

You Are My Oxygen

By

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ACT I

FADE IN TO:

1 **EXT. SHINGLE BEACH/SEA - DAY - DREAM**

1

A beached row-boat, pretty as a postcard, sits idly by. Waves roll in softly. It's dreamlike, almost ethereal.

A gaggle of YOUNG GIRLS hurtle past the boat, along a rickety pier, and leap into the water.

Two girls linger behind: YOUNG SARA (15) and SWIMTEAM GIRL (13). They snicker and giggle like the young girls they are.

Coach toots on his whistle. The two girls race each other along the pier and vault into the water.

The girls swim lengths (back and forth) between two buoys, as their COACH (40), decent build, awful hairline, watches from the end of the pier. A cigarette dangles from his mouth.

The young Sara takes the lead. She cuts through the water effortlessly.

Waves crash violently against the pier. Coach blasts on his whistle and summons the girls ashore.

The girls exit the water, one by one, to the clickety-clack of pebbles underfoot. Coach wanders over to them.

The young Sara looks at those ashore nervously: where is her friend?

A piercing scream!

Over there, in the distance, is the outline of a girl. It bobs up and down, flails about helplessly... The young Sara wades back in. Coach staggers over and grabs her.

Sara writhes about and, in the struggle, slaps the cigarette from his mouth. Coach signals for the girls to help him.

They assist the coach, take hold of Sara, and drag her ashore as she kicks and screams.

Coach swims off into the distance...

The girls wait ashore with bated breath...

A figure emerges from the nothingness. Coach hauls the lifeless body of the girl up onto the beach.

Sara attempts to revive the girl herself, but Coach holds her firmly. He sits her down and strokes her arms in an attempt to calm her.

She snivels, breathes erratically. Fat tears creep down her cheeks. Coach signals for her to look at him, which she does.

Using both HANDS, he gestures for her to take long, deep breaths.

CUT TO:

TITLE CARD: YOU ARE MY OXYGEN

2 **EXT. TÓRSHAVN - JONSSON RESIDENCE - EARLY MORNING** 2

Mist shrouds round a solitary house right by the sea. Whitewashed exterior. Black roofing. Rustic feel.

3 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS** 3

The rustle of the duvet cover. An ARM pokes out from underneath the covers, wanders aimlessly for... a PHONE on the bedside table.

The hand grasps onto the phone and switches it on. The time (6:30) flashes on the screen.

Two FEET land daintily on the floor. They rise on their tiptoes, back down, and make their way to the drawer.

A pair of HANDS dig through the drawer and, before long, come across their prize: a 50s-era one piece swimsuit.

4 **EXT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - BEACH/SEA - LATER** 4

The waves crash against craggy rocks. An errant puffin, high in the sky.

SARA (23) stands proud, looks out at the vast expanse before her. WAVES wash over her FEET.

She breathes deeply, dives into the water, and breaks through the surface. She pushes the hair out of her face and starts to swim...

5 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - STUDY - AFTERNOON** 5

A bookcase crammed with a diverse array of titles. A FRAMED PICTURE of jazz saxophonist John Coltrane (and his famous quintet).

A pair of ARMS rifle through tattered LPs stuffed inside a record case.

A pristine FERGUSON LP PLAYER rests atop the desk. Aside the record player, a calendar. The days are crossed off. Only 7 days till "PERFORMANCE AT THE PRESTIGE", noted on the 23rd.

The ARM places the record down and switches it on.

The record spins as a HAND lowers the needle. Music fills the room. It's complex stuff, but boy, does it groove...

JOHAN (O.S)
 (under his breath)
 1, 2, 3 --

Tenor sax joins the mix with a swingin' melody, goes off into a variation, then returns to the original melody line.

The sax comes an abrupt halt. The record continues to spin... Deep breath.

JOHAN (O.S) (CONT'D)
 1, 2, 3 --

The sax returns to the mix. At first, the lines are varied and exciting, but, before long, it returns to the original melody.

A frustrated grunt. The sax stops again. The record spins.

JOHAN (O.S) (CONT'D)
 1! 2! 3!

Immediately, it's that original melody.

JOHAN (O.S) (CONT'D)
 (in Faroese, subtitled)
 FUCK!

The ARMS tear the LP from the turntable and fling it at the wall. It splits upon impact, knocks a FRAMED AWARD to the ground.

Shards of glass litter the floor. JOHAN (43) fights to catch his breath.

Johan rubs his eyes tiredly and leaves the study...

A figure approaches: Sara. She looks at the broken award, perturbed.

6 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

6

Johan leans against the arm of the sofa, book in hand. He hears footsteps and hides his face.

Sara enters the room.

SARA
 Johan...

He doesn't look up. Sara glides across the room and caresses his cheek. He swats her hand away but she persists. He sighs and holds it there resignedly.

SARA (CONT'D)
Talk to me.

JOHAN
It's nothing.

SARA
Don't lie.

JOHAN
"Don't lie..." I'm a man, for God's sake.

He chuckles. Sara smiles a half-smile.

SARA
Please.

JOHAN
I feel I am lost.

SARA
In what way?

JOHAN
I don't know, just- Everything I play is some... pale imitation of something that has come before. I feel like I am a thief, stealing from my former self.

SARA
Well, maybe you've said all that you had to say?

He lets go of her hand.

JOHAN
What?

SARA
Well, that's alright, isn't it?

JOHAN
No, it's not alright.

He breaks away from her, heads over to the window.

SARA
Why not?

He turns to face her.

SARA (CONT'D)
If you were young and broke, I'd understand, but you're not.

JOHAN

Yes, but I cannot just stop! This upcoming show is my first show in over a year. I have an audience to entertain and I have NOTHING! NO IDEAS!

SARA

They're there because of YOU. They want to see YOU. They fell in love with all that you gave them, and they want to fall in love all over again.

JOHAN

But that isn't what I want! I can't just settle down.

SARA

Why not? That's what you've done with me, haven't you?

JOHAN

What? Yes, I guess so.

Unbearable pause.

SARA

Do you, by any chance, blame me for this?

JOHAN

That would be cruel.

SARA

That's not an answer.

JOHAN

I guess... my priorities have changed somewhat.

The words SMACK Sara with all the force of a 9-iron.

SARA

You do blame me.

JOHAN

No, that is not what I said. Please, do not twist my words.

SARA

Well, tell me what you mean!

JOHAN

I- I don't know. I'm sorry, Sara, I just- For the first time, I feel unsure of myself. It used to be so

(MORE)

JOHAN (CONT'D)
 easy. Everything felt new and
 exciting, but now... I wrack my brain,
 and all I have are doubts.

SARA
 So, you've got doubts. That's okay.
 You've got doubts. I've got doubts.
 Everyone's got doubts.

JOHAN
 But I'm NOT everyone, Sara. I don't
 have time for doubts.

Conversation over.

7 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT**

7

The two of them are in bed. The duvet covers their bottom
 halves. Sara strokes his CHEST as it rises and falls...

JOHAN
 Are you afraid of death?

SARA
 Oh, let's not do this now.

JOHAN
 Do what?

SARA
 This, this... psychoanalysis bullshit.
 It's late.

She turns away from him.

JOHAN
 You resent having to talk to me?

SARA
 No, not at all, but-

JOHAN
 Why do you say that, then?

SARA
 I'm sorry.

SARA (CONT'D)
 Right now, I don't want you to study
 me. I want you to hold me.

JOHAN
 Very well.

They embrace.

Johan coaxes a cigarette from the pack. He offers to Sara, but she declines.

The LIGHTER clicks, producing an ovate ORANGE FLAME... Johan lights his cigarette, takes a long-overdue drag...

SARA
Why do you smoke?

CHESTY LAUGHTER.

SARA (CONT'D)
What? What is it?

JOHAN
I thought we were dropping the psychoanalysis bullshit?

SARA
What? Oh, shut up.

She hits his chest playfully.

JOHAN
(mockingly)
I'm SO sorry.

SARA
You know it's not good for you.

JOHAN
God, you sound just like-
(under his breath)
Doesn't matter.

Sara glares at Johan, her eyes icy-cold. He doesn't notice.

8 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - FOYER - MORNING**

8

Elsewhere, Johan practises.

Silhouette of POSTAL CARRIER approaches. he knocks on the door, forces a clump of LETTERS through the letterbox, and shuffles out of sight.

The music stops.

JOHAN (O.S)
Sara? Could you get the post please?

Sara bends down, picks up the letters... She flicks through them inquisitively: Johan, Johan, Johan - STOP! This one's for her.

This dampens her enthusiasm. She studies the handwriting. The excitement drains from her face.

9 INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

9

Sara skims through the letter whilst Johan plunders the depths of an old book...

Sara places the letter down dejectedly. Johan glances over. His face drops. He's seen that look before.

JOHAN
Your mother?

Sara nods.

SARA
I don't know why she bothers anymore.

JOHAN
You must understand, Sara. She does care for you.

SARA
She has a funny way of showing it.

JOHAN
It takes effort - effort from both parties - to maintain a relationship.

SARA
Where's the effort in a letter?!

JOHAN
Well, you've hardly exerted yourself.

SARA
What?

JOHAN
Look... You two have this way of doing things. Do you want it to change?

She mulls it over nervously.

SARA
I don't know.

JOHAN
Exactly. You don't know.

SARA
So, what do I do?

Johan gets to his feet and plants himself down beside her. He holds her oh-so tightly.

JOHAN (CONT'D)
Sit on it for a while. If you want to
(MORE)

JOHAN (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
do something, you will.

Sara nods. Johan beams and kisses her forehead.

SARA
I need to go for a walk.

JOHAN
Good idea. Shall I come with?

SARA
No, you stay here. I won't be long.

She leaps to her feet.

10 **EXT. TÓRSHAVN - BEACH - AFTERNOON**

10

Sara saunters along the beach, hands in her pockets. A flock of CURIOUS ONLOOKERS chat nearby. She turns to them. One of them notices and waves.

Sara feigns a smile, carries on walking...

Suddenly, an unearthly scream. A dart of panic shoots through her. She turns to the sea and her face curdles.

A group of WHALERS wade through the water, trap hundreds of PILOT WHALES near the shore.

The whalers butcher the whales with their blades. The water runs red.

Sara spots a lone pilot whale, not quite dead, and sprints off towards it.

11 **EXT. TÓRSHAVN - BEACH - MOMENTS LATER**

11

Sara reaches the whale and tries to soothe it.

SARA
Shh, shh, shh...

She PUSHES and PUSHES and PUSHES... An ANGRY WHALER appears, as if out of nowhere, and confronts Sara.

ANGRY WHALER
(in Faroese)
What are you doing?!

No response.

ANGRY WHALER (CONT'D)
(in Faroese)
Hey!

Still, she ignores him.

ANGRY WHALER (CONT'D)
 (in Faroese)
 HEY!

He shoves her. She bites and turns to him.

SARA
 (full of bile)
 FUCK YOU!!!

She paints his face with spit. He goes to pick her up but she slaps him.

ANGRY WHALER
 (in Faroese)
 BITCH!

He lunges at her, knocks her to the ground. His hands lock round her throat like a vice.

The pilot whale watches on, helpless. Sara tries desperately to break free. She claws at his face.

An ONLOOKER, the one who waved at Sara earlier, races down the beach.

ONLOOKER
 (in Faroese, subtitled)
 Stop! Stop, you two!

He reaches the combatants and grabs hold of the whaler.

ANGRY WHALER
 (in Faroese, subtitled)
 Release me!

ONLOOKER
 (in Faroese, subtitled)
 Stop at once! You'll kill the poor girl!

ANGRY WHALER
 (in Faroese, subtitled)
 She started it!

The whaler releases Sara, who stays still.

ANGRY WHALER (CONT'D)
 (in Faroese, subtitled)
 Unhand me.

The onlooker loosens his grip.

ANGRY WHALER (CONT'D)
(in Faroese, subtitled)
Bloody foreigners...

They want to destroy that which they
do not understand.

ONLOOKER
(in Faroese, subtitled)
I'll send her on her way, sir, and
leave you be. Does that sound
reasonable?

The whaler nods, glares at Sara once more, then departs. The
onlooker bends down.

ONLOOKER (CONT'D)
You speak English?

Sara nods.

ONLOOKER (CONT'D)
I do too. A little. My name Sven.

He extends his hand to her, which she promptly takes.

SVEN
On your feet.

He hauls Sara up and examines her; bruises on her neck, cuts
on her arms, and bloodstains on both her hands.

SVEN (CONT'D)
Where you live?

SARA
I'm sorry?

SVEN
No, I have car. I can take you home,
if you like?

SARA
Oh... Please.

SVEN
(warmly)
Come.

He places his hand on her shoulder and escorts her away.

SVEN (CONT'D)
What's your name?

Meanwhile, the whaler massages the handprint Sara left on his
cheek.

He then turns to the pilot whale and silences it with his BLADE.

12 **EXT/INT. CAR - LATER**

12

SARA
Thank you for helping me.

SVEN
Oh, that? It was nothing. There are many foreigners who take umbrage with our tradition. You are not the first, nor will you be the last.

Sara smiles, unsure of what else to do.

SVEN (CONT'D)
So, is there anyone waiting for you at home?

SARA
Johan.

SVEN
Johan... Johan Jonsson? The saxophonist?

SARA
Yes, why?

SVEN
It's curious. I'm a big fan, but I did not know he had a daughter.

SARA
He doesn't. I'm his wife.

SVEN
Oh... do forgive me.

A beat.

SVEN (CONT'D)
I, like many here, eagerly await his return. What are his feelings about it?

Miss?

He looks over to her. Her eyes are glued to the skies. He smirks.

Meanwhile, Sara watches the landscape drift by.

13 **EXT/INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - PORCH/FOYER - LATER**

13

Sven raps smartly on the door. Sara stands by his side.

The door swings open.

SVEN
Good evening, sir.

Johan claps eyes on Sara.

JOHAN
(incredulous)
Sara?! What on Earth happened?

SVEN
She took issue with a whaler, sir, and they got into a fight. I watched it all unfold. She was not at fault.

JOHAN
Are you police?

SVEN
Oh, no. Nothing of the sort, sir. I'm an undertaker.

JOHAN
I see... Well, thank you for getting her back home. You want payment?

SVEN
Oh, that won't be necessary.

JOHAN
A drink, at least?

SVEN
No, I- Oh. There is something, but it's... I don't know.

JOHAN
Name it.

Sven races off.

SVEN
Could you sign this?

JOHAN
He brandishes a MARKER PEN.

JOHAN
What is your name, sir?

SVEN

Sven.

Johan scrawls his signature and returns the CD to Sven.

SVEN (CONT'D)

(in Faroese, subtitled)

Thank you.

Johan nods appreciatively.

JOHAN

Let's get you inside.

He ushers Sara into the house. Sara disappears from view. Johan shakes Sven's hand and closes the door behind him.

14 INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - EN SUITE - EVENING

14

Sara, now in the shower, rubs her hands together frantically, desperate to remove the blood.

JOHAN (O.S)

What were you playing at, Sara? It's unwise to try and upturn tradition.

SARA

Tradition... You should've heard it scream. It's barbarism.

JOHAN (O.S)

No, it's life. You mustn't intervene.

SARA

Are you just numb to it?

JOHAN (O.S)

To what?

SARA

Their suffering.

JOHAN (O.S)

No, of course not. I accept their fate is inevitable and I move on. It may be unfair, but... that's life. What else do you want me to say?

SARA

Right now, I don't want you to say anything.

JOHAN (O.S)

Have I upset you?

SARA
 (bluntly)
 No.

Johan lets out an exasperated sigh.

JOHAN
 Whatever you say.

Footsteps. The bedroom door slams shut.

Sara looks down at her hands. The blood hasn't come off...

15 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS** 15

Johan walks a step, or two, then stops, dead in his tracks, and closes his eyes.

JOHAN
 "You should've heard it scream..."

He grins, gallops along the corridor, and enters the study.

16 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT** 16

A frantic flurry of saxophone emanates from the study. Sara sits upright in bed, her teeth on edge...

She places a pillow over her mouth and screams:

SARA
 (muffled)
 ARGH!!!

The "music" drowns her out completely.

17 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - STUDY - LATER** 17

Johan is bent double over the desk. He writes at a manic pace.

He scribbles the last few notes of a new composition.

JOHAN
 (in Faroese, subtitled)
 You beauty!

He admires it, kisses it, then writes 'FROM THE BELLY OF A WHALE' atop the page in BIG, **BOLD** letters.

He lets out a sigh of immense relief and glances at his watch: just gone midnight.

He leans across his desk, grabs his calendar, and crosses off the 22nd. Today is the 23rd: the day of the performance. He smiles.

18 **EXT. TÓRSHAVN - THE PRESTIGE - EVENING** 18

Through the window, table upon table of EXCITED ATTENDEES.
The band plays the closing bars of 'Naima'.

19 **INT. THE PRESTIGE - STAGE/HOUSE - CONTINUOUS** 19

The band finish to great applause. Sara, who sits on her own table, claps louder than the rest.

Johan approaches the mic.

JOHAN
(in Faroese, subtitled)
Thank you. Thank you all so much.

The applause continues. He signals for them to quieten, which they do.

JOHAN (CONT'D)
(in Faroese, subtitled)
This song will be our last of the evening, and it-

Clamours of opposition from the audience.

JOHAN (CONT'D)
(in Faroese, subtitled)
There's only so much time in a day, is there not? Now, before we get to this last song, I - sorry, we - want to thank you for being a wonderful audience.

Thunderous applause.

JOHAN (CONT'D)
(in Faroese, subtitled)
Thank you kindly. Now, where was I? Oh, yes... This all came to me in a matter of hours last night, and this... this will be our first time playing it live. What could go wrong?

Hearty laughter from the audience. Sara, unable to understand, laughs regardless.

JOHAN (CONT'D)
(in Faroese, subtitled)
But why talk when we can play?

Roars of approval.

JOHAN (CONT'D)
(in Faroese, subtitled)
I'm glad you agree.

Applause soon turns to silence.

The PIANIST lays down the chords. Before long, they're all locked in.

It's an up-tempo piece: angular piano, dissonant sax, and a scorchingly fast rhythm section.

Johan starts to solo. It's frenzied, dissonant, and vibrant...

Sara watches on, awestruck.

Midway into his solo, Johan staggers and collapses to the ground. The music ceases.

Sara gasps and leaps to her feet.

Hushed murmurings amongst the onlookers.

SARA
Shut up, all of you!

Meanwhile, Johan shoos away his bandmates.

Sara bolts up on stage and leans down to help Johan.

JOHAN
I'm fine, Sara.

She persists.

JOHAN (CONT'D)
I'm fine, God damn it!

She walks offstage, downtrodden, as Johan clammers up onto his feet.

JOHAN (CONT'D)
(in Faroese, subtitled)
I think we should've rehearsed.

Smatterings of nervous laughter soon escalate.

20 **INT. THE PRESTIGE - GREEN ROOM - LATER**

20

Sara enters.

SARA
Johan?

He swivels round.

JOHAN
Yes?

SARA
Are you okay?

JOHAN
I told you before: I'm fine. The only thing that's hurt is my pride.

PIANIST
(in Faroese, subtitled)
I'd be careful with that if I were you. Pride's a grave sin.

JOHAN
(in Faroese, subtitled)
So is sodomy, but that never stopped you.

DRUMMER
(in Faroese, subtitled)
Calm down, ladies!

They chuckle amongst themselves.

SARA
I think you ought to go to the doctor.

JOHAN
Doctor? What? No... There's no need.

She goes to protest, but-

JOHAN (CONT'D)
Please, don't argue with me on this. I've been gigging for over twenty years, ten of those years with this band here. I never had a perfect first gig. That's probably as close as I'll come to one. It was a hiccup. Nothing more!

She doesn't buy it.

JOHAN (CONT'D)
What else do you want from me? I wrote the damned thing yesterday. I've had no time to practice. My technique, well-

BASSIST
What technique?

JOHAN
What technique?! Exactly! Let's just leave it there, shall we?

He turns back to the band.

SARA
You can't just know everything.

JOHAN
(irritated)
Well, I know how to breathe, alright?!

SARA
(softly)
Alright.

She leaves the room and closes the door behind her.

21 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM - LATER** 21

Outside, glimmers of moonlight paint

The couple are fast asleep in bed. Sara tosses and turns. She seems disturbed.

22 **EXT. SHINGLE BEACH/PIER - DAY - DREAM** 22

The landscape is thick with mist.

Sara, somnambulant, wanders along the pier.

She reaches the end, comes to a halt, and looks down... Under the water, the rigid corpse of Johan.

She screams and reaches down to grab him.

Pair after pair of DISEMBODIED ARMS hold her back. She fights against them but to no avail.

23 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT** 23

Sara wakes with a start and rubs her eyes tiredly.

24 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - DINING ROOM - AFTERNOON** 24

At the table, Sara fidgets with a FOUNTAIN PEN. Atop the table, ball after ball of SCRUNCHED-UP PAPER.

Johan strides in, book tucked under his arms, and leans over her shoulder.

JOHAN
Nothing yet?

She shrugs defeatedly and drops the pen.

JOHAN (CONT'D)
What do you want to say?

SARA
What is there to say? We're just
(MORE)

SARA (CONT'D)
repeating ourselves at this point.

JOHAN
Well, say that! You've got to be
honest, otherwise you're not going to
get anywhere.

She nods.

SARA
Thank you.

JOHAN
You're welcome. Now, if you need me,
I'll be out on the beach.

SARA
Okay.

He kisses her and promptly scarpers.

SARA (CONT'D)
See you.

Elsewhere, the door crashes shut.

Her attention turns back to the paper... She starts off:

"Dear Mother,"

She chucks the pen down. It bounces off the table and hits
the floor.

SARA (CONT'D)
(angry at herself)
Shit.

She gazes outside longingly. It calls for her, yearns for
her...

She

25 **EXT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - BEACH - MOMENTS LATER**

25

Johan props himself up on an ancient deckchair and peruses
the page.

SARA
(hollers)
Room for one more?

Johan turns to see Sara in a bikini. She struts with the
confidence of a catwalk model.

JOHAN
I'd say so.

She beams and parks herself besides Johan.

SARA
What're you reading?

JOHAN
Oh, nothing much. I've finished the chapter, anyway.

He dumps the book down besides him.

JOHAN (CONT'D)
What're you here for? Sunbathing?

SARA
Nope!

Before the word can escape her mouth, she's off!

SARA (CONT'D)
Swimming

Johan watches as she plunges herself into the sea.

26 **EXT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - SEA - LATER** 26

Sara treads water and spins round to face the beach.

SARA
HEY!!!

27 **EXT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - BEACH - CONTINUOUS** 27

Johan wanders over to the water. He notices Sara, arms all over the place, is desperate for him to notice her.

He waves and lights a cigarette.

28 **EXT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - SEA - CONTINUOUS** 28

Sara grins. She then takes in a big gulp of air, goes underwater, and expels the air from her system.

Her outline remains visible from the surface, even as she sinks further and further down...

Finally, she returns to the surface and takes a moment to catch her breath. Her eyes return to the shore. Her lip quivers.

Johan is on the ground, unconscious, nothing but a small speck in the distance...

29 **EXT/INT. AMBULANCE - LATER**

29

The ambulance hurtles down the road, alarms at full volume.

Meanwhile, inside the ambulance, Johan stirs. He monitors his surroundings... Sara sits alongside him and strokes his hand. There's a PARAMEDIC (28) with them.

He massages his forehead. His hand comes across BLOOD-STAINED BANDAGES, then an OXYGEN MASK.

JOHAN
(muffled)
What the hell?

Sara gasps and turns to him.

SARA
Johan! Oh, thank God! You collapsed on the beach. Do you remember?

JOHAN
(muffled)
What? Oh, God damn it!

He rips off the oxygen mask, much to the paramedic's chagrin.

PARAMEDIC
(with an impossibly thick accent)
Sir?

JOHAN
Sara, I'm fine. I don't know what you told these people, but-

PARAMEDIC
Please do not tamper with equipment, sir!

SARA
Johan, please. Don't be difficult.

He groans and places the oxygen mask back on. Sara fusses over the straps.

JOHAN
(muffled)
Please don't coddle me.

She turns away scornfully.

30 **INT. HOSPITAL - RADIOLOGY DEPARTMENT - EVENING**

30

Johan lies still. A RADIOGRAPHY MACHINE takes an X-ray of his chest.

31 INT. HOSPITAL - DOCTOR'S OFFICE - LATER

31

They sit with the DOCTOR (56). His skin is weather-worn.

DOCTOR
(in Faroese, subtitled)
I must say, I'm saddened to see you in
here, Johan.

JOHAN
(in Faroese, subtitled)
How so?

DOCTOR
(in Faroese, subtitled)
Well, I was looking forward to seeing
you play. But, no matter...

He opens a file, pen at the ready, then hesitates. He turns to Sara tentatively.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
We have a strict policy of
confidentiality, Mrs Jonsson. I must
ask you to leave whilst I discuss
things with your husband?

SARA
But-

DOCTOR
I'm sorry, that's just the way it is.
Unless, of course, your husband
doesn't mind?

JOHAN
It's quite alright. She can stay.

May we continue in English, though?
For her sake?

DOCTOR
Very well... Now, onto the issue in
hand. This isn't the first incident of
the sort. Is that correct?

SARA
Yes.

DOCTOR
Uh-huh. And you stayed conscious
throughout the first incident?

Sir?

He's reluctant to answer.

SARA

Yes.

DOCTOR

(sarcastically)

Thank you.

Rushed notes. Typical doctor's handwriting.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Well, we have all we need for now.

Both he and Johan rise to their feet and shake hands. Sara remains still.

JOHAN

(in Faroese, subtitled)

Thank you, sir.

DOCTOR

(in Faroese, subtitled)

Not at all. We'll give you a call when we get the results from the X-ray.

JOHAN

(in Faroese, subtitled)

What if you can't get through?

DOCTOR

(in Faroese, subtitled)

Well, we can send you your results by post, if you'd like? We also have your wife's number, if you'd allow us to talk to her about it?

Johan looks to Sara, who smiles at him meekly.

JOHAN

(in Faroese, subtitled)

That's fine.

The doctor nods. Johan offers his hand to Sara, who takes it. They leave the doctor's office.

32 **INT. STUDIO - REHEARSAL ROOM - AFTERNOON**

32

BAM! Cymbal swells, cascades of piano...

The rhythm section locks into a down-tempo groove. Long, spacious piano chords.

The pianist begins to improvise. Johan listens intently.

Elsewhere, his phone rings, but the music drowns it out.

ACT II33 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON**

33

RING, RING! RING, RING!

Sara leaps up from the sofa and picks up the phone.

SARA

Hello?

A beat.

LISBETH (V.O)

(in Faroese, subtitled)

Johan? Are you there?

SARA

Do you speak English?

LISBETH (V.O)

Yes... Who is this?

SARA

I'm Johan's wife. Who are you?

LISBETH (V.O)

Oh... I'm sorry, I- My name's Lisbeth,
I- I was married to Johan. Long time
ago... Hello? Are you still there?

SARA

Yeah... How did you get this number?

LISBETH (V.O)

Johan's doctor, he-

SARA

His doctor?

(a confused beat)

What the fuck?!

LISBETH (V.O)

I think you will want to hear.

SARA

Oh, wonderful.

(under her breath)

I can't fucking believe this.

A tense beat.

LISBETH (V.O)

They've diagnosed him with COPD.

SARA
Right... What's that?

LISBETH (V.O)
It's a... what is word? Breathing-
Respiratory condition?

SARA
Okay. Should I be panicking, or what?

LISBETH (V.O)
It's treatable. He can take steps to
lessen its impact. Does he still
smoke?

SARA
Yeah?

LISBETH (V.O)
Get him to stop. There's more he can
do, but you can sort that out. I-
forgive my asking, but... I'd like to
visit you both.

SARA
I'm sorry?

You just said it's nothing major. Why
the Hell would you want to visit?

LISBETH (V.O)
Please...

SARA
I'll talk to Johan about it.

LISBETH (V.O)
Thank you.

SARA
Yeah, yeah...

She goes to hang up.

LISBETH (V.O)
WAIT!

SARA
What?

LISBETH (V.O)
What's your name?

SARA
Sara!

She slams the phone down.

34 **INT. MS NORRONA - CABIN - MORNING** 34

A woman snoozes atop an unmade bed. She stirs and opens her eyes. LISBETH (38), well-intentioned but all too human. Dark rings surround her eyes like moats.

35 **EXT. MS NORRONA - DECK - LATER** 35

Lisbeth wanders out onto the deck, past an OLDER COUPLE, and leans against the railing.

She unwraps a fresh pack of cigarettes, removes two, and lights them both.

She takes a drag, stares off into the distance, and ruminates. Tórshavn draws ever closer...

36 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - CORRIDOR - MIDDAY** 36

JOHAN

I'm not in the mood for this right now!

SARA

I don't give a shit. Why is she still your next-of-kin?

JOHAN

It's paperwork! That's all! I just haven't sorted the paperwork.

SARA

And why not?

JOHAN

(in Faroese)
FUCKING HELL!

SARA

That's it. Raise your voice. Say it LOUDER!

SARA (CONT'D)

You just don't get it, do you?

JOHAN

No, I don't, and you know what? I'm not going to, because I'm not listening to this anymore.

SARA

Bullshit, you're not. This is
(MORE)

SARA (CONT'D)
important.

JOHAN
It's NOT! We can sort it out tomorrow,
a week from now, next month, or even
next year. What difference does it
make when the outcome is the same?
Look... I can't deal with this right
now. I'm on edge as it is, and you're
NOT helping.

SARA
Oh, you POOR baby... You want a
shoulder to cry on?

JOHAN
Don't do that.

SARA
What?

JOHAN
I don't like to be patronised. I'm an
adult, unlike you.

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK!

Johan is awash with panic. He looks to the door, afraid of
what he knows awaits him: his past. Sara scoffs, incredulous.

37 **EXT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - PORCH/FOYER - CONTINUOUS** 37

Lisbeth reaches out to knock again but withdraws...

She takes a deep breath then reaches out, tremulous...

The door flies open: Sara. Without a word, the two women
acknowledge each other.

Sara summons her inside, swings the door shut forcefully, and
locks up.

38 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER** 38

Neither of the two women know what to do with themselves.

SARA
Do you... want some coffee?

Sara hovers over the kettle.

LISBETH
Please.

Sara flicks on the kettle. Lisbeth plonks herself down on a

chair.

Sara pours out two cups of coffee, full to the brim.

SARA
Do you have milk and sugar?

LISBETH
No.

SARA
That's a relief.

Lisbeth lets out a light chuckle as Sara places the cups down on the table.

LISBETH
Thank you.

Sara sits down opposite her.

SARA
So... how was the journey?

LISBETH
Oh, it was fine. I can't handle boats, though. All that rocking... makes me nauseous.

Sher rummages through her handbag.

LISBETH (CONT'D)
Then again, could be the nerves- May I smoke?

SARA
If you must. I'll have to open a window, though. I can't stand the smell.

LISBETH
Feel free. It's your home.

Lisbeth lights her cigarette. Sara swings the window open and glares at her contemptuously.

LISBETH (CONT'D)
I'm surprised you're not used to the smell, considering you married a chimney.

Sara takes the joke as a personal affront, but laughs to cover this.

SARA
I doubt I'll ever get used to it.

LISBETH

I always found it to be rather reassuring. My dad was a chain smoker. You know of the sort, yes? Good. On weekends, when the weather was right, he would join my mother and I out on the lawn. He would unfold his chair, grab any old book, and smoke a full cigar in total silence. Then he'd leave us be.

She smiles vacantly.

LISBETH (CONT'D)

Anyway... how is he?

SARA

Oh, he's- he's fine. It just doesn't feel real yet. It won't feel real yet, of course, but... he hasn't changed a bit.

SARA

He's in the study. He's like a recluse. Won't leave unless he has to... When did you find out? About the diagnosis?

LISBETH

About an hour before I phoned you. I thought it was joke, at first. I hadn't seen Johan in so long, let alone thought about him, and suddenly... there he was, back in my life once again.

SARA

When were you married?

LISBETH

You don't know?

SARA

No. Johan doesn't mention you often. In fact, he doesn't mention you at all.

LISBETH

Oh...

Tense pause.

LISBETH (CONT'D)

I was twenty three... I met him through his music, before he had any real success. He was gigging in bars,
(MORE)

LISBETH (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 happened to visit a bar I would
 frequent. I went up to him afterwards
 and we got talking... Please, don't
 make me go on. It's horribly cliché.

SARA
 Please. I want to hear it.

LISBETH
 We were married for about five years.
 They were happy times, while they
 lasted, but marriage wasn't what he
 wanted from life... Not with me, at
 least.

Lisbeth takes a swig of her coffee. The door creeps open...

Her eyes shift nervously across the room and find Johan. For
 a moment, their eyes meet. Neither of them enjoys it. Rather,
 they endure it.

Lisbeth rifles through her pockets for a cigarette. Johan
 leans over to offer her one. Lisbeth swats his hand away.

Johan turns to Sara: he wants to speak with Lisbeth, alone.
 She gets up and leaves.

39 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS**

39

Sara pulls the door to. All agog, she studies the two figures,
 the pent-up blotches of colour, through the glass.

JOHAN (O.S)
 (in Faroese)
 My wife is by the door. Don't speak in
 English until she's gone.

LISBETH (O.S)
 (in Faroese)
 Why?

JOHAN (O.S)
 (in Faroese)
 I'd rather talk in private. It's rude
 of her to pry.

Sara sighs and leaves.

40 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

40

Johan peers over to the door, nods to Lisbeth. He notices the
 open window.

JOHAN
 Oh, for God's sake.

He storms over and forces it shut, then places himself opposite Lisbeth.

LISBETH
Come on, then. Let's talk.

Johan withdraws, from his packet, one cigarette.

LISBETH (CONT'D)
I haven't seen you in years. Give me something.

Johan lights his cigarette and sucks on it, ponders her request...

JOHAN
What are you doing here?

She snorts derisively.

LISBETH
What does it look like to you?

JOHAN
Lok, I appreciate the concern, it's... touching. But this? It's nothing. Just a bump in the road.

LISBETH
Yeah, well... you call it nothing all you like. Regardless of what it is to you, it's now of interest to me.

JOHAN
What?!

LISBETH
I knew before either of you did. I couldn't possibly have kept it to myself.

JOHAN
Of course you could've.

LISBETH
Don't be ridiculous.

JOHAN
I'm being ridiculous?

LISBETH
Yes, you are, you're- You take issue with my conscience? Where is the sense in that?

JOHAN (CONT'D)
Oh, don't even try that. No, I don't take issue with that. That's an absurd claim.

JOHAN (CONT'D)
Sense... Don't make me laugh. You've travelled God knows how far, just to check up on me?

LISBETH
I couldn't just leave you behind. What sort of a person would that make me?

JOHAN
You're not my mother, Lis. Don't waste your breath. "You and I" has long since passed. Let's not bring it into the present.

LISBETH
That's all well and good, for you, but what you fail to understand is that I never wanted it to end.

He stubs out his cigarette. Palpable tension.

41 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - DINING ROOM - LATER**

41

Johan looms over the kettle as the water bubbles.

JOHAN
You find someone?

LISBETH
Yes, I did.

JOHAN
I suppose congratulations are in order?

LISBETH
Thank you.

JOHAN
How long?

LISBETH
Six years.

JOHAN
Wonderful.

Johan pours out two cups of coffee and returns cautiously to the table. Lisbeth grabs her cup from him.

JOHAN (CONT'D)
(wryly)
Is he like me?

LISBETH

No, not at all. It's one of his finest qualities.

JOHAN

And you're happy?

LISBETH

Would I be here if I was?

JOHAN

You tell me.

A nervous beat.

LISBETH (CONT'D)

Only those who are unhappy find pleasure in digging up the past.

JOHAN

Do you know what Dante said about nostalgia?

LISBETH

No, and I don't give a shit.

JOHAN

Suit yourself.

Lisbeth scowls, her eyes like death.

JOHAN (CONT'D)

So, what's wrong?

LISBETH

I don't know, it's just- He is such a decent man, kind-hearted to an almost sickening degree. At first, that drew me to him. I knew I could settle with him, and I liked that security. Now, I don't know what it is, but- All of it, everything I have just mentioned, sickens me. I realised that I crave a challenge. I need something, anything, that will throw me off my feet. Life is so one-note with him: conversation, sex, all of it. It has been six years. There have been longer unions, but six years is still a long time. He still holds up sex as sacred, as if we are virginal teens, waiting for the moment when everyone's asleep.

"Making love..." I haven't the time for such childish notions. The words alone make me want to puke.

She drains the life from her cigarette. Her lips tremble.

JOHAN
So, what are you going to do? Are you
going to leave?

She shakes her head incessantly.

JOHAN (CONT'D)
Why?

LISBETH
People can change. He can change.

JOHAN
Oh, don't be absurd. Mark my words: if
you hold onto that belief, you are a
fool.

LISBETH
You'd know.

Her demeanour is glacial.

42 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - FOYER - LATER**

42

The two women gather in the foyer.

LISBETH
It has been so nice to meet you.

SARA
Likewise. Are you sticking round?

LISBETH
Oh, definitely! I've seen nearly
nothng of the island. I intend on
rectifying that before I leave.

SARA
Oh, you must! It's so beautiful.

LISBETH
I will... Why don't we meet sometime?
For coffee?

SARA
I don't know, I-

LISBETH
Please. I feel I know nothing about
you, and yet you've come away knowing
a great deal about me...

SARA
This isn't some sort of competition!

LISBETH
I know, but- Far as I can tell, you
don't go out much. So-

SARA
Thank you SO much.

LISBETH
Come on. I'd like to get to know you,
so I don't have to make more stupid
assumptions. Besides, I've had enough
of him for now.

Schoolyard giggles.

SARA
Go on, then.

LISBETH
Great! I'll call you?

SARA
Yeah, sure.

Lisbeth opens the door and leaves. Sara closes the door and
heads off, a spring in her step.

43 **EXT. TÓRSHAVN - COMMUNITY CENTRE - AFTERNOON**

43

The centre reeks of modernity. Outside, a notice board,
peppered with flyers of all colours and sizes.

SARA
This is the place.

She prods at a notice: PULMONARY REHABILITATION - GROUP MEET
(13.00-14.00).

SARA (CONT'D)
We've got a few minutes yet.

She wanders back over to Johan. A light breeze blows. Cars
pass by ambly.

JOHAN
I don't feel great about this.

SARA
Don't be like that. They're all in the
same boat as you.

JOHAN
I know. That's what's bothering me.

SARA
It's an hour out of your life. It's
(MORE)

SARA (CONT'D)
 nothing, just some exercises and a
 coffee... Honestly, I'd rather help
 you with the exercises, but-

JOHAN
 We're not there yet.

SARA
 Don't say "yet."

Johan smirks, roots round in his pocket for his cigarettes.

SARA (CONT'D)
 (sternly)
 DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT.

An OPEN PALM flies out in front of him.

SARA (CONT'D)
 Give them here.

JOHAN
 Ja, Mein Fuhrer.

He passes the packet to her and trundles off up the stairs
 and inside.

44 **INT. COMMUNITY CENTRE - RECEPTION - CONTINUOUS**

44

A dull-looking RECEPTIONIST (52) rests behind the front desk.
 Johan makes his way over to her.

JOHAN
 (in Faroese, subtitled)
 Excuse me? Which room is it for
 pulmonary rehabilitation?

RECEPTIONIST
 (in Faroese, subtitled)
 Go through the door. It's the first
 room on your right.

JOHAN
 (in Faroese, subtitled)
 Thank you.

He sets off. Through the entrance door, Sara watches on,
 forlornly. The receptionist spots her and, after a brief
 moment of befuddlement, promptly shoos her away.

45 **INT. COMMUNITY CENTRE - MEETING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

45

A half dozen PEOPLE, all in their sixties, sat in two rows of
 three. Johan makes an awkward addition in the second row.

A kindly PULMONARY COACH (47) sits facing them all.

PULMONARY COACH
 (in Faroese, subtitled)
 As you all will have noticed, we have
 a new attendee with us.

She gestures to Johan, who, at this point, wants to retreat
 inside himself.

PULMONARY COACH (CONT'D)
 (in Faroese, subtitled)
 This is Johan Jonsson. He's a
 saxophonist. A rather famous one, at
 that.

The requisite "oohs" and "aahs" follow.

PULMONARY COACH (CONT'D)
 (in Faroese, subtitled)
 Johan will be joining us in the coming
 weeks and months, to see how pulmonary
 rehabilitation can help him.

She notices his blatant hesitancy.

PULMONARY COACH (CONT'D)
 (in Faroese, subtitled)
 It may not seem like much now, but it
 can really make a difference. Everyone
 here would attest to that. All you
 have to do is put your mind to it.
 Okay?

Johan nods. The coach smiles a sickly-sweet smile.

PULMONARY COACH (CONT'D)
 (in Faroese, subtitled)
 Good. Now, before we move onto some
 more... intensive exercises, we need
 to warm up. So, let's start with our
 legs. Everyone, follow along with me.

She extends one leg, wiggles her foot about, then repeats
 with the other leg. The attendees mimic her like sheep.

PULMONARY COACH (CONT'D)
 (in Faroese, subtitled)
 Good. Now, let's move onto our arms.
 Stretch up... and down.

Johan gawks at them all. He's not like these people...

46 **EXT. COMMUNITY CENTRE - LATER**

46

Three ATTENDEES leave, polystyrene cups in hand.

Johan barges past them and heads off in the opposite direction. He whips out his phone and presses it to his ear.

SARA (V.O)
What is it?

JOHAN
I'm not going back there. Ever.

Silence. Johan stops dead in his tracks.

JOHAN (CONT'D)
Come on. Give me an answer, for God's sake.

SARA (V.O)
Okay.

He hangs up and carries on his way.

47 **INT. STUDIO - REHEARSAL ROOM - AFTERNOON**

47

The drummer tunes his kit. The bassist plays a walking bassline.

PIANIST
(in Faroese, subtitled)
Are you sure this is wise?

JOHAN
(in Faroese, subtitled)
Of course. I just- Show a little restraint. That's all there is to it.

Everyone's ready, at last.

JOHAN (CONT'D)
(in Faroese, subtitled)
Right, we'll try something a little slower. Let's start in Bb and see where it takes us.

The drummer lays down a sparse groove, half-time swing.

48 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - LATER**

48

RING, RING! RING, RING!

Sara bolts into view and picks up the phone.

SARA
Hello?

LISBETH (V.O)
Hi, Sara. I was wondering if you were free for that coffee?

SARA
 Sure, why not? Johan's at rehearsals,
 and I have nothing better to do.

LISBETH (V.O)
 Well, great. There is a cafe just down
 the way... the Brell?

SARA
 I know the place.

LISBETH (V.O)
 Meet me in an hour?

SARA
 Okay. Bye.

She places the phone down.

49 **INT. STUDIO - REHEARSAL ROOM - AFTERNOON** 49

The band improvise. Johan rocks back and forth eagerly.
 He begins. He plays slowly, contemplatively...

50 **EXT. BRELL CAFE - LATER** 50

The two ladies sit outside a quaint little cafe.

SARA
 So, come on. What did you want to talk
 about?

LISBETH
 You. I want to talk about you.

SARA
 Go on, then.

Lisbeth lights a cigarette and blows the smoke away from
 Sara.

LISBETH
 Where are you from? England?

SARA
 Yes. My accent used to be quite thick.
 Johan always had a strong grasp of
 English, but even he had difficulty
 understanding me from time to time...

LISBETH
 Did you meet him in England? Did you
 travel, or-

SARA

I met him whilst in England. I was a fan of his long before I met him. I loved his music.

LISBETH

You're a bit young for jazz, aren't you?

SARA

No, I don't think so. What makes you say that?

Lisbeth shrugs.

SARA (CONT'D)

Anyway, he was set to do a show at the Barbican, this... concert hall place. The place was packed. I barely managed to get a seat. I was only young. I'd never travelled into London by myself. I think I got lost on the tube at least twice, but I made it. When he finally appeared, we all went crazy. It was marvellous. He hung round in the lobby after the show. People swarmed him, but he was so kind. I went to him, started gushing, and he stopped me. He said he saw me in the crowd and thought I was beautiful. He saw me...

LISBETH

I can't listen to jazz anymore, it just... drives me up the wall. I can't separate the art from the artist. Those musicians, the Johans of this world... they think they have the answers. That crowd of people, that's who he is playing for. He's playing for those who think they have everything.

SARA

You're wrong.

LISBETH

And what do you know about it?

SARA

Not much, but there's one thing I know for certain. I feel things when I hear him play. I don't know, I feel. To me, that's all that matters.

Lisbeth takes a sip of coffee.

51 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - FOYER/LIVING ROOM - EVENING** 51

The front door bursts open. Johan skips into the living room.

SARA
What's gotten into you?

JOHAN
Inspiration, my dear! I've found it,
at last.

SARA
That's wonderful. I met Lisbeth today,
at the-

Johan places a finger to her lips.

SARA (CONT'D)
Uh-

He locks her into a tight embrace. He lifts her up and whisks her away.

52 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER** 52

Johan throws her down onto the bed and their lips lock once more.

They undress each other in a frenzy. They laugh in between the kisses.

He flips her over, presses her face down onto the pillow. She giggles excitedly and waits expectantly.

She moans as Johan takes her, sways rhythmically... The bed rocks back and forth, back, and forth...

Johan's breathing becomes laboured.

Everything comes to an abrupt stop. Johan gasps for air.

Sara does not move, for she is uncertain...

She lifts her head steadily and turns to face Johan.

53 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - MIDDAY** 53

Johan sits bolt upright in a chair. Sara drags a chair, places it opposite him. Johan shuffles about.

JOHAN
Do we have a chair that's more
uncomfortable?

SARA
I'm sorry, but please... don't
(MORE)

SARA (CONT'D)
complain. It's either this, or-

JOHAN
I know, I know. I don't suppose
suicide's an option?

Sara chuckles politely.

SARA
Not on my watch, no. These are just
warmups, remember? Five minutes or so,
and then --

SARA (CONT'D)
-- half an hour of exercise.

JOHAN
Half an hour of exercise! I
know the routine. I've had
ample bloody practice.

SARA (CONT'D)
Good.

Sara takes a seat.

SARA (CONT'D)
We'll start with some stretches. Let's
do... the shoulders. Stretch them up
and down, like this.

She rolls her shoulders back and forth, up, and down. He's
reluctant.

SARA (CONT'D)
Come on.

He gives in.

SARA (CONT'D)
There we are. Now, hold out your arms
like this --

She extends her arms and claps her hands together. He does
the same, albeit with much less enthusiasm.

SARA (CONT'D)
-- and raise them, high as you can.

She raises her arms to the Heavens. Johan does too, but soon,
they flop back down onto his legs.

SARA (CONT'D)
What?!

JOHAN
I can't do this.

SARA
You're not tired?

JOHAN
No, not at all. I just can't do this.

SARA
This?

JOHAN
This! All of this! These... stupid exercises, and you, just sitting there, talking to me like I'm an infant!

SARA
I'm not!

JOHAN
Yes, you are. You're just the same as the others. For God's sake, even children are above this...

SARA
Well, excuse me for trying! I don't have to help, but I WANT to, and I thought you'd appreciate that.

JOHAN
I DO appreciate it, but-

SARA
This is the thanks I get?

JOHAN
Oh, to Hell with this.

Johan rises up, out of his chair, and stretches himself right out.

JOHAN (CONT'D)
There. I'm done.

He departs dramatically.

54 INT. CONCERT HALL - THE HOUSE - DREAM

54

A stream of SPECTATORS flood the house. A pleasant hum of chatter.

ANNOUNCER (V.O)
(over the tannoy)
The performance will begin momentarily. Everyone, please take to your seats. Once again, can audience members please take to their seats?

The lights dim. The audience hushes. You could hear a pin drop.

55 **INT. CONCERT HALL - THE WINGS/STAGE - CONTINUOUS** 55

Meanwhile, a YOUNG JOHAN (8), dressed to the nines and ever so nervous, cradles his ALTO SAX.

He traipses out onto the stage to WILD APPLAUSE. He bows to the audience, loses his footing in the process, and stumbles.

The PIANIST plays the intro to 'From the Belly of a Whale'. The rhythm section locks in.

The young Johan is baffled: what is this? He attempts to play. No sound escapes...

He exchanges worried glances with his band, but receives little sympathy.

He looks out to the audience, eyes wide with fear. Their expressions are blank, lifeless.

He breaks down. The music peeters out.

The audience says nothing. Their faces, on the other hand, tell all.

Johan plucks up the courage to face them, but there's no-one there. In their place is Sara, who wears a grin and the garb of the Virgin Mother.

SARA
(subtitled)
Poor little lamb.

Her voice is barely audible. She beckons to Johan.

SARA (CONT'D)
(subtitled)
Come.

Johan reaches out to her. His LITTLE HAND waggles in the air...

56 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT** 56

Johan wakes with a start and fights for air. Sweat drips from his every pore.

SARA
What is it? What's the matter?

He sighs and mops his brow with his pyjama sleeve.

JOHAN
It's nothing... Just a nightmare.

He collapses back onto the pillow.

Sara brushes his cheek lightly, kisses it, and rests her head on his chest.

SARA
Are you afraid?

JOHAN
Let's not do this now.

He turns over onto his side.

57 INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM - LATER

57

Pitch black. Bizarre sounds cut through the darkness. Gargles.

JOHAN (O.S)
(strained)
SARA?!

SARA (O.S)
Johan?

A HAND floats through the darkness and switches the bedside light on. Sara turns to see Johan. He's blue in the face, unable to draw breath.

SARA (CONT'D)
JOHAN!

She leans over him as he writhes about. She fusses over him, strokes his cheek...

SARA (CONT'D)
It's okay. It's okay. I'm here. Calm down. Now breathe, Johan!

JOHAN
CAN'T!

SARA
What? Don't be silly. Of course you can, you-

JOHAN
SHUT UP! AMBULANCE!

Reality sets in for Sara.

58 **INT. HOSPITAL - LABYRINTH OF CORRIDORS - LATER** 58

A swarm of SURGEONS push Johan, who lies unconscious on a hospital bed, down a labyrinth of corridors.

Sara holds onto his LIMP HAND and races alongside the bed. Her eyes are red, full of tears.

59 **INT. OPERATING THEATRE - LATER** 59

Johan lies atop the operating table. HANDS clamp down an OXYGEN MASK.

HEAD SURGEON

Scalpel.

The SCALPEL pierces the flesh of his neck. Blood spurts out. The head surgeon hastily inserts a TUBE.

60 **INT. WAITING AREA - EARLY MORNING** 60

The walls are a sickly white. The lights flicker. Sara twiddles her thumbs. Her eyes race around the room. There's people all around, but they don't matter to her.

She notices a BLODY-FACED MAN (55). A thin crust of blood peppers the rumpled flesh of his nose. He hawks up a glob into a CARDBOARD KIDNEY DISH.

Opposite her, a MOTHER and SON (33 & 8). The son cradles his knee. The mother picks him up, kisses his knee, and places him gently on her lap.

A NURSE walks towards Sara, signals for her to follow. The two of them leave...

61 **INT. ICU WARD/JOHAN'S ROOM - LATER** 61

Dimly lit. Oppressive atmosphere. NURSES, indiscriminate from one another, rush to and fro.

Through the windows, the sun rears its ugly head.

Johan is in bed, hooked up to a ventilator. His breathing, if you can even call it that, is strained. Sara strokes his forehead...

The doctor approaches Sara.

SARA

Hi.

DOCTOR

How are you holding up?

SARA
I'm okay. Just a bit shaken up.

DOCTOR
I understand.

He pats her shoulder.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
May I be frank with you?

SARA
Of course.

DOCTOR
If we had gotten to him any later,
there's every possibility you would
have lost your husband. I hope you
understand that.

She nods.

SARA
When can I take him home?

DOCTOR
I'm sorry?!

SARA
I want to take him home.

DOCTOR
No, no, a thousand times, no... You
don't just walk off a tracheostomy.

SARA
Well, I want him out of here as soon
as possible. He hates hospitals.

DOCTOR
So does everyone, my dear. Have you
stopped to consider the impact of this
procedure? Your husband is not the
same man he was yesterday. He's not
the same man he was six hours ago. He
needs time to recover.

SARA
I understand that, but I want to care
for my husband. I want him home.

DOCTOR
Your dedication is certainly touching,
but please... listen to me. When he
has fully adjusted, you could consider
a home set up? Be patient.

SARA
Of course. Thank you, doctor.

He leaves. Sara turns back to Johan and kisses his forehead.

62 **INT. HOSPITAL - LOBBY - AFTERNOON**

62

A constant flow of people whiz past a row of payphones. Sara picks one up, inserts some loose change, and dials.

LISBETH (V.O)
Hello?

SARA
Lisbeth?

LISBETH (V.O)
Sara? I must have called... I don't
know how many times.
(hushed, to someone else)
Get my bags. Now!
(back to Sara)
Where've you been?

SARA
I'm uh- at the hospital.

LISBETH (V.O)
Oh... What happened?

A beat.

SARA
Johan took a turn for the worse.
They've given him a tracheostomy.

LISBETH (V.O)
Fuck.

SARA
Yeah. We're still in the hospital.
It's horrible in here. I hate it.

LISBETH (V.O)
Well, no-one likes hospitals, do they?

SARA
No, of course not. On the plus side,
he's finally quit smoking.

They laugh together.

LISBETH (V.O)
Why don't I come and visit again? When
you're home, that is, out of that
wretched place.

SARA
Yeah. Yeah, I'd like that.

LISBETH (V.O)
Ring whenever, okay?

SARA
Thank you.

LISBETH (V.O)
That's alright. Goodbye.

Sara puts the phone down and bolts.

63 **INT. ICU WARD/JOHAN'S ROOM - LATER**

63

Two NURSES swarm Johan.

NURSE #1
(in Faroese, subtitled)
Can you count for me again, Johan?

JOHAN
(in Faroese, subtitled)
1...
2...
3...
4...
5...

He speaks on an out breath. No sound escapes.

NURSE #2
That's a good effort, Johan.

He scowls at her resentfully. Sara enters the room. The nurses look up briefly and exchange polite smiles with her.

SARA
How's he doing?

NURSE #1
Very well. His speech will need work,
but it's certainly within the realms
of possibility.

SARA
That's great. Thank you both.

The two nurses leave. Sara takes a seat beside Johan.

SARA (CONT'D)
Did you hear that?

JOHAN
(breathily)
Yes.

SARA
Isn't that good news?

He nods apathetically.

SARA (CONT'D)
Yeah... You keep this up, you'll be
back home before you know it.

64 INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - FOYER/CORRIDOR - NIGHT

64

A thick MOUND OF LETTERS rests on the DOORMAT. The door
creaks open: Sara. She spots the letters, stops, and bends
down.

She examines them. They're all from one person. They're all
from her...

She drops the letters and wanders off.

In the corridor, she notices her bedroom door is open.
Through the open door, she sees their bed...

65 INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM/CORRIDOR - MORNING

65

Sara stands at the end of her marital bed. In this moment, it
feels so small.

Footsteps...

Johan's bandmates enter. Sara snaps out of her trance and
stands aside.

Two of them take the mattress, turn it on its side, and haul
it along the corridor, whilst the other unscrews brackets and
removes loose components.

66 INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM/CORRIDOR - NIGHT

66

The couple's old bed is gone. In its place, a HOSPITAL BED,
one that is every possible shade of white and grey. Two
HOSPITAL WORKERS stand aside it.

Sara watches on from the doorway.

One of them adjusts a fitting. The other grabs the REMOTE
from atop the bed and wanders over to Sara.

HOSPITAL WORKER #1
 He can use this to adjust his position
 whilst he's in bed. It's all fairly
 rudimentary: incline, decline, et
 cetera... There's a manual, just in
 case, but I doubt you'll need it.

He turns to his colleague.

HOSPITAL WORKER #1 (CONT'D)
 Could you go fetch the ventilator?
 It's out in the corridor.

His colleague leaps to his feet and runs off.

HOSPITAL WORKER #2 (O.S.)
 (in Faroese)
 Will you help me with this?

He sighs and runs off after his colleague... Sara watches
 them move the ventilator at a snail's pace.

HOSPITAL WORKER #1
 Will you help us?

Sara sprints down the corridor and takes some of the weight.
 The two men pant.

HOSPITAL WORKER #2
 Thank you!

The two men laugh. Sara smiles.

67 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM - EVENING**

67

Sara toys with a SPEECH VALVE in between GLOVED HANDS. She
 looks to Johan, who has a fortnight's stubble.

SARA
 Lift your head up.

Johan does so. Sara removes the AIR TUBE, attaches the SPEECH
 VALVE.

SARA (CONT'D)
 Are you comfortable?

He nods.

SARA (CONT'D)
 Good. Okay... Count for me.

JOHAN
 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

His speech is still breathy, but he has a voice.

Sara's face lights up.

SARA
What's your name?

JOHAN
Johan.

SARA
What's my name?

JOHAN
Sara.

She smiles giddily, kisses his forehead, and leaps to her feet. She dances about, claps her hands.

JOHAN (CONT'D)
Sara...
(gravely)
SARA.

SARA
(cheerily)
What?

JOHAN
Please... Hire someone... Care...
Worker...

Her face drops. She laughs in disbelief.

68 **EXT/INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - PORCH/FOYER - MORNING**

68

Lisbeth marches up the steps, knocks confidently... Sara invites her in. The door closes.

Inside, Lisbeth removes her coat.

SARA
How are you?

LISBETH
I've been better, that's for sure.

SARA
How was the ferry?

LISBETH
Ghastly. I need some coffee. I just feel... eurgh, but, no matter. Where is he?

SARA
He's in the bedroom. I'll get you that coffee, then you can see him.

LISBETH

Okay.

Sara takes her coat and they hurry away.

69 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - CORRIDOR - LATER**

69

The two of them loiter by the bedroom door.

LISBETH

One minute.

SARA

Are you okay?

LISBETH

Yes, just- I need a moment.

She takes deep breaths, psyches herself up.

LISBETH (CONT'D)

Okay.

SARA

Are you sure?

LISBETH

Absolutely not.

They laugh nervously. Lisbeth becomes stoic.

LISBETH (CONT'D)

Open the door.

Sara pushes the door open.

70 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

70

Johan looks up from his NOTEPAD, turns to face the door.
Lisbeth suppresses a gasp and walks inside.

LISBETH

Hi.

SARA

Oh, you need a seat.

Sara scuttles off.

LISBETH

Oh, please don't-

Too late. She's all alone with Johan...

LISBETH (CONT'D)

Um-

She approaches hesitantly, stands beside the bed.

LISBETH (CONT'D)
How do you feel?
(a beat)
Are you okay?

Nothing. She sighs.

LISBETH (CONT'D)
Fine.

Sara strolls in, places a chair behind Lisbeth.

SARA
There you are.

LISBETH
Thank you, but I think I'll stand for
now. I- I thought he was able to talk?

SARA
Oh, he is. Must've run out of things
to say?

Sara chucks herself down onto her chair.

LISBETH
You look shattered.

SARA
Thanks. I feel it, too.

LISBETH
I'm not surprised. Are you the only
one looking after him?

SARA
Has he been talking to you?

LISBETH
No. Why?

SARA
He thinks it's bad for me to do all
this. He wants me to hire someone. I
don't want to, so we... butted heads a
little.

LISBETH
I see. I know it's not my place,
but... why is that a problem?

SARA
Because I like to think I know what's
best for him.

LISBETH
Please, don't misconstrue my words,
it's just... such an undertaking.

SARA
I know that. I'm not an idiot. It's
just that, whenever people doubt me,
it sets off something deep inside, and
I'll do anything to prove them wrong.

Lisbeth stares at her in quiet disbelief.

LISBETH
Tell me you're joking.

SARA
What?

LISBETH
Is that what this is all about? You,
having the last laugh?

SARA
That's not what I meant.

LISBETH
But that's what you said. Jesus
Christ... This isn't child's play,
Sara. This is life and death.

SARA
I know!

Lisbeth scoffs.

LISBETH
Do you? Really? You wouldn't say
something so petty if you did.

Sara bites her tongue.

SARA
We're not doing this in here.

She jumps to her feet, storms out the room. Lisbeth is about
to follow when --

JOHAN
-- WAIT!

She returns to Johan's side. He rips out a PIECE OF PAPER
from the notepad and holds it to her.

JOHAN (CONT'D)
POCKET.

She pockets it and leaves.

71 INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

71

Sara stands, a gunslinger in a western, ready for a fight. Lisbeth rears her head.

SARA

You took your time.

LISBETH

He asked me to say goodbye before I leave.

SARA

Oh. Well, don't worry. I shan't keep you.

LISBETH

Sara, you've got to understand-

SARA

No, YOU'VE got to understand! What right do you have to tell me how to live my life?! What the fuck do you know anymore? You've been divorced TEN YEARS!

LISBETH

But-

SARA

You can shut up, I haven't finished. Who are you with right now, that... whatshisname? You didn't mention it. Not even to Johan... I can only guess as to why.

LISBETH

What are you saying?

SARA

Oh, come on. He doesn't exist. He's not real. Never has been. Never will be.

LISBETH

Unbelievable.

SARA

I knew it!

LISBETH

You really are just a scared little girl.

SARA
I KNEW IT!

LISBETH
For God's sakes, Sara. What do you
have to prove?

SARA
I have EVERYTHING to prove! That's all
life is: proof! Everything we do,
everything we leave behind... it's all
proof! I'd like to think I've started
towards that. I've found someone I
love. I care for him, tend for him
when he cannot himself, and yet, it's
like the whole world is against me!

LISBETH
(calmly)
No-one's against you, Sara. The
world's not like that.

SARA
That's rich. You're the competition!

LISBETH
What?
(in Faroese)
OH, FUCKING HELL!

SARA
Brush it off all you want! It means
something.

LISBETH
(sarcastically)
Yes, Sara. We are still madly in love
with each other. I've kept my feelings
hidden for a long time, but I'm glad
they're out in the open.

SARA
Well, at least you're being honest
now.

LISBETH
Oh, to Hell with this. I will never
get through to you. I don't know how
he'll ever manage it.

She stomps off. Sara follows in hot pursuit.

72 **INT/EXT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - FOYER/PORCH - CONTINUOUS**

72

Lisbeth heads for the door.

SARA
(accusatory)
Didn't you want to say goodbye?

LISBETH
No, I'll leave you two alone. That's
what you'd prefer, isn't it?

She yanks the door open, goes to leave, but, for some reason,
stops herself. She closes the door, unable to face Sara.

LISBETH (CONT'D)
You were wrong about my husband, by
the way. He was real.

SARA
What? Dead, is he?

LISBETH
To me, he is.

SARA
I'm sorry.

LISBETH
Don't bother with that.

She sighs resignedly.

LISBETH (CONT'D)
If you need me, you can call. Just...
leave it for a few days, at least.

She opens the door and walks out of the house, out of their
lives.

SARA
Good riddance.

She slams the door shut.

Outside, on the porch, Lisbeth freezes in place...

She reaches deep into her pocket and unfurls the note. It
reads: HIRE SOMEONE! DON'T TELL SARA!

73 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM - AFTERNOON**

73

Sara gives Johan a bed bath. She soaks a FLANNEL and pats
down his arms.

JOHAN
Softer.

SARA
Sorry.

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK!

Sara turns.

SARA (CONT'D)
Back in a minute.

She gets up and leaves the room. His gaze follows her knowingly.

74 **INT/EXT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - FOYER/PORCH - CONTINUOUS** 74

A short and stout silhouette lurks behind the glass. Sara opens the door to see a CARE WORKER (47): leathery skin, eyes that know Death.

SARA
Yes?

CARE WORKER
This is the home of Johan Jonsson?

Sara nods.

CARE WORKER
I am carer. You uh- must be Lisbeth?

SARA
NO. Sorry, Lisbeth?

CARE WORKER
Yes.

SARA
Lisbeth... she's my sister.

CARE WORKER
Your sister?

SARA
Yes, my... MUCH OLDER sister. I don't see her that often. I think we need to talk this through. Come in.

The care worker nods appreciately. Sara allows her to enter.

75 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - DINING ROOM - AFTERNOON** 75

Sara places the kettle on the hob and sits opposite the care worker.

SARA
Right, here's the thing. I don't want to hire a carer.

CARE WORKER
Oh? Your sister said you were worn out.

SARA
(belligerently)
That's untrue.

CARE WORKER
She said you'd be belligerent, too. In fact, she paid for some dates upfront.

The kettle starts to whistle.

SARA
Well, I refuse. Give her the money back?

CARE WORKER
I'm afraid that's not how it works. Transactions and their outcomes are between the client and myself. Why don't you let me do my job and see how you feel? Okay?

A beat.

SARA
(begrudgingly)
Tea or coffee?

The whistle reaches its peak.

76 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - LATER**

76

Sara paces back and forth, presses the phone to her ear.

LISBETH (V.O)
Yes? Who is this?

SARA
What do you think you're playing at?

LISBETH (V.O)
I was trying to help him.

SARA
Nonsense. You're trying to take over.

LISBETH (V.O)
You're a grown woman, Sara. Stop thinking like a child. Johan asked me to do it. Okay? It should be his choice, not yours.

SARA
Do I have NO say in how I care for MY
husband?

LISBETH (V.O)
Yes! You have a say! But he's not a
vegetable, for God's sakes. He still
has his mind. Please, Sara. Don't
strip him of that.

SARA
Can you understand why this really
fucks me off?

LISBETH (V.O)
Because you're listening to no-one but
yourself.

Lisbeth hangs up. Sara throws the phone down.

77 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM - AFTERNOON**

77

The care worker gives Johan a bed bath. She's competent but
cold. A BOWL of warm water rests on her lap.

The door is ajar. Sara peers through the gap.

The care worker clocks this, rolls her eyes, but says
nothing. Instead, she continues with the task in hand.

SARA (O.S)
He likes it when you're softer with
the towel.

CARE WORKER
Sara. Come in here.

SARA
Huh?

CARE WORKER
Just for a moment?

Sara enters gingerly.

CARE WORKER (CONT'D)
I get it.

SARA
Get what?

CARE WORKER
I understand where you're coming from.
Really, I do, but please... let me do
my job.

SARA

But-

CARE WORKER

No. None of that. Go.

Sara sulks, turns on her heel, and leaves.

JOHAN

Thank... you...

The care worker turns back to Johan and smiles.

CARE WORKER

She cares for you deeply. You are a lucky man.

She soaks his forehead with a WET FLANNEL.

78 **EXT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - SEA - LATER**

78

Sara slices through the water like a scythe...

She comes across a small STACK OF ROCKS and changes course.

She clambers up onto the rocks. The craggly surface punctures the flesh of her feet.

She finds purchase, stands tall, and peers off into the distance: the MS NORRONA disappears from view.

She GASPS!

SARA

Shit.

Blood pours from her foot. She gazes back at the house. In her mind's eye, Johan waves to her from the beach and lights a cigarette.

She examines the gash on her foot and sits down. She spritzes it with water.

79 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - DINING ROOM/LIVING ROOM/FOYER - LATER**

79

Sara plants her foot up on a chair.

She unspools some BANDAGES and wraps her foot up awkwardly.

She hobbles into the living room and falls onto the sofa. She spreads herself out, makes herself comfortable. Her leg hangs off the end.

She looks to a BROKEN CLOCK on the mantelpiece and grumbles. She hobbles over to it and tries to get it going: no luck.

Meanwhile, a door opens.

SARA
(hollers)
I'm in the living room!

The care worker enters.

CARE WORKER
What've you done to yourself?!

SARA
It's nothing. I was being reckless.

CARE WORKER
May I?

SARA
Yes! Sorry.

The care worker speeds past Sara, who struggles to keep up.

In the foyer, they stop.

CARE WORKER
I'll see you Friday?

SARA
Yeah, that's fine.

They shake hands.

80 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM/CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER** 80

Sara enters and shuts the bedroom door.

SARA
What did you make of her?

JOHAN
Good...

SARA
Good?

JOHAN
Yes... Why?

SARA
Didn't she seem... cold?

Johan shakes his head.

JOHAN
I... like her...

SARA
You do, huh?

He nods, then shuffles about in bed.

SARA (CONT'D)
Tired?

He nods again. Sara tucks him in and kisses him.

SARA (CONT'D)
I'll leave you be.

Johan smiles and closes his eyes. Sara hotfoots out of there.

Once in the corridor, she stops. She looks back to the room, back to Johan... Her face twists with jealousy.

81 **EXT/INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - DRIVEWAY/PORCH/FOYER - AFTERNOON** 81

The care worker parks up outside the Jonsson residence, exits her car, and walks up to the porch. She knocks brashly on the door.

SARA
I want you to leave.

CARE WORKER
I'm sorry?

SARA
You heard me. I want you out of the door, and I don't want you to come back.

CARE WORKER
Have I done something wrong?

SARA
Not exactly.

CARE WORKER
Then... what is this about?

A beat.

CARE WORKER (CONT'D)
This goes against our agreement. I still have two dates booked in.

SARA
You and Lisbeth made the agreement. I never agreed to anything. I don't care about the circumstances, I just- I can't go on with this. How much do those two dates come to?

SARA (CONT'D)
 (a beat)
 Come on, how much? Whatever it was,
 I'll double it...

She takes out her wallet, withdraws a wad of cash, and wafts it in front of the care worker.

SARA (CONT'D)
 Here. Take it.

CARE WORKER
 Keep your money. I won't be coming
 back.

She turns around, gets back in her car, and hurtles back down the road. Sara watches her go with a sardonic smile.

82 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - DINING ROOM - MORNING** 82

PING!

A single piece of toast flies out of the toaster, but a HAND catches it: Sara's hand.

She spreads a generous amount of jam atop the toast and takes a bite.

83 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM - INTERCUT** 83

Johan lies awake, lost in thought: daydreaming, perhaps?

He coughs...

He heaves...

He wheezes...

Elsewhere, Sara looks up from her toast.

SARA
 Johan?

The dreadful noises continue.

JOHAN (O.S)
 (spluttering)
 Sara!

She drops her toast and sprints out of the dining room.

She bursts through the bedroom door, just as Johan tugs his AIR TUBE out. Thick pools of BLOOD spurt from the AIR TUBE. It paints the sheets.

SARA
Oh, fuck!

She leans over him, fusses over the wound. The HISS of the AIR PIPE gets louder and louder!

HARD CUT TO:

84 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT** 84

Johan lies in bed. Sara stands at the end of the bed, as if his nemesis. He scowls at her, his eyes full of disdain.

85 **EXT/INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - PORCH/FOYER - AFTERNOON** 85

The HAND of a woman pummels the front door! The woman leaves it a moment, then does it again.

SARA (O.S)
Alright, give me a minute!

Sara opens the door to see IDA (55).

SARA
Mum.

IDA
Sara.

Unbearable pause.

IDA (CONT'D)
Aren't you going to invite me in?

SARA
Yes. Yes, of course.

Sara gives way.

IDA
(under her breath)
Such good manners.

Ida barges past and removes her coat.

IDA (CONT'D)
You haven't responded to any of my letters.

Sara closes the door.

SARA
I've been busy.

IDA
Busy, busy, always busy...

SARA
What are you doing here?

IDA
Oh, it's nice to see you, too.

SARA
That's not what I meant and you know it.

IDA
I was worried about you, Sara.

SARA
But, why?

IDA
I know we've had our differences, you and I, but you're still my daughter.

Sara smiles a slight smile, but tries desperately to hide it.

IDA (CONT'D)
God, it's deathly quiet in here. I assume he's out?

SARA
(under her breath)
Shit.

IDA
LANGUAGE.

SARA
There's something I haven't told you.

She takes her mother by the shoulder and guides her away.

86 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

86

The two women ambush Johan, who lies asleep. The spectral drone of the ventilator haunts the scene.

IDA
My God... When did this happen?

SARA
It's been months now.

IDA
Months... and you never thought to tell me?

SARA
I'm sorry, mum. I just got so caught up in everything.

IDA
I guess... Can he talk?

SARA
He can, but he chooses not to.

IDA
What? Why?

SARA
No clue.

IDA
Uh-huh. And do you, uh, have assistance?

SARA
No.

IDA
No?!

SARA
(under her breath)
For fuck's sake.

IDA
LANGUAGE!

SARA
Alright, just- Don't go there. It's all I get from anybody.

IDA
And why do you think that is?

SARA
Mum, don't go there.

IDA
Sara, come on! You need to start living in the real world.

SARA
(snappily)
Fine. Years, maybe?

IDA
And you plan on keeping this up for years?

SARA
I'll keep this up until the day I die.

IDA
You're acting a fool. Sara, I don't
(MORE)

IDA (CONT'D)
 want you throwing your life away
 because of some man.

SARA
 I love him, mum! Why can't you see
 that?

IDA
 This, whatever this actually is, isn't
 love. You're just making him suffer.

SARA
 Oh, really? How's Dad? How's the man
 YOU threw YOUR life away for?

Ida slaps her! Johan opens his eyes, but quickly closes them,
 lest anyone notice.

Sara massages her cheek. Her lip wobbles.

IDA
 I know. I've made mistakes. At least I
 have the guts to acknowledge them.
 You, on the other hand... you could
 never. You don't know what love is,
 and, if you keep up this charade, you
 never will.

A beat.

IDA (CONT'D)
 I shouldn't have come. We're
 combustible, you and I. I think the
 distance was doing us some good.

She turns slowly and leaves the room.

SARA
 Mum?

Sara chases after her like a lost child.

87 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - CORRIDOR/STUDY CONTINUOUS**

87

Sara exits the bedroom.

SARA
 Mum!

Ida does not concede. She continues along the corridor and
 disappears from sight.

SARA (CONT'D)
 FUCK!

She punches the wall, regrets it immediately, and cradles her injured hand...

Sara then turns back to the bedroom and peers through the open door. Far as she can tell, Johan is still fast asleep.

She mulls over what to do... BINGO!

She enters the study to see his SAXOPHONE. She takes it in her hands and hugs it. The dust coats her shirt.

She flicks through Johan's record collection and lands on one of his solo projects. She studies the cover art, feels the texture of the sleeve, and unsheathes the vinyl from within.

88 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

88

Elsewhere, the record starts to spin.

His head swivels round to see Sara. She mimes along with his sax. He smiles.

She prances about the room like a loon. She drops to her knees and "plays" her heart out.

Suddenly, Johan breaks down. Tears stream down his face, tears he tries to hide.

Gradually, she comes to a standstill.

SARA
(jokingly)
Come on. I'm not that bad, am I?

He cowers.

SARA (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. I thought you'd like it.

He rubs his puffy red eyes.

SARA (CONT'D)
What is it?

Pregnant pause.

JOHAN
I can't do this.

SARA
I can stop, if you like?

JOHAN
No! God...

He shields his eyes from view.

SARA
(uneasily)
What's the matter?

JOHAN
I can't... pretend... anymore...
Pretend... that I... am okay...

SARA
You don't have to pretend. I'm here
to-

JOHAN
Sara... Please... don't talk...
Listen...

SARA
Course. I'm listening.

JOHAN
Kill... me...

Prolonged silence.

SARA
What?

He looks at her as if to say: "you heard."

SARA (CONT'D)
You don't mean that.

JOHAN
This... isn't life...

SARA
"Isn't life?" Of course it's life,
you-

JOHAN
Sara...

She stops.

JOHAN (CONT'D)
I... can't... live... I... just...
exist...

SARA
Don't give me philosophy now. I don't
need it...

She paces back and forth, unable to settle. He watches her
every step.

SARA (CONT'D)
You're actually serious, aren't you?

She stops at the end of the bed and stares him down.

SARA (CONT'D)
Aren't you?!

JOHAN
Yes...

SARA
Fuck.

She starts to roam. Her aimless movements reflect her mood.

SARA (CONT'D)
I don't know what to say. What the fuck are you meant to say? I don't know, uh- How long have you felt this way?

JOHAN
Some time...

SARA
What does that mean? Days? Weeks? Months?

JOHAN
Yes...

SARA
Shit! Fuck! How am I supposed to take that? Huh? Did you, in your infinite wisdom, think about how I would feel? All this time I've spent trying to make your life bearable... it wasn't worth shit to you. Should I have smothered you, forced the pillow down until there was nothing left? Nothing for you to complain about? Would you have appreciated that? No... I bet you'd have found fault in me even then.

JOHAN
Sara...

SARA
You never appreciated anything I did. And yet, I did it anyway. Why? Because I loved you. You got your ex wife, your EX FUCKING WIFE, to run errands for you behind my back, and I just nodded my stupid little fucking head

(MORE)

SARA (CONT'D)
 and accepted it. Why? Because I loved you! And now, you ask me to take your life, which you know would never fucking happen, and you just... what, expect me to do it? Why? BECAUSE I LOVE YOU? NO! NO, I REFUSE, YOU... COWARD! Fuck... I never had to help you. You, of all people, know that. But I wanted to help you, and you despised that about me. Well, I'm sorry for giving a shit about you, but I'm YOUR WIFW! It's in my nature, I- I love you, Johan. I love you so much.

She collapses to her knees, shrouds her face with her hands, and weeps...

JOHAN
 Your... love... is... selfish...

She reveals herself once more.

SARA
 WHAT?! What the fuck are you talking about?

She stands tall and begins to pace again.

SARA (CONT'D)
 Everything I have ever done has been for you.

JOHAN
 No... It... is all... for you...

SARA
 Don't be absurd. You know that isn't true...

JOHAN
 Please... Listen...

SARA
 I AM LISTENING!

Ugly pause.

SARA (CONT'D)
 Why didn't you just do it? Why tell me? You've had no qualms about going behind my back, so... why didn't you? Why get me involved? You knew I would refuse, so why even bother asking? All it does it make ME feel guilty! You don't have to feel a thing!

She stops, ponders something, then returns to the end of the bed.

SARA (CONT'D)
You know what? Go ahead... DO IT.

Johan's focus shifts to the ventilator, then right back to her.

SARA (CONT'D)
That's what you want, isn't it? It's your decision, at the end of the day... DO IT.

Their gazes wage war. He looks at her with contempt, but does nothing.

SARA (CONT'D)
COWARD... You want help? Ask Lisbeth.

She stomps off furiously and locks herself in the en-suite...

89 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - EN SUITE - CONTINUOUS** 89

She clasps her hand around her mouth and paces about. She breathes sharply, groans, and then repeats.

She climbs into the shower, still in her clothes, and turns it on full. Torrents of water soak her from head to toe. She breaks down, inaudible over the violent downpour.

90 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS** 90

Johan lies there. He takes out his phone, scrolls through his contacts, and finds Lisbeth. He stares at the screen, uncertain.

ACT III

91 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - EN SUITE/MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING** 91

Outside, the sun shines.

She pushes the door open, just a smidge, and looks through to see Johan, who is fast asleep.

She leaves the en suite, tiptoes through the bedroom, and rushes off.

92 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER** 92

Sara fidgets nervously with the phone wire. She wipes tears from her eyes.

93 **INT. HOTEL ROOM - SAME TIME** 93

Lisbeth pats her tired eyes and picks up the phone.

LISBETH

Hello?

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

SARA

Lisbeth? It's me.

LISBETH

Sara?

SARA

Don't hang up, I-

LISBETH

Johan spoke to me.

SARA

What? When?

LISBETH

Last night.

SARA

Oh...

LISBETH

How are you feeling?

SARA

I don't know... Confused? No, that's a terrible answer.

LISBETH

It's alright.

SARA
 I just- I don't know what came over
 me. As soon as he said it, I just felt
 this rage inside me... I- I told him
 to kill himself, and I wanted him to
 do it. What's wrong with me?

LISBETH
 You need to calm down.

SARA
 What if he'd done it? What if I'd
 misjudged him?

LISBETH
 There is little point focusing on the
 "what ifs." They are merely
 distractions from what is happening
 right in front of us... Listen to you.
 You're not thinking straight. I'll be
 with you in an hour, okay? Okay???

SARA
 Okay. Thank you.

Her hand trembles as she places the phone down.

94 **INT/EXT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - FOYER/PORCH - LATER**

94

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK!

Sara runs up to the door and opens it. Lisbeth smiles
 sweetly.

LISBETH
 Hey.

Sara flings herself at Lisbeth and wraps her arms around her.
 Lisbeth strokes her hair.

LISBETH (CONT'D)
 Shh, shh, shh...

She looks Sara in the eyes, kisses her softly, and hugs her.

95 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

95

Lisbeth leads Sara to the sofa and places her down.

LISBETH
 Shall I get you a coffee?

SARA
 No, thank you.

Lisbeth sits beside her.

LISBETH

Talk to me.

SARA

I just- I thought I had it right,
but... HOW could I think that? What
could I have missed?

LISBETH

You've been wrapped up inside your
head for months now. It's enough to
drive anyone mad.

SARA

I suppose. God, I don't know what's
wrong with me.

LISBETH

You're in love, that's what's wrong
with you.

Sara laughs, then rubs her forehead nervously.

LISBETH (CONT'D)

It's nothing to be ashamed of, little
one. It's the most human thing in the
world.

SARA

I hope not.

Lisbeth chuckles sincerely.

LISBETH

Was he your first love?

Sara nods.

LISBETH (CONT'D)

Oh, Sara. Come here.

She hugs Sara once more, rests her on her chest...

LISBETH (CONT'D)

I'll do it.

SARA

(muffled)
What?

LISBETH

I'll do it.

Sara recoils.

SARA
No. You can't.

LISBETH
Sara... his mind is made up.

SARA
But, what choice does that give me?

LISBETH
Well, that was a cry for help. You can listen it, or, you can ignore it. But, when things get worse for him, those cries will become a lot harder for you to ignore.

SARA
I don't want him to suffer, of course I don't! I just can't bring myself to give up.

LISBETH
You're not giving up. Look... there's one inevitable outcome here. What you have to do is accept that.

SARA
But what do I have if I don't have him?

LISBETH
You have your freedom.

SARA
But, what's the point in freedom when there's nothing on the horizon for you?

LISBETH
Look at you... You're so young.

Sara scoffs.

SARA
You make me sound useless.

LISBETH
What I meant was: you've got so much ahead of you.

SARA
Please don't talk about that now.

LISBETH
You're right. Sorry.

Sara wipes her eyes in her sleeve.

LISBETH (CONT'D)
Shall we go and talk to Johan?

Sara considers, then nods slightly. Lisbeth gets up and offers Sara her hand.

LISBETH (CONT'D)
Come on.

Sara takes her hand.

96 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER** 96

The two of them enter, their footsteps light. No point. Johan's awake.

LISBETH
Hi.

Her appearance stuns Johan. Sara sits beside him. Johan turns to her.

SARA
Johan, I- I'm so sorry. For everything... Fuck, I don't know where to start, I-

JOHAN
Sara...

SARA
Yes?

JOHAN
It's okay...

SARA
No, it's not okay, I-

JOHAN
SARA.

He turns to Lisbeth.

JOHAN (CONT'D)
Are you... here... for me?

LISBETH
Sara?

Sara's gaze darts around the room. She looks at anything and everything except Johan. She wells up.

SARA

Do it.

Johan smiles.

JOHAN

Thank... you...

SARA

Please, stop talking.

Johan laughs.

Lisbeth shuffles past Sara. She strokes Johan's cheek and grabs hold of his AIR TUBE.

Johan turns to Sara.

JOHAN

I want... you... to hold... me...

He extends his feeble hand to her. Sara holds it firmly.

LISBETH

You ready?

SARA

Yes.

LISBETH

Johan?

He nods. Lisbeth uncouples the air tubes. The HISS of air.

His grip tightens. His hand starts to shake. He splutters and chokes...

His hand shakes frantically. His grip is vice-like...

Finally, his grip loosens. The movements cease.

SARA (O.S)

I love you.

She lowers his hand onto the bed, just as --

97 **EXT. CHURCH - CEMETERY - MORNING**

97

-- FUNERAL STAFF lower the coffin into the ground.

BROADCASTER (V.O)

(in Faroese, subtitled)

Today, our isles mourn the loss of a true talent, Johan Jonsson, who lost his fight against the cruellest of afflictions... COPD.

MOURNERS watch from the grounds above. Amongst the faces are: Sara, Lisbeth, Johan's bandmates, and Sven. Ida is nowhere to be seen.

BROADCASTER (V.O) (CONT'D)
 (in Faroese, subtitled)
 It is a sad twist of fate that, in his dying days, a man should be robbed of all that he held dear. Let this be a reminder to us all to be thankful for what we have, while we have it.

The VICAR passes round a WICKER BASKET, full of FLOWER HEADS. Mourners take a handful of flower heads and scatter them over his coffin.

BROADCASTER (V.O) (CONT'D)
 (in Faroese, subtitled)
 Our condolences go out to his friends and family.

One by one, the mourners leave the cemetery.

98 **EXT. CHURCH - CEMETERY - LATER**

98

The ceremony is done. Almost everyone has left. Sara stands over the plot. In the distance, Lisbeth reads the encriptions on the other headstones.

Sven approaches her tentatively.

SVEN
 I'm sorry for your loss.

Sara nods.

SARA
 Thank you.

They hug tightly and he departs. Lisbeth joins Sara at the plot.

LISBETH
 The ceremony was beautiful.

SARA
 Yeah. Yeah, it was.

Lisbeth goes to light a cigarette, then tries to stub it out.

SARA
 Go ahead.

Lisbeth smiles and relights it.

SARA (CONT'D)

What now?

LISBETH

What now? Whatever you can think of.

SARA

Where do I go?

LISBETH

Anywhere but here. There's too many bad memories. That, and it's fucking expensive.

They laugh fleetingly.

LISBETH (CONT'D)

There's no right way to grieve, but you can't just look to the past, because you won't know where you're heading... This may seem like the end, but, someday, it'll be a drop in the water... Someday, you'll find a man. You won't accept it, at first, but, soon, you'll open up, and before you know it, you'll get married. If you're lucky, you'll have children, too. Then, when they're going through hard times, you'll give those children the same advice I'm giving you now...

She takes a long drag of her cigarette.

SARA

I want to go back to the house.

LISBETH

Are you sure that's wise?

SARA

No, but I have to. I need some sort of closure.

LISBETH

I don't know.

SARA

This will be the last time.

LISBETH

Can you promise me that?

SARA

I promise.

A beat.

LISBETH
 Alright, just... lock up when you
 leave, okay?

She hands Sara the keys. Sara lets out a sigh of relief.

SARA
 Thank you.

She smiles warmly and the two of them embrace.

99 **INT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - FOYER/LIVING ROOM/CORRIDOR/MASTER BEDROOM - DAY** 99

The front door edges open. Sara creeps inside. She studies her surroundings as if she sees them anew...

RING, RING! RING, RING!

She jumps out of her skin. She wanders into the living room and stares down at the phone.

TWO beats.

She reaches out to the phone and tears out the wire! The ringing ceases.

Suddenly, her path changes. She waltzes aimlessly out of the living room, along the corridor... She glances into the study as she passes, then enters the master bedroom...

Not a thing is out of place. Sara glances over to the hospital bed, freezes: Johan's outline is in the mattress.

She turns to the bedside table, notices a PACK OF CIGARETTES, a LIGHTER, and an ASHTRAY.

She tips the contents out onto the table: loose tobacco, tinfoil, and one sole CIGARETTE.

She grabs it up, along with the lighter and ashtray, and meanders over to the window.

She rests the ashtray up on the windowsill and lights up...

She coughs and splutters. It's obviously her first cigarette, but she soldiers on defiantly.

She smokes it down to the filter, stubs it out in the ashtray...

She looks over to the bed one last time: the outline is gone.

Slivers of smoke rise up and cover her face like a bridal veil...

100 **EXT. JONSSON RESIDENCE - BEACH - LATER**

100

The waves crash against the rocks. Sara strolls onto the beach languidly.

She stops at the edge between sand and sea...

She holds out her arms and feels the wind rush through her FINGERS...

A horn BLARES!

She looks off into the distance: the MS Norrona comes into view.

The horn BLARES again!

She closes her eyes and loses herself in the noise: the wind, the waves...

The horn BLARES a third and final time!

CUT TO BLACK.

END.