

Great Hope Springs

by

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FADE IN:

1 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - MAEVE'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING 1

The room is decorated in that overly precious way, china blue accents, frilly pillow shams, a ceramic cat.

MAEVE SOAMES, middle-aged -- not Hollywood middle-aged, Duluth middle-aged -- is awake and has been. She has bobbed blonde hair and a face like Doris Day. Twenty years later. She has aged the way perky and cute inevitably do: pretty for years then one day invisible.

Maeve stares up at the ceiling from her twin bed, wishes she were somewhere else.

She turns, looks longingly at a PHOTO on her nightstand. Just visible in the moonlight, it's of Maeve and her husband.

2 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - ARNOLD'S BEDROOM - MORNING 2

This, believe it or not, is where Maeve wishes she were: the bedroom of her husband, the sleeping ARNOLD SOAMES. Arnold is an accountant and looks like one. He retains wisps of dark hair which he sometimes bothers to comb over but for the most part vanity is outside his purview.

His ALARM SOUNDS, the old fashioned kind, BLEEP BLEEP BLEEP. Arnold slaps it off, swings his legs to the side of the bed, resigned. Today will be as colorless as all the days before.

3 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - MAEVE'S BEDROOM - MORNING 3

Maeve gets dressed. She wears a "cute" patterned sweater and "slacks." She looks like one of those "real" people in the health care commercials: sweet and sexless.

4 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - ARNOLD'S BEDROOM - MORNING 4

Arnold puts on his daily uniform: a low-end suit and tasteless cuff links. He pulls a tie from a rack of ties which all look the same.

5 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 5

Maeve is at the stove when Arnold enters. Arnold sits at the kitchen table and opens the waiting paper. Maeve places a strip of bacon and two eggs sunnyside up onto his plate.

ARNOLD

Thanks.

MAEVE

Mmm hmm.

Reading the business section, he begins to eat.

Back at the stove, Maeve watches him.

6 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

6

Maeve cleans up from breakfast. Arnold comes back through with his briefcase, on his way to the garage.

MAEVE

Six tonight?

ARNOLD

Should be.

MAEVE

I thought I'd do pot roast.

ARNOLD

Mmm.

MAEVE

Would you prefer something else?

ARNOLD

No, that's fine.

He kisses her on the cheek -- so fast it's like a drive-by.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Alright, see you tonight.

MAEVE

Bye.

He leaves. Maeve stands there in the wake of the kiss and all that it was and wasn't.

7 INT. TALBOT'S DAY - DAY (FORMERLY SCENE 17)

7

Maeve works (retagging returned items and marking sales items or dressing mannequins for the window) with EILEEN, a tougher, more blue-collar version of herself: Maeve if she'd grown up with the mob.

EILEEN

I could have killed Jerry this morning. Just killed him. And it's not like I haven't told him. I've told him a hundred times. Sometimes I think he does things I beg him not to just to, to --

MAEVE

What?

EILEEN

I don't know, he likes the...friction. If he stopped doing it, I'd stop telling him not to and that part of our marriage would be over. It's like a tradition. A very bad tradition. It's the thing that if he dropped dead tomorrow I'd say, you know I never thought I'd miss that about him but I miss it.

(beat)

I could have killed him.

MAEVE

Do you think you can change your marriage?

EILEEN

Me? What am I telling you, I talk, I talk, it's like I'm mute.

MAEVE

No, I mean...anyone.

EILEEN

Change your marriage?

(then)

I don't know, you mean like, you mostly eat in on Friday nights and then you eat out? Or you're at each other's throats and then you're Cinderella and Prince Charming? How big a change are we talking about?

MAEVE

The second one.

EILEEN

No. You married who you married, you are who you are, why would it change?

MAEVE

If you wanted it to.

EILEEN

No.

(then)

(MORE)

EILEEN (CONT'D)

For that to happen it would have to be so bad someone's willing to risk it all to shake things up. But then it may not come down your way. Change is very hard. People don't like change. And unless someone's beating you in the face or sleeping with every woman in town it's never bad enough that people are willing to risk the only thing they have. Marriages don't change.

Maeve sighs. What she feared.

EILEEN (CONT'D)

What are you making tonight? The kids still coming over?

MAEVE

Mmm hmm.

EILEEN

You should borrow that new blazer -- with the embossed flowers? That would be great on you.

9 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - DEN - NIGHT

9

Maeve wears the embossed blazer. Its brightly-colored appliqué design drowns her a little. There's a cheese plate. Arnold has a drink. They are waiting.

ARNOLD

Jon Ross came in today.

MAEVE

Mmm.

ARNOLD

You'd think it was the first year he'd heard April fifteen was the deadline for taxes.

MAEVE

Uh huh.

ARNOLD

As if it was a totally new concept. We have the same conversation every year. Every goddamn year, for seventeen years -- can you imagine that?

Maeve can imagine that.

He takes a sip, out of things to talk about.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
What time they coming?

MAEVE
Quarter of.

He looks at his watch then turns on the TV NEWS.

10 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT (FORMERLY SCENE 18)10

On Maeve's right at the dinner table sits their daughter, MOLLY, an expansive person, handsome, athletic, with husband MARK. On her right sits their son, HANK, sweet-faced, thoughtful. Arnold is at the other end carving something.

HANK
Doing all right there, Dad?

ARNOLD
I'm fine, it's just...tough.

Maeve tries to ignore the slight.

MARK
Would you like some help with that?

ARNOLD
I'm fine, thank you.

MOLLY
Oh, you -- the last time I had Mark carve something it flew off the table.

MARK
It almost flew off the table.

MOLLY
It was four seconds from contact with the floor.

MARK
But I caught it.

HANK
Good hand-eye.

MARK
It's because I used to play baseball.

MOLLY

It's because you knew I would kill
you after I spent five hours
cooking that --

He laughs, subtly puts his hand on her arm. Maeve watches.

ARNOLD

Aw, hell, I'll have to get the
electric one.

He gets up, heads into the kitchen.

MOLLY

Mark hates those electric carvers.

MARK

I don't hate them, I just --

MOLLY

That's what it was, remember,
because your dad was there --

MARK

Oh, now why --

MOLLY

And he was standing behind you and
you started it up and he --

But she's laughing so hard she can't finish the story.

MARK

All right Red Buttons, enough,
let's tell some good ones about
you. Let's talk about the time you
put Woolite in the washer and it
flooded.

Maeve smiles, trying to join in. Hank notices.

HANK

(softly)

Hey, Mom.

She smiles at him.

HANK (CONT'D)

You all right?

MAEVE

Fine.

HANK

Be happy.

She smiles again, gives his arm a squeeze then as the conversation continues she gets up. She nearly crashes into Arnold and his electric carver as he heads back in.

ARNOLD

Where are you going?

MAEVE

Just to check on the -- I'll be right back.

She makes it out, just barely, to the

11 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - GUEST BATHROOM - NIGHT 11

Inside (flowered wallpaper, pot pourri) she looks at herself in the mirror, crying silently. Be happy? How?

12 INT. BARNES & NOBLE BOOKSTORE - DAY 12

Maeve peruses the self-help section, self-conscious. She moves through "Addiction," "How to be more organized," "How to do more," "How to be happy doing less,"...

She arrives at the marriage and relationship section. An avalanche of topics: how to pick a great partner, communicate better, have better sex, love more, hate less, get along with in-laws. She's having trouble identifying exactly what her problem is.

Finally, something catches her eye on the bottom of the next shelf. A book that's gotten wedged in behind the others. Maeve has to get down on the ground to fish it out.

The book's clearly been on the shelf a while. It's got some wear on its book jacket, which announces in big block letters, "YOU CAN HAVE THE MARRIAGE YOU WANT." God is talking to her at the Barnes & Noble.

Maeve flips the book over, reads the back: "You think great marriages are for other people." She does. She looks around furtively, irrationally wondering if the book's author can actually...see her.

She keeps reading: "They're not. Just by picking up this book you've already proven you have the one thing you need to achieve a great marriage: desire. Every marriage has within it the essential marriage that it was and the exciting marriage that it can be."

MAEVE
 (quietly)
 "Every marriage."

She stands there holding the book. Does she believe that? Every marriage? Even hers? A tear slides down her cheek. She does believe it. And the belief is nearly as painful as doubt would have been.

12A INT. BARNES & NOBLE BOOKSTORE - DAY 12A

Now in the long checkout line, Maeve waits, self conscious about her impending purchase.

She's right next to the magazine rack and glances over: US, Vogue, Cosmopolitan, all are covered in aliens -- thin, beaming aliens. She looks at the Cosmopolitan, "26 Ways To Drive Your Man Wild." She reaches for it, at the last minute veers to the the House & Garden.

Back in line she thumbs to the article on "Garden Gnome: Retro Chic or Relic?" As she begins to read she glances back at the Cosmo.

The girl on the cover taunts her with a lascivious smile. She looks around, embarrassed to be caught even looking.

13 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 13

Engrossed, Maeve reads, drinking her tea without looking up.

14 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT 14

Dinner time again. Arnold vents about his day but the sound is muted as Maeve looks at him, sizing him up, wondering.

15 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - MAEVE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 15

Maeve wears a more revealing nightie -- still white, still with flower accents, very innocent, but this one sleeveless. She looks at herself in the mirror, adjusts her hair, pulling a few strands out for a "sexier" look, doesn't know if she's succeeded. She takes a deep breath.

16 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - ARNOLD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 16

Arnold is reading in bed. KNOCK. He looks up. This never happens. KNOCK KNOCK.

ARNOLD
 Come in?

Maeve opens the door.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

What --

She closes the door behind her, stands against it. For the first time we see her eyes glow with something like hope. She looks younger. She's barely breathing, nervous, excited.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

MAEVE

I was thinking...

This would be a good time for him to help her. He does not.

MAEVE (CONT'D)

I was thinking...I could sleep in here tonight.

ARNOLD

In here? Why? Is something wrong with your room?

She shakes her head.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Is the furnace out again?

MAEVE

No.

ARNOLD

Then what --

MAEVE

I just...wanted to...

With a thunk Arnold gets it. And it scares him shitless.

ARNOLD

I don't -- I'm not feeling -- I had pork today at lunch -- it's probably best if --

The light in her eyes goes out.

MAEVE

I'll...I'll just go back.

She leaves. We stay with Arnold. Now he can hardly breathe.

19 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - MAEVE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

19

Dead of night now, that creepy otherworldly silence. Maeve sits on the window seat in her room, looking through old photo albums, back to when the kids were young, back to before there were kids, a Europe trip, she a smiling newlywed, Arnold for a moment confident because he won the pretty girl.

She stares hard at those people: where did they go? Are they still here?

She picks up her book, reads the back, about the author. "Doctor Bernard Feld runs the Center for Intensive Couples Counseling in Great Hope Springs, Maine."

She puts the book down, thinks.

A19 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - MAEVE'S BEDROOM - DAY

A19

Maeve, now dressed for the day, is navigating the web on her outdated computer. She's on the website for the Center for Intensive Couples Counseling, fascinated.

There's a picture of Doctor Feld. She studies it. He has a nice face, warm smile, wears a jacket. Looks reassuring.

She sees a link to a video, clicks on it.

A19A THE VIDEO PLAYS:

A19A

On the screen she watches Doctor Feld being interviewed.

Takes her a minute to get the sound to work. Finally --

DOCTOR FELD

...I see couples who think their marriage is over, who've been sleeping in separate rooms for years, --

Maeve blushes, again feeling irrationally like he can see her.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)

...couples who think it's impossible to get back what they once had. It's not impossible. And it's not too late, for anyone who truly wants it.

Off Maeve,

20

INT. SOAMES HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

20

Maeve puts one piece of bacon and two eggs on a plate as Arnold enters, sits, opens the paper. Like clockwork. Only today, Maeve sits. Arnold doesn't notice for a moment.

He looks up, something's weird.

ARNOLD

What are you -- are you eating?

MAEVE

No. I ate.

ARNOLD

What, you're just going to sit there? What are you --

Maeve slides a brochure across the table.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

What's -- what is this?

MAEVE

I want to go.

ARNOLD

"Doctor Bernard Feld, Intensive Couples Counseling -- "

He looks up, agog.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

You want to go to couples counseling?

MAEVE

In Maine.

ARNOLD

In Maine??

MAEVE

It's only a week --

ARNOLD

A week?

MAEVE

Only half the day. The rest of the day you can...read or see the town.

He looks down at the brochure.

ARNOLD
"Four thousand dollars?" Is that --
for...one week?

MAEVE
It's intensive.

ARNOLD
It'd have to be gold plated.

MAEVE
I'll pay for it.

ARNOLD
You? You're going to pay for it.
Four thousand dollars.

MAEVE
I'll use my CD.

ARNOLD
This is insane.

MAEVE
I made a reservation.

ARNOLD
What? Cancel it.

MAEVE
I want to go.

Arnold can't believe she's serious but is starting to get the unpleasant feeling she is.

ARNOLD
What is wrong with you? Are you --
is this -- have you been to Doctor
Lesser? Maybe this is related to
the hormone --

MAEVE
I am not crazy, Arnold.

ARNOLD
Well. Then I don't know what to
say to you. In all our years
together, never have I --

MAEVE
Heard me ask for anything?

ARNOLD

I beg your pardon? Did we not just
get a new water heater because you -

MAEVE

That's not what I mean.

An impasse. He knows what she means. But doesn't want to.

ARNOLD

Well, you're a free woman, you can
go anywhere you want, but I'm not
going, so, if you want to go to
couples counseling by yourself --

MAEVE

Maybe I will.

ARNOLD

Then I guess I'll see you when you
get back.

She takes the brochure, leaves. Stay with Arnold, eighty
percent sure she'd never do it, twenty percent very
uncomfortable.

21 INT. DIEBLER BAUMGARTEN AND SOAMES - DAY

21

Arnold is with a CLIENT, at his desk surrounded by files.

ARNOLD

...next time I'll need all of your
receipts, for the stuff we talked
about -- the vacation and your home
office.

CLIENT

I was thinking about taking a write-
off for my mother-in-law's car,
too, do you --

ARNOLD

I wouldn't. It's a red flag.

CLIENT

Worth a try. Thanks Arnold.

ARNOLD

See you next month.

Client leaves. Arnold stacks client's papers, pushes the
files aside, looks at his watch. A still moment.

Arnold gets up, goes into the

21A INT. DIEBLER ANISGARTEN AND SOAMES - MEN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS 21A

He's at a urinal when fellow CPA, VINCE, late 40's, big, enters, unzips.

VINCE
Soames.

ARNOLD
Yeah.

Vince glances over. Already this makes Arnold uncomfortable.

VINCE
You all right there, buddy, you're sweating a little.

Arnold wipes his brow.

VINCE (CONT'D)
You feeling all right?

ARNOLD
Yeah, fine.

VINCE
You got an issue?

ARNOLD
What?

VINCE
Prostate.

ARNOLD
No.

VINCE
I watch mine like a hawk. Most people get prostate cancer they die with it not of it but God forbid you got to have the surgery you're lucky if the thing still works.
(beat)
You could tell me, you know that.

ARNOLD
I'm fine.

He zips up, washes his hands.

VINCE
What do you say we grab lunch, talk about --

ARNOLD
No, I'm fine, it's fine.

Vince isn't buying it.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
My wife's acting kind of...off,
that's all.

VINCE
"Off" how?

ARNOLD
(shrugs)
Threatening me.

VINCE
What -- oh, she wants you to buy
her a car or a vacation or
something --

ARNOLD
Yeah, a vacation.

VINCE
And what, she's telling you if you
don't do it she'll what, she'll --

ARNOLD
I don't know. I think she said she
would leave.

VINCE
Leave? Over a vacation?

ARNOLD
Well, no, not --

VINCE
Little minx plays a mean game of
brinkmanship.

Now Vince zips up, comes to the sinks.

VINCE (CONT'D)
She's not gonna leave. But I'll
tell you when Susan threatens me,
well I used to do what we all want
to do, you know, head out to Yankee
Doodle's, not call, come back way
too late, piss drunk, big screw
you. But I tell you it always came
back to bite me on the ass.
(MORE)

VINCE (CONT'D)

Now first sign of that I'm on it with flowers, a card, maybe dinner or a necklace. I kill that thing dead, I'm like the Orkin man. You can call it spineless or you can call it smart.

He claps Arnold on the back before leaving. Arnold considers. Before he knows it he has to grab a towel, wipe his forehead, he's sweating again.

22

INT. SOAMES HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

22

Maeve is finishing preparing dinner when Arnold comes in through the garage. He puts a bouquet of pink roses on the counter next to where she's taking a steamer bag full of vegetables out of the microwave. She looks up.

ARNOLD

I got you this, too.

He awkwardly hands her a box. She dries her hands, opens it. It's a pair of starfish-shaped earrings, silver, from a department store.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

The girl liked these best. I told her what you look like...

Maeve examines them a moment before slowly putting them down. She looks at him, walks over to the table, picks up an envelope.

MAEVE

These are your tickets.

ARNOLD

Oh, come on --

MAEVE

The flight leaves at 10:02.

She heads into the dining room. He follows.

ARNOLD

What is wrong with you? What are you trying to do to us?

She looks up, betrayed. She's trying to save them.

MAEVE

I want a real marriage again, Arnold.

ARNOLD
A real -- what does that mean?
This isn't real? This isn't real
for thirty-two years?

MAEVE
When is the last time you touched
me --

He starts to object.

MAEVE (CONT'D)
-- that wasn't for a picture? When
was the last time you kissed me?

ARNOLD
I kiss you every day.

She looks at him: a real kiss.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
We're not twenty-two anymore,
things change.
(then)
I can be more -- I can --
(frustrated)
This is insane.

MAEVE
The flight leaves at 10:02
tomorrow. I'm going to be on it.

She gets out one plate, one glass, hands them to him.

MAEVE (CONT'D)
The casserole is in the oven.

ARNOLD
What are you, aren't you --

Then she walks out of the room.

Arnold stands there. His whole world is this, her, this
room, and his whole world has just come to a grinding halt.

23 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT 23

Arnold sits, trying to eat. Distracted, confused, in shock.

23A INT. SOAMES HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT 23A

Now finished, Arnold carries his plate, silverware and glass
into the kitchen. He gets out the saran wrap and covers the
casserole dish. He puts it and his plate into the fridge.

He goes to the sink, gets out a sponge, squirts dishwashing soap on it, then realizes his plate isn't there.

Mystified, he looks around the kitchen, then goes back to the doorway. Seeing his plate is not in the dining room, he looks over the kitchen again, exasperated: what the hell?

Finally, an unpleasant light slowly dawning, he opens the door to the fridge, sees the plate.

Irked and chagrined, he pulls his dirty plate from the refrigerator.

25 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - ARNOLD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 25

Arnold in bed sleepless, wired, freaked out.

26 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - MAEVE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 26

Maeve sleeps peacefully, the hint of a smile on her face.

27 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - ARNOLD'S BEDROOM - MORNING 27

Arnold wakes up, for a moment life is as it was. Then he remembers. Fear grips him. Then anger.

28 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 28

Maeve is making breakfast and fixing snacks for the plane. Arnold enters loaded for bear.

ARNOLD

I am not going to any bloated money-grubbing self-help guru to hear what is wrong with my marriage.

Maeve looks up, resigned.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Our marriage is fine. Our marriage is good. We have two grown children, a house, everything we could ever need. And if you feel it's necessary to...to crap all over that because you had a hormonal...mood, well, that's your problem.

He sits authoritatively. She puts his breakfast in front of him. He opens his paper.

Maeve finishes making snacks, puts his airplane tickets down on the table, leaves.

He looks up.

29 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 29

Arnold is still there, still reading the paper, business as usual, as Maeve wheels her (flowered) airporter bag through the kitchen and out the garage.

Arnold says nothing. He hears the CAB idling outside.

CAB DRIVER (O.S.)
Morning, ma'am.

MAEVE (O.S.)
Good morning.

Arnold: heart pounding. She wouldn't leave. She wouldn't leave without even saying goodbye?

CAB DRIVER (O.S.)
Let me take this for you. Where are we going?

MAEVE (O.S.)
The airport.

The SOUND of the TRUNK shutting, a DOOR shutting, then a second DOOR. The SOUND of the CAB pulling away.

Arnold looks around. Stillness. He's alone.

30 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY 30

Arnold wanders through the house. Silence is everywhere. He hears sounds he doesn't usually notice: a CLOCK, the HEAT coming on, the HUM of the refrigerator.

32 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - ARNOLD'S BEDROOM - DAY 32

Arnold puts on his cufflinks, picks up his briefcase. Catch him in the mirror white as a sheet.

33 INT. AIRPLANE - DAY 33

Maeve glances at the seat next to her as passengers continue to board. Get the feeling she's holding onto her resolve just barely. The moment the plane takes off it'll be waterworks -- if it takes off with her on it at all. Then

Arnold's there, pissed as hell, shoving his bag overhead, crowding in past her with his briefcase. Maeve tries not to cry.

BEAT.

ARNOLD
I hope you're happy.

34 INT. AIRPLANE - LATER 34

The plane lands. Out the window: a dreary, water-logged vista, grey and pouring. Arnold looks at Maeve.

MAEVE
They've had some weather.

35 INT. AIRPORT - NIGHT 35

Maeve and Arnold silently wait in a long line for car rental. There is one person at the desk and he appears to be "slow."

RENTAL WORKER
Do you know who you spoke to?

CAR RENTER
No, it was the 800 number but --

RENTAL WORKER
(pained)
Oh, it wasn't here.

CAR RENTER
(handing it over)
No, but I have my confirmation number --

RENTAL WORKER
(no clue)
So...you don't remember who you spoke to?

Arnold's face is pinched. Maeve suffers in silence.

36 EXT. AIRPORT - NIGHT 36

Maeve and Arnold walk outside with their bags. A blast of cold, wet air hits them. It's horrible. The wind feels malevolent. There are no signs anywhere for anything.

ARNOLD
I don't know -- where do we even --

He scans the horizon, frustrated, angry.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
I don't know where to go. Where do we go?

Maeve looks out helplessly.

37 INT. CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

37

Arnold drives, Maeve in the passenger seat. It's raining, the kind that makes you grip the steering wheel too tight.

ARNOLD
This is not an SUV.

MAEVE
He said "compact" SUV.

ARNOLD
A compact SUV is a car!
(then)
Well I just hope we don't hit any
standing water because...

Maeve looks at him, wishing he didn't hate her.

MAEVE
I'm really glad you came, Arnold.

ARNOLD
Yeah, tell me that when it starts
to snow. We'd get more traction in
a Fiat.

They drive on in silence.

38 INT. CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

38

They enter the town and immediately see "Captain Jack's Bed & Breakfast" -- a lovely old Victorian, white with forest green trim, candles in the windows, quaint, romantic.

ARNOLD
There's a hotel, is that it?

MAEVE
No. We're at the "Good Nite Inn."

Maeve looks longingly at the bed & breakfast as they pass.

39 EXT. GOOD NITE INN - NIGHT

39

The opposite of Captain Jack's, a motel in a box. While Arnold pulls the luggage out, Maeve looks up, dubious. Could their lost romance really be hiding...here?

40 INT. GOOD NITE INN - NIGHT

40

Strictly functional. One of those uncomfortable foam couches, a kitchenette, fluorescent lights, some waxy fruit.

The bedroom is no frills, haunted by ghosts of smokers past. The bathroom is too dim and too bright at the same time.

Maeve unpacks in two drawers leaving the others for Arnold. He comes out of the bathroom, waits for her to finish.

MAEVE

Oh, sorry.

She hurriedly shoves her things in and moves to the side. He begins to unpack. Feeling awkward, she sits on the bed.

ARNOLD

What time's this thing start tomorrow?

MAEVE

Ten-thirty.

ARNOLD

Might as well get there on time, get our money's worth...

He's done unpacking. He looks at her, she looks at him. Moment of truth: bedtime. She feels like he can hear her heart thudding out loud.

MAEVE

I'll set the alarm.

She does.

ARNOLD

Wouldn't give us a lot of extra time, not sure you even could get lost in a town this size.

MAEVE

Mmm.

She can barely focus on what he's saying. She's waiting, waiting endlessly for him to say --

ARNOLD

Well.

Not that. Timidly she offers --

MAEVE

If you want to --

But he's not listening. He's grabbing his magazine and earplugs, on his way out.

ARNOLD

I'll go see how the pull-out works.

Maeve flushes with disappointment, embarrassed to have hoped he would sleep with her.

MAEVE

All right.

He goes into the living room/kitchen area with his magazine, begins wrangling the pull-out couch. Maeve sits on the bed, alone.

41 INT. GOOD NITE INN - MORNING 41

Maeve awakens, listens to Arnold lightly snoring in the next room, wonders for the millionth time if this was just stupid.

42 EXT. GREAT HOPE SPRINGS STREET - MORNING 42

Maeve and Arnold trudge the Main Street sidewalk. It's your typical small town, storefront shops frozen in time, awnings cracking with age and weather.

ARNOLD

Not what I'd call charming.

Maeve looks around, spots a diner.

MAEVE

That little place looks cute.

ARNOLD

I can guarantee you they don't serve anything you could call "healthy." Even the oatmeal will be dripping in grease.

MAEVE

We're only here for a week, Arnold, we might as well try to --

ARNOLD

A week. God. By then I'll have heart disease.

Maeve sighs as they enter

43 INT. HALLIE'S COMET DINER - CONTINUOUS 43

Maeve and Arnold sit down.

In the background, a nondescript couple, both thin, pale, mousy, sits silently. In fact, if you were looking for it, you'd notice an odd preponderance of couples.

A sour waitress, with a name tag reading "CORA," takes her time with the menus.

CORA
Coffee to start?

Arnold pushes his cup towards her. She fills it, takes the pot back.

Maeve and Arnold open their menus.

ARNOLD
"Biscuits and gravy with eggs and cheese." What'd I say? They might as well dip it in lard...

MAEVE
It's comfort food.

ARNOLD
Yeah, who's it comforting?

Cora returns with her order pad.

CORA
What'll it be?

ARNOLD
Is the oatmeal fresh?

MAEVE
Arnold.

ARNOLD
What? I just want to know is my oatmeal going to be made of oats and water or some kind of congealed, day-old --

CORA
I harvested the oats myself. You want a bowl?

ARNOLD
Guess I'll try it.

CORA
Congratulations. And for you?

MAEVE

I'll just have the fruit and
cottage cheese. Nervous stomach.

(then)

Oh, and we're in a little bit of a -

CORA

You got the ten-thirty? We'll get
you there.

She pauses, looks at Arnold, taking stock.

CORA (CONT'D)

(then, to Maeve)

Good luck.

She moves off. Maeve's a little taken aback. She looks
around, now notices the couples. Do all these people know?

ARNOLD

Told you. There's nothing in this
town but that extortionist quack
and his tourism.

(then)

He says one thing about "repressed
memories" I'm leaving.

44

INT. DOCTOR FELD'S OFFICE - WAITING ROOM - DAY

44

Maeve and Arnold wait nervously. A couple exits. They are
Jack Sprat and his wife: the woman's a house, the man's a
twig.

Maeve doesn't look at Arnold, she knows what he's thinking.
The couple may be perfectly happy, but their freakishness is
not helping sell the whole plan.

Moments pass before the door opens and DOCTOR FELD emerges.
(*Note: he wears a wedding ring.) He is younger than they
expected and warmly enthusiastic. It's almost off-putting.

DOCTOR FELD

Maeve and Arnold, I'm so glad
you're here.

ARNOLD

That makes one of us.

Doctor Feld laughs congenially, ushering them into

45

INT. DOCTOR FELD'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

45

Doctor Feld's office is warm and beige, upscale-resort looking. Designed to soothe, it is, at this moment, failing. Arnold and Maeve sit uncomfortably on the sofa.

DOCTOR FELD

So Arnold, I take it intensive therapy was not your idea.

ARNOLD

No.

DOCTOR FELD

(to Maeve)

You wanted to come.

MAEVE

Yes.

DOCTOR FELD

All right, and Arnold, you...?

ARNOLD

I thought she was nuts. We're not in the same tax bracket as your other patients, --

DOCTOR FELD

Oh, you'd be surprised, but...

ARNOLD

-- even if we were, all due respect, I really don't see the point.

DOCTOR FELD

You think there's nothing wrong with your marriage.

ARNOLD

Well.

He looks over at Maeve.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

We've been married thirty-two years, it's not perfect.

DOCTOR FELD

But in your opinion it works well enough.

Arnold shrugs.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)

(to Maeve)

But you wanted to come, you
persuaded Arnold to --

MAEVE

No.

(then)

I mean, I paid for it. With my own
money, from savings.

DOCTOR FELD

(sensitive)

All right. So this was really
important to you. Tell me why.

Maeve hesitates, glances at Arnold who gives her a look like,
you got us into this, go ahead.

MAEVE

(slowly)

I wanted to...have a marriage
again.

Arnold erupts.

ARNOLD

Again? Again? If we don't have a
marriage I don't know who does --

DOCTOR FELD

Please, Arnold, let Maeve talk.
You can respond after.

ARNOLD

Fine.

(then)

"Again."

BEAT.

MAEVE

Arnold used to touch me.

ARNOLD

Oh, God.

She looks over at him, he nods: sorry.

MAEVE

Not just...you know, but he'd touch
my arm or my shoulder or...just to,
I don't know -- because he wanted
to.

DOCTOR FELD
And now he doesn't.

Doctor Feld's sympathy routine is giving Arnold an ulcer.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
And that bothers you.
(then)
Do you touch him?

MAEVE
Not really.
(then)
He doesn't like it.

DOCTOR FELD
Is she right, Arnold? Do you like
it when she touches you?

ARNOLD
I don't know.

DOCTOR FELD
You don't know?

ARNOLD
I don't think about it.

DOCTOR FELD
All right.

BEAT.

Doctor Feld is the only one comfortable in the silence.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
What else, Maeve?

MAEVE
I feel like we live in the house
together like two...like two
workers who bunk in the same room --
except we're not even in the same
room. It's like there's nothing
holding us together but the house
itself, like we're stuck.

ARNOLD
Oh, that is -- nothing holding us
together like thirty-two years of -

DOCTOR FELD
Of what, Arnold?

ARNOLD
Marriage.

DOCTOR FELD
What does that word mean to you?

ARNOLD
(glowering)
It means we have a marriage license
and I pay all the bills. Not to
mention our two grown children --

Arnold turns back to Maeve.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
You really have lost your mind.

DOCTOR FELD
Let's try to keep our conversation
descriptive and positive.

Arnold rolls his eyes.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
Maeve, please continue.

MAEVE
We don't...we don't talk about
anything.

ARNOLD
What? What is there I don't know
about you? About Eileen and
what...slacks she bought or if she
returned the necklace with the tiki
symbols on it, Jesus --

Maeve acknowledges his point with a look, continues.

MAEVE
(to Feld)
What I mean is, I don't tell Arnold
how I feel about anything. And I
don't know how he feels about
anything either.

ARNOLD
Well let me tell you how I feel
about this. I hate it.

DOCTOR FELD
All right. This is good.

ARNOLD

This is good? Right. This is good for you. The more we tear each other apart the more we have to pay you to put it back together. God, you people are worse than lawyers.

DOCTOR FELD

I understand how you feel.

Doctor Feld's knowing smile is really annoying.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)

The first step in rebuilding a marriage is tearing down some of the scar tissue we've built up over the years and it can be painful. But it's worth it.

Maeve looks at him. Can she trust him? Does he really know more than they do about their marriage? Can he fix it?

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)

Couples come to me because they want a better marriage. This can mean a lot of things. You two have come because you want to be more intimate, physically and otherwise. Did I -- does that sound about right?

MAEVE

Yes.

Arnold just sits there. Feld looks at him.

FELD

Arnold?

Arnold sniffs his assent: sure, whatever.

FELD (CONT'D)

So that will be the goal of our very focused sessions together, to find ways to communicate your needs to one another, cultivate intimacy and develop tools to sustain that intimacy going forward. Sound good?

Maeve nods, sounds just right. Just what she wanted. Arnold sighs. Feld doesn't push it.

DOCTOR FELD
All right. Let's start with...
(turning to her)
Maeve, why don't you tell me the
story of your courtship and
marriage in your own words.
Beginning when you two met.

MAEVE
I -- well --

DOCTOR FELD
Begin with how you met.

MAEVE
Well, it was a course at Akron U.,
beginning accounting, Arnold was
the teaching assistant...

Arnold rolls his eyes.

46 INT. DOCTOR FELD'S OFFICE - LATER

46

Maeve continues.

MAEVE
...that afternoon I found a red
rose on my binder and a note with
all these...kitten stickers on it,
because I had mentioned in passing
that I just love cats...

With each revelation Arnold sinks further into annoyance and
irritation.

47 INT. DOCTOR FELD'S OFFICE - LATER

47

Maeve continues.

MAEVE
...he held my hand for the first
time in that movie. Before I felt
like he could hear my heart beating
it was so loud.
(then)
"Love Story." That was the movie.

Arnold wants to die.

48 INT. DOCTOR FELD'S OFFICE - LATER

48

Maeve continues.

MAEVE

...We were so thrilled when I got pregnant. But I had the morning sickness pretty bad and then later, well I was just so uncomfortable, I had gas pains all the time...

49 INT. DOCTOR FELD'S OFFICE - LATER

49

Maeve continues.

MAEVE

We were so busy. With the kids.
Molly played softball.
(then)
She was very good.

50 INT. DOCTOR FELD'S OFFICE - LATER

50

Maeve continues.

MAEVE

...that fall Arnold threw his back out helping Hank paint his room. He just seemed more comfortable sleeping alone. His back got better, but I just stayed in the guest room.
(then)
I don't know why. I missed Arnold but...I didn't think he missed me.

She starts to tear up.

MAEVE (CONT'D)

I just...wanted him to miss me.

DOCTOR FELD

(to Arnold)
And did you? Miss her?

ARNOLD

Oh, God.

DOCTOR FELD

Is this bothering you, Arnold?

Arnold's expression is grim.

ARNOLD (PRELAP)

Charlatan!

51 EXT. DOCTOR FELD'S OFFICE - DAY

51

Maeve and Arnold bundle up as they cross the street.

ARNOLD

He's worse than a charlatan, he's like some kind of... Says he's "honed his method," -- Jesus. What he's honed is the method of making sure if you walk in without a marriage-destroying problem you won't leave without one.

Maeve just listens.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

He's like the eye drops that make your eyes dry.

(then)

I can't believe you spent four thousand dollars on this. That could have been a new roof. I really, I can't believe it. If I had researched this guy...

They're stopped on the corner. Maeve stares straight ahead.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

I guess it's back to the diner since it's pretty much the only restaurant in the entire town...

52 INT. HALLIE'S COMET DINER - DAY

52

They sit now, with menus out. Arnold continues his tirade.

ARNOLD

I thought you had more sense. I'm a CPA for crying out loud. Did you look at a brochure or even -- God. Unbelievable. I'd like to see the guy's tax returns.

Maeve doesn't respond. When he finally turns he sees she's about to cry.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Oh, God. Don't -- just --

MAEVE

You have to stop yelling at me.

ARNOLD

I'm not yelling. Who's yelling?

She says nothing, struggles to regain composure.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Fine. See. I'm not saying
anything. See?

She nods, brushing her tears away as the waitress, Cora,
approaches.

CORA
You're back.

Already Arnold doesn't like her. Already she doesn't like
Arnold.

ARNOLD
I'll have a tuna melt and an Arnold
Palmer.

CORA
Sure you're ready to commit?

Arnold glares at her. Cora's impervious.

CORA (CONT'D)
(to Maeve)
And for you?

MAEVE
Chicken salad and the soup.

Cora leaves.

BEAT.

ARNOLD
Disgusting.

He looks around.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Do they even have a health
department rating?
(then)
I saw a grocery store behind the
motel, we can pick up cold cuts
tonight, eat in the room.

Maeve nods, miserable. None of this is going as she planned.
It's like her regular life but worse.

Maeve looks around: more couples. A new couple now sits at mousy couple's table, this one happy, playful with one another. Maeve can't help but watch longingly. The WOMAN sees.

WOMAN

Are you guys here for Bernie?
(off Maeve's nod)
We come back every year.

HUSBAND

For a tune up.

They smile the jocular smile of people who still have sex.

ARNOLD

(to Maeve)

In case you were wondering, we are
never coming back.

She wasn't wondering.

53

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

53

Arnold and Maeve cruise the deli aisle. Arnold pulls out packages of meats.

ARNOLD

If I had ever so much as said an
unkind word --
(holding up package)
You want hard salami or this kind?

Maeve points. Arnold continues down the aisle.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

I mean, my brother Ralph, if Angela
brought him to some -- but you...

(then)

I just hope you remember this next
year when you want to tell me that
I never help and I never --

(picking it up)

I'm getting the goat cheese, you
don't have to eat it.

(continues with cart)

I can tell you one thing, we are
going to Florida to see my mother
next year for the full two weeks.
You have forfeited your right to
complain.

Maeve just stares at the meats, harbinger of her future.

55 INT. GOOD NITE INN - NIGHT

55

Arnold and Maeve sit at the table, cold cuts now in open packages, bread out, mustard, minimal eating. No talking.

In the background, a sitcom on TV features a skinny, attractive couple whose marriage is "funny." The laugh track laughs, Maeve and Arnold don't.

56 INT. DOCTOR FELD'S OFFICE - DAY

56

Maeve and Arnold sit opposite the ever-smiling Feld.

DOCTOR FELD

So.

They both just look at him: why is this man so happy?

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)

Today I'd like to get further into the roles you each play in your relationship --

ARNOLD

Oh, brother.

Doctor Feld smiles at Arnold like he finds this charming.

DOCTOR FELD

-- and begin to talk about your sex.

Arnold shakes his head. He just keeps drifting down, as if through layers of rock, closer and closer to the core of his own personal hell.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)

We discussed yesterday the way in which you, Maeve, took the lead in bringing the two of you here. Would you say that you play a dominant role in the relationship?

MAEVE

Me? No...

DOCTOR FELD

Is Arnold dominant?

MAEVE

Dominant? I don't know.

(then)

(MORE)

MAEVE (CONT'D)
He...makes the decisions and
I...we're pretty traditional I
guess.

DOCTOR FELD
Do you resent that?

MAEVE
No. I like knowing Arnold knows
what to do.

DOCTOR FELD
What about you, Arnold? Do you
mind calling the shots?

ARNOLD
Of course not.

DOCTOR FELD
What about in the bedroom?

ARNOLD
Oh, God.

DOCTOR FELD
Stay with me here. When was the
last time you had sex?

ARNOLD
I have no idea.

DOCTOR FELD
Well let's try to think about it.

They do. It's taking a long time. Get the feeling Arnold's
really having trouble recalling, Maeve's holding her tongue.

BEAT.

MAEVE
It was six years ago. Well, about
six. Because it was September so,
that's not quite...

She's counting it up in her head when she realizes Arnold's
looking at her like, "what'd you do, mark the calendar?"

MAEVE (CONT'D)
It was when Hank moved out...

Arnold's starting to remember.

MAEVE (CONT'D)

After the summer after graduation.

(then)

September twenty third.

(to Feld, explaining)

I remember thinking he was moving
out on exactly the first day of
fall...

ARNOLD

We get the picture.

She nods, apologetic.

MAEVE

His room was so empty. I was in
there when Arnold came home. I was
so sad. And he came in and just...

ARNOLD

Yeah, yeah, we get the idea.

DOCTOR FELD

It makes you uncomfortable
discussing this, doesn't it,
Arnold?

ARNOLD

Well sue me, I don't want to talk
about sex with my wife with a total
stranger.

DOCTOR FELD

Do you want to talk about it at
all?

He lets this one lie there.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)

Tell me what you remember about
that day, Maeve.

MAEVE

Arnold was very...tender.

This is killing the "tender" Arnold.

MAEVE (CONT'D)

We got into Hank's bed -- that was
strange I guess.

DOCTOR FELD

How did you make love?

MAEVE

How -- ?

DOCTOR FELD

In the missionary position? Was
Arnold on top?

MAEVE

Um, yes.

DOCTOR FELD

Was it always missionary style?

ARNOLD

Please --

MAEVE

Mostly.

DOCTOR FELD

Did you have things you
particularly liked to do?

MAEVE

It was mostly just...the same.

DOCTOR FELD

Was your sex life satisfying to
you?

Maeve has to think about that one. She doesn't know.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)

How about for you, Arnold?

ARNOLD

It was fine.

DOCTOR FELD

Fine?

ARNOLD

It was...we've been married thirty-
two years --

DOCTOR FELD

Then it was only twenty-six years.
What about at one year? What was
your sex like then?

They both think.

BEAT.

ARNOLD
It was fine.

ON Maeve and Arnold, no expression, felled by their own boring sex life.

BEAT.

DOCTOR FELD
All right.

He smiles at them like they're winners.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
I want to assign you your first exercise.

Arnold's guard is instantly up.

ARNOLD
What kind of --

DOCTOR FELD
Tonight I want you to spend a period of time, before bed, with your arms around one another.

ARNOLD
What's the -- why --

DOCTOR FELD
Because I want you to remember what it's like to touch one another. Do you think you can do that?

Arnold seems to be having trouble with the idea.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
Arnold?

ARNOLD
I -- I just don't see what the point of the --

To the extent Maeve ever outwardly shows her annoyance, she's beginning to look a little frayed.

DOCTOR FELD
It's an intimacy exercise.

ARNOLD
Yeah, well, maybe that's what I'm -- I mean, forced intimacy, is that even --

DOCTOR FELD
It's not forced intimacy, --

ARNOLD
That's what it sounds like.

MAEVE
Arnold.

ARNOLD
What, I -- I thought we were
supposed to tell the truth here --

DOCTOR FELD
You are.

ARNOLD
Well, I'm saying I don't think the
"exercise" or whatever you want to
call it sounds like something -- I
mean if I do that just because
someone tells me to -- what is the
point?

Maeve shifts on the couch, her jaw starting to tighten.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
And I don't think I like the idea
of someone telling me how to -- I
just, this is just ridiculous to
me, I am not a trained pony.

That's it. He's pushed too far. Maeve looks like she
swallowed a rocket.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
What?

MAEVE
You...are a bully.

This is as close as Maeve gets to swearing.

ARNOLD
Come on now.

MAEVE
All you've done is complain since
we got here. All you've done is
make me feel terrible.

ARNOLD
Maeve.

MAEVE

Well I've...had it.

Hard to tell who's more shocked by this, Arnold or Maeve herself. Doctor Feld is of course not shocked but pleased.

ARNOLD

Maeve --

But she's up, getting her coat and walking out.

BEAT.

Doctor Feld leans forward, "relating" to Arnold, sensitive.

DOCTOR FELD

It can be very painful sometimes.

ARNOLD

(glowering)

What can?

DOCTOR FELD

Growth.

Arnold rankles.

57 EXT. OFFICE OF DOCTOR FELD - DAY

57

Arnold catches up.

ARNOLD

Maeve.

She ignores him.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Come on. This is infantile.

MAEVE

I think you're infantile.

She starts across the street. He follows.

ARNOLD

Maeve -- where are you going?

(then)

You know this is insane.

MAEVE

No it isn't.

He stands there, at a loss, watching her go.

ARNOLD
 (calling after)
 Where are you going?

He looks around, suddenly aware people are watching him yell at his retreating wife.

Giving up, he turns the other way, starts to walk.

58 EXT. STREET - DAY 58

Maeve's so intent she hasn't noticed she has no idea where she's going. She stops, looks around, spots a tavern across the street.

59 INT. LUCKY'S TAVERN - DAY 59

Maeve enters. It's a dive. A handful of regulars are glued to their stools, otherwise dark and empty save KAREN, the bartender, toughly attractive with roots and a gravelly voice, got some miles on her.

Maeve hesitates, still time to back out the door until --

KAREN
 Come on in. We don't bite.

Maeve considers.

60 EXT. GREAT HOPE SPRINGS MUSEUM - DAY 60

Completely put out, walking without direction, Arnold comes upon the miniscule "museum." It's unimpressive. But looks heated. And where else does he have to go? He enters.

61 INT. GREAT HOPE SPRINGS MUSEUM - DAY 61

It's basically one room. Arnold checks out the "artifacts" from the town's history, including various Native American relics and evidence of the region's shipbuilding industry. In one corner a "tableau" depicts a scene from the Dummer's War. A DOCENT sits behind a desk.

DOCENT
 You want the audio tour? It's four
 ninety-five.

Arnold just looks at him.

62 INT. LUCKY'S TAVERN - DAY 62

Maeve sits at the bar, a long way from the pickled regulars.

KAREN

What can I get you?

MAEVE

Um, would you recommend the white wine or the red?

KAREN

Depends if you like red or white.

MAEVE

I guess I'll have white.

Maeve looks around while Karen goes to get her drink. Accidentally meeting eyes with one of the regulars she quickly turns back, focuses on the bar in front of her.

Karen brings her a white wine on a little napkin.

MAEVE (CONT'D)

Thank you.

She sips it, tries to act natural, feels loudly out of place. Karen's looking at her. Is she doing it wrong?

KAREN

So.

(then)

What's wrong with your marriage?

63 EXT. GREAT HOPE SPRINGS "MUSEUM" - DAY 63

Arnold leaves the museum, checks his watch: where to go?

64 INT. LUCKY'S TAVERN - DAY 64

Maeve struggles to articulate.

MAEVE

And so, um, I thought maybe we could, um...

She downs the last of her tiny glass of wine.

KAREN

Right, you want to get the magic back. Did you ever have it?

BEAT.

MAEVE

(re: wine)

I think I'll have another.

65 INT. GOOD NITE INN - DAY 65

Arnold watches Oprah and "experts" asking "Have You Let Yourself Go?" Restless. Can't believe Maeve's not there.

66 INT. LUCKY'S TAVERN - DAY 66

Maeve works on her second glass of wine. It goes down easier than her first.

MAEVE

The thing is, we really
don't...have sex, mostly. At all.

Feeling like she's announced the silo codes she silently waits for the blast.

KAREN

That's it? Join the club, honey.
(to the bar)
Who in here's not having sex?

Karen and most of the regulars raise their hands.

KAREN (CONT'D)

(to Maeve)
This one's on the house.

Maeve smiles, oddly buoyed by the solidarity.

67 INT. GOOD NITE INN - NIGHT 67

Arnold, sitting in (the fold-out) bed, glances at the clock, shakes his head, annoyed.

67A INT. LUCKY'S TAVERN - NIGHT 67A

Maeve turns when the regulars greet a new arrival. SAM, (50's), is ruggedly handsome with a good smile, a man's man.

Maeve finds her gaze lingering. She's checking him out.

He catches her eye. She quickly turns back, embarrassed to have been caught looking.

Karen smiles girlishly as he approaches.

KAREN

Sam.

He comes up beside Maeve at the bar.

KAREN (CONT'D)

We've missed you.

SAM
Been working too hard.

Karen goes to get his drink. He looks at Maeve. She looks at him quickly, nods shyly, goes back to her wine.

He keeps looking.

SAM (CONT'D)
I'm Sam.

MAEVE
Maeve.

SAM
That's beautiful.

MAEVE
Thank you.
(then)
It's Irish.

Karen puts down Sam's beer.

SAM
Thanks.

Karen winks at him, trying for cool, harboring a crush.

Maeve waits for him to head over to the regulars. Instead, he sits on the stool next to her.

She has no idea what to say - if she's supposed to say anything. She's momentarily forgotten she's here for couple's counseling - or that she's a couple.

Before she can say anything, he gets up, with his beer. Maeve thinks he's leaving, feels stupid. Did she do something? Not do something?

Then she HEARS a SONG come on. Sam returns from the jukebox.

SAM (CONT'D)
So. You on the run from the law,
or just passing through?

She could say she's married and there for couple's counseling. Doesn't.

MAEVE
Passing through.

BEAT.

The conversation could be over. If Maeve lets it be.

MAEVE (CONT'D)
What about you?

SAM
From here, born and raised. Can't
you tell?
(then)
Look at these.

He holds out his hands. They're rough, calloused.

SAM (CONT'D)
Maine dockyard hands.
(then)
Feel.

She hesitates. She reaches out, touches the calloused part.

SAM (CONT'D)
Feel that?

From behind the bar, Karen notices.

KAREN
Careful, she's one of Bernie's.

He looks at Maeve again.

SAM
You're married.

She nods, a little sheepish.

BEAT.

SAM (CONT'D)
That's too bad.

For a second, she feels that way, too. Not that she would truly want to be single or be without Arnold, just that this moment of possibility has been a little intoxicating.

67B INT. GOOD NITE INN - NIGHT

67B

Hearing the DOOR, Arnold picks up a magazine. He is reading his magazine, nonchalant, as Maeve enters.

MAEVE
I'm back.

ARNOLD
I see that.

She takes off her things. He wants to ignore her. Can't.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
I went to the museum.

MAEVE
How was it?

ARNOLD
Extremely interesting.

She heads into the BEDROOM.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
If you want to go you'll have to do
it on your own.

Silence. It's killing him that she's not volunteering any
information. He holds out as long as he can.

She comes out again, now in her nightgown, heading for the
kitchen.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Where did you go?

MAEVE
Just...around.

BEAT.

It's the first time she's ever intentionally made him worried
or jealous. She can barely stand it. But she does.

MAEVE (CONT'D)
I'm going to get ready for bed.

It's like she's won something -- a cold shoulder contest.
Something in her that was open to him is closed.

ARNOLD
I thought you wanted to do that
thing, but...

She stops.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
...if you don't want to, I
certainly don't care.

She's stunned. A little afraid.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
All right, well --

MAEVE
I want to do it.

She's called his bluff. He can't back down now.

ARNOLD
Okay.
(then)
I guess we should do it in there.

They look toward the bedroom.

67C INT. GOOD NITE INN - BEDROOM - NIGHT

67C

Now both in their night clothes they look down at the bed:
Goliath to their puny David.

ARNOLD
I'll get in.

He does. She starts to climb in next to him.

Now they are both under the covers, facing each other.
They're pretty freaked out.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Maybe this is enough.

She nods. He reaches for the light but before he can turn it
out, surprising them both, she reaches over for him. He
stops for a minute, stock still, comes back.

With her eyes down, almost closed, she puts an arm around
him. He puts an arm around her.

We go out on them like this, the most uncomfortable possible.

69 INT. GOOD NITE INN - MORNING

69

Arnold and Maeve sleep spooning. They look peaceful. Maeve
awakens, happy. She did it, she really did it. She's so
grateful she could cry.

70 INT. OFFICE OF DOCTOR FELD - DAY

70

Doctor Feld listens. Maeve seems lighter, more joyful,
almost a little giddy. Even Arnold seems slightly thawed.

MAEVE
And then we did the exercise, and
when we woke up --

ARNOLD
Yeah, that was...

MAEVE

We were in the same bed and it was...comfortable.

ARNOLD

Yeah, it was...yeah.

DOCTOR FELD

This is very good.

Maeve smiles. Arnold tries not to look pleased.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)

By taking some time to yourselves last night you managed to get back a little to who you are individually, so you could relate better as a couple. And you both did it without even trying.

ARNOLD

She wanted to spend time apart --

MAEVE

I was so mad!

ARNOLD

Mad as a wet cat...

MAEVE

But it was nice to be --

ARNOLD

To do something on your own, yeah.

You get the feeling they could revel in self congratulation all day long. They don't get much of it. Arnold holds onto his crusty exterior but barely.

DOCTOR FELD

This is great, you two, really great.

They try not to look as proud as they feel, especially Arnold.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)

I'm thrilled with the progress you've made. I think it will make it that much easier for you to proceed to the next step.

ARNOLD

Next step, okay, let's get to it.
(off Maeve and Feld)
We're doing so well, maybe we can
get out of here early.

Maeve can't help but smile at his shameless attempt. The
thought of early parole has him almost jolly.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

So what is it, Doc, write a poem,
hold hands in public, maybe do a
serenade?

DOCTOR FELD

Sex.

It lands like a mallet.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)

We're going to talk extensively
about your sexual history -- when
it started, what it was, what it
included and didn't include, who
did what and how --

Maeve and Arnold's faces begin to fall.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)

If --

(to Maeve)

-- you had orgasms, vaginally or
otherwise, if --

(to Arnold)

-- you had issues around sexuality
or performance, if you talked about
sex or during it, what your
fantasies were and are, if you've
ever shared fantasies, acted them
out, brought toys or sex games into
the bedroom or brought sex out of
the bedroom. Then once we've
explored all that I'll give you
your first sexual -- not sex, but
sexual -- exercise.

Maeve and Arnold sit in stunned silence.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)

All right, let's get started.

THUNK.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
Arnold, would you like to begin?

Arnold looks at him. Just like that he's supposed to lay his secret soul open for this shlemiel he hates and his wife who he hasn't confided in in years.

He turns to Maeve.

ARNOLD
Do you --

He stops.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
I think we should stop this now,
before --
(then)
I think we should just...get our
stuff and go.

She looks at Feld. Knows how much Arnold is going to hate this, hate her. Also knows it's their last chance.

She shakes her head. Arnold is predictably pissed.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Fine. Terrific.

MAEVE
I'll go first.

ARNOLD
Damn straight you will.

DOCTOR FELD
All right, so, Maeve, let's talk
about what you liked, sexually.

MAEVE
Um, you mean...

DOCTOR FELD
Was intercourse pleasurable for
you?

MAEVE
Sometimes.

DOCTOR FELD
Did you have orgasms?

MAEVE
Sometimes.

BEAT.

DOCTOR FELD
Do you masturbate?

MAEVE
Not...not anymore.

Arnold looks up, surprised to learn she ever did at all.

DOCTOR FELD
Why not?

MAEVE
I think I just...after a while I
didn't want to think about it,
about sex, about Arnold, it made me
sad. It made me think of what I
missed.

Hearing this makes Arnold sad.

DOCTOR FELD
What about your fantasy life?

MAEVE
My --

DOCTOR FELD
When you have fantasies...

MAEVE
Fantasies like...?

DOCTOR FELD
Imagined sexual scenarios, like
having sex on a mountaintop or
dressed all in leather.

MAEVE
I mainly just used to think about
Arnold and things we had done.
Just imagine him being there.

DOCTOR FELD
You don't have any fantasies about
things you haven't done, at all?

MAEVE
No, not really. No.

Arnold and Feld both understand that this is unusual and not
good. Maeve is unaware.

DOCTOR FELD
All right, Arnold, let's talk about
you.

Arnold shrugs, resigned.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
What do you enjoy sexually?

ARNOLD
(shrugs)
Sex.

DOCTOR FELD
I'm going to ask you to get more
specific.

ARNOLD
Fine.

DOCTOR FELD
So, you enjoyed the actual sexual
act -- intercourse.

ARNOLD
Yes.
(then, wryly)
The missionary position.

DOCTOR FELD
Did you prefer that to say...oral
sex?

ARNOLD
I guess so.

Doctor Feld isn't fooled.

DOCTOR FELD
Was oral sex an option? Is that
something you would do regularly?

ARNOLD
I don't know. No.

DOCTOR FELD
Why not?

Arnold hesitates.

MAEVE
I didn't...I wasn't comfortable
with it.

DOCTOR FELD
Okay, so you, Arnold would have
been open to that?

ARNOLD
What does it matter? She just said
it wasn't an option.

DOCTOR FELD
What about manual stimulation?
(then)
Did Maeve touch you with her hands?

ARNOLD
Not...recently.

DOCTOR FELD
Recently meaning --

ARNOLD
After college.

DOCTOR FELD
Did you wish she would?

ARNOLD
Not really...can do that fine
myself...

DOCTOR FELD
Fair enough. So what would you say
was working in your sex life, when
you were sexual together?

Arnold wouldn't know how to answer this even if he wanted to.
Feld prompts.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
For instance, would you climax?

Despite his annoyance, Arnold's relieved he knows one.

ARNOLD
Yes.

DOCTOR FELD
Were there things you wanted to do
but didn't?

ARNOLD
Are you kidding me?

DOCTOR FELD
Well --

ARNOLD

That's just -- Who says no to that, Hugh Hefner?

DOCTOR FELD

Okay, then, go ahead.

ARNOLD

What, you want a whole list?

DOCTOR FELD

Sure.

ARNOLD

Fine.

BEAT.

Arnold thinks. Sort of.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

I'm not really coming up with anything.

Feld looks at him. Resistance is not new to Bernie Feld.

DOCTOR FELD

There are no right answers here.

Arnold was hoping there could be no answer at all. But Maeve and Feld both look at him, waiting.

ARNOLD

(frustrated)

I don't know, pour whipped cream on sorority girls.

(then)

You know, your sex life is your sex life, it's not some teenaged boy's fantasy... At some point you have to get real, you didn't marry Pamela Anderson.

DOCTOR FELD

Well, but let's -- we're talking about fantasy but trying to reframe it in the realm of reality. If you could have anything you wanted in your sex life with Maeve, what would it be?

Maeve becomes embarrassed. Maybe he doesn't want anything from her. Her worst fear. Arnold on the other hand would rather die than admit what he does want from her.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
 What did you fantasize about? Were there things you fantasized about but didn't feel comfortable telling her?

ARNOLD
 Of course.

Feld nods, go ahead.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
 (reluctant)
 I don't know, I guess I...used to think about...Maeve giving me a -- giving me oral sex. At work.

Maeve tries not to appear shocked.

DOCTOR FELD
 Okay, so public places.

ARNOLD
 Well, not only public --

DOCTOR FELD
 No, that's good. Very good.

Arnold shrugs, relieved to have this line of questioning behind him. Then, unbelievably,

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
 What else?

Unbelievable. He's taking everything Arnold's got.

ARNOLD
 (almost inaudible)
 A...threesome.

DOCTOR FELD
 With?

ARNOLD
 (reluctant)
 Our neighbor.

MAEVE
 Helen?

ARNOLD
 (chagrined)
 Carol.

MAEVE

With the rhododendrons? That
Carol?

Arnold nods, sheepish.

Maeve's head is about to fly off.

DOCTOR FELD

All right, Arnold. Both of you,
that's very good. Tonight I'm
going to ask you to do another
exercise...

He smiles at them. They don't smile. They are runners at
the twenty-five-and-a-half mile mark who've just been told a
marathon is twenty-eight miles.

71 INT. GOOD NITE INN - BEDROOM - NIGHT

71

Maeve sits on the side of the bed, Arnold beside her.

ARNOLD

You think we should be sitting for
this, or --

MAEVE

Maybe lying down.

He sighs like she's said "holding a ten-ton anvil."

He takes his shoes off, lies down, she lies next to him.

BEAT.

ARNOLD

Do you want to start?

MAEVE

Do you want me to?

ARNOLD

Six of one.

She turns, looks at him: where to begin. She reaches out and
tentatively starts to stroke his arm.

MAEVE

Is this all right?

ARNOLD

It's fine.

BEAT.

MAEVE
Does it feel good?

ARNOLD
It feels like you're petting a dog.

Slightly discouraged, Maeve continues, moves on to his chest.

As she gets around his nipples --

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Don't -- that tickles, don't go
there.

She moves on. She looks down his body: where now?

Spying her salvation, she goes down to his calves, starts
working up his lower legs.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
You know I really don't see the
point of -- I mean do you think
this Doctor Feld, does he have
other legitimate doctors who agree
with him or is he some sort of
a...renegade...

While Arnold muses, Maeve works her way above his knees.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
I mean, us, the average person, you
could be being treated by someone
who's psychotic, did you ever think
of that? Or just someone who's a
very --

Maeve has made her way up to his thighs.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
-- average or even below-average
practitioner who --

As she goes even higher he stops with a sudden inhalation.

She's starting to turn him on. He's surprised, confused,
doesn't know what to do.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
-- who, uh...

Maeve for her part watches his erection with stunned awe.

Neither wants to breathe.

She tries to continue as if she hasn't noticed.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
 (trying to pick up where
 he left off)
 He, uh, to me he just sounds like
 he --

As she moves up to his abdomen, he gives up.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
 Um, I um...I think we better stop.

Her hand stops, she stops, hovers, waits.

MAEVE
 Are you sure?

ARNOLD
 I uh...I'm going to...go to bed.

He gets up, leaves. She continues sitting.

72 INT. GOOD NITE INN - NIGHT 72

Maeve in her bed wide awake, thinking. Slowly, she closes her eyes, imagining. As she does she reaches down, runs her hand over her breast.

73 INT. GOOD NITE INN - NIGHT 73

In the outer room, Arnold, too, is awake, scared, off balance. He looks toward her door.

74 INT. DOCTOR FELD'S OFFICE - DAY 74

Arnold and Maeve sit in front of Feld, both embarrassed.

DOCTOR FELD
 So. Last night you had the
 touching exercise.
 (then)
 How did it go?
 (then)
 How was it for you?

They shrug, fine.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
 Well, let's talk about it.

But they don't.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)

Arnold?

(then)

How was it having Maeve touch you?

ARNOLD

Fine, I guess.

DOCTOR FELD

It's been a long time since you've touched each other that way.

(then)

Was it strange?

ARNOLD

A little.

DOCTOR FELD

What else? What did it feel like?
Did it feel good?

ARNOLD

I don't know.

Feld is no idiot.

DOCTOR FELD

Did you get aroused?

Arnold shrugs.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)

How did that make you feel?

ARNOLD

Aroused.

Feld ignores the sarcasm.

DOCTOR FELD

What about you, Maeve? How did it make you feel?

MAEVE

Um, I felt...aroused, too.

She's incredibly embarrassed to admit this. Arnold is beyond surprised.

DOCTOR FELD

Did you know that, Arnold?

ARNOLD
I -- how could I know what she's
thinking?

Feld tries another tack.

DOCTOR FELD
What happened next?

ARNOLD
Nothing.

DOCTOR FELD
Nothing? Did you --

ARNOLD
We stopped.

DOCTOR FELD
Why?

Arnold shrugs, Maeve doesn't know.

ARNOLD
We did the exercise, it was done,
we did it.

DOCTOR FELD
The exercise was to spend some time
touching each other sensually. It
sounds like Maeve touched you and
then you stopped.
(then)
Did you talk about it? Whose idea
was it to --

ARNOLD
It was mine, okay? I just...wanted
to stop. I didn't want to do it
anymore.

DOCTOR FELD
Okay, but let's try to go deeper.

ARNOLD
Oh God, look --

DOCTOR FELD
Stay with me, Arnold. What were
you feeling when you --

ARNOLD
I just stopped, I just wanted to --
not do it anymore, all right?

Arnold looks more and more like a cornered animal.

BEAT.

DOCTOR FELD

I know how hard this is for you and I respect you for coming. I also respect you enough to tell you the truth: it's not enough just to show up. You have to try.

ARNOLD

Try? I'm not trying?

DOCTOR FELD

I didn't say you weren't trying.

ARNOLD

You said "you have to -- "

DOCTOR FELD

I'm simply pointing out where I see resistance --

ARNOLD

I'm resistant to this whole goddamned thing but that --

DOCTOR FELD

Okay, well, that's what I'm --

ARNOLD

-- didn't stop me from flying five hundred miles to --

DOCTOR FELD

Saying you're trying is not trying.

ARNOLD

(glowering)

I'm trying.

BEAT.

DOCTOR FELD

Well let's go deeper then, really figure this out. Why did you want Maeve to stop?

ARNOLD

I already told you --

DOCTOR FELD
You said you wanted her to stop but
you didn't say why.

ARNOLD
I wanted her to stop because --
because --

Arnold's getting flustered. Feld doesn't let up.

DOCTOR FELD
Were you afraid?

ARNOLD
No! What would I be afraid of?

DOCTOR FELD
Being vulnerable again. Reengaging
can be frightening -- intimacy can
be frightening --

ARNOLD
I am not frightened of my wife.

DOCTOR FELD
It's all right to feel fear, fear
is normal --

ARNOLD
I didn't have fear!

DOCTOR FELD
Then why did you stop Maeve from
touching you?

Now he's truly cornered. He's on a depressurized plane and
the oxygen masks aren't falling. It's more than he can take.
He shuts down.

ARNOLD
I don't know.

DOCTOR FELD
All right, well, maybe spend some
time tonight thinking about that.

But he's done. Feld knows it. Even the nominal
participation he's had so far is too much. At this moment,
they are less intimate than when they arrived, not more.

74A EXT. GREAT HOPE SPRINGS - STREET - DAY

74A

They walk in silence.

BEAT.

ARNOLD

I might -- get some air before...

She looks at him, gets that he's been pushed past his limit. He's still talking to her but he's already leaving.

MAEVE

Will you be back for supper?

ARNOLD

I don't -- uh, don't wait, I'll get something or -- don't wait.

She watches him go.

75

INT. TAVERN - DAY

75

Arnold is now seated next to a TRUCKER TYPE. A BASKETBALL GAME plays on the TV in front of them. The trucker nurses a beer, Arnold drinks scotch.

They both grimace at a particularly bad shot.

TRUCKER

God.

ARNOLD

Unbelievable.

TRUCKER

Hasn't made a free throw this season.

ARNOLD

Guy used to be able to play.

TRUCKER

Got married.

ARNOLD

That it?

TRUCKER

(nodding)

Victoria's Secret model.

Arnold shrugs, that'd do it.

ARNOLD

What a waste.

TRUCKER
Maybe they'll get divorced.

They grimace again.

ARNOLD
Couldn't afford that foul.

TRUCKER
This thing is over.

The trucker takes a drink, summons the bartender for another.

TRUCKER (CONT'D)
You need a --

ARNOLD
(surprised)
Yeah, thanks.

The trucker nods to the bartender.

TRUCKER
Will.

ARNOLD
Arnold.

TRUCKER
You here for the --

ARNOLD
Yeah.

TRUCKER
What'd --

ARNOLD
My wife's idea.

TRUCKER
How's it going?

ARNOLD
It's, uh...

He shrugs. The trucker gets it, commiserates.

TRUCKER
Yeah. My wife tried to drag me
once.

ARNOLD
Oh, yeah?

TRUCKER

I don't know...I bring home the
money I make, don't sleep with
other women. Feel like that should
be enough, you know?

Arnold nods. He does, too.

TRUCKER (CONT'D)

So you didn't...cheat or anything?

ARNOLD

No.

(then)

Not that I haven't, you know,
thought about...

TRUCKER

Who hasn't?

(then)

Mine thought I cheated on her,
that's why she...

ARNOLD

Did you?

He shakes his head.

TRUCKER

Should have, maybe...

They laugh, enjoying being bad without actually being bad.

76

INT. GOOD NITE INN - NIGHT

76

Arnold returns to the room, a little lighter now that's got
some alcohol in him. The outer room's oddly lifeless.

ARNOLD

Maeve?

He goes to the doorway to the

BEDROOM

Maeve silently packs.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

I'm back.

Understanding slowly seeps past the alcoholic haze.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

MAEVE

Doctor Feld said he'd give us a refund.

ARNOLD

Oh.

Arnold sits on the bed.

Maeve continues packing.

BEAT.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

What percent?

MAEVE

What?

ARNOLD

Did he say he'd give back the whole payment or --

MAEVE

Half.

BEAT.

ARNOLD

If it's just half maybe we should...

She doesn't respond.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

I mean, if he was going to give the whole thing back I'd say...

(then)

But if we're already out the two it might make more sense to just...

Again no response, just the steady packing.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

I don't know what you thought was gonna happen here, what did you -- There's no magic -- you know, like Jack and the Magic -- He's just a man with an office.

(then)

It's ridiculous, you come here for four days and you're supposed to, what, have a new marriage? It's a gimmick, a set up.

(MORE)

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

That's what it is, you're set up to fail. Then you feel bad about failing. You see that, right? You can't win.

Finished packing, Maeve gets out his suitcase, begins putting his things in.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Why did you bring us here?

She stops, thinks.

MAEVE

(slowly)

You know how you always think you're heading towards something? When you're a kid, you think, "when I'm in high school," or "when I get married," there's always something you're looking forward to.

(then)

One day I thought, we're not going towards anything anymore. I guess I just wasn't ready to let go of things getting better yet.

(then)

Could you bring me your shaver from the bathroom please?

Arnold just looks at her.

DOCTOR FELD (PRELAP)

You're back.

77

INT. DOCTOR FELD'S OFFICE - DAY

77

Arnold and Maeve with Feld.

DOCTOR FELD

Let's talk about that.

Arnold shrugs.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)

(to Arnold)

You got what you wanted, or what you said you wanted. You could have gone home. But you're here.

(then)

How do you --

ARNOLD

It was only a partial refund.

Feld has to smile at Arnold's consistency.

DOCTOR FELD
How did you feel after yesterday's session?

ARNOLD
Fine.

DOCTOR FELD
And when Maeve told you you could go home?

ARNOLD
Great.

DOCTOR FELD
But you --

ARNOLD
Well, I mean... I felt great but then I could see Maeve didn't feel great. She looked...disappointed.

DOCTOR FELD
And that bothered you. Did you feel guilty?

Arnold nods.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
What else?

ARNOLD
What do you mean what else, what else is there to --

DOCTOR FELD
And you felt guilty. What else?
(off Arnold)
You can't do this for Maeve -- not only for Maeve. There has to be something you want.

BEAT.

Arnold thinks.

ARNOLD
I don't know, I...it's probably not...

DOCTOR FELD
What?

ARNOLD
When Maeve was packing...

DOCTOR FELD
Go on.

BEAT.

ARNOLD
When she was packing, I felt like,
like --

He searches for the words.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Like we lost.

DOCTOR FELD
Lost what?

ARNOLD
Like a...game or a -- not a game,
but --

DOCTOR FELD
It felt like a defeat.

Arnold nods.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
So what do you think you'd lost?

Arnold shrugs.

ARNOLD
I don't know.

DOCTOR FELD
Well what do you think you --

ARNOLD
I said I don't know!

DOCTOR FELD
What do you want, Arnold? Do you
want to have an intimate
relationship with your wife again?

Maeve's practically holding her breath.

ARNOLD

I -- you're gonna put me on the --
I don't know -- I don't even know
what that means, "intimate
relationship," I mean, we're
married, we're -- yeah, I guess I -
if you're going to push me, I guess
I want it to be...more like it was.

(then, quickly)

But I don't know anything about
therapy or marriage or --

(to Maeve)

Just don't expect anything.

She nods, again almost in tears, this time the good kind.

78

INT. HALLIE'S COMET DINER - DAY

78

Maeve and Arnold eat. At the usual table sits the silent,
mousy couple, still silent. Cora approaches.

CORA

So, Romeo, can I freshen up your --

She picked the wrong day to rattle Arnold's cage.

ARNOLD

You know, "Cora," I may have been
condemned to spending an entire
week in this godforsaken town using
up valuable vacation days way too
close to tax season being abused by
some quack about everything I've
done wrong in my life, but that
does not mean I have to listen to
your rude obnoxious comments. So
unless you have the answer to
marital bliss hidden under that
apron, I'd like to ask you to just
shut your big wide trap.

Speechless, Cora leaves.

Maeve looks around, the various other couples have noticed
Arnold's outburst, are looking at them.

Arnold, impervious, takes a bite out of his Reuben.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

I think the food here's getting
better.

Maeve just looks at him.

DOCTOR FELD (PRELAP)
Let's talk about why the sex
stopped.

79 INT. OFFICE OF DOCTOR FELD - DAY

79

Maeve and Arnold respond with blank looks: if they knew that
would they be here?

DOCTOR FELD
Maeve? What do you think?

Maeve thinks.

MAEVE
Um, I don't really... I don't
know. Exactly.

DOCTOR FELD
Well, what do you think?

MAEVE
(considering)
It didn't so much stop as it would
go longer between, until...

DOCTOR FELD
It effectively stopped. All right.
But something precipitates the
longer in between, even if it's
just fatigue or ill health or a
childbirth or... Arnold?

ARNOLD
Probably started with the kids.
After Molly was a few weeks old I'd
try to... I didn't want to force
myself on anyone.

DOCTOR FELD
Okay. Then what?

Arnold shrugs.

MAEVE
Hank came pretty soon after.

DOCTOR FELD
And did you ever get back to what
you would call a regular pattern of
lovemaking before Hank came?

MAEVE
Not, not really.

DOCTOR FELD

Okay, so after Hank, was it the same thing?

Arnold nods.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)

All right. This is very common. It happens to so many couples they should give out a warning at the hospital. As the kids got older did things change?

ARNOLD

Just didn't seem like she ever wanted to...

MAEVE

After they were a little older I tried to...you know, start things...

DOCTOR FELD

You initiated sexual contact.

MAEVE

Sort of.

Arnold gives her a look: you did?

MAEVE (CONT'D)

I wasn't...good at it. I felt embarrassed.

DOCTOR FELD

Why?

MAEVE

I didn't know how to -- to -- what to do. And it didn't seem like he wanted it anyway.

DOCTOR FELD

Did you ever try to talk to Arnold about what was going on? What you wanted?

She shakes her head.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)

Why do you think that is?

MAEVE

I don't know. I was afraid.

DOCTOR FELD

Of what?

MAEVE

I was afraid he wasn't...attracted
to me anymore.

DOCTOR FELD

Was that the case Arnold?

BEAT.

Arnold is not unaware of what's at stake in this answer.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)

Arnold?

ARNOLD

No.

(then)

Of course not.

DOCTOR FELD

It's not really "of course not."
People change, emotionally,
physically. Our desires change
over time. Sometimes when a
connection is lost we forget how to
want one another. It's not
automatic that we are attracted to
someone because we once were.

Arnold realizes a further affirmation is expected. And he's
in this far. Feld pushes a little.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)

Do you still fantasize about Maeve?

ARNOLD

Do I -- you mean...now?

Feld nods. Maeve is embarrassed, sure she knows the answer.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Sure.

If Feld senses this may be a lie he doesn't let on.

DOCTOR FELD

When was your last one?

ARNOLD

My last --

DOCTOR FELD
When was the last time you
fantasized about sex with Maeve?

ARNOLD
It was probably...I mean if you're
asking for one specifically, I
can't...

Clearly he can't think of one. What Maeve has feared. He
doesn't think about her anymore, not in that way.

She could fold here, has every reason to. Doesn't.
Believing they can get back, she doubles down.

MAEVE
I had one.

They both turn. She feels the heat on her face, flushed.

DOCTOR FELD
When?

MAEVE
After we did the exercise.

DOCTOR FELD
It was you and Arnold engaged in a
new sexual --

MAEVE
(nodding)
Like you said. I mean, we weren't
on a mountaintop or anything...

DOCTOR FELD
This is good. This is very very
good, a very hopeful step.

They're pleased.

He looks at them, considers carefully, decides.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
I want to assign you your next
exercise.

He's still considering though, weighing it.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
This is going to demand real trust
because you'll both be stepping
outside your normal comfort zones.
(then)
(MORE)

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
 There's always a moment in this
 kind of work where you have to just
 take a leap of faith. I think you
 guys are ready for it.

Off Maeve, intent, and Arnold, skeptical,

80

INT. THEATER - NIGHT

80

Maeve sits in the theater as Arnold enters with popcorn and
 cokes. The theater's nearly empty and they are toward the
 back.

ARNOLD
 (sitting)
 Of course there was some problem
 with the popcorn popper.
 (then)
 Do you think it's actually
 inbreeding? I notice a delay.
 (then)
 I don't see why you can't just tell
 me what you're --

MAEVE
 Doctor Feld said it was fine this
 way.

ARNOLD
 It just makes me uncomfortable.
 Not knowing what's going to
 happen...what I'm going to be
 required to do.

MAEVE
 Well when it's your turn...

ARNOLD
 But who's to say we'll do the
 exercise again? We're moving at a
 clip here.
 (off Maeve)
 All right, it's your ballgame,
 fine.

The lights start to go down.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
 Tell you one thing, you would never
 have gotten me to a movie starring
 a dog if we were at home.

Maeve watches as the trailers start, more than a little
 anxious.

81

INT. THEATER - LATER

81

Arnold's having a great old time, eating popcorn, laughing at the dog movie.

ARNOLD

This is actually pretty good.

He's completely forgotten there was an exercise to do.

Maeve hasn't. She's waiting. Anxious.

The laughter subsides from the latest joke. It's now or never.

Maeve reaches over, puts her hand on Arnold's thigh.

He reacts instantly.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Oh.

She's totally embarrassed but plays through. He tries to relax as she runs her hand up his thigh. His eyes widen.

He holds his popcorn completely still, off balance.

She takes a break, furtively checks the coast is clear before getting down onto the floor. She tries to look sexy, or at least comfortable. Or at least not petrified.

Arnold looks around to make sure no one's watching.

As Maeve angles herself into the space between the seats in front of her, she knocks his popcorn and some of it spills.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Hey, what are you --

MAEVE

I'm just --

ARNOLD

I gotta put the popcorn --

He tries to perch it on the next seat while she angles in front of him and unzips his pants. Again he's just incredibly surprised.

We watch his face as she continues getting access.

Then we're on her, terrified, as she's about to begin.

Back on him for --

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Ow. Hey. Hey, what are you --
Ouch!

MAEVE
I'm --

ARNOLD
It's okay just watch it with the --

MAEVE
I didn't mean to --

ARNOLD
It's fine, just -- you can hurt
someone if you don't --

What little confidence she had cobbled together is gone.

She gets up awkwardly.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Hey, where are you -- I said it's
fine --

But she's already hurrying out, like she's running from
something. Which she is.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Maeve.

He sits there for a minute, feeling like a total jerk before
he gets up, follows her.

82 EXT. THEATER - NIGHT

82

Maeve walks quickly, visibly upset, Arnold tries to calm her.

ARNOLD
Look, it's not --

MAEVE
I shouldn't have --

ARNOLD
-- a big deal.

MAEVE
I'm not good at anything, I don't --
know how to do anything.

ARNOLD
There's nothing to know how to do,
it's just you can't --

MAEVE
I'm so clumsy.

Now Arnold feels terrible.

ARNOLD
You're not clumsy.

She looks at him.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
What? You're just maybe a
little...you haven't had the
experience with certain things.

Maeve crumples.

Arnold rolls his eyes, great he made it worse.

83 INT. GOOD NITE INN - NIGHT

83

Arnold's in the outer room reading. He looks through the
bedroom to her closed bathroom door. He puts his magazine
aside, gets up and heads into the

BEDROOM

He lightly KNOCKS on the bathroom door.

ARNOLD
Maeve.

BEAT.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Come on, it's not a big deal.

BEAT.

MAEVE (O.S.)
Not to you.

He gives up, goes back into the main room.

84 INT. GOOD NITE INN - BEDROOM - NIGHT

84

Once it's safe, Maeve comes out. She wishes she could take
the day back.

85 INT. OFFICE OF DOCTOR FELD - DAY

85

Maeve and Arnold sit silently in front of Feld.

DOCTOR FELD
All right. Let's talk about last night.

They both look away.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
(to Maeve)
You said it didn't go well. What does that mean?

Maeve can't help it, tears start to roll down her cheeks. Hearing her not responding Arnold looks over, rolls his eyes. He's both annoyed and crushed. He wishes he could cry, too.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
What happened, Arnold?

ARNOLD
I told her to watch out for the...not to...
(shrugs)
I shoulda been more...sensitive.

DOCTOR FELD
Okay.

ARNOLD
We've never done anything like --
(then)
I don't know what you -- I don't know.
(then)
Does anyone ever succeed at these things?

Feld looks at them both, Arnold hopeless, Maeve weeping.

DOCTOR FELD
I'm going to suggest we move to individual sessions.

86 INT. OFFICE OF DOCTOR FELD - DAY

86

Feld's now alone with Maeve.

DOCTOR FELD
I want to commend you on your bravery.

MAEVE
I must have looked so stupid.

DOCTOR FELD

The degree of difficulty on this one was, like, a nine. I don't know too many people who can pull that off in a movie theater.

Maeve laughs a wet laugh, pulls a Kleenex from a box.

87

INT. OFFICE OF DOCTOR FELD - DAY

87

Feld alone with Arnold.

ARNOLD

The whole situation was just...dangerous, with the cup holders and --

Feld looks at him.

DOCTOR FELD

Arnold. You and Maeve were happy once.

ARNOLD

I thought we were happy now.

DOCTOR FELD

Maeve is putting it all on the line here. What are you putting on the line?

Arnold can't answer that.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)

From where I'm sitting, it looks like Maeve is doing this all alone.

Arnold glares at him, equal parts feeling like shit and wanting to beat the shit out of Feld for making him feel that way.

88

INT. DOCTOR FELD'S OFFICE - DAY

88

Feld looks kindly at Maeve, who seems tapped.

DOCTOR FELD

So much of this is about giving yourself permission, to try and sometimes fail. Do you think you can do that?

MAEVE

Oh, I know I can fail.

He smiles. She smiles. Maeve made a joke.

89 INT. DOCTOR FELD'S OFFICE - DAY

89

Back in Arnold's session, no one's smiling.

DOCTOR FELD

We've got two days left together,
if you want to spend those two days
sitting on the sidelines watching
Maeve try to save your marriage, I
can't stop you. My question to you
is: are you really willing to let
it go?

This sounds ominous, gets Arnold's attention.

90 INT. DOCTOR FELD'S OFFICE - DAY

90

Back with Maeve.

MAEVE

I just wish there was a set of
instructions somewhere...I have
manuals for how to use everything
in my house except the one thing I
really need a manual for.

DOCTOR FELD

(gets out a little pad)
I'm going to give you this, I
think it might help with your
anxiety...

She watches him write something down: a prescription?

91 INT. DOCTOR FELD'S OFFICE - DAY

91

Back with Arnold, still staring at Feld with barely concealed
hatred and more than a little dread.

DOCTOR FELD

Couples come to me for two reasons,
to help them save their marriage
or...

Arnold hardens.

ARNOLD

Or what?

DOCTOR FELD

Or to help them end it.

He lets that sink in.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
When one person is this unhappy,
the marriage has to restore some
kind of equilibrium or...

ARNOLD
Or what...?

Feld just looks at him.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Or what, you bastard? Are you
saying my marriage is over? I
swear to God. I am not paying you
for another session just because
you threaten me, you little jerk.
(then)
Do you have any idea how it -- how
would you like it if someone came
in here and asked you all kinds of
personal --

Arnold turns the tables, with a rapid-fire interrogation.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
How do you like it -- like
your...sex?

DOCTOR FELD
I --

ARNOLD
Do you like it...up your backside?

DOCTOR FELD
No.

ARNOLD
Or do you like to...put your penis
in between your wife's breasts and
rub it all around in there?

DOCTOR FELD
Sometimes.

ARNOLD
Really? You like that? You like
it when she sucks your...cock, too?

DOCTOR FELD
Yes.

ARNOLD

When you...get off...does she
swallow it?

Feld just looks at him.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Answer me! Does she?

(then)

Got one you don't want to answer,
huh? Life's an open book but you
got one you don't want to answer.
You feel pissed? You feel
attacked? Like an asshole?
How does that feel you smug
little...

(then)

God I hate you.

Doctor Feld is engaged but not thrown, still mindful of who
the doctor is and who the patient. He's compassionate.

DOCTOR FELD

Your wife is unhappy. I'm not
saying she'll ever leave -- I just
don't want you to have anything to
regret, should --

(another tack)

I'm simply saying the moment is
here and you need to ask yourself,
"have I done all I could?" Have
you, Arnold? Is this the best you
can do?

The fact that even after his verbal assault, Feld's still
clearly deeply concerned about -- and only about -- Arnold's
marriage really freaks Arnold out.

92 INT. DOCTOR FELD'S OFFICE - WAITING ROOM - DAY 92

As Arnold emerges, the mousy couple is entering. Only
they're transformed, they're laughing, touching each other.
Insult to injury. Arnold stares at them in silent fury as
they enter Feld's office: traitors.

93 EXT. GREAT HOPE SPRINGS STREET - DAY 93

Arnold walks, agitated, frustrated, having a fight with
himself inside his head.

ARNOLD

(grumbling)

Asshole...."not
trying"...asshole...

He grunts, annoyed, losing his own argument, pissed. He stops at the corner, unable to avoid the conclusion that this piece of shit Feld has a point.

95 EXT. WHALE OF A TALE BOOKSTORE - CONTINUOUS 95

Meanwhile, Maeve stands outside the tiny local bookstore, reading the "prescription" Feld gave her, looking inside, considering.

96 INT. WHALE OF A TALE BOOKSTORE - DAY 96

Maeve enters the microscopically small bookstore. A TEEN-AGED SKATEBOARD PUNK mans the register.

SKATEBOARD PUNK

Hey.

MAEVE

Hello.

SKATEBOARD PUNK

We got a discount on trade paperbacks in front.

MAEVE

All right.

SKATEBOARD PUNK

You looking for anything?

MAEVE

Not...really.

SKATEBOARD PUNK

Lemme know.

Maeve tries to navigate the tiny store and its hand-printed barely-legible signs.

At the self-help section, she cocks her head to try and get the "health and sexuality" books in her peripherals. She allows her eyes to dart briefly across.

SKATEBOARD PUNK (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You got a title?

Startled, Maeve turns.

MAEVE

Um, no, I...I'm really just looking.

She hesitates, ready to let herself off the hook. Too hard today, too hard.

SKATEBOARD PUNK

If you have a title I can look it
up, we're short on shelf space,
gotta lot of stuff in back.

Maeve stops. The universe is giving her a second chance. She steels herself, approaches the register, takes a deep breath.

MAEVE

Actually, I'm looking for --
(reading from paper)
"Sex Tips For Straight Women From A
Gay Man."

BEAT.

Skateboard punk fleetingly wonders if he's stoned, recovers.

SKATEBOARD PUNK

Great, cool, lemme check...

97 EXT. CAPTAIN JACK'S BED & BREAKFAST - DAY 97

Arnold arrives at the quaint Victorian. He glares up at it as if the inn itself is now the source of his suffering.

98 INT. CAPTAIN JACK'S BED & BREAKFAST - LOBBY - DAY 98

Arnold waits for someone to appear, embarrassed to be there. He checks out the lobby. What women like about the place is a mystery. It reminds him of his dead grandmother's house.

MIKE (O.S.)

Can I help you?

Arnold turns to see a burly-looking guy, MIKE, more military than one would think for a B&B owner, approach the counter.

ARNOLD

You Jack?

MIKE

No Jack. I'm Mike.

ARNOLD

All right, well, Mike, I'd like to
make a reservation. For dinner.

MIKE

For when?

ARNOLD

Tonight.

Mike frowns as he looks over his book.

MIKE

Yeah, that might be tough...

Arnold looks around, the place is empty.

MIKE (CONT'D)

We really don't have anything.

ARNOLD

Okay, well, I'm -- I should have called ahead but...

MIKE

I've got a nine-fifteen open next Thursday, you want that?

ARNOLD

No, I -- I'm not from -- look, you really can't -- there's nothing you can do for us?

MIKE

Sorry.

ARNOLD

All right, fine. Where else in town should we go?

MIKE

For dinner? There's really nowhere else for -- well, you know, there is a Pea Soup Andersen's down on Route --

ARNOLD

No, that won't -- there has to be somewhere else in town.

MIKE

Afraid you're out of luck.

Arnold sighs. Begging some ex-Marine for mercy is not his idea of a good time.

ARNOLD

Look, I need a reservation, this is kind of a... just, can you --

Marine Mike's not budging.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
I -- my -- my wife...

Mike looks him over. Smells the desperation.

MIKE
You one of Bernie's?

Arnold nods.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Most of Bernie's stay with us.

ARNOLD
Yeah, I heard.

MIKE
Where are you staying -- over in --

ARNOLD
We're at the Good Nite --

MIKE
The Good Nite? Jesus.

His look says it all: you are circling the drain, pal.

99 INT. GROCERY STORE - REFRIGERATOR AISLE - DAY 99

Maeve consults her book, examines several types of cookie dough. She reaches out, feels the peanut butter roll, then feels the chocolate chip, kind of grossed out by what she's doing. She feels again, perplexed; what thickness and resiliency does she want?

Nearby, a fellow shopper watches, absorbed and confused.

At a loss, Maeve throws the peanut butter into her basket. As she moves on, she looks up and sees her observer. Tries to smile like it's totally normal to feel up your dough.

100 INT. CAPTAIN JACK'S BED & BREAKFAST - LOBBY - DAY 100

Mike's still flipping through his book. It looks like he's at about next July.

MIKE
Sorry, there's just...

ARNOLD
Nothing?

MIKE

On top of our reservations we have to keep enough tables every night for inn customers. Now if you were staying here that'd be a different -

ARNOLD

Yeah, yeah I get it.

Mike puts away his book.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Listen. I can...maybe a little tip would --

MIKE

(amused)

You want to buy a table?

ARNOLD

I just...I need this so whatever I have to do --

MIKE

You have to make a reservation. A month ago.

ARNOLD

But I didn't, so --

MIKE

Look, I'm really sorry about whatever's going on in your marriage but I don't think the dinner was gonna save it.

ARNOLD

I need a table. I need it. I am not going to leave -- from right here -- until I get it.

Mike looks at him.

101 INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

101

Now in the produce aisle, Maeve tries to be inconspicuous as she picks up a bunch of bananas, checks them for size.

102 INT. CAPTAIN JACK'S BED & BREAKFAST - LOBBY - DAY

102

Arnold's still standing there. Mike's ignoring him, doing stuff around the office, taking phone calls. Arnold stands his ground.

103 INT. GOOD NITE INN - DAY 103

Sitting on the lid of the toilet, Maeve's got her book open and is massaging the cookie dough roll while reading "instructions" on pressure.

104 INT. CAPTAIN JACK'S BED & BREAKFAST - LOBBY - DAY 104

Arnold's still there. Mike takes a reservation by phone, another couple comes up. In the background waiters set up the tables for dinner. Finally Mike looks at Arnold, gets it: he's not leaving.

The PHONE RINGS. Mike picks up, still looking at Arnold.

MIKE
(into phone)
Okay...Feuer?...For what time?

Arnold looks at him, realizing he's got him.

Mike crosses "Feuer" off his reservations list.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Okay, thanks for calling.

He hangs up. Arnold waits.

BEAT.

ARNOLD
Well.

MIKE
Got a waiting list. Gotta call --

But Arnold's leaning across the desk, in his face, grabbing his collar. He's not by nature a rough or physical man but he's been pushed to a new place.

ARNOLD
You will give me that table, so
help me God.

Mike eyes him, believing it.

105 INT. GOOD NITE INN - DAY 105

Maeve, now dressed for dinner, book open on the counter, pulls one banana off, looks at it, daunted. She begins licking at it. She grimaces, it tastes dirty. She washes it off, continues. She starts to stick it in her mouth, in awe of its girth, when it occurs to her. She smiles, PEELS the banana, continues. She's nearly got it in her mouth when

ARNOLD (O.S.)
Are you ready?

Maeve starts, pulls the banana out.

MAEVE
Almost.

She shoves the banana, dough and book under the sink, stands, looks at herself in the mirror. She can't suppress a tiny smile. For the cookie dough, the book and the banana and the courageous woman who bought them.

Maeve heads out into the

OUTER ROOM

Where Arnold, nicely dressed, is already anxious.

ARNOLD
Are you ready? I don't want to be
late.

Maeve's too nervous herself to care that Arnold's failed to compliment her dress or notice her appearance at all.

They set out.

106 EXT. TOWN - NIGHT

106

They walk toward the inn, wordless.

BEAT.

ARNOLD
(blowing on his hands)
Cold out.
(then)
You cold?

She nods. He reaches for his jacket, but instead of offering it zips it up further. They walk on.

107 INT. CAPTAIN JACK'S BED & BREAKFAST - LOBBY - NIGHT

107

They're half frozen by the time they get in there. Arnold goes to the desk, Maeve looks around. She's enchanted. It's all she hoped this trip would be.

Mike comes up, a little cat-that-swallowed-the-canary.

MIKE
All ready for you, Sir.

ARNOLD

Great.

MIKE

And how about you, little lady?
Ready for a night of romance?

Maeve smiles but his joke brings it all back -- to both of them -- the pressure. They fight to rise above the swelling panic.

108 INT. CAPTAIN JACK'S BED & BREAKFAST - DINING ROOM - NIGHT 108

A lovely quiet dining room, pink table cloth, rose in crystal vase, candle, fireplace. Maeve is in heaven. Or would be, if she weren't already distracted by what's supposed to happen after dinner.

ARNOLD

Do you like it?

MAEVE

I love it.

Her sincere appreciation makes him feel self conscious.

ARNOLD

Let's -- you want to get some wine -
- let's get someone over here.

He looks around, motions for service.

Maeve sighs. She could use a little liquid courage right about now.

109 INT. CAPTAIN JACK'S BED & BREAKFAST - DINING ROOM - NIGHT 109

Dinner on the table, wine bottle half empty.

MAEVE

I just can't get over --

ARNOLD

The cod is very good.

MAEVE

This is exactly...

ARNOLD

You like it.

(then)

A little different than the Good
Nite.

MAEVE
Completely different.
(then)
I guess I should have --

ARNOLD
What?

MAEVE
Well, that place...it's not very...

ARNOLD
No.

BEAT.

MAEVE
You know that first night...

She looks up, hesitating. Should she share?

ARNOLD
What, the sirens? You hear those,
too?

MAEVE
I was disappointed...

ARNOLD
With the room?

MAEVE
(shaking her head)
I thought you might...stay in the
room with me.

This is not where Arnold thought she was going. This has
never occurred to him.

ARNOLD
Oh.

MAEVE
Not that, I had no reason to think
you'd --

ARNOLD
I didn't --

MAEVE
No, of course not.

BEAT.

MAEVE (CONT'D)
I just...hoped.

She's not reproaching him and he knows it. He likes that she wanted him there.

BEAT.

ARNOLD
I, uh...I...you know I --

Whatever it is he's trying to say he can't quite get it out. He's starting to look a little peaked.

MAEVE
Are you all right?

ARNOLD
(nodding)
The fish is very good.

110 INT. CAPTAIN JACK'S BED & BREAKFAST - DINING ROOM - NIGHT 110

Maeve and Arnold are halfway through dessert, now really enjoying themselves. A passing waiter pours the last drops of wine and heads off.

ARNOLD
What I don't get is how he remembers to talk like that --

MAEVE
I know, it would be so hard.

ARNOLD
I mean probably sometimes you just want to strangle your patient and you still have to sound like --

MAEVE
I know.

ARNOLD
(doing Feld)
"What do you think it means that you have dreams about killing your husband?"

Maeve laughs.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Think he talks that way to his own wife?

MAEVE
That would be funny.

ARNOLD
"Mildred, I find it interesting
that you're naked..."

Arnold enjoys making Maeve laugh.

The WAITER approaches.

WAITER
Can I bring you anything else?

They look at one another.

ARNOLD
Do you --

MAEVE
I'm all right.
(then)
Unless you --

ARNOLD
(to waiter)
Just the check please.

He goes off.

BEAT.

MAEVE
It's going to be cold on the way
back.

Arnold, once more looking nervous, bites the bullet.

ARNOLD
The thing is, uh -- and I don't
know how you'll, um, -- well, I...
(out with it)
...got us a room.
(then)
Here.

He looks up to see how she's taking it.

She's melting.

MAEVE
You did?

ARNOLD
I just thought maybe you'd like,
you know, for a night to, um...

MAEVE
(teary)
Thank you.

ARNOLD
Sure, so, after this we can just...

He gestures "go up."

BEAT.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
The front desk has toothbrushes. I
asked.

A little awkward. Both nervous. Now there's pressure. Like
there wasn't before.

BEAT.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Are you sure you don't want some
tea?

111 INT. CAPTAIN JACK'S BED & BREAKFAST - HALLWAY - NIGHT 111

Outside the door Maeve waits as Arnold searches his pockets
for the key.

Maeve's nervous as her moment approaches. Arnold's nervous,
too, way out on a limb now. No pretending you don't care
when you're springing for the honeymoon suite.

ARNOLD
Here it is...

He opens the door to

112 INT. CAPTAIN JACK'S BED & BREAKFAST - HONEYMOON SUITE - NIGHT 112

The romantic suite literally takes Maeve's breath away. If
she had designed it herself it couldn't be more perfect --
flowered everything: wallpaper, curtains, quilt...

MAEVE
Oh, Arnold...

ARNOLD
You like it?

She nods, speechless.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Great, well, there's strawberries.
You had to get 'em, so...
(then)
You want some?

MAEVE
Hmm?

ARNOLD
Strawberries?

MAEVE
I'm kind of full.

ARNOLD
Me, too. They knew that, rip off
really the --

He's got a rant in there ready to come out and fill the empty space. But Maeve knows it. She cuts him off at the pass.

MAEVE
I think I will have some.

ARNOLD
You will?

She nods, he goes over to prepare a little plate. Maeve takes a look around.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Do you want to sit at the table or -

She's still looking, mesmerized by the details.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
(shyly)
We could eat them in front of the
fire, if you --

She nods.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Yeah?

MAEVE
Yes.

She positions herself in front of the fire. She'd be enjoying this more if she didn't feel like she was about to throw up from nerves.

At the table, he's off his game, too, trying to be casual, shoveling the strawberries onto the plate.

He comes over and awkwardly arranges himself on the floor next to her, then offers her a strawberry.

Aiming for chivalry, he goes to put it in her mouth, she thinks he's putting it in her hand, then tries to take it in her mouth while he tries to put it in her hand. Finally, she takes it, eats it. They are both exceedingly nervous.

MAEVE (CONT'D)

It's good.

ARNOLD

Is it?

MAEVE

Fresh.

ARNOLD

Good.

BEAT.

The fire, the romantic setting, the strawberries...there's really no denying what's supposed to be going on here.

They sit. The silence is awkward, very very pronounced.

BEAT.

MAEVE

I like the --

ARNOLD

There's champagne, too --

MAEVE

Oh, is there?

ARNOLD

Sorry, I --

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

You go ahead.

MAEVE

No, I...

She shakes her head, it's gone.

BEAT.

Another interminable moment.

We are with Maeve as she struggles. She knows what she wants to do, what she has to do, but it's so hard to just...do it.

She steels herself. Wills herself. This is why she came here, now or never. Reserves of strength.

For his part, Arnold, feeling like it's his job to make the move, is starting to sweat.

ARNOLD
Maybe, would you --

But Maeve's already out of the gate.

MAEVE
Could I have some champagne please?

Thrilled for a task, Arnold gets up, pours her a glass.

MAEVE (CONT'D)
You could bring the bottle over.

ARNOLD
You -- okay.

He brings it, her glass, the extra glass.

She takes her glass, drinks it down.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Do you want some more?

MAEVE
(offering glass)
Yes.

ARNOLD
(pouring)
Are you comfortable because I saw
some more pillows in the --

He's just mid-sentence when she turns and very purposefully starts to undo his belt.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Oh -- oh.

He sits there, glass of champagne in hand, while she undoes his pants.

She takes the glass of champagne, downs it, pushes him back onto the floor.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Guess you have something in mind
there.

She puts the glass down, works her way down him.

She pulls his pants down, doing her best confident person/porn star impression. She's believable, at least to Arnold who suddenly feels like a librarian at a bondage convention, outmanned and outgunned.

This is not the Maeve he knows. This Maeve knows what she wants, is taking it, is sexy. And scary.

Maeve looks down at Arnold's personal areas. She's terrified but goes for it.

Once he starts to let himself be in it, Arnold really enjoys it. He's surprised, pleased. Maeve doesn't LOOK nervous so he can relax. He gets into it.

Then

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Wait, stop.

MAEVE

(alarmed)

Did I --

ARNOLD

No, just, I don't want to --

MAEVE

(surprised)

Oh.

(then)

Oh.

She's thrilled. She did it. In this moment, she loves herself.

ARNOLD

Do you think we should --?

MAEVE

Should --?

(getting it: sex)

Oh.

(then)

Oh. Okay.

ARNOLD

Do you want to be --

MAEVE

Me? No. I mean, if you want --

ARNOLD
No, I can be --

He starts to rearrange so he's on top.

He kisses her, starts caressing her, pulling her clothes off.
It's awkward. He hasn't done this in a while. A long while.

She's liking it, enjoying herself, almost relaxed. As the
moment approaches Arnold, on the other hand, is really
starting to feel some anxiety.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Are you --

MAEVE
Yes.

ARNOLD
Okay, I'm going to --

MAEVE
Okay.

ARNOLD
Are you sure you want me to --

MAEVE
Uh huh.

ARNOLD
Okay.

He starts feeling around down there and then their eyes meet.
She's nervous but excited, expectant. But what she's
expecting to happen doesn't happen.

MAEVE
Are you --

ARNOLD
Just a --

MAEVE
I want to.

ARNOLD
I know, I --

MAEVE
Do you want me to --

She starts to reach down.

ARNOLD

No!

He doesn't want to say what just happened, but in an instant she knows.

He rolls off her.

They both sit for a moment in the ruin.

MAEVE

You lied.

ARNOLD

What?

MAEVE

When Doctor Feld asked --

ARNOLD

No I didn't.

(then)

It's like he said, you get out of a habit and it's hard to go back to, jeez, don't --

MAEVE

It was when you looked at me.

ARNOLD

What?

MAEVE

You looked at my face, that's when -

ARNOLD

That had nothing to do with it.

She turns and looks at him, at that last desperate place where even a terrible truth is better than the not knowing.

MAEVE

Then tell me.

ARNOLD

Tell you what?

MAEVE

That you still --

ARNOLD

Oh, come on, --

MAEVE

Tell me.

ARNOLD

What, what do you want from me?
It's been years since -- you can't
just --

(then)

We fell in love when we were twenty
years old for crying out loud! If
you had told me then I was marrying
a fifty year old woman --

(to Maeve)

If you had known I would be bald
and old and --

MAEVE

I would still have loved you.

ARNOLD

I love you, you know that --

MAEVE

I would still have wanted you.

ARNOLD

I -- It's not that...I don't even
know how we got into this --
Goddamn it.

In order to correct her misapprehensions he'd have to take this on himself, tell her the truth: yeah, it might help if she was a twenty-year old stripper, but that's not what this is about. He's older, his body doesn't work the way he wants it to necessarily. This shouldn't be so difficult. But he feels like he's let her down, let them down. He feels humiliated. And doesn't have the courage to say it.

113 INT. DOCTOR FELD'S OFFICE - DAY

113

They sit in front of Doctor Feld, defeated.

BEAT.

DOCTOR FELD

Well.

BEAT.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)

Clearly you're both feeling bad
about last night. Let me assure
you setbacks are a natural part of
this process.

If they are hearing him at all they seem utterly unreassured.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
 Unfortunately we've run out of
 time. But I think you're ready now
 to follow up with a therapist at
 home and I can give you a referral
 to someone really good.

No response.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
 I know you're disappointed the
 treatment didn't yield more in the
 way of short-term results but I
 think real progress has been made.

He leans in, intimately, sensing they're not buying it.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
 This is by no means an
 insurmountable problem. I believe
 in you. You just have to keep
 believing, too.

They stare back at him blankly, utterly defeated.

113A EXT. GREAT HOPE SPRINGS - STREET - DAY 113A

Maeve and Arnold walk back in silence.

113B INT. GOOD NITE INN - DAY 113B

They silently pack.

113C INT. GOOD NITE INN - DAY 113C

They wheel their luggage to the door. The waxy fruit awaits
 the next guest, untouched, as if they'd never been there at
 all.

113D INT. CAR - MOVING - DAY 113D

They drive out, passing the inn. Maeve can barely look at
 it.

113E INT. CAR - MOVING - DAY 113E

They pass the diner as they drive out through town.

ARNOLD
 (re: diner)
 Won't miss that place.

Maeve's feelings are more complex.

113F EXT. GREAT HOPE SPRINGS - GAS STATION - DAY 113F

Arnold and Maeve pull into

113G EXT. GREAT HOPE SPRINGS - GAS STATION - DAY 113G

Maeve waits while Arnold gets out, trying to figure out how to get the gas cap off the rental car.

Directly across from them: a nice-ish but not new station wagon. On the passenger side, Maeve sees an attractive (but normal looking) 40ish woman. She looks familiar.

A man gets out of the car, awkwardly, cell phone to ear, talking on the phone and also to the woman in the car. He turns and Maeve sees his face; it's FELD. He looks harried.

Maeve looks again at the woman in the car, now recognizing her (from the photo in Feld's office) as Feld's wife.

DOCTOR FELD
(to woman in car,
exasperated)
No, I'm not her husband anymore,
but we're still going to go and get
her --
(into phone)
How far are you from the
interchange?

Now Maeve realizes Feld's wife is actually his SECOND wife. The man who was going to save their marriage is divorced.

Maeve watches, fascinated, as he begins filling one of those red plastic gas "cans," struggling to keep the cell phone to his ear, while also arguing with his wife in the car.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
(into cell)
Hold on, Hallie, I can't hear you --

He covers the phone, nearly dropping it, while responding to the woman in the car.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
I was married to her for twelve
years, Dana, what do you want me to
do, leave her on the freeway, --

The woman in the car says something inaudible.

DOCTOR FELD (CONT'D)
So we'll be fifteen minutes late.

Finally, Feld turns, sees Maeve. His body sags a little.

His sad smile says it all: "I wanted to be superhuman for you but look, I'm just a man."

Arnold returns. Doesn't see Feld. Gets into the car and starts to drive. Maeve looks back as they go, convinced now that Arnold was right; he had no magic. No one does.

115 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 115

They enter with their luggage. The house feels dead, its best years behind it.

115A INT. SOAMES HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY 115A

Arnold carries their bags upstairs. Maeve watches as he sets her bag down in her room, then takes his to his own.

116 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT 116

They eat dinner, silent. The old routine aches with defeat.

117 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - MAEVE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 117

Maeve there, alone and wistful, exactly as she was in the opening except now...

118 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - ARNOLD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 118

Arnold is awake in his room. Not wistful, but...ill at ease. Dissatisfied in a way he can't quite put his finger on. It won't let him sleep.

119 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 119

Maeve serves him two eggs over easy and bacon. They could go on like this forever. As if it had all never happened. Except that it's so much worse because it did.

120 INT. DIEBLER BAUMGARTEN AND SOAMES - KITCHEN - DAY 120

Arnold waits behind Vince to get his coffee. Vince notices him there.

VINCE
Soames.

Arnold grunts his greeting.

VINCE (CONT'D)
How was that vacation?

ARNOLD
Mmm?

VINCE
To -- where was it? Vermont?

Vince sugars his coffee.

ARNOLD
(getting coffee)
Maine.

VINCE
Maine, right. How was that? You
guys enjoy it? The leaves and all?

ARNOLD
It was fine.

VINCE
Yeah? Would you go back?

ARNOLD
Probably not.
(then)
Little overpriced.

Vince washes his hands.

VINCE
But how'd Maeve like it? She was
puttin' the screws to ya as I
recall to --

ARNOLD
And I took her. Can't say I
didn't.

VINCE
No, she cannot. Hey, if it keeps
the missus happy another year, I
say it's money well spent.

Vince claps him on the shoulder and leaves. Arnold considers
how "happy" the missus is.

121 INT. TALBOTS STORE - DAY

121

Maeve and Eileen sort out some inventory behind the counter.

EILEEN

Here, this is where I'm putting those extra tags, okay, underneath? When I'm out next week I don't want to get a million calls asking where the sale tags are.

(then)

God, I need this vacation. I'm so exhausted I'm practically asleep on my feet.

MAEVE

I know what you mean.

EILEEN

You? You just had one.

Before Maeve can think what to say Eileen continues.

EILEEN (CONT'D)

Kind that leaves you needing a vacation from the vacation, right? That's what it was like when Jerry took me to Mazatlan. I stopped drinking for six months after that. So you two had fun, huh? Must be tough to go back to the old routine.

MAEVE

Yeah.

Eileen finally notices Maeve's demeanor.

EILEEN

What is it? You look like you could cry.

MAEVE

No, I...

EILEEN

Tough to let it go isn't it?

MAEVE

Hmm?

EILEEN

Vacation. It's how life should be.

She puts an arm around an infinitely uncomfortable Maeve.

122 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

122

Maeve enters the kitchen, opens the fridge, gets out broccoli, some chicken, a half-used can of broth. She puts them on the counter, puts on an apron. Then she stops.

She looks around, as if seeing the kitchen through new eyes, as she indeed is. Through these eyes it looks...impossible.

123 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

123

Arnold and Maeve eat. It's got the monotonous feel of prison life, stretching out endlessly into the future.

ARNOLD

Got a new client today.

MAEVE

Mmm.

ARNOLD

Wilt Stieffel -- you know him?

MAEVE

I don't think so.

ARNOLD

His wife is Marge.

BEAT.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Saw that TV movie's on tonight, the Western.

(then)

The one we missed last summer, remember?

MAEVE

Mmm.

BEAT.

ARNOLD

Do you want to watch?

MAEVE

I don't think so.

(then)

I'm a little tired.

ARNOLD

Maeve. You been moping around since we got back.

MAEVE
No, I'm just...

But she can't even finish the sentence.

ARNOLD
Is it really all that bad?

She shakes her head but wipes a tear away at the same time.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
We talked about this. It's just
expectations. It's like a makeover
you know, you look different for a
minute but then you're back to
yourself, right?
(then)
Right?

MAEVE
I don't know if I can.

ARNOLD
Can what?

MAEVE
Go back.

It just hangs there. Then

ARNOLD
What's that mean you can't go back?
If you're not going back...where
are you going?

Maeve thinks, being careful, knowing once she takes this step
she won't be able to take it back.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Where are you going?
(then)
Maeve?

MAEVE
Eileen and Jerry have that trip...
She said I could go over and --

ARNOLD
Oh, now --

MAEVE
-- stay for a few days, just to --

ARNOLD

Come on.

MAEVE

-- think about...

ARNOLD

About what? What do you need to think about?

MAEVE

What I'm going to do.

Arnold's expression is grim. This is bad, very bad, much worse than he could have imagined before it became his reality.

124N INT. SOAMES HOUSE - MAEVE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 124N

Maeve enters her room and looks around, at all the things in it, all the artifacts of her life...alone.

She pulls the flowered suitcase out from under the bed.

124O INT. SOAMES HOUSE - DEN - NIGHT 124O

Arnold sits in front of the TV unseeing.

He HEARS Maeve upstairs, walking around, packing.

A124R INT. SOAMES HOUSE - MAEVE'S ROOM - NIGHT A124R

In her room, Maeve tries to figure out what she will need.

B124R INT. SOAMES HOUSE - ARNOLD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT B124R

Now in bed, but with the light on, sitting up, the opposite of going to sleep, Arnold hears the WATER start to run in the bathroom.

C124R INT. SOAMES HOUSE - MAEVE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT C124R

Maeve zips her suitcase, looks at it for a moment, a little disbelieving but here it is. She takes her robe off and gets into bed.

D124R INT. SOAMES HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT D124R

Arnold comes out of his room, looks at Maeve's door, can see the light is on. He goes to the door, leans toward it, almost touches it. But can't do it. He retreats.

E124R INT. SOAMES HOUSE - MAEVE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT E124R

In bed, lights off, Maeve is wide awake, waiting, but he doesn't come.

124R INT. SOAMES HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT 124R

In the dark hallway, light is visible under each of their doors. Finally, Maeve's light goes out, then Arnold's.

BEAT

We hang there for long, long time.

Then

OVER DARKNESS

The SOUND of FOOTSTEPS padding down the hall. Then a KNOCK.

An INHALATION of BREATH, surprise. Stillness, waiting, then a DOOR CREAKING open.

124S INT. SOAMES HOUSE - MAEVE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 124S

We can barely see him silhouetted against the window as he enters, can barely make out Maeve sitting up in bed. She says nothing as he makes his way stumblingly towards her.

ARNOLD

I -- I just --

He just can't get it out.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Maeve.

Gently, he kisses her. Then, still looking at her -- her face, he reaches for her.

She pulls him back into the bed with her, tearful, grateful. Someone is giving her her life back.

It's a little awkward, the two of them on her twin. They fumble, grope, discovering again.

We get back to the moment where things stopped at Captain Jack's.

This time they don't stop.

136 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

136

The next day Maeve is cleaning up the breakfast dishes, a tiny smile playing at the corners of her mouth when Arnold hurries through.

ARNOLD

I'm late.

MAEVE

(giggling)

Mmm hmm.

The drive-by kiss is sweeter than at the start, but no great shakes. Maeve smiles.

MAEVE (CONT'D)

Have a good day.

ARNOLD

I'll try.

MAEVE

Tonight's rump roast.

ARNOLD

Okay.

MAEVE

With potatoes.

ARNOLD

Mmm.

MAEVE

Maybe spinach.

ARNOLD

You can skip it.

MAEVE

Okay.

(then)

Six?

ARNOLD

Better make it six thirty.

MAEVE

Okay.

He heads for the garage, stops. Maeve keeps washing dishes.

Arnold turns, comes back to her.

MAEVE (CONT'D)

What, did you --

He puts his briefcase down, pulls her to him, kisses her, a real kiss. A little awkward, Fred Astaire he's not. Still holding her soapy dish, Maeve has to shove it onto counter, he pushes her back against sink, she gets water all over her, manages to turn off the faucet. It's a little like the guy who kisses you in eighth grade -- all enthusiasm, no technique.

But he doesn't stop. He plays through. And so does she. And eventually, it hits its groove and is a deep, sexy, romantic kiss. Between two unsexy middle-aged people.

Then he turns to go.

ARNOLD

Have a good day.

Maeve just looks at him, speechless, the kiss was that good.

MAEVE

Uh --

There's words in there somewhere. Just not at her disposal.

He smiles, leaves.

After he's gone, she smiles. A big broad satisfied smile.

BEAT.

Then Maeve sees his briefcase still sitting there.

MAEVE (CONT'D)

Arnold!

137 INT. SOAMES HOUSE - GARAGE - DAY

137

Maeve runs through the garage.

MAEVE

Arnold, wait!

Arnold has already pulled the car out to

138 EXT. SOAMES HOUSE - DAY

138

Hearing her, Arnold brakes. Maeve rushes out. But before she can get to him --

CAROL (O.S.)

Maeve!

Across the way, their neighbor, CAROL, in full gardening gear, is waving.

Carol is tall and thin, sporting a grey Peter Pan cut. Her pert expression says she'd like nothing more than to herd you into a minivan for swim practice. Her sweater vest covers what is still an impressive and perky rack.

MAEVE

(stopping)

Carol. Your rhododendrons are looking wonderful.

CAROL

Thanks, how was your trip?

Arnold reaches out for the briefcase but Maeve devilishly switches it to her other hand, just out of his reach.

MAEVE

Our trip was...

(then)

You know, why don't you come by for drinks tonight, we'll tell you all about it.

Arnold looks at her, panicked.

CAROL

Great, I'd love to.

MAEVE

Great.

Maeve smiles at Arnold, handing him his briefcase. Arnold takes it, horrified. She wouldn't. Would she?

FADE TO BLACK.

*