

AGNES OF GOD

Screenplay by
John Pielmeier

Based on the stage play by
John Pielmeier

FADE IN:

EXT - CONVENT - DAY

Whispering of nuns at prayer.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT - CHAPEL - DAY

Nuns at prayer; MOTHER MIRIAM, the Superior closes the gate and locks it.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT - COURTYARD - DAY

The nuns walking around the courtyard in an anticlockwise direction saying the rosary.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT - CHAPEL - DAY

A line of nuns kneeling at prayer. Closeups of various individuals.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT - CONVENT - NIGHT

A single shot of the building.

INT - TOP CORRIDOR - NIGHT

SISTER MARGUERITE is locking up for the night, shutting doors, turning off lights, finally walks off down the corridor. Suddenly a terrified scream is heard, the voice of a young woman.

EXT - CONVENT - NIGHT

Lights in the windows flick on.

INT - TOP CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The nuns are running up the corridor in their night dresses and caps, calling urgently in French. They reach the door of Sister Agnes' room and try the door. It is blocked. Pushing harder they see the blood stained figure of SISTER AGNES. Much alarm and crying...

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Agnes!... Agnes...

EXT - CONVENT - NIGHT

An ambulance comes tearing down the road, siren blaring. It cuts the siren and stops outside the convent gates. The nuns open the gate and the ambulance drives inside.

INT - TOP CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Two PARAMEDICS urgently run the stretcher down the hall to the unconscious figure of Sister Agnes. The Mother Superior desperately wipes and kisses her face.

PARAMEDIC

I'm just going to put something here to stop the bleeding. Excuse me Sister. She'll be fine.

They lift her on to the stretcher and run back down the hall.

The Mother Superior looks around worriedly and goes into...

INT - SISTER AGNES' ROOM - NIGHT

She kneels down by a waste paper basket full of bloodied sheets and starts to pull them out. Then she freezes, makes the sign of the cross and starts to weep.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT - MONTREAL - NIGHT

An aerial shot of the great cross of Montreal. Superimposed over this are the words

"MONTREAL, QUEBEC".

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT - SUPREME COURT - DAY

A normal busy day. A car pulls up with a woman and a man driving. The woman is MARTHA LIVINGSTON. She kisses the man (LARRY), gets out of the car, runs across the road dodging traffic and goes up the steps of the courthouse. There a group of REPORTERS there and a sudden bustle of interest.

REPORTER

Here they are now.

Martha watches intently as 3 nuns, the Mother Superior, Sister Marguerite, and Sister Agnes (dressed in a white novices habit) and their LAWYER come out of the court escorted by police. The reporters leap on them, taking photographs, asking questions in English and French. Suddenly Sister Agnes looks right at Martha, then she is quickly hustled past. Martha goes on into the courthouse.

INT - JUDGE'S CHAMBERS - DAY

Inside EVE, LYON, and JUSTICE LEVEAU are sitting. Martha is standing by the window smoking furiously.

LEVEAU

Martha, it's you.

MARTHA

What about Roger? He's free.

EVE

They want a woman.

LYON

All you have to do is meet with her once or twice... then tell the court she's insane.

MARTHA

Are you dictating my position to me? We're getting into some sticky legal territories here.

EVE

Martha, all we're saying is, no-one wants this to come to trial, not the Church, not the Crown... least of all me.

MARTHA

Eve, she strangled a baby!

EVE

Nobody is interested in sending a nun to prison.

LEVEAU

We're not telling you what to decide Martha. We're not even telling you to take this.

LYON

Is there any reason why you feel you shouldn't take it?

Martha pauses for a long moment at the window, then turns.

MARTHA

Today's my birthday. I always make bad decisions on my birthday.

The Judge, Eve and Lyon all chuckle. The Judge throws the file down on his desk towards her.

LEVEAU

Happy birthday.

15 INT - MARTHA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Martha unlocks the door and comes in. She plays her answerphone and moves over to her cat.

MARTHA

Hi, Kitty.

The answerphone whirs...

SECRETARY (V.O.)

Hi, it's Helen, calling to tell you that Mrs Davenport phoned to confirm her appointment at nine o'clock tomorrow, okay? Bye bye.

Some whirs and clicks.

ROGER (V.O.)

Hi Martha, it's Roger. Can you call me at the hospital. I'd like your opinion on a case. Oh, bye the way, happy birthday. Bye.

SECRETARY (V.O.)

Hi, Marty it's Helen again. I cancelled your Wednesday afternoon appointment so you can visit with your mother. Bye bye.

MAN

(in French)

???

Martha picks up a news paper with a photo of Sister Agnes on the front.

DISSOLVE TO:

16 EXT - CONVENT - DAY

Martha pulls up in her BMW outside the convent walls and gets out, cigarette

in hand. A sign tangled over with creeper reads "Les Petites Soeurs de Marie Madeleine". Martha jangles a bell. After a wait she presses a buzzer. A peephole in the door slams open and Sister Marguerite looks out.

MARTHA

Bonjour, I'm Doctor Martha Livingston, I...

The peephole slams shut, but the door does open. Sister Marguerite glares at her.

MARTHA (Cont.)

Hello... I'm Doctor Martha Living...ston... I...

Martha realizes it is the cigarette that is causing the trouble and hastily grinds it underfoot.

MARTHA (Cont.)

Excuse me... I'm...

Sister Marguerite eyes flick down at cigarette butt. Martha awkwardly tries to kick it away.

MARTHA (Cont.)
...the court-appointed psychiatrist.

Sister Marguerite gives a frosty imitation of a smile and motions for her to come in.

MARTHA (Cont.)
Thank you. I um... I believe your Mother Superior's expecting me.

Martha and the Sister walk up the drive to the convent.

17 INT - WAITING ROOM - DAY

Martha follows Sister Marguerite into a grilled waiting room. Sister moves off, leaving Martha looking around curiously. Then the MOTHER MIRIAM arrives from behind the grilled door, sees Martha, sighs exasperatedly and enters giving Martha a slight start.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
(beaming at her own little joke)
Doctor Livingston I presume? I'm Mother Miriam Ruth. You needn't call Mother if you don't wish.
(shaking hands)
Most people find it uncomfortable.

MARTHA
Well... I...

MOTHER MIRIAM
(carrying right on)
I'm afraid the word brings up the most unpleasant connotations in this day and age...

MARTHA
Yes... I...

MOTHER MIRIAM
You can call me Sister.

MARTHA
... Thank you.

MOTHER MIRIAM
You must have tons of questions. You may smoke if you want to. Just don't tell any of the Sisters.

Martha sits; Mother Miriam gets her a box of matches.

MOTHER MIRIAM (Cont.)

They wouldn't understand, especially Sister Marguerite. She'd scare the pants off Queen Elizabeth.

(she lights Martha's cigarette)

Besides, I miss them.

MARTHA

You were a smoker?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Two packs a day.

MARTHA

I can beat that.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Unfiltered.

Martha inclines her head impressed. Mother Miriam sits down next to her.

MOTHER MIRIAM (Cont.)

Well, you have questions.

(checks her watch)

Fire away...

MARTHA

Who knew about Agnes' pregnancy?

MOTHER MIRIAM

No-one.

MARTHA

How did she hide it from the other nuns?

MOTHER MIRIAM

She undressed alone... she bathed alone.

MARTHA

Is that normal?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Yes.

MARTHA

How did she hide it during the day?

MOTHER MIRIAM

(indicating her habit)

She could have hidden a machine gun in here if she had wanted to.

MARTHA

Didn't she have any physical examinations in this time?

MOTHER MIRIAM

We're examined once a year. Her pregnancy fell in between the doctor's visits.

MARTHA

Who was the father?

MOTHER MIRIAM

I haven't a clue.

MARTHA

What man had access to her?

MOTHER MIRIAM

None as far as I know.

MARTHA

Was there a priest?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Yes, but I...

MARTHA

What's his name?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Father Martineau, but I don't see him as a candidate.

MARTHA

Could there have been anyone else?

MOTHER MIRIAM

(a pause)

Obviously there was.

MARTHA

And you didn't try to find out who?

MOTHER MIRIAM

(standing)

Believe me, I've done everything possible short of asking Agnes.

MARTHA

Why haven't you asked her?

Mother Miriam removes a tray from under a pot plant and brings it back to use as an ashtray.

MOTHER MIRIAM

(sitting again)

She can't even remember the birth. Do

you think she'd admit to the conception?

MARTHA

Look, someone gave her the baby.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Yes, but that was some ten months ago.
I fail to see that the identity of that
somebody has anything to do with this
trial.

MARTHA

Why do you think that?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Don't ask me those questions dear,
I'm not the patient.

MARTHA

Well I'm the doctor. I'm the one who's
going to decide what is, or is not
important here.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Look doctor, I don't know how to tell you
this politely, but I don't approve of you.
Not you personally...

MARTHA

The science of psychiatry.

MOTHER MIRIAM

(standing)

Exactly. I want you do deal with Agnes
as speedily and as easily as possible.
She won't hold up under any sort of cross
examination.

MARTHA

(also standing)

I am not with the Inquisition.

MOTHER MIRIAM

And I am not from the Middle Ages. I
know what you are! I don't want that
mind cut open.

Then Mother Miriam walks out.

18 INT - WAITING ROOM - DAY

A little later, Martha is sitting alone smoking. SISTER ANNE
enters and indicates that Martha should follow her. They exit out of
the grilled room
and head up a steep flight of wooden stairs. Faintly the voice
of a single

young woman can be heard singing in Latin.

19 INT - TOP CORRIDOR - DAY

Martha follows Sister Anne down the hall towards the singing. They stop outside Agnes' room. Martha looks to see...

20 INT - AGNES' ROOM - DAY

... Agnes an almost childlike young woman singing happily, looking out the window. Then Agnes hears a slight sound and stops abruptly. She turns to see Martha standing in the doorway.

MARTHA

Hello. I'm Doctor Livingston. I've been asked to talk to you. May I?

AGNES

Yes.

Martha moves further in the room. An ELDERLY NUN hovers outside the door.

MARTHA

You have a lovely voice.

AGNES

No I don't.

MARTHA

I just heard you.

AGNES

That wasn't me.

MARTHA

Was it Sister Marguerite?

Agnes laughs and Martha closes the door, shutting out the old nun.

MARTHA (Cont.)

You're very pretty Agnes.

AGNES

No I'm not.

MARTHA

Hasn't anyone ever told you that before?

AGNES

Let's talk about something else.

MARTHA

What would you like to talk about.

AGNES

I don't know.

MARTHA

Anything... may I sit down?

AGNES

Yes.

They both sit.

MARTHA

First thing that comes to your mind?

AGNES

God! But there's nothing to say about God.

MARTHA

Second thing that comes to your mind.

AGNES

Love.

MARTHA

Have you ever loved anyone?

AGNES

Yes.

MARTHA

Who?

AGNES

Everyone.

MARTHA

Well, who in particular?

AGNES

Right now?

MARTHA

Uh huh.

AGNES

I love you.

MARTHA

(a pause)

Agnes, have you ever loved another man... other than, Jesus Christ?

AGNES

Yes.

MARTHA

Who?

AGNES

(chuckles)

Oh, there are so many.

MARTHA

Well do you love... do you love
Father Martineau?

AGNES

Oh, yes!

MARTHA

Do you think he loves you?

AGNES

Oh, I know he does.

MARTHA

He's told you?

AGNES

No. But... when I look into his eyes,
I can tell.

MARTHA

You've been alone together?

AGNES

Yes.

MARTHA

Often?

AGNES

At least once a week.

MARTHA

And you like that?

AGNES

Oh, yes.

MARTHA

Where do you meet?

AGNES

(obviously)

In the confessional.

A slightly awkward pause.

MARTHA

Agnes, do ever see Father Martineau
outside the...

Agnes suddenly looks exasperated.

AGNES

You want to talk about the baby
don't you?

MARTHA

Would you like to talk about it?

AGNES

I never saw any baby... I think they
made it up.

MARTHA

Why should they?

AGNES

I don't know.

MARTHA

Do you remember the night they said
it came?

AGNES

No. I was sick.

MARTHA

How were you sick?

AGNES

Something I ate.

MARTHA

Did it hurt?

AGNES

Yes.

MARTHA

Where?

AGNES

Down... there.

MARTHA

And what did you do?

AGNES

I went to my room.

MARTHA

And what happened?

AGNES

I got sicker.

MARTHA

And then what?

AGNES

I fell asleep.

MARTHA

In the middle of all the pain?

AGNES

Yes.

MARTHA

Where did the baby come from?

AGNES

What baby?

MARTHA

The baby they made up.

AGNES

From their heads...

MARTHA

Is that where they say it came
from... ?

AGNES

No, they say it came from the waste
paper basket!

MARTHA

Where'd it come from before that?

AGNES

From God.

MARTHA

After God... before the waste-paper
basket.

AGNES

I... I don't understand.

MARTHA

Agnes, how are babies born?

AGNES

Don't you know?

MARTHA

Yes I do, but I want you to...

AGNES

(very agitated)
I don't understand what you're talking about... you want to talk about the baby... everybody wants to talk about the baby but... I never saw the baby so I can't talk about the baby because... I don't believe in the baby.

MARTHA
Then let's talk about something else...

AGNES
(standing)
No... no, I'm tired of talking, I've been talking for weeks, nobody believes me when I tell them anything... nobody listens to me.

MARTHA
(also standing)
Agnes...

AGNES
(opens the door)
No... no, I don't want to answer any more questions.

MARTHA
Would you like to ask them?

AGNES
(pausing in the doorway)
What do you mean?

MARTHA
Just that... you ask and I'll answer.

AGNES
Anything?

MARTHA
(smiles)
Anything.

21 INT - NUN'S ROOM - DAY

The elderly nun looks out the window into the courtyard where Martha and Agnes are walking, then pulls the curtain across.

22 EXT - COURTYARD - DAY

Martha and Agnes are walking together. Martha is smoking.

AGNES

What's your real name?

MARTHA

Martha Louise Livingston.

AGNES

Are you married?

MARTHA

No.

AGNES

Would you like to be?

MARTHA

Not at the moment, no.

AGNES

Do you have any children?

MARTHA

No.

AGNES

Would you like some?

MARTHA

I can't have them any more.

AGNES

Why not?

MARTHA

(a pause)

I've stopped menstruating

AGNES

Why do you smoke?

MARTHA

Does it bother you?

AGNES

No questions.

MARTHA

Smoking is an obsession with me. Maybe one day I'll become obsessed with something else, then I'll stop smoking... Do you have any more questions?

AGNES

One.

MARTHA

What?

They both halt.

AGNES

Where do you think babies come from?

MARTHA

From their mothers and fathers of course. Before that, I... I don't know.

AGNES

Well I think they come from... angel lights on their mothers chest and whispers into her ear. That makes good babies start to grow. And bad babies come from when a fallen angel squeezes in down there, and they start to grow, grow, till they come out down there. I don't know where good babies come out. And you can't tell the difference... except bad babies cry a lot... and they make their fathers go away... and their mothers get very ill... die sometimes.

Agnes sits down on a bench and Martha follows her.

AGNES (Cont.)

Mummy wasn't very happy when she died ... and, I think she went to hell because every time I see her she looks like she just stepped out of a hot shower, and I... I'm never sure if it's her, or the Lady who tells me things! They fight over me all the time.

(staring into space)

The Lady... I saw when I was ten. I was lying on the grass, looking at the sun, and the sun became a cloud, and the cloud became, a Lady. And she told me she would talk to me. And then... her feet began to bleed and I saw there... there were holes in her hands and in her side. And I tried to catch the blood as it fell from the sky, but I couldn't see any more because my eyes hurt because there were big black spots in front of them. And she tells me things like, like... right now she's crying Marie! Marie! ... but I don't know what that means.

Martha stands up, disturbed. Agnes is slightly delirious with happiness.

AGNES (Cont.)

... and... she uses me to sing, it's as if she's throwing a big hook through the air and it catches me under my ribs

and tries to pull me up, and I... I can't
move because Mommy's holding my feet
and all I can do is sing in her voice...
it's the Lady's voice, God loves you!

And her cry echoes all around and the doves fly out of the bell
tower.

AGNES (Cont.)

(to Martha)

God loves you.

MARTHA

Do you know a Marie?

AGNES

No... do you?

MARTHA

Why should I?

AGNES

I don't know.

23 INT - MOTHER MIRIAM'S STUDY - DAY

Mother Miriam is standing checking some papers when Martha
enters. Mother Miriam seems to have entirely regained her good
humour.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Well... what do you think? Is she
totally bananas or merely slightly
off centre... or maybe she's perfectly
sane and just a very good liar.

MARTHA

What's your opinion?

MOTHER MIRIAM

I believe Agnes is different.

MARTHA

From other nuns...
(laughs)
Yes I... I've noticed.

MOTHER MIRIAM

From other people!
(moving across the room)
I believe she is not crazy, nor is she
lying.

MARTHA

How could she have a baby and know
nothing of sex or birth?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Because she's an innocent. She's a slate
that's hasn't been touched except by God.

MARTHA

(lights a cigarette)

That's ridiculous...

MOTHER MIRIAM

(moves to her desk,
starts writing)

In her case it isn't. She's had very little
schooling. Her mother kept her home
almost all the time and when her mother
died Agnes came here, to us. She's never
been out there Doctor. She's never seen a
movie or a television show. She's never
even read a book.

MARTHA

If she's so innocent, how come she
murdered a child?

MOTHER MIRIAM

She didn't! This is manslaughter, not
murder. She didn't consciously kill that
baby. She'd lost a lot of blood. She was
unconscious by the time we got to her.

MARTHA

So, someone else could have done it.

MOTHER MIRIAM

No... not in the eyes of the police.

MARTHA

And in your eyes?

MOTHER MIRIAM

I've already told you what I thought.

MARTHA

That she was unconscious, yes! So
someone easily could have come in
the room and killed the...

MOTHER MIRIAM

You don't really believe something like
that happened do you?

MARTHA

It's possible isn't it?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Who?

MARTHA

One of the other nuns found out about the baby and... and wanted to avoid a scandal.

Mother Miriam removes the tray from under a pot plant and bangs it down in front of Martha to act as an ashtray.

MOTHER MIRIAM

That's absurd!

MARTHA

That possibility never occurred to you?

MOTHER MIRIAM

No-one knew about Agnes' pregnancy. No-one. Not even Agnes.

24 EXT - CONVENT - DAY

Martha's car exits out of the convent and heads up the road.

25 INT - CAR - DAY

The car radio is playing light band music...

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

You have been listening to Mostly Music from Montreal. This is CBC Radio.
(and again in French)

Martha flicks the radio off and stops the car. She thinks for a moment then...

26 EXT - LONELY ROAD - DAY

... she turns the car around and heads back in the direction she came.

27 EXT - PRESBYTERY - DAY

Martha drives in through an entrance and pulls up outside the presbytery.

28 INT - PRESBYTERY - DAY

From inside the house, Martha can be seen knocking on the glass fronted door. Presently a huge, fat HOUSEKEEPER answers.

MARTHA
Is Father Martineau in please?

HOUSEKEEPER
(in French)
???

MARTHA
(answers in French)
???

The housekeeper indicates she should enter and walks back inside.

HOUSEKEEPER
(halting briefly)
Wipe your feet.

They move into the next room. The housekeeper goes further calling...

HOUSEKEEPER
Pere Martineau...
(in French)
???

Martha stands uncertainly at the doorway. The sound of thumping is heard,
and then the figure of a very old priest, FATHER MARTINEAU appears walking
with a stick.

29 INT - PRESBYTERY DINING ROOM - DAY

Father Martineau and Martha are having tea. He pours a slug of whisky from a flask into her cup and an even larger slug into his own.

FATHER MARTINEAU
(French accent)
They arise at five in the morning... and they're in bed by nine at night. Even if a man could get to them, he would probably find them praying. That's why I see that the real question is not only how he got in, but when.

MARTHA
And you're the only man to see them?

FATHER MARTINEAU
I promise you Doctor, even if I had the inclination, how could I possibly catch her? She would have to be a very slow and patient nun.
(they both laugh)

Ah no... they're a very special and rare people those Sisters. Only a few of them left in this modern world, consecrated to the praise of God.

30 INT - NURSING HOME, LOUNGE - DAY

An elderly WOMAN is sitting watching "Spiderman" on TV cackling with laughter. She is physically alright, but quite senile. Martha enters, goes over to her and kisses her.

MARTHA

Hello, Mama
(pulls up a chair)
... brought you something.

MAMA

Shut up, I'm trying to watch this.

MARTHA

It's your favourite...

MAMA

Who are you?

MARTHA

It's Martha, Mama.
(hands over a tub
of icecream)
There you go.

MAMA

Marie brings me icecream too you know. Chocolate... my favourite.

MARTHA

I thought cherry-vanilla was your favourite.

MAMA

Not any more... now I like chocolate.

MARTHA

(stroking her hair)
Did you have a good week Mama. Are they treating you all right?

MAMA

You know Martha never comes to see me. You watch it, she's going straight to hell... after all the things she said to me. Then she marries that son of a bitch of a Frenchman... has an abortion. I knew that one wouldn't work out. Not like you Marie. You got married to God.

MARTHA

(lighting up)

Marie's dead Mama.

MAMA

I remember when you was a little girl Marie. You come back from the movies and you'd say - Mama that ending was so sad... and I'd tell you they had all the happy endings locked away in a vault in Hollywood.

(chuckles)

And you believed me.

MARTHA

Mama, that wasn't Marie, that was me!

MAMA

(a long pause)

Who are you?

MARTHA

I... I'm Martha, Mama.

31 EXT - CONVENT, CHICKENYARD - DAY

It is raining... distant thunder in the background. Martha is standing under an umbrella talking to Sister Anne who is feeding the chickens.

SISTER ANNE

The convent was built for over fifty. Not many of us left... just us and the chickens.

MARTHA

How do you survive?

SISTER ANNE

Oh, we own the land around here. But we rent it out. We keep a few acres for ourselves,
(indicating)
some wheat, corn, some vegetables.

MARTHA

Well that's a lot of land. You must have help. Do you have field hands that help you?

SISTER ANNE

No. We work the land alone. No-one but Sister Marguerite and I are permitted contact with the public.

MARTHA

Sister Anne, which was Agnes' room?

Sister Anne points up to a window on the corner of the convent.

SISTER ANNE

Oh that one there, in the corner.

MARTHA

The one up on the third floor?

SISTER ANNE

Yes.

MARTHA

Uh huh.

32 INT - AGNES' OLD ROOM - DAY

Mother Miriam unlocks a padlock on the door, opens it for Martha. They both enter the room which is totally plain, stripped of everything.

MOTHER MIRIAM

This convent is locked solid. The only one that has a key is Sister Marguerite and she wouldn't let Christ in after dark.

MARTHA

Well, it's been known to happen in the day too. Maybe Agnes went to him.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Oh come on, you've talked to her. She doesn't even know how babies are born, let alone made.

MARTHA

When did you first learn about her... innocence, the way she thinks?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Shortly after she came to us.

MARTHA

And you weren't shocked?

MOTHER MIRIAM

I was appalled, just as you are now.

MARTHA

And what happened?

MOTHER MIRIAM

She stopped eating completely...

33 INT - CHAPEL - DAY

In flashback: Agnes, all in white is lying face down in the sign of the cross in front of the altar. Mother Miriam enters.

MARTHA (V.O.)

This was before her pregnancy?

MOTHER MIRIAM (V.O.)

About two years before.

Mother Miriam stops in front of Agnes.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Agnes, it has come to my attention that you have stopped eating. Why is this?

AGNES

(not looking up)

I've been commanded by God.

MOTHER MIRIAM

(sighs)

He talked to you Himself?

AGNES

No.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Through someone else?

AGNES

Yes.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Who?

AGNES

I can't say.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Why?

AGNES

She'd punish me.

MOTHER MIRIAM

One of the other Sisters?

AGNES

No.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Who?

Mother Miriam glances up at an older NUN who has been in the chapel watching all along. She takes the hint and hobbles out.

MOTHER MIRIAM (Cont.)

Why would she tell you to do this?
... Agnes look at me.

AGNES

(looking up)
Because I'm getting fat.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Oh, for Heaven's sake.

AGNES

I am, there's too much flesh on me.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Agnes...

AGNES

I'm a blimp.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Why does it matter whether you're fat
or not...

AGNES

Because...

MOTHER MIRIAM

... You needn't worry about being
attractive here.

AGNES

I do, I have to be attractive to God.

MOTHER MIRIAM

He loves you the way you are.

AGNES

No he doesn't. He hates fat people.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Who told you this?

AGNES

It's a sin to be fat.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Why?

AGNES

Look at the statues, they're thin.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Agnes...

AGNES

That's because they're suffering...
suffering is beautiful, I want to be
beautiful.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Who tells you these things?

AGNES

Christ said it in the Bible, he said -
suffer the little children, I want to
suffer like a little child.

MOTHER MIRIAM

(genuinely distressed)

That's not what he meant.

AGNES

I... I am a little child but my body
keeps getting bigger and soon I... I
won't be able to fit in, I... I won't be
able to squeeze into Heaven.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Agnes dear, Heaven is not a place where...

Agnes gets to her knees and pushes up her breasts.

AGNES

No... I mean... I mean look at these.
I've got to lose weight, I'm a blimp.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Oh my dear child.

AGNES

(standing)

God blew up the Hindenburg. He'll
blow me up, that's what she said...

MOTHER MIRIAM

Who?

AGNES

Mommy I'll get bigger and bigger every
day and then I'll pop but... but if I stay
little it won't happen.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Your mother tells you this?... Agnes
your mother is dead.

AGNES

But she watches... she listens.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Nonsense, I'm your mother now and I want you to eat.

AGNES

I'm not hungry.

MOTHER MIRIAM

You've got to eat something Agnes.

AGNES

No I don't... the host is enough.

MOTHER MIRIAM

My dear, I don't think a communion wafer has the recommended daily allowance of anything.

AGNES

Of God.

MOTHER MIRIAM

(smiles)

Yes, of God.

Then Mother Miriam looks down and is shocked to see Agnes' white habit is spotted with blood, and more blood is dripping onto the floor. She pulls out Agnes' hand from her habit and gasps with shock; there is a bleeding hole in the middle of her palm.

AGNES

I'm being punished.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Why?

AGNES

I don't know.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Dear Jesus...

She quickly leads Agnes out of the chapel.

AGNES

It started this morning and I can't get it to stop.

34 INT - AGNES' OLD ROOM - DAY

Back in the present, as before...

MARTHA

Why didn't you take her to a doctor?

MOTHER MIRIAM

It was healed by the following morning
and she started eating again...

MARTHA

She had a... a hole in the palm of her
hand! She could have bled to death.

MOTHER MIRIAM

But she didn't... did she. If anyone had
seen what I'd seen she'd be public
property... newspapermen, psychiatrists,
ridicule. She doesn't deserve that.

MARTHA

She has it now.

MOTHER MIRIAM

I know what you're thinking, she's a
hysteric pure and simple.

MARTHA

Not simple, no.

MOTHER MIRIAM

I saw it. Clean through the palm of
her hand. Do you think hysteria could
do that?

MARTHA

It's being doing it for centuries. She's
not unique, she's just another victim.

MOTHER MIRIAM

God's victim. That's her innocence.
She belongs to God.

MARTHA

And I intend to take her away from Him.
That's what you're afraid of isn't it?

Martha walks out. Mother Miriam yanks the padlock out of the
door.

MOTHER MIRIAM

You bet I am.

35 INT - CHAPEL - DAY

All the Sisters are present. Mother Miriam leads the chant in
Latin and the rest of the nuns respond at intervals. Agnes is very
happy. Their singing continues over, until the end of scene 41.

DISSOLVE TO:

36 EXT - POLICE PRECINCT - DAY

Martha and Larry are at the top of steps. He hands her an envelope.

LARRY

Here you are. Don't let anyone know where you got them.

MARTHA

(kissing him)
Thanks...

DISSOLVE TO:

37 EXT - CONVENT - DAY

Agnes is happily swinging on a long swing attached to a tree.

DISSOLVE TO:

38 INT - CRYPT - DAY

The Sisters go about their tasks. Then all together they move to a corner of the room which is laid out with burning candles and make their devotions.

DISSOLVE TO:

39 INT - CONFESSIONAL - DAY

Agnes is confessing to a rather disinterested Father Martineau.

AGNES

Last Tuesday, I didn't eat all of my lima beans... hid them under my spoon.

FATHER MARTINEAU

Yes...

AGNES

(very quietly)
I thought... thoughts... about...

FATHER MARTINEAU

Speak up, I can hardly hear you.

AGNES

(very loudly)
I thought ugly thoughts about Sister Marguerite.

DISSOLVE TO:

40 INT - MARTHA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Martha is leafing through a sheaf of police photographs of the sheets and the waste-paper basket. She puts the photos aside and puffs thoughtfully on a cigarette.

DISSOLVE TO:

41 EXT - CONVENT FARM - DAY

Agnes is milking the cow. She pours the milk into a large churn.
(The singing finishes at this point).

42 INT - JUDGE'S OFFICE - DAY

The same four are in a meeting. This time they are all sitting except for Lyon who is standing by the window.

LEVEAU

Would you tell me why the hell this is taking so long.

MARTHA

Look there are a lot of unanswered questions here.

LYON

Martha, your job is to diagnose, not to heal and play detective. Who do you think you are?

MARTHA

I know my job. Don't tell me my job Lyon. My duty as a doctor is to...

EVE

Martha, you have to make a decision on her sanity as quickly as possible and not interfere with due process of law.

MARTHA

No... no, excuse me Eve. As quickly as I see fit.

EVE

The longer you take to make a decision, the more difficult it will be for us.

MARTHA

Why?

EVE

The bishop is breathing down our necks.

MARTHA

And the sooner she goes to prison, the better off she'll be?

LEVEAU

(in French)

???

MARTHA

I don't believe this. I don't bloody believe this.

LYON

Well the bishop will be very upset about this.

MARTHA

I'm fighting for this woman's life, not some bloody bishop.

43 EXT - CONVENT GRAVEYARD - DAY

It is a strange place; all the crosses are identical and very simple. Martha is standing. Agnes is kneeling in front of a cross marked with the name "Soeur Marie Paul" and the dates she was born, consecrated and died. Agnes places some winter flowers on the grave.

MARTHA

You liked Sister Paul?

AGNES

She was kind to me. She told me I was beautiful.

MARTHA

(crouching down)

What else did she tell you?

AGNES

She said all of God's angels would want to sleep beside me if they could. I liked that.

Agnes makes the sign of the cross, they both stand and start to move off.

AGNES (Cont.)

She lived here for almost seventy years. Every day she'd ring the bell,

wake us up, call us to God. She took me to my secret place.

MARTHA

Where's that?... I promise I won't tell, would you take me?

So Agnes takes her.

44 INT - BELL TOWER - DAY

Martha and Agnes enter the bell-tower. Agnes leads the way up the steep wooden steps. Martha becomes breathless almost immediately.

MARTHA

Sister Paul was in her eighties? Did she climb up here often?

AGNES

No, only when she felt like it. She brought me up here last winter and the next day she died.

MARTHA

(halting, out of breath)
No wonder... wait... Agnes... Agnes how do you feel about babies?

AGNES

Oh, they frighten me, I'm afraid I'll drop them. They have a soft spot on their heads and if you drop them so they land on their heads they become stupid. I was dropped on my head, that's why I don't understand things.

MARTHA

Like what?

AGNES

(climbing again)
Numbers... you can spend your whole life counting and never reach the end.

MARTHA

(following her)
I don't understand them either. Do you suppose I was dropped on my head?

AGNES

I hope not. It's a terrible thing to be dropped on your head.

MARTHA

Oh, I've got to give up smoking. Agnes

... wait a minute... Agnes slow down.

45 EXT - TOP OF BELLTOWER - DAY

Agnes climbs up through the trapdoor to the bell platform.

AGNES

She said you could see the whole world from up here. But it looks much better far away than it looks close up.

Martha arrives exhausted.

MARTHA

Beautiful...

Agnes lies down under the bell.

AGNES

And sometimes I get under here... it makes a wonderful sound.

She starts to sing in a beautiful voice and the sound rings in the bell.

MARTHA

What happens if the bell rings and you're under there?

AGNES

Oh, it's even more wonderful then.

Agnes sings a little more.

MARTHA

It's like hiding from my mother when I was a little girl.

AGNES

Where did you go?

MARTHA

Oh, no place as wonderful as this. Agnes... have you ever thought of leaving the convent for something else?

AGNES

No. There is nothing else. Just being here at night helps me sleep.

MARTHA

You have trouble sleeping?

AGNES

I get headaches. Mommy did too...
oh, but she wasn't stupid. She knew
things that nobody else knew.

MARTHA

What things?

AGNES

She knew what was going to happen
to me. That's why she hid me away.

MARTHA

How did she know that?

AGNES

Somebody told her.

MARTHA

Who?

AGNES

I don't know.

MARTHA

Agnes...

AGNES

You'll laugh.

MARTHA

I promise I won't laugh. Who told
her?

AGNES

An angel, when she was having one
of her headaches.

MARTHA

Did your mother see angels often?

AGNES

No.

MARTHA

Do you?

AGNES

No.

MARTHA

Do you believe she really saw them?

AGNES

(sitting up)

No, but I can never tell her that.

MARTHA

Why not?
(no answer)
Mmm?

AGNES
She'd get angry.

Martha moves round close to Agnes.

MARTHA
Agnes, did you love your mother?

AGNES
Yes.

MARTHA
Did you ever want to be a mother
yourself?

AGNES
I could never be a mother.

MARTHA
Why not?

AGNES
Well I don't think I'm old enough and
besides I don't want to have a baby.

MARTHA
Why not?

AGNES
Because I don't want one.

MARTHA
If you did want one, how'd you go
about getting one?

AGNES
From someone who didn't want to
have a baby.

MARTHA
Like you?

AGNES
(suddenly frustrated)
No, not like me!

MARTHA
How would that person get one if
they didn't want one?

AGNES
(jumping to her feet)

A mistake...

MARTHA

Agnes, how did your mother get you?

AGNES

A mistake... it was a mistake...

MARTHA

Is that what she said?

AGNES

(very upset)

If you're trying to get me to say that she was a bad woman and hated me and didn't want me but that's not true, she was a good woman, a saint...

(distorted)

MARTHA

Agnes, I don't believe you know nothing about sex...

AGNES

I can't help it if I'm stupid.

MARTHA

... that you don't remember getting pregnant...

AGNES

Not my fault.

MARTHA

... and that you don't believe you carried a child.

AGNES

I was a mistake.

MARTHA

What the child?

AGNES

Everything... I don't have children.

MARTHA

Agnes...

Martha puts her arm out to Agnes who slaps it away.

AGNES

Don't touch me like that! You don't touch me like that, I know what you want from me, you want to take God away. You should be ashamed, they should lock you up people like you.

Agnes disappears down through the trapdoor. Martha throws her cigarette away.

46 INT - CONVENT - DAY

Mother Miriam is comforting a tearful Agnes. She sees Martha coming across the courtyard and pushes Agnes gently away.

MOTHER MIRIAM

You hate us don't you?

MARTHA

What?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Nuns... you hate nuns.

MARTHA

I hate ignorance and stupidity.

MOTHER MIRIAM

The Catholic Church...

MARTHA

I haven't said anything against the the Catholic Church.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Catholicism is not on trial here. I want you to deal with Agnes without any religious prejudice or you turn this case over to someone else...

MARTHA

How dare you tell me to run my affairs!

Mother Miriam starts to walk away, Martha angrily follows her.

MOTHER MIRIAM

It's my affair too.

MARTHA

How dare you think I'm in a position to be pressured...

MOTHER MIRIAM

I'm only interested...

MARTHA

... or bullied or what ever you're doing. Who the hell do you think you are? You go around here expecting applause for the way you treated this child.

Martha and Mother Miriam are climbing the stairs. They pause briefly.

MOTHER MIRIAM

She is not a child.

MARTHA

And she has a right to know that there's a world out there filled with people who don't believe in God...

(Mother Miriam walks on)

... and aren't any worse off than you Mother. People who've gone through their entire lives without bending their knees once, to anybody. And people who fall in love and have babies and occasionally are very happy. She has a right to know that. But you and your... your order and your Church have kept her ignorant...

They reach Mother Miriam's study.

MOTHER MIRIAM

??? (distorted)

MARTHA

??? (distorted)
... virginity, right Mother? Poverty, chastity and ignorance is what you live by.

MOTHER MIRIAM

I am not a virgin, Doctor. I was married for twenty three years, two daughters. I even have grandchildren... surprised? It might please you to know that I was a failure as a wife and mother. My children won't even see me any more, that's their revenge. I think they tell their friends that I've passed on. And don't tell me I'm making up for past mistakes Doctor Freud.

(she sits)

MARTHA

Then help her.

MOTHER MIRIAM

I am...

MARTHA

No, you're shielding her. Let her face the world.

MOTHER MIRIAM

What good would it do. No matter what you decide it's either the... the prison or the nut house and the differences

between them are pretty thin.

MARTHA

There's another choice.

MOTHER MIRIAM

What?

MARTHA

Aquittal.

MOTHER MIRIAM

How?

MARTHA

Innocence. Legal innocence. I know the judge would be happy for any reason to throw this case out of court.

A long pause. The tension between them dissolves.

MOTHER MIRIAM

All right, what do you need.

MARTHA

Answers.

Martha holds her hand.

47 INT - MOTHER MIRIAM'S STUDY - DAY

Same place, but a little later. Martha is smoking.

MARTHA

When would Agnes have conceived the child?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Oh, some time in January.

MARTHA

Do you remember anything unusual happening at the time?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Earthquakes?

MARTHA

Visitors to the convent.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Nothing.

MARTHA

Do you have a... a diary or a day book?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Yes.

MARTHA

Take a look at it.

Mother Miriam moves to her desk and opens the day book.

MOTHER MIRIAM

There's nothing here.

MARTHA

Was the child full term?

MOTHER MIRIAM

(reads through the book)

Oh, Dear God...

MARTHA

What is it?

MOTHER MIRIAM

The sheets...

MARTHA

What sheets?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Oh, Dear God, I should have guessed...

48 INT - CONVENT DINING ROOM - NIGHT

In flashback: the sisters are sitting around the table at dinner. SISTER GENEVIEVE, the other novice is serving them. Mother Miriam folds up a linen towel.

MOTHER MIRIAM (V.O.)

... I should have suspected something.

In flashback, Mother Miriam addresses Agnes.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Sister Marguerite says you have been sleeping on a bare mattress Sister. Is that true?

AGNES

Yes Mother.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Why?

AGNES

In the medieval days the nuns and monks would sleep in their own coffins.

Sister Marguerite gives a snort of derision. Mother Miriam glances sharply at her, then turns back to Agnes.

MOTHER MIRIAM

We're not in the Middle Ages, Sister.

AGNES

It made them holy.

MOTHER MIRIAM

It made them uncomfortable. And if they didn't sleep well I'm certain the next day they were cranky as mules. Sister where are your sheets?

(no answer)

Do you really believe that sleeping on a bare mattress is the equivalent of sleeping in a coffin?

AGNES

No.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Then tell me. Where are your sheets?

AGNES

I burnt them.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Why?

AGNES

(a long pause)

They were stained.

MOTHER MIRIAM

How many times have I burned into your thick skull and the thick skull of your fellow novice, that menstruation is a perfectly natural process and nothing to be ashamed of.

AGNES

Yes, Mother.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Say it!

AGNES and GENEVIEVE

It is a perfectly natural process and nothing to be ashamed of.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Mean it!

The two girls start to repeat it but Agnes starts to cry and Genevieve falters into silence. Mother Miriam goes on more kindly.

MOTHER MIRIAM

A few years ago one of the Sisters came to me in tears, asking for comfort, comfort because she was too old to have any children. Not that she wanted to, but once a month she had been reminded of that possibility.

AGNES

It's not that... it's not that...

MOTHER MIRIAM

What do you mean?

AGNES

It's not my time of month.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Should you see a doctor?

AGNES

I don't know. I don't know what happened Mother, I woke up... there was blood on the sheets, but I don't know what happened.

(starts to weep)

I don't know what I did wrong, I don't know and I should be punished.

MOTHER MIRIAM

For what?

AGNES

I don't know... I don't know...

MOTHER MIRIAM (V.O.)

That was the beginning, the night of the conception. That's why she burnt the sheets.

49 INT - SICKROOM - NIGHT

Still in flashback, Mother Miriam enters the room where SISTER PAUL lies dying. Father Martineau is there and many of the other nuns singing hymns.

MARTHA (V.O.)

When was that?

MOTHER MIRIAM (V.O.)

The twenty third of January. On that night one of our elder nuns passed away.

MARTHA (V.O.)

Sister Paul?

MOTHER MIRIAM (V.O.)

Yes. I don't remember where Agnes was.
I was needed in the sick room.

Father Martineau annoints the old woman. Then Agnes quietly slips in unobserved. Sister Paul rallies for a moment, tries to say a single silent word to her. The smile slips from Agnes' face. Then Sister Paul lies back and dies.

50 INT - CATHEDRAL - DAY

Martha and the MONSIGNOR are walking through the church talking. He is quite young and has a rather abrasive manner.

(beginning missed)

MARTHA

No.

MONSIGNOR

Well you're probably right about that. It certainly can't help Sister Agnes to have this investigation continued for any length of time.

MARTHA

Why do you call it an investigation?
I never have.

MONSIGNOR

Your mother was a resident of Saint Catherines home before you moved her.

MARTHA

What does this have to do with..?

MONSIGNOR

And you had a sister who died in the convent.

MARTHA

Who told you this?

MONSIGNOR

Do you still go to church?

MARTHA

What business is it of yours..?

MONSIGNOR

Oh, we just wonder if you can be very objective about this case.

MARTHA

Look, Father, ah... just because I don't subscribe to the... to the beliefs you subscribe to...

MONSIGNOR

(halting)

But what you believe makes no difference to us whatsoever Doctor. But it does make all the difference to Agnes.

MARTHA

I don't understand. Are you expecting me to..?

MONSIGNOR

Well someone's got to suffer for this Doctor. You've got to be merciful and quick. Excuse me.

Martha stares at him as he walks away.

51 EXT - CONVENT - DAY

A single shot of the back of the convent and the belltower. The bell is ringing.

52 INT - BELLTOWER - DAY

Mother Miriam is ringing the bell and it takes quite a considerable effort.

53 EXT - CONVENT FARMYARD - DAY

Agnes has a wheelbarrow full of straw and manure. She dumps it on a pile.

54 INT - COWSHED - DAY

Martha is watching Agnes milking a cow.

MARTHA

Agnes, I'm here because I want to help you.

AGNES

I'm not sick.

MARTHA

But you're troubled... aren't you?

AGNES

That's because you keep reminding me.
If you go away then I'll forget.

MARTHA

And you're unhappy.

AGNES

Everyone's unhappy, you're unhappy aren't
you?

MARTHA

Agnes...

AGNES

Answer me! You never answer me.

MARTHA

Sometimes, yes.

AGNES

Only you think you're lucky because
you didn't have a mother who said things
to you and did things to you that maybe
weren't always nice but that was because
of me, because I was bad, not her.

Agnes carries the milk pail round to the churn.

MARTHA

What did you do?

AGNES

I'm always bad.

MARTHA

What did you do?

AGNES

I breathed!

Agnes falls to her knees. Martha moves round and kneels in
front of her.

MARTHA

Agnes. What did your mother do to
you?

(no answer)

If you can't answer me, just shake
your head yes or no. Did... did she
hit you?

(Anges shakes her head: no)

Did she make you do something you

didn't want to?
(yes)
Did it make you feel uncomfortable
to do it?
(yes)
Did it embarrass you?
(yes)
Did it... did it hurt you?
(yes)
What did she make you you do?

AGNES
No...

MARTHA
You can tell me.

AGNES
I can't.

MARTHA
She's dead isn't she?

AGNES
Yes.

MARTHA
She can't hurt you any more.

AGNES
She can.

MARTHA
How?

AGNES
She watches... she listens.

MARTHA
Agnes, I don't believe that. Tell me.
I'll protect you from her.

AGNES
She...

MARTHA
Yes?

AGNES
... makes me...

MARTHA
Yes?

AGNES
... take off my clothes and then...
she makes fun of me.

MARTHA

She tells you you're ugly?

AGNES

Yes.

MARTHA

And that you're stupid?

AGNES

Yes.

MARTHA

That you're a mistake?

AGNES

She says my whole body's a mistake.

MARTHA

Why?

AGNES

Because she says if I don't watch out
I'll have a baby.

MARTHA

How does she know that?

AGNES

Her headaches.

MARTHA

Oh, yes.

AGNES

And then...

MARTHA

What?

AGNES

She touches me down there with a
cigarette.

(Martha gasps)

Please Mommy, don't touch me like that
any more. I'll be good, I won't be a baby
any more.

MARTHA

Agnes, oh Agnes, Agnes I want you to do
something. I want you to pretend that
I'm your mother. Oh yes, only this time
I want you to tell me what you're feeling,
alright?

AGNES

I'm afraid.

MARTHA

Please! I want to help you. Let me help you.

AGNES

Alright.

MARTHA

Agnes, you're ugly!... what do you say? Of course you do. Agnes, you're ugly!... what do you say?

AGNES

No I'm not.

MARTHA

Are you pretty?

AGNES

Yes.

MARTHA

Agnes, you're stupid.

AGNES

No I'm not.

MARTHA

Are you intelligent?

AGNES

(more forcefully)

Yes I am.

MARTHA

You're a mistake.

AGNES

(shouting)

I'm not mistake, I'm here aren't I. How can I be a mistake if I'm really here. God doesn't make mistakes, you're a mistake...

Agnes is half shouting , half crying. Martha holds on to her.

MARTHA

Oh Agnes, oh Agnes, it's alright, it's alright, it's alright, it's alright, I love you.

AGNES

Do you really love me or are you just saying that?

MARTHA
I really love you.

AGNES
As much as Mother Miriam does?

MARTHA
As much as God loves you.

55 INT - AGNES' OLD ROOM - DAY

Martha is in there by herself smoking. The elderly nun appears at the door.

ELDERLY NUN
I've been watching. We were fine 'till she came. She brought the devil here.
(makes the sign
of the cross)
There was blood on her hand that night.

MARTHA
Agnes?
(the nun shakes
her head)
Who? Mother Superior?

ELDERLY NUN
(in French)
???

MARTHA
What?

ELDERLY NUN
Look into the convent records.

MARTHA
Sister...

But the nun has gone, walking quickly away down the corridor.

56 INT - RECORD ROOM - DAY

Sister (?) enters to find Martha going through a cabinet.

MARTHA
(slightly guiltily)
Oh, Good afternoon Sister, I... I'm looking for some biographical data on Sister Agnes, and Mother said I might find it here.

The Sister smiles, goes to another cabinet, extracts a file and hands it to

her.

MARTHA

Thank you.

The Sister nods and without a word leaves the room. Martha waits until she has gone, then opens the cabinet and pulls out another file. Glancing at the door, she compares the two files. They both have the same surname Burchetti. The the door opens and Mother Miriam is standing there.

MARTHA

You lied to me

MOTHER MIRIAM

About what?

MARTHA

(brandishing the files)

Your niece!

MOTHER MIRIAM

I didn't tell you because I didn't think it was important.

MARTHA

No, it just makes you doubly responsible doesn't it?

MOTHER MIRIAM

I never saw Agnes until she set foot in this convent. My sister ran away from home. We lost touch with her. And when my husband died and I came here, she wrote to me and asked me if I would take care of Agnes in case anything happened.

MARTHA

And Agnes' father?

Mother Miriam turns out of the room. Martha goes after her.

MOTHER MIRIAM

It could have been any one of a dozen men from what my sister told me.

57 INT - CORRIDOR - DAY

Continuing, just outside the record room.

MOTHER MIRIAM (Cont.)

She was afraid that Agnes would follow in her footsteps. She did everything she could to prevent it.

MARTHA

Like keeping her home from school?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Yes.

MARTHA

Listening to angels?

MOTHER MIRIAM

She drank too much. That's what killed her.

MARTHA

Do you know what she did to her?

MOTHER MIRIAM

I don't think I care to know.

MARTHA

She molested her!

MOTHER MIRIAM

Oh, dear God.

MARTHA

There is more here than meets the eye isn't there? Lots of dirty little secrets.

MOTHER MIRIAM

(crying)

Oh God, if only I'd known.

MARTHA

Why didn't you? You knew she was keeping her home from school. You knew she was an alcoholic.

MOTHER MIRIAM

I knew that after the fact.

MARTHA

Why didn't you do anything to stop her?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Because I didn't know...
(she leaves)

MARTHA

Oh, God.

DISSOLVE TO:

58 INT - POLICE STATION, LARRY'S OFFICE - DAY

Larry is interviewing a young PROSTITUTE in French. Martha appears at the door.

MARTHA

Larry...

LARRY

Marty, what are you doing here?

MARTHA

Larry there's got to be something missing.

LARRY

I gave you the pictures Marty, what else do you want?

MARTHA

Something they... that they overlooked.

LARRY

What? You think that the girl is innocent?

MARTHA

I don't know.

LARRY

You got to be crazy.

Larry pulls out a pack of cigarettes, gives one to Martha and to the prostitute.

MARTHA

Larry...

LARRY

What's the matter with you, you've seen the reports. It's a cut and dried case.

MARTHA

Maybe there's something that's not in the report that should be.

LARRY

You're too involved Marty.
(lights her cigarette)
Jesus look at you. Why don't you turn this case over to someone else?

Larry lights his own cigarette and comes over to Martha.

LARRY (Cont.)

I'll ask around, see what I come up with. In the meantime you go home

and get some sleep.

MARTHA

Thanks.

(she leaves)

LARRY

(calling after her)

If I find anything I'll call you.

59 INT - MARTHA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Martha takes off her coat, moves across the room turning on lights. She flicks the answerphone on. Her cat meows.

SECRETARY (V.O.)

Hi Marty, it's Helen. Mrs Davenport called and was very upset that you'd missed her appointment. She wants you to call her at home, oh and a couple of reporters have been trying to get a hold of you about Sister Agnes. They seem persistent and they may try to reach you at home. I didn't give them number.

Some whirs and beeps. Martha goes into the bathroom.

REPORTER (V.O.)

(French accent)

Hallo, Doctor Livingston. My name is (?). I'm doing a Sunday article on Sister Agnes for the Gazette. I would appreciate it if you would give me a phone call on 942-2424.

More beeps and whirs. Martha starts to undress.

LARRY (V.O.)

Hi Marty, it's me. Listen I just talked with Detective Crawley who was at the convent. She said that there was one thing that bothered her that didn't make it into the report. The waste paper basket. The one in Agnes' room.

(Martha freezes in the middle of lighting up)

None of the other nuns had one. Bye.

Martha rushes over to the answerphone and rewinds it.

LARRY (V.O.)

... her that didn't make it into the report. The waste paper basket. The

one in Agnes' room. None of the other nuns had one. Bye.

Martha looks thoughtful and flicks off the desk lamp.

60 INT - CONVENT CHAPEL - DAY

Father Martineau is saying Mass. All the sisters are there singing together. Father Martineau places the host in the sconce, incenses it and raises it up. Close on individual nuns at prayer including Agnes.

DISSOLVE TO:

61 INT - BARN - DAY

Mother Miriam is kneeling in the doorway of the barn, praying when Martha enters. Mother Miriam pauses.

MARTHA
I've gotten the court's permission
to hypnotise her.

Mother Miriam makes the sign of the cross and stands up.

MOTHER MIRIAM
And my permission?

MARTHA
I'd like yours too.

Mother Miriam grabs a bucket and moves across the barn. Martha follows her.

MOTHER MIRIAM
We'll see about that.

MARTHA
Don't deny it!

MOTHER MIRIAM
I haven't decided yet.

MARTHA
The woman's health is at stake.

MOTHER MIRIAM
Her spiritual health.

MARTHA
I don't give a damn about her spiritual
health.

MOTHER MIRIAM
I know you don't.

Mother Miriam starts shovelling grain into the bucket.

MARTHA

Sentence her and be done with it, that's what you're saying and I...

MOTHER MIRIAM

I am saying (distorted) a beautifully simple woman...

MARTHA

An unhappy woman...

MOTHER MIRIAM

She's happy with us and she could go on being happy if she was left alone.

MARTHA

Then why did you call the police in the first place Mother, huh?

MARTHA (cont.)

Why didn't you just throw the baby into the incinerator and be done with it.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Because I am a moral person.

MARTHA

Bullshit!

MOTHER MIRIAM

Bullshit yourself!

MARTHA

Catholic Church doesn't have a corner on morality...

MOTHER MIRIAM

Who said anything about the Catholic Church...

MARTHA

You just said...

MOTHER MIRIAM

What the hell has the Catholic Church got to do with you?

MARTHA

Nothing...

MOTHER MIRIAM

What have we done to hurt you? And don't deny it, I can smell an ex-Catholic

a mile away. What did we do? Burn a few heretics, sell some indulgences? That was in the days when the Church was a ruling body. We let governments do those things today. So what did we do to you eh? You wanted to neck in the back seat of a car when you were fifteen and you couldn't because it was a sin?

This time it is Martha who walks away and Mother Miriam who follows her.

MOTHER MIRIAM (Cont.)

So instead of questioning that one rule...

MARTHA

(halting)

It wasn't sex. It was a lot of things, but it wasn't sex. You know when I was in the first grade my best friend was run over on the way to school, you know what the nun said? She died because she hadn't said her morning prayers.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Stupid woman... and that's all?

MARTHA

That's all? That's enough! She was a beautiful little girl.

MOTHER MIRIAM

And what has that to do with it?

MARTHA

I wasn't. I wasn't. She was the pretty one. She died, why not me? I never said my morning prayers. And I was ugly, I was scrawny, I had buck teeth and freckles all over my face, do you know what the nun called me, Sister Mary Clitus, called me Polkadot Livingston.

MOTHER MIRIAM

So you left the Church because you had freckles?

MARTHA

No, because I... yeah, yeah I left the Church cause I had freckles.

They both cannot help laughing at this absurdity.

62 EXT - COURTYARD - DAY

A couple of nuns walk across the courtyard. Another is

meditating alone. On
a bench a nun kisses a dove and lets it fly away.

63 EXT - GAZEBO - DAY

It is out the back of the convent near the belltower. Mother
Miriam and
Martha are sitting there talking. Martha is smoking.

MOTHER MIRIAM

When I was a child I used to hear my
guardian angel. She sang to me 'till I
was six years old. That's when I stopped
listening. But I remember the voice. A
few years ago I looked at myself and saw
nothing but a nun who was certain of nothing.
Not even of Heaven. Not even of God. And
then one evening I saw Agnes standing by

her window, singing. And all my doubts about
myself and God were gone, in that one moment.
I recognized the voice. Please don't take it
away from me again Doctor Livingston. Those
years after six were very bleak.

MARTHA

My sister died in a convent. And it's her
voice I hear.

(a long pause)

Does my smoking bother you?

MOTHER MIRIAM

No, it reminds me.

MARTHA

Would you like one? Huh?

MOTHER MIRIAM

I'd love one.

Martha hands her a cigarette and lights it for her. Mother
Miriam coughs a
lot. Martha pats her on the back.

MOTHER MIRIAM

I'm out of prac...

(cough)

... practice.

(cough)

MARTHA

All right?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Fine thanks...

MARTHA

Do you suppose the saints would have smoked if tobacco had been popular back then?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Undoubtedly. Not the ascetics of course but, well Saint Thomas More...

MARTHA

(chuckles)

Long, thin and filtered.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Saint Ignatius would smoke cigars and stub them out on the soles of his bare feet.

(they roar with laughter)

And of course (distorted)

MARTHA

Hand rolled.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Even Christ would partake socially.

MARTHA

Saint Peter?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Pipe!

MARTHA

Right...

MOTHER MIRIAM

Mary Magdalen?

MARTHA

(imitating)

Oh, you've come a long way baby.

MOTHER MIRIAM

And Saint John would chew tobacco.

More laughter, then the moment became more serious.

MARTHA

Right.

(a pause)

What do you suppose today's saints are smoking?

MOTHER MIRIAM

There are no saints today. Good people yes, but extraordinarily good people... those I'm afraid we are sorely lacking.

MARTHA

Do you think they ever existed?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Yes I do.

MARTHA

Do you want to become one?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Become? One is born a saint.

MARTHA

Well you can try, can't you, to be good?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Yes, but goodness has very little to do with it. Not all the saints were good, in fact some of them were a little crazy. But... they were still attached to God. Agnes has that birth.

(she stands)

No more... we're born, we live, we die. No room for miracles.

(Martha gets up too)

Oh my dear, how I miss the miracles.

They start walking back to the convent.

MARTHA

Do you think Agnes is still attached to God?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Listen to her singing.

MARTHA

(a pause)

I'd like to begin.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Begin what?

MARTHA

The hypnotism. Do you still disapprove?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Would it stop you if I did?

MARTHA

No.

They both halt.

MOTHER MIRIAM

May I be present?

MARTHA

Of course.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Then let's begin.

64 INT - ATTIC ROOM - DAY

The room is painted white and completely empty with a steeply sloping ceiling. Agnes is sitting on a chair with her eyes closed, already under hypnosis. Martha and Mother Miriam are facing her.

MARTHA

You're listening to a chorus of angels.
The music surrounds you like a...
warm and, comfortable pool of water.
And while you're sleeping, you're
going to be able to recall, all the things
that we want you to remember. And
when I count to three and clap my hands,
you'll no longer be hypnotised. Can you
hear me.

AGNES

Yes.

MARTHA

Who am I?

AGNES

Doctor Livingston.

MARTHA

And why am I here?

AGNES

To help me.

MARTHA

Good. Would you like to tell me why
you're here?

AGNES

Because I'm in trouble.

MARTHA

What kind of trouble?

(no answer)

What kind of trouble Agnes?

Martha starts to walk around behind Agnes.

AGNES

I'm frightened.

MARTHA

Of what?

AGNES

Of telling you.

MARTHA

But it's easy. It's just a breath with sound. Say it. What kind of trouble?

AGNES

(a pause)

I had a baby.

Both Martha and Mother Miriam react with some degree of relief.

MARTHA

How did you have a baby?

AGNES

It came out of me.

MARTHA

Did you know what was going to come out?

AGNES

Yes.

MARTHA

Did you want it to come out?

AGNES

No.

MARTHA

Why?

AGNES

Because I was afraid.

MARTHA

Why were you afraid?

AGNES

Because I wasn't worthy.

MARTHA

To be a mother?

AGNES

Yes.

MARTHA

Why?

AGNES

May I open my eyes now?

MARTHA

No not yet Agnes, very soon but not yet. How did the baby get into you?

AGNES

It grew.

MARTHA

What made it grow? Do you know?

AGNES

Yes.

MARTHA

Would you like to tell me?

AGNES

No.

MARTHA

Did anyone else know about the baby?

AGNES

I can't tell you that.

MARTHA

Will she be angry?

AGNES

She made me promise not to.

MARTHA

Who? Who made you promise?

(no answer)

It's alright Agnes. It's alright.

(a pause)

Let's go to your room. It's the night about six weeks ago when you were very sick.

AGNES

I'm afraid.

MARTHA

Oh don't be, I'm here. It's alright.

I want you to tell me what you did before you went to bed.

AGNES

I ate.

MARTHA

Hm hmm. What did you have for dinner?

AGNES

Fish...
(distastefully)
... brussel sprouts.

MARTHA

You don't like brussel sprouts?

AGNES

I hate them.

Martha and Mother Miriam can't help smiling.

MARTHA

And then what happened?

AGNES

We went to chapel for vespers.

MARTHA

Hm hmm.

AGNES

I left early because I wasn't feeling
very well.

Suddenly Agnes leaps up from her chair.

MARTHA

What is it?

AGNES

Someone's following me.

MARTHA

Who?

AGNES

Sister Marguerite I think.

MARTHA

Was it Sister Marguerite who knew
about the baby?

(no answer)

Alright Agnes, I want you to see your
room as you saw it on that night.

MARTHA (Cont.)

Open your eyes.
(she opens them)
What do you see?

AGNES

My bed.

MARTHA

What else?

AGNES

A crucifix.

MARTHA

Above the bed? Any... anything else?
What do you see, something
different? What is it?

AGNES

(puzzled)

A wastepaper basket.

MARTHA

Do you know who put it there?

AGNES

No.

MARTHA

What do you think it's there for?

AGNES

For me to get sick in.

MARTHA

Are you ill?

AGNES

Yes.

MARTHA

What do you feel?

AGNES

I feel as if I've eaten glass.

MARTHA

What do you do?

AGNES

I have to throw up...

And she falls to her knees, retching horribly.

AGNES (Cont.)

I can't... glass... one of the sisters
has fed me glass.

MARTHA

Which one?

AGNES

I don't know which one (distorted)

MARTHA

Of what?

AGNES

Of me. Oh... God! My God...
(assumes the birth
position and looks
between her legs)
Water... it's all water...

MARTHA

Why isn't anyone coming?

AGNES

(trying to wipe up
the water)
They can't hear me that's why.
(in terrible pain)
Oh God... I don't wanna...

MOTHER MIRIAM

(to Martha)

Stop her!

Then Agnes tries to crawl away as though terrified of something.

MARTHA

What is it?

AGNES

Please get away from me...

MARTHA

Who?

AGNES

Go away, I don't want you here.

MARTHA

Is someone in the room with you?

AGNES

No... don't hit me please...

MOTHER MIRIAM

Stop this, she'll hurt herself
(stepping forward)
I'm not going to allow this.

MARTHA

(hauling her away)
NO... no... I said leave her alone.

AGNES

(still screaming)

You're trying to take my baby... trying

to take my baby... no...
(then quietly)
It wasn't my fault Mommy... it was a
mistake Mommy.

MARTHA
Alright Agnes... it's alright. One, two
three...
(claps her hands;
Agnes comes to)
It's alright... it's me, Doctor Livingston,
it's alright, alright. Thankyou Agnes,
thankyou. How do you feel?

AGNES
Frightened.

MARTHA
Do you remember what just happened?

AGNES
(a long pause)
Yes.

MARTHA
That's good. Do you feel well enough
to stand?

AGNES
Yes.

Martha helps her to her feet. Agnes clings to her.

MARTHA
There you go. It's alright, it's alright,
it's all over. It's alright Agnes, that's
right, that's right.

65 EXT - LAND REGISTRY - DAY

Martha approaches the building and enters it.

66 INT - RECORD ROOM - DAY

The camera tracks through shelves of ancient records and maps.

MARTHA (off)
Ah excuse me. Hallo. I'm looking
for some ah... ground plans for the
ah... Saint Marie Madeleine Convent
in (distorted).

MAN (off)
(answers in French)

Martha and a middle aged official come into view. He stops
at a long set of drawers and starts looking through it.

MAN
(in French)

MARTHA
(replies in French)

MAN
Oh... very interesting I guess...
(he pulls out a
folder of plans)

Excuse me...

He sets the folder down on a table and starts going through it.
They both
look at the plans.

MAN (Cont.)
Ah viola! This has everything. Even
the secret entrance. They all had
that. Usually to get from building to
building in the snow...
(he indicates on
the plan)
... like that one.

MARTHA
(murmurs)
That's how he got in... or she got
out.

MAN
Oh excuse me, what did you say?

MARTHA
Nothing. May I take some notes?

MAN
Oh yes, (distorted)

Martha starts drawing a rough plan.

67 INT - CRYPT - DAY

The crypt is deserted but candles are burning in front of a
statue of Saint Michael. Martha walks over to it, lights a candle and
goes behind it and
finds a stairway there leading underground. She goes down
into...

68 INT - TUNNEL - DAY

Martha walks through the dimly lit passage. She stops for a moment to look at a cross carved on the stone floor, then continues. Finally she reaches more steps and goes up into the...

69 INT - BARN - DAY

Martha emerges through a trapdoor in to the barn which is full of doves. It begins to make sense for her.

70 EXT - CITY - DAY

Various closeups of famous statues. A bell is tolling. Two nuns come out of a building, down streets, across the road as though traffic did not exist and into another building.

71 INT - LIFT - DAY

The nuns are Sister Anne and Mother Miriam. In the lift an OFFICE GIRL checks her lipstick in the reflective metal walls. The lift stops and the Sisters get off.

72 INT - CORRIDOR - DAY

They walk down the modern carpeted corridor into...

73 INT - MARTHA'S OFFICE - DAY

Mother Miriam addresses the secretary, HELEN.

MOTHER MIRIAM
Is the Doctor in her office?

HELEN
Ah, who shall I say is calling?

MOTHER MIRIAM
(grimly)
General MacArthur.

She heads onto Martha's office. Helen jumps up after her.

HELEN
Just a minute please, you can't go in there.

Mother Miriam pushes the door open to reveal Martha.

MARTHA

(standing)

It's... it's alright Helen, just close the door.

Mother Miriam walks in and throws some papers down onto Martha's desk.

MOTHER MIRIAM

I've just met with the bishop. We're taking you off the case.

MARTHA

(picking up the papers)

You're what?

MOTHER MIRIAM

If we want to hire a psychiatrist for Agnes. we'll find our own, thank you.

(starts to leave)

MARTHA

One that will ask the questions you want asked.

MOTHER MIRIAM

(halting)

One that will approach this matter with some objectivity and respect.

MARTHA

For the Church?

MOTHER MIRIAM

For Agnes.

MARTHA

You think she's a saint?

MOTHER MIRIAM

She's been touched by God, yes.

MARTHA

How? How? She hallucinates, stops eating and bleeds spontaneously. Is that supposed to convince me she shouldn't be touched. Give me a miracle.

MOTHER MIRIAM

The father!

MARTHA

Who is he?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Why must he be anybody?

MARTHA

(laughs and sits down)

My God, you're as crazy as...

MOTHER MIRIAM

Stop laughing, I don't say it's the truth,
I'm saying...

MARTHA

How (distorted) ?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Don't be ridiculous.

MARTHA

Well give me a reasonable explanation

MOTHER MIRIAM

A miracle is an event without an
explanation. If she's capable of putting
a hole in her hand without benefit of a
nail, why couldn't she split a cell in her
womb?

MARTHA

This is insane.

MOTHER MIRIAM

There as no man in the convent on that
night and no way for any man to get in
or out.

MARTHA

You're saying God did it?

MOTHER MIRIAM

No, that's as much as saying Father
Martineau did it. I'm saying God
permitted it.

MARTHA

But how did it happen?

MOTHER MIRIAM

You'll never find the answer for
everything God did.

MARTHA

I thought you didn't believe in miracles
today Mother?

MOTHER MIRIAM

But I want the opportunity to believe.
I want the choice to believe.

MARTHA

But what you are choosing to believe
is a lie because you won't face the fact
that she was raped... or seduced...
or that she did the seducing.

MOTHER MIRIAM

She is an innocent.

MARTHA

But she is not an enigma Mother.
Everything that Agnes has done is
explainable from modern psychiatry.
One, two, three, right down the line.

MOTHER MIRIAM

That's what you believe she is? The
sum of her psychological parts?

MARTHA

That's what I have to believe...

MOTHER MIRIAM

Then why are you so obsessed with her?
You're losing sleep over her?
(Martha gets up disturbed)
You're thinking about her all the time.
You're bent on saving her. Why?

Martha has no answer.

MOTHER MIRIAM (Cont.)

(calmer)

I'm not accusing. I'm recognizing.

MARTHA

There's a tunnel out of the crypt into
the barn. Did you know about that?
There's an answer Mother. That's how
she got out.

MOTHER MIRIAM

That's crazy. How could she find out
about it?

MARTHA

Somebody told her.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Who? That tun... that tunnel hasn't
been used in fifty years.

MARTHA

Oh, would you stop lying Mother!

MOTHER MIRIAM

Why would I lie?

MARTHA

Because it's murder we're talking about.
Aren't you concerned about what she told
us about the other person in her room.

MOTHER MIRIAM

I'm concerned about her health.

MARTHA

Who was that person Mother? Was it
you?

MOTHER MIRIAM

If you believe this is murder, it is the
Crown attorney you have to talk to, not
me. And definitely not Agnes.

She goes out and slams the door.

74 EXT - POND - DAY

After a couple of establishing shots of the convent, the nuns
are shown ice skating on the frozen pond. They are quite
uninhibited, like little
children. Their singing (off) from the chapel continues until
the end of
scene 78.

75 INT - CHAPEL - DAY

Sister Genevieve, the other novice is being consecrated. She
approaches the altar all dressed in white, carrying a single candle
and kneels down.

76 INT - LAW COURTS - DAY

Martha and Justice Leveau come up the steps and into the
corridor.

MARTHA

All I want is one more week.

LEVEAU

Why?

(continues in French,
then...)

You've done nothing to show any progress.

MARTHA

Yes, that's because I'm getting to her.

LEVEAU

You're getting to all of us Martha, let's

face it.

MARTHA

I'll have a decision by next week.

LEVEAU

It's gone on long enough. You're out.

MARTHA

Oh Joe... Joe she didn't kill the baby.

LEVEAU

(halting)

You have proof?

MARTHA

I'll have it.

LEVEAU

When?

MARTHA

Next week.

LEVEAU

(walking on)

No, no, no...

MARTHA

I can get you new evidence next week.

LEVEAU

No!

MARTHA

Tomorrow... tomorrow, I'll get it by tomorrow. I will.

They reach the door of Leveau's office. He thinks...

LEVEAU

Yes, demain (?)

77 INT - CHAPEL - DAY

The scene consists of a number of shots dissolving into one another. Sister Genevieve lying face down in front of the bishop, Genevieve praying on her knees, her family (4) watching from behind the grilled gate. Genevieve's hair being cut, her joy at the habit being fitted to her, running out to join her family, a jolly old singalong on the piano, this time the nuns singing along from behind the gate.

78 EXT - CONVENT - DAY

Martha drives up in her car and walks across the now snow covered grounds to the convent.

79 INT - MOTHER MIRIAM'S OFFICE - DAY

Mother Miriam is working away at her desk when a nun interrupts. Singing from the party can faintly be heard.

NUN (off)

Excuse me Mother, Doctor Livingston is here.

Mother Miriam nods tiredly and goes to meet Martha at the door. Martha hands her a court order. Mother Miriam reads it briefly and hands it back.

MOTHER MIRIAM

This is permission to take her apart.

MARTHA

Where is she?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Hasn't she had enough?

MARTHA

I have a few more questions to ask her.

MOTHER MIRIAM

My God, but you're determined.

They move back into the room.

MARTHA

Who knew she was pregnant?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Why do you insist upon pressing...

MARTHA

Was it you?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Is it because she's a nun?

MARTHA

Did you know she was pregnant?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Yes.

MARTHA

And you didn't send her to a doctor.

MOTHER MIRIAM

I didn't guess until it was too late.

MARTHA

For what? An abortion?

MOTHER MIRIAM

Oh, don't be ridiculous.

MARTHA

Too late for what?

MOTHER MIRIAM

I don't know... too late to stop it.

MARTHA

The baby?

MOTHER MIRIAM

The scandal...

MARTHA

You went to the room to help with the birth.

MOTHER MIRIAM

She didn't want any help.

MARTHA

You wanted that child out of the way.

MOTHER MIRIAM

That's a lie.

MARTHA

You hid the wastepaper basket in her room.

MOTHER MIRIAM

I didn't hide it. I put it there for the blood and the dirty sheets.

MARTHA

And the baby.

MOTHER MIRIAM

No!

MARTHA

You tied the cord around its neck.

MOTHER MIRIAM

I wanted her to have it when no-one else was around, they would have taken the baby to a hospital and left it with them, but it was such a difficult birth, there

was so much blood and I panicked.

MARTHA

Before or after you killed the child?

MOTHER MIRIAM

I left it with her and I went for help.

MARTHA

I doubt that's what she'd say.

MOTHER MIRIAM

Then she's a liar.

80 INT - ATTIC ROOM - DAY

It is the same as before, except that this time Martha and Mother Miriam are standing.

MARTHA

Agnes, can you hear me?

AGNES

Yes.

MARTHA

I want you to remember if you can a night last January. The night Sister Paul died. Do you remember.

There is a flash cut to Sister Paul being annointed. Agnes stirs slightly.

MARTHA (Cont.)

What's the matter?

There is another flash cut, this time of Sister Paul saying that mysterious word that we could not previously understand.

AGNES

She said Michael.

MARTHA

What did she mean?

There is a third flash cut of the shrine of Saint Michael in the crypt.

AGNES

The statue. She had shown it to me the day before.

MARTHA

And the passage to the barn?

AGNES

Yes.

MARTHA

Why?

AGNES

So I could go to him.

MARTHA

Who?

AGNES

Him.

MARTHA

How did she know about him?

AGNES

She'd seen him too.

MARTHA

Where?

AGNES

From the belltower the day she before
she died.

MARTHA

So she sent you?

AGNES

Yes.

81 INT - TUNNEL - NIGHT

In flashback: Agnes is walking alone through the tunnel
carrying an oil
lamp.

MARTHA (V.O.)

What happened?

Agnes keeps walking and finally goes up the steps into...

82 INT - BARN - NIGHT

Still in flashback, Agnes emerges into the barn. The doves flap
about as

Agnes moves nervously through the barn.

AGNES (V.O.)

He's here.

83 INT - ATTIC ROOM - DAY

Back to the present:

MARTHA
Are you frightened?

AGNES
Yes.

84 INT - BARN - NIGHT

In flashback: the doves continue to make flapping and bumping sounds as they fly around the barn.

AGNES
Hallo...

85 INT - ATTIC ROOM - DAY

In the present:

AGNES
... where are you?

86 INT - BARN - NIGHT

In flashback:

AGNES
Is it you?

Then she seems to be talking to someone although we can see nothing except the doves.

AGNES (Cont.)
I... I'm afraid... yes, yes I do...
why me?... wait, I want to see you.

MARTHA (V.O.)
What do you see?

87 INT - ATTIC ROOM - DAY

In the present:

AGNES
Halos...

88 INT - BARN - NIGHT

In flashback: Agnes is still in the barn but now she is lying on her back.

Still all we can see are doves flashing in the light.

AGNES (V.O.)

... dividing and dividing feathers and starts, falling, falling into the iris of God's eye. Oh... oh!... it's... it's so lovely... it's so... blue... yellow... blood wings, brown, blood...

And she lifts up her hands.

89 INT - ATTIC ROOM - DAY

In the present: as she lifts up her hands, Agnes is horrified to see two holes in her palms weeping blood.

AGNES

His blood... my God...

Martha and Mother Miriam are equally shocked.

MARTHA

Oh Agnes...

Agnes runs terrified over to the walls blood pouring over her white habit. Mother Miriam rushes after her.

AGNES

It's bleeding... I'm bleeding... my God it won't stop, I can't get it to stop.

(to Mother Miriam)

Let go of me, I wish you were dead.

MARTHA

(trying to hold her)

Agnes... Agnes...

Agnes breaks free and runs over to another wall smearing it too with blood. Martha follows her.

AGNES

Stay away from me...

MARTHA

Agnes it had nothing to do with the hand of God. He did a terrible thing to you, do you understand?

AGNES

No...

MARTHA

He frightened you and he hurt you. It's not your fault. It's his fault. Tell us who he is so we can find him. Stop him from doing this to other women.

AGNES

Not your fault...

MARTHA

Agnes who did you see?

AGNES

I hate him...

MARTHA

Of course you do. Who was it?

AGNES

I hate him for what he did to me.

MARTHA

Yes.

AGNES

For what he made me go through.

MARTHA

Who?

AGNES

I hate him.

MARTHA

Agnes, who did this to you?

Agnes flings her arms back against the wall.

AGNES

God! It was God.

(sinks to her knees)

And now I'll burn in hell because I hate him.

MARTHA

Agnes you won't burn in hell. It's alright to hate him.

MOTHER MIRIAM

That's enough.

MARTHA

Agnes, what happened to the baby?

MOTHER MIRIAM

(shouting)

She can't remember.

MARTHA

What happened to the baby?

AGNES

It was dead.

MARTHA

It was alive wasn't it?

AGNES

I don't remember.

MOTHER MIRIAM

(screaming)

Oh, don't do this!

MARTHA

Wasn't it!

AGNES

YES!

Somehow this declaration seems to calm them down somewhat.
Mother Miriam is looking utterly resigned.

MARTHA

Mother Miriam was with you wasn't she?

AGNES

Yes.

MARTHA

She took the baby in her arms?

AGNES

Yes.

MARTHA

You saw it all didn't you?

AGNES

Yes.

MARTHA

And then... what did she do?

(no answer)

Agnes what did she do?

AGNES

She... left me alone with that little thing, and I looked at it, and I thought this is a mistake. But it's my mistake, not Mommy's. God's mistake.

AGNES (cont.)

I thought I... I can save her.
(she raises her hands)
I can give her back to God.

MARTHA

What did you do?

AGNES

I put her to sleep.

MARTHA

H... how?

AGNES

I tied the cord around her neck...
wrapped her in the bloody sheets...
and stuffed her in the trash can.

Mother Miriam gives a shuddering sigh, makes the sign of the cross and prays. Martha claps her hands lightly together once.

90 EXT - CITY - DAY

A shaft of sunlight shines through the winter clouds onto the city. Angle on the courthouse.

91 INT - COURT ROOM - DAY

All the main characters are present: Eve, Lyon, Martha, Agnes, Sister Marguerite and Mother Miriam. Justice Leveau is summing up.

LEVEAU

In view of the situation as it now stands, and the testimony given here this morning, it seems quite clear that the defendant was in no manner responsible for her actions. It is therefore the judgement of this court that she be returned to the convent of Marie Madeleine where she will be cared for under proper medical supervision by a visiting physician.

Both Martha and Mother Miriam show relief at this. Justice Leveau continues to sum up in French when suddenly Agnes stands up.

LEVEAU (Cont.)

(surprised)

Oui. Do you have something to say?

AGNES

(a long pause)

I stood in the window of my room every night for a week. And one night I heard the most beautiful voice imaginable. And when I looked I saw the moon shining down on him. For six nights he sang to me, songs I'd never heard. And on the seventh night he opened his wings and lay on top of me. All the while he sang -

(sings)

Charlie Sweet... Charlie Sweet...
Charlie's a...

LEVEAU

Please, remove her from the court.

Martha and Mother Miriam step forward uncertainly.

LEVEAU

Would someone please remove the defendant from the courtroom.

(continues in French)

The nuns lead Agnes, still singing past Martha and out of the court.

DISSOLVE TO:

92 EXT - CONVENT - DAY

It is full winter; many shots of the convent and surroundings dissolving into one another.

MARTHA (V.O.)

I don't know the meaning behind the song she sang. Perhaps it was a song of seduction. And the father was a fieldhand. Perhaps the song was simply a lullaby that she remembered from many years ago. And the father was hope and... and love and desire. And a belief in miracles.

The nuns are seen walking together through the snow back to the convent over which Agnes' singing can be heard.

MARTHA (V.O.)

I want to believe that she was blessed. And I do miss her, and I hope that she's left something, some little part of herself with me. That would be miracle enough wouldn't it?

DISSOLVE TO:

93 EXT - TOP OF BELLTOWER - DAY

Where Agnes is singing her song among the doves. She stops singing and the music fades in on the same key. Agnes gently takes on of the doves and lets
it fly away across the snowy landscape.

FADE OUT.

END TITLES.