

"METAMORPHOSIS"

FADE IN:

EXT. SAMSA RESIDENCE - NIGHT

The house is mid-sized, nondescript, situated in a middle-class neighborhood with limited green areas. A few lighted upstairs windows show through a downpour that floods both lawn and street.

GREGOR SAMSA (40s), average height, thin-shouldered, in business attire, sports a bowler and thick-lensed glasses, holds an umbrella and a briefcase.

He side-steps huge puddles, hurries to a tiny, covered front porch. He struggles to close the umbrella, fumbles for his keys and drops the briefcase. It falls open and papers spill out into the rain.

GREGOR

Damn it!

Gregor picks up everything, opens the door and goes in, slams the door behind him.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL/PARLOR - CONTINUOUS

An ornate coat rack stands just inside the door, a staircase faces the door, and beyond an open doorway is a parlor.

Gregor turns on a ceiling light, places coat and hat carefully on the rack, walks into the parlor and sits on a sofa. He hears steps coming down the stairs.

FRAU SAMSA (70s), disheveled in a nightgown, comes in.

FRAU SAMSA

Oh, Son! I was waiting for you.

Gregor stands up and Frau Samsa clutches him to her.

FRAU SAMSA

How was your day?

GREGOR

As usual.

FRAU SAMSA

Oh, It can't be that bad!

GREGOR

I'm really tired, Mama. I'm going up to bed.

FRAU SAMSA

Oh, Son, before you go, I was wondering if you can help me with some--

GREGOR

(interrupts)

Financial problems?

FRAU SAMSA

Yes...sorry.

GREGOR

Wasn't what I gave you last month enough?

FRAU SAMSA

No, it's all gone.

GREGOR

(with a sigh)

I'm tired of this.

FRAU SAMSA

I know you must be, but you're the only one who can help me.

GREGOR

(resigned)

Tomorrow is the end of month, so we'll see.

FRAU SAMSA

Oh, thank you, my sweet Gregor. I knew you'd understand.

GREGOR

I'm going up now. I have a headache.

FRAU SAMSA

Alright.

GREGOR

Good night.

FRAU SAMSA

Good night, son.

Gregor kisses her and goes upstairs.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - MINUTES LATER

Sparsely and inexpensively furnished, the windows are open and all the lamps are on. Gregor frowns as he walks in.

GREGOR

(shouting)

Grete! Why did you leave the windows open and all the lights on? Do you think the electricity is free, or what?

GRETE (OS)

(loudly)

It wasn't me. It was Mother.

Gregor slams the windows shut, glares at insects that fly around the room. He slaps at them and misses.

GREGOR

Damn mosquitos! Go away!

Gregor closes the door, lies on the bed.

EXT. SAMSA RESIDENCE - 3 HOURS LATER

A few lighted windows glow through sheets of rain. The street is deserted, the other homes are dark.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - AT THE SAME TIME

A figure tosses and turns on the bed, covered completely by the sheet and blanket.

EXT. SAMSA RESIDENCE - NEXT DAY

At daybreak, rain has stopped, large puddles lie dark and still on street and lawn.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - AT THE SAME TIME

A huge bug lies on its back in Gregor's bed, tangled in the covers. Its rigid, beetle-like brown abdomen is divided into curved sections, sprouts several pairs of spindly, segmented legs that kick themselves free of the blanket. A shiny black,

pointed head has multi-lensed eyes.

Feelers twitch nervously, as the head raises up and the bug studies its body.

When the bug speaks aloud, it is with Gregor's voice, but burbly and high-pitched, with just a hint of his old human voice. VOs are Gregor's thoughts, heard in his normal voice.

GREGOR

(aghast)

Oh, Lord! What has happened to me?

Oh, no! What is this? No!

He looks desperately around the room. He reaches out with one of his upper legs, touches a gilt-framed magazine picture of a woman in a fur hat and boa that hangs above a small bedside table. Clumsy in his new form, he knocks it askew and barely keeps it from falling.

His head turns toward the window. It starts to rain. Drops plonk on the metal-clad window ledge.

GREGOR (VO)

Why don't I go back to sleep for a while longer and forget all this foolishness?

He tries time and again to lie on his right side, only to roll onto his back each time, due to his rounded shape. He closes his eyes at the sight of his ugly wriggling legs and tries once more to roll onto his side.

GREGOR (VO)

Ow! That hurts. What's going on? I've never had a pain there before.

He finally gives up and lies there, exhausted.

EXT. SAMSA RESIDENCE - DAY - FLASHBACK

Frau Samsa stands at the open door. Gregor gives her a quick kiss and rushes down the path to the sidewalk.

GREGOR (VO)

What a demanding job I've chosen! I work as a slave for others.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - LATER

The vault-roofed space is immense. CROWDS OF COMMUTERS board several trains, TRAIN ATTENDANTS hustle and bustle.

GREGOR (VO)

Being a traveling salesman is terrible.
Day after day, it's the same story, the
same pressures. Constant travel, worrying
about train connections...

Gregor, sweaty and anxious, pushes through the crowd towards a train. He doesn't make it, the train leaves without him.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - LATER

Gregor waits impatiently. A train comes and an ATTENDANT waves people into it. Gregor elbows his way in.

INT. TRAIN - MINUTES LATER

Gregor sits by a window, watches the passing landscape, eats a small hamburger.

GREGOR (VO)

All the time, the same miserable junk food
on the road.

EXT. SMITH RESIDENCE - LATER

Brightly painted and newly-built, it is 2-storied with a large expanse of perfectly manicured lawn and weed-free flower beds.

Gregor stands at the doorstep. MRS SMITH, well-groomed and stylish, stands at the open door.

Gregor shyly shows her travel brochures. She scowls at him, goes into the house and shuts the door in his face.

GREGOR (VO)

And always a parade of new faces, but with
no hope of any lasting relationship, or
greater intimacy.

EXT. LOWER CLASS NEIGHBORHOOD - LATER

Dingy, single-story cottages with junk-filled postage stamp yards are crowded together on both sides of the narrow street.

Gregor walks despondently in the middle of the street, pounds his head with a fist.

GREGOR (VO)
Always the same stuff, the same routine.
To hell with it all!

BACK TO SCENE

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - DAY

Gregor closes his eyes.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Gregor opens his eyes, scratches at the top of his abdomen with a foreleg that twitches nervously. The itchy part is entirely covered with white spots. He looks at them with disgust.

He tries to touch one spot with his wriggling leg, but cannot control it well enough. Disgusted, he gives up and wriggles frantically around on the bed, but can't turn onto either one side or the other.

Exhausted by his efforts, he lies still.

GREGOR (VO)
This getting up early makes a man function
like a complete idiot. A man needs his
sleep.

INT. HOTEL DINING ROOM - FLASHBACK

Luxurious, with curved marble staircase beyond the wide-open double doors. TWO BUSINESSMEN sit at a table set for breakfast.

Gregor walks in and watches the men enviously, as they enjoy their coffee and sweet rolls.

GREGOR (VO)
Other salesmen live like bankers! For
instance, when I come back to the hotel at
morning's end to write up my orders, these
fellows are just sitting down to
breakfast.

He goes out and plods tiredly up the staircase.

INT. GREGOR'S BOSS'S OFFICE - LATER IN THE DAY

Well-furnished and tidy. A large desk sits in front of a wall on which hang several diplomas. GREGOR'S BOSS sits behind the

desk, his back to the door.

Gregor walks in quietly, meekly stands just inside the door. The chair swivels around and the GREGOR'S BOSS (55), overweight and half bald, glares at him. Gregor trembles all over.

GREGOR (VO)

If I were to stand up to my boss. I'd be thrown out on the spot. I'd have quit ages ago, if I didn't hold back for my parents' sake.

Gregor's eyes fill with tears.

GREGOR (VO)

I wish I could tell him what I feel from the bottom of my heart. I haven't completely given up hope yet, though. Once I save enough money to pay off their debt to him, I'll do it for sure... in five or six years, at the most.

BACK TO SCENE

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - DAY

The bug lies still, its eyes closed.

GREGOR (VO)

Well, in the meantime, I'd better get up, if I'm to catch the five a.m. train.

His eyes open. A clock on the bed stand shows it is 6:30. He is startled.

GREGOR (VO)

Good God! Could the alarm have failed to ring? Oh, Lord, what should I do? What!?

He tries to get up and out of bed, only to roll over onto his back each time.

GREGOR (VO)

Damn it! Why can't I even get out of this bed?

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - LATER

The clock reads 6:45. Gregor shudders.

GREGOR (VO)

What have I done to deserve this?

His feelers quiver at the sound of a light knocking at the bedroom door. Gregor covers his face with his forelegs.

FRAU SAMSA (OS)

Gregor? It's a quarter to seven! Don't you want to be on your way?

The knocks get louder and the whole bed shakes, as he trembles under the covers.

FRAU SAMSA (OS)

Gregor!? Are you there? Why don't you answer?

INT. HALLWAY - AT THE SAME TIME

Frau Samsa stands in the short, narrow hall, at one of two doors, knocks on it impatiently.

FRAU SAMSA

Gregor, please...is there anything wrong?
Please answer me. Answer me!

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - AT THE SAME TIME

Gregor pounds his head on the pillow.

FRAU SAMSA (OS)

Answer me! Please?

GREGOR (VO)

I wish I could answer her in detail and explain everything...as if it were so easy!

FRAU SAMSA (OS)

Why don't you answer? Can you hear me?
Open the door!

The bug struggles to speak and finally succeeds.

GREGOR

Yes, Mother. I'm getting up right away.

A brown fluid drools out of his mouth.

INT. HALL - AT THE SAME TIME

Relieved, Frau Samsa stops knocking.

FRAU SAMSA

I feared something bad had happened to you. You sound strange...are you all right? Your breakfast is on the table. A good meal will put you right.

GREGOR (OS)

Okay.

INT. DINING ROOM - AT THE SAME TIME

Small, crowded with heavy, dark furniture. HERR SAMSA (65), overweight and untidy sits at a table set elaborately for breakfast. He eats rolls, sips at a cup of coffee, spills some on the tablecloth.

HERR SAMSA

Oh, drat!

Herr Samsa wipes carelessly at the stain with a napkin. Frau Samsa comes in and sits down.

HERR SAMSA

And Gregor?

FRAU SAMSA

He's coming. He sounds odd, though. I think the poor boy must have a sore throat.

Herr Samsa checks his watch.

HERR SAMSA

What! It's a quarter to seven... what the hell is he thinking?

FRAU SAMSA

I think there's something going on. When I went to check on him, he didn't want to open the door.

HERR SAMSA

He's always been stupid. He just wants to go on sleeping. Stop pampering him.

FRAU SAMSA

What are you talking about? I don't pamper him, just care about him... so should you!

HERR SAMSA

Oh, he's just too lazy to get up.

FRAU SAMSA

Well, we wouldn't have to depend on him financially, if it weren't for you.

HERR SAMSA

For me?

FRAU SAMSA

It was your business misfortune that brought unhappiness here.

HERR SAMSA

Stop it! It's his responsibility to give us all he makes. We're his parents.

FRAU SAMSA

He's always done that. He's only kept a few florins for himself. Poor boy!

HERR SAMSA

We gave him life, now he has to pay us back.

FRAU SAMSA

It pains me to hear you talk like this.

HERR SAMSA

I'm just honest.

Herr Samsa checks his watch again.

HERR SAMSA

But what the hell is he doing? He's late.

FRAU

He's coming, don't worry.

HERR SAMSA

(shouting)

Gregor! Gregor!

Gregor!

Herr Samsa gets up and stalks to the dining room door.

HERR SAMSA

(shouting up the stairs)

Gregor! Gregor! You're late! Damn it, what are you doing? Your boss will fire you and then where will we be?

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALL - CONTINUOUS

Herr Samsa stomps up the stairs.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - CONTINUOUS

Herr Samsa goes to Gregor's door, turns the knob, finds it locked. He pounds on the door.

HERR SAMSA
Gregor! Gregor! Open the goddamn door!

On the other side of the hall, GRETE SAMSA (17), sleepy-eyed in wrinkled pajamas, opens the door, peeks out of her room.

GRETE
I can't sleep with this noise. What's wrong?

HERR SAMSA
Your brother doesn't want to open the door. He's too lazy to go to work.

He pounds on the door again

HERR SAMSA
Open the door!

GRETE
Calm down, Dad! Please.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - AT THE SAME TIME

Gregor lies immobile on the bed.

GREGOR
(weakly, to the door)
I'll be ready in a minute.

INT. HALL

Herr Samsa and Grete look at each other.

HERR SAMSA
He finally answered!

GRETE
What's wrong, Gregor? Why are you talking like that?

HERR SAMSA
Gregor, you'll get fired if you keep this up.

GRETE

What's wrong? Gregor, open the door!

HERR SAMSA

Can't you see that he's late and he doesn't even care?

GRETE

There must be something wrong with him.

HERR SAMSA

I'm going to finish my breakfast. I don't want to waste any more time here. If he's not down in five minutes, I'll kill him.

GRETE

Oh, Daddy, please! That's nonsense.

Grete tries to open the door after Herr Samsa stomps back down the stairs.

GRETE

Please, Gregor. open the door, I beg you.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM

Gregor is agitated from all of the knocking and shouting.

GREGOR (VO)

Thank goodness I had locked the door last night.

GRETE (OS)

Please, Gregor, please. Do it for me. Please!

GREGOR (VO)

How I'd love to stand up and get dressed, and have my breakfast just like any normal day.

GRETE (OS)

Oh God, please, Gregor, please.

GREGOR (VO)

I must get out of this bed somehow.

INT. HALL

Grete sobs softly. Frau Samsa comes up the stairs.

FRAU SAMSA
Stop bothering him, please.

GRETE
But, Mom...

Frau Samsa takes Grete's hands in her own.

FRAU SAMSA
Don't worry, daughter, I'm sure everything
is fine.

GRETE
But...

FRAU SAMSA
Come with me, breakfast is ready.

Frau Samsa and Grete go downstairs.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - AT THE SAME TIME

Gregor raises himself up a little, throws off the blanket.

GREGOR (VO)
Oh God, it hurts. I wish I wasn't so wide.
If only someone could come and help me
climb out of this bed.

Gregor looks at his small, useless limbs, which constantly move
in all directions, seemingly of their own volition.

GREGOR (VO)
If I could just control my body, my
limbs...but I can't! I cannot stay in bed;
I must go to work.

Gregor tries again and again to move his extremely heavy body,
finally gives up, exhausted from the effort.

GREGOR (VO)
I must do something. I must do something!
I can't go on like this.

He hurls himself upward and forward with all his strength, and
hits the lower bedpost hard.

GREGOR (VO)
Ouch!

He falls back again.

GREGOR (VO)

I must try it differently.

He turns his small head carefully, toward the side of the bed and raises it up as far as he's able, looks over the edge at the floor.

GREGOR (VO)

Hmm-mm...but if I fell and landed on my head, I'd be dead. I think I'd rather remain in bed.

He rolls back into the center of the bed and looks toward the window. The morning fog casts a gray pall over everything.

GREGOR (VO)

What a pitiful day! What a pitiful life!

He looks at the clock, which shows 7:00.

GREGOR (VO)

It's already seven o'clock and still such a fog!

He lies quietly with, breathing weakly.

GREGOR (VO)

By quarter past, whatever happens, I must be out of bed. Besides, by then, someone from the office will be calling to ask where I am, since everyone else will be there by now.

With much effort, Gregor again struggles to get up. After a lot of rocking and flailing about, he finally manages to make it to the edge of the bed, where he balances his bulky body precariously.

GREGOR (VO)

In five more minutes, it will be a quarter past seven.

His feelers quiver at the sound of a DOORBELL. The doorbell continues to ring.

GREGOR (VO)

(horror-struck)

Oh God, that's someone from the office. Why doesn't anyone open the door? What if they do?

INT. FOYER - AT THE SAME TIME

ANNA (20s), a housemaid, hurries to the door, looks through the peephole.

IN THE PEEPHOLE

Gregor's boss stands outside, scowls at the door. He is grossly overweight, but well-dressed.

HERR SAMSA (OS)
Anna, open the door!

She opens the door.

GREGOR'S BOSS
Is Gregor home?

ANNA
Yes, please wait.

The ANNA leaves the door open, goes to the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Herr Samsa, Frau Samsa and Grete sit at a table set for breakfast. Herr Samsa reads a newspaper, Frau Samsa and Grete drink coffee. Anna scurries in.

HERR SAMSA
Who is it?

ANNA
(with a slight curtsy)
It's for Gregor, sir.

Annoyed, Herr Samsa closes the newspaper.

HERR SAMSA
For Gregor?

ANNA
Yes, sir.

FRAU SAMSA
Who?

ANNA
It's a rather large gentleman, sir.

HERR SAMSA
Well? Did you leave him standing outside?

ANNA
(mortified)
Yes, sir...sorry sir!

Herr Samsa gets up from the table.

HERR SAMSA
How could you do such a thing, you silly girl? It must be Gregor's employer...a very important man!

Herr Samsa goes to the door.

INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Herr Samsa hurries to the door.

HERR SAMSA
Oh, sir, what an honor it is to welcome you to our humble home! Please, please come in. I hope you will excuse us for that witless servant girl leaving you standing here.

Herr Samsa leads the man to the parlor.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - AT THE SAME TIME

GREGOR is still perched on the edge of the mattress. He wobbles, as his limbs wave about in nervous agitation.

GREGOR (VO)
Oh, no! The doorbell isn't ringing any more. I'm sure it's my boss. I'm sure it is.

GREGOR moves frantically, attempts to slide off the bed into some sort of standing position.

GREGOR (VO)
I must do something.

INT. PARLOR - AT THE SAME TIME

Herr Samsa and Gregor's Boss sit at the far ends of the sofa. Herr Samsa is clearly ill at ease.

HERR SAMSA
Uh...would you care for something to drink? A cup of coffee?

GREGOR'S BOSS
 (surly/annoyed)
 No, I don't want anything.

HERR SAMSA
 I have caviar, it's really good.

GREGOR'S BOSS
 I said I don't want anything. And who
 would eat caviar for breakfast?
 I'm here about Gregor, not a social visit.
 Why didn't he leave on the early train?

HERR SAMSA
 Oh, Gregor always works so hard for his
 family.

GREGOR'S BOSS
 I didn't ask about that! Where is he? Why
 is he late today?

HERR SAMSA
 Um...well, you see...he's...he's not
 exactly well.

GREGOR'S BOSS
 What's that mean? In his five years of
 working for me, he hasn't missed a single
 day. Not one! Gregor does not get sick.

HERR SAMSA
 I know but...

Herr Samsa and Gregor's boss gasp, as a THUD is heard and felt
 from upstairs.

GREGOR'S BOSS
 What was that?

HERR SAMSA
 I don't know.

GREGOR'S BOSS
 It was upstairs. Is that Gregor's room?

HERR SAMSA
 Yes, but...

Frau Samsa and Grete rush into the room.

FRAU SAMSA
 (to Herr Samsa)
 Did you hear that? It sounded like
 something fell in Gregor's bedroom!

She looks at the visitor.

FRAU SAMSA
(curtsies shyly)
Oh, good morning, sir!

GREGOR'S BOSS
(gruffly)
Good morning.

HERR SAMSA
(to his wife)
Why don't you go up and check on Gregor?

FRAU SAMSA
(flustered)
Yes, that's what I was going to do.

GREGOR'S BOSS
I'll go with you.

He gets up and heads for the stairs.

HERR SAMSA
Eh, no, that's not necessary, sir. It's okay. My wife can see to it.

GREGOR'S BOSS
I need to talk to Gregor. Come along, Frau Samsa.

FRAU SAMSA
Oh, please do not disturb yourself, sir. I can go with Grete.

GREGOR'S BOSS
(suspiciously)
Why do you not want me to go up? What is going on here?

FRAU SAMSA
Oh, nothing...nothing at all. Of course you are welcome to come. I meant no disrespect.

GREGOR'S BOSS
(leading the way)
Okay, let's go then.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - AT THE SAME TIME

Gregor lies on his back, on the floor next to the bed. He attempts to rub his head with some of his appendages. He moans

in pain and frustration.

GREGOR (VO)

Oh, my poor head! It hurts so much. Why couldn't I hold it up as I fell, to keep it from hitting the floor?

None of his limbs able to reach his head, he rubs it against the carpet. Sudden pounding on the door makes him start.

HERR SAMSA (OS)

Gregor? Gregor! Open the door.

GRETE (OS)

Your employer is here, Gregor.

GREGOR (VO)

I knew it! I knew he would come...now what am I to do?

FRAU SAMSA (OS)

What happened? What was that noise?

GREGOR'S BOSS (OS)

(sternly)

Good morning, Mr. Samsa. Would you mind very much telling me what is going on here? How is it possible that you are ill? Who is to take your place today, young man?

FRAU SAMSA (OS)

Please open the door, dear. I'm sure the kind sir will forgive the mess, if your room isn't tidy.

INT. HALL

Herr Samsa knocks on the door more frantically than ever.

GREGOR'S BOSS

What's wrong with your son?

FRAU SAMSA

He's not well. Let's leave him alone for a while. He needs his rest.

GREGOR'S BOSS

But, what's the matter with him? Why won't he open the door, if he's merely unwell?

FRAU SAMSA

Believe me, I know my son. Of course he's not well, or how could Gregor miss his train? He never has anything on his mind but business.

GREGOR'S BOSS

Then why doesn't he just open the door so his illness can be tended to, he can recover and get back to work?

FRAU SAMSA

He's so stubborn and he's certainly not well, as you can tell from his voice, although he denied he was this morning.

GREGOR (OS)

I'm coming...right away.

Herr Samsa stops knocking. A faint rustling noise is heard through the door.

GRETE

I hear him...he's coming!

HERR SAMSA

He said he was coming right away, a while ago, but here he is, still locked away in there.

(under his breath)

And why does he sound so odd...could he be on drugs?

GREGOR'S BOSS

(to Frau Samsa)

My dear lady, of course I hope it's nothing serious, but those who are dedicated to the responsibility they owe their employers should overcome slight indispositions.

Herr Samsa is shamed by his son's odd behavior, fumes with anger beneath his embarrassment.

HERR SAMSA

So, Gregor, can we come in to see you now?

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - AT THE SAME TIME

Gregor still lies on the floor, unable to get up and unlock the door.

GREGOR
(softly)

No.

INT. HALL

Grete is in tears, Frau Samsa hugs her, worried and confused. The boss looks disgustedly at Herr Samsa, who puts his ear to the door.

HERR SAMSA
Gregor, speak up! We can't hear you.

GREGOR (OS)
(louder)
No.

HERR SAMSA
Why not? Why can't we? Just unlock the door.

GREGOR'S BOSS
Samsa, why have you barricaded yourself in this room? Do you not realize that you are making trouble for your parents...and causing me to waste my valuable time here.

HERR SAMSA
Why don't you answer?

GREGOR'S BOSS
I knew you to be a calm, reasonable person, but I'm fast losing respect for you, young man.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM

Gregor rocks his way close to a chest of drawers that stands near the door.

GREGOR
(in a burst of speech)
But sir, I'm opening the door at this very moment. A slight dizzy spell has prevented me from getting up, but I'm nearly there.

He struggles to pull himself up against the chest.

GREGOR
I'm in the midst of getting out of bed, just have a bit of patience, everyone...please.

INT. HALL

The four outside Gregor's room, huddle closely and whisper.

GREGOR'S BOSS

Did you understand what he said? It sounds like an animal speaking. Is he playing the fool with us?

FRAU SAMSA

(wringing her hands)

I don't know. I really don't know.

Frau Samsa knocks on the door frantically, sobs.

FRAU SAMSA

For God's sake, Gregor, please!

(to the boss)

Perhaps he's very ill and we're only upsetting him.

GRETE

(her mouth to the door)

Gregor, if you're sick, you must go to the doctor. You can't stay like this all day.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM

Gregor makes more attempts to pull himself upright against the chest of drawers.

HERR SAMSA (OS)

Gregor, please! Open the door! What are you doing?

FRAU SAMSA (OS)

Do it, son, please. All we want is the best for you.

GREGOR (VO)

I want all of them to see me. I wonder what they'll say.

Gregor slides down a few more times against the chest of drawers, gives himself a final push and stands upright.

GRETE (OS)

You know how important you are to us, please just open the door.

GREGOR (VO)

Will they or will they not accept me as I am now?

He tips over against the back of a nearby chair, then braces himself there with his limbs.

GREGOR (VO)
Oh, I'm much more comfortable like this.

FRAU SAMSA (OS)
Oh God! Please!

GREGOR (VO)
Poor mother.

INT. HALL

Herr Samsa hits Gregor's door hard, with both fists.

HERR SAMSA
(shouting)
That's it! Anna! Anna! Fetch a locksmith right away.

Herr Samsa looks at Grete.

HERR SAMSA
You're in the way here. Go and call the doctor.

Grete nods submissively and goes down the stairs.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM

Gregor is more or less upright, braced against the back of the chair, at the side of the door where it opens.

GREGOR (VO)
What a relief! Perhaps the doctor will be able to help me after the locksmith lets everyone in.

He leans carefully towards the door, attempts to turn the key in the lock with what passes for his mouth. He has no teeth, just pincer-like jaws. He struggles to grab the key with them. Brown fluid drools out of his mouth, flows over the key, drips onto the floor.

GREGOR'S BOSS (OS)
Listen! He's turning the key.

INT. HALL - DAYDREAM SEQUENCE

Herr and Frau Samsa and Gregor's Boss stand outside Gregor's bedroom. They all cheer and clap their hands when they see the door handle jiggle a bit.

HERR SAMSA

Come on, dear boy, you can do it. I know you can.

FRAU SAMSA

We love you. Try your best, son.

GREGOR'S BOSS

You're my best man, you can do it!

HERR SAMSA

Keep going, keep working on that lock. You can do it.

BACK TO SCENE

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM

Gregor still struggles to move the key with his jaws.

GREGOR (VO)

Ha! Who am I kidding? They'd never encourage me, or cheer for me.

He bites down frantically on the key. It turns slightly. He hangs onto it with his jaws, pulling down with the whole weight of his body. The lock breaks loose, takes the door handle with it, leaving the key stuck on Gregor's pincer.

GREGOR (VO)

So I didn't need the locksmith.

He places the tips of his pincers on the edge of the door and pulls it wide open, hidden from view behind it. His boss and the Samsas walk in. They look around the room for Gregor. The boss closes the door and sees the bug.

GREGOR'S BOSS

Oh, my God!

He covers his mouth with his hands, backs away slowly.

The bug looks frightened. Frau Samsa stares at it, looks around the room not seeing Gregor anywhere, and collapses.

Herr Samsa sees the key hanging on the bug's pincer, clenches his fists and leaves the room, his eyes filling with tears. He closes the door behind him, gently.

INT. HALL - MOMENTS LATER

Herr Samsa pounds his head against the wall, his shoulders shake with heavy, silent sobs.

HERR SAMSA
Why? Why?

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - AT THE SAME TIME

Gregor leans against the back of the door and looks out the window across the room. It's raining. He stares at a small clinic on the other side of the street.

GREGOR (VO)
If only I could go to a clinic to be treated for whatever it is that happened to me. But how can I go anywhere? Bugs are exterminated, not treated.

He studies a gilt-framed photo of himself in military uniform, that hangs on the wall.

GREGOR (VO)
Those were the days!

Gregor's Boss still stands on the other side of the door, not quite believing his eyes.

GREGOR
(to his boss)
I'll get dressed right away, sir, pack up my samples and be off. I hope you know I'm very happy with my job. Of course the traveling is a bit tiring, but--

The man turns away from Gregor, shaking his head.

GREGOR'S BOSS
This can't be real!

He looks back at Gregor and wrinkles his nose.

GREGOR'S BOSS
You are disgusting.

GREGOR
Please don't make things any more difficult for me than they already are, sir. I'm very concerned about my parents and my sister. I know I'm in a fix at the moment, but .

His boss moves towards the door, doing his best to avoid the bug.

GREGOR (VO)
He's obviously not understanding anything
I say.

Gregor's Boss rushes out of the room.

GREGOR (VO)
I can't let him go! My family and I depend
on him.

Gregor drops to the floor and scuttles after him.

INT. HALL - CONTINUOUS

Gregor watches the frightened man bolt unsteadily down the stairs. His own pointed feet slide on the linoleum and he nearly slips off the top step, but catches himself just in time and returns to his room.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Gregor huddles on the floor, all six feet tucked under his carapace, not far from Frau Samsa, who lies in a faint where she'd fallen.

He reaches out with his feelers and touches her cheek. Frau Samsa's eyes snap open in fright, she springs to her feet with arms crossed in front of her, to fend off the horror she sees.

FRAU SAMSA
Oh God! For God's sake, help! Help!

Frau Samsa backs away from the bug, bumps into the end of the bed and can go no further. She sobs.

FRAU SAMSA
Oh, God! Oh, no! Don't hurt me.

Gregor goes closer to her.

GREGOR
(softly as he can)
Mother, I'm not going to hurt you.

As his bug jaws open and close right in front of her when he speaks, Frau Samsa screams, scurries to the door and runs into the hall.

INT. HALL - CONTINUOUS

Frau Samsa rushes out of Gregor's bedroom into the arms of Herr Samsa, who has just come back up the stairs. Her eyes are scrunched tight.

HERR SAMSA
Open your eyes, woman! What is wrong with you?

Gregor crawls out of the bedroom. Herr Samsa is frightened, backs slowly away from him.

GREGOR
I'm sorry I scared you, Mother, but I must catch my boss before he leaves.

HERR SAMSA
Get away from us!

GREGOR
I won't hurt you, I'm your son.

HERR SAMSA
Get away!

Gregor scuttles down to the bottom of the stairs where his boss stands, still in shock. Gregor's boss grips the railing, looks back up at the bug for the last time and runs to the front door.

INT. FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

The bug scuttles after Gregor's Boss. Short of breath, the man tries to keep ahead of his pursuer, opens the door and slams it behind him.

GREGOR
Damn it!

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - AT THE SAME TIME

Herr Samsa holds up Frau Samsa who still has her eyes closed tight. He pats her cheeks.

HERR SAMSA
Come on! Open your eyes. Everything is okay.

Herr Samsa looks around, sees a vase of flowers on an antique stand. He drips some water from it on Frau Samsa's face. She sputters and slaps him.

FRAU SAMSA
Why did you do that?

HERR SAMSA
I thought you had fainted. Don't worry,
we're fine.

Frau Samsa looks down at a brown blotch of bug drool on the floor and points to it.

FRAU SAMSA
What's that?

HERR SAMSA
It's from the disgusting thing that came
out of our son's room. We must kill that
filthy insect.

FRAU SAMSA
But what is it? Where did it come from?
(wails)
And where is our son?

HERR SAMSA
I don't know, but we have to get rid of
that monster.

They are startled by a woman's screams from downstairs.

FRAU SAMSA
That's Grete!

The couple hurries down the stairs, holding on tightly to each other.

FRAU SAMSA
(calling out)
Grete, are you all right?

INT. FOYER - AT THE SAME TIME

Grete stares at the bug. It leans against the front door. She shudders and covers her eyes with her hands.

GRETE
Oh, my dear God!

Gregor moves closer to Grete.

GRETE
Oh, no, please don't hurt me. I beg you!

GREGOR
Grete, it's me...your brother, Gregor.

GRETE
What?

GREGOR
(stammering)
Gregor...Gregor.

Grete stares at his mouth, that can barely be seen moving, between the opening and closing pincers. His voice is hard for her to understand.

GRETE
What?

GREGOR
Gregor.

GRETE
Gregor?

Gregor nods his little head furiously.

GRETE
Am I out of my mind?

Herr Samsa and Frau Samsa rush in.

HERR SAMSA
Move away from her! Move away from her!

Herr Samsa grabs a cane newspaper from the hall stand. He brandishes them at the bug, like weapons.

GRETE
Don't harm him! It is Gregor.

HERR SAMSA
Don't be ridiculous, you silly child.

FRAU SAMSA
(pulls on Grete's arm)
Grete, it's best for you to go to your room now. Papa will handle this...this thing.

GRETE
Please, Papa, don't hurt him... please!

HERR SAMSA
Do what your mother said! Go to your room and let me deal with this.

GRETE

No.

HERR SAMSA

Go to your room now. You must do as I say.

Grete weeps and goes up the stairs. Gregor starts, when Herr Samsa stamps his feet hard on the floor. He hits Gregor on one leg with the cane.

THE GREGOR

Ouch!

Gregor tries to move away, but he is backed against the front door.

GREGOR

Please, Papa, I beg you...don't hurt me!

Herr Samsa pounds the floor with the cane. Gregor pushes past his mother and scurries into the parlor.

INT. PARLOR - CONTINUOUS

Herr Samsa storms after Gregor, flails at him with both cane and newspaper. Gregor scuttles back towards the staircase. Herr Samsa chases him, with Frau Samsa close behind.

INT. STAIRCASE

Gregor moves awkwardly up a couple of steps, hampered by his injured leg. The Samsas chase him. The bug hisses.

Herr Samsa backs at him and waves the newspaper at him.

GREGOR

For heaven's sake, stop that! Stop swatting at me as if I'm an insect.

Herr Samsa hisses even louder, and hits the bug's feelers with the cane.

HERR SAMSA

Get out of here! We don't allow bugs in our home.

GREGOR

Father, please what can I do to make you understand me? What?

Herr Samsa tries to hit the bug's head with the cane, hits a leg instead. Gregor scuttles slightly sideways up the stairs.

Frau Samsa wrings her hands.

FRAU SAMSA
Poor him.

HERR SAMSA
Poor him? It's an insect,

FRAU SAMSA
But Grete said it is Gregor.

HERR SAMSA
Nonsense.

INT. HALL - MOMENTS LATER

Gregor creeps awkwardly into his room. His leg drips brownish goop on the floor. His father dashes up the stairs after him,

HERR SAMSA
You're staining the floor!

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM

Gregor does his best to hide in the far corner of the room. The gash in his leg, oozes more heavily.

INT. HALL

Herr Samsa slams the door shut with the cane and blocks it with a heavy piece of furniture.

HERR SAMSA
We've got it trapped!

FRAU SAMSA
What should we do now?

HERR SAMSA
I need to rest. We'll decide what to do
with this pest when I've recovered.
(points to stains)
In the meantime, you need to clean up that
mess!

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM

He lies on the floor motionless, eyes closed, as his leg oozes a puddle onto the floor.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Gregor lies in the same position on the floor. He wakes up, sees the solidified puddle on the floor. He takes a few steps. His wounded leg drags lifelessly.

GREGOR (VO)

At least I rested a little.

His head lifts, feelers wave about as if sniffing the air. He looks around and sees on the floor by the door a bowl of milk and a few hunks of bread, set out on a page of newspaper.

GREGOR (VO)

Mm-m, that smells delicious. Milk, my favorite drink! It must have been my sister who put this here for me.

He goes to it, gropes awkwardly at the bread with his pincers.

GREGOR (VO)

Oh, my beautiful pincers! Thank you for being a part me. What would I do without you?

He picks up the bowl with the pincers, tips it toward his small mouth.

GREGOR (VO)

Ugh, this is disgusting! I can't eat and drink like this. I want my hands back...and a real mouth.

He puts the bowl back down on the floor and creeps back to the corner.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - 5 MINUTES LATER

Gregor creeps slowly to the door.

GREGOR (VO)

It's so quiet.

He looks through the crack under the door.

GREGOR (VO)

What a quiet life the family leads...but how will things be if now all that tranquility, all that prosperity and all that contentment should come to an end?

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - LATER

Gregor is in the middle of the floor.

GREGOR (VO)
There's nothing to do.

The door opens a crack, is quickly closed.

GREGOR
Who might that be? How ironic... when the door was locked, they all wanted to come in, but now that it's not, no one wants to.

GREGOR's feelers quiver at the sound of someone tiptoeing outside his door.

GREGOR (VO)
What's my family doing now? What can they be up to?

He tries to scuttle under the bed, but his high, round back won't fit, the shell too hard to squeeze it in.

GREGOR (VO)
I hate being so ungainly.

Only his head is under the bed and the rest of him sticks out in the room.

GREGOR (VO)
Oh, I feel much more comfortable under here, in the dark.

EXT. SAMSA RESIDENCE - DAY

It's daybreak, a heavy fog rolls in. No one is in sight, no lights are showing in the houses.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - AT THE SAME TIME

Grete walks on tiptoes, quietly opens a door.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Not large, it is cheaply furnished, but neat. The Samsas are asleep. Grete peers in warily, scans the room and leaves.

GREGOR'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Gregor wakes up, his head still under the bed. He backs out, looks at his body in the full length closet door mirror and shudders.

GREGOR (VO)

Oh, this same nightmare again! Why can't I wake up from it?

He looks at a scab that had formed on his leg.

GREGOR (VO)

At least my wound healed quickly! Perhaps being an insect has some benefits after all.

He stares at the door as it slowly opens. Grete walks in, looks the room over warily, sees the bug and stops a shriek with her hands over her mouth.

GRETE

Oh, my God!

Grete backs away, runs out and slams the door shut behind her.

GREGOR (VO)

How disgusting must I be? Not even my sister, who I thought was my friend can bear to see me like this. Maybe she hopes I'll die of hunger here.

(sees the bowl and bread)

Oh, no, she wouldn't do that to me, after all she brought me food, didn't she...or did she?

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - AT THE SAME TIME

Outside Gregor's bedroom, Grete sighs loudly and turns back toward his door.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Grete walks in, hesitantly. Gregor watches her.

Grete sees the bowl still full, with only a few drops of milk spilled next to it. She picks it and the bread up with the newspaper page and carries it out of the room.

GREGOR (VO)

Oh, I knew she'd come sooner or later...glad it was sooner. But will she bring in something else for me to eat and drink instead? What will it be?

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - FANTASY SEQUENCE

Gregor sees food whirl around him in the mirror.

GREGOR (VO)
Will it be ice cream?

An ice cream cone zooms around his head.

GREGOR (VO)
Will it be fruit?

Several kinds of fruit chase each other around his head

GREGOR (VO)
Will it be cereal?

A bowl of cereal circles his head.

BACK TO SCENE

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - MINUTES LATER

Grete walks in with a large tray covered lined with an old newspaper. On top of the paper are a bowl and carafe, half-rotten vegetables, a few small bones covered in mold, a pile of raisins and almonds, chunks of greenish cheese, a slice of dry bread and one smeared with butter.

She sets the tray down, places the bowl on the floor, pours some water in it from the carafe> She goes out quickly and is heard pushing the furniture back against the door.

GREGOR (VO)
Oh, dear Grete. You can't even imagine how much I love you.

Gregor's feelers test all of the items and he picks up the cheese with his pincers, crams it into his mouth.

GREGOR (VO)
I can't believe I'm eating this old cheese now. I considered it totally inedible before.

He devours the rotten vegetables and eats all the mold off the bones.

GREGOR (VO)
The more rotten, the more delicious it is.

He nibbles at the bread and butter.

GREGOR (VO)

Yuck!

He pushes all the fresh food aside and makes short work of the garbage.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - MINUTES LATER

The newspaper on the tray is bare, except for a few crumbs. Scraped clean bones and the uneaten fresh food are scattered about the floor. Gregor lies amid the refuse, happily cleaning his feelers with one pincer.

The sound of the door blocker being moved startles him. He scurries back to his corner. Grete comes in, sweeps the mess onto the tray with a broom and leaves. The furniture scraping is heard again, followed by a light thud as it hits the door.

Gregor stretches out in his corner and goes back to sleep.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - 2 WEEKS LATER

Grete comes in with a doctor's mask over her nose and mouth, carrying another tray of rotten food, which she places on the floor in the same place as before.

Gregor watches her unmoving, from his dark corner.

GRETE

Enjoy your meal, my dear Gregor. And don't forget to say grace. God should be thanked even for poor food such as this.

Grete leaves, Gregor comes out from the corner, grabs the cheese greedily.

GREGOR (VO)

It's been two weeks and she's still wearing that damn mask. Can I smell so bad? I can't tell, not having a nose. But anyway, thank goodness she's been loyal to me.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - 10 MINUTES LATER

Remnants of the meal are strewn on the floor. Gregor scuttles back to his corner, as Grete comes in and cleans up as usual.

GRETE

Well, it tasted good to him, anyway.

She leaves.

GREGOR (VO)

My dear sister has been even more supportive than she was in the first days. She actually seems to like me this way.

INT. DINING ROOM - LATER

Grete and her parents sit at the breakfast table.

HERR SAMSA

(to Grete)

Enough of this nonsense! We cannot keep that monstrous bug in our house any longer. And you don't help things any by feeding it.

GRETE

But, Papa, he's Gregor. He's my brother!

HERR SAMSA

I am tired of having to keep repeating myself to say that he most certainly is not. No son of mine would do such a thing to his family.

FRAU SAMSA

We shouldn't argue about this, please.

GRETE

Gregor isn't doing any harm. Why can't we just accept him as he is?

FRAU SAMSA

Grete is right. Sometimes even I feel sorry for the poor bug.

HERR SAMSA

You feel sorry for an insect? Ha! Are you out of your mind?

GRETE

I don't know why, but I like him this way.

HERR SAMSA

This is ridiculous. Don't you realize how annoying it is to have to talk about the same subject over and over?

(pounds the table)

Gregor is not here. Perhaps he ran out on us...perhaps he didn't want to continue helping his own family.

FRAU SAMSA

You know he'd never do that to us. He's been supporting us for more than five years.

GRETE

Gregor would never leave us.

(derisively)

He knows he's the only one who works in this house.

HERR SAMSA

Well, he's not here now! But, wait ...he's a bug, right? So, maybe tomorrow he'll fly off and get an even better job than the one he quit to leave us in dire straits.

FRAU SAMSA

Will you stop with the sarcasm?

HERR SAMSA

Alright, but what you should both be worried about is that, I just checked our bank account, and...

GRETE

And?

HERR SAMSA

We haven't much money left. Even Gregor's pitiful little savings are gone.

FRAU SAMSA

What can we do? How will we pay the rent...or buy food? The butcher has told me he will no longer give us anything on credit.

HERR SAMSA

(with a shudder)

We will have to work.

FRAU SAMSA

Work? Work at what?

HERR SAMSA

We'll see.

FRAU SAMSA

Oh dear God, where's Gregor? If it weren't for this misfortune, we'd be still living beautifully. The maid is going to quit, too. How will I ever manage without her?

GRETE

(whining)

Now mother and I have to do all the cooking. And cleaning!

FRAU SAMSA

I miss my Gregor so much.

GRETE

(wailing)

And he promised that he would pay for me to go to the conservatory next year.

HERR SAMSA

I find it difficult to see how he can keep that promise now, if that filthy thing upstairs is truly him.

GRETE

(rallying)

No, I know he will. There's a part of me that knows that. He'll find a way. He always has, hasn't he?

HERR SAMSA

Don't fool yourself. He either ran away, or died.

FRAU SAMSA

How can you say such things about your own flesh and blood?

HERR SAMSA

I'm just being realistic. Besides, he never liked the way you played the violin, Grete. Said it sounded like an alley cat in heat.

GRETE

Yes, he did! My beloved brother would never say such a thing about me. He told me I played like an angel.

HERR SAMSA

No. All he did was lock himself up in his room with the radio on, when you practiced.

GRETE
 (pouting; in tears)
 That's not true.

HERR SAMSA
 The truth here is that we have a disgusting bug living with us and that thing, whatever it is, must be gotten ridden of.

GRETE
 Father, please, don't hurt him. Don't ever do that. Please! I don't care if he hated my playing, I still love him.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - 1 HOURS LATER

Grete walks in, sees Gregor is safely in his corner and sits on the bed.

GRETE
 (teary-eyed)
 Oh, Gregor, I know you understand me. I wish I could understand you. If you only knew how much I miss you! How much I need your help, your love.

She wipes her tear-streaked face with a corner of the blanket.

GRETE
 If I could bring the old you back, I'd do it, no matter what it takes.

GREGOR (VO)
 I always knew that, I always did.

GRETE
 Now, of course, we are in serious financial trouble but I didn't care about your money, only cared about you as a brother. But...damn money, anyway! Why must it be so necessary in this life?

GREGOR (VO)
 Oh, dear. What's my family going to do now, without all the money I had provided for them?

GRETE
 Gregor, I promise I'll do whatever I can to make you happy. I just want you to know that I love you, I really do, not matter what you are.

GREGOR (VO)
 Oh, Grete, thank you, thank you from the
 bottom of my heart...if I still have one.
 Do beetles?

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Gregor lies on the floor, looks longingly at the window. He struggles to pull himself up to lean against the sill.

GREGOR (VO)
 I love this time of day, when it's just
 gone dark.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - DAY

Grete sweeps up, as Gregor hides behind the bed. She opens the window and waves the drapes to let in some fresh air.

GREGOR (VO)
 Don't leave the window open, it's cold.

Grete leaves it open and goes out of the room.

INT. HALL - CONTINUOUS

Grete slams Gregor's door shut behind her. Herr and Frau Samsa stand at the head of the stairs.

FRAU SAMSA
 What's my son doing today?

GRETE
 Don't worry he's fine.

HERR SAMSA
 I can't believe that bug is still alive. I
 don't even want to look at it.

FRAU SAMSA
 I do. I do want to look at my son.

GRETE
 (scoffs)
 You might faint again, as usual.

FRAU SAMSA
 I don't care, I just need to see him. I
 need to tell him that he still has a
 mother.

HERR SAMSA

How can you be the mother of something that eats rotten food? It's insane.

GRETE

I know Gregor is grateful for all I've been doing for him. I know he'll be back to his old self soon. I don't think this transformation will last forever.

FRAU SAMSA

But, why did it happen? Why?

GRETE

I don't know, but I'll find it.

HERR SAMSA

That's it! I'm going in. It needs to be dealt with, not coddled.

Grete blocks the door.

GRETE

No, father, please don't do that. Don't frighten Gregor more than he already is.

FRAU SAMSA

I want to go in, too. I won't frighten him, I promise.

GRETE

It's not the right time, yet.

FRAU SAMSA

When is the right time, then?

GRETE

I don't know, but it's not now.

FRAU SAMSA

(stubbornly)

I want to see him, he's my son. I have the right to see him.

Frau Samsa struggles to get past Grete and open Gregor's door. Herr Samsa and Grete grab her.

FRAU SAMSA

(screeching)

Let me go to Gregor! He's my poor, unlucky son! Don't you understand that I have to go to him?

GRETE

Not, now, Please Mother, not now!

Frau Samsa sinks to the floor, weeping.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - AT THE SAME TIME

Frau Samsa's shouts startle Gregor.

GREGOR (VO)

Poor Mama! I want to see her, too.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - 2 WEEKS LATER

Gregor walks across the wall and looks out the open window open.

GREGOR (VO)

It's been a month, and I'm still this bug!
Is this metamorphosis to last forever? And
my sister still leaves the window open.
She knows it annoys me to no end.

He pushes the drapes closed with his pincers.

GREGOR (VO)

At least, she's learned to see me without
fear in her eyes, finally. And I'm able to
do what I like best, even when she's in
the room.

He crawls back and forth across the walls and ceiling.

GREGOR (VO)

(hanging from the ceiling)
Whee! This part of being a bug is fun, at
least.

Grete comes in and startles Gregor, who falls off the ceiling onto the bed. Trails of shiny, sticky stuff are left on walls and ceiling. He flops off onto the floor and scurries into his old corner.

Grete looks at his tracks crisscrossing walls and ceiling.

GRETE

(gets an idea)

Gregor, It seems to me you enjoy creeping
around all over the place.
So, I'll make it easy for you, by removing
the furniture, since you don't use it

anymore anyway. Then you can scurry
anywhere you want.

(tries to move the bed)
Since our father is not here, I'll have to
call mother to help me.

Grete rushes to the door, stops in the doorway and turns
around.

GRETE

Wait for me a second...just a second.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - MINUTES LATER

Frau Samsa and Grete stand outside Gregor's bedroom. Grete
walks in, leaves the door open.

GRETE

Wait there, Mama.

FRAU SAMSA

(peeking in)

Oh, I can't believe it!

Grete looks around, does not see Gregor.

GRETE

Okay, come on in.

Frau Samsa goes in and closes the door tightly behind her.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Gregor lies behind the bed, completely covered by his quilt.

Frau Samsa looks around the room.

FRAU SAMSA

Where's Gregor?

Grete looks at the lump under the quilt.

GRETE

He's not visible.

FRAU SAMSA

I want to see my son!

GRETE

You'd better not.

FRAU SAMSA

Why?

GRETE

You know why. It might be too shocking an experience.

FRAU SAMSA

Poor Gregor.

Grete pushes futilely against the chest of drawers.

GRETE

Just help me get this out of the room, will you please?

FRAU SAMSA

That looks too heavy.

GRETE

We'll do just fine, if you help.

FRAU SAMSA

Are you sure Gregor wants to live in an empty bedroom?

GRETE

Yes, I'm sure. It needs to be empty so he can creep around, which is what he enjoys doing.

FRAU SAMSA

But I don't want to strain myself.

GRETE

Push with your hip and it'll be easier.

They do their best, but it only moves a few inches.

FRAU SAMSA

It's too heavy.

GRETE

We have to do it.

FRAU SAMSA

Your father will be home soon, why don't we wait for him to do it? Are you sure Gregor will be pleased with the removal of his furniture?

GRETE

Yes, Mom. I am.

Gregor shifts around under his quilt, careful not to let any part of him show.

GREGOR (VO)

Oh, no! Grete misunderstood. I wouldn't like to live in an empty room.

Frau Samsa and Grete try again to move the chest and Frau Samsa gives up.

FRAU SAMSA

I can't do it! And anyway, won't taking out his furniture show that we're giving up all hope of him changing back?

GRETE

I don't think so.

FRAU SAMSA

I think it'd be best if we keep the room exactly the same as it is, so when Gregor returns to his true self, he can forget this whole awful mess.

GRETE

(impatiently)

Mother, I know Gregor. I know what he likes and what he doesn't. He needs a great deal of room to creep about and the furniture is not of the slightest use to him as he is now.

FRAU SAMSA

You're right, I suppose. I'll do whatever pleases my son.

GRETE

I know Gregor will appreciate this, Mother. Let's take out the drawers first. Then we should be able to move it.

FRAU SAMSA

That's a good idea.

The two women take out the drawers and set them down in the hall. The chest is then moved easily out of the room.

Gregor shrugs off the quilt and comes halfway out from behind the bed.

GREGOR (VO)

Well, I could live without the chest of drawers.

Frau Samsa comes back into the room, while Grete places the drawers back in the chest out in the hall.

GREGOR (VO)

Oh, no! My mother can't see me like this.

Gregor scrabbles his way back under the quilt. Frau Samsa turns in that direction, stands listening for a moment, then goes back to help Grete with the drawers.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - 1 HOUR LATER

The room is empty but for the bed, a desk and some framed pictures on the wall. Frau Samsa and Grete start to move the desk. Gregor is still behind the bed.

GREGOR (VO)

They are taking away everything I cherish.
Oh, no, not my desk!

The two women move the desk out into the hall.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL

Frau Samsa and Grete lean on the desk.

FRAU SAMSA

I can't go on, I'm exhausted.

GRETE

So am I, but I'm sure Gregor is happy.

FRAU SAMSA

I hope so. Right now, I just want to rest.

GRETE

Yes, that's a good idea.

Gregor scuttles out from behind the bed, looks around for another place to hide, sees nothing is left but the pictures, crawls up the wall and stops next to them.

GREGOR (VO)

If only I wasn't so big, I could hide behind one of these, like any normal bug would do.

He hears someone at the door. Frau Samsa and Grete walk in.

GRETE

What shall we take now?

Grete sees Gregor on the wall and gasps.

FRAU SAMSA
(doesn't see the bug)
Is something wrong?

GRETE
Oh, no, nothing at all.

FRAU SAMSA
Are you sure? You're suddenly so pale.

GRETE
Yes, don't worry, I'm fine. But, Mama,
wouldn't it be better if we rested just a
bit more?

FRAU SAMSA
You sound nervous. What is it?

Frau Samsa notices Grete stares at something, turns in that direction and sees the bug.

FRAU SAMSA
Oh, my God!

She faints. Grete raises her fist at Gregor.

GRETE
Look what you did. What should I do now?
What?

Grete gets down on her knees, pats her mother's cheeks.

GRETE
Mom, please, say something.

She looks at Gregor.

GRETE
She doesn't say anything!

GREGOR
Poor mother!

Grete gets up, rushes out of the room.

GREGOR
Wait a second. I'm going with you!

Gregor scuttles down from the wall and follows her.

INT. GRETE'S BEDROOM/BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Gregor watches from his sister's bedroom, as Grete rummages through the medicine cabinet.

Grete catches sight of him in the mirror, is startled and drops a bottle on the floor. It shatters and a splinter of glass cuts Gregor's face, some of the liquid splashes on him.

GREGOR

Ouch!

GRETE

Gregor, don't sneak up on me like that.

Grete takes a small vial and heads back to Gregor's room.

Gregor stays behind, tries to shake off the liquid.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Grete rushes in, pats her mother's cheeks, uncorks the vial and holds it under the woman's nose.

Frau Samsa opens her eyes slightly. The doorbell rings.

GRETE

Oh, damn it!

Doorbell continues to ring.

GRETE

Damn it!

She stands up and leaves the room hurriedly.

INT. FOYER

Grete yanks the door open and her father stalks in.

HERR SAMSA

Why did it take you forever to open the goddamn door? With all that's going on in this house, I even forgot the damn keys.

GRETE

Um...

HERR SAMSA

(interrupting)

Where's your mother?

Grete avoids his glare.

HERR SAMSA
I said, where's your mother?

Grete is in tears.

HERR SAMSA
Where is she?

GRETE
She fainted in Gregor's room, but she's
okay now. Gregor has gotten loose...he's
in my bathroom.

HERR SAMSA
I was expecting that. I told you he would,
but you women don't want to listen. I'm
going to get rid of that bug now, once and
for all.

GRETE
No, father please, no!

HERR SAMSA
Go to your room...now.

GRETE
But, Gregor...

Herr Samsa holds up his hand, won't let her speak.

HERR SAMSA
I said go to your room!

Grete goes up the stairs.

INT. DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A large bowl of fruit sits on the sideboard. Herr Samsa picks
out several of the largest apples and puts them in his pockets.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - MOMENTS LATER

Herr Samsa opens Grete's bedroom door and walks in.

INT. GRETE'S BEDROOM

Herr Samsa stands in the doorway to the bathroom, looks down at
the bug, who lies listlessly on the tile floor, a small puddle
of antiseptic by his head and broken glass nearby.

HERR SAMSA

What did you do to my poor wife? What did you do to scare her into fainting? Aren't you ashamed of yourself?

GREGOR tries in vain to cover his face with his feelers and front set of legs.

HERR SAMSA

Now, this nonsense will be ended. You cannot be allowed to live. We will all be better off without you.

Herr Samsa takes two apples from his pocket and throws them as hard as he can, at the bug. Gregor does his best to dodge them and one only hits him a glancing blow on the back end of his carapace.

GREGOR

Somebody! Help! Please father, don't kill me. How can you kill your only son and heir?

Herr Samsa throws another apple, grabs his chest and doubles over in pain.

HERR SAMSA

Oh, my heart!

GREGOR

You shouldn't strain yourself, Father.

Samsa takes out another apple and throws it, ignoring his pain. This one hits Gregor quite hard in the back.

GREGOR

Oh, God!

Gregor creeps painfully past his attacker and into the bedroom, aiming for the open doorway to the hall. As he dodges the man, he bumps the desk and a large glass water carafe topples onto the floor.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - AT THE SAME TIME

Frau Samsa sits on the bed, recovering. Grete hands her a glass of water. The two women are startled by the sound of glass breaking in the next room.

GRETE

Father? Gregor? What are they doing?

They both rush out of Gregor's room.

INT. GRETE'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Herr Samsa picks up a small bronze statue from the desk and brandishes it like a weapon. Grete and Frau Samsa rush in and see him about to attack the bug.

GRETE

No! My God...don't do that!

FRAU SAMSA

Have mercy on him, he's our son.

GRETE

Please don't, Papa! You'll regret it, I know you will.

Grete stands in front of her father, blocks him from attacking Gregor.

GRETE

Don't do it, I beg you. Please. If you want me to get down on my knees, I will, but please don't hurt him.

HERR SAMSA

Why would you do that just for a bug?

GRETE

He's not only a bug, he's my brother. He's your son!

Herr Samsa backs up a bit.

HERR SAMSA

If he dares attempt to harm us, I'll get the insecticide.

Herr Samsa glares at Frau Samsa and his daughter.

HERR SAMSA

So, if that's your son, your brother, why don't you two go and kiss him?

Herr Samsa goes out of the room and slams the door shut. Grete looks at Gregor, her eyes full of tears.

GRETE

I'm glad he didn't hurt you. He still loves you, I'm sure he does.

Frau Samsa bursts out in sobs.

FRAU SAMSA

Oh, God, why? Why are you doing this to us? How have we deserved this horrible punishment? My Gregor has been a good son. We need him to be back in his own body.

Grete hugs her mother.

GRETE

Don't worry, he'll be fine again, soon.

Grete looks at Gregor.

GRETE

Dear brother, I'll never let anyone hurt you...never.

INT. GRETE'S BEDROOM - DAYS LATER

Grete sits on her bed, plays a sorrowful air on the violin. She looks sad, but is dry-eyed.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - AT THE SAME TIME

The small crack in Gregor's back from the apple's blow oozes a brownish-green substance. The stem of the apple is stuck in the wound. He lies on the floor, motionless, shivers a little at the high notes of his sister's violin.

GREGOR (VO)

Oh, Grete, I don't understand why I didn't like your music before. You play like an angel. Such lovely sounds relieve my pain a bit. Don't ever stop! Don't.

He pulls himself around the room awkwardly, hampered by his cracked carapace.

GREGOR (VO)

Why did my father have to hurt me? He treats me like an enemy. Doesn't he realize I'm still a member of his family?

The violin music stops.

GREGOR (VO)

What happened? Why did she stop? I can't even go and ask her.

Grete comes in.

GRETE

Gregor, I've been thinking. We're having serious financial problems, as you must know...

GREGOR (VO)

How easy it'd be if I could just return to human form and go back to work.

GRETE

...but don't worry, Gregor. Father has a job as a bank messenger. That's why he's late coming home most of the time, now.

GREGOR (VO)

Bank messenger?

GRETE

He's not fond of the work, but he's doing it for us. Mother is also working. She sews piecework. And we got a new maid since our old one quit. She does the heavy work.

GREGOR (VO)

I never thought they'd ever go to work.

GRETE

And I'm happy to tell you that I'm going to work as a salesgirl next week.

GREGOR (VO)

A salesgirl? I can't believe what I'm hearing!

GRETE

But that's not all. I'll also study stenography and French, so I can obtain a better position later on.

GREGOR (VO)

I guess they don't need me now.

GRETE

You know Gregor, whenever I play my violin, I think of you.

GREGOR (VO)

Oh, Grete, my poor Grete.

GRETE

You don't know how happy I'd be if I just woke up and realized all of this was just a nightmare.

She rubs her eyes and rushes out of the room.

INT. GRETE'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Grete drops onto her bed face down, pounds her head on the pillow and bursts into tears.

INT. DINING ROOM - LATER

Grete, dry-eyed, sits alone at the table, sips a glass of orange juice. The classified section of the newspaper lies open on the table. She picks it up and scans it. An ad catches her eye. It reads, "Got problems? Don't worry, Mrs. Mills will help you solve them with her magical powers. Call
[href="tel:330-0009" x-apple-data-detectors="true"](tel:330-0009)
[x-apple-data-detectors-type="telephone"](tel:330-0009)
[x-apple-data-detectors-result="0">330-0009."](tel:330-0009)

INT. PARLOR - MOMENTS LATER

Grete sits on the sofa, picks up the phone, dials a number.

WOMAN'S VOICE

(over the phone)

Mrs. Mills' answering service, may I help you?

GRETE

Hello. My name is Grete Samsa and I would like to make an appointment to see Mrs. Mills. Is she there?

WOMAN

Just a moment, please. I'll put you through.

GRETE

Thank you.

Grete taps her fingers nervously, on the arm of the sofa.

MRS. MILLS

(on phone)

Yes?

GRETE

(nervously)

Hello. My name is Grete Samsa and I was wondering if you would tell me how your healing powers work.

MRS. MILLS

What is it you need help with, my dear?

GRETE

Well, I don't know If I should tell you about it on the phone...

MRS. MILLS

Can you come in to my office?

GRETE

Right now?

MRS. MILLS

Yes, now would be fine, as a client just cancelled, leaving an opening.

GRETE

Alright, I'll come right away. What is the address?

INT. MRS. MILLS' RESIDENCE - MOMENTS LATER

Old and run-down, the 2-story house sits behind a rickety picket fence and large, weed-filled yard. Grete walks hesitantly to the front door, rings the bell.

MRS. MILLS (40s), overweight, wrinkled and dressed like a gypsy, opens the door.

MRS. MILLS

Miss Samsa?

GRETE

Yes.

MRS. MILLS

Come in, won't you?

INT. STUDY - MOMENTS LATER

Sparsely and cheaply furnished. Mrs. Mills behind a large desk, motions to a shabby upholstered chair in front of the desk.

MRS. MILLS

Sit down, young lady, and tell me about your problem.

Grete sits down uneasily, fusses with her skirt.

GRETE

Mrs. Mills, no one must know I've come here, but I'm desperate. I really want to help my brother.

MRS. MILLS

Your brother. What's wrong with him?

GRETE

I know it's going to sound crazy, but he turned into a bug.

MRS. MILLS

(tries not to look shocked)

A bug?

GRETE

I know how crazy it sounds, but let me explain what's been going on.

MRS. MILLS

It is very strange, I must say.

GRETE

I want my old brother back.

MRS. MILLS

When was the last time you saw your brother in human form?

GRETE

It was about two months ago.

MRS. MILLS

Why do you think he turned into a bug?

GRETE

I don't know. I really don't. That's what I've come here for.

MRS. MILLS

Can you guess? Did he always love bugs and want to be one, for instance?

GRETE

No! He hated insects. He never wanted to go to bed with the windows open, for fear one would get in and crawl on him.

MRS. MILLS

I see. It might be a spell, of course, but before I can help you, I must see him.

GRETE

Yes, of course.

MRS. MILLS

I can come tonight. Would that work for you?

GRETE

Yes, but not too late, please, as my parents have to get up early in the morning.

MRS. MILLS

You know, of course, that because my services are so effective, they are not inexpensive.

GRETE

How much would it cost?

MRS. MILLS

I charge a flat thousand dollars for anything I do. Results are guaranteed.

GRETE

Oh, Mrs. Mills, I can't possibly afford to pay that much.

MRS. MILLS

I'm sorry. Then I can't do anything for you.

GRETE

Please, I beg you to help me.

MRS. MILLS

Well, if you can pay five hundred in advance, I'll get your brother back for you. But only because you seem a sweet girl, trying to help someone other than yourself.

GRETE

Alright, I'll get it somehow.

MRS. MILLS

Write your address down and I'll be there.

GRETE

Tonight?

MRS. MILLS

Yes, at eight on the dot.

INT. MR./MRS. SAMSA'S BEDROOM - LATER

Grete peers in, makes sure the room is empty, then goes to the night stand and takes a metal box from the drawer that has the word "SAVINGS" engraved on it. She takes the money from it and goes to the vanity, where she takes a ring and necklace from a jewel box on top of it.

INT. PAWNSHOP - DAY

The PAWNBROKER stands in front of showcases filled with secondhand video cameras, VCRs and all kinds of other items. Grete walks in, with a shopping bag in one hand.

PAWNBROKER

Can I help you, Miss?

GRETE

Yes. How much would you give me for some valuable jewelry?

PAWNBROKER

Are you selling them or pawning them?

GRETE

Selling them.

PAWNBROKER

Let me take a look.

Grete takes the jewelry out of the bag and lays it on the counter. The Pawnbroker studies the pieces through a loupe and shrugs.

PAWNBROKER

The most I can give you for these is a hundred dollars.

GRETE

What! But they're worth five times more than that!

PAWNBROKER

(another shrug)

Take it or leave it.

GRETE

Oh, God. All right.

Grete is teary-eyed as the man gives her the money.

PAWNBROKER
 (smirking)
 Good luck.

EXT. SAMSA RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Grete stands by the front door. A taxi pulls up in the driveway and Mrs. Mills gets out.

MRS. MILLS
 (to the driver)
 Wait for me. This won't take long.

Mrs. Mills walks to the door.

GRETE
 Thank you so much for coming. But please
 be quiet, my parents are asleep upstairs.

MRS. MILLS
 (rolls eyes discreetly)
 Don't worry, I can be as quiet as a mouse.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Gregor lies on the floor facing away from the door, eyes wide open and feelers quiver.

GREGOR (VO)
 Oh, why can't I sleep!

He hears the door open behind him and tries to look around, but with no neck, can't manage it. The two women walk in.

GRETE
 (whispering)
 Please be quiet.

Mrs. Mills looks the bug over.

MRS. MILLS
 Interesting!

GREGOR (VO)
 Who can that be? I don't know that voice.

GRETE
 Do you know what to do?

MRS. MILLS
 Yes, don't worry.

GRETE

Why did he turn into a bug?

MRS. MILLS

I'm sure a spell was cast on him, but I can reverse it.

Mrs. Mills opens her bag, takes out a small bottle of pinkish liquid.

MRS. MILLS

A few drops of this will have him back to normal in three days. It never fails.

GRETE

What is it?

MRS. MILLS

Never you mind. I've healed hundreds of people...

(gives the bug a look)
and things...with this.

GRETE

(skeptical)
Really?

MRS. MILLS

Tomorrow, put three drops in his food and I assure you that in three days, you'll have your brother back.

GRETE

Are you sure?

MRS. MILLS

(huffy)
If you don't believe me, then I've wasted my time coming here.

GRETE

(desperately apologetic)
Please forgive me, I didn't mean to insult you. I do believe you... really I do!

(pats Gregor on back)
Oh, my dear brother, you'll finally be human again.

GREGOR (VO)

I don't know what to believe, but I hope it does work.

GRETE

Thank you, Mrs. Mills...thank you.

MRS. MILLS

We should leave, before your parents get up, if you don't want them to know I was here.

INT. FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

Grete opens the door for Mrs. Mills.

MRS MILLS

Haven't you forgotten something...my fee?

GRETE

I'm so sorry, I was so excited I forgot all about it. It's in my bedroom. Wait here, I'll go get it.

Grete goes up the stairs. Mrs. Mills looks around, clearly assessing the value of the furnishings.

Grete comes down with a handful of bills, hands them to Mrs. Mills.

GRETE

This is all the money I could get. I had to pawn Mother's jewelry.

Mrs. Mills counts the money.

MRS. MILLS

You won't regret it. It's for a good cause.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - NEXT DAY

Gregor crawls around the room awkwardly, still hampered by his back injury.

GREGOR (VO)

It hurts so much; I couldn't even sleep well.

Grete comes in with a tray of food.

GRETE

How's my cute brother today?

GREGOR

Worse than ever.

Grete puts the tray on the floor, pours three drops from the bottle Mrs. Mills gave her into the bowl of milk.

GRETE

In just three days, I'll have my old Gregor back.

GREGOR (VO)

I wish I could believe that... Oh, my back. What a pain!

GRETE

Okay, sweet brother. I'd better go and let you eat peacefully. Just be patient, because in three days this nightmare will be over.

Grete leaves the room.

GREGOR (VO)

I hope she's right. But I'll probably still be the same in a week. I may be like this forever!

He sips the milk.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - 6 DAYS LATER

Gregor crawls around the room more awkwardly than ever.

GREGOR (VO)

It's been six days and I'm still a damn bug, still have this goddamn pain in my back.

Grete comes in, picks up the empty bowl, glares at Gregor.

GRETE

Why are you still a disgusting bug? Why didn't those damn drops work?

She stamps her feet.

GRETE

What do you want from me? What?

Grete throws the bowl on the floor, then calms down.

GRETE

I'm going to call Mrs. Mills. She can't just take my money like this and not do what I paid her for.

INT. PARLOR - LATER

Grete sits on the sofa dials a number on the phone.

GRETE

Come on! Pick up the goddamn phone. It's rung a dozen times, where can you be?

Grete slams down the receiver. Frau Samsa rushes in from the kitchen, looks at Grete with a worried frown.

FRAU SAMSA

What's wrong?

GRETE

Nothing.

FRAU SAMSA

Who were you trying to call?

GRETE

Just a friend of mine.

FRAU SAMSA

Well, don't break the telephone, dear, just because your friend isn't home. We must watch our money carefully, you know, and repairs are so costly, aren't they?

Frau Samsa leaves, Grete dials the number again and waits in vain for someone to answer. Tears run down her cheeks.

INT. PARLOR - 10 MINUTES LATER

Grete dials the number again.

WOMAN'S VOICE

(on the phone)

Yes?

GRETE

Hello. May I speak with Mrs. Mills?

WOMAN

Mrs. Mills?

GRETE

Yes.

WOMAN

Mrs. Mills doesn't live here any more. She sold the house and I just moved in.

GRETE

What? When did you buy it?

WOMAN

A few days ago.

GRETE

But why? Why did she sell her house?

WOMAN

She said she was going to settle in Egypt or somewhere odd like that. Who is this?

Grete slams down the receiver, covers her face with her hands.

INT. DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Frau Samsa sits at the table, polishing silverware.

FRAU SAMSA

My dear, could you help me with this?

Grete fights back tears.

FRAU SAMSA

Grete, what is it?

Grete bursts out in sobs, Frau Samsa takes her hand.

FRAU SAMSA

What? Is it Gregor again?

GRETE

Why, Mom? Why was I so stupid?

FRAU SAMSA

What have you done?

Grete continues to weep.

FRAU SAMSA

Grete, what has happened.

GRETE

I'm sorry, I didn't know.

FRAU SAMSA

Didn't know what? What did you do?

GRETE

I pawned your jewelry, and took all of your savings.

FRAU SAMSA

What!

GRETE

I did it to save Gregor.

FRAU SAMSA

How dare you do such a thing? We don't have any money to waste.

GRETE

She said she was going to save him.

FRAU SAMSA

Who?

Grete drops her head in shame.

INT. GRETE'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Grete lies on the bed, crying.

INT. DINING ROOM - THAT NIGHT

Herr, Frau and Grete Samsa sit at the table. A meager dinner sits untouched.

HERR SAMSA

Young lady, what you did was...was unspeakable. And for an insect! For a damn bug!

(shakes his finger at her)

Gregor is dead, he's not coming back.

GRETE

Don't say that.

HERR SAMSA

(shouting)

Why did you do it?

GRETE

I thought it was the only way to save him.

HERR SAMSA

Be glad I just rented the empty room. It will give us some source of income, at least.

GRETE

I'll give you all I earn.

HERR SAMSA

Of course you will, just like Gregor did.

GRETE

But Gregor didn't ever do anything wrong, and you made him give you his money anyway!

HERR SAMSA

How dare you say such a thing after what you did.

FRAU SAMSA

She's right in a way, dear. Gregor always gave us his money and he always behaved well.

HERR SAMSA

I'm not going into this. Gregor deserted us and he's never coming back.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - AT THE SAME TIME

Gregor lies on the floor, the wound on his back oozes a dark, viscous substance. He shifts his position this way and that.

GREGOR (VO)

Oh, I still can't sleep. The pain is too bad! Oh, God!

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - NEXT DAY

GREGOR lies unmoving on the floor.

GREGOR (VO)

I can't bear it any more. I can't.

Grete comes in with her usual tray of food, sets it on the floor, kicks it closer to the bug and leaves quickly.

GREGOR (VO)

She didn't even say good morning and she kicked the food at me, as if I were garbage, too.

He looks at the slop on the tray.

GREGOR (VO)
I'm hungry, but I don't think I can eat
anything.

Gregor moves painfully away from the tray, huddles against the wall.

GREGOR (VO)
I wish I could sleep...just that.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL

Grete bumps into the MAID (40s), huge and unkempt.

MAID
Oh, I'm sorry, I was just going to clean
the rooms.

GRETE
That's fine, but don't clean Gregor's. You
know that's my job.

MAID
Yes ma'am, I apologize.

Grete points to Gregor's bedroom.

GRETE
I'm the only one who takes care of that
bedroom, do you understand?

MAID
(not too politely)
Yes, Miss.

Grete goes downstairs hurriedly. The Maid looks around warily, opens Gregor's door just enough to peek in.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - AT THE SAME TIME

The bug lies up against the far wall in distress, his feelers waving and his six legs moving feebly in all directions.

EXT. UPSTAIRS HALL - AT THE SAME TIME

The maid gasps, closes the door quickly, then opens it again, just a crack. She looks in, shakes her head.

MAID

Poor you.

EXT. SAMSA RESIDENCE - NIGHT

A well groomed Grete struggles to unlock the front door, succeeds after several attempts, goes in and slams the door shut.

INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Grete hangs her coat on the rack. Frau Samsa looks out from the parlor.

FRAU SAMSA

Oh, it's you, Grete. How was your day, dear?

GRETE

(peevishly)

I'm bushed. That's how it was!

Frau Samsa kisses her on the cheek.

FRAU SAMSA

I know you must be tired, but don't forget to clean up Gregor's room. It's become quite smelly since you started your new job.

Grete throws her keys and purse down angrily, on the table by the door.

GRETE

Why should I have to clean up after that garbage!

FRAU SAMSA

(shocked)

Grete?

INT. GREGOR'S ROOM - LATER

Food scraps and untouched food litter the floor. Gregor scurries to his usual corner as Grete opens the door. She carries a broom, looks at the mess.

GRETE

(annoyed)

You're not eating what I bring you. I'm tired of doing this.

She does a quick and sloppy job of sweeping up and leaves. Gregor looks around at the mess his sister left behind.

GREGOR (VO)

She's not the same. She never used to leave even a speck. And what she brings me to eat now isn't what I like at all, either.

INT. GREGOR'S ROOM - A WEEK LATER

Walls are dirt-streaked. Dust and garbage cover the floor. Gregor lies amid the mess, bits of garbage under him and caught in the stiff hairs of his limbs.

GREGOR (VO)

This is disgusting. I can't believe my sister let this happen. I don't want to live in this garbage dump any more.

Grete comes in with a shovel, a scarf tied over her nose. The bug crawls into the least filthy corner. She scowls at it as she shovels the garbage into a pile in one corner and leaves.

GREGOR (VO)

Grete, please don't let me live in this filthy room any more. Not another day with this. No!

INT. GREGOR'S ROOM - HOURS LATER

Gregor crawls on the garbage, which is again strewn all over the floor. Frau Samsa opens the door.

FRAU SAMSA

Oh, my God! It smells all through the house now!

Frau Samsa pinches her nose with her hand.

FRAU SAMSA

It definitely needs some cleaning.

She leaves.

GREGOR (VO)

Oh, Mother, I knew you'd help me.

INT. GREGOR'S ROOM - LATER

Frau Samsa comes with a bucket of water and a broom, wearing a surgical mask. She splashes water all over the room. Some lands on the bug.

GREGOR (VO)

This is a nightmare. I hate water!

INT. GREGOR'S ROOM - MINUTES LATER

The room is garbage-free, the floor slightly awash. Gregor lies in a puddle.

GREGOR (VO)

This will make me sicker than I already am. Dirt is my unavoidable natural home.

Grete comes in, Frau Samsa behind her. Gregor lies immobile in his corner.

GRETE

What? Why did you clean his room? It was my job.

FRAU SAMSA

Well, you didn't do it and I wanted Gregor to feel better.

GRETE

(angrily)

I'm the only one who's allowed to do it. Gregor is my responsibility!

FRAU SAMSA

Don't raise your voice to me.

Herr Samsa walks in.

HERR SAMSA

What's this racket?

GRETE

Mother cleaned up Gregor's room, when it was my job.

HERR SAMSA

I'm tired of this whole situation. No one is going to clean this room. Grete, you are never to clean this room again, do you hear?

(to his wife)

And you are not to come in this room ever again!

GRETE

But he's my brother.

FRAU SAMSA

But he's my son!

HERR SAMSA

How many times do I have to tell you to stop this nonsense?

Grete turns red with anger and her mother weeps.

HERR SAMSA

If you keep this up, I'll kill it. Do you understand?

(raises his voice)

Do...you...understand?

Grete covers her face with her hands. Frau Samsa covers her face with her apron. Gregor tries to cover his face with his feelers.

HERR SAMSA

I don't want to see this kind of behavior when the lodgers come, get that?

GREGOR (VO)

It's a nightmare! If only I could get out of the house. I'd rather take my chances out in the world as a bug, than have to go on with this impossible situation here.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - DAYS LATER

Garbage all over the place again. Gregor crawls over the mess listlessly. The door opens and a tray of rotten food scraps is shoved in on the floor by the toe of a woman's shoe. The door closes.

GREGOR (VO)

Is my life going to be like this always?

Gregor's feelers poke at the food.

GREGOR (VO)

I'm so hungry, but I can't eat anything.

The Maid opens the door, comes in with a broom and dustpan.

MAID

Look at the old dung beetle.

GREGOR (VO)
Oh, good grief, it's her again.
(waves his feelers at her)
Scoot!

She stares at him.

MAID
Don't worry, you don't bother me. Your
sister just left for work and I wanted
another look at you. My employers told me
to clean up this mess.

GREGOR (VO)
I want to be alone. I don't want anyone in
here.

Gregor sticks his head under the bed. She sweeps the room, hums
a tune.

GREGOR
Stop it! Stop that noise.

She continues to hum, ignores the odd noises the bug makes.

GREGOR
Damn it! I said stop it!

The Maid looks at him, scratches her head. The bug crawls toward
her, flails at her with his feelers, raises the top part of his
body and waves his front limbs wildly.

The Maid brandishes her broom like a weapon, pokes him in the
abdomen. Gregor drops back down and gives up, exhausted.

The Maid holds the broom next to her, like a rifle at rest and
gives her opponent a stern look.

MAID
This goes no further, right?

Gregor bows his head and covers his face with his feelers.

GREGOR (VO)
I'm such a loser. I can't even scare a
stupid maid.

EXT. SAMSA RESIDENCE - DAY

Three LODGERS (40s) with full beards stand at the door. Herr
Samsa opens it.

HERR SAMSA
Good morning, gentlemen, I was waiting for
you, please come in.

INT. PARLOR - NEXT DAY

The LODGERS sit on the sofa, Frau and Herr Samsa sit in the two
easy chairs.

LODGER #1
May I smoke in the room?

HERR SAMSA
Yes, as long as you have your windows
open.

LODGER #2
What about laundry facilities?

HERR SAMSA
Don't worry, my wife will take care of it.

FRAU SAMSA
We're aware that the rent of the room is a
bit high, but remember that it includes
meals, plus you are welcome to whatever
you need.

LODGER #3
Who else lives here?

HERR SAMSA
Our seventeen year old daughter. I'll call
her down to meet you. She's in her room
upstairs.

Herr Samsa goes to the stairs.

HERR SAMSA
Grete! Grete! Come down, the lodgers are
here.

GRETE (OS)
I'll be there in a second.

Herr Samsa sits back on the sofa.

FRAU SAMSA
There's also someone living in another
room, but he won't bother you at all.

LODGER #3

I hope not. We just want a quiet place to live in.

Grete comes down the stairs, looks over the lodgers.

HERR SAMSA

Come, my dear, don't be shy. These gentlemen will take the room next to yours.

GRETE

(to the lodgers)

Nice to meet you.

INT. KITCHEN - NEXT DAY

Frau Samsa sits at the table alone, sips at a cup of coffee. Grete comes in with two large, empty boxes.

GRETE

Mother, where shall I put these? The lodgers gave them to me. They don't need them now.

Frau Samsa looks at them.

FRAU SAMSA

Oh, just put them in Gregor's room.

GRETE

Yes, that's what I thought.

SERIES OF SHOTS - GREGOR'S ROOM

A) Grete walks in and dumps the two boxes on the floor. B) Lodger #1 opens the door and tosses in a box of trash. C) Lodger #2 puts an overflowing garbage pail inside the door. D) Grete throws in boxes of old toys, dolls, torn books. E) Frau Samsa moves in pieces of broken furniture.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - DAYS LATER

The room is crammed wall-to-wall with tools, junk, boxes, etc. Gregor pushes his way into his corner.

GREGOR (VO)
I'm sick of this. Now my bedroom is the
storage room and the trash bin!

The door opens, a food tray is kicked in. Gregor squirms his way through the junk to reach it.

GREGOR (VO)
I hate those new lodgers.

Gregor checks the food, takes a bit into his mouth, holds it there, lies still on the floor.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - 2 HOURS LATER

GREGOR spits out the bit of food.

INT. GREGOR'S ROOM - NEXT DAY

Gregor's shiny brown carapace is now greyish-green, covered with moldy spots and bits of garbage. He lies on the floor beside the bed.

GREGOR (VO)
What irony! I'm hungry all the time, but
don't want to eat.

The Maid opens the door, peeks in, pinches her nose closed.

MAID
Oh, it's disgusting! The poor beetle.

She walks out, leaves the door slightly ajar.

GREGOR (VO)
I have to get out of this mess. I can't
miss this opportunity.

He crawls through the garbage towards the door, hits it with his head and opens it wide.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - MOMENTS LATER

No one is in sight. Gregor scuttles to the stairs and makes his way down.

GREGOR (VO)
My legs hurt so much. I haven't been able
to use them for so long.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALL - MOMENTS LATER

From the bottom of the staircase, the bug creeps stealthily towards the dining room, his feelers waving about excitedly.

GREGOR (VO)
I smell something yummy.

Gregor peeks around the doorway, sees the Lodgers seated at the table set with the good china and silverware and pulls back quickly.

GREGOR (VO)
I hope they didn't see me.

Frau Samsa walks in from the kitchen on the other side of the dining room, with a large platter of meat. Grete follows her with a huge bowl of potatoes and another one full of buttered vegetables. They set the food on the table. Lodger #1 sniffs at the meat.

LODGER #1
Not too bad.

FRAU SAMSA
We hope you like it.

LODGER #2
We'll see.

FRAU SAMSA
If you need anything, we'll be in the kitchen.

LODGER #1
Fine. Now leave us to enjoy our meal, will you?

The Lodgers load their plates and dig in. Frau Samsa and Grete leave, Gregor peeks in again.

INT. DINING ROOM - DREAM SEQUENCE

Gregor, in human form, sits down at the dinner table and gorges himself with the same meal that was set out for the Lodgers.

BACK TO SCENE

INT. DINING ROOM

The three Lodgers continue to eat. Gregor's feelers twitch.

GREGOR (VO)

They can enjoy my mother's cooking and I'm dying of starvation.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Almost empty pots are on the stove, a violin sits on one counter, a folded newspaper lies on another. The Samsas and Grete stand at the stove and pick at the food in the pots, with old forks and spoons.

GRETE

I can't believe we have to eat in here, like this.

HERR SAMSA

Shhh!

FRAU SAMSA

Keep your voice down, Grete, they can hear you.

HERR SAMSA

We must be very polite.

GRETE

It's not right that we have to do this. I liked eating in the dining room, with our good china and the nice silverware. Why must we live as if we're servants, now?

FRAU SAMSA

You know how important it is that we keep our lodgers happy. We wouldn't have even this food to eat, if it weren't for the rent they pay to live here.

HERR SAMSA

Why is your violin in the kitchen and not in your bedroom, daughter?

GRETE

I played for Mama yesterday, while she cooked dinner. It helps her to hear music, when she must do our old cook's job. Would you like me to play while you eat, Papa?

HERR SAMSA

Play if you like. It doesn't matter to me.

GRETE

I'll play a piece by Schubert...one of Mama's and my favorite.

Grete puts down her fork, picks up the violin and plays.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALL - AT THE SAME TIME

Gregor is at the bottom of the staircase, just outside the open kitchen door. His feelers move in time to the music.

BUG (VO)
It's so lovely. My sister's music does
soothe me so.

The Lodgers sit still in front of their empty plates, listen spellbound, to the music.

LODGER #3
That seems to be coming from the kitchen.

LODGER #1
It's nice.

LODGER #2
Let's see what's going on in there.

They get up and head for the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN

Grete plays, her parents stand and listen, their meal of the Lodgers' leftovers forgotten.

The Lodgers come in. Herr Samsa turns from Grete at the sound of their footsteps and Grete stops playing.

HERR SAMSA
I hope my daughter didn't disturb you. She
shouldn't have been playing during your
dinner. Please excuse...

LODGER #1
(interrupts imperiously)
No, no! On the contrary, she may continue.
It's rather pleasant... for an amateur, of
course.

HERR SAMSA
Are you sure it's all right?

LODGER #1
Yes, yes!
(waves Samsa away; to Grete)
Continue, young lady.

LODGER #2
(to Grete)
I would prefer you play something a bit
more lively, if you can.

GRETE
If it gives you pleasure, I would be
delighted to do so, sir.

LODGER #3
Not here. The parlor is more appropriate.

GRETE
As you wish, sir.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALL - MOMENTS LATER

The Lodgers, the Samsas and Grete pass through, on their way to
the parlor.

Gregor scuttles under the staircase, before they can see him,
peeks out as they pass by.

INT. PARLOR - MOMENTS LATER

Lodgers #2 and 3 sit on the sofa, Lodger #1 sits in Herr Samsa's
favorite easy chair. Samsa sets up a music stand on the hallway
side of the room. Grete arranges herself behind it with her
violin and Frau Samsa places a sheet of music on the stand.

Lodger #1 points to the other easy chair.

LODGER #1
Mrs. Samsa, take a seat here.

FRAU SAMSA
Oh, thank you, sir.

She sits. Herr Samsa leans against the wall by the doorway to
the hall, looks not too happy to have his family ordered around
in his own house.

Grete plays. Everyone's attention is on her.

Gregor peers in at the doorway behind his father, then inches
forward a bit.

GREGOR (VO)
Dear Grete, you play like an angel. I can
listen to you for hours.

INT. PARLOR - 30 MINUTES LATER

Grete continues to play, now a slow, haunting piece. The Samsas and Gregor are caught up in the music. The Lodgers are bored. They yawn, light cigarettes and a cigar, blow smoke rings at the ceiling. Grete scowls at their rudeness.

GREGOR (VO)

Who do they think they are? They must not disrespect my sister like this.

He creeps forward a little further, goes close to his sister and tugs at her dress with his mandibles.

GREGOR (VO)

Don't worry, Grete, I value your playing and I will send you to the conservatory, as I promised.

Lodger #1 sees the bug over, points at it in shock.

LODGER #1

Samsa, look!

Everybody looks where he's pointing and sees Gregor. Grete stops playing. Frau Samsa gasps for breath and puts her hands to her heart.

Lodger #2 takes a crystal statue from an end table, stands up and hurls it at Gregor with all his might. It shatters into many pieces, against the bug's back.

GREGOR

Oh, my back!

GRETE

(shouting)

Leave him alone!

Herr Samsa tries to block the Lodgers' view of Gregor with his body and outstretched arms.

HERR SAMSA

Please... go to your room and forget this.

LODGER #2

What is that?

HERR SAMSA

Go to your room now, sirs! I will deal with it.

The Lodgers all tug at their beards, agitated and curious.

LODGER #2

There's something strange going on in this house.

HERR SAMSA

It's nothing serious. Please just go upstairs.

LODGER #1

But we want to see what that is!

HERR SAMSA

This is my house and I said to leave the room now!

The Lodgers leave, Herr Samsa follows, to make sure they go up to their room. Grete looks down at Gregor.

GRETE

Oh, Gregor, why did you have to spoil everything?

Grete drops her violin in Frau Samsa's lap and follows the others.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - MOMENTS LATER

The Lodgers stop at their door, Herr Samsa behind them.

HERR SAMSA

Get in there now and forget this ever happened.

LODGER #1

We're out of patience with you, Samsa! You can't tell us what to do, you know.

HERR SAMSA

(huffily)

This is my house, sir and...and thus I am the owner of this room, so can very well tell you what to do as long...as you remain on my property.

LODGER #1

I declare!

Grete comes up the stairs and watches them.

LODGER #1

Well, I immediately cancel our rental of this room.

HERR SAMSA

What?

Lodger #1 spits on the floor.

LODGER #1

We will, of course, pay nothing for the time we have spent here, in these disgustingly unsanitary conditions.

HERR SAMSA

(sputters)

You can't just do that.

LODGER #1

We certainly can. And we will give serious thought as to whether or not to take legal action against you for this outrage. I am sure any court will award heavy damages.

LODGER #2

To be sure!

LODGER #3

We are done here. We will leave first thing in the morning.

They stalk into their room and Lodger #3 slams the door shut in Herr Samsa's face. He turns to Grete and glares at her.

HERR SAMSA

Are you happy now? Look at what you've done!

Grete runs down the stairs, her father hot on her heels and red in the face.

INT. PARLOR - AT THE SAME TIME

Frau Samsa trembles uncontrollably, her hands still on her heart. Gregor remains motionless, just inside the doorway. The violin on his mother's lap falls to the floor. Gregor starts at the thud.

Grete rushes in and goes to her mother. Herr Samsa sees his wife's distress and hugs her.

HERR SAMSA

Calm down, please. He's not going to hurt you.

Grete looks at the bug with no love left in her glance.

GRETE

That's it! Things cannot go on any longer in this way. I will never again utter my brother's name in front of this monster.

Gregor shudders as the word "monster" issues from his sister's mouth.

GRETE

We must get rid of it. It's making us all miserable. It's ruined our lives!

Frau Samsa utters a single sob.

HERR SAMSA

That's what I've been telling you all along. But would you listen?

GRETE

I did everything I could to adjust to this horror, but I failed...I failed.

She sobs, turns away from the cause of their troubles.

HERR SAMSA

I'm sorry you ever tried, daughter. It only made things worse.

GRETE

We must get rid of it. When people have to work as hard as we all do now, they can't also have to put up with this endless torment at home.

GREGOR

Please, don't say that, please!

GRETE

Listen to that! It can't even speak so anyone can understand it. I hate that thing. The devil must have put it in this house.

FRAU SAMSA

If he only understood us. And we could understand him.

GRETE

He can't. He's nothing but a monstrous bug, will never be able to understand anything.

Grete points at Gregor.

GRETE

That's not Gregor. If it were my brother,
he would have long ago realized that
living among humans is not possible in
that form and would have gone away
voluntarily.

GREGOR (VO)

Oh, God! Why are you doing this to me,
Grete? I can't bear to hear any more.
Can't you see how weak I am?

Gregor creeps painfully away from them all.

GREGOR (VO)

I wouldn't wish this heartache and pain on
anyone. Not even my worst enemies.

Gregor crawls toward the staircase, pulls himself slowly and
weakly up it, step by painful step.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - MOMENTS LATER

He goes slowly toward his bedroom, collapses exhausted, when
nearly there.

GREGOR (VO)

(weakly)

Almost there. I can't give up.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Gregor drags himself in, lies gasping on the floor.

GREGOR (VO)

I did it! I knew I could make it.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - LATER

The door is closed, Gregor is in the same position on the
floor, eyes closed. He opens his eyes, turns around and sees
the door is shut.

GREGOR (VO)

Someone closed the door.

He tries to move further, but his injured back won't let him
move more than a few inches.

GREGOR (VO)

I don't know the reason for all of this, have no idea why it happened all of a sudden, for no reason at all. Perhaps it was a warning that things weren't right in my life.

Gregor pulls himself slowly to the window.

GREGOR (VO)

I failed to see how talented and bright I was. Perhaps the meaning is that there are surprises, that things change, that time goes by, humans die, animals die, life does, but the soul never does.

He tries to raise himself up against the window enough to see out, but has no strength left. The bug sinks slowly down to the floor and, with one last weak breath, Gregor dies.

INT. GREGOR'S BEDROOM - NEXT DAY

The room is bright with the sunlight that pours through the window. The bug lies dead on the floor.

The Maid comes in with a broom and dustpan, looks down at Gregor, tickles him with the broom.

MAID

Come on, get up. You can't be sleeping your whole life away.

She tickles him again.

MAID

You must eat. Come on. I'll bring you some food after I clean up a bit.

She scowls at him, pokes him a little harder.

MAID

I'm losing my patience with you.

She shoves him hard, with the broom handle, shrieks as the corpse flips over. Thick, brown fluid oozes out of its mouth.

MAID

Oh, that's gross!

She drops the broom, runs out of the room.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - CONTINUOUS

The Maid runs to the Samsas' room and pounds on the door.

INT. MR/MRS SAMSA'S ROOM

Herr and Frau Samsa bolt up in bed.

MAID (OS)
(shouting)
Come and look. It's dead. The bug is dead!

INT. GRETE'S ROOM - AT THE SAME TIME

Grete lies on her bed, reads a beauty magazine. The Maid's shouting startles her.

She drops the magazine, jumps off the bed and rushes out into the hall.

INT. LODGERS' ROOM - AT THE SAME TIME

The Lodgers lie asleep in bunk-beds and a foldaway cot. The shouts startle them awake.

LODGER #1
What's that?

LODGER #2
Why should we care, it's not our house?

LODGER #3
I agree. Everything is odd in this house,
anyway. I don't want to see any more
weirdness.

LODGER #1
Perhaps they're just getting rid of the
bug.

LODGER #2
To get us to stay?

LODGER #1
Yes.

INT. SAMAS' BEDROOM - AT THE SAME TIME

Frau and Herr Samsa climb quickly out of bed.

FRAU SAMSA
Oh, no, it couldn't have happened.

HERR SAMSA
We knew it was going to happen.

FRAU SAMSA
No, not my poor Gregor!

They leave the room hurriedly.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - MOMENTS LATER

The Samsas hurry out of their room and almost knock the Maid down. They all go quickly to Gregor's room.

MAID
I first thought he was just feeling sorry for himself and trying to make me feel bad, but when I poked him a little I knew something was really wrong.

Grete opens the door of her bedroom, rushes to her parents and the Maid.

GRETE
What happened?

FRAU SAMSA
Gregor is dead.

GRETE
Dead?

FRAU SAMSA
Yes.

GRETE
But, how?

They all walk into Gregor's room, almost tip-toeing.

INT. GREGOR'S ROOM

The bug's corpse lies on its back on the floor under the window. Frau Samsa and Grete shriek as they look down at the body. Herr Samsa pinches his nose closed with his hand.

FRAU SAMSA
Oh, no! Why God, why my boy?

GRETE

Gregor? Gregor!

HERR SAMSA

This thing smells!

GRETE

How can you say such thing?

HERR SAMSA

Because it's the truth. It's just a dead bug, after all.

GRETE

It's my fault.

Frau Samsa hugs her daughter.

HERR SAMSA

It's nobody's fault. We couldn't deal with this any more. You said it yourself.

GRETE

But he was my brother.

FRAU SAMSA

And he was our son, why can't you understand that, husband?

HERR SAMSA

I never wanted to have a bug as my son.

FRAU SAMSA

You felt inferior to him because you knew we depended on him and what he earned and then, when you felt superior, after he changed, you mistreated him.

HERR SAMSA

I didn't. It's not that!

Grete gets down on her knees beside the corpse, touches the bug's face, but immediately pulls her hand away from it.

HERR SAMSA

See?... Even you are so disgusted, you can't even touch it.

FRAU SAMSA

Grete, let's leave now. It's too hard for us to deal with.

Grete stands up, takes one last look, hugs her mother and leaves with her.

Herr Samsa stands there and stares at the corpse. A single tear runs down one cheek.

HERR SAMSA
 (wiping away the tear)
 I'm sorry.

Stern-faced once more, Herr Samsa turns to the Maid.

HERR SAMSA
 Get rid of it.

MAID
 Yes, sir.

Herr Samsa leaves the room. The Maid shuts the door and opens the window wide.

She takes one of the sheets from the bed, wraps the corpse in it and wrestles it out the window. She jumps when it thuds onto the ground below.

EXT. SAMSA HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The sheet with the bug in it lies on the ground. A dumpster stands near the street. The chambermaid comes out the front door, pulls the wrapped corpse to the street with both hands and manages to shove it up into the dumpster. She goes back into the house and slams the door shut behind her.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALL - AT THE SAME TIME

The Lodgers come down the stairs, look into the dining room. The table is bare.

LODGER #2
 Where's our breakfast?

LODGER #1
 It should be on the table by now.

LODGER #3
 Perhaps they just wanted to make sure we were ready to eat.

The Maid walks in from outside.

LODGER #1
 Oh, there you are! We were just now wondering where you were. Where is our breakfast?

She puts her finger to her lips.

MAID

Don't talk so loud, they can hear you?

LODGER #1

I don't care if they hear us.

MAID

I recommend you not bother them right now.

LODGER #3

Bother them? We're not an imposition here, we're paying tenants!

MAID

They're going through a tough time at the moment.

LODGER #3

What kind of tough time?

MAID

The bug won't bother you again. It's dead.

LODGER #1

So? Why would they be sad at the demise of an overgrown insect?

MAID

Miss Samsa was very fond of it. I heard her say it was her brother.

LODGER #1

These people are definitely insane.

Herr Samsa comes down the stairs.

LODGER #2

They're maniacs.

HERR SAMSA

Insane? Maniacs!

LODGER #2

I'm sorry I didn't know you would overhear us.

HERR SAMSA

Get out of my home immediately.

LODGER #2

But...

HERR SAMSA
Get out...right now.

LODGER #1
You can't be serious.

HERR SAMSA
I mean it! I don't want to see any of you
here for another moment.

LODGER #3
See here, Samsa, you can't do that to us.
We've gotten used to our room and the
cooking isn't at all bad. Besides, now
that the bug's gone, we intend to stay.

HERR SAMSA
I don't care. You'll leave today, or I'll
call the authorities and have you put out.

LODGER #1
You'd better think it over. We pay good
rent, after all.

LODGER #3
Don't make a hasty decision you'll surely
regret when it's too late.

HERR SAMSA
I don't want to repeat myself. Get out!

LODGER #1
All right, we'll go. Come on, guys, we
don't need to beg anyone to let us stay.
Let's pack.

INT. FOYER - MINUTES LATER

The three Lodgers are laden with suitcases. They take their hats, coats and canes from the rack. Herr Samsa opens the door and ushers them out unceremoniously.

HERR SAMSA
Good bye and good riddance!

EXT. SAMSA RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS

The Lodgers get into a cab at the curb. Lodger #1 looks back at Herr Samsa who stands in the open door to his house.

They look at the dumpster with the bug in it, as the taxi drives off.

Herr Samsa walks to the dumpster, takes one last nose-pinched look at the sheet-wrapped body. He goes back in the house and slams the door shut.

INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Frau Samsa and Grete come down the stairs as Herr Samsa comes in.

GRETE
Where's the corpse?

HERR SAMSA
In the dumpster. Do you want to see it?

GRETE
Good heavens, no! Oh, why was I so mean to him?

Grete hides her face in her hands.

FRAU SAMSA
Poor Gregor!

GRETE
We didn't even give him a decent burial.

HERR SAMSA
(trying to look stern)
It's all over, now. It's all over.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAYS LATER

Herr Samsa, Frau Samsa and Grete sit at the dinner table. The Maid puts a bottle of wine in the center of the table.

FRAU SAMSA
Thank you.

MAID
Do you need anything else?

HERR SAMSA
Yes. We would like you to know that we are grateful for all you've done for us, but we no longer need your services. No, not at all.

GRETE
You've been really good. We're sorry...

HERR SAMSA
 (cuts her off)
 We've decided to move.

MAID
 Where to?

HERR SAMSA
 We'll be renting an apartment.

FRAU SAMSA
 It'll be more practical than this big
 house, now that our family is...
 (stifles a sob)
 ...s-smaller.

Grete pours her glass to the brim with wine and sips at it.

GRETE
 Yes. And it brings us such bad memories.

INT. FOYER - DAYS LATER

Herr Samsa and Frau Samsa wrangle over-filled suitcases to the front door.

HERR SAMSA
 (yells up the stairs)
 Grete, hurry up! The cab is waiting for
 us.

GRETE (OS)
 I'm coming. Just a second.

Grete comes down the stairs. She carries a single small suitcase, is better-groomed than ever, and beautiful.

HERR SAMSA
 Well, look at you. You're quite a lovely
 young woman now.

GRETE
 (not exactly complimented)
 Thank you, Papa.

FRAU SAMSA
 Our daughter has finally blossomed.

HERR SAMSA
 It's time for you to find a good, honest
 man to marry.

GRETE
 (rolls her eyes)
 Perhaps, Papa. We'll see.

HERR SAMSA
 Okay, Hurry up, now! We don't want to miss
 the train.

They go out and the door closes behind them.

EXT. CITY STREETS - MINUTES LATER

A cab speeds through light traffic in the fading twilight.

INT. TAXICAB - AT THE SAME TIME

Frau Samsa and Grete sit in the back seat. Herr Samsa sits in
 the front with the DRIVER. Grete looks sad.

FRAU SAMSA
 Cheer up, Grete. We're beginning a new
 life.

Grete smiles too quickly and briefly to mean it.

FRAU SAMSA
 We're moving to a better place and we'll
 forget any of this happened.

Grete shakes her head, then drops it into her hands and closes
 her eyes.

GRETE'S POV

A quick flash of Gregor's dead body by his bedroom window and
 her hand touching his face.

BACK TO SCENE

EXT. TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

The cab pulls up, the Samsa family gets out. The Driver opens
 the trunk, sets the suitcases on the sidewalk and drives off.

HERR SAMSA
 Hurry up, or we'll miss the train.

INT. TRAIN STATION

They rush toward a train. It's already moving and leaves without them.

HERR SAMSA

Great! We have to wait for the next one, now. It's your fault, Grete, for being late.

GRETE

I'm sorry, Father.

Grete looks around the station, stares at a hanging light that. A variety of insects surround it.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - LATER

A train comes and an ATTENDANT ushers people into it. The Samsas hurry to get on.

INT. TRAIN - 5 MINUTES LATER

Grete sits by the window next to her mother. Herr Samsa sits behind them in a seat by himself. Grete and her mother look at a picture of Gregor as a young man. His mother presses it to her heart.

Grete stares blankly out the window. It starts to rain. A small beetle lands on the outside sill, draws her eyes to it. She stares at it, as it crawls along. The train starts up and the bug flies away.

The train speeds through the night. Grete holds her head in one hand, her elbow braced on the window sill. Tears stream down her face, which is seen reflected in the window. Rain streams down the outside of the window.

FADE OUT