

MYSTERIUM

by Lyndall Blake
and Bryan Colley

Second Draft
September 1, 2007

Bryan Colley
10535 Jefferson St #301
Kansas City, MO 64114
816-941-3547
Jupiterkansas@gmail.com

Lyndall Blake
2844 Blue Ridge Blvd.
Kansas City MO 64129
816-836-1915
lyndall.blake@gmail.com

FADE IN.

A swirling mist engulfs shafts of colored light.

An old woman's hands play a piano, moving hypnotically over the keys.

THE MELODY IS HAUNTING, BEAUTIFUL, MOROSE.

Light shifts from blue to crimson as she plays.

The music continues over...

A white luxury sedan moving in SLOW MOTION

SPLINTERING through a wood fence.

ROCKETING,

PLUMMETING over a rocky cliff,

DESCENDING SLOWLY.

It rotates gracefully, racing downward,

HITTING THE ROCKY SHORE.

Metal bends, collapsing under the momentum, crushing itself into the earth.

The movement is hypnotic, like watching crash test.

Overlaid across the image...

The hands appear again at the piano.

The colored lights blend with the balletic movement of twisting metal.

BLUES, REDS, GREENS, YELLOWS mingle as

CHRISTOPHER HELM

sits at the wheel of the car.

HIS FACE

driven forward, smashing into the windshield.

Glass SHATTERS, millions of pieces drifting gently to the ground like snowflakes.

Colors reflect rainbows off the falling glass.

FLICKERING

GROWING

OVERPOWERING the image.

The hands reappear - frantically playing the piano. The faster the music, the slower the movement.

Flames erupt, filling the screen.

A 12 year-old girl,

AMY HELM,

rises up in the back seat of the car, slow motion flames dance around her.

She tries to pull herself free, but her legs are trapped in the wreckage.

The flames threaten.

She SCREAMS just as...

A WAVE

of ocean water envelopes the car, dousing the flames.

Water swirls around Amy, engulfing the colors, filling the space.

ANOTHER WAVE and Amy is up to her neck.

She strains to get free, but to no avail. She looks up, out the rear window, into the sky.

A LIGHTHOUSE

stands proudly on the cliff's edge. It's glowing beacon pulses against the dark horizon.

The wreckage fades away.

The colors swirl into darkness.

Only the old woman's hands remain, playing the piece of music to its bleak conclusion.

The hands come to a rest - pausing only a moment before starting again...

THE SAME SONG.

INT. HOSPITAL PLAYROOM - DAY

KLANG! BAM! THUMP! KLANG!

Tiny hands pound a colorful keyboard.

A little girl in a hospital gown SQUEALS WITH GLEE.

A stern nurse swoops in and scoops her up, returning her to a group of children playing games.

AMY

stares blankly as they play - unamused, uninterested.

She sits in a wheelchair,

bandages on her legs.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

LAURA HELM - a dark, svelte, beautiful woman - watches Amy through a picture window. Worry clouds her classic features.

A YOUNG ASIAN DOCTOR fumbles through the clutter on his desk and picks up a thick chart.

DOCTOR

I can't help but feel that you're taking
Amy too soon.

Laura barely makes eye contact, continually staring into the playroom.

LAURA

Are the arrangements made for the
therapist?

DOCTOR

Yes, it's all arranged, but Mrs. Helm--

LAURA

How long before she can walk again?

DOCTOR

Difficult to say. Right now it depends on
if she opens up or not.

LAURA

She still hasn't said one word about what they were doing in New Hampshire?

DOCTOR

No, nothing.

Laura turns away from the window, unable to hold back her tears. She finds a box of tissue on the doctor's desk.

LAURA

She didn't flinch when I told her Christopher was dead. She didn't even care.

DOCTOR

Mrs. Helm, this type of trauma... Don't think she doesn't care about her father. The accident has left her withdrawn and vulnerable, possibly guilt ridden.

LAURA

What if she doesn't change?

The doctor gives her the standard, reassuring smile.

DOCTOR

I'm confident that she will. You have to be patient. It will take some time.

He watches her a moment, noticing her fidgeting - rubbing her wedding ring with her thumb, her mind elsewhere.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

I also suggest that you see your physician. There are several things she can prescribe that will help you through this ordeal...

Laura looks back at Amy as his words fade away.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Laura lays a hand on Amy's arm, looking over the girl's bruised and scratched body. Sorrow fills her eyes.

LAURA

Amy?

Amy slowly opens her eyes, turning to stare blankly at her mother.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Hi, baby. How are you feeling?

Amy stares back - no reaction.

LAURA (CONT'D)

You get to go home today...

Amy softens, a slim smile crossing her lips.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Won't it be nice to sleep in your own bed?

Amy nods gently.

INT. PENTHOUSE HALLWAY - DAY

Laura enters and sets shopping bags on a table.

Amy calls from the next room.

AMY

Mom! Come and watch me!

INT. LIVING ROOM

Laura steps in to find Amy with her PHYSICAL THERAPIST.

AMY

Watch what I can do!

Amy grabs hold of a walker and pulls herself to her feet. The therapist follows behind with the wheelchair.

Amy throws one leg out in front of the other, struggling to push herself forward.

LAURA

That's great, honey. You're doing it.

The determination on her face is agonizing as she continues to walk.

Amy moves closer and closer to Laura. Laura holds her arms out for her.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Almost there. Just a few more steps.

A few inches away - Amy lets go of the walker and grabs Laura around the waist. Laura hugs her.

LAURA (CONT'D)
That's it! Very good.

INT. ENTRYWAY

Laura shows the therapist to the door.

THERAPIST
Amy's doing a great job. She'll be back on her feet in no time.

AMY
Thank you for all your help.

THERAPIST
Don't mention it. I'll be back tomorrow. Make sure she keeps up with the weight exercises.

AMY
I will. Goodbye.

Laura closes the door.

INT. AMY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Laura wheels Amy up to her bed and helps her in. She pulls the covers over her and strokes her hair.

LAURA
Goodnight, sweetheart.

AMY
I want Flunkey.

LAURA
Flunkey? Okay.

Laura goes to the shelf where Amy's toys are neatly arranged. There's a gap where one is missing. Laura glances around, scanning the room.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Where is it?

Laura looks under the bed, in the closet.

LAURA (CONT'D)
I don't see it.

AMY
I want Flunkey.

LAURA
He's not here.

Amy snaps at her sharply.

AMY
I want Flunkey!

Laura pauses, shocked at Amy's sudden anger.

She pulls a stuffed frog off the shelf and hands it to her.

LAURA
Here, take Froggy instead.

AMY
I don't want Froggy!

Amy flings the frog across the room, knocking the toys from the shelf.

INT. LAWYER'S OFFICE - DAY

FIVE YOUNG LAWYERS surround a mahogany table, dressed in the blackest black.

They circle around LAURA, shouting questions and accusations in a UNANIMOUS CACOPHONY.

HERBERT MUFLIN, a Jewish lawyer, sits next to Laura nervously shuffling through a stack of papers.

He argues with the lawyers - defensive, pummeled.

MUFLIN
You have to understand our position...
Mr. Helm fully intended to honor his
creditors... We're still waiting on the
insurance claim...

Laura is zoned out - her face full of anger and tension.

She fidgets with her ring.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Muflin chases Laura down the hall clutching a ream of disheveled documents.

MUFLIN

I'm sorry, Mrs. Helm. This has happened so quickly... so very quickly.

LAURA

How much do I owe?

MUFLIN

Everything, Mrs. Helm.

LAURA

Everything?

MUFLIN

This means bankruptcy.

LAURA

Even with the insurance?

MUFLIN

That will barely cover the fees.

LAURA

I don't understand how things could have gotten this far.

MUFLIN

Your husband was deep over his head. It was only a matter of time.

LAURA

He never told me there was a problem.

MUFLIN

Well... that's most unfortunate, but the facts are hard.

He follows her into an elevator.

The doors close and Muflin drops his papers while pushing the button. He scrambles on the floor picking them up.

LAURA

So what do I do now?

MUFLIN

We'll need to itemize your estate and go through everything one piece at a time.

He scoops up the papers in his arms, and looks Laura in the eye.

MUFLIN (CONT'D)

You'll have to sell everything.

INT. PENTHOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Muflin closes a folder and sets it atop a tall stack on the desk. A mess of papers are scattered about.

MUFLIN

Well, that takes care of the New York and Florida properties and most of your other personal holdings as well...

He looks at Laura. She's staring out the window at the glittering skyline of New York, her eyes red and weary. She seems a million miles away.

MUFLIN (CONT'D)

Look, we can finish the rest of this tomorrow.

LAURA

No, let's get it over with.

MUFLIN

Alright.

He opens up a new screen on his laptop.

Laura strokes Amy's hair as she sleeps in her lap.

LAURA

Amy loves to sit here and watch the city.

MUFLIN

I'm sorry you can't keep the view.

LAURA

Where will I live?

MUFLIN

Perhaps there's some piece of real estate we can hang onto. Let me see what's left.

He grabs the mouse and starts clicking.

LAURA

I think we've gone through everything.

He pulls up a new screen and scans the figures.

MUFLIN

There's still your house in Exeter.

LAURA

Exeter?

MUFLIN

Yes, Exeter, New Hampshire.

Laura slides out from under Amy and heads for the desk.

LAURA

We don't own any property in New Hampshire.

Herbert shuffles through the stack and digs out a folder.

MUFLIN

That's the location. The deed, all the papers are here....

LAURA

New Hampshire?

MUFLIN

...fifteen acres, twenty thousand square feet, eight bedrooms. Impressive.

She scans the folder.

LAURA

Christopher never told me about this?

MUFLIN

Perhaps it had something to do with his work?

There's a long, strained silence. Laura's eyes blaze with betrayal.

Herbert watches her, discomfort overtaking him.

LAURA

Can I keep this file?

MUFLIN

Of course.

Laura carries the file to the couch - confused, perplexed.

Muflin approaches her cautiously.

MUFLIN (CONT'D)

Mrs. Helm, sometimes it's best for the deceased to keep their secrets.

LAURA

Secrets?

MUFLIN

We all have secrets. Some small, some not so small, but if your husband never told you... you may be better off not knowing.

LAURA

What are you suggesting?

MUFLIN

It's probably nothing, but I've been doing this for years, and sometimes things turn up... affairs and such.

Laura snaps back at him.

LAURA

No, Christopher wouldn't do anything like that. He couldn't.

MUFLIN

I'm sorry, I just... I'm sorry.

INT. AMY'S PENTHOUSE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Laura slips into the darkened room illuminated by a television. Amy sits numbly watching cartoons.

Laura looks at the night stand -

Amy's pills lay untouched.

She offers them to Amy with a glass of water.

LAURA

Amy? You've got to remember to take your medication.

Amy drinks just enough to down the medicine.

As she hands the glass back, Laura gently takes her hand.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Honey? I want you to tell me about that night...

Amy stiffens. She tries to pull away, but Laura insists.

LAURA (CONT'D)

...I need to know what your father was doing?

Amy jerks her hand away

THE GLASS FLIES

flinging water everywhere - all over Laura.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Amy!

Amy shoots Laura a hateful look and turns away.

INT. PENTHOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Laura sits down with a glass of wine.

She opens a prescription bottle, takes out two pills, and downs them with her wine.

She picks up Christopher's portrait from the end table and stares at it, wiping away her tears.

INT. PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

IN THE STUDY

Laura's hands rummage through drawers filled with papers. She rips open an unmarked envelope holding a single key.

IN THE CLOSET

She searches jacket pockets, quickly producing a metal ring with two keys on it.

IN THE BEDROOM

Laura MUMBLES TO HERSELF as she pulls open drawer after drawer, digging through her Christopher's things.

She opens an ornate wooden box, rummaging through mementos, trinkets and coins. At the bottom - three more keys.

A half-dozen keys lie in her open hand.

IN THE KITCHEN

CHING! The keys go tumbling into a plastic bowl. Laura SNAPS on the lid.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Laura's black Mercedes races along the highway.

INT. MERCEDES

Laura checks the car's built-in GPS, its glow gives her face a ghostly pallor. The map indicates an exit ahead.

Through the windshield, a looming sign reads:

EXETER.

Laura checks the clock. She pops a few more pills from her prescription bottle, gulps some water, and heads off down the road.

EXT. MANSION GROUNDS

Laura slows as she passes through the ruins of a stone gate. Ivy smothers crumbling walls that stretch in both directions. Neglected lawns are well on their way to devouring the winding drive.

She rounds a line of trees and stops. At the top of the hill lies the estate, shrouded in murky darkness.

Laura leans forward, peering through the windshield.

Clouds pass, spilling light, revealing a massive stone mansion. Laura SUCKS IN HER BREATH at the sight.

The architecture is bizarre - Picasso meets the Middle Ages. Strikingly modern, gleaming, reflecting moonlight in its black stone surface. An angular, windowless, post-modern castle curving around the hill.

Out of the center rises a

MASSIVE TOWER

piercing the sky.

Laura is overwhelmed.

She takes a deep breath and drives on.

EXT. MANSION

With her bowl of keys in hand, Laura stands in the drive, staring up at the looming structure. A moment's hesitation, and she moves towards door.

Something follows her in the inky blackness of the marble walls -

her own reflection,

a pale, distorted spectre staring back at her.

She stares at it a moment, mustering courage, and approaches the door.

The aberration swells, seeming to leap at her from the mirror-like door. Her reflection becomes angular, menacing.

The door is etched with an ornate design - lightning bolts and musical notes radiate out from a triangular shape in the center.

In the center of the triangle is a large 'M'.

Another deep breath and Laura begins trying keys.

First key. No luck.

The second. The same.

The third and fourth follow suit, then on the fifth, tumblers fall into place and

THE DOOR CREAKS OPEN.

INT. MANSION ENTRYWAY

Laura steps inside. The air is still, heavy.

Wielding a small flashlight, she looks around -

cobwebs, dust layered inches thick, furniture covered with white tarpaulins.

Her FOOTSTEPS echo through the hollow house, strangely amplified by the stillness.

She moves into the center of the hall - the interior is narrow and curves away in both directions.

The window before her offers a striking view of the tower.

The sides of the tower are the same gleaming black stone. There are no markings or ornaments all the way up.

The top is a glass enclosure with colored windows. The inside is dark.

Laura stares at the tower, strangely drawn to it.

She moves cautiously to her left and opens the door to the first room. Peering inside, she finds more covered furniture, dust, emptiness.

Back in the hall she stops, observing. All the rooms are on the outside wall.

The inside wall is nearly all glass - huge windows circling a stone courtyard. At its center lies the tower, disconnected from the rest of the structure.

She walks up to a window, running her fingers over the glass. It is colored a slight yellow.

On to the next - green, the next a pale blue.

Stepping away, she looks down the hall. As far as she can see, each window a different color.

The key slips from her hand and hits the floor.

CHING!

THE METALLIC SOUND REVERBERATES

throughout the house, slowly dying away.

Laura leans down to retrieve the key and stops dead.

THE SOUND BEGINS TO GROW,

coming back to her, rolling down the main staircase, but now layered, melodic, different.

She picks up the key and stands, holding her breath as the ringing continues, like the persistent din of a tuning fork.

Before it fades away, there is a CLANGING from upstairs.

She looks up the ornate staircase, startled but determined.

LAURA

Hello?

Her voice fills the room - booming and echoing.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Is anyone here?

The CLANGING is heard again.

She climbs the stairs as it continues intermittently.

The second floor is a reverse of the first - the hall is on the outside wall, the rooms on the inside.

She follows the sounds to a narrow door and listens through.

CLANG. CLUNG. CLINK.

Like pots and pans being sorted.

She opens the door to find a narrow, angular passage. She follows it, zig-zagging until she reaches an open perch.

The perch overlooks a vertical chamber that descends down to the first floor.

ENORMOUS STEEL PIPES hang from the ceiling, the largest reaching all the way to the bottom.

Laura's hair is rustled as a breeze flutters in from vents around the perch. The vents open and close.

The pipes sway gently back and forth, bumping each other and letting out an enormous CLANG, filling the house with sound.

A GIANT WIND CHIME.

A flickering streak of emerald green LIGHT flashes in her eyes.

Laura shields her eyes with her hand, looking up at the tower.

The narrow beam of light emanates from the multi-windowed room at the top.

The beam begins TO PULSE

TO THROB

TO GROW.

The light changes, shifts and darkens to crimson red. Sanguine hues paint the walls.

The room seems to swell.

THE CHIME BEGINS TO SWAY ON ITS OWN

KLANGING OUT A DARK DISCORD

LOUDER AND LOUDER

SHAKING WILDLY.

Laura covers her ears, deafened, trying to shake it off. She stumbles down the crooked hall, bouncing off the walls.

INT. MANSION - DAY

The horrid chime-noise follows as Laura races down the stairs, moving along the inside wall.

The light pours through the downstairs windows, creating a patchwork of colors on the tile floor. It follows Laura as she races to the colored glass panels.

WINDOW AFTER WINDOW

NO DOOR

She stops to catch her breath, leaning against the glass, staring up at the monolith.

The light swings to her, finding her panic-stricken face.

She races on, hands pressing on glass, desperately seeking an outlet. The hall swells, blurs, loses its clarity.

Suddenly it's there - a small door, miniature of the entry door.

IT SWINGS OPEN.

EXT. COURTYARD - DAY

Laura hurries out, then slows... stops.

The courtyard is hushed.

The tower now dark.

The chime silent.

In the woods beyond the house, a NIGHT BIRD SINGS PEACEFULLY.

Her breath still coming in short gasps, Laura wipes the sweat from her brow. She then crosses to the tower and

CIRCLES IT,

running a hand along the black stone, moving round and round.

Nothing. Not a door. Not a window.

She SIGHS, resting her head against the cold stone.

Something catches her eye. Something on a lone, marble bench at the back of the courtyard -

A STUFFED TOY - a flying monkey.

She picks it up, horror in her eyes.

INT. SHADOWY ROOM - NIGHT

HANDS caress the piano keyboard, cautiously beginning the same melody as before.

Colors build, filling the air with shifting hues.

The hands stop, one straightening the elaborate, lace cuff partially covering the other.

They move back to the keys and they begin again, playing with increasing confidence.

The song is beautiful, filling the large, dark room,
haunting every corner.

A YOUNG BOY, silhouetted in the window, holds a red ball
at his side. He watches the woman's back as she leans
over the keyboard, swaying with the melody.

Her long, lace-covered white dress GLOWS
in the dancing lights.

The boy lets the ball slip.

WHAP! It hits the floor, bouncing away.

WHAP! WHAP! WHAP!

The woman SLAMS the keys,

JAGGED DISCORD

replaces beauty.

The boy GASPS as the room shatters in shards of RED
LIGHT.

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT

Laura sits in the car, holding the stuffed toy tightly to
her chest. She leans forward, looking up at the mansion,
now silent and dark.

Her eyes float up to the tower - fixed there.

She sets the stuffed toy on the seat, her hand brushing
the prescription bottle. She picks it up and reads:

ONE TABLET EVERY 12 HOURS.

Laura rolls her eyes, shakes her head in disgust, then
tosses the bottle into the console.

She starts the engine and pulls away.

INT. AMY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Amy lies in bed running her fingers across a series of
black and white lines she has drawn on a sheet of paper.

Laura sets her bag in a chair and sits down next to Amy.

LAURA
Amy, honey. I need to talk to you.

Amy glances up - a little apprehensive.

AMY
What is it?

Laura pulls the flying monkey from her bag.

LAURA
I found Flunkey.

Amy goes back to her paper, not happy to see the doll.

LAURA (CONT'D)
You knew where it was, didn't you?

AMY
Give it to me.

Laura hangs onto it, tears welling in her eyes.

LAURA
Do you want to tell me about that house?

Amy rolls over and hides her face in her pillow.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Look at me when I'm talking. Look at me!

Amy reluctantly looks back, rolling her eyes.

LAURA (CONT'D)
If you don't tell me, I'm going to have
to find out somehow. You know that, don't
you?

Laura waits as Amy glares steadfast.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Well?

Amy sits there.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Fine.

Laura puts the monkey back in her bag and carries it out
of the room.

AMY
I want Flunkey!

INT. PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Laura opens the folder for the Exeter house.

She stares at a fading photograph of the house, her eyes transfixed on the tower.

EXT. PENTHOUSE BALCONY

Laura steps out on the balcony with a glass of wine.

She steps over to the railing and leans against it, looking over at the blinking lights below.

The flashing lights illuminate her face as she remains contemplative.

There is a TINKLING sound behind her.

She looks up at a small

ORNATE WIND CHIME

that hangs over the balcony. She looks at it curiously, then walks up and examines it closely.

The chimes are made of glass. The center weight is a small metal circle with

THE LETTER 'M'

cut into it - just like the ornamentation on the door.

INT. EXETER MANSION - DAY

Herbert Muflin follows Laura through the house, dropping and retrieving papers as he goes.

MUFLIN

I just need you to sign these papers and you're all taken care of.

Movers and cleaners scurry about the main hall - sweeping, polishing, unpacking boxes, bringing in furniture.

MUFLIN (CONT'D)

You'll have plenty left to live comfortably on. Nothing extravagant of course, but it could have been worse.

Laura leans against a window, staring into the inner courtyard where

A WORKER

moves about examining the tower base. After a moment, he steps up to the window and shrugs.

Laura moves down the hall to the courtyard door and Muflin follows.

The worker ducks as he comes through.

WORKER

Search me, lady.

LAURA

You couldn't find it?

WORKER

There's no way up there. That stonework is seamless - smooth as a baby's butt.

Laura looks up at the tower.

LAURA

Well what do you think it is? I mean, it looks like a lighthouse.

WORKER

What would you need a lighthouse for around here? This place is ten miles from the ocean.

LAURA

Thank you for looking anyway.

The worker grabs his tool belt and leaves, parting with...

WORKER

If you ask me, this whole house is just weird.

Laura looks up at the mysterious tower.

MUFLIN

Mrs. Helm?

LAURA

Are you certain you don't know anything about Christopher and this house?

MUFLIN

No! Nothing!

LAURA

It's just that the other day you sounded like...

MUFLIN

I'm sorry about that. I was out of line. I jump to conclusions. But honestly I don't know anything.

Laura looks him over, wondering if she should believe him.

MUFLIN (CONT'D)

Your husband... he was all business. He never mentioned this place.

LAURA

I'm sorry. It's just all been very strange. Thank you for your help.

MUFLIN

You'll be happy here. Country air will do you good. You and Amy.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Laura waves goodbye to Muflin as he drives off. He's followed by a large moving truck.

INT. ENTRYWAY - DAY

Laura steps inside.

Amy sits in her wheelchair in the center of the room.

The house is still and quiet.

They look at each other. Laura smiles.

LAURA

Well, here we are.

EXT. COURTYARD - DAY

Amy wanders around the courtyard.

She picks up a rock from the ground leans her ear against the tower. She hits the rock against the black stone, listening to the HOLLOW ECHO.

INT. PERCH - DAY

Laura maneuvers down the crooked hall to the perch.

She looks over the railing at the long, metal tubes. They hang motionless.

She tries to reach out and touch one of the chimes, but it's just beyond her reach.

She pulls a pair of binoculars from their case and looks across the courtyard at the tower.

It's dark and empty. The glass panels are multi-colored, with more colored panels inside, creating a fractured mosaic that obscures everything within.

Laura lowers the binoculars, curious and dismayed.

INT. MUSIC ROOM - DAY

A shaft of light pierces the black room as the door slowly creaks open.

Amy wheels through the doorway and the door swings wide, letting the light in. She rolls in slowly - frightened of the darkness.

Canvas tarps cover everything like a hall of ghosts. Amy grabs the largest tarp and gives it a pull.

It slides away in a cloud of dust, revealing

A GIANT, ORNATE GRAND PIANO.

She lifts the lid, revealing a row of faded yellow ivory and ebony keys.

She stares at it a moment in awe, her fingers gently touching them.

LAURA

Amy?

Amy jumps, startled to see Laura silhouetted in the door.

LAURA (CONT'D)

What's that?

AMY

A piano.

Laura looks around the gloomy room.

LAURA

It's dark in here.

Laura flings open the heavy curtains.

Light floods into the space.

The sun is directly behind the tower, and sunlight shines through the glass precipice, breaking into colors and rainbows that sparkle around the music room.

Amy looks around in wonder and amazement.

AMY

Cool.

Amy turns her chair in circles, chasing patterns of light around the room.

SHE'S LAUGHING.

Laura smiles when she sees Amy enjoying herself.

AMY (CONT'D)

Push me!

Laura grabs the chair and wheels Amy around the room.

Amy laughs and sings a song.

The tune is familiar.

It's the same melody the old woman was playing.

AMY (CONT'D)

(singing)

I wish I could dwell in your soul as a beautiful dream at least for a single moment. I wish I could disturb the peace of your heart with a sudden passionate longing. To turn your charming head with a great creative idea, and to present you, my friend, with a whole world of delight.

The light patterns begin to fade as the sun settles behind the tower.

Laura looks up as a beam of light briefly illuminates

A LARGE PORTRAIT

on the wall.

A bearded man in Victorian garb sits in a chair, arms and legs crossed. He seems to stare back at her with intense, mysterious eyes.

Her smile fades slightly as she gazes at the painting.

The portrait quickly descends into darkness as the light dissipates, leaving them in a gloomy red glow.

LAURA

You like it here?

Amy nods.

AMY

Can this be my bedroom?

LAURA

No.

AMY

Why?

LAURA

Because the bedrooms are upstairs.

AMY

But I like this room.

LAURA

Well, maybe just until you can climb the stairs.

Amy rolls forward and grabs Laura around the waist.

AMY

Thank you.

Laura is a bit shocked at the sudden affection, but returns the hug.

LAURA

We'll have to clean up in here first!

AMY

Okay.

INT. MUSIC ROOM - NIGHT

Laura wrings out a mop and sets it aside.

She pulls off her gloves and wipes her brow - exhausted.

She steps around the piano and finds Amy asleep in her chair. She stares at her a moment - smiling, loving.

She covers Amy with a blanket and goes to the door.

She looks back before turning out the light, her eyes falling one more time on the portrait.

She hits the switch.

INT. LAURA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dressed for bed, she takes a box off the bare mattress and throws a heavy blanket across it.

She picks up a couple of pillows from the floor and tosses them on the bed. Her eye catches

THE PORTRAIT OF CHRISTOPHER

in the box. She takes it out and sits on the bed staring at it a moment, wiping the tears from her eyes.

She sets the portrait on the nightstand and climbs in bed.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Laura tosses in her sleep - lost in a dream.

FAINT COLORS

dance across her restless body.

MUSIC

floats through the air, swelling, waking her with a start. She sits up, cocks her head.

It's an odd melody, unsettling.

A flash of blue light illuminates the room, briefly etching black shadows on the walls.

Laura crosses to the window and looks up to the source -
THE TOWER.

Its windows pulse with a dull glow.

Laura follows the music into the hall.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY -NIGHT

Laura pauses, listening to the music. She looks one way, then the other. It seems to come from everywhere.

Laura races down the stairs, fighting panic.

LAURA

Amy?

THE MUSIC SWELLS, beckoning.

She quickens her pace, moving to where it is loudest--

INT. MUSIC ROOM

Laura scans the room. Amy's things are scattered about, but she's nowhere to be found.

Her eyes fall on the menacing portrait. The stranger's gaze seems to bear down on her - cold, aloof, knowing.

She notices something directly below the portrait -

AMY'S WHEELCHAIR

is lodged into a section of the mahogany wall.

A SECRET PASSAGEWAY

now sits open.

Laura approaches slowly, cautiously.

She peers inside, her eyes straining against the darkness. A set of narrow stairs leads down,

A dim light up ahead and

THE SOURCE OF THE MUSIC.

INT. SECRET PASSAGE

Laura winces as she pushes aside ancient cobwebs.

Shifting lights illuminate the narrow passage that ends at a spiral staircase.

The music is VERY LOUD now, spilling down the tower, engulfing her.

Laura places a shaking hand on the rail, then calls out once more in a FRIGHTENED WHISPER.

LAURA

Amy?

Again, nothing.

Mustering her courage, Laura makes her way up the staircase.

INT. TOWER

Laura peers over the top of the stairs, taking in the ornate room.

Amy sits at an odd-looking musical instrument like a cathedral organ - tall, angular, imposing. A curious machine designed for this curious house.

The girl's hands glide along the keys. She plays a haunting and complex tune, fluidly, with great ease.

A flashlight sits on the instrument.

Its light reflects off dozens of colored panes of glass and prisms that make up the room's walls.

The light's intensity is amplified in the reflections, flowing, filling even the darkest corners of the room with eerie luminescence.

Laura is surprised, then fearful.

LAURA

Amy?

Amy doesn't hear - immersed in the music.

Laura slowly approaches and places a hand on her daughter's shoulder.

Amy stops playing, whirls around.

AMY
Look what I found!

LAURA
Yes... yes, I see.

AMY
A secret passage! This house rocks!

Amy begins playing again, with less intensity.

Laura watches her daughter. She looks small, frail, and delicate now.

Laura sits down on the bench and watches as the Amy's hands move effortlessly across the keys.

LAURA
How did you learn to play?

Amy shrugs.

AMY
I just started.

LAURA
But you've never had lessons.

AMY
Is it alright if I play some more?

LAURA
It's the middle of the night.
You need to sleep.

AMY
Can I play tomorrow?

LAURA
We'll see.

Laura explores the room.

LAURA (CONT'D)
(almost to herself)
What in the world is this place?

The floors and ceiling are finished with elaborate, brightly-varnished wood.

The ceiling curves downward from the outside corners,

focusing at the center, at the instrument.

Laura moves around the room, then steps up to the wall. The night sky can be seen through multi-colored panes - muted, distorted.

Odd-shaped pieces of colored glass hang from the ceiling by thin wires.

Laura takes in the instrument.

There are two rows of keys, one over the other, with dozens of unmarked levers and switches surrounding them.

The triangular body is ornately carved with musical notes and markings.

Again, there are carefully etched stars, moons, planets.

In the center panel

is a single word carved in florid script:

MYSTERIUM.

Amy stops playing. She taps one key repeatedly, biting her lip, looking for the right words. Finally, she blurs it out.

AMY

Why did dad hate music?

The sudden change in topic takes Laura aback. She struggles to answer.

LAURA

I don't know, honey. He was raised to believe that music was bad.

AMY

How can music be bad?

LAURA

It's not, but some people think so.

AMY

Will he mind if I play?

Laura scans the room again, as if looking for Christopher's specter.

LAURA

Daddy's not here. Maybe it's a good time
to make some new rules.

A sudden wave of heat engulfs Laura. The room seems to
grow, the walls swell, moving in on her. The glass panes
move, light shifts.

Laura struggles to her feet, clutching the side of the
Mysterium for support. Then, as suddenly as it appeared,
the sensation is gone.

Laura moves toward the stairs.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Okay. This place is a little creepy.
Come on. Let's go to bed.

She grabs Amy and pulls her away from the instrument.

Amy limps, still favoring her right leg. Laura helps her
down the stairs.

Amy looks back, her eyes locked onto the Mysterium until
it's out of sight.

INT. TOWER - DAY

Amy plays fast and furious at the Mysterium keyboard.

INT. MANSION - KITCHEN

Laura unpacks dishes, silverware, pots, pans.

THE MUSIC from the tower is heard LOUD AND CLEAR.

IN THE BATHROOM

Laura cleans off the fixtures and arranges her toiletries
on the counter while

THE MUSIC CONTINUES - the same tune, only fainter.

IN THE BASEMENT

Laura puts away empty boxes.

Even in the depths of the house, the Mysterium can
faintly be heard -

THE SAME MELODY OVER AND OVER.

Laura stops and listens a moment, shaking her head.

INT. TOWER - DAY

Laura climbs into the tower with a lunch tray.

She sets it down on the Mysterium.

LAURA

Amy?

Amy continues playing, again oblivious.

Laura touches her arm to stop her.

Amy is startled, and glares sharply at her mother.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I brought you some lunch.

In an instant, the child returns, smiling.

AMY

Thank you.

She takes a bite of her sandwich and turns up her nose.

AMY (CONT'D)

Strawberry! I want grape. Can we get some?

LAURA

Just eat up.

AMY

This is yucky.

LAURA

Eat it.

Amy's hunger gets the best of her and she gives in.

Laura watches her a moment, then runs a hand along the keyboard.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Listen, I'm glad you like playing so much, but don't you think you could play something else. I'm getting pretty tired of hearing the same song all morning.

AMY

But I don't know anything else...

LAURA

What do you mean? You must know something else if you can play this well.

Amy shakes her head.

AMY

No, I just know this one.

LAURA

Well, we'll have to get you lessons then, won't we?

Amy shoves the rest of the sandwich in her mouth and goes back to playing - cheeks full, jelly on her chin.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Laura pulls an old phone book from a drawer.

She flips through the pages and finds the heading

MUSIC INSTRUCTION.

She turns to the next page and a

BUSINESS CARD

falls out onto the floor. She picks it up - reading

DR. BRADLEY TAMBORLANE, EXETER ACADEMY

ADVANCED KEYBOARD INSTRUCTION.

EXT. EXETER ACADEMY - DAY

The Mercedes drives along the graceful road snaking through the campus of Exeter Academy - A collection of stately, turn-of-the-century buildings.

Established, ivy-covered academia.

Amy absently stares out the window.

INT. HALLWAY/TAMBORLANE'S OFFICE - DAY

Laura leads Amy by the hand to an office door marked

DR. BRADLEY TAMBORLANE.

Piano music from inside fills the air - COMPLEX,
BROODING, SAD.

Laura KNOCKS. The music continues. She KNOCKS again.
Still nothing.

She looks at Amy, who answers with a shrug of the
shoulders. Laura smiles and shrugs back, then opens the
door. They step inside.

The room is dark and stuffy.

It's a throwback to the 19th century - hardwood paneling,
antique furniture, assorted period musical instruments -
not an electronic gadget to be found.

DR. TAMBORLANE sits at a grand piano near the window -
the only light source in the room. His conservative,
tailored suit and trimmed beard make him look older than
his years.

He notices them walk in, but he continues playing, his
body moving with the melody, face sombre, totally
immersed in the music.

Laura and Amy wait patiently in the center of the room,
almost reverent of the unexpected performance.

Laura glances along the wall of musical paraphernalia,
spotting the same portrait

of the odd, intense man that hangs in her music room -
his fierce, dark eyes seem to stare back at her.

Tamborlane watches her across the piano - his eyes
lingering on her face. He speaks in a deep, rich voice
with authority.

TAMBORLANE

Legend has it that when Scriabin played
this sonata, the walls would melt, and a
green fog would creep in around him. It
terrified him, and he never performed it
in public.

LAURA

Doesn't sound very spooky to me.

TAMBORLANE

Yes, well, it's a different world now,
isn't it?

He stops playing and his mood brightens. He's charming despite his intellectual airs.

TAMBORLANE (CONT'D)

To what do I owe this interruption?

LAURA

I'm looking for a piano teacher.

TAMBORLANE

I teach theory and composition. I don't give lessons.

LAURA

I'll make it worth your time.

He cocks an eyebrow. She interests him.

TAMBORLANE

Really? What training have you had?

LAURA

Not me. My daughter.

He turns to Amy, noticing her for the first time, suddenly disinterested.

TAMBORLANE

Yes, I see. There are many fine instructors in Exeter who teach children.

LAURA

I believe she may be some sort of prodigy. She's never touched an instrument, but yesterday she sat down and started playing... like she'd been playing for years. I can't explain it, but it seems she has some talent.

Tamborlane SIGHs, gets up from the piano and crosses the room. He kneels in front of Amy, looking deep into her eyes.

TAMBORLANE

A prodigy, you say? Very well, let's see what she can do.

He smiles and holds out his hand. Amy takes it and he leads her to the piano.

Amy sits and turns to her mother, her nervous eyes pleading. Laura nods encouragement.

Amy SIGHS, then looks down at the keys - hesitating.

She looks again to her mother, who urges her on.

Amy puts her fingers on the keys -

takes a deep breath -

and starts to play...

CLANG! CLANG! CLANG!

A HIDEOUS MISH-MASH.

Laura is instantly perplexed.

LAURA

No honey, like you did at home.

Amy stops - frowning.

She concentrates, and attacks the keyboard again.

CLANG! CLANG!

Nothing even closely resembling a melody.

Tamborlane's expression sours.

LAURA (CONT'D)

But she can play. She's just... nervous.

Tamborlane places his hand on Amy's, stopping her. He gently closes the lid on the piano keyboard and leads them to the door.

TAMBORLANE

Look, I'm certain she's a drawing room virtuoso, but I have work to do.

Laura wants to protest, but is at a loss for words. She glares fiercely at Amy.

The girl is red-faced and stares blankly at the floor.

INT. MERCEDES - DAY

Laura slams the car door and confronts Amy.

LAURA
What did you do that for?

AMY
What?

LAURA
You made me look foolish. Why didn't you
play like at home?

AMY
I tried. I just couldn't do it.

LAURA
You didn't try at all!

AMY
I did, really.

Amy is on the verge of tears.

LAURA
Well, it wasn't funny. You made a fool of
both of us!

She starts the car and drives off.

EXT. MANSION - DAY

The Mercedes pulls up and Amy leaps out while it's still
rolling, racing towards the house.

Laura climbs out of the car.

LAURA
Amy, wait!

Amy runs into the house with remarkable speed and
agility.

Laura chases after her.

INT. MUSIC ROOM

Laura enters just as Amy opens the passage door. A quick
glance back, and Amy dives inside.

INT. SECRET PASSAGE

Laura stops at the foot of the stairs.

POUNDING FOOTSTEPS rain down from above.

Laura grabs the railing, starting to climb as

MUSIC

fills the air.

Amy plays again - perfectly -

the same old tune.

Laura freezes on the stairs, SOBBING.

She regains her composure and listens -

fear and terror in her eyes.

She starts up the stairs -

ONE STEP

TWO

when the tower seems to close in on her.

DARKENING.

The colored hues deepening and swirling around her.

She swoons and

COLLAPSES

on the stairs.

Looking up at the tower, she SCREAMS.

LAURA

AMY!

INT. EXETER TITLE - DAY

Laura pushes through the glass doors and steps up to a middle-aged CLERK.

LAURA

Excuse me, I'm trying to find some information about the prior owners of my home.

INT. EXETER TITLE - BACKROOM

The clerk pulls a file from a cabinet.

CLERK

Here we go. Looks like the prior owner was Christopher Helm.

LAURA

Yes, I'm his wife.

CLERK

Before that, it belonged to a woman named Vera Ward.

Laura writes the name in her notepad.

LAURA

Vera Ward?

CLERK

That's all the owners I show here.

LAURA

Thank you.

CLERK

Actually, I've heard of this place. The Ward Mansion? Just north of town?

LAURA

Yes.

CLERK

If you want to know more, there's a local historian you might speak to. Comes in here all the time. Meredith Burgess. Knows all about Exeter.

INT. HISTORIAN'S HOME - DAY

The ancient house is stacked to the ceiling with papers, magazines, and books.

MEREDITH BURGESS

leads Laura down a narrow path from one room to the next. She's a kindly old lady, but completely scatter-brained.

MEREDITH

The Ward Mansion was originally some kind of church for this religious cult. Have you ever heard of theosophy?

LAURA

No.

Meredith starts sorting through boxes.

MEREDITH

I've got a whole file on them somewhere. There were quite a few of them in New Hampshire at one time.

Meredith digs deep into the pile, knocking over a tower of books.

MEREDITH (CONT'D)

Oh my!

Laura helps her stack them back up.

LAURA

Allow me.

MEREDITH

Had them all in order too.

LAURA

Really?

MEREDITH

Lord, I'll have to sort this room out sometime before I get buried in it.

Laura sets the last of the books on the stack, looking fruitlessly for some kind of order.

Meredith leads her to into a chaotic corner.

LAURA

What is theosophy?

MEREDITH

Supposedly the original religion from which all the world's religions came from. It's the basis of all this new age crap we have today. It was pretty big at the turn of the century. Led by Madame Blatsky... Blatsky...

She spots a book in the stack and pulls it out -

"Isis Unveiled"

MEREDITH (CONT'D)

Here's one of her books right here.
(reading)
Madame Blavatsky.

She hands the book to Laura. Laura thumbs through it as Meredith digs deeper into the pile next to the book.

MEREDITH (CONT'D)

I must be getting close.

LAURA

What's theosophy have to do with Vera Ward?

MEREDITH

If I remember right, there was some sort of ritual that went wrong. This was in the early thirties. Vera Ward was just a little girl then, of course. Local folks didn't like the idea of a little girl involved in cult rituals.

She pulls a photocopy of an old newspaper from a tottering stack that amazingly doesn't collapse.

MEREDITH (CONT'D)

Here it is.

She hands Laura the newspaper. The headline reads:

"POLICE BUST UP STRANGE CULT RITUAL"

"Young Girl Remains in Trance-like State"

MEREDITH (CONT'D)

It was a pretty big scandal back then, as you can imagine.

Laura stares at a photo of the newly built mansion.

The stark black and white image starts to tingle with color, until brilliant flashes fill the screen.

INT. MANSION - NIGHT

The hallway throbs with colored light.

BRIGHT FLASHES followed by blackness,

PULSING like a beating heart.

A line of strange figures -

CULTISTS -

move down the hall, adorned with scarlet robes, hoods obscuring their faces.

A YOUNG VERA WARD

is carried over their heads.

Her sheer, white gown seems to glow. Her eyes stare blankly upwards, to the tower. Her body is stiff, face frozen in a trance.

She's the same age as Amy.

INT. TOWER - NIGHT

Vera leans over the Mysterium's keyboard.

She plays with total abandon.

WILDLY -

PASSIONATELY -

THE MUSIC SWELLS.

The robed figures bow reverently and back away as the colors join together into a

BALL OF BLINDING, BRILLIANT WHITE LIGHT.

INT. ENTRYWAY

A SPLINTERING CRASH as

heavy boots smash open the front door.

THE POLICE CHIEF

and several uniformed cops charge in.

They follow a shaft of white light pouring from the music room doors.

INT. TOWER

THE MUSIC IS DEAFENING

as the police chief rushes into the room.

He covers his eyes, squinting through fingers at a huge ball of white light floating near the ceiling.

Police and cultists scuffle behind him -

nightclubs swinging -

brute force applied without scruple.

The police chief makes his way to the Mysterium.

His meaty hands grab Vera by the shoulders and he drags her off the bench,

her arms flailing in a desperate attempt to reach the keys again.

He stares at the Mysterium.

IT CONTINUES PLAYING,

as if powered by some invisible force.

The police chief reaches up into the ball of light.

Vera SCREAMS.

The light EXPLODES, enveloping them.

The room falls silent and dark.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Young Vera lies in bed, motionless.

TAP, TAP, TAP.

A white cane taps the floor as the police chief finds his way into the room.

Black sunglasses hide

BLIND EYES.

He locates the chair and sits.

He reaches out, searching, finally grasping Vera's hand.
Still no reaction from Vera.

INT. TOWER - DAY

Young hands move across the keys, playing
the same melody that Amy played.

Colored lights dance across her hands.

Slowly the hands morph -

aging into those of an ADULT WOMAN -

and again into the hands of an OLD WOMAN, still playing.

MEREDITH (V.O.)

She stayed in that tower the rest of her
life, playing the same piece of music
over and over, for years and years.
Completely obsessed.

The colored lights overwhelm the image, turning into...

Stained glass wind chimes hanging outside Meredith's
window, illuminated by the setting sun.

Colors ripple over Laura's horrified face.

LAURA

What happened to her?

Meredith shakes her head.

MEREDITH

She took her own life. Hung herself with
a piano wire. All she left was a piece of
sheet music with the words "it is
finished" scrawled across it.

Laura looks terrified as she pieces the story together.

MEREDITH (CONT'D)

That's the local legend, anyway. Always
have to take these things with a grain of
salt.

LAURA

Of course.

MEREDITH

Can't say I believe it myself. Never found any documentation to back it up. Stories like that just make my job harder, you know.

LAURA

Thank you.

MEREDITH

I hope that was helpful?

LAURA

Yes, it really explains a lot.

MEREDITH

If you really want to know more, you should talk to Doctor Tamborlane at the academy.

LAURA

Tamborlane?

MEREDITH

You know him?

LAURA

Yes, we just met.

MEREDITH

He knows far more about this than I do.

Laura seems perplexed at the connection - pausing to think it over, then shaking Meredith's hand.

LAURA

I will, thank you.

Laura turns to leave, but finds herself lost in the maze of books and papers. A moment's confusion.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, which way do I go?

Meredith chuckles and leads the way.

MEREDITH

The halls of knowledge keep getting narrower around here. Follow me.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE TAMBORLANE'S OFFICE - DAY

Laura knocks on the door. No answer.

She rips a piece of paper from her notepad and writes a message on it.

She slides it under his door.

INT. TOWER - NIGHT

Amy plays the Mysterium, thoroughly engrossed in the music.

Laura pokes her head up into the tower, wary of her surroundings. She searches the rafters and discovers a massive beam -

dark-stained wood

RIPPED OPEN

like a wound, gouged out long ago by a piano wire.

A FLASH -

VERA WARD'S BLOODY BODY

hangs from a wire.

The vision disappears in an instant. Laura is startled.

She approaches Amy at the keyboard.

ANOTHER FLASH!

An aging Vera Ward plays the Mysterium, the same tune that Amy plays.

Again the image is brief, returning to Amy, her hands in perfect sync with the vision.

Unsettled, Laura calls to Amy.

LAURA

Amy?

Amy keeps playing. Oblivious.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Amy, darling!

Amy doesn't seem to hear her.

LAURA (CONT'D)

AMY!

She stops and looks back -

GLARING

Her features hard, angry, intense.

Laura pulls away with an AUDIBLE GASP, but as she does, Amy is herself again - all smiles.

AMY

What is it?

LAURA

It's time for dinner.

AMY

Can you bring it up here?

LAURA

No, come on down.

AMY

But I want to keep playing.

LAURA

No. Come down and eat.

AMY

Why? You always bring it up here.

LAURA

Well not tonight. I want to eat downstairs in the dining room like normal people.

AMY

What difference does it make?

LAURA

Come down and eat now.

AMY

I'm not hungry.

LAURA

Then come down and sit with me.

AMY
I don't want to.

LAURA
I don't care.

Amy starts playing again.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Amy!

Amy ignores her.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Amy! Stop playing and come eat!

She keeps playing. Laura grabs her arm, pulls her away.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Downstairs now!

Amy screams hysterically.

AMY
I don't want to! You can't make me!
I want to play!

Unable to control her anger,

LAURA SLAPS HER.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Amy sits in front of a plate full of food, staring at Laura as she finishes the last bites of her meal.

AMY
Are you done?

Laura shakes her head, picking up her glass and finishing off the wine.

She sets the glass down, and Amy leaps up from the table. She runs for the music room.

LAURA
Amy!

Amy stops, keeping her back to Laura.

LAURA (CONT'D)

How about we stay down here tonight?
Let's... play or something.

Amy ignores her and heads for the music room. Laura leaps to her feet and races after her.

INT. MUSIC ROOM

Laura chases after Amy, grabbing her arm. Amy pulls away.

Laura jumps ahead of her and shoves the desk against the passageway, blocking it.

AMY

That won't stop me.

LAURA

Listen to you. You're obsessed.

AMY

I just want to go up there. Why won't you let me?

LAURA

Because of the way you're acting.

AMY

I hate you.

Amy grabs the desk and pulls it away from the door.

LAURA

Stop it!

Laura shoves it back.

Again Amy responds, pushing it into her mother with fearsome strength. Laura is knocked back.

Amy slides behind it and pries the door open.

Laura leans across the desk, grabbing Amy's collar.

She pulls.

Amy fights back.

HARDER AND HARDER until

R-I-P-P-P!

Amy's shirt tears and Laura falls back with a handful of cloth. Amy slides through the opening and disappears.

Laura collapses on the desk, SOBBING.

INT. AMY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Laura opens the door a crack. Amy lies curled up under the sheets, sound asleep.

The clock on the nightstand reads

3:30 A.M.

INT. BASEMENT

Laura pulls several boards from a stack of lumber.

INT. MUSIC ROOM

Laura opens a toolbox and removes a power screwdriver.

She takes a two by six board from the stack and lays it across the passage panel.

WHIR-R-R-R-R!

She buries a screw deep.

The metal twists into the wood, releasing an

ANGUISHED CREAK,

like it's screaming out in pain.

INT. ENTRYWAY - DAY

Laura opens the door and lets Tamborlane in.

LAURA

Thank you for coming, Doctor.

TAMBORLANE

I had no idea you lived at the Ward Mansion.

LAURA

Does that make a difference?

TAMBORLANE

Yes, I have some interest in the place.

She leads him toward the dining room.

LAURA

Vera Ward?

TAMBORLANE

Yes.

LAURA

What do you know about her?

INT. KITCHEN

Laura hands Tamborlane a cup of tea and sits down.

TAMBORLANE

It's nothing like what you've heard. She was a dedicated woman. Prolific beyond belief.

LAURA

You knew her?

TAMBORLANE

Well, no... I'm only familiar with her work.

LAURA

I'm told she just wrote the same piece of music over and over.

TAMBORLANE

To the untrained ear, perhaps. But there's infinite variety in the slightest variation. I believe she was on a quest.

LAURA

For what?

TAMBORLANE

Perfection. Pure understanding of the musical form. Something perhaps mystical - enlightenment.

LAURA

Maybe she was insane?

TAMBORLANE

Of course she was. Most great artists are, to varying degrees. I imagine the greatest among us are so far removed from normality that we have no way to recognize their brilliance - at least not while they're alive. Misunderstanding and persecution - that's Vera Ward's true story.

LAURA

Doctor, something's wrong with Amy.

TAMBORLANE

Really?

LAURA

It's like she's possessed or something.

Tamborlane cocks an eyebrow - does he know something, or does he think she's crazy?

LAURA (CONT'D)

Do you think the house could be haunted?

TAMBORLANE

Haunted? Yes, that's very likely. What makes you think so?

LAURA

It's just the way she's been acting, and this house is...

She struggles to say the next words...

LAURA (CONT'D)

Did you know my husband - Christopher Helm?

A PIERCING SCREAM

interrupts them from the next room.

Tamborlane drops his cup.

They rush into the...

MUSIC ROOM

as Amy leaps at the passage door

BARRICADED

by boards, crude but sturdy.

Amy pulls at them, HUFFS and PUFFS,

SCREECHING as Laura rushes into the room.

Tamborlane stops in the doorway.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Amy, get down.

Amy pulls and pulls.

LAURA (CONT'D)

You're not going up there again.

Amy whirls to face her.

Her features are twisted, feral.

AMY

You can't do this! You can't take it
away!

LAURA

Amy, stop it. NOW!

Amy jumps onto the boards, digging her fingers in under
the edge of one.

The cords in her neck pop, her face reddens.

She GRUNTS under the strain.

After an eternal moment,

POP!

The screw lets loose.

The board SNAPS IN TWO and

Amy goes flying, slamming hard onto the floor.

Like a leopard, she leaps back to her feet and attacks
another board with bloody hands.

Laura rushes up to her.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Stop it!

She grabs Amy by the shoulders and pulls. Amy struggles wildly.

LAURA (CONT'D)

You're tearing up the house.

Laura does her best, but Amy's almost her size. She manages to slip her arms around the girl's chest.

Amy writhes in her grip,

SCREECHING.

With all her might, Laura pulls her away from the wall.

AMY

Let me go!

Amy stomps down, smashing Laura's foot.

Laura crumbles in pain, letting go.

She recovers and grabs Amy by the nape of the neck.

Amy swipes, viciously clawing her mother's cheek.

Laura SHRIEKS.

She sways, loses her balance,

falls into a table, knocking it over.

A glass lamp SHATTERS on the floor.

Amy is back at the wall, tearing at the boards like a caged animal.

Laura sits up, stunned. She wipes the blood away from her cheek and stares at her unrecognizable daughter.

Amy pulls and pulls, but the other boards are more secure.

Exhausted, she falls on the floor, flailing her arms and kicking her feet

SCREAMING at the top of her lungs.

Laura screams back.

LAURA

AMY! STOP IT! STOP IT NOW!

A hand grabs her shoulder. Laura turns in surprise as

TAMBORLANE

pulls Laura away, raising a hand to stop her.

Amy's tantrum continues as Tamborlane takes a seat at the piano. He begins to play.

After a few notes, Amy starts to calm.

He plays on, reducing her to a

QUIET WHIMPER.

Laura looks at Tamborlane, amazed and thankful.

LAURA (CONT'D)

How did you do that?

He cocks an eyebrow, smiles, and keeps playing.

Amy pants on the floor, hair wild, cold sweat on her forehead, staring blankly, catatonic.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Multi-hued lights flicker here and there, drifting slowly through the house, illuminating the dark recesses.

EXT. TOWER

The setting sun sparkles through the tower, sending an array of subtle lights through the house.

INT. MUSIC ROOM

Red flashes across the portrait. Light falls on

AMY

asleep in the floor beneath the painting.

Her brow is painted with a thousand beads of sweat.

She tosses and turns,

MOANING.

INT. MANSION - DAY

A ball bounces against the wall.

WHAP! WHAP! WHAP!

The boy smacks it with keen precision.

THE MYSTERIUM plays from above, fast and furious,

DISTORTED

MANIC.

WHAP! WHAP! WHAP!

The boy catches the ball as the music turns to

VIOLENT DISCORD.

He listens, until the music

SUDDENLY STOPS.

He looks up toward the tower.

INT. LAURA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Laura writhes in her sleep - distressed by a nightmare.

Sheets of light drift across the room.

INT. TOWER - DAY

The boy's head peeks over the edge of the stairs.

The room is still and silent.

He looks at the Mysterium - no one is there.

He searches the room, a movement catching his eye.

VERA WARD HANGS FROM THE CEILING

suspended by a piano wire.

It cuts into her throat.

Blood runs down her tattered, white dress, dripping off her bare feet onto the floor.

The boy drops his ball.

It bounces down the stairs and plummets into the darkness below.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Laura wakes with a start, the light from the hallway streaming across her bed. She hears a faint voice.

AMY

Mommy?

She raises her head, dimly seeing Amy's silhouette in the doorway - dreamy, spooky.

AMY (CONT'D)

Mommy?

Laura bolts out of bed, awake and concerned.

LAURA

What is it, honey?

AMY

My stomach hurts.

INT. BATHROOM

Amy throws up in the toilet. Laura searches for a towel.

Laura waits for her to finish - grim determination in her eyes.

INT. AMY'S BEDROOM

Laura throws a suitcase on the floor.

She pulls open a drawer and starts throwing Amy's clothes into it.

AMY

What are you doing?

LAURA

We're getting out of this house.

AMY

But I don't want to go.

LAURA

Get some shoes on and grab your things.

EXT. DRIVEWAY

Laura tosses two suitcases in the trunk, slams it shut.

Amy sits in the backseat looking out the window.

INT. MERCEDES

Laura pulls out of the driveway.

Amy watches the house receded.

AMY

I don't want to leave. I want to go back.

LAURA

I'm sorry, honey.

Amy gets increasingly anxious.

AMY

I want to go back now! I don't feel good.

LAURA

No, we can't.

Amy clutches her stomach, an anguished pain on her face.

AMY

My stomach hurts, mommy! It really hurts.

She rolls in the back seat, screaming and crying.

Laura stops the car and reaches around to comfort her.

LAURA

I'll take you to get help, honey.

Amy screeches - pounding on the seat.

AMY

No! I want to go back home. Please!

Laura looks at her - is she faking? Is it real?

INT. AMY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Laura tucks Amy into her bed.

She holds up her daughter's head, offering a glass of water. Amy accepts, swallowing painfully.

Laura dips a washcloth in the water and dabs the sweat from Amy's forehead.

AMY

Remember when daddy got sick and you had to take care of him?

Laura nods and smiles - somewhat embarrassed.

LAURA

You remember that?

AMY

And the firemen had to come because you burned up the kitchen. That was scary.

Laura LAUGHS, happy to see some life in her child. She places a hand on Amy's forehead.

LAURA

I think you're getting better.

AMY

Mommy, can't I play the Mysterium? Just one more time?

Laura glances out the window... at the tower.

She looks back at Amy, fear and concern returning to her face.

INT. MUSIC ROOM - NIGHT

Laura tears down the barricade blocking the passageway,

UNSCREWING BOARD AFTER BOARD

from the wall.

INT. STAIRWELL

Laura carries Amy up the stairs to the tower.

INT. TOWER

Laura sets Amy down at the Mysterium.

The girl sways a little - still woozy.

Laura reaches for her, but Amy recovers, springing to life as her fingers come to rest on the keys.

She starts playing.

Amy visibly improves before Laura's eyes - her color slowly coming back, her life returning.

Laura is amazed. She looks at the keyboard, touching it, feeling the antique wood surface.

LAURA

What do you think about when you play?

AMY

I like the sounds, and the pretty colors.

LAURA

Do you ever think of dad?

AMY

Sometimes.

LAURA

Does he... speak to you?

AMY

No.

LAURA

Can you see him?

AMY

No.

Laura seems disappointed to hear this.

AMY (CONT'D)

Just that funny man.

LAURA

Who? Tamborlane?

AMY

No. The man in the picture.

LAURA
What picture?

INT. MUSIC ROOM

Laura stares at the portrait on the wall, looking deep into the menacing eyes.

INT. TAMBORLANE'S OFFICE - DAY

Laura walks in with determination.

Tamborlane looks up from his desk. He's about to speak but Laura walks past him, up to the portrait.

He watches as she studies the painting -

the same face that guards the passage to the tower.

LAURA
Who is that?

TAMBORLANE
Alexander Scriabin.

LAURA
And who is he?

TAMBORLANE
A Russian composer. Believe it or not, I'm one of the foremost authorities on his life and music - in North America anyway.

LAURA
There's a portrait of him at the house.

TAMBORLANE
Scriabin was fascinated with theosophy and mysticism. That tower looks like something he might have built for the Mysterium.

She turns to Tamborlane, desperate for answers.

LAURA
What exactly is the Mysterium?

TAMBORLANE

A mystical performance that would transcend mankind to the next level of consciousness - the next level of being. Much more than music - lights, sounds, dancing. A grandiose religious synthesis of all arts which would herald the birth of a new world - a world of peace, prosperity, and love. It was to take place in the Himalayas, with bells suspended from clouds, drawing people from all around the world, enlightening the masses.

LAURA

And did it?

TAMBORLANE

Well, it was never performed. He died during the Great War - long before he could finish it - before he really got started actually. But if he had, it would have surpassed the work of any other composer in history. Everyone would know Scriabin by name just like Tchaikovsky or Beethoven.

LAURA

You have to help my daughter.

TAMBORLANE

You'll have to do everything I ask of you - no matter what it is.

LAURA

What's wrong with her?

TAMBORLANE

It's nothing a doctor can cure. It's in the house.

LAURA

So you can help?

Tamborlane hesitates - sizing her up.

TAMBORLANE

Let me show you something.

INT. EXETER LIBRARY - MUSIC WING

Tamborlane leads Laura past dozens of listening stations manned by headphone-sporting students. The library stacks hold thousands of records and tons of sheet music.

Laura follows Tamborlane into a second room, it's walls lined with shelves holding row upon row of thick, canvas notebooks.

TAMBORLANE

Everything Vera Ward wrote has been stored here.

He pulls a volume off the shelf and sets it on a table. Opening it, his fingers move over the hand-scrawled pages, barely legible, marked in different colors.

TAMBORLANE (CONT'D)

Four hundred volumes - sixteen thousand variations - all on the same theme - but all of them different. Remarkable.

In the center of the room are tables with computers and MIDI keyboards. Students sit in front of them, pouring over open notebooks, entering musical notations on their screens.

TAMBORLANE (CONT'D)

I've been studying these scores for the last six years. I believe they represent some hidden code, and we've been using these computers to decipher it.

He turns to one of the computers and starts clicking the mouse. Notes appear on the screen, HAUNTING MUSIC floats from the computer's speaker.

The notes fade away to be replaced by an array of colors, slowly changing and pulsating along with the music.

TAMBORLANE (CONT'D)

I think I may have cracked the code.

LAURA

What does it mean?

TAMBORLANE

I don't know. There seems to be a piece missing that I haven't found yet. It's as if I have a key, but no lock.

LAURA

Then I've got something to show you.

INT. TOWER - DAY

Tamborlane stands at the top of the stairs, staring in awe at the Mysterium.

HE'S STIFF, FROZEN.

Laura and Amy come up behind him.

Amy takes his hand and he seems to relax. She pulls him towards the Mysterium. He reluctantly follows.

She sits down at the keyboard and begins playing the melody.

Tamborlane watches her a moment, then looks at the instrument before him.

He reaches out and gently lays a hand on the face, running a finger over the carved letters -

MYSTERIUM.

A strange, knowing smile crosses his lips. He's lost in his own thoughts.

TAMBORLANE

(whispering)

You did it...

Suddenly he's back. With uncharacteristic enthusiasm, he leaps to his feet.

He hurries back to his leather briefcase on the floor. Popping it open, he rummages through the contents.

LAURA

What is it?

TAMBORLANE

I thought it was in the music, but of course, it's just a code for the machine.

LAURA

Like a computer?

He beams as he finds what he's been searching for - a single sheet of music.

He holds it up for her with shaking hands.

TAMBORLANE

The most primitive computer, built for one specific purpose.

He sets the sheet in front of Amy. Instead of notes there are colored bars, dots, jagged lines of color.

TAMBORLANE (CONT'D)

Can you play this for me, Amy?

She studies it a moment, then puts her hands on the keys and starts to play - a new melody, much more complex and haunting.

She plays it perfectly.

Tamborlane turns to Laura, a broad smile on his face, as if he's discovered something revolutionary.

TAMBORLANE (CONT'D)

You see - colors. It doesn't even make sense to me, but it makes sense to her.

Laura places a hand on Amy's shoulder and stares at the sheet of music - it's completely incomprehensible.

TAMBORLANE (CONT'D)

Vera Ward composed music with color. It seems your daughter has a special gift to understand it.

LAURA

A gift?

He looks around the room, noticing the colored panes of glass, and takes a seat next to Amy.

TAMBORLANE

Tell me, Amy, what color is the music?

AMY

Yellow.

Laura steps closer - mystified. Tamborlane holds up a hand, stopping her.

TAMBORLANE

It's a pretty yellow, isn't it?

Amy curls up her nose.

AMY

Looks a little yucky to me.

TAMBORLANE

Maybe it would be better if it were a little more blue?

She stops playing and looks at him, struck by the idea.

AMY

You mean like this?

She concentrates, fingers searching the keys, playing a JAGGED DISCORD.

AMY (CONT'D)

That's yuckier!

Adjusting, she tries again. The melody flows from her fingers, this time in a slightly lower key.

TAMBORLANE

Something like that?

AMY

Much better.

Amy slips away again, looking at the air around her, smiling.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Laura sets a cup of tea in front of Tamborlane.

TAMBORLANE

It's called synaesthesia.

LAURA

What? It's like... she's psychic?

TAMBORLANE

No. It's a neurological condition - sort of a joining of the senses. Numbers have shapes. Colors have smells. Sounds have colors.

LAURA

But how did you know?

TAMBORLANE

Because Vera Ward had it too. That's apparent from her compositions. It's not as special as it sounds. Many people have it. It's hereditary. The Mysterium seems to be clued into it.

LAURA

Is that why Amy can only play when she's in the tower?

TAMBORLANE

It's not your daughter playing. It's the Mysterium.

LAURA

The Mysterium?

TAMBORLANE

Yes, something is in this house trying to get free.

LAURA

You mean... like a ghost?

TAMBORLANE

Perhaps. Perhaps not that simple. The whole house seems to be constructed for this one purpose. Vera Ward spent her whole life obsessed by it, but she never understood what was going on. I think I do. I can help your daughter.

LAURA

How?

TAMBORLANE

By releasing it.

LAURA

Releasing what?

Tamborlane shrugs, a mischievous smile.

TAMBORLANE

We won't know until we get it working again.

EXT. MANSION - DAY

Several trucks pull up to the house. Tamborlane hops out of the first and directs the others to park behind him.

Students get out and head to the back. They begin unloading crates of equipment.

The sidewalk starts to fill with boxes.

INT. TOWER - DAY

Tamborlane opens a wood panel on back of the Mysterium and shines a flashlight inside.

Pedal mechanisms, gears, and cables are covered in ancient cobwebs and thick dust.

Adverting his eyes, he aims a can of compressed air inside.

P-S-S-S-T.

The air explodes in a cloud dust. He begins to COUGH.

The students LAUGH as he swipes the air in hopes of clearing it.

INT. TOWER - DAY

Tamborlane leans over a student's shoulder, directing as the boy solders a circuit on one of the dozen electronic devices attached to the Mysterium.

Behind them, more students, more frenzied work.

INT. PERCH - DAY

Tamborlane lowers a rope ladder down into the depths of the house.

Laura helps steady the ladder as Tamborlane climbs down.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Tamborlane holds the ladder as Laura reaches the bottom.

He turns on a flashlight, following bundles of cable and tubing snaking between the joists.

The trail ends as it all disappears into the ceiling, heading into the bowels, into the floor above.

The light falls onto a small trap door.

Tamborlane hands the light to Laura. He reaches up, prying at the four latches holding the door in place.

With a final twist, it opens in a

GUST OF STALE AIR.

He grabs the sides and pulls himself up, into the pitch-black opening. Moments later, his hand reappears and motions for the light.

Laura peers into the opening. Tamborlane squats inside, scanning the interior with the light.

A CAVERNOUS SPACE

filled with elaborate works greet their eyes -
gears, tubes, pulleys, ancient electrical devices.

Tamborlane beams down at her, his face freakish in the harsh light.

A glint of red catches his eye.

Tamborlane reaches up, into a gap in the gearing. He pulls out

A RED BALL -

the boy's ball.

He gives it to Laura.

INT. TOWER - DAY

Laura and Amy play catch with the ball, bouncing it between them.

Tamborlane stands at the back wall facing an array of electronic equipment.

He turns on a computer, then follows a myriad of cables streaming across the floor, feeding into the Mysterium.

A large flat-panel monitor is mounted on the keyboard's music stand.

TAMBORLANE

Alright, Amy. Let's give this a try.

Amy sits down, ready to play.

He sits in a chair next to her, his fingers running over a computer keyboard. Amy's screen goes dark, then points of red light begin to appear.

TAMBORLANE (CONT'D)

Can you play that?

Amy stares at the screen, raises her hands to the keys.

She studies the image for a moment, then starts to play.

The notes REVERBERATE,

BOOMING LOUDLY through the tower.

Tamborlane puts his ear to side of the Mysterium. Inside he hears the sound of

WHIRRING MACHINERY.

TAMBORLANE (CONT'D)

It's working.

The panes of light begin to move, shifting until shades of red are focused on the Mysterium. Bathed in the warm glow, Amy continues playing as the screen fills with red.

Tamborlane is elated.

TAMBORLANE (CONT'D)

It works!

Laura is impressed but puzzled.

LAURA

That's pretty, but what's it doing?

He leads her to the window - pointing to where all the window panes below reflect light onto the tower.

TAMBORLANE

The whole house is a wonderful generator - like no other on earth. It is crossing barriers, merging light, sound, focusing it all onto this point... and, scents?

Tamborlane steps into the middle of the room, basking in the warm glow. He throws his head back, sniffing the air.

TAMBORLANE (CONT'D)

Cherry-almond? Can you smell it?

Laura sniffs but shakes her head negatively.

LAURA
All I smell is dust.
It's beautiful.

Laura steps up to the Mysterium and watches Amy play. Amy stares at the screen, transfixed.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Amy?

There's no reaction.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Amy, can you hear me?

Amy plays on, oblivious to everything around her.

TAMBORLANE
She's in a trance. It's the house, you see.

LAURA
She's hypnotized?

He checks his computer screen - a red bar steadily moving across the bottom.

TAMBORLANE
She will be fine when the program finishes.

The bar reaches the end and fades. The screen goes black, the red light in the tower dims as the glass panes shift back to their normal position.

The Mysterium winds down, the final notes

SLOWLY DYING OUT.

Amy relaxes at the keyboard, slowly raising her head as if waking.

AMY
Can we get some ice cream?

Laura LAUGHS and hugs her. Tamborlane smiles, happy with the results.

He begins adjusting equipment, jotting down notes.

TAMBORLANE

You see, once I've interfaced Vera Ward's compositions with the Mysterium, I'll be able to get some idea of what this is all about. If I can just record--

LAURA

Professor?

He pauses to look at her.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Thank you.

She smiles at him warmly.

He tries to smile back, but gets self-conscious and turns away, pretending to inspect the cables.

TAMBORLANE

It's nothing...

INT. MUSIC ROOM - NIGHT

Tamborlane plays Scriabin's third piano sonata.

Laura and Amy listen - a private performance.

He finishes with a flourish and they applaud.

AMY

That was Scriabin?

Tamborlane nods.

AMY (CONT'D)

How did he die?

TAMBORLANE

History books will tell you it was blood poison, and poison it was, but he was murdered. He was poisoned by German spies.

AMY

Why?

TAMBORLANE

Because of the Mysterium. Scriabin's plan was to bring about world peace - this during the war of course. The Germans must have thought it was a secret weapon.

AMY
That's incredible.

TAMBORLANE
Yes, I wrote a paper on it four years ago, but it never got past peer review.

AMY
Do you really think the Mysterium is that powerful?

TAMBORLANE
I believe music has the power to change the world. Scriabin believed it too.

AMY
Play some more.

TAMBORLANE
Alright.

He turns back to the piano and starts playing again.

INT. MUSIC ROOM - LATER

Amy sleeps on the couch.

Laura and Tamborlane finish off their wine.

LAURA
Did you know my husband?

TAMBORLANE
Who?

LAURA
Christopher Helm.

TAMBORLANE
No.

LAURA
I don't know what he was doing with this house; with Amy.

TAMBORLANE
He never told you?

LAURA
It was a secret. That's what I don't understand - why he kept it from me.

TAMBORLANE

Perhaps he too was seduced by the power
of the Mysterium?

LAURA

What's going to happen?

TAMBORLANE

What do you mean?

LAURA

When this Mysterium starts working, what
happens?

TAMBORLANE

I don't know, exactly, but I'm sure that
whatever has its grip on Amy will go
away.

INT. AMY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Laura tucks a sleeping Amy into bed.

She kisses her on the forehead and turns out the light.

She looks in the doorway, where Tamborlane stands
silhouetted by the hall light.

She walks up to him and looks into his eyes.

She gives him a hug, wrapping her arms tight around him.

Tamborlane is a bit startled, but slowly puts his arms
around her.

Laura leans her head on his shoulder.

She looks at her hand -

HER WEDDING RING.

She releases her hold, looking into Tamborlane's eyes a
moment. She smiles and leads him down the hall.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Laura waves goodbye as Tamborlane gets in his car and
drives off.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Laura climbs the stairs to the bedroom with a basket of laundry. Just as she's about to enter her room, she sees Tamborlane's car out the window driving away.

The car stops, pulling over to the side of the road.

She pauses to watch.

Tamborlane gets out and looks back at the house. He opens the trunk and takes out a camera. He aims it at the house and takes a picture.

He gets back in his car and drives off.

Laura thinks it's odd.

Suddenly, MUSIC fills the house.

INT. AMY'S BEDROOM

Laura looks in, but the bed is empty.

She goes to the window - the tower is lit up.

INT. TOWER - NIGHT

Amy plays as Laura sits down beside her.

LAURA

You need to sleep, honey. It's late.

AMY

I'm not tired.

Laura listens a moment, carefully approaching the next question.

LAURA

Was dad bringing you here when the car crashed?

Amy shakes her head 'No'.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Where were you going?

AMY

We were coming back home.

LAURA
From here?

Amy nods.

LAURA (CONT'D)
What happened?

SILENCE from Amy.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Don't you understand I have to know what
happened? I have to know what it has to
do with this place.

Amy starts to play.

Laura pulls her hands from the keys.

LAURA (CONT'D)
No! Tell me!

Amy tries to wrestle her arms free.

She screams.

AMY
I killed him!
I killed him!

A pane of glass reflects light into Laura's eyes.

In the flash she sees...

CHRISTOPHER'S CAR

driving down a rocky coastline.

Laura lets go and moves back, startled by the image.

Amy's face turns grim and twisted.

AMY (CONT'D)
I killed him.

INT. CAR - DAY

Amy screeches in the backseat.

Christopher reaches around, trying to calm her.

Amy leaps up, grabbing him around the head.

With all her strength, she pulls at him, twisting his head back.

Christopher lets go of the wheel to pull her arms off.

Amy squirms and flails - fighting back.

Straight ahead of them,

THE OCEAN LOOMS.

INT. TOWER

Amy starts to play.

The light in the tower dims, almost to black.

Laura gets to her feet, tense in the oppressive atmosphere.

Amy's fingers move feverishly, hitting the same notes over and over.

LAURA

It's not true. Tell me what's going on.
What were you doing here?

Amy ignores her, entranced in her playing.

The Mysterium is so loud the tower is shaking.

Glass panes CLANK against each other.

The windows RATTLE in their frames.

Laura covers her ears to drown out the noise.

Shrinking into the corner.

She cries and runs for the stairs.

INT. ENTRYWAY - DAY

Laura takes Tamborlane's coat and hangs it up.

THE MYSTERIUM is heard in the background.

TAMBORLANE

Amy is still going at it?

LAURA

I'll tell her you're here.

TAMBORLANE

No, let her play. I've got to get the interface up and running and it could take a while.

LAURA

Do you mind if I run some errands in town?

TAMBORLANE

No, go right ahead.

LAURA

You don't mind watching Amy?

TAMBORLANE

I suspect that will be quiet easy.

LAURA

Yes, of course.

Tamborlane carries his briefcase to the music room.

TAMBORLANE

I wonder if you might stop by my office on the way back. I left a ream of scores on my desk.

LAURA

Certainly.

He fishes out a key from his pocket.

TAMBORLANE

Here's the key. Should be easy to spot. It's in a a blue folder.

INT. TAMBORLANE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Laura picks up the blue folder from the desk and heads for the door.

Something catches her eye - a flash of light.

She looks over to the window and spots

A WIND CHIME.

Suddenly curious, she steps up and examines it closely - the same 'M' medallion hangs from its center.

Light reflects off the chime, illuminating a high bookshelf in the corner.

She walks over the shelf. The light falls on several scrapbooks on the top shelf.

Standing on a chair, she reaches up and pulls them down. She lays them on the desk and switches on the reading lamp.

Flipping open the first scrapbook she finds

A PHOTO OF VERA WARD

from a newspaper clipping about her suicide.

She turns the page.

VERA'S OBITUARY.

She flips through several more pages, engrossed, stopping on an old family photo -

Vera, her gnomish husband, and a small boy.

Laura puts her finger on the boy, puzzled.

Another page - a photo of Tamborlane in front of the new library wing. He's shaking hands with

CHRISTOPHER.

Laura ponders this a moment, and opens another scrapbook.

THE TOWER

greet her eyes, seen in multiple images.

She turns the page -

MORE PHOTOS of the tower.

Each is marked with a date and time.

Page after page - the tower shown from different angles, at different times of day.

Sunrise behind the tower.

Bright noon on a cloudless summer day.

Overcast and rainy - the tower a dark shadow against the sky.

In the cold of winter- the tower shrouded in ice.

The reflecting sun flares across the photo in vivid color.

Laura flips through page after page -

still more photos of the tower -

HUNDREDS.

She opens another scrapbook - more photos of the tower.

Then, a newspaper article about Christopher's death.

The next page, a photo of

CHRISTOPHER AND LAURA TOGETHER.

She is stunned.

INT. TOWER - DAY

A PRIEST MUMBLES WEDDING VOWS as a nervous, 18-year-old Vera Ward and her gnomish middle-aged husband.

The blind police chief stands out in a room full of shadowy witnesses.

INT. MUSIC ROOM - NIGHT

Laura slowly walks into the music room where Amy and Tamborlane are sitting.

Tamborlane stands up when she enters - a broad smile on his and Amy's faces.

LAURA

How did you know my husband?

TAMBORLANE

I'm sorry?

LAURA

Christopher Helm? You knew him?

INT. TOWER - DAY

Vera Ward smashes against the Mysterium - her body holding down the keys in a JAGGED DISCORD as her husband HAS HIS WAY WITH HER.

INT. MUSIC ROOM - NIGHT

Tamborlane's caught off-guard. It's obvious he covering something up.

TAMBORLANE

We may have met once. This is a small town.

Laura takes a step forward, her resolve firm, her tone demanding.

LAURA

What did he have to do with this house?
Why was Christopher here?

Tamborlane sizes up the situation, then gives in.

TAMBORLANE

You really don't know, do you?

LAURA

I don't know anything.

Tamborlane is bewildered. He replies slowly, deliberately.

TAMBORLANE

Christopher was Vera Ward's son.

Laura is visibly shaken and she staggers, leaning on the piano for support.

LAURA

That's impossible.

TAMBORLANE

Surely you knew.

INT. TOWER - DAY

Tears roll down Vera's cheeks as she plays the melody in angry, frustrated gestures.

HER SWOLLEN, PREGNANT BELLY presses against the keyboard.

INT. MUSIC ROOM - NIGHT

Laura's confusion nearly cripples her, but she rebounds, gaining courage.

LAURA

I can't believe I trusted you. This has all been a lie?

TAMBORLANE

Listen, Laura...

She charges him.

LAURA

Get out of here - NOW!

WHACK!

Laura is hit from behind.

She falls to the floor with a

THUD.

Behind her stands

AMY

clutching a small bust of Scriabin, its plaster surface cracked from the impact.

Her face is twisted, altered. A gleeful smile.

AMY

We have work to do, professor.

Tamborlane stares at her, horrified and powerless.

CUT TO:

VERA WARD'S MELODY ECHOES

throughout the house. The light flickers in rhythm with its haunting theme.

Laura lies on the floor unconscious.

Blood oozes from the lump on her head.

She GROANS, then slowly opens her eyes. Realization brings fear and near panic.

She climbs to her feet and crosses to the passageway.

She pushes on the panel, but it doesn't budge.

She tries again -

it refuses to move.

She thinks a moment and rushes out of the room.

INT. PERCH

The vents are wide open, and a blast of wind rises from below.

Laura looks across to the tower -

Flickering beams of colored light shoot out to various windows around the courtyard.

Laura looks over the edge, following the steel pipes down into the depths of the house.

The bottom is lit by a dull, throbbing glow.

She climbs onto the railing takes a deep breath.

SHE LEAPS

across the gulf and

grabs onto one of the pipes

It swings wildly

CLANGING

against the other pipes.

A DEAFENING KLAXON.

She hangs on tight until the swinging stops,

then carefully slides down the pole to the bottom.

She follows narrow tunnel leading to the base of the tower.

BLINDING LIGHT pours out of the opening.

The Mysterium's mechanism races above -
gears meshing,
pistons pumping,
cables moving.

A GIANT, INSANE CLOCKWORK.

Laura crawls inside.

INT. MYSTERIUM'S GUTS

The music mixes with the grind of the mechanism,
SHRILL AND DEAFENING.

Laura climbs around the thrusting arms of polished brass,
over articulated pulley mechanisms that guide huge steel
cables up the walls through the floor.

She squeezes through a narrow opening, between two sets
of man-size, whirling gears.

The giant machine creates a sucking wind that pulls at
her.

Laura sways uncertainly. The edge of her shirt flares -
Gets caught in jaws of a gear's teeth.

She SCREAMS as she's pulled toward the deadly mechanism.

She grabs a pole and yanks - HARD.

R-I-P-P-P!

Laura's shirt tears,
a huge piece pulled into the machine,
shredded.

She leaps for a narrow ladder.

She scrambles up,
reality swells,

The walls liquefy.

The rungs above her change their shape -
distant, out of reach.

Laura can't tell if it's real - tries to shake it off.

She wipes the sweat from her face and continues.

The ceiling is now in sight.

She leaps for the next to last rung and grabs it.

She dangles there, the pounding, grinding machinery
waiting below her.

Her grip begins to slip.

She pulls for all he's worth,
clinging for dear life.

INT. TOWER

A trapdoor crashes open in the corner.

Laura crawls out.

She gets to her knees, scanning the room, getting her
bearings.

The tower is impossibly huge.

It's as if all the laws of physics were scrambled. The
once small room is now a cavernous chamber, dwarfing her.

Fog covers the floor, channeling light everywhere.

The walls are vaguely outlined by bright and ever-
changing sheets of colored light.

AMY

sits at the Mysterium far across the room,
hunched over the keyboard,
playing with demonic intensity.

TAMBORLANE

stands in the center of the room, arms outstretched.

Fog swirls around him as he stares into a

BRILLIANT BALL OF LIGHT

that forms over his head.

He seems larger than before - magnified.

The room is pulsing with color.

It's palatable,

liquid,

REAL!

Laura moves along the wall towards Amy.

Her feet sink into the fog with each step.

It's like syrup.

It takes all her effort to move one foot,

then the next one,

to get closer.

Amy turns her head as Laura approaches -

A WICKED, MALICIOUS SMILE

on her face.

Amy dives into a different variation - frenetic and wild.

The colors shift, all the light focusing on

LAURA'S FACE.

Laura reaches out to grab her daughter.

Amy's plays a loud, DISHARMONIOUS CHORD that strikes
Laura with a single, powerful blow,

KNOCKING HER TO THE FLOOR.

Laura disappears into the fog for a moment, then

she gets back up and crawls toward Amy.

LAURA

Amy!

TAMBORLANE

lunges at Laura.

His head grows huge, his face filling the tower, as he
GROWLS.

Laura screams and turns away.

INT. MUSIC ROOM

Laura looks around, disoriented. She's laying on the
floor where she was knocked out.

She feels the cut on her forehead and gets to her feet.

The portrait of Scriabin is illuminated by the tower.

She notices it changing - the brush strokes begins to
move.

The head in the portrait turns to look at her.

Scriabin starts to get up from his chair, slowly as if
the paint was returning to liquid and dripping off the
canvas.

Laura backs up to the door and turns to run from the room
when

A HAND

grabs her shoulder. She spins.

TAMBORLANE is reaching for her.

His eyes are wide and possessed.

TAMBORLANE

Laura--

She shoves him back into the piano.

He falls across the keyboard as she bolts from the room.

INT. ENTRYWAY

Laura throws the front door open and slams right into
Tamborlane as she rushes out.

He clutches her in his arms.

TAMBORLANE

Wait! Listen to me--

Laura wriggles free, falling to the floor.

INT. NEW YORK PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Laura sits on the floor of the living room.

She's frozen in fear - unable to move.

Everything is still and quiet.

She slowly gets to her feet and looks out the window.

TAMBORLANE

stands on the balcony, admiring the view.

EXT. BALCONY

Laura steps out and approaches him cautiously.

Tamborlane doesn't move.

TAMBORLANE

I can help if you'll listen to me.

LAURA

What in the hell is going on?

TAMBORLANE

None of this is real. The Mysterium is controlling our perceptions, but we can still communicate unconsciously. We have to stop it.

LAURA

What about Amy?

TAMBORLANE

The synaesthesia - Amy is completely under the Mysterium's power. But we can still resist.

LAURA

How?

INT. CHRISTOPHER'S CAR - DAY

Laura sits in the front seat with Christopher. Tamborlane is in the back with Amy.

The whole world moves in ultra-slow motion around them.

The car is plummeting over the cliff.

Laura gasps when she sees Christopher next to her.

LAURA

Oh my God!

TAMBORLANE

Ignore it.

LAURA

Christopher!

She reaches out to touch him, but her hand doesn't want to get close enough.

TAMBORLANE

I may be able to save Amy, but you'll have to deprive me of my senses first. It's the only way to break free of the Mysterium.

LAURA

How?

TAMBORLANE

Render me unconscious.

LAURA

What?

TAMBORLANE

You have to knock me out.

Laura looks out the window. The rocky shore is just a few feet away. Christopher looks terrified.

LAURA

Christopher! No!

TAMBORLANE

Your perceptions will follow your thoughts. Think back to the Ward Mansion.

She looks at Christopher, tears in her eyes.

The car hits the rocks.

INT. WARD MANSION - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Laura and Tamborlane sit across the table from each other. Laura is still crying.

LAURA
How do I do it?

TAMBORLANE
Hit me on the head.

LAURA
Do what?

TAMBORLANE
Use something blunt. A rolling pin.

LAURA
I can't do that.

TAMBORLANE
You have to break the sensory connection.

She can't believe it, but he's serious.

LAURA
Alright.

She gets up and pulls

A ROLLING PIN

from the drawer.

She stands behind Tamborlane. He looks worried, and clutches the table.

TAMBORLANE
I'm ready.

She raises the pin, ready to strike, but hesitates.

LAURA
I can't.

TAMBORLANE
You must, for Amy.

LAURA
But--

TAMBORLANE

Do it!

He closes his eyes tight.

With grim determination, she swings the pin.

KLONK!

It connects with Tamborlane's skull. He tumbles from the chair.

TAMBORLANE (CONT'D)

Ow!

He rolls on the floor.

LAURA

My God! Are you alright?

He gets up, rubbing his head.

TAMBORLANE

You have to hit harder.

LAURA

None of this is real, right?

TAMBORLANE

I'm afraid that was very real.

LAURA

I'm sorry.

TAMBORLANE

No, do it again.

He sits back down on the chair.

LAURA

What if I kill you?

The possibility flashes in his eyes.

TAMBORLANE

I'll be alright. Just do it again.

She raises the pin again, working up the courage to swing. She takes a deep breath, grips the pin tight, and

WHACKS HIM.

His head falls on the table.

INT. TOWER - NIGHT

Tamborlane lies unconscious on the floor.

The room is silent except for the DULL PULSING HUM of the
BALL OF WHITE LIGHT

that hovers near the ceiling.

Amy looks at Laura - her innocent self again.

Laura thinks it's all over.

LAURA

Amy darling?

Amy smiles at her, an EVIL, MALICIOUS GRIN.

AMY

You're too late, mommy.

She raises her hands and strikes the keys.

The ball of light brightens like a flash of lightening,
scorching the room in its white brilliance.

It slowly starts to descend toward the Mysterium.

TOWARD AMY.

LAURA

No! Amy!

Laura struggles to her feet, forcing her legs to move
against an invisible force.

Laura leans,

STRETCHES

LUNGES

for her daughter, ripping the girl away from the
Mysterium.

Amy falls backwards,

but her hands stay on the keyboard,

HER ARMS STRETCHING IMPOSSIBLY

to reach the keys.

Amy looks at her mother and HOWLS with a deep, hoarse voice.

AMY

Let me go!

Laura throws Amy to the floor, pinning her arms back.

The Mysterium keeps playing.

THE MUSIC CONTINUES, SWELLING.

THE MYSTERIUM RISES UP

out of the floor,

towering,

leaning over them,

GROANING,

BELCHING SMOKE AND STEAM.

G-R-R-R-R-R!

The instrument opens, splitting across the top, like some

HUGE, MECHANICAL MOUTH.

The two rows of keys become

TERRIFYING TEETH.

Tornadic winds explode from the interior,

SUCKING IN,

pulling Amy from Laura's grasp.

Laura SCREAMS and grasps the empty air.

LAURA

Amy! No!

Amy is pulled into the black interior.

SWALLOWED WHOLE

as the mouth closes tight around her.

The Mysterium continues to morph -
panels opening up,
secret doors folding on invisible hinges.
IT TURNS INSIDE OUT -
Amy and the keyboard disappears inside -
wires, cabling, and splintered wood taking their place.
Laura scrambles on top,
SCREAMING,
prying,
pounding at the wooden surface.
THE BALL OF LIGHT is directly over the Mysterium.
Laura shields her eyes, blinded as
The Mysterium begins to
SHAKE VIOLENTLY.
THROWING LAURA OFF.
The whole tower follows suit, walls vibrating, the floor
moving in rolling waves.
Light and fog begin to swirl around the tower, rapidly
accelerating, moving to the ceiling.
Laura looks up into the center of the maelstrom as
TAMBORLANE WAKES UP next to her.
He shakes his groggy head and looks at the Mysterium.
He pulls himself to his feet.
HE COVERS HIS EARS with his hands,
clamps his eyes shut, and
DIVES INTO THE BALL OF LIGHT.
The light channels into him.
He is the center of the vortex

sucking everything in.

The wind roars around Laura.

She grabs the Mysterium and holds on for dear life as the
MUSIC MELDS WITH AN AGONIZING GROAN.

The tower starts to twist -

the wood splintering -

the stones crumbling.

The whole tower

EXPLODES

into a thousand shards of glass and splintered wood.

Laura covers her head as debris flies in all directions,
spinning around and up into the air.

The floor gives way,

crumbling under her feet.

She clings to the Mysterium as the floor collapses.

Bright beams of light shoot up through the dust.

Light swirls into the air,

an inverse tornado,

pumping into the rising ball of white.

Tamborlane is at its center,

slowly rising as the light encircles him, concentrating
itself into an ever smaller space until he is completely
enveloped.

Only his faint outline can be seen, and then

A BOLT OF LIGHTNING

shatters the sky,

striking Tamborlane.

HE VANISHES

in a cloud of white.

THE THUNDERCLAP

sucks out all the noise.

The wind dies down.

The fading notes of

VERA WARD'S SAD MELODY

drift away into the night sky.

The dust settles.

The tower is gone, but

THE MYSTERIUM REMAINS,

Suspended on twisted poles and wires.

LAURA

gripping the top of it.

Blood oozes from dozens of small cuts.

The lights go out, darkness enveloping everything.

The Mysterium gives out a final,

MECHANICAL GROAN

and, like a blooming flower,

begins to open.

Laura watches with amazed eyes as

AMY

curled into a ball, tumbles from the interior.

She's bruised and battered, but when her eyes flutter open, her twelve-year-old self shines through.

AMY

Mom?

LAURA

Amy!

She grabs Amy and hugs her,
tears of joy streaking down her face.

EXT. COURTYARD - NIGHT

Laura and Amy climb down from the pile of rubble.

She looks across the courtyard, where part of the tower
has collapsed into the house.

The house is shrouded in darkness.

The night air is quiet and still.

She clutches Amy tight and takes her inside.

INT. MANSION ENTRYWAY - NIGHT

Laura pulls a flashlight from the drawer and turns it on,
scanning the hall with its powerful beam.

Amy stands in front of the music room, staring inside.

LAURA

Amy? Let's go.

Amy ignores her. Mesmerized, she walks back into the
music room.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Amy?

INT. MUSIC ROOM - NIGHT

Laura hurries inside, then freezes.

Amy stares at the

DARK OUTLINE OF A MAN

sitting in the shadowy corner.

Laura steps up behind her daughter, leaning in, peering
at the figure.

She shines the flashlight beam on him, revealing

TAMBORLANE,

sitting with legs and arms crossed,
the same pose as the portrait of Scriabin behind him.
 He shields his eyes from the light, but smiles at them -
 somewhat distant,
 his attitude changed.

AMY

Look, it's that funny man...

Tamborlane slowly rises from his seat.

Laura pulls Amy away.

He speaks,

IN RUSSIAN.

TAMBORLANE

[Where am I? What happened?]

He takes a step closer. Laura pulls back another step.

LAURA

Stay back.

TAMBORLANE

[Do you speak Russian? French?]

LAURA

Dr. Tamborlane?

TAMBORLANE

[No... this would be America.]

He walks up to them. Laura clutches Amy tightly. He looks into their faces with peaceful eyes, offering his hand to Laura.

HE SPEAKS IN BROKEN ENGLISH.

TAMBORLANE (CONT'D)

Thank you for bringing me back.

Laura stares back, a sudden realization.

LAURA

Oh my God.

She doesn't take his hand.

She just stares at him until he gives up.

Tamborlane catches himself in the mirror.

He cocks an eyebrow, inspecting himself.

TAMBORLANE

Not what I expected, but...

He shrugs, then spots the piano behind him.

He slides his hand lovingly across wood surface and takes a seat at the bench.

He smiles. There's a joy and twinkle in his eye.

TAMBORLANE (CONT'D)

Music. Beautiful music.

He starts to play a sonata,

the same one Tamborlane played.

Laura and Amy just watch and listen as darkness closes in around them.

A green mist rises from the floor.

The walls begin to melt.

FADE OUT.