

SPOILS: "HAPPY MEAL"

Written by

Dené Janse van Rensburg

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
u13149424
060 970 8425

"Happy Meal"

MEDIUM SHOT:

INT. UNDERGROUND PARKING LOT - STORAGE LEVEL. PROCESSING SECTION.

Dark, decrepit and damp. Two men with meat cleavers are processing meat. Their bodies and clothes are worn and filthy. Containers with herbs and rough salt are on their tables. Wires with meat hooks and drying meat are seen in the background.

PROCESSOR #1

I had that a talk with Marie ... I said I wasn't going this time.

PROCESSOR #2

Nothing could make me miss this one.

PROCESSOR #1

I just can't stand to hear her complain anymore.

A YOUNG MAN enters. He carries unprocessed meat in his arms and drops it into a drum next to PROCESSOR #1's table.

PROCESSOR #1 (CONT'D)

Hey son.

YOUNG MAN

Morning ...

The YOUNG MAN walks to the drying meat. PROCESSOR #1 and PROCESSOR #2 have their backs to him, continuing their work. YOUNG MAN takes a few pieces of dried meat from the hooks at the back and slips it into his jacket pocket.

YOUNG MAN (CONT'D)

Later ...

YOUNG MAN exits the room.

PROCESSOR #2

(calling after YOUNG MAN)

Tell your mother hello from me,
would you?

CUT TO:

INT. - TRACKING. UNDERGROUND PARKING LOT. STAIRWELLS.

YOUNG MAN descends the stairwell from the processing room. He goes down two levels, keeping his hands in his jacket pockets.

YOUNG MAN enters the lowest level of the underground parking lot.

INT. - TRACKING. HOUSING LEVEL.

Private areas are sectioned off with various materials. YOUNG MAN makes his way between them and finds his own home. He draws back a curtain and enters a patchwork living area with worn, mismatched furniture and miscellaneous items displayed on open shelves. A LITTLE GIRL is playing under the table with a handmade doll. The LITTLE GIRL is spasmodically twitching.

YOUNG MAN

Hey ... Having fun?

LITTLE GIRL

(distracted)

Very much.

YOUNG MAN

Treat?

LITTLE GIRL looks up as YOUNG MAN produces a small piece of dried meat from his jacket pocket. YOUNG MAN hands it to her and she immediately starts gnawing at it.

YOUNG MAN goes to a container close by and checks its contents and immediately covers his nose and mouth in disgust. The contents of the container is a bag of unidentified cuts of meat that has started to rot.

YOUNG MAN (CONT'D)

Has mother been back?

LITTLE GIRL shakes her head and continues to gnaw at the dried meat.

YOUNG MAN (CONT'D)

I have some work to do, but I'll be back in a little while. I'll bring some food and, if you're good, another treat.

LITTLE GIRL nods, smiling shyly. She is still jerking.

YOUNG MAN leaves the room.

INT. - TRACKING. HOUSING LEVEL.

YOUNG MAN walks back to the stairwell, passing others who are busy with their daily activities. He makes his way to the second level.

INT. - TRACKING. OFFICES - BUSINESS LEVEL (SECTION 1).

The BUSINESS LEVEL is less occupied - sectioned off quarters are more sparse and interspersed with open meeting tables and stacks of shabby journals, packs of water-damaged paper and mix-n-match stationary.

YOUNG MAN draws back a Hessian divider and enters an 'office'. A large RED HAired WOMAN is in a heated discussion with the other, younger women. One is small, olive skinned and ANDROGYNE with shaven black hair and the other has walnut skin and long, black DREADLOCKS. YOUNG MAN whispers into the RED HAired WOMAN's ear and leaves the office.

RED HAired WOMAN

As I said, I can't do anything.
Your father named the two of you

...

(pointing to an open
document on the table in
front of her)

... And we have to follow through
with it.

ANDROGYNE

I should be able to decline the
position. He put my name on there
without my consent.

DREADLOCKS

Corinn ...

CORINN (ANDROGYNE)

No, Kamille. Maybe it's time to
change some rules.

KAMILLE (DREADLOCKS)

On that I agree.

CORINN is frustrated. She admits defeat.

CORINN

So. I guess that job would fall to me, since I'm obligated to run this shit-hole.

RED HAired WOMAN

Since you're so eager ...

CORINN

Oh, fuck you Robyn.

CORINN gets up from her chair and leaves the office.

CUT TO:

CORINN is outside the office. KAMILLE follows suit and embraces her. CORINN tears up.

KAMILLE

I know she's a bitch, but this isn't her fault, Corinn.

CORINN breaks from the embrace. She wipes her face to remove any proof of tears. She's angry for crying, especially in front of people.

CORINN

I don't care. He just died.

KAMILLE

I understand. But you'll take it out on someone other than her, until the ceremony's over.

CORINN

Kamille ... We can't stay stuck in ...

KAMILLE

Where do you want to go exactly?
There's nothing left.

CORINN stares at KAMILLE for a moment before she turns to leave. KAMILLE follows her. The two women walk together toward the stairwell.

CUT TO:

INT. ROBYN'S OFFICE.

ROBYN is furiously writing in a tattered, water damaged journal. The pen dries up and she throws it aside, frustrated. She finds another in a mug on the table and continues writing.

CUT TO:

INT. CORINN AND KAMILLE'S ROOM.

CORINN is lying on the bed, staring at the patterned fabric ceiling. KAMILLE watches her from the entrance of the room.

KAMILLE

What are you thinking?

CORINN

I miss him.

KAMILLE sits on the bed and leans over CORINN. They kiss.

KAMILLE

I miss him too.

CUT TO:

INT. ROBYN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

A BURLY MAN enters the office. ROBYN quickly stows the journal with a fright. She recognizes the man and angrily sighs, taking the journal out again.

ROBYN

Fuck sakes. Announce yourself,
George.

GEORGE (BURLY MAN)

Sorry .

The GEORGE takes a seat in front of the desk.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

What did she say?

CUT TO:

INT. CORINN AND KAMILLE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The women are still kissing.

KAMILLE

Do you still want a family with me?

CORINN

Some day.

KAMILLE

I said I'd wait, but you make it
hard not to try and rush you.

CORINN smiles apologetically. CORINN pulls KAMILLE into a kiss and manoeuvres herself into straddling KAMILLE's hips.

CUT TO:

INT. ROBYN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

ROBYN

She doesn't want it ... but she
didn't manage to keep up the fight.

GEORGE

And Kamille?

ROBYN

She seemed pleased. Possibly
relieved. I think she's as afraid
of Corinn's ideas as we are.

GEORGE

I take it she still wants to go
back up there ...

CUT TO:

INT. CORINN AND KAMILLE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CORINN is removing KAMILLE'S tattered pants and underwear.
Her hands move over KAMILLE'S body, caressing and kneading
the flesh. CORINN kisses KAMILLE'S abdomen, continuing
further down between her thighs.

CUT TO:

INT. ROBYN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

ROBYN closes the journal and puts it in a drawer of her desk,
which she locks with a small key produced from her denim
pocket.

ROBYN

Speaking of ... Have you found him?

GEORGE

Who?

ROBYN

The gatherer.

GEORGE

No, ma'am. But they're on his trail. Benjamin will have him back tomorrow.

FADE TO:

INT. CORINN AND KAMILLE'S ROOM.

CORINN watches KAMILLE sleep. She gets up, concentrating on not waking KAMILLE, gets dressed and leaves her room.

INT. - TRACKING. HOUSING LEVEL.

CORINN walks between makeshift homes and rooms, greeting some of the people she passes. She stops at a home sectioned off by swollen slabs of pressed wood. She knocks on the outside, but there is no answer. She takes a look inside, but finds no one. CORINN continues on to the stairwells, where she climbs one floor up.

INT. BUSINESS LEVEL.

CORINN passes the infirmary. Some way behind it is a sectioned off room. CORINN slips inside, unnoticed. Inside, bodies are covered with stained sheets. There is an old bible in a corner that has gathered a thick layer of dust. One of the bodies is marked HEATH.

CORINN walks as far as possible around HEATH's body. The only other two bodies have names that she doesn't recognize. She takes a look under the sheets. She recognizes their faces, but she is sure she has not formally met them before they passed. CORINN leaves the makeshift morgue and makes her way back to the stairwell. CORINN climbs one more floor up. At the top of the stairwell, she crosses a threshold with PROCESSING & STORAGE painted above it.

INT. PROCESSING ROOM.

PROCESSOR #1 and PROCESSOR #2 are still working. One is hanging meat on hooks and the other is removing the dried pieces and placing them in a large container. The YOUNG MAN is sitting on a high stool by one of the processor's tables, rubbing salt and herbs into already processed pieces of meat.

CORINN

(To PROCESSORS)

Hi, Bill ... Jerry.

BILL (PROCESSOR #1) and JERRY (PROCESSOR #2) return the greeting and continue their work. CORINN sits on a stool that she drags to the table where YOUNG MAN is working.

CORINN (CONT'D)

(To YOUNG MAN)

Hi, Wayne.

WAYNE (YOUNG MAN) does not reply. He nods at her greeting and tries to seem preoccupied with his work.

CORINN (CONT'D)

Your sister is well, I hope? I haven't seen her around my room lately.

WAYNE smiles. He's afraid.

WAYNE

She's okay. She's found a new spot underneath our table.

CORINN

I'll have to visit her under the table then.

WAYNE

(Uneasy)

I'll let her know you'd like to visit.

CORINN watches WAYNE's hands start to tremble. She gets up from the stool.

CORINN

Would you help me get a couple things together for me and Kamille?

WAYNE

Of course.

WAYNE leaves his work on the table hastily and finds CORINN a worn, blue, plastic basket with handles that would have been white at some point. He walks toward rows of containers farther into the STORAGE LEVEL and finds a few that are marked DRY GOODS. He opens one of the containers and inside are a collection of miscellaneous brands' crackers. He takes out a packet and places it in the basket. WAYNE closes the container and moves on to the next one, which is marked. CANNED: VEGETABLES.

CORINN

Is everything okay with you, Wayne?

WAYNE looks startled by the question.

WAYNE

Yes. Why do you ask?

WAYNE hands CORINN two cans of mixed vegetables in brine.

CORINN

When you came into the meeting this morning, you looked worried.

WAYNE laughs, relieved. He checks the expiry date on a can of beans and hands it to CORINN.

WAYNE

I'm fine. I'm not happy with how they treat me, but delivering messages between Robyn and her lackeys has its benefits ... Meat?

CORINN thinks for a moment, cringing slightly at the mention of meat.

CORINN

Maybe just a little bit, for Kamille. Just not ...

WAYNE

Don't worry ... It's not ready yet.

They are quiet. They look at each other, uneasily. CORINN is anxious.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

I'll go get you a few strips from the back.

CORINN composes herself, shaking her head slightly. She follows WAYNE.

CORINN

You haven't gotten any peanut butter lately? Or cookies? Anything sweet will do, really. I'd like to treat her a little bit.

WAYNE

You're in luck. The gatherers came in yesterday with a killing. Jars full of honeycomb from an old farm some kilometres from the city.

CORINN

You aren't serious ... Are they going closer to the cities now?

WAYNE

They have to. There's nothing left to gather around here ... I heard they're planning on fixing a car or two for gatherers to start going into the cities.

CORINN is dumbstruck. She stands in silence, contemplating. WAYNE wraps some dried meat in a piece of foil that seems to have been used before. He moves out of the shot, which remains with CORINN, and returns with a jar of honeycomb.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

Here you go. Fresh.

CORINN

Thanks. Well, let me know when I can come see your sister. I have something for your mother as well.

WAYNE looks down, painfully, realizing that he has given himself away. CORINN looks at him inquiringly.

CORINN (CONT'D)

What is it?

WAYNE

We haven't seen my mom in days. She said she wasn't feeling well and then she as gone.

CORINN

Have you spoken to Robyn?

WAYNE

I have. She said she would let me know if she found anything ...
Nothing yet.

CORINN nods. She is shocked.

CORINN

I'll see what I can do ... Are the two of you okay on your own?

WAYNE

Fine. I just don't know how to prepare the meat I usually bring home, so its going bad ... She seems happy enough with the dried meat for now.

CORINN

Give her some of the honeycomb ...
We'll find your mother.

CUT TO:

INT. INFIRMARY - BUSINESS LEVEL (SECTION 2).

CORINN rushes between tattered beds, looking for WAYNE's mother. She does not recognize the woman among the sleeping patients. She approaches one of the men who works as a nurse.

CORINN

Excuse me, has Lillian been here
for treatment?

NURSE

Wayne's mother?

CORINN nods.

NURSE (CONT'D)

We haven't admitted her, no. Did
she say she was coming?

CORINN thinks for a moment.

CORINN

She just said she wasn't feeling
well, so I assumed ... I have
something for her, but I'll just
leave it with WAYNE.

NURSE

Sure ... Nice to see you again,
CORINN ... I'm sorry about Heath.
We all miss him.

CORINN swallows hard.

CORINN

Thank you ... I should get back.
Nice to see you too.

CORINN smiles warmly and leaves. The NURSE frowns and pages through the handwritten files.

INT. CORINN AND KAMILLE'S ROOM.

CORINN enters her room. KAMILLE is not in their bed anymore. CORINN hastily empties the basket and loads it all into their own container. She checks below their table, where three five-litre plastic bottles of water are stowed. Only two of the bottles are still full with slightly discoloured water. She takes one out and drinks from it.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSING LEVEL. RECREATION AREA.

A cleared space is filled with children playing a game of football (soccer). The space is lit by lamps, large candles and small fires surrounding the area. There are tables stacked on all sides and lines carved in the concrete floor to outline a field. KAMILLE is playing with dirty children. Parents and other adults are gathered as spectators. Everyone cheers and laughs at the spectacle.

CORINN pushes through the audience to the front. She crosses her arms and smiles at KAMILLE, who is doing tricks with the ball to frustrate and amuse the children, who are trying to take the ball from her.

She scores a goal, everyone cheers and applauds. KAMILLE is laughing as she walks toward CORINN, breathing heavily.

CORINN

You look good out there.

KAMILLE

Thanks ... You flatter me too
often.

They leave, strolling arm in arm, between homes, toward their
own. CORINN tries to hide her concern.

KAMILLE (CONT'D)

Where did you go earlier?

CORINN

Storage. I wanted to get something
nice for when you woke up.

KAMILLE

Did they have anything sweet this
time?

CORINN smiles and gives KAMILLE a peck on the cheek.

CORINN

Yes, they did. I went especially
for your sweet tooth.

KAMILLE

Please say they found cookies?

CORINN

Honeycomb.

KAMILLE sighs mockingly.

KAMILLE

I guess that will have to do.

They are quiet for a while as they stroll. CORINN is watching
her feet as they go and KAMILLE is observing CORINN.

KAMILLE (CONT'D)

Tell me.

CORINN looks up to see where they are. She sees their room is close and she drags KAMILLE behind her.

CUT TO:

INT. CORINN AND KAMILLE'S ROOM.

CORINN

(With a stern look)

People are disappearing, Kamille.

KAMILLE is confused. She sits down on their bed.

KAMILLE

Hand me some water, please ...

CORINN hands KAMILLE a bottle from below the table. KAMILLE drinks from the heavy five-litre bottle, closes it and hands it back to CORINN. She doesn't take it, raising her eyebrows to signal her impatience.

CORINN

So?

KAMILLE

Are you looking for a scapegoat?

CORINN

What?

KAMILLE

Are you looking for an excuse not to take the job?

CORINN

Fuck you ... I'm serious. People have gone missing and Robyn isn't doing anything about it.

KAMILLE sighs. She puts the water by her feet and composes herself.

KAMILLE

Who is it that you think is missing?

CORINN is sour about the phrasing of the question.

CORINN

I spoke to Wayne at storage. He says that Lillian hasn't been home in days. He's been to Robyn, but apparently she hasn't done jack shit.

KAMILLE

I don't think you should be too worried about Lillian. You know about her problem ...

CORINN

Has she ever let that little girl more than two centimetres from her side? No. She wouldn't leave them to fend for themselves. Something must have happened.

CORINN takes the water from KAMILLE's feet and drinks.

KAMILLE

Who else?

CORINN

You remember the old lady from two houses down? The one who makes the scrap flowers?

KAMILLE

Without pissing on your concerns
... She is extremely old and could
easily have ...

CORINN

She's not in the processing room
and she's not at the infirmary. So
where the fuck is she?

KAMILLE gets up from the bed, heading out of the room.

KAMILLE

Let's go speak to Robyn.

INT. RED ROOM

A room decorated with mostly red cloth and flowers fashioned out of scrap materials. Large jars with meat, crackers and other miscellaneous goods are stacked on skew shelves of scrap wood. TEENAGE GIRL sits cross legged on a bench opposite the shelves.

In her hand she fiddles with a candle. The wax is off white, almost yellow. She picks off the drops that have formed on its sides. She is startled when someone enters.

TEENAGE GIRL

Hey dad.

DAD

Did I frighten you there?

TEENAGE GIRL

Never. I can hear you coming a
level away.

DAD

Do you want me to light that for you?

TEENAGE GIRL

No, it's okay. I was just thinking, I'd like to make some of these ... Red ones.

DAD

I can speak to Collin. He might be able to get you some when he goes out. They stopped gathering candles when we started making them.

TEENAGE GIRL

Must have been nice to live before this. The stories I hear from people who lived before ... It sounds ... I don't even know a word that can describe it.

DAD

Fresh, open, clean, bright ... all of the above.

TEENAGE GIRL tries her best to laugh at her father. She fails to hide her longing.

TEENAGE GIRL

I could train as a gatherer. They get to go up there every day.

DAD

I wish you wouldn't scare me with such talk.

(MORE)

DAD (CONT'D)

We don't know what's waiting and
I'm too scared to find out what's
become of the place we left up
there.

TEENAGE GIRL

I want to find out ...

DAD

If Collin thinks its too dangerous
for him, then I definitely don't
want you up there. Not now.

The TEENAGE GIRL nods, defeated. She places the candle back
on the shelf behind her father.

DAD (CONT'D)

Maybe, if its safe, some day ...

INT. ROBYN'S OFFICE.

ROBYN is writing in another journal. Her hair is tied up and
there is a film of sweat visible on her face. Her shirt is
stained dark under her arms.

KAMILLE

(From outside)

Robyn ... It's Kamille and Corinn.
Could we speak with you?

ROBYN

Just a moment, please ...

ROBYN closes the journal and stows it under a false bottom,
underneath a stack of other documents inside her desk drawer.
She walks to the entrance and pulls back the Hessian divider
to let the other women enter.

ROBYN (CONT'D)

Come in.

ROBYN motions for them to sit down in the seats they had occupied earlier in the day.

KAMILLE

No need, we won't be long.

ROBYN

That's a bit worrying ...

(to CORINN)

What can I help you with?

CORINN

I spoke to Wayne ...

ROBYN sits on the front of her desk.

ROBYN

And he told you about Lillian?

CORINN doesn't respond. She stares at ROBYN accusingly.

KAMILLE

We were wondering if you'd heard anything?

CORINN

Because we'll need to find someone who can take her children if she doesn't come back.

KAMILLE

She means to say the children are struggling on their own.

ROBYN shakes her head, looking worried.

ROBYN

I won't lie to you. I expected to find her hiding somewhere in the basement level on the other side of the building after one of her fits. I sent my men through all the levels twice, on both ends, and once more in that basement, but we didn't find anything.

KAMILLE

Why haven't you told Wayne?

ROBYN

I still think there's a chance of finding her in the building above ground. But we'll need to send gatherers and I'm afraid to involve people who might cause panic.

CORINN

I can go.

ROBYN

You won't. I have more than enough guards and gatherers to spare. You need to stay here and stay alive so you can take over from your father.

CORINN smirks.

ROBYN (CONT'D)

Anything else?

CORINN

Yes. There's an old lady that lives a few homes from us. She used to make scrap flowers ...

ROBYN

I'm sorry.

CORINN

About?

ROBYN

Her name was Edith, if I'm not mistaken.

CORINN

Was?

ROBYN clears her throat and gets up from her desk.

ROBYN

Edith passed away some days ago.

KAMILLE

Her body isn't in the morgue.

ROBYN

You will not repeat what I tell you now. Understood? ... I don't want people to get scared for no reason.

CORINN crosses her arms, biting back rage. Kamille nods.

ROBYN (CONT'D)

Bear in mind that she was very old ... and ill. We couldn't process her body with the others, because it would risk others getting infected.

CORINN shakes her head.

CORINN

I don't know if I don't believe
you, or if I just don't want to.

KAMILLE

We should go home, love.

CORINN

Too many people are dying. I can't
keep track anymore.

(To ROBYN)

Your guys need to find Lillian, or
I will.

CORINN storms out of the office, as before.

KAMILLE

I'm sorry about her.

KAMILLE takes a seat. ROBYN joins her.

KAMILLE (CONT'D)

She's been angry at everything,
lately.

ROBYN

I don't expect any less. I see
every single bit of Heath in her.
She'll be angry forever, but she'll
also never fall out of love with
this community. I'm counting on
that right now.

KAMILLE smiles. She remains in thought.

KAMILLE

What did you do with the body?

ROBYN

Edith's? ... She was buried above ground.

KAMILLE

You know, I haven't cried once since he died ... I should feel guilty, but I don't ... He doesn't have to be here anymore.

ROBYN

True. But it's sad for that reason precisely. He won't be here to see the outside with us.

KAMILLE scrutinizes ROBYN's face.

KAMILLE

It's ludicrous how unwaveringly you believe that. Everyone keeps saying how we'll see the outside again, but we both know that's a rainbow unicorn kind of dream.

ROBYN

I know it sounds impossible to you now, but if you think about it clearly enough, you realize how probable it becomes.

KAMILLE

It's been years ...

ROBYN

Exactly! It has been. And that is what makes it more probable that things have calmed down.

(MORE)

ROBYN (CONT'D)

We've been gone for so long that
nobody will have remembered to look
for us.

KAMILLE nods. She breathes deeply and gets up to leave.

ROBYN (CONT'D)

I appreciate you bringing her to me
first. Rumours are the most fatal
of poisons in a situation like
ours.

INT. CORINN AND KAMILLE'S ROOM.

CORINN shoves clothing, an old, stained bar of soap and a worn scrap of cloth into the blue basket from the storage level. On her way out, she grabs a towel with small holes in it and drapes it across her shoulders.

INT. - TRACKING. HOUSING LEVEL.

CORINN is walking toward a far end of the level where large pressed wood boards are erected along the breadth of the concrete wall. There is a draped cloth doorway to the far left. At a small hole in the rotting pressed wood wall, two boys are hunched, peeping and giggling.

CORINN

Get away from there you perverts!

The boys run away. CORINN enters through a draped cloth doorway into a washing area. The floors are wet and mucky. It smells of faeces, urine and sweat. Inside are rows of pressed wood cubicles with curtain doors. Inside each is a hollow wooden block with holes cut in the top. CORINN is shocked to see a MAN inside. An OLD LADY comes from behind her.

OLD LADY

They thought there was a problem
with the borehole ...

(Whispers)

But it was someone's excrement that
blocked the flow up here.

CORINN

That's terrible.

OLD LADY

I've been too scared to come here
all day and my floodgates are about
to open ... It must be so
embarrassing.

CORINN nods, uninterested. They watch as the MAN packs up his
tools. All his exposed skin is covered in grime. He doesn't
look perturbed by his work or the smell. CORINN looks toward
the washing cubicles. They are all empty.

CORINN

Is there water for washing?

OLD LADY

Oh, yes. It was only the
lavatories.

CORINN

Why is nobody washing today?

OLD LADY

I think people are stretching it
out so they can wash before the
ceremony. I usually keep my wash
days for when we have a special
occasion. Like with ...

The OLD LADY catches her tongue. She looks horrified.

OLD LADY (CONT'D)

Oh, I'm so terribly rude ... I
apologize, dear.

The OLD LADY takes CORINN's hands in hers. She puts on the pained face that CORINN has seen so often in her life. She knew what was coming.

OLD LADY (CONT'D)

He was a great man to have prepared
this place for all of these people.
He went to a lot of trouble to make
us a home here ...

CORINN

He would have been very grateful to
hear you say that.

The OLD LADY smiles sadly, squeezing CORINN's hands. She leaves the washing area. CORINN walks to the row of washing cubicles, each with a tin bucket inside. She enters a cubicle and places her things on the bench next to the bucket. The floor is layered thick with grime. CORINN takes the bucket out of the cubicle to a large container in the middle of the wash room. It is filled with borehole water. On the side of the container, in the ground, is a long and rusty lever with which to pump water into it from below. The container has a tap near the bottom. CORINN fills the bucket halfway with the brown, icy water. On her way, she passes the toilet cubicles, which some women have started to occupy since the MAN left. She returns her bucket, takes the worn piece of cloth and closes the curtain from outside. CORINN goes to a toilet cubicle and urinates without covering the entrance. She wipes herself with the cloth and returns to her washing cubicle.

INT. SHOWER.

CORINN drops the cloth on the bench and undresses. She dips her head into the bucket, wetting her closely cropped hair. She lathers some soap into it and dips her head in the bucket once more to rinse. She splashes her bare body with water and rubs some of the soap into her underarms, her crotch and her buttocks. She washes her feet last. She dries with the torn towel and dresses. Once CORINN is dressed, she throws her dirty clothes in the bucket and washes them in the murky, slightly soapy water. She wrings them out and places the wet bundle back in the basket. Lastly, she drops in the worn piece of cloth.

INT. RED ROOM.

WAYNE and TEENAGE GIRL are lying on the bed, kissing and fondling each other. He pulls back and traces her face with a finger. They smile. He lies down next to her and they stare at the red fabric ceiling.

WAYNE

I saw Corinn today at storage.

TEENAGE GIRL

Heath's daughter?

WAYNE

Yeah. She said she'll help me look for my mom.

TEENAGE GIRL

Robyn is god damn lazy. I don't know why she was ever on the council to begin with.

WAYNE

I think she was fucking Heath.

TEENAGE GIRL gags.

TEENAGE GIRL

That's horrific.

WAYNE

You're so dramatic.

TEENAGE GIRL

(laughing)

Its quite a disturbing and vivid
image you gave me.

WAYNE smiles at her. He props himself back onto his side and cradles her face.

WAYNE

You are so fucking beautiful,
Mecca.

WAYNE gives her a long, soft kiss.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

I love you.

MECCA gives him another quick kiss and gets up from the bed. She lights some more candles on the table in the centre of the room. By the candles, there is a wooden carving of Buddha. MECCA stares at the smiling figure contentedly.

MECCA

I wish I could have lived before.
I'm tired of listening to other
people's stories. I want my own.

WAYNE gets up from the bed and stands behind her, wrapping his arms around her waist.

WAYNE

You have stories ... From here. And I can guarantee they are a lot more interesting, and a lot less violent than the ones from out there.

MECCA

Just stop. You and my dad are trying to do the same thing. Your sweet words won't make me want it any less.

They stand for a while, staring at the Buddha. WAYNE leaves to fetch his bag from next to the bed.

WAYNE

I almost forgot that I have something for you. Your dad mentioned it once.

WAYNE opens the tattered backpack and carefully removes a used, pink candle. MECCA's eyes widen. She carefully takes the candle from him.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

Smell it.

MECCA brings it to her nose and inhales deeply, closing her eyes. She's quiet for a while. When she opens her eyes, they are filled with tears.

MECCA

Thank you.

INT. CORINN AND KAMILLE'S ROOM.

KAMILLE is sitting on a pouffe with an old paperback. On the cover is a hand with a moth suspended, mid-flight, above its fingers. The Silence of the Lambs. KAMILLE is interrupted when CORINN enters with a blue basket containing a dripping mass of clothes.

KAMILLE

You washed?

CORINN

Will you help me hang this?

KAMILLE folds the top corner of the page, closes the book and gets up to help CORINN.

KAMILLE

I assumed we would wait for the ceremony.

They go outside.

INT. HOUSING LEVEL. OUTSIDE CORINN AND KAMILLE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS.

CORINN

I needed it today.

KAMILLE

So you'll go unwashed to your father's ceremony?

CORINN turns to KAMILLE flabbergasted. She puts the basket down. A length of wire is suspended between two poles propped in pots with dried concrete.

CORINN

He's dead. He won't care how I
smell. I expect he'll be the one
who smells worst.

CORINN takes out the wet shirt and hangs it over the wire.
KAMILLE takes the underwear and does the same. They continue
as they speak.

KAMILLE

I thought you'd care more about
this one. It'll be the biggest
ceremony we've ever had down here.

CORINN

Remind me why it has to be big?

KAMILLE

Because he was important.

CORINN

This was one of Robyn's ideas and
she's turning, what is supposed to
be a memorial, into a bloody
spectacle.

KAMILLE

Memorials are spectacles ...

They hang the last of the dripping clothes. KAMILLE leans
against a concrete pillar opposite the wire.

KAMILLE (CONT'D)

I think its really nice what she's
planning ...

CORINN picks up the basket and waits for the rest of
KAMILLE's thought.

KAMILLE (CONT'D)

It enshrines him in a way ... The ceremony should do justice to the magnitude of what he's done for all of these people.

CORINN

He wasn't a god, Kamille. He doesn't need enshrining.

KAMILLE

It's going to be beautiful, which isn't something that we get to see very often anymore.

CORINN doesn't answer. She goes back inside the room. KAMILLE follows.

INT. CORINN AND KAMILLE'S ROOM.

CORINN falls into the pouffe with her head in her hands. KAMILLE stands in the doorway, watching her.

KAMILLE

Corinn ...

CORINN

I'm just so angry that he's gone.

KAMILLE

I know.

CORINN

And I don't understand why Robyn insists on parading his body in front of everyone.

KAMILLE

You know it's about more than that.
People need a send-off.

CORINN

Why? He's my father!

KAMILLE crouches in front of CORINN. KAMILLE takes hold of CORINN's thighs and squeezes them for comfort.

KAMILLE

You need to remember that he was a father to everyone here. He looked after every one of us, not just you ... We're mourning him, just like you are. And you're making us feel like we're not allowed to.

CORINN's tears flow stronger. She is irritated with her inability to control the tears; she furiously tries to wipe them from her face.

KAMILLE (CONT'D)

I haven't cried once and it's not just because I'm glad he's rid of this place ... It's as if you've forbidden it ... Like I don't have the right to cry.

CORINN

I never said you couldn't.

KAMILLE

You didn't need to.

CORINN continues to wipe her face.

CORINN

(In a thick, stammering
voice)

I ... Fuck. I'm sorry ... Of course
you can fucking cry.

KAMILLE smiles, shaking her head in surrender.

KAMILLE

I fucking hate fighting with you in
my head and preparing myself for an
onslaught. But then when I come out
with it, it ends up never being a
fight. You make me feel pretty
stupid sometimes.

CORINN

Don't change the subject now.

KAMILLE giggles and kisses CORINN's hand.

KAMILLE

You're a mess.

CORINN

Fuck-off.

KAMILLE pulls CORINN into her arms.

CORINN (CONT'D)

I know everyone loved him. But I
don't want to share the grief right
now.

CORINN pulls away and wipes her nose on the back of her hand.
She has stopped crying.

CORINN (CONT'D)

I'm angry and I want to stay angry until I'm not anymore. I don't want to hear the I'm sorry's and we all miss him and he was a great man. I don't care. I care that my dad died. The grey guy who was supposed to be a grandad one day.

KAMILLE doesn't say anything. But the ecstasy is plain on her face.

CORINN (CONT'D)

Don't look at me like that. You know I still want that with you.

KAMILLE

I think that's the best thing I've ever heard you say.

INT. - TRACKING. FIRST LEVEL ABOVE GROUND.

A BEARDED MAN comes from a dark corner at the edge of the level. Over his shoulder is slung a black fabric bag. He is inside an abandoned, unfinished mall. Scaffolding is still in place and construction equipment is scattered everywhere. Unruly plants grow in from outside. Everything is layered with dust. Very little natural light comes from overhead in the middle of the level. Where the light falls, there is an unfinished pair of escalators going to and from the ground level downward into the uninhabited upper level of the parking lot. The BEARDED MAN goes down the escalators then walks toward the emergency stairwell some feet away, next to an open elevator shaft. On the first landing of the stairwell there is a door with a DANGER: HIGH VOLTAGE sign on it.

Below it, another, smaller sign that reads AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY. He knocks on the door once, pauses, knocks three times, pauses and knocks once more.

FEMALE VOICE

(From inside)

Name?

BEARDED MAN

Collin.

Locks click on the other side and the door creaks open. A young woman with dirty, tight blonde curls stands aside for him to pass.

COLLIN (BEARDED MAN)

Hey, June.

Inside is Mecca's DAD and a TALL MAN. The room is lit with candles and lamps. The walls of the room are concrete and covered in electrical boxes. Pipes run across the ceiling. There is limited space.

COLLIN (CONT'D)

(To DAD with a nod)

Reginald.

(To TALL MAN with another
nod)

Eddie.

JUNE (FEMALE VOICE) closes the door and locks it. COLLIN takes a seat next to EDDIE (TALL MAN). The chairs are positioned in a circular fashion.

JUNE

Could you find batteries?

COLLIN opens his bag, rummages through its contents and produces a pack of batteries.

JUNE takes it and places it on the table next to one of the lamps. COLLIN takes out cans of soda and hands one to each of them.

EDDIE

I still can't believe that you got your hands on these.

COLLIN

If you're willing to go where no other man is willing to, you'll find a lot of things you won't believe.

COLLIN winks. He opens his can and drinks from it.

REGINALD (DAD)

I just wish you were willing to go where there is ice.

The men laugh and continue drinking their soda as if it were beers by a braai. JUNE takes the bag from them and empties it onto the floor. Out of the bag falls two pocket knives, three torches, a pack of chocolate chip cookies, two walkie-talkies and a handgun with an extra magazine. JUNE arranges everything in a row - Handgun and ammunition, knives, torches, walkie-talkies. She throws the pack of cookies at COLLIN.

JUNE

Not important.

REGINALD

Of course its important.

JUNE smiles. COLLIN tears the packaging apart and the other two snatch cookies out of COLLIN's hand.

COLLIN shoves a whole cookie into his mouth and chews loudly. REGINALD laughs at the younger men who are chewing dramatically.

JUNE

I better get my share of those.

EDDIE

God. I swear this is the best thing I've ever had inside my mouth.

COLLIN

I have to disagree with you. Sure, its fucking fantastic. But nothing beats pussy.

The men laugh. JUNE punches COLLIN on his upper arm.

COLLIN (CONT'D)

Fuck! You need to stop throwing those at me. You can't punish me for speaking truths.

JUNE

Pig.

JUNE removes a cookie from the packaging and takes a bite. She savours it, rolling it on her tongue.

JUNE (CONT'D)

(With a full mouth and eyes closed)

Oh. My. God.

REGINALD nods in agreement.

REGINALD

Sorry, Collin. But the pussy you speak of can't match this.

JUNE nods. They're silent as they enjoy the aftertaste of chocolate.

EDDIE

Sorry to interrupt your mouthgasms,
but I need to get back. So let's
start sorting shit out.

JUNE

Right.

REGINALD

Before we start ... I want to
include Mecca in this.

They are all silent. COLLIN looks at JUNE and the other two mimic him.

JUNE

I don't think its a good idea.

EDDIE

It won't be safe and we don't have
enough weapons for the four of us
as it is.

REGINALD

I can't help her if something
happens here and I'm about with the
three of you.

COLLIN

We can think about it.

JUNE

Of course.

REGINALD sighs and sits back in his seat, crossing his arms.

COLLIN

Do you think she'll be able to use a weapon if things come to that? Or is she the type to get scared and run?

REGINALD

She's not a runner. She'll keep fighting until she's dead.

JUNE nods.

EDDIE

Let's reconsider once we're sure of how we want shit to go down.

COLLIN

Deal.

INT. ROBYN'S HOME.

ROBYN is lying on her bed. There is a military simplicity and order to the room. Her sheets are dark blue and stained oatmeal. Nothing is ornamental. Her candles are all in strategic places. She gets up from her bed and goes to a doorless wardrobe. One half of the wardrobe has shelves with sparse, neatly folded clothes. Under a stack of three shirts, ROBYN produces a pack of cigarettes. She takes one out of the nearly empty packet, puts it between her lips and straightens out the shirts. She lights her cigarette from a candle on her bedside table. Next to it is a journal and the stub of a pencil. She sits back down on the bed with her back to the wall, taking the journal and pencil onto her lap. While smoking, she pulls out a knife and an old, copper ash tray from the drawer in her bedside table and starts to sharpen the pencil stub.

MALE VOICE

(From outside)

Robyn?

ROBYN quickly puts the cigarette out in the ashtray, puts the ashtray back in the bedside drawer and tries to swat away the plumes of smoke with the journal.

MALE VOICE (CONT'D)

May I come in?

ROBYN

George?

MALE VOICE

Yes ma'am.

ROBYN

Come in.

ROBYN gets up from the bed, ready to receive her guest. Her feet are bare, her shirt is slightly unbuttoned and her voluminous red hair hangs loose down to her lower back. GEORGE (MALE VOICE) enters the room and is startled by ROBYN's appearance. He clears his throat.

GEORGE

I apologize for bothering you at home.

ROBYN

Not necessary. What is it?

GEORGE

Ma'am, she's getting much worse. I don't think we'll be able to keep her much longer.

ROBYN considers the news. She nods.

ROBYN

Thank you, George. Wait outside,
please? I'll be with you in a
moment.

GEORGE

Ma'am ...

ROBYN

Yes, George?

GEORGE

You look lovely.

ROBYN does not smile, but she blushes and nods.

ROBYN

Wait outside, George.

GEORGE

Of course.

GEORGE leaves the room. ROBYN smiles, demurely, and takes a deep breath. She puts on her shoes and ties her hair up into an unruly bun.

INT. HOSUING LEVEL. OUTSIDE ROBYN'S HOME.

GEORGE is standing outside Hessian draping, watching people walking around between homes and rooms in conversations. ROBYN comes out from behind the draping. She immediately leaves for the stairwells, without speaking to or waiting for GEORGE. He silently follows her.

CUT TO:

INT. - TRACKING. STAIRWELLS.

GEORGE switches on a torch. ROBYN and GEORGE climb three flights up and arrive at an empty level. They pass a door with a DANGER: HIGH VOLTAGE sign on it. Below it, another, smaller sign that reads AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY.

INT. UNDERGROUND PARKING LOT. OPEN LEVEL.

The level is dark. In the middle of the level glows a circle of moonlight around a pair of escalators. They walk toward and up one of the escalators. They walk in silence. GEORGE is uneasy. He casts sly glimpses at ROBYN, who walks briskly in front of him. (From GEORGE'S P.O.V.) They arrive at the first level above ground. ROBYN shields her eyes from the still blinding brightness of the level at night-time. She walks directly toward the other end of the level, underneath scaffolding, passed the atrium and into the darkness at the other end.

INT. - TRACKING. STAIRWELLS.

GEORGE and ROBYN climb down four flights of stairs. They exit at the base of the stairwell. ROBYN pulls out her own torch.

INT. BASEMENT - OPPOSITE PARKING LOT.

Their torches light small areas of the dirty, debris littered floor. Only their shoes and shins can be seen in the torchlight. In the distance, warm lamp and candle light glows from the inside of a fabricated tent. Inside and around it are the silhouettes of guards. As GEORGE and ROBYN near the tent, they switch off their torches. Whimpering can be heard from inside.

GUARD #1

She's calmed down, but she's
unstable.

ROBYN

Do you have a buff for me?

GEORGE

I have one.

GEORGE pulls a grey buff out of his pocket, shakes it out and hands it to ROBYN. She pulls it over her head and, from her neck, pulls the front over her mouth and nose.

ROBYN

Let's go.

INT. TENT - CONTINUOUS

ROBYN steps through the draped entrance. GEORGE follows. He smell reaches him and he covers his nose and mouth with his hand. It's not his first time in the tent. GUARD #2 is inside the tent, standing opposite a malnourished WOMAN with long, black hair. She is tied to a concrete column, around which the tent is structured. She is whimpering and twitching spasmodically. Her face is dirty with lines where her tears had run. She is sitting in pools of her own waste. She doesn't acknowledge ROBYN or GEORGE when they enter.

ROBYN

(To GUARD #2)

What have you seen so far?

GUARD #2

She's had excessive joint pain and
headaches.

(MORE)

GUARD #2 (CONT'D)

Her tremors and twitches are getting worse and her coordination is almost completely gone.

ROBYN inspects the woman's clothes and the stained floor underneath her.

ROBYN

You wrote it down?

GUARD #2

Yes, ma'am.

ROBYN

Anything besides the twitching and pain?

GUARD #2

She can't control her bowels or bladder.

ROBYN

And?

GUARD #2

Nothing else.

ROBYN

What does her mental state look like, would you say? Ignoring that she's been tied up here for days.

GEORGE

It's hard to say. But she is ... Impaired. Sometimes she thinks we fed her children to her and other times she thinks she's a war-prisoner.

(MORE)

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Yesterday she was calm and relatively sane, asking me about my family from before ...

ROBYN

Thank you, that's enough. Hand me that please?

GUARD #2 hands ROBYN a worn-out file and pencil. She writes in bulleted form: Impaired memory; dementia; drastic personality/mood changes. She hands the file and pencil back to GUARD #2 and approaches the WOMAN, who does not react to ROBYN's presence.

ROBYN (CONT'D)

Lillian?

LILLIAN (WOMAN) registers. ROBYN reaches for her chin to turn her head. LILLIAN violently jerks her head toward ROBYN.

LILLIAN

(Monotonously, deranged)
You filthy fucking bitch. I want my children ... I will kill you. Take me to them or I'll slit your throat.

ROBYN is unperturbed by LILLIAN's thrashing and yelling, who doubles up in pain, trying to caress her head, but unable to with her hands tied away from her. LILLIAN screeches in pain, her voice is hoarse from too much strain.

LILLIAN (CONT'D)

(Sobbing)

Help me ... Help me, please ... I need to see them. My children need me.

LILLIAN continues to sob and plead as ROBYN inspects her. She takes one of her tied, outstretched arms and watches closely as LILLIAN's muscles move and twitch underneath her skin. ROBYN lets go of LILLIAN's arm.

ROBYN

Write down fasciculation.

GUARD #2 does as he is told.

ROBYN (CONT'D)

Has she said how she got ill?

GUARD #2

We couldn't get anything coherent out of her. But she kept talking about dinner. She has to get home and make dinner ... Whenever we asked her ...

ROBYN nods. She turns to face GUARD #2 and holds out her hand. He takes a large army knife from a holster in his belt and hands it to her.

ROBYN

There's nothing more to do now. She won't survive.

DOLLY OUT.

ROBYN returns to LILLIAN. She cradles LILLIAN's head into her stomach, strengthening her grip around LILLIAN's neck, while she thrashes and twitches violently to release herself. She is screaming at the top her voice, but the sound is muffled by ROBYN's shirt. ROBYN thrusts the knife into the side of LILLIAN's head. Her body slumps over. The drapery of tent's entrance closes on the action.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END