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CRAWL, FADE TO WHITE

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CRAWL, FADE TO WHITE
by Sheila Callaghan

LOUISE / YOUNG LOUISE- female, 38....

FRAN / VOICE- female, 45-55

DAN- male, 45-55

APRIL- female, early twenties

NOLAN- male, early twenties

NIKO-male, 28-32

A stroke (/) marks the point of interruption in overlapping dialogue. When the stroke is not immediately followed by text, the next line should occur on the last syllable of the word before the slash— not an overlap but a concise interruption

ONE.

FRAN and DAN in their living room. They are dressed very stodgily, in drab clothing from the late 60's. DAN is folding little autumn-colored pieces of paper. FRAN is cutting leaves from them. Their actions perfectly mirror one another; fold-snip, fold-cut. Something taut and fat and terrifically unsaid hangs between them. Piles of colored paper leaves lie at their feet in orange, yellow, red.

They sit there for a bit. Finally.

The doorbell rings. FRAN and DAN glance at each other, bewildered and timorous.

FRAN stands and hundreds of tiny color scraps fall from her lap at her feet. She opens the front door. It is LOUISE, in her coat and hat. She is made-up and well-coifed. She smiles graciously.

Beside her is a large cardboard box.

LOUISE

Hello.

FRAN

Hello.

LOUISE

I hope it isn't too late to call...

FRAN

Not at all.

FRAN opens the door wider and gestures for LOUISE to enter. LOUISE drags the cardboard box in after her carefully. FRAN resumes her cutting nervously. LOUISE sits down, still in her coat and hat. DAN has stopped folding and is staring at LOUISE.

LOUISE

I live next door.

FRAN

We've seen you. Not seen as in "seen" really. We didn't know where you loved. Lived. I meant lived.

LOUISE

I've been there twenty years. You can see my house through that window.

FRAN and DAN look through the window. They see LOUISE's house.

FRAN and DAN

Ahh.

FRAN (cont.)

Your bedroom window. Is facing our living room window. You don't have curtains.

LOUISE

I suppose I don't.

DAN

We've seen you. In your bedroom.

LOUISE

Ah.

DAN

You have guests sometimes.

LOUISE

Indeed.

DAN

Men.

LOUISE

I do.

FRAN

It's going to rain tomorrow. Upwards, they say...

LOUISE

I heard.

FRAN
We're having a sale. A Fall Clearance Sale. We're selling some things. We wanted to

DAN
Wanted to

FRAN
Sell things. Old things we kept. It's a Fall Clearance Sale. But the trees lost their leaves too early this year. Fall fell before our sale.

DAN
So we're making our own leaves. So people will know.

LOUISE
Actually, that's why I'm here.

DAN
We're almost out of paper...

LOUISE
For the sale.

FRAN
It doesn't start until eight A.M. tomorrow.

LOUISE
I understand... have you another pair of scissors?

FRAN
Have we, Dan?

DAN
Scissors? Another pair? No. No, we only have one pair. One pair of scissors.

FRAN
One pair of scissors. Only one.

LOUISE
May I use those?

FRAN looks at her scissors. She looks at DAN.
She looks at LOUISE. She looks at the scissors.
She hands LOUISE the scissors, very carefully,
handle first.

LOUISE approaches DAN. She places her fingers
on the paper he is folding and removes it from his
hands. He lets her, stunned. LOUISE returns to her
seat and begins cutting the folded paper. DAN and
FRAN look at each other, incredulous.

LOUISE

You see, I'd like to sell something in your sale.

FRAN

Sell? Well.

FRAN looks at DAN.

DAN

Well.

DAN looks at FRAN. They both look at the cardboard box next to LOUISE.

FRAN

Is it... I mean/

LOUISE

An antique. It has been in my family for a century. I have no doubt it will go at once. The city folk flock in early, at around six-thirty. I've attached a price. Be sure to stand firm. I'll come by tomorrow evening to collect my cash. You may retain fifteen percent for yourselves. Does that sound equitable?

FRAN

Yes

DAN

Equitable.

FRAN

Yes.

LOUISE is done cutting. She hands the scissors back to FRAN and the paper back to DAN. She stands beside the large box.

LOUISE

Very good. Now if you don't mind...

She gestures for them to turn their backs.

FRAN & DAN

Of course.

FRAN and DAN turn their backs, close their eyes, put their fingers in their ears, and begin to mutter "la-la-la-la-la."

LOUISE kneels by the box. She strokes it lovingly.

In another space, APRIL and NOLAN have just completed vigorous sex in a small twin bed in a