

CRATER LAKE:
A Study of the Monster
Within.

A project submitted in fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
(creative writing)

OLIVIA WEARNE

School of Creative Media
Design and Social Context Portfolio

RMIT UNIVERSITY

March 2008

Declaration

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; and, any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged.

Olivia Wearne.

28 March 2008.

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ABSTRACT

For my project I shall be writing a feature length screenplay in the horror genre. The screenplay will be entitled "Crater Lake". It will be set in a remote, drought stricken Victorian town. In the story for *Crater Lake*, the pregnant protagonist, Eve, travels to the town in search of her missing husband, Robert, and is taken hostage by the locals.

The problem I intend to address through my research is how to write a horror screenplay that employs more than bloodcurdling scare tactics to elicit fear from its audience. In order to address this problem I mean to explore Freudian psychoanalytic film theory. My purpose is to discover how useful psychoanalytic film theory might be for writing my horror screenplay.

My research will include a study of the film theory of feminist theorist and author, Barbara Creed. In particular, I am interested in how Creed uses the Freudian psychoanalytic concepts of 'repression', the 'other', the 'primal uncanny' and 'the abject', in order to address the representation of the monster in horror films.

I intend to apply Creed's film theory to a case study of

Roman Polanski's *The Tenant* (1976). I chose to research Creed and Polanski because both address the horror genre in a way that demonstrates the genre can be a medium for social and psychological inquiry. I mean to apply what I have learned from my examination of their work to the writing of my own horror screenplay, *Crater Lake*.

Introduction.

Film theory is a broad and wide-ranging field of study. Since cinema's inception, people have written about film and thus theorized it. In their overview of film theory, authors, Robert Lapsley and Michael Westlake, comment how early film theorists, the likes of Eisenstein, Bazin and Kracauer, 'tended to adopt a commonsensical aesthetic based on personal expression, realism and humanism' (1988, p. vii). Henceforth, film theory underwent a constant evolution that incorporated such diverse fields as Marxism, structuralism, psychoanalysis and semiotics. More recently, the field has broadened again under the influence of postmodernism. Within the field there has tended to be conflict amongst theorists and critics. This includes early debates surrounding tensions between genre and auteur theory, structuralism versus post-structuralism and more recent conflicts involving theories of active and passive spectatorship.

For the purpose of my research I am interested in the horror genre. In particular, how film theory might prove useful to the writing of my horror screenplay, "Crater Lake". As it stands, the bulk of theoretical discussion surrounding the horror genre has by and large referred to

psychoanalysis as the basis for interpretation (see Wood, 1986, Jancovich, 1992, Williams, 1984 and Creed, 1993). Among the many film theorists who address the horror film narrative from the perspective of psychoanalysis, I have selected to focus on the work of Barbara Creed. Creed's uses psychoanalytically informed feminist film theory to address the representation of the monster in horror films. Her theory correlates the depiction of the monster to anxieties relating to notions of identity and gender conflict.

Methodology.

In order to discover a means for applying psychoanalytical film theory to the process of writing my screenplay, I shall address the following questions in my research:

Question 1.

How does Creed use the concept of 'repression', the 'other,' the 'primal uncanny' and 'the abject to define the monster within the horror movie genre?

To help me answer this question I intend examining Creed's work, with particular emphasis on her book, *Phallic Panic* (2005) and her essay, *The Monstrous – Feminine: horror, theory, film* (2004: first published 1986). I have located four of Creed's theory's key psychoanalytical concepts to serve as the basis for my research.

1, Repression: Creed develops Freud's theory of repression, whereby repressed instincts, urges and desires are confined to the unconscious.

2, The Other: According to Creed, in patriarchal culture (or a culture determined by male domination) women are portrayed as 'other' through their difference to the male norm.

3, The Primal Uncanny: Creed argues the male monster is aligned to the 'primal uncanny' in horror films through their connection to 'woman, the animal and death'.

4, The Abject: Creed suggests, in horror films the abject is coded as feminine and provides a ritual whereby the male

subject can reject and withdraw himself from the feminine.

Question 2.

How might Creed's theories of repression, the 'other', the primal uncanny and the abject be interpreted within "The Tenant"?

In order to answer this question I mean to conduct a detailed case study of *The Tenant*. My focus will be on how Creed's film theory is depicted through plot and character development within *The Tenant's* narrative. *The Tenant* is extremely relevant to my research for the way in which the narrative portrays psychological issues relating to Creed's arguments concerning gender and identity. Given that the screenplay of *The Tenant* was never released, I have opted to study the film. I mean to study the film for ideas on how Polanski uses visual imagery in line with narrative and character development to depict psychoanalytic ideas within the horror genre.

Question 3.

How might Creed's concepts of repression, the 'Other', the abject and the primal uncanny be developed in my own screenplay, "Crater Lake"?

In order to answer this question, I intend applying

what I have learned from answering questions one and two to the writing of my screenplay, *Crater Lake*. My intention is to uncover ways in which Creed's psychoanalytic theories might prove useful to the writing of my script. By studying the film of *The Tenant* I hope to discover ways of demonstrating mood, tension and psychoanalytic themes within my script of *Crater Lake*.

Rationale.

This research is aimed at bringing together the two separate but related fields of film theory and screenwriting. The purpose of my research is to help me investigate ways for writing a horror screenplay that is more than fantasy of gory sensationalism, but has something to say about the world. According to academic and author, Mark Jancovich, 'through psychoanalysis, the fantastical nature of many horror plots can be read not as escapism, but as an attempt to deal with repressed materials' (2002, p. 21). My aim is to utilize Barbara Creed's psychoanalytical film theory in order to develop a screenplay writing technique that uses film theory as its basis. It is hoped that what I discover from my study of Creed will assist me in composing a horror screenplay that knowingly addresses individual and social anxieties. This knowledge should serve as a means for eliciting terror and dread from an audience.

This exegesis will make the connection between film theory and the practice of screenwriting. Through my research I intend to develop a screenwriting technique that uses psychoanalytic film theory as its basis. This screenwriting technique should utilise the theoretical understanding of the complex representation of the horror monster as demonstrated by Creed. This technique will be aimed at understanding how screenplay narrative and character psychology might be structured in accordance with the theories of Creed. In particular, my research is aimed at devising horror screenplay writing technique with reference to Creed's theories of repression, the 'other',

the primal uncanny and the abject. This research aims to give writers the theoretical tools to address psychological issues and anxieties in their screenplays.

CHAPTER 1

Barbara Creed's Film Theory.

Barbara Creed, along with other feminist film theorists (most notably Laura Mulvey), has often been criticised for being too inflexible and overly generalised in the reading of gender roles (Carroll, 1990, Deyer, 1988, Owens, 1983). For example, Queer film theorists have criticised feminist film theory for equating gender and sexuality too directly (Benshoff, 1997, Grant, 1984). As Creed herself notes, 'queer theory exposes the problem of what we might term hetero-normative... which uses gender specific labels... in order to put people into boxes...' (2004, p. 124). Creed has attempted to answer criticisms surrounding feminist film theory. In her overview of the field, 'Feminist Film Theory: Reading the Text' (1983), Creed accounts for the diversity in feminist film theory arising from the second wave of feminism and the woman's movement.¹ According to Creed, contemporary film theory, such as feminist film theory, attempts to understand how the cinema maintains 'dominant values in relation to such areas as aesthetics, gender, sexual preference and race' (2004, p. viii).

For the purpose of my research I have chosen to analyse Creed's feminist film theory, with the intention of applying it to my screenplay. Creed analyses the representation of gender in film. She does not attempt to account for the 'actual' position of women and men in relation to society. Creed's arguments surrounding the representation of women in horror films are supported by detailed case studies. Within her case studies, Creed

highlights trends and consistencies regarding the representation of the feminine within the horror genre. Creed argues, 'the identity of the monster... is inseparable from questions of sex, gender, power and politics' (2005, p. viii). It is for this reason that I am interested in exploring Creed's work within my script of *Crater Lake*.

Within this chapter I intend to examine how Barbara Creed uses the concept of 'repression', the 'other', the 'primal uncanny' and 'the abject' to define the monster within the horror movie genre? I shall begin by exploring Creed's argument that Freudian psychoanalysis, based on the notion of repression, is important to film theory.

Creed gives a detailed account of the influence of psychoanalysis upon film studies and criticism in her essay *Dream Screen: film and Psychoanalytic Theory* (2004, first published 1998).ⁱⁱ Here, Creed gives an overview of the history of psychoanalytic theory in relation to cinema. Creed observes that 'psychoanalysis and the cinema were both born at the end of the 19th century. They share a common historical, social and cultural background shaped by the forces of modernity' (2004, p. 80) Creed addresses how psychoanalysis, incorporating an emphasis on the importance of desire in the life of the individual, has influenced cinema and film criticism.

In order to analyse Creed's arguments concerning Freud's theory of repression, I shall also be referring to film theorist and author, Robin wood. Whereas Creed adopts a feminist approach to reading films, Wood takes a political-ideological approach to film theory. For the purpose of my research, I shall focus on his chapter 'The American Nightmare: Horror in the 70s', from his book *Hollywood: From Vietnam to Reagan* (1986). In this chapter,

Wood explores the role of repression in interpreting horror films. He argues horror films provide an illustration of and an outlet for things that are repressed by society.

Part 1: Repression.

According to Creed, repression equates to the suppression of disagreeable drives and desires by the unconscious. Creed suggests the Freudian notion of the unconscious serves as the basis for psychoanalytic thought. Creed notes that, according to Freud, large parts of human thought remain unconscious:

The subject does not know about the content of certain troubling ideas and often much effort is need to make them conscious. Undesirable thoughts will be repressed or kept from consciousness by the ego under the command of the super-ego, or conscious (2004, p.81).

Creed's observation of Freud's theory suggests individuals may suppress troubling or instinctive thoughts and urges which are regarded as socially unacceptable. This equates to the attempt made by the conscious mind (ego/super-ego) to think and act in a manner regarded as 'civilised'.

Consequently, Creed addresses Freud's observation that repressed thoughts manifest themselves in dreams, nightmares, and in artistic activity. Creed notes the usefulness of this approach to film studies. She observes how many film critics come to read film from the perspective of the unconscious of the film text – referred to as the sub text. Viewed in this way, Creed writes that

films can be analysed 'for repressed contents, perverse utterances and evidence of the workings of desire' (2004, p. 82).

For the purpose of this essay, Creed's understanding of repression is relevant to the screenwriter in three ways. Firstly, it relates to the creative process within the act of conceiving and developing a script. Secondly, the notion of repression allows the writer to undertake a deeper reading of the scripts of other writers. Thirdly, it gives the writer an insight into the hidden fears and anxieties of their audience.

Robin Wood supports Creed's use of the Freudian notion of repression to analyse horror films.ⁱⁱⁱ Wood observes how horror films provide an illustration of and an outlet for things that are repressed by society (1986, p. 71). Wood, points to two types of repression: basic and surplus.

Basic repression is vital to our growth into socialised human beings. It consists of elements such as self-control, empathy and the ability to accept the postponement of gratification. According to Wood, basic repression is the socialising indoctrination that distinguishes people from animals. Wood concedes that basic repression is responsible for enabling us to control our own lives and co-exist with others.

Wood argues surplus repression is 'specific to a particular culture and is the process whereby people are conditioned from earliest infancy to take on predetermined roles within that culture' (1986, p. 71). According to Wood, surplus repression restricts and inhibits people's behaviour with a view to creating 'civilised' beings (1986,

p. 71).^{iv} Wood's view of surplus repression adheres to Creed's theory of the Symbolic order. Creed argues entry into the Symbolic order means succumbing to the laws of society: law, language and loss (2004, p. 87).

Both Creed and Wood refer to sexuality as an example of surplus repression. Both critics explore ways in which the horror genre portrays sexual desires as adverse and dangerous to the greater community. Wood argues horror films illustrate the collective repression of sexuality (1987, pp. 59-63). In *Phallic Panic* Creed argues that horror conventions such as cannibalism, female monsters, werewolves, vampires and mad scientists can all be read as the expression of repressed sexual desire.

Polanski gives a horrific portrayal of Creed's view of repression in his film *Repulsion*. The film narrates the psychological demise of a repressed young girl (Catherine Deneuve) who drives herself to insanity and murder when left alone in her apartment for a few days. In *Repulsion*, the heroine has a psychologically debilitating fear of sexuality. In this instance her severely frigid and repressed nature leads to alienation and fear of human contact that eventually drives her to insanity.

Both Wood and Creed suggest that by displaying the release of repression on screen, the horror film has the potential to be a subversive medium (Creed, 2005 & Wood, 1986). Horror films, such as Polanski's *Repulsion* and *The Tenant* expose how repression manifests itself in the individual in a negative way. The horror in these horror films arises from the revelation of how repressed urges find an outlet in the most horrific of ways. As such, the representation of extreme repressiveness can offer a disturbing psychological study. The horror genre can be

used to demonstrate the negativity of censoring one's instinctive self.

Part 2 - The Primal Uncanny.

In *Phallic Panic* (2005) Creed develops her theory of the 'primal uncanny' as it applies to the male monster in classic horror films. Creed argues that the male monster of classic horror films is associated to the primal uncanny through its connection to woman, the animal and death. In order to consider Creed's theory of the primal uncanny it is important to understand that her theory was derived from Freud's theory of 'the uncanny'.

In his 1919 essay, *The Uncanny*, Freud outlined his theory of 'the uncanny'. In this essay Freud argues the uncanny refers to 'that class of the frightening which leads us back to what is known of old and long familiar' (1975, p. 340). Freud's theory of the uncanny was primarily concerned with castration anxiety. He used the notion of the uncanny to demonstrate circumstances in which the familiar can become uncanny and frightening.

According to Creed the 'uncanny' is an important perspective from which to consider the horror genre. For Creed, working from a Freudian perspective, repression lies at the heart of any notion of the uncanny - 'the uncanny is that which should have remained repressed but has come to light' (Freud, cited Creed, 2005, p. 5). Creed argues Freud's theory of the uncanny demonstrates how the uncanny equates to an illustration of 'the metamorphosis of the familiar into the unfamiliar, of bringing to light what should have remained hidden, of the dissolution of boundaries between the real and imagined' (2005, p. 7).

In *Phallic Panic*, Creed extends upon Freud's notion of the uncanny. Creed argues the anxiety ascribed to the uncanny can be explained in reference to the 'primal uncanny.' According to Creed, woman, the animal and death are representative of the primal uncanny because they are perceived as disrupting the male social order. Creed contends the male social order attempts to posit woman as 'other,' in an effort to exclude her from such civilising arenas as law, language and religion (2005, p. 16). In terms of the primal uncanny, women, the animal and death are represented by the male order as 'unfamiliar and strange' in an attempt to normalise masculinity as familiar, proper and natural (Creed, 2005, p. 14). Woman becomes unfamiliar (and thus uncanny) when positioned as 'other' in relation to the male symbolic order.

Creed explores the filmic representation of the male monster in relation to woman as 'other'. She argues, 'man is made monstrous when he attempts to usurp the primary functions of woman, particularly in relation to reproduction, sexuality and birth' (2005, p. 50). Creed cites the example of the Creation narratives, most notably the Frankenstein films. She argues the central theme of these films asserts when man creates life he gives birth to monsters. Creed claims there are dual notions of monstrosity at play in these narratives. The figure of 'the creator' may be interpreted as monstrous because of his desire to usurp woman's reproductive function. Alternatively, the creator's creation may be read as 'other' because of its unnatural birth.

Creed demonstrates through the figure of the vampire (namely Dracula) how the three categories of the primal uncanny: woman, animal and death interlink.

His sexuality is feminised and animalised in relation to his acts of metamorphosis, orality, cannibalism and bestiality...With his attachment to Mother Earth, his association with women's blood cycle, his power to transform into animal forms and his existence as an undead creature, Dracula is closely linked to the primal uncanny (Creed, 2005, p. 94).

According to Creed, the figure of the vampire illustrates the collapse of boundaries between imaginary and real, male and female, living and dead (2005, p. 68). Creed suggests the vampire is portrayed as monstrous because it blurs the distinctions between these ideally stable categories.

Creed also references the figure of the vampire to argue that the implication of blood and bloodletting in horror films is representative of female monstrosity. According to Creed, 'his [Dracula's] mythic and symbolic associations with women's menstrual cycle, virginal blood and foetal blood make him the supreme blood monster of the cinema' (2005, p. 94). Creed suggests, in woman's connection to the body, death and nature, the feminine is also married to the notion of abjection. Creed observes that within the horror narrative the (generally male) monster is depicted in alignment with woman (and thus to death and nature) and brings turmoil to civilised society.

In summary, we see that Creed demonstrates the male monster of the horror film bears an uncanny alignment with woman, the animal and death. Creed argues that the arenas of woman, the animal and death are deemed 'other' by the male social order – 'outside the realm of what constitutes

proper phallic masculinity' (2005, p. 15). Creed regards the emergence of the primal uncanny in horror films as a disruption to the male social order and a disturbance to the 'myth of civilisation.' According to Creed, the emergence of the primal uncanny in the horror genre creates an anxiety, a sense of what she labels 'phallic panic.'

Part 3 - The 'Other'.

We have seen how the notion of repression affects the individual through the suppression of instinctive thoughts and behaviours. Also, how horror films characterise the figure of the monster as a manifestation of released repression. I now want to explore how the 'repression' of certain groups can be depicted in horror films through the representation of the 'other'.

In her theory of the primal uncanny, Creed argues woman is portrayed as 'other' in her connection to the animal (nature) and death. Creed asserts, woman's status as 'other' arises in relation to woman's position outside of the male Symbolic order. Creed argues the motifs of woman, the animal and death are used by the Symbolic order to portray that which is viewed as 'other' as threatening to the status quo. Creed demonstrates how the monster is depicted as 'other' because it aligns itself with woman, the animal and/or death.

Robin Wood's film theory supports the notion of the 'other' demonstrated by Creed. However, Creed is a feminist film theorist. For this reason, she focuses more on the representation of women in cinema. Wood is a political/ideological film critic. He tends to focus on the different groups that he sees as oppressed within Western

Democracies. Wood argues that the motif of the 'Other' (Wood uses a capital 'o') is the most common method for representing 'the repressed' in horror films. According to Wood, that which is repressed by society is projected onto others as a way of rationalising the oppression of these groups.^v

Horror films where minority groups figure as the monster depict these individuals or groups 'going bad' and chaos ensuing. Examples include Tobe Hooper's *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1974) and Wes Craven's *The Hills Have Eyes* (1977) are examples of the impoverished uprising against bourgeois society - a case of poverty stricken grassroots folk menacing the middle classes. Interestingly, in these films the terrorising poor choose to eat their wealthier victims. This may be viewed in terms of the primal uncanny, whereby monstrous rural families have reverted to bestial/animalistic behaviour.

In Polanski's *Rosemary's Baby*, the protagonist, Rosemary (Mia Farrow) is chosen by a group of Satanists (her husband among them) to be raped by the devil so she can give birth to the antichrist. In this instance the 'other' group is depicted as being the satanic cult. The portrayal of the bizarre devil worshippers in *Rosemary's Baby* is also aligned to Creed's theory of the primal uncanny. Here, the safe and familiar notion of friendly neighbours, a caring doctor and supportive husband is twisted. These 'homely' folks become evil and ominous as the viewer gradually becomes aware of their ulterior motives.

Rosemary's Baby corresponds to Creed's theory regarding the representation of 'borders' in horror films (2004, p. 35-39). According to Creed, that which threatens

to cross the border is abject. In the case of *Rosemary's Baby* the Satanic sect are aligned as both 'other' and abject. Creed asserts that whilst the nature of the border may vary from film to film the function of the monstrous remains the same – 'to bring about an encounter between the symbolic order and that which threatens its stability' (2004, p. 38).

Academic and author, Peter Hutchings gives a detailed account of the history of the horror genre in his book *The Horror Film* (2004). Hutchings observes that critics have often been preoccupied with the horror genre's 'inner workings, its themes, underlying structures and social function...' (2004, p. 6). According to Hutchings, horror films that depict oppressed groups as the monster have frequently been interpreted by film theorists as being social critiques. Hutchings suggests, these films 'give us proletarian monsters that are a product of U.S. society... and generally they offer a powerful sense of a society tearing itself apart' (2004, p. 120). Together with Creed and Wood, Hutchings' argument demonstrates the horror genre's potential to explore the cultural tendency of projecting 'otherness' onto groups and individuals.

Part 4 - The Abject.

In Creed's essay *The Monstrous – Feminine: horror, theory, film* (2004), she accounts for the interconnection between abjection and the horror genre with particular emphasis on the role of the female monster.^{vi} Creed draws on the work of French psychoanalyst Julia Kristeva to help support her arguments regarding the feminine/maternal qualities of the monster. In Kristeva's book, *The Powers of*

Horror (1982) she accounts for the ways in which abjection functions in patriarchal societies as a source of horror. Kristeva argues the abject separates the human from the non-human and the fully constituted subject from the partially formed subject. Creed focuses on Kristeva's account of how 'the mother' represents a key figure of abjection.^{vii} Creed applies Kristeva's theories to suggest, woman is transformed into a monster in horror films 'as a consequence of abject changes that affect her body in relation to gestation, birth and mothering' (2004, p. 44).

As we have seen, in Creed's film theory she argues that the primal uncanny, incorporating the figure of the 'other', may be read as a posing a threat to the Symbolic social order. In *The Monstrous Feminine* Creed posits that the representation of abjection also works on this premise. Creed accounts for the various ways in which the abject can be experienced as a disturbance to civilisation: in relation to biological bodily functions, inscribed in symbolic (religious) economy or via threats to the 'fragility of the law' (2004, pp. 36-8). Citing Kristeva, Creed notes:

The abject is that which does not 'respect borders, positions, rules' that which 'disturbs identity, system, order'... The abject threatens life; it must be 'radically excluded' from the place of the living subject, propelled away from the body and deposited on the side of the imaginary border which separates the self from that which threatens the self (2004, p. 36).

In regards to its relationship to the social order, both Creed and Kristeva account for the presence of the abject as a reminder of what it is to be a 'civilised' individual.

Creed accounts for the horror film as being a form of social ritual whereby viewers expose themselves to the abject element in order to expel that element.

The spectator is able to view encounters with the abject monster, take perverse pleasure in the gruesome sights on offer, and then withdraw secure in her/his sense of what constitutes the whole and proper self and body (Creed, 2004, p. 38).

For the most part, the horror paradigm ensures the 'civilised' persona prevails over the abject – the social order triumphs. However, Creed argues the horror films can function to destabilise the repression of our biology by revealing the existence of our 'abject selves'. In this way, horror films reaffirm the unavoidable reality of our biological composition.

According to Creed, biological abjection represents all that is perceived as being offensive and unsanitary about the human body.^{viii} Creed's notion of abjection accounts for a repressive antipathy toward the human body. Creed credits the horror genre with representing the abject in a number of ways. For Creed, the most obvious image of abjection is the corpse, 'whole and mutilated,' followed by the depiction of bodily wastes such as 'blood, vomit, saliva, sweat, tears and putrefying flesh' (2004, p. 38). Accordingly, the abject represents one of the psychological

tools most frequently used in horror to achieve physical queasiness.

Linda Williams examines the concept of the abject or gross in the genres of horror, melodrama and pornography. Her study analysed how these genres display differing forms of bodily excess: blood, tears and semen, so as to provoke a similar excessive response in the viewer.

What seems to bracket these particular genres from others is an apparent lack of aesthetic distance, a sense of over-involvement in sensation and emotion. We feel manipulated by these texts – an impression that the very colloquialisms of “tear jerker” and “fear jerker” express (Williams, 1991, p. 5).

In Williams’s discussion of horror, she observed how this category of film depicted the body gripped in a type of ecstasy – overcome by fear and terror (1991, p. 4). According to Williams, the horror film not only presents such physical ecstasies but also aims to elicit similar physical reactions in the spectator.

Joseph Campbell writes of the human relationship to the abject as something to which we are repelled by in others, but tend not to consider in terms of ourselves.

But when it suddenly dawns on us, or is forced to our attention, that everything we think or do is necessarily tainted with the odour of the flesh, then, not uncommonly, there is experienced a moment of revulsion (Campbell, 1968, pp. 121-122).

The realisation of the 'odour of the flesh' to invoke a sense of revulsion is a major trope of the horror genre. As Creed contends, horror films force to our attention the fact of our being, at the core, biological beings. Both Creed and Campbell note, horror films compare and contrast our abject selves with our 'ideal' self-image. This 'ideal' is characterised by culturally *positive* human characteristics, such as behavioural awareness and empathy (Campbell, 1968, pp. 121).

Summing up, in conjunction with repression, the abject entails a subconscious rejection of that which is innate within humans. Creed suggests society's unpalatable regard for the abject, encompasses a denial of our biological reality. Creed suggests this is particularly relevant in relation to women's biological and reproductive functions. Creed argues the Symbolic order replaces our abject reality with an idealised image of man based on an infallible, socialised and civilised self. Portraying the abject creates anxiety for an audience by illuminating biological realities subconsciously deemed repellent.

Chapter 1 - Conclusion.

Using Creed's film theory to understand how concepts such as repression, the primal uncanny, the 'other' and the abject are read in the horror genre may be a useful tool for screenwriters. Creed's theory offers writers an understanding of repression from the perspective of unconscious drives and desires. Creed endeavours to explain the effects of repression on individuals and society alike.

This may help the writer interpret his or her own fears and anxieties. It may also assist them to draw characters that reflect the unfounded and subconscious anxieties of the audience.

As we have seen, Creed's work also brings perspective to the concept of the 'other' based on the perceived threat of difference. It demonstrates the relationship between the male monster and the primal uncanny and the female monster and abjection. As such, Creed's psychoanalytic film theory demonstrates ways in which horror films work on the viewer to incite dread, terror and discomfort. For the screenwriter, Creed's film theory offers the basis for recognising what motivates fear and revulsion in their prospective audience.

In this chapter, we examined the work of Barbara Creed to establish how horror films can be interpreted from the interrelated notions of repression, the 'other,' abjection, and the primal uncanny. We saw how the horror genre may equate to the portrayal of narratives that represent universal fears and uncertainties. I shall now apply what I have learnt from my study of Creed's theories to a case study of Roman Polanski's film, *The Tenant*.

CHAPTER 2

Case Study of Roman Polanski's

"The Tenant".

Roman Polanski's film *The Tenant* depicts the effects of oppression and repression on the human condition. Film writer John Orr notes, 'he [Polanski] explores without preconception the encounters of cold evil and human fallibility in modern times' (2006, p. 5). I chose a film by Polanski for my case study because his early films, particularly *Knife in the Water* (1962), *Repulsion* (1965), *Rosemary's Baby* (1968) and *The Tenant* (1976) are good examples of the sub-genre I want to explore for *Crater Lake*: the modern psychological horror film.

Peter Hutchings notes, modern horror, arising in the 1960s, challenged the established conventions of the horror film. Hutchings observes how modern horror films were often set in contemporary locations and bore a fascination with the psychological individual (2004, pp, 169-177). Hutchings asserts that films from this period challenged assumptions about the nature of good and evil. They questioned the assumption that good would always prevail and that normality was on the side of the righteous (2004, p. 169). Polanski's early horror films adhere to Hutchings's comments. These films use tension and character psychology to elicit fear and dread from the audience. I mean to study Polanski's approach to psychological horror in *The Tenant* for ideas on how I might inspire terror in my script of *Crater Lake*.

Set in Paris, *The Tenant* tells the story of meek office clerk, Trelkovsky (played by Roman Polanski). Trelkovsky takes over the lease of an apartment after the previous tenant, Simone Choule (Dominique Poulange) is hospitalised due to a failed suicide attempt. The oppressive environment of the apartment block and its strict residents exacerbates Trelkovsky's natural inclination for repressive behaviour. After Simone dies, Trelkovsky convinces himself that his neighbours plan to turn him into the dead woman. Trelkovsky is driven insane by his paranoid conviction of the conspiracy against him. He experiences absurd hallucinations and takes up cross-dressing. In the finale, the hero succumbs to his insanity. Trelkovsky dresses up as Simone Choule and attempts suicide by jumping from his apartment window. When the first attempt fails, Trelkovsky hauls himself off the pavement for a second attempt.

Part 1 - Repression in The Tenant.

I begin my study of *The Tenant* with an examination of how Creed's theory of repression is presented within the narrative. In *Phallic Panic* Creed demonstrates how the classic horror film portrays the hero as threatened by the figure of the monster. Creed argues the monster is depicted as a manifestation of released repression. In this example, the protagonist is expected to conquer the monster in a manner that resembles the unrepressed behaviour of the monster.

The Tenant does not follow Creed's classic paradigm. Instead, as we have seen, *The Tenant* falls under the heading of 'psychological horror'.^{ix} As such, *The Tenant's*

plot charts the hero, Trelkovsky's demise through his mental undoing. Trelkovsky falls victim to his severely repressed nature. As Creed would suggest, Trelkovsky represents both the hero and monster. Through his psychological breakdown he is the figure who threatens to destabilise the ordered world of the narrative.

In the opening scenes of *The Tenant* Trelkovsky is characterised as being heavily repressed. When making enquiries about the vacant apartment to the building's doorkeeper (Shelly Winters), he appears as a reserved and uptight character. Later, Trelkovsky prostrates himself in front of the apartment building's owner, Monsieur Zy (Melvyn Douglas) in an effort to display that he is 'proper' enough to fit in with the other tenants.

Trelkovsky's guilt complex exacerbates his repression. At Simone's funeral he imagines the priest's eulogy to be a fire and brimstone tirade. Trelkovsky listens to the priest's admonishment as he guiltily ogles Simone's friend Stella (Isabelle Adjani). The protagonist's behaviour suggests Trelkovsky aspires to achieve Creed's theory of the idealised image of a civilised male. The hero is beset by neurotic anxieties and an obvious discomfort toward his inner nature. This implies Creed's argument that the notion of ideal civility does not come naturally, but is fostered upon individuals by the Symbolic order.

In the first and second acts of *The Tenant* we see instances whereby Trelkovsky's overbearing repression makes him a social pariah. Trelkovsky awkwardly attempts to interact with his exuberant workmates at his housewarming. Yet he makes them leave early after a neighbour complains about the noise. This scene is later re-enacted when the rowdiest of Trelkovsky's colleagues, Scope (Bernard

Fresson) invites Trelkovsky to his apartment. Scope plays music unbearably loudly for the purpose of disturbing his neighbours. This scene demonstrates the opposing extreme to Trelkovsky's uptight civility. Scope is an over-confidant, self-interested, bully. His character presents a picture of the absurd exemplar of manhood. Scope's character is no more desirable than Trelkovsky but has the effect of reinforcing Trelkovsky's meekness.

The Tenant reflects Creed's view that the role of the monster is to highlight contradictions that exist in patriarchal culture. Creed suggests these contradictions exist in relation to questions of male identity and the nature of patriarchal civilization (2005, p. xviii). Trelkovsky desperately attempts to be a model citizen by repressing himself under the guise of decorum and etiquette. Rather than achieve his desired social acceptance, Trelkovsky is driven to insanity. This demonstrates Creed's view that the desire to assimilate into the male Symbolic order, the order of patriarchal language and law, is an impossible ideal.

Part 2 - The 'Other' in The Tenant.

As we have seen, Creed argues that in horror films the monster represents that which is viewed as 'other' in relation to the male Symbolic order. According to Creed, the portrayal of the monster as 'other' often arises through its connection to woman, the animal and death. *The Tenant* is a psychological horror. Thus, the hero, Trelkovsky is depicted as the monster and marked as 'other'. To begin with the plot attributes the hero's otherness as being racial. Trelkovsky's Polish background

is easily identifiable to French society by his accent and foreign sounding surname (the only name accorded to Trelkovsky during the film.) Throughout the narrative Trelkovsky is quick to inform those who question his birthplace that he is a French citizen. When questioned by a suspicious policeman Trelkovsky anxiously assures him he is not Russian. This, along with Trelkovsky's painful politeness demonstrates the hero's fear of being labelled 'other'. The protagonist's apprehension reveals the perceived rejection or alienation that being branded an outsider entails.

Trelkovsky is not only an outsider because of his foreignness; his personality and behaviour make him 'other' as well. Trelkovsky is alienated from mainstream society because of his pained attitude toward social relations. *The Tenant* depicts Trelkovsky awkwardly watching others enjoy themselves: amongst his colleagues at work, at his housewarming and later at a party Stella takes him to. Trelkovsky's timid, anxious and repressive nature exiles him from his peers. Trelkovsky resembles an insecure teenager, paralysed by self-consciousness and social discomfiture.

As we have seen, *The Tenant* gives many instances of Trelkovsky's overly repressed behaviour, especially in the first half of the film. These situations serve to characterise the protagonist's desperate attempt to not be labelled 'other'. One example involves Trelkovsky having a drink with Stella after meeting her at Simone's bedside. Trelkovsky dithers over deciding what drink to order - what would be the more suitable beverage to have on this occasion? Later he excuses himself to use the toilet by lying about making a phone call. In another instance,

Trelkovsky politely accepts the local café imposing Simone's choice of beverage and brand of cigarettes upon him. In another example Trelkovsky is mortified at accidentally dropping litter from an open rubbish bag onto the apartment staircase. These situations all reflect the protagonist's fierce determination to be an unobjectionable member of society, regardless of the personal toll this takes. The paradox lies in the fact that the hero's desperation to appear 'normal' in fact designates him as 'other'. Trelkovsky's overbearing correctness separates him from normal 'everyday' society.

The tenement building (the central location for the film) can be viewed as representative of society at large. The building itself is gloomy and oppressive. Meanwhile, the behaviour of its inhabitants reflects the politics and social etiquettes of mainstream society (albeit on a trivial and petty scale). Trelkovsky comes to the building seeking occupancy as an outsider - reflecting his arrival in France as an outsider. Trelkovsky is given residency on the condition that he abides by the rules of the establishment. Rules based largely upon the need for silence and an agreement not to fraternise with the opposite sex. As Creed would suggest, these restrictions mirror the general laws of democratic society fostered to maintain civility and social order (including restraints on promiscuity). Trelkovsky, like most members of society, adjusts his behaviour to suit. He represses his natural urges and instincts in favour of conforming to the status quo of the building, and of society at large.

Part 3 - Abjection in The Tenant.

Having examined how Creed's theory of repression and the 'other' may be read in *The Tenant's* narrative, I now want to consider her concept of the abject. As we have seen, in *The Monstrous Feminine* Creed claims abjection can be portrayed in relation to biological bodily functions... or via threats to the 'fragility of the law' (2004, pp. 36-8). Creed argues that the representation of abjection works on the premise that the abject poses a threat to the patriarchal social order. Creed accounts for the presence of the abject as a reminder of what it is to be a 'civilised' being. According to Creed, the abject is tolerated and indeed utilised as a means for teaching what it is to be a 'proper' subject.

In *The Tenant*, the actions and behaviour of the protagonist, Trelkovsky, reflect Creed's concept of the abject. The narrative progression of *The Tenant* equates to a progression in paranoia for the Trelkovsky. The hero becomes increasingly certain that his neighbours are trying to convert him into the deceased Simone Choule. This paranoia encompasses the representation of the abject within *The Tenant*. Trelkovsky represents the abject monster in his psychological downfall. The film illustrates the chaos, both physical and mental, that arises when a subject loses touch with their sanity. The hero assumes the persona of the deceased Simone through transvestism. He also engages in paranoid ravings and pitiful tantrums over the conspiracy he believes is taking place against him. Trelkovsky's psychological derangement results in his inability to function as a 'civilised' person. As Creed's theories demonstrate, through his mental breakdown

Trelkovsky presents a threat to the 'fragility of the law' whilst exposing the myth of civilisation.

Simone Choule, the deceased prior occupant of Trelkovsky's apartment, also demonstrates Creed's theory of the abject in *The Tenant*. Trelkovsky receives a frank account of Simone's suicide attempt from the concierge (Shelly Winters): including a visual reminder in the smashed glass portico beneath his French doors. Soon after, Trelkovsky makes a visit to the hospital where Simone is being kept. He discovers a bandaged figure (reminiscent of *The Mummy*) with only the mouth – missing its front tooth – and one beady eye left uncovered. Simone's injured body represents the repression of the abject: tightly wrapped and hidden from view. Yet, the viewer is aware that beneath the bandages lie the unspeakable horrors associated with the biological – particularly the wounded – body. At the end of Trelkovsky's visit Simone turns her eye upon him and releases a dreadful, primal moan. This cry is the first real moment of horror for the audience and is repeated in the film's horrific ending. In the finale, Trelkovsky is the bandaged figure in place of Simone. He sees himself seated beside himself at his hospital bedside and emits the abject primal scream. Trelkovsky's hallucination suggests the concept of repression whereby one banishes vital instinctive parts of themselves to the unconscious. At this point Trelkovsky has completely lost touch with his true identity. The hero has become Simone, who now looks back at the stranger Trelkovsky.

Compared with most horror films, which abound in blood and injury, *The Tenant* is comparatively restrained in outward displays of biological abjection. As a psychological horror, the film adopts a subtler approach to

depicting abjectivity. Perhaps the most lingering depiction of the physically abject relates to missing teeth. Trelkovsky discovers Simone's missing tooth plugged into a hole in the wall. This tooth will come back to haunt Trelkovsky (and the audience) later in the film, when he wakes to discover he has similarly ripped out his own front tooth. The physical deprivation and pain of removing one's front tooth demonstrates the abject mental state of Trelkovsky, and Simone before him.

The Tenant's hero's abject mental breakdown has the effect of unsettling the viewer - the terror of the mind turned against its-self. In the climax, psychological and physical abjection come together in an appalling display. Trelkovsky dresses as Simone then throws himself from his window. When the first attempt fails he drags himself upstairs again for a second attempt. This dramatic finale may result in conflict for the audience. *The Tenant's* audience might feel aghast at the horrific and lamentable behaviour of the hero. However, they may also sympathise with his plight, particularly his self-abused state of mind. Trelkovsky's inability to manage his repressive nature, his uncertainty as to what constitutes *acceptable* behaviour, may be a familiar predicament for the viewer.

Part 4 - The Primal Uncanny in The Tenant.

I now want to turn my focus to exploring how Creed's theory of the primal uncanny may be interpreted in *The Tenant*. In *Phallic Panic* Creed develops Freud's notion of the uncanny, regarded as the familiar turning unfamiliar and threatening. Creed conceives of a theory of the primal uncanny to account for the anxiety ascribed to the uncanny.

Creed argues that woman, death and the animal are representative of the primal uncanny because they are perceived as disrupting the male social order. According to Creed, women, death and the animal are represented by the male order as 'unfamiliar and strange' in an attempt to normalise masculinity as familiar, proper and natural (2005, p. 14).

Creed argues the male monster in horror is represented as monstrous through his connection to the primal uncanny. In *The Tenant*, the male protagonist, Trelkovsky, is aligned with Creed's theories concerning the depiction of both male and female monsters: the primal uncanny and the monstrous feminine. Trelkovsky transforms into a monster through his psychological derailment. A major part of Trelkovsky's emotional breakdown is attributed to his terror of being aligned with the feminine. This hysteria is enacted through the hero's fear of being turned into the prior tenant of his apartment, Simone Choule. In the narrative's climax, the hero's fears are realised when he adopts Simone's persona.

Creed's theories concerning the primal uncanny and the monstrous feminine may be read as themes in *The Tenant*. The narrative might be interpreted, as a man's haunting by the dead woman who inhabited the apartment before him. In accordance with Creed's theory, what makes the character of Simone Choule *monstrous* is the fact that she infects the male hero with her abjection. Under these terms, Trelkovsky is contaminated by the female hysteria that lingers in Simone's apartment. This would account for his fascination with the few personal effects that remain in her apartment: a black dress, some cosmetics and underwear. Trelkovsky appears hypnotised by these feminine objects, stroking the

dress and lovingly applying Simone's polish to his nails. The hero's reverence for Simone's possessions indicates the powerful allure of the feminine – having the ability to possess the male and reduce him to wanton effeminacy.

In Creed's theory of the primal uncanny women are correlated with nature. This relationship incorporates both the biological and the emotional. Creed asserts, in woman's connection to nature she is represented as unstable and prone to madness by the male Symbolic order. In *Phallic Panic* Creed argues women are viewed in relation to the body and nature because of her procreative and reproductive functions and her ability to be penetrated. For Creed, the horror text often highlights the cultural fear and stigmatisation of the feminine, arising from woman's connection to life, and therefore death.

In *The Tenant*, Simone's posthumous feminine allure drives Trelkovsky to insanity. This mental breakdown equates to Trelkovsky's monstrous transformation. As a male monster, Trelkovsky's feminine hysteria and high emotion align him with the feminine. Thus, in the climax, Trelkovsky tries to take his own life. Creed theories would suggest Trelkovsky is driven toward death at the hands of the feminine.

Conceivably what Trelkovsky is so repulsed by in relation to womanhood, is his secret recognition of his own effeminate character. Trelkovsky displays many of the behavioural traits commonly attributed to the female. He is timid, anxious, self-conscious and submissive; physically he is small and unassuming. Trelkovsky's lack of masculinity adheres to Creed's theories regarding the Symbolic order's impossible 'ideal' male. Trelkovsky desperately aspires to become a model of Western

masculinity, by shedding (or repressing) the female attributes of his personality.

Chapter 2 Conclusion.

The Tenant's narrative transpires as a detailed portrayal of the protagonist's transition from repressed citizen to suicidal transvestite. A conversion that gradually plays itself out as the hero grapples with his repressed nature and overwhelming desire to 'fit in' with society - thereby suppressing his instinctual self.

Trelkovsky's demise illustrates Creed's supposition that the male monster may function to expose the myth of the 'ideal' civilised male. Creed proposes that the male monster suggests the falsity of achieving an idealised masculinity by way of their abject appearance and actions.

The central ideological function of the classic male monster... [is] to undermine the symbolic order by demonstrating its failures, contradictions and inconsistencies... the male monster signifies the failure of man to achieve a masculine ideal (Creed, 2005, pp. xvi-xvii).

According to Creed, the classic monster, representative of the primal uncanny, brings to light the repressed, biological and feminine aspects of the so-called 'ideal' male.

In *The Tenant*, Polanski illustrates the toll that suppressing natural and instinctive aspects of human nature can take on the individual. Through the protagonist,

Trelkovsky, the audience witnesses the desperate struggle to meet with societal codes of civilised behaviour. This incorporates a denial of the feminine, biological and instinctive aspects of the male hero's character. Polanski demonstrates the psychological effects that denying vital components of one's inner nature can take on the psyche. In *The Tenant* this equates to alienation, hysteria, a psychological breakdown and attempted suicide.

In *Crater Lake* I intend developing what I have learned from my study of *The Tenant*. My case study involved examining how Creed's film theory might be interpreted in *The Tenant's* narrative. Using Creed's psychoanalytic concepts I was able to read how the themes of repression, the 'other', the primal uncanny and the abject were portrayed through the protagonist and supporting characters within the narrative. Similarly to *The Tenant*, I am interested in demonstrating the negative effects of repression and the process of labelling people as 'other' within my script.

My analysis of *The Tenant* explored the depiction of women as emotionally unstable. We saw how this representation corresponded to Creed's theories pertaining to the relationship between the representation of the feminine and the monstrous in horror films. For the purpose of my screenplay, I'm interested in ways in which portraying women as emotionally volatile might align them to Creed's theory of the monster. My case study of *The Tenant* was a useful demonstration of Creed's concept of social anxiety surrounding feminine power. I intend to apply what I have learned, regarding anxieties and paradoxes surrounding the representation of women to my script of *Crater Lake*.

CHAPTER 3

Applying Creed's Film Theory To My Screenplay, "Crater Lake".

Crater Lake is a feature length screenplay in the horror genre. The script is set in a remote, drought stricken Victorian mining town: Crater Lake. The story will focus on the protagonist, Eve. Eve is a pregnant woman whose husband, Robert, goes to Crater Lake to investigate the town's abandoned mines. When Robert fails to return home, Eve travels to the town in search of him. Eve becomes increasingly wary of the bizarre townsfolk who frustrate her search at every turn. Eve learns of the town's belief that the drought is the result of a twenty-year-old curse imparted by a local woman, Noelene. Eve is taken hostage by the townsfolk and discovers Noelene has pledged to call off the curse in exchange for Eve's soon-to-be-born child. When rain unexpectedly arrives, the locals kill Noelene and Eve finds the opportunity for escape.

The work I have done in Chapters one and two to develop an understanding of the representation of the monster in horror, should be useful for developing my own monstrous characterisations within the screenplay for *Crater Lake*. I intend to incorporate into my script what I have learned regarding Creed's theories on the representation of repression, the primal uncanny, the 'other' and the abject. I also want to employ what I have learned from reading Creed's theories in my case study of

The Tenant. I mean to engage with how Creed's psychoanalytic concepts might be illustrated in the figure of the monster – the character of Noelene in *Crater Lake*. All in all, I intend exploring how useful Creed's film theory, incorporating Freudian psychoanalytical concepts of repression, the primal uncanny, the 'other' and the abject might be for writing my horror screenplay.

Crater Lake aims to demonstrate the horrors arising from repression, small mindedness and self-deception. In my script I intend to reveal how the repressive small town mentality of *Crater Lake*, and particularly the antagonist, Noelene, is inflicted upon the hero, Eve. My objective is for the screenplay to depict the interplay between different patterns of repression and repressive behaviour.

I intend addressing the interplay between repression and oppression through different relationships within the script. Noelene will repress the townsfolk through her curse and the subsequent power she holds over them. Noelene also oppresses Eve by ordering the locals to hold her captive. This should create an interesting interplay between Eve and her local jailors who are themselves victims of Noelene's oppression. I propose drawing upon Creed's theories of repression, the primal uncanny, the 'other' and the abject to support and strengthen these interactions.

Part 1 - Repression in Crater Lake.

The representation of repression in *Crater Lake* is pivotal to the protagonist, Eve's, journey. In the story Eve becomes a victim of the *Crater Lake* townsfolk's repressive society. Eve's antagonist, Noelene, maintains

control over the town through a legendary twenty-year-old curse. Noelene decides she wants Eve's unborn baby and orders the locals to imprison Eve until she conceives. The repressed locals comply with Noelene's orders in the belief she will end the curse under which they are oppressed.

The parochial owners of the B&B, Kath and John, imprison Eve in their antiquated home. Eve is later moved to the pub, the favourite haunt of the townsfolk, so all the locals can watch over her. Eve's imprisonment is intended to demonstrate the unthinking way in which individuals can be repressed by a behavioural regime, be it political, religious or socio/cultural. In *Crater Lake*, the townsfolk adhere to behavioural codes passed down from a higher authority (in this case Noelene). The Crater Lake locals will be characterised as having ceased thinking for themselves. They should appear to act only on Noelene's directives. The townsfolk cook and clean for Noelene and obey whatever ridiculous command she makes of them, including holding Eve captive. This is intended to reflect the mob mentality that drives the town. This mob mentality also leads to the screenplay's climax whereby the locals sacrifice Noelene after the drought breaks.

Crater Lake is aimed at demonstrating a community that is unequivocally repressed and hence oppressed by its beliefs. I intend to illustrate this repression through the blind acceptance of the local curse by every towns person. The Crater Lake community should be viewed as having been cut off from the freethinking world for the past twenty years. This isolation has led to a common mentality and fostered a common state of small mindedness. Accordingly, *Crater Lake* will reflect *The Tenant* whereby the repressed occupants of the tenement building lived in a mutual

forbidding and judgemental gloom. In the case of Crater Lake, the locals have shut down their minds in acceptance of Noelene's curse. This is intended to reflect Creed's argument that repression equates to a way of life for Western society. The townsfolk's blind conviction towards the curse has enslaved them under Noelene's rule. So much so, the locals are no longer capable of rationalising or questioning Noelene's hold over them.

The township's self-oppression reflects the suffocating repressiveness experienced by *The Tenant's* protagonist, Trelkovsky. Trelkovsky censures himself in accordance with social codes of behaviour that dictate an ideal civility. Trelkovsky oversees his self-destruction by adhering to codes of behaviour that are not his own but that of a rigid and overbearing society. The narrative for *Crater Lake* is set twenty years after the commencement of Noelene's curse. The screenplay is intended to depict the locals as indoctrinated into accepting Noelene's control over them. Accordingly, the repression experienced by the townsfolk is self-imposed and self-governing.

I mean to portray the township's oppression as self-inflicted because those who stay in Crater Lake choose to do so. As such, Eve should be viewed in opposition to the locals' repressive existence. Eve is held in Crater Lake against her will and her motivation is to find her husband and get away from the town's oppressive environment as quickly as possible. My intention is to represent the townsfolk as being scared of change. Eve will question two local characters, Pat and Jack as to why they stay. In response, Eve will be given the excuse of having no-where better to go. Pat and Jack's state of resignation is intended to represent the mindset of all the locals. They

continue to live under miserable conditions rather than leave and make new lives someplace else. *Crater Lake* is intended to illustrate the example of people who chose to live and die in small towns without ever leaving. My aim is to provoke a degree of empathy from the reader toward the townsfolk. It is important that the screenplay establish the Crater Lake residents remain trapped in a sterile and drought-ravaged community because psychological barriers impede their escape. Repressive fear of change makes the Crater Lake locals their own jailors.

Part 2 - The 'Other' in Crater Lake.

In the screenplay for *Crater Lake* I intend incorporating a fierce interplay between the township and Eve, based upon the notion of the 'other'. My intention is to portray the prejudiced view that Eve and the township hold for one another based on the fact that Eve is from the city and the locals are rural inhabitants. I mean to impart the idea that there are two sides to 'otherness'. Eve views the town locals as the foreign 'other' group. Alternatively, the locals regard Eve as being the outsider or 'other'. Meanwhile, Both Eve and the townsfolk view themselves as belonging to the normal, rational and 'proper' group.

The divide between Eve and the Crater Lake locals will stem from the city versus country opposition. This opposition will incorporate the long-established battle lines of civilisation verses nature, urban progress versus tradition and city sophistication versus country morals. The screenplay will open with an illustration of this urban/rural divide as a means for introducing the two

worlds: Crater Lake and Eve's world. Eve's world will be established with an image of the sprawling Melbourne CBD. The city will be viewed from the huge plate glass windows of the modern city apartment Eve and Robert inhabit. In the following scene, the picture of Eve's world will be contrasted with Crater Lake. The town will be established with a desolate depiction of Crater Lake as a dull, isolated and seemingly lifeless place.

For the reader, the emphasis will be on the Crater Lake locals as 'other'. This should arise through their identification to the protagonist, Eve. My screenplay will posit the 'outsider' urbanite against the delusional and countrified Crater Lake locals. Thus, when Eve is ostracised and chastised by the town, the reader should similarly take umbrage. In this way, the *Crater Lake* screenplay is intended to create a paradox for the reader. By siding with Eve and viewing the locals as absurdly 'other' the reader engages in the same socially repressive behaviour as the townsfolk in their attitude toward Eve.

In *Phallic Panic*, Creed attributes the projection of 'otherness' onto the monster as a demonstration of that which is deemed threatening to the male social order. In *Crater Lake* Robert represents the civilised 'other' world of the story – the world Eve leaves in order to travel to Crater Lake in search of him. Eve's constant focus on finding Robert is a symbol of her desire to return to the known world she departed. Robert embodies the patriarchal status quo. Robert's captivity is representative of a suspension of the laws of the male social order in the town of Crater Lake. Robert's imprisonment at the hands of the antagonist, Noelene (in her empty water tank) is intended to demonstrate the perceived threat of the 'other' to the

social order. Robert, the civilised, rational male (he works as a scientist) is debilitated by the 'other' social order of the town, headed by Noelene.

Noelene represents the monster in the screenplay. Together with her henchmen, the townsfolk, she poses a threat to the protagonist Eve and her unborn baby. Noelene and the locals are emblematic of the notion of the 'other' within the script. However, as author of *Crater Lake*, I will not condemn Noelene and the Crater Lake townsfolk entirely. One of the challenges to be faced in writing this script is to reflect the viewpoints of both Eve and the Crater Lake residents. My aim is to portray the negativity of narrow mindedness. In Creed and Wood's theories of 'otherness' individuals are deemed threatening by virtue of their differences. *Crater Lake* is intended to question the systemic attitude of labelling groups or individuals as 'other' by revealing the practice in action.

Part 3 - Abjection in Crater Lake.

As we have seen, Creed's theory of abjection accounts for a repressive antipathy toward the human body. Creed argues the depiction of the abject in horror films equates to that which is regarded as offensive and unsanitary about the human body. Through its portrayal of blood and gore, the horror film demonstrates the negative attitude toward the human body that predominates Western culture.

In *The Tenant*, Polanski's depiction of psychological abjection was complemented by a display of physical abjectivity (recall Trelkovsky extracting his own tooth). In my screenplay for *Crater Lake* I mean to address both the psychological and physical notions of abjection. The notion

of physical abjection will assert itself throughout the *Crater Lake* screenplay in the constant visual reminder of Eve's pregnancy. This is a direct illustration of Creed's theory of the monstrous feminine. Here, woman is transformed into a monster 'as a consequence of abject changes that affect her body in relation to gestation, birth and mothering' (2004, p. 44). In my *Crater Lake* screenplay Eve will be physically transformed by her pregnancy: weighed down by her bulk, easily exhausted, overwhelmed by migraines, disfigured by swollen ankles and exasperated by the constant urge to urinate.

The depiction of Eve's pregnancy as a form of physical abjection is intended to compliment the concept of the abject as a psychological regression within the script. Psychological abjection will manifest itself in the emotional toll that Eve's pregnancy takes on her personality and behaviour. I intend portraying Eve's character as moody, agitated and emotional. This is meant to illustrate the effect of hormonal drives on Eve's personality at this late stage in her pregnancy.

In my case study of *The Tenant*, I examined how the narrative enacted the psychological demise of the protagonist, Trelkovsky. In the script for *Crater Lake*, I intend for the protagonist, Eve, to undergo a similar psychological regression. Eve will transform from an assertive, forthright and self-centred character at the story's beginning to an angry, violent and primal woman by the script's latter half. Eve's increasing frustration at her imprisonment by the locals, combined with her inability to reason with their irrational view of the situation, causes Eve to lose touch with civility. Eve's emotional behaviour will be depicted as unstable and thus abject. The

hero's demeanour is intended to be reflective of Creed's theory of feminine abjection. As Creed would suggest, Eve's volatility aligns her to nature and the animal. It also links her to the concept of the abject and to death.

Eve should be seen to submit to the release of repression invoked by her unconscious. In accordance with Creed's theories, depicting Eve as 'unrepressed' libels her as 'other' and positions her as a threat to the stability of the status quo. It is my intention for Eve to cross over to uninhibited hero in the script's climax. Here, Eve will awkwardly flee the town on bike, battle it out with Kath and John, then reclaim her car and speed away. My intention is for the reader to derive pleasure from watching Eve shed her repressions. I aim to emphasise that casting-off her inhibitions enables Eve to escape the oppression of Crater Lake. As such, my intention is to create a conflict in identification for the reader. Eve will become unrepressed and monstrous in her behaviour. However, as the hero, the reader should take pleasure in seeing Eve triumph.

Part 4 - The Primal Uncanny in Crater Lake.

As we have seen, Creed argues that women are positioned as threatening within the male Symbolic order. According to Creed, the feminine is not *actually* a monstrous sign but is constructed as such within a patriarchal discourse (2004, p. 58). In Creed's theory of the primal uncanny, women are viewed in relation to the body and nature because of her procreative and reproductive functions and her ability to be penetrated. Creed contends woman's relationship to human biology also aligns her to the notion of abjection. As Creed suggests, 'in the

signifying practices of patriarchal ideology, woman is associated with key areas of the primal uncanny – birth, nature, the animal and death (2005, p. 15).

Crater Lake's protagonist, Eve, is key to my demonstration of Creed's theory of the primal uncanny in the script. In the narrative she moves from the familiar sign of woman, as nurturing giver of life, to reveal 'that which should have remained hidden' – the emotional uprising, or hysteria, of primal inner self. Eve will begin the story as a harmless figure for the Crater Lake locals – one who can be easily manipulated for the common good of the town. Eve's character will become increasingly frantic as the narrative progresses and her oppression increases. The Crater Lake locals will be unsure of how to respond to Eve's regression. They would rather she behave in a 'natural' state of calm restraint and civility. As Creed would suggest, their expectations of Eve equate to an idealised view of woman as maternal nurturer. Instead Eve lashes out against her captors. She constantly manages to escape her confinement and berates them for their treatment of her, their belief in the curse and their plans to take her baby. As a figure of the primal uncanny Eve is a disruption to the previously ordered world of Crater Lake.

Eve's pregnancy is also intended to demonstrate Creed's theory of the primal uncanny within my screenplay. As a pregnant woman, Eve is a source of anxiety because she represents man's potential superfluosity – she is able to take care of herself and reproduce. The town, under orders from Noelene, clips Eve's wings and usurps her power. Eve will become a victim of the town. She will be demoralized and expected to submissively surrender to her fate – to hand over her child to be raised within the town's

oppressive society. As Creed would suggest, Eve's treatment at the hands of the town is a reflection of woman's status within the patriarchal social order.

Alongside of Eve, the town of Crater Lake is intended to be a depiction of the primal uncanny in the script. The locals will correspond to Creed's theory of the primal uncanny because through their 'uncivilised' behaviour they align themselves to the notion of the *animal*. I mean to portray the pack mentality of the township, their coarse behaviour and their simple-mindedness. This will be particularly evident in the behaviour of the local police. Sergeant Hodges and Constable Westlake are incompetent and uncouth and in fact only pretend to be police. Eve desperately tries to get sense out of them as to their efforts in finding Robert. They respond to her questions with absurd insinuation and innuendo. Hodges and Westlake, like the rest of the township represents the uncivil and lawless realm of the untamed country.

In keeping with my screenplay's depiction of the primal uncanny, will be *Crater Lake's* portrayal of Creed's theory of the monstrous feminine. The most significant illustration of the monstrous feminine in my *Crater Lake* script will be Eve's antagonist, Noelene. Noelene represents abject femininity in the irrational hysteria that her character demonstrates. Noelene and her curse epitomise the figure of the woman scorned and the extreme lengths she will go to in order to feel avenged.

Noelene will also symbolise Creed's concept of the monstrous overbearing mother. She oppresses the township for decades in order to punish them for killing her husband and sons twenty years prior. Noelene's power is intended to represent an upset to the patriarchal social order. Rather,

Noelene demonstrates the notion of woman as matriarchal oppressor. In act three the town will rise up against Noelene in a unified execution. I intend to depict Noelene's murder as an ironic sacrifice. The locals drown Noelene because they hold her responsible for a twenty-year drought. As the author, it is my intention that Noelene's sacrifice reveals the futility of overthrowing one's oppressor when one is still subconsciously repressed. The townsfolk put an end to the curse, yet are doomed by their own inclinations to remain confined to the town.

CONCLUSION.

In chapter one of this exegesis we saw how Barbara Creed uses Freudian psychoanalytic film theory to interpret the horror genre. Creed uses the concepts of repression, the 'other', the primal uncanny and the abject to develop her theories on the representation of the monster in horror films. According to Creed, repression can be interpreted in the horror genre by associating the monstrous figure with the release of repressed drives and urges. Creed also demonstrates how the monster in horror represents the 'other'. For Creed, the monstrous 'other' is depicted as being as being outside of, and thus a threat to the patriarchal symbolic order.

In chapter one, we also saw Creed's theory of the primal uncanny as it relates to the classic horror film. Creed argues that the primal uncanny equates to the representation of the male monster in relation to its association with woman, the animal and death. Finally, we explored Creed's theory of the abject, particularly as it relates to depicting the feminine as monstrous. We saw Creed's example of how women are aligned to the abject in relation to their biological and procreative functions.

Creed's film theory served as a basis for chapter two of my research. Here, I applied her ideas to my case study of Roman Polanski's *The Tenant*. In my study I examined how Creed's theories on repression, the 'other', the primal uncanny and the abject might be interpreted in *The Tenant*.

To begin with, we saw how *The Tenant* uses its protagonist, Trelkovsky, to demonstrate the concept of

repression. Through the figure of Trelkovsky, *The Tenant* reveals the psychological straight jacket that is imposed upon individuals through repression. We examined how the hero was driven insane as a result of his overly repressed nature.

In chapter two, I also examined how Creed's theories of the 'other' and the abject might be read in *The Tenant*. We saw how the protagonist's desire to rise above his perception of 'otherness' demonstrated Creed's theory of the impossible quest for masculine idealism. Alternatively, the protagonist's psychological demise into transvestitism and self-mutilation demonstrates Creed's views on society's adverse relationship to the abject. I argued that the character of Trelkovsky is depicted as monstrous through his portrayal of abject mental instability. Using Creed's theories I was able to explore how *The Tenant's* narrative depicts issues relating to the myth of civilization and the notion of the 'ideal' self.

From my study of *The Tenant* I also observed Creed's theory of the primal uncanny and with it her theory of the monstrous feminine. I demonstrated Creed's arguments by citing the fraught relationship the hero, Trelkovsky, experiences in relation the feminine. I interpreted the portrayal of the hero as conflicted due to his repugnance and fascination for the feminine. I suggested that Trelkovsky's internal conflict reveals Creed's arguments regarding the male symbolic order's anxiety toward women and representing the feminine.

In chapter three of this exegesis I applied what I had discovered from my study of Creed's work and *The Tenant* to the writing of my own screenplay, *Crater Lake*. What I learned from Creed's psychoanalytic film theory and my case

study enabled me to write a more meaningful horror narrative. I interpreted Creed's theories in order to apply psychoanalysis to my development of my character psychology. Creed's theories helped me conceive more detailed and insightful characterisations based on the concept of repression, the 'other' the primal uncanny and the abject. I demonstrated these concepts using different character archetypes such as a pregnant protagonist, a female antagonist and absurd townsfolk.

This exegesis reveals some of the ways screenwriters can interpret and reflect psychoanalytic film theory for their own purposes. From my reading of *The Tenant* I was able to explore how the narrative uses the protagonist to reveal the concept of repression, the 'other', the primal uncanny and the abject. *The Tenant* demonstrates the psychological demise of the repressed protagonist, Trelkovsky. In *Crater Lake*, the script illustrates the hero, Eve's demise. However, unlike Trelkovsky, Eve's regression is transitory and results in her resurgence into a stronger character than before.

Eve and Trelkovsky also differ in relation to their portrayal of internal and external repression. Trelkovsky is a victim of his unconscious repressive nature. *The Tenant's* overbearing secondary characters serve to fuel the onerous flaws in the protagonist's own personality. Alternatively, *Crater Lake's* secondary characters actively repress the hero, Eve, by imprisoning her throughout the action. As such, Eve is externally oppressed at the hands of her antagonist, Noelene, and the town locals. Also, Eve will be repressed by the physical and emotional grievances associated with her pregnancy.

The Tenant and *Crater Lake* depict Creed's psychoanalytic theories in diverse ways. This serves to illustrate how developing an understanding of psychoanalytic film theory can be employed in different ways by screenwriters. In *Crater Lake* I did not set out to write a blood-splattered horror screenplay. I learnt from Creed's theory and Polanski's film that portraying abjection need not overwhelm the narrative in bloodshed. My research provided me with the insight to explore individuals' relationship to our biological selves in different ways. Similarly to Polanski, I chose to adopt a more psychological approach to abjection. Much of what my screenplay has to say about human vulnerability is depicted through characters' mental instability. I also portrayed the concept of abjection through Eve's pregnancy and the mental and physical deprivations associated with this. Creed's theory enabled me to make learned choices regarding my portrayal of psychoanalytic concepts, such as the abject.

Creed's theories assisted me in discovering ways to reflect inequalities and problematise social and cultural attitudes within my horror screenplay. This proved particularly useful in regards to women and 'outsiders'. My case study of *The Tenant* supported this logic. I was particularly interested in how Creed's theories might be utilized to assist in writing a subversive screenplay. As Creed argues:

The horror film questions phallic power and qualities associated with the male symbolic, such as identity, rationality, ascendancy and control. In particular it undermines the notion of a coherent, stable, civilized

self. Instead it gives rise to a sense of disquiet, unease and fear (2005, p. 201).

My understanding of Creed's concepts of repression, the 'other', abjection and the primal uncanny enabled me to express ideas involving the dangers of conformity, mob mentality, discrimination and misogyny in my script.

Psychoanalytic concepts, such as repression, the 'other', the primal uncanny and the abject may assist writers who aim to engage with their audiences' unconscious. By developing an understanding of Creed's theories, screenwriters might more knowingly and meaningfully create internal conflict for their audience. As this exegesis has demonstrated, psychoanalytic film theory can give screenwriters the tools to explore individual and collective anxieties. Moreover, screenwriters wanting to write in the horror genre may utilize psychoanalytic film theory to bolster the amount of fear they elicit from their audience.

This exegesis has shown how developing a psychoanalytic awareness of what incites fear and dread in audiences may be a valuable tool for screenwriters. In this way, Creed's film theory may be used to help writers to reinforce their screenplays with greater depth and meaning. Creed's theories develop the idea that the figure of the monster represents more than just a physical threat. According to Creed, the figure of the monster might also be interpreted as saying something about the cultural environment in which we are indoctrinated. Psychoanalytic film theory can be used to gain a greater awareness of the depth of meaning in horror films. This insight might enable

screenwriters to incorporate psychoanalytic themes and concepts into their scripts. As such, writers may choose to develop horror screenplays that project deeper levels of intention and thought beyond the surface narrative. The upshot of this process may be greater stimulation and significance in the horror screenplay for the writer and audience alike.

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FOOTNOTES

ⁱ This Chapter in Creed's anthology, *Pandora's Box* (2004), first appeared as the article 'Feminist Film Theory: Reading the Text' in *Lip*, vol. 7, 1983, pp.280-313.

ⁱⁱ This chapter in Creed's anthology, *Pandora's Box* (2004), first appeared as 'Film and Psychoanalysis' in *The Oxford Guide to Film Studies* (1998).

ⁱⁱⁱ Wood notes that his condensed definition of repression is derived from Marcuse who developed his theory from Freud. For further insight into issues of repression Wood refers his readers to God Horowitz's book, *Repression: Basis and Surplus Repression in Psychoanalytic Theory: Freud, Reich, Marcuse*. (1977). Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

^{iv} Wood argues that surplus repression 'makes us into monogamous heterosexual bourgeois patriarchal capitalists' (1986, p.71). This broad and unfounded political statement is typical of Wood's film analysis and is often detrimental to his work.

^v For Wood, the true subject of the horror film entails: 'the struggle for recognition of all that our civilisation represses or oppresses, its re-emergence dramatised... as an object of horror, a matter for terror, and the happy ending (when it exists) typically signifying the restoration of repression' (1986, p. 75). Wood cites examples of the figure of the 'Other' as it operates in Western culture: other cultures, women, children, the proletariat, alternative ideologies, and deviations from ideological sexual norms.

^{vi} This chapter in Creed's anthology, *Pandora's Box* (2004), first appeared in *Screen*, vol.27, no.1, pp.44-70, 1986. It was originally published under the title 'Horror and The Monstrous-Feminine – An Imaginary Abjection'.

^{vii} Kristeva associates the maternal to her theory of abjection by tracing its evolving representation throughout religious history, starting from the period of the pagan. She explores maternal abjection from the perspective of 'rite', 'ritual' and 'taboo' (1982).

^{viii} For examples on how Western society and culture has developed a negative attitude toward the human body see sexual theorist and philosopher, Michel Foucault's study on sexuality in *The History of Sexuality* (1990).

^{ix} Film writer, Charles Derry, offers a definition of the psychological horror film. Derry points to a horror subgenre arising from the mid-sixties: the 'horror-of-personality' films, as being an arena for portraying man's concerns regarding man. According to Derry, the horror in the horror-of-personality films is given a psychological explanation, as opposed to a religious or scientific reason. Derry accounts for the shift in horror, from the pseudoscientific and the supernatural, to the psychological as relevant to the times (the 1960s: most significantly the Vietnam and Cold wars). He claims the horror films of this period reflect 'the anxiety of living and the nearness of mutilation, and most especially... the ambiguity of insanity.' Derry concedes that the horror-of-personality genre (incorporating its preoccupation with innate insanity and violence in man) was absorbed into the mainstream after the early 70s. He regards this as an indication that society's view of the world had become increasingly more horrible. As a result of which audiences became increasingly eager to experience similar negativity on screen (1977, p. 25).

PART 2: PROJECT

CRATER LAKE

Feature Screenplay

By
Olivia Wearne

MASTER OF ARTS
(creative writing)

School of Creative Media
Design and Social Context Portfolio

RMIT UNIVERSITY

March 2008

CRATER LAKE

EXT: THE BRIDGES HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON (1987)

The year is 1987. A quiet street in a country town.

Two rows of small shabby weatherboard houses align the street. At the end of the court sits a new brick home fronted by a well tended garden - green paddocks spread out behind it.

INT: THE BRIDGES HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Inside the new brick home BILL BRIDGES and his two young sons, Liam (aged 8) and Luke (aged 5) are passing a rainy Saturday afternoon.

BILL and LIAM are playing battleship at the kitchen table.

LUKE watches TV with his ET. Doll in the adjoining lounge.

The theme song to *The Muppet Show* starts playing.

LUKE
(calling out)
Liam it's on.

LIAM
Can I go dad?

BILL BRIDGES
Not till you finish the game.

LIAM
Can't we finish it after?

BILL BRIDGES
Nope - now take your turn.

LUKE
(calling out)
You're missing it.

LIAM
(calling out)
I'll be there in a minute.

Father and son continue playing their game.

They look up to see LUKE standing in the doorway to the kitchen.

LUKE
Dad there's people in the window.

BRIAN and LIAM spin round to see two faces duck down from the kitchen window.

LUKE (cont'd)
They're in the other room too.

BILL jumps up and crosses to the lounge room doorway - across the room he can see two men peering in at him - the faces move away.

BILL BRIDGES
Wait here boys.

BILL crosses to the window - the two boys follow.

INT: THE BRIDGES HOUSE - LOUNGE ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Peering out through the lounge room windows BILL, LIAM and LUKE see a large group of people gathered on their lawn.

LIAM
What do they want dad?

BILL BRIDGES
I don't know.

Suddenly a rock comes flying in through the lounge room windows smashing the glass beside them.

LIAM
What'd they do that for?

BILL BRIDGES
Bastards.

LIAM
Dad? What's going on?

BILL heads out of the room.

BILL BRIDGES
Stay inside.
You hear me?
Don't come out till your mother gets home.

BILL leaves the room shutting the door behind him.

The two young boys watch through the window as their father crosses to speak to the crowd.

LUKE
Look there's Sam.

EXT: THE BRIDGES HOUSE - FRONT YARD - LATE AFTERNOON

Standing at the edge of the crowd is a young boy, SAM.

He looks over at the house and spots the two BRIDGES BOYS at the window.

SAM waves quickly to the pair inside.

INT: THE BRIDGES HOUSE - LOUNGE ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

The boys watch as BILL talks to the crowd for a moment.

Suddenly a rock is thrown - it hits BILL in the head causing him to fall backwards.

LUKE
Daddy!

The two boys watch as their father is set upon by the angry mob.

Both boys are bawling.

LIAM
Dad. No. Dad, dad.

LUKE
Daddy!

LIAM looks at SAM who watches them while the crowd attacks their father.

SAM tugs on a man's hand and points at the window.

LIAM grabs hold of his brother.

LIAM
Come with me.

INT: THE BRIDGES HOUSE - BOY'S BEDROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

LIAM pushes his brother into their bedroom wardrobe and climbs in after him.

LUKE
Daddy? - is he OK?

LIAM
He's fine - you have to be quiet
now - dad's fine.

LUKE
He's not, he's hurt - they hurt
him.

LIAM
Shut-up Luke. Just shut-up OK.

LIAM continues crying so LUKE squeezes both hands around his mouth.

The two boys sit quivering in the wardrobe listening as men move through their house.

MALE VOICE 1.
(from the hallway)
Marco.

MALE VOICE 2.
(from the lounge room)
Polo.

MALE VOICE 1.
(from the kitchen)
Come on boys why don't you join in?
Marco.

MALE VOICE 3.
(from the bathroom)
Polo.

MALE VOICE 1.
(from the parent's room)
Marco.

The doors to the wardrobe are flung open.

MALE VOICE 2.
Polo.

The boys are faced with a large pair of black boots.

MALE VOICE 2. (cont'd)
Got em!

EXT: THE BRIDGES HOUSE - EVENING

NOELENE BRIDGES, a plain woman in her mid-thirties, drives her car up the driveway. She parks and removes a series of bags and packages from the boot.

INT: THE BRIDGES HOUSE - DINING ROOM - EVENING

Bill, Liam and Lucas are seated at the dining room table.

BILL is beaten to a bloody pulp.

LUKE'S head hangs at an angle from where his throat has been slit.

LIAM looks relatively unharmed - only when the camera pans down do we see the pile of entrails sitting in his lap.

EXT: THE BRIDGES HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - EVENING

NOELENE notices the tyre tracks and skid marks that have torn up her driveway and lawn.

She drops the packages and runs towards the house.

NOELENE
Bill! Bill!

NOELENE passes through the front door which has been kicked in.

NOELENE moves through the house.

NOELENE (cont'd)
Bill, Liam, where are you?

INT: THE BRIDGES HOUSE - BOY'S BEDROOM - EVENING

NOELENE looks into her sons' room - its decor is befitting of two young boys; it is messy and filled with 1980's toys. The wardrobe door hangs open.

The room is deserted.

NOELENE leaves the room.

The camera remains in the boy's room. It moves into the wardrobe to observe the ET. doll lying on its side.

A moment later a piercing scream rings out through the house.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT: EVE AND ROBERT'S APARTMENT - MORNING (PRESENT DAY)

Present Day. A sweeping view of Melbourne as seen from the massive plate glass windows of EVE and ROBERT'S 34th floor living room.

The camera sweeps through the apartment revealing the minimalist modern decor.

In the bedroom, ROBERT, a fine-boned man in his early forties, lies asleep on a king size bed. He is woken by the sound of a woman sobbing.

ROBERT
Eve? Honey are you OK?

Robert takes his glasses off the bedside table. He puts them on and slides out of bed.

INT: EVE AND ROBERT'S - WALK-IN WARDROBE - MORNING

ROBERT finds his wife EVE sitting on the floor of their spacious walk-in wardrobe.

EVE is an attractive woman in her late thirties - she is heavily pregnant. She sits with her back to the wall and her legs splayed out in front of her.

EVE has a number of expensive garments and shoes littered on the floor about her. A blood red skirt sits in her lap.

She is in a state of obvious distress.

EVE
I can't wear anything!
I'm so freaking huge... I just want
to wear something nice!

ROBERT
What about all the maternity stuff
you bought?

EVE

Its hideous.

(Eve starts weeping)

I want to wear my *nice* clothes
again - I miss them...

ROBERT

It's not long now baby.

EVE

What would you know?

I'm fat, I might never be able to
wear them again.

This thought causes EVE to sob uncontrollably. ROBERT squats
down and rubs her back soothingly.

EVE (cont'd)

I can't even wear my shoes my
ankles are so swollen.

ROBERT

I know, I'm sorry baby.

EVE

I want to wear heels.

ROBERT

I know, you will.

EVE

I'm fat and disgusting.

ROBERT

You're pregnant and beautiful.

EVE

Don't patronise me - you're the one
leaving.

ROBERT

Don't start this again. It's only
for two days - I'll stay if you
want me to.

EVE

No, go. I wouldn't want to be
around me either.

ROBERT

I don't want to go, you know this
is the only time they'll give me...

EVE
 You better buy me something really
 nice.

EVE starts crying again.

ROBERT
 Honey? Baby are you OK?

EVE
 I have to go to toilet again.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT: THE BRIDGES HOUSE - MORNING - PRESENT DAY

SFX: A TOILET
 FLUSHING.

NOELENE BRIDGES exits her house, she adjusts her dress and stockings having just been to the loo. NOELENE walks over to her car.

The house and car still look the same as they did in the earlier 1980s scenes - clean and well maintained.

The landscape and gardens are drastically changed. The garden is a tract of dirt and burnt weed stubble, whilst the surrounding green paddocks are now arid brown dessert.

EXT: CRATER LAKE MAINSTREET - MORNING

A large wooden fish stares down the lens of the camera.

The fish is perched precariously above the 'Crater Lake Bait and Tackle Shop.'

Beneath the fish the Crater Lake mainstreet bakes in the already hot morning sun.

On a pavement bench an old man reclines with his legs outstretched.

NOELENE walks past the man.

NOELENE
 Wake up - you look revolting
 lounging there.

The man drags himself into an upright position.

EXT: CRATER LAKE MAINSTREET - MORNING

A small dog licks up a puddle of spilt soft drink from a can.

NOELENE peers in through the glass window of the milk bar.

INT: MILK BAR - MORNING

JULIE, a middle aged woman in a floral cotton housedress sits at a laminex table beneath a fan. Beads of perspiration prickle her forehead and upper lip. JULIE languidly turns the pages of a magazine.

From the street NOELENE raps on the dirty glass pane startling JULIE inside.

NOELENE
(through the window)
You got any lemon slices left?

JULIE
Sorry Noelene. Sold out. I've got a
bit of hedgehog here...

NOELENE gives a dismissive wave of her hand and moves on.

JULIE (calling out) (cont'd)
I'll make some and bring them round
later shall I?...

EXT: CRATER LAKE MAIN STREET - MORNING

NOELENE trips over the drinking dog. She looks down at the animal pensively before giving it a swift kick.

The dog flees out onto the road.

A car driving past almost hits the dog.

INT: ROBERT'S CAR - CRATER LAKE MAIN STREET - MORNING

ROBERT slams his foot on the brake to avoid hitting the dog - he is thrown forward.

ROBERT stops to catch his breath. He looks out the passenger window to see NOELENE peering in at him.

NOELENE and ROBERT stare at one another.

EXT: CRATER LAKE MAIN STREET - MORNING

The dog continues running down the main street before turning right at a cluster of houses.

The camera turns to the left where a long road stretches away into the distance.

The camera focuses in on the black bitumen.

CUT TO BLACK

EXT: CRATER LAKE MINE - EVENING

ROBERT stands at the edge of a massive grey pit.

ROBERT films the abandoned Crater Lake mine through a small HD camcorder.

INT: CRATER LAKE PUB - NIGHT

An old-school bar, dingy and displaying local sporting memorabilia is filled with middle-aged and elderly Crater Lake locals.

A few patrons play darts, a few play pool at a torn and lopsided table, whilst a handful watch a tiny television bracketed to the wall.

ROBERT sits at a corner table. His counter meal has been pushed to one side, barely touched. He is busy typing notes on his laptop.

NOELENE sits at the bar nursing a gin and watching ROBERT.

Without taking her eyes off ROBERT she addresses the barman KEVIN, a rangy man in his late sixties.

NOELENE
What's he drinking?

KEVIN
He just had a pot.

NOELENE
Give us another one.

NOELENE takes the beer KEVIN pours for her and crosses over to ROBERT - the room falls silent as the patrons all turn to watch.

NOELENE slaps the beer down in front of ROBERT.

NOELENE (cont'd)
Here, have another one.

ROBERT
Thanks.

NOELENE
You're hard at work - we're not
used to seeing people work so hard
around here.

ROBERT
I'm sure that's not true.

NOELENE
What would you know?
You didn't like your dinner?

ROBERT
They're big serves.

NOELENE
The food's rubbish...
That's a fancy little box you've
got for yourself, what are you
putting into it?

ROBERT
Its just some research I've been
doing on the mines.

NOELENE
Yeah? What sort of research?

ROBERT
I'm investigating whether they
might have something to do with the
weather conditions in the area.

NOELENE
You mean the drought?

ROBERT
Among other things.

NOELENE
Who told you about the drought?

ROBERT

I've been following the weather patterns in this area for some time now.

NOELENE

Have you now? What's your name again?

ROBERT

Robert.

NOELENE

Right Robert, here's a tip - I wouldn't go saying too much about this to the others.

(Noelene indicates the room-full of locals)

They're all a bit testy about that subject.

ROBERT

Sure, of course not. I guess a lot of them are out of a job because of it.

NOELENE

All of em.
How long are you here for?

ROBERT

I'm heading back tonight.
Sorry, I didn't catch your name?

NOELENE

Noelene.

ROBERT

Can I return the favour?
(Robert wiggles his glass)

NOELENE

Not necessary, I get mine free anyways.

NOELENE stands and raps on the table.

NOELENE (cont'd)

You drive safe now Robert.

INT: EVE AND ROBERT'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The Melbourne skyline now seen at night seen through the windows of EVE and ROBERT'S apartment.

A telephone rings out in the darkness.

EVE opens her eyes - she has fallen asleep on the couch in front of the television.

Eve listens to the sound of the ringing phone for a moment.

Eve hefts her heavy body off the couch and stumbles into the kitchen.

EVE.
Hold on - I'm coming.

Eve grabs at the receiver.

EVE. (cont'd)
(on phone)
Hello.

ROBERT
(on phone)
It's me.

EVE.
(on phone)
Where are you?

ROBERT
(on phone)
I'm on the road.

EVE.
(on phone)
I told you not to drive and phone.

ROBERT
(on phone)
I couldn't get reception in town -
do you want me to hang up?

EVE.
(on phone)
No.
I miss you baby.
I don't want to be by myself any
more... and I've run out of food.

ROBERT
(on phone)
Do you want me to pick up
something?

EVE
(on phone)
Maybe just some cheese, and
crackers, and maybe some chips -
anything with salt...

ROBERT
(on phone)
How are you feeling?

EVE.
(on phone)
Horrible - the migraines have come
back...

ROBERT
(on phone)
What the fuck?...

INT: ROBERT'S CAR - NIGHT

Through the windscreen ROBERT sees a dark figure run out into the middle of the road. The figure waves its arms at the car. ROBERT swerves to avoid hitting it.

EVE
(on phone)
What's wrong?

ROBERT
I have to go - I think someone
needs help.

EVE
(on phone)
What do you mean?

ROBERT
I'll call you back.

ROBERT snaps shut his phone. He parks at the side of the road. ROBERT steps out of his car and begins walking towards the person still standing in the road.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT: COUNTRY ROADSIDE - NIGHT

Illuminated by the moonlight ROBERT'S car sits at the side of the road.

The driver's door hangs open.

On the side of the road opposite to the car a large sign glints in the moonlight. The sign reads: WELCOME TO CRATER LAKE: POPULATION 240.

A strange eerie silence fills the air.

INT: EVE AND ROBERT'S BEDROOM - MORNING

EVE rolls over in her double bed. The sheets beside her are clean and crisp.

EVE reaches out for ROBERT. He isn't there. EVE sits up and looks around the bedroom, bathed in morning sunlight.

EVE.

Robert?

EVE receives no answer to her call.

INT: EVE AND ROBERT'S BATHROOM - MORNING

EVE flushes the toilet and puts on a bathrobe. She makes her way into the living room.

EVE.

Robert?

EXT: CRATER LAKE SERVICE STATION - MORNING

SAM, a 28 year-old mechanic and PETE his portly fifty year-old boss recline against the entrance to the Crater Lake service station.

SAM and PETE watch a massive water tanker drive past and turn the corner into town.

SAM.

About time.

PETER

Yep.

EXT: SERVICE STATION - MORNING

LYNN and LEO BRODY, an elderly local couple out on their morning power-walk, approach the service station.

LEO BRODY.
(calling out to Sam and Peter)
Morning Boys.
You see the water truck come through?

SAM.
Yeah, looks like we'll live to see another day.

PETER
Pity.

EXT: COUNTRY ROADSIDE - MORNING

The BRODYS continue walking.

They slow down as they approach ROBERT'S abandoned car.

The couple stop to investigate the vehicle.

INT: EVE AND ROBERT'S KITCHEN - MORNING

EVE finishes making coffee, she picks up her cordless phone and dials a number.

EVE sits on a kitchen chair and raises her feet onto another. She holds the phone with one hand and drinks her coffee with the other.

EXT: COUNTRY ROADSIDE - MORNING

THE BRODYS are startled when ROBERT'S mobile suddenly starts ringing.

LEO BRODY.
Good Lord!

They take a few hesitant steps away from the car. The phone sits on the dash - ringing and ringing.

LYNN BRODY.
(nudging her husband)
 Go on. I dare you.

LEO BRODY.
 What do I tell them?

LYNN
 Maybe it's the owner wondering
 where it's got to.

LEO BRODY reaches in through the open door to answer the phone - suddenly the phone stops ringing.

INT: EVE AND ROBERT'S KITCHEN - MORNING

EVE hangs up. She puts down the phone then unwraps the last of a wheel of Camembert cheese - she chews and swallows meditatively.

EXT: COUNTRY ROADSIDE - MORNING

Crater Lake's local police officers, SERGEANT BILL HODGES, a toad-like man in his late sixties, and Constable MATT WESTLAKE, a stringy forty-five year-old, investigate ROBERT'S abandoned vehicle.

SERGEANT HODGES picks up some fast food packaging off the floor of the back seat - he sniffs at it.

SERGEANT HODGES
 Young bloke's setting himself up
 for a heart attack.

CONSTABLE WESTLAKE
 Give it here.

SERGEANT HODGES tosses the packaging to CONSTABLE WESTLAKE.

SERGEANT HODGES
 It's still fresh.

CONSTABLE WESTLAKE deeply inhales into the packaging as though chroming.

CONSTABLE WESTLAKE
 Fuck that smells good - smells just
 like I remember it.

HODGES leans against the car and examines the desolate countryside.

SERGEANT HODGES
 What the hell does he think he's up
 to?

CONSTABLE WESTLAKE
 He might have gone to take a piss.

SERGEANT HODGES
 What, and got lost?

WESTLAKE shrugs.

HODGES coughs violently, he leans over and spits a large
 globule of bloodied mucus onto the gravel.

HODGES picks up ROBERT'S mobile from off the dash, he
 examines it then tosses it to WESTLAKE.

SERGEANT HODGES (cont'd)
 Here... present for ya...

All of a sudden the mobile in WESTLAKE'S hands starts ringing
 - WESTLAKE looks at it in bewilderment.

HODGES.
 Answer it dopey.

WESTLAKE presses a button on the phone and places it to his
 ear.

WESTLAKE
 Hello?

INT: EVE AND ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - MID MORNING

EVE lies on the floor with her feet up on the wall.

EVE.
 Who am I speaking to?

INT: EVE AND ROBERT'S BEDROOM - MID MORNING

EVE packs some clothing into a bag.

EXT: DOCKLANDS APARTMENT COMPLEX - MID MORNING

EVE drives out of the underground carpark and straight into
 heavy Melbourne inner-city traffic.

EXT: COUNTRY ROAD - AFTERNOON

EVE'S car throws up a cloud of dust as she drives along a deserted highway headed for Crater Lake.

EVE

Oh, for Christ's sake!

EVE pulls over at the side of the road.

EVE gets out of her car and squats down beside it. A trickle of urine runs out from under the car and gathers in a pool.

EXT: CRATER LAKE OUTSKIRTS - AFTERNOON

EVE continues driving - the air conditioner blows through her hair.

EVE breaks suddenly and swings wildly onto the dirt tract at the side of the road.

EVE winds down her window - on the other side of the road sits ROBERT'S car.

A mentally and physically disabled man, TIM (28) sits in the driver's seat pretending to drive.

When TIM realises he is being watched by EVE he scrambles out of the car and lopes awkwardly off across the adjoining paddocks.

INT: CRATER LAKE POLICE STATION - EVENING

EVE stands at the police station counter filling out a missing persons form.

SERGEANT HODGES stands on the other side of the counter looking down at what EVE is writing.

CONSTABLE WESTLAKE sits on one of the waiting room chairs beside the counter - he obviously has nothing else to do.

SERGEANT HODGES

So can you tell me what he was supposed to be doing here?... Your husband.

EVE.

He was here for work - something to do with a mine or something.

SERGEANT HODGES

He was here about the mines?

EVE

I think so - I'm not sure...
You'll have to call his office...
Look, his car's just sitting there
and there's some retarded or
disabled or whatever, guy playing
in it.

CONSTABLE WESTLAKE

(snort of laughter)

That'll be Timbo.

EVE

Could he be involved? Robert said
someone needed help...

CONSTABLE WESTLAKE

Tim couldn't manage to piss in a
bucket.

HODGES coughs a rattling cough and spits a red mouthful into
a plastic bowl sitting on the counter.

SERGEANT HODGES

Can we get back on track here?
What does your husband do?

EVE

He's a scientist.

EVE rummages wildly through her handbag.

Finally EVE takes a a photo of ROBERT from her purse and
gives it to SERGEANT HODGES.

HODGES takes the photo and studies it.

SERGEANT HODGES.

Doesn't look like a scientist.

CONSTABLE WESTLAKE stands to look at the photo.

CONSTABLE WESTLAKE.

Give us a look.
Yeah, his hair's not white.

SERGEANT HODGES.

Saw him at the pub a couple of
times?
Seemed alright.

EVE

What's that supposed to mean?

SERGEANT HODGES

He didn't look like trouble at the time...

HODGES pins the photo to the wall behind him deliberately sticking a pin through ROBERT'S face.

SERGEANT HODGES (cont'd)

You might want to think about staying in town for the night - see what happens.
Most missing persons cases are answered in 24 hours.

WESTLAKE

Is that really true?

HODGES

Well, they're false alarms aren't they... Bloody waste of time.

EVE

I was hoping I wouldn't have to stay - I didn't realise how far it was.

WESTLAKE

(to Eve)

You should stay at the B&B - my sister and her husband run it - it's got all the amnesties.

EVE

Amenities. Is that where Robert stayed?

WESTLAKE

Dunno - doubt it.

EXT: CRATER LAKE B&B - NIGHT

EVE steers her car up a gravel driveway. In front of her sits a decrepid double story Victorian terrace.

KATH, the B&B's heavysset 47 year-old proprietor, sits out front on a gaudy floral swing chair.

KATH waves her arms at EVE signalling for her to stop.

KATH picks up two bikes lying in the driveway - she leans them against the house.

KATH signals to EVE to continue driving up to the front of the house.

EVE parks and exits her car.

KATH

That was close... You almost ran over our only means of transportation - it's been a while since we had a car in the drive... Anyway, I'm Kath... Matt called ahead and let me know you'd be coming...

EVE.

Did you have a man staying here for the last couple of nights?

KATH

Your husband? I think he stayed at the pub luv - is that going to be a problem?

EVE.

I guess not.

KATH

Good. Don't worry about your bags, I'll have John bring them in for you...

INT: B&B GUEST ROOM - NIGHT

KATH shows EVE around her faded chintz guest room.

KATH

... Now the loo's just next door and the bathroom's next to that... But you can't use the bath, and shower's are for three minutes maximum... It's all written up on a little sign in there... Oh, and we prefer you only flush for number twos...

EVE

I don't think I've managed a number twos in months.

KATH

Good, so it shouldn't be a problem then. I'll be listening downstairs in case you need reminding. Now, dinner shouldn't be long - are there any eating requirements I should know about?

EVE.

I don't think I'll be able to eat anything until Robert shows up.

KATH

You have to eat.
(nods at EVE'S stomach)
What about it?
Besides, John turns out a lovely Quiche Lorraine.

From downstairs comes the sound of violent coughing followed by the sound of someone retching.

EVE.

Sounds delicious.

KATH

A summer cold - it's not contagious... I'll give you a yell when tea's ready.

KATH leaves the room.

INT: B&B GUEST ROOM - NIGHT

EVE observes the vista from her second story window.

The yellow light of the sunset melts into the surrounding dustbowl.

EXT: COUNTRY ROADSIDE - NIGHT

SAM drives his truck to ROBERT'S abandoned car. In the darkness, he crawls underneath the car and chains it to his truck.

EXT: CRATER LAKE TOWNSHIP - MIDNIGHT

The town is quiet - the main street is completely deserted. A slight breeze rustles through the trees.

EXT: ROAD SIGN - MIDNIGHT

On the outskirts of town a sign indicating water storage levels sways in the breeze.

The sign's arrow points to the red danger zone - showing nearly no water.

Across the road another sign bears a diagram showing where to turn off to reach the North and South Mine Pits.

EXT: CRATER LAKE PUB - MORNING

EVE enters the pub.

A few patrons sit around eating bacon and eggs with their beer.

NOELENE is seated on a stool at the bar drinking coffee.

KEVIN is cooking bacon on an electric frying pan behind the bar, he looks up at EVE as she enters.

KEVIN
Morning sunshine - aren't you a
breath of fresh air.

EVE
Aren't you a liar.

KEVIN laughs uproariously.

EVE (cont'd)
I came to find out if my husband
stayed here last night?

KEVIN
The fella with the glasses? He
stayed here a couple of days but
not last night.

EVE
Do you know where he might be?

KEVIN
Haven't a clue.

EVE.
Bugger.

EVE looks downcast - she takes a moment to consider her next move.

NOELENE
What are you having?

EVE.
Nothing for me thanks.

NOELENE
I meant boy or girl...

EVE.
I'd prefer not to know.

NOELENE
Didn't you have one of those x-ray thingys?

EVE
Yes, but I told them not to say...

KEVIN
Just so long as it's healthy...
Isn't that right?... Doesn't matter
what it is so long as its got ten
fingers and toes...

SAM enters the pub. TIM lopes in behind him - he hides behind SAM when he spots EVE.

SAM.
Morning Kev, couple of egg and
bacon sangas to go mate.
(noticing Eve)
You the car owner's wife?

EVE.
Yes, have you seen him?

SAM.
Nah... Shit nah... I just towed his
car to the garage last night...
I'll have a bit of a play with it
if you like - see what I can do.

EVE.
Were the police finished with it
already?

SAM.
No idea.

EVE.
God they're hopeless.

EVE storms out of the pub.

EXT: CRATER LAKE POLICE STATION - DAY

EVE stands at the counter of the deserted police station.

EVE
Hello?

CONSTABLE WESTLAKE sticks his head out from behind a door.

CONSTABLE WESTLAKE
It's you.

CONSTABLE WESTLAKE'S head disappears. Male laughter can be heard.

SERGEANT HODGES returns and walks to the counter. CONSTABLE WESTLAKE leans against the office doorjamb.

HODGES
What are you here for?

EVE.
I came to see what's happening.

HODGES
Keeping tabs are ya?

EVE.
Some guy just told me he's taken his car.

HODGES
Yeah, what of it?

EVE.
Shouldn't it stay where it was?
What if Robert comes back to it?

HODGES
Look missy we're still not sure if your husband didn't *chose* to disappear...

EVE
Oh for heaven's sake!... Is there anyone else I can talk to - anyone higher up?

HODGES

Yeah, just give me a sec and I'll
put a call through to God.

CONSTABLE WESTLAKE guffaws in the doorway.

EVE

You know, the sooner you find
Robert the sooner I'll get out of
your hair.

HODGES

That reverse psychology won't fly
with me.

WESTLAKE

He's onto you...

EVE.

Good for him - I'll be in later to
check how its going.

EXT: NOELENE'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

NOELENE'S back garden consists of a large tract of dirt
littered with the patchy remnants of yellow grass and weeds.

Attached to the porch is a rusty water tank with an ancient
ladder running up the side.

SAM stands beside the tank talking to NOELENE.

TIM has his hands and face pressed up against the side of the
tank.

NOELENE

Go on... Up you get.

SAM.

Can't we just chuck it in?

NOELENE

He's not a bloody zoo animal...

SAM.

What about Tim - he'll do it.

NOELENE

Tim's useless.

SAM.
He did OK last night.

NOELENE
Stop arguing with me Sam or you'll
be joining him in a minute.

SAM.
Alright, for fuck's sake... Give us
the bag.

SAM takes the plastic bag out of NOELENE'S grasp - he begins to climb the ladder.

TIM tries to grab hold of SAM'S legs as he climbs, SAM kicks out at him.

SAM. (cont'd)
You're a fucken child... You know
that?

TIM
I'll do it, Timbo do it...

SAM.
(to Noelene)
See, what did I tell ya?

TIM begins to climb the ladder after SAM.

NOELENE
Get down from there you stupid boy -
you can't both be up there...

TIM slides back down the ladder. NOELENE cuffs him across the back of the head when he reaches the ground.

INT: INSIDE WATERTANK - DAY

There is the sound of thumping and the occasional bang against the side of the tank as someone scales the ladder outside.

Suddenly a head appears over the side of the tank.

SAM.
Hey.

ROBERT does not respond. SAM whistles to try and get the man's attention.

SAM. (cont'd)
Hey mister.

ROBERT squints up at SAM'S head - a small black apparition in the blinding sunlight.

SAM dangles the plastic bag over the side of the tank.

SAM. (cont'd)
Brought you something to eat.

SAM drops the plastic food bag into the tank.

ROBERT looks at SAM.

ROBERT
What the hell's going on here?

SAM.
No questions mate... I'm not answering any questions...

ROBERT
Please... I haven't done anything...

SAM.
No-one said you had - we're just keeping you here for a bit...

NOELENE raps on the side of the tank.

NOELENE
Stop chattering in there...

ROBERT
Please... I think my leg might be broken - I need to see a doctor.

SAM looks back over at NOELENE.

SAM.
He says he needs a doctor.

NOELENE
Tell him there isn't one.

SAM.
(looking back down at ROBERT)
You hear that? There isn't one.

NOELENE

That'll do - get down from there now.

ROBERT

Please, at least let me call my wife.

Suddenly an airborne can comes flying in over the side of the tank - it hits ROBERT on his chest.

SAM

(to TIM)

Good one dickhead - I think you hit him.

TIM.

(knocking on the tank)

Sorry, sorry buddy.

SAM'S head reappears over the rim of the tank.

SAM.

Sorry bout that.

ROBERT

Please.

SAM.

Jesus mate, we're feeding you aren't we?... You just sit tight and wait till Noelene's ready for you.

EXT: CRATER LAKE TOWNSHIP - DAY

EVE drives the streets looking for ROBERT.

She passes an old weatherboard house that has been converted into a shop.

A sandwich board out front reads: WEATHERFIELD ANTIQUES, CURIOS AND COLLECTABLES.

INT: WEATHERFIELD ANTIQUE STORE - DAY

EVE wanders through the rooms of the old house passing the various antiques on display.

EVE

Hello. Anybody here?

Eve walks through to the kitchen at the back of the store.
 The kitchen is stacked to the rafters with bottles of wine.
 Finding the kitchen empty, Eve looks through the open back door to the yard outside.

EXT: WEATHERFIELD ANTIQUE STORE GARDEN - DAY

Seated at a large wooden table in the middle of the yard is PATRICK, the shop's owner.

PATRICK is an effete man in his early sixties. PAT holds a cigarette in one hand and a glass of red in the other - the half empty bottle is one of many littering the table.

PAT looks up at EVE from the paperback he is reading.

PAT
 You interested in buying something?

EVE.
 I'm looking for my husband.

PAT
 Well I don't have him.

EVE.
 I thought he might have come in here. He's tall and thin and wears glasses - he might have been looking for second hand books...

PAT
 Your description doesn't do him justice. He was very well mannered too.

EVE
 That sounds like Robert.
 (Eve puts a hand out to steady herself)
 Do you mind if I take a seat for a second? - my legs are a bit wobbily.

PAT
 That makes two of us.

EVE collapses into the nearest chair.

PAT (cont'd)
 Watch the furniture darling.
 He didn't buy books though, he
 bought one of my Doulton animals.
 Paid far too much for it.

EVE
 When was this?

PAT
 Couple of days ago.
 It was either the deer or the horse
 - hand-painted, lovely piece.

EVE
 Did he say what his plans were?

PAT
 No. I asked him to stay for a drink
 but he refused me.

PAT fills a nearby glass with wine and passes it to EVE.

PAT (cont'd)
 What about you?

EVE.
 It makes me nauseous at the moment.

PAT
 This one won't - it's from my own
 winery.

EVE.
 You own a winery?

PAT
 Used to. Then we ran into some
 difficulty.

EVE
 What happened?

PAT
 Vines need water darling. And in
 case you hadn't noticed there's a
 decided lack of H2o around here...

EVE
 (taking the glass)
 What the hell - I need something to
 settle my nerves...
 (MORE)

EVE (cont'd)
I've just come from the police station - it's an asylum down there.

PAT
The Crater Lake police?
Darling there are no Crater Lake police - the station was closed over ten years ago. There's only Zig and Zag down there living a dream...

EVE
I thought they were proper police - I thought they were looking for Robert.

PAT
They're just playacting sweetheart...

EVE
I'll kill them!

EVE polishes off the contents of her glass.

EXT: CRATER LAKE POLICE STATION - AFTERNOON

EVE stalks to the door of the police station.

Hanging from the door is a sign that reads: GONE FISHEN.

EVE walks over to nearby bushes and throws up into them.

INT: B&B KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

EVE enters KATH'S kitchen to find KATH busily packing a meal into a hamper.

KATH
You took your time.

EVE.
I got talking to Pat... May I have a glass of water?

KATH
Of course.

EVE pours a glass of water, she leaves the tap running while she rinses her mouth and spits a couple of times.

KATH crosses angrily and turns the tap off.

KATH (cont'd)
 The water Eve!
 For God's sake I thought you were
 going to drink it not just spit it
 out.

EVE.
 Sorry.

KATH returns to the hamper. EVE surreptitiously pours herself
 another glass of water and skulls it.

KATH
 You must have been chatting for a
 while, John was starting to worry.
 He wanted to go out looking for
 you, but I told him you're a grown
 woman - you'll find your own way
 home... But you know how protective
 men can be... especially when a
 woman's in your condition.

EVE.
 Do you know where Matt might be,
 there's a sign up that says they've
 gone fishing?

KATH
 Those two - funny aren't they?
 They'll be out shooting Roos.

EVE.
 Why didn't you tell me your brother
 wasn't really a policeman?

KATH
 Did Pat tell you that?
 His lips need stitching.

EVE.
 Can I use your phone? I want to
 call the real police?

KATH
 Lines are down Luv. I'll get Mattie
 to contact them later.
 Right now I have to take Noelene
 her dinner.

(calling out)
 John, it's ready.

(MORE)

KATH (cont'd)
You should have a lie down - you
look like last month's casserole.

INT: B&B GUESTROOM - EVENING

A breeze from the open window puffs out the curtains.

EVE is lying fully clothed upon the bed. She awakens suddenly.

EVE checks her watch to determine how long she has been napping.

EVE raises her heavy body from the bed and pads into the bathroom. After using the toilet, EVE returns to the bedroom and grabs a cardigan from her bag.

INT: B&B HALLWAY - EVENING

EVE puts on her cardigan and heads downstairs to look for KATH and JOHN.

The B&B is eerily still and silent.

INT: B&B - EVENING

EVE wanders through the gloomy house looking for KATH or JOHN.

The kitchen is empty as is the lounge room.

EXT: B&B - EVENING

EVE exits through the front door and wanders around the outside of the house.

JOHN and KATH are not at home - their bikes are missing.

EVE returns indoors.

INT: B&B KITCHEN - EVENING

EVE looks in the fridge for something to eat.

EXT: CRATER LAKE MAINSTREET - EVENING

EVE wanders down the deserted mainstreet - everything is closed. All the store windows are shrouded in darkness.

EVE tugs at the door of the pub, unable to believe that even it has shut its doors at this early hour.

EXT: CRATER LAKE STREETS - NIGHT

EVE walks back to the B&B.

Suddenly, from out of the darkness EVE notices a single illuminated building.

EVE makes for the building - the sign over the door reads Community Hall.

INT: COMMUNITY HALL - NIGHT

Hearing voices from within, EVE opens the door to the hall.

EVE stands in the doorway - she looks at the entire town who are seated in the hall.

KEVIN stands on the podium at the far end of the hall.
NOELENE is seated in a chair beside him.

KEVIN and NOELENE stare at EVE. At the same time the entire audience swivel their heads around to stare at EVE also.

EVE stands in shock and looks at the townsfolk, who in turn glare back at EVE - no-one moves, not a word is spoken.

EVE turns from the room and quickly departs - the heavy door slams shut behind her.

EXT: CRATER LAKE STREETS - NIGHT

EVE walks hastily back to the B&B.

She turns to check she is not being followed.

EXT: B&B - NIGHT

EVE exits the B&B carrying her overnight bag. The screen door slams shut behind her with a bang.

EVE climbs in behind the wheel of her car.

EVE attempts to start her car - it won't start.

EVE tries again. The engine makes no response.

EVE
Come on, damn it!

EVE gives the engine one more try - it refuses to budge.

EVE bangs the steering wheel with her palm in frustration - the pain from the blow causes her to cry out.

EVE (cont'd)
Ow! Bloody hell!

Suddenly EVE is startled by a tapping on her window.

EVE looks up to see KATH and JOHN peering in at her.

KATH
Something wrong dear?

INT: CRATER LAKE B&B - GUEST ROOM - NIGHT

EVE lies on her bed staring at the ceiling.

She hears a knocking on the door.

KATH
(through the door)
Are you going to come down and have
some dinner?

EVE.
No.

KATH opens the door enough to stick her head around it.

KATH
You have to eat.

EVE
I'm not hungry.
When will John fix my car?

JOHN sticks his head around the door - he has obviously been listening in.

JOHN
I'll do it first thing tomorrow.

KATH
You said you needed a part.

JOHN

That's right, I'll do it when I get the part.

KATH

So you meant you'll order it first thing tomorrow.

JOHN

That's what I meant.
Can I get you a warm milk Eve?

EVE

(addressing the ceiling)
Not unless you want it see it come up again.

KATH

You have to have something, think of baby, what would baby like?

EVE remains staring at the ceiling.

EVE

Baby would like pasta, with a meat sauce... And baby would like something chocolatey for dessert.

Suddenly JOHN is racked by a fit of painful coughing. He holds onto the doorjamb with one hand and holds onto his stomach with the other. After a moment the coughing subsides.

EVE (cont'd)

Baby will eat it up here - Baby doesn't want to catch a cough...

EXT: CRATER LAKE SERVICE STATION - MORNING

EVE walks across the gravel driveway of the Crater Lake service station. She passes two petrol pumps and a couple of ancient cars with large cardboard 'For Sale' signs in their front windows.

SAM'S ute is parked beside the small fibro one room shop.

EVE looks inside the garage shop. The shop appears deserted so EVE wanders around to the adjoining garage.

INT: SERVICE STATION GARAGE - MORNING

EVE wanders into the garage. Inside there are two cars up on blocks and an assortment of car parts, tools and engines lie about the place. EVE can see no sign of ROBERT'S car.

SAM enters the garage from around the side - he is wearing grease-monkey overalls with a pair of ray bans tucked into the top pocket.

SAM jumps when he looks up and sees EVE standing in front of him.

SAM.
Shit... You scared me.

EVE.
Sorry.

SAM.
I wasn't expecting to find anyone
in here - I was just taking a...
using the loo.

EVE.
I was wondering where Robert's car
was.

SAM.
Yep.

EVE.
I wanted to take a look inside...

SAM.
Right.

EVE.
So, is it here?

SAM.
No.

EVE.
You said you were bringing it
here...

SAM.
That's right.

SAM is prevented from elaborating further by the appearance of TIM.

TIM crunches across the gravel driveway carrying a couple of pies - he is wearing clothing similar to that worn by ROBERT in the first scene.

TIM approaches the garage, when he sees EVE standing with SAM he pales - he looks around him as though seeking an escape route.

EVE'S face falls as she recognises the clothes TIM is wearing.

EVE.

They're my husband's clothes...

TIM looks down at his outfit then over at SAM.

SAM.

No... They're his.

EVE.

Don't lie to me... They're Robert's.
And they're his sunglasses...

SAM.

I don't know what you're talking about...

EVE.

Why are you wearing his things?...
Where is he?

TIM

These are mine - got given me.

Suddenly a car speeds off the road and onto the gravel driveway. It spins to a stop with a whirl of dust in front of the EVE, SAM and TIM.

As the dust comes to rest EVE can see the car is ROBERT'S Honda Civic.

The window of the Honda is wound down and PETER, SAM'S boss, sticks his head out.

PETER

You ready to go mate?

SAM shakes his head at PETER.

PETER notices EVE.

PETER.

Oh Shit.

EVE is distressed and confused.

EVE.
That's Robert's car.

SAM.
Yep.

EVE.
Why is he driving it?

SAM.
Old Pete's just taking it for a
test drive... I got it going for
yers...

TIM.
Fast car.

EVE.
Well I want it back!

SAM and PETER make eye contact.

TIM begins eating his pie - making an almighty mess of it -
sauce and gravy drip onto ROBERT'S shirt.

SAM.
Thing is... It's still a bit
dangerous... I wouldn't want to let
you drive it till I'm sure she's
perfect.

EVE.
I don't care... I need it...

PETER
Yeah... We really can't hand it
over till we know it's road-worthy -
that's the law... Nothing we can do
about it.

EVE.
You don't seem to have a problem
driving it.

PETER.
I'm the test driver see - I'm
testing it for ya.

PETER coughs hoarsely and spits a globule of bloody mucus out the window - it lands on the side of the car where it rolls slowly down the duco. TIM points at the car door and laughs with a mouthful of pie.

TIM
Red line. Red line.

SAM.
Yep... Pete's dispensable... Not like you - you're precious... Carrying precious cargo... Aren't you?

EVE.
This is ridiculous... I need a car.

SAM.
You have one don't ya?... How'd you get here?

EVE.
I walked... Mine won't start.

PETER
You walked to Crater Lake?

EVE.
No... I walked to the service station... My car's at the B&B...

SAM.
(laughing)
Shit... I was gonna say...

PETER
(chuckling)
... And with all that excess baggage...

EVE.
I want to take a look inside.

SAM.
If you want - it's your car after all...

TIM - now wearing most of his pie down the front of him hold's out the other pie to SAM.

SAM. (cont'd)
Not now mate.

PETER, who has been talking all along from the safety of the driver's seat, eases himself out of the car.

PETER
Tight squeeze.

EVE ignores PETER. She climbs into the driver's seat. SAM reaches in past EVE and takes the keys out of the ignition.

EVE
Hey... It's my car...

SAM.
Like I said - it's just not safe...

EVE checks the glove box and rifles through the general clutter about the car - the three men look on - TIM is now halfway through the second pie.

EVE.
Did any of you happen to find a mobile phone in here?

PETER
Can't say I did... What about you Sam?

SAM.
Nah... No phone.

EVE pulls the lever to open the boot.

EVE gets out of the car to look inside the boot.

EVE.
I don't suppose I need to ask where his suitcase is?

SAM and PETER shrug.

TIM cries out in despair.

TIM
New shoes!

A small pile of pie and sauce sits on the toe of ROBERT'S boat shoe.

INT: CRATER LAKE POLICE STATION - DAY

SERGEANT HODGES is leaning on the police counter talking to CONSTABLE WESTLAKE.

WESTLAKE notices EVE entering and blatantly cuts in on what HODGES is saying.

WESTLAKE
Good-morning Eve.

HODGES spins around. There is an obvious look of surprise on his face - he covers it with a jovial smile.

HODGES
Ah, if it isn't the lovely lady herself. I was just telling the young lad here....

EVE.
I don't want to hear it.
I know you're not really police...
I want to get in touch with the proper police.

WESTLAKE exhales in a whistle.

HODGES
The 'proper police' and who might they be?

EVE.
The ones in the city - the ones getting paid.

HODGES
I don't like your tone Miss Muffet.

EVE
Either you help me now and I say nothing or I'll call them myself and tell them everything...

HODGES
Are you threatening me sweetheart?

EVE.
Yes - so will you contact them or not?

HODGES
I'd have to say not.

EVE.
Fine. I'll do it myself...

HODGES

Yeah, you got your own private line
do ya?

WESTLAKE

She'll send out the bat signal.

HODGES

Use her ESP - her *woman's*
intuition...

HODGES grabs hold of EVE'S upper arm.

HODGES (cont'd)

Listen to me lady... I'm not just
wearing this pretty uniform because
I think it suits me... I'm wearing
it because I'm a trained officer...
The city cops couldn't give a rats
about what happens up here... So,
if you want to go and bugger things
up more for you're husband by
calling in some big-time,
incompetent city ass-hole - be my
guest... But I don't reckon you'll
be doing him any favours...

EVE.

It couldn't be any worse than
what's being done already...

HODGES releases his grasp.

HODGES

Is that what you think?...
We've been busting our balls trying
to find this one's daddy...

HODGES pokes EVE in the stomach - she pulls away in disgust.

EVE.

Don't touch me!
You can't keep fobbing me off...
They have rules for police too you
know, even fake ones... I...
Ahhh... Damn it!

EVE feels a sharp stab of migraine pain - her vision blurs.

EVE

... I have to go now, but I'll be
back.
I'm not finished with you yet...

EVE stumbles out of the police station.

EXT: CRATER LAKE MAINSTREET - DAY

EVE tries to walk back to the B&B - she is in pain and unable to see properly.

EVE is disoriented. She walks down a street before realising it's a 'no through road'.

INT: B&B HALLWAY - DAY

JOHN enters the hall to see KATH leading EVE in.

EVE has her hands pressed over her eyes.

JOHN
What's going on?

KATH
She's been out wandering the streets - Noelene found her out the front of her place...
Needless to say she wasn't happy.

JOHN
Where are we taking her?

KATH
To her room... Where else would we take her?

EVE
Can we hurry up? I need to lie down...

JOHN
But I'm not finished...

KATH
It doesn't matter - you can do it later...

INT: B&B GUESTROOM - DAY

KATH and JOHN help EVE down onto her bed. JOHN removes EVE'S shoes and spreads a throw rug over her.

EVE.

Would someone close the curtains...
and there's some painkillers in my
beauty bag in the bathroom. I need
two and some water.

KATH

I really don't know if you should
be taking those - I'm sure I read
somewhere that they're bad for the
baby...

EVE.

Not now Kath...

KATH

What do you think John?

JOHN

She does look pretty crook... I'm
sure a couple won't hurt.

KATH

You say that now, but is it worth
taking the risk?

EVE.

Jesus Kath! Just give them to me.

KATH

Honestly - I don't care what you do
to your own body... I'm only
thinking of the baby.

EVE tries to get up from the bed - the weight of her body
sends shooting pains through her head. She falls back down,
helpless.

JOHN

I'm sure it'll be alright Kath...
She really is hurting.

KATH

Fine... But it's on both your
heads.

JOHN enters the ensuite and returns carrying the pills and a
glass of water.

JOHN administers the headache tablets to Eve.

EVE lifts her head to swallow the pills - she falls back on
the pillow.

EVE shuts her eyes. She can hear JOHN and KATH whispering over her but can't distinguish what it is they're saying.

Suddenly KATH stops whispering and speaks to EVE.

KATH (cont'd)

We're going to go now and leave you to rest. If you want anything call out, but don't try getting it yourself... You're too sick for that... John and I will get you whatever you need... Remember, it's best for everybody if you just lie still.

JOHN and KATH leave EVE'S room.

INT: B&B GUESTROOM - DAY

EVE tries to sleep but is prevented from doing so by drilling sounds outside her room.

EVE listens - the sound of drilling stops and is replaced by a dull thumping, then the drilling resumes.

Finally the drilling sounds stop. EVE strains to listen to the noises outside her doorway.

EVE hears what sounds like a latch being moved into position.

INT: NOELENE'S BACKYARD - WATERTANK - DAY

ROBERT lies curled up on the floor of the watertank.

Littered around him are the remnants of the food and drink he has been given.

ROBERT feels something poking him in his back.

ROBERT

Jesus!

He wriggles out of the way fearing it might be a rat.

ROBERT looks at a human finger poking through a hole in the tank - the finger wiggles.

The finger disappears and is replaced by an eye.

NOELENE

Where are you?

ROBERT leans over to look through the hole - he stares into the eye.

ROBERT
Who is it?

NOELENE
It's not important - get back a bit
would you.

ROBERT doesn't move.

NOELENE (cont'd)
I've got your box thingy here but I
need you to tell me how to work it.

ROBERT
You're the woman from the pub.
What's going on? Why am I being
held here?

NOELENE
I want to know what this box says
about the mine.

ROBERT
I can't show you unless you get me
out of here.

NOELENE
Rubbish.

ROBERT
Please, I'm not here to reopen the
mines, if that's what you're afraid
of. I'm here to help the town - to
see how the mines might have
damaged it.

NOELENE
I can't find where to turn it on.

ROBERT
I know that the mines have probably
made a lot of people here very sick
- other than just the miners.

NOELENE
I know that too.

ROBERT
I think many of the locals might be
poisoned...

(MORE)

ROBERT (cont'd)

Between the southerly and northerly
blow off and the contaminated water
supply - not to mention what might
be in the soil...

NOELENE

Yes, yes - my husband used to be
foreman down there, I've heard it
all before.

ROBERT

Why are you keeping me here then -
if you already know everything?

NOELENE

I want to know why you care about
the weather.

ROBERT

I think the mine might be
responsible for the drought.

NOELENE

No, you're wrong there.
The mine didn't cause the drought -
I did.

ROBERT

You did? How?

NOELENE

I just gave your wife a lift.
What sort of baby is she having?

ROBERT

You've seen Eve?

NOELENE

Boy or girl?

ROBERT

Where is she?

NOELENE

Are you gonna tell me or not?

ROBERT

I don't know the sex.
Where's Eve?

NOELENE

You're as difficult as your silly
wife...

NOELENE heads back inside her house.

ROBERT
 (calling out)
 Where's my wife?
 What's going on?

INT: B&B GUESTROOM - AFTERNOON

EVE wakes. Her migraine has subsided.

EVE rises and heads into the bathroom. She sits on the toilet and urinates, at the same time she takes two more headache pills.

Back in the bedroom EVE slips on her shoes and crosses to the door.

EVE attempts to open the door but is unable to - the door appears to be locked from the outside.

EVE tugs on the door a few times in an attempt to force it.

EVE
 Son of a bitch!

EVE goes to the window - it's too high to jump from.

EVE spots JOHN pottering around in the garden. She raises the window sash to speak to him.

EVE.
 John.

JOHN looks around him to see who has spoken.

EVE. (cont'd)
 John it's Eve... Up here.

JOHN looks up at EVE'S guestroom window.

JOHN
 What is it?

EVE.
 I can't get out.

JOHN
 It's for your own good... You have to stop wandering about - you'll do yerself an injury.

EVE.

Let me out John - I promise I won't go anywhere.

JOHN

I don't think so - best wait till Kath gets back.

EVE.

John this is very bad... I'm claustrophobic... You can't confine me like this.

JOHN

Sorry, you'll have to talk to Kath about that...

EVE.

Where is she?

JOHN

She just popped into town, she'll be back in a bit.

EVE.

I can't wait... Seriously John... I'm going stir crazy in here - I don't know what I might do...

JOHN

Calm down... She'll be home in a minute.

EVE.

I'll have to jump out the window John... I can't bear being locked up like this...

JOHN

Don't do anything stupid... Just hold on for a little while...

EVE.

I'm going to jump John... I mean it - I have to get out.

EVE swings one leg over the window ledge to show JOHN she means business.

JOHN panics.

JOHN

Ah for Heaven's sake... Get back
inside...

EVE leans forward and prepares to put her other leg out on
the ledge.

JOHN (cont'd)

You stay put... Don't move a
muscle... I'm coming up there.

JOHN runs out of view - a second later he returns.

JOHN (cont'd)

Just checking.

JOHN disappears again.

EVE re-enters the room. She picks up a lamp off the bedside
table - she tries to jerk its plug out of the wall.

EVE can hear JOHN thumping up the stairs - she tugs harder on
the lamp.

EVE can hear JOHN outside her door - she pulls back on the
lamp pulling the plug out of the wall.

JOHN swings open the door to EVE'S room and EVE crashes the
lamp over his head.

EXT: WEATHERFIELD ANTIQUE'S STORE - LATE AFTERNOON

EVE enters the back garden of the antique store.

PAT is seated in much the same posture as the previous day -
equipped with wine, cigarettes and novel.

EVE collapses into a garden chair.

EVE

You have to help me get out of
here.

PAT

What's happened?

EVE

I've just been locked up by Kath
and John.

PAT
Really? They're usually very good
hosts.

EVE
They've been a fricken nightmare to
me... I don't suppose you'd give me
a lift out of town?

PAT
Can't help you there Darl - I don't
drive.

EVE
Damn! And there's no taxi service I
suppose?

PAT
Were you thinking of calling a cab?
That's precious.

EVE
Do you know anyone who'll drive me?

PAT
What's your rush pet? Stay with me
tonight and I'll have Jack drive
you out in the morning.

EVE
I want to go now though.

PAT
What about hubby - what if he shows
up tonight?

PAT is interrupted by the entrance of JACK, a short fifty
year-old in a blue singlet and shorts - he is painfully thin
and ashen-faced.

JACK
What the hell's going on here?

PAT
Speak of the devil.
Jack, this is Eve - as if you
didn't you already know... She
wants you to give her a lift out of
town.

JACK leans down beside him and spits a mouthful of blood onto
the ground.

JACK

Does she now? I haven't had my tea yet.

PAT

I told her you'd do it tomorrow.

JACK

I'll have to check my diary.

JACK empties a bottle of wine into a nearby glass and sits in a chair next to EVE. He studies her closely.

EVE

This place is like purgatory.
How do you stand it?

PAT lights his cigarette and inhales deeply. He blows the smoke away from EVE as he exhales.

JACK

It's as good a place as any.

PAT

Least it was until the eighties.

EVE

What happened then?

PAT

That's when Noelene cursed us.
She sterilised the town - that's why we haven't had any rain.

EVE.

Neither has half of the rest of the country.

JACK

Yeah... It's pelted down around us in a twenty-five kilometer radius - and Crater Lake hasn't received a drop... not one drop in twenty frigten years... explain that why don't ya?

EVE.

I can't.
But I certainly don't think Noelene has anything to do with it...

PAT
Her hubby used to be one of the
head honchos up there until they
closed the pits...

JACK
Just packed up and pissed off.

EVE
So?

PAT
The miners were none to happy to be
out of a job... Were they Jack?

JACK
My oath. Someone had to be held
responsible.

PAT
Then the farmers got wind that the
pollution had ruined their farms.

JACK
We were entitled to our pound of
flesh.

PAT
You took more than a pound - I'd
say you took about three hundred.

JACK
And we're paying for it aren't we?
The place is dead as that bitch's
heart and as dry as her...
(with a wink at Eve)
Sexual organ.
Nothing'd want to grow here even if
it could - Tim was the last fucker
to be born and look how well that
turned out...

EVE.
Why don't you just leave then?

PAT
Most of us were born here...
It's as good a place as any...
Besides half the town's too sick to
pick up and move anywhere.

PAT rifles around on the mess piled up on the table in front
of him.

PAT (cont'd)
Blast... I'm out of cigarettes.

PAT pushes back his chair and walks into the house. EVE and JACK pass a moment in awkward silence.

JACK
How's the baby?

EVE.
I'd say not great if it's half as stressed as I am.

JACK
Tell me, have you started bonding with it yet?

EVE.
What?

JACK
Have you picked out a name or anything?... At what stage do you start getting attached?

EVE.
How should I know? - I'd say its different for everybody.

JACK
I wasn't asking about everybody, I was asking about you.

EVE.
Can we stop now - you're starting to annoy me.

JACK
I wouldn't worry about me baby-cakes - I'm the least of your worries...

Suddenly an outside light is switched on illuminating EVE and JACK at the table

JACK (cont'd)
Ah... Company's arrived...

EVE looks over at the house. KATH stands in the back doorway with her arms crossed looking stern. JOHN stands behind KATH - his head wound in a bandage. PAT stands behind JOHN, looking guilty.

In a moment of blind panic, EVE rises and moves quickly across the garden and out around the side of the antique store.

EVE hastens out through the front gate of the antique store and on down the street.

EXT: CRATER LAKE STREETS - NIGHT

EVE walks quickly down the street headed back into town.

As Eve nears the mainstreet she hears the sound of a car coming up behind her.

EVE is illuminated by the headlights as the car approaches.

The car pulls up alongside of EVE.

EVE quickens her pace as the car drives slowly beside her.

The passenger side window is wound down and KATH speaks to EVE.

KATH

Get in.

EVE.

I'll walk home Kath, thanks all the same.

KATH

Get in the car Eve.

EVE looks over at KATH.

EVE.

You're driving my car.

KATH

That's right.
John managed to fix it for you...

EVE continues walking.

KATH (cont'd)

He's not a well man - he didn't deserve what you did to him.

EVE.

You locked me up... You can't do that!

KATH

Look Eve, I don't have the patience
for this right now... Will you
please just get inside the car.

EVE ignores KATH and walks defiantly on.

KATH (cont'd)

I don't want to have to drag you in
here... Why are you being so
stubborn?

EVE rounds the corner onto the mainstreet. The car follows
closely - driving down the wrong side of the road.

KATH (cont'd)

Stop being stupid Eve... What are
you afraid of?

EVE pulls up suddenly and turns to the car.

EVE.

You... The whole crazy town...
That's what I'm afraid of!

KATH

Don't be silly... What are you on
about... Did Patrick say something?

EVE continues walking, quickening her pace - the car
continues tracking her.

Suddenly, EVE pulls up quickly. The car continues for a
moment then stops also.

EVE runs behind the rear of the car before KATH and JOHN have
time to exit the vehicle.

EVE is headed for the pub across the street.

INT: CRATER LAKE PUB - NIGHT

The ambiance of the pub feels warm and inviting compared to
the threatening atmosphere of the street.

A few patrons sit the bar, a couple are playing pool, others
are scattered at small tables around the room - Slim Dusty is
playing on the jukebox.

EVE faces the room.

EVE.
Excuse me everyone.

Every head in the room turns to stare at EVE.

EVE. (cont'd)
I need some help... I was wondering
if someone would be willing to give
me a lift out of town - I'm happy
to pay...

The pub's patrons continue staring curiously at Eve. After a moment a few shake their heads at one another, they continue drinking.

EVE notices KATH and JOHN entering behind her. She moves further into the pub.

EVE. (cont'd)
Please, won't any of you help me?
I'll pay you generously.

The locals ignore EVE'S plea and whisper amongst themselves.

KATH takes hold of EVE'S arm in an attempt to guide her away. EVE shrugs her off.

EVE. (cont'd)
Is it because of this stupid curse -
is that it?... Because it's called
a drought - most of Australia is
affected by it... Anything else is
just coincidence, bad luck and
coincidence...

KATH
Come on. You've said your peace -
lets go.

EVE tries to shrug KATH off again but KATH holds fast. JOHN moves in to take hold of EVE'S other arm.

EVE.
Please... Surely one of you can
think for yourself.

KEVIN, the bartender finally speaks up.

KEVIN
(to Kath and John)
How the hell did she manage to slip
the noose again?...

PETER
That must have been a pretty loose
noose.

Some of the patrons laugh at PETER'S observation.

KEVIN
Geeze, you two are hopeless...

INT: CRATER LAKE PUB - EVENING

KATH and JOHN lead Eve through the pub and pass behind the bar.

KEVIN
I knew the pair of you wouldn't be
able to cut it... I went ahead and
got everything ready... take her on
through.

JOHN
She got me a beauty - you should
see my head.

KATH
I just wish she could of used
something other than one of my good
lamps.

KEVIN
Yeah, well, it's like Noelene
said... This way we can all keep an
eye on her.

EVE is taken through to a small office behind the bar.

INT: PUB'S OFFICE - EVENING

A camp bed has been set up alongside an untidy office desk.

An incongruous armchair sits beside the end of the bed,
taking up half the room - it's obviously been brought in for
the occasion.

EVE is stricken with yet another migraine - she puts a hand
to her eyes to block out the lights of the pub.

EVE is led into the pub's office and laid down on the bed
like a trained animal - her eyes remain closed.

EVE presses her palms against the sides of her head in an effort to clamp out the pain.

KEVIN

Does she need seeing to?

KATH

It's probably another one of her headaches - she seems to get them whenever things don't go her way.

JOHN

If you've got any headache pills - panadol or whatnot - give her a couple of those every now and then... But not too many - Kath reckons they're no good for the little one...

KATH notices a number of the locals have congregated around the door to get a look at EVE.

KATH

Kev, do something about them would you.

KEVIN turns to the group.

KEVIN

Piss off why don't ya. She's not some prize catch... Go check out my marlin hanging on the wall in there if you want to gape at something...

PETER

It's been a while since I've seen one who was carrying.

RON

I forgot how big they got.

KEVIN

Get back in there you pack of mongrels.

RON

Noelene said we were supposed to be watching her?

KEVIN

Not all of you... Not all at once.

EXT: CRATER LAKE MAINSTREET - NIGHT

SAM and TIM stagger out of the pub and over to SAM'S ute parked on the curb.

Both men carry a six pack under one arm.

SAM fumbles for his car keys and drops them as he attempts to open his car door.

SAM.
Bugger.

SAM bends down to pick up his keys - he sways precariously.

SAM. (cont'd)
Nup... Too drunk...

SAM stands and addresses TIM over the top of the ute's hood.

SAM. (cont'd)
We're walking.

TIM shrugs and begins to head off down the street.

SAM. (cont'd)
Hang on a tick.

SAM rummages around the clutter in the tray of his ute. He pulls a torch from amongst the debris. SAM switches on the torch illuminating his face eerily for a moment.

SAM. (cont'd)
Nice one.

SAM switches off the torch and jogs after TIM.

EXT: NOELENE'S HOUSE - WATERTANK - NIGHT

SAM and TIM stand beside the watertank in NOELENE'S yard illuminated by the beam from SAM'S torch.

SAM knocks on the side of the watertank.

SAM.
Hey bobby... You home?

SAM knocks again.

TIM.
Bobby... Want a beer?...

SAM.
 We brought the party to you mate...
 Here, give us it.

SAM passes the torch to TIM and takes one of the six packs.

TIM.
 I give it.

SAM.
 She'll be right.

SAM holds his six pack in one hand and the torch in the other as he carefully scales the ladder.

TIM raps on the side of the tank again.

TIM.
 Wake up Bobby... Visitors.

SAM finally makes it to the top of the tank. He balances himself against the side and rests his beers on the top rung.

SAM shines his torch down into the tank.

INT: WATERTANK - NIGHT

The beam from the torch illuminates ROBERT.

ROBERT squints up into the light.

SAM.
 Man you look like crap.

ROBERT
 I need to talk to you.

SAM.
 Yeah, that's why we came - to keep
 you company - you want a brew?

SAM tosses a beer down to ROBERT it smashes on the floor of the water tank.

SAM. (cont'd)
 You were meant to catch that.

ROBERT
 You have to get me out of here, I
 have to tell you about Noelene.

SAM.
What about her?

ROBERT
She's lying to you.

SAM.
What do you mean?

ROBERT
The curse, the drought, it's all
bullshit - I can prove it...

ROBERT feels something prodding him in his lower back. He looks down to see a stick poking at him - the stick moves in and out of the hole in the tank.

TIM
'Lo... 'Lo Bobby.

Suddenly the porch light switches on. The screen door slams open and NOELENE is standing at the back door.

NOELENE is dressed in a long pink nightie - she looks haggard and scary.

NOELENE
What the hell is going on out here?

TIM looks scared. SAM switches off the torch and scurries back down the ladder.

SAM.
We just thought we'd pop in and see
how he's doing.

NOELENE
Did you just?... And how is he?

SAM.
He looks a bit crook actually.

NOELENE steps forward, allowing the screen door to shut behind her.

NOELENE
Did he say anything to you?

SAM.
Nah - not really.

NOELENE
This won't do - this won't do at
all.

NOELENE raps against the tank with her knuckles.

NOELENE (cont'd)
What did I say to you? What did we
agree on?

ROBERT
(from inside the tank)
Where's Eve.

NOELENE
(mimicking Robert)
Where's Eve?
(to Sam and Tim)
Sounds like a bull on heat doesn't
he boys?

TIM
Mooooo.

NOELENE
Seeing as you're here you may as
well get rid of him.

SAM.
What do you mean?

NOELENE
I want my tank back.

ROBERT
(From inside the tank)
What's going on?

SAM.
Geeze - that's a bit harsh isn't
it?

ROBERT
(shouting from inside the
tank)
Don't let her con you - she has no
power over you...

NOELENE
That's enough out of you...

SAM.
What's he on about?

NOELENE
 (under her breath so
 Robert won't hear)
 He's a madman - his brain's more
 buggered than Tim's.

ROBERT
 Don't listen to her.

NOELENE
 Shut your trap Robert.
 (to Sam)
 Remember, the only reason you're
 not sick like the others is because
 Liam was your best friend.
 So stop fighting me and just do
 what I tell you.

SAM.
 Shouldn't we just hear him out
 though - he is a scientist and
 everything?

ROBERT
 (pleading from inside the
 tank)
 Listen to me - the mines spread
 pollution that...

NOELENE
 (to Robert)
 Do you care about your wife or
 don't you?

ROBERT starts kicking wildly at the side of the tank.

ROBERT
 She's lying to you!
 (kicking)
 Why won't you listen to me?
 (kicking)
 Listen to me!

NOELENE
 I said enough!
 (to Sam)
 This is ridiculous.
 Get out of here - go on... I'll
 take care of him myself - I should
 have done that in the first place.

INT: PUB'S OFFICE - DAY

EVE lies on the camp bed.

The muffled voices of the patrons at the bar penetrate the room.

EVE stares at the blank wall in front of her.

INT: CRATER LAKE PUB - NIGHT

The pub is filled to near capacity with locals drinking, eating and playing pool.

KEVIN'S wife, MARGE, is behind the bar lending him a hand.

A group of men (PAT, JACK, SAM, TIM, MR. BRODY, etc.) sit at the bar talking to KEVIN.

KEVIN

I just wish she'd perk up and eat something.

SAM

What? Is she on a hunger strike?

JACK

She's probably depressed.

SAM.

Who's cooking? Cause, to be honest, the food here isn't all that good...

KEVIN

When did all this come about? You never had any problem with the food before...

PAT

It's not the food - she loves to eat... I'd say she's come down with some of that post-natal depression.

MARGE

That comes after.

PAT

It could have come on early - stress will do that...

KEVIN

Whatever it is... We can't take the risk of her not eating...

LEO BRODY

Someone ought to lift her spirits.

JACK

You got any tricks you can do?

LEO BRODY

I know some jokes...

KEVIN

She doesn't need cheering up ... she needs something to pin her hope's on... You know - mind over matter and all that...

JACK

Ask me, I'll tell you she needs to do less hoping and more eating... Stick with the facts at hand - you gotta eat, drink, breathe and shit... Hoping doesn't enter into it far as I'm concerned...

The men fall silent - staring at something over KEVIN'S shoulder. MARGE lets out a squeak.

KEVIN turns around.

EVE stands in the doorway between the pub's office and the bar.

EVE looks like death warmed up. Her hair is plastered to her head where's she's been lying on it and her face has the wrung out appearance of someone who's been heavily crying.

JACK (cont'd)

Hello there luv... You after a drink?

EVE looks at the men with hollow eyes.

EVE.

Were you just talking about me?

KEVIN

We were just saying we wish you'd eat something...

JACK

That's right - we're worried about you... It's not healthy skipping meals like that...

EVE.

What do you care - you want me dead don't you?

KEVIN

On the contrary - we want you fit and healthy.

EVE.

Why?... What do you care about my health - what do you want from me?

EVE starts to sob in frustration.

PAT

Now, now... Don't start with the theatricals...

EVE.

Don't you talk to me!
Why are you keeping me here?...
Tell me!

JACK

It's only for a little while.

EVE.

But why?

The other patrons have turned their attention to EVE standing in the doorway.

PETER, playing pool in the corner, speaks up.

PETER

For Christ's sake just tell the woman...

EVE looks over at PETER.

EVE.

Tell me what?

PETER doesn't respond - SAM shakes his head at him.

EVE shouts at the room in general.

EVE. (cont'd)
Tell me what?

JACK
Noelene's taken a fancy to that
baby you're carrying.

EVE.
What? What do you mean?

JACK
Like I said, Noelene wants that kid
you're carrying there.

EVE.
What does she want with my baby?

KEVIN
She's had a rough trot, she reckons
the baby'll make amends for it.

EVE is dumbfounded.

EVE.
But it's my child!...

JACK
She's gonna call off the curse Eve -
you'd be helping a lot of people...

EVE bangs her fist against the edge of the doorway.

EVE.
She can't have it!

LEO BRODY
You can always have another.

EVE bangs her fist harder against the doorway.

EVE.
You're all crazy... You're all
fucking crazy!...

EVE turns back into the pub's office and throws herself down
on the camp bed crying.

INT: PUB'S OFFICE - DAY

EVE lies on the camp bed staring at the ceiling.

She listens to the sound of chatter emanating from the busy bar.

KEVIN sticks his head around the door.

KEVIN
Marge's just whipped up a lovely
batch of scones - how about it hey?
A nice scone hot from the oven, bit
of jam and cream ey? What do you
say?

EVE
Go away.

KEVIN disappears from view.

EVE continues staring at the ceiling.

A moment later EVE hears a voice in the room.

TIM
Lo.

EVE looks over at the doorway to see TIM peering in at her - he is still dressed in ROBERT'S clothes.

TIM (cont'd)
Lo.

TIM sidles into the room.

EVE
Nice shirt. Now leave me alone.

TIM hesitates for a moment before slinking up to the office desk. He places a small porcelain horse upon the desk.

EVE (cont'd)
What's that?

TIM
Found it?

EVE
Good for you.

TIM
It's a horse.

EVE
What?

EVE sits up to reach for the horse. She fingers it - it is obviously of high quality.

EVE (cont'd)
Where did you get this?

TIM
Found it.

EVE
Where?

TIM looks uncomfortable - he moves toward the door.

TIM
Timbo go now.

EVE
Where is he?

TIM
Nice to see you.

EVE
Wait a second - I'm not angry...
Just tell me where he is.

TIM flees the room.

EVE looks at the horse.

INT: CRATER LAKE PUB - DAY

KEVIN stands behind the bar talking to a few patrons.

EVE walks out of the office and into the bar area. She helps herself to a packet of chips and removes a bottle of orange juice from the fridge.

KEVIN
You alright there Luv?

EVE
Fine...

KEVIN
Good, help yourself then.

EVE
I intend to.

KEVIN
 We're watching the footy this
 arvo... You want to come in and
 join us?

EVE
 Thanks but no.

KEVIN
 You want me to keep you updated on
 the score?

EVE
 Not necessary.

EVE takes her chips and juice back into the office.

INT: CRATER LAKE PUB - DAY

A dozen or so locals are gathered at the pub. Everyone holds a drink in their hand - all eyes are on a small TV screen fixed to the wall.

KEVIN also watches the game from his position behind the bar.

NOELENE enters the pub. She crosses over to where the sporting memorabilia aligns one wall.

NOELENE takes down a large shot-gun hanging on the wall above a photo of KEVIN holding up a huge dead kangaroo by the tail.

NOELENE carries the gun over to KEVIN who has been watching her the whole time.

NOELENE
 This thing got any bullets in it?

KEVIN
 You think I'd keep a loaded gun
 around this lot?
 Hold on a sec I reckon I've got
 some in the office.

INT: PUB'S OFFICE - DAY

EVE sits up on the camp bed eating a sandwich.

KEVIN enters the office and opens one of the desk drawers to remove a box of bullets.

KEVIN
 It's a real nail biter.
 Sure you don't want to come in and
 watch?

EVE shakes her head and waves KEVIN out of the room.

On the TV the voice of the announcers becomes increasingly excited as the game rounds into the final ten minutes.

The sound of cheering from the patrons in the bar mirrors the crowd's cheers on TV.

INT: CRATER LAKE PUB - DAY

KEVIN places the box of bullets down on the bar.

KEVIN
 You know how to work it?

NOELENE
 I'll figure it out.

KEVIN
 Want me to load it?

NOELENE
 No.

KEVIN
 Mind my asking?

NOELENE
 Yes.

KEVIN
 Can I expect to see it back again?

NOELENE
 We'll see.

NOELENE swipes the bullets off the bar and sweeps out of the pub.

KEVIN returns his attention to the TV screen.

The pub's patrons have gathered around the small TV screen to witness the final minutes of the match.

KEVIN
 Some of you duck down would ya - I
 can't see a thing.

EXT: NOELENE'S BACKYARD - WATERTANK - DAY

NOELENE climbs the ladder to the top of the water tank - the shot-gun wedged under one arm.

When she gets to the top she loses her balance and the gun falls to the ground.

NOELENE

Blast!

NOELENE climbs back down, picks up the gun and ascends the ladder again.

At the top NOELENE looks down at ROBERT within.

NOELENE (cont'd)

You talk too much.

She points the gun over the edge of the tank - she has trouble maintaining her balance.

ROBERT

Please, don't do this.

NOELENE tries to take aim but it proves too awkward from the top rung of the ladder.

ROBERT (cont'd)

Please, I'm begging you - I won't say anything...

NOELENE

Shut-up a minute would you.

NOELENE tries to take aim again but wobbles on the ladder and nearly loses her balance.

NOELENE (cont'd)

God damn it.

NOELENE grabs onto the edge of the tank and cuts herself on the sharp tin edge - the gun falls to the ground again.

NOELENE (cont'd)

Bloody hell.

NOELENE descends the ladder once more.

INT: CRATER LAKE PUB - DAY

EVE pokes her head around the office door.

KEVIN remains stationed behind the bar but his attention is focused on the game.

EVE looks over at the pub's entrance a few metres away - the double doors are latched open allowing the afternoon sunlight to stream in.

EVE watches KEVIN'S back intently as she creeps out of the office and past the bar.

EVE glances once more at the pack of locals before dropping slowly into a crawl and creeping across the carpet toward the open doors.

A local man turns his head in EVE'S direction - she freezes.

LOCAL MAN

Oy kev. Bring us a refill.

KEVIN

No drinks till the games ended.

LOCAL MAN

That's no way to run a business...

KEVIN

I'm bloody watching it too aren't I? Come over and pour it yourself if you can't wait five minutes.

EVE watches in terror as the man takes a second to make up his mind.

Suddenly the room erupts into cheers of delight. On the TV screen an angry brawl has broken out among the football players.

The local man returns his attention to the screen and joins the other patrons in cheering on the fight.

EVE crawls madly for the doors.

EXT: NOELENE'S HOUSE - WATERTANK - DAY

NOELENE retrieves the gun from off the ground. She dusts it off and practices aiming with one hand.

ROBERT
 (from inside tank)
 Are you still there?

NOELENE
 I'm here.

ROBERT
 (from inside the tank)
 Noelene can't we work something
 out? There must be something I can
 do...

NOELENE
 You should never have come.
 What business was it of yours what
 the weather was like here?

NOELENE puts a hand on the bottom rung to resume climbing.

ROBERT
 Please. I can pay you. I've got
 money.

NOELENE
 I don't want your money.

ROBERT
 What then?

NOELENE
 You've got nothing I want.

EXT: NOELENE'S HOUSE - DAY

EVE heaves herself up onto NOELENE'S verandah.

NOELENE'S front door is propped open. EVE passes inside.

INT: NOELENE'S HOUSE - DAY

EVE walks through NOELENE'S house.

EVE
 Noelene? Noelene?

EVE opens a door into what appears to be NOELENE'S bedroom.

EVE (cont'd)
 Hello. Anybody home?

EVE walks past the bathroom.

EVE (cont'd)
Noelene, are you here?

EVE opens another door - she looks inside.

INT: NOELENE'S HOUSE - NURSERY - DAY

The room appears to be a baby's nursery. Painted in pale yellow there is a large bassinet in one corner and a recliner in another. A bookshelf filled with toys stands next to a baby's change-table.

EVE
My God...

EXT: NOELENE'S HOUSE - WATERTANK - DAY

NOELENE wraps her bleeding hand in her hankie.

She tucks the gun under her arm and begins climbing the watertank ladder again.

The fly-screen door slams.

EVE
I want to talk to you.

NOELENE
How in Christ's name did you get here?

EVE
I just saw your nursery.

NOELENE
Get out of here.

EVE
You're not taking it! You hear me!

NOELENE
Get back to the pub you naughty girl.

EVE
I want you to call off the town - I want to go home.

NOELENE
I've got a gun here.

EVE.
So? You won't shoot me...

ROBERT
(from within the tank)
Eve, is that you?

EVE.
Robert? Is that you?
What are you doing in there?

ROBERT
Baby are you OK? Are you alone?

EVE.
No, yes. I'm alone but I'm not
OK...

EVE moves toward the tank but NOELENE climbs back down to bar her way.

NOELENE
You need to go now Eve - he's fine,
he's happy in there.

EVE.
Robert you have no idea what I've
been through.

ROBERT
I'm sorry baby - I'm so, so
sorry...

NOELENE
Go back to the pub Eve.

EVE.
Robert they want to take the baby.

ROBERT
What? No!

NOELENE
Would both of you shut-up!
This has nothing to do with you
Robert.

ROBERT

This has everything to do with me!
Let her go! Please Noelene, let her
go...

EVE

Why are you in there?
(to Noelene)
Why is he in there? Let him out for
God's sake.

EVE is interrupted by the fly-screen door slamming.

KATH enters the back-yard carrying a packed hamper.

KATH

It's only me... I've got your
dinner here Darl... What on
earth?...

NOELENE

Get a hold of her would you?

EVE

Kath, she's got Robert in the tank -
we have to help him.

JOHN steps out into the yard.

JOHN

Where is everybody?

EVE

John please - Robert's trapped in
the tank...

JOHN

Is he?
How'd he get in there?

KATH

Don't ask questions John - help me
grab hold of her would you.

JOHN and KATH move in on EVE. EVE tries to dodge them.

ROBERT bangs against the side of the tank.

ROBERT

What's going on? Don't hurt her!
Don't you dare fucking touch her!

JOHN manages to grab hold of EVE - she struggles against him.

KATH helps JOHN restrain her.

EVE
Let me go - Robert they've got
me...

ROBERT continues banging.

ROBERT
Let her go - I swear to God I'll
kill you all!

EVE releases her bladder - the urine runs down her legs and puddles on the dry earth.

KATH
Stand back John, she's gone and wet
herself.

NOELENE
Get her out of here.

KATH and JOHN lead EVE away.

EVE
Robert they're keeping me at the
pub - please come get me.

ROBERT
I will, hang in there baby - I love
you.

EVE
I love you too honey.

Alone again, NOELENE scales the ladder once more.

ROBERT bangs against the inside of the tank - the ladder bounces with each bang.

NOELENE
Stop that! You're a bloody
nuisance.

ROBERT
Let her go - let us both go!

NOELENE hangs onto the ladder and continues climbing carefully - ROBERT continues thumping the tank.

At the top NOELENE looks down at ROBERT who is standing looking back at her.

ROBERT (cont'd)
Please Noelene - I'll get you
anything you want.

NOELENE
You already have.

NOELENE takes aim.

ROBERT throws his body against the tank wall in an effort to
upset the ladder.

NOELENE wedges the gun under her elbow and holds onto the
tank with her bandaged hand - causing the tin to cut in
deeper.

NOELENE (cont'd)
I wouldn't bother - it's like
shooting fish in a barrel.

NOELENE is startled by the sound of an almighty howl - she
turns in time to see TIM bounding toward the tank.

TIM
No! Not Robbo!

TIM reaches the tank and begins shaking the ladder.

NOELENE
Stop that! Stop it Tim!

TIM continues banging the ladder.

TIM
Don't hurt him! Don't hurt him!

NOELENE hits out at TIM with the butt of the gun. TIM cops
the beating but continues banging the ladder.

NOELENE loses her balance and falls to the ground - the gun
hits her on the head as she lands.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT: PUB'S OFFICE - DAY

EVE lies on the camp bed - she hears a loud cracking sound -
she rolls over and looks up at the ceiling.

EVE hears what sounds like stones being thrown on the roof.

The hits become more and more frequent until they are hammering on the pub roof.

The loud cracking sound is repeated followed by a flash of light that illuminates THE ROOM.

KEVIN'S voice yells from outside.

KEVIN
Marge get out here.

There is the sound of rumbling followed by a massive thunderclap

Another blinding flash of light illuminates EVE.

EVE listens to the hammering of rain falling on the pub's tin roof and on the ground outside.

EVE smiles as she listens to the rain.

EXT: CRATER LAKE MAINSTREET - DAY

EVE stands in the entrance of the pub.

Beyond the pub's awning the rain pelts down.

EVE watches the locals gathering in the middle of the road to enjoy the rain.

Beside EVE, TIM cowers the under the pub's awning - he has never seen rain before.

INT: NOELENE'S HOUSE - WATERTANK - DAY

ROBERT sits in the tank as the rain pelts down on him.

INT: NOELENE'S HOUSE - LOUNGE ROOM - DAY

NOELENE sits in a recliner with her arm in a sling and bruising on her face.

She rocks back and forth morosely listening to the rain bucket down outside.

EXT: CRATER LAKE MAINSTREET - DAY

The rain continues falling heavily.

Water streams in through the shop awnings which have rusted through after twenty years of dryness.

Water fills the blocked gutters along the mainstreet.

INT: PUB'S OFFICE - DAY

EVE lies on her bed listening to the rain.

EVE'S uneaten breakfast sits on the desk.

MARGE enters with EVE'S lunch tray. MARGE replaces the untouched breakfast tray with the lunch tray.

EVE
Why won't they let me go now?

MARGE looks to the doorway and shrugs.

MARGE
No idea pet.
Fancy some visitors?

KATH and PAT enter the room - pushing MARGE aside. JOHN hovers in the doorway.

KATH
It's only us... We've come to keep
you company...

KATH pulls the office chair up to EVE'S bed and sits in it. PAT rests on the edge of the desk.

EVE.
Where's Robert?

KATH
He's alright - safe and sound.

KATH turns to MARGE hovering in the doorway beside JOHN.

KATH (cont'd)
You can go now.

Both MARGE and JOHN make to go.

KATH (cont'd)
Not you John.

JOHN remains in the doorway. KATH turns back to EVE. She pulls EVE'S lunch tray toward her. KATH cuts a slice of meat onto a fork then holds the fork out to EVE.

KATH (cont'd)
You're going to eat this lovely
lunch, and you're not going to give
us any trouble, are you?

EVE.
I'm not eating until I see Robert.

KATH
Eat.

KATH wiggles the fork in the air. EVE ignores KATH and looks
at PAT.

EVE.
It's raining - the curse is over.

PAT
Appears so.

EVE.
Then you don't have to give her my
baby.

PAT
No, Noelene won't be getting any
babies.

KATH pushes the fork to EVE'S lips. EVE turns her head away.
KATH consumes the forkful herself.

KATH
You wouldn't have made much of a
mother...

EVE.
You have to let me go - I have to
get to a doctor.

KATH
You don't need a doctor to deliver
a baby - women have been doing it
since the dawn of time.

PAT
That's partly what we wanted to
talk to you about... Kath and I
have been planning for the future.
How is it?

KATH
Surprisingly, very good.

PAT takes the plate from KATH and samples some of EVE'S meal.

EVE.
What are you talking about?

KATH
I'm going to raise the child.

EVE.
No! No-way! Never!

PAT
(Talking through a
mouthful of meat)
You don't have much choice
sweetheart.
This is the only reason we have for
keeping you...
(Cutting up more meat)
See, after Kath's got her baby,
you're going to have one for me.
(Pat forks the meat into
his mouth)

EVE looks over to JOHN standing in the doorway - he smiles sheepishly at her.

KATH
Then after us, there's Julie and
The Brodys...

PAT
We've been asking round town and it
seems there's quite a demand.

EVE stares at them in shock.

EVE.
You can't be serious...

PAT
The town's been sterile a long time
Eve - you're our one shot at
renewal.

KATH
Just think how lucky you'll be to
be doing something that brings so
much joy to so many people...

EVE lets out a moan and smothers her face in her pillow.

INT: NOELENE'S HOUSE - WATERTANK - DAY

ROBERT sits on the floor of the tank - across from him water gushes out of the roof's down-pipe.

ROBERT watches the rainwater as it swirls around his ankles before draining out the hole in the tank's side.

ROBERT takes off his expensive leather shoe and bends it over. He wraps his shirt tightly around the folded shoe and wedges it into the hole.

EXT: CRATER LAKE MAINSTREET - DAY

The townsfolk congregate under the shop awnings of the mainstreet in an effort to avoid the rain.

There is much chattering among the locals as they gather in small groups.

Suddenly a voice calls out over the general hubbub and sound of falling rain.

JULIE

Here's the truck now.

The townsfolk turn to watch as SAM drives his truck up the mainstreet. The truck's tray is empty except for some old rope and a large, rusty tin drum.

SAM parks the truck in the middle of the street, barricading the road.

SAM hops down from the cab of the truck and wanders over to where KEVIN, RON and PETER are standing.

SAM.

She's pretty near full but I might have sloshed some on the trip over.

KEVIN

No worries.

(calling out across the street)

Hey Tim. Check the water level and top her up if she needs it... You can run the hose out from Ron's place.

RON

Hey, why use my water?

KEVIN

Shit Ron... You planning on saving
it up for a rainy day?

The men watch as TIM climbs up on the back of the tray and
checks inside the barrel.

TIM

It's fullled up.

KEVIN

How close to the top?

TIM sticks a finger into the barrel, he pulls it out and
points to where the water came up to.

SAM.

I reckon that's only about five
centimeters - geeze I'm a good
driver.

KEVIN

Alright, you can come back down
Tim.

(to Ron)

Looks like you just saved yourself
some water... You might want to
think about putting some buckets
out around the place... catch
yourself a little something
extra...

PETER

While you're at it, lay some down
in the garage too... She's coming
in a beauty - I never bothered to
seal it cause the holes were
letting in so much natural light...

EXT: CRATER LAKE MAIN-STREET - DAY

Further up the street PAT and JACK approach holding an old
jacket over their heads.

JULIE races across the street under her open umbrella - she
holds the umbrella over PAT and JACK keeping them dry.

PAT

You got one of these?... I turned
my place upside down trying to find
where I left mine.

JULIE

Actually, I've no idea who this belongs to... I found it in an old umbrella stand in the caf...

JACK

Hurry up, I want a front row possie...

As JULIE, PAT and JACK cross over the main-street, three small figures can be seen in the distance - walking in the centre of the road - headed towards them.

EXT: CRATER LAKE MAIN-STREET - DAY

MARGE stands with a handful of local ladies, including KATH and MRS BRODY.

MARGE is one of the first to notice the approach of the three figures.

MARGE

Here they come! They're coming!

MRS BRODY.

Which way? I can't see them - which direction are they coming from?

KATH takes hold of MRS BRODY'S shoulders and directs her attention to the three individuals walking down the street.

EXT: CRATER LAKE MAIN-STREET - DAY

The three figures: SERGEANT HODGES, CONSTABLE WESTLAKE and NOELENE walk down the centre of the main-street.

The two police officers each grip one of NOELENE'S arms - one of which is still in a sling. All three appear unconcerned by the rain falling down upon them.

NOELENE has a ghastly, vacant expression upon her face (her bruising has turned yellow-green).

As the three draw in upon the townsfolk the atmosphere becomes increasingly eerie.

The rain falls straight down from the grey sky as HODGES and WESTLAKE lead NOELENE past the locals to stand at the back of the truck.

INT: PUB'S OFFICE - DAY

EVE lies in bed staring at the wall and listening to the rain - it is suspiciously quite in the pub.

EVE rolls over and sits up. She listens out for any signs of life but hears nothing.

EVE slides off the bed and creeps over to the office door - she peeks out.

INT: CRATER LAKE PUB - DAY

The pub is dark and empty. Beyond the silent room EVE can see the light falling across the floor from the pub's open doorway.

Through the door EVE can see some of the gathered locals.

Curious, EVE slips out of the office.

INT: CRATER LAKE PUB - DAY

EVE crosses the pub to the front entrance - careful to remain unseen.

EVE hides against the side of the open door to watch the action taking place on the main-street.

EXT: CRATER LAKE MAIN-STREET - DAY

SERGEANT HODGES and CONSTABLE WESTLAKE climb up onto the back of the truck.

SAM and PETER hold onto NOELENE as they do so.

HODGES and WESTLAKE reach down and haul NOELENE up onto the truck with them.

The two men remain gripping onto NOELENE as they face the crowd of locals.

NOELENE looks haggard and scared.

SERGEANT HODGES addresses the crowd.

SERGEANT HODGES

Alright now, just as we agreed,
every one of you is going to pass
by the truck and touch Noelene...
That way everybody knows we all had
a hand in it... Sam, Tim, we'll
start with you...

SAM and TIM step up to the truck and both reach out to touch
NOELENE. NOELENE flinches upon their contact.

SERGEANT HODGES (cont'd)

Come on now... Form a line
everybody... I'll be watching to
make sure every one of you takes
their turn...

INT: CRATER LAKE PUB - DAY

From the pub's doorway, EVE watches the bizarre ritual taking
place out in the falling rain.

The line of townsfolk moves gradually past the truck.

Each local takes a moment to reach up and touch NOELENE. Some
of the smaller, elderly women have trouble reaching. SAM and
TIM assist them by lifting them up at the waist, so they too
can have their touch.

NOELENE appears to shrink visibly with each passing person's
touch of her body.

When JACK'S turn comes he slaps NOELENE across the side of
her head.

JACK

It's all over now - stupid bitch.

PAT drags JACK away and the procession continues.

EVE feels ill watching this grim parade, yet she is compelled
to watch.

EXT: CRATER LAKE MAIN-STREET - DAY

When the line of passing locals has finished and everyone has
returned to their original places, HODGES again addresses the
crowd.

SERGEANT HODGES

Does anyone want to say anything?

JACK

I've got something I'd like to say...

SERGEANT HODGES

Not counting you Jack... We've all heard you say your piece often enough...

KEVIN

Get on with it, we're getting soaked out here.

SERGEANT HODGES

(to Noelene)

Do you have anything to say?... After all you've put this town through...

NOELENE appears shell-shocked - too stunned to reply.

SERGEANT HODGES (cont'd)

Alright then, I'd like to remind everyone that what we're doing today is insuring ourselves against the future... So, if no-one wants to speak, then I'll move along with the proceedings... Constable Westlake, if you please...

The two officers drag NOELENE over to the tin drum.

NOELENE stands as still and unmovable as granite.

Suddenly NOELENE finds her voice and begins to scream.

The townsfolk are startled by NOELENE'S sudden piercing screams.

SERGEANT HODGES grabs hold of NOELENE'S head and thrusts her screaming face down into the water.

NOELENE struggles against the two officers. HODGES holds her head submerged and CONSTABLE WESTLAKE pins her body in an effort to restrain her.

INT: CRATER LAKE PUB - DAY

EVE turns her head away from the sight on the street - looking instead at the empty pub behind her.

EVE crosses the length of the pub to the back entrance.

EVE pushes the back door open.

EXT: BEHIND THE PUB - DAY

EVE stands in the courtyard area behind the pub - she is soon soaked by the pouring rain.

Resting along one of the side walls at the back of the pub are two rusty old bikes.

EVE takes the top bicycle and wheels it away.

EVE struggles to get on the bike, eventually managing to balance her bulk upon the precarious seat.

In great discomfort, EVE begins to ride the bike around the back of the pub and adjoining shops.

EXT: CRATER LAKE STREETS - DAY

EVE cuts a bizarre figure - a heavily pregnant woman riding a dinky old bike in the pouring rain.

EVE pedals as fast as she can.

EVE cycles down a dirt road before reaching the main street intersection.

EVE peers down main street - in the distance she can see the town gathered around the truck - on top of which she can see HODGES and WESTLAKE holding NOELENE'S head in the barrel.

EVE puts her head down and cycles frantically across main street.

EXT: NOELENE'S BACKYARD - WATERTANK - DAY

With some difficulty, EVE hops off the bike and drops it beside the tank.

EVE
Robert! Robert it's me! Are you
still in there?

EVE awkwardly manoeuvres her pregnant body up the ladder.

She reaches the top only to find the tank is near full with water.

EVE (cont'd)
Oh god no! Please no!

EVE peers into the watery depths trying to see if ROBERT'S body is still at the bottom.

EXT: CRATER LAKE MAIN STREET - DAY

ROBERT staggers onto the main street. He can see a crowd of people gathered in the distance.

ROBERT stumbles down the main street.

EXT: COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

EVE struggles to ride toward the road headed out of town.

She is greatly distressed.

EVE rides blindly across the main street before cutting across open paddocks.

EXT: CRATER LAKE MAIN STREET - DAY

Standing amongst the crowd of locals, KATH spots EVE in the distance riding a bike across the street - she gives JOHN a nudge.

EXT: OPEN PADDOCKS - DAY

EVE rides over a rabbit hole and the bike jerks violently, nearly causing her to fall. EVE manages to maintain her balance and continue riding.

EVE gives an almighty groan - a look of intense pain crosses her face. She has begun to go into labour.

EVE tries to cycle on despite the pain.

EVE approaches the road.

EVE experiences another contraction and cries out with pain. The spasm causes her to lose her balance and fall from the bike.

EVE sits on the ground - hurting from both her labour pains and the fall.

EVE attempts to stand by rolling onto all fours and hefting herself up from there. Once standing EVE has great difficulty in bending down to pick up the bike.

EVE manages to raise the bike off the ground but finds herself in too much pain to get back on again.

EVE tosses the bike aside and begins to walk toward the road.

INT: CRATER LAKE PUB - DAY

ROBERT walks through the pub looking for EVE.

ROBERT
Eve? Eve? Are you here?
Eve where are you?

He walks upstairs looking into rooms.

ROBERT (cont'd)
Eve? Eve?

ROBERT returns downstairs. He notices the office behind the bar.

ROBERT looks into the office and sees EVE'S bags sitting on the desk.

ROBERT storms out of the office. He looks around him before crossing to the wall of memorabilia and taking down KEVIN'S shotgun.

EXT: CRATER LAKE MAIN STREET - DAY

The whole town has their eyes glued to the back of the truck on which HODGES and WESTLAKE stand.

HODGES pulls NOELENE'S head out of the barrel of water - she is obviously dead.

HODGES
That looks to have done the trick.

The sound of a shotgun being fired rings out.

The locals all turn to see ROBERT standing in front of the pub with the gun raised in the air.

ROBERT
Where is she? Where the fuck is she?

The town is too surprised to speak.

ROBERT (cont'd)
What have you done with her?

ROBERT spots SAM standing by the truck. He points the gun at SAM'S head and moves toward him - various townsfolk step aside to let him through.

ROBERT (cont'd)
You, tell me where she is.

ROBERT stands beside SAM with the gun pressed to his head.

SAM.
I don't know mate - she's at the pub... She should be in that room behind the bar...

ROBERT
She's not there.

SAM.
Then I don't know, honest, that's the last place I saw her...

ROBERT, still holding the gun to SAM'S head looks at the crowd.

ROBERT
Someone better tell me where my wife is.

The locals all stare at ROBERT - dumbstruck.

ROBERT (cont'd)
Who's truck is this?

SAM.
Mine.

ROBERT
Give me the keys.

SAM.
I'll drive it for ya.

ROBERT
Give me the fucking keys - don't you think you've pissed me off enough already?

SAM.
They're already in there.

Standing on the back of the truck, SERGEANT HODGES kicks ROBERT in the head.

ROBERT spins round and fires, blowing off half of SERGEANT HODGES' face.

Everyone stares at HODGES who stares back at them in shock.

Suddenly HODGES collapses on top of NOELENE'S corpse.

ROBERT stands stunned.

ROBERT
I didn't mean to do that.

SAM pushes the shotgun barrel away from his head.

SAM.
That was number two.

ROBERT
It just went off...

KEVIN
This bloke's seen quite a bit today
I reckon.

The locals continue staring ROBERT.

KEVIN (cont'd)
Jesus, do ya need me to draw you a
fucking map?

The locals begin to press in on ROBERT.

ROBERT attempts to climb into the truck but SAM pulls him back.

SAM.
Not today mate.

The townsfolk move in on ROBERT and proceed to tear him apart.

EXT: COUNTRY ROADSIDE - DAY

EVE approaches the road. She breaths deeply and tries to quicken her pace.

EVE experiences another contraction that brings her to her knees. She waits for it to pass before rising and moving on.

EVE staggers along the side of the road away from the township.

EVE passes under the 'Welcome to Crater Lake' sign and the water level sign.

Suddenly EVE is overcome by a contraction. She sinks to the ground.

EVE rests her back against a reflector post.

The recent downpour has turned the dusty roadside into sodden mud, as a consequence, the post has come unstuck from its foundations. The post gives way under EVE'S weight, sending her sprawling on her back.

EVE.
Jesus Christ!

EVE heaves herself back into a sitting position - she breathes heavily.

EXT: COUNTRY ROADSIDE - DAY

In the distance two headlights appear through the rain - they are heading toward EVE from the direction of Crater Lake.

EVE looks up at the oncoming headlights.

As the car nears, EVE recognises it as being her car - there are two individuals sitting within.

EVE'S car pulls over to the side of the road. KATH and JOHN exit the vehicle.

EXT: COUNTRY ROADSIDE - DAY

EVE looks up at KATH and JOHN as they bear down upon her.

EVE.
I'm having the baby.

KATH
That's right... Come on now Eve...
We'll take you back...

EVE.
I'm having it now you idiot!... I'm
in labour...

KATH looks at JOHN in alarm.

EVE. (cont'd)
Are you going to help me here or
what?

KATH is visibly panicked.

KATH
That's my baby... We have to get
you back...

EVE.
Then help me up off the fucking
ground...

EVE reaches out a hand to KATH to help her up off the ground.

As KATH moves forward to take EVE'S hand, EVE grabs the
broken post from the ground beside her and swings at KATH'S
head.

The post contacts with KATH'S skull, making a hideous
cracking sound.

KATH cries out and falls backward.

EVE rolls onto her hands and knees and crawls to her feet -
she manages to retain a firm grasp of the post.

JOHN is stunned - he doesn't know whether to go to EVE or
KATH first.

EVE holds the post out in front of her - threatening JOHN
with it.

EVE. (cont'd)
Go tend to your bloody wife why
don't you...

JOHN looks at EVE then moves down to the ground to see to
KATH.

EXT: COUNTRY ROADSIDE - DAY

EVE staggers over to her car. Both the driver's and
passenger's side doors remain open - the engine is still
running.

EVE hefts herself into the driver's seat.

EVE tries to lean over to shut the passenger door but is unable to reach.

EVE.

Fuck it.

EVE returns to the steering wheel, she puts the gear-stick into drive and puts her foot down on the accelerator. The car jolts forward.

EVE veers off the gravel and onto the road.

Through the front windshield EVE can see that JOHN has risen to his feet. JOHN looks as though he might be intent on blocking EVE'S path.

Eve swerves in JOHN'S direction, clipping him with the passenger door, which slams shut on impact.

EVE

Thank-you John.

INT: EVE'S CAR - DAY

EVE drives on. She looks in her rearview mirror to see that JOHN has been knocked to the ground.

EVE puts her foot down on the accelerator.

Suddenly EVE is wracked by another painful contraction causing her to swerve off the road.

EVE cries out in agony. She rights the car and continues driving with one hand clutching her stomach.

EVE

(to her baby)

Not yet damn it!

You listening to me?

I've been through hell because of you...

You can just hang on until I'm ready...

No child of mine is going to be born on the side of the road - that might be OK for them but that's not how we do things.

Ahhhhh!

EVE speeds on down the highway.

INT: EVE'S CAR - DAY

The camera moves away from EVE and over her shoulder to a map resting on the backseat.

The camera focuses in on the map. It is a map of Victoria. In the top left hand corner someone has drawn a red circle around a tiny black dot. Beside the circle, some-one (obviously Eve) has scrawled 'crater lake'.

The camera lingers on the map for a moment before moving up to look out through the car's back windscreen.

From the back windscreen we see the straight road stretching out behind the car - the flat landscape passes quickly by as EVE speeds away from Crater Lake.

THE END