

Lillianette Rodriguez

THE REFLECTION PLACE

FADE IN:

EXT. CLARA'S HOUSE – FRONT YARD - EVENING

Delicate fog drifts. Light cuts through tall grass and porch rails. Idyllic.

COLD OPEN

INT. CLARA'S HOUSE – KITCHEN – EVENING

EDIE BELL (70s, the town's realtor. Soft curls rest just above her collar. She wears a realtor crew shirt under a pressed floral apron.) Her hands move with care. She arranges a welcome basket on the counter. A folded note and a silver key sit beside it.

A dusty record spins.

A haunting lullaby drifts from old speakers. Strings. Warbled melody. Timeless.

Song: "Lavender Waltz" Unknown Artist, 1949

SONG (V.O.)

"Lavender skies and a window that waits, A swing
that remembers the shape of her weight.

She came for the quiet, she stayed for the sound. Of
the silence that sang when no one's around."

CLOSE-UP: Hands slide lavender soap into a wicker basket.

CLOSE-UP: A fresh jam jar, a folded linen napkin.

We only see her from chin to waist. She wears a floral apron, small embroidery, nothing flashy.

CLOSE-UP: An image of the town STILLWATER HOLLOW in its prime; as the card cover.

INT. CLARA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN – EVENING

Edie WRITES OUT a fancy penmanship on the card.

“Welcome to Stillwater Hollow, Clara.”

SONG (V.O)

“No one remembers, but someone once knew...
The woman who stayed for the silence, not you.”

She folds it.

Smiles to herself eerie, calm, tucks card in envelope and drops the key. Seals it.

EXT. CLARA'S HOUSE - PORCH - EVENING

The basket. The ribbon tied just so, is placed perfect on the kitchen table, from the outside porch window, above the lazy swing, lays the perfect view.

SONG (V.O)

“Any road will feel like home,
If I don't have to walk alone.
I'm with you...”

TITLE CARD (over misty trees): THE REFLECTION
PLACE

SONG (V.O.)

...My quiet is true.”

END COLD OPEN.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. SUBWAY PLATFORM - NEW YORK CITY -
CONTINUOUS

Cramped and Claustrophobic. A thunderstorm of human noise hits Clara. Heels click. Horns blare in the distance. Someone sneezes. Laughter. Arguing.

Clara stands still in the chaos. She's pale, withdrawn, visibly worn by life. One sleeve slips past her wrist. She doesn't fix it. She clutches her phone like a lifeline.

Her eyes, sharp but exhausted, scan the crowd without really seeing it. A constant RINGING hums in her ears, too loud for one person to bear.

A MAN bumps into her without a word.

A WOMAN loudly complains about her boss.

A KID plays a game on full volume.

PHONE SCREEN: CALENDAR FULL. MESSAGES UNREAD. "PSYCHIC READING W/ TAMIKA - CANCELED."

The subway car screeches to a stop. Doors open.

Clara closes her eyes. Breathes. Shakes her head. Opens them. She steps into the subway car.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - EVENING - MOMENTS LATER

Metallic screech. Fluorescent lights flicker. Clara sits stiff. The car is full, but she sits alone. She watches people talk, laugh, and scroll.

The camera SLOWLY PUSHES IN on her face. She blinks.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. SUBWAY TERMINAL - EVENING - MOMENTS
LATER

Clara walks past a row of vending machines. Her head stays down. She clutches a few grocery bags.

A MAN (50s, unkempt, intense) slams his palm against the glass and startles her!

MAN

You feel that? That buzz in the air?

Clara steps wide to avoid him.

CLARA WYNN

Sorry, don't have anything.

MAN

Didn't ask for money. I asked if you felt it.

She walks faster. He follows close.

MAN

People like you... you see too much. That's your problem.

CLARA WYNN

(whispers)

Please don't—

MAN

(shouting now)

You think it's loud here?! Wait till it's quiet. That's when they come. When there's nothing left to distract you!

Clara turns into the crowd to lose him. Her breath catches.

Her vision blurs.

MAN (O.S)

(distant shout)

You can run, girl, but you'll still hear 'em...

She vanishes into the commuter chaos.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. CLARA'S STUDIO - EVENING - CONTINUOUS

She turns the corner and reaches her studio door. She squeezes the grocery bags tight.

INT. CLARA'S STUDIO - EVENING- MOMENTS
LATER

Clara sets the grocery bags down by the door but doesn't unpack them. She reheats leftover soup on the stove. An email chime sounds. Clara steps to her laptop and opens the message from her realtor. She reads the last line. CONFIRMATION. Her eyes go wide.

CLARA WYNN

(softly, to herself)

I closed.

She drops into the chair and exhales.

CLARA WYNN

It's mine.

She scrolls past the listing photos and stops at the bottom. The address. The words: "KEYS ARE IN THE MAILBOX." She stares. Packed boxes line the wall. A small smile creeps across her face. Gentle. Quiet.

INT. CLARA'S STUDIO - EVENING - CONTINUOUS

Clara drops a white plastic bag onto a box.

MONTAGE: Preparing To Leave:

- Clara tapes the last box shut.
- She calls FedEx and confirms a pick-up time.
- A FedEx DRIVER loads the boxes onto a dolly.
- Clara hands him a tip, nods as he confirms the destination address.

INT. CLARA'S STUDIO - EVENING - CONTINUOUS

Clara eats her final meal in the studio. A single mattress rests on the floor. Her suitcase waits by the door. City sounds press in from all sides.

INT. GREYHOUND TERMINAL - MOVING DAY - MORNING

Clara sits in silence. Eyes forward. Pale. The announcement board flickers:

ANNOUNCER (O.S)

CHARLESTON / STILLWATER HOLLOW –
NOW BOARDING.

She clutches her suitcase and stands.

EXT. GREYHOUND BUS - MORNING - MOMENTS LATER

The bus rolls through empty land. Clara watches the city fade behind her.

She sees the “NOW LEAVING NEW YORK” sign.

Silence fills the Greyhound.

DISSOLVE TO BLACK.

EXT. STILLWATER HOLLOW - BUS STOP - LATE
AFTERNOON

Clara stands alone. The Greyhound pulls away behind her.
She looks around. No cabs. No people.

Across the road, an old man waters his garden. A woman
rides past on a bicycle and nods without a word.

Stillness. Clara hears her heartbeat.

EXT. CLARA'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON -
CONTINUOUS

A modest Victorian house. White paint flakes. The porch
swing creaks. A real estate sign reads: "LEASED."

Clara climbs the steps. She opens the mailbox. Inside: an
envelope, a key, and a written note.

INSERT – CARD:

*"Welcome to Stillwater Hollow, Clara. Key enclosed utilities on.
– Stillwater Hollow Leasing"*

No phone number. No signature. She unlocks the door.

INT. CLARA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATE
AFTERNOON - MOMENTS LATER

She enters. The house is already furnished. Warm-
toned furniture. A faint lavender scent lingers. A small
WELCOME BASKET waits on the kitchen counter:
scones, soap, homemade jam.

Clara moves through the house. One room at a time. She
makes sure she's alone.

INT. CLARA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Clara lies in bed, staring at the ceiling. Outside, wind hits the tree. The swing creaks. She exhales.

Off scene a soft whisper. Not words just breath. Clara freezes. Eyes open wide. She slowly turns toward the window.

Nothing.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Bright light cuts across the room. Birds chirp. Clara stirs under a heavy quilt. A moment of peace.

KNOCK.

KNOCK.

She throws on a cardigan and heads for the front door.

EXT. CLARA'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - MORNING
- CONTINUOUS

EDIE BELL with her warm eyes, soft curls, and floral apron. She stands with a basket and a sweet smile.

EDIE BELL

Good morning, sweetheart. Thought you might like something warm to start the day. I baked extra.

Clara blinks. She isn't fully awake yet.

CLARA WYNN

Oh, thank you. That's really kind.

EDIE BELL

You looked tired when you arrived. Most people come here to stop feeling that way.

She hands Clara the basket.

EDIE BELL

You'll feel better soon. Everyone does.

EXT. STILLWATER HOLLOW - MAIN STREET - MID-MORNING

Clara walks down the sidewalk.

She passes a baker who sweeps flour from the steps. He smiles, "too long."

A mail carrier waves from across the street. She doesn't blink. Just smiles. Frozen.

Two kids jump rope in perfect rhythm. They giggle. They stare straight ahead.

Clara looks away.

INT. HARLEN'S HARDWARE - MID-MORNING -
MOMENTS LATER

HARLEN BECK (60s, Tall, broad-shouldered, with the quiet weight of someone who's seen too much) steps out from the back. He wipes his hands with a rag.

Shelves lined with items no one seems to have touched in years. Not dusty just still.

His flannel looks crisp. His boots show wear. His eyes stay steady, "too steady." He taps two fingers.

Stares at the door.

Waits.

The bell above the door chimes.

HARLEN BECK

Morning. You must be Clara.

CLARA WYNN

(polite but guarded)

Word travels fast.

HARLEN BECK

Not much else to do but listen around here.

Clara picks up a broom. She spots a small shovel against the wall.

HARLEN BECK

That one's light but sturdy. Good for digging in soft ground.

She half-laughs, uncomfortable.

CLARA WYNN

I just came in for a broom.

HARLEN BECK

Still. Good to have... just in case.

They hold eye contact for a second too long.

She places the broom on the counter.

EXT. STILLWATER HOLLOW - MID-MORNING -
CONTINUOUS

Clara walks home with the broom. The town sits quiet. No one stands outside. Not even the birds.

She passes the jump rope kids. Gone.

A porch swing sway. No wind.

She walks faster.

INT. CLARA'S KITCHEN - MID-MORNING -
MOMENTS LATER

She places the broom in the corner. The welcome basket still sits untouched. Jam. Soap. The card. She picks it up. Reads the line she missed:

CLARA WYNN

"May you settle in quickly."

She stares at the words.

EXT. CLARA'S YARD - MID-MORNING -
CONTINUOUS

Outside the window, WILLOW THORNE (9) and MAY THORNE (9) stand in the yard. Identical dresses. Matching braids. They don't move. They don't blink.

INT. CLARA'S KITCHEN - MID-MORNING -
CONTINUOUS

She pulls the curtain. Willow and May still stand in the yard. Identical. Still. Then they wave perfectly in sync.

Clara hesitates, then offers a small, unsure wave back.

They turn and walk off in unison. Clara exhales. The kitchen turns quiet. Too quiet. She opens a drawer. No silverware. Opens another. Nothing.

She checks under the sink. Only an old sponge and a folded piece of paper. She unfolds it. Faded ink. A single line:

INSERT – PAPER:

"Don't let the quiet get too loud."

She frowns.

INT. CLARA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

She lies awake. No wind. No creaks. No hum from the fridge. Just complete stillness. The ceiling fan spins without a sound. Her brow tightens.

EXT. STILLWATER HOLLOW - DAY

An overcast sky looms above. Clara heads toward the square, phone in hand. She dials. No bars. She checks the screen. Still dead.

Across the square, Willow and May sit on a bench. Identical sketchbooks rest on their laps. Clara passes. The girls speak without eye contact.

WILLOW THORNE

It's hard when your things don't show up.

MAY THORNE

It's even harder when no one hears you calling.

Clara stops. Turns.

CLARA WYNN

What did you just say?

They look up. Wide smiles. Innocent.

WILLOW THORNE

We like your sweater.

MAY THORNE

It suits your sadness.

Willow cuts her off, quick.

WILLOW THORNE

No, your... curiosity.

Willow and May stop drawing. Clara backs away. Uneasy.

INT. CLARA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Bars appear on Clara's phone. She checks her order confirmation.

INSERT – PHONE SCREEN:

“OUT FOR DELIVERY – DELAYED.”

She clicks refresh. Nothing changes.

She exhales sharply, frustrated.

Outside the window, the swing creaks.

Refresh. Still nothing.

Another sharp exhale. The swing creaks again.

INT. CLARA'S KITCHEN - EVENING

Clara refreshes the delivery tracker on her phone.

DELAYED.

She sighs. Then again. Louder.

Refresh.

Still nothing.

EXT. STILLWATER HOLLOW - TOWN CENTER -
EVENING - SAME TIME

The town shifts again. Shutters slam. Children freeze. A dog barks, then whimpers and runs off.

A bakery window CRACKS without reason.

Harlen scowls at an electrical screwdriver that won't turn.

EXT. CLARA'S YARD - EVENING - CONTINUOUS

Willow and May stand in her yard.

WILLOW THORNE

It's hard when things don't come.

MAY THORNE

That's when the bad feelings show up.

Clara steps outside, tense.

CLARA WYNN

What did you say?

The girls tilt their heads.

WILLOW THORNE

You were smiling earlier.

MAY THORNE

It made everything lighter.

They turn and walk away

EXT. RURAL ROAD - NEXT DAY

A FedEx truck rumbles down a two-lane road surrounded by thick trees.

INT. TRUCK - DAY - CONTINUOUS

DERRICK (30s, clean-shaven with a calm demeanor) drives with one hand and sips gas station coffee with the other. He hums along to classic soul on the radio.

INSERT - GPS SCREEN:

GPS (V.O.)

(pings)

NEXT STOP: STILLWATER HOLLOW.

His brow pulls tight.

EXT. STILLWATER HOLLOW - DAY - MINUTES
LATER

The truck turns into town.

Derrick's POV:

No cars. Loose shutters rattle. Buildings sit weathered and cracked. No movement. No people.

DERRICK REED

(quietly to himself)

Looks dead here.

He checks his tablet again. No bars.

ORDER STATUS SCREEN - FROZEN:

“CLARA WYNN – 17 WILLOW ELM DRIVE – URGENT
DELIVERY”

EXT. CLARA'S HOUSE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The house sits desolate. Paint peels. A porch light blinks.
The path stands overgrown. Derrick rolls up with a dolly
stacked with boxes. Clipboard in hand. He knocks.

KNOCK.

KNOCK.

The door opens.

Inside: warm light. Soft music plays. Clara stands in the
doorway calm, collected, relieved.

CLARA WYNN

(relieved, giddy)

Oh, thank God. I've been waiting forever.

She smiles.

CLARA WYNN

I can finally make it feel like home.

DERRICK REED

(delicately)

You sure this is... the right address?

CLARA WYNN

Yeah. Everything's perfect now.

She smiles after she signs. She grabs a box and leaves the door open.

EXT. CLARA'S HOUSE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Derrick stands there for a moment. He pulls out his dolly from under the boxes. He looks back at the house. It already looks... different. Dimmer. Older. He backs away, gets into the truck, and drives off. As he turns the corner, we hold on to the house.

The porch swing sways. No wind.

INT. CLARA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY - LATER

Clara opens her boxes:

A vacuum. Cleaning supplies. Her favorite herbal candle. She hums. She moves through the house. The space feels alive. Clean. Bright. Peaceful.

She stands in the middle of the room. Exhales.

CLARA WYNN

(softly)

I needed this.

INT. CLARA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -
AFTERNOON

Clara lights her favorite candle. She plays soft music. Sunlight hits the room just right. She laughs to herself—genuine, at ease for the first time.

EXT. STILLWATER HOLLOW - AFTERNOON - SAME
TIME

The town begins to shift. Children laugh down the street. Edie strolls up with fresh roses in hand. The bakery opens its windows. The smell of cinnamon wafts out.

Harlen adjusts a squeaky sign. He smiles to himself.

Willow and May draw chalk hearts on the sidewalk. They stop at the same time. Both sniff the air. Cinnamon. They run toward the bakery.

The town exhales.

INT. CLARA'S HOUSE – STORAGE NOOK –
AFTERNOON - SAME TIME

A narrow closet door creaks open.

Inside: a shallow storage space. Dim. Still. A thin metal ladder leans against the wall. At the top shelf a ceramic vase. Roses carved into the side.

Clara sets down her folded cardboard boxes. Her eyes lift. The vase catches a shard of light.

She reaches for the ladder.

CLARA WYNN

(to herself)

That'll work.

She drags the ladder over. Climbs.

INT. CLARA'S HOUSE – KITCHEN – AFTERNOON -
SAME TIME

A candle flickers beside her herbal tea. Edie knocks on the side of the house.

Knock.

Knock.

Edie's shadow passes the window. She opens the door and steps inside quiet, familiar.

INT. CLARA'S HOUSE - STORAGE NOOK –
CONTINUOUS

Clara reaches. Her fingers brush the vase.

CLARA WYNN

Just a little—

The ladder wobbles. One leg tilt off the edge of a floorboard seam.

From behind her, a shadow moves.

EDIE (O.S.)

Need a hand, dear?

Clara glances back.

CLARA WYNN

I'm fine. Got it.

She stretches again.

The ladder slips.

Her foot misses the rung.

CLARA WYNN

Wait—

THUD.

SMASH.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. CLARA'S HOUSE – LIVING ROOM – DUSK

Clara blinks. She sits up on the couch.

The house feels... cleaner. Still.

On the table: the vase. Fresh roses.

A note folded next to it.

INSERT - NOTE:

Rest easy now. – E

EXT. CLARA'S (TRAIL ON A HILL) BEHIND HER
HOUSE - DUSK

Later. Clara walks through the woods. Peaceful now. A trail
overgrown but passable.

She follows it until it opens onto a...

EXT. SMALL CEMETERY - DUSK - CONTINUOUS

A wrought iron fence. Faded headstones tilt into the grass.

She walks through. She reads the names. She stops.

EDIE BELL 1873 – 1954

“Stillness became her.”

Clara frowns. She walks on.

HARLEN BECK - 1901-1962

“His breath catches.”

WILLOW AND MAY THORNE - 1949

“Forever young, forever nearby.”

She steps back. Hand to her mouth.

EXT. CEMETERY - DUSK - CONTINUOUS

Clara stumbles out. She runs down the path.

Trees lean in. Shadows stretch too far.

INT. CLARA'S HOUSE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

She bursts in, locks the door behind her. Her chest heavy.

She grabs her phone. No signal.

The vacuum sits unplugged. Its cord coils tight, like no one ever used it. She backs into the kitchen.

EDIE BELL

You found it, didn't you?

Clara jumps. Edie stands in the doorway, calm and smiling.

Same floral apron. Same soft eyes.

EDIE BELL

It always takes them a while. The cemetery.

CLARA WYNN

You're dead.

EDIE BELL

So are we all. That's the peace, darling.

Clara steps back. She presses her palm flat over her heart. Holds it there. Outside the window, the town lights blink off: one by one.

INT. CLARA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT -
CONTINUOUS

Clara stares at Edie. Frozen.

CLARA WYNN

I want to leave.

EDIE BELL

No one ever really leaves. You know that.

CLARA WYNN

I'm not like you.

EDIE BELL

But you are, Clara. You feel everything. That's what made you perfect. You're one of us now.

Clara bolts for the front door.

EXT. STILLWATER HOLLOW - NIGHT -
CONTINUOUS

She runs down the street. The houses look rotted, faded, like time has drained the town overnight. Figures stand on porches, in windows. Harlen. Willow. May. Others. All watching silently.

She screams. No sound. Clara drops to her knees. The wind stops. Even the trees hold still.

She looks down at her own hands. Perfect. Untouched.

Too still.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAWN

Clara stands beside her gravestone. Hopeless. Reflection across her face.

SCORE (REPRISE):

SONG (V.O.)

“Any road will feel like home,

If I don’t have to walk alone.

I’m with you...

Edie steps behind Clara. Gardening gloves still on. She places fresh roses at the base of the gravestone. Thorns trimmed. Neat. Gentle. She brushes soil from one glove. Doesn’t speak.

They both stare down at the town. Silent. Still. Everyone in their place.

EXT. STILLWATER HOLLOW - SAME TIME -
CONTINUOUS

Derrick’s delivery truck rolls past. He slows at the corner.

The sleeping bag nudges forward with the turn.

He glances toward Clara’s house.

Through his window: The porch swing rocks.

To the left—

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. ACROSS FROM CLARA’S HOUSE - SAME TIME

A freshly posted sign in the yard:

FOR RENT - MOVE-IN READY

Derrick watches for a beat. Spooked, he drives off.

EXT. CEMETERY - SAME TIME

Clara watches from above. She stares down at Derrick's truck as it disappears down the road.

A breeze brushes past.

CLARA WYNN

(whispers)

I just wanted quiet.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD:

You can run away from people...

But you can't run away from yourself.

CUT TO:

EXT. STILLWATER HOLLOW CEMETERY -
MORNING

A crow caws. Mist curls around the crooked tombstones.

We slowly push in on a fresh gravestone near the others.

CLOSE ON HEADSTONE:

CLARA WYNN 1978 – 2023

“She felt too much.

So, we took the rest.”

Hold for a beat. The wind brushes the grass.

SONG (V.O.)

“My quiet is true.”

FADE OUT.

THE END.