

Coraline

Screenplay by Henry Selick

based on the novel by Neil Gaiman

HEAD CREDIT SEQUENCE MYSTERIOUS SEWING ROOM - NIGHT,

A HAUNTING LULLABY plays against a black, star-pricked sky when something appears in the distance. A BUTTON-EYED DOLL floats towards CAMERA, through the open window of a small sewing room where it lands in a pair of WAITING HANDS, hands that are made of SEWING NEEDLES.

The doll - which resembles a YOUNG BLACK GIRL in old-fashioned clothes, hair fixed with ribbons and braids - is placed on a sewing table. An elaborate sewing kit is opened, and, in flickering green light, the NEEDLE-HANDS go to work. The doll's old clothes are cut away; button-eyes torn off; hair pulled out. The doll's stuffing is removed and then the empty cloth body is pulled inside out, turning from NUT BROWN to PALE PINK.

Sawdust is poured in the NEW DOLL's mouth; facial features added; blue yarn hair punched in; and then a fresh pair of shiny black button eyes is selected from a button drawer.

The transformed doll, in a LITTLE YELLOW RAINCOAT, its new button eyes affixed, is released out the window and BACK INTO THE NIGHT.

LAST HEAD CREDIT APPEARS, THEN FADES.

EXT PINK PALACE, ASHLAND OREGON - DAY

WIDE ANGLE on a rambling old Queen Anne-style house with tacked-on outside stairs. It's late winter, the sky a damp, grey sponge. A SIGN in the foreground reads "Pink Palace, Apartment for Rent".

MR. BOBINSKY - a seven-foot-tall blue-skinned man - performs calisthenics on the rooftop, counting in Russian.

MR. BOBINSKY

Dras, dva, tri, chetyri.

Dras, dva, tri, chetyri.

Dras, dva, tri ...

A BEEPING SOUND begins and he pauses. A tired MOVING VAN backs into frame and up the muddy driveway. A VW BEETLE - suitcases roped to its top - recklessly passes the truck and disappears around the side of the house. Bobinsky shakes his fist angrily after the car and shouts:

MR. BOBINSKY (CONT'D)

Mer-sa-vich!

He marches away indignantly. One of the MOVERS, unseen in the truck, speaks to his companion.

MOVER 2 (O.C.)
We're here. Time to muscle up.

ANGLE ON moving truck's REAR DOORS as they're wrenched open by two men - MOVER 1, tall and bear-shaped, and MOVER 2, built like a brick top - to reveal a lot of BOXES and BEAT-UP FURNITURE.

They haul out the LOADING RAMP towards CAMERA.

NEW ANGLE, EXTERIOR STAIRS to BASEMENT FLAT. APRIL SPINK, a rotund little old English lady with bad legs, surveys the MOVERS as they pass by her chair-lift with boxes and furniture. The old gal can't wait to tell her flat mate below about the young, strapping men.

MOVER 2 (CONT'D)
(efforts)
Got it? Almost there, just a few more.
Come on, now, LIFT.

ANGLE ON FRONT PORCH. The job finished, Mover 2 heads down the front steps while Mover 1 waits for a signature from the unseen-but-for-his-hands new tenant. Papers signed, a tip of a single, grubby dollar bill is placed in the outstretched hand of the disappointed mover, and the door is shut.

EXT HOUSE, REAR VIEW - SAME

ANGLE from BACK YARD. Hiding behind shrubs, WE SHARE the POV of a MYSTERIOUS SPY. With a CLICK, a close-up lens is rotated into place to better see the movers quietly pack into the truck and drive away. A MANGY BLACK CAT walks right in front of the lens and looks at us with concern. OFF-SCREEN, a door bangs open. WE FOLLOW the cat as it races up a tree and out a branch towards the BACK PORCH to investigate.

CORALINE JONES, 11, steps onto the porch in a YELLOW RAINCOAT with a shoulder bag. WE - SPY'S POV - CLICK to a CLOSE-UP to find this new tenant has BLUE HAIR and a skeptical face.

NEW ANGLE, non-spy reverse, on Coraline as she glances furtively over her shoulder, then hops down the steps and moves diagonally away from the house.

NEW Angle, SPY POV. We watch Coraline head towards the WOODY SHRUB we've hidden ourselves in. We DUCK DOWN.

ANGLE on Coraline, non-spy, shrub by garden gate. She reaches into the shrub and breaks off a FORKED BRANCH. She removes the stick's red leaves, aims it like a DOWSING ROD and heads into the garden.

CAM PUSH IN to shrub as the SPY RISES UP, wearing a three-eyed SKELETON MASK on his head and SKELETON GLOVES on his hands. The black cat hops into frame, glances at the spy and follows the girl.

MONTAGE VARIOUS EXT - SAME

AFISH POND IN GARDEN - SAME

Coraline explores the drained, crumbling pond. She finds an old TURTLE SHELL in the muck and holds it up. After rapping on it to make sure it's empty, she puts the shell into her shoulder bag.

ANGLE ON CAROLINE, SPY POV. WE PUSH ASIDE dead vines from the railing of the GARDEN BRIDGE for a better look. Coraline aims her forked stick once more then follows it up from the pond and out the BACK GATE. A gust of WIND blows DEAD LEAVES into a swirling eddy WE TRACK high up into the air.

DISSOLVE TO:

ROCKY PATH HIGH ABOVE HOUSE - LITTLE LATER

SPY POV on sky, now dark with GATHERING STORM. Hidden behind a NATURAL WALL OF STONES, WE TILT DOWN to view Coraline crossing frame on a STEEP HILLSIDE path. She steps on an old RAILROAD TIE, and her foot SINKS into the rotted wood, stopping her.

WE LEAN OUT for a better view, and DISLodge some stones that roll down past her. WE DUCK as she jerks her head our way.

NEW ANGLE, non-spy. Unnerved, Coraline calls out.

CORALINE
Hello?... Who's there?

She throws a rock over the wall of stones, HITS THE UNSEEN SPY, causing a CRY OF PAIN. ANIMAL? HUMAN? Freaked out, she GASPS, runs up the trail.

NEW ANGLE, SPY POV. We rise up to watch and the black cat hops onto the stone wall.

EXT. OVERGROWN ORCHARD - CONT.

Coraline races down past an OLD TRACTOR and into an ORCHARD. WIND begins to blow.

NEW ANGLE as we move beside Coraline through the old apple trees, where she nearly trips on the tongue of a harvest cart.

DOWN ANGLE ON on Coraline as she BACKS INTO a circle of TOADSTOOLS in front of a STUMP. BREATHING HARD, she looks out for her pursuer.

NEW ANGLE. The black cat shoots past Coraline in the tall grass. She can't see him but she knows something is there. Already behind her now, the cat LEAPS onto the stump with a loud, warning *MEROWWW!*

STARTLED, Coraline YELLS and whips around. She's both angry and relieved when she sees it's just some cat.

CORALINE

You scared me to death, you mangy thing!

Cat GLARES at her with BLUE OPAL EYES, makes a low growl as she stands. She exhales.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

I'm just looking for an old well. Know it?

Cat BLINKS EYES slowly.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

Not talking, huh?

The wind picks up. She grasps the forks of her stick, closes her eyes, and, tracing a figure eight above her, says:

CORALINE (CONT'D)

Magic dowser, magic dowser: show... me... the well!

ANGLE ON CORALINE FROM HIGH BLUFF. The SPY moves into frame, astride some kind of MOTOR-BIKE. He presses a button on the handlebars and BLASTS a loud AIR HORN. STARTLED, Coraline SPINS around.

UP ANGLE ON SPY. As LIGHTNING FLASHES and THUNDER ROLLS, Coraline sees him for the first time. With his turret-lensed SKULL MASK and SKELETON GLOVES and black FIREMAN'S COAT flapping in the wind, he looks like a PSYCHO KILLER!

CORALINE (CONT'D)
(freaked out)
AHHHHH!

He REVS his motor, pops a wheelie, then SWOOPS DOWN the bluff towards her. She HOLLERS IN FEAR, then tries to WHACK HIM with her forked stick.

CORALINE (CONT'D)
GET AWAY FROM ME--

He SNATCHES it from her as he passes, KNOCKING HER to the ground. He SIDE-SKIDS his bike, hops off and JUMPS UP onto the stump. Looking TEN FEET TALL from the ground, THUNDER AND LIGHTNING at a peak, the Spy turns his THREE-EYED TURRET LENS and studies her like a predatory alien.

And then, the thunder and lightning just FADE OUT and this psycho-killer, three-eyed spy pulls off his mask and Coraline GASPS -- *he's just a short kid in a costume.*

Shoulders hunched, neck bent, the Spy - real name WYBIE LOVAT - aged 12 - examines Coraline's forked stick, aims it around.

WYBIE
(oblivious)
Hoo! Let me guess, you're from Texas or Utah; someplace dried out and barren, right? I heard about water-witching before but it doesn't make sense; I mean, it's just an ordinary branch.

Coraline, SNATCHES it from his GLOVED HANDS.

CORALINE
(enraged)
IT'S A DOWSING ROD!

Coraline smacks Wybie.

WYBIE
Ow!

CORALINE
And I *DON'T* LIKE BEING *STALKED*, not by PSYCHO-NERDS OR THEIR CATS!

He crouches, nervous, to scratch the cat behind his ears.

WYBIE

He's not really *my* cat; he's kinda feral
- you know, *wild*? Of course, I do feed
him every night and sometimes he'll come
in my window 'n bring me little *dead*
things.

The cat PURRS like a diesel.

CORALINE

(tough)

Look, I'm from Pontiac.

WYBIE

Huh?

CORALINE

MICHIGAN? And if I'm a "water witch",
then--

(points stick, stomps foot)

--*where's* the secret WELL?

WYBIE

You stomp too hard and you'll *fall* in it!

Coraline reacts, hops out of the springy circle. The boy
scrapes at the ground, revealing a CIRCULAR COVERING
made of WOODEN PLANKS. He wedges a fallen branch under
one side, and, using a rock for the fulcrum, pries up the
covering.

WYBIE (CONT'D)

See? Supposed to be so deep if you fell
to the bottom and looked up, you'd see a
sky full of stars in the middle of the
day.

CORALINE

(softens)

Huh.

Her frown RELAXES and the black cat tilts his head,
noticing her change in tone. He steps off the branch, and
the well cover *thumps* in place.

WYBIE

Surprised she let you move in...

Jerks his head toward the pink house in distance.

WYBIE (CONT'D)

... my Gramma. She *owns* the "Pink Palace"
(indicates house in distance)
Won't rent to people with kids.

CORALINE
What do you mean?

WYBIE
(suddenly worried)
Uh... I'm not supposed to talk about it.

Changing the subject, he lifts a gloved hand to shake.

WYBIE (CONT'D)
I'm Wybie, Wybie Lovat.

CORALINE
(skeptical)
Wybie?

WYBIE
Short for Wyborne. Not my idea, of course. What'd you get saddled with?

CORALINE
I wasn't *saddled* with anything. It's Coraline.

WYBIE
Caroline what?

CORALINE
Coraline. Coraline Jones.

WYBIE
(confused, not hearing it)
Hmmm... It's not real scientific, but I heard an ordinary name, like Caroline --

Her face goes as DARK as the rain clouds above.

WYBIE (CONT'D)
-- can lead people to have ordinary expectations about a person--

WYBIE'S GRANDMOTHER (O.C.)
(calling from afar)
Wyborne!

CORALINE
I think I heard someone calling you, Wyborne.

WYBIE
What? I didn't hear anything--

CORALINE

Oh, I definitely heard someone, Why-were-you-born.

A distant dinner bell clangs.

WYBIE'S GRANDMOTHER (O.C.)

Wyborne!

WYBIE

(under his breath, nervous)
Grandma!

He holds up his hands in surrender, nodding with eyes closed, forcing some laughs.

WYBIE (CONT'D)

Heh. Well, great to meet a Michigan water witch.

He picks up his bike, wheels it around, then holds up his gloved hands.

WYBIE (CONT'D)

But I'd wear gloves next time.

CORALINE

(skeptical)

Why?

He points to her dowsing rod, nods.

WYBIE (CONT'D)

'Cause that dowsing rod of yours? Uh, it's poison oak.

CORALINE

Ehh!!

Coraline drops the stick as he zooms away and wipes her hands on her clothes.

The cat *merows* at her, shaking his head with a pitying look, then trots away after Wybie. She STICKS OUT HER TONGUE at him.

She looks down at the COVERING to the well. Coraline finds a PEBBLE and drops it through A SMALL KNOT-HOLE. Ear at the knot-hole, she counts until there's a watery "plop" far below. FAT RAINDROPS start to fall around her.

ROTATE DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KITCHEN - NEXT MORNING

It's POURING out. Coraline looks out a window at the DEAD-LOOKING GARDEN, and places PACKETS OF SEEDS - pumpkins, squash, snap dragons, bleeding hearts - on the sill. She's developed a REDDISH RASH - *poison oak* - on one hand.

The main floor kitchen, like most things in the Pink Palace, is barely maintained, and looks worn and faded. Coraline's MOTHER, MEL JONES, 40, bangs away at her laptop on the table, MOVING BOXES stacked nearby. She's plain-looking and tired and wears a NECK-BRACE.

CORALINE

I almost fell down a well yesterday, Mom.

MEL

(not listening)

Uh huh.

CORALINE

I would have died.

MEL

(continues typing)

That's nice.

Coraline scratches the rash on her hand, changes subject.

CORALINE

Hmmm. So can I go out? I think it's *perfect* weather for gardening.

MEL

No, Coraline. Rain makes mud. Mud makes a mess.

Coraline turns to her.

CORALINE

But Mom, I want stuff *growing* when my friends come to visit. Isn't that why we moved here?

MEL

Something like that. But then we had the accident.

CORALINE

Wasn't *my* fault you hit that truck.

MEL

I never said it was.

CORALINE

(mutters)

I can't believe it -- you and Dad get paid to write about plants and you hate dirt.

Mel stops typing, loses her patience.

MEL

Coraline, I don't have time for you right now. And you still have unpacking to do. Lots of unpacking.

CORALINE

That sounds exciting.

Mel remembers something.

Mel (CONT'D)

Oh - some kid left this on the front porch.

Coraline walks over and is handed a NEWSPAPER-WRAPPED PACKAGE. Attached note reads:

WYBIE (V.O.)

Hey Jonesy, look what I found in Gramma's trunk. Lock familiar? Wybie.

She rips open the package and finds the BUTTON-EYED, BLUE-HAIRED, YELLOW RAINCOAT-WEARING DOLL from the head credits - *it's a litte Coraline!*

CORALINE

(to herself)

Huh... a little me? That's weird.

She crumples the note, both annoyed and charmed.

MEL

What's his name, anyway?

CORALINE

Wybie. And I'm way too old for dolls.

But Coraline takes it with her and leaves the room.

INT. STUDY - SAME

CHARLIE Jones, 40, goose-necked and gangly with thinning dark hair, HUNT-AND-PECKS at his ancient computer, surrounded by boxes of GARDENING MAGAZINES and empty coffee cups. Coraline, with doll, opens the SQUEAKY DOOR. He doesn't turn.

CORALINE

Hey Dad, how's the writing going?... Dad?

He ignores her reflection in his computer screen as he types away, green letters on black. She CLEARS HER THROAT.

CHARLIE

Hello, Coraline...
(notices doll's reflection)
And... Coraline doll?...

CORALINE

D'you know where the garden tools are?

He hears rain outside.

CHARLIE

It's pouring out there, isn't it.

CORALINE

Humph, it's just raining.

CHARLIE

What'd the boss say?

CORALINE

(mocking)
"Don't even *think* about going out,
Coraline Jones."

CHARLIE

Then you won't need the tools.

Coraline GROANS, stamps her feet. Charlie just taps harder on the keys. Pouting, she makes the door squeak, opening and shutting it till he can't take any more. He spins around.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Uhhh, you know, this *house* is a hundred
and fifty years old.

CORALINE

So?

CHARLIE

So explore it!

He grabs a pen and pad, holds it out.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Go out and ... count all the doors and windows and write that down. List everything blue!

(begging)

Just let me work.

She rolls her eyes, takes paper and pen and leaves.

MONTAGE, VARIOUS - SAME

HALLWAY NEAR STAIRS

Coraline, with doll, jumps on BUMP in carpet that moves with each jump.

LAUNDRY ROOM/WINTER GARDEN

She wipes off the misted glass so she and the doll can see out, then writes in her pad: *7 leaky windows*. A drop of water lands on the pad, smearing the ink. She adds *really* between 7 and leaky windows.

HALLWAY NEAR STAIRS

Coraline thumps the carpet bump again and pounds up the stairs.

PARENT'S ROOM/BATHROOM

A FRAMED PHOTO sits in the foreground on a beside table. It shows a younger, happier Coraline with her parents by the BEAR FOUNTAIN at the Detroit Zoo. RACK FOCUS to bedroom door as it swings into the room, with Coraline hanging on it. She drops to the ground and, doll and pad in hand, decides to check out the bathroom.

When she pulls aside the mildewed shower curtain she finds a hundred skittering SILVERFISH BUGS.

CORALINE

Ewww!

Disgusted, she jumps into the tub and smashes as many as she can.

She turns on the faucet to wash her hands, only to get soaked with rusty water from the shower head.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

Ahh!!

She shakes out her hair.

HALLWAY NEAR STAIRS

Coraline pounds down the stairs, spots the carpet bump again in the hallway and jumps on it. A closet door opens, a light on inside, and she goes to investigate.

WATER HEATER CLOSET

ANGLE OVER water heater on Coraline. She jots down *one rusty water heater* in her pad. As she leaves, she flicks off the light switch, not noticing a note taped beside it that says: *Do not turn off!*

INT. STUDY - SAME

Lights flicker and then Charlie's computer dies. He *hollers*.

CHARLIE

No, no, no, no, no; GAAAA--!

INT. HALLWAY - SAME

CHARLIE (O.S.)

--AAAAAAA!

Coraline reacts with guilty alarm, runs back to the closet and --

INT. CLOSET - SAME

-- spots the *Do not turn off* note. She flips the light switch back on and gets out of there.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME

The room is faded and cold with bare windows looking out on rain and gray. The floor is strewn with moving boxes, a few pieces of furniture, Charlie's old Nordic Track. A few garden tools lean against one wall; a cardboard mattress box leans against a corner wall.

Coraline enters, counting windows and doors to note in her pad. She sets the doll on a low table beside an open moving box and smiles.

The box is filled with her mom's collection of SNOWGLOBES. She takes out her favorite - the BEAR FOUNTAIN AT THE DETROIT ZOO - and shakes it. She studies the globe and *sighs* with homesickness. She sets it carefully on the FIREPLACE MANTEL, then unwraps the rest of the snowglobes and places them beside it.

Over the mantel hangs a PAINTING of a CRYING BOY IN BLUE - a scoop of ice cream melting on his shirt, his hand holding an EMPTY CONE. Coraline takes up pad and pen and adds to her list, *muttering aloud*.

CORALINE

One boring blue boy in a painfully boring painting ... four incredibly boring windows ... and no... more... doors...

She turns to grab the doll off the table by the snow globe box. *It's gone.*

CORALINE (CONT'D)

All right, little me, where are you hiding?

Scanning the room, she spots the doll LOOKING OUT FROM BEHIND THE MATTRESS BOX leaned against the corner wall. Perplexed, she walks over and kneels down to grab the doll when she notices SOMETHING ON THE WALL behind the box.

She shoves the box aside, and discovers the outline of a SMALL DOOR that's been wallpapered over.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

Huh?

Intensely curious, she calls to the kitchen.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

Hey Mom...

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Mom, typing away, ignores her.

CORALINE (O.S.)

Where does this door go?

MEL

I'm really, really busy!

INT LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Coraline tries to open it but there's no handle.

CORALINE
I think it's locked.

MEL (O.S.)

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

CORALINE (O.S.)
Pleeeeeeeeeeease!

Mel gets up, really annoyed. Big *sigh*.

MEL
Uhhh...

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME

She walks over to Coraline, looks at the outline of the door in the ratty old wallpaper.

MEL
Will you stop pestering me if I do this for you?

Coraline nods her head quickly, PANTING like a dog.

MEL (CONT'D)
Fine.

She heads back to the kitchen.

INT KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Mel pulls open a drawer, pushes a bunch of loose brass and nickel keys aside to find a small, sharp black key. Holds it up.

INT LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mel cuts the wallpaper around the door and sticks the key in the lock. Coraline looks on, giddy with anticipation, the doll at her side. Mel turns the key, unlocks the door, and pulls it open to reveal ... an UNBROKEN BRICK WALL. Coraline is totally disappointed.

CORALINE
Bricks? I don't get it.

Coraline scratches her wrist rash with annoyance.

MEL
They must have closed this off when they
divided up the house.

Mel gets up to leave.

CORALINE
You're kidding? And why is the door so
small?

Mel leaving room, turns back, and loses it.

MEL
We made a deal. ZIP IT!

She exits. Coraline makes annoyed sound.

CORALINE
You didn't lock it.

MEL (O.S.)
AaaaaH!!!

Coraline pushes the little door shut, her head lowered.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

WIDE ANGLE ON HOUSE. Pouring rain. We hear Charlie
singing a song about Coraline, badly.

CHARLIE (O.S.)
Oh, my twitchy witchy girl,

INT. KITCHEN - SAME

CHARLIE, using OVEN MITT to protect his hand, takes a
BURNED-UP CASSEROLE DISH from the oven while mom closes
up her LAPTOP. Coraline sits at the table with her doll.

CHARLIE
*I think you are so nice,
I give you bowls of porridge
And I give you bowls of ice --*

CHARLIE sets the dish on the table.

CHARLIE
(really bad note)
-- *cream!*

Coraline pushes it away, disgusted.

CORALINE
Why don't you ever cook, Mom?

MEL
Coraline, we've been through this before:
your Dad cooks, I clean, and you stay out
of the way.

Coraline HUFFS.

MEL (CONT'D)
I swear I'll go food shopping soon as we
finish the catalog.
(indicates Coraline's plate)
Try some of the chard, you need a
vegetable.

CORALINE
Looks more like slime to me.

CHARLIE
Well, it's slime or bedtime fusspot --
now what's it going to be?

Coraline looks to her doll, cradles its head.

CORALINE
Think they're trying to poison me?

She makes the doll's head nod "yes." Coraline rolls her
eyes, looks up to the heavens and --

INT. CORALINE'S BEDROOM - SAME

-- falls back, washed and dressed for bed, on her pillow.
Still raining out. Coraline puts the doll on the chair
beside her, then scratches at her wrist. ORIGAMI
DRAGONFLIES are strung between the tall, thin bed posts;
the TURTLE SHELL she found in the garden sits up on a
box, her NIGHT LAMP that projects stars and moons is
warming up on the bedside table. Despite her efforts at
decorating, Coraline's new bedroom feels small and cold,
cracked and faded.

Coraline reaches for a framed PHOTO that rests on a toy
PRAYING MANTIS by her night lamp.

It's her TWO BEST FRIENDS from home, posing in the snow by her old school's marquee, its letters rearranged to spell "CORALINE, GOOD BYE!" She touches her friends' faces with her fingertips.

CORALINE

Don't forget about me, guys. Okay?

She puts back the photo, hits the light switch over her bed and, looking over at the doll, sighs.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

Good-night...little me.

Her breathing slows and, with the doll WATCHING HER, she starts to fall asleep.

INT. CORALINE'S BEDROOM - DREAMTIME

--SURREAL MIST SWIRLS out her window. MOONS AND STARS SLOWLY MOVE across the walls.

SOMETHING in the room goes t-t-t-t-t-t. Coraline sits up, awake. SOMETHING CHITTERS under her bed. She leans over her bedside, head first, peering underneath when a ghost-pale KANGAROO MOUSE JUMPS OUT and bounds out the door.

INT. HALL - SAME

She gives chase, down the upper hall, down the stairs, snaps on the lower hall light, sees it hop into the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Coraline enters. The mouse edges out from beneath the sofa, then hops frantically toward the SMALL DOOR behind the wallpaper! Coraline runs and dives, but the door is open a crack, and the mouse escapes.

Coraline grabs the door's edge and pulls it open. Instead of a brick wall, there is a DARK, EXPANDING TUNNEL, with the hopping mouse heading towards a bluish light at the far end.

CORALINE

Whoa...

She catches her breath, pulls the door wider and CRAWLS THROUGH.

INT. PASSAGEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Coraline MOVES FORWARD, towards the light ahead.

INT. OTHER LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Coraline steps out through the same little door, into what looks like the EXACT SAME LIVING ROOM she just left, only *something* is different -- it feels deeper, more dimensional.

CORALINE

Huh?

She looks around, notices the painting over the fireplace: the crying blue boy is now SMILING, his *shirt clean* and his *ice cream back on his cone*.

From across the hall, warm light comes from the kitchen and the smell of delicious food wafts towards her nose.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

MMMMM, something smells good.

INT. OTHER KITCHEN - NIGHT

Coraline enters to see her mother cooking at the stove, wearing an apron and ROOSTER-HEAD OVEN MITTS. The light and colors are much warmer and the details more perfect in this kitchen. Other Mother is facing away from Coraline as she works.

CORALINE

Mom?! What are you doing here in the middle of the night?

Her mother turns from the stove to greet her and Coraline is DUMBSTRUCK: she's got BUTTONS FOR EYES! She beams with happiness at Coraline's arrival.

OTHER MOTHER

You're just in time for supper, dear!

CORALINE

You're not my mother.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

My mother doesn't have b-b-buh...

Coraline points to her own eye.

OTHER MOTHER
B-b-b-buttons? Do you like them?

She taps one with her nail.

OTHER MOTHER (CONT'D)
I'm your *Other* Mother, silly. Now go tell
your Other Father that supper's ready.

She opens the oven door and the intoxicating perfume of
great cooking fills the air. Coraline breathes it in,
suddenly VERY HUNGRY.

OTHER MOTHER (CONT'D)
Well, go on. He's in his study.

INT. OTHER HALLWAY - SAME

Coraline goes down the hall and opens the study door.

INT. OTHER STUDY - CONTINUOUS

She sees the back of a man like her father, only with
more hair. Instead of tapping away at his computer,
though, he's picking notes on a BABY GRAND PIANO.

CORALINE
Hello?

He turns around. He, too, has SHINY BUTTON EYES. He seems
happier and a little more handsome than real Dad, and
wears an IRIDESCENT ROBE over POLKA DOT PAJAMAS, with
ORANGE MONKEY SLIPPERS on his feet. He smiles broadly.

OTHER FATHER
Hello, Coraline. Want to hear my new
song?

CORALINE
My father can't play piano.

OTHER FATHER
No need to ... this piano plays ME!

DR. SEUSS GLOVES - connected with rods and pulleys - POP
OUT of the piano's front and ONTO HIS HANDS. His hands
RAISE UP - then DROP DOWN to play pounding STRIDE PIANO
as Other Father SINGS out.

OTHER FATHER (CONT'D)

*Making up a song about Coraline.
She's a peach, she's a doll, she's a pal
of mine.
She's as cute as a button in the eyes of
everyone who ever laid their eyes on Cor-
a-line.*

Coraline is amazed as his hands fly.

OTHER FATHER (CONT'D)

*When she comes around exploring
Mom and I will never ever make it boring
our eyes will be on Coraline.*

Anxious, she taps his shoulder to stop him.

CORALINE

I, uh - sorry - but *she* said to tell you
the food's ready.

OTHER FATHER

Mmmmm! Who's starving? Raise your hand.

He sticks his hand up, still in a glove, and his other
gloved hand slaps his face. She LAUGHS, then covers her
mouth.

INT. OTHER DINING ROOM - SAME

Other Mother sets down a HUGE, ROASTED CHICKEN near
Coraline on a table spread with CANDLES, fine CHINA and
SILVER and a PINEAPPLE CENTERPIECE. FIGURE EIGHT MODEL
TRAIN TRACKS circle twin LAZY SUSANS covered in dishes of
POTATOES, SWEET PEAS, ROLLS, and CORN. The Other Father
seals this Norman Rockwell moment by making PRAYER HANDS
and a solemn face.

OTHER FATHER

We give our thanks and ask to bless,
Our Mother's golden chicken breast!

He laughs with glee then a STARTING BELL rings and it's
time to eat. Other Father really digs in while Coraline
tries some chicken.

CORALINE

Mmmm, this chicken is *good*.

OTHER MOTHER

Hungry, aren't you.

CORALINE
(nodding, mouth full)
D'you have any gravy?

OTHER MOTHER
Well, here comes the gravy train! Choo-
choo!

Other Mother GIGGLES as a MODEL TRAIN circles round the track, pulling a GRAVY BOAT CAR and blowing its whistle. The train goes in one side of the centerpiece and comes out the other, slowing till the gravy boat lines up with Coraline's plate, where it POURS GRAVY on her potatoes.

OTHER MOTHER
Another roll, sweet peas? Corn on the
cob?

Other Mother looks on approvingly, not touching any food herself.

CORALINE
(mouth full)
I'm real thirsty.

OTHER MOTHER
Of course! Any requests?

A beautiful CHANDELIER DRINK DISPENSER descends.

CORALINE
Mango milk shake?

The dispenser SPINS, stops and fills her glass while Other Mother presents dessert: a cake with candles that POP UP and LIGHT THEMSELVES while the words "WELCOME HOME!" write themselves in icing. Coraline is taken aback.

CORALINE (CONT'D)
Home?

Her Other Parents squeeze each other's hands warmly.

OTHER MOTHER
We've been waiting for you, Coraline.

CORALINE
For me?

OTHER FATHER
Yep. Wasn't the same here without you,
kiddo.

Coraline remains a little unsure.

CORALINE
I didn't know I had an Other Mother.

OTHER MOTHER
Of course you do. Everyone does.

She smiles at Coraline, her button eyes gleaming.

CORALINE
Really?

OTHER MOTHER
Uh huh, and soon as you're through eating, I thought we'd play a *game*.

She taps her fingers a little too excitedly on the table.

CORALINE
(skeptical)
You mean like, hide and seek?

OTHER MOTHER
Perfect! Hide and seek *in the rain*.

CORALINE
What rain?

THUNDER, LIGHTNING, then RAIN appears outside the window.

CORALINE (CONT'D)
Huh, what about the mud?

OTHER FATHER
We love mud here!

Other Mother rises, walks towards Coraline.

OTHER MOTHER
Mud facials, mud baths, mud pies -- it's *great* for poison oak.

She takes Coraline's rashy hand, but Coraline pulls it away.

CORALINE
(suspicious)
How'd you know I--

Coraline adjusts her tone.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

I, I'd love to play, but ... I better get home to my other mother.

OTHER MOTHER

But *I'm* your other mother.

CORALINE

(befuddled)

I mean my *other* other mother. Mom number one?

(yawns)

I think I should get to bed.

OTHER MOTHER

Of course, sweetheart, it's all made up.

CORALINE

(shakes head)

But ...

Other Father steps in beside her.

OTHER FATHER

Come along, sleepyhead.

They lead her from the table towards the stairs to her bedroom.

INT. CORALINE'S OTHER BEDROOM - SAME

In this world, Coraline's bedroom is a dream come true: it is filled with rich color and light; there's a fire in the fireplace, a sheer, lacy canopy over her now beautiful bed. And her favorite toys are *alive!*

CORALINE

Wow.

Her ORIGAMI DRAGONFLIES FLUTTER towards her.

DRAGONFLIES

Hello Coraline, hello, hello!

Her BLUE SQUID greets her with a WAVE of its tentacle.

TOY SQUID

What's shakin', baby?

CORALINE

Hello.

The TURTLE SHELL she'd found CIRCLES HER FEET on clothes pin legs, making PANTING SOUNDS. She laughs, then hears two voices from beside her bed.

PHOTO FRIEND 1 (O.C.)
(Michigan-speak)
Hey, how zit goin', yuper!

PHOTO FRIEND 2 (O.C.)
(Michigan-speak)
Where's your swampers and tuke?

She jumps onto the bed, grabs the photo of her best friends from home, now ALIVE IN THE PHOTO.

CORALINE
Kripes a-mighty, how are my best trolls?
I can't wait till summer. You're both
comin', right?

PHOTO FRIEND 1
We're already here, Coraline --

PHOTO FRIEND 2

-- gone to Or-e-gine!

Coraline grins hugely, then, exhausted, she yawns, stretching out her arms.

The Other Mother, in the bedside chair, takes her hand and applies some SOOTHING BLACK MUD to Coraline's poison oak rash.

CORALINE
Oh, the mud...

The Other Mother gently tucks her in then she and the Other Father smile at Coraline as she drifts off to sleep.

OTHER MOTHER
See you soon ...

OTHER FATHER
See you soon ...

PULL BACK MATCH
DISSOLVE:

INT. CORALINE'S REAL BEDROOM - MORNING

Coraline awakens. She looks around expecting bright colors, a magic dragonfly. But it's just her NORMAL ROOM: moving boxes; cracks in the ceiling -- nothing's changed.

She notices the BUTTON-EYED DOLL on the chair where she left it, where the Other Mother was sitting. She picks it up, absentmindedly goes to scratch her wrist. She stops, noticing that the rash on her wrist IS GONE.

CORALINE

(gasping)

It's gone, my poison oak, *it's gone!*...

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME

Coraline goes to the little door, still ajar. She peeks behind and finds the WALL OF SOLID BRICKS. Yes, it was only a dream.

CORALINE

(softly)

Huh?

She shakes her head and pushes the door shut. The kettle blows from the kitchen.

KITCHEN - DAY, GROUND FOG OUT WINDOWS

Breakfast. Mel and Charlie finish their "Go Lean Breakfast Twigs" and mugs of instant coffee. Preoccupied with their work, they half-listen as Coraline recounts her dream, her breakfast untouched. FOG lies outside the windows.

CORALINE

It was incredibly real, Mom! Only you weren't *really* you; you were my *other* mother.

MEL

(disapproving)

Buttons for eyes, huh?

(indicates untouched food)

Coraline, you only *dreamed* you ate all that chicken. Take your multi-vitamin, at least.

CORALINE

You were in the dream too, Dad. You had wild-looking pajamas and orange monkey slippers.

CHARLIE

(pretend offense)

Orange? *My* monkey slippers are blue.

He stands, put his dishes in the sink. Whispers over his shoulder:

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
(optional)
Pssst. Can you get *me* some of that magic mud you were talking about?

She points to her rash-free wrists. He nods.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Because I have a terrible case of writer's rash. On my---

Mel CLEARS HER THROAT, interrupting.

MEL
If the real Charlie Jones wants his pages edited, he'd better wrap them up ASAP.

He crisply salutes her, turns on his heel, and marches out the door. Mel gets up to clear the table with Coraline.

MEL (CONT'D)
Coraline, why don't you go visit downstairs? I bet those "actresses" would love to hear your dream.

CORALINE
Miss Spink and Forcible? But you said they're dingbats.

MEL
(nods)
Uh huh.

Coraline sighs, gets up to go.

EXT. HOUSE, FRONT PORCH - MORNING

It's drizzling and a WHITE FOG has lowered over the house and grounds. Coraline - yellow rain poncho, garden SHEARS in hand - opens the front door. Stepping out onto the porch, she TRIPS on a big bundle of mail. Annoyed, she picks it up, starts leafing through the envelopes.

CORALINE
Bo-bin-sky...Bo-bin-sky....Bo-bin-sky...

Smells something bad, sniffs the envelopes.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

Ohh, Poo-eeeeee!

She goes down the front steps and finds a sign that reads "Bobinsky there" with an arrow that points up long, winding outside stairs. With an "oh well" shrug, she goes up.

EXT. HOUSE, BOBINSKY'S - CONTINUOUS

At the top, she knocks on the door, a little anxious.

CORALINE

H-hello?...

She knocks again.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

I think our mail got mixed up. Should I leave it outside or...

The door swings open. Curious, Coraline peeks inside: it's dark and cramped with something boiling on the stove and a caged chicken.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

Hmmm...

Suddenly a HUGE BLUE MAN swings down behind her and scolds:

MR. BOBINSKY

SEE-KRET...

She whips around to find MR. Bobinsky - upside down, reaching *right at her face!* She ducks and he reaches past her to his actual target - his door knob - and pulls it shut.

The Russian giant, dressed in a sleeveless T-shirt and shorts, pulls a RAW BEET from his pants. He's not happy.

MR. BOBINSKY (CONT'D)

(scowling)

Famous Jumping Mouse Circus *not* ready, little girl!

CORALINE

(confused)

Circus?... Oh, uh, I brought this for you.

She holds out his mail. Bobinsky takes it, smelling the stinky envelopes deeply. Nods approvingly.

MR. BOBINSKY
(sniffs)
Mmmm... Noviseer.

CORALINE
Huh?

MR. BOBINSKY
New "cheese" samples.

He swings down like a spider monkey and stands beside her on the balcony. Coraline backs away.

MR. BOBINSKY (CONT'D)
Very clever, using this "mix up" to sneak my home and peek at meeshkas

CORALINE
Meeshkas?

MR. BOBINSKY
The Mice!

CORALINE
Oh, sorry. I'm Coraline Jones.

MR. BOBINSKY
(bows)
And I am the Amazing Bobinsky! But you can call me Mr. B, because amazing I already know that I am.

He smells his mail again, makes *pleased* sound, then seems to fall off the side of the third story porch! Coraline rushes over, looks down. He cartwheels in from the porch railing behind her.

MR. BOBINSKY
Ha! You see, Caroline, the problem is my new songs go oompah oompah. But the jumping mice play only toodle toot, like that. Is nice, but not so much amazing? So now--
(indicates smelly mail)
--I switch to stronger cheese, and soon -
WATCH OUT!

He opens his door, crouches low and turns. He hands her a beet.

MR. BOBINSKY (CONT'D)
Here, have beet. Make you *strong*.
(salutes her)
Daas vee DAAN ya, Caroline.

He scuttles inside and slams the door shut. Coraline mutters.

CORALINE
Cor-a-line.

Looking at the beet, she makes a *disgusted sound* and tosses it away, then heads down the stairs.

EXT HOUSE, SOUTH SIDE YARD - CONTINUOUS

When she gets to the bottom, she starts towards the back, gardening shears out.

CORALINE
(to herself)
Oompah oompah, toodle toot, toodle toot.

MR. BOBINSKY (O.C.)
EHHH! CAROLINE: PA-DAZH-DI'-- WAIT!!

She looks up.

CORALINE
No!!!

Bobinsky LEAPS all the way to the ground, landing beside her, out of breath.

MR. BOBINSKY
The mice...asked me to give you message.

CORALINE
The...jumping mice?

Mr. B nods gravely. He leans down, so close his moustache touches her ear, and whispers, his voice DEAD-SERIOUS.

MR. BOBINSKY
They are saying: *do not go through leetle door*. Do you know such a thing?

Coraline is startled.

CORALINE
The one behind the wall paper? But...
it's all bricked up.

The old man shrugs, straightens.

MR. BOBINSKY

Bah. So sorry, is nothing. Sometimes the mice are leettle...

He points to his head and rotates his finger.

MR. BOBINSKY (CONT'D)

...mixed up, hmmm? They even get your name wrong, you know. They call you Coraline instead of Caroline, not Caroline at all.

He starts back up the stairs.

MR. BOBINSKY (CONT'D)

Maybe I work them too hard...

Coraline stares after him.

EXT. HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

SHEARS IN HAND, Coraline approaches the family VW, where one PINK SUITCASE remains tied to the roof. She snips it free and takes out her special HAT, a black Japanese schoolboy's cap.

EXT. HOUSE, STAIRWELL DOWNSTAIRS FLAT - SAME

Coraline climbs down the steps to the basement flat. At the door, she tries the comedy/tragedy door knocker and waits. Nothing. She glances down at the doormat - it reads "No whistling in the house."

She peers through the door glass. A YAPPING DOG suddenly LEAPS UP inside, startling her, and a moment after, MISS SPINK - wearing some sort of house robe - opens the door and three SCOTTIE DOGS - HAMISH, JOCK, AND ANGUS - shoot out and surround Coraline. Spink tries to quiet them down.

MISS SPINK

(harsh)

Oh cease your infernal yapping!

(to Coraline, sweetly)

How nice to see you, Caroline. Would you like to come in? We're playing cards.

CORALINE

Still Coraline, Miss Spink.

MISS SPINK
(over shoulder)
Miriam, put the kettle on!

INT. MISSES SPINK & FORCIBLE'S FLAT - SAME

Miss Spink leads Coraline into the living area, as MISS FORCIBLE, taller and sporting a platinum wig and a very large bosom, prepares tea in the kitchen to the side. The dogs race ahead and jump onto the sofa. Coraline scans the walls to see framed POSTERS from the "Shakespeare" the ladies used to perform like *King Leer* and *Julius Seize Her*. Miss Forcible peers out her, half-blind without her glasses.

MISS FORCIBLE
April, I think you're being followed.

MISS SPINK
It's the new neighbor, Miriam - Caroline?
She'll be having the Oolong tea.

MISS FORCIBLE
No, no, no, no. I'm sure she'd prefer
Jasmine.

MISS SPINK
No, Oolong.

MISS FORCIBLE
Ah, Jasmine it is, then.

Forcible grabs a handful of tea, puts it in the pot and pours boiling water in.

MISS SPINK
Come on, boys!

The dogs leap off the sofa and, as Coraline takes their place, she looks to the side and sees a towering bookcase filled with STUFFED SCOTTY DOGS IN KNITTED SWEATERS WITH ANGEL WINGS.

CORALINE
(alarmed)
Are those dogs real?

MISS SPINK
(sighs)
Our sweet, departed angels. Couldn't bear
to part with them ... so we had them
stuffed.
(continues)
(MORE)

MISS SPINK (CONT'D)
Now, there's Hamish the third, the
fourth, the eighth, the ninth. Angus the
second, the fifth, the..

Miss Forcible arrives with a tea tray and urges Coraline
to take a candy as Spink goes on and on.

MISS FORCIBLE
Oh go on, have one - it's hand-pulled
taffy from Brighton - best in the world.

Coraline reaches for a pink and green one. But the taffy
is so old and sticky, her fingers get stuck. Then her
other hand gets stuck, trying to get the first hand out.

MISS SPINK (O.C.)
...seventh, the third, the ninth, yes,
the fourth I'm right; and Jock Junior,
Jock senior, Jock the third, the
fourth...

Coraline, using her feet, finally un-sticks the candy
bowl which FLIES UP and sticks to the ceiling.

MISS SPINK (CONT'D)
...oh, and that's Jock's 2nd cousin,
twice removed.

She turns to Coraline, about to sip her tea. Spink
indicates cup.

MISS SPINK (CONT'D)
I'll read them, if you like.

CORALINE
Read what?

MISS SPINK
Oh, your tea leaves, dear. They'll tell
me your future. Drink up then, go on.

Coraline gulps down the bitter brew.

MISS SPINK (CONT'D)
No, not all of it, not all of it. That's
right, now hand it over.

Coraline passes her the cup. Spink puts a saucer on top
and swirls it three times, removes the saucer and peers
in at the abstract leaf pattern. She purses her lips.

MISS SPINK (CONT'D)
Oh... Caroline, Caroline, Caroline; you
are in terrible danger.

Miss Forcible snorts.

MISS FORCIBLE

Oh, give me that cup, April, your eyes
are going.

MISS SPINK

My eyes! You're blind as a bat!

Spink passes the cup to Forcible, who adjusts thick
glasses and peers closely into it.

MISS FORCIBLE

Oh, now, ummm... not to worry, child,
it's good news: there's a tall, handsome
beast in your future.

CORALINE

A what?

MISS SPINK

*Miriam, oh really, you're holding it
wrong.*

Spink forcibly rotates the cup.

MISS SPINK (CONT'D)

See? Danger!

Coraline wants more information.

CORALINE

What do you see?

The ladies, heads side by side, gaze into the cup. We see
a SPIKY CLAW formed from the leaves.

MISS SPINK

(ominous)

I see a very peculiar hand...

Forcible rotates the cup back again. Upside down, the
claw hand looks like a GIRAFFE.

MISS FORCIBLE

I see a giraffe.

MISS SPINK

*Giraffes don't just fall from the sky,
Miriam.*

The stuck candy dish suddenly CRASHES to the floor.

MISS SPINK (CONT'D)

Oh!

MISS FORCIBLE

Oh, lord!

Coraline asks in a practical voice:

CORALINE

Well, what should I do?

MISS SPINK

Never wear green in your dressing room.

MISS FORCIBLE

Acquire a very tall step ladder.

MISS SPINK

And be very, very careful. Now, was there something you came to tell us?

Coraline thinks it over, then shakes her head.

CORALINE

No, I guess not. Thanks for the tea, though.

She gets up and leaves, the dogs immediately return to their sofa.

MISS FORCIBLE

Toodle-oo.

MISS SPINK

Cheery-bye.

The ladies resume their card game with Miss Spink turning to the dogs.

MISS SPINK (CONT'D)

Do you have any nice Queens for mummy?

EXT. HOUSE, TOP OF BASEMENT FLAT STAIRS - SAME

Coraline climbs the stairs up to ground level, intrigued by her fortune.

CORALINE

(to herself)

Danger?

Behind her, a PERISCOPE RISES from the WAIST-DEEP FOG. Coraline just catches it in her peripheral view.

She frowns but doesn't let on she's aware of it. She walks ahead nonchalantly, the periscope following her, then suddenly turns and GRABS it, PULLING UP WYBIE, then PUNCHES him in the arm.

WYBIE

Owwwwwwww!

CORALINE

Great, the village stalker.

WYBIE

Ow. I - I wasn't stalking you. We're hunting banana slugs.

Wybie takes some SALAD TONGS from a tool belt, snaps them.

CORALINE

What d'ya mean, "we?"

There's a soft meowing from under his coat. He opens it up and the BLACK CAT EMERGES and climbs onto his shoulders.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

Ha! Your cat's not wild, he's a wuss-puss!

Cat glares at her angrily.

WYBIE

What? He hates to get his feet wet. Geez.

CORALINE

(mocking)

Wuss-puss...

Tired of her company, the cat jumps off Wybie, onto a tree and up onto the roof of the house. Coraline softens.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

So... that doll. Did you make it look like me?

Wybie, scanning under the ground fog for slugs, sticks his head up for a moment.

WYBIE

Oh no; I found it that way. It's older than Gramma -- old as this house prob'ly.

Coraline is highly skeptical. Wybie returns to his hunt.

CORALINE
(points to self)
C'mom - blue hair, my swampers and
raincoat?

Wybie stands excitedly and presents a HUGE YELLOW-GREEN
SLUG to Coraline.

WYBIE
Dang, check out Slugzilla!

She's not impressed.

CORALINE
(frustrated)
You're *just* like them.

WYBIE
Huh?

He looks from the slug to himself.

CORALINE
I meant my *parents*; they don't listen to
me either.

Wybie nods, not listening again, takes his camera --

WYBIE
Uh huh... You mind?

-- hands it to her. She acts put-out, but frames a shot.
He signals he's ready and she fires off one auto-flash
shot after another as he strikes silly poses making SOUND
EFFECTS: horrified of the slug one moment; ready to eat
it the next; pretending it's something from his nose in
another. She can't help but *GIGGLE*.

CORALINE
Ew!

Finished, Wybie tosses the slug back into the fog, and
takes the camera back. He lowers his head, thoughtful,
then glances up past Coraline at the house. He *SIGHS* and
speaks in a SAD TONE.

WYBIE
You know, I've never been inside the Pink
Palace.

CORALINE
(sceptical)
You're kidding.

WYBIE
Grandma would kill me. Thinks it's
dangerous or something.

CORALINE
Dangerous?

WYBIE
Well... she had a twin sister.

CORALINE
So?

WYBIE (O.C.).
When they were kids, Grandma's sister
disappeared.
(ON CAMERA)
She says she was stolen.

CORALINE (O.S.)
(skeptical)
Stolen?

ANGLE from roof, over CAT'S SHOULDER as dialog continues.
Cat senses something and turns -- it's Coraline's DOLL AT
THE WINDOW, looking like it's spying on things.

CORALINE (CONT'D)
Well, what do you think?

WYBIE
Uhhh, I-I don't know.

BACK TO KIDS. Wybie, astride his electric bike now,
WHISTLES and the black cat jumps down from the roof, onto
his shoulders.

WYBIE (CONT'D)
Maybe she just ran away?

We hear Wybie's agitated grandmother call out.

WYBIE'S GRANDMOTHER (O.C.)
Wyborne!

Wybie turns away: he's said too much.

WYBIE
Look, I gotta go.

He starts to pull away.

CORALINE
Wait a minute!

And he's gone. PUSH IN on her pensive face.

INT CORALINE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CU ON DOLL FACE, back in the chair by the bed. Coraline takes some yellow cheese from her pocket and puts it by the door: mice bait. She lies down and her breathing slows, the doll watching her with a nearly IMPERCEPTIBLE SMILE on its face.

INT CORALINE'S BEDROOM - LATER

Coraline sleeping, lighting suggests another dream. SOME THINGS go t-t-t-t-t-t. Coraline sits up, looks to her door, and spots a COUPLE OF KANGAROO MICE stealing the last bit of cheese.

INT. UPPER HALL - SAME

She gives chase after the mice, hopping down the stairs with the cheese.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME

Coraline follows the kangaroo mice directly to the little door, opened a crack, where they disappear.

She pulls it open. Bricks are gone; tunnel revealed. She doesn't hesitate this time to crawl through the door.

INT. OTHER KITCHEN - NIGHT

Coraline enters Other Kitchen to find Other Mother preparing a delicious breakfast. She looks PRETTIER tonight; her black hair shining, lips REDDER. She stops HUMMING A LULLABY to greet Coraline.

OTHER MOTHER

Welcome back, darling.

CORALINE

Hi.

She is grating YELLOW CHEESE into scrambled eggs.

OTHER MOTHER

So thoughtful of you to send this nice cheddar, Coraline.

CORALINE
Cheddar?... Oh, the mice bait...

OTHER MOTHER
Would you go fetch your father?

Beams at Coraline.

OTHER MOTHER (CONT'D)
Bet he's hungry as a pumpkin by now!

CORALINE
You mean my Other Father?

OTHER MOTHER
Your better father, dear. He's out in
the garden.

CORALINE.
But my parents don't have time to garden.

Other Mother SHUSHES her and pops a strawberry in her
mouth.

CORALINE
Mmmmmmm!

OTHER MOTHER
Go on...

Coraline shrugs *okay*, starts for the door.

EXT STUDY DOOR TO BACK PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Looking out, she sees the broken-down garden from the
real world, still grey and lifeless in the dim light.

EXT. OTHER GARDEN - SAME

Coraline opens the gate to the garden. A large CRESCENT
MOON RISES, and THINGS START TO GROW.

Two dead shrubs start to RISE, then BLOSSOM, then the
blossoms themselves are LIT UP by some GOLD AND AMBER
HUMMINGBIRDS.

The hummingbirds circle around Coraline, light her
DRAGONFLY BARRETTE, then continue on, LIGHTING UP PITCHER
PLANTS that have grown up in a nearby flower bed. A
beautiful FROG POKES OUT of one blossom.

The birds lead Coraline up steps past a stone wall where BLEEDING HEART GROW, AND GLOW, AND BEAT.

She spots the Other Father, riding a PRAYING MANTIS TRACTOR on the hillside, planting SEEDS that instantly grow into FLOWERING PLANTS.

OTHER FATHER

Hey!!!

CORALINE

I love your garden!

He waves back, calling:

OTHER FATHER

Our garden, Coraline!

A gang of SNAP DRAGONS goes at her, TICKLING Coraline till she falls down. Her *squeals of delight* grow into HYSTERICAL LAUGHTER.

CORALINE

(giggling)

Oh ah, stop! Stop tickling, ah!

The Other Father hears this and looks over.

OTHER FATHER

Oops, daughter in distress!

He guns the tractor full-speed over a little bridge, grabbing a GOURD TRUMPET from a vine and blowing it.

JACK-O-LANTERNS surface in the pond below and spout STREAMS OF WATER.

Arriving beside Coraline, he waggles his finger at the naughty snapdragons.

OTHER FATHER (CONT'D)

Tickle no more, you dragon snappers!

Then he deftly cuts a bouquet of them and presents it to Coraline. She nods thanks.

CORALINE

Well, she says it's time for dinner ... breakfast ... *food*?

OTHER FATHER

Hop on, kiddo, I want to show you something!

She does. The Other Father grabs the GEARSHIFT KNOB, pulls it, and the mechanical mantis SPROUTS WINGS. They RISE in the air. Looking down, she sees that the garden is a PORTRAIT OF CORALINE.

CORALINE

I can't believe you did this!

OTHER FATHER

Mother said you'd like it! Boy she knows you like the back of her hand.

He pulls a lever and they ZOOM out of frame.

INT. OTHER KITCHEN - SAME

Coraline doesn't hold back this time. She stacks sausages on eggs on top of waffles, rolls it up and stuffs it in her mouth. The Other Mother FEEDS BITS OF SAUSAGE to the HUNGRY SNAPDRAGONS bouquet now in a vase.

CORALINE

Mmmm...so good!

OTHER FATHER

I love dinner, breakfast food.

OTHER MOTHER

Coraline, Mr. Bobinsky has invited you to come see the Jumping Mice perform after dinner.

CORALINE

Really. That know-it-all Wybie said it was all in Mr. B's head, I knew he was wrong.

OTHER FATHER

Well, everything's right in *this* world, Kiddo.

Coraline hurries to shovel in the rest of her meal, while her Other Parents smile at one another.

OTHER MOTHER

Your father and I will clean up while you and your friend head upstairs.

CORALINE

My *friend*?

There's a KNOCK at the door. Other Mother opens it to reveal the OTHER WYBIE. He's cleaner, with better posture, and cute button eyes.

CORALINE (CONT'D)
Great... another Wybie. Hello, Why-were-you-born.

The boy nods, button eyes shining.

CORALINE (CONT'D)
Hello?

He just makes a shy smile, doesn't answer. She's confused.

OTHER MOTHER
I thought you'd like him *more*, if he spoke a little *less*.
(shrugs, smiling)
So I fixed him.

CORALINE
So he can't talk at all?

OTHER MOTHER
Nope.

She looks Other Wybie over appreciatively.

CORALINE
Hmm, I like it.

OTHER MOTHER
(proudly)
Now run along, you two, and have fun.

Coraline heads out the door with the mute boy.

EXT. OTHER ESTATE HOUSE - SAME

The Other House - lit by amber spotlights looks MAGICAL with ornate GINGERBREAD TRIM; glowing TOPIARY in the yard. The kids come out the front door.

CORALINE
You're awful cheerful, considering you can't say anything.

Other Wybie nods in agreement. Coraline and he start up the stairs to Bobinsky's.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

Uh...It didn't hurt, did it, when she...

She points to her mouth. There's an awkward moment and then he points past her, excitedly: a SMALL BLIMP is flying towards Bobinsky's door.

They run up the stairs and watch it slip through an opening above his door. Coraline knocks and the door suddenly SPINS, THROWING THEM INSIDE.

INT. OTHER MR. BOBINSKY'S FLAT - SAME

They somersault to a stop and sit up. Down two rows of SMALL CANNONS that face each, an amazing MINIATURE CIRCUS has been set up, with a FERRIS WHEEL beside it.

CORALINE

Whoa... cool!

Coraline goes right to the Ferris wheel where a MECHANICAL CHICKEN eats dried corn on the cob, fires up its belly, then POOPS OUT POPCORN into paper bags.

Other Wybie stomps a firing button and COTTON CANDY shoots out of a cannon. He catches the cone, then starts firing off all the cannons. Coraline looks back to find him covered in the cotton candy.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

Look at you!

Spotlights come on in the big top, the entrance opens, and a big voice is heard over loudspeakers.

OTHER MR. BOBINSKY (O.S.)

Lady and gentleman! For to tickle your eyes and ears and making hearts to thump, I - Sergei Alexander Bobinsky - am introducing...

They race to the entrance, stoop down to crawl inside.

INT. MINIATURE BIG TOP - SAME

OTHER MR. BOBINSKY (O.S.)

... my as-tound-ishing, stu-pen-dulous and AH-MAZING *Jumping Mouse Circus!*

They sit between miniature grandstands and watch as the little BLIMP, bathed in spotlights, enters through a flap. It circles around, rising to the top of the tent, then NOSE-DIVES towards the ground! It CRASHES in the center of the circus ring, and OPENS LIKE A FLOWER from which 50 JUMPING MICE spring up like Chinese acrobats to spell out C O R A L I N E.

CORALINE
(delighted)
My name!

The jumping mice leap to the ground in formation, BRANDISH TINY INSTRUMENTS, and DRUMMERS START POUNDING. The DRUM MAJOR MOUSE parachutes down and whips out a BATON. On his signal, the group launch into a WILD RUSSIAN CIRCUS MARCH.

Coraline, grinning, turns to the Other Wybie.

CORALINE (CONT'D)
It's wonderful, Wybie!

The boy smiles and nods to the beat of the bass drums as the hopping band marches in and out of ever changing formations - PINWHEELS, X's, CIRCLES WITHIN CIRCLES.

They hoppers begin to SPIRAL to the center of the circus ring when the floor RISES UP from its center to form a six-foot Tower of Babel, the mice HOPPING TO THE TOP. The DRUM MAJOR balances on the tippy-top on a COLORFUL CIRCUS BALL.

CORALINE (CONT'D)
Wow!

He RUNS the ball DOWN AND AROUND the spiral as the MICE HOP OFF, and when he hits the ground, the TOWER DROPS AWAY to reveal the OTHER MISTER BOBINSKY! He CRACKS A WHIP.

Coraline and Other Wybie STAND and CLAP. Other Bobinsky - in a RINGMASTER'S OUTFIT with a full length cape - bows graciously, doffing his tall black hat. His moustache is waxed, his eyes black buttons.

CORALINE (CONT'D)
Yah! Whooo-oooh! That was great!

OTHER MR. BOBINSKY
Very very thank you, lady and gentleman.

On cue, the entire jumping mice band DISAPPEARS INTO OTHER MR. B'S SLEEVES while the drum major SWINGS UP from the man's moustache and onto his head, where he's quickly hidden by the tall black hat.

CORALINE

We loved it, Mr. B. It was ... so ... so--

OTHER MR. BOBINSKY

(coaching)

Ahhhhh---

CORALINE

A-mazing!

OTHER MR. BOBINSKY

You are very welcome anytime you like,
you and also your good friend there.

She happily turns to Other Wybie, beaming with joy.

OTHER MR. BOBINSKY (CONT'D)

Dosvedanya, Coraline.

Bobinsky takes her hand to kiss it.

INT. CORALINE'S OTHER BEDROOM - SAME

Other Mother kisses SLEEPING CORALINE'S forehead, sits back in the bedside chair. Other Father, close by, pulls a cotton candy cone off Other Wybie and munches it. Coraline's Other Parents smile warmly, knowing something secret that makes them glad.

PULL BACK MATCH
DISSOLVE:

INT. CORALINE'S BEDROOM - DAY

EARLY MORNING. Coraline once again wakes in own bed in the real world, the little doll - left on the chair - now clutched against her chest.

CORALINE

Ughhh.

Her gaze moves from the doll to where she left the cheese by the door. It's GONE. This is much too confusing.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME

Coraline tries the small door in the corner wall. It's locked. *What the heck?*

EXT. SMALL OFFICE BUILDING IN TOWN - DAY

--SQUEALING brakes, as the Jones' JEEP pulls up in front of "Northwest Garden" headquarters. TOWNSFOLK in SHAKESPEAREAN COSTUMES stand about, advertising a local festival. Coraline is sharing her latest dream:

CORALINE (V.O.).

... there were garden squash like balloon animals AND snap dragons.

ON FAMILY: Coraline continues from back seat as her father and mother review their work pages.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

Oh, and upstairs I saw a *real* mouse circus, not pretend like the crazy man's in our house.

Her parents, preoccupied, ignore her.

CHARLIE

You sure you won't come?

MEL

(indicates neck brace)

Don't fret, Charlie, they'll love the new catalog. At least, they'll love *my* chapters.

Gives her an "aren't you funny" look, opens door. Mel looks back at Coraline.

MEL (CONT'D)

I did not call him crazy, Coraline. He's drunk.

She makes the hand-thumb bottle sign. Charlie leans in to Coraline, pinches her nose.

CHARLIE

Well, I guess I'll see *you* around, you dizzy dreamer.

Coraline cuts him off, embarrassed.

CORALINE

Da-ad! I'm not five anymore.

Dad sighs, heads up the steps to his appointment as Mel and Coraline drive off.

INT. UNIFORMS DEPARTMENT STORE - SAME

PRESIDENT'S DAY SALE. Mel piles gray blouses, a navy skirt, white socks onto the arms of a CLERK.

Sitting alone on some stairs, Coraline sees a pair of fancy GREEN AND ORANGE GLOVES.

As she tries them on, a YOUNG RASCAL in costume with sword BOUNCES PAST her down the stairs on a WHEELED STEP STOOL - his FATHER in pursuit.

YOUNG RASCAL

My kingdom for a hoooooorse!!!!

There's an off screen *crash*, then the step stool rolls back to Coraline. She gets an idea.

Mel is checking out school blouses, when Coraline rolls past, first one direction, then the other, modeling the colorful gloves. Without looking up, her mom tells her:

MEL

Put them back.

CORALINE

But Mom, the whole school's gonna wear boring gray clothes. No one will have these.

MEL

Put them back.

Coraline mutters:

CORALINE

My *other* mother would get them.

MEL

Maybe she should buy *all* your clothes.

Coraline scowls and stomps away to return the gloves.

INT. CAR - SAME

Coraline and Mel are driving home, shopping bags in back.

CORALINE

So what do you think's in the other apartment?

MEL

I don't know. Not a family of Jones imposters.

CORALINE

Then why'd you lock the door?

MEL

(shorter than previous)

Oh, I found some rat crap and... I thought you'd feel ... safer.

CORALINE

They're jumping-nice, Mom! And the dreams aren't dangerous; they're the most fun I've had since we've moved here.

MEL

Your school might be fun.

CORALINE

With those stupid uniforms? Right.

MEL

Had to give it a try.

They pull into their DRIVEWAY.

INT. KITCHEN - SAME

Mel pulls out salsa, mustard, catsup, stale tortillas from the fridge.

Mel

How do you feel about a mustard-ketchup-salsa wrap for lunch?

Coraline, carrying in the bags from outside, makes a face.

CORALINE

Are you kidding me?

MEL

Mmm... Had to go food shopping anyway. Dad's planning something special.

Coraline squinches up her nose.

CORALINE
Gross-gusting.

MEL
(brightens)
You wanna come along? You can pick out
something you like.

Coraline plops down in a chair.

CORALINE
Oh, like the gloves?

Mel reaches out and musses Coraline's hair. The girl
pulls away.

MEL
Look, Coraline... if things go well
today, I promise I'll make it up.

CORALINE
That's what you always say.

Mom rolls her eyes, shaking her head, and opens the door
to leave.

MEL
Won't be long.

Shuts the door.

CORALINE
(mutters)
But *I* might be...

She leaves.

INT. KITCHEN - SAME

Coraline pulls open the key drawer, looking for the small
black key. Not there. She looks around, then spots it
hanging on a hook above a door. She stands on a chair and
snags it.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME

Coraline stoops in front of the small door and pushes the
key into the keyhole and unlocks the door.

She listens for her mother's car. Nothing. Grasping the
key between thumb and forefinger, she *closes her eyes*,
she pulls the door open.

ANGLE ON CORALINE: A SOFT BREEZE MOVES her hair. She knows before her eyes open that the BRICKS ARE GONE.

CORALINE
(triumphant)
I knew it was real!

She opens her eyes, smiles, and CRAWLS FORWARD.

ANGLE ON CORALINE THROUGH WINDOW. CAMERA PULLS BACK and we FIND the BLACK CAT, perched on the wet window sill, OBSERVING Coraline as she disappears into the tunnel. With a look of concern, he exits frame.

INT. OTHER KITCHEN - NIGHT

Lunch is ready and waiting for her: foot-long hotdogs with relish; grilled cheese sandwiches with gherkins; curly-fries; piles of coleslaw and potato salad; five flavors of soda-pop. There's a NOTE attached to a GIFT-WRAPPED BOX:

OTHER MOTHER (V.O.)
*Dearest Coraline,
Miss Spink and Miss Forcible have invited
you downstairs after lunch. I hope you
like the new outfit I made you! Love,
Mother.*

Coraline tears open the box and finds a pair of beautiful BLUE BOOTS, BLACK CORDUROY TROUSERS, and a METALLIC GREY SWEATER WITH TWINKLING STARS.

She holds up the sweater to her body, smiles, then puts down the clothes and digs into lunch.

EXT. OTHER HOUSE - SAME

Coraline, dressed in her FANCY NEW CLOTHES, steps onto the FRONT PORCH and BURPS. It's always nighttime in this world.

A CAT MEEEROWS. Coraline looks up to see a BLACK CAT on the porch roof above her.

Coraline raises her brows, studies the animal a moment.

CORALINE
Hmmm... Wybie's got a cat like you at home. Not the quiet Wybie; the one that talks too much. You must be the *Other* Cat.

The cat LEAPS down and lands on the railing by the basement stairs. He shakes his head and SPEAKS!

CAT

No. I'm not the other anything. I'm me.

He tips his head to one side, opal blue eyes glinting. Coraline is surprised.

CORALINE

Um... I can see you don't have button eyes. But if you're the same cat, how can you talk?

The cat shrugs from the tip of his tail to his whiskers.

CAT

I just can.

He leaps smoothly from the railing and onto a large, FALLEN TREE.

CORALINE

Cats don't talk at home.

CAT

No?

CORALINE

Nope.

Climbs up the tree's upended roots, head held high and proud.

CAT

(dryly)

Well, you're clearly the expert on these things. After all, I'm just a *big fat wuss puss*.

CORALINE

Come back. Please? I... I'm sorry I called you that, I really am.

Coraline forces herself to be polite.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

How'd you get here?

CAT

I've been coming here for a while.

He DISAPPEARS behind one a thick root that sticks up, then REAPPEARS from a large knot hole beside Coraline, startling her.

CAT (CONT'D)
It's a game we play. *She...*
(indicates house)
...hates cats and tries to keep me out.
But she can't, of course.

He pokes his HEAD DOWN into the knot hole, then POPS IT UP out of ANOTHER KNOT-HOLE, ten feet away.

CAT (CONT'D)
I come and go as I please.

CORALINE
(skeptical)
The Other Mother hates cats?

CAT
(contemptuous)
Not like any "mother" I've ever known.

CORALINE
What do you mean? She's amazing!

Cat climbs the tree's branches onto the roof.

CAT
You probably think this world is a dream come true. But you're wrong. The Other Wybie told me so.

CORALINE
That's nonsense. He can't talk.

The cat looks at her, pitying her lack of intelligence.

CAT
Perhaps not to you. We cats, however, have far superior senses than humans and can see and smell, and --

Suddenly, the cat drops into a crouch and freezes, sensing something.

CAT (CONT'D)
(whispering)
Shhhh! I hear something! Right ...over...

He SCRAMBLES across the roof and disappears around the corner.

Coraline shrugs, skeptical, and heads down to Spink and Forcible's, their door now circled with CHASER LIGHTS.

INT. MISS SPINK AND FORCIBLE'S OTHER APARTMENT - SAME

She pushes past elegant VELVET CURTAINS to discover an enormous, darkened THEATER with dim rows of seats and a high WOODEN STAGE.

A FLASHLIGHT comes towards her, carried by a black SCOTTIE DOG with button eyes. He looks up at her, sniffs, then leads her down the aisle past rows and rows of BUTTON-EYED SCOTTIES, to a front seat by the Other Wybie. She squeezes his arm hello, he looks back warmly.

CORALINE

Hey, Wybie.

Light flash, the audience quiets, then the curtains open on a SEASIDE SETTING with ROTATING WAVES. OTHER MISS SPINK rises up on stage left, in a MERMAID SUIT, large WIG, BUTTON EYES, and UKULELE.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

(shocked)

She's practically naked!

And Miss Spink sings.

OTHER MISS SPINK

*I'm known as the siren of all seven seas
The breaker of hearts by the bay.*

A flat cut-out ship manned by cut-out men rows in behind her.

OTHER MISS SPINK (CONT'D)

*So, if you go swimmin'
With bow-legged women,
I might steal your weak heart away.*

She bows her head and the audience of dogs THUMP their tails.

Spink is LOWERED through the stage floor, the SCENERY CHANGES, and on the right, a huge SCALLOP SHELL RISES up with the OTHER MISS FORCIBLE, clad in the bare minimum - her homage to Botticelli's BIRTH OF VENUS. She's facing the wrong way.

CORALINE

(whisper, to Wybie)

Oh my God.

A dog HOWLS, alerting the near-blind lady, who turns to the audience and begins the next verse.

OTHER MISS FORCIBLE

*A big-bottomed sea witch may bob through
the waves,
And hope to lead sailors astray,
But a true ocean goddess,
Must fill out her bodice,
(indicates her ample bosom)
To present an alluring display.*

The dogs thump and woof, Wybie and Coraline clap.

Spink, furious at the greater reaction, gets back in the competition. Rising up, she makes it clear just who she's dissing.

OTHER MISS SPINK

*Beware of old oysters, too large in the
chest,
Let's banish them from the buffet.*

But Forcible is up to the challenge - the scenery starts to change faster and faster as the ladies rise up and down, competing.

OTHER MISS SPINK (CONT'D)

I'm far more nutritious

OTHER MISS FORCIBLE

You smell like the fishes

OTHER MISS SPINK

Did I hear a banshee?

OTHER MISS FORCIBLE

You're sea-green with envy

OTHER MISS SPINK

This mermaid enchantress,

OTHER MISS FORCIBLE

No, I "Birth of Venus!"

The set rigging can't take it anymore -- ropes snap, sandbags swing, scenery starts to fall.

OTHER MISS FORCIBLE

(CONT'D)

Will send sailors swooning --oh--!

OTHER MISS SPINK
Will send sailors swooning --oh--!

With a crash, the old ladies TUMBLE DOWN IN A PILE.
Coraline winces. The audience HOWLS with laughter as the
curtains close on the disaster.

DRUM ROLL. A SCOTTIE DOG pushes a large BUCKET OF WATER,
labeled "POOL", onto center stage. Spotlights tilt up to
the top of very tall diving platforms WHERE THE OLD
LADIES NOW STAND. Coraline can't stand it.

CORALINE
(whispers)
I can't look!

OTHER MISS SPINK
Ready to break a leg, Miriam?

OTHER MISS FORCIBLE
Our lives for the theater, April!

They begin to bounce on the diving boards. As they bounce
up, the two troupers unzip *FAT SUIT DISGUISES* from which
emerge their YOUNGER BEAUTIFUL SELVES which LEAP to catch
matching TRAPEZE BARS that swing into place.

Coraline LAUGHS with relief and amazement, Other Wybie
pleased. Dogs WOOF, MUSIC BEGINS and the TWO BEAUTIES -
eyes BRIGHT BUTTONS, SEXY BATHING SUITS striped pink and
green - SWING OUT over the stage.

YOUNG FORCIBLE
What a piece of work is man!
How noble in reason!

They FLY past each other on their trapezes, double up,
catch one another hand to ankle. We notice a LARGE PEARL
RING on Forcible's finger.

YOUNG SPINK
How infinite in faculty!
In form and moving how express and
admirable!

In a SUDDEN change of direction, they SWING OUT over the
audience, trapeze bar LOWERING and PULL CORALINE INTO THE
AIR! She *HOLLERS*, terrified.

They expertly TOSS HER one to the other, FLIPPING AND
SPINNING, as they continue their lines. Her SCREAMS
become CRIES OF EXHILARATION.

YOUNG FORCIBLE
In action like an angel!

YOUNG SPINK
In apprehension how like a god!

CORALINE
Ahhh!!!

YOUNG FORCIBLE
The beauty of the world!

YOUNG SPINK
The paragon of animals!

Coraline swings face-to-face to the dogs in the royal box seats where one licks her.

CORALINE
Yeah!!

The acrobats TOSS CORALINE UP into the air and JACK-KNIFE DIVE into the large bucket below. They rise up, unhurt, just in time to catch Coraline. The THREE BOW to THUNDEROUS THUMPING APPLAUSE and, as the camera pulls back on the scene, Other Wybie throws her a rose!

EXT. OTHER ESTATE HOUSE - NIGHT

Other Wybie escorts Coraline up the stone stairs from Spink and Forcible's apartment. The Other Mother and Other Father, a huge, full moon rising behind them, wait at the top of the stairs.

OTHER FATHER
Hey there.

OTHER MOTHER
Was it wonderful, dear?

Other Mother's hair looks absolutely beautiful and Other Father dapper. Coraline shakes with excitement as they walk toward the front porch. Other Wybie holds back, loses his smile.

CORALINE
Oh yeah. They swooped down and pulled me right out of my seat - Spink and Forcible. Only they weren't old ladies, that was just a disguise. But then, I was flying through the air and... it was, it was magic.

They walk up the front steps.

OTHER MOTHER

You do like it here, don't you, Coraline?

CORALINE

(nods, turns back)

Uh-huh! Good night, Wybie.

Other Father takes Coraline inside. Wybie, at the bottom of the steps, looks GUILTY AND SAD. Other Mother glares at him, makes a huge, false smile then points to him. He just lowers his head.

INT. OTHER HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

OTHER MOTHER

You *could* stay here forever... if you want to.

CORALINE

Really?

OTHER FATHER

Sure...we'll sing and play games, and Mother will cook your favorite meals.

Other Mother rests her hand on Coraline's shoulder.

OTHER MOTHER

There's one tiny little thing we need to do.

CORALINE

What's that?

OTHER FATHER

Well, it's a surprise.

INT. OTHER DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Coraline is seated in her place. The Other Mother places a SMALL BOX with a bow in front of her, and takes her seat along with Other Father. Coraline excitedly removes the lid.

OTHER MOTHER

For you ... our little doll.

The "surprise" is a spool of BLACK THREAD, a SILVER NEEDLE, and a pair of SHINY BLACK BUTTONS -- FOR CORALINE'S EYES.

Coraline GASPS. She looks up at her Other Parents, hoping it's a bad joke.

OTHER MOTHER (CONT'D)

(smiling)

Black *is* traditional, but if you'd prefer pink or vermillion or chartreuse...

Coraline sees their button eyes changing colors, growing ever more panicked.

OTHER MOTHER (CONT'D)

... though you might make me jealous.

CORALINE

NO WAY!

She bats the box away, and her hands FLY to her face, COVER her eyes.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

YOU'RE NOT SEWING BUTTONS IN MY EYES!

OTHER MOTHER

Oh, but we need a *yes* ... if you want to stay here.

Other Father tests the needle on his finger.

OTHER FATHER

(enthusiastic)

So sharp you won't feel a thi-- Oww!

Other Mother KICKS him under the table. Embarrassed, he puts the needle back in the box.

OTHER MOTHER

There now; it's *your* decision, darling.
We only want what's best for you.

She walks over and puts her hand, now ICY COLD, on Coraline's shoulder. Coraline PUSHES it away and STANDS UP.

CORALINE

I'm... I'm going to bed! RIGHT NOW!

OTHER MOTHER

(wounded)

Bed?

OTHER FATHER

Before dinner?

Coraline fights to control her quaking voice.

CORALINE
I'm *really, really* tired. Yeah...
(fakes huge yawn)
I just need to sleep on things.

Other Mother stands, masking disappointment.

OTHER MOTHER
Well of course you do, darling... I'll be
happy to tuck you in.

Coraline backs away, urging them to stay where they are.

CORALINE
(palms out, forced smile)
Oh, no thanks, uh, you-you've done so
much already--

She turns to leave and finds the Other Mother BLOCKING
THE DOORWAY. Other Father joins her.

OTHER MOTHER
You're welcome. And I -
(smiles to Other Father)
we aren't worried at all, darling.
(softly)
Soon you'll see things *our* way.

She lets go. She and the Other Father herd Coraline
across the hallway to the stairs.

INT. OTHER HALLWAY, STAIRS, UPPER HALL - CONTINUOUS

Coraline carefully climbs the stairs, the Other Parents
watching. When they can no longer see her, she RACES up
the last steps and DASHES to her Other Bedroom.

INT. CORALINE'S OTHER BEDROOM - TWILIGHT

Coraline shuts the door and is quickly surrounded by
fluttering DRAGONFLIES.

MAGIC DRAGONFLY
What's wrong, Coraline? Don't you want to
play?

She jumps up and CATCHES the paper creatures, opens the
TOY CHEST and tosses them in.

The PLUSH BLUE SQUID greets her from the shelf, followed by the TOY TANK GIRAFFE.

TOY SQUID

Yeah, I wanna hugga your face!

TOY TANK GIRAFFE

Get a grip, soldier.

She GRABS them both and drops them in the toy chest.

Her PHOTO FRIENDS - NOW WITH BLACK BUTTONS FOR EYES - call out from the photo by her bed.

PHOTO FRIENDS

Hey!

PHOTO FRIEND 1

Where's yer buttons, yuper?

PHOTO FRIEND 2

You wanna stay, don'tcha?

Coraline grabs them as well, drops them in the chest, and SHUTS the lid. She barricades the door with a DRESSER and CHAIRS and then the TOY CHEST.

CORALINE

I'm going home tonight, *robots* - and I won't be back.

She sits on the bed, pulls off the blue boots then CLIMBS UNDER THE COVERS, pulling them over her head and holding tight. She HUGS herself to stop shaking, knowing she must fall asleep in this bed to wake up in her real bed at home. She closes her eyes and tells herself:

CORALINE (CONT'D)

Go to sleep, go to sleep, go to sleep, go to sleep!

She tosses one way, then another. WE HEAR her voice continue:

CORALINE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Go to sleep, go to sleep...

There are strange, backwards sounds, then the eerie voices of Other Mother and Other Father.

OTHER MOTHER (V.O.)

There's just one tiny little thing we have to do.

CORALINE

Go to sleep, go to sleep, go to sleep...

OTHER FATHER (V.O.)

So sharp you won't feel a thing...

CORALINE

Go to sleep, go to sleep, go to sleep...

OTHER MOTHER (V.O.)

Soon you'll see things our way...

Coraline fidgets and turns and turns again but sleep finally wraps her and takes her to oblivion.

MATCH PULLBACK
DISSOLVE:

INT. OTHER BEDROOM - LATER

We see Coraline's room, BRIGHTLY LIT LIKE MORNING IN THE REAL WORLD.

ANGLE ON Coraline's face beneath the covers, as she's WOKEN by the light. With a hopeful look, she calls out, pulls back the covers:

CORALINE

Mom!... Dad!..

Her smile turns to shock -- there's a BRIGHT, FULL MOON in her window and it's *STILL NIGHTTIME IN THE OTHER WORLD*.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

Oh God, I'm still here?

INT. OTHER STAIRS, LOWER HALLWAY - SAME

Coraline races downstairs to the Other Living Room where the little door home must be! But the living room is LOCKED TIGHT. She pulls at the handles, plants a foot and tries with all her might! It's no use. She stops, panting, then *hears a piano note being hit over and over*.

INT. OTHER FATHER'S STUDY - SAME

Coraline opens the door and finds the Other Father sitting at the piano, his back to her, hitting the note. She speaks in her bravest voice.

CORALINE

Hey you! Where's the Other Mother? I
want to go home.

The Other Father turns around. He looks ill; his hair
messed and his glasses askew. He speaks, his voice slowed-
down.

OTHER FATHER

All will be swell, soon as Mother's
refreshed. Her strength is our strength.

The WHITE-GLOVED HANDS POP OUT from the piano. One COVERS
HIS MOUTH, the other WAGS A FINGER in his face.

OTHER FATHER (CONT'D)

Mustn't talk when Mother's not here.

CORALINE

If you won't even talk to me, I'm gonna
find the Other Wybie. He'll help me.

She turns to go.

OTHER FATHER

No point; he pulled a long face...

He PULLS DOWN the corners of his mouth impossibly far.

OTHER FATHER (CONT'D)

...and Mother didn't like it.

The PIANO HANDS pop out again, aggressively SHUT HIS
MOUTH and SPIN HIM away from Coraline. Frightened, she
runs to the door that leads outside, and pulls it open.

EXT. OTHER HOUSE - NIGHT, FULL MOON

She runs out the back porch, towards the Other Garden.

OTHER STEEP HILLSIDE TRAIL

She crosses the trail, the Other House in the distance.

ENTRANCE TO OTHER ORCHARD

She runs down the path.

OTHER ORCHARD

Coraline runs past trees that are LUSH WITH GREEN LEAVES
AND RIPE RED FRUIT.

She's panting hard, and has to slow to a fast walk. The further she goes, the LESS TREE-LIKE the fruit trees become.

She hears the CAT *MEROWWW*. Surprised, she looks down.

CAT

And what do you think you're doing?

The cat trots along by her feet. She blinks.

CORALINE

Well, I'm gettin' outta here. That's what I'M doing.

The sky starts to BRIGHTEN and the apple trees become WIRE-THIN SHAPES OF TREES.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

Huh? Something's wrong. Shouldn't the old well be here?

The remnants of the trees and the sky and the ground give way to a PALE, EMPTY NOTHINGNESS. No ground or shadows.

CAT

Nothing out here ... it's the empty part of this world. She only made what she knew would impress you.

CORALINE

But why? Why does she want me?

They walk over the horizon.

CAT (cont'd)

She wants something to love, I think. Something that isn't her... Or maybe she'd just love something to eat.

CORALINE

Eat? That's ridiculous, mothers don't eat daughters!

CAT

I don't know. How do you taste?

OTHER HOUSE REAPPEARS

A SHAPE RISES in front of them in the whiteness and becomes the beautiful OTHER HOUSE. Coraline and the cat slow, then the front yard and topiary, the sky, hills, white gravel drive and the poplar trees behind them FILL IN.

CORALINE

Huh? But how can you walk away from something and still come back to it?

The cat curls its tail into a question mark, and tips its head to one side.

CAT

Walk around the world.

CORALINE

Small world.

Coraline shivers. The cat suddenly TENSES, focuses on a shrub.

CAT

Hang on--

He bounds towards the shrub and chases out a CUTE KANGAROO MOUSE in uniform with a TINY TRUMPET. Before Coraline can blink, he's PINNED IT DOWN.

CORALINE

Stop, he's one of the circus mice!

With a SWIFT BLOW of its paw, the cat KNOCKS the mouse into the air, and catches it in his mouth. He gives a QUICK, KILLING BITE - CORALINE GASPS - and the mouse TRANSFORMS into a BIG DEAD RAT. Coraline is stunned. He drops the rat on the ground.

CAT

I don't like rats at the best of times, but *this* one was sounding an alarm.

The cat picks the rat up and heads off. Slack-jawed, Coraline speaks with admiration.

CORALINE

Gooooood kitty.

Coraline looks to the house with a determined look.

On the porch, she takes out a HEAVY CANE from the UMBRELLA STAND and hits it into her hand.

INT. HOUSE, OTHER HALLWAY - SAME

Coraline, standing in front of the living room doors, TESTS the cane in her hands, and peers down the hall for danger. It's dead quiet -- no piano, no sounds of anything.

She JAMS the cane through the doors' handles, and PULLS with all her might. One HANDLE AND LOCK BREAK and the door swings open into the pitch black living room. The hall light casts a narrow path directly to the Other Little Door on the far wall, cracked open. She steps into the room.

INT. OTHER LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A huge ARMOIRE BUG suddenly crab-steps in her path, blocking the little door, and all around her things start to glow. The room has been TRANSFORMED into an amazing BUG MUSEUM, with all sorts of glowing, living specimens in the place of the old furniture and furnishings. The radiators are now big caterpillars, the Nordic Track a serving bug.

The Other Mother speaks out, startling Coraline.

OTHER MOTHER (O.S.)

They say even the proudest --

The sofa, now a LARGE BUG, turns in place to reveal her sitting on it.

OTHER MOTHER (CONT'D)

--spirit can be broken ... with love.

She's all smiles, button eyes shining, one hand held out in a *behold my handiwork* gesture.

A BUG CHAIR scoops up Coraline and brings her to the Other Mother.

The Other Mother takes a candy dish from the servant bug.

OTHER MOTHER (CONT'D)

Of course, chocolate never hurts. Like one?

She extends a CANDY DISH filled LIVING CHOCOLATE BEETLES.

OTHER MOTHER (CONT'D)

They're Cocoa Beetles from Zanzibar.

Coraline is disgusted. The Other Mother takes back the dish and BITES OFF THE HEAD OF ONE. It's the first thing she's eaten in the film.

CORALINE

I want to be with my *real* mom and dad. I want you to let me go.

The Other Mother FROWNS, swallows. She speaks with a FRIGHTENING STEELINESS in her voice.

OTHER MOTHER

Is that any way to talk to your mother?

Coraline is mad, and feeling mad makes her brave.

CORALINE

You aren't my mother.

The Other Mother STRAIGHTENS. Her button eyes, now DEAD, stare into Coraline's.

OTHER MOTHER

Apologize at once, Coraline!

Coraline stares right back, not blinking.

CORALINE

No.

OTHER MOTHER

(tensely)

I'll give you to the count of three.
One...

Then she stands up, GROWING TALLER.

OTHER MOTHER (CONT'D)

...two...

She grows TALLER STILL and SCARIER like a super model on steroids.

TALL OTHER MOTHER

...THREE!

This TALL OTHER MOTHER GRABS Coraline by her NOSE and DRAGS her to the hallway.

CORALINE

Ow, what are you doing!

INT. OTHER HOUSE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

She PULLS Coraline down the hallway to the mirror at the end. Coraline flails at the Tall Other Mother with her fists.

CORALINE

Ow, that hurts!

Tall Other Mother **SHOVES** Coraline **RIGHT THROUGH THE MIRROR** as if it was water!

INT. CLOSET-PRISON BEHIND THE MIRROR - CONTINUOUS

Coraline **HITS** the ground hard. The Tall Other Mother, head thrust through the mirror, stares down at her angrily.

TALL OTHER MOTHER

You may come out when you've learned to be a *loving* daughter!

She **PULLS HER HEAD OUT** and leaves Coraline in **DARKNESS**.

Coraline pounds on the mirror-door, kicks it with her blue boots. A **SOB** wells up in her throat.

And then we hear a *SOFT GHOSTLY MOAN*.

She turns. She can just make out a sagging iron bed. When the voice speaks, there is a faint glow from beneath its stained cover.

CORALINE

(frightened)

Who's there?

TALL GIRL GHOST (O.S.)

(whispers)

Hush! And shush! For the Beldam might be listening!

Coraline steps towards the bed, the faint glow from under the covers in sync with the words she hears.

CORALINE

(whispers)

You ... you mean the Other Mother? ...

She gently pulls back the sheets.

The **DIMLY GLOWING GHOSTS** of **THREE CHILDREN**, **BUTTON EYES**, **SIT UP**: a **SWEET GIRL GHOST**, Coraline's size; a **TALL GIRL GHOST**, emotional; a young **BOY GHOST**, very sad.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

Who are you?

BOY GHOST

(wistful)

Don't remember our names... But I 'member my *true* mommy...

The boy, dressed like Huck Finn, CONJURES up ghost flowers.

The strange-looking flowers wither and fade. He's so sad that Coraline takes his cold hand and squeezes it.

CORALINE

Why are you all here?

ALL GHOSTS

The Beldam!

The ghosts move about in a *dance macabre*, like ghostly fish in water.

SWEET GIRL GHOST

*She spied on our lives,
through the little doll's eyes,*

BOY GHOST

And saw that we weren't happy.

TALL GIRL GHOST

So she lured us away,

TALL GIRL GHOST (CONT'D)

with treasures and treats,

SWEET GIRL GHOST

and games to play!

BOY GHOST

Gave all that we asked -

SWEET GIRL GHOST

yet we still wanted more -

TALL GIRL GHOST

So we let her sew the buttons.

BOY GHOST

She said that she loved us,

TALL GIRL GHOST

But she locked us here

ALL GHOSTS

And ate up our lives.

The ghosts fall back into their bed and sink down. Coraline is stunned. She thinks a little and then speaks, trying to steady her voice.

CORALINE

Well, she can't keep me in the dark
forever; not if she wants to win my life.
Beating her is my only chance.

A beat. Then the Sweet Girl asks in her sing-song way:

SWEET GIRL GHOST

Perhaps, if you *do* win your escape, you
could find our eyes?

CORALINE

Has she taken those, too?

SWEET GIRL GHOST

Yes, miss. And hidden them.

BOY GHOST

Find our eyes, mistress, and our souls
will be freed.

CORALINE

I ... I'll try.

The ghosts PULSE with hope. Coraline sits down against
the mirror door, bounces her head against it. She's not
hopeless.

Suddenly, HANDS REACH THROUGH THE MIRROR and PULL HER
OUT!

INT. OTHER HALLWAY - NIGHT

C.U. of Coraline's FACE, eyes wild, as she TEARS at the
hands that hold her. She GRABS one and, FLIPS her MASKED
ATTACKER onto the ground. She pulls off his mask: it's
the OTHER WYBIE, his mouth stitched into a PAINFUL, EAR
TO EAR SMILE.

CORALINE

(panting)

WYBIE?..

Coraline sits him up.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

Did she do this to you?

She unstitches his painfully-huge grin.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

I hope that feels bet--

OTHER WYBIE

Shhh.

He stops her with a finger to her lips, and points to the Other Living Room, its door UNLOCKED AND OPEN. He grabs her hand and PULLS her there.

INT. OTHER LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

It's dark, the bug furniture asleep. They run to the big armoire bug that guards the little door and SHOVE IT out of the way. It CRASHES to the floor. And from upstairs, a voice calls out.

TALL OTHER MOTHER (O.S.)

Coraline? Is that you!

CORALINE

Let's go!

She opens the little door. A COLD WIND blows from the dark passageway, now filled with SPIDER WEBS and the SHOES, COATS, AND HATS of other kids who tried to escape.

TALL OTHER MOTHER (O.S.)

Coraline...

The tunnel MOVES at the sound of her voice. Coraline takes Other Wybie's arm.

CORALINE

Come on. She'll hurt you again!

He shakes his head no, then pulls off his glove to reveal a HAND MADE OF SAWDUST. He blows his fingers away.

HIGH HEELS CLICK from the stairs; she's ALMOST THERE!

TALL OTHER MOTHER (O.S.)

Coraline? How dare you disobey your mother!!

Other Wybie shoves Coraline into the tunnel and shuts the door.

INT. PASSAGEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Hunched down, she moves as quickly as she can, tearing through the sticky cobwebs.

TALL OTHER MOTHER (O.S.)
(calling after her)
Coraline!

Strands of web brush her face, stick to her hair; she closes her eyes, hands out until she finally gets to the little door at the other end. She DIVES, TUCKS, --

INT. REAL LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS TIME, BUT **DAY** HERE

-- AND ROLLS OUT onto the REAL LIVING ROOM FLOOR. Coraline SLAMS the door shut and turns the sharp little key - still in the keyhole - to LOCK IT.

She stands, covered in dust and cobwebs, and calls out with joy and relief.

CORALINE
I'M HOME!

INT. HALLWAY, STAIRWAY, DAD'S STUDY - SAME

She goes quickly through the apartment, happily calling:

CORALINE
Anybody here? Hello, hello, hello! Real Dad ... Real Mom!

INT. KITCHEN - SAME

CORALINE
Oh, Mom's groceries!

There are bags of groceries on the table, as if her mother had just gotten in. She pulls open a bag to peek and FRUIT FLIES shoot out. The food is spoiled.

CORALINE (CONT'D)
(puzzled)
Uhhh. That's disgusting.

Door bell rings.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

She runs excitedly to the door and flings it open.

CORALINE
I missed you guys *so much*-- You'll never--

INT./EXT. FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS, RAIN

But it's just Wybie, the real boy.

CORALINE

Oh... the Wybie that talks...

He's waves, face down, awkward.

WYBIE

Huh? Ha ha ha....yeah... Um, so you know tha-that old doll I gave you?

Coraline tenses, *sharp breath*.

WYBIE (CONT'D)

Um... my Gramma's real mad, says it was her sister's - the one that... disappeared?

She reads him like a book.

CORALINE

(realization)

You *stole* that doll, didn't you?

Wybie answers quickly, guilty as heck.

WYBIE.

Well, i-it looked just *like* you. And I figured--

Coraline, rushing the words, tells him the truth.

CORALINE

It *used* to look like this pioneer girl; then Huck Finn junior; then it was this Little Rascals chick with all these ribbons, and braids, and....

Her voice trails off. Coraline studies Wybie, then, *snaps her fingers*.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

Grandma's missing sister!

He nods, one brow raising up.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

I think I just met her. C'mon!

She pulls him inside and--

INT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

--drags him down the hall.

WYBIE

Uh, listen, I-I-I'm really not supposed to--

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Coraline WALKS HIM to the LITTLE DOOR in the corner wall and points. Wybie looks around anxiously, fearful and curious to be in his grandmother's old house.

CORALINE

She's in there.

Reluctantly, he bends down and reaches for the key in the lock.

WYBIE

C-can you - can you unlock it?

She grabs his hand, stops him.

CORALINE

Not in a million years. But it wouldn't matter; she can't escape without her eyes. None of the ghosts can.

Wybie stares at her, nodding his head as if he understands her crazy story. He changes the subject, gets back to his mission.

WYBIE

Huhhhhhh... So, uh, I really need to get that doll?

Coraline snaps at him.

CORALINE

Great! I'd love to get rid of it!

She exhales in a huff. Grabs his sleeve, leads him from room.

INT. CORALINE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The doll's not on the bed, not on the chairs or moving boxes.

CORALINE

Where are you hiding, you little monster?!

Wybie nervously watches Coraline pull out her dresser drawers, yank cushions off the window seat.

WYBIE

You and Gramma been talking?

CORALINE

The doll's her *spy*! It's how she *watches* you, finds out what's *wrong* with your life!

Wybie, trapped like a deer-in-the-headlights, tries to make sense of her remarks.

WYBIE

The doll...is my Gramma's...spy.

CORALINE

NO! - the *Other Mother*! She's got this whole world where everything's better - the food, the garden, the--
(leans in on him)
--neighbors.

Holds her hands up.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

But it's all a trap!

Wybie, eager to escape, cups hand to ear by the window.

WYBIE

Yeah... Uh, I think I heard someone calling me, Jonesy.

Coraline sees right through him.

CORALINE

Don't *believe* me?... You can ask the cat!

He moves around her towards the door, turns to leave.

WYBIE

The cat... I-I'll just tell Gramma that you couldn't find the doll-- OW!

A blue boot - thrown by Coraline - HITS his arm. He turns back as she takes off the second one.

CORALINE
You're not LISTENING TO ME!

WYBIE
That's ... cause ... you're *CRAZY!*

He FLEES as the second boot flies past. Coraline GROWLS, and gives chase.

INT UPPER STAIRWAY - CONTINUOUS

She grabs her boots from the floor, and CHASES him down the stairs in her socks.

EXT. FRONT DOOR/DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS, RAINING

Door flies open and Wybie RUNS down the front steps to his electric bike. Coraline RACES down after him.

CORALINE
You creep!

WYBIE
(calling over his shoulder)
Crazy!!

He RUNS his bike towards the FALLEN TREE, HOPS ON and PEDALS LIKE MAD. As Coraline hurls a boot at him, he GUNS the motor and escapes down a side path past the driveway.

CORALINE
Crazy?... You're the jerk-wad that gave me the doll!

Out of breath, she turns away and notices her PARENTS' CAR parked to the side.

CORALINE (CONT'D)
Mom! Dad!

Excited, she hops over the fallen tree and runs to the car.

INT. JONES' CAR - SAME
Coraline, standing in the rain, excitedly looks through the car's window. But the car is EMPTY. She spots her mom's PHONE, then opens the door to grab it and speed dial a number.

CORALINE
Pick it up, Dad, pick it up.

CHARLIE (V.O.)

Hi!

CORALINE

Dad! Whe-

CHARLIE (V.O.)

I'm digging in my garden right now, but
leave a message and I'll get right back
to you.

She dejectedly looks at the phone, then snaps it shut.

CORALINE

Where have you gone?

INT. SPINK AND FORCIBLE'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Miss Spink is knitting a SWEATER WITH WINGS for a worried-
looking ANGUS, one of the Scotties, who sits on her lap.

Coraline sips tea, anxious, the other two DOGS beside
her.

CORALINE

Uh... don't you only make wings for the
... dead ones?

MISS SPINK

Just looking ahead dear... Angus hasn't
been feeling very well of late.

MISS FORCIBLE (O.S.)

April? Aren't you getting ready?

MISS SPINK

(looks off camera)

We've lost our ride, Miriam. Caroline
says her parents have vanished, quite
completely.

ANGLE ON Miss Forcible, tightening her elaborate corset
behind a screen, using pulleys and hooks.

MISS FORCIBLE

What?! We've waited months for those
tickets.

One of the corset hooks FLIES UP and pulls off her wig.
She ignores it and comes over to address Spink.

MISS SPINK

I suppose we could walk!

MISS FORCIBLE
With your gamy legs? It's nearly two
miles to the theater!

Coraline CLEARS HER THROAT, frustrated.

MISS SPINK
Oh, oh yes ... your missing parents. We
know just what you need. Miriam,
get...that's right.

Miss Forcible grabs another dish of old stuck-together
candy and puts it in front of Coraline.

CORALINE
How is hundred-year-old candy going to
help--

Miss Spink suddenly RAISES her KNITTING NEEDLES as if to
STAB CORALINE. Coraline *yelps*, hands up in defense. But
it's CANDIES she attacks, sending sticky chips flying,
making loud grunts as she stabs.

She pulls a LARGE, THREE-SIDED CANDY WITH A HOLE IT from
the rubble and passes it to Coraline.

MISS SPINK
There you go, sweetie.

Coraline studies the odd candy.

CORALINE
What's it for?

She holds it up, looks through its hole at the ladies.

MISS SPINK
Well, it might help. They're good for *bad*
things, sometimes.

MISS FORCIBLE
No, they're good for *lost* things.

They don't look any different.

MISS SPINK
It's bad things, Miriam.

MISS FORCIBLE
Lost things, *April*.

MISS SPINK
Bad.

MISS FORCIBLE
Lost.

MISS SPINK
Bad things!

MISS FORCIBLE
Lost.

MISS SPINK
Bad.

MISS FORCIBLE
Lost.

Coraline can't take anymore. She gets up, takes the odd piece of candy and leaves.

INT. PARENT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Coraline, dressed for bed with her blanket over her shoulder, walks into her parent's room, the PHOTO of her and her parents at the Bear Fountain in the foreground.

She pulls down the bed covers and builds COPIES of her parents out of pillows. She fits an extra neck brace on one pillow head and some reading glasses on the other. Then Coraline lies down and pulls up the covers, very sad.

CORALINE
Good-night, Mom. Good-night, Dad.

She kisses them both and BEGINS TO CRY. CAM PUSHES IN.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PARENT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT, LATER

Coraline, asleep. SOMETHING blurs past camera. One paw and then two paws bat her nose. She opens her eyes to find OPAL BLUE EYES staring at her. It's the BLACK CAT, *purring* loudly.

CORALINE
Hello. How did you get in?

The cat yawns, his eyes flash.

CORALINE (CONT'D)
Do you know where Mom and Dad are?

The cat blinks. Then he heads out the door.

INT. LOWER HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

She follows him, wrapped in her blanket, to the MIRROR at the end of the hallway. The mirror starts to GLOW and then an IMAGE FORMS within the glass. It's HER PARENTS! They cling together, blue with cold, as snow falls.

CORALINE

MOM! DAD!!

They look up and, with a desperate look, Mel BREATHES on the inside mirror-glass to fog it. She writes *H E L P U S.* - her fingertip *squeaking* on the glass like a SMALL, SAD BIRD. Frost RISES UP, hiding the letters and then her parents. The image fades.

Coraline STRIKES AT THE MIRROR as hard as she can. GLASS SHATTERS and she drops to the ground, shaking. The cat nuzzles her..

CORALINE (CONT'D)

How did this happen?

INT. PARENT'S BEDROOM - SAME

From under the bed, the cat drags out the BUTTON-EYED DOLL, REMADE into HER MOTHER on one side, and HER FATHER on the other!

CORALINE

She's taken them.

Coraline, enraged, THROWS the doll. FIRE LIGHT comes up on her face as the background DISSOLVES TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM, FRONT OF FIREPLACE - SAME

CLOSE ON DOLL: BURNING in the FIREPLACE.

Coraline and cat watch until the fire burns out. She takes a breath and looks up at the mantel.

ANGLE ON snowglobe, the one of the FOUNTAIN BEARS from the Detroit Zoo. Coraline cradles it, remembering.

CORALINE

They're not coming back, are they - Mom and Dad. Not on their own.

The cat blinks. She looks over at the locked little door in the corner wall.

CORALINE (CONT'D)
Only one thing to do.

CUT TO:

INT CORALINE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Series of quick shots of Coraline getting ready to go. Pulls her collecting bag from the closet, her puffy vest, her boots; grabs a candle and garden shears, puts them in the bag. She stands to go, taking her cap off the chair. The ODD PIECE OF CANDY, the triangle green one with the hole, drops to the floor. She hesitates a moment, then sticks it in her bag.

INT. PASSAGEWAY - CONTINUOUS

We hear the *click* of the door being unlocked. It opens to reveal the cat, and - holding a lit candle - Coraline. She leaves the key in the lock, like always, takes a breath and crawls forward.

The candle casts huge, flickering shadows along the wall. The cat, his voice returned, SPEAKS to her.

CAT
You know, you're walking right into her trap.

CORALINE
I have to go back.

With great feeling, she explains:

CORALINE (CONT'D)
They are my parents.

CAT
Challenge her then. She may not play fair but she won't refuse. She's got a thing for games.

Coraline thinks about it, remembering.

CORALINE
Hmmm, okay.

The door at the end of the tunnel clicks open, the candle BLOWS OUT and the cat VANISHES IN THE DARK. Coraline tenses when a voice calls out.

MOTHER
Coraline?

CORALINE
Mom?

There, framed in the open door, back-lit in blue, Coraline's REAL MOTHER, with neck brace and dressed in her shopping clothes, calls.

MOTHER
Coraline, you came back for us!

CORALINE
(relieved)
MOM!

She runs forward eagerly and--

INT. OTHER LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

--out the Other Little Door, throwing her arms out to hug her real Mom.

MOTHER
Darling!
(voice shifting)
Why would you run away from *me*?

Coraline sees her mother's hand GROW as it wraps around her. Alarmed, she PUSHES AWAY and sees the DECOY MOM grow into the TALL OTHER MOTHER.

The room LIGHTS UP with the glowing bug furniture and a fireplace fire.

Coraline tries her best to be brave.

CORALINE
Where are my parents?

The Tall Other Mother's button eyes GLITTER.

TALL OTHER MOTHER
Gosh, I have no idea where your "old" parents are. Perhaps they've grown bored of you and run away to France?

Her teeth gleam.

CORALINE

They weren't bored of me. You stole them!

Other Father, a FOOT SHORTER than before, his sagging face a pale PUMPKIN color, his hair VINES, comes up behind Coraline.

TALL OTHER MOTHER

Now, don't be difficult, Coraline. Have a seat, won't you?

Other Father, GURGLING happily, herds Coraline onto the walking bug chair.

The Tall Other Mother, standing by the little door, turns to it and CLAPS her hands.

A moment later, a HUGE RAT skitters out of the tunnel - *FILLED AGAIN with spider webs and children's things* - carrying the KEY from the real world door.

The Tall Other Mother takes the key, locks the door, and - while the armoire bug assumes guard position - she SWALLOWS THE KEY.

CORALINE

(offhand)

Why don't you have your own key?

OTHER FATHER

Only *one* key.

The Other Mother PULLS A VINE growing from his ear, SHUTTING HIS MOUTH.

TALL OTHER MOTHER

Shhh!

(sunnier)

The garden squash need tending, don't you think, pumpkin?

She turns him around, her hands under his arms and drags him out.

OTHER FATHER

Squish squash, pumpkin sauce...

After a beat, Coraline hears the very faint SOUND OF A FINGER ON GLASS, just like when her mother wrote HELP on the mirror. Coraline jumps to her feet, looking around the room for a sign of her real parents.

CORALINE
(loud whisper)
Mom, Dad, where'd she hide you?

A muffled screen door *slams O.S.* and the Tall Other Mother calls to her from the kitchen.

TALL OTHER MOTHER (O.S.)
Breakfast-time!

Coraline leaves frame.

INT. OTHER KITCHEN - NIGHT

Coraline pauses in the doorway.

CORALINE (V.O.)
(to herself)
Be strong, Coraline.

She sits at the kitchen table in her regular place, her back to the sink.

Tall Other Mother, humming happily, prepares a mushroom omelet and bacon. Fragrant cinnamon buns bake in the oven.

At the table's center, Coraline sees the box with her **BUTTON EYES** with needle and thread. A bead of sweat rolls down her forehead. As casually as she can, she asks:

CORALINE (CONT'D)
(anxious, trying to be cool)
Why don't we play ... a game? I know you like them.

The Tall Other Mother's button eyes **FLASH**.

TALL OTHER MOTHER
Everybody likes games.

CORALINE
(nods)
Uh huh.

Bacon sizzles and spits on the stove.

TALL OTHER MOTHER
What kind of game would it be?

CORALINE)
An exploring game ... a finding things game.

Other Mother tries to act disinterested, but her fingers drum with excitement.

OTHER MOTHER
And what is it you'd be finding,
Coraline?

Coraline hesitates.

CORALINE
My real parents.

TALL OTHER MOTHER
(dismissive)
Too easy.

She folds the omelet over in the pan.

CORALINE
And, and the eyes of the ghost children.

Tall Other Mother smiles: *now it's getting interesting.*

TALL OTHER MOTHER
Huh.

The meal ready, she turns from the stove and takes the food to Coraline.

TALL OTHER MOTHER (CONT'D)
What if you don't find them?

CORALINE
If I lose, I'll stay here with you
forever and let you love me.
(indicates button box)
And I'll let you sew buttons into my
eyes.

TALL OTHER MOTHER
Hmmm... And if you somehow win this game?

CORALINE
Then you let me go. You let everyone go -
my real father and mother, the dead
children, everyone you've trapped here.

The Tall Other Mother smiles a malicious *not in a million years* smile.

TALL OTHER MOTHER
Deal.

She holds out her hand. Coraline doesn't reach.

CORALINE

Not till you give me a clue.

Tall Other Mother snorts, her smile sours. She slowly circles Coraline, and speaks as if talking to a very stupid child.

TALL OTHER MOTHER

Oh, right... In each of three wonders I've made just for you, a ghost's eye is lost in plain sight.

CORALINE

And for my parents?

Tall Other Mother - standing behind her in front of the sink - smiles wickedly and just starts TAPPING HER BUTTON EYE with her finger nail. Coraline turns away from her.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

(shrugs)

Fine. Don't tell me...

Extending her hand, Coraline starts to turn back.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

...it's a deal--

But the Tall Other Mother HAS DISAPPEARED and the tapping now is the FAUCET DRIPPING in the sink.

Coraline EXHALES, walks to the sink, stares at the dripping faucet.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

What does she mean "wonders?"

Out the kitchen window, the FANTASTIC GARDEN LIGHTS UP, answering her question. She FURROWS HER BROWS, thinks *this was too easy*.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

Hmmm.

CUT TO:

EXT. OTHER GARDEN - SAME

Coraline walks through the gates. The bright magic of the garden is DARKER NOW, with areas of black against areas of glowing flowers.

She passes the PITCHER PLANTS, and the one with the frog suddenly SWALLOWS the animal.

She goes up the steps past the BLEEDING HEARTS, which now LEAK STICKY RED JUICE that runs down the wall.

At the top, a few SNAPDRAGONS, feeble now, SNAP at her. She KICKS them down. Behind her, a brick tree ring OPENS like a monster's MOUTH and five HUGE, PALE SNAPDRAGONS sneak towards her. They ATTACK, knock her to the ground, spilling her bag.

CORALINE

No!!

They GRAB CORALINE at her ankles, knees, hips, waist, and shoulder, and start to ROLL HER UP TOWARDS THE STONE MOUTH.

Coraline is just able to GRAB her GARDEN SHEARS. She CUTS OFF one mutant snapdragon's head, then another, until she is free. The HEADLESS STEMS retreat into the rock mouth.

Coraline, winded, goes to gather her spilled things when a trio of HUMMINGBIRDS/WASP HYBRIDS SWOOP IN. They don't attack her; instead they poke their long beaks into the TRIANGLE CANDY WITH THE HOLE and LIFT OFF.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

Stop!!

Coraline chases them, but they're getting away. As she crosses the little bridge, she takes off her cap and FLINGS IT LIKE A FRISBEE at them. SCORE! They fall to the ground, near the eyebrow shrubs, sawdust spilling out. She picks up the triangle candy.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

Why steal this?

With a look of *what does she have to lose*, she holds it up to her eye and GASPS.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

Wow...

EVERYTHING IS BLURRY GREY like a pencil drawing, all color gone. She scans the garden, turning slowly. As she turns back to where she started, she *sees something, right in front of her*: a BURNING RED EMBER -- A GHOST'S EYE!

CORALINE (CONT'D)

That must be it.

She lowers the stone from her eye, to see that the ghost's eye is the FADED STICK SHIFT KNOB from the preying mantis tractor, which STANDS RIGHT IN FRONT OF HER with the Other Father, a SQUAT PUMPKIN MAN, at its controls, his own hands IMPRISONED IN THE MECHANICAL PIANO HANDS.

HEADLIGHTS GLARE and the tractor ROARS TO LIFE. The mechanical hands FORCE Other Father to SHIFT GEARS, and the tractor LURCHES at Coraline, its arms SLASHING. She yells, backs away. Other Father calls in a garbled voice:

OTHER FATHER

Sorrory, so sorrory, Motherrr making meeee.

Coraline backs onto the little bridge that spans the fountains as the tractor moves in.

OTHER FATHER (CONT'D)

Don't waaaanno hurrrrrt you.

The Other Father tries to steer the tractor away, but the mechanical hands are stronger. It moves onto the bridge - STUPIDLY SMASHING THROUGH THE PLANKS in front of it. Halfway over, it lurches, then STARTS TO FALL THROUGH THE HOLE IT HAS CREATED. The tractor hangs precariously for a moment.

Other Father KICKS away one mechanical hand, and with ONE HAND FREE, manages to PULL OFF THE SHIFT KNOB.

OTHER FATHER (CONT'D)

Taaaake it!!!!!!

Coraline DIVES FORWARD and just GETS THE KNOB before the tractor and Other Father fall away and SINK UNDER THE WATER.

Rippling out from Coraline like a gray wave, the entire GARDEN BECOMES ASHEN AND DEAD.

Coraline CATCHES HER BREATH, shaken. The ghost eye/gear knob GLOWS RED, no magic candy necessary.

BOY GHOST

Bless you, miss, you found me! But there's two eyes still lost.

CORALINE

Don't worry, I'm getting the hang of it!

Coraline looks past the greyed garden towards the Other House. A LUNAR ECLIPSE has begun, the full moon a pale acid green.

Coraline looks concerned, then resolved, and then she heads towards the house. *A haunting version of Spink and Forcible's show song starts to play...*

EXT. OTHER HOUSE, STAIRWAY TO SPINK AND FORCIBLE'S - SAME

CORALINE'S POV DOWN STAIRWAY: chaser lights circle the door at half-speed. *Haunting show song continues.*

REVERSE ON Coraline. She carefully descends towards CAM.

INT DOWNSTAIRS THEATRE - SAME

WE SEE her flickering shadow and then Coraline appears behind the entry curtains. She steps close, pulls the curtain open. *Song stops.*

POV ON THEATER, quiet and dark save for light coming through entry curtains. She spots usher's FLASHLIGHT on the ground.

ON CORALINE - she picks it up, clicks it on, and STEPS FORWARD. She sweeps the light beam around, apprehensive, then HEARS SOMETHING overhead. She aims flashlight up and startles a NEST OF BAT-DOGS - half Scotties/half bats. One bares his teeth and GROWLS. She clicks off the light and shivers.

On stage, one spotlight and footlights FADE UP on a huge, wrapped SALTWATER TAFFY. It hangs from ropes and sandbags.

She cautiously climbs up onto the stage. A HUMAN-SIZED TAFFY THING - striped pale pink and green - can just be seen through the wrapper. She holds her TRIANGLE CANDY-WITH-HOLE to her eye. There is a BLUE-WHITE GLOW coming from inside the wrapper.

Coraline PUNCHES A HOLE through the paper, steels herself, then reaches inside. She touches something *sticky* and *cold* and *inhuman*. Clenching her teeth, she grabs hold and pulls out two clasped-together COLD, TAFFY HANDS - Young Spink and Forcible's.

Her heart thumps. She PRIES the TAFFY HANDS open like scallop shells until a large PEARL-on-a-ring is revealed.

CORALINE
(realizing)
The pearl!

The hands suddenly GRAB HER! She SCREAMS. Young Spink and Forcible, *twisted together into one taffy monster*, THRUST THEIR HEADS FROM THE BAG!

TAFFY MONSTER

Thief!! Give it back!

Coraline PULLS AWAY, STRETCHING the candy arm out across the stage! The taffy monster THRUSTS OUT another paired arm, and starts DRAGGING ITSELF TOWARDS CORALINE, ropes swaying on pulleys.

TAFFY MONSTER (CONT'D)

(in unison)

You thief! Thief! Thief! Thief! Give it back! Thief! Give it back! Give it back! Thief! Stop thief! Thief! Stop!

Coraline, desperate, gets an idea. She *clicks* on her flashlight and aims it at the BAT-DOGS. They GROWL with annoyance, OPEN their wings.

The taffy monster is GETTING CLOSER! Coraline *hurls the flashlight at the bat-dogs* and HITS THEM. Angered, they TAKE WING TO ATTACK HER - *just like she planned!*

Bat-dogs are closing on the left, the taffy monster on the right! She waits to the very last second, and then DIVES OUT OF THE WAY!

BAT-DOGS AND TAFFY MONSTER COLLIDE! Coraline's hand is *released* by the taffy hands, leaving her the PEARL. The bat-dogs and taffy monster - stuck together and still-as-stone - turn to *dead, grey ash, as does the stage and theater.*

The PEARL in Coraline's hand PULSES BLUE.

TALL GIRL GHOST (V.O.)

Hurry on, girl - her web is unwinding!

Coraline nods, sticks the pearl in her bag, and looks up towards the ceiling and beyond.

EXT. OTHER HOUSE/OTHER BOBINSKY'S BALCONY - SAME

CORALINE'S MOVING POV, on lower ext stairs to UP ANGLE ON BALCONY. We hear *haunting circus music* in the air.

Other Mr. B's Russian flag, TORN in places, waves in the air. The pale green moon is nearly HALF-ECLIPSED now with what is clearly the SHADOW OF A HUGE, DARK, BUTTON.

ANGLE ON CORALINE as she climbs the last flight of stairs to Bobinsky's. She stops with a SHUDDER at the top. The flag has been replaced with the EMPTY COAT OF OTHER WYBIE-gloves, pants and sneakers pinned on - hanging like old laundry.

CORALINE

Oh, Wybie...

She takes a breath, leans out over the railing and shouts.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

EVIL WITCH ... I'M NOT SCARED!

The door behind her CREAKS open. Coraline shivers - she is *definitely* scared.

INT. OTHER MR. B'S ATTIC FLAT - CONTINUOUS

Coraline steps into the apartment and carefully shuts the door. The cannons and Ferris wheel are dark and quiet; the circus tent glows dimly. Pale green moonlight shines in patches through holes in the roof. The corners and edges of the room are very dark.

OTHER BOBINSKY suddenly CRAWLS by the door behind her. Coraline whips around, on guard. He LOOMS UP past the cannons on her right, leaning towards her.

OTHER MR. BOBINSKY

Hello, ga-LOO-boo-shka.

There are *too many joints* in his arms and legs.

CORALINE

I'm Coraline.

His tall, crooked hat is pulled so low, and his collar so high, that his *face is completely hidden*.

He throws out his arm towards her and the CIRCUS BALL from the mouse circus rolls from his sleeve to his hand.

OTHER MR. BOBINSKY

Is *dis* vhat you're looking for?

She looks through the hole of the triangle candy and sees an AMBER GLOW - the THIRD GHOST'S EYE!

CORALINE

Uh-huh.

She grabs for it, but he's too quick. He back-bends to all fours and SCUTTLES around her towards the back shadows.

OTHER MR. BOBINSKY
You tink vinning game is goot ting?

Coraline holds up the triangle candy, scans the room for him. His voice sounds distorted now.

OTHER MR. BOBINSKY (O.S.)
(CONT'D)
You'll just go home and be bored and neglected...

WE SEE him *twine up a post* behind Coraline, *crawl out on a beam...*

OTHER MR. BOBINSKY
(CONT'D)
...same as always.

He SWINGS UPSIDE-DOWN from his ankles, his head stopping right by Coraline's. She whips around, alarmed.

OTHER MR. BOBINSKY
(CONT'D)
Stay here vis us; vee vill listen to you and laugh vis you.

He DROPS to the floor on his head, then SLITHERS into the circus tent. Coraline does *not* want to follow him. But she does.

INT. CIRCUS TENT - CONTINUOUS

The Other Mr. B is perched on a pile of MOLDY CHEESES in the center of the ring. He moves like all his bones are broken.

OTHER MR. BOBINSKY
If you stay here, you can have whatever you vant, vsig-DA - always.

Coraline raises the triangle candy to her eye, sees the AMBER GLOW coming from inside his hat.

CORALINE
You don't get it, do you?

She moves closer.

OTHER MR. BOBINSKY
I don't understand.

Small forms MOVE under the back of his coat.

CORALINE
Of *course* you don't understand. You're
just a copy she made of the real Mr. B.

OTHER MR. BOBINSKY
(last breath)
Not even that anymore.

Coraline pulls off his hat. Instead of his head, a HUGE
PALE RAT SITS THERE - *holding the circus ball*. It *barks*
at her then DIVES DOWN the coat collar.

RATS leap from COAT SLEEVES and PANT LEGS, Coraline pulls
back, *HORRIFIED*, as the clothes collapse, scanning around
for the circus ball.

There's a *rat bark* behind her and she turns. The HUGE RAT
- *balanced on a wheel of cheese, circus ball in paws* -
TAUNTS HER, then RUNS THE CHEESE OUT THE DOOR! She GIVES
CHASE.

INT. OTHER MR. B'S FLAT - CONTINUOUS

The OTHER RATS RACE behind the twin rows of cannons - the
cheese wheel rat rolls through them, heading towards the
door!

Coraline CHARGES. The cannons, manned by rats, FIRE
COTTON CANDY at her. She's HIT in the side, her leg, her
ribs; she weaves and STUMBLES, the shots landing like
punches.

CORALINE
Ahhh! No!!

A PET DOOR - perfectly shaped for the rat on the wheel -
appears in the front door as the rat approaches.

Coraline looks up to see the PET DOOR OPEN and the CHEESE-
WHEEL RAT HEADING THROUGH IT TO THE OUTSIDE.

Coraline takes her triangle candy stone and THROWS IT as
hard as she can AT THE RAT.

The whistling candy FLIES through the pet door towards
the RAT, *just outside*.

EXT. OTHER MR. B'S FLAT - CONTINUOUS

The RAT DUCKS, the CANDY MISSES, and the cheese-wheel rat ESCAPES down the stairs with the ball.

INT. OTHER MR. B'S FLAT - CONTINUOUS

Coraline, lurching forward, HOLLERS.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

NOOOO!

Two waiting rats - tail tips tied - pull tails tight, and TRIP her. She CRASHES THROUGH THE DOOR AND--.

EXT. OTHER HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

--OUT onto the balcony which TEARS AWAY FROM THE HOUSE with ATTACHED STAIRWAY.

CORALINE

Nooooo!

The whole rig, with Coraline on top, ROTATES as it collapses, THROWING CORALINE toward the front of the house when it HITS THE GROUND. She BLACKS OUT a moment.

WHEEZING for breath, Coraline pushes up on hands and knees and SCANS past the topiaries and poplars and white gravel driveway, looking for the cheese-wheel rat and circus ball. No cheese-wheel rat, no circus ball ghost eye.

Coraline, lit by a NARROWING BAND of pale green light, turns to look at the moon. It's *nearly covered now* by the DARK BUTTON SHADOW.

Her HAND stings from a scrape. BLOOD trickles from her knee. She feels nothing but COLD LOSS.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

(devastated)

Oh God, I've lost the game; I've lost everything.

She *sobs*, hugs knees and face to chest. The band of light that illuminates her is narrowing to near-gone.

In the foreground, the HEAD of the cheese-wheel rat - CIRCUS BALL IN ITS TEETH - DROPS ON THE GROUND. Sawdust leaks from its neck. Band of light STOPS NARROWING, the *eclipse paused*.

There's a familiar MEROWWW and Coraline looks up.

Across from her on the front yard, sits the BLACK CAT, licking his paws, rat's head and circus ball at his feet.

CAT

I think I mentioned that I don't like rats at the best of times.

Coraline smiles, walks towards him.

CORALINE

I think you might have said something like that.

CAT

It looked like you *needed* this one, however.

He bats the circus ball and it rolls to Coraline.

She picks it up , sticks it in her bag. Around her, the YARD, HOUSE, TREES, SHRUBS AND DRIVEWAY TURN ASHEN GRAY.

CORALINE

Thank you.

Looks towards house.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

I'm heading inside. I still have to find my parents.

CUT TO:

ANGLE ON MOON. The stalled eclipse STARTS AGAIN, and in one beat, the last sliver of green moon is FULLY BLACKED OUT. The EDGES of the button shadow start to FLAKE AWAY.

ON CORALINE WITH CAT. A strange *insect thrumming* has begun. What appear to be grey paint chips or bits of paper are falling. Confused, she looks up to see:.

The huge button shadow is EATEN TO NOTHING and then the SKY around it IS EATEN AS WELL, revealing dirty white light. The destruction TRAVELS from sky to the distant hills, the sound of a *million, invisible locusts* growing louder.

UP ANGLE ON CAT AND CORALINE. The cat *hisses*. Deeply alarmed, they look from one direction to another.

POV out front yard. The destruction TRAVELS up the driveway, PULLS APART the poplars, and then UNRAVELS the topiary elephant and bird.

DOWN ANGLE ON Coraline and cat, his TAIL TWITCHING. WE PULL BACK to find they are at the center of a RAPIDLY SHRINKING ISLAND!

NEW ANGLE on Coraline and cat as ground beneath their feet STARTS CRACKING, white light coming through. Cat makes a *fearful sound*, afraid for the first time in the movie!

Coraline holds out her arms to the trembling animal, her guardian angel.

CORALINE (CONT'D)
Come on, quickly!

The cat LEAPS and she catches him, then CARRIES HIM up the DISINTEGRATING porch steps to the front door. She gets through just in time, and SLAMS it shut!

INT. OTHER HOUSE HALLWAY - SAME

It's dark and stable in here, with just some creaks and intermittent vibrations. A poisonous green light spills from the other living room.

Coraline goes there, carrying the cat over her shoulder, past wallpaper that PEELS UP as she passes, to the room where she last heard the sound of her mother's finger on glass.

INT. OTHER LIVING ROOM - SAME

A poisonous GREEN FIRE - LIKE SLEEPY SEA SNAKES - BURNS in the fireplace. The bug furniture looks grey now, their lights flickering as if short-circuited; legs and wings twitching uncontrollably.

Coraline scans the walls, the ceiling, looking for a sign of her parents.

ANGLE ON CORALINE in foreground. She senses the Other Mother behind her, a creature who is no sort of Mother at all but a witch, a Beldam. She turns.

The Beldam is hunched on the sofa - her face hidden.

BELDAM
So, you're back....

Her voice sounds dry and tired. She turns her face towards Coraline. It is a WHITE DEATH MASK, cracked and peeling - her true face.

BELDAM (CONT'D)

And you brought vermin with you.

Coraline shudders and steps back. The cat makes a fearful sound and digs his claws into her shoulder.

CORALINE

No, I ... I brought a *friend*.

The Beldam rises up 12 FEET TALL. She is WITHERED to the bone; with plate-like shoulders and hips; her bustle now an arachnid's tail section. Her true form.

She reaches her long, sharp FINGERS MADE OF NEEDLES to Coraline's face.

BELDAM

(flatly)

You know I love you.

Coraline works hard to not show how freaked out she is.

CORALINE

You, you have a very funny way of showing it.

The Beldam smiles, turns away, then back, her hand outstretched.

BELDAM

So? Where are they - the ghost eyes?

Coraline pulls out the three spheres from her bag and starts to hand them over. But she catches herself.

CORALINE

Hold on.

And pulls back.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

We aren't finished yet, are we?

The Beldam looks daggers, then smiles sweetly.

BELDAM

No, I suppose not. After all, you still need to find your old *parents*, don't you? Too bad you won't have this.

She produces the TRIANGLE CANDY that Coraline lost and FLINGS it into the green fire. The Beldam laughs while the MAGIC BURNS out of the candy with sparks and pops.

ON CORALINE. The third ghost eye PULSES WITH AMBER LIGHT in her hand. Coraline turns away, so the witch won't see.

SWEET GIRL GHOST (O.S.)

Be clever, miss; even if you win she'll never let you go!

Coraline looks towards the locked little door behind the armoire bug and understands: *she's got to get the Beldam to unlock it!* She furrows her brow as an idea comes to her then nods.

She turns to the witch and in the most confident tone she can muster, says:

CORALINE

I already know where you've hidden them.

The Beldam turns from the fire, both concerned and sceptical.

BELDAM

Well... produce them.

Coraline points to the little door.

CORALINE

They're behind that door.

The Beldam leans close, knowing Coraline is wrong, and speaks very quietly.

BELDAM

Oh, they are, are they?

A smile creeps onto her terrible face. And she STARTS TOWARDS THE LITTLE DOOR, moving in an odd, laboring way, as if she had four legs instead of two. She signals the armoire bug to stand aside, her back to Coraline.

Coraline hears the *soft chirp* of her mother's finger on wet glass! Looks around, desperate - where is it coming from?!

The cat's ears twitch and focus, and then he SEES SOMETHING on the mantel!. He whispers to Coraline --

CAT

There!

-- and JUMPS to land beside the DETROIT ZOO SNOW-GLOBE - OPAQUE WITH FROST.

C.U. ON SNOW-GLOBE. With a SOFT-CHIRP, a section of glass is WIPED CLEAR from inside by a TINY FOREARM - and we see the tiny, cold figures that are CORALINE'S TRAPPED PARENTS! Coraline's heart races. She purposely stays back from them.

CORALINE
(whispering)
Mom. Dad!

ON BELDAM, by little door. Oblivious to Coraline's discovery, she COUGHS up the KEY into her hand. She turns to Coraline, expectantly.

CORALINE (CONT'D)
Go on. Open it. They'll be there, all right.

The Beldam stoops to push the key into the lock, turns it, *leaves the key in place.*

She grins at Coraline and speaks in a *low, sing-song* voice.

BELDAM
You're wrong, Coraline!

She opens the little door, revealing the empty, spider-web tunnel.

ON CORALINE, who glances from the open door to the cat - obscured on the mantel - and back to the Beldam. She's thinking very hard.

BELDAM (CONT'D)
(pitying)
They aren't there.

She opens her hands: one holds box with Coraline's BLACK BUTTON EYES, the other a THREADED NEEDLE. Triumphant, the Beldam softly gloats:

BELDAM (CONT'D)
Now you're going to stay here forever.

Coraline strikes a warrior's pose, and, summons all the fury she can.

CORALINE
No ... I'm ...

She GRABS THE CAT off the mantel and RAISES HIM OVER HER HEAD.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

NOT!

And she *HURLS THE CAT* at the Beldam. The *YOWLING ANIMAL* - face shocked with surprise - *SAILS* through the air and lands *RIGHT ON THE ASTONISHED WITCH'S HEAD*.

FREAKED-OUT, the cat *DIGS* in his *CLAWS AND BITES* the shrieking Beldam, who *STAGGERS* to one side of the little door.

Coraline GRABS the *SNOW GLOBE* with her parents inside, stows it in her bag, and moves out to approach the door from the other side.

The Beldam *FLAILS WILDLY* at the cat. The cat *HOWLS LIKE A BANSHEE*, *RAISES HIS CLAWS*, and - quick as you can - *TWO SHINY BLACK BUTTONS HIT THE FLOOR - THE BELDAM'S EYES!*

ANGLE ON CAT as he's thrown on armoire bug.

ON BELDAM, hands covering her face.

BELDAM

NOOOOOOOOO!

Her hands pull away to show *EMPTY, FLAT SOCKETS* and *TORN THREAD!*

BELDAM (CONT'D)

You horrible cheating girl!

She furiously *STOMPS* the floor which *FLIES UP* in a spiral of floorboards that drive Coraline to the room's center. A huge *WEB TRAP LIES BENEATH THE FLOOR!*

The web trap *STRETCHES DOWN* into a *FIFTY FOOT DEEP PIT*. There is nothing beyond but *PALE NOTHINGNESS*.

The cat scrambles along the tops of falling furniture straight to the little door and disappears into the tunnel.

Coraline falls the very bottom of the web.

Fifty feet above, the Beldam *LAUGHS MANIACALLY* and *LEAPS DOWN* like a huge, flying spider!

Coraline manages to pull herself to the outside of the trap *JUST AS THE BELDAM LANDS*.

The witch - furious her prey has escaped - spins around, grasping blindly.

BELDAM (CONT'D)

Noo!! Where are you? You selfish brat!!

Coraline, nearing the top, looks up and spots the LITTLE DOOR, still in the corner wall of the Other Living Room. She goes to climb back inside the web, when her bag GETS CAUGHT on a barb. She pulls and pulls until it breaks free, sending a STRONG VIBRATION DOWN THE SPIRALING WEB TO THE VERY SENSITIVE HAND OF THE BELDAM.

BELDAM (CONT'D)

Hahahaha...

The Beldam smiles - she knows where her prey is now!

Coraline makes it to the little door, but the BELDAM IS COMING UP BEHIND HER VERY FAST!

BELDAM (O.S.) (CONT'D)

YOU ... DARE ...

INT. PASSAGEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Coraline SCRAMBLES through the door, KEY IN HAND, and grabs the door's handle. Before she can shut it, the BELDAM'S HEAD THRUSTS INSIDE.

BELDAM

... DISOBEY YOUR MOTHER??!!

Coraline KICKS HER IN THE FACE, knocking her back. The cat takes off down the tunnel.

Coraline nearly shuts the door, when NEEDLE FINGERS GRAB HOLD THROUGH THE CRACK. The door STARTS TO PULL OPEN!

CORALINE

PLEASE...SHUT!!

The ghost children's FLUTTERY, DISMEMBERED HANDS FLY OUT FROM HER BAG and GRAB HOLD OF CORALINE'S HANDS that grip the door's handle. And her STRENGTH IS QUADRUPLED.

The door STARTS TO SHUT. The Beldam SNATCHES DESPERATELY at Coraline, reaching through the closing gap with one thin claw. There's a final moment of resistance - the Beldam's wire-thin wrist caught in the door - and then SNAP! The DOOR SHUTS, and the Beldam's hand drops to the ground!

She SCREECHES like a metal rake on pavement!

Coraline just manages to lock the door in the dark when it is POUNDED from the other side, green light coming through cracks! She takes off down the tunnel, stooped down, as fast as she can.

The pounding grows more insistent, green light flashing.

BELDAM (O.S.)
DON'T LEAVE ME! DON'T LEAVE ME!!! I'LL
DIE WITHOUT YOU!!!!

And then the tunnel behind Coraline STARTS TO GROW SHORTER, like a collapsing accordion and the pounding far door with the blind, one-handed Beldam on the other side STARTS TO CATCH UP TO HER!

Ahead, DAYLIGHT APPEARS, and then the LITTLE DOOR TO THE REAL WORLD!

INT. REAL LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Coraline FLINGS HERSELF through the doorway, SHUTS AND LOCKS THE DOOR and BRACES HERSELF AGAINST IT. A split-second later, the OTHER WORLD DOOR CATCHES UP WITH A CRASH! Coraline is THROWN BACK. But the real-world door and lock, hold. It's over...

Coraline lies on her back, as beat-up and tired as she's ever been, GULPING in breaths of air till her heart slows a little. The room is brightly lit by sunlight, the first since she moved here, and the sky out the windows is blue with white clouds.

She smiles, remembering, and turns to her bag with the ghost eyes and snow globe with her parents inside.

She opens it up, and searches, shoving aside ghost eyes and garden shears. But the snow globe is GONE!

She gets on all fours, starts searching the floor. Her hand hits a small PUDDLE by the fireplace, with tiny bits of BLUE SNOW. A drip plops down, then another. She looks up to the mantel and spots the MISSING SNOW GLOBE. She stands up and finds that it's BROKEN OPEN, and neither her parents or the fountain bears are inside.

As the last of the snowy liquid drains from the globe, Coraline's face clouds with confusion and fear: *What does this mean and where are her parents?* Then her WONDERFULLY REAL MOTHER calls to her.

MEL (O.S.)
Coraline? We're home!

Her TRUE PARENTS enter the room from the hallway, a
dusting of snow on their shoulders and hair.

CORALINE
Mom! Dad! I missed you so much!

Coraline runs to her parents and throws her arms around
them.

MEL
Missed us?

C.U. ON CORALINE. *Huh?*

Mel notices the broken snow globe.

MEL (CONT'D)
Oh no, you broke my favorite snow globe.

CORALINE
*I didn't break it. It must've broke when
you escaped.*

Mom spots her bloody knee.

MEL
And cut your knee.

Charlie crouches low, clutching his briefcase.

CHARLIE
Coraline, I asked you to *count* all the
windows, not put your knee through them.

CORALINE
But-

Mel tells her.

MEL
Well, get yourself cleaned up,
(warms)
we're going out tonight.

CHARLIE
We gotta lot to celebrate!

Coraline, confused, takes a stab.

CORALINE
You're talking about... your garden
catalog?

MEL
Of course! What else?

Her parents turn to leave the room.

CORALINE
But look at the snow on your clothes...?

But the snow melts without a trace.

MEL
(confused)
What's gotten into you, Coraline?

Her parents walk off. Coraline shrugs her shoulders and looks back to the broken snow globe on the mantel. She cocks her head, deeply puzzled, then leaves the room.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT HOUSE - NIGHT, SKY CLEAR

The VW is parked out front, its interior light fading as light in Coraline's bedroom window switches on. We HEAR Charlie make a strangled sound.

INT. CORALINE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT FULL MOON RISING

Coraline sits in bed -- pajamas washed and PATCHED, wounds-dressed, hair shining. The KEY hangs from a string around her neck. A gibbous moon shines in the clear night sky.

Charlie wrestles with a blue stuffed-toy squid like it's an alien face-hugger then, FEIGNING DEATH, falls on the bed. Coraline LAUGHS.

CORALINE
So, gonna order the tulips?

He opens one eye, pretends he's never heard about this.

CHARLIE
What's that?

CORALINE
For the garden party!!

He sits up and kids her, tickling her face with the squid.

CHARLIE

I have no idea what you're talking about.

CORALINE

Dad!

She turns to Mom, arranging things on a shelf.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

So, Mom. Invitations? Don't forget the invitations.

Her mother nods, points up.

MEL

Even Bobinsky?

CORALINE

Mr. B's not drunk, Mom, he's just...eccentric.

Charlie LAUGHS. He bends down to kiss her.

CHARLIE

Good night, Coraline.

As he steps away, Mel slips a slim box under the covers next to her daughter. She gives Coraline a "told you so" look, and she and Charlie leave the room.

Coraline sits up excitedly and opens the box - it's the GREEN AND ORANGE GLOVES she'd wanted! She pulls one on to admire when the BLACK CAT appears outside her window

CORALINE

Oh, hello again.

She walks over to the window, opens it.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

You still mad?

His expression says *yes, he's still mad.*

CORALINE (CONT'D)

I'm really sorry I threw you at her - the Other Mother? - it was all I could think of.

The cat's angry expression softens. He rests his head on her hand, licking her fingers and *purrs*.

Coraline *exhales* with relief then picks him up and carries him over to her bed.

She grabs her collecting bag and takes out the large PEARL, the CIRCUS BALL, and the GREY STICKSHIFT KNOB. She holds them out to the cat.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

I think it's time, don't you? To set them free?

The cat nods. She puts the ghost eyes under her pillow and gently lays down, the cat lying beside her. The two of them close their eyes, and in no time at all, they doze off to sleep. WE SLOWLY TILT UP.

MATCH MOVE DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DREAMSCAPE - MAGIC TIME

A MAGIC ART SKY animates subtly.

CAM TILT DOWN ON Coraline, studying sky, her back to us. From behind CAM, CHIMES sound and GOLD LIGHT begins to shine on her. She turns toward us, shielding her eyes.

Coraline's eyes adjust to the brightness to see the THREE GHOST CHILDREN, now transformed into GOLDEN ANGELS; EYES RESTORED, small fluttering WINGS ON THEIR BACKS.

SWEET GIRL GHOST

It's a fine, fine thing you did for us, miss.

CORALINE

Well, I'm glad it's finally over!

A SHADOW crosses the faces of the three children. They gather around Coraline and bow their heads.

SWEET GIRL GHOST

(sighs)

It *is* over and done with ... for us.

Silent beat.

CORALINE

What about...me?

The tall girl ghost shifts uncomfortably, then BLURTS out:

TALL GIRL GHOST

You're in terrible danger, girl!

Coraline is stunned and gestures for an explanation.

CORALINE

But how? I locked the door!?

SWEET GIRL GHOST

It's the key, miss, there's only one and the Beldam will *find* it.

The KEY ON THE STRING around Coraline's neck floats out in front of Coraline. She grabs it.

The three ghost children all embrace Coraline tenderly.

BOY GHOST

(whispers)

Tain't all bad, miss. Thou art alive ...
thou art still ... living...

They begin to swirl around her, spinning faster and faster. Coraline starts to turn and then she --

CUT TO:

INT. CORALINE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

-- ROLLS HERSELF AWAKE IN HER OWN BED. FAST PULL BACK above her to find covers thrown off and the CAT awake by her side.

Coraline lifts up her pillow and GASPS - the GHOST EYES ARE IN PIECES like hatched bird eggs. She takes out the key on its string and explains to the cat, her voice panicked:

CORALINE

I -- I've gotta hide this somewhere, s-
somewhere she can never ...

The cat doesn't like the sound of this. Coraline grabs her blanket and heads to her door. But the cat leaps down and blocks her way.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

Outta my way!

She sidesteps the cat and leaves her room. The cat glares after her

INT. HOUSE STAIRWAY, LOWER HALL, LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Coraline trots down the stairs and purposefully heads down the hall. She passes the LIVING ROOM and exits frame. CAMERA stays on living room, where, on the LITTLE DOOR in the corner wall, SHADOWS and LIGHT start to MOVE. WE ROCKET IN AND--

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The baseboard is PUSHED ASIDE. Through the narrow gap at the door's bottom, the DISMEMBERED HAND OF THE BELDAM CRAWLS OUT. It scrambles out of frame in the direction of Coraline!

EXT ROCKY PATH HIGH ABOVE HOUSE - SAME

Coraline moves briskly, the house below, GRIPPING THE KEY that's tied round her neck. DARK, ROPEY CLOUDS reach like fingers across the gibbous moon. Coraline sings her father's nonsense song, her voice hardly trembling.

CORALINE

*Oh.... my twitchy witchy girl,
I think you are so nice ...*

EXT. ORCHARD - SAME

She moves down past the old fruit trees, now covered with BRIGHT SPRING BLOSSOMS that fall gently like snow.

CORALINE

*... I give you bowls of porridge
And I give you bowls of ice cream.*

LOW ANGLE ON Coraline, moving away. The BELDAM'S HAND drops into frame and CREEP-CRAWLS after her.

CORALINE (CONT'D)

*I give you lots of kisses,
And I give you lots of hugs ...*

EXT. WELL - SAME

Coraline jams the SAME DEAD BRANCH Wybie used under the well's cover, lining it up over the SAME FULCRUM ROCK.

CORALINE

*... But I never give you sandwiches
With grease and worms and mung beans.*

Circling around behind the BIG STUMP, the HAND SCAMPERS behind one rock to a bush to a tree, coming closer.

Coraline manages to lever the well's cover off to one side, leaving the WHOLE WELL OPEN. Huffing and sweating, she wipes her brow, then takes the key string that's around her neck.

The hand, SEEING what is about to happen, RACES TOWARDS HER!

Coraline lifts string and key, not quite over her head.

The hand JUMPS onto the big stump and SPRINGS through the air to GRAB THE KEY and PULL CORALINE TO THE GROUND!

Coraline makes a CHOKED SCREAM, her fingers caught between the key string and her neck!

The HAND wants to DRAG HER BACK TO THE HOUSE and the LITTLE LOCKED DOOR THAT IS *BREATHING WITH ANTICIPATION!*

A BLINDING HEADLIGHT hits HAND and CORALINE; an AIR HORN SOUNDS; and WYBIE LOVAT - hollering a BATTLE CRY all his own - comes SPEEDING DOWN THE BLUFF on his whining electric bike!

WYBIE

YAHHHHH!!!!

Wybie GUNS the throttle, and, leaning out, GRABS the confused HAND with his slug tongs!

He CIRCLES AROUND and HEADS TOWARDS THE WELL, readying to throw the hand in. But the HAND GETS FREE, and GRABS his handlebars.

OUT OF CONTROL, Wybie's bike HITS A ROCK, and WYBIE AND HAND ARE THROWN RIGHT DOWN THE WELL. HOLLERING, he just manages to hang on with one hand! The Beldam's hand, *caught on Wybie's coattail*, SCRAMBLES UP his body and face and onto the well's edge where it STABS AT HIS FINGERS to make him fall!

WYBIE (CONT'D)

(struggling)

Get off!!

Coraline, choking, rises to her feet. She grabs her BLANKET and - in the still-blazing headlight of the crashed bike - she RUNS UP and THROWS IT OVER THE HAND. It fights like crazy as Coraline wrestles to control it. The hand STABS THROUGH THE BLANKET and SHAKES IT OFF. It crouches to attack her!

And then WYBIE IS BACK, pumped with adrenaline, a BIG ROCK raised over his head! He HURLS IT DOWN ON THE LEAPING HAND! And it BREAKS into TWENTY LIFELESS NEEDLES.

Wybie struggles to catch his breath. Coraline - breathing hard - removes the key and string from around her sore neck. She pulls up the corners of her blanket - with the needles on it - around the rock, and ties it all together with the string. The key is left attached.

The two friends carry the heavy package to the well and DROP IT DOWN THE HOLE. By the light of a stray moonbeam, they watch and listen until it makes a *muffled splash* in the dark water at the bottom. They slide the well cover in place.

Still catching his breath, Wybie stands, holding his injured hand, its glove ripped by the Beldam's claw. He looks over at Coraline as the scene brightens a little with moonlight.

WYBIE (CONT'D)

I-I'm really sorry I didn't believe you about all this ... evil stuff, Coraline.

Coraline, shoulders rising as she catches her breath, stands and smiles: *he called her by real name for the first time.*

CORALINE

Why did you change your mind?

He walks over, and takes out an old B&W photo from his jacket.

WYBIE

W-well, Gramma showed me this picture, after I called you crazy?

He hands it to her.

ANGLE ON PHOTO: two light-skinned black girls - dressed in old-fashioned clothing - stand in front of the Pink Palace, before it was divided into apartments. One looks just like the sweet ghost girl, and holds the DOLL WITH BUTTON EYES, which looks just like *her*.

WYBIE (O.C.) (CONT'D)
It's her and her sister, before she
disappeared.

ANGLE ON WYBIE AND CORALINE. Behind them, blossoms fall
like snow in the orchard.

CORALINE
The sweet ghost girl.

Wybie's grandmother, loud and worried, calls from the
distance.

WYBIE'S GRANDMOTHER (O.C.)
Wyborne! Come home!!

WYBIE
(re: his grandmother)
Oh, man...what am I going to tell her?

She looks up from the photo and smiles.

CORALINE
Just bring her by the house tomorrow. We
can tell her together.

WYBIE
We...we can??

CORALINE
You know, I'm glad you decided to stalk
me.

She gives Wybie a playful punch on the arm and LAUGHS.

WYBIE
Wasn't *my* idea.

The BLACK CAT jumps up on the TREE STUMP and MEROWWS.
Coraline smiles.

We TILT UP to the sky and see the last ropey clouds -
like *two clawed hands* - clear away from the bright
gibbous moon.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT HOUSE, GARDEN - DAY

One WHITE BALLOON floats against a blue sky with puffy,
white clouds. WE TILT DOWN past more balloons to a TABLE
OF REFRESHMENTS, set up by the front gates.

Coraline picks up a TRAY OF DRINKS and heads out to her hard-working GUESTS, all wearing garden gloves and showing signs of having helped plant about TWO HUNDRED RED TULIPS.

SPINK AND FORCIBLE, along with their DOGS, are set up at a table below the steps. Empty plant cartons are stacked nearby along with some garden tools and empty bags of peat moss.

CORALINE
Thanks for helping me, Miss Spink, Miss Forcible.

MISS FORCIBLE
(straining to see)
Oh, look April - Pink Ladies!

CORALINE
Actually, it's just lemonade.

Coraline hands them the beverages, then nods towards the GREY DOG digging in the flowers.

CORALINE (CONT'D)
How's Angus doing?

Miss Spink sighs.

MISS SPINK
Oh, much better, dear... But he can't duck his wings forever!

Coraline heads up the steps to find her PARENTS dumping a heavy bag of PEAT MOSS around the dead-looking tree in the stone circle.

CHARLIE
Here comes a burp.

Charlie BURPS.

MEL
(scolding)
Charlie!

CHARLIE
Oh, excu-say-moi, but that pizza was delicious.

Mel SIGHS.

CORALINE
Cold drinks?

Charlie nods, grabs them for Mel and Wybie.

CHARLIE
(happily)
Oh yeah, great!

MEL
(skeptical)
You were right, Coraline. I really hate dirt, but the tulips look nice.

CORALINE
Thanks, mom.

Coraline, *delighted*, moves on.

Coraline comes upon Bobinsky in the bottom of the drained fish pond. He's stealthily PULLING just-planted tulips from the dirt there, and putting BEETS in their place.

MR. BOBINSKY (O.S.)
(pulling beets)
Ooo, dret nican...neit, neit...da, da, dat iz possible.

Coraline CLEARS HER THROAT to get his attention.

CORALINE
How are the meeshkas, Mr. B?

Surprised and looking very guilty, he tries to cover up his activities. She smiles and hands him a drink.

MR. BOBINSKY
(smiles)
Dey tell me that you - are saviour,
Caroline. And -- soon as dey are ready --
dey vish to give special tenks-you
performance.

He drains his glass of lemonade. A familiar voice is heard approaching. Coraline turns and smiles.

WYBIE'S GRANDMOTHER (O.C.)
Wyborne, I know where I'm going--

ANGLE ON Wybie and his GRANDMOTHER as they walk through the garden gates

WYBIE'S GRANDMOTHER
(CONT'D)
--I grew up here.

Coraline sees them and waves.

CORALINE
Welcome, Ms. Lovat!

The old lady looks up and smiles.

WYBIE'S GRANDMOTHER
Oh, hello.

CORALINE
I'm Coraline Jones -- I've got so much to
tell you!

MEL (O.C.)
(background dialog)
Here.

CHARLIE (O.C.)
(background dialog)
Thanks.

MISS SPINK (O.C.)
(background dialog)
Ooo, do you want to pop a little gin in
it dear?

MISS FORCIBLE (O.C.)
(background dialog)
Of course!

CAMERA PULLS UP from the GARDEN, FLIES OVER THE HOUSE and
BOOMS DOWN to the PINK PALACE APARTMENTS SIGN out front.
On top of the sign sits the black cat, who looks right
into camera, blinks, then walks behind the thin post that
holds the sign and DISAPPEARS.

END

Henry Selick