

PullingFocus Pictures Inc

AWAY FROM HER



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

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

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

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

A younger woman's voice is heard.

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

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

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

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

She looks back at us. Right into our eyes.

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

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

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

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

GRANT (V.O.)

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

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

CUT TO:

3A EXT GAZEBO - EVENING 3A

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

CUT TO:

3B EXT GAZEBO - EVENING 3B

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

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

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

FIONA

Careful.

2A.

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

FIONA
Give me that.

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

FIONA
Alright then. You do it.

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

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

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

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

GRANT
It must have had some context.

She takes a sip of wine. He laughs.

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

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

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

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

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

FIONA
Don't you have another shirt?

6 INT ANDERSSON'S KITCHEN - JANUARY 2003 -NIGHT

6

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

FIONA

I'll go make the fire.

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

7 INT ANDERSSON'S LIVINGROOM -JANUARY 2003 -NIGHT

7

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

GRANT

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

Fiona strokes his face. Interrupts him.

FIONA

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

GRANT

Ssshhhh.

He grabs her hand. Kisses it.

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

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

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

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

Title Card:

The Diagnoses

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

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

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

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

GRANT
 That was lovely.

FIONA
 What was lovely?

He thinks for a moment.

GRANT
 Nothing.

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

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

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

MARIAN

Yes?

GRANT

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

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

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

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

GRANT

I've never seen those white ones before.

FIONA

The earth must really suit them there.

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

Fiona is busily arranging the flowers.

GRANT

You could always just open the drawers. Remind yourself.

FIONA
What?

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

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

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

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

FIONA
 If only we recalled just what we
 needed.

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

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

Grant is absolutely still. She tosses this casually.

CUT TO:

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

CUT BACK TO:

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

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

And now she looks at him with a smile.

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

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

13 INT DINNER PARTY - 1970'S -NIGHT 13

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

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

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

PHOEBE

Where the hell have you two been?

WILLIAM

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

15 INT LIVINGROOM - NIGHT 15

They have drinks in the livingroom

FIONA

Well at least we're all waiting together.

WILLIAM

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

PHOEBE

(to William)

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

FIONA

(winks at William)

Well he's not as young as he used to be Phoebe.

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

WILLIAM

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

FIONA

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

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

FIONA

You're an idiot. Do you know that?

GRANT

It worked for you.

FIONA

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

16 INT LIVINGROOM- JUNE 2003- NIGHT

16

They eat dinner.

FIONA

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

PHOEBE

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

GRANT

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

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

FIONA
Yes I did!

Fiona laughs. holds up the wine bottle.

FIONA
Would anyone like some more...

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

FIONA
Some more...

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

FIONA
Ween.

She furrows her brow. Stares at the wine bottle.

FIONA
Wane. Wane....

GRANT
No, but I'll have some wine.

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

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

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

FIONA
The thing is...

CUT TO:

17 OMITTED 17

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

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

10A.

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

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

CUT TO:

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

FIONA
 I think I may be beginning to
 disappear.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MARIAN
I heard about that.

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

21 EXT WOODS - APRIL 2003-LATE AFTERNOON 21

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

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

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

She pauses. Thinks.

FIONA
Sometimes there's something delicious in oblivion.

Grant is moved.

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

FIONA
They generate a heat of their own.

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

GRANT
I don't feel it.

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

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

GRANT
Well?

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

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

FIONA
The heat attracts bugs.

She begins to walk away.

FIONA
Nature doesn't fool around just
being decorative.

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

23 EXT LAKE HURON BEACH -NOVEMBER 1960'S

23

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

24 EXT LAKE HURON BEACH - SUNSET - NOVEMBER 2003

24

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

FIONA

We better get back before it gets dark.

GRANT

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

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

GRANT

Let's stay here. A little longer.

25 EXT PARIS ONTARIO BRIDGE-NOVEMBER 2003- DAY

25

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

GRANT

Cheese. What about cheese?

FIONA

Only if it's very high cholesterol.

They pass a couple about their age.

FIONA

Hi there Lauren, Michael.

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

FIONA

Poor people. Poor human beings.

They continue walking.

FIONA

Oh. I forgot my list.

Grant stops.

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

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

GRANT
Okay. I'll see you there.

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

26	OMITTED	26
26A	OMITTED	26A

27 EXT PARIS ONTARIO MAIN STREET- NOVEMBER 2003-DAY

27

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

BUDDY

Hi there Mrs. Andersson.

FIONA

Hi Buddy.

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

BUDDY

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

FIONA

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

BUDDY

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

Fiona peers into the car again.

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

Mac, an old farmer, leans out the window.

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

FIONA
Not at all.

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

28 INT CAFE DE PARIS -NOVEMBER 2003- DAY 28

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

BUDDY
Can you tell me what your name is?

FIONA
Fiona. Fiona Andersson.

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

Fiona laughs a little.

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

Buddy laughs.

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

Buddy thinks for a moment.

BUDDY
Who are Edith and George?

Fiona furrows her brow.

30 INT LATE 1960'S HOUSE.

30

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

GRANT (V.O.)

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

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

BUDDY (V.O.)

How long ago...

GRANT

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

31 INT ANDERSSON'S LIVINGROOM- NOVEMBER 2003-EVENING

31

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

GRANT

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

BUDDY

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

Grant has a far off look.

GRANT

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

He chuckles to himself.

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

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

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

GRANT
No. I realize that.

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

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

DR. FISCHER
And what year is it?

FIONA
It's 2003.

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

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

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

FIONA
Peter Martin.

Grant lets out a small breath.

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

Fiona looks at her.

FIONA
I would mail it.

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

Fiona is silent. There is an endless pause.

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

Another endless pause.

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

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

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

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

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

Sits back down. Feeling their gaze on her.

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

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

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

FIONA
What an ugly baby.

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

34 EXT COUNTY ROAD- NOVEMBER 2003-DAY 34

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

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

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

FIONA

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

Grant stops the car. Answers directly, with courage.

GRANT

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

Shakes her head, casually surprised.

FIONA

Hmmm. That's shocking.

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

FIONA

Let's just see how it goes shall
we?

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

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

MARIAN

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

(MORE)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

She thinks about this.

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

She lets out a little laugh.

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

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

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

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

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

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

CUT TO:

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

FIONA ponders this.
 She smiles.

FIONA
 Sounds like a regular marriage.

40 EXT LAKE - DECEMBER 2003 - LATE AFTERNOON 40

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

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

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

He laughs.

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

FIONA
 I might.

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

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

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

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

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

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

43 EXT BRIDGE - DECEMBER 2003 - MAGIC HOUR 43

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

44 EXT WOODS -DECEMBER 2003- EVENING 44

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

44a EXT COUNTRY ROAD - DECEMBER 2003 44a

Grant drives, worried.

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

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

GRANT

Fiona.

FIONA

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

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

47 INT CAR - DECEMBER 2003-NIGHT 47

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

GRANT

Where were you going Fiona?

FIONA

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

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

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

Grant breathes deeply.

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

FIONA
Shallowlake, Shillylake, Sillylake. Sillylake it is.

He is irritated by her light manner.

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

They sit in silence at the dining room table.

FIONA
We are at that stage. Grant.

She puts his hand gently on his.

FIONA
We are at that stage.

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

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

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

She strokes his hand lovingly.

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

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

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

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

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

MARIAN
You might as well have a cup of
coffee.

GRANT
Thanks.

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

GRANT
It must be a struggle.

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

She pours him a coffee.

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

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

GRANT
You're sure.

FIONA
I'm sure.

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

Fiona furrows her brow.

FIONA
What place?

Grant sighs, goes to answer.

FIONA
Just kidding.

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

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

52 EXT MEADOWLAKE - DECEMBER 2003-MORNING 52

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

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

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

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

THERESA
Yes, that'll be fine.

LIAM
I'll come with you Mom.

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

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

GRANT
Hi there.

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

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

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

GRANT
Yes. I see that.

54 INT MEADOWLAKE CORRIDOR - DECEMBER 2003-MORNING 54

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

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

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

MICHAEL
Hello there sweet Madeleine.

MADELEINE
Hello Michael.

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

MADELEINE

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

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

MADELEINE

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

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

She leads him to the elevators.

MADELEINE

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

(MORE)

MADELEINE (cont'd)

They pause outside the elevators. Madeleine presses the button.

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

ELIZA

Just taking my tea for a ride.

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

ELIZA

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

Grant laughs.

GRANT

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

He gives her a lovely smile. Dashing.

ELIZA

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

MADELEINE

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

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

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

GRANT
 You're pretty charming yourself
 sweetheart.

Eliza beams.

55

INT SECOND FLOOR - DECEMBER 2003-MORNING

55

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

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

Grant smiles.

GRANT
 Interesting choice of words.

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

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

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

He says it with determination. Looks right at her.

MADELEINE
 Alright.

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

GRANT
 Who chooses the music?

I'm sorry? MADELEINE

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

Madeleine glances back.

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

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

GRANT
 How kind.

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

Madeleine sits across from Grant and hands him some documents.

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

Grant looks at her questioningly.

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

GRANT
Right.

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

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

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

Kristy reaches out her hand. Jovial, sweet.

KRISTY
Against some people's better judgement.

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

KRISTY
Hi there.

GRANT
Hi.

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

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

GRANT
What kind of visitors?

MADELEINE
Everyone. Even close family.

Grant looks taken aback.

GRANT
I couldn't just leave her here.

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

MADELEINE (cont'd)

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

GRANT

My wife isn't going to the second floor.

MADELEINE

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

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

KRISTY

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

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

57

INT MEADOWLAKE DINING AREA - DECEMBER 2003 - AFTERNOON 57

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Grant still sleeps. Fiona gets up quietly.

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

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

GRANT
Smells good.

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

She smiles at him.

GRANT
Why didn't you wake me?

She picks up some forms from the dining room table.

FIONA
What are these Grant?

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

She looks frustrated.

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

GRANT
No. It gets a lot of light.

She looks at him, questioning.

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

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

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

GRANT
I don't think I like the place.

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

Grant sees her unmovable determination and nods.

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

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

64 INT ANOTHER HOUSE (LATE 50'S) 64

GRANT'S MEMORY:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

FIONA
How do I look?

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

FIONA
And what does that look like?

GRANT
Direct and vague. Sweet and ironic.

FIONA
Is that how I look?

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

67 EXT COUNTY ROAD -JANUARY 2004- EARLY MORNING 67

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

FIONA
Oh. Remember?

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

FIONA
You look surprised Grant.

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

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

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

FIONA
You've been good to me Grant.

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

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

MADELEINE
Should I give you two a moment?

GRANT
Yes please.

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

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

Grant looks pleadingly at Fiona.

FIONA
Yes. That sounds lovely.

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

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

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

FIONA
Yes. This will do just fine.

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

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

FIONA
For now.

GRANT
We'll see how it goes.

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

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

He shoots her a glare.

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

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

FIONA
I will.

Madeleine leaves the room.

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

GRANT
Please Fiona.

FIONA
Grant. You know what I'd really
like?

GRANT
Fiona...

She strokes his face. Kisses him.

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

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

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

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

FIONA
Go now. Go now.

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

71 INT CORRIDOR -JANUARY 2004- MORNING 71

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

72 INT CONSERVATORY -JANUARY 2004- MORNING 72

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

GRANT
Hello there.

She warmly extends her hand.

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

He nods noncommittally.

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

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

GRANT
Yes. That'll be fine thanks.

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

73 INT MEADOWLAKE DINING AREA - JANUARY 2004- MORNING 73

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

MADELEINE
Is she ready for the tour?

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

Madeleine comes and sits beside him.

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

Grant smiles a little. Dumbfounded at her insensitivity.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

GRANT
Really.
Kristy smiles.

KRISTY
He loved his job too much to
retire.

She shrugs.

KRISTY
Frank's on the second floor.

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

KRISTY
Those are beautiful aren't they.

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

KRISTY

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

Grant looks uncomfortable.

GRANT

Yes. Her long term memory seems very intact.

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

GRANT

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

Kristy lets him think in silence for a moment.

KRISTY

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

She sees he's still nervous.

KRISTY

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

He sighs.

GRANT

I don't know what to do.

Madeleine enters again.

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

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

GRANT
(whispering)

Okay. Okay.

He turns to Kristy.

GRANT
Thanks so much.

He leaves the building. Kristy looks after him
compassionately.

74 EXT COUNTY ROAD -JANUARY 2004- MORNING 74

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

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

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

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

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

75 INT MEADOWLAKE DINING AREA -JANUARY 2004- MORNING 75

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

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

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

77 EXT LAKE JANUARY 2004- MAGIC HOUR 77

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

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

79 EXT LAKE - JANUARY 2004- NIGHT 79

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

82 EXT ANDERSSON'S COTTAGE - EARLY MORNING 82

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

83 EXT LAKE - JANUARY 2004- DAY 83

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

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

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

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

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

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

Marian gives a sharp laugh.

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

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

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

MARIAN
 I thought you said you went and visited her.

GRANT
 I do. That's not it.

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

Grant smooths his hair. Appraises his appearance carefully.

FLASHBACK:

89 INT DIFFERENT HOUSE 89

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

91 EXT COUNTY ROAD -FEBRUARY 2004- MORNING 91

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

Title card:

AUBREY AND THE FORGETTING

92 INT MEADOWLAKE CORRIDOR FEBRUARY 2004-MORNING 92

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

MADELEINE

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

She looks at the flowers.

MADELEINE

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

They walk down the corridor.

MADELEINE

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

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

MRS. ALBRIGHT

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

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

KRISTY

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

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

KRISTY
Great to see you Mr. Andersson.

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

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

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

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

Grant peeks his head in the door.

GRANT
Fiona?

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

94 OMITTED 94

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

KRISTY

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

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

FIONA

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

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

FIONA

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

GRANT

Phoebe Hart.

FIONA

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

GRANT

I don't drink tea...

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

GRANT

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

FIONA

Well no. I'm here.

There is an awkward pause.

GRANT

You've made a new friend.

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

FIONA

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

GRANT

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

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

FIONA

Really?

Fiona turns back to Grant nervously.

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

(MORE)

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

GRANT
 Will you be through soon?

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

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

GRANT
 I'm fine.

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

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

96 INT BRIGHT HALLWAY-FEBRUARY 2004-AFTERNOON 96

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

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

Grant drives home.

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

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

99 OMITTED

99

100 INT DINING AREA - FEBRUARY 2004-MORNING

100

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

KRISTY

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

GRANT

She's not even playing.

KRISTY

Well, but her friend's playing. Aubrey.

GRANT

So who is Aubrey?

KRISTY

That's who he is. Aubrey.

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

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

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

GRANT

Does she even know who I am?

KRISTY

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

(MORE)

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

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

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

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

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

101 OMITTED 101

102 INT MEADOWLAKE TV AREA -MARCH 2004- DAY 102

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

~~player. The camera slowly pans to all three. It's silent, as the~~
 appointed journey across the sky. Aubrey and Fiona hold their breaths. Aubrey's breath breaks out first, expressing satisfaction or disappointment. Fiona's chimes in on the same note a moment later. Grant notices this with irritation.

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

103 OMITTED 103

104 INT BRIGHT HALLWAY -MARCH 2004- MORNING 104

Grant sees Fiona pushing Aubrey down the hall.

GRANT
Hello Fiona.

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

Grant awkwardly holds out some books.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

105 OMITTED 105

106 INT MEADOWLAKE STAIRWELL -MARCH 2004-DAY 106

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

Eliza comes up behind Grant giggling.

ELIZA

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

Grant smiles, uncomfortable.

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

He gives her a polite smile and leaves.

107 INT MEADOWLAKE TV AREA- MARCH 2004 - AFTERNOON 107

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

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

FIONA

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

GRANT

Yes. Shall we go somewhere a little quieter?

FIONA

If you like.

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

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

FIONA

You said you have some books for me.

GRANT

Yes.

He takes the books out.

GRANT

Letters From Iceland.

FIONA

Yes you said. By Auden.

GRANT

(excited that she remembers)

Yes. That's right.

FIONA

Now where is Iceland.

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

GRANT

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

Fiona replies with casual interest.

FIONA

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

GRANT

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

Fiona looks very vulnerable.

FIONA

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

GRANT

No.

FIONA

But ... Wasn't I curious?

GRANT

Oh you're very curious. Very curious.

He smiles tenderly. Strokes her hand.

GRANT

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

She smiles sadly.

FIONA
~~say~~ what?

*

GRANT
 Yes. You said that.

*

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

*

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

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

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

GRANT
 Fiona.

FIONA
 Yes?

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

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

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

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

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

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

109 INT BRIGHT HALLWAY- MARCH 2004 -AFTERNOON 109

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

110 INT DINING AREA-MARCH 2004 - LATE AFTERNOON 110

Grant and Kristy eat slices of pie and drink coffee.

GRANT
Who is he?

KRISTY
He's...Aubrey?

GRANT
Yes. Aubrey.

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

Grant nods.

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

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

(MORE)

KRISTY (cont'd)

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

(MORE)

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

GRANT
I see.

Grant tries to use a calm, indulgent tone.

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

KRISTY
Depends what you mean.

There is an awkward silence. Grant is getting nervous.

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

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

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

GRANT
Well I sometimes wonder-

KRISTY
(a little sharply)
You wonder what?

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

KRISTY
A what?

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

Kristy looks at him fondly. Pats his hand.

KRISTY
Now why would she do that.

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

KRISTY
Oh.

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

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

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

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

GRANT
Excuse me. Excuse me!

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

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

Madeleine looks over at Fiona.

MADELEINE
It's pretty isn't it.

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

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

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

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

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

GRANT
Fiona.

She is startled.

GRANT
Fiona. I'm your husband. Fiona.

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

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

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

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

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

FIONA

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

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

FIONA

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

She laughs lightly. Brushes her tears away.

FIONA

We'll see you again tomorrow I
suppose.

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

112A INT BRIGHT HALLWAY - DAY 112A

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

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

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

MARIAN

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

(MORE)

MARIAN (cont'd)

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

Grant takes a breath and then takes the plunge.

GRANT

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

He has an idea.

GRANT

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

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

GRANT

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

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

MARIAN

Homemade.

GRANT picks one up. Marvels at its perfect roundness.

GRANT

Really.

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

MARIAN

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

GRANT

(earnest)
Would it upset him?

MARIAN

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

GRANT

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

MARIAN

He understands everything all right.

She says this as though he has just insulted AUBREY.

MARIAN

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

GRANT

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

MARIAN

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

(MORE)

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

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

MARIAN
You smoke?

GRANT
No, thanks.

MARIAN
Did you never? Or did you quit?

GRANT
Quit.

MARIAN
How long ago was that?

He thinks about it.

GRANT
Thirty years. No - more.

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

MARIAN
I've quit quitting.

She lights up.

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

She looks at him, sizing him up.

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

GRANT
It's Fiona.

114 INT CONSERVATORY-MARCH 2004- NIGHT 114

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

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

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

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

115 EXT MEADOWLAKE - MARCH 2004 -DAY 115

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

GRANT
She was 18.

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

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

KRISTY
She proposed to you?

Grant nods.

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

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

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

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

KRISTY
What did you say?

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

Grant takes a deep breath.

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

116 EXT PIER - 1961

116

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

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

117 EXT MEADOWLAKE -MARCH 2004 -DAY

117

Kristy watches him, sympathetic.

GRANT
It's curious.

KRISTY
What's curious?

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

118 EXT LAKE HURON BEACH - APRIL 2004 -DAY 118

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

*

120 INT CONSERVATORY- DECEMBER 2004 - EARLY EVENING 120 *

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

*

*

*

*

*

*

GRANT
They never sorted out the clothes.

*

*

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

*

*

*

Grant.

*

121 INT DINING ROOM 121 *

*

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

*

GRANT

Not such a fun place to visit eh? *

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

MONICA

Excuse me *

GRANT

Nothing. *

She turns off the music. *

MONICA

No. What were you gonna say? *

GRANT

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

MONICA

Fuck. Depressing. *

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

MONICA

No offence. *

smiles. *

GRANT

No offence taken. *

MONICA

Sorry. I'm just on the rag. *

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

GRANT *
 You could say that. *

MONICA *
 Why wouldn't you? *

GRANT *
 Why wouldn't you what? *

MONICA *
 That's why. *

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

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

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

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

He looks at the Monica selfconsciously. Embarrassed. *

GRANT *
 I suppose it seems rather pathetic. *

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

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

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

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

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

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

123 INT CORRIDOR - JANUARY 2005-MORNING 123

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

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

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

GRANT

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

FIONA

Why. Thank you.

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

FIONA

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

She pulls some tissue out of the box.

FIONA

Here. Here.

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

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

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

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

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

125 INT CORRIDOR - JANUARY 2005-MORNING 125

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

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

GRANT
 Should I stay?

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

GRANT
 To keep her company.

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

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

126 INT MEADOWLAKE DINING AREA-JANUARY 2005- MORNING 126

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

ELIZA

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

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

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

FIONA

Oh. Hello.

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

GRANT

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

FIONA

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

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

GRANT

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

FIONA

Ice-land. *

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

GRANT

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

(MORE) *

GRANT (cont'd)

Into our provinces of persecution *
 Where our regrets accuse, we keep *
 returning, *
 Back to the common faith from which *
 we've all dissented, *
 Back to the hands, the feet, the *
 faces *

 Children are always there and take *
~~hands~~ *
 Even when they're most *
 terrified; those in love *
 Cannot make up their minds to go or *
~~stay;~~ *
 Artist and Doctor return most *
 often; *
 Only the mad will never never come *
 back. *

 For doctors keep on worrying while *
 away *
 In case their skill is suffering *
~~and~~ asserted; *
 Lovers have lived so long with *
~~giants~~ and lives *
 They want belief again in their own *
 size; *
 And the artist prays ever so gently- *

 'Let me find pure all that can *
 happen. *
 Only uniqueness is success! For *
 instance, *
 Let me perceive the images of *
 history, *
 All that I push away with doubt and *
 travel, *
 Today's and yesterday's, alike like *
 bodies. *

128 OMITTED

128 *

129 OMITTED

129 *

131 OMITTED

131 *

132 INT TV AREA-JANUARY 2005 -DAY

132 *

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

FIONA

How could they forget Vietnam?

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

FIONA

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

133 INT DINING AREA MEADOWLAKE

133

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

KRISTY

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

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

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

Grant scratches his head. Looks worried.

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

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

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

Grant enters with a lot of energy.

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

135 EXT HURON COUNTY ROAD -JANUARY 2006- MORNING 135

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

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

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

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

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

FIONA
They've kept it so like it was.

Who has? GRANT

FIONA
The people who live here.

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

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

FIONA
Everything...

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

FIONA
Everything just reminds me of him.

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

FIONA
I wasn't enough I suppose.

GRANT
Who?

She is silent.

GRANT
Who Fiona? Who does everything remind you of?

She looks back at him.

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

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

139 EXT COUNTY ROAD -JANUARY 2005- AFTERNOON 139

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

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

140 EXT MEADOWLAKE - COURTYARD-JANUARY 2005- DAY

140

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

GRANT

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

KRISTY

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

GRANT

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

KRISTY

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

Grant looks vaguely hopeful.

KRISTY

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

She snaps her fingers.

KRISTY

Like so.

Grant stares off. Tears in his eyes.

GRANT

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

KRISTY

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

GRANT
How old are your kids?

KRISTY
Ten, three and eight.

GRANT
Must be a struggle.

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

Grant looks at her, thinking.

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

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

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

He looks at her for a moment.

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

Grant looks off into the distance.

GRANT
I wonder that too.

KRISTY
I'll bet you do.

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

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

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

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

FIONA
Oh. Remember?

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

FIONA
You look surprised Grant.

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

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

She leaves a pregnant pause. The scene continues.

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

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

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

She means it. He is stunned.

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

CUT TO:

142 INT UNIVERSITY CLASS - 1970'S

142

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

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

CUT BACK TO:

143 EXT COUNTY ROAD - JANUARY 2004 - MORNING

143

FIONA

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

She gets wistful.

FIONA

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

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

FIONA

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

Grant goes to say something. She interrupts him.

FIONA

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

CUT TO:

144 INT 70'S CLASSROOM

144

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

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

CUT BACK TO:

145 EXT MEADOWLAKE PARKING LOT JANUARY 2004 - MORNING 145

They pull into the parking lot.

FIONA

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

She smiles fondly.

FIONA

How long ago was that?

GRANT

Twenty years.

Fiona shakes her head.

FIONA

Well that's shocking.

She smiles serenely.

FIONA

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

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

GRANT

Fiona.

FIONA

Yes dear.

GRANT

Don't go.

She pats his hand. Gives him a kiss.

FIONA

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

84A.

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

145A OMITTED

145A

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

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

GRANT
Fiona...

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

GRANT
Fiona let's come back another time.

The receptionist brings up a file.

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

FIONA
Perfect. Will you show me to it
please?

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

FIONA
Yes. That's correct.

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

The Receptionist exits into the back office.

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

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

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

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

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

147 EXT MEADOWLAKE -JANUARY 2005-DAY 147

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

CUT TO:

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

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

148 INT CONSERVATORY - FEBRUARY 2005-DAY 148

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

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

Grant notices how far off Fiona is. Stops reading.

Fiona? GRANT

She doesn't respond.

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

Fiona smiles sadly. Strokes his hand.

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

GRANT
Okay. Okay.

Grant grabs her hand. Kisses it.

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

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

149 INT MADELEINE'S OFFICE -FEBRUARY 2005 -DAY 149

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

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

Grant thinks for a moment.

GRANT
Would you happen to have Aubrey's
address?

MADELEINE
Excuse me?

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

150 INT BRIGHT HALLWAY- FEBURARY 2005 -LATE AFTERNOON 150

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

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

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

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

GRANT
It's Grant.

She suddenly sticks her hand out across the table.

MARIAN
Hello Grant. I'm Marian.

He shakes her hand, tentatively.

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

GRANT lowers his voice to a whisper.

GRANT

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

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

MARIAN

No. I'm keeping him right here.

GRANT

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

MARIAN

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

GRANT

Still. It's not easy.

MARIAN

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

GRANT

It's very nice.

MARIAN

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

GRANT

I'm sure you did. You do.

MARIAN

I don't want to lose it.

GRANT

No.

MARIAN

I'm not *going* to lose it.

GRANT

I see your point.

MARIAN

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

GRANT

Bad luck.

MARIAN

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

GRANT

That's true.

MARIAN

You can't beat life.

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

MARIAN

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

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

GRANT
Quite a while ago.

MARIAN
I'm not much of an intellectual.

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

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

She shakes out another cigarette.

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

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

MARIAN
You bet it is.

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

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

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

Grant smiles. He has lost.

GRANT
No. No I didn't think so.

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

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

GRANT
Thank you for your time Miriam.

She's suddenly sensitive. A bit vulnerable.

MARIAN
It's Marian.

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

MARIAN
(to herself)
What a jerk.

But that's not what she's thinking.

SCENE153OMITTED

SCENE153OMITTED

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

GRANT stares at the machine for a long time.

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

GRANT makes himself an omelette.

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

Marian watches closely as Aubrey eats his dinner.

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

GRANT eats his dinner, thinking.

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

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

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

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

Grant picks up the phone.

GRANT
 Hello Marian.

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

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

GRANT
So.

MARIAN
There you are.

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

GRANT
Here I am.

Marian motions him inside.

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

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

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

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

GRANT
Hello there.

Badass turns around.

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

GRANT smiles.

MONICA
What are you doing here?

MARIAN enters, all gussied up and ready to go.

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

He forces a smile.

GRANT
You look lovely.

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

He looks at her, a little guilty and ashamed.

GRANT
Life is...complicated.

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

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

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

165 INT DANCE HALL -FEBRUARY 2005- NIGHT 165

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

FLASHBACK:

December 2003

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

166 INT DANCE HALL -FEBRUARY 2005 NIGHT 166

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

MARIAN
What are you thinking about?

GRANT
Oh. Not much. Skiing.

Marian watches him. Knowing that isn't all.

MARIAN
Downhill?

GRANT
Cross-country.

She shrugs.

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

She looks off, smiles to herself.

GRANT
What are you thinking about?

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

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

167 EXT WOODS - TIME TRANSITION 167

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

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

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

FLASHBACK:

169 INT ANDERSSON'S LIVINGROOM - JANUARY 2003 169

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

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

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

171 EXT SKI LIFT - DECEMBER 2005 - MORNING

171

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

GRANT

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

Monica. MARIAN

GRANT

Sorry?

MARIAN

Monica. That's her name.

GRANT

Ah. Monica. What do you think?

MARIAN

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

GRANT

Which kind of person are you?

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

MARIAN

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

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

MARIAN
Quite the philosopher eh?

She takes a moment. Looks at him knowingly.

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

Grant takes her hand.

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

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

172 INT MARIAN'S BEDROOM- DECEMBER 2005 172

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

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

Grant looks at her. They both laugh.

TITLE CARD:

THE RETURN

173 INT CHECK IN AREA

173

KRISTY

Hello there Mr. Andersson.

Madeleine peeks out.

MADELEINE

We didn't get to see you yesterday.

GRANT

No. I went skiing.

MADELEINE

Good for you to get away.

Grant nods.

174 INT FIONA'S ROOM - JANUARY 2006 - MORNING

174

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

175 INT MEADOWLAKE ELEVATOR AREA- JANUARY 2006 -MORNING

175

MADELEINE catches GRANT just as he is leaving.

MADELEINE

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

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

GRANT

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

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

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

Grant stares at him for a moment and then leaves.

176

EXT MEADOWLAKE - JANUARY 2006-MORNING

176

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

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

GRANT
 Her daughter?

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

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

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

Grant laughs at the irony of this.

GRANT
 That doesn't sound all that
 biblical.

KRISTY

Well. Maybe they're gettin creative
on us.

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

17 OMITTED

17 OMITTED

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

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

179 INT MEADOWLAKE CORRIDOR - FEBRUARY 2006 - DAY 179

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

180 INT ELEVATOR - FEBRUARY 2006 - DAY 180

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

181 INT SECOND FLOOR -FEBRUARY 2006- DAY 181

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

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

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

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

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

MARIAN

I'll see you soon Aubrey.

184 EXT COUNTY ROAD -MARCH 2006- EARLY MORNING 184

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

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

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

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

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

GRANT

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

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

Grant enters Fiona's room.

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

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

FIONA

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

She runs her fingers over the book tenderly.

FIONA

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

(MORE)

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

GRANT
 Fiona...

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

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

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

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

FIONA
 Names elude me.

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

FIONA
 I'm happy to see you.

She smiles, smells his shirt.

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

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

GRANT
 Not a chance.

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

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

188 EXT LAKE -DAY

188

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

189 EXT PIER - 1961 -MORNING

189

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

FADE TO WHITE.