



Outline

Scene 1

Maria sits on a bus. She is wearing business attire along with gloves and a mask. Passengers around her also wear masks. The afternoon sun beams through the window, highlighting her discomfort.

Scene 2

Maria arrives home. She immediately and frantically strips down to her underwear and dumps her clothes in a pile near the front door. She washes her hands thoroughly, grabs a basket from the bathroom, puts new gloves on and gathers her clothes in the basket. She dumps the clothes in the washing machine then disinfects the basket. The disinfectant hanging in the air makes her cough. She looks at herself in the mirror and her eyes betray her fear.

Scene 3

She showers, madly scrubbing herself. Her skin goes red. The bathroom gets steamy.

Scene 4

Maria sits in bed with a hot tea. She scrolls through her phone, reading headlines about a global pandemic. The phone rings, the display reading 'Yorgen'.

Maria answers and wants to know if he is okay. Yorgen says he is fine, Graziella is home and so are the kids. They shut down the schools today and Graziella is working from home. He says he doesn't know how much longer he will be going to work but thank god they have the rental bringing them another source of income.

Maria says they are still making her go to work and she is scared. She doesn't want to be around people. The pandemic is spreading – everyone in the office is talking about it, the daily tally of cases is growing and constant talk about the virus is heightening her anxiety.

Yorgen says this is exactly what *they* planned to happen when they introduced 5G. It's all about population control. He tells her to stay safe but if she doesn't work how will she survive? Though she is his sister he doesn't have any money to spare with things so uncertain. Keep working. Maria says she will.

Scene 5

Maria dreams. She is lying flat on her back in a wartime bunker and she is bathed in deep red light. She is dressed in a singlet and pajama pants. She is blindfolded and breathing heavily.

Scene 6

The next morning Maria gets ready for work. She showers, eyes closed under the hot water. She tries to pick out clothes but takes a long time to decide. She gets dressed robotically in business attire. She puts on make-up in the mirror. She can hear indistinct whispers around her. Maria's hand shakes and she smudges her lipstick.

Scene 7

She sits at the kitchen table, steeling herself. A facemask and gloves are spread out before her, as is her phone. She stares at it and suddenly it rings, the display reading 'Dad'.

Maria tells her dad she doesn't know if she can make it to the hospital today as she doesn't know if it is safe. He and mum are elderly and vulnerable. She can't risk making them worse by visiting. She says she is not clean and they need to recover.

Maria hangs up the phone and then puts on her mask and gloves.

Scene 8

Maria approaches the bus stop. A man in a business suit stands there, maskless, and Maria makes sure to keep her distance. But when the man begins coughing Maria quickly scampers away.

Scene 9

The front door opens and Maria bolts into the house. She puts down her keys, strips off her clothes and gloves frantically. She washes her hands for a long time.

She sits on the edge of the toilet, trying to take calming, even breaths. She calls her boss Ian and says she feels like she is coming down with a cold. She can't come in today. He tells her to let him know how she is feeling tomorrow. They are overburdened with new claims and they need her.

Scene 10

Maria cleans. Madly scrubbing the floors, the kitchen, disinfecting everything she sees.

She sits on the floor, looking at the dirt under her nails. She picks at it with a nail scraper, pressing so hard she draws blood.

Scene 11

The next day Maria sleeps in. She is woken by a phone call – it is Ian. He wants to know how Maria is feeling and if she is coming in. She says she is still sick and can't go to work. He tells her she'll need to get a doctor's certificate. There are bandaids on her fingers from the nail scraper.

Scene 12

Maria sits at her kitchen table. She is tense, her eyes staring ahead. The indistinct whispers surround her. There are still the bandaids on her fingers from the nail scraper. Her phone rings. It is her dad again.

Maria asks him to put mum on the phone but he cannot. She explains no, she still can't visit. She says she is stuck at home now. She answers her dad when he asks about Yorgen. Dad wants her to put Yorgen on the phone but Maria says she moved out of the family home. Her dad should remember this. It was a dirty place.

Scene 13

Montage.

13A: She cleans.

She washes the sheets.

She sits at the kitchen table and listens to the news on her laptop. The reporter says the cases of the virus are increasing. She removes the bandaids from her fingers.

13D: She showers. Her skin is raw and red from how hard she scrubs.

13B: She cleans harder.

She does laundry.

She washes her hands.

She sits at the kitchen table and listens to the news. The reporter says everyone in the country will be sick at this rate of spread.

13D: Under the shower she scrubs so hard she bleeds.

13C: She cleans. She begins to disinfect herself and run the sponge over her clothes.

She sits at the kitchen table and listens to the news. The reporter says you are dirty, Maria.

13D: Under the shower a tuft of worms fall from her hair. She screams.

Scene 14

Maria wakes up to the sound of her phone ringing. It is her boss. She answers the call. Ian wants to know why they haven't heard from her in days? He tells her how overwhelmed they are at work. They need her. Maria's mind drifts as he talks and she rises from bed and looks at herself in the mirror. Her hair is dishevelled, her eyes haggard.

Ian is asking her if she is coming in? Maria tells him there is a pandemic. He says if you don't feel safe they can set her up from home but she isn't listening. She hangs up the phone.

She wraps herself in the sheets and reads the news headlines on her phone. More cases of the virus have been reported. People are dying. A woman was arrested for spitting on doorknobs in town. The words on the headline begin to blur and form a new headline: You Are Sick. Maria stares at the display when the phone rings again, giving her a fright. It is work calling once more.

Maria cancels the call. She lies back on the bed, crawling into a ball, taking deep breaths.

Scene 15

She has fallen asleep, curled in a ball like a frightened kitten, but her phone wakes her in the middle of the afternoon. This time it is Yorgen.

He goes on about the virus and conspiracy theories on how it started. He says they almost have a vaccine ready but the vaccine is worse. It is full of nanotechnology and they will have complete control over everybody once you are inoculated. They will be able to control your mind, creating a race of subservient sheep. We have been heading in this direction for a long time and now the final play is being made. Spread bioengineered disease, cripple the economy, prime the populace for compliance, and now you're under control.

Maria listens, glassy eyed, but doesn't respond. Finally Yorgen asks how she is holding up? Maria admits she isn't going into work. She is afraid of getting sick. Yorgen says that is exactly what they want. They are rolling out 5G networks across the country and they want people to hide indoors to not interfere in the rollout. They want everyone to think they are safe but boom, if they don't get you with a human carrier they will get you with 5G radiation from your phone. Fuckers.

Yorgen says nowhere around the populace or technology is safe. Maria asks what she should do? Yorgen admits he doesn't know, he has been warning people this would happen for years but nobody would listen to him. He says Maria knows they have the family bunker and he will hole up in there if he has too. She can come too. Maria says she doesn't want to go there. Yorgen says they might have no choice. He is worried about her. What about food? What about money? What about rent? Maria says she will be fine as long as she stays clean.

Maria hangs up but the display on her phone is still flashing. "You are sick." The display suddenly changes to red worms pulsing and slithering. Maria drops her phone in shock.

Scene 16

Maria rushes into the kitchen, dumping the phone in the bin. She holds onto the sink, considering. She rummages in the kitchen drawers and pulls out a meat mallet. She puts on gloves and grabs her phone from the bin. She smashes her phone into pieces with the mallet.

Scene 17

Maria dreams. Again, she is flat on her back in the wartime bunker, blindfolded and washed in red light as thick as blood. Her body feels as heavy as an anchor and she is pinned to the cold stone floor by an invisible force.

Her pants get pulled off by invisible hands to reveal underwear adorned with childlike patterns. Maria whispers 'stop it, stop it, I don't want to play anymore.'

The laughter of a male child echoes.

Scene 18

Maria wakes up with a start. She is bathed in sweat, panting, eyes darting around the bedroom like a cornered hare. It is dark. Her breathing is ragged and rough. She sits up in bed, still trying to calm herself. Control her breathing. Control her panic.

It takes a long time but her breath slowly becomes shallow and still. She lights a candle on the bedside table and burns incense. She crawls into a ball. She watches the candle flame flicker.

Tears wet the corners of her eyes.

Scene 19

Days pass in a blur.

19A. Maria sleeps, tossing and turning.

19B. Night comes, still Maria tosses and turns. This leads to another night of restless sleep.

19C. During the day she sits in the kitchen and watches the news on her laptop like a zombie. Two days go by like this.

19D. She keeps watching the news on the laptop in the night.

19E. The fridge is empty and so is the pantry. She has no choice but to order food.

Scene 20

Maria sits at the kitchen table, still as a ghost. She has her mask on already as well as gloves. The doorbell rings. She slowly turns and considers the door. She is trying to control her breathing.

Maria rises and looks out the peephole. The food and shopping delivery is here. She yells at the driver through the peephole – “leave the box on the doorstep and leave”. She doesn’t wait for a response, instead she paces nervously. She hears a van door close and moments later the sound of the engine fading away. Maria checks the peephole again to see the coast is clear.

Still, she hesitates. The indistinct whispers are back, louder than before. She grips the door handle like a snake coiled around its prey but she doesn't move. She breathes. In and out, in and out. And now she moves, opening the door, dragging the shopping box in as quickly as she can, then slamming the door shut.

But she is not safe yet. She scurries, grabs the disinfectant, sprays every inch of every shopping bag. The disinfectant makes her cough and choke and Maria double over.

When she recovers she looks at the shopping box. They are covered in worms. Maria gasps and backs away. Again she needs to breathe and fight down panic. She picks up her mop, opens the door, and shoves the shopping outside with the mop, slamming the door closed.

Scene 21

Maria is cleaning, caked in sweat, hair dishevelled, when a knock at the door makes her stop. Momentary panic washes over her but then a voice bellows her name. It is Yorgen.

Maria looks out the peephole just as Yorgen bangs on the door again. He tells her to let him in. Maria says no. Yorgen bangs the door again and demands she open up. He is her brother, what is wrong with her?

Maria hesitates, then puts on a mask and gloves. She opens the door and then runs back into the kitchen. Yorgen enters and he is holding the discarded shopping bags. There are no longer any worms on the bags and Yorgen wants to know why they were outside. Maria warns him to keep his distance. She keeps the kitchen table between them.

Yorgen looks at her in concern. He says he has been calling and calling her for the last few days but she doesn't answer. Maria says she broke her phone. Yorgen says he was worried. He says her landlord has been calling him too because he can't reach her. He wants to come over to collect the rent. Maria panics at this and tells Yorgen no over and over. Nobody can come here, she'll get sick like mum and dad. Yorgen has to tell Maria to calm down several times but when he tries to approach Maria shrieks at him to stay back. Yorgen, uncertain, says he will speak to her landlord. Tell him not to inspect the house this time. Tell him he will pay her rent this month. But she needs to pay him back.

Maria tries to get a hold of herself. Yorgen looks at her, his concern obvious. He says maybe it is best if Maria comes to live with them until this is over. The kids can sleep together and she can have her old room. Maria says she doesn't want to be around any people, who knows who is sick. If she gets sick she can't take care of mum and dad anymore. Yorgen bristles. He asks what she is talking about, has she lost her mind?

Maria says it all began in the house and the house is sick, mum and dad got sick in the house, she got sick in the house. Yorgen tells her to stop talking nonsense. He says he and his family

are not sick and they are not going to be. The globalists are not going to get him. They can all hide in the family bunker, remember. Maria whispers "I don't want to play anymore, Yorgen."

This makes Yorgen go silent. He regards her, unsure what to do. Maria says she thinks he should leave now. She needs to clean. She needs to get rid of all the dirt. Yorgen looks at her coolly. He says she missed a spot and kicks over the cleaning bucket as he leaves, water and worms splashing over the tiles.

Maria cowers in the corner, sinking down to the floor, as the sound of the front door slamming echoes.

Scene 22

The sun rises and sets over the house.

Scene 23

A banging on the door wakes Maria. She tries to hide under the covers but the banging persists. She gingerly climbs out of bed and sits on the edge, looking at the full length mirror. A big fat red worm crawls along the mirror. Her hair is dishevelled and her skin is pale and she is a mess. The banging hasn't ceased.

Maria puts on a robe and stumbles into the hallway. She calls out to Yorgen to go away. But it is not Yorgen who answers; it is her landlord Peter. Through the door he yells he needs the rent money. Maria tells him to leave. He repeats he needs the money. And then she hears the key turning in the lock.

Scene 24

The door opens and Peter barges in. He wants to know what is going on, why hasn't she paid the rent, why hasn't she answered her phone in two weeks, why is she avoiding him. Maria cries and cowers and tells him to stay back, don't touch her, don't go near her. The virus is killing everyone, he has it, he has it, he is here to make her sick.

The landlord tells her to calm down, he just wants his rent money, she is acting like a freak. Maria bolts into the bathroom and locks the door. The landlord bangs on the door. He tells her he is calling the police.

Maria yells no, Yorgen said he would pay. The landlord says her brother never told him that. He needs his money now. Maria yells there is money in the bedside drawer. Take it and leave her

alone. She begs. She cries. He is here to make her sick. She cries for her mum and dad. She says they need to take care of her.

Maria curls up in a ball on the bathroom floor and cries, sobs racking her body, muttering and mumbling "I am not sick, I am not sick, I am not sick."

Scene 25

It is dark. The bathroom door swings open. Maria emerges like a harrowed hare. Worms crawl all over the house, on the walls, on the floor, and where the landlord stood is particularly covered, worms tangled together in thick throbbing clumps.

Maria scampers into the bedroom and shuts the door.

Scene 26

Maria tries to catch her breath, tries to think. The whispers blast in her head and she mutters to herself over and over. It is all contaminated, it is all contaminated. Then she takes out her suitcase and begins to pack.

She throws out clothes from her wardrobe.

She rummages through drawers.

She jams the suitcase shut.

Scene 27

Maria disinfects the suitcase and coughs. She puts on her mask and gloves. She braces herself before the door. Then she inches the door open and peeks into the hallway.

The worms still cover the house, slithering and slobbering. Maria closes the door. She grips the suitcase in one hand and the bottle of disinfectant in the other. She is tempted by the sheets, tempted to hide under the covers. But she knows the contamination won't stop, it will keep spreading, infecting the whole house. She has no choice. Maria sucks in a deep breath and bolts into the hallway.

Slow motion.

Maria runs through the hallway. She sprays disinfectant at the worms. She scampers along the floor, sliding over the tiles. She dives to the front door, throwing it open. One more blast of disinfectant and she jumps into the open air, slamming the door behind her, slamming the worms inside.

Scene 28

Maria runs in the middle of the road through the lonely night. Her eyes are haunted, her suitcase bouncing along behind her, and she doesn't know where she is going, only that she needs to keep going. Suddenly, she hears a phone ringing. She stops, panting, trying to locate the sound. It is coming from the suitcase. She opens the suitcase and rummages inside and finds her phone, intact, no longer smashed to pieces. And the caller ID shows 'Dad'.

Maria answers. She wants to know why dad is calling her at this time. He should be asleep, resting and recovering with mum. Dad says her mother is worried about Maria but Maria says it is her job to worry about her parents. Look after them as they battle disease. Maria's lip trembles as she speaks. She can't hide her panic and her stress.

She admits she is not okay. She is running from the sickness but she doesn't know where to run too. Her house isn't safe, it is contaminated, and it feels like she is contaminated too. She doesn't know what to do. Maria tells dad she can't go stay with Yorgen. He is dirty too.

And now Maria is crying. Sitting in the middle of the road, crying, crumbling. Maria tells her dad she loves him. She says she needs help. She says she is trying to stop crying, she is trying to keep strong. She repeats help me, help me, daddy and mummy, and her dad tells her she is a sick little girl, and it is the first time we hear dad speak.

Maria whimpers.

And suddenly blinding white headlights bear down on Maria and she screams and tires screech and sudden black slams her world.

Scene 29

Maria opens her eyes.

She sits in the middle of the road, skid marks swirling around her, a car stopped on the side of the road, door open, brake lights bathing the road in red.

A woman climbs out of the car and she begins to yell at Maria for sitting on the road. But when she sees the fear in Maria's eyes, the tears streaming on her face, her anger becomes concern. She approaches Maria and asks if she can help.

Now it is Maria who yells. Don't touch me!

Maria picks up her disinfectant and sprays it at the woman before turning and running. Her suitcase is abandoned. Maria runs into isolation, running into the night, but inside her head the voice of her dad won't stop, and the voice is joined by Yorgen, and the indistinct whispers become clear too, many voices joining together, a chorus of torment.

“You are sick, Maria.”
“You are contaminated, Maria.”
“You are dirty, Maria.”

Scene 30

Maria dreams. She is in the bunker again. The voice of Yorgen bounces off the walls. “Play with me, Maria.”

Maria sobs. And then the voice of her father echoes in anger. “What are you doing? Yorgen, Maria! You are sick, you are dirty, you are sick!”

And on her underwear a big fat red worm slithers.

Scene 31

Maria wakes with a start. She is on a shallow beach, waves lapping the shore, the sun rising pale yellow sick. She is curled into a ball and the voices still plague her. She doesn't know where the nightmare ends and where reality begins.

“You are sick.”
“You are dirty.”
“You are sick.”

The voices swirl around the sky and Maria covers her ears and begs for it to stop.

Suddenly, she sneezes. The voices still. She runs the back of her hand on her nose. Snot. She looks at the back of her hand and a single red worm crawls over her knuckles. Maria recoils in horror, shaking off the worm.

Maria sneezes again.

Panic rising, Maria sprays herself with disinfectant. She coughs and coughs.

The voices renew, louder and louder, hitting her like a wave.

“You are sick.”
“You are dirty.”
“You are diseased.”

And then a single voice intrudes, drowning all others. It is Yorgen.

“Maria, it is all your fault.”
“Maria, you are sick.”
“Maria, it is all your fault.”

Maria considers the bottle of disinfectant. She sneezes again. She repeats no over and over. And then she drinks the disinfectant, swallowing it down, fighting the disease. Almost immediately she coughs and chokes and cries, rolling on the ground, struggling to breathe. She curls into a ball. Still coughing. Still choking.

The rising yellow sunlight becomes bright and white.

Maria calls out for her mum and dad. “Help me.” A calmness washes over her. Maria rises to her knees and relief flits across her face. The voices have stopped.

Maria stands. The white light surrounds her, bathing the sea. She strides forward, entering the water, embracing the light.

The End.