

INTRODUCTION

I discovered Janet Lunn's best-selling novel *Shadow in Hawthorn Bay* after adopting my young daughter. The story of Mary Urquhart's journey from Scotland to Canada struck me as both empowering for young women and a meaningful way to connect with my daughter by sharing my Canadian/Celtic heritage.

It was natural, then, for me to write the screenplay as if I were reading a story to her.

Though updated from the 1986 novel for a contemporary audience, *Shadow* remains a deceptively old-fashioned drama, grounded in myth and history. It features great characters and an intimate, yet epic scope – sweeping at times and hauntingly beautiful as it marries the world of the supernatural with a period love story.

With a bold, progressive heroine at the centre of its story, the film explores the human conflict that comes from loss and grief; romantic and familial love; the struggle for identity; female friendship; the effects of societal pressures placed on young women; and the desperate plight of economic migrants to build a better life.

— Steven R. Mitchell

SHADOW IN HAWTHORN BAY

Screenplay by

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Based on the novel by

Janet Lunn

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"I get asked by kids all the time if I write about long-ago times because I remember them. I'll admit I'm old – but I'm not that old!"

— Janet Lunn

NOTE:

The screenplay has been developed in consultation with Janet Lunn's estate.

Film + TV Rights optioned by the screenwriter until 2027

Indigenous scenes were written with the counsel of elder Kim Wheatley, an Ojibwe Anishinaabe Grandmother from Shawanaga First Nation Reserve who carries the spirit name of Leader of the Fireflower and is of the Turtle Clan.

FADE IN:

1

EXT. SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS - GLEN URQUHART - LATE EVENING

It's the magic hour. We enter a deep, ancient valley nestled between jagged peaks and misty hills. Orange, ghost-like lights flicker on nearby slopes.

SUPER: 1812, Scotland

Humble croft lands, edged with drystone walls, sprawl outwards in irregular patches - rocky and unforgiving.

Slowly, curiously, we follow a rutted dirt road that winds through a small, tight-knit settlement of stone cottages with thatched roofs. It's free of travellers this evening.

In fact, the whole village is dark, deserted, and eerily quiet.

UNTIL...

YOUNG MALE VOICE (V.O)
(excited, encouraging)
Come Mary! Hurry!!

We now HEAR laboured BREATHING, giddy LAUGHTER, and the CRACKLE of fire - inviting us to join...

2

EXT. HILLSIDE - BELTANE (FIRES OF BEL) FESTIVAL - CONTINUOUS

A pilgrimage of VILLAGERS clad in simple costumes with animal masks purposefully climb the rugged hillside towards a pair of ROARING BONFIRES.

The laughter continues as two TEENAGERS weave in and out of the procession. They race hand in hand towards the pyres.

DUNCAN CAMERON (16) tugs and cajoles our heroine **MARY URQUHART** (15), who struggles to keep up. The teens could be twins but for his dark hair curling at the nape, and her wild, flaming-red tresses.

It's Duncan's hellbent sprint that jolts Mary, making her fumble the cloth sack under her arm.

Inevitably, the couple's horseplay puts them on a collision course with a **SHEPHERD** herding his flock between the sacred flames. His blessings become CURSES as he swipes a crook at the "wild things".

The troublemakers promptly scatter to take part in the local BELTANE celebrations. Duncan revels in the carnival-like atmosphere, removes a wooden flute from his jacket, and begins to play. Mary is in her element and SINGS along.

MARY

Ca' the yowes to the knowes, Ca'
them where the heather grows. Ca'
them where the burnie rows, My
bonnie dearie...

(to Duncan)

...Fair and lovely as thou art,
Thou hast stown my very heart; I
can die—but canna part, My bonnie
dearie.

As the festivities continue into the night, jubilant faces are smeared with ashes, bodies leap over flames, and time-worn rituals ensure the fertility of the land and its people.

3

EXT. HILLSIDE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Mary crouches before one of the bonfires, cradling her package. The rhythmic movement of the flames has a calming effect on her, despite the boisterous activity nearby.

Duncan saunters up with two tightly bound bundles of rushes – a glint of mischief in his eyes. Mary is well aware of his approach, but remains transfixed by the firelight's spell.

MARY

Teacher speaks of the veil between
this world and the other being its
thinnest at Beltane.

DUNCAN

That witch. A last flicker of the
old ways is what she'll have of ye,
Mary Urquhart!

It's the story of their lives; flippant Duncan testing Mary's tolerance. This time, she remains focused on the flames and pulls a bannock loaf from the cloth sack.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

Hold to yer own. Them that go with
the mystics and faerys never return
as they were.

He playfully pokes at the bread. Mary's grip tightens.

MARY

(Scottish Gaelic)
Shush! The People of the
Mound will hear.

MARY

(Scottish Gaelic)
Wheesht! *Cluinnidh na Daoine*
Sith.

MARY (CONT'D)

If Da's croft loses their favour
because of your tongue, it's not
the spirit folk you need fear, this
world or the other.

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

(beat)

With me or no?

DUNCAN

Always.

Mary tears at the loaf and stuffs one heel purposefully against Duncan's chest. She stands, surrenders herself to the flames, and begins to CONJURE...

MARY

Fire of May, burn bright and pure, Kindle the land, let life endure.

MARY

Teine a' Chèitein, lasadh soilleir, fior-ghlan, Las an tir, mairidh beatha.

Duncan interjects; he's acting the fool by mimicking a ghost.

DUNCAN

Spirits dance in golden light, Shadows flee from sacred night.

DUNCAN

Bidh spioradan a' dannsadh ann an solas òir, Faileas a' teicheadh bhon oidhche naomh.

MARY

Dinnae mock, Duncan Cameron.

Mary turns her back to the sacrificial pyre. She takes a deep breath and raises her bannock into the air. Duncan sobers and follows her lead. In unison, they CHANT...

MARY & DUNCAN

Hearts alight as bonfire burns. O sun that climbs the Beltane sky, Bless the earth where love may lie.

MARY & DUNCAN

Cridhe lasarach mar theine a' lasadh. O ghrian a dhìreas speur Bealltainn, Beannaich an talamh far am bi gaol.

The couple's eyes lock, sharing a long-established bond.

DUNCAN

What is it we've promised since childhood?

MARY

We two are never to be parted.

DUNCAN

Not in life. Not in death!

With that declaration, they toss their offerings over their shoulders and into the blaze. THE BREAD FLARES!

SUDDENLY: Mary's head starts to POUND. The flames SWIRL upwards and the hillside SHIFTS. She teeters as Duncan's face fades from her sight, then the young conjurer spirals to the ground.

4

VISION STARTS (OVERWHELMING) - UNKNOWN PLACE & TIME

- * Horse hooves break to a halt - Armed LANDMEN dismount.
- * Cottage door BURSTS open - inhabitants are FORCED outside.
- * Belongings are RANSACKED, SEIZED, and SCATTERED.
- * LIVESTOCK are driven off the property.
- * A TORCH lands on a thatched roof - the straw explodes.

VISION ENDS

5

EXT. HILLSIDE - NIGHT - RESUMING

Mary GASPS and CLAWS at the earth as she drags herself back to consciousness.

DUNCAN (O.C.)
Are ye all there? You alright?

She searches, trying to make sense of the crushing images... then bolts up, imagining the WORST!!

MARY
Didnae I warn you! Ye've angered
the old ones.

Mary battles to her feet, mad, scared, and desperate.

MARY (CONT'D)
Shift yerself.
(Duncan wavers)
NOW!!

She shoves Duncan aside and flies down the hillside.

DUNCAN
(hollering after her)
What of the torch walk? MARY!!!

But before he can decide his next move, Duncan is swept up by the mob of worshippers as they converge on the bonfires to light their torches.

6

EXT. VILLAGE ROAD - URQUHART COTTAGE - MORNING TWILIGHT

Mary slows to a strident walk. Her heart beats slower, and her chest collapses in a SIGH of relief. The family cottage is still standing.

7

INT. URQUHART COTTAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Inside, the fireplace is cold, and a chill is in the air.

Mary hangs on the doorframe. The single room is small and dark - a neat, poverty-stricken hovel. No one is home.

Drained of energy and will, she collapses onto a straw mattress, wraps a wool blanket about her shoulders, and pulls her knees to her chest.

MARY

Would it be better that I not see
such things?

8

EXT. HILLSIDE - DAWN

A river of torches flows down the hillside. The scent of smoke, damp earth, and wild herbs drifts in the air. The villagers are now subdued and hushed as they descend.

Duncan marches alone, sombre, passing in and out of the torchlight and shadows.

9

INT. URQUHART COTTAGE - LATER

A weathered, but kind-looking MAN appears at the doorway. He pauses, curious. **JAMES URQUHART** (40s) is Mary's father, and the light of his torch falls on her crumpled form.

JAMES

What's this then? Mary?

A strapping WOMAN and a young GIRL push past him. **MARGARET** (late 30s) and **HEATHER** [13] are Mary's mother and sister.

MARGARET

In God's name! What now, child? You
laying about. Beltane is done. Are
there no chores?

JAMES

(compassionately)

Margaret...

Mary lies still, detached and withdrawn.

MARGARET

Not even so much as a mind to catch
Neid-fire to light the hearth?
There's no saving us from trouble.

JAMES

We have a torch. There'll be no
trouble this year.

(passes his to Heather)

Be a good lass.

Heather skips proudly to relight the embers, while Margaret withdraws in a HUFF to put away the festive leftovers.

MARY

(slowly rousing)

Sorry, Da. I lost the time of it.
What of Duncan? We were together at
the Bel fires...

JAMES

Duncan Dubh? Davie and Jeanie's?

MARGARET

Trust 'Duncan the black' to set the
girl off.

MARY

We made our offering to the *Daoine Sith*... then come one of my
visions. 'Twas sure it was our
croft... the Laird's men plundering
and torching it...

MARGARET

The moods of that lad can truly be
as dark as a winter's storm.
(directly to Mary)
And you find yerself caught in it!

MARY

Ma! Will ye no listen?
(gathers herself)
It was my *an dà shelladh*, warning.

MARGARET

Keep the two sights to yerself.
What with the Clearances, it's
every man for hisself these days.
Dinnae give folk cause, nor ideas.

MARY

Do ye think I want to see what I
see? I don't!! I cannae control it.

Margaret smacks a side of beef onto the table.

MARGARET

But you can control your tongue.

James has always had a soft spot for Mary. He reaches out to his daughter, and she sinks into his embrace.

JAMES

The two sights are God's touch on
ye. 'Tis why the wise woman agreed
to teach you her healin' ways.
Dinnae we need the butter or bit o'
wool the work provides as well.

(to the others)

We'll all carry an eye out.

MARGARET

God help us.

JAMES

Aye, God help us. Now I'm for a drink.

A THUD at the doorway breaks the tension. All eyes turn to the figure of a tall, gaunt WOMAN with riveting eyes framed in the entrance. A large willow basket rests at her feet.

MRS. GRANT

Come now, Mary! There's work in front of us!

A lump of trepidation forms in our young Mary's throat.

10

EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS - AFTERNOON

MRS. GRANT [60s] carries the weight of time as she climbs a narrow pass. A tartan shawl, a thick woollen dress and sturdy leather boots protect her from the elements and uneven path.

With every stab of her walking stick, she hikes towards a small mountainside cabin. She is unmoved by the WAILS and MOANS coming from within its walls.

Mary trails behind, struggling under the weight of the heavy basket, when a passing shepherd recognizes her from their encounter at Beltane.

SHEPHERD

(waving her away)

You! Where's your accomplice now?
Divil's hand, the two 'o ye are.

Mary makes herself as small as possible and moves that much quicker up the pass.

11

INT. MOUNTAIN CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

Through the dense smoke from a dying fire, a **BOY** kicks and GROANS in the grip of convulsions. Bent over him, his **MOTHER** tries desperately to hold her child steady in his box bed.

Three KNOCKS interrupt the mother's concentration. A candle in the window begins to FLICKER erratically.

She glances at the **FATHER**, who jumps from his vigil by the dying fire pit. Their eyes lock, silently continuing a conflict – his protesting, her's insisting. The mother wins.

The father MUMBLES to the heavens, opens the door, and Mrs. Grant sweeps in like the wind. Bone and wood talismans, along with the charm pouch at her waist, hint at spiritual work.

MRS. GRANT
(calling outside)
Come along, Mary!

She turns to the mother.

MRS. GRANT (CONT'D)
Like treacle running uphill in
winter, that lass.

Mrs. Grant raises her hands, and the pit's embers FLARE.

The father grabs his pipe and attempts an escape, only to collide with the apologetic teen at the threshold. He backs off, as if afraid he'll catch something, then slips outside.

MRS. GRANT (CONT'D)
(in father's direction)
I hear 'twas you sent for me. Not
himself.

MOTHER
Never mind him now. Save our little
man.

The healer gestures, and her apprentice draws herbs, a blue glass bottle, and a mortar & pestle from the basket.

MRS. GRANT
Kettle, Mary!

Mary sets an iron kettle over the now radiant coals. She looks to her teacher, searching, unsure of her next steps.

The wise woman passes her hands over the boy's forehead and neck to assess warmth.

MRS. GRANT (CONT'D)
Clover grass and wild Colewort,
girl. Quick now!

Mary jumps at the command. She places the herbs in the mortar to pulverize them, but her tresses keep falling in the way.

MRS. GRANT (CONT'D)
Willye, not tosh up that mop and
get on with it, child.

Mary sheepishly retrieves a tartan ribbon from her sleeve and ties her hair back. JUST THEN, her head starts to ACHE, and her teacher's words RING in her ears.

MRS. GRANT (CONT'D)
The rushes!!!!

Mary fights back her growing headache as she fetches two GRASSY STALKS from the basket.

She pours boiling water into the mortar and stirs. As the steam rises into her face, her head THROBS. Mary stiffens, resisting...

12

EXT. VILLAGE ROAD/CAMERON COTTAGE - SAME MOMENT

Duncan drags his feet along the village road, his head lowered with the weight of melancholy thoughts, until...

He catches wind of a pungent smell, SMOKE??!!

He looks up to see an orange glow growing brighter ahead of him. Duncan picks up his pace until running flat out in the direction of home.

13

EXT. CAMERONS' COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

DAVIE and **JEANIE CAMERON** [40s], Duncan's parents, cling to their younger, terrified children, **CALLUM** [5] and **BEN** [7], as a RAGING FIRE advances across their cottage's thatched roof.

The LOCALS gather at the croft wall, fearing to enter, as a band of LANDMEN seize blankets, pots, and livestock tack.

The roof COLLAPSES in a shower of flames.

PATRICK SELLARS (32), the LAND AGENT, struts towards the family, slinging a sack of pilfered goods over his shoulder.

DAVIE CAMERON

Ye've no right! Have we no paid our taxes?

Sellars unfurls a writ. His posture reeks of privilege and gruff formality.

PATRICK SELLARS
By Order of His Grace, Sir Lewis Alexander Grant, 5th Earl of Seafield, Chief of Clan Grant, To the Tenants residing upon the lands known as Inverness-shire,

DAVIE CAMERON (CONT'D)
This croft has been in the Cameron clan for hundreds of years.

JEANIE CAMERON
God forgive ye, attacking on the Sabbat too!

ANGLE ON: Duncan storms up to his home, now engulfed in flames.

PATRICK SELLARS (O.C.)

Be it known that by right of lawful ownership and for the improvement of said estate, it is hereby decreed that all tenants currently occupying the aforementioned lands shall vacate their dwellings and holdings forthwith.

Duncan pushes past the onlookers to join his family.

DUNCAN

Ma! Da! What now?

PATRICK SELLARS (CONT'D)

This action is deemed necessary for the betterment of the estate. By authority vested in me, Patrick Sellars, on this the 1st of May, 1812.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

How can they? Da! Do something!!

The cottage is now an inferno.

DAVIE CAMERON

There's nothin' can be done now, son.

(to Sellars)

What are we to do? Where are we to go and live? Tell us that. No croft, no work, no place for us.

PATRICK SELLARS

It's no personal. The Laird needs the land t'graze more sheep. Yer no the first, nor the last. Demand is great now for wool in the big city factories. 'Tis a higher return than any yer farming can bring.

(looking Davie over)

There's a need for strong arms on the coast, go farm kelp... work the quarries.

DAVIE CAMERON

There's no life in that!

PATRICK SELLARS

(indifferent)

If yer truly at tether's end, there's always passage to Canada.

With that, Sellars rejoins his henchmen. They pack up, mount their horses, and ride to the next eviction.

Davie and Jeanie close ranks as their home and life crumble around them.

But it's all too much for Duncan. He breaks away from his family and runs, desperately wanting to be in the one place and with the one person where he feels safe.

14

INT. MOUNTAIN CABIN - SAME MOMENT

Mrs. Grant towers over a motionless Mary. She immediately takes charge, seizing the mortar from her assistant, then decants the potion into the blue glass bottle - clouds form.

MRS. GRANT
Mind me now, child.

She clutches Mary's hand bearing the rushes, and together they move in a slow, clockwise circle, CHANTING...

MRS. GRANT & MARY Bone to bone / Pulse to pulse / In communion with the son / Calm the fever...	MRS. GRANT & MARY <i>Cneimh ri cneimh / Cuisil ri cuisil / Air comh-chomunn ris a' mhac / Agus socair am fiabhras...</i>
--	---

As if opening a gateway to the otherworld, the window BURSTS open, the smoke-filled room is sucked clear, and the candles FLUTTER before dying.

It's then a HAUNTING SOUND wafts into the room, like a siren's song.

The boy takes a deep breath, releases it, and then quietens.

His mother sobs quietly as his father pokes his head inside, tears shining in his eyes.

Mrs. Grant raises the blue glass bottle, recites a BLESSING, and pours its contents into a cup to feed the recovering boy. As she does, she takes note of...

Her student's attention has drifted out the window.

15

EXT. MOUNTAIN CABIN - LATER

Mary follows Mrs. Grant from the tiny shelter; she's restless, and the willow basket swings awkwardly at her side.

The siren's song, now recognizable as a FLUTE MELODY, echoes from hillside to hillside.

MARY
The *Tornashee!* 'Tis Duncan!!

Mary can't help herself. She fidgets as the mother hands the healers a small packet of root vegetables as payment. Once their business is concluded, Mrs. Grant leads the way down the mountain pass.

IN TIME...

MRS. GRANT
Out with it.

MARY
Mother Grant. Please. May I go?

MRS. GRANT
What took hold of ye while tending
the lad? You'll no learn a thing if
ye cannae follow.

MARY
Nothing. I dinnae ken (don't know).
I thought 'twas a vision coming on,
but I fought it off. Sorry, I am.

The haunting melody continues to work its spell on Mary.

MRS. GRANT
What comes, comes. An *dà shelladh*
'tis a precious window into the
past, future, and otherworld.
Embrace yer gift.

MARY
(searching the Tornashee)
My burden, more the like.

MRS. GRANT
You have the knowledge in your
heart, hen. Heed teacher, you
cannaе completely control what yer
born with until you embrace it.
(Mary's not listening)
Go, if you must.

The teen drops the basket, curtseys, and gallops from the mountain pass, the ribbon in her hair bobbing freely.

16

EXT. THE TORNASHEE (FAERY'S HILL)- EVENING

The setting sun casts a shimmering path of warm light on a distant, great loch.

We find Duncan propped against an ancient Rowan tree, whose roots clutch peaty soil and grip scattered boulders — whimsical dashes of light flit about him. In contrast, there's a darkness to his mood and flute playing.

MARY (O.C.)
Are ye trying to make trouble
between teacher and me?

The darting lights scatter as a deliriously exhausted Mary tosses her earnings onto Duncan's strewn jacket.

DUNCAN

'Tis you who's causin' trouble.
Disturb the *Teine Biorach*, and the
mischievous ones will lead us all
from our path, so they will.

Mary flings herself onto the ground and stretches out as though to merge with the earth.

MARY

Never you mind. Yer all that matters, you and this place. This old Rowan tree, with its scarlet berries and hundreds of invisible roots that reach under the soil, binds us to each other and this land forever.

Duncan sets his flute aside, and his gaze turns to the loch.

DUNCAN

(by wrote)

Aye, twined together since childhood. No tellin' where one ends and the other begins.

Mary knows that look well and the dark mood accompanying it.

17

EXT. VILLAGE ROAD - MRS. GRANT'S COTTAGE - SAME MOMENT

Mrs. Grant's basket slips from her hands as she steadies herself. She senses a tremor between this world and the next, and it's originating from the Tornashee.

18

EXT. THE TORNASHEE - CONTINUOUS

IMPULSIVELY: Mary pounces on Duncan, teasing and tickling him in an attempt to disarm his gloom.

MARY

Go on now, tell me. Tell me right this minute whatever yer not! Out with it!!

DUNCAN

(in Gaelic))
Jings and crivens, Mary?

He pushes her aside, searches for the words, then BLURTS.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

We'll be off to Canada.

MARY

Never!

DUNCAN

It's as good as done. The Laird's men took everything. Burned our croft to the ground.

MARY
Burned your croft!!!

FLASH: Mary recalls her Beltane vision and now recognizes the Camerons among the turmoil.

DUNCAN
There's nothing here for us now.
Canada, it is. Ma & Da will be in
need of me to make a new start.

MARY
Ye cannae go.

DUNCAN
I've no choice in the matter.
(beat)
Come with me, Mary!

MARY
Would I in a heartbeat, only...
there's need of me too, what of my
wages. Hasn't Da reminded me enough
times.
(her mind racing)
And what of Heather's wedding?

DUNCAN
There's the promise of free land.
The trades say Canada has the most
fertile soil in the world. We could
plant new roots there.

MARY
Our roots are here. Under this
Rowan! You cannae. I cannae!!

Duncan shies away and gathers his things.

DUNCAN
I'll write every day 'til I make my
fortune and come back for you. Back
in a coach, hitched to fine horses.
Watch now, a 'Man of Station', I'll
return, in a whisper.
(Mary is inconsolable)
I mean it, Mary. We two are never
to be parted...

He moves to take her hand, but she pulls away.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)
Not in life. Not in death.

Undeterred, Duncan removes a folded linen from his pocket.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)
To bind us together. You to me.

Mary unwraps the cloth to find a LOCK OF HIS HAIR. She's near tears but slowly surrenders and slips the ribbon from her own hair to give to Duncan.

MARY
And you to me. Forever.

She flings her arms around her sweetheart, crushing him.

MARY (CONT'D)
Dinnae let it from your sight,
Duncan Cameron... Or I'll have at
ye, the likes of which you've never
seen.

As they embrace, the young lovers are oblivious to the evening mist creeping up the mountainside to envelope them.

DISSOLVE TO:

19

INT. MRS. GRANT'S COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Mary and Duncan's impassioned farewell lingers within the mist of the blue glass bottle, resting on a rough-hewn table.

Mrs. Grant's cottage is more of a workshop than a home. Herbs, remedies, and the tools of her trade surround the healer and seer as she watches the couple. Her muscles tense.

MRS. GRANT
You have knowledge in your heart, love. With the gifts to turn away evil... Do you ne'er listen?

MRS. GRANT
Tha eòlas agad nad chridhe, a ghràidh. Le tiadhlaic an gus olc a thionndadh air falb... Nach èist thu tuilleadh?

Knowing there's no good to come, she returns to preparing her magic.

20

EXT. CAMERONS' COTTAGE - ANOTHER DAY

Davie steps from the ruins of the Cameron cottage to join his family. He holds a charred hearth stone in his hands.

DAVIE CAMERON
There's no reason for comin' back.
But we'll always be connected to our land and ancestors.

JEANIE CAMERON
Amen!

They bury the hearth stone as a last claim on their property.

21

EXT. GLEN URQUHART - ROAD - LATER

Wooden wheels RATTLE as the Camerons and their possession-laden trap make their way down the glen road. Several LOCALS walk with them to the village edge, passing small gifts along the way for the family's journey.

22

EXT. THE TORNASHEE - SAME MOMENT

As Duncan and his family set off below, Mary clings to their Rowan tree; her heartbreak is overwhelming.

OUT OF THE BLUE: Her head starts to POUND. The CLOUDS race overhead, and the hillside begins to SHIFT.

23

VISION STARTS (ILL-DEFINED) - A STRANGE LAND & UNKNOWN TIME

- * It is night - a full moon overlooks a dark body of water.
- * Towering trees stand as sentinels surrounding a clearing.
- * Bare feet press upon dew-covered grass.
- * A SHADOWY FORM steps onto a large, grey rock.
- * A RIBBON flutters in what resembles a hand.

VISION ENDS

24

EXT. THE TORNASHEE - DAY - RESUMING

Mary stirs, confused and panicked, and plunges down the hillside like a mad thing.

MARY
Duncan! Wait!!! I'll come. I'll go
with you...

BUT, IT'S TOO LATE! Her young man vanishes beyond a bend in the glen road.

DISSOLVE TO:

25

EXT. HILLSIDE - EARLY MORNING

The morning mist burns from the hillside, revealing a familiar ancient peak. Yet, there's a feeling that everything else has changed.

SUPER: Three years later

As the mist retreats, a formidable STONE WELL and BOULDER emerge, accompanied by the SOUND of VOICES climbing upwards.

MARY (O.C.)
I must be mad. You draggin' me up
here at this hour, in the cold and
damp, no less!

Heather arrives first, impulsive and determined.

HEATHER

Quit your complaining, sister! Yer
as cross as two cats in a sack.

MARY

And me head poundin' so.

HEATHER

Could it be one of your visions?
We're near. Go on, make my Robert
show himself in the old well.

MARY

Heather, you know I cannae call on
an dà shelladh for myself. Let
alone choose what I see.

HEATHER

Aye.

(mimicking)

*"Second sight dinnae work that
way."* I'm not wanting for you, but
for me!

MARY

Nor for you, either. Your man long
ago sent a letter asking you to
marry. Have you not agreed? What
more is there to see until Robert
returns?

Heather drags Mary towards the well.

HEATHER

Don't be such a sourpuss!

(pleading)

Is there not wisdom and healin' to
find in this old well? Please
conjure a vision of Robert and his
Black Watch safe in Belgium. To
mend me broken heart.

MARY

Robert is safe, I'm sure of it...

HEATHER

Show me, then I can plunk myself
upon that fertility stone to pray
for a flock of wee Bobbys.

MARY

Don't tempt fate!

HEATHER

Jealous? Because you've no one.

MARY

Haven't I, Duncan?

HEATHER

That fly-by-night! Himself, that
hasnae put pen to paper in three
years as promised? Dinnae be
foolin' yourself, Mary dearest.

MARY

Mind what ye say. Or I might plant
a wart on yer nose and whiskers on
yer chin. Only, I'd wait till your
wedding night. What will yer man
make of his bride then?

Heather SHRIEKS with mock alarm as she hides behind the well.
Mary gives chase, but the THROBBING in her head slows her.

HEATHER

Come on then. Please, please, try!

Mary grudgingly gives in and picks up the perfect PEBBLE. She takes Heather's hand and places the stone in it, then leads her to circle the well. After three turns, they scratch a crude Celtic cross on its cover. Bursting with hope, Heather lifts, and...

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Nothin'! Not so much as a squeak.

You're not trying hard enough.

Eejit well!

(drops the cover)

Damned if I end up a spinster like
sister here.

That's enough! Mary snatches the cover and is about to replace it when the water below RIPPLES, her head POUNDS, and the wellhead SHIFTS.

26

VISION STARTS (CLEAR AND ENGULFING) - UNKNOWN PLACE & TIME

- * Mary is standing on a large, grey rock at the edge of a formidable body of water.
- * Its surface RIPPLES – a dark SHADOW takes shape below her.
- * The shadow assumes the shape of a PERSON lying face down.

DUNCAN

Come Mary!

MARY (V.O.)

Duncan, love?

- * The shadow begins to roll over...

DUNCAN (V.O.)
 (pained, beckoning)
*Come Mary! Quick now. COME YOU TO
 ME!!*

MARY (V.O.)
 Where? How can I?

* The waters surrounding the shadow begin to THRASH.

VISION ENDS.

27

EXT. HILLSIDE - EARLY MORNING - RESUMING

Once again, Mary is lying flat on her back, struggling to return to this world. As the POUNDING in her head eases, Heather's PRAYERS pierce through her fogginess.

HEATHER (O.C.)
 Praise I give you today and ask for your blessing. As seeds spring forth, may the winds blow gently for Robert and I...

HEATHER (O.C.)
Moladh tha mi toirt dhut an-diugh agus ag iarraidh do bheannachd. Mar a bhios siol a' tighinn a-mach, sèididh na gaothan gu socair airson Robert is mise...

Despite Mary's warning, Heather is atop the fertility stone.

MARY (O.S.)
 Down off that! Dinnae fool with what you dinnae understand.

Mary RACES to her sister and pulls her to the ground.

MARY (CONT'D)
 Home now!

She forcefully prods Heather homeward until the bothersome girl lopes away, then turns to the distant, great loch.

MARY (CONT'D)
 Why call now? Three years after.
 How can I come to you, love? I
 cannae. I'm forever cursed to see
 and hear the things I do!!

Full of guilt and longing, Mary descends the feary hill to seek the one person who may have the answer.

28

INT. MRS. GRANT'S COTTAGE - LATER

Mary repeatedly raises her hands to command the embers in her teacher's fireplace. NOTHING HAPPENS!

Close by, Mrs. Grant silently and patiently cleans the tools of her craft. SHE'S WAITING.

FINALLY...

MARY (O.C.)
Mother Grant, what am I to do?
Duncan called to me. Fierce.

Mary gives up and prods the embers with a poker. They IGNITE!

MARY (CONT'D)
Pained he was. I know in my heart
he's in great trouble.

MRS. GRANT
'Tis yer born gift speaking to you,
child. To guide your fortune.

MARY
Misfortune, more like! I've no want
or need for this burden.

MRS. GRANT
Gifts are just that, given.

MARY
Can I no be as everyone else?

MRS. GRANT
You have the way to see far and to
heal. Harness their power. Turn
from them, and you bring on even
greater trouble.

(beat)
Come, make yourself useful.

Mary joins her teacher and stores the clean tools away.

MARY
Have you no charm to bring him
back?

MRS. GRANT
What's to come will make your heart
sore. But there it is. Your gifts,
want them or no, are there for
thee. How best to use them is the
only question that matters. Follow
your heart, my dear.

MARY
I should go to Duncan, then? I'm
afraid.

MRS. GRANT
Nonsense! Say it aloud, there'll be
less to be frightened of.
(MORE)

MRS. GRANT (CONT'D)

(reaches to the rafters)

Now, take this Tormentil for your
travels home, there be need.

With that, Mrs. Grant SHUSHES her out the door.

29

EXT. URQUHART STABLE - LATER

James Urquhart rests against an overturned cask, sharpening a *Caschrom* – an ancient foot plough. He spots Mary passing through their croft gate with downcast eyes.

JAMES

Return o' the prodigal. 'Twas
wondering, with the likes of your
sister home herself.

MARY

Da.

JAMES

Never mind, lass. See to the wee
sick gussie (piglet) inside. Cannae
have another loss.

MARY

(looking up)
I'm no a healer as teacher.

James pauses, sizing up his daughter's mood.

JAMES

(warm and loving)
Biddy Grant believes in you. I
believe in ye too. Go on, work yer
magic, daughter.

Mary forces a smile, then starts toward the stable – only to pause and glance back at her father.

MARY

Da? A word?

30

INT. URQUHART COTTAGE - LATER - EVENING

The air is charged with a feeling of tension and anticipation.

Heather kneels before a DEAL BOX, her trousseau is draped over her lap, but her eyes are fixed on...

James and Mary – a squirming piglet under her arm – wait uneasily for Margaret to finish her mending, or for the backlash to come.

THEN...

MARGARET

Canada! On your own? A single wee
slip of a thing as yerself? Have ye
gone soft in the head?

(to James)

And you, encouraging the child. Cut
from the same bog, the two of ye.

Mary lowers the piglet to fetch a saucer and the Tormentil.

HEATHER

What of my wedding to Robert? Go,
and you'll spoil it all.

Mary bites her tongue and grinds the root into the saucer.

MARGARET

Have ye no thought this through?
What of the neighbours? That'd give
the lot somethin' to gossip about.

The student healer MUTTERS a charm and adds warm milk to the ground root, but the sick piglet still won't drink.

JAMES

Have ye no thought how ye're to
make passage?

MARGARET

She's not going. That's flat!

Mary takes a deep breath and pushes back.

MARY

I must. Haven't I made up my mind.
(eyeing the deal box)
I could use Gran's brooch for fare.

Heather clutches the BROOCH and hurls herself at her mother.

HEATHER

Don't let her!

MARY

Gran meant it for me.

HEATHER

Should you be the first to marry!
Only you're wastin' away on that
dark one, when my own man is to
come home any day.

Mary dips her trembling finger into the potion and finally gets the piglet to suckle its cure.

James gently takes the heirloom from Heather. It has deep meaning for him, and Mary's request weighs on his next words.

JAMES

Gran's brooch has been in the family for over 300 years. 'Tis the only thing of value we Urquharts own. Now, you'll want the precious thing sold on a whim?

MARY

It's no whim, Da. It was Duncan I saw in the old well. He called to me. "Come. Quickly", he cried.

HEATHER

But not a thing of Robert.

MARGARET

I thought we were rid of the hooligan. You'd travel thousands of miles, alone, a soft-hearted creature like yerself?

MARY

There's no mistakin'. Duncan's in dire trouble, and I must fetch him.

Margaret pitches her husband's shirt into her chair and retrieves a BASKET OF LETTERS from a dresser.

MARGARET

Urquharts and Camerons are as close-knit as the shawl on yer back. Do ye not even call them Uncle and Auntie? Doesna stop me seein' the lad for what he is, a shiftless layabout!

HEATHER

Auntie Jeanie writes of Callum helping and little Ben breaking his wee back to cut wood. But, never of that empty-headed *trosk* (buffoon).

Mary thrusts Duncan's lock at her family like a weapon.

MARY

Did he not give me a lock of his own hair, and I my ribbon to him?

(to Heather)

Are we not, then, also betrothed? No different than you and yer Robert. 'Tis my duty to bring him safe home.

Her mother WAVES several letters back at Mary.

MARGARET

Mind yerself! I'll give ye,
 Jeanie's letters beg us to join
 them in Canada: a map and all. But
 heaven knows, that lot found
 themselves leapin' from the kettle
 into the fire, what with the
 troubles.

MARY

What troubles?

MARGARET

The Americans' War with the colony.
 God help those that betrayed the
 King.
 (beat)
 We'll be doin' no such thing, nor
 yerself!

Margaret retrieves her mending and plants herself firmly back in her chair.

JAMES

What of yer work with Biddy Grant?

MARGARET

Wonders ye cannae see it for
 yerself. You with such sharp
 vision! Wipe Canada from yer
 sights.

And with that, the discussion is over.

31

INT. URQUHART COTTAGE - NIGHT

A thin ray of moonlight slips through the cottage window and falls on Mary's tear-stained face.

She crawls out of bed and drops her nightdress to the floor to reveal she is already clothed. She tiptoes to the letter basket and searches for Auntie Jeanie's MAP.

WHEN...

HEATHER (O.C.)

I need my big sister by my side on
 my wedding day.

Seizing the map, Mary turns to her sister.

MARY

(whispering)

I cannae wait that long, love. No
 tellin' how and when yer Robert
 will be back.

HEATHER

Is he really worth it? Be honest with yourself. Aren't there plenty of greater fish in the sea without needing to cross one?

Mary kneels beside Heather and strokes her hair.

MARY

Imagine sunlight without shadow. One's soul in two bodies. That's Duncan and me. There's none out there sees me for what I truly am, he does. I know now I should have left with him. We belong together.

Heather places the pebble from the well in her sister's hand.

HEATHER

Dinnae forget where ye belong.

They embrace, then Mary gathers her shawl and heads for the cottage door. As her hand rests on its latch, possibly for the last time...

HEATHER (CONT'D)

You didnae take Gran's brooch, though?

Mary smiles and quietly slips outside.

32

EXT. URQUHART COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

On the cottage stoop lies an empty FAERY STONE. Mary kneels to pour milk from the nearby canister into its hollow.

MARY

Bring blessings to this house, good neighbours. Watch over and protect all who live here.

MARY

Thugaibh beannachdan don taigh seo, a choimhearsnaich mhath. Coimhead thairis agus dion a h-uile duine a tha a 'fuireach an seo.

Trusting her family is now safe, she marches forward.

33

EXT. THE TORNASHEE - LOOM 'O MORN (PRE-DAWN)

The sky is transforming from darkness to the first light of a new day as Mary climbs the Tornashee. Now and again, she glances back towards home.

MARY

Forgive me, all of ye.

As if in response, a voice WHISPERS on the wind.

MRS. GRANT (V.O)
 Leaving then? Without a breath of
 one small word?

Mary chases after the voice to find Mrs. Grant tucked beneath the old Rowan tree, sorting wildflowers. She runs to bury her head in her teacher's lap.

MRS. GRANT (CONT'D)
 There, there. Any day, they'll all
 be wishing they'd stolen to the
 land of milk and honey.

MARY
 I dinnae want to go. Only Duncan
 needs me, Mother Grant. We made
 ourselves a promise.

MRS. GRANT
 Your feet will bring ye where your
 heart is. 'Tis a journey that will
 also bring sorrow and many trials.
 Twice you'll refuse what's for ye.

MARY
 What is for me? Tell me.

MRS. GRANT
 Your destiny. Yet, when you think
 to seek it out, won't it avoid yer
 grasp. Only then will you learn to
 embrace it as yer own. And only
 then can ye turn away true evil.

MARY
 'Tis all so confusing, frightening.

MRS. GRANT
 And well it should be. There is
 darkness out there. Dark as any
 dark. Beware. For it holds grave
 danger and suffering for you.

Mary pulls away, prompting the wise woman to draw a leather pouch from her basket in reassurance.

MRS. GRANT (CONT'D)
 Hush child. You will go, and I've
 three gifts for your travels. The
 first being the savings sent by my
 own Barbara in Boston. You'll have
 need of it for passage.

She presses the pouch into Mary's hands – next, a packet.

MRS. GRANT (CONT'D)

The spindle-whorl in this wee
packet is as old as the oak from
which it is cut. May it find you
work and bring good fortune.

Finally, she reveals a neatly folded white shawl.

MRS. GRANT (CONT'D)

This is for a blessing. I wore it
on my own wedding day, and I've no
wish to be buried in it. God bless
ye, my dear.

Mrs. Grant kisses her and drapes the fine wool over her
tearful student's shoulders.

MARY

You've been a kind and patient
teacher. Ashamed I am, to have been
such a poor pupil.

MRS. GRANT

You are a most difficult child,
stubborn to a fault, and I shall
miss you sorely.

(silence)

Away with ye. Only remember,
dearest: Beware the dark!

Once again, Mrs. Grant's words leave a lump in her throat.
Mary gathers her gifts, rises, and as a tear falls...

MARY

Thank you.

MARY

Tapadh leat.

She sets off on her adventure, unaware of her teacher's
furrowing brow.

34

EXT. THE GLEN ROAD - MORNING

Mary leaps and scrambles along a rutted road, distancing
herself from home.

35

EXT. THE GLEN ROAD - LOCH NESS - DAY

A rickety cart makes its way along a narrow, winding path
hugging the hillside above Loch Ness.

A **TINKER** glances back with a toothless grin at his passenger.
Mary sits amid the wares, tools, and barter goods of his
trade. It's an uncomfortable ride for more than one reason.

36

EXT. ROAD TO FORT WILLIAM - EVENING

A FLASH of LIGHTENING lays bare the ruins of an ancient CASTLE. Mary presses on toward it, her head bowed beneath her shawl as protection against the wind and incoming downpour.

37

EXT. INVERLOCHY CASTLE - NIGHT

Drenched and shivering, Mary pauses at the castle's time-ravaged entrance. Its faery stone spills over with rainwater.

MARY

I am sorry. I have no milk to give. Only blessings on those who live here now, and all who once did.

MARY

Tha mi duilich. Chan eil bainne agam ri thoirt. A mhàin beannachdan air an fheadhainn a tha a 'fuireach an seo a-nis, agus a h-uile a rinn aon uair.

The wind responds with a shrill, fluted WAIL.

MARY (CONT'D)

Are ye the spirit of this home?
Duncan? Have ye come to travel with me??

She enters the ruins, hoping and trusting all will be well.

38

INT. INVERLOCHY CASTLE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Rainwater pours down the battlement steps, and we find Mary curled beneath them. Cupped in her hands is Duncan's lock.

MARY

If only I knew what ails ye.

SUDDENLY: A GUST of wind SNATCHES the lock from her. Mary jumps to her feet and frantically tries to recapture it.

DUNCAN (V.O.)

Come Mary. Please, come!

The strand WHIRLS about her as if Duncan's presence forms a vortex with his lock at its centre. IT SHOOTS UPWARDS!

MARY

Wait love! Patience! Am I not coming as fast as I can?!

She races after his lock of hair. Up the battlement steps she climbs, but once reaching the top, the rain HALTS, the wind falls SILENT, and the precious gift binding her to Duncan, VANISHES. As Mary desperately scans the night sky...

Only the distant lights of FORT WILLIAM can be seen.

39

EXT. LOCH LINNHE - FORT WILLIAM - MORNING

Established in the 17th century, FORT WILLIAM is a military garrison transformed into a commercial settlement. The remains of the fort are still prominent, though it's no longer the hub of activity.

HIGHLANDERS, MERCHANTS, and TRAVELLERS trade livestock, hawk their wares, and gather provisions in its bustling marketplace.

Hundreds of emigrating **FAMILIES** cluster along the harbour as they await passage across the ocean. Several **CHILDREN** jockey for a glimpse of the battle-scarred and transport-weary **SOLDIERS** returning from the Napoleonic Wars.

Our Mary wanders into town, curious, searching, having never experienced the likes of such crowds and activity before.

40

EXT. FORT WILLIAM SHIPPING OFFICE - A LITTLE LATER

Mary's shocked face is reflected in a window bearing a NOTICE announcing the noon departure of the ANDREW MACBRIDE for Montréal, Canada.

MARY

Today! Holy Mother of God, and look at the cut of me!

She hurriedly dusts herself off and enters the office.

41

EXT. FORT WILLIAM MARKET - LATE MORNING

With little time to spare, Mary HUSTLES about the market gathering provisions in her arms, until a matronly **VENDOR** takes pity on her struggle and offers her a tattered basket.

42

EXT. FORT WILLIAM WHARF - DAY

The three-masted clipper Andrew MacBride is a masterpiece of fully-squared rigging and wood planking. It lies in wait just offshore with its glorious 40 sails ready to be unfurled.

A **PASSAGE BROKER** confirms Mary's ticket, and she settles into a gently rocking rowboat alongside a family, **KIRSTY** (22) and **IAIN MACKAY** (25), their **BABY**, and matron, **MRS. MACKAY** (50s).

They launch, and Mary's eyes fill with tears as the Scottish coastline recedes.

MARY

I will be back. I will. And I'll have Duncan with me. It will all be so perfect, it will...

43

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN - ANDREW MACBRIDE - WEEKS LATER

Only, it's the opposite of perfect! The Andrew MacBride HEAVES and SURGES on the ocean. Each large swell lifts the ship to a mountainous crest, then HURLS it down like an unwanted toy.

44

INT. ANDREW MACBRIDE - SHIP'S STEERAGE - DAY

As we descend into the ship's steerage, we find it cloaked in dim, perpetual lamplight. Rows of narrow wooden bunks with straw and rags for bedding are stacked along the hull. The air is thick and stale, reeking of sweat, rot, and sickness.

The **PASSENGERS** are treated more like freight, crammed shoulder-to-shoulder and divided into classes: men travelling alone, women without male escorts, and families.

An **ELDERLY WOMAN** staggers past Mary's bunk with a bucket of human waste. She stumbles, spilling it, and Mary recoils. As she does, she discovers an **EMACIATED MAN** rifling through her basket. She CRIES OUT for help, but Iain arrives too late, and the thief slips away with her provisions and slippers.

Too ill to give chase herself, Mary collapses into her bunk in despair. To comfort her, Mrs. Mackay tucks the poor, sick thing's shawl around her.

45

INT. SHIP'S STEERAGE - ANOTHER DAY

Wretched but upright, Mary sits with the Mackays, clutching a cheese block and ship's biscuit, while Mrs. Mackay rocks her grandchild and Iain urges his wife to take more porridge.

MARY

I feel terrible, takin' food from
yer own mouths. The missus is in
dire need.

MRS. MACKAY

There be enough. Imagine. That
filthy blaggard, robbing a wee lass
as yourself blind. Had I a mind...

But her voice trails off as Mary's focus shifts to Kirsty vomiting up her last serving.

46

EXT. SHIP'S DECK - NIGHT

Mary slips along the ship's upper deck. This night, the ocean is serene under a brilliant canopy of stars. The only SOUND is the lap of waves and the creaking of the ship's timbers.

UNTIL...

An OTHERWORLDLY MOAN rises from the deep.

MARY

Duncan love. Is that yerself?
Dinnae give way. I'll be with ye
soon enough.

With that promise, Mary pulls her shawl tight about her and conjures thoughts of rejoining her love.

47

INT. SHIP'S STEERAGE - DAYS LATER

Mary squints under candlelight at Auntie Jeanie's map as she traces the ST. LAWRENCE RIVER from Montréal to her final destination of COLLIVERS' CORNERS on Lake Ontario.

Her studying is cut short by FUSSING noises; she looks up to find Mrs. Mackay juggling baby Mackay while soothing her daughter-in-law.

MARY

Why not hand wee Dottie over?

MRS. MACKAY

A good heart you have. Still
looking a bit peaky yourself.

Mary sets her map aside to collect the baby.

MARY

I'm grand. Just a bit of a
headache. I get those... often.

Mrs. Mackay encourages her daughter-in-law to eat a stick of salt beef, but Kirsty refuses. Her fate is obvious, and Mary rests a gentle hand on the elder woman's arm.

MARY (CONT'D)

No need to feed the poor thing,
Missus. Best save what you have for
the bairn.

Sadly, it's true.

48

EXT. SHIP'S DECK - DAY

The Andrew MacBride rises and falls on the gentle swells of the Atlantic.

Kirsty's SHROUDED body lies in wait on deck, with Iain at her side and his mother perched nearby in support.

The **CAPTAIN** and a **MINISTER** stand at the ready.

Mary hugs baby Mackay tighter as her head begins to ACHE.

CAPTAIN

All hands now, as we surrender the dead!

BODY BEARERS take their station as the minister steps forward.

MINISTER

Let us not think of our loved ones as gone away, but as having set forth on a new journey. For life holds many facets, and this earth is but one—precious, yet passing. Today, we commend dear Kirsty Mackay, now at rest from all sorrows and tears, to a place of everlasting warmth and comfort, where time is no more. And let us remember: this young mother lives on in the hearts she bore and touched, for nothing truly loved is ever lost.

ALL

Amen.

A **PIPER** plays a familiar lament as Mrs. Mackay wraps an arm around Iain, urging her grieving son to bid his wife a final farewell.

Mary's headache SHARPENS, and her breath comes in GASPS.

MARY

Take wee Dottie, will ye, Mrs. Mackay? I'm afeared I might...

The THROBBING increases as she hands the child over.

DUNCAN (V.O.)

Come Mary! Come!!

MARY

(under her breath)
Duncan? What now?

A cold sweat breaks across her skin as Kirsty's body is raised.

DUNCAN (V.O.)

Come quickly!!!

MRS. GRANT (V.O.)

"What comes, comes. *Embrace your gift.*"

MARY

NO! NO!! STOP!!!!

The body bearers FREEZE, and all eyes swing to Mary. She's mortified that her outburst has disrupted the service and looks to escape. As she slips away...

The Captain turns to Ian for approval, then signals his crew to carry on.

ANGLE ON: Mary searches for privacy, but the deck below her begins to SHIFT, the skies DARKEN, and the SOUND of RUSHING WATER compounds the POUNDING in her head.

Kirsty's body is positioned for release to the sea.

ANGLE ON: Mary's body goes limp.

49

VISION STARTS - INTERCUT WITH KIRSTY'S FALLING BODY

- * Mary is alone, perched on a large, grey rock.
- * Duncan steps on the same rock, alone, tartan in hand.
- * A dark, ominous stain grows under the body of water below.
- * Mary teeters.
- * Duncan hovers.

DUNCAN (V.O.)

Come, Mary! Come ye to me, now!!!

- * The water ripples - Mary's on the brink of plunging.
- * The tartan ribbon whisks from Duncan's hand.

MARY (V.O.)

*I am coming mo chridhe (my heart).
Wait for me!*

- * Duncan's face peers directly at her. His eyes beckon.

VISION ENDS.

50

EXT. SHIP'S DECK - RESUMING

Kirsty's body PLUNGES into the ocean.

ANGLE ON: Mary is draped over the ship's rail, with the sea swelling as if to claim her, too. WHEN...

A pair of hands grasps her shoulders.

51

INT. SHIP'S STEERAGE - DAY

Mary's eyes flicker open to discover she is back in steerage with Mrs. Mackay at her side, holding a steaming mug of tea.

MRS. MACKAY

Drink now, dear. You'd be
frolicking with the King of the
Seals himself had our Iain not come
to your rescue.

MARY
(panicked)
What of Dottie?

MRS. MACKAY
With her Da. We'll be in Montréal
soon enough, thanks be to God.
(beat)
Where was it you said you were
heading?

MARY
Collivers' Corners. Beyond Kings
Town. Along the great river.

Mary fumbles about to find her map.

MRS. MACKAY
'Tis a wonder your ma let ye go all
this way on your own.
(no response)
Is there a Cornwall on that bit of
paper of yours, I wonder?
(they find it together)
That's it, then? Cornwall! Where
our promised land lies. Should poor
Kirsty only lived to see it.

They share a moment of silence.

MRS. MACKAY (CONT'D)
(calculating)
We're off in the same direction, so
we are! Why dinnae ye come with us,
dear? I'll keep me eye on ye.
You'll be grand for poor Iain... I
mean with the bairn and all.

It's awkward. Mary hides her unease by folding away the map
and feigning not to hear.

52

EXT. UPPER CANADA - ISLE DE MONTREAL - SHIP'S DECK - DAY

Mount Royal offers a unique vantage point to view Montréal's evolution from a fortified trading post into a major industrial and commercial hub.

The new **IMMIGRANTS** crowd the ship's rail as oxen tow the Andrew MacBride into shallow waters and toward a simple wooden dock. There is excitement in the air and relief at leaving the dark, cramped, and deadly journey behind them.

53

EXT. MONTRÉAL HARBOUR - SHIP'S DECK - DAY

Mary ponders the next leg of her journey as each passenger jostles past her. Above their CHATTER, we hear VOICES hollering from shore in ENGLISH and FRENCH.

THEN...

A familiar TUNE rises over the din. Out of a corner of her eye, she catches the shadow of a passing **FLAUTIST**. IT'S DUNCAN! Or is it?

IAIN (O.C.)
Och aye, it'll be grand to finally
set foot on firm land.

Iain approaches carrying baby Mackay. The child gleefully responds to seeing Mary's face.

IAIN (CONT'D)
You've a way with this one.

ANGLE FROM BELOW: Mrs. Mackay SIGNALS from shore, pointing to the horse and cart she's secured.

IAIN (CONT'D)
Isn't she a great woman altogether!
There be plenty of room in our
carriage, if ye like.

But before Mary can respond.

IAIN (CONT'D)
Hold Dottie for us. I've to fetch
our luggage and will be but a wink,
then we can join Ma.

Iain THRUSTS baby Mackay into Mary's arms and disappears.

MARY
(the tune beckons)
That is you, my love. Come to meet
me after all.
(to baby Mackay)
What to do with the likes of ye?

In that instant, Mary makes up her mind and gives baby Mackay a quick kiss.

MARY (CONT'D)
Dinnae forget me, Dottie.

54

EXT. SHIP'S DECK - A SHORT TIME LATER

Iain arrives on deck, lugging a sea chest and several bags, to discover that Mary and his baby are nowhere to be seen.

55

EXT. MONTRÉAL HARBOUR - MOMENTS LATER

Mrs. Mackay patiently holds the horse's reins as a frenzied Iain, loaded down with his luggage, struggles to reach her.

IAIN

Dottie! Have ye no got her?

MRS. MACKAY

What of Mary? Has she not?

Iain is beside himself with worry when...

A SOUND comes from the back of the cart. Wedged securely between Mrs. Mackay's belongings is a happy baby Mackay.

56

EXT. MONTRÉAL HARBOUR - SAME MOMENT

Barefoot and clutching her few possessions, Mary weaves through the throng, the TUNE drawing her closer to her love.

AT LAST: She spies a slim figure with dark hair curling at the nape. DUNCAN! Mary pushes and shoves her way forward, seizes the flautist, and spins him around - IT'S NOT DUNCAN!!

Heartbroken, she melts back into the crush of newcomers.

57

EXT. LOWER CANADA - THE LAND BRIDGE WEST - DAY

Shafts of sunlight splash over the road west. The land is low, lush, and generally flat, save for the odd rolling hill.

Mary tries desperately to control her SOBBING as she checks Auntie Jeanie's map. The swarming black-flies make it impossible for her to breathe without swallowing them.

MARY

Why were you no there? Ye big
eejit! I'm off now, all alone.

As she leaves Montréal behind, the government road becomes less groomed and the encroaching forest grows DARKER.

MRS. GRANT (V.O)

Remember, dearest. Beware the dark!

Mary pauses, listening, then takes her shawl from around her waist and tightens it about her shoulders like a shield.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LOWER CANADA - THE ROAD WEST - LATE AFTERNOON

The government road beyond Montréal is little more than a cleared path through the wilderness, suitable for horse-drawn wagons and carriages, but not a barefoot girl. Still, our Mary soldiers on; her feet are deeply cut and blistered now.

UNEXPECTEDLY: A carriage RATTLES past, forcing her off the road.

WOMAN (O.C.)

Stop! Stop at once!

The **DRIVER** reins in his horses, and a fashionable bonnet appears at the window. Behind it, two CHILDREN'S heads bob.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

You there! Girl!

MRS. BABBINGTON, a voguish lady in her 30s, leans further out the window.

MRS. BABBINGTON

Yes, you! To whom else would I be talking to on such a desolate road, foolish creature? What on earth can you be doing here alone?

MARY

On my way to Loch Ontario, Missus.
To Collivers' Corners.

MRS. BABBINGTON

That's still quite a distance.
We're bound for Prescott. That's along the way to Lake Ontario.

A boy's VOICE comes from inside the coach.

CHARLES (O.C.)

Mamma, Josie's peeing. All down her legs.

JOSIE (O.C.)

I AM NOT!

CHARLES BABBINGTON [5] pokes his head beside his mother.

CHARLES

She's making a huge puddle all over the seat and my recorder. Mamma!

MRS. BABBINGTON

Charles Cardale Babbington! What am I to do with you?

(an idea)

Dear, would you... Could you...

(MORE)

MRS. BABBINGTON (CONT'D)

It would be most helpful to have
you ride with us and tend to the
children. We lost our Nanny on the
ship coming over. Terribly sad.
It's been hard on the little ones.
Honestly, they're frightfully
sweet... underneath.

Mary weighs her options.

59

INT. BABBINGTON CARRIAGE - THE ROAD WEST - EVENING

JOSIE BABBINGTON [3] hums an endless DRONE while sucking her thumb and repeatedly bouncing her head off the carriage's seat back. Her outfit is damp, as is the carriage floorboard.

Mary leans out the window, desperate for fresh air, and unaware that Charles is wiping his RECORDER on her skirt.

MRS. BABBINGTON

Have you worked with children
before, dear?

MARY

I did have a job once, back home at
the big house.

(Charles crawls over her)

Only, I stopped going. I prefer...
the animals.

Mrs. B draws a PICNIC HAMPER into view; Mary's eyes widen.

MRS. BABBINGTON

Do help yourself. Personally, I'm
in the mood for nature's second
course if you gather my meaning.

As her ladyship settles in for a nap, Charles and Josie pounce on the hamper. They grab several eggs and hurl them out the window to Mary's shock.

MARY

STOP! You'll attract the Devil,
hissself!

Those "frightfully sweet" children aren't acting that way right now, causing Mary's eyes to darken. She CHANTS...

MARY (CONT'D)

By the light of the sun/ By
the glow of the moon/ With
his lone eye twitching may
Balor come soon/ From beyond
the rocky pool/ From beyond
the waterfall...

MARY (CONT'D)

*Le soillse na grèine / Le
deàrrsadhb na gealaich / Le a
shuil aonar a' sèideadh gun
tig Balor gu luath / O thaobh
thall an linne chreagach /
Bho thaobh thall an eas...*

She reaches into the basket, removes a chicken leg, and bites savagely into it.

MARY (CONT'D)
To gobble up young children/ Skin,
bones, and all!

Charles and Josie sit stock-still as Mary settles in, at last savouring the taste of fresh food.

60

EXT. UPPER CANADA - CROSSROAD - EVENING

A horse-drawn BAROUCHE driven by a well-dressed man, **MR. BABBINGTON** waits at a junction in the road. He flags down Mrs. Babbington's approaching carriage.

Mary disembarks first and passes Josie to her father, while Charles clings to his mother.

MRS. BABBINGTON
Won't you reconsider, my dear? The
children were so well-behaved on
the journey.

MARY
Thank you, Missus. Aren't I in a
hurry to Collivers' Corners.

MRS. BABBINGTON
I've never known them to be so
quiet. I rather think you cast a
spell on them.

No comment from Mary.

MRS. BABBINGTON (CONT'D)
We'd make it well worth your while.

MARY
Thank you, no Missus. Someone dear
is in more need of me.

Mrs. B forces a smile and hands Mary a small carryall.

MRS. BABBINGTON
Here then, my dear. You'll need
some sustenance on your journey.
Remember, this is a wild country
and can be awfully dangerous. Don't
be careless with it.

With that, both barouche and carriage depart, leaving Mary alone. She peeks inside the carryall to discover a variety of clothing, food staples, plus one hard-boiled egg with a bite out of it - miserably, no slippers!

61

EXT. UPPER CANADA - THE ROAD WEST - LATER THAT EVENING

As Mary pushes deeper into this strange new land, the forest gets denser, and the road, decidedly darker.

MARY

"Beware the dark!"... Weren't those Mother Grant's very words? Is it not but dark forest all around me, ne'er ending, and no sight nor sound of the great river.

The SNAP of a twig from deep within the brush causes her to jump. Instinctively, she drops her carryall, raises both fists, and outlines a circle in the air.

MARY (CONT'D)

I will close my fist. Tight I will close my fist against the danger I have come within.

MARY (CONT'D)

Dùinidh mi mo dhòrn. Dùinidh mi mo dhòrn gu teann an aghaidh a' chunnairt anns an tainig mi.

Then she listens intently, but whatever creature or *Ghillie Dhu* (wood faery) was there is thankfully gone!

62

EXT. THE ROAD WEST - NIGHT

Mary emerges from a bend in the road to find that the forest canopy ahead is aglow, with flecks of light whirling and rising above a small clearing.

MARY

The *Teine Biorach?* Here in this Canada?
(reflecting)
Did Duncan not say they were to draw me off my path?

She peers down the road ahead; it's pitch dark, but after some debate, Mary steps off the road to discover...

63

EXT. THE ROAD WEST - A CLEARING - NIGHT

A full moon shines upon an encampment of dome-shaped structures (wigwams) that encircle a brilliant campfire.

Groups of **INDIGENOUS WOMEN** and **GIRLS** of the Algonquin Nation twist tobacco ties, gather cedar branches, and prepare vessels of water.

A male **FIREKEEPER** fans the campfire with an eagle feather.

ANGLE ON: Curious, Mary braces herself beneath a tree at the clearing's edge.

The Firekeeper signals a retreat, and several MEN take a seat at a respectful distance away.

The women of childbearing age approach the fire with their sacred gifts and gather in a circle. The elders and youngsters take up drums and shakers and begin to SING.

ANGLE ON: Mary watches in fascination as the ritual begins.

The women toss their tobacco ties on the fire, then add the cedar branches. They offer the bowls of water to Grandmother Moon, in recognition of the life-giving power of all women.

ANGLE ON: Mary takes a step forward, straining to see better, when...

She comes FACE-TO-FACE with the Firekeeper. His ruddy and striking body is dressed in a melding of indigenous and Western trade; cloth, footwear, gold/silver jewelry, beads and feathers. Mary's never seen anything like this creature.

She BOLTS back to the "safety" of the road.

64

EXT. THE ROAD WEST - NEAR GANANOQUE - MORNING

Sunlight pierces the branches of an old oak tree to fall on Mary's hung carryall. As she slowly awakens, we find her body fastened to its trunk by her shawl.

THEN...

The distant SOUND of RAPIDS.

MARY

The river! I can hear it now!!!

Mary quickly unties herself, gathers her belongings, and hugs the oak's trunk.

MARY (CONT'D)

Blessings on ye, oak tree.
For yer protection this
night.

MARY (CONT'D)

*Beannachd leat, a chraoibh
daraich. Airson do dhion an
oidhche seo.*

As quickly as her feet can carry her, she's off to find the great river.

65

EXT. ST. LAWRENCE RIVER - NEAR GANANOQUE - MORNING

Mary gazes at the vast, open sky and across the massive ST. LAWRENCE RIVER. She steps in; its touch is cold and refreshing, especially on her sore feet.

MARY

See, Duncan? The dark is now gone.
I'll be with ye soon. We'll sing
together like linnets.

She playfully splashes about, her voice boldly SINGING.

MARY (CONT'D)

(The Bonnie Banks of Loch
Lomond)

*"By yon bonnie banks and by yon
bonnie braes, Where the sun shines
bright on Loch Lomond, Where me and
my true love..."*

Life couldn't get any better, WHEN..

66

EXT. ST. LAWRENCE RIVER / ROAD WEST - MOMENTS LATER

A horse-driven wagon LUMBERS down the government road.

LUKE ANDERSON [20], tall, sturdy, with dirty-blonde hair and kind eyes, has a rustic air to him. He reins in his horse and takes a blade of grass from his mouth.

LUKE

Now there's a sight, if ever..

ANGLE ON: Flying beads of water capture a rainbow of colours, framing the red-haired and sun-spangled girl as she frolics.

Luke eases his horse and wagon closer.

Mary SPINS and SPLASHES until she realizes a strange young man is watching her. He tips his hat with an amused grin. Something about him is appealing, which makes her even more embarrassed.

Mary tries to maintain her dignity as she clumsily wades to shore.

MARY

How rude!

MARY

Dè cho mi-mhodhail!

She turns her back on the stranger, wrings her clothing, then marches up the embankment and down the government road. Unable to resist, Luke urges his horse after her.

LUKE

Never meant to scare ya. Just
curious, is all. You looked just
like a... I don't know what, like
a... a loon out there!

MARY

A lune? Think me some lunatic?

LUKE

No, jeez. Didn't... don't think that. You're a Scot?

(beat)

No offence meant. With you splashin' about like that in the light... you know what a loon is, don'tcha? It's a bird, a water bird.

(now he's embarrassed)

Forget it. The name's Luke. Luke Anderson.

MARY

(continues marching)

Mary Urquhart. Let me away now, Luke Anderson.

LUKE

Can I give you a lift? I'm heading west, beyond Kingston way.

Collivers' Corners, if that's any help.

Mary stops short as Luke lets slip those magic words.

MARY

Collivers' Corners...?!

67

EXT. GOVERNMENT ROAD - LATER THE SAME DAY

Time passes slowly as a MUTE Mary clings white-knuckled to her seat, though she secretly takes comfort in not facing the forest alone.

Luke takes note of her bloodied feet and breaks the silence.

LUKE

You come all the way from Scotland in no shoes? And walked from Montréal?

(Mary fires a look at him)

You come alone?

(another look)

Why on Earth would you make such a crazy trip all alone?

MARY

I'm to stay with the Camerons.

Luke ABRUPTLY HALTS his horse and wagon.

LUKE

The Camerons. Oh God, I'm so sorry.

His face is ashen - Mary's confused and nervous now.

LUKE (CONT'D)

They took from here but two weeks ago. Left. For home, I believe. If you just arrived, they're likely headin' back out on the ship you came in, back to Scotland.

Her eyes start to well with tears.

MARY

The lot of them?

LUKE

Well, jeez...

MARY

What of Duncan, Duncan Cameron?

LUKE

Dash it! I guess the heart went out of the Camerons after he... Well, he's...

Luke's words are suddenly lost as...

68

FLASHBACK OF EARLIER VISION - INTERCUT KIRSTY'S FALLING BODY

- * Duncan steps on a large, grey rock, alone. Tartan in hand.
- * Kirsty's body is raised above the ocean.
- * An ominous stain grows under the waters below.
- * Mary cries out on the ship's deck.
- * Duncan HOVERS...

DUNCAN (V.O.)

Come, Mary! Come ye to me, now!!!

- * The water RIPPLES.
- * Kirsty's body SLAMS into the ocean
- * Her tartan ribbon WHISKS from Duncan's hand.

FLASHBACK ENDS

69

EXT. GOVERNMENT ROAD - RESUMING

Mary recoils as far from Luke as the wagon seat permits.

MARY

Dead! He's truly dead!

LUKE

Ain't that why you come, then?

MARY

(crying out)

Duncan love, you called to me... scared and all.

LUKE
Called to you?

It's as if Luke no longer exists to her.

MARY
I didnae know! Not truly.

LUKE
If it weren't the Camerons sent for
you, then... who? Folk 'round here
won't speak 'bout him...

Mary is shaking, and her tears spill down her face.

MARY
You broke your promise! Not a word
these three years, then you call
for me... Why didnae I see it at
all? What good is this cursed gift
of mine!

Luke bites back his words, afraid to upset her more. Yet as
Mary sinks into despair, every instinct in his body longs to
hold and comfort her.

DISSOLVE TO:

70

EXT. COLLIVERS' CORNERS - TOWN - DAY

Collivers' Corners is situated among fertile farmland that
stretches over multiple lots of 100 acres or more.

"THE CORNERS," as it is called, is a vibrant settlement with
a blacksmith's forge, saw mill, general store, makeshift
firehall, and schoolhouse - it's a growing, affluent, and
permanent community.

71

INT. COLLIVERS' HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAYS LATER

Mary's eyes slowly open to a room full of light; it's rustic,
spacious and clean. She swings her legs from a proper bed
onto a polished wooden floor. A new nightdress swims on her.
Her feet are clean and bandaged. A pair of gently used
sippers sits by her bedside.

Mrs. Grant's shawl hangs by the bedroom door. She gets up and
rubs her cheek in it. Her clothes are also clean and folded
neatly on a dresser, and the spindle whorl rests beside them.

DUNCAN (V.O.)
Come Mary.

Duncan's voice beckons from a tall pine-framed mirror. As Mary approaches, he emerges alongside her reflection and reaches to touch her hair, but his fingers don't, can't, make physical contact.

MARY

No!!!

(Duncan vanishes — Mary collapses)

I came as fast as I could, love.
Had I wings, I'd've flown. Here I
am, and where are you? What trouble
did you find here? How am I to
live, and without you!

As she wallows in her misery...

POLLY (O.C.)

Ma said to git you up.

Through the mist of her tears, Mary sees **POLLY COLLIVER** [5] peeking from the doorway.

72

EXT. COLLIVERS' HOUSE & GRIST MILL - DAY

JULIA COLLIVER [late 30s], strong and determined, hovers on the porch of a two-story wood-framed homestead. Nearby, a GRIST MILL with a paddle wheel straddles the creek. She signals to her husband, **SAM** [40s], driving a horse team laden with grain.

JULIA

Breakfast, Sam!

Mary and Polly appear in the doorway.

JULIA (CONT'D)

So you're back on your feet! Mary, is it? We was awful worried about you, young lady. I'm Julia Colliver. That over there is my husband, Sam. You met Polly. Young Luke Anderson told us where you come all the way from, and you bein' kin to the Camerons. Terrible sorry for your loss. Luke brung you here night before last, whisperin' in a half-faint state and with a forehead colder'n a January stone.

MARY

Thank you for your kindness,
Missus.

JULIA

Don't you worry none, I get all sorts of the Corners' healin' work.
(MORE)

JULIA (CONT'D)

If your hands is clean you can sit right down at the breakfast table. If not, there's a pitcher on the bedroom dresser.

Polly is thrilled and TUGS Mary back into the house.

73

INT. COLLIVERS' HOUSE - DINING AREA - MOMENTS LATER

A breakfast feast is laid out on the dining table - pancakes, scrambled eggs, oatmeal, a jug of milk, maple syrup, etc.

MATTHEW [6] and **NANCY COLLIVER** [9] sit upright. They hold out their hands in a synchronized gesture. Mary and Polly join them and follow suit, allowing Julia to perform a thorough inspection while Sam washes up.

JULIA

Clean enough. Go on then.

The children dive in as Mary's eyes roam.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Eat up, you're nothin' but skin 'n bone.

SAM

Go on! There's berries and syrup on the table.

Mary hesitates, then fills her plate to the brim.

JULIA

Fancy the Camerons going off like that when they knew you was comin'.

MARY

(with a mouthful)

They weren't to know. I set out as soon as I heard Duncan call for me.

JULIA

Duncan? The Camerons' older boy?

(catching Sam's look)

How's that possible? Weren't you in Scotland? And he was...

Mary is ravenous.

MARY

Indeed, I was. I've an *dà shelladh*.

Though I wish I didn't. He called out to me. Sounded terrible and I came out to bring him home.

SAM

Not sure we quite take your
meanin'.

MARY

An dà shelladh. The two sights. I
see and hear into the past, or
future... most often 'tis
unpleasant...

POLLY

Mary kin see and talk to ghosts
too, Pa. Can't you, Mary?

JULIA

Quiet now, Polly!

POLLY

I seen her!

MARY

Aye, to the otherworld, too.

The room goes silent, and Mary looks about the table, unsure.

JULIA

You may as well know first as last -
we don't hold with ghosts nor any
of that old world "an de shel..."
whatever nonsense here.

(to Polly)

Not in this house anyway.

MARY

(pauses eating)

It's no nonsense, Missus! The
spirit folk can and do walk
among...

SAM

Best put them ideas aside if you're
to stay in these parts.

Mary pushes her chair back and rises to her feet to leave.

MARY

Thank you for yer kindness. I
wasnae meant to stay.

JULIA

Whoa! Hold on a minute. Sam??!!

SAM

Mrs. Colliver and I never thought
so neither. We left America on
account of our loyalty to the King.
(MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)

It caused us a lotta trouble from officials in New York and the bunch of hooligans there.

JULIA

We believed Canada would be a more welcoming place.

SAM

'Course, President Jefferson thought he could march up and liberate us. He had another thing comin'. Canada's home now. How do you imagine to git yourself to Scotland?

JULIA

Never you mind, Sam.

(to Mary)

We didn't mean to upset you none.

MARY

Please excuse me.

Mary pushes her chair in assertively.

74

INT. COLLIVERS' HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Julia follows Mary to the bedroom as she gathers her things.

JULIA

We're sorry, dear. No harm meant. Stay with us for a spell. You could help with the chores for room and board. Lord knows I could use an extra pair of hands. I seen a spindle among your things. You could earn your passage home by spinning.

MARY

I dinnae know how to spin, Missus. I can read, so I can. I write a fine hand and tend the animals better than most. Sing a might too. But I never learned to spin.

Mary is ready to leave, but Julia blocks the doorway. After a brief, silent standoff, the lady of the house steps aside.

75

EXT. COLLIVERS' CORNERS - ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Mary can't escape fast enough, but quickly realizes she doesn't know where to go, and dense forest surrounds her.

MARY

"Beware the dark." Where be ye,
Duncan? You have to help me! I've
no one. Please!

As if answering her prayers, a FLUTE-LIKE CRY beckons.

MARY (CONT'D)

You've not left me after all.

Racing down the road, Mary chases after her missing love.

76

EXT. HAWTHORN BAY - LATER STILL

An exotic bird with a spear-like beak, diamond back, and silver collar drifts across a large body of water. We find Mary climbing over rocks and pushing aside brush to get a better view. ONLY...

The creature throws back its head, lets out its spooky WARBLE, and dives.

She hurries along the bay's shoreline, searching for the mysterious bird, until stumbling into a CLEARING with half-stripped trees, stumps jutting up and brush piled in heaps.

Pressed against the surrounding forest stands a crude thatched cottage, and at the clearing's banks lies a **LARGE, GREY ROCK**.

77

EXT. HAWTHORN BAY - CAMERON COTTAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Mary's fingers graze the rowan sapling by the tiny cottage. The door is secured with a latch and lockbox, the single window boarded, and a bone-dry faery stone sits at the threshold.

MARY

This is your place. Your home,
Duncan. I can feel ye about it.
You're not truly gone.

ANGLE ON: As the words leave her lips, a dark SHADOW begins to form in the waters off the large, grey rock.

78

INT. COLLIVERS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Julia BUSTLES about her kitchen and pantry, stuffing various medicinal items into a carry bag while Mary plays Cat's Cradle with Polly.

JULIA

So you've seen some sense, have
you? No trotting back to Scotland
just yet? Soap? Did I pack it?

MARY

What ye said about teaching me to
spin, so I can earn passage home.
I'd like that, if ye dinnae mind.
(standing)
Missus, I come across...

JULIA

Now, I've left dinner on the stove
and... scissors?!

MARY

The wee cottage, down by the
water... with that big stone...
would that be...?

JULIA

Hawthorn Bay? Best keep away from
there dear, if I was you. Now,
where did I put that tincture?

MARY

'Twas their place, was it no? Uncle
Davie and Auntie Jeanie's?

Julia's grasp on the antiseptic tightens.

MARY (CONT'D)

They left, but what of Duncan?

Before Julia can respond, there's a SHARP RAP on the door and Luke BURSTS in.

LUKE

S'cuze me, Miz Colliver. Baby's
awful sick. An Ma is...
(sees Mary and guards his
words)
Well... She's havin' one of her
spells. Pa'd take it kindly if
you'd come by.

His presence embarrasses Mary and relieves Julia.

JULIA

I can't, Luke. I'm sorry. I'm just
readying myself to go on up to
Jenny Heaton's. She's near due.
What about Mary here? You know
anything 'bout sick babies, Mary?

MARY

Sick piglets. I was only learning
about caring for bairns...

JULIA

Close enough. Off you go, then. Sam and the children can look after themselves. Take some clothes with you. You may be a day or two.

(awkward silence)

Well go on, the both of you!

Mary obediently heads to her bedroom to pack as Luke restlessly waits.

79

EXT. COLLIVERS' CORNERS - ROAD - DAY

Luke hikes at a hurried pace, challenging Mary to keep up.

LUKE

Feelin' better? You cleaned up pretty good.

(reaching for her carryall)

Here, let me help with that.

MARY

I'm well able to carry what's mine, thank you.

LUKE

Suit yourself. This way, then.

He heads towards the forest.

MARY

I'll no be goin' to that forest ever again.

LUKE

It's a shortcut!

Luke steps off the road, when...

MARY

'Tis too dark. Have I not been warned.

Mary marches off on her own, leaving Luke behind.

LUKE

(calling after her)

You're being ridiculous. It's not dark. It's broad daylight out. Nothin' in here to be scared of. Well, you might run into the odd Indian, that still makes some folk lose their wits. Bears won't bother you. Well, 'less you git between their cubs...

(stupid!)

(MORE)

LUKE (CONT'D)
 Ma is terribly. We'll git to her
 faster.

Mary puts more distance between them, and he's forced to chase after her.

LUKE (CONT'D)
 You don't even know where your
 goin'! Dammit!!

80

INT. ANDERSONS' FARMHOUSE - SAME DAY

Luke holds the door for Mary, who stops just inside. It's dark, disorderly, and squalid. Flies BUZZ about a bowl of discarded, dirty DIAPERS.

We HEAR an infant's WHIMPER coming from a corner of the room.

Mary cautiously advances into the room to find **LYDIA ANDERSON** [38] slouching in a rocking chair. Her jewelry and quality of clothes, now neglected, indicate she was once a woman of higher standing - a YOUNG MALE hovers over her.

LYDIA
 Julia? That's not Julia. Is it?

Lydia tugs at the vibrant quilt draped over her lap.

LUKE
 Mamma, Miz Colliver's off tendin'
 to a sickly Jenny Heaton. This
 here's Mary, uh... Urkit.

LYDIA
 Come in then. Come right in...
 Fetch the jug, Simeon.

SIMEON ANDERSON [18] steps from behind his mother. He's a stockier, rougher, and darker version of Luke.

SIMEON
 Look at the skinny thing Luke brung
 back. Shoulda sent me, Mamma.

LYDIA
 Be a dear. Get the jug for the girl
 since you're on your feet. I won't
 say no to a drop myself.

Simeon obeys and pours a healthy amount of whiskey into a dirty mug. He thrusts it at Mary, causing her to recoil.

SIMEON
 Whatsa matter?

Just then, the door FLIES OPEN and a muddy, exhausted, **JOHN ANDERSON** [40+] storms into the farmhouse.

JOHN

Which one of you jackasses left the white-faced cow untethered? She's calved in the swamp, and now her goddamn calf's gone missing. Sim?

John strikes a disciplinary cuff at Simeon.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Git yourself out there this minute and find the Christly thing, or I'll take the switch to you. You too, Luke! Where's Henry?

He spins back out the door, followed dutifully by Luke and Simeon. The whimpering becomes a CRY.

MARY

The bairn, Missus. There's no much light. Tell me where.

Lydia attempts to get up, but can't stomach it. So, Mary sets her carryall down and crawls about until she finds a CRADLE with a **NEWBORN**. Recalling the sick mountain boy, she lays her hand on the baby's forehead.

Just then, a dusty-haired, mini version of Luke, **HENRY** [7], peeks out from the shadows and startles her.

MARY (CONT'D)

Child of grace... come you here.
(lifting the baby)
Were ye protectin' the wean?

Henry nods, confirming.

MARY (CONT'D)

We'll do that together now, so we will. What be your name?

HENRY

H... Henry Matthews Anderson.

MARY

Go now and fetch us soup and a pail of fresh water, then find some milk for your wee sister. Will ye do that, Henry Matthews Anderson?

Henry thinks for a moment, then runs off.

The baby is in dire need of a new diaper, but a quick search comes up empty, so Mary tears a strip from her own clothes.

HENRY (O.C.)

Miz? W... w... will she die? Like the others?

As Henry returns with the water, his troubled question takes Mary by surprise. She hesitates, then...

MARY

Be a good lad and find that milk now.

(Henry obeys)

Mother Grant, dinnae I now wish I'd paid you more heed?

She sets about cleaning and changing the baby.

81

INT. ANDERSONS' FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

The Anderson farmhouse is now tidy, though far from perfect. Candlelight makes the room appear warmer and cozier.

Lydia stares bleakly into the robust flames in the fireplace.

Nearby, Luke mends a leather harness and watches Mary – a stirring for her – as she tucks the tangled sheets about a sleeping Henry. As she fusses, Mary discovers BRUISES running up and down Henry's arm.

AGAIN: Her head starts to THROB. The room begins to SHIFT.

82

VISION STARTS - BARN - UNKNOWN PLACE & TIME

- * *SMOKE spills from under a barn door.*
- * *Livestock SNORT, SQUEAL and BRAY as panic sets in.*
- * *FIRE quickly spreads across the hay-strewn ground.*
- * *An abandoned, well-loved TEDDY BEAR is engulfed in flames.*

MARY (O.S.)

Put them out!! Someone!

MARY (O.S.)

Cuir a-mach iad!!!

REALITY: Mary slaps at her dress, trying to put out imaginary flames. Luke runs over to restrain and calm her.

LUKE

Mary! It's all right! It's all right!! I'm here...

VISION:

- * *Two CHILDREN hold hands as they run to climb a ladder.*
- * *Flames surround Mary as the barn becomes an inferno.*

VISION ENDS.

83

INT. ANDERSONS' FARMHOUSE - RESUMING

Mary is gripped with fear. She grabs onto Luke with all her might.

MARY

Fire... a terrible fire... and bairns... two...

LUKE

Mary, you just slipped away a moment while tendin' to Henry. We've put a lot on you when you's still recoverin' from your journey.

MARY

No. I saw it! Listen. It's to be!!

LUKE

Maybe a spark in the firebox caught your eye? Or you ate a bad chicken leg or somethin'. It were just a nightmare.

MARY

(fear turns to annoyance)
Ye dinnae believe me, do ye? I've the two sights. I know what I saw. A barn on fire and two weans... in danger.

(Luke's confused)

Will ye no listen? Or, I should just keep me mouth shut?!

At that moment, baby Anderson begins to CRY...

MARY (CONT'D)

Not another word from me, then!

And Mary runs to soothe the infant.

84

INT. ANDERSONS' FARMHOUSE - DAWN

The candles have died, and the room is dim again. We find Mary curled up beside baby Anderson's cradle. She wipes the sleep from her eyes as she wakes, only to become aware of Lydia WEEPING.

LYDIA (O.C.)

My baby... my baby girl.

Mary looks in the cradle to find the LIFELESS child.

MARY

God holds this wee lamb in the hollow of his hand now. No pain touches the little one anymore.

She picks the little girl up tenderly and hands her over to her mother.

85

INT./EXT. ANDERSONS' FARMHOUSE - NEXT DAY

Lydia leans against the window in a daze, observing the family burial service outside.

EXT. ANDERSONS' FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A freshly planted WOOD CROSS marks a small hole in the ground. It rests close to three similar markers.

Mary and Henry watch in silence as Luke places a tiny homemade coffin at the gravesite. John Anderson flips through the family bible.

ANGLE ON: Simeon remains apart from his family, his attention directed towards the farmhouse and his mother in the window.

JOHN

He maketh me lie down in green pastures. He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul...

John pauses as **PATTY OPPENSHAW** [19], prim and pretty, races to join the makeshift service. She over-apologizes and inserts herself close to Luke.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me...

ANGLE ON: Simeon's focus changes. Now, he is aware of Patty, watching Luke, watching Mary.

EXT. ANDERSONS' FARMHOUSE - DAY

Henry is BROODING on the porch as a parade of **CORNERS' LOCALS** arrive, bearing condolences, cooked meals, and baked goods.

Patty makes the refreshment rounds. Her hand touches John's arm comfortingly while refilling his drink. As she moves on, Simeon approaches her and snatches the whiskey jug away.

MEANWHILE: Mary sits alone by baby Anderson's grave until Luke joins her, carrying a plate of baked goods.

LUKE

Poor little mite hadn't hardly opened her eyes. Woulda bin nice for Mamma to have a girl in the house. Us have a sister.

(no response from Mary)

You ain't eaten since yesterday.

(softly)

It ain't just the baby, is it?

Mary knows she'll cry if she speaks, so she sits silent until, of all things, Simeon slips between them.

SIMEON

Luke. Mary. Thinkin' now ya' might wanna join me in some swill. To toast to our dead baby sister.

LUKE

Not now, Sim!

The long-standing rivalry between the brothers is apparent: This time, Luke wins, and Simeon staggers away

MARY

It's everything. That poor wee thing... the others... There's such darkness all around this land.

LUKE

There's also lots of fertile soil, nice hot summers, and close-knit folk willin' to help when in need.

MARY

What of Duncan? What of his need? Did no one come to help him? None will tell me what happened. Uncle Davie and Auntie Jeanie left without so much as a word, and here's me own self with no choice but to go back home... but cannae yet.

LUKE

You have a choice. Stay. With us.
(attempting humour)
Can't say you're the easiest to git along with. Still, I'm willin' to give it a try... if you think you might...

(Mary shoots him a look)

Besides, Mamma could use your help now. Henry too.

MARY

Henry is a sweetheart.

ANGLE ON: Patty tries to distract herself, but the couple's intimate conversation eats at her own desires for Luke.

EXT. ANDERSONS' FARMHOUSE - LATER

A drunken Simeon stumbles up the farmhouse steps and trips over Henry.

SIMEON

Goddamn it! Little runt. Whatcha lookin' at? You stay right there.
(removing his belt)
(MORE)

SIMEON (CONT'D)

It ain't a switch, but it'll learn
ya to git under my feet.

Henry panics and SPRINGS toward the forest, leaving his teetering brother in his wake.

89

EXT. COLLIVERS' BARN - MOMENTS LATER

Emerging from the forest, Henry looks back - NO SIMEON! As he catches his breath, Henry notices the COLLIVERS' BARN.

90

INT. COLLIVERS' BARN - CONTINUOUS

Young Polly is holding court over two RAG DOLLS and a worn TEDDY BEAR. A tea setting is laid out before them, with a tin teapot hanging over a stack of kindling. In her hand is a twig with a GLOWING EMBER at its tip.

Henry pokes his head around the half-open barn door.

POLLY

Come in! Close the door behind you.

He obeys and joins Polly and her guests.

POLLY (CONT'D)

It's tea time. Hands, neck and
ears, please.

She innocently sets the burning stick down to complete the inspection.

91

EXT. ANDERSONS' FARMHOUSE - SAME MOMENT

We find Mary cleaning up after baby Anderson's wake when Patty approaches and hovers uncomfortably close, she's carrying Mary's packed carryall.

PATTY

Here. Your things. Thought I'd help
you. I'm Patty by the way, Patty
Oppenshaw. I'm pretty close to... I
mean, our family is close with the
Andersons... and Luke.

MARY

Mary Urquhart.

PATTY

You'll be leavin' now, I suppose. I
mean, back to the Collivers'. I can
walk with you a ways, so you don't
get lost... if you like.

Mary's no fool; she knows that look and happily accepts her bag. Yet, Patty continues to press.

PATTY (CONT'D)

You... uh... aimin' to set your cap for Luke?

(Mary ignores her)

I only ask 'cause I'm real keen on Luke myself. Have been since I was little. And now that he's all growed up an' at least three axe handles across those shoulders. Well! It's hard for a girl to get him outta her mind.

MARY

You're welcome to him, so ye are.

PATTY

(relaxing)

Swell! I'm real sorry about what happened. I mean, the Camerons leavin' right before you come. They lived not a stone's throw from ours, on the bay. Pretty spot.

Mary pauses, now curious.

MARY

Ye knew of Duncan?

PATTY

The oldest? Not well. He never quite fit in. Always spoke of goin' back to Scotland. Corners folk want young people and don't take kindly to newcomers who don't appreciate all we got here.

MARY

Had he no one?

PATTY

Can't say. I heard he got into lotsa squabbles... 'bout landowners, the King and independence. You don't say such to loyalists. Ma and Pa were sure someone would take a good lickin' to him. He just had a way of rubbing people wrong.

MARY

Och aye, there's that.

PATTY

When Mr. Cameron got recruited to fight the Americans, the boy was left with all the chores and caring for their land and his family. It can be hard, would be on any young fella all alone... Then he weren't with us no more.

Mary's head starts to ACHE.

MARY

How was he to pass?

PATTY

It's a dark mystery. Locals won't talk right out. As Mr. Cameron come back from fightin', it weren't long after they up and sold their place to Sam Colliver. Not a word to no one. Sam's done nothin' with the place. No one goes there no more. Guess, it don't feel right...

Mary STOPS in her tracks!

MARY

FIRE! HENRY!!

A large plume of SMOKE is seen rising over the treetops.

92

EXT. COLLIVERS' BARN - MOMENTS LATER

The smoke billows from below the barn door. CRIES from the trapped LIVESTOCK cut above the ROAR of a growing inferno.

93

EXT. COLLIVERS' CORNERS - MAIN STREET - SAME MOMENT

Mary races along the town's main street, pleading for help.

94

EXT. MORRISAY FARM - FIELD - SAME MOMENT

JIM MORRISAY [36] is broad-shouldered, weather-browned, and with a jaw that spells no-nonsense. He works his field with **SARAH PRITCHETT** [30], who reads as an academic but sure doesn't appear to be afraid of getting her hands dirty.

Jim stops to wipe the sweat from his brow and notices the smoke rising from the Collivers' place. He and Sarah drop their tools and run towards it.

95

EXT. COLLIVERS' BARN - MOMENTS LATER

Mary throws herself at the barn doors. When they break free, she is overcome by stampeding livestock, smoke, and heat.

96

INT. COLLIVERS' HOUSE - SAME MOMENT

At the same time, Julia is lost in song and her spinning until she HEARS a commotion from outside. She gets up and...

97

EXT. COLLIVERS' HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Julia steps onto the front porch to find their livestock roaming free and their barn going up in FLAMES. Her Sam is already leading their horse team from the grist mill.

WHERE ARE THE CHILDREN?

JULIA
(top of her lungs)
Matthew? Nancy? Polly?

Matthew and Nancy CALL OUT from inside the house.

JULIA (CONT'D)
POLLY! Where's Polly? Oh God!!

Julia desperately runs to the barn as the fire grows and townsfolk arrive with axes, shovels, and buckets.

98

INT. COLLIVERS' BARN - SAME MOMENT

Mary leaps over and between the licking flames.

MARY
Henry! Where are you, love? Henry?
Answer me now.

HENRY
Mary!

From the loft above, two small, frightened heads appear.

MARY
There you are, Henry. And ye have
Polly with you, too.

POLLY
It's not my fault!

MARY
I know, dear one.

POLLY
Teddy burnt hisself all over.

MARY

Now, I want you to jump, both of
you. I'll catch ye. Who's first?

POLLY

I'm afraid.

MARY

Henry's not afraid. He's going to
jump and show you how easy it is.
Won't ye, Henry? There's a brave
lad.

ANGLE ON: Luke CHARGES into the barn. He's dripping wet and
carrying two full BUCKETS of water.

MARY (CONT'D)

Come now. Open your arms, like
this, see? Just like a bird and it
longin' to fly.

Henry opens his arms wide and dives from the loft. Mary
catches him, and they fall to the ground together.

Luke joins them, sets his buckets down, and raises his arms
to Polly. Still SOBBING, she closes her eyes, holds her nose,
and leaps into his arms.

As they steady themselves, Mary and Luke lock eyes – his
filled with love and wonder, hers saying, I TOLD YOU SO!

LUKE

(decisively)

Close your eyes. We've got to git
outta here, now!

MARY

I'm fine.

LUKE

Just do it!!

Mary submits, and he douses them all with water.

EXT. COLLIVERS' BARN - MOMENTS LATER

Sparks shower into the air as the barn collapses. Containment
is now the only option for the volunteer firefighters.

Safe at last, Luke, Mary, and the children cling to each
other until Julia swoops in to take Polly. Seconds later,
John Anderson arrives and pulls Henry close. He looks to Luke
and rests a proud hand on his eldest son's shoulder.

DISSOLVE TO:

100

EXT. COLLIVERS' HOUSE - ANOTHER DAY

Mary sits on the Collivers' porch steps, staring anxiously across their land at the rubble where the barn once stood.

101

INT. COLLIVERS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - SAME MOMENT

Anybody who is anybody in The Corners is jammed around the dining table. Patty plays 'Drop Spindles' with the children. Luke stands by the window, one eye on the gathering, the other on Mary.

Sam BANGS his open palm on the table.

SAM

Right. If we're all agreed, call out Mary... Urkit.

One by one, they repeat her name.

JOHN

Mary Urkit!

LYDIA

Mary. Yes!

MR. & MRS. OPPENSHAW

Mary Urkit!

SARAH PRITCHETT

Mary Urquhart, please.

JIM MORRISAY & OTHERS

Mary Urkit... Urquhart??!

SAM

It's done!

JULIA

Luke, fetch Mary.

Luke gladly makes his way to the door and opens it.

LUKE

(calling)

Come on in now. It's ok.

Mary enters, aware that all eyes are on her.

SAM

Ain't no need to be shy, girl.

She stands before the community, and Luke glows at the sight of her. Simeon is increasingly aware of his brother's attraction to this strange girl from a distant land.

SAM (CONT'D)

Mary... we know all too well
there's no easy way of makin' a
life for oneself in a new country,
'specially one that can be as harsh
as this. The missus and I never
gave you much of a chance to settle
and get to know us. Most of us are
good people.

(laughter)

What you done for us...

(voice breaking)

Well, don't we owe you... we were
thinkin'... wonderin'...

Julia interjects.

JULIA

Mary, you said you can read and
write, didn't you?

Mary nods. The group acknowledge. Luke beams.

JULIA (CONT'D)

God knows our children are our
future here. We want to thank you
for what you done.

MARY

There be no need, Missus.

JULIA

Shush! See'n how you are with the
children, we'd like to offer you a
job at the schoolhouse, helping
Sarah Pritchett here teach our
little ones. We'd pay what we can.
It's not much. But more
importantly, we'll care for you, as
you have us. And hopefully, you'll
stay. That's our offer.

Sarah nods in agreement as everyone else CHEERS and CLAPS.

LUKE

Speech!

All eyes return to Mary.

MARY

Dinnae forget, Luke was there too.

Louder APPLAUSE and WHISTLES.

SIMEON

Sure. Makin' a big show of
hissself!!

MARY

I will stay, but only till I've
earned me passage home. I'd be
proud to teach your children. And
most thankful if...

(she gauges the room)

I've set my sights on making a home
where Duncan... the Camerons once
lived.

JULIA

What? No! You'll stay here. With
us. There's plenty room and food.

MARY

I'm saying, I want to live in Uncle
Davie and Auntie Jeanie's cottage,
please. On that Hawthorn Bay.

The mood in the room changes.

SAM

You can't live there, Mary.

SARAH PRITCHETT

It ain't healthy, that place. Not
on that bay.

JOHN

Damn that bay! Ain't right period
to leave a young girl to live all
alone! There's all sorts of wild
animals, bears, wolves. I happen to
know there's been Indians comin'
and goin' from that place too. Can
you trust them? Stay with us!

Patty instinctively moves close to Luke as the discussion
becomes more heated. Sam CALLS for silence.

SAM

Mary, the Camerons' place has a
dark shadow over it. Some even say
it's haunted, considering...

MARY

(defiant)

I thought you and Mrs. Colliver
didn't hold with ghosts. "Old world
nonsense," was it called? You own
the Camerons' cottage, do ye, or
no?

(Sam affirms)

So, 'tis you will have the key?

Mary stares down the room, while Patty rests a possessive
hand on Luke's arm.

102

EXT. COLLIVERS' HOUSE - MORNING

Mary clammers down from the Collivers' porch, packed and determined to move on, until... Julia CALLS after her.

JULIA

Why you want to go traipsing to
live in that one-room shack, I'll
never know.

MARY

(pausing)

I've ne'er so much as lived in a
house as grand as yours, Missus.
That wee cottage, it felt like
home.

Julia is tempted to respond, but thinks better of it.

JULIA

Wait there!

She runs back inside, then returns with two loaves of bread.

JULIA (CONT'D)

There's no good come from me
speaking ill of the dead. I won't.
There's no tellin' what truly went
on out there that loathsome night.
The boy brought it on hisself. It's
a sin is all I know, and that's all
I'll say about that!

This time, Mary holds her tongue as she accepts the bread.

103

EXT. HAWTHORN BAY - MARY'S COTTAGE - LATER THAT MORNING

Our Mary shakes the dust from an abandoned blanket as a cool breeze drifts through the clearing. A chill lifts the hairs on her neck and arms, yet she finds comfort in it.

MARY

I feel you here. I'm not
afraid love!

MARY

*Tha fios agam gu bheil thu an
seo. Chan eil eagal orm, a
ghràidh!*

JUST THEN: A RUSTLING in the forest sets her on high alert.

MARY (CONT'D)

Jings and Crivvens!! You put the
heart across me. What now?

Luke emerges from the woods carrying a pitcher of milk.

LUKE

I brung you some milk.
(debating)
(MORE)

LUKE (CONT'D)

See what I mean? You're so easily scared. I don't want you livin' here.

MARY

I'm not afraid. Was surprised, that's all. I had not thought I'd care for a single clod of earth from this dark country, Luke Anderson. But this place...

LUKE

It's because of him, ain't it? That's why you're here. He's not coming back. You know that!

MARY

What I know is I'll no leave 'till I see what I did not fully before. I havnae the way or means, in any road. Duncan called out to me. Across a whole ocean. He's here and needs me... and I him.

As Mary starts to leave, Luke grabs her wrist, causing her blanket to fall to the ground.

LUKE

Do you think you can just call him back? Like he was across the clearing?

She breaks from his grip, challenging him.

MARY

Look, I'm to wash this now, truly.

Mary gathers the blanket and pushes past Luke toward the bay, unaware that the water around the large grey rock is beginning to RIPPLE.

LUKE

(calling after her)

First time I laid eyes on you, you was dipping like that wild bird in the river, with the sun streaming down.

(Mary stops)

It hit me like the blow of an axe. I never gave a thought to someone till-

MARY

Hold your tongue.

LUKE

I get it. It's all strange here to you. But if you'd stop being so stubborn...

The shadow in Hawthorn Bay rises to the surface. As it does, Mary's head begins to ACHE. She tries to shake it off.

LUKE (CONT'D)

(moving closer)

You're all so caught up on "yer Duncan", so much so you're missin' all what's around here.

The shadow becomes darker and more ominous. Mary's headache INTENSIFIES.

LUKE (CONT'D)

We don't got much. Maybe you think I ain't much. No, I ain't got carefree ways with me. I certainly ain't like him. But I can cut a reel on the dance floor, mend anything. And well...

(disarmingly)

...the cows like me. We could make a good life together. We could marry!

With every word Luke speaks, the shadow SHAPE-SHIFTS closer to that of a human form.

MARY

Ye dinnae even know me to court.

LUKE

You won't give me a chance!

MARY

Am I to belong in a land where none hold with my own beliefs? With trees so huge they smother you in darkness? Ye dinnae see things as I do, Luke. Ye dinnae see me as I am. None here do!

LUKE

I do see you. You're right here in front of me.

MARY

We're ne'er destined to be one. Should I stay, I'd no marry you.

Luke seizes the pitcher of milk, strides over to the porch, and drops it with a THUD.

LUKE

Well, you can't marry him! You
can't marry a deader!!

Luke throws his hands up and disappears back into the forest. Equally upset, Mary tosses the blanket back onto the ground and storms into her cottage.

The shadow in Hawthorn Bay is no longer visible.

104

EXT. MARY'S (CAMERON'S) COTTAGE - CLEARING - ANOTHER DAY

Another day, another challenge. Mary pitches a spade into a grassy patch near the shoreline. It strikes something hard. She adjusts, and thrusts again, and again – her hands BUZZ.

She's about to fling the spade aside when she hears LAUGHTER from across the clearing. Mary spins to see...

A striking young woman, **ALSOOMSE** [24], is approaching. Her long black braids and olive complexion complement a colourful print shirt draped over deer-skin leggings. Her moccasins are ornamented with quillwork, trade silver, and beadwork.

ALSOOMSE

Kwey kwey.

Mary raises the spade defensively.

ALSOOMSE (CONT'D)

Kwey. Hello.
(gesturing)
I am Alsoomse, of the fish clan.

MARY

(faltering)
Mary. Mary of the... Urquhart? Ach!

ALSOOMSE

My people are Algonquin; we come
from the lake that is like a great
water. Where is Jeanie Cameron? You
are a newcomer?

Mary is paralyzed. As an act of goodwill, Alsoomse presents the mint she has collected.

ALSOOMSE (CONT'D)

I came for the mint, for tea.
It cures stomachaches and chest
pain. Jeanie grows it, and my
family trade for it.

MARY

The Camerons are no here. They're,
to Scotland. Gone back home

ALSOOMSE

(studying Mary)

Do not plant here, the Great
Turtle's shell is too close to the
land we walk on.

MARY

I dinnae ken... I mean, cannae
understand ye.

ALSOOMSE

In the beginning, a Skywoman fell
on a beam of light to the water
world. A great turtle rose from the
depths and offered her his back to
stand on...

(she picks up a stone)

But the turtle's back is hard, and
Skywoman could not plant the seeds
she carried.

Alsoomse gathers mud from the bay...

ALSOOMSE (CONT'D)

The deep-diving animals swam to the
bottom of the water world and
gathered mud, like this.

And covers the stone.

ALSOOMSE (CONT'D)

Skywoman spread the mud over the
Great Turtle's back so her seeds
could grow and feed all animals.

MARY

Och aye. Back home, we say the
Cailleach, the Veiled One, shaped
Scotland by dropping rocks from her
apron... to create the mountains.

ALSOOMSE

Skywoman left us teachers. The
plants, the earth, and the water
tell her story, how to live off the
land. It is her gift. Come!

As they cross the clearing, Mary slowly lets down her guard.

MARY

Mother Grant once told me gifts are
just that, and I should embrace
them. Surely now, she would say
I've wasted mine.

ALSOOMSE

What gifts do you bring?

MARY

I have an dà shelladh. Visions that come to me. These hands are supposed to heal, though they didnae save Julia's bairn.

ALSOOMSE

We speak of the pawe-wa... visions that guide us along our sacred path.

MARY

And here's me, at odds with it all, even with the people just tryin' to be kind to me.

ALSOOMSE

(smiling)

I do not always follow too.

Mary trails after Alsoomse, sensing they've shared a small secret – one of the first good feelings since arriving in this dark, miserable land.

UNTIL...

A simple wooden board marking recently disturbed earth rests next to an overgrown garden.

MARY

Duncan?!!

Mary runs to it and reads...

Duncan Grant Cameron

Died May 10, 1815

"Dachaigh sàbhailte!" (Safe home!)

She drops to her knees as her head begins to THROB.

ANGLE ON: The shadow in Hawthorn Bay resurfaces.

MARY (CONT'D)

The tenth of May. 'Twas the very day we sent poor Kirsty to the sea. You did call out to me, *Mo chridhe*. I came as fast as I could. Why when I see so much of others I dinnae wish, I didnae see this what matters so?

Alsoomse senses a disturbance closing around them.

ALSOOMSE

His journey back to the Creator has not been well prepared. He will need your help to finish it.

Mary falls backwards; there's no mistaking, Duncan is truly dead!

105

INT. HAWTHORN BAY - MARY'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

It's late, and Mary is dressed for bed. She sits at her table writing a letter with the PEBBLE Heather gave her acting as a paperweight. She speaks aloud as she writes.

MARY

To all my dear ones, especially my wee sister Heather, on her wedding day. God's blessing...

JUST THEN: The wind WHISTLES loudly down the chimney, causing her to drop her quill.

DUNCAN (V.O.)

Come, Mary!

MARY

Duncan! There ye are. I'm here. I've been so worried! We are still bound to each other, as we promised. You and I...

Before she can speak further, a THUD rattles the cottage door, followed by muffled CUSSING. She rises, grabs her poker, and listens. When all falls silent, Mary slowly opens the door to find...

MARY (CONT'D)

Luke!! What are you doing?

The young suitor fumbles about, juggling a lantern and something behind his back while trying to reset the faery stone in its place.

LUKE

No need for both of us to get all worked up. I just stopped by... why is that rock there?

MARY

'Tis for the spirit folk, for protection, especially from strange visitors in the night.

LUKE

Well, like it or not, livin' folk do the looking out for each other in these parts. And I'm not crazy 'bout you bein' alone here.

He pulls a pair of leather slippers from behind his back.

LUKE (CONT'D)
 Thought I'd make up from before.
 (half joking)
 Stitched these myself, seein' as
 you're in the habit of losing yours
 'n all.

In the same instant, they both realize Mary is only wearing her nightdress.

LUKE (CONT'D)
 I should go.

In truth, she's happy he's here.

MARY
 Before ye do,
 (grabs her shawl)
 tell me of that creature callin' to
 the world beyond.

She tries to imitate a loon's call.

LUKE
 (laughing)
 The loon? Some call 'em divers.
 You'll find 'em clear from here to
 as far north as anyone's ever been.
 Lonesome creatures... most don't
 mate for life. Well, some do...
 (awkward silence)
 Locals say when Algonquin hunters
 hear a loon, a plaintive call, they
 know there's moose or deer nearby.
 I swear it could wake the...

Luke stops short, realizing his near gaffe. Mary studies him, puzzled by some growing attraction and his love of nature.

LUKE (CONT'D)
 Guess I'll be on my way. Pa's been
 planning the upcoming season. What
 to plant and all.

It's a stupid excuse, and he knows it, so he turns to leave.

MARY
 Luke.

Mary points to the slippers still in his hand. He surrenders them and stumbles backwards, tripping over the faery stone again.

As his lamplight gradually fades into the night, Mary locks her door, places the slippers on her table, and buries her head in her unfinished letter.

DISSOLVE TO:

106

EXT. SCOTLAND - URQUHART COTTAGE - DAY

A FIDDLER performs O'CAROLAN'S CONCERTO to a small, jubilant gathering.

Heather is radiant in a simple earth brown dress and apron. A tartan shawl is draped over her shoulders and pinned with Gran's brooch.

At her side, **ROBERT MACRAE** (20) is striking in his military finery: red coatee, Black Watch kilt, and shako (cap). He leans ever so slightly against a cane.

With their hands fast together, the couple take three mouthfuls of salt and oatmeal from a bowl held by Mrs. Grant, who recites a CHARM to ward off evil and bless the union.

CHEERS break out, and Robert is torn from Heather's side by his **MATES**, a pint is thrust in his hand as they SING.

ROBERT & BEST MEN
(The Parting Glass)
*So fill to me the parting glass
And drink a health whate'er befall,
And gently rise and softly call
Good night and joy be to ye all.*

Meanwhile, in the background, James and Margaret are deep in a conversation with none other than DAVIE & JEANIE CAMERON.

107

EXT. SCOTLAND - URQUHART COTTAGE - ANOTHER DAY

It's a rare, warm and sunny day. The Highlands are bathed in a soft, luminous glow.

Robert is helping his new father-in-law mend the croft's stone fence.

MARGARET (V.O.)
*"To all my dear ones, especially my
wee sister Heather on her wedding
day, God's blessing."*

CUT TO:

108

EXT. SCOTLAND - GLEN URQUHART - A MOOR - SAME MOMENT

Margaret, Auntie Jeanie, and Heather stroll across the local moor. It's a stunning patchwork of earth tones, deep purples, and golden yellows. Margaret READS from Mary's letter.

MARGARET
*"I am heartsick at the news of
Duncan's passing. Didnae I know he
was in terrible trouble. I heard
his call.*
(MORE)

MARGARET (CONT'D)

If only he could have heard me call back, I was on my way. Had I only landed sooner.

(beat)

Only today is not a day for sadness. Do tell Uncle Davie and Auntie Jeanie I am living in their cottage on this Hawthorn Bay - a wild and beautiful place it is."

MONTAGE BEGINS

109

EXT. COLLIVERS' HOUSE - DAY

Patty stirs a vat of walnut brown dye as Mary drapes freshly tinted hanks of wool on a wooden rack.

MARY (V.O.)

"I have made friendships. Though at times, one here may wish I were back home tending to my own..."

Luke passes by, and Patty accidentally drops her spoon in the vat, splattering the dye all over the SQUEALING girls.

110

INT. COLLIVERS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING

Julia Colliver slaps a massive side of pork on the kitchen table and salts it. Mary is at a spinning wheel, a tangled mess of wool by her feet.

MARY (V.O.)

"The food here is so plentiful, even plain folk eat meat once a day. I'm to teach the children by day and will learn to spin by night. I hope from it to make my earnings for passage home."

She becomes frustrated by all the bumps in the roving.

111

EXT. HAWTHORN BAY - CLEARING - MAGIC HOUR

Mary fills her faery stone with milk, then stops to take in all the work left to do in the clearing.

MARY (V.O.)

"I cannae say I feel a true connection to most of this dark and smothering land. 'Twould be easier if I did.

(MORE)

MARY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*Duncan whispers to me on the wind,
 but I have yet to find the still
 place where we two can meet.*

MONTAGE ENDS

112

EXT. SCOTLAND - GLEN URQUHART - MOOR - RESUMING

Margaret pulls up short, her eyes well up.

JEANIE CAMERON
*'Tis a tragic thing being caught
 between one world and the next.*

HEATHER
*Mary will come home, Ma. She must,
 to see Robert and me in our own
 cottage, and it filled with bairns!*

Margaret forces a smile, wishing those words would come true.

113

EXT. HAWTHORN BAY - CLEARING - DAY

Mary and Alsoomse proudly survey the foot-tall corn stalks growing in her new garden.

ALSOOMSE
*Corn grows straight; now it is time
 to plant the bean seeds. In seven
 moons, the squash seeds. This way,
 the 'Three Sisters' can care for
 each other.*

Alsoomse strips the beans from their pods to share with Mary.

ALSOOMSE (CONT'D)
*As the corn grows tall, the beans
 climb skyward to Grandfather.*

She plants the beans in a circle around the stalks. Mary follows her lead.

ALSOOMSE (CONT'D)
*They will dig deep and feed Mother
 Earth, so she can feed all the
 creatures on Turtle Island.*

They soak the ground with water from buckets.

ALSOOMSE (CONT'D)
*In seven moons, plant the squash.
 (hands her squash seeds)
 Her leaves will protect the others
 and keep Mother Earth from becoming
 thirsty.*

MARY

Where... how did you learn all this?

ALSOOMSE

A garden is for all. We share the land and its wisdom. The elders teach the young the ways of the plants. All they have seen and learned from Mother Earth.

MARY

Aren't we all but left alone with our crofts back home. Sowing each to its own, nae like this.

ALSOOMSE

(amused)

The elders say the new people do not have both feet on the shore; one is still in the boat.

(deliberate)

The plants were here first and have had a long time to learn how to grow strong.

As their work is done, the new friendship grows stronger.

DISSOLVE TO:

114

EXT. HAWTHORN BAY - MARY'S COTTAGE - FALL - EVENING

Time passes, the days grow shorter, the weather cooler. The forest is mostly bare now. Wind and rain rake across Hawthorn Bay to push against Mary's cottage.

115

INT. HAWTHORN BAY - MARY'S COTTAGE - SAME MOMENT

Safe and warm inside, Mary practices her spinning by candlelight until interrupted by a POUNDING at the door. She peeks out from the window to find...

MARY

God help the two of ye.

MARY

Dia gad chuideachadh.

Luke and Henry are shivering outside.

116

INT. HAWTHORN BAY - MARY'S COTTAGE - LATER

Henry is now draped in a heavy blanket and warmed by the fire. Mary pours tea as Luke enters from outside, carrying an armful of firewood.

MARY

What brought you both out on a night such as this?

LUKE

It's Mamma. Her condition's gettin' worse. Me 'n Pa don't right know what to do anymore. Sim is no help. He feeds her affliction in the worst way and every little thing Henry does gits him riled.

MARY

Had I a potion to help...

LUKE

Potion?

(beat)

You mean, medicine? Fair to say, it's all in her head and would do no good. Ever since Pa swept her off her feet to come to Canada, she's not been the same. Mamma was used to livin' in a real house on a real street with friends to be social with. But he'd likely have bin 'scripted had they stayed. Pa's a strong man, but caring for both the farm and Mamma is killin' him.

MARY

Why not let Henry stay here with me. Just for the winter. We could walk to school together, now that it's started. He'd be grand company.

Henry brightens and looks to his big brother.

LUKE

We was hopin' you'd ask.

Thrilled, Henry LEAPS on the spare jack bed and makes himself right at home.

117

EXT. HAWTHORN BAY - MARY'S COTTAGE - THE NEXT DAY

Steam rises from a large tub as Mary fills it with boiling water. Henry races about the clearing, playing tag with imaginary friends.

As he climbs onto the large, grey rock...

MARY (O.C.)

Henry!!! No!!

Mary storms over and pulls him off before he can fall.

MARY (CONT'D)

Stay from there, you hear?! I'll no
be one to dive in should you trip
and fall. Come you here now! And
off with yer frock!

Henry sheepishly complies.

118

INT. HAWTHORN BAY - MARY'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Mary sits by the fireplace crocheting a wool toque for her new charge. Henry is asleep; his breathing is deep and peaceful.

As she approaches to measure his hat size, her head starts to POUND and the room begins to SHIFT.

119

VISION STARTS - UNKNOWN PLACE & TIME

- * A blinding snowstorm - drifts piled against a tiny shack.
- * A broken trail of footprints.
- * An unrecognizable FEMALE FORM clutches something, the blizzard rips and tears at her flimsy nightdress, she struggles to make headway, then collapses.

VISION ENDS.

120

INT. HAWTHORN BAY - MARY'S COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Mary comes to with her body cold and shivering.

MARY

No more!

She promptly tucks Henry's blanket tightly about him and throws another log on the fire.

121

INT. COLLIVERS' CORNERS - SCHOOLHOUSE - DAY

School is in, and Sarah Pritchett teaches sums to the older children, who sit two to a desk. Meanwhile, Mary is on the floor at the back of the classroom with the younger ones.

Henry rocks back and forth, excited to learn.

Each child takes turns calling out a letter of the alphabet, until **ABE MORRISAY** [6] pronounces the letter 'F' as if CROAKING, sending his classmates into fits of LAUGHTER.

MARY

Would it no be a fearful thing Mr. Morrisay to be turned into a real frog? With bulging eyes and slimy skin?

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

Always the terror of little
children pouncing on ye and
trappin' ye in a jar. Now, have I
that kind of spell in me pocket?

Their laughter DIES just as quickly, and a little girl begins to SOB. Henry is pale and rigid, as if he'd just seen a ghost rise from the floorboards.

MARY (CONT'D)

Who now has the letter G?

Unbeknownst to Mary, Sarah is sharply focused on her.

122

EXT. COLLIVERS' CORNERS - SCHOOLHOUSE - LATER THE SAME DAY

It's recess time. The children are outside playing ball, skipping, or shooting marbles.

Henry proudly sports his new toque while playing CONKERS with his buddy, **MOSES** [6].

The teachers try to stay focused on the children, but Sarah and Mary are engaged in an intense discussion.

MARY

'Twas only helping them keep a
civil tongue in their heads.

SARAH PRITCHETT

In the future, Mary...

MARY

It wasnae a real spell, Sarah.

SARAH PRITCHETT

Real spell? Listen to you. Where on
this earth do you think you are?
This isn't Scotland, it's Canada,
the NEW WORLD! The Dark Ages were
left behind long ago.

MARY

Dinnae ignore what ye choose not to
understand. Spells've been passed
down from the ages for good
reason...

Mary is cut short when a ball THUDS against the schoolhouse wall beside them. As Sarah dashes after the culprit, Mary is left uncertain of her place.

123

INT. COLLIVERS' CORNERS - A FORGE - DAY

Mary drops a cloth pouch onto a crowded bench as The Corners **BLACKSMITH** lumbers towards her with a box of nails. He gives Henry's hair a rough tousle, leaving a sooty mark.

MARY

Henry, be a good lad and count me out fifty of the smith's nails.

As Henry counts, Mary wanders, her thoughts making a quiet list of needs - when movement outside the sooty shop window draws her eye.

POV: Luke's wagon pulls up to the general store, Patty beside him, beaming as he helps her down. She slips her arm through his, eager to claim her place.

MARY (CONT'D)

Come now, Henry! Have ye finished?
There's work in front of us!!

HENRY

What comes after 10 again?

Henry blushes in embarrassment.

124

INT. COLLIVERS' CORNERS - SCHOOLHOUSE - WEEKS LATER

Mary checks that each child's corner is tidy and their belongings are gathered before class dismissal.

The second Sarah RINGS the handbell, the children stampede from the schoolhouse. Henry and Moses race each other, proudly swinging their prized, stringed CHESTNUTS.

MARY

(calling after him)
Mind your new cap, Henry Anderson.
Stay with Moses. There are fresh
biscuits at home till I'm done at
Mrs. Colliver's. You hear me,
Henry?

But Henry isn't listening; he's too caught up in challenging his adversary to a new battle of the chestnuts.

125

INT. COLLIVERS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER THE SAME DAY

Christmas is coming, and party preparations are the order of the day. Patty fills oil lamps. Mary strings peeled apples onto nail hooks. They both stop to admire Julia, who enters with her arms full of gorgeous, pressed linens.

JULIA

Done with them apples yet, Mary?
 They have to be hung promptly to
 dry in time. Then be a dear and
 give my best china a good wash.
 We'll be needing it soon enough for
 Christmas.

As she glances at the full china cabinet, Mary's head starts to ACHE.

126

EXT. COLLIVERS' CORNERS - ROAD - MOMENTS LATER

Henry pulls up and challenges his buddy to another round of conkers. Moses swings his so hard that it smashes Henry's chestnut to pieces. Henry bristles, furious.

HENRY

Now look what you done!

Henry shoves Moses hard, sending him to the ground. Then caught between anger and guilt, Henry BOLTS.

127

INT. COLLIVERS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - SAME MOMENT

Mary pours hot water into a basin, soaps a dishcloth, then scrubs a fine China sugar bowl — her headache nags at her.

128

EXT. HAWTHORN BAY - CLEARING - SAME MOMENT

Henry plods into the clearing, fixated on his new CHESTNUT. A breeze stirs, and an ethereal VOICE calls to him...

DUNCAN (V.O.)

Come here!

DUNCAN

Thigibh an seo!

HENRY

Mary? Is you there?

DUNCAN

(louder)

Come you here!

Henry can't pinpoint the direction of the voice; the cottage, the forest, the bay...?

HENRY

Moses? It's not funny!

He climbs onto the large, grey rock for a better view.

129

INT. COLLIVERS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - SAME MOMENT

Mary tries harder to focus on her work, but as each bubble pops in the soapy basin, her head POUNDS harder.

130

EXT. HAWTHORN BAY - CLEARING - SAME MOMENT

The shadow in Hawthorn Bay stirs beneath Henry. As the curious boy edges toward the rock's drop-off, his footing grows less certain. SUDDENLY, his chestnut is yanked from his hand and into the water.

Henry lunges after it... Loses his footing...

HENRY

Mary!

And tumbles into the bay!

131

INT. COLLIVERS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - SAME MOMENT

Julia's magnificent teapot crashes to the floor.

MARY

HENRY!!!

Mary races out of the house in a mad panic!

132

EXT. HAWTHORN BAY - CLEARING - SAME MOMENT

The little boy flails and thrashes in the water, arms and legs kicking wildly as he fights to stay afloat, but the weight of Henry's clothing keeps dragging him down.

133

EXT. COLLIVERS' HOUSE - SAME MOMENT

Mary dashes from the Collivers' house. Henry must have made it home! The fastest route is through the forest, but she can't bring herself to go in there. She'll have to run FASTER.

134

EXT. HAWTHORN BAY - CLEARING - SOON AFTER

Henry claws at the large grey rock, splashing weakly. His strength ebbs fast. Finally, he slips underwater, and the bay is left still but for his drifting toque.

ANGLE ON: Mary bursts into the clearing. Her instincts immediately draw her to the water. She throws herself across the rock and reaches down, searching for Henry below.

MARY
 Henry, I'll not have you walk with the spirits now.

MARY
Henry, cha leig mi leas thu a choiseachd leis na spioradan a-nis.

Her fingers go numb as she reaches deeper, deeper – panic rising – until she finds Henry. With all her strength, she hauls his limp body toward shore.

MARY (CONT'D)
 Henry Mathews Anderson, come you back to me!! Healing hands bring Henry back!

Mary turns him over her knee and WHACKS his back again and again to waken him. Henry remains unconscious. She pumps his chest, until... he begins to SPUTTER and GASP.

MARY (CONT'D)
 How could you? Why go near the water after all I've warned?

She shakes him hard, trying to get her point across.

MARY (CONT'D)
 Didnae I say stay with Moses?
 Didnae I?!

Henry regains his strength, and out of fear, he twists and pushes to break free. When he does, he darts into the forest.

MARY (CONT'D)
 Henry! You come out, love. Please.
 I meant no harm. You know I cannae come after you.

Mary tries to enter the forest, but can't. She collapses in a heap at its edge.

MARY (CONT'D)
 How did I not see before? What good is the *an dà shelladh* if that which is precious, I cannae see?

Luke strolls into the clearing, a partridge slung over his shoulder and a lantern swinging at his hip. Its light falls on a crumpled figure at the forest's edge, making UNSETTLING SOUNDS.

LUKE
 Who's there? Show yourself... Mary?

She points into the forest.

MARY

Henry's in there!

LUKE

What? When? Why the hell didn't you go after him?

MARY

I cannae. Wasn't I warned, "Beware the dark." The trees are too dark!

Luke lifts Mary...

LUKE

Inside! Now!! I'll go git him.

And pushes her towards the cottage.

136

INT. HAWTHORN BAY - MARY'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Luke pours a cup of hot tea for Mary, her teeth still CHATTERING. Henry is asleep, tucked under multiple blankets.

LUKE

Little fella's had quite a day.
Dammit Mary, how could you let this happen?

MARY

Duncan was sure to have called to him. He's still with us. I know it. He can be jealous, that one.

LUKE

Stop talkin' nonsense. I told you 'bout that.
(her shivering gets worse)
You're freezing! Get out of those wet things this minute.

He lifts Mary to her feet, slipping the wet shawl from her shoulders. His gaze never leaves hers as he wraps her in a warm blanket. Mary's chest tightens as she can't believe the way he makes her feel.

Luke sinks to his knees, slides off her slippers and eases her stockings down. Mary flushes, a mix of embarrassment and thrill, and instinctively jerks back.

MARY

I can take care of myself.

She steps behind a privacy blanket to change.

LUKE

You have a real problem with being looked after, doncha? Guess you did all the caring for him too.

MARY

He has a name. And I did not. Duncan was the strong one. Why does not a soul see in him what I do?

LUKE

I ain't against Duncan directly. It's just... It's like your livin' in some kind of dream. No, a nightmare! Bein' chased by his ghost, there ain't no room for no one else. Not anyone real, at least.

(no reaction)

I'll leave cut wood for you. Snow's comin'. I can feel it in the air.

He reaches the door, and Mary peeks from behind the curtain.

MARY

Luke, I want to trust ye, sure as I do. Only, you have to trust me. An *dà shelladh*, I cannae control when a vision comes or who it is for. Could I, Henry would not have gone to Duncan. I wish I could. I want to help others to avoid misfortune.

LUKE

None of this makes any sense.

MARY

I can see what is to come. Luke, there's no mistakin'. I had a vision when Henry first come to stay. Watch out for your ma when the snow comes. Will ye do that for me?

Luke's heard enough and closes the door behind him.

A Blue Jay SCREECHES and WHISTLES from a rooftop.

Snow fills the ruts between sled runners and clings to window ledges. Woodsmoke spirals from chimneys. Firewood leans against every door. The Corners shows signs of life, but is STILL this morning.

138

INT. HAWTHORN BAY - MARY'S COTTAGE - MORNING

The cottage door BUSTS open.

HENRY

We got winter, Mary. Wake up! We
got winter!!

After waking Mary, Henry races back outside into the clearing, now blanketed in the whitest of white snow.

Mary leaps from bed to close the door. The air inside is crisp and cold as she watches Henry make snow angels.

Hawthorn Bay is quiet, save for her little man's SQUEALS.

139

EXT. HAWTHORN BAY - CLEARING - ANOTHER DAY

As Mary hauls a second bucket of water from the ice hole she cut, the opening freezes over almost as fast.

ANGLE ON: Alsoomse appears from the forest and snowshoes across the clearing. She's wrapped in layers of animal hides beneath a long beaver capot.

MARY

Never have I lived a winter the
likes of this.

ALSOOMSE

Grandfather travels across the sky
in short strides this time of year.

MARY

'Tis a miserable land. If not the
darkness, then this sharp cold,
like a banshee's breath.

ALSOOMSE

Winter is not just cold to bear. It
is time to come together. My people
gather in the longhouse and tell
our stories, sing our songs, and
dance. In these, we remember who we
are, how to live on this land, and
how to survive. You should come, to
watch and listen. You will learn.

Alsoomse presents Mary with a pair of moccasins.

ALSOOMSE (CONT'D)

To keep your feet dry and warm.

MARY

(gratefully accepting)
There's fresh bannock inside.
(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

It's no a fair trade, but I will
make it up to you in good time. You
can tell me more of your people's
ways. Isn't time all I have now?

Hawthorn Bay GROANS as the ice shifts.

ALSOOMSE

He sleeps now, like the bear.

Mary pauses, not sure if that is a good thing or not.

140

EXT. COLLIVERS' HOUSE - CHRISTMAS DAY - LATE AFTERNOON

The Collivers' house glows with festive warmth. Garlands drape across the windows and porch rails.

Craters from children's footsteps and spent snowball fire pock the blanket of snow between abandoned forts.

Horses and wagons, decked with colourful ribbons and bells, are hitched by arriving **GUESTS**. The day sparkles with LAUGHTER and winter magic.

141

INT. COLLIVERS' HOUSE - CHRISTMAS DAY - CONTINUOUS

A **TRIO** plays lively Christmas tunes.

Pine cones, dried apples, nuts, feathers, and socks filled with treasures hang from the walls, rafters, and above the fireplace.

The children pretend play with their new toys as the men, off in one corner, puff on their pipes and cigarettes. We find the womenfolk bustling about the room, clearing leftovers and dishes from an earlier feast.

Sarah Pritchett sits at the piano, fingers poised, as Julia CALLS for everyone's attention.

JULIA

May I have all of your eyes and
ears up here.

The room quiets in anticipation.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Mary!!

Sarah hammers out a FANFARE, and Mary enters, festive and radiant. Her bright red hair is tied with a green ribbon, and she carries a flaming PLUM PUDDING. There are GASPS and CHEERS.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Mary made this all by herself. I
didn't seed a single raisin.

Our heroine does a victory lap of the room.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Isn't it fabulous? Line up if you
all aren't too full already.

Patty steps up to Luke, who is unaware that he is standing beneath the KISSING BOUGH. As she leans closer, his gaze meets Mary's, and a flicker of tension sparks between them.

Sarah begins playing a Scottish favourite, CHARLIE IS MY DARLING on the piano, and the trio picks up on the tune.

Taking note of Mary's eyes on them, Patty presses closer, plants a kiss on Luke, and pulls the reluctant young man onto the makeshift dance floor."

Mary falters, unsure what to do, when Julia swoops in and rescues the flaming pudding.

JULIA (CONT'D)

I'll serve, dear. You go on up and
join Sarah. You said you were a
singer.

Mary resists at first, but Julia is insistent.

MARY

*O Charlie is my darling, my
darling, my darling. Charlie is my
darling, the young cavalier...*

Luke's attention is now squarely on Mary as he and Patty waltz about the room.

MARY (CONT'D)

*As he was walking down the street
the city for to view, O there he
spied a bonnie lass the window
peekin' through...*

As soon as he can, Luke breaks free of Patty and drifts toward Mary, where the two share their first smile.

DISSOLVE TO:

As the festivities wind down, the guests pack up to leave.

Lydia Anderson greets Mary, who is dressing Henry for the chilly trip home.

LYDIA

Thank you for looking after my
Henry and giving him the schooling
none of the other boys got. And
I've been meaning to thank you for
all you did for my baby girl.

MARY

God rest her little soul.

LYDIA

I wasn't... well, quite myself
then. I'm much better now.
Christmas Day without a drop.

Lydia smiles awkwardly and moves on. Luke approaches.

LUKE

You look mighty pretty in that
ribbon. Very Christmasy!

MARY

You and Patty cut a smart line on
the dance floor.

LUKE

Oh, that... Hey, I got somethin'
for you.

He digs into his jacket pocket and pulls out a delicately
carved ornament.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Merry Christmas.

She buries her eyes, avoiding his.

LUKE (CONT'D)

It's a loon. You don't like it?

MARY

No. It's lovely so it is... Only I
feel 'shamed.

LUKE

For what?

MARY

I've ne'er known such a Christmas.
Mrs. Morrisay from across the bay
gave me this new ribbon. Sarah a
handkerchief with brilliant
embroidery on it, the work and all.

(pointing)

Julia, this little pin. Now
yourself... I didnae know. I have
no gifts for none.

LUKE

It's ok, gifts ain't all what
Christmas is about.

She strokes the loon's neck, her eyes tearing. Then, Simeon appears out of nowhere and SLAPS Luke on the back.

SIMEON

C'mon, brother. Mamma's tired and
y'r keepin' Pa waitin' outside

He winks at Mary, and she closes her hand over the loon.

MARY

Please, Luke, my only gift can be
that which I were born with. Had I
embraced them before, Henry may
never have followed Duncan into the
water. Had I learned Mother Grant's
lessons, your wee sister could
still be with us. I've been too
scared of everything.

(gathering conviction)

I know you don't believe. But what
I saw will come true. Watch for yer
own mother! There will be a
terrible snow and storm...

LUKE

Stop it right there! Don't go
spoilin' things. And don't go
'round talking like that. How the
hell can you be a part of the
community if you're scarin' people.
They'll not know what to make of
you... but you can bet it won't be
good.

She shoves the loon back at him.

MARY

Why cannae ye trust me? Try to see
what I do? Aren't I looking out for
your own ma!

LUKE

Sometimes I think you're just
lookin' to find your way back to
Scotland.

Luke rushes outside to join his mother and father. Simeon glances at Mary, and a smug smile crosses his face before following his brother.

143

EXT. ANDERSONS' FARMHOUSE - WEEKS LATER - DAWN

Blowing snow and strong winds reduce visibility to almost nothing. Snow drifts rise around the farmhouse, where the open door swings freely.

Simeon, bleary-eyed in his nightclothes, steps to the doorway. He reaches to close it, then stops cold as he spots a whiskey jug lying in the snow, and footprints that lead towards...

Alone, barefoot, and in her nightdress, Lydia Anderson lies frozen and lifeless in the snow.

Simeon CRIES OUT for his father and Luke, then plows through the knee-deep drifts to collapse onto his mother's body.

144

EXT. HAWTHORN BAY - CLEARING - NIGHT

The night sky glows a pale, ethereal blue, filled with distant worlds that evoke a sense of calm, wonder, and serenity. Moonlight falls over the trees, casting long shadows on the snow.

The HOOT of an owl breaks the stillness.

145

INT. HAWTHORN BAY - MARY'S COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Mary sits beside the warm fire, fondling Luke's slippers. Henry is in bed, but having a restless sleep. Then...

HENRY (O.C.)
Mamma! MAMMA!!

He begins to THRASH until jerking himself awake.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Mamma's out there.

MARY
Henry, calm you now.

HENRY
She's after me. Mary, I wanna sit up with you.

MARY
Did yer mother ever hurt you when she was alive?

HENRY
N-never. But what if she is... a ghost waitin' to git me?

MARY

There's none going to get ye. Not while I'm here.

HENRY

But what if they git you first?

Mary grabs a small block of salt from the kitchen table.

MARY

Shhhh. Here, keep this salt close. If any wee ghost come, give it good toss their way. Ghosts dinnae like salt and will leave ye be.

She tucks the frightened boy into bed.

MARY (CONT'D)

You've school tomorrow, now go to sleep.

As her hands slide between the mattress and frame, Mary feels something tucked away. Her heart quickens. She pulls out a letter... then another... and another... each addressed to her, from Duncan.

146

EXT. ANDERSONS' FARMHOUSE - DEAD HOUSE - DAY

Mary is bundled against the winter cold. Her eyes are lowered as she trudges toward the Andersons' farmhouse. She clutches Luke's slippers in her hand and as she looks up...

She sees Luke and Patty standing before a small shack.

ANGLE ON: With his head lowered, Luke passes his mother's quilt from hand to hand.

LUKE

Come spring thaw, we can bury Mamma with the little ones. She'd like that.

(beat)

Always thought drinkin' would be the death of her, but not like this. It's hit Sim real hard.

(Patty touches his arm)

Mary said she seen it all too. How's that possible? Come to think, there's the Collivers' barn too.

PATTY

Don't think too much on Mary and what she might've seen or not.

(MORE)

PATTY (CONT'D)

Once she's raised enough money,
she'll be gone back where she come
from and things'll be back to the
way they was.

Patty stills his fidgeting by laying a hand on his, then
slips her arm around his shoulders.

Mary drops the slippers into the snow and flees.

DISSOLVE TO:

147 EXT. HAWTHORN BAY - CLEARING - DAY

With the robins' return and icicles melting from tree
branches, we see that spring is returning to the countryside.

148 INT. COLLIVERS' CORNERS - GENERAL STORE - DAY

John Anderson, Sam Colliver, and Jim Morrisay huddle around
the Corners' storekeeper, **DAN**. They are discussing this
season's weather, planting, and the latest in grains and
techniques. The door's entry chime RINGS.

MARY (O.C.)

So say you, tobacco be a fitting
wee gift to bring your folk? Aye,
back home as well...

Mary and Alsoomse enter. The men eye them suspiciously, but
continue their conversation.

JOHN

Joe Bradley over at Soames been
trying out a new kinda wheat. Hear
it did pretty well for him last
year. Been thinking I might plant
some of it myself come summer.

Mary searches the shelves and cubbies as Alsoomse wanders to
the bolts of colourful fabrics.

DAN

(distracted)

Red Fife wheat...

Mary's head starts to ACHE.

JOHN

That's it. You thinkin' of stockin'
any, Dan?

As Alsoomse lifts a bolt to feel the fibre and check for dye
blemishes, Dan breaks from the group; his pace is deliberate,
his shoulders rigid.

DAN

Don't touch what you don't mean to
pay for.

Dan grabs her by the arm and pulls the fabric from her.

DAN (CONT'D)

And keep your hands where I can see
'em.

Outraged, Mary CHARGES between them, small but determined. She pushes Dan back, and as her hands make contact, her head starts to POUND and the store SHIFTS around her.

MARY

Not now!

Alsoomse braces her friend...

ALSOOMSE

Walk on your sacred path. Do not be
afraid.

And Mary slips into one of her TRANCES.

149

VISION STARTS (CLEAR AND REALISTIC) - A FIELD - UNKNOWN TIME

- * *The sky is cold and grey.*
- * *A layer of frost blankets dry and cracked soil.*
- * *Row upon row of blue, wilted wheat stems cover a field.*

JIM MORRISAY (V.O.)

The almanac's callin' for a good
hot summer. I could surely use a
bumper crop!

- * *A man's boot kicks at the dirt. It's not summer.*

VISION ENDS

150

INT. COLLIVERS' CORNERS - GENERAL STORE - RESUMING

This time, Mary hasn't collapsed. She's standing firm enough to stare Dan and the gawking men down.

MARY

Ye dinnae deserve to know this.
There'll be no summer to come this
year. Havnae I just seen it. No
summer at all!

Her words unnerve the shorekeeper, and he falls back toward the others.

DAN

That's ridiculous. There's always
summer. The both of you can git on,
right now.

Mary and Alsoomse decide discretion is the better part of further confrontation and leave empty-handed.

DAN (CONT'D)

(shaken)

Gentlemen, if you want the Red
Fife, I'll have it in time for your
planting. Put your money down.

His eyes dart back to the closing door.

151

INT. HAWTHORN BAY - MARY'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

It's pitch black out and pouring rain. The forest jumps to life with every sheet of LIGHTNING and roll of THUNDER.

Mary stands at the cottage threshold, watching the rainwater spill over the rim of her faery bowl, WHEN...

A NOISE in the darkness draws her attention. With a brief FLASH, she catches a fleeting glimpse of Simeon. He's soaked, unsteady, and staggers up to the cottage.

SIMEON

Gonna let me in?

Mary thinks twice, then reluctantly steps aside.

SIMEON (CONT'D)

All alone. Weren't I just sayin' to
Luke the other day, poor Mary, she
come all this way only to end up
without her fellas, without nobody.

MARY

Shhh now! I'm no alone. Henry is
fast asleep.

SIMEON

You know, we're not so different.
Both lost someone we loved.

MARY

Rubbish. Go on, then. Let yer coat
hang by the fire till dry, then on
your way. Tea?

Simeon rummages through his pockets, pulls out a whiskey flask, and then tosses his coat by the hearth.

SIMEON

Somethin' stronger.

Mary picks up his coat and hangs it by the fireplace. She reaches for the poker, intending to stoke the embers, when Simeon LURCHES closer.

SIMEON (CONT'D)

I think we got off on the wrong foot. That's all.

She tries to lift her kettle over the fire.

SIMEON (CONT'D)

I know! We could sing a tune or two together. You got such a pretty voice...

Simeon is now predatory and SNATCHES the poker from her hand. He tosses it aside, and the NOISE wakes Henry.

SIMEON (CONT'D)

Why doncha look at me the way I seen you look at Luke? That's all I want.

MARY

Leave me be!

Henry hides under his blankets, listening intently.

SIMEON

Why should Lukie get all the fun.

MARY
May you grow garlic in your beard, and onions out of your nose!

MARY
Gum fàs thu garlic nad fheusag, agus uinneanan a-mach às do shròn!

SIMEON

What's that? Gonna turn me into a frog like you threatened little Abe? Well, what princess can resist her frog prince!

Simeon LUNGES. Mary ducks and scrambles as she tries to get to safety, but he mirrors her every move. He's relentless. As Simeon snatches her, Mary lashes out, fists POUNDING against him with all she can muster.

MARY

I said, NO!

Then Mary rakes her nails across her attacker's face and yanks free. She stumbles back to the dry sink, fingers scrabbling, hunting... her CARVING KNIFE! She snatches it and flashes the blade between them.

MARY (CONT'D)

Come again and I'll be feedin' yer ears to the wolves.

ANGLE ON: Patty BARGES through the cottage door, a cloth-covered crock in her arms.

PATTY

We could hear you was up. Laws,
that's freezin' cold rain out
there! Luke's just behind...

She sees the knife and Simeon hovering close to Mary.

PATTY (CONT'D)

Oh, Sim... my lord!

Luke follows her inside, the leather slippers he made for Mary swinging from his hands. Immediately, he drops them and strides forward, reaching for the knife.

Patty watches, jealous, as Luke fiercely protects her rival.

LUKE

Go home, Sim!

The brothers wrestle until, in his condition, Simeon can't win. He grabs his coat and bottle to leave.

SIMEON

C'mon, Patty. Why don't you let me walk you home? Let's leave these two lovebirds alone.

MARY

No! Luke?

PATTY

Maybe... you two have a bunch to talk about. I should go.

MARY

Don't be daft, Patty. Stay. I'll make tea. Luke can walk you home later.

Tears well in Patty's eyes as she slips out the door. Simeon smirks at Mary and takes off in pursuit.

MARY (CONT'D)

Go after them, Luke, please.

LUKE

Patty can look out for herself, don't worry, none.

MARY

I said go!!

Luke heads to the door, searches, then returns to pick up the slippers he was carrying.

LUKE

They're gone. Nowhere to be seen.

(beat)

I found these in a snow bank way
back...

Mary pushes past him and searches herself - No Patty or Sim.

MARY

If Patty's safe enough with your
brother, then so am I.

LUKE

Dammit, Mary, Can't you see? Livin'
alone is just askin' for trouble!
We could look out for each other.

Mary closes the cottage door and backs up against it.

LUKE (CONT'D)

And it's not just Sim. You got half
the farmers in the county riled up
over what you said about there
being' no summer. What if...

MARY

It will come true, and you refuse
to believe me. Marriage is what ye
want, is it? How is it you can ask
when you'll ne'er accept one whole
part of me? I do see and hear what
will come!

LUKE

What about the things I see and
hear? The animals. The forest. What
the land can give back with a
little ploughin' and plantin'? You
can't see that! You're too caught
up in your own... Dammit, means you
can't see what is right in front of
you!

(beat)

For God's sake, Mary. I don't wanna
keep fightin' you. All I want, have
wanted, is for you to see it's
possible to marry me! Maybe I
should court Patty instead?! At
least she's got a soft spot for me.

MARY

We're from different worlds.

LUKE

Well, Duncan ain't part of this
world no more. He didn't care about
nothin'. Was moody as all get out.

(MORE)

LUKE (CONT'D)

Not anywhere near strong enough to
cut it here. He can't have cared
too much about you, given what he
did!!

MARY

Get out, Luke Anderson! Out, and
dinnae come back! Not ever. Hear
me? Not ever!

With that, Luke GRUMBLES under his breath and leaves.

152

EXT. HAWTHORN BAY - CLEARING - DAY

Mary, unsettled by her quarrel with Luke, works in her garden. She lifts a stone and tosses it absently, and it lands square on Duncan's grave.

HEATHER (V.O.)

*That fly-by-night! Him that hasn't
put pen to paper in three years as
promised? Dinnae be foolin'
yerself, dearest sister.*

Troubled at the sight, Mary steps to remove the stone.

MARGARET (V.O.)

*The lad's moods truly are black as
a winter's storm at times. Ye'll
find yerself caught in it!*

MRS. GRANT (V.O.)

*Yer feet will bring ye where yer
heart is. But 'tis a journey that
will also bring sorrow and many
trials.*

She picks up the stone. It feels heavy for its size.

LUKE (V.O.)

*You can't marry him! You can't
marry a deader!!*

As her eyes are drawn to Duncan's epitaph...

MARY

I feel what misery befell ye
too. I wish we were safe
home, my love.

MARY

*Tha mi a' faireachdainn na
trioblaid a thachair ort
cuideachd. Bu mhath leam nam
biodh sinn sàbhailte aig an
taigh, a ghràidh.*

153

EXT. SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS - URQUHART COTTAGE - DAWN

A load of peat bricks are piled next to a small cottage. Robert is stacking them, WHEN...

Mrs. Grant steps from the building and takes him aside; his shoulders slump before he heads inside.

154

INT. SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS - URQUHART COTTAGE - SAME MOMENT

Robert finds his wife lying in bed, sipping a Yarrow leaf brew. She is heartbroken and stares at her reflection in Gran's brooch.

155

EXT. ANDERSONS' FARMHOUSE - FIELD - MORNING

A severe frost sweeps the Andersons' land, dusting it with ice crystals. Row upon row of wheat lies ruined.

SUPER: SUMMER 1816

Dressed in heavy sweaters and wool hats, John Anderson and Sam Colliver stare at the ravaged crop.

JOHN

Has got to be God punishing us for
desertin' our farms and takin'
seaport work during the war.

SAM

I'm none superstitious, John, but
I'm beggin' to believe somethin',
or someone, has cursed us all.

John SCUFFS his boot at the cracked, frost-heaved soil.

156

INT. COLLIVERS' CORNERS - SCHOOLHOUSE - DAY

Mary peers over the rows of empty desks; only Henry hunches over his, while Sarah feeds wood to the stove.

SARAH PRITCHETT

Let's hope that does the trick. No
wonder they're calling this
eighteen hundred and freeze to
death.

MARY

Where are all the children?

SARAH PRITCHETT

I tried to warn you. She who plays
with fire burns her fingers. All
those dreadful stories you told to
keep the children quiet have come
home to roost. And there's all sort
of talk about you at Dan's?

MARY

I'm to be the *nicneven* now? The
evil witch come to the Corners?!

Henry stealthily puts on his toque and stands.

MARY (CONT'D)

Please sit down, Henry. It's no
time to go. We're to visit the
Collivers first.

He inches forward.

MARY (CONT'D)

Sit you down, Henry Anderson!

HENRY

(backing up)

Abe Morrisay says you disappeared
both Sim and Summer. Well, I heard
you puttin' a spell on Sim the
other night, and now he's gone. I
don't want to be disappeared too.

MARY

Rubbish!

Henry inches closer to the door, then BOLTS, leaving Mary
hanging off the schoolhouse.

MARY (CONT'D)

Henry! Go you right home!

157

INT. COLLIVERS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER

All the community leaders are seated at the Collivers' dining table. The headline on the front page of a copy of the Kingston Press reads, **1816: THE YEAR WITHOUT A SUMMER.**

A KNOCK sounds at the door, and Julia rises to find Mary.

MARY

I was told you were to be holdin' a
packet for me?

Sarah arrives behind Mary and steps past her without so much as a hello.

SAM

On the hutch there, Mary. Only we
wanted to talk to you too.

MARY

Tell me quick. I need be home for
Henry.

JULIA

We'll get right to the point. We don't want you teaching our kids no more. Everyone is too upset with all your strange talk and behaviour.

MARY

They be stories, that's all!

JIM MORRISAY

Stories, Aunt Fanny!

(smacks the newspaper)

You come in with that... Indian girl. Told us there'd be no summer. Now, look at it out there. And ain't it said your own garden ain't as worse off. Explain how we got winter in summer!

JULIA

Jim!

JIM MORRISAY

Well, none of us can. Never seen anything like this before she come.

MARY

Am I to blame now? Missus, when I first came, Mr. Colliver and you told me to forget my otherworldly ways. "God has no time for them here," you said. Now, you believe I put a spell on the weather? Across half of this Canada?

(beat)

And you believe I, who love yer children, would turn them into frogs?

(challenging the group)

Who's to be seeing strange things at work now?

SARAH PRITCHETT

Mary, all your talk about spells and visions, it's not suitable for the children.

MARY

I wish you could see! I'm not to make things happen, they happen anyway. I just see it before everyone else.

JOHN

All the same. Crops or not, we think it's best you keep to yerself. Or your Indian friends.

MARY

Your minds are made. I'll no have
you shame me for the gifts I have.
If I cannae share them with ye, so
be it. I just wanted to help.
Ashamed you should all be!

She grabs her PACKET from the hutch and tramps out of the Collivers' house.

158

INT. HAWTHORN BAY - MARY'S COTTAGE - DAY

Mary enters her cottage and tosses the packet on her table.

MARY

Henry!!! Henry?

The place is cold and empty.

159

EXT. HAWTHORN BAY - CLEARING - CONTINUOUS

Mary runs to the large, grey rock. The wind picks up around her, and the surface of the bay ripples.

MARY

Henry!!! Henry Matthew Anderson,
where are you?
(to the bay)
Yer no to touch a hair of him!

And there is no sign of him. Her mind races, WHERE????

THEN...

MARY (CONT'D)

Luke!

As Mary races from Hawthorn Bay, the SHADOW rises again.

160

EXT./INT. ANDERSONS' FARMHOUSE - FIELD - LATER

We find John stripping dead wheat stalks from the soil. He notices Mary hurrying to the farmhouse, then pressing her face to the window.

POV: Inside, the room is neat, and a warm glow fills the space as Luke reads with Henry.

161

INT. ANDERSONS' FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The door FLIES open as Mary BURSTS in.

PATTY (O.C.)

Mary!!! What on earth...?

Patty is hovering over a pot of boiling stew, her spoon dripping onto the floorboards. Mary's sudden entrance sends Henry scrambling behind Luke.

MARY
I've come for ye, Henry.

Henry looks to Luke for help.

MARY (CONT'D)
You're near the death of me, so ye are. Come away now, let us home.

John enters the farmhouse.

JOHN
What the hell is going on? Mary, what are you doing here?

MARY
Haven't I come to collect Henry.

JOHN
(to Henry)
Didn't you tell Mary you was comin' home?

Henry shyly admits, "No".

LUKE
That ain't right, Henry. You shoulda said somethin'.
(to Mary)
Guess I'll have to say it. Henry wants to live here again, at his true home.

MARY
His true home is with me! We had an agreement. Henry needs me.

LUKE
The little guy's scared. He really believes you made Sim disappear.

HENRY
And the summer!

MARY
Simeon is gone? I didnae even know!
How was I to...? Where?

JOHN
No one knows.

MARY
Is it Patty to care for Henry, now?

LUKE

Patty's gonna be livin' with us. We
think Henry'll be better off.

PATTY

We're to be married...

MARY

(to Luke)

So it truly is Patty now, is it?

A flood of emotions overtakes Mary, and she takes flight, her heart POUNDING and body TREMBLING.

162

EXT. HAWTHORN BAY - MARY'S COTTAGE - EVENING

The magic hour sees its warm light battle the darkening clouds. Mary sits beside the Rowan sapling at her cottage's entrance. Duncan's letters are spread before her lap.

DUNCAN (O.S.)

Mary, come!

She picks over the others and begins to open one. Her head immediately ACHES and the letters seem to come alive as the ground SHIFTS.

163

VISION STARTS - MONTAGE OF EVENTS - VARIOUS

- * Duncan and Jamie struggle to fell trees and remove stumps from the land.
- * A half-built log wall CRACKS and collapses, grazing Jamie's leg as Duncan and his brothers run for cover.
- * Jamie is dragged off by British conscription militia during a nighttime raid.
- * Duncan is in a heated discussion with several Corners locals. It becomes a shoving match, and his eye is blackened.
- * The shelves of the general store are near empty as Jeanie and Duncan shop for staples.
- * Duncan watches helplessly as Jeanie tends to his younger brothers, sick with smallpox.
- * Flooding from a Spring thaw has washed away the Camerons' gardens.
- * It's the magic hour, and Duncan is perched on the large, grey rock playing his flute. Mary's ribbon is tied around the instrument.

VISION ENDS

164

EXT. HAWTHORN BAY - MARY'S COTTAGE - RESUMING

Duncan's letter drops from Mary's hand. Her sense of loneliness grows into irritability.

MARY
 Why couldn't you come back to
 me then, my beloved? Now, I
 cannae bear to be alone.

MARY
*Carson nach b' urrainn dhut
 tilleadh thugam an uairsin, a
 ghràidh? A-nis, chan urrainn
 dhomh a bhith nam aonar.*

The shadow in Hawthorn Bay rises and assumes human form.

165

INT. HAWTHORN BAY - MARY'S COTTAGE - EVENING

Mary mechanically smooths the sheets over Henry's bed; they don't need to be done, but she is doing it anyway.

There is a soft KNOCK at the cottage door. Mary hesitates, then goes to the door and places her hand on its lock.

LUKE (O.C.)
 Mary. Open the door. I have Patty
 with me. You have to let her speak
 to you.

She opens the door and, without a single greeting, moves to make tea.

PATTY
 The preacher comes next month. I
 have get married, see. What with
 the baby on the way and my family
 wanting nothing to do with me!

MARY
 You're with a bairn?

Mary hooks her kettle on the trammel and turns to Luke - a look of shock on her face.

PATTY
 Not Luke's! Oh gosh, no. Sim's!

MARY
 Sim's? Not Luke's.

LUKE
 We figure that's why Sim runned
 off.

PATTY
 The night you took to him with the
 knife, I seen Luke looking at you
 like you was his girl... I felt
 real low. I didn't much care when
 Sim got hisself all over me... we
 made a baby... Mamma and Pappa were
 to kill me for it if it weren't for
 John saying he'd do right by me.

MARY

You're to marry Luke's...
Lydia's...?

PATTY

Yes! He's a better man than many.
And not having an easy time of
it... He needs me, and the baby
will need a father.

MARY

A bairn's a precious gift.
(to Luke)
Let me take Henry now. Your house
will be full enough.

LUKE

Henry don't wanna live with you.

MARY

Please. First, Duncan is taken from
me, then the school children, now
Henry... Henry needs me. Make him
come with me. I cannae earn passage
home now. How am I to live in this
lonely land, tell me that?

(desperate now)

Luke, should we marry, could Henry
come back to me then?

LUKE

You ain't interested in marrying
me! God is my witness. The only man
you got any time for is that dead
man. He cast a dark shadow on this
town an' he deserved what he got.
You were right all along, we
weren't meant for each other.

PATTY

Luke! Don't talk to Mary that way.

LUKE

I shoulda talked like this a whole
lot sooner. Come on!

Luke grabs Patty's arm and strides out of the cottage. Mary
chases after them...

MARY

Luke!!! How am I to live here
without Henry to care for?

He stops, takes a deep breath, and turns back to Mary.

LUKE

Henry don't need you now. Go back
to Scotland.

(MORE)

LUKE (CONT'D)

Take your shadow with you, too.
Why, I'll even help, you can have
the money I got put by for a piece
of land. Get your ticket and go on.
You ain't never goin' to let
yourself be happy here.

Mary forces herself forward, but Luke and Patty vanish into the night. She turns toward Duncan's grave.

MARY

I'm all but alone now. My love,
where are ye?

As soon as the words leave her lips, a cool breeze whispers across her feet and Mary's tartan ribbon lands by them.

166

INT. HAWTHORN BAY - MARY'S COTTAGE - LATER THAT NIGHT

BLACK

DUNCAN (V.O.)

Mary! Come to me!!

Mary ties her hair back with her ribbon. She closes her eyes, raises her arms, and draws a circle in the air. There is NO POUNDING headache – still, the room begins to SHIFT, the cottage door SHUDDERS and swings open, a wind rushes in.

Mary embraces the coming TRANCE.

167

INTERCUT MARY'S REALITY WITH HER VISION (ITALICS)

The Camerons are asleep. Duncan stands at the cottage door in his nightdress, calm, at peace, focused. In his hand is Mary's tartan ribbon...

REALITY: Mary walks to her doorway.

DUNCAN (V.O.)

We are bound together.

MARY

You, to me.

Duncan steps past the faery stone, pausing at the Rowan sapling...

REALITY: Mary does the same.

DUNCAN (V.O.)

Forever.

MARY

Forever.

Duncan's bare feet flatten the dewy grass. A moonlit path leads him to an ink-black body of water...

DUNCAN (V.O.)
Come, Mary. Come to me!

REALITY: Mary surrenders and steps into the clearing. She removes her clothing, Mrs. Grant's shawl, and her slippers...

DUNCAN (V.O.)
'Twined together since childhood, we are.

MARY
 No telling where one ends and the other begins.

Duncan stands by the large, grey rock. He MOANS and CRIES OUT. The dark pool of water begins to lap more violently against the large grey rock...

DUNCAN (V.O.)
Come, Mary! Come to me!

REALITY: Moonlight shines across the bay as Mary crosses the clearing and drops her dress, stockings, pantalets...

DUNCAN (V.O.)
We two are never to be parted. That was our promise...

MARY
 Not in life...

Duncan steps onto the large, grey rock.

REALITY: Mary steps onto the large, grey rock.

DUNCAN (V.O.)
Not in death.

Mary's tartan ribbon is torn from Duncan's hands. Calmly, he plunges headfirst into Hawthorn Bay. A dark shadow forms around him at impact – he sinks without a struggle.

END INTERCUT

REALITY: Empty, cold eyes stare up at Mary from beneath Hawthorn Bay's surface, and Duncan's black hair swirls around his ghostly face.

DUNCAN
Follow the shining path...

Mary teeters at the water's edge. Duncan reaches for her, she surrenders, and FALLS into his outstretched arms.

AS THE COLD WATER SLAMS INTO HER, the shock JOLTS her. Mary GASPS as she swallows water — its cold clamps around her chest, squeezing the breath from her lungs. As panic takes hold, Mary THRASHES, but Duncan's pull is strong and drags her down into Hawthorn Bay's depths.

MARY (CONT'D)

No!

Her arms claw upward, fingers grasping for anything, but with each kick, Duncan's relentless pull drags her ever deeper.

DUNCAN (V.O.)

Come Mary!

MARY

No more!!

Mary fights for her life, her muscles trembling, her body screaming for air. When her head breaks the surface, she GULPS greedily, coughing, sputtering, and kicks toward the large, grey rock, until...

Mary hauls herself forward onto the formidable stone; her skin is scraped and bleeding, and she fills her lungs with cold, cutting air. **THEN HER FURY IGNITES!**

MARY (CONT'D)

You did this to yourself, ye did! How could you? I read the letters you never sent as promised. You turned from me for three years, and when you couldn't live with the hardships of this land, you called to me, wanting me to die with you. I wish I had been there for ye. No wonder none in the Corners could speak of it. When ye called to me, I couldn't believe evil in you. It was evil you would take Henry from me because he was my comfort. This is not love! All you wanted was someone to share your darkness. Twas you Mrs. Grant warned me of. "Beware the dark", she said. It wasnae the forest, but Duncan Dubh, Duncan the black.

The shadow in Hawthorn Bay remains, unflinching, challenging.

MARY (CONT'D)

WE BOTH LOST THAT WHICH BOUND US
TOGETHER.

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

It was a sign we weren't truly
meant to keep such a promise. It
was a child's promise!

Mary unties the ribbon from her hair.

MARY (CONT'D)

Take this ribbon, then, and my
blessing and forgiveness. May you
have a safe journey to the land of
the dead and walk with the good
spirits who can be there for ye.

She tosses her ribbon into the bay. There are SHOCKWAVES, and
an audible EXHALE.

MARY (CONT'D)

I'll let ye go. Rest in peace,
love. Tis time to go now!

The young man who had been Duncan, her love, sinks beneath
Hawthorn Bay and is gone forever.

168

INT. HAWTHORN BAY - MARY'S COTTAGE - BEFORE DAWN

Mary shivers as she lays kindling in the fireplace.

She picks up the packet sent to her and presses it to her
face. The scent of home aches through her. With trembling,
frozen fingers, Mary opens it to find, nestled in a letter,
GRAN'S BROOCH.

169

EXT. HAWTHORN BAY - CLEARING - DAY

Mary leans into the sun's warmth, then dips her head into the
wash tub as she cleans herself.

JAMES (V.O.)

*Dearest daughter. We were glad to
hear you've found Uncle Davie and
Auntie Jeanie's cottage to be a
fitting home, though we miss ye
here sorely.*

170

EXT. GLEN URQUHART - A SMALL COTTAGE - DAY

Robert loads their wagon, helps Heather aboard, and takes the
reins. They set off down the village road.

JAMES (V.O.)

*The baby Heather and Robert were to
have was lost, God bless the wee
thing. Sadly, the wise woman has
seen she is to have no more. Did
they no leave for the big city.*

171

INT. MARY'S COTTAGE - SAME DAY

Mary lays out her best clothes.

JAMES (V.O.)

Before they left, the family talked and agreed. We will likely have no descendants now, unless they be yours. It was our Heather who wished you should have Gran's brooch now.

She dresses and braids her hair as Alsoomse would, then settles Mrs. Grant's shawl around her shoulders and lifts Gran's brooch until she sees her reflection — she's pleased with what she sees.

JAMES (V.O.)

We wish our only treasure to stay in the family. But, if ye do not choose to marry, 'tis hoped ye may use it for passage home. Either way, do as what will make ye happy, for that is all we truly care for.

Mary pins the brooch to her shawl, gathers several spun balls of wool, and tucks them into her carryall. Excitement and nerves flutter through her — she is ready!

172

EXT. HAWTHORN BAY - MARY'S COTTAGE - DAY

As Mary shuts the cottage door behind her, she discovers Alsoomse waiting and cradling white lupins in her arms.

ALSOOMSE

I came for you to sit with my people and welcome the harvest, but I see your shadow is gone.

(presenting the flowers)

Take these Lupins to bring you strength and happiness on your next journey. We can sit another day.

Mary accepts her Alsoomse's gift, and the two friends walk towards Duncan's grave.

MARY

"Twice ye'll refuse yer destiny. Yet, when you think to seek it out, it will avoid yer grasp. Only then will you come to truly embrace it as yer own."

They stand before it, solemn and respectful.

MARY (CONT'D)

I didnae understand any of it at the time, but I'm sure enough now that the *an dà shelladh* is not my misfortune.

Mary kneels and lays a single lupin on Duncan's grave.

MARY (CONT'D)

My visions of Duncan were to lead me to Luke. Mother Grant's true gift could only have been seeing that twice I would refuse Luke's proposal, and when I said I would marry him, didnae he refuse me.

Mary stands and turns to Alsoomse.

MARY (CONT'D)

I wish Luke to be part of my destiny and I'll no refuse him if he still wants me. I want now to see the land and the animals the way he does.

ALSOOMSE

All gifts are meant to be shared.

Mary embraces Alsoomse, then BOLDLY ENTERS THE FOREST.

173

EXT - COLLIVERS' CORNERS - FOREST - CONTINUOUS

"God light" streams through the forest as Mary embraces her newfound strength and the beauty surrounding her.

A single beam falls on a tiny Rowan sapling; she reaches deep into the earth to cup its roots in her hands.

174

EXT. ANDERSONS' FARM - MOMENTS LATER

Mary emerges from the forest, the sapling in her hand.

ANGLE ON: Luke and his father are labouring in their field, while Henry plays on the farmhouse steps.

Mary draws near.

MARY

Henry! Come you here. Shhh now!

Henry cautiously obeys.

MARY (CONT'D)

You're not still afraid? Even to look at me?

HENRY

A bit. You look pretty, though.

MARY

You know, I can be afraid too.
Aren't I now, even of something I
mean to do?

HENRY

I never seen you afraid.

Mary holds out her hand; it trembles.

MARY

Look at that, will ye! Ever see the
likes of it? That's how afraid I am
right now.

She straightens her shoulders, closes her eyes, and YELLS.

MARY (CONT'D)

LUKE! LUKE ANDERSON!!

Luke and John look up, and Patty comes running from the
farmhouse door.

MARY (CONT'D)

I HAVE COME COURTING, LUKE, AND I
HAVE BROUGHT YOU A GIFT.Luke edges toward her cautiously as Mary lifts the wool balls
she had spun from her carryall.

MARY (CONT'D)

They're no perfect, but I spun
these myself, so I did. I'll learn
to weave and make you a grand
wedding jacket.He crosses his arms, amused and content. This is a different
side of Mary he's not seen.

MARY (CONT'D)

(looking straight into his eyes)
Luke, if you refuse my courtin'
it'll still be yours, the wool, to
do with as you wish.

Luke takes her gift from her shaking hands.

LUKE

Mary Urqu...

(struggling to pronounce
it correctly)Ur-kit. Darn, that's a mouthful.
I've been thinkin'... a lot.
(MORE)

LUKE (CONT'D)

You told me to watch out for Mamma in the snow - and I got to tell you I tried, just in case you weren't as loony as I figured. And it did give me a turn when you knew to run to the Collivers' in time to save Henry and Polly.

He fidgets with the balls of wool.

LUKE (CONT'D)

I dunno what you coulda seen in Duncan, but maybe there's somethin' to it and all. I just ain't been raised to look at things like you do. But I accept all your gifts. The ones I see, and even the ones I'm afraid I can't. I'm sorry for the terrible things I...

Mary puts her hand over his mouth.

MARY

Back home, we plant a Rowan tree to ward off evil and offer protection from mischievous spirits. You are safe now.

She smiles impishly and presses the sapling against him.

MARY (CONT'D)

I will try to see the land and the animals the way you do, if you agree to try seeing some things the way I do.

LUKE

I will.

MARY

Bone of my bones. Love of my heart.

MARY

Cnàmh mo chnàmhan. Gaol mo chridhe.

Luke leans forward, pressing his lips to hers. Henry looks away. John and Patty CHEER. Together, Luke and Mary lift the sapling overhead in triumph.

THE END.