

ANNE TYLER'S SAINT MAYBE

Teleplay by

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Based upon the novel

"Saint Maybe"

by

Anne Tyler

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FINAL SHOOTING SCRIPT

SAINT MAYBE

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

1 EXT. BEDLOE HOME, BALTIMORE, MD. - DAY

1

TO ESTABLISH. Super: "Spring, 1965." It's a quiet street of homey homes. Aging but respectable. Kids have grown up here, moved away, then come back to raise their own.

CUT TO:

2 INT. BEDLOE HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

2

A room that seems to wrap an arm around you when you enter. Comfortable. Meaningful knick-knacks, understandable artwork. A whole section of the room is devoted to the "Bedloe Archives"...a cornerstone upright piano loaded with and surrounded by family pictures, and more pictures...christenings, graduations, weddings, etc. Doing her weekly dusting of these cherished items is BEE BEDLOE, late 50's. Bee is an ex-schoolteacher, bright, energetic, happily motherly, and a bit playful. Evidence of this...she sits for a beat at the keys of the old upright and plays a few bars of "London Bridge is Falling Down" for her own amusement...quickly standing, pleased with herself...to resume dusting. There's an ear-jarring yell from just o.s. from a lusty 17-year-old son, IAN BEDLOE.

IAN (O.S.)

MOM.....!!!!!!

And he enters to "discover" his mother within reach!

BEE

Speak up...I can barely hear you.

He gets a sheepish look.

IAN

Didn't know you were here.

BEE

Who'd you think was playing the piano...Mozart?

Ian, who was a "surprise baby" when Bee was 40, is good looking, rascally charming at times, hiding his charisma under faded jeans, floppy plaid shirt. At that moment, Ian's father, DOUG BEDLOE,

*

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

2

enters from another area, carrying a mantel clock he's been repairing in his basement workshop. Bee notices.

BEE (CONT'D)

(to Doug)

Did you fix it?

Doug sets it down on its place on a table or mantel.

DOUG

Hundred year guarantee...

IAN

(to his mom)

If Sid calls...tell him I'm on my way...I have to swing by the post office first...talk to Danny.

Bee takes Ian's baseball glove off the piano, tosses it to him.

BEE

Don't go out half dressed...that doesn't belong on the piano.

DOUG

(to the glove)

Ought to have it bronzed for a door stop...never stopped much else.

Ian's heard it before, plays along...just as a "party mix" dog, BEASTIE, enters to get a back scratch from someone.
Ian leans to oblige...letting Beastie sniff the glove.

*

IAN

(telling it to Beastie)

You hear that, Beastie? Wouldn't you think having a Dad as my baseball coach and my math teacher...I'd have been front-of-the-line for a scholarship...somewhere!? Nope! Here I am...hauling furniture for Sid 'n' Ed's trying to scrape up tuition...

DOUG

(playfully)

You're breaking my heart. If you have to earn it...you'll be sure to learn it!

BEE

(amused)

If I'd had you in a couple of my classes...!

Ian stands to go into his "act" with flourishes...

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: 2

2

IAN
Never forget...I say: "Average"
starts with an "A"!

DOUG
At least you can spell.

Ian continues with gestures...plopping his ball glove back
on the piano absent-mindedly.

IAN
Some day...you watch...I'll invent
something I can make for a nickel,
sell for a buck and everybody will
need two of! You can brag you raised
me and come visit at my horse ranch
next to my private airport.

He starts out.

BEE
If your brother doesn't want to loan
you his car, don't press. Remember
last time!

IAN
(exit line)
Not my fault...it was legally
parked...Danny knows that...

He leaves, the door closing behind him. Bee retrieves the
ball glove one more time...steps to the window to watch
Ian depart.

A3 ANGLE ON WINDOW (PRACTICAL BEDLOE)

A3

Bee enters frame. The proud mother.

BEE
He will, too, you know...

B3 BACK TO INT. BEDLOE - DAY

B3

He's been decoding her delayed comments for years.

DOUG
Probably. I just wish he'd get a place
on a lake...who needs a horse ranch!

Their look says they regard their family as something
special. The repaired clock BONGS, Beastie BARKS at it.

CUT TO:

3 EXT. BEDLOE HOME - MOVING WITH IAN - DAY

3

He approaches their next door neighbor, MRS. JORDAN. She's a 60-year-old widow and long time resident, watering her lawn and shrubs at the moment...but staring at a house across the street.

IAN
Hi, Mrs.Jordan..

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

She nods in the direction she's looking...

MRS. JORDAN

Can't figure out what's going on over at the "United Nations"...What are those young doctors and graduate students up to?

She makes a sweep with the hose to point, shooting a spray of water on a passing car, waving an apology...as Ian looks across the street at the "Foreigners' House." Three graduate students in medicine and science occupy the house on a rotating basis. They're in their early 30's. They stand now in animated discussion about a garage door opener they've installed. The door remains open, with a car parked only halfway out of the garage!

IAN

They've been installing a garage door opener...Dad offered to help but they didn't want to "invade on his friendship," they said.

They see the door activate...coming down.

IAN (CONT'D)

There goes...

And it lowers with a CLUNK atop the sedan parked beneath it.

MRS. JORDAN

Oh my!

Ian immediately starts to hurry across with:

IAN

Well, it works...that's something.

Leaving Mrs. Jordan to mutter with amazement...

MRS. JORDAN

The cute little thin one's studying brain surgery, I hear...

4 SHOT - THE SCENE AT THE "FOREIGNERS" GARAGE

4

Ian arrives as the three foreign students are struggling to raise the door off the car roof manually. He motions for STEVE, the Asian student, to hand him the garage door opener.

IAN

(mistakenly)
Jack...?

B

Steve, the "cute little thin one," points to JACK, the East Indian student...

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

STEVE
 (the Asian)
 He's Jack...
 (to himself)
 Steve...

IAN
 Steve...let me show you...

Steve hands him the remote control, and the three look with anticipation as Ian operates the controls...and the door raises off the roof of the badly damaged car! The three grad students beam like they've witnessed a miracle as they huddle around Ian who points out the control buttons...

IAN (CONT'D)
 Open...close...up...down.

The third student, a Middle Easterner, FRED, speaks up.

FRED
 (to his friends)
 Just like the book said.

IAN
 (to car)
 The book didn't say where to park the car...right?

They seem amused...giving Ian a couple of friendly slaps on the back in appreciation as he prepares to move on.

JACK
 (the East Indian)
 Great thanks to you...

Ian basks in a brief moment of genius...

IAN
 Large pleasure is all mine.
 And he leaves them to puzzle out what to do with the car.

CUT TO:

5 EXT. CITY STREET - MOVING WITH IAN - DAY

5

He walks at a good clip...a man on a mission.. rehearsing his speech to Danny...gesturing, turning and walking backward...then forward again.

IAN
 The dent was not my fault...it was legally parked...
 (another tack)
 I meant to put gas in but Ridley's was
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

IAN (CONT'D)
closed...where else have I got
credit?

He nears a branch post office...heading for it.

IAN
Look...just because you live like a
monk doesn't mean I have to. You're
in favor of Cicely for a
sister-in-law, aren't you?

CUT TO:

6 INT. POST OFFICE - THE SCENE NEAR DANNY'S WINDOW - DAY

6

Ian waits at a roped-off distance from his brother's window, waiting his turn...a couple more patrons behind him now, growing impatient. DANNY BEDLOE, 30, clean cut, nice looking, is presently occupied with another customer...LUCY ANN DEAN, early 20's, who is in the process of mailing a bowling ball! She seems somewhat unprepared...the carton still unsealed...arranging the crumpled paper for cushioning, etc. And Ian takes a last chance to rehearse one last pitch, muttering audibly.

IAN
I will not be out all night...her
folks would string me up...Twelve-
thirty latest!

The middle-aged MAN PATRON directly behind him wonders...

MAN PATRON
What?

Ian turns...only a quick flash of embarrassment.

IAN
Talking to myself...

MAN PATRON
(viewing Danny)
We'll all be talking to ourselves.
What's going on there anyway?!

For the first time, Ian focuses on Danny and Lucy instead of himself. His reaction changes as he sees Danny being patient and sort of taken with this slight, attractive, almost childish-looking girl. Ian knows his brother...and this is not like him! (We're treated to a few innocent light-hearted moments with three people who will soon be involved in a terrible tragedy, changing many lives forever!) Making a last move to arrange the crumpled paper packing...Lucy drops the bowling ball! It rolls to Ian...as she pursues it the few feet to retrieve it. Ian picks it up...hands it to her.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

LUCY

Sorry.

IAN

(eye contact...half
hypnotized)

No harm done.

She returns to the counter, stuffing it back in the open carton...and Danny aids her by slapping a sealing tape on the box...ready to go. And he puts it on the scale as we can hear her say only:

LUCY

Air mail...?

Danny reads the scale...gives her an inaudible figure...and she feigns fainting. More pantomime. Danny puts it back on the scale and we hear him saying...

DANNY

Parcel post...is...

And he mutters a price we can't hear. She seems able to live with it. He starts to process the parcel at the lower rate...but she reaches out and touches his hand to stop him...and we see she's made the big decision.

LUCY

(quickly, lowly)

No, wait...Air mail, quicker the better.

And she starts to count out the small fortune...twenty dollars and change in small bills! The guy behind Ian is nearing the end of his rope.

MAN PATRON

For Pete's sake!

Danny seems intentionally to take his time, prolonging the transaction...sneaking looks at Lucy as he collects, counts her money, taking forever...certainly not like him! Ian smiles...giving his brother that "you-son-of-a-gun" look.

Danny finally nods a pleasant goodbye to Lucy who now turns to move off, then detours to Ian! Face to face for just an instant...she gives him a guilty look of complete innocence.

*

LUCY

I'm sorry...please don't hate me...okay?

She tips him off center for an instant...an almost adolescent charm...that masks a deep hurt. And she slips off...and away. Ian recovers, remembering his mission, and moves to the window.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED: 2

6

CLOSE ON IAN AT WINDOW

He launches into his pitch...low tones...

IAN

Esteemed brother...I've got a much bigger than average date with Cicely tonight and I wonder if I could borrow the blue beast.

Before he can go on, Danny tells him:

DANNY

Sure.

It's never the first answer. Ian continues his "deal."

IAN

I'll even give it a good wash...no charge.

Danny whisks the keys from his pocket and plops them down.

DANNY

(benign smile)

All yours, kiddo.

Ian picks up the keys as Danny places the "NEXT WINDOW" sign at his window and picks up the bowling ball carton...starts into the back with it. Ian quickly hedges his original offer...calling after him...

IAN

Well...maybe just a rinse...okay?

But Danny disappears...to the absolute outrage of the Man Patron who's been waiting! He blurts out..

MAN PATRON

I don't blinkin' believe it! He can't do that...who does he think he is anyway!!!!

Ian, buoyant with good fortune, turns to the guy with a burst of family pride and the verve of a good PR man.

IAN

(pointing in Danny's departed direction)

Excellent question...that...that is Daniel G. Bedloe...all time leading wide receiver at Poe High...and a batting average over three-fifty for three years running...thirteen years at the United States Post Office without missing a single day of work! The post office is lucky to have

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED: 3

6

IAN (CONT'D)
 him...Daniel G. Bedloe...his kind
 don't come this way often!

He turns and walks out. The irate Man Patron breaks into a little smile...and joins in a smattering of APPLAUSE from the handful of customers within earshot of the "oration".

7 INT. POST OFFICE - REAR SORTING AREA - ON DANNY

7

He carries the boxed bowling ball like he's transporting the Holy Grail...his face glowing. He stands for a moment near an open door...stopping before depositing the parcel into a special sorting bin. He holds it up and begins a little out-loud speech of his own.

DANNY
 Mom...Dad...I want you to meet...

He lowers the box to read the return address...

DANNY (CONT'D)
 Lucy Ann Dean...the woman who has
 changed my life!

8 SHOT - BOWLING ALLEY

8

SUBLIMINAL SHOT...a bowling ball SMASHING into pins, sending them flying...as we...

CUT TO:

9 INT. BEDLOE LIVING ROOM - DAY

9

Probably a couple of weeks later...a joyous little scene of Danny's introduction of his intended to his parents. Ian is there, grinning ear to ear. Beside him is CICELEY BROWN, 17, Ian's one-and-only, bright, attractive...from all appearances destined one day to become a Bedloe by the way she seems glued to Ian. Mrs. Jordan is present, dropping by to borrow pinking shears. ON CUT, everyone seems caught a bit off balance, a small sense of the unreal for Bee and Doug...as, oddly, Mrs. Jordan is the first to speak.

MRS. JORDAN
 Well, finally...you were starting to
 worry me, Danny.

Lucy reaches a hand out tentatively to Bee, uncertain of her acceptance here. Bee starts to take it...then awkwardly steps to hug her instead...

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

BEE

My goodness...I just...well, I'm just
breathless...Lucy?

DOUG

I'd better get a picture of this...

He scoots to the piano to retrieve his ever-ready camera.

DANNY

I almost let her get away. I mean if
she'd picked parcel post, I'd have let
her go...close as that!

BEE

Parcel post?

DANNY

But when she picked air mail...I knew
she had something...to mail a bowling
ball air mail!

This starts to sound "curiouser and curiouser" to Bee who
is forcing a smile.

LUCY

(finally speaking)

When he said twenty-twenty-seven, I
almost fainted. But I wanted to get
rid of my ex-husband's stuff as fast
as I could.

The sound of "EX-HUSBAND" sounds like a cymbal in Bee's
head. She blinks, coughs slightly...as Doug lines up for a
quick photo.

DOUG

(to his subjects)

Little closer there...get in with
them. Mrs. Jordan.

Lucy leans shyly against Danny...Bee not knowing quite
which side to take...Mrs. Jordan willingly stepping in.

BEE

Air Mail...well...

LUCY

That was fifteen dollars more than
parcel post which would go a long way
for groceries...or shoes and stuff for
the kids.

The word "KIDS" hits Doug in the chest...a cough, causing
him to misfire the camera.

DOUG

One more...

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: 2

9

And he clicks it. They break slightly.

BEE

So, when...or haven't you decided...?

DANNY

Soon as we get the license.

(giving Lucy a hug)

Not taking any chances!

Cicely has been watching, approving...extending a hand.

CICELY

I'm Cicely...Ian told me about you.

LUCY

(to Ian)

I was so clumsy...remember?

IAN

Naw...not every day a person mails a
bowling ball...to Cheyenne, Wyoming!

Bee tugs Lucy a step toward the piano...pointing out
pictures.

BEE

Might as well meet the family...

DANNY

No time, Mom...

BEE

There's Danny, three years. My, such
a tyke. That's Claudia, our oldest
...left college to start having
children. Well on her way to a
record.

MRS. JORDAN

Time Danny got started...

BEE

Look at the time...I'd better finish
getting dinner ready. You'll stay, of
course...

DANNY

I've got reservations at Haussner's,
Mom...to celebrate our engagement!

(checks his watch)

We have to be there in half an hour.

BEE

(feigning self pity)

Half an hour...after thirty
years?...you give your old mother a
half an hour?

*

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: 3

9

And the event is lost in a swirl of OVERLAPPING
DIALOGUE...

DOUG
Haussner's got a new chef, I hear...

*

MRS. JORDAN
Watch it when they start calling their
cook a chef, I say...

BEE
I wasn't planning anything fancy...

LUCY
Danny's the boss now.

IAN
(to Danny)
Hi, Boss...

CICELY
(simultaneously; to Ian)
Don't get any ideas...

Laughter...

DISSOLVE TO: .

10 INT. BEDLOE KITCHEN - NIGHT

10

Bee and Doug alone. A feeling of let-down...as Bee
finishes washing a few dishes...Doug wiping them. The
silence gets to Doug.

DOUG
She seems nice enough.

BEE
Mmmmmmm.

DOUG
She's pretty, all right.

BEE
Mmmmmmm.

DOUG
What am I saying wrong?

Bee sighs, unreproachful but reflective.

BEE
I don't know. I mean, this day has
just come and gone like any other.
And I waited so long for it...our
first born son bringing his..."life
mate"...home for us to meet.
(MORE)

*

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

BEE (CONT'D)

(beat)

I've dreamt about it. I sort of expected the time to have a...glow to it. It just...came and went like any old Tuesday.

He gives her a little hug of reassurance...hangs the dish towel and moves to sit at the table to glance at his paper.

DOUG

Danny seems happy, that's what we want. Did she say how many children?

BEE

(lighter)

No. If she has enough maybe we can put them with Claudia's gang and have our own ball club.

They share a relieved little laugh.

BEE (CONT'D)

Ian seemed to approve of her.

DOUG

I noticed. Good sign. Ian thought most of Danny's girls were dogs.

(beat)

I heard her lining him up already for baby sitting...buck an hour...can you believe it...I used to work all day for a dollar.

BEE

Don't say that, it makes you sound old.

(beat)

She couldn't take her eyes off Danny...I noticed that much.

DOUG

Oh yes. I heard her say it..."he's the best looking thing I'd seen in ages."

BEE

Takes after my side of the family.

DOUG

She works at the "Fill 'er Up Cafe" ...I'll bet Danny puts a stop to that. Bedloes don't let their women work at cafes for their keep.

BEE

Well, they'll be married.

DISSOLVE TO:

All INT. DANNY'S HOUSE - THE KITCHEN - EVENING

All *

Danny has arrived home a bit late, working overtime, and AGATHA, 7, and THOMAS, 5, are all ready for bed. They stand in their pajamas, giving their mother a "look"...something on their minds. Lucy tells them...

LUCY

Say goodnight to Danny.

When they hesitate, she tells Danny:

LUCY (CONT'D)

They wanted to call you Daddy, but I said they should ask first.

Danny beams happily.

DANNY

No need to ask. Daddy it is!

The kids light up...run to him and clutch his knees quickly.

AGATHA & THOMAS

(unison)

Good night, Daddy.

And, a bit embarrassed now, they go racing off to bed, giggling. Danny now opens his arms to Lucy.

DANNY

Sorry I had to work late. Give "Daddy" a kiss?

She willingly falls into his arms for a beat, giving him a welcoming kiss. As they break, something catches his eye...bright new curtains at the kitchen window. He steps to them admiringly.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Hey...something new has been added.

They're beautiful.

(touching them)

Where'd you get them?

LUCY

I made them.

He turns to her with admiring disbelief.

DANNY

You're kidding me...

LUCY

I love doing curtains. I always thought...they sort of frame the way you look out at the world.

(CONTINUED)

All CONTINUED:

All

He turns to her again, full of love for her.

DANNY
You're too much...

And he throws his arms around her again in an impulsive hug. She whispers to him:

LUCY
Surprise for supper...it's all ready.

CUT TO:

B11 INT. DINING ROOM - THE SCENE

B11

Danny is sitting now...as she lights the candles on the small dining room table. They throw a romantic light in the modest room. He smiles. She notices, thrilled to be pleasing him, and ducks out quickly. In only a couple of beats, she reappears with two small cornish game hens and accompanying items on a platter...quite attractively presented. As she sets it down in front of him...

LUCY
Something special...

Her simple words carry a bigger meaning to him...as he turns his face to her...

DANNY
My whole life's turned into something special...since the minute I laid eyes on you.

She sits to his left, ready to serve him...looking at him through the candlelight.

LUCY
Funny how things work out. I'm so happy it almost hurts. Isn't that a crazy thing to say, though?

DANNY
Yeah...I thought it was just me.

They share a delighted little laugh.

DISSOLVE TO:

11 EXT. DANNY'S HOME - DAY

11

A neat but commonplace frame house in a respectable neighborhood. Ian is arriving on the lope, bounding up the steps, admitted inside after only one knock on the door.

12 INT. DANNY'S HOME - LIVING ROOM

12

Lucy is happily, hurriedly firing off little instructions, preparing to leave...a last swipe with lipstick in front of a wall mirror.

LUCY

I made some fudge. It's in the fridge.
They can have one piece after they've
had some fruit, a banana or a pear.
(to her kids)

Can't you say hello to your Uncle
Ian?

ANOTHER ANGLE

Ian turns to see Agatha and Thomas sitting on a small couch in front of a TV which is playing cartoons. They wave to him. Thomas holds a sizeable stuffed cloth doll which is without clothes. He's met the children before...shooting them a remark...friendly... *

IAN

You got that, guys? That's the
law...! Fruit before fudge!

LUCY

Mrs. Myrdal let them stuff themselves
with any old thing.

Ian watches Thomas clutching the doll like a security blanket.

IAN

What's your friend's name there,
Thomas?

Agatha gives the cloth doll a poke...answering...

AGATHA

Dulcimer.

Thomas gives Agatha a poke!

THOMAS

It's my doll, let me say it...
Dulcimer.

IAN

Good name...

LUCY

It's a terrible name...

AGATHA

Mrs. Myrdal won't sit with us
anymore.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

LUCY
That's enough...

IAN
(back to the doll)
Dulcimer looks cold...where are her
clothes?

AGATHA
Long gone. Ma brings home lots and
lots of baby clothes but she won't let
us use any of them.

Silence. Ian shoots a glance at Lucy, who gets a guilty,
cat's-out-of-the-bag look. She feels forced to explain.

LUCY
I haven't told Danny yet...till I'm
absolutely sure. You won't say
anything, will you?

IAN
(flustered)
Hey...no way...

A HORN HONKS outside...Lucy's ride. Lucy puts a hand on
Ian's arm.

LUCY
That's Dot...You never met her. I
used to work with her at the Fill 'er
Up Cafe. Anyway,...
(secretive)
About the other...just between us,
okay?

IAN
(the captured spy role)
I die before I talk.

She gives him a quick sisterly kiss on the cheek and darts
out. Ian stands looking at the closed door for just a
beat. Like he may have gotten himself into something.

DISSOLVE TO:

13 INT. BEDLOE HOME - LIVING ROOM - CLOSE ON DANNY AND BABY - 13
DAY

It's Christmas...ON CUT, Danny is holding a plump, newborn
baby girl for his Dad (family photographer) to capture on
film...announcing with gusto:

DANNY
In-tro-duc-ing...Miss Daphne Bedloe...
the Daniel G. Bedloe wing of the
family!

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

DOUG
Steady...look down at her...

WIDEN

As Doug snaps the photo, the moment is greeted by applause and little cheers. It's a joyous Christmas dinner gathering at the Bedloe home, 9 people pushing the room to capacity. CLAUDIA BEDLOE, 32, eldest daughter, is there with her husband, MACY, and five young children, step-ladder sizes (for our purposes, all but Claudia are really "extras" in our story). Mrs. Jordan from next door...the three "foreigners" from across the street...Steve, the Asian...Fred, the Middle Easterner...and Jack, the East Indian (all in suits and ties). Lucy's children, Agatha and Thomas, sit quietly on a couch, the feeling of outsiders, looking on at all of this. A beautifully decorated tree adorns the room...and a Bedloe specialty elaborate hors d'oeuvres, are everywhere. On WIDEN, Claudia steps to Danny to take the baby from him.

CLAUDIA
Give me that child...you're holding
her like a football.

MRS. JORDAN
Play us some Christmas carols, Danny.

Danny moves off toward the piano, Lucy with him.

ON CLAUDIA IAN

As Claudia holds the baby, Ian looking on. They seem to study the infant...an awareness of something! ...The Foreigners make their way to the piano, seeming anxious to savor the day to the fullest. Bee steps to Claudia with Mrs. Jordan now.

BEE
Claudey, would you fill the
trays...let me have that precious...
(taking the baby)
My, you're an armful...just like your
Daddy.

Mrs. Jordan reaches in a finger to touch the baby.

MRS. JORDAN
Leave it to Daniel...waits thirty
years then tries to catch up...turning
out seven-month babies...

Ian and Claudia exchange a glance. She quickly breaks it off, heading for the kitchen.

WIDEN

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: 2

13

Danny starts to play "The First Noel"...singing the lead in a beautiful baritone voice! Claudia's kids chirping in happily...the Foreigners leaning to "read" the music book on the piano to make an effort to sing along...Lucy sitting adoringly on the piano bench beside Danny...

BEE

(to baby)

Look at that little mouth, and those dimples. Is that Danny all over again?

Ian shoots a look toward Lucy at the piano...sees Claudia taking a couple of nearly empty trays toward the kitchen. The music he's always enjoyed seems suddenly to annoy him. He heads for the kitchen.

14 THE KITCHEN - WIDE ON SCENE

14

Claudia starts to replenish the trays of hors d'oeuvres as Ian enters...hovering silently...something on his mind. Claudia knows her brother. After too long a silence from this talkative guy...she asks...

CLAUDIA

Well, what!?

IAN

Oh, nothing.

CLAUDIA

For Pete's sake, you're a college man...stop being a brat! What?

IAN

You don't think she had that baby early, do you?

She freezes just a split second at what she's doing.

IAN (CONT'D)

(catching it)

That's what I thought.

CLAUDIA

Oh, Ian...who am I to say...

IAN

I mean, she's fat and filled out as any of yours...and none of yours were early! And she's got blue eyes!

CLAUDIA

Let's just leave that talk right here in this room...

IAN

I'm wondering if somebody ought to tell Danny.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

She looks at him with semi-shock.

CLAUDIA

Tell him? You can't do that!

IAN

It makes Danny look like such a dummy,
Claudey...all you've got to do is
count...and you know it can't be his!

Ready to leave with a couple of replenished trays, she
puts a hand on his arm and tells him softly...

CLAUDIA

Ian...lots of times, people have...
understandings about things...that
outsiders can't even guess at.

He gives her a puzzled, confused look.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)

It's Christmas, Ian...be kind.

She leaves. Ian sits at the kitchen table. The clear
beautiful VOICE of Danny now comes from the other room,
leading the singing of "Silent Night." Ian...used to
singing along with his brother on Christmases past...
forces out a muted:

IAN

(faint)

"Silent Night...holy night."

But his voice catches in his throat. A beat. The door
opens, and Agatha and Thomas move cautiously into the
kitchen, seemingly feeling like outsiders here on the big
occasion. Thomas carries the ever-present "Dulcimer"
doll. Just a beat while Ian stares back at them, these
"strangers" who have edged into his life under
circumstances that have become tainted in his mind. Ian's
eyes fall on Daphne.

CUT TO:

A15 INT. DANNY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

A15 -

The next year, Christmas time again. Daphne, now one,
sits in a high chair at the kitchen table as Lucy spoon
feeds her. Thomas and Agatha watch as Lucy improvises on
'Little Miss Muffet'...swooping the spoonful of cereal up
and then down into Daphne's mouth with:

LUCY

Little Miss Daphne Bedloe...
Eating her curds and whey...
Open wide...it goes inside...
And she gets bigger by the day!

(CONTINUED)

A15 CONTINUED:

The kids laugh as baby Daphne takes the food, spilling some.

THOMAS

Does she get stuff for Christmas this year?

LUCY

Wouldn't you want presents if you were her?

AGATHA

I guess so...

LUCY

(happily)

Okay...let's decide what we'll get Daphne for Christmas this year...I know...let's go through the alphabet.

The kids make faces of concentration...happy to be making a game of it...Lucy has the look of fulfillment.

DISSOLVE TO:

15 EXT. DOWNTOWN THEATER - NIGHT

Ian and Cicely exit the theater into a winter night...It's Christmas break from college, a year later. He seems moody...hands thrust in his pockets...Cicely loops an arm through his as we MOVE WITH THEM. Christmas decorations visible still.

CICELY

First time I ever saw you leave a movie in the middle.

IAN

Stuffy in there...everything smelled like popcorn.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

She nestles a cheek close to his.

CICELY

Everything...? Thanks heaps!

He gives her cheek a quick kiss of reassurance.

IAN

I wish we were going to the same college. Something cozy about being at State College, just next door almost.

CICELY

I'm only an hour farther away. Don't you trust me?

He doesn't answer immediately. She picks up on it.

CICELY (CONT'D)

You've been a sourpuss ever since last Christmas...it's this Lucy business, isn't it! If she'd had a skinny baby back then...no problem...right?

*
*
*

IAN

I'm thinking of Danny...

CICELY

I think she's the best thing that ever happened to Danny. I saw some of the girls he used to show up with...spare me! You see how he looks at Lucy? You can't buy a look like that.

IAN

Every time I babysit...she still goes off with that "Dot"...from the Fill 'er Up Cafe...who knows where?

*

CICELY

Gals aren't supposed to have buddies?

IAN

And she's always coming home with stuff...like a bracelet, or a jewel box or a scarf...like presents from someone.

CICELY

We call it shopping. I like her...she's fresh air.

IAN

One day she comes home with this dress, wearing it. I mean it was like shiny ivory. movie star material. She was scared to death it looked too

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED: 2

15

IAN (CONT'D)
expensive. She says it only cost
nineteen ninety-five...baloney! And
she asks, do I think Danny will think
she's a spendthrift? And I told her
...no, Danny would think she looked
just great. Which she did...great for
someone!

CICELY
Come on, now...

IAN
I mean...where was the dress she left
in?

CICELY
Honestly, Ian!

IAN
The worst part...I only sat for two
hours...and she gave me five
dollars...a three dollar tip, she
said. I told her I'd bring her the
change, but she said no. And I never
did...I kept it...like hush money.

They walk on for a silent beat.

CICELY
You've spoiled everything.

IAN
Like what did I spoil?

CICELY
I've been saving a Christmas present
for you.

IAN
Too late, I've already opened 'em.

CICELY
Mom and Dad are taking a trip to
Cumberland Saturday...they'll be gone
overnight.

A flash of interest from Ian...

IAN
Too bad they're not taking little
monster brother Stevie with them.

CICELY
He's in bed by eight. I thought if
you'd come by...say eight-thirty or
so, I'd cook you a really elegant
dinner...I've been saving recipes.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED: 3

15

CICELY (CONT'D)
 We'll have candles just like Lucy
 always does for Danny.

He stiffens at the mention of Lucy. She persists,
 intentionally.

CICELY (CONT'D)
 Come on...you can't fault a wife who
 always feeds her husband dinner by
 candlelight! I think it's romantic.
 We'll put on some music...

He weakens an inch.

IAN
 Soft...don't want to wake up Stevie.

CICELY
 Very soft...

IAN
 (teasing)
 I'll have to check my appointment
 calendar.

To which she gives him a jab in the ribs where she knows
 he's ticklish. He lets out a WHOOP and tickles her back.
 She SHRIEKS in delight...and they get into a brief
 tussling-tickling contest...pedestrians diverting around
 them like this happens all the time on Baltimore streets
 after dark.

DISSOLVE TO:

16 EXT. BEDLOE HOME - WIDE - DAY

16

The fateful Saturday. A mid-sized moving van with the
 logo "Sid 'n' Ed's Movers" on the side, pulls to a brief
 stop in front of the Bedloe home, detouring through the
 neighborhood to drop Ian off. He jumps from the van and
 "gate" for the house...bright expectancy.

17 INT. BEDLOE HOME - THE ENTRY - DAY

17

Bee is standing at the hall mirror, attaching an earring
 as Ian charges in. She throws him a curve:

BEE
 I thought you'd never get here. You're
 supposed to head over to Lucy's right
 away...she needs you to baby-sit.

Ian goes stiff-legged with disbelief.

IAN
 I can't baby sit...I've got a date!

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

BEE

Well, I'm sure she won't be long.
 She's just meeting her friend, Dot,
 for a drink. Danny's at a stag party.
 (beat; to watch)

Goodness look at the time...and your
 father's still fussing around...

(calling upstairs)

Douglas...hurry up please.

She moves into the living room, Ian following as we MOVE
 WITH THEM...Ian protesting:

IAN

You had no right volunteering me,
 Mom...I've got plans of my own!

(a bit guardedly)

Besides, I don't like this business of
 Lucy...calling up the minute Danny's
 back is turned...

Bee, who is plumping the couch pillows and collecting
 sections of the evening paper...stops, astonished.

BEE

Back is turned? What are you talking
 about...it's Bucky Hargrove's bachelor
 party...he's getting married next
 week! I told Lucy...of course she
 should get out for a bit...Ian would
 be glad to sit.

(a final word)

I'd appreciate it if you didn't let on
 you feel otherwise!

She considers the matter closed, leaving the room.

IAN

I'm dead...

CUT TO:

18 INT. DANNY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

18

Already getting dark outside. Ian stands glumly watching
 as Lucy is just putting on her coat, looking pretty in a
 red turtleneck and long loose woolen pants.

LUCY

I really thank you, Ian...Dot phoned
 at the very last minute. I know it's
 a Saturday night, but I thought maybe
 if you invited Cicely over...?

IAN

I'm supposed to go to her house...I
 promised I'd be there at
 eight-thirty!

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

18

LUCY

Well, there...see...it'll work out
just great. I'll tell Dot an hour
tops...it's six-twenty now...

A HORN HONKS OUTSIDE...

LUCY (CONT'D)

There she is...

She darts over to Daphne who sits in her baby seat...leans
to give her a quick kiss...

*

LUCY (CONT'D)

Bye, sweet stuff...almost bedtime...

Agatha and Thomas come hurtling into the room wearing
footed pajamas...expectancy giving way to small
disappointment.

THOMAS

Mama said you might bring Cicely.

LUCY

You two be nice...no cheating at
Parcheesi.

The HORN HONKS again...Lucy darting away with:

LUCY (CONT'D)

See you in an hour...

And she's gone...the front door closing. Thomas brings
out the Parcheesi board to plop on the floor as Ian moves
to pick up Daphne...holding her...

IAN

(to Daphne)

What are you grinning at, Daphie-Doo
...think you're smart...suckering me
into baby-sitting, eh...

AGATHA

Why don't you come over anymore?

IAN

(dodging it)

Busy...

AGATHA

Now we got no one...mama called Mrs.
Myrdal and begged and begged, but Mrs.
Myrdal hung up on her.

The comment strikes Ian strangely.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED: 2

18

IAN
(as a buddy)
What did you guys ever do to Mrs.
Myrdal, anyway...?

THOMAS
Nothin'...she liked us a lot!

AGATHA
One day she just wouldn't come again.

Ian ponders this...moving to the phone, cradling Daphne in
an arm.

IAN
(to kids)
Be right with you...

He dials...gets Cicely on the phone.

IAN (CONT'D)
(to phone)
Hello...you have just been selected
from thousands of coeds to have a
dinner date with the famous Ian
Bedloe...

CUT TO:

19 INT. CICELY'S KITCHEN - CLOSE ON CICELY - DAY

19

She cradles the phone at her ear, standing at the
stove...stirring something...looking cute and confused.

CICELY
Sorry, I'm busy tonight...

INTERCUT THEIR PHONE CONVERSATION

IAN
I'm over baby-sitting at Lucy's. Won't
be long...in case you find yourself
desperate for the sound of my voice.

CICELY
I'm following a recipe that says
simmer covered, stirring constantly!
How can you "stir constantly"
something that's "simmering covered?"
Oh, well...on your way over could you
pick up some butter? My white sauce
didn't thicken and I had to throw it
out and start again. Now there's no
butter for the rolls. Oops, gotta go.

She hangs up...moves to adjust the heat.

20 INT. DANNY'S HOUSE - ON IAN

20

As he hangs up...moves to sit with Agatha and Thomas on the floor...releasing Daphne to crawl about...

AGATHA
Do you really like Cicely?

IAN
Sort of...

THOMAS
She's pretty...

IAN
Play!

Agatha rolls the dice first.

THOMAS
I can't wait till tomorrow morning.
Danny makes us apple pancakes on
Sunday mornings.

Daphne crawls back to Ian...likes his lap.

IAN
You heard "apple pancakes," didn't
you, eh?

TIME LAPSE DISSOLVES - VARIOUS SHOTS

A21 WALL CLOCK

A21

The clock shows the time has become "7:40!"

B21 PARCHEESI BOARD

B21

Dice roll across it one more time.

C21 CLOSE ON DAPHNE'S CRIB

C21

Ian gently lays a sleeping Daphne into it.

21 CLOSE ON CICELY ON PHONE

21

...growing concerned.

CICELY
Stevie's already in bed...I'm waiting!

22 WIDE ON FRONT PORCH OF DANNY'S HOUSE

22

We see Ian draw back a drape to look out onto the dark street...no one!

A23 WALL CLOCK A23
...now showing "8:45."...

B23 ON AGATHA, THOMAS B23
sitting on a sofa now, watching TV...

C23 ON IAN ON PHONE C23
...asking someone:

IAN
Tim, have you got any idea where
they're holding Bucky's bachelor
party?

23 ON CICELY AT DINING ROOM TABLE 23
She's blowing out the half-burned candles she'd already
lit at the nicely set table!

CLOSE ON CICELY ON PHONE

...a defeated tone...

CICELY
It's nine-thirty, Ian...everything's
stone cold!

IAN (V.O.)
(phone filter)
I feel like just walking out...!

CICELY
You can't do that...something must
have happened to her.

END DISSOLVES

24 EXT. DANNY'S HOUSE - WIDE - NIGHT 24
Danny pulls up to the curb in his blue Chevy,
parks...moves casually toward the front porch. The door
whips open and Ian charges out to meet him...angrily!

ANGLE ON THE PAIR

Danny seems in a happy mood...surprised to see Ian,
however.

DANNY
Hey, buddy...what's up? Where's Luce?

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

IAN

You tell me!

DANNY

What...?

IAN

I'm due at Cicely's an hour ago!
Haven't even gone home to change...

DANNY

No problem...I'll drive you...let me
collect the kids.

IAN

Daphne's already asleep for Pete's
sake!

ANOTHER ANGLE - PAST THEM TO SIDEWALK

DANNY'S NEIGHBOR, a 40-ish man, walking a golden
retriever, is just passing...calling to Danny...

DANNY'S NEIGHBOR

Hi, Danny...

DANNY

(quick thought)

Henry...could you sit with the kids
for twenty minutes...have to run my
brother home...

DANNY'S NEIGHBOR

(moving on)

Be right there...just let me put
Gretchen in the yard.

DANNY

(to Ian, brightly)

There...was that so hard?

But this whole thing is much bigger to Ian.

IAN

You just don't get it, do you...?

CUT TO:

25 EXT. CITY STREET - MOVING WITH DANNY, IAN IN CAR - NIGHT

25

Danny starts to whistle a little tune as he
drives...infuriating Ian even more!

IAN

I might as well inform you right now
that you have lost your favorite baby
sitter for all eternity!

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

DANNY

What say?

IAN

Cicely and I had this huge important date...she made dinner special!

DANNY

Better late than never...

IAN

It's ten o'clock! It's garbage! Lucy swore on a stack of Bibles she'd be back in time!

DANNY

Not like her. Not like my Lucy... wonder where she is...

IAN

Drinking with her waitress friend...is what she claims!

Danny grins...relieved!

DANNY

Ah...Dot from the Fill 'er Up Cafe...okay.

IAN

(growing more irate)

You really don't get it, do you...I gave you more credit.

DANNY

Know something I've noticed...Lucy never says a word against anyone... just not her style...you know another woman like that? I looked for a woman like Lucy all my life...almost thought there was a jinx on me...

IAN

You're not hearing me. She's out all afternoon any time she can get a sitter...comes back perfumed and laughing...wearing clothes she can't afford...

Danny seems to feel a torrent of bad news coming...starts building a little dam of protection.

DANNY

Did you know she makes her own curtains...even cuts the children's hair herself.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: 2

25

IAN

Forget curtains! That white knit
dress...haven't you ever seen her
white dress? Where'd she get
it...how'd she pay for it?

*

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: 3

25

EXT. WAVERLY STREET - BEDLOE HOUSE - NIGHT

Danny turns onto Waverly and draws up in front of the Bedloe home, stopping, letting the car idle. He stares out the windshield...his voice starting to weaken.

DANNY

You know something, Ian...she can
plant a snapped-off twig in a pot and
...and it will turn green and start
growing...

It only maddens Ian more...he can't hold it any longer:

IAN

And how about the baby? You
listening?! *

Danny says nothing...just staring ahead...
expressionless... *

IAN (CONT'D)

Premature baby?...get serious!
Premature baby with dimples? Two
months early and breathing on her
own...full weight...no incubator... no
problems? No wonder she married you
quick as a flash...and then had a baby
just seven months later...

(beat)

Because the baby was someone else's!

Long beat. Danny's mind seems fixed on an image Ian had
mentioned...

DANNY

You're talking about that dress with
the kind of like...criss-cross
middle?

IAN

That's the one...

Danny starts rubbing his right temple with his
fingertips...and when it doesn't seem he means to say
anymore...Ian shows mixed feelings...that he's had his
say...and that it may have been too much. He opens the
door...and says only:

IAN (CONT'D)

Anyway...

He steps out, closes the door.

ON IAN

As he starts away. Plagued a little by guilt for his "big
mouth," he sort of shuffles toward the porch instead of
bounding. Behind him, we hear the car start up and move
off...the hum of an engine gaining speed, shifting gears.

(CONTINUED)

A26 CONTINUED:

A26

And just as Ian starts up the steps, he hears it...THE CRASH...the sickening sound of crumpling metal and crashing glass. Ian freezes...turns...

26 PAST IAN TO CRASH SITE

26

Halfway up the next block, Danny's car can be seen smashed headlong into a tree! Total shock...then he lets out a little GROAN of instant grief. He takes a couple of hesitant steps in the direction of the crash, then breaks into a full run, yelling at the top of his lungs...

IAN
DANNYYYYYYY.....!

A few front porch lights in the vicinity flick on...and along with the scattered Christmas lights still showing on some homes, they give the crash area an almost festive look.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

27 EXT. DANNY'S HOUSE - WIDE - DAY

27

A few months later. Spring break from college for Ian. The Bedloe sedan drives up...stops in front, Ian driving...Bee with him.

ANGLE PAST CAR TO HOUSE

Bee gets out, carrying a sizable hamper of food. Ian stays in the car momentarily...as though he'll wait for her. She turns. gives him a look that says more than words. He gets out begrudgingly.

MOVING WITH THEM

Toward the porch.

BEE

They'll want to see you, Ian...the children are crazy about you.

He doesn't respond...an uneasiness in being here.

BEE (CONT'D)

Honey, could you manage this basket?

Ian immediately relieves her of the basket as they start up the steps. A curtain that has been held aside at a front window falls back as they approach the door. Bee is just about to ring the bell...and the door opens almost automatically...Agatha and Thomas standing there.

BEE (CONT'D)

(exaggerated surprise)

My, now...how did you know we were here?

THOMAS

She keeps watching out the window. She thinks Danny's coming home.

AGATHA

I do not.

They enter as we MOVE WITH THEM...into the house.

28 THE LIVING ROOM

28

They stop momentarily.

28 CONTINUED:

28

THOMAS

Danny's dead. No more apple
pancakes.

The simple little pronouncement seems deafening to Bee and Ian...a silence penetrated by the click, click, click, PING of someone practicing amateurishly on a typewriter in the kitchen. They head toward it.

29 INT. THE KITCHEN - CLOSE PAST LUCY

29

Lucy, clad in a wrinkled kimono, pecks away at a manual typewriter she's placed on a card table. No doorbell to alert her...she doesn't notice as Bee and Ian enter with the kids...startled as they come into view! An open soda bottle and an amber pill bottle sit next to her...and she whisks the pill bottle into a pocket like magic (the shoplifter's art?) as she stammers...

LUCY

Oops...hi...you caught me right in the
middle of my typing lesson...!

WIDEN

Ian sets the hamper on a counter...Bee glancing at Lucy's
"work."

BEE

Well, now...looks like...didn't know
you'd taken it up...

Ian remains strangely detached...stepping around in
silence while Bee and Lucy exchange small talk...the kids
watching him oddly. Lucy feels she must explain the card
table.

LUCY

I can't use the dining room table for
the typewriter, the book says, because
it's not the customary height...but
this thing does get the wobbles.
Can't have everything I guess. Right?

Bee nods to the food hamper.

BEE

Brought a few things for a meal or
two.

LUCY

Thank you so much...
(to Ian)

How come you're not in college, Ian?

An awkward moment when Ian doesn't answer.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

BEE

Spring break...
(to the typing)
How's it coming...?

LUCY

(hopefully)

One peck at a time...I'm determined.
My waitressing job at the Fill 'er Up
Cafe was long gone. And besides, I
had this sort of dream where I saw
myself sitting in the reception area
of a downtown lawyer's office...typing
up stuff in between making
appointments and things.

CLOSE PAST IAN TO SCENE

He seems to register this "dream" of hers, a hurt look
like it's an impossibility? He steps to the sink area,
observing...dishes are clean but not put away...and he
notices the curtains for the first time...staring as Danny
suddenly takes part in the conversation for Ian...

DANNY (V.O.)

(distantly)

Did you know she makes her own
curtains?

Ian glances to a corner of the counter...a half dozen
little candlesticks, long unused now...the candles burnt
to stubs.

DANNY (V.O.)

Lucy feels people should always eat by
candlelight...

Panning to laundry which sits piled in a corner, clean but
unfolded...a task Bee is setting herself to as she
continues to chat.

*

Ian just stares at his mother's hands folding the
linens...and Lucy's voice now seeps into his
consciousness.

LUCY

The kids want to know why we can't
have sitters anymore, and I tell them
we're living in the "department of
reality"...they'll have to wait until
I can...typewrite my way out.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: 2

29

She smiles weakly as though she's said something profound.
It's confusing to Bee who can only say:

BEE

Well, I guess...

Ian's eyes fall on a small earthen flower pot on the
window ledge with a little plant, started as a twig...but
now dead and dry. And again...Danny's voice penetrates:

DANNY (V.O.)

You know something, Ian...she can
plant a snapped-off twig in a pot...
and...and...it will turn green and
start growing.

In a too-quick reaction...Ian snatches the little flower
pot from the ledge and heads for the wastebasket in the
corner. He's halted in mid-step by a frantic little
protest from Lucy.

LUCY

Don't, Ian...please...let it be!

He turns to her...speaking for the first time since he's
been in the house...reacting like it's a challenge:

IAN

(too loudly)
It's dead!

Agatha and Thomas stare at him...Lucy stands...moves to
take the pot from his hands...gently...

LUCY

No, it isn't...

She COUGHS from the exertion...steps back to take a sip of
soda.

LUCY (CONT'D)

It just seems that way...

She steps over and replaces it on the window ledge... and
there's a lusty BAWL coming from offstage...Daphne has
awakened...from voices or other reasons...

BEE

(to Ian)

Now see what you've done...

Ian doesn't answer...only looks like this is unfair.

LUCY

She can't be hungry yet.

BEE

Probably just needs changing...I'll do
it.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: 3

29

LUCY

No, no...I'll do it...

She moves too suddenly, dizzying herself...steadyng herself a beat on a counter. Tired...pills? Both Bee and Ian seem to notice. Agatha sizes up the situation, leans against the refrigerator to offer a startling solution:

AGATHA

Maybe we should all just come and live with you...

The half beat of silence is like a small quake. Lucy musters a still flickering bit of self-reliance and digs deep for a touch of humor as she starts from the room...touching Bee's arm fondly.

LUCY

I'm sure Grandma Bee would find having you underfoot all day just too exciting to imagine...

And she manages a little chuckle as she disappears in the direction of Daphne's audible WHIMPER. Bee stands for a moment looking like the "accused." Agatha quickly seems to sense it...letting her off the hook...

AGATHA

I didn't mean it really...

Thomas, clutching "Dulcimer," steps beside her...family unity.

THOMAS

Me neither.

CLOSE PAST IAN TO WINDOW LEDGE

He looks at the pitiful dead twig in the flower pot which had been taken from his hands...symbolic, perhaps of the havoc his careless words may have caused...

DISSOLVE TO:

30 INT. BEDLOE HOME - THE KITCHEN - NIGHT

30

That night. Bee and Doug at the table... having coffee...Ian scooting in and out, preparing to return to college next day...grabbing bites from the fridge. Bee is in a self-reproachful mood.

DOUG

(nod to her cup)
You won't sleep tonight with that coffee in you...please toss and turn on your own side.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

BEE

I won't sleep anyway...

(beat; worried)

She's taking pills of some kind...I saw her whisk them off the table when we came in.

(to Ian)

Did you see her, Ian...?

His delayed answer is noticeable.

IAN

Pills...?

Bee gives him a look...

BEE

Sure you did...

Ian shrugs, wanting to remain detached...leaves momentarily.

DOUG

Doctor probably prescribed something.

BEE

I wish she had someone to go to... some relative, I mean. Of course, we'd miss her. But if she had someone to tend the children so she could get a job. I know I ought to offer... but...

DOUG

Don't even consider it.

BEE

Well, I'm their grandma...or one of them's grandma...but lately I've been so tired. And my knees are acting up. I don't see how I could handle it.

DOUG

These things straighten themselves out. She's a spunky one. We'll do what we can. And she's bright enough...she can always go back to waitressing...the gals down at Teddy's grill always seem to be driving near-new cars...she can set aside enough for sitters...

BEE

She's teaching herself to type...

Ian re-enters the room for a beat to get something... Bee asking him:

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED: 2

30

BEE (CONT'D)
 What did she say she had in mind,
 Ian...?"

Without hesitation, almost as though he's been reciting it
 to himself:

IAN
 She said she had this sort of dream
 where she saw herself sitting in the
 reception area of a downtown lawyer's
 office...typing up stuff in between
 making appointments and things...

Bee gives him a look of slight amazement...

BEE
 For goodness sake...that's
 word-for-word...what a wonderful
 memory you have...

DISSOLVE TO:

31 EXT. DOWNTOWN OFFICE BUILDING - WIDE - DAY

31

To ESTABLISH a multi-storied building housing professional
 offices. We see Lucy entering.

32 INT. PERSONNEL OFFICE - THE SCENE - DAY

32

Lucy sits in the applicant's chair in front of the desk of
 the OFFICE MANAGER for this legal firm...a pleasant
 looking woman in her 40's. Lucy looks attractive
 still...but a bit drawn and wan to those who'd know her.
 Her dress is pretty...but not quite professional in these
 surroundings. A tense beat for her as the Office Manager
 studies her application. It seems Lucy can feel her heart
 beating...she sneaks a hand to her breast to still
 it...lowering it quickly as the woman now looks at her.
 And her office career seems doomed to be limited to a
 single question...a single answer...

OFFICE MANAGER
 How many words a minute do you type?

Lucy looks at the woman...as though this is some strange
 language.

LUCY
 What...?

CUT TO:

33 EXT. STREET - MOVING WITH LUCY - DAY

33

She walks the busy downtown street in a half daze. And we HOLD ON SCENE as she walks away, melding with other pedestrians...a slight figure now being swallowed up by a busy world. As the sight of her becomes only vanishing glimpses, we hear Danny's VOICE, loud and clear, but distant as though coming from another place:

DANNY (V.O.)
Mom...Dad...I want you to meet Lucy
Ann Dean...the woman who has changed
my life...!

DISSOLVE TO:

34 OMITTED

34 *

35 INT. IAN'S DORM ROOM - CLOSE ON SMALL DESK - NIGHT

35

A student lamp drops a circle of light on an open text on the small desk. PANNING the spartan room...Ian's jacket tossed on a chair back...a picture of Cicely sitting on a stand near the bed...where Ian is lying now...stretched out, napping. A beat...quiet like a dream...then a soft RAPPING as though not meant to disturb. Followed in a couple of beats by a louder THUMP, THUMP on the door that says...open up! Ian stirs...sits up...and moves to the door.

ANGLE ON DOOR

He opens it...and Danny is standing there! Ian stands frozen for an instant as Danny hits him with a big grin and a brotherly slap on the shoulder...entering past him into the room with:

DANNY
I'll tell you, little bro'...you're a
tough man to find...

THE SCENE

As Danny steps in, surveying the small quarters...in good spirits...

DANNY (CONT'D)
I know my zip codes...but I thought
they said Parker Street instead of
Barker Street and I've just been
wandering around...

He moves to examine the open text under the light...

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

35

DANNY (CONT'D)

Ah, Joe College now, eh...good for you.

(turning to Ian)

Tell me, though...be honest...don't you see one of Mom's casseroles in your sleep now and then...eh...eh?

He steps in to give Ian another good-natured cuff on the shoulder...a chuckle...

DANNY (CONT'D)

You bet.

(beat)

Anyway...the reason I came by...

He reaches in his pocket for a few small bills...

DANNY (CONT'D)

I know you must make a fortune working part time for Sid 'n' Ed's Movers...but you just walked off without getting paid for that last night of baby sitting...

(starting to count some off)

I realize you were working overtime... but family members don't get time-and-a-half...right...?

He's holding out a few one dollar bills...a lusty brotherly LAUGH...

36 INT. IAN'S DORM ROOM - CLOSE ON IAN IN BED

36

Waking from this dream...the LAUGH ringing in his ears. He sits up...perspiring visibly...guilt-ridden.

CUT TO:

37 INT. DANNY'S HOUSE - LUCY'S BEDROOM - ANGLE ON BED - NIGHT

37

A little vignette of life in the balance, being played out in another dim light. Lucy lies in deep sleep...askew...under rumpled bed covers. Agatha stands near her, checking a small hand mirror she has just used to test for breath from her mother! Thomas stands uncertainly at the door, as though afraid to enter. He asks her...

*

*

THOMAS

What's that supposed to tell?

AGATHA

Breath shows up on a mirror...I saw them do it on TV...

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

37

THOMAS

Do you see any?

She starts out...standing by him...looking back at the bed
with slight misgivings.

AGATHA

A little, I think. I saw a little.

Thomas reaches for the mirror.

THOMAS

Let me see...

She pulls it back.

AGATHA

It doesn't stay...

(diagnosis)

She's just real sound asleep...that's
all.

THOMAS

(to bed)

Sure...that's all.

DISSOLVE TO:

38 INT. IAN'S DORM ROOM - DAY

38

The next day, probably...Ian enters, returning from class.
We can hear a nearby dorm phone RINGING...and the O.S.
MALE VOICE...

O.S. MALE VOICE

(yelling it out)

Telephone for Ian Bedloe...!

Ian reacts..as we move with him.

IAN

calling back

Right here...coming...Thanks.

He hurries to grab the hall phone receiver left
dangling...answering it.

IAN

Hello...

(beat)

Mom...?

CUT TO:

39 INT. BEDLOE HOME - CLOSE ON BEE ON KITCHEN PHONE - DAY

39

39 CONTINUED:

39

BEE
I hate to bother you, but I thought
you'd want to know...Honey...it's
Lucy...

40 INT. IAN'S DORM ROOM - INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

40

IAN
(stiffening)
Lucy...what...?

BEE
She died.

He can't speak.

BEE (CONT'D)
Ian?...Ian...?

IAN
(finally)
Yeah...

And Bee rattles off a discourse that's part reportage,
part Bedloe philosophy, and a dash of guilty rationale.

BEE
We got a call from Agatha last night.
she said, "Mama keeps sleeping and
won't wake up." Well, you know that
could mean anything, and I told her,
"Oh, sweetie, I bet she's just
tuckered out." And then she
said...she wouldn't even get up for
breakfast! Ian, could you believe,
those children on their own since the
night before? We hurried right over,
of course, and sure enough. There she
was, breathing so slowly...just a
breath here and there. There was an
empty pill bottle on her nightstand.
But there wasn't any letter or
anything like that, to make it look
like she did it on purpose, you know.
But why? Anyhow...the ambulance took
her to Union Memorial. But it was too
late...she'd been lying there a whole
night and a day. She died this noon
without ever regaining consciousness.
I thought you should know...

*

He can't respond. She wonders if he's still there.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

BEE
Ian...Are you there?

IAN
Yeah...

BEE
We're not going to breath a word to
the children.

IAN
(disbelief)
Their mother's dead...how can you not
tell them?!

BEE
I mean, we're not going to tell them
they might have saved her...if they'd
phoned earlier. It could affect their
whole lives...they'd feel so
guilty...so awfully guilty...

DISSOLVE TO:

41 EXT. CEMETERY - WIDE - DAY

41

A small graveside service has just ended...a handful of
people...all adults, start moving off...Bee and Doug with
Claudia and Mrs. Jordan...along with a 40-ish MINISTER.

ANGLE ON IAN

He stands with a bewildered look...watching his parents
move away...the whole "event" seeming over so swiftly...no
one caring about the hole in the ground! His attention is
jolted by a female voice:

DOT (O.S.)
Mrs. Myrdal...I thought that was you.

He turns to the two "strangers" at the service...MRS.
MYRDAL, 60-ish, Lucy's one-time babysitter...and DOT,
30-some, a hard, sincere-looking gal with a bee hive
hairdo...from the Fill 'er Up Cafe!

MRS. MYRDAL
Dot... almost didn't make it...
thought I should...

DOT
Terrible...still can't believe...

They move the few steps toward Ian who hasn't budged...

MRS. MYRDAL
I just feel so guilty...that last
night she called me to sit and I
wouldn't...

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

DOT

Don't say it...I shouldn't have ever
begged her to go out...

MRS. MYRDAL

If I had it to do again...but I'd told
myself no, not after that day I went
shopping with her. Never saw anything
like it...I caught her shoplifting...
bold as you please...

Dot seems to know...shakes her head sadly.

DOT

I tried to shut my mind to it.

MRS. MYRDAL

Rest her soul. It was probably a
sickness, now that I think. I mean,
she swiped a pure silk blouse off a
rack...I thought I was seeing
things...then whoosh...an Italian
scarf scampers into her bag...one
thing right after another. Makes me
shudder to remember. Next time she
called I turned her down. I think she
knew why, too.

DOT

Maybe I could of helped...I don't
know...

They've reached Ian who stands immobilized by what he's
just heard...and unprepared for a second revelation. Dot
spots him...makes a guess who he is...stepping to him...

DOT (CONT'D)

You're Ian...Danny's brother...

He nods...unable to speak, Dot appears cordial...

DOT (CONT'D)

I'm Dot...Lucy's friend...from work?

IAN

Oh, yeah...

DOT

I should have called you one time or
another and told you how sorry I was
about that night...my fault.

IAN

Huh?

She gets a sad look, remembering...

41 CONTINUED: 2

41

DOT

Lucy said, "Ian's going to kill me"...I mean, she was good enough to pop out for a drink with me, and I stick her out there on Ritchie Highway in that crate of a car of mine...broke down...stranded! I felt so guilty. She always wanted to be home before Danny got home...wife's place, she said. She was like that...for all her faults. I really loved her...she was special.

She lays a sympathetic hand on Ian's arm.

DOT (CONT'D)

I know you must have thought so, too...

DISSOLVE TO:

42 INT. BEDLOE HOME - THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

42

Bee is pacing the floor with Daphne, who is whimpering lowly. Agatha and Thomas sit to one side watching TV turned low. Bee looks tired...trapped...trying to comfort the baby...but feeling like crying herself. Doug enters the room downcast. Bee looks to him, for a ray of hope.

BEE

Anything...?

DOUG

Zero.

CLOSE PAST AGATHA TO DOUG, BEE

She watches them carefully as they continue...

DOUG (CONT'D)

I've tried every "Dean" in Cheyenne, Wyoming...if that's where her first husband really headed for. No luck.

(beat)

And there's not a scrap of anything at their house that I could find with any other name or address on it.

BEE

There has to be something. We'll have another look tomorrow...Could you take up the laundry?

Doug nods...heads back out with...

DOUG

Don't you overdo it.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

42

BEE
I'm already "overdone."

Quietly, Agatha stands, taking Thomas's Dulcimer doll with her...and slips out of the room!

43 INT. BEDROOM - CLOSE ON AGATHA

43

She's staying in Ian's room now with Thomas. She moves quickly to a small lamp, turning it on. She looks off, furtively...to see she's not watched..and turns her attention to the Dulcimer doll. She unzips a zipper hidden by a seam...reaches in...withdrawing a long-bent sales tag...perhaps three inches square! She looks at it...studying it as though something about it is incriminating. Just then, Doug's voice from the door:

DOUG
You okay in here, Aggie...?

WIDEN

As she whips around quickly, hiding the slip...trying to look innocent.

DOUG (CONT'D)
(comforting tone)
Things'll turn out, honey...you wait
and see...

He gives her a compassionate smile...and a little wink, moving off. Quickly, she stuffs the sales tag back inside the doll's covering...zipping it shut...the movements of someone hiding a secret!

44 INT. LIVING ROOM - AS BEFORE

44

Bee still paces with Daphne, who continues to whimper. Agatha, minus Dulcimer, slips back into the room...plopping down beside Thomas who hasn't seemed to miss her. Ian enters from the front door. He appears to be walking in a half trance...his mind off somewhere...dueling with an onslaught of guilt. Bee hails him...

BEE
Ian, honey...thank heaven...

He stops...turns to her, bouncing back to reality...

BEE (CONT'D)
Are you doing anything...?

IAN
Just going to pack the stuff I
brought...

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED:

44

BEE
Be a love and hold little Daphne
awhile...

He moves to take the baby...

BEE (CONT'D)
I can't seem to quiet her. I have to
get to bed.

*

IAN
(to Daphne)
Here you go. Okay, what's the
complaint?

Bee starts out...shooting a word to Agatha and Thomas.

BEE
Almost bedtime...am I right...?

They nod to her...she starts up the stairs.

CLOSER ON IAN

Pacing with Daphne who is still vocal about something.
Agatha watches it just so long.

AGATHA
Use the rocker...she'll stop.

Ian gives her a look...he'll try anything. He steps over
to the old rocker near the piano "archive
corner"...sitting down. He starts to rock...and silence
Thomas looks at Ian.

THOMAS
We told you.

Ian gives them a look...then looks down at Daphne...a
stranger in his arms. He rocks...feeling himself soothed
by the movement. He turns slightly toward the piano...and
his eyes fasten on a framed photo of Danny...smiling.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

45 EXT. BEDLOE HOME - WIDE - DAY

45

It's the next Christmas. But something's amiss. Mrs. Jordan, in jacket and stocking cap, is stringing lighted Christmas lights on her front bushes...the NEIGHBOR on the other side is just carrying a lush 6-foot Christmas tree into the house! And Claudia pulls up in her station wagon, gets out carrying a few small, meagerly wrapped boxes and starts up the steps to the undecorated front porch...a perfunctory wave to Mrs. Jordan.

46 INT. BEDLOE HOME - THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

46

Claudia sets the boxes down on a table next to a little "token tree," artificial with little ribbons instead of lights...a far cry from the festive tree of another time. Bee sits for the moment in a living room chair...Beastie at her feet. The floor is littered with kid stuff...plastic toys...balls...the Dulcimer doll. Claudia starts to pick them up...move them out of the way...sort of an automatic "mother thing" with her.

CLAUDIA

Sorry about Christmas, Mom.

BEE

Just as well, Hon...I thought we'd eat out.

CLAUDIA

Macy's folks are in from Florida.
(realizing what Bee said)
Eat out...at a restaurant?!

Bee stands with effort.

BEE

Your dad says waitresses need family, too.

A twinge of sadness comes over Bee...she stops...Claudia comes to the alert...

CLAUDIA

Easy, Mom...are you okay...?

BEE

(takes a breath)

I'll be all right.

(remembering it all)

It just struck me. That Christmas...
Danny standing here...holding the
little one..."the Daniel G. Bedloe
wing of the family"...

*

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED:

46

Claudia snatches up the Dulcimer doll to keep Bee from tripping over it.

CLAUDIA
I never saw him so happy. Let's remember that.

BEE
You're right...

Ian enters from the kitchen area...wearing a "Sid 'n' Ed's Movers" cap (or jacket)...

IAN
Hi, Claudie...

CLAUDIA
Merry Christmas, Professor.

Claudia fusses with the cloth doll...it symbolizes the whole dilemma to her..and she asks her mother:

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)
What did the doctor say?

Bee moves slowly to straighten a magazine on a table, tries to allay Claudia's concern...the old spark of humor...

BEE
He gave me some tiny pills and told me I should take up figure skating.

Claudia appreciates the attempt...but worry shows.

CLAUDIA
You can't do this to yourself, Mom. They may have to become wards of the state...I mean they're not yours in any sense, at least not the older two.

BEE
I won't hear of it. They're not "wards"...they're warm...little individual people! And they loved Danny so...in just that short time. When I think he could be...listening to us...it's out of the question.

Claudia decides to drop it...turns to Ian.

CLAUDIA
Where are you off to?

IAN
Moving job...muscles for dollars.

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED: 2

46

CLAUDIA

I go by Sid 'n' Ed's. I'll drop you
off.

Claudia gives Bee a kiss on the cheek.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)

Merry Christmas. Next year for sure.

BEE

Tell them grandma will be waiting...

(to Ian)

Are you seeing Cicely tonight...?

IAN

If she remembers what I look like.

CLAUDIA

Come on, muscles...

Claudia sort of absent-mindedly hands Bee the Dulcimer
doll...and she and Ian head out.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)

'Bye...

They leave. Bee moves back toward a chair, sits, looking
sadly at the worse-for-wear cloth doll figure. She looks
past the scant little artificial tree...toward the piano.
And she seems to hear...DANNY'S VOICE, in distant
echo...sitting at the piano...singing...

DANNY (V.O.)

(singing)

"The First Noel, the angels did
say...was to certain poor shepherds in
fields where they lay..."

47 EXT. BEDLOE HOME - AT CLAUDIA'S STATION WAGON

47

As Claudia and Ian arrive at the car. Before getting
in...Claudia leans on top of the car...staring across at
Ian who has just opened the door to get in. Ian knows his
sister's "Looks"...

IAN

What...?

CLAUDIA

You didn't say anything to Danny that
Christmas...did you?

*
*

His hesitation...his caught breath...his pain showing...is
enough of an answer for an older sister who knows him so
well. She tells him:

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)

Get in...

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED:

47

They get in...the station wagon moves away.

CUT TO:

48 EXT. VACANT HOUSE - WIDE - DAY

48

A "Sid 'n' Ed's Movers" truck is parked in front...three Movers carrying furniture and cartons into the newer house in a developing neighborhood. We see Ian toting a large carton inside.

49 INT. VACANT HOUSE - THE KITCHEN

49

Ian enters, carrying the carton...setting it down.

PAST IAN TO CARPENTER

As he straightens...he notices a carpenter, MR. BRANT, 40's, installing new cabinets. He steps forward to admire the work as a section of new cabinet slips into place.

IAN

Nice work...

Brant turns to Ian...then back to the cabinets, screwing a door in place...critiquing his own work...

BRANT

It's junk!

It surprises Ian...an odd comment from an "artisan?" Ian...always quick on the uptake...plays along.

IAN

Now that you mention it...

The reply catches Brant by surprise...he turns to get another look at this "kid." Then he turns back to the cabinet.

BRANT

It's like asking Michelangelo to carve bookends.

An added flicker of interest from Ian.

IAN

What does "Michelangelo" do when he's not making "Junk?"

Brant hesitates, then produces a bent business card from a jacket pocket, handing it to Ian, telling him with slight sarcasm but innate pride (and a dig at Ian's youth)...

BRANT

Creations for the ages...you might not "dig" them...

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED;

49

Ian looks at the card...reading it:

IAN
"B.B. Brant...Fine Custom
Furniture"...

He moves to hand the card back...but Brant turns his back on Ian..resuming work with:

BRANT
Keep it...I've got another one.

Ian is faintly amused by this gruff guy, pockets the card..."salutes" Brant's turned back...and exits.

MOVING WITH IAN

He moves back through the dining room area of the house where a DECORATOR, late 30's, and her ASSISTANT, early 20's, are hanging cheerful looking curtains at a window of the room. Ian glances to the young gal hanging the curtain...an image jolting him...he stops to stare!

IAN'S P.O.V. - THE ASSISTANT DECORATOR

From behind, as she fastens the curtain to its rod...the toss of her hair...her mannerisms...the little hunch of her shoulders at a "goof"...it hits him...this could be Lucy! A moment of that deja vu feeling when he's transported in time and space...and he hears:

DANNY (V.O.)
(distant echo)
Did you know she makes her own
curtains?...did you know she makes her
own curtains...?

The Decorator turns and gives him an annoyed look...the young Assistant turns...smiles. The resemblance to Lucy is not exact...but close enough to send him almost bolting from the room. The women exchange a look...men!

DISSOLVE TO;

50 INT. BOWLING ALLEY - A REAR AREA BEHIND LANES - MOVING
WITH IAN AND CICELY - NIGHT

50

Ian and Cicely stroll the space behind the alleys where some of their friends are bowling. They seem the same, but different. Time and events have come between them. Cicely takes a sip of her soda, telling Ian rather pedantically, in reference to the scene he just fled...

CICELY
It's called deja vu...

He reacts...a bit testy...

50 CONTINUED:

50

IAN

I know what it's called...they teach
Psych 101 at the cheaper colleges,
too!

She flinches at his reply...he eases off...

IAN (CONT'D)

Anyway...it was like she was standing
right there...

She tries to soften the moment.

CICELY

I think of her every once in a while.
And I wonder...why...three kids...
why!?

They stop, lean on a back rail to watch an alley of
bowling for a few beats.

PAST THEM TO ALLEY

It's as if she's waiting for a reply...something...!

CICELY (CONT'D)

I really liked her. A whole lot. I
mean...she had this sort of..."naive"
thing about her...but there was a real
tiger inside...she'd tangle with
anyone when it came to her kids...or
Danny...you could feel it.

Still no reaction from Ian who stares out onto the
action.

CICELY (CONT'D)

And then to go and do that. I think
about it and I wonder...why!? I mean,
what could have driven her to it?

(V.O.- echoing)

And I remember Danny telling how she
mailed that bowling ball...air
mail...air mail...!

IAN'S P.O.V. - SUBLIMINAL CUTS

51 CLOSE ON BOWLER AND BALL

51

A ball being picked from the return rack...becomes...

52 BOWLING BALL IN LUCY'S HANDS

52

in the post office...becoming:

- 53 A THROWN BALL 53
emitting a sound of BURNING RUBBER, ENGINE REVING...which becomes...
- 54 DANNY'S BLUE CHEVY 54
..speeding...and then...
- 55 A BOWLING BALL AGAIN 55
heading for the pins...and just as it strikes the pins...it becomes...
- 56 DANNY'S BLUE CHEVY 56
crashed into the tree
(END SUBLIMINAL CUTS)
- 57 ON IAN, CICELY 57
Ian whips around suddenly...and goes almost running from the area, heading for the exit...Cicely close behind...

CICELY
Ian...what...Ian...?
- 58 EXT. BOWLING ALLEY - THE PARKING LOT 58
They come rushing out into a light chilling rain...Cicely finally able to grab onto him...stopping him.

CICELY
What...what is it, Ian? What did I say?

IAN
(weakly)
I'm sorry Ciss...not you...it's me.

An O.S. MALE VOICE calls out from the bowling alley area:

MAN
Hey, Cicely...come on back in...we're going to Eddy's...

She looks trapped...at another time she could have clung onto him!

IAN
(releasing her)
Go ahead...Eddy's doesn't ring a bell with me.

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED:

58

CICELY
Just a coffee house...bad poetry.

IAN
Go ahead...

CICELY
You sure...?

He nods...making a last weak effort...

IAN
We're not having Christmas dinner this
year...will I see you before you go
back to school?

Her eyes meet his...they're both getting a bit wet in the
light rain. And her answer is not a "yes," it's only:

CICELY
Hope so...

She seems to sense this is some kind of significant
goodbye...and she almost slams into him with an impulsive
"last kiss," surprising him, then rebounding, grasping his
hand, pulling away, letting the hand slip from hers as she
turns and hurries back inside.

WIDEN

Ian stands in the parking lot...a HORN HONKS to move him
out of the way. Unheeding, he walks directly into the
path of the car and its headlights...the HONKING becoming
a steady BLARE...as he angles off just in time...the
picture of a man walking away into a different world.

CUT TO:

59 EXT. CITY STREET - MOVING WITH IAN - NIGHT

59

Ian pulls up his collar against the wintry drizzle.
Colored Christmas lights glow here and there. But Ian
can't seem to focus...staring blankly...aching with guilt.
He is just passing a series of darkened shabby
stores...only half noticing that one window glows with a
yellow light. A wide expanse of plate glass with "CHURCH
OF THE SECOND CHANCE" arching across it in block letters.
The inside of the place is shielded by a paper shade. The
window sign might as well say "BIG CHRISTMAS SALE" for all
Ian can tell as he walks by...except for one thing: A
soft chorus of harmonizing VOICES, singing sweetly...with
a single clear BARITONE VOICE overriding...sounding like
Danny...singing..."leaning, leaning...leaning on the
everlasting arms!" Ian stops...turns...walks back to the
storefront as if drawn by a magnet. The shade-obscured
window makes it impossible to satisfy his curiosity. He
enters.

60 INT. THE CHURCH - WIDE - NIGHT

60

Ian enters a warm, welcoming aura...his hair soaked, his jacket dampened. The SINGING is just concluding...Ian seeming to scan the small flock of some 20 people to single out the one sounding like Danny! He stands at the rear, unnoticed for the moment. There's a mystic dichotomy about the place. The "pews" are nothing but rows of folding chairs...yet the room has a mission-like sanctity to it. The minister...REV. EMMETT...late 30's...once an Episcopal divinity student...is at once a gentle-looking but charismatic figure...he is forceful yet soft spoken...almost priestly in his bearing...yet wearing a tweed sport coat. The ORGANIST playing softly on the beautifully tonal Lowry electronic someone has donated to the group...reprises the hymn they've been singing...as Rev. Emmett speaks at last:

REV. EMMETT

We have reached the point in our service when any person...long among us...or new tonight...is invited to step forward and ask for our prayers.

(beat)

No request is too great...and none too trivial in the eyes of God our Father.

CLOSE PAST IAN

He waits the few suspenseful beats...how does this work...can it be this simple? Finally, a gray-haired WOMAN MEMBER in her mid-forties stands...and begins hesitantly.

WOMAN MEMBER

You all know my son Chuckie was fighting in Vietnam.

Several nods as a few turn to look at her.

WOMAN MEMBER (CONT'D)

Well, now they tell me he's been killed.

AD-LIBBED mutterings of "Oh, no"... "Oh, dear..."

WOMAN MEMBER (CONT'D)

Monday night these two soldiers, all dressed up, come to tell me. They say he got killed jumping out of a plane. He was a paratrooper, you know. Chuckie was, what do you call, a fluke accident. He forgot to put his parachute on.

Ian blinks, takes a half step back. Faces look stunned.

60 CONTINUED:

60

WOMAN MEMBER

Chuckie had just jumped so often, he stopped thinking about it. So he comes up to the door where they jump out...the whole time making smart remarks...everybody laughing...and he jumps out into thin air. And the fellow behind him says...wait, you forgot your parachute...

Little SIGHS, MOANS of compassion.

WOMAN MEMBER

I'm just about sick with grief, I tell you. Pray for me to find some deliverance...please?

She sits down. Silence, except for the music, as Rev. Emmett, seemingly unphased by the outlandishness of this story, raises his arms, palms up, eyes closed...all heads bowed in prayer...an air of serenity filling the room. Finally:

REV. EMMETT

For our sister Lula...

CONGREGATION

(in unison)

Amen.

A glow comes to Ian's face. He feels something...release...relief...this is what he has been seeking. Was he meant to pass here...this night...this hour?

REV. EMMETT

Remember...this moment...you are in His presence...ask...and we will all speak to Him with our prayers...any need for healing...for understanding...no prayer is unworthy in the eyes of our Creator...

Ian scans the group. He can't imagine why no one else is taking advantage of this great release. The soft organ music begs to be spoken to...he aches to be relieved of his crushing guilt. He clears his throat...a few heads turn...strange eyes staring but friendly. He steps forward hesitantly...awkwardly.

IAN

I...I thought I heard my brother...in here...his voice...singing...like it was coming from in here...

More faces start to turn to him..gentle looks...

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED: 2

60

IAN (CONT'D)

It was like...maybe he wanted me to
come in...come in and ask you
to...pray for me...

He stares into willing, welcoming faces...hardly daring
the next step. But then...he confesses almost calmly:

IAN (CONT'D)

I caused my brother...to kill
himself.

The faces remain friendly, non-accusative...

IAN (CONT'D)

I lied to him about something. I told
him his wife was cheating on him. But
it turned out she wasn't...I found out
later, but he'd already...killed
himself...it might have been an
accident, but it was my words that did
it.

Their compassionate expressions enable him to continue:

IAN (CONT'D)

And then...his wife died of sleeping
pills...on purpose or not...it all
went back to what I said.

(beat)

I've wanted to die myself...but Danny
wouldn't want that...and...maybe
that's why I heard his voice coming
from in here...maybe he wanted you to
pray for me. If you would.

His eyes fasten on Rev. Emmett, who shows no shock or
alarm...merely raising his arms once more to signal his
flock to bow their heads. This time, as the organ
reprises the hymn, we hear the baritone VOICE:

BARITONE VOICE

softly singing)

"What a fellowship, what a joy divine,
Leaning on the everlasting arms..."

DISSOLVE TO:

61 INT. CHURCH - WIDE ON IAN, REV. EMMETT - NIGHT

61

Later. They sit alone in the quiet, empty room now...a
single overhead light dropping a pool of light on them.
They've been talking for some time. Ian has dried off
from the night rain and seems relaxed. Rev. Emmett has
draped his tweed jacket over the back of his folding
chair...listening intently to Ian.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

61

IAN

So...it looks as if my parents are going to have to raise the children. I don't know if my mom's up to it... or my dad either. I don't think they'll ever be the same after this. And my sister's busy with her own family...and I'm away at college most of the time...

(beat; deep breath)

So anyhow...that's why I asked for that prayer. And I honestly believe it might have worked. I mean...it's not like I got an answer in plain English, but...it's like...I'm forgiven...don't you think?

A long beat. Rev. Emmett gives Ian a benign look...like a blessing is coming. Instead:

REV. EMMETT

Oh, goodness, no.

Ian's mouth falls open.

IAN

I thought that was kind of the point. I thought God forgives everything.

REV. EMMETT

He does. But you can't just say, "I'm sorry, God." He helps with what you can't undo...but only after you've tried to undo it.

IAN

Like what...I mean what would it take?

REV. EMMETT

The children...souls in your hands. First you'll need to see to the children.

A beat. Ian becoming a bit suspicious.

IAN

Is this some kind of test?

REV. EMMETT

I think it's God's test. I believe God wants to know how far you'll go to undo the harm you've done.

Ian can't believe his ears.

IAN

You're saying God would want me to give up my education!!

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED: 2

61

REV. EMMETT

Yes, Ian, if that's what's required.

IAN

But that's crazy...I'd have to be crazy.

REV. EMMETT

(quoting Scripture)

"Let us not love in word, neither in tongue...but in deed and in truth."
First John three, eighteen.

IAN

I can't take on a bunch of kids! I'm nineteen years old! What kind of cockeyed religion is this?!

He stands as though ready to "flee." Rev. Emmett stands slowly...laying a hand on Ian's shoulder.

REV. EMMETT

It's the religion of atonement and complete forgiveness, Ian. It's the Religion of the Second Chance.

His beatific smile seems to put Ian at peace again.

REV. EMMETT (CONT'D)

Just as a point of interest...only a coincidence, I'm sure...but that particular voice that seemed to draw you in here tonight...it belongs to Brother Daniel. I don't make too much of that...but it's rather amazing, isn't it.

They start out together...Ian seeming to shed any last semblance of boyishness with each step.

CUT TO:

62 EXT. BRANT'S FURNITURE SHOP - CLOSE ON IAN AT ENTRY - NIGHT

62

An area of light business, manufacturing. Still raining...dark. Ian can see through the cloudy front door glass, lettered with the sign: "B.B. Brant...Fine Custom Furniture." Ian checks the bent business card in his pocket and bangs on the door, peering for any activity in the dimly lit rear of the shop...bangs again. A shadow moves inside...the door opens...and Brant appears. He gives Ian a scowl of non-recognition for interrupting him at his work. But Ian quickly flashes the bent business card in his hand. Brant remembers...and motions for Ian to enter. The door closes. HOLD for a beat...then:

63 INT. BRANT'S FURNITURE SHOP - MOVING WITH IAN, BRANT

63

They walk through a long, dimly lit aisle of truly elegant furniture in various stages of construction and finish. Tables, armoires, desks, cabinets. Brant watches Ian's reaction to the pieces...Ian's eyes wide with true admiration.

SHOT - REAR OF SHOP - NEAR WORK BENCH

They've come to the lighted area where Brant has been working on a large, hand-carved piece...his tools still lying there. Ian steps to the piece...touches it gently as one would a masterpiece...picks up one of the sculpting chisels...examining it. Finally, Brant issues his one caveat.

BRANT

I don't like dropouts.

Ian seems to think it's a fair statement, and he replies with his only qualification:

IAN

I want to learn to make things people won't throw away.

A long beat. It's the first time Brant has ever heard this definition of his work. He steps to the bench...looks at the carving...flicks away a curl of carved wood...thinking. He turns back to Ian, studying him. Then, with a grim look of a tutor with a long road ahead...he reaches out to shake Ian's hand.

CUT TO:

64 INT. BEDLOE HOME - THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

64

Ian, Bee and Doug. Ian has confronted his parents with his decision, and the eruption has begun. Bee, already in her robe for bed, almost sobs it out:

BEE

You're dropping out! I can't believe my ears!

IAN

I'm taking a leave of absence, till Daphne's in first grade...or kindergarten at least.

DOUG

(bewildered)

What's Daphne got to do with it?

IAN

I'm going to help Mom raise the kids.

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:

64

BEE

Me?! I'm not going to raise those children. We're looking for a guardian...some relative...an aunt, maybe. This is not your responsibility!

IAN

It is, Mom. It's my doing.

DOUG

What brought all this on anyway? This isn't like you, son.

IAN

(awkwardly)

It's the will of God...

BEE

Who?!

IAN

I ran into this church sort of place on York Road...

DOUG

You haven't fallen into the hands of some..cult?!

BEE

(crying it out)

How can you do this to me...how?!

IAN

I'm not doing anything to you, Mom. I'm doing something for myself...to be forgiven.

DOUG

Forgiven for what? You're nineteen years old, a fine, considerate upstanding human being! You've had a spat with Cicely right? Those things heal...

A long beat. Rev. Emmett told him he'd have to tell them:

IAN

I'm the one who caused Danny to die. He smashed into the tree because of me.

BEE

(an absurdity?)

It was an accident! Everyone knows that!

(CONTINUED)

IAN

Everyone but me. But whether it was...or not..I caused him to do it. You'd better know, because I can't keep it inside any longer.

Bee goes white, almost flinty.

IAN (CONT'D)

I told him Lucy wasn't faithful, that the baby wasn't his. That last night I babysat...when he'd been to the bachelor party.

(beat)

I'm sorry. I'm really sorry. I was wrong.

Bee grasps Danny's picture from the piano, clasping it to her breast...as though to shut Danny off from this!

BEE

Don't...stop it.

Her voice sounds weak, not commanding. Doug steps to her quickly, putting an arm around her...a bit alarmed for her health.

DOUG

Now now, honey. Easy...

(taking the picture)

Let's have that now...take it easy. What say to some hot chocolate, eh?

He gives her a comforting squeeze, then moves to set the picture back on the piano.

DOUG (CONT'D)

You know, Ian's got a point...if you want my opinion. You've been running yourself ragged with those kids.

(returning to her)

You're the one who needs a little "leave of absence," I think. Come on getting late. We'll talk about it.

He starts to lead her out of the room...as she turns to Ian sadly, still a motherly concern in her voice:

BEE

Oh, Ian...Ian.

Ian stands alone. It's done. He feels suddenly isolated, inadequate...a now-what look. And the now-what question is answered by a soft but distinguishable CRY from upstairs...Daphne crying? Ian heads up.

65 INT. IAN'S ROOM

65

Where Daphne's crib has been placed since he's in school. Ian enters...Daphne sobbing quietly, a little protest because of a wet diaper. Ian turns on his little desk lamp, moves to the crib. A couple of beats of uncertainty...and Agatha and Thomas come padding into the room from their little bedroom next door. They look at Ian. Daphne raises her pitch a couple of deciples.

AGATHA

She ain't going to stop crying until
you change her.

Ian gives the 7-year-old Agatha a look. The job of "Uncle Ian, guardian and tutor" begins as he corrects her:

IAN

She isn't going to stop crying until I
change her.

Four-year-old Thomas yawns and tells Ian:

THOMAS

That's what she just told you.

And the schooling of "Ian Bedloe, greenhorn uncle" seems to be just starting. He admits to them:

IAN

Guess I've got a lot to learn.

Agatha confident, career-bound herself, cuts him a little slack.

AGATHA

That's okay.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

A66 EXT. BEDLOE HOME - WIDE - DAY

A66

To establish.

B66 INT. BEDLOE HOME - LIVING ROOM - CLOSE ON BEE - DAY

B66

Bee stands at the old upright piano, inserting a new photo in a frame. She's a little more bent, moving slower, flexing her fingers occasionally from arthritis. It's about four years later.

INSERT - THE PHOTO

Agatha, Thomas and Daphne at their present ages...Agatha, 11, Thomas, 10, and Daphne, 5.

BACK TO SCENE

As she places the photo atop the piano, next to a framed photo of Lucy and Danny. This addition to the "archives" sort of signifies that the kids are here to stay. Bee now moves a recent picture of Ian, now 23, closer to the others. As we move CLOSER ON IAN'S PHOTO...

CUT TO:

56 EXT, FENCED YARD - CLOSE ON SIGN - DAY

56

A small sign hangs near the gate of this residential yard, reading: "CHURCH OF THE SECOND CHANCE - SUMMER CAMP." As we WIDEN ON SCENE, we see that the "camp" is really a fenced back yard and home of one of the church members, with a portable pool, swings and slide for playtime, and a converted basement for Bible lessons.

ANOTHER ANGLE - PAST IAN

He's there to pick up the kids, recognizable from the photo we just saw. He leans against the rear of his station wagon parked near the yard gate on the street. He wears his work clothes...faded jeans, t-shirt, a white carpenter's cap turned backward. he pets the family dog, Beastie, who sits in the rear, looking out the tailgate window, almost as though she's trying to pick up familiar voices from inside the "camp" area...clear young VOICES singing, "Jesus loves me, yes, I know...'cause the Bible tells me so." (NOTE: This is the first sizeable time lapse, requiring a second casting for the kids, at the ages indicated above.) Suddenly he comes to the alert as he spots a gal jogger approaching on the street. Is it?...Yes, it is! It's Cicely! A beat of disbelief and pure pleasure as he calls out to her:

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED:

66

IAN
Ciss? Hey, Ciss!

She reacts, slowing, then beaming as she jogs across to him. She's clad in smart shorts, t-shirt, looking like a chic young woman, shed of any hint of "girlishness" now. She races into him, and they hug in a sort of automatic embrace of old friends meeting after a long while. But quickly breaking...still holding hands, quick body language of "pals," not lovers.

*
*
*

CICELY
(happily)
I don't believe this!

IAN
What are you doing way out here?

CICELY
Oh, I run off in all directions.
Daily routine, stay in shape.

*

Ian gives her a quick scan..and offers an easy compliment.

IAN
You get in any better "shape," you'll be a traffic hazard.

CICELY
How nice...

Ian feels awkwardly "casual" with his cap on backwards, perhaps reversing it. It's a movement she notices. and he instantly seems to wish he hadn't done it.

ANOTHER ANGLE - PAST THEM TO GATE

Just as Rev. Emmett exits the gate, seeming pleased to see Ian with an attractive friend. Ian quickly makes introductions.

IAN
Cicely Brown...Reverend Emmett.
elaborating on Cicely
Cicely was the scourge of my teenage years.

REV. EMMETT
(quickly, friendly)
I'm sure it was just the opposite.
(to Cicely)
Very pleased...

CICELY
Thank you.
(kidding Ian)
Someone else has got your number, eh?

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: 2

66

Just then, the SINGING inside stops, and the young voices in the yard erupt into SHOUTS of freedom. Rev. Emmett steps away from the gate for safety...moving away with:

REV. EMMETT
Prepare for the prison break...Nice
meeting you.

And the kids come charging out...shouting, scampering in all directions...some to a couple of waiting cars beyond. Agatha, Thomas and Daphne come darting towards Ian...and slow to a halt at the sight of Cicely whom they haven't seen in a couple of years. A beat as they size her up. These kids have been scouting a mate for Ian for some time now. And their reactions are clear indications of their growing individual personalities. Cicely faces them, smiling, testing her memory.

IAN
(to kids)
Guys...you remember Cicely...

CICELY
Let's see...you're Agatha, right?

Agatha...serious, studious, developing a mind of her own, offers only a polite response as she studies Cicely.

AGATHA
Hi.

CICELY
to Thomas:
And you're Thomas...You don't remember
me maybe...

Thomas, rapidly becoming the popular socializer and charmer, smiles, telling Cicely:

THOMAS
Sure. I always thought you looked
like a movie star.
(beaming)
I always told Uncle Ian.

IAN
(interrupting)
Okay, okay, Thomas.
(to Cicely)
On guard. These three have been
trying to recruit a wife for me since
I came of age.

Cicely seems to brush by this quickly, only a little glimmer of a smile as she turns now to Daphne. Before she can stumble trying to remember the name, Daphne..now an outspoken, self-reliant character...announces:

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: 3

66

DAPHNE

I'm Daphne. I'm five.

Cicely grins.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: 4

66

CICELY

And then some, I'd say...

(beat)

I remember when Ian used to baby-sit
for you guys...not babies anymore.The moment is charged with a mood of happy expectation.
Will Ian and Cicely get together?

IAN

Hop in. We'll give you a ride home. *

She looks hesitant...the kids look eager...and Beastie
lets out a WOOF from the rear of the station wagon, Cicely
recognizing him.

CICELY

Beastie?...All right, if you say
so...Good boy.Ian opens the passenger door for Cicely as the kids
scramble for the back seat where they can study Ian and
Cicely in the front seat. *

CUT TO:

67 EXT. STREET - MOVING WITH THEM IN CAR - DAY

67

The kids sit like spectators, taking it all in. Ian takes
off his cap finally...more "handsome" without it maybe...
combing his hair back with his fingers. A bit of it
doesn't "fall" just right, and Daphne reaches forward to
pat it down. Cicely turns to hand them a candy bar she's
carrying.

CICELY

If I'm going to loaf instead of run, I
won't need my candy bar. Anybody? -

THOMAS

pleasantly declining:
Rev. Emmett says sugar is a
stimulant.

AGATHA

Nuts!

Daphne reaches forward to take it.

DAPHNE

I'll take it.

From force of habit...Ian asks the kids...

IAN

Agatha...what was the Bible verse
today?

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

67

But Thomas jumps in to answer for her.

THOMAS

"As the hart panteth after the water
brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee,
O God."

AGATHA

I believe he was asking me!

IAN

Okay, Agatha, your turn. What did you
come away from camp with today?

Agatha, the scientist, is not a great camp devotee.

AGATHA

Germs, probably. I think the pool is
full of germs.

IAN

(to Cicely)

Agatha is going to be a doctor.

CICELY

I think that's great.

AGATHA

It doesn't take a doctor to know what
a bunch of kids do in a pool.

IAN

Okay, that'll do.

(beat. to Cicely)

Golly, it's good to see you.

CICELY

Nice surprise...totally.

IAN

Out of college, eh?

CICELY

Over a year...thank God!

She quickly realizes the irreverence is out of place...
turning to the kids...

CICELY (CONT'D)

Sorry.

But the little slip only emphasizes the big gulf between
them now...far greater than Ian saying "golly" and Cicely
saying "God."

CICELY (CONT'D)

I hear you're a furniture builder
now...right?

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: 2

67

The kids exchange a proud glance...aha...is she impressed?

IAN

I'm learning. B.B. Brant...a real artisan. We work now almost exclusively for the finer architects and interior designers. Farthest thing from my mind...back when. Now it seems like it was something I was born to do.

He's said it with the hope it might light a small spark with her. The kids wait for her reaction. But she says only:

CICELY

I'm happy for you. Really.

There's not a hint of "Happy for us" in her voice. A few beats of silence...everyone in the car senses this. Even Cicely's reaction seems to say she's said it with a purpose. But Ian makes another effort to connect:

IAN

It's Claudia's birthday. We're having a little party tonight. Can you come?
I know mom would love to see you.

She delays the bad news.

CICELY

How is your mom?

IAN

Not so good. She needs a change of scenery. You'd be just the ticket.

CICELY

(finally)

I can't, Ian. I'm meeting Richard.

A long beat before Ian inquires...

IAN

Richard...is he your latest?

She looks at him, knowing she's going to hurt him.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: 3

67

CICELY
He's my last, hopefully. We're being
married in June.

A68 EXT. CICELY'S HOUSE - DAY

A68 .

Silence. It's over. They've arrived at Cicely's house
now...Ian pulling over, parking. He gives her a sincere,
fond look.

IAN
The best, Ciss...I mean it.

CICELY
I know you do. He's an engineer. I
think you'd approve.

IAN
Most likely.

Cicely seems not to dare saying more...giving Ian a quick
kiss on the cheek...jumping out, squelching any "goodbye"
too hard to say without memories flooding over them. She
hurries to the house without looking back.

CLOSE ON IAN

He puts his cap back on. His heart aches with the sight
of her, the scent of her...on her way to someone else.

ANOTHER ANGLE - FAST IAN TO KIDS

Daphne is the one to spot his distress, and with the move
of an acrobat she scrambles over the seat back and into
the front seat next to Ian.

DAPHNE
I think I'll sit up front.

Ian doesn't object...driving off. He looks down at her to
see her reassuring smile, and gives her a thank you grin,
tousling her hair.

DISSOLVE TO:

68 INT. BRANT FURNITURE SHOP - CLOSE ON IAN - DAY

68

It's a Saturday, perhaps a couple of months later. The
shop area is empty except for Ian who is putting the
finishing touches on an absolutely beautiful little end
table.

WIDEN

As we see Brant appear from his rear office, coming to Ian

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED:

68

as he finishes administering the final wax coat. Brant steps to the piece, rubs a finger along a fine carved embellishment...lifts the small table to examine the impeccable construction, turns it, sets it back down. A beat...and he finally tells Ian with almost paternal pride:

BRANT

Well, you've finally done it, Ian.
You're making things nobody's going to
throw away.

IAN

Thanks. ,

But it puzzles Brant. He knows part of the story.

BRANT

Let me see...You made it as a wedding
present for the girl you once thought
you'd marry yourself. You want her to
suffer a little every time she looks
at it...right?

IAN

No. Rev. Emmett said it would help me
let her go, make me feel good...by
letting her know I wish her well and
think her deserving of fine things.

Brant ponders it a beat...proud of his protege.

BRANT

Too bad what you have isn't catching.

He returns to his office. Ian resumes polishing.

CUT TO:

69 INT. FOREIGNERS' HOUSE - A BEDROOM - DAY

69 *

In contrast, a slightly comic sight of "genius" in action. Doug sits on the floor..his long legs straddling a TV set...three "foreign faces" staring at him closeup. (New residents occupy the house now...A Chinese intern, PHIL, a Mideast grad student, MIKE, and an Indonesian doctor, SAM.) Doug is explaining the mystery of hooking up three television sets to receive a signal from a single antenna.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*

PHIL

(Chinese intern)
Three televisions! From one wire...

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED:

69

DOUG
(explaining the lead-in)
A lead-in...from the roof.

*

MIKE
(Mideast grad student)
It's a miracle...

*

Doug holds up the little three-way device he's hooking up
now.

*

*

DOUG
It's called a "splitter."

PHIL
A spitter.

MIKE
(correcting him)
Splitter.

*

*

PHIL
Splitter.
(beat; beaming to Doug)
Genius!

SAM
Genius!

MIKE
Genius!

Doug gets true delight out of befriending and helping
these guys.

DOUG
Who am I to argue?

They laugh.

DISSOLVE TO:

70 INT. BEDLOE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

70

Bee and Doug alone. And a look of loneliness. Bee lies
on the couch, propped up against pillows, looking tired,
dejected. A TV mutters away only half heard at the corner
of the room. Doug sits in his overstuffed chair,
reading...Beastie asleep at his feet. Bee scans the
room...it's "averageness" and clutter seeming to oppress
her suddenly. She says...like out of nowhere:

BEE
When did we become so...second fiddle,
Doug?

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

70

DOUG
(looking up)
What?

BEE
Danny gone...Claudia in a world of her own...Ian a whole different person almost...a house full of other people's children. We used to be so special, I thought. We've turned so...makeshift...so second-string.

DOUG
Of course we're special...

BEE
I don't feel it. We used to look forward to your retiring. Now look...You spend half the time in the basement fixing things we should probably throw away.

DOUG
Other people's children have been our way of life, Sweetie...both teachers. Even that constant stream of "foreigners" across the street in Number 9...ever think of how many Asian and Middle Eastern grad students and doctors of all kinds we've left the "Bedloe imprint" on...eh?

Just then, Agatha marches into the room with Bee's pills and a cup of hot chocolate...announcing as she reads it from the pill bottle:

AGATHA
You forgot your pills...Take two before bedtime with water. I figure hot chocolate won't hurt you.

She hands the pills and hot chocolate to Bee.

BEE
Thank you, dear.

Doug stands, ready to take the dog out.

DOUG
Come on, Beastie...you want to take me for a little walk before we turn in?

Beastie gets up slowly. Agatha steps to give him a pat. *

DOUG (CONT'D)
Atta boy...let's go. *

He leaves with Beastie following. When they've left:

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED: 2

70

AGATHA

I think you're special, Grandma Bee.

BEE

Pay no attention to my rambling,
Agatha.

(really SEEING her)

Look at you, growing so fast. You're
a good girl and I'm happy to have you
here. You'll be gone much too soon.
I should be thankful, really. My own
grown up or gone. Maybe God sent me
"replacements."

Agatha offers Bee an alternative.

AGATHA

Or maybe He just played a nasty trick
on you. You think He does that?

BEE

I don't know. But I know I'd miss you
if you weren't here.

Agatha gives the disorder of the place a look. Several
days of newspapers stacked up..wilted flowers...a jacket
not hung up, etc.

AGATHA

I wish I knew how to keep house
better. But I really don't like to.

Bee relaxes takes a deep breath.

BEE

Keep a secret? Neither do I.

They share a little smile of a shared confidence.

DISSOLVE TO:

~1 END. CITY STREET - MOVING WITH IAN, THE KIDS, MRS. JORDAN ~1
- DAY

It's a sunny Sunday. They're heading for church on foot,
Ian and Mrs. Jordan leading, the kids traipsing behind.
Mrs. Jordan sets the pace...lively...but lets out a little
cough.

IAN

I should have driven, Jordy. You're
just getting over a cold. I didn't
think.

MRS. JORDAN

(feisty)

You just worry about keep up! I'm not
going to die walking to church!

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED:

71

AGATHA (11)
(the heretic)
There's no guarantee of that!

IAN
(fending her off)
Don't start...

That does it. Agatha stops in her tracks...adamant!

AGATHA
Okay, I won't! I'm not going!

Ian pauses, turns with Mrs. Jordan. He's faced this before.

DAPHNE
Oh boy, not again.

IAN
(to Agatha)
Is this the time or place,
Agatha...really?

AGATHA
It's hypocritical. I'm not a
believer!

THOMAS
Speech...speech!

IAN
All right, Thomas.
(back to Agatha)
I've told you, you can go to Grandma
and Grandpa's church if you prefer...
If you prefer.

But she's firm...her feet planted.

AGATHA
I keep saying it and you keep not
hearing me. I-am-not-a-believer!
Not! Not!

Ian appears tolerant, instructive, rather than critical.

IAN
There's a great deal in the Bible
that's beyond our understanding,
Agatha.

AGATHA
Beyond yours maybe. What about the
fig tree...that winds up cursed to die
just because it couldn't grow figs out
of season? Or Noah's Ark...how come
God wouldn't send a few sample rains
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED: 2

71

AGATHA (CONT'D)
on ahead so sinners could mend their
ways before drowning them all!

Ian can see this is going nowhere. He tells her:

IAN
You're right.

It's like she hasn't heard him.

AGATHA
It's very bad manners to force your
own religion on other people.
Shoot...it's probably
unconstitutional.

IAN
I said you're right. You can leave.
I shouldn't force you.

She looks a little stunned, like this is too easy.

IAN (CONT'D)
Go on back. It's okay. Be a doctor.
I just hope none of your patients are
ever caught praying to get well.

She stands there as they turn and walk off, leaving her.

CUT TO;

72 OMITTED

72

73 EXT. BEDLOE HOME - WIDE - NIGHT

73

Early morning, pre-dawn. Still dark. A light goes on in
the back kitchen area. We see Doug enter.

*

74 INT. BEDLOE KITCHEN - NIGHT

74

Doug enters, still in pajamas and robe...an early riser up
to make his morning coffee while the rest of the house
sleeps.

MOVING WITH HIM

As he first steps onto the back service porch to let
Beastie out in the back yard from his bed...whispering
hoarsely...

*

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED:

74

DOUG
Okay, Beastie...time to get up, boy.
(no response)
Beastie?

*

Doug stands motionless for a moment...long realizing there would be a morning like this.

DOUG (CONT'D)
(almost prayerfully)
Oh no...

He kneels by the dog bed, puts a hand on the lifeless old dog.

DOUG (CONT'D)
Oh my. Dear old friend..

75 INT. IAN'S BEDROOM

75

Doug enters quietly...wakens Ian carefully,..visibly shaken.

DOUG
Ian...son?

Ian awakes easily...turning to his father.

DOUG (CONT'D)
I need your help...Beastie's dead.

CUT TO:

76 EXT. BEDLOE BACK YARD - CLOSE ON IAN, DOUG - NIGHT

76

Still dark with only the distant sound of light early morning traffic starting. Ian is patting down the last earth over a small grave at the rear of their small flower garden. We hear light sobs from Doug...the loss of a true friend.

ANOTHER ANGLE

As Daphne appears...stepping to them in her robe and bare feet, wondering. She seems to realize what's going on. They accept her presence without rebuke. She slips her hand into "Grandpa Doug's"...and Ian offers a short prayer:

IAN
Thank you God for giving us Beastie.
He gave us love without conditions...
and made us better for the warm
feelings he stirred in us. We give
him back into your keeping...Amen.

*

*

*

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED:

76

It's another little scene of surrender and role reversal. Doug now the helpless child figure, Ian and even Daphne taking charge to offer comfort. Daphne squeezes Doug's hand...her voice breaking.

DAPHNE

It's okay, grandpa...I'm crying, too.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

A77 INT. BEDLOE HOME - ANGLE ON PHOTOS - DAY

A77

Rearranged again on the old upright piano, as we move CLOSE ON NEWER PHOTO, this one of Ian and the kids. Ian now in his 30's, Agatha in the cap and gown of a med school graduate, Thomas in his early 20's and Daphne in her late teens.

CUT TO:

77 EXT. CITY STREET - WHOLESALE AREA - MOVING WITH IAN IN VAN - DAY

77

Ian, now 36, a touch of gray at the temples, drives a new '85 van or pickup with the furniture company ID on the side: "B.B. BRANT...CUSTOM WOOD FURNISHINGS." It's an area of wholesale shops, warehousing...not exactly rough by day but iffy by night maybe. Ian pulls up to a large florist outlet.. "Wholesale-Retail Flowers"...parks behind a shabby convertible.

ON IAN

He gets out, eyeing the convertible as though he knows who it belongs to. The FLORIST, a middle-aged guy, steps out front now, arranging some stuff, culling wilted stems. Ian greets him.

IAN

Hi, Louis...How's business?

The Florist holds up a withered stem.

FLORIST

Perishable. Why did I get into this business?

IAN

It smelled good.

FLORIST

(likes Ian)

Right.

IAN

Is Daphne still here?

FLORIST

(a beat; to convertible))

Yes and no...

Ian glances at the battered car, gets the drift.

IAN

Right.

He moves inside.

78 INT. FLORIST SHOP - MOVING WITH IAN

78

He moves toward the rear of the shop,,,not meaning to "trap" anybody, just to be on his way...he's a busy man. Back among sorting tables and flowers, he can spot Daphne, now 19, nuzzling and fending off...and nuzzling again...a guy her age, GIDEON. He's long-haired, sloppy, tattooed...dashing to young maidens, less so to parents and uncles. Ian intentionally knocks over a wicker basket, making a noise to pick it up...to announce his entrance. Gideon spots him, gives Daphne a couple of provocative parting kisses to show his daring...but detours around Ian to dart out a side door. Ian walks closer to Daphne.

ON THE PAIR

He pretends nothing happened.

IAN

Ready, Daph? Got to get back to the shop.

She reaches to grab her tote bag.

DAPHNE

Sure. Gideon could have driven me.

We can hear the old mufferless convertible start with a ROAR outside...and pull away.

IAN

Must have missed it...I didn't hear him offer. Sorry if I broke up something.

She gives him a friendly jab in the ribs.

DAPHNE

You don't look sorry..

IAN

(a smile)
Neither do you.

They head out.

CUT TO:

79 EXT. STREET - MOVING WITH IAN AND DAPHNE IN VAN - DAY

79

They drive slowly through the area. Ian reminds her:

IAN

I told you, Daph...learn to drive and I'll buy you a car.

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED:

79

DAPHNE
I'd rather walk.

He glances to the scruffy area.

IAN
I don't like you walking through the
rough parts of town.

DAPHNE
Live on the edge, I say. I can outrun
anyone down here.

A beat...Ian glancing at her.

IAN
Are you serious about Gideon back
there?

DAPHNE
(a sigh)
Only in short spurts. I think the
record was four minutes, ten seconds.

IAN
You keep trying to shock me.

She gives him a big warm grin.

DAPHNE
I really enjoy these little chats,
don't you?

He grins back.

IAN
More than you do, I'm sure.

She gets a little serious now.

DAPHNE
Ian, you think I'm some kind of ninny
who wants to do right but keeps
messing up, right? Wrong! What you
don't see is...I goof on purpose. I'm
not like you...King Careful, Mr.
Look-Both-Ways..."Saint Maybe!" Mess
up, I say. Fall flat on your
face...so what. Use all the life
you've got.

He gives her an understanding glance.

IAN
You sure know how to make a guy feel
like "old uncle grump."

She returns a sassy smirk, then whacks the dash with her
open hand...telling him:

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED: 2

79

DAPHNE

Step on it a little...the pedestrians
are passing you!

IAN

I'm only thinking of your future,
Daph. Beyond the next four minutes,
ten seconds, I mean. Look at
Agatha...a doctor in Los Angeles..and
you haven't planned beyond the
weekend.

*

Daphne looks amused rather than penitent.

DAPHNE

Dear "Doctor Agatha." She was seven
when I was born. Looking back, I'm
surprised she didn't deliver me!

CUT TO:

80 INT. CALIFORNIA HOSPITAL - A CORRIDOR - MOVING WITH AGATHA 80
- DAY

Agatha, now 28, walks the corridor of a modern LA hospital
wearing the white coat and a serious look. A P.A.
announcement catches her attention:

P.A. VOICE

Doctor Dean...Doctor Agatha Dean...
please call Cardiology...

She steps to a phone picks it up.

CLOSE ON AGATHA

AGATHA

(to phone)

Doctor Dean...Yes, please...

(beat, waiting)

Hello...Ian? What?...Grandma?...No:

When?...Who's the surgeon?...Doctor

Ross?...I'll catch the first plane I
can...Love you.

she hangs up

Oh please, God...let me be there...

Just an instant when she realizes what she's done.
Prayed.

DISSOLVE TO:

81 OMITTED

81

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED:

81

DISSOLVE TO:

82 INT HOSPITAL ROOM - ICU - DAY

82

Bee is out of recovery...hooked to a monitor, nasal oxygen assist... but alert and gaining color. Doug and Agatha stand at one side of the bed, the Surgeon, DOCTOR ROSS on the other, making a note, dressed in his street clothes now. A mood of relief, success, in the room.

*

BEE
(weakly)
Always wanted...a...doctor in the family.

Doug gives Agatha a squeeze...speechless really.

AGATHA
All I did was hold your hand. Doctor Ross did the fancy work. He was kind enough to let me observe.

*

*

DOCTOR ROSS
The hand-holding did the trick.
(to the monitor)
Look at that picture...nice?

Bee glances up weakly at the monitor.

BEE
That the only station we can get?

The Doctor gives her a pat.

DOCTOR ROSS
See you tomorrow...Same time, same station.

Then, to Agatha as he exits:

DOCTOR ROSS
Be glad to go over my notes with you, Doctor.

AGATHA
Thanks...I'd appreciate that.

DISSOLVE TO:

83 INT BEDLOE HOME - THE KITCHEN - NIGHT

83

The gathering place, within reach of the coffee maker. Doug is still at the hospital, but the kids are all here...including Thomas, who is now 22, and a computer

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED:

83

engineer who has flown in from New York. The scene of years and years of discussions, arguments...great odors from the ovens. But it doesn't look "presentable" anymore...old cartons stacked, piles of newspapers in a corner, laundry heaped on the washer just through the door. Agatha, the most antiseptic, is the first to protest:

AGATHA

This place is a mess! I can't believe it. It's overflowing with junk from attic to basement! Doesn't anyone throw anything away around here anymore?

THOMAS

Looks fine to me.

DAPHNE

I've seen your New York apartment, Thomas. It looks like hurricane Lucille.

AGATHA

I wouldn't be surprised to see you're saving empty cereal boxes!

CLAUDIA

I've tried to pitch in, but it's not enough.

AGATHA

It's not your job, Claudie. You've got your own army to worry about.

THOMAS

Don't they have services that do that sort of thing? You see ads for those "closet organizers."

DAPHNE

You're the genius computer designer. Can't you make one that sorts junk?

THOMAS

"Junk in, junk out." I'll work on it.

AGATHA

"Closet organizing" won't do it. We're talking about "terminal junkitis."

IAN

Don't you think we should ask Mom and Dad first?

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED: 2

83

CLAUDIA

Dad's workshop is neat as a pin,
always.

(beat)

But I've heard mom say a hundred
times, "I wish I had the nerve to
throw away everything under size
fourteen!"

AGATHA

There must be some kind of cleaning
service that could sort it out for us.
I hate to see Grandma come home to
this.

DAPHNE

There's the "Clutter Counselor..."

AGATHA

Be serious, Daph...

DAPHNE

Rita the Clutter Counselor. She goes
with this guy I know, Nick Bascomb.

THOMAS

Now there's a recommendation!

DAPHNE

I didn't say she was chairman of the
ladies' morality league. She makes
her living sorting other people's
belongings,, ,hauling stuff away,
putting things in order.

AGATHA

Hire her!

IAN

Slow down a little...

AGATHA

And while she's at it, have her assign
someone to give Ian a haircut. Ian,
look at you!

DAPHNE

I cut Ian's hair, thank you very
much.

Agatha gives her young sister a little shoulder hug.

AGATHA

You're really bad...I love you. What
did you say this clutter master's name
was?

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED: 3

83

 DAPHNE
 (correcting her)
 "Clutter Counselor." Her name is Rita
 diCarlo...

DISSOLVE TO:

84 INT. BEDLOE HOME - UPSTAIRS - MOVING WITH RITA AND DAPHNE
- DAY

84

RITA diCARLO, 30, is tallish, not unattractive, but a bit
forbidding in boots and leathers, looking like a Harley
fan as she marches like a storm trooper through the
upstairs rooms and hallway...Daphne following. Rita jots
on her clipboard as she moves, announcing finally:

 RITA
 I sort everything into three piles...
 keep, discard, and query. I "query"
 as little as possible.

85 INT. ANOTHER ROOM

85

 RITA
 I've got my own truck and two guys who
 bag and tote.

86 INT. HALLWAY TOWARD THE STAIRS

86

As they start down.

 RITA (CONT'D)
 If I start tomorrow morning, I could
 be done by late Thursday.

They reach the bottom of the stair. Daphne catches her
breath. Rita gives her a questioning look.

*

 DAPHNE
 Explain to me the difference between
 "discard" and "query."

No problem. Rita steps to the coffee table, picks up a
magazine.

 RITA
 A two-year-old copy of a sporting
 magazine is a "discard"...like one
 green sock, sixty paper shopping bags
 you've saved because they have little
 cord handles, a plastic toy truck with
 three wheels...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She steps and picks up a souvenir pillow from a chair.

RITA (CONT'D)
A souvenir pillow from the New York
World's Fair is a "query," but just
barely.

Daphne seems to find no real objections so far...but
hedges.

DAPHNE
Okay. It's a go, I guess.
(beat)
First I'd better break the news to my
grandma. She's in the hospital
recouping from a heart operation. I
don't want to send her back.

Rita tosses the pillow back on the couch, gives Daphne her
first smile...surprisingly warm.

RITA
Tell her I've never lost a grandma
yet.

CUT TO:

87 INT. HOSPITAL - A CORRIDOR - MOVING WITH BEE, DAPHNE - 87
DAY

Bee walks slowly on doctor's orders to exercise, Daphne
with her.

BEE
What did you say she said when she
looked in my closet?

Daphne fears she may have invaded Bee's privacy too far.

DAPHNE
Well...she didn't exactly nose around
in it. Just a glance, sort of.

BEE
She said she could tell by what I'd
been wearing that two thirds of the
stuff was either the wrong size or
twenty years out of date! Right?

DAPHNE
It's sort of her manner, Grandma...

BEE
She's heaven-sent!!

DAPHNE
(surprised)
I wouldn't go that far.

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED:

87

BEE
(spirited)
Tell her to start throwing! I'm
feeling better by the minute..

DISSOLVE TO;

88 INT. BEDLOE HOME - AN UPSTAIRS SPARE BEDROOM - DAY

88

A beefy FIRST CLUTTER COUNSELOR, 30's, is throwing junk in a plastic trash bag which is held open by a tubular framework (pros at work). He wears a lettered t-shirt, "Clutter Counselor," and wastes no time discarding broken toys, crumpled plastic balls, tattered towels. A beat...and Rita enters, carrying another armload of clothes, dumping for him to include. He unhooks the plastic bag, knots the corners together, removes it and inserts another as a SECOND CLUTTER COUNSELOR, 50 but sinewy, enters to take the full bag away. Rita checks her watch.

RITA
Okay, last one. We'll finish
tomorrow.

They nod...the Second Clutter Counselor hoisting the bag to carry down, his partner starting to stuff the last bag.

89 EXT. BEDLOE HOME - CLOSE ON REAR STEPS - DAY

89

Starting to get dark outside. The Second Clutter Counselor exits, lugging the bulging bag, and we WIDEN to see him march to the end of a lineup of probably 20 full bags of junk, waiting to be hauled away! He sits for a beat on one of the bags, and his partner exits, bringing the last bag to the lineup.

LONG FAST LINEUP OF BAGS

The guys say something MOS...and head around the house past the garage area to leave.

DISSOLVE TO:

90 INT. KITCHEN - ANGLE ON TABLE - EVENING

90

Daphne is pouring coffee...Rita relaxing, seeming to enjoy the break. As she pours a refill for Rita...

DAPHNE
The house feels lighter...

RITA
It's supposed to. Be honest...have
you really missed anything?

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED:

90

DAPHNE

Nope. Of course, I don't own a lot of priceless collectibles...

ANOTHER ANGLE - TOWARD IAN

RITA

People's lives are full of junk...

She's said it just as Ian enters from the front from work, carrying a heavy, foot-square cardboard box...sort of caught by the comment. Rita turns to him. Daphne makes the introductions.

DAPHNE

This is Rita diCarlo...my uncle Ian. Rita's the one who's here to organize us.

IAN

(pleasantly)

Oh, yes...almost forgot we were going to be organized.

He sets the open box on the table. It's full of exquisite antique ceramic tiles! Moving to pour himself a cup of coffee.

IAN (CONT'D)

How do you do that?

She glances into the tile box.

RITA

(confident)

Well, for instance...do you have a specific bathroom in mind that's in need of these tiles within the next ten days?

He sits down with them to have coffee.

IAN

Of course not.

RITA

Then I'd suggest you walk them straight out the back door to the trash can. This is what I have to deal with all the time.

Ian bristles a bit, unlike him really. He gives her a look...taking a tile from the box to show her.

IAN

These are century-old handmade tiles from Spain! We're replacing an antique mantel at a house in Fells

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED: 2

90

IAN (CONT'D)

Point, and these were just being thrown out.

RITA

That's the point...thrown out!

IAN

No, the point is...nobody in the world makes tiles anymore just like this. Look at the design...like a kaleidoscope. You can almost see it move, see? I'm going to use them in a table top, walnut if I can find the right grain.

(holding it to the light)
These tiles will be around to delight the eye another hundred years...long after you and I are dead and buried.

He hands her the tile suddenly.

IAN (CONT'D)

Here...take it.

(she takes it)

Feel anything? Like it's still warm from the kiln, maybe? A hundred years old and still warm. That's the magic of artwork like that. It has a life of its own.

He stands...taking a last gulp of coffee.

IAN (CONT'D)

Put it back in the box when you're through.

He walks out the back door to the rear yard area...leaving Rita holding the tile. Daphne, a bit puzzled, watches as Rita seems unable to let go of the tile. She reaches to take it from her "apologizing."

DAPHNE

Here, I'll take it. That's uncle Ian for you. He's a little different...not your fun, devil-may-care Nick Bascomb...more coffee?

(pouring it)

What uncle Ian needs is a good woman. We're waiting for him to pop the question to Clara...nice, pretty gal in the church he goes to. I don't know how long they can sit side-by-side before something happens...if you know what I mean.

The phone RINGS, Daphne jumping to get it. Rita stands also.

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED: 3

90

RITA
I'll see my way out. Thanks for the
coffee.

91 INT. LIVING ROOM - MOVING WITH RITA

91

She enters the living room on her way out, stopping for a beat at the "archive corner" of photos. It's still a "clutter" of sorts, but sacrosanct. Just then...Doug enters from the front door...seeing her standing there.

DOUG
Well...still here, eh? You put in the
hours, don't you.

RITA
Hi.

DOUG
(to the photos)
You're not thinking of getting rid of
all of these, are you?

RITA
Oh, no...

DOUG
Took most of them myself...sort of a
hobby. I like faces. You have a good
face. Maybe I'll get a shot of you
before you're through.

She seems strangely softened at the moment...and
inquisitive about another matter...Looking at the photos:

RITA
Is there a picture of "Clara" here?

DOUG
Who?

The reply seems to please her.

RITA
Maybe I got the name wrong. Good
night.

And she leaves, faintly pleased that "Clara" is not a
fixture here yet?

92 EXT. THE HOUSE - REAR YARD - MOVING WITH IAN

92

He walks the lineup of trash bags with some disbelief...
not really displeasure...and he stops! Jutting out from
one of the bags in the faint light of the rear porch
bulb...the upraised cloth arm of Thomas's "Dulcimer" doll,
as though begging...save me! Ian instantly retrieves it!

(CONTINUED)

92 CONTINUED:

92

IAN
Oh, no, you don't...

He holds the soft cloth doll for a moment, Fond memories.

IAN (CONT'D)
Hello there, Dulcimer. What're you doing hanging out with trash like this?

He brushes the dust off the cloth body and notices something...the hemmed seam along Dulcimer's side actually covers a zipper...to allow the interior cloth padding to be removed for washing perhaps. He unzips it, starts to zip it back up...and can't. The badly crumpled cardboard sales ticket juts out, long held inside the doll's covering (and once inspected by Agatha years ago!). He moves closer to the outside back porch light...holds it up to read.

IAN (CONT'D)
(reading)
"Hold for Mrs. Lucy Ann Dulcimer... 24 Oak Glen trailer park..."

He looks at it again, stunned...a mystery unraveling before his eyes.

IAN (CONT'D)
"Dulcimer." Her married name wasn't Dean. It was "Dulcimer." Mrs. Lucy Ann Dulcimer!

DISSOLVE TO:

92 EXT. MRS. DULCIMER'S HOUSE - SMALLTOWN, PA. - CLOSE ON MRS. DULCIMER - DAY

93

A weathered, harsh woman in her 70's, Lucy's former mother-in-law, MRS. DULCIMER, reacts bitterly:

MRS. DULCIMER
Never expected to hear her name drug up in my presence again!

WIDEN TO INCLUDE IAN

He's dressed in jacket and slacks, presentable. They stand in the woman's small front yard. Apparently he's unwelcome in the weathered, unfriendly-looking house. Mrs. Dulcimer seems the type who's proud of her "landscaping," including fake things like a cement frog, a chrome ball on a pedestal and a pink flamingo.

IAN
Sorry. Just a matter of information.

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED:

93

MRS. DULCIMER

(suspicious)

Don't know what you expect to gain by it.

(beat)

My Thomas could have been anything... even a male model...but she trapped him. Oh, yes. That's the type she was, and a thief to boot. One brat wasn't enough. She had to stick him with two. Who can blame him for taking off. I mean, a lot of nerve she had, always demanding money! He had his whole life ahead of him...so he took off. Died in a motorcycle crash. I blame her for that. Must have been about the same time she went. Can't say I'm sorry to hear that...considering.

(beat)

No, sir, and you can tell anyone who thinks otherwise. My Thomas didn't deserve her to contend with!

She juts out her chin as if in punctuation. Ian agrees with her...but meaning exactly the opposite, of course.

IAN

No, ma'am. "Your Thomas" certainly didn't deserve her.

(genuinely meaning it)

I'm very sorry for you. Good day.

He turns and walks back to his car as she watches...the look of a woman who wonders if she's just been fleeced!

CLOSE ON IAN AT CAR - TOWARD MRS. DULCIMER

She still stands watching him with a bitter look. Before stepping into his car, he looks skyward for just a beat. And he offers thanks, softly, but aloud:

IAN (CONT'D)

Thank you God, for not letting us find her sooner. Thank you, God...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

FADE IN:

94 EXT. BAR - WIDE - DAY

94

A motor scooter comes darting through traffic, pulling to a brief stop in front of a little neighborhood bar. Daphne, riding as a passenger, jumping off...giving the Driver a thank you wave.

CLOSE ON BAR ENTRY

Daphne's just about to enter...when she almost bumps into Rita diCarlo, also heading inside! A beat...Daphne hardly recognizes her! Rita looks softer somehow. Gone is the frizzed hair, the leathers and the boots... replaced by a turtleneck and flattering slacks and soft hair dropping to her shoulders. Daphne greets her, surprise showing:

DAPHNE

Well...hi...

Rita glances at the sputtering scooter just leaving.

DAPHNE

My cab...

Rita smiles. (Another change in her appearance?) They enter.

95 INT. BAR - SINGLE ON DAPHNE AND RITA AT BAR - DAY

95

They're parked on stools in the nearly vacant place. Daphne still fascinated by Rita's changed look, but trying not to be obvious about it. They sip shells of beer...awkwardly almost. Rita can sense Daphne's glances.

RITA

A regular here?

DAPHNE

Twice a year maybe. Only in emergencies.

RITA

What's the emergency today?

DAPHNE

Job hunting. Just stopped in to look in the mirror here and see what's wrong.

They look at themselves in the bar mirror for a beat.

RITA

You look qualified to me.

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED:

95

DAPHNE

Right...for heavy construction.

RITA

What happened to the florist job?

DAPHNE

I was "released,"..."down-sizing" he said. But he'll be "up-sizing" by tomorrow probably which means I was canned.

RITA

Out of the blue...just like that?

DAPHNE

Oh, I've been asking for it, I suppose. I was in charge of phone orders, taking down corny messages to go with bouquets...you know. This guy who had a fight with his girl...he wants to say, "Every little flower says I love you." It was that famous "last straw." I lost it. Broke out laughing. And I joked, how about adding, "Every little bud says I made a boo-boo," or "Every little stem says I'm a stinker." He didn't think it was funny...and here I am.

Rita laughs out loud.

DAPHNE

Thank you. I feel better.

RITA

You're quick. I can never think of anything clever until the next day.

DAPHNE

Lucky you. The "next day" I wind up unemployed.

A beat

RITA

Ian says you don't drive.

A flag goes up! Daphne reacts.

DAPHNE

Where did you run into Ian?

A beat. Rita seems ready to try out a "test" confessional.

RITA

Oh...I saw him at Brant's custom wood shop. I ordered myself a bureau.

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED: 2

95

So far just a coincidence?

DAPHNE

Whew! Expensive at that place!

RITA

Tell me! Worth it though. Ever taken a close look at Ian's work? Exquisite. It's almost like a religion to him.

Oh-oh. Better put out some warning flares:

DAPHNE

Ian's very religious. I mean, he'd frown on seeing me in here. He wouldn't yank me out or anything, but in his quiet way he'd let me know there were better places for me to be.

(and in contrast)

How's it with Nick Bascomb?

Rita picks up on Daphne's jargon.

RITA

Oh...I "down-sized" him. We called it quits.

DAPHNE

Wow...long time...no?

RITA

Too long...and we were going nowhere. All of a sudden it just didn't seem right.

DAPHNE

(curiosity revived)

When do you get your new bureau?

RITA

Ian said he'd do his best, without breaking his word to other clients. I'll wait.

DAPHNE

They're awfully behind, I hear.

RITA

I like that he said he wouldn't break his word to other people.

(beat)

But it didn't surprise me. You get to know people when you arrange their belongings.

Daphne tries to make a joke of it.

95 CONTINUED: 3

95

DAPHNE

Ah, yes. I'm "sophisticated,
worldly...yet casual in my regard for
material things..."

RITA

(playing along)

Exactly.

(then, more seriously)

No. I mean...Ian's belongings are so
simple...direct. It's like he doesn't
own anything that tries to say he's
something he isn't. He owns six books
on how to be a better person. The
clothes in his closet smell of
nutmeg.

(beat)

And have you ever really looked at
him? He has this really fine face...
it's all straight lines.

(on a roll now)

I thought at first his eyes were
brown, but they're not. They've got a
clear yellow light to them...like some
kind of drink...like cider! When he
talks, he's very serious, but when he
listens to what I say back...he starts
smiling like he's happy to hear me.

(beat, realizing)

Okay...so he probably does that to
everyone, right? I don't kid
myself...it's probably part of his
religion or something. Right?

Daphne gives her a long, examining look. Rita stands
quickly to leave.

RITA (CONT'D)

Gotta run. Take care!

She ducks out. The encounter has left Daphne a bit off
balance. She looks into the bar mirror...echoing
something Rita said:

DAPHNE

"Like cider...?"

DISSOLVE TO:

96 EXT. BRANT'S FURNITURE SHOP - WIDE - DAY

96

Morning. Ian pulls up in his van, gets out, starting for
the door..and something strikes him! No other cars in
sight! He does a 360...no employee cars anywhere!

ON IAN AT ENTRY

He moves to the entry, tries the door. It's locked. That

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED:

96

quick-dazed moment...is it Sunday? Or did he "under sleep?" He checks his watch, and uses his own key to enter.

97 INT. THE SHOP - MOVING WITH IAN

97

The mystery deepens as he walks down the long aisle of furniture "masterpieces" in various stages of completion. The place is dark! He calls out...

IAN

Hello? Anyone here? B.B....?

Nothing. He continues to the rear of the shop, growing increasingly concerned. So much so that he almost misses something as he arrives at the large workbench reserved for special projects. Then it strikes him:

CLOSE PAST IAN TO BENCH

His eyes fall on an 8-foot long sign, beautifully carved by a master...the chisels and mallet still lying on the bench among the curled shavings. The sign reads: "BRANT & BEDLOE...Master Builders of Fine Wood Furniture." Amazed, he reaches out and runs his finger across his own name, "Bedloe," as though somehow discovering himself anew. His eyes moisten just a bit. Then...

ANOTHER ANGLE - PAST HIM TO THE SHOP

Silently, almost ghost-like...workmen, including a couple of women in the 15 to 20 craftsmen, start appearing from dark corners of the shop...from behind armoires and cabinets. No great commotion, just looks of admiration from his co-workers. B.B. Brant appears, moves to shake Ian's hand, and finally there's a round of APPLAUSE.

BRANT

We're a year behind on orders, so I guess another ten minutes isn't going to kill anyone.

(adding warmly)

If that's all right with you, partner.

LONG ON SCENE

The work force moves forward, gathering around Ian, offering congratulations, admiring the new sign...as we ZOOM IN ON BRANT to see he's probably the most pleased of all...perhaps remembering the rainy night Ian showed up asking for a chance.

DISSOLVE TO:

98 EXT. BEDLOE HOME - WIDE - DAY

98

A Sunday...which also happens to be Doug's birthday, and the family has gathered. But we're introduced to this gradually by a scene of happy confusion as we hear:

THOMAS

Give me the camera, Gramp...I want this one of just you and Grandma.

99 INT. BEDLOE HOME - WIDE - DAY

99

All the grown Bedloes are present, along with Agatha, Thomas and Daphne. And except for Bee, they're all clad in their "Sunday best," ready for church! Bee and Doug are posing for the picture about to be snapped by Thomas.

THOMAS

You'd think I didn't know how to operate a camera!

DOUG

They come out better when your finger isn't in front of the lens.

Thomas removes his obstructing finger.

THOMAS

Nobody's perfect.

FLASH...and the group resumes its informal manner.

CLAUDIA

Macy says happy birthday, Dad. He's umpiring a baseball game today.

DOUG

He has my sympathy.

(to Agatha)

All the way from California...just for my birthday.

AGATHA

Actually, I'm here for a seminar. I didn't know it was your birthday.

THOMAS

She means birthdays aren't deductible.

AGATHA

It's all in the timing.

Ian feels uneasy about interfering with their "free" weekend.

(CONTINUED)

99 CONTINUED:

99

IAN
Look, gang...you don't have to take
time out of your weekend. I go to
church alone all the time.

DAPHNE
(feigning hurt)
Thank you so much!

IAN
I go to church alone all the time...
with Daph!

She socks him.

AGATHA
We're going!

IAN
I'll get my jacket.

He darts out of the room.

DOUG
(to Bee)
Sure you don't want me to stay home
and help you, Hon?

BEE
(almost robust)
Sure, you're a great help baking a
birthday cake. Get out of here!

ON AGATHA, DAPHNE, CLAUDIA

An air of conspiracy as they're left alone for a couple of
beats.

AGATHA
(to Daphne)
How do you know this "Clara" will be
there?

DAPHNE
She's always there.

AGATHA
Is she pretty?

CLAUDIA
She could be.

AGATHA
What's "could be?"

DAPHNE
Like she'd probably come out great in
one of those "make-overs" they do of
women on TV!

(CONTINUED)

99 CONTINUED: 2

99

AGATHA

Is she nice? We don't want Ian wasted
on some shrew.

DAPHNE

She's very, very nice.

CLAUDIA

There's such a thing as being too
nice, you know.

DAPHNE

You're talking to the wrong cookie.

AGATHA

If she's "right," let's give Ian a
little shove, okay?

Doug breaks into their circle.

DOUG

Mrs. Jordan's already outside
waiting.

Ian re-enters the room, donning his sport coat.

IAN

Let's go.

As they start out...Doug giving Bee a quick kiss goodbye.

BEE

(rather proud of them)
I hope Reverend Emmett is ready for
this bunch. Don't be shy...sing out!

Almost on cue, the sound of perhaps 60 VOICES can be heard
raised in the hymn, "Amazing Grace."

CUT TO:

100 INT. CHURCH - WIDE ON SCENE - DAY

100

The CHURCH OF THE SECOND CHANCE has been upgraded slightly
over the years. Expanded, perhaps, to take over the
adjacent storefront. Wooden pews now replace the folding
chairs, and a modest but beautifully carved pulpit
(courtesy of Ian, no doubt) serves Rev. Emmett. The
congregation, nearly filling the place, is singing,
"Amazing Grace, How sweet the sound...that saved a wretch
like me..." (John Newton, 1779).

ANGLE ON THE BEDLOES

Doug and Mrs. Jordan stand in the pew next to Ian and
CLARA. She's mid-30's, nicely featured and good looking
in an unadorned way. She shares a hymnal with Ian, which
they don't need, having memorized it cover to cover by

(CONTINUED)

100 CONTINUED:

100

now. A couple of rows obliquely behind him, Agatha, Claudia, Daphne and Thomas...eyeing Ian and Clara, exchanging whispers with the look of plotting deviltry...like matchmaking!

CLOSE ON THOMAS, DAPHNE

He leans to her, a nudge...telling her:

THOMAS
(a whisper)
Get off his back...

Daphne isn't totally neutral in this.

DAPHNE
(whispering back)
Quiet. This is girl stuff.
(back to singing, lustily)
"I once was lost, but now am found...
Was blind, but now I see..."

The hymn concludes. The organist continues a soft CHORDING as Rev. Emmett raises his hands for the benediction:

REV. EMMETT
May the Lord bless thee and keep thee:
The Lord makes his face shine upon
thee and be gracious unto thee: The
Lord lift up his countenance upon thee
and give thee peace...

CUT TO:

101 EXT, CHURCH - NEAR ENTRANCE

101

Recessional MUSIC still audible from inside. Agatha standing near the entrance ready to pounce...Claudia beside her,,,Daphne and Thomas hanging to one side. Doug and Mrs. Jordan exit with a handful of others they've met inside...chatting, moving to stand at one side to wait. Then Ian and Clara come out, accompanied by four or five "regulars," exchanging small talk.

CLOSE ON AGATHA

As she edges immediately to Clara, grasping her like a long-lost sister!

AGATHA
Clara! There you are!

In the near background, Thomas rolls his eyes skyward. Daphne gives him an elbow.

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED:

101

AGATHA (CONT'D)
 (to Clara's shock)
 I'm Ian's niece, Agatha. We've heard
 so much about you.

Clara recovers quickly. A pleasant smile.

CLARA
 Oh, yes...You're the doctor. How nice
 to meet you.

CLAUDIA
 (lamely, to keep it going)
 We finally get a doctor in the family,
 and she moves to California.

It's a non sequitur for Agatha's purposes. She quickly
 gets back to the blarney, scolding Ian.

AGATHA
 Ian, why didn't you tell us how
 attractive your Clara was...

The "your" is intentional and an immediate clue to Ian.

IAN
 Attractiveness comes from inside.
 It's not always something you can
 describe.

AGATHA
 Well I can see it, inside and out.
 (quickly)
 Clara, we're all going to lunch
 after...Grandpa Doug's birthday.
 You'll join us, won't you? Please?

Clara is sharp enough to catch the drift here. Agatha has
 never been famous for subtlety.

CLARA
 Ah, I wouldn't want to intrude...a
 family gathering.

AGATHA
 Don't be silly. That's what "family
 gatherings" are for, right? Ian...
 tell her. We'd love to have her.

Ian purposely doesn't derail the invitation.

IAN
 Of course. Think you could stand my
 company a while longer?

The little game is now being played by Ian and Clara.

101 CONTINUED: 2

101

CLARA

Oh, I think so. Unfortunately, we're
having people over. Another time,
maybe?

IAN

Sure. See you Wednesday night.

CLARA

God willing.

(to Agatha)

So nice meeting you. See you again
soon, I hope.

AGATHA

(to departing Clara)

Lovely seeing you...very soon, yes.

ON THOMAS, DAPHNE

THOMAS

(lowly)

Oops, she's getting away...

DAPHNE

Put a sock in it, Thomas.

They start away, moving with Agatha and Claudia. Ian,
Doug and Mrs. Jordan fall in behind as the congregation
disperses in various directions.

A102 EXT. FRONT OF CHURCH - DAY

A102

Another angle.

AGATHA

What a dud!

DAPHNE

Who? Clara?

AGATHA

No, ...Ian.

CLAUDIA

Maybe they had a fight or something.

AGATHA

If I ever saw a pair who didn't know
what it's all about!

(CONTINUED)

A102 CONTINUED: 3

A102 *

THOMAS
That your medical opinion?

AGATHA
I think this church has been the
ruination of Ian!

Daphne takes offense to this quickly.

DAPHNE
Bite your tongue. Where do you think
you and Thomas and I'd be if he hadn't
happened onto this church...ever
wonder?

AGATHA
I retract my stupid statement. I just
want him to have a full life. Time's
ticking away.

DISSOLVE TO:

102 EXT. WAVERLY STREET - MOVING WITH THE BEDLOES

102

A short hike later, nearing home. Claudia makes a final
suggestion:

CLAUDIA
Maybe we ought to just sit down with
Ian...and tell him how much we'd like
to have Clara in the family.

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED:

102

THOMAS

Like we've voted on it...puhleeze!

CLOSE PAST IAN

He sees them still talking, and seems to guess what they've been so intent on...a guy sensitive to these "kids" moods and temperaments for years. Just as they're crossing the quiet street, he calls a halt to the march of the Bedloes.

IAN

Okay, folks...everybody...hold up.
Hold it.

They all stop, turn to him.

IAN (CONT'D)

I think it's time I made an
announcement...to ease the crippling
anxiety of these...matchmakers here.

(to Doug)

Dad, consider it a birthday present.

(to them all)

I'm getting married next month!

Agatha almost bursts with self-justification, grasping Ian in a bear hug.

AGATHA

Oh, Ian...that's wonderful! I think
she's just great. I knew it the
second I saw her. Clara is just
lovely...

As she breaks away, Ian quickly tells them all.

IAN

Clara is a good friend. I'm marrying
Rita diCarlo.

(to Daphne)

You know Rita...

Agatha's mouth drops open. Daphne stands stunned, but not totally surprised probably. But it's Doug who utters the first approval with gusto:

DOUG

Rita...the "Clutter Lady." Hot dog!
There's the one for you, Ian...I had a
feeling...yeah!

Claudia now grasps Ian, teary-eyed.

CLAUDIA

I'm going to cry. My little
brother...

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED: 2

102

A horn BEEPS lightly...they've taken over the whole street, blocking a few cars now, standing in front of the Foreigners' house, ignoring the total confusion they're causing. This is "their street" sort of. Thomas throws an arm around his uncle in approval.

THOMAS

Mister Mysterious. Great, Ian.
Great.

Agatha turns to Daphne.

AGATHA

Who's a "Clutter Lady?"

DAPHNE

She's the one you helped pay for to
straighten out the house. Looks like
she made a clean sweep.

Mrs. Jordan starts directing traffic now...an 80-year-old traffic cop! We hear a DRIVER'S VOICE:

DRIVER (O.S.)

What's going on!

Another VOICE yells back...like this is a "block party."

SECOND VOICE

Ian's getting married...

There's a small barrage of neighbors' VOICES...AD
LIBS...Yeah...okay...Hey, Ian...and a Chinese John Hopkins
intern, FRED comes out to the curb, observing.

ON IAN. DAPHNE

He steps to her as the others are busy spreading the news to passing cars. We can sense the special relationship between these two. Ian's tenderness for his adopted niece.

IAN

Okay with you, Daph?

Tears are streaming down her cheeks, unashamedly...hurt and happiness combined. And she becomes "typically Daphne."

DAPHNE

Heck...I knew you were both goners the minute you handed her that old Spanish tile that night in the kitchen.

They rush into each other's arms for a beat..a loving embrace. As they break, the Chinese from Number 9 asks Daphne:

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED: 3

102

FRED

Is situation acceptable?

She looks at him, smiling through her tears.

DAPHNE

Fred...situation is beautiful.

He beams with delight, nodding. And seeping softly through the celebratory sounds of the street, we hear the Christmasy sound of "Jingle Bells" being played very professionally on a piano in OVERLAPPING SOUND FOR...

DISSOLVE TO:

103 INT. BEDLOE HOME - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

103

Its Christmas, and the room is bursting with the old spirit...a beautifully decorated tree, boughs with red bows on tables, etc. Fred, the Chinese intern from across the street, is also an accomplished pianist... playing "Jingle Bells" now to the delight of five step-ladder aged GRANDKIDS of Claudia's. Macy, her husband, grayed and pudgy, sits near the piano, enjoying it all.

ON RITA AND IAN

They stand with Agatha as Claudia enters with a tray of hors d'oeuvres...announcing:

CLAUDIA

Okay, everybody...I'd like to announce a whole new Bedloe "traditional" hors d'oeuvre here...prepared by our newest Bedloe...Rita!

Hands reach for the tray, but Claudia withdraws it teasingly as Rita warns:

RITA

Don't eat more than one without your doctor's permission.

Agatha takes one, takes a bite...smiles approvingly.

AGATHA

Dig in!

CLOSE ON BEE - HER P.O.V.

She stands for a moment, her eyes panning the photos on the piano and wall...like it's all coming together again.

ON MRS. JORDAN, TWO OTHER FOREIGN NEIGHBORS

Mrs. Jordan is speaking to JACK, an Israeli law school grad student, and TOM, a turbaned East Indian immunologist.

(CONTINUED)

103 CONTINUED:

103

MRS. JORDAN

And these fellows had just put in a new garage door opener...but they forgot to move the car...and bango!

They laugh.

ON THOMAS, GIRLFRIEND, DAPHNE

Thomas has an attractive GIRLFRIEND on his arm.

THOMAS

Tell her, Daph...I was your favorite brother, right?

DAPHNE

Of my one brother...you were my second favorite.

They laugh.

WIDEN

Fred at the piano changes the mood in the room by segueing into "The First Noel," the song we heard Danny play here so long ago. Some of them now move to the piano, singing along lightly, and we ZOOM IN ON DOUG, finally...who's sitting in his easy chair, holding his Christmas present from Daphne...a little black half-grown puppy wearing a small Christmas bow in her collar! He nuzzles the little dog.

DOUG

Well little girl, we'd better have a look outdoors about now.

Just as Lee comes to him...

BEE

I'll get my coat.

They move away...an "all's-right-with-the-world again" feeling about them...and slip out of the room...the singing continuing.

104 EXT. THE BEDLOE HOME - MOVING WITH BEE, DOUG

104

Doug has the little black pup on a light line leash, walking with Bee. The soft sound of Christmas MUSIC can be heard...the warm colored lights once more glow on the Bedloe house and others within view.

HOLD ON SCENE

As they walk slowly away, stopping for the inquisitive pup to sniff things.

(CONTINUED)

104 CONTINUED:

104

BEE
Cute little thing. She loves you.

DOUG
You think?

BEE
Where did Daphne say she found her?

DOUG
Orphaned in the alley behind Ian's
shop.

BEE
Wouldn't you know...

A beat. They're becoming part of the shadows now.

DOUG
Yeah. Wouldn't you know.

We hear Bee laugh lightly at the little animal.

BEE
(softly now)
Isn't she precious?

Sweet, silent night. Tomorrow is a new puppy...life goes
on.

FADE OUT.

THE END