF MEMBER move to a car labeled with a number identical to the one on LARA'S ID badge, #14052.

**INT. PARKING GARAGE. DAY.**

STAFF MEMBER

You should drive. You'll need to get used to it.

LARA

Alright.

The STAFF MEMBER directs her.

STAFF MEMBER

It's about two and a half miles until we reach the houses, then another half mile until the fields. That part you'll be walking.

**INT. WORK HOUSE. SAME.**

They arrive at the work house. Crudely made, one-story.

Inside are minimal furnishings. A large dining room table and entrance closet. Behind them are a bath and bedroom.

STAFF MEMBER

Let's not waste any time.

LARA

Of course.

She empties her bag.

Inside: a large glass bottle of water, a packed meal, some toiletries.

Bracing herself, LARA goes towards the closet.

She opens door. Inside leans the body of an elderly woman.

Lara looks towards the STAFF MEMBER questioningly.

STAFF MEMBER

You're a new recruit.

The older woman wears long underwear and is supported by a dolly type tool.

LARA wheels her out. She awkwardly lifts her onto the table.

The STAFF MEMBER hands Lara the same device used by the HEAD DOCTOR earlier.

LARA adjusts the woman on the table. Head back, palms up.

LARA attaches two wires with sticky pads on the ends to her temples. She does the same for the woman. Lara sits.

Begin the Transfer.

LARA shudders, and falls back in her chair, unconscious. The woman on the table shudders and wakes up. LARA is occupying the body of the older woman.

STAFF MEMBER

Take some time to get used to it. Get up when you feel ready.

LARA gets up from the table, struggling a bit.

The STAFF MEMBER conducts a series of quick tests as if giving a physical at a doctor's office.

STAFF MEMBER

All is in order. How are you feeling?

LARA

(croaky)

Go... good.

STAFF MEMBER

Yes, that is an odd experience, not having your own voice. Feels foreign, doesn't it?

LARA

Yes. It feels very strange.

STAFF MEMBER

This is as far as I go. Try to fill at least three-quarters of the harvester by the end

of the workday. They're lenient on first-timers.

LARA

Thank you, I -

STAFF MEMBER

Are you nervous?

LARA

Am I nervous?

STAFF MEMBER

Yes, are you nervous? Scared? Frightened?

LARA

Well, yes. I'm a little nervous.

STAFF MEMBER

It's good to be a little nervous. Keeps you alert. You seem very calm, though. Much calmer than anyone else I've brought out here. Maybe it means you'll do a good job.

LARA

*(forcefully)*

I will.

STAFF MEMBER

Don't worry, I can't fire you. I'll see you in a few hours. Good luck.

LARA

Hopefully I won't need it.

LARA steps into a hazmat suit that obscures her face.

She leaves the STAFF MEMBER in the house and walks the half mile path towards the harvesting fields, carrying a harvesting device shaped like a vacuum.

**EXT. HARVESTING FIELDS. DAY.**

Tall, barbed-wire fencing surrounds the fields. Signs read:

**Hazardous! Keep Out!**

The fields are quiet and calm. There is no noise, no sounds of wildlife.

The earth is damp and soft; rain fell recently.

LARA takes out her harvester and begins to harvest.

**SMASH CUT TO:**

**INT. LARA'S APARTMENT. DAY.**

CLOSE UP on LARA'S hand as she marks the previous day off of her calendar. She is back in her original body. The current day reads:

**April 11. Dee and Mom.**

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELDERWOOD HOME. AFTERNOON.**

LARA and DEIDRE sit down at chairs on the side of a hospital bed.

LARA glances at the window: cloudy, no rain.

In the bed lies DEIDRE'S mother, MISS SHANNON. She doesn't look like someone who belongs in assisted living. She is around sixty, with kind eyes and greying hair.

DEIDRE

Hi, mom. How are you feeling?

MISS SHANNON

Oh, what a nice surprise! Hello, girls.

LARA

Hello, Miss Shannon.

MISS SHANNON

I was just talking to Abby about moving the flower pots to the side porch to get more sun. It's a shame living here, really. Rarely any sun in this area.

DEIDRE

Well there's no porch here, but we can get some flowers for you, mom. *(To Lara)* It actually would brighten up the room, this place is depressing.

LARA chuckles. MISS SHANNON tries to address her, but can't recall her name.

LARA

Lara.

MISS SHANNON

Yes, yes, Lara. How are things with your job?

LARA

Very well right now. I'm - I'm enjoying it.

DEIDRE

I'll get out the lunch, I'm starving.

MISS SHANNON

I've always loved those cereals. My favorite kind is...um...it's the one that...

DEIDRE

Lara doesn't work there anymore, mom. She's working for the facility.

MISS SHANNON

Are you? Fantastic!

LARA

Oh, thank you. It's not much, just a job -

MISS SHANNON

But it's a government job. And those keep. Michael had one, yes he did. For the Parks Department. Just for the summer, but he very much enjoyed it. Him and the boys would drive down in one of those town trucks from the village center right into the park, and they'd do fencing, tend to the grass. The kids in the athletic programs loved him.

DEIDRE

Turkey or tuna?

LARA is relieved to be taken out of the conversation.

MISS SHANNON

This one, please.

They eat.

MISS SHANNON

Is Michael coming down soon? I haven't seen him in a while.

DEIDRE

Not sure.

LARA

Miss Shannon, have you been playing any chess lately? Dee's told me you've joined a club here.

MISS SHANNON looks at LARA with confusion. Pause.

DEIDRE

Mom you need a new sweater. This one's almost worn out. How long have you had it?

MISS SHANNON

This sweater's fine. It's held up for years.

DEIDRE

Come on, I'll buy you a new one.

MISS SHANNON

That's not necessary.

DEIDRE

No, I want to. What's your favorite color?

MISS SHANNON

*(gesturing to her sweater)*

This! This is my favorite color! Please, I'm not hungry anymore. I just need... I need...

LARA

A rest?

DEIDRE

I'm sorry, mom, I - yes, how about you rest for a bit. We'll just take a little walk.

DEIDRE and LARA call in a nurse and step out.

DEIDRE

(sighing)

Thanks for coming.

LARA

Of course. Dee, don't worry about it.

DEIDRE

I shouldn't have pushed. I knew what was going to happen, and I pushed.

LARA

Well, now you know. She seems much worse, Dee.

DEIDRE

She does. She's mixing up times. It's like she's living before.

LARA

Oh, when she was talking about Michael?

DEIDRE

Michael, the sun. I thought signing her up for chess club would help. But I suppose it's a little too late.

LARA

I mean, it won't help a ton at this stage.

DEIDRE

I know. I'm going to have to increase the visits. Can't have her forgetting her favorite daughter's face.

LARA

Don't worry, I'll come with you.

DEIDRE

Ugh, I don't want to talk about this anymore. Tell me about the job. I mean, I know the basics, but what has it been like? You're finally out on the field.

LARA

It's been...

LARA looks around, as if people are listening in.

LARA

It's been incredible. Dee, I can't tell you a lot, but all of the training has been worth it.

DEIDRE

What? What can't you tell me?

LARA

Just the specifics. Government contract.

DEIDRE

So fancy. Thank you for hanging out with my sorry self.

LARA

Dee.

DEIDRE

Do you think they'll let you stay?

LARA

As long as I meet my quota.

DEIDRE

But - aren't you nervous, Lara?

LARA

Nervous about what? The harvesting?

DEIDRE

No, Lara, the *radiation*.

LARA

Oh, that.

DEIDRE

Yes, *that*.

LARA

I don't know. No one does. I mean, maybe some people do.

DEIDRE

That's the point, Lara. No one knows what it is or what it does. Not completely. It could be doing anything to you... even right now!

LARA

(*laughing*)

Dee, they wouldn't send me in there if there was a risk.

DEIDRE

Don't flatter yourself.

LARA

Trust me, I'm well protected.

DEIDRE

With what, a suit? What will that do?

LARA

It's a special suit.

They are interrupted by SHOUTING down the hall. MISS SHANNON has wandered out of her room and forgotten where she is. A nurse attempts to coerce her back.

MISS SHANNON

I don't live here! Let go of me, I'm going home! Where are you taking me?

DEIDRE

Shit.

They move to help.

DEIDRE

Mom, stop, it's okay -

MISS SHANNON

Get off of me! Who are you people?

DEIDRE

Mom, it's your daughter -

MISS SHANNON

Don't touch me!

DEIDRE pulls away, shocked that her mother doesn't recognize her.

DEIDRE

*(without turning around)*

You can head home. I'll be back later.

LARA

Are you sure?

DEIDRE

Yes. Please go.

LARA leaves.

**EXT. HAMBURG STREET. AFTERNOON.**

LARA exits the home and takes the wrong turn onto Hamburg Street.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

LARA continues to walk down Hamburg Street, taking turns that will lead her to Elmwood Village.

The surrounding buildings slowly increase in size and stature. A more affluent neighborhood.

LARA walks in a state of daydreaming.

END SERIES OF SHOTS:

LARA is halfway through Elmwood Village when she snaps out of it.

She stands in front of a beautiful Queen Anne style home.

She is extremely confused, and studies the house, trying to make sense of why she walked and stopped here, so far from her apartment.

She cannot figure it out, and shaking her head, turns to go home.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. WORK HOUSE. NIGHT.**

End of a day of harvesting. The night routine begins. Rain hammers on the roof.

LARA strips off her hazmat suit and discards it, stepping into the shower. A chemical decontaminant takes the place of body wash.

LARA dons a new suit and moves to undergo the Transfer, but hesitates. She wants to test out this older body.

It begins tentatively, and then evolves into a joyous event.

LARA stretches, moves around, dances. She tests out her voice: vocal warm-ups, SINGING the Happy Birthday song.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MONTES GROCERY DELI. NEXT MORNING.**

LARA pushes a cart through the aisles. She loads it with staple foods, mostly breads and frozen meats.

There is a small dairy section. The vegetable and fruit aisle is sparse and expensive.

LARA contemplates the fruits. She grabs a green apple.

CASHIER

How are you today?

LARA

Good, thanks.

CASHIER

Oh, an apple? Got a birthday?

LARA doesn't respond, just smiles.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. DEIDRE'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.**

LARA enters DEIDRE'S apartment carrying grocery bags.

LARA

It's me.

DEIDRE

Oh, hi. Put the bags on the table, I'll be right in.

LARA empties the bags, taking out food to cook.

DEIDRE

Hey. No work today?

LARA

No, I'll go in tomorrow.

DEIDRE

Aw, that's a shame. Supposed to rain tomorrow. Here, the knives are in the cupboard.

LARA cooks precisely and economically while DEIDRE HUMS, not caring for precision.

LARA

What's that?

She gestures to a pile of dirty pans and measuring cups shoved in the counter corner.

DEIDRE

*(embarrassed)*

Oh. I was trying to make soap.

LARA

You make soap all day, Dee.

DEIDRE

Yea, I am quite aware. No, I mean I'm trying to make it different.

LARA

How?

DEIDRE

All the soap is mass produced and watered down and low quality. And I get it, I get that it's better business to do it that way. But I was thinking. People up in the north would maybe want to pay a little more if it was colored, or if it smelled a bit. Not a lot more, but we could test it out and see how it sells.

LARA

Can I smell some?

DEIDRE

Oh, no. It smells like feet. I haven't perfected it yet.

LARA

Where did you get all the materials?

DEIDRE ignores her.

DEIDRE

Mmm, this smells good. Put the pot in the sink, I'll wash it later.

LARA

Didn't expect such aloof behavior from the soap alchemist.

DEIDRE

Ha! The soap alchemist... has a nice sound to it.

They sit.

DEIDRE

Oh, I forgot to ask you. You came home so late the other day.

LARA

When?

DEIDRE

After we visited my mom. I didn't see your light on when I put the trash out.

LARA

Yeah. Actually, something weird happened.

DEIDRE

Hmm?

LARA

I ended up in Elmwood Village.

DEIDRE

Elmwood? How did you get there?

LARA

Well, I walked.

DEIDRE

Lara, that's about an hour away walking.. I don't understand-

LARA

Are you sure? An hour?

DEIDRE

Yes, definitely. I did some deliveries there last year when the truck broke. Took me an hour and a half carrying the bags.

LARA

It only felt like twenty minutes, I swear...

DEIDRE

Pass the salt. Really, Lara? Were you feeling badly after we visited my mom? I shouldn't have asked you to walk back home -

LARA

No, that was fine. I don't know. I didn't feel sick. I felt really good, actually.

DEIDRE

So what happened?

LARA

It was the strangest thing. So I leave the home, and I usually take a right down Hamburg. But I think I took a left instead and just kept walking.

DEIDRE

I'm just surprised you didn't realize immediately. Because I've done that before, walked a few minutes and then thought "oh, where am I."

LARA

I'm surprised too. That's why I thought it was only for twenty minutes or so. But I didn't feel ill or anything. It felt like I was being pulled or something, the way you feel when you daydream. I only stopped when I finally reached it.

DEIDRE

Finally reached it? Reached what?

LARA

Oh, this house. Very nice, a Queen Anne -

DEIDRE

Fancy.

LARA

- and suddenly I knew where I was. Very confusing.

DEIDRE

Maybe you were daydream-walking... like sleepwalking, but in the day.

LARA

I don't know... I don't know why I stopped at that house.

DEIDRE

Strange. You should ask to get a checkup the next time you go into work, you know.

LARA

It's not that, Dee. Maybe I was really tired.

DEIDRE

Or maybe you were hallucinating and being in front of such a nice house shocked you awake.

LARA

*(laughs)*

Maybe.

Pause.

DEIDRE

Will you go back there?

LARA

To the house? Yes, probably. I don't know.  
Anyway, look what I picked up at Montes.

LARA brandishes the apple.

LARA

Voilà!

DEIDRE

*(gasps)*

Lara! You shouldn't have! Well, yes, you  
should have, my mouth is watering. But  
really, how much was it?

LARA

Doesn't matter.

DEIDRE

Well then. Let's toast to the Harvester -

They CHUCKLE as LARA toasts with the apple, holding it in front  
of her face.

DEIDRE (CONT'D)

- our own daughter of woman.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. HARVESTING FIELDS. DAY.**

SERIES OF SHOTS:

LARA harvests. Light fades. It is clear she harvests all day.

Her posture indicates fatigue as rain drips down her suit.

The fields give off a calm tranquility, but a feeling of uneasiness underneath it all.

END SERIES OF SHOTS:

**CUT TO:**

**INT. WORK HOUSE. NIGHT.**

LARA deposits her quota of energy and completes the night routine, removing her hazmat suit and stepping into long underwear.

She is so exhausted that she forgets to Transfer, and goes to sleep in the older body.

**SMASH CUT TO:**

**INT. WORK HOUSE. NEXT MORNING.**

LARA wakes up in the old body.

She moves to check the weather through the window: sunny.

LARA packs up her bag and gets in the car to drive back.

**EXT. PARKING GARAGE. MORNING.**

LARA drives into the parking garage. It's very early, and few people are around.

She parks her car and exits the garage. In the distance, a group of officials walk towards the garage.

LARA walks a few yards along the side of the garage, catching her reflection in the glass.

LARA

Ahh!

LARA is startled by her face. She begins to panic and turns to go back into the garage.

The group of officials has moved closer.

She doesn't want to lose her job over this mistake.

LARA sneaks around the side of the parking garage and moves down to the trolley tracks. She follows the tracks back into the city, keeping out of sight of the passing trolley. She is sweating in exertion by the time she returns home.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. LARA'S APARTMENT. MORNING.**

LARA enters her apartment building, trying to move undetected. As she is getting her keys out, DEIDRE opens the door of her apartment to head to work. DEIDRE looks at LARA, confused but smiling at the older woman in long underwear.

DEIDRE

Hi, are you lost?

DEIDRE spots the keys.

DEIDRE (CONT'D)

How do you have that key? Excuse me, ma'am!

LARA

Shh! Deidre, stop!

DEIDRE

Do I know you?

LARA

Shh, just come in!

LARA grabs DEIDRE and drags her into the apartment.

DEIDRE

I'm going to have to report you - this is trespassing!

LARA

Deidre!

DEIDRE

How do you know my name? Are you from the home?

LARA begins to babble.

LARA

Listen to me, please, just listen. I fucked up. At my job, I forgot to transfer after harvesting last night, I just went to bed and I didn't notice, I was so tired -

DEIDRE

(*shocked*)

Lara?

They begin overlapping speech.

LARA

Dee, you can't tell *anyone*.

DEIDRE

Jesus Christ, Lara -

DEIDRE (CONT'D)

What the hell is going on? What did they do to you?

LARA

Dee, calm down -

DEIDRE

Calm down? You've aged thirty years! How -  
how did you -

DEIDRE feels faint and sits down.

LARA

Dee -

DEIDRE

Don't call me that.

LARA

Deidre.

Pause.

LARA (CONT'D)

You know that special suit I was talking  
about? This is it. This body.

DEIDRE

Whose is it?

LARA

Whose what?

DEIDRE

Whose body is it?

LARA

I'm not sure.

DEIDRE scoffs.

LARA

*I don't know. They're given to us. Like you say all the time, we don't know what the energy does yet. It's being tested everyday.*

DEIDRE

How could you do this? I don't get it, I don't -

LARA

Listen to me. You can never tell *anyone*, do you understand me? No one can know.

DEIDRE

Don't worry. I'm not planning on telling anyone soon. Just... what the hell, Lara.

Pause.

DEIDRE (CONT'D)

Besides. I wouldn't do that to you.

LARA

Thank you.

Pause. LARA sits down next to DEIDRE.

LARA

I messed up last night. I was supposed to Transfer back into my body, but I forgot.

DEIDRE

*(sarcastically)*

Easy to do, I'm sure.

LARA

*Listen.* I'm stuck in this body until I can go back to work and transfer, but I can't use the normal way. They'll see me. Can I please use your bike tomorrow morning?

DEIDRE

Why didn't you just tell your boss you  
fucked up?

LARA

I was worried they'd demote me. I wouldn't  
be able to harvest anymore.

DEIDRE

Is that the worst punishment in the world?

Beat.

DEIDRE

Unbelievable. Okay. Fine. Use it. I have to  
go to work now. Just... we'll talk later,  
okay?

LARA

Okay. Yes, let's.

DEIDRE

And don't go outside. Just stay here. I'll  
come back after work.

LARA

I won't.

DEIDRE turns to leave.

LARA

*(calling after her)*

You would have done it too. If you had  
gotten the job, you would have done it too.

DEIDRE

I don't know.

DEIDRE leaves.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**INT. LARA'S APARTMENT. MIDDAY.**

Lara sits in her apartment in the elderly body, restless.

She struggles with not leaving the house and experiencing her world in this old body.

She plays dress up in her closet, choosing clothes to disguise herself.

A hat, a scarf. The outfit looks mismatched. The shoes are too large, the pants too tight.

When she's satisfied, she slowly steps outside.

**EXT. SOUTH STREET. SAME.**

LARA walks through the street, nervous and cautious.

No one pays her any attention.

She looks at Silo City. She begins to walk in that direction but stops herself.

**INT. MONTES GROCERY DELI. SAME.**

LARA wanders through the aisles of Montes.

She walks hesitantly, but with curiosity beaming through.

She absentmindedly begins to shop, putting different types of food in the cart than she did last time.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. LARA'S APARTMENT. AFTERNOON.**

LARA returns to her apartment to drop off the groceries.

She sits down again, trying to convince herself to stay in.

It doesn't work.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. SOUTH STREET. SAME.**

LARA walks down South Street.

She lets herself become overtaken by the emotions and sensations she is experiencing.

LARA feels that same pull towards the house on Elmwood Avenue, and lets her body lead her to it.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. QUEEN ANNE HOUSE. LATE AFTERNOON.**

LARA arrives at the Queen Anne house and stares at it, trying to understand what it means to her.

The door suddenly opens and an elderly man, FINN steps out.

80s, short and plump, with wisps of white hair hanging onto his head. His face is kind, set into a permanent smile.

He stares at her in disbelief.

LARA feels a wave of sadness and affection pour over her. She is shocked and steps back.

LARA

Oh my...

LARA begins choking up, suddenly overwhelmed with so many foreign emotions that she can't breathe.

LARA looks at the old man and feels love wash over her; pure affection and adoration.

She is GASPING, her hands shaking.

But she also feels more unsettling emotions. A wave of sadness mixes in, feelings of regret and abandonment.

LARA is so caught up in struggling with these emotions that she doesn't realize the spectacle she's making on the quiet street.

The man looks similarly affected. He stares at her for a few moments, enough for LARA to catch herself and begin to back away.

FINN

Maeve? Maeve!

He begins to walk forward, but LARA hurries off against his cries.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. LARA'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.**

LARA steps into her apartment, locking the door and pulling down the shades. She sits there in total shock, hyperventilating from such an intense emotional wave. After a while, she begins to SOB.

A KNOCK on her apartment door.

DEIDRE

Lara? You in there?

DEIDRE hears her CRYING and mistakes it for regret.

DEIDRE (CONT'D)

I'll leave the bike outside my door.

**SMASH CUT TO:**

**INT. LARA'S APARTMENT. DAWN.**

LARA lies on her bed in MAEVE'S body, awake. She hasn't slept.

LARA collects herself and gathers her things to return to work.

She exits her apartment, grabbing DEIDRE'S bike.

**EXT. TROLLEY PATH. DAWN.**

LARA bikes adjacent the trolley path. It begins to rain on her. She HUFFS with exertion.

LARA stows the bike behind the parking garage and gets in the car.

**EXT. HARVESTING FIELDS. DAY.**

LARA harvests.

She is determined in her job, trying to block all other thoughts from her mind.

Rain falls around her.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. WORK HOUSE. NIGHT.**

LARA stands in front of her bathroom mirror, naked. She is still in MAEVE'S body.

She examines her face, touching it gently. Caressing, grazing.

Finally, she dresses, and performs the Transfer.

LARA cannot bring herself to put MAEVE'S body in the closet, and instead keeps her on the table, watching MAEVE from her bed.

**SMASH CUT TO:**

**INT. WORK HOUSE. LATE NIGHT.**

LARA lies on her bed. She tosses and turns, dreaming.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

SERIES OF SHOTS (DREAM SEQUENCE):

**EXT. SILO CITY. DAY.**

LARA'S POV; LARA walks through Silo City.

The air is hazy and slow. A sluggish summer.

Silo City stands as it was before the disaster, free of any government facility.

The sun beats down.

LARA LAUGHS happily as she walks along the river.

From behind, a few other people in their twenties run alongside her.

YOUNG MAN

Come on! We're going to go jumping!

YOUNG WOMAN

The water's beautiful!

YOUNG MAN

Hurry up!

They begin to run ahead of her, calling back.

LARA tries to run to catch up with them, but she isn't moving. It's the horrible, quicksand running of dreams.

LARA

Wait! Wait for me!

The people disappear. LARA begins looking around wildly.

She catches her reflection in a window. MAEVE stares back at her.

LARA looks up to see DEIDRE in front of her.

LARA

Dee, help! I lost them!

DEIDRE

I don't know you.

LARA

Dee - help me!

DEIDRE gets aggressive.

DEIDRE

I don't know you! I don't know you! I don't know you!

LARA ducks into the door of the elevator.

Instead of being inside the building, she stands on the top of a 120 foot silo.

The young people from before surround her.

YOUNG PEOPLE (GROUP)

Jump! Jump! Jump!

They close in on her. LARA jumps off the silo and into the Buffalo River.

Just as her feet SMACK the water she jolts awake.

END SERIES OF SHOTS (DREAM SEQUENCE):

LARA wakes up GASPING.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. LARA'S APARTMENT. MORNING.**

LARA stands in front of her calendar in her original body, crossing off days. The current date reads:

**Check-in @ Facility.**

The handwriting on the calendar has changed slightly but noticeably since the last time.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. SILO CITY. MORNING.**

LARA stands in same location she stood in at the beginning of her dream, on the edge of the river. The sky is cloudy.

She looks down into the water and begins to enter a bit of a trance.

The water draws her in. All other sounds from the environment go mute.

LARA leans forward so much that she falls in.

She SPUTTERS and struggles; she cannot swim. Two hands reach in and pull her out.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. PEROT GRAIN ELEVATOR MEDICAL ROOM. MORNING.**

LARA sits with a blanket around her in one of the medical rooms within the facility.

A NURSE moves around, prepping for LARA'S check-up.

NURSE

I keep telling them to put a fence up there.  
Just not professional. A huge risk.

LARA

Yes. I guess I just stumbled.

NURSE

You should be fine. Lucky that employee was  
walking around. Can't swim?

LARA

No.

NURSE

Not many can. Arm.

LARA sticks out her arm to get her blood pressure taken.

NURSE (CONT'D)

How long have you been harvesting?

LARA

About a month.

NURSE

Oh, a new recruit. Welcome.

LARA

Ha, thank you.

NURSE

What kind of shell do you have?

LARA

Excuse me?

NURSE

For harvesting. New recruits are usually stuck with the old ones, often people from the homes.

Pause as LARA digests the information.

LARA

Oh, yes. Mine is older.

NURSE

You'll upgrade as you move up.

LARA

Oh. We don't stick with them?

NURSE

Of course not.

Pause.

LARA

How frequent are the upgrades?

NURSE

Oh, every so often. Eager to get a younger one?

LARA

I don't mind mine.

NURSE

I understand. People can get attached to things. Open.

The NURSE sticks in a tongue depressor.

NURSE (CONT'D)

Good.

LARA

Is there a sort of database? To rotate them?

The NURSE looks at LARA, amused by all of her questions.

NURSE

Not that I know. You would know more than me about that, I think, having done the training. There is one for potential Shells. But I believe all information is wiped after they're selected. Privacy concerns. Preference concerns. Liability issues.

LARA

*(dejected)*

Of course.

NURSE

Just the scan left.

LARA steps up to a device that scans her body.

Her scan appears on screens that the NURSE studies with a bit of confusion.

LARA

Is something wrong?

NURSE

No, no, I don't think so. Most likely some residue from the water supply. You're all set.

LARA

Thank you.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. DEIDRE'S APARTMENT. EVENING.**

LARA walks into DEIDRE'S apartment carrying groceries.

DEIDRE

Hi. How are you?

There is an awkward tension.

LARA

Good, I'm good.

DEIDRE notices the change in food selection.

DEIDRE

Oh. This is a switch-up.

LARA

Yes. I don't know, I was just craving it.

DEIDRE

I'm always up for a change.

They begin cooking, only communicating to ask questions about the meal.

DEIDRE

Turn on the left burner.

LARA

Where's the cutting board?

DEIDRE

Bottom cupboard.

They sit to eat.

DEIDRE

How was work?

LARA

Good. I went in yesterday to harvest. Just had a check-in at the facility today.

DEIDRE

And?

LARA

Everything's cleared.

DEIDRE

Oh, good.

LARA

And you?

DEIDRE

Same as usual. Unfortunately.

LARA

What about your soap alchemy?

DEIDRE

Oh, ha - that. I don't know. I've gotten a few that smell nice. Maybe I'll just keep them.

LARA

No, you should definitely bring them in.  
Call them first, see what they think.

DEIDRE

*(confused)*

Call? With what?

LARA looks confused as well.

She has forgotten no phones have been used since before the disaster.

LARA

*(shaking her head)*

I don't know why I said that.

DEIDRE

Ha. You sounded like my mom for a second there.

LARA

*(chuckling)*

Yes, I did. Well, you should *tell* them the next time you have a chance.

DEIDRE shrugs. Pause.

DEIDRE

So, I can assume you didn't get in any trouble the other day?

LARA

No, thank god. Thank you, for the bike.

DEIDRE

Of course.

LARA

Let's - let's just forget it happened.

DEIDRE

I want to, but.

Pause.

DEIDRE (CONT'D)

Lara. I'm only going to ask this once. And I need you to tell me the truth. When you were in that other body, the older one. Where did it come from?

LARA

I - I'm not completely sure.

DEIDRE

My mother. Could she become that?

LARA

No.

DEIDRE SIGHS in relief.

LARA tries not to look guilty.

DEIDRE

Excellent. Okay, then. Let's put all of this behind us.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. ELDERWOOD HOME. DAY.**

LARA and DEIDRE stand outside MISS SHANNON'S room, talking to her CARETAKER.

CARETAKER

She's very tired. Hasn't been making much conversation, but she has been talking a lot about her childhood. It's a bit incoherent and jumbled, but recalling memories is a good sign. You being here will help a lot.

DEIDRE

I'm glad. Is there anything else we can put her on?

CARETAKER

Not now. We've already got her on cholinesterase inhibitors, so we want to see how those work in the long run.

DEIDRE

Okay, okay. I mean, how much longer is the long run?

CARETAKER

We are evaluating her everyday. Can't say anything for sure right now.

DEIDRE

Okay. Thank you.

LARA and DEIDRE step into the room.

LARA

That was cryptic.

DEIDRE

I think that's just professional talk for "prepare yourself."

LARA

Dee - stop worrying. She on medication, right? And she's being taken care of here. It's the best possible option for her.

DEIDRE

You're right. I'm still going to worry, but you're right.

DEIDRE (CONT'D)

Hi, mom.

MISS SHANNON doesn't respond right away, instead gazing serenely at them both.

DEIDRE (CONT'D)

How are you feeling?

MISS SHANNON

Michael should be back soon, he just stepped out - he'll be right back.

DEIDRE

Did he?

MISS SHANNON

Yes, we're going to the river this afternoon to kayak. It's so beautiful outside. I'm very excited.

DEIDRE glances to the grey, cloudy sky.

LARA

*(politely)*

That's very exciting.

MISS SHANNON

Have you been out on the river yet? It's so beautiful. Kayaking, picnics, swimming..

LARA goes into a happy daze.

LARA

Yes, my friends and I like to jump off the silos.

DEIDRE

*(whispering)*

Lara, what are you talking about?

MISS SHANNON

Oh, the Silos! They're so big. Michael loves to kayak past them...

MISS SHANNON continues talking in the background.

LARA

I - I don't know. I'm sorry.

DEIDRE regards her strangely.

LARA turns back to MISS SHANNON.

She watches her, feeling guilt that she knows what will most likely happen, but doesn't reveal it.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. LARA'S APARTMENT. AFTERNOON.**

Sunny weather - no harvesting work today.

LARA lies in her bed, restless.

Finally she gets up, and makes sure DEIDRE is gone.

LARA heads outside and walks towards the house in Elmwood Village.

**EXT. FINN'S HOUSE. NIGHT.**

SERIES OF SHOTS:

LARA stands in the backyard of Finn's Queen Anne house in her original body. She watches him through the kitchen window as he prepares dinner.

She continues to watch him as he washes up the dishes, gets a book, and sits down with some coffee.

LARA is getting a high off of experiencing the foreign emotions that she feels when she's around him and this house.

When he finally retires for the night she begins the walk back home.

END OF SERIES OF SHOTS:

**CUT TO:**

**INT. LARA'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.**

LARA gazes out of her window at Silo City. It looms over the river.

After a few long moments she breaks her gaze. LARA slams the window shut.

**CUT TO:**

MONTAGE:

**EXT. FINN'S HOUSE. NIGHT.**

LARA continues to stalk the house on her days off of work.

She wants to learn as much as she can about who MAEVE was and to experience foreign emotions and mindsets.

See LARA harvesting, LARA in her apartment, and mostly LARA at FINN'S house.

END MONTAGE:

DISSOLVE TO:

**INT. LARA'S APARTMENT BUILDING. NIGHT.**

LARA sneaks out again to watch FINN, but DEIDRE has been growing suspicious.

She follows LARA to FINN'S house.

**EXT. FINN'S HOUSE. NIGHT.**

DEIDRE watches LARA in utter confusion.

DEIDRE watches for several minutes, bewilderment growing.

She realizes LARA will be here for a long time. DEIDRE turns to go home.

**INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY. LATE NIGHT.**

When LARA returns that night, DEIDRE is waiting for her in the hallway.

DEIDRE

You get off on that, huh?

LARA

*(gasping)*

Dee - what are you doing up?

DEIDRE

Well, I'm not stalking some old man in his house, if that's what you mean.

LARA

You... you followed me?

DEIDRE nods.

LARA

*(anger building)*

How dare you! You snuck behind me like a child?

DEIDRE

Me? I'm the child? What are you doing, Lara?

LARA

Nothing that concerns you!

DEIDRE

Obviously it concerns me if my best friend is sneaking out at night to spy on people!

LARA

I'm not spying.

DEIDRE scoffs.

DEIDRE

Then what are you doing? Explain to me, please.

LARA

*(deflating)*

I'm - you wouldn't understand.

DEIDRE

I want to. I want to help you.

LARA

You don't need to help me. There's nothing to help.

DEIDRE

Just tell me! Is it something to do with that woman? That - that body?

LARA instinctively corrects her.

LARA

Maeve.

DEIDRE

Oh, it has a name?

LARA

Yes, *she* does! And a history, and a childhood, and a - a family, and...

DEIDRE

You're obsessed. You're completely obsessed.

They begin to overlap their speech.

LARA

No, I'm not. You don't understand what it's like being in her body -

DEIDRE

This job, it's destroying you! And you don't even care!

LARA

It's not the job. I'm handling it fine -

DEIDRE

Obviously not, if this is what it's doing to you -

LARA

I'm sorry you didn't get it!

DEIDRE steps back, hurt.

LARA (CONT'D)

Dee -

DEIDRE

Don't call me that. You're sorry I didn't get this job? Maybe we should talk about what happened that day. You're sorry you let go of my hand? You're sorry you pushed me away?

You're sorry you saw an opportunity for you to succeed and didn't even think for a *second* about me?

LARA looks guiltily at the floor.

DEIDRE (CONT'D)

I've spent a lot of time thinking about that day. Thinking that maybe my memory is failing me. Or maybe that I would have done the same. But right now, I don't think I would have. And I'm glad. Because if this is what the result of that job is, I'm glad.

Pause.

LARA

I... I don't -

DEIDRE

I want to help you, Lara. I want to understand so I can help. This job, this body switching - it's ruining you. You're destroying your own body.

LARA

My body doesn't mean anything to me.

DEIDRE

Lara... don't say that.

LARA

It's true. Once you've experienced it,  
you'll get it.

DEIDRE

You can't just... separate your mind from your  
body... it doesn't work like that. Your body  
is part of your mind, it's part of who you  
are!

LARA

I'm not trying to separate them -

DEIDRE

But you are.

LARA

No, Dee, it's not about a different body.  
It's about a different reality. I'm feeling  
things I've never felt before, experiencing  
memories and visions.

DEIDRE

Oh, Lara.

LARA

You can't help me.

DEIDRE

Why not?

LARA

Because I don't want to be helped.

DEIDRE

Please Lara, just try, for me. Just... *sigh*.  
What do you want when you go to that house?

LARA  
(*taken aback*)

Um...

Beat.

LARA (CONT'D)  
To know her.

DEIDRE  
To know Maeve? To know more about Maeve?

LARA  
Yes. I need to know.

Long pause.

DEIDRE  
You need to get over this. And you need to  
stop stalking that house.

LARA  
I -

DEIDRE  
You need to. And you know it.

Beat.

DEIDRE (CONT'D)  
Go to the house. Knock on the door. Ask to  
meet him.

LARA  
What?

DEIDRE

I don't know, say you're conducting a survey. Get your answers and be done with it. Lara, I can't continue on like this.

LARA

I know. I just don't know if I can stop.

DEIDRE

I think you can. And I'm sorry.

LARA

Don't be. And me too.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. LAFAYETTE STREET. DAY.**

LARA walks down Lafayette Street, heading to FINN'S house.

She feels a tug and looks to her right.

Next to her is a wide, concrete building. On the side reads:

**City Public Library.**

The doors are chained shut.

LARA studies it for a few moments, then shakes her head and walks on.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. FINN'S HOUSE. DAY.**

LARA stands on the porch of FINN'S house, clipboard in hand.

She KNOCKS.

FINN answers, looking surprised to see someone.

FINN

Hello. May I help you?

LARA STUTTERS for a moment, shocked to finally see him so close-up.

LARA

H... hello. My name is Lara. I'm a worker for the census. I was wondering if you have a moment to answer a few routine questions for us?

FINN

Of course. Would you like to come in?

LARA

Yes, please.

LARA moves into the house slowly, taking it all in.

FINN

The sitting room, perhaps?

LARA

Perfect.

They sit down opposite each other.

FINN

That's very funny. You know, that was my wife's favorite chair.

LARA

Oh, it was?

FINN

*(chuckling)*

Yes. Everyone else calls it the most uncomfortable chair they've ever sat in!

LARA

I think it's great. Very sturdy. Nothing to sink down into.

FINN

So. What can I answer for you today?

LARA

Ah, yes, well... We're just conducting some survey questions to better know our demographics. If you don't mind answering, what is your age?

FINN

Eighty-three.

LARA

Family?

FINN

None living.

LARA

Your wife is deceased?

FINN

Yes.

LARA

Age of death?

FINN looks like he doesn't want to discuss further, but he does.

FINN

Seventy-five.

LARA

Occupation?

FINN

She used to work as a librarian.

LARA

What library?

FINN

*(hesitating)*

The City Public Library. Excuse me, I'm feeling a bit parched.

FINN rises and heads towards the kitchen.

FINN

Would you like anything? I have sparkling water, still, coffee, green tea, mint tea -

LARA

Mint. Mint tea, please.

FINN

Of course.

LARA gets up and walks around the sitting room.

She moves to a mantle covered with photographs.

They depict MAEVE and FINN over the years. Happiness is frozen in the frames.

She gazes at one when they were younger.

FINN

That's us when we were about twenty-five.  
Can you believe it?

LARA jumps, not expecting him.

LARA

You both look very young. When did you two meet?

FINN

We must have been about nineteen, twenty? Very young.

LARA

Where was the picture taken?

FINN

Down by the river. Near the old General Mills company.

LARA

Oh, I used to work there!

FINN

Did you really?

LARA

*(trailing off)*

Yes, before...

FINN

Yes, yes.

The tea kettle WHISTLES.

FINN (CONT'D)

Ah, the tea!

FINN returns with two cups.

LARA

Thank you.

As LARA sips the tea she suddenly gets a series of rapid flashback images of MAEVE'S life with FINN.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

MAEVE and FINN jumping off the silos.

MAEVE and FINN LAUGHING.

MAEVE and FINN holding a child.

MAEVE and FINN eating together.

END FLASHBACK:

LARA jolts.

FINN

Are you alright? Too strong?

LANA

No, it's perfect. Just a bit hot.

FINN

Cream?

LARA

No, no, it's not a problem.

FINN sits.

FINN

Any other questions?

LARA

Just a few. What was the cause of death for Maeve?

FINN

Ah. It was a brain tumor.

LARA

I'm so sorry. Do you mind me asking where she is buried?

FINN

Not at all, because she never was. Was taken in for research. A special case, I was told.

LARA

I see. I'm sorry you lost her.

FINN

Don't be. Between you and me, I'm not so sure she's completely gone.

LARA

What do you mean?

FINN

*(measuredly)*

It's just that I sometimes think that she may have never fully left me.

LARA feels herself get uncomfortable under his gaze.

She recalls when she appeared before him in MAEVE'S body.

LARA

Ah, yes. Well, those were all the questions I had.

FINN

Wonderful. Thank you for stopping by. Feel free to come again if you have any need to, I love to chat.

LARA

I will. Thank you very much, sir.

CLOSE UP on MAEVE'S face in the most recent photograph.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. HARVESTING FIELDS. DAY.**

CLOSE UP on LARA'S face under the hazmat suit as she harvests in MAEVE'S body. Rain falls.

**INT. WORK HOUSE. NIGHT.**

LARA stands in front of her bathroom mirror, still in MAEVE'S body.

She recites into the mirror, practicing.

LARA

Finn, I'm back. I was only in a coma. It was a lab mistake. No, that's stupid.

LARA (CONT'D)

Finn, it's me!

LARA shakes her head.

LARA (CONT'D)

Finn. I never died. Not fully. It was a mistake at the hospital. I'm home now.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. LARA'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.**

LARA moves around her apartment, packing her belongings.

She is interrupted by KNOCKING on the door.

LARA opens it to find DEIDRE SOBBING.

LARA  
Deidre! What's wrong?

DEIDRE  
It's mom. She's - she's dead!

LARA  
Oh no. Oh, Deidre, oh no.

They embrace.

LARA (CONT'D)  
I'm so sorry, Dee. I'm so sorry.

To her own astonishment, LARA begins to CRY.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP CHURCH. DAY.**

LARA and DEIDRE sit in the front pew of the church.

The walls peel and dust covers the altar. There hasn't been the labor to keep it up over the years.

They are the only two in the pews.

On the altar, a PRIEST gives the sermon.

PRIEST  
  
Saints of God, come to her aid! Come to meet  
her, Angels of the Lord!

PRIEST/DEIDRE/LARA

Receive her soul and present her to God the Most High.

PRIEST

May Christ, who called you, take you to himself; may Angels lead you to Abraham's side.

PRIEST/DEIDRE/LARA

Give her eternal rest, O Lord, and may your light shine on her forever.

PRIEST

Let us pray. All-powerful and merciful God, we commend you to Shannon, your servant. In your mercy and love, blot out the sins she has committed through human weakness. In this world she has died: let her live with you forever. Through Christ our Lord.

PRIEST/DEIDRE/LARA

Amen.

They move to the cemetery.

**EXT. HOLY CROSS CEMETERY. AFTERNOON.**

DEIDRE and LARA stand next to a grave plot in the far end of the cemetery.

It is lonely, deserted.

Next to the plot lies a coffin.

There is no gravestone. A small metal sign designates the burial place.

Two cemetery workers lower the casket into the earth as the PRIEST speaks again.

PRIEST

Lord Jesus Christ, by your own three days in the tomb, you hallowed the graves of all who believe in you and so made the grave a sign of hope that promises resurrection even as it claims our mortal bodies.

PRIEST (CONT'D)

Grant that our sister, Shannon, may sleep here in peace until you awaken her to glory, for you are the resurrection and the life.

CLOSE UP on LARA'S face.

Talk of resurrection makes her feel ashamed.

She stares down at the coffin.

PRIEST (CONT'D)

Then she will see you face to face and in your light will see light and know the splendor of God, for you live and reign forever and ever.

PRIEST/DEIDRE/LARA

Amen.

DEIDRE moves to thank the PRIEST as LARA continues to stare at the grave.

DEIDRE

Ready?

LARA jumps.

LARA

Yeah. Yes, I am.

They stare at the grave a moment longer.

LARA

She loved you, you know. Even if she  
couldn't remember you, she loved you.

DEIDRE nods, trying to hold back tears. They spill onto her  
face.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

MONTAGE:

A month passes after the funeral. Passage of time is denoted by  
LARA'S calendar.

LARA takes care of DEIDRE, cooking her dinner, and throwing out  
the soap-making supplies DEIDRE has given up on.

LARA continues to harvest.

She no longer makes visits to FINN'S house.

END MONTAGE:

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**INT. DEIDRE'S APARTMENT. EVENING.**

LARA and DEIDRE clean up the dishes after dinner.

DEIDRE

Hey. Do you remember when we used to go to  
the Philharmonic?

LARA smiles at the memory.

LARA

Yes. It was incredible. I don't quite remember what it looks like, though.

DEIDRE

I remember. Not what it looks like now, but I remember the red carpet, and the big orchestra.

Pause.

DEIDRE

We should go.

LARA

Go?

DEIDRE

Go back. To the Philharmonic.

LARA

Dee, it's abandoned.

DEIDRE

I know, that's what would make it so much fun. Come on, I think I remember a little piano. They probably didn't even bother to remove all the instruments.

LARA

Are you suggesting we *break into* the old Philharmonic building?

DEIDRE

Well, it's not a break in if nobody's using it.

Beat.

DEIDRE

Please?

LARA

No.

DEIDRE

*(sighing dramatically)*

Fine. I'm going.

LARA

Dee!

DEIDRE

What? It's too depressing being in here anymore. I need to *do* something. And it would be much more fun if someone were with me.

Pause.

LARA

I'll think about it.

DEIDRE breaks into a grin.

LARA

But we're going at night so nobody sees us.

DEIDRE

Of course.

They continue washing dishes.

LARA

You're a bad influence.

**CUT TO:**

INT. BUFFALO PHILHARMONIC. NIGHT.

LARA and DEIDRE sneak into the Philharmonic via the loading dock.

The building is dusty and falling apart.

They walk through the staff and crew tunnels of the backstage.

The atmosphere is creepy and eerie.

Chairs are scattered on the orchestra floor.

The percussion instruments lie dusty in the back.

A grand piano has been pushed off to the side.

DEIDRE

Yes!

She hurries towards it, opening the cover.

LARA

Dee, wait.

DEIDRE

No one's in here, Lara.

LARA surveys the hall skeptically.

LARA

Alright. But let's not stay long. This place makes me uneasy now.

DEIDRE

Just a few songs.

DEIDRE is rusty, and so is the piano.

Soon a melody can be made out.

MUSIC CUE: "Singin' in the Rain" by Gene Kelly

LARA begins to hum it. They LAUGH.

LARA starts to perform a mock tap dance.

They are having fun remembering a different life.

DEIDRE starts to play the Entertainer.

MUSIC CUE: "The Entertainer" by Scott Joplin

LARA stills. She feels an extreme happiness and closes her eyes.

LARA'S POV: When LARA opens them, she no longer stands in the decrepit hall.

It has been restored to its former glory. Lights from the ceiling blind her temporarily. Lush red carpet rolls between the sections of seats.

DEIDRE'S voice comes in to her from a distance.

DEIDRE

Lara. Lara. Lara!

LARA snaps out of it.

LARA

What?

DEIDRE is about to say something but is interrupted by a CLASH in the upper balcony.

They both look up, scared.

LARA

Probably a squirrel.

DEIDRE

Probably. Let's go.

DEIDRE leads the way out.

CLOSE UP on LARA'S face as she stares at DEIDRE'S back.

Her decision to leave her body has been made.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. LARA'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.**

LARA has finished packing her apartment.

Everything fits into two suitcases. LARA gazes again at Silo City, as if saying goodbye.

She moves across the hall and KNOCKS on DEIDRE'S door.

DEIDRE

Hey -

She looks behind LARA to see LARA'S apartment cleaned out.

DEIDRE (CONT'D)

What's going on?

LARA

I'm leaving. I wanted to say goodbye.

Beat.

DEIDRE

(*shocked*)

You're leaving? To where?

LARA

I've thought about it a lot, and I have to go.

DEIDRE

To - to where? Where will you live? What about your job?

LARA

Please Dee, I'm going. Don't worry about me. I don't want to drag this out any longer than it has to be.

DEIDRE

What the fuck, Lara? Drag it out? I've known you my entire life and you've just announced you're leaving? *Where are you going?*

LARA

It doesn't matter, Dee!

DEIDRE

It does! Oh my god... you're still fucking around with that old woman.

LARA

Stop -

DEIDRE

You are! This whole time I bet you've been messing around with her! How long have you been planning this?

DEIDRE'S voice breaks.

LARA

I haven't planned it. I haven't planned anything. It just happened.

DEIDRE

Sure, it just *happened*.

Pause.

DEIDRE (CONT'D)

*(softly)*

How could you do this to us?

LARA

If you knew what it was like, you would understand, you would try to come with me -

DEIDRE

I don't want to know what it's like if this is what it's done to you.

LARA

No, you have to experience it. I can't explain it, it's too difficult.

DEIDRE

Try.

LARA struggles to find words, then shakes her head.

LARA

I can't.

She turns to leave.

DEIDRE

Wait! Wait.

Pause.

DEIDRE (CONT'D)

I'll try it. Get the device, and I'll try it. But only once. And only because I want to understand you.

LARA

Yes. Yes, I'll get it!

DEIDRE

Don't leave me yet.

LARA

Give me two days. I'll be back.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. HARVESTING FIELDS. DAY.**

LARA harvests for the last time.

She takes a few moments to survey the wet fields, leaving behind what she trained all those years for.

**INT. WORK HOUSE. EVENING.**

LARA puts MAEVE back into the closet in a loving manner. She doesn't close the door completely. She grabs the Transfer device and stuffs it in her bag.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. SOAP FACTORY. DAY.**

Chemical fumes fill the air.

LARA looks through the industrial room, spotting DEIDRE operating a vat.

She pulls her into a corner.

DEIDRE

What are you doing here?

LARA

I told you I'd be back in two days.

DEIDRE

Yes, but at home, not here.

LARA

Where's your break room?

DEIDRE

In the back, but -

LARA drags her to the break room.

She pulls the Transfer device from her bag.

DEIDRE (CONT'D)

Lara, I don't want to do this here. Lara!

LARA

What? You said you wanted to understand, and I'm here. Lock the door.

DEIDRE locks it.

LARA (CONT'D)

Alright. Attach these two, one to each temple.

DEIDRE

Like this?

LARA

Yes.

DEIDRE

Lara. Have you done this before?

LARA

Yes, I do it every time I go into work.

DEIDRE

But Maeve is different, isn't she? She's built for this. Have you ever done this between two people like you and me?

LARA

It's the same concept. Trust me.

DEIDRE

That's exactly it. I don't know if I trust you.

LARA looks up at her, hurt.

DEIDRE (CONT'D)

You've become... different.

LARA

It's ready.

DEIDRE breathes in slowly, calming herself.

DEIDRE

Okay. I hope I can feel what you feel.

LARA

You will.

LARA starts the device.

They tense up and start to shake.

They stare into each other's eyes, mouths gaping with no sound coming out.

Sweat starts to drip down their foreheads.

SERIES OF IMAGES:

Quick rapid images all mixed together and repeating.  
LARA runs in the grain elevators, a child.

MAEVE embraces FINN.

MAEVE jumps from a silo.

LARA, a child, watching a wave crash into her house in Silo City.

MAEVE holding a baby.

LARA almost drowning, screaming.

MAEVE shelving books.

LARA harvesting.

MISS SHANNON'S face.

DEIDRE playing piano.

END SERIES OF IMAGES:

In a tremendous effort, LARA moves her shaking hand towards the Transfer device.

She shuts it off.

LARA and DEIDRE GASP, wrenching away from each other.

They lie PANTING on the ground.

Long pause.

DEIDRE

Is there any of Lara left in you?

LARA

It's not like that. I am Lara, and she's Maeve. It's just... changed. A changed mind. Emotions, and feelings, and...

Pause.

DEIDRE

How long will you have left? In her body?

LARA

I - I don't know. Is a long life what you want in this place?

DEIDRE shrugs.

They sit together for a few minutes, saying nothing.

DEIDRE

Well. I'll be where I always am.

LARA smiles. They embrace.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. FINN'S HOUSE. AFTERNOON.**

LARA arrives at the house in MAEVE'S body and goes to knock on the door.

She is eager and confident.

After there is no answer from the first knock, she knocks again. There is still no answer.

LARA moves to open the door and discovers it is locked.

She lifts up the welcome mat to find a key, and uses it to open the door and let herself inside.

**INT. FINN'S HOUSE. SAME.**

The lights in the house are turned off.

An air of staleness prevails.

LARA peers out of the window into the garage, seeing FINN'S car parked there.

LARA

Hello?

No answer.

LARA begins to move around the bottom of his house freely, taking in all that she couldn't during the last visit.

She walks into the sitting room and sits in MAEVE'S chair, relaxing in the familiarity of it.

LARA goes to the mantle.

She smiles deeply, running her hands over the frames.

On the second story LARA enters the bathroom. She examines herself in the mirror.

Her caresses carry more confidence.

LARA enters the bedroom.

The curtains are drawn, making it difficult to see.

She makes out a figure on the bed.

LARA

Finn? Finn, it's Maeve.

LARA moves toward the bed.

LARA (CONT'D)

I'm back, I'm ba -

LARA pulls back with a horrified gasp. FINN is lying in bed, dead.

LARA (CONT'D)

No... no! Oh, please, no!

LARA breaks down completely, sobbing at his bedside.

She feels an intensity of emotions that she has never felt before, and is completely overwhelmed, GASPING for breath.

She falls to her knees, looking at FINN with intense heartbreak and bitterness.

LARA (CONT'D)

How could you do this?!

LARA SOBS into his body.

**FADE TO:**

**EXT. FINN'S BACKYARD. A FEW HOURS LATER.**

LARA digs a grave at the far end of FINN'S backyard.

FINN'S dead body lies next to the haphazard plot, waiting to be rolled in.

She finishes digging the grave, exhausted.

Sweat covers her body.

She embraces FINN'S body for the last time.

With a sad but determined look, LARA rolls his body into the earth.

**INT. FINN'S HOUSE. SAME.**

LARA washes the dirt and blood off her hands.

They mix together in the sink, swirling down into the drain.

It has begun to rain.

LARA gathers her bags, making sure she has the Transfer device.

She steps out of the house and onto the street, and begins walking in a unknown direction.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. SILO CITY. DAY.**

Rain pours down. The grain elevators and silos stand tall and silent.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

**INT. PEROT GRAIN ELEVATOR. SAME.**

People in hospital rooms, administrative offices.

**INT. MONTES GROCERY DELI. SAME.**

Butcher slices meat. People shop.

**INT. ELDERWOOD HOME. SAME.**

Patients lie in bed. Nurses attend to them.

**EXT. SOUTH STREET. SAME.**

People walk down the street, going about their day.

CLOSE UP on their faces.

END SERIES OF SHOTS:

**CUT TO:**

**INT. DEIDRE'S APARTMENT. SAME.**

DEIDRE moves around her apartment, clearing up dishes. On the counter is a photo of her mother.

FOCUS on the photo.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. HARVESTING FIELDS. SAME.**

A Harvester works in the fields. Their face is obscured.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. LARA'S WORK HOUSE. SAME.**

The STAFF MEMBER enters LARA'S work house with a clipboard.

They pick up the harvesting device. It's empty.

They move to the closet and open it.

LARA'S original body hangs there.

**CUT TO BLACK.**

**END.**