

PHANTASMAGORIA

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - NIGHT

A large, steep cliff protrudes from the coast towards the bright moon. A MAN, silhouetted by the moon, stands on the edge next to a TREE with a rope swing.

His toes curl around the edge of the cliff. He takes slow, heavy breaths.

An ANIMAL WHINES O.S.. A DOG walks into frame, also a silhouette. As it approaches the Man, it whines again.

The Dog sits between the Man and the edge of the cliff. The Man lowers his arms and pets the Dog's head.

THE MAN

(Shaken up)

Not tonight. -- What am I going to do with you? You're better off without me.

The Dog looks at the Man and wags his tail.

The Man forces a smile.

EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - MORNING

Gentle waves break and retreat repetitively. The sunrise just catches the cliff's edge, its shadow cast out over the ocean.

The CAMERA TILTS slowly, starting with the rocky black sand, going up the cliff. There is a house on top of the cliff.

The house is in bad shape. The weathered walls are in need of replacement.

Despite the house's appearance, the view is spectacular, the edge of paradise.

INT. THE HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

OVERHEAD SHOT of a white, circular table accompanied by two matching white chairs.

In the center of the table are two orange PHARMACY BOTTLES. They're for the same anti-depressant medication. One is full, the other is spread around the table.

Slightly off center, a large, black REVOLVER with an off-white inscription on the handle rests with some papers on the table.

In calligraphy, it reads, "Alice."

The papers are revealed to be bills, a LIFE INSURANCE policy, an application for a WILL to be notarized and an EVICTION NOTICE. The house is to be vacated in the coming days.

A shirtless MAN walks through the frame, passing the table.

The distinct NOISE of cupboards opening and closing is heard. Then the fridge.

The Man comes back into frame and sits down, placing MILK, a SPOON, a BOWL and a box of plain CHEERIOS on the table next to the gun.

The Man has a rough face with a grizzled beard. Once a man of fitness, booze is his fuel now.

There is a landline hooked onto the wall. The modem has been cut.

He pours the Cheerios into the bowl and reaches for the milk. As he reaches for the milk he steals a glimpse of the gun.

There is no SOUND. The man is frozen looking at the gun, a brooding look cemented on his face.

After staring at the gun, a large German Shepard puts his paws on the man's leg. The man is liberated from his apparent paralysis.

THE MAN

(somewhat startled)

Hey buddy, didn't see ya there.

He gently grabs the dog, and pets him. POV shot from the man's perspective. He looks at the dog.

The dog is wearing a vibrant green collar. It reads, "Cooper" and underneath that, "IAN SOAPE" followed by a phone number.

Cooper gets off of Ian, lying down next to his feet. Ian grabs the milk, ignoring the gun this time, and pours some onto the Cheerios.

CUT TO:

INT. SHOWER - CONTINUOUS

CU of Ian in the shower, motionless. His eyes are closed, head tilted slightly back. The trails of water rush down his face.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - AFTERNOON

Ian is walking down a long, windowless hallway. He is humming a tune.

At the end of the hallway is a small waiting room with a reception desk adjacent to the only other door. Ian approaches the desk.

RECEPTIONIST

(Cheery)

Mr. Soape, hello! Dr. Walton is just about to finish up with another client, I'll let her know you're here.

Ian puts on his fake, practiced smile.

IAN

(Sighing)

Thanks.

Ian sits and resumes the tune.

The door opens and a WOMAN walks out. She wipes a tear from her cheek and stops just outside the door to face DR. KAREN WALTON.

WOMAN

(With sincerity)

Thank you Doctor.

Dr. Walton is a professional woman. In her fifties, despite graying hair, she has aged well. She looks at Ian, smiles, and motions for him to join her in the office.

Reluctantly, Ian stands and closes the door behind him as he enters.

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The office has plain white walls littered with simple paintings and a lone window.

DR. KAREN WALTON  
Hello Ian, it's nice to see you  
again.

Ian continues to hum, ignoring Karen.

DR. KAREN WALTON (CONT'D)  
Are you ready this time, Ian? It is  
her birthday in a few days, is it  
not?

Ian's expression changes briefly, a hint of pain surfaces on  
his face. He continues to hum.

DR. KAREN WALTON (CONT'D)  
Talk with me, Ian. I can't help you  
if you aren't even willing to try  
to help yourself.

Ian hasn't moved. He sits and hums.

DR. KAREN WALTON (CONT'D)  
(Slightly irritated)  
Okay fine, Ian, I'll bite. What is  
it that deserves more of your  
attention than the improvement of  
your mind's current state?

Ian pauses.

IAN  
(Pensive)  
Everyone accepts the reality  
they're given, but what - what if  
this isn't reality? It's all just  
one big, fucking, joke...

DR. KAREN WALTON  
Now Ian, that's not the right kind  
of thinking. You have to start  
thinking happy thoughts, channel  
positivity.

Ian zones her out.

DR. KAREN WALTON (CONT'D)  
(In a final effort)  
Ian, you know that we'll just sit  
here until your time here is up.  
(Heavier tone)  
Do you really want to just sit  
around until your time - is - up?

She looks at Ian with a provocative stare.

Ian shoots her a look as if he has something very emotional to say but is unable to bring himself to speak.

He stands, and silently excuses himself.

Once he is no longer facing Dr. Walton, the charade is over. He sighs.

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - EVENING

Ian is sitting with Cooper on the back porch watching the sunset and it's shimmering reflection on the water.

IAN

How was your day Coop? Do anything fun?

Cooper yawns.

IAN (CONT'D)

Yeah, haha I thought so.

(beat)

I don't think I'm going back to that shrink anymore. I used to have hope, but hope can drive a guy insane.

Cooper tilts his head and locks eyes with Ian for a moment before resting his head on Ian's leg.

IAN (CONT'D)

I know, I know, I know. I'll try harder, for you.

Ian looks out, pausing as if to say more, but says nothing.

Ian breathes deeply and looks up to the sky.

The CAMERA ZOOMS in past his shoulder through a bedroom window and FOCUSES on a PICTURE of a young GIRL on Ian's shoulders. They're both incredibly happy.

INT. HOUSE - MORNING

Ian is asleep on his bed. Cooper is asleep at the end of the bed.

CU of Ian's face. His eyelids slowly open to reveal soft, weary blue eyes, a hopeful expression across his face. After a moment, it's replaced with a cold, dead one.

Ian enters the kitchen and retrieves the same breakfast as before. He sits at the table, in the same seat. Cooper wedges his head between Ian's arm and leg.

Ian looks at his would be breakfast, more disappointed the longer he looks.

He gets up and opens the freezer, retrieving a bottle of cheap whiskey. Taking a glass from the cabinet, he fills it almost halfway.

IAN  
(Unenthusiastically)  
Cheers.

He takes one swig, choking down a cough, then finishes the glass.

CUT TO:

INT. IAN'S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

The back of an old Mac laptop fills the frame, the Apple logo is barely lit.

The CAMERA rises to see Ian sitting in bed, totally engrossed in what he is reading. Next to him lies Cooper and a rather diminished bottle of whiskey.

Ian has tabs open to many different websites. Most of them are pages about psychology and related topics.

IAN  
(Slurred)  
This could, could finally, be THE  
answer!

Cooper's tail wags.

IAN (CONT'D)  
(Verge of drunk breakdown)  
I have to. I need to. Whatever it  
takes! If this doesn't work...

Ian yawns, his eyes unable to stay open. He has left his computer open on a page about Charles Dodgson, "Renowned psychologist discovered conducting disturbing, unethical experiments."

The page continues on. Further down, "Last known residency:" is seen, though the address itself can't be seen.

INT. CAR - MORNING

SHOT from the GLOVE BOX pointed at the PASSENGER'S SEAT. The car is moving. Part of Ian's body is visible in the DRIVER'S SEAT. Resting on the PASSENGER'S SEAT is the REVOLVER.

SHOT of the REARVIEW MIRROR. Ian has heavy bags under his eyes.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Dark, stone walls free of windows give the basement an enigmatic depth. It has an almost medieval aura.

In the center of the basement, extending from the ceiling, is a bright light. The only light in the basement.

Directly underneath the light are two tables. One, clearly a chemistry station, has many flasks and containers, filled with different liquids and substances.

There is a large, unlabeled BOOK on the edge of this table.

The larger table, raised to a 45 degree angle, is daunting. There are four leather straps attached to either side.

FOOTSTEPS ECHO into the basement as CHARLES DODGSON enters. He is an older man, though he moves purposefully.

He approaches the back wall, to study it. The wall is covered in newspaper clippings.

The clippings are all about Charles. Some of the clippings accuse him of trying to play God. Others wanted answers, concerned with what he did, but more interested in why. Only a small few were accepting of his methods.

They deem Dodgson a FAILURE.

A shrill DING echoes throughout the basement. Charles looks curiously toward the stairs. Another DING.

CUT TO:

INT. FRONT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

POV shot as Dodgson looks through the peephole on the front door. Ian stands outside, gently shaking his head.

Dodgson continues to watch Ian, but does nothing.

Ian walks back to his car. He retrieves the gun.



POV shot looking down at the GUN. Gripping the revolver, he opens the cylinder, there's one bullet. He spins the cylinder, snapping it shut and slowly raises it.

The CAMERA faces Ian. The FRAME is CROPPED from the top and bottom showing only the gun at Ian's temple and his pin-pointed pupils.

Ian holds his breath as his finger pulls the trigger. CLICK. Ian's gun wielding hand drops to his side as he exhales, now breathing more quickly.

Ian raises the gun just as before. Exhaling, he pulls the trigger. CLICK... CLICK. CLICK --

Several LOCKS are heard UNLATCHING. Ian's eyes widen. He turns and stares at Dodgson. Dodgson stares back. The CAMERA ZOOMS IN, alternating between their faces.

CHARLES DODGSON

There are far superior ways to make a statement. Regardless, it's the next one.

Dodgson smirks.

CHARLES DODGSON (CONT'D)

The pleasure was all mine. I bid you good day sir.

Dodgson begins to close the door.

IAN

Give me a chance!

CHARLES DODGSON

I don't know who you are, but I said good day, *sir*.

Dodgson begins to step back. Ian points the gun back to his head. Dodgson steps back out.

CHARLES DODGSON (CONT'D)

Do or don't, but do not waste my time.

Ian's hand is trembling.

Ian's head protrudes from the bottom of the frame against the vast blue sky. He quickly points the gun to the sky and pulls the trigger. BANG.

A large cloud of gun smoke settles over Ian as he hangs his head and tosses the gun onto the car carelessly.

Dodgson observes motionlessly.

CHARLES DODGSON (CONT'D)  
 (Knowingly)  
 What exactly did you come here for  
 anyway, Ian?

CUT TO:

INT. BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

IAN  
 How did you know it was the next  
 one?

CHARLES DODGSON  
 (Carelessly)  
 It was 50/50.

They briefly exchange glances.

IAN  
 I came here to see you.

CHARLES DODGSON  
 Would you care for a drink? Scotch  
 perhaps?

IAN  
 You'd be correct.

CHARLES DODGSON  
 (Smug)  
 I know.

Dodgson goes upstairs. Ian takes a moment to observe, before he settles on the BOOK.

Oddly drawn to it, he reaches for the BOOK, and opens it to a random page. He flips through a few pages. He stops on one pertaining to a homemade drug. It's supposed use is to help with depression.

There are lots of notes on the page. The page is primarily complicated chemical equations.

Dodgson returns without Ian noticing. He grips Ian's shoulder.

CHARLES DODGSON (CONT'D)  
 (Sarcastically)  
 Enjoying the literature?

IAN  
 (Surprised, Gesturing)  
 What's this?

Dodgson releases Ian and hands him the glass of scotch.

CHARLES DODGSON  
 (Angrily)  
 I had been working with subjects suffering from depression. I was making serious progress before my research methods proved too - *sophisticated* for my inferiors to understand. Those -- those Neanderthals couldn't comprehend my vision. -- Fear's a driver and life's the car.

IAN  
 (Curiously)  
 Ever kill anyone?

Dodgson grimaces.

CHARLES DODGSON  
 That was some time ago.  
 (pause)  
 I was never able to complete my research. I was constantly in need of patients and once they convinced everyone I was a mad scientist -- people don't like what they can't understand.

IAN  
 (Impulsively)  
 I understand! We can, we can help each other! Whaddaya say?

Dodgson's eyes light up momentarily at the opportunity to experiment once again. His expression sends a cringeworthy chill down Ian's spine. Dodgson's face quickly hardens.

CHARLES DODGSON  
 No. I told you, I won't help. You only *think* you want this. You couldn't handle it.

IAN  
 You're the one who doesn't understand! We're each others' last chance. I'm clocking out soon, a vacation from *this* is long overdue.

CHARLES DODGSON

Where might you be headed on this, *vacation*, of yours?

IAN

Where I go is irrelevant, but how I get there... If I'm leaving anyway, why not just give it a go?

CHARLES DODGSON

Sometimes all you really need is a nice vacation. Why not just, give it a go?

Ian looks Dodgson in the eyes.

IAN

I'm serious about this, so are you the fuck up from the articles or are you a real doctor with some balls?

CHARLES DODGSON

(Sharply)

If you're going through with this, there's no turning back. This will enter your most repressed thoughts and memories and bring them to the surface. I can't be sure what will happen to you physiologically or psychologically -- if you'll even survive.

IAN

It can't get any worse than it already is. Show me what you got.

Ian is calm for a moment before FAST, CONSECUTIVE SHOTS of him screaming and struggling against the straps binding him to the table FLASH and light up the screen. OTS shot from behind Dodgson as he watches Ian.

CUT TO:

INT. IAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ian abruptly wakes up, immediately sitting up in his bed. He stretches his arms, yawns and smiles.

IAN

There's a chance here Coop, I can feel it.

Cooper tilts his head slightly, and goofily looks at Ian, letting his tongue hang to the side.

Ian scratches Cooper behind his ear. Cooper gets excited and steps in place while he shakes his head. Ian continues to scratch Cooper while he looks at the PICTURE. Cooper BARKS.

Ian freezes. His pupils dilate before enveloping the entirety of his eyes. He blinks a few times before looking around in wonder.

POV shot through Ian. The grass and TREE in the back of the picture begin to sway in the breeze. Life spreads to the rest of the PICTURE. Birds CHIRP and the sound of waves CRASHING can be heard. The Girl comes to life mid-laugh.

Ian is untouched by the life within the PICTURE. He stands motionless, a joyous laugh cemented on his face.

Ian is focused on the Girl, especially her eyes.

CU of the Girl's eyes. They are revealed to be ornate kaleidoscopic designs.

Ian is completely absorbed by the hypnotizing design. Within the PICTURE, the Girl gets off of Ian's shoulders and starts running around.

Cooper nudges Ian's hand with his nose. Ian is unresponsive. Cooper jumps onto the bed next to Ian. CU of Cooper's and Ian's faces as Cooper licks Ian up the side his face and pants heavily.

Cooper tries to lick Ian again. Ian pulls back and laughs.

IAN (CONT'D)  
(Affectionately)  
Yeah yeah, get off me, you smell  
like shit.

Ian looks back at the picture just as the Girl runs out of the frame.

Ian shakes his head before leaning back into the pillows on his bed. Just as he relaxes, Ian is swallowed up by the bed and disappears.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOTTOM OF CLIFF - CONTINUOUS

The black sand moves around before Ian is spit out of the Earth.

Ian stands in the sand, just before the water. The moon is overwhelming in the sky. It's surrounded by intricate constellations. On the water, just in front of Ian, lies a PATH of moonlight that extends beyond the horizon.

Ian stands, engrossed as the moon pulses and the stars move around the moon. A breeze coaxes Ian toward the PATH as waves break around it.

Much to Ian's surprise, his foot finds no water, but rather a solid PATH. He quickly pulls his foot away.

He notices something far down the PATH. The MIRAGE draws Ian down the PATH.

The CAMERA TRACKS Ian's feet and moves up his body as he walks away from shore. The MIRAGE slowly becomes more in focus as Ian gets closer.

The MIRAGE fades away. In its place sits the Girl as she plays with the water by her feet.

Ian approaches her, struggling for words. At first, silence. Ian hasn't looked away from the Girl.

THE GIRL

The moon is really pretty. I wanna go to the moon, can we Daddy, can we?

Ian sits next to the Girl and sighs with relief.

IAN

(Staring into space)  
We can go together. We'll fly right up, right up to the moon!

THE GIRL

But what if we don't make it?

IAN

(Pointing)  
See those stars, there in the sky? You, get to be one of those, shining for everyone to see.

THE GIRL

What happened to me? Do I shine?

IAN

(Choked up)  
What happened to you was -- it won't happen again. I won't let it. Please forgive me - Alice.

Alice smiles at her father.

IAN (CONT'D)

You glow. Never lose your glow, you don't know who you might lose to the dark.

Ian and Alice look at each other, her eyes are still beautiful designs.

ALICE

Are you going to get lost in the dark Dad?

IAN

Not everyone glows Alice.

(pause)

Protect your innocence, but cherish your ignorance. -- Life is full of mystery, it doesn't need to be solved all at once.

Alice begins to dissipate into the wind.

ALICE

(Supportively)

Try not to get lost Dad.

Ian quickly reaches for her. He grabs a handful of her shirt, before it, and Alice, disappear.

Ian sheds a lone tear. CU of Ian as the tear falls down his cheek. It falls off Ian's face.

The CAMERA TRACKS the tear in SLOW MOTION as it falls to the ocean, the PATH disappears and Ian is plunged into the water.

He thrashes for a moment, then realizes he isn't drowning. Instead, he calmly sinks deep beneath the surface.

The SCREEN is split horizontally by the tranquil ocean surface. A beam of light from the moon highlights Ian as he descends. The water just under the surface begins spiraling down faster and faster.

It begins to wrap around him, before finally engulfing him completely. Then, as quickly as it began, it ends.

Ian appears to be naked, and begins to ascend.

CU of Ian in SLOW MOTION as the water tension breaks around his face.

He continues to rise, until he is a silhouette framed by the moon.

The stars shimmer, diamonds scattered across the endless sky. One star GLOWS brightly directly above Ian. A BARK, Cooper's, echoes from the heavens.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. IAN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Ian's eyes snap open, his eyes no longer black. He is relaxing against his pillows just as before. He sits up, and looks around but focuses on Cooper.

IAN

I feel better, my mind sorta feels -  
lighter maybe. Like some of the  
weights been lifted.

He shrugs.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The CAMERA is on the table ZOOMED OUT on the cliff and ocean, there is a dark blurry object at the bottom of the frame. RACK FOCUS to show the EMPTY GUN back on the table.

EXT. DODGSON'S HOUSE - DAY

Ian raps on the door with white knuckles. The locks click and the door opens.

CHARLES DODGSON

(Eagerly)

Please, come in, but tell me, did  
it work?

IAN

(Marveling)

I'll explain what I can, it was  
kinda like a lucid dream but guided  
by my subconscious rather than me,  
er, you know what I mean.

Ian follows Dodgson inside. He closes the door behind them.



INT. BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Dodgson is sitting at the chemistry table, the BOOK open to a page with the heading, "IAN SOAPE." There are neatly written notes.

CHARLES DODGSON

So it *did* work, then, did it not?

IAN

I don't -- *how* should I know? I can't -- there aren't words to describe how I felt and what I saw. But now I feel just the same as before. I think it wore off. Let's go again.

Dodgson mixes and works with the contents of flasks.

CHARLES DODGSON

I've seen subjects drive themselves to - unfortunate states of mind. You people are so willing to write off the future for immediate satisfaction. Only the absolute strongest, both psychologically and physiologically, are capable of such an undertaking. Your mind - it may be lost, trapped inside itself until you get lucky and die.

IAN

What, you think I'm not strong enough? Are you kidding me, that's bullshit! I'm more than strong enough. Besides, uh, Doc, wouldn't you be able to escape a trap you created in your own mind?

Dodgson moves two flasks aside.

CHARLES DODGSON

(Scoffs)

Please, you simply couldn't... Consider your mind doesn't generate an answer, essentially a simulation, just enough to lead you on. My last subject was *far* superior to you, yet, even she was lost.

As Dodgson says this, he pours the contents of one flask into another, generating an illuminating BLAZE.

IAN  
(Unfazed)  
You're so full of shit! I'll prove  
it, right now. Let's experiment,  
Doc.

INT. IAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ian abruptly wakes up, immediately sitting up in his bed.

IAN  
He did it again Coop.  
(beat)  
Let's celebrate!

Cooper wags his tail.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Ian moves toward the freezer, hesitating for a moment, before he opens it and retrieves two ice cubes.

He moves to a cabinet across the kitchen and selects a glass. He opens the cabinet to the left and carefully removes an elegant bottle of SCOTCH.

Ian pours himself a glass.

He proceeds to open the pantry, grabbing a box of jumbo MILK-BONES. Cooper smells the treats and barks.

Ian freezes. The glass of scotch falls in SLOW MOTION. At the same time, also in SLOW MOTION, EXTREME CU on Ian's eyes as his pupils envelop the rest of either eye. There is no SOUND.

As the glass shatters on the floor, SOUND returns. POV from Ian's perspective. The walls and ceiling change like Alice's eyes.

The kitchen looks as though it could've been part of a prison.

Millions of slivers, all different shades of black, gray, and white, move around. They slowly appear to be taking shape on the ceiling.

A human face has begun to assemble. More and more it begins to resemble Alice.

Just as the pieces seem to magically complete her face, she slowly descends from the ceiling.

Cooper's ears point behind him. He bears his teeth.

The girl looks up at Ian.

IAN  
(Overcome with grief)  
Alice? -- Alice.

ALICE  
Dad?

Cooper is now in a crouched position, growling at Alice.

IAN  
Coop, Cooper, whats wrong? It's  
Alice! She's back!

Cooper slowly approaches Alice, continuing to growl. Alice looks frightened, as if she is about to cry.

Ian rushes between them.

IAN (CONT'D)  
Cooper enough!

Cooper whimpers, tucking his tail between his legs. Ian turns to Alice.

The CAMERA moves up Alice hovering briefly on her right hand, holding a KNIFE. It continues up to her face.

Alice's scleras are filled with blood, nostrils flared and mouth hanging open.

ALICE  
(Distorted)  
Dad.

Ian stumbles back in disbelief. He trips and falls, hitting his head on the way down.

Ian is slumped on the floor, next to the white kitchen table. He is still conscious, though dazed.

POV shot from Ian's perspective. Looking past a few obstacles, Ian sees Cooper backed into a corner, growling tirelessly at Alice.

Alice raises the knife as she gets closer to Cooper and she slashes at him. Cooper grabs her wrist out of the air, biting down hard.

Alice doesn't react as her wrist is torn open. She swings her left fist at Cooper, catching him this time.

Cooper yelps but recovers with a fierce growl. He leaps at Alice and knocks her over.

Cooper bites down on Alice's left ankle and violently shakes his head. A POP is heard as he ruptures her Achilles tendon.

The CAMERA looks at the wall behind the two, watching their shadows. They exchange blows before a swift SWISH through the air is heard and a large blood spatter covers the wall.

IAN  
(Through tears)  
NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

Ian musters his dwindling strength to knock the table on it's side. It falls, just barely missing Ian.

Alice rises from a crouched position over Cooper, she is holding the knife. She slowly begins to drag her damaged leg away from Cooper and toward Ian.

Ian is desperately trying to reach around the fallen table for the gun. CU of Ian's fingers wiggling for the gun. Ian looks at his fallen companion, summoning a surge of adrenaline and gets his fingers around the handle of the gun.

He turns, and simultaneously pulls the trigger. CLICK. Empty. Multiple rapid clicks are heard.

IAN (CONT'D)  
No no no.

Alice is close now, ready to strike. She winds up with the knife once again, but before she can swing, Ian hits her hard with the revolver on the outside of her knee.

She falls by Ian's feet. Her leg is crippled, pieces of bone protrude from her skin. She begins to cry.

ALICE  
(Innocently)  
Daddy why? You hurt me. You hurt me  
Daddy.

IAN  
Goddamn! What've I done!?

Alice's pain stained face transforms into a demonic grin as she pulls her arm back and thrusts it forward, stabbing Ian through his right foot.

Ian kicks Alice with his left foot and yanks the knife out of his other foot. Ian stands up, limping over to Alice.

Raising the gun over his head, Ian gets down on one knee and pistol whips Alice in the back of her head, concaving her skull and spraying blood all over Ian.

The rush is over and Ian collapses.

OVERHEAD SHOT [same as before] looking down at Ian laying next to the fallen table, crying, with the bloody gun in hand.

On the other side lies Alice, her skull seemingly shattered.

Blood flows from Alice's head and fills the cracks between the tiles.

Ian is crying, barely conscious. Just before he passes out, a BARK echoes from the heavens.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Ian comes out of the trance, still standing motionless, in the spilt scotch. He looks around. The room has no trace of what just occurred. He settles on Cooper.

IAN  
(Very cautiously)  
Hey Coop, gentle boy. No barking.

Ian motions for Cooper to be calm with his hands. Cooper begins wagging his tail.

IAN (CONT'D)  
(Pleading)  
No, no, no, Coop. Calm down.

Cooper steps in place and BARKS. Ian jolts and falls, landing in the scotch. He suffers a few gashes from the broken glass.

FLASHES from Ian's psychosis appear on the screen. Cooper dead. The blood stains. Alice's mangled body. The knife. Alice's distorted voice.

Cooper BARKS again. Ian is on his side, in the liquor, curled up into a ball.

Another BARK. Ian's screams become muffled whimpers as he rocks back and forth on the glass

Cooper BARKS again. It's followed by silence.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

The sun shines through a window, reflecting off the broken glass, illuminating the kitchen.

Ian is still curled up on the floor. Cooper is laying down next to him.

Cooper gets up and walks away. Ian wakes up.

INT. SHOWER - CONTINUOUS

CU of Ian in the shower. He scrubs shampoo in his hair. His eyes are closed, head tilted slightly back. The shower rinses his soapy hair.

SHOT of the SHOWER FLOOR. BLOOD from Ian's cuts washes down the drain.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Ian is sitting beside the tables. Dodgson stands next to him. They both have glasses of hard liquor. Ian sips on his glass throughout their conversation.

IAN

(Traumatized)

She killed Cooper, Charles. Alice, my little girl... she tried to kill me too.

CHARLES DODGSON

What are you getting worked up over? It was a hallucination, get over it.

IAN

She's my fucking daughter!

CHARLES DODGSON

Was.

IAN

(Stung)

What.

CHARLES DODGSON

Was. She was your daughter. And what you saw -- what you saw wasn't your daughter. None of it was real, entirely from your subconscious.

IAN

It feels real. Something needs to change. Whether you give me something better or I just stop or whatever, something *will* change.

Dodgson sits.

CHARLES DODGSON

(Curtly)

Nothing is going to change damn it. We're in the middle of an experiment, you'll ruin everything.

Ian's chair rattles as he stands.

IAN

No, **you're** in the middle of an experiment --

CHARLES DODGSON

Ian, please, sit, at least discuss with me the details of your experience.

Ian ignores him and continues to stand.

IAN

(Escalating)

God DAMNIT Charles! I'm not taking myself back there. You don't get it -- you've never tried it have you?

Ian shoots Dodson a look and is met with an answering stare.

IAN (CONT'D)

Fuck you. You saw an opportunity to use me and you took it, it wasn't about helping me.

(Dawn breaking)

It's *always* been about you. I didn't see it then, but I see it *now...*

The CAMERA PANS across the CHEMISTRY TABLE and stops on the syringes, filled with the serum.

IAN (CONT'D)

Wouldn't you agree, that satisfaction is best when earned?

CHARLES DODGSON

But of course.

The camera focuses on Ian's KNUCKLES turning WHITE as he grips his now empty glass.

IAN

I'm glad we're in agreement. --  
I've earned this.

Dodgson has a confused look on his face for a brief moment before Ian hurls his GLASS at Dodgson. It shatters on his head.

Before Dodgson has a chance to react, Ian pounces on him and hits him in the face, stunning him. He straps Dodgson's arms to the inclined TABLE.

IAN (CONT'D)

And you deserve this!

Ian grabs a syringe and plunges it into Dodgson. Then another. He stands and takes a step back from Dodgson and seems to calm down.

Dodgson looks at his arms and the needles sticking out of him.

CHARLES DODGSON

(Frantic)

Ian! Ian what the fuck have you  
done! You'll kill --

IAN

Better you than me, I still have  
hope.

CHARLES DODGSON

(Eerily)

Give it up Ian, before hope claims  
you too...

Dodgson loses consciousness. CU on his face as the black takes over not only his eyes, but begins spreading to his face as well.

CUT TO:

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ian walks up to his front door, holding a brown paper bag that contains a BOTTLE.

Ian one handedly fumbles with his house KEY. Unable to get it, he brings his other hand to help and consequently knocks the bottle out of his hand.



IAN  
God damnit.

Cooper hears the commotion from inside. He barks.

Ian drops his keys, his eyes once again consumed by black.

He walks around to the back yard. He stands by the edge of the house looks at the TREE.

Alice, once again the innocent little girl, is climbing the TREE. As she climbs up, she brings the rope with her.

FLASHBACK. Alice is hanging from the same branch, the rope twisted around her neck. Her body sways slightly in the breeze.

ALICE  
(Playfully)  
Look Daddy, look!

Ian snaps out of it and shakes his head, determined not to let it happen again.

IAN  
(Frantically)  
Alice, get down. It's not safe.

ALICE  
I'm okay Daddy, see?

Alice pretends to lose her balance, recovering just as quickly.

Ian briskly walks toward the tree.

IAN  
Alice Soape! Get down!

ALICE  
(Confused)  
Daddy what's wrong? You're scaring me.

Alice extends a foot to start climbing down. She misses the branch and hangs briefly from the branch above her.

The CAMERA goes back and forth between Ian sprinting toward the TREE and Alice falling.

At the last second, Ian leaps forward and turns belly up while in the air. He catches Alice just before she hits the ground and clutches her against his chest.

IAN  
I've got you Alice.

They both go flying over the edge of the cliff.

LONG SHOT with the CAMERA facing the cliff face. Ian and Alice fall in SLOW MOTION down the side of the cliff.

They clear the rocky beach below. CU of the pair as they land in the water next to the PATH of moonlight.

There is a large SPLASH. Once the water settles, Ian and Alice climb onto the PATH.

Ian looks over his shoulder, sneaking a final glimpse at the house on the cliff.

ALICE  
Are we solving it Dad?

IAN  
Solving what?

ALICE  
One of the mysteries, remember?

IAN  
We'll solve them all, Alice.

He takes Alice's hand as they begin to walk down the PATH and eventually disappear into PARADISE.

The CAMERA is now on top of the cliff, behind Cooper. He is sitting by the TREE at the edge. He howls. It echoes emphatically.

The CAMERA moves forward, over Cooper and tilts down past the edge of the cliff. ZOOMING in, Ian's body is battered from the fall. Despite missing a few teeth, there's a bloodstained smile on his face.

FADE TO BLACK.