

TRUTH OR DARE

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Abstract

Thesis Screenplay Title: Truth or Dare © Rosamund Owen 2024

Masters in Screenwriting

Feature length dramatic screenplay

Brief Synopsis:

Ruby (15) escapes from her group home in search of her sister Bella (10). When she arrives on the doorstep, Bella's adoptive parents immediately try to send Ruby back to into care. Ruby takes off. In a ravine behind Bella's family home, Ruby meets and briefly becomes involved with two young transient men, before breaking free and finally accepting a new reality. One which may now include her younger sister.

Thesis, Themes, and Process

In the process of writing the screenplay journey my main character Ruby takes I've explored questions of family formation, youth culture, and gender relations, as well as economic disparity and class differences. As a woman writer/director, my female filmmaker's eye informs the approach I take to my screenwriting. My stories are rooted in and evolve from my experience and understanding of being a woman in this world.

I am unabashedly a drama writer-director. While writing the *Truth or Dare* feature screenplay my director's vision informed many of my story decisions. I will be working towards directing this film, hopefully in summer 2025.

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Scholars, researchers and fellow filmmakers who wish to read my thesis screenplay can contact me at gradfilm@yorku.ca. Please explain your interest and confirm that it is for personal / private research purposes only, and that you will respect my copyright and not copy, reproduce, or repurpose it in any manner.

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Ingrid, my reader for her fabulous producing course and for all the support in the writing of these last two drafts. I appreciate your insight, honesty and always your support.

And Jim Miller, my life partner, the kindest person I know, who when the chips are down, reminds me why I started writing this story. And supported me through the writing of this script and the support paper.

I dedicate this film to both my sisters Kate and Louise, best friends with a foundation of history that grounds me in a profound way. The occasional punch up. The fierce love. Honesty delivered with such humour. To all the fun, the dancing, the forts, the Smartie-make-up in the bathtub and to our laughter.

Kate and I are the same age apart as Ruby and Bella. Both of us defiant. Both dyslexic, so we did badly in school. Made us both artists I suspect. *Come-on let's just have fun, escape. Run away. Do the things we are told not to.* Rebels at heart. Strangely life deals us such unexpected blows. We lost my sister Kate in February this year. Luckily, we spent June 2023 together in Kate's rambling house in Scotland before anyone knew she was ill. I even had my own writing

room there. Then in November the worst cancer diagnosis came in. The most determined, stubborn, kindest, most generous person I've known. I miss her terribly.

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Introduction / Synopsis

Through the story of Ruby's fierce determination to find her sister Bella, *Truth or Dare* questions what family means after one sister has been left in care while her only sister is adopted out. I question how much of life is chance, luck of the draw. Bella and her adoptive parents live in a house in Rosedale, the oldest wealthiest area of Toronto. It backs onto a ravine where many homeless people set up camp. As the wealth divide continues to increase, I fear what will happen if people continue thinking of the world in terms of us and them.

Determined to reconnect with her sister, Ruby goes to the nth degree to make it happen. My relationship with my sisters has been very important in my life. My stories are rooted in and evolve from my experience and understanding of being a girl/woman in this world. As a woman writer/director, my female filmmaker's eye informs the approach I take in all my work. Ruby is a runaway. Attempted sexual assault is unavoidable. She's on her own; vulnerable but fierce.

Bella's parents, Allison and Simon, only turned to adoption after years of trying to conceive their own child. They send her to private schools, ballet, piano, and tutors. All of it fills up Bella's free time. They are people who have never questioned what is right for Bella, they just expect they can mould her to be just like them. It could work. It may not. Certainly, they are threatened by Ruby's appearance. I am interested in class and the sense of entitlement that comes with old money.

Truth or Dare is a story about love in impossible circumstances. When Bella's parents try to send Ruby back into care, she escapes and meets Tully and Spencer, a couple of grifters who are living in tents down in the ravine behind Bella's family home. When Spencer tries to force

himself on Ruby, she knocks him flat, but Tully takes her under his wing. The next day he introduces Ruby to his life in Kensington Market. She is smitten. She meets Mr. Gregory who owns a cool hair salon. We learn later that Mr. Gregory's father threw him out for "being a fairy" when he was fifteen. He admires Ruby's spunk, but fears Tully's influence on her. His assistant is Melanie, Tully's friend, who he is training to cut hair. When they leave the salon, Ruby asks Tully, "Is she your girlfriend?" Tully laughs. "Girlfriend?"

Ruby returns to the ravine on her own to find the tents and all their belongings have been bulldozed over. Unable to connect with her sister or the guys, she's forced to fend for herself in the city. A man tries to rape her. She strikes him with an object and leaves him for dead. She's once again on the run.

When she meets up with the guys again, Spencer has discovered his great aunt's falling down mansion is sitting empty on the edge of Lake Ontario. No electricity or running water, but it's like a dream come true. Tully and Ruby swim, then make love on the grass under the stars.

Next day Ruby leads the guys to break into Bella's parent's home. While they loot the place, she explores Bella's bedroom and finds her locked diary and takes it.

Back at the mansion, Melanie has moved in. Sensing Ruby has slept with her guy, Melanie gains Ruby's trust, only to betray her. Ruby finds a room to be alone in. She forces open Bella's diary to discover she's been writing about her. *"Today my sister Ruby came to visit. She's a teenager. Her clothes are really messy, but her eyes are sparkly. My mom said I am not allowed to see her..."*

With nothing left to lose, Ruby busts Bella out of school and brings her back to the falling down mansion where she has set up a bedroom to share with her sister. Finally, the sisters really connect, but it's a dangerous place for a child. We all know the amber alert is coming.

When Ruby takes Bella back to her parents, Allison is enraged. Bella finally stands up for her sister. Sometimes it just takes one person to believe in you. In the end Ruby, still on her own, is left to explore an option working for Mr. Gregory the hairdresser and rebuilding a life from the ground up, a life which will one day likely include her sister Bella.

Background of Specific Themes

I write and make films to try and make sense of the world and how we as human beings interact with one another. My themes evolve from issues and experiences I am grappling with in my own life as well as the ideas and perspectives I encounter in the works of other filmmakers, writers, artists and thinkers. I do believe that drama gives us the opportunity to immerse ourselves in different people's lives in ways that are otherwise hard to do. And if we are lucky, films have the ability to radically influence people's thinking.

I've woven a number of topics and themes through my thesis screenplay *Truth or Dare*: the perspective of being an outsider; the consequences of broken and dysfunctional families; the importance of sister relationships; the wealth divide and class disparities; homeless youth, and the challenges facing girls and women. I also want to capture the joy and love that we can tap into in life. These threads are woven into the theme at the heart of Ruby's story — her search for love and connection in impossible circumstances.

Telling stories from the point of view of an outsider is an approach I often take. My childhood experiences —moving and changing schools almost every year— has influenced me enormously. By making films through the eyes of misfits, I've come to learn that most of us actually see ourselves as outsiders. To be effective in telling a story with which people can connect, I've had to develop an intimate understanding of how Ruby, Bella, and all my characters see their world(s), and how each may feel like an outsider. It is always my intention to write and direct films that are accessible to people. This is why I am committed to working in narrative film.

Having grown up with few female role models in films, or stories, or life, I am compelled to tell my stories through the eyes of my female characters. Eight, nine, and ten-year-old girls are at such an interesting age. I feel they often tend to have clarity about who they are and what they believe in. Then with puberty, the crushes, and need to be loved takes over. For a girl like Ruby (15) who has grown up in care, kindness is so needed ...and so easily misinterpreted.

As a teenage girl, it is a minefield trying to figure out how to cope with the overwhelming attention/obsession from boys and men. In order to write this story, I had to grapple with my own sexual assault which, I was doing my best to avoid for many years. Like Ruby, I was raped at 15. After I got through the trauma I made a pact with myself —that I would belt anyone who threatened me— and that I would never let fear define me. From my earliest drafts this defiance in Ruby was very clear, but I'd made it hard for reader-viewers to understand. In my own life I've done my best to put my rape behind me; I've buried it in my past. I had buried Ruby's rape too, in her backstory. We all experience difficult incidents in our lives. It is the way we deal with and confront these issues that make us who we are.

When I was growing up my mother worked for Children's Aid for a time. I was 9 and we had just moved from the North of England to Owen Sound. I was so excited to meet people who we naively called "red Indians". There were several reserves around Owen Sound. I remember overhearing our neighbour talking about "dirty Indians and dirty hippies. Can't tell if it's a boy or a girl." There was one day I stayed home from school, so my mother had no other option than to take me to work. In my family we were expected not to ask questions. We drove through the country and past some run-down houses until we stopped outside a particular home. The paint was peeling, and I could see someone move at the window. My mother gave me explicit instructions to wait in the car. After what seemed like a very long time, she came out with a

crying baby. I thought if this baby could be taken away from his family, then my siblings and I could be taken too. The parents watched from the door. You could feel the rage, but also their despair.

As we drove away my mother went over a bridge too fast and we ended up in a ditch. We all survived, but images from that day remain vivid. How could people give away their baby and why was my mum taking away their baby? Years later, when I met my future sister-in-law, I found out about the 60's Scoop and discovered what was really going on. Colonial Canada was systematically taking Indigenous children from their families to be adopted into non-Indigenous families. The 60's Scoop, along with the residential school system have been a terrible travesty in Canada's relations with the Indigenous peoples on these lands.

During my high school years my closest school friend came from a family where, in her father's eyes, she was the only bright one. He continuously berated and belittled her older brother and younger sister. My friend became a banker and was successful in her career but was haunted by her family's dynamic. Her brother began robbing stores and ended up in and out of jail. When her younger sister was fourteen, she ran away and became a prostitute. She went to a lot of therapy to try and sort through it all. I remember the day she broke down saying her father had treated everyone—but her—with contempt. It was a breakthrough.

When this friend was in her forties, she decided to become a single parent and adopted a four-year-old child from children's aid. I thought it was a good idea at first, but then my friend became like her father. Her small boy could do nothing right. When her son was fifteen, he and his girlfriend had a baby. My friend adopted the baby.

My experience with my friend's broken family—across generations—played on my mind as I wrote and directed my feature drama, *Trouble in the Garden* (2018). What happens

when one child is seen as the golden child and the adopted sibling is seen as the problem? In

Truth or Dare I'm dealing with a variation on this theme. In this screenplay there are two sisters.

The favoured one is adopted. The other is left in social care.

Research connected to previous work

Trouble in the Garden was specifically about a family dealing with the aftermath of the 60's Scoop. In the process of writing I reached out to Dr Raven Sinclair, who is Nehiyaw (Cree) from Treaty 4, a professor of social work, and a Sixties Scoop survivor/activist. I worked directly with Raven to finish the *Trouble in the Garden* script. I met and interviewed other Scoop survivors. A number, like Raven, had been separated from their birth-siblings and placed with adoptive siblings. I also did a lot of research about social services in Canada.

Truth or Dare continues my focus on siblings who are treated differently. In this case the youngest, Bella, is adopted while the older one, Ruby, remains in care. Older children are harder to place as they are seen as less malleable, and more likely to have too much emotional baggage. It is a fact that more people want to adopt a baby or a younger child. After realizing that many separated siblings were not thriving, social services have been trying harder to keep siblings together, but separations still happen. As Dr Raven Sinclair has pointed out, when one child is deemed difficult, or is a risk to the younger child, the older child can still be left in care. There can be good reasons for the separation, but sometimes it is subjective and can depend on the office and the social workers.

In August 2023, I interviewed Irene Szabla, a retired social worker who worked in the Yukon for many years. She spoke with emotion and passion about her experience with two siblings who had been separated in care. They were both suffering acute sense of loss. Neither was thriving. Before they were put in care, the older sibling had been parenting the younger one as the birth parent was incapable. When Irene was able to find a home that would take both

siblings the change was profound. In *Truth or Dare* Ruby and Bella are struggling with very similar separation circumstances.

In the back story, which comes out in the script, Ruby had been looking after Bella for some time before their mother died from an overdose. Ruby's dad was long gone, and Bella's dad, who was a long-distance trucker, had been killed in a tractor trailer accident on the Trans Canada. One fateful afternoon, Ruby left the chicken noodle soup on the stove as she went to answer the door. Bella, who was stirring it, got burned and was hospitalized. Ruby blamed herself for the accident. Everything went wrong after that. Their mom died; they were put in care; and then Allison and Simon entered the picture. Ruby was acting erratically. When she learned Allison was taking her sister Bella away from her, she lashed out. Allison and Simon had the money and the power. Ruby overheard one of the social workers say: "*At least one of them has a chance.*"

On top of the research I did about siblings and adoption while writing *Truth or Dare*, I also interviewed a number of adoptive parents and children who were adopted. Two of my dear friends adopted an older child when she was 10. It hasn't been easy for them, but the love is strong, and they stay connected as a family. I spend time with them every summer.

I also read many books. One I've returned to many times is Paula McLain's brutally honest memoir, *Like Family: Growing Up in Other People's Houses*. Keeping Paula and her two sisters together was the one thing the California Department of Welfare did right. The three of them, however, did experience some horrendous foster parents. Finding a family willing to take in three sisters was and is a challenge. Paula and her siblings ended up in homes where they suffered sexual abuse that no child should have to bear. As I've worked on *Truth or Dare* her

powerful book has provided me valuable insights into childhood and the powerful emotional bonds that were tested as she and her siblings endured difficult times. Amazing resilience.

Class disparity is a theme that weaves through much of *Truth or Dare*. Bella's adoptive parents, Allison and Simon, are well off in terms of money. They never question whether their upper middle-class ideas are right. They just know they are. Rather than encouraging Bella to find her own voice, they believe they can mould Bella to be like them. Bella goes to a private girl's school, but it is not easy for her to fit in. Her after-school hours are filled with classes in ballet, tap, piano, and tutors. When teenage Ruby arrives, Allison and Simon are overwhelmed by fears that Ruby will drag Bella back into her past and undo all their hard-parenting work. Ruby is no angel, but their fear overwhelms their ability to see the profound love that still binds the sisters, and how much they need each other. This kind of love is something Allison hasn't been able to develop with Bella as she rushes her from one extracurricular activity to the next. I am very interested in exploring the jealousy that runs both ways between Ruby and Allison and how they are both threatened. (The dynamic between Ruby and Melanie is somewhat similar, though it is much more on the surface).

I have set the home of Bella and her adoptive family in Rosedale, Toronto's oldest wealthiest neighbourhood. It is on the edge of a deep ravine where unhoused people live below in tents among the trees. The ravine is just beyond the stone wall at the end of Allison and Simon's back garden. Earlier in the story, when they try to send Ruby back to the group home, she escapes over the wall and into the ravine where she meets Tully (19) and Spencer (20), who live in two tents. They make their living selling items they steal from the mansions at the top of the hill. When I saw *Zone of Interest* (2023) it struck me that the Rosedale wall in *Truth or Dare* has some relationship with the Auschwitz wall in Jonathon Glazer's film, though clearly in

different universes with very different stakes. In the two stories the comfortable families on one side a wall are both wilfully oblivious to the plight of those beyond it. My film is about the ever-increasing wealth divide and the ways we can ignore what we don't want to see. The bitterness of this divide strikes Ruby later when she leads the guys back over the wall to rob Bella's house. That's when she sees how different Bella's life has been in the years since their separation.

I have always wanted to capture a sister relationship on film. My connection with both my sisters has been very close. We are like best friends, but more than that, because the histories we share are embedded in our family dynamics. In *Truth or Dare* I want to capture this closeness between Ruby and Bella. After six years apart, Bella's memories are re-awakened, and Ruby's memories are given new life. Bella scarcely recognizes her sister, but the light goes on when Ruby returns her stuffed rabbit; which makes sense. Ruby looks so different, but the rabbit looks the same. Bella's sense of being loved by Ruby is the foundation. Their shared memories flood back: Smarties-make-up in the bathtub, the honesty, the laughter, the dancing, swimming in the lake, singing songs they used to sing. Their long separation has made their reawakened memories powerful.

Influences

Two filmmakers who I am most aligned with are Andrea Arnold and Jane Campion. Both tell stories through the eyes of female lead characters.

From the moment I saw Arnold's short film *Wasp*, I was hooked by her emotional insight into her characters. The story is told through the eyes of the eldest daughter. Desperate to find love her mother puts her four young children in so much danger when she leaves them in a pub parking lot at night. She expects her older daughter to watch over them. At Cannes when Arnold was asked about the story, she admitted she was the eldest daughter in the story and that the mother was based on her own mother. With *Truth or Dare* I'm inspired by the great empathy Arnold has for her flawed, feisty characters.

Arnold's film *American Honey* is the film that speaks to me the most in terms of *Truth or Dare*. The lead character Star is a misfit living by her wits. She is on the road with other misfits, after escaping her terrible family situation. Star and Ruby definitely share some characteristics as both run away and have to live by their wits. But Ruby is younger, and her need to reconnect with her sister drives the story.

Arnold chooses to shoot her films using a handheld camera where the POV is always driven by the emotion of the story and the characters. This is also my instinct. According to her Director of Photography, Robbie Ryan, Arnold is adamant that the camera can never be ahead of her characters, which means the audience experiences the life in the film the same way as the characters do. I am always conscious of my vision for a film as I am writing a screenplay.

The Piano is my favourite Jane Campion film. I love the wonderful performance by the nine-year old girl Flora, played by Anna Paquin. When Flora's mum Ada (Holly Hunter) stops speaking, she becomes her mother's voice. Flora is a riveting character; insightful and confident, but also prone to misinterpreting the adult world because she is only nine. Flora is the same age as Bella in *Truth or Dare*.

An extraordinary vision informs this film: the landscape by the sea; the tents made of the Victorian dresses and bustle cages; the scene underwater when Holly Hunter's character dives down to try and save her piano after it goes overboard. It is full of small but telling details, like the tiny hole in Ada's stocking. It is the only skin Harvey Keitel's character can touch as payment for letting Ada play the piano he now owns. This erotic scene leads to an incredibly moving love scene. I love the fact that Jane Campion won for Best Original Screenplay Oscar in 1993. This script is a great example of a film told through vision with minimal dialogue, something to which I aspire.

Secrets and Lies by Mike Leigh is another strong influence. The spark that drives the story that leads the family to resolution is when Hortense, a black optometrist decides to seek out her birth mother after adoptive mother dies. When it comes to love in impossible circumstances, this is a brilliant film. He has created a story about family where the characters are divided by so many barriers and secrets they are carrying from the past: shame, race, sexual assault, and infertility. When she meets her white birth mum, Cynthia, she is drawn into the larger family under false pretenses. In the end the whole façade breaks down and the lies are all revealed.

There are a number of connections on the level of story between *Secrets and Lies*, and *Truth or Dare*. Ruby throws herself into the unknown, just as Hortense does in *Secrets and Lies*, but Ruby is a kid, and the resolution is very different. Ruby thinks that if she can only be

reunited with Bella everything will be ok. But what she really needs is kindness from someone who can empathize with her through lived experience. It will never be Allison or Simon. In Ruby's situation it is Mr. Gregory, the flamboyant but down to earth hair salon owner in Kensington Market. His own father called him "*The only fairy in town*," and disowned him. He left Newfoundland on his own when he was fifteen. Sometimes it just takes one key person to believe in you when few others do. The brother character, Maurice, in *Secrets and Lies*, and Mr. Gregory have some similar traits.

Coming of Age as a Filmmaker

The fact that my father has always hated Disney, and that we never had a functioning television when I was younger, had an unanticipated influence on my decision to become a filmmaker. My exposure to film and TV growing up was minimal. My parents owned a small black and white TV which they would listen to more than watch, as the picture was mostly snow. I did see plays and read novels when I was young, but my exposure to film came much later. That delay meant it had a huge impact on me. I had no filters. One of the first films I saw in a cinema was Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960). I was 16. Those shower images still haunt me. I was captivated by the power of film and had a lot of catching up to do. That powerful impact ultimately set me on the course to become a filmmaker.

I began in art school with painting and drawing, but my work was always figurative because I was interested in the relationships between people. Along the way someone pointed out that my drawings looked like storyboards. It was an idea that stayed with me. At NSCAD I had my first opportunity to work with moving images when I took a video course with Jan Peacock. But I found it to be an ugly medium, so I took a 16mm film course at the Atlantic Film Co-op. That's when I knew I had found my medium.

My work has always involved narrative, but my first films were looser and more experimental. When I returned to Toronto I made my first half-hour drama. It was inspired by *The Third Man*, but I was making a feminist film noir. This was my first real experience creating a screenplay. Inspired by Godard I wrote it on set as I workshopped it with actors. Writing on-

the fly-led to time-dragging headaches in edit-room, but I wasn't deterred. I was learning to be more disciplined in my approach to story and script writing.

In film's silent era women like Alice Guy-Blaché, Lois Weber, and Dorothy Arzner, wrote and directed many films. Alice Guy-Blaché ran her own studio. As soon as sound was introduced filmmaking became an industry dominated by men, and it has remained that way. This has made it harder for women directors to get films made. In my own case, this led me to write scripts for my own low-budget films with lead female characters. As a writer-director, I try to bring my director's vision into my scriptwriting process.

When I was a director resident at the Canadian Film Centre, one of the most impactful experiences I had was with Rosemary Dunsmore in her *Acting for Directors* workshop. Since then I've taken two other acting workshops with her. In the same way that learning to understand acting has helped me as a director, it has also helped me develop as a writer.

I love live theatre. *Angels in America* (1991), by Tony Kushner, and *887* (2017) by Robert Lepage, are two plays that come to mind. I have also followed the many productions by Richard Rose when he was Artistic Director at the Tarragon. In 2012 I took a Theatre directing workshop with Rose as I thought I would like to direct theatre. But after taking the course, I began to realize that while story is at the core of both mediums, theatre is more about text and dialogue. I am more interested in how to tell the story through vision as much as possible.

The Third Man (1949) by Carol Reed was the film that made me want to make films. It was the camera, the composition and angles, the film noir lighting, the locations, the characters. It was set in Vienna just after the second world war. Vienna was divided between the Russians, Brits and the Americans. Buildings were bombed out and the black market was thriving. Many

of the scenes were shot on location in the sewers under the city, others above in the streets, and on a giant Ferris wheel.

The filmmaker's vision and the cinematic components are breathtaking, but it is equally a great story with fabulous characters. When Orson Wells' character, Harry Lime, takes Holly (Joseph Cotton) up on the Ferris wheel, he asks him to look at the people below and says: "*Tell me old man. If one of those dots stopped moving, would you care?*" Orson Wells plays such a fascinating, con man. He's been watering down penicillin to make money on the black market which has put so many children in hospital. His disregard is contradicted when he is cornered in the sewers by Holly and the police. Harry Lime has the opportunity to shoot first, but he can't. It is Holly who shoots his best friend. For me *The Third Man* is an exemplary film about love in impossible circumstances. I cannot imagine this story told effectively in any other form than film. That conclusion, perhaps above all, led me to becoming a filmmaker.

I want to make films that challenge us to think about why we humans do the things we do? How do we control our greed? What do we do when we are threatened? How can we learn to trust? How do we face our contradictions? I want to create complex characters where no one wears black hats or white hats. We are all capable of doing terrible things. This is exactly what Jonathan Glazer evokes in the making of *The Zone of Interest* (2023).

"...*All our choices were made to reflect and confront us in the present — not to say, "Look what they did then," rather, "Look what we do now." Our film shows where dehumanization leads, at its worst....*" Jonathan Glazer, (Academy Awards, 2024).

When Sinéad O'Connor died last summer, I realised that she embodied the kind of fierce, yet vulnerable character that I want Ruby to be in *Truth or Dare*. In my last draft Ruby is now listening to Sinéad's music in the screenplay.

Previous Work

I was an art student before I became a narrative filmmaker. While my initial focus was on figurative painting, at that time the contemporary art world seemed to have abandoned it. When I was a student at Arts' Sake, a school run by male abstract expressionist painters, only Robert Markle believed in figurative painting. I needed more opportunities and mentorship, so I left my boyfriend in Toronto to finish my studies at NSCAD. On the plane, my tubes of acrylic paint exploded in my suitcase over my clothes. In Halifax, when I entered the studio, I came face to face with a huge black graffiti message sprayed on the wall. "*Painters forget your inner vision!*" That's when I discovered I was now in a conceptual art school. But I had a great studio, a couple of teachers who encouraged me, and I was living by the sea.

Later someone saw my artwork and pointed out that my drawings looked like storyboards. As mentioned previously, this notion stayed with me.

Jan Peacock was my first female art teacher. She really helped me to find my voice. I loved the concept of making films, but found video, VHS at the time, to be such an ugly medium. On top of that, I was more of a storyteller than a video artist. This led me to take a credited course at the Atlantic Filmmakers Co-op. I picked up a Bolex camera. I've never looked back.

I graduated from NSCAD with my thesis film called *A Precaution Against the Inevitable*. Seen through a female eye and voice over, it was about the feeling of being a stranger, an outsider between two cities. "*A place never looks the same as when you first saw it. Never. It's strange isn't it.*" It won the Theresa Cha Award. I graduated with my thesis film from an art

school that didn't have a film department at the time. I seem to have a strange way of doing things backwards.

I left NSCAD, moved back to Toronto, and started working to fund my first half-hour drama, a feminist film noir titled, *A Love of Contradiction* (1989). With a grant from the OAC I shot the film with equipment I borrowed from the Funnel, the experimental film co-op founded by Ross McLaren. Ross was a huge support for me. He made sure I could join and get the equipment. Other Funnel members were not so supportive, as I found out when I saw “*Hollywood Go Home*” scrawled on the blackboard. If I didn't have Ross's support, it would have been less funny. Ross was a perfect example of a person who stands by you when you need it most. I wish I had thanked him before he died last November.

A Love of Contradiction is about a young woman whose acting career is taking off, and her jealous grifter boyfriend who can't deal with her success. Looking back, I was working with noir tropes, but overturning the usual gendered power dynamics. The film traveled to a number of film festivals including TIFF and Melbourne and taught me so much about making films.

In 1994, when I was a director resident at the Canadian Film Centre, I made a film titled, *YOU LOVE ME I HATE YOU* (22min). It is a story seen through the eyes of an eight-year-old misfit who receives well-meaning, but terrible advice by her mum. It was inspired by being told, after trying to cope with a schoolyard bully, “Ah, that's how you know boys like you.” I set the film as a period piece because I was more interested in the legacy of this common advice that left generations of women incapable of knowing how the hell to fight back. It was my first film set within a family.

I was inspired to write feature screenplay through the eyes of a young girl, a kindred spirit to both Ruby and Bella in my thesis screenplay, *Truth or Dare*. In *Look Both Ways* Vivian

(9) and her mum (35) leave the UK to join the dad who is now gainfully employed in Canada. The dad left earlier to escape the labour strife in Thatcher's England. At the airport Vivian's mum forgets to look both ways and is hit and killed by a lori (truck). Alone in Canada, Vivian and her dad struggle to cope with their tragic loss. It just so happens that next door Reverend Rustin lives with his wife and young daughter. Sarah, the same age as Vivian, is quick to induct her into the Angels of Purity— a girl's group that follows her father's teachings. By the time Reverend Rustin baptizes Vivian's dad in the local swimming pool, it is clear to Vivian that she has lost her old dad. Once again this is a story seen through the eyes on an outsider — a young girl — who fights to get her old dad back from the grips of a charismatic minister.

Social and Political Concerns

In 2012, I completed my first feature documentary called, *Portrait of Resistance: The Art and Activism of Carole Condé and Karl Beveridge*. The journey of making this film began one winter night in 2007 when Jim and I were at Carole and Karl's for dinner and stopped by their studio to see what they were working on. They were at the beginning stages of producing *The Fall of Water*, an extraordinary Bruegel-inspired staged photograph. Where Bruegel's work was about the counter reformation, Condé and Beveridge were depicting activists from around the world fighting to take back water rights from global corporations such as Suez Water, Coca Cola, Bechtel, and Nestlé's.

Suddenly I felt it was crazy that more people didn't know about Condé and Beveridge's work, which relates back to my drive to give voice to outsiders. As we sat down for dinner it popped out of my mouth "*We have to make a film about you two.*" Jim and I started filming later that week. From that very early footage we created a trailer and a short, that helped us raise funding to shoot *PORTRAIT OF RESISTANCE*.

It has always struck me that Condé and Beveridge's photographs are like film stills. What excited me most about making this film was the idea that I could bring some of their still images into time and allow their subjects to step out and speak in their own words. We met migrant workers who have spent 25 years working on Canadian farms, yet still have few rights. We filmed two Oshawa women who, in the early 70's, helped break down male hierarchies in both the auto plant and the union. We witnessed the ruins of Carole's family cottage in the shadow of the Nanticoke power plant — at that time North America's worst greenhouse-gas polluter. And

we joined Carole and Karl, along with thousands of protesters who stood against police in riot gear at Toronto's 2010 G20.

My immersion in their work and their social and political concerns has had a marked effect on my own work as a filmmaker. Issues of labour, class, and the environment figure more prominently in my work since then. I've been determined to bring outsider perspectives and voices to the screen. That is the case with my *Truth or Dare* screenplay, and with my most recent feature.

Trouble in the Garden (2019) is the feature drama that I wrote and directed. My screenplay, *Truth or Dare*, screenplay has significant roots in this work.

Trouble in the Garden is the story of Raven, (Cara Gee) a radical eco-activist, who is jailed for protesting development on disputed Indigenous land. Long estranged from her adoptive family, she never imagined her brother Colin (Jon Cor) would be the one to bail her out. Compelled to stay at his suburban home, she discovers he's in real estate; pre-selling houses on the very land she's been trying to save. Adopted, disowned, and now under house arrest, this is a story of betrayal and reckoning – with love, land, and blood

Trouble in the Garden is set in a white settler family. This inspiration came to me after I learned my sister-in-law was scooped as a baby, as were all her siblings. Adoption is difficult at the best of times. Forced adoption is a whole other level of trauma. The 60's (70's 80's) scoop was a social experiment that went wrong for most everyone involved. Until recently it has been one of settler-Canada's best-kept tragic secrets. My log-line for the film is a quote from George Orwell's *1984*:

"If you want to keep a secret you must first hide it from yourself."

I am very familiar with the white settler world, but I knew I would be dead in the water if I didn't find a collaborator who could speak from the Indigenous world. I had heard Dr. Raven Sinclair on CBC radio. She was being interviewed because she is a recognized national spokesperson and expert on the 60's Scoop. She is also an activist Scoop Survivor herself. When I cold-called her we immediately hit it off because when I mentioned Thomas Vinterberg's film *Celebration* (1998) was a touchstone for my film, she said she watches that film every six months. *Celebration* is about a family that has been living in denial about the patriarch's sexual abuse of his children. I couldn't have made *Trouble in the Garden* without Dr. Raven Sinclair's input. I continue to consult with her on *Truth or Dare* as her research into adoption, foster care, and group homes is extensive.

Trouble in the Garden is very much linked to *Truth or Dare*. The adopted child in both stories is treated differently than their sibling. Both adoptive families are wilfully oblivious. The outsiders in both stories speak truth to power. When we finally began screening *Trouble in the Garden* at festivals I was able to witness the affect this film about a Scoop adoption had on audience members. The film gave Scoop Survivors a hero, but also touched a nerve with many other adoptees, and was affecting for a wider circle of people who came from fractured families. Those audience responses have spurred me to write *Truth or Dare*.

Three Different Script Iterations

It is interesting to look back and see the first iteration of the script which used to be called *Split Ends*, now called *Truth or Dare*. I began writing this story as a treatment in Howard Wiseman's screenwriting class. I had never formally studied screenwriting until I took the first screenwriting class with Howard. Usually, I don't go back and read old drafts, so it is easy to forget the journey I have been on while writing a script. When I look back at my three drafts, I feel what drives the changes most is finding the essence of the themes and emotional beats and finding the best visual ways to tell the story.

At the core *Truth or Dare* is a story about love in impossible circumstances. Ruby is hell bent on reconnecting with her sister Bella as she believes if they can be reunited, she will regain the love that was stolen from her when she was left in social care. She believes this will help her feel whole. Bella was adopted as the only child of a well-off couple who didn't want their daughter to have anything to do with her angry older sister. Ruby is determined to reunite with Bella, but it is a tough journey she is on.

In the first draft of *Truth or Dare*, Bella's adoptive mother Allison (the antagonist), had a bigger role. After I had read my first draft, I found it just wasn't the story I wanted to tell. I was more interested in discovering the crazy, dangerous world that a fifteen-year-old runaway like Ruby experiences. I had other reasons too. I didn't want my new film to be set in one house-location. In my previous film my lead character was under house arrest in her brother's suburban home. The thing that irked me most in the *Truth or Dare* first draft was Allison's story line. On reading it I felt I'd created a wealthy white female character who goes from being the antagonist

to the saviour. Though I didn't write that exactly, it had that feeling. The film felt too soft, not dangerous or true enough.

In all the drafts Allison has remained the antagonist, but in the second draft I spent more time building the dangerous world of my fifteen-year-old runaway with Tully and the gang of street kids. In this iteration the story seemed to read to me like an updated Fagin operation as I had ended up that Tully's character was trying to make money from pornography pictures of Ruby. In that draft, it wasn't until Tully wanted Bella to join in that Ruby finally snapped. This version of the story became too much about their desperation to make money. It became more about Ruby's relationships with the guys, and with Tully's main girlfriend Melanie. Like Allison, Melanie wanted Ruby to disappear. Making the outsider world more vivid, and promoting Melanie to greater prominence in the story, were the major advances I made with this draft. But somehow, I managed to lose I managed to lose too much of the story about the sisters.

Ruby was also pregnant in the second draft, and in that iteration near the end of the story she gave birth and kept her newborn girl. She had become pregnant because she was raped by one of the group home staff before she ran away. Strangely, I made her rape part of her backstory. I tried writing that it was Tully's baby, but that wouldn't work for a number of reasons. The biggest being that I didn't want the story to have a nine-month time span. Many teenagers who have been in care do have babies, so it was all completely plausible. But last summer as I was getting into draft number three, the US Supreme Court overturned Roe vs Wade. I never imagined that would be possible, but it was, and I quickly lost interest in a film where any right-to-life people could misinterpret my intentions.

After I finished my second draft I started reworking my ideas. Howard was organizing a late-April script reading evening at the Tranzac Club for writers in the master's program. I chose

the scenes that begin with Ruby busting Bella out of school, and then taking her back to the falling-down mansion where the two sisters are finally able to connect. I found a couple of young actors from the TMU acting program and my friend and actor Marianne McIssac read the scene description. It is so important to have live readings with actors and an audience. I will definitely do this again with the whole script *Truth or Dare*, again before I start raising money for production in the fall 2024.

In the third draft I dropped the whole pregnancy/baby idea. As the story transitioned I now didn't feel like life was enough of a challenge for Ruby. Both Howard and Ingrid told me I was protecting my Ruby character too much. It took me a while to see this, and gaining that recognition was an interesting process to go through. In my mind, and in earlier drafts, Ruby had been raped by Bill, the group home manager before she ran away. Her response to this incident was to make a pact with herself that she would fight to the death rather than succumb to a sexual assault again. After any traumatic experience we can be consumed by being a victim, or we fight hard to prove that we can overcome that trauma and refuse to live in fear. My problem was that I'd been conceiving this incident as part of her backstory in the recent past, so I wasn't making it easy for an audience to understand Ruby's behaviour.

Howard pressed me on this and suggested I needed a scene further along in the script where Ruby was in more jeopardy. This was when I realized I was holding back writing this rape scene because it was too painful for me to revisit my own rape. So, kicking and screaming, I wrote a new 'attempted' rape scene. It was immediately clear this gave the story the power it needed. It grounds the story in the realities of being a runaway and gives readers and audiences a chance to better understand Ruby.

Ruby's journey is to learn to trust the right people. As a runaway so in need of kindness this can be doubly hard to judge. Before the laundromat attempted rape scene, Ruby gets caught in a rainstorm, and slips into a laundromat where she meets a guy who kindly offers to share his drying machine. When she is changing in the washroom he forces himself on her. Ruby belts him hard and knocks him out cold. She flees leaving him for dead. Later Ruby confides in Melanie about how the group home manager assaulted her, and how she would kill somebody if that ever happened again.

Allison and Melanie are linked in their roles as antagonists in this draft. It's as though one takes over where the other left off. Melanie's character definitely became more central in this version of the story. At first, she seems so wild and fun, though definitely high maintenance. When Ruby leads the guys to rob Bella's family home, it is the first time Ruby has really seen the inside of her sister's house, Tully invites Melanie to join them because, as he says, Melanie is the only one who knows what things are worth. While Ruby is finding Bella's diary and collecting some sheets and pillows from the linen closet, Melanie is helping herself to Allison's shockingly expensive shoes and clothes. Melanie doesn't have middle class polish, but she definitely wants it.

Back at the falling down mansion, Ruby sets up the blow-up bed with sheets she stole from the house, for her and Tully. She's at a loss when Melanie lies down instead. Having a sixth sense that Ruby has slept with her guy, Melanie uses her manipulative skills to get Ruby to confide all her secrets. She then takes over the bed and seduces Tully while Ruby's in the bed beside her. I am very interested in portraying how women behave when threatened or jealous.

The scenes with Melanie are excruciating to me as she is unabashedly selfish. Allison, Bella's adopted Mom, and Melanie have some traits in common, though Allison is able to hide

behind the mask of upper-middle class graces. Ruby's bad influence on Bella may alarm Allison, but it is the authentic love Ruby and Bella share as sisters that unnerves and threatens her the most. Allison doesn't admit it until the end.

Throughout the story Ruby has to learn to trust the right people. In working with my themes of broken families, and love in impossible circumstances, I'm also exploring how we can make our own families — once we learn who first to trust. I feel much happier with Mr. Gregory, the owner of the Kensington Market salon, in this most recent draft. He has evolved as a character into the one person Ruby can trust in the end. Sometimes it is the people with a similar life experience who can have the most empathy. Having been disowned for being gay when he was fifteen, he had to make his own way, just as Ruby does. They are both survivors. He admires her spunk. Both of them have realised who Tully is, and they can see through Melanie's antics. We all need love. It doesn't necessarily come from where we expect to find it. (I may re-title this film *Courage My Love*. It is exactly the kind of encouragement Mr. Gregory would give. It is also the name of my favourite store in Kensington Market, which is where a key scene between Ruby and Mr. Gregory takes place.)

In the process of writing *Truth or Dare* I've gained new insights and acquired and sharpened skills. I find myself compelled to write as a way to understand ourselves as people with all our contradictions. Until I did this MFA in screenwriting, I thought I subconsciously wrote to torture myself. I now believe I write to stay sane.

I have to admit that Howard's class was the first screenwriting class I have ever taken. I've benefited from insights gained, and persevered through challenges, so it is a joy to bring *Truth or Dare* to where it is today.

One measure that tells me how much I've learned is that I feel much more grounded in screenwriting as a discipline when giving feedback to my film production students.

I was totally unnerved at the thought of writing this essay, but as I write it, I realize I can write about my work with so much more ease now.

Ethical Issues

As I indicated in the Section 5 *Truth or Dare* has significant roots in my feature drama *Trouble in the Garden*. I am carrying forward with my exploration of characters who are dealing with the trauma of broken families, and abuse, but from a very different vantage point.

Yes, I am dealing with consenting sex between consenting minors. I am also dealing with the tragedy of sexual assault, and the will to overcome it. This is the world we live in. I am creating female characters who can speak their mind and stand up for themselves. I am always interested in complex characters, and never interested in gratuitous representation. The filmmakers I admire never shy away from provocative honesty.

In my second draft my main character Ruby was pregnant and, in the end, had her baby. This desire to have a baby who loves you is a strong force for children in care, and those who age out. I wasn't advocating for more teen pregnancy. I was considering this path for my character because of research. Then the US Supreme Court made its decision, and suddenly men had taken over women's right to choose once again. I had many reasons for taking Ruby's pregnancy out of the story, but I definitely did not want her story to be reduced to a pro-life agenda. My characters are more complex and interesting than that.

I recognise that most people working in social services and public institutions are doing their best, and efforts are made to try and change with the times. There is progress, but we all know mistakes are made, and the results can have a huge impact on children in care. Drama is about the way people, and the institutions people create, can fuck up.

As I work to complete my MFA in screenwriting, I can't help but think about my ongoing work teaching film production to students in college and university, and for 12 years at TMU. To upgrade my credentials I have been to TMU workshops conducted by award-winning teachers with whom I disagree pedagogically. They talk about teaching to the top 5% of students, advice I don't believe in. In my screenwriting I try to bring empathy to my characters. If students are willing to put the work in, I am happy to support them.

Conclusion

Writing *Truth or Dare* has been like going on a journey where you take one path and it leads you to a resolution you hadn't intended. Then you have to go back to your theme again, think about what it is you really trying to say in the story, then take another path to see if that one can lead you where you feel you need to go.

My main character Ruby's determination to reunite with her younger sister Bella remains the through line of *Truth or Dare*, but where her mission ends has changed with each draft. For a time I thought Ruby might find a place in the hearts of Allison and Simon, Bella's adoptive parents. With that end however, I faced the prospect of making another film rooted in one domestic location. More importantly I didn't feel I was being true to Ruby's character, and Allison's transformation felt unbelievable. It was an ending that also took the air out of topics and themes that are important to the stories I want to tell.

With my second draft I took Ruby's story out of Allison and Simon's wealthy home and down into the ravine behind it where she met up with Tully and Spencer. As I worked it felt real and authentic to bring her into the kind of world teens often land in when they run away or age out of care. I was making the class and wealth divide more tangible by separating Bella's adoptive family above from Ruby and her transient homeless below. Ruby's character was gaining complexity, and most of the other characters were coming into their own too. But the storyline that ended with Ruby's baby was very wrong for reasons I have explained elsewhere in this paper.

The final draft is one that incorporates all of my recent explorations in the clearest and most heartfelt, as well as in the most original way. Ruby's journey is not an easy one. She was dealt a bad hand in the luck of the draw. Her desire to reunite with her sister drives the story to its conclusion. In the end Ruby and Bella earn an ending where their loyalty to each other is strongly affirmed. This frees Ruby to trust the one character who understands the authentic Ruby and can support her for who she is. Sometimes it just takes one person to believe in you.

I have always written, and could likely fill a room with the equivalent of books I have written. Like any other art form, there are times when one feels like a conduit, as though the words just flow through me by some other force. While writing *Truth or Dare* I've become much more aware of how important story, structure, themes, and emotional beats are to script writing, and how all these elements have brought me closer to the truth of a story I must tell.

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TRUTH OR DARE

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April 22, 2024

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INT. GROUP HOME - EVENING

RUBY (15), vulnerable, but fierce, walks down a long hallway past a series of worn-looking small bedrooms.

Each room has a single bed covered with old stuffed toys, a desk, a chest of drawers and a nightstand. Various posters cover the walls.

A cleaner pushes by her with a LOUD VACUUM CLEANER and enters an office door.

Ruby continues towards a small kitchen where SUE (35) is preparing for a birthday party.

SUE

Two minutes.

As Sue turns to get the pop from the fridge, BILL (35) appears in the doorway and caresses Ruby's bum. Enraged, Ruby jumps back.

RUBY

Back the fuck off.

Sue turns to see Bill feign innocence. Reassuringly, he touches Sue's arm.

MARY (16) rolls her eyes as she appears by the door.

MARY

(under her breath)

Dickhead.

Mary gently takes Ruby by the arm as they walk back down the hall. Standing with her back to the wall, Ruby focuses on breathing. Then she notices the office door, propped open by the cord from the vacuum.

Ruby peers in through the door's glass window. Eying the wall of filing cabinets and seeing the cleaner's back is turned--

INT. GROUP HOME OFFICE - EVENING

--Ruby slips through the door. Quickly she opens one of the filing cabinet drawers and flips frantically through the files until she finds the one she's looking for.

Sliding it under her sweater, she heads out as the cleaner turns off the vacuum and returns, eyeing Ruby suspiciously.

INT. GROUP HOME HALLWAY - EVENING

SINGING (O.S.)
Happy birthday to you----

Ruby joins Mary as she re-enters the hall. Sue is at the end of the hall waving them forward.

INT. GROUP HOME COMMUNITY ROOM - EVENING

As Ruby enters, Bill walks towards her with a blue icing supermarket cake lit with candles in the shape of a one and a five. Happy 15th Birthday decorations hang on the wall.

Two teenage girls, immersed in their cell phones, sing halfheartedly. Mary, Sue and Bill carry the song.

Struggling to keep the file folder from slipping, Ruby blows out the candles.

Sue efficiently cuts the cake. As Bill hands flimsy paper plates of cake around and points to a mark on the wall.

BILL
Hey look, walls still bashed in from
Ruby's last birthday party.

Ruby knocks the bottom of the plate towards his face. Everyone but Sue and Bill laugh. Bill wipes icing off his nose.

SUE
Oh Ruby, why do you always have to push
it!

Mary grins at Ruby. Sue hands the cake around to the girls who go back to their phone screens.

Holding the file folder in place with one hand, Ruby puts the cake on the table then stabs it with the plastic fork. The prongs CRACK, splaying out in all directions.

EXT. GROUP HOME - DAWN

Early morning mist is in the air as Ruby climbs out the window onto a flat roof. Every pocket of her jacket is full.

Mary, half hidden by the curtain, hands her a plastic bag stuffed with belongings. They grasp each other in an intense hug--

MARY
 (quietly)
 I'll cover for you. Long as I can.

Ruby darts across the roof and down a fire escape.

EXT. BUS (PARKED) MAIN STREET SMALL TOWN - EARLY MORNING

The bus driver is busy stowing luggage as Ruby approaches. Seeing her with only a plastic bag, he nods his head towards the bus door.

INT. BUS (PARKED) MAIN STREET - EARLY MORNING

Ruby makes her way to the back as the bus driver climbs on and gets settled in the driver's seat.

INT. BUS (TRAVELLING) AROUND THE ROUNDABOUT - EARLY MORNING

As the bus careens around the circle, Ruby scans through the papers in the file. Words like "unmanageable, anger issues" pop out. Brushing away tears, she scans the papers until she finds a previously opened envelope with "TO BE OPENED UNDER GUIDANCE OF SOCIAL SERVICES" written across it in red ink.

Removing the document, Ruby scans it until she finds "107 Thornwood Rd, Toronto".

Finally getting the bus wifi to work, she puts the address into google maps. Finding the destination, she zooms out to see how massive the city is.

Taking out a pen, she writes "107 Thornwood Rd Rosedale" on her arm.

INT. BUS (TRAVELLING) - DAY

Tired but unable to sleep, Ruby's head bounces up and down. Pulling a well-worn stuffed RABBIT out of her plastic bag, she falls asleep with Rabbit tucked in her arms.

INT. BUS (TRAVELLING) - DAY

Ruby puts in her ear buds and listens to Sinead O'Connor. "I'm Stretched On Your Grave". Turning, she stares out at the passing landscape: fields, trees, small towns---

*I am stretched on your grave
 And will lie there forever
 If your hands were in mine
 I'd be sure we'd not sever
 My apple tree, my brightness
 It's time we were together
 For I smell of the earth
 And am worn by the weather*

EXT. TRUCK STOP - NIGHT

Ruby leans against a transport truck as she eats through a box of chocolate Timbits. In the distance, cars and trucks wiz by on the highway.

The bus driver glances over at her then waves her back on the idling bus.

INT. BUS (TRAVELLING) ADJACENT ST LAWRENCE RIVER - DAYBREAK

Ruby wakes up and stares at the extraordinary view. The bus pulls to the side of the highway.

EXT. BUS (PARKED) - ADJACENT ST. LAWRENCE RIVER - DAYBREAK

Ruby stands leaning against the side of the bus beside the driver, staring at the River and the sky.

BUS DRIVER
 Fleuve Saint-Laurent. La plus belle vue
 du monde.

Ruby nods. He offers her half his sandwich. Ruby shakes her head. He insists. Hungrily she eats it.

INT. BUS ON 401 (TRAVELLING) APPROACHING TORONTO - DAY

Sitting in the front, to the right of the driver, Ruby stares at 20 lanes of 401 traffic weaving in and out. Feels like a building drumbeat. Never having experienced anything like this, she is in awe.

INT. BAY STREET TORONTO BUS STATION - EARLY EVENING

Ruby gets out of the bus, carrying her plastic bag. Unsure which way to turn, the bus driver points her towards the exit sign.

EXT. CHINATOWN SPADINA AVE. - NIGHT

It's raining. Lit by neon and streetlights, Ruby walks through the crowded streets.

EXT. DUMPLING RESTUARANT SPADINA - NIGHT

Ruby stops to look hungrily at two women making dumplings in the front window, then walks away.

INT. CHINESE SUPERMARKET ON SPADINA - NIGHT

Thick strips of clear plastic hang over the entrance. Pushing through, Ruby finds herself in a large basement supermarket. Not only does she not recognise the food, everything is written in Chinese.

Her eyes dart over the packaging as she walks up and down aisles. Suddenly seeing familiar cookies, she slips the package under her coat and darts past the cashier.

A young clerk follows her out.

EXT. CHINATOWN ALLEY - NIGHT

The clerk calls out to her in Chinese. Ruby pivots, rips open the package and hands him a cookie. Shaking his head, the shop clerk turns and walks away.

EXT. YONGE STREET - NIGHT

As Ruby walks by a brightly lit storefronts, a car with a bunch of yahoos follows her at walking pace.

YAHOOOS

Heh cutie.

She ignores them. The driver hits the gas and takes off.

EXT. SIDE STREET - NIGHT

Ruby walks past a series of new condo buildings. CLANGING of a steel door. A man exits from an underground condo parking lot.

As the door slowly closes, Ruby darts forward, but it's locked by the time she reaches it.

Ruby slips into the shadows.

Finally another person leaves. In the nick of time she catches the closing door and slips in.

INT. UNDERGROUND PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Dashing down the stairs and in through the next set of doors, Ruby scans the parked cars.

(O.S) FOOTSTEPS.

Ruby ducks behind a car.

A man, and a woman in high HEELS walk by. A door CLANGS open and shut. When all is quiet, Ruby peers into car windows and tries many door handles before finding one that opens.

She slips in the back, beside a child's booster seat and clicks the lock.

INT. UNDERGROUND PARKING LOT - BACKSEAT OF CAR - NIGHT

Exhausted, Ruby pulls Rabbit out of the bag and wraps her arms around it. Hearing footsteps she ducks down until the footsteps disappear in the distance.

Closing her eyes, she crashes.

INT. OFFICE HALLWAY/WAITING ROOM DREAM/FLASHBACK - DAY

RUBY (9) punches out wildly, but is held in control by a social worker. High HEELED shoes walk away.

A smartly dressed woman(38) and a girl(4) walk away down the long office hallway. The girl starts to look back, but the woman redirects her forward as they go through the doors and into the light.

SOCIAL WORKER (O.S.)

At least one of them has a chance.

Ruby SCREAMS and punches out wildly. A loud BANGING is heard.

INT. UNDERGROUND PARKING LOT - MORNING

An enraged/scared woman (35)is BANGING on the car window.

WOMAN

Private property. You have no right--

The woman flings open the door. A boy (5) is beside her.

Bursting out, Ruby slips between two cars.

BOY (O.S)

Why doesn't she sleep in her own house?

Ruby looks back through tinted glass to see the woman fling out her plastic bag, then Rabbit hits the wall. Briskly brushing off the booster seat, she picks up her child, and puts him in it.

As soon as they drive off, Ruby darts back, grabs Rabbit, brushes off the debris.

RUBY

(under her breath)

It'll be OK.

Her hands are shaking as she gently stuffs Rabbit in her jacket pocket and starts picking up her belongings.

EXT. YONGE STREET INTERSECTION - MORNING

As a few people move past her on their way to work, Ruby stands at a red light looking lost. Clicking her phone, she stares at the low battery symbol.

A woman in a shiny pink track suit jogs up beside her to the beat of the music on her headphones.

RUBY

Do you know where Thornwood Rd is?

The woman shakes her head.

RUBY (CONT'D)

Rosedale?

The woman waves her arms around her and is off as soon as the light changes.

Ruby stares down a street of mansions.

EXT. ROSEDALE WINDING STREETS - DAY

Ruby walks down the street staring up at massive houses then studies the web of circular streets on her phone. No data, so the map turns with her as she turns around. The battery dies. Turning in circles she searches for street signs.

Crossing the road, she passes a landscaping pickup truck parked outside a house and a park with a playground on the other side of the street.

CUT TO:

Later, when the sun has changed direction, Ruby returns from the opposite direction to see the same truck and park. Realising she's been going in circles, she crosses the street towards the playground.

EXT. ROSEDALE PARK - PLAYGROUND - DAY

The sky and trees spin around and around.

Two young men's faces rotate into view.

TULLY
(Quebecois accent)
You OK?

Sitting up from lying flat out on a spinning playground round-about, Ruby looks warily at TULLY (19), a good looking guy in wild sort of way and SPENCER (20) who's rougher around the edges.

Tully lights a cigarette.

TULLY (CONT'D)
You want one?

Ruby nods. Tully hands her a cigarette and lights it. He winks at her. Ruby looks away for a moment. Spencer looks at his phone.

Ruby rolls up her sleeve and points to 107 Thornwood, written in her arm.

RUBY
You know where this address is?

Glancing at her arm, Tully then studies maps on his phone.

SPENCER
We got that guy to meet, remember?

TULLY
Yeah, it's on the way.

Ruby looks uncertain.

TULLY (CONT'D)

You coming?

Ruby follows the guys out of the park.

EXT. BELLA'S HOUSE - DAY

Ruby, Tully and Spencer stop outside a large three story house. Ruby looks unsure.

RUBY

(worried)

Hope they still live here?

Spencer pulls Tully away.

TULLY

Good luck.

The guys are off. Ruby walks towards the front door, then loses her nerve. Instead, she darts down the driveway and peers in windows. An SUV is parked in front of the red brick garage covered in vines.

EXT. BELLA'S HOUSE LIVING DINING AREA - DAY

A newly renovated extension with a kitchen and family room overlook the deck and large back garden.

Stashing her plastic bag behind some bushes, Ruby parts some branches and looks in.

INT. BELLA'S HOUSE - LIVING/DINING AREA - DAY

ALLISON(45), is painstakingly putting BELLA'S (9) long hair into a french braid. Both have their backs to Ruby.

Bella, wearing a long sleeved, shiny pink dress with a bow at the back, is having a hard time standing still. Allison is trying to get her to stop fidgeting.

Ruby steps towards the door to make sure it really is Bella.

ALLISON

Almost done.

Finally the hair is finished. Allison hugs her tightly, before Bella bursts free and twirls around and around in her dress.

EXT. BELLA'S HOUSE - BACK GARDEN - DAY

Ruby's face lights up. She steps onto the deck. The sliding glass door is open.

INT. BELLA'S HOUSE - EXTENSION LIVING/DINING AREA - DAY

Oblivious, Allison starts searching for her purse, getting ready to leave.

Bella sees Ruby standing on the steps.

BELLA
(puzzled)
Look Mom, a girl--

ALLISON
-Oh.

Ruby's face is beaming. She steps in towards Bella who is confused, but struggling to remember something.

RUBY
(tears in her eyes)
--Don't you remember me?

Bella looks unsure. Ruby bends down to her level. Allison fights to keep her mask on.

ALLISON
Oh--

RUBY
(to Bella)
--I'm Ruby, your sister.

ALLISON
Of course. Oh god. Caught me off guard. I wish you'd called first. We're just on our way to Bella's recital--
(checking her watch)
--we're in a bit of a rush--

Ruby yanks Rabbit out of her pocket and hands it to Bella.

Suddenly, Bella holds Rabbit like a body memory. Bella and Ruby study each other carefully.

ALLISON
Does social services know you're here?

RUBY
--I've aged out.

ALLISON
Oh I see.

Grabbing a pen, Allison hands it to Ruby, then slides over a note pad.

ALLISON (CONT'D)
Here. Look. Why don't you write down your number. And we'll call you when it's a better time. Maybe we can have a nice meal together.

Grabbing the coats, Allison opens the screen door and hustles them both out.

ALLISON (CONT'D)
Sorry...we just can't be late for this recital.

Allison slides the door closed. Then stops to set the alarm. Rattled, Allison messes up punching in the numbers. When she hits the numbers the second time, Ruby watches carefully. "4321"

Taking Bella by the hand, Allison heads to the car.

Yanking open the back door. Bella watches Ruby as she slides into the back seat. Quickly Allison shuts the door.

ALLISON (CONT'D)
We'll give you a call--sorry we're in such a rush--Uh, can I drop you anywhere?

RUBY
No that's okay, I'm staying..not that far away...it's an air bnb.

ALLISON
Okay...well...

Allison nods goodbye. We can tell she doesn't really believe her.

Ruby and Bella watch each other carefully as Allison starts the car and backs down the driveway.

Bella waves tentatively. Ruby has tears in her eyes. She's found her sister, just not the warmest welcome.

Once the car is out of sight, Ruby collects her plastic bag from behind the hedge, then stares at Allison's expensive pen still in her hand. Looking for a place to leave it, she heads towards the deck, then notices the garage.

CUT TO:

Ruby tries the big garage door. It's locked. She walks round to the side to find a small door and window. The door is locked, but Ruby is able to force the small window open.

Tossing her bag through, she hoists herself up and slides in and--

INT. BELLA'S HOUSE - GARAGE - DAY

--rolls onto the ground. It takes a moment for her eyes to adjust. Brushing herself off, she turns and takes the room in. There's a disused feel about the place. An old wheel barrow is tipped up against the wall and boxes and winter tires are piled up beside it.

Glancing through the window, Ruby discovers she has a good view into the newly built kitchen/family room extension.

Ruby rights the wheelbarrow, then steps in, almost tipping it over.

Grabbing the handles, she wheels it over to the window, steadies it against the wall with a brick, then gets back in. Lying back, her eyes wander.

Seeing an electrical outlet, she leaps back out. Surveying the room, she sees a whipper snipper hanging on the wall. Attached to it, success, is an extension cord.

Ruby runs the extension cord over to the wheelbarrow, climbs in, takes the charger out of the plastic bag and plugs her phone in.

Ruby hits Mary's number.

RUBY

Found her.

MARY (O.S.)

Great to hear from you, Ruby. You okay?
Shit. Listen, someone told me they can
trace your location through your phone...
I really wanna talk but -

RUBY

Shit.

Quickly Ruby powers off her phone.

She doesn't know what to do. Instead she watches a daddy long legs climb along the wall.

Exhausted, she drifts asleep.

INT. BELLA'S HOUSE GARAGE - EVENING

Ruby wakes to the sound of CAR TIRES ON GRAVEL.

Car doors SLAM.

Leaping out of the wheelbarrow, Ruby peeks through a crack in the garage door.

EXT. BELLA'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY AND BACK DECK - EVENING

Ruby watches Bella follow Allison across the back deck and into the house.

BELLA

Please can I keep this dress on?

ALLISON

OK. Alright. But you need to get straight to your homework. Math test tomorrow.

BELLA

--But when can Ruby come--

ALLISON

--Here hold this while I --

Allison fumbles with putting in the code, then hands Bella her purse.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

She's a pretty mixed up girl -- so I don't think it's a good idea--

The conversation is cut off when the door closes.

Ruby closes her eyes.

INT. BELLA'S HOUSE - GARAGE - EVENING

Ruby moves over to the window and looks in to see--

INT. BELLA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN LIVING AREA - EVENING

Bella sits at the table as Allison puts food in the microwave. The phone RINGS.

Allison scrambles to find her phone, then starts gesturing emphatically. As she listens to the voice on the phone, she puts out cutlery, then takes out the meal and places it in front of Bella, then disappears down the hall--

INT. GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Seeing Bella alone, Ruby slips out through the side door and runs outside--

EXT. BELLA'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - EVENING

--and waves her arms in the air.

INT. BELLA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM KITCHEN - EVENING

Looking up from writing out her times tables, Bella sees Ruby waving her arms.

ALLISON (O.S)

I've already called them. We just have to methodically go through the list. I'll call the first 6. You take the last half.

(Beat)

Believe me. That's what I'm worried about. No I'm working on the livingroom computer.

Unsure, but too curious not to go, Bella slips out the door and crosses the deck--

Ruby smiles and waves her forward.

INT. BELLA'S HOUSE - GARAGE/SHED - EVENING

Trepidatious, Bella follows Ruby in.

RUBY

Here, jump in!

Ruby picks Bella up and puts her into the wheelbarrow then takes her for a quick spin around the garage.

RUBY (CONT'D)

I used to push you in the stroller and give you your bottle, dress you. Change your diapers... The whole shebang.

Bella's not sure what to do with this information.

Ruby stops the wheelbarrow, wedges it against the wall and slips into the opposite end.

Ruby holds her hands out, palms facing Bella.

RUBY (CONT'D)

Let's see if we have the same hands?

Bella presses her hands against Ruby's.

BELLA

Mine are smaller.

RUBY

But look. Same shape, exactly.

Shyly, they smile at each other.

RUBY (CONT'D)

This can be our secret meeting place.

Bella nods, unsure.

RUBY (CONT'D)

High Five.

Ruby raises her right arm high. Bella high fives her, revealing a thickly scarred wrist and arm. Quickly, she pulls her sleeve down to cover it. Ruby looks down, ashamed.

BELLA

Was our birth mum a drug addict? My Mom says she did this to my arm.

RUBY

--She's not your real mom.

Fighting tears, Ruby busies herself picking her chipped nail polish.

RUBY (CONT'D)

--It was an accident.

BELLA

Drugs are very bad. Do you take drugs too?

Ruby again shakes her head and goes back to stripping nail polish.

RUBY

She hurt her back at work, in the warehouse. A doctor gave her these pills. She was so happy at first, but then she got very sick and couldn't get out of bed so I used to look after you a lot.

Bella looks down to see a daddy-long-legs crawling over the side of the wheelbarrow-- She SCREAMS--Ruby SHUSHES her.

RUBY (CONT'D)

It's ok.

Gently grabbing the spider by a leg, Ruby sets it on the wall where it continues on its journey minus the leg that's left wiggling in Ruby's fingers. Shivering, Ruby blows it away.

Ruby takes a well worn photograph out of her pocket. Bella 4, Ruby 10 and their Mom (27) are standing in an overgrown garden. A tree fort is behind them. Bella stares at it for a long time.

BELLA

The tree fort, I remember. And my special poppy dress.

(touching Ruby's long hair in the picture)

You had long hair, then.

Ruby nods and smiles. She traces a circle on Bella's knee.

RUBY

(singing quietly at first)

The good ship sales on the ally ally oh,
the ally ally oh,

Ruby glances up to see if Bella remembers.

RUBY (CONT'D)

--Mom used to sing that to us when she put us to bed.

Bella watches Ruby closely.

RUBY (CONT'D)
 (singing)
 The good ship sales on the ally ally oh,
 the ally ally oh, on the last day of
 September--

ALLISON(O.S)
 (calling out)
 --Isabella, Bella, where are you?
 Isabella!!!

They jump tipping the wheelbarrow and roll across the floor. Ruby peeks out the window to see Allison scanning the backyard as she stands on the deck. Bella's hand is on the doorknob. Ruby grabs Bella's arm--

RUBY
 --Wait. Wait. Don't tell her about our
 secret place. Promise.

BELLA
 OK.

Bella runs out--Allison is rushing towards her.

Ruby slips into the shadows and waits.

ALLISON (O.S.)
 (cross)
 Look at that dress. You've completely
 ruined it.

BELLA (O.S.)
 I didn't mean to. Ruby was--

ALLISON (O.S.)
 Where is she Bella? Isabella? I need you
 to be honest with me.

Bella looks caught. Ruby waits in the shadows.

The garage door opens. Allison flips on the light and scans the room until she sees Ruby's eyes glinting in the corner.

ALLISON (CONT'D)
 Right, there you are.

Ruby looks caught, but defiant.

ALLISON (CONT'D)
 You can't just show up like this Ruby.
 You frightened me. You frightened Bella.

Fighting tears, Ruby turns and begins to step away.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

(beat)

Are you hungry? I bet you're really hungry.

Ruby turns back. A glimmer of hope. Despite her better judgement, Allison holds open the garage door. Grabbing her phone Ruby follows Allison into the house.

INT. BELLA'S HOUSE - LIVINGROOM / KITCHEN AREA - EVENING

As Allison spreads peanut butter on the bread, she keeps an eye on the girls. Ruby catches Bella's eye.

RUBY

Can I see your room?

ALLISON

I'd prefer not.

(beat)

We don't take food upstairs.

Bella looks from her mom to Ruby. Ruby scans the room. Seeing the speakers and music set up, Ruby saunters over, and puts a song into search.

As the SONG starts, Ruby takes Bella by the hand. They dance.

RUBY

We always used to dance, in the kitchen, remember, when mom was making dinner--

Bella imitates Ruby's dancing - a little too provocative for Allison's liking.

Allison walks between them and places the sandwiches down on the counter. Bella sits. Ruby sways to the music and eats the sandwich while standing.

Allison is relieved to hear a car pull into the driveway. Car door SLAMS. FOOTSTEPS cross the deck.

SIMON (45) slides open the door. He gives Allison a knowing look, kisses her, then touches Bella on the head and smiles at Ruby.

SIMON

You must be Ruby. I'm Simon, Isabella's dad.

Bella looks to her parents and then to Ruby and back.
Allison stops the music mid-song.

Simon sits at the table and pats the chair for Ruby to sit on. Gingerly she sits down.

SIMON (CONT'D)
So you're visiting Toronto, I hear.

RUBY
I'm not going back.

Allison glances at Simon. Bella watches her parents and then Ruby.

SIMON
What about school?

RUBY
I'm going to be a hairdresser.

ALLISON
Oh Ruby, you have your whole life ahead of you--

RUBY
--Everybody needs their haircut.

Simon stands and gently puts his hand on Ruby's shoulder. She shrinks under his touch and looks trapped.

SIMON
That may be, but you'll have so many more opportunities, choices for other careers when you finish high school. You don't want to get locked into one option. Nothing's more important than education.

ALLISON
Toronto's a big scary city for a young girl.

Ruby face is flushed, she doesn't believe a word of their concern. Standing, her eyes dart around the room.

RUBY
Have you got enough now?

ALLISON
What do you mean?

RUBY
You said--when you had enough money we could be sisters again.

ALLISON

I don't think--

RUBY

--That's what you told the social worker.
I heard you--

Allison looks pained. They both do. Bella's eyes dart from one person to the next.

ALLISON

--Isabella just started a new school--

RUBY

--I don't care. She's my sister. By blood, she's my sister.

ALLISON

Legally she's our daughter.

RUBY

Six years. You already took her away from me for six years.

Ruby breaks down sobbing, despite her best intentions.

BELLA

Maybe she can stay in my room?

ALLISON

It's a school night Sweetie. We'll work something out later, alright. Lets get you ready for bed. How about a nice warm bath.

Bella watches Ruby as Allison leads her out of the room.

BELLA (O.S.)

But why can't she stay?

Ruby looks like a deer caught in the headlights.

Simon looks at her sadly.

SIMON

You look like you need a hug.

Ruby backs off and shakes. He hands her a tissue. Instead, Ruby wipes her eyes and nose on her sleeve.

SIMON (CONT'D)

We'll work something out, alright. It has just all been a bit of a surprise that's all.

Simon opens the fridge and pours a glass of juice.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Let me run you back to where you're staying.

RUBY

No. No. I'm OK. I can walk.

SIMON

We can't possibly let you go by yourself.

Simon opens the sliding door and waits for Ruby to exit, then closes it behind her.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - EVENING

Simon puts his hand on Ruby's back. She squirms away from his touch as he guides her to the car. Opening the passenger door, he waits for her to get in then shuts it.

As he walks round to the driver's seat, Ruby studies the door handle and lock.

Simon gets in. Putting the car in reverse, he throws his arm over Ruby's headrest and backs down the driveway.

SIMON

So where to? Right? Left.

RUBY

Left.

He drives slowly through the neighbourhood and out towards Yonge Street. He glances at her waiting for a response.

RUBY (CONT'D)

I'll recognise it when I see it.

SIMON

So, Ruby how old are you now?

RUBY

Sixteen--

SIMON

--That's odd because as I was driving home, I spoke to the Manager of your group home. He's under the impression that you're 15. Which means legally the group home is still responsible for you.

Ruby's hand is shaking as she grabs the door handle. As Simon stops at a light, she flips open the lock, smashes her shoulder into the door, busts out and takes off--

SIMON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Ruby! Ruby---stop.

(O.S.)Cars horns blast.

Frantic Ruby runs down a side street, scanning for a hiding place. Seeing a window-well at the side of a building, she slips in and ducks out of sight.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Peering out, she sees Simon frantically turning to look for her in all directions. Then he runs back in the opposite direction.

Once he's out of sight, Ruby gets out, climbs over the fence and jumps into the next yard and then the next. Dogs start BARKING.

CUT TO

EXT. ROSEDALE RAVINE - DUSK

Ruby heads down the steep hill. It's dark under the trees. She follows a trail along a creek. Houses are at the top of the ravine, but she stays below in the woods until she ends up under a big bridge.

Stopping to catch her breath, she listens to the sound of the cars above, driving over the seams.

Looking around, she sees EYES SHINING in the darkness. She jumps, unsure if it is a person or an animal. Scrambling down the hill, she disappears into the woods, then follows a creek.

When the creek disappears into a large pipe, she climbs a hill and find herself at the edge of a familiar park.

EXT. ROSEDALE PARK - CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND - NIGHT

Sitting down on the round-about, Ruby spins slowly and catches her breath. A bright full moon rises over a rooftop.

After a time, a rough-looking woman walks through the park, then disappears between the trees. Curious, Ruby follows her, careful not to be seen.

EXT. ROSEDALE RAVINE - NIGHT

As she walks further into the ravine she comes across an old overgrown graveyard. Beside it is a small collection of tents. The woman slips into one of them.

Ruby sits on a log at a safe distance. A man waves her over.

MAN

Hey, why don't you come and sleep in my tent. Keep me warm.

Ruby flashes a knife.

RUBY

Back the fuck off.

The man goes into his tent.

MAN (O.S.)

(muttering)

Was only being friendly.

Ruby stands and leans against a tree as she stares up at leaves blowing in the wind.

CUT TO:

Ruby is sitting on a log with a stick in her hand. Hearing a RUMBLING SOUND, she turns to see Tully and Spencer roll along the pathway with a wagon full of gear. Relieved, she runs down to meet them.

Tully studies her face.

TULLY

Didn't work out eh?

Ruby shakes her head.

TULLY (CONT'D)

Bastards. Here, join us if you like.

Ruby looks around.

RUBY

Is this where you live?

TULLY

It's temporary.

Ruby follows them into a moonlit clearing. They remove some branches to reveal a couple of well camouflaged green tents.

Tully flips open a can of beer and hands it to Ruby. Then gets one for himself and Spencer. He shakes out a blanket and empties the knapsack, revealing a stash of cell phones and a couple of laptops.

RUBY

You sell this stuff?

Spencer sits on the red wagon and lights a joint. He pats a space for Ruby beside him.

TULLY

(laughs)

E bay. Facebook market place. Most people are so relieved, they buy back their own stuff.

As Tully talks Ruby tilts her head towards him.

RUBY

(beat)

Where's your accent from?

TULLY

Quebec, Sherbrooke. Stepdad's a prick.
Left when I was 15.

Ruby nods. She looks around.

RUBY

You have internet?

Spencer hands her the joint and nods his head to the right.

SPENCER

(speaking as he holds his
breath)

See those solar panels.

Ruby is impressed. She takes a hit of the joint. It's strong. She coughs.

SPENCER (CONT'D)

(he exhales)

All high-speed around here.

(chuckles)

(MORE)

SPENCER (CONT'D)
Passwords are pretty predictable.
123, 321, 789, 987--

Tully and Spencer start removing phone cards and location finders on all the electronics.

SPENCER (CONT'D)
You got a phone?

Ruby pulls it out of her pocket.

TULLY
Don't need anyone tracking you. Right.

He looks at Ruby who nods.

RUBY
Thanks. I really don't.

Tully looks to Spencer.

TULLY
Let's trade this in for her.

RUBY
What about my contacts.

TULLY
We'll air drop them.

SPENCER
Depends what she can do for us?

Spencer strokes his hand over her thigh and between her legs.

Ruby belts Spencer and knocks him off the wagon. Spencer rolls and brushes himself off.

SPENCER (CONT'D)
What the fuck.

Tully looks at Ruby carefully.

SPENCER (CONT'D)
We're helping you out here.

TULLY
Give her a break Spence.

Ruby kicks the ground with the heel of her shoe and concentrates on her breath. Tully turns to focus on changing the phone over.

Spencer grabs a bag of potato chips out of a plastic container. His hopes of getting laid have crashed.

CUT TO:

Spencer slips into his tent and turns on his cell phone light. Spencer's silhouette tugs a belt tight around his arm then he turns his back to them.

RUBY

Maybe I could help you sell stuff.

TULLY

Yeah/No. We got it covered.

Tully stands.

TULLY (CONT'D)

I'm calling it a night.

He holds open the second tent door for Ruby.

TULLY (CONT'D)

Join me if you like?

Ruby shakes her head.

RUBY

I'm not tired.

TULLY

I'm going straight to sleep. That I promise you.

Ruby stands. The world spins. Uncertain, but exhausted, she follows Tully into the tent.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

When Tully shares his pillow, Ruby takes only the small corner and keeps herself as far away from him as possible.

Lying awake, Ruby makes sure Tully falls asleep before she does. Looking up, she sees the moon through a small netted window.

Only when Tully's breathing is steady, does she let herself fall asleep.

CUT TO:

INT. TENT - MORNING

Waking up with a start, Ruby sees Tully getting up.

TULLY (O.S.)
Stay asleep if you like. We're not
leaving for a while yet.

Ruby peers out the tent door to see Tully peeing into some bushes. She closes her eyes and falls back to sleep.

EXT. ROSEDALE RAVINE - SUNNY MORNING

Ruby exits the tent and walks towards Tully and Spencer who are immersed in testing their stolen wares.

TULLY
You sure talk a lot in your sleep.

Embarrassed, Ruby kicks a hole in the ground. Tully and Spencer pack their stolen goods into knapsacks.

SPENCER
Catch you later.

Spencer takes off through the woods. Tully puts on his knapsack and starts to walk away.

RUBY
Where are you going?

TULLY
Join me if you like?

Relieved, Ruby runs after him.

INT. BLOOR SUBWAY STATION - DAY

Ruby and Tully jump the turnstiles and head down the platform.

A wind gust from the tunnel buffets them around as the train enters the station.

They get onto the train.

INT. SUBWAY TRAIN - CONTINUOUS

Worried, Ruby stands looking at the dark tunnel before them. Tully laughs.

TULLY (O.S.)
First time on a subway train?

Ruby nods. She looks relieved as light from the next station begins to appear.

EXT. KENSINGTON MARKET - DAY

Ruby and Tully walk through the colourful market eating a meat patty.

A massive car struggles to get through the small crowded street.

Tully smacks his hand on the hood. A man gestures through the closed car window.

MAN
Don't touch my car.

TULLY
Fucking SUV's. Killing the planet.

The driver is startled. Ruby grins. Young women nod to Tully.

Passing a store playing bass-heavy HIP HOP MUSIC, Ruby and Tully dance spontaneously as they continue by.

TULLY (CONT'D)
Wait here.

As Ruby stands against a storefront, Tully crosses the road and knocks on a door beside a shop window.

A man opens the door. Ruby watches the quick exchange of money and phone then turns to look at--

EXT. KENSINGTON MARKET - HAIR SALON - DAY

Excitedly, Ruby steps towards the window and peers in at a shabby-chic shop filled with faux 18th century French furniture. Curtains hang like tapestries on the walls.

She sees Tully approach in the reflection of the window. Swinging open the door, he enters.

INT. KENSINGTON MARKET - HAIR SALON - DAY

MR GREGORY, a flamboyant gay man, nods to Tully and eyes Ruby as she follows Tully in.

MR GREGORY

(Newfoundland accent)

I see Mel can't pin the blame on you this time.

(glancing at his watch)

Jesus, the girl only lives a block away.

Ruby looks around enamoured with the shop.

MELANIE (19) sweeps in with a large bouquet of flowers which she dramatically presents to Mr. Gregory. He can't help but smile.

Glancing at Ruby, she kisses Tully.

MR. GREGORY

Sarah's waiting to have her hair washed.

MELANIE

(joking)

Alright, alright. Keep your wig on.

Melanie sashes towards the sink towards SARAH(35) who is seated at the sinks.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Sarah darling, sorry to keep you waiting.

She lowers Sarah's head into the sink.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Crazy line up in the flower store.

Melanie focuses on massaging Sarah's scalp, but when Ruby leaves with Tully, Ruby sees a flash of jealousy cross Melanie's face.

CUT TO:

EXT. KENSINGTON MARKET - DAY

Ruby and Tully walk off through the market.

RUBY

Is she your girlfriend?

TULLY

(laughs)

Girlfriend?

He heads towards another shop.

INT. COURAGE MY LOVE - VINTAGE CLOTHING STORE - DAY

As Ruby follows Tully in, her face lights up. The shop is full of great old clothes, but also chock full of things like beads, bangles, antique lamps, and folk art from Mexico including tin mirrors and Day of the Dead celebrations.

Turning she sees Tully kiss the sales clerk on both cheeks, as he slips her a small packet. Cash is quickly exchanged.

Suddenly Tully is on his way out. Ruby follows him.

RUBY

Can I go with you?

Tully waves as he keeps walking.

RUBY (CONT'D)

But I don't have your number.

TULLY

Got some business to take care of. Catch you back at the camp.

Ruby tries not to look disappointed.

EXT. KENSINGTON MARKET - DAY

Ruby walks through the market. She stops and looks in--

EXT. HAIR SALON - DAY

Ruby stands outside, watching as Mr Gregory holds up a mirror for his client to see her new haircut.

As the client leaves, Ruby enters. Melanie is just finishing sweeping the floor.

RUBY

You're from Newfoundland, right?

MR GREGORY

Long time ago now. Bet you're a Cape Breton girl.

Ruby nods.

RUBY

I'd really like to work here.

MR. GREGORY
(smiles)
Cut hair before, have you?

RUBY
I've cut my friend's hair--
Seeing Melanie put the broom aside.

RUBY (CONT'D)
Maybe I could sweep the floors or
(looking around)
or wash the windows or anything you need.

MR GREGORY
What are you implying about my windows?
Ruby's face turns red.

MR GREGORY (CONT'D)
Just teasing you. Got Mel here so I don't
need anymore help right now.
Ruby tries to keep looking cheerful.

MR. GREGORY
Coffee shop up the road is looking for
help. Got a sign in the window.

MELANIE
Can't walk in without a resume though.

RUBY
OK. Thanks.
Ruby leaves.

EXT. COFFEEEE SHOP - DAY

--to see a help wanted sign propped up in the window.
Swinging open the door, she enters.

INT. COFFEE SHOP DAY

Ruby goes straight up to a harried woman working at the
cash. The SCREECH of milk being steamed fights with the
cafe background playlist.

WORKER (O.S.)
(calling out)
Two cappuccinos, one with oat milk.
(MORE)

WORKER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

One with almond milk. Don't mix them up
this time.

Ruby hovers.

RUBY

Saw your sign.

The clerk pats the pile of papers.

Ruby slips out.

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY COMPUTER SCREEN - DAY

The HUSH of the library is broken by the tapping of a keyboard. A resume template is on a computer screen. Ruby Lane is written at the top and a blinking curser is stuck on the space before address. Roughly, Ruby brushes away tears.

A librarian looks up for a moment, then walks over to see her.

LIBRARIAN

Are you OK?

Ruby wipes away tears and nods.

Ruby watches the librarian return to her desk and pick up the phone. When she turns to look at Ruby, Ruby grabs her plastic bag and is gone in a flash.

EXT. ROSEDALE PARK - CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND - DAY

As Ruby walks through the playground past all the parents pushing kids on swings, the BEEPING SOUNDS OF TRUCKS BACKING UP gets louder. Ruby walks to the edge of the park.

EXT. ROSEDALE RAVINE WOODS - DAY

Through the trees she sees two small Bobcat Tractors rolling over the tents. Seeing her plastic bag of belonging driven over, she takes off down the hill.

Ruby picks up her belongings, then seeing the solar panels in pieces, she tries to collect the parts. BEEPING. Ruby jumps out of the way when the driver backs up too close to her.

She climbs back up the ravine hill carrying some of the solar panel bits along with her own plastic bag of belongings.

CUT TO:

EXT RAVINE BEHIND BELLA'S HOUSE - EVENING

Ruby walks along a path through the woods that edges the back of large Rosedale houses.

She stops at a stone wall. Dropping her bags, she peers into the garden.

EXT. BELLA'S BACKYARD - EVENING

Ruby slips over the wall, then hiding behind trees and bushes, she makes her way towards the house.

INT. KITCHEN/LIVING AREA - EVENING

Through the window, Ruby watches Bella doing her homework on one side of the table. Allison works across from her on her own lap top.

EXT. BELLA'S HOUSE BACKYARD - EVENING

Ruby stays hidden behind a large bush and waits. Dislodging a stone, she turns it over to watch lines of busy ants carrying eggs to their nest.

INT. BELLA'S HOUSE KITCHEN LIVING AREA - EVENING

Bella and Allison close their laptops and leave the family room.

INT./EXT. BELLA'S HOUSE - EVENING

Ruby watches from outside. A light goes on in the hall, then the upstairs hallway and then the back bedroom. Allison appears in the window as she draws the curtains.

Below Bella's window is the flat roof that covers the back extension. Squinting, Ruby studies it, determined to find a way up.

CUT TO:

Ruby jimmies open the garage window--

INT. BELLA'S GARAGE - EVENING

--and slips in. Retrieving her bag of clothes, she climbs into the wheelbarrow.

Car headlights blast through cracks in the garage door as a car drives up to the door. Curling up in a ball, Ruby stays dead still.

(O.S.) The ENGINE CUTS OUT. Headlights dim then turn off. A car door OPENS and SLAMS. FOOTSTEPS cross the driveway, then up the wooden steps.

Ruby peers out to see--

INT. BELLA'S HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM AND BACK YARD - NIGHT

Simon pours himself a glass of wine. Moments later Allison enters. They are talking animatedly about something we can't hear. He pours her a glass. She puts her hand out when it's enough.

Simon slides open the deck door and stands leaning against the railing. Allison joins him.

SIMON

You've been working on this presentation for months. You can't back out at the last minute.

ALLISON

What happens if she shows up again?

SIMON

The police have all the information they need. And if she shows up here, we'll call them.

Simon gently touches her back.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Come on. Big day tomorrow.

They go back in. Allison locks the door, turns off the lights as they head upstairs. The house is dark.

CUT TO:

Dropping the bag of clothes out the garage window, Ruby slips out herself.

Then darts along the ground to the far end of the deck.

CUT TO:

Climbing up on the deck railing, she KNOCKS into a planter. Catching it in the nick of time, it rocks, then finally stops. Ruby stays dead still.

Grabbing the trellis, she steadies herself, then hauls herself up onto the flat roof and crawls across to Bella's window.

The window is open about five inches. Laying her head to the side, she peers in through the gap in the curtains.

EXT/INT. BELLA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Bella is lying in the middle of a child's four poster bed. Light from a flashlight illuminates the diary she's writing in.

Cupping her hands, Ruby whispers through the gap.

RUBY

Bella, Bella.

Bella looks around confused.

RUBY (CONT'D)

Over here.

Looking up, Bella sees Ruby at the window.

Slipping out of bed, Bella rushes over as Ruby tries to force the window open more.

They talk in hoarse whispers.

RUBY (CONT'D)

Help me get this open.

BELLA

It won't open anymore.

RUBY

Why?

BELLA

My mum fixed it.

RUBY

What do you mean?

BELLA
So I wouldn't fall out.

RUBY
Fuck's sake.

Ruby tries to force her head through the gap, then instead puts her hand through.

RUBY (CONT'D)
Hold my hand OK.

Bella doesn't reciprocate.

BELLA
I'm not allowed to see you because you're a bad influence.

Ruby feels like she's been stabbed in the chest. Holding her breath, she listens.

ALLISON (O.S.)
Bella?

Ruby ducks down and stays dead still. Bella dashes back and leaps onto her bed.

Light spills in from the hall as Allison opens the door.

ALLISON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Who are you talking to?

BELLA (O.S.)
Just my stuffies.

ALLISON (O.S.)
Well you need to get to sleep. I just wanted to remind you, I'm driving to Waterloo tomorrow so your dad will take you and pick you up from school.
(beat)
Night Isabella. Love you so much.

BELLA (O.S.)
Love you too mom.

EXT. ROOF BY BELLA'S WINDOW - CONTINUOUS

Ruby holds her head in her hands. When all is quiet, she peeks in.

The lump that is Bella under the covers is illuminated by the flashlight. She stays absolutely still.

RUBY

Bella. Bella.

INT. BELLA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bella's eyes are open, but she doesn't move. A SIREN can be heard in the distance.

EXT. BELLA'S BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Ruby lets herself down onto the deck.

Grabbing the plastic bag of belongings, Ruby runs towards the stone wall and hauls herself over.

Ruby falls against the wall and WEEPS.

INT.EXT. COLLEGE STREET OUTSIDE FRANS RESTAURANT - NIGHT

It's now raining and Ruby is soaking wet. As she walks past the diner, she looks in see a waitress asking two customers if they're finished. The woman nods her head. The man rolls his eyes. The waitress takes away the man's empty plate and the woman's half finished plate.

EXT. BACK ALLEY BEHIND FRANS - NIGHT

Slipping into the back alley, Ruby heads for the kitchen door and peers in to see the waitress drop off the plates. Once the waitress's back is turned, Ruby sneaks in, grabs the half eaten hamburger and french fries and runs.

CUT TO:

Hungrily she eats, standing under a building's overhang to keep out of the rain.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE LAUNDROMAT - NIGHT

Ruby runs down a street through pouring rain. She is soaked right through and shivering.

Seeing the neon OPEN sign reflected in the pavement, Ruby ducks into--

INT. LAUNDROMAT - NIGHT

Dashing in out of the rain, Ruby sits on a ledge in the front window and stares out at passing cars and reflections in puddles. Water drips from her clothes onto the floor.

Looking up she notices a man's reflection in the window. She turns to see TREVOR (40's) holding up a tiny pair of red overalls and then a tiny adorable dress.

TREVOR

Amazing to think we were all this small.

Ruby nods at him.

He studies the back of a container of fabric softener.

TREVOR (CONT'D)

Hey, do you know if I put this in now or at the end.

RUBY

Not sure.

TREVOR

Hard to read this small print without my glasses. Can you read it?

Grasping her plastic bag, Ruby edges towards him.

RUBY

(pointing)

I think you just put it in this section.

He does then turns the knob around.

TREVOR

Hot. Cold. Warm--Way too many decisions. What do you think?

RUBY

All I know is you can't put red with whites or everything turns pink. I did that once.

The man hauls out the red overalls.

TREVOR

Just in the nick of time. My sister would have killed me.

(glancing at Ruby)

You're soaked right through. There's room for your clothes too if you like.

RUBY
No. No. That's OK.

TREVOR
No skin off my nose. Come-on, you did me
a favour.

Unsure, but touched by his kindness, Ruby dumps in her clothes from the bag, then rubs her hand over her wet jeans.

TREVOR (CONT'D)
Wet jeans. Worst feeling ever.

Glancing up, Ruby sees a washroom sign across the room and darts over.

TREVOR (CONT'D)
I'll hold the wash for ya.

INT. LAUNDROMAT WASHROOM - CONTINUOUS

As Ruby struggles to get out of her wet jeans, Trevor busts through the door and pins her against the wall.

TREVOR
You're a beautiful girl. Noticed you as
soon as you walked in.

Shoving his knee between her legs, he undoes his belt. Ruby struggles to get free. He grabs her hair, yanks her head back.

TREVOR (CONT'D)
Little cock tease. Can't leave a man in
agony.

Enraged, Ruby slams the flat of her hand into his nose. Not expecting the hard blow, Trevor loses his balance.

Ruby is incensed. They struggle until Trevor's head is smashed on the sink. He falls to the floor.

Ruby stares at the blood pouring from his nose and head wound. He is not moving. Ruby's hands are covered with blood and shaking uncontrollably.

Grabbing the door handle, she swings it open, only to have it hit Trevor's foot and bounce back. Opening the door again, she squeezes through the gap. She runs through the laundromat and out into the street.

EXT. CHINATOWN STREET - NIGHT

Suddenly Ruby darts into an alley and throws up violently. Tears stream down her face as she runs through the neon lit streets of Chinatown.

Turning, she finds herself on a familiar, dark tree-lined street in Kensington Market.

EXT. KENSINGTON AVE - NIGHT

She walks past a series of closed second hand clothing stores. Then stops outside--

EXT. COURAGE MY LOVE STORE - NIGHT

Stepping forward, she stares in the window then slips along the edge of the building to the side door. It's locked. Hearing footsteps she slips behind a parked car.

A shop clerk (19) walks down the street talking on her phone. (We met her when Ruby first went to the store with Tully.)

SHOP CLERK

Ok. You're right. Ok. I forgot.

She goes straight to the back of the building - doesn't see Ruby - and hauls the garbage bin to the curb.

SHOP CLERK (CONT'D)

I'm sorting it out. Ok. I came back specially.

The clerk opens the front door of the shop, then strides to the back of the store.

Seeing her chance, Ruby slips in and rolls under a clothing rack. She stays dead still.

Ruby watches the clerk's feet return with the garbage. Once through the door, she adds it to the outside bin, then returns to lock the shop door.

Ruby breathes as she stares at the ceiling through the clothes on the rack. Car headlights and loud booming MUSIC sweep by. As a group of kids pass, two press their faces to the window and peer in. Ruby stays dead still.

Finally Ruby rolls out. Staying in the shadows, she tiptoes to the back of the store.

Finding a door marked staff only, she swings it open and struggles to flip on the light.

INT. COURAGE MY LOVE - STAFF WASHROOM- CONTINUOUS

The washroom is lit up by a string of Mexican Day of The Dead nightlights.

Turning water on in the sink, Ruby washes her hands and watches the bloody water go down the drain. Over and over again, she washes her hands.

Glancing in the mirror, she sees blood on her face and covering her dress. Panicking, she flings the dress off and grabs a hand towel, fills it with soap and washes her face, then every part of herself. She looks tiny.

RUBY

Never trust anybody. Never. Never. Again.

She stares at her naked reflection. Picking up her dress, she washes it in the sink, rings it out, then shivers as she puts the dress back on.

INT. COURAGE MY LOVE STORE - NIGHT

Still shivering in the wet dress, she tiptoes around the clothing racks. Seeing a row of men's shirts, she throws off the wet dress and puts on a large shirt that reaches her knees. Her dress lies in a wet heap.

Noticing a rotary phone next to a phone charger she slips behind the counter. Connecting the charger to her phone she looks up a number, then dials it on the rotary phone.

RUBY

(disguising her voice)

Hello, I wanted to speak to Mary Vanderhill.

VOICE (O.S.)

She's not here.

VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

--Is this Ruby?

Ruby stay silent.

VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

She's back in rehab.

RUBY

Rehab. Oh God.

Panicked, Ruby SLAMS the phone into its cradle.

The rotary phone RINGS. She doesn't pick it up. It keeps ringing. Ruby paces the store.

CUT TO:

She stops before a collection of tiny Day of the Dead figures. Small painted skeletons in family situations: sitting around tables, watching TV, at the beach...she crouches down, picks one up and studies it carefully.

RUBY (CONT'D)

Bullshit.

CUT TO:

Ruby lies on the floor and rolls under a row of men's shirts.

CUT TO:

INT. COURAGE MY LOVE STORE - MORNING

Ruby wakes up to see feet walking back and forth as the store owner opens the store. The BELL rings.

STORE OWNER (O.S.)

Not open yet Tom. Just catching up on some book keeping.

MR GREGORY (O.S.)

Thought you were here a little early. Has that new shipment come in yet?

STORE OWNER (O.S.)

No. Not yet.

Ruby stays dead still. A hand picks up the wet dress from the floor, revealing the wet patch.

Ruby moves further back under the clothes.

STORE OWNER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

That's weird.

Pushing the clothes aside, the STORE OWNER (35) is shocked to find Ruby, who leaps to her feet.

RUBY

--I just wanted to--Can I get a job here?

The woman stares at Ruby and then at the \$19.00 Price tag on her sleeve.

STORE OWNER

That's one of our shirts.

Ruby panics.

RUBY

I lost my clothes.

OWNER

Well you can't just break in and take stuff. I could call the police.

RUBY

No. No. Don't--Please. I just--A really bad thing happened--

As Ruby darts away and sees Mr. Gregory.

RUBY (CONT'D)

You remember me right?

Mr Gregory looks pained. He shares a glance with the Store Owner.

MR GREGORY

We better get her some new clothes.

RUBY

I don't need your pity.

He takes cash out of his pockets and hands it to the clerk.

MR GREGORY

(to Ruby)

Hardly pity. I never would have made it myself, if someone didn't help me out. Old man threw me out when I was fourteen. "The only fairy in town and it had to be you." He's dead now, my dad. Never could let it go.

He looks at his watch and walks towards the door.

MR GREGORY (CONT'D)

Let me know if that covers it. Got an early client.

Stunned, Ruby goes into the change room.

INT. COURAGE MY LOVE STORE, CHANGE ROOM - DAY

Ruby stares at her reflection in the mirror.

STORE OWNER (O.S)
This your phone?

Looking down she sees the cell phone being handed to her under the change room door.

As Ruby tries on the clothes--

STORE OWNER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
A couple of things you might want to try.

--clothes are flung over the change room wall.

EXT. KENSINGTON MARKET ALLEY - DAY

Ruby, now fully dressed in second hand jeans, shirt and jacket walks through the market.

EXT. NEEDLE PARK - DAY

Ruby sits on a swing and watches skinny kids fly by on skateboards. She eats a donut.

A girl wearing a pink dress, just like the one Bella had on, is skipping down the street. Ruby runs after her.

When Ruby touches her shoulder, the girl turns. Not Bella. Plus the dress is wrecked. They both look confused. Ruby's face drops.

Ruby goes back to the swing. Time passes.

EXT. STREET - LATE AFTERNOON

Ruby stares at "No ID" message on her BUZZING phone. She doesn't answer it.

A text pops up with a BLIP.

TEXT
It's Tully. Want a job?

RUBY WRITES
YES!

A map appears:

TEXT

Follow the map.

Ruby studies the map, then is off.

EXT. DON VALLEY RIVER - LATE AFTERNOON

Ruby runs through the trees until she comes to a stream. Following the stream, leads her to a river flowing with plastic debris and floating fish.

Unsure, where she is, Ruby studies the map on the phone, then turns south to follow the river. All around are roads and entrances and exits onto the Don Valley Parkway.

It's a long walk.

EXT. LAKESHORE BLVD/GARDINER EXPRESSWAY - EARLY EVENING

The path seems to end at Lakeshore where cars fly by in either direction. Above her is a raised highway. Below it's an industrial wasteland.

TULLY (O.S.)

(yelling)

Hey, Ruby.

Ruby looks all around her.

TULLY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(yelling)

Ruby!

Finally looking up, she sees Tully on the catwalk of a billboard. He throws down a pair of work gloves and waves her up.

Ruby begins the climb.

She climbs higher and higher. Looking down, the world spins.

TULLY (CONT'D)

(yelling)

Don't look down.

Ruby steadies herself, determined to reach the top.

TULLY (CONT'D)
Spencer fucked off somewhere. It's a two
person job.

CUT TO:

As Ruby gets close to the top, Tully sees she is crying.
Grabbing her under her arms, he pulls her sobbing onto
his chest.

TULLY (CONT'D)
You scared of heights?

Shaking her head, she sobs into his arms.

RUBY
--Just hold me. Please just hold me.

TULLY
Come-on. Can't be that bad. What
happened?

Ruby rolls off him and leans curled up against the
railing with her hands over her eyes.

RUBY
She doesn't love me anymore.

TULLY
Who?

RUBY
Bella.

TULLY
Oh, I'm sure she still loves you. Fucking
parents. Can't believe they won't let you
see her.

RUBY
Fucking hypocrites. I hate them.

TULLY
Come-on it'll work out. You just need to
find a way to get her by herself so you
can talk to her.

Tully guides Ruby to stand up. Ruby holds on to him.

TULLY (CONT'D)
OK?

Ruby nods.

TULLY (CONT'D)
Gotta get this up before we lose the
light. Here, lean your body against this
ladder.

She does as Tully climbs the ladder. He has a 2 x 2 foot
piece of vinyl in one hand and a squeegee in his back
pocket.

TULLY (CONT'D)
(yelling down)
Keep the poster steady.

Unfolding the poster, from the top, he quickly squeegees
the top section down. The wind catches the rest of the
poster and it expands 8 feet below.

Grabbing it, Ruby steadies it in the wind. Quickly Tully
sticks down the rest of the poster.

Tully moves the ladder four feet, ready for the next
section. He climbs up. Again, Ruby presses herself
against the ladder, then catches the poster from being
battered by the wind.

CUT TO:

EXT. BILLBOARD BY THE GARDINER EXPRESSWAY - NIGHT

The lifestyle ad for alcohol is up behind them. It's rush
hour. Red taillights go on forever in one direction.
White headlights in the other.

TULLY
Look at the suckers. Stuck in traffic,
every morning, every night. I'd take our
life over their's any day.

Ruby looks at Tully with a new appreciation.

RUBY
Yeah, and they're killing our planet.

A text interrupts. Tully glances at it.

TULLY
Spencer just sent a map. 2264 Lakeshore.
Another job, maybe. Don't know.

Ruby and Tully get ready to descend. The ground spins in
front of Ruby.

Ruby lowers herself from the catwalk. Tully takes her hand.

EXT. LAKESHORE AVE.- NIGHT

Ruby and Tully eat pizza as they walk along scanning numbers on buildings. They pass a set of run down low rise apartment buildings, a supermarket, a dusty looking hardware store, a laundromat and a few run down empty stores. They keep walking--

Suddenly when they look down Lake Crescent, they see the lake and the city lights sparkling across Humber Bay.

TULLY

What the hell?

There is a big house on the corner and then a mansion, another mansion and then a dark house with no lights on. It is overgrown. The numbers 2264 are on the stone wall.

SPENCER (O.S.)

Took you long enough.

Spencer emerges from the bushes grinning from ear to ear.

Ruby and Tully stare in awe at the place.

SPENCER (CONT'D)

Just found out from my sister. Our great Aunt went into an old folks home or died or something. One side of the family hates the other. So while they're fighting over who gets the house, it's sitting here empty.

They run round to the back. The lot opens out onto Lake Ontario. The downtown city skyline shimmers in the distance. They stare at the water lapping against the sandy shore.

TULLY

(slapping Spence on the back)

What the fuck?

Turning back to the house, Spencer climbs in through a window. Tully and Ruby follow.

INT. ABANDONED MANSION - DININGROOM - NIGHT

They use their cell phones as flashlights to illuminate an elaborate chandelier. Tully flips the light switch. Electricity is off.

They walk through to the hall and then the living room. The house is in need of repair, but it has a fallen-down grandeur about it. Ruby spins around taking it all in.

Spontaneously, Ruby takes Tully by the hand and they roll across a wall kissing.

INT. ABANDONED MANSION - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Gleeful, Ruby runs up the stairs. A ceiling chandelier lies crashed on the second floor, leaving a hole in the plaster above.

Tully and Spencer follow Ruby and they all run from room to room laughing.

RUBY
(joyful)
Bella's going to love it here!

Tully and Spencer share a look. Spencer rolls his eyes.

They walk into the bathroom and try the taps. No water comes out.

Ruby stays up in one of the top rooms and stares out at the lake.

Tully and Spencer troop downstairs.

TULLY (O.S.)
Almost out of battery. We gotta get the
wifi working.

Ruby beams as she looks out at the city in the distance and then dances around the room.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED MANSION - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ruby skips downstairs to find Tully and Spencer huddled round computers smoking pot. They offer Ruby the joint. She takes it and coughs.

Suddenly Tully and Spencer's arms fly in the air and they high five each other.

Success. They have broken the code to one of the neighbour's wifi.

TULLY

I would kill for a shower. Come-on lets see if we can get the water going.

SPENCER

Spiders. No way am I going in that basement. My cousin locked me down there when I was a kid once.

RUBY

We could get water from the lake! Oh, we can swim in the lake---Last one in is a sissy!

They race out the back door.

EXT. ABANDONED MANSION - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Stripping off their clothes, they laugh and stagger giddily towards the water. The boys throw off all their clothes. Ruby keeps her T shirt and underwear on.

They run into the lake and dive in.

Floating on their backs, they look up at the stars. A blinking passenger plane flies overhead towards the island airport.

RUBY

I've never been so happy in my whole life.

They laugh as Tully holds her floating body and spins her around in the water.

CUT TO:

Tully leads Ruby out, they kiss until they fall into the grass. Spencer sulks, then goes in.

Ruby and Tully roll around in the grass. Tully gently kisses her face. Ruby wiggles out of her underwear, so in need of being loved. They have sex under the stars.

INT. ABANDONED MANSION - DININGROOM - NIGHT

Ruby and the guys lie out on the floor. Ruby watches the car headlights light up the walls.

Everybody shifts around trying to get comfortable. Ruby takes down some old curtains.

She lays one over herself and Tully, then watches him sleep.

INT. ABANDONED MANSION - DINING ROOM - MORNING

Ruby wakes up on the floor next to the guys.

TULLY

Fuck. This floor is worse than sleeping
in the woods.

Ruby's smile widens into a grin. Tully looks at her.

TULLY (CONT'D)

What are you so chipper about?

RUBY

We need stuff for the house right?

EXT. BELLA'S HOUSE - DAY

Ruby, Tully and Spencer have ski masks on. They climb over the back wall and into the garden. They put on rubber gloves as they follow Ruby to the back door.

CUT TO:

Ruby punches in the code she remembers seeing Allison put in. The alarm shuts off.

INT. BELLA'S HOUSE - LIVING KITCHEN EXTENSION - DAY

As Ruby leads the guys in, they quickly scan the room. When Ruby goes to take off her mask, Tully stops her.

TULLY

(under his breath)

Security cameras.

Spencer scans the house for security cameras. Unable to find any he nods to Tully and they both take off their masks. Ruby follows.

Tully grabs the laptop covered with butterfly stickers.

RUBY

No. No. Not that. That's Bella's.

Spencer glances at Tully as he puts it down.

His eyes fall on the speakers and music set-up.

TULLY

Bingo. Top of the line.

Grabbing the speakers etc., he follows Spencer down the hall. The house looks like its straight out of a magazine. Ruby stares at staged studio photographs of Bella dressed as a ballerina. Bumping a wedding picture onto the floor, she picks it up and looks worried.

TULLY (CONT'D)

Insurance pays for everything, right Spence?

SPENCER

Yup.

TULLY

His dad owns an insurance company.

A huge desk is by the window in the front living room. Quickly Spencer unhooks the computer as Tully searches the desk drawers.

Tully finds a business card:

TULLY (CONT'D)

Dr. Simon McKenzie. Anaesthesiologist. St Mary's hospital.

The guys exchange knowing glances.

RUBY

What does that mean?

Spencer pulls out the bottom drawer and sweeps the floor with his hand, but finds nothing stashed there.

Ruby scans papers on the desk. One is an invoice for yearly fees.

RUBY (CONT'D)

Branksome Hall

(beat)

(MORE)

RUBY (CONT'D)
\$40 thousand a year. Isabella McKenzie?
What's Branksome Hall?

Tully glances over.

TULLY
Girl's private school, I bet.

Ruby takes a picture of the address on her phone. Tully hands Ruby a letter with Allison's signature on it

TULLY (CONT'D)
Mother's signature. Could be useful.

Ruby takes a picture of the signature. She takes another.

Tully flips through more papers until he finds a charge card still stuck to the renewal letter.

TULLY (CONT'D)
Allison McKenzie. Gold. Brand new. Fuck.
Hasn't even been signed yet.

Pocketing the card, he keeps searching.

He scans more papers. (O.S.) a car sounds like it's pulling up in front of the house.

Ruby darts to the window to see a cab stopped in front.

RUBY
Someone's coming.

Tully darts to the window. Melanie strides up the front walk, carrying a handful of large empty duffel bags.

TULLY
Just Mel.

RUBY
How did she--?

TULLY
She knows what stuff is worth.

As Tully goes to the front door, Ruby picks up a photograph of Bella standing in front of the Eiffel Tower. Ruby's feeling in over her head.

MELANIE (O.S.)
Too bad they didn't adopt her too. She would've been set for life.

Ruby's heart stops for a moment.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

--Oh, I didn't know you were here.

Tully and Spencer are filling one of the duffle bags with loot.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Leave that. It's not worth much.

TULLY

We're done down here. Come-on. Gotta be quick.

Leaving the full bag at the bottom of the stairs, Tully heads up with the last two duffle bags. The others follow.

INT. BELLA'S HOUSE - HALL - DAY

Ruby opens the first door she comes to - a cupboard full of sheets and towels. The others head straight towards the master bedroom.

RUBY

Look. Sheets.

(beat)

And a blow up mattress.

Ruby stuffs everything, including a handmade quilt into the duffle bag.

TULLY

Keep your eye on the ball. Re-sell value.

That's what we are looking for.

The next door down the hall is ajar enough for Ruby to see in.

INT. BELLA'S HOUSE - BELLA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Ruby pushes open the door to a princess room with a child's four poster bed covered with every stuffed animal one could desire. Ruby scans the toys. No sign of Rabbit.

Sitting on the side of the bed, she grabs a pillow, presses her face into it and breathes in.

TULLY (O.S.)

Are you sure?

MELANIE (O.S.)

Yup. That's a Prada. Retail for like
4,000 bucks.

Beside the bed is a girl's diary. Ruby tries to open it,
but it's locked. She searches the drawer of the bedside
table, but is unable to find the key.

MELANIE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

OMG Boutique Quinto. These retail for
over a thousand.

Slipping the diary into the pillow case, Ruby exits and
adds it to the duffle bag of bedsheets.

INT. BELLA'S HOUSE - ALLISON AND SIMON'S BEDROOM - DAY

As Ruby enters, Tully joins Spencer in the ensuite
bathroom.

Melanie walks around in high heeled shoes.

MELANIE

Can't believe it. They fit me like a
glove. She has good taste. I can give her
that.

SPENCER (O.S.)

(hoots)

Hey, look what I found.

Through the crack in the bathroom door, Ruby sees Spencer
show Tully a large pill container. Tully grabs and
pockets it.

SPENCER (CONT'D)

Hey. Come-on. Finders keepers.

TULLY

No-one needs another one of your fucking
near death dramas.

Curious, Ruby steps forward.

RUBY

What is it?

Tully walks out of the on suite.

TULLY

Nothing important.

OS the sound of a car. Ruby darts to the window. Tully joins her to see a car pulling into the driveway.

TULLY (CONT'D)

We're done.

Grabbing the stolen belongings, they scramble out. Ruby struggles with the bag of sheets.

TULLY (CONT'D)

Leave that.

Ruby struggles to get it down the stairs.

RUBY

(fierce)

No! We need it!

Tully relents and helps her with it. Quickly putting on their masks, they take off through the back door.

EXT. BELLA'S HOUSE - BACK GARDEN - DAY

Sprinting to the stone wall, they drop the duffel bags to the other side, then are over themselves, in seconds.

EXT. BEHIND BELLA'S HOUSE - ROSEDALE RAVINE - STONE WALL - CONTINUOUS

Crouching down, they silently high five each other, then stay dead still as they peer through cracks between the stones.

The car is long gone.

TULLY

Bet someone was just turning in the driveway.

Spencer gets ready to jump the wall and go back.

SPENCER

I'll get what we left.

RUBY

Maybe we've taken enough.

MELANIE

Thought you hated them.

TULLY

Let's not tempt fate.

Melanie makes a show of kissing Tully, then glances at Ruby.

MELANIE

Wish me luck. Got my practical exam at three.

Melanie heads off in the other direction, shoes in hand.

EXT. ROSEDALE RAVINE BEHIND BELLA'S HOUSE - DAY

Ruby and the boys take off through the woods, laden down with their take.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY

Ruby and Tully roll around on the deflated mattress
LAUGHING.

Spencer holds up the electric plug at the end of the pump.

TULLY

We need new solar panels

SPENCER

Or a generator.

Spencer looks through the bag and finds an empty battery case.

SPENCER (CONT'D)

Or AA batteries--

(drops the battery holder on
Tully)

Hey, time to indulge ourselves.

TULLY

Card's got a best before date. We gotta use it or lose it.

SPENCER

You're no fun.

Spencer lights up a joint.

INT. DOLLAR STORE - DAY

Ruby's cart is filled with sketchbooks, magic markers and kids craft-type items. Tully and Spencer share a look.

The boys roll by with another cart filled with candles, pots, pans, plates, cups, a couple of pillows and quantities of food.

As they wait in line for the cash, Ruby grabs two boxes of smarties. Spencer grabs bags of chips and Tully grabs batteries of every type.

Tully hands Ruby the card.

Ruby taps the card. The cashier puts the sale through without a blink of the eye.

Barely able to contain their grins, Tully, Spencer and Ruby appear to be floating on air.

EXT. BRICK FURNITURE STORE - EARLY EVENING

Seeing the huge Brick warehouse store, they exchange glances. Quickly stashing their dollar store bags, they head towards the entrance.

INT. THE BRICK FURNITURE STORE - EARLY EVENING

Buoyant, they drift through, scanning the massive showroom. Every salesman has their eye on them as they head to the fridge and stove section.

Playfully they open and close all the fridge and stove doors.

TULLY

Can't possibly live without an ice maker.

A bulky salesman in a tight-fitting suit appears as Ruby closes a fridge door.

RUBY

Or this cold water dispenser.

Ruby pushes the lever, spilling water on the floor.

TULLY

I apologise for my fiancé. She's a little over excited. We're getting married in two days--

SALESMAN

Congratulations.

SPENCER

Hey look if you get this gas stove we
could hook a propane tank to it.

The salesman looks worried.

SALESMAN

No no. You can't store propane inside a
building--

TULLY

We're going electric, don't you think
honey?

Ruby nods as she scans her eyes across the fridges.

RUBY

I never knew fridges cost so much money.

SALES PERSON

These are top of the line. Can't find
better fridges than these.

TULLY

We'll get this one and the matching
stove.

The sales clerk waves them towards the bed section.

SALES CLERK

Shipping's already covered. You might as
well add the beds. We could even throw in
an accent chair.

CUT TO:

Ruby and Tully roll around on various beds and pick one
they like. Spencer tries out his own bed.

RUBY

What about Bella?

Tully and Spencer glance at each other. Tully looks
closely at Ruby and takes her aside.

TULLY

(whispering)

Gotta keep it under five grand.

To the sales clerk.

TULLY (CONT'D)

Fridge and stove are good for today.

CUT TO:

At the sales desk, Ruby stands beside Tully who slips the chargecard into her hand. Spencer is in the couch section trying out different couch sets.

The sales person rings it in. \$4,699.00. Ruby hands over the card. The MANAGER, in a better fitting suit with manager on his name tag, picks up the charge card and studies it like a hawk.

SALESMAN

Allison McKenzie, I'm sorry, but we'll need to ask you for some other ID. Something with your address on it.

Spencer, seeing how it's all going down, or not going down, is out the door in a flash.

RUBY

That's all I have right now.

TULLY

We'd like the card back.

The Manager slips the card into the drawer and slams it shut.

TULLY (CONT'D)

This is outrageous. You'll be hearing from head office about this.

SALESMAN

We've called security. I'll have to ask you to wait.

Tully takes Ruby's hand.

As they pass the bed section, Ruby pulls Tully towards a bed and they leap on it as though it's a trampoline.

With the sales clerks trying to catch them, they leap from one bed to the next until they dash out the doors.

EXT STREET OUTSIDE THE BRICK - CONTINUOUS.

Spencer is sitting in a taxi cab, with the back door open. Frantic, he gestures them towards him.

Ruby and Tully, leap in LAUGHING.

INT. TAXI - NIGHT

As the cab takes off, Spencer, Ruby and Tully are squished in the backseat between their Dollar Store loot.

The car drives up the ramp onto the gardiner expressway.

Ruby looks out the window to see the city skyline. She looks unsettled.

RUBY

I forgot about the security cameras?

TULLY

They can't charge us. We didn't take anything.

Tully wiggles around trying to get to his pocket.

TULLY (CONT'D)

How much cash've you got?

Spencer finds a five dollar bill.

Ruby glances at the meter. \$ 10.50.

TULLY (CONT'D)

Better take the next exit.

The cab driver glances at them in the rear view mirror.

SPENCER

What're the fuck are you doing, man?

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

They all pile out of the cab.

TULLY

I drove cab for a while. Barely made the gas money. No way am I ripping off a cabbie.

INT. BELLA'S HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - EVENING

Bella's POV: Bella, dressed in her ballet outfit, follows Allison and Simon into the house.

SIMON

Did you forget to set the alarm?

Puzzled, Allison scans the room.

ALLISON
Wait, where's my computer?
(she touches Bella's)
Here's Bella's.

SIMON
Did you take it to work?

Looking under the side table.

ALLISON
No the briefcase is here still.

SIMON
Speakers. Where are the speakers? I just
got those damn speakers.

Bella follows her parents into the living room to find
desk drawers turned out and the computer gone.

ALLISON
Oh no. Not that computer too.

SIMON
Kids. Probably.

ALLISON
I know exactly who did this.

SIMON
Let's not jump to conclusions.

ALLISON
This is why I wanted spy cameras. And you
said NO.

SIMON
Why would anyone want to be spied on in
their own house?

ALLISON
This is exactly why!

Seeing the smashed wedding photograph.

ALLISON (CONT'D)
I feel so violated.

Simon heads up the stairs, Bella follows.

ALLISON (CONT'D)
Bella stay here with me. They may still
be in the house.

Bella sits down on the stairs and watches her mother.

Allison hits 911 on the phone.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

Hello yes.

(beat)

Police thanks. We've been robbed.

(beat)

Yes, the address is--

EXT. SUPERMARKET PARKING LOT - NIGHT.

Tully heads towards a dumpster at the far side of the lot. Ruby and Spencer follow.

Dropping the dollar store bags, Tully climbs up and peers in. Ruby hoists herself up beside him.

Ruby holds up some oranges. Tully nods.

Ruby and Tully throw food down to Spencer who puts it into the cart.

CUT TO:

Ruby grips the cart's handle and steps onto the bottom rung. Tully pushes her around in circles. Spencer walks behind, talking on his phone.

EXT.INT. ABANDONED MANSION - KITCHEN DOOR - NIGHT

Spencer tries to push the shopping cart in through the back door. It doesn't fit. Ruby and Tully squeeze by and begin bringing everything in.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Tully and Ruby wear head lamps as they finish lighting candles and putting small battery lights around the kitchen. Spencer is in the corner cutting up a pill into a fine dust, then snorts it.

Tully hands him a head lamp and swings open the basement door. Spencer shakes. Tully slaps him on the back.

TULLY

Time to face the spiders.

Spencer grimaces. Ruby begins to follow.

TULLY (CONT'D)
Stay up here and open the taps.
(To Spencer)
Com-on Spence. How am I supposed to know
where the main is?

SPENCER
You owe me big time for this one.

CUT TO:

Ruby opens the taps and stares out the kitchen window.

A fox stops and stares back at her.

LOUD SHUDDERING and rusty water and air bursts out of the
taps.

TULLY (YELLING)
Let it run and open all the others.

Ruby runs into the small downstairs powder room and
forces open the SQUEAKING taps.

INT. ABANDONED MANSION - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Light from her headlamp bounces as she heads up the
stairs. She opens doors until she finds the upstairs
bathroom.

She opens up the bath taps. Pipes shudder and rusty water
bursts into the bathtub.

TULLY (O.S.)
Got it.
(beat)
Ok. Turn them all off now.

CUT TO:

Ruby watches the sink tap drip. It needs a new washer.

INT. BRICK FURNITURE STORE - VIDEO IMAGE

A video image of Ruby and Tully bouncing on the beds is
playing on a computer screen.

ALLISON
The cops sent it. In case we recognised
them.

INT. BELLA'S KITCHEN LIVING AREA - NIGHT

Bella is wide-eyed, Allison is livid and Simon looks like he's been backed into a corner.

SIMON

All I'm saying is, it doesn't prove she broke in. We still need results from the fingerprints.

Allison storms off. Bella looks sad.

INT. ABANDONNED MANSION - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Ruby puts batteries into the air pump and clicks the switch. A SCREAMING SOUND OF the PUMP begins.

Puzzled, Tully opens the door and peers in to see the mattress inflating.

A RINGING PHONE can barely be heard over the PUMP MOTOR so it's a few moments before Tully realises his phone is ringing. He swipes to answer and waves for Ruby to shut the PUMP OFF.

MELANIE (O.S.)

(hysterical sobbing)

I can't believe it. Fucking guy.

TULLY

What happened?

Tully holds the LOUD phone away from his ear.

MELANIE (O.S.)

He took me down in front of the whole class. I'm so sick of being bullied. Why does this always happen to me. (sobbing) Fucker tells me I need 10 more haircuts for my portfolio. I worked so hard. And now I can't find the address. Fucking bus driver let me off at the wrong street so now I'm walking back and forth--

TULLY

Ok. OK. Mel. I'll find you.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE ABANDONNED MANSION - NIGHT

The SCREAMING PUMP is back on. Ruby looks through the window to see Melanie on the sidewalk sobbing as she walks towards Tully. He holds her tight and she sobs into his arms.

CUT TO:

The headlamp Tully is wearing, lights their way through the overgrown hedges and trees.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Ruby enters the kitchen to see Melanie follow Tully in. Black streaks of mascara have run down her cheeks. She is tottering around in Allison's shoes.

RUBY

You OK?

MELANIE

Soon I will be.

Melanie pulls a bottle of vodka and a paper envelope out of her purse. She takes a pill and hands the envelope to Tully. He takes one and hands it to Ruby.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Has she taken Molly before?

Ruby pops a pill in her mouth.

RUBY

I have now.

TULLY

(laughing)

You two have a lot in common.

Ruby and Melanie stare at each other, sizing each other up.

MELANIE

I gotta get your cut done before Molly kicks in.

Melanie picks up her phone, pushes Tully into the light, pulls off his headlamp and messes up his hair. Standing back she takes his picture.

As she retrieves a pair of scissors from her jacket pocket, Tully turns on the tap and dunks his head under the cold water and YELLS.

TULLY
(shivering)
Fuck that's cold.

Ruby watches as Tully takes off his T shirt and dries his hair with it.

MELANIE
Have you cut hair before?

RUBY
(beat)
My friend's. But I've been watching You Tube.

Melanie hoots.

MELANIE
You Tube. You gotta start somewhere I guess.

Melanie combs Tully's hair through and holds a section between straightened fingers.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
See this line. Once you get the lines right, you follow it through. That way the hair falls where you want it to.

She combs the hair back.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
See that?

Ruby nods. Melanie has a flair for this. Ruby begins to mistake Melanie's sharing of trade secrets as friendship.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
Hey Ruby, hold this part back for me I forgot my clips.

Suddenly, tears start rolling down Melanie's face. Pushing them away, she stops to takes a swig of vodka.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
Fucking hate that guy.

TULLY
Can we just finish the hair cut. Don't need my ear lopped off.

Melanie takes another hit of vodka.

TULLY (CONT'D)

He's just jealous. You're a way better cutter than he is.

MELANIE

He took me down in front of the judges.

Sobbing, she searches her purse for a Kleenex.

TULLY

Once you get your licence, you won't have to deal with him ever again.

Instead of finding kleenex she wipes her nose with the back of her hand and pulls out a wig and a brand new pairs of scissors still in packaging.

MELANIE

I almost forgot.

She drops them both on Tully's lap.

TULLY

What do you want me to do with this?

MELANIE

Real hair. It's worth a lot of money and these scissors retail for like 300 bucks. Too big for my hands. You should be able to figure it out.

TULLY

I thought you liked the guy.

MELANIE

Guy's a fag. So uptight. He's getting on my nerves. Soon as I get my licence I'm opening up my own salon.

CUT TO:

Melanie is finishing the cut. She glances at Ruby.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

See here. It's like sculpture. You gotta think in three dimensions. You don't want to go too short on the top or it gets too boxy.

Melanie takes pictures of the final cut. Seeing her reflection in the phone, she grabs a package of wipes from her purse and starts wiping the mascara off her cheeks. Ruby studies the haircut.

RUBY
It's really good.

Tully flicks his hair back, but there is no hair to flick back now.

MELANIE
You gotta stop doing that now or people will think you have that...What's that called? You know where people flick their head and swear all the time.
(beat)
Tourettes. That's it.

Ruby's starting to feel the Molly. The lights begin to blur.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
Have I got the mascara off.

Ruby points to her own cheek. Melanie gives her the wipe. Ruby wipes the rest of the mascara off Melanie's cheek.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
Love Molly. Isn't it great.
(beat)
I'll cut your hair later if you like?

RUBY
Oh, that would be Great!

Spencer arrives. With a big grin on his face.

SPENCER
Wait till you see this.

They all peer out the door to see a generator in a red wagon.

MELANIE
Anyone think of calling Hydro?

Tully slaps Spencer on the back.

TULLY
This is the better plan.

Tully opens the pill container and gives Spencer another pill.

As Spencer cuts it up on the counter. Melanie grabs Ruby's hand and they run out the door.

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT

Melanie and Ruby spin around in their Molly state. Lights from the city sparkle.

The guys set up the generator and run the cables into the house.

Ruby and Melanie keep spinning until they fall on the grass.

RUBY

Hey, we could wish on a falling star.

MELANIE

I see one.

TULLY

That's a satellite.

MELANIE

You're so boring.

The city lights sparkle in the distance. Everything sways and feels floaty.

INT. LIVINGROOM - NIGHT (LATER)

Music is playing. Ruby is stoned. Excitedly, Melanie runs around the room.

MELANIE

Just imagine. Chairs here. Couch along by the window. And a huge painting, abstract I can see all the colours now. This room could be my new salon.

Melanie pushes Tully against the wall and kisses him, then turns to see Ruby watching them. Tully grabs Melanie's hand.

TULLY

You haven't seen the whole house yet.
Come-on.

He leads her out.

Ruby feels totally alone. Light from Melanie's phone light flashes up the stairs

Car headlights sweep across the walls.

MELANIE (O.S.)

This place is amazing. How many bedrooms?

TULLY (O.S.)

Four.

MELANIE (O.S.)

Even Joey could have his own room.

Ruby listens to the footsteps and voices go upstairs.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

We need one of those huge crystal chandeliers, you know the ones I mean and then we could paint the walls. We need another couch here.

INT. ABANDONED MANSION -DINING ROOM - NIGHT (LATER)

Ruby finishes putting sheets on the blow up bed, then adds the quilt and lies down on top of it.

Footsteps return.

Melanie comes to the door and flops onto the bed beside Ruby. Tully comes in behind her.

MELANIE

Don't know where you're going to sleep Tul, but I know where I am.

Tully looks through the belongings on the floor until he finds a towel in the pile.

TULLY

I'm going for a swim. Anyone want to join me?

Ruby and Melanie shake their heads. Melanie cuddles up to Ruby.

RUBY

So who's Joey?

MELANIE

My son. He's in foster care. I'm trying to get him back, that why I need my hairdressing licence. He's four now.

RUBY

That's how old Bella was, when they took her away. So hard.

MELANIE

Tell me about it. I hate social services. He's already had 3 different foster parents.

RUBY

Were you in care?

MELANIE

Yeah.

RUBY

Me too. Last group home, the manager's a prick. His wife's just clueless.

We can see Ruby wants to say more, but she's quiet.

MELANIE

And now we're living in a mansion and everything's going to be alright.

Melanie rolls over and hugs Ruby.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Sex on Molly is the best sex EVER. Hey, have you ever kissed a girl before?

Ruby shakes her head.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Who was the first person you kissed?

Beat.

RUBY

Hmm. Michael Pentergost, he chased me in a corn field. Tackled me, then he kissed me. And then he threw my shoe away. I had to hop home on one shoe. How could you possibly lose one shoe? That was the end of my first foster home.

MELANIE

How old were you?

RUBY

Ten.

MELANIE

That doesn't count.

Turning on her side, Melanie leans on her elbow.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

OK. Truth or dare. So how come your sister's parents didn't adopt you too.

Ruby stays silent.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

There must have been a reason. Social services keep siblings together now.

Ruby watches the leaves blowing in the tree beside the house.

Melanie caresses Ruby as she wraps herself around her.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Ok dare then. If you haven't kissed a girl before I dare you to kiss me.

Ruby kisses Melanie, who laughs.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

You gotta work on your technique.

Melanie moves back on her side to whisper in Ruby's ear.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Tully and I, we're soulmates. He always comes back to me.

Tully appears at the door, drying his hair with a towel.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Hey Tul, we were just talking about you. Here, there's room for you here.

Melanie backs herself against Ruby.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Shove over girl. Give us some room.

Ruby moves over. As Tully lies down, Melanie wraps herself around him as she quickly begins seducing him.

Ruby stares at the ceiling. Sounds of lovemaking. The bed starts wobbling and bouncing.

Horribly alone, Ruby struggles to get up off the blow up mattress, then walks out.

EXT. ABANDONED MANSION - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Ruby walks straight into the water and swims out into the lake. Holding her breath, she dives to the bottom.

It gets darker and darker and she is unable to find the surface until she finds herself at the bottom.

Suddenly she bursts out, gasping for breath.

CUT TO:

Ruby crawls up on the shore, where she lies collapsed.

INT. ABANDONED MANSION - DINING ROOM BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ruby returns to find Tully and Melanie sprawled across the blow up bed. She grabs the quilt from the floor and yanks the pillow from under Melanie's sleeping head. Grabbing a headlamp, she leaves the room.

INT. ABANDONED MANSION - UPSTAIRS - DAY

Ruby climbs the stairs and pushes open a door to the room that looks out over the lake. The half-moon shines in through the window. Morning light is just beginning to break.

Ruby wraps the quilt around her and face plants her head into the pillow. Hitting something hard, she puts her hand in the pillow and pulls out the diary. It's still locked. Grabbing Allison's pen, she uses it to wrench open the lock.

The book opens to a child's drawing of a small girl and a big girl. "Me and my sister Ruby".

Ruby stares at the picture. Tears run down her face. She reads it quietly.

RUBY

"Today my sister Ruby came to visit. She's a teenager. Her clothes are really messy but her eyes are sparkly. My mom said I am not allowed to see her. My dad tells her to stop being a control freak. I don't like it when they fight. I am trying to remember my other life. I remember we played in a tree fort and we kept our candy in a tin box."

Ruby holds the diary close to her chest and falls asleep.

INT. ABANDONED MANSION - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - MORNING

Ruby's cell phone is open to a photograph of Allison's signature. Versions of Allison's signature have been copied many times over. Balls of scrunched up paper are scattered about.

CUT TO:

Ruby folds a piece of paper and stuffs it in the envelope.

CUT TO:

EXT. PRIVATE GIRLS SCHOOL - LUNCH

The bell RINGS as Ruby walks towards the school.

Students wearing matching uniforms burst through the doors. Bella is one of the last out.

Bella stubs the toe of her shoe on the asphalt. Three girls sidle over. The lead girl says something to Bella, who shrinks. The girls walk away laughing.

Ruby runs along the fence towards Bella.

RUBY
(whispering)
Bella, Bella, over here.

Unsure, Bella walks up to the fence.

RUBY (CONT'D)
Why are they being mean to you?

BELLA
Sally Bannister told everyone I'm adopted.

Ruby sizes up her opponent.

RUBY
That blond one? Bally Sinister?

BELLA
Her mother's the school principal.

RUBY
I'll bust you out of here. I could bust up that Bally bitch too--

Bella looks worried. Ruby takes a letter out of her pocket and pushes it through the chain link fence. Bella opens it to see her Mom's signature.

RUBY (CONT'D)
You have a doctor's appointment. Just take this to the office. Then meet me. I'll be--

Ruby scans the yard.

RUBY (CONT'D)
--behind that hedge OK.

BELLA
--I'm scared. I don't want to get in trouble.

RUBY
(Enthusiastically)
Come-on. We can be sisters again.

Bella runs back into the school.

Ruby waits behind the trees. Bella doesn't come back.

EXT. WOODS BEHIND THE SCHOOL - AFTERNOON - (LATER)

Ruby walks away into the woods behind the school. She smokes a cigarette.

The sun is now lower in the sky. Ruby crouches down and studies insects. Hearing the BELL RING in the distance, she walks back towards the school.

EXT. HOUSE ACROSS FROM THE SCHOOL AFTERNOON (LATER)

Ruby hides in the driveway behind a bin and watches.

EXT. SCHOOLYARD - DAY

Bella come through the school doors. She sits on the steps and waits as all the other kids get picked up in SUVs.

Her flip phone RINGS. She answers it and listens.

SIMON (O.S.)
Oh sweetie I'm so sorry. Everything took way longer than any of us expected.

BELLA
That's OK Dad. I'm going to walk home.

SIMON (O.S.)
Are you sure?

Getting up, she puts on her knapsack and walks down the sidewalk. She jumps over the cracks.

BELLA
(under her breath)
Don't step on the cracks,
Then Ruby will come back.

Ruby follows at a safe distance, then moves in beside her.

RUBY
I know I shouldn't have taken this--

Ruby hands Bella her diary.

RUBY (CONT'D)
But I know you miss me too.

Bella smiles shyly at Ruby.

BELLA
That's why I didn't step on any cracks.

RUBY
What do you mean.

BELLA
Don't step on the cracks,
Then Ruby will come back.

Ruby smiles and hugs her. Seeing the park across the street, she takes Bella by the hand.

RUBY
Come-on.

EXT. PARK WITH THE CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND - DAY

They run off towards the swings.

They swing higher and higher into the trees. It feels like they're flying.

Holding hands, they lie side by side on the roundabout. Bella's phone RINGS. "Dad" is on the screen. Startled, Bella looks to Ruby who nods. Bella answers it.

SIMON
Are you home, Bella?

BELLA
Dad can I go for a playdate to Tilda's house?

SIMON
That would be a great solution. Let me talk to Tilda's mom.

Frantic, Ruby mimes steering the car.

BELLA
--Not right now--
(beat)
she's driving--

SIMON (O.S.)
Ok? But--

BELLA
OK. Bye.

Ruby and Bella run off.

INT. SUBWAY - EARLY EVENING

Ruby and Bella are at the front car of the subway train. Bella's eyes are wide open as they enter a tunnel.

RUBY
You haven't been on the subway before?

Bella shakes her head.

RUBY (CONT'D)
Me neither. No subways in Nova Scotia.
Just ships. Lots of ships.

They stare into the pitch black darkness. A distant light brightens as they approach and enter the next station.

EXT. ABANDONED MANSION BACKYARD - EARLY EVENING

Ruby takes Bella by the hand and they run around to the back of the house.

Lake Ontario is before them.

Swans are tipped upside down feeding from the bottom.

RUBY

Bums up!

Bella starts LAUGHING. Neither of them can stop. They roll around on the grass.

RUBY (CONT'D)

Come-on. Come and see our mansion!!

Bella follows Ruby

INT. ABANDONED MANSION - EARLY EVENING

Ruby and Bella run through the back door and into the shell of a kitchen.

Empty beer cans, potato chip bags and candles cover the counters. The scissors and wig are still on the counter.

Bella stares at the gaping holes where the fridge and stove used to be.

BELLA

You don't even have a fridge or a stove.

RUBY

Soon we will.

Ruby takes Bella's hand as they run through the hall and into the dining room. The blow up bed has lost most of it's air.

Ruby tries to shield Bella from seeing Spencer in the livingroom in one of the sleeping bags, but Bella looks back to see him.

Spencer catches her eye.

BELLA

What's that man doing?

RUBY

Just having a nap.

Ruby guides Bella up the staircase.

Ceremoniously, Ruby shows Bella a bedroom door with Bella and Ruby written on it in colourful magic-marker. She swings open the door.

INT. ABANDONED MANSION - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - EARLY EVENING

RUBY

See look, our very own room.

Ruby leads Bella over to the quilt laid out on the floor.
As Bella sits down she runs her hand over the quilt.

BELLA

It's exactly like my Grandma's--

RUBY

--Smarties? Do you still like Smarties?
Or we could draw pictures? Look I got
all these colours--

BELLA

--It's bad to steal.

Ruby looks like a deer caught in the headlights. Bella
opens one end of a box of smarties.

BELLA (CONT'D)

My mom says we're not real sisters
because we have different birth dads--

Ruby dashes out of the room. Bella looks around the
room, then runs out into the hall.

A teenage boy and girl are making out.

INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Ruby sits on the side of the bathtub. Slipping into the
tub, she flings the shower curtain shut and weeps.

Bella runs in looking lost. She is still holding the box
of smarties in her hand.

BELLA

Ruby, Ruby?

Ruby stays still, holding her breath. Bella peaks around
the curtain.

BELLA (CONT'D)

Oh, there you are.

Seeing Ruby's been crying, she sits on the side of the
tub and watches Ruby carefully.

BELLA (CONT'D)

--Smarties are my favourite.

RUBY

It is bad to steal, but it's way worse to steal people from people.

Bella looks at Ruby carefully, then slips into the tub backwards, Bella leans against Ruby's legs.

Tipping the box, she pours out a red Smartie, licks it and gently paints Ruby's lips red.

BELLA

Smartie makeup in the bathtub--remember?

Ruby smiles through tears.

Bella pours out more smarties. They eat some, then line others up along the edge of the bath.

Ruby paints Bella's lips with a red Smartie and then adds sticky purple eyeshadow.

Ruby runs her hand over Bella's bare knees--

BELLA (CONT'D)

What about our feet? Are they the same?

Taking off their shoes, they stare at their feet and shake their heads. Their feet are different shapes.

RUBY

But look! Your baby toe turns out like mine does. Look.

They wiggle their toes.

BELLA

Do you have a dad?

Ruby looks away and is silent for a while.

RUBY

He died in a crash on the Trans Canada.
Used to drive trucks all over Canada and the US.

Bella takes this in.

RUBY (CONT'D)

Do you ever have sleep overs?

BELLA

I used to stay at Tilda's, but that was before I moved to my new school.

RUBY

Maybe you could text your dad and tell him that's where you are.

BELLA

--I don't know what to say?

RUBY

Staying at Tilda's for a sleepover. How's that?

Unsure, Bella hands the phone to Ruby who types in the text. Bella looks worried.

Ruby taps an app to turn off location finder. Then powers down Bella's phone.

They struggle to get out of the tub.

RUBY (CONT'D)

My legs have gone all pins and needles.

BELLA

Me too.

Laughing, they both wobble about.

RUBY

Ok, come with me.

EXT. LAKE ONTARIO AT THE FOOT OF THE BACKYARD - EVENING

Ruby and Bella float on their backs.

As they get out, Bella is shy about being in her underwear.

They sit on the sandy shore.

RUBY

We can dry in the sun.

Bella stares at the welts on Ruby's thighs and arms.

BELLA

Why do you have so many scars?

RUBY

Because every time I couldn't find you, I had to make myself sad about something else.

Bella thinks about this as she strokes the scar from a scald on her own arm.

BELLA

How did I get this?

RUBY

(quietly)

Chicken noodle soup. You always used to stand on the chair, by the kitchen counter so you could help..... And then the doorbell rang and it kept ringing. I thought maybe mom forgot her keys. But this man and there was a woman kept talking about Jesus and I was trying to make them go away--And then you started screaming--
and when I ran back in the soup was all over you and you were screaming--

Ruby shakes at the memory. Flopping back on the sand, she shuts her eyes. Bella rolls onto her side, propping her head up with her hand.

BELLA

I remember being in that crib with the bars and I couldn't get out. Was I in hospital?

RUBY

(nods, ashamed)

If that didn't happen we wouldn't have been taken into care and mom wouldn't have taken all those pills.

BELLA

(beat)

How old was I?

RUBY

Three. Almost four.

Looking over, Bella sees Melanie and Tully bringing in bags of groceries.

INT. MANSION KITCHEN - EVENING

Shy about being in her underwear, Bella looks uncertain as she follows Ruby through the kitchen. Their eyes bug open to see bags of junk food on the counter. Ruby hands a bag of cheezies to Bella.

Seeing the wig, Ruby puts it on and turns to Bella who looks worried.

BELLA

You don't look like yourself anymore.

Ruby twirls around, laughing. Bella struggles to open the cheezies.

Melanie appears against the door frame smoking.

MELANIE

The kid can't stay here.

Ruby stops spinning and cuts open Bella's bag of cheezies with the scissors. Grabbing a bag of potato chips, she pushes by Melanie, taking the scissors with her.

RUBY

Just ignore her.

Melanie saunters over to Tully.

MELANIE

Babe, You gotta talk to her.

Tully nods.

INT. ABANDONED MANISON - UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - EVENING

Ruby and Bella are standing in front of the mirror. The water drips from the tap. Bella has to stand on her tippy toes to see her reflection.

BELLA

I really want short hair, but my mom says no.

RUBY

She's not the boss of your hair.

BELLA

She thinks she's the boss of everything. My dad says its because she's got too much anxiety.

RUBY

What if I just cut a little bit? Like this much?

Ruby holds up her thumb and finger a couple of inches apart. Making the distance a bit smaller with her own thumb and finger.

BELLA

OK. This much.

Ruby combs Bella's hair and cuts off a chunk. It falls to into the sink. Bella picks it up and holds it in her hand.

BELLA (CONT'D)

My friend Tilda has a pixie cut. That's what I really want.

Ruby keeps cutting. Hair piles up in the sink and on the floor.

CUT TO:

Bella looks up to see her new haircut in the mirror. She looks worried.

BELLA (CONT'D)

I really like it.

Ruby tries to stick part of it down with water.

INT. MANSION - RUBY AND BELLA'S ROOM- NIGHT

As Ruby and Bella lie on the quilt, Bella traces her finger over one of Ruby's stick and poke tattoos.

RUBY

It's a magic symbol. So nothing bad can happen.

Bella uncaps a sharpie pen and copies the tattoo, childlike over her scar. Ruby draws tattoos on Bella's arm too. Then Bella draws on Ruby's arm.

They laugh and laugh as they keep drawing on each other.

CUT TO

Pen tattoos now cover both Bella and Ruby's arms.

RUBY AND BELLA

(singing)

The big ship sails on the ally ally oh,
The alley ally oh,
The alley ally oh.
The big ship sails on the ally ally oh,
On the last day of September.

The captain said it will never, never do,
 never, never do, never, never do,
 The captain said it will never, never do,
 on the last day of September.

The big ship sank to the bottom of the
 sea, the bottom of the sea, the bottom of
 the sea,
 The big ship sank to the bottom of the
 sea, on the last day of September.

We all dip our heads in the deep blue
 sea, the deep blue sea, the deep blue
 sea,
 We all dip our heads in the deep blue
 sea, on the last day of September.

Ruby and Bella fall asleep in each other's arms.

INT. UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bella wakes up in darkness to the BLASTING SOUND of the
 BASS and a party with YELLING and LAUGHING.

Doing the pee dance, Bella dashes out into the hall and
 into--

INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - NIGHT

Bella enters. She sits on the toilet.

Looking up, she sees Spencer lying dead still in the
 bathtub. Bella's SCREAM is PIERCING.

FOOTSTEPS run up the stairs. Ruby runs in and hugs Bella,
 then sees Spencer. Ruby smacks Spencer's face. He doesn't
 move.

RUBY
 (yelling)
 HELP! Spencer's not breathing.

FOOTSTEPS get louder. Tully runs in with Melanie right
 behind him. Tully takes nasal naloxone out of his pocket
 and administers it.

Bella is sheet white, shaking. They all are.

Everybody else holds their breath, waiting. Suddenly
 Spencer starts shaking and throws up.

SPENCER

You wrecked my high. Totally fucking wrecked it.

Tully sits on the side of the tub with his head in his hands.

Ruby guides Bella out of the room. Crowds of kids are all around them.

Ruby holds Bella who is shaking like a leaf. All Ruby's dreams are crashing around her.

BELLA

Take me home. I want to go home.

RUBY

We'll go right now. I promise. Just let me grab a few things--

Quickly Ruby stuffs a scarf, clothes, the wig, and scissors into a plastic bag.

Melanie stands by the door and watches them.

MELANIE

I told you the kid shouldn't be here. Now she traumatised for life.

Ruby ignores her. Melanie comes towards Bella--

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Do you want a hug?

RUBY

Don't fucking touch her.

MELANIE

Oh dear. I bet your sister cut your hair?

INT. MANSION HALLWAY - NIGHT

They stand back as Tully and another guy guide Spencer into--

INT. MANSION RUBY AND BELLA'S ROOM - NIGHT

--and help him lie down on the quilt.

Bella is shaking. Darting around the room, Ruby grabs her bag, the wig and scissors.

Taking Bella's hand she leads her out into the hall and down the smoke-filled stairs as party people push their way by them on their way upstairs.

Suddenly an AMBER ALERT ALARM goes off. Phones light up teenagers faces as they read the alert. Many put their phones away, but some stare at Ruby and Bella.

TULLY

(Yelling)

Ruby. Fuck. Amber alert. Get the fuck out of here!

BELLA

I don't want short hair anymore.

Ruby squeezes Bella's hand as she guides her through the panicked party goers who are trying to stash drugs and collect belongings.

EXT. MANSION BESIDE THE HOUSE - NIGHT

Stopping for a moment to put the wig on Bella and a hood over her own head, she takes Bella by the hand and runs towards the street.

INT. STREETCAR - NIGHT

Ruby waves down a streetcar and they run for it.

When they are both seated, Ruby nods to Bella.

Bella hits the number and passes it to Ruby. Allison picks it up on the first ring.

ALLISON (O.S.)

Where are you? Just tell me where you are?

RUBY

Bella's on her way home.

Ruby ends the call and turns off the power. They go into the dark tunnel of the Humber loop.

EXT. ROSEDALE RAVINE WOODS BEHIND BELLA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ruby and Bella dash through the trees and up the slope of the ravine to the stone wall behind Bella's house.

Ruby peeks over the wall. Emergency lights from a police car, parked in the driveway sweep across the garden.

Struggling, Ruby helps Bella up onto the stone wall.

RUBY

Stay there OK.

Ruby climbs up herself, jumps down, then throws her arms out.

When Bella jumps into her arms, they both fall to the ground. Ruby squeezes Bella tight.

RUBY (CONT'D)

Whatever happens, I love you so much.

(beat)

You go back in now, OK.

Ruby takes the wig off Bella and stands still.

BELLA

I'm scared. Aren't you going to come with me?

Ruby hesitates, then nods. Taking her hoody off, she puts it on Bella, then takes her hand and they head across the backyard towards the house. As they walk across the deck, a planter falls.

Allison and Simon leap up to meet them at the door. The cop remains standing.

INT. BELLA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN/LIVING AREA - NIGHT

Allison is so relieved to see Bella, but the haircut is revealed as Allison removes the hood.

ALLISON

What did you do, drug her? And tattoos.
Are you insane.

Instantly Allison smacks Ruby hard across the face.

COP

M'am--

SIMON

Allison--

COP

Are you going to press charges?

ALLISON

Yes I am--

BELLA

Stop being mean to my sister. It's pen.
It's only pen. We drew it on with pen.

ALLISON

How was I supposed to know!

BELLA

You think you know everything. I hate
you. I hate my new school.

Bella runs out of the room. We hear her footsteps on the
stairs.

Allison runs after her. (O.S.) an upstairs DOOR SLAMS.

(O.S.) Allison bangs on the door.

ALLISON (O.S.)

Sweetie please. If it's pen, I over
reacted. I didn't know. I'm sorry.

Weeping can be heard from the top of the stairs. Simon
turns to Ruby.

SIMON

Is it pen?

Ruby nods.

COP

We'll need a statement.

SIMON

We're not pressing charges.

Simon gestures for the cop to follow him out into the
hall. Ruby watches from the kitchen doorway.

INT. BELLA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

ALLISON (O.S.)

Bella I love you so much. Please just
open this door.

SIMON

We can manage from here. I'm sorry.

He opens the door for the cop.

COP

Believe me. Just happy she's safe. It doesn't always turn out that way. But I have to talk to my superior.

Simon walks up the stairs. He knocks quietly on the bathroom door.

SIMON (O.S.)

Your mum is really sorry. Let's all come out and talk about this. We love you so much Bella.

Ruby walks out the back door and along the driveway, darts past the cop and out onto the street.

EXT. BRIDGE OVER THE DON VALLEY - NIGHT

Ruby walks up by the side of the bridge and looks down to the road below.

She watches traffic. We fear she might jump.

A woman walks by with her dog. Suddenly she stops, then turns back and looks at Ruby carefully, kindly.

WOMAN

You OK?

Ruby nods.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

You're sure?

Reaching out, she holds Ruby's hand with both her hands.

RUBY

Yeah, I'm sure.

The woman nods and walks away down the road.

EXT. KENSINGTON MARKET - EARLY MORNING

Ruby walks through the empty market until she's standing outside--

EXT. HAIR SALON - EARLY MORNING

Seeing the fire escape at the side of the shop, she climbs up a few steps, then sits and watches the market start to come alive in the morning.

CUT TO:

Hearing a door open, she looks up to see Mr Gregory at the top of the fire escape. He walks down towards her.

Standing, Ruby descends to the ground, then hands him the stolen scissors and then the wig.

RUBY

I didn't take them.

MR GREGORY

Don't know how that gal pulled the wool over my eyes. Always a sucker for people who make me laugh.

(beat)

Not with that Tully character still are you?

Ruby shakes her head.

MR GREGORY (CONT'D)

Best to leave those two to their own devices.

(beat)

Cup of tea?

Ruby follows him up.

INT. MR. GREGORY'S APARTMENT

Ruby looks around. It's a curious place filled with interesting pieces of furniture, vanities, a big comfortable couch, original paintings.

MR GREGORY

What about going back to Nova Scotia?

RUBY

Can't.

Ruby looks around the room. A few glamorous women's clothes, 1920-40's are hanging off the screen.

Ruby gets up and walks around the room.

RUBY (CONT'D)
I've never seen so many beautiful
clothes.

MR GREGORY
Courage My Love. The ones from the 1920's
are my favourite, but they're so ancient
they're hard to find now.

He smells the milk carton, then pours the contents down
the sink.

MR GREGORY (CONT'D)
Can't have tea without milk. Back in a
minute.

After he leaves, Ruby sits back down on the couch and
crashes.

CUT TO:

Ruby wakes up to see Mr Gregory sitting across from her.
He hands her a large sandwich.

MR GREGORY (CONT'D)
You're welcome to stay for a bit, till
you get sorted.

He pours her some tea. She drinks it and hungrily eats
the sandwich.

INT. HALLWAY - MR GREGORY'S APARTMENT

Mr Gregory opens a door to a small room full of paints,
brushes, half finished paintings and a small bed.

Ruby looks out the window. The sun is setting on the west
side of the market.

INT. HAIR SALON - DAY

Six months later:

Ruby's hair has grown longer. As she sweeps up the cut
hair from the floor, she dances with the broom to the
MUSIC playing on the sound system.

Mr Gregory looks up from the haircut he is doing and
looks out the window.

Bella is peering in.

MR GREGORY

Someone to see you.

Ruby turns to see Bella dressed in her school uniform.
Bella waves at Ruby through the window.

Bella walks on.

Ruby runs out.

RUBY

Bella wait.

Bella turns around and smiles.

THE END