

Opening Montage:

The shining exterior of a beautiful home, birds chirping in the background and the sun shines brightly.

Freshly cut grass.

Expensive cars in the driveway.

Inside, made beds and beautiful furniture.

Above a fireplace sits three generations of portraits, three generations of women.

Dietary pills on a vanity.

manicured nails grabbing weights.

A nightstand of organized lipsticks.

A stack of SYLVIA PLATH poetry beside a portrait and a photo of an old women and a little girl.

The house is empty.

A trash can in a girls bathroom.

Hands grabbing a spool of rope amongst crafts.

Socked feet walking through the home.

Golden hair just out of sight each time we round a corner.  
Like a ghost.

CUT TO:

**1 EXT. POOL - MORNING**

**1**

Hands stack the last of a series of weights together, tying them with a bad knot.

At the edge of the pool stands ELSIE (20), a girl who has made her own pain a sacrament, ankle tied to the weights.

She wears her night clothes still, a .

INSERT: elsie goes off the deep end

Elsie wiggles her ankle to check the knot and sighs.

She picks up the weights and THROWS them in the pool the rope zips into the water and Elsie jumps.

She dunks into the water, all bubbles. The weights pull on her ankle and the knot comes loose. She watches as she begins to float up and the weights hit the bottom of the pool.

She breaks the surface, grabbing the side of the pool. She makes eye contact with CLEM (9), her neighbor, all decked out in her swim gear on the other side of the fence.

They regard each other.

START FLASHBACK:

Elsie is younger (LITTLE MISS SHOT), walking through her home and towards the sound of a record player humming.

The sun is bright in memory, shining colors and bright hues.

Elsie pushes open a door and there is MOTHER, facing away from us and painting on a large canvas.

Her cigarette case open as a stream of smoke emits from her. We can hear the small whimpers of her mother.

Elsie stares. Her mother doesn't even know she is there.

END FLASHBACK.

Elsie is out of the pool, standing at the poolside, soaking wet.

Water drips down her body.

Elsie looks at her watch, its ten am.

ELSIE LOOKS DIRECTLY AT THE CAMERA; WE ARE PASSENGERS ON HER JOURNEY.

QUEUE GRAND CHORAL MUSIC SOMETHING FLEABAG-ESQUE

OPENING TITLES- PART I: SHEDDING

CUT TO:

Elsie, still sopping wet makes her way to the laundry room. She shivers from the chill of the morning breeze. Hues from the early sunshine through the windows, illuminating the wideness of the space.

She walks into the laundry room and looks in each of the machines.

She shivers again. LOOKING AT US. NODDING US AWAY.

CUT TO:

Wide as Elsie slowly begins to strip her wet clothing from her body, starting with her socks. Her back is ribbed and boney, her body still girlish in its stature.

She looks over her shoulder, her eyes acknowledging us just outside the room momentarily before taking off her shirt.

Elsie wears nothing but her undergarments which amount to simple white package underwear and a cloth bralette with small printed flowers.

She puts in her clothes, pressing the buttons and watching as the machine roars to life.

Elsie wraps her body in a spare blanket on the shelf and sits on the floor. She watches the cycle spin.

GRANDMOTHER

You look like death.

A woman appears beside Elsie, standing in the doorway. She is a little older than Elsie, but not by much. Her attire is what ages her, directly from the 60's.

Elsie looks up and sees GRANDMOTHER. Elsie opens her mouth to speak and closes it again. She tucks her head in her arms, scorned by perception. Her eyes look at us SLIGHTLY. (FALLEN ANGEL)

ELSIE

Maybe I am.

Grandmother looks at Elsie, her eyes are sympathetic only for a moment, before hardening.

GRANDMOTHER

Please, you're a child, you're not dead yet.

ELSIE

I should have, I think, I should  
have died today.

Grandmother sighs at Elsie, almost in exhaustion,  
impatience even.

GRANDMOTHER

But you didn't. Look, it doesn't  
matter if you were once the dying  
girl. You are resurrected, as all  
women must be, and so you must  
endure another day.

ELSIE

I wish I could tear out the rot  
within myself, it's eating me  
alive.

Grandmother hums.

GRANDMOTHER

Yes, well, suffering is an art,  
like everything else. We women do  
it exceptionally well, we do it, so  
it feels like a sacrament.

Elsie feels strange under Grandmother's gaze, something  
warm in her eyes. She takes Elsie's hands, softer now.

Elsie looks away.

ELSIE

I've been with my sadness for so  
long that i'm not even sure who I  
am without it.

Grandmother giggles sadly, taking Elsie's face.

GRANDMOTHER

Who does, really? All the pain you  
wear in your eyes. All the  
confusion in your bones. I'm sorry  
to say you come across it honestly.

Grandmother smiles, her demeanor melancholy.

ELSIE

Then why didn't anyone try to fix  
it? Why did we all ignore it?

GRANDMOTHER

I think we meant to, somewhere  
along the way...whatever fixing it  
might have meant.

Grandmother takes a drag from her cigarette. Silence for a  
moment, a shift. Elsie lays on Grandmothers shoulder,  
Grandmother returns the gesture.

ELSIE

Will it ever make any sense? Any of  
this?

GRANDMOTHER

Perhaps not, Lord knows I never  
figured it out. But I think you  
know better than any of us, how to  
make sense of it. That's why it's  
all so unbearable for you.

A BUZZER GOES OFF.

Elsie jumps, she had fallen asleep. She looks at the space  
where she saw Grandmother. Elsie rubs the tired from her  
eyes and stands, pulling out her clothing from the washer  
and swapping into the dryer.

CUT TO:

**3 INT. BEDROOM - WINDOW - DAY**

**3**

Elsie sits on her bed, staring out her window. Her  
silhouette rounded by the frame of her window. She wears  
different clothes now, oversized and loose. We hear the  
sounds of a suburban morning, birds chirping and soft music  
humming in the background, Elsie turns so we see her  
profile.

The lighting grows brighter, warmer, vibrant.

The face of a young woman smiles softly at Elsie, full of  
innocence. They looks at eachother, wide eyed and full of  
wonder. First love, first kiss.

The young woman leans and kisses Elsie.

ANGELINE (V.O)

Do you dream of me?

CUT TO:

**4 INT. BEDROOM - BED - DAY- YEARS AGO**

**4**

ELSIE (18) is facing her window, a blanket covers her bare shoulders. This question disturbs her, her brow furrows.

ELSIE (O.S.)  
I don't think I dream of anything.

A hand through Elsie's hair.

ANGELINE (17), a girl who represents all that could have been and all that is now lost, lays in Elsie's bed. Her face is flushed, and her hair falls perfectly. She is woman born raw, without filter, seen gently.

Angeline traces Elsie's spine softly, her own eyes shy and full of adoration.

ANGELINE  
Would you dream of me?

ELSIE  
If I could.

Angeline seems content with this answer, she kisses Elsie's shoulder and Elsie closes her eyes. She looks torn as she opens her eyes. Elsie turns to Angeline, nose to nose.

ELSIE  
I'm sorry.

ANGELINE  
(genuine confusion)  
Why?

Elsie looks at Angeline like she holds the world.

ELSIE  
For never saying the right thing.  
You always know what to say, I  
think I missed that lesson.

Angeline giggles and shakes her head, leaning forward and KISSING Elsie softly, her smile is bright.

ANGELINE  
Words fade, Elsie, in the end it's  
our actions that matter.

Elsie blinks, hanging on her words and searching her eyes.

ELSIE  
How can you be so sure of the  
world?

ANGELINE

I can't speak for the world; I don't even think I would try. But I know I'm sure of you. I knew it the moment I saw you, when I decided I wanted to know you on purpose.

ELSIE

You think too much of me.

ANGELINE

You don't think enough of yourself. This world wasn't made for women like us, but I think one day it could be.

A silence, thoughtful. They share a kiss, it's softer, intimate, kind. Sadness doesn't exist here for them, not yet.

ELSIE

If you make me an optimist, you'll ruin me.

Elsie looks at Angeline, smirking. Angeline rolls her eyes.

ANGELINE

Don't worry, I'll love you anyway.

RED AND BLUE FLASH OVER ANGELINES FACE, SHE SMILES, ITS EERIE.

CUT TO:

5 INT. BATHROOM - DAY

5

Elsie is broken, the memory like a bullet in her brain. She is on the floor, curled up and whimpering uncontrollably. Her cries echo in the empty bathroom. She inhales sharply, another sob.

CUT TO:

6 INT. KITCHEN - DAY

6

Elsie holds a small container of RASPBERRIES, water rushes over her fingers as she holds it under the water. Her eyes are strained forward, emotionless.

The water grows hotter, steam begins to rise, but Elsie doesn't move.

A car beeps somewhere in the neighborhood, Elsie jumps. She retreats her hands in pain, they are blotched and red from the hot water. The raspberries are squished, red juice dripping stains through her palm.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

PHILLIP

Careful there, don't go swallowing them all at once.

(a beat, a chuckle)

you wouldn't want to ruin yourself, not with such a pretty face going for you.

ELSIE (12) sits on the floor in the kitchen. She wears one of her mothers button up satin shirts, it reaches her knees. She looks up at PHILLIP, a faceless man, and eats the remaining raspberries on her fingers.

PHILLIP

You've grown into quite the little nymphette, huh? I'm sure you're a terrible temptation to all the boys at school.

Elsie looks down, her hands twiddle. Stained red under her nails from the raspberries. She picks at the seeds and shrugs, smiles at Phillip.

END FLASHBACK.

Elsie is squeezing the raspberries between her fingers, her hands shake and a tear streams down her face, she looks at US, accusatory, as if to ask 'you let this happen?'

ELSIE (V.O.)

It hurts, sometimes, to look back. I can feel the anger rise in me like a disease. Was it my mothers anger, her mothers anger, hers before her? Like a russian doll, I keep all the women before me. I'd learned to carry it quietly, until it turned biblical.

CUT TO:



Elsie sits at the table, a bowl of cereal in front of her. She pokes at it with her spoon. A phone begins to ring, somewhere that seems far away. Elsie looks up.

MOTHER

Elsie...Elsie! Elsie for Gods sake  
are you even listening to me?

MOTHER, faceless by way of framing, sits opposite of Elsie. Her hands clasp on the table impatiently.

ELSIE

Mom?

MOTHER

Are you ready?

ELSIE

W-What?

MOTHER

My gallery opens in an hour and  
you've spent all day, what? Moping  
around like some blithe child.

ELSIE

Mom, somethings wro--I...I think--

MOTHER

Elsie we talked about the mumbling,  
I can't understand you when you  
mumble. Now, please listen to me.  
I...

(begins to fade off)

picked out your dress upstairs. You  
need to coordinate with me or else  
press photos will be a nightmare.

(clear again)

Can you do that?

Her mother sounds rushed, frustrated on the phone. Elsie bites her tongue, unable to express herself in the way that is needed.

ELSIE

Yeah, I'm sorry just been a long  
day.

MOTHER

Long day? What could have possibly  
caused you to have such a long day?  
Honestly, Elsie, grow up. I'll see  
you in an hour, do not be late,  
okay?

Elsie looks forward at her mother, her eyes far away. In  
her hand is her phone held to her ear. She nods.

ELSIE

Okay.

INSERT: PART II: VELVET.

Elsie looks AT THE CAMERA. Her fists clench a moment,  
everything begins to come crashing down. She stands  
abruptly.

INSERT: the glass bowl falls on the ground, cereal goes  
everywhere.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

QUEUE MUSIC: SONG TBD

Elsie looks at the CAMERA as she looks at the dress. It's  
hanging in the bathroom, perfectly ironed and sleek. She  
runs her hand over the fabric, her expression far away. The  
echoes of her mothers words play out in her head. She grips  
the fabric and rips it off the hanger.

INSERT of her mother looking at her in disappointment.

Her eyes begin to well with tears, a frustration rising in  
her.

Elsie is in the bathroom, looking at the mirror hand  
holding concealer. She hovers it over her skin, hands  
shaking. Elsie puts it down, LOOKS AT US, a dazed  
expression. She opens her drawer and pulls out scissors.

INSERT of hands running through Elsie's hair kindly.

CUT TO:

Elsie sits in a chair as her mother brushes her hair

ELSIE holds her hair and takes the scissors to it. Chopping  
away the memories as if to shed the sadness in her life.  
She grows more careless, faster and faster until--

ELSIE

Fuck!

Elsie looks down at her finger. She has cut it with the scissors, she stares at the blood curiously.

She is alive, somehow, even after today her body continues to live on.

She looks at her reflection, maddening tears on her face, her hair chopped beyond recognition, she smiles and runs a hand over her head. She giggles, a girlish laughter of curiosity.

We hear the buzz of a razor, seeing the silhouette of Elsie in the bathroom.

CUT TO:

**8 INT. ART GALLERY - SUNSET**

**8**

The sound of a glass being hit by a spoon, ding ding ding.

MOTHER (40's), stands before the crowd proudly. Her hair is perfectly styled, a sleek outfit makes her the center of attention. Everything about her reads "Boss" in all the most advertisable ways.

The crowd wears an assortment of artistic, eclectic and simple outfits for the gallery opening. The upper crust, of all ages, hold champagne glasses served by waiters.

ANNOUNCER

Please if you would all help me in  
welcoming our star tonight, the  
illustrious and beautifully  
talented Miss Florence

The crowd looks around, Mother giggles to herself.

MOTHER

Who I might have pointed out if she  
wasn't running late, but we all  
know how daughters can be.

Agreeable murmurs and laughter, posh disconnection.