

EPISODE THIRTY-FOUR

BLACK HARBOUR

"Aftershocks"

By Karen Janigan

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ACT ONE

EXT. ROADSIDE -- DAY

ON an ancient Cadillac as it's winched up by a tow truck.

AUNT SOPHIE

You just tell me where to meet you, and I'll be there. Easiest sixty bucks you ever made.

Buck is operating the winch. Beside him, a compact lady in her mid-to-late sixties -- hustling as fast as she can. AUNT SOPHIE. Traffic goes by.

AUNT SOPHIE

OK, seventy. Final offer.

BUCK

Sorry, m'am. Ya gotta talk to *him*.

He nods behind them to TOMMY HANSON, who's beside his cruiser scribbling notes. The lightbar's flashing. Sophie scowls.

AUNT SOPHIE

He doesn't seem to speak English.

An old Camaro (on its last legs) pulls up directly behind the cop car. Donnie gets out. Sophie hurries over.

AUNT SOPHIE

Finally.
(pointing at Buck)
Look what he's doing.

DONNIE

Calm down, Soph.

AUNT SOPHIE

I'm perfectly calm.
(at Hanson)
He's hysterical.

Hanson raises his head, gives her a look. Sees Donnie.

HANSON

You Mr. Caswell?

DONNIE

Yeah.

Hanson nods toward Sophie.

HANSON

I tried to pull her over in East River. She ran me all the way here at about ninety clicks an hour.

AUNT SOPHIE

(to Donnie)
He was following me so close I almost crashed.
(hands an inch apart)

That close. He had the lights flashing, and the sirens going... I thought somebody robbed a bank.

HANSON
Didja know her licence was suspended?

Donnie's stunned. He looks to Sophie. After a beat:

AUNT SOPHIE
Matter of opinion.

Buck gets in his truck, starts to haul the caddy away. Sophie's agitation peaks.

AUNT SOPHIE
(raising her voice)
You see that? That's against the law!

DONNIE
Soph--

AUNT SOPHIE
(to Hanson)
Give me back my car!

HANSON
Pay the fine and the impound fees, you can have it.
(pointed)
But you can't drive it.

Sophie glares at him. He flips his notepad closed and pockets it -- just as she digs into her handbag, comes up with her own notepad and pencil. Eyeballs Hanson again.

AUNT SOPHIE
And your name would be...?

Donnie sighs deeply.

EXT. NICK'S COTTAGE - DECK -- DAY

ON a small bucket of water as it's upended over Nick's head.

NICK
(it's cold)
Yiiiiikes....

He's sitting in a deck chair overlooking the ocean, towel draped over his shoulders. Jesse's the "dumper," behind him with the bucket in her hand. She's scooped the water from a rain barrel by her side. She squeezes shampoo into her palm, massages it into his scalp.

NICK
Redford did this to Meryl Streep in "Out of Africa." 'Cept he didn't use ice water.

JESSE
It's rainwater. It'll make your hair soft.

NICK
Fabulous. I'll do Clairol commercials.

JESSE

(musing)
"Out of Africa"... is that the one with
the... they had this plane, they flew over
the flamingos, or something?

NICK

(incredulous)
You actually saw it.

JESSE

I saw it.

He reaches up, grabs her hand. From inside the house, the phone starts to RING.

NICK

Thank the Lord, there's a movie we've both
seen.
(tipping his head back to
look at her)
You're not just lying to make me feel good.

She pushes his head forward again, continues to shampoo.

JESSE

I told you. I'm not into movies.

NICK

Good think I changed jobs, huh?
(tips his head back)
Huh?

She's laughing. He reaches up, pulls her down to him. Kisses her. Trying to pull her into his lap. They struggle, laughing. Inside, we hear the answering machine CLICK IN.

NICK

(recorded)
Hi. I can't take your call at the moment...
please leave me a message. Thanks.

BEEP.

EXT. RESTAURANT TO BOATYARD PARKING LOT -- DAY

Katherine and Tasha stroll. Katherine's reading an invoice in her hand as they round the corner.

TASHA

The extra seventy bucks is the haddock.
Brenda ordered it on Friday

KATHERINE

Did I say she didn't?

TASHA

No, but....

KATHERINE

(smiles)
Would ya just let me check the addition.

Tasha looks up.

TASHA
Is that Donnie's car?

Katherine looks over.

Her POV: Donnie's 76 T-Bird, with Donnie and Sophie in conversation inside. Parked near the boatyard.

KATHERINE
Yeah. He just picked up his aunt.

ON Katherine and Tasha.

TASHA
So...your aunt?

KATHERINE
No, other side of the family. Her car conked out, or something.
(re: invoice)
Tell Teddy I'll send the cheque this afternoon.

TASHA
(smiles)
Great.

Tasha heads off. Katherine starts toward Donnie's car.

INT/EXT. DONNIE'S CAR AT BOATYARD -- DAY

Mid-argument.

AUNT SOPHIE
I'm not gonna meet her...

DONNIE
C'mon, what would it hurt?

AUNT SOPHIE
No.

DONNIE
Maybe she can help get your car back.

AUNT SOPHIE
I don't want help from her. I came to talk to you about my wiring problem. If you can't fix it, I'll just go home and hire someone.

DONNIE
Oh, yeah? So how you planning to get home?

AUNT SOPHIE
(pointed)
Well, I guess that's why I need my car, maybe.

Checkmate. Donnie softens.

DONNIE
(gentle)

Soph, you can't drive with an expired license.
(beat)
And the cop said you failed your eye exam.

AUNT SOPHIE
I didn't fail it. Mervil's niece Cindy... at the license place? She's at the number three window, see, and she knows me, and she was on holiday, and so this...
(disdainfully)
...replacement girl... she was over at Cindy's window, and *she* doesn't know how to use the machine properly...

She trails off. She's staring out the windshield.

Her POV: Katherine, heading straight toward them. She waves.

Sophie's frozen.

Donnie sees Sophie's face. Then looks where she's looking. Then back at Sophie, who's quickly turned away.

DONNIE
C'mon, Soph... She's your niece.

AUNT SOPHIE
(fiercely)
You're not gonna say a word. Promise me!

He looks at her, shakes his head, then gets out of the car as Katherine arrives.

KATHERINE
Hey. Everything work out?

DONNIE
Yeah, sorta. Uh, Kathy... this is Clara.

KATHERINE
(leaning in the window)
Hi. Heard you had some car trouble.

Sophie stares at her for a beat. Then looks past her to Donnie.

AUNT SOPHIE
I need to get going.

Katherine's a little surprised. She looks at Donnie.

DONNIE
(to Katherine)
She's had a bad day.

KATHERINE
Oh.
(not sure)
Maybe you'd like to come in for some lunch.

AUNT SOPHIE
I'm not hungry.

DONNIE

(edgy)
Well, I'm starving.

They glare at each other. Katherine looks from one to the other. Buffaloed.

INT. HERMITAGE - SHED -- DAY

Len sits bolt upright, shocked out of a restless sleep by a bad dream. He's sweating, gasping... and wild-eyed.

His POV: a goat, staring right back at him.

Len tries to get a grip. He's bunking in a very rudimentary shed, sharing the space with several goats. He orients himself after a beat, wipes at the sweat on his face.

There's a SOUND of WHACK, WHACK, THUNK outside his window. A pause, and then a repeat. Len kicks off his twisted blanket.

He goes to the door of the shed, looks outside.

EXT. HERMITAGE - SHED -- DAY

Len's POV: Two MONKS are hard at work: BROTHER WILLIAM's splitting wood, BROTHER KEVIN's stacking it. He nods to Len.

LEN
'Morning.

William turns in surprise as Kevin puts a finger to his lips: Sshhhh. An awkward nod as Len remembers he's not supposed to talk.

BROTHER DUTCH comes to the door of the main house, gives a BLAST from a boat horn.

Len jumps. The monks stop working, and head for the house.

A beat as Len considers. Then follows them inside.

EXT. RESTAURANT PATIO -- DAY

Sophie sits at a table by herself. Food's been set out for her and Donnie. She munches while scribbling notes into her pad.

DONNIE
It's the fourth time she's been picked up
this year. So they impounded the car.

INT. RESTAURANT -- DAY

This is Katherine's POV. She's standing near the bar with Donnie.

KATHERINE
You gotta be straight with her, Donnie.

DONNIE
And say what? She lives back of beyond...
she'd die without a car out there.

He's really morose. She watches him.

KATHERINE
You're really fond of her.

DONNIE
Aw, she's a great old bird. When I was a kid, she'd take me on these trips... she usta let me drive.

KATHERINE
How old were you?

DONNIE
(shrugs)
Seven or eight.

Katherine reacts. Then stares at Sophie.

KATHERINE
Was she ever checked for cataracts?

DONNIE
I dunno.

KATHERINE
'Cause if that's the problem, it's an easy fix. She could get her licence back.

DONNIE
Jeez, Kathy... that'd be great. Where do we go?

KATHERINE
Dr. French has an office in town. I could call him.

Donnie looks at her with real love. Takes her face in his hands and kisses her.

DONNIE
Angel face.

KATHERINE
(laughing)
Yeah, right.

She looks back at Sophie.

Katherine's POV: TIGHT on a perplexed Sophie, who's fingering the small nasturtium from her dinner plate. After a beat, she sets it into one of the holes in the saltshaker. Looks up to see Katherine watching her. Her face darkens.

ON Katherine. OK, then. She turns away.

EXT. RESTAURANT -- DAY

VICKY'S sitting on the edge of her seat, trying to engage the attention of STEPHEN RYSHER, a mid-40s mining engineering executive. Lunch is also going on at this table.

RYSHER
So you people have been running these wacky little encounter groups for... let's see...
(refers to a brochure)
Magazine publishers, ad agencies, car companies...Airheads.

VICKY
I'm sorry?

RYSHER
Creative types. Hustlers.
(beat)
The resource sector is different.

VICKY
You're having trouble with your management
team. What's different about that?

He leans forward a touch.

RYSHER
(straight at her)
Everything.

He's pretty aggressive, very self-assured. She sits back in her chair,
about ready to concede defeat.

VICKY
If you already made up your mind, why'd you
bother coming out here?

RYSHER
Because your dear boss Mr. Haskell paid for
the trip.
(beat)
And I have relatives in Pictou.

Vicky stares at him. Then reaches out, picks up the brochure and slides
it into her bag. She stands.

VICKY
Well, I guess we're done, then. Enjoy the
rest of your visit.

Rysher leans back in his chair, squints up at her.

RYSHER
You always give up this easy?

Now she's angry. But she controls her voice.

VICKY
What exactly do you want from me?

Rysher half-smiles. Gestures at her chair.

RYSHER
I want you to sit down and order dessert.
Then I could meet your Mr. Haskell and... we
could talk.

Vicky stares at him, trying to decide if she's being hustled. As she
hesitates:

RYSHER
I brought a cheque for the deposit.

A beat, and she sinks back into her chair.

AUNT SOPHIE

'Scuse me...

Vicky turns. Sophie's leaning toward her.

AUNT SOPHIE

How many "M's" in "incompetent?"

VICKY

Uh... one.

AUNT SOPHIE

Thanks.

She goes back to scribbling. Vicky looks at Ryshe; now he's grinning.

EXT. HERMITAGE - GARDEN -- NIGHT

Len's hard at work in the garden. Using a small hand cultivator to break up the hard soil around the cabbages.

He gets a creepy feeling... like someone's watching him.

He turns quickly.

HIS POV: a wild rabbit watching him. His sudden movement sends the bunny bounding back into the woods near the edge of the garden.

Spooked by a rabbit. Idiotic. He's angry at himself even as he tries to slow his breath. Then he hears a SNAP and turns again.

It's Brother Dutch, carrying a lantern, a bottle of scotch and a glass. He watches Len for a beat.

DUTCH

Brother Tony says the goats' milk is off.
Half as much as usual.

LEN

Yeah?

DUTCH

Thinks they're not getting enough sleep.

Len doesn't know what to say. Dutch hands him the bottle and a glass.

DUTCH

Brother Tony says "Sweet Dreams."

Len pours a little of the scotch out for himself... He takes a swallow, grateful for the comforting burn of a good scotch. He offers the bottle back to Dutch who just shakes his head and smiles.

DUTCH

Slange-ee-vah.

Dutch turns and heads back inside. Len watches him go, his shoulders finally coming down from around his ears. He pours some more scotch into the glass.

INT. HUBBARD HOUSE - KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Katherine's pouring water from the kettle into a teapot. Donnie's beside her. They speak in lowered tones. She's a little ticked off.

DONNIE

You're a doll, Kath. 'Cause I couldn't, like, park her at Nigel's for the night. I mean, he's got me sleeping on a mattress in the kitchen.

KATHERINE

I get the feeling she'd be happier over there.

DONNIE

Aw, she's just cranky. Don't take it personal.

KATHERINE

That's kinda hard when she won't even look at me.

DONNIE

She's scared.

Katherine makes a face: yeah, right. The front door OPENS and CLOSES off.

ANONDA

(calling)
Mom...?

KATHERINE

(calling)
In here.
(to Donnie)
Look, she doesn't wanna eat, fine. She wants to sleep on the sofa, fine. I'm not gonna spend the night arguing.

DONNIE

She'll sleep on the bed.
(she looks at him)
She'll sleep on the bed.

A beat as Katherine considers. Then she picks up the tea tray.

KATHERINE

Then you take the sofa. And I'll stay out of her way.

She heads for the living room.

INT. HUBBARD HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Sophie's on the sofa, scribbling on her notepad. Anonda's standing in front of her.

ANONDA

(spelling slowly)
A-N-O-N-D-A.
(beat)
It means "bliss" in Sanskrit.

Sophie looks at her blankly as Katherine and Donnie enter.

KATHERINE
So you two have met.

AUNT SOPHIE
(right past this)
Donnie, you gotta call Mervil for me. I'm
s'posed to drive her to the foot doctor
tomorrow for nine, and we're not gonna make
it.

KATHERINE
You're welcome to use the phone, Clara.

AUNT SOPHIE
(a touch stiff)
Donnie can call.

Katherine decides not to argue. She sets down the tea tray.

KATHERINE
(to Donnie)
You two help yourself.
(to Anonda)
Get some clean sheets for your bed, Muffin.
Clara's staying with us tonight.

ANONDA
(to Aunt Sophie)
You like pink or yellow?

AUNT SOPHIE
I'm not staying.

Despite herself, Katherine reacts.

DONNIE
(a threat)
Pink or yellow?

A beat, then:

AUNT SOPHIE
(subdued)
Pink.

KATHERINE
Pink it is.

Katherine heads for the stairs. Anonda trails her.

ANONDA
Am I in your room?

KATHERINE
You got it.

INT. HUBBARD HOUSE - STAIRWAY -- NIGHT

Anonda and Katherine climb the stairs.

ANONDA
(whispered)
What's wrong with her?

KATHERINE
(whispered)
She's having trouble with her eyes, hon.
It's making her a little cranky.

INT. HUBBARD HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Donnie's got a cup of tea in his hand. Sophie is studiously ignoring hers. They speak in lowered tones.

DONNIE
You're a big pain in the arse, y'know that?
(more silence)
Why can't ya cut Kathy a break? She's really
tryin' here.

After a beat:

AUNT SOPHIE
She doesn't look anything like your mother.

DONNIE
(a beat)
That's a crock. And you know it.

Sophie ignores this. Looks around the room.

AUNT SOPHIE
I never wanted to see the inside of this
house. I never wanted anything to do with
these people. And look where I end up.

DONNIE
Oh, would ya stop with the 'poor victim'
stuff?

She looks at him quickly. Outrage on her face. He stares back, just as angry.

DONNIE
You knew about Kathy all these years. And
you kept your mouth shut.

AUNT SOPHIE
I did what my sister wanted me to.

DONNIE
I'm forty-five years old, and I suddenly find
out I got a sister 'cause *she* finds out by
accident!
(as Sophie looks away)
The Hubbards lied to her and you and Mom lied
to me. You're no better than they are.

AUNT SOPHIE
Don't you ever say that to me. Don't you
dare!

A moment as they both stew in their anger. Then Sophie sniffs.

AUNT SOPHIE
She's a Hubbard through and through. Just
the way she carries herself.

DONNIE

You don't even know her.

Sophie sniffs again, sips her tea. Silent. Donnie looks at her. His tone softens.

DONNIE

You know what they say, Soph. You can't choose your family.

(beat)

And it's not like you have another niece.

A long beat. Then:

AUNT SOPHIE

(quiet)

I can choose.

Donnie sighs. Gives up.

INT. NICK'S COTTAGE - BEDROOM -- NIGHT

ON the answering machine, as Nick's finger hits the FAST FORWARD button. A message ZIPS forward, unintelligible. Then a BEEP. He hits PLAY.

He's in jeans and bare feet by the machine as it plays back.

VICKY

(through machine)

It's about nine-thirty, and, uh... Rysher's gonna be here any minute, and uh... where are you? 'Cause I don't--

He fast forwards to next BEEP.

VICKY

OK, here's the story. Rysher's a creep. The only reason he let you fly him out here is 'cause he wants to visit his relatives. He says he's willing to talk, so if this thing's gonna happen, it's all up to you, 'cause I--

Nick zips past this one, too.

JESSE

(calling)
The tap's still dripping.

NICK

(calling)
I know.

BEEP. Nick lets it play.

WOMAN'S VOICE

(through machine)
This message is for Jesse Mar. It's Professor Mallone from U.B.C.

Jesse comes into the room, she's heard the first part of the message and has hurried in. She's bathrobe-clad, towelling off her hair from the shower.

WOMAN'S VOICE

I'm calling because a space just opened in the doctoral program... if you're still interested... and if you can get out to Vancouver within the week. Please let me know as soon as you can. Area code 604... 555-7876.

BEEP. Nick hits STOP. A touch stunned.

Jesse's eyes are shining. She's utterly transported.

JESSE

(barely audible)
I don't believe it.

Nick turns to look at her.

JESSE

I didn't think I had a chance. This is...
(beat)
Amazing.

NICK

Uh-huh.

They stare at each other.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. NICK'S COTTAGE - BEDROOM -- DAY (DAY 2)

Jesse's asleep. Nick's watching her. Trying to divine what's going on her head. She stirs, wakes.

JESSE
Hiya.

NICK
Hiya.

They gaze at one another for a beat. Then she kisses him. Stretches, smiling.

NICK
So did you sleep on it?

Her smile fades a little. A beat, then:

JESSE
I have to do this, Nick. It's absolutely everything to me.

An uneasy moment. He wants to be careful here.

NICK
What about waiting a year?

Jesse looks at him. Then pulls herself up into a sitting position.

NICK
Look, I just need to understand. I mean, yesterday, Dalhousie was good enough. Today it isn't?

JESSE
And I told you it's got nothing to do with Dal.
(beat)
Dr. Mallone is the best in the country. She turned me *down* last year. I didn't think I had a chance in hell--

NICK
(a little sharp)
Yeah, we covered that.

His tone is more acerbic than he meant it to be. Jesse feels the sea change here, and doesn't like it.

JESSE
Then I guess you just don't get it.

They stare at one another for a beat. Then she throws off the sheets and gets out of bed. Starts to pull her clothes on.

NICK
I'm sorry.

JESSE
It's fine. I gotta go to work.

NICK
I'll drive you.

JESSE
That's okay.

NICK
Please.

She looks at him. He's trying so bloody hard it hurts.

JESSE
Okay.

He smiles at her. A tentative beat, and she smiles back.

EXT. HUBBARD HOUSE -- DAY

Aunt Sophie is sitting on the front porch. Dressed, purse under her arm, ready to go. A bedraggled Donnie comes out of the house; he's massaging his lower back with one hand.

DONNIE
You're lucky you *didn't* take that couch.

AUNT SOPHIE
Let's go.

DONNIE
Where?

AUNT SOPHIE
To the bank.

DONNIE
Huh?

AUNT SOPHIE
So you can get the money for my car.

DONNIE
Eye doctor first.

AUNT SOPHIE
No way.

DONNIE
No doctor, no driver's licence.

AUNT SOPHIE
C'mon, Donnie. I gotta take Hazel to the vet
to pick up her cat. And take George to cash
his cheque.

Katherine comes out on the porch. She's dressed for work.

KATHERINE
'Morning.

DONNIE
(ignoring Sophie's
silence)
Hi.

KATHERINE
(to Sophie)
You sleep OK?

AUNT SOPHIE
Fine.
(to Donnie)
Let's get the show on the road.

KATHERINE
There's breakfast inside if you want it. I
gotta go take some deliveries.
(to Donnie)
See you later.

She moves down the steps, turns at the bottom.

KATHERINE
(to Sophie)
And you're welcome for the bed.

Sophie stares off blankly. Katherine walks to her van.

AUNT SOPHIE

I'm not going to any doctor of hers.

DONNIE

You are. Or you can kiss your car goodbye.

Aunt Sophie is supremely pissed.

EXT. HERMITAGE - GARDEN -- DAY

A tired Len kneels to survey his handiwork from the day before. He kneels, seeing something.

HIS POV: some of the cabbages he's exposed have been munched by rabbits.

ON Len, a touch sour.

LEN

(to himself)

You little bugger.

EXT. HUBBARD HOUSE DOCK -- DAY

ON the wharf under construction, as seen from the Hubbard deck.

GAIL

How long's it gonna take them to fix the wharf?

TASHA

A month, or something.

Tasha and Marcy stand on the dock with Gail and Helen, both of whom are wearing wetsuits. The Fisher King is anchored here. Their tanks are on the floating dock; a bag is still at the top of the stairs.

JESSE

(calling)

Sorry I'm late.

The girls turn.

Nick (carrying Jesse's gear) and Jesse are coming down the stairs.

Tasha immediately picks up one of the tanks, steps onto the boat.

HELEN

'Morning.

Tasha disappears into the cabin. Marcy follows her as Nick and Jesse arrive.

GAIL

(looking at her watch)

So what's the excuse?

Jesse glances at Nick. Then:

JESSE

Mallone called.

INT. FISHER KING -- CONTINUOUS

Tasha's below, listening.

HELEN
(whooping)
What??????

JESSE
She had a cancellation. I gotta be in
Vancouver in a week.

GAIL
I don't believe this! Talk about a horseshoe
up your ass!

Marcy looks at Tasha. Who turns away and pretends to be busy stowing gear.

JESSE
Yeah, well I dunno how the hell I'm gonna get
organized.

EXT. HUBBARD HOUSE DOCK -- DAY

GAIL
What's to organize? Just get your butt *out*
there.

Jesse and Gail continue to talk in the BG as Helen heads up the stairs to get the bags. Nick follows her.

HELEN
Unbelievable.

NICK
Yeah, it's great.

Nick picks up the bag.

NICK
Too bad she couldn't find someone like
Mallone on the east coast.

HELEN
There's a guy at M.I.T. But that'd cost an
arm and a leg....

Helen takes the bag from him. Meets his eyes, reads his feelings.

HELEN
She's really lucky, Nick.

He manages a smile. Helen turns, moves down to the boat.

NICK
Have a good time.

Jesse looks him for a beat, then climbs onto the boat.

Tasha steals a glance at him, then turns for the cabin.

ON Nick watching them go. The wheels turning.

INT. BOATYARD - OUTER OFFICE -- DAY

Vicky's on the telephone.

VICKY

OK. This is the last message I'm gonna--

She stops mid-sentence. Nick walks past her desk towards his own. She hangs up the phone slowly.

VICKY

Is it against your religion to return messages?

NICK

My machine's not working.

He sits down at his desk, pushes a pile of paper aside.

VICKY

Uh-huh.

He's rifling through a phone book.

NICK

I'm sorry.

VICKY

That's kinda not good enough.

Exasperated, he slams the book shut.

NICK

(tired)

What do you want from me, Vicky?

VICKY

Information would be nice. Like, do I keep trying to pull contracts out of the fire, or do I just lock up and go home?

They stare at each other for a moment. Then:

NICK

I'm sorry about Rysher. I'll talk to him.

VICKY

Before he leaves for Pictou.

NICK

(cool)

I'll talk to him.

He picks up the telephone, punches in an eleven-digit number.

Vicky looks at him. Her PHONE starts to ring.

NICK

You gonna get that?

Vicky picks up the receiver and punches a button.

VICKY

(into phone)

Team Motivate.

NICK

(into phone)

Uh, Boston please. I'd like the number for the oceanography department at M.I.T.

ON Vicky, watching and listening.

VICKY
(into phone)
Um, I'm sorry, he's with a client. Can I help you?

EXT. HUBBARD HOUSE - PORCH -- DAY

Donnie is leading Aunt Sophie up the steps. She is really angry.

DONNIE
Careful. One more step.

AUNT SOPHIE
I'm fine.

DONNIE
Doctor French said the drops'd take an hour to wear off.

AUNT SOPHIE
He's a quack.

DONNIE
OK, he's a quack.

He helps her settle into a chair on the porch.

AUNT SOPHIE
I can see just fine. It's the drops that messed me up.

DONNIE
Soph--

AUNT SOPHIE
Don't "Soph" me. Just get me my car.

Donnie looks at Aunt Sophie. He can see the fear mixed in with the bluster... and feels very protective.

DONNIE
I'll see what I can do.

He moves off.

Sophie sits back. Blinks hard into the middle distance. It's clear she can't see very well. She's uncomfortable -- and scared.

INT. RESTAURANT -- NIGHT

Katherine's prepping limes and lemons at the bar. Donnie sits on a stool. He's as distressed as Sophie was.

DONNIE
What the hell am I gonna do?

KATHERINE
Tell her she has to sell the car.

DONNIE
Are you kidding?

KATHERINE
Then you sell it.

DONNIE
(are you nuts?)
How? The car doesn't belong to me.
(beat)
I'm just gonna have to bite the bullet. Tell
her the truth.

KATHERINE
Good luck.

DONNIE
I need you to come with me.
(she looks at him)
She's gonna get upset, and then she won't
talk to me. If you're there, she can talk to
you.

KATHERINE
Is this a joke?

DONNIE
Please.

KATHERINE
No.
(as he opens his mouth)
No.

EXT. HUBBARD HOUSE - PORCH -- NIGHT

ON Katherine, as Donnie talks.

DONNIE
There's no way around it.

Donnie faces Sophie, still in the chair. She looks small and lost.
She's trying to cover her despair with anger.

DONNIE
Believe me. If there was, I'd--

AUNT SOPHIE
(snapping)
You'd what?

He's at a loss. Turns to Katherine. Sophie locks in on her.

AUNT SOPHIE
(to Katherine)
This was your idea, wasn't it?

Katherine looks at Donnie: see, I told you.

KATHERINE
No, Clara. But I think he's right.

AUNT SOPHIE

Oh, and what you think... that's all that matters, right?

KATHERINE
We're trying to help you.

AUNT SOPHIE
Who's this royal "we?"

Katherine sighs, ready to give up. Sophie stands, turns her fury on Donnie.

AUNT SOPHIE
So the Hubbards are gonna tell us what to do all over again?
(wagging a finger in his face)
I'm done with that! Been done with that for thirty years!

Katherine's taken aback, then angry. Really angry.

KATHERINE
OK, look. I am out of this.

AUNT SOPHIE
You're just like your goddamned father.
(beat)
And you're no niece of mine!

Ka-boom. Katherine's anger morphs into shock. Aunt Sophie can't get off the porch past Donnie, so she turns, goes for the door. Not too steady on her feet.

AUNT SOPHIE
And he says I can't choose my family.
(turning at the door,
blinking at Katherine)
Well, I'm *choosing*!

She turns again, pushes the door open. First the screen door bangs behind her, then the front door slams shut.

Katherine's paralyzed. So's Donnie -- for half a second. Then:

DONNIE
She didn't mean it.

When Katherine can find her voice:

KATHERINE
She's *mom's* sister. Isn't she?
(beat)
Aunt Sophie...

She sees painful confirmation in Donnie's face. She can hardly get her breath.

DONNIE
She made me, Kath.

She gapes at him, then stumbles down the steps. Stops at the bottom.

DONNIE

There was so much bullshit from all the family stuff... she just never got past it. I figured if she *met* you...

ON Katherine, frozen.

INT. HUBBARD HOUSE - ANONDA'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Aunt Sophie is sitting on the bed. Furious... helpless.

A KNOCK at the door.

KATHERINE
(through door)
Sophie... I need to talk to you.

Sophie flinches.

INT. HUBBARD HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Katherine is speaking through the door.

KATHERINE
Please.
(silence)
I want to know what happened. What my father did.
(beat)
Please.

She waits. Nothing.

Katherine steadies herself. Then goes down the stairs.

INT. HUBBARD HOUSE - ANONDA'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Sophie sits on the bed. A tear courses down her cheek. She wipes it away.

EXT. HUBBARD HOUSE - PORCH -- NIGHT

Katherine bangs out of the house. Donnie stands up to follow her.

KATHERINE
I gotta get back to the restaurant.

He catches up, puts a hand on her shoulder.

DONNIE
Kath-- She kept it from me too.

She throws his arm off. Furious and hurt.

KATHERINE
Yeah, but you kept the lie going....

Donnie has no defence.

KATHERINE
I'm sick of secrets.

Donnie looks at her sadly.

DONNIE

(quiet)
Me too.

Katherine turns and leaves.

INT. NICK'S COTTAGE - LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Jesse's sitting on the sofa. Nick's shuffling through a folder of faxes. A tension in the room; she's waiting.

JESSE
Any time.

Nick looks at her. Takes a deep breath.

NICK
Okay.
(beat)
Here's the thing. I think I found a way to get us what we both want.

JESSE
What are you talking about?

He hands her the folder.

NICK
I did some research.
(she takes it)
There are three places in New England doing exactly your research. The top guy in your field is at M.I.T., and I spoke to him this afternoon--

JESSE
(interrupts)
You what?

He looks at her. She can't believe what she just heard.

NICK
Jesse, I'm just tryna... hold onto this.

She's slightly horrified. Turns away. He scrambles.

NICK
Look, OK. Never mind about accommodating *me*. You wanna go to Vancouver... fine.
(beat)
I could do a coupla seminars out there. I mean, the show *travels*. And if it works out, maybe I could... move there.

Now she's astonished.

JESSE
And do what? Sit around and wait for me to finish at the lab?

NICK
I'd be with you.

She shakes her head... trying to clear it.

JESSE

No... no. It'd be totally out of whack.
You're... part of here. Where your kids are,
where I met you...

NICK

What're you talking about? I'm not something
you found on the beach. Some kinda... lab
specimen.

She stares at him.

JESSE

I'm trying to tell you what you mean to me.
You can't just pick this thing up and... *move*
it.

NICK

"This thing" being...

JESSE

(emotional)
This *thing* being these last few weeks and all
the stuff we shared, and the fact that it was
perfect and you're gonna ruin it! If you
don't let it go, you're gonna kill it!

It's almost burst out of her. The words hang in the silence for a
moment. Then:

NICK

So you want me to just... stand on the dock
and wave goodbye.

JESSE

(almost broken)
I just want you to be who you were.

NICK

(cold)
Well, you're outta luck on that one, kiddo.

Jesse looks at him. She's defeated, out of steam.

JESSE

I don't know what else to say to you.

NICK

Well, maybe you could explain the joke.

JESSE

What?

NICK

Or maybe it wasn't a joke. Maybe it was just a neat little scheme for free rent.

He's getting to her. She fights back tears.

JESSE

That's really... mean.

NICK

Oh, it is, huh?

(mimicking her)

What about, this is your life, Nick. Why don't you start living it?

(beat)

Now *that's* mean.

A long moment. They stare at each other then:

JESSE

Maybe I should go.

NICK

What a bloody good idea.

The room temperature has plummeted. Jesse stands, goes downstairs to pack.

ON Nick, furious and frightened.

EXT. HERMITAGE - GARDEN -- NIGHT

Len's laid his foamy down by the garden. He's lying on it, a blanket thrown over him. He's got a lantern burning. Trying to keep vigilant, but he's having a hard time staying awake.

The bunny hops up behind him. Len looks around... but doesn't see him.

Len lays down... and his eyes flutter shut.

The bunny takes a couple of tentative hops out from his hiding place toward the garden. Then makes straight for a cabbage.

No movement from Len. He's fast asleep.

INT. HUBBARD HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Katherine rounds the corner, hesitates, then knocks on Anonda's door.

KATHERINE

Sophie?

ANONDA

(muffled)

Come in!

Katherine's brow furrows. She opens the door.

INT. HUBBARD HOUSE - ANONDA'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Anonda is sitting on her bed, painting her toenails. No sign of Sophie.

KATHERINE

Where is she?

ANONDA

I dunno.

KATHERINE

Was she here when you got back?

ANONDA

Yeah. She borrowed twenty bucks, and I called her a cab.

ON Katherine's face, drained.

EXT. IMPOUND -- NIGHT

ON the gate to the impound as Katherine's van lights sweep over it. Sophie's got longhandled wire cutters; she's struggling with the chain.

Donnie jumps out of the passenger side.

DONNIE

Sophie, for Chrissake!

AUNT SOPHIE

Don't pull on the car for 40 seconds are crossed by the s5CID 23 >>BDC BT /T1_2 1 Tf 0 To

She goes at the chain again. Donnie wrestles the wire cutters away.

AUNT SOPHIE

(grabbing for them)
You give those *back*!

He's not going to. She points at the chain.

AUNT SOPHIE

Then make yourself useful.

Katherine climbs out of the van in drop-jawed astonishment.

DONNIE

So how were you gonna get the car out?

Aunt Sophie scowls at him, then reaches down the front of her shirt. Pulls a cord around her neck until a spare key comes up. The sound of another car PULLING UP is audible O.S.

AUNT SOPHIE

I'm not senile yet, goddammit.

Suddenly all three faces are crossed by the swirling colours of a lightbar.

HANSON

Move away from the gate, please.

Hi, Tommy.

She and Donnie exchange a look over the head of the very defiant Aunt S.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. IMPOUND -- NIGHT

Katherine steps away from Hanson's cruiser as he pulls away. She crosses to Donnie and Sophie.

KATHERINE
Let's go home.

DONNIE
That's it?

KATHERINE
That's it. No charges.

Katherine looks at Sophie, who's pointedly looking away. Then she gets into her van.

DONNIE
I'm givin' up, Soph.

And he gets into the passenger seat.

Sophie stands there, very much alone. After a beat, she moves to the driver's side. Katherine rolls the window down.

AUNT SOPHIE
Please. I want to go home.

Katherine looks at her. An absolutely pathetic little figure.

EXT. HERMITAGE - GARDEN -- DAY (DAY 3)

Len's sound asleep. Suddenly he starts awake. Brother Dutch has touched his shoulder.

DUTCH
'Morning.

Len blinks at the sun.

LEN
Wow.
(beat)
I slept like a baby.

Len gets to his feet, stretches.

DUTCH
Fresh air'll do that to ya.

LEN
Yeah.

Dutch moves off.

DUTCH

There's still some coffee in the kitchen.
(nods toward the garden)
Rabbit come back?

Len turns.

His POV: more stuff munched by the bunny.

ON Len, his face darkening.

EXT. HUBBARD DOCK -- DAY

Tasha, Marcy and Helen are on the deck of the Fisher King. Helen and Jesse are loading gak from the dock.

NICK
Hey...

The girls look up.

He's coming down the steps toward them. In a hurry. Jesse stiffens. Gail glances at her.

NICK
Hiya.
(to Jesse)
I need to apologise.

JESSE
That's okay.

NICK
Could I just talk to you for a sec?
(Jesse's uncomfortable)
Just for a sec.

On the boat, Tasha's watching. She turns, goes below. Jesse waits, uncomfortable. Nick looks at Gail, who doesn't move.

NICK
Could you excuse us for a sec?

A beat, then Gail moves off a few paces. Nick focuses back on Jesse, intense.

NICK
I'm sorry about last night.
(she shrugs)
I know I came on a little strong. I just...
(beat)
I need you to think about this. 'Cause I have, OK? 'Cause I'm forty-one years old--
(as she reacts)
--and you're twenty-three, which means you don't know what I know, which is the fact that this kinda thing... it doesn't happen a lot, OK?

She closes her eyes... it's almost painful. He sees he's losing her.

JESSE
Nick--

NICK

Please... just... I need you to understand
what we're losing here before we lose it...

She meets his eyes. She so *doesn't* want to hurt him, but...

JESSE
(gentle)
We really gotta go.

NICK
(in disbelief)
Did you hear what I said?

JESSE
I heard.
(beat)
It's over, Nick.

She touches his arm, then turns, moves away. He's frozen for a moment.

NICK
Jess, I'm just asking you to take some
time...

He's taken a few steps toward her. Which is when Gail moves to intercept. Nick is surprised, then annoyed.

NICK
Oh, please.

He tries to move around Gail as Jesse climbs onto the boat. Gail blocks him.

GAIL
Back off.

Nick's radiating white fury.

NICK
Jesus Christ. Cut the melodrama.

But Gail's not moving. Another beat, then Nick turns and climbs back up toward the house.

ON a pained Jesse, who watches for a moment, then turns away.

INT. FISHER KING -- CONTINUOUS

Tasha's hiding in the cabin, trying to get a grip on herself. She's hurt and humiliated.

GAIL
Freak.

HELEN
Shut up, Gail.

Tasha closes her eyes.

INT/EXT. KATHERINE'S VAN ON TRUNK ROAD -- DAY

Aunt Sophie's in the back, staring out the window. Katherine's driving, Donnie's riding shotgun. He's trying to keep up the patter.

DONNIE
Soph and mom usta sing together. They were
on Stacey's Country Jamboree once.
(silence)
'Member? That show outta Bangor?
(silence)
They came up to Yarmouth and did a special
one time. You guys sang... what was it?

No answer.

DONNIE
(singing off-key)
In Scarlet Town where I was born... there was
a fair maid dwellin'.... made every youth cry
well-a-day...

KATHERINE
(joining in)
...Her name was Barbara Allen.
(both)
'Twas in the merry month of May...

Donnie stops, listens to Katherine. Sophie is clearly affected.

KATHERINE
When green buds they were swellin'... sweet
William on his death bed lay...

Katherine trails off. Feels foolish singing alone.

DONNIE
Sounds just like Mom, don't she?

Silence. Then:

AUNT SOPHIE
There's a Tim Horton's down there on the
right. I always stop.

Katherine glances in the rearview. Sophie's still staring out her window.

INT. HERMITAGE - DINING ROOM -- DAY

Len and the monks are sitting at the trestle table. It's a silent period. Bread, cheese, vegetables on the plates. A pitcher of water is passed around.

Brother Dutch hands the pitcher to Len. The eye contact is more than Len can bear.

LEN
There's a rabbit eating the cabbages.

All the monks look at Len. After a beat:

LEN
Sorry.

He pours himself a cup of water, passes the pitcher on.

INT. BOATYARD - OUTER OFFICE -- DAY

Nick's sitting at his desk, Rysher's scribbling notes across from him. Vicky's at another desk in the room.

RYSHER
So you could take the whole group.

NICK
Uh-huh.

RYSHER
And we're talking eight grand a day, four
days... all expenses in.

NICK
That's about it.

RYSHER
(calculates)
So if I'm stupid enough to go ahead and do
this thing...

NICK
I beg your pardon?

A beat, then:

RYSHER
It was a joke.

NICK
Oh. Didn't sound like one.

Rysher stares at him for a moment. Sits back in his chair.

RYSHER
I dunno, is it me? There seems to be some
kinda problem here. This whole
conversation...
(to Vicky)
You get that feeling?

NICK
(evenly)
Don't talk to her when you're talking to me.

RYSHER
'Scuse me?

Vicky sees it coming. She gets to her feet.

VICKY
Nick... maybe I could take Mr. Rysher--

NICK
To the airport. That'd be good.
(beat)
On second thought, call him a cab.

Rysher's gaping at him.

RYSHER
You actually pretending to be in business
here?

NICK
Matter of fact, I am. And if you were stupid
enough to go ahead and book us. I'm not
stupid enough to accept.
(icy)
See ya.

Nick settles back in his chair.

Vicky's frozen. Watches as Rysher stands.

RYSHER
I'll tell ya, pal. You are some kinda
asshole.

NICK
(tight smile)
Glad I could help.

It's like Nick is trying to provoke him. Rysher debates whether to get into it -- then turns and leaves.

Vicky watches him go... all her hard work out the door. She turns to Nick, who's put his feet up on the desk. He's flipping through a magazine.

NICK
When did this come in?
(off her silence)
Huh?

VICKY
Are you out of your mind?

NICK
I thought we cancelled our subscription.

He stands, moves to a filing cabinet, pulls out a drawer. Looking for something.

VICKY
I can't do this anymore, Nick.
(beat)
When you decide what you want to do with this
business, call me.

Vicky picks up her handbag and walks out.

Nick suddenly slams the drawer shut.

ON Nick, haunted. He doesn't move.

EXT. HUBBARD DOCK -- DAY

The expedition's over. The Fisher King is anchored at the dock again. Tasha and Marcy are on deck; Jesse's just about to step off. Gail and Helen are heading for the stairs.

HELEN
(calling back)
'Bye.

GAIL
(calling back)
Thanks, guys.

MARCY
(calling)
No problem.

Marcy turns to put something away. Jesse's hesitating. Tasha sees this, heads for the cabin as:

JESSE

Tash...

(Tasha reluctantly turns)

I'm sorry about before. It was kinda awkward.

Now Tasha's looking at her. Trying to keep her face neutral... without much success.

JESSE

I didn't mean to hurt him.

TASHA

(snapping)

Don't be stupid.

The two girls look at one another. Then Jesse gets up, climbs onto the dock. She heads for the stairs without looking back.

Tasha moves toward the cabin. Catches Marcy's sympathetic eye.

TASHA

Don't say anything, OK?

Marcy just nods. Of course not.

EXT. AUNT SOPHIE'S HOUSE -- DAY

Katherine's van turns down a gravel lane to a tiny dilapidated farmhouse. Virtually in the middle of nowhere. No nearby houses, no facilities.

KATHERINE

The back of beyond.

The van stops in front of the house.

INT/EXT. KATHERINE'S VAN AT AUNT SOPHIE'S -- DAY

DONNIE

What'd I tell ya.

Aunt Sophie's wrestling with the sliding door.

DONNIE

You wanna hang on a sec, and I'll open it?

No. She wrenches it open, steps out. He looks at Katherine.

DONNIE

Comin'?

KATHERINE

(sotto voce)

Now I see the problem.

EXT. AUNT SOPHIE'S HOUSE - FRONT STEP -- DAY

Sophie's working the lock, trying to jiggle it open. The PHONE is ringing inside the house. Donnie and Katherine come up behind her.

DONNIE
I'll do you a grocery run.

AUNT SOPHIE
Don't bother.

DONNIE
Jesus, Soph, would ya just--

AUNT SOPHIE
Suit yourself.

Sophie gets the door open and goes in -- doesn't close the door behind her. Donnie looks at Katherine.

KATHERINE
I'll stay.

Donnie reaches out, squeezes her hand.

DONNIE
Good luck.

Katherine watches him get into the van and start the motor. She takes a deep breath and steps inside.

INT. AUNT SOPHIE'S HOUSE - LIVINGROOM -- DAY

Katherine appears in the doorway.

The room is full of African violets and statues of animals of all sizes. Crocheted throws on every chair. Aunt Sophie's in the kitchen on the telephone.

AUNT SOPHIE
Mervil, I know. Anyway, who'd you get for a fourth?
(beat)
God. Did she bring those awful coconut squares?

Katherine sees an arrangement of photographs on a table. She crosses to it.

ON the photos: kids' school pictures, one shot of a university graduation. Another of Sophie and Mary Margaret in glamorous dresses -- singing their hearts out into microphones.

AUNT SOPHIE
I know. Just some car trouble.
(beat)
What about Nancy?
(beat)
Okay. I'll give her a call. Bye.

Katherine's rivetted by that picture. Reaches out for it, then hesitates.

Sophie enters. Katherine turns to her, gestures to the photo.

KATHERINE
May I?

Aunt Sophie looks at her, sees the yearning. A beat, then she nods.
Katherine picks up the photo.

AUNT SOPHIE
The glamour gals.
(laughs)
That's what they called us.

Katherine's tracing her mother's young face. Entranced.

KATHERINE
Please...
(a beat)
Tell me about my mother.

Aunt Sophie looks at her. Impassive.

KATHERINE
I need to know...
(she struggles)
Why didn't she want to keep me?

Sophie's face softens. A flicker of pain.

AUNT SOPHIE
It wasn't like that.

On Katherine, daring to hope...

AUNT SOPHIE
He was the mayor, then. And we were... dirt.
(as Katherine absorbs
this)
She never forgave him for that. Neither did
I.

KATHERINE
(bitter)
All that ever mattered to him was what other
people thought.

Aunt Sophie watches her.

AUNT SOPHIE
Were you happy?

Katherine stares at nothing. Remembering.

KATHERINE
He always seemed to be angry with me. Like I
couldn't do anything right.
(beat)
And Frances, she kinda... stayed in the
shadows.

KATHERINE
(a long beat)
I remember being really, really... lonely.

Sophie gazes at her. Seeing the pain on the other side now.

She reaches up around her neck, unclasps a gold chain.

AUNT SOPHIE
Mary sent this for your sixteenth birthday.
But it came back.

She lays it in Katherine's palm.

ON the necklace: a small gold bell with a cultured pearl as the clapper.

A tear rolls down Katherine's cheek. She's staring at the necklace,
trying to muster up the courage. Finally:

KATHERINE
Is it... is it OK if I hug you?

She raises her head, looks at Sophie.

A moment, and then Sophie opens her arms. Katherine stands, moves into
them. The two hold one another, overwhelmed.

INT. AUNT SOPHIE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

ON Sophie, sound asleep on the sofa. Katherine sits opposite, watching
her. A strange peace pervades the scene.

Katherine glances at the side table on her left.

Her POV: Sophie's handbag, with the small notepad.

Katherine hesitates, reaches for the pad... but stops before her fingers close over it. Withdraws her hand. She looks across at the sleeping Sophie again.

The front door opens and closes.

DONNIE

Hey, folks...

Katherine looks up as Donnie comes into the room. She presses a finger to her lips.

Donnie sees Sophie. Then crosses to Katherine.

DONNIE

We got a problem.

KATHERINE

What's up?

DONNIE

She said she came to talk to me about a wiring problem. It's a lot bigger than that.

KATHERINE

We can get someone in.

DONNIE

The house is condemned, Kathy. It's a firetrap. She was s'posed to be out last week.

Katherine looks from him to Sophie.

ON Sophie, dead to the world.

END OF THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. AUNT SOPHIE'S HOUSE -- DAY (DAY 4)

The van's hatch is open. Donnie's loading one of the dog statues from Sophie's. The rear is packed with a lot of the stuff we saw in her living room.

KATHERINE
(gently)
Because the fire chief said so.

EXT. INT/EXT. KATHERINE'S VAN AT AUNT SOPHIE'S -- DAY

Katherine's in the driver's seat, Sophie's on the passenger side.

AUNT SOPHIE
How could he know? He never saw inside.

DONNIE
(as he passes)
Because you never let him in.

AUNT SOPHIE
(ignoring that)
I can get all that stuff fixed.

KATHERINE
It's beyond fixing. You're not safe here.
(takes her hand, Sophie
looks at her)
C'mon. Could living with me be that awful?

Katherine grins at her. Sophie finally grins back.

INT. RESTAURANT -- NIGHT

Nick's in the busy restaurant. Sitting at a window table, staring off into the night. There's an untouched glass of wine in front of him and an untouched basket of rolls.

BRENDA brings a beautiful plate of shrimp on a bed of rice and vegetables and arranges it in front of Nick.

BRENDA
I added a touch of Pernod...

A beat, then Nick turns and looks at Brenda.

Then looks down at his meal like she's put an alien in front of him.

BRENDA
That's right, isn't it?

Nick makes no appearance of hearing.

BRENDA
(uncertain)
Okay. Good.
(beat)
Enjoy.

Brenda crosses to the bar, keeping an eye on him, while Nick just stares at his plate.

Suddenly, he pushes his chair back. Stands.

And purposefully strides across the restaurant toward the side door.

Brenda, who's been keeping an eye on him, tries to catch him.

BRENDA

Nick? Nick!

But Nick's out the door, walking very quickly. Brenda turns to see some diners looking at her. She smiles.

BRENDA

Forgot his wallet.

This makes some diners laugh. Brenda glances out. Nick's nowhere in sight. She crosses to clear Nick's table.

INT. HUBBARD HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Sophie and a glum Katherine on the sofa. Donnie's near the fireplace. One of the larger dog statues stands by the pocket door to the dining room.

AUNT SOPHIE

Well, she's only going for a week. She'll be back on Tuesday. I can move in then.

DONNIE

Mervil has one bedroom, Soph. Where you gonna sleep?

AUNT SOPHIE

We'll work something out.

(seeing Katherine's face)

Don't take this personal, dear. But Mervil's feet are no good, so she can't get around by herself. And Mervil cooks for George, 'cause Bernice's cooking is awful, and I always brought the food over to George's. So if we move the game to Mervil's, then Bernice can go get George on the bus--

KATHERINE

I get the picture.

Sophie pats her arm.

AUNT SOPHIE

These people can't manage on their own. I just gotta be there.

(gets up)

I'll go call Bernice.

She heads to the kitchen. Katherine looks glummer.

KATHERINE

Sounds like she's the center of their universe.

DONNIE

They're the reason she keeps going.

Katherine shakes her head.

DONNIE
But Mervil's is not going to work.

EXT. HERMITAGE - GARDEN -- NIGHT

Len's filling a wooden feeding station. He's pouring birdseed in one bin. There's a water dish in another. And some cabbage leaves in a third.

He settles into his cot, snuggling under the blankets.

Lo and behold, the bunny. It hops to the garden. Looks at Len. He returns the stare. Doesn't make a sound.

The bunny hops investigates the feeding station. Sniffs tentatively. And digs into the seeds.

Len's grinning. For this precious half-second, he's at peace with the world.

EXT. GIRLS' HOUSE -- NIGHT

Several lights on in the house. Nick pulls up behind Jesse's beater. He walks to the door, knocks.

Curtains twitch open and then twitch closed.

Silence.

NICK
(calling)
Jesse?
(silence)
I know you're in there.

INT. GIRLS' HOUSE - LIVINGROOM -- NIGHT

Jesse, Gail and Helen in the middle of packing. Jesse looks like a deer caught in a headlight. After a moment, she starts toward the door. Gail grabs her arm, shakes her head. Jesse stops.

NICK
Jesse, c'mon! Talk to me.

EXT. GIRLS' HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Nick moves to the window, tries to see in. No luck.

NICK
Jess?

He backs up. The silent house is mocking him.

NICK
(bellowing)
Jess---eeee!

INT. GIRLS' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Jesse's started to cry. Then the THUNDER of Nick's fists on the door. She jumps.

NICK

Jesse, open up. Open the goddamned door!

Gail goes over. Musters up her courage, yells through the door.

GAIL
She's not here.

EXT. GIRLS' HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

This enrages Nick further.

NICK
Jesse! Jesse, open the door!

Now he starts kicking it.

INT. GIRLS' HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

The sound of his KICKS and his YELLS are muffled through the door. Gail crosses to the telephone.

GAIL
I'm calling the cops.

JESSE
No.

GAIL
What do you mean, no? He's gonna break the door down!

Jesse takes the receiver out of Gail's hand.

JESSE
No. No cops.

EXT. GIRLS' HOUSE -- LATER

ON a cab, as it swings down the road. Its headlights land on Nick. He's slumped against the door. Talking.

NICK
(broken)
Jesse... please.

The taxi door opens; Tasha gets out. Her face is tight with fury and mortification. The cab driver leans out his window.

CAB DRIVER
You need some help?

TASHA
(barely audible)
No.

The cab pulls away. Tasha moves toward the house.

NICK
(crying into door)
Jesse... don't do this.

Tasha grabs Nick's shoulder, pulls him back from the door so violently that he falls against her. She puts an arm under each of his arms, struggles to bring him to his feet. He's almost like a rag doll.

TASHA
(hard)
Dad... for Chrissake.
(yelling)
Stand up!!!

Somehow, he obeys. Tasha steers him by the arm to the passenger door of his car. Opens it up and shoves him inside. Nick's not resisting -- he's weeping.

Tasha slams the door. Takes a breath, wipes her own tears away. She walks to the driver's side.

Glances up at the house. Then gets in and starts the engine. Drives away.

END OF ACT FOUR

TAG

EXT. NICK'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

The Jeep's pulled up in the driveway. Tasha opens the passenger door and waits. Nick doesn't move.

TASHA
Get out.

It's like he doesn't hear her. She leans into the car, her face inches from his. Hateful.

TASHA
You're a joke. You know that? A friggin'
joke.

He's staring at the dashboard.

Tasha withdraws. And SLAMS the car door shut.

She walks away from the house.

ON Nick through the windshield. The porch light plays across his face... and his expression hasn't changed a whit.

EXT. HERMITAGE - GARDEN -- MORNING (DAY 5)

ON Len on the edge of his garden. Listening to the CHANTS as the sound of morning mass drifts across from the chapel. He makes his way across the grass toward the music. A moment of hesitation at the door... then he goes in.

EXT. OLD HOUSE -- DAY

Aunt Sophie and Katherine look doubtfully at a large, dilapidated house. Donnie's in overdrive.

DONNIE
Not a nursing home. A retirement community.
A co-op.
(to Sophie)
You and your pals.

Sophie stares at the facade, grimaces.

AUNT SOPHIE
It's gonna be condemned. I can tell.

DONNIE
We fix it up. Top to bottom. A games room.
A garden.
(Sophie's shaking her
head)
What.

AUNT SOPHIE
Wouldn't work. I'm fine with Mervil. But
I'm not sharing no bathroom with George.

DONNIE
You'd have your own room, your own bathroom.
But George's there when you want him.
(to Katherine)
Whaddya say, sis? A family project.

Katherine looks from the house to Donnie.

KATHERINE
Well, the idea's not bad--

DONNIE
What, "not bad?" It's the best idea I had
this month, and I had a lotta great ideas
this month.

Katherine begins to grin.

KATHERINE
We'd need to get it inspected...

DONNIE
And evaluated, and re-evaluated... I know the
drill
(wicked grin)
You in or you out?

He waits. Sophie looks at her. Finally:

KATHERINE
In.

DONNIE
I didn't hear you.

KATHERINE
(bellowing)

IN!!!! I'm *IN*!!!

He throws one arm around Katherine, one around Sophie. Firm embrace.

DONNIE
Fine. Great. We're settled.

AUNT SOPHIE
Not so fast.
(they look at her)
Bernice doesn't get to cook.
(beat)
Ever.

DONNIE
Fine.

AUNT SOPHIE
You tell her.

DONNIE
I'll tell her.

AUNT SOPHIE
Good.
(satisfied)
Good.

Donnie looks from Sophie to Katherine... who smiles back at him as though her heart's gonna burst with joy.

EXT. NICK'S HOUSE -- DAY

On Tasha as she rounds the corner. Tentative. Looks like she wants to bolt more than she wants to go in there.

She passes the jeep: it's empty. She crosses to the stairs, then stops.

Her POV: Nick on the deck. Sitting. Staring out at nothing.

Tasha watches him for a moment. A mix of emotions cross her face... but mostly what we read is terrible empathy. She's hurting almost as much as he is.