

Coco Chanel & Igor Stravinsky

by

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*A screenplay based upon the novel "Coco and Igor"*

Pre-production Draft

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FADE IN

**PLATE: '1913'**

INT. CHANEL WORKSHOP - DAY

COCO CHANEL - dark, slender, feisty and effortlessly feminine - stands, arms akimbo, contemplating a tightly-laced whalebone corset that constrains her waist. Seated opposite and watching her is BOY CAPEL - handsome, moustachioed, dilettantish. She picks up a lit cigarette and looks down at the corset, shaking her head.

In the b.g. tables are piled with fabric, sewing equipment and many hats in various stages of completion.

ANGLE ON: the fussy criss-cross of lacing.

COCO puts down the cigarette after taking a drag and reaches decisively for a large pair of scissors.

BOY CAPEL

What are you doing?

COCO CHANEL

I want to be able to breathe.

BOY sees the scissors in COCO's hands and comically defends his groin.

COCO

What are you afraid of?

(beat)

Do you want me to look like a woman  
or a chocolate box?

BOY

I can't have both?

With her scissors, COCO abruptly RIPS UP the corset. BOY is first shocked, then impressed by the boldness.

COCO tears off the corset and tosses it away dismissively. She takes another drag of her cigarette, then pulls on a blouse.

BOY advances towards COCO, and they kiss hungrily.

ANGLE ON: BOY's hand as it reaches beneath COCO's blouse.

COCO playfully slaps his hand, but goes on kissing eagerly.

EXT/INT. THEATRE DES CHAMPS ELYSEES - CONTINUOUS

Final rehearsal of *Rite of Spring* in progress. The dissonance and strangeness of the music are immediately striking. MONTEUX, a plump man with a walrus moustache, conducts. The orchestra is struggling with the unfamiliar music.

A dozen female dancers in squaw-like costumes, directed by a gaunt-faced NIJINSKY, try vainly to keep up.

ANGLE ON: DIAGHILEV, a portly man with dark hair halved and parted by a white streak, as he watches from the wings. Around him are crates marked 'Ballets Russes', stuck with labels for Berlin, Vienna, London, Madrid, Athens, Amsterdam.

Following a particularly dissonant chord, there are GROANS and nervous laughter from members of the orchestra, who stop playing.

VIOLINIST #1

That can't be right?

VIOLINIST #2

Surely that's B natural, not B flat?

MONTEUX

I'll tell you if you make a mistake.

VIOLINIST #1

But where's the melody?

MONTEUX

Ignore the melody, follow the rhythm. Forget Ravel, Debussy. Forget anything you've heard before.

VIOLINIST #2

How will they know when to clap?

ANGLE ON: IGOR STRAVINSKY in the wings, arms folded, frustrated, close to fury.

INT. CHANEL WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

COCO is in the final stages of getting dressed. Her leg extends horizontally, the foot resting on the edge of a dresser. Slowly and sensually, she rolls a white stocking up the length of her elegant leg. The staticky crackle is amplified as it unfolds.

BOY, collar unbuttoned, smoking.

As BOY and COCO speak, ANGLES ON:

- A white dress in tiered silk cut with ravishing simplicity as COCO slips it on
- COCO's lips in granular close up as she applies red lipstick
- COCO's fingers as they lift a string of pearls onto her throat from around a photograph of 'Boy'.
- A white hat with a black band around the crown, as she sets it on her head at a sly angle. A shadow falls over one side of her face.

The impression is one of sophistication and understated beauty.

COCO

When are you leaving?

BOY

I should go tonight.

COCO

You have to?

BOY

Come with me.

COCO

I can't.

BOY

You can't?

COCO

I have to work.

BOY

You're always working. It's...

COCO

Unladylike.?

BOY

It's a waste.

COCO

Suppose I like it?

BOY

You're crazier than I thought.

ANGLE ON: COCO's finger as she dabs a smidgen of perfume on both sides of her throat.

INT. THEATRE DES CHAMPS ELYSEES - CONTINUOUS

VIOLINIST #1

I don't know what you mean here.  
It's just...noise.

MONTEUX

Then, listen.

No longer able to control himself, IGOR moves to the piano, begins to play, savagely pounding the keys. The piano vibrates. Members of the orchestra regard him as though he is completely mad. IGOR shouts over.

IGOR STRAVINSKY

Imagine sunburst on first day  
of creation. Imagine, after  
eternity of winter, ice cracking,  
sound of earth creaking. Sap  
bursting from trees...

The orchestra picks up the music with him. They play with more passion: dynamics more pronounced, rhythms fiercer.

INT. CHANEL WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

COCO and BOY walk through the workshop and leave in silence. She almost floats to the door.

The door clicks shut behind her.

EXT. RUE CAMBON - CONTINUOUS

POV COCO: BOY gets into a large car, where his chauffeur is waiting. Behind this is a small motorised taxi and after a moment she walks towards it.

INT. THEATRE - CONTINUOUS

ANGLE ON: a wing of the stage. MISIA SERT - a woman of beauty, wealth and flame-red hair, approaches DIAGHILEV.

MISIA

So this is how you spend my money?

DIAGHILEV

I told you it was different.

MISIA

I wasn't prepared for this.

DIAGHILEV

Have you ever experienced an earthquake?

(beat)

You will.

ANGLE ON: NIJINSKY, slender, neurasthenic. None too convincingly, he claps time for the ballet dancers. IGOR calls a halt.

IGOR

No, no, no. Too slow!

NIJINSKY

It's impossible. They can't dance any faster.

Exasperated, they each appeal to DIAGHILEV, who steps forward.

IGOR

I've told him time and again.  
He doesn't listen.

DIAGHILEV

Don't worry, Igor. Everything will be fine. It always is.

(to Nijinsky)

Nijinsky, darling. A little faster.  
For me? Mm?

The primitive rhythms of the music and ballet resume.  
POV MISIA: DIAGHILEV and NIJINSKY share an ardent glance.  
ANGLE ON: NIJINSKY's backside.

MISIA

(aside to Diaghilev)

Beautiful, isn't it?  
Like a rose.

EXT. THEATRE - CONTINUOUS

Flower-sellers are out in force. Hundreds of people mill around. Sense of great anticipation, excitement.

INT. IGOR'S DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Noirish light. The muffled sound of tuning instruments insinuates into the room.

ANGLE ON: IGOR pulling on his white shirt. Fastened high, it snags around his head. A musical score is open on the dresser, along with photograph of his wife and three children - aged 7, 5 and 3. IGOR's head emerges finally, with a gasp.

CATHERINE, IGOR's wife, helps adjust his bow tie. It is more a sisterly act and not a sensual one.

CATHERINE

We're with you. Good luck.

IGOR nods in gratitude. CATHERINE kisses her fingers and puts them to his lips.

INT/EXT. CAR DRIVING THROUGH CENTRAL PARIS - CONTINUOUS

CU of COCO. Bits of her face glimpsed in the rear-view mirror as light and rapid shadows play across the car's interior.

POV COCO: wide shots of a darkening but alluring Paris

EXT. THEATRE DES CHAMPS ELYSEES - CONTINUOUS

Floor level shot as COCO slides out of the car.

ANGLE ON: a Morris column with a poster: "DIAGHILEV's Ballets Russes present the World Premiere of STRAVINSKY's The Rite of Spring. Choreography by Nijinsky"

POV COCO: Men's eyes are upon her as, almost bridal, she glides towards the lights of a crowded lobby.

INT. BACKSTAGE THEATRE - CONTINUOUS

In full tuxedo, IGOR walks alone from his dressing room down the corridor. Nervously he adjusts his cuffs. He approaches DIAGHILEV, who is waiting for him.

Together, IGOR and DIAGHILEV walk backstage past knots of rehearsing dancers. There are shouts of 'GOOD LUCK' and handshakes. Sound of tuning instruments, louder now.

Agitated, IGOR finds it hard to smile. He looks at his watch. With DIAGHILEV, he peeks from the wings as the elite audience enters and the auditorium begins to fill.

DIAGHILEV

They have no idea what's going to hit them.

DIAGHILEV signals to some of his supporters standing in the audience - aesthetes amid the bejewelled crowd.

INT. FOYER OF THEATRE - CONTINUOUS

COCO enters the foyer, and sees MISIA.

MISIA removes her hat to reveal her flame-red hair, severely cropped.

COCO

My god, what have you done to your hair?

MISIA

I had a fight with a pair of scissors...

COCO

You look like Joan of Arc.

MISIA

Sometimes I feel the urge just to go to a hotel, wander the corridors, and ask the first man I see to sleep with me.

COCO

You've told your husband this?

MISIA

You think I tell him everything?

INT. THEATRE AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

POV COCO: introductions, local laughter, fans flapping.  
CU of a programme with Stravinsky's name visible.

ANGLE ON: COCO. Though she looks stunning, she seems ill at ease to begin with among these supremely rich people. Beautiful, she yet seems uncomfortable, out of place.

POV COCO: Men in tails, one tweaking the ring on his finger; women with diamonds and pearls, wearing exotic turbans, gaudily coloured taffeta gowns and heavy velvet dresses.

The simplicity of COCO's white dress - its restrained elegance and line is in sharp contrast to the fussiness and darkness of the others.



MISIA

I found him in the fitting room at  
Poiret's with one of the sales girls.

COCO

I'm sorry.

MISIA

One thing you learn, Coco: women  
want grand passion; all men feel  
is a little lust.

(beat)

I want someone who's mad about me,  
who can't live without me.

COCO

You think I don't?

COCO and MISIA reach their seats. Other women regard them  
with a mixture of jealousy and disapproval.

MISIA

Where's Boy?  
I thought he was coming.

COCO

So did I.

MISIA registers COCO's disappointment, tries to console her.

MISIA

You look ravishing.

Surrounded by married couples, the two women stand out. There  
is something mischievous and girlish about the two of them  
together. The trajectories of opera glasses converge upon  
them. They know they are being observed.

MISIA lifts her opera glasses, sees DIAGHILEV, and gives a  
little wave. DIAGHILEV offers a stately bow in return.

MONTEUX and the principal violinist take the stage.

POV COCO: A buzz of activity as IGOR seats himself in the  
front row to local applause and handshakes.

The lights dim. The hum of conversation distils to a hush.  
From the darkness float the notes of a bassoon: the opening  
motif of *The Rite of Spring*. The notes give way quickly to  
birdlike twitterings, thin scratches and scrapes.

Flurries come from the woodwind, followed by scurryings on the strings, and then the entry of the brass. ECU the bell of a trumpet. Each instrument is amplified as it is picked out.

Great swerves of sound. The transitions are abrupt, the rhythms spastic. One big fortissimo on the brass makes COCO jump. The angles tilt wildly.

Against a backdrop of rolling steppes and sky, twelve women in squaw-like costumes adopt primitive positions on stage - knees touching, elbows clamped to the sides - and lurch in time to the beat.

There are distinct signs of unrest in the audience. Puzzled glances are exchanged. There are stunned murmurs, a nervous turning of heads.

ANGLE ON: IGOR - his face registers the incomprehension of the audience. He looks about uneasily, catches DIAGHILEV's eye. DIAGHILEV gives him a reassuring look.

COCO

Is it always like this?

The dancers come together in provocative friezes. Then, abandoned, they leap about. Their movements clumsily accent the harsh rhythms of the music.

POV COCO: a few boos and hisses issue from spectators. Howls and shrieks are heard. There is some stamping of feet. Not far from COCO, an old lady stands up, her tiara almost slipping. She shouts in ECU.

WOMAN

This is a disgrace!

COCO and MISIA exchange a look.

A man laughs out loud at the spectacle. A lady in a nearby box slaps a neighbour, who is hissing, across the face. Another man rises to his feet and appeals for silence.

MAN

You spoilt bitches - shut up!

The audience becomes more restive. Chords clash. The impact is akin to a war zone, everything tilting, shells going off. The sound becomes muffled here, the acoustics echoey for a few moments, slowed as though heard under water.

CUT TO: CORRIDOR

A couple arrive late. As the usher checks their tickets, they register the strange sounds coming from the theatre. They exchange a worried glance and are not sure they want to go in.

INTERCUT

- COCO's face, with
- close-ups of bows scraping strings, beaters hitting drums.

The music chimes with something deep inside COCO, so that the visible rhythms and her reactions seem to correspond.

The full sound returns, only louder now. The noise generated by the crowd begins to compete with the music. Obscenities are hurled. A slow hand clap begins.

In front of COCO, some women are so moved to hilarity that tears mix with mascara and run in black lines down their cheeks.

ANGLE ON: the prima ballerina. Motionless at first, head tilted on her hands, she begins the 'Sacrificial Dance'.

MONTEUX, the conductor, glances round anxiously as behind him a fight breaks out. His hair flaps unkemptly.

POV MONTEUX: DIAGHILEV arrives in the wings of the theatre, and stands behind NIJINSKY who, stood on a chair, tries desperately to clap time to the dancers.

DIAGHILEV signals to MONTEUX to keep going.

CUT TO: OFFICE

One of the theatre managers hears the small chandelier in his office start to tinkle, sees it shake. Puzzled, he opens the door and is hit by a wave of sound.

CUT TO: AUDITORIUM

Riots begin in parts of the theatre.  
Protests and peals of laughter swell to a climax.

ACCELERATED MONTAGE:

- Police with whistles move in to stop the fighting.
- The house lights flicker on and off.
- Spasms shake the prima ballerina's body. She thrusts convulsively to the rhythms with an increasing sense of frenzy, ending in a wild ecstasy of irregular jerks.
- IGOR stands up at the front. Tracking shot as he marches down the centre aisle. Rows of eyes turn to watch him.

- Boos and shouts of ridicule contend with a handful of 'bravos' and cheers.

As IGOR sweeps towards the exit, MISIA and COCO again exchange looks.

IGOR looms in front of us, a look of fury on his face.

The final orgasmic collapse of the ballerina corresponds with a massive thud on the drums, and with the action of IGOR slamming the door behind him. The bang of the drum and the door resonate for several seconds afterwards.

INT. CORRIDOR OF THEATRE - CONTINUOUS

The audience swarm out, buzzing, agitated, excited. Overlapping voices in reaction. MISIA with COCO.

MAN #1

All very Russian.

WOMAN

So ugly, foreign.

MAN #2

Sensational.

MAN #3

Barbaric.

COCO

I feel as if my insides have been pulled out.

MISIA

It was certainly new.

COCO

Is he married, this Stravinsky?

MISIA

To his cousin.

COCO

I thought that was illegal.

MISIA

It is.

INT. OUTSIDE DIAGHILEV'S DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

DIAGHILEV's name is on the door. MISIA beckons to COCO, hushes, knocks. Dancers and musicians mill around. People are sweeping up. After a pause, and with MISIA grimacing inauspiciously at COCO, the door opens a fraction.

DIAGHILEV gives MISIA a kind but rueful look.

DIAGHILEV

Now's not a good time.

POV COCO: Glimpsed briefly through the half-open door, IGOR sits with his head in his hands, distraught. Next to him his wife, CATHERINE, clearly pregnant, has her arm around him. Sense of loneliness and contemplation.

MISIA nods and the door is closed.

INT. DIAGHILEV'S DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

IGOR sits with CATHERINE, who comforts him. DIAGHILEV and NIJINSKY stand close by.

DIAGHILEV

You saw the audience. You knew what you were up against.

CATHERINE

Did you see all the poodles waiting in taxi cabs?

NIJINSKY

These people were brought up on Swan Lake. What did you expect?

IGOR is sweating, feverish even.

DIAGHILEV

It was the opening night. They wanted a fete. And what did you give them? A female orgasm.

NIJINSKY

Not even Dr Freud is ready for that.

IGOR

Don't joke. This is my life.

DIAGHILEV

They were incapable of hearing it.  
The whole thing was beyond them.

CATHERINE

It frightened them.

IGOR

They didn't give it a chance.  
But they might have if the  
dancing hadn't been so clumsy.

DIAGHILEV

That's a little unfair, old boy.

IGOR

They weren't ready. They were  
under-rehearsed.

NIJINSKY

They rehearsed endlessly.

IGOR

They danced like imbeciles.  
They couldn't even count.

NIJINSKY

They always ended at the same time  
as the music.

IGOR

That doesn't mean they were  
together on the way!

Though DIAGHILEV attempts to reassure him, NIJINSKY walks out.  
DIAGHILEV plants his hand on IGOR's shoulder and forces him to  
look him in the eye.

DIAGHILEV

Listen to me, Igor. I know you're  
upset, but people are always opposed  
to things they don't understand.  
You've invented a new language, and  
they don't speak it yet. We both  
know it's a masterpiece, and there  
were some in the audience tonight  
who recognised that. Even those who  
were appalled by it were moved,  
don't you see? You managed to pierce  
that bourgeois armour and get a  
reaction. You touched them.

IGOR nods, but looks sceptical.

DIAGHILEV

You know what to do when confronted  
with a monster?

IGOR

Fight?

DIAGHILEV

No. Sing!

IGOR smiles at DIAGHILEV, who looks back intently to emphasise his point.

INT. FOYER OF THEATRE - CONTINUOUS

COCO and MISIA along with other members of the audience file out down the stairs. There is still a buzz of excitement.

LONG SHOT of the double stairs as MISIA stops to talk to someone at the bottom of the stairs and COCO turns to look back. TRACK on COCO as she faces the opposite way to all the others and takes in the scene.

TRACK on COCO as she walks out of the theatre and into the night.

**PLATE: '1920'**

An abstract pattern fills the frame, mixing images of war, communism, cubism, the letters I and S twisting into the number 5, a sickle twisting into the letter C, a hammer multiplying into the hammers of a piano...

EXT. FADED APARTMENT BUILDING - RAINY EVENING

INT. SMALL, BARE APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The room is cramped, dim, claustrophobic. There are stains on the wall. The wallpaper is peeling. Water drips slowly but regularly into a bucket.

A dummy keyboard is ranged across IGOR's lap. His son, the ten-year-old SOULIMA, sits next to him watching his father's fingers noiselessly span the keys.

CATHERINE and the other three children - THEODORE (14), LUDMILLA (12) and MILENE (6) sit in the background, reading, drawing. Outside it is raining.

CATHERINE annotates a music manuscript. She is much more pallid and careworn than she appeared seven years earlier. She wears a crucifix round her neck, as she does always.

SOULIMA

Can *I* have a go, now?

IGOR ruffles his son's hair, motions him to sit on his lap. He corrects the position of SOULIMA's hands, placing his own right hand over his son's.

IGOR

Change the harmonies with your left.  
Good!

After a few moments of silent music, they both stop to listen as the room is wrapped in a high-pitched hum. The rain has become torrential.

The drip into the bucket quickens. With his son, IGOR moves to the window. He puts his brow to the pane.

Seen from outside briefly, the frames of the window resemble the bars of a cage.

SOULIMA

How long are we going to stay  
here, papa?

IGOR

Not long, probably.

SOULIMA

I don't want to be in the same room  
as Milène.

MILENE looks up, flashes her brother a hateful look.

CATHERINE

It's hard for her, too, you know.  
Things have changed.

THEODORE

When can we go back to Russia?

IGOR

As soon as the Bolsheviks allow  
us.



SOULIMA

Would they kill us if we went  
back now?

CATHERINE

I don't think so, sweetheart.  
We've done nothing wrong.

CATHERINE comes forward, rubs SOULIMA's head with affection.  
She has the music manuscript in her hands.

THEODORE

They killed the Tsar and his  
children, didn't they?

IGOR and CATHERINE exchange a look.

MILENE

I'm hung-ry.

SOULIMA returns to contemplate the world outside the window.  
CATHERINE hands the music manuscript to IGOR.

CATHERINE

The string parts need balancing.  
I've written it all down.  
(beat)  
It's good.

IGOR

Just 'good'?

CATHERINE

It's too controlled. It needs  
more energy. Passion.  
You want me to be honest, don't you?

IGOR

Nothing gets past you, does it?

After a small delay, IGOR responds to CATHERINE's gesture of  
putting her hand around his waist. She coughs very badly as  
together they look out at the rain. IGOR begins fiddling with  
a necktie, getting ready to go out.

CATHERINE

Will you be long?

EXT. FADED APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

IGOR emerges onto the street, trudges off despondently into the rain and the dark. He struggles to put up his umbrella.

EXT. SMART APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Seen from above: streetlights shed vague halos onto the damp streets. Into one of these pools of light steps IGOR, shaking out his umbrella.

INT. DIAGHILEV'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

IGOR wipes rain from his glasses, pushes his hair back. A maid takes his coat. His dress suit is a little frayed.

DIAGHILEV approaches. He has several rings on his fingers, and a necktie fastened by a fat black pearl.

DIAGHILEV

No Catherine, tonight?

IGOR

I promised I'd get back soon.

Guests - bohemian types mostly - chat within. There is a real buzz about the party already. A piano is being played. Some of the women, one resembling Colette in a mannish suit, smoke cigars. Some of the men are similarly ambiguous.

There are Cubist paintings on the wall. Tables are filled with glistening hams, salads, caviar, oysters, swordfish. Waiters serve drinks. IGOR accepts a glass.

MISIA and husband JOSE-MARIA SERT are in a group including GRAND DUKE DMITRI. They're looking at a portrait of MISIA.

MISIA

The more he paints me, the less  
it looks like me.

JOSE

Darling, is there anyone who  
hasn't painted you?

MISIA breaks from the group to greet IGOR.

IGOR

I see your husband is here.

MISIA

Which one?

MISIA extends her hand, smiling, showing off an impressive ring. IGOR kisses MISIA's hand with respect but also a little wariness.

MISIA (cont.)

You didn't respond to my letter.

IGOR

I didn't know what to say.

MISIA

Really, Igor. Those string quartets.  
Why waste your time?

IGOR bows stiffly and walks away. DIAGHILEV counsels him.

DIAGHILEV

Be careful. Who do you think is paying  
for tonight?

POV IGOR: GRAND DUKE DMITRI: handsome, arrogant, dashing. He wears an impressive sash, a star pinned to his chest. He's holding forth to a small group of men.

DMITRI

After the bar closed, I said, well, I've got to be going, but she said she was going in the same direction. Then when I got to the hotel, I held out my hand to say goodbye and she said, how incredible, but she was staying there, too - even though I'd never seen her before - so anyway we went inside, and finally got to my door, and I stopped to say goodnight and told her I hoped to see her again soon, but she stopped and looked at me, and said, 'This is *my* room too' - so in we went!

DMITRI laughs, as do those in the group around him. IGOR looks on wryly. DMITRI sees IGOR and becomes serious. He clicks his heels, bows militarily. The two share a competitive handshake. DMITRI is younger by some years.

IGOR

Duke Dmitri. I see exile has not  
slowed you down.

In the b.g. there is silence as COCO enters.

ANGLE ON: COCO. Dressed in black, but luminous in the room, she appears just as elegant and beautiful, if more solemn and self-assured than before. Her hair is much shorter now, about the same length as MISIA's on the night of The Rite.

POV IGOR: DIAGHILEV bends to kiss COCO's fingers.

COCO and MISIA exchange sisterly kisses.  
COCO stands out. It's as if she's lit from within. COCO and IGOR's eyes meet briefly. His view of her is eclipsed for a few instants as others greet her.

DIAGHILEV

(aside to IGOR)

She makes even grief seem chic,  
doesn't she?

IGOR

Her husband?

DIAGHILEV

Lover. Everyone called him 'Boy'.  
Car crash. Nasty business.  
Almost a year ago, now.

ANGLE ON: IGOR, as he watches her, registers the complexity of this woman, intrigued by her beauty.

With perfect courtesy COCO approaches, offers her hand to IGOR who, slightly abashed, presses her fingers to his lips.

IGOR

I see your name everywhere.

COCO

And I never stop hearing yours.

Their eyes meet and communicate. They stare at one another for a moment.

Noisily a number of foppish young men from the ballet enter. Drunk already, they pirouette about the place, giggle. DIAGHILEV makes a beeline for them.

IGOR  
 (loudly enough for DIAGHILEV to hear)  
 No sense of decency.

COCO  
 God save us from that!

DUKE DMITRI interrupts, offering his own hand to COCO.  
 DMITRI gives IGOR a superior look.

TIME LAPSE

The party is much wilder now, in full swing. The men from the ballet are running amok. People are more drunk.

ANGLE ON: DMITRI and JOSE as they toss off shots of vodka.

Amid the drunkenness, IGOR appears more sober, COCO more self-possessed than the rest.

DIAGHILEV  
 I was just telling José how you were arrested for urinating against a wall.

JOSE  
 It was Naples, though, wasn't it?

IGOR  
 Really, Serge, your guests will form a very dim opinion of me.

DMITRI  
 It's always a pleasure to see a reputation besmirched.

COCO  
 I'm surprised they let you go.  
 I mean, you're obviously very dangerous.

(beat)  
 I was there, you know.

There is a sense of conspiracy between COCO and IGOR. He holds her gaze. Other voices lower for the moment.

COCO (cont.)  
 The first night of The Rite.  
 I remember it vividly.  
 It was quite a scandal.

Voices rise again.

DIAGHILEV

(overhearing)

Come on, it was the best thing that could have happened.

IGOR

It didn't seem so at the time.

COCO

We both survived, at least.

DIAGHILEV

We're hoping to revive The Rite next year. We need funding. Since the Revolution, things have been hard.

DMITRI

Let's not talk about politics, please.

COCO

You believe in Marxism?

DMITRI

Do you believe in the virgin birth?

IGOR

They're still claiming the people will be free.

DIAGHILEV

Free to jump in the ocean.

DMITRI

The poor will *always* be oppressed.

JOSE

When shit becomes precious, the poor will be born without assholes.

Laughter. But IGOR is still passionate.

IGOR

It makes me sick just to hear the word 'revolutionary'.

MISIA

It's used to describe your music.

IGOR

I consider it an insult.

DIAGHILEV

People don't know what to believe  
in any more.

COCO

Do they have to believe in anything?  
Can't they just believe in themselves?

IGOR looks again at COCO. She notices his stare.  
Abruptly DIAGHILEV raises her glass and proposes a toast.

DIAGHILEV

To The Rite!

ALL

The Rite.

IGOR acknowledges the toast. COCO looks at him as she drinks.  
She dominates the space around her. The glasses, chinked,  
vibrate. The vibration is sustained.

IGOR can't keep his eyes off COCO, and she knows it. Their  
faces register an intense awareness that something wonderful  
is going on.

Voices recommence around them as COCO leans forward and, in a  
whisper, offers a PRIVATE TOAST to IGOR.

POV IGOR: COCO shivers at the coldness of the champagne.  
Involuntarily she tugs at the pearls around her throat.

Voices sharpen and become audible again.

DMITRI

Without question, the motor car.

JOSE

The aeroplane, surely.

MISIA

The telephone, if you ask me.

DIAGHILEV

And Mademoiselle Chanel - what do you  
consider the greatest discovery  
of the last twenty years?

COCO takes a moment to catch up. All eyes turn to her. She replies with a mixture of hauteur and sauciness.

COCO

The fact that women like it, too?

There is astonished silence, followed by laughter.

MISIA

(aside to COCO, smiling)

My, what a vulgar girl!

IGOR sips at his drink, regarding her, stimulated, amused.

POV IGOR: (muffled chatter) Though people speak to him, he is barely sensible of what they say, so distracted is he by COCO.

TIME LAPSE.

A little quieter now, towards the end of the party. IGOR, DIAGHILEV and DMITRI together in a corner, drinking brandy. DIAGHILEV runs his nose luxuriously the length of his cigar. COCO and MISIA visible in b.g., talking.

IGOR

She's a remarkable woman.

DMITRI

She's a seamstress. She likes to embroider.

DIAGHILEV

You under-estimate her.

DMITRI

She's a modern woman.

IGOR

I'm not sure I approve.

DIAGHILEV

Oh?

IGOR

I'm not even sure I know what it means!

DMITRI

It means she's rich and single for a start!



DIAGHILEV

And desperate to be accepted.

Encouraged by MISIA in the b.g., COCO approaches IGOR.

COCO

Let me know if I can ever be of  
help.

COCO hands IGOR a folded piece of paper. He looks puzzled.  
DIAGHILEV and DMITRI look on amused.

EXT. FADED APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

IGOR returns, a little drunk. It is no longer raining. It is  
late. The streets are quiet. Topsy, he fumbles for a key.

INT. IGOR'S APARTMENT - CHILDREN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

IGOR enters his children's bedroom, touches their foreheads  
tenderly, smiles.

INT. IGOR'S APARTMENT - HIS BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

IGOR slips into bed next to his wife. CATHERINE's hair is  
plastered to her brow. He sees she has a fever. IGOR does  
not touch her. He lies there, eyes open, staring upwards.

Seen from above, they lie parallel and untouching. Their  
bodies make two opposing letter Cs.

EXT. MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY - DAY

IGOR clutches behind his back a bunch of white camellias. He  
checks his watch. COCO is late, and his frustration is  
mounting. CU: he displaces some gravel with his shabby shoe.  
His clothes are a little ragged, shambolic.

COCO appears. They smile to see each other from a distance.

COCO

Sorry I'm late.

IGOR

I'm patient.

COCO

Good. I won't hurry next time.

She holds out a white-gloved hand. He kisses her solicitously on each cheek. IGOR conjures the flowers from behind his back.

COCO  
Camellias. My favourite.

She smells them admiringly. They approach the museum entrance.

INT. MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY - CONTINUOUS

COCO and IGOR wander around the paleontology room.

COCO  
Would it bother you if I were to help financially?

IGOR  
It would have, years ago.

COCO  
But now?

IGOR  
It bothers me even more.

COCO  
You're not afraid of me, are you?

IGOR  
I make a living.

COCO  
You do?  
(beat)  
You find it easy composing in hotel bedrooms?

IGOR  
(shrugging)  
The world tilted and we ended up here.

COCO  
Why Paris?

IGOR  
It's where the twentieth century is.

COCO

(beat)

I have a villa. It's quiet, in the suburbs, with a large garden. Not a palace exactly, but it's not bad. I was thinking - you might like to move in.

IGOR

I couldn't possibly...

COCO

We could spend a few weeks together in the summer. After that it would be yours.

IGOR

It's very tempting. But my family...

COCO

My dear, of course they'd move in, too. I'm not suggesting you leave them behind.

IGOR

I can't accept.

COCO

(beat)

Don't look so worried. I don't want to *own* you. I *like* you, for God's sake.

IGOR

You don't know me.

COCO

We can work on that.

Their look establishes an affinity between them. She inhales the scent of the camellias as she looks at him. He still looks doubtful. [Opening of 'Russian Dance', *Petrushka*]

EXT/INT. FADED APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Excited, with quickened step, IGOR approaches the building, enters. He walks through the gloomy interior, calling.

IGOR

Catherine? I have good news.  
Catherine?

He sees the children looking morose outside their mother's bedroom. Puzzled and concerned, he enters the bedroom to see his wife, with a doctor in attendance. The music stops.

ANGLE ON: blood on the pillow next to CATHERINE's mouth.

Stunned, IGOR looks to CATHERINE, then to the DOCTOR. CATHERINE looks pale and desolate.

EXT/INT. CAR - DAY

Black car moving on the road through a leafy suburb. [Opening of 'Shrovetide Fair', *Petrushka*]

The Stravinsky family crammed inside. SOULIMA's nose pressed to the window. IGOR next to the driver in the front. CATHERINE in the back looks hot and uncomfortable - though when she sees the excited look of the children, she smiles.

POV IGOR: Telegraph wires like musical staves. A series of bourgeois residences. Then suddenly, glimpsed between branches, a wholly different villa appears: big and modern in white stucco and black shutters.

The car turns into the a long tree-lined driveway.

A large immaculate garden, bordered with trees. Closer view of black shutters, white stucco.

The noise of the car, followed by a van, grows louder until both vehicles are crunching up the drive.

The car slows down. IGOR looks up at the house, amazed. CATHERINE, though, seems bemused, almost disapproving.

CATHERINE

You see that? Black shutters!

The children are first out of the car. IGOR alights, helping his wife out.

CATHERINE wears a broad blue hat. COCO and CATHERINE shake hands. CATHERINE looks tired and pale, a little suspicious.

COCO

Welcome!

CATHERINE

Thank you for letting us stay.

COCO

It's a privilege to have you here.  
I hope the air improves your health.

The politenesses have a rehearsed air about them. CATHERINE, uneasy and alarmed at COCO's attractiveness, unfurls her parasol as if it is a shield. A wariness establishes itself in the looks between the two women. They regard the children.

COCO

They're sweet.

CATHERINE

They're naughty.

In b.g. JOSEPH - the butler - and his wife, MARIE, supervise the removal men as they start to unload the van. The men struggle to carry the piano. IGOR sees this with a mixture of anxiety and expectation.

INT. THE VILLA - CONTINUOUS

POV IGOR and CATHERINE entering villa: white walls and black lintels. White flowers. Modern furniture. Few paintings, but plenty of ornaments and books. Everything spotless.

CATHERINE

(more surprise than sarcasm)  
You don't like colour, Mademoiselle Chanel?

COCO

So long as it's black.

In the b.g., JOSEPH and the driver ferry in luggage, cases, hatboxes, crates. They bring in several cages containing parrots. Seeing these last, COCO raises an eyebrow. IGOR offers an amused shrug.

INT. VILLA - CONTINUOUS

COCO leads the family into the house and up the stairs as a string of cases is taken up in front of them.

CUT TO: BOYS' ROOM

COCO shows them the boys' room, which has a Japanese theme.

COCO

I thought the boys would like this.

The boys are shy, but respond with smiles and nods.

CUT TO: GIRLS' ROOM

COCO  
What do you think?

MILENE, shy but eager to please, nods vigorously.

CUT TO STRAVINSKY BEDROOM

COCO  
And this is for you.

COCO sees that CATHERINE is weary. CATHERINE looks round with distaste at the walls and modern furniture.

COCO  
You want a moment? You must be tired.

COCO withdraws. CATHERINE sits on the bed, massaging her temples.

IGOR  
How are you feeling?

CATHERINE  
Awful.

IGOR touches her shoulder lightly.

IGOR  
I'll just see downstairs.

INT. OUTSIDE STRAVINSKYS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

As IGOR emerges, COCO is waiting. They share a smile.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

COCO stops to open a door, invites IGOR inside.

INT. IGOR'S STUDY - CONTINUOUS

It is spacious, with a chaise longue and big windows. IGOR is open-mouthed in admiration. COCO unfastens and flings the windows open. The room is transformed by light.

COCO leans her elbows on the sill. Light and birdsong flood the room, together with the noise of children playing. Leaves flutter, throwing spidery shadows on her arms.

COCO

Do you think you'll be able to work here?

IGOR

It's superb!

The driver and JOSEPH wheel in the piano. IGOR helps jockey it into position.

COCO

I wish I could play an instrument.

IGOR

I thought you could sing

COCO

Like a crow.

IGOR

I knew a soprano once who gave up singing because her own voice made her cry

COCO

That's ridiculous.

IGOR

It's not romantic?

COCO

Sentimental. There's a difference.

IGOR's attention switches to the piano, his fingers twitching. He sees COCO turn to go.

IGOR

You're leaving?

COCO

I'm needed at the shop.  
I'll be back tomorrow.

IGOR

You don't want to hear?

Standing, IGOR lifts the lid, rests his hands on the keys, then begins to play. The room brims with sunlight and music. COCO is thrilled, genuinely engaged, and moved. IGOR can't hide his delight. He's been given back his voice.

INT. STRAVINSKYS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

CATHERINE hears the piano from downstairs. The ice-bright major chords contrast with her look of exhaustion and misery.

INT. IGOR'S STUDY - LATE AFTERNOON

MONTAGE: IGOR unpacks a gramophone with handle and folding trumpet; photographs of him with DIAGHILEV; some books, from which he blows the dust, and a ICON (ECU) which he rests as a centre-piece on his desk.

IGOR sets the metronome ticking on top of the piano. Its beat seems the rhythm of a heart. He smiles, watching it.

INT. STRAVISNKY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

MONTAGE: CATHERINE, helped by the children, unpacks cups, samovars, paperweights, photographs with pictures of CATHERINE in healthier days. Wrapping paper in heaps across the floor.

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

IGOR and CATHERINE watch adoringly as their children dutifully finish their prayers before dinner. COCO is absent.

LUDMILLA

And thank you for bringing us to this  
new house. And thanks to Mademoiselle  
Chanel for letting us stay. Amen.

THE OTHER CHILDREN

(simultaneously)

Amen.

They look to their mother and father, who smile and nod their approval. The children begin eating. There is silence as they start the meal. CATHERINE watches for a moment.

CATHERINE

Soulima, hold your knife and fork  
properly.

The meal continues in silence.

INT. BOYS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

The two boys are in bed, asleep.

IGOR and CATHERINE check upon them, kissing their foreheads.



The house is quiet, but clearly spacious and contrasts to the previous cramped apartment. COCO is present in every detail of the house and its furnishings.

EXT. VILLA - DAY

IGOR in the garden, playing with his children.

The car approaches, with COCO inside. IGOR sees this, is distracted. The children run to the car.

INT. STRAVINSKY BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

CATHERINE hears the sound of the car and the excited cries of the children, then the sound of joyful voices downstairs in the house.

INT. IGOR'S STUDY - DAY

IGOR plays jauntily and animatedly at the piano as COCO dances with the children. CATHERINE, wrapped up, smiles to see the children enjoying themselves - but her pleasure shades into anxiety as she sees the rapport COCO establishes with them. She feels excluded.

COCO pirouettes balletically. LUDMILLA and MILENE attempt to copy her, spinning round.

COCO

Like this.

COCO spins more quickly as IGOR accelerates the music on the piano. It's as if a dialogue is being articulated between the music and her movements, and she knows how to respond.

LUDMILLA

You know ballet?

COCO

I took a few lessons.

MARIE enters with drinks and sees COCO dancing with the children. She registers CATHERINE's uneasy half-smile. The children wave at their mother, who waves back weakly.

The music quickens further, and COCO spins in ever tighter circles until, dizzy, she staggers and falls back. As she collapses, IGOR jumps from the piano to catch her in his arms.

CATHERINE looks on, helpless, cup in hand, her mouth twitching nervously. The children gather round COCO, concerned. MILENE turns to her mother.

LUDMILLA

Is she all right?

CATHERINE

She's perfectly fine.

MARIE looks at COCO and looks for CATHERINE's reaction. IGOR beckons her. COCO quickly recovers, stands.

COCO

Get some water.

MARIE nods, exits.

CATHERINE begins coughing badly. She sets down her cup.

CATHERINE

If you don't mind, I'll retire now.

IGOR

(distracted, pulled in two directions)  
Of course.

CATHERINE leaves the room, seen by MARIE who enters with a glass of water. CATHERINE coughs OS.

COCO drinks the water.

MARIE, with a hint of disapproval, ushers the children out.

COCO

I'm sorry.

IGOR

Why?

COCO

She's not upset?

IGOR

She's sick.

COCO

And what about you?  
Are you happy?

IGOR

Does it matter?

COCO

More than anything, I would  
have thought.

IGOR

Some people need it more.

COCO

Some people deserve it more.

IGOR

(beat)

What is it you want in life?

COCO

The same as any woman.

IGOR

And what's that?

COCO

The perfect pair of red shoes.

COCO's brightness then fades. She becomes reflective, drinks.

IGOR

Misia told me about Boy.

COCO

(beat)

She did? Really?

IGOR

I'm sorry.

COCO

I told him to be careful. He was  
always in too much of a hurry.  
You get through the war, and you  
think you've escaped - then bang!

(beat)

The morning after, I went through his  
things to retrieve what was mine.  
I came across a letter from a  
friend. I didn't mean to read it,  
but I saw my name. And you know  
what he said, this friend? He said,  
'You don't marry someone like Chanel'.

IGOR

That's just silly.

COCO

You don't understand. I was nothing before him. He made me.

(defiant)

But you know something? I paid him back, every penny. I built the business by myself.

(plaintive)

He was the beat of my heart for nine years. And now he's gone, I can't stand it. I want to put the whole world into mourning for him.

(BEAT)

Have you ever saved someone's life before?

IGOR shakes his head.

COCO

Save mine.

There is an uncomfortable and awkward silence, only broken when COCO laughs - at herself partly, and at IGOR's stunned reaction. Not knowing what else to do, she leaves the room.

IGOR reaches for a cigarette.

INTERCUT:

- COCO walking thoughtfully up the stairs towards her room
- IGOR downing a cognac

INT. VILLA - NIGHT

INTERCUT:

- COCO (tight focus) inside her room, removing her make-up
- IGOR leaving his study and slowly climbing the stairs
- COCO taking a key mysteriously from a drawer and moving towards a locked door in her room
- IGOR sees COCO's bedroom door closed down the hall, and pauses, contemplates for a moment before entering his own

INT. STRAVINSKY BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Quietly in the dark, IGOR begins to undress.

ANGLE ON: CATHERINE's eyes, which are open - though IGOR is unaware of this.

IGOR slips into bed and lies very still before turning away from his wife.

INT. STRAVINSKY BATHROOM - MORNING

IGOR bursts from under the water in the bath, where he has been holding his breath. He recovers, then submerges himself again, his face blurred beneath the water.

JUMP CUT:

IGOR in his underwear after his bath, with his glasses on, determinedly executes press-ups.

INT. STRAVINSKY BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

IGOR returns to the bedroom, where CATHERINE - still in bed and motionless - in contrast to his exercises - is kissing the children, who are dressed to go outside.

IGOR  
(to the children)  
You're going out?

CATHERINE  
For a walk in the woods, with Marie.

IGOR bends to kiss his children.

INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alone for breakfast, IGOR breaks open and swallows two raw eggs.

INT. IGOR'S STUDY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

IGOR is careful to close the door.

Laid out on the desk like a surgeon's instruments are pen-knives, letter-openers, rulers, a monogrammed cigarette case, pots of pencils.

IGOR looks around the room, sees the influence of COCO everywhere. He opens the piano lid, contemplates some sheet music propped on a board above the keys, pencils in a correction or two. His glasses are pushed up onto his brow.

He tries out different chord sequences, his fingers testing phrases, different intervals, discovering complex harmonies. But he cannot work, and sits back. In silence he looks out the window.

EXT. RUE CAMBON - DAY

COCO's Rolls Royce draws up outside her shop. The music of Stravinsky plays over. The name CHANEL is stencilled in thick black letters on a white awning above number 31.

POV COCO: outfits displayed in the window - a sleeveless evening dress; a grey silk jacket edged with fur; wool jerseys with broad pockets, a brooch on one of them. She smiles.

INT. CHANEL SHOP - CONTINUOUS

There is flustered activity among the women as COCO enters. She half acknowledges the greetings from the shop girls, but doesn't stop, continuing on through the salon towards the stairs.

INT. CHANEL SHOP - WORKSHOP UPSTAIRS - CONTINUOUS

ANGLE ON: a girl kneeling over some fabric with a piece of tailor's chalk in her hand.

COCO with a model. Mirrors on all sides, fabrics on the floor. COCO straightens and simplifies the line of the dress: beige silk with an uneven hemline and a collar like a crossed scarf. She pins it continuously.

GIRL #1

Madame Rothschild called to make an appointment.

GIRL #2

The jersey you ordered has arrived.

COCO wags her finger as a third girl approaches sheepishly.

COCO

I've told you already, if it's about the wages, I don't want to hear it..

The model stands as stock-still as she is able, while COCO works around her, first on her knees, then on all fours, then standing up, then sitting down. She holds the pins in her mouth, and is frustrated when she has to remove them to speak.

COCO

...Isn't it enough that you get to meet rich lovers - husbands, even? What more do you want?

GIRL #3  
But at Poiret's...

COCO  
I can never get the damn sleeves right!

GIRL #3  
With respect, Mademoiselle...

The model overbalances a little, and needs to shift her weight.

COCO  
Can't you keep still even for one minute! What am I paying you for? Stand straight, for God's sake!

ANGLE ON: GIRLS #1 and #2, who catch each other's eye.

COCO  
(to GIRL #3)  
Are you still here?  
Can't you see I'm busy?

COCO pulls at a pleat here, flattens a crease there.  
CU: she feels the material between her fingers.  
Satisfied, she stands back from the model and checks the final result.

COCO  
Clean lines, you see?  
(to one of the girls)  
Okay. Send it down.

MISIA appears.

MISIA  
Do you ever stop?

COCO  
I never finish.

There's a strong sense of COCO's love for the material as she plays her fingers through some of the fabrics.  
MISIA follows her around as they speak.

COCO's designs: crepe-de Chine belted blouses, sleeveless evening dresses in black tulle, jackets with patch pockets and turned-back cuffs. Busily she moves around in the half-dark, re-hanging dresses, adjusting mannequins.

MISIA

You seem tense.  
Is everything all right?

COCO

(beat)

I've chosen my perfumer. He's  
working on samples for me now.

MISIA

Do we *need* another perfume?

COCO

It will be more than just a scent.

MISIA

Most people don't even wash.

COCO

I'm not talking about some toiletry.  
It'll be something completely new.  
Not just an aroma. It will surround  
you like a shape you can almost see.

MISIA

And if it fails?

COCO

A single whiff will be sufficient  
to intoxicate any man! They'll  
be defenceless against its charms!

MISIA

What are you going to call it?  
'Coeur en Folie'? 'Nuit Japonaise'?  
'Eau de Russie'?

COCO makes a face.

ANGLE ON: an assistant passes a large magnet over the floor.  
ECU: the magnet dramatically attracts stray needles and pins.

EXT/INT. VILLA - DAY

INT. IGOR'S STUDY

Slowly, IGOR closes the lid of the piano. Restless and unable  
to work, he rises.



INT. CHILDREN'S PLAYROOM - CONTINUOUS

POV IGOR: glimpse of the children with a governess, drawing, colouring, doing puzzles. CU of MILENE tracing the shape of her splayed hand. IGOR smiles, closes the door.

INT. OUTSIDE IGOR'S STUDY DOOR - CONTINUOUS

IGOR advances along the corridor; ascends the stairs. At the top, he moves quietly towards COCO'S bedroom, tries the door handle gingerly, enters furtively.

INT. COCO'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sunlight projects sharp shadows against the walls. With an attitude of reverence, IGOR inspects the room.

POV IGOR as he sees:

- COCO'S bed, its silk white sheets, pillows
- photos on the wall of COCO in riding gear; COCO reading on a terrace; COCO relaxing in a sailor jacket at the beach
- COCO'S clothes draped over a screen, which IGOR resists touching, just

IGOR sees himself in the triptych of the dresser mirror, then sees a closed door. Intrigued, he tries the handle. CU: it is locked.

He sees another door leading to COCO'S bathroom.

INT. COCO'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

POV IGOR: the bath and fixtures gleam. One whole side of the bathroom comprises shelves brim with perfumes, colognes, soaps, pomades, shampoos, bath oils etc.

IGOR stares, amazed. He takes a bottle of perfume. ECU: as he twists off the cut-glass stopper. It makes a small but audible pop. He smells it, quizzically, returns it to the shelf, but adjusts it so that the label faces outwards.

INT. OUTSIDE COCO'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

As IGOR emerges furtively, he sees THEO at the top of the stairs. The two of them freeze for a moment. IGOR attempts a smile. THEO continues on into his room. IGOR winces.

EXT. VILLA - BALCONY - NIGHT

Moonlight; chirr of cicadas. IGOR is alone, leaning against the rail. He is surprised to see CATHERINE come out. She looks out at the stars.

CATHERINE

It's romantic, isn't it?

IGOR

It's not too cold?

IGOR continues smoking. CATHERINE moves towards him. They hold hands; their eyes grow soft. IGOR takes his wife in his arms, kisses her on the forehead chastely. The backs of his fingers stroke her cheek. His lips wander with great tenderness to each of her eyelids.

She responds to the tenderness, but when he tries to kiss her on the lips, she moves her head so that his mouth meets only her hair. Though not angry, he is clearly disappointed.

CATHERINE

I'm tired.

Slowly his arms go slack around her. They draw apart.

The wind gets up for a second. CATHERINE rubs her arms and shivers with cold.

CATHERINE

I'm going to bed.  
Are you coming?

IGOR smiles faintly. He remains on the balcony, staring out on the emptiness as CATHERINE moves inside.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

IGOR and THEO are both eating breakfast together.

IGOR

I told him it was terrible.  
Four hours is far too long.

THEO

What did he do?

IGOR

He cut it in half. Now it's only  
terrible for two!

IGOR sees that THEO is unimpressed. He puts down his napkin.

IGOR  
Hey, watch this.

IGOR presses the palm of his right hand under his left armpit and squeezes quickly and repeatedly. The rapid movement of his arm up and down makes a loud farting sound. THEO does not laugh.

IGOR  
Rimsky-Korsakov taught me that.

THEO  
Can I go now?

INT. COCO'S STUDY - DAY

COCO stands, looking for something in a drawer. Triumphant, she pulls out a needle and some thread.

CUT TO: STAIRS

COCO walks purposefully down the stairs, along the corridor. She opens the door to IGOR'S study.

INT. IGOR'S STUDY - CONTINUOUS

COCO  
I found it.

COCO brandishes the needle and thread.

COCO  
Face the light.

ECU: COCO wets the thread with the tip of her tongue and pokes it through the needle's eye.

COCO kneels. Standing, IGOR turns to the window, arms raised as in a crucifix. The light crowds his white shirt, making it transparent. COCO senses the tautness of his body, his muscularity as she sews the button on his shirt.

IGOR looks down at her hair, her neck. Their eyes meet. A palpable attraction flashes between them.

COCO  
Here, hold this.

He puts his finger against the button as she ties a knot.

COCO

Let go.

She snaps the thread instinctively with her teeth. She stands, leans back and inspects her work.

COCO

There!

COCO stands, pockets her needle and thread. IGOR sits on his stool by the piano. COCO indicates the manuscript paper on the board above.

COCO

Do you work on paper first?

IGOR

I always start at the piano.  
I need to feel the music through  
my fingers.

COCO

I never start with sketches either.  
I need to touch the stuff,  
to feel the fabric in my hands.

IGOR

I'm not sure it's quite the same.

COCO

If God failed to clothe us the first  
time round, it takes a second act  
of creation to put that right.  
And this time by a woman!

IGOR shrugs, amused, conceding the point.

COCO

Feel!

CU as IGOR's fingers explore the fabric.

COCO

Jersey. You see how stretchy it is.

IGOR

It isn't a bit coarse?

COCO  
It's comfortable.

IGOR lets go. Growing CU of IGOR as he watches her with fascination and deepening respect.

COCO (OS)  
If you can't walk or dance in a dress then I say, what's the point?  
(ANGLE ON: IGOR)  
Are you *listening* to me?

IGOR  
(as though roused from a reverie)  
Yes!

COCO shoots him a doubtful look. She picks up a sheaf of music manuscript from the desk, sees all the crossings out. IGOR points.

IGOR  
I have twenty-four instruments - different time signatures, clarinets in different keys. All fragments. I'm not sure it fits together.

COCO  
How do you know if it's any good?

As IGOR speaks, INTERCUT COCO's fingers trailing sensually across ink-bottles, pens, rulers etc., on his desk. There is a strong, semi-conscious element of flirtatiousness in this as well as engagement.

IGOR (OS)  
You need to shut yourself away and plunge yourself in the music. It can take a time. And mostly nothing comes. But sometimes it just happens by accident...

(growing CLOSE UP)

IGOR (cont.)  
A hum starts inside your head. You can almost see the shape vibrating. And then you try to fit the noise in your head to sounds on the keyboard, to make it correspond, and when it happens you can't work fast enough.

Now by the piano, COCO idly pulls the back of one hand softly across the keys; too soft to make a sound. Then with her index finger, she presses one of the higher notes.

COCO

Teach me.

IGOR

Now?

COCO sits right next to him on the stool. A little taken aback, IGOR positions her fingers on the keys and motions her to straighten her back.

IGOR

Keep your wrists level.  
Fingers rounded. That's it.

IGOR strikes up a jaunty song [*Les Cinqs Doigts*]. While he plays the melody, she sustains a simple chord.

CUT TO: CORRIDOR

ANGLE ON: CATHERINE unobserved, as she approaches and listens outside the room.

CUT BACK TO: STUDY

IGOR

Get the rhythm inside  
your head. And don't let go.

COCO responds to the accents of the music, seeming to articulate a dialogue between the piano and her movements, and between herself and IGOR, too.

He corrects her fingering with one hand, while carrying on playing with the other. For a moment, they seem so animated and jolly, laughing together, that they forget themselves.

The music accelerates, IGOR quickening the tempo, COCO trying to keep up, until, without warning.  
CATHERINE enters. Seeing her, they stop playing.

ANGLE ON: CATHERINE, who, flustered, registers with alarm the intimacy that has grown between COCO and her husband.

CATHERINE smiles awkwardly, exits.

COCO and IGOR are alone together again. There is a loaded and uncomfortable silence between them. COCO's face hardens. She gets up.

COCO

You'd better go. Your wife is waiting for you.

COCO leaves the room.

ANGLE ON: IGOR, bemused. Obsessively he straightens a ruler on the desk which COCO has slightly upset.

INT. STRAVINSKY BEDROOM - DAY

CATHERINE in bed. IGOR present. Sat up on a bank of pillows, CATHERINE inhales wheezily. The DOCTOR taps and, with a stethoscope, listens from the back.

POV CATHERINE: the doctor listens intently. Finished, he winds the stethoscope's tube around his hand. CATHERINE's head falls exhaustedly back against the pillow. A wedge of shadow darkens the bed.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

DOCTOR

The lung is still weak. She needs to be looked after. This will allow her to breathe more easily. It may make her more sleepy, though.

The DOCTOR hands IGOR a medicine bottle. THEODORE looks concerned. The DOCTOR touches the boy's head as though healing him.

EXT. GARDEN - CONTINUOUS

COCO, secateurs in hand, has cut two white carnations. She savours their scent. Advancing, she pins the flowers on the lapels of IGOR and the DOCTOR.

COCO

There's no reason why men shouldn't smell sweetly, too.

COCO moves away.

ANGLE ON IGOR: grave, preoccupied.

In bg: MILENE on the swing. Having twisted the ropes until they begin to kink, she releases her feet from the ground. The ropes of the swing unravel, sending her spinning round.

ANGLE ON: COCO as she re-enters the house.

INT. STRAVINSKY BEDROOM - DAY

Music manuscripts cover the bed. CATHERINE has been annotating them. The curtains are half closed. A sickly light pervades the room. The piano plays downstairs.

COCO sits on a chair close - but not that close - to the bed. Pale, CATHERINE suppresses a fit of coughing. Dismayed by her appearance, she attempts to straighten her hair.

COCO

I'm sorry you're not well.

CATHERINE

I'm sorry, too.

An uneasiness exists in the looks between the two women, punctuated by the piano's chords below.

COCO

It's stuffy in here.  
Let me open the window.

CATHERINE

I tried earlier. It was too stiff.

Pulling back the curtains, COCO pushes firmly at the window and it gives. The curtains flutter. The music manuscripts stir on the bed. CATHERINE winces at the light.

COCO

That's better!

CATHERINE re-gathers the manuscripts on the bed.

COCO

He says you're his best critic.

CATHERINE

The most honest, probably.

COCO notices a photograph of CATHERINE and IGOR as little more than teenagers on the bedside table.



COCO  
Childhood sweethearts?

CATHERINE  
There's nothing like marriage to  
spoil a perfect love!

The piano downstairs repeats a difficult phrase.

CATHERINE  
He wants people to love him.

COCO  
You mean his music?

CATHERINE  
You know, secretly, he loves life.

Keen to change the subject, on an impulse COCO moves to the wardrobe.

COCO  
Do you mind if I take a look?

CATHERINE  
Please.

COCO opens the wardrobe doors. CATHERINE squirms, as if violated. Revealed are her clothes: mostly fussy formal gowns and dresses: heavy, old-fashioned things.

COCO pulls out a long belted blouse with embroidered bands on collar and cuffs. She removes it from the hanger and holds it against herself.

COCO  
I like this.

CATHERINE looks at COCO to see if she might be mocking her. It seems not.

CATHERINE  
It's just some peasant thing.  
A roubachka.

COCO  
Rou-bach-ka?

CATHERINE  
You can borrow it if you like.

COCO

No, I didn't mean...

COCO replaces the skirt, but continues to rummage. Her hands find a quantity of tissue paper. She tugs the hanger along the line and lifts it out. The shape of a gown is concealed beneath opaque layers of paper.

COCO

What have we here?

Intrigued, she peels away the layers of tissue until the white silk of a wedding gown is revealed. ECU: COCO's stunned face.

INT. GIRLS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

IGOR reaches to open the window.

MILENE is already asleep. He bends to kiss goodnight to LUDMILLA.

LUDMILLA

I really like it here.

IGOR nods kindly and puts his fingers to his lips to hush LUDMILLA to sleep.

IGOR turns off the lamp, leaves the room.

CUT TO: STAIRS

ANGLE ON: IGOR as he chooses not to go into his own bedroom but walks down the stairs.

INT. COCO'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

COCO is putting back a bottle on the shelf. Music can be heard faintly from IGOR's study. She notices another bottle turned differently and picks it up. She looks at it, picks it up and holds it for a moment.

INT. COCO'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

CU: COCO removes a key from a drawer. She unlocks the door to the secret room that connects to her bedroom.

INT. BLACK BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Inside, all is darkness. As the door opens, COCO stands silhouetted, before switching on the light. Revealed is a second bedroom all in black. Black walls and ceiling, closed black curtains, black bed sheets, pillowcases.

COCO enters slowly, gravely.

ANGLE ON: a shrine-like photograph of 'Boy'. COCO looks at it solemnly for a moment, smiles ruefully, and turns the photograph to the wall.

INT. COCO'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

COCO emerges from the black bedroom. She closes the door and (ECU) locks it again, removing the key.

She has been crying and takes a moment to recover. She stands back against the door, pondering for a moment.

INT. IGOR'S STUDY - CONTINUOUS

IGOR is at the piano, playing tenderly.

INT. STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Like a somnambulist, COCO is drawn towards the source of the music. She is wearing a WHITE DRESS - in contrast to the mostly black or dark clothes she has worn in the villa so far.

INT. IGOR'S STUDY - CONTINUOUS

COCO enters silently, unseen. The white suit sets off her tan. She watches him for a few moments, standing in shadow.

IGOR becomes aware of her presence. He stops playing, but does not turn round, remaining frozen, his fingers tense and arrested on the keys.

COCO moves behind him, whispers something thrillingly in his ear. Deftly she lifts off his glasses. With supreme self-control he closes the piano lid. Sweating, he turns to face her, sees her in her white dress. His hands are placed chastely on his knees.

Their eyes lock hotly. COCO shuffles out of her skirt, which falls in a wrinkly heap at her feet.

ANGLE ON: COCO's back in f.g.; IGOR facing in b.g. Then COCO pulls off her top, lets it drop to the floor. Without hurry she peels off her underclothes.

ANGLE ON: IGOR. The sight of her naked stuns him.

COCO lies half in shadow on her front across the chaise longue, her legs lifted, crossed at the ankle. Her face tilts towards him, her chin cupped in her hand.

COCO

Well?

IGOR moves towards her, with an expression of near panic at the loss of control. His shadow merges with hers. Then he submits to the impulse, frenziedly undresses.

Desire undoes him. He kisses her hungrily on the stomach, her breasts. Their mouths meet in quick kisses. Urgently their bodies come together, slick with perspiration.

COCO

Slowly!

IGOR's hands fumble along the insides of her thighs until she shivers. Blindly she sucks his fingers. Lithely she arches her back.

She kisses his head, shoulders, eyelids, neck and chest, before coaxing him into her with an ardour he finds almost immodest. Drunkenly he loses himself inside her.

Their limbs mingle. Their bodies move in synchrony as they make love. It's as though they attempt to merge. The act is hard, passionate, necessary.

ANGLE ON: COCO as her limbs stiffen, her head snaps sideways.

ANGLE ON: IGOR as something wells within him, quickens, achieves a brief vertiginous rhythm, then explodes.

TIME LAPSE

Afterwards they lie very still, her body resting against his. Gently she runs her fingers through his hair and traces the line of his jaw.

COCO sees IGOR is about to say more. She puts a finger to his lips, hushing him.

INT. STRAVINSKY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Exhausted, unsleeping, IGOR lies in the dark next to his sleeping wife. He lies on his back, his eyes staring at the ceiling. His hands rest inertly at his sides.

Guiltily he looks across at CATHERINE. Her cheeks are hectic with fever, her breathing uneven.

TRACKING SHOT down the corridor registers the distance between the two bedrooms.

INT. COCO'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

COCO sits in bed alone, smoking - contemplative, serious.

Music starts OS...

INT. IGOR'S STUDY - DAY

The music continues as IGOR plays the piano.

COCO enters.

He continues playing for the moment as she places her hands on his shoulders.

INT. VILLA - SIMULTANEOUS

OS the piano stops playing abruptly.

MONTAGE

- CATHERINE's head stiffens on her pillow, braced for sounds that do not come
- With their governess, the three younger children freeze for a moment and exchange curious glances
- In the garden, THEO regards the closed shutters of IGOR's study
- In the kitchen, JOSEPH and MARIE shoot one another a knowing look

INT. IGOR'S STUDY - MINUTES LATER

COCO and IGOR make love. The lovemaking is sensual and approaching vulgarity in its frankness. There is a strong sense of COCO's sexual confidence and IGOR being released from timidity into glorious abandon.

TIME LAPSE

Both are dressed. COCO leaves the study. IGOR remains in stunned silence.

CUT TO: STAIRS

COCO climbs the stairs, looks at the closed door of the STRAVINSKY bedroom and carries on down the hall.

CUT TO: STRAVINSKY BEDROOM

CATHERINE in bed, looking at music manuscripts, hears the footsteps of COCO go past the room. Downstairs the music begins again. CATHERINE registers it starting again. She blinks rapidly, but is otherwise still.

CUT TO: IGOR'S STUDY

IGOR plays the piano loudly. ['Gallop' from *Five Easy Pieces*.] The sense of liberation, and his new willingness to experiment sexually, obviously inform his music here.

INT. KITCHEN - LATE AFTERNOON

MARIE and JOSEPH are preparing dinner. The window is open and the music audible from IGOR's study. Through the window, MILENE plays on a swing, which sways metronomically back and forth. MARIE and JOSEPH are silent for a time, MARIE chopping tomatoes.

JOSEPH

You think Madame knows?

MARIE

She has eyes and ears like the rest of us.

JOSEPH

You know what they say. New lover - new domestics.

MARIE

Now she's rich, she thinks she can do what she wants.

JOSEPH

We need to be loyal.

MARIE

I suppose someone has to be.

INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

JOSEPH and MARIE pour drinks at the table.

COCO and IGOR - with CATHERINE and the children present. Silence except for the scraping of plates. The tension is palpable.

POV CATHERINE: COCO and IGOR exchange sly glances.

CATHERINE, her emotional antennae twitching, suspicious, does not touch her food.

ANGLE ON: THEO, who senses his mother is upset.

ANGLE ON: CATHERINE's hand under the table as she pinches the skin of her arm hard.

COCO

I won't be here the next few days.

LUDMILLA

You're leaving?

COCO

(to Catherine)

While I'm in Grasse, if you need anything, just ask Marie.

MARIE nods to CATHERINE, who remains unresponsive.

COCO

Some decorators are coming to paint a room upstairs. I hope they don't make too much noise.

IGOR tickles SOULIMA, who giggles. CATHERINE's glance tells us that this is unusual behaviour from IGOR at the table. Her food is still untouched.

EXT. VILLA - DAY

COCO's car is about to leave. The children hover, admiring the car.

COCO

(to Igor)

Remember, you're mine now.

IGOR looks at her, happy but a little startled.

Without looking back, COCO enters the car.

As the car drives off, the children run after it, waving.

INT. STRAVINSKYS' BEDROOM - DAY

The DOCTOR shakes down a thermometer, and places it under CATHERINE's tongue. IGOR sits opposite her.

CATHERINE

The medicine makes me tired.

DOCTOR

It's supposed to make you rest.

CATHERINE

I feel so listless.

The DOCTOR consults his watch and removes the thermometer, holding it up to the light.

DOCTOR

There are other medicines. More expensive...

CATHERINE

The expense would not bother my husband.  
Mademoiselle Chanel sees to the bills!

IGOR

Catherine!

DOCTOR

You need time to recover.

CATHERINE

All I lack is a reason to recover.  
Is she paying you to sedate me?  
Is that what's happening?

IGOR

(to Doctor)

She's been under a lot of strain lately.

CATHERINE

I knew it. You're all in it together!  
Even the flowers are poisoning me.

IGOR

Catherine, you're making yourself ill.

CATHERINE

It's you who's making me ill!

The DOCTOR looks from one to the other, trying to fathom what is going on. Seeing this, IGOR addresses him.

CATHERINE

You've got it all worked out, haven't  
you? She houses us, pays my medical  
bills, the children's education...

(beat)

I'm not as naïve as you think, Igor.

IGOR steers the DOCTOR out.



INT. STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

IGOR and the DOCTOR descend. JOSEPH stands impassive at the bottom of the stairs.

CATHERINE (OS)  
Something's going on around here.  
I'm not stupid, you know...

INT. CATHERINE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

MILENE has entered, oblivious, and begins pulling playfully at the covers.

CATHERINE  
Don't do that.

MILENE continues tugging at the covers.

CATHERINE  
Get off!

MILENE freezes. CATHERINE's patience evaporates.

CATHERINE  
Get away from me!

MILENE bursts into tears and runs from the room. Anguished, CATHERINE reaches out to call her back, but it is too late. CATHERINE's face crumples.

EXT. STREET IN GRASSE - DAY

A motorised taxi stops. COCO gets out. The car drives off.

COCO is alone. She holds a small map, but is clearly unsure quite where to go. She takes a heady breath, walks.

JUMP CUTS: she heads down side streets but soon gets lost.

POV COCO: shopfronts with flacons of scent. The fragrances have exotic names: 'Dans la Nuit'; 'La Fille du Roi de Chine'. She has not found what she's looking for, consults the map further.

A boy in rags approaches her in one of the small streets.

COCO  
You know Monsieur Beaux?  
The perfumer?

JUMP CUTS: improbably the boy leads a doubtful COCO to BEAUX's laboratory. COCO is surprised and delighted. She gives him some money. The boy's eyes light up. He runs off, pleased.

EXT. BEAUX'S LABORATORY - CONTINUOUS

COCO stands outside, confirming the address on her map.

INT. BEAUX'S PERFUMERY - DAY

Ernest BEAUX, a squat man, slightly diabolical looking, emerges to greet COCO.

COCO

I'm looking for Monsieur Ernest Beaux.

BEAUX

Mademoiselle Chanel?

The man's demeanour changes from that of an obliging chemist to that of a humble subject about to meet his queen. BEAUX shakes her hand for longer than is necessary.

BEAUX

This way, please.

He ushers her into the main part of the laboratory. The room is dazzlingly white.

POV COCO: burners, flasks, agitating devices, measuring glasses, funnels etc., all on white germless surfaces.

Two white-coated assistants swirl liquids in glass beakers.

POV COCO: a shelf laden with glass jars, each labelled in black ink - a complete lexicon of scents.

ECU: ambergris, camphor, frangipani, jasmine, musk, neroli, sandalwood, violet etc. She looks on in awe.

BEAUX

The collected sweat of the gods.

(with relish, picking up one small phial)

Think of the hundreds of crushed blossoms that have gone into this distillate, this elixir, to create a single liquid drop.

COCO

Do you extract the essences yourself?

BEAUX

It's not how you extract them.

It's how you combine them that counts.

BEAUX (cont.)

(beat)

The trouble with most perfumes  
is that they fade too quickly.  
You have to reek at the beginning  
of the evening if you want the scent  
to last all night. You have to  
inundate yourself with the stuff.  
But we're working on a fragrance  
that won't degrade or decay.  
You want a ribbon rather than a  
cloud around you, no?

Perfumes are being created, swilled in flasks, filtered through funnels, agitated in test tubes and stirred with glass rods.

COCO participates actively in this process, sampling and then either approving or discounting certain scents, sniffing, shaking her head, making suggestions.

COCO stops to try one concoction offered her in great hope, and with some ceremony, by BEAUX. It is now later in the day. Everyone looks tired. COCO shakes her head.

COCO

Still too sweet. I want to smell  
like a woman, not a rose.

BEAUX looks disappointed. He turns with cheerful weariness, his assistants registering the need to begin over again.

BEAUX

We need a little magic, perhaps.

COCO

A little subtlety will do.

EXT/INT. IGOR'S STUDY - DAY

IGOR at the piano. Rapt, inspired, decisively he scores a few bars of music on the MS in front of him. He tests a few phrases, nods vigorously. Pleased, he scribbles down more notes. IGOR begins playing 'Scherzino' from *Pulcinella*.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE WOODS - DAY

COCO and IGOR make love, half-glimpsed in shadow beneath a tree. They are both clothed, but unbuttoned. COCO stands,

against the tree, her face close to IGOR's as he makes love from behind. All the noise they cannot make in the villa is released here in primal grunts and cries. Birds rise from the trees at the sound. No music over.

It is unclear whether this scene is a memory or fantasy.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. IGOR'S STUDY - CONTINUOUS

IGOR is playing the piano with physical force and passion. Every sinew of his being is engaged.

When he stops the music continues on inside his head and over on the soundtrack. He recommences, inspired, almost attacking the piano with his fingers.

Music continues OS over the following:

INT. BLACK BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

A team of decorators is transforming the room, which is being newly painted white. The white curtains are open to receive the sunlight. The music pours in. Two of the decorators exchange a glance at the strangeness of the music.

INT. IGOR'S STUDY - CONTINUOUS

IGOR playing the piano, seen from the back, his hands animated and vigorous.

INT. STRAVINSKY BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Marie enters with fresh water for CATHERINE.

MARIE

I hope the music doesn't keep  
you awake.

CATHERINE

I already sleep too much.

MARIE

Can I get you anything else?

CATHERINE

How long have you worked for  
Mademoiselle Chanel?

MARIE

More than two years now.

CATHERINE

You find her straightforward?

(beat)

Don't worry, I'm not one of  
her spies.

MARIE

She's been good to us.  
Very generous.

CATHERINE

Sometimes I wonder how moral  
she is...?

MARIE

(squirming)

People's ideas have changed  
since the war...

CATHERINE

(a serious appeal)

I want you to tell me the truth.

MARIE

(wringing hands)

She's very - independent.

CATHERINE nods in recognition that MARIE will disclose nothing. She feels humiliated at asking a servant these questions.

MARIE

(beat)

Will there be anything else, ma'am?

CATHERINE

(weary, dismissive)

No. You may go.

INT. IGOR'S STUDY - CONTINUOUS

IGOR sweating as he plays.

He stops abruptly and stands with a flourish. He opens the window and breathes in the air as if he needs it.

EXT/INT. BEAUX'S LABORATORY - DAY

BEAUX and his ASSISTANTS work hard, distilling more scents. Again, COCO practically assists in the process. BEAUX hectically scribbles formulae on paper. He moves around the laboratory like a celebrated chef.

[ 'Andante' from *Five Easy Pieces* plays over the above.]

BEAUX assembles the flacons he has prepared.

BEAUX  
I think we're ready.

COCO is shown to a chair. Doubtful, she sits down. The assistants stand prepared.

BEAUX squeezes a dribble from different pipettes into a series of petri dishes, numbered 1 - 20 in two series of ten. ECU: a trembling pipette releases a single drop at a time.

BEAUX beckons her to test the samples: dishes seen from above.

BEAUX  
These should be more stable.  
A dab is all that's required.

ANGLE ON BEAUX who dips a smelling strip into the first dish, then plays it below COCO's nose. COCO looks doubtful.

BEAUX  
Trust me.

JUMP CUTS: COCO sniffs each of them in turn. ECU: her nostrils flare.

BEAUX  
Well?

She swishes the smelling sticks below her nostrils.

COCO  
This one's overripe still..  
And this one's a little vinegary.

BEAUX looks hurt.

COCO  
These two are more delicate.  
I like both of these.

BEAUX

You must choose.

BEAUX looks more hopeful. COCO points to dishes 19 and 5. She inhales generously above each remaining sample.

COCO

There's jasmine.

BEAUX

Yes.

COCO

And tuberose.

BEAUX

You have an extraordinary nose,  
Mademoiselle.

SLOW MOTION: COCO sniffs, compares and reflects once more. And there it is. Slowly it comes to her, like something divine. An epiphany. COCO points to the fifth dish, nodding.

COCO

This. This is new.

BEAUX

Number five.

ECU: Beaux lifts the dish, so that the honey-coloured liquid catches the light and becomes precious.

BEAUX

The thing itself.

Behind COCO, one of the assistants opens a bottle of Champagne.

EXT/INT. VILLA - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

The children, with IGOR, are huddled round a chess board. IGOR moves a piece. CATHERINE sits in her dressing gown.

THEO

Check mate.

THEO sits back, satisfied. The other children jeer their father. IGOR looks genuinely surprised.

IGOR

There's a first time for everything.

CATHERINE

Off to bed now, children. Marie's waiting for you. Come on, off you go. It's late.

After hugging their parents, the children troop out reluctantly.

IGOR

They had a nice time this evening, no?

CATHERINE

I don't know what to think any more. I hardly feel as if I know you.

IGOR sighs, picks up the black queen from the chess board, fiddles with it. He does not want this fight.

CATHERINE

Let's leave here, Igor. Let's go somewhere else and start again.

IGOR

Where?

CATHERINE

I don't know. Biarritz, perhaps. At least we know people there.

IGOR

I can't.

CATHERINE

You mean you won't?

IGOR

Have it your way.

CATHERINE

If I had it my way, we wouldn't be here.

IGOR

I'm working well.



CATHERINE

And I'm suffocating. I feel like a prisoner. Even in the most cramped apartment, I never felt so trapped.

IGOR

It makes sense to stay.

CATHERINE

Sense to you.

IGOR

We'd be penniless in Biarritz.

CATHERINE

We'd be happy.

(beat)

Why can't you support me for once?

IGOR

I have. For years.

A fold of CATHERINE's dressing gown slips, exposing her knee. Quickly she tightens the gown around her.

CATHERINE

(beat)

Tell me it's nothing, and I'll believe you.

(beat)

She's in love with you.

IGOR

We're friends.

CATHERINE

I don't believe in friendships between men and women.

IGOR

You're friends with Diaghilev.

CATHERINE

That's different. And all this stuff about inferior materials like jersey. It's a way of promoting herself - don't you see?

IGOR

Can we stop this now? Please?

After a pause, CATHERINE rises, moves towards the door. CATHERINE withdraws from the room. She closes the door behind her with a strange quietness.

CU: IGOR returns the black queen delicately to the board. He looks out the window.

TRACKING SHOT: out to the trees and into the evening beyond.

INT. IGOR'S STUDY - DAY

ECU: COCO undoes the latch on a small box. Inside, in red plush, are two dozen flacons of scent. She removes one and unstoppers it.

IGOR recoils slightly as she trails it beneath his nose. He holds the flacon, smells, considers.

IGOR

I'm not sure I can place it.

COCO

I'm not surprised. There are over eighty ingredients in that bottle.

(beat)

It doesn't drive you wild with desire?

He looks at her and realises again how beautiful she is. He embraces her. They kiss.

IGOR

Catherine wants to leave.

COCO

She said so?  
What else did she say?

IGOR

Nothing.

COCO

Do you want to stop it now?

IGOR

I'm not leaving.

COCO

Are you sure?

IGOR

I wasn't. But I am now.

COCO  
And Catherine?

IGOR  
It's easier to lie.

COCO  
You don't mind that?

IGOR  
It's less cruel than telling the truth.

COCO  
Less cruel for who?  
(beat)  
You know, we should stay one night  
above the shop.

IGOR  
That could be awkward.

COCO  
One night? I just thought you might  
like to, that's all.

IGOR  
I would, but...

COCO  
You're ashamed of me? Is that it?

IGOR  
No!

COCO  
What, then?

IGOR  
I know all you see is this sick  
woman, but she's refined...

COCO  
She's in danger of refining  
herself out of existence.

IGOR  
She's not well.

COCO  
You expect me to feel sorry for her?

COCO stands. Disappointed and a little angry, she stabs out the cigarette, begins to dress.

COCO

I don't feel as if I'm real to you,  
sometimes.

After a pause, IGOR abruptly lies flat on the floor. Then, tensing his muscles, he invites COCO to stand on his stomach.

IGOR

Come on!

COCO hesitates, then plants both feet on his midriff, wobbles a little, laughs. He supports her weight for several seconds.

Stepping off, COCO reaches for a letter-opener on the desk. IGOR looks up in mock alarm.

IGOR

What are you doing?

COCO

You're mine!

Half playfully, but half not, COCO drags the letter opener upwards from his tummy, grazing his chest, until the point is at his throat.

COCO

And I don't want to share you  
with a-ny-bo-dy else.

Pulling the letter opener down again, she ends with a mild jab in his groin.

EXT/INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Silence. CATHERINE removes the crucifix from around her neck and stands, pale and emaciated, her chest pressed flat against an X-ray machine. Instructed to take a deep breath, she does so, and holds it. The machine hums.

INT. The RADIOLOGIST'S OFFICE - DAY

CATHERINE and IGOR both there with the RADIOLOGIST.

RADIOLOGIST

The good news is, it's not galloping.

He slides X-rays against a lit screen. CATHERINE, fingering her crucifix, regards the images. Though she looks on with an eerie calm, she is clearly spooked. She cannot resist touching them.

CU of white bones, black vacant spaces.  
[Music from *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*]

RADIOLOGIST

But as you can see, the tuberculosis  
has taken a slow hold.

He points out the white swirls that cloud her lungs.  
The scene grows quiet as CATHERINE retreats into herself.

EXT. VILLA - DAY

INT. COCO'S STUDY

Absorbed at her desk, COCO sketches a cube-shaped bottle, with a short neck, oblong stopper, and her surname in black capitals. Scrunched bits of paper litter the desk, and there are sketches of more elaborate designs crossed out.

CU of COCO's lips round the pencil stem as she considers.

ANGLE ON: the drawing of the cube-shaped bottle.  
She's already added the number '5'. Now she sketches an overlapping back-to-back double C on the bottle's neck.

COCO stands and stretches.

ANGLE ON: a long belted blouse in black crepe de chine, with a square neckline and embroidered collar and cuffs. It is a copy of CATHERINE's roubachka.

POV COCO: through the window in the garden, LUDMILLA looks hunched over, in pain or upset.

EXT. GARDEN - CONTINUOUS

COCO

What is it?  
Tell me, what's the matter.

Slowly, reluctantly, LUDMILLA reveals a broad red stain ruining her dress. COCO embraces her in sisterly fashion.

COCO

Congratulations on becoming  
a woman.

LUDMILLA

I feel strange.

COCO

You will to begin with. Everyone does.  
You should tell your mother.

LUDMILLA

She'll think I'm dirty.

COCO

She'll be proud of you.  
She'll think you're growing up.

LUDMILLA

Really?

COCO

Of course.

With her thumbs, COCO wipes tears from LUDMILLA's eyes. She smiles tenderly.

LUDMILLA

Can't you tell her?

COCO

I'm sure she'd prefer it to come  
from you.

LUDMILLA

She won't be angry?

COCO

I know she won't.

LUDMILLA

Your mama wasn't?

COCO

My mother died when I was a little  
girl.  
I can't believe I'm telling you this.

LUDMILLA

Were you sad when she died?

COCO

I was too small to understand.

LUDMILLA

Is *my* mama dying?

COCO

Of course not.

LUDMILLA

If she did, would you be our new Mama?

COCO

(firm yet tender)

Look. You be nice to her, all right?

(beat)

And don't worry about the dress.

We'll soon get another one of those.

COCO and LUDMILLA embrace. ANGLE ON: COCO's face as the hug becomes warmer and develops into something more maternal.

EXT. VILLA - DAY

ANGLE ON: the children in uniform going off to school.

INT. STRAVINSKYS' BEDROOM - DAY

CATHERINE is sitting up in bed. In an attempt to spruce herself up, she is combing her hair. She looks pale.

IGOR

You look very nice.

IGOR sits on the bed next to her. Neither of them can think of anything to say. CATHERINE suddenly slaps the hairbrush down on the covers.

CATHERINE

Why do you hate me?

IGOR

I don't hate you.

CATHERINE

What have I done wrong?

IGOR

Nothing.

He makes to stroke her cheek. She averts her head.

CATHERINE  
Is she so different?

IGOR  
No.

CATHERINE  
She understands nothing of your music.  
(beat)  
She collects people. Can't you see?  
And discards them when they're  
no use to her.

IGOR  
She's been good to us.

CATHERINE  
You're not yourself when you're  
with her.

IGOR  
You think I hide things from you?

CATHERINE  
I don't know. Do you?  
(beat)  
Would you even care if I left?

IGOR  
Why are you saying this?

CATHERINE  
(beat)  
I take it you've slept with her.

IGOR  
(BEAT)  
I have needs, Catherine.

CATHERINE  
And so do I! Enormous needs.

She hits out at him spasmodically, then collapses in tears.  
IGOR, silent, looks down. Long pause.

BEAT in which CATHERINE's distress turns to fear.



CATHERINE

I'm frightened, Igor.  
 Every day when I wake up, there's  
 this smell of decay in the room.  
 At first I thought it must be the  
 flowers. But it's more like the  
 stink of meat that has gone off.  
 Then slowly I realised - it's me!  
 It's me who's decaying. It's my  
 own insides I can smell. I'm  
 beginning to rot. I feel as if  
 I'm dead already.

IGOR

(appalled)

Don't say that.

CATHERINE

There isn't anything else is there?  
 I mean this is it. There isn't  
 anything beyond.  
 I saw it with my own eyes, up there  
 on the screen. I saw my own death.  
 There was...just - nothing.

After a silence, IGOR makes to hold her hand but she pushes him away. He sits there motionless for a few moments. Then quietly, resignedly, without a further word, he leaves. CATHERINE weeps stonily.

EXT/INT. DIAGHILEV'S APARTMENT - DAY

DIAGHILEV, in nightgown and Turkish slippers, sits behind a large desk, writing. A handsome young man enters, stands in front of him a few feet from the desk. DIAGHILEV continues writing.

DIAGHILEV

Take off your clothes.

The man removes his clothes, clears his throat to attract attention. DIAGHILEV, slow to look up, regards the man for a second, seems disappointed.

DIAGHILEV

Put them back on again.

ECU: DIAGHILEV dips his pen in the ink, continues writing. COCO enters while the man is still dressing. DIAGHILEV sees her, but shows no embarrassment at the situation.

DIAGHILEV

I'm interviewing for a secretary.

The man leaves hurriedly with the rest of his clothes. COCO smiles. DIAGHILEV picks up a piece of cake from his desk.

COCO

(handing him an envelope)  
On condition that you don't tell  
anyone - especially Misia and  
Igor.

Intrigued, DIAGHILEV opens the envelope, raises his eyebrows. It is a cheque. He stands up, overwhelmed.

DIAGHILEV

My dear girl. How can I begin to...?  
This will finance our whole season.

COCO

Please. I don't wish to hear  
any more of it.

DIAGHILEV

We must celebrate...

COCO

Please don't say it was me -  
I mean it.

DIAGHILEV puts his finger to his lips, agreeing to keep silent. He puts away the cheque with ostentatious care.

DIAGHILEV

And how is Igor?

Another young man enters, is embarrassed to see DIAGHILEV with COCO. DIAGHILEV waves him out.

EXT. THE VILLA - DAY

INT. OUTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

IGOR pours millet into trays, removes the odd feather. Placing his head next to a cage, he scrutinises the parrots. There is a sense of monastic calm in this operation.

COCO enters. IGOR does not turn to face her.

IGOR

You see the engineering that's gone into those wings?

COCO

Oh, come on, birds are just one step up from vermin.

IGOR

Not to me they're not.

(beat)

You know, some of them, in the urge to migrate, dash their heads against the bars.

COCO

I hope you don't feel the same!

(beat)

Do you miss Russia?

IGOR

I miss my home, the language. Friends. The snow.

COCO

Tell me, what would you do if Catherine were to find out?

IGOR

I think you'll find she already knows.

COCO

How?

IGOR

I told her.

IGOR still continues to fiddle with the cages and does not face her.

COCO

Why?

IGOR

Who else would I tell?

ANGLE ON: COCO, who is surprised but moved by this.

EXT. WOOD - DAY

TRACKING SHOT: into the woods.  
COCO and IGOR are making love. COCO is on top.

EXT. GARDEN - DAY

CATHERINE sits in the garden, a blanket round her, in the shade. She is reading, a big hat on her head. The children play on the lawn.

POV CATHERINE: COCO and IGOR disengage arms before they reach the garden.

SOULIMA

Papa!

The children run towards their father. COCO moves towards the house and cannot avoid acknowledging CATHERINE. IGOR, joins in a game of 'catch' with the children.

COCO

What are you reading?

CATHERINE

It's all right. You can stop pretending.

COCO

Excuse me?

CATHERINE

You needn't worry. I won't start a row.

(beat)

I'm happy for him. He needs to be distracted. He gets so caught up in his work.

SOULIMA (OS)

You can't catch me!

COCO

I have some perfume I was going to give you.

CATHERINE

Ah yes, your magic potion. That's how you bewitch them, is it?

(calling out)

Igor, Mademoiselle Chanel is giving me some of her perfume. Isn't that kind?

IGOR stops playing for a moment, looks across awkwardly at the two women, nods, continues playing.

CATHERINE

That's very sweet of you, dear.

COCO

I know what you're doing.

CATHERINE

Don't think that I like myself for it.

COCO

I didn't plan any of this.

IGOR is tickling LUDMILLA, who, trapped by her father, is lying on the grass.

CATHERINE

It's as if he's drunk all the time.  
I don't know how long he can sustain it.

MILENE (OS)

That's not fair!

CATHERINE

Just don't interfere with the music.  
It's everything to him.

COCO

And to you?

IGOR (OS)

Mind the flowers!

CATHERINE

He sleeps with the light on. Did you know that? He's afraid of the dark.

COCO

Why are you telling me this?

CATHERINE

He can't work when there's chaos.

COCO

Are you afraid of the dark? Or is it the light you can't stand?

CATHERINE

You're quite something, aren't you?  
Do you never feel guilty?

COCO

I do if I'm dishonest.

CATHERINE

And you're never dishonest?

COCO

Only with myself.

CATHERINE

You know the odd thing in all  
this? I actually like you.

ANGLE ON: COCO, as she watches IGOR play catch with his children.

LUDMILLA comes running from the house, wearing a new dress of black Chantilly lace, twirls for her mother. The girl displays a flirtatiousness, a native sexuality that her mother finds unsettling.

LUDMILLA

Isn't it pretty? Coco said I could  
keep it.

CATHERINE's smile is tight-lipped.  
COCO leaves.

EXT/INT. VILLA - NIGHT

A party is in full swing. Two lesbians, dressed exotically in Egyptian garb, are dancing cheek to cheek. There is wild applause, cheering and hoots. Atmosphere of drunken revelry. A huge Champagne bottle is being passed round.

DIAGHILEV sits with with his troupe, and his new lover from the ballet, MASSINE. IGOR, COCO, MISIA and JOSE are also present. CATHERINE sits in the background, watching.

IGOR

300,000 francs! That's fantastic!  
Who?

DIAGHILEV

Anonymous, it seems.

POV CATHERINE: DIAGHILEV exchanges a look with COCO.

DIAGHILEV refills IGOR's glass with champagne.  
 CATHERINE leaves and retires upstairs. MARIE notices and  
 tries to help her up. CATHERINE refuses her help.

IGOR

No conditions attached?

DIAGHILEV

Only that we use it for a revival  
 of *The Rite*.

(beat)

I thought you'd be pleased!

IGOR

I want it performed properly this  
 time. No craziness.

DIAGHILEV

Don't worry. Massine will be  
 better. He understands the music.  
 Leave everything to me.

(gravely)

You know Nijinsky is in the asylum?

Before IGOR can answer, COCO swishes past with MISIA. She is  
 wearing a roubachka.

IGOR and DIAGHILEV nod in appreciation.

CUT TO:

INT. COCO's STUDY - CONTINUOUS

The noise of the party continues OS.  
 COCO unclasps a box excitedly.

MISIA

They've arrived?

COCO removes the stopper from one of the flacons of perfume,  
 and allows a quantity to seep through and wet her fingertip.  
 She applies a smidgen to MISIA's wrist. MISIA inhales, nods  
 appreciatively.

COCO

I'm sending it out as a gift  
 to a few clients.

MISIA

What are you going to tell them?

COCO

I'll tell the old ladies they need  
it if they still want to be kissed.

MISIA

And the younger ones?

COCO

I'll tell them it's all they need  
to wear in bed.

MISIA

Perhaps you should attach a warning  
label.

COCO

Like nitroglycerine?

COCO flashes MISIA a sardonic look. They are about to leave  
the room.

MISIA

Are you coming to the opera?

ANGLE ON: COCO who looks blank.

MISIA (cont.)

He didn't mention it?

CUT BACK TO:

The party. In the b.g. a black jazz band plays ragtime tunes.  
Everyone much drunker now.

ANGLE ON: IGOR, himself a little drunk, whispering to COCO.

IGOR

There's something I should tell  
you. I've never slept with  
anyone but Catherine before.

COCO

I know.

IGOR

It's that obvious?

COCO

Work is busy at the moment.



IGOR

You and that damn shop.  
It's vulgar.

COCO

I can't just sit around all day  
at the piano.

INT. IGOR'S STUDY - DAY

IGOR at the piano hums to himself. The hum begins to align itself with the notes he's playing. He stops to record his notes on the stave.

He can't fill in the bars fast enough. The act of composition takes him over.

ECU: the ink bottle as IGOR dips his pen.

ECU: the notes he writes on the manuscript.

The hum extends to an orchestrated version of *The Rite of Spring* on the soundtrack.

IGOR stops, as does the music. He examines what he's written and seems excited by it.

INT./EXT. IGOR'S STUDY/GARDEN - CONTINUOUS

POV IGOR: through the windows of his study.  
The trees are near leafless.

LONG SHOT: CATHERINE, warmly wrapped, stands with the children at the garden gate.

LUDMILLA comes running, her hymn book in hand.

LUDMILLA and CATHERINE, obviously reconciled, link arms, pass through the gate.

ANGLE ON: IGOR, who smiles poignantly, seeing this.

He waits for a moment, expecting COCO to come into the room. He taps his pencil, looks to the door. He rises, moves to the door and looks beyond it. There is no sign of her. He contemplates for a moment, unsure what to do.

- POV IGOR: as he goes upstairs slowly, searchingly.
- He arrives at COCO's bedroom door, slowly pushes it open. She is not there.
- He enters COCO's bedroom. There is still no sign of her.
- The door to the BLACK ROOM is ajar.

INT. BLACK BEDROOM - MINUTES LATER

The room, now white. COCO sits on the bed rolling white stockings onto her legs in f.g. IGOR is dressing in b.g. They have tried and failed to make love.

IGOR

You make me feel as if I have to compete.

COCO

I said it doesn't matter.

COCO (cont.)

Why can't you relax?

You said she knows.

IGOR

So does half of Paris, thanks to Misia!

She's a gossip.

COCO

She's a *friend*.

If you want to know the truth, I think she's jealous.

She still sees herself as your patron. I'm not sure she's keen on me cutting in.

IGOR

Well, I'm sick of her interfering!

COCO

I'll tell her, shall I, not to send you more money?

The two of them share a hostile stare. Pause.

COCO

I hear you're invited to the opera.

IGOR

You wouldn't enjoy it. It'll be very tedious.

COCO

A bit too intellectual for me, is it? Too sophisticated? All those artists and musicians. I wouldn't want to show you up now, would I?

IGOR

What are you talking about?

COCO

You'd obviously prefer I didn't come.

IGOR

That's not true.

COCO

You're still not sure about being seen with me, are you?

COCO (cont.)

It's all right to fuck me in private, but you won't walk within ten yards of me outside the house.

IGOR

You're being ridiculous.

COCO

If it's so boring, don't go.

IGOR

It will be rude not to attend.

COCO

Tell them your wife is ill or something. They'll understand.

IGOR

There's no limit to you, is there?

COCO

You can't get over the fact that, as a woman, I'm just as clever as you - only more successful - and an artist in ways you'll never understand!

IGOR

You're not an artist, Coco. You're a shopkeeper!

COCO

(beat)

Get out!

They glare at one another. IGOR turns smartly and leaves the room.

Slowly COCO gathers herself. A harder, more determined look enters her features.

FADE OUT

INT./EXT. VILLA - DAY

IGOR is pushing MILENE to and fro on the swing.

POV IGOR: a motorised van and a car pull up in the drive. Out of the car steps GRAND DUKE DMITRI.

The van is piled with trunk-loads of luggage. Accompanying DMITRI is his bear-like butler, PIOTR. COCO greets DMITRI.

INT. HALLWAY OF VILLA - CONTINUOUS

COCO and DMITRI with IGOR.

COCO  
(to IGOR)

Duke Dmitri will be staying with us  
for a time.

DMITRI and IGOR shake hands and bow stiffly, with military courtesy. IGOR looks uneasy, confused. PIOTR carries luggage through, grimly inarticulate.

ANGLE ON: THEO and SOULIMA, peeping from a doorway, excited. POV THEO and SOULIMA: there is an irrepressible sense of energy and force about DMITRI as he looks about the place.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

THEODORE and SOULIMA with DMITRI, inspecting his medals. IGOR in b.g. watching. COCO with LUDMILLA and MILENE in another part of the room, playing with a cat's cradle.

ECU of SOULIMA fingering the low relief of the Tsar's profile on one side of a beribboned decoration.

DMITRI  
The Tsar awarded that to me personally.

THEODORE  
What did you do?

DMITRI  
Captured a German gun battery.

SOULIMA

Were many killed?

DMITRI

Quite a few.

The children are mesmerised by DMITRI's stories.

THEODORE

Tell us again what happened with  
Rasputin.

ANGLE ON: IGOR as he lifts his eyes heavenwards.

ANGLE ON: COCO, with LUDMILLA and MILENE, a cat's cradle  
wrapped around her fingers.

COCO

The trick is to pull one of the  
threads so that it all untangles.

(she pulls one)

See?

The cat's cradle unravels magically. LUDMILLA and MILENE both  
seem delighted.

ANGLE ON: DMITRI in full flight.

DMITRI

And then Yusupov shot him again  
- bang! And again - bang! And  
still he wouldn't fall.

With a glance back at his children, IGOR leaves the room.

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

IGOR and CATHERINE, COCO and DMITRI at dinner. COCO has on a  
black angora sweater. Chin resting on her hand, she fingers  
the pearls around her neck, playing them to her lips. She is  
looking intently at DMITRI. IGOR feels threatened.

DMITRI

Let me tell you something, Igor.  
One afternoon, I was walking along  
the street whistling a tune and,  
as I approached a corner, an  
extraordinary thing happened.  
Coming the other way, a young lady -  
charming thing - was whistling the  
same tune. Even more extraordinary,

DMITRI (cont.)

she'd reached the exact same part of the melody. What do you make of that? Coincidence? Or fate?

IGOR

The popular tunes of the day often play in people's heads.

DMITRI

Well, I think it's more than that.

IGOR

Oh?

DMITRI

The way I see it, we all walk to a rhythm. It beats differently for each of us. But sometimes there's a connection...

COCO

You think it possible for two people to be in synchrony like that?

DMITRI

It sounds to me like a definition of love.

CATHERINE notices the rapport between COCO and DMITRI.

DMITRI

What do you think, Igor?

POV IGOR: COCO's leg leaning against DMITRI's under the table.

IGOR

The idea is a little fanciful...

DMITRI

Have you never felt that?

COCO and CATHERINE turn their eyes to IGOR. CU of his face. After a pause, he directs his answer to DMITRI.

INT./EXT. STRAVINSKY BEDROOM/VILLA

POV CATHERINE: PIOTR harnesses two horses as COCO and DMITRI emerge together in riding gear. Music from IGOR's study plays over. CATHERINE watches from a window as gallantly DMITRI helps COCO up onto the saddle.

Abruptly DMITRI spurs his horse into a gallop. COCO gives her horse a flick and playfully sets off after him.

CATHERINE stands at the window. The music stops. She notices the silence.

CUT TO:

INT. IGOR'S STUDY - CONTINUOUS

POV IGOR: COCO and DMITRI on their horses turn and disappear into the woods together.

IGOR turns from the window and, restless, plays solitaire, ripping cards from the deck and snapping them down. His leg shakes in agitation as he tries to concentrate.

CUT TO:

INT. OUTSIDE IGOR'S CLOSED STUDY DOOR - CONTINUOUS

MILENE in silence is playing contentedly. Then she is startled and jumps as OS the driving rhythms of *The Rite* ['Augurs of Spring'] start up. MILENE stands open-mouthed, transfixed and frightened by the music's savagery and power.

CUT TO:

INT. STRAVINSKY BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

POV CATHERINE: she registers the music starting again, and very subtly nods to herself.

TIME LAPSE

INT. IGOR'S STUDY - LATER

It is visibly darker. IGOR's sleeves are rolled up. OS, there is a clatter of hooves in the drive. Quickly IGOR switches off the light and peers out the window, eager to see, yet remain unseen.

POV IGOR: COCO and DMITRI dismount. PIOTR leads the horses off, steam rising visibly from them. COCO and DMITRI, in close conversation, head towards the house. IGOR resumes his game of solitaire.

OS, COCO's laughter fills the hallway. The sound of her footsteps approach. COCO enters.

COCO

Why are you sitting in the dark?

IGOR

I can see.

Riding crop in hand, COCO switches on the lights. She glows with vigour, and looks marvellous in her tight-fitting riding gear. IGOR affects casually to continue with his game, slapping cards down.

IGOR

How was your ride?

COCO

Good. And your card game?

IGOR

Good.

COCO

I'm glad.

After an awkward silence, COCO leaves and closes the door behind her. Stunned by her sudden removal, IGOR holds the next card frozen between his fingers.

OS, DMITRI mutters something, followed by COCO's laugh.

ANGLE ON: IGOR, desolate.

INT. VILLA - DOWNSTAIRS CORRIDOR - DAY

IGOR

I saw him. He kept doing it.

COCO

Maybe I let him.

IGOR

You obviously enjoyed it.

COCO

Why are you getting so upset?

POV CATHERINE: COCO and IGOR are whispering fiercely, arguing in the hallway. COCO pulls her arm away as IGOR tries to hold it. Decisively, COCO walks off.

IGOR catches sight of CATHERINE, who turns away immediately, and goes back up the stairs.

ANGLE ON: IGOR mortified. He walks to his study.



CUT TO: IGOR'S STUDY

IGOR lights cigarette, paces around the room.

INT. VILLA - UPSTAIRS - MINUTES LATER

IGOR reaches the top of the stairs and enters his bedroom.

INT. STRAVINSKY BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

As he enters the room, he sees suitcases open on the bed, half-packed.

IGOR  
Catherine?

CUT TO: BOYS' BEDROOM

IGOR enters and sees another suitcase open and partly packed.

POV IGOR: through the window, in the garden, CATHERINE is in deep conversation with THEO, explaining something.

INT. STRAVINSKYS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

CATHERINE is packing her things, folding clothes busily into a suitcase, wrapping up ornaments, photographs, books.

IGOR  
Don't do this to me.

CATHERINE  
I'm not doing it to you. I'm doing it for me and for the children.

IGOR  
I want you to stay.

CATHERINE  
Why?

(beat)  
You want me to be brave, is that it? You want me to face things?

IGOR  
You're my wife.

CATHERINE  
You should have thought of that earlier.

IGOR

I need you.

CATHERINE

And I needed *you*!  
Now I'd rather live in a hovel  
than stay here any longer.

IGOR

It's nearly over...

CATHERINE

What do you want? Another week,  
another month; a year?

IGOR

You're acting out of pride.

CATHERINE

And about time, too!

IGOR

What about *us*?

CATHERINE

Who do you mean by *us*?

IGOR

And the children?

CATHERINE

They've suffered enough with the  
musical beds that goes on around here.

CATHERINE stops packing for a moment.

CATHERINE

Don't you see, Igor? They know.  
They might not understand fully, but  
deep down they know what's been going  
on. They know you don't love me.

IGOR

They'll blame me.

CATHERINE

No. They'll blame themselves.

CATHERINE resumes packing. Stung, for an instant IGOR's fists clench and he looks around for something to smash. He manages to suppress the instinct.

CATHERINE presses the suitcase lid down.  
ANGLE ON: the buckles as they both click shut.

INT. CHILDREN'S BEDROOM - EARLY EVENING

All the children are assembled, together with their mother and father. The children look morose. IGOR wrings his hands.

LUDMILLA

But why?

CATHERINE

Because the weather is better there.

IGOR

And the schools.

LUDMILLA

We're just getting used to the school here.

CATHERINE

With Dmitri, the villa is getting a little full.

SOULIMA

Are we all going?

CATHERINE

Your father is staying.

SOULIMA

Why?

CATHERINE

(sees that Igor is silent)  
He has some work he needs to finish.

SOULIMA

Can't you finish it in Biarritz?

IGOR

I need to be here.

The children greet the news with solemn silence. THEODORE alone smiles bravely at his mother.

INT. COCO'S STUDY - DAY

CATHERINE enters quietly and unseen. She places an envelope, marked 'Mademoiselle Chanel' on COCO's desk.

EXT. DRIVEWAY OF THE VILLA - MORNING

The car is ready. Visibly upset, the children stand prepared to leave with CATHERINE. It is cold. They have their coats on. JOSEPH and MARIE are packing the last things.

COCO is there, and offers CATHERINE her hand. Slow to obey, CATHERINE's hand moves to meet COCO's. As COCO makes to kiss her, CATHERINE turns, averting her cheek.

Gravely IGOR embraces his children. He straightens SOULIMA's cap, adjusts THEODORE'S collar.

IGOR

Be good.

Though IGOR tries to press a lifetime of affection into these gestures, THEODORE refuses to meet his father's eye, and SOULIMA remains stone-faced.

CATHERINE bids IGOR a stiff goodbye.

CATHERINE

(to Igor)

I can stand most things, but  
you know the final humiliation?  
Your anonymous donor?

CATHERINE looks at IGOR until the knowledge sinks in.

COCO embraces LUDMILLA.

CATHERINE and the children enter the car.  
IGOR flinches as, OS, the doors slam shut.  
The vehicle moves off.

ANGLE ON: IGOR, waving, then ceasing to wave as the noise of the car fades.

COCO

I'll let you get on with your work.

COCO walks inside.

ECU: IGOR's smart shoe displaces gravel.  
Seen from above, IGOR appears isolated in the drive way.

INT. IGOR'S STUDY - DAY

IGOR alone at the piano, desolately presses with a single finger one of the higher notes. A look of fierce, almost manic concentration on his face. The metronome ticks on top of the piano.

The metronome ticks louder, its rhythm assaulting. Abruptly IGOR rises and stops its ticking with a violent grab.

INT. COCO'S STUDY - CONTINUOUS

Fabrics lie on the floor, sketches for designs are pinned up by the mirrors. COCO stops when she sees CATHERINE's letter. She opens and begins reading.

INTERCUT:

- ANGLE ON: CATHERINE as she writes at a table
- ANGLE ON: COCO as she reads it in growing CLOSE UP

Music in b.g.: opening of 'Serenata' from *Pulcinella*

CATHERINE (VO)

I am writing to thank you for your generosity in recent months in having us to stay. I am deeply grateful, too, for your efforts as regards my health. The next subject, however, is far more difficult to broach. As I'm sure you're aware, your unnatural closeness to my husband has caused me a great deal of pain. And, while I have every respect for you as an Independent woman, I cannot pretend to admire your morals. I urge you to look to your conscience. The children need their father. I am dying by half-inches, and need him more than you ever could.

COCO folds the letter slowly and returns it to its envelope, holding it with both hands as though absorbing its contents. She slips it into her pocket, and stares blankly ahead.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

There is evident tension between PIOTR and JOSEPH as they both, in silence, reach for the same tray.

EXT. GARDEN - DAY

COCO and IGOR walk; COCO with her arms folded against the cold, IGOR with hands planted stiffly in his pockets.

IGOR  
You're making a mistake.

COCO  
It's too late.

IGOR  
Is that what he told you?  
(beat)  
What we have is deeper than  
man and wife.

COCO  
Deeper than cousins?  
(beat)  
You're married. I have to protect  
myself.

COCO begins to move away. IGOR catches her arm. Unyielding, she looks back at the house, arms folded, locking him out.

IGOR  
Don't do this.

COCO  
I'm not Catherine. I have my own  
work. I'm ambitious, too.

IGOR  
Then why waste time with this  
imbecile, Dmitri?

COCO  
He's good to me, pays me attention.  
I don't come a poor third,  
after his piano and his wife -  
and perhaps I want some fun.  
Is that allowed?

A dog barks distantly. A huntsman's rifle sounds. Leaves fall from the trees.

IGOR  
Diaghilev goes to Spain with the  
Ballet. Let's join him.

COCO

I won't be your mistress, Igor.

IGOR

You want marriage? Children?

COCO

You're not exactly the father I'd choose for my children!

IGOR

I won't fail you.

COCO

You already have.

IGOR looks incredulous.

ANGLE ON: DMITRI emerging from the house.

DMITRI

Coco, are you coming?

DMITRI has his shotgun with him. Remaining at a distance from the two of them, he is casually loading the gun.

IGOR gives COCO a last, pleading look.

IGOR

You're being unreasonable.

COCO

Perhaps, but I need more.

IGOR

You think he'll give it to you?

COCO

He might.

IGOR

He might?

COCO

It's all I've got.

IGOR

You've got me.

COCO

What if I don't want you?

There is a disturbance in the trees. They all look up. Dmitri snaps his shotgun straight. Raising it high, he fires into the topmost branches. Two shots go off in quick succession. A wood pigeon drops like a stone onto the lawn.

A fan of birds rises darkly from the treetops. The spent cartridges lie on the ground. The flat crack of each shot rings around the garden. IGOR looks on in disbelief, screams at DMITRI.

IGOR

Must you destroy everything you  
come into contact with?

IGOR breaks into a run. Arms flailing, he launches himself, fists battering blindly at DMITRI, who staggers back. The gun is knocked to the floor.

More surprised than anything else, DMITRI absorbs a flurry of ineffectual blows. Then he turns and hits IGOR with a single blow smack against the nose.

Startled and hurt, IGOR is knocked to the floor. His glasses are cracked and askew. Tears well in his eyes. Gingerly IGOR's fingertips seek the point of impact. They come away sticky and dark with blood.

IGOR looks to COCO, his request for love diminished now to a thin need for pity. DMITRI shrugs apologetically. COCO indicates the spent cartridges on the grass.

COCO

(to Dmitri)

Pick them up!

COCO turns and walks off, shaking her head. IGOR sits alone on the damp grass.

INT. HALLWAY NEAR OPEN FRONT DOOR - DAY

JOSEPH and MARIE stand with their coats on and bags packed.

COCO

I'll need you back in a week.

MARIE

Yes, ma'am.

JOSEPH picks up the bags as MARIE walks out the door. PIOTR holds the door open and exchanges a cold look with JOSEPH.



INT. IGOR'S STUDY - DAY

IGOR at the piano. In b.g. glimpsed through the window, JOSEPH and MARIE quit the villa.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

PIOTR is preparing something very small. The sound of the piano plays over.

INT. IGOR'S STUDY - MINUTES LATER

PIOTR enters with a small tray. Without a word, he puts it down on the table. IGOR registers PIOTR's presence, but doesn't acknowledge him and carries on painstakingly re-tuning the piano. The tuning fork pings in the silence. His glasses are still cracked. PIOTR leaves.

TIME LAPSE

IGOR drags his hands in runs across the keys. Hard brilliant sonorities. Then, eyes closed, drawn by the emotional impulse of the music, he plays with a frenetic intensity and composes furiously.

Series of angles on IGOR, transfigured in playing sections of *The Rite*, seeming to enter into conversation with the piano.

TIME LAPSE - NIGHT

Still at the piano, and noticeably tired, IGOR transcribes a last couple of notes, then draws a line under the score. He closes the lid of the piano, gathers his manuscript together, and squares the pages on his desk. He has finished.

Satisfied with his final revisions, he leans back in his chair, and puts his hands behind his head.

TIME LAPSE - LATE NIGHT

IGOR, alone, drinks himself into a blind stupor.

Sound of laughter and fun from COCO and DMITRI filters from COCO's bedroom upstairs.

POV IGOR: a vodka bottle shakes in a prism. The background moves within the frame, but he does not, causing a nauseous sensation.

[End of 'The Bear and the Peasant', *Petrushka*]

IGOR staggers from his chair, stumbles across the room. Clumsily he makes his way towards the door.

INT. STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Noisily, on all fours, IGOR negotiates his way up the stairs. Confronted by the doors at the top of the stairs, he seems lost, disoriented.

INT. COCO'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

COCO wakes abruptly at the noise. Next to her sleeps DMITRI. She lies, eyes open, facing away from DMITRI, a look of concern on her face.

INT. IGOR'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

IGOR rips open his shirt, buttons flying off. He is breathing hard, still staggering. Abruptly he rushes from the bedroom. OS he vomits audibly.

INT. IGOR'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Gasping, IGOR regards himself through tear-thickened lashes in the mirror. A moment of self-communion. His face looks grey.

INT. IGOR'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Without undressing further, IGOR collapses onto the bed.

INT. IGOR'S STUDY - MORNING

COCO enters, detects a foul smell and opens the windows wide.

ANGLE ON: empty vodka and wine bottles, a full ashtray. COCO shakes her head, but stops and smiles as she sees on the desk the complete revised manuscript: *The Rite of Spring*.

INT. IGOR'S BEDROOM - MINUTES LATER

COCO enters.  
Half-dressed still, on top of the bed, IGOR groans.

COCO

Come on.

COCO pulls open the curtains. IGOR shrinks from the light.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

COCO running a bath.

COCO  
Get undressed.

IGOR hesitates, shyly begins to undress.

TIME LAPSE

IGOR in the bath. COCO washes him like a child in the tub. She squeezes a sponge tenderly over his head.

IGOR  
You have every right to hate me.

COCO  
I could never hate you.

IGOR  
I'm not sorry. You think I'm  
ashamed?

COCO  
Keep still.

IGOR  
(waving her away)  
I'm fine.

Emerging from the tub, IGOR ties a towel chastely round his waist. Dried, he moves close to COCO. Together they touch foreheads. Their fingers intertwine. He whispers to her.

IGOR  
You know something? I never told  
you - you smell marvellous!

They both smile ruefully.

ANGLE ON their hands as slowly they each let go.

INT. IGOR'S STUDY - DAY

IGOR - sober now - with COCO. He holds the icon.

IGOR  
I want you to have this.

He presses it into her hands. COCO accepts, smiles sincerely, turns to leave, then stops.

She pulls from her pocket a letter - the one she read earlier.  
After a hesitation, she hands it to IGOR.

COCO

This is yours.

IGOR takes the letter, registers what it is, nods.  
COCO waves a tender goodbye with her fingers.  
She blows a kiss before closing the door.

FADE OUT.

EXT. CHANEL SHOP - MONTHS LATER - DAY

INT. WORKROOM ABOVE CHANEL SHOP

MISIA and COCO together with perfume bottles.

COCO

It occurred to me: why don't  
we spray it in the changing rooms?  
When they smell it, clients will ask  
what it is, and whether they can  
buy it.

MISIA

What if they don't?

COCO

We'll explain we've just had a small  
amount made up as gifts, but that  
if they think the perfume will sell,  
then we may consider manufacturing it.

MISIA

So you involve them in the process?

COCO

We make them think so.

MISIA

You're such a fox, Coco!

COCO

(becoming busy)

I want the girls in the shop to  
talk about it. I want bottles  
displayed across the salon...

MISIA

So shall we spray?

COCO

Let's spray!

INT. STAIRS OF CHANEL SHOP - DAY

COCO and MISIA walk abreast down the stairs with a slightly intimidating rhythm. Like a CUBIST collage or Duchamp nude, their images are fractured and seen from different angles in the surrounding mirrors. COCO holds the samples in her hand like a pack of high explosives.

TIME LAPSE

COCO on her way out of the shop.

She gazes with satisfaction and pride at the display of No 5 perfume bottles in the window.

Women are queueing at the counter to buy them.

Seen through shop the window, COCO outside is framed for a moment by one of the No. 5 bottles.

EXT. CHANEL'S SHOP - CONTINUOUS

COCO steps into a car.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

COCO regards an invitation card.

ECU: 'Serge Diaghilev's Ballets Russes present Igor Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*'. She smiles.

EXT/INT. THEATRE DES CHAMPS ELYSEES - DAY

INT. CORRIDOR OF THEATRE DES CHAMPS ELYSEES

ANGLE ON: COCO making her way along the corridor towards her box.

On the way, she is feted, receiving bows and curtsies and admiring glances from society men and women.

INT. AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

COCO seats herself in a box overlooking the performance. MISIA is next to her.

CUT TO: WINGS

IGOR emerges to warm applause. Baton in hand, he readies himself to conduct *The Rite of Spring*. He now has a thin moustache on his upper lip.

POV COCO: IGOR glances up to see her.

CUT TO:

Performance of *The Rite* in full progress.

Counting with his right hand and beseeching with his left, he calls the music into being.

Six notes float from the bassoon. The woodwinds stir, the violins scratch, and there are ejaculations from the brass.

IGOR's fingers stiffen to signal a quickening rhythm, relax to command more tranquil harmonies. He seeks out individual musicians with a look, including the principal violinist.

IGOR closes his eyes and listens. No longer needing to consult the score, he conducts blindly.

POV IGOR: a series of surreal images mix, evoking the house, the love and passion COCO and IGOR enjoyed.

CUT BACK TO:

The performance of *The Rite*. IGOR's eyes well with tears.  
POV PRINCIPAL VIOLINIST: a tear breaks from IGOR's eye, quickens down his cheek.

Abruptly the percussion thuds, the brass arrives in orgiastic crashes. Great swerves of sound.

The music much louder now. The performance is richer, more passionate than that of 1913. The ballet appears less crude, more assured in its choreography. The squaw-like costumes have gone, and the dancers now wear black.

ANGLE ON: CATHERINE and the children watching intently from the front row.

IGOR again catches a glimpse of COCO in her box as he conducts. The emotion of the last few months informs their faces and the music as he conducts.

The 'Sacrificial Dance' is performed with great skill. The prima ballerina collapses in perfect sync with the final chord and the fall of the curtain.

As the ballet and concert end, there is a spontaneous standing ovation. DIAGHILEV walks onto the stage and leads the thunderous applause.

Deeply moved, IGOR takes several deep bows, his right hand held over his heart. He is greeted with bouquets of flowers. There are repeated shouts of 'Bravo'. The evening is a triumph.

ANGLE ON: CATHERINE and the children in the front row. CATHERINE smiles gently. The children clap wildly, proud of their father and the adulation that swells around him. The violinists tap with their bows; the dancers applaud.

ANGLE ON: COCO in her box upstairs. Deeply moved, she too is standing, applauding, wiping away a tear. MISIA looks across at her in sympathy.

IGOR acknowledges the ovation. He raises his hands as in prayer to his family, then glances up and nods towards COCO. She smiles back, bravely, tearfully, clapping still.

ANGLE ON: COCO. Overwhelmed with emotion, she leaves her box. MISIA follows to comfort her.

Members of the ballet company and orchestra hoist IGOR onto their shoulders. They carry him up the theatre's aisle. IGOR's euphoria is tempered by one last poignant glance at COCO's empty box.

FADE TO WHITE

**PLATE: '1971'**

An abstract changing pattern fills the frame for a few seconds.

EXT. CENTRAL PARIS - JANUARY - DAY

The echo of the applause melts into the sound of a pigeon's wings as a bird takes to the air.

Quiet, except for the remote sound of church bells. The trees are leafless, the sky grey, the roads almost empty.

INT/EXT. CAR/PARIS - MORNING

ANGLE ON: OLD COCO, 87, wrapped in a woollen tweed overcoat, her face glimpsed in the rear-view mirror of a black car, and in the mirror of her compact. [*opening of 'Largo', Pulcinella*]

She finishes applying red lipstick to her mouth.  
Blinking rapidly, she puts her glasses on.

EXT. RITZ HOTEL - MORNING

OLD COCO, escorted by the chauffeur, enters the hotel.  
People's heads turn as they notice who it is.

RECEPTIONIST  
Good morning, Mademoiselle Chanel.

ANGLE ON: the clockwise revolving door.

INT. OLD COCO'S ROOM IN THE RITZ - MINUTES LATER

OLD COCO sits down on her single bed. Sound of church bells.  
The walls are white, vases thick with white camellias, shelves  
filled with leather-bound books.

POV OLD COCO: on her bedside table, (ECU) the icon IGOR gave  
her 50 years before.

ANGLE ON: OLD COCO. She picks it up, holds it, touching it  
with a mixture of fond memory and sadness. A single tear  
breaks, falls across her cheek.

The distant spasms of a piano play above this.

OLD COCO grows breathless.

CU: the icon slips from her fingers onto the bed covers.

FADE TO WHITE.

EXT. APARTMENT BLOCK - NEW YORK - NIGHT

INT. OLD IGOR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

OLD IGOR in total darkness, is fumbling for something.  
Eventually a lamp snaps on, and OLD IGOR puts his glasses on.  
In bed, he sits up straight, squeezing a fist against chest as  
if he has indigestion.

SLOW TRACK. He is breathless and, though he calms down, he is  
immensely sad without understanding why. His face lifts to  
look directly into the camera.

Tears well in his eyes. A look of grave reminiscence  
overtakes his face.



EXT. THE RITZ HOTEL - PARIS - DAY

The final bars of *The Firebird* play over.

SLOW MOTION: the revolving door spins clockwise on its axis,  
slowing to a stop.

FADE TO BLACK