

NIGHT BLOOMING FLOWERS

Written by

Michael Justin Moynihan

A psychedelic ballet musical

Address
Phone Number

TEASER

EXT. VILLAGE BOBO - GOLDEN HOUR

ESTABLISHING

Everything in the Village Bobo feels like a middle school play. The villagers' boxy clothes, the curtain sky, and the people in animal costumes, tree costumes, and flower costumes.

This set has a Italian/Spanish feel: decaying windmills with tattered cloth sails, houses on terraced hillsides, wooden paths along the water, a clock tower, canals. And LADDERS--

Ladders everywhere. Ladders to windows. Up trees. To second floors. And third floors. Up the terraced hills. Connecting houses. As bridges. Integral to the function of the village: ladders.

At the edge of town, FOUR GRAND TREES border a dark forest. The dark forest and Four Grand Trees are out of place. They're not costumed actors. They look *real*.

A dozen signs are posted: "BEWARE - DEEP SCARY."

EXT. VILLAGE BOBO - TOWN CENTER

The village breaks into song and dance. A roll call of the primary cast. (Everyone except our hero ALBA. We'll spend quality time with him next.)

CHRYON: "How do you really feel?"

RAPHAEL steps forward to sing first. BRANSON jumps in, in front of him.

BRANSON

If I'm more manly everyone will
like me.

DUDOSO butts in front of Raphael too.

DUDOSO

Girls don't really like me.

LAURIE jumps in.

LAURIE

No one really likes you.

DUDOSO

I'll trick one of them into loving me.

LAURIE

Sorry Raphy. Gotta wait your turn. I didn't get to where I'm at in Bobo by waiting for betas like you.

RAPHAEL

I say I love Laurie, but she just enables my self loathing. I'd rather endure the abuse than have to be my own man.

STACY

I'm tired of Bobo. It's a mundane hellish trap. And all the men are pigs.

FRANK

I gave up long ago. Watching and letting it all go. It makes me happy until I see how much it hurts Stacy. So I try to avoid noticing.

MIA

"Oh my god, every boy is obsessed with me." That's what I tell myself, but I won't actually let any of them get close enough to reveal that I'm making that all up.

JO

I didn't choose this body or this home but I've made it work all these years. Nothing's really changed here for a hundred years.

CONVO

I had a chance to leave. But I stayed for Pallida. Her mother left. Sometimes I dream of what could have been.

PALLIDA

It was nice to grow up here. But then I met Alba. He's so different. It makes me want to see what else is out there. How can I be weird too? I think the answer is in the darkness.

CHYRON: What do you think of Alba?

PALLIDA (CONT'D)

Alba is my love! He is the most inspiring and lovely weird boy. I'm attracted to his spirit more than his looks. And the promise he brings of other things. Sometimes I'm scared that being a boring girl from Bobo is dulling him down.

CONVO

Oh jeez, Alba? I guess he'd be fine if he wasn't dating my daughter. They're too young to be together.

JO

Alba is a unique and tender child. The most refreshing spirit to come to Bobo in decades.

MIA

Oh that stalker?

FRANK

The smelly kid?

STACY

Who?

RAPHAEL

He doesn't look like the rest of us.

LAURIE

At least he manages the compost. No one else wants that job.

DUDOSO

Hahaha the Stink Stalker!

BRANSON

Compost Creep? I can't believe Pallida likes him. He's just like the invasive flowers that keep popping up in Bobo.

The village clock tower strikes 9am. Ending the song. Everyone shuffles to their morning routine.

END TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. ALBA'S SECRET GREENHOUSE NURSERY

ALBA, teenager, little but try-hard strong. Not especially handsome. But he looks *real* like the trees by the "Deep Scary".

Alba adjusts mirrors to shine sunlight on the dozens of flowers that also look *real*. Unlike the rest of the flowers in town which are small people in costumes.

ALBA
(talking to the flowers)
Morning y'all. A little shower
before we start the day?

Alba waters the flowers.

Alba pats the tiny plants. He kisses a picture of Pallida.

ALBA (CONT'D)
You think I should give Pallida the
ear rings today? I don't want to
scare her away. Maybe I'm too
intense.

He peeks in a jewelry box. Ear rings.

ALBA (CONT'D)
(as if he hears someone)
You don't think I'm too intense?
Haha. Maybe a little?

BBBRRRAAAAAA! -- The daily work whistle.

Alba hurries into his work clothes: jumpsuit, gloves, goggles, clothes pins in his pocket.

He climbs a ladder and crawls through a hole in the ceiling.

EXT. ALBA'S COMPOST HEAPS - CONTINUOUS

A complex and enormous compost heap with multiple levels woven together with ladders.

Fake trees and fake flowers (people in tree and flower costumes) lean towards the compost heap trying to look inside.

Alba pushes out a secret door in the ground of the main compost heap.

The fake trees and flowers turn their heads away pretending they weren't peering.

Clothes pins pinching his nose, Alba opens buckets of rotting food. He buries the food into long bed of straw and manure.

Flies. Stink.

BRANSON, 50's, mustache, machismo, moron. Branson thinks he's the village Patriarch. He wants to be loved by everyone. He's an insecure jerk.

ALBA
Morning Branson.

Branson gags as he sees Alba and the compost piles.

Alba frowns. Always put down by Branson.

Branson sees a *real* looking flower growing from the ground.

BRANSON
Ugh. Damn invasives! Cut them down
and they just come back!

Branson goes to kick the flower. Alba jumps in the way.

ALBA
I'll take care of it Branson.

Alba pulls out tools to dig out the flower.

ALBA (CONT'D)
Need to get below the roots.

BRANSON
Bleh. Whatever Compost Creep.

Branson leaves Alba and takes us back to town and to--

EXT. CONVO AND PALLIDA'S HOUSE

Quaint. With peach and fig trees outside. Geographically close to the Four Grand Trees and the Deep Scary.

INT. CONVO & PALLIDA'S HOUSE - VILLAGE BOBO - CONTINUOUS

An ambient hum slowly grows.

PALLIDA, teenager, first to climb something tall or to jump in the mud. Pallida sneaks down her bedroom ladder.

Rays from the late-afternoon-sun dress the walls.

CONVO, early 40's, Pallida's dad, works hard but is tired. Convo's wearing an apron. Finishing cooking dinner for himself and Pallida. Two plates are set on the table.

CONVO

Pallida!

He doesn't see Pallida coming down her bedroom ladder.

Pallida tip toes to the backdoor. Glances back at her Father. Convo doesn't see her.

PALLIDA

(whispers)

Sorry Papa.

The ambient drone has come up full. Tension has built.

Pallida sneaks out.

EXT. CONVO & PALLIDA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Pallida runs off down the street. Looking behind her. Making sure Convo isn't following after.

EXT. GRAND TREES - CONTINUOUS

By the line of Grand Trees that border the Deep Scary, Pallida runs straight into Branson. Knocking him into the wall of *real* looking brush.

BRANSON

Ooof!

Pallida bounces up and off Branson. She blushes embarrassed.

PALLIDA

Branson I'm sorry.

Branson is dazed. He looks up at Pallida. Enamored.

A burlap pouch of seeds falls from the bushes above Branson. Bouncing off his head, his knee, and rolling across the ground to Pallida's feet.

Pallida picks it up. Peeks through the bushes that fence the Deep Scary.

Branson recomposes.

BRANSON

Where are you off to in such a hurry?

Pallida doesn't notice. She's fixated on the pouch. Opening it she finds dozens of seeds.

PALLIDA

Oh he'll love these!

She holds the bag up to Branson.

Branson looks bummed.

BRANSON

Of course. Off to see Alba.

PALLIDA

You don't think Alba will love these? Seeds!

BRANSON

He'll think they're swell.

PALLIDA

Here, one for you Branson.

Pallida hands him a seed. Branson's heart swells from Pallida's gift. His eyes water.

He looks more closely. Seeing the seed looks *real*. His expression changes from love to concern.

BRANSON

Careful with these Pallida.

But she's already gone. In a flurry. Off to see Alba.

We follow.

Traversing the town, then the meadows, and the--

EXT. COMPOST HEAPS - CONTINUOUS

Ab Major 7. Tender melodies of love.

Alba is alone in the field next to his compost heaps. Braiding wild flowers into a crown.

Pallida comes up behind Alba as he cuts a *real* flower to add to the braid.

ALBA
 (to the flower)
 I'm sorry sweetie.
 (flinching as he cuts)
 I can't see how you all like being
 cut back. If it makes you grow
 more, sure. But doesn't it hurt?

PALLIDA
 (quietly watching)
 My weird sweet love.

ALBA
 You all like the crown? It's for my
 love Pallida.

Pallida sneaks closer.

ALBA (CONT'D)
 I'm sick when I'm without her, and
 even worse when I'm with her.

PALLIDA
 (smiling)
 I make you sick?

ALBA
 Pallida! What? No. I was only
 thinking of a story and a song.

PALLIDA
 Sing it to me?

ALBA
 It's not ready.

PALLIDA
 Alba, look at the light. So
 beautiful. How about a dance
 instead?

Pallida takes Alba's hands. Stands him up and puts her head
 against his chest. They rock back and forth in embrace and
 subtle dance.

The two together transform into something else. Animated
 different. Rotoscoped while they dance. So that we feel the
 connection.

Long red ribbons drape down, one end connected to the sun.
 Alba ties the free end round Pallida's waist. Then turns her
 around so that the ribbon wraps around her.

Alba lifts Pallida high. Using the ribbon to turn her.
Swinging her in the air. Pulling her close to nuzzle and hug.

Pallida ties an end around Alba's waist. Around his arms.
Across his face. And kisses his lips.

Golden light shines brilliantly through the vast artificial
landscape. Through the fake grass and fake flowers and fake
trees. All the actors turn their faces up to feel the radiant
joy.

The handful of volunteer *real* flowers in the compost heap and
all the *real* flowers in Alba's underground Greenhouse perk up
strong in the evening sun.

The flowers on the Four Grand Trees erupt and spiral down in
the sky. Circling petal confetti like fireworks.

EXT. VILLAGE BOBO SKYLINE - CONTINUOUS

The Sunset. Overture.

As the sun dips, we see that it's made of hundreds of FLAME
FAIRIES crouched in an enormous iron ring. Each holding a
blazing torch.

As the giant ellipse reaches the horizon, pairs of flame
fairies leap and dance off, trailing red and golden fabrics
behind them. The fabrics are tied back to the iron ring.

The Torch Lighter's dance.

The TORCH LIGHTER enters. He is a massive other worldly
creature. Even larger with his long coat and stilts.

He jumps and turns. Lifting Flame Fairies into street lamps.
Others into fireplaces where they flip and throw each other
and shake vigorously. And others into the dozens of lanterns
littering the fields.

Then he goes about tossing Flame Fairies into the sky. First
one at a time. Scattering them like seeds only amongst the
hundreds of candles (stars).

Moving from the village center to--

EXT. COMPOST HEAPS - FIELDS - CONTINUOUS

Torch Lighter gets really into it. Taking up handfuls of
Flame Fairies and throwing them wildly like buck shot.

One gets away from him and lands on Alba. Alba quickly plucks the little one up and puts her in an empty lantern next to him. Pallida is very impressed.

Torch Lighter throws harder and harder, more wild and wild. Until he falls into the hole in the ground into Alba's Greenhouse.

POOF! Fall broken by the poor old flowers below.

Coda.

The iron ring has sunk out of view.

Everything flickers.

Night is made.

The torch lighter crawls back out of the underground greenhouse.

TORCH LIGHTER

My back!

EXT. FIELDS OF WILD FLOWERS - CONTINUOUS

Softly. Slowly.

Pallida and Alba untangle themselves. Blushing.

Pallida pulls out THE POUCH OF SEEDS.

PALLIDA

I found these today.

Alba sees the seeds and gets super excited.

ALBA

Oh Pallida!

Alba squeezes her so tight she coughs.

PALLIDA

Alba can you let go a little?

ALBA

Sorry love. I'm always afraid you'd fly away.

PALLIDA

I'm not going anywhere.

Distantly they hear someone calling.

CONVO (O.S.)

Pallida!
 (beat)
 Pallida!

PALLIDA

Oh no! I gotta go! Papa's going to
 be furious!

Pallida kisses Alba on the eyes, then the lips.

She runs off.

Alba reels with love. Rolling on his back. Bunching up and
 hugging all the ribbons.

EXT. CONVO & PALLIDA'S HOUSE - VILLAGE - NIGHT

Convo waits in the doorway.

He looks at the village clock tower. It strikes (6pm).

Convo, cartoonishly frustrated.

DONG.

Pallida runs up to the house. Stops when she sees her dad.

CONVO

(super dad-mad)
 Pallida.

PALLIDA

Shi--

DONG.

Pallida makes goofy faces. Making a mustache with her hair.
 Convo doesn't react.

DONG.

She starts dancing super silly. The Charleston. The running
 man. Convo remains stone faced. Even colder and madder.

DONG.

Pallida gives her dad sad eyes with a pouty lip. Convo is
 having a hard time but remains steadfast.

DONG.

Pallida steps forward. Convo straight arms her. She pushes through and gives him a big hug. He remains rigid.

DONG.

She hugs tighter.

PALLIDA (CONT'D)
I'm sorry Papa. I can't help it.
I'm in love.

Convo softens and melts in his daughters hug.

CONVO
Mercy.

He gives way. Pallida kisses his cheek and goes in.

PALLIDA
I love you most Papa.

She runs in for dinner.

CONVO
(to himself)
Why Alba? Couldn't it be anyone
else?

Convo sings about his love for his daughter. He finds it impossible to stay mad. Admits that her growing up and changing is difficult for him as a single father. He misses Pallida's mom. Wonders what he'd be if he weren't a dad. And wonders where Pallida's mom went: dead? Missing?

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. FIELDS OF WILD FLOWERS - NIGHT

Alba is still laying in the field. Ribbons all over him.

He looks at the ear rings he still has.

ALBA

I forgot to give them to her.

He turns to the real looking flower that Branson had tried to stomp out. He listens as if she's talking to him.

ALBA (CONT'D)

For reals, I forgot.

(beat)

Ok, maybe I got scared. There just wasn't the right moment.

Alba sings a prayer about staying with Pallida forever. He explains to an unseen spirit that he's never felt accepted by a person before Pallida. He has these ear rings as a totem of his love.

Taking up a lantern he brings the seeds back into his

INT. ALBA'S SECRET GREENHOUSE NURSERY - CONTINUOUS

Alba plants the seeds in little starter flats.

In Alba's song, he prays that the seeds will always bring him and Pallida back together.

The song ends.

A Coyote howls.

EXT. SAD SAP ALE HOUSE - NIGHT

A half dozen costumed tree people stand with tubes coming out of their trunks. Sap runs through the tubes into giant wooden barrels labelled "TREE SAP FOR BOOZE".

The tree people are exhausted from losing all their juice.

The Torch Lighter lays sprawled out in front of the bar. He's been drinking. A lot.

He still has flowers from Alba's greenhouse all over his coat and in his hair.

TORCH LIGHTER
(to the tree actors)
I'm tired of abusing my body for work.

Tossing back another.

TORCH LIGHTER (CONT'D)
Maid!

The trees are silent and look scared of the giant.

STACY, 20's, so over this village. She's not having it.

TORCH LIGHTER (CONT'D)
You Maid! Another Sarsaparilla!

Stacy marches over to the Torch Lighter.

STACY
I'm Stacy. I'm not your Maid.

The Torch Lighter pulls a flower out of his hair and throws it at Stacy. She's startled.

TORCH LIGHTER
I'm Torch Lighter and I bring the god damn sun to this village every single day!

Torch Lighter sings about how tiring it is to bring the sun and the night every day. How he's dreamt of an occupation that doesn't abuse his body. And how he needs a vacation or death.

Stacy picks up the flower, puts it in her hair, takes off her apron, throws it inside the bar.

STACY
I'm done Frank.

FRANK, looks 50's, gave up a long time ago. Frank pops his head out of the bar.

Stacy sings about how small this village is and how she needs to see other places. How Frank is a fat slob. And every guy's an asshole. Even the mystical Torch Lighter.

Stacy climbs a ladder to her room. She pulls two already packed suit cases out. Walks off.

FRANK

Stacy! Don't go! I'll start working out again. We'll get the band back together. I promise things will be different!

Frank chases after.

TORCH LIGHTER

My drinks?

Torch Lighter crawls over to the barrels. He pulls a tube from a barrel and sucks on the giant straw. The tree costumed man its coming from gets pale and faints.

EXT. CONVO AND PALLIDA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Alba climbs a ladder into a peach tree. He picks a peach and pulls a notebook from between two branches. Alba writes.

ALBA

"Sow a seed and the earth will yield you a flower. Dream a dream to the sky and it will bring you your beloved."

Pallida enters her room carrying a lantern.

Alba almost chokes on the peach. He draws a little curtain inside the lantern to hide his light. The FLAME FAIRY inside whines.

ALBA (CONT'D)

Shhhh.

Reluctantly the Flame Fairy behaves.

Pallida changes behind a partisan while she sings and Alba watches.

Pallida sings about how she yearns to earn her place in the world with darkness and adventure. "Life is but a dream. But I am not dreaming. And so I am not living." She loves Alba because he is strange, but wonders if she is dulling his weirdness.

Alba edges up a branch to watch. The Flame Fairy squeals. Giving Alba shit for being pervy.

ALBA (CONT'D)

What? I wasn't. I didn't mean to.

Alba looks away and covers his eyes. But then turns back and peeks through split fingers.

Silhouetted Pallida slips into a nightgown and comes back out from the partisan.

ALBA (CONT'D)

Oh spirits, angels, devil's, whom
ever will hear me. I am the
luckiest boy alive. Never let this
love die.

Alba clutches the ear rings in his hand. Pallida comes to the window. She is radiant.

Alba slips off the branch. He barely catches himself.

PALLIDA

Who's there?

Pallida holds the lantern out the window. Alba sucks up to the underside of the branch. Trying to hide in the shadows.

PALLIDA (CONT'D)

Alba is that you?

Alba squeezes the branch. And closes his eyes tight.

PALLIDA (CONT'D)

Alba, I can see you.

Alba relaxes.

ALBA

(playing it off)

Is this where you live Pallida?

PALLIDA

Don't play coy Alba. Were you
watching me change?

ALBA

I wouldn't dream of it. I was just
hugging this tree.

PALLIDA

Uh huh.

ALBA

They say you need at least 4 hugs a
day to survive. 8 to be happy. And
12 to grow as a person.

PALLIDA
We hugged for hours this afternoon.

ALBA
Maybe all that just counted as one
big hug?

Alba rights himself. He struggles a bit. Trying to keep
looking cool. Pallida thinks he's cute.

PALLIDA
If all our cuddling only counted as
one big hug then am I in hug-
deficit?

ALBA
Guess so.

PALLIDA
So you're getting all your tree
hugs while I barely survive?

ALBA
It's a real shame.

PALLIDA
You'd abandon me like that?

ALBA
(too earnest)
I'd never abandon you Pallida!

Pallida leans forward, watches Alba, and waits.

Alba doesn't understand. But he can't take much of the
silence. He endures a beat. Waits another. Then blurts out.

ALBA (CONT'D)
I'd traverse space, time, and the
horrors of human desire to find you
Pallida!

Pallida waits longer. Watching Alba squirm.

ALBA (CONT'D)
(pleading)
Pallida?

PALLIDA
Get in here you dummy.

ALBA
Hell yeah!

Alba runs down the tree's ladder. Grabs the ladder and rushes towards her window with it still upright. Balanced on it end, he climbs it as it falls towards her window. Jumping off just before it crashes into the house. Alba tumbles into

INT. PALLIDA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Pallida barely dodges the reckless boy. Alba crashes through her changing partisan.

Ungodly clamor.

PALLIDA
(hushed)
Alba! My dad!

Pallida peeks out her door. All's clear.

She sneaks down the second floor ladder. Convo is asleep. Passed out on the living room chair. Snoring.

Through his sleeping exhales, Convo sings a nonsensical song about the devilish freedom in his dreams. "No man is responsible for his dreams."

PALLIDA (CONT'D)
(pew!)

Satisfied, she returns to Alba. Alba is fussing with the partisan. Trying to get it to stand back up.

PALLIDA (CONT'D)
Come here you buffoon.

Pallida tackles him onto the bed. Innocent but passionate.

Return to rotoscope for this moment of connection.

CUT TO:

BLACK

Reprise Torch Lighter's theme. Fortissimo.

EXT. SAD SAP ALE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The Torch Lighter is passed out drunk.

Theme ends.

BLACK

INT. PALLIDA'S ROOM - STILL NIGHT

Ambient hum.

Pallida and Alba lay next to each other. Holding hands.
Asleep. Happy.

EXT. VILLAGE SKYLINE - CLOCK TOWER

Night Blooming Flowers Theme.

The clock tower strikes six am. But it is still night.

These rings are different than before. The clock has an unearthly tone: a hundred bells, gongs, and cymbals striking all at once.

SERIES OF OVER-LAYED SHOTS:

DONG!

Wisteria flowers close their open blooms.

over-layed with

Sad Sap Ale House. Deserted. Only an impression in the dirt of where the Torch Lighter lay.

DONG!

The Flame Fairies in a fireplace lay down for naps. They dim down into coals.

over-layed with

Roses close their petals.

DONG!

Pallida sits up in bed. Her eyes are still closed. Enchanted. Possessed. Whimsical.

over-layed with

The wind blows through a brook causing the flowers from jewel weed to pop, pop, pop.

DONG!

Pallida turns out of bed and skips to the door.

over-layed with

Bougainvillea petals rain from their vines.

DONG!

Alba watches Pallida go. He reaches out and she ignores him.

over-layed with

Alba tries to call after. He opens his mouth, calling out "Pallida!" But no sound comes out.

DONG!

Alba shakes Convo. He won't wake up. Alba shakes harder. A flower petal falls from his head onto Convo's face. Convo wakes up.

Disoriented. Then flustered that Alba is in the house. Convo goes to scream at Alba but NOTHING COMES OUT.

over-layed with

The clock tower.

END OF SERIES OF SHOTS

EXT. VILLAGE BOBO SKYLINE - MOMENTS LATER

An ethereal suite.

Alba pulls a reluctant Convo out into the street. Pointing frantically towards Pallida who walks in a trance through town.

Silently other doors to houses open. Other possessed people come out from their homes. Other young kids. Older men and women. About half the village spill out onto the streets.

Alba shakes the walking sleepers. They don't respond. They just reel a lunatics joy.

Convo sprints ahead, to try and catch up with Pallida. He's fast. And quickly out of sight.

Alba tries to keep up, but loses Convo. Catching up minutes later at the

EXT. FOUR GRAND TREES - STILL NIGHT

Alba arrives finding the possessed villagers gathered in a semi-circle by the line of trees that border the Deep Scary. The forest.

Amongst the group of Villagers are Stacy, Branson, and the Torch Lighter.

Pallida stands amongst these three. Convo pleads with his daughter but she remains blissfully oblivious of her father.

The TREES. Three of the four trees has some trait that would make it easy to climb.

The first tree has long ramp like branches that runs all the way to the ground.

The second is wrapped with a spiral staircase of sturdy mushrooms.

The third is draped with a woven ladder made of vines.

The fourth tree is broad and tall. Ridiculously tall. A hundred feet to the first branch. And bark as smooth as a whale.

The music changes tone. Enchanted variations.

Rotoscoped dance sequences.

The Torch Lighter steps forward. A subdued solo compared to his grandiose display at sunset.

Alba and Convo watch in awe and disbelief.

The Torch Lighter finishes up the long ramp branches of the first tree.

Then Stacy. Alba snaps to and tries to stop her.

Stacy artfully evades him. Turning the pursuit and escape into a playful dance.

Alba ends up on his ass as Stacy walks backwards up the staircase of mushrooms.

Branson. Convo tries to stop him. Branson easily jumps over and around Convo.

Branson dances up the net of the third tree's vines.

Finally Pallida.

Both Convo and Alba are heart broken. Pleading "no". They each take her hands. Trying to pull her back. But Pallida is unmovable. Magically so very strong.

Alba tries to pick her up like he had done in their ribbon dance. But she's suddenly unmoveably heavy.

Convo and Alba fall back exhausted.

Pallida dances a sad farewell to the Village Bobo, her father, and Alba. Mixed with a courting call to the Fourth Tree.

The fourth tree lowers a branch down to Pallida, which she takes hold of. They dance together, the tree spinning her by the hand. Lifting her and putting her back down again.

Finally the tree lifts her high into its canopy. So very high.

Pallida stands balanced on a long straight branch.

Convo tries to climb the tree. He just slides down with each attempt.

The branches that all four dancers (Torch Lighter, Stacy, Branson, and Pallida) are on turn towards the Deep Scary forest.

The Torch Lighter runs first. Straight along the branch and into the air above the forest. Light shines from where he entered.

Convo tries to climb the tree again. Falls.

Next Stacy. She wakes up. As if the trance is gone. She looks down at the villagers below. Scanning for Frank? He's not there. She looks back towards the opening in the Deep Scary. Where the light from the Torch Light emits. She runs along the branch and through the air into the opening.

Branson's turn. He wakes up. Seeing how high he is he clutches to the tree terrified. He balks at entering the Deep Scary.

Lastly Pallida. She wakes up. Looks down to Alba and Convo. Begins tearing up. Looking back to the Deep Scary.

Convo pulls a knife and swings it into in the tree. The blade folds over on itself. Cutting his hand. The tree is unscathed.

Pallida runs. Straight along the branch and into the air into the Deep Scary.

Alba and Convo try to follow her into the forest. Running into the thick brush. They're thrown back by the forest.

Vines and thorns grow thicker making a woven and sharp wall. The only opening remaining is high out of reach.

Both of them collapse in sorrow.

All the climbable features of the first three trees falls onto the ground below. Along with Branson.

BRANSON

(Shrieks)

Breaking the silence.

Ending the Music.

All the villagers wake from their trance and begin wailing.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. CONVO & PALLIDA'S HOUSE - LATER

Convo pushes Alba back out the front of his house.

ALBA
(protesting)
I only want to help!

CONVO
There's no way you can help this
situation Alba.

ALBA
Convo, this may come as a shock,
and I'm sorry we haven't told you,
but Pallida and I are dating. She's
my girlfriend.

CONVO
She told me months ago. And I told
her to find someone else. Why she's
dating the only kid who doesn't
belong here is beyond me. I must
have really screwed up being a dad.

ALBA
You're a great dad. Pallida is the
best. I love her.

CONVO
I'm not having this conversation
with you. I wouldn't have it with
you on a normal day. And I'm
definitely not having it now.

Convo slams the door in Alba's face.

Alba watches Convo through the front windows. Running back
and forth collecting rope, ladders, duct tape.

Alba bangs on the windows. Convo draws the shades.

Alba sits dejected on the curb.

Convo opens the door back up.

CONVO (CONT'D)
Talk to Branson. See if he
remembers anything.

Convo shuts the door again.

ALBA
 (excited)
 Ok, yeah. Branson.
 (realizing)
 Shit, Branson.

Branson is sitting on the curb a ways away from Alba. He looks totally worn out and depleted.

ALBA (CONT'D)
 (to Branson)
 Hey Branson. You doing ok?

BRANSON
 Oh me? I'm fine. That wasn't way
 too much for me. That wasn't
 impossibly too much.

ALBA
 What did you see?

A mob of sleepy and agitated villagers come out from their homes, gathering out front.

DUDOSO, Branson's sickening yes-man lackey approaches.

DUDOSO
 What up chief? You tie tie? Baby
 chief chief tie tie?

BRANSON
 Huh?

DUDOSO
 What's up duuuude? The mob is
 gathering. They need their
 Patriarch. Time to be a man!

Branson looks around. He snaps to. Chest puffed out as if he's in control.

BRANSON
 (using Alba)
 Ha ha. Look it's Compost Creep.

DUDOSO
 Oh damn Stink Stalker!

ALBA
 What? Branson. We gotta find
 Pallida.

There are murmurs. Confusion. Disorganized. Amongst the villagers.

VILLAGER 1
What's all the commotion?

VILLAGER 2
Where's the sun?

VILLAGER 3
People are missing?

VILLAGER 4
Was it terrorists?

BRANSON
(to the Villagers)
Village Bobo. Have no fear,
Branson's here. I'll get to the
bottom of this nonsense.

DUDOSO
And look good doing it!

Branson sings about his faux machismo. About his need to be accepted and how he might be the most popular man in town. How he saw into the Deep Scary and how the prospect of change horrified him. But how Pallida rushed right in. Oh his inappropriate crush on Pallida! How could she love Alba?

LAURIE and RAPHAEL, 30's. Laurie is lean, tall, strong, and handsome. Raphael is average in every way.

LAURIE
Do you even know what we're after
Branson? Can't swing your fists and
boots at every mystery that comes
your way.

DUDOSO
If it's flesh he'll beat it.

RAPHAEL
Can't hit ghosts. Felt like I was
possessed.

VILLAGER 1
Possessions?

VILLAGER 3
Witches?

LAURIE
Shut up Raffy.

DUDOSO
Branson could punch a ghost.

RAPHAEL
He couldn't! He was possessed like
all of us.

LAURIE
Don't argue with the idiot.
Possessed? Ha! Sure you didn't all
eat the same moldy bread?

BRANSON
I could probably punch a ghost.

Frank, the Sad Sap Ale House owner, shuffles towards the crowd. Head down. Big frown. Belly hanging out from his shirt.

He's carrying a potted daisy and a lantern. The daisy remains in bloom, soaking in the little light from the sole flame fairy.

DAISY (V.O.)
Where's the sun?

No one hears the Daisy but Alba.

BRANSON
Frank? Look alive, we have a maiden
to save and a villain to vanquish.

FRANK
(sad AF)
Stacy left.

DUDOSO
Damn, you two broke up? Mind if I?

LAURIE
She always leaves.

FRANK
It's different this time. She's
gone forever. For sure. She thinks
I'm lazy and uninspired.

DUDOSO
You're both.

DAISY (V.O.)
The sun should be here.

Alba leans in towards the Daisy.

ALBA

The Torch Lighter went into the
Deep Scary.

BRANSON

Who are you talking to Alba? Frank
what's with the daisy?

FRANK

It was for Stacy.

DAISY

I need the sun.

ALBA

We're going to find him. And the
others.

BRANSON

Hey crazy!

DUDOSO

It's supposed to be a bouquet of
cut flowers. Not a potted flower.
No wonder she left, you dunce!

FRANK

I couldn't bring myself to kill a
flower.

ALBA

(interjecting)
Who's Stacy.

DUDOSO

Super hot bar maid.

LAURIE

She worked with Frank at the Sad
Sap.

ALBA

I saw her go into the Deep Scary
with Pallida and the Torch Lighter.
Branson almost went in too.

BRANSON

Stop spreading lies Compost Creep.
I didn't almost go anywhere.

ALBA

I saw it. Lots of people did.

JO steps forward. An old lady, well into her 100's, but with an impossibly youthful vigor.

JO

Raphael, you were there. What did you see?

RAPHAEL

I don't remember anything. Just waking up at the trees with Branson screaming.

VILLAGER 5

Me too. I remember going to bed and then waking up by the trees with Branson screeching.

BRANSON

Night terrors are common. What's weirder is that everyone else was unconscious and Compost Creep claims he "saw it all." Down right suspicious.

ALBA

You really don't remember Branson?

FRANK

You really think Stacy went into the Deep Scary?

ALBA

I swear.

LAURIE

For what that's worth.

DUDOSO

(to Frank)

Good news bad news. Good news, maybe she didn't leave you. Bad news, she's been kidnapped by the Deep Scary. Worst new, maybe she left you for the Deep Scary.

Frank looks bummed.

BRANSON

Don't look so pathetic Frank, we're going to fight this terrific evil. And save your Stacy. You'll be a hero or die heroically. Either one is better than where you're at.

FRANK

Ok.

LAURIE

What's keeping Convo?

Convo clamors out of his house with ladders stacked on his shoulder. Alba jumps up trying to help.

Convo drops a ladder out of the mess in his hands. Alba picks it up.

ALBA

I got it!

BRANSON

(to Convo)

What's the plan Convo?

CONVO

(mutters)

We need more ladders.

BRANSON

What's that now?

ALBA

I can carry more ladders.

BRANSON

Ladders? How many?

CONVO

All of them.

Convo marches towards the trees. Alba chases after with his ladder in hand.

BRANSON

You heard him then. More ladders!

DUDOSO

More ladders bitches!

The townsmen scurry into their homes to collect ladders.

EXT. PATH TO THE GRAND TREES - CONTINUOUS

Branson, Laurie, Raphael, Dudoso, the rest of the village, follow the path. Past the clock tower, the decaying windmill, and the houses layered on terraced hills.

Reaching the--

EXT. GRAND TREES - CONTINUOUS

Three of the four trees have grown smoother and taller. The Fourth Tree has grown exponentially taller than before.

The third tree, the one Branson had climbed in a trance, has crumbled to a pile of ashy mulch.

Branson sees and bites his tongue. Glancing around hoping no one will notice.

ALBA

Branson, what happened to your--

BRANSON

(to distract)

Look there, Convo is already climbing up!

Convo is high on his first ladder. Lashing another ladder together with that one. Climbing the next. Hoisting up a third. Lashing that one on. Back down to collect a fourth.

Alba grabs an end of a ladder to help Convo.

Looking up, Alba sees the dozen ladders Convo has doesn't even get them a fraction of the way to that first branch.

Some townsmen arrive with a few more ladders.

ALBA

More. Bring more. A hundred more!

The townsmen aren't sure if they should take the boy's order. They turn to Branson for approval.

BRANSON

Yeah, sure. More ladders.

VILLAGER 1

How many?

BRANSON

(looking up)

All the ladders in Bobo!

Dozens of villagers rush back to Bobo. Into the alleys and courtyards and canals to collect every ladder. Tearing the infrastructure that ties the village together.

ALBA

Thanks Branson.

BRANSON

(bothers him)

I don't like you Alba. I don't trust you. I'm with Convo, I don't get what's the deal with you and Pallida.

MIA, late teens early 20's, gorgeous but with a terrible attitude. Mia chimes in.

MIA

(instigating)

Alba's obsessed with Pallida.

ALBA

What? She's my girlfriend.

MIA

Why would a pretty girl like her like a weird looking stinky boy like you? "Girlfriend." Ha! Exactly what a stalker would say.

DUDOSO

A Stink Stalker!

MIA

I have so many stalkers. They love following me around. So I know one when I see one.

JO

Y'all have no idea what love is. Pallida loves Alba!

FRANK

Stacy and I used to be in love.

BRANSON

Maybe a love spell.

MIA

You're a witch right Jo?

JO

Come on Alba.

Jo tries to lead Alba away from the toxic group.

DUDOSO

Little perv made a deal with the devil and the devil came to collect. How else could he score such a hot girl?

Alba dips his head.

JO
Don't listen to them Alba.

ALBA
What if I brought the devil?

Convo's lashed together a hundred more ladders. Finally nearing the first high branch.

LAURIE
Look Convo's almost there.

ALBA
He can't go in alone.

RAPHAEL
Convo slow down. Could be dangerous!

BRANSON
Ahoj there Convo. Wait a moment.
We'll tie a rope for you.

Convo ignores everyone and leaps off the top of the ladder to the first branch.

CRASH! The 100 ladders fall back to the ground.

Convo barely makes it to the branch. He wrestles onto the limb. Stands.

The townsmen labor to push the ladders back upright. Tying the many broken pieces back together. They gather the rope and begin carrying it up the obscenely tall thing.

ALBA
Convo, just a minute longer!

Convo ignores everyone and everything. He focuses the opening in the Deep Scary canopy. Sprints across the long branch and dives into the hole.

The townsfolk gasp.

JO
He's lost.

RAPHAEL
Maybe he'll be right back?

Everyone is silent. And watching. Waiting.

Nothing. Just nothing.

DUDOSO
Probably not.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

ALBA

I'll get him. Let me go.

MIA

Might as well send the stalker in.

LAURIE

You can't send in the boy. Why don't you go Branson?

BRANSON

I'm managing the scene.

FRANK

I'll go.

Frank is already walking towards the ladder.

RAPHAEL

Oh Frank.

LAURIE

Well tie a rope to him at least.

A townsman quickly ties the end of the rope to him.

FRANK

Sure, I guess. Tell Stacy I did something.

Frank lumbers up the ladders. Struggling to climb while still holding the potted daisy. He barely makes the climb onto the branch. Nearly falls off the limb as he waddles towards the Deep Scary.

Frank doesn't run or jump, but barely steps off the branch, continuing in the air through the forest opening.

The rope feeds through the hands of the townsmen. Then it stops.

Suddenly it pulls fast. Outrageously fast. Burning through their hands.

Branson, Dudoso, Raphael, Alba, and the men bear down and stop the pull.

Then, the rope falls limp. The opening to the forest closes like a cigar cutter, chopping the rope. It falls onto the ground.

DUDOSO
Well, the bum's dead.

The forest opens back up. A glowing figure emerges. Handsome. Fit. Charismatic. Beautiful.

JO
He's like Alba.

He looks *real* like Alba.

MIA
(star struck)
He's nothing like Alba. He's gorgeous.

The man carries the same potted daisy as Frank, but barely resembles Frank.

The gorgeous glowing man walks across the branch and slides down the 100 ladders to the ground.

All the townsfolk swoon with love.

DAISY
Not Frank.

Alba steps up to the man.

ALBA
What have you done with Frank?

VILLAGERS
That's Frank.

Branson backs Alba up. Drawing his sword and pointing it at the man.

BRANSON
You're not Frank.

The glowing man pushes Branson's sword to the ground. Branson struggles with every ounce of strength.

DUDOSO
What are you doing Branson? It's Frank!

Mia and Raphael run closer to swoon.

FRANK
Branson, it's me. How long has it been?

BRANSON
 (confused and helpless)
 Like two minutes?

FRANK
 (sorrow)
 I couldn't save Stacy. I couldn't
 recognize Convo. I failed them
 Branson.

MIA AND RAPHAEL
 Awwwww.

They run to hug Frank. Total enamored fan girls/boy.

LAURIE
 Raph!

ALBA
 You saw Convo? What about Pallida?
 The Torch Lighter?

VILLAGER 4
 The Torch Lighter?

MIA
 I can be your new Stacy.

RAPHAEL
 Me too!

FRANK
 I'm not worth your affection. I
 have to fast in the great empty,
 until I am as empty. And only then
 might I feel again.

MIA
 Oh no! Don't say that. Let me try
 to make you feel again.

RAPHAEL
 I give a hell of a massage

FRANK
 I won't deprive your choice to try.
 But I can promise nothing.

Frank walks off. Mia and Raphael go with him.

DAISY
 Find the Torch Lighter.

LAURIE

Raph!!!

DUDOSO

What the hell just happened?

ALBA

The flowers. He went in and out with the Daisy.

JO

Convo didn't have any flowers.

DUDOSO

Flowers?

Dudoso runs to a patch of "fake" flowers. He tears the tiny costumed people from the ground and bunches them together into a bouquet.

LAURIE

(sarcastic)

Oh how brave. Dudoso is risking himself for the lost father and child.

DUDOSO

Hell, Imma come back and make a dozen of you my wives!

BRANSON

Dudoso wait.

DUDOSO

I don't know what's wrong with you boss, but I'm getting mine.

JO

Don't be hasty Dudoso.

DUDOSO

Forget you old hag. You ain't getting any.

Dudoso ties the rope round his waist and charges up the ladders. He barely makes it onto the branch. Then runs and dives through the Deep Scary opening.

PTOOEY!

With the same force as he jumps in, Dudoso is spit back out.

His body flies out from the hole and down the long, long, long, long, forever long drop to the ground where the village mob stands.

PLOUGHF!

The flowers he gathered scatter. His body is gone, only a heap of soil remains in Dudoso's clothes.

BRANSON

Ah hell!

LAURIE

What were you saying about flowers?

ALBA

Those were the wrong flowers.

LAURIE

Wrong flowers? This is bonkers. Raph left. Frank's... Dudoso is soil. This is too dangerous.

ALBA

They need to be the "Invasives".

BRANSON

No, you're not bringing more of those into Bobo. I just lost my Dudoso. These trees are dangerous. We knew that! Take down the ladders. Cut down the tree.

Townsmen approach with axes and ropes.

ALBA

But Pallida and Convo! Everyone will be lost!

THUD!

Villager 1 swings at the tree with an ax.

VILLAGER 1

Nothing? Really? I'm super strong.

Everyone stop and looks. Sure enough. Nothing. No mark.

BRANSON

Did you actually try hard?

VILLAGER 1

Yeah I tried hard.

BRANSON
Maybe you're weak.

Branson takes the ax from the townsman's hand. Takes a swing.

THUD!

Again no damage.

JO
Who's weak?

Branson rolls up his sleeves. Spits on his hands. Rubs them together. With everything.

BRANSON
Raaaahhhh!

CRASH!

The ax shatters across the impenetrable bark of the grand tree.

LAURIE
Aw hell no.

BRANSON
Take down the ladders. Fashion them into a wall blocking us from the Deep Scary.

JO
Village Bobo relies on ladders. How will the town function?

BRANSON
Better than being invaded by the Deep Scary. We'll have to make do without them.

ALBA
Give me a minute. I can figure it out. It has something to do with the flowers.

JO
How do you know Alba?

LAURIE
Yes, how?

ALBA
They talk to me.

LAURIE

He's crazy!

ALBA

You believe me, don't you Branson?

BRANSON

Don't rope me into this Compost
Creep. There's no way we can deal
with what's over there.

JO

You saw something?

BRANSON

Put up the wall.

EXT. GRAND TREES - LATER

TIME LAPSE

The townsmen take down all the ladders.

Alba is pushed to the side with Jo and other onlookers.

A monstrous wall is put up. Surrounding the Grand Trees.
Obscuring them from view.

Alba can only see in through little cracks between the rungs.

OVER BLACK

CHYRON: Weeks later

---END OF EDITS---

EXT. COMPOST HEAPS - NIGHT

With clothes pins on his nose, Alba opens buckets of rotting
food. He shovels and buries the food into long bed of straw
and manure. Flies. Stink.

Jo approaches Alba.

JO

I don't remember winter nights
lasting this long before.

ALBA

He's stuck in the Deep Scary.

JO

You sure you saw him go?

ALBA

Certain.

JO

I've never seen the Torch Lighter at all. My grandmother would tell me stories about him. You'd think a magical creature like him could just come and go from the Deep Scary.

ALBA

He was really unhappy. Stacy too.

Branson appears, startling both Alba and Jo.

BRANSON

Pallida and Convo too.

JO

Why are you also starting something?

BRANSON

No, really. Everyone was unhappy. Me too. But when I saw what was in there, I couldn't. It's far worse than this mundane village.

ALBA

You did see! Why didn't you help me? We have to tell the villagers.

BRANSON

No. The Deep Scary is hell. We can't infect Bobo with that. You've infected it enough. You and your invasive flowers.

JO

You came here just to pick on Alba?

BRANSON

No. I feel bad for you Alba. You scare me. You scare other people. I guess I'm saying it's not your fault. But it's how it is.

JO

Don't listen to him Alba. He's just a bitter has been.

BRANSON

I'm going to sleep. I'm not sure if it's time for that or not. Sorry about Pallida Alba.

INT. ALBA'S SECRET GREENHOUSE - LATER - ENDLESS NIGHT

Alba's gathered many more flame fairy lanterns to make grow lights for the seeds Pallida gave him. They've grown into little bushes and trees. NIGHT BLOOMING LILY has grown the largest.

ALBA

Come on guys. Ladies. I know it's not the sun, but... You can talk to me.

Alba waits watching the plants.

Nothing.

He crawls into his sleeping bag on the floor of the Greenhouse.

NIGHT BLOOMING LILY (V.O.)

Moon.

Alba is surprised. Looks around.

NIGHT BLOOMING LILY (V.O.)

Moon.

ALBA

Hi! Is that you?

Looking right at the Night Blooming Lily.

NIGHT BLOOMING LILY (V.O.)

Moon.

ALBA

Moonlight would be better than these lanterns? Yeah it would huh?

NIGHT BLOOMING LILY (V.O.)

Bring the moon.

ALBA

That kind of feels out of my wheelhouse. If we could find the Torch Lighter he could help.

NIGHT BLOOMING LILY (V.O.)
You. Bring the moon.

ALBA
I no magical creature. How could I
possibly?

NIGHT BLOOMING LILY (V.O.)
Moon.

Alba sits there stumped.

ALBA
I guess I could try.

Alba fashions a swaddle and puts Night Blooming Lily in. He
climbs out of the greenhouse to the

EXT. COMPOST HEAPS - CONTINUOUS

Then walks to

EXT. FIELDS OF WILD FLOWERS - CONTINUOUS

Moonrise suite.

Alba looks around. He goes to the edge of the field, where
the black curtain that is the sky touches the ground.

There's a slit in the ground where a giant ring of iron is
tucked. He tries to pull it from the ground.

NIGHT BLOOMING LILY (V.O.)
Flame.

Alba looks around. Spotting the Flame Fairies in lanterns
scattered around the field. He collects and brings them to
the iron ring. Alba opens their cages.

Rotoscoped Ballet

One Fairy jumps out onto the iron ring. It begins rising from
beneath the horizon. A dozen flame fairies jump out from
their lanterns onto the half ring. Gathering together making
the rising moon.

Night Blooming Lily turns her flower bud up and opens it to
the sky. The fragrance fills Alba up with love. Her blooms
reflection is radiant in the dark.

Alba dances with the potted Night Blooming Lily as the moon
rises over the Village Bobo.

Villagers come out from their homes to see the first bright light in weeks. *Ballet Ends*

ALBA

Is it crazy that I love you?

NIGHT BLOOMING LILY (V.O.)

I love you.

Alba pulls the ear rings meant for Pallida from his pocket. He looks at them.

ALBA

I don't know what I'm saying.

NIGHT BLOOMING LILY (V.O.)

She left.

ALBA

You don't know that.

(beat)

I have to find her.

NIGHT BLOOMING LILY (V.O.)

I'll bring you. You have to bring me back.

ALBA

I will. I will.

NIGHT BLOOMING LILY (V.O.)

If you find her?

ALBA

I won't abandon you. We'll go together.

NIGHT BLOOMING LILY (V.O.)

Dangerous.

ALBA

It is.

Alba carries Night Blooming Lily to

EXT. THE GRAND TREES - CONTINUOUS

The wall the villagers made is so tall it blocks out the curtain sky.

END ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

With Night Blooming Lily in his swaddle, Alba begins climbing.

Alba looks down at the Village Bobo. Folks are wandering going about their normal lives. But without ladders they have to hoist each other up to second floors. Or more independent folks try to climb up walls and fall back down.

Alba continues climbing. Hundreds of feet.

He looks down again. The ground is so very far. Alba hugs close to the ladder wall. Terrified. He begins hyperventilating.

NIGHT BLOOMING LILY

Breath Alba.

Alba stops. Takes a deep breath. Exhales. Regains composure. Then resumes climbing.

Thousands of feet. Past the clouds. High above the Village Bobo. Barely a spec of light below.

Remarkably there is nothing else to this world. Nothing outside Bobo. The curtains of the sky remain narrow and enclosed around the Village.

The moon Alba helped make is below them now. It turns its face up towards them. Night Blooming Lily basks in its light.

The final scramble from the wall onto the first branch of the enormous Fourth Tree.

Alba sits and recovers. Spying the opening in the Deep Scary, Alba sits up. Takes another deep breath and runs

INT. WATER - SUBMERGED

SPLUNK!

Music becomes full. Orchestrated. Progressive.

VOICES ARE MUTED

Alba is suddenly hundreds of feet deep in a body of water. He panics and swims towards the surface.

EXT. MARSH - DEEP SCARY - CONTINUOUS

ALBA
(muted)
Gasp!

He looks around. An expansive marsh filled with dead trees. Bone like, smooth and white. Everything looks *real*. Nothing is a set.

Alba's missing something. He looks back into the water and sees a woman, dressed in white, with a flower hood on, holding a Night Blooming Lily, drifting at the bottom.

ALBA (CONT'D)
(muted)
Lily!

Alba dives back under. Swims down a long ways. Finally reaching her he pulls the long armed and delicate beauty to the surface.

He swims them to the shore and collapses. She coughs out water. Continues to lay there. Holds Alba's hand.

NIGHT BLOOMING LILY. She looks different here in the Deep Scary. She is a woman.

Alba lays exhausted. He turns to Night Blooming Lily with love and concern.

Night Blooming Lily squeezes his hand and nods up the hill.

Alba nods and the two stand and walk up a long hill. Following a dried up stream.

At the top of the hill is a

EXT. OLD MANSION - DEEP SCARY - CONTINUOUS

Reaching the giant house. Night Blooming Lily points up to the seventh floor window. Pallida stands at the window.

She is beautiful as ever. Flowers are still braided in her hair. Alba lights up. Nearly crying. He clenches the ear ring box in his hand.

Alba pushes open the front door

INT. OLD MANSION - CONTINUOUS

Into the foyer. A giant open space with long curving stair cases. Creaking wood. Dripping candles. The heads of animals and humans on the walls.

At an open door across the room a MADMAN stands in the shadows. His back is turned to them. He makes unintelligible grunting sounds.

MADMAN

(louder)

Hulinmph! Ho! Ho! Hulinmph! Crana!
Crana!

The Madman grunts and cries as if he's been tortured a thousand years. Hitting himself over and over in the stomach with both fists. Half squatting and bobbing.

Horrified. Alba and Night Blooming Lily run to an opening between the old wooden walls.

Night Blooming Lily immediately begins to fade.

There is a long but very narrow passage behind all the walls. It is tight but they're able to push back. Alba's thick body barely fits. It is suffocating.

Alba finds a hole in the wall to look back out at the Madman.

He's still bobbing and punching and grunting.

The Madman abruptly stops. Is very still.

Alba squeezes Night Blooming Lily's hand. Her eyes are filled with tears.

The Madman spins around with the most menacing grins. Ear to ear.

He looks back and forth and paces. Across the room left to right. Right to left. With longer and longer strides. Fierce. Inching closer to Alba and Night Blooming Lily.

The color drains from Night Blooming Lily's skin. She seems to wilt.

Alba is fixated on the Madman. Pacing. Pacing. Then dropping out of view.

Alba panics, trying to change the angle so he can find the man. Pushing up close.

Breathing. Waiting.

His EYE!

The Madman's. Staring through the peep hole eye to eye!

Alba tears down the narrow passages, pulling Night Blooming Lily along by the hand. She wafts as she goes like a blade of grass in the wind.

Weaving as the walls cut back and forth left and right. Alba looks back, seeing Night Blooming Lily in her fading state.

Then seeing the Madman chasing them through the walls!

There's a bit of light through a wall ahead.

Straight for it!

CRASH!

Alba bursts through the wall. Erupting into

INT. PALLIDA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Stop.

Peace.

Breathe.

It is safe. The madman is gone. There is no hole or debris. It is bright. Like it is day.

Seated above Alba is Pallida. On a lofted bed. She looks down and smiles at the boy.

He is overcome with love. He holds the ear rings up to Pallida.

Pallida smiles.

Night Blooming Lily tries to give Alba the moment. But she is on the verge of death. She falls.

Alba rushes to catch her. In his arms she whispers.

NIGHT BLOOMING LILY
(muffled)
Remember.

Looks back to Pallida with regret and sorrow. He forces a smile. Pallida waves goodbye. Disconnected from Alba's sorrow.

Alba runs out Pallida's window falling across the landscape. Swooping down and just above the steep slope down the dried up stream. Floating just above. Then landing back in the marsh.

SPLASH!

EXT. GRAND TREES - VILLAGE BOBO - NIGHT

Reprise Opening Suite.

Alba, holding the flower version of Night Blooming Lily. She closes her bloom. The flower falls from the plant.

Alba hugs the plant to his chest and cries.

He carries her back to his

INT. ALBA'S SECRET GREENHOUSE NURSERY - CONTINUOUS

Alba sets Night Blooming Lily back under the Flame Fairy grow lights, by the other sprouting plants.

ALBA

Whenever any of you are ready.

BRRRRRAAAAAA!

The work whistle blares.

Alba puts on his jumpsuit, goggles, clothes pins. He takes up his shovel and heads to work.