

Steps and Stones
an original screenplay by
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FADE IN:

EXT. BOULEVARD CROSSING - NEWFOUNDLAND -- DAY

Boulevard Crossing sits amid a former Air Force base, shutdown, broken up pavement, bungalows, abandoned barracks, in Pleasantville, NL, at the foot of Southside Hills.

CLOSE UP: Tunnel walls, graffiti, floats like art.

The town alongside Windsor Lake, an overgrown meadow where water and sky meet for as far as the eye can see.

EXT. STREET - DAY

IRIS (16) and HAZEL (16) walk past the military base, a long straight road with a sharp turn at the end.

They enter the corner store, a daily stop. Iris starts to pull money out of her hoodie pocket.

INT. MONTYS STORE - DAY

Iris and Hazel walk in between the chip racks, and squeeze bags of junk food to get the full bags.

ALICE(65), the store owner, is on the phone by the cash register. They look through the rungs on the rack.

INTERCUT: PHONE CONVERSATION

ALICE

She was only 5. Crushed right in front of me. Nothing left to her.

Alice gets squeamish, anguish on her face.

Iris and Hazel lean on the rack and look on in horror.

ALICE (CONT'D)

He'll never get over it... He won't drive that bus again... An ambulance sped away with her... Yes, my dear, dead... That's for sure.

Girls fall against the rack, make it rattle, and catch it just before it falls. Girls look at Alice, spooked by her phone call.

ALICE (CONT'D)

I got to go. Don't want the teenagers to be repeating this.

Hazel puts their chips and cheezies on the counter, scrounges for money in her pocket and starts to pay.

Iris runs back, stuffs cheezies into her sweatshirt, and runs to catch up to Hazel at the door without paying.

Iris drops a bag and picks it up as she rushes out.

Alice catches Iris out of the corner of her eye, and hurries to the door. She sings out to the girls as they rush to the edge of the curb.

ALICE (CONT'D)

You get back here. I'm not blind.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Iris and Hazel jump back from the edge of the curb. Iris puts her arm across Hazel's chest and pushes her back.

Bus brushes past and the rush of wind comes over them.

Alice is standing in the doorway of the store in the BG. Her face turns white in fear.

Hazel looks to Iris. Shaken.

Iris and Hazel cross the street and continue to walk down the road.

IRIS

Lisa's parents are waiting for her to come home from school.

HAZEL

I can't believe it happened in our town. I hate this.

IRIS

No one is at my house waiting, ever.

HAZEL

My dad is not home. It's not his fault, he was sick. Died. Mom is always there. That's good.

IRIS

I know your family, Hazel, we live next to each other.

Hazel sneaks out a smile.

HAZEL

I know.

IRIS

I dream about not going home.
(MORE)

IRIS (CONT'D)
Getting killed. Not on purpose. Just
to see them cry. Just to see them
want me. Sick, I know.

Hazel leans into Iris and pulls her close, like an old soul,
a Great Aunt she never had.

HAZEL
You have me.

Iris looks to Hazel, lovingly.

They both laugh and lean into each other.

INT. IRIS'S BEDROOM- DAY

Iris, all limbs, like a rag doll, animated. Hazel is steady,
sure of her looks and opinions.

Iris puts the junk food on the bed and lines it up in a row.
Blankets are weathered, holes, unravelled. Washed out colours,
pale pink and rainbows for a child.

IRIS
I can't believe Lisa was killed.

HAZEL
The bus driver didn't kill her. He
just didn't see her.

IRIS
She's dead.

HAZEL
He'll never get over it.

IRIS
What do you think it felt like?

HAZEL
What?

IRIS
To be hit by a bus?

Iris grabs an exercise book and pencil crayons, with her
hands stained orange from the cheezies.

She draws a bus, the road. Girl's long hair and her legs
crushed under a bus wheel. Pencil lines of red gushes like
blood.

HAZEL
Ewww. That's gross.

IRIS
It's how it was.

Iris draws a foot further away from the bus.

HAZEL
Why is Lisa's foot over there?

IRIS
It could be there.

HAZEL
Can you imagine having a little girl
and then she is run over by a bus.

Iris picks up a sad-looking doll, thrown in the corner with
torn-up clothes from when she was younger.

IRIS
I'm never having a baby.

HAZEL
How do you know?

IRIS
Mom says I was made and raised in
the back of a car.

Hazel looks confused.

HAZEL
You have a place now.

IRIS
Mom says we won't have power this
winter, if I keep eating her out of
house and home.

CLOSE UP: Iris gangly frame of her body.

HAZEL
No way I'm having a baby if you're
not.

Iris puts out her pinky, to pinky swear.

IRIS
Never having babies.

HAZEL
Never.

Iris smiles.

INT. GAMES ARCADE - DAY

Iris clenches the sides of the pinball machine tight. She rattles the sides and tips it to get points.

INSERT: Pinball machine. The ball pops up randomly to the top of the machine, lights flicker, and shots flare.

Sound roars and pings, FREE GAME, lights up the screen.

IRIS

YES!

Iris and Hazel get change. A bunch of young boys hang off the machine, but are not playing.

JIMMY(14) lurks around on his own, hands in pockets.

IRIS (CONT'D)

You're holding up the wheel, Jimmy.

JIMMY

Hey, money bucks. Toss us a few quarters. I'm out.

HAZEL

Sucks to be you.

IRIS

I know what'll get you a game.

JIMMY

Didn't think you were that kind of girl.

IRIS

Shut up. Didn't your parents get you a guitar?

HAZEL

I don't see you in a band.

JIMMY

It's not my thing. I have to play ball you know.

HAZEL

Keep your hands soft for pinball-got it.

IRIS

Give you \$15 to borrow it.

Jimmy thinks his getting one over on her.

JIMMY

Sure.

Iris softens.

IRIS

Can I get it now?

JIMMY

Let's go. Don't tell my folks.

IRIS

I won't.

HAZEL

Put her out of her misery. She's
dying to play.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Iris, Hazel and Jimmy head down a long road alongside the tarmac. Boardwalk, a thin line, separates the air force base and the neighbourhood.

EXT. JIMMY'S HOUSE - DAY

Iris, Hazel and Jimmy run up the front steps to his bungalow. The house looks like all the rest, beige, rows upon rows lined up.

He runs in, and slips the guitar out, not to get caught.

JIMMY

Here.

IRIS

Got a case and everything. Cool.

JIMMY

Pulls it back in. \$20.

IRIS

You said \$15. That's all I've got.

Passes him the \$15.

JIMMY

That's good. For now.

IRIS

I'll have more when I play music.

Jimmy laughs.

JIMMY

Fat chance.

Iris pulls the guitar away. She and Hazel walk down the steps.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Iris and Hazel head back down the road.

A half dozen shut-down hangers on the horizon, muted soft blues and grays. Sky and buildings morph as one.

Iris twirls around and hugs her guitar.

IRIS

We got it. This is it.

HAZEL

Your hands will bleed to death before you can play that thing.

IRIS

It'll be worth it.

HAZEL

Do you have any money?

IRIS

I scrounged some from Mom's top drawer.

HAZEL

Let's get to the store.

EXT. MONTYS STORE - DAY

They walk past the store. There's a poster with a PHOTO of two schoolgirls on it.

POSTER: Schoolgirls, wanted for mischief. Report to Alice.

IRIS

Alice!

HAZEL

She wants to scare us.

IRIS

It's working. I'm not going in.

They walk fast and look sheepish.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

They walk by the graveyard, lined with rows of plastic flowers in the field.

A bright bouquet of real red roses pops from the grey concrete tombstones.

IRIS

There are never roses in this town.

HAZEL

Someone loves their grandma.

IRIS

My grandma loved me. Nanny Jo. Josephine. I couldn't say her name when I was little.

HAZEL

She's dead too?

IRIS

She moved away. Mom, drugs, money. She had to go. I guess she could be dead. Maybe.

Iris picks up one of the red roses and holds it with care, smells it.

HAZEL

You have to drive to the city to get roses.

IRIS

I'm taking them.

HAZEL

No way.

IRIS

Do you think we'll grow up and get flowers from Jimmy?

HAZEL

I don't want flowers from Jimmy. He's a kid.

Iris grabs the flowers from the graveyard.

INT. IRIS'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Iris is awake. Crawls out of bed. Street light comes in across the floor. Her red roses hang over the brim of a mason jar, like a fountain.

Band-aids on her fingers. Blood oozes from her thumb.

Iris picks up her guitar and plays the first chords of *This Land is Your Land* by Woody Guthrie.

You can hear Iris's Mom, Pauline (32), in the hallway turning on the bathroom light, but we don't see her.

PAULINE

What the hell are you doing up? Go to sleep, now!

Iris stops playing. Listens.

PAULINE (CONT'D)

You're making a god-awful racket with that thing.

You can see Iris mull over Pauline's words. She puts the guitar beside her and pulls the ripped blanket under her chin.

PAULINE (CONT'D)

Woody Guthrie, you're not.

IRIS

And what are you? Nothing. Not a thing.

Iris rolls over and dreams of her Nanny Jo.

DREAM SEQUENCE:

NANNY JO, sits on the edge of the bed, she wears black pants and a short black leather coat.

NANNY JO

You can do it, Iris. Don't listen to Pauline. You can be anything you want.

Iris rolls over and smiles.

INT. TUNNELS - NIGHT

Iris, Hazel, and Wes (16) run through the tunnel. Wes hangs back, close to Iris. He sees a big rock in front.

WES

Watch out.

She jumps over and clears the rock, just in time.

IRIS

I'm not going home yet. Not until
Mom's passed out.

WES

I'll stay with you.

HAZEL

We're all here, Wes. Together. I
take care of her.

They keep running. Sounds of the circus outside. They reach
the end of the tunnel, their bodies flop over with exhaustion.

A glimmer of light from the circus fills the tunnel.

Iris starts to sing. She is joking around.

IRIS

*I just want to be little miss one of
a kind/ I'm one of a kind/ I'm one
of a kind/ Now I can die my hair
blue and get a new tattoo/ Get a
crazy piercing, that's what some
girls do/ I could get in the mood
and never say what's on my mind/
That's what you get with little miss
one of a kind/*

Wes and Hazel stop in their tracks. Still. She's magical.

Iris laughs trying not to look like a fool.

HAZEL

Your voice is beautiful.

IRIS

Mom says I sound like screeching
tires.

WES

Your mom is messed up. You are
beautiful.

IRIS

I'm terrible.

HAZEL

You know if you say you're terrible,
that's what you'll be.

IRIS

If you say so.
(laughs)
I'm the best singer ever.

Iris twirls. Hazel is taken aback when Iris agrees.

HAZEL
That's better.

Iris shrugs her shoulders.

INT/EXT. TUNNELS - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

There's an opening in the top of the tunnel. Lights flash from the circus and spin like a strobe.

There's noise of a MAN and a GIRL, above the tunnel, but we can't see them.

Iris, Hazel, and Wes can hear the noise above the tunnel.

SOUND: Man pushing against a girl.

Girl SCREAMS out in fear and pain. Then silence.

More pushing. Noise against the concrete. Silence. Heavy footsteps rush away.

MAN
Enjoy the rides. First ones on us.

SOUND: Girl's cry, Crying. Convulsing in pain.

INT. TUNNELS - NIGHT

Iris, Hazel, Wes, stop. Scared. Frightened.

They run the length of the tunnel. Faster, as fast as they can.

EXT. TUNNELS - CONTINUOUS

Iris runs. Hazel is up ahead. She slows down as they get out of the tunnel. She looks back to WENDY (14), with long blazing red hair. She is curled up in a ball, her clothes torn.

Iris looks at Wendy in cold fear, not admitting what has happened.

She races faster to catch up with Hazel and Wes.

INT. STAR OF THE SEA - NIGHT

Iris and Hazel have dishrags in their hands, cleaning every inch of the bar and stacking glasses in the dishwasher.

Band, *Smooth Leather*, older men who know their way around a drum kit play April Wine songs, bar-goers swing to the music. A few on the dance floor.

HAZEL

You think one shitty job cleaning
the hotel would be enough.

IRIS

We're trying to get to sing here.

HAZEL

I don't see anyone calling out for
us.

IRIS

I'm working on it. Hold up, already,
will ya?

Hazel glares at the girls carrying trays of glasses, winking
at the guys.

HAZEL

To think that's all I ever wanted.

IRIS

What? A guy.

HAZEL

A good guy. My mom would say any gal
can get a guy, you need to get a
good young man.

IRIS

Was that creep you were dating a
good young man?

HAZEL

He's gone now.

IRIS

You said that before.

HAZEL

He's gone.

SAM (28) joins Iris and Hazel at the end of the bar.

SAM

Rum and coke.

IRIS

Come'n up. I can only get you a coke.

SAM

I'll top it up. The bar is clean
that's what counts.

Iris passes him the drink.

IRIS
Doesn't your uncle own this place?

SAM
We both own it.

Hazel moves in closer and tries to charm him.

HAZEL
It's time to stop those old geezer
wannabe stars from playing.

SAM
Says who?

HAZEL
We've got songs.

SAM
Whose we?

Iris from behind the bar.

IRIS
Me. Me and Hazel.

SAM
We're not looking for that girlie
shit.

IRIS
How'd you know? No one is dancing to
the band with the bad synthesizer.

HAZEL
Keyboard drum machines. They're
ancient.

SAM
So what do you play?

IRIS
I play acoustic.

HAZEL
And we sing.

SAM
Ballads. That shit.

Iris slams the dishrag down.

IRIS
You won't regret it.

SAM

I regret it. Are you two old enough?

HAZEL

We work here.

SAM

Cleaners I need. Singers, not so much.

HAZEL

You haven't heard us.

Hazel goes over and leans in on Sam, a little too close. He sees her desperation and reads it as seduction. He is not wrong.

IRIS

Give us a chance. Come on.

SAM

You can be the warm-up act. You better be good.

Iris and Hazel are giddy, like the school girls they are.

INT. IRIS'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Iris checks for her mother in her bedroom, then checks the couch. No sign of her.

The house is dimly lit. Street lights radiate black. Inside and outside of the house are like one.

She sees a half packed suitcase in the hall.

On the table is a half-eaten frozen dinner. She looks to the counter and sees a note.

INSERT NOTE: *Had to go. Keep your chin up. Love Mom. Everyone dies famous in a small town. XoXo*

Iris walks around the room, aimless, head down.

She snaps out of it. Makes a quick turn and takes the half-eaten frozen dinner off the table and throws it against the wall like a frisbee.

INT. IRIS'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Iris lies on her bed, and plays her guitar. Dead roses on the side table in an empty mason jar.

Takes her phone out and calls Hazel over and over and over again. Fifty-two unanswered calls.

IRIS
Where is she?

EXT/INT. SAM'S CAR - SAME NIGHT

Hazel and Sam are in his car. Windows are steamed up. They are all in, making out.

INT. IRIS'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Iris calls the POLICE to report a missing person, her mother.

INTERCUT: PHONE CONVERSATION

IRIS
I'd like to report a missing person,
my mother, Pauline Spencer.

POLICE
How long has she been gone?

IRIS
Less than a day, maybe a half day.

POLICE
How do you know she's missing?

IRIS
She left a note.

POLICE
What does it say?

IRIS
*Had to go. Keep your chin up. Love
Mom. Everyone dies famous in a small
town. XoXo*

POLICE
She's not missing. She had to go,
right?

Iris looks down at the note in her hand.

IRIS
Right.

INT. STAR OF THE SEA - LATER

Hazel is by the pool table. Iris storms in and confronts Hazel.

IRIS
Can I talk to you?

Crowd around the bar: *Ooooooh, you're in trouble now.*

IRIS (CONT'D)
Where the fuck have you been?

Iris holds up the phone, shows well over 50 missed calls from her. Shakes her phone in rage in a clenched fist in her face.

Iris stomps back to the bar. Hazel follows her.

IRIS (CONT'D)
I've been calling and calling and calling you about Mom. Where were you?

HAZEL
I've been taking calls about your Mom since I was five. Can't I have one night off to have some fun.

Iris catches Sam out of the corner of her eye, still looking at Hazel in a steamy way.

IRIS
You're never there for me.

HAZEL
When you say something to try and hurt me. It does hurt me, ya know. I think about it all day and all night and then I also cry about it.

Iris tries to brush it off, watches Sam's every look toward Hazel.

IRIS
Like when I say what?

HAZEL
That I talk too much.

HAZEL (CONT'D)
I go around wanting to be quieter. I practice it at home in the mirror.

Iris scoffs at Hazel, as if she is foolish.

IRIS
You don't talk too much. You just keep saying things I don't want to hear like ... *let's leave this fucking town. I can make it in music if I try.*

HAZEL

You do just have to try. Try is all we've got.

IRIS

Who the hell wants to hear that. *I'm good and I have to try.* You're so weird.

HAZEL

There you go again. Now I think I'm weird.

Sam laughs behind the bar, and shares an intimate moment with Hazel and blows her a kiss.

IRIS

I bet there wasn't much talking last night. Banging Sam in his car while I was worried sick.

Hazel looks at Iris, serious.

IRIS (CONT'D)

I called the police.

HAZEL

What did they say?

IRIS

She left a note. She's not a missing person.

INTERCUT: PHONE CONVERSATION

Phone RINGS behind the bar, Sam picks it up and nods.

SAM

Iris, it's for you.

Iris takes the phone call from behind the bar.

PENNY

Hey, this is Penny from Penney's bar, a couple of towns over. I'd like to hire you to play and sing over here.

Hazel leans on the side of the bar.

HAZEL

Is that your Mom?

Iris shakes her head.

IRIS
Sure, I'll be there.

Iris hangs up.

HAZEL
Who is it? You'll be where?

IRIS
Penney's bar asking for a gig.

HAZEL
There's no *I* in us, Iris. *I'll be there.*

Hazel looks to the guys by the pool table, who hang on her every word.

Iris starts to turn away, she screams back.

IRIS
She fucking left. Again. For good this time. That's all I know.

Iris storms out, gives Sam a stare down, a warning.

EXT. GALLEY HOTEL - DAY

Motel doors swing open, paint peels off the siding, it's rundown.

Windows are cloudy from neglect. Swimming pool is small with broken patio furniture around it.

INT. GALLEY HOTEL - DAY

Iris and Hazel are chambermaids, and tear through the rooms to clean them spotless. Iris is still barely talking to Hazel, just gestures to get the job done.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

- Iris pushes the vacuum with force.
- Hazel leans over the bathtub and cleans with a sponge.
- Hazel grabs a wastebasket and tosses bottles and paper.
- Iris flops on the bed and spreads the bed sheet out.
- Hazel makes hospital corners on the bed like a pro.
- Iris fixes one of the corners, as if it is not perfect.

END MONTAGE:

INT. HALLWAY - LATER

Iris pushes the vacuum back into the hallway closet.

IRIS

Done.

It tips over, and the vacuum bag explodes. Dirt, dust, and wrappers pile up in the hallway.

Hazel pulls a heavy plant on top of the pile of dirt to cover it up. Plant lands lopsided.

HAZEL

I'm so done.

Iris wants to scold Hazel, but she lets it go, also feeling the pain of their mediocre jobs.

EXT. TARMAC - NIGHT

Iris rides around on her bike, aimless.

Passes by the airport hangers, runway markings.

Across the runway she sees a small figure. Barely recognizable. She races to him with a vengeance.

It's Wes.

WES

You're riding at night. Odd.

IRIS

You're walking. Strange.

Less defensive.

WES

Can I get on?

Iris lets him on back. She struggles to get going and can't support their weight.

Without a word, they switch places, and start to ride to Iris's house.

INT. IRIS'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Wes walks in. The house same as when Iris's mom left.

Frozen dinner against the wall, a half packed suitcase in the hall.

Wes observes without judgment or sympathy.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

They are new, but like an old couple, friends since grade school. Iris takes Wes by the hand and pulls him onto the bed.

Iris and Wes are in bed, close.

WES

You okay?

Iris nods her head.

There's a calm, a silence. They enjoy each other. Iris smiles.

EXT. IRIS'S HOUSE - DAY

Iris comes down her steps. She puts a key under the mat on the way. EPHRAM (70), Postal Carrier, walks up to the wooden mailbox outside and clocks her hiding the key.

EPHRAM

I'm not sure if that's a good idea.
Did I ever tell you the story about
losing the key to my apartment ...

Iris cuts him off.

IRIS

See you anon. Move along, now.

Ephram puts a stack of mail, bills, in the mailbox at the end of Iris's walkway.

Wes walks out of the house behind Iris. Ephram stops, and gives Wes a hard look.

EPHRAM

There's a stack of mail there for
you, Iris. Looks important.

Iris grabs the mail.

They grab her bicycle, and ride past Ephram.

Iris stares into the sky as they ride off.

EXT. SCHOOL BUS - NEXT MORNING

Iris walks through the field she is carrying a small cooler, a camp stove, blankets, her guitar and the stack of bills from the mailbox.

She walks up to the bus, it is the one that the bus driver ran over the girl Lisa, with a dent from him trying to swerve not to kill her.

Iris lays down the stove and cooler outside.

INT. SCHOOL BUS - MORNING

Iris goes into the back of the bus and sets up her blankets. She makes it cozy like a little house. She strings white Christmas lights, and turns them on.

Iris is practicing on her guitar and singing.

She takes up her sketchbook and starts to draw an IMAGE of the night they were in the tunnel.

She draws Wendy leaning against the side of the tunnel with long red hair, her head in her hands and crying. There is a figure of a man back on looking gruff walking away.

She writes the words *crime scene* above the drawing.

Footsteps: Iris hears someone outside rustling near the side of the bus.

Hazel does a chin up to the side window of the bus, and startles Iris as she looks in.

Hazel pulls the drawing from Iris's hand.

HAZEL

What the hell, you're living in a bus now. This school bus is a *crime scene*.

(holds the drawing)

What's this?

Iris smacks the edge of the window where Hazel's fingers are holding on and Hazel hollers with pain.

She pulls the drawing back from Hazel and shoves the drawing into her guitar case.

EXT/INT. SCHOOL BUS - MORNING

Hazel falls to the ground, not giving up, she races to the other side of the bus and eyes the camp stove.

Iris runs down the aisle of the bus to block the entrance of the bus.

IRIS

How did you find me?

HAZEL

We've been friends since we were
five years old, I know you.

IRIS

Wes. Wes told you didn't he.

Hazel laughs.

HAZEL

It's a bit creepy, don't you think?
Bus driver won't go in this bus and
now you're living it.

Iris eyes the stack of bills she has dropped outside near
the stove.

IRIS

Sometimes creepy is all we've got.

Iris comes out and stands next to Hazel she clears a place
for the stove. Opens the cooler and takes out the hot dogs
and forks.

She lights the stove and cooks the hot dogs, roasting them
to perfection. Each time she rotates the hot dog, she puts
an envelope over the flame and burns each one of the bills.

She passes the hot dog to Hazel, blowing away the ashes from
the hot dog she has cooked.

IRIS (CONT'D)

Supper.

HAZEL

You could've come to my place.

IRIS

It's not one night. This is it.

HAZEL

Mom would want you to.

IRIS

Your mom is not *my* mom. I don't know
if I'll lose the house. Last time
mom almost lost it paying a drug
debt. I don't even know how we got
it back.

Iris and Hazel eat hot dogs sitting in the grass.

IRIS (CONT'D)

I need to make my singing work.

HAZEL

You will.

Iris remembers she is mad about Hazel and Sam.

IRIS

And stay the fuck away from Sam.
That's trouble.

HAZEL

I take care of you, remember.

INT. SAM'S CAR - SAME NIGHT

Hazel and Sam are in his car, again, making out, car horn sounds as their bodies lean up against the steering wheel.

WEEKS LATER:

INT. COACHLINE BUS - MORNING

Iris sits on her own, head against the window. Guitar leans against her passenger seat.

People pass by to get to their seats. She closes her eyes.

Hazel struggles to get down the aisle, as she carries three bags and two hot coffees.

IRIS

You made it. Pried yourself away.

It's Hazel.

Hazel passes her the coffee, smiles ear to ear. Puts her luggage behind the seat.

Iris, fails at being mad. Busts open with chatter.

HAZEL

Just saw Wes at the store. He asked
after you.

They both laugh. They're back.

INT. PENNY'S PUB - NIGHT

Iris and Hazel walk in, swing in their step.

PENNY (56), the bar owner, a woman who commands the room.

HAZEL

Did your husband leave you his bar?

PENNY

Did my what, leave me a what? What makes you think I don't own this bar myself? That I built it myself. I make money, myself. I should send you right back to that used-to-be town you came from.

Hazel backs up. Iris, confident, tries to make amends.

IRIS

I'm sorry ma'am. Hazel is a bit full of herself.

PENNY

Ma'am. Well, aren't you two a pair of backtwoits?

IRIS

A what?

PENNY

Don't make me spell it out for you.

IRIS

Hard to get it right in here, Penny.

Penny starts to laugh.

PENNY

I'm just razzing you. You're ready now, get on stage.

Iris and Hazel take to the stage. Iris sings.

IRIS

I wonder if you thought of me/ All these years/ Did it bring you laughter, Or fill you with tears/ It's funny how life took us down, Different roads/ I guess some doors open/ While others close/ Do you love me/ Oh, Mr. Darcy/ Mr. Darcy/

PENNY

Not bad. For your first time on the road.

Iris and Hazel continue to play their set.

Hazel starts to look queasy like she might fall off the bar stool. She can't hold herself up and forges ahead to the bathroom.

INT. WASHROOM - NIGHT

Hazel grabs a paper towel, covers it in cold water, and puts it on her forehead as she runs inside the washroom stall.

She leans against the stall door, trying to hold herself up. She holds her arms wrapped around her stomach, as if she might split open at the seams.

INT. PENNY'S PUB - NIGHT

Iris continues to sing.

IRIS

*First impressions are just that/
Lost in history they're lost in the
past/ If the right person just got
the right line/ Everything is going
to be alright/ if you give it a little
time/*

Iris rushes to the washroom to check on Hazel.

INT. WASHROOM - NIGHT

Iris leans on the the outside of the stall door. Hazel, terrified, calls out to Iris from inside the cubicle.

HAZEL

What is coming out of me? Clots of blood.

Iris still, leans on the door.

IRIS

Oh Christ, Hazel.

HAZEL

Oh Christ, what?

IRIS

That is your 10 Hail Marys and Our Father.

HAZEL

What are you talking about? My insides just cracked open.

IRIS

It's not what. It's who. That would've been your and Sam's child.

Hazel horrified.

HAZEL
How do you know?

IRIS
I've seen more of my mother's close calls. She'd never even know who the father was, just like with me.

HAZEL
You mean ...

IRIS
Count your lucky stars, my dear.
I'll grab our pay and get us back to the motel.

INT. MOORLANDS MOTEL - NIGHT

Hazel lies on her side on the bed, hands under her cheek.

HAZEL
I'm not stupid, you know.

IRIS
I know. Careless and foolish, maybe.

HAZEL
Bored. I can't stand it at home.

IRIS
No one likes home.

HAZEL
Someone must. Like in New York. They must like home.

IRIS
Who calls New York home?

HAZEL
You never left. At least I tried Spaniards Bay, with that prick. Don't say it. *Look where that got you.*

IRIS
I can't leave home. There's no one to leave.

HAZEL
Come with me.

Iris sits. Quiet.

EXT. MOORLANDS MOTEL - MORNING

Iris and Hazel stand together with all of their bags. There's a bus going west.

IRIS
Should've known, with the luggage
you packed, it wasn't for two nights.

Bus pulls up. They jump back from the edge of the curb. Iris puts her arm across Hazel's chest and pushes her back. Just like she always does. Hazel gets on the bus.

Iris stares after Hazel, lost.

INT. INTERNET CAFE - DAY

Iris sits behind PAIGE (18) at a computer terminal. DAVEY (20), Paige's boyfriend, is looking on the INDEED site.

IRIS
Are you leaving?

DAVEY
It's nice to get a job.

PAIGE
At least you have your place.

IRIS
I work. The hotel and bar. There are
bills.

PAIGE
But you and Wes can at least have a
place.

IRIS
What's he got to do with it?

DAVEY
He said you were a thing.

IRIS
Whatever. What's that? Who are those
people?

Iris looks over their shoulder again. There's a blue Facebook symbol. Fills the screen with photos.

PAIGE
It's Facebook. How can you not know
what Facebook is? Everyone is on it.

IRIS
I don't use a computer. I play a
guitar and rinse a mop. Show me.
Who's everyone?

Paige shows her how to log on.

PAIGE
Sam from the bar. School friends.
Check it out. Hazel is on here.

Paige keeps scrolling, past a photo of Hazel. Iris leaps up.

IRIS
No, she's not. She hasn't even
answered my calls.

PAIGE
She's on here. Want a page?

Iris is tormented.

IRIS
Who are her friends?

PAIGE
Everyone. What kind of name do you
want to use?

IRIS
My own, I guess. Spencer.

PAIGE
Give me a password.

Iris jots it down. Paige looks at the password. *#Everyone
dies famous in a small town.*

PAIGE (CONT'D)
It's kind of long.

Paige takes a photo of Iris and sets it up. Fiddles with the
computer.

PAIGE (CONT'D)
There you're ready. Now pass me your
phone.

IRIS
Make me have Hazel's friends. I want
those.

PAIGE
You want those?

IRIS
I don't know. Can I talk to her?

PAIGE
See this spot here. Everyone can see what you write here.

IRIS
Like who is everyone?

PAIGE
The whole world.

IRIS
Why would the world care what I'm writing Hazel? Hazel doesn't even care. I've been calling.

Paige shows her the section for messages.

PAIGE
Use this section. You can just talk to Hazel on her own.

DAVEY
Give her a cool post, playing at the Star.

Davey sees a poster of Iris on the wall announcing her singing gig, takes a snap, and passes his phone to Paige.

DAVEY (CONT'D)
Here, put this up.

Iris's profile photo and her post fill the screen. A second goes by and they hear a ding.

IRIS
What's that?

PAIGE
Sam liked your profile.

Iris shakes her head.

IRIS
Is Hazel my friend yet?

PAIGE
No. She hasn't accepted. She can see your private message, though.

Iris looks sad.

IRIS
How do you know?

PAIGE
See these green dots. It means she's online.

IRIS
Why hasn't she called?

PAIGE
I don't know. Did you two fight?

IRIS
I don't think so. She hates it here.

PAIGE
I get it.

INT. MATERNITY HOSTEL, HALIFAX - DAY

Hazel is in a maternity room with other young mothers.

They put the little baby in her arms. She looks down with neither joy or sadness. She is stoic.

Background voices of other women: *She should call someone. She must have a friend.*

Nurse comes and takes away the baby.

On the bedside table is a clipboard with paperwork.

Adoption Papers Intake Form: Birthmother chosen name **IRIS**

Hazel reaches over to retrace the letters and make sure the name Iris is clear.

EXT. TARMAC - STAGE - NEXT DAY

Iris walks onto the tarmac. A ceremony with rows and rows of people line the runway.

SIGN: *Fortress of Protection. Fort McAndrew Military Air Base, 70 years old. Take Flight.*

TV cameras are set up for the evening news.

MAYOR POWER (64), introduces two women pilots, Captain Allison Rumbolt (34) and Captain Zoe Webb (33).

MAYOR POWER
I am honoured to introduce two of
Canada's best chopper pilots.
(MORE)

MAYOR POWER (CONT'D)
Captain Rumbolt and Captain Webb.
They've earned the distinction as
the first all woman crew to fly a
helicopter.

Iris sits on the edge of the stage sings *Ode to Newfoundland*,
with a sweet voice and plays acoustic.

She shares the stage with the Captains, looks for their
approval, but there is none.

ALLISON RUMBOLT
We hope to inspire women to seek out
careers with Elevation Aviation in
our home province.

ZOE WEBB
There could be a flight training
school for young women here someday.

Applause from the audience and Iris plays again.

Iris is looking down to her guitar, trying to feel famous
like how Hazel showed her.

IRIS
I wish Hazel was here. Hazel, come
home, please.

Iris looks out across the wide pavement that used to be a
runway.

In the distance she sees WENDY, Sc. 14, Int. Tunnel Night.

Iris squints across the runway looking into Wendy's eyes, as
if to say she knows.

Wendy looks back to Iris across the distance with a scornful
glare. She knows Iris did nothing to help her.

Iris pulls herself away from the stage and grabs her guitar
by the handle. She walks away from the ceremony and audience.

INT. STAR OF THE SEA - DAY

Iris walks in. Sits at the bar. Glares at Sam.

TV CLIP: Evening news is on with the Air Force base ceremony.

ALLISON RUMBOLT
Girls the world is yours to discover.
Air flight is yours to behold.

A bunch of men, DAWSON (38), HARV (32), and BILL (41) line the bar, hurling insults at the TV.

DAWSON

What's she getting on with, conquer what? I'd say conquer supper and put that on the table.

HARV

Like a good missus should. Nothing to fly those choppers. She's special is she, 'cause she's a girl.

BILL

I've landed more of them pieces of metal, mind now.

TV CLIP: Air Base fills the TV screen. Iris sings and is barely the size of a cockroach in the bottom corner. Noise from the crowd buries her singing.

Dawson and Harv look up to see Iris sit alongside them, she looks lost.

HARV

Kind of a waste of your time, Iris.

BILL

You could've played for us.

Iris, too defeated to speak, walks away.

SAM

Still no word?

IRIS

At least one of us got out of this useless town.

SAM

Town of used-to-be's, as Hazel would say.

Iris goes through the pool room and starts to leave. Realizes she forgot her guitar.

Iris walks back to the bar. Same group of men all lined up. This time looking at their phones.

DAWSON

See this, Iris. A bunch of people posted videos of you singing.

HARV
You've got over 400 people following
you with likes.

IRIS
Let me see. Who posts them?

Iris looks over his shoulder. Sam walks over.

SAM
I did.

Iris looks up and fights anger.

IRIS
Why?

SAM
People like to hear you play. I think
I'm going to run a contest.

IRIS
With who?

SAM
A couple more gals have come to town.
They're singers, too.

IRIS
It's our idea. I mean my idea.

SAM
If they're no good. You'll win.

IRIS
So what's the big door prize?

SAM
1st prize. \$200.

Iris is taken aback.

DAWSON
We'll share it all over The Facebook.

HARV
It's Facebook, Daws. Not The Facebook.
You know nothing.

The crowd at the bar laugh.

SAM
Crowds will come. You'll see.

INT. IRIS'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Iris sits on the couch, notebook in hand. Contest, written at the top. She writes lyrics.

Jeopardy is on TV in the background.

TV HOST

Becky Gibbons from Mount Pearl,
Newfoundland, has the most wins this
year.

IRIS

You've got to be kidding me.

TV HOST

Mount Kilimanjaro.

BECKY

What is Tanzania?

TV HOST

That's correct. You're a 3-time
champion from Newfoundland.

IRIS

How is everyone from here a winner?
Everyone. Except me.

Iris scribbles on the page and writes something. Hums to herself. Starts to look like it's working out.

Flips the paper over and writes a list.

INSERT LIST: Power \$108, Groceries \$80, flip phone \$40, guitar strings \$11.

Iris crumples the paper and throws it across the room.

INT. IRIS'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

Iris turns on the shower and jumps in. She hears someone come in.

INT. IRIS'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Wes walks through the front door.

WES

It's just me.

He has a bouquet of real roses in a mason jar. Grabs her notebook and pencil.

NOTE: *Not from the graveyard. XoXo*

Wes hears the shower and sneaks out the front door again.

Iris comes out dripping with jeans and a t-shirt on. Towel on over her head. Glances to the kitchen and catches the flowers out of the corner of her eye.

She sits at the table, scribbles on the back of Wes's note.

IRIS

*The sadness is the emptiness/ We're
shadows in the rain/ She covered me
in loneliness/ Like flowers on a
grave/ Like flowers on a grave.*

Iris picks up her phone and goes online. Hazel has posted a photo. She's in a big park, leaning against a new car.

She checks for a response. No reply. Her friend request is highlighted, not accepted.

Iris shakes the water out of her hair, brushes it.

She grabs one flower puts it in a tiny glass carries it out the door, and puts her guitar on her back.

EXT. HAZEL'S MOTHER'S HOUSE - DAY

TINA (38), Hazel's Mom, is sweeping the front step. Iris passes Tina the rose. Tina smiles.

IRIS

Hazel's okay. She's on Facebook.

TINA

On what?

IRIS

She's in Halifax. You can see her on your phone.

TINA

My phone is on the wall.

IRIS

She's fine.

TINA

She left us, better get used to it, my dear.

IRIS

She breaks my heart. I can't imagine what you're going through.

Tina nods, not sure what to make of her.

TINA
Daughters will break your heart. You
and Hazel.

IRIS
Mother's too. She'll be back. We
made a pact. Even if we're middle
age, it still holds.

Iris starts to walk away.

TINA
Saw your mother and Nan around the
garden. Thought they were gone.

IRIS
My mother. My Nan. Nah. You've got
that wrong.

TINA
They're hard to miss. It was them
for sure.

IRIS
Where?

TINA
Poking around the house. Looked like
your Nan was tearing a strip off
your mother. Guess she could be using
again.

IRIS
That I'd recognize. Haven't seen Nan
since I was young. How'd she look?

TINA
Same. Tall lanky legs. Short leather
coat. A bit of a looker to be honest.

Nanny Jo is hiding behind the rose bush in the front garden.
She gives a smile when hearing 'she's a looker'.

IRIS
Guess I'll keep my eye out.

Iris starts to walk away.

TINA
How's the singing going?

IRIS
Not as bad as it used to be. Not as
good as it could be.

Tina looks confused. Iris walks alongside a stray cat, fur matted and mangled.

Tina is peering over the rose bush into Iris's garden.

EXT. IRIS HOUSE - DAY

Pauline (Iris's Mom) is trying to climb into the window at the side of their house.

NANNY JO (70) walks up behind her and pulls on her sweater, stretches it down over her knees and pulls her down from the window sill. She's carrying a yellow envelope.

Pauline falls back on, buried in a pile of branches on the ground.

NANNY JO

No, you don't. You're not getting back in that house to spend more money in drug dens. Over my DEAD BODY.

Pauline's voice rises from the ground, still covered in a pile of branches.

PAULINE

Guess you must be dead to be signing over the deed to *my* house.

NANNY JO

Who told you. That's why your back.
(shaking the envelope)
I signed this house over to you once before and look where that got us. You can't even raise your own daughter.

PAULINE

Says the mother of the year. Where were you when I was growing up?

NANNY JO

Not in a drug den, that's for sure.

PAULINE

In a bar hanging off the men. That's hardly running Sunday school.

NANNY JO

I tried to make it up to you.

PAULINE

It was too late.

NANNY JO

I tried.

Pauline pushes Nanny Jo back with the branches covered over her feet. Not wanting to hear it.

PAULINE

You never saved me.

NANNY JO

Neither did drugs

PAULINE

Some people do drugs because they like drugs. Don't you know?

Nanny Jo scoffs at Pauline.

NANNY JO

This is for Iris, not us. I got you back here to help Iris, and you'll sign this house over to her if it's the last thing you do.

Nanny Jo shakes the yellow envelope in her hand and holds it for dear life.

TITLE ON ENVELOPE: DEED OF PROPERTY Josephine Spencer.

Pauline sings out with a demonic laugh, still on the ground.

Nanny Jo pulls Pauline off the ground. She leans Pauline against the house and puts the pen in her hand.

NANNY JO (CONT'D)

You won't lose my house again. Sign here.

Pauline falls against the wall of the house and signs as she leans up against the house, with Nanny Jo still holding her.

Nanny Jo lets go and snatches the legal document from Pauline the second it's signed.

Nanny Jo, taller than Pauline, shuts the window down and pushes Pauline out of the back garden before Iris catches her in the garden.

Pauline shuffles off down the road.

EXT. IRIS HOUSE - GARDEN - CONTINUOUS

Nanny Jo slides the envelope of legal docs into Ephram's postal bag as he comes up the walk.

She goes back to her hiding place, behind the rose bush in the front garden.

She stays just far enough out of sight not to be seen as Ephram puts the big yellow envelope in the mailbox, with the title DEED OF PROPERTY, Josephine Spencer.

Ephram looks pleased with himself, as he knows Iris will now have a home.

Iris walks up her garden path and comes to the mailbox, disheveled, wearing a ratty old sweater, twigs in her hair from living on the bus and carrying the cooler, camp stove and her guitar.

Ephram lingers as Iris pulls the envelope from the mailbox. He starts to walk close to Iris, waiting to see the hope in her eyes when she opens the envelope.

Iris abruptly looks over her shoulder up to Ephram.

IRIS

What now? You're only meant to deliver
the mail, you know.

Ephram is startled and now aware of himself being nosey, he makes an about face and scurries out of the yard.

EXT. EPHRAM'S APARTMENT - DAY

Ephram walks up the walkway serious in thought.

Nanny Jo peeks out behind Ephram's 'everybody library', and gauges his look.

She runs ahead to the side door and takes the back stairs.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Ephram enters his apartment, and Nanny Jo peeks out from behind the cookoo clock, amidst his candelabras and bronze statues collection.

NANNY JO

What did she say?

Ephram jumps out of his skin in a fright.

EPHRAM

You scared me half to death.

Ephram gasps for air and falls into his arm chair.

NANNY JO

I am half to death, Ephram. How do you think Iris is going to get that house, unless the bank hands it over ('air quotes') 'Cause I'm dead.

EPHRAM

She has the deed. I think we're in the clear.

NANNY JO

And the death certificate. *My* death certificate.

EPHRAM

It's all there. It's Iris's to keep. Mustn't been easy to get Pauline to sign.

NANNY JO

I'll be damned if my granddaughter ends up like her mother. I had to leave town cause of her drug debts.

Nanny Jo sits in the other arm chair, and lets out a big sigh.

NANNY JO (CONT'D)

All I need to do now is be dead for the rest of my life. That shouldn't be to hard, I suppose.

EPHRAM

Iris needs a home.

NANNY JO

You did a good job printing the death certificate. I'd believe it.

EPHRAM

You know I don't break the law. It's for Iris, that's different.

They both look at each other with years between them.

NANNY JO

Wish I could see the look on her face. I'd love to see her after all these years.

CUT TO:

EXT/INT. IRIS HOUSE - DAY

Iris walks back into the desolate house, empty, except for Iris's bedroom.

She opens the envelope.

She reads her Nanny Jo's death certificate and the deed of the house left to IRIS SPENCER, with her mother's signature.

Nanny Jo looks in the window smiling and hoping to see a big smile on Iris's face.

Iris slides down to the floor with her back against the wall and her knees up to her chest and screams.

IRIS
Is anyone in this family going to
fucking live?

Iris tosses the papers and envelope across the room like it is a frozen dinner.

Nanny Jo sees the papers thrown across the room and left by the edge of the fire place.

NANNY JO
Oh no. No. This is not good.

Nanny Jo hurries off.

Iris stands in the large front window of the house looking out, she doesn't see Nanny Jo run off. Just the rustle of the trees in the front yard.

Iris walks over to the fireplace, takes a deep sigh and picks up the Deed of Property. She places it carefully with a pile of other papers on the mantle.

INT. STAR OF THE SEA - NIGHT

Iris walks into the room. She sees a few new people there, three or four women with guitars. It's contest night.

IRIS
Boring.

Iris gets up and wins the room over.

Iris comes off the stage, WENDY(16) Sc.42, makes her way to the stage.

Wendy sings and the crowd is blown away by her talent, cheering her on.

Iris eyes her in envy, and then looks to the back of the bar and sees the ROADIES from the circus.

SAM

We have a runner-up. Second place, goes to Iris Spencer, and she'll headline on Saturday nights. First prize, I think you can guess. The super talented Wendy Pye. She's going places, folks.

Applause is loud. Iris is fuming.

IRIS

There's no cash. My job is the prize.

Sam walks off the stage and comes over to Iris.

SAM

Saturday is our best night. You'll make a fortune from the door. There are radio personalities here. You could go viral, if I keep posting. Hazel might even come back.

Iris looks up.

IRIS

Have you heard from her?

SAM

No.

He looks concerned.

IRIS

It's been forever.

SAM

I know.

Iris looks to the back of the room again and eyes the men from the circus, as Wendy packs up her gear.

She walks back over to Wendy.

IRIS

I'm proud of you Wendy for keeping with it. I bet your mom is too.

Iris looks to Wendy, and walks closer as they come off the stage.

Iris hesitates. She remembers the tunnel that night.

IRIS (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, Wendy. I was young.

WENDY
So was I. Now I have to live with
your songs around this town.

IRIS
I'm nothing.

WENDY
You did nothing. You didn't help me.

IRIS
I know.

Iris hesitates and looks to the back of the room to the men.

IRIS (CONT'D)
Want to walk with me.

Wendy gives Iris a stare.

WENDY
I take care of myself.

Wendy walks away from Iris, without looking back.

Iris heads to the door, guitar on her back.

EXT. BOULEVARD CROSSING - NIGHT

Iris hears the sound of heavy boots coming up behind her.
The town is lit up. The circus is in town. Ferris wheels. A
hot air balloon in the middle of the old paved runway.

IRIS
AirFlight school for Women. Not
likely.

She doesn't turn around. Knows it's Wes.

WES
Did you get the flowers?

IRIS
Yeah, nice.

WES
I didn't steal 'em from a graveyard.

IRIS
I know.

WES
How did it go?

IRIS
Sam's a fuck head. The prize is to
play on Saturdays.

WES
Saturday nights are a good gig. I'll
go. I didn't want to make you nervous
tonight.

They walk beside the beaming light of the amusement park.
Iris lays her head on Wes's shoulder. More intimate than
usual.

Wes pulls her in close, he laughs.

IRIS
It's not funny.

WES
Don't you want to be famous?

IRIS
I want to *know* I can be famous, not
just small town famous.

WES
Let's leave.

IRIS
And live where? Davey and Paige are
still on a couch out west and barely
working.

WES
I don't want you to just stay, cause
you have to.

IRIS
Someone has to stay. Mom left. Hazel
left. Dad, whoever the fuck he is,
left. Nan's dead or maybe she's here.
Who knows. You'll be next.

WES
I'm not going. I mean unless you
want me to.

IRIS
How the hell can I know what to want
for you, Wes? I have no idea what to
want for me.

WES
Any news on Hazel?

IRIS
Hazel and I used to sing and used to be friends.

WES
You used to be joined at the hip, since kindergarten. It's like you were married.

IRIS
It's not like that, now. She's not here, that's all I know.

WES
You two lived together, like family.

IRIS
Kind of. I'm going to go home on my own tonight. That alright?

WES
Nobody's stopping you.

Wes and Iris pull apart and pretend they don't care. He picks up the pace and moves ahead to give her space. He goes up over the hill and out of site.

She turns around and walks back down towards the circus.

EXT. CIRCUS - NIGHT

Iris walks, the rush of the wind and bright lights from the circus go across her. She is restless. Careless.

ROSS (62), a circus roadie, waves tickets in the air.

ROSS
Free rides til midnight. The last one's on us.

IRIS
What ride can I get for free? A ride to paradise, Paris, LA.

ROSS
Big dreamer. You see yourself in the big lights, do you?

IRIS
It's only circus lights here. Not like you guys are famous.

Laughs.

ROSS

I bet I've tracked more miles than
you will in a lifetime.

They walk back to the theme park.

IRIS

Where've you been?

ROSS

New York. Nebraska. 52 states. Mexico.
Ireland. Spain. You?

IRIS

Spaniards Bay. Corner Brook. Town.
Goose Bay. I'll get out someday. I
just have to keep playing.
(points to her guitar)
Need to get better. Then I'll make
it.

ROSS

You're a little old for a hobby.

IRIS

It's not a hobby. It's what I do.

ROSS

Looks like that guitar means something
to you. Your Mama handed it down to
you.

IRIS

There's no mama. I bought it from a
guy in a games arcade. 15 bucks.
I've still got a chance.

ROSS

Opposed to a washed-up old hoser
like me, that's what you mean?

Iris glances at him.

They arrive at the circus site. A bunch of men stand around
a few oil barrels, fire is lit.

Iris joins Ross with the other guys and hangs around. Men
are much older. They pass around a bottle of rum. Iris takes
a swig, then another.

Ross blares out again.

ROSS (CONT'D)

Last rides on us. You going to get a ride.

IRIS

Nah. I got my guitar. I should get home.

Another round of booze goes past Iris, she takes a couple of swigs.

ROSS

We'll watch your guitar. Nothing like riding the wheel with that kind of buzz on.

Iris is charged up. Years of not being a kid come to a halt.

IRIS

I'll do it.

They slow the Ferris wheel down.

Iris runs over to catch a ride.

Jumps on, wind in her hair. She is free, stoned from the booze. For once, not a care in the world.

Wheel makes a turn and then she catches sight of the men, as she comes over the next turn.

They hold her guitar above the fire in the oil drum. Bobbing it up and down, close to the flames.

Taunting Iris. Iris jumps from her seat and is pulled back by the rail that is bolted in front of her.

IRIS (CONT'D)

Don't you fucking dare. NOOO. You goddamn pricks. Don't you dare. STOP. Stop this wheel, or I'll fucking kill you.

Guys yell out again.

ROSS

What'd you say? Kill me. That's what you'll do.

Iris loses it. Arms raised in panic.

Ferris wheel slows. She leaps out of her seat. She thinks she has won them over.

SLOW MOTION: Ross lowers the guitar into the oil drum, saving only the handle as she runs over in tears.

ROSS (CONT'D)
I'm just a roadie, right?

He tosses the guitar handle to Iris. It's all that's left.

ROSS (CONT'D)
Get out of here or I'll make you
earn your 15 bucks.

EXT. FIELD - TUNNEL - NIGHT

Iris picks up the pace, furious. Tears still on her face. Images are blurred from drinking. She looks to the end of the tunnel, light coming through as if she remembers something.

She sees an IMAGE of a girl curled up with flaming red hair. She shakes her head and runs up over the hill.

Iris SCREAMS back to Ross and the men at the circus.

IRIS
I fucking know what you did. You'll
pay. You'll fucking pay.

Iris walks on and looks back. She speeds up, looks back twice until the image is gone and her screams are dull in the night.

EXT/INT. IRIS'S HOUSE - NIGHT

She gets close to her steps. Wes is waiting, again. Her tears stream harder.

Iris falls into Wes's arms. They go into the house.

Iris puts the handle of her guitar in the corner where she always lays her guitar.

Iris walks into her bedroom on her own.

Iris leans against the wall of her bed, her rag doll still on the tattered covers.

INTERCUT: PHONE CONVERSATION

IRIS
I'd like to report a roadie from the
circus.

POLICE
What roadie? What did you witness?

IRIS
An assault on a young girl.

POLICE
Tonight?

IRIS
No. She was fourteen.

POLICE
Some years ago. Is she with you?

IRIS
No.

POLICE
You'll have to bring her in to the station for a statement. Can you do that? Miss ... what's your name?

IRIS
I'll try. Iris, my name is Iris.

Iris leans into her pillow, street lights across her darkened eyes covered in tears.

INT. STAR OF THE SEA - NIGHT

Sam runs his fingers over a new guitar that sits on top of the bar.

INTERCUT: PHONE CONVERSATION

SAM
Iris. It's me again. Why don't you swing by we've got something for you. The guys told me what happened. Fucking pricks. We still need you here. Call me.

Guys at the bar shake their heads, in disbelief.

SAM (CONT'D)
She'll come around guys. It's a good thing you did. Pitching in like this.

WEEK LATER:

EXT. IRIS'S HOUSE - DAY

Ephram walks up and puts a sizable wooden box in the mailbox.

Iris goes to the mailbox, and pulls out a wooden box. Horrified. It's a wooden urn.

INSCRIPTION: Pauline Spencer. RIP.

Iris takes the box in her hand. Holding both ends like a casket, showing reverence.

Ephram looks on in tears.

IRIS

Mom.

Nanny Jo is behind the rose bush again, crying, holding herself up and leaning on the fence.

Ephram passes Nanny Jo a handkerchief, careful not to be seen.

INT. IRIS'S HOUSE - DAY

Wes comes out of the bedroom.

Iris is sitting at the kitchen table, casual. Wooden urn in the center of the table.

Wes walks to the fridge, opens the door, and mutters as he looks for something to eat in the fridge.

WES

What's that?

Iris thinks he means something in the fridge.

IRIS

What's what?

WES

The wooden box on the table.

IRIS

It's Mom.

Wes slams the fridge door. Walks to the table. Leans with both his hands over the box.

WES

Your Mom?

IRIS

It says right there on the urn.
Engraved. Pauline Spencer.

Iris points to the wooden box. It could be a cigar box, bought in a hippy marijuana shop.

WES

Where the hell did it come from?

Iris, still nonchalant.

IRIS
The mailbox.

Wes echoes Iris.

WES
The mailbox?

IRIS
No other mail. Just mom.

WES
Who sent your mom in the mail?

IRIS
I don't know. There's no return address. At least she had the decency to engrave it. Even if it was done with a blunt pocket knife.

Wes looks shocked.

IRIS (CONT'D)
I guess now I can stop wondering what alley she might've OD'd in. Or who she pissed off stealing money.

WES
She's back?

IRIS
Guess she got the last laugh after she skipped out on me.

WES
What do you mean?

IRIS
She knew I'd still be here. In this town. In this house. At this same kitchen table.

Wes grasping.

WES
We got a new table.

Ignores Wes.

IRIS
I'm not a singer on the road.

WES

That dream is still yours if you want it.

IRIS

I'm an office clerk. It doesn't scream famous singer to me, does it?

WES

Will I get an autopsy? Post it in the paper?

IRIS

Little late for an autopsy.

WES

What do you want me to do?

IRIS

How the hell do I know what I want you to do, Wes? I have no idea what I want to do.

Iris walks to the kitchen counter, opens a small can and takes out the old note, now faded.

NOTE: *Had to go. Keep your chin up. Love Mom. Everyone dies famous in a small town. XoXo*

She glares at the piece of paper and tosses it on the kitchen table. It lands near the wooden urn.

Wes looks on in disbelief. Iris breathes heavy.

Iris pushes the urn on the table toward Wes.

IRIS (CONT'D)

I think we should burn it.

WES

Burn it?

IRIS

In the fireplace. Maybe we can burn that goddamn new guitar you bought me, while we're at it. Cause I'll sure as hell never play that again.

Iris leaves the room. The sound of water from the shower in the bathroom fills the air.

EXT. GALLEY HOTEL, SWIMMING POOL - DAY

IRIS (22) goes to the side of the pool. She takes off her cleaning uniform, and has a swimsuit on underneath.

Iris dives through the water and swims to the surface.

HAZEL (22) is on the balcony, by her Motel room.

Iris can't believe her eyes.

She is dressed in an elegant business suit. Her husband TOM (32), handsome, well-tailored, stands by her side. Hazel looks down to the pool.

IRIS

You're back, are you? About time.

They eye each other hard. Iris sings out.

IRIS (CONT'D)

It's called ghosting, you know?

HAZEL

What?

IRIS

I read it on Facebook. If you abandon a friend and never talk to her again, like never again, it's called ghosting.

Hazel sings back.

HAZEL

So?

IRIS

We are friends. You haven't accepted my friend request.

Hazel walks away.

NEXT DAY:

INT. MUN INSURANCE OFFICE - MORNING

Iris walks into the office. She takes her perch as an office clerk.

Iris pulls out her lunch. White bread. Ham. Crusts cut off. Thermos. The ritual.

She picks out files from a cabinet and starts to do data entry on the computer.

In the background the platform Facebook is on screen and Hazel's photo. She is in front of her mom's house, two doors down from Iris.

IRIS

I can't believe it. Who the hell
does she think she is?

MR. REYNOLDS (64), dated suit and thick hair, comes in to
introduce his new supervisor.

MR. REYNOLDS

I'm happy to say we have a new
supervisor, Mrs. Hazel Lemoine. Mrs.
Lemoine is the top insurance sales
agent from Halifax. She's even won a
trip on a cruise. Something I imagine
most of you can only dream of.

Iris looks back at Hazel's Facebook page and sees photos of
her on a cruise.

Hazel walks in behind Mr. Reynolds and looks more
sophisticated than the day before.

Iris stares ahead.

IRIS

How dare she.

Hazel waltzes by the desks looking over each person's
paperwork.

HAZEL

Organization is key. It is everything.

She looks at several desks with approval. Then comes across
Iris's desk with her lunch half strewn on top, knitting
needles and wool, and some files with papers sticking out.

Hazel picks up the knitting needle and pushes the paper back
under a file with the needle.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

If you want the client to believe in
you. Then you have to believe in
you.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

If you are worth their hard-earned
money. Then you have to work hard,
to earn their money.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

There's a difference between good
and great.

Hazel starts to walk around the room while speaking.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

Good ideas anyone can find. Great ideas must come from you. What do you bring to the table? What makes you unique?

WOMAN 1

I bake wedding cakes.

WOMAN 2

I make quilts.

WOMAN 3

I ride a small motorcycle.

HAZEL

And you Iris? What makes you unique?

Iris picks up her knitting needle like a weapon. Waving it in the air.

IRIS

I knit.

Hazel presses her.

HAZEL

Haven't you played music before?

IRIS

I knit, I said.

Hazel walks on to the other women, who hang on her every word.

Iris gets up, pushes past Hazel, and storms out of the room.

EXT. BOULEVARD CROSSING - DAY

Iris walks through the neighbourhood and passes Ephram's house on the way home in a flurry.

INT. EPHRAM'S APARTMENT - WINDOW - DAY

Ephram looks out his ground-floor apartment window and catches Iris walking in a huff. He is still wearing his postal uniform at home.

Nanny Jo looks out the window.

NANNY JO

She's in trouble, Ephram.

Ephram draws his curtains closed.

Ephram picks up the rotary dial phone and whispers into it as if he is delivering a state secret.

His apartment is heavily decorated full of bronze figurines and an ornate rotary dial phone.

There is a steamer, and several postal uniforms on hangers ready to go. There is a collection of old books.

A small wooden 'Everyman's Library' is in the center of the room, ready to get refilled with books and to set up outside his apartment for passersby.

INTERCUT: PHONE CONVERSATION

EPHRAM

Iris, I just got wind that you may need a new job. Why don't you come by the Post Office and I'll set you up?

Ephram smiles proud of his good deed.

NANNY JO

Good man, Ephram. I could've used the likes of you when I was raising Pauline.

EPHRAM

You didn't have it easy. She didn't have it easy. She doesn't like drugs cause of you.

They walk back over to the window again both leaning on the sill, looking straight ahead.

NANNY JO

You wanted to help, I know.

EPHRAM

I offered more than help. I loved you.

NANNY JO

I had to chose the one that gave us a hard life, the reckless one. Before I knew it. It was too late.

Nanny Jo glances to the side, looks up to Ephram.

NANNY JO (CONT'D)

The worst part is I knew I loved you too.

Ephram still looks straight ahead, he is warm but less willing to give over his emotions.

EPHRAM

Some find it hard to love a man in a uniform, he can be by the book.

Nanny Jo laughs.

NANNY JO

We were too young to understand love,
and now we're too old to remember
us.

EPHRAM

I think you'd know by now, I'd do
anything for you and Iris.

NANNY JO

I know. She'll get through. She has
to.

They both look straight out over the hay coloured field with slate grey blue apartment buildings overlapping the skies edge.

INT. POSTAL OFFICE - DAY

Iris enters, sheepishly, knowing she hasn't been the kindest to Ephram.

She looks to the computer appearing to be lost, it's obvious she is not good at office work.

Ephram comes in and pats her on the shoulder.

IRIS

You always do that.

She smiles, pretending to be okay with her new job and her zany neighbour Ephram's help.

He turns on the computer. Ephram is dutiful and sorting the mail.

EPHRAM

Turn the switch on. And you're away
to the races. You're a postal clerk
now, Iris. Marjorie showed me how to
turn that thing on. There's a video
that comes up to show you how to use
it. I'm afraid the rest is up to
you.

Iris looks bewildered.

IRIS
Thank you for the job.

EPHRAM
I guess you won't be at your own house today, when I drop off the mail. Do you have a message for Wes? He's good to you, is he?

Iris thinks for a second.

IRIS
He does his bit. Works a good job in security. He's good.

Iris plays the video in the background, not too concerned with the details.

EPHRAM
There's a bit to that system, isn't there? You'll get your head around it. Marjorie also left this binder of notes.

Ephram puts the binder on the counter with the newspaper underneath, so it is visible to Iris.

EPHRAM (CONT'D)
I'm off. Guess I'll drop the flyers to Wes. He's sure to be there. On the step, I suppose, like always.

IRIS
Never moves, always there.

Ephram rushes out the door.

Iris rummages through the binder pretending to be dutiful. Picks up the newspaper left underneath and reads the headline on the 3rd page, already turned down by Ephram.

NEWSPAPER HEADLINE:

Pauline Spencer, Boulevard Crossing, deceased. Police suspect inhalation of narcotics as cause of death. Condolences to Iris Spencer, daughter of the deceased. Service arrangements yet to be announced.

IRIS (CONT'D)
Guess she finally got a headline in the town paper.
(makes fun)
Headline: *Small town junkie makes it big, sends her ashes home in a*
(MORE)

IRIS (CONT'D)
*slightly used cigar box carved with
her own pocket knife.*

Ephram rushes back in.

EPHRAM
Forgot Marjorie's special delivery.

Reaches up on a shelf and notices Iris reading the newspaper.

IRIS
You turned down the page for me.

Ephram hesitates.

IRIS (CONT'D)
Best I know what everyone else in
town knows about me, I suppose.

Iris looks further down the page. Hazel and her husband have
a big photo of the Mun Insurance Office opening.

IRIS (CONT'D)
Thanks for the job, Eph.

Ephram looks to Iris with concern.

IRIS (CONT'D)
It's okay if I call you Eph, is it?

EPHRAM
That a be fine, just fine, Iris.

He stumbles with the parcel.

EPHRAM (CONT'D)
Special delivery. Must get this out
on time.

Ephram clumsily goes through the door with the package.

Iris looks down to the paper deep in thought.

EXT. IRIS AND HAZELS'S HOUSE - DAY

Iris walks up the steps to her home. Hazel walks up the steps
to her family home. They are mirror image to each other.

They glare at each other.

EXT./INT. IRIS'S HOUSE - DAY

Iris goes into her house, grabs a cake, and comes back out.

She stomps down her steps.

EXT. HAZEL'S HOUSE - DAY

Iris walks up Hazel's steps and knocks heavily.

Hazel answers.

IRIS
Here.

She passes the cake to Hazel. Starts to turn around.

IRIS (CONT'D)
For your mom.

Goes to turn around again.

IRIS (CONT'D)
How's your mom?

HAZEL
No change. She's sick. Really sick.

Iris is like a teenage girl. Turns back on quickly.

IRIS
Sorry.

Hazel sings out.

HAZEL
You missed work.

Iris walks away.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Hazel is sitting by her mom's hospital bed and looks over to her. TINA (52), has her eyes open and is alert.

TINA
Did you see her?

HAZEL
A little.

TINA
Did you tell her?

Hazel shakes her head.

INT. HOSPITAL - RECEPTION AREA - DAY

Iris walks up to the reception desk.

IRIS

The nurse called and said Tina wanted to see me. Is she still taking visitors?

NURSE

Yes, go on in. Just down the hall. She asked for you.

Iris walks down the hall. Sees her name on the wall and slowly walks into the room.

She sees Hazel there.

IRIS

I'll come back.

Tina waves for Iris to come over.

Iris moves toward the bed. Tina pulls Iris in close and hugs her.

Tina tries to murmur something but is tired. She motions to Hazel and points to Iris.

HAZEL

She wants us to talk.

Iris looks dazed. Leans in and hugs Tina again and follows Hazel out of the room.

INT. HOSPITAL COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Hazel leads Iris down to the coffee shop and sits with her.

HAZEL

The cancer has spread. Her lungs. Everywhere.

IRIS

How long?

HAZEL

Days. Maybe a week.

IRIS

I'm sorry.

Hazel pauses.

HAZEL

She got you here to talk to me.

IRIS

Figures.

Iris starts to get up to leave.

Hazel grabs her hand.

HAZEL
Sit.

IRIS
What?

HAZEL
When we thought I lost the baby that
night at Penny's bar. I didn't.

IRIS
You have a baby?

HAZEL
I had a baby.

IRIS
You ...

HAZEL
Adoption. I didn't want you to talk
me out of it.

IRIS
I ... Yeah... I would've.

HAZEL
I know. I couldn't take you doing
that to me.

IRIS
I would've helped.

HAZEL
You couldn't help. My mind was made
up. You would've just made it worse.

IRIS
I'm your best friend. I love you.

HAZEL
But I would've had to do what you
wanted.

Hazel is quiet.

IRIS
I guess. Maybe. You're right.

HAZEL
I know I'm right.

IRIS

You're always right. I hate that.

Hazel softens.

HAZEL

It's still hard. Seeing you makes it worse somehow. Even now.

IRIS

Being stuck with a kid on our hip was just a joke, wasn't it?

HAZEL

You said your mother made you and raised you in the back seat of a car. I didn't think I should do the same.

IRIS

And look at you now. The gal who got out. Taking cruises. Instead of a bus.

HAZEL

It's just a job.

IRIS

Chambermaid is a job.

They laugh. Nurse interrupts.

NURSE

Hazel, you should come.

Hazel looks up, panicked.

IRIS

Go. Go.

WEEK LATER:

EXT. HAZEL'S HOUSE - DAY

People go up and down the steps. Drop off bread, cakes, and casseroles.

INT. HAZEL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Iris and WES (22) walk in. The house is the same as when they were growing up. There's a crowd around the table, flowers, cards with condolences. Photos of Tina from young to old, with Hazel in her arms as a toddler, spread out on the hutch.

HAZEL
It's been a while, Wes. She finally
let you in off the steps.

Wes laughs.

WES
I always knew she would.

Hazel points to a man by the table, dapper in a suit.

HAZEL
That's my husband Tom. He'll be a
while. He likes to talk.

Iris is awkward, always a teenager and nervous.

IRIS
What will you do now?

HAZEL
What do you mean?

IRIS
Will you stay here?

HAZEL
I think I will. Tom will go back and
forth to the company in Halifax. He
owns it.

IRIS
He owns it.

HAZEL
I thought you knew.

Both are awkward, playing grown-up.

IRIS
Your mom was so young.

Iris leans her head against the wall.

Hazel starts to cry.

HAZEL
Your mom was young.

IRIS
No one was there. Maybe in an alley,
who knows? She arrived in an urn
dropped in the mailbox.

HAZEL

Guess we're truly orphans, now.

Iris is deep in thought, knowing she always has been.

They hear someone from the crowd, gather around the table and sing out.

MAN/WOMAN

There's a guitar, Iris. Sing something sweet.

IRIS

I've got to go.

Iris repels an outburst. Grabs Wes's hand. Looks to Hazel panicked. She leaves.

DAYS LATER:

EXT. IRIS'S HOUSE - DAY

Iris and Wes are in the front garden, she is mad.

IRIS

Can't you pick up for me, just once.
Do you have to always be so nice. Do
you think I want to sing at a wake.
Fuck, all we do here is die. I guess
Mom was right.

IRIS (CONT'D)

And stop asking me what to do. How
the fuck do I know what to do.

She storms off toward the house.

Wes walks around the front yard, smacking at the hanging branches.

Door SLAM as Iris goes in the house.

He sees Hazel come out into her front yard.

WES

You've got to talk to her, Hazel. I
know this is not a good time. But
...

Hazel looks back to Wes.

HAZEL

She's spiraling. Her mom?

WES
Her mom. Not playing music. All of
it. You know her.

Hazel doesn't flinch.

HAZEL
So it's over.

WES
Closure. No closure.

HAZEL
I'll be up.

INT. IRIS'S HOUSE - DAY

Hazel walks in and looks around the room. Iris's life is changed. The house is a home.

Iris comes out of the shower, t-shirt and jeans on. Hazel sits in the armchair. She picks up the guitar Wes bought.

HAZEL
It's nice.

IRIS
You ready to draw blood from your
fingertips and mess up your dress.

HAZEL
No. But I'm ready for you to stop
fucking around.

IRIS
That's not what Mrs.Lemoine said. To
draw clients in, you need to share
part of yourself. Be self assured.
Know who you are.

HAZEL
Which means stop fucking around. Not
'making it', doesn't mean you have
nothing to give.

HAZEL (CONT'D)
Play the guitar, Iris. Sing. Who
cares if you're in this town? You
can still be good at what you're
good at. For you.

IRIS
Or I can put my ashes in a cigar
box, like my mother did and Wes can
have two fires tonight.

HAZEL

He's been sitting on your steps since he was a kid. I'm sure that's just what he'd like to do. I can just see Tom waiting up for me.

IRIS

I thought you were perfect. Why are you with him?

HAZEL

Cause he didn't care who I was. Or who I should be. We're like partners.

IRIS

No children.

HAZEL

It's business.

IRIS

Wonder what business Wes and I are?

They laugh.

HAZEL

Play, Iris.

She walks to the fireplace. Picks up a pic for her guitar by the wooden urn of her mother's ashes on the mantel and takes her guitar from beside the fireplace.

Iris strums the guitar and plays.

IRIS

I have a dream of my own. And it's mine all mine alone/It's been my friend since I was just a girl/It has a life it has a heart/It has a soul and it's a part.

EXT./INT. STAR OF THE SEA - DAY

Iris and Hazel walk through the gravel parking lot. Iris has her guitar that Wes gave her, brand new.

Iris and Hazel hesitate and enter.

IRIS

Watering hole.

HAZEL

It's been a while.

Hazel looks across the bar. Sees Sam. They share a look but don't speak.

WENDY (20) walks in, she has long flaming red hair carrying a guitar.

HAZEL (CONT'D)
She's made a name for herself.

IRIS
She's everything.

Iris walks to the back of the bar, where they play pool. She's distracted.

HAZEL
You're playing pool, now?

IRIS
Nervous.

Sam looks to Hazel. Hazel is dressed like a business owner, professional, as if she owns the place and Sam is the stock boy.

He gives Hazel space.

Iris looks out of the backdoor across the field and down towards the empty tarmac and circus.

She sees police lights by the ferris wheel.

Hazel comes over and looks out the door by Iris.

IRIS (CONT'D)
Do you remember when we were playing
in the tunnel one night and Wendy
was crying.

HAZEL
We played there a lot. What night?

IRIS
We were young. Never mind.

HAZEL
We're still young, Iris.

IRIS
I don't feel young.

POLICE officer comes toward the backdoor of the bar.

Iris is still leaning on the doorframe, and Hazel has gathered courage to go over and talk to Sam.

POLICE
Is there an Iris singing here tonight?

IRIS
I'm Iris.

POLICE
There's been another complaint about the roadies. Can you get you and your friend to come to the station.

IRIS
Can we sing first.

Police nods and goes out the backdoor.

INT. STAGE - DAY

Sam takes to the stage, introduces Wendy.

SAM
I'm sure you've been glued to the TV to watch the latest *Idol*. Our very own Wendy was one of the latest winners. Wendy Pye, here to sing tonight.

Wendy goes up on stage and makes sure the equipment and bar stool is set up correctly.

WENDY
TV is great. This is better. Happy to have you all here.

Wendy starts to sing.

WENDY (CONT'D)
Singing in the headlights/ Staying up at midnight/ In your mama's Chevrolet/Settling on a set back/ popping in an 8 track/ Maybe I'm young/Maybe a little naive/Thinking I found the one/ At barely 17/Just barely 17/

Loud applause. Sam takes the mic.

SAM
You're a lucky crowd to hear Wendy at the Star tonight. I'm opening the floor up for any takers.

Iris opens her guitar case. Doesn't look to Hazel or Sam. Just takes to the stage like she never left.

IRIS

*Must have a hole in my pocket cause
I am working 9 to 9/ Never got a minute
and I still ain't got a dime/ If
only money could grow on pines I'd
be sitting on a dock with a fish on
a line/ Ain't getting younger and
the clock won't slow/ Gas ain't cheap,
but I got places to go/*

Wendy gets up and joins Iris. They sing together. As they finish, Wendy takes the mic.

WENDY

I grew up listening to your homemade tapes.

(she joins in)

*I'd be sitting on a dock with a fish
on a line/ Ain't getting younger and
the clock won't slow/ Gas ain't cheap,
but I got places to go/*

Iris looks to Wendy sheepishly.

She walks off the stage up to Hazel who sits by Sam.

SAM

I thought you were homeowners and would have toddlers running around by now?

IRIS

Fuck off, Sam.

SAM

What did you say?

Hazel looks uncomfortable. Iris holds her ground.

IRIS

We can do whatever the hell we want.

Sam shrugs his shoulders.

IRIS (CONT'D)

Come on Hazel.

SAM

At least you're back together. In this fog bound town, where planes don't fly.

Sam laughs to himself.

Hazel follows Iris.

Sam walks over to the corner of the bar and looks down at the new guitar the guys bought, still in it's blue case after all these years.

Iris turns around before they leave, goes behind the bar. Sam is surprised. Hazel walks on ahead to the parking lot.

Iris puts her hand on the neck of the guitar and nods her head toward Wendy by the stage, she means for him to give the guitar to her.

Sam understands Iris, and nods back to her.

EXT. STAR OF THE SEA - DAY

Iris and Wendy carry their guitars and walk out the front door toward the POLICE on the other side of the parking lot in the distance.

INTERCUT: Scene 78 and 79.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT, FLASHBACK

Iris looks back to WENDY (14), with long blazing red hair. She is curled up in a ball, her clothes torn. She looks at Wendy in fear, not admitting what has happened.

Iris races away from Wendy, into the field.

INT. IRIS'S HOUSE - NEXT DAY

Iris and Hazel stand on step stools, hanging drapes.

IRIS
So glad we got husbands.

HAZEL
Your place is tidy as a pin.

IRIS
Your place is like a showroom.

HAZEL
What do you think Pauline would say?

IRIS
Not sure.

HAZEL
I'm glad to be back.

IRIS
You accepted my friend request.

Hazel lights up and holds up a new curtain, she brought over from her house.

HAZEL
I have this left over from my place.

IRIS
Looks pricey for leftovers.

HAZEL
Take it. If not I'll make you run to the Goodwill to buy it.

Iris smiles.

INT. IRIS'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Hazel drops the old drapes on the floor.

Iris pulls a ladder out of the broom closet to help Hazel.

IRIS
Wes is not handy around the house.

HAZEL
Handy with you though, I bet. I'm jealous.

IRIS
Really?

HAZEL
You got what you didn't want. It's perfect.

They balance the new curtains on the rod.

The phone rings.

Iris drops her end of the curtains and gets the phone.

IRIS
I got to get that. Could be Wes.

HAZEL
Mind now.

Iris grabs the phone. Looks intent. Listens.

INTERCUT: PHONE CONVERSATION

IRIS
Who?

RAYMOND (58) on the other end, in a confident voice.

RAYMOND

This is Raymond Mercer. I am with *Idol*. We are doing a show on our *Idol Talent* musical influences. Star of the Sea said you're the music influence in town.

IRIS

I sing at the bar.

RAYMOND

They sent us a video.

IRIS

Sam? I'll kill him.

RAYMOND

This is short notice. But we'd love to fly you up here to join our show.

Hazel is busting with excitement.

IRIS

When?

RAYMOND

The show would be recorded tomorrow. I'll have a plane ticket for you at the airport and send a taxi. All paid for by *Idol*.

IRIS

This is crazy.

Iris covers the phone and sings out to Hazel.

IRIS (CONT'D)

They want me to perform on *Idol*.

HAZEL

Yes. Yes. You'll go.

IRIS

I'll do it.
(hangs up)

HAZEL

You'll go. And I'll go, too.

IRIS

You can't go. Can you?

HAZEL

The company card is my company card,
my dear. I can do as I please. Go
pack. I'll grab a few things. See
you in the morning.

Hazel heads out.

INT. IRIS'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Iris tosses clothes in her suitcase and grabs her guitar and
lays it on the couch.

She has a basket of wet clothes ready to hang up on the line.

Iris walks over to the mantle and starts to run her hands
across the wooden box with her mother's ashes in it, carved
with a pocket knife Pauline Spencer RIP.

Wes comes in and holds Iris.

WES

Is it time?

IRIS

It's time.

EXT. GARDEN - DAY

Wes is in the garden, digs a hole, about two feet deep. Soil,
like potting soil, is in a pile next to the gravesite.

INT. IRIS'S HOUSE - DAY

Iris grabs the basket of clothes to hang outside on the
clothesline.

Wes comes back in.

WES

Holes dug.

Iris turns around and grabs the wooden box off the mantle
and lays it on top of the wet clothes.

Iris looks to Wes with love.

IRIS

I'll do it.

EXT. GARDEN - DAY

Iris walks outside on the patio with the basket and the wooden
box of her mom's ashes sitting on top.

She looks across the garden.

She stops and lays the wooden box on the edge of the BBQ.

Iris starts to hang out the clothes.

She hears a rustle of leaves, and can see someone's shadow behind the rose bush. It's Nanny Jo.

She starts to walk out from behind the rose bush covered in leaves.

Iris looks at her in disbelief but hangs out one more piece of clothes.

Iris picks up the wooden box of her mom's ashes holds it careful like a small casket, and starts to walk toward Nanny Jo.

Nanny Jo comes out covered in a few rose petals and twigs.

IRIS

You're not in this box with Mom,
then?

NANNY JO

No darling, that I'm not.

IRIS

So, I could have a home?

Nanny Jo smiles.

They walk to the hole that Wes dug for the grave and both of them get down on their hands and knees.

Iris puts the box in the ground.

They both push the dirt in to cover up the box of ashes.

Nanny Jo is careful.

NANNY JO

She loved you, you know. In her own
way.

IRIS

I don't know about love, Nan Jo. Wes
shows up ALL the time. That's the
best I can do.

NANNY JO

It's not a bad place to start.

IRIS

I don't even know how to prune a rose bush.

NANNY JO

I've got that done for you, sure.
It's coming back in full bloom.

Iris pushes to pat down the dirt.

IRIS

I'm going on *Idol*. To sing.

NANNY JO

That a girl. I told you, you'd do it.

Nanny Jo pulls some of the rose bushes that were stuck to her off, and puts them on top of Pauline's grave.

IRIS

It's not her wish. She didn't want to die famous in a small town.

NANNY JO

Wishing and wishing wells. Pile of horse manure. You know your Uncle Frank fell down a wishing well and died, that wasn't so lucky was it. Now, he was a good singer. Come to think of it maybe that's who you take after.

Nanny Jo reaches out for Iris to help pull her up off the ground.

NANNY JO (CONT'D)

My shins aren't what they used to be. You'll find out when your old and grey.

IRIS

You think I'll live to be old.

NANNY JO

My dear you're going to live so long, you'll rot.

Nanny Jo starts to walk up over the steps of the patio and Iris is by her side.

IRIS

Where are you going?

NANNY JO

I thought I'd just put on a roast so
Wes doesn't starve while your gone.
I was showing him a few tricks in
the kitchen.

Nanny Jo and Iris start to walk into the house.

NANNY JO (CONT'D)

I think Wes could make a fine cook.
He just likes to be told what to do.

IRIS

He loves to be told what to do.

NANNY JO

I never met a man like that. Men are
right different now, aren't they.

Iris carries the laundry basket as they walk into the kitchen.

EXT. HAZEL'S HOUSE - NEXT MORNING

Hazel walks down her steps, mirror image to Iris coming down
her own steps.

EXT. IRIS'S HOUSE - DAY

A taxi pulls up. Wes is on the step. Iris looks back up to
him, casual but loving.

IRIS

Gotta go. Idol called.

Wes waves goodbye to Iris and Hazel.

EXT/INT. TAXI - DAY

Iris and Hazel get in and the driver puts their suitcases in
the trunk.

Iris and Hazel look pleased with themselves. Taxi driver,
PAUL (68), in a gruff voice.

PAUL

Where to?

IRIS

Town, please.

HAZEL

Airport. Departure entrance.

PAUL
Been driving folks there for over 50
years. Never been on a plane yet.

Hazel in disbelief.

HAZEL
You've never left this island?

PAUL
All I need, I've got right here.

Iris smiles.

IRIS
This is my first flight. I'm
performing on *Idol*.

PAUL
You're that Iris woman. My wife
listens to you all the time.

HAZEL
She's going on *Idol*. She'll be famous.

PAUL
Loosing another good one to the
Mainland. That's it.

IRIS
I'll be back. My home is here.

PAUL
He's a lucky fella tell him.

HAZEL
He knows.

IRIS
Everyone dies famous in a small town.
As mom would say.

PAUL
Your mom must be proud.

IRIS
She left when I was young. Mailed
herself home in an urn. No return
address.

Paul looks confused.

PAUL
You've got a few songs, then.

HAZEL
That's what I keep telling her.

Iris looks to Hazel.

IRIS
You'll come back home with me, right?

Iris and Hazel hold hands as they drive towards town and the airport.

EXT. IRIS'S HOUSE - DAY

Nanny Jo and Ephram sit on the front steps of Iris's house.

NANNY JO
You did a good job, Ephram.

EPHRAM
You did, too. We took care of her.

NANNY JO
Pauline wouldn't have listened to me
no matter what.

EPHRAM
Iris will make a change. It's
different now.

NANNY JO
She gives you a hard time.

EPHRAM
She's just like you.

NANNY JO
At least that Wes stuck around.

Nanny Jo and Ephram look up behind them, and Wes is on the step by the doorway.

EPHRAM
He's not going anywhere fast.

NANNY JO
I think we're in his spot.

Ephram and Nanny Jo grab Wes's bike and peddle down the road, laughing, field and sky in the distance fill the screen.

INT. IDOL STAGE - HALIFAX - DAY

Iris takes to the stage in front of the judges. Judge, LEAH (25), a young gal looks onto the stage.

LEAH

Iris Spencer, is that right?

IRIS

Wendy brought me up.

LEAH

Sometimes a big city can help you.
You've got a good start. I like your
sound.

Iris smiles. Wendy comes in and makes her way to the stage.

WENDY

I just got in.

LEAH

There's our star. Our *Idol* treasure.
Nice of you to get Iris up here.

WENDY

Small town. Some of us look after
our own.

Wendy opens her guitar case the one Sam bought for Iris at
the bar back home.

Hazel comes in and takes a seat further back in the audience.

Iris and Wendy sing from separate mics but side by side and
glance each others way.

IRIS/WENDY

*Must have a hole in my pocket cause
I am working 9 to 9/ Never got a minute
and I still ain't got a dime/ If
only money could grow on pines I'd
be sitting on a dock with a fish on
a line/ Ain't getting younger and
the clock won't slow/ Gas ain't cheap,
but I got places to go/ No good reason
to worry or wait/ Ain't got a second
to waste/*

Iris leaves the stage and lets Wendy finish the song, she
sits next to Hazel.

WENDY

*Take that jump don't matter where
your gonna land/ Love like your never
gonna love again/ Call your Mom make
time for friends/ Life's too short
to not take a chance/ Go off road
when the pavement ends/ The best
(MORE)*

WENDY (CONT'D)

*part ain't always part of the plan/
Lean on the gas until your last
breath/ And live like there's no
tomorrow left.*

CLOSE UP: Iris and Hazel in the audience, she's made it.

THE END.