

# **TUCK EVERLASTING**

**Based on the novel by**

**Natalie Babbitt**

**First Draft Screenplay by Jeffrey Lieber: March, 1999**  
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**For Beacon Pictures/Jane Startz Productions/The Disney Company**

**Director: Jay Russell**  
**Producer: Jane Startz**

"time is the final currency...."

David Crosby

1

TUCK EVERLASTING

1

1

A BLAZING ORANGE SUN RISES

1

In stunning time lapse. A perfect circle. Higher. Higher. Arcing to the top of the sky...

MAE (V.O.)

The first week of August hangs at the very top of summer, the top of the live-long year, like the highest seat of a Ferris wheel when it pauses in its turning.

## 2

## EXT. LAKE AND FOREST - DAWN

2

Heaven on Earth. Cycles of nature awaken from a bleak winter and sweep into spring as flowers and leaves burst forth from the lifeless wood encircling the shimmering waters.

★

\*

MAE (V.O.)

The weeks that come before are only a climb from balmy spring, and those that follow a drop to the chill of autumn.

✱

★

Mists rise and swirl like wraiths. Mayflies link in mating dance. Flights of Ducks rush by an evening Sun.

MAE V.O. CONT'D)

It is a time of glaring noons and sunsets smeared with too much color.

**\***

**\***

## 3

THE SUN BECOMES THE FULL MOON - REFLECTING IN THE WATER

3

MAE (V.O.)

Often at night there is lightning, but it quivers all alone. There is no thunder. No relieving rain...

**\***

A Toad regards the Moon's reflection. Stretching its body defying gravity, the Toad splashes into the shimmering image sending waves of concentric moon circles across the water.

**\***

★

## 4

GOD'S POV - THE FOREST - DAY

4

The Wood encircles the lake like a great wheel.

MAE (V.O.)

The wood was at the center, the hub of the wheel. All wheels must have a hub. A Ferris wheel has one, as the Sun is the hub of the wheeling calendar.

## 5 TO THE ASH TREE - TRANSFORMING

5

From death to life and all the colors in between.

MAE (V.O.)

Fixed points they are, and best left  
undisturbed, for without them, nothing  
holds together...

\*  
\*

The view rests on the great trunk. Ancient petroglyphs carved  
by another civilization. Then a pronounced single initial  
stands out in sunrays penetrating the dense wood.

'T'

The view descends to centuries of roots anchored to the  
earth. Under a gnarl, a spring bubbles up. Pure. Colorless.

MAE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But sometimes people find this out too  
late....

\*  
\*

## 6 THREE IMAGES WASH OVER US:

6

As if reflections in the same mirror...

A HORSE AND BUCKBOARD

Driven by a lone Driver on a dusty road. A 1915 motorcar  
roars past the wagon honking and spooking the horse.

A 15 YEAR OLD GIRL

Peers out from between bars at a world beyond.

A STRANGER APPROACHES

In silhouette against a blazing sun.

OVER THIS WE HEAR:

MAE (V.O.)

These are strange and breathless days,  
the dog days, when people are led to do  
things they are sure to be sorry after...

\*

The Stranger approaches, his shadow filling the view

WIPING FRAME TO:

7 EXT. TUCK CABIN - DAWN

7 \*

We see it hiding the forest at the edge of the lake. A craftsman cottage. Eclectic. Rambling.

\*  
\*

8 INT. TUCK CABIN - CONTINUING

8 \*

An industrious spider spins a magnificent web in and around an old clock. The appearance of the timepiece suggests it hasn't been wound in ages.

\*  
\*  
\*

Tinny notes from a music box break the silence. The Spider pauses turning to the sounds.

\*  
\*

MAE (O.C.)  
(joyous whisper)  
The boys are coming home...

\*  
\*  
\*

The cabin is a flea market paradise. A rambling clutter of knick-knacks, odds and ends, calendars, clothing, hats, a kepi from the civil war, a hammerlock double barrel shot gun collects dust over the mantle, mismatched pieces of china, an early photoplate of a family with two children. The husband wears Union blues.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

MAE (O.C.) (CONT'D)  
(whispering louder)  
The boys are coming home...

\*  
\*  
\*

MAE TUCK

\*

Ageless. Forty something? Maybe. Her eyes all youth and brimming with expectation. In bed. Wide awake. Watching the spider decorate the clock's hands. She accompanies the spinning with the tiny music box she cranks in her hands.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

ANGUS TUCK STIRS

\*

Melancholy creases that track his rugged daytime face now smooth and slack. The corners of his mouth turned up in a smile.

\*  
\*  
\*

MAE (cont'd)  
I swear, Tuck, for the life of me, the only time you ever smile is when you're dead asleep...

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

He twitches his smile vanishing.

\*

TUCK  
Then why'd you have to go and wake me up?

\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

Mae buries his head under a pillow. He watches her scoot to the bureau and start pulling out clothes.

TUCK (cont'd)  
I was having that dream again. The good one.

MAE  
No use having that dream. Nothing's ever going to change.

Tuck rolls back on his side.

TUCK  
You don't have to remind me...Where are you going in such a hurry?

TO THE KITCHEN

Mae stokes the fire under the coffee pot while she dresses.

MAE  
Don't you know what today is?

FROM THE BED

TUCK  
No, I don't...

MAE (O.C.)  
I'm going to ride into town to meet them.

RESUME: THE KITCHEN

Mae pours steaming black coffee into a tin cup. Tuck enters pulling on his trousers and suspenders.

TUCK  
What do you mean...?

MAE  
Our Sons, Tuck. It's been ten years.

She thumps a wall of calendars. Days have been marked off for ten years on ten different calendars.

TUCK  
Better not do that, Mae. What if they don't show up? What if someone sees you...

Mae tucks her mane of brown hair in a bun eyeing Tuck.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: (2)

8

MAE

You worry too much, Tuck. It's been that long since I went to Treegap. No one'll remember me. I'll ride in at sunset. Wait for the train....I just can't wait to see the boys.

TUCK

(resigned)

Sure seems an unnecessary risk...But I know I can't stop you.

She pulls on a blue straw hat with a drooping brim that hides her face. Tuck pushes the hat back to see her.

MAE

I am one of a kind and you know it.

She looks into his eyes and hugs him close.

9 EXT. TUCK CABIN - MORNING

9

Tuck stands on the rambling porch whittling. The look on his face reveals true concern.

Mae leads the horse around to the front.

MAE

Sure you're going to be alright?

TUCK

What in the world could possibly happen to me?

MAE

You know, you never tell me what heaven looks like in your dream.

TUCK

Don't really matter much. I'm never going to get to heaven anyway. Guess this'll just have to do.

Tuck throws a belt of tools over his shoulder and makes his way down to a canoe grounded on the bank.

Mae watches Tuck as she pulls away in the wagon.

A PANORAMA - HEAVEN ON EARTH

Tuck paddles across the mirror waters of the perfect lake in the perfect world. Ducks fly. Birds sing. A Bass strikes. And a Toad...the Toad takes a flying leap--

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

--disappearing into sunlight shimmering on the water.

SUN BLINDS UP WIPING FRAME TO:

10 EXT. RIVER CITY BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

10

A NEANDERTHAL PUGILIST drives his huge fist at us  
obliterating the view.

MILES TUCK goes down hard. Head spinning, intensely handsome  
at 25, he appears to be in big trouble. The Neanderthal has  
no forehead and weighs 300. Miles is half his size.

\*

MEN and assorted FLOOZIES gang around the makeshift ring,  
booing, hissing at Miles. Money waved. Bets made.

\*

SAILOR

Get up you leaking sod. I seen dying men  
spitting the plague that can fight  
better'n you!

FLOOZIE

I think he's sweet.

GENTLEMAN

Then you can have what's left of him.  
He'll never last three rounds.

Neanderthal lurches over and stomps Miles in the back  
slamming him back down. The big man struts to cheers. The  
Referee begins to count--

\*

REF

One thousand and one!

A dashing young Man with flowing mane sidles up beside the  
Gentleman, tipping his bowler to the Floozie. JESSE TUCK...

\*

\*

JESSE

M'am...Sir, I couldn't help but  
overhearing your disparaging comment  
about this exhibition. Being a Sport as I  
am, I'll wager fifty dollars that young  
fellow can go five rounds against this...  
this...specimen of a gorilla.

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

He fans a roll of greenbacks in the Gentleman's face.

\*

GENTLEMAN

Candy from a Baby...

\*

\*

SAILOR

I'll take me some'o that as well.

\*

\*

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

MILES - DOWN FOR THE COUNT

Spots Jesse taking bets from the Gentleman and others. He  
angers quietly to himself.

The Ref points another finger at him--

REF

One thousand and three--

Miles starts to get up. Jesse ducks out of his betting frenzy  
and kneels beside Miles. He is a charismatic young Man at 17.

JESSE

How ya doing, Champ?

MILES

(bristling)

Having the time of my life 'til you  
showed up--

JESSE

So glad to see you too, Miles. Don't let  
me spoil your fun. Stay down to an eight  
count. Good for another hundred easy.

MILES

For who?

REF

One thousand and five--

The giant guzzles a bottle of seltzer and smashes it over his  
own head.

Jesse looks up from Miles and freezes at a Face staring at  
him through the crowd.

---Piercing eyes riveted on Jesse. His tailored suit and  
waistcoat a faded mustard color. Sharp point of a beard. His  
hat shading his features, hiding his age.

REF (cont'd)

One thousand and six.

Jesse makes his way over to the captivating stranger.

JESSE

How about you, Sir? You look a sport.  
Care to bet wonderboy there can't go a  
full five--

The MITYS (Man in the Yellow suit) smiles slim. Knowing.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: (2)

10

MITYS

Why bet against a sure thing?

Miles spots the Man talking to Jesse and goes pale.

Jesse tries not to let the answer sway him. The Man points at Miles with an ornate silver handled cane.

MITYS (cont'd)

Suppose I wager your brother could go a hundred rounds... \*

JESSE

We're no kin. You got us mixed up with somebody else. I'm just...a sport. Like you.

Again the slim smile.

MITYS

Me? A sport? Why I'm honored, Citizen. \*

Jesse is a blur pushing through the crowd.

REF

One thousand and eight--

Miles pulls himself to his knees. Jesse pushes through.

JESSE

We got company....

MILES

I know. I've seen him before.

JESSE

Lawman? Marshal?

Miles locks eyes with the MITYS now at ringside.

JESSE (cont'd) \*

Mama'll be real disappointed we don't make it home.

Miles nods agreement. He bolts to his feet pumping himself up. He pushes the Ref out of the way acting like a wild man. \*

Neanderthal is stupefied long enough for Miles to kick the Gorilla in the gut and drive his head into the giant's chest. \*

Neanderthal does not go down! Instead he grabs Miles in a bear hug and hoists off him the ground in a killer hold.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: (3)

10

MITYS maneuvers closer as everyone yells for blood. \*

Jesse has to think fast. He looks at his growing bankroll. Quickly he halves it. Weighing the stack of bills in each hand...he pockets one.... \*

As the Gorilla parades by crushing Miles, Jesse showers the remaining money into the air-- \*

Chaos ignites! The Gorilla drops Miles. Jesse grabs him-- \*

Gorilla grabs at the money. Belting or heaving any Spectator who gets in his way. A free for all as everyone piles on grabbing for the dosh. \*

The MITYS pushes toward Jesse and Miles. A crush of people block his way. He bats two Spectators on the head with his cane clearing his path just in time to see: \*

MILES AND JESSE \*

Ducking down a narrow alley. \*

11 NARROW ALLEY - CONTINUING ACTION

11

The MITYS rushes up. Deadend. He sends a couple of Low Lifes hurrying away with his dead-eye glance. He walks briskly poking cans and barrels with his cane. No Miles and Jesse. \*

At the end, Jesse's bowler sits in a puddle. The MITYS flips it over with his cane. He picks it up. Slim smile. A ten dollar gold note is tucked inside the band. \*

A train whistle blows echoing in the night. The MITYS turns to it like a bloodhound on the scent. \*

12 INT. RR. CAR - NIGHT

12

Heading west. Jesse counts money by moonlight. Miles broods. \*

MILES \*

I shoulda killed him...I shoulda gutted him like the snake I fear he is, brother. \*

JESSE \*

The Man in the yellow suit? You worry too much, brother. Hey! We're going home! \*

13 INT. RR. STATION - NIGHT

13

A shadowy Stranger approaches whistling an eerily familiar melody. The Ticket Agent looks up to: \*

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

MITYS appears at the ticket window. He slides a faded tintype photo plate to the Ticket Agent. \*

MITYS  
Evening, Citizen. A man like this?  
Traveling with a younger fellow?

The Agent shakes no clammings up.

MITYS (cont'd)  
The train that left a few minutes ago.  
How many stops does it make?

More shrugs. MITYS holds up the gold note from Jesse's hat. \*

14 EXT. TREGAP TOWN - DAY

14

Motorcars share a single dusty main street with horses and wagons. New construction is going up as the town grows toward the mountainous forest in the b.g.

A Truck hauling fresh cut logs rumbles by honking at: \*

Mae, who steers her spooked horse and wagon down a sidestreet. Both she and horse catch their breath. \*

Workmen raise a sign on a new brick building: TREGAP BUILDING AND LOAN. Across the street FOSTER MERCANTILE sports a new addition. A gas pump. "GAS 4CENTS A GALLON". \*

15 EXT. FOSTER MANSION - DAY

15

On the outskirts of progress jutted up against the great verdant wood. A tall iron fence circles the self-important Victorian house. The grass is cut painfully to the quick. \*

An ornate sign on the iron gates reads: FOSTER'S WOOD. No life. Like a museum. Except for the Girl dressed in white sitting on the lawn by the fence. Head buried on her knees. \*

WINNIE FOSTER

Staring through iron bars separating her from the rest of the world. 15...caught between the little girl she was and the woman she is becoming. She tugs at the stifling spotless dress. She fans a cloud of gnats that haunt her. She wishes she were somewhere else. Anywhere. Aimlessly tossing pebbles in the road, something catches Winnie's eye. \*

HER POV - THE TOAD

Hops from the edge of the forest in great jumps across the road toward her. She is fascinated as it approaches.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

Suddenly a mill truck rounds the corner hauling logs. Heading for the Toad!

Winnie stands in her stifling dress. She starts to yell--

But the Toad leaps landing just outside her fence--As the truck rumbles by and disappears.

WINNIE AND THE TOAD

She reaches through the fence to touch the mudball Toad.

MOTHER (O.C.)  
Winifred! Winniii-freed!

She jerks back cringing at the voice echoing from the house.

THE HOUSE - WINNIE'S MOTHER

In doorway in perfect cinched up fashion. Hair up. Prim. Proper. A handsome woman who could well enhance her looks if she smiled occasionally. Her accent is educated. Eastern born and bred. Boston, no doubt.

MOTHER (cont'd)  
(miffed)  
Oh, Winifred! Young ladies do not sit on the bare lawn. You'll stain your dress. Honestly...And your stockings!

RESUME: WINNIE AND THE TOAD

She throws a pebble at the Toad trying to discourage him.

WINNIE  
You really don't want to come in here. I don't think I can stand it much longer myself.

The Toad hops through the fence into the yard.

MOTHER (O.C.)  
Come in right now! You'll get heat stroke. Time for your lessons!---

Winnie's entire body stiffens.

WINNIE  
(exasperated)  
All right. I'm coming!

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED: (2)

15

MOTHER - CLOSER

Her jaw clenches. Eyes narrow.

MOTHER

And who are you addressing with that tone  
of voice, young lady?

WINNIE

Finds another pebble and tosses it at the Toad.

WINNIE

(polite, submissive)

I shall be right there, Mother.

The Toad hops closer. She stands brushing the grass off her  
stockings checking her dress for stains. The Toad is right at  
her feet. \*

Winnie looks back to the house. Her Mother has turned to go  
inside. Winnie ponders...then reaches down with her  
handkerchief and picks her new friend up. Instead of setting  
the creature outside the fence, she slips it in her pinafore  
pocket and hurries toward her house, tugging at her layers of  
clothing. The Toad croaks. Winnie stifles a laugh. \*

16 INT. FOSTER MANSION - DAY

MUSIC/PIANO LESSON

16

Lavishly appointed. We hear Winnie laboring over her piano  
lesson as we glide through the splendor of the Foster home as  
compared to the clutter and eclectic ramble of the Tucks.

A portrait of Winnie's Father is over one fireplace, her  
Mother another. Rich paneling, beveled mirrors, Victorian  
fixtures and curtains as elegant as the dress Mother wears as  
she sits sipping tea monitoring Winnie's progress. \*

Winnie struggles to keep up with the metronome. Her harsh  
faced PIANO TEACHER taps her baton on Winnie's back. Winnie  
instantly sits up straight--losing time with the metronome. \*

Torture. Her Teacher begins to play with her exaggerating  
each note trying to get Winnie in the groove.

17 THE ATTIC BEDROOM - SAME TIME

MUSIC CONTINUES

17

Misplayed notes echo. A magical room compared to the rigid  
everything-in-its-place feel of the house. GRANNY CALLIE  
FOSTER, feisty but sickly, stirs from the "sampler" she is  
busy needle pointing. Another dischord and she draws blood. \*

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

CALLIE  
(sucking her pricked finger)  
Oh, Hell's Bells...

\*

She rolls her wheel chair toward her open attic door.

CALLIE (cont'd)  
Least we know why Beethoven went deaf.

\*

She slams the door with a bang echoing downstairs to:

18 RESUME: THE PARLOR - CONTINUOUS

18

Mother looks up at the sound. The teacher lays her baton across Winnie's hands meaning "stop".

PIANO TEACHER  
That is quite enough today, Winifred.

WINNIE  
Yes, Mam. Thank you, Ma'am.

\*

Suddenly a foreign sound breaks the tension. Winnie's Toad. The two women shoot looks at her.

MOTHER  
Winifred. Where are your manners?

WINNIE  
(thinking fast)  
I...I am feeling...  
(fakes a heaving hiccup)  
ill, Mother..

MOTHER  
Then you may be excused.

WINNIE  
Yes, Mother. Thank you, Mother. Thank you  
Mrs. Pilkington.

She curtsies to both, folds her sheet music and dutifully exits. Teacher and Mother exchange that...look.

THE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

As soon as she is out of sight, Winnie checks her pocket. Another croak. She bolts up the stairs.

\* \*

19 EXT. TREEGAP TOWN - AFTERNOON

19

Mae Tuck stands frozen against a wall as People blur by. Motorcars honk congesting the main street with horses. A car backfires startling her.

Mae summons her courage, and begins to walk...keeping her hat down low afraid to look at anyone. Hearing people speak to each other...exchanging greetings, asking after an ill relative, shaking hands....

...A young couple meets and steals a kiss looking around to see if anyone has noticed.

Mae marvels at shop windows. A Mother buying a bonnet for her daughter...Mae has to turn away. Almost in tears.

AT FOSTER'S MERCANTILE

People inside buying food and clothes...and chocolate. Mae almost swoons at the window. Chocolate!

She turns to leave bumping right into a Gentleman in a hurry. He helps steady her. Mae tries not to panic.

GENTLEMAN IN A HURRY  
Excuse me, Ma'am. Are you alright?

Mae nods looking everywhere but at him.

GENTLEMAN IN A HURRY (cont'd)  
My fault, Ma'am. Too big a hurry. I  
promise to watch where I'm going next  
time. Have a good evening, M'am.

The Gentleman smiles at Mae and tips his hat.

MAE  
(feeling human)  
Why...thank you...

No one has spoken a polite word directly to Mae in many years. She finds herself smiling. Even welling up as she loses herself amidst people coming and going as:

THE FOSTER'S MOTORCAR PASSES BY

Winnie and Mother ride in back. A group of Mill Boys Winnie's age are playing baseball in the street as they approach. The Driver honks dispersing the rag tags.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

WINNIE - AT HER WINDOW

Eyes the Boys as they pass through. One brandishes his bat right at her. Another spits in their direction.

Mother looks straight ahead refusing to acknowledge them.

\*

MOTHER

I have told your Father time and again a proper city requires a public park. Boys of that ilk with idle time are nothing but trouble. This...place is changing for the worse...If that's possible...

\*

\*

WINNIE

Yes, Ma'am...

\*

Mother regards her Daughter. She is trouble, too.

20 INT. BAKERY - AFTERNOON

20

Mother and Winnie peruse trays of delights.

MOTHER

No, no...too large for tea cakes. None of these will do I'm afraid. This is Winnie's first tea. For a few special friends, you understand...I prefer her to have petit fours just as I grew up having in Boston.

\*

\*

The Baker's smile fades as he slides confection trays back on display. Winnie feels for the poor man.

BAKER

I'm sorry, Mrs. Foster. Not much call for such treats out here.

\*

WINNIE

(sampling a cupcake)

Really, Mother, these are scrumptious...

\*

\*

Mother silences her with a look. The Baker chimes in.

BAKER

For you, Winnie, I will make them special.

Winnie smiles embarrassed. She turns away staring out the shop window. Boys lean on their car making faces at her.

\*

## 21 OUTSIDE THE BAKERY - CONTINUING ACTION

21

The Driver chases them away. Then he sees the result of their mischief. One flat tire.

Mother exits the Bakery with Winnie heading for the car.

MOTHER

You see...This is what is wrong with the world today...Particularly Treegap. Those boys are why locks and fences were invented.

WINNIE

Yes, Mother...

## 22 EXT. RR TRACKS - LATE AFTERNOON

22

Outside of town. Mae sits in the wagon resting her horse in the shade. She cranks her music box musing.... Her expression changes as she hears voices in the distance.

Down the tracks she sees them. She brightens, righting her hat, her hair--

MAE

My Lord...Oh...my boys.  
(exploding)  
Miles! Jesseeeee!

HER POV - MILES AND JESSE

Walking the tracks towards her. Jesse whoops and runs full out to meet her. Miles continues at his steady pace.

Mae gets as much speed as she can out of her horse. Jesse jumps on the wagon hugging his Mom nearly knocking her over.

JESSE

Mom! What're you doing here!

MAE

Well, I couldn't wait to see you. I missed you so much, Jesse. Look at you.

JESSE

I missed you, Mom! Didn't think we were going to make it! Mom, look, right here. This is for you--

He pulls a frilly dress out of his rucksack--

JESSE (cont'd)

Picked it out myself. And wait, just wait--hold on--No fair peeking--

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

He pulls out a box of chocolates. Mae is overwhelmed.

MAE

I have died and gone to heaven.

She hugs Jesse squeezing the breath out of him. She fixes on Miles stroking the horse, letting Jesse have his time.

MAE (cont'd)

Miles....

MILES

(nuzzling the horse)

Hey...Traveler here hasn't aged a day.

He climbs up beside Mae taking the reins perfunctory.

MAE

Well what about me? It's been ten years,  
Miles. Can't you even give me a hug?

Mae hugs Miles as he takes the reins.

MAE (cont'd)

I swear you are just like barbed wire.

Miles remains stoic. She pulls them to her with both arms.

MAE (cont'd)

Oh, I missed you boys. My babies! I have  
you back!

Miles heads the wagon across the tracks into the wood.

23 INT. FOSTER MANSION - AFTERNOON

23

Winnie climbs the stairs to the attic carrying a service tray. A cigar box is visible under the linen napkin. Croaks emit. She shushes the box and hurries up the last flight to:

24 THE ATTIC BEDROOM - CONTINUING

24

Callie slumbers in her wheelchair at the window. Her sampler in her lap. Winnie pokes her head in.

CALLIE

(without opening an eye)

Well, Winnie, I see you've chosen  
servitude rather than butchering  
Beethoven. Or was it Bach?

Winnie enters brightening for the first time. She loves this room. Sanctuary....

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24.

WINNIE

You've found me out, Gran Callie. The piano is not my calling.

CALLIE

Child, you just haven't found your music yet. You will. In time.

Winnie's smile is a killer.

CALLIE (cont'd)

(mocks a reprimand)

Ah, ah--the first rule of being a good servant..?

Winnie comes alive as she plays the part, curtsying, laying a napkin in Callie's lap.

WINNIE

To serve, Mum. Will that be all, Mum?

Winnie discreetly sets the cigar box on the floor as she curtsies.

CALLIE

Oh, dear. Service is not your calling either, Winnie. I suppose you will just have to settle for...Fairy Princess.

Winnie grins again hugging Callie.

WINNIE

As you wish. Now I command you to take your magic potion--

She dutifully points to a pill box on the tray. Callie reluctantly takes the glycerine tablets under her tongue.

CALLIE

Ugh..that's the trouble with getting old. Everyone tells you what to do and when to do it...

Suddenly, the cigar box croaks and thumps. Callie eyes it casually and continues to needlepoint. She indicates for Winnie to do the same.

CALLIE (cont'd)

Do you plan to kiss it...turn it into a Prince?

WINNIE

You won't tell Mother, will you?

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: (2)

24

CALLIE

About the Prince or the Toad?

Winnie laughs and sits on the floor checking on her new friend.

WINNIE

I think Prince Toad is thirsty.

CALLIE

Oh, they don't drink like us. Soak up the water right through their skin, they do.

Callie indicates her water pitcher. Winnie sprinkles a few drops on the Toad's back. The Toad glistens.

WINNIE

He likes it.

Callie hums contentedly. A familiar melody we have heard.

WINNIE (CONT'D)

What's that? I know that....

CALLIE

You should...The lullaby I sang to you every night when you were just a nib.

WINNIE

I remember....

CALLIE

I heard it in the wood when I was a girl. Faeries making their music...and Elves...

--off Winnie's skeptical look.

CALLIE (cont'd)

Oh, but you're nigh a young lady now. Too big for lullabies and magic.

She traces her Granddaughter's face taking in her beauty.

WINNIE

Gran....Is it boring to be an adult?

CALLIE

Sometimes...Most times. Why do you ask?

WINNIE

I was hoping it gets better.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: (3)

24

Callie loosens Winnie's tightly bunned hair letting it fall. She regards her beautiful Grand daughter. A horn honks O.C. Winnie beams jumping to her feet looking out the window.

\*

WINNIE (cont'd)

\*

He's home!

She kisses Callie on the forehead and races out. Callie envies her energy, her spirit. She continues her needlepoint, humming the music to herself....Now we recognize the same tune as Mae's music box.

\*

\*

\*

\*

25 FOSTER ENTRANCE HALL - SECONDS LATER

25

Winnie races down the stairs and embraces her FATHER.

WINNIE

Daddy! I missed you! All day!

\*

He is the same Gentleman who spoke to Mae in town.

FATHER

How's my Girl today?

WINNIE

Well, I rather butchered Beethoven.

FATHER

I'm sure he deserved it.

WINNIE

Then some mill boys flattened our tire after Mother drove through their ball game.

\*

\*

--before Father can react, Mother appears.

MOTHER

(that disciplining tone)

Winifred...?

Father and Daughter separate. He adopts a more formal pose. Winnie curtsies to her Father.

\*

WINNIE

Good evening, Father. May I take your hat?

Mother watches the exchange with approval. She allows a brief kiss from Father on her cheek.

MOTHER

Was that you honking that dreadful horn?

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

Mother knows perfectly well who it was...

26 FOSTER DINING ROOM - END OF DAY

26

The table dwarfs Mother, Father and Winnie. Servants wait at either end. Deadly silent. The clink of silverware. The ticking of the Grandfather clock is maddening.

Winnie clings her glass resoundingly against her plate.

Mother smiles daubing her mouth properly with the corner of her napkin indicating Winnie do the same. She does.

MOTHER

So...the Hannaway's daughter will be coming for tea with Winifred. Along with Beatrice Ruston of the Southgate Rustons ....I understand she was off to school in Paris come the fall...until half of Europe wanted to war...

Father looks to Winnie who is less than thrilled.

FATHER

One more vote in Congress back then and we'd be speaking French instead of English.

MOTHER

Bien sur...C'est vraiment.

FATHER

Ruston's made a very handsome offer for our timber. Every tree. Military contract. To build barracks...camps...

Winnie reacts startled. Mother indicates to Father he is speaking with his mouth full. He winks at Winnie, chews fast, and swallows.

FATHER (cont'd)

With the new machinery coming in, we can meet the demand for new lumber. The world is changing before our very eyes. I like it!

MOTHER

I don't, quite honestly.

WINNIE

Well, what about the trees? I think...

Winnie abruptly reaches for her glass knocking it over.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

Nobody moves. A Servant swoops down to clean it up. Winnie and her Mother lock eyes through the candles on the table separating them.

27 EXT. TUCK CABIN - END OF DAY

27 \*

Angus Tuck sits asleep in his favorite chair out on the dock. His fishing pole stuck in a makeshift holder on the armrest. He has that turned up smile on his face. Dreaming....

Jesse steals up from behind ready for mischief. He raises Tuck's stringer from the water revealing a good sized Bass. \*

He signals to Mae stifling her laugh on the shore. Miles hangs back tending the horse. \*

Jesse starts yanking Tuck's line. The little bell attached to the pole starts to ring. Tuck sputters away. Jesse tosses the big bass in his lap. \*

TUCK

(amazed)

Hey--whoa--Am I dreamin? Hey--it's a miracle. Hey--fish--

Tuck freezes.

TUCK (cont'd)

Who's there. What the hell is-- \*

Jesse tips him and his chair in the lake whooping and hollering. Tuck surfaces sputtering. \*

TUCK (cont'd)

Think you're pretty funny, do you? Making a fool outta your old man? \*

Jesse suddenly sobers. \*

JESSE

Aw, no Pops. No, honest. I didn't mean to...Accident... \*

Jesse busts out laughing and jumps cannonballing Tuck. Foom! \*

Miles busies himself unhitching the horse. Somber... \*

MILES

(to the horse)

Be thankful for fools. Without'em, none of us'd be worth a damn. \*

28 INT. TUCK CABIN - END OF DAY

28

Mae cooks up a storm. The Tucks eat and talk and laugh in stark contrast to the tone of the Foster's dinner.

JESSE

Probably had to call out the army to corral that big Gorilla from squashing people 'til they gave him their money.

Jesse is up mimicking the Gorilla sitting on Tuck, then Mae. Tuck has not laughed like this in years. Mae loves seeing her family together. She is laughing so hard she is crying.

MAE

Oh. Stop... I can't take anymore.

She looks up for Miles. He has left the table. She sees him standing in the nursery. Somber...deeply saddened....

29 EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

29

Tuck whittles that same piece of tiny wood. Miles sharpens his lethal hunting knife.

TUCK

And you think you've seen him before?

MILES

Yes, Sir...I just don't know where.

Tuck is not surprised by this news.

TUCK

Well...it was only a matter of time before someone found us out.

He stands slowly feeling the weight of the world.

TUCK (cont'd)

The World's closing in anyway. Forest's almost gone except for the Wood. They'll cut it all down. I've seen the tire tread marks on the low road a few months ago. There'll be more.

MILES

War's coming, I hear. I'm joining up. Fight the Huns. Get as far away from this place as I can.

Tuck looks at his Son with profound sadness.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

TUCK

Think that's going to solve it do you?  
Hadn't you had enough killing for two  
lifetimes?

MILES

Middle of a war is about the safest place  
for me to be.

Tuck considers his eldest sharpening his big knife. Sad but  
true. Jesse parades Mae out wearing her new dress.

JESSE

Hubba hubba--feast your eyes on the Queen  
of Sheeba.

MAE

Well, what do you think, Tuck? Look what  
your youngest bought me all the way from  
St. Louis. Do I still bubble your soup?

She sashays around. Tuck holds up the sliver of wood he has  
been whittling in the lantern light admiring it.

TUCK

That's just about perfect.

He inserts the perfect toothpick between his teeth pre-  
occupied. Mae knows that look on his face.

MAE

Tuck....?

TUCK

...I don't want anybody going to town for  
anything. That's out. You see any  
strangers in the wood getting too  
close...you all know what to do....

Solemn agreement around.

TUCK (cont'd)

...And what not to do. No exceptions. Our  
time here's about done... I can feel it.

Mae is chilled. Jesse comforts her. Miles sheaths his knife.

30 EXT. FOSTER MANSION - DUSK (SAME TIME)

30

Fireflies flicker in the dense wood behind the house. Winnie  
has parked Gran Callie in her wheelchair on the lawn to watch  
the magical sight.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

WINNIE

Gran, do you really expect me to believe  
you just like I was five years old?  
They're fireflies...

CALLIE

Fireflies, yes... That's what the faeries  
change into when you get too close.

Winnie looks at her Grandmother as if she is completely  
insane, then jumps to her feet and chases a flicker--

DOWN TO THE FENCE

Winnie runs along the bars away from the house and Gran  
futilely trying to catch a twinkle of orange yellow light. A  
strange melodious whistling stops her cold....

A Shadowy Figure watches her from the other side of the  
fence. Faded yellow suit seeming to glow in the fading light.

MITYS

Good evening....

Foot constantly tapping. Tipping his black hat---

MITYS (cont'd)

Might this be the road to Treegap? My  
petrol expired just up the road.

--piercing eyes scanning Winnie up and down to the point of  
discomfort. Winnie curtsies--an involuntary reflex...

WINNIE

It is, Sir. Good evening, Sir--

MITYS

(charming, airy)

Well, now. Out for fireflies, are you?

--laughing tapping his foot. A shoulder twitch. Never taking  
his eyes off of Winnie as he leans on the fence, (as if to  
check its strength) peering at her through the iron bars.

MITYS (cont'd)

A lovely thing to do on a summer evening.  
Lovely entertainment. Did the same when I  
was a boy. But of course that was....a  
long time ago.

--gesturing in self deprecation with long fingers. He jerks  
with a kind of grace. Like a marionette suspended before her  
in the twilight.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED: (2)

30

MITYS (cont'd)

I would think a young woman as fair as  
you would rather be out courting.

Winnie steps back instinctively feeling...well, undressed.

WINNIE

(feeling uneasy)

Do you want to see my father?

MITYS

Why? I quite like talking to you.

Winnie moves down the fence toward the house eyeing him. Half  
charmed....He parallels her studying the house.

MITYS (cont'd)

Have you and your family lived here long?

WINNIE

Forever. My Father practically built  
Treegap. My Grandmother was born here.  
She remembers when this was all trees,  
just one big forest, before they mostly  
cut it all down. Except for that wood....

She fixes on the forest where the fireflies circle. He places  
his hands on the same iron bars as hers, blocking her view.

MITYS

Then I've come to the right house. You  
must know everyone and every thing.

WINNIE

Not me, sir...Why?

MITYS

I'm looking for someone lives hereabouts  
...I'm an old friend the family...

Their faces inches apart. Her hands sweating on the bars.

CALLIE (O.C.)

Winnie! Winnie!

Callie has managed to roll her chair down the path toward  
them.

CALLIE (cont'd)

Who are you talking to out there?

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED: (3)

30

WINNIE

A Man. He's looking for someone.  
I...didn't get his name.

MITYS

Good evening, Madame. You're looking fit.

Callie eyes his suit suspiciously, getting a sudden chill. \*

CALLIE

Well you must be selling something  
because we haven't met I can recall. Who  
are you? What are you looking for? \*

Callie takes Winnie's hand easing beside her.

MITYS

This young lady tells me you've lived  
here a long time. I thought perhaps you  
might know a certain family...Goes by the  
name of... \*

CALLIE

I don't know everyone nor do I want to.  
And I don't stand outside in the dark  
discussing such a thing with strangers.  
And neither does my Winifred...

The Man bows elegantly with a sweep of his hat.

MITYS

Then I beg your pardon.

With lightning swiftness he snatches a firefly in his hand  
and holds it up to Winnie. The glow through his knuckles.

MITYS (cont'd)

Good evening, young lady, madam.

He smears the bug on the bars leaving a streaking glow right  
across Winnie's fingers curled around the bar!

MITYS heads down the road. \*

WINNIE PUSHES CALLIE \*

Quickly to the house. Callie is gasping for breath. \*

WINNIE

(alarmed)  
Gran? Want me to get your pills? \*

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED: (4)

30

CALLIE

I don't like the looks of that man. Not  
one bit.

\*  
\*

Winnie pats Callie's hands as they reach the house.

\*

WINNIE

Let's go inside and have some iced tea.  
This heat is getting to all of us...

Winnie glances at the dark road and the wood beyond.  
Fireflies swarm...beckoning...She pushes Callie inside.

\*  
\*

The Man's haunting melodic whistle echoes from the dark road.  
Winnie's lullaby?...

\*  
\*

31 INT. FOSTER'S MANSION - WINNIE'S BEDROOM - DAY

31

Winnie holds on to her bedpost being cinched into a corset by  
her Mother who pulls extra tight.

WINNIE

--but why must I look like a figure  
eight? I can scarcely breathe, Mother.

MOTHER

You do want to look nice for your  
friends. As you become a young woman, you  
will learn that appearance is paramount  
to acceptance in proper social circles.

Winnie looks in the mirror. She is becoming a woman. Before  
our eyes, layers of clothing appear on her, long stockings,  
the petticoat after petticoat, her long hair put up in pin  
curls on top of her head.

\*

32 FEMININE HANDS IN WHITE GLOVES

32

Daintily remove teacakes from a tray---

SALLY (O.C.)

Oooo, tres charmant, Winifred. Merci.

\*

BEATRICE (O.C.)

Tres, tres délicieux, mon cheri'.

\*

---to dainty mouths that take dainty bites.

THE TEA PARTY - DAY

SALLY and BEATRICE sit in the parlor with WINNIE all looking  
like Victorian Dolls, cinched, coiffed and corseted as  
Servants hover pouring tea, serving cakes.

\*

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

WINNIE

Oui, oui...les petit fours est...uh...  
They're awfully rich. Wouldn't want to  
pop your corset, Beatrice.

\*

Beatrice has just polished off three of the little cakes in  
one gulp. She smiles shooting daggers at Winnie.

THE SITTING ROOM - PARLOR IN VIEW

Mother entertains the Mothers all keeping a proud but  
watchful eye on their daughters.

MOTHER

En Francais, jeune filles, en Francais.

SALLY

(fake smile)

Bien Sur, Madame Foster.

Callie is with the Mothers trying to enjoy herself.

SALLY'S MOTHER

You really should engage Sally's French  
tutor. She was fluent within a month.

\*

Mother's react.

BEATRICE'S MOTHER

How delightful. Our Beatrice is off to  
New York in the fall to finishing school.  
At the Lycee Francais...

\*

Again the Mother's react.

MOTHER

How wonderful for her. Isn't that  
wonderful, Callie?

Callie makes a face. Before she can answer, Mother moves the  
Women on to the next topic. The girl's dresses.

\*

RESUME: THE PARLOR

BEATRICE

Sally, Winifred doesn't have the faintest  
idea what she's talking about.

\*

\*

WINNIE

My Father said so, Beatrice. There was a  
ballot in Washington and English won by a  
single vote...If we could vote maybe we'd  
all be speaking French instead.

\*

\*

\*

\*

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: (2)

32

SALLY

My Mother says Women have more important things to do than vote.

\*

WINNIE

Oh, you don't think it would be nice to have the right to say what you wanted to...and be heard.

\*

\*

The two girls look at Winnie like she is from Mars.

BEATRICE

I saw those Suffragettes marching in New York last year. Some had dresses above their ankles. Right there. In public. You've never seen anything uglier...

\*

\*

Winnie starts to protest. Mother silences her with a look. Callie watches from the parlor, saddened.

MOTHER

Beatrice, si'l vous plait, tu commence reciter une poeme' en Francais?

\*

\*

BEATRICE

Mais Oui, Madame.

Beatrice stands in front of the piano nearly knocking over the tea cart her petticoats are so wide.

BEATRICE (CONT'D)

"The Road Not Taken", by Robert Frost.

Beatrice recites in bad French. Mothers listen attentively. Winnie's eyes drift to:

Callie, who indicates "boring", then raises her shawl...

...revealing Winnie's cigar box! The Toad!

Winnie turns back stiffening in her chair. Then she gets a big grin on her face.

33 THE PARLOR - A MINUTE LATER

33

Winnie. At the piano. Hands on keys...deep breath...and plays. Rather, pounds the opening chords of Beethoven's 9th!

\*

The Toad responds with a loud flatulent croak!

Sally looks to Beatrice who is redfaced. Again a croak!

\*

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

Mothers react mortified. Winnie keeps playing. Louder. Callie swells in her wheelchair as if at the symphony.

CROAK! Beatrice pulls out Winnie's chair. The cigar box bursts open as the Toad leaps--

--sailing through the air onto the table right in the middle of the tea cakes.

Sally screeches wringing her white gloved hands. The Toad leaps again--

--landing on Beatrice's bodice clinging to her lace. She looks down at the bulging eyes checking her out.

BEATRICE

Eeeyouuuuu....Mommy! It's looking at me.

I don't want wartsssssss!

Beatrice leaps up sending the tea cakes flying. \*

34 EXT. FOSTER HOUSE - DAY

34

Cold faces of the Girls and Mothers refuse to look as they pull away in an expensive motorcar.

AT THE FRONT DOOR - MOTHER

Watches them go. Completely and utterly humiliated.

35 EXT. FOSTER HOUSE - NIGHT

35

A Servant exits the kitchen entrance and dumps the Toad back into the world. It hops, gratefully, away. \*

MOTHER (O.C.)

This is hardly a laughing matter...

36 INT. PARLOR - NIGHT

36

Mother stands, back rigid, hands folded in front of her all fire and ice. Father sits in his chair, his head buried in his hands. Now we see, he is laughing.

MOTHER

Honestly, you're as bad as your Mother.  
She cannot continue undermining my  
responsibility to raise our daughter. \*

FATHER

Okay...I'll talk to her. \*

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36

MOTHER

This kind of gauche behavior would not be tolerated in a proper school! Around proper girls her own age!

FATHER

Right, well, yes, we have a problem.

MOTHER

And a solution. I think we seriously consider sending Winifred back East to a good finishing school come Fall.....

Father recoils at the idea but offers no resistance.

37 WINNIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

37

Winnie, dressed in her bedclothes, sits sullen, obviously in a state of punishment.

Callie appears at the door. Winnie notices her, but doesn't respond with the usual relief of being with her grandmother.

WINNIE

Why didn't Mother have a little sister or brother so there'd be someone else for her to watch over?

CALLIE

Oh, child, I should be punished. Not you. Afterall, I'm the "bad influence"....

WINNIE

They hardly ever let me out of the yard by myself. This house is like a big cage...

CALLIE

I know it seems like that. Your mother just fears that the outside world's a dangerous place. Anything new is bad.

WINNIE

Oh, Gran Callie... Maybe I should just...go away. Light out.

CALLIE

Young folks have to find out things for themselves. Only way they learn. They can't believe old worn out grownups have a smidge of sense--

Callie regards her own reflection in the mirror. Faded glory.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

37

CALLIE (cont'd)

--And you'd be right. But never you mind,  
Win, you have plenty of time to find out  
for yourself...Plenty of time...

She sinks in a spell of halted breathing. She reaches for her  
glycerine pills with trembling hand. Winnie helps her.

38 SECOND HALL FLOOR - SECONDS LATER

38

Winnie's Parents argue ascending the stairway.

FATHER

I just don't know if sending her away is  
the answer.

MOTHER

Well, I certainly do. First thing in the  
morning, I am writing Edith Spence. Her  
school for girls in New York is highly  
regarded. Winifred would be fortunate to  
be accepted.

Winnie pales at what she is hearing as she closes her door.

39 EXT. FOSTER MANSION - WOOD IN VIEW - DAWN

39

A steamy one. Sun red as roses. Climbing...climbing....

40 INT. FOSTER MANSION - SAME TIME: GLIDING VIEWS

40

Hall clock ticking. Metronome silent on the piano. Portraits  
of Mother and Feather staring each other down...Up the stairs  
past closed doors. Silent. Save the ticking.

41 TO THE ATTIC ROOM - DAWN

41

Callie. Sleeping in her chair. Breathing labored. It...stops.  
Through the dormer. On the lawn, a figure in white. Winnie!

42 EXT. THE FENCE - WINNIE

42

Staring through the bars. Hardly dressed to run away, that is  
exactly what she is doing. She grabs the bars in her delicate  
hands, hikes her skirt and petticoat--and climbs--

--dropping on the other side. She waits. No voice stops her.  
She is free! A surreal breeze swirls dust blowing her skirt  
and petticoats around her. The force turns her to:

43 THE WOOD 43 \*

The wind animates trees dancing in rays of sunlight. Winnie takes the biggest steps of her life. Crossing the road. She enters the wood and is swallowed up in nature's maw. \*

44 RESUME: CALLIE 44 \*

Suddenly breathes again. Serene smile turns up her face. \*

END OF ACT I \*

ACT II: KIDNAPPED \*

45 EXT. PROMONTORY - DAWN 45 \*

Overlooking the forest. Mist rise. Vaporous ghosts moving about like sentinels over the dense wood. \*

MAE (V.O.) \*

The wood has a sleeping otherworld appearance that makes you want to speak in whispers. "Let it keep its peace. We won't disturb it." \*

A figure crouches like a Gargoyle. Jesse. Watching over his domain. His city duds gone for his roughouts. He is home.... \*

MAE (V.O.) (cont'd) \*

Nothing ever seems interesting when it belongs to you. Only when it doesn't. \*

Jesse stands erect arms open to the sun. He suddenly bolts hell bent across the promontory and leaps into space! \*

FALLING FALLING---

To a rock shelf below. With dancer's grace and skill of a mountain goat, Jesse runs the narrow ledge above the forest. \*

He leaps again into a tall pine--bending it earthward-- \*

--dropping to another. Wild abandon. Wild daredevil riffs, he tightropes a fallen tree across a great water fall----and vanishes in the spray. \*

46 EXT. THE FOREST FLOOR - MORNING 46 \*

Winnie walks through Wonderland completely enchanted. Her white clothing sending a gaggle of Wild Turkeys scurrying. \*

Squirrels dart up trees and chatter at each other. \*

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED:

46

Winnie has a huge grin of wonder on her face. Flower patches blooming in brilliant colors. Birds calling out her presence. A wobbly fawn stares at her through morning mist.

Sunlight streams down dappling over Winnie like fairy dust. Thistle and milkweed puffs float through the air like little angels. A light beam rests on an ancient log spotlighting:

THE TOAD

Perched as if waiting for her imminent arrival.

WINNIE

Were you expecting me?

She covers her mouth. Her voice suddenly sounding foreign and ridiculous in this setting. She steps up onto the log to approach her friend, when she hears it.

A snapping noise from the trees. Twigs breaking. The sound of feet or paws moving fast through the forest.

Winnie looks around startled. The Toad leaps into the bog and disappears.

Winds kick up. Trees sway. She backs away scanning the wood.

PREDATOR'S POV - CIRCLING HER IN THE SHADOWS

Breathing rhythmic. Stalking. Keeping its distance...

Winnie backs off the log right into the bog. She shrieks at the guk covering her left shoe and oozing up her stocking.

PREDATOR'S POV - WINNIE IN VIEW

A strange animal cry wheels her toward the view. Panicked, she runs away...deeper into the forest.

The Predator pursues. Feet are visible gaining on her.

47 THE THICKET - MINUTES LATER

47

Winnie runs through a huge spider web, sputtering, pulling and wiping at herself.

She finds herself amidst a maze of brush and vine. She pushes through, panicked--

## 48 AHEAD - A CLEARING

48 \*

The sun shines brighter. At the center, the enormous Ash tree thrusts up into the air. Winnie stops short hiding in the thicket. Through the dense vines she sees:

JESSE

Standing before the great tree carving something in the vast trunk. Then he kneels and bends to drink from the spring at the gnarl of roots.

Winnie cannot breathe watching him. He is stunning. Like a wild animal who does not know he is being watched. He pours the crystal colorless liquid from a gourd drenching his long hair shaking it out like a dog after a shower.

Then---he looks right at her--through the vines to her hiding place.

Winnie panics backing into the thicket. Now she thinks she hears the stalker behind her. That did it. She runs--

## 49 INTO THE CLEARING

49 \*

Empty. The vision of the young forest man is gone. She wheels around maddened.

WINNIE

Please--help me. Won't you please....

She is awed by the size of the tree. Up, up, up...

WINNIE (cont'd)

Hello!...

All is suddenly quiet. Peaceful. Only the bubbling of the hidden spring.

She approaches the tree examining the pronounced "T" carved in the bark. Other ancient symbols fillet the great trunk. Rows of simple counting slash marks circle the girth.

Sunlight sparkles on the spring trickling under the great roots.

Winnie examines her hands and arms scratched and dirty. She hikes her skirt and tries to lower herself to reach the waters without getting her whites dirty and wet--

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

49

THE SPRING - CLOSER

Her hand reaching down cupping the sparkling water. Her other holding her bulky clothing. Her hand rising, dripping the water, closer to her lips...closer...

---a hand pulls her back forcefully before she drinks.

JESSE

Hey! What do you think you're doing?

Jesse drags her by the arm forcefully cornering her against the tree. Winnie is terrified.

JESSE (cont'd)

Nobody's supposed to be here. What're you doing here?

Jesse releases her. Winnie is suddenly self conscious of her glaring whites.

WINNIE

What am I doing here? What are you doing here?

Jesse wears grubby pants, shirt and bright green suspenders with the confidence of silk and satin.

JESSE

I asked you first. You come here a lot? Dressed like that?

Winnie realizes how ridiculous petticoats and corsets are in the woods but does not relent--

WINNIE

I can come here anytime I want to. I was never here before, but I could've come at anytime. I own these woods.

JESSE

Is that a fact? You're a Foster?

Winnie nods going with the weight her name carries.

JESSE (cont'd)

You...dressed like creme pastry...own all this land?

WINNIE

I do.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED: (2)

49

JESSE

Ownership of land's an odd thing. How  
deep can it go? Ever think of that?

He digs his hand in the soil holding up a glob of moss and  
dirt which he offers to her, pulling out a big worm.

JESSE (cont'd)

Do you own just the thin crust on top  
where these worms have never heard of  
trespassing?

She pushes his dirt and worms away disgusted.

WINNIE

Don't be...."gauche".

JESSE

Oh, I guess you Fosters own this land all  
the way down through the center of the  
Earth clear to China!

Winnie cannot help but smile at the notion, completely  
charmed.

WINNIE

I guess I never thought about it.

JESSE

About China? Ever been to China? Uh,  
what's your name, Foster--?

WINNIE

Winnie. I've never been anywhere, except  
Treegap.

Jesse climbs up on the log beside her, excitement in his  
every syllable.

JESSE

I'm going. Got it all planned. I'm going  
to walk every inch of the Great Wall.  
Visit the Forbidden City, see what all  
those Emperors know--I'm going to see the  
world, Winnie Foster.

Winnie. Completely mesmerized. All her fear gone.

WINNIE

How old are you?

He looks at her suspiciously, backing away.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED: (3)

49

JESSE

Why do you want to know?

WINNIE

Just wondered. You sound...older.

JESSE

Alright, you got me. I'm a hundred and four come September.

Winnie laughs revealing more of her beautiful smile.

WINNIE

No, I mean really.

JESSE

Okay, seventeen, if you really have to know.

WINNIE

That's old...

JESSE

You've no idea.

WINNIE

Are you married?

JESSE

(embarrassed)

No. And not any time soon, I assure you.

WINNIE

What's your name?

JESSE

Jesse...

WINNIE

Well, Jesse, is that good to drink? I'm really thirsty.

She hops down pointing to the spring. Jesse stiffens.

JESSE

(instantly serious)

Oh--that--that's poison. You should never drink it. Forget about it--

He starts piling some smooth rocks with markings over the ooze of water.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED: (4)

49

WINNIE

I saw you drink some.

JESSE

(increasingly nervous)

Yes... And that's why you can't. It's awful. I'm feeling ill from it...

Winnie persists removing some of the stones.

WINNIE

You don't look ill. This water is mine and I want some. I'm as dry as dust.

Jesse forcefully pulls her away from the spring.

JESSE

Winnie Foster! I can't let you drink any of this water. It'd be terrible for you!

WINNIE

Let go of me! My Father would have you arrested. You're trespassing!

She pulls angrily away. Jesse is panicked--

JESSE

Hold now, Winnie. You're not going to run off and tell him now are you?! Don't do that Winnie!

Winnie, panicked trying to remember her direction.

WINNIE

I've got nothing more to say to you. You just keep away from me...

She fights her way into the thicket. Jesse piles rocks on the spring like a mad man.

JESSE

Don't make me do something we're gonna both be sorry about!

50 WINNIE CRASHES THROUGH THE MAZE

50

Tearing her beautiful dress. It appears as though she has gotten away from Jesse until she runs right into the arms of:

MILES

Not so fast miss...

Winnie screams. Mile gags her with his hand.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED:

50

JESSE

Miles wait!

--crashing through the thicket to them. She is terrified in  
Miles' vice like grip--

MILES

You know what Tuck said. No exceptions.

JESSE

You can't do this, Miles. We can't.

Winnie looks to Jesse pleading--to Miles, a killer's eyes!

SHARP CUT TO:

51 THE WOOD - AFTERNOON

51

Miles rides with Winnie on the Tuck horse through the thick  
wood at break neck speed.

WINNIE'S POV - THE RIDE

Trees blur by. Sweat pours off the horses flanks. Steam  
pulsing from its nostrils.

Miles suddenly pushes her down as a low branch narrowly  
misses their heads.

52 INTERCUT: THE HIGH COUNTRY - SAME TIME

52

Jesse runs like an Indian along dangerous cliff trails,  
leaping to rocks, sliding down steep to another trail.

53 THE ASH TREE - SUNSET

53

The view descends down the great trunk past the "T". The  
spring has been covered by rocks. No trace is visible.

Save a shred of Winnie's white dress stuck in the brambles.

54 INT. FOSTER MANSION - EVENING

54

Mother holds vigil at the window. Emotions bottled up as is  
the custom. Her red eyes betray tears she has discreetly  
wiped away.

MOTHER

I cannot for the life of me fathom what  
could've possessed Winifred to do such a  
thing. No note... nothing...She can't  
just be gone.

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

54

Father is shucking his hat and coat from a harrowing day. \*

FATHER \*

No one at the mill saw her. She didn't  
show up at the store-- \*

MOTHER \*

Did you ask-- \*

FATHER \*

--the Baker. You reminded me four times  
today. \*

FATHER (cont'd) \*

How is my mother? \*

Mother crosses picking up his hat and jacket from the chair-- \*

MOTHER \*

Dr. Finchley gave her a sedative. She was  
...overcome when...with the news... \*

---and hangs both neatly on a hall tree. They face each other  
in awkward silence. A service bell splits this atom. \*

Father hurries to the staircase ascending as a Servant enters  
and curtsies to Mother. \*

SERVANT \*

Mister Foster's Mother, Ma'am. Shall I  
see to her? \*

55 INT. CALLIE'S ATTIC ROOM - NIGHT

.55 \*

Father holds Callie's hand trying to be patient. She is in  
and out of lucidity. This has hit her hard.

CALLIE

Oh, the poor girl. Where can she be? She  
was here combing my hair as she always  
does before bedtime...

FATHER

Then you were the last to talk with Win.  
Mom, please, think. Did she say anything?  
Talk about anyone? Anything?

Callie drifts. A smile comes to her face. She laughs.

CALLIE

Yes..she wanted to name the Toad,  
"Beatrice"...Yes...that's nice.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

55

He tucks her shawl around her ready to give up.

FATHER  
(frustrated)  
Yes. Fine. Dandy.

\*

Suddenly, Callie sits up, panic in her eyes. She digs her fingers into Father's hand.

CALLIE  
Wait. Him...Him.

FATHER  
Who? What are you talking about.

CALLIE  
This Man in a yellow suit. Right there at the gate asking Winnie all kinds of strange questions.

Fear builds in Father. A parent's worst nightmare.

FATHER  
What's his name? When was this?

CALLIE  
Evening, last. Ohh, he's got a bad side, Son. I could tell it the moment I fixed eyes on him.

She starts to shake and tear up.

CALLIE (cont'd)  
If anything's happened to her...Oh...

56 DOWNSTAIRS - ON THE MOVE

56

Father vaults the last stairs grabbing his hat and coat.

MOTHER  
My God--what is it?

FATHER  
I want you to keep the doors locked. Any strangers come knocking don't answer.

MOTHER  
Oh, dear...Where are you going?

FATHER  
To find the Constable.

\*

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED:

56

Already out the door, he waits staring at her through the etched door glass. He indicates the door. Mother quickly locks it...and watches him go....

She stands silent not knowing what to do. The clock ticks...

\*

57 INT. CHURCH MEETING HOUSE - NIGHT

57

A YOUNG PASTOR gives his all to the sparsely attended Prayer Meeting of mostly Elderly and Older Couples.

YOUNG PASTOR

"And I give unto them", John says in Chapter ten, verse twenty eight, "And I give unto them eternal life..."

THE FACES OF HIS FLOCK

YOUNG PASTOR (cont'd)

"...and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

In the back row, the MITYS surveys the gathered, legs crossed casually, black hat resting on his knee. Long fingers stroking his pointed beard....

58 EXT. CHURCH MEETING HOUSE - NIGHT

58

The Pastor bids farewell a last couple. He sees the MITYS perusing headstones in the small cemetery with a lantern.

PASTOR

Have you lost your way, Friend?

MITYS

Not hardly, Reverend.

The Pastor approaches wary.

YOUNG PASTOR

All are welcome in God's house. How I can I be of service?

\*

MITYS

The name I am looking for doesn't appear on any grave. "Tuck", the name of "Tuck". I'm an old friend of the family.

PASTOR

I don't recall any such name in my congregation. Of course I have only been in God's service here for two years. I could check the rolls---

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED:

58

MITYS

I don't think you will find them there  
either, Reverend....

\*

He tips his black hat to go.

MITYS (cont'd)

All of these poor souls....  
(indicating cemetery)  
...went to their death believing the  
promise of eternal life....

YOUNG PASTOR

That whosever believeth in him should not  
perish, but have eternal life. That is  
the Lord's promise.

\*

MITYS

Ah, if you have faith. There's the catch.  
No guarantees....Too bad for them.

The MITYS heads away tapping his cane on the headstones.

\*

59 EXT. TUCK CABIN - NIGHT

59

Miles splashes the horse through the shallows up onto the  
bank and wheels in front of the cabin nearly toppling Winnie  
over the horse's neck.

MILES

We're stopping here. Not a sound out of  
you. Do you understand?!

He breaks her hold on his arms and hops off leaving her alone  
and in shock.

Mae appears on the porch. She hurries down the steps.

MAE

Oh my! Oh myyy! Lift the poor child down.

Miles grabs Winnie roughly and swings her down. She reacts  
kicking and screaming.

MAE (cont'd)

Please, child....don't be scared.

Winnie shrinks from Mae's advances like a trapped animal.

\*

Miles unsaddles the horse glaring at Winnie.

MILES

I caught her at the spring. With Jesse.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED:

59

Mae sags with this news.

MAE

Well, it's finally happening at last.

WINNIE

I want to go home. Please. I want to go home! I didn't do anything!

She starts to cry looking at her disheveled self, her dress and stockings grimy and torn. Mae tries to comfort her--

MAE

Dear Lord, don't cry. Please don't cry. We're not bad people, truly we're not. We'll take you back just as soon as we can. I promise.

She wails twisting away from Mae's comforting hands, flailing at her. Miles pulls her back.

MILES

You know we can't let her go anywhere. We should have had a better plan than this.

MAE

That's the truth. Had to happen sooner or later. I never expected it to be a child.

\*

Winnie is strangely infuriated, suddenly on the attack.

WINNIE

I am not a child. Stop calling me that. Who are you people?

Silence. Mae cannot believe this is happening.

MAE

Go get your father. He's across the pond. He'll know what to do with her.

WINNIE

"Do with me?" Don't you dare touch me. Any of you!

Miles makes a strong move toward Winnie. Mae steps between them.

MAE

Go find your father! Leave us be.

\*

Miles skulks toward the lake swinging at the Gods.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED: (2)

59

MILES

Just you tell Jesse when he shows up I'm going to fix that mouth of his.

--leaving Mae and Winnie alone. Mae gestures to the cabin.

Winnie shakes "no" tears still flowing. Mae digs in her pockets comes up with a rumpled hanky which she offers.

Winnie regards it and haughtily refuses. Mae has found something else in her pocket which she nervously cranks as she heads for the cabin.

MAE

Suit yourself.

WINNIE - CLOSER

The notes of the "lullaby" music startle her.

WINNIE

Wait...please...I think I...know that...

Mae holds out what is left of her music box, the works. The melody has a calming effect on the tension between them....

\*  
\*

Winnie accepts it tentatively. The crank slowly winds down. The melody falters...and stops. Winnie winds it again.

60 INT. TREGAP POLICE OFFICE - NIGHT

60

Winnie's Father is losing his patience with the Chief Constable. He has the tell tale signs on one who enjoys a good drink.

FATHER

I expect you to find her. Find out what's happened to her. That's your job, Henry. This is my only child!--

\*

CONSTABLE

I understand, Mr. Foster. We'll do everything we can. I've already wired your daughter's description down the line to the station masters. They'll keep a lookout. Not much else we can do tonight--

FATHER

What about this stranger who was up at our place talking to Winnie? I told you--

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED:

60

## CONSTABLE

I know, I know. Some kind of yellow suit.  
Shouldn't be too hard to find if he's  
still around. I've put out the word.  
(after a beat) We're working with new  
tools now, Mr. Foster. It's not like the  
old days...

Dead air. Father does not know what else to say.

## CONSTABLE (cont'd)

We'll organize a search party first  
light. Kidnapping's a serious crime.  
Never had one around here. (after another  
sober beat) Maybe Winnie  
just....well...Kids do you know.

Father refutes what the Constable is not saying....

## FATHER

(convincing himself)  
My daughter did not run away!

He is gone. The Constable pours himself a drink. This is  
going to be a long night.

61 INT. TUCK CABIN - NIGHT

61

Winnie clutches the music box as she huddles on the ancient  
green sofa in the parlor facing the soot streaked fireplace  
still deep in last winter's ashes.

Mae rattles in the kitchen partially in view behind the big  
black stove.

## MAE

I expect a young lady like you is more  
accustomed to things being in their  
place. All squeaking clean...swept and  
scoured to the nines...

Winnie picks up on the shotgun gathering dust by the mantle.  
The table before her is cluttered with wooden soldiers  
whittled by hand and a ship model under construction. She  
fans the dust away--

--then startles back at the eyes staring at her from inside  
the model. A mouse scurries out, down the table and into the  
Tuck's bedroom under the big brass bed.

## MAE (cont'd)

The boys don't get home much and, well,  
we just never have...visitors.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

61

Winnie startles back to Mae who is beside her holding out a glass of yellow liquid. Winnie refuses, defiant.

WINNIE

"Visitor?" Is that what I'm supposed to be?

MAE

My boys didn't mean you any harm.

WINNIE

Then just what did they mean? Bringing me here by force. Why am I here?...

\*  
\*

Mae sets the glass on the table, warm and motherly--

MAE

Because...It's just we have to be careful.....Tuck will explain everything when he gets home...

Winnie looks away refusing her hospitality.

MAE (CONT'D)

Sorry I don't have any ice. But it's cool to the taste.

Winnie fumbles the music box in her hands shaking "no".

MAE (cont'd)

Fresh lemonade. My boys quite love it...

\*

Mae turns back to the kitchen--letting it hang. Mae steals a glance back at Winnie. She gives in, taking the glass. She sips...bliss. She chugs it down like a field hand...then catches herself.

\*

WINNIE

Thank you....Delicious...

She looks for a napkin to wipe her mouth. She reluctantly searches for a clean corner of her dress, and daubs her mouth properly the way her mother taught her.

Mae marvels at the private moment. A girl! In her house!! Jesse's voice outside breaks the moment.

62 EXT. LAKE - NIGHT

62

Tuck steers the canoe to shore.

TUCK

Where's the child?

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED:

62

Tuck approaches Mae on the porch quicker than usual.

TUCK (cont'd)

The boys say they brought home an honest  
to god natural child.

MAE

So they did. But she's no child, Angus.

JESSE

I told you. She's going on sixteen.

Tuck takes note of Jesse smoothing his hair back and tucking  
in his shirt to make himself more presentable. Jesse dusts  
off Tuck's hat for him--

63 INSIDE CABIN - PORCH IN VIEW

63

Winnie hangs back in the shadows watching the tall rough hewn  
Tuck approach with his sons.

MAE

And here she is....

64 INSIDE - TUCK AND SONS

64

Everybody waits anxiously as Tuck tilts his head this way and  
that looking her over.

TUCK

You're a Foster?

WINNIE

Yes, Sir.....

That does not sit well with Tuck, his eyes burning into her.

\*

TUCK

Does she know?

MILES

Why do you think I brought her here?

\*

JESSE

She just knows where. That's all. I told  
you that.

MILES

Yeah and she knows about us, too, thanks  
to you, Romeo.

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:

64

Miles slams Jesse ready to get into it. Tuck separates the boys paying them no mind. He is fixed on Winnie. His mouth turns up at the corners in that smile of his. \*

TUCK

Well, then, in spite of what she does or doesn't know, I'll go on and say...this is the finest thing that's happened around here in--at least eighty years.

Tuck grins and sticks his hand out to shake.

TUCK (cont'd)

Pleased to meet you, Miss Foster. Angus Tuck.

WINNIE

I don't understand. What do I know? Who are you people? What do you want with me?

TUCK

Well, I prefer never to talk about such important matters on an empty stomach.

65 INT. TUCK CABIN - NIGHT

65 \*

Winnie sits and watches the Tucks devour a mound of buckwheat cakes, ham, corn bread and fresh applesauce. A shocking contrast to mealtime in her household. Jesse sits on the floor by the fireplace. Miles eats standing up--always watching. Mae and Tuck eat at the table by the couch. \*

Manners do not exist. Buckwheat cakes are rolled in hands and dipped in syrup. No napkins, but the back of your sleeve. Winnie stares at the plate before her unable to eat.

Jesse gets up and pours a mound of syrup on Winnie's cakes.

JESSE

They're best when they're hot. I've downed buckwheats all over the country. You won't find a better one. Promise.

WINNIE

Thank you. I'm not hungry.

Miles snags the syrup shooting Jesse a "why waste it on her" look. \*

Winnie checks her fingers spattered with syrup. No napkin. She watches Jesse lick his fingers. So does Tuck. Miles wipes his mouth on a cake then eats it. \*

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED:

65

Gingerly she licks the sweet from her finger....then the other. She looks up. No one reprimands her. No one cares. She dips her finger in the pool and licks it clean. Pure delight.

Winnie carefully rolls up a cake and swabs it in syrup. She bites into the bit of heaven. Mae is smiling at her. Jesse tries not to notice, handing her some cornbread.

Her hand brushes his. She tingles, shaking.

WINNIE (cont'd)  
(suddenly fearful)  
I...want to go home.

The Tucks stop eating. Jesse sinks back disappointed.

MAE  
Of course you do, Winnie. That's only natural. I'm sure your folks are worried sick by now...

WINNIE  
My Father will come looking for me.

TUCK  
Your Father's going to cut down the whole forest the way things are changing around here. Make himself a very rich man.

WINNIE  
Money? Is it money? That's why you took me. My father's got plenty. He'll pay. Whatever you want?

MAE  
(after a beat)  
No, Winnie. It's not that. We'll take you home. Just like I promised.

TUCK  
But's there's a good deal to explain before we can trust you to go back. And there's not a whole lot of time to make our decision.

MILES  
Aw, c'mon, Tuck. Time's all we got! You can't trust normal people. She'll turn on us in a second!

MAE  
Miles!--

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED: (2)

65

Miles glares--and storms out of the cabin. Mae is in shock.

MAE (CONT'D)

Miles! Come back here!

TUCK

Let him go, Mae.

Winnie sits stiff upright on the couch clenching her hands in her lap about to melt down.

TUCK (cont'd)

I doubt we can make this up to you, Miss Foster. I'm sorry it had to happen this way.

\*  
\*

Tuck stands decisively.

TUCK (cont'd)

We'll talk tomorrow. Then we'll get you home just as fast as we can.

There is a sadness in Tuck's eyes. A sincerity and a love. Winnie is strangely moved and calmed by his gentle dignity.

WINNIE

Yes...Sir. Thank you, Sir...

TUCK

Just call me, Tuck. Everyone I know in the whole world calls me that.

He extends his hand.

WINNIE

Winnie....Tuck...

She shakes taking in her strange collection of caring decent kidnappers.

\*

66 INT. TUCK CABIN - NURSERY ALCOVE - NIGHT

66

A DOLL'S FACE FILLS THE VIEW

Hand carved. Blue eyes staring at us. The paint and hair has seen better days. The doll's clothes from another century. Winnie picks the doll up unruffling her dress, hair...

WINNIE

Do you have a daughter, as well?

Mae is fixing Winnie a bed on the window seat.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED:

66

MAE  
Granddaughter. And a Grandson. Little  
Anna and Beau....

Winnie looks at Mae.

MAE (cont'd)  
Miles....Those two children were the love  
of his life...And ours.

Mae fluffs a pillow masking her profound loss.

MAE (cont'd)  
Here you go. The breeze off the lake will  
keep you cool all night. The boys sleep  
up in the loft when they're home. Try to  
get some sleep now...

Mae lays out one of her nightgowns. Winnie is touched by her  
kindness. She returns the doll to the handcrafted doll house.

MAE (cont'd)  
That...corset...looks very uncomfortable.  
May I help you.

WINNIE  
(after a moment of decision)  
Yes, please.

In direct contrast to the severe "lacing" Winnie had received  
earlier, Mae gently loosens the constricting garment.

WINNIE (cont'd)  
What happened....To the children?

Mae focuses on the laces.

MAE  
Oh, they....died....Both of them. Their  
Mama too...It tore Miles' heart out. The  
good parts of Miles died with them...You  
have to forgive what's left of him....

WINNIE  
I'm so...sorry....

MAE  
It's the way things are supposed to be,  
Winnie Foster. The way things are...

Mae smiles through the painful memories...

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (2)

66

MAE (cont'd)

I'm very sorry about all this. Still and all, it's a good feeling, you being here with us...

Mae leaves. Winnie sits on the window seat bed staring at the doll. She collapses back wide awake. A tangle of emotions and mixed feelings about the events of the day. She stares up at the loft ceiling above her---

UP IN THE LOFT - JESSE

Lays wide awake as well. Outside a hint of a mist drifts from the lake. Frogs talk comfortably. Cool breeze. Crickets join in with their shrill rhythmic song. Jesse is restless.

RESUME: WINNIE

Hears Jesse tossing and turning above her. A shadow looms from the sitting room.

Winnie looks up to see Tuck standing there.

TUCK

Just yell if you need anything. It's been a long time since we had a growing child ...excuse me...."young lady" in the house.

Tuck has been whittling something and leaves his creation on the dollhouse, then disappears.

Winnie retrieves it inspecting it in the moonlight. A girl...with wings for arms.

HER POV - OUTSIDE

A surreal wind kicks up blowing ripples across the pond. The trees and porch outside Winnie's window are alive with music. Wind chimes fashioned of bottles, pieces of glass, and bells bring a smile to Winnie's face.

THE MASTER BEDROOM - TUCK AND MAE

In the big brass bed...wide awake.

MAE

Tuck.... I wish she was ours. I wish she could stay forever.

TUCK

You know that's one wish that just cannot be.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (3)

66

Mae is suddenly emotional, welling up.

MAE

Do you want our Jesse to go through his  
life never knowing love? Having a family?

TUCK

That would turn him into Miles.

Tuck sits up abruptly. The look on his face frightens her. \*

MAE

You're about to tell me something I don't  
want to hear.

He takes her hand and squeezes it.

TUCK

Start picking out what goes and what  
stays. I'm afraid the time has come for  
us to leave Treegap...Forever... \*

MAE - CLOSER

Quiet tears form. She nods perfunctory and rolls over to try  
and go to sleep. \*

67 INT. TUCK CABIN - DAWN

67

A creaking sound wakens Winnie. Jesse's face is next to hers. \*

JESSE

Hey...Winnie Foster. You asleep?

Winnie sits up, pulling the quilt up around her strangely  
embarrassed and....excited. She can hardly contain her smile.

WINNIE

Not anymore...

JESSE

Good. How would you like to see the  
Eiffel Tower?

WINNIE

(more than intrigued) \*

What? Someday...of course...

JESSE

No. Now....while the day is still ours.

He bows tipping a colonial three corner hat, nearly tripping  
over the riding cape he wears about his shirtless shoulders. \*

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

67

JESSE (cont'd)

I mean before you go home and all.

He looks up at her from his hopeful bow. He offers his hand like a gentleman. She takes him all in...his irresistible impetuous youthful charm...

...then she takes his hand.

68 EXT. CABIN - LAKE IN VIEW - DAWN

MUSIC68

Jesse and Winnie silhouetted against the sunrise. He raises both arms and does a little jig to celebrate the new day. Winnie is immobile. This will never do. Jesse spins her until she is a blur against the sunrise.

THE SUN WIPES FRAME TO:

69 EXT. HIGH FOREST - MORNING

MUSIC 69

The Honey tree. Jesse guides a long branch into a gaping knot hole in an ancient maple. And draws out a hunk of honeycomb dripping with honey.

At first Winnie is put off by the sticky mess Jesse crams in his mouth. He breaks off a tiny bit of comb for her. She samples it...

Her jaw drops honey dripping from her lips in ecstasy. The most incredible rush she has ever tasted. She points to her open mouth unable to talk it is so good.

Jesse shoves some more in. She grabs a chunk herself and squishes it in her hands reveling in how sticky and gooey they are. She wipes them on Jesse's flowing hair.

"Oh, thank you very much." He chases her threatening her with the rest of the dripping comb.

70 WINNIE RUNNING - TRACKING

MUSIC 70

She is fast. Jesse has to work to gain on her. She races into a field of wild flowers waist high. Her petticoats and dress hold her back. She hikes them up in her hands for more speed.

The wind blows up rippling the flowers in waves whipping her hair like a horse mane behind her. She lets go her petticoats which spread in the wind like sails.

Winnie exalts spreading her arms against the force like wings. She leans into the stiff breeze as if she is going to take off.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

70

Jesse whoops behind her flapping like a turkey.

THE WOODS RUSH UP

Winnie ducks through the low browse just out of Jesse's reach. He yells a warning--

71 TO THE PROMONTORY - CONTINUING ACTION

MUSIC 71

Winnie stops short nearly running into thin air. Jesse grabs her from behind pulling her back. He holds her close. Her heart is racing--out of breath. The proximity of their faces to each other...He wipes a smear of honey from her cheek and turns her to:

PANORAMA - JESSE'S WORLD

His view from the promontory of the forest valley. A stunning view of the perfect world. Winnie steals a glance at Jesse.

\*

72 EXT. EIFFEL ROCK - MORNING

MUSIC 72

Jesse and Winnie approach the tall pinnacle which narrows to a needle at the top. Just like the Eiffel Tower.

WINNIE

The Eiffel Tower? I don't think so.

JESSE

Winnie, there you are thinking small. And you're not. Use your imagination. The one in Paris, France is a thousand and forty-seven feet high in the sky. Mine...is two feet higher.

\*

\*

\*

\*

WINNIE

(studying the pinnacle)

Well, mmm...they do both come to a point at the top.

\*

JESSE

Good. Good. Now, there's sixteen-hundred and fifty two steps to the top of the one in Paris. Next time I'm there, I'm going to take every single one...

\*

\*

\*

\*

WINNIE

I'd take one of the new elevators.

Jesse turns Winnie to him face to face.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

72

JESSE

Not with me you won't. You'll take off your shoes and walk up every single solitary step.

WINNIE

You are....the most...unusual...person I have ever met...

JESSE

You haven't met a lot of people have you. You live in a convent or something? I'm a dime a dozen. Come on!

At the base of the pinnacle he leads her into an opening.

\*

73 INSIDE - THE LAUGHING PLACE - CONTINUING ACTION

73

He stands her in the middle of the circular archway and points up. The pinnacle is hollow. Like a great chimney reaching to the sky. The wind whistles through the fissure emitting pleasing droning hums.

\*

\*

WINNIE

Jesse...oooo, my ears. They're buzzing. The sounds. It...tickles.

\*

\*

JESSE

Whenever I need to laugh, I come here and...

He laughs. It echoes up into the hollow surrounding them. Winnie is amazed. She chortles with delight. The chortle comes back amplified ten fold. Which makes her laugh harder.

JESSE (cont'd)

Go on, Winnie Foster, give the world a laugh!

He guffaws reveling in the sounds. Winnie cracks up, giddy at first then building to an exulting, freeing, cleansing, celebration of laughter--that swirls, amplifies and rebounds--

74 OVER THE FOREST

74

Across the lake. Over the Ash tree and the hidden Spring.

SHARP CUT TO:

75 INT. TREGAP POLICE STATION - DAY

75

The MITYS. Knowing smile. Stroking his beard. Ever patient. Sitting in a chair, legs crossed. Hat across his knee.

\*

\*

\*

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED:

75

CONSTABLE

You boys go on home now and stay out of trouble.

The Mill Boys who flattened Winnie's tire file out past the MITYS. The Constable and an exhausted Mr. Foster follow.

MITYS

Understand you're looking for me, Mr. Foster...?

He reacts to the yellow suit. His piercing eyes.

FATHER

You...you were by my house, evening last. You spoke to my daughter--

MITYS

That I did. Her grandmother as well. Bright young woman. Pretty...like her mother no doubt.

Father shoots the MITYS a look. The Constable joins them.

CONSTABLE

What's your business in Treegap, Mr....?

MITYS

(avoiding giving his name)

I'm seeking a family that used to live in these environs so I'm told. Name of Tuck. Long lost relatives. It's a matter of a sizable inheritance....

He places a photoplate on the desk. Miles, his wife and twin daughters. Miles, in union blues, does not look a day over 22. Exactly as he appears now.

CONSTABLE

We have a few old timers from that war. No Tuck's that I recall.

FATHER

(impatient)

Look, I just want to know--have you seen my daughter since you first spoke with her--Mr. Tuck or whatever your name is?

The MITYS holds Mr. Foster's stern accusatory look.

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED: (2)

75

MITYS

Mr. Foster, if I had reason to mischief  
your daughter, I certainly would not  
dally about your dusty little metropolis  
to make it easy for you.

MITYS stands to go. Mr. Foster is burning with suspicion.

CONSTABLE

Sir, I think I might have a few more  
questions for you so you just go ahead  
and dally all you want. If that's your  
Packard parked out front, you can leave  
the igniter switch with me.

MITYS doffs his hat tossing his starter key to the Constable.

MITYS

You're a wealthy man, Mr. Foster. Do you  
have enemies? That is where I would start  
looking...Good day, Gentlemen.

Foster is riveted to the MITYS as he exits by the windows.

76 EXT LAKE AND FOREST - END OF DAY

76

Winnie and Jesse emerge from the wood walking slowly. Into  
each other. Winnie is transformed. She wears a three cornered  
wreath of flowers in her hair. She has wrapped her dress and  
petticoats around both legs and tied them with vines like  
chaps for freer movement. Her face literally glows.

But her feet hurt. She finally stops leaning on Jesse. She is  
comfortable against him. He raises both his bare feet for her  
to see...again. He wiggles his boots tied around his neck.

Winnie relents unlacing her shoes. One at a time, her  
stocking feet touch the moist soft ground.

She freezes eyes closed at the sensation. Ecstasy.

WINNIE

Heaven.

JESSE

That's exactly what Tuck calls it.  
Heaven. Tuck's sure going to hate leaving  
here.

Winnie opens her eyes on that one. Reality again.

WINNIE

You're leaving? All because of me?

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED:

76

They walk in silence for a moment. Jesse summons his courage.

JESSE

Winnie, I don't think a person should stay in one place their whole life. Hide away from everyone and every place the way Tuck does.

He takes her hand suddenly. Winnie lets him. She likes it.

JESSE (cont'd)

I told you I was going to see the world. Every speck of it. I might even discover some new continents or something.

She laughs like music, glowing. Jesse makes his stand.

JESSE (cont'd)

I'm serious now. How'd it be if you were to come with me? 'Round the world. See every thing. Do every thing. Have us a high time together that never, never stops...

\*

\*

Winnie is speechless...

JESSE (cont'd)

It's like Tuck says, "You've got do something useful with your life if you're going to take up space in the world"...

\*

The truth. Hold on this moment. Never forget it.

\*

WINNIE

Jesse Tuck...you are...I don't know what you are...You just ARE!

As Jesse talks he shucks his shirt---

\*

JESSE

You and me. You think on it, Winnie Foster.

77 A LOW BLUFF OVERLOOKING THE LAKE - CONTINUING ACTION

77

They've stopped at the edge. He undoes his suspenders and is about to drop his pants--

WINNIE

Jesse Tuck? What are you doing?

\*

--down they go. He hikes his wooly drawers, grabs a rope wrapped around a tree trunk--

\*

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED:

77

JESSE

Life's to enjoy! What else is it good  
for?

\*

AND SWINGS OVER THE WATER

Crowing like a Rooster. He lets go at the top of the arc  
flapping his arms and splashes into the Sun's reflection.

Winnie watches Jesse surface blowing water like a whale  
singing one of his funny songs. She dances on barefeet  
wanting to go in with him. She looks down at:

\*

\*

\*

HER BARE FEET

\*

Petticoats drop first. She steps out of them. Then her dress.

\*

78 THE LAKE - JESSE PADDLING ON HIS BACK

78

\*

Singing. Winnie's jubilant scream turns him back to:

\*

HER BLUR SAILING BY ON THE ROPE

Splashing beside him nearly upending him. She surfaces  
flailing and sputtering and laughing.

\*

JESSE

Woman overboard! Can you swim, girl?

\*

He heads toward her. Winnie thrashes the water in his face.

WINNIE

Of course I can swim. You just stay away.  
Over there. Stay--

JESSE

Looks like you're drowning from here.

WINNIE

I'm just fine--

She turns and swims away from him. Her bare backside blurs  
just under the surface.

\*

Jesse goes beet red and turns away. Then gets a big grin on  
his face. And starts to sing again.

WINNIE (cont'd)

Ooooo, a fish just nibbled my foot.

\*

\*

She laughs hysterically.

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED:

78

JESSE

Probably Big Muddy. Just an old bull  
alligator.

WINNIE

An alligator--? AN ALLIGATORRR!??

JESSE

Don't worry. I'll scare him off.

Jesse dives out of sight. Winnie splashes scared, aroused,  
joyous and having the time of her life.

THE LAKE - WIDER

Winnie and Jesse are splashing specks in a slice of heaven.

79 INT. TUCK CABIN - SAME TIME

79

Mae packs randomly. She picks up the doll from the alcove and  
places it in a sack. Then the photoplate of Miles and his  
family.

She hesitates hearing the laughter and frolic of children  
echo across the lake. She shakes it off. She must be hearing  
things....

80 INT. HOTEL - NIGHT

80

Tree Gap's finest. A serious poker game is underway in the  
Gentleman's Lounge. Miles is right in the middle of it. He  
laughs derisively as he reaches to rake in a hefty pot. The  
Sore Loser across from him grabs Miles' hands.

SORE LOSER

I don't like being laughed at by a Cheat.

Miles more derisively, riling the man even more.

MILES

Cheat's a nasty little world, Sir. I  
prefer "cardsharp".

He cuts the cards to an "Ace of hearts."

MILES (cont'd)

A faint heart never fills a flush--

He performs another "slight of hand" trick with the cards.

SORE LOSER

You sure are looking for trouble aren't  
you, Mister--

(CONTINUED)

80 CONTINUED:

80

The Man stands fuming. Miles flexes his knuckles and hands.

MILES

Yes, I sure am.

The Loungetender pulls a sawed off Louisville Slugger with a wrist grip from a cabinet and tosses it to Sore Loser.

LOUNGETENDER

Outside.

81 EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

81

The MITYS shakes hands with a wiry Old Timer in his eighties.

OLD TIMER

Yes, Sir--we shoulda whopped Meade's blue bellies at Gettysburg. That's what we shoulda done. Things'd sure be different.

MITYS

Perhaps next time. I thank you for your--

--as Miles and Sore Loser come sailing out the hotel doors onto the dusty street, followed by the angry Poker Players.

MILES

I said on the count of three. Now who's cheating?

Sore Loser rams the bat into Mile's gut. Miles enjoys it.

The MITYS fixes on Miles with great relish just as--

--Miles locks on him in complete disbelief! Miles ducks the bat and drops the sore loser....Then he runs!

The MITYS checks his watch, tips his hat to the Old Timer--

MITYS

You'll excuse me?

--and runs after Miles down the dusty main street.

82 EXT. NIGHT SKY - BIG DADDY MOON

82

Except it is a reflection in the lake. Breeze ripples the image. Hundreds of frogs and toads communicate with rhythmic syncopation echoing unseen in nature's surround sound.

WINNIE (O.C.)

After you finish seeing the whole world,  
are you going to the moon?

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED:

82

Now a Hoot Owl joins the night chorus.

JESSE (O.C.)

Winnie....listen...just listen.

83 THE VIEW DESCENDS TO: THE TUCK'S DOCK

83

Winnie. In her dress, sans petticoats. A blanket around her. Jesse perches on a piling tapping a rhythm on his britches with a couple of sticks.

WINNIE

What is it?

Crickets can be heard by the thousands matching the sticks clicking on Jesse's thigh. Nightbirds fly above with lonely cries. A coyote yips across the lake. Another yips back.

Winnie begins to sway to the rhythm swishing her garments.

JESSE

You won't ever hear it at the Carnegie Hall in New York City. Listen. They're playing for you.

Winnie begins to spin clapping her hands, letting herself be swept up in the music of the night.

Jesse stands up on the piling and yips back at the coyotes. With great sweeps of his arms he conducts the symphony of sounds, yelling, whistling, calling on the nature's symphony.

Crickets, frogs, toads, birds, everything gets louder.

Winnie dances up and down the dock flapping the windchimes hanging on the posts and trees adding to her rush.

Jesse leaps down and beats a pulsing rhythm on the side of the Tuck's canoe. A thunder of drums.

Winnie lets go. Dancing with wild abandon. Sensual. Tribal. Her freedom dance. She is one with the beat, the heat, the night and the music. Her music. She has found it!

84 EXT. THE WOOD - DAWN

84

Miles pushes the exhausted horse through the browse, ducking branches staying off the beaten path.

85 ANOTHER PART OF THE WOOD - SAME TIME

85

The MITYS trails on horseback. He dismounts checking a print in the moss covered ground. A trampled clump of flowers.

(CONTINUED)

85 CONTINUED:

85

He takes a reading on his compass and enters it in his notebook. Then remounts and rides on changing direction. On the scent.

86 INT. ATTIC BEDROOM - DAWN

86

A shot of sun stirs Callie in her wheelchair. Voices outside. Winnie's father in a heated exchange....She wheels herself to the dormer to peer out. A wheel bumps over something. She backs up to see what it is....

There on the floor is the cigar box Winnie kept her Toad in!

Callie reaches down to try and pick it up. Too far. She reaches out her foot to drag it. She flips the box open in the process. There, folded neatly, is a letter!

THE CIGAR BOX - CLOSER

We see the handwriting. "Dear Gran Callie...."

CALLIE

Winnie....

87 EXT. LAKE AND CABIN - DAWN

87

The canoe drifts. A breeze turns the canoe gently in a circle as first light finds Winnie and Jesse nestled inside. Her head tucked into his chest. Tranquil smile on her face.

The canoe bumps gently back into the dock. Jesse wakes... watching the sunlight on her hair. She coos nudging her head under his chin. He smooths her hair...

WINNIE

Mmmm, I was having the most wonderful dream. Do I have to wake up?

JESSE

Never.

WINNIE

Good...I want this to last forever. This second. This moment. Right now...

Jesse thinks hard searching his conscience.

JESSE

Winnie...there is a way.

She opens her eyes looking up into his. ????

JESSE (cont'd)

A way we can be together forever.

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED:

87

Now she sits up all ears. Jesse is dead serious.

88 INT. CABIN - LAKE IN VIEW - SAME TIME: GLIDING VIEWS

88

The spiders spin their webs in the clock. Mae lies in bed next to the lump that is Tuck watching.

JESSE (V.O.)

It's the part about us you don't know.

WINNIE (V.O.)

The secret....?

89 THE WOOD - SAME TIME

89

Miles walks his horse up a steep embankment. Both slipping and sliding...

WINNIE (V.O.)

The reason you don't want anyone to find out about you?

90 ANOTHER PART OF THE WOOD - SAME TIME

90

The MITYS rides briskly on the same path Miles took earlier.

WINNIE (V.O.)

You're hiding out from the law. I knew it. You're bank robbers or...grifters.

JESSE (V.O.)

That's what you think? Really?...

91 THE ASH TREE AND THE SPRING - SAME TIME

91

Sunbeams dance on the "T" carved in the trunk.

JESSE (V.O.)

The giant ash tree at the center of the wood where we met....The little spring bubbling up...you saw me drink from...

92 DISSOLVE TO: JESSE AND WINNIE

92

Intent. Fixed on each other inches apart.

JESSE

I'm sworn to never tell a soul. We all swore...but...you already know about it. You're the first human I've ever met I wanted to know the truth..

(CONTINUED)

92 CONTINUED:

92

WINNIE

Jesse Tuck...you're the first human I've  
ever met I wanted to...to....

\*

Her lips find his in a first kiss. Clumsy at first, finding a  
way to fit....then sweet tender innocence...

WINNIE (cont'd)

...to...do that...

She kisses him again. Jesse responds holding her close.

JESSE

Listen to me. You remember when I told  
you I was a hundred and four years old?

She nods giddy with pleasure caressing his lips.

JESSE (cont'd)

Well, it's the honest truth.

WINNIE

Don't be a silly ass.

JESSE

Winnie, I'm going to live forever. I'm  
never going to change. Same with Miles  
and Tuck and Mae...Something happened to  
us...It's the spring, Winnie, the water.  
Something's wrong with it.

The romantic moment is broken for Winnie. She now seems  
perturbed and confused.

JESSE (cont'd)

As far as I know, I'll be seventeen until  
the end of the world.

Winnie is shaking trying to comprehend, getting angry.

WINNIE

You're teasing me. I'm not a child. I  
don't believe in fairy tales anymore---

\*

JESSE

That water--it stops you right where you  
are. If you had a drink of it today,  
you'd stay just like you are forever.  
You'd never grow up. Not ever...

Winnie just wants out of the canoe. She grabs for the dock  
trying to pull herself up.

(CONTINUED)

92 CONTINUED: (2)

92

WINNIE

Stop this. I don't want to hear anymore.

A hand reaches out in her face. She looks up to:

MILES

Glaring down at her from the dock. Crazy eyes. A stoned smile like you see on veterans too long in war...

MILES

Don't you wish he'd told you before you kissed him?

Her hand goes instinctively to her mouth suddenly feeling sordid. Miles pulls her onto the dock.

MILES (cont'd)

Did he tell you immortality is not all the preachers crack it up to be?

JESSE

Leave her alone, Miles!

Jesse scrambles out. She struggles against Miles' grip.

MILES

Aww, now, you want her to hear it, Jesse boy. She's the first human you want to tell the truth to...

JESSE

You just don't want me to have what you lost, brother. I know that...

WINNIE

Stop it. Both of you. And tell me...the truth...I want to know. Everything...

Miles lets her go. He is in anguish.

MILES

We all had a drink...except for the cat.

THE VIEW GLIDES PAST MILES TO:

The shimmering water....

93 EXT. ASH TREE AND THE SPRING - DAY [THE PAST]

93

Eighty seven years ago. The Tucks dressed in early 19th century garb break camp at the foot of the tree. Miles hitches the same horse to a solid wheeled cart.

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED:

93

Mae ladles water from the spring for Miles and Tuck. Tuck drinks admiring the petroglyph carvings on the great trunk.

\*  
\*

Jesse dons the same three corner hat he wore for Winnie as he piles their belongings in the cart scaring the calico cat.

He bends down to lap some spring water with the horse.

JESSE (V.O.)

--the water tasted sort of strange. We'd camped there overnight. Tuck carved a T on the trunk, to mark where we'd been...

\*

TUCK HEADS THE LOADED CART AWAY

Past the great tree. The view lingers on the 'T'.

MILES (V.O.)

Then we moved on west looking for a place to settle down.

94 EXT. WIDE OPEN SPACES - DAY [THE PAST]

94

Mae cooks over an open fire. The three Tuck Men and the horse raise a post and beam wall of a house in the f.g.; the open door frame passing right over Mae.

\*

MILES (V.O.)

We put up a house for Mae and Tuck and a little shed for Jesse and me. We figured we'd be starting families of our own pretty soon and would want our own houses.

\*

95 TO JESSE - UP A TALL LONESOME PINE TREE [THE PAST]

95

In the act of "topping" it before cutting it down.

MILES (V.O.)

That was the first time we figured there was something peculiar.

\*

The waist rope holding Jesse to the tree snaps! He falls--

JESSE - TOPPLING DOWN

All time slows---Jesse plows head first into the hard ground--his neck SNAPS like a gunshot!

SHARP CUT BACK TO:

96 RESUME: WINNIE AND THE BOYS 96

She flinches as if feeling the impact.

JESSE

They thought I'd broken my neck. So did I.

\*

MILES

He was on his feet again before Mae could work up a good cry. Didn't hurt him a bit. No broken bones. Nothing.

\*

VOYEUR POV - ACROSS THE LAKE

Field glasses focus on Miles, then Jesse...then Winnie. Huddled on the dock deep in conversation. The view pans up to the cabin tucked in the trees.

\*

97 REVEAL: THE MITYS - LAKE IN VIEW 97

Spying on the Tucks from across the lake. A compass reading, notes in his book, lean and hungry look on his face--

98 RESUME: WINNIE AND THE BOYS 98

Jesse stands abruptly--frustrated.

\*

JESSE

That's not all Winnie, not by a longshot.

MILES

Things began to happen. Some brush poppers mistook Mae's horse for a deer--

\*

\*

\*

99 FLASH TO: THE HORSE [THE PAST] 99

Grazing in the morning mist. Long rifle fire blazes from Hunters in silhouette enshrouded in mist.

\*

\*

100 MUSKET BALL POV - RUSHING AT THE HORSE REARING IN FRIGHT 100

The view passes right through the animal like water and out the other side spinning into misty limbo. (No blood, no impact!)

\*

\*

\*

MILES (V.O.)

Thing is, the bullets didn't kill him. Barely even left a mark!

\*

\*

\*

- 101 RESUME: WINNIE AND THE BOYS 101 \*
- She cranes to see the horse grazing around the cabin. A  
skeptics look still in her eyes. \*
- JESSE \*
- But the cat died and Miles...got \*
- married... \*
- The deeper Miles goes into the past the darker and more \*
- withdrawn he becomes. Right into his hollow eyes.
- 102 EXT. MILES HOUSE - DAY [THE PAST] 102
- Miles carries his beautiful YOUNG BRIDE over the threshold  
into his little house.
- 103 TIME CUT: THE LITTLE HOUSE [THE PAST] 103
- His Bride exits holding one infant DAUGHTER. His SON age \*
- three, runs out the door jumping in Mile's arms. He scoops  
the girl up from his wife.
- MILES (V.O.)
- Beau....little Anna...
- TIME CUT: THE LITTLE HOUSE [THE PAST]
- Anna and Beau run out the door again. Ages eight and ten.  
Miles still looks twenty-two.
- 104 TIME CUT: THE TUCK FARM - DAY [THE PAST] 104
- The Tucks eat outside at a long table with Friends and \*
- Family. The view glides past Miles at the head. Un-aged. Then  
Jesse, Mae, Tuck the same. Anna and Beau now teenagers--
- MILES (V.O.)
- We worked the farm, made friends...But
- after more'n ten years, We had to face
- it. Something was terribly wrong.
- The view rests on his once Young Bride at the other end. She \*
- has aged. Hair graying. Eye's sunken. Hollow. Fixed on Miles  
at the other end...still twenty two.
- 105 MATCH DISSOLVE TO: MILES 105
- Jesse moves to comfort him. He shrugs away shooting hateful  
looks at both Jesse and Winnie.

(CONTINUED)

105 CONTINUED:

105

## MILES

It was that goddamn demon spring! We all drank from it. Even the horse. Tuck figured it early on. Had to be. The source of our "changelessness"...What a joke God played. God....

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Angry tears begin to boil in Miles' eyes.

## MILES (cont'd)

I begged her to come back with me to find the spring...drink from it. The children, too. It was our only hope to be together.

\*  
\*

106 FLASH TO: MILES HOUSE - NIGHT [THE PAST]

106

## MILES (V.O.)

My wife, she finally made up her mind I'd sold my soul to the Devil. She left me. And she took my babies with her....

Anna, his youngest, tears away and hugs Miles goodbye. She leaves him the doll Winnie found in the alcove to remember her by. Miles clutches the treasure, weeping.

\*

107 EXT. TUCK FARM - SUNDOWN [THE PAST]

107

Mae and Tuck load their wagon with Jesse.

## MILES (V.O.)

Everyone pulled back from us. There was talk about witchcraft. Black Magic. Finally, we had to leave the farm...

## RIDERS APPROACH WIELDING TORCHES

They circle the three Tuck homes. Tuck holds Jesse back. Mae watches in anguish.

\*

108 DISSOLVE TO: THE ASH TREE - DAY [THE PAST]

108

The Tucks returning to the scene of their life changing moment. The T is still there. Fresh as the day it was cut.

\*

\*

## MILES (V.O.)

The tree hadn't changed any more than we had in twenty some odd years. Tuck cupped his hands in the spring and concluded the day we drank the water we became... immortal....

\*

109 RESUME: WINNIE AND THE BOYS

109

Silence. Winnie is pale. Barely breathing. Jesse is stoic.

MILES

We all kind of went crazy after that...  
War came. I'd joined the first Ohio. Saw  
brave men die at Gettysburg by the  
thousands in the blink of an eye...but  
not me. I couldn't die...like little  
Anna. Influenza took her before she was  
fifteen. Beau...he would be eighty two  
now if he was still alive....And my sweet  
young bride...died in an insane asylum  
...old and alone....

He weeps, no longer able to steel himself. Winnie embraces  
him, holding him...no longer a girl, but woman and mother...

MILES (cont'd)

(punishing himself)

..but I'm still here...I'm still here...

110 THE CABIN - LAKE IN VIEW - DAWN

110

Mae brings coffee to Tuck already on the porch watching the  
kids down on the dock hugging each other.

TUCK

Winnie Foster just found out the truth I  
expect....I hope it's not too late...

A reflection from the wood across the lake catches his eye.

SHARP CUT TO:

111 EXT. WOODS - MORNING

111

The MITYS rides flatout through the wood retracing his trail.

WINNIE (V.O.)

"....the world is a dangerous place.  
Mother is always telling me so."

112 INT. FOSTER MANSION - EARLY MORNING

112

Father reads Winnie's letter from the cigar box Mother busies  
herself adjusting vases and curtains holding it all in.

WINNIE(V.O.)

"And I would not be able to manage  
without protection. They are always  
telling me that too.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

112 CONTINUED:

112

WINNIE(V.O.) (cont'd)

In truth I have always obeyed and stayed home...because in my darkest fears, I am afraid to go away alone..."

MOTHER

(denial)

The Minister is coming right over. This does not sound like our Winnie. Can't be.

FATHER

(reading aloud)

"but you inspired me, Gran. To make my own decisions. I've decided to go into the wood to find the music..."

His voice bleeds into:

WINNIE'S VOICE (V.O.)

"Of course, while I'm in the wood, if I decide never to come back, well then, that will be that...."

He lays the letter down gripping the table with his hands.

FATHER

"If I decide never to come back..." No one took her. There is no foul play. Our daughter has run away...from us. Us...

MOTHER

Please don't say these things. God knows what your mother--

FATHER

Callie's toting enough pain for an old woman with a good heart. I'm sending for the constable. We'll get the dogs out.

Mother sinks knocking a vase to the floor. A servant hurries in to clean up. Mother waves her off and stoops to pick up the pieces herself.

A door bell splits the silence.

113 THE FRONT PORCH - A MINUTE LATER

113

The MITYS. Hat off, smoothing his hair with long white fingers. Father stares in disbelief on the other side of the beveled glass door.

114 INT. FOSTER PARLOR - DAY

114

The MITYS sits back in his chair taking in the spotless parlor. Legs crossed. His suspended foot jiggling rhythmic.

(CONTINUED)

114 CONTINUED:

114

MOTHER

Oh...thank God....

Mother takes Father's hand squeezing tight. Relief.

MITYS

She's with them now. I turned around and came directly back. Knowing how worried you must be...

FATHER

Of course we're grateful. We just want her back safely---

MITYS

(clicks his tongue)

Dreadful business, kidnapping. Fortunate I was witness. I am perhaps the only person...who knows where to find her....

A sigh. A smile. A lift of the eyebrows. A jiggling foot.

FATHER

(growing dread)

Just what is your game, Mister?

Mother goes pale realizing what is happening.

MITYS

Some types one encounters on life's winding road can't seem to hew their way through any problem. But you...

He smiles serpentine at Mother the same as he did Winnie. She suddenly feels...undressed...

MITYS (cont'd)

Well, I don't have to explain the situation to you...I've got what you want. You've got what I want.

Father explodes to his feet jerking the MITYS to his--

FATHER

You come into my home, in front of the mother of my daughter and you--

MOTHER

Please! I can't bear this---

(CONTINUED)

114 CONTINUED: (2)

114

MITYS

Listen to your wife, Mr. Foster. Oh, you might find your daughter without me...but perhaps not in time.

FATHER

You're in on this aren't you? You and your "long lost relatives!" If you have touched my daughter--

Father is splitting with anger. MITYS remains calm.

MITYS

I have my faults. Kidnapping is not among them. These are rough people the ones who took her. Ignorant illiterates. No telling what they might do.

Mother stands losing all her poise--

MOTHER

Give the Man whatever he wants. I don't care what it is. I just want Winifred back...please....

MITYS fastidiously fixes his tie.

MITYS

I'm no barbarian. You can see that. Now, understand I would not cut down the trees as you would. A few, you understand, but we'll be good neighbors, I think....

The Fosters look at him gobsmacked.

MITYS (cont'd)

So...I want the wood and you want your daughter. A simple clear-cut trade.

He smiles folding his hands together.

115 THE STAIRCASE - ON THE MOVE

115

Mother hurries up the stairs leaving Father below.

MOTHER

Give it to him, Edward. Every cursed inch. I hate it so anyway....Just get that ...thing out of my home.

At the landing she sags in her anguish giving up her tears.

116 ATTIC BEDROOM WINDOW POV - THE YARD - MINUTES LATER 116

Callie watches the MITYS watering his horse. She is distraught.

117 OUTSIDE - CONTINUING ACTION 117

Father exits ready to ride. He hands a letter to the MITYS who reads it quickly.

MITYS

Done and done. It's best to keep things legal and tidy, don't you agree--

He extends his hand to shake.

MITYS (cont'd)

You're an intelligent reasonable man. I'm seldom wrong as a judge of character.

Father refuses to accept his hand.

FATHER

Yes, and maybe I'm the biggest sucker ever born. I'm going with you, Sir--

The MITYS mounts up and cuts Father off heading for the barn.

MITYS

I understand your concern, but we'll do this business my way. I know these people. I know how to deal with them.

FATHER

They're criminals. With my daughter.

MITYS

If I'm not back by supper with her safe and sound, then you may cancel the terms of our agreement...

He wheels to go.

MITYS (cont'd)

Have your friendly Constable on hand to make the appropriate arrests. Your terrible ordeal is as good as over.

(tipping his hat)

You should be so very thankful I was here to help you and your lovely wife.

\*

He rides off. Father watches him go.

(CONTINUED)

117 CONTINUED:

117

THE VIEW SHIFTS TO INCLUDE THE HOUSE

Mother. Standing at a front window. Above her on the third floor, Callie watches from her window.

118 EXT. TUCK CABIN - DAY

118

The wagon is almost loaded. Miles fixes the dollhouse carefully on the pile wedging is fast with Tuck's old shotgun. Tuck and Jesse carry the bureau out.

\*  
\*

TUCK

Well whoever he is, we'll be ghosts  
before he finds us. It's the girl I worry  
most about...

They slide the bureau on back.

119 INT. TUCK CABIN - SAME TIME: GLIDING VIEWS

119

Still full of stuff. Mae stands in the middle of the main room at a loss of what to take and what to leave. Winnie stands with her...confused...torn...lost....

MAE

I expect you're full of questions...but  
we can't stay here any longer. Just  
think, Winnie Foster, you're the only one  
besides us in the whole world who knows  
...Do you understand what it means....?

\*

Mae takes her shawl from her shoulders and wraps it around Winnie's once white dress.

WINNIE

If I had a drink of it today...a drop,  
I'd stay like this forever? Never grow  
up..not ever?

Mae smooths Winnie's hair. Miles and Jesse are at the door.

\*

MAE

We don't know how it works, or even why.

JESSE

Tuck thinks it's something left over  
from, well, some other plan the way the  
world should be.

Miles skulks out kicking the years of junk in his way.

(CONTINUED)

119 CONTINUED:

119

MAE

You share our secret now, Winnie. It's a big dangerous secret. We've got to have your promise to keep it.

Winnie cannot comprehend the gravity of this knowledge. Jesse can see her walling up, her head reeling. She rushes out:

120 TO THE PORCH - CONTINUING ACTION

120

Bending over the rail trying to get a grip on herself.

\*

Tuck speaks quietly to his Sons. They nod in agreement. Tuck approaches placing a fatherly arm on Winnie's shoulders.

TUCK

We're going to take you home now, but first we have to talk.

Winnie looks up at him wiping her tears. Tuck is so calm and rock steady. He offers his hand. She takes it.

Mae folds her arms about her boys watching Tuck and Winnie head to the dock.

121 EXT. THE WOOD - SAME TIME

121

The MITYS rides by the thicket surrounding the great ash tree. He consults his notebook, his compass, turns and heads away from the spring completely unaware of its proximity.

122 EXT. FOSTER MANSION - SAME TIME

122

The Constable arrives in a mill truck. Five Men riding in back unload three baying Hunting Dogs.

Father hurries from the house carrying Winnie's bedclothes for the dogs to smell.

Father eyes them into silence. A Stable Boy leads horses from the corral. The dogs pull and tug Handlers to the fence where Winnie entered the wood.

123 INT. FOSTER MANSION - SAME TIME: GLIDING VIEWS

123

Empty. Silent. The hall clock ticking. Portraits of Mother and Father staring at each other. We hear the piano....

...Beautifully mournful. Mother...playing with trained hands. Losing herself in the composition. Mindless of her tears staining the keys...

(CONTINUED)

123 CONTINUED:

123

Callie enters quietly in her wheelchair and observes unnoticed. Her heart aches seeing Mother express her pain and fear and love pounding her feelings out in the music.

THE MUSIC PLAYS OVER:

124 EXT. THE LAKE - AFTERNOON

124

Tuck paddles Winnie across the lake. The sun is a soft red egg yolk heading to set. Birds sweep overhead calling out. Frogs echo back and forth. He points to a Mother Wood duck herding her ducklings to shelter in the cattails.

TUCK

They'll fly soon enough. Leave the nest.  
Ever spring there's a new batch that  
comes to life. Flowers. Trees, Bugs.  
Frogs. Fish. And people too. But never  
the same ones. Always growing and  
changing, and always moving on. That's  
the way it's supposed to be. Just like  
the water from this lake. It goes on down  
stream to the ocean...Then the sun sucks  
some of it up, carries it back to the  
clouds, then it rains here and the stream  
takes it back to the ocean again. It's a  
wheel, Winnie. Everything's a wheel,  
turning and turning and never stopping.

\*

He stops paddling. The canoe bumps up against a dead tree and stops.

TUCK (cont'd)

Then there's us. Stuck so we can't move  
on. We're not part of the wheel any more.  
Dropped off. Left behind. And everywhere  
around us, things are moving and growing  
and changing. Look at you. You were a  
child. Now you're about to become woman.  
You'll grow up and maybe do something  
important...

Winnie breaks a warm smile. She has to agree.

TUCK (cont'd)

But someday you'll move on to make way  
for new children. And then one day you'll  
leave the world. Go out just like the  
flame of a candle. That's a certainty.

\*

\*

Winnie turns away to her reflection in the water.

(CONTINUED)

124 CONTINUED:

124

WINNIE

I don't want to die...I don't want my  
Gran Callie to die. My mother, my  
father...Is that wrong?

\*  
\*  
\*

TUCK

No...No human does. But it's part of the  
wheel, the same as being born. You can't  
have living without dying. So you can't  
call it living, what we have. We just  
are. Like rocks beside the road.

WINNIE

But maybe it's not supposed to be a  
secret. Maybe you were supposed to find  
it...Jesse wants to see the world with  
all the time he's got--

\*  
\*  
\*

TUCK

And Miles wants to end it....Listen to me  
Winnie, you go back and you tell folks  
about us and about the spring and they'll  
come running like pigs to slop to drink  
it. They'll trample each other trying to  
get some of that water. One thing I've  
come to know about humans ...they will do  
anything not to die! Even kill each  
other...Which they have been doing since  
the beginning of time. And still are...

Winnie sinks trying to comprehend the immensity of it all.

TUCK (cont'd)

Can you imagine--? All the little ones  
little forever, all the old ones old  
forever? Those stricken with disease  
suffering forever?....The big wheel would  
keep on turning...turning. But people  
would be stuck like us...piling up like  
rocks...Can you picture forever? What it  
means....forever? I just have to make you  
understand before you leave us.

\*  
\*  
\*

Tuck peers at Winnie feeling hopelessly inadequate.

\*

125 EXT. THE WOOD - SAME TIME

125

The MITYS urges his mount up the steep embankment. The horse  
falters, refusing. The MITYS dismounts and leads the animal  
up the grade. He looks at the sun. His watch. Hurry!

126 EXT. THICKET AND ASH TREE - SAME TIME

126

Dogs find the shred of Winnie's dress caught on the briars. A Handler brings it to Father as he reins in. Winnie's! The Constable yells from across the thicket.

CONSTABLE

Over here. We got tracks!

MEN DOGS AND HORSES BLUR BY WIPING FRAME TO:

THE ASH TREE....UNSEEN...UNNOTICED...UNDISCOVERED.

127 EXT. PINE GROVE - LAKE IN VIEW - GOLDEN HOUR

127

Tuck leads Winnie into a circular clearing of tall pines. A single obelisk shadow traverses the clearing like a sundial. Winnie slows awed at the site rising before her.

THE TOP OF A LONESOME PINE TREE

One hundred feet in the air. The faces of the Tucks carved in lifelike detail. Even Mile's children at the tippy top---

THE VIEW DESCENDS REVEALING: A LIVING TOTEM

Stunningly intricate carvings of animals of the world, the Native American life wheel, buffalo herds, flights of geese, wild horses, the coming of Man, steamboats, trains, the War between the States, a big round sun with rays curling along limbs, ocean waves carved in tremendous motion and detail--

TUCK (O.C.)

We all have to do something useful with our lives...so...this is my work in progress...

TO WINNIE AND TUCK - MEMORIAL RISING ABOVE THEM

She is completely overpowered by the creation.

WINNIE

You did this....alone...?

TUCK

It was a shorter when I started.

WINNIE

No one could have done this alone in one lifetime...no one.....

Tuck gives a modest little nod letting Winnie soak it all in.

(CONTINUED)

127 CONTINUED:

127

WINNIE (cont'd)

It's true. The spring. Everything. You  
are...

She reaches out to touch the face of a deer in progress but  
holds back.

TUCK

I hoped when people like your Father  
finally get to cutting down this forest  
maybe they'll leave this one alone.

\*

\*

Tuck places her hand on the smooth polished shape.

TUCK (cont'd)

Now it's up to you to protect the  
wood...and our secret, Winnie Foster...

THE VIEW CIRCLES FROM WINNIE AROUND THE CARVED TREE TO:

Mae, Miles and Jesse walking up from the lake. They stop  
behind Tuck. All eyes on Winnie.

TUCK (cont'd)

Now do you understand forever? We never  
had a choice. You do....

Winnie overcome with emotion takes each Tuck into her heart  
and mind . She nods slightly, then clearly and unwavering...

\*

\*

WINNIE

I know...I don't want to die...as long as  
I can be with all of you. I have never  
felt more alive than right now...

Mae chokes back her instant emotions. Tuck shores Mae up.

WINNIE (cont'd)

I can't go back to my life living behind  
fences and being afraid of anything new.  
I can't.

Jesse ventures forth and looks her right in the eye.

JESSE

Winnie...you want to be with us forever?  
With me...?

WINNIE

I do...Jesse Tuck. I want to drink from  
the spring...I do...

(CONTINUED)

127 CONTINUED: (2)

127

Jesse takes her hand. Together they look up at Tuck's monument glowing in the golden light.

THE VIEW ASCENDS THE GREAT TREE TO THE TOP

128 EXT. THE WOOD - SAME TIME

128

Father surges up the embankment. His mount topples backwards throwing him. Dogs scatter yowling.

He gets up and starts climbing on his hands and knees grabbing his spooked mount's reins.

129 EXT. TUCK CABIN - LAKE IN VIEW - SUNSET

129

The Tucks dock the canoe and rowboat and hurry toward the cabin. Jesse and Winnie arm in arm, excited. New purpose. \*

Someone is waiting on the porch in the shadows. A familiar foot jiggles in the f.g. The haunting whistling...

The Tucks stop cold. The boys are instantly en garde. Mae knows the melody. Winnie pales.

MILES

It's him. That's the one.

THE MITYS LEANS INTO VIEW

Comfortable in Mae's chair. Black hat resting on his knee. \*

MITYS

You're safe now, Winifred. I've come to take you home.

Winnie instinctively takes Jesse's hand. Miles wants to pounce. Tuck walks slowly up on the porch.

TUCK

We were going to bring her back ourselves directly. She hasn't been in any danger.

MITYS

And you would be Mr. Tuck I suppose?

TUCK

(formal)

I am.

---his back straighter than usual.

(CONTINUED)

129 CONTINUED:

129

MITYS

I've been looking forward to meeting you for some time. You, too Mrs. Tuck. Your boys are as illusive as they are handsome judging from Miss Foster's public display.

Jesse jerks his arm from around Winnie.

JESSE

Now you look here, Mister, whoever you are--

TUCK

Let him speak his piece, Son.

Without looking, Tuck points at Miles who is moving toward the other end of the porch.

TUCK (cont'd)

Listen up, Miles. Hold it--

MITYS

So wise....I'll be brief...I've come for the waters....The "Elixir of Life", the "Fountain of Youth." How do you call it?

He lets it hang in the air. Mae cannot hide her dread.

TUCK

Thought you came for Miss Foster. You want a drink, we got a whole lake full.

MITYS

Give me some credit, Mr. Tuck. I have managed to find you, after all these years. You are not as ignorant as you would appear to be...are you?

Silence.

MITYS (cont'd)

You in fact are the same strange family my Grandmother told me wild fantastical stories about when I was growing up. How her dear friend married the eldest of two sons...brought two children into the world. And for years they grew, she aged, but the rest of the family stayed the same...The story goes they'd all drunk from a spring that made them...immortal.

Tuck remains stoic. The MITYS keys on Winnie's reaction.

\*

(CONTINUED)

129 CONTINUED: (2)

129

MITYS (cont'd)

At her wits end, the poor Woman showed up one day with her son and daughter to live with my Grandmother. The Woman was quite mad. Dangerous in fact. Forced into a mental facility until she died. My mother was the same age as the daughter. Let's see..."Anna."

Miles flinches anguishing....

MITYS found the button. He produces the photo-plate of Miles and his family holding it up for all to see. Miles is coming undone. Jesse holds him back. Mae explodes.

MAE

You have no call to come into my home and bring us such pain.

MITYS

There, there, now, good Mother. I mean you no harm.

--spreading his long white fingers in a soothing gesture.

MITYS (cont'd)

Before she died, my own Mum remembered a music box the Mother of this strange family held dear. The melody had a calming effect on the Son and Anna even after their Mum was carted off to the asylum. I'm sure you know it.

He looks right at Mae whistling the music box tune. Mae covers her ears unable to bear it. Winnie is cracking.

JESSE

What's this got to do with Winnie? She wants to stay with us.

MITYS

Like all magnificent things, it is really quite simple.

TUCK

Get to the point, Mister.

Tuck is menacing for the first time. His patience gone.

MITYS

The Fosters have given me the wood in exchange for bringing Winifred home.  
(patting his coat pocket)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

129 CONTINUED: (3)

129

MITYS (cont'd)

I have the paper, all signed and legal.  
The spring belongs to me now. God made  
such a botch of this creation...I intend  
to rectify his mistakes by making the  
water available to those who deserve it.

TUCK

You're out of your mind.

MITYS

Am I? Who wouldn't give a fortune to live  
forever?

TUCK

I wouldn't.

MITYS

Exactly. Immortality is wasted on  
ignorant people like you.

Miles rages rushing the porch. The MITYS calmly lifts his hat  
and aims the revolver he has been concealing right at Miles.

Winnie screams. Miles holds up, no fear in his face.

MITYS (cont'd)

I'm a fair man. Show me where the spring  
is and we'll share the wealth. If you are  
immortal you can help me demonstrate the  
properties of the waters. You know--  
things that would be fatal to anybody  
else.

JESSE

You want us to be sideshow freaks?---

The MITYS swings his revolver at Jesse.

MITYS

It would mean you could afford to live  
like people again, instead of pigs.

The Man suddenly points his weapon at Winnie--

MITYS (cont'd)

I've given you a chance as a Gentleman.  
Winifred--you're coming with me--to the  
Spring.

The terrified look on her face is all he needs.

(CONTINUED)

129 CONTINUED: (4)

129

MITYS (cont'd)

If any of your friends try to stop me, I  
will be forced to test your mortality.

JESSE

You bastard. She hasn't had a drop!

WINNIE

Please....I know where the water is. Let  
them go. I'll show you...

Winnie steps bravely toward him. The MITYS is unwavering in  
his aim. His crazed obsession overtaking him.

MITYS

Clever girl. You can be my first  
demonstration.

TUCK

No...You can't let anyone know about that  
water....Don't you see what will happen?

\*

The MITYS shoves her toward his horse. The Tuck Men surround  
them, arguing threatening. Mae edges to the wagon, horrified.

\*

MITYS

Did you really believe you could keep it  
for yourselves? Can you not see the  
benefit for the world?? I will see to it  
the world will be inherited by superior  
intelligent beings. Immortals...

\*

\*

\*

Jesse makes a move. He wheels threatening Winnie.

WINNIE

Jesse! You have to get away! Leave me!

\*

MITYS

You'll be perfect in the demonstrations,  
Winifred. Children are so much more  
appealing to the masses. Especially the  
young girls--

\*

MAE (O.C.)

Not Winnie!

Everyone wheels to:

MAE CHARGING

\*

Holding Tuck's forgotten shotgun by the barrel like a club.

\*

(CONTINUED)

129 CONTINUED: (5)

129

MAE (cont'd)

You're not doing anything like that to  
Winnie!

She moves right at the Man her strong arms swinging the  
shotgun around her head like a wheel!

The Man reacts with a ghastly smile. Winnie jerks away  
leaving him standing. He aims--

--as the stock of the shotgun smashes into the back of his  
skull. He topples like a tree to the ground. His eyes roll  
back. A surprised look frozen on his face.

\*

The Tucks stand over the MITYS in stunned silence. Winnie  
grabs on to Jesse her head in his chest.

Baying dogs and horses across the lake shred the silence...

\*

130 AROUND THE LAKE

130

\*

The Hunting dogs break through the trees barking and baying.  
The Constable appears on horseback with two others. He fixes  
on the Tucks--standing over the MITYS. And Winnie!

\*

CONSTABLE

There they are! Winnie Fosterrrr!

131 RESUME: THE CABIN

131

\*

Winnie reacts to her name. Everyone is frozen where they  
stand. Tuck lights a torch and runs in the cabin torching it.

\*

\*

TUCK

Mae, get the wagon moving.

Mae grabs Winnie by the hand leading her to the wagon. Miles  
jumps on the MITYS' horse and wheels.

TUCK (cont'd)

You boys make for the high forest. We'll  
meet at the pinnacle tonight. Get outta  
here!

Miles picks up Jesse on the run. Tuck runs inside the cabin  
and torches the place.

The cabin goes up like kindling. Mae freezes at the wagon  
watching her world vanish. She climbs down and rushes inside.

JESSE

Winnie!? Come with us.

(CONTINUED)

131 CONTINUED:

131

She nods climbing up on the wagon to jump on behind Jesse-- \*

WINNIE'S FATHER

Splashes across the shallows, yelling--

FATHER

Winnie! Winnieeeeeeee!

RUSH IN ON WINNIE

She turns back to her "Rescuers". She looks to Jesse--torn-- \*

WINNIE

It's my father.....

Miles reads her and spurs the horse. Jesse touches her hand as they ride away into the woods.

THE CABIN - BURNING

Tuck exits the inferno dragging Mae. She clutches the charred doll from the nursery. They are both amazingly unscathed.

THE POSSE RIDES UP

Surrounding them. Dogs barking and tearing to get at them. The Constable dismounts staring the MITYS.

Winnie's Father leaps from his horse, embracing her. \*

FATHER

Winnie?

--her hair down, her face smudged, her dress torn and loose. He looks at her as though he doesn't quite recognize her. \*

FATHER (CONT'D)

You're safe. You're alright. \*

WINNIE - CLOSER

Staring in shock at the blaze. Mae and Tuck hold on to each other. It is over. \*

END ACT II

CUT TO: BLACK: \*

ACT III: TUCK EVERLASTING \*

132 EXT. FOSTER MANSION - DAY

132 \*

Heat rises. The house behind the barred fence looks more like a prison than ever before. Armed Deputies linger at the gate. \*

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED:

132

MAE (V.O.)

It was the hottest day yet. Unspeakably hot. The Earth was cracked, a lifeless tan color...Tired, dried out and parched.....

\*  
\*

In the f.g., the Toad sits free just outside the bars.

133 INT. COUNTY JAIL - DAY

133

Mae and Tuck are behind bars as well. She alone in her cell. Tuck in his. Mae reaches through the bars. Tuck startles deep in thought. He manages to reach her fingertips with his.

MAE (V.O.)

The countryside, the village of Treegap, the wood, all lay defeated.

\*

134 INT. PHYSICIAN'S OFFICE - DAY

134

The MITYS stares at us. The Doctor closes the man's eyes and pulls the sheet up over this head.

\*

MAE (V.O.)

Nothing stirred....

135 THE SUN - BLAZING DOWN

135

MAE (V.O.)

The sun was a ponderous circle without edges, a roar without a sound, a blazing glare so thorough and remorseless...

\*

136 INT. FOSTER MANSION - DAY

136

Curtains burn red with the blaze. Mother fans herself sipping lemonade, her hair unsettled, a fall from her gentility.

MAE (V.O.)

...that even in the Foster's parlor, with curtains drawn, it seemed an actual presence. You could not shut it out.

\*  
\*

Winnie, cleaned up, hair in ribbons, cinched into a spanking clean dress and pinafore sits on display in the parlor.

MAE (V.O.) (cont'd)

They had seized her at once, swooping down on her, her mother weeping, hugging her. But they peered at her under hushed voices, as if they sensed she was different from what she had been before. As if some part of her had slipped away.

(CONTINUED)

136 CONTINUED:

136

The Constable waits. The Pastor is there in case God's guidance is needed. Callie is conspicuously absent. Father diplomatically breaks the silence.

FATHER

The Constable asked you a question, Win.  
It's important....

MOTHER

We just want to understand what's happened...to you....This is all so... humiliating for all of us.

Winnie narrows looking right at her Mother.

WINNIE

They did not kidnap me. I was with them...because I wanted to be.

MOTHER

Winifred! You don't know what you're saying. Edward, she does not know what she is saying.

--Mother's eyes wide with complete disbelief. Father takes Mother's wrist gently but firm, getting her attention.

FATHER

Yes....she does....Let her...

WINNIE

(without hesitating)

The Tucks were kind to me. They're good people...They're my friends.

Everyone stares at her.

CONSTABLE

If they didn't kidnap you, then why--why did that woman club that man over the head with a shotgun?

Winnie stands in polite defiance.

WINNIE

Because...Mae Tuck was...protecting me.

Mother is undone. Father motions. The Pastor sees her out.

137 EXT. FOSTER MANSION - NIGHT

137

The Constable pauses on the porch with Father before leaving.

(CONTINUED)

137 CONTINUED:

137

## CONSTABLE

Well, we can't press kidnapping charges if Miss claims there wasn't any kidnapping....Doesn't matter anyway, Mr. Foster....That man...died about a hour ago. She hit him hard. I'm afraid it's a murder charge now. I didn't much like the Man...but that won't stop that poor woman from hanging....Miss is an eye witness. She'll have to testify--

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

## FATHER

My God...

The Constable produces the letter Father signed to the MITYS.

## CONSTABLE

Figured you might want to hang onto this. It doesn't exist far as I'm concerned.  
(tips his hat to go)  
I'm sure sorry about all of this. Good night.

\*  
\*

Father, shaken, studies the letter. He rips it up methodically.

\*

138 INT. FOSTER MANSION - SECOND FLOOR LANDING - NIGHT

138

Winnie hurries quietly up the stairs toward Callie's attic room. Her Mother appears on the landing below her.

## MOTHER

Winifred?...I want to talk to you.

\*

She slows, starts to turn and confront her, then climbs on.

## WINNIE

I just want to see Gran Callie....  
I want to talk to her.

\*  
\*

## MOTHER

She needs peace and quiet right now. I want to talk to you. What happened out there?...I want you to tell me...

\*  
\*  
\*

Winnie turns and faces her full on, woman to woman...

## WINNIE

Things. Things that are mine alone. My own. Things you can't take away from me.

Mother is clearly losing control of her daughter. She has never been up against her equal. This is war.

(CONTINUED)

138 CONTINUED:

138

MOTHER

Very well. But I can take you away from here. This godforsaken place has involved you in a murder case and who knows what else!

\*  
\*  
\*

WINNIE

Stop it. Stop it. You don't know what happened! You could never understand because you're so...so...terrified what people think!...It's no way to live... Mae Tuck is a better mother than you will ever be!

\*  
\*  
\*

Winnie regrets the words the moment they escape her. Mother reels like the wind has been knocked out of her. Stunned.

MOTHER

Look what this has done to you!

\*

Father bounds up the stairs as Mother and Daughter are getting into it.

FATHER

Listen to me--both of you. I am not dividing this family up. Winnie this is your home--and this is where you belong.

He looks to Mother who is beside herself with anger.

FATHER (cont'd)

But...if you continue to act irresponsibly, then I will have no choice but to let Mother arrange for your schooling in New York or Boston or wherever she chooses. Is that understood?

\*  
\*  
\*

Dead silence. He looks to both the women in his life caught square in the middle. Mother and Daughter turn and head in opposite directions. No resolution.

139 EXT. FOSTER MANSION - WINNIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

139

Winnie at her window seat staring out the open sash at the night sky. On the far away horizon, above the wood, heat lightning flashes. Again and again it throbs, like the pounding in her head.

WINNIE (INNER VOICE)

Please...let it rain.

She cradles her head in her arms.

140 FLASH TO: THE MITYS

140

Leering at her. Sprawled on the parched ground lifeless. Mae standing over him clutching the shotgun.

WINNIE (INNER VOICE)

They'd all come running like pigs.... \*

141 FLASH TO: THE SPRING

141

Crowds tooth and claw their way digging at the earth scooping up cups, hands, anything to drink the waters. Rich, poor, old young, fighting in dreamy motion for a taste of immortality.

WINNIE (INNER VOICE)

It's true about the spring. It is. That's why Mae did it. He had to die. He had to....

Lightning flashes over the nightmarish vision. Thunder booms! \*

142 RESUME: WINNIE AT HER WINDOW

142

Distant thunder again. Rain drops grace her face.

JESSE (O.C.)

Winnie---?

She wakes to Jesse staring at her from outside her window.

JESSE (cont'd)

You asleep?

At first she thinks she is dreaming. Then her eyes fly open and she grabs his hand clutching the window sill--

WINNIE

Oh, Jesse. I thought you were...How did you get up here?

JESSE

I flew.

---clinging to the drain pipe he has shinnied two floors up.

Winnie helps him in. Breathless, the two stare at each other, framed in the window by the heat lightning and gentle rain. The air is so hot, rain striking their skin literally steams.

JESSE (cont'd)

Winnie...

(CONTINUED)

142 CONTINUED:

142

No words are necessary. The kiss is one of those that can lead to other things...

WINNIE

I was afraid I would never see you again.

The young lovers fight their urges, sobering--

WINNIE (cont'd)

You shouldn't be here.

JESSE

I need you...to help me...and Miles.

WINNIE

(right with him)

Angus and Mae.....

JESSE

That Man up and died. They can hang Mae for it. They will.

WINNIE

No, no...I'll tell them what happened.

JESSE

Listen to me. Mae can't go to the gallows. Even if she were the cruelest murderer who ever lived and deserved to be put to death--Mae won't die. They'll drop her to the end of that rope over and over again--but she won't die. She can't die....She'll suffer and they'll find out our secret. We can't let that happen.

This realization hits Winnie hard.

WINNIE

We have to get her out. Tuck, too.

JESSE

Then you'll help us?

WINNIE

They'll send me away....

JESSE

I'll find you....

Winnie smooths his face in the intermittent light, searching her resolve.

SHARP CUT TO:

143 EXT. STORMY SKY - NIGHT 143 \*

The sky flashes white. Thunder. The spring storm unloads.

144 EXT. TREGAP MAIN ST. - SAME TIME 144 \*

Deserted. The sky flashes revealing TWO WRAITH FIGURES in the middle of the street. Capes sweeping behind them in the gusts of wind. Three cornered hats from another century---

Again a flash. The figures have vanished. Like ghosts.

145 INT. TREGAP POLICE OFFICE - SAME TIME: GLIDING VIEWS 145

A deputy sleeps in the corridor near the holding cells. Lightning flashes to--Tuck, sitting against the wall watching Mae sleep. Their hands still clasped through the bars.

MAE

You having that dream again, Tuck?

TUCK

I was just thinking you'll still look good to me when you're a hundred.

She smiles squeezing his hand lovingly. Pounding and yelling outside alerts them.

VOICE (O.C.)

Open up! Please! Help me!

146 FRONT OFFICE - CONTINUING ACTION 146

The Night Deputy heads for the front door--

NIGHT DEPUTY

Alright, alright. Just hold on--

The Backup Deputy exits from the cell block already jumpy.

BACKUP DEPUTY

Who the hell is that--

THE DOOR - LIGHTNING FLASHES

Winnie is visible through the thick glass terrified, pounding for dear life.

WINNIE

Please, they're coming to get me!

She stumbles in drenched her nightgown soaked.

(CONTINUED)

146 CONTINUED:

146

NIGHT DEPUTY

Miss Foster? OKay--okay. It's alright.

Backup holds his riot gun peering out the window. Winnie clutches the Night Deputy pleading completely freaked.

WINNIE

Monsters! Witches! They kidnapped me to sacrifice me. I was afraid to tell. Devils! They're after me!

NIGHT DEPUTY

Now, Winnie, I know your upset after--

WINNIE

They're trying to kill me. They'll kill you too--both of you.

BACKUP DEPUTY

Holy mother--

He snaps his riot gun shut.

NIGHT DEPUTY

What're you doing--?

He points out the barred window.

THEIR POV - LIGHTNING FLASHES REVEALING:

The two ghostly WRAITHS in the middle of the street holding sabers! Thunder. Lightning. The newly built gallows visible in the background. The noose dances with the gusting winds.

147 THE CELL BLOCK - SECONDS LATER

147

The Night Deputy hustles Winnie into the cell block. Angus and Mae are wide awake--

NIGHT DEPUTY

You just stay here, Miss Foster. We'll handle this.

TUCK

Winnie? Are you alright? What's going on?

MAE

Take this before you catch your death...

--handing her shawl through the bars. Tuck understands that a jail break is under way. He pulls himself up on the bars of the small window to look out.

148 EXT. POLICE OFFICE - SAME TIME

148 \*

WRAITH (JESSE)

Come out and meet your death! Hell is  
upon you!

\*  
\*  
\*

The door opens. The Backup Deputy steps out, shotgun to bear. \*

BACKUP DEPUTY

You're---you're under arrest!

The Wraiths look at each other questioning then turn back to  
the deputy and laugh making right for him.

BACKUP DEPUTY (cont'd)

You stay back now. I'll shoot.

The shotgun reports kicking the Deputy back into the door. \*  
The Wraiths reel, checking themselves out. They dust each  
other's capes and straighten three corner hats--unharmd!

The Deputy goes white, looks at his gun, drops it and runs \*  
into the night wailing.

The Night Deputy sticks his head out to investigate.  
LIGHTNING FLASHES! The Wraiths are gone. He steps outside  
weapon drawn looking around.

NIGHT DEPUTY

Russell? Where are you?

\*

Suddenly, the Wraiths drop from the entrance overhang  
screeching in the man's face. He fires wildly as the Wraiths  
dance around the terrified man waving their sabers. \*

The Deputy half runs half falls down the street yelling.

149 RESUME: CELL BLOCK - SAME TIME

149

Winnie grabs the keys and opens Tuck's cell, then Mae's. \*

WINNIE

Quick, now. Before they get help.

Tuck takes in Winnie, then heads to unlock the rear door. Mae  
hugs her close.

MAE

Oh, my dear sweet Winnie. What I wouldn't  
do to keep you. I wish you were  
ours....For Jesse...for all of us. \*

Mae is crying. So is Winnie.

(CONTINUED)

149 CONTINUED:

149

WINNIE

You have to go. Please---

Jesse hurries in the back door dashing in his black cape and hat.

JESSE

Come with us, Win. There's nothing for you here. We can be together forever.

He holds up a vial of water on a thong around his neck--

JESSE (cont'd)

I took it from the spring....

--folding the precious liquid into her hands closing his hand over hers--

JESSE (cont'd)

For our wedding night...

Winnie is a mess. Tears of joy and heartbreak. She looks into his eyes, saying it all with hers. She wraps herself around him kissing him lovingly completely.

She suddenly tugs the thong off her necking holding Mae's music box and folds it in his hand. Then pulls away and slams herself in the cell--

WINNIE

You must go. Please. I can't go with you.

Mae caresses her hands on the bars. Tuck pulls her reluctantly away.

TUCK

Winnie's right. If she comes with us, they'll hunt us down. They'll never stop looking....

Mae...Jesse...Winnie...Jesse folds his hands over hers on the bars. He kisses each one.

JESSE

You want to go see the Eiffel tower?

Winnie nods tears wetting their hands.

WINNIE

I'll take every step...all sixteen hundred and fifty two to the top.

(CONTINUED)

149 CONTINUED: (2)

149

JESSE

Drink it when you're ready. You'll know  
where to find me. New Year's Eve....Top  
of the World...

\*

150 OUTSIDE - MILES

150

Holds horses spooked by the storm.

MILES

Let's go. Before it's too late!

Tuck pulls Mae out and helps her on a horse.

151 WINNIE AND JESSE

151

Last looks. Rain pounding on the tin roof echoes.

JESSE

You and me, Winnie Foster. You think  
about it. Enjoy this life--

\*

WINNIE

I will...

\*

Crying...laughing. Fifteen years hold, holding immortality in  
her hands. A flash of lightning blinds the view.

At the door, Jesse bows sweeping his hat across his cape--

\*

JESSE

I will love you 'til the day I die...

And then..."The Tucks--her darling Tucks--were gone."

CUT TO: BLACK

152 FADE IN: THE ASH TREE - DAY

152

Golden rod now covers the browse around the great tree hiding  
the spring. An early drying milkweed has opened its rough  
pod, exposing a host of downy-headed seeds...

MAE (V.O.)

The first week of August was long over.  
And now, though autumn was still some  
weeks away, there was a feeling that the  
year had begun its dying arc...

A sudden breeze detaches the puffs sailing sedately off--

153 TO THE FOSTER MANSION - DAY

153

Puffs lead us floating, floating toward the house as:  
The Toad emerges from the forest and hops to the fence.

MAE (V.O.)

...That the wheel was turning again,  
slowly now, but soon to go faster,  
turning once more in its changeless sweep  
of change...

Servants carry steamer trunks from the house to the Foster's  
motorcar.

154 INT. CALLIE'S ATTIC ROOM -DAY

154

Not much left of Callie except youth burning in her eyes.

CALLIE

An "accomplice" are you now...helping  
criminals to escape. And hardened killers  
no less....I missed all the fun.

She pats Winnie's hand weakly. Winnie smooths her forehead.

WINNIE

Yes, and now I'm in "custody" to Mother  
and Father. I know it's been hard on them  
in town....Mother has been staunchly  
there to protect me...

Callie cranes her head to look at Winnie all dressed up to  
travel. She motions Winnie to get up and turn around.

CALLIE

You're quite the young woman, now,  
Winnie. New York better step aside when  
you show up. Eh...Look out.

Winnie laughs to suppress any stray tears.

CALLIE (cont'd)

I never got there....Statue of Liberty,  
Broadway...Plum out of time. Where did it  
go?---

Callie drifts lapsing in and out. Winnie fingers the vial of  
precious liquid around her neck.

WINNIE

Gran Callie...what if...you had all the  
time in the world?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

154 CONTINUED:

154

WINNIE (cont'd)

What if you could live forever...just by  
drinking a sip of water?....Would you?...

\*

Silence. Callie muses...some happy thoughts....She gets a  
little girlish remembering some beau, then serious again.

CALLIE

I expect there's plenty of time to live a  
full life without having to last forever.  
Most people spend all their waking  
minutes gabbing about the things they're  
going to do...instead of doing them! I've  
lived plenty. I don't need anymore time.

\*

\*

A spurt of energy squeezes Winnie tight.

CALLIE (cont'd)

Hell's bells, Girl, you get out there and  
do something useful with your life if  
you're going to take up space on this  
earth. That's what I say....

\*

Echoes of Jesse and Miles and Mae and Tuck. Winnie kneels  
hugging Callie's lap like the little girl she used to be.

\*

WINNIE

Thank you, Gran Callie....I will always  
love you....

CALLIE

I know...I know....What else is an old  
bag a bones like me good for....

\*

Callie smiles....One that Winnie will always remember.

\*

155 INT. HALLWAY AND PARLOR - DAY

155

Winnie descends looking up toward the attic deep in thought.  
Mother waits in the parlor dressed to travel as well.

MOTHER

May I speak with you...alone?

\*

Winnie dutifully approaches her Mother. She starts to curtsy.  
Mother stops her.

MOTHER (cont'd)

Please no...before we go...I...Winnie...  
I've been asking myself these past few  
weeks over and over, why had you done  
such a thing? You're our daughter. We  
raised you. Trusted you.

\*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

155 CONTINUED:

155

MOTHER (cont'd)

Brought you up properly with a true sense  
of right and wrong... I simply could not  
understand your actions...Then I  
understood...

Mother's chilly rigid demeanor disintegrates. Weeping...

MOTHER (cont'd)

You did it because, in spite of  
everything....you loved them...

WINNIE

Oh...Mother....

\*

Mother and Daughter let down and embrace holding on tight.

MOTHER

...You did the right thing...You are  
our...daughter. And I am proud of you...

Father watches from the entry wall. He reopens and closes the  
door giving the ladies in his life a moment to regroup---

FATHER

Now, who wants to go to New York City!?

Mother and Daughter laugh fussing over, hats, hair, lips--

156 EXT. FOSTER MANSION - DAY

156

The Fosters load into the car. Winnie holds back.

WINNIE

There's something I have to do. I have to  
say goodbye to a...friend....

Mother and Father trade looks. Mother nods "go ahead".

157 THE FENCE - MANSION IN VIEW

157

Winnie runs outside to the fence searching for something.

\*

There sits her toad on a lily pad in a small decorative pool  
built at the edge of the lawn.

\*

\*

WINNIE AND THE TOAD

Winnie bends. Nose to nose with the amphibian. She strokes  
its back. It cowers but remains in one spot.

\*

Winnie then pulls the vial of water from around her neck,  
holds it up to the Gods...sun refracting through it. She  
removes the cork--

(CONTINUED)

157 CONTINUED:

157

--and pours it gently over the Toad's back. We see the precious liquid soaking into its bumpy brown skin. It expands its body and emits a satisfied croak...

Winnie puts a finger kiss on its nose then sets it outside the fence...

WINNIE

There...you're safe...forever and ever.

The Toad hops from the pool through the fence toward the wood.

DISSOLVE TO:

158 EXT. TREEGAP - MINUTES LATER

158

Father drives the Motorcar down mainstreet.

WINNIE AT THE REAR WINDOW -

The local boys are playing baseball in the middle of the street blocking their way.

The lead Mill Boy sees Winnie in the back. A look of respect crosses his face as he trots beside the motorcar and begins to wave. The others follow and wave.

Winnie smiles and gives a slight wave back. The lead boy returns it with a big grin. She is a new hero in his eyes.

THE VIEW CLIMBS AS THE FOSTER'S MOTORCAR

Heads out of town--

MOTHER (O.C.)

I guess the Eiffel Tower will just have to wait, Winnie, until they stop the ridiculous fighting over there.

WINNIE (O.C.)

That's alright, Mother. It will still be there a hundred years from now.

The Motorcar disappears....

159 TIME ACCELERATES....TO THE PRESENT

159

The dusty road which is Main Street, Treegap "morphs" into modern day Treegap. Signs of fast food. An SUV roars by full of teenagers singing to the radio--

(CONTINUED)

159 CONTINUED:

159

We hear the whine before we see it. A Yamaha road bike roars from the horizon blurring by.

160 WITH THE RIDER - TRAVELING

160

Reflections of progress on the one-way helmet visor roll by. Dressed in black, the lean mysterious rider screeches to a halt in front of:

161 THE FOSTER MANSION - DAY

161

Pristine. Looking lost next to the condo project across the street. Security gates bar the entrance. A voice squawks at the mysterious Dark Rider. The Rider's answer is to rack pipes and donut away speeding around the perimeter.

162 RIDER'S POV - LOOKING FORWARD

162

Road surface humming by as gears wind. Iron bars of the fence blurring to one. Suddenly the Rider brakes as a vision moves into view. All time slows.

A YOUNG GIRL OF 15

Works in a flower garden along the fence. Her back to us. Is it her?....It is Winnie!...It could be her.

\*

HER REFLECTION IN THE VISOR HELMET

As she slowly turns to the Stranger. She smiles. JENNY FOSTER

JENNY

Hey...nice ride. You lost---?

A gloved hand raises the visor revealing:

\*

JESSE TUCK

Still crazy, handsome and seventeen after all these years.

JESSE

Sorry...thought you were somebody I knew....

Jenny gets a strange look on her face, then genuine awe, eyes wide, mouth wide open...

JENNY

Jesse...?....Jesse Tuck?---

Now it is his turn to be gobsmacked. Jesse looks around paranoid.

\*

(CONTINUED)

162 CONTINUED:

162

JENNY (cont'd)

Oh...m'god--it's you. You're real.... \*

JESSE

You....know who I am...? \*

JENNY

Oh--m'god---Oh myegod--It's you. Uh--My  
great grandmother... she told me stories  
about you. I know your picture. She drew  
you---you--your face. Oh myegod--myegod--  
(beside herself)  
She said you'd come back. \*

JESSE

Is she... Is she here?... \*

JENNY

.....Yes. \*

Jesse trying to comprehend, shaking out his long hair. \*

JESSE

May I see her? \*

Jenny speechless nodding. Jesse takes her hand. \*

163 EXT. THE ASH TREE - DAY

163

Tuck's "T" is still as fresh as the day it was carved. An  
ornate fence circles the clearing. And before the trunk where  
the spring bubbled up, a marble and stone memorial covers it. \*

Jenny lets Jesse climb the steps alone to an old gravestone  
which has been set into the memorial. Jesses traces each  
word...with loving care... \*

***In Loving Memory...Winifred Foster Jackson*** \*

***Dear Wife    Dear Mother    1899 - 1999*** \*

Jesse lowers to his knees...

JESSE

You almost did live forever...Good girl.

He cries...He grieves...then pulls a treasure from around his  
neck and places it before the stone. He stands, wiping tears,  
takes in the tree, and returns down the steps to Jenny.

(CONTINUED)

163 CONTINUED:

163

THE VIEW GLIDES RIGHT UP TO THE STONE

To the tiny music box which begins to play the tinny lullaby.

THE LULLABY BUILDS OVER:

164 THE LAKE - AT SUNSET

164

The cabin is long gone. Hiking paths cut the forest still intact. Jenny and Jesse paddle across the waters to the other side. Other boaters dot the lake enjoying the setting.

Jesse knows the way. He can see Angus's memorial tree standing proud in the clearing.

165 THE FOREVER TREE

165

A handful of Hikers are there admiring the work of genius. Some sit on benches in the circle contemplating "The Forever Tree" as the marker calls it. Children play with parents. They will grow up and return with their children to admire and wonder at Angus' Forever tree.

At the very top, the faces of the Tucks, Angus Miles, Jesse and.....Mae.

MAE (V.O.)

The wood was at the center, the hub of the wheel. All wheels must have a hub, as the sun is the hub of the wheeling calendar. Fixed points they are, and best left undisturbed, for without them, nothing holds together...You think on it...

The canoe glides to shore. The name on the side is:

TUCK EVERLASTING

(CONTINUED)

165 CONTINUED:

165

\*  
\*

FOR ALBERT JONES HART

BORN 1920

SON OF WARREN BRYAN HART, HUSBAND TO  
ALICE LOUISE GATTI HART, FATHER OF JAMES  
VONALLMEN HART AND DAVID ALBERT HART,  
GRANDFATHER TO JAKE VONALLMEN HART AND  
JULIA MAGRITTE HART...

For teaching us that Heaven is on Earth...We just  
have to open our eyes and our hearts...

Jim Hart  
Pound Ridge, New York  
Winter, 2001