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I R M A

“Irma, 28, 400 pounds, suffers a heart attack and has to choose between a gastric bypass and Holmes Home, a place where her spirit learns to leave her body and finds out why she needs to be fat.”

Irma, 28, 5’10”, 400 pounds, has a heart attack and almost dies. To survive she must choose between having a life-threatening gastric bypass or attending Holmes Home, a place where people learn how to heal their afflictions. Irma chooses Holmes (it might be safer), and meets Mr. Owen, the ‘caretaker’. He tells her she will be living outside her body, in spirit, which could cure her obsession with food and her compulsion to eat. He says six other people are also at Holmes for healing.

He begins to teach Irma how to leave her *casing*, her body. “Whoa, Mr. Owen. *Casing?* *Casing?*” she asks. “It is completely safe,” he assures her. “Sez you,” she says. “Yes, sez I.” He demonstrates with his own body. She accedes. As her spirit emerges, a lovely slender woman appears; she is attached to her *casing* by a *silvercord*. She moves, she dances as she hasn’t since she was a child. Mr. Owen tells her she must spend time each day in her *casing* and eat, exercise, eliminate and bathe. Otherwise the *silvercord* will disconnect from her *casing*, and she will die.

She meets Matt in spirit who has sexual secrets. His *silvercord* trailing, he shows her how to translocate in spirit, and he lands high up in a tree. Back on the ground he tells her she’s pretty and asks why she’s at Holmes. Just then Gabriel in spirit appears. He moves like a panther with its life force missing. He’s shocked at Irma’s slender appearance as he saw her when she arrived. He seems to ‘know’ things about Irma, and she is drawn to him. Matt gets jealous and moves between them. Martin, a gay man and four-pack-a-day smoker, shows up in spirit, and they all walk to the cathedral. Waiting for them in spirit are Patti, dependent on cosmetic surgery, Lisette with bi-racial troubles, and Doug, an alcoholic.

They sit in a circle of red chairs. Mr. Owen asks Doug to stand in the center. He demands that Lewis, a discarnate spirit who’s been living secretly in Doug, come out. Lewis, with his harmonica, flows out of the top of Doug’s head and plays, “Whiskey On A Sunday.”

Mr. Owen tells them: “You will be given Five Tasks to help heal the problems you brought to Holmes.” Irma’s journey will take her through these Five Tasks.

The First Task is the Concordia Ball, a Ball of Light which unravels like yarn. As they throw the Ball to one another revelations about each other pop out of their mouths. As the Ball unwinds it wraps around them, connecting them, and they become one. Irma later mocks the experience to her *casing*. “He said we were disconnected, alone. I’m never alone. Holmes and Watson, Jane Marple, Arkady Renko, Lord Peter Wimsey – always with me. What’s he talking about?”

Irma, in *casing*, eats a delicious, nutritious meal and follows it by walking up and down the tall stairs in her backyard. Night comes, and she's frantic for sweets. She stuffs her fingers in her mouth and bites down.

Mr. Owen assigns them Task Two. They are to find and reclaim something discarded in their pasts which gave them happiness. Irma finds roller skates. She hasn't skated since she was eight. She laces them up and stands. She skates away and falls but stands on her own, refusing the aid of a Spirit Helper.

Irma, Matt and Martin are out walking when Matt's and Irma's *silvercords* entangle. They experience each other's memories: Irma sees Matt in perverse sexual situations; and he sees her surreal nightmares. He doesn't see she is obese. A Spirit Helper steps between them and breaks the connection. Matt kisses Irma passionately.

Task Three sends them to discover an indispensable quality they need to heal their lives. Mr. Owen tells Irma to find "her natural self". Matt perks up. Irma walks into a big pond and encounters a large red fish. She dances with it sensually and experiences "her natural self". Later Matt flirts with her, and it sparks her memory – visions of Little Irma, 6, lying in bed as a man enters her room.

The next night Irma, ravenous for sweet stuff, can't sleep and roams the grounds. She finds Matt's house and through a large window watches him pace. She climbs the stairs. Suddenly Gabriel appears and says, "Be careful!" "Careful of Matt?" she asks. "Yes," as he leads her away from Matt's house.

Mr. Owen announces to the Group it is time to reveal themselves in their *casings*. Later, concerned about Irma, he goes to her house. She is hysterical. "What in the world will Matt think?" She refuses to enter her *casing*. Mr. Owen says, "Nothing changes unless you change." She's adamant. She tells him she can't stop eating, "You don't know what it's like." "You must face what is inside you," he says. They reach an impasse. He lays his hand on her shoulder, and she relaxes and agrees.

In her *casing* Irma enters the cathedral. Everyone but Gabriel is shocked; Matt is horrified. Irma is humiliated. Mr. Owen tells Irma: your thoughts have created your *casing*.

Since revealing her *casing* to Matt and the Group, Irma, disconsolate, hasn't entered it for three days. She is close to death. Mr. Owen says, "Irma, it is imperative you enter or you will die." He cannot convince her. Gabriel shows up, and Mr. Owen leaves. Gabriel tells her, "I'll enter your *casing* for you." "You'd do that for me?" Irma asks. He nods. She touches his hand and enters her *casing*.

"Task Four is imminent," Mr. Owen says. "You will walk in your brothers' and sisters' moccasins." Irma, Patti and Lisette enter each others' *casings*. Irma says Lisette's *casing* is so light it feels like she's in spirit. And she feels vulnerable to men. Patti says she felt things in Irma's *casing* that want to hurt Irma.

Mr. Owen tells Irma she has lost fifty pounds. “Oh, yeah, it’s kind of hard to tell”, she says. In *casing* Irma sets out for a walk. Matt, in *casing*, appears, surprising her. “You turned me on, and then you turned into this.” He blows up his cheeks, mocking her, and pats her butt. She tells him she’s lost fifty pounds, and he laughs. He pushes her to the ground and falls on top of her. “You’ve been waiting for this.” “Stop, Stop!”, Irma shouts. He rolls around on her. She grabs a rock and hits him, but he doesn’t move off. “Acres and acres of it,” he says.

A Spirit Helper appears close by, and Irma stops struggling, looks up and focuses. Her spirit leaves her *casing* and stands next to Matt. “Get back in here,” he says. “Get off,” she says. Suddenly he looks at her, “You’ve never had it, have you?” At that moment Irma has a clear vision of her father raping her. She sees her child spirit leaving her body and entering the vent in her room. Matt can’t get hard again and moves off Irma. “Just wait!” he yells as he leaves. Irma strokes her *casing*’s face and enters it.

In the cathedral Mr. Owen announces Matt has left. He tells them their time at Holmes is almost finished. Irma freaks out: “I’m not ready to leave.” That night she exits Holmes’ grounds and returns with a chocolate cake. She’s got the box open and is shoving cake in her mouth as she climbs the steps to her house. She slips and falls. Mr. Owen appears and grabs her cakey hand. Inside he washes off the chocolate cake and tells Irma it is now time for the final task.

Task Five: They leave their casings and travel shamanically to The Cave of Lost Children. They enter and see many pinpoints of light. Irma realizes these are children. Mr. Owen tells her this is where Little Irma went that night. He tells her to call Little Irma. “I’m afraid.” “You should be,” he says. Irma calls, “Irma.” She calls again. Little Irma steps out of the darkness.

The three return to Holmes. Mr. Owen and Irma enter their *casings*. When Little Irma sees Irma’s huge *casing*, she says, “I’ll be really safe in there.” Mr. Owen picks up Little Irma and blows her into the top of Irma’s head. A new, soft, vulnerable quality appears in Irma. “Welcome home, Irma,” Mr. Owen says.

After leaving Holmes Irma opens a real estate business and continues to lose weight. Months later Irma, 200 pounds now, visits New Orleans where Gabriel reads Tarot cards in Jackson Square. She approaches his table. “I was expecting you,” he says. She sits, and he shuffles the cards.

(scenes to follow)

I R M A

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FADE IN:

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

A silver Lincoln Navigator SUV pulls up to a two-story brick house. Inside the SUV....

IRMA, 28, 5'10", 400 pounds, in a flowing brown blouse with dark pants, turns off the engine. Candy wrappers litter the interior. She looks up and down the street then grabs a plastic bag on the seat and opens it - empty.

Frantically she searches through the litter and finally finds a half-eaten, TOOTSIE ROLL under the seat. She bites down into it, chews and relaxes.

A blue PT Cruiser turns the corner and parks behind her. Irma drops the Tootsie Roll, wipes her mouth and checks herself in the mirror. She brushes up her strong, dark eyebrows with her pinkies.

Irma opens the door, turns her legs and carefully steps onto....

THE STREET

She walks to the PT Cruiser as a MAN and WOMAN, 30's, exit. The three shake hands. Irma looks at her watch.

MAN

Traffic.

Irma holds up her cell phone. The Woman watches the Man.

As Irma leads the way to the house, she stumbles on a bump in the sidewalk. The Man reaches out to steady her, but Irma catches herself before she falls. The Couple exchanges looks of relief.

Irma opens the lock box, removes a key and opens the front door.

INT. BRICK HOUSE - DAY

The empty house has white walls freshly painted, windows sparkling and wooden floors shining. Irma sniffs from side to side and turns on lights and ceiling fans in....

THE LIVING ROOM

IRMA

Beautiful, isn't it? Move-right-in condition. Smells so fresh.

Irma's voice is light and musical, not the voice you'd expect from a huge woman.

WOMAN

Look at all the windows.

MAN

The better to lose heat in the winter.

IRMA

Catch that natural light! You can't buy that.

The Couple looks at each other.

IRMA

You know, you're lucky. It came on the market just a couple hours ago.

She walks to....

THE STAIRS

She struggles up the stairs and carefully watches where she walks. She stops a moment and pants. The Man looks at Irma's huge behind and makes impatient gestures to the Woman who tries to calm him. Irma steps into the....

SECOND FLOOR HALL

As she catches her breath, her face perspires and stains appear under her arms.

The Man and Woman step into the Hall. The Man sniffs, looks at Irma and wrinkles his nose.

Irma enters....

THE MASTER BEDROOM

A white mantel with a round mirror above it stands along one wall. Irma sees her red face in the mirror; it fills the entire space and spills off the edges. She looks away.

The Couple follows her in.

WOMAN

This room is perfect, isn't it, Richard?

MAN

Maybe.

He gives her a warning look.

Irma opens the door to the bathroom. She stares at the narrow doorway she can't fit through and smiles pleasantly at the Couple as they enter....

THE BATHROOM

IRMA (O.S.)

The fixtures are lovely, aren't they?

The Man flips a switch and sea green glass fixtures light up the room, giving it an underwater feel.

WOMAN

You could go swimming.

MAN

If it weren't so small.

IRMA (O.S.)

Cozy, isn't it. Nice and warm in the winter.

The Man switches the lights off and on, and they exit into....

THE MASTER BEDROOM

Irma catches a glimpse of herself in a mirror; half of her is outside the glass. She quickly looks away.

The Man opens a door to a small closet.

MAN

Is this the closet?

The Woman looks in.

WOMAN

It'll work.

IRMA

No big deal?

WOMAN

I don't think so.

Irma adjusts her blouse, sees the perspiration and walks to the window. She flutters her blouse under her arms and looks out.

IRMA
If that were my yard, you know what
I'd do?

WOMAN
What?

IRMA
A gazebo. Sit and read.

MAN
She don't read, I don't read. We
don't read.

The Woman gives him a hurt look.

IRMA
I think your wife reads. Anyway
how about some coffee?

WOMAN
Sure.

The Man reluctantly agrees.

INT. SUV - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Irma reaches for the Tootsie Roll, bites down into it and
drives away.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Irma and the Couple sit in a booth. The TV is on CNN.
Irma looks around impatiently.

IRMA
(loudly)
Can we get some coffee over here?

WAITRESS STATION....

Two WAITRESSES, a Blonde and Redhead look at each other. The
Redhead shakes her head.

REDHEAD
Sounds like Irma. Not in the mood.

BLONDE
I'll take her.

She approaches....

THE TABLE

IRMA

Yeah, how about some coffee?

MAN

Strong and black.

WOMAN

Tea, please.

The Waitress leaves.

MAN

So, if we like it, how much should we offer?

TV COMMENTATOR (O.S.)

Breaking news! From Munich, Germany, A sealed underground apartment has been discovered where a father kept his daughter prisoner for the last twelve years.

Irma snaps her attention to the TV.

The Man and TV Commentator speak simultaneously.

MAN (O.S.)

You listening?

Television shows an underground bunker.

TV COMMENTATOR

He fathered three children with her and they have all been removed from the bunker.

MAN (O.S.)

Hey!

IRMA

Shhhhh.

Irma intently watches the TV with a growing look of horror.

TV COMMENTATOR

The man's wife who lived upstairs knew nothing of the underground bunker.

MAN

What?

The Waitress pours his coffee. The Woman dunks a tea bag.

MAN
Come on, let's go.

WOMAN
Richard?

MAN
Eleanor, I said let's go!

They exit. Irma is oblivious to them as the TV continues with the story. Then she looks around.

IRMA
What did you say?

INT. HOYNE'S REALTY - AFTERNOON

A busy real estate office with AGENTS working the phones.

A sexy blonde RECEPTIONIST sits at the front desk.

Irma enters and nods to some of the Agents. Her eyes linger for a moment on HAL, 35, cute. He meets her eyes and quickly looks away.

She sits at her desk in the back next to the copy machine and picks up the phone. The BOSS, male, 55, walks up to her. She waves him off.

BOSS
Did you close the deal, St. Cyr?

She covers the phone.

IRMA
How many deals did you close today?

He glares at her and walks away.

IRMA
(into phone)
Sorry back in the restaurant. I got distracted for a minute. Call me when you get this, okay?

HAL
Miller time!

Hal and a few of the REALTORS move to the door. Irma stares after them.

LATER....

Irma looks at her watch, picks up the unsigned contract and drops it into drawer where "THE BROKERS EXAM" lies next to a RIO DE JANEIRO Brochure.

A MEXICAN COUPLE cleans the office. As Irma passes the Receptionist's desk, she notices a half-eaten bag of M&M's in the waste basket. She stoops, grabs the bag and opens it. She stands and meets the Mexican Man's eyes. She replaces the bag in the garbage.

INT. JEWEL SUPERMARKET - NIGHT

Irma pushes a cart down the candy aisle. She picks up a jumbo bag of M&M's, opens it and pops a handful in her mouth. She spies Junior Mints, Snickers and Whoppers and drops them in.

Irma arrives at the checkout with chocolate around her mouth. She places the candy on the conveyor as the CASHIER tries not to stare.

INT. BAKERY - DAY

Irma enters and the SALESLADY smiles at her. Irma's eyes go to the PASTRY CASE. Pans of Napoleons, Eclairs, a Jelly Roll, Chocolate Doughnuts, Bismarks, Chocolate and Vanilla Long-Johns and a single Chocolate Cupcake fill the case.

MAN with a potbelly goggles Irma. He looks at a slender WOMAN and shakes his head.

Irma turns, stares at him, looks down at his potbelly, then back to his eyes. He looks away.

SALESLADY
Three Napoleons and three Eclairs?

Irma nods. The Saleslady fills a white box.

IRMA
And let me have two Chocolate and two Vanilla Long Johns, the ones with the most frosting.

Irma points at the Chocolate Cupcake.

IRMA
Do you have any more of those?

The Saleslady shakes her head and fills another box.

IRMA
Let me have that Jelly Roll then.

The Saleslady closes the boxes.

As Irma turns to leave with a box in each hand, she whispers to the Man.

IRMA

I got the last Jelly Roll.

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Irma, holding six bags of groceries, enters the elevator with seven other PEOPLE. They all move to the left; she takes up the right side.

IRMA

Fifteen!

They all look at her as a WOMAN presses 'fifteen'. The doors close.

Irma's face and body are reflected off the shiny metal door and fill the space. Her face perspires, and she has stains under her arms.

A WOMAN near her squeezes her nose closed and looks down.

The doors open at the 3rd floor, and Irma's image disappears. An OLD MAN with a walker stands ready to enter when he sees Irma. His eyes look over to the WEIGHT RESTRICTION SIGN. He shakes his head and steps back.

Irma looks down at his walker and up to his eyes as the doors close.

INT. BROKER'S EXAM CLASS - NIGHT

Irma sits in the front row with a three inch binder open on her desk. Two MEN behind her strain to see around her. She raises her hand.

IRMA

Can you explain 'procuring cause'
in more detail?

TEACHER (O.S.)

Excellent question!

EXT. CITY STREET - LA CUBANA CLUB - NIGHT

Irma passes the nightclub as SAMBA MUSIC pulses out of the open door. She moves her hands to the beat, her body stiff, and sees herself in the black reflective glass.

She puts her hands on her hips, poses a moment and stiffly moves them. A slender WOMAN walking by is reflected in the glass. Irma stops and walks away.

A Latino MAN follows her and smiles.

MAN
Que paso, Mama! Wacha doin'?

Irma ignores him.

MAN
You sure are lotta woman. Wanna a drink?

Irma keeps walking.

MAN
How 'bout you like some food?

Irma walks faster past Walgreen's.

MAN
Hey, I ask you a question. You tell me, hunh?.

Irma slows down and turns. The Man smiles.

IRMA
I like food. Watch me eat this.

Irma reaches into her purse and pulls out a white WHISTLE. She puts it in her mouth and blows a loud SHRIEKING sound.

The Man looks scared and hurries away.

MAN
Hija de puta!

Irma hurries into the Walgreen's.

She exits with a bag and looks around. She pulls out a Heath Bar, rips it open and bites down.

INT. IRMA'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Irma wears a babydoll pajama top which hardly covers her. She stands at the stove cooking spaghetti sauce, rigatoni, meatballs and sausages. She reads an Anne Perry mystery.

She stirs the sauce, tastes it and turns the meatballs and sausages over. She catches a boiling rigatoni on the spoon, blows on it, takes a bite and drops it back in the water.

She opens the refrigerator and grabs a bottle of Dr. Pepper. She opens the freezer, and a gallon of Chocolate Double Chip ice cream falls out. She holds onto it as she removes an ice cube tray.

A water bowl with "Baskerville" written on it slides off the top of the refrigerator. As Irma catches it tears fill her eyes. She pours Dr. Pepper into a glass with ice..

Suddenly she grabs her chest, holds herself, doubles over and falls to the floor.

IRMA

Help me! Help me!

She lies there, massaging her chest. She passes out for a moment, wakes, crawls to the phone and dials 911.

OPERATOR (O.S.)

Nine-one-one.

Irma passes out again.

KNOCKING on the door. Irma looks around as the door opens and the BUILDING MANAGER, male, 40, enters.

BUILDING MANAGER

What's going on? Are you okay?

He sees her lying almost-naked and signals to two EMTs outside.

The EMTs, a Woman and Man, enter with a collapsible gurney and hurry to Irma.

EMT MAN

(to Building Manager)

Come on, help us turn her over.

The three turn her on her back.

EMT MAN

Stand back!

He begins CPR on Irma.

EMT MAN

Okay!

The EMT Woman places an oxygen mask on Irma. She elevates Irma's feet.

EMT WOMAN

I'll get the Fire Department.

She keys the phone.

EMT WOMAN

It looks like a heart attack. She
must weigh four-five hundred pounds.
Send 'Big Boy' and enough guys to
get her out of here.

The EMT Woman kneels down next to Irma whose eyes are closed.

EMT WOMAN

The Fire Department is on its way.
Just hang in there, Honey, okay?

The EMT Man pushes furniture to the side of the room. Stacks
of mysteries fall off the table. He kicks them away.

FIVE FIREMEN arrive with 'Big Boy', an oversized stretcher on
a reinforced gurney. They stare.

FIREMAN #1 lays a tarp on the floor.

FIREMAN #2

How we gonna do this. I'm not
breakin' my back.

FIREMAN #1

We'll have to roll her onto it.
Sorry, Lady.

All five of them roll Irma's almost-naked body onto the
tarp. They roll up the sides.

FIREMAN #1

On three . . .

FIREMAN #3

Okay.

FIREMAN #1

One . . . two . . . three!

The five Firemen strain and struggle to raise up Irma. They
finally manage to lift her onto the gurney.

Irma, eyes closed, skin grey, lies still.

EMT LADY

Wait a minute.

She moves into the bedroom and emerges with a blanket. She
throws it over Irma. She sees Irma's purse, grabs it and
places it under the blanket.

They roll the gurney to the door as Irma slides to the side.

FIREMAN #4

Watch it! Careful now!

FIREMAN #5

Yeah, we don't want a lawsuit like
that five hundred pound guy they
dropped down the stairs.

The Firemen quickly adjust Irma and move her through the door. The EMTs exit.

The Building Manager notices the food cooking and turns the gas off. He smells the sauce, spoons some, blows on it and tastes. Then he spears a rigatoni from the water and dips it into the sauce. He eats with gusto and looks around the room.

An oversized print of Paul Klee's, "The Mountain of the Sacred Cat" hangs on the wall with a photo of Baskerville, Irma's dead silver and black TABBY, taped over the "Sacred Cat". He stares at the Cat's picture.

Primitive MASKS cover a wall and watch him.

On the table next to a vase of yellow buttercup flowers is a framed picture of Little Irma, 6, roller skating. The Building Manager shakes his head.

He sees her journal, looks guiltily around as he flips pages. The Masks stare as he stops at...

INSERT - THE PAGE, which reads:

"She waddles around in fat
protected from his hands."

BACK TO SCENE

He glances at the Masks and closes the journal. He moves to the fish tank with one goldfish. He sprinkles some fish food on the water.

INT. HOSPITAL - ICU - NIGHT

Irma lies motionless, eyes closed, connected to a metal pole with wires, tubes and blinking lights.

ORDERLY, 60, tall, slender, fluffy white hair, enters holding a mop. He pauses next to the bed and watches Irma. He runs his left hand in a wavy line above her body from head to foot. He looks at her again then mops the floor.

DOCTOR, male, 30's, enters and his eyes rest on Irma. They narrow as he watches her breathe and takes her measure.

DOCTOR
(to Orderly)
It isn't a good time.

Irma opens her eyes. The Orderly smiles at her and exits.

DOCTOR
You were lucky.

IRMA
Oh? Oh?

DOCTOR
But it's just a matter of time.

IRMA
What? What's a matter of time?

DOCTOR
Somebody as big as you - there's not much hope.

IRMA
You're the doctor, you should be able to do something for me.

The Doctor shakes his head.

DOCTOR
If you'd been able to stop eating, you'd have done so by now.

IRMA
I don't know. I can't.

DOCTOR
See what I mean? That's exactly what I said.

Tears run down Irma's fat cheeks.

The Doctor studies her for a moment.

DOCTOR
Have you ever considered a gastric bypass?

IRMA
An operation? Surgery?

DOCTOR

I don't know though. It can be risky.

He shakes his head and watches her.

DOCTOR

Well, do you want to consider it?

Irma looks out the window and sees a cardinal flying.

IRMA

I don't want to die. I'm not ready for that.

DOCTOR

Well then...

IRMA

What happens when you get hungry?

DOCTOR

You eat, a little, like normal people, and stop. Your stomach is too small to hold much food. Later, you eat a little more and stop. Soon it gets to be a habit.

IRMA

I need some time to think about this.

DOCTOR

Take all the time you want.

IRMA

Really?

DOCTOR

But right now, I'd like to help you.

IRMA

Go ahead. What can you do?

DOCTOR

We can work together. I can't do this alone.

He watches for a response. Nothing.

DOCTOR

Look, Irma, it's a joint effort.

She nods grudgingly.

DOCTOR

I think we need to consider the
bypass.

Irma sighs.

DOCTOR

We'll have to run an
electrocardiogram to see if you're
strong enough.

Irma stares ahead.

DOCTOR

Irma, do you want to live?

Irma raises her eyebrows.

IRMA

Can you guarantee it'll make me
stop eating?

DOCTOR

How's this: Do nothing and die?

Big exhale from Irma.

INT. BUILDING LOBBY - DAY

Irma carries a white plastic hospital bag. She opens her
mailbox and removes a few letters.

One of them is a cream-colored envelope. The address is hand-
written from "M. R. Owen". Irma looks puzzled.

The Building Manager, behind the counter, waves.

BUILDING MANAGER

Feeling better?

IRMA

Yes, thank you.

BUILDING MANAGER

I fed your fish.

IRMA

You did?

INT. IRMA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Everything is just as she left it. Irma walks into the....

KITCHEN

Rigatoni, sauce, meatballs and sausages are still on the stove. She stirs the rigatoni, and it falls apart. The glass of Dr. Pepper is mostly water.

She moves into the....

LIVING ROOM

She looks at the chairs and tables pushed to the side, books on the floor. She spots the goldfish swimming in its tank.

IRMA

I wondered about you.

Irma hears COOING. She moves to the window where a PIGEON builds a NEST on the ledge. Another PIGEON flies up with a TWIG in its beak.

IRMA

If that's all I ate, I wouldn't
need a bypass.

She sits on the yellow couch and thumbs through the mail. When she comes to the cream-colored envelope, she stops, smells it and smiles. She carefully opens it to a handwritten card.

INSERT - THE CARD, which Irma reads aloud:

Dearest Irma,

This is an invitation to Holmes Home, a place of hope and help. As is said, "You are a beloved child of the universe, no less than the trees and the stars. You have a right to be here."

M. R. Owen

R.S.V.P.

555-9770

BACK IN THE LIVING ROOM

IRMA

Yeah, you right. Easy for you to
say.

The photo of Baskerville watches her. She spots her journal and squints.

She remembers the hospital bag and spills it on the table: toothpaste, toothbrush, mouthwash, Kleenex, a cup and a PAMPHLET. She picks up the Pamphlet.

INSERT - THE PAMPHLET, Bariatric Bypass Surgery

Irma flips a page to a drawing of an obese man. She turns a few pages and stops at a picture of the man at normal weight.

RETURN TO SCENE

IRMA

"In the obese, pulmonary embolism is often fatal." Good!

She turns a page.

IRMA

"Post-operative pneumonia - more likely in the obese." Oh yeah!

She turns another page.

IRMA

"Wound infections - considered more likely in the obese. X-Rays do not penetrate as well and pictures are less clear." Right!

Irma shakes her head and reads.

IRMA

"And very large patients will not fit in some equipment such as the CT scanner." Perfect, just perfect!

Irma opens her frightened eyes wide and rubs her stomach.

IRMA

There's got to be a better way.

She picks up the the Holmes Home invitation and smells it.

IRMA

"You are a Beloved child of the Universe..."

She frowns.

IRMA

"You have a right to be here."

She looks around.

IRMA
Do I? Do I really?

Irma walks to the window with the pamphlet in her right hand and the invitation in her left. She holds them up.

The Pigeon turns to her.

IRMA
What would you do?

The pigeon COOS and looks away.

IRMA
Thanks.

EXT. HOLMES HOME - DAY

A tall black wrought iron fence surrounds a large park of trees, shrubs and flowers. A taxi pulls up, and Irma carefully exits. She pulls her suitcase behind her and walks to the gate.

MR. OWEN, 60, appears. He is tall, slender and wears a pinstripe cutaway. Lots of fluffy white hair blows in the breeze. He was the Hospital Orderly. He opens the gate.

MR. OWEN
Welcome, Irma. Welcome to Holmes Home.

She looks confused.

IRMA
Thank you, sir. Have I seen you before?

He smiles as she enters the Park.

MR. OWEN
You may call me Mr. Owen, Irma.

IRMA
Oh, "M. R. Owen". I get it, that's you.

They pass rolling hillocks, boulders and trees. RUSHING STREAMS flow into ponds. Small HOUSES pop up here and there.

Mr. Owen and Irma walk down a dirt PATH through the trees. Her feet leave an IMPRESSION.

Bright colored flowers, ferns, palms, and pines grow wild, and Irma stops to smell LILACS on a bush. CROWS fly overhead in a baby blue sky and CAW-CAW-CAW as Mr. Owen and Irma continue on the path. Parrots CHATTER from the trees.

IRMA

What is this place? Why me?

MR. OWEN

You have long been a concern of ours
and--

IRMA

Yeah right. A concern of no one's.

MR. OWEN

And now it is time.

IRMA

For what?

MR. OWEN

You will see.

IRMA

Still okay about the money?

MR. OWEN

It is our gift to you, Irma.

IRMA

Gift, hunh? Better be good!

High up in the branches of an elm tree, GABRIEL, 40, sits cross-legged. He wears black pants, a black tee and has shoulder-length black hair. Unseen, he watches them.

A small HOUSE comes into view.

MR. OWEN

That is where you will live.

IRMA

Will I have it all to myself?

MR. OWEN

Yes.

IRMA

I was a little worried.

They step up to the porch, and Mr. Owen opens the door.

MR. OWEN

Welcome home.

IRMA

We'll see.

INT. IRMA'S HOUSE - DAY

The room is light-filled with a yellow couch, two large, yellow chairs with pillows and a silver chaise lounge. A long mirror hangs on the wall. Irma's face and body are reflected and spill over the sides.

A kitchen table with a lace tablecloth and vase of Buttercups and chairs stand against the wall. Two doors lead from the room.

IRMA

You got my favorite color right.

She looks surprised and touched.

IRMA

And the flowers. Have you been to my apartment? Haha.

MR. OWEN

You may set your suitcase down.

IRMA

It's nice in here. Large windows. Light, spacious, airy.

She looks up.

IRMA

High ceilings. Good closet placement.

MR. OWEN

It meets your expectations. Please sit down, Irma.

IRMA

I like that beveled window.

Irma checks that the yellow chair is sturdy and lowers herself into it.

Mr. Owen sits on the couch. He places his hands on his knees.

MR. OWEN

We are glad you decided to come to us.

IRMA

Hope I'll be glad too, Mr. Owen.

MR. OWEN

The old way had come to an end, had it not?

IRMA

Quaint! Yes, the old way ended. With a plop.

MR. OWEN

We use a spiritual approach here at Holmes to heal problems you and the others face.

IRMA

The others? Who are they?

MR. OWEN

Six others are in this session.

IRMA

Oh. Are they all... uh... do they have my problem?

MR. OWEN

You will soon meet them.

IRMA

I was wondering about the diet - the food I'll eat.

Irma looks around.

IRMA

I don't see the kitchen.

MR. OWEN

Yes, there will be food.

IRMA

A special diet? I mean that's the problem - the food I eat.

MR. OWEN

That is but a small part of your problem. And we begin right now to alleviate it.

IRMA

A little quick, isn't it? I just sat down.

Mr. Owen looks gently and kindly at her.

She relaxes into the chair.

MR. OWEN

Let us begin. We are each a spirit inside a physical body which we call a '*casing*' here at Holmes. Because that is--

IRMA

Whoa, Mr. Owen. *Casing? Casing?*

MR. OWEN

Your body. Did you know your spirit can leave this *casing* at will?

IRMA

The spirit leaves? And goes where?

Irma massages her chest.

MR. OWEN

Just listen. Suspend your disbelief and listen.

Irma looks away.

IRMA

Maybe I made a mistake.

MR. OWEN

You are safe. It is all right.

Mr. Owen watches her.

MR. OWEN

A *silvercord* connects the spirit to the *casing*. The spirit can move out of the *casing*, but it still remains connected to the *casing*.

Irma scrunches her forehead trying to picture it.

MR. OWEN

All right?

IRMA

So what does it mean?

MR. OWEN

Now, Irma, if one does not inhabit a physical body, one cannot satisfy the craving to eat.

IRMA

And that means...?

MR. OWEN

That eventually the urge to eat will disappear.

IRMA

But I inhabit a body. And that's the problem, isn't it? The big problem.

MR. OWEN

I am going to teach you to leave your body, Irma.

Irma, afraid, massages her chest, looks toward the door and prepares to stand.

MR. OWEN

It is all right, Irma. Completely safe.

IRMA

Sez you.

MR. OWEN

Yes, sez I.

IRMA

It sounds crazy. Are you crazy, M. R. Owen?

MR. OWEN

Do you know why you came here?

Irma shrugs.

MR. OWEN

Because you were desperate. You are still desperate.

Irma shakes her head.

MR. OWEN

Would you like a demonstration?

She crosses her arms in front of her.

IRMA
Not with my body.

MR. OWEN
With mine.

IRMA
(laughs)
Oh, so you can leave your body?

MR. OWEN
Shall I show you?

Irma looks out the window as a squirrel runs up a tree.

IRMA
Okay, show me.

Irma holds herself tightly.

A glistening bead of light appears on Mr. Owen's forehead and a stream of light emerges.

Irma SHRIEKS. The light continues to emerge.

IRMA
Stop! Stop!

She holds a pillow in front of her chest, her eyes fixed on the emerging light. She looks in wonder as the light takes the form of Mr. Owen. His spirit, out of his *casing*, walks around the room while his *casing* sits immobile.

A *silvercord*, thin and faintly shimmering, extends from the forehead of his *casing* to the back of the neck of his spirit body. Mr. Owen in spirit looks identical to Mr. Owen in *casing*.

Irma sits open-mouthed.

IRMA
Are you still here, Mr. Owen?

MR. OWEN
(in spirit)
Still here, Irma.

IRMA
Wow! Would you go back in? Please?
Now?

Mr. Owen's spirit reenters his *casing* through the forehead. His *casing* reanimates.

IRMA
I never saw anything...

Mr. Owen nods sympathetically.

MR. OWEN
I know, Irma.

Irma watches him and relaxes a little.

IRMA
And you want me to do that?

Mr. Owen nods.

IRMA
You think I can?

MR. OWEN
I know you can.

IRMA
And you expect... even if I
could... I'm not coming out of
myself. No way. No way!

MR. OWEN
That is not yourself, Irma. It is
your *casing* for this incarnation,
this lifetime.

IRMA
Sez you.

MR. OWEN
Sez I.

IRMA
If I do that, where will I be?

MR. OWEN
In spirit. You will be in spirit,
your true self.

IRMA
How come I never heard about this
before?

MR. OWEN
Most people have not.

IRMA
How come you know about it?

MR. OWEN
It is my business to know.

IRMA
Could you step out again?

Mr. Owen leaves his *casing*.

IRMA
Can I touch you?

MR. OWEN
Yes.

Irma touches his *casing's* nose. Instantaneously Mr. Owen enters his *casing* and wiggles his nose. Irma gasps.

Mr. Owen laughs and winks at her.

MR. OWEN
I am just teasing you, Irma.

Irma looks at him with a thin smile.

IRMA
A real sense of humor, hunh?

MR. OWEN
Are you ready to begin?

IRMA
I... I... I...

She swallows and massages her chest.

Mr. Owen lightly touches her forehead with his middle, wand-like finger.

MR. OWEN
Now, Irma, take a nice deep breath
and close your eyes.

Irma blinks and watches him then closes her eyes.

MR. OWEN
Allow a wave of relaxation to
spread throughout your body. Start
at your feet and move up, up, up
to your head.

IRMA
I... Oh. Oh-oh.

MR. OWEN

It is so pleasant just to relax
like this.

Irma relaxes, breathes and sits still. Mr. Owen's voice becomes softer, quieter.

MR. OWEN

Direct your attention to the middle
of your forehead.

He pauses.

MR. OWEN

And now allow yourself to move out
of your *casing* at this point.

Irma looks intent.

MR. OWEN

Just allow yourself to slip out.

IRMA

But I...

MR. OWEN

Shhhhh.

A few moments pass.

MR. OWEN

(loudly)

Come out! Now!

Light slowly emerges from Irma's forehead and touches the floor. A female shape stands surrounded by yellow light: slender, dark curly hair, fresh, newly created. The yellow light becomes yellow pants and a blouse.

MR. OWEN

Good, Irma.

Irma, in spirit, looks at him. She touches her chest, arms, stomach. Her confused eyes move around. She sees her *casing*, a shimmering *silvercord* extending from its forehead to the back of the neck of her spirit body.

Irma moves to the mirror and stares. She touches her slender form and notices she doesn't spill over the sides. She walks effortlessly, moves her arms up and down like wings and lifts each leg like a ballerina. She jumps and twirls.

She moves to her *casing* which sits immobile with its eyes open. She pats the cheeks and touches the forehead where the *silvercord* emerges.

She walks to the window and watches a hawk fly high and flaps her arms.

MR. OWEN

How does it feel?

IRMA

This is really me, who I am?

Mr. Owen nods.

IRMA

The prisoner goes free, hunh? So
what do I do without a *casing*?