

THE HANDMAID'S TALE

EPISODE 211:

"Holly"

BY

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Based on the novel by Margaret Atwood

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THE HANDMAID'S TALE
EP 211 - "Holly"
Pink Revisions - 2/25/18

CAST LIST

OFFRED/JUNE
SERENA JOY
COMMANDER
MOIRA
LUKE
AUNT LYDIA
JANINE *
HANNAH

~~GRACE~~
MRS. TANAKA
D.J.
HOLLY
DOCTOR
ALMA *
~~DOULA~~

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SET LIST

INTERIORS

LAKE HOUSE
- KITCHEN
- FOYER
- OFFICE
- MASTER BEDROOM
- HALLWAY
- ATTIC
- LIVING ROOM

GARAGE

JUNE AND LUKE'S APARTMENT

BIRTHING CENTER

HOSPITAL
- BIRTHING SUITE

RED CENTER
- GYMNASIUM

PUTNAM HOUSE
- BEDROOM

EXTERIORS

LAKE HOUSE

GARAGE

PRE-SCHOOL ENTRANCE

TEASER

1

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

1

ON OFFRED, moments after we left her in Episode 210, among the bare winter trees and stretching shadows.

Devastated by her too-brief reunion with Hannah.

Frightened for Nick, injured and hauled away by Guardians.

Reeling from her last, humiliating Ceremony at the hands of the Waterfords.

Offred is alone. Stranded. And very, very pregnant.

OFFRED (V.O.)

I'm sorry there is so much pain in this story. I'm sorry it's in fragments, like a body caught in crossfire or pulled apart by force. But there is nothing I can do to change it.

(and then)

I've tried to put some of the good things in as well.

The baby kicks, feeling her panic.

OFFRED

(to the baby)

Shh. It's okay. It's going to be okay.

Convincing herself as much as the baby. It's not quite working.

She looks around, trying to get her bearings. Takes a few tentative steps to follow the tire tracks.

No way. It's too cold, she's too conspicuous, she doesn't even know where she is.

What the hell is she going to do?

She notices a GARAGE. Detached from the house.

A beat as the significance of this lands on her.

Then, moving as quickly as her nine-month belly will let her, Offred rushes over.

2

EXT. GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

2

Offred tries the side door. Locked.

She rubs frost and dirt off the tiny window with her sleeve.

Inside, under a cloth cover, is a CAR. Muscular, gas-guzzling, pre-Gilead. A beloved hobby project.

The possibility of escape. Freedom.

Offred's panic melts away.

She urgently tries the door again with more force, but without success. She needs a key.

Heading back to the house with purpose, she stops dead in her tracks.

A WOLF watches her from the edge of the woods.

A wild, dangerous thing, untamed by Gilead.

It's an image from a fairy tale, Red Riding Hood facing off against the Wolf, but all too real.

OFFRED (V.O.)
My, what big eyes you have.

Fear spikes through Offred, but the wolf doesn't approach.

OFFRED (V.O.)
When I was little, my mom would never take me to those princess movies. I remember hating her for it. But now I know why. In the real world, you can't wait for a prince.

Wary, she continues on her way back to the house.

OFFRED (V.O.)
Happily ever after is up to you.

ON Offred, resolute. She has a chance to get herself and her baby out of here, just like she promised.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

3 OMITTED 3

3A INT. LAKE HOUSE - FOYER - LATE AFTERNOON 3A

Offred hurriedly searches for keys to the garage and the car.

Anywhere she flips the light switches, nothing happens.
Power's shut off.

Offred checks the tchotchkes and furniture by the front door,
every place you'd keep extra keys. No luck.

CUT TO:

4 OMITTED 4

4A INT. LAKE HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER 4A

The faucet DRIPS, keeping the pipes from freezing.

Offred rifles through junk drawers in the kitchen. Still
nothing.

The family center/bulletin board, the calendar still turned
to a summer month (wordless, of course), holds only empty key
hooks.

An open door gives view onto an OFFICE, a decidedly male
room.

The kind of room for the man who'd own that car.

CUT TO:

5 INT. LAKE HOUSE - OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER 5

The inner sanctum of another Commander. Unsettling to Offred.

She takes in the books and maps. Photos of him with his
fishing buddies. A few taxidermy birds and animals, hunting
trophies. Smart of that wolf to come around in deep winter,
when no one's home, or he could be on the wall too.

Offred goes to the desk and opens drawers.

Then she sees a KEYCHAIN, holding both house keys and car
keys, in a lumpy clay BOWL on the desk. Success.

Her triumph fades when she picks up the bowl, registering
that it's something a child made.

Something Hannah made.

(CONTINUED)

5

CONTINUED:

5

The desk is full of Hannah reminders.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

A mug painted with flowers and hearts holds pens and pencils. Crayon drawings sit framed around the desk, along with snapshots of Hannah and her adoptive PARENTS. Laughing, picnicking, having fun by the lake.

Bittersweet, this all lands on Offred like a body blow.

Because it means that Hannah is loved.

She left Hannah, and now someone else loves her.

FLASHBACK TO:6 EXT. PRE-SCHOOL ENTRANCE - MORNING - FLASHBACK

6

The usual morning mayhem of PRESCHOOLERS, PARENTS, and TEACHERS.

JUNE tries to drop off an unhappy 4-year-old HANNAH, giving her a final hug. *

JUNE

Okay. That's it. I have to go now. *

Hannah grabs her legs. *

June's harried and distressed too but determined to remain upbeat for Hannah. Separation anxiety is no joke.

JUNE (CONT'D)

Hannah. We talked about this. You had a great day yesterday, right? You did drawings for me and Daddy, and played with your friends...

Hannah doesn't care. She just clings to June. *

To June's profound relief, here comes Hannah's teacher, MRS. TANAKA.

JUNE (CONT'D)

Look, there's Mrs. Tanaka.

(to Mrs. Tanaka)

Hi. Having a little trouble this morning.

MRS. TANAKA

(sympathetic but firm)

I know it's hard, but the minute you go she'll be fine. Believe me. And it's important to stick to the routine. Did you already do Last Hug?

(CONTINUED)

6

CONTINUED:

6

JUNE

We did.

MRS. TANAKA

(to Hannah)

So you know it's time for Mom to
leave.

She stands by patiently as June extricates herself from
Hannah.

MRS. TANAKA (CONT'D)

(to June)

I'm sure you went through this with
your own mother.

*

JUNE

Not really.

(to Hannah, over-cheerful)

All right. Have a wonderful day,
banana. I'll see you later.

June turns and goes. Hannah screams after her.

HANNAH

Don't go, Mommy! Don't go! Don't
go!

[**ALT:** June turns and goes. Hannah stares after her.]

*

June's false smile vanishes as she walks away. Dying a little
inside.

*

END OF ACT ONE

8

CONTINUED:

8

America is still out there. Her America is still out there.

However remote and fractured.

(CONTINUED)

8

CONTINUED:

8

It's a stirring, empowering reminder to Offred, so deeply embedded in this fucked-up place that was once her homeland.

Offred scans over the dashboard controls.

Warning lights are off.

Gas tank is full.

She SHUTS OFF the car. Unpleasant truths fly through her head.

OFFRED

(to the baby)

If we go, it's just you and me. No going back for anyone. Not your father, and not --

She can't say the name. *Hannah*.

Trying to follow or find her or Nick would be suicide.

OFFRED (CONT'D)

She'll forgive me. They both will.

(less certain)

I hope they will.

More doubt creeps in. She's going to just drive out of here? When she's had so little luck before?

OFFRED (CONT'D)

This is crazy. We can't do this.

(and then)

Can we?

She touches her belly, finding the answer in her unborn baby.

OFFRED (CONT'D)

Fuck it.

9

INT. LAKE HOUSE - VARIOUS - MOMENTS LATER

9

We stay with Offred as she rushes to gather escape essentials.

Her pregnancy hinders her progress -- she doesn't move as fast as she'd like and tires more quickly -- but she's a woman on a mission.

- Trail mix, crackers, other non-perishables from the pantry.

- Water in glass bottles filled at the kitchen sink.

- Blankets. First aid kit. Maps.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

- A DOLL, abandoned by Hannah during the visit in Episode 210, a talisman of hope that Offred will see her again.

All go into a big, sturdy BAG.

Under the above, we hear Offred's VOICEOVER:

OFFRED (V.O.)

I used to save those plastic shopping bags, a habit from my mother. Luke would complain about it and throw them away. Hannah will get one of those over her head, he'd say. She won't, I'd say. She's too smart, too old, too lucky.

We end on Offred standing before a glass-fronted GUN CABINET, but unfortunately for her it's empty.

Strange... unless you're a responsible family with a child in the house.

OFFRED (V.O.)

I took too much for granted. I trusted fate, back then.

It stings a little less, this new evidence of how careful and caring Hannah's new family is.

But it still stings.

CUT TO:

10 INT. GARAGE - LATE AFTERNOON

10

Offred hoists the heavy bag into the car's trunk.

Shutting it, she catches her REFLECTION in the windshield.

Hers will be a very short escape if she gets stopped for any reason. Women can't drive in Gilead, much less pregnant Handmaids.

CUT TO:

11 INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

11

Offred takes off her cloak. She opens the closet and pushes past teal Wife summer dresses to search through the Commander clothes.

Something to disguise herself from the waist up. Caps, jackets. She'll never pass for a man at close glance, she just needs to avoid attracting attention on the road.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: 11

Offred finds a jacket that looks like it'll fit.

She holds it up to her body, checking her reflection in a nearby full-length MIRROR.

FLASHBACK TO:

12 INT. JUNE AND LUKE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - FLASHBACK 12

Wearing a stunning maternity cocktail dress, June puts on earrings, ready to go out.

LUKE chooses a tie to go with his collared shirt and suit coat.

JUNE

Roger's wife is Patricia. She does something at John Hancock.

LUKE

(committing to memory)
Patricia. John Hancock.

He holds up two ties for June to consider.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Blue tie or gray tie?

JUNE

No tie. It's a book release, not a deposition.

She slips on her shoes.

JUNE (CONT'D)

Lenore's awesome -- you met her at the Christmas party -- but she's dating a guy who just moved from New York so do not talk about sports unless...

She stops when she realizes Luke isn't listening.

He's just staring at her. Entranced by his beautiful, pregnant wife.

JUNE (CONT'D)

What?

LUKE

Just you.

END FLASHBACK:

13

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

13

The NOISE of a vehicle pulling up outside jerks Offred out of that pleasant memory.

She hurries to a window.

A car could mean good news or bad news: Nick, the Eyes, Mayday.

This one, an anonymous black Commander VEHICLE, isn't familiar, but the people getting out of it are.

SERENA JOY and the COMMANDER.

Holy shit.

ON Offred. Bad news. Very fucking bad news.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE14 INT. LAKE HOUSE - FOYER - DUSK

14

The front door's unlocked, either from Nick going out to deal with the Guardians in 210 or from Offred's recent trips outside.

Serena and the Commander enter. Fighting to remain calm.

COMMANDER
(calling out)
Commander Mackenzie? Mrs.
Mackenzie?
(and then)
Offred? Nick?

No answer.

COMMANDER (CONT'D)
Maybe they weren't here.

SERENA JOY
They were. You saw the tire tracks
outside. Don't you realize what
you've done?

COMMANDER
Panicking is not going to do us any
good. We'll go home. Make a plan --

SERENA JOY
I'm not going home without my baby.

In seek and destroy mode, Serena stalks away into the house.

15 INT. LAKE HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

15

Serena looks around, the Commander on her heels.

COMMANDER
We shouldn't be here. Someone
might've seen our car. I'll make
some calls. And I'm sure Nick will
check in soon.

She withers him with a doubtful glare.

Then she clocks evidence of Offred's rushed packing: open
pantry doors, scattered food items.

SERENA JOY
They were here. They might still be
here.

(CONTINUED)

15

CONTINUED:

15

It's clear that Serena isn't budging until they search the house.

COMMANDER

Fine. We'll look. But quickly. If they've gone we're only wasting time.

He and Serena split up and hurriedly move through the house. Hunting.

COMMANDER (CONT'D)

Nick? Offred?

SERENA JOY

Offred? Offred!

It's terrifying. Like a horror movie.

CUT TO:

16

INT. LAKE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

16

Serena enters to find the closet door open. Caps knocked onto the floor along with clothing on hangers.

In the MIRROR she catches a flash of RED on the floor behind her.

Fabric of Handmaid red, peeking out from under the bed.

Someone's hiding.

But not well enough.

Serena stalks over, expecting Offred --

-- but instead finds only Offred's cloak.

Furious, Serena seizes it and charges out.

17

INT. LAKE HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

17

Serena storms in from the bedroom.

SERENA JOY

Fred! Get in here.

Behind and above her, rickety STAIRS curve up and away.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: 17

Unseen by Serena, another glimpse of RED FABRIC vanishes up the stairs...

CUT TO:

18 INT. LAKE HOUSE - ATTIC - SAME TIME 18

Storage CONTAINERS, dusty BOXES, old FURNITURE.

And Offred.

Perched among the exposed beams and insulation. Shaking and pale with fear and the effort of getting up here quickly.

From here, Offred can hear and even see the Commander and Serena. She can only hope they don't hear or see her.

INTERCUT WITH:

19 INT. LAKE HOUSE - HALLWAY - SAME TIME 19

Serena hurls Offred's cloak at the Commander.

SERENA JOY

"Maybe they weren't here." They were. And now they've run off together. Thanks to you.

The Commander holds the cloak. Numb, still in denial.

COMMANDER

There must be some other explanation.

SERENA JOY

Like what, Fred?

COMMANDER

Nick wouldn't be disloyal... I let Offred see her daughter. She should've been grateful.

Among the dusty storage trunks, Offred spies BOXES OF SHOTGUN SHELLS. This must be where the Mackenzies put the guns from the cabinet.

Offred realizes she's sitting on a GUN CASE.

She moves off and opens it.

Inside she finds a double-barreled SHOTGUN.

(CONTINUED)

19

CONTINUED:

19

As Serena and the Commander argue, Offred moves as quietly as she can to load the shotgun. Every CREAK, every CLICK sounds like thunder to her frightened ears.

SERENA JOY

How could you be so stupid?

COMMANDER

Can you just give it a rest for a second? I'm trying to think --

SERENA JOY

They hate you. She's always hated you. She keeps running away from you --

The Commander's had enough. He throws the red cloak to the floor and lashes out right back.

COMMANDER

Me? If you'd shown that girl an ounce of kindness she would never have left.

SERENA JOY

Kindness. You raped her yesterday.

COMMANDER

That was your idea.

So much for decorum. The gloves are off.

COMMANDER (CONT'D)

I did this to fix your mess.

SERENA JOY

You sent her out here with the father of her baby to see her daughter? What did you think would happen? That she'd come home and thank you? You are such a fucking idiot.

COMMANDER

Stop calling me stupid. When did you become such a bitch?

Offred reacts to the raw turn the fight's taken. It gives her not a little pleasure, listening to the Waterfords flay each other. Their rotten marriage laid bare.

SERENA JOY

What are we going to do? We can't explain this away.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

19

CONTINUED:

19

SERENA JOY (CONT'D)

We can't even report it. To have a pregnant Handmaid run away once is bad enough. But twice. They'll say we're in the Resistance.

COMMANDER

I'll handle it --

SERENA JOY

Like you handled this? They'll put us on the Wall.

COMMANDER

Maybe they'll hang us side by side. Just my fucking luck.

SERENA JOY

Sure, make jokes. I gave up everything for you. For the cause. I only wanted one thing in return. A baby --

COMMANDER

You wanted a lot more than that. Fucking demanded it --

SERENA JOY

I only wanted a baby. And because of your infatuation with that girl, your stupid obsession --

The Commander grabs Serena and SHOVES HER AGAINST THE WALL.

COMMANDER

Don't call me stupid.

Offred has a shot. She cocks the shotgun.

Serena, the Commander. Two barrels.

Will Offred shoot? Who first?

SERENA JOY

-- Now I don't have anything.

Serena crumples, past anger now and well into despair.

SERENA JOY (CONT'D)

I'll never hold my baby.

The Commander lets her go.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

SERENA JOY (CONT'D)

I have nothing, Fred. You've left
me with nothing.

Serena's such a pathetic mess that Offred hesitates, finger
on the trigger.

SERENA JOY (CONT'D)

I have nothing.

COMMANDER

Serena --

SERENA JOY

Get away from me.

Serena jerks away. The two move out of Offred's eyeline.
Offred's moment of compassion cost her the shot.

COMMANDER

Listen to me. It'll be all right.
I'll make some discreet calls to
local security. They can't have
gotten far. But we need to go.

The Commander leads Serena away, his VOICE fading.

FOOTSTEPS retreat.

The front door SLAMS.

The car STARTS and DRIVES OFF.

Only then does Offred dare to move.

CUT TO:

20 INT. LAKE HOUSE - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

20

Offred creeps down the STAIRS.

Heart hammering. Moving carefully, step by step, bringing the
shotgun with her.

She goes to a window, peering out cautiously, making sure the
car is gone.

It is. She's alone now.

Offred's about to cry with relief. Bullet dodged.

Now no one is looking for her and she's free to make her
escape. Praise be --

(CONTINUED)

20

CONTINUED:

20

A CONTRACTION hits, yanking a surprised GRUNT of pain out of her.

To unmedicated Offred, it feels like a menstrual cramp times a million. Not the Braxton Hicks from Episode 210, this is a real contraction. Longer, stronger.

She's in labor.

ON Offred, *can I please catch a fucking break for once?*

HOLLY (PRE-LAP)

I went into labor in the middle of performing a uterine myomectomy.

FLASHBACK TO:

21

INT. BIRTHING CENTER - DAY - FLASHBACK

21

Pregnant June, her mother HOLLY, and MOIRA tour a birthing suite. Comfortable and clean but very granola. Water birth tub, New Age decor, birthing chair shaped like an upside-down T, a foreshadow of the Gilead chair from Episode 102.

HOLLY

I finished the procedure, closed, and then had twenty more hours of labor.

MOIRA

I bet doctors get the best drugs. You had, like, three epidurals, right?

HOLLY

I was unmedicated. I wanted to know what it feels like.

MOIRA

Seriously?

Moira's somewhere between horrified and impressed, but June's blasé. She's heard this story before.

JUNE

I don't know. I think I'd just feel safer in a real hospital.

HOLLY

Safer? Should I name all the superbugs you can catch in those places?

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

MOIRA

But you work in hospitals.

HOLLY

Yeah, so I know.

(to June)

The staff here are licensed and fully qualified. I went to school with the medical director.

JUNE

It's just not me. I'm going to want doctors and nurses and drugs.

HOLLY

You're stronger than you think.

JUNE

Look, you're not going to be there, so what do you care?

HOLLY

What are you talking about? Of course I'll be there.

She's hurt. June backpedals, calmer.

JUNE

You say that now, but you have your work and I know how important it is.

HOLLY

And, what, I think it's more important than you?

JUNE

Just... please don't make promises you can't keep. Not about this.

HOLLY

June. Really --

Moira jumps in, defusing things before they escalate again.

MOIRA

My friend Bridget gave birth in the woods. In a *stream*. YouTubed it and everything.

END FLASHBACK:

22 INT. GARAGE - DUSK

22

Offred struggles in with the shotgun and shells. Drops them in the car.

The plan's still on, labor be damned, but she has no time to lose.

She reflexively hits the wall button for the GARAGE DOOR OPENER but nothing happens. Right, no power.

Thinking quickly, Offred goes to the emergency disconnect CORD and yanks it, disengaging the opener from the door. She'll lift it up manually.

She tries. But it doesn't budge. Frozen to the ground, or the metal parts have contracted from the cold.

She's hit with another CONTRACTION. It hurts. Bad.

OFFRED

Holy shit.

Breathing through it, Offred gets into the car, STARTS it, FLOORS it, and throws it into REVERSE, trying to shove the door free with the car.

OFFRED (CONT'D)

C'mon c'mon...

It doesn't work.

FUMES and acrid TIRE SMOKE billow into the garage. Dangerous for her, dangerous for the baby.

OFFRED (CONT'D)

Goddammit!

Offred turns off the engine.

Still thinking, still not giving up.

CUT TO:

23 EXT. GARAGE - DUSK

23

In the twilight, Offred tries again to lift the garage door. And fails again.

She attempts to pry it up with the handle of a rake, straining, but the door's stuck solid.

She SLIPS and FALLS, landing hard on her side.

(CONTINUED)

23

CONTINUED:

23

Offred attempts to get up but another CONTRACTION keeps her down, panting with effort and pain. Doubtful she could drive in this condition, not that that's possible now.

She struggles to sit up and sees WETNESS spreading between her legs, staining her dress and cloak.

OFFRED

No. Please. Not yet.

But there's no doubt.

Her WATER HAS BROKEN.

The baby is coming.

The door is not going to open.

She is not escaping.

A wave of hopelessness crashes over Offred.

Shattered and despairing, a hostage of her own body and the baby now imminently on its way into the world, Offred slumps against the garage door.

Freedom, at least a fighting chance for it, was so close.

But it's gone now.

OFFRED (V.O.)

I used to think of my body as an instrument. Mine to use, to make things happen. Now the flesh arranges itself differently. I'm a cloud, congealed around a central object, more real than I am.

(and then)

And still I am empty.

She looks up to see that the WOLF has returned. Closer this time.

Offred tenses, but the wolf keeps its distance.

It HOWLS.

Though eerie, the sound is oddly encouraging.

In this moment, it's what Offred needs.

A reminder that she's also a wild, dangerous thing, untamed by Gilead.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

OFFRED (V.O.)
*No. You're not done. Get up. Get
up, goddammit. Get. UP.*

She gets up, fueled by resignation and resolve.

She's going to have this baby and then they're getting out of here, together.

This isn't over.

CUT TO:

24 INT. LAKE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

24

Some time later. Dark outside.

Offred now wears a teal bathrobe, courtesy of the mistress of the house. Offred's sweaty and tired, well into active labor. She's having a CONTRACTION amid the nest she's made of blankets and towels in front of the FIREPLACE.

Nearby sits the bag of escape supplies, now her birthing supplies.

The contraction passes, allowing her to start a FIRE against the cold. She strikes MATCHES near the tinder and kindling until they CATCH.

She waits. Then watches gratefully as FLAMES begin to lick the logs.

She sets a POT OF WATER next to the burning wood to heat: no electricity means the kitchen stove doesn't work.

OFFRED
(to the baby)
Any time now. The sooner you get
out of there, the sooner we can get
out of here --

She grunts in pain. Another CONTRACTION. Soon it will be time to push --

Offred doubles over in alarm.

This contraction feels different. Hurts more.

OFFRED (CONT'D)
(to the baby)
What was that? Everything okay in
there?

The pain sharpens, deepens into piercing agony.

(CONTINUED)

24

CONTINUED:

24

Offred tries to muscle through it, but her body has other ideas.

She passes out.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

25

INT. HOSPITAL - BIRTHING SUITE - DAY - FLASHBACK

25

Modern, comfortable, state-of-the-art. We've been in this hospital before, in Episode 102, after June gave birth to Hannah.

Now we're here earlier: June's in labor, in bed. A swarm of DOCTORS and NURSES attend her along with DOULAS. Moira adjusts June's pillows while Luke fusses with his phone.

DOCTOR

Four centimeters and eighty percent effaced. Looking good.

JUNE

How about that epidural now?

DOCTOR

I'd like to wait a little longer. We don't want to slow down your contractions.

JUNE

(easy for you to say)
No, we sure don't want that.

Luke goes to plug his phone into a SOUND SYSTEM dock, only to find another phone already there.

LUKE

Whose phone is this?

MOIRA

Mine.

LUKE

I made a playlist.

MOIRA

I made a playlist. We're not playing that garbage you listen to.

JUNE

I like his garbage.

A doula rubs June's feet. June calls to another doula:

JUNE (CONT'D)

Can I get more of that coconut water?

The doula brings it to her, a bottle with a straw.

(CONTINUED)

25

CONTINUED:

25

It's luxurious. In fertility-crisis America, no expense or effort is spared when a woman is in labor.

June revels in the care and attention but her eyes roam across the room, searching the faces.

LUKE

You okay?

JUNE

Yeah.

(to Moira)

Did she call?

MOIRA

(no)

I'll text her again.

June's mother is not here.

Of course she's not.

June winces as a new CONTRACTION hits her.

END FLASHBACK:

26

INT. LAKE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

26

Offred comes to in her firelit nest of sheets and blankets.

No doctors, no family, no one helping her. A stark contrast to her first labor.

The pain has passed, but she notices that BLOOD streaks down her legs.

Something's very wrong.

OFFRED

Oh shit.

Maybe it was the fall by the garage. Maybe it's because hers is a high-risk pregnancy, like the Doctor said.

But this much blood isn't normal for labor.

Neither is pain severe enough to make her pass out.

OFFRED (CONT'D)

(to the baby)

No one's looking for us. No one except your father even knows where we are. And if he could've come for us, he would have by now.

(CONTINUED)

26

CONTINUED:

26

Dark questions race through her mind.

What if she passes out again?

What happens to the baby if she bleeds out and dies?

She cannot risk the life of this child.

She will not.

OFFRED (CONT'D)

We can't do this alone. Fuck.

Offred hardens. Making an irreversible decision.

OFFRED (CONT'D)

I know I promised you. I'm sorry.

She will save this child at any cost, even her own freedom.

Offred struggles to her feet.

CUT TO:

27

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

27

Cloak wrapped around her, leaving BLOODY BOOTPRINTS in her wake, Offred limps into the back yard with the shotgun and box of shells.

The lake stretches out before her. LIGHTS from distant houses twinkle far away.

A CONTRACTION sends Offred to her knees.

The shells scatter on the ground.

On all fours, Offred recovers and looks up to see that the WOLF is back.

The closest it's been yet, perhaps drawn by the blood.

The two watch each other for a beat.

Offred sits up to cock the shotgun.

She FIRES both barrels up into the air. The recoil knocks her back. This isn't easy. Nothing is easy.

The gunshots ECHO over the lake and woods like thunderclaps.

A call for help.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED: 27

The wolf dashes away, vanishing into the woods. Returning to the wild at the same time as Offred is returning to civilization.

Offred cracks open the shotgun, dumps the shell casings, and laboriously retrieves two more shells from the ground.

She reloads and FIRES again into the night sky.

Can't risk anyone thinking the first were an accident.

She must be heard.

OFFRED (V.O.)

Here I am. Come and get me.

She dumps the casings and grabs two more shells to reload.

Ready to do it again.

28 INT. LAKE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 28

A short while later.

Sweat-soaked and depleted, Offred is in the final stage of labor. She dips a washcloth in the now-heated pot of water and wipes herself clean between her legs.

It's time.

Squatting and bracing herself against the hearth, Offred breathes deeply a few times to center herself.

OFFRED

(to the baby)

Here we go.

And she PUSHES.

INTERCUT WITH:

29 INT. HOSPITAL - BIRTHING SUITE - DAY - FLASHBACK 29

Ready to bring Hannah into the world, June lies in bed surrounded by hospital staff. She's cranky and hurting and ready to have this baby out.

Luke holds her hand, Moira hovers nearby.

LUKE

You ready?

JUNE

Go fuck yourself.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

LUKE

I love you.

JUNE

I love you too. But I mean it. Go
fuck yourself.

MOIRA

You can do this.

JUNE

I can't.

MOIRA

Sure you can.

DOCTOR

All right, June. Time to push.

June breathes deep to --

PUSH.

30 INT. RED CENTER - GYMNASIUM - DAY - FLASHBACK

30

AUNT LYDIA oversees a lesson in Gileadean childbirth.

June and HANDMAIDS including Moira and JANINE sit in pairs:
one on the floor, one on the edge of a cot behind her.
Handmaid and Wife, mimicking the two-tiered birthing chair.In the center of the room, an AUNT sits on one such chair in
the Wife position, behind ALMA.

AUNT LYDIA

All together, girls.

AUNT LYDIA AND HANDMAIDS

Breathe, breathe, breathe.

(and then)

Push, push, push.

(to June, a command)

Push, dear.

Moira shoots June a "can you believe this shit" look as June
pretends to --

PUSH.

31 INT. PUTNAM HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

31

The birthing scene from Episode 102. Offred, Serena Joy,
WIVES, AUNTS, and HANDMAIDS surround NAOMI and JANINE.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

31

EVERYONE
Breath, breathe, breathe.
(and then)
Push, push, push.

Janine strains, ready for another --

PUSH.

Moments all unique and yet somehow the same. Like every birth of every child since the beginning of time.

The memories blend together in an IMPRESSIONISTIC SWIRL.

PUSH.

PUSH.

PUSH...

32 INT. LAKE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

32

Offred takes up her birthing position, lying on her left side.

And she PUSHES one last time.

Gasping against the pain as the baby finally crowns.

Offred reaches with both hands between her legs to guide the BABY out.

A girl.

Squirming, CRYING. Robust and healthy as far as Offred can tell.

Offred towels her off and bundles the infant to her breast, umbilical cord and all, under the bathrobe and blankets.

Mother and baby wrapped up tight together and curled up facing the fire for warmth.

A victory. Against Gilead, against the Waterfords, against everything.

The baby nuzzles Offred, skin to skin, nursing.

Drenched with sweat, hurting everywhere, physically and emotionally drained and fighting unconsciousness, Offred regards the baby with love and wonder.

OFFRED
Hello there.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: 32

Her baby.

Her daughter.

FLASHBACK TO:

33 INT. HOSPITAL - BIRTHING SUITE - DAY - FLASHBACK 33

Nurses deliver newborn HANNAH to a wrung-out June and Luke. Moira smiles, joyful and near tears.

June holds her tiny daughter, overwhelmed.

She glances up to see a new arrival rushing in, unshouldering a duffel bag.

Holly, just in from the airport. She made it after all.

JUNE

Mom.

HOLLY

Shitty weather in Atlanta. Flight got delayed.

(greeting Luke)

Hey, Dad.

Holly goes to June's bedside. Beaming with love and pride.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

You did it, kiddo.

JUNE

This is Hannah.

June turns to baby Hannah to finish the introductions.

JUNE (CONT'D)

Hannah, this is your grandmother.

Holly.

END FLASHBACK:

34 INT. LAKE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 34

Woozy and struggling to stay awake, Offred looks at her new baby girl.

OFFRED

Holly.

Whatever name Gilead will give the baby, this is her true name. Given to her by her mother, in memory of her own.

(CONTINUED)

34

CONTINUED:

34

Offred looks over to Hannah's doll sitting near the plundered bag of supplies. A reminder of the escape that wasn't to be. Of the heartbreaking choices she's had to make.

OFFRED (CONT'D)

You have a big sister. Hannah.
(and then)
You'll meet her someday.

Her stubborn optimism can't hide that this hurts more than anything Offred has endured so far.

OFFRED (V.O.)

*I keep on going with this limping
and mutilated story because I want
you to hear it. As I will hear
yours too if I ever get the chance,
if I meet you or if you escape, in
the future or in heaven.*

(and then)

*By telling you anything at all I'm
believing in you. I believe you
into being. Because I'm telling you
this story I will your existence.*

(and then)

I tell, therefore you are.

HEADLIGHTS from outside sweep across the walls.

A car is here. Help is here. Someone heard the gunshots.

Whatever happens next, whatever happens to Offred, the baby will be safe and cared for.

OFFRED

We did it, Holly.

And now Offred can finally give in to the pain and exhaustion.

Eyes closing, consciousness fading, Offred holds little Holly close. Mother and daughter.

Facing an uncertain future, but facing it together.

At least for now.

END OF EPISODE

APPENDIX

Full radio D.J. dialogue from Scene 8:

D.J.

This is Radio Free America, with some personal messages: The east is yellow as a daffodil. I met a traveller from an antique land. Our year begins with burnished leaves. The beacon light shines on the hill.

(and then)

And now, this news. The American government in Anchorage today received promises of economic aid from India and China, as well as a reiteration of support from Russia. In the United Kingdom, additional sanctions on Gilead were announced as well as plans to raise the cap on American refugees relocating from Canada.

(and then)

That reminds me. You can drop off gently used clothing and housewares at our embassy in Toronto for our brothers and sisters who've made it out. Money too. Every bit helps.

(and then)

We'll have another news update at the top of the hour. This is Radio Free America, broadcasting from somewhere in the Great White North, on your A.M. dial and online. And now, a tune to remind everyone who's listening, American patriot or Gilead traitor, that we are still here. Stars and stripes forever, baby.

(and then)

That one takes me right back. We'll be making music like that again soon, don't you worry. We won't be silenced. So let's keep the flow going, shall we? Next up, a block of my favorites. This is Radio Free America.