

**PullingFocus Pictures Inc**

# **AWAY FROM HER**



Written by  
Sarah Polley

Based on the short story "The Bear Came Over The Mountain" by Alice Munro

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**Pulling Focus Pictures Inc.**  
65 Heward Street, Suite B206

TEL: (416) 915-1785 FAX: (416) 915-1788

Grant, a handsome man in his 70's, with a constant twinkle in his eye, drives down a suburban looking street in a poor area of a small Ontario town. He consults an address that lies on the seat beside him. Looks at the houses as he passes them. Mostly rental houses. Some of the yards are marked by car tracks, the windows plastered with tinfoil or hung with faded flags. He finds the address he's looking for. A small house on a quiet street. He pulls into the driveway. This house is much better looked after though still modest. There are flowers freshly planted. He takes a moment. Stares at the house. Takes a deep breath.

GRANT'S MEMORY: of a beautiful 18 year old girl. She is leaning against the rail of a pier overlooking a great lake. It is windy and cold and raining lightly. The wind blows her pale blonde hair into her face. She is confident and strong. She is smiling, staring straight at us. She is yelling over the wind, a glimmer in her eye. We can't hear what she's saying. We hear the voice of a man in his 70's.

GRANT (V.O.)  
She said, "Do you think it would be  
fun - Do you think it would be fun  
if we got married?"

A younger woman's voice is heard.

KRISTY (V.O.)  
What did you say?

GRANT (V.O.)  
I took her up on it. I shouted yes.

The 18 year old girl grins. She turns away and looks out at the water, happy.

GRANT (V.O.)  
I never wanted to be away from her.  
She had the spark of life.

She looks back at us. Right into our eyes.

The image dissolves to white, ski tracks melt over her face.

"Harvest Moon," by Neil Young plays on the soundtrack.

3 EXT ANDERSSON'S COTTAGE - JANUARY 2003 - MAGIC HOUR 3

A bird's eye view of a snowy, ice covered lake. A couple skis through frame. We follow their ski tracks in the opposite direction. To where they came from.

GRANT (V.O.)

Over our many winters, her hair went from pale blonde to silver. That's all. I don't think I noticed exactly when.

Credits over the ski tracks as we follow them. We arrive at a warmly lit cottage. It is old and large but not ostentatious. We pause here and then we continue on around their property. We find FIONA AND GRANT ANDERSSON, skiing together through their field. Grant is in his 70's, Fiona in her sixties. They are both stunning and sexy, with humour in their eyes. We recognize Fiona as the beautiful girl we saw at the beginning. She is ethereal, light, and sly. As though always enjoying a private joke. They pant hard as they ski side by side, glancing at each other.

CUT TO:

3A EXT GAZEBO - EVENING 3A

They stand in a gazebo at the edge of the lake, staring at the sunset over the frozen water. They stare silently, mesmerized.

CUT TO:

3B EXT GAZEBO - EVENING 3B

CLOSE ON Grant and Fiona's fingers, unlatching their skis from their boots.

4 INT ANDERSSON'S KITCHEN -JANUARY 2003- EVENING 4

The cottage is warm and comfortable. Rugs crooked on the floor and cup rings bitten into the table varnish. FIONA and GRANT are both tastefully dressed. They prepare dinner together. There's a sense of easy routine about it. Grant chops vegetables while Fiona tends the stove. There's not a lot of conversation about what they're doing. As he maneuvers around her to dump the vegetables into the pan his arms encircle her waist and he steals the spatula from where she has left it on the counter.

FIONA

Careful.

2A.

He hides the spatula behind his back. She turns to look at him, knowing what he's done.

FIONA  
Give me that.

He stays still. She scuffs his hair on the way out the door.

FIONA  
Alright then. You do it.

He smiles. Continues her work at the stove. We hear the television come on. A news segment about an election.

5 INT ANDERSSON'S LIVINGROOM -JANUARY 2003- EVENING 5

They eat a good looking dinner. Not labour intensive but carefully made.

FIONA  
Then they showed this totally irrelevant clip of him running. Apparently he likes to run when he's canvassing.

GRANT  
It must have had some context.

She takes a sip of wine. He laughs.

FIONA  
It didn't. And he runs like a goalie.

GRANT  
Oh and you're such a hockey fan. Show me how a goalie runs.

FIONA acts out a goalie running, laughing her head off. She sits back down.

FIONA  
Oh, It's too sad. He wants to be a good samaritan in the most boring possible way.

Grant laughs. A pause and then they both start giggling again. She looks at his clothes.

FIONA  
Don't you have another shirt?

6 INT ANDERSSON'S KITCHEN - JANUARY 2003 -NIGHT

6

FIONA and GRANT clean the kitchen together. A warm quiet between them. Grant steals tender glances at her as she does the dishes and she dries them. It's as though he is watching for something. She goes about putting the dishes away, oblivious to his eyes on her. This goes on for a while. We watch them work in silence, she puts the dishes in the cupboards. He hands her a frying pan. She stares at it for a moment. She opens the freezer and puts it inside. As he hears the freezer door open, he turns to look at her. She looks back at him, oblivious. She goes back to putting the dishes away in their proper places. He smiles at her. When the last dish is put away she leaves the room, feeling like she's missing something.

FIONA

I'll go make the fire.

He waits until she is safely in the other room, and then, sadly, takes the pan out of the freezer and puts it in a cupboard.

7 INT ANDERSSON'S LIVINGROOM -JANUARY 2003 -NIGHT

7

FIONA lies with her head on GRANT'S lap. There's a fire in the fireplace, the house orderly and cosy. It's snowing outside, big fairy tale snow flakes. He reads to her from a book of poetry.

GRANT

(reading)  
 You climbed the bank and said  
 This is how you touch other women  
 The grass cutter's wife, the lime  
 burner's daughter  
 And you searched your arms  
 For the missing perfume  
 And knew

Fiona strokes his face. Interrupts him.

FIONA

Don't worry darling. I expect I'm  
 just losing my mind.

GRANT

Ssshhhh.

He grabs her hand. Kisses it.

GRANT  
 What good is it to be the lime  
 burner's daughter  
 Left with no trace  
 As if not spoken to in the act of  
 love  
 As if wounded without the pleasure  
 of a scar  
 You touched your  
 Belly to my hands  
 In the dry air and said  
 I am the cinnamon  
 Peeler's wife. Smell me.

She falls asleep as he reads. He watches her sleep for a few moments.

8 INT ANDERSSON'S BEDROOM -JANUARY 2003-NIGHT 8

GRANT strokes FIONA'S hair. She smiles up at him, warm. They kiss, and slowly and calmly make love.

Title Card:

**The Diagnoses**

9 INT ANDERSSON'S BATHROOM -JANUARY 2003-NIGHT 9

GRANT is peeing. He finishes and washes his hands, catching a glimpse of himself in the mirror. On the mirror is a sticky note. It says "7am Yoga. 7:30 - 7:45 teeth, face, hair. 7:45-8:15 walk. 8:15 Grant and Breakfast." He puts his fingers to it, touched by it's precision.

10 INT ANDERSSON'S BEDROOM -JANUARY 2003-NIGHT 10

GRANT gets into bed behind FIONA. He spoons her, holding her close, kissing her neck.

GRANT  
 That was lovely.

FIONA  
 What was lovely?

He thinks for a moment.

GRANT  
 Nothing.

He looks at the back of her head, guilty and wondering. He leans over and kisses her forehead. She smiles. He turns away and closes his eyes.

11 EXT MARIAN'S HOUSE -FEBRUARY 2005- MORNING 11

Grant sits in his car, in the same shot as the opening. He gets out of the car and knocks on the door of the house in the rundown neighbourhood. Marian, an attractive woman in her 60's opens the door. She holds some flowers in her hand, as though she was just about to put them in a vase. She speaks with a fairly heavy American accent.

MARIAN

Yes?

GRANT

I don't quite know how to introduce myself. I used to see your husband at Meadowlake. I'm a regular visitor there myself. Those are some lovely flowers.

We will keep returning to this scene throughout the film, always picking up right where we left off.

12 INT ANDERSSON'S LIVINGROOM- JUNE 2003- AFTERNOON 12

Fiona arranges wild flowers while Grant makes drinks. Warm spring light pours through the house.

GRANT

I've never seen those white ones before.

FIONA

The earth must really suit them there.

Grant goes to the kitchen and notices something as he goes to get a spoon to stir the drinks. On each of the kitchen drawers there are post it notes saying, "cutlery, dishtowels, knives." He looks at them, debating whether or not to say something. He laughs.

Fiona is busily arranging the flowers.

GRANT

You could always just open the drawers. Remind yourself.



FIONA  
What?

He comes into the livingroom and stands in the doorway to the kitchen.

GRANT  
Maybe all the labels... All the  
lists are defeating the purpose.  
(MORE)

GRANT (cont'd)  
 If you stop thinking about things  
 the moment you write them down,  
 maybe that's the end of your need  
 to recall.

Fiona seems unperturbed by this question. Doesn't turn  
 around.

FIONA  
 If only we recalled just what we  
 needed.

She lets this hang in the air a moment. Then continues  
 lightly.

FIONA  
 There was a story I heard at a  
 dinner party, about the German  
 soldiers on border patrol in  
 Czechoslovakia during the war.  
 Remember that Czech student you  
 had? Veronica? We spoke once at a  
 dinner party.

Grant is absolutely still. She tosses this casually.

CUT TO:

12A INT 1970'S DINNER PARTY 12A  
 Veronica, a gorgeous young girl looks at us across the table.

CUT BACK TO:

12B INT ANDERSSON'S LIVINGROOM - JUNE 2003- AFTERNOON 12B  
 Fiona glances at Grant. He is stock still.

FIONA  
 Don't get nervous. It's a good  
 story.

And now she looks at him with a smile.

FIONA  
 She told me that each of the German  
 patrol dogs wore a sign that said  
*Hund*. Why? said the Czechs, and the  
 Germans said, Because that is a  
*Hund*.

She gives him an amicable smile. Not threatening in any way. He watches her, his breath is caught in his throat. She leaves the room and he lets his breath out. Stares at the post it notes. We flash quickly in and out of:

13 INT DINNER PARTY - 1970'S -NIGHT 13

GRANT'S MEMORY: Veronica, a beautiful creature with dark hair and shiny eyes, talks to someone animatedly at a dinner party, stealing furtive glances at us. We see her foot crawl up a pant leg under the table.

14 INT ANDERSSON'S LIVINGROOM - JUNE 2003-EARLY EVENING 14

The doorbell rings. Fiona answers the door. Phoebe and William Hart, a couple in their 60's stand at the door. Fiona throws her arms around Phoebe.

PHOEBE

Where the hell have you two been?

WILLIAM

Phoebe's a nightmare to live with when she hasn't played bridge in a while. Call more often will you?

15 INT LIVINGROOM - NIGHT 15

They have drinks in the livingroom

FIONA

Well at least we're all waiting together.

WILLIAM

You wouldn't say that if you were waiting for a transplant.

PHOEBE

(to William)

Who have you become all of a sudden? Jesus, you sound like one of those "Stand up For Canada" conservative commercials.

FIONA

(winks at William)  
Well he's not as young as he used to be Phoebe.

Grant is poking the fire. His hands covered in soot.

WILLIAM

I just don't think you can ignore how serious a problem these waiting lists are.

FIONA

I think they are a problem. I just don't think the solution is a shorter line for those who can afford it and longer lines for those who can't. Oh look, now you've made me all earnest and boring.

Grant looks down at his sooty fingers. He gets up and as he passes Fiona, he touches her face, leaving a bigsooty fingerprint on her cheek. She looks up at him knowingly. She knows there's a mark on her cheek and tries hard not to smile. He tries not to smile too. It doesn't really work. He sits down.

FIONA

You're an idiot. Do you know that?

GRANT

It worked for you.

FIONA

It's a wonder I ever brought him home to the parents.

16 INT LIVINGROOM- JUNE 2003- NIGHT

16

They eat dinner.

FIONA

It was one of those craft shows where you look around and wonder that the laws of supply and demand have allowed for the production of so many macrame ducks.

PHOEBE

God those are everywhere. What do you do with them.

GRANT

You've got one of those as a little, whatdoyoucallit, light fixutre holder or whatever it is.

PHOEBE  
I do not. Oh wait a minute I do.  
Fiona gave it to me.

FIONA  
Yes I did!

Fiona laughs. holds up the wine bottle.

FIONA  
Would anyone like some more...

She stops, totally unable to find the words she's looking for.

FIONA  
Some more...

Grant looks at her, looks at the HART's to see their reaction.

FIONA  
Ween.

She furrows her brow. Stares at the wine bottle.

FIONA  
Wane. Wane....

GRANT  
No, but I'll have some wine.

PHOEBE and William stare at her. William breaks the silence.

WILLIAM  
Yes. Yes that would be wonderful  
Fiona. Some more "wane."

They laugh. He holds his glass out to her. Fiona doesn't move to fill it. She stays standing there, thinking. Begins talking as though to no one in particular.

FIONA  
The thing is...

CUT TO:

17 OMITTED 17

18 EXT LAKE- FLASHBACK TO: SUNSET -JANUARY -2003 18

Fiona is skiing around the lake at sunset. She looks determined, focussed. Gradually she slows down.

10A.

Glides a little. Her focus becomes less clear, her face more  
and more blank.

FIONA (V.O.)  
 Half the time I wander around  
 looking for something which I know  
 is very pertinent. But then, I  
 can't remember what I'm looking  
 for...once the idea is lost,  
 everything is lost and I have to  
 wander around trying to figure out  
 what it was that was so important  
 earlier.

CUT TO:

19 INT ANDERSSON'S LIVINGROOM -JUNE 2003- NIGHT 19  
 Phoebe and Grant stare, speechless.

FIONA  
 I think I may be beginning to  
 disappear.

PHOEBE  
 Oh Fiona. You've always been a  
 funny sort of person though haven't  
 you? I mean, remember - you'll  
 remember this Grant - Remember when  
 you two went to Florida that year?  
 And Fiona left her fur coat in  
 storage, and then just forgot about  
 it? Remember that?

GRANT  
 Oh that was unintentionally on  
 purpose. Like it was a sin you were  
 leaving behind.

Fiona sits back down at the table, joining into the process  
 of brushing the awkwardness aside.

FIONA  
 Well. The way some people made me  
 feel about fur coats.

They laugh. Go back to more playful banter. We move to look  
 out the window and move towards the snowy fields.

GRANT (V.O.)  
 Uh... How is your husband doing?

MARIAN (V.O.)  
He's okay.

20 EXT MARIAN'S HOUSE - FEBRUARY 2005 - MORNING 20

Marian still stands in the door. (We will keep returning to this scene throughout the film, picking up right where we left off.)

GRANT  
My wife and he struck up quite a  
close friendship.

MARIAN  
I heard about that.

GRANT  
So. I wanted to talk to you about  
something if you had a minute.

21 EXT WOODS - APRIL 2003-LATE AFTERNOON 21

Grant and Fiona walk together through the woods. They reach a little hollow, skunk lilies everywhere. They are the size of platters and spring up like flames. It's surreal, and beautiful beyond belief. Fiona and Grant look at each other, amazed. Fiona bends down and touches one.

Fiona looks at the flower. Then away from it. Then back at it again. Closes her eyes. Opens them. Grant watches her quizzically.

FIONA  
When I look away, I forget what  
yellow means. But I can look again.

She pauses. Thinks.

FIONA  
Sometimes there's something  
delicious in oblivion.

Grant is moved.

FIONA  
They generate a heat of their own.  
Grant bends down to feel one.



FIONA  
They generate a heat of their own.

She stops a minute. Thinks. She may have already said this.  
Looks at Grant hoping he didn't catch it. He smiles.

GRANT  
I don't feel it.

FIONA  
I think...I think...you're supposed  
to be able to put your hand inside  
the curled petal and feel the heat.

She tries it. He watches her. She looks up at him and smiles.  
This is a gorgeous place, and they are both a bit  
overwhelmed.

GRANT  
Well?

FIONA  
I can't be sure. I can't be sure if  
what I'm feeling is the heat or my  
imagination.

She stands up. Changes her tone to a more certain one.

FIONA  
The heat attracts bugs.

She begins to walk away.

FIONA  
Nature doesn't fool around just  
being decorative.

Grant watches her walk away. Looks around at the gorgeous  
flowers, savours the image of his wife walking through them.  
Then follows.

23 EXT LAKE HURON BEACH -NOVEMBER 1960'S

23

GRANT'S MEMORY: Grant and Fiona in their 20's. They walk,  
holding hands along the beach. There are dividers every so  
often. Steel walls that have staircases on either side. They  
go up and down them. Occasionally there is space between the  
staircases so that you must walk, balancing on the narrow  
divide until you get to the next one. Grant helps Fiona over  
these, holding her hand as she balances. Close on her feet as  
she walks on the precarious edge. We rise up from her feet to  
reveal:

24 EXT LAKE HURON BEACH - SUNSET - NOVEMBER 2003

24

Back to the present: Fiona is walking along one of these edges now, with Grant helping her along in much the same way. Their noses red, their breath in the air. They do this in silence. And walk further in silence. They settle on the beach, sitting on a piece of drift wood.

FIONA

We better get back before it gets dark.

GRANT

You think after 50 years we won't find our way back? Just because it's dark?

She smiles. Takes his hand. They look out at the water.

GRANT

Let's stay here. A little longer.

25 EXT PARIS ONTARIO BRIDGE-NOVEMBER 2003- DAY

25

Grant and Fiona are walking along the bridge. Grant holds shopping bags.

GRANT

Cheese. What about cheese?

FIONA

Only if it's very high cholesterol.

They pass a couple about their age.

FIONA

Hi there Lauren, Michael.

They couple coolly nod their heads. Grant looks uncomfortable. There's some history here. Fiona sighs.

FIONA

Poor people. Poor human beings.

They continue walking.

FIONA

Oh. I forgot my list.

Grant stops.

FIONA  
No no. Give me the keys. You go on  
ahead and I'll meet you there.

Grant hesitates for a split second. Then hands them to her.

GRANT  
Okay. I'll see you there.

Grant continues on and Fiona walks in the opposite direction.  
She sees a dog walk by. She stops for a moment, thinking.  
She begins to look around, quite confused.

26	OMITTED	26
26A	OMITTED	26A

27 EXT PARIS ONTARIO MAIN STREET- NOVEMBER 2003-DAY

27

We see her in the distance coming towards us down a steep hill. The occasional car stops and she walks aroundus. Finally she comes to a stop and just stands there, looking all around her, perplexed. A car comes to a stop in front of her. The driver is stunned. Finally sort of leans on his horn. She looks into the car and waves politely but is still distracted. A police officer, Buddy, hears the horn honk and comes out of a coffee shop and approaches her. She is patient. Doesn't rush her, even though the driver is obviously irate.

BUDDY

Hi there Mrs. Andersson.

FIONA

Hi Buddy.

She's not really paying attention to him. Still worried about something.

BUDDY

Would you like to have a coffee with me Fiona? I'm just inside there. In Cafe de Paris.

FIONA

Oh. I don't drink coffee Buddy. Makes me go to the bathroom.

BUDDY

Alright then. I'll buy you a tea. How's that? I think Mac there's in a bit of a hurry to keep driving on up the road. You know how he can be.

Fiona peers into the car again.

FIONA  
Oh. Hi Mac. Is that you? Where are  
you on your way to?

Mac, an old farmer, leans out the window.

MAC  
To the cattle auction if you don't  
mind!

FIONA  
Not at all.

She stays where she is, looking around. Buddy leads Fiona  
gently out of the road.

28 INT CAFE DE PARIS -NOVEMBER 2003- DAY 28

Fiona and Buddy sit and sip tea at a table overlooking the  
river.

BUDDY  
Can you tell me what your name is?

FIONA  
Fiona. Fiona Andersson.

BUDDY  
Can you tell me what the Prime  
Ministers name is?

Fiona laughs a little.

FIONA  
If you don't know that, young lady,  
you really shouldn't be in such a  
responsible job.

Buddy laughs.

FIONA  
Listen Buddy. You haven't seen  
Edith and George lately have you? I  
think they ran off on me.

Buddy thinks for a moment.

BUDDY  
Who are Edith and George?

Fiona furrows her brow.

30 INT LATE 1960'S HOUSE.

30

GRANT'S MEMORY: Fiona opens the door to the bathroom. She is in her mid 20's. Crying. She looks up at us, defeated. This image plays over the following dialogue.

GRANT (V.O.)

Edith and George. Uhhh. Edith and George are...were... Some scraggly mutts she adopted some years ago.

As a favour to a friend. She devoted herself to them for the rest of their lives.

BUDDY (V.O.)

How long ago...

GRANT

Oh. A lifetime ago. I think it may have coincided with the discovery that she was not likely to have children. Something about her tubes being blocked or twisted - I can't remember now.

31 INT ANDERSSON'S LIVINGROOM- NOVEMBER 2003-EVENING

31

Buddy looks at Grant across the dining room table, Fiona skis on the lake in the background.

GRANT

I'm afraid I've always avoided thinking about all that...female apparatus.

BUDDY

So they were dogs. Dogs she had a long time ago.

Grant has a far off look.

GRANT

She picked them up on one of her more eccentric whims. But they were well looked after. I think I may have been picked up in much the same way. I don't think I understood that until quite recently.

He chuckles to himself.

BUDDY  
Have you been to see Dr. Fischer  
about this?

GRANT  
No. I suppose I don't really want  
to hear what she has to say do I?

BUDDY  
You can't just walk down the centre  
of Main Street and then have  
everything go back to normal.

GRANT  
No. I realize that.

32 INT DOCTOR'S OFFICE -NOVEMBER 2003- MORNING 32

Dr. Fischer is a kind, attractive small town doctor in her  
mid forties. Fiona and Grant sit in the office.

DR. FISCHER  
And what year is it?

FIONA  
It's 2003.

DR. FISCHER  
And what is the Prime Minister's  
Name?

FIONA  
(to Grant)  
It seems to me Grant that no one in  
this town reads the paper.

Grant and Dr. Fishcer smile and glance at one another. Fiona  
catches this look and her eyes seem to hone in on something  
between them. Just as fast as this intensity came into her  
eyes, it goes away again.

FIONA  
Peter Martin.

Grant lets out a small breath.

DR. FISCHER  
And Fiona, if you were to find a  
letter on the street, addressed,  
with a stamp on it. What would you  
do with it?

Fiona looks at her.

FIONA  
I would mail it.

DR. FISCHER  
And where would you put it to mail  
it?

Fiona is silent. There is an endless pause.

DR. FISCHER  
And if there was a fire in a movie  
theater, and you were the first one  
to spot the fire. What would you  
do?

Another endless pause.

FIONA  
We don't go to the movies much  
anymore. Do we Grant? All those  
multiplexes playing the same  
American garbage. Have you seen my  
jacket?

She begins to look around the room. She gets up, looking  
under things, behind the desk.

GRANT  
It's on the back of the chair  
there.

She stops and looks at it. Then picks it up and puts it on.

DR. FISCHER  
Fiona. Would you mind if I asked  
you a few more questions? Would you  
mind taking a seat?

Sits back down. Feeling their gaze on her.

FIONA  
I was feeling a little cold. That's  
all.

33 INT DOCTOR'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM -NOVEMBER 2003-DAY 33

Fiona and Grant walk out of the office, holding some  
brochures. They pass a few elderly people and a mother  
holding a large baby. Fiona comments quite loudly.

FIONA  
What an ugly baby.



Grant lets out a laugh. They snicker together as they go out the door.

34 EXT COUNTY ROAD- NOVEMBER 2003-DAY 34

Fiona and Grant drive through town, and out into the country side. Down the country roads, through fields, past farms. The brochures sit between them, advertising a retirement home called Meadowlake. Most of them focus on early onset Alzheimer's. They look at each other every now and then. They turn down the desolate road towards their house. It runs through fields, across train tracks. They turn onto their road, and into their driveway.

35 EXT ANDERSSON'S DRIVEWAY - NOVEMBER 2003-DAY 35

They turn up the drive to their cottage Fiona looks at the cottage as though for the first time.

FIONA

When did we move into this cottage?  
Was it last year or the year  
before?

Grant stops the car. Answers directly, with courage.

GRANT

It was longer than that. It was  
when I left the University. About  
20 years ago.

Shakes her head, casually surprised.

FIONA

Hmmm. That's shocking.

She looks at the brochures. One for meadowlake, a few on living with Alzheimer's. They look at each other tenderly. She shrugs. Strokes his face.

FIONA

Let's just see how it goes shall  
we?

36 EXT MARIAN'S HOUSE - FEBRUARY 2005-MORNING 36

Marian still stands in the doorway of her house. She addresses Grant aggressively.

MARIAN

My husband did not try to start  
anything with your wife, if that's  
what you're getting at.

(MORE)

MARIAN (cont'd)

He did not molest her in any way.  
He isn't capable of it and he  
wouldn't anyway. From what I heard  
it was the other way round.

GRANT

No. That isn't it at all. I didn't  
come here with any complaints about  
anything.

MARIAN

Oh. Well I'm sorry. I thought you  
did.

She doesn't sound sorry. She looks at him for a moment,  
thinking.

MARIAN

You better come in, then. It's  
blowing cold in through the door.  
It's not as warm out today as it  
looks.

Grant enters the house. Relieved that he's been let inside.

37 INT ANDERSSON'S LIVINGROOM - NOVEMBER 2003 - DAY 37

Fiona is pouring through books on Alzheimer's. Grant glances  
at her over his paper every now and then.

FIONA

"Never let a person make you feel  
guilty for your anger with God."  
Hmmm. Random.

GRANT

I don't see what the point is. We  
can't even be certain that this is  
what...you're far too young.

FIONA

There's a reason it's called "early  
onset" dear. Or maybe I've always  
been a flake. Oh. I like this.  
"Apraxia is usually present early  
in Alzheimer's disease...In the  
early stages, apraxia may be more  
apparent when the patient faces  
several choices. He may have no  
difficulty putting his shirt on,  
but when faced with a variety of  
shirts, ties, underwear, trousers,  
and coats, he may become confused  
as to which one to pick first."

She thinks about this.

FIONA  
 (with weight)  
 They left you undiagnosed a long  
 time.

She lets out a little laugh.

She lets this hang between them. They stare at each other. Something unspoken but clear. She flicks through pages. A tense silence. Then she begins to read again.

FIONA  
 Should the patient afflicted with  
 the disease remain at home, the  
 caregiver will very often be the  
 spouse.

38 INT ANDERSSON'S KITCHEN -FLASHBACK WINTER 2003- SUNSET 38

Over Fiona's reading we see : A pot of water sits on the stove untended, forgotten about. Grant approaches it. Looks at it, sad. He slowly removes it from the element. We stay on his face for a long time. He looks out the window at Fiona skiing around the large field in the pink sunset. She waves cheerfully. He waves back. She continues skiing, until she gradually comes to a stop, gliding a little. We see the earlier sequence that she told the Hart's about from hisPOV, through the window.

FIONA (V.O.)  
 The caregiver must preside over the  
 degeneration of someone he or she  
 loves very much; must do this for  
 years and years with the news  
 always getting worse;not better,  
 ...must every few months learn to  
 compensate for new shortcomings  
 with makeshift remedies;must  
 negotiate impossible requests and  
 fantastic observations;must put up  
 sometimes with deranged but at the  
 same time very personal insults;  
 and must somehow learn to smile  
 through it all.  
 (MORE)

FIONA (V.O.) (cont'd)  
 Caregivers must be able to diagnose  
 a wide variety of ordinary ailments  
 under extraordinary circumstances.  
 Imagine the person you love the  
 most suddenly upset about something  
 but completely unable to  
 communicate the problem or even to  
 understand it himself.

CUT TO:

39 INT ANDERSSON'S LIVINGROOM -NOVEMBER 2003-DAY 39

FIONA ponders this.  
 She smiles.

FIONA  
 Sounds like a regular marriage.

40 EXT LAKE - DECEMBER 2003 - LATE AFTERNOON 40

FIONA and GRANT ski side by side. They glance at each other,  
 in much the same way as we saw in the first scene.

GRANT  
 I think I'm done. I'm going to head  
 in and get supper ready.

FIONA  
 You have to try to keep up. You're  
 with a younger woman,  
 old man.

He laughs.

GRANT  
 You'll come back when you're  
 hungry.

FIONA  
 I might.

He skis towards the cottage. Leaving her to contemplate the  
 lake.

41 EXT LAKE/WOODS - DECEMBER 2003- LATE AFTERNOON 41

Fiona continues on skiing by herself. She stops at the edge  
 of the woods on the other side of the lake. She takes off her  
 skis and enters the woods. The woods are thick. The  
 occasional branch lightly touches her hair or her face. At a  
 certain point she decides to sit down. She sits in the snow.  
 Lies back and looks up at the trees.

Mesmerized by the pink sunset light pouring through the tops of the pines. She smiles.

42 INT ANDERSSON'S LIVINGROOM - DECEMBER 2003-MAGIC HOUR 42

The sun is down. Grant stands alone, looking out the window and contemplating the ski tracks in the snow. A concerned look on his face.

43 EXT BRIDGE - DECEMBER 2003 - MAGIC HOUR 43

Fiona is walking across the bridge into town. A train goes by over the river bridge in the distance. She is in her ski boots. It's awkward. She looks worried, lost. Stops and looks first one way, then the other.

44 EXT WOODS -DECEMBER 2003- EVENING 44

Grant follows the ski tracks. He follows them to the edge of the woods on the other side of the lake. The skis lie unattended. Grant looks around. Worried now.

44a EXT COUNTRY ROAD - DECEMBER 2003 44a

Grant drives, worried.

44A EXT PARIS ONTARIO - DECEMBER 2003 - NIGHT 44A

Grant drives across the bridge through town. He sees Fiona, staring out at the river. He stops the truck and watches her for a moment. Then he rolls down the window.

GRANT

Fiona.

FIONA

Hello. I was just thinking how nice it is that it hasn't changed too much in this part of town.

Grant gets out of the truck and puts his arms around her, keeping her warm as they look at the limestone backs of the buildings on the river. Grant looks very concerned.

47 INT CAR - DECEMBER 2003-NIGHT 47

Grant drives Fiona home. They sit in silence for a long time.

GRANT

Where were you going Fiona?

FIONA

I was trying to get home by following the fence line. I've counted on fences always taking you somewhere.

She says this lightly, as a joke. Grant isn't amused. She looks at his furrowed brow.

FIONA  
You're going to have to put me in  
that place. Shallowlake?

Grant breathes deeply.

GRANT  
Meadowlake. We're not at that stage  
yet.

FIONA  
Shallowlake, Shillylake, Sillylake.  
Sillylake it is.

He is irritated by her light manner.

48 INT ANDERSSON'S LIVINGROOM-DECEMBER 2003- NIGHT 48

They sit in silence at the dining room table.

FIONA  
We are at that stage. Grant.

She puts his hand gently on his.

FIONA  
We are at that stage.

Grant holds his head in his hands, his elbows on the table.

GRANT  
If we do think of it- If we do, it  
must be as something that isn't  
permanent. A kind of experimental  
treatment. A rest cure of sorts.

FIONA  
Alright. Alright. We can think of  
it that way.

She strokes his hand lovingly.

49 INT MARIAN'S HOUSE - FEBRUARY 2005-MORNING 49

MARIAN leads GRANT down the front hallway and past the Livingroom. It is very neat and organized. The house of a truly practical person. Everything polished and organized. A plastic runner down the hall to protect the carpet. It stands in sharp contrast to the comfortable disorder of his house.

MARIAN  
We'll have to sit in the kitchen  
where I can hear Aubrey.

50 INT MARIAN'S KITCHEN - FEBRUARY 2005 - MORNING 50

MARIAN pulls out a chair for GRANT to sit in. From a room off the kitchen, he can hear the sounds of a television. The door is slightly open and he can just see a man's feet, supported on a wheelchair.

MARIAN  
You might as well have a cup of  
coffee.

GRANT  
Thanks.

MARIAN  
My son got him on the sports  
channel a year ago Christmas, I  
don't know what we'd do without it.

GRANT  
It must be a struggle.

MARIAN  
Well. You know. You know what  
struggle is by now. Don't you?

She pours him a coffee.

51 INT ANDERSSON'S LIVINGROOM -DECEMBER 2003-MORNING 51

Grant is standing in his coat in front of Fiona, who is sipping her tea while she looks out the window.

GRANT  
You're sure.

FIONA  
I'm sure.

GRANT  
You don't want to just get a sense  
of the place? I don't want to make  
this decision alone.

Fiona furrows her brow.

FIONA  
What place?



Grant sighs, goes to answer.

FIONA  
Just kidding.

She allows herself a little laugh. He shakes his head.  
Smiles.

FIONA  
You're not making this decision  
alone Grant. I've already made up  
my mind.

52 EXT MEADOWLAKE - DECEMBER 2003-MORNING 52

Grant stands in the parking lot outside the Meadowlake  
Retirement Facility.

53 INT MEADOWLAKE CHECK IN AREA - DECEMBER 2003-MORNING 53

It's a clean, bright facility. A few elderly people walk past  
on walkers. Grant watches a woman look carefully at  
walkers that are parked together. She examines each one,  
trying to figure out which one is hers. Finally chooses one  
and goes on her way. Grant looks at her, wondering if Fiona  
is really at the point where she needs to be here. He watches  
a nurse tend to one of the women, THERESA, who is also helped  
along by her son, LIAM. The nurse, Betty, talks to the woman  
as though she is three years old. Grant watches with concern.

BETTY  
Now, Mrs. Taylor. Are you ready for  
your bath? It's bath time  
Mrs. Taylor. That'll be nice won't  
it?

THERESA  
Yes, that'll be fine.

LIAM  
I'll come with you Mom.

Madeleine, the very prim looking supervisor comes out from  
behind the desk to meet Grant. Shakes his hand sharply, with  
a pasted on smile.

MADELEINE  
Mr. Andersson. Madeleine  
Montpellier. I'm the supervisor  
here at Meadowlake.

GRANT  
Hi there.

MADELEINE  
Now I'm just going to take you on a  
quick tour of the facility and then  
we can sit down and discuss Mrs.  
Andersson's condition and the  
appropriate time for admitting her.

She leads him down a long bright hallway, blasting with  
light.

MADELEINE  
As you can see, we get a lot of  
light.

GRANT  
Yes. I see that.

54 INT MEADOWLAKE CORRIDOR - DECEMBER 2003-MORNING 54

Madeleine leads Grant past a conservatory where residents are  
doing a puzzle.

MADELEINE  
And there, as you can see, they're  
in the middle of a puzzle over  
there. They've always got a puzzle  
on the go.

They pass MRS. ALBRIGHT and MICHAEL, two residents of  
Meadowlake who are having a conversation.

MICHAEL  
Hello there sweet Madeleine.

MADELEINE  
Hello Michael.

They go past a TV area with a giant state of the art  
television.

MADELEINE

As you can see, our entertainment system is state of the art, and residents can gather here to watch together.

She leads him into a dining area, with many windows. An elderly man plays the same key over and over, creating an unsettling soundtrack. The place is decorated for Christmas, with a giant tree and lots of lights. Elderly people of various capacities eat their lunch with varying degrees of help from staff, many have family members visiting. There are many stages of altzheimer's here, but none as strong and capable looking as Fiona. Grant looks nervous.

MADELEINE

Now we can accommodate any dietary preferences or restrictions. We're just serving up our Christmas dinner early for the families.

Grant looks at the people eating. Who, among them, would Fiona ever elect to spend time with?

She leads him to the elevators.

MADELEINE

The old Meadowlake is next door. It's a day centre now. But this one, for the permanent residents, is brand spanking new.

(MORE)

## MADELEINE (cont'd)

They pause outside the elevators. Madeleine presses the button.

A resident, ELIZA, walks by leaning on her walker. On her walker is a cup of tea. She walks at such a slow pace, it seems to take her forever. She looks up at Grant.

ELIZA

Just taking my tea for a ride.

Grant smiles warmly at her. Another woman, Florence, walks by. Eliza addresses her.

ELIZA

Look at this one Flo. A real charmer isn't he? Would you say? Are you a charmer?

Grant laughs.

GRANT

Oh I think you could say I was a bit of a charmer.

He gives her a lovely smile. Dashing.

ELIZA

You're a rascal. Are you moving in with us?

MADELEINE

Mr. Andersson is here about his wife, Eliza. Behave yourself.

ELIZA  
 Oh I should have known it. At this  
 age it's...what do the kids call  
 it Flo? A real cluster fuck. The  
 charmers are all taken. Or dead.  
 Mostly dead.

Grant laughs. The elevator doors open and before he gets in  
 he give Eliza a little peck on the cheek. She's thrilled.

GRANT  
 You're pretty charming yourself  
 sweetheart.

Eliza beams.

55

INT SECOND FLOOR - DECEMBER 2003-MORNING

55

The elevator doors open and Madeleine and Grant come onto the  
 second floor. The residents are being fed by young attendants.  
 Something Brittany Spearsish is playing on a cheap stereo  
 system. Almost everyone here is totally silent except for a  
 few that are moaning. These people are very far gone. Grant  
 looks alarmed.

MADELEINE  
 Now this is the second floor - our  
 extended care wing. The elevators  
 here have a lock down system. This  
 is where residents can move to once  
 they get more progressed.

Grant smiles.

GRANT  
 Interesting choice of words.

Madeleine looks at him. She doesn't like him much. Smiles  
 anyway. That pasted on smile again.

MADELEINE  
 I'll show you some of the rooms  
 here while we're at it. Then I'll  
 show you our regular floors where  
 Mrs. Andersson will be living.

GRANT  
 That won't be necessary. My wife  
 won't be "progressing" to this  
 floor.

He says it with determination. Looks right at her.

MADELEINE  
 Alright.

They press the elevator button again. Wait. An awkward pause in the conversation between Grant and Madeleine. A Britney Spearsish song is playing. Something occurs to Grant. He turns around to glance at one of the young attendants. She sings along to the music.

GRANT  
 Who chooses the music?

I'm sorry? MADELEINE

GRANT  
 I'm assuming it's not the  
 "residents." I don't see any of  
 them singing along.

Madeleine glances back.

MADELEINE  
 The rooms on our regular floors  
 have their own stereo systems. The  
 residents can play whatever they  
 want.

They enter the elevator. Grant stares at the 2nd floor and its residents as the doors close.

GRANT  
 How kind.

56 INT MADELEINE'S OFFICE-DECEMBER 2003- MORNING 56

Madeleine sits across from Grant and hands him some documents.

MADELEINE  
 Now we don't accept anyone during  
 the month of December, so Mrs.  
 Andersson would have to wait until  
 January to make the big move. Then  
 we'd have one of our executive  
 rooms available just like the one I  
 showed you.

Grant looks at her questioningly.

MADELEINE  
 December...Christmas just has so  
 many emotional pitfalls.

GRANT  
Right.

Kristy, an attractive woman in her late thirties enters the room.

KRISTY  
Sorry to interrupt Madeleine. I'm just looking for the documents on Aubrey Bark.

MADELEINE  
Go ahead. Mr. Andersson, this is Kristy, our managing nurse.

Kristy reaches out her hand. Jovial, sweet.

KRISTY  
Against some people's better judgement.

MADELEINE  
Mr. Andersson is here about his wife, Mrs. Andersson who will be a resident here with us in January.

KRISTY  
Hi there.

GRANT  
Hi.

Madeleine gets back to business. Kristy is searching the binders on the bookshelf.

MADELEINE  
We also have a policy that our new residents can't receive visitors or take phone calls for the first thirty days. To give the resident time to adjust.

GRANT  
What kind of visitors?

MADELEINE  
Everyone. Even close family.

Grant looks taken aback.

GRANT  
I couldn't just leave her here.

MADELEINE  
Well, we understand this is really  
the hard part.  
(MORE)



MADELEINE (cont'd)

But most people need that time to get settled in. Before we had the rule in place, they'd often forget over and over again why they were being left here. Whereas we find, if they have a month to adjust, they end up happy as clams. Meadowlake's their home then. After that, it's perfectly fine for them to take a little visit home every now and then. Of course, that doesn't apply to the ones on the second floor. It's too difficult, and they don't know where they are anyway.

GRANT

My wife isn't going to the second floor.

MADELEINE

No. I just like to make everything clear at the outset.

Kristy is heading out the door with a binder. She gives Grant a squeeze on the shoulder.

KRISTY

We'll take good care of her. I promise.

She smiles warmly, genuinely. Grant looks up at her. Trusts her. Gives her a smile.

57

INT MEADOWLAKE DINING AREA - DECEMBER 2003 - AFTERNOON 57

A female resident at meadowlake sits absolutely silently. Her friend, about the same age, sits equally silently, her hand on her friend's face. They stare at each other lovingly, tragically. Many residents eat with children and grandchildren. Meadowlake is heavily decorated for the holidays, and a turkey dinner is being served. The camera moves among the tables catching snippets of conversation. Michael sits with his family, talking, as do MRS. JENKINS and MRS ALBRIGHT. Mrs. Albright's daughter, REBECCA, complains to her that she complains too much. Eliza sits with her family. She speaks in sign language to her hearing impaired daughter, STELLA. She is very affectionate with her. The rest of the family talks among themselves, not paying attention to either of them. We travel along the tables catching snippets of conversation.

A woman a little younger than Grant, MARIAN sits down beside him, staring at a man in a wheelchair who sits among the other residents, staring vacantly. She watches him, with tears in her eyes. Grant looks in her direction compassionately. She gives him a little smile through her tears. She picks up her purse and walks out.

Grant watches as the families take leave of their relatives. Slowly, in a series of dissolves, the common area empties out. Leaving the residents feeling empty, alone, and gasping for more.

They stare out windows, or wheel or shuffle themselves back to their rooms. The light has changed. It is late afternoon and Grant has been sitting there watching for a long time.

59 INT ANDERSSON'S BEDROOM -DECEMBER 2003- NIGHT 59

Grant lies in bed staring at the ceiling while Fiona sleeps.

60 INT ANDERSSON'S BEDROOM -DECEMBER 2003- MORNING 60

Grant still sleeps. Fiona gets up quietly.

61 INT ANDERSSON'S LIVINGROOM -DECEMBER 2003- MORNING 61

Fiona sits at the dining room table stirring her coffee. Grant enters in his housecoat, rubbing his eyes.

GRANT  
Smells good.

FIONA  
I was going to go for a ski but I thought I shouldn't chance it. What with the Alzheimer's and all.

She smiles at him.

GRANT  
Why didn't you wake me?

She picks up some forms from the dining room table.

FIONA  
What are these Grant?

GRANT  
They're the... The forms to fill out. If you decide to go to Meadowlake.

She looks frustrated.

FIONA  
But that is exactly what I have decided. You were to go and sign these forms. And leave them there. Is it cold? Is it dark?

GRANT  
No. It gets a lot of light.

She looks at him, questioning.

GRANT  
I wouldn't be allowed to visit for  
30 days.

She comes around to him, puts her arms around him.

FIONA  
30 days isn't such a long time  
after 44 years.

GRANT  
I don't think I like the place.

FIONA  
I don't think we should be looking  
for something we like here Grant. I  
don't think we'll ever find that. I  
think all we can aspire to in this  
situation is a little bit of grace.

Grant sees her unmovable determination and nods.

63 INT ANDERSSON'S LIVINGROOM -DECEMBER 2003-NIGHT 63

There is a Christmas tree lit up and a fire in the fire  
place. Grant and Fiona dance to "Harvest Moon" by Neil Young.  
She puts her feet on top of his and he leads her around the  
room. They murmur softly to each other.

64 INT ANOTHER HOUSE ( LATE 50'S) 64

GRANT'S MEMORY:

Grant and Fiona ( in her teens), dance exactly the same way.  
He moves a strand of hair away from her forehead lovingly.  
She bats his hand away laughing. Pulls his earlobes lovingly.

65 INT ANDERSSON'S LIVINGROOM -DECEMBER 2003-NIGHT 65

Grant tries to move a strand of hair away from her forehead.  
She lets him for a moment. Then playfully bats his hand away  
in much the same manner as when she was younger. Again, she  
tenderly pulls his earlobes.

66 INT ANDERSSON'S FRONT HALLWAY -JANUARY 2004- EARLYMORNING 66

Fiona's bags are packed. She is dressed up a little. She  
looks at herself in the mirror. Grant watches her.

FIONA  
I guess I'll be dressed up all the  
time. Or semi dressed up. It'll be  
sort of like in a hotel.

She puts on her good coat. Applies her usual red lipstick.

FIONA  
How do I look?

GRANT  
Just like always. Just as you've  
always looked.

FIONA  
And what does that look like?

GRANT  
Direct and vague. Sweet and ironic.

FIONA  
Is that how I look?

She looks directly at him. They watch each other. Smile.

67 EXT COUNTY ROAD -JANUARY 2004- EARLY MORNING 67

Grant and Fiona drive in silence. "Harvest Moon" continues to  
play. Fiona spots something just off the road.

FIONA  
Oh. Remember?

Grant looks and sees the little hollow where they walked in  
the spring. The bright yellow flowers are gone. Now it is  
covered in snow. Grant smiles at her. Looks ahead. It's all  
he can do to not turn the car around.

FIONA  
You look surprised Grant.

GRANT  
Not surprised. Just grateful. I'm  
grateful you can remember that.

68 INT MEADOWLAKE CHECK IN AREA -JANUARY 2004- MORNING 68

They stand in the check- in area, waiting for someone to come  
to the desk. A tear falls down Fiona's face.

FIONA  
You've been good to me Grant.

Grant clutches the hand on his face. Kisses it desperately.

Madeleine comes out of her office. Senses the weight of the moment she is walking into.

MADELEINE  
Should I give you two a moment?

GRANT  
Yes please.

FIONA  
No thank you. I'll go to my room now.

MADELEINE  
Alright Mrs. Andersson. We'll get you settled into your room. And then I'll take you on a tour of the facility.

Grant looks pleadingly at Fiona.

FIONA  
Yes. That sounds lovely.

She gives Grant a squeeze on the arm. He reluctantly follows them towards the rooms.

69 INT FIONA'S ROOM - JANUARY 2004- MORNING 69

It's a nice room. A bright window. Tastefully decorated

FIONA  
Yes. This will do just fine.

Madeleine glances at the few suitcases they brought in with them.

MADELEINE  
I'm glad you like it Mrs. Andersson. Is this all you brought with you today?

FIONA  
For now.

GRANT  
We'll see how it goes.

Madeleine takes a gage of their different ideas of the situation. Talks to Grant, pointedly.

MADELEINE

Well. You let us know if you need any help arranging things.

He shoots her a glare.

FIONA

(politely)

Thank you Mrs. Montpellier. Now if you wouldn't mind, I'd like to say goodbye to my husband. We haven't been apart for a month for the last 44 years. It will be quite something.

MADELEINE

Absolutely. You just come and find me in my office when you're ready.

FIONA

I will.

Madeleine leaves the room.

Grant sinks down on the bed, grabbing Fiona's hands and pulling her down with him.

GRANT

Please Fiona.

FIONA

Grant. You know what I'd really like?

GRANT

Fiona...

She strokes his face. Kisses him.

FIONA

I'd like to make love. And then I'd like you to go. Because I need to stay here. But if you make this hard for me I think I'll cry so hard I'll never stop.

She has tears rolling down her cheeks. It's excruciating but he manages to nod. She kisses him again. They make love on the well made bed.

70 INT FIONA'S ROOM -JANUARY 2004- MORNING -LATER 70

Grant and Fiona lie in each others arms. He clings to her. She kisses him lightly on the forehead.

FIONA  
Go now. Go now.

He kisses her passionately. Pulls himself away. Awkwardly puts his clothes on. He is clumsy. He does up his shoes. It seems to take forever. Fiona just watches him. He gives up, leaving his shirt open, his pants undone. He leans in for one final kiss. Tears himself away. Leaves the room. Fiona waves lightly at the closed door.

71 INT CORRIDOR -JANUARY 2004- MORNING 71

Grant stands outside the door doing up his pants. A nurse passes by. Looks shocked. Grant shrugs awkwardly. Walks down the hall.

72 INT CONSERVATORY -JANUARY 2004- MORNING 72

Grant sees Kristy, the managing nurse, tending to an oldman in a wheelchair. The man has vacant eyes. He tentatively approaches her.

GRANT  
Hello there.

She warmly extends her hand.

KRISTY  
Kristy. We met on your tour. Is Mrs. Andersson settled in?

He nods noncommittally.

GRANT  
I was wondering if I could talk to you for a minute. Ask your advice.

KRISTY  
Sure. Mr. Bark and I were just reading here. Maybe when I'm finished this chapter I'll come find you in the check-in area? How's that?

GRANT  
Yes. That'll be fine thanks.



Kristy goes back to reading to this almost comatose man.  
Clearly, and without condescension.

73 INT MEADOWLAKE DINING AREA - JANUARY 2004- MORNING 73

Grant sits nervously on one of the plush chairs. He watches as Eliza speaks in sign language with a woman in her 30's who appears to be her daughter. They are animated and involved. Madeleine peeks her head out the door.

MADELEINE  
Is she ready for the tour?

GRANT  
Uh. I'm not sure. I need a moment  
to think about all this.

Madeleine comes and sits beside him.

MADELEINE  
If I may say so Mr. Andersson. Your  
wife seemed quite happy to come in  
today. It can be much more  
difficult than this. It almost  
always is. I can't emphasize enough  
how valuable a lack of drama can be  
in a situation like this.

Grant smiles a little. Dumbfounded at her insensitivity.

MADELEINE  
I'll give her a few minutes and  
then I'll go and see how she's  
doing.

Madeleine leaves. Grant watches as FRANK, male resident is  
slowly escorted in the doors by BETTY, the nurse. FRANK  
speaks quickly and constantly as he comes through the doors.

FRANK  
And we're moving down the centre,  
and young Betty is helping me, and  
we're going back up, back up to the  
second floor and we're moving past  
the dining room...

KRISTY  
Hi there Mr. Andersson. Now how can  
I help you?

She takes a seat beside him. She notices him watching the male resident.

KRISTY  
Oh. That's Frank. He used to be the  
play by play guy for the Winnipeg  
Jets.

Grant watches him as he goes, still doing a play by play of his every movement. Dumbfounded.

GRANT  
Really.  
Kristy smiles.

KRISTY  
He loved his job too much to  
retire.

She shrugs.

KRISTY  
Frank's on the second floor.

GRANT  
I just... My wife has always been a  
different sort of person. And I'm  
wondering. I was told that  
Alzheimer's can't be confirmed  
until after... And on the way here  
today, she just... We passed the  
conservation area where we went on  
a walk last spring. There were  
these gorgeous flowers. These skunk  
lilies.

KRISTY  
Those are beautiful aren't they.

GRANT  
They really made an impression you  
see. And today, even though the  
whole place was covered in snow,  
she said "Oh. Remember." Now that  
was quite recently. About nine  
months ago. Isn't the short term  
memory the thing that goes first?

KRISTY

Well. Yes. But not all at once. And what's comforting is the long term memory sometimes stays for quite a long time.

Grant looks uncomfortable.

GRANT

Yes. Her long term memory seems very intact.

This has a weight to it. She looks at him carefully. Absorbing his tone.

GRANT

When she said that. About the skunk lilies. It was all I could do not to turn the car around. What if... What if all this is just her...being herself? She's so young to...

Kristy lets him think in silence for a moment.

KRISTY

She is young. And this is hard. No doubt about that. A month is a real long time. Between you and me, I don't know about the policy myself. I think it makes it easier on the staff is what I think. But look. Here's my pager number. You can call me whenever you want. Call every day if you feel like it. I'll let you know how she's doing. And I'll keep a special eye on her.

She sees he's still nervous.

KRISTY

Look. We're pretty nice around here. I don't know about the ones in charge. But the ones that will be in direct contact with Mrs. Andersson. We're a pretty nice bunch if i do say so myself.

He sighs.

GRANT

I don't know what to do.

Madeleine enters again.

MADELEINE  
Mr. Andersson. Here's a note from  
Mrs. Andersson. She asked that I  
pass it along.

He opens it up. It reads: "Go now. I love you. Go now. Fona."  
He stares at the spelling mistake.

GRANT  
(whispering)

Okay. Okay.

He turns to Kristy.

GRANT  
Thanks so much.

He leaves the building. Kristy looks after him  
compassionately.

74 EXT COUNTY ROAD -JANUARY 2004- MORNING 74

K.d. Lang's version of "After the Goldrush" plays over the  
next several scenes.

Grant drives home sadly. He passes the SkunkLily Hollow.  
Looks at it solemnly.

74A INT ANDERSSON'S BEDROOM - JANUARY 2004- NIGHT 74A

Grant reads from a book on Alzheimer's. This voice over  
continues over the next few scenes.

GRANT (V.O.)  
Throughout much of the thinking  
brain, gooey plaques now crowd  
neurons from outside the cell  
membranes, and knotty tangles  
mangle microtubule transports from  
inside the cells.

75 INT MEADOWLAKE DINING AREA -JANUARY 2004- MORNING 75

Kristy introduces Fiona to the man in the wheelchair with the  
vacant eyes. She greets him warmly. Sits down beside him.

76 INT ANDERSSON'S KITCHEN -JANUARY 2004- NIGHT 76

Grant does the dishes. When he goes to put the frying pan  
away he pauses. Looks at it. Then puts it in a cupboard.

77 EXT LAKE JANUARY 2004- MAGIC HOUR 77

Grant skis around the lake all by himself. He skis around and around as the sun goes down and leaves the sky pink over a countryside that seems to be bound by waves of blue-edged ice. He stops on the other side of the lake from the house. Stares at the house. Extremely wide shot of Grant standing alone in the snowy field staring at his lonely cottage.

GRANT (V.O.)  
 All told, tens of millions of synapses dissolve away. Because the structures and substructures of the brain are so highly specialized, the precise location of the neuronal loss determines what specific abilities will become impaired. It is like a series of circuit breakers in a large house flipping off one by one.

79 EXT LAKE - JANUARY 2004- NIGHT 79

Grant stands still on the lake, still looking back at the house. One by one, all the lights in the house switch themselves off.

82 EXT ANDERSSON'S COTTAGE - EARLY MORNING 82

Grant takes down a string of Christmas lights from the front of the house.

83 EXT LAKE - JANUARY 2004- DAY 83

36 fps as Grant laces up his ski boot. Takes a few strides. Decides against it. Heads back to the cottage.

86 INT MARIAN'S KITCHEN - FEBRUARY 2005 - MORNING 86

On the kitchen counter there are all sorts of contrivances and appliances - coffeemaker, food processor, knife sharpener, etc. All look new and expensive, as if they had just been taken out of their wrappings or polished daily. Grant decides it might be a good idea to admire things.

GRANT  
 That's a great looking coffeemaker. I always meant to get one of those. I saw they had them on sale at the Canadian Tire.

MARIAN  
 They gave us that. Our son and his wife. They live in Kamloops, B.C. They send us more stuff than we can handle. It wouldn't hurt if they would spend the money to come and see us instead.

GRANT  
 (philosophical)  
 I suppose they're busy with their lives.

Marian gives a sharp laugh.

MARIAN  
 They weren't too busy to go to Hawaii last winter. You could understand it if we had somebody else in the family, closer at hand. But he's the only one.

She pours the coffee into two brown and green ceramic mugs that she takes from the amputated branches of a ceramic tree trunk that sits on the table. She sits down with him. Grant hesitantly begins to speak.

GRANT  
 People do get lonely. If they're deprived of seeing somebody they care about. Fiona, for instance. My wife.

MARIAN  
 I thought you said you went and visited her.

GRANT  
 I do. That's not it.

87 INT ANDERSSON'S BEDROOM -FEBRUARY 2004- MORNING 87

Grant smooths his hair. Appraises his appearance carefully.

FLASHBACK:

89 INT DIFFERENT HOUSE 89

GRANT'S MEMORY: Grant, in his 30's, smooths his hair in the bathroom mirror. Fiona appears behind him. Straightens his tie for him. She encircles her arms around his waist. Kisses his neck. They stare at each other in the mirror.

91 EXT COUNTY ROAD -FEBRUARY 2004- MORNING 91

Grant drives down the long country road to Meadowlake. He looks so excited and happy.

Title card:

**AUBREY AND THE FORGETTING**

92 INT MEADOWLAKE CORRIDOR FEBRUARY 2004-MORNING 92

Grant goes down the hall quickly, the flowers held awkwardly in his hands. Madeleine sees her office.

MADELEINE

There you are. I'll take you to her.

She looks at the flowers.

MADELEINE

Wow. Narcissus this early. You must've spent a fortune.

They walk down the corridor.

MADELEINE

Funny. They all come in with flowers. Even if they're not the flower buying type. They all turn into guilty husbands. Only thing missing is the affair. The important thing to remember is you've done nothing wrong.

They pass a few people in wheelchairs, staring off into space, murmuring to themselves, etc. A woman passes them, clearly in a haze.

MRS. ALBRIGHT

I'm certain I left my sweater in the church. Just this morning. I left my sweater in the church.

Kristy, who is passing by, tenderly places her hand on the old woman's shoulder.

KRISTY

Well maybe someone picked it up for you and put it in your room, Mrs. Albright. I'll help you look for your sweater.

The woman calms down. Nods. Goes back in the direction she came from. Kristy sees Grant.

KRISTY  
Great to see you Mr. Andersson.

She gives him a squeeze on the shoulder. She continues down the hall.

MADELEINE  
There now. You remember from last time you were here don't you?  
~~There's her room, right there. Her name plate's right on the door.~~  
I'll leave you to it.

Madeleine leaves. Grant pauses in front of the door. Looks at the handmade nameplate. It is sloppily made, but has "Fiona," neatly written, and a few yellow clay flowers decorating it. They are very like the skunk lilies. He touches them gently. Smiles. Pauses a moment. Not sure if he should knock or not. Decides he should. Knocks gently. He opens the door.

93 INT FIONA'S ROOM -FEBRUARY 2004- MORNING 93

Grant peeks his head in the door.

GRANT  
Fiona?

No answer. The room is empty. There is still nothing personal in the room. The bed is made. There is a glass of water and a box of kleenex on the bedside table. No photos, pictures of any kind, not a book or a magazine. He looks around disappointed. Leaves the room.

94 OMITTED 94



Residents sit along the walls, in easy chairs, others at tables in the middle of the carpeted floor. The same man that was playing the piano during Grant's tour, plays it again now. Picking away with one finger and never achieving a tune. A group of residents sit and play cards. Grant sees Fiona, in profile, sitting up close to the card table but not playing. She is sitting very closely beside the man in the wheelchair. She looks a little different. Her hair is pulled back in an unfamiliar style. Her usual red lipstick gone. Kristy comes up behind Grant.

KRISTY

There she is. You just go up and say hello and try not to startle her. Remember she may not - Well. Just go ahead.

Kristy looks concerned. Grant walks towards the table. As he approaches, all the card players look up, including Fiona. The rest of the players look back down at their cards again, except Fiona. She smiles her sly, charming smile, pushes back her chair and comes around to him, putting her fingers to her mouth.

FIONA

(whispering)  
Bridge. Deadly Serious. They're quite rabid about it.

She draws him towards the coffee table. Sits him down beside her. Speaks to him very politely, as you would an acquaintance.

FIONA

I can remember being like that for a while at college. My friends and I would cut class and sit in the common room and smoke and play like cutthroats. One's name was Phoebe, I don't remember the others.

GRANT

Phoebe Hart.

FIONA

You knew her too? Can I get you anything? A cup of tea? I'm afraid the coffee isn't up to much here.

GRANT

I don't drink tea...

Grant is paralysed. He wants to throw his arms around her but something about her demeanour makes it impossible. At a loss, he searches around for something to say.

GRANT

I brought you some flowers. I thought they'd do to brighten up your room. I went to your room, but you weren't there.

FIONA

Well no. I'm here.

There is an awkward pause.

GRANT

You've made a new friend.

He indicates the man in the wheelchair. The man looks up, Fiona looks back at him.

FIONA

It's just Aubrey. The funny thing is I knew him years and years ago. He worked in the store. The hardware store where my grandpa used to shop. He and I were always kidding around and he could not get up the nerve to ask me out. Till the very last weekend and he took me to a ball game. But when it was over my grandpa showed up to drive me home. I was up visiting for the summer. Visiting my grandparents - they lived in a cottage on the lake.

GRANT

Fiona. I know where your grandparents lived. It's where we lived. Live.

Fiona is distracted by Aubrey's look. He is looking at her quite intensely, with a kind of command in his eyes.

FIONA

Really?

Fiona turns back to Grant nervously.

FIONA  
I better go back. He thinks he  
can't play without me sitting  
there.

(MORE)

FIONA (cont'd)  
 It's silly, I hardly know the game  
 anymore. I'm afraid you'll have to  
 excuse me.

GRANT  
 Will you be through soon?

FIONA  
 Oh we should be. It depends. If you  
 go and ask that grim looking lady  
 nicely she'll get you some tea.

She indicates a particularly stern looking attendant behind a  
 coffee urn.

GRANT  
 I'm fine.

FIONA  
 So I'll leave you then, you can  
 entertain yourself? It must all  
 seem strange to you, but you'll be  
 surprised how soon you get used to  
 it. You'll get to know who  
 everybody is. Except that some of  
 them are pretty well off in the  
 clouds, you know - you can't expect  
 them all to get to know who *you*  
 are.

She leaves Grant and goes back to her chair at the table. She  
 whispers something into Aubrey's ear and taps her fingers  
 across the back of his hand. Grant watches them for a while.  
 Then gets up and leaves. As he does Aubrey gives him a  
 suspicious look. Fiona gives him a polite little wave.

96 INT BRIGHT HALLWAY-FEBRUARY 2004-AFTERNOON 96

We watch Grant as he walks alone down the long hallway,  
 bathed in late winter afternoon light.

97 EXT GRANT'S VEHICLE/ANDERSSON'S DRIVEWAY - FEBRUARY 2004-97  
 AFTERNOON

Grant drives home.

98 EXT ANDERSSON'S COTTAGE- FEBRUARY 2004-AFTERNOON 98

Grant gets out of the car. Pauses before he puts the key in  
 the door. Sighs. Leans his head against the door.

99 OMITTED

99

100 INT DINING AREA - FEBRUARY 2004-MORNING

100

Grant sees Fiona at the same table she was at the day before. Right beside Aubrey. He catches her eye. She waves politely. Indicates that she'll be a few minutes. Aubrey gives her a stern look. She places her hand on his. Grant, defeated, sits down on the sofa with the wilted flowers on his lap. Kristy sees him and sits down next to him.

KRISTY

You caught her at sort of a bad moment. Involved in a game.

GRANT

She's not even playing.

KRISTY

Well, but her friend's playing. Aubrey.

GRANT

So who is Aubrey?

KRISTY

That's who he is. Aubrey.

She looks up to see the look on Grant's face.

They get the attachments. That takes over for a while. Best buddy sort of thing. It's kind of a phase.

He goes to say something. It's hard to get the words out.

GRANT

Does she even know who I am?

KRISTY

She might not. Not today. Then tomorrow - you never know, do you? Things change back and forth all the time. You'll see the way it is once you get used to coming here.

(MORE)

KRISTY (cont'd)  
 You'll learn not to take it all so  
 serious. Learn to take it day by  
 day.

They watch Aubrey and Fiona. It is difficult for Aubrey to manage the cards. Fiona shuffles and deals for him, and sometimes moves quickly to straighten a card that seems to be slipping from his grasp. A wisp of Fiona's hair touches his face and he gives a husbandly frown.

Fiona pushes her chair back and comes over to greet Grant. Grant stands, and awkwardly goes to kiss her on the cheek. She politely accepts, though it's clear that this makes her uncomfortable. She shoots a nervous glance back at Aubrey who intentionally drops all of his cards to the floor.

FIONA  
 (to Grant)  
 Oh I'm sorry. I'll have to go fix  
 that now.

Grant watches as Fiona bends down and picks up all of Aubrey's cards. Aubrey calms down as she takes her place beside him and continues on with the game.

101 OMITTED 101

102 INT MEADOWLAKE TV AREA -MARCH 2004- DAY 102

Grant watches as Fiona and Aubrey watch golf on television with the other residents. He sits a few chairs away from

~~player. The camera is only in the ball track. It's lonely,~~ as the appointed journey across the sky. Aubrey and Fiona hold their breaths. Aubrey's breath breaks out first, expressing satisfaction or disappointment. Fiona's chimes in on the same note a moment later. Grant notices this with irritation.

He gets up to leave, trying to make eye contact with Fiona, but fails.

103 OMITTED 103

104 INT BRIGHT HALLWAY -MARCH 2004- MORNING 104

Grant sees Fiona pushing Aubrey down the hall.

GRANT  
Hello Fiona.

FIONA  
Oh hello there. You're very persistent aren't you.

Grant awkwardly holds out some books.

GRANT  
I brought you some books. I notice they don't have all that many around here.

GRANT  
Letters From Iceland by Auden. We always meant to read it together. Remember?

She looks at him blankly. He looks at Aubrey who is staring up at him, irritated at being interrupted.

GRANT  
Fiona. Do you think... would it be possible to talk alone?

FIONA  
Oh. I'm not sure. Aubrey's card game starts in a few minutes and then we usually go walking and then he does his drawing.

GRANT  
 (irritated)  
 Well perhaps you could make some  
 time a little later. I'll wait  
 here. Or I'll come back in a few  
 hours.

FIONA  
 (playfully)  
 You *are* persistent aren't you?

She continues walking with Aubrey, leaving him alone. Aubrey  
 is holding a few drawings on his lap and as they walk away,  
 one flutters loose. Grant picks it up and is about to hand it  
 back to him. He stops as he gets a good glimpse of it. It's a  
 very precise drawing of Fiona as she looked when she was  
 younger. He stares at it, and then after Aubrey and Fiona.

105 OMITTED 105

106 INT MEADOWLAKE STAIRWELL -MARCH 2004-DAY 106

Grant stands looking through the window watching Fiona  
 pushing Aubrey around. Fiona catches his eye. Now she looks a  
 little concerned. She turns Aubrey around in the other  
 direction before he can see Grant.

Eliza comes up behind Grant giggling.

ELIZA

~~That's fine and Aubrey, they're~~

Grant smiles, uncomfortable.

ELIZA  
 Maybe it's time you started  
 branching out too you rascal.

He gives her a polite smile and leaves.

107 INT MEADOWLAKE TV AREA- MARCH 2004 - AFTERNOON 107

Grant sits watching a hockey game with some of the residents.  
 Frank is doing play by play to the game. Grant goes over and  
 turns of the sound on the TV. The residents clap as Frank  
 takes over the commentary.



Fiona approaches him from behind. Puts her hand on his shoulder. He looks around with a start. Grasps her hand, thinking she remembers him. She politely pulls it away.

FIONA

I just came down to say. Aubrey is having his afternoon nap. If you'd like to talk.

GRANT

Yes. Shall we go somewhere a little quieter?

FIONA

If you like.

108 INT FIONA'S ROOM - MARCH 2004 -AFTERNOON 108

Fiona sits in a chair. Grant sits on the bed. Smooths out the sheets remembering their last encounter in this room. He looks around at the walls which have many of Aubrey's drawings pinned up. They are all different angles of Fiona, looking so much like the images we've seen of her in the past, it's uncanny.

FIONA

You said you have some books for me.

GRANT

Yes.

He takes the books out.

GRANT

Letters From Iceland.

FIONA

Yes you said. By Auden.

GRANT

(excited that she remembers)

Yes. That's right.

FIONA

Now where is Iceland.

Grant sinks. As he describes Iceland we see Super 8 and archival footage of Iceland. Earthquakes, geysirs, highway bridges carried off by giant movements of ice and water.

GRANT

Iceland is... It's in the middle of the Atlantic. It's an island. It's the youngest country in the world. It's constantly erupting. Volcanos and earthquakes. It's always...shaking itself off.

Fiona replies with casual interest.

FIONA

Hmm. Wouldn't it be nice. To be from a young country.

GRANT

You are. That's where you're from. Where your people are from. They immigrated here in the late 1800's. Your people were on the first voyage from the north. A place called Akyuyeri. They came to Canada. That's where you're from Fiona. And I teach... I taught the myths from there. Norse Mythology.

Fiona looks very vulnerable.

FIONA

I must have been there then. Have I been there?

GRANT

No.

FIONA

But ... Wasn't I curious?

GRANT

Oh you're very curious. Very curious.

He smiles tenderly. Strokes her hand.

GRANT

You always said, there ought to be one place you thought about and knew about and maybe even longed for - but never did get to see.

She smiles sadly.

FIONA  
~~say~~ what?

\*

GRANT  
 Yes. You said that.

\*

She smiles. Then something occurs to her. She looks at him. Upset. She looks quite angry and quite present. She stares at Grant for a long time, totally familiar and direct. Grant looks afraid of what she might be about to say.

\*

Then her polite manner is back, suddenly. All of a sudden she treats him like a stranger again.

FIONA  
 Well I better go see to Aubrey.  
 He'll be wanting a little walk  
 around I suppose. It was nice  
 chatting. I suppose you'll be back  
 again tomorrow.

She goes to stand up. He takes her hand back. She looks down at it.

GRANT  
 Fiona.

FIONA  
 Yes?

GRANT  
 What are you doing? What are you  
 doing with Aubrey?

She takes her hand back. Looks him in the eye.

FIONA  
 He doesn't confuse me. He doesn't  
 confuse me at all.

She walks to the door. Turns around. Very polite and formal.

FIONA  
Well. It was nice chatting. I  
suppose you'll be back again  
tomorrow.

Grant sits on the bed for a while, thinking. He places the  
books carefully on the bedside table.

109 INT BRIGHT HALLWAY- MARCH 2004 -AFTERNOON 109

36 fps. Grant is on his way out the door. He passes Fiona  
helping Aubrey out of his chair. He holds onto the rail on  
the wall and supports himself by leaning on her as he takes a  
few tentative steps. A small group of residents and nurses  
clap. Both Fiona and Aubrey look somewhat proud and bashful.  
Grant leaves.

110 INT DINING AREA-MARCH 2004 - LATE AFTERNOON 110

Grant and Kristy eat slices of pie and drink coffee.

GRANT  
Who is he?

KRISTY  
He's...Aubrey?

GRANT  
Yes. Aubrey.

KRISTY  
Aubrey. He was the local guy for  
this company that sold weed killer  
and all that kind of stuff. He was  
a fine person.

Grant nods.

GRANT  
What happened to him? Did he have a  
stroke?

KRISTY  
When he was not very old or even  
retired he suffered some unusual  
kind of damage. They just went on  
holiday somewhere and he got  
something, like some bug, that gave  
him a terrible high fever? And it  
put him in a coma and left him like  
he is now.

(MORE)

KRISTY (cont'd)

Between you and me I wouldn't be surprised if it had something to do with that weed killer. His wife is the one takes care of him usually. She takes care of him at home. She just put him in here on temporary care so she could get a break. Her sister wanted her to go to Florida.

(MORE)

KRISTY (cont'd)  
See, she's had a hard time, you  
wouldn't ever have expected a man  
like him-

GRANT  
I see.

Grant tries to use a calm, indulgent tone.

GRANT  
Do these affections between  
residents...do they ever go too  
far?

KRISTY  
Depends what you mean.

There is an awkward silence. Grant is getting nervous.

KRISTY  
The trouble we have in here, it's  
funny, it's often with some of the  
ones that haven't been friendly  
with each other at all. They maybe  
won't even know each other, beyond  
knowing, like, is it a man or a  
woman? You'd think it'd be the old  
guys trying to crawl in bed with  
the old women, but you know half  
the time it's the other way round.  
Old women going after the old men.  
Could be they're not so wore out I  
guess.

She stops smiling, as if she's afraid she has spoken too  
callously.

KRISTY  
Don't take me wrong. I don't mean  
Fiona. Fiona is a lady. She's a  
real lady.

GRANT  
Well I sometimes wonder-

KRISTY  
(a little sharply)  
You wonder what?

GRANT  
I wonder whether she isn't putting  
on some kind of charade.

KRISTY  
A what?

GRANT  
Some kind of act. Maybe a kind of  
punishment.

Kristy looks at him fondly. Pats his hand.

KRISTY  
Now why would she do that.

He looks at her in a way that makes her know that he's  
talking about something very real.

KRISTY  
Oh.

111 EXT ANDERSSON'S COTTAGE - MARCH 2004 -LATE AFTERNOON 111

Grant shovels snow. He throws himself into the work,  
exhausting himself.

112 INT MEADOWLAKE DINING AREA/CORRIDOR-MARCH 2004 - MORNING 112

Grant watches from the the couch in the dining area while  
Aubrey walks, a little more confidently now holding onto  
Fiona for support. Fiona is wearing a very bright, tacky  
sweater. Completely different from her other clothing.  
Madeleine walks by. Grant gets her attention.

GRANT  
Excuse me. Excuse me!

MADELEINE  
Yes Mr. Andersson. What can I help  
you with?

GRANT  
She's...Fiona. She's wearing  
someone elses' sweater.

Madeleine looks over at Fiona.

MADELEINE  
It's pretty isn't it.

GRANT  
No. It isn't pretty. It's tacky.  
And she would never wear it.

MADELEINE  
Well, if you like you can talk to  
the on duty attendant on Mrs.  
Andersson's wing.

Grant keeps watching Fiona, supporting Aubrey as he makes his way slowly across the room. Madeleine pauses to watch with him.

MADELEINE  
It's a marvel really. The way she's  
getting him up and out of that  
chair.

She walks off. Grant watches Fiona laughing with Aubrey who is smiling a little. Grant gets more and more upset. He goes up to Fiona, grabs her wrists.

GRANT  
Fiona.

She is startled.

GRANT  
Fiona. I'm your husband. Fiona.

She looks away. She doesn't want to see him. Keeps her head locked to the side.

GRANT  
Fiona. It's Grant. Your husband.  
We've been married for 45 years.  
Look at me. Fiona. We live in your  
grandparents cottage. We ski every  
day together on the lake. Every  
night we make dinner together and I  
read to you and you fall asleep in  
my lap and I carry you to bed. You  
proposed to me when you were 18.  
That is not your sweater. We've had  
a good life together. Those are  
your words, not mine. Fiona. That  
is not your sweater.

Fiona won't look at him. Has tears streaming down her face.  
Aubrey is making panicked sounds. Wants to help her get free  
of Grant but can't move. She pulls her wrist away from him  
violently.



Then pulls the sleeves of her sweater straight and composes herself. She helps Aubrey to sit back down in his wheelchair. He is making desperate animal sounds. She coos to him trying to settle him down. Grant puts his face in his hands. Once Aubrey has settled somewhat, Fiona takes Grants hand and leads him around the corner. Aubrey's sounds grow louder and louder.

Fiona looks sternly at Grant. Seems about to say something. A long pause while she looks at him. Whatever it was she was going to say, she decides not to say it.

FIONA

I'll see you again tomorrow I  
suppose. Please don't...Please  
Don't.

Grant nods, devastated. Fiona laughs, embarrassed by everything that has just happened.

FIONA

You *are* persistent aren't you. I  
wish I knew what...

She laughs lightly. Brushes her tears away.

FIONA

We'll see you again tomorrow I  
suppose.

She walks away from Grant. Gets Aubrey out of his chair again and supports them as they walk down the hall.

112A INT BRIGHT HALLWAY - DAY 112A

Grant watches them go as they walk, together, away from him, down the long, sun bathed corridor. (36 fps)

113 INT MARIAN'S KITCHEN -FEBRUARY 2005 - MORNING 113

Grant sits nervously at Marian's table. He is gearing up to say something. Not sure how to begin. He stirs his coffee, thinking. Marian watches him closely.

MARIAN

You're not doing too well are you?  
No big surprise. What we're dealing  
with here isn't so easy. I thought  
I'd married someone who'd be there  
with me to the final stretch. And  
I'm betting you thought the same. It  
didn't work out that way.

(MORE)

MARIAN (cont'd)

So. I think you came here for a reason. I'm the kind you can just say things flat out to. So shoot.

Grant takes a breath and then takes the plunge.

GRANT

I'm wondering if you could consider taking Aubrey back to Meadowlake. Maybe just one day a week for a visit? It's only a drive of a few miles, it wouldn't be too difficult would it?

He has an idea.

GRANT

Or...if you'd like to take the time off - I suppose I could take Aubrey out there myself. I wouldn't mind at all.

This wasn't part of what he had planned to say, and he's rather dismayed to hear himself suggest it.

GRANT

I'm sure I could manage it. And I'm sure you could use a break.

While he talks she moves her closed lips and her hidden tongue as if she is trying to identify some dubious flavour. She gets up and gets some milk. Pours it into his coffee. Goes back to the counter and grabs a plate of ginger cookies. They are perfectly round. She sets the plate down in front of him.

MARIAN

Homemade.

GRANT picks one up. Marvels at its perfect roundness.

GRANT

Really.

She pours milk into her coffee. Stirs it. GRANT waits in the interminable, awkward silence. Glances at AUBREY's feet, visible through the door.

MARIAN

No. No I can't do that. And the reason is, I'm not going to upset him.

GRANT

(earnest)  
Would it upset him?

MARIAN

Yes, it would. It would. Bringing him home and taking him back. Bringing him home and taking him back, that's just confusing him.

GRANT

But wouldn't he understand that it was just a visit? Wouldn't he get into the pattern of it?

MARIAN

He understands everything all right.

She says this as though he has just insulted AUBREY.

MARIAN

If I go to all that trouble I'd prefer to take him someplace that was more fun. It'd make more sense to take him to the mall where he could see kids and whatnot. If it didn't make him sore about his own two grandsons he never gets to see. I've got to get him all ready and pack up his chair and maneuver him into the car, and he's a big man, he's not so easy to manage as you might think. All that and what for?

GRANT

But even if I agreed to do it? It's true, you shouldn't have the trouble.

MARIAN

(flatly)  
You couldn't. You don't know him. You couldn't handle him.

(MORE)

MARIAN (cont'd)  
He wouldn't stand for you doing for  
him. All that bother and what would  
he get out of it?

Grant considers saying something about Fiona. Decides not  
to. She gets up and fetches her cigarettes and lighter from  
the window above the sink.

MARIAN  
You smoke?

GRANT  
No, thanks.

MARIAN  
Did you never? Or did you quit?

GRANT  
Quit.

MARIAN  
How long ago was that?

He thinks about it.

GRANT  
Thirty years. No - more.

Grant's mind wanders momentarily, remembering the  
circumstances in which he quit.

MARIAN  
I've quit quitting.

She lights up.

MARIAN  
Just made a resolution to quit  
quitting, that's all.

She looks at him, sizing him up.

MARIAN  
So your wife's depressed? What's  
your wife's name? I forget.

GRANT  
It's Fiona.

114 INT CONSERVATORY-MARCH 2004- NIGHT 114

Aubrey and Fiona sit by the fountain. They sit among the lush and tropical looking plants. Fiona talks softly to him. We move around the fountain to find Grant sitting alone, catching glimpses of them through the leaves. Mixed in with the sound of the leaves rustling and the birds in the cages and the sound of splashing water is Fiona's soft talk and laughter. Then a sort of chortle which sounds like it might be coming from Aubrey. Then some words, which are definitely coming from Aubrey. His voice is soft and strained. Grant squints his eyes, trying desperately to make out what he is saying. Then there is silence. Then a few clear words.

AUBREY  
Take care. He's here. My love.

Grant looks into the blue bottom of the fountain's pool. Stares at the coins.

KRISTY (O.S.)  
And how old were you when you met?

115 EXT MEADOWLAKE - MARCH 2004 -DAY 115

Kristy takes a smoke break. Grant sips a coffee to keep her company.

GRANT  
She was 18.

KRISTY  
Holy. That's pretty young to get married eh?

GRANT  
It wasn't my idea. But it was a good one I think.

KRISTY  
She proposed to you?

Grant nods.

KRISTY  
Well that's lovely. That's what I think. How'd she do it?

GRANT  
I don't think she planned it necessarily. We were in Tobermory, waiting for the ferry to Manitoulin. It was raining and miserable and she was happy and sick of my sour mood.

KRISTY  
So what'd she do? What'd she say?

GRANT  
She said, "Do you think it would be fun - Do you think it would be fun if we got married?"

KRISTY  
What did you say?

GRANT  
I took her up on it. I shouted yes.

Grant takes a deep breath.

GRANT  
I never wanted to be away from her. She had the spark of life.

116 EXT PIER - 1961

116

GRANT'S MEMORY: The image of Fiona at 18 from the beginning of the film. She looks at us. Right into our eyes. Over this we hear:

KRISTY (V.O.)  
You know. Nothing takes away what happens to you. Where you've been, what you've experienced. I don't think so. Even if it's gone away somehow, even if you can't remember it. It's still there. It's still what you are.

117 EXT MEADOWLAKE -MARCH 2004 -DAY

117

Kristy watches him, sympathetic.

GRANT  
It's curious.

KRISTY  
What's curious?

GRANT  
All that. The "madly in love" part.  
The beginning. When I hear myself  
tell the story, it sounds  
so...crucial. And it was I suppose.  
But compared to what we ended up  
with, it seems very...superficial  
somehow.

118 EXT LAKE HURON BEACH - APRIL 2004 -DAY 118

Grant walks along the beach, up and down the metal barricades  
as he did with Fiona. 36 fps.

\*

120 INT CONSERVATORY- DECEMBER 2004 - EARLY EVENING 120 \*

Grant watches as the residents play Bingo. Eliza plays bingo  
with her daughter. They sign to each other. Her daughter  
looks absolutely joyous as she plays with her mother, and she  
describes to her the game in sign. Fiona, wearing that  
bright, tacky sweater helps Aubrey play. Kristy takes a seat  
beside Grant.

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

GRANT  
They never sorted out the clothes. \*

\*

KRISTY  
Oh. They...tried to. She's become  
very attached to that sweater. \*

\*

\*

\*

Grant. \*

\*

121 INT DINING ROOM 121 \*

Meadowlake is decorated for Christmas again. A badass teenager with blue hair and a whole lot of piercings watches her grandfather and her parents play Bingo. Her grandfather has food all over his chin. The badass teenager leaves the table. Grant sits alone at the fountain, watching Aubrey and Fiona sitting in the distance. They lean in close and whisper, oblivious to the invasion of visitors. The badass teenager. MONICA comes and sits beside Grant on the fountain in a huff. She puts on her headphones which blare thrasher music. Grant notices her. Continues to watch Aubrey and Fiona as he talks to the young girl beside him. \*

GRANT \*

Not such a fun place to visit eh? \*

Monica lifts up her earphone. The music is deafening. \*

MONICA \*

Excuse me \*

GRANT \*

Nothing. \*

She turns off the music. \*

MONICA \*

No. What were you gonna say? \*

GRANT \*

Just. Not such a fun place to visit eh? \*

MONICA \*

Fuck it. Depressing. \*

She glances at him, thinking she may have offended him. \*

MONICA \*

No offence. \*

smiles. \*

GRANT \*

No offence taken. \*

MONICA \*

Sorry. I'm just on the rag. \*



GRANT		*
That would be yes.	*	
They sit in silence for a moment.	*	
MONICA		*
I'm not in the mood for Grandpa		*
when I'm on the rag, know what I'm		*
sayin?		*
Grant		*
glares.	*	
GRANT		*
You never know. I'm not an expert		*
on families. But someday you might		*
be a name.	*	
Monica looks at him. Assesses him.	*	
MONICA		*
No one came to visit you eh? That		*
must suck huge.		*
GRANT		*
No. I'm... I don't live here. I'm		*
just visiting someone.	*	
Monica makes a show of looking around for the person he's		*
visiting.		*
MONICA		*
Who? What's your deal crazy man?	*	
Grant smiles. Likes her. He indicates Fiona.	*	
GRANT		*
I'm visiting that woman over there.	*	
Monica looks over.	*	
MONICA		*
Which one?		*
GRANT		*
The beautiful one. With the shock		*
hair.	*	
MONICA		*
The one sitting with her husband?	*	

GRANT \*  
 You could say that. \*

MONICA \*  
 Why wouldn't you? \*

GRANT \*  
 Why wouldn't you what? \*

MONICA \*  
 t's a pity. \*

GRANT \*  
 Uh...you wouldn't say \*  
 that...because I'm her husband. \*

Monica looks at Fiona and Aubrey, deep in conversation. \*

MONICA \*  
 So...why aren't you sitting with \*  
 her? \*

GRANT \*  
 Oh... I've learned to give her a \*  
 little bit of space. She's in love \*  
 with the man she's sitting with. I \*  
 don't like to disturb her. I \*  
 just...like to see her I suppose. I \*  
 like to make sure that she's doing \*  
 well. \*

He looks at the Monica selfconsciously. Embarrassed. \*

GRANT \*  
 I suppose it seems rather pathetic. \*

Monica stares at him for a long time. A little tear in her \*  
 eye. \*

MONICA \*  
 If the guy I'm dating right now? If \*  
 he was like you? I should be so \*  
 lucky. \*

She gives him a hefty pat on the back. Makes him lay her five \*  
 and goes back to her Grandpa. Grant laughs to himself. The \*  
 biggest, most genuine smile we've seen from him in a long \*  
 time. \*

Grant looks around the card tables for Fiona. Eliza yells out \*  
 to him, excited. \*

ELIZA  
She's not here! She's sick! He's  
not here either!

She looks very proud of having this information. And way more out of it than we've seen her. Her hair is messy, her clothes awry. Grant nods.

123 INT CORRIDOR - JANUARY 2005-MORNING 123

Grant hurriedly makes his way down the corridor to Fiona's room, a book under his arm. Grant knocks lightly at Fiona's door. He opens it gently.

124 INT FIONA'S ROOM - JANUARY 2005-MORNING 124

Fiona is sitting straight up in the bed, which is cranked up like a hospital bed. She's wearing a nightgown and looks very pale. Aubrey is beside her in his wheelchair, which is pushed as close to the bed as it can get. His face also has a gray, worn out expression. He is wearing a jacket and tie and his hat rests on the bed. He looks as though he's going somewhere. As Grant enters, they both look up at him with stony, grief-ridden apprehension that turns to relief, if not to welcome when they see who he is. Not who they thought he'd be. They grasp each others hands and do not let go. Grant is taken aback. He sets the book down at the foot of the bed.

GRANT

I...I brought you a book Fiona.  
It's about Iceland. I thought maybe  
you'd like to look at it.

FIONA

Why. Thank you.

She turns her attention back to Aubrey who is pulling his hand away from her. He puts his hand over his face as he weeps uncontrollably. He is embarrassed about his running nose, especially in Grant's presence. \*

FIONA

What is it? What is it, dear heart?  
Oh, all right. Oh, here.

She pulls some tissue out of the box.

FIONA

Here. Here.

She tries to wipe his nose, but Aubrey grabs the kleenex away from her and does it himself.

FIONA  
 (whispering, to Grant)  
 Do you by any chance have any  
 influence around here? I've seen  
 you talking to them.

Aubrey makes a noise. Like an animal wail. He pitches his upper body towards her. She scrambles half out of bed to catch him and holds onto him. Grant doesn't know whether to help or not. Decides he'd better not.

FIONA  
 (to Aubrey)  
 Hush. Oh, Honey. Hush. We'll get to  
 see each other. We'll have to. I'll  
 go and see you. You'll come and see  
 me.

Aubrey makes another animal wail into Fiona's chest. There is nothing Grant can decently do but get out of the room.

125 INT CORRIDOR - JANUARY 2005-MORNING 125

Grant closes the door gently. Puts his back to it and leans on it, sighing. Madeleine walks by.

MADELEINE  
 I just wish his wife would hurry up  
 and get here. I wish she'd get him  
 out of here and cut the agony  
 short.

GRANT  
 Should I stay?

MADELEINE  
 What for? She's not sick you know.

GRANT  
 To keep her company.

MADELEINE  
 They have to get over these things  
 on their own. They've got short  
 memories. That's not always so bad.

Grant walks down the corridor, rattled. Stops and looks out the window to see a woman in a tartan pants suit in the parking lot getting a folded-up wheelchair out of the trunk of her car.

126 INT MEADOWLAKE DINING AREA-JANUARY 2005- MORNING 126

Grant arrives at Meadowlake. Looks for Fiona. She's not there. Eliza sees him and gleefully calls to him.

ELIZA

She's still sick! But he's gone!  
You must be happy about that!

127 INT FIONA'S ROOM -JANUARY 2005- MORNING 127

Grant gently opens the door to Fiona's room. She is weeping. An untouched plate of food sits beside her. She looks up to see him. \*

FIONA

Oh. Hello.

She goes back to weeping. Grant is at a loss. He begins to leave, then changes his mind. He comes and sits next to her while she cries. He looks at her hand on the bed, and debates whether or not to take it in his own. Slowly, gently, he holds it. \*

GRANT

Perhaps I could read you something.  
~~you~~. \*

FIONA

Oh. Alright. I don't have any books though. \*

Grant looks at the stack of books on the dressing table that he has brought over the last several months. He feigns surprise. \*

GRANT

Oh look. Here's some. Here we are.  
I'll read something from Letters  
From ~~Iceland~~. \*

FIONA

Ice-land. \*

He begins to read to her. She is staring into space. Not hearing. We stay very close on her during the following. Occasionally we go to grainy archival footage of Iceland. It appears to be part of Fiona's memory, or thoughts. \*

GRANT

Isn't it true however far we've  
wandered \*

(MORE) \*

GRANT (cont'd)

Into our provinces of persecution \*  
 Where our regrets accuse, we keep \*  
 returning, \*  
 Back to the common faith from which \*  
 we've all dissented, \*  
 Back to the hands, the feet, the \*  
 faces \*  
  
 Children are always there and take \*  
~~hands~~ \*  
 Even when they're most \*  
 terrified; those in love \*  
 Cannot make up their minds to go or \*  
~~stay;~~ \*  
 Artist and Doctor return most \*  
 often; \*  
 Only the mad will never never come \*  
 back. \*  
  
 For doctors keep on worrying while \*  
 away \*  
 In case their skill is suffering \*  
~~and~~ asserted; \*  
 Lovers have lived so long with \*  
~~giants~~ and lives \*  
 They want belief again in their own \*  
 size; \*  
 And the artist prays ever so gently- \*  
  
 'Let me find pure all that can \*  
 happen. \*  
 Only uniqueness is success! For \*  
 instance, \*  
 Let me perceive the images of \*  
 history, \*  
 All that I push away with doubt and \*  
 travel, \*  
 Today's and yesterday's, alike like \*  
 bodies. \*

128 OMITTED

128 \*

129 OMITTED

129 \*





132 INT TV AREA-JANUARY 2005 -DAY

132 \*

Fiona watches the news with Grant and some other residents. Scenes of violence and chaos in Iraq.

FIONA

How could they forget Vietnam?

Grant stares at her. This sounds very much like her as she was. Someone switches the TV station to golf. As she looks at the screen she is hit with a fresh bout of grief. She begins to cry silently. Grant reaches out to touch her hair. She bats his hand away.

FIONA

Oh. It's just the big screen. Hurts my eyes.

133 INT DINING AREA MEADOWLAKE

133

Kristy sits and has a coffee with Grant on her break. They watch 2 old men in the common area playing horseshoes. One of them throws the horseshoe and then they both stand there like statues, not sure what happens next.

KRISTY

Her muscles are deteriorating. If she doesn't improve soon we're gonna have to put her on a walker.

GRANT  
I keep trying to get her walking.  
She just doesn't seem to want to go  
anywhere.

KRISTY  
But you know once they get a walker  
they start to depend on it and they  
don't walk much anymore, just get  
wherever it is they have to go.

Grant scratches his head. Looks worried.

KRISTY  
You'll have to work at her harder.  
Try and encourage her.

Kristy goes and retrieves the horseshoe and gives it to the  
man who threw it. He throws it again. And then waits again.

134 INT FIONA'S ROOM -JANUARY 2005 -MORNING 134

Grant enters with a lot of energy.

GRANT  
How do you feel about a little  
field trip Mrs. Andersson?

135 EXT HURON COUNTY ROAD -JANUARY 2006- MORNING 135

Grant drives Fiona down the road to their home. They pass the  
hollow. He notices it. Looks at her to see if there is any  
recognition. She vaguely seems to register something. Touches  
the glass of the window.

136 EXT ANDERSSON'S COTTAGE -JANUARY 2005- MORNING 136

Grant leads Fiona to the door. She looks at it. Some  
recognition.

137 INT ANDERSSON'S COTTAGE -JANUARY 2005- MORNING 137

Grant watches as Fiona makes her way around the house.  
Touching things, admiring pictures and objects. He watches  
her intently.

FIONA  
They've kept it so like it was.

Who has? GRANT

FIONA  
The people who live here.

138 EXT ANDERSSON'S COTTAGE -JANUARY 2005- DAY 138

Fiona walks out the back door. Grant follows. She sees the skis propped up against the wall. She touches them gently, her eyes welling up with tears. She sinks down on the ground.

FIONA  
Everything...

Grant kneels down beside her. Takes her hand. She takes it back.

FIONA  
Everything just reminds me of him.

Grant searches her eyes which are staring off into space, right past him.

FIONA  
I wasn't enough I suppose.

GRANT  
Who?

She is silent.

GRANT  
Who Fiona? Who does everything remind you of?

She looks back at him.

FIONA  
I'd like to go now if you don't mind.

He sits with her. We pull away from them, sitting together on the back porch. She's a million miles away.

139 EXT COUNTY ROAD -JANUARY 2005- AFTERNOON 139

They drive past the hollow again. Fiona smiles ever so slightly. Looks at Grant. He smiles back at her, trying to ascertain whether or not she remembers.

FIONA  
Everything just reminds me of him.  
He looks ahead. Defeated.

140 EXT MEADOWLAKE - COURTYARD-JANUARY 2005- DAY

140

Kristy has a smoke and wraps up a cell phone call. Grant comes out to join her.

GRANT

I think I want to ask you about the second floor. Just to know a bit more about it.

KRISTY

Well. It's for people who have really lost it.

GRANT

And what do they do? What happens after they've...lost it.

KRISTY

Some just sit. Some sit and cry. Some try to holler the house down. You don't really want to know. But...sometimes they get it back. You go in their rooms for a year and they don't know you from Adam. Then one day, it's "oh, hi, when are we going home?" All of a sudden they're absolutely back to normal again.

Grant looks vaguely hopeful.

KRISTY

But not for long. You think, wow, back to normal. And then they're gone again.

She snaps her fingers.

KRISTY

Like so.

Grant stares off. Tears in his eyes.

GRANT

Are you married? I haven't even asked you about yourself.

KRISTY

Technically I guess yeah. Got three kids. Their father's somewhere in Alberta I think. Makin it rich maybe. I wouldn't know.

GRANT  
How old are your kids?

KRISTY  
Ten, three and eight.

GRANT  
Must be a struggle.

KRISTY  
Oh, ya know. It knocks the wind out  
of ya every now and then. But you  
pick yourself back up like everyone  
else.

Grant looks at her, thinking.

GRANT  
I suppose... I suppose our lives  
must seem easy to you. We got  
through life without too much going  
wrong. What we have to suffer, now  
that we're old hardly counts I  
suppose. That's what you must  
think.

Kristy stares at him, shocked at the condescension in his  
tone. And thoroughly insulted by the sentiment. There is a  
lot of anger in her eyes. She half smiles, glaring.

KRISTY  
You don't know what I think. To  
tell you the truth I'd rather be  
the one who stayed than the one who  
left. I'll bet you weren't always  
the doggedly devoted husband. Am I  
right? When you said you thought  
maybe she was punishing you for  
something. I'll bet maybe you had  
something pretty specific in mind  
didn't you?

He looks at her for a moment.

KRISTY  
You see a lot in this job. You see  
the end of things, all day long. In  
my experience, at the end of  
things, it's almost always the men  
that think not too much went wrong.  
I wonder if your wife feels the  
same way.

Grant looks off into the distance.

GRANT  
I wonder that too.

KRISTY  
I'll bet you do.

He turns to look at her. Decides to confide in her, now that she seems to have lost all respect for him anyway.

GRANT  
Do you remember the day we came in here? How badly I didn't want to let her go?

141 EXT COUNTY ROAD -FLASHBACK-JANUARY 2004- MORNING 141

We've seen the beginning of this scene before. Grant and Fiona drive in silence. "Harvest Moon" by Neil Young plays in the tape deck. Fiona spots something just off the road.

FIONA  
Oh. Remember?

Grant looks and sees the conservation area where they saw the skunk lilies. Grant smiles at her. Looks ahead. It's all he can do to not turn the car around.

FIONA  
You look surprised Grant.

GRANT  
Not surprised. Just grateful. I'm grateful you can remember that.

FIONA  
I'm not all gone Grant. I'm just going.

She leaves a pregnant pause. The scene continues.

FIONA  
There are things I wish would go  
away but won't. Things we don't  
talk about.

Grant looks very unsettled. Fiona continues on. Sincere. No  
venom at all. Almost lightly.

FIONA  
You never left me. You still made  
love to me in spite of disturbing  
demands elsewhere. You never stayed  
away from me a single night. There  
was no making up elaborate stories  
in order to spend a weekend in a  
tent on Manitoulin Island. You went  
easy on the dope and the drink. You  
continued to publish papers, make  
progress in your career. You never  
had any intention, so far as I  
could tell, of throwing up work and  
marriage and taking to the country  
to practice carpentry or keep bees.  
Thank you for that. That would have  
been ugly.

She means it. He is stunned.

FIONA  
But all those sandals Grant. All  
those bare female toes.

CUT TO:

142 INT UNIVERSITY CLASS - 1970'S

142

GRANT'S MEMORY: We see glimpses of long hair, toes in  
sandals. A University class, full of young women looking up  
at us with adoring eyes.

FIONA (O.S.)  
What could you do but be a part of  
the time you were a part of. All  
those pretty girls. It didn't seem  
like anyone was willing to be left  
out. And hey. You got in shape.

CUT BACK TO:



143 EXT COUNTY ROAD - JANUARY 2004 - MORNING

143

FIONA

You quit smoking even. A wife of twenty years knows that it isn't for *her*. Do you remember how hard I tried to get you to quit when we were first married. You felt so sick when you finally did it. But you kept to it. And I thought. "A big reward must be coming his way." But you seemed happier. Even though you were...away from me sometimes. You were easier to live with in many ways. I think you did alright. Compared to your colleagues. The ones who left their wives. And the women who wouldn't put up with it.

She gets wistful.

FIONA

I never quite understood those women to tell you the truth.

She loses her train of thought. Is silent for a moment.

FIONA

I think people are too demanding. Aren't they? People want to be in love every single day. What a liability.

Grant goes to say something. She interrupts him.

FIONA

And then that silly girl. That silly girl Veronica. Girls that age are always going around talking about killing themselves.

CUT TO:

144 INT 70'S CLASSROOM

144

GRANT'S MEMORY: of Veronica. Close on her face, looking into our eyes. Pain and anguish in her eyes.

FIONA (V.O.)  
 That was it for then. No more New  
 Year's or Christmas Invitations for  
 the Andersson's.

CUT BACK TO:

145 EXT MEADOWLAKE PARKING LOT JANUARY 2004 - MORNING 145

They pull into the parking lot.

FIONA

We moved out here. Without making  
 the mistake of confessing. You  
 promised me a new life. We moved  
 out here. And that's exactly what  
 you gave me.

She smiles fondly.

FIONA

How long ago was that?

GRANT

Twenty years.

Fiona shakes her head.

FIONA

Well that's shocking.

She smiles serenely.

FIONA

So you see. I'm going but I'm not  
 all gone.

Fiona goes to open the car door. Grant grabs her hand.

GRANT

Fiona.

FIONA

Yes dear.

GRANT

Don't go.

She pats his hand. Gives him a kiss.

FIONA

That's what is happening Grant.  
 It's happening right now.

84A.

She gets out of the car. Like a zombie he follows her. Takes her bags out of the trunk and follows her, blindly into the building.

145A OMITTED

145A

146 INT MEADOWLAKE CHECK IN AREA -JANUARY 2004- MORNING 146

Fiona approaches the front desk, Grant following behind, trying to keep up with her with all the bags.

GRANT  
Fiona...

FIONA  
(to receptionist)  
I'm checking in today. My name is  
Fiona Andersson.

GRANT  
Fiona let's come back another time.

The receptionist brings up a file.

RECEPTIONIST  
Yes Mrs. Andersson. We have your  
room all ready for you.

FIONA  
Perfect. Will you show me to it  
please?

RECEPTIONIST  
Absolutely. We'll have our  
supervisor Mrs. Montpelier show  
you. Now you haven't taken the tour  
yet. Is that correct?

FIONA  
Yes. That's correct.

RECEPTIONIST  
I'll go fetch her. She's just in  
her office right now. But she's  
expecting you.

The Receptionist exits into the back office.

GRANT  
Please Fiona. Not now. I can't go  
away from you like this.

Fiona smiles a little. Lets this sink in for a minute. Puts  
her hand tenderly on his face.

FIONA  
 You've been good to me Grant. We  
 had nothing to tie us down Grant.  
 You could have just driven away and  
 forsaken me. But you didn't. And I  
 thank you for that.

Over Fiona's face, looking sincerely up into Grant's we hear  
 Grant, telling Kristy the rest of the story.

GRANT (O.S.)  
 And then we went to her room, and  
~~she asked me to make love to her~~  
~~there and then go. And so I did. I~~  
 went. And I never really saw her  
 again... Or she never really saw me  
 I suppose.

147 EXT MEADOWLAKE -JANUARY 2005-DAY 147

Kristy watches Grant. Taken aback. She shakes her head. She  
 stubs out her cigarette and walks away from him. Grant  
 watches her go.

CUT TO:

147A INT MEADOWLAKE STAIRWELL - JANUARY 2005 - DAY 147A

We see Grant stand alone as Kristy walks away from him. Pull  
 back to reveal Fiona, watching.

148 INT CONSERVATORY - FEBRUARY 2005-DAY 148

Grant reads to Fiona from Letters From Iceland. She is far  
 off.

GRANT  
*The desires of the heart are as  
 crooked as corkscrews  
 Not to be born is the best for man  
 The second best is a formal order  
 The dances pattern, dance while you  
 can.*

Grant notices how far off Fiona is. Stops reading.

GRANT  
Fiona?

She doesn't respond.

GRANT  
Is there any way to let this go? Do you think?

Fiona smiles sadly. Strokes his hand.

FIONA  
If I <sup>(weakly)</sup> let it go, even for a minute,  
it'll only hit me harder when I  
bump into it again.

GRANT  
Okay. Okay.

Grant grabs her hand. Kisses it.

He goes back to reading to her. She cries silently.

GRANT  
*Dance, dance, for the figure is  
easy  
The tune is catching and will not  
stop  
Dance till the stars come down with  
the rafters  
Dance, dance, dance till you drop.*

149 INT MADELEINE'S OFFICE -FEBRUARY 2005 -DAY

149

Madeleine sits across from Grant, Fiona's file in front of her.

MADELEINE  
The thing is, I'm sure you know, we don't do any prolonged bed care on the first floor. We do it temporarily if someone isn't feeling well, but if they get too weak to move around and be responsible we have to consider upstairs.

Grant thinks for a moment.

GRANT  
Would you happen to have Aubrey's  
address?

MADELEINE  
Excuse me?

GRANT  
Aubrey and his wife. Do you know  
where they live?

150 INT BRIGHT HALLWAY- FEBURARY 2005 -LATE AFTERNOON 150

Grant watches Fiona walk away from him down the long  
corridor, bathed in that late afternoon light.

MARIAN (O.S.)  
Fiona. Her name's Fiona huh? And  
what's yours? I don't think I ever  
was told that.

151 INT MARIAN'S KITCHEN - FEBRUARY 2005 - MORNING 151

Marian stares at Grant, inquisitively. GRANT looks down,  
feeling slightly defeated by her attitude.

GRANT  
It's Grant.

She suddenly sticks her hand out across the table.

MARIAN  
Hello Grant. I'm Marian.

He shakes her hand, tentatively.

MARIAN  
So now we know each other's name,  
there's no point in not telling you  
straight out what I think. I don't  
know if he's still so stuck on  
seeing your - on seeing Fiona. Or  
not. I don't ask him and he's not  
telling me. But I don't feel like  
taking him back there in case it  
turns out to be more than that. I  
can't afford to risk it. I don't  
want him getting hard to  
handle. I've got my hands full with  
him as it is. I don't have any  
help. It's just me here. I'm it.

GRANT lowers his voice to a whisper.

GRANT

Did you ever consider - it *is* very hard for you - did you ever consider his going in there for good?

MARIAN doesn't seem to feel the need to lower her voice.

MARIAN

No. I'm keeping him right here.

GRANT

Well. That's very good and noble of you.

MARIAN

You think so? Noble is not what I'm thinking about.

GRANT

Still. It's not easy.

MARIAN

No it isn't. See, I don't have much of a choice. If I put him in there I don't have the money to pay for him unless I sell the house. The house is what we own outright. Otherwise I don't have anything in the way of resources. I get my pension next year, but even so I could not afford to keep him there and hang on to the house. And it means a lot to me, my house does.

GRANT

It's very nice.

MARIAN

Well, it's alright. I put a lot into it. Fixing it up and keeping it up.

GRANT

I'm sure you did. You do.

MARIAN

I don't want to lose it.



GRANT

No.

MARIAN

I'm not *going* to lose it.

GRANT

I see your point.

MARIAN

The company left us high and dry. Basically he got shoved out. It ended up with them saying he owed them money and when I tried to find out what was what he just went on saying it's none of my business. What I think is he was doing...well he was pretty stupid. But I'm not supposed to ask so I shut up. You've been married. You are married. You know how it is. And in the middle of all this we're supposed to go on this trip with these people and can't get out of it. And on the trip he takes sick from this virus you've never heard of and goes into a coma. So that pretty well gets *him* off the hook.

GRANT

Bad luck.

MARIAN

I don't mean exactly that he got sick on purpose. It just happened. He's not mad at me anymore and I'm not mad at him. It's just life.

GRANT

That's true.

MARIAN

You can't beat life.

She flicks her tongue in a cat's businesslike way across her top lip, getting the cookie crumbs.

MARIAN

I sound like I'm quite the philosopher, don't I?  
(MORE)

MARIAN (cont'd)  
They told me out there you used to  
be a university professor.

GRANT  
Quite a while ago.

MARIAN  
I'm not much of an intellectual.

GRANT  
I don't know how much I am either.

MARIAN  
But I know when my mind's made up.  
And it's made up. I'm not going to  
let go of the house. Which means  
I'm keeping him here and I don't  
want him getting it in his head he  
wants to move anyplace else. It was  
probably a mistake putting him in  
there so I could get away, but I  
wasn't going to get another chance,  
so I took it. So. Now I know  
better.

She shakes out another cigarette.

MARIAN  
You're thinking - there's a  
mercenary type of a person.

GRANT  
I'm not making judgements of that  
sort. It's your life.

MARIAN  
You bet it is.

Marian looks at him for a moment. Takes him in.

GRANT  
Did your husband - did Aubrey work  
in a hardware store in the summers  
when he was going to school?

MARIAN  
I never heard about it. I wasn't  
raised here.

Grant smiles. He has lost.

GRANT  
No. No I didn't think so.

152 INT MARIAN'S HOUSE HALLWAY -FEBRUARY 2005-MORNING 152

Marian opens the door for Grant. He shakes her hand.

GRANT  
Thank you for your time Miriam.

She's suddenly sensitive. A bit vulnerable.

MARIAN  
It's Marian.

She seems hurt. The door closes. MARIAN thinks for a moment.  
Then leans on the door.

MARIAN  
(to herself)  
What a jerk.

But that's not what she's thinking.

SCENE153OMITTED

SCENE153OMITTED

154 INT MARIAN'S HOUSE - FEBRUARY 2005-DAY 154

MARIAN sits down at her kitchen table, pensive. She glances  
at AUBREY's feet through the doorway. Stirs her coffee.

155 INT ANDERSSON'S LIVINGROOM -FEBRUARY 2005-EVENING 155

Grant presses play on the answering machine. He stands at the  
table with his head hung. As he hears the message, he turns  
his head slowly to look at the phone.

MARIAN (O.S.)  
Hello, Grant. I hope I got the  
right person. I just thought of  
something.  
(MORE)

MARIAN (O.S.) (cont'd)

There is a dance here in town at the Legion supposed to be for singles on Saturday night, and I am on the supper committee which means I can bring a free guest. So I wondered whether you would happen to be interested in that? Call me back when you get a chance. 281-3457.

The machine beeps and another one plays. This time, her voice has a little tremor of nerves, an affected nonchalance, a hurry to get through and a reluctance to let go.

MARIAN(O.S.)

I just realized I'd forgot to say who it was. Well you probably recognized the voice. The accent. It's Marian. I'm still not so used to these machines. And I wanted to say I realize you're not single and I don't mean it that way. I'm not either, but it doesn't hurt to get out once in a while. Anyway, now I've said all this I really hope it's you I'm talking to. It did sound like your voice. If you are interested you can call me and if you are not you don't need to bother. I just thought you might like the chance to get out. It's Marian speaking. I guess I already said that. Okay, then. Good-bye.

GRANT stares at the machine for a long time.

156 INT ANDERSSON'S KITCHEN -FEBRUARY 2005- EVENING 156

GRANT makes himself an omelette.

157 INT MARIAN'S HOUSE -FEBRUARY 2005- EVENING 157

Marian watches closely as Aubrey eats his dinner.

158 INT ANDERSSON'S LIVINGROOM -FEBRUARY 2005-EVENING 158

GRANT eats his dinner, thinking.

159 INT MARIAN'S HOUSE -FEBRUARY 2005- EVENING 159

MARIAN does the dishes, thinking very hard about something. She goes to the phone. Looks at it a long time.



160 INT ANDERSSON'S COTTAGE -FEBRUARY 2005- NIGHT 160  
 GRANT does the dishes. Grant goes to put away the frying pan.  
 He stares at it for a long time.

MARIAN (O.S.)  
 Grant. This is Marian. I was down  
 in the basement putting the wash in  
 the dryer and I heard the phone and  
 when I got upstairs whoever it was  
 had hung up. So I just thought I  
 ought to say I was here. If it was  
 you and if you are even home.  
 Because I don't have a machine  
 obviously, so you couldn't leave a  
 message. So I just wanted. To let  
 you know. Bye.

Grant picks up the phone.

GRANT  
 Hello Marian.

161 OMITTED 161 \*  
 162 OMITTED 162 \*  
 163 EXT MARIAN'S HOUSE - FEBRUARY 2005- EVENING 163 \*

Grant knocks on MARIAN's door. He is dressed in a suit with  
~~some ruffles in the hand when MARIAN seems to be there. He is dressed up a~~  
 little as well.

GRANT  
So.

MARIAN  
There you are.

They look at each other. Taking stock of the situation.

GRANT  
Here I am.

Marian motions him inside.

MARIAN  
I'm just putting on the finishing touches if you get my meaning. Give me a minute. Have a seat in the kitchen if you want. I've got the neighbours daughter over to see to Aubrey.

Marian exits to the bathroom. Grant goes to the kitchen. Sits down. Looks around at the orderly details of this life. Monica, who we met earlier at Meadowlake, comes in and turns the kettle on, not seeing Grant. She talks to AUBREY, whose feet are again visible through the doorway.

MONICA  
Just gimme a sec Mr. Bark. Your tea's a comin.

Grant stares at the back of her head, waiting for her to turn around.

GRANT  
Hello there.

Badass turns around.

MONICA  
HEY!!! How are ya? How's your long lost love?

GRANT smiles.

MONICA  
What are you doing here?

MARIAN enters, all gussied up and ready to go.

MARIAN  
Well. Let's be off. Free drinks  
only last til eight.

He forces a smile.

GRANT  
You look lovely.

He gets up to leave. Monica has her jaw hanging open. MARIAN heads for the door. GRANT goes to follow her but Monica stops him. Monica stares at him, upset.

He looks at her, a little guilty and ashamed.

GRANT  
Life is...complicated.

Monica shakes her head. He pats her comfortingly on the shoulder as he leaves the room.

164 INT MARIAN'S HOUSE - FEBRUARY 2005 - EVENING 164

Monica brings AUBREY his tea. She has tears in her eyes. At the sound of the car driving off, he turns his head mournfully to the window. He slowly shakes his head. Monica holds his hand, but looks away, embarrassed. Evening winter sunlight pours in sadly.

165 INT DANCE HALL -FEBRUARY 2005- NIGHT 165

MARIAN and GRANT dance. Grant has a far off look, not totally engaged.

FLASHBACK:

December 2003

GRANT'S POV of FIONA skiing beside him in the field behind their house. She looks at him, out of breath and laughing.

166 INT DANCE HALL -FEBRUARY 2005 NIGHT 166

Grant closes his eyes, trying to block out the image. Marian looks up at him. Direct.

MARIAN  
What are you thinking about?



GRANT  
Oh. Not much. Skiing.

Marian watches him. Knowing that isn't all.

MARIAN  
Downhill?

GRANT  
Cross-country.

She shrugs.

MARIAN  
I'm more of a thrill seeker I  
guess.

She looks off, smiles to herself.

GRANT  
What are you thinking about?

MARIAN  
I'm thinking. You never know how  
these things are going to turn out.  
You almost know. But you can never  
be quite sure.

GRANT looks down at her. A little shocked at the direction  
his life is about to go in.

167 EXT WOODS - TIME TRANSITION 167

Close on a skunk lily covered in snow. We stay on it as the  
snow slowly melts off it, sun illuminates it, rain falls on  
it, wind blows it, and the snow falls again.

168 INT MARIAN'S BEDROOM -DECEMBER 2005 - EVENING 168

GRANT sits on the bed his thoughts still a million miles  
away.

FLASHBACK:

169 INT ANDERSSON'S LIVINGROOM - JANUARY 2003 169

Fiona peeks over a Norse Mythology book, lit by the fire,  
laughing.

170 INT MARIAN'S BEDROOM- DECEMBER 2005 - EVENING 170

MARIAN's bare legs pass through frame in the f.g. GRANT  
smiles up at her, distracted. He is in a thousand pieces.

171 EXT SKI LIFT - DECEMBER 2005 - MORNING

171

MARIAN and GRANT on the ski lift. Marian grabs Grant's hand.

GRANT

I'm thinking...that next time we go skiing It might make more sense to put Aubrey back into Meadowlake. Just for the day. Instead of leaving him at that teenager's house.

Monica. MARIAN

GRANT

Sorry?

MARIAN

Monica. That's her name.

GRANT

Ah. Monica. What do you think?

MARIAN

I'm thinking that sometimes you just have to make a decision to be happy. You just decide. Things aren't ever what you hoped they'd be. Not ever. Not for anybody. The only thing that separates one kind of person from the other, is that there are some who stay angry about it, and there are some who accept what comes their way.

GRANT

Which kind of person are you?

MARIAN all of a sudden looks very vulnerable. All her hardness just melts away.

MARIAN

I was pretty damn mad. But right now...I'm looking at what came my way...and I think...maybe I could become the other kind of person.

Marian gets embarrassed by how much she has revealed and laughs it off.

MARIAN  
Quite the philosopher eh?

She takes a moment. Looks at him knowingly.

MARIAN  
I know what you're doing Grant. I know why you're here. I'm a little unpolished but I'm not stupid. It'd be easier on me if you could pretend a little. Pretend you're here for me. Not just to get Aubrey back to Fiona. Think you could do that for me?

Grant takes her hand.

MARIAN  
I'm just trying to make the decision to be happy. I could use a little help here.

Grant nods, moved. He takes her hand. They ride the rest of the way in silence. We see them from a distance, the ski lift taking them further and further up the hill and away from us.

172 INT MARIAN'S BEDROOM- DECEMBER 2005 172

Grant and Marian have sex. It is quite intense. They are both in their own worlds. Both, for their own reasons, on the verge of tears. When it is over, they fall back overcome. They are silent for a long while.

MARIAN  
(with tears streaming down her face)  
Now what were we talking about again?

Grant looks at her. They both laugh.

TITLE CARD:

**THE RETURN**

173 INT CHECK IN AREA

173

KRISTY

Hello there Mr. Andersson.

Madeleine peeks out.

MADELEINE

We didn't get to see you yesterday.

GRANT

No. I went skiing.

MADELEINE

Good for you to get away.

Grant nods.

174 INT FIONA'S ROOM - JANUARY 2006 - MORNING

174

GRANT knocks at the door, opens the door slowly. FIONA is still in bed, looking even paler, even skinnier. Hesits beside her. She has her back to him, and slowly reaches out her fingers to touch one of Aubrey's drawings which is pasted on the wall.

175 INT MEADOWLAKE ELEVATOR AREA- JANUARY 2006 -MORNING

175

MADELEINE catches GRANT just as he is leaving.

MADELEINE

Mr. Andersson. As you can see, we're going to have to move Mrs. Andersson to the second floor quite soon. She hasn't been out of bed for the last few weeks and...

GRANT whirls around on her, screaming, tears flying out of his eyes.

GRANT

Yes! Yes! I'm quite aware of your policy! I'm more than aware of your fucking policies!

KRISTY watches him from behind the counter. A lot of empathy in her eyes. Frank, the play-by play guy for the Winnipeg Jets walks through the doors, escorted by an attendant.

FRANK  
 ...and We're back in Meadowlake,  
 going back to the second floor, and  
 passing a man with his heart broken  
 on the left, broken in a thousand  
 pieces...

Grant stares at him for a moment and then leaves.

176

EXT MEADOWLAKE - JANUARY 2006-MORNING

176

Grant stands outside Meadowlake, staring at Eliza who is walking around the pond, being followed by her daughter who signs to her, trying to get her attention. She keeps looking back at him, irritated and confused. Finally she stops chasing her. Stands alone, weeping at the edge of the pond while Eliza hurries back into Meadowlake. Kristy appears beside him, smoking.

KRISTY  
 She was the only one in the family  
 who bothered to learn sign  
 language. Now she doesn't remember  
 how, or maybe even who she is.

GRANT  
 Her daughter?

KRISTY  
 Yup. It's left her pretty stranded.  
 Marooned.

Grant stares at the sight of the woman, alone, looking to where her mother disappeared.

KRISTY  
 I thought of you the other day. You  
 know the billboard in front of the  
 United Church in Brantford? They  
 post different biblical type stuff.  
 The other day it said "It's never  
 too late to become what you might  
 have been."

Grant laughs at the irony of this.

GRANT  
 That doesn't sound all that  
 biblical.

KRISTY

Well. Maybe they're gettin creative  
on us.

Grant smiles at her. She gives him a little squeeze on the  
shoulder and leaves. It means the world to him. He stares out  
at the pond and thinks.

17 OMITTED

17 OMITTED

178 INT MARIAN'S HOUSE-FEBRUARY 2006- SUNSET 178

Marian's house is full of moving boxes. Grant stares out of  
Marian's kitchen window. She passes by with a box she has  
just packed. She pauses. She looks at him. She keeps going  
into the other room. He looks out the window.

179 INT MEADOWLAKE CORRIDOR - FEBRUARY 2006 - DAY 179

Kristy and Madeleine push Fiona in her bed, down the hall,  
Grant follows.

180 INT ELEVATOR - FEBRUARY 2006 - DAY 180

They are silent as the elevator takes them to the 2nd floor.

181 INT SECOND FLOOR -FEBRUARY 2006- DAY 181

The elevator doors open on a group of very far gone  
residents. They eat in silence. Someone drops a plate and it  
crashes on the floor. They push the stretcher past the group  
and into a room.

182 INT FIONA'S NEW ROOM -FEBRUARY 2006- DAY 182

They put the bed beside the window. Fiona stares outside.  
Grant watches her look out the window.

183 EXT MARIAN'S HOUSE -MARCH 2006- EARLY MORNING 183

Grant and Marian load the last of Marian's belongings into a  
moving truck. The moving truck drives off. And then, as  
though he is another box, they load Aubrey and his wheelchair  
into Grant's car. Marian gives him a kiss on the forehead.

MARIAN

I'll see you soon Aubrey.

184 EXT COUNTY ROAD -MARCH 2006- EARLY MORNING 184

Grant and Aubrey drive in silence. Aubrey looks straight ahead. He very slowly, almost ominously turns his head to look at Grant. Grant turns to make eye contact. They lock eyes for a moment. Then look away.

185 INT MEADOWLAKE CHECK IN AREA -MARCH 2006- MORNING 185

Kristy looks up as Grant wheels Aubrey in the door. Her jaw drops. She looks up at Grant, understanding what he's doing. She smiles at him. Grant looks at her and shrugs.

186 INT 2ND FLOOR CORRIDOR -MARCH 2006- MORNING 186

Grant walks down the hallway. Kristy pushes Aubrey in his wheelchair towards Fiona's room. Grant takes a deep breath. They stop outside the door. Grant turns to Kristy and Aubrey.

GRANT

If you wouldn't mind...Could I have  
a moment alone before you come in?  
To explain things?

Kristy looks up at Grant with all the respect in the world. Aubrey nods.

Grant enters Fiona's room.

187 INT FIONA'S NEW ROOM - MARCH 2006-MORNING 187

Fiona is in her room but not in bed. She is sitting by the open window, wearing a seasonable but oddly short and bright dress. She has the Auden book in her lap. She looks up at Grant and smiles.

FIONA

Look at this beautiful book I  
found, it's about Iceland. You  
wouldn't think they'd leave  
valuable books lying around in the  
rooms. The people staying here are  
not necessarily honest. And I think  
they've got the clothes mixed up. I  
never wear yellow.

She runs her fingers over the book tenderly.

FIONA

I seem to remember you reading this  
to me. You were trying to make me  
feel better. You tried so hard.

(MORE)

FIONA (cont'd)  
 You're a lovely man you know. I'm a  
 very lucky woman.

GRANT  
 Fiona...

FIONA  
 You've been gone a long time. Are  
 we all checked out now?

Grant is very thrown. He doesn't know how to respond to all  
 this. Decides he shouldn't. He inhales and continues.

GRANT  
 Fiona, I've brought a surprise for  
 you. Do you remember Aubrey?

She stares at him for a moment, as if waves of wind have come  
 beating into her face. Into her face, into her head, pulling  
 everything to rags.

FIONA  
 Names elude me.

The look passes, as she retrieves, with an effort, some  
 bantering grace. She sets down the book carefully and stands  
 up. She lifts her arms to put them around him. He holds her,  
 astonished. Settles into the embrace. She pulls his earlobes.

FIONA  
 I'm happy to see you.

She smiles, smells his shirt.

FIONA  
 You could have just driven away.  
 Just driven away without a care in  
 the world and forsook me. Forsooaken  
 me. Forsaken.

He keeps his face against her white hair, her pink scalp, her  
 sweetly shaped skull. With tears in his eyes he says:

GRANT  
 Not a chance.

Kristy opens the door slightly, and sees them embracing.  
 She's amazed. She looks back at Aubrey, offscreen. Only his  
 feet are visible through the doorway.

Fiona and Grant hold each other like they'll never let go.  
 We hear k.d. Lang's version of "Helpless."



188 EXT LAKE -DAY

188

We race backwards over ski tracks in the snow. They go on and on and on until they melt and dissolve into:

189 EXT PIER - 1961 -MORNING

189

GRANT'S MEMORY: Fiona at 18, looks at us. Smiling. Full of life. She turns away from us.

FADE TO WHITE.