

"Cordelia"

written by

DC Dzoja

daniela.dzoja@ryerson.ca

START

SC 1

Mother and Cordelia sit across from each other at the kitchen table, same as the day before. Cordelia looks drained. We see a new bruise on her neck above her school uniform's shirt collar.

Cordelia pushes her grey porridge around with a spoon. Mother loudly UNWRAPS another hard candy and pops it in her mouth, SUCKING loudly.

Cordelia
Mother

Cordelia eyes the unopened candies on the table. She again tries reaching for one slowly. Mother grabs her hand. Cordelia recoils.

MOTHER

(shifting the candy around in her cheeks)

Not for you, honey. Eat your breakfast first, then maybe you can have one.

Mother smiles, then releases Cordelia's hand and turns her attention towards the TV. Cordelia looks down at her hand, wiggles her fingers slowly. She presses the tip of her index finger into the table until the skin turns white.

END

CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOLYARD - DAY

Young adolescents LAUGH and run around in the background.

Cordelia sits against the school wall alone, scribbling in her now-wrinkled notebook. She pauses to look up at the other kids playing. She watches them longingly.

GIRL (OS)

(hushed)

Ew. No she's weird. I don't want her to join.

Cordelia looks down at her drawing. At her pen. She starts to scribble on her skin, just below her knee. Slowly at first, unsure, then harder and faster. The skin turns inky. She stops to observe her work. A mess. A disappointment. She pulls the hem of her skirt down enough to cover it.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY

Walking home from school, Cordelia's attention is caught by the sound of people SHOUTING. In an alleyway, a trashcan is

~~Cordelia shuts her eyes, attempting to slow her breathing. In her mind, she hears her Mother's CRUNCHING candy.~~

~~Frantically, she lights a match, holds it out in front of her, and lets the small flame fall to the ground.~~

~~The matchstick misses the wet alcohol spot and fizzles out. Nothing happens. She stares at the burnt stick for a long time. In shocked relief or disappointment?~~

START

Cordelia lights another match.

SC 2

Mother enters the bedroom, startling her.

MOTHER

Cordelia, where are my -- What are you doing!?

Cordelia scrambles to her feet, stepping out of the small circle to get away from her mother. She holds the lit match in her hand. It's starting to burn down the wood.

MOTHER

(louder)

What are you doing!?

Mother makes a move towards Cordelia, stepping on the soaked floor spot.

Panicked, Cordelia throws the lit match onto the floor. The fire hits the rubbing alcohol, instantly setting it aflame. Mother too.

Mother SCREAMS in terror as Cordelia rushes out of the room.

CUT TO:

SC 3

EXT. FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Cordelia flies out the front door of the small house and onto the front yard. She turns back to face the house, BREATHING heavy, watching the fire grow until the whole interior and roof is aflame.

The house burns, CRACKLING, stark against the night. SHOUTING, FIRE ENGINES, and DOGS BARKING sounds in the distance, getting closer.

Cordelia stands alone, watching the red and orange burn.

She stares, completely entranced, completely mesmerized,

Continuing

Cordelia
Mother

completely horrified. Then a shift:

Her eyes well up with tears and she can't help but break out in a laugh; she's never seen anything so beautiful.

A flaming candy wrapper floats by. She pays it no mind.

END

CUT TO BLACK.

END.