

THE ART OF EATING ICE CREAM

Written by

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ACT ONE

SCENE ONE

EXT, EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND

AERIAL VIEW OF SUN COMING UP OVER ARTHUR'S SEAT, SETTling
INTO A MONTAGE OF EDINBURGH HIGHLIGHTS IN EARLY MORNING

KELSIE MCDUNN

Charles Shultz, the American
cartoonist, once stated; "Life is
like an ice cream cone: You lick it
one day at a time..." For ice cream
lovers amongst us, the context of
these words is not lost; life is to
be tasted, enjoyed, even savored...

CUT TO:

EXT, KELSIE'S ICE CREAM EMPORIUM, OLD TOWN, EDINBURGH

The emporium is newer with a eclectic, steam-punk flair. A
half dozen tables are scattered across the sidewalk. Only
one table is occupied by a single patron--a wiry, nervous
looking woman, tall, with wild hair.

CUT TO:

INT, BACK ROOM OF THE EMPORIUM, OLD TOWN, EDINBURGH

CLOSE UP: KELSIE MCDUNN, IN A WHITE LAB COAT, WEARING
GOGGLES. SHE HOLDS AN EYE DROPPER OVER WHAT APPEARS TO BE A
LARGE TEST TUBE.

Kelsie McDunn, a slim, attractive woman with auburn hair,
lets several drops of a dark liquid fall into the test tube.
She swirls, smells, then puts in two more drops. Walking
over to a large vat, she pours the contents in, then side-
steps over to the wall and flips a switch. The vat begins to
churn, its loud whine filling the room. Walking back to the
vat, she peers in, grabs a hand full of crumbles, and
sprinkles them in. Suddenly, the apparatus turns off. She
spins to find a heavier-set woman, Katie Shyles, with
tattoos running down both arms and wild, curly hair.

KATIE

You couldn't hear me yellin'?

KELSIE

No. Machine's a bit noisy today.

KATIE

The machine's a bit noisy every day! I've been tryin' to tell ya, that lady's here!

KELSIE

That lady? *What* lady?

KATIE

Ya know--the *socialist*! That Duncan lady. *Remember*? The one that ya said would bring people a runnin'!

Kelsie looks down at her watch.

KELSIE

Oh, yeah!...Ally Duncan. I set the alarm. Wonder why I didn't hear it?

KATIE

Uh, possibly because ya broke it. Remember, last week--ya impaled it against the wall? As I recall, it failed to alert ya that a batch of *Fruity Booty* was ready.

KELSIE

Oh, yeah. Forgot about that too. Hmmm... Well, tell Ms. Duncan I'll be out in five and give her a scoop of ice cream on the house. I've got to finish this batch. I'm onto something, I just know it...

KATIE

Aye! You're always on to somethin'. If it were how to focus on your business, well, we might just have somethin'! If it's how one should manage their life, God help us all!

Kelsie, who had pushed her goggles back down, looks up.

KELSIE

By the way, Ally Duncan is not a socialist! She's a *social media* influence with half a million followers. That's a kind of specialized reporter.

KATIE

Well, she makes me nervous the way she keeps pokin' at her hair.

(MORE)

KATIE (CONT'D)
I keep wonderin' if one of these
times, it's gonna just jump up,
scream, and run away!

Kelsie gives a slight nod, obviously not listening. Katie sighs, adds a spoon, some whip cream, and a cherry to her ice cream dish, and heads through the empty shop toward the outside tables.

FADE TO:

SCENE TWO

EXT. KELSIE'S ICE CREAM EMPORIUM, OLD TOWN, EDINBURGH

Kelsie rushes out of the ice cream shop, stopping almost immediately to compose herself before heading to where Ms Duncan is seated. Kelsie greets her and sits down. Ms. Duncan looks up, obviously perturbed.

ALLY DUNCAN
Thirteen minutes! Thirteen minutes,
Ms. McDunn! I could have just
walked away!

KELSIE
You could have, but I'm so glad you
didn't. Do you like the ice cream?

The woman stares at her for a long moment, then decides to let it go.

ALLY
That's the only reason I didn't.
What did you call this? *Moon-Mint*
or some such? What's in it?

Kelsie flashes her most winning smile.

KELSIE
Moon-Mint Marble is one of our
favorite flavors. We start with a
very smooth mint, add just a dash
of eucalyptus, dandelion, and melon
extract, swirl it around flowing
fingers of rich, Belgian choc--

Ally cuts her off.

ALLY
Well, it's just short of
phenomenal. It's smooth, rich,
and...well, *unique*.
(MORE)

ALLY (CONT'D)

I'll give you that one. By the way, who comes up with these outlandish names? *Banana Boat Booty with Barnacles...*

KELSIE

That'd be me--with help from my manager, Katie. That's another of our favorite flavors! Banana Boat Booty takes traditional banana split flavors like caramel, chocolate, and strawberry, and whips them into a light, creamy banana yogurt base with hints of cherry, and sprinkled with cookie bits--that's the barnacles.

Ally seems unimpressed. She frowns down at the menu.

ALLY

You don't serve anything... ordinary here, do you?

Kelsie is unapologetic.

KELSIE

Why would people come here for ordinary? We're a boutique shop, not a wanna-be franchise. We focus on the *EXTs*; extreme, extravagant, and extraordinary. We want every dessert we sell to be a mind fantasy; a flavor-filled dream; a cherished memory; a raucous party for the taste buds!

Ally holds up a hand.

ALLY

Let me get this down...*raucous party for taste buds...* So, you're attempting to reinvent ice cream, by defining it as more a...vehicle for unusual and bizarre flavors. Is that how you would put it?

KELSIE

I wouldn't use the word bizarre, but essentially, you're correct. *Flavor* is that miracle that happens when fire and ice force carefully selected ingredients to *connect*. The ice is obvious.

(MORE)

KELSIE (CONT'D)

The fire comes from *the fires of imagination*, fires that force ingredients to come to terms with who they are and thus boldly contribute... A true masterpiece of flavor occurs when ingredients no longer hide behind each other, or cancel each other out.

ALLY

You speak like ice cream is a religion.

KELSIE

I wouldn't say religion,' but tasting good *flavor* is definitely an uplifting experience.

Ally waits for Kelsie to continue. When she doesn't, the social media specialist decides to lead the discussion in another direction, leaning forward onto the table.

ALLY

You're the daughter of Shamus McDunn, founder of H&S Energy. Is he aware of your...*philosophy*?

KELSIE

Both of my parents are very aware of my interest in food--ice cream in particular. I became a Rhodes Scholar while still twenty-two and studied culinary arts at *Le Cordon Blue*, London, after that. We began our adventures in ice cream a little over two years ago, and opened up our shop here in Old town three months ago to the day.

Ally takes a long moment, tapping with the stylus on her tablet and thinking.

ALLY

I don't doubt your credentials, Ms. McDunn, I question your choice.

KELSIE

I'm not sure I follow.

ALLY

H & S Energy is one of the biggest industrial success stories in Scottish history, and one of the most influential corporations in Britain. Yet, here you are, Hamish McDunn's only girl, your hands up to the elbows in ice cream...

KELSIE

Oh, what a lovely image, Ms. Duncan! In a world filled with dark news-- with a frenzy of negative focus and a sea of people runnin' so hard and so long that they've lost track of where they came from and have no idea where they stand.

In this very world, a millionaire's only daughter decides to put money into bringin' the world a bit of good news; a smile on a spoon; a moment of innocent delight; a reason to get up every sunrise and have at it again!

I knew I liked you and I was sure you'd find just the right words to show what we're doin'! As for my father, when he found that first coal deposit, one of the largest in Scotland--

ALLY

In all of Britain.

KELSIE

Yes, when he found it, he was smack in the middle of a wee discussion with his neighbor--

ALLY

I heard it was an all out row. The argument about property boundaries had come to fisticuffs before they tumbled into that old abandoned mine and discovered the coal-- but...continue.

KELSIE

The point I'm making, Ms. Duncan, is that, when he found himself in those unexpected, but fortunate circumstances, he had plenty of opportunity to sell out, to get rich and retire to Tahiti, but he didn't. He had a dream and the opportunity to build on it, and that's what he did. It's the same for me. I found myself in unexpected but quite fortunate circumstances, and decided I wanted to make the world just a little kinder, a bit more pleasant. My shop is helpin' me do that.

Ally stares for a long moment, her eyes narrowing. She then looks down, swipes at her tablet, jots a few things down, and looks back up.

ALLY

So, that's that.

KELSIE

Aye. That's that.

ALLY

Okay, I think I have what I need.

Kelsie sees Katie, who has been listening at the door, hurry toward them with a small dish of ice cream. She mouths the word *Snapdragon*. Kelsie touches the woman's arm.

KELSIE

Wait! Please...I want to grab you a free pint of *Banana Boat Booty with Barnacles*, and in the mean time, Katie is comin' out with a dish of a new flavor we introduced just this week--we call it, *Snapdragon*.

Ally raises an eyebrow.

ALLY

I suppose I can give you five more minutes, but no more.

KELSIE

Great! Here's the *Snapdragon*. Give it just a wee taste, won't ya?

Ally takes the small dish from Katie, studying it.

ALLY
I'm the first to be tasting this
flavor?

KELSIE
Outside of Katie and I, yes.

ALLY
Alright. But I'll be brutally
honest with anything I taste.

KELSIE
We want no less. The name tells ya
what ya need to know...Think soft
gingerbread with a hint of kick and
a tang not unlike that of Asian
sweet and sour.

Ally dishes up a bite of the yellowish dessert.

ALLY
I will say, I like the ambiance
you've created. The shop is
somewhere between an industrial
museum, a curio cabinet, and Willy
Wonka. The white lab coats are a
nice touch as well.

KELSIE
Thanks, but our headliner is ice
cream. Flavor is our crown jewel...

While Ally's first sample is barely enough to taste, her
second is a full spoonful. She takes a long moment, seeming
to roll the ice cream around in her mouth. She takes another
bite, and another. Closing her eyes, as if savoring.

KELSIE
What do you think?

Ally does not immediately answer, but takes yet another
bite. She again closes her eyes and savors. Finally, her
eyes open and her face spreads into a soft smile.

ALLY
I think I...I think I will be
visiting again, Ms. Kelsie
McDunn...probably *frequently*!

Katie, still standing behind Ally, gives Kelsie a thumbs up.
Kelsie's eyes sparkle, as if this were the best compliment
she could ever be paid.

FADE TO:

SCENE THREE

EXT. BUS STOP, OLD TOWN, EDINBURGH

Kelsie exits a red, double-decker bus wearing a designer off-white sweater and white slacks. She has a heaped brown bag on one arm and a cell phone to her ear.

KATIE (VOICE ON PHONE)
The article's done *what?* ...*Gone viral?* Do we need shots? I told ya she was a socialist!

KELSIE (CHUCKLING)
You're killin' me, Katie! Just be prepared for heavier than usual traffic today, okay?

KATIE
If ya say so. Always here to throw another log on the fire, boss!

Kelsie breaks into a slight grin.

KELSIE
I'm Kelsie, not boss, and I can only hope you're jokin' because we run an ice cream shop, in case you've forgotten and fire is *not* our friend! Listen, I'm off the bus and stoppin' by the Cafe. Shouldn't be more than ten...

KATIE
Wait--can you pick me up an espresso?

Kelsie turns left at the intersection of Cowgate and High Street. She walks up an inclining, cobblestone street.

KELSIE
Expresso? It's after eleven, Katie!

KATIE
So? ...It's 5AM somewhere.

Kelsie gives her head a slow shake.

KELSIE
Awk, you're impossible, Ms. Shyles! Alright. I'll bring it, but ya drink it in the back, agreed?

KATIE

Aye, Cap'n. See you in fifteen. Oh! I almost forgot... There's a wee girl askin' for ya. She's ordered five dishes of ice cream so far, some of our most unusual flavors, but she refuses to speak to anyone but the legendary Kelsie McDunn.

KELSIE

Legendary? She used those exact words, did she?

KATIE

Aye! She uses a lot of big words.

KELSIE

Is she in the shop? We don't officially open until noon.

Katie gives no response. Kelsie sighs again.

KELSIE

Let me guess--ya let her in, didn't ya?

KATIE

Ya should have seen her--all forlorn out there on her own!

KELSIE

Okay. Just tell me what I'm walking into?

KATIE

Uh, remember the part about *she'll only speak to Kelsie McDunn*? She won't say a word to the rest of us mere mortals.

KELSIE

Ya mean you and your huge staff?

KATIE

Aye. Me and the mice... *Just hope they're not goin' viral...*

CUT TO:

SCENE FOUR

INT. KELSIE'S ICE CREAM EMPORIUM, OLD TOWN, EDINBURGH

SLOW PAN OF THE INTERIOR'S MIX OF BRIGHT LIGHTING AND STEAMPUNK STYLE DECOR. CAMERA MOVES IN ON A YOUNG GIRL WHO APPEARS TO BE NO MORE THAN FOURTEEN OR FIFTEEN. SHE'S SEATED ALONE AT A HIGH COUNTER ALONG THE BACK WALL.

Isla Meikle rakes fingers through her long, dark hair and flashes equally dark, intense eyes. She is in jeans, a black leather jacket, and a t-shirt that sports a rather cynical looking black unicorn.

Katie peeks through the swinging door from the back room as the front door bell jingles. Kelsie enters, beelining toward her. As she enters the back room, she puts her bag down next to an order of ice cream Katie has just bagged.

KELSIE

Sorry, there was a fair long queue.
I've got to hit the loo, Espresso's
in the bag. Would ya put the rest
in the fridge?

Katie nods and Kelsie ducks into the bathroom, leaving the door partially open. She talks just loud enough for Katie to hear her.

KELSIE

The girl who wants to see me--she's
the one with the leather jacket?

Katie pulls her espresso out of the bag and takes a long sip, then continues to unload the bag.

KATIE

Aye. What gave it away? The demonic
unicorn?

The toilet flushes. Kelsie exits the bathroom, pulling a white lab coat off a peg and throwing it on.

KELSIE

Well, at least her face is angelic.
Wish me luck!

Kelsie exits the back room and heads toward the girl at the back of the shop. She has attractive features, but they are buried beneath a goth, dark-girl vibe.

KELSIE

Hi! I'm Kelsie McDunn. I hear
you're lookin' for me.

ISLA
I am. I'm Isla.

Kelsie notes the stacked ice cream dishes beside Isla. The girl awkwardly extends a sticky right hand. Kelsie cringes a bit taking the hand, but uses the moment to slide into a seat next to Isla.

KELSIE
Wow! Seems you've got the art of eating ice cream down! What do you think? I want your honest opinion.

ISLA
I only do honest. Unique. Amazing. I'm impressed...So, what art? How is art involved in eating?

KELSIE
Art is involved in the *savorin'*. When ya *savor* a unique flavor, magic happens. Each taste bud comes alive, putting your brain on high alert. *What is this sensation?* A memory, much like a snapshot is taken, and ya find ya want more.

ISLA
Aye! It's true.

KELSIE
Isla...That's an interesting name. How do you spell it?

Isla flashes a smile, pleased Kelsie has taken interest in her name.

ISLA
It's spelled I-S-L-A and pronounced 'I,' like it's your eye.

Isla points to her eye, giving a silly grin.

Then, 'la,' as in 'fa-la-la.' It's Scottish Gaelic...That's probably more than you were asking for, but anyway, on to the proposition. It's in perpetuate, of course.

Katie comes out to help a young couple get a double-decker cone. Kelsie, gives a tight smile, glancing over at her to see if she's listening in (which, of course, she is).

KELSIE

Of course. I consider all my agreements *in perpetuate*... But first, truth be told, Isla, I do have interest in your name. Isla happens to be a favorite of mine. It comes from the west coast. In Gaelic, it means, 'Island.' It originated on the island of Islay I believe. Have ya ever been there?

Isla tilts her head back slightly, obviously delighted and surprised by Kelsie's response.

ISLA

Aye. The island isn't much, but it's beautiful. How did ya come by such information?

KELSIE

Well, names, you see, are a *thing* of mine. I hunt 'em down, along with stories and recipes. They're all part of the research we do here. As they say, '*Nothin' comes from nothin'.*' It's how we create our magical flavors. Now, which flavor was your favorite?

ISLA

Hmmm... I'd have to say Chocolate Unicorn--it's like a tutti-fruti that refuses to grow up.

KELSIE

Great description! You've got a way with words! Can we use it?

ISLA (GIVING A SHRUG)

Anyway, my proposal...

Isla rumages through her bag. Katie, who has finished helping the young couple, tries to look busy as she makes her way closer to Kelsie and Isla.

KELSIE

Ah, yes! The agreement in *perpetuate*. How can we help?

Kelsie throws a strict glance toward Katie, who, pretending not to notice, turns and works her way back toward the far end of the ice cream case.

Isla pulls a notebook out of her backpack, opens it, and pulls something out of the center zipper pouch. It appears to be a check of some kind. She hands it to Kelsie.

ISLA

Don't worry--it's real. It's from my own account at the Bank of London. It's the first payment. Ya get the rest upon completion.

Kelsie's eyes fly open wide.

KELSIE

Isla, this is a cashier's check for *six thousand pounds!*

Isla cracks an even wider smile.

ISLA

I know. How do ya like that flavor? There's another nine thousand pounds upon completion of this project.

Kelsie throws a glance at Katie, whose eyebrows are raised.

KELSIE

That's a lot of money, Isla. *In perpetuate* usually means *forever* or *for an indefinite period of time*. What kind of situation are we talking about?

ISLA

It's dad. He's lapsed and I'm not sure how long it'll take to turn him around--hence *in perpetuate*.

KELSIE (eyebrows now narrowing)
Uh...*lapsed*?

Isla closes the notebook and puts it back into her pack, talking as her hands continue in motion. The money was obviously no big deal to her. She pulls a digital tablet from her bag, frees up the pen, and starts tapping.

ISLA

Yes, lapsed... You'll find the project is quite easy. I've worked out all the details here in the contract. First, I get free rein at the shop for two years.

KELSIE

Free reign?

ISLA

That means I can come and go as I please when your open, and I get whatever ice cream suits my fancy-- no questions, and no charges for me and maybe a guest or two.

KELSIE

Sure. That's no problem. Now back to this lapsed issue...

ISLA

Right. I've been handlin' dad for sixteen years, now and--

KELSIE

So, you're sixteen?

ISLA

Well, actually, fifteen. I get your confusion, though. It was hard handlin' him from the womb. But he's in a dangerous phase now, and I need help. He's...well, like I said, I hardly know the man anymore! When he's not flittin' off to London (for God knows what), he's developin' strange habits, like checkin' stocks and playin' golf all day. He's even wearin' the plaids, mind you--*the plaids!* It's like he's fadin' into a fog of middle-aged mediocrity. I can't let him lapse like this.

Kelsie stares at the girl, stunned.

KELSIE

Isla. Lots of dads check stocks and play golf.

ISLA

Yeah, but they're not...well, not *my dad!* He's an adventurer! He needs to be at the bleedin' edge, chasin' thunder! He'll wither and die wearin' plaids and chattin' finance, so I need someone to catch his eye, spin his world around!

Kelsie opens her mouth to speak, but has no words.

ISLA

I know, it's complicated. Ya won't fully understand until ya meet him. I knew it from the start; life would not be easy with a man like that and I was right! It's been one challenge after another from the day I fought my way out of the womb! Not every lass could handle a life so devoid of conventionality, but here we are!

Kelsie throws a quick glance over at Katie, who is mouthing; "*fought her way out of the womb?*" She looks back at Isla, biting her lip, but the girl is completely serious.

KELSIE

Yes, here we are--but where, exactly, is here? Shouldn't ya be speakin' with your mom?

Isla's doesn't miss a beat.

ISLA

Aye, but my Mom, well, she... She died, ya know... Anyway, she's left and it's all up to me, now, to make sure Dad doesn't, you know--I mean, it's his career and everything...

Kelsie cocks her head, giving a quick glance at Katie again. Katie shrugs. She takes a deep breath, leaning forward.

KELSIE

God's truth, Isla, I've been tryin' to stay with ya, but I'm not sure how much of this I follow...

ISLA

What's there to follow? There's a lot of money on the table for ya, and all ya got to do is go on a date. Well, a date or two...

KELSIE

And you think this...date will keep your dad from...lapsing?

ISLA

I do.

Kelsie rolls the words over in her mind, as if searching them for an exit sign. She decides to take a different tack.

KELSIE

I'm so sorry for the loss of your mom--that must have been hard. How old were you then?

ISLA

I was seventeen months and five days--well, it spilled over into six days before it was over.

Kelsie gives a moment of pause.

KELSIE

That's a...a very exact age. I understand it must have been hard on your dad too. I guess I'm just not understandin' how our ice cream, or our shop, or my goin' on a date with your dad can help.

ISLA

The ice cream and the shop are the set up. The date--well, when you're on your date, I would expect ya to employ, well, your *vampish* ways.

Katie lets slip a laugh, managing, just barely, to make it sound like a cough. She mumbles something about allergies, but continues to fight to control her amusement, her face going red with the effort. Kelsie gives her a severe glance. Isla is oblivious to the disturbance.

ISLA

You're his type--I know it! You're just what he needs right now to get him back focused on his work.

KELSIE (BROW FURROWING)

You want me to...date your dad?

ISLA

Yeah...Easy. I'll tell him I want to create a unique ice cream flavor for my birthday--it's coming in about a month. I'll specify your shop as the one who will actually work with me on creatin' a flavor and ask him to check the shop out. He'll come in and that's that. I'm dead certain he'll ask ya out.

KELSIE

And if he doesn't?

ISLA

Then ya keep the six thousand pound deposit.

KELSIE

And if he does, what '*vampish ways*' are we speakin' about and how many dates will be required in *perpetuate*?

ISLA

I'm not askin' ya to do anything but be yourself, which, from what I've seen, you'd do anyway. You can't lose. Whatever happens, ya get paid.

KELSIE

You put a lot of emphasis on gettin' paid, Isla, but in truth, I don't need the money. Now, ya didn't answer my question. How many dates?

Kelsie isn't quite sure what else to say. Isla seems suddenly impatient.

ISLA

Okay, I know ya don't need the money, but I need your help. I'm askin' ya to trust me, Kelsie. I'll tell ya straight up, it's a good deal and I think you'll be happy.

Kelsie thinks for a moment, carefully scrutinizing Isla.

KELSIE

I can trust ya and I can try to help ya, but this is what I'm agreein' to:

- 1) I will give you free product for you and your friends for three years;
- 2) We'll let ya hang out here whenever ya want as long as ya don't disturb the customers;
- 3) I'll meet your father and help him create a special flavor for your birthday. If he asks me out, well, I'll say 'yes' if I feel so inclined. That's all that I agree to.

ISLA

Okay. I'm good with that. .

Kelsie checks with Katie before sucking in a deep breath.

KELSIE

Right then...Mind ya, I may ask for help with flavor names.

ISLA

Ah, well...next thing ya know, I may ask ya for a job.

KELSIE

Next thing ya know, I may hire ya.

ISLA (SMILING)

Good, then. Seems we've got a deal?

She holds out her hand out awkwardly. Kelsie takes it and gives a tentative nod. Isla stands.

ISLA

Been a pleasure negotiatin'.
Cheerio for the now!

Isla makes a casual exit. Kelsie watches her go for a moment, then turns to Katie.

KELSIE

What just happened?

KATIE

Oh, I'd say you just signed up for a six thousand pound blind date!

KELSIE

It's not a date, Katie. I'll just meet him to talk about ice cream. Are we horrible people for takin' her money?

KATIE

How could you not? *DON'T* you try to tell me you're not curious as to whose the dad of that one! I mean, she fought her way out of the womb!

Kelsie shakes her head, breaking into a wide smile.

KELSIE

Aye. She was something. And I think I offered her a job.

KATIE

That ya did! And I fully agree. We need a new face around here.

Kelsie rises and heads back over toward the ice cream counter. She gives a slow sigh, staring down at the check.

KELSIE

I guess what will be will be. But what needs to be right now is a good cleanin'. We do want our new surge in business to continue, do we not?

Katie follows, musing to herself.

KATIE

Hey, how's this for that birthday flavor... *Womb Raider*? Catchy, huh?

Kelsie tries to ignore her, but can't keep the smile away.

KELSIE

Katie, you're horrible! ... But at least ya didn't say, "*Somewhere in Slime*"...

The two burst into hysterical giggles.

CUT TO:

SCENE FIVE

EXT. CANNONGATE KIRK BUS STOP, EDINBURGH

Kelsie exits a red, double-decker bus. Among the chaos of fighting her way to the sidewalk, she hears someone calling her name. She looks back. A rather odd-looking woman with black, bushy hair, dressed in a loud, psychedelic sweater, with a trailing scarf and cargo trousers, is waving.)

PEE WEE

Kelsie! Hold up!

Kelsie waits as the girl maneuvers her way around the crowd, trying, unsuccessfully, to refrain from hitting people with her rather hefty backpack.

PEE WEE

I didn't crash into anyone, so I'll take the win! Where's the Rover?

The two fall into step, heading toward an alley called *Bakehouse Close*.

KELSIE

At home. I needed the steps...

Kelsie points at her tracker watch. Penelope chuckles.

PEE WEE

And you lookin' like a model!

Walking at a fair clip, they dip under the Baker Close tunnel, heels echoing against the cobblestones. Pee Wee notices Kelsie glance at the stone work.

PEE WEE

Hey, d'ya know that over there was once a notorious tavern known as the *Cock and Trumpet*? You can still see the insignia carved above the door. They speak of a list kept there called the *Ranger's List* that listed ladies of the night and what their preferences were.

KELSIE

That's an odd bit of trivia. I thought you'd say over there was where they filmed "*Sailor and Commander*."

PEE WEE

Aye, I was gettin' to that! What I wouldn't give to see ole' Capt'n McLeod peekin' in to see the list!

KELSIE

Oh, Capt'n McLeod wouldn't do that.

PEE WEE

Says you! A '*Sailor and Commander*' buff? Ya sound hard core.

KELSIE

Everybody needs a *Capt'n McLeod* now and then if only for the dreamin'.

PEE WEE

So right! Well, this is me. Hey, we're havin' a *Sailor and Commander* binge-fest Friday. Wanna come over?

KELSIE (shaking her head): Thanks, Pee Wee, but I've a mountain of laundry not two days from taking over the city.

Pee Wee gives a shrug.

PEE WEE

Well, I tried. This is me. See ya!

Kelsie waves as she turns toward her own flat.

FADE TO:

SCENE SIX

INT. EIGHTH FLOOR OF THE PARK, EDINBURGH

CLOSE UP ON ANTIQUE-LOOKING ELEVATOR DIAL SHOWING THE ELEVATOR CAR COMING UP. IT STOPS AND THE DOORS PULL BACK

Kelsie steps out, fishes for her key while walking to the corner flat. She unlocks the door and steps inside.

CAMERA PANS THE APARTMENT AS KELSIE TURNS ON THE LIGHT AND GRABS A WATER FROM THE FRIDGE. THE INTERIOR IS ELEGANT. THE KITCHEN IS MODERN, AND THE DEN AND BEDROOM SPORT WOOD FLOORS AND FLOOR TO CEILING BOOKSHELVES. A WOOD AND TILE FIREPLACE WITH AN ORNATE MANTLE IS AGAINST ONE SIDE WALL WITH A LARGE BAY WINDOW AND WINDOW SEAT FACING THE STREET.

Kelsie gathers clothes from the floor as a thin, well trimmed cat, Gray Beard, jumps down from a beautiful, dark wood hutch. It arches its back, brushing up against Kelsie's leg. She picks the cat up and sits on the window seat.

KELSIE

So, Gray Beard, you going to be my
sea Cap'n tonight?

The cat just purrs, disinterested. Kelsie sighs.

Aye. I thought so...

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

SCENE SEVEN

EXT. KELSIE'S ICE CREAM EMPORIUM, OLD TOWN, EDINBURGH

Katie stumbles up, a steaming cup of coffee in one hand, the other one fishing in her coat for the key, then, looking up, she realizes the shop is open. She pushes inside.

CUT TO:

POV KATIE SEES THAT KELSIE AND ISLA ARE ALREADY THERE

Kelsie looks up from polishing the napkin dispensers. To the far end of the counter, Isla is sitting, sipping from a teacup, a small plate in front of her with remnants of a bagel. Katie pushes through the door and stops.

KATIE

Well, you're up bright and early!
Workin' on a new flavor?

KELSIE

No. Just wanted to get a jump on
the day. I've bagels in the back.
Come on.

Kelsie motions for Katie to follow, heading to a small counter in the back where a bag of bagels and tub of cream cheese are laid out. Katie glances a last time at Isla before joining her in the back room.

KATIE (LOWERING HER VOICE)

So, our new patron seems to be
settlin' in just fine. Is this
going to be every morning now?

KELSIE

I can't say. When I got here, she
was already sittin' at one of the
outside tables, sippin' coffee.

KATIE (CRACKING A SMILE)

Ah! You made her put it in a tea
cup.

KELSIE

You know my rules. I had bagels
dropped off. She tells me she came
to let me know that her dad plans
on stoppin' by today. I said I
looked forward to meetin' him, and
she answered, '*just be ready*'.

KATIE

Just be ready? What does that mean?

Katie puts her coffee down on the counter and takes her coat off, draping it over a high-back bar stool. Taking a bagel, she spreads cream cheese across it.

KELSIE (SHRUGGING)

I have no idea. Just lettin' you
know--could be an interestin' day.

Isla sticks her head around the corner.

ISLA
Oh, it will be that! I can pretty
much guarantee it.

Isla gives a slight wave as she turns to go.

ISLA
Thanks for the bagel, Kelsie. I've
classes this afternoon, so you're
on your own. Good luck!

Kelsie waits to hear the front door close before turning to
Katie.

KELSIE
Is it just me, or is she makin'
this sound like an audition?

KATIE
I was going to say like an
execution, but no, it's not just
you. Might want to leave a gallon
or two of frozen Moca Macaroon
within arm's length just in case...

CUT TO:

CLOSE UP ON THE WALL CLOCK SHOWING THE TIME IS NOW 3:47 PM.

Two women, a man in jogging attire, and a mom with three
kids are finishing their treats while Kelsie and Katie, in
lab coats, are cleaning off counters and restocking straws
and spoons, speaking together in low tones.

KATIE
So, what do you think? Is the
mystery date fella a no-show?

KELSIE
It's not a date, Katie, and I don't
know. He could have come and gone.
I'm not gonna fret about it.

Katie looks up from her spoons, her eyes widening.

KATIE
Wait! There was that wiry fella--
the one with sunglasses and
raincoat. He asked if we were open,
and I almost said, *No--not for old
men in raincoats!*

Kelsie lets a snicker escape before catching herself. It takes a moment for her to regain her composure.

KELSIE

Katie! You're *abominable*!

The front door bell jingles. An old man with a worn hat, thick spectacles that distort his eyes, and matted gray hair steps in. Bushy eyebrows are visible over the top of his glasses and he is wearing a ragged brown, full length coat that's about two sizes too big. He shuffles forward using a cane and stops at the counter. Kelsie moves toward him.

KELSIE

The stools are quite high here at the counter, sir. Could I lead ya to a lower chair?

OLD MAN

No, no...I can manage.

The blind man feels the stool with his hand, then slowly, with great effort, slides onto it. He sits, panting for a moment.

KELSIE

Are you alright, now? Could I get ya a glass of water?

OLD MAN

What be the charge for it?

KELSIE

I don't know--a smile maybe?

OLD MAN

Aye, then, I'll take it. I also hear ya have the best ice cream known to man. Could a poor old beggar sample a wee dish.

KELSIE (SIGHS)

A poor old beggar with no funds?

OLD MAN

That be the long and the short of it, lass.

KELSIE

Auk, well, I think we can manage it. What flavor?

OLD MAN

Give me your favorite--not the
favorite of the store, mind ya, but
you, your personal favorite.

Kelsie looks down the bar to Katie, who shrugs.

OLD MAN

And I want to know the name of it.
I've reasons for asking.

The old man is still staring forward, seemingly oblivious to
anything around him. Katie gets him a clean glass of water
and a small dish of ice cream.

KELSIE

Here you are. We call it *Maple
Cinnamon Twist*.

The man smiles as Katie touches the ice cream spoon to the
back of his hand and moves his other hand to the bowl.

OLD MAN

I think I like it already.

Eating the ice cream slowly, the old man smacks his lips,
then takes a moment to drain his water glass. He wipes his
mouth, then waits patiently for Kelsie to come back.

KELSIE

So, how'd we do?

OLD MAN

That was...was a treat! I thank you
for your kindness!

He pauses, sliding off the stool with effort.

OLD MAN

Now, I have but one final request.

KELSIE

What's that, luv?

OLD MAN

Could ya walk me around the corner
to the bus stop?

The old man fumbles with his cane. Kelsie gives an inaudible
sigh, then looks over at Katie with a helpless grin.

KELSIE

All right then. Come on...

Kelsie walks around to the man, touching his arm and finding that it is not as wiry as she expected. She leads him to the shop door and holds it open. Katie watches as she leads him past the front window. Kelsie helps the man to the first street intersection. At the corner is a large limousine. A tall, well-dressed chauffeur jumps out, runs around, and opens the door for the old man. Kelsie stares, open-mouthed, as he suddenly transforms, losing the shuffle and cane. He straightens, hands his oversized coat to the chauffeur, then looks back and motions for Kelsie to quickly follow. He ducks down into the limousine. The man's physique is definitely not that of an old man. The chauffeur also motions to Kelsie.

CHAUFFEUR

Madame? Please...Alec does not wish
be discovered.

KELSIE

Alec?

Kelsie walks to the door of the limousine and peers in. The "old" man has shed the glasses and is busy peeling off the gray hair and eyebrows. He places them in a compartment under a lit tray in front of him and begins using tissues and alcohol to remove his make-up.

KELSIE

So, this whole thing was a set up?
Am I on hidden camera, or is this
just someone's idea of a joke?

Alec sighs.

ALEC

I apologize, but the deception was
necessary. I have business to
discuss with you, but I can't do
that in view of the paparazzi.

Kelsie's nostrils are flaring.

KELSIE

Paparazzi? I think you better tell
me what's goin' on, Alec! Who are
you? And why should I climb into a
car with ya after what you pulled?

ALEC

Isla.

The word stops Kelsie dead. Realizing now a little of what Isla was trying to tell her, she looks again at the face coming visible from under the makeup.

There is something familiar about it, about the man's voice, but she can't seem to place it. After a short pause, she sighs and climbs in.

CUT TO:

SCENE EIGHT

INT. INSIDE LIMOUSINE, OLD TOWN, EDINBURG

The chauffeur goes to shut the door, but she stops him, waving him back. She shuts her own door. He pauses, walks around the car, then retakes his place behind the wheel.

CHAUFFEUR

Do ya wish me to drive around the block, Mr. Meikle--so we don't attract undue attention?

ALEC

No. We're fine. We don't want to give Ms. McDunn any more reason for concern. She has actually been quite kind.

Kelsie's eyes fly wide as she comes to terms with the name.

KELSIE

Alec Meikle? *'Sailor and Commander'*
Alec Meikle?

Alec gives Kelsie a soft grin, then continues to remove his make-up.

ALEC

That would be me.

KELSIE

But...You don't have a daughter!

ALEC

Actually, I do.

Kelsie feeling like an idiot, apologizes. Alec, not used to having someone speak to him that directly, seems intrigued.

KELSIE

It's just...why have we never heard of her? I would think she would be big news.

ALEC

If you have one, would you want your daughter to be "big news?"

KELSIE

No. I guess not.

ALEC

No, you don't have a daughter, or
no, you wouldn't want her face
plastered across the headlines?

KELSIE

Both.

ALEC

Good. We're making progress. Now,
would you mind too terribly telling
me why my daughter has become so
enamored with you?

Kelsie pulls her mind back from its tangled thoughts.

KELSIE

I have no idea.

ALEC

You must have some idea. I'm sure
this is as awkward for you as it is
for me. Why did you agree to it?

Kelsie takes a moment to respond.

KELSIE

Because...because she seemed to
need something, and I thought we
might be able to help her.

ALEC

How did she sell it to you?

KELSIE (GIVING A SHORT LAUGH)

Well, that's something altogether
different. Let's see...She started
off with when she fought her way
out of the womb. Then, there was
something about you having *lapsed*.

ALEC

Lapsed?

KELSIE

That's the word she used. Oh, and
she seemed to be particularly
concerned about your playing golf--
and in plaids no less. She seems to
have a thing about plaids...

ALEC

Right. She hates them. But, what was this rendezvous with you to 'create an ice cream flavor for her birthday' supposed to accomplish?

KELSIE

Well, she felt you needed someone to distract you--to catch your eye. She says it never lasts long, but it helps your career, or some such.

Alec lets go a loud laugh. As he quiets, he sits for a moment, staring at the mirror. He mumbles to himself.

ALEC

That little matchmaker...

Alec goes quiet again for a moment, then turns to her, breaking the silence.

ALEC

And you had no idea who I was?

Kelsie shakes her head. After another brief silence, she gives him a slight grin.

KELSIE

Well, I promised her I would meet you, and that's done. If ya need a flavor created, I have some ideas I can run past Isla and I'll return her check. I haven't cashed it.

ALEC

Her check?

KELSIE

Yes. Six thousand pounds, with a promise of nine more at the end of the project, though I'm not exactly sure what she meant by that.

Again, Alec went quiet. Kelsie opened the door.

ALEC

Nice meetin' ya, Mr Miekle. Isla is quite a gal.

Kelsie steps out of the limo, which seems to bring Alec out of his trance.

ALEC

Yes, she is. So is Kelsie McDunn.

Kelsie stops.

ALEC (CONTINUING)

I already know a good bit about you, Ms. McDunn. Tell you what; I'll increase the offer to thirty thousand pounds if you'll see the project through.

Kelsie turns and bends back down to look into the car.

KELSIE

If that's true, Mr. Miekle then ya know I don't need your money.

ALEC

On the contrary. You want to prove you can make it without your father's money.

KELSIE

Aye. You're right...and Isla *does* need...something.

ALEC

Have dinner with me tonight. Hear me out.

KELSIE

Hear you out?

ALEC

It's just dinner, Kelsie. Not many young ladies can say they've dined with the Captain of '*Sailor and Commander*'...

Kelsie rolls her eyes.

KELSIE

Really? If that's the tone of the dinner, count me out Captain!

Alec realizes his mistake and tries to backtrack.

ALEC

Kelsie, that...that didn't come out right. Forgive me. What I meant to say is, I feel I need your help and I would truly appreciate if you'd have dinner with me... I'll buy a pint of ice cream, any flavor...

Kelsie takes a long moment to consider the request.

ALEC
Pick you up at seven tonight? I'll
be in my Gull-wing.

KELSIE
Gull-wing?

ALEC
Aye. It's a special edition silver
Mercedes and believe me, I never
lapse when I'm in my Gull-Wing!

Alec gives a warm smile. Kelsie studies his face.

KELSIE
Okay. Seven then. If ya know so
much about me, I suppose ya know my
address. When ya arrive, pull up to
the curb and I'll come down.

Alec gives a nod. Kelsie turns and leaves. He watches her
go. His eyebrows slowly, purposefully knit, his brow
increasingly furrows, belying the intensity of his stare.

CUT TO:

SCENE NINE

INT. KELSIE'S ICE CREAM EMPORIUM, OLD TOWN, EDINBURGH

Katie is chatting with a soccer player as Kelsie enters the
shop, flushed and hurrying. She motions for Katie to follow.
Katie brings her conversation to a quick close and follows.

KATIE
That was a long walk! What happ--

Kelsie cuts her off.

KELSIE
It was him!

KATIE
Him? Him who? You're not makin'
much sense, luv.

KELSIE
Him Isla's father!

KATIE
That old man was Isla's father?

KELSIE
In disguise... Isla's father is--

Kelsie pauses, trying to think how to best break the news. It's obvious she is still trying to come to terms with the experience. Katie raises an eyebrow.

KELSIE
Isla's father, Katie, is *ALEC*
MIKLE!

Katie's eyes fly wide.

KATIE
No! Alec 'Sailor and Commander'?
Meikle? He was in our shop?

Kelsie slowly nods, grinning despite her state of disbelief.

KATIE
Okay, so--details, lass! Besides
being an amazingly convincin' old
geezer, what did he want?

KELSIE
Uh...He wants to take me to dinner
tonight.

Katie's eyes open even wider. She seems in shock. Her words come out as a mumble.

KATIE
Heavens almighty... But, I've never
heard that Alec Mickle has a
daughter. Is Isla adopted?

KELSIE
I don't think so, but he didn't
give much explanation. He just
asked me if I would want my
daughter plastered across the
headlines, or some such.

KATIE
She must be the best kept secret in
all of Britain!

KELSIE
Aye.

KATIE
*Well...Isla's *Dark Unicorn* makes*
more sense now. Poor girl--the most
famous dad in Scotland, and she
can't tell a soul.

KELSIE

That's why I agreed to it. I saw
Isla's face in my mind, tellin' me,
"I need your help."

KATIE

Really? The good Samaritan speech?
I know it's your heart, Kelsie, but
you're goin' out with Alec Meikle,
the world's most eligible bachelor!
What are ya gonna wear?

Kelsie bites back a grin, then looks down at herself.

KELSIE

I have *no idea!* I've nothin' for
this type of situation, Katie--
nothin'! Should I give PeeWee a
call?

KATIE

Well, I seriously doubt that ya
have nothin' but I do agree ya need
to be pullin' things together, and
PeeWee would probably help. Take
the afternoon off. Isla is stoppin'
back by after her class and I'll
put her to work. She and I can hold
down the fort.

Kelsie takes a deep breath.

KELSIE

Thanks, Katie, I believe that's
just what I'll do. Oh, and he did
ask for that extra pint of ice
cream--must have liked it!

Katie gives her head a shake.

KATIE

I'm beginnin ta like this man more
and more! What flavor?

KELSIE

He said any flavor.

KATIE

Wow! An endorsement like this
certainly wouldn't hurt sales!

KELSIE

I, I didn't even think of that!

KATIE

Right! Get your things, lass, and
off with ya! Time's a burnin'!

KELSIE

Sure you'll be alright? I owe ya!

KATIE

That ya do...

As Kelsie opens the door to leave, Katie calls out.

And you'll be tellin' me all the
juicy details first thing! Don't be
forgettin' that!

When Kelsie is finally gone, Katie leans back against the
counter with a huge sigh.

KATIE

Alec Meikle...Who'd have thought?

FADE OUT.

SCENE TEN

EXT. front entry of the park, OLD TOWN, EDINBURGH

FADE UP ON THE APARTMENTS, CAMERA SLOWLY FOCUSES IN ON A
CORNER BAY WINDOW TWO FLOORS UP. KELSIE STANDS AT THE WINDOW
HOLDING HER CAT AND TALKING ON THE PHONE.

CUT TO:

INT. INSIDE KELSIE'S APARTMENT AT THE PARK.

KELSIE

No, really, it looks great! Thanks
PeeWee--I owe ya one.

Kelsie puts the phone down, strokes Grey Beard a few more
times, staring off at the sunset. She puts the cat down. She
is dressed in a dark blue blouse with a form-fitting black
skirt, matching heels, dangling diamond earrings, a matching
bracelet, and a diamond pendant. A silver Mercedes pulls up.
She looks down at the cat.

KELSIE

Well, this is it. Wish me luck.

She grabs a designer black coat, picks up a small purse, and
heads toward the door, shouting over her shoulder.

KELSIE

If I'm not back by midnight, Grey
Beard, come after me... I mean, who
else will feed ya?

The cat, settled onto a cushion at the edge of the bay
window, seems only vaguely interested.

CUT TO:

SCENE ELEVEN

INT. KELSIE'S ICE CREAM EMPORIUM, OLD TOWN, EDINBURGH

Katie is just finishing up with a customer at the register
when Isla walks in. She walks over to the back high counter
and takes a seat. Katie wishes the departing couple a good
eve, then walks over to Isla.

KATIE

Well, Ms. Meikle; that was a bit of
a bombshell.

Isla can't help breaking into a quick grin.

ISLA

I warned ya.

Isla's outfit is a smash-up of Goth and fandom. Katie notes
that she seems to identify with the anti-hero.

KATIE

That ya did... As ya probably know,
your dad is out with Kelsie, and I
volunteered ya to help behind the
counter. Ya think you're up to it?

ISLA

You offerin' me a job?

KATIE

Aye. It only pays minimum wage, but
there are...benefits.

ISLA

Like...?

KATIE

Well, ya get to learn from Kelsie,
McDunn, the flavor master. And ya
get my sparklin' personality...

ISLA

Well, sounds like a deal I can't pass up! ...So, how did it go?

KATIE

Go? Oh, ya mean the part where your dad dresses up like a beggar and turns out to be Alec Meikle? It was...*it was magical!*

ISLA

Good! Hopefully, Kelsie won't let the castle throw her.

KATIE

Castle?

ISLA

Yeah. Dad's takin' her home for dinner tonight. He owns Fa'side Castle.

Katie raises an eyebrow.

KATIE

Oh, Kelsie's gonna love this!

Isla starts to reply, but is interrupted. The front bell clinks and the door opens. It's a middle-aged, beefy man with wavy black hair and a trim beard, wearing a Levi jacket with the sleeves cut off.

KAYCEE (MAN WITH LEVI JACKET)

Hey, luv, could I, I have a minute?

Katie looks over. Seeing who it is, she sighs.

KATIE

Kaycee, you're interruptin' an important conversation. Somethin' I can do for ya? Spit it out!

Kaycee hesitates, then starts trying to speak. He stammers and stutters. Katie shakes her head, motioning for him to get it out, whatever it is.

KAYCEE

Uh. Well, uh, ya see, Katie, I've...I've run a bit short--

KATIE

Stop right there, Kaycee. Ya know the answer, and ya know the reason.

KAYCEE

Don't, don't be that way, K-Katie!
What we have...

KATIE

What we have at this moment is a
failure to communicate. Now, say
goodnight to my friend, Isla, and
be away. This is bad timin'...

Kaycee wipes his hands on his jeans. It's obvious he wants
to say more, but he just says goodbye to Isla. He frowns,
dejected and shuffles out. Katie looks over to Isla.

KATIE

Sorry for that.

Isla is still staring at the door.

ISLA

Was that your boyfriend?

KATIE

Uh, no. Kaycee is *not* my boyfriend.
My *mistake* is closer to the mark.
Maybe one day that'll change, but
for now, it's the long and the
short of it.

Isla looks to Katie.

ISLA

Thanks, by the way.

KATIE

For what?

ISLA

For tellin' him I was your friend.

Katie looks up.

KATIE

Well, we are friends, aren't we?
And now, you're our newest employee
too, right?

Isla breaks back into a smile, giving an amiable shrug.

KATIE

Good! Let's get ya clocked in and
trained on the counter before some
other near-disaster walks in...

CUT TO:

SCENE TWELVE

EXT. CASTLE PROPERTY, EAST OF EDINBURGH,

The Mercedes turns down a long drive. Kelsie gasps as a striking lit castle comes into view. As they stop in front of the massive wood and iron doors, Alec helps Kelsie out of the car. The castle doors open and a smartly dressed butler appears. He smiles as the two enter. Alec gestures with a grand wave of his hand.

ALEC

Here we are. She's a beauty, is she not?

KELSIE

Oh, aye. Did ya say ya filmed here?

Everywhere Kelsie looks, the view is breathtaking, like something from a magazine. She lets herself wander.

ALEC (SLOW GLANCE, AS IF AT A MEMORY)

Yes... Yes, I did. I fell in love with her almost immediately. That's why, when she came on the market a few years ago, I bought her.

KELSIE

You bought her? So, you're sayin' ya own this place?

ALEC

That's what I'm sayin'.

KELSIE

Well, that might have been some pertinent information to share.

ALEC

But a man's house is his castle. Is that not the saying?

Alec grins, then motions for Kelsie to leave her coat with the butler, who then escorts them past a hive of activity toward the dining room. Alec directs her to a seat next to him at the great table. Attendants begin serving soup. Kelsie glances around, trying to take everything in.

KELSIE

Heavens! Is every room in this place a great hall? What do you and Isla do with all this space?

Alec seats himself and grabs a dinner roll.

ALEC

Not all. There are quaint nooks and crannies. Those are Isla's domain. She especially likes the lookout from the turrets.

Kelsie seats herself, takes a roll and butters it.

KELSIE

I suppose there's a lot an only child could do in a place like this; cross swords with the armor, chase bats, ride horses through the hallway... Seems a little cold and impersonal to me, though.

Alec looks over, finishing his bread.

ALEC

You get straight to the point, don't you? Aye, she's an only child alright, and while we don't ride horses in the halls, there is the occasional motorbike.

Alec gives Kelsie a boyish wink, then continues.

ALEC

That's the limit, though. Frankly, Isla's sense of isolation is at the crux of what I want to speak with you about.

I'm not able to go out much, as you can imagine and when I do, I have to be careful, as you've seen. I've managed to keep her away from the limelight, but it hasn't been easy. Part of my justification for buying this castle was to bring the world to her. In a space this size, I thought I might be able to keep her busy. She has interesting studies and cultural experiences, but lately, it's not enough.

KELSIE

Well, I wouldn't think so.

Alec straightens himself in his chair, a shadow running across his face as he takes a couple of bites of soup.

ALEC

I think she's lonely, and she's...getting more difficult by the day--moody and angry. Almost daily, she invents issues that she's sure she, alone, can resolve.

KELSIE

Well, if ya want my take on the situation, here it is: Isla's at a age when she needs friends and companions--not a huge, mostly empty castle! Maybe her meddling is a way of tellin' ya she doesn't appreciate livin' in a *bubble*. Your career may well require sacrifices, but your askin' her to face it mostly alone.

ALEC

You are direct.

KELSIE

I tell it like I see it, Alec. As I've told ya before; I like Isla. If bein' direct helps the two of ya find a better path, well, it's a small price to pay..

ALEC

You're not afraid of me, are you?

KELSIE

Should I be? Are you afraid of me?

ALEC (GRINS)

Maybe. Just a little. You do know I was voted '*Man of the Year*' by four different publications last year?

KELSIE

Oh, aye--but they didn't vote ya '*Dad of the Year*,' did they? A good PR team isn't what Isla needs--she needs a dad and a friend.

Alec seems taken back, but he doesn't immediately respond. He studies her a moment. She takes the chance to dig into her soup and bread.

ALEC

So, tell me more about what Isla needs at the moment?

Kelsie glances up from her soup.

KELSIE

Okay: validation. *Let her go, Alec!*
She's a young woman, not a secret
to be locked away in a tower...

ALEC

And the paparazzi?

Alec motions for the attendant to take away his soup bowl. When the attendant tries to take Kelsie's bowl, however, she takes it back, politely.

KELSIE

The paparazzi is paparazzi. They're gonna be who they're gonna be. You can deal with them. Teach her.

The second course is served, a harvest salad with caramelized pecans, flakes of dried peaches, and goat cheese crumbles, with a berry vinaigrette. Kelsie lets the attendant take her plate this time.

ALEC

Things are so easy in your world.

Kelsie was just ready to take a bite of salad, but lowers the fork.

KELSIE

Really? My dad owns the largest energy holdings in Britain, and everyone expects me, his only only daughter, to be either a flighty socialite or representin' women's rights on the board, and *me*? I like creating ice cream flavors...

ALEC

If I was to, to *let her go*, as you put it, would you mentor her?

Kelsie almost chokes on her salad.

KELSIE

Mentor her?

ALEC

She's bright, and creative, and entrepreneurial, and she likes you. You're bright, and creative, and entrepreneurial, and you like her. You're the perfect mentor for her.

KELSIE

We're strugglin' to stay alive,
Alec. I'd like to help, but I just
don't have the bandwidth.

ALEC

I'm not asking you to disrupt your
schedule. Just let her shadow you.
She picks things up fast.

KELSIE

I don't doubt that, but--

ALEC

If you're worried about struggling,
I don't think that will be an issue
after I pull out a pint of your ice
cream while talking to the press
and let them sample it around.

Alec looks down and digs heartily into his salad. Kelsie
looks at him, takes another bite, then looks up again.

KELSIE

You would do that?

ALEC

That and more.

Alec motions that he is finished with his salad. The
attendant removes the plate and serves the main dish, a type
of cranberry trout with seasonal vegetables. As Alec wipes
his mouth again, it's obvious he enjoys eating.

ALEC

The financial agreement also
stands. I'll double Isla's offer.

Kelsie is listening, but she is also taking time with her
salad, trying to note what all is in it. It is clear she,
also, has noted the quality of the food.

KELSIE

Well...Katie wants me to hire staff
and Isla and I spoke about her
workin' there. In fact, I think
she's working with Katie tonight.

ALEC

Excellent! That's all I'm asking.

Kelsie finishes the salad and breathes in the smell of the
main course when her plate is served.

KELSIE
Who is your chef? The food is
simply amazing.

ALEC
Well, I do hire only the best
culinary experts to cook my
recipes.

KELSIE
Your recipes?

Alec looks up with a grin, wiping his mouth.

ALEC
Well, I didn't create the recipes.
I find them. It's sort of a hobby
of mine. As I travel around with my
career, I sample the best of the
best, and keep notes.

Kelsie seems a bit surprised. She gives Alec a smile.

KELSIE
So, you're a foodie?

ALEC
Guilty as charged! I am weak in the
desserts category, though. I don't
even have a good ice cream recipe.

KELSIE
Sorry to disappoint, but our
recipes are trade secrets.

ALEC
I've heard that before. I can be
very persuasive.

KELSIE
I don't doubt that.

ALEC
And I'm patient...Oh, so patient.

KELSIE
I said 'secret' Did ya not hear?
This may be what Isla's referin' to
when she says your 'lapsin'.

Alec chuckles.

ALEC
At least I'm not wearing plaids.

KELSIE
True. You're not. But let's put the
notion to rest; no amount of money
will buy our recipes...

ALEC
So, she throws down the gauntlet!

Kelsie takes another bite of fish, evidently enjoying.

KELSIE
...BUT...

She looks up, savoring the bite until the last swallow.

ALEC
But?

KELSIE
I may be willin' to exchange a
recipe or two for access to your
recipe files...

Alec raises an eyebrow.

ALEC
I may be willing to grant access--
with the limitation, mind you, that
the recipe is never shared. Deal?

(Kelsie's face breaks into a smile.)

KELSIE
Now we're negotiating...

FADE OUT.

ACT TWO

SCENE THIRTEEN

EXT. OUTSIDE THE CITY CAFE, OLD TOWN, EDINBURGH

CAMERA FADES IN TO CLOSE UP OF A BIRD, SINGING ATOP THE CITY
CAFE SIGN.

As camera pulls out, we see Kelsie carrying two smallish
bags as she exits the cafe. She takes a moment, looking up
to find the bird, giving it a soft smile. The bird flits
away. She watches after it.

CUT TO:

EXT. KELSIE'S ICE CREAM EMPORIUM, OLD TOWN, EDINBURGH

Kelsie approaches the shop. Katie and Isla are already there, sitting at one of the outside tables talking freely.

KATIE

So, she decides to join us! Let us praise the elements and take a moment to synchronize watches.

Kelsie tightens her smile.

KELSIE

Okay--I suppose I deserve that. By the way, there are pastries and breakfast sandwiches from the Cafe in the bag.

Katie and Isla follow her into the shop.

KATIE

What's the celebration?

KELSIE

I don't have to be celebratin' to be in a good mood.

KATIE

Maybe not, but if you're in a good mood, we're celebratin'!

Katie winks at Isla as Kelsie unlocks the shop door as the three of them continue on into the back, flipping lights on as they go. Kelsie hands Katie a lab coat, and Katie hands it to Isla, grabbing another one from the pegs for herself. Kelsie gives her a curious look, which she promptly ignores.

KATIE

We're a little late opening, Isla. Would ya mind gettin' napkin containers on all the tables, checking the straws and spoons, then turn on the music and sign?

Isla shrugs and starts pulling on the lab coat. Katie, however, holds back. When Isla is out of earshot, she turns to Kelsie.

KATIE

So, Isla is doing really good as a new hire. She catches on to things really fast!

KELSIE

I don't seem to recall a discussion about hirin' Isla.

KATIE

It happened...I just connected the dots is all.

KELSIE

Connected the dots?

KATIE

Yeah. Ya told me I'd have to take more initiative if I was to be manager. Then ya told me that ya agreed we needed more staff. Then ya said, '*Have Isla help...*' Connect all those up, and ya certainly did tell me to hire her.

Kelsie tries to think through Katie's reasoning.

KELSIE

Well, you're in the clear this time, Katie, but it's plain, dumb luck! Alec wants me to mentor Isla, so I planned to hire her.

KATIE

Mentor her?

KELSIE

That's what I said.

KATIE

Ya never mentored me!

Kelsie gives a short laugh.

KELSIE

Like that would've gone over well!

KATIE

Ya have a point there.

KELSIE

So, Isla accepted the job?

KATIE

Aye. It's obvious she mostly wants ya to teach her about your process for inventin' flavors. I guess that would be the mentorin' part. The rest, well, she seems okay with it.

(MORE)

KATIE (CONT'D)
I think she enjoys bein' out. Seems
to me that she's not had a lot of
companionship.

KELSIE
Aye, seems that way to me too.

Kelsie starts putting out the bagels and cream cheese and
pastries.

KELSIE
Well, I guess the shop needs a sort
of dark angel vibe.

KATIE
You caught that, did ya?

KELSIE
Hard to miss it. Takes a while to
find the eyeballs beneath all the
mascara.

Katie snickers. Kelsie folds down the food bags and puts
them in a recycling bin. Katie seems hesitant to leave.

KATIE
So?

KELSIE
So what?

KATIE
So, how was it! Ya only went to
dinner with the most eligible
bachelor on the planet!

KELSIE
It was a business dinner, Katie!
He's nice. He has some interesting
hobbies and the castle is gorgeous.

KATIE
That's it? That's all you're gonna
tell me?

KELSIE
That's all there is, Katie.

Isla sticks her head around the corner.

ISLA

By the way, did ya get somethin'
delivered to your apartment this
morning?

Kelsie grabs her lab coat and starts buttoning it.

KELSIE

No. Should I have?

At that moment, the front bell rings. Isla turns. A delivery man steps in with the largest, most beautiful vase of roses any of them has ever seen. Isla pumps a fist at the air. Kelsie wanders over and takes the flowers, somewhat bewildered. She thanks the man, then looks at the card.

KELSIE

They're from Alec. He wants me to
go to Ireland to watch his shoot.

KATIE

'All *there is to it*' my eye! Men
don't send a rose garden to thank
ya for a business dinner!

KELSIE

I swear Katie, *nothin'* happened!

KATIE

Well, while you're contemplatin'
all the *nothin'* which did or did
not occur, I'll just take these
gorgeous flowers and put 'em across
the tables. Isla, could ya grab
those dessert glasses? They'll make
good vases...

Isla is having trouble wiping the smile off her face. Kelsie slowly lowers herself onto a stool. She seems in shock.

KELSIE

He's sending tickets over. It's
some kind of film for the Irish
Travel board... I leave tomorrow.

KATIE

So, leave tomorrow. Isla and I will
be fine. Go! Away with ya now! Ya
need a vacation anyway!

KELSIE

I can't just leave! I planned to
spend some time with Isla--

Isla turns, talking over her concerns.

ISLA

Go! Dad leaves all the time. It's his job. I'm used to it.

KATIE

Havin' ya dump everythin' on us and go is a sight better than havin' ya dump everythin' on us and stay!

Katie and Isla chuckle at the joke, but Kelsie is so caught up in her thoughts that she scarcely notices. She doesn't respond, just wanders to the back, staring down at the card.

CUT TO:

SCENE FOURTEEN

EXT. WORKING CLIPPER SHIP, DUBLIN BAY, IRELAND

MONTAGE OF PLANE TAKING OFF FROM GLASGOW INTERNATIONAL AND LANDING IN DUBLIN, AND KELSIE GETTING THROUGH ENTRY.

Kelsie meets a young, female assistant holding a sign who leads her to a taxi. Kelsie takes in the scenery of Dublin. They pull up to a small inlet pier where a small boat is waiting. She boards and the boat whisks her off to what appears to be a clipper ship. As we come around the nose, however, we see it is only a mock up of a ship in full sail. The ship cuts through the waves at a good clip. As the boat continues around, we see the ship's back end is connected by a rigging to a large tug boat. They come up along side her.

Kelsie grabs a steel ladder on the tug and pulls herself up. Two men help her up on the boat. One, a younger man with a British accent, possibly an intern, introduces himself as Robert.

ROBERT (ALEC'S ASSISTANT)

Hi Ms. McDunn. I'm Robert. Alec is in make-up. He asked if I would escort you to the tower.

KELSIE

When Alec said he'd be filmin' on location, I didn't expect to be on a ship.

ROBERT

Yes! Exciting, isn't it? Alec is a genuine mariner. He probably could Captain a ship like this.

(MORE)

ROBERT (CONT'D)
He loves the sea and opts for live
ocean filming over studio sets.

Robert helps weave Kelsie through a crowd of people. She glimpses Alec getting his makeup and costume fine-tuned. A portly man with a beard, who she assumes is the director, is chatting with a cameraman a few meters away. Robert leads her to a steel stairway that winds up to the observation level on the tug. They continue talking as they climb.

ROBERT
Of course, Alec wanted the actual
Tall Ship, the Endurance II, but
space on it was so restrictive and
the precautions we'd have to take--

Kelsie sees a group of short men with green suits and bowler hats climbing into a speed boat attached to the tug.

KELSIE
Are those leprechauns?

Robert follows her gaze.

ROBERT
Oh, yes! We're doing the effects
scene today--where they ram the
front of the ship...Can I get you
anything? Coffee? Tea?

Kelsie is not really not sure how to respond.

KELSIE
They're gonna ram us on purpose?

Robert chuckles, offering a boyish grin.

ROBERT
Not us! The replica ship--in fact,
they don't actually ram anything.
Just watch closely and you'll see.
It's one of our most complicated
special effects shots.

KELSIE
So, those wee men...

ROBERT
Are dwarves--I'm sorry; *persons of
small stature*. They're a pretty
cheeky lot though.
(MORE)

ROBERT (CONT'D)

A bit rough around the edges, if you know what I mean. I'd give them a wide berth.

KELSIE

Thanks--noted. Oh, and if you're still offerin', tea would be nice.

Robert nods again and heads back down the stairs. Kelsie glances around. The make-up and costume people seem to be finishing up and scurry off the set. Alec walks toward the ship wheel in full Captain regalia. A few men and women scurry here and there, checking the rigging, setting up sound or tweaking the lights. In the water, the leprechauns pull out in their 24 meter speedboat. A tall, thin man shouts into a megaphone.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Places! We go in five, four, three, two, one...

Someone shouts; "Rolling!" The crew become still and quiet. Kelsie sips her tea as she watches Alec at the Captain's wheel. The tug boat has picked up a little speed, making the ride a bit more choppy and throwing sprays of mist up over the bough. Kelsie grabs the rail. Alec turns the wheel. To Kelsie's amazement, the replica ship seems to respond.

ALEC

Cap'n Anan Deaglan McFarrell at the wheel. What a trip we have planned for ya today--and what a ship to get us there! You'll find no finer in all the isles. This be an exact replica of Ernest Shekelton's "Endurance!" From the wood planking to the white, furling sails, she's a true beauty!

Cameras are in motion. One is hanging on a boom out over the water. A camera behind Alec raises up and swivels to get shots of the decking, lines, and mast. Alec leaves the ship wheel as another sailor comes up behind him. He walks slowly toward the ship's railing, hands clasped behind his back.

ALEC

What be our destination ya might ask? Ireland, my friends...

(MORE)

ALEC (CONT'D)

The very name is enough to conjure
images of wee folk, mermaids, and
fairies; pots of shining gold, and
shades of green beneath the rainy
forest mists...Aye, the Emerald
Isle--a dream to behold!

Kelsie grins at the sudden mastery Alec shows in his role. He's every bit as good as she imagined. She takes another sip of her tea. Alec reaches the ship rail and places a hand on it. He lets the hand run lightly across the top of the railing as he makes his way toward the bow of the ship.

ALEC

We'll discuss Irish traditions, the
beloved rituals of a people that
have had immense--

At that moment, the tug gives a sudden, violent rock. Kelsie is grateful she had hold of the rail, but Alec is not so lucky. He had skillfully avoided putting pressure on the rail until now, but as he is thrown forward, the railing gives way, leaving him careening head first into the sea.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Man overboard!

DIRECTOR

Cut! Cut!

The director doesn't even seem to notice Alec has fallen. He's shouting over a walkie-talkie.

DIRECTOR

What the hell? The ship movement
was way early! We're talking a good
minute or more! Get Cage on it--

Alec bobs up as a tethered lifesaver is thrown overboard near where he fell.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

...He's up! Lifesaver in the water!
Skiff in the water! ...Got him!

Kelsie watches, her heart racing a bit. Alec is pulled onto a motorized skiff. As the skiff turns back toward the tug, the crew turn away and begin scurrying to repair the set. Alec's make-up and costume team meet him at the back of tug along with the crew EMT, who Alec promptly waves off.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

All right--shows over! We need to be ready for retake in twenty-five minutes and counting! We're already pushing against lunch!

Alec is helped back up onto deck, shivering a bit, but smiling and joking with the crew. He looks over, giving Kelsie a thumbs up. At the costume area, a tri-fold screen is set up to provide privacy as he strips off his clothes. His cross strap and waist coat are off even before he reaches the tri-fold, and he pulls his white shirt off before stepping behind it. Kelsie can't help but notice his strong muscled back. As he steps behind the screens, he catches Kelsie staring at his well-muscled torso and smiles, giving a little wave. Kelsie, angry with herself for looking, turns away.

ROBERT

How are you getting on, Ms. McDunn?

KELSIE

Fine...Uh, isn't that boat gettin' a bit close?

Kelsie points toward the leprechaun speed boat, racing toward the ship. Robert follows her gaze.

ROBERT

Oh, they're filming the boat crash scene. I'll take ya through it: The camera tracks them as they disappear below the railing, the boat rocks. An explosion throws wood, debris, and water sprays up, the Captain reacts, then comes the explosion on the other side as the leprechauns come bursting out!

KELSIE

Won't that ruin the set, much less damage the speed boat?

ROBERT

Oh, they don't actually hit anything. Wood panels on each side of the ship pull up leaving a clear passage for the ship. It's a little tricky, but the driver is one of the best in the business!

KELSIE

I hope so! That boat probably costs a fortune!

ROBERT

That it does! Anyway, when all the elements are put together, it's quite believable.

Kelsie narrows her eyes, looking over at the splintered railing.

KELSIE

If it were to happen in real life, though, wouldn't the ship sink?

ROBERT

Right...and it does. The Captain, who has been talking about the wealth of Irish tradition, shouts an obscenity at the leprechauns and says something to the effect of; *"Now we'll show you one of the greatest Irish seafaring traditions ...How to abandon ship!"*

Kelsie gives a light chuckle.

KELSIE

And who is this for? Was it the Irish Tourism Board?

ROBERT

Right. It's a spoof on YouTube travel infomercials.

KELSIE

Well, I certainly agree it's unique. Seems that many things connected to Alec are unique.

ROBERT

Alec is one of a kind! ...More tea?

KELSIE

No, but thank you--and I've kept ya long enough.

Robert nods, and hurries off. Kelsie looks after him a long moment, then looks over to Alec, who has come out from behind the tri-fold, looking as fresh and trim as ever.

KELSIE (MUMBLING)

So, Alec Meikle...You're one of a kind...and what kind might that be?

CUT TO:

SCENE FIFTEEN

INT. KELSIE'S ICE CREAM EMPORIUM, OLD TOWN EDINBURGH

Katie is restocking ice cream flavors in the ice cream bar while Isla is wiping down a table.

KATIE

Doin' great, luv! So, the lad I told ya about--the one what plays cricket--is comin' tonight. His name is Aryan. He should be in by six. You're okay with that, right?

ISLA

Does it matter?

KATIE

Of course it matters! I'll have to flick a spoon of this...Uh, Carrot Carmelo Cupcake, right at ya if'n your not!

Isla gives her a patronizing grin.

ISLA

So, let me get this straight--you're hiring a second employee, in Kelsie's absense, without a thought of discussing it with her? That sounds like something I might do.

Katie flashes her a devious smile, heading toward the back room to put pints of ice cream in the back freezer.

KATIE

It's why I hired ya! I knew we'd get a long.

ISLA (CALLING AFTER HER)

Is he at least easy on the eyes?

KATIE

Oh, aye! An athlete and a scholar. You'll be impressed, mark my words.

ISLA (CALLING AFTER HER)

I'm not impressed easily.

KATIE

Well, impressed or no, you'll be workin' with him, so best he think you're some semblance of normal.

ISLA
But I'm not.

KATIE (MUTTERING UNDER HER BREATH)
Don't I know it...

Isla looks up at the clock.

FADE TO:

MONTAGE OF THE CLOCK FACE, HANDS MOVING TO 6;00.

As the bell rings, Aryan, out of breath, rushes in, his hair wet and clothes disheveled. He looks wildly toward Isla.

ARYAN
Time, my good woman! I'm
desperately in need of the time!

Isla gives him a strange look, pointing at the wall clock.

ISLA
By the way, I'm not sure I'm good,
and I'm definitely *not* your woman.

ARYAN
But ya could be! The night's yet
young! Play your cards right, and
who knows!

He arches his eyebrows. Isla tries not to vomit.

ARYAN
So, what's your name? You do have
one? We may be workin' together--
what'cha think of that?

ISLA
I think I'll need aspirin--lots and
lots of aspirin...

ARYAN
You always this congenial, or did
ya reserve your most rare and
wonderful performance just for me?

ISLA
Praise be! There's hope for the
time wanderer! I sense a glimmer of
brain! If he can only focus it, we
might come to know his very name!

ARYAN

Oh, yeah. I'm Aryan, and, yes, I pride myself on bein' punctual, and yes, ya probably saw me in the post? Uh, huh. I've been called the best starting half in Edinburgh!

ISLA

What about the half that doesn't start?

ARYAN

You're a barrel of laughs! I'm talkin' rugby--a *fly half*--in case you're not a sports person.

Katie comes out from the back, wiping her hands on a towel.

KATIE

Oh, hi Aryan.

Isla throws Katie a punishing gaze as she escapes into the back room. Aryan stares toward the back room as if shocked.

ARYAN

I've met more pleasant wolverines!

KATIE

So, ya met Isla, did ya?

Aryan is still staring toward the back room.

ARYAN

So, ya say she's an island?

KATIE

Her name is I-S-L-A! And ya best find a way to work with her if you're gonna be workin' here. Ya get my drift?

ARYAN

Aye, I get it. *Just throw me to the wolves, would ya!* It's that kind of day! Practice goes over--I barely have time for a shower, then I'm chasin' the bus two blocks, tryin' to throw clothes on along the way.

KATIE

Aye, life has its way of whittlin' us back down toward the stubs we are on any given day. Kudos, by-the-by for throwin' yer clothes on!

(MORE)

KATIE (CONT'D)
I think all of us in this fair city
applaud that move.

Katie throws Aryan a sarcastic grin as the boy walks toward the back room, miming ripping his shirt open while mumbling, with feeling; "Agony!...Agony!"

CUT TO:

SCENE SIXTEEN

EXT. COBBLED STREET IN FRONT OF HAWKSMOOR RESTAURANT, DUBLIN

Kelsie exits a taxi and finds herself standing at the foot of a small bank of stairs. The building before her is columned with almost a roman look. She heads up the steps and enters through the massive doors into a space of iconic elegance. The sign over the door reads Hawksmoor.

Kelsie waits and waits at the restaurant. The afternoon sun fades. She paces back and forth to the door, walking out onto the stone steps, then finally, rests atop them. Alec finally shows up, jogging and out of breath.

ALEC
Sorry. (He takes a moment,
panting.) The dailies took longer
than expected, then my ride from
the marina had engine trouble... I
jogged the last mile.

KELSIE
Oh, dear, did ya lose your phone?

Alec looks up, studying Kelsie's eyes for a moment.

ALEC
No. Got it right here.

KELSIE
Well then, ya must have lost your
voice.

Alec slowly shakes his head, confused.

KELSIE
Well, if ya didn't lose your voice,
and ya didn't lose your phones, why
didn't ya call?

Alec looks suddenly like a deer caught in the headlights.

ALEC

Ah, I've walked right into a trap,
one I well deserve! Apologies.

KELSIE

Well...ya did fly me to Ireland.
I'll give ya a few points for that.
Besides, I had the opportunity to
appreciate the wood in these
windows...the detail in these
beautiful doors...the dirt patterns
across the cobblestones.

ALEC

The way fading sun touches my
angelic, if perspiring, face?

Alec cocks his head slightly, making sure to catch her eye.
Though she fights it, she does eventually offer a more
genuine smile. Alec breaks eye contact, satisfied.

ALEC

I think things are starting off
well with Isla. She seems genuinely
excited about working for you.

KELSIE

She's a smart girl. I wouldn't be
surprised to see her give the
business world a run for its money
when she's ready.

ALEC

Oh, aye. I'm counting on it! It's
why I'm having her mentored by THE
one and only Kelsie McDunn!

Kelsie's grin widens.

KELSIE

Alright, you're forgiven. Now,
seriously, this is a beautiful
place. I'd be interested in the
history of it.

Alec gives a quick nod, smiling back.

ALEC

Aye! The Hawksmoor is, well, an
institution around here. They've
some very tasty Irish dishes and
some amazing desserts.

KELSIE
It looks old.

ALEC
Aye. It has been around a long
time. It has a fascinating history,
steeped in Dublin tradition...

CLOSE UP OF ALEC PULLING SUNGLASSES FROM HIS POCKET,

Alec ducks down and puts them on before opening the door for
Kelsie. They step inside. The door closes after them.

FADE TO:

SCENE SEVENTEEN

INT. HAWKMOOR RESTAURANT, DUBLIN IRELAND.

They're led to a private dining room with several smaller
tables. The hostess guides Alec to the the only one that has
a full table settings on it. Kelsie lags a bit, taking the
room in. It has dark, greenish-blue paneling, gold
highlights, accent lights, and tasteful decor. Alec address
the Hostess.

ALEC
Thanks, Monica. Please bring the
vintage Chablis I picked out. We'll
be ready to order soon.

The Hostess gives a nod and leaves. Alec takes off his
sunglasses and helps Kelsie into her seat. Within minutes,
the hostess is back with a bucket of chilled Chablis. She
hands them menus housed in tall leather portfolios that
match the color of the room. Alec seats himself and opens
the menu. Kelsie follows suit.

ALEC
Is there something you would
recommend tonight, Monica?

MONICA
Well...My choices would always be
either the Chateaubriand, or the
Dublin Bay Monk Fish. The Sourdough
with Glenilin butter is just out of
the oven and pipin' hot. And for
dessert, the Peanut Butter Louis,
or Pineapple Upside-down Financier.

Alec looks over to see what Kelsie is interested in, but notes she's still visually exploring the room. He smiles at the hostess.

ALEC

Perhaps give us just a few moments.

The hostess gives a nod, smiling, and quietly exits the room. As soon as the door closes, Alec turns to Kelsie.

ALEC

They call the room "None the Wiser" after a Dexter cow from 1892. As you may note, the whole room is a tribute to native cattle breeders.

Kelsie points to picture boards centered in the various panels.

KELSIE

I love the names...Croom A-Boo, Razzle-Dazzle, Charlie's Aunt, King of Kilarney, and Did'na Forget. They read almost like poetry.

ALEC

Aye. They have a gift for naming things in the Isle, God's truth.

Kelsie opens her menu and begins to scan it.

KELSIE

Impressive menu with surprisingly reasonable prices.

ALEC

Aye.

Kelsie closes the menu and puts it back down.

KELSIE

Why don't you order for me?

Alec looks up with a sly grin.

ALEC

Oh, you are the brave one.

Alec looks down, then closes the menu.

ALEC

Ready Monica...I believe we'll try the local fish--Bay Monk Fish.

(MORE)

ALEC (CONT'D)

It has a bit of a Halibut texture and their sauces are superb. I'll also add the creamed spinach and some of the fresh-baked Sourdough. For dessert, we'll try the ice-cream; the Pineapple Upside-down Financier.

KELSIE

Sounds ominous.

ALEC

That it does. Thank you, Monica.

Monica nods and leaves the room.

KELSIE

So, you're on first name basis with everyone here? They seem to come at your beck and call.

ALEC

I must admit, I visit Ireland frequently. Sometimes, to film. Sometimes, because...Well, I have business interests here.

Kelsie finds the last part of the comment interesting, but decides not to pry.

KELSIE

It is a beautiful country.

Kelsie reaches forward and lifts the bottle of Chablis to read the label.

KELSIE

Domaine Larroche... Is it a good wine?

ALEC

Aye. A 2019 vintage Chablis Grand Cru from their Reserve. I thought you might know your wines.

KELSIE

I don't drink much. I like *knowin'* when I'm in control and not just *thinkin'* that I do.

ALEC
Smart lady. Of course, those are
fighting words for a Guinness man--
which are all around here!

FADE TO:

SHORT MONTAGE OF THE MEAL PROGRESSING WITH WHAT SEEMS
PLEASANT CONVERSATION, ENDING IN A TIGHT SHOT OF TWO SMALL
DISHES OF ICE CREAM ON A SILVER TRAY.

A server sweeps the dishes off his silver tray with an
almost acrobatic flurry. He places them on a small napkin
beside each plate. Kelsie waits until he leaves.

KELSIE
Is it always like this?

ALEC
Like what?

Alec is leaning over, a napkin tucked into his shirt, taking
a last bite of the spinach.

KELSIE
Well...the precision and polish of
the staff. They're in, they're out,
quiet as a mouse and smooth, like a
well-oiled machine.

Alec gives a slight smile.

ALEC
To be fair, probably not. But I'm
Alec Miekle, and they know that
media--any media--will be quite
interested in what I have to say,
where I go, and why I go there.
Also, they know I was bringing a
special guest, so they're likely to
get a hefty tip. So, I'd say you're
probably seeing them at their best.

KELSIE
Well, it's impressive. These
sauces--oh heavens, I've got to
take home a sample of each!

ALEC
Which was your favorite?

KELSIE

Well, I really like the Porcini
Hollandaise, but I think I'm
partial to the Peppercorn.

Kelsie takes a bite of her ice cream.

KELSIE

Hmmm, I think this coconut is fresh
roasted.

ALEC

They take fresh very seriously
here.

Alec wipes his mouth, then digs into his own dish of
dessert.

ALEC

So, tell me more about your
emporium.

KELSIE

What do you want to know?

ALEC

What's with the white coats?

KELSIE

I like to think we're more than
just an ice cream shop.

ALEC

How so?

KELSIE

When I was a young girl, my father
father would take us to the ice
cream shop on Sundays. On nice
days, we'd sit out on the lawn to
enjoy our treat. I found myself
doing all in my power to prolong
those moments. I'd sit quiet and
still, lettin' the ice cream melt
in my mouth. Then I'd close my eyes
and try to milk every ounce of
pleasure out of the sweet, cool
taste sensation runnin' past my
tongue and down my throat.

No matter what the day had brought,
those were magical moments.

(MORE)

KELSIE (CONT'D)

It was as if all dark clouds parted at once, lettin' the sweet sunlight set the world around me aglow! Of course, no bowl of ice cream can last forever, but I found myself better able to cope with things after the break, as if a weight had had been lifted from my shoulders.

I thought, *What if we could bottle that?* It pushed me into business. I became an entrepreneur and an inventor to boot. Our flavors are designed to heighten common and pleasurable experience by carefully overlayin' the very taste of lost memories, hidden longings, and long suppressed loves into the texture of the treat.

ALEC

Very poetic.

KELSIE

Aye. It is a sort of chaotic poetry. We want people leavin' our shop seein' the world a little different, a bit brighter. We want people walkin' out with a spring in their step and a smile on the face.

ALEC

And all this from a simple bowl of ice cream.

KELSIE

There's nothin' simple about ice cream. True, we use ice and cream to highlight the sense of taste, but every ingredient wove into the mesh of flavor helps us challenge the mind and win the heart.

ALEC

Interesting. Not so different from what I do, only the senses I work with are the eyes and the ears.

Kelsie takes another bite of ice cream. The conversation has obviously hit a cord with Alec. He lowers his fork a moment, his eyes intensifying.

ALEC
You're a strange package, Kelsie McDunn.

KELSIE
Well, I'm not your average *Flavor of the Month* to be sure.

ALEC
You're not an average anything from what I can tell.

Kelsie tries to hide a slight blush.

KELSIE
Well, maybe I'm just a good actor.

ALEC
Aye. I've thought of that.

Alec takes a breath and looks at her as if trying to decide something.

ALEC
The care you put into your ice cream gives you away. I'll leave it at that.

Kelsie watches him take another bite of the dessert.

KELSIE
You know you're eatin' your ice cream all wrong.

Alec raises an eyebrow, but before he can respond, Kelsie continues.

KELSIE
There's an art to eatin' ice cream. Here, I'll show you.

She daintily peels a small bite from her own dish and feeds it to him.

KELSIE
Now, just let it sit on your tongue--don't swallow. Close your eyes and just let it sit there... Take time to savor, to appreciate the coolness the taste sensations criss-crossing your tongue.

ALEC

Is closing your eyes absolutely required?

Kelsie throws him a grin.

KELSIE

Not required, but a good idea. It let's you block out the immediate moment and focus on enjoyin' the ice cream itself...

There--a hint of orange. I can see it in my mind a green orchard, filled with ripening orange fruit, on a hill, overlookin' a sandy beach with bright blue ocean...

Then there's the cinnamon...I'm in a sweltering bazaar, on the fringes of a moonlit dune. A man is jugglin' a fire sword, and there's a hint of ash on the air.

Ah, next comes coconut--soft, smooth, another dune far away from cities, the coconut fronds swayin' overhead in a gentle breeze, with the moon, a giant's orb, risin' up to light the black sea.

ALEC

All that from a bite of ice cream?

KELSIE

Aye. And more. And if ya can get that from a single bite of ice cream, imagine the feast you could have if ya learned to truly use all your senses all the time? Why, you'd discover a world of wonder, livin' and breathin' in grand, swirlin' kaleidoscopes of sound, color, smell, and touch...

ALEC

And taste.

KELSIE

And taste... So, what flavor are you, Alec Miekle? What wonders lie 'neath the surface of that weather-worn Captain's exterior?

Alec's face tightens. He takes a spoonful of ice cream and holds it up, studying it.

ALEC

Careful now... When you start digging in a man's soul, you might find more than you bargained for.

KELSIE (LEANING IN)

You've kept perhaps the biggest secret in the entertainment world for fifteen years, and now you've decided to share it with me, a local shop owner--you have a daughter, and you're askin' me to take the girl under my wing and mentor her? Does that sound like normal parental behavior to you?

ALEC

Maybe I'm not a normal parent.

KELSIE

You got that right. I need to know what I'm getting into, Alec. Tell me about Isla's mother. There must be a reason you've chosen to keep her existence a secret. Isla's at a sensitive age. I get the feelin' she's holdin' on to somethin'. She won't hardly speak of her mother, and her constant anxiety focused around you--well, there's obviously things you're not tellin' me.

ALEC

You're very perceptive. And you care about her, don't you?

KELSIE

Of course! She's bright and highly unique, or haven't you noticed?

ALEC

Oh, I've noticed. What has she told you about her mom.

KELSIE

Very little. She said her mom died when she was very young.

ALEC

Aye. When she was a wee baby, actually, just over a year old.

(MORE)

ALEC (CONT'D)

I had to fly to London to audition for "Sailor and Commander." The second day of auditions, Charity--Isla's mother--stopped answering my calls. I grew concerned and called my mom asking her to check on them.

Later that day, I got a call from the local police. Charity was missing and a baby of Isla's description had been found abandoned near an outcrop of rock on a lonely stretch of beach just south of Edinburgh.

I flew back immediately. Two days later, Charity's body was found, washed up further down the shore. The autopsy ruled out foul play. The final police report stated that Charity had evidently been swimming in the ocean the night of a terrible storm. The rip currents became too much.

KELSIE

Alone? And she left a wee baby unattended on the beach? ... Had she been drinkin'? Was she on some...medication?

ALEC

Charity was not a drinker, nor a drug addict. Now you see why I have kept the story from the press. Charity had...demons inside. From time to time, they would surface. Her parents had died when she was young, and she was raised in a state-run orphanage. She never shared all that went on in that cold, forbidding place, but when storms came, that was when the demons came out. She had been seeing a therapist and making good progress. It had been almost two years since an incident when she became pregnant with Isla.

KELSIE

That's so awful, Alec? Does Isla know the whole story?

ALEC

Some. She knows her mother was an orphan, and that she had a fear of storms. Isla, you see, also has that fear. Beyond that, she's been told her mother died in a swimming accident. I think she associates the accident with an umbrella Charity painted for her--it was the one they found her under on the coast. She keeps it hanging over her bed.

KELSIE

I don't know what to say. Isla's unique, if a bit dark and moody.

ALEC

Aye. There seems to be no hint of the trauma that unfolded around her. But she does have her moods, and the darkness seems to be coming more often. That's why I've asked you to help. I thought maybe a woman's perspective could help me understand what's going on with her. I've tried nanny's, and female professors, but if I do the choosing, she drives them away. That's what makes you unique. *She* chose you.

KELSIE

She chose me thinkin' I could solve your problem.

ALEC

Possibly. But the fact is, *she* chose you. As to her concerns about me, I've been considering for some time now stepping away from the limelight. I think Isla has gotten wind of that and it scares her. Acting is the only profession I've had in her lifetime. She's worried I may fail if I try something else.

Then she found the article about your shop and was fascinated! I would wager she knows more about you than the social columnist who wrote the article--what's her name?

KELSIE

Don't worry. I know the one.

ALEC

Anyway, my career has been, for her, a bit of a security blanket. She's immersed herself in it, and become pretty good at analyzing my performances. In fact, I trust her judgment more than most Directors I've worked with.

Alec looks down, taking another large bite of his dessert.

Forgive me, I don't mean to burden you with all this.

KELSIE

Don't apologize. I'm glad you've told me. It helps me understand better. But where to go from here?

Alec finishes his ice cream, then cocks his head.

ALEC

Okay, while we think of how to help Isla, I'd like to know more about you. I know little beyond your schooling and career. Tell me about Kelsie McDunn. Are there unrealized dreams? Has there been anyone special in your life?

KELSIE

So, ya didn't read the article Isla brought ya?

Alec gives her a curious look.

ALEC

About the shop? Uh...

Alec tugs at his collar.

ALEC

I mostly had Isla fill me in. What did I miss?

KELSIE

A fair amount. Like you, much of my life, especially regarding my family, is public record.

(MORE)

KELSIE (CONT'D)

When your 'dad' is founder and CEO of a Forbes listed corporations, there's not much in the way of quiet anonymity growin' up. Still, I'm sure the press scrutiny around us was mild compared to what you've had to deal with.

ALEC

I've always been a fan of Hamish McDunn. He's a straight up guy.

Kelsie raises an eyebrow.

KELSIE

Ya have? Well, I--we, the whole family, have always been fans of '*Sailor and Commander*.'

ALEC

Thank you for that. Shamus was the brother's name, right? Hamish and Shamus--sounds almost lyrical!

KELSIE (WITH A SIGH)

A fact the press never fails to mention when M&W is in the news.

ALEC

Oh, very little gets by the press if they think it might sell papers. From what I've noted, though, your dad is generally a fair, level headed sort of guy.

Kelsie barks a short laugh.

KELSIE

A hard-headed sort of guy, maybe.

ALEC

He's a bit of an adventurer, right?

KELSIE

Well, he likes to explore history. Would you like to meet him? I'm sure he'd be happy to meet you.

Alec takes a moment, seeming to contemplate the idea.

ALEC

Well, as luck would have it, I've a break coming relatively soon.

(MORE)

ALEC (CONT'D)

After shooting wraps up next
Tuesday. I'm free for a few weeks.
You think they'd mind a visit?

KELSIE

Not at all. I often go up on a
Friday, stay the night, and come
back Saturday. I'm sure they'd want
to meet ya. In fact, Hamish loves
rare and unique automobiles.

Alec lifts an eyebrow.

ALEC

Brilliant! I'll bring the Gull-
Wing.

KELSIE

Are ya sure? The old goat can be
intimidating.

Alec raises a glass.

ALEC

To intimidating old goats!

Kelsie gives a slight tip of her head as she raises her
glass.

FADE TO:

SCENE EIGHTEEN

EXT. KELSIE'S ICE CREAM EMPORIUM, OLD TOWN, EDINBURGH

Katie is just turning the "Open" sign off when Kaycee
waltzes in with a box under one arm. He looks more clean
shaven this time and better dressed. We hear an off-key
version of Coldplay's "*Princess of China*" from the back,
being barked out in a male voice over the sound of clinking
dishes and spraying water. Isla is sitting at the polished
counter, putting some new lettering on the chalk board.
Katie steps over to Kaycee, obviously confused.

KATIE

Kaycee...What are ya doin' here?
We're just closin' up.

KAYCEE

Brought these for ya. They're
chocolates. Ones ya like.

Kaycee hands Katie the box. She sighs.

KATIE

What d'ya want, Kaycee? It's been a long day.

KAYCEE

I've done it Katie. I've started AA and decided it's time for me to grow up.

KATIE

Hallelujah and hope it lasts till tomorrow! Listen, Kaycee, I'm your friend, but ya need to get things straightened out on your own. Once I see ya can do that...Well, we'll go from there.

Kaycee gives a nod and a solemn smile.

KAYCEE

I'll get 'em straightened out. Ya got my word.

He turns and abruptly leaves. Katie watches him go, her eyebrows knit together. Isla, finished with her lettering, walks up behind her.

ISLA

Wow. How did ya manage *that*?

KATIE

I have no idea... Men are weird.

Aryan comes out from the back, still singing. Pulling an ear-bud out, he turns to Katie and Isla and salutes.

ARYAN

All done. Good evening, ladies!

Isla looks over.

ISLA

"Princess of China?" Really?

ARYAN

Oh, not your type? More of an Alice in *Chains* type?

Isla says nothing. Her withering gaze says everything. As Katie goes to lock the door, Isla finally comments.

ISLA

I thought you said he's a scholar?

Katie gives her head a shake. She had also been staring after Aryan.

KATIE

Oh, aye--so they say, but what I would add, Isla, is that *smart* and *intelligent* aren't always the same thing. Over the years, I've learned that boys are quite good at movin' their lips, but ya don't want to be puttin' too much stock into the words that fall out.

ISLA

So, you're sayin' boys are weird.

KATIE

Aye...and they grow...

CUT TO:

SCENE NINETEEN

EXT. HAWKMOOR RESTARAUNT, DUBLIN, IRELAND

Alec leads Kelsie out of the restaurant saying his goodbyes to the staff. They head southeast along the wide and less busy street, ambling toward the Shelbourne Autograph Collection hotel. Alec is softly humming to himself.

KELSIE

What's the tune?

Alec gives her a self-conscious grin.

ALEC

Some call it the unofficial Dublin anthem:

*'In Dublin's fair city
Where girls are pretty
I first set my eyes on sweet Molly
Malone...'*

Her statue's about a block west. A pretty young thing. As the story goes, she was a fishmonger, but died early, in her prime. Some claim she never left the city; that she still roams the streets at night, trying to sell her wares...

Kelsie smiles, but pulls slightly closer as they reach a corner and cross.

KELSIE

Really? Are ya tryin' to scare me,
Alec McDunn?

ALEC

That's the tale--God's truth.

KELSIE

Awk, well...Leave it to the Irish
to romanticize a haunt.

ALEC

Oh, Ireland is haunting--no doubt
about that. I once stayed in a
place, north of Dublin called the
Martello Towers. There's a small
hotel built in an old tower looking
out over the rocky cliffs and sea.
One night, I looked out, and I'd
swear I saw a clipper ship in full
sail--shouts from the crew wailing
about Selkies in the shoal...

Alec looks over, giving his signature grin. He makes a
slight left, keeping to the center of the wide sidewalk.
It's bordered to the left by a short, gray stone wall, with
a high, black metal pole fence atop.

ALEC

There's a great pub up that way.
Their Irish Poke Cake and Butter
Whirl Biscuits are legend.

KELSIE

Based on dinner, I have no trouble
takin' your suggestions for
cuisine! In fact, do ya happen to
have any recipes from tonight?

Alec smiles.

ALEC

I happen to have *all* the recipes
from tonight. I worked that into my
deal with the management.

KELSIE

Arent' you the sly one.

ALEC

I like to think so.

The two walk in silence for a long moment.

KELSIE

I'm sorry, Alec, but I can't stop thinkin' about your... about Isla's mother.

Alec takes a deep breath and lets it out slowly. He stares down at the pavement.

ALEC

Aye. Questions we can't answer haunt us. Ever present, ever challenging, they push us... Maybe that's what ghosts are--questions--questions captured in lost moments, frozen in place, waiting for answers to make sense, praying that, when they do, they'll allow us to finally let go...

KELSIE

Did ya know of her...of her *moods* when ya married?

ALEC

No. I was a struggling nobody. Both of my parents had died--one in military service, the other from emphysema--and I'd become a bit of a loner. She brought sunshine back to my life. I met her at a pub where I took an odd job. She was waiting tables, and she made sure every table had what she called a *beach in a jar*; a jar with sand and shells, accented by a handful of wild flowers.

She was full of life and vigor then, an accomplished traditional dancer and an artist--a painter.

KELSIE

Right. She painted the umbrella.

ALEC (LOOKING OVER)

Yes. I have other of her works too. She was quite good.

Alec drops his gaze as if suddenly lost in thought.

ALEC

That umbrella--the one you just referred to--Chastity meticulously painted a bright and brilliant meadow on the inside. It's springtime and the flowers are in full bloom.

KELSIE

I think ya said Isla has it in her room, right?

ALEC

Yes. It is one of her most prized possessions.

KELSIE

Isla tells me you've had many relationships since that time, but none of them have lasted.

Alec gives a short nod.

ALEC

It's true, but what Isla didn't tell you--and she knows this quite well--is that my publicists have been behind most of them. It's good business to keep my name in the gossip columns.

KELSIE

The ladies man, and yet not one lady has turned your eye?

Alec gives Kelsie a wry grin.

ALEC

Irony, isn't it? There have been plenty interested, but how could I be sure the interest was in me and not the *Captain* from "Sailor and Commander?"

Kelsie walks a moment in silence.

KELSIE

If it's any consolation, I find the man, not the icon, more interestin'.

They cross a street and Kelsie's hotel comes into sight.

ALEC
I'll take that as a compliment.

KELSIE
Good. It was meant as one.

They reach the entry to the hotel.

ALEC
Here we are. I'll admit the walk
was much too short for my liking.

Alec locks eyes with Kelsie.

KELSIE
I agree. That happens when you're
in good company.

ALEC
The leprechauns called you *pure
gold*.

KELSIE
They did, did they?

ALEC
Aye, and I dare say they have a
fair amount of accumulated
knowledge on the subject.

KELSIE
Judgin' from the pinch they gave
me, I'd wager their minds spend a
fair amount of time on other areas
of *accumulated knowledge*.

ALEC (CHUCKLING)
I'd wager you're right.

Kelsie looks past Alec to the distant bay, the moon painting
in strokes of silver across the waves.

KELSIE
That's a view I could get used to.

Alec does not turn his eyes away.

ALEC
It is... Why is it, do you suppose,
that we all turn to look at the
moon when there are so many other
things wanting to be said?

Kelsie allows her eyes to drift back over and lock with his.

KELSIE

It's the light, I think...We like
how it shines down on us like a
patient mother, softenin' away all
the rough edges...

A soft smile spreads across her face as her chin reaches up,
ever so slightly.

ALEC

Like the rough edges of a Sea
Captain?

Kelsie pushes in.

KELSIE

Aye, and takin' us to that solemn
sea beyond rough edges...*Captain.*

Alec takes her face in his hands. He tilts her head up
slightly and slowly, purposefully, kisses her.

FADE OUT.

SCENE TWENTY

INT. KELSIE'S ICE CREAM EMPORIUM, OLD TOWN EDINBURGH

Katie is busily prepping condiments as we see Kelsie in the
background in her small office space behind the bathroom.
Her open door is beside where the white smocks are hung.

Kelsie and Katie are conversing loudly, making it obvious
that the shop has not yet opened for the day.

KATIE

...built onto a tug-boat? What kind
of production is he in?

KELSIE

An odd one to be sure. He described
it to me as a spoof on travel films
focused on Ireland.

The second day, there was a scene
where he walks up this cobbled
road, and passes a tour center in
the background. A sign above the
doors reads: "Upbeat Irish Authors
Tour duration 15-18 minutes...
Depressed Irish Authors Tour
duration, 32-40 days."

The two fall into a fit of giggles. When it dies down, Katie wipes her eyes.

KATIE

Isn't it the truth! I've enough
Irish blood in me to feel justified
in laughin' about it now and then.

KELSIE

So, what's new here?

KATIE

Not much. Kaycee is making a play
to get back into my life.

KELSIE

Really!

KATIE

It's true.

KELSIE

I liked him when he was sober, it
just didn't seem to happen much.

KATIE

I felt the same, but he started AA
on his own and says he's over two
months sober now, so, we'll see...

Katie finishes the last bin, then, still holding it walks
over to Kelsie's office and leans against the door frame.

KATIE

That's my news, now let's get
yours. Ya just went out with one of
the most eligible bachelors in the
world. Let's have the particulars.

KELSIE

The particulars are that he's a
nice man. I already told ya that. I
had a wonderful time...

KATIE (INTERUPTING)

Ya told me a lot of what amounts to
nothin'! *Did sparks fly or not?* I
want the version ya don't run home
and tell your mother.

KELSIE

Katie! What makes ya think there
was more to it?

Katie doesn't answer, just gives Kelsie a raised eyebrow look. Kelsie sighs.

KELSIE

Oh, all right... There was a bit more to it....

Katie's smile widens.

KATIE

Alright. Out with it.

KELSIE

We had the most amazing dinner. Then we walked in the moonlight through the streets of Dublin and he sang to me, and told me tales of the city. Then...

KATIE (LEANING FORWARD)

Then?

KELSIE (THINKING BACK)

I went *completely* out of my mind and started *talking about the moon!*

Katie narrows her eyes, a bit stunned.

KATIE

Wow. How much wilder could it get.

KELSIE

I know. *What was I thinkin'?* It was our first time out together!

KATIE

Uh, I'll tell ya what I'm thinkin'; I'm thinkin' you don't know as much about romance as I was wanted to give ya credit for. And what was Alec doin' while ya were talkin' about the moon?

KELSIE

He was sayin' we look to the moon when we can't find the right words, and I said it was the light, takin' away rough edges, and he said, 'Like those of a Sea Captain?' And I was thinkin', *kiss me*, and I said somethin' about beyond rough edges, and then *he was!* He was kissing me! *Boy, was he kissing me!*

KATIE

Ah! Now we're getting somewhere!
What was it like?

Kelsie is staring off into nothing, reliving the moment.

KELSIE

Let's just say *memorable* would be a
frightful understatement.

Kelsie looks over at Katie, now back in the present.

KELSIE

So, that's my problem--I'm fallin'
for a man whose had a hard go of
it--harder than you might imagine--
but is still *soft* and *passionate*...

Unbeknownst to either Katie or Kelsie, Isla has entered the
backroom. She catches the last few words.

ISLA

Who's soft and passionate?

Isla is very matter-of-fact, putting on her lab coat while
talking. Katie and Kelsie both about fall over.

KELSIE

Isla! We didn't see ya there. We
were, uh, just talking about men...

ISLA

Men? I'm supposed to believe that?
You're talking about my dad, aren't
ya?

KELSIE

Uhhhh...

KATIE

Your dad certainly is a man. But is
he soft?

KELSIE

And...is he passionate...?

Isla looks from one woman to the other, then bursts into
loud peals of laughter.

FADE TO:

CLOSE UP: KELSIE, HEAD BACK, ASLEEP. CAMERA PULLS SLOWLY OUT

Kelsie is snoring softly as Isla sticks her head around the corner, startling her awake.

ISLA

Oh, sorry... Shifts over. Mind if I take home a few pints? I'd like to try out the new stuff.

Kelsie sits up straight, wiping the sleep from her eyes.

KELSIE

Not at all. Just let me know what you think.

Isla starts to leave, then turns back.

ISLA

Oh, yeah, and I'm supposed to ask ya if ya want to go to a big dinner and gala tomorrow night. It's for an SAMH--the Scottish Association for Mental Health. It'll be a good meal, and we'll have great seats. Say you'll go, then I get to go!

Kelsie narrows her eyes. Isla jumps back in:

ISLA

Dad has set it up so you'll be a donor--he already made a donation in your name, and I'll be...uh, part of your family.

KELSIE (SIGHING)

I hate this subterfuge stuff.

Isla grins.

ISLA

Good thing you're talking to me and not Aryan. I actually know what that word means.

KELSIE

Aryan?

Katie comes into view.

KATIE

Aye, I was just comin' over to tell ya about that. Aryan is the new boy we hired. Isla and I have been trainin' him. I know his mum. A good lad if a bit...typical. He'll be here any minute. Plays rugby for his school, so runnin' late.

At that very moment, the bell jingles from the front door and Aryan bursts in.

ARYAN

Helluh! Helluh! Don't fret--Your victor has arrived!

Arryan races on into the back room.

KATIE

You're late again!

ARYAN

Sorry Dozed off in the steam room, but ready to sell ice cream like nobody's business!

Isla rolls her eyes and turns back to Kelsie, who seems a bit perplexed by the boy.

ISLA

So, do you want me to tell him you'll go?

KELSIE

Uh, sure. I'll go. Did he say what our relationship is gonna be?

Isla thought for a moment, then smiled.

ISLA

We'll be sisters I think.

Aryan brushes past her carrying a partially empty spoon and straw holders. He gives a short chuckle.

ARYAN

Maybe sisters from another mister.

Isla's reaction is instant. She spins on Aryan, directly confronting him. Katie, watching the motion, gets to the boy first, grabbing him by the arm and jerking him away

KATIE

Oh, and this is Aryan, Kelsie.
Aryan, Kelsie owns the store. She
was looking forward to meeting you.

Aryan frowns, realizing his mistake.

KELSIE

Oh, sorry. I tend to speak what's
on my mind.

Kelsie gives him a smile and extends her hand.

KELSIE

Successful reporters need a good
editor. Remember that, Aryan.

Katie leads Aryan back out to the front, making sure to stay
between Isla and he. Isla watches the boy go with a scowl.
Kelsie gives her an apologetic smile.

KELSIE

Well, at least he has *some*thin' on
his mind to speak about...

DISSOLVE TO:

SCENE TWENTY-ONE

EXT. VODOO ROOMS BAR AND BANQUET HALL, DOWNTOWN EDINBURGH

DUSK. CAMERA SWOOPS DOWN FROM HIGH ANGLE, PULLING IN SLOWLY
ON THE VODOO ROOMS BAR AND BANQUET HALL.

Cars are pulling up to a small strip of red carpet letting
out guests in gayla dresses and evening wear. Alec pulls up
in the gull-wing mercedes. He steps out, sporting an Armani
tux and hurries around to help Kelsie out. She is in a light
blue gown that shimmers, highlighting the diamond and
sapphire earrings. He then helps Isla, who is in a black
crepe baby-doll dress with long sleeves and a decorative
black lace waist covering. Her make up is lighter than
usual, but still noticeably Gothic. He leads them to the
door and enters.

CUT TO:

INT. VODOO ROOMS BAR AND BANQUET HALL, DOWNTOWN EDINBURGH

CLOSE UP: THE LIT SIGN FOR THE VODOO ROOMS. CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL THE STAINED GLASS WINDOWS AND ENTRY DOOR.

Alec, Kelsie, and Isla enter and are led through a barrage of flashing lights from paparazzi. The beautifully ornate interior with paneled walls and elaborate ceilings is packed. They're led to the banquet hall.

As a waiter seats them at a round table, draped with a bit of netting and a lighthouse centerpiece thematically tied to the ocean themed walls, a jazz band plays softly from a nearby stage. Kelsie turns to Alec. A faint sound of soft waves hitting the beach, the low murmur of voices, and the clink of fine cutlery back-fill the sound scape.

KELSIE

This place is amazing! I can't believe I've never been here.

ALEC

I can. I mean, you can't beat the place for atmosphere, but outside its liquor collection, there's little on the culinary side that's exceptional. Ah, here are our other guests... Lord Shounesly and Lady Marie, May I introduce Kelsie McDunn and her sister.

After cordials, the Lord and Lady take their place at the table. The servers immediately begin laying out the meal. Alec gets a call on his cell and has to excuse himself for a moment. Kelsie glances at Isla, who is unusually quiet.

KELSIE

You okay?

ISLA

I've been here before, but a long time ago. Just checking to see how well I remembered the details.

KELSIE

And?

ISLA

Well, I accurately recalled the decor, though I did think there were four diamonds in the stain glass, not just three.

KELSIE (GRINS)

And here I'm lucky to remember my address much of the time.

At that moment, Aryan passes the table, stopping, as if surprised. He has an attractive blonde draped onto his arm as if she were a long coat.

ARYAN

Oh! Fancy meeting you here.

Kelsie notes Isla bristle slightly at the site of Aryan and his girl. She can't recall the boys name, but smiles just the same.

KELSIE

We're here as guests of Mr. Meikle.

It's Aryan's turn to show shock.

ARYAN

Alec Meikle? The actor?

Kelsie gives a nod. Aryan just stands there as if trying to come up with something clever to say. The blonde gives his arm a slight tug.

ARYAN

Oh, yeah. Uh, this is Sherrie.
She's a friend from school

He turns to Sherrie.

ARYAN

This is...the owner of the ice
cream shop, Kelsie McDunn. And this
is Isla, a girl I work with.

Sherrie steps forward, shaking Kelsie's hand and turning toward Isla. A self-satisfied smile creeps over her face. She barks a short laugh, speaking in an airy voice.

SHERRIE

So, you're the Goth Girl!

Isla's reaction is immediate. She mimics the smile.

ISLA

And you're the bimb--

Kelsie quickly jumps to her feet and grabs Isla by the hand, overriding the conversation.

KELSIE

Where are those drinks! They're
probably ready for us, Isla. Could
we get ya anthin' Lord Shounesly
and Lady Marie?

The Lord and Lady, who have already started eating, shake their heads. Aryan seems to snap out of his daze and takes action, also hoping to dismantle any tension.

ARYAN

Right. Well, we've got to get back to my Dad's table.

Isla tries to pull away, but stands, turning to Kelsie. Aryan pulls Sherrie around, though not before she angles her head back for a parting shot.

SHERRIE

Love the look!

Isla tries to follow the girl, but Kelsie steps in front. She whispers pulling close to Isla as she turns her away.

KELSIE

I know you'd like nothin' better than to give Ms Sherrie a nice bowl of ice cream on the kisser right now, and rightly so, but this is not the time or the place.

Isla pauses a moment, then turns, stopping all resistance. She is blinking quickly, holding back tears. Kelsie quickly leads her out.

CUT TO:

EXT. VODOO ROOMS BAR AND BANQUET HALL, DOWNTOWN EDINBURGH

Once Kelsie and Isla are outside, the two slow, stepping onto the sidewalk. Kelsie lets Isla set the pace. They walk for several moments in silence.

KELSIE

That wasn't pleasant. What can I do?

Isla drags an arm quickly across her eyes.

ISLA

The bowl of ice cream in the kisser would be a nice start...The girl is inconsequential. How she hung on him tells me all I need to know. It's...him! He was *talkin'* about me to her! He called me '*Goth Girl!*'

KELSIE

I'll talk to him.

ISLA

No, please don't! I,I...I just want it honest...Was his comment totally out of line?

Kelsie does not answer immediately, but continues walking.

KELSIE

Certainly, talkin' about someone behind their back and slappin' a label on 'em', is out of line. It can create a caustic work environment. Outside of that, well, ya do know that ya tend toward the Gothic, right?

Isla's voice takes on a dramatic tone.

ISLA

I come from a Gothic life, Kelsie! I'm shunned, hidden away! I haunt an empty castle like some sort of estranged gargoyle! You can't know my life--how could you? *I'm fated!* Fated to create a look on the outside that belies how I feel within!

KELSIE

You're right, Isla. You lost your mother at a very young age. I'll never know what that was like. You add to that the challenges of your dad's fame and I can only imagine what your life to now has been.

Isla is walking quietly beside her, wiping again at her eyes. Kelsie looks up, staring straight forward.

KELSIE

I do know a thing or two about growing up in the shadows, though. My father is also a bit of a celebrity. He had us home schooled, or sent away to upper-crust private schools. Of the two, I think I preferred the home schooling.

ISLA

Aye, but ya traveled. Ya went to Cambridge! Ya became a Rhodes Scholar and finally a star graduate of *Cordon Le Blue* in London!

(MORE)

ISLA (CONT'D)

Then ya started your own business
and became a success...

Kelsie looks over at Isla with a subdued grin.

KELSIE

About that...You know what happened
when I told my dad I wanted to go
to *Cordon Le Blue* and open my own
restaurant? He laughed. Not a small
laugh. I'm talking a big, belly
laugh--the kind that has you
rollin' on the floor. When the
laughing finally stopped, he looked
at me and said; '*That'll teach
those obnoxious socialites with the
crass editors!*' He walked out.

To him, it was all a joke--I was
trying to stick it to the press for
all the years of hell they caused
our family... I should have seen it
coming. Dad never understood me.
For my sixteenth birthday, he built
a stable and stocked it with top
breed mares. He was determined I
was going to be some sort of
equestrian legend. Only, he didn't
let the horses in on the joke.

ISLA

Ya didn't like ridin'?

KELSIE

I loved ridin'. I still love
ridin'. I'm just not...athletic.
After leading two of our top tier
competitors to last place finishes,
the horses themselves gathered
round and snorted, '*We love ya for
tryin', Kelsie, but we also love
bein' alive and all in one piece,
so please, please--take up
knittin'! Make us a saddle rug!*'

Isla lets go a slight chortle. Getting her tears under
control, she sniffs.

ISLA

I love ridin' too.

KELSIE

Anyway, point is that I felt very misunderstood and held back at your age. My two brothers were bein' groomed to take over the family business. If I'd 'ave asked, I would have been given some minor executive task, but I wanted to make my own way. You're gettin' to an age, Isla, where you can start to choose your own way. Ya don't have to be ruled by your past.

ISLA

I think I'm ready, but dad won't let me go until, I don't know, my *twenties* or something, and I'll be needin' a walker by then!

KELSIE

Well, I hope not, but I agree, it's too late. I'll have a talk with him... Speaking of which, we should probably be headin' back. He'll think we abandoned him.

ISLA

Well, we sort of did, but perhaps it's good for him...occasionally.

Kelsie shares a conspiratorial grin with Isla.

KELSIE

Perhaps it is.

Kelsie and Isla head back to the the restaurant, chatting about how to widen fashion sensibilities.

ISLA

You think I could ever look like you? Your outfits are always so stunning! You walk in and every eye in the place turns, like the spindle on a compass, finding magnetic North.

KELSIE

Thanks. How I wish that were true. I do have good fashion consultants though. I'll introduce ya.

ISLA

That would be great!

KELSIE

Be aware that they take fashion seriously. I wouldn't be surprised if she may made you lose a fair number of your Goth t-shirts.

ISLA

Alright--but not my dark unicorn!
That's where I draw the line!

The two chuckle.

FADE TO:

INT. VODOO ROOMS BAR AND BANQUET HALL, DOWNTOWN EDINBURGH

Alec is back at the table, chatting with the Lord and Lady when Isla and Kelsie return. Isla's make up has been touched up to hide evidence of her tears.

KELSIE

Sorry to take so long. The line was impossible! We finally gave up.

Alec throws her a curious look.

ALEC

Lord Shounesly said the two of you wanted something different to drink. I can call a waiter--what's the beverage of choice?

KELSIE

Isla and I wanted to see if they'd make us a...a strawberry Sprite.

Alec raises an eyebrow, calls over a waiter and asks if it would be possible. Within minutes, both Isla and Kelsie have their Strawberry Sprite. Shortly after the waiter leaves, Alec leans over.

ALEC

What do you think of the meal?

Kelsie has only taken a dozen or so bites, but seems glad for the conversation.

KELSIE

For banquet fare, I'd say it's wonderful! Did you have anything to do with the menu?

Alec throws her a wink.

ALEC

I did have a wee discussion with
the planning commission this year.
Glad you like it, though sadly, we
overlooked strawberry sprite.

Alec smiles as Lord Shounesly and his wife comment on the quality of the meal. The band takes a short break as Kelsie begins to tell them a funny story about riding back to the dock with the leprechauns at Alec's shoot. The guests chuckle appropriately. Just as her story winds down, the band comes back and strikes up a new song. Alec slowly reaches for Kelsie's hand. He lifts her gently while addressing the Lord and Lady, explaining that this is a favorite song of his. He leads her onto the dance floor.

ALEC

Okay, so what was the real story?
Where did you and Isla go, and why
has she been crying?

KELSIE

How d'ya know she'd been crying.

ALEC

I'm fairly accomplished with make
up, if you recall, and hers had
obviously been recently touched up.

Kelsie sighs.

KELSIE

Let's just say a boy showed up she
knows from the shop--with a
fetching blonde drapin' herself all
over him. The blonde seemed quite
eager to voice her opinions on
Isla's fashion sense.

Alec shakes his head.

ALEC

Teenage girls can be right cruel.
Is she okay?

KELSIE

Yeah. I'm going to introduce her to
a fashion consultant friend, and
we'll see if we can help her expand
her wardrobe.

ALEC

Good! That's wonderful news! I've long tried to get her to consider that. Let me know if you need anything. I'm happy to help.

Alec is quite light on his feet for his size, and spins her gracefully around, nodding and waving to other couples.

KELSIE

You can help, Alec. Introduce Isla to the world. She's far too old to be hidden away in a castle.

Alec is quiet for a moment, letting the request sink in as they continue to dance.

ALEC

The paparazzi will eat her alive. It's too soon. She's getting some good experience meeting young people her age at the ice cream shop, isn't she?

KELSIE

Aye, but ya can't keep this kind of secret for long Alec, not now that she's in front of the public. The truth's gonna get out, and if you're not the one controlin' the narrative, I fear for what could happen. Now is the time.

Again, Alec is quiet, but not as long this time. He sighs.

ALEC

Maybe you're right. There are some events coming up. Give me a week or two--time to talk with my publicist and get all affairs in order.

Kelsie nods and the song ends. Those on the dance floor clap politely, then head back toward their tables.

ALEC

You are an excellent dancer, Ms. McDunn.

Kelsie gives an appreciative nod, then smiles.

KELSIE

For a Sea Captain, I found your navigation of the floor quite ...scintillating.

Alec raises an eyebrow.

ALEC
Scintillating?

Kelsie nods, trying to hold back a snicker. Isla, who overhears, does not hold back. Alec pulls at his collar as he sits, not entirely sure he knows what the word means.

ALEC
Scintillating...

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

SCENE TWENTY-TWO

EXT. KELSIE'S ICE CREAM EMPORIUM, OLD TOWN, EDINBURGH

A large SUV pulls up to the curb. Isla, Kelsie, and PeeWee climb out. Only the female driver stays in the SUV. Isla leans a head back in after everyone has climbed out.

ISLA
Thanks again, Jenna! This was the
greatest day ever! Good luck on
your show--I'll have dad pass your
cards around.

As she steps back and closes the door, PeeWee and Kelsie have just finished pulling a dozen or so clothes bags and a few boxes out of the back. They close the back hatch.

KELSIE
I owe ya one, PeeWee.

Isla comes back and takes two of the boxes and a handful of bags from PeeWee.

PEEWEE
Are you kidding? I had a blast!
Isla's Goth collection inspired
both Jenna and I! She's a born
model and a fair designer, though
we did have room for some variety.

ISLA
I love everything--the makeup tips
and hair styling. I'd hug ya again
if I had another pair of arms!

PEEWEE

No need. I mean, how often does a designer get the chance to work with the secret child of an international celebrity! Good luck! We'll look forward to seein' ya set fire to the world!

PeeWee waves goodbye and hops back into the SUV, which takes off as Kelsie and Isla make their way into the ice cream shop where Katie is holding the door open for them.

KATIE

So, did ya leave any clothes for the rest of us?

KELSIE

We tried to! With Jenna and PeeWee, enough is never enough!

ISLA

And they showed me different makeup strategies. How do ya like my hair?

KATIE

I like everything I'm seeing.

ISLA

Oh, you've got to see the dress I'm gonna wear to the premier with dad!

Isla grabs one of the garment bags and one of the boxes and heads into Kelsie's office, shutting the door. She yells to Kelsie through the shut door.

ISLA

Ya okay with me usin' your office Kelsie?

Kelsie looks to Katie who is shaking her head, trying to hold back a soft laugh.

KELSIE

Uh... Sure.

They wait a moment, hearing bangs and rattles from the office, then Katie looks to Kelsie, narrowing her eyes.

KATIE

She's goin' to a premier with Alec?

Kelsie shakes her head and shrugs.

KELSIE

She's certainly set her mind on it.

Aryan comes in with a tub of dirty dishes.

ARYAN

Hey, what's all the excitement?

At that moment, Isla emerges from the office wearing a full-length shimmering deep blue gown, highlighted by sparkling dangling earrings and matching bracelet. Aryan turns, his eyes growing large. Isla does not notice, her eyes on Katie.

ISLA

So, is this look acceptable for
Alec Meikle's daughter?

ARYAN

Who's Alec Meikle's daughter?

Isla spins, sees Aryan, then, not knowing what to do, pushes back into the office and closes the door. Katie looks over at Aryan.

KATIE

I believe you nicknamed her, 'Goth Girl.' And if you say a word about this, your fired. I can also make things very uncomfortable for you with your dad.

Aryan gulps, blood draining from his face as he realizes the implications of the revelation. Katie looks over to Kelsie with a 'What do we do now?' look. Kelsie says nothing, just stares after Isla with a tight-lipped look of frustration.

CUT TO:

SCENE TWENTY-THREE

EXT. THE PARK, OLD TOWN, EDINBURGH

LOW SHOT OF FRONT GRILL OF THE MERCEDES 300SL GULLWING
APPROACHING CURB.

Isla opens the side door and steps out. She looks up with a degree of trepidation.

CUT TO:

OVER THE SHOULDER SHOT OF KELSIE WATCHING OUT HER WINDOW SEVERAL STORIES UP.

Kelsie watches Isla approach the door and push the buzzer. She puts her cat down and turns away from the window, walking to the wall intercom near her front door. She pushes the button and speaks.

KELSIE

I wondered if you'd come. Ya haven't answered my calls or texts.

ISLA

I know. I felt like such an idiot. I didn't know what to say. I told dad you and I needed to talk--girl stuff--and it'd be a while.

KELSIE

Okay, come on up.

She hears the door buzz and Isla open it.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY JUST OUTSIDE KELSIE'S APARTMENT

Isla steps out of the elevator just as Kelsie opens the door. Behind her is a large, roller cooler and a matching set of three suitcases. They are both dressed casual, Isla in jeans and a T-Shirt that says "Loch Ness: Protect the Wildlife." Kelsie is in tight-fitting, straight-legged jeans and a cashmere cardigan. She beckons Isla into the condo and shuts the door. Isla can't seem to take her eye off the collections of suitcases.

ISLA

Tell me you're not takin' all of those cases! It's a two-day trip.

Kelsie chuckles.

KELSIE

I don't pack light--that's a fact, but no. I'm leavin' the small one.

ISLA raises her eyebrows, but chooses not to say anything. She scans the room and sees the cat on the window seat. She starts toward it.

ISLA

What's your cat's name? You don't talk about her.

KELSIE

His name is Gray Beard, and I don't think he likes anyone discussin' him. Be careful, he's not good with strangers.

Isla sits on the window seat. She says nothing, just stares in the cat's eyes. After a moment, Gray Beard comes forward and settles himself on her lap. She softly strokes his head. It's Kelsie's turn to raise eyebrows.

KELSIE

That's a first.

ISLA

I'm good with animals.

KELSIE

I can see that.

ISLA

Is someone taking care of him while we're gone?

KELSIE

Aye. PeeWee. They have a love-hate relationship. He loves her feeding him, and she hates cleanin' his box, but I took care of her snakes once, so she owes me one.

ISLA

Snakes?

KELSIE

Don't ask! It was some hair-brained idea of hers. They're gone now.

ISLA

I love how you've done the library. You seem to like naturalist art.

KELSIE

I do love nature. That's a print by Kirsten Zerngibl. She also does Steampunk styles. I have another of hers in the bedroom, but that's not what you came up for.

Isla looks down at the cat for a long moment, then back up.

ISLA

So, how bad is it? I should have been more careful.

Kelsie sighs and comes closer, sitting on the arm of a stuffed chair.

KELSIE

It was bound to happen some time. Ya can't keep that kind of secret out in the real world for long. I don't know that Aryan will say anything. For all his faults, he seems like a nice boy. But it's bound to come out. The most we can hope for is that your dad comes to understand the need to control the narrative soon.

ISLA

You think that will happen?

KELSIE

I'm hopin' for it. I've suggested he take you to the premier of his Ireland spoof.

Isla's eyes light up.

ISLA

Really? I could wear my dark blue gown, the one we just bought--and those long, dangling earrings!

KELSIE

That you could. If he agrees to it.

The two are quiet for a long moment, then Kelsie stands.

ISLA

I've a confession...I brought. I brought the gown. I thought I'd show it off to your folks and dad at the same time. Are ya mad at me?

KELSIE

Why would I be mad at ya? I think it's a great idea!

ISLA

Ya do?

KELSIE

I do. Now, let's get movin'! We've been up her a good while.

Isla nods, her mind probing the possibilities of being able to be seen anytime, anywhere with her dad.

She stands, carefully settling the cat back down on the window seat, and walks, in a bit of a daze, to the largest suitcase.

ISLA
I got this one...Ugh! It feels like
it's full of concrete!

KELSIE
Well-packed is the term I think
you're lookin' for. A few things in
there are for my folks.

ISLA
Okay, but it feels like you're
packin' a sleepin' midget!

Kelsie barks a short laugh, as she takes the smaller suitcase

KELSIE
What would I want with a midget?

ISLA
I don't know. Maybe he's the secret
of your ice cream.

Kelsie looks over her shoulder.

KELSIE
The secret of my ice cream, Isla,
is work! Work, work, and more work!

Isla sighs, shaking her head as she mumbles.

ISLA
I'd stick with the midget story.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE PARK, OLD TOWN, EDINBURGH

Alec is still waiting, leaning against the back bumper of the Mercedes as the girls exit the apartment block chatting and smiling. Isla jumps in the car while Kelsie goes around to the back with the luggage.

KELSIE
Hope it'll all fit.

Alec doesn't respond immediately, but while picking up the first bag he leans in, keeping his voice low.

ALEC

I was beginning to wonder if you
were coming. Is everything okay?

Kelsie leans in as well, keeping her voice low.

KELSIE

Well, I learned Isla has a way with
cats. Gray Beard went right to her.

ALEC

I take it Gray Beard is a cat?

KELSIE

*No, he's a gorilla...Of course,
he's a cat! We discussed a bit
about my taste in art, touched upon
Kirsten Zerngibland, then rounded
off the conversation with some
thoughts on midgets.*

ALEC

*Midgets?... I take it this means
I'm not to know what you discussed.*

Kelsie gives him a broad, teasing smile.

KELSIE

And ya got there all on your own!

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

SCENE TWENTY-FOUR

EXT. COLVEND, DUMFRIESHIRE, SCOTLAND.

WIDE SHOT OF THE GULL-WING MERCEDES PULLING UP TO A LARGE,
COUNTRY MANOR

Alec is watching, interested, as the car pulls into the
drive of a quaint Country Manor nestled in a grove of trees
on a hill. A medium height man with a cabbie cap and an
angular jaw steps out of the cottage as the Mercedes pulls
up the circular drive. Kelsie looks over at Alec.

KELSIE

Remember what I said--don't let him
intimidate ya!

Alec gives a nod, then pulls to a stop just in front of the
man with the cap.

A slightly taller, equally thin woman with a pleasant smile and shoulder length white hair, comes out to stand beside him. Both are dressed in traditional attire, he in a hunting jacket, she in plaid skirt and white blouse. As soon as Alec steps out of the car, the man steps forward and grips Alec's hand in a firm grip.

HAMISH

Hamish and Lydea McDunn. Welcome.

ALEC

Hamish McDunn... You're not as tall as I imagined you'd be.

Hamish breaks into a slow grin.

HAMISH

Aye, but I'm tougher. Don't ya put that to the test!...And I'll have ta say, ya don't strike me much as a seaman what could captain a crew!

ALEC

Well, I'm seaman enough to throw you overboard, you old coot!

Hamish barks a laugh, comes over and slaps Alec on the shoulder. He looks over to Kelsie who has climbed out of the car and is helping Isla.

HAMISH

He's a keeper, I'd say.

Kelsie gives Isla a grin and rolls her eyes. Isla walks up to Hamish and extends her hand.

ISLA

Hi...I'm Isla, the invisible, Alec's daughter.

Lydea McDunn steps quickly forward, embracing Isla.

LYDEA

Of course ya are! We've been waitin' to meet ya. Kelsie's told us so much about you, but she never mentioned how beautiful ya are!

Alec looks over sheepishly, realizing that he should have been the one to introduce Isla. Hamish pumps Isla's hand.

HAMISH

Welcome to our abode, Ms. Isla. Do ya like horses?

ISLA
Horses? ...Sure.

HAMISH
Well, I was just headed to the
stables and I certainly could use a
hand. What'ya say?

Isla looks to Alec who has walked to the back of the Mercedes, popping the trunk. He smiles and nods, giving a slight shrug.

ISLA
Okay...Should I call you Hamish? Or
is too informal?

Hamish barks another short laugh.

HAMISH
I've certainly been called worse.

Hamish glances over at the Gull-Wing.

HAMISH
Quite a machine ya have there.

Alec pauses unloading the baggage and touches the car affectionately.

ALEC
That she is. Can I leave it here?

HAMISH
Leave it wherever ya want. In fact,
leave it here for good if ya want!

Alec grins. Isla looks over, pushing a strand of hair behind her ear.

ISLA
Will we get to ride? If so, can
Kelsie come? She says she's no good
with horses, but I'm not sure I
believe her.

HAMISH
Oh, believe her!

He leans in conspiratorially.

HAMISH
They see her comin' and hide under
the hay!

Isla chuckles as Isla follows Hamish around the corner of the house. Alec finishes fishing out all the baggage and Kelsie and Lydea come over and help hauling it into the manor house.

FADE TO:

SCENE TWENTY-FIVE

INT. HORSE BARN, COLVEND, DUMFRIESHIRE

Hamish and Isla enter the stable deep in conversation. The stable is neatly kept, with eight stalls and three horses. Hamish heads toward a rack in the back where buckets, feed, bridles, and other horse paraphernalia are kept.

ISLA

I actually ride quite well. On nice days when dad's away, I'll ride the paths in the forests around our castle. I think I could do quite well in competition.

HAMISH

Do ya now? Well, you and I may have much to discuss later, young lady!

Hamish sets out three buckets, grabs a bag of feed, and sets to filling them. He then grabs two buckets and instructs Isla to grab the third. He approaches a calico filly, strokes its nose and speaks to it in Gaelic

ISLA

These are beautiful horses. Do ya race them?

Hamish moves on to the next horse, repeating the exercise.

HAMISH

Not race--they're trained for *Eventing*.

ISLA

Eventing?

HAMISH

Aye. It includes Show Jumping, Dressage, and Cross Country--all equestrian sports.

ISLA

I'm familiar with Show Jumping and Cross Country. I think I could be good at it.

HAMISH

Huh. Well, just so happens we're lookin' for a rider. Let's see how Sparkle likes ya.

Hamish hands a bucket to Isla and points her to a young, attractive chestnut mare. To his astonishment, Isla speaks in Gaelic, stroking the horse as if she'd known it her whole life. She hangs the bucket on its peg and lightly brushes the horse's mane.

HAMISH

I've never seen the like! Isla, you and I are gonna become friends!

Hamish lets the comment hang on the air a moment, then adds:

HAMISH

Her grandfather's name was Coal. As a lad, Coal and I would ride like the wind. We would ride for hours. I entered some of the Equestrian events around, and we won, over and over. I loved that horse. I thought nothin' would ever part us...

ISLA

What happened to him?

HAMISH

Awk...he got old. I remember comin' home from college and feelin' alarmed--even a bit frightened. Coal was lookin' so worn and tired.

I took his head in my hands, I did, and I looked him right in the eye. Somethin' passed between us. We knew we would never ride like we once did again. But we also knew it'd be alright. Worn and tired things have a place too, ya know.

Hamish looks at Isla with a soft grin.

HAMISH

So, maybe don't judge your dad so much when he wants to put on the plaids and have a round of golf.

Hamish winks and gives Sparkles a final pat, then turns toward the stable door. Isla stares after him.

ISLA

How did ya know about that?

Hamish turns and gives her a smile. He then continues on to the door, calling over his shoulder.

HAMISH

Stay as long as ya like. I'll be back at the manor.

Isla watches Hamish go, her eyes still narrowed. She turned back to Spakles and stroked her nose. After a long moment, she slides her hands under the horse's chin and tries to look into her eyes.

FADE TO:

SCENE TWENTY-FIVE

INT. COUNTRY MANOR, COLVEND, DUMFRIESHIRE, SCOTLAND.

Isla comes in the back door into a huge kitchen with beamed ceilings. She takes a moment exploring the interesting fixtures of the room which include a brick oven. Lydea comes around the corner.

LYDEA

Oh, Isla, Kelsie said you needed a room with its own bathroom, so I put ya in the north end bedroom on the second floor. I also hung up that gorgeous dress in the closet.

ISLA

Thanks. You make bread in this or something?

LYDEA

Aye, at times. You like to cook?

ISLA

I don't know. I'd like to know how to make bread.

LYDEA

Well, we'll have to do that sometime, won't we? Now, it's just after three and we don't eat until seven, so you've plenty of time to get settled in, wander the grounds, watch TV, or whatever you like.

(MORE)

LYDEA (CONT'D)

We don't have a pool, but we do
have garden paths, and plenty of
places for takin' a wee snooze. If
ya need anythin', holler.

Isla wanders out of the kitchen as Lydea begins preparations
for dinner.

CUT TO:

CLOSE UP: DECORATIVE ANTIQUE CLOCK SITTING ON A HEAVY,
CARVED WOOD END TABLE. THE TIME IS FIVE MINUTES TO FOUR.
CAMERA PULLS OUT TO REVEAL ISLA, LYING ON A COUCH IN A
RATHER LARGE LIBRARY/STUDY.

Isla is curled up, reading a copy of *Caroline* by Neil
Gaiman. Bookshelves cover three of the walls and the fourth
sports a central fireplace with fire crackling with floor to
ceiling windows on each side. The couch is facing the
fireplace a good ways in from the two entries. Over the
fireplace is a large painting of Hamish and partner.

Alec wanders into the library through one of the doors. He
heads for an area in the bookshelf where an array of alcohol
is displayed with a tray of glasses and bucket of ice.
Hamish enters after him. Neither notice Isla.

HAMISH

The girl's are upstairs. So, what
did ya want to speak about?

Alec pours himself a drink, then turns and stares at the
painting over the fireplace. At length, he sighs.

ALEC

I don't know that I can do this
anymore, Hamish. Keeping this under
wraps is getting...*difficult*.

Hamish also pours himself a drink.

HAMISH

What'ya mean? I would've said it's
goin' perfectly. The merger is only
two weeks away and the paparazzi
have no clue. They're too busy
tryin' to figure out if Kelsie
McDunn's fallen for the world's
most eligible Sea Captain.

ALEC
Yeah, but what if...Well, what if
it's the other way around?

Hamish looks up, considers the words, then shakes his head.

HAMISH
I don't follow.

ALEC
What if it's the *Sea Captain* that's
trying to figure out if he's fallen
for Kelsie McDunn?

Hamish gets a wide grin.

HAMISH
Ah! Well, you've stepped in it now,
Alec Meikle! Ya can't say I didn't
warn ya!

ALEC
*Warn me? Pish...You told me she's a
fine woman. Right. I date many fine
women. But Kelsie, she's something
more; different...She's the whole
package, Hamish--and I've fallen
for her, hook, line, and sinker!*

HAMISH
Hmmm...That does muddy the water a
bit. What have ya told her?

Alec heaves a sigh

ALEC
I've wanted to speak with her, but
with Isla, and the merger, and me
not havin' told her a word of
what's really goin' on...

Hamish paces a moment, considering the words.

HAMISH
What if I call and tell her I've
found that you own a majority share
in a company we want--that we
desperately need.

ALEC
And what are you going to say when
the story hits and she calls your
bluff? She'll know how long it
takes to pursue a merger.

HAMISH

Well, I'll...I'll be creative with the truth.

ALEC

You mean, you'll lie through your teeth! I don't want to build my relationship with Kelsie on lying and deceiving, Hamish. I need to tell her. You think she'll listen?

HAMISH

Well, she does have Irish blood, so pick your time carefully, and make sure there's no fyin' pans or sharp objects nearby!

ALEC

This is serious, Hamish! I don't appreciate your joking. We also have Isla to think of. Kelsie thinks the press will discover her soon even without the merger.

HAMISH

Kelsie's probably right.

ALEC

Aye, and that's a problem. Isla's not yet sixteen! She's not ready to have the press descend on her! I barely survived it, and I was much older! Should we call this off?

HAMISH

It's gone too far for that. We couldn't stop it now if we wanted to. And I think Isla is stronger than ya give her credit for.

ALEC

I don't doubt she's strong, it's not that, it's...it's her mother. Sometimes, I see that same wild rage in Isla's eyes, and she has the moodiness--just like Charity. What do you think will happen when the press mull over the full story of her mother's death?

HAMISH

Aye, that was a bad business...

Hamish bows his head, thinking for a moment. At length, he looks up.

HAMISH

I've an idea...Suppose Isla stays here for a while? Lydea said she's interested in makin' bread in the brick oven, and she's good with the horses. I can even give her some trainin' in equestrian sports--that could be the excuse ya give for sendin' her here. If she wins an Equestrian Medal of Honor, which I think she's fully capable of, it would give her confidence to face whatever comes. It would also let ya work things out with Kelsie.

Alec considers the words, then drains his glass.

ALEC

Maybe. I would love to have Isla otherwise engaged while this merger unfolds. I'd also love to have time with Kelsie to work things through. Let me float it past the girls and see if we can get any traction.

HAMISH

Aye. I'll support ya from my side.

ALEC

Well, thanks for the drink and the time. I suppose we can take a crack at the Gull-Wing now. You ready?

Hamish rubs his hands together, eyes sparking.

HAMISH

The question is, my boy, are you...?

The two exit the library/study.

CUT TO:

CLOSE UP ON ISLA, PULLED IN AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE AGAINST THE COUCH. HER EYES CLOSED TIGHTLY, HER LIP QUIVERING. A TEAR ESCAPING HER EYE.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

SCENE TWENTY-SIX

EXT. COUNTRY MANOR, COLVEND, DUMFRIESHIRE, SCOTLAND.

Kelsie is coming back from the stables, a worried look on her face. She walks slowly to the front of the manor.

The Gullwing is just turning back into the drive. She waits for the car to come to a complete stop. Alec steps out from the passengers side and grins at Kelsie.

ALEC

Does your dad always drive like a maniac?

HAMISH

I heard that!

KELSIE (GRINNING BACK)

Aye--should have warned ya. You give him keys to a Gull-wing Mercedes and you're puttin' your life on the line...On another topic, have ya seen Isla? She's not in her room or at the stables.

ALEC

I haven't.

KELSIE

Well, probably just wonderin' the manor or the grounds. I wanted a word with ya if ya have a moment.

Hamish finishes pulling himself out of the car and closes the wing doors, throwing the keys to Alec.

HAMISH

I best be in to see how Lydea is doing with the meal. Thanks for the jaunt. I may be gettin' me one of those. Mind ya, tell Kelsie about my idea...

Hamish makes his way to the manor while Alec falls in step with Kelsie, who continues to walk away from the house.

KELSIE

Idea? What's he talkin' about?

ALEC

He wants Isla to come stay for a while.

(MORE)

ALEC (CONT'D)

He says she's good with the horses
and he feels she may have a talent
for riding--maybe enough to win a
Medal of Honor.

Kelsie dismisses the thought with a shake of the head.

KELSIE

He and his Medals of Honor... It is
Isla I want to speak to you about,
though, Alec. When we went shoppin'
to pick out dresses, Isla made it
clear she needed an elegant gown
for premiers. She's got her heart
set on goin' with ya. I even think
she may show off her gown tonight.

ALEC

Kelsie, we've been over this! I
can't take Isla to a premier
without presenting her first to the
press, and it's just not the time!
Maybe in another year.

KELSIE

I don't think ya have another year!
As for my father, the two of you
hardly know each other. What's
goin' on that ya haven't told me?

Alec looks over as if wanting to say something, but holding
back. He looks down, then directly up into her eyes.

ALEC

There are things we need to talk
about, but not here, not tonight.

Kelsie narrows her eyes, trying to read him.

KELSIE

Alright. I won't pry. I am askin'
two things of ya tonight, though.
First, if Isla does come down in
her gown, don't jump into all the
reasons you can't take her to the
premier. Give her the moment.
Really look at her, Alec! *See her!*
See the beautiful, intelligent
young lady she's becomin'--not just
your daughter and moral charge.

(MORE)

KELSIE (CONT'D)

Second, *talk to her!* Give her a chance to tell you why she thinks she's ready for this. *Listen!* Then share your concerns and let her respond. Come to a decision together. *Don't mandate it.*

Alec opens his mouth, as if to debate, but doesn't. Instead, his lips turn up in a tight smile.

ALEC

I guess those are fair asks...I'll do my best. You have my word.

Kelsie is momentarily shocked at how quickly he agrees, but recovers without missing a beat.

KELSIE

Good! Now if you don't mind, I think I'll go freshen up a bit before dinner.

FADE TO:

SCENE TWENTY-SEVEN

INT. COUNTRY MANOR, COLVEND, DUMFRIESHIRE, SCOTLAND.

Lydea carries the final steaming dishes from the kitchen and puts them onto the ornate dining room table. Alec mills in. Hamish ducks his head back out into the hall.

HAMISH

Kelsie! Isla! Dinner's on!

CUT TO:

Kelsie stands in the long hallway outside Isla's door.

KELSIE

Isla, ya need help, hon? Everyone's at the table now.

ISLA

No. I'm fine. You go on down. I'll be there momentarily.

Kelsie sighs, but turns and heads down the stairs.

DISSOLVE TO:

Everyone is seated at the table when Kelsie enters the dining room.

KELSIE

Isla will be down momentarily.

As Kelsie is seating herself next to Alec, he looks over and whispers.

ALEC

Everything okay?

Kelsie shrugs. Lydea starts passing food around. A few minutes later, Isla enters. She is wearing what may have once been her beautiful blue gown. The gown is now ripped in several places. The skin underneath has been blackened and red streaks, apparently meant to create the illusion of dripping blood, spill over each rip, and appear to have trickled down long stretches of bare arms and legs. Isla's hair is a disheveled mess and she has blackened her eyes and lips so that she looks like some kind of zombie or a discarded voodoo doll. Alec glances over. Kelsie, recovering from her initial shock, watches the girl closely, her face tense. Hamish is the first to speak.

HAMISH

Well, Isla, that's some kind of fashion statement there.

Kelsie has not taken her eyes off the girl. Isla offers a brief grin, then, still avoiding Kelsie's gaze, she looks up at Hamish with a fake, pious smile.

ISLA

Thought I'd share how I'm feelin' today... Shall we say grace?

Kelsie's cheeks are growing a bit red, but she holds her tongue. Mrs. McDunn then passes food to Isla, who fills her plate. They begin to eat, Kelsie commenting how good the food is. Hamish takes a few bites, then looks over to Isla who hasn't said much since grace.

HAMISH

So, Isla, I mentioned to your dad that you're good with the horses. I even suggested ya may have interest in competitive ridin'. We have a Show Jumping competition coming up in late September. Would ya like to be in it?

Again, Isla gives Hamish her fake smile.

ISLA: I'm just a lonely soul from a guarded castle, Hamish, but yes, I know how to jump when I'm told...

(MORE)

HAMISH (CONT'D)

I will take a moment, though, to amend your remarks. What ya really spoke to my dad about was hidin' me away here for a year so dad could make his move on your daughter, our celebrated ice cream queen, Kelsie McDunn. Of course, he thinks he's in love with her.

Kelsie bites her lip. Alec is not amused.

ALEC

That's quite enough, Isla. Maybe you'd like to go upstairs until you're ready to be civil.

ISLA

No! I won't be banished to another room, a distant castle, the McDunn manor--not until I've had my say.

Kelsie can't hold back any longer.

KELSIE

What is it you want, Isla? To offend my parents, to make your dad look foolish? To embarrass me?

Isla's voice softens.

ISLA

No... What I want, Kelsie, is for us to start being honest with each other. For starters, Hamish, why don't ya tell us about the merger happening next month between H&S and my dad's company?

And while we're at it, dad, maybe you could tell me about said company and explain how ya own a company large enough to attract the likes of H&S Energy? Of course, we can't leave out Kelsie! Who wants to explain to her that she and I were but pawns in a little scheme--concocted to confuse the press when they started gettin' too close to the story of the merger?

Isla flutters her eyelids, a mock smile on her face. Kelsie turns to Alec, her eyebrows raised.

ISLA

I did believe ya had the smarts, Kelsie, and the looks to turn my father's head. Ya certainly didn't disappoint. In so doin', however, it appears I gave these two exactly what they wanted; a way to hoodwink the press, plantin' the suggestion that love was in the air...

Alec narrows his eyes, blood draining from his cheeks. He glances toward Hamish, who has a *deer-in-the-headlights* look, mind racing, trying to figure out how Isla got such accurate information. Kelsie continues to let her eyes bore a hole through Alec, waiting for some sort of explanation.

ALEC

It's not like that, Kelsie. Hamish did suggest I stop by the shop. This is what I wanted to talk to you about. At first, I wasn't going to go through with it. I just tossed the article he gave me on the kitchen counter. Then Isla found it and, well, things sort of took on a life of their own...

KELSIE

Life of their own?

Isla is looking down now, tears beginning to form in her eyes. Kelsie, visibly devastated, stands, gracefully.

KELSIE

Mom, I think I'll have my plate upstairs... Isla will too.

She raises her plate and glass and starts toward the stairs, stopping only once to confirm Isla's there. As the two girls disappear up the stairway, Lydea McDunn stands up, reaches across the table, and grabs the bowl of mashed potatoes. She pulls out the serving spoon and clobbers Hamish soundly on the head, sending remnants of mashed potato everywhere.

HAMISH

Oww! What'd ya do that for, ya crazy woman!

Lydea grabs a platter and storms off toward the kitchen. Hamish rubs his head, digging mashed potatoes out of his hair and ear with a napkin.

Alec stares after Kelsie and Isla trying to come to terms with what just occurred. At length, he mumbles in defense.

ALEC
I *did* see her...

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

ACT THREE: SCENE TWENTY-EIGHT

INT. OLD TOWN EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND. KELSIE'S ICE CREAM
EMPORIUM.

CLOSE UP ON WHITEBOARD CALENDAR. TWO DAYS LABELED "KELSIE
AND ISLA GONE" ARE FOLLOWED BY TWO OTHER MARKED OFF DAYS.
CAMERA PULLS BACK INTO A WIDE SHOT.

Katie is leaning against the work shelf, watching Kelsie
with her white frock and goggles, measure out some
concoction into the ice cream maker machine

KATIE
So, what is it your makin' again?
Love potion #9 or a poisoned apple?

KELSIE
Very funny.

She pushes her goggles back and sighs.

KELSIE
I was just...dabblin'. Tryin' to
clear my head. It's no use.

KATIE
Why? I thought things were cleared
up with Alec.

KELSIE
Aye. Clear as London fog. I know
Hamish reached out to Alec, who
dressed in plaids to play golf with
him and his board. I know that
negotiations in London where why he
went down there so often. I know
the clean energy company he helped
found has a blueprint for a fully
self-sustainin' offshore community.
I know H&S thinks it may be the
future of planned communities.

I know the press were gettin' too
close, so it became clear that a
distraction was needed.

(MORE)

KELSIE (CONT'D)

Hamish suggested Alec stop by the shop, thinkin' the publicity would help us as well as them. But Alec didn't want to do that. Then Isla saw the article and got involved, and he decided to play along.

KATIE

Sounds plausible.

KELSIE

Okay, but *why* did he decide to play along? Why didn't he just tell me he needed a distraction, and Hamish thought it might help the shop? Why lead Isla along too?

KATIE

What does it matter? He obviously saw somethin' he wanted to explore more. He made a mistake, Kelsie. Alec Meikle or not, people make mistakes.

Kelsie sighs again, taking her smock off and hanging it back on the wall with the goggles.

KELSIE

Aye, but a lot of lives got affected by this one.

KATIE

So? He seems to care enough to want to make it right.

Kelsie has walked over to the whiteboard schedule.

KELSIE

Katie, wasn't Isla supposed to be here a half hour ago? Have ya heard from her?

Katie walks over to the board.

KATIE

No. I haven't heard from her.

KELSIE

She worked last night with ya. Did she seem...okay?

KATIE

No. She didn't. She barely spoke and avoided Aryan like the plague, even though he made extra efforts to be nice. What exactly happened at the infamous 'dinner.'

Kelsie pulled in a deep breath.

KELSIE

Well, let's just say Frankenstein's bride would have felt right at home. I'm worried about her, Katie. She's gotten the worst of this...I'll call her.

Kelsie dials, then holds her cell up to her ear. After several rings, she cancels the call.

KELSIE

She's not answerin'. I know she's not speakin' to Alec yet. He called me this morning. He's in London again, but he saw there's a storm blowin' in. He wanted me to invite her over tonight.

KATIE

Well, it's after six now, and a slow night, so why don't ya drive by the castle and check in?

KELSIE

Aye, that's a good idea. Sure ya don't mind?

KATIE

I can manage. Go!

Kelsie looks around, quickly gathering her things. Her mind is already elsewhere. She barely even says thanks to Katie as she passes on the way to the door.

FADE TO:

SCENE TWENTY-NINE

INT. RANGE ROVER, OUTSIDE KELSIE'S SHOP, OLD TOWN, SCOTLAND

Kelsie opens the door and climbs in. She takes a moment to look up at the sky. The wind is whipping and dark clouds are rolling in. She sighs, closes the door and starts the car. Her cell phone rings and she picks it up.

KELSIE

Alec? ...Aye, I'm drivin' over to the castle right now. Isla didn't come in tonight... Are ya sure? I don't even know yet if there's a problem... *She took the Gull-Wing?* Are ya sure?...It's not a tracker malfunction? Does she even know how to drive? ...Okay, okay, I got it...I6, about twelve miles out...Where are ya now?...Right. That means ya should get here maybe a half hour behind me...How are ya gettin' here so fast?...*The coast guard?*...Aye, I know, Alec. I'll get there as fast as I can...

Kelsie hangs up, her face riddled with concern. She pushes down on the gas and swerves into traffic.

FADE TO:

SCENE THIRTY-TWO:

EXT. BEACH ALONG I6, WEST OF EDINBURGH

WILD WAVES BREAK OVER A JUTTING LEDGE OF ROCK BESIDE A STRETCH OF BEACH. THE SPRAY MINGLES WITH RAIN TO FALL ONTO AN OPEN UMBRELLA, WEDGED INTO THE BASE OF THE ROCK. IN THE DISTANCE, BEYOND THE STRETCH OF BEACH, WE SEE THE GULL-WING, CRASHED THROUGH THE GUARD RAIL AND STICKING NOSE DOWN OFF A ROAD EMBANKMENT AT A TIGHT CURVE.

Kelsie has had to slow due to the rain and almost misses the back end of the Gull-Wing jutting up. The twisted guard rail is hard to miss, however. She pulls over onto the shoulder and jumps out of the Range Rover, running over to the car.

KELSIE

Isla! Isla!...

She is able to crack the door open and shines her phone flashlight around. There's no sign of Isla. She looks around the rock outcrop. No Isla. No blood. She quickly dials.

KELSIE

Alec! Where are ya? ...*Thank God!* I think we'll need the Coast Guard! ...I found the Gull-Wing! It's off the road and down an embankment. Doesn't look like anyone was hurt in it, and no signs of Isla...

(MORE)

KELSIE (CONT'D)

I'll leave my car lights on focused
on the Gull-Wing and go looking...
Alec, hurry!

Kelsie hangs up, hurrying back to the Rover to point the headlights. She then jumps back out into the rain, throwing a windbreaker on and pulling up the hood. She makes her way down the embankment to the beach. Across the short sliver of sand, she spots the umbrella in the dimness. She hurries to it. It has been wedged into the rocks to keep from blowing away. She drops to her knees and shines the flashlight up. It's definitely the umbrella Isla's mom painted. In masterful strokes, the underside depicts a sunrise scene, shining across a rocky beach. She struggles back to her feet, wind whipping her hair. In a flash of lightning, she sees a lone figure, standing in water up to her waist. The figure seems to be just standing there, staring at the surf. She hurries to the waters edge, yelling at the top of her voice to be heard over the thunder and noise of the storm.

KELSIE

Isla! Stop! There are rip currents
out there!

The figure does not move, continuing to stare at the ocean. Kelsie rips off her jacket, wrapping her phone in it and throwing it back up the sand toward the embankment, then wades out into the water.

KELSIE

Isla! Isla!...Can ya hear me?

Surf rages, wind howls, water tears at Kelsie's body, but she continues pushing toward Isla. As she gets closer, she hears Isla's voice. She seems to be singing. The tune is simple and the words, which Kelsie can't quite make out, are sung over and over. The words seem to be in a different language. She calls out louder, slowly closing the gap.

KELSIE

*Is that somethin' your mother sang
to ya?...*

The figure stops singing and turns. Isla's voice seems perplexed, as if she's just come out of a trance.

ISLA

Kelsie. What're ya doin' here?

Kelsie stops. She is about three meters from the girl. The water is over her waist and almost up to Isla's chest.

KELSIE

I've come for you, ya dote! You're in danger here! Rip currents criss-cross this whole area!

ISLA

So? My life has never been under my control.

Isla turns back away, as if she is going to start singing again. Kelsie has only a moment to formulate a response.

KELSIE

I said, is the song one your mum would sing to ya?

Isla turns back, her eyes boring into Kelsie.

ISLA

What do ya know of her? *What has he told ya?*

KELSIE

Not much. That she was beautiful. That she was talented. That he loved her and tried to help her, but she had a sadness inside. She couldn't seem to shake it, and on a wild, stormy night, perhaps much like this, it overwhelmed her, perhaps affecting her judgment...

Isla holds her glare a moment. Then turns back to the sea. When she speaks again, Kelsie can barely hear her.

ISLA

I'm surprised he was that direct. He never talks about her. He never talks about that night. He thinks I was too young--that I don't know any details. But I remember every detail. I've relived it almost nightly for thirteen years...

Kelsie edges slowly forward.

ISLA

It's a Welsh song, for children, about two friends, riding on a horse... One falls off, knowing pain and injury, but the friend helps him climb back on. Holding the horse tight, they spur it on to jump clean over the moon...

(MORE)

ISLA (CONT'D)

She sang it that night, at the top
of her lungs, when she walked out
into the sea and never returned...

As Isla turns back yet again, the fury of the sky lets go in
a series of bright lightning flashes and crashing thunder.
The waves are getting higher and harder to manage.

KELSIE

We need to go, Isla! The storm's
gettin' too strong!

Isla doesn't even seem to hear her. Her mind is focused
elsewhere. Kelsie sees that her eyes are red and swollen.
Her voice is raw as she shouts over the thunder.

ISLA

*What kind of mother does that? What
kind of mother leaves her child,
unprotected, on a beach, just
walking off...*

Isla looks away, her eyes seeming to steel. Kelsie realizes
she doesn't want to move--no matter how rough the storm is.

ISLA

I remember every detail...*Why? Why
do I have to remember it--relive
it? It's gettin' dark. She takes me
on the bus. We get off and walk and
walk. It starts to rain. She opens
the umbrella, bright on the inside
even in the dim light. She stands
for a long time, just starin' at
the sea. Then she puts me down,
kisses me, and sets the umbrella in
the rocks.*

I remember her face. It was as if a
sadness was pulling it inward,
sucking it down to her very soul.
There were no tears. Just sadness.
She stands. She turns. She starts
walking and singing. The song gets
stronger the closer she gets to the
water. She walks right into the
waves. She continues walking until
the water reaches her waist. The
waves hit as high as her chest. She
stands there, beltin' out her song
a long time it seems.

(MORE)

ISLA (CONT'D)

The storm gets worse. I can only see her in lighting strikes; I can only hear her when waves aren't crashing and wind dies down. Then lighting strikes. She isn't there and doesn't come back. I don't hear her. I never hear her again...

Kelsie feels tears sting her own eyes.

KELSIE

No child should have to go through that, Isla. I think your mother was dealin' with...with a depression that was bigger than her. It was pullin' her und--

Isla's eyes sharpen as her head spins back around.

ISLA

And that's an excuse?

Kelsie tries to think. She sees the story for what it is...horrible.

KELSIE

No. No, there's no excuse. *None...*

It's just that, sometimes people can get to a place that we can't know and we can't understand. They don't see the world like we do.

Maybe, in her way, she was tryin' to protect ya. She created and then left the umbrella. She tucked ya under it, like a mom tucks a babe under a blanket. Maybe she saw her world as too dark, *too painful* to keep ya close. Maybe she was in a place where it felt that seperatin' herself and her darkness from ya was the best way to show ya *that...that she loved ya.*

Isla is listening, hanging on ever word. She wipes at her eyes.

ISLA

I can see that. *I can...*But it still *hurts!*

Isla's voice falls into sobs. Kelsie opens her mouth, but words don't come. Isla pulls her cell phone from her pocket.

ISLA

And it seems life isn't done with us. Have ya seen the latest on social media?

Kelsie takes the phone.

CLOSE ON PHONE SCREEN. A POST TITLED "WHAT IS ALEC MEIKLE HIDING?" TELLS OF THE 'RUMOR' THAT ALEC WAS MARRIED ONCE AND HAS A DAUGHTER FROM THE MARRIAGE. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF COMMENTS OFFERING IDEAS RANGING FROM THE DAUGHTER BEING SPECIAL NEEDS TO DARKER AND MORE HURTFUL SCENARIOS.

Kelsie looks up from the phone, confused as the storm rages.

KELSIE

How?

ISLA

I don't think it was Arryan. Seems somehow linked to before the gala. However they got it, though, it's only a matter of time before they dig up the story of my mother...

At that moment, a huge crack of thunder seemed to highlight a new ferocity with the storm. A huge wave washes over Isla and Kelsie, knocking them off their feet. Both are able to recover, spitting and floundering.

KELSIE

Isla, we got to get out of here!

Kelsie holds out a hand. Isla gives a brief nod, still wiping water from her face. She grabs it. Kelsie pushes toward shore. Isla's voice comes again, more subdued.

ISLA

I've ruined everything, haven't I?

Kelsie, fighting the storm winds and undertow, can barely hear her, but tries to listen.

ISLA

I wrecked dad's Gull-Wing. *He's gonna kill me!* And I wrecked his chance with you! He was gonna tell ya--I promise! I heard him say!

Kelsie stops to catch her breath and turns to Isla.

KELSIE

The Gull-Wing's a car, Isla. Your dad wants ya back safe. That's *all* he cares about right now! And about your dad and I's chances--know this; *love doesn't always follow the recipe!* Sometimes it's just chance. Sometimes accident. It can be about workin' through challenges or just holdin' on 'til storms pass...It's different for each of us. *It's the ultimate flavor--unique every time!*

Now, we're in a bad way right now in case you haven't noticed. So, *we need to focus!* We need to move--*the undertow is gettin' stronger!*

Isla gives an abashed nod and Kelsie turns, pushing against the wind and water as they, hand in hand, slog towards shore. A sudden strong gust of wind hits them--as does something else.

ISLA

The umbrella!

The open umbrella bounces off them, flipping over onto a wave that curls it under. Without even thinking, Isla pulls away and dives after it. When a lightening strike shows it clearly again, it's further out, being pulled away to sea. Isla still struggles after it, sobbing and lunging into the deeper waters. Kelsie can do nothing but follow.

KELSIE

Isla!...You gotta let it go! I know it's hard! I know!...But let it go!

Isla slows, allowing Kelsie to grab her arm just as a monster wave crashes over, sucking them under. Kelsie is rolled and twisted, not knowing for a moment which way is up. Finally, she finds the surface again, spitting and sputtering. Isla has broken surface as well, only a few meters away.

ISLA

I c-c-can't feel the b-bottom...I can't feel it!...It's c-colder...

Kelsie is looking around, trying to get her bearings.

KELSIE

Aye...Bein' sucked further out...
Think it's...a rip tide...

ISLA

Feelin' heavy...Kelsie!...Don't let
me...drown!

KELSIE

Nobody...drowns on my watch!...Get
shoes and...c-clothes off! *Hurry!*

Isla obeys. Kelsie reaches Isla to help.

KELSIE

Now...gotta s-s-swim!

Kelsie takes off, Isla following close behind. In the next
lightening flash, it appears they have made little progress.

ISLA

We're...not...g-g-gettin' anywhere!

KELSIE

Push, harder!...C-come on, I-Isla!
Kick!...G-got to g-g-get back...to
where...w-we c-can s-s-stand!

ISLA

F-freezin'...c-c-colder...too c-c-

Another huge wave hits, pulling them under again and further
out to sea. Kelsie manages to get back to the surface to the
sound of Isla gasping and screaming as she bobs under again,
floundering, unable to do little more than stay afloat.

ISLA

Kel! Arms-s...h-heav-vy...n-n-not
s-s-strong...lik-ke...

Kelsie reaches the girl just as the biggest wave yet hits
and rips them apart. Kelsie, noting that this wave dragged
her down deeper, fights to the surface, adrenalin pumping.
She frantically searches for isla. She sees nothing but
undulating rolls of sea, bent on pulling her under.

After a gulp of air, she pushes down in the direction she
thinks Isla might be. Swimming blind, she fans her arms out.
Just as her lungs feel as though they'll burst and she has
to go up, her arm brushes against something. . She grabs at
it. It's an arm. *It's Isla!* Pulling, she drags the limp body
to the surface. Isla is out cold and she can't tell if the
girl is breathing. She feels her own metabolism slowing and
her arms getting heavy.

Desperately, she looks again for shore, but without a lightening flash, she can't tell which direction to start swimming in.

Minutes seem like lifetimes. She feels strength draining from her. Suddenly, there is another play of light from a different direction. Another wave hits. She fights to keep from going too deep, to hold on to Isla, and to pull her up and is barely able to do so. She is so tired. She can feel her brain beginning to shut down. She thinks she sees a boat, but it's far away--so *far*! Her mind is screaming that she can't keep Isla's head above the water much longer, but she screams back, spitting water from the steady falling rain. Her feet have gone numb, and her muscles seem to be freezing up, but she doesn't give in.

Faintly, beneath the screaming roar in her head, Kelsie thinks she hears a new sound. It seems to be overhead. It seems to be someone shouting her name.

CUT TO:

POV: KELSIE'S SIGHT IS BLURRY. A DARK FIGURE SPLASHES DOWN BESIDE HER, YELLING SOMETHING. IT TAKES A LONG MOMENT BEFORE SHE'S ABLE TO UNDERSTAND.

COAST GUARD DIVER

I've got her Ms. McDunn! I'VE GOT
HER! You can let go! *LET GO!* ...

KELSIE (VOICE SLURRED)

N-n-not...b-b-breathin'

COAST GUARD DIVER: LET GO!

Kelsie lets go. There is a moment when she hears a noise, like wings, beating the heavy air. She looks up.

KELSIE: *Wings...*

Her mind tries to process...A chopper?...Must be...somebody...there was somebody bringing a chopper...she can't remember. She stares up into the streaming light.

POV: KELSIE SEES WATER FROM ANOTHER WAVE BLOCKING OUT THE STREAMING LIGHT AND CRASHING DOWN. SHE'S ROLLING IN THE WATER. HER ARMS AND LEGS BARELY MOVE. SHE FINDS THE FAINT LIGHT ABOVE. DESPITE HER ATTEMPTS TO STRUGGLE, IT BECOMES FAINTER AND FAINTER AS SHE SINKS...A DIFFERENT KIND OF LIGHT BEGINS TO GROW, WIPING AWAY THE SEA AND STRUGGLE. THE DIFFERENT LIGHT TAKES ON A BLINDING INTENSITY.

SHE WANTS TO GO TOWARD IT, BUT A FEELING, LIKE AN ARM
SLIPPING AROUND HER WAIST, STOPS HER. IT IS PULLING HER FROM
THE LIGHT. AWAY...

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

EXT. OLD TOWN EDINBURGH, KELSIE'S ICE CREAM EMPORIUM

WIDE SHOT: KELSIE IS AGAIN SITTING WITH THE SOCIAL MEDIA
SPECIALIST (FROM OPENING SCENE). CAMERA MOVES IN ON KELSIE

KELSIE

That's what it felt like...an arm
around my waist, pulling me away
from the blissful abyss. Next thing
I knew, I woke in a hospital room.
They said I'd been out for almost a
day! Isla and Alec were there. Isla
came to about an hour after they
got her to the hospital, but they
say it was a little touch and go
with me. That's it. That's what I
was aware of.

ALLY DUNCAN

You mean, you didn't know that Alec
stripped down to his briefs, and
dove into that raging sea when he
saw ya goin' under? A boat of
paparazzi filmed it. Have ya seen
the footage?

KELSIE

How could I not. It's everywhere.

She gives Ally a sheepish grin and leans forward, her voice
low, as if sharing a confidence with a friend.

KELSIE

He looked pretty good, didn't he?

Despite herself, Ally's face twitches, showing the hint of a
grin.

ALLY

Aye! That he did. Like a true
Captain... You know he's gotten so
much exposure over that, the
studios are scrambling to sign him.

(MORE)

ALLY (CONT'D)

Some say it may have all been a
ploy to rekindle his career.

Kelsie raises an eyebrow.

KELSIE

Ah! Quite a coup, to get the Coast
Guard, the Royal Infirmary, and
Mother Nature all to cooperate on
an elaborate ploy?

Ally's expression turns to a tight smile.

ALLY

Okay. Point taken. How is Isla
doin'? Ya sure ya want me to
introduce the story of her mother?

KELSIE

It's gonna come out. We just want
the truth out there--in context and
told as a whole story. As for Isla,
physically, she's good.
Emotionally...she's holdin' her
own. She has good days and bad
days. Havin' the press breathin'
down your neck doesn't help ya
heal, but she's a fighter and she
knows now that she's not alone.
She's got me, Alec, Katie, and
others, all standin' beside her.

ALLY

Speakin' of you and Alec, are there
weddin' bells in the future?

Kelsie's smile broadens.

KELSIE

Maybe. It's like I told Isla; love
doesn't always follow the recipe.
We're takin' our time.

Kelsie looks back toward the shop where we glimpse Isla and
Katie working to fill an order.

KELSIE

Let me run in and see where that
sample dish and your order are.

Kelsie hurries back into the shop.

CUT TO:

INT. OLD TOWN EDINBURGH, KELSIE'S ICE CREAM EMPORIUM

Isla is just putting finishing touches on a small bowl of red and white striped ice cream.

KELSIE
What's takin' so long?

ISLA
Nothin'! On it's way right now.

Isla takes the small dish, along with a bag of four other pints of ice cream, out the front door, heading for Ally.

KATIE
Hard to imagine that we had to turn
to a *socialist* to straighten this
whole thing out, wouldn't ya say?

Kelsie looks over, giving Katie a large grin.

KELSIE
Hard to imagine.

Katie watches wistfully as Isla serves Ally. Then, she throws her hands up with a heavy sigh.

KATIE
Well, back to business! I've a boss
ya can't believe! Always work,
work, work! I've two new recruits
startin' today, and two others that
Aryan is trainin'... So, bye!

She disappears to the back with a wink and a wave. Kelsie takes a deep breath, watches a moment longer, then heads back outside, angling toward Ally and Isla.

CUT TO:

EXT. OLD TOWN EDINBURGH, KELSIE'S ICE CREAM Emporium

ALLY
Ah, here she is...(turns to
Kelsie). So, I was tellin' Isla I
think this is the best flavor yet!
Who would've thought the fire of
pepper sauce could be balanced by
the cool ice of peppermint! Ah,
it's nothin' short of divine!

Ally quickly finishes the little bowl, then grabs the white bag with her pints in it, as if trying to stay ahead of a hurricane.

ALLY

Now, gotta run! Already late for my next interview, and I've got to get goin' on this--this *Expose of the Year!* Thanks again for callin' me, Kelsie! And Isla, if this is your flavor, then, my goodness child, ya have a future in ice cream!

Ally scurries off while Isla and Kelsie watch her. Isla leans over, keeping the smile pasted on her face.

ISLA

I'm not a child! Ya sure I can't wear my dark bunny smock? No-one would dare call me a child in that!

KELSIE

Right--and I'll have ya sellin' wolf-bane and wooden crosses 'stead of ice cream... Besides, if I were to wager, I'd say all of us here on God's blue planet are children in that woman's mind!

Isla let's go a loud snicker.

KELSIE

So, is that a genuine smile?

Isla looks over.

ISLA

What'ya mean? I smile!

KATIE

Maybe. But not enough.

Isla flinches at this, looking down. When she looks up, she's put a brave smile on her face.

ISLA

It's hard...lettin' go *all of it*.
But I won't give up.

Kelsie puts an arm around Isla as they look back toward Ally. The woman moves sporadically, like a mouse scurrying, hunting cheese. As she turns a corner and disappears from view, golden sunlight reflects from the retro storefront of a Scottish tweed shop where she turned.

ISLA

Ya think I should tell her one day
that if ya look at 'stressed,'
backwards, it gives ya 'desserts'?

Kelsie gives a soft grin.

KELSIE

To tell ya true, Isla...At some
level, I expect she knows...

THE END