

Elfreda
Screenplay
by
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1 EXT. HARBOUR GRACE, JANUARY 6, 1870 - AFTERNOON

Crowds gather, all eyes glued to the hearse, they shiver in the freezing cold. Six young pallbearers from HARBOUR GRACE gently ease sixteen-year-old ELFREDA PIKE'S simple pine coffin into the ground.

A row of school girls, young women, dressed in uniforms stand in line, each wearing the same frock coat with small buttons. They could be from The Royal Family in Britain, tidy as a pin.

Anglican Nuns, from the sisterhood, Society of Saint Margaret, wear long gowns brushing along the dirt road, wide white collars and habits hang close to their cheekbones, leaving only their small faces to be seen.

KATHLEEN (18), the eldest daughter in the Pike family, holds her parents, EDWARD PIKE (45) and MARIE PIKE (40).

*

Edward doesn't move and Kathleen and her mother comfort each other during the service.

After the Scripture readings, Kathleen withdraws her hand from her mother's and slowly makes her way towards the altar.

She steps up to the pulpit and silently whispers a prayer to Elfreda. The congregation is hushed and attentive as she takes a deep breath and begins.

KATHLEEN

My Sister Elfreda Pike, 16 years of age, smart and caring beyond her years. At a young age when our father had fallen off the stage-head while fixing the roof, Elfreda was the only one who was there to see him fall. He wasn't breathing! Not missing a beat she struggled to turn him on his side and prop him against a wooden box.

(MORE)

KATHLEEN (CONT'D)

Only when she saw him breathe did she run for help. Doctor Montgomery arrived a full hour later and assured Mom that if it weren't for Elfreda, Dad wouldn't be here with us today.

ELFREDA

by Rhonda Buckley

Based on a true story with original narration from the Express Newspaper in 1870.

WEEK PRIOR:

2 EXT. HARBOUR GRACE - MORNING

A group of school girls pass the last farm on the hill and notice EPH HUNTER (70) feeding his cattle. They wave to each other and ask if they can help farmer Hunter.

A school girl MOIRA SHEA (16) gets drawn to the other side of the road and is sidetracked to play onto a forest path.

Hurtling over the tree line she stops, halted by a grotesque site, the top of a human head with matted bloodied hair protrudes from under a tree.

She runs back to Eph Hunter's yard, terrified, and begins to bang loudly hammering on the front door, away from the other school girls.

Eph Hunter swings open the door to find Moira bent over and hardly able to breathe, with her school uniform covered in bark.

MOIRA

Come quick! Someone's been hurt.

She leads Eph Hunter to the spot where she found the body.

3 INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

CHIEF MITCHELL (35) is sitting at his desk as Eph Hunter and Moira come running into the building. Mitchell doesn't look up until Moira bellows.

MOIRA

There's been a murder!

Moira's words shock Mitchell, who jumps up from his chair and marches over to the door.

CHIEF MITCHELL

What've you seen?

Moira is followed in by REVEREND MOTHER MARGARET (70) scurrying behind her in disgust.

REVEREND MOTHER

The girl doesn't know what she's seen. I can assure you. They get up to pure nonsense.

Eph Hunter speaks up for the young girl Moira and makes eye contact with Mitchell.

EPH HUNTER

I can confirm myself Reverend Mother, Moira has seen what she says.

There are a bunch of school girls gnarling at the window, exasperating Moira's case.

Moira is cowering to the side in fear of the Reverend Mother, as usual.

EPH HUNTER (CONT'D)

She brought me right to the corpse.
A sight not for a young girl's eyes.

Moira can't contain herself and is foolhardy, 'back talks' to the Reverend Mother.

MOIRA

It's true. Her neck was slit open
with a knife and blood drained
out.

Reverend Mother calls Moria out on her obstinance, and
she puts a firm grip on her neck to shut her down at
once.

REVEREND MOTHER

You'll do chores till midnight for
this young lady.

Moirra tries to pull away from Reverend Mother, but the
Constable agrees it is too much for the child.

CHIEF MITCHELL

This is all too much for the young
girl. Let's get her to another
room to rest.

Moirra, as she leaves the room.

MOIRA

She could be my age, maybe a little
older.

CONSTABLE PETER WARD (30), fit, handsome man, seldom
smiles, enters the room and stands with his arms folded
listening.

Eph Hunter continues with the details of the case.

EPH HUNTER

Young Moira comes knocking, banging
on my door, says someone is up on
the ridge hurt.

CHIEF MITCHELL

It's a steep cliff.

EPH HUNTER

She took me to the woods.

(MORE)

EPH HUNTER (CONT'D)

A young girl lay there, with her throat slashed from ear to ear in a sea of blood. Somewhat as Moira said.

Eph Hunter stops to take a drink of water.

CONSTABLE WARD

Who is it?

EPH HUNTER

I couldn't tell. She was too disfigured.

CHIEF MITCHELL

Where is Constable Furey?

CONSTABLE WARD

He's checking on a bar fight at Latery's Pub.

CHIEF MITCHELL

Find Furey. Take the wagon and pick up Doctor Montgomery along the way. We need to identify the girl and notify the family. Right away.

CONSTABLE WARD

Yes, sir.

CONSTABLE FUREY (30) storms into the room.

CONSTABLE FUREY

I'm here. I just got in, Sir.

CHIEF MITCHELL

Furey, I want you to check the docket to see if we had any reports of missing persons last night.

CONSTABLE FUREY

Getting them now, Sir.

Eph Hunter gets up to leave.

CHIEF MITCHELL

Go with the men to show them where
you saw the body.

Constable Ward stands and Chief Mitchell gives him
direction.

CHIEF MITCHELL (CONT'D)

Check in on Reverend Mother and
the girl, then take them back to
the dormitory. She's seen enough.

CONSTABLE WARD

I'll fill you in, Furey.

The Constables walk out the door together.

4 EXT. WOODED AREA - MORNING

The police walk to the crime scene, two constables, DR.
MONTGOMERY (60), and Eph Hunter track through the woods.

The gruesome sight in the bushes, untouched, the young
girl butchered.

Elfreda is on her back and coal black hair now tangled
with blood covers her face.

Doctor Montgomery wipes her hair away from her face,
notices her woolen jacket over her tattered dress with
flowers and blood.

Dr. Montgomery eyes are sad as he gently closes her eyes.

DR. MONTGOMERY

The killer slashed the girl's neck.
Her head is barely connected. Face
is pulverized beyond belief.

Dr. Montgomery looks under her nails to see if she's
struggled enough to scratch her assailant's skin.

DR. MONTGOMERY (CONT'D)

There's no trace of struggle. The
blows to her face knocked out
several teeth and there are multiple
lacerations to both her cheeks and
chin.

Constable Ward and Constable Furey look around for
footprints, pieces of clothing, or anything that might
give them an inkling to who committed this heinous act.

DR. MONTGOMERY (CONT'D)

The murderer bleed out the victim.
Her feet elevated and her head
left sunken below in the bushes.

Policemen lift the young girl's body onto the stretcher
and cover her with a white sheet.

CLOSE UP SHOT pans over Elfreda's hair and silhouette
soaked in blood.

5 INT. GIRL REGENCY DORMITORY - DAY

Marie Pike, Elfreda's Mom, brings clothes into the convent
to Reverend Mother.

MARIE

I have these extra clothes for you
Reverend Mother. I thought I'd
drop them off and get Elfreda to
come home with me. I have chores
for her there.

Reverend Mother takes the clothes and gives Marie a smile.

REVEREND MOTHER

So gracious of you. Girls go get
Elfreda, I think she was helping
in the kitchen.

A few of the girls run off. Moira speaks up.

MOIRA

Cooks say she finished last night
and met up with Thomas, they're
courting you know.

Marie looks taken back.

MARIE

No, I didn't know.

Moira comes closer, full of bluster.

MOIRA

I hope he walked her home. There's
been a murder.

Reverend Mother takes Moira by the scruff of her neck
and pushes her toward the door of the kitchen, but she
disobeys and stays in the room.

MARIE

A what? A murder. Not here.

Marie is in complete shock.

MARIE (CONT'D)

Elfreda didn't come home last night.
She was helping at the dormitory.
Isn't that right, Reverend Mother?

Reverend Mother looks perplexed, as if she is a young
Moira in trouble.

Reverend Mother looks over to Moira in panic.

REVEREND MOTHER

Is Elfreda working with you, Moira?

MOIRA

She left last night with Thomas.

Marie drops the clothes in her arms in a pile below her
feet.

She runs out the door, panicked.

6 EXT. STREET - DAY

Marie, runs all the way to the police station.

Men, women and children look oddly at her as she dashes up past Mosquito Cove, which is still roped off.

She tries to break through the barrier. They hold her back.

She runs full speed ahead in the street.

Crowds gather around the police station to find out who's the victim.

7 EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Marie frantically pulls people back as she forces her way to the police station door.

She pulls on shoulders, desperately pushing and shoving anyone standing in her way. She pushes on the latch to get in. The door is locked.

She bangs frantically on the door and then she raises her fist in the air and yells.

MARIE

Let me in! I want to find my little girl.

8 EXT/INT. POLICE - DAY

The crowd is silent. She begins beating on the door again and suddenly someone grabs her from behind.

She swings around and sees her daughter, Kathleen, who heard about the murder and came running to her mother.

CHIEF MITCHELL

Everyone go home! We have nothing to say. Wait until the coroner's inquest.

MARIE

I think it's my girl. I think it's
Elfreda.

Chief Mitchell steps out further on the landing and pulls Marie and Kathleen inside from the crowd.

He tries to get the two of them to settle down.

CHIEF MITCHELL

Let's not jump to any conclusions.
Get your husband, Edward.

Chief Mitchell insists Marie and Kathleen take a seat.
He passes them a cup of tea.

MARIE

I need to see who it is. I need to
see her. She should be home by
now. I don't need my husband to
know my own daughter.

CHIEF MITCHELL

I know your daughter. I've seen a
body and I'm not able to say who
it is. You'll never get past it if
you see her.

MARIE

I have to know. Where is the body
so I can see for myself?

Marie jumps up, throws her cup and it flies across the room. It smashes to pieces against the wall.

Chief Mitchel is shocked by the broken cup.

CHIEF MITCHELL

I don't want you to go in, Marie.

KATHLEEN

I'll do it. I'll identify her,
Elfreda's my sister.

Kathleen walks towards the door.

9 INT. CORONERS ROOM - DAY

Marie rubs her forehead. She feels as if she may black out from this nightmare.

Chief Mitchell paces, Marie leans her head against the wall.

Kathleen opens the double doors to the ward. Not long after she returns, lead by a policeman, her face is expressionless like that of an undertaker. Kathleen is shaking.

KATHLEEN

It's her Ma, it's her!!

Kathleen barely catches her mother in time as she falls to the floor and blacks out.

She drops to her knees in pain and sobs aloud.

MARIE

My dearest Elfreda. My poor dear child. Who did this to you? I swear I will make sure he pays, if it's the last thing I do.

Chief Mitchell and Kathleen lift Marie to her feet.

CHIEF MITCHELL

Marie, I don't know what to say.

MARIE

Fetch her father, he's at sea.

They ride in the police buggy back to the Pike home.

As the somber entourage proceeds through town it confirms Elfreda's murder. Townspeople look on in horror.

10 EXT/INT. PIKE FAMILY HOME - EVENING

Kathleen and Marie in tears climb up the house steps.

They enter the house through the front door, only used on formal occasions.

Marie hauls herself in over the doorstep followed by Reverend Mother Margaret.

They are just in over the stoop and they see Edward climbing the steps, worried, when he sees the front door open.

He follows up over the steps still covered in wet fishing overalls.

EDWARD

What's wrong?

MARIE

Murdered.

Scans the room to see the family are there, without Elfreda.

EDWARD

Not Elfreda. Tell me it's not her!

Marie begins to wildly hit Edward on his chest. He finally grips her wrists and looks into her eyes.

MARIE

Our Elfreda is murdered. In cold blood.

Marie takes two steps towards the kitchen daybed before she faints. Kathleen manages to catch her again before she hits the floor and gently lays her on the daybed.

Reverend Mother Margaret joins them in prayer.

REVEREND MOTHER

Bow your heads in prayer. Dear
 Father in Christ, help this family
 have strength to ride out this
 storm of sorrow and grief. Let us
 pray for Elfreda that she remain
 with you in heaven and at peace,
 after this scornful act of horror.

Reverend Mother looks up as she finishes the prayer and
 it is then Marie's grief turns to delirium.

She begins to flail her arms and curse at the top of her
 voice, completely ignoring everyone around her, pushing
 herself from the daybed.

MARIE

Goddamn the bastard who did this!
 Goddamn him to the fires of hell.
 Goddamn him forever.

Kathleen is in the kitchen trying to console Marie.

Edward stands outside and silently stares out over the
 hill.

PRESENT DAY:

11 EXT. BOSTON CITY CENTER - DAY

Activists march for women's rights and file down the
 street en masse wearing pink pussy hats with placards
 "Women's Rights are Human Rights."

12 INT. TAXI - DAY

NORA (30) rests her head on the headrest of the taxi
 seat, she still holds her boarding card in her hand from
 Harbour Grace, Newfoundland.

Her hair blows in the wind and echoes Elfreda's in the
 carriage.

Nora, startled, wakes from a dream, frightened, images of Elfreda's murdered body in her mind.

Taxi Driver, MIKE (64), looks burly and man-kept, a bachelor. There is opera music on the radio. He pauses up ahead near the Women's March, activists block off the road.

A sea of knitted pink pussy hats are coming toward the car. Taxi driver in a gruff voice.

MIKE

Ladies first. Been hearing that my whole life.

NORA

It'd be great if people really meant it.

MIKE

I've been holdin' open doors for women since I was a young boy.

NORA

How chivalrous. A man with manners.

MIKE

Some of you need to be treated with kid gloves, that's for sure?

NORA

I have had more doors slammed in my face.

MIKE

City girl like you, looks like you can handle yourself.

NORA

I'm from Newfoundland - pretty small place really.

MIKE

A girl from the wild, kicking up a
fuss in the city?

NORA

I'm a woman. Girls, minors, in
this city, need parental consent
to get an abortion. Think what
that means. Men, on the Legislature
Judiciary Committee, held a hearing
to overturn the ROE Act.

MIKE

The what act? I don't stick my
nose into that stuff. I'm not
telling any woman what to do about
kids.

NORA

And yet so many politicians can't
help themselves. Just pull up ahead
by the Journalism Studies sign.

MIKE

Taking courses, instead of raising
babies, huh?

NORA

I'm a professor. I'm teaching a
conference if you like to come
hear.

MIKE

You need a hand?

NORA

I'm good. Thanks.

MIKE

You're welcome, Ma'am.

NORA

Ma'am. Okay, now you're just being
an asshole.

MIKE

(laughs)

Nah, I'm just being a man.

Nora gives a mischievous evil look back.

13 INT. EMERSON UNIVERSITY CLASSROOM - AFTERNOON

Nora takes a firm stance at the podium. A class of women's studies with only women taking the class. A bright student SIMONE speaks up in class and her classmate HEATHER sits close by.

NORA

Takes 50 years for social change.
Unless its the rights of women,
then it takes longer. In the eyes
of the law, before 1882, once a
woman married, she basically ceased
to exist. On her wedding day, she
became one person with her husband.
Not only did he have control of
all her possessions, but he also
had control over her body.

NORA (CONT'D)

Treat women like porcelain dolls.
Ladies first, as my Uber guy would
say.

SIMONE

Truly, we didn't get into this
mess 'cause a few doors were held
open for women in hooped dresses.
And she could've married a woman.

NORA

Women held as powerless, helpless
and incompetent. Incapable of being
autonomous. Equal persons with
body rights? All for a kind gesture?

14 INT. TV STATION - CAMPUS - DAY

Nora is on a Campus TV Talk Show with host, ANGELA (25). The set is two armchairs, a coffee-style talk show. Nora has copies of an original article printed in the Express Newspaper about Elfreda's murder in 1870.

ANGELA

Why are you so taken with this woman Elfreda?

NORA

I was born in Newfoundland where she was murdered. An unlikely place to have a brutal slaughtering of a 16-year-old girl in 1870. Or even today for that matter.

Angela reads from the original Express Newspaper article of 1870.

ANGELA

The unfortunate victim: Elfreda Pike 16 years of age, bearing an excellent character and respected by all who knew her. What does excellent character mean?

Nora continues reading.

NORA

It means just what you're thinking. With regards to the character of poor Elfreda, we rejoice to say that it was of a truly good young woman, of Christian parents, her moral character known to be perfectly free from stain. She was a regular attendant at her church.

ANGELA

The young woman has been slaughtered and they are boasting in the
(MORE)

ANGELA (CONT'D)
 newspaper that she hasn't been
 sexually compromised?

NORA
 The newspaper article is as
 concerning as the crime itself.
 I'm intrigued by the visceral
 details written up in the paper.
 Why the crime isn't sexual in nature
 is rare.

ANGELA
 Are you suggesting that a newspaper
 article today wouldn't give as
 much detail about a crime?

NORA
 Not sure. It's 1870, Harbour Grace,
 Newfoundland...

HARBOUR GRACE, 1870:

15 EXT. WOODED AREA, CRIME SCENE - MORNING

Elfreda lying on the ground behind a large stone PAN UP
 to the enormous tall trees and into the sky.

NARRATOR (V.O) over footage of the murder scene.

NARRATOR
*She was full-grown and in the full
 flush of womanhood. The lower jaw
 was broken by a compound fracture,
 three teeth were knocked out and
 two were loosened, the sockets of
 the teeth were burst open, a cut
 over the chin was laid open to the
 gums and perforated the lower lip.
 The head wounds alone were
 sufficient to destroy life.*

CLOSE UP pans over Elfreda's hair and silhouette.

PRESENT DAY:

16 INT. CLASSROOM - AFTERNOON

Nora is at the head of the class in front of a slide screen with her notes in front of her.

NORA

Women are more likely to experience repeated and severe forms of abuse. Gender crime. The 'President' just changed the definitions of domestic violence and sexual assault.

SIMONE

She can't say his name.

Heather gives Simone a peculiar glare.

NORA

Take the case of Elfreda Pike in 1870.

SIMONE

She's writing a book *Elfreda* on gender violence.

HEATHER

She's obsessed.

SIMONE

She was born in Newfoundland where it happened.

HEATHER

Was she born in 1870?

SIMONE

Come on.

Simone gives Heather an odd look.

17 INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

KURTIS (28) and Nora see each other at the coffee shop, they shake hands to introduce themselves.

KURTIS

I don't think we've formerly met.
I'm Kurtis.

NORA

Nora. You work around here?

KURTIS

For now, working in the Boston
Globe building. Reporter.

NORA

Digital, isn't it?

KURTIS

Print newspapers aren't considered
technology, anymore.

NORA

Social media is life changing.
That's a big job.

KURTIS

There's still an awful lot of papers
in the archives for a digital
department.

NORA

Interesting. Let me know if you
find any love letters to
Newfoundland. Boston and
Newfoundland go way back, you know?

KURTIS

New 'to who land'. Joking. I heard
of it. Doubt any of my folks grew
up there.

NORA

Maybe not.

They look up at the TV.

KURTIS

I can't see my tax dollars going
to the man in the red hat.

NORA

I can't say his name, and I'm not
even from here.

KURTIS

Where's home?

NORA

Harbour Grace, small town. I'm
researching a murder of a young
girl.

KURTIS

You don't need to go home for that.
There's a murder down the road,
every 30 minutes.

Nora leaves with a stern look, but she knows he's right.

HARBOUR GRACE:

18 INT. CHURCH, NEWFOUNDLAND - DAY

NORA (10) and her Grandmother, FRANCIS (65) are at the top of the church hovering over two coffins, side by side, covered in flowers. Francis pulls Nora away from the coffin as she clings to it for dear life. On top of the caskets are embossed brass plates Michael Hannaford on one casket and Beatrice Hannaford on the other.

They inch towards the entranceway of the church, and stand solemn with the parishioners giving their condolences as they leave the church.

Francis hangs on to Nora's hands with all her might. Her rings dig through Nora's cloth gloves piercing her hand.

Nora clings to the side of her grandmother for support.

Church goer, NELLIE (70), stops to give her condolences.

NELLIE

Francis, I have no words. Thine
is the power and glory of the Lord,
God rest their souls. Your not
supposed to bury your own child.

FRANCIS

I prayed and prayed for Bea to
move home from Boston, but not
like this. In a wooden box.

NELLIE

Tragic. Those highways, see. They
didn't have a chance.

FRANCIS

Not with the likes of him driving.

NELLIE

(nods down to Nora)
Make no wonder she got out alive.

FRANCIS

This ones my keeper. She'll get
through. I'll see to that.

NELLIE

You'll be just fine. I'll drop
bread and cookies off, would you
like that?

Nora tries to break a half hearted smile.

19

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Nora and Francis walk along the dirt road in Harbour
Grace with the graveyard in the background.

They walk over the hill past the small harbour and wooden houses. Nora is swinging her coin purse on a strap.

FRANCIS

I bet you don't have these down there.

Nora kicks and scuffs the dirt with her dress shoes.

NORA

Have what?

FRANCIS

Dirt roads. That's what.

NORA

Who wants one?

FRANCIS

It's just something a little different that's all. You were born here, you know.

NORA

I was?

FRANCIS

Yes, you were. Your mother swooped you away to Boston when you were only 3 months. Your father was a professor.

NORA

He is ... was smart.

FRANCIS

He was that. Your mother was pretty bright to, you know. I saw to that. She did her lessons.

Nora swings her coin purse faster, agitated.

NORA

She always helped me. Read to me.

FRANCIS

We'll still do that. You'll get
used to it here before you know
it.

NORA

(pause)

FRANCIS

Might have to get some street sounds
for you, awfully quiet here.

Nora drops her purse by the side of the road near the
trees, so unnerved she doesn't notice. Francis slows
down looking back.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

You dropped your purse, my dear.

Nora walks back to the side of the road, while Francis
waits. About four feet in from the edge of the dirt road
she sees a rock with a handmade plaque on it.

NORA

What's that?

FRANCIS

What's what, my dear?

Francis starts to walk back toward Nora to see what she's
looking at in the grass. As she gets closer she shows
even more sadness on her face.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

That's a burial.

NORA

Like my Mom and Dad's?

FRANCIS

Yes, pretty much.

Nora walks in closer to see the rock.

NORA
Says Elfreda Pike and she was 16.

FRANCIS
That she was. God rest her soul.

NORA
How did she die?

FRANCIS
She was murdered.

NORA
Murdered?!

FRANCIS
Yes.

NORA
You said it was safe here. You
said it was so quiet, it was
deafening.

FRANCIS
It is my love. We've never heard
the likes of that since or before.

NORA
How was she murdered?

Francis grabs her by the hand, strong.

FRANCIS
Never you mind that now. Lets get
home for lunch. They're dropping
bread and cookies. You heard them.

NORA
I'll never see my Mom and Dad again.

Starts to cry, while being dragged by Francis.

FRANCIS

I know my love. I know.

FIVE YEARS LATER;

20 INT. FRANCES' KITCHEN - DAY

Nora (15) is sitting at the kitchen table studying and Francis (70) is puttering through the kitchen cooking. Pots and pans clanging while baking bread.

NORA

It says here that Elfreda was on her way to her Grandmother's house.

FRANCIS

Are you sure you need to do a project on this murder?

NORA

There's a full article written in the 1870 Express newspaper. I found it at the museum.

FRANCIS

There is one or two things in that museum that shouldn't be dug up.

NORA

They say she was a good girl and a church goer. Why would they say that?

FRANCIS

They always say things like that about young women, Nora. It's as if were to blame for it all.

NORA

She was murdered. How can any of it be her fault.

Puts down her mixing bowl.

FRANCIS

If there is a way for a man to
hold a woman to blame they will.

Francis is deep in thought.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

I guess we should have a chat.

NORA

About Elfreda?

FRANCIS

No, that we won't.

NORA

What?

FRANCIS

Don't say 'what', it's not becoming.

Nora rolls her eyes. Francis sits down and leans in.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

You're getting older now. And there
is a few things you'll need to
know. You may want to be with a
man.

NORA

Oh, you mean sex. Myself and Josie
talk about that all the time.

Francis in shock.

FRANCIS

All the time.

NORA

We've read Judy Blume. You know
Forever, like a thousand times.

FRANCIS

Well that's a good word for it.
Cause there are some things that
are for forever and there are some
things that are not.

NORA

Like what?

FRANCIS

If you are with a man you need to
take care and go to the nurse.
Before, you know, you're with him.
Cause' if not a baby can be forever
and a man is not always there
forever, that's for sure. But you
should not be with a young man to
start with. I'm just saying, if it
happened.

NORA

You mean birth control. I read
about that. I'm not ready just
yet.

Francis takes a deep sigh of relief.

FRANCIS

There's more.

NORA

Like what? Not what. But you know,
what do you mean?

FRANCIS

Men aren't always what they seem.
They can be nice. But if they make
you afraid. Don't put up with it.
You're not meant to ever, ever, be
hurt by a man.

NORA

Is that what Grandpa did? Is that
why he's gone?

FRANCIS

Never you mind that, now. He's gone. I'm just saying stand up for yourself, always. Especially where the men are concerned.

21 INT. HIGH SCHOOL, HARBOUR GRACE - DAY

Nora is in a group with her other classmates for their research project. She has become enthralled with her project on Elfreda and has artifacts and index cards on her desk. The desks are arranged in groups of four facing each other.

JACOB

Are you still doing that project on the dead girl?

NORA

She's not just dead. She was murdered.

BEN

My grandma said that woods is haunted. And she should have known better.

NORA

It's not haunted. There was an investigation. It's a real crime.

BEN

How do you know? You're not even from here.

(using an accent)

You're from *Boston*.

NORA

I am from here. My family is from here. My mom, my dad.

JACOB

But they're dead. They're not here.

NORA
My grandmother is here.

Nora wells up but covers it up, not to let on to the guys she is bothered.

NORA (CONT'D)
You're just chicken to go to the woods that's why you said your mom said it was haunted.

BEN
It is haunted.

JACOB
Are you sure?

Ben winks to Jacob without Nora seeing him.

NORA
Prove it.

BEN
Meet us there after school.

NORA
Where?

JACOB
By the gravestone. There's another stone further in on the path where the murder happened.

NORA
Really? It did say in this newspaper it was in from the road by a tree.

BEN
We know where that tree is and we can show you.

JACOB
Yeah, we can show you.

22 EXT. PATH - DAY

Nora walks confident toward the gravestone and stops by the edge of the road where she has walked home now for over five years. She looks up and down the dirt road and tries to see if she can see the boys coming by. They shout out.

JACOB

We're in here.

BEN

We're far in. A ways longer.

Nora can hear their voices clearly and knows the woods well enough to follow them on in.

NORA

I hear you.

Nora pushes tree branches and shrubs out of her way. She is able to navigate the woods like a pro despite growing up in the city.

NORA (CONT'D)

See I know my way around these woods.

Nora barely has the words out of her mouth and she falls through a bunch of loose bows covering a hole and causing her to fall in.

Ben and Jacob go into fits of laughter and start to run back out of the woods.

Ben is bolting ahead back to the road and Jacob starts to slow down as he hears Nora cry out.

NORA (CONT'D)

Hey, I'm stuck. Assholes.

Jacob fully slows down and makes a move to go back and get Nora. Ben from up ahead looks back.

BEN

You're not helping that crazy one.

JACOB

Shut up!

BEN

Someone's got a crush.

JACOB

Shut up.

BEN

You know you get two crazies, Nora
and Elfreda. She's obsessed.

Jacob starts running back. Ben heads to the road not to
get caught.

NORA

I'm slipping.

Jacob reaches over pulls Nora's hand and both arms, harder
and harder to shimmy her across the wooden path and out
of the pit.

JACOB

You think it's deeper than it really
is. But it was a sucky thing to
do.

NORA

Sucky. Sucky. I could have broken
both my legs.

JACOB

I came back didn't I?

NORA

Are you crazy?

JACOB

Ben said *you* were crazy.

Nora and Jacob sit on the wooden path with their legs folded, covered in leaves and twigs.

NORA

You don't even really know me.

JACOB

He's right. You're obsessed with this murder thing.

NORA

You don't want to know about a murder that happened down the road from where you live.

JACOB

It's like over 150 years ago.

NORA

But no one knows who did it.

JACOB

Yah, but he's dead now.

NORA

How do you know it's a man who did it?

JACOB

Usually is. On the news anyway.

NORA

Thanks for coming back.

Nora starts to stand up and Jacob helps her up.

JACOB

Are you okay? I know it was stupid. I should've stopped it.

Jacob starts to pull twigs out of Nora's hair. He gently pulls Nora close, just to hug her.

NORA

I would've hugged you. You didn't need to push me in a ditch, you know.

He smiles and takes her by the hand.

JACOB

We were lucky. You could've been hurt.

NORA

You were lucky. You don't know what my grandmother, Francis, would do to you.

JACOB

Why do you think I came back.

They smile and walk out to the road.

23 INT. FRANCES' KITCHEN - DAY

Nora comes racing in through the door still looking like she has fallen in the woods.

She waves good bye to Jacob on her way in to shut the door.

Francis looks up alarmed to see Nora, as if she has played football, rather than being at the library.

FRANCIS

Well?

NORA

Well?

FRANCIS

What's this? Everyday you come home with your notes filed in a binder. Have you been cleaning sheds?

NORA

I went with some classmates to see more about Elfreda's murder site.

FRANCIS

Looks like you tried to dig her up my dear.

NORA

It was like you said. You always need to make sure guys won't hurt you. And there was one good guy and then one not good guy.

Francis looks to Nora as if giving her a warning sign.

FRANCIS

You're not looking for a good young man, Nora. You're looking for a great young man. And I will see to that.

NORA

I warned him, that was the case.

FRANCIS

Good. Cause he won't get in over this doorstep until I say.

Nora laughs. Francis embraces a parental moment between them after all they've been through.

24 INT. MUSEUM - DAY

Nora walks up to a display case with a little coin purse in it, encased with a glass cover.

She looks nervously to see if MRS.THORNE (45), the Museum director is coming behind her.

Nora slyly removes the glass lid, knowing she can hold the coin purse, if she doesn't get caught.

She picks it up and holds it in her hand as if to muster up the presence of Elfreda, deep in prayer.

By the purse there is a card to identify the coin purse and Nora reads it in a whisper to herself.

NORA

Last known artifact to be found of
Elfreda Pike, in the woods near
her body that was brutally murdered
on January 6th, 1870. No one has
yet been convicted for this heinous
crime.

Mrs. Thorne comes up behind Nora and suddenly startles her.

Nora panics and fidgets with the purse in her hand, but manages to put it under the glass case just in time.

MRS. THORNE

You can't have much more to look
at on that coin purse, you come
see it almost every day.

NORA

I know. I'm sorry. But it's my
project at school now.

Nora beams as if she has saved herself from an interrogation.

MRS. THORNE

It's not natural for a young girl
to spend so much time thinking
about a murder.

NORA

You don't want to know who killed
her?

MRS. THORNE

You'll never find that out now.

Nora looks uncomfortable, as if she is not helping.

NORA

We have to try.

MRS. THORNE

What's your Grandmother think of
you and all of this talk of death,
after what you've been through.

NORA

It's my studies. So that's good
I'm reading, right?

MRS. THORNE

Finish up, now.

NORA

I'll find the answer someday.

Nora moves toward the door, she looks back towards Mrs.
Thorne standing in the doorway.

25 EXT. MUSEUM - DAY

Mrs. Thorne leans on the edge of the door contemplating.

MRS. THORNE

They say there was a letter. It's
most likely a rumor.

Nora stops in her tracks and turns back.

NORA

What kind of letter?

MRS. THORNE

A confession.

NORA

A confession. Well that's something.
That's a lead.

MRS. THORNE

I've never seen nor heard tell of
it in this museum.

NORA

But it could be here.

MRS. THORNE

Yes, somewhere.

Mrs. Thorne breaks a small smile, as if all is not lost.

26 INT. FRANCIS'S HOUSE - DAY

Nora crawls up a ladder into the attic under a peaked
roof.

There are trunks, old and dusty, covered with blankets.
Brown boxes with string tied around them.

Nora sees some letters coming out of one of the boxes.
She picks it up and underneath there is a tin can.

LABEL: MOIRA SHEA security box.

Nora looks behind her to the crawl space opening. She
makes sure Francis is not coming.

NORA

She can't get up here. I hope.

Nora turns the latch on the security box.

There's a passport and birth certificate dated 1854. And
adoption papers for the Girls Regency Dormitory.

Nora reads the birth certificate: MOIRA SHEA birthdate
1854, Unwed birthmother, JULIE SHEA.

NORA (CONT'D)

That's Francis last name. Not a
husband's name.

Underneath she finds a photo of two school girls marked Moira and Elfreda. Elfreda carries the coin purse.

Nora gasps.

NORA (CONT'D)

Her mother is friends with Elfreda.

Nora hears Francis below, downstairs, singing out.

FRANCIS

Nora, I'm going to town. Coming?

Nora hurries to put back the birth certificate.

She looks down from the attic, climbs through the hatch door, down the ladder and lands inside the closet.

Nora waits until Francis walks past.

She closes the closet door, just in time not to get caught.

Nora sings out to Francis in the kitchen.

NORA

I'll come. Let me get my things.

27 EXT/INT. FRANCES KITCHEN - LATER

Nora sits with Francis, looking out the kitchen window onto a huge field that meets the oceans edge.

28 INT. KITCHEN - LATER

Nora looks nervous.

NORA

What about your Mom and Dad. You never talk about them.

Francis puts on the kettle. Gets cups and saucers, makes herself occupied.

FRANCIS
Never met my father.

NORA
Ever?

FRANCIS
Not once. But there was enough of my mom for both of them. She was a strong woman.

NORA
What was her name?

FRANCIS
Claire Shea and her mother was Moira Shea. We are a line of three women, without husbands. Moiras mother was Julie, but not much is known about her.

Nora doesn't dare mention the photo.

NORA
You have her name?

FRANCIS
That I do, Shea. She raised me on her own. Worked every day. Took me to work when I was a baby. No husband's name for her. Or me. Your mother was the first to take a husband's name my dear, your name.

NORA
What did your mom do?

FRANCIS
Secretarial. At the police station.

NORA
Interesting. I bet she saw lots of stuff.

FRANCIS

She was smart as a whip. Just like
your mother. Must have skipped
over me.

NORA

You're a pretty bright light.

Francis laughs. Nora acting older than her age.

FRANCIS

You're the same age as my
Grandmother, Moira, when she had
my mother Claire.

NORA

She was 15.

FRANCIS

That she was. We survived illness,
poverty, malnutrition.

NORA

That sounds horrible.

FRANCIS

We were so poor, we could only
afford to eat one side of the bread.

Nora laughs.

NORA

Yet, here you are.

FRANCIS

Here I am. Like it never happened.

NORA

Do you think your Grandmother knew
about the murder.

FRANCIS

You tricked me. I thought I had
you onto something new.

NORA
I love hearing about your
Grandmother.

I just noticed her birth certificate was the same age as
Elfreda's.

Nora barely has the words out of her mouth, and she gasps.

FRANCIS
How do you know that? You weren't
up in that attic, I hope. That's
not for you. Who knows what stories
are in those trunks.

NORA
I'm sorry. I won't

FRANCIS
That you won't.

Francis and Nora sit down to tea.

29 INT. NORA'S BEDROOM - NEXT DAY

Nora pokes her head out of her bedroom to see if she can
catch Francis lurking in the hallway.

30 INT. HALLWAY - LATER

Nora carefully walks down the hallway.

She opens the closet door with ease, not making a sound
to be caught.

Once inside she looks up to the hatch in the ceiling,
the passageway to the attic, and can see a giant padlock
on the trap door.

NORA
Damn.

31 INT. NORA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Nora, drowsy, lies in bed looks at the attic above her.
She starts to doze off to sleep and dreams of Elfreda.

DREAM: Elfreda stands erect walking through the trees,
translucent, and powerful.

Narrator: Excerpt from 1870 Express newspaper.

NARRATOR

What mind can grasp the intensity
of agony which the poor victim
must have undergone, the struggle
for life, the very tormented, the
fearful death wound, the pool of
blood, the melancholy tragedy, a
human being mangled and butchered
by another human being, ten thousand
times worse than the beast that
perishes!

Elfreda continues to walk through the trees, erect, as
if she will levitate into the sky.

Nora wakes up, alarmed.

She realizes it's a dream, and grabs the blankets tight
around her to console herself.

32 INT. FRANCES' KITCHEN - DAY

Nora comes in through the door, books in hand, dutiful
to greet Francis at supper.

FRANCIS

You're in a better way tonight.
Less dirt on you.

NORA

I went to the museum.

FRANCIS

Mrs. Thorne will put you on display
if you don't stop bothering her.

NORA

She said there was a letter. About
Elfreda. A confession.

FRANCIS

She said there was a rumour of a
letter, I bet.

NORA

She did say rumour. But does it
exist?

Francis slowly pours a cup of tea.

FRANCIS

Tea?

NORA

Sure.

Nora knows if she has tea she will get more of a story.

FRANCIS

There was a rumour. And the apple
doesn't fall far from the tree.
Your mother tried to find it.

NORA

She did?

FRANCIS

And she walked past that grave
more times than I can count, too.

NORA

My Mom.

FRANCIS

She also combed the files in Boston
while she was studying to teach.

NORA

Why Boston?

FRANCIS

Plenty of Newfoundlanders went to Boston. Telegrams went back and forth all the time.

NORA

Did they think he escaped there.

FRANCIS

There was talk of it.

NORA

When I finish school here. I'm going to University in Boston.

Francis looks distraught.

FRANCIS

You are, are you? We'll see about that.

NORA

I can't stay here. What would I do?

FRANCIS

There's work at the fish plant.

Nora sees her Grandmother and goes over to give her a big long hug.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

I can't loose you too.

NORA

You won't, I promise, you wont.

FLASH FORWARD:

33 INT. AIRPORT - DAY

Francis (90) is sitting looking straight ahead out to the runway.

NORA (30) walks to the reservations counter, very confident.

She then sits along side of Francis laying her head on her shoulder.

NORA

I'll be back. Thanksgiving.

FRANCIS

Your Thanksgiving or my Thanksgiving.

NORA

I'll come here for both.

Francis pulls her close.

FRANCIS

You'll call. You'll write or send the emails to the library.

NORA

I will.

FRANCIS

I'm glad you stayed to do your first studies here. You're ready now.

NORA

I know.

FRANCIS

Cause' I can't loose you too, you know.

NORA

I know. I promise.

FRANCIS

That you will. Remember where you're from.

NORA

Where I'm from ... "no man paves the way for me."

FRANCIS

That's right. Don't let that funny Boston accent fool ya. You don't need to rely on a man.

NORA

I can hold open my own doors. Thank you very much.

Francis laughs with Nora and holds her tight while still sitting down.

FRANCIS

Be off with you. Get out of here now. Your Mother would be proud.

Nora walks backwards blowing kisses. Then turns around and walks through the gate.

Francis looks straight ahead out onto the tarmac, watches Nora get on board the plane, and wipes tears from her eyes.

PRESENT DAY:

34 INT. UNIVERSITY OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Nora (30) and VIVIAN (25) share an office that looks lived in like a house, with a teakettle, sweaters, and pillows. TV clips are running in the background. Nora points to the screen.

NORA

The personal is still political.

VIVIAN
Gloria Steinem.

NORA
Still leading the march.

VIVIAN
When your president thinks 'grab
'em by the pussy' is witty the
battle is not over.

NORA
It's far from over.

VIVIAN
He shouldn't have been elected in
the first place. He has such bad
grammar.

NORA
Here we go. Steinem urges her
audience to get rid of the Electoral
College vote. Steinem says it best.

VIVIAN
Unless Maya Angelou's poetry is
being belted out.

Vivian starts to sing.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)
*It's in the click of my heels, the
bend of my hair, the palm of my
hand, the need for my care. Cause',
I'm a woman phenomenally. Phenomenal
woman, that's me.*

VIVIAN (CONT'D)
Maya Angelou could read off a milk
carton and sound profound.

NORA
(smiles)

VIVIAN

Angelou's civil rights legacy is the only reason we have the equal rights amendment.

NORA

That was the rationale for Ruth Bader Ginsberg to take on the senate. 'No discrimination based on gender, race or marital status'.

VIVIAN

Now, if it was only part of the constitution.

Vivian reaches into one of the file boxes, pulls out a pink power pussy hat and puts it on.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

All these knitted hats, ditched right after the march.

NORA

Is this what this is? A file box of ditched Pussy hats?

Nora reaches in and grabs another. Puts it on. Nora laughs. Vivian changes hats and does fake poses for a portrait.

VIVIAN

Wasn't really about all women and all races, was it?

NORA

You're right.

VIVIAN

All vulvas aren't pink.

NORA

Knit whatever colour hats you want, as long as we get rid of that motherfucker.

VIVIAN

Unraveling knitted pink hats is a lot easier than melting down AR-15 rifles.

NORA

Never happen. Our president elect was voted in on this countries love affair with guns.

VIVIAN

Hashtag #blackgunsmatter.

Nora shakes her head.

35 INT. COFFEE SHOP - MORNING

Nora sits having a coffee on her own. She eyes a young woman Zoe (20) who looks like she just snuck in from living outside. Zoe rushes to the table.

ZOE

Hey, you have the password?

NORA

Maybe the waiter has it.

ZOE

He'll just kick me out.

Waiter walks to Nora's table and glares at Zoe.

NORA

An espresso, please. And?

Zoe looks surprised.

ZOE

Coffee. Black.

(snarky to the waiter)

So, looks like I'll be staying, after all.

NORA
Another woman killed on campus.

Zoe speaks up.

ZOE
Men hate women.

NORA
Feels like that, at times.

ZOE
Men kill women because they can.

NORA
I won't argue you there.

ZOE
You're a lawyer?

NORA
Gender media prof.

ZOE
That's a thing?

NORA
Did you see those women march this morning. Outside the conference center.

ZOE
I slept in. My class was cancelled.

NORA
There's always a march. Trigger laws are still getting past. A minor needs parental consent before having an abortion.

ZOE
I was a minor once.

NORA

Your body, your decision.
If not the men in suits decide.

ZOE

Welcome to our world.

NORA

There's still hope.

ZOE

Hope. Like free coffee for the
couch surfers.

Zoe nods to Nora and downs her coffee.

36 INT. UNIVERSITY OFFICE - DAY

Vivian and Nora are at their desks.

NORA

It's hard to talk about.

VIVIAN

Cause' it happens all the time.

NORA

True.

VIVIAN

Do you think you can find out who
murdered Elfreda?

NORA

Hard to say. I'm going through the
archives.

VIVIAN

I can't believe it was someone
local. It's so calculated.

NORA

It's kind of a mythology back home.

VIVIAN

The police just dropped the case?

NORA

Pretty much. A small town likes to
turn a blind eye.

37 INT. RESTAURANT - EVENING

Nora is sitting on her own in the restaurant scanning the menu. She sees Zoe eyeing the plates left behind by others in the restaurant. She mischievously takes a dinner roll from a plate without a customer noticing.

Nora calls out to Zoe and beckons her towards the table where she is dining.

NORA

Join me?

Zoe hesitates but goes over. The waiter looks suspicious, as Zoe comes joins Nora.

NORA (CONT'D)

She's with me.

ZOE

How do you know I won't steal
anything?

NORA

Doesn't matter.

ZOE

I'm Zoe. You bought me coffee.

NORA

Nora. Are you staying around here?

Points to the patio outside.

ZOE

Exactly right here. Sometimes over
there. Wherever.

NORA
Living outside?

ZOE
So, a gender studies prof?

NORA
You remember? Gender inequality
in the media, formerly called the
News.

ZOE
Nice light topic.

NORA
Do you ever think about taking a
class, even auditing?

ZOE
Me in school? That'll make it all
better, right?

NORA
Can't say it really helps, but you
know that.

ZOE
Thin sheets and thick skin.
What could go wrong?

NORA
And your family?

ZOE
They don't think me being homeless
is 'artsy' or "feminist"
I can tell you that much.

NORA
(pause)

ZOE
I don't see my family.

NORA

I'm sorry.

ZOE

What am I? Your case study? Your date?

NORA

I hate eating alone.

ZOE

So?

NORA

I can see why you think it's pretentious for me to drag you in here.

ZOE

Hey, you're buying dinner. You can dissect me to bits.

NORA

Not what I'm doing. But I get it.

ZOE

No, you don't. You don't get it at all. But that's okay. I'll have prime rib.

NORA

You're leery of those who 'try' to help?

ZOE

Some nights if I'm laying in a real bed what difference does it make what they 'try' to do to me.

38 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Vivian is giving the lecture today, confident, and razor-sharp. Two of the same students speak up Simone and Heather.

SIMONE

We simply out number them. The panic is on.

VIVIAN

"Me Too" was initially used by sexual harassment survivor and activist Tarana Burke.

SIMONE

Because African American women support feminism more than white women.

VIVIAN

And then, American actress Alyssa Milano posted on Twitter, "If all the women who have been sexually harassed or assaulted wrote 'Me too' as a status, we might give people a sense of the magnitude of the problem."

SIMONE

Because influencers have to be white.

HEATHER

As long as it stops the violence.

SIMONE

She kinda ignored what I had to say about white women.

VIVIAN

I'm not ignoring it Simone, we only have to take a further look at Burke or Milano. Investigating #Me Too provides an interesting way into the race divide in feminism.

SIMONE

Meaning?

VIVIAN

The Media dictates how women's murders are told. What they drank. What they wore. The personal has always been political.

SIMONE

You mean what she drank, and what he wore was a police uniform. And it took six years for that case to get a sentence in court in this city.

HEATHER

There is a war on women. And now it is open season on our campus. Our place of work.

VIVIAN

There is a perception that feminism and women's rights are different. Simone has a good point. Milano's and Burke's contexts are completely different. And yes Heather all institutions are pervasive.

Vivian speaks over the class as they start to leave before class is ended.

39 INT. AIRPLANE - NIGHT

Nora is on a plane to Newfoundland. Close up of her with her head resting and leaning on the window. She is asleep and deep in thought.

40 EXT. WOODED AREA, 1870 - MORNING

Detail of Elfreda lying on the ground behind a large stone PAN UP to the enormous, tall trees and into the sky.

Original text from Express newspaper 1870 (V.O).

NARRATOR

We rejoice to say that Elfreda was a truly good young woman, of Christian parents, her moral character known to be perfectly free from stain. She was a regular attendant at her church.

41 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Vivian is giving the lecture from the podium. A stack of notes in front of her.

VIVIAN

Nora is gone to Newfoundland to do research. It's just us today, and don't go easy on me.

HEATHER

Let me guess, she's looking for Elfreda's murderer.

SIMONE

It's an important story.

VIVIAN

On screen and in real life, society has barely diverged from the "beware of the deviant woman" script.

SIMONE

FBI data finds that 45 percent of women killed were killed by an intimate partner while 5 percent of men were killed during the same time period.

HEATHER

One in five women and one in seventy men in the United States has been raped in their lifetime. My lifetime.

SIMONE

Our lifetime.

VIVIAN

The danger in statistics is we are shocked. Every murder is an individual, a human life taken.

SIMONE

The play by play of murders of women are not just a news report, it's to keep women in fear.

VIVIAN

Society sees each woman as a warning sign. Do we respond with the same horror and shock, just hearing a name?

Vivian stares out to her students in class.

PRESENT DAY:

42 INT. FRANCES' HOME, NEWFOUNDLAND - DAY

FRANCES sits in an armchair, and Nora sits on a small stool at her feet looking up to her Grandmother. They have tea on a side table.

NORA

I'm back.

FRANCIS

Checking on your grandma?

NORA

I can't resist your stories.

FRANCIS

You can't stop thinking about that murder I told you about?

NORA

I think about Elfreda quite a bit,
it's true.

FRANCIS

Horror of a story.

NORA

Her body just laying there until
church goers went by. So odd.

FRANCIS

It's so wrong.

NORA

And it's not going away.

FRANCIS

I wouldn't want folks to think
that's who we are.

NORA

I'm not saying this town are
murderers.

FRANCIS

It's not like where you're living
now. It was a shock.

NORA

I'm sure a woman's daughter found
in an alley in a big city is also
a shock.

FRANCIS

You read the Express from that
time?

NORA

Strange details, like she wasn't
'compromised'.

FRANCIS

Thanks be to God.

NORA

So, that's a blessing.

FRANCIS

They did god awful things back then to women.

NORA

Not like this?

FRANCIS

No, and not as common as today.

NORA

And her family?

FRANCIS

They were never right again. They were church people, see.

NORA

In their mind her virtue being in tact was a blessing.

FRANCIS

She was lead into the woods by the devil himself.

NORA

He had to have a name. Do you ever wonder who it was?

FRANCIS

That child's soul wouldn't have a moments grace, if that's all we thought of her.

NORA

And my mother tried to find out who did it?

FRANCIS

She did.

(MORE)

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

She went to the museum just like you and through almost every attic in this town, thinking something would show up.

NORA

And nothing.

FRANCIS

That misfit may openly reject God and embrace evil. But he'll meet his maker.

NORA

But no justice for Elfreda?

FRANCIS

Not yet.

NORA

You think it can be solved?

FRANCIS

You're a writer. Every story has an ending, my love.

NORA

I know.

FRANCIS

If somebody had only been there to save her.

NORA

I try to save her all the time, in my dreams. I can't stop thinking about her.

FRANCIS

That's not dreaming. Dreaming is hope. Trying to save a murdered woman is poison.

NORA

I should stop trying.

FRANCIS

Trying to save Elfreda, will eat you alive.

NORA

There are still so many women murdered.

FRANCIS

Write your book. You won't stop the killings, but you need to do it.

NORA

Why are men who kill above the law?

FRANCIS

I told you they will have their day.

NORA

Judgment day? I don't have your faith Grandma.

FRANCIS

You must believe in good.

NORA

I would like to come face to face with these murderers. I need to know why.

FRANCIS

Knowing why a man is evil, will not make it go away.

NORA

If only I could let it go.

FRANCIS

Let it go, my love.

Nora leans her head on her Grandmother's lap as she strokes her hair.

43 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Vivian is lecturer again, but towards the end of class Nora slips in to the back row, just back from her trip.

VIVIAN

The recent manosphere comment in the Globe newspaper is first described as anti-feminist and the article ends in extreme misogyny and racism.

SIMONE

The civil rights movement alienated Southern racists.

VIVIAN

As Chomsky would say, the Nixon team openly said, "We can pick up votes by being racist."

HEATHER

Is he still alive? Chomsky?

SIMONE

Yes, Chomsky is always alive. And Nixon is always dead. White women are the patriarchy in skirts.

HEATHER

Let's hope Republican wives are too old to have kids.

SIMONE

Is that what we're calling the war on women now?

Vivian eyes Nora entering the back of the lecture hall.
Nora takes a seat at the back of the class.

VIVIAN
Our students outweigh us again,
Nora.

Vivian walks to the back and Nora and her walk out to
the hallway.

44 INT. UNIVERSITY HALLWAY - DAY

Nora sees Zoe as she scurries through the door, but she's
barely visible, as they get closer.

VIVIAN
Who's that?

NORA
The woman I met and took out to
dinner.

Nora rushes through the door and tries to catch up to
her, but she's gone. Nora walks on ahead up over the
stairs to her class.

45 INT. UNIVERSITY COFFEE SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Vivian rounds the corner of the coffee shop, her head
down, scanning her notes. She bangs directly into Zoe
without realizing it.

Zoe moves closer to stand directly in front of Vivian,
as if to block her. Vivian is startled at first.

VIVIAN
That was you, I saw run out.

ZOE
I haven't seen you around the
shelter?

VIVIAN
You're who Nora is helping out?

ZOE
She's not helping me.

VIVIAN
You don't have to be there at the shelter.

ZOE
You sent your boss to rescue me?

VIVIAN
I had nothing to do with it.

ZOE
She saved you?

VIVIAN
Nobody gets saved.

ZOE
What's she get in return?

VIVIAN
Nothing. She wants nothing.

ZOE
That's it then. This is your institution of choice.

VIVIAN
Being in a shelter wasn't a choice for me.

ZOE
So you've told Nora, then?

VIVIAN
There's no reason. I'm working for her now.

ZOE
She doesn't need to know your past? That you were a victim, like the women she writes about.

VIVIAN

We all heal in different ways. I don't need for people to know my past.

ZOE

And that includes me?

Students start to gather around in the coffee shop and their space is crowded.

Zoe lets students slip in between herself and Vivian and she quickly leaves.

Vivian looks vacantly off into the crowded room, but Zoe is nowhere to be seen.

46 INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Nora and Vivian are sitting at the same table near the window in the restaurant where Nora had dinner with Zoe.

They've ordered and food is on the table.

NORA

This is nice. It's about time we did this. I've been working you too hard. Cooped up in that office.

VIVIAN

You mean 'cause we have a tea kettle, blankets and a laundry basket at work, I should worry?

NORA

I guess it's all consuming.
(glances outside to
people on the street,
homeless)
I worry about women on the streets.

VIVIAN

There's a lot to worry about.
(MORE)

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

You know women don't have to be on the street to be murdered.

NORA

True.

VIVIAN

Sometimes the worst guy is the one who tucks you in at night in the fanciest home.

NORA

Including professors. Arrogant pricks.

VIVIAN

All men are on the hit list, huh?

NORA

I hope you're dating a good guy.

VIVIAN

First off, you'd have to hope I'm dating a dude to wish that.

NORA

So much for my feminist mantra.

(embarrassed)

Fuck, I have no idea why I assumed.

VIVIAN

We'll blame it on your Grandma's Catholic ways and let you off the hook.

NORA

You're kinder than I deserve. You should just say, fuck you, to make me feel better.

Vivian catches the eye of Zoe walking along outside in the other direction behind Nora's head and out of sight from Nora's view.

Zoe makes kissing faces and pushes her two mitten covered hands together like puppets smooching and kissing.

Vivian catches Zoe's eye but tries to keep a poker face, not to draw attention to Zoe behind Nora.

VIVIAN

At least we don't gossip.

NORA

If we start to gossip that would be trouble. I'll get this.

Nora picks up the cheque.

47 EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Nora and Vivian walk past homeless people lying in the street. Vivian is nervous at first thinking Zoe is still lurking around, but she is long gone.

They take a side street that is remote but still in city center.

A young woman walking on her own crosses the street when a man walks toward her. She takes out her phone and pretends to walk up to a house door as a car goes by.

The woman starts to walk on the road near the curb, to steer clear of the dark bushes.

Nora and Vivian look to each other immediately knowing each move the women is making and why she is doing it.

NORA

Do you think men know all our habits to 'try' and keep us safe.

VIVIAN

Walking out the wrong exit from a subway, then ducking back in to go home in the right direction.

NORA

Working extra hours at the library
so you can walk down the staircase
with someone at night.

VIVIAN

We found one plus, all those extra
hours at the library made you a
professor.

NORA

Fuck, such a colossal waste of
time all this dancing around men's
violence.

VIVIAN

We could have restored clean water
for 3rd world countries by now.

NORA

I really didn't think I would see
us get less rights as women in my
lifetime.

VIVIAN

Isn't your generation responsible
for all this misogynistic gansta
shit.

NORA

I'm only five years older than
you.

VIVIAN

A lot can go wrong in five years.
Remember that year we let a Reality
TV star run for president.

NORA

And the same year Handmaids took
over the courtrooms.

VIVIAN

Margaret Atwood could be a little
less right.

NORA

*A word after a word after a word
is power.*

VIVIAN

*Don't let the bastards grind you
down.*

NORA

That sounds more like Eminem.

VIVIAN

'White America' is not quite the
same as Time Magazine suggesting
the word "feminist" be banned.

NORA

Poof. Gone.

Vivian and Nora have arrived at the front door to her
apartment building.

VIVIAN

Are you sure you're okay walking?

NORA

My condo is just one more block.
I'll text when I get in.

48 INT. VIVIAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Vivian opens the front door of her apartment, as she
turns the key she can see the door isn't locked.

Cautiously she stands back, kicks opens the door, but
doesn't enter. From the doorway she can see that Zoe is
sitting at her kitchen table with candles lit in the
dark.

She has poured a glass of wine and is in Vivian's bathrobe.

ZOE

I showered. Hope you don't mind.

VIVIAN

(breaths out heavy)

A little late now.

ZOE

I thought I'd give you some hands on research.

VIVIAN

That part of our relationship is over.

ZOE

You afraid if you touch the other side, you'll go back to the other side.

VIVIAN

I wasn't very good at being an addict.

ZOE

Most of us aren't.

VIVIAN

You seem clean. Cleaner.

ZOE

Some folks just do drugs because we like drugs, you know.

VIVIAN

Is it too early to ask if it's for good.

ZOE

You gave up asking I believe when you left.

VIVIAN
Hard place to look back.

ZOE
You just didn't look back.

VIVIAN
I landed there 'cause I was almost
beaten to death.

ZOE
You didn't choose us 'cause your
husband beat you.

VIVIAN
I know.

ZOE
(Pause)

VIVIAN
I couldn't choose us, if it meant
not making it. I had to make it.

Zoe gets up to walk towards Vivian intimately. She is
radiant and strong in the candlelight.

ZOE
And now that you've made it ...

Zoe leans in to kiss Vivian and they make out.

49 INT. UNIVERSITY OFFICE - DAY

Nora comes back to her office to find Vivian face and
eyes into her paperwork.

NORA
How did classes go?

VIVIAN
Let's see we covered manosphere,
misogyny, and why black women
support feminism.

NORA

You must be a fast talker. Why do
black women support feminism?

VIVIAN

Black women do not support feminism.
We support black feminism.

NORA

It's time you devise your lesson
plan then.

VIVIAN

It's in there. Black feminism
upholds that black women give rise
to a particular understanding of
their position in relation to
sexism, class oppression, and
racism. Each concept—being black,
being female—should be considered
independently while knowing that
our identities reinforce one
another.

NORA

I sure hope that's all going to
happen today.

VIVIAN

Give me 'til lunchtime. I just
poured my first coffee.

NORA

If anyone can. You can.

50 INT. UNIVERSITY HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

Nora and Vivian hear a thunderous parade. There is a
rally en masse, a women's rally. Placards and students
and people from the street.

WOMEN CHANTING 1

Stop the killing! Stop them now...

NORA

Another young girl raped in the
stairwell.

VIVIAN

All over the internet, the video,
a badge of fucking honour.

NORA

Might as well be in the classroom.
Fuck. Fuck. Fuck.

The rally is mainly university students but more women
file in that look weathered and have been on the streets.

WOMEN CHANTING 1

Work. School. In the streets. No
more rapes! No more!

The group of women pass by and at the end Nora notices
Zoe and then Vivian also catches her eye. Nora summons
Zoe over and introduces Zoe to Vivian, not knowing they
have a relationship.

NORA

I knew we would get you in this
school one way or another.

ZOE

You think it's safer in here. One
of the street kids found the phone.
It can't be traced.

NORA

Vivian, this is Zoe. The woman I
told you I met for dinner one night.

Vivian and Zoe play it cool. Zoe is coy and Nora just
takes their interaction as flirtatious.

VIVIAN

This march is great.

ZOE

I always try to do what's right.

VIVIAN

Another horrific crime.

Zoe smiling to Vivian in a very personal way.

ZOE

I thought you scholarly types said
women could make a difference in
here.

Nora picks up on their connection.

NORA

Is Vivian trying to persuade you
to go to school, too? You're
getting it from all sides.

ZOE

I'm getting it from all sides,
that's right. Motherfuckers to the
right and the left of me.

VIVIAN

They have to find that bastard.

ZOE

I'd say bastards.

NORA

Watch him get a suspension if were
lucky. This fucking administration.

ZOE

You're the administration.

VIVIAN

It's not that easy to fight from
the inside.

ZOE

Can't help you. I'm not on the
inside, now am I?

Zoe does a dance and sways and walks backward as she
turns to catch up with the rally.

NORA

She's a hard one to crack, that
girl.

VIVIAN

She knows exactly what she's doing.
Trust me.

51 EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Zoe and the group continue into the street. Zoe sticks
with the crowd of women from the shelter. Street gal,
LOIS (45), walks alongside her.

LOIS

You seem pretty close with those
'Prof Snobs'.

ZOE

Not really. Just wasting time
chatting.

LOIS

You're just doing research like
them, I bet. You don't have to be
here.

ZOE

If you ask 'members' of society,
none of us have to be here.

Zoe makes a quick right off the main street up an alley
towards a hanging fire escape ladder.

LOIS

Where're you headed?

ZOE

Becoming a member of society, living
the dream.

Zoe skips with a spring in her gait. Her downtrodden
clothes are the only sign she is not on top of the world.

Lois can see that Zoe is headed for trouble and headed
to where a drug dealer is squatting.

LOIS

Zoe, don't do it. You don't need
it.

ZOE

Not about need, my friend. I want
it.

Zoe lets out a demonic laugh. Lois walks on looking
defeated.

52 INT. DRUG DEALER TRAP HOUSE - EVENING

Zoe climbs the metal stairs and crawls into the window,
excited, like a child going to a circus.

The space inside is beyond decrepit. There are bodies
strewn across the halls and in corners.

There is wailing noises coming from the rooms and
desperate sounds of sex from those who are conscious.

Zoe is barely in through the window and the only sign of
real life is a group of 3 men, THUGS, who come up the
steps inside and have arranged to meet Zoe.

**This scene is shot in SILHOUETTE with only AUDIO playing
over the footage.**

THUG 1

There she is. The infamous Zoe.

THUG 2

Larger than life.

THUG 1

But not larger than our life.

ZOE

So, you have what we agreed on?

THUG 1

Did we agree on something for our
good friend, Zoe.

THUG 2

We did.

THUG 1

Let's give this upper class bitch,
what she came for.

Thugs push Zoe in an empty and scum infested room. In dark silhouette, off screen, without vivid detail. The men assault and have their way with Zoe, and beat her within a breath of her life.

Soundtrack is raw and visceral and reveals the horror of the attack.

53 INT. EMERSON UNIVERSITY OFFICE - NIGHT

Nora and Vivian are working late. Both look wiped hanging over stacks of books.

Vivian's cell phone rings, it's the hospital. She's the contact number for Zoe with the shelter. Vivian listens while Nora looks on realizing the seriousness of the call.

VIVIAN

It's Zoe she's in hospital. It's
bad.

NORA

Let's go.

54 INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Nora sits down just outside the hospital room door.

Vivian walks in cautiously to Zoe. Vivian sits on Zoe's bedside and puts her hand on her shoulder, praying for Zoe to come to. Slowly, Zoe's eyes open up, barely conscious.

ZOE

This is what it takes to get you
by my bedside.

VIVIAN

(hiding tears)

You don't miss a beat. Zoe.

ZOE

I'm sorry.

VIVIAN

It's my fault. I should've been
there for you.

ZOE

There's no me left.

VIVIAN

Zoe, you're here. You are here.

55 INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Nora is still sitting outside Zoe's room.

A very distinguished man SENATOR RAMOS (65) starts to walk by Nora. She recognizes him from TV.

SENATOR RAMOS

Did she make it this time? My
daughter.

NORA

Your daughter. It's bad. They're
keeping a close watch on her.

SENATOR RAMOS

That girl is testing the good Lords
patience.

NORA

If the Lord is as good as you say,
I'm sure he'll make time for Zoe.

SENATOR RAMOS

Do you work at the shelter?

NORA

No. Do I recognize you from TV
Senator Ramos?

SENATOR RAMOS

Not here, you don't. I'm Zoe's
father.

NORA

Sorry about Zoe, we're worried. My
colleague Vivian is in with her
now.

SENATOR RAMOS

Colleague. If it's the same Vivian,
they've been sharing a mattress
and needles for years. This is not
my first near death call.

Nora tries to pretend she knows about Vivian.

Vivian comes out of the room completely emotional and
shaken by Zoe's condition.

She doesn't have time to collect herself, and she is
face to face with Zoe's father.

VIVIAN

Mr. Ramos.

SENATOR RAMOS

Vivian. I was just speaking with
your colleague.

VIVIAN
It's bad Mr. Ramos.

SENATOR RAMOS
You fed her to the wolves.

VIVIAN
I tried, Sir.

SENATOR RAMOS
Not hard enough.

He pushes through the door to Zoe's room.

56 INT. VIVIAN'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Nora has come to check in on Vivian. She has brought her coffee.

VIVIAN
He's right. I didn't try hard enough.

NORA
What could you do?

VIVIAN
She was there for me, I was flung out of a car onto to the shelter steps covered in blood, the hair barely attached to my head.

NORA
Fuck, Vivian. You never said.

VIVIAN
What's there to say. He was my husband. Not like he was a wanted criminal.

NORA
And you never pressed charges.

VIVIAN

No. Skipped right over that and went straight for heroine. That's how Zoe and I got started, and then it was more than that.

NORA

You loved her.

VIVIAN

Still do. But you don't leave someone you love behind. Not in that living hell.

NORA

You tried.

VIVIAN

Tried. And tried and tried. Then I came to school, took a course, got to take another, then a degree, then your past is less and you don't even know who that person was anymore.

NORA

Did you see her after?

VIVIAN

After you started bringing Zoe around. She came here the other night. We spent the night together.

NORA

Vivian. I'm sorry.

VIVIAN

He's right. Didn't try hard enough. She saved me and I fed her to the wolves.

Vivian breaks down in tears. Nora holds Vivian and tries to console her.

57 INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Nora and Vivian are walking into the hospital room.

Zoe is recovering somewhat, her face is healing and she still has a broken arm and half cast on her leg.

There are two police officers at the end of Zoe's bed, finishing up their report, then leave.

VIVIAN

What did they say?

ZOE

You got what you deserve, in their new politically correct voice.

NORA

Can your father help, put pressure on them.

ZOE

You didn't fill her in. My father is practically why I'm an addict.

NORA

Conservative.

ZOE

Religious bootcamp was taken literally for the dear Senator.

VIVIAN

Fuck. You being in there with those fucking monsters kills me.

ZOE

Monsters hide.

Vivian holds Zoe again and Nora notices they need time and gets ready to leave.

NORA

I'll leave you two alone. I can drop over food to your place, for you both. Same code?

ZOE

We're a we all of a sudden?

VIVIAN

She's right. I want you to come stay with me.

ZOE

I have been broken to shit for the last time. I do need you.

VIVIAN

I'm here.

NORA

Anything I can do. I will.

ZOE

Just keep me out of that murder mystery. Got it.

NORA

Fair.

58 INT. VIVIAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Vivian grabs her things to go to class at the University. Zoe is with crutches, dressed, her arm in a sling. Vivian goes around the apartment making sure Zoe has everything she needs, TV remote, phone, coffee.

ZOE

I'm not an invalid.

Zoe looks at her cast and arm.

VIVIAN

You know how the security works?
(MORE)

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

You have to buzz anyone in, you can see them at the front. The counsellors are coming by, one from NA, trauma specialist, and a case worker from social assistance.

ZOE

House calls? Is that 'cause of you and Nora or does someone care I was almost left for dead.

VIVIAN

It was fucking bad, Zoe. I think the system may be catching on.

ZOE

I always said social assistance was a sign of failure. Not sure what I saw as successful.

VIVIAN

(leans in to kiss
Zoe)

Living is succeeding. That's what we were doing. One day...

ZOE

At a time. Got it.

(looks at a text on
her phone)

Fuck the Senator wants to come by.

VIVIAN

He was at the hospital. Maybe it's time to give him a chance.

ZOE

Nothing more sobering than Dad.

VIVIAN

Use the security camera. Okay?

ZOE

Got it.

Vivian blows a kiss good-bye to Zoe. She races down the stairs and off to work at the University.

59 INT. EMERSON UNIVERSITY OFFICE- DAY

Nora is in her office. As she hears Vivian walk towards the door she swings around in her chair abruptly.

NORA

I dropped some food.

VIVIAN

We got it, thanks.

NORA

How is she?

VIVIAN

Holding on. She wants to get sober.
It's a tall order.

NORA

I've been so worried. And the two
of you?

VIVIAN

Are Zoe and I together now, 'cause
of you? It somehow became a blur.

NORA

And the counsellors?

VIVIAN

On their way over, as well as her
Dad.

NORA

Senator Ramos?

VIVIAN

He's done quite the number on Zoe growing up. He motioned the abortion by parental consent clause because of Zoe's teenage pregnancy from an assault.

NORA

For fuck sakes.

VIVIAN

I messaged the therapist to be there for her after he's gone.

NORA

Do you think she'll get through?

VIVIAN

I may be fooling myself, but I do. I think this time she'll make it.

NORA

She will, with you.

(changes topic)

Who's up today? I can head class if it's too much.

VIVIAN

A class about gender politics is just what I need.

NORA

I have to fly out to Newfoundland for more research. Will you be okay?

VIVIAN

We will. You've done so much.

Vivian gives Nora a hug.

60 EXT. VIVIAN'S APARTMENT- STAIRCASE - AFTERNOON

Vivian is rushing up over the stairs and runs directly into Zoe's father Senator Ramos leaving the apartment.

VIVIAN

I thought you'd be gone already.

SENATOR RAMOS

I waited for the social workers to be done.

VIVIAN

You haven't upset her, I hope.

SENATOR RAMOS

I offered money.

VIVIAN

Not what she needs.

SENATOR RAMOS

She said. She's choosing this lifestyle?

VIVIAN

And what lifestyle do you mean, the drugs, the abuse, me. Or all of it?

SENATOR RAMOS

She needs a way out, Vivian. It seems you've cleaned up your act.

VIVIAN

You may not remember, my act was my husband slamming my head. And your daughter took care of me. I owe her everything.

SENATOR RAMOS

I don't approve of you two together, or even understand it.

(MORE)

SENATOR RAMOS (CONT'D)

But if you can keep each other off the street, that's enough. And the offer for money still stands.

VIVIAN

How much does it cost for you to try and understand?

SENATOR RAMOS

That's what Zoe said. Maybe you're meant to be together.

VIVIAN

Maybe.

Senator Ramos continues down over the stairs.

Vivian cautiously enters the apartment.

Zoe is at the table, two placemats are set, candles are lit. There is a box of Cheerios on the table.

ZOE

Come join me.

VIVIAN

Hell of a day?

ZOE

Hell of a big fucking day? I spent all day making dinner, too.

VIVIAN

(laughs, looks down
at her cereal)

The milk jug is a nice touch.

Vivian puts her hand on Zoe's.

ZOE

Cereal for supper is a good sign.

VIVIAN

I know.

PRESENT DAY:

61 INT. GRANDMOTHER'S HOME, NEWFOUNDLAND - DAY

Francis and Nora are sitting at the table for tea.

FRANCIS

You were only ten when your mother
and father were killed.

NORA

And you've been pouring my tea
every since.

FRANCIS

I had to catch up quick to raise a
feisty young child like yourself.

NORA

I should've stayed.

FRANCIS

You took after your mother, you
wanted school and that was that.

NORA

I didn't give you a say?

FRANCIS

You've made something of yourself.
A professor.

NORA

For what's good its done.

FRANCIS

If I'd known you would leave I'd
made you work at the fish plant.

NORA

I'd probably be better off, can't
say this book is going anywhere.

FRANCIS

It'll come to you. Why don't you
take a walk around the town. I'll
have supper on for you when you
get back.

62 EXT. WOODS HARBOUR GRACE - DAY

Nora takes a long walk, at first she is just hiking. She knows every nook and cranny, every square inch of woods and exactly what rock that Elfreda was killed by. The rock is marked now with a proper sign, as if it's a draw for tourists.

She walks through the woods past the rock going through the motions as she has done many times and then continues on up over the hill outside in the schoolyard.

In a big grassy meadow Nora lies down, resting, but as always Elfreda is not far from her thoughts. With the voices of young children on the playground in the background, Nora lies there.

63 EXT. HARBOUR GRACE MUSEUM - DAY

Nora continues to walk through town, along the road and stops into the museum.

64 INT. MUSEUM - DAY

Museum guide, TORI (18), cheerfully greets her.

TORI

Hello again, Nora.

NORA

Nice day.

TORI

Back for more research.

NORA

You know me too well.

TORI

The coin purse is still on display.
I kept an eye out for the letter
you mentioned, and asked around
but nothing came up.

The Museum Guide's boyfriend comes in and she is
distracted, they laugh and carry on and hang out closer
to the back door.

Wind blows through the museum and Nora takes the beaded
coin purse from the display case, cautiously eyeing the
back door.

Nora holds the coin purse tight in the palms of her hands
knowing it is the last thing Elfreda held.

She holds it as if by her will alone she can make the
man suffer who horrifically slaughtered Elfreda.

CUT TO:

65 INT. EMERSON UNIVERSITY - OFFICE - DAY

Nora looks over old newspapers on Elfreda's murder.

Vivian reads the newspaper out loud again from the
original EXPRESS NEWSPAPER article of 1870.

VIVIAN

The unfortunate victim: Elfreda
Pike only 16 years of age, bearing
an excellent character, and
respected by all who knew her.

Nora continues reading.

NORA

... Face, chin, deeply cut, jaw
broken teeth knocked out.

(MORE)

NORA (CONT'D)

As regards to the character of poor Elfreda, we rejoice to say that it was of a truly good young woman, of Christian parents, her moral character known to be perfectly free from stain, she was a regular attendant at her church.

VIVIAN

The young woman has been slaughtered and they are boasting in the newspaper that her virginity is intact. They rejoice. Would they put it in print if she had been compromised, like a rotten fruit at the market?

NORA

She was brutally attacked. The murderer bleed out the victim, which can suggest a violent act of rage-passion. Why the crime isn't sexual in nature is rare.

VIVIAN

Intimate act, maybe he thinks he saved her. She will always be pure. You know how fucked this stuff can get.

NORA

I know. It's 1870 Newfoundland and it could be today.

HARBOUR GRACE, 1870:

66 INT. POLICE STATION - MORNING

Three constables review their notes. Constable Ward begins by dumping the contents of his satchel on the desk describing the objects.

CONSTABLE WARD

We went over to check on the
Reverend Mother and Moira.

CHIEF MITCHELL

Moira is a lot braver than most
her age. She was willing to give
another full testimony, recount
the events against the Mother
Reverend's wishes, of course.

CONSTABLE WARD

There was a piece of blue cloth
found at the scene of the crime.
It's woolen and I discovered it
snagged to a stump very near the
body.

He holds up the tiny strip of material between his thumb
and forefinger. There's no blood on the material.

CONSTABLE FUREY

It looks like a piece of uniform.
And it could've been there long
before the killing.

CHIEF MITCHELL

I think you're right. There's really
no way of telling.

CONSTABLE WARD

I don't know if this gives us
anything?

Furey picks up the cloth and moves it around in his hand,
trying to see if there was any kinds of insignia.

CONSTABLE FUREY

Hard to tell if it is a uniform
from here or overseas.

CHIEF MITCHELL

Furey, solved a brutal homicide in St. John's, the killer was a foreign sailor.

CONSTABLE WARD

It would be something if you cracked this case, Constable Furey.

CONSTABLE FUREY

There's a big difference in tracing a piece of cloth from a uniform and tracing a serrated knife.

CHIEF MITCHELL

Constable Ward this is not a competition, we are all here to find the killer, understand?

CONSTABLE FUREY

I'll ask around and get an opinion on the piece of fabric.

CHIEF MITCHELL

Did anything come of chatting to the townspeople?

CONSTABLE FUREY

I didn't learn much. Most folks were just curious about what happened. Let's start with family, that's often where the secrets come out.

CHIEF MITCHELL

With kid gloves, when it comes to the family.

Ward unclips his notebook.

CONSTABLE WARD

All we know right now is that Elfreda was volunteering at the
(MORE)

CONSTABLE WARD (CONT'D)
dormitory and then left to meet
Thomas, a love interest.

CHIEF MITCHELL
Let's find Thomas and bring him in
for questioning. I'm off to the
morgue. They'll need my testimony
tomorrow in court for the coroner's
inquiry.

Chief Mitchell leaves the room.

CONSTABLE WARD
Looks like your experience will
pay off, getting to interview the
family could give you a lead.

CONSTABLE FUREY
Maybe I'll get lucky. And we can
wrap this case up.

CONSTABLE WARD
It's not the kind of town that
sleeps with a killer on the loose.

CONSTABLE FUREY
Hard to be believe there's a killer
amongst these churchgoers.

CONSTABLE WARD
There wasn't until Elfreda. We
have to get her justice.

Constable Furey turns away, already distracted.

67 **EXT/INT. RYAN MANSION- DAY**

Constable Furey knocks on the door and as it swings open
stands one of the prettiest women he has ever seen, JULIE
SHEA (30).

CONSTABLE FUREY

Good day. I'm Constable Furey.
Sorry about disturbing your morning
but I'm investigating the death of
Elfreda Pike. Does a Miss Julie
live here? It's Miss is it?

JULIE

Yes, on both accounts. I'm Julie ,
and yes, you may speak to me. Would
you like to come in?

Julie is impressed by the handsome uniformed policeman.

CONSTABLE FUREY

You don't mind if I take some notes,
do you?

JULIE

Not at all. I wondered if you were
a Chief, those titles don't mean
much to me.

CONSTABLE FUREY

No, a Constable, my age may suggest
otherwise. I was transferred on
different postings. Maybe a sergeant
soon, if all goes well. And the
title Miss, you never thought to
...

JULIE

Marry? No, I put my work first,
like you, I believe. It meant more
to support myself even in this
age.

CONSTABLE FUREY

You're a smart woman. Shall we
proceed.

JULIE

I will do whatever I can to help.
(MORE)

JULIE (CONT'D)

Elfreda and I were close. I have her and a girl Moira over here to help from the dormitory.

CONSTABLE FUREY

Is there anything that sticks out in your mind that may shed some light on what happened?

JULIE

I'm still in shock. Elfreda was such a gentle person. Always helping at the Regency Girls Dormitory. I really can't believe she is dead. She worked here. I'm the head housekeeper, but I'm in need of extra help.

CONSTABLE FUREY

Did she have a boyfriend? Or did you speak of that kind of thing.

JULIE

Thomas Guy for several months. Everything seemed to be going well. Then, out of nowhere, she told me she was breaking up with Thomas. I don't know why she was breaking up with Thomas, but she did talk about a man being interested in her.

CONSTABLE FUREY

Do you know who he was?

JULIE

Sadly, I don't. All I know is that the man was attracted to her and she wasn't willing to expose their relationship. I assume he was married.

CONSTABLE FUREY

Do you know if she was meeting
this man?

JULIE

I believe she met the man in
Mosquito Cove. And it could be on
the night of the murder. I'm afraid
to say.

CONSTABLE FUREY

How long since she lost interest
in Thomas?

JULIE

I would say a couple of weeks.

Furey makes some notes and closes his book.

As he stands up, he remembers the piece of cloth in his
pocket. He takes it out.

CONSTABLE FUREY

One last thing. Do you recognize
this piece of cloth.

Julie takes the cloth in her hand.

JULIE

Yes, its our own Regiment, dress
uniform. For the younger lads.
I'm working on mending on mending
one in the closet, to help the
brigade.

Julie motions towards the closet and shows Constable
Furey the uniform.

Constable Furey takes Julie's hand as she passes back
the piece of cloth to him.

CONSTABLE FUREY

If you think of anything else that
is of importance please let me
know.

CONSTABLE FUREY (CONT'D)

We'll have people in this area
keeping watch. We may want to talk
to you again.

Constable Furey is very tempted to ask Julie if he can
see her some afternoon when she finishes work, but he
thinks better of it.

Julie holds Constable Furey back, as she thinks of more
to tell him.

JULIE

I was the one who told Thomas Guy
of Elfreda's death. Poor Thomas
almost collapsed on the Ridge when
he heard. Heartbroken.

CONSTABLE FUREY

Have you seen him since?

JULIE

No. I haven't.

He and Julie exchange warm glances as he leaves.

68 INT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

The courthouse is crowded. The Terra Nova Constabulary
has called on officers from the nearby community to help
with crowd control.

Constable Furey enters to see Constable Ward, Chief
Mitchell, and Dr. Montgomery. Mitchell is upset that
Furey is late.

CHIEF MITCHELL

It's about time. Give me the notes
you have. We don't have much time.

69 INT. COURTROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mitchell finishes speaking and the door to the courtroom room bursts open. They immediately enter. The court sheriff orders all hands to be silent as JUDGE PETERS(60) is ready to enter.

JUDGE PETERS

All rise. I'm presiding over the coroner's inquest on the death of Elfreda Pike. Let us commence. Please be seated.

Chief Mitchell stands at attention with the two other constables, then marches towards the bench and salute Judge Peters.

Chief Mitchell reads Constable Furey's statement.

CONSTABLE MITCHELL

Constable Furey's report concludes Julie of Ryan Mansion was close friends with Elfreda, she worked there.

JUDGE PETERS

Constable Furey called on her then.

CONSTABLE MITCHELL

Yes, your Majesty. Furey was there to see if she had news on Elfreda. That is when Julie shared the news of a possible romance with Thomas.

The courtroom erupts once more with the sound of the townspeople.

JUDGE PETERS

Order in the court. This is your last warning.

Mitchell reaches up and loosens his shirt collar, an action he would never condone for his staff. Beads of sweat run down his face.

He reaches into his vest and grabs his handkerchief.

He wipes the perspiration from his brow with one hand and holds the police report in the other.

CHIEF MITCHELL

Miss Julie points out that Thomas Guy had been rejected by Elfreda. Another man had shown interest in her. Miss Julie didn't have a name.

Constable Furey is put out, he knows this is the information he collected from Julie.

Thomas Guy can't take anymore. He gets up from his seat and swiftly leaves the courtroom, shoving and pushing his way through the mob of people standing in the rear of the room until he gets to the front doors.

There is an uproar inside the courtroom as people shout obscenities at Thomas, and he breaks away from the crowd.

CROWD

You bloody murderer! You'll hang for this!

The crowd tries to restrain Thomas and warns him that this is a court of law.

The sheriff opens the tall front doors and allows Thomas to exit.

The courtroom grows quiet as the doors slam shut.

Nobody tries to stop Thomas from leaving, he hasn't been charged with anything.

JUDGE PETERS

The purpose of this inquest is to seek information about the death of Miss Elfreda Pike. I will now ask Chief Mitchell to continue and open the floor for further input from anyone present in the court.

When the courtroom settles down, Mitchell again steps up to the podium. He has little else to add except to reiterate the point made by Judge Peters.

CHIEF MITCHELL

No specific evidence has been found.
Not enough information has come
forward to warrant a charge. At
present, we only have circumstantial
evidence.

Judge Peters officially opens the court for public input. There is an eerie silence in the room. It is obvious that they are getting impatient. There is no doubt, that many inside the courtroom have already determined Thomas is the killer.

JUDGE PETERS

Elfreda Pike has been murdered on
January 6th, 1870. The investigation
should proceed on the evidence
thus far. The uniforms of all the
quarter-leads must be confiscated
by the police, based on a piece of
cloth found near the crime scene.
Her Majesty's Court is now
suspending this coroner's inquest
until further notice, at which
time I will resume these proceedings
to probe further into this young
woman's untimely death. Long live
the Queen!

70 INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

On entering the building, a frustrated Mitchell marches over to his desk and calls out to the other Constables.

They gather around the stove to warm their hands. Chief Mitchell reaches into the woodbox and picks up a junk of wood.

He opens the front door of the stove and throws the wood in as violently as he can.

CHIEF MITCHELL

Thomas Guy is a convicted man as far as this community is concerned. We haven't uncovered a single fact that can lead us to arrest him and yet the community wants to hang him.

Chief Mitchell looks worried as he sits at his desk and removes his hat and his holster. He goes over to a table and takes out his pencil. He jots some notes as he gives Constable Ward directions.

CHIEF MITCHELL (CONT'D)

We have to act swiftly in order to avoid a riot.

Chief Mitchell leans back in his seat and places his hand under his chin. He pauses while he ponders his next point.

CHIEF MITCHELL (CONT'D)

(to Constable Furey)

I would like for you speak to Julie Shea one more time to see if there was some other mention of Elfreda's male friend.

CONSTABLE FUREY

Will do, Sir.

Constable Furey shows secret delight for another visit with Julie.

71 EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Constable Furey looks over the fence and sees Julie standing on the front porch.

Julie looks towards him as he gets closer but then turns away fearing he might think she is flirting.

He opens the gate and proceeds up the steps.

CONSTABLE FUREY

(to himself)

I wonders if others feel this way.

He notices that her hair flows over her shoulders and onto her hooded cape and he is astounded again at her beauty.

CONSTABLE FUREY (CONT'D)

It's so nice to see you so soon. I thought I would stop and say hello.

JULIE

No bother at all.

CONSTABLE FUREY

Would you like to join me for a short walk? Maybe it would help get your mind off this horrible thing for a little while.

JULIE

If we can get back before nightfall, that sounds good to me.

They walk through Peddle's Lane, which is heavily forested with only a few houses.

It is a pleasant but cold night with little wind.

Being close to the sea they can hear the heavy surf crash against the cliffs.

JULIE (CONT'D)

I had to leave school to support my family with this job. And you, why this job? This town?

CONSTABLE FUREY

I think it's commendable that you made a sacrifice for the sake of your family's security.

(MORE)

CONSTABLE FUREY (CONT'D)

When I came to St.John's, the Terra Nova Constabulary was recruiting and I applied. I had just finished school, and they took me and posted my in small communities.

JULIE

It hasn't really been much of a sacrifice for me. I love my work. The money is fair.

Julie trusts Constable Furey. She puts up her hood and he helps her put it up over her head, being careful not to disturb her hair.

CONSTABLE FUREY

I bet there are many men who are interested in you?

JULIE

Not really. I was never home in Mosquito long enough.

CONSTABLE FUREY

There's really no way of knowing unless somebody tells you, isn't that right?

JULIE

You can tell if someone is interested in you by the way they look at you.

CONSTABLE FUREY

Did Elfreda ever tell you how she felt about this new man?

JULIE

It wasn't like her to share that kind of thing. But she broke Thomas's heart.

CONSTABLE FUREY

Maybe she was foolhardy leaving him. She may have thought twice, if given another chance.

JULIE

Maybe.

CONSTABLE FUREY

I think sometimes young women are a pure mystery to me.

They are nearing the end of the lane and head into a dark wooded area.

Constable Furey heart begins to beat rapidly and he has to strain to control his breathing.

Unbeknownst to Julie, he reaches into his pocket and holds the material from the crime scene tightly. Julie is beginning to feel uncomfortable.

JULIE

It's getting dark and cold. Maybe we should turn back.

CONSTABLE FUREY

Your wish is my command.

He quickly cradles her arm to make sure she doesn't slip. They make an about turn and he releases his gentle hold immediately so Julie won't think he is being too forward.

He doesn't want to veer away from the conversation they are having so he asks Julie quietly what she meant by something else going on with Elfreda.

CONSTABLE FUREY (CONT'D)

Do you think there really was somebody else in Elfreda's life?

JULIE

On my way to work later the same day, I dropped by her grandmother's house and she hadn't arrived. That happened several times.

CONSTABLE FUREY

How do you know the times when she left and when she arrived? Did you ask her where she had been or who she was with?

JULIE

Yes, I did. And she just grinned and said nothing. If there was someone in her life it's still a mystery to me.

Constable Furey is falling for Julie but this is not the time to tell her. He hangs on her every word about the case.

Constable Furey unlatches the gate and takes Julie's hand as he leads her up the steps.

He does the gentlemanly thing and wishes her goodnight without the slightest brush of a kiss.

Julie secretly wishes he had been just a little bit less of a gentleman.

72 INT. POLICE STATION HARBOUR GRACE - EVENING

Ward is on his way back to the station with the uniforms and he is surprised to see Furey still there.

CONSTABLE WARD

You're working late?

CONSTABLE FUREY

I just came back from seeing Julie, at Chief Mitchell's request.

CONSTABLE WARD

I've got the uniforms.

CONSTABLE FUREY

I'll stay here and write up what we have found so far. Have you identified the uniforms?

CONSTABLE WARD

Not yet. It is good you mentioned that.

CONSTABLE FUREY

I can do it for you if you want. I'm here anyway doing reports. I'll double check all our information and make certain that we've got it right.

CONSTABLE WARD

Are you sure? That would be a great help. I also have this letter from Thomas, found in a book at the Pike's.

Ward shows Furey the letter Kathleen gave him. Furey reads the letter silently.

CONSTABLE FUREY

Well done. I will label all the evidence and then we will be ready for our meeting with Mitchell.

CONSTABLE WARD

Thank you for this.

73 INT. POLICE STATION HARBOUR GRACE - NEXT MORNING

Ward and Furey are at the police station to give their reports to Chief Mitchell. Ward is first to report, when he shows him the note Thomas Guy has written to Elfreda.

CONSTABLE WARD

I have this letter from Thomas Guy
we just catalogued.

CHIEF MITCHELL

This complicates everything. If we
believe that Thomas was infatuated,
he could have acted out of rage or
passion. What do you think, Furey?

CONSTABLE FUREY

Already taken care of, Sir.

CHIEF MITCHELL

What Furey?

CONSTABLE FUREY

I have already logged the letter,
Sir, as Ward suggested.

CHIEF MITCHELL

But what do you think about the
intensity of Thomas' letter. Do
you think Thomas' devotion to
Elfreda could be unhinged?

CONSTABLE FUREY

Thomas wants Elfreda, there is no
question. Hard to say how far a
man would go to get what he wants.

CONSTABLE WARD

He's just a lad in love.

CHIEF MITCHELL

And yet we have a young woman who
has been mutilated, gentlemen. Not
everyone we meet is well
intentioned. Would you agree?

They both nod, not sure where this is headed.

CONSTABLE WARD

Agreed.

CHIEF MITCHELL

This is a small town, and people live a simple life. But don't be deceived, the answer is here and we have to find it.

Constable Furey turns away as if Mitchell thinks he is hiding something.

CHIEF MITCHELL (CONT'D)

Nothing is a secret in Harbour Grace. Tension is building. I hope we can get through this without a riot.

The Constables nod and head out looking haggard.

74 INT. POLICE STATION INTERVIEW ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Constable Ward tosses his notebook across his desk in frustration.

CONSTABLE FUREY

Are we missing something? Is there a possibility there was another person involved with Elfreda?

CONSTABLE WARD

Why else would she not have recognized him?

CONSTABLE FUREY

You're right, Peter. He may have been somebody Elfreda had just recently met. After he killed her, he may have left the community.

CONSTABLE WARD

That's the only hope we have of nailing down this killer.

CONSTABLE FUREY

You know, we may have been misled by going after motives with Thomas.

Furey is growing more and more excited.

CONSTABLE WARD

If this crime revolves around motives, we need to get Thomas back here. And we can't do anything until Captain Hart's ship arrives in Boston.

CONSTABLE FUREY

True. I will continue with a few hunches from the locals until then.

Constable Furey has a date with Julie. Furey changes into casual clothes and walks to meet her.

Chief Mitchell walks in on their conversation having over heard it.

CHIEF MITCHELL

Your right gentlemen. I have spoken to the legislature. We have to avoid a riot. All hands point to the murderer has left this town and it is time we let the townspeople mourn and move on.

CONSTABLE FUREY

You won't pursue it.

CONSTABLE WARD

We have caught the murderer.

CHIEF MITCHELL

Crimes can defy an arrest. This may be such a crime, I'm afraid. I've been given orders to let it rest.

The police officers steer at each other in dismay.

75 INT. RYAN'S MANSION - EVENING

Julie is pleased that she and Constable Furey will have a romantic setting for their first real social engagement.

CONSTABLE FUREY

I'll be thirty this year and I have already lived several lives. Being a policeman, you really get an opportunity to see the good and the bad. But you Julie are all good, that I know.

JULIE

(she blushes)

I shouldn't say but I am of similar years. I have not thought of marriage because of my duties.

CONSTABLE FUREY

I commend you for that. Given the opportunity would you consider it. I mean we could take it slow. Dating, of course.

JULIE

I would like that.

CONSTABLE FUREY

I am here to protect you, Julie. And love you, of course.

JULIE

I feel there is good in both us Constable Furey, being together.

Julie reaches out and holds his hand. Constable Furey secures her hand in his, and knows Julie has won his heart.

76 EXT. PIKE HOME - DAY

Constable Furey goes to see the Pike family.

Edward doesn't see him approach and there is a surprise on his face when he opens the door.

CONSTABLE FUREY

Good day, Mr. Pike. I want to drop something off to you both.

EDWARD

We have a visitor.

The kitchen is warm and cozy. An indoor clothesline stretches across the kitchen with clothes hanging to dry.

Edward looks at Constable Furey with curiosity.

EDWARD (CONT'D)

You mentioned you've something you want to give us.

He reaches into his pocket and takes out the pink coin purse which was found at the murder scene.

CONSTABLE FUREY

It's no longer necessary for us to have this in our possession.

MARIE

Elfreda's little purse.

CONSTABLE FUREY

How are you getting by?

MARIE

Not too good. Our family has been driven apart.

EDWARD

Kathleen married and went to Boston.

CONSTABLE FUREY

She can have a fresh start?

EDWARD

Kathleen is unsure if Thomas is
the one who murdered Elfreda?

CONSTABLE FUREY

And what causes her to question
it?

EDWARD

She says Elfreda had someone
watching her and was unsure who it
was?

CONSTABLE FUREY

That's odd, maybe an admirer?

MARIE

And now we'll never know.

EDWARD

Captain Hart's ship capsized with
Thomas aboard.

CONSTABLE FUREY

No survivors? Thomas is gone.
Evidence pointed to Thomas, but
it's hard to know.

Edward takes a box of cigarette papers out of his top
pocket.

EDWARD

You and your men did what you could,
I suppose.

MARIE

We'll never move on, we'll barely
just get by.

CONSTABLE FUREY

It's a closed case, I believe.
I'm sorry Mrs. Pike.

EDWARD

I guess Elfreda's killer is above
the law.

CONSTABLE FUREY

I guess so. We'll give our final
reports to Chief Mitchell this
week.

Constable Furey motions to the doorway, slowing down as
he sees a young woman's coat in the porch.

He passes his hand along the sleeve, before the Pike's
come to the door to say good- bye.

Startled as they draw near him, he takes his hat off and
tips it in respect.

77 INT. SERGEANT FUREY AND JULIE'S HOUSE, 1880 - DAY

Sergeant Furey and Julie are married and live in a
colonial style house. Furey has risen to the rank of
Sergeant and they are enjoying their social life and
have two small girls.

The house is well to do and pristine, not a speck of
dust to be found.

JULIE

Are you ready for church dear?

The children are dressed and outside.

SERGEANT FUREY

I don't think I'll be able to attend
this morning. I believe my stomach
is feeling ill.

JULIE

Not from something I've cooked, I
hope?

SERGEANT FUREY

Certainly not, life with you is
fit for a king.

He reaches into his pocket and pulls out some money.

Julie is surprised with the amount.

JULIE

If this is our donation with you
staying home, the Reverend may not
want you in church again.

SERGEANT FUREY

Charity is for more than church
walls and there are many who
struggle in this town.

JULIE

You're generous and always thinking
of others. I'll send your regrets
to the Reverend.

She leans in and kisses him on the cheek.

SERGEANT FUREY

I'll curl up with a book in the
study.

Julie walks out to join the children and go to church.

Sergeant Furey goes to the front window watching them
leave the yard peering through the blinds. There's a
close up pan of Sergeant Furey walking through the home,
objects are ornate and in perfect order. Medals on the
wall to Sergeant Furey for his years of service.

Sergeant Furey goes to his study. Continuing to run his
hand over his collections as if in a museum, toy military
statuettes, animals teeth, a knife collection on the
wall shimmers in the light.

Sergeant Furey opens a closet with many of his uniforms
in tact, ranging from dress wear and police uniforms.

He runs his hand through the clothes until he holds a uniform that is older and covered in a garment bag. The uniform has a rip on the sleeve, a small piece of cloth torn away. In the side pocket he finds the matching small piece of cloth from the scene of the crime.

CUT TO 1920:

78 INT. POLICE STATION- DAY

Constable Ward (80) is looking at the BOSTON SUN paper at the Police Station.

BOSTON SUN: *Thomas Guy seeks justice for unsolved Newfoundland murder case, now over 50 years old.* He speaks with the secretary, MOIRA(66), who sits behind the desk.

CONSTABLE WARD

(under his breath)

Thomas is alive.

MOIRA

All caught up on your weekly newspapers?

CONSTABLE WARD

It's just Peter now Moira, I've been retired for sometime.

MOIRA

As they say once a cop always a cop.

CONSTABLE WARD

Some truth to that, I suppose.
Is Sergeant Furey still at the same house in town?

MOIRA

Oh yes, he still has us send his mail to the post from here. He is sick thou. I believe close to his death.

79 INT. SERGEANT FUREY AND JULIE HOUSE - DAY

Constable Ward goes to Sergeant Furey's house and knocks several times, he carries the newspaper under his arm.

Sergeant Furey's wife, Julie (80), answers the door and is startled not having seen Peter since Harbour Grace.

JULIE
Constable Ward?

CONSTABLE WARD
Peter, ma'am. I heard of Sergeant Furey's condition, and I thought to look in on him.

JULIE
He isn't well. He's getting weaker as the days go by.

CONSTABLE WARD
I won't stay long.

JULIE
(gestures to his coat)
Want me to take that for you?

CONSTABLE WARD
No, I won't be long.

She leads him along the hall and opens a door and peeks in.

JULIE
He's awake. Peter here to see you.

Furey (80) is old and frail. Months of being bedridden has taken its toll on his appearance. He reaches for his glasses on the bedside table.

JULIE (CONT'D)
I'll excuse myself.

SERGEANT FUREY

I thought you may visit.

CONSTABLE WARD

Have you read the paper Sergeant Furey? It seems Thomas is alive.

SERGEANT FUREY

I'll save you the trouble. It took you a while.

CONSTABLE FUREY

You knew Thomas was alive?

SERGEANT FUREY

Open the top drawer and you'll find an addressed letter. I'll be dead before you convict anyone.

Peter opens the letter addressed to the people of Harbour Grace in care of the Harbour Grace postmaster.

Peter studies the letter in disbelief.

SERGEANT FUREY (CONT'D)

If you wait until tomorrow, the people of Harbour Grace will have their convicted killer.

CONSTABLE WARD

Why?

SERGEANT FUREY

I knew best.

CONSTABLE WARD

She resisted you?

SERGEANT FUREY

I sacrificed her from the evil out there. I was good for her and then she rejected me. Cast me aside.

CONSTABLE WARD

(chokes on the words)

You were good for her. You're meant to protect.

SERGEANT FUREY

People would think I was nobody. They would laugh at me. A fool. I had to show them. I devised the perfect crime. Never solved.

CONSTABLE WARD

You're good for her! I should've known who you were.

SERGEANT FUREY

There was no way to know. I made sure of it. I'm notorious. Don't you see. They'll remember me.

CONSTABLE WARD

I was a good cop.

CONSTABLE FUREY

You were a good cop. And I was a good husband. But goodness is not in *all* of us.

Peter goes over to the drawer as if to return the envelope and put it back inside, but he takes the letter and slips it into his coat pocket instead.

As he is leaves he turns back toward Sergeant Furey in scorn.

80 INT. POLICE STATION - DAY, 1920

Constable Ward walks in and hands Moira the letter that he has now post marked for the Boston Sun Newspaper and addressed to Thomas Guy.

CONSTABLE WARD

Sergeant Fury gave me this letter to post to the Boston Sun.

MOIRA

It'll go out first thing in the morning, Constable. I know, you're not a police officer anymore.

CONSTABLE WARD

That I'm not. Good day Moira.

He heads out tipping his hat.

81 INT. BOSTON SUN NEWSPAPER OFFICE - DAY, 1920

Thomas (68), comes into Boston Sun office as he does most days to read the papers. The secretary sings out.

SECRETARY

There's a telegram for you.

THOMAS

For me?

SECRETARY

It's addressed to Thomas Matthew Guy, not Matthew Guy. Maybe it's your christian name.

It's supposed to be printed in today's paper.

Thomas holds up the Telegram from Newfoundland. Tears run down his face as he reads the letter out loud.

THOMAS

The Late Sergeant Furey, confesses on his deathbed, I, Sergeant Furey, confess on my deathbed. I murdered 16-year-old Elfreda Pike. A perfect crime. My only crime. I killed Elfreda. I cannot explain the horror of my ways, evil was within me.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

It's over.

PRESENT DAY:

82 INT. FRANCES HOME - DAY

Nora goes to the closet and looks up, the hatch is unlocked.

She climbs the wooden ladder, like when she was a teenager. Pokes her head through the trap door.

Nora gasps. The attic is almost empty. Racks of clothes, furniture, are all gone.

In one corner there is a trunk and on top of it the same security box marked Julie.

Nora acts quickly, opens the trunk with lace table clothes, small babies dresses, and a few photos.

She opens the security box and rifles through the papers; the same birth certificate, passport. Nora flips through it.

A photo of Julie and a man in a police uniform. Nora turns the photo over. Julie Shea and Constable Furey written on the back, wedding photo 1870.

Nora looks further, there are papers from the Girls Regent Dormitory. MOIRA SHEA birthdate 1854, Unwed birthmother, JULIE SHEA.

Nora horrified.

NORA

He married our Great Grandmother.

Nora looks weak.

She looks around the room and sees a floor board is loose and pushes on it. Another tin can.

Nora pulls it out, opens it, and finds a letter.

LETTER: *Attention Townspeople of Harbour Grace. From Sergeant Furey.*

NORA (CONT'D)
It's it. It's the confession.

Nora reads the letter.

NORA (CONT'D)
Fifty years later in 1920, Constable
Furey, investigator of Elfreda's
murder, confesses on his deathbed.
*I, Sergeant Furey, confess on my
deathbed. I murdered 16-year-old
Elfreda Pike. A perfect crime. My
only crime. I killed Elfreda. I
cannot explain the horror of my
ways, evil was within me.*

Nora takes a photo of the letter and also grabs the letter
and takes it with her.

83 INT. NORA'S BEDROOM - LATER

Nora goes to her room and secures the letter inside her
book and puts it inside her suitcase and locks the case.

84 INT. FRANCIS KITCHEN - LATER

FRANCIS (90) passes Nora over a hot meal, chicken dinner.

NORA
My favourite. Just the way I like
it.

FRANCIS
There's been a lot of careful living
to see you do well, my dear.

NORA
By careful. You mean secrets?

Francis straightens up the table putting hot tea biscuits
and butter on the table and sits down to join Nora.

Francis acts coy.

FRANCIS

Secrets in this town are too many
to count.

Nora persists.

NORA

Our family secrets. I was in the
attic, again.

Francis looks ahead.

FRANCIS

I told you to stay out of there.
If you loved me at all you would
stay out of there.

Nora holds up the photo.

NORA

I found this. Julie married him.

FRANCIS

He had nothing to do with us.

NORA

He's the killer.

FRANCIS

You hear me. He is not who we are.

NORA

I found the letter of confession.
In our attic.

FRANCIS

You hear me. He is not *us*.

Francis storms up from the table knocking over a glass
of water onto to the floor.

Nora gets up and grabs a cup towel and helps Francis
clean up. They are both on the floor cleaning and look
in each others eyes.

Francis breaks in tears.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

She did not know. She did not know.
He killed Elfreda. We did not know.
We did not. My mother was given
the letter and the photo. She
couldn't let others know. The town
would hang her. It would haven
been the end of her.

Nora takes her by the hand. Tries to pull her close.
Francis is guarded, and pulls back.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

You do what you need to with that
photo. It's up to you who you say
this monster is. But he is not my
flesh and blood, you hear me.

Nora tries to calm down her grandmother's shaking.

NORA

I know. I know. I understand.

FRANCIS

No, you don't. We're all research
to you. We lived it. If you were
my mother and had to find that
out, what would you do? And have
the strength to raise a child on
her own. She buried the letter
from the people in town. She had
to. How do you think people get
through, knowing their family is
evil incarnate. What would you do?
What'll you do, now?

Nora hangs her head. Sheepish, from her own thoughts.

NORA

I don't know. I really don't know.

85 INT. BOSTON HERALD OFFICE - DAY

Nora comes in to Vivian and Zoe fielding calls about the release of their new article.

There are several newspaper copies on the desk with Zoe, Vivian, and Senator Ramos on the front page.

NORA

Did we make amends?

ZOE

Some strides.

VIVIAN

It's been quite the week. You?

NORA

It's been quite a week. You can say that.

VIVIAN

Senator Ramos. He's reconsidered the bill on parental consent.

Nora pipes up.

NORA

That's great.

ZOE

I guess the next generation can benefit from his new found wisdom. Even if it's lost on me.

NORA

It's good for you to get him to deal with the truth. Do you feel better?

ZOE

Not really.

NORA

I get it.

Nora looks to Vivian.

NORA (CONT'D)

Great job on the article. I see awards in your future.

VIVIAN

Only award I need is for them to take care of us on the street.

NORA

Will it do that?

VIVIAN

For now. Until the next wave of poison hits us.

NORA

You finding the truth matters to me.

Nora passes Vivian the CONFESSION LETTER.

NORA (CONT'D)

Can you see if it can be squeezed in the paper somewhere.

Vivian takes a look at the letter dated 1870.

INSERT LETTER: I, Sergeant Furey, confess on my deathbed. I murdered 16-year-old Elfreda Pike. A perfect crime. My only crime. I killed Elfreda. I cannot explain the horror of my ways, evil was within me.

Vivian is shocked to see the letter.

VIVIAN

Does it feel good to have the truth?

Nora starts to walk away.

NORA

Not really. It can go to print.

Nora leaves.

86 INT. BOOK LAUNCH - EVENING

Nora reads excerpts from her book.

Vivian and Zoe are there with students lining the walls and the room is filled with an audience for the book launch.

Nora's grandmother is in the audience and Nora becomes emotional, thanking her.

NORA

They looked for Elfreda's killer.
The records claimed the case was
closed. A young woman was killed.
Justice was denied. A young woman's
life denied.

NORA (CONT'D)

50 years later in 1930, Constable
Furey, investigator of Elfreda's
murder writes a letter from his
deathbed to the citizens of Harbour
Grace confessing to the murder of
the young 16-year-old Elfreda. "*I
killed her. I killed her. And you
never suspect.*"

NORA (CONT'D)

You never suspect. A woman's life
denied. Justice denied.

NORA (CONT'D)

Suspect. We doubt the genuineness
of women. Doubt the truth of women.

NORA (CONT'D)

Remember her name, her name is
Elfreda.

NORA (CONT'D)

Thank you to my assistant Vivian
and my students and my Grandmother.

87 EXT. WOODED CRIME SCENE OF ELFREDA - NIGHT

Narrator voice plays over footage of the murder scene.
Elfreda stands erect walking through the trees,
translucent, and powerful. Excerpt from 1870 paper.

NARRATOR

*Every face one meets bespeaks a
saddened spirit; every sound has a
tone of melancholy; and every eye
reflects the deep sorrow, or the
longing aspiration that justice
shall be satisfied.*

NARRATOR

*In the midst of life we are in
death. Nothing should be left
undone publicly or privately, to
discover the murderer. Justice
would best be satisfied were the
regular process of trial then to
be executed on the spot where he
so brutally murdered his innocent
victim. Notorious in his deed of
savagery.*

88 INT. EMERSON UNIVERSITY CLASSROOM, AFTERNOON

ZOE (40) is a professor in front of the class and is
strong and confident. Nora (55) and Vivian (45) sit at
the back of the classroom.

Zoe shows film clips of men politicians speaking against
women's rights and then footage of women's marches and
rallies in North America. Women's voices becoming stronger
and stronger at the rallies. Zoe is holding a book in
her hand *Elfreda* by Nora Wilson.

STUDENT

It's not like that at all now.

ZOE

I know, my dear. I know...

The End.