

SENTIMENTAL VALUE

A screenplay

by

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Version 2.3
August 18th 2024

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Mer Film AS
Eye Eye Pictures AS
Don't Look Now AS

1

EXT. FAMILY HOUSE (PRESENT, WINTER) - DAY

1

A venerable old house in Oslo sorely in need of a coat of paint. Other houses in the neighborhood may be more modern and in better condition, but there's something soulful about this one missing from the others.

2

EXT. FAMILY HOUSE (APPROX. 2000, SUMMER) - DAY

2

The same house in a different era. Summer. Green leaves moving in the wind. The facade paint is fresher.

NARRATOR

When she received the essay assignment to write a story as if one were an object, she immediately knew that she would choose to be their house.

Closer to the house: the two windows on the first floor and the door make it easy to imagine the facade of the house as a face.

3

INT. FAMILY HOUSE (1990S) - DAY

3

Close on two girls' feet stomping down the stairs from the second floor, they step into shoes, grab their school bags and run out. The door slams shut behind them.

NARRATOR

She described how the house's belly shook as she and her sister ran down the stairs and out the back door - the house's butt -

4

EXT. FAMILY HOUSE (1990S) - DAY

4

View from several windows: the two girls running through the garden.

NARRATOR

- taking the shortcut to school, through a hole in the fence and a neighbor's lawn, before they turned onto the road and the house could no longer see them.

They squeeze through an opening in the fence behind the house and run off.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Her mother pointed out that it was a bit inconsistent that the house could also see behind its back. As if a house couldn't have eyes in the back of its neck?

The facade of the house from the back. Worn-out garden furniture.

5 **INT. FAMILY HOUSE (VARIOUS TIMES) - DAY**

5

MONTAGE of rapid images of the house being used and abused as the voice continues:

NARRATOR

She remembered wondering if the house preferred to be light and empty or full and heavy...

High heels scrape the parquet floor at a party (1965).

An eager dog's claws scratch the wooden floor in front of the door (1980).

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

...if it liked being trampled on, or that people crashed into its walls, that eager dog claws scratched the floorboards...

A chair scraping against the kitchen floor (1998).

Children's dirty fingers stick to the railing on the stairs (1994).

A wine glass falls to the floor and shatters (1965).

A milk glass topples over (1955).

A laptop falls corner-first, creating a deep gouge in the wooden floor (2000).

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

...and she thought yes, it liked being full, and that the marks were just scrapes like you get playing tag or soccer.

Gustav (35) is moving his hands behind the two small windows over the kitchen door. The shadowplay makes it seem to Nora (3) that they are two eyes looking towards her. (1990S)

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6 **EXT. FAMILY HOUSE (1990S) - DAY**

6

Close on the facade: a noticeable crack in the foundation.

NARRATOR

Her father said the crookedness was an old flaw, discovered right after the house was built a hundred years ago.

7 **INT. FAMILY HOUSE (1990S) - DAY**

7

The crack in the foundation wall seen inside in the basement. *

The library on the ground floor. The crack is visible there as well, making its way all the way up to the ceiling.

8 **INT. FAMILY HOUSE (APPROX. 2000)**

8

An adult couple arguing loudly is heard through the wall. A girl (NORA 12) - lying on her bed - puts a pillow over her head to drown out the sound.

NARRATOR

She wrote that it was as if the house was still sinking, collapsing - just in very slow motion - and that the entire time her family had lived there was just a split second in mid-air.

CLOSE UP on the girl's eyes.

POV: CLOSE UP on the crack in the wall in front of her face.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

And before them, a number of people, pets... insects also had their brief flash in the house's time. Four people had even died within the walls of the house.

9 **INT. FAMILY HOUSE (1918, FALL) - DAY**

9

The largest bedroom on the third floor. A man lies in bed. Flowers on the bedspread over him. He is dead.

NARRATOR

Nora's great-grandfather Edvard Irgens died in the bedroom on the second floor from the Spanish flu... In the same room where his granddaughter Edith was born just seven years later.

10 **INT. FAMILY HOUSE (1925, WINTER) - DAY**

10

The same bedroom. A baby is lifted by a midwife and placed in the mother's arms.

NARRATOR

Which was now her parents' bedroom.

11 **INT. FAMILY HOUSE (APPROX. 2000) - DAY** 11

The same bedroom almost 75 years later. Sissel (45) and Gustav (50) are in the midst of a fierce argument. The sound of the argument is heavily muted - as if it is far away.

12 **INT. FAMILY HOUSE (CA 2000) - DAY** 12

Back to Nora's childhood room where she's holding a pillow over her head (the pillow muffles the sound of the argument).

13 **INT. FAMILY HOUSE (1955, SPRING) - DAY** 13

A man (Otto, 70) drops an orange. He bends over, but it rolls away due to the slant in the floor. He notices something is wrong and freezes.

NARRATOR

Edvard's son Otto died of a heart attack one spring day in 1955.

CLOSE UP on the orange rolling until it stops against the wall.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

The father said it was a bit confusing how she rattled off so many names, but complimented how she managed to paint vivid pictures for the reader.

The sound of Otto's body hitting the floor.

14 **INT. FAMILY HOUSE (1958) - DAY** 14

A woman (KARIN, 36) sits in the living room with her head down. The hallway is visible behind her, the door to the inner room ajar.

NARRATOR

In the room at the end of the hallway, Otto's eldest daughter Karin hanged herself in 1958 at 36 years old.

A cloud moves in front of the sun outside - the room darkens.

15 **INT. FAMILY HOUSE (1985) - DAY** 15

NARRATOR

Karin's little sister Edith died 30 years later in the same bedroom she was born in.

16

INT. FAMILY HOUSE (2008) - DAY

16

Back to Nora's childhood room with the crack. It is now used more as a storage room, but her bed is still there.

NARRATOR

When she read the essay later, she noted that she hadn't used the word "quarrel", but wrote of all the "noise" her parents made. A kind of noise that the house didn't like.

Close up of the book. A teenage girl's handwriting.

17

INT. FAMILY HOUSE (QUICK MONTAGE, VARIOUS YEARS & SEASONS)

One of the house's windows overlooking the driveway.

Outside, Gustav passes by the window on his way out. It's as if the "eyes" of the house are watching him leave. (1990)

Then another day. He walks past the window again. (Approx. 2000)

A third day: he hurries past, looking stressed. (2000)

NARRATOR

But if there was anything the house disliked more than the noise, it was silence. And among all the silences, her mother's silence was the worst.

18

INT. FAMILY HOUSE (APPROX. 2000) - DAY

18

In the kitchen, a woman in her 40s is staring melancholically into nothingness (SISSEL, 45).

NARRATOR'S VOICE

When Dad was home, it was never quiet, even when he wrote, music thumped the floorboards, but his trips started lasting longer and longer. And when he left for good, the house got lighter, the noise between the parents disappeared, but the house missed all his other sounds.

A girl (Nora 12) watches her mother just sitting there, sad.

19

INT. FAMILY HOUSE, NORA'S CHILDHOOD ROOM (2008) - DAY

19

Nora, 20, sits in her old room full of old clutter. We see her back as she reads the essay she wrote.

NARRATOR'S VOICE

Her teacher gave her an A, and her father had loved it. She dug out the essay when she was looking for a monologue for her auditions at the Theatre Academy, but was disappointed because it seemed so unemotional. She therefore chose Nina's monologue from "The Seagull" instead.

LATER

Nora stands upright with a sheet of paper, trying out Chekhov's text. ("I am a seagull, no, no. What am I saying? I am an actress... Yes, that's what I am...")

Close-up on the crack that is still on the wall.

TITLE

20

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE, STAGE - NIGHT

20

The sound of someone breathing nervously close by.

A POV from far back on the main stage of Norway's NATIONAL THEATRE:

The stage right in front of us is dark. There is no stage curtain, and the square opening towards the auditorium lights up - full of expectant theatre guests. The MURMUR of the audience mixes in with the breathing.

CLOSE UP on the face in the dark, looking out towards the audience from the back of the stage. This is NORA (35), she breathes more and more nervously.

The sound of breathing is replaced by MUSIC:

21

EXT. NATIONAL THEATRE - NIGHT

21

Documentary-like images of the audience on their way to the theatre premiere. White snow covers the square and the stairs in front of the venerable theatre building in central Oslo.

Snow on the statues in front of the theatre: Ibsen, Bjørnson, Holberg.

People flock up the stairs and into the theatre.

22

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE, LOBBY - NIGHT

22

The MUSIC continues over the murmur from the people in the lobby and as heavy winter coats are hung up in the cloakroom.

The doors open to the stately theatre hall with rows and rows of still empty red seats.

THEATRE USHERS take tickets and hand out the program for the performance. People stream in.

23 **INT. NATIONAL THEATRE, MAIN HALL & BEHIND STAGE - NIGHT** 23

Hundreds of expectant theatre guests are in place, the buzz of voices is massive. The performance is about to begin.

The camera moves over the rows towards the stage, still dark. As we get closer, we glimpse a few chairs and a table in the darkness. A simple stage design says little about the play that will soon be performed.

The camera floats further past the chairs and into the total darkness at the very back of the stage.

Nora is hidden in the darkness at the back of the stage. No one out there can see her, but she can see the audience. She's breathing frantically - scared.

Suddenly, she storms off the stage.

BACKSTAGE: Practical and worn, in stark contrast to the glamorous hall. Anxiety is running high. The young STAGE MANAGER talks to the sound technician at the edge of the stage (well out of sight of the audience).

SOUND TECHNICIAN

She just wanted to look at the audience.

STAGE MANAGER

OK, but she's not miked up?

As they speak, Nora leaves the stage and hurries past them. She is wearing a large dress that flutters as she walks.

STAGE MANAGER (CONT'D)

Nora! Nora!!

Nora doesn't react. The stage manager runs after her.

Actors in costume hang around and cast nervous glances after them. Among them an approx. 40 year old actor, JAKOB, dressed as a priest with a black robe and a white collar.

24 **INT. NATIONAL THEATRE, DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT** 24

Nora has retreated into a sparsely furnished dressing room: a mirror, a couch, and some books. She seems to be panicking.

Someone knocks on the door.

STAGE MANAGER (O.S.)

Nora?

(sternly)

Nora!

(knocks harder)

NORA

No!

25

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE, AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

25

The stage manager pushes past a full row out in the auditorium.

A man in his 40s (the DIRECTOR) notices and looks questioningly at her. The stage manager beckons him over - *something is clearly wrong*. The director gets up. *

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26

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE, DRESSING ROOMS - NIGHT

26

Nora has opened the door to the dressing room. The director is standing there talking to her. The stage manager stands beside him.

*
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DIRECTOR

But it's like this every time, and it always turns out well.

NORA

No, this isn't like that, this... I can't...

She grabs her and looks seriously at her.

DIRECTOR

You can use this. Take it out on stage.

27

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE/ BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

27

Nora is finally miked up by the sound technician. The director has succeeded in persuading her.

The director stands with the stage manager, who is clearly irritated with Nora.

DIRECTOR

(quietly to stage manager)

I know, I know, but she's ready now. Everything will be fine once she gets on.

28

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE, AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

28

The director sits down in his seat. He smiles to his husband next to him before looking up at the stage.

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*

The lights in the hall begin to dim. The humming of voices slowly fades.

29

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE, BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

29

Nora stands right by the stage with the other actors. They're about to go on. She tries to gather herself, and breathes calmly and deeply...

...it's not working. She looks up and makes eye contact with Jakob, the actor in a priest's costume.

She waves at him - *come!* - as she slowly backs away from the stage and towards the door to the hallway outside.

The stage manager is watching and is about to stop her.

NORA

(to stage manager)

We... we're just gonna go over something real quick.

A MOMENT LATER

Nora and Jakob stand next to colorful set elements from another play (*Alice in Wonderland*).

NORA (CONT'D)

You have to help me.

JAKOB

Okay..?

Nora maneuvers around an absurdly large fake cake, so they are partially hidden. The stage manager looks at her suspiciously.

NORA

Hit me.

JAKOB

Huh?

NORA

I just need to get out of this.
Just a slap.

She slaps herself in the face to demonstrate.

NORA (CONT'D)

Come on.

Jakob looks at her. He is stressed too, and isn't sure what to do.

NORA (CONT'D)
Come on, it doesn't have to be...

Suddenly, Jakob slaps her on the cheek. Quite hard.

NORA (CONT'D)
(surprised)
Thanks.

JAKOB
Let's go.

He takes the lead towards the stage, with Nora behind him.

The stage manager looks surprised at something behind Jakob.

STAGE MANAGER
Hey!

As Jakob turns back, Nora is no longer behind him. She has bolted towards the exit.

STAGE MANAGER (CONT'D)
Hey!

30

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE, HALLWAY - NIGHT

30

Nora sprints down a hallway while her large dress flutters around her. The stage manager rushes after her and grabs hold.

Nora begins to let down her hair and tear up her costume.

STAGE MANAGER
No, no, no!

An older lady, the COSTUME SUPERVISOR, comes to prevent her from ruining more of the costume. Jakob comes sprinting.

31

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE, MAIN AUDITORIUM & BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

In the auditorium, a growing confusion spreads.

The lights are dimmed, *but why is nothing happening?*

Backstage, Nora is held at the edge of the stage. A big STAGE TECHNICIAN holds her hands firmly while everyone works manically to get her ready.

STAGE TECHNICIAN
Sorry.

Nora doesn't respond. She breathes quickly and looks down.

A stressed MAKEUP ARTIST fixes her hair. The costume supervisor patches Nora's dress - she gives up sewing and pulls out duct tape.

The stage manager sits in a booth right next to the stage. She throws a nervous glance at Nora before she cues the lights.

The lights come on the stage: Jakob and two other male actors are already standing there.

The hall goes silent. Everyone is expectant.

So is everyone backstage. They look at Nora standing there, looking down with her hands held firmly.

The stage manager signals and the stage technician lets Nora go.

She stands still for a second. Two seconds. Three. Then she slowly walks onto the stage. (Her dress has duct tape on the back, but from the auditorium, it looks fine.)

Everyone watches. Out in the hall. Backstage. Jakob on stage.

She stops. With the light in the hall dimmed, the audience is just a black mass, but the silence suggests they're intently watching.

Then she finally speaks. It's said softly, but the microphone captures it and sends it out into the hall.

NORA

I don't know what to say.

The line is delivered so naturally that one could wonder if it's a line at all. She lifts her gaze and looks straight at Jakob and the men who are positioned higher than her. The men who are to decide the fate of her character in the play.

Nora's nerves seem to be gone, or rather, they are still there under the surface, giving her acting an edge.

Jakob and the two other actors don't react to her accusations, they stand immovable, frozen in time. Nora's character is dead and is moving among them like a ghost.

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NORA (CONT'D)
Can you hear me? Listen!

She walks past Jakob, the priest, towards one of the other men, and places her hand over his mouth.

*

NORA (CONT'D)
You said you wanted to save me, but
all you did was chase me into the
flames.

*
*
*

He doesn't react. Frozen. She walks over to the last of them, *
 a slightly older man. She brings her face close to his. *

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NORA (CONT'D)
 (increasingly enraged)
 At least the lies have now ended.
 I let your children into my home.
 And still you witnessed against me.
 No one defended my case. No one
 wanted to listen to me.

Her anger dissipates. She turns away from the immovable men. *

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NORA (CONT'D)
 Now I am silent forever. Nothing is
 as quiet as a heart that has
 stopped beating.

LATER

The play is over. Nora and the actors accept applause. Nora
 is visibly happy, relieved, and proud. Almost euphoric.

32 **INT. NATIONAL THEATRE, DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT** 32

Nora's dressing room is as she left it. Empty. Her phone is
 on the sofa, it starts VIBRATING.

33 **INT. NATIONAL THEATRE / BACKSTAGE - EVENING** 33

Nora exits the stage with the other actors. Everyone hugs and
 smiles. The stage manager and others backstage join in.

Nora embraces the costume technician. They laugh. Someone
 hands Nora a large bouquet of flowers.

With a slight bow, Nora passes the bouquet to the stage
 technician who had to hold her back. He smiles.

Close-up on Nora, savoring the moment, happy - *or is there a
 hint of something bothering her?*

34 **INT. NATIONAL THEATRE, DRESSING ROOM** 34

Back to her dressing room where her phone lights up again.
 VIBRATING alarmingly.

35 **INT. TAXI - NIGHT** 35

Nora sits in a taxi. She has changed into "civilian" clothes
 and is removing her stage makeup with wet wipes, clearly
 stressed.

36

EXT. NURSING HOME PARKING LOT - NIGHT

36

The taxi drives into a parking lot in front of a large hospital looking building.

37

INT. TAXI IN THE NURSING HOME PARKING LOT - NIGHT

37

Nora has her card ready and hands it to the driver as he stops. She unbuckles her seatbelt, impatiently placing her hand on the door while the payment processes - ready to hop out.

The TAXI DRIVER hands her the card back. The payment is successful, but Nora remains seated.

TAXI DRIVER

Do you want the receipt?

Nora doesn't respond. She sits there with her hand on the door handle.

TAXI DRIVER (CONT'D)

You all right?

NORA

Can I just sit here for a moment?

He nods. He looks at her with concern through the rearview mirror.

38

INT. NURSING HOME - EVENING

38

Nora walks through the corridors of a nursing home. She finds the room she's looking for and slows down.

39

INT. NURSING HOME / MOTHER'S ROOM - EVENING

39

Nora enters the room. It's empty except for an older woman lying motionless in bed.

A winter coat on a chair next to it gives the impression that someone has just been there. (Nora is still wearing hers).

It's clear that the woman in bed is dead: a pretty older lady with thin white hair. Her eyes are closed. (Nora's mother SISSEL.)

Nora walks over and slowly reaches her hand towards the woman's hand. She touches it gently. She moves her hand to the woman's forehead, but withdraws it.

She hears the door and turns: a woman is standing in the doorway looking at her. This is Nora's younger sister AGNES. Agnes has clearly been crying.

They embrace each other.

BLACK

40

EXT. THE ROAD OUTSIDE THE FAMILY HOME - DAY

40

A taxi drives up a narrow and snow-covered road, crowded with parked cars. Many vehicles are perched with two wheels on the snowbanks.

The car stops in front of a house, and a figure dressed in black steps out: This is GUSTAV BORG (71).

Gustav is a well-known film director with his heyday behind him. On a good day, he still has the energy and charm that once made him a force of nature. But today is not a good day. He is tired, and his suit is creased.

Gustav looks up at the house:

It's the family home as we got to know it in the opening scenes.

The taxi drives away, and Gustav walks towards the entrance.

Behind the windows on the ground floor, he can see people dressed in black - a funeral reception in progress.

41

INT. FAMILY HOUSE/KITCHEN - DAY

41

Agnes enters a large kitchen (bearing the distinct imprint of an elderly lady living alone for a long time), Nora follows closely. They are in the middle of a conversation.

NORA

We should have just ordered
catering. I knew it was going to be
stressful.

AGNES

Not now.

Agnes opens the refrigerator. Nora watches her younger sister, visibly stressed, taking out food and arranging it on large serving trays. They are both elegantly dressed in black. As we'll soon understand, this is the reception after their mother's funeral. The murmur of guests talking and moving around in the adjacent rooms is audible.

Nora notices that Agnes has tears in her eyes, but it doesn't deter her from attending to the food.

NORA

(about Agnes crying)

Oh come on, not now.

Agnes has to smile at herself.

ERIK enters (Agnes' eight-year-old son).

ERIK

Mom, can I have more cake?

AGNES

Yes, of course.

Even (Agnes' husband and Erik's dad) is hot on Erik's heels.

EVEN

I just told him to cool it. He's had four pieces.

A woman in her 60s, THEA, enters the kitchen - VOICES from the guests outside grow louder as she opens the door.

THEA

So this is where you are. Do you need any help?

AGNES

We're fine, thank you.

(to Erik)

It's not okay, Erik. When Dad already said no.

ERIK

Please?

THEA

(to Nora)

That was such a beautiful speech you held. S

NORA

Thank you, it was on behalf of both of us.

THEA

She was so proud of you. She talked about it all the time.

Agnes looks at her but is evidently used to hearing praise about her sister without receiving any herself. Erik wants an answer:

ERIK

Just one piece?

Gustav enters and is met with the hum of various conversations. He pauses in the entrance, surveying the surroundings. It's been a while since he's been here. He heads towards the living room where FUNERAL GUESTS guests dressed in black stand in small clusters. No one seems to have noticed him.

He spots Nora, walking with Erik towards the cake table.

Before she can notice him, he retreats into an empty room: a library with a glass door leading to a narrow covered terrace. The room still bears traces of having been the deceased's psychology office. (Sissel, Agnes' and Nora's mother, received patients here until a few years ago.)

Gustav looks around, contemplative. The light changes as outside the sun slowly peeks out from a cloud.

In the living room, Nora experiences the same change in light; she smiles at someone but is lost in thought.

Agnes fills a water jug in the kitchen while the light shifts. She, too, is contemplative.

43 **INT. FAMILY HOUSE - DAY**

43

Suddenly, the house is completely deserted. Everything goes quiet.

The kitchen where Agnes stood is empty.

The living room and dining room where we just saw Nora and Erik is devoid of people.

Faint MUSIC is heard from far away as the camera glides from the living room to the office where Gustav was just present. It fades into:

44 **INT. FAMILY HOUSE (1930S, SUMMER) - DAY**

44

The same room, but now in the 1930s, it's summer and sunny. The faint MUSIC is playing at full volume from a hand-cranked record player. A girl (KARIN, 12) sits with some FRIENDS, enjoying the music.

NARRATOR

The room on the first floor was just called the library - it was rarely in use, and the eldest daughter of the house, Karin, got to use it freely to listen to music and hang out with friends...

Karin gets up and closes the door (we glimpse the rooms outside before the door shuts, also 1930s style).

The camera moves towards the fireplace and follows the chimney upwards (as if following the music seeping up to the second floor). *

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Karin's younger sister, Edith, discovered that the sound leaked through the chimney, reaching her upstairs.

45 **INT. FAMILY HOUSE (1930S) - DAY** 45

We follow the music from a fireplace (the hatch is open) into a girl's room on the floor above.

It's the room we know as Nora's, but decorated in 30s style with black and white photos of movie stars on the wall.

A girl (EDITH, 10) lies by the fireplace and listens. She hears MUSIC and GIGGLING from Karin and her friends.

46 **INT. FAMILY HOUSE (1940S) - EVENING** 46

The fireplace on the second floor a decade later. Voices from the room below are heard indistinctly: an excited discussion. Someone whispers.

EDITH (17) moves closer to the stove to listen. The MUSIC is turned up below, drowning out the voices.

47 **EXT. FAMILY HOUSE (1940S, FALL) - DAY** 47

Seen from a first-floor window: Karin (20), dressed in a coat, walks out of the gate.

48 **EXT. FAMILY HOUSE (1943, WINTER) - EVENING** 48

Seen from a second-floor window: Karin is escorted out of the house by MEN FROM THE STATE POLICE (in German Nazi style uniforms) to a waiting police car.

NARRATOR

One fall day in 1943, Edith heard knocking downstairs and that the State Police had taken her 20-year-old sister.

As Karin is put in the back seat, she casts a final glance up towards the second floor (and the camera).

49 **INT. FAMILY HOUSE (1944, SUMMER) - DAY** 49

A young woman's room (Karin's room) at the end of the hallway near the entrance. Some shelves are empty, but much remains.

NARRATOR

Karin was released half a year later. One morning her room was empty. She had fled to Sweden.

50 **INT. FAMILY HOUSE (1944, SUMMER) - DAY** 50

The library on the first floor: abandoned. No one uses the record player.

51

INT. FAMILY HOUSE (PRESENT DAY, WINTER) - DAY

51

Back to the same room (Sissel's psychologist office) during the funeral reception. Gustav is sitting on the armrest of a chair. Thoughtful.

On the wall in the hallway, among many family pictures, there is a portrait of Karin in her late twenties, smiling warmly.

NARRATOR'S VOICE

After the liberation, Karin returned to Norway as Karin Borg, wife of the Swede Lennart.

Another photograph of Karin together with a slightly older man: Lennart. (A picture of Nora as a child hangs beside it.)

52

INT/EXT. FAMILY HOUSE (1950S, SUMMER) - DAY

52

A smiling little blond boy (GUSTAV, 3 YEARS) runs through the house. Close on his feet on the floor. The sun is shining.

Close-up of milk spilled on a wooden table: children's fingers draw in the milk, creating blue-white streaks.

NARRATOR

Karin gave birth to Gustav at Ullevål Hospital, and he was brought home to Losveien in 1951. Gustav loved the house, Aunt Edith, and the neighbors...

Gustav (3) stands out on the porch. The rain is pouring down.

53

INT./EXT. FAMILY HOUSE (1950S, VARIOUS SEASONS) - DAY

53

QUICK MONTAGE: The sun shining through the trees into the living room window, creating beautiful, winding shadows on the floor.

NARRATOR

...he loved how the reflection of their windows created magical shadows on the wall in the living room and in his room.

The light reflected from a neighbor's window creates a beautiful square on the kitchen wall.

The shadow of a sheet dancing in the wind on the house wall.

As a cloud moves away from the sun, a square light of a window appears on the floor - a green glass vase on the windowsill also creates a beautiful green diffused shadow at the bottom of the square.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Many years later, when he had become a filmmaker, Gustav liked to say that "Nothing is more beautiful than shadows." And as he did he would always think of the house where he had lived as a child.

The sun goes behind a cloud, the shadow disappears, and the room darkens.

54

INT. FAMILY HOUSE (1958) - DAY

54

The whole living room darkens. Karin, Gustav's mother, sits thoughtfully in the living room with her back in the dim room. The mood is gloomy. (We recognize the image from the opening of the film.)

She gets up with heavy movements, walks down the hallway, and disappears into the room at the end of the hallway.

NARRATOR

When Karin died, Lennart took little Gustav with him back to Sweden.

She closes the door behind her. Silence.

55

INT. FAMILY HOUSE (1965) - NIGHT

55

The closed door at the end of the hallway a few years later. It is night. Suddenly the door opens, and a pair of jovial YOUNG WOMEN come out. LOUD, HAPPY 60s MUSIC.

The pair run down the hallway and into the living room filled with PARTY GUESTS. Everyone is having fun. (For the time an unusually liberated crowd, unafraid to show their different orientations.)

NARRATOR

Karin's younger sister Edith took over the house with her maid Lillian. Edith was happily childless, and never had the house's innards shaken more from music and laughter, nor had its hardwood floor suffered more scrapes.

EDITH (40) and LILLIAN (30) dance together.

56

EXT. FAMILY HOUSE (1965) - NIGHT

56

All the windows on the first floor are lit with a full party inside.

57

INT. FAMILY HOUSE (1965) - NIGHT

57

From inside among the dancing guests, we look out at the building across the street: lights in a window turn on.

NARRATOR

If anyone complained, Edith turned up the volume. She was sure one of the neighbors had ratted on her sister during the war.

Then someone turns on lights in another window in another neighboring house.

58

EXT. FAMILY HOUSE (CIRCA 1965, SUMMER) - DAY

58

Edith (40) is hanging bed linens to dry outside in the garden. A boy, GUSTAV, 13, comes over to her. They talk.

NARRATOR

One summer when Gustav was visiting and Aunt Edith had had one too many drinks, she gave him advice he later loved retelling: "Fuck as much as you can, men and women, whoever wants to, life is short." Edith would never have used the word 'fuck' like that, but the sentiment behind it was probably correct.

Sheets and duvet covers flutter in the wind. Gustav casts long glances at something off screen as he talks to his aunt.

It's Lillian (30) sunbathing topless. She turns over onto her stomach to sunbathe her back.

59

EXT. FAMILY HOUSE (CIRCA 1965, SUMMER) - SUNSET

59

The sun is low. Edith and Lillian sit on the steps down from the small terrace, smoking in silence.

NARRATOR

When Edith died, Gustav was his aunt's sole heir.

Lillian rests her head on Edith's shoulder.

60

INT. FAMILY HOUSE (1986, FALL) - DAY

60

The entrance and living room. Empty and worn down. The house has lost some of its charm since the happy 60s.

61

INT. FAMILY HOUSE (1986, FALL) - DAY

61

Gustav (35) has covered the floor of the bedroom on the second floor with plastic and is busy painting the walls.

NARRATOR

And in 1986, he moved back to the country and to the house with the beautiful light.

62

INT. FAMILY HOUSE (1986, FALL) - EVENING

62

Plastic covers half the living room floor. Gustav (35) sits with his back on a stool. Motionless. Painting equipment next to him. Something reminiscent of his mother's melancholy.

NARRATORS

There are two stories about how Gustav met his wife Sissel. She said he came as a patient and complained about sleep problems. Moving back had triggered something in him, she thought.

Gustav looks towards the room at the end of the hallway (where his mother died).

NARRATOR

Gustav's version was more extravagant:

63

INT. FAMILY HOUSE (CIRCA 2000) - EVENING

63

On a bulky tube TV, we see Gustav being interviewed as a handsome and confident 50-year-old on a talk show.

GUSTAV (V.O.)

(Swedish)

...she was the most beautiful woman I'd ever seen, I found out that she worked as a psychologist, so suddenly I developed some psychological problems...

Laughter from the audience.

NARRATOR'S VOICE

Gustav had been the least motivated patient Sissel had and she ended the treatment after three appointments.

GUSTAV (V.O.)

(on the talk show)

Nobody's got more self-insight than me, I'm thoroughly analyzed, I live with my goddamn therapist.

Laughter.

64

INT. FAMILY HOUSE (EARLY 90S) - DAY

64

A girl with brown hair (Nora, 3) runs through the kitchen, into the hallway, and down into the living room. The rooms are brighter and more modern.

NARRATOR'S VOICE

Six months later, Sissel was pregnant. They got married three weeks before Nora was born in December 1987. When her little sister Agnes was born, they became a family of four.

The girl runs out the open veranda door. Soon we see the brown hair flash past the window and disappear.

65

INT. FAMILY HOUSE (MONTAGE, 1988 - 2020)

65

Layers of random memories from the family's life in the house overlap as the camera pulls back:

Night (1988). White moonlight outside. Gustav (40) stands with a baby in his arms, pointing up out of the living room window, softly saying:

GUSTAV

Look, that's the moon.

It transitions to day (1991). A girl's voice yells, "Done!" Sissel (45) opens a bathroom door in the hallway, and a little girl leans forward on the toilet seat for her mother to wipe.

Farther down the hallway another scene appears:

Evening (2000). A plate comes flying and shatters hard on the floor in the hallway. Agnes (9) - in pajamas - is startled. Nora (12) comes and leads her sister away. Loud arguing from Gustav and Sissel is heard from the kitchen.

It transitions to night (circa 2020), the hallway is empty, but inside the living room, an older female figure (SISSEL 65) slowly passes by.

NARRATOR

After the divorce, Gustav went back to Sweden... The house became lighter and lighter.

She turns off a lamp.

66

EXT. FAMILY HOUSE (CIRCA 2020) - NIGHT

66

Total view of the house. One by one, lights are extinguished until only a solitary window on the first floor is lit. It gives the feeling that the place is becoming more and more abandoned.

NARRATOR

Nora moved out the year she turned 20. Agnes stayed until she started studying in Bergen in 2011.

One can glimpse the female figure behind the window walking around alone inside. She seems frail, old before her time.

67

INT. FAMILY HOUSE (CIRCA 2020) - DAY

67

A tape dispenser and a pen are misplaced in the fridge next to a brown banana.

The fridge door closes. There are pictures of Nora and Agnes, and Erik as a 5-year-old. A note is visible: "Turn off the coffee maker." Another one: "Agnes (your daughter!) 48273234 Call if you need anything."

The stove. A kettle is unrecognizable. It has been left on a hot stove plate and has melted outward. (In the background, a reminder note "TURN OFF!" is visible.)

Total view of the living room. Sissel sits and cries. Agnes (adult, this is just a couple of years ago) stands and comforts her.

68

INT. FAMILY HOUSE (PRESENT DAY) - DAY

68

Back to the present: The living room is full of funeral guests - a stark contrast to the scene before. Agnes' son Erik has a large piece of cake in his hand. Nora leads him toward the hallway.

NORA

(pointing to the office)

You know grandma used to work in there, right, before she got sick?

ERIK

Yes.

69

INT. FAMILY HOUSE/STAIRS TO 2ND FLOOR - DAY

69

They walk up the stairs to the second floor.

NORA

She used to sit there and talk to those she was helping... or they talked to her and it was...

(MORE)

NORA (CONT'D)
 (smiles)
 ...secret things, in a way.

70

INT. FAMILY HOUSE - DAY

70

They enter the room on the second floor that was once Nora's bedroom (and so much else), but now is filled with various clutter. Nora goes over to the old fireplace and opens it. Voices can be heard from the floor below. Erik is fascinated.

NORA
 When I was little... a bit older
 than you - I liked to sit here
 after I came home from school.

ERIK
 Were you allowed to do that?

Nora shakes her head. They smile together. A loud burst of laughter is heard through the fireplace. A Swedish voice is very clear.

GUSTAV (O.S.)
 (out of the chimney)
 I realize it's not easy, should you
 offer condolences or
 congratulations?

QUICK CUT TO THE BASEMENT as we hear the last part of the line: The fireplace in the office (which carries the sound) is in focus - a figure stands in the foreground and talks.

ON THE SECOND FLOOR, Nora had not expected to hear that voice. She stands up, completely taken aback.

ERIK
 Are you okay?

She doesn't answer right away. Then it sinks in.

NORA
 Yes, yes. Just...

She abruptly leaves the room.

71

INT. FAMILY HOUSE - DAY

71

Nora stands outside the bathroom on the first floor. Agnes is washing her hands.

NORA
 Dad is here.

AGNES
 (happily surprised)
 What?

NORA
Did you know?

AGNES
No, or I did tell him when it was,
but...

A MOMENT LATER

Nora walks towards the room where the sound of her father came from. She seems nervous. Agnes follows right behind.

Gustav is standing right by the fireplace with a young woman (KAMILLA) who stands with her boyfriend (WILLIAM, 25) and a MAN AROUND 65. Gustav seems to be in a much better mood now and very focused on Kamilla, whom he has just recognized.

GUSTAV
You have become a woman!

She laughs.

NORA
Hi Dad.

Gustav sees his two daughters approaching.

GUSTAV
Ah, there you are!
(to the others)
Excuse me.
(to the man in his 60s:)
Barbados sounds fantastic!

Gustav and his daughters hug each other, awkwardly.

AGNES
Have you met Erik yet?
(calling for Erik)
Erik!

NORA
I didn't see you in the church.

GUSTAV
No, it was too difficult for me...
Why was it in the church, anyway -
she didn't find religion at the
end, did she?

AGNES
No, we just thought it would be
nice...

GUSTAV
(interrupts)
Did you see that it was Henrik's
Kamilla? Little Kamilla is all
grown up.

The father looks over at Kamilla by the fireplace.

AGNES
We know Kamilla, Dad.

GUSTAV
She was so happy to see me.

Nora gives him a strange look - what does he mean by that?

AGNES
How are you doing?

GUSTAV
No, how are you two? This is all so
sad, she was a fantastic mother to
you, right? She was so beautiful.

NORA
Beautiful?

GUSTAV
Yes, beautiful - like you, right -
and sharp as hell. Was always
right.

Erik comes over to Agnes. He looks skeptical at his grandfather.

AGNES
Aren't you gonna say hi to your
grandfather?

Erik gives him a stiff hug. They don't know each other well.

72

INT. FAMILY HOUSE - EVENING

72

The crowd has started to thin out. Even and Erik sit together on the sofa watching *YouTube shorts* on Even's phone. Erik rests his head against his father's shoulder. It looks peaceful.

Nora says goodbye to a guest before going into the kitchen to clean up some things.

Suddenly, she sees the door to the back stairs move. A man's foot tries to pry it open from the outside. An elbow becomes visible.

Nora goes over and opens the door. Gustav comes in with his arms full with a couple of large speakers.

GUSTAV
Thanks.

Nora looks at him questioningly.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
I was just thinking about you.

NORA
(about the speakers)
What are these?

GUSTAV
They're mine, I got them from the
basement.

Silence.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
How are you doing?

He touches her arm kindly; she finds it a bit unusual.

NORA
Why?

GUSTAV
We need to talk while I'm in town.

NORA
(skeptical)
Okay?

GUSTAV
I have something to tell you.

NORA
But can't you just say it now?

GUSTAV
Not here. It's time for us to have
a proper talk, isn't it?

Silence. Gustav walks out with the two speakers.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
Nils Fredrik could take them for me
in his car. He has one of those...
A Toyota.

With a speaker under each arm, he moves towards the exit.
Nora stands and watches him leave.

The two sisters are cleaning, alone in the house. Nora picks up a half-full bottle of wine that's on a table and pours two glasses.

She takes a sip of wine and gives Agnes the other glass.

NORA

I don't know. I just hope he doesn't feel like he suddenly has to play dad and comfort me or something.

AGNES

But it's good that he's trying though. I know you think it's hard, but he probably feels the same way too.

Nora sips her wine thoughtfully. Agnes takes a big gulp.

AGNES (CONT'D)

But ask him about the house. What he wants to do with it.

NORA

What about it?

AGNES

He owns it. I mean, he gave it to Mom when they divorced, but there were never any papers on it.

NORA

Really?

AGNES

Yeah, I know.

Agnes drinks more wine.

AGNES (CONT'D)

It's... it's bad timing... with the interest rates and all. We were actually counting on that money.

NORA

But you talk to him. You never dare to talk to him about anything difficult.

AGNES

(gets up)

That's not true.

Agnes starts picking up coffee cups and empty bottles.

She opens the dishwasher. Steam billows out.

NORA

Were those his speakers, do you think?

AGNES

Who knows?

They smile.

74

INT. LORRY PUB - DAY

74

Nora is entering an old and traditional pub in downtown Oslo. Some guests glance at her - they recognize her from TV or theatre.

Gustav has been looking out for her, he lights up as soon as he sees her and waves and smiles.

Nora smiles back - he suddenly seems sweet and eager.

NORA

Hi Dad.

They hug. It's more relaxed than at the reception.

GUSTAV

You look so good.

She sits down.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

I've already ordered something,
what would you like?

NORA

A coffee is fine, thanks.

GUSTAV

Nothing else?

She smiles. He waves the server over.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

A coffee for the beautiful young
lady.

SERVER

Do you have everything you need?
Does it taste good?

GUSTAV

Everything tastes good when you
serve it.

He smiles at the server, she smiles back and leaves. Nora is embarrassed by his flirting.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

She probably thinks we're a couple.

NORA

Ew, Dad.

The waiter goes away.

GUSTAV

I've been thinking a lot about you... I've been a bit worried about you.

Nora appreciates his sensitivity but steers the conversation away.

NORA

Okay. How are you doing?

GUSTAV

Very well! A lot is happening. You might have heard that they want a retrospective of my films in France?

NORA

(smiling)

No, where should I have heard about that? That's good though.

GUSTAV

I don't really like that kind of attention. But I do like France.

NORA

...yeah, they do like your films.

GUSTAV

(smiling)

But the most important thing is, I have a new film in the works.

NORA

That's great, you don't give up.

GUSTAV

I think it might be the best thing I've written, Michael said the same.

NORA

Is Michael still producing?

GUSTAV

Micke says that now... now the tide is turning for me... They are screening a retrospective of my films. And my documentary is being screened here and there.

The server comes with Nora's coffee.

NORA

Thanks.

(to Gustav)

(MORE)

NORA (CONT'D)

Yeah, that's great, but you said
you wanted to talk to me about
something?

Nora watches her father dig into a plastic bag he brought with him. He takes out a worn bubble wrap envelope and lays it on the table. He is nervous and his hand is slightly shaking.

GUSTAV

The film is about a young woman,
about a young mother who...

Gustav lays the envelope in front of her.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

I wanted... I want you to play the
lead role in my film.

Silence. Gustav smiles with satisfaction.

NORA

Okay.

Nora doesn't know what to say. She didn't see this coming.

GUSTAV

I wrote it for you. You are the
only one who can play this role.

NORA

Thank you, but... You've never
actually seen me act, have you?

GUSTAV

Yes, several times. I saw you in
Medea.

NORA

I saw you leave during the
intermission, Dad. We talked about
it.

GUSTAV

You know I can't handle theatre...
and that scenography was
dreadful... But you were good. I
can see an actor for two minutes,
and I'll know if he's great.

Nora just looks at him.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

This role could be good for you, in
many ways. You deserve to do
something more personal... not a
200-year-old play for a bunch of
pensioners... This is a real film
role.

Gustav doesn't seem to realize how insulting this feels - as if she hasn't played real roles. Nora smiles. She's angry, her eyes are shiny, but she tries to hide it.

NORA

Yeah, great, and since my series did so well, maybe you can get some money for it too?

Gustav doesn't realize she's leading him on and he gets enthusiastic about this topic.

GUSTAV

Yes, it certainly helps, I talked to Michael - he says that this is the best I've ever done... he is certain that he can get it financed. And we will use the house.

NORA

Our house?

GUSTAV

Yes, it's perfect.

Nora sits and looks at him before she pushes the manuscript away.

NORA

No, sorry.

Gustav doesn't understand.

GUSTAV

Can't you take a break from that stupid TV series?

NORA

It finished a long time ago.

GUSTAV

(doesn't pick up on what she's saying)

You can't let that stuff dictate what you do... You're better than that.

NORA

I thought you hadn't seen it?

GUSTAV

Yes, I have.

NORA

So you can stream it in Sweden after all?

(he looks away, caught)

So, what did you think?

GUSTAV

No, it's not important what I think.

NORA

Yes, it is. I'd love to hear what you think. Just say it.

Gustav straightens up.

GUSTAV

Okay, if you want... It's not for me, that kind of stuff. There's no imagery, no faces... You can't see the actors' eyes.

(pause)

But what do I know? People like it.

NORA

(angry)

Thanks.

GUSTAV

No, Nora, please. You're not the problem there, right... And this part it...

NORA

Dad, we're never going to work together, we can't even talk to each other...

Nora stands up.

GUSTAV

Just read it, then I'll call...

NORA

(interrupting; stern)

And stop calling me. Yes, I can tell you're drunk, stop calling.

Gustav is taken aback.

GUSTAV

I... I call because I'm worried about you.

NORA

Worried? You don't have the right to be worried about me, Dad. You don't have the right.

Nora turns and walks towards the exit. Gustav follows her, he takes her by the arm and holds the envelope out to her.

GUSTAV

Please. Just read it.

NORA

(not taking it)

Why should I? You haven't made anything in 15 years, it's not going to happen anyway.

She walks away. The waiter and one of the guests who recognized Nora glance at Gustav as he stands watching her. Outside the windows, the snow is falling heavily.

BLACK

75

INT./EXT. CAR IN DEAUVILLE, FRANCE - DAY

75

A French beach town in Normandy. Long sandy beaches. Sun.

Gustav sits in the back of a car, looking out. Next to him is a slightly nervous French film journalist: CHRISTOPHE (32), he works for the film festival that invited Gustav.

GUSTAV

Will Jean-Baptiste interview me?

CHRISTOPHE

No, I told you, I will do the...

GUSTAV

Where is Jean-Baptiste?

CHRISTOPHE

Jean-Baptiste died four years ago. Cancer... how do you say, cancer in the mouth.

GUSTAV

In the mouth?

Gustav is slightly shocked. The DRIVER looks at him in the mirror.

FRENCH DRIVER

(in French; subtitled)

Il est connu lui? (Is he famous?)

CHRISTOPHE

(in French; subtitled)

C'est Gustave Borg.

(the name means nothing to him)

Un grand réalisateur scandinave.

Anna, La rivière du temps... (He's a great director. Anna, The River of Time...)

He looks at Gustav in the mirror. Gustav doesn't understand what they're saying and smiles at the driver.

FRENCH DRIVER

Connais pas. (Never heard of him.)

GUSTAV

What are you saying?

FRENCH DRIVER

(to Gustav)

Are your films on Netflix?

Gustav shrugs. He has no idea.

CHRISTOPHE

(thinks it's
inappropriate)

C'est pas ce genre de film.

(It's not that kind of film)

The driver doesn't quite understand. Gustav no longer listens, he looks thoughtfully out the window.

GUSTAV

(mostly to himself)

In the mouth...

CHRISTOPHE (O.S.)

Yes, it was very sad.

(pause)

Are you ready for your screening?

76

EXT. CONGRESS CENTER, DEAUVILLE - DAY

76

A large building. A flock of people gather to catch a glimpse at the celebrities. Photographers.

Christoph escorts Gustav. No one is looking at them, they're after the big stars, but A FRENCH FILM NERD yells and waves with Gustav's picture from the festival program. Gustav signs it.

77

INT. CONGRESS CENTER, DEAUVILLE - DAY

77

They walk past a long, long line and towards some doors where they have started to let in the audience.

CHRISTOPHE

Nathalie, the festival president,
would like to meet you here.

Through the open doors, one can see an ENORMOUS movie theatre.

GUSTAV

Not bad.

CHRISTOPHE
(realizes the
misunderstanding)

Yes, we are in another room, this
is the main room. Another film.
American film.

Sounds of excitement spread. A young woman (RACHEL KEMP) is surrounded by fans from the line.

CHRISTOPHE (CONT'D)
It is her film. Or she is the star.

The young star signs autographs with a smile, but the BODYGUARD and others around her make sure to get her free.

Rachel is about 30 years old. She has charisma, obviously a star, but has a relaxed and cool vibe makeing her stand out.

GUSTAV
(about her film)
Any good?

CHRISTOPHE
(doesn't like it)
Very indie. About abortion, you
know, it is a big deal over there.
But she usually does more... you
know big things.

Rachel and her entourage pass by and stop where they can be in peace.

CHRISTOPHE (CONT'D)
I wanted your films to be screened
here, at least ANNA, I mean it's
the opening of your retrospective,
but... you know.

GUSTAV
Is there a dinner tonight? Jean-
Baptiste always took me to...

CHRISTOPHE
Ask Nathalie...

NATHALIE, a charismatic and well-dressed woman around 50, comes towards them smiling.

NATHALIE
Gustav Borg... how wonderful to
meet you. I'm Nathalie Morali.

She does the French cheek-kissing thing.

NATHALIE (CONT'D)
We are so happy to screen all your
wonderful films.

CHRISTOPHE

Almost all.

NATHALIE

(ignores Christophe)

It's a huge honor for us.

GUSTAV

Thank you.

NATHALIE

No, thank you.

Nathalie spots the star standing further away.

CHRISTOPHE

I think we should get to our screening.

GUSTAV

Yes, Christophe said there is a dinner later?

Nathalie is already heading off.

NATHALIE

Have a great screening. So glad you are here.

Gustav and Christophe are left standing. Nathalie talks effusively with Rachel and the gang. They laugh.

CHRISTOPHE

We really should be going.

Suddenly an older Latin American gentleman comes over, pats Gustav on the shoulder, and smiles - PEDRO MORALES.

GUSTAV

Pedro? Pedro Morales?

PEDRO

Gustav!

GUSTAV

Do you have a film here?

PEDRO

(thick Spanish accent)

No, I am on the panel about the «death of cinema» Are... are you in the death of cinema?

GUSTAV

No, I'm not in any death of cinema. I'm presenting my film.

PEDRO
(impressed)
You made a new one?

GUSTAV
No, this is ANNA. But my new
documentary is showing tomorrow.

CHRISTOPHE
...at noon.

PEDRO
Oh no, that is the time for Death
of cinema, sorry.
(pause)
I have to run. I'm meeting the
Death of cinema people to eat. Nice
to see you, my friend.

GUSTAV
You too.

Pedro points towards the hall (where he thinks Gustav's film will be shown) and smiles as he walks away.

PEDRO
Anna... Great film!

78

INT. SMALLER CINEMA, DEAUVILLE - DAY

78

Christophe and Gustav stand on stage, each with a microphone.

CHRISTOPHE
I think this is the first time all
of your feature films are
screened...

Gustav shrugs playfully - *how would I know?* - people in the audience laugh.

CHRISTOPHE (CONT'D)
From the first, very bold, *Le soleil l'après-midi*, *Afternoon Sun*
from 1978...

GUSTAV
(interrupting)
When he says bold he means there is
a lot of nudity.

More laughter from the audience.

CHRISTOPHE
... all the way to the criminally
under seen *L'idylle* from 2009.

GUSTAV

(uses an old joke)

Well, I always say: it was seen by
DOZENS of people.

Most don't get the joke, only a couple of people laugh.

CHRISTOPHE

So this is a rare chance to see
this... misunderstood film on the
big screen. Your last film to date.

GUSTAV

My newest screens tomorrow.

CHRISTOPHE

Yes, the premiere of Borg's short
documentary *The Last of its Species*
is tomorrow at the library. It
doesn't have a French distributor,
so this may be your only chance.

There is some noise in the back of the hall, but Gustav has
light in his eyes and cannot see anything but that some
people are standing up.

CHRISTOPHE (CONT'D)

But what a better place to start
the retrospective than with ANNA.
Grand Prix à Cannes. A nomination
for the Oscars. Your masterpiece?

A LITTLE LATER

Christophe and Gustav leave the stage as the lights in the
hall dim.

CHRISTOPHE (CONT'D)

Did you see?

GUSTAV

What?

CHRISTOPHE

(flustered)

Rachel Kemp. She is here!

GUSTAV

Who?

In the back of the hall sits the star who passed them in the
hallway. She must have done an intro to her film and sat down
here. She and her gang are still looking at their phones.
Their faces light up in the hall.

CUT TO GUSTAV'S FILM ANNA (ALL IN ONE SHOT WITHOUT CUTS):

Overview of a large plain: far away, a DARK-HAIRED BOY and a young girl run towards us. A black car stops on the roadside a bit behind them. Two SOLDIERS jump out and run after the children who have a solid head start.

The girl doesn't see the boy stumble behind her. The soldiers shout in German. The LOUD SOUND of a train starting its engine right beside us drowns them out. The boy gets up and runs.

The girl is close now. This is ANNA in the film, played by Gustav's daughter Agnes, 9 years old. She acts well: tears in her eyes, convincingly scared.

The camera moves backward and reveals that we have seen it all through a window of a train compartment. A WOMAN in her 40s sits in the compartment, unaware of the drama outside.

Anna is so close that she runs out of sight. One of the soldiers almost catches the boy, but stumbles.

SOUND of a train door opening. Anna enters the compartment. She sits by the window next to the woman. She tries to hide how scared and out of breath she is.

More SOUNDS FROM THE LOCOMOTIVE. The compartment shakes. Slowly, slowly, the train we are in begins to roll. Steam is seen outside the window.

Anna looks out: the boy is approaching (soldiers right behind), but the train rolls on and the boy slowly slides out of sight.

Anna is distraught. Suddenly someone knocks on the train window. She jumps. The boy's arms reach up and knock on the window once more before he again slides out of sight. Then we hear German shouts right beside us - *have the soldiers caught the boy?*

Anna wants to stand up, but the lady stretches out her arm and holds her back. It seems like she wants to protect her.

The train goes faster and faster, further and further away, the boy will never catch it again.

The camera moves closer to little Anna. Finally, her face fills the entire screen. She has escaped, but is distraught and fights back tears.

The image is held for a long time before fading to black.

The film is over. Applause in the hall.

Close up of Rachel Kemp sitting with tears in her eyes. Next to her, her publicist (NICKY) takes out her phone and mutters *well that was an upper*. Rachel's entourage gets up, but she doesn't notice, still captivated by the film. Nicky taps her on the shoulder, she gathers herself and stands up. They want to leave before the lights in the hall come on.

The lights come on. Gustav stands next to the stage, looking at the credits still rolling. He is far away. Melancholic.

A YOUNG MAN sets up two chairs on the stage.

A LITTLE LATER

Christophe and Gustav sit and talk. The audience listens.

CHRISTOPHE

...So, the image of the child and the rock, it's an expression of the lack of love, the coldness of the parents, no?

Gustav thinks. He is less cocky than before the film. Vulnerable.

GUSTAV

It is just a rock.
(laughter)
You can't film a symbol. A rock is always a rock, you know.

Gustav still seems moved. Christophe sees it.

CHRISTOPHE

I can see you are moved.

GUSTAV

I'm sorry, I watched the ending coming back in... I haven't seen it in... I don't know, 20 years... I remember that day on set, you know. I make films with my friends, they are my family.

CHRISTOPHE

And in this movie even more so, yes?

GUSTAV

Yeah, you mean my daughter, Agnes? My youngest? Yes, she's the one that plays Anna.

Reactions from the hall. Impressed. A PERSON FROM THE FESTIVAL signals to Christophe and points to his watch.

CHRISTOPHE

Just a last question before I let

you go...

(MORE)

CHRISTOPHE (CONT'D)

I am sure everyone wants to know:
no films since *L'idylle* 15 years
ago. Will we see another feature
film from Gustav Borg?

GUSTAV

Yes. I hope so.

CHRISTOPHE

I hope so too... Thank you,
Monsieur Borg...

81

EXT. BEACH PROMENADE IN DEAUVILLE - JUST BEFORE SUNSET 81

Gustav walks alone away from the festival area and down to the long, straight beach promenade.

A series of beach huts line the promenade. Names of famous actors and directors are painted in blue in front of the doors - seemingly a festival tradition to honor guests.

Gustav walks on. He is melancholic.

The sun is low. The shadows are long. The wind blows sand along the ground at his feet.

He notices one of the many festival banners hanging: a picture of Agnes as Anna.

CHRISTOPHE (O.S.)

Gustav!

Gustav is lost in thought and doesn't hear right away.

CHRISTOPHE (CONT'D)

Gustav!!

Gustav turns around. A sweaty Christophe has clearly run after him. He is out of breath.

CHRISTOPHE (CONT'D)

Rachel... Rachel Kemp wants you to join her. She is having dinner and... she loved your film.

Gustav is not in the mood, he doesn't feel like it.

GUSTAV

(tired)

What does she know...

CHRISTOPHE

They are at L'Excelsior...

(Gustav reacts)

And the festival is paying, of course.

Gustav suddenly becomes interested.

82

EXT. FANCY FRENCH BRASSERIE BY THE BEACH - EVENING

82

The sun has set, but the sky is still light. Lights are on in a venerable restaurant near the promenade.

Paparazzi and fans stand behind a barrier outside - hoping for a glimpse of Rachel Kemp on her way out.

83

INT. FANCY FRENCH BRASSERIE BY THE BEACH - EVENING

83

Inside the restaurant, he sees Rachel and her entourage. They are seated at a large table by the window.

Gustav straightens his linen suit a bit. It's crinkled, but that's not wrong for such a suit. He doesn't look too bad.

On his way to the table, a large man in a suit (Rachel's bodyguard) appears out of nowhere and stops him.

BODYGUARD

(with French accent)

*Excusez-moi, Monsieur, this is a
private event.*

Rachel spots Gustav and lights up.

RACHEL

Gustav Borg!

The bodyguard lets him pass with an apologetic look.

Rachel's publicist Nicky (always with her face in her phone) moves so there's a place next to the star.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Thanks for making the time. I'm so impressed by your film. It was deeply moving. A real masterpiece.

Rachel's manager, SAM, a man in his 40s, smiles at Gustav. The festival director from earlier in the evening is also there:

NATHALIE

(to Rachel)

Yes, it is *exceptionnel*. Wonderful.

Gustav sits down, pleased with the praise.

NICKY

We already ordered. Would you like something?

Gustav picks up the menu.

RACHEL

Your film... it really struck me... it was so touching.

Everyone around the table agrees: yes so great, so moving.

GUSTAV
(looking at the menu)
Yes, it's my E.T.

RACHEL
What?

GUSTAV
You know with the alien leaving and
all the crying.

Rachel can't help but smile.

RACHEL
All the performances were so good.
I mean, the girl of course, but
everyone...

Others agree. Gustav seems more concerned with the waiter.

GUSTAV
(to the waiter)
Could I have a glass of this one.

WAITER
Non, *désolé*, we only do bottles of
that one.

GUSTAV
Okay... let's do bottles then.

Nathalie from the festival looks worried - *this will be expensive*.

LATER

They have eaten and are tipsy. Gustav has gained energy from the champagne and from everyone appearing interested in him.

SAM
Do you know Björk?

GUSTAV
(laughs)
She's from Iceland. But yes.

RACHEL
(chiding Sam)
That's a different country.

Gustav drops a piece of cheese, picks it up off the floor and eats it while talking.

GUSTAV
She did some music for a film of
mine.

*
*
*
*
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*
*

The waiter is next to Gustav with the wine menu.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
Do you have the '96?

WAITER
I'll check in the cave.

NATHALIE
(cost-conscious)
I think... there is another
champagne that I really like.

Gustav isn't listening. The waiter goes to check.

NICKY
My mother just loves Björk.

GUSTAV
I wanted Bernard Sumner. He's a big
fan - I even did a music video for
New Order, shot in Cannes - but it
never worked out schedule wise.

Gustav notices that Nicky has her phone out. Sam is also busy
texting - are they bored? Or is this how young people are? *

Rachel does not look at her phone, but is lost in thought.
She seems almost sad. *

Gustav leans over to her, he speaks softly: *

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
Let's do something fun. Let's go to
the beach. *

Rachel looks at him and smiles. *

RACHEL
(smiles)
Now? *

GUSTAV
(gets up)
We're going to the beach. *

NICKY
I'm sorry, there are just too many
photographers and people outside... *

GUSTAV
(smiles)
We'll just go out the back, it
opens right on to the beach and...
(snaps fingers) *

SAM
I don't think it's a good idea. *

*
*
*
*

RACHEL
Of course it is.

GUSTAV
I did this with Richard Dreyfus
once, it's no problem.

Gustav starts giving directions like on a film set:

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
(to Nicky)
Take a couple of bottles of the
champagne to go.

Rachel laughs. Nicky and Sam seem a bit nervous, but are in.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
(to Nathalie about the
number of bottles)
Make that four...

Nathalie and her assistant exchange a worried look.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
(to the bodyguard)
Tell the cars to leave, if they
follow... everyone will know.
(to Nicky on the way
out:)
Don't forget glasses!

*

84

EXT. DEAUVILLE BEACH - NIGHT

84

Gustav, Rachel, and the manager walk in the sand on the enormous beach. They find it amusing to "sneak away".

A bit behind them, the bodyguard and Nicky follow with the champagne.

A LITTLE LATER

They walk along a deserted stretch of the promenade. Gustav opens a bottle and pours into glasses while they walk. We hear Rachel and Gustav confidential conversation from later in the night off-screen:

RACHEL (V.O.)
I usually just go in and out of
cars. Like really quickly. I never
do stuff like this any more.

Gustav pours for Rachel. They spill a lot and laugh.

GUSTAV (V.O.)
Well, you should.

LATER

They have found some sun loungers and moved them a good distance from the promenade into the sand. They sit among a small forest of folded beach umbrellas, drinking champagne.

Mixed with direct sound, we continue to hear Rachel and Gustav's voices talking.

GUSTAV (V.O.)
(softly and intimately)
I have to tell you something...

Gustav gets the bodyguard to take off his shoes and walk barefoot in the sand. He enjoys it in a surprisingly childlike way. Rachel laughs.

RACHEL (V.O.)
Okay.

GUSTAV (V.O.)
I'm sorry... I haven't really seen any of your films.

We catch up with the conversation as Rachel reacts to what he says. They're sitting next to each other on a sun lounger.

RACHEL
(laughs)
That's ok. I hadn't seen yours before today.

GUSTAV
Before today, I had no idea who you were.

Rachel finds this amusing. Sam - on a sun lounger with Nicky - is slightly shocked overhearing this.

RACHEL
I want to make films like you do, you know. So simple and... real.

GUSTAV
You can.

RACHEL
That's why I did this one. The script was really good, it just turned into something else. I think the reviews aren't great. Nicky's trying to hide them from me.

Nicky sits with her nose in her phone and yawns.

The sun is not up, but the sky is turning brighter. The sea is now visible. Sam sleeps on his lounger. Nicky sits leaning against it, dozing off.

Gustav and Rachel are a bit away from the others, walking in the sand.

RACHEL

I've been thinking a lot about taking a break... but I have all these projects already lined up. Good enough parts, but it's like... they don't have anything to do with me, you know.

Gustav lets it sink in before responding.

GUSTAV

Sometimes the bravest thing you can do is to say no.

Rachel glances over at Sam and Nicky.

RACHEL

Sam would freak out if I just walked away like that...
(smiles at the thought)
He'd be right too.

GUSTAV

I don't know... if it doesn't feel right...
(shrugs and smiles)
Fuck Sam... It's your life.

Rachel looks over at Sam (still asleep) and laughs.

RACHEL

And you, are you working on something new?

GUSTAV

No.
(pause)
I thought I was, but...

RACHEL

You couldn't get the money?

GUSTAV

Something like that.

Silence.

RACHEL

What's it about?

GUSTAV

It's about this young woman, a young mother... Everything just unravels for her... And she does the unthinkable.

She nods slightly, pensive.

RACHEL
Is there a script?

GUSTAV
I don't think it's your cup of tea.

RACHEL
(has to laugh)
And how would you know? I mean,
this is what I'm talking about...
You haven't even seen me act and
still you have this idea of who I
am and what I can do.

GUSTAV
(laughs)
You are right.

They keep walking. Rachel looks out towards the water.

She takes off her jacket, hands it to Gustav to hold, and heads off towards the ocean far in the distance. Gustav laughs.

A MOMENT LATER

Rachel comes back, out of breath. Her trousers are soaked halfway up her calves. She laughs, out of breath.

RACHEL
It's too far... The water is like
this deep.
(shows with her fingers)

Gustav smiles. She throws herself down on a sun lounger and puts on a sweater and a jacket. She's caught a chill. He takes off his jacket and lays it over her.

Gustav gets the agent to take off his jacket too. Gustav packs it around Rachel's cold feet.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
Thank you.

A MOMENT LATER

Gustav pours her a new glass and sits on the edge of her sun lounger. The sun is rising.

Gustav observes Rachel as she looks towards the horizon: her smile fades and a sadness seems to resurface.

Gustav notices something in the distance: a horse running along the water's edge. A man sits on a small cart behind it, steering. They are moving fast, as if training for a race.

86

EXT. DEAUVILLE BEACH (2024, SP) - SUNRISE

86

Rachel lies there under several layers of jackets.
Thoughtful.

GUSTAV

What does your father do?

This is a difficult subject for Rachel.

RACHEL

No... I don't really know him.

(pause)

After they divorced he... He just
wasn't very interested in me, I
guess. And when he suddenly became
interested later it was sort of for
the wrong reasons, you know.

GUSTAV

Yeah. That's tough.

RACHEL

My mother has been great though.
Like super supportive... driving me
to auditions since I was 7.

The water sparkles. The sun has risen above the horizon.

GUSTAV

You have the most expressive
face... a silent movie face... like
Lillian Gish. I'm sure you're great
on screen.

RACHEL

(laughs)

As long as I don't speak?

GUSTAV

I'm serious. I Know. I never make
actors read. I cast amateurs.
When I know, I know.

He is sincere. Rachel accepts the compliment.

Gustav is contemplative. He looks at Rachel again. Silence.

He throws a glance towards the ocean and sees that the horse
cart has turned and are on their way back.

Rachel is shivering - despite all the layers of jackets.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

You're freezing.

RACHEL

I'm fine.

Gustav gets up - he grabs an unopened bottle of champagne and hurries down to the water's edge.

Rachel sits up and watches him. *What is he doing?*

Gustav positions himself in the path of the horse and waves his arms.

Nicky and the agent are also watching the odd Scandinavian who is stopping the horse and talking energetically with the cart driver. He points to Rachel and down the promenade.

A deal is done. He gives the man the bottle of champagne. He smiles at Rachel and waves her over.

A MOMENT LATER

Rachel is placed with the driver in the cart behind the horse.

GUSTAV

He'll take you right to the hotel.

RACHEL

Thank you. Very nice to meet you.

GUSTAV

(takes her hand)

Yes, very nice. Hope you get out of those black cars more.

He signals to the man with the horse who takes off.

Rachel sits behind the horse - they zoom along the beach, water splashing around them.

Back on the beach, Gustav watches them leave.

Nicky, the agent, and the bodyguard are already following the horse. They walk heavily up towards the beach promenade. The bodyguard waves to Gustav. He waves back.

Gustav feels dizzy and sits heavily down on the sun-bed. He is very tired. Breathing heavily.

He looks around, stressed. He finds his jacket in the sand and with shaking hands, he finds a small box in the pocket.

Is he having a fit? He takes out some pills and swallows them with a swig from a champagne bottle. He puts on his jacket and lies down on the sun lounger.

Wide shot of Gustav lying motionless on the empty beach.

BLACK

A TV FILLS THE SCREEN, IT SHOWS GUSTAV'S DOCUMENTARY:

A beautiful blue-glistening frog is lying on a stone.

GUSTAV (V.O.)

(sound from film; English
with a Swedish accent)

*This is an Amazonian dragon frog.
The biologists say he is the last
of his species... I call him
Edvald... Edvald is sick, he'll die
soon. Scientists will never be able
to reconstruct Edvald's organism,
he's unique.*

The blue frog is evidently the one Gustav calls Edvald. There are other frogs there, with completely different colors and patterns.

AGNES (O.S.)

Why is he speaking English? Is
there a Swedish version?

EVEN (O.S.)

No, it's just this one.

GUSTAV (V.O.)

We will never know what we have
lost when Edvald dies. Maybe
nothing. Maybe everything.

A new image: it is revealed that the frogs are not in nature, but behind a glass wall in a zoo.

Then an image of the jungle. The sun through dense trees.

GUSTAV (V.O.)

I met Edvald in a building of walls
and glass in Frankfurt. He was born
here, but he is really from the
Ecuadorian part of the Amazon.
Edvald likes the sun, the wet...

Agnes and Even's living room. Nora is visiting and watching her father's film with them on their big TV.

NORA

Why exactly "Edvald"?

Agnes laughs. Even pours more wine. Their son Erik is also sitting on the sofa with his iPad, looking up now and then.

EVEN

(about the wine)

Did you like it? It's not totally
Burgundy, but...

NORA
(not wanting to talk
about wine)
Yeah, it works.

She takes a sip and continues watching the documentary.

GUSTAV (V.O.)
...the stars are chaos, but still
we humans need to convince
ourselves that there is some sense
in the madness of the arbitrary.

Nora takes the remote and turns the volume down.

NORA
Just dialing down the Herzog level.

On the TV, we see silent images of the frog in the zoo mixed with beautifully composed jungle pictures.

AGNES
That was quite nice.

NORA
Actually, the images are pretty...
if he just shuts up.

On the TV, we see the frog lying on a white bench, completely still, only its faint breathing showing it's alive.

AGNES
Have you talked to Dad?

NORA
No, why?

AGNES
He's coming to Oslo again.

NORA
What is it this time? When?

They stop talking - captivated by the images:

The last frog of its kind taking its very last breath.

A LITTLE LATER

The film ends. Even fiddles with the remote.

EVEN
It's kind of sad... that you'll
never see a frog like that again.

NORA

(not listening to Even)

Kind of funny that he's supposed to make a climate-conscious film about a frog and it turns into a self-portrait.

Agnes picks up the thread from earlier.

AGNES

I think he's coming to sell the house. He asked us to clear out Mom's things by the end of the month.

NORA

Is there still stuff there?

Agnes is slightly taken aback - *of course, there is.*

EVEN

Agnes has been up there a lot working at it.

AGNES

Could you go through some of it?

EVEN

Look! That's cool.

(they look; don't understand)

Your show is still on the front page.

From the image on the TV, Nora's series, '*Cold Case*', looks like a standard *Nordic Noir* in snow-heavy surroundings. In the picture, Nora is in a police uniform.

Nora thinks about her father's film.

NORA

How do you think Dad managed to be there filming just when it died?

AGNES

It was sick, you know.

NORA

Yeah, but can you know exactly? I don't think he was more than a couple of days in Frankfurt, in that zoo there.

A brief silence. They think the same thing:

AGNES

You don't think Dad killed the frog?

NORA
 (laughs)
 No... or did he?

They laugh more. Erik listens, not quite understanding, but he smiles too.

EVEN
 He didn't kill Edvald?

CLOSE-UP ON A PHONE:

A video filmed in the bathroom by Erik and Nora doing a fun dance. Their dancing is passably funky, yet their enjoyment is evident.

88 **INT. AGNES AND EVEN'S APARTMENT, ERIK'S ROOM - EVENING** 88

Erik's room. He lies in bed with a small night light on.

NORA
 Goodnight.

ERIK
 Can you lie next to me for a bit?

NORA
 Of course.

Erik makes room for her in the narrow bed.

ERIK
 Do you have a boyfriend?

NORA
 No, not really.

ERIK
 Don't you want one?

NORA
 Yes, but that's not always so easy.

They lie there in silence. Erik seems very tired.

ERIK
 But I love you.

NORA
 I love you too.

ERIK
 (smiles cunningly)
 I want to marry you when I grow up.

She smiles, but answers without making fun of him.

NORA

That's nice of you to say. That's probably not possible, but thank you very much.

ERIK

I know.

Nora hugs him. They lie there quietly. Erik closes his eyes.

89

INT. AGNES AND EVEN'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

89

Even and Agnes are drinking wine in the living room. Nora comes in.

AGNES

(smiles)

Did you fall asleep?

NORA

He's so sweet.

She pours herself a glass of wine.

NORA (CONT'D)

I think I got proposed to in there...

AGNES

Okay?

EVEN

Congratulations.

NORA

That doesn't happen every day.

She raises a toast. Agnes and Even laugh and toast back. Nora sits down.

EVEN

He's quite a character actually.
Today he came to me and said that he really wanted to...

AGNES

(interrupts)

What's the matter?

Agnes has noticed that Nora has tears in her eyes.

AGNES (CONT'D)

Is something wrong?

Nora shakes her head, but starts to cry. Agnes goes to her.

AGNES (CONT'D)

It's okay.

She touches Nora's arm comfortingly, but Nora pulls away and stands up.

NORA

It's fine. I just need to go.
Sorry.

She nearly runs out of the living room. Agnes follows her.

NORA (CONT'D)

Really, it's okay.

In the hallway, Nora puts on her shoes and grabs her jacket.

A MOMENT LATER

Agnes comes back into the living room and sits down.

EVEN

Is she okay?

AGNES

Yeah, or...

Silence.

EVEN

You don't think... she's not like,
there again?

Agnes gets what he's hinting at.

AGNES

(uncertain)

No... No, she's not. She's just a
bit lonely these days.

90

INT. NORA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

90

Nora arrives home. She lives in a nice and practical two-room apartment, but it lacks the cozy home feeling of Agnes' place.

She sits at the kitchen table in semi-darkness. The light is not turned on in the room. It's quiet and empty. A lonely feeling.

91

EXT. NATIONAL THEATRE - DAY

91

Nora walks down a street and enters the side entrance of the theatre.

92

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE/ OFFICE - DAY

92

A serious man in his 50s leans against the front of his desk. Nora sits on a chair and looks up at him.

THEATRE DIRECTOR

It's natural to be nervous before a performance, we've seen it before, but when it goes this far... the others can't do their job.

For some reason, this makes Nora smile a bit.

THEATRE DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

(sternly)

No, you need to take this seriously. I've received complaints.

A beat.

THEATER GENERAL DIRECTOR *

You might know that Olivia has asked for you in the lead role in her new production?

Nora lights up - she had hoped for this.

THEATER GENERAL DIRECTOR (CONT'D) *

I am mostly inclined to say no.

Nora is surprised.

THEATER GENERAL DIRECTOR (CONT'D) *

And it's not because I don't think you're talented... And it would be good timing with a new female *Hamlet* on the main stage now. But we can't accept such behavior anymore. You have to change it.

(imploringly)

Do you understand?

Nora nods seriously.

Nora and a man lie naked in bed, intimate and laughing after sex. It's Jakob, the actor from the theatre premiere. They talk about the conversation with the THEATRE DIRECTOR.

JAKOB

(smiling)

He does have a point, though.

NORA

What do you mean?

JAKOB

Just... have you ever thought about therapy?

Nora laughs. Jakob smiles.

JAKOB (CONT'D)

It might help with those type of
things.

NORA

I don't need therapy, I know too
much about myself.

JAKOB

Okay... How's that working out for
you?

Nora laughs again.

NORA

For example, I know exactly why I
like you.

JAKOB

Okay?

NORA

It's because this can never become
something serious. Since you're
married. That way I can avoid this
kind of serious relationship where
I have to be constantly reminded of
how *fucked up* I am.

JAKOB

And how *fucked up* are you?

Nora has to laugh.

JAKOB (CONT'D)

On a scale from 1 to 100?

NORA

Honestly... 80. 80% *fucked up*.

JAKOB

And 20%, you're...

NORA

Totally normal.

They laugh.

A LITTLE LATER

Jakob finds his sweater on the floor and puts it on.

He leaves. Nora lies there alone.

94

INT. FAMILY HOUSE (CIRCA 2000) - DAY

94

The hallway in the family house about 20 years ago. The door to the library (Sissel's office) is closed. A conversation can be faintly heard from inside.

95

INT. FAMILY HOUSE/ SISSEL'S OFFICE (CIRCA 2000) - DAY

95

A therapy session is in progress. A woman in her 40s is speaking. Nora's mother Sissel (about 45) sits and listens.

CLIENT #1

...I know he thinks it's
ridiculous... that a woman my age
wants to learn to play guitar...

In the middle of a sentence, it cuts to ANOTHER THERAPY SESSION:

MALE CLIENT

I... I just spend more and more
time in the bathroom. It's the only
room where it seems okay to lock
myself in and I...

A man sits where the woman was just sitting - right by the fireplace.

96

INT. FAMILY HOUSE/ NORA'S CHILDHOOD ROOM (CIRCA 2000) - DAY

A third voice takes over from the man (the voices blend together). The sound comes from the fireplace in the floor above where Nora (12) sits and listens intently.

CLIENT #3 (O.S.)

...I also think that my friends who
are in long relationships are a bit
cowardly, like they just don't dare
to be alone... It's like some kind
of Stockholm syndrome.

SISSEL (O.S.)

So that's not something you want
for yourself?

The voice ends. Nora wonders about the silence and moves closer to the fireplace. Some faint SOUNDS from the chimney pipe. *Is someone crying?* Nora leans in even closer to hear.

CLIENT #3 (O.S.)

(choked up)

It doesn't matter what I want. I
can't do it.

97

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE/ REHEARSAL SPACE (PRESENT DAY) - DAY

Nora, three other actors, and the director (OLIVIA) sit each with a script in hand. Everyone listens attentively to Nora as she analyzes a scene in the play they are rehearsing:

NORA

So, when she says this... she's seeking security, right. It makes me think of my sister...

(laughter)

Dad left when she was little, so she's never dared to criticize him, afraid he might disappear entirely or something. And to not be like Mom and Dad, she just clung to the first and best... had children really early before she could come to terms with how boring he is.

Someone laughs. We see that Jakob (whom she was in bed with) is one of the actors. He smiles.

*
*

NORA (CONT'D)

Right, so when she says that...

98

INT. AGNES AND EVEN'S APARTMENT - EVENING

98

Nora sits with her sister Agnes talking. Even sits next to Agnes, looking at his phone and not paying attention. The conversation from the previous scene continues:

NORA (V.O.)

...when she says he avoids conflict, it's because she does too. And she hates that about herself. Because her mother was like that with her father, and...

Nora's voice from the rehearsal is drowned out by Agnes:

AGNES

But... You enjoy it too, right? Even if it costs you so much to go on stage, I mean. Maybe you should think about what you actually like about it?

NORA

I love it... I love it.

Nora thinks.

A LITTLE LATER

Even puts away his phone and wraps his arm around Agnes. She smiles at him - it seems intimate and pleasant.

Nora watches them.

99

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE/ REHEARSAL SPACE - DAY

99

The rehearsal is over for the day.

Nora glances at Jakob as he puts on his shoes. He is turned away from her, and she looks at his neck and shoulders - it's clear that she likes him.

As he is about to put on his bicycle helmet, he notices her looking at him. He smiles at her - and at the same moment, he glances around to see if anyone has seen it.

The last of the other actors have already left the room. Olivia is busy retrieving her bag from under a chair.

Nora and Jakob wait patiently until Olivia gets her bag and leaves the room. As soon as they are alone, he closes the door.

JAKOB

I actually have to run... I'm picking up today.

They kiss. She puts the helmet on his head and fastens it while they talk.

NORA

I've actually... I've started to lie about my age on Tinder. I'm 30. If I say that I'm 35, only 50-year-olds contact me.

JAKOB

(feeling like she's calling him old)

Haha.

He kisses her goodbye and leaves with the helmet on.

100

EXT. FAMILY HOUSE (CIRCA 2000) - DAY

100

Nora (12) throws her school bag down and walks past the closed door to her mother's office where someone is talking (indistinctly).

She hears SOUNDS and voices from the kitchen.

She walks through the living room and looks in:

Gustav (50) is sitting with his back to her, with a manuscript in front of him. Agnes (9) and a dark-haired boy sit on the other side of a kitchen table. (They are doing a read-through for the film ANNA.)

GUSTAV
 (laughs heartily)
 Yes, that's good, but now we must
 work.

A YOUNG ASSISTANT closes the kitchen door. She doesn't notice Nora, who is left standing alone in the dining room. Voices and laughter are heard from the kitchen.

101 **EXT. STREETS IN OSLO - DAY**

101

Nora walks down the street, thoughtful. We hear her voice from the earlier conversation with Agnes.

NORA (V.O.)
 No, one of the things I like best
 about acting - is to be someone
 else... to feel things I would
 never do, to think in different
 ways, feel in different ways.

As she speaks, Nora walking is replaced by other women: a WOMAN IN HER 50s walks where Nora just did, then a YOUNG WOMAN with a yoga mat under her arm takes her place again, then a SERIOUS CAREER WOMAN...

AGNES (V.O.)
 So what you like about acting is
 not being yourself?
 (laughter)
 What would mum have said about
 that, do you think?
 ...then a WOMAN IN HER 30s pushing a red bike.

NORA (V.O.)
 You know, I can be kind of... in my
 head. But all those thoughts, all
 the preparations and everything, as
 soon as I step onto the stage, it's
 gone, I just do it.

The woman with the bike moves on. She seems sad.

Scenes from Nora's single existence intermingle with scenes of other lonely women:

102 **INT. NORA'S APARTMENT - DAY**

102

Nora (adult) sits alone in her bed, reading and making notes in her manuscript.

103 **EXT. OUR SAVIOR'S CEMETERY - DAY**

103

Nora jogs alone through the green cemetery. Intense.

104 **INT. NORA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT** 104
 Nora sits in the living room. It's dark, but her cell phone lights up her face. She laughs at something on the screen.
 She scrolls further. Soft sound from the phone echoes in the empty apartment.

105 **EXT. STREETS IN OSLO - DAY** 105
 The woman with the red bike sits down to lock her bike. She pauses. Tears are in her eyes.

106 **INT. NORA'S APARTMENT - DAY** 106
 The 50-year-old woman - one of those who Nora was replaced by previously - sits at the kitchen table in semi-darkness in Nora's apartment. *
 It reminds us of when Nora came home from Agnes's. The light isn't turned on. It's quiet. A pressing loneliness.

As the camera approaches the woman the other women replace her once again - one by one - until it ends with Nora being the one sitting there. *
 *

BLACK

107 **EXT. FAMILY HOUSE - DAY** 107
 Nora walks up to the family house. The house looks different in the summer, the garden is green. Agnes stands on the terrace outside.
 They hug and smile. Nora seems happy and unaffected.

108 **INT. FAMILY HOUSE - DAY** 108
 They enter through the terrace door and the mother's old office. Nora looks around. Sissel's chair stands where it did in the earlier flashbacks, but the shelves are empty.
 They go into the living room. Most of their mother's things are packed in boxes or arranged in piles.
 Agnes misinterprets how Nora looks around as nostalgia.

AGNES
 It's strange... when Mom got sick.
 Part of me thought I should take over and live here. With Even and Erik...

NORA
(surprised)
Do you want to live here?

Agnes is a bit taken aback by Nora's reaction.

AGNES
No, not really. We couldn't afford
it anyway... We can't buy anyone
out.

A LITTLE LATER

Nora glances at some stacks of papers.

AGNES (CONT'D)
I think we'll throw that away, but
you're welcome to go through it.

NORA
It's great that you've done all
this. Thank you so much. But I
think it's fine with me, really...
whatever you don't want, we can
just have someone get rid of it.

AGNES
But there are lots of nice things,
things with sentimental value. At
least take a look.
(pause)
I would really like to have that
vase, for example.

It's a nice, simple glass vase.

NORA
That one is kind of nice.

AGNES
(smiles)
Because I wanted it?

NORA
No, you take it.

AGNES
No, that's not it, we have to
agree, that's what I'm saying.

NORA
So I'll take it then.

Agnes smiles, bemused.

LATER

Nora is tired of going through things and looks around the
house.

*

*

*

In the kitchen, she removes a worn note taped ("Turn off!") above the stove, the paint peeling with the tape. On the kitchen counter, there is a plate with crumbs and a tin of liver pâté that hasn't been put away. A man's jacket hangs over a chair.

NORA (CONT'D)
How long is he going to stay here?

A bound manuscript lies open on the kitchen table.

AGNES
(from another room)
He didn't say.

Nora examines the manuscript. Is it the movie he offered her? She leafs through it, curious. On the cover is the title of the film: "Homesickness". Agnes stands in the doorway, looking at her. Something bothers her.

NORA
So he's here to deal with the sale,
or what?

AGNES
He...
(evasively)
He said he would be here around
two, so you can ask him.

NORA
No, I don't think so.

AGNES
You can't just pretend he's not in
town.

NORA
I can try.

AGNES
You know, you'll see him at Erik's
birthday anyway.

Silence. Agnes turns and goes back into the dining room.

AGNES (CONT'D)
(quietly)
He... he's not here to deal with
the sale. I thought so, but he
apparently has a project.

NORA
What did you say?

Nora walks towards her. Agnes struggles to say it outright.

AGNES

(hesitantly)

Well, actually it's good, but he's making a film again.

(Nora smiles)

It's true. Michael is flying in and everything.

NORA

What's the project?

AGNES

The one he talked to you about.

NORA

My film? The one he wrote for me?

AGNES

Yes, the one you didn't want to act in.

Nora is taken aback.

NORA

And he's got funding for it?

AGNES

Yeah, he must... he didn't say much. I think maybe he wanted to tell you in person. He also asked if you were going to be here.

NORA

Okay?

Outside we hear car doors slamming. Agnes goes to the window.

NORA (CONT'D)

Is that him?

Outside the house, two large black cars are parked. Two people we recognize (Sam and Nicky, the star's manager and publicist) are looking around the Norwegian villa neighborhood.

A DRIVER opens the door of the second car and their father steps out. Following him, a young woman gets out.

AGNES

Oh shit.

Nora doesn't see what Agnes sees.

NORA

What is it?

Nora goes over and looks out the window: Rachel Kemp is talking to their father. The sisters can't believe it.

The father says something to Rachel that makes her laugh. He points to the house, and they all start walking towards the entrance.

Nora steps back from the window in shock and bumps into the table with the vase they discussed. She saves it on pure reflex.

She casts a confused look at Agnes and hurries out.

109 **EXT. FAMILY HOUSE - DAY**

109

Nora hurries out the back way, as we previously saw her as a child taking a shortcut to school: through a hole in the fence, still holding the vase in her hand.

110 **EXT. FAMILY HOUSE - DAY**

110

On the other side of the house, Gustav opens the door for Rachel but then blocks the way for the agent and Nicky.

GUSTAV

Nicky! Sam! So great to see you again, there is a café a couple of minutes that way. Rachel will let you know when we're done.

Sam is about to protest, but Gustav closes the door.

111 **INT. FAMILY HOUSE - DAY**

111

Rachel smiles at how Gustav got rid of the entourage.

Gustav takes off his shoes and puts on some worn old wool socks lying in the hallway. He goes into the living room.

Rachel hesitates, then takes off her shoes and tiptoes after him in her socks. *Is this how they do it in Norway?*

GUSTAV

Hi. Is Nora here?

Agnes shakes her head. She tries not to stare at Rachel.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

Rachel, this is my daughter Agnes.

They shake hands.

RACHEL

So nice to meet you.

Agnes can't say a word but smiles kindly.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

(to Agnes)

So this is your family home?

AGNES

Yes.

RACHEL

It's beautiful, I can see why you want to use it.

(to Agnes)

Are you in the business as well?

AGNES

Oh god no.

GUSTAV

Agnes helps me with research sometimes.

AGNES

I'm an historian... Academic.

(to her father in Norwegian)

My god, I can barely speak.

(Gustav laughs.)

RACHEL

Did you do any research for this film?

AGNES

No, I don't think this is a historical film, is it?

(Gustav shakes his head.)

GUSTAV

Agnes was Anna in the film you saw.

It dawns on Rachel that Agnes played in the film she saw.

RACHEL

You're Anna! I totally see it now... Wow! I'm really star struck.

AGNES

Yeah, right.

RACHEL

Seriously, can I take a photo with you?

Agnes doesn't know what to say. This is surreal.

AGNES

Sure.

Rachel takes a picture.

RACHEL
(trying Norwegian)
Tusen takk. (*thank you so much*)

Agnes smiles at the attempt.

AGNES
Tusen takk.
(in Norwegian to her
father:)
Is she going to act in Norwegian? *

GUSTAV
(answering in English)
No, everything will be in English.
Lars Von Trier-style.

RACHEL
Yes, unfortunately I don't speak
Norwegian. It's such a beautiful
language.

A LITTLE LATER

Gustav and Rachel walk alone through the house. Faint sounds of Agnes cleaning elsewhere in the house.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
I really love the script.

She glances into the kitchen: breakfast that hasn't been cleared away. Dirty laundry thrown on a chair. If Gustav has a strategy for the meeting, it must be to not give the big star any special treatment.

GUSTAV
Thank you. Are you hungry?

RACHEL
No, I'm fine.
(about the script:)
It's very moving. So radical. In
the US you would get all these
notes about it being a downer, how
can it be less of a downer and...

GUSTAV
Is that what your manager said?

RACHEL
(smiles)
Well, it's not his decision.

A LITTLE LATER

Gustav is explaining to Rachel how they will film the final scene of the film.

GUSTAV

So she's here, talking to her son.
(walks to the kitchen
counter)
You know, this is the last scene...
this is the ending. She's preparing
him something to eat. It's
important for her, a last motherly
touch, maybe...

They walk out towards the hallway and the front door. Gustav is full of infectious energy, has the characters under his skin, and a precise idea of how the shots should be.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

They hug and he leaves. And the
moment the door closes something in
her changes, almost like she
relaxes. Don't you think?

Rachel nods.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

The boy's meeting up with his
father, so she isn't in a hurry.
(points)
Here there will be the... you know,
the wire used to dry clothes.

RACHEL

A clothes line?

GUSTAV

And then... she goes in here and
starts preparing.

He goes into the room at the end of the hallway. He brings a stool and places it in the middle of the floor.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

But suddenly she hears the veranda
door opening.

He walks a bit down the hallway.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

He has forgotten his flag...
Norwegian flag.

RACHEL

Yeah, the script said it was the
17th of May, that's like the
National Day?

GUSTAV

Yes, so sometimes we'll hear
marching bands and like joyous
sounds in the distance. No score
music here.

RACHEL

I thought, is that a bit too
symbolic? I mean, killing yourself
on the National Day?

She might have a point. Gustav has to think for a moment. *

GUSTAV

Yeah... And did I say: all this
will be one shot... no coverage.

RACHEL

A oner? This whole thing?

GUSTAV

The whole ending... just one shot.

Gustav sees that this makes Rachel a bit nervous.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

When you pull that off no one can
deny how good you are. No
editing... Nowhere to hide.

This makes an impression on her. She likes the challenge, but
it scares her. Gustav continues with the scene.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

So he stands there, looking at her.
Something's off, but he just grabs
his flag and runs out again.

Gustav stands in the mother's place and watches where the boy
disappears. Thoughtful. Rachel can't help but look over there
as if something is happening there.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

(walks to the window)

She goes here and makes sure that
this time he really leaves - we
only hear the garden gate closing
behind him, because the camera is
here, on her. And this is key, the
expression she has here.

RACHEL

What is she thinking?

GUSTAV

Exactly. And she walks back here...

They go back into the room at the end of the hallway.

RACHEL

And this is where she does it.
(looks up at the ceiling)
Will there be like a beam installed
for the shoot?

GUSTAV

No, she'll use that.

He points to a white-painted metal hook in the ceiling for hanging a lamp.

RACHEL

Would that really bear her weight?

A brief silence. Gustav looks at her.

GUSTAV

You know, it happened like that.
With my mother.

Rachel can't believe it.

RACHEL

Not... not here?

GUSTAV

Yes.

RACHEL

No?

She has to sit down on the stool by the door.

GUSTAV

It's a very long time ago, you
know.

Rachel is taken aback. A devilish smile appears on Gustav's face, he points to the stool she's sitting on.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

She used that...
(he can't find the word)

Rachel jumps up and looks at the stool in shock.

RACHEL

This one?
(Gustav nods)
This actual stool?

GUSTAV

You know, to get high enough.
(pause)
But we won't see that. We'll end
the shot with her going back in and
closing the door. And we'll just
hear the sound -
(he knocks over the stool)
- as the camera moves away.

Rachel is taken aback.

RACHEL

Are you serious? Did it really
happen here?

(Gustav nods)

Can I ask... why didn't you just
leave after that?

GUSTAV

We did, my father took me to
Sweden. He was Swedish.

He walks back through the kitchen. Rachel follows.

RACHEL

Well, I'd love to hear more about
her?

GUSTAV

(smiles)

It's not my mother in the script,
you know.

A LITTLE LATER

Rachel talks with the others on the phone and puts on her
shoes. Agnes goes to her father, who is pleased.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

(in Norwegian to Agnes)

This will be good. She's motivated.

(Agnes smiles)

I told her that stool -

(points to the stool
visible through the door)

that's what my mother used to hang
herself.

AGNES

The IKEA stool?

Gustav smiles. Agnes gives him a strange look.

112

EXT. MEDIEVAL CASTLE (TV SERIES SHOOTING) - DAY

112

A majestic horse is led past, revealing MICHAEL (Danish
producer, 75 years old, still active in the industry)
standing in a castle courtyard and speaking on a hands-free
device. He is excited.

MICHAEL

Are you sitting down?

Behind him are both extras in medieval armor and crew members
in jeans and t-shirts. An ASSISTANT tries to interrupt.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

(to the assistant)

Not now!

(MORE)

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

(to Gustav on the phone:)
She's in, she's in, damn it!

113

INT. FAMILY HOUSE - EVENING

113

Gustav sits on the couch, trimming his toenails with Michael on speakerphone. Music from the band New Order plays from the stereo.

GUSTAV

(smiles confidently)
Yes, of course she is.

He concentrates on a toenail as Michael cheers.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

We'll have to get a move on
regarding her availability in...
This probably won't be a spring
film.

(hears the music)

Is that New Order? Are you still
listening to that old crap?

*
*

Gustav smiles. He leans over and turns the volume up.

*

BLACK SCREEN

114

EXT. DOWNTOWN HOTEL - DAY

114

A group of young RACHEL KEMP FANS stands at the entrance to a hotel in downtown Oslo, hoping to catch a glimpse of their idol. Some have posters with Rachel's name and hearts on them or "Welcome!"

115

INT. DOWNTOWN HOTEL - DAY

115

A large room in a hotel has been prepared for an informal press day with selected JOURNALISTS from the press and TV.

A PHOTOGRAPHER takes pictures of Gustav and the lead actors in the film. It's Rachel, a 60-year-old actress (INGRID BERGER), and a man in his 30s (ANDERS).

A LITTLE LATER

Michael and Gustav stand apart while a sound technician attaches a small wireless microphone to Gustav.

GUSTAV

Have you spoken to Peter?

MICHAEL

(has been dreading this)
Gustav, Peter is an old man, he
hasn't shot a film in ten years.

GUSTAV

I haven't either.

Gustav helps attach the microphone to his shirt collar.

MICHAEL

He has quit working.

GUSTAV

He will do it for me. I will talk to him. I am not doing a film without Peter behind the camera.

Michael sighs but sees that Gustav is determined.

MICHAEL

Okay, but go and see him first, is that alright?

A LITTLE LATER

A TV interview is underway - focused on Rachel:

TV-JOURNALIST

(to Rachel)

How do you like Norway?

Gustav is bored. He stifles a yawn.

RACHEL

I love it, it's so beautiful. The people are very friendly.

Rachel's publicist Nicky (with her phone out) and a LOCAL PRESS OFFICER stand behind the camera with Michael.

The journalist turns to Gustav - Michael looks nervous.

TV-JOURNALIST

This is a Netflix production. Will the film be shown in theaters?

GUSTAV

(doesn't understand the question)

Where else?

Michael intervenes from behind the camera.

MICHAEL

There's an ongoing negotiation. But that's the plan, yes.

Gustav looks at Michael strangely.

A MOMENT LATER

TV-JOURNALIST

Just another question for Rachel Kemp. It's about the reception of your last film, "Cathy's Choice" ... it must have been a bit of a disappointment to you?

Nicky looks up from her phone, she doesn't like this.

RACHEL

I... I am proud of that film, but I don't think we're all here to talk about that, are we.

The journalist is fishing for a bigger reaction.

TV-JOURNALIST

Yes, but knowing how negative some critics were about your performance, were you nervous about taking on another serious role like this one?

Rachel hides her unease. The CAMERAMAN zooms in on her.

RACHEL

No... I mean, like I said, I'm doing this film because I wanted to work with Gustav and... and...

GUSTAV

(intervenes)

You are a very rude man.

The camera eagerly pans over to Gustav, who is visibly upset.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

Rachel Kemp is the best actress of her generation. I'm lucky she's here. You're lucky she's here. She's going to be fantastic.

Rachel looks at Gustav, grateful.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

Your jaws will drop to the fucking floor.

Rachel smiles; he's going a bit overboard, but it's nice to be defended like that. She looks away and meets the gaze of the other actors, Ingrid and Anders, who are studying her.

Gustav is fed up, gets up and tears off his microphone.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

(in Swedish)

Fucking idiot.

116 **INT. NORA'S APARTMENT - DAY** 116

Nora sits and eats cereal while looking at her phone. We hear sounds from the press day - Gustav saying, "your jaws will drop to the fucking floor..." and then in Swedish, "fucking idiot" (sound of microphone being removed)."

117 **INT. TUBE STATION (2024, SU) - DAY** 117 *

Nora stands on the escalators in a tube station. She glides past a large row of digital billboards. Suddenly, Rachel Kemp's face appears on all the screens (an international ad campaign). *

Nora looks at the ad. Rachel on the screen is looking straight at the camera. It almost seems like they are looking at each other. *

118 **EXT. AGNES AND EVEN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY** 118

Nora approaches the door to where Agnes lives, carrying a gift. She seems slightly nervous and rings the doorbell.

119 **INT. AGNES AND EVEN'S APARTMENT - DAY** 119

Agnes and Even's place is decorated for Erik's 9th birthday. A large silver balloon shaped like the number 9 hangs from the ceiling.

Nora has just arrived and hugs Agnes.

NORA
Is Dad here?

AGNES
Not yet.

Erik comes rushing over and hugs Nora.

NORA
Happy Birthday!!
LATER

The birthday boy sits on the couch with Nora, holding an iPad. An open kitchen layout allows us to see Even (wearing an apron) preparing pizza while regularly checking a football game on his phone. Even's mother THERESE (65, dressed nicely) and Agnes place candles on Erik's birthday cake.

The doorbell rings. Nora sees Agnes heading towards the front door, and they exchange a look - *here he comes...*

A MOMENT LATER

Gustav enters with a big smile and a lot of energy. He hugs Agnes.

GUSTAV
(sees Erik)
Happy birthday!

Erik walks over and hugs his grandfather. Nora gets up from the couch but remains at a distance.

AGNES
(referring to Therese and Gustav)
And you two haven't seen each other since... since the wedding?

Gustav takes Therese in his arms, bends her down, and kisses her on each cheek. He is effusive and charming.

GUSTAV
I'll never forget a woman like Therese.

Therese is a bit taken aback but blushes and smiles. Even is about to hug him too, but Gustav hands him a bag with some wine bottles instead. * * *

Even picks up the wine Gustav gave him and reads the label.

EVEN
Wow. That *terroir* is actually kinda underrated. It's....

GUSTAV
(wants to drink, not talk)
Yeah, yeah, go get some glasses.

Gustav looks over at Nora who observes from the living room. Their eyes meet. *

NORA
Hi, Dad.

GUSTAV
Hi.

A LITTLE LATER

Nora goes over to her father.

NORA
How's the movie going?

GUSTAV
Good.

Even and Therese appear with wine glasses. Gustav notices that Erik is back with his iPad on the couch.

THERESE
I heard about it, it's so exciting.

NORA

How is it working with Rachel Kemp?

AGNES

(worried about an
argument)

Hey...

NORA

I'm just asking what she's like to
work with.

GUSTAV

She has a long way to go, but she's
on her way.

NORA

Yes, she's the best actress of her
generation, after all.

A beat. Agnes looks worried. Gustav chooses to interpret it
humorously.

GUSTAV

We're having fun. I think she has a
little crush on me.

(laughs)

AGNES

No, Dad.

NORA

Oh my god.

GUSTAV

I'm not saying I want to do
anything about it.

AGNES

Stop it.

NORA

I heard you scared her with an IKEA
stool.

Gustav and Agnes laugh, relieved that Nora is joining in on
the joke.

THERESE

(to Nora)

What are you up to these days?

Gustav interrupts before Nora can answer.

GUSTAV

(to Nora)

Where did you buy those pants?

NORA

These? Do you like them?

EVEN

(to Therese about Rachel)

She shared a selfie with Agnes.

AGNES

(laughs)

I got 10,000 followers.

EVEN

Yes, yes, but she has 15 million.

Even takes this as a cue to glance at his phone and the football game.

Nora notices that Gustav is holding up his phone to take a picture of her. She smiles uncertainly, but he seems to aim the camera down towards her pants as he takes the picture.

Nora finds her way back to Therese's question.

NORA

I'm actually going to play Hamlet on the main stage...

THERESE

That's great!

NORA

You're all invited. It's not a typical main stage thing, a bit more edgy...

GUSTAV

(only talks about himself)

We start rehearsing for real next week. It's going to be non-stop.

AGNES

That soon?

GUSTAV

Yes, Michael got all the money from Netflix.

NORA

What's it like making a Netflix movie, then?

Gustav looks over at Erik with the iPad (out of earshot).

GUSTAV

Is he just going to stare at the screen all the time like that?

(puts his hand in front of his face)

AGNES
He only has 20 minutes of screen
time left.

NORA
(pretending to
misunderstand)
Even?

Gustav sees Even engrossed in his phone and smiles.

A MOMENT LATER

Erik struggles to open a clumsily wrapped gift. He gives up and tears it open - a bunch of DVDs spill out. He's not quite sure what they are.

AGNES
And then what do you say? *

ERIK
Thank you, Grandpa.

GUSTAV
This is all you need.

Erik goes through the movies. Except for "*The Red Balloon*", there are no movies suitable for a 9-year-old.

AGNES
Thank you, Dad... but we don't have
a DVD player.

NORA
(seeing "*Blue Velvet*" and
"*Irreversible*" among
them)
Thank goodness for that.

Gustav picks up "*Irreversible*" and holds it up to Erik.

GUSTAV
(smirking at Erik)
Monica Bellucci, for heaven's sake!
(picks up "*The Piano
Teacher*")
And here: the only movie you need
to understand women...
(looks at his daughters)
...and their relationships with
their mothers.
(laughs heartily)

THERESE
Oh, that sounds nice.

AGNES
 (trying to salvage the
 situation for Erik)
 We'll find a way to watch them.
 Or... the ones that are
 appropriate.

EVEN
 (to Gustav)
 I hardly watch movies anymore.

Gustav looks at him oddly.

AGNES
 (trying to save Even)
 You did watch Dad's documentary
 though.

EVEN
 Yes, it was nice.

NORA
 You didn't kill Edvald, Dad?

THERESE
 Who is Edvald?

GUSTAV
 (laughs)
 No, no, Edvald was my friend.

EVEN
 (to Therese)
 Edvald is a frog, Mom.

GUSTAV
 And besides, he didn't have much
 time left.

A silence. *What did he mean by that?*

EVEN
 What?

Gustav laughs.

120

INT. AGNES AND EVEN'S APARTMENT/ ERIK'S ROOM - DAY

120

Erik sits in his room in front of a PC with a stack of DVDs next to him.

On the PC screen, we see that he is on an artificial intelligence website where you can input keywords and prompts to have it create something that matches the description.

Erik has apparently been on such a site before. He types various instructions in English (Gustav Borg style, film...).

He checks the title of one of the DVDs he received and writes something more.

121

INT. AGNES AND EVEN'S APARTMENT/ LIVING ROOM - DAY

121

GUSTAV

(about Erik)

You should just make sure he
doesn't become stuck in that stuff.

Gustav looks at Even (who is once again on his phone) - to Nora and Agnes, it's clear that what he's saying is a jab at Even.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

If he's always staring at a
screen... It's like that guy... the
one with Facebook.

NORA

Mark Zuckerberg.

GUSTAV

Yes, one of those pale guys who
can't talk to women. That's not a
fun life. Right, Even?

EVEN

(looks up)

What?

Nora laughs. The two of them have obviously bonded over making fun of Even. Agnes notices.

AGNES

(wants Even to get off
his phone)

Hey, come join us.

EVEN

(to Agnes as if it were a
valid argument)

It's Coventry against Leeds.

AGNES

Is the pizza oven hot enough?

EVEN

It's hot, it just needs to stand
for a bit to get the steel properly
hot.

Gustav and Nora both find this amusing.

LATER

Pizza is eaten, and everyone has gathered around the TV. Even fidgets with the remote control and his phone.

EVEN (CONT'D)

I just have to... they need to be
on the same network. Okay, are you
ready, Erik?

He presses play, and a film starts playing on the TV.

GUSTAV

So Erik made this?

AGNES

Yes, just now, all by himself.

A strange 30-second short film unfolds on the TV, created using artificial intelligence - Erik asked it to emulate Gustav's style and was also inspired by a couple of the movies Gustav gave him as a gift.

When it's finished, everyone claps, politely impressed.

Despite a few nice compositions, it's mostly a random compilation of computer-generated images. But Grandpa Gustav gets up enthusiastically.

GUSTAV

Bravo! The boy is a genius...

He enthusiastically puts his arm around Erik.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

(doesn't understand how
it was made)

When did you film this?

(to the others)

This is the *Mozart of cinema* for
fuck's sake!

EVEN

It's AI. Erik gets to use my
account. It's...

Gustav isn't listening. Agnes tries to stop Even from taking the credit away from Erik, who smiles at the impression the film has made on his grandfather.

GUSTAV

(to Erik)

Have you seen my films?

(to the others)

That shot was like the final shot
of *River of Time*.

EVEN

Yes, because the computer analyzed
them, and that...

GUSTAV

(interrupts)

Orson Welles, go home, right?
(MORE)

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

He got this from me. It just
skipped a generation.

AGNES

(laughs)

Thank you very much.

NORA

(to Erik)

That was really cool.

Erik smiles.

122

INT. AGNES AND EVEN'S APARTMENT/ BALCONY - EVENING

122

Gustav and Nora are standing on the balcony, smoking. The mood is light.

GUSTAV

I think Therese likes me.

NORA

Therese? Well, that's nice then.

GUSTAV

She held my hand, did you see that?

NORA

(laughs)

No... Don't try to sleep with
Therese, Dad.

123

INT. AGNES AND EVEN'S APARTMENT - EVENING

123

Leftover cake and coffee cups. Erik has gone to bed. Even comes in with a bottle of calvados and glasses. He pours a drink for Gustav and Therese.

GUSTAV

You... you should start writing.

NORA

Yes, Dad, you always say that.

GUSTAV

It's wrong for you to just sit
around waiting for some fucking guy
to decide that maybe you can play
Ophelia...

NORA

Hamlet. I'm going to play Hamlet.

THERESE

(impressed)

Oh, you are?

GUSTAV

(not listening)

I talked to Rachel about it; she started developing things on her own. She has a production company.

(to Therese)

You see, it's really tough being an actress.

NORA

We just say actor now, Dad.

GUSTAV

(continuing to Therese)

You don't decide anything for yourself; you just sit and wait for someone to desire you. It's not good in the long run.

NORA

Well, in the last five years, I've been in ten plays at the National Theatre and three seasons of a TV series. What have you been doing?

GUSTAV

(not paying attention;
continuing to Therese)

I could never marry an actress.

Silence. It's a terrible thing to say in front of Nora, but it's hard to know if he meant it that way.

NORA

But sleeping with them was okay.

AGNES

Enough now.

GUSTAV

(answers Nora with a
smile)

No comment.

Gustav laughs. Therese also chuckles at this.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

(to Therese)

Now, artists have to be like everyone else, equally dull and bourgeois. You can't write *Ulysses* if you have to drive to soccer practice and... compare car insurance, right?

(pause)

Artists must be free.

NORA

Sure, but maybe don't have children then, Dad.

Gustav turns towards Nora. He suddenly seems worried.

GUSTAV

No, don't say that, Nora. Don't give up on that.

Nora is caught off guard by this turn.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

You just need to find a smart guy; he doesn't have to be boring.

He smiles - perhaps an invitation to make fun of Even, as they have been doing all evening. But Nora doesn't smile.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

How old are you now?

NORA

Don't you know?

GUSTAV

I mean... when Sissel was your age, she had two kids. And she wasn't a young mother.

Nora is silent, her eyes vacant. Agnes feels like she should say something.

AGNES

Times are a bit different now, Dad.

GUSTAV

I'm just saying that children are wonderful. And time flies... You two are the best thing that ever happened to me; you mustn't...

NORA

The best thing that happened to you?

(dismissive)

Okay? But maybe you should have been home with us a bit more, then?

Gustav senses Nora's anger.

GUSTAV

(smiles at Therese)

In this family, everyone is mad at Dad.

(to Nora and Agnes)

But you two, you've turned out so well. I must have done something right.

NORA
 How would do you know that?
 (Gustav doesn't
 understand)
 You don't even know us, so how
 would you know?

Therese and Even don't know how to react. Agnes feels the awkward tension and tries to smooth things over.

AGNES
 Nora, now don't exaggerate.

NORA
 Am I exaggerating? You think?

AGNES
 You don't have to make everything a drama, is all.

Nora just looks shocked at Agnes - *how can she take her father's side like this?* Agnes looks away.

Gustav is also taken aback but can't help but keep talking.

GUSTAV
 I know it's been tough for you. I can relate to it. But you're so damn angry... you should open up to others...

NORA
 (feebley)
 Stop.

GUSTAV
 It's not easy to love someone who has so much anger inside them... You don't want to end up alone...

As he keeps talking, we see Nora. The air has gone out of her. She looks away, struggling not to cry. Gustav continues to ramble.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
 And it's not good for art either.
 You... you need something to care about. Children or something.
 (to Therese)
 You don't regret having children, right?

Nora looks up at Agnes, reproachful. Agnes looks down.

Nora walks pensively through the streets. It's deserted.

A lone car passes by and disappears.

125 **EXT. OTHER STREETS IN OSLO - NIGHT**

125

Gustav walks alone on the road, looking troubled.

126 **INT. FAMILY HOUSE - NIGHT**

126

Gustav enters the house. It's dark and quiet. He turns on a small lamp in the hallway.

He sits down to take off his shoes but just remains seated, exhausted.

The light from a passing car sweeps through the room.

127 **INT. NORA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT**

127

Nora arrives home, she switches on the hallway light.

A MOMENT LATER

Nora opens the refrigerator. The faint refrigerator light spreads in the dark kitchen. The refrigerator HUMS.

LATER

She sits in the living room with a beer in her hand.

Her phone lights up: it's Agnes.

She lets it ring. Soon, it becomes silent again.

128 **INT. TRAM - DAY**

128

Nora sits on the tram, looking tired.

129 **INT. NATIONAL THEATRE/ REHEARSAL SPACE - DAY**

129

*

Nora walks onto the stage where they usually rehearse. The stage floor creaks. She is completely alone on the stage, no set design.

She looks out into the auditorium. It's too dark to see if anyone is sitting there.

Nora suddenly appears very sad. Tears start to flow.

She lets it out, crying more and more. It seems raw and desperate. She falls to her knees, sobbing. *Is this part of a performance? It seems so real.*

View from the audience with a couple of heads in the foreground (Colleagues from the auditions?): Nora lies down on the stage floor. She is empty. There is no more crying, just small sobs.

BLACK

129A **INT. CAR SWEDISH COUNTRYSIDE - DAY**

129A

Gustav sits in a car. Outside, we see vast landscapes and fields. It reminds us of the landscape in his film "ANNA." *

130 **EXT. BEAUTIFUL HOUSE BY THE SWEDISH COAST - DAY**

130

Gustav arrives at a beautiful modern house with large windows.

Through the windows he sees a man lying in a sunbed at the back of the house, sleeping in the shade of a parasol. This is PETER (soon 80), Gustav's go-to cinematographer.

Gustav smiles.

A MOMENT LATER

Gustav has walked around the house and over to his sleeping friend. Peter has an open shirt (noticeably tanned) and shorts. On his lap, he has a copy of Gustav's script.

GUSTAV

Peter. Hey.

PETER

Gustav!

Gustav expects Peter to get up and give him a hug, but he just sits up a bit in the chair.

Gustav bends down and gives him a proper hug. They seem genuinely happy to see each other.

PETER (CONT'D)

Great to see you!

Peter points to another sun lounger, signaling for Gustav to sit down. Gustav sits and admires the beautiful surroundings. The view of the sea is breathtaking.

GUSTAV

What a place you have.

PETER

Thanks to Lasse Hallström, not you,
huh?

GUSTAV

Lasse would have never booked you
if he hadn't seen "River of Time".

(referring to the place:)

This must be fantastic for the
grandchildren?

PETER

(a painful subject)

No, it's still a bit tough with
Daniel...

(tries to brush it off)

The worst part is that it's his
children who are affected... who
can't come here and see their
grandfather.

He lifts up the script.

PETER (CONT'D)

But what a script, huh?

(Gustav smiles)

It's absolutely wonderful.

GUSTAV

So, you're in?

PETER

I have to do this... Come, let's
have a little drink.

Peter starts to get up. It immediately becomes clear that
he's in very poor physical condition.

Gustav looks shocked as Peter slowly picks up a cane from the
ground, stands up, and limps toward the house.

PETER (CONT'D)

(noticing Gustav's gaze)

My hip gets a bit stiff in cold
weather.

The sun is shining, and it looks warm and inviting.

Gustav tries to hide his shock about how old his friend has
become. *Can this man shoot a feature film?*

They walk up a small staircase from the terrace to the house.
Peter groans softly, trying to hide the pain.

PETER (CONT'D)

(excited about the film)

I don't think this is a film with a
lot of handheld. I'm thinking dolly
and tripod.

Gustav nods, closely watching his friend's movements: how he
has to carefully lean the cane against the wall to use both
hands to open the door.

131

INT. BEAUTIFUL HOUSE BY THE SWEDISH COAST - DAY

131

Gustav sits at the kitchen table. He watches Peter pour whiskey into two glasses - *are his hands shaking as well?*

GUSTAV

(softly)

Maybe you could work with an operator?

Peter sits down next to Gustav.

PETER

No, it's fine. As long as I get my eye to the viewfinder, my body starts to... just wait and see.

(raises his glass)

Cheers.

Gustav raises his glass and smiles, but his eyes are empty. *Michael was right: Peter is too old.*

Gustav looks around. There are a few movie posters on the wall along with fine abstract art. An old photo of a younger Peter with a blonde boy (his son, Daniel) is the only visible family picture.

GUSTAV

Sorry I haven't kept in touch, I'm so bad at it when I'm not filming.

PETER

Same here.

Silence. Gustav finds this hard to say.

GUSTAV

I have to... I'll let you know if this works out. It's... You know, Netflix wants us to talk to someone else too.

Peter realizes the implication.

PETER

I get it. That's how it is, huh.

Gustav nods, sadly.

GUSTAV

That's how it is...

132

INT. FAMILY HOUSE - NIGHT

132

Gustav sits alone in the house in the evening, drinking wine. It's clear that the meeting with Peter has affected him.

Two duty-free bags of wine are on the living room table.

A BIT LATER

Close-up of Gustav's wine glass being filled.

A BIT LATER

Gustav is drunk. He has to support himself on the kitchen door frame.

He notices that the frame is full of dates and names - the heights of Nora and Agnes measured and marked over the years.

133 **INT. FAMILY HOUSE - NIGHT**

133

Gustav is upstairs in the large bedroom. Empty. Only a bed frame remains (the mattress has already been removed.)

This was like we have seen Gustav and Sissel's bedroom a long time ago. Surely hers, alone after he left.

He sits down on the bed frame, melancholic.

134 **INT. FAMILY HOUSE - NIGHT**

134

Gustav lies on the couch in the living room with his phone to his ear, clearly drunk. It RINGS and RINGS. Soon, we hear Nora's voice on the phone. *"Hi, you've reached Nora Borg, please don't leave a message, but send a text..."*

GUSTAV

Nora... Hi Nora... I miss you. I have so much I should have said, but... you're always so angry with me... I can't find the moment to say... you...

Gustav is tired. His eyes flutter.

135 **INT. FAMILY HOUSE - DAY**

135

Gustav wakes up on the couch in the living room - fully clothed. His phone is next to his head. *Did he fall asleep while leaving a message?*

He sits up. Coughs and clears his throat, trying to gather himself.

A BIT LATER

Gustav clears away traces of last night's excess, dirty wine glasses, a plate, an empty wine bottle, and half-eaten duty-free candy bags, all shoved straight into a trash can.

He wipes the kitchen table with a whole roll of paper towels he has dampened with water. He turns it over and wipes with the dry side.

He has to stop and collect himself. Clearly hungover.

The DOORBELL RINGS.

136

INT. FAMILY HOUSE - DAY

136

Gustav and Rachel sit in the kitchen of the family house, engaged in script readings. Ingrid (the actress in her 60s from the press day) is also there with her script. She's not part of this scene. If Gustav is still hungover, it doesn't show. Rachel dryly reads the script to familiarize herself with it.

RACHEL

(reading from the script)

You know, I don't believe in God,
We weren't even baptized, my sister
and I - we both did the civil
confirmation thing just so we
wouldn't miss out on the gifts.

Gustav interrupts. He's focused, energetic, and attentive; the work invigorates him. He looks over at his ASSISTANT sitting in the corner with a Mac.

GUSTAV

What's in the original?

ASSISTANT

(looking up in the
original script)

"both my sister and I did civil
confirmation just for the money..."

GUSTAV

It feels weird in English.

(to Rachel in English)

Is civil confirmation a thing? *

RACHEL

Not really in the US, but I looked
it up and we have something
similar.

Rachel flips through her script - Ingrid notices it's full of post-it notes and annotations, someone has been working hard.

GUSTAV

(to the assistant)

We should cut that - make a note.

(to Rachel)

Continue, sorry.

RACHEL

Can I ask... who is the "you"? She
says "you know", and... who is the
you?

GUSTAV
Who do you think?

RACHEL
(looks at Ingrid)
I don't think it's her mother,
she'd never say that to her. It
feels more like an inner voice...
but it's weird to speak and not
talk to anyone.

GUSTAV
Great, let's try that... do it like
Ingrid over there is listening.

INGRID
(smiles)
I am.

Gustav stands up energetically and pushes a chair over.

GUSTAV
(to Ingrid)
Sit here... just to see.

Ingrid sits down next to Rachel.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
(to Rachel)
Pick it up at...
(looks in the script)
...at "I had this kind of crisis"
and talk to Ingrid, you don't have
to look at her, but you know she's
listening.
(to Ingrid, in Norwegian)
And you can... if you want, you can
touch her. It's nice to feel that
you're her mother.
(to Rachel, in English)
And... remember, she has never told
anyone about this. She's
embarrassed about praying like
that. You might try to hide it or
laugh at yourself, but you're
ashamed... ashamed of being so
weak.

RACHEL
Okay.
(takes a breath; reads)
I had this kind of... crisis. I was
alone in the house again. Lying in
my bed, crying, I know, everyone
lies in bed crying, but...

She reads with more emotion, smiling at herself, embarrassed.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Someone said praying isn't really talking to God, it's acknowledging the despair, to throw yourself on the ground because that's all you can do... not unlike lying with your heart broken, thinking: please call me, please forgive me, please take me back. And I had fucked up, and I was alone and crying and then... For the first time... I sat down on the floor and prayed, I don't know who I said it to, but I said it out loud: "Help me. I can't do this anymore, I can't do it alone. I want a home. I want a home."

Rachel's acting is good, it's very good. As she says the last lines, Ingrid touches her, comfortingly. Rachel looks up and their eyes meet. Ingrid embraces her. Rachel breaks and looks at Gustav. She's moved. *

RACHEL (CONT'D)

(about the embrace)

I kind of wish her mother was like that in the film.

GUSTAV

Exactly.

137

EXT. FAMILY HOUSE - DAY

137

They have moved out to the garden for a short break. The assistant serves coffee on the terrace.

RACHEL

Are you sure it works... doing this in English?

GUSTAV

Yes, of course.

RACHEL

But should I... should I have like a Norwegian accent like Ingrid.

INGRID

I don't have an accent.

GUSTAV

Ingrid is Swedish.

RACHEL

(to Ingrid)

I mean your accent is non-existent -

(to both)

(MORE)

RACHEL (CONT'D)

But wouldn't it be weird if
everyone has a Scandinavian accent
and I just sound like... me?

Gustav thinks. She might have a point.

GUSTAV

Maybe. I'll think about it.

RACHEL

And also can I ask you... Just a
little bit more about the
character.

(pause)

My biggest question is still why?
Why she decides to kill herself.

GUSTAV

What do you think?

RACHEL

I get that she's depressed, like
her mother, but she has a child.
I'm still struggling with the why,
you know?

GUSTAV

Well, that is the question the film
is asking, isn't it?

(pause)

I think you have to find your own
reasons.

(serious)

She belongs to you now.

This makes an impression on Rachel. Gustav empties his coffee cup, but Rachel is not entirely done with this subject.

RACHEL

Can I ask you about your mother? I
don't want to pry, but I can't help
but to feel she's relevant in some
way.

GUSTAV

(laughs)

This is not about my mother.

Gustav looks at her.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

What would you think of dying your
hair? A shade darker?

(looks towards Ingrid)

Wouldn't that be good?

(to Rachel:)

Or even brown?

Rachel is confused.

*

138

INT. AGNES AND EVEN'S APARTMENT - DAY

138

Rachel has just arrived at Agnes's home. They walk through the apartment, Rachel has a lot on her mind.

RACHEL

He drops that bomb about his mother, but then he says she's not important, and...

AGNES

Can I get you anything?

RACHEL

Coffee maybe? Or maybe not, I haven't really been sleeping well.

A beat.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

But it did happen like that... like in the script?

AGNES

I haven't read the script, but she did do it... in the house and everything. But you know, it's more than... 60 years ago.

RACHEL

Do you know what happened to her? I mean, why she did it?

AGNES

(uncertain)

She'd been in prison during the war, I think that had something to do with it.

RACHEL

Oh. I didn't know that... That's awful.

Agnes feels she doesn't have good answers.

AGNES

I'm sorry, I should know much more about this stuff... But she died like way before I was born and... my dad doesn't really like to talk about it.

Rachel moves towards the dining table and sits down.

RACHEL

When I ask him about her he just subtly changes the subject... or not even that subtly.

(smiles)

Agnes follows and sits down.

AGNES

A few years ago the records from
the war became public here... I
asked dad if we should look her up
in the archives and he just...
(shakes her head)

RACHEL

He didn't want to?

AGNES

I don't think he even understood
the question.
(smiles)
He really doesn't like to talk
about uncomfortable things.

RACHEL

That's weird... I mean his films
are so... unafraid.

AGNES

Yeah, that's my dad, I guess. He's
more open in his films than in he
is in life.

RACHEL

I guess... He's amazing though, so
much energy.
(smiles)
I wish I had a dad like that.

Silence. Agnes feels that Rachel is uncertain.

AGNES

It's just his way of working you
know. He doesn't give answers - he
wants you to find them yourself I
think.

Rachel is comforted to hear that he is always like this.

A BIT LATER

They walk towards the front door. Rachel notices a poster of
the "ANNA" movie on the wall, featuring Agnes as a child. *

RACHEL

I started as a child too, you
know...

AGNES

Yeah, I know.

RACHEL

Why did you stop?

AGNES

I don't know. I'm very proud of it,
but... My sister is the real
actress, it's not my thing, really.

RACHEL

Your sister is an actress? Has she
worked with Gustav too?

Rachel puts on her shoes.

AGNES

They're not really speaking. It's
complicated... so she didn't want
to do the part.

RACHEL

In this film?
(Agnes nods)
Not my part?

AGNES

Yes. She has her reasons, but...
She can be a bit difficult too, you
know.

Agnes doesn't notice Rachel's surprise.

139

INT. RACHEL'S HOTEL SUITE - EVENING

139

A large suite with a beautiful view over Oslo. Yet, it feels *
impersonal and empty. It has started to get dark outside. *

Rachel sits with headphones and a cell phone, practicing
pronunciation. She has a darker hair color and a new
hairstyle. *She works on the typical Scandinavian mistakes in* *
English: w to v, th-sound to t, and strongly accented j. *

RACHEL

(listening and repeating)
I vant tree glasses of juice.

She repeats it several times in the empty suite varying the
exaggerated accent.

LATER

Rachel looks at her phone. She has found Nora's Instagram:

PICTURES OF NORA: At the theatre (*Hamlet* mentioned). With
friends. Her hair resembles Rachel's new style and color.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

(Scandinavian accent)

Vhat the føkk.

140 **EXT. OSLO FERRY - DAY**

140

Nora stands on the ferry deck with director Olivia, Jakob, and four other actor colleagues from the new play.

141 **EXT. GRESSHOLMEN ISLAND - DAY**

141

They are on an island in the Oslo fjord. It's sunny and nice weather, but cold in the air. They sit on a blanket and eat.

Olivia is in the middle of making a kind of toast.

OLIVIA

...it's just so cool to work with you guys. I know, Nora, I know there are some things left...

(Nora smiles)

...we'll fix that when we move to the main stage. And Jakob, I know you're going through some tough times at home right now...

Nora is surprised - she hasn't heard about this. Jakob looks at her - their eyes meet before he looks up at Olivia again.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

...and if there's anything, just say, you know that.

Jakob smiles at Olivia.

LATER

Nora and Jakob are alone on the picnic blanket, talking seriously.

NORA

It's not because of us, is it?

JAKOB

No, no, it's not that.

Silence. The noise of some PLAYFUL RUCKUS down by the water edge. A young actor dives into the cold sea and sprints back up. Olivia and the other actress watch and laugh.

Jakob looks down at them. Nora is thoughtful.

NORA

But... but why haven't you told me you're getting divorced?

JAKOB

Well, you know... We've been in the middle of rehearsals and... I don't know.

Nora touches his arm comfortingly. He smiles at her.

NORA

I'm here... if you want to talk or
just...

It feels like an invitation to something more. Jakob doesn't answer. He's pensive.

LATER

Everyone is gathered - they've been drinking for a while and are talking freely.

FEMALE ACTOR

Yeah, but I don't think you realize how lucky you are just...

NORA

Oh, I don't know...

FEMALE ACTOR

Your parents, they understand what you do. My mom and dad just get scared and weird when they have to go into a theatre.

Jakob observes Nora as she speaks.

NORA

Yeah, I know my family and Dad can seem cool like that from the outside, but don't you get the idea that he cares...

(almost laughs at the thought)

He left this extremely long message on my phone... Shitfaced of course, just talking about himself. I should play it for you guys.

Nora pretends to search her phone as if she's really going to play it. Laughter. Jakob looks skeptical.

JAKOB

Here.

Jakob holds out a bottle and diverts Nora. She forgets her phone and lets him fill her glass.

JAKOB (CONT'D)

But your mom was cool, wasn't she?

Nora nods, thoughtful. She looks at Jakob.

NORA

Yes, Mom... Mom was the sweetest, coolest, warmest person, even though she also worked a lot, but... But when she was down...

(MORE)

NORA (CONT'D)

Well, there was nobody who did the laundry at home... to put it that way.

It feels sore. Silence. Nora becomes self-conscious, she raises her glass and smiles.

NORA (CONT'D)

Cheers!

OLIVIA

Cheers to moms!

(everyone cheers)

Blame the mom!

142 EXT. GRESSHOLMEN ISLAND/ON THE WAY TO THE FERRY - DAY 142

They are on their way to the ferry. The sun is low, shadows are long. Nora and Jakob walk a little behind the others.

She looks at him, he is turned slightly away. She glances at the others - they are now a bit ahead and not paying attention to what's happening behind them.

She grabs Jakob and pulls him to her for a kiss, but he pulls away.

NORA

It's not that big of a deal anymore... if they see us. We can do whatever we want.

She tries to kiss him again, but he won't.

Nora looks at him, hurt. Jakob avoids her gaze.

JAKOB

Nora, I... I don't know.

He turns and follows the others.

Nora is left standing, rejected.

143 EXT. OSLO FERRY - SUNSET 143

They are on the ferry back to the city. Everyone is a bit tired, and sit scattered. Jakob is talking with Olivia.

Nora sits by herself. She casts a glance at Jakob - their eyes meet - then he looks away.

Nora looks out to the sea. The boat surges forward.

144

INT. FAMILY HOUSE - DAY

144

A break in the script readings with Rachel, Ingrid, and Anders. The assistant sits with the Mac and takes notes.

Gustav takes Rachel aside for a private conversation.

GUSTAV

You seem a little distracted.

RACHEL

It's nothing... Just nerves, I guess. A bit tired.

GUSTAV

You can't go wrong here, I don't care about the words - the only thing you can do wrong is not to listen... And don't rush it.

Rachel listens intently, clearly nervous.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

Let's try once without the accent, Just speak like you normally do.

They walk back. Rachel gets ready to continue working with the scene, but the accent thing has thrown her off.

Ingrid sits, watching and thinking.

145

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

145

Gustav and Ingrid lie in bed in Ingrid's large hotel room. They've obviously just had sex and lie catching their breath.

INGRID

I'm worried about the young ones... They don't fuck.

GUSTAV

All young people fuck.

INGRID

Not like we did, I read about it in the newspaper... and if they do, they feel guilty afterward.

(he laughs)

They take everything so seriously.

GUSTAV

We did too.

INGRID

No, you did.

GUSTAV

They are right, the world is
ending.

INGRID

Another reason to fuck.

Gustav laughs heartily.

GUSTAV

Do you have a cigarette?

Ingrid puts her feet on the floor and picks up a T-shirt.

INGRID

I'm glad you saw me naked when we
were young.

GUSTAV

You're still beautiful.

INGRID

That's not what I meant.

Gustav lifts the duvet and shows her his 70-year-old body.

GUSTAV

I look exactly the same.

She smiles as she puts on the T-shirt and stands up.

Ingrid talks as she gets a glass of water from the bathroom.

INGRID

I think you're taking her to some
good places. When you're not
confusing her, poor thing.

GUSTAV

What do you think?

Ingrid sits down.

INGRID

I like her, I think some of the
others are a bit skeptical. They
don't think she fits in. Anders
doesn't like having to act in
English.

GUSTAV

And you?

INGRID

(re: acting in English)
It doesn't bother me.

GUSTAV

Do you think she fits in?

Ingrid sits down.

INGRID

She doesn't think she fits in,
that's the problem.

Gustav stretches his arm out towards her water glass.

INGRID (CONT'D)

(takes the glass for
herself)

Get your own.

(continues)

She's not dumb, she has good
instincts. That thing with the boy
and the flag.

(gives him the glass
anyway)

It's about your mother and the war.
That's not what this film is about.

He takes a sip and hands the glass back to her.

GUSTAV

Well, it's about many things.

Ingrid puts the glass down and sits closer to him:

INGRID

I'm fine with playing yet another
variant of your wife in this. It's
fine for me that she doesn't have
any redeeming features, she's a
function, I see that, but why
doesn't the dad have a role in
this? ... You see Rachel's
character so well, but why don't
you see that the reason she's
depressed, it's just as much her
father?

Gustav looks at her, he is surprised by this.

INGRID (CONT'D)

He has left her with this unstable
mother, he doesn't care what... If
she feels worthless, it's also his
fault.

Silence. Are his eyes a bit blank?

GUSTAV

Are you sure you don't have a
cigarette?

Ingrid doesn't answer. Gustav thinks about what she said.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

Sissel wasn't that bad, was she?

INGRID

I liked Sissel, she was great, but
she was a manic depressive... And
not often manic.

Gustav is silent. He suddenly becomes very emotional.

GUSTAV

I couldn't pull it off... Not with
Sissel and not with the children...
I thought... they were better off
without me.

Ingrid wraps her arms around him comfortingly.

BLACK

146 **EXT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES - DAY**

146

A functionalist building from the 70s on the outskirts of
Oslo near the forest.

147 **INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES (MONTAGE) - DAY**

147

Pictures of the entrance to the mountain halls.

The rough, wet concrete hall where archive material is
delivered.

The long corridors, 70s and 90s style, where archives are
stored.

An ARCHIVIST with a document trolley stands in a long
corridor with shelves packed closely on both sides.

She presses a button so the shelves move apart: the contents
of two large shelves are revealed: protocols, archive boxes,
and more.

A sign at the end of the shelf: "RA/S-1329 - State Police -
Main Office/Oslo Department" Some documents are loaded on the
trolley which is now wheeled through another long corridor
with different colored shelves.

New shelf meters of archive material come into view. "Archive
after German prisons in Norway."

The trolley drives on - more folders are loaded on.

Another corridor. Here, the archivist turns a handle to move
the shelves: a multitude of archive boxes is revealed.

The archivist's hands take out a box of archive material.
Just one of many boxes on the shelf. And there are many
shelves.

The trolley now has many folders, rattling as it is wheeled.

It is taken into an elevator. The elevator goes up.

The trolley is placed in a room. A tag is attached to it with a name: Agnes Borg-Pettersen.

148 **EXT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES - DAY**

148

Agnes enters the large main door.

149 **INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES - DAY**

149

Agnes enters the end of the building and goes up a staircase.

150 **INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES/RECEPTION - DAY**

150

She stands at the reception desk in the reading room. ANOTHER ARCHIVIST comes in with the trolley we followed in the previous sequence.

He lays the archive material in front of Agnes.

ANOTHER ARCHIVIST

This is her registration card from the State Police archives... and the entry from Grini. It's limited to name, reason for imprisonment, and dates of stay.

The archivist points to a very thick folder.

ANOTHER ARCHIVIST (CONT'D)

This is the case against Ole Wilhelmsen from the treason trials. Karin Irgens' testimony is here, but you requested to see the entire folder.

(re: a folder within the folder)

As part of the case, there are also photos of reconstructions of his torture methods. This is...

151 **INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES/READING ROOM - DAY**

151

Agnes sits in a reading room with the archive material in front of her.

Close-up of a registration card: *Karin Irgens, b. 22/5.22. Law student, Losveien 14. Admitted 13/10.43 at 10:30, transferred to Grini - Spreading anti-Nazi propaganda.*

She looks at the card. It's yellowed old paper, blurred typewriter font. Some handwritten numbers in red pencil.

The content is mundane, but the paper still feels like proof of something. If nothing else, that her grandmother existed.

Agnes glances at more documents. Then she takes out the thick folder and starts flipping through it.

Close-up of a worn folder full of papers. Typewriter font: Case 390/45 B. Ole WILHELMSEN. Torture treatments.

Agnes notices the name she was looking for.

Close-up: the folder is open at a typewritten testimony, the name Karin Irgens is clear. She has testified against a torturer and this is the transcription of what she said in court:

"I was taken on the 13th October 1943 by two Gestapo men and state police constable Ole Wilhelmsen."

Agnes flips and reads.

"One of the Gestapo men beat me with a heavy stick (4-5 cm in diameter) while Ole Wilhelmsen and the other Gestapo man threatened me with a gun to make me talk."

Fragments of a story: "I was driven to..." "Strangely enough, I was given a glass of water and allowed to sit on a chair" "They kept at me all morning..." "...they put on leg clamps", "left me tied with a heater next to my head..."

Agnes leans back, affected. She looks around the reading room. It's almost empty, an ELDERLY LADY flips through some documents. A MAN comes in and sits down.

Agnes pulls out another folder:

"The German Security Police - T O R T U R E -" "22 photographs and a sketch showing various methods..." "...taken with the assistance of 2 people who had been subjected to torture as well as Ole Wilhelmsen"

Black and white pictures of torture methods recreated for the trial. Ways to tie people so it hurts. Heaters placed so close to the head that it must feel like burning... It's unsettling, not least because it's so mundane, amateurish; they used what they had at hand: electrical cables, shelf brackets, heaters...

Agnes closes the folder.

She sits thoughtfully in the reading room, moved.

NARRATOR'S VOICE

Later, when she tried to tell Even about it, it didn't feel like she was bringing much new information. They probably knew most of it...

152

INT. AGNES AND EVEN'S APARTMENT - DAY

152

Agnes sits at home with Even on the sofa. The TV is on.

NARRATOR'S VOICE

It was hard to describe what had made such a strong impression... Was it her grandmother's testimony, how dryly and unsentimentally she had described it? Or was it that she was just one of many victims who testified in the same folder?

QUICK CUTS: The folder with testimonies against Ole Wilhelmsen. It's stuffed full - hundreds of people.

A picture of reconstructed torture - it has a strange feeling to it - *is that not a smile on the face of one who is being tied up?*

PICTURE: Police report: Karin Borg (née Irgens)

BACK IN THE LIVING ROOM: Agnes is thoughtful.

NARRATOR'S VOICE (CONT'D)

The police report on the suicide fifteen years later was thin, there were no pictures, but her father's name was there... He hadn't been interrogated, probably because he had only been 7 years old when it happened.

Agnes looks out to the backyard: outside in the sunshine, Erik is running around with the neighbor's dog. Happy and innocent as only a child can be.

153

EXT. FOREST - DAY - CLIP FROM FATHER'S FILM ANNA:

153

The dark-haired boy from ANNA jogs through a rain-soaked forest. He is covered in mud, cold and scared. The sound of a TRAIN passing in the distance.

He reaches a clearing in the forest where there's a large stone. He stops. All is quiet around him - is he safe?

He approaches the stone. It looks a bit out of place, oversized, like something from a fairy tale. But it's also just a large stone. Moss covers one side.

The boy sits down next to it. Exhausted.

He lies down. The stone is shaped such that one could say he lies in the stone's embrace. His eyes flutter.

Wide shot of the clearing: The boy lies motionless, close to the stone.

A girl stands at the edge of the forest watching him. It's Anna, played by Agnes as a child.

154

INT. OUTDOOR AREA BY AGNES & EVEN'S APT. - DAY

154 *

Agnes (as an adult) watches her father:

He holds a long plastic shovel squeezed between his arm and upper body. He talks to someone off screen (Erik) and waves his arm in a quick motion:

GUSTAV

You have to do it like this...

quickly.

(to Erik)

Now!

At the same moment Gustav reacts in shock and grips the shovel as if it has just impaled him. He falls to the ground.

Erik films the entire parodical death scene with his phone and runs closer to capture his grimaces in a closeup shot.

Gustav goes all the way and lets his body spasm as his life drains from his body. Erik can't help but laugh behind the camera.

Gustav lies motionless... then turns towards Erik.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

How was it?

He gets up gleefully and brushes away grass from his clothes.

Agnes suddenly gives him a small hug - Gustav smiles satisfied and a bit surprised - *where did that come from?* He is out of breath.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

Physical humor, it always works.

CLOSEUP OF A PHONE: Gustav (throws the plastic shovel with murderous intent - the camera swiftly pans over in the direction of the throw (and hides a cut) - and catches Gustav who falls over and dies, impaled by the shovel.

ANOTHER CLIP: Erik looks like a giant staring down at a tiny Gustav. Erik hits his miniature-grandfather over the head with the plastic shovel to comical effect. Agnes laughs behind the camera. Erik laughs and walks towards her. The moment he moves, the illusion breaks: Gustav was smaller because he was standing much further away from the camera, they were just cheating the point of view so it looked like they were standing right next to each other.

A BIT LATER

Gustav and Agnes sit on some benches in the backyard. Erik walks around, looking pleased with his recording.

*
*

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
(to Agnes about Erik)
He's just like I was, walking
around with his camera.

AGNES
(smiling)
Yeah, with his phone.

They look at Erik who is filming something with his phone.

*

AGNES (CONT'D)
Why don't we just go together to
Nora's premiere? Therese will
babysit, but we could have a drink
with her here first.

GUSTAV
I'll probably have to take a car
directly from the office.

AGNES
But you're coming?

GUSTAV
Yes, of course.

Gustav looks over at Erik.

*

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
Agnes... I want Erik to be in my
film... He's perfect.

Agnes is caught off guard.

AGNES
Ok?

GUSTAV
There aren't many lines, but it's a
very important role. Rachel's son.

Agnes isn't sure what to say, but it's clear she isn't fond
of the idea. Gustav doesn't seem to notice.

AGNES
That's really nice, Dad, but... I
don't know... He's not exactly the
actor type.

GUSTAV
I don't want an actor type. There
is nothing worse than kids in films
coming at you with fucking jazz
hands as if they're about to sing a
musical number.
(MORE)

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

(looks at Erik)

Erik has something, he has a secret.

(looks at her)

You were also a bit shy. But you were damn great on film. You should have continued.

Agnes is thoughtful - *does she not like the idea of Erik acting?*

Erik notices that his mom is looking at him and waves at her. *

156

EXT. NATIONAL THEATRE - EVENING

156

Documentary-like images of the audience on their way to the theatre.

It is reminiscent of the film's opening, but now the place is snow-free and it's light outside. On the theatre wall, one can see a large poster for the *Hamlet* performance with Nora.

People cluster together on their way up the stairs to the main entrance.

157

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE - EVENING

157

In the middle of the full hall, director Olivia is nervous, neatly dressed, she sits with her closest family.

The theatre manager sits elsewhere among the audience, talking to someone.

A few rows back in the middle sit Even and Agnes - a seat is vacant next to Agnes.

The hall BUZZES with voices from hundreds of expectant theatregoers.

158

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE/DRESSING ROOMS - EVENING

158

Nora in her dressing room. She seems calm. She puts a cork in her mouth and recites some absurd sentences to warm up: Ten topped cups of unpopped popcorn. Ten topped cups of unpopped popcorn... Five flat flounders in a flooded flat.

Someone KNOCKS on the door.

STAGE MANAGER (O.S.)

10 minutes.

159

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE/BACKSTAGE - EVENING

159

Nora gets "miked up": the sound technician attaches a portable microphone and transmitter to her costume.

Jakob and some of the other actors stand close by. Nervous glances are cast in her direction.

Nora doesn't meet anyone's gaze, she is focused - but she doesn't seem nearly as nervous as last time.

The stage manager (the same as before) watches her like a hawk - just waiting for something to happen.

Nora walks towards the edge of the stage where the others are waiting. Suddenly she turns abruptly and walks the other way.

The stage manager is immediately alert - is she going to run off?

False alarm: it was the microphone that had come loose, Nora was just going back to the sound station.

A LITTLE LATER

Nora stands waiting for her cue to go on stage. She hears it and goes out to meet the large hall...

160

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE/MAIN STAGE - EVENING

160

The play is well underway, we hear Nora on stage as Hamlet.

Gustav stands right at the back of the hall, watching, hidden in the darkness. We don't see the stage, only Gustav's face watching his daughter far ahead.

Something happens to him - he seems moved.

Suddenly, he leaves.

161

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE/FOYER - EVENING

161

Gustav comes out of the hall. The sound from the play faintly echoes in the room.

He crosses the large empty foyer and leaves the theatre.

162

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE/MAIN STAGE - EVENING

162

The play is over. APPLAUSE.

People in the hall stand up and give a standing ovation. Nora receives an extra large swell of applause as she bows.

163

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE/ACTORS' FOYER - EVENING

163

Hugging and kissing and flowers in a large room where the audience doesn't have access. Everyone looks happy. Nora too.

It's a chaos of guests and actors. JAKOB'S DAUGHTER comes running and hugs him. What must be his (soon-to-be ex-) WIFE stands beside them and smiles.

Agnes and Even enter. They stand shyly at the door, waiting for the right moment to interrupt.

She looks at Nora who smiles and laughs at all the well-wishers, but something seems a bit off - her eyes don't smile.

Agnes approaches. Even hangs back. Nora smiles when she sees her, but seems a bit reserved.

AGNES

Congratulations, it was fantastic.

NORA

Thank you!

EVEN

(from a distance)

Really good.

Agnes leans closer to her sister.

AGNES

(quietly)

Are you all right?

Nora looks at her, puzzled.

NORA

Why wouldn't I be?

AGNES

Well, you haven't been answering your phone lately and...

NORA

Did you come here with Dad?

AGNES

No, I don't think he made it.

Nora looks away. Agnes feels something is off with her.

AGNES (CONT'D)

We have a babysitter and are going for a drink at Teketopa. You're probably busy, but drop by if you want to.

Nora is about to answer, but someone else comes to congratulate her and she turns away.

164	INT. NATIONAL THEATRE/DRESSING ROOMS - EVENING	164
Nora sits alone in her dressing room.		
165	INT. NATIONAL THEATRE/ACTORS' FOYER - NIGHT	165
Nora (without makeup and costume) walks past the door to the room where she just celebrated with the others, she sees Olivia, Jakob, and the others from the play sitting at a table, drinking and laughing. The windows outside are dark - it has gotten late.		
She continues walking.		
166	INT. NORA'S APARTMENT - DAWN	166
Nora sits quietly in a dark apartment. The sky outside has just begun to brighten. She is wearing the same clothes as after the performance - she has been up all night.		
167	INT. NORA'S APARTMENT - DAY	167
Nora's POV: under the sofa in the living room there is a thick layer of dust. A large dust bunny moves slightly in rhythm with Nora's breath.		
Nora lies on the living room floor, staring blankly ahead. Motionless.		
168	INT. NORA'S APARTMENT - DAY	168
Nora sits at the kitchen table with her back turned. She talks on the phone - her voice sounds flat. Drained of energy.		
<p style="text-align: center;">NORA (on the phone) ...no... I don't know if I'll be better tomorrow. I'm going there now, then I'll let you know, but I can't make it tonight. I'm sorry, but... Thanks.</p>		
She hangs up. She sits motionless. SOUND of some children shouting in the distance.		
She slowly gets up, walks slowly down the hallway into the bedroom and out of sight.		
A cloud passes in front of the sun. The rooms suddenly become darker.		

169

INT. AGNES AND EVEN'S APARTMENT - DAY

169

Agnes stands at the kitchen counter. Thoughtful. The light changes here too.

A LITTLE LATER

Gustav has just arrived at Agnes's place. He is in a good mood.

GUSTAV
Where's Erik?

Agnes is angry at him.

AGNES
He'll be here soon... Why weren't you at Nora's premiere? You said you would be.

GUSTAV
(avoidant)
No, she didn't want me there. And you know, I hate theatre.

He smiles. Agnes doesn't find it funny.

Gustav sits down on the sofa. He takes two scripts from his bag and lays them on the coffee table.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
Here is the original and this is the translated one. So Erik can practice the English lines.
(sees that she is skeptical)
It's okay to have an accent, he talks like he does, you know. Has Michael spoken to you? There's some school leave that needs to be arranged.

Agnes has actually already made up her mind.

AGNES
I don't know if this is a good idea.

GUSTAV
Of course, it is. It will be great.
(smiles)

AGNES
I don't know... I don't know if he wants to.

GUSTAV
Yes, it will be fine, he wants to.

AGNES
How do you know that?
(realizes)
Did you ask him?

GUSTAV
I just mentioned it. He was very
happy.

AGNES
Oh my God, Dad. You can't just...

She sits down.

Silence. He takes her hand.

GUSTAV
You playing in my film, that's the
most beautiful memory I have.

AGNES
For me too, but...

GUSTAV
(interrupts)
This will be good. We'll start off
really soft, just so I can see them
together. I think Rachel will like
doing those scenes with him... a
bit more joy.

Gustav talks and talks without noticing that Agnes isn't
listening - something is building up in her.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
I think she needs to feel other
sides of the film.

Suddenly, Agnes withdraws her hand. She is upset.

AGNES
Can you stop talking for a bit.
Please!

Gustav has never seen her like this.

AGNES (CONT'D)
I don't want Erik to be in the
film.

GUSTAV
But Agnes, then it...

AGNES
(interrupts him)
And yes, it was nice, Dad, it was
nice when we worked together... You
made me feel like the most
important person in the world...
(MORE)

AGNES (CONT'D)

And then... then you were gone
again.

GUSTAV

(can't get a word in)

You were amazing. I...

AGNES

(continues; emotional)

I don't understand it... how you
can just turn it off... how you can
be so close and real... and then
just disappear and make someone
else the most important person in
the world.

Gustav is taken aback.

GUSTAV

Agnes..?

Agnes just looks at him.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

Please. I don't need this now. Not
from you.

He's about to get up, but he's in pain. Or is he faking it
for sympathy? Either way Agnes doesn't seem to care.

AGNES

Do you know why Nora is always
angry with you? ... It's because
she expects something from you, I
gave up on that a long time ago...
We never got the best of you,
that's okay... I've accepted that,
but I don't want Erik to... to be
disappointed in that way.

Gustav is clearly shaken by everything Agnes says, as a last
argument he touches the script lying on the table.

GUSTAV

(feebley)

But read it... just read it.

AGNES

(angrily)

Don't you get it... I don't care if
it's good or not. I care about
Erik.

Gustav tries to get a word in, but she talks over him.

AGNES (CONT'D)

And you're old, Dad. This is a big
production, and I don't think
you're in control. Sorry.

Silence. Gustav is devastated.

SOUND of the front door.

Soon, Erik comes running in and hugs his grandfather.

GUSTAV

Hi Erik.

AGNES

(apparently cheerful)

Hi... Grandpa was just about to leave.

She gives Gustav a stern look. He gets up slowly. He looks much older than usual.

170

INT. AGNES AND EVEN'S APARTMENT - EVENING

170

Agnes walks alone, tidying up before going to bed. She seems almost light on her feet. Maybe it was good to speak up?

In the living room, Gustav's script lies on the edge of the coffee table. The camera holds it in the foreground, while we see Agnes in the background, going about tidying up.

Finally, she notices it. She picks it up, looks at it for a second before she opens it and glances through it.

She flips back to the beginning.

171

INT. AGNES AND EVEN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

171

Agnes sits on the toilet, reading her father's script. Clearly captivated.

172

INT. AGNES AND EVEN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

172

Agnes reads in the nightstand light. Even sleeps beside her.

She finishes and puts the script away. Thoughtful.

173

EXT. NORA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

173

Agnes (with her father's script in hand) stands at the entrance to a tall functionalist building. She rings the bell. For a long time. It's clear she has been trying for a while.

She steps back and looks up at Nora's windows.

She goes back and presses the bell again. This time, she holds the button down.

174

INT. NORA'S APARTMENT - DAY

174

Nora opens the door and lets in Agnes.

AGNES

Sorry for just showing up like
this, but... Why don't you pick up
when I call?

Nora doesn't respond. Agnes looks around the apartment:

It's dark and unwelcoming. The blinds are down. No lights are on, only the laptop is on with a reality show playing.

There's take-away on the kitchen table, but the food seems untouched.

Nora herself looks unkempt and tired.

AGNES (CONT'D)

Are you okay?

Nora nods, but avoids looking at her.

AGNES (CONT'D)

You have to answer... You know I
get nervous when you don't answer.

Nora nods again.

AGNES (CONT'D)

What's up? Are you ill or
something?

Nora shrugs.

Agnes goes over and shuts the laptop. Silence.

She goes over to Nora with her father's script in hand.

AGNES (CONT'D)

Dad was at my place yesterday, we
fought really bad... he wants Erik
to act in the film and I don't want
him to... But... I read it. I've
read Dad's film. I know you don't
want anything to do with it, but...
But I think you should read it. It
is completely different from what I
thought, I was very moved by it.

Nora doesn't understand, but she sees that this is important for Agnes.

AGNES (CONT'D)

It's not so much about his mother
actually. I think he has written it
for you, I feel it is about you.

Nora doesn't quite understand. Agnes calms down.

AGNES (CONT'D)
It's hard to explain, it's just...
Just... read this for example.

She finds something in the script and gives it to Nora.

Nora looks at it.

AGNES (CONT'D)
It's a bit overwritten, or a bit
stylized, maybe.

Nora looks at it, she begins to read internally.

AGNES (CONT'D)
Just read it out loud.

Nora reads the monologue we know from when Rachel read it,
but now we hear it in Norwegian.

*
*

NORA
(reading dryly)
You know, I don't believe in God at
all, we came from a home where all
that was completely unimportant, we
weren't even baptized, and my
sister and I had a civil
confirmation just for the money.

She glances at Agnes when the sister is mentioned. She
continues to read, not performing it, but we see it becoming
more and more emotional for her.

NORA (CONT'D)
But then I had this crisis. I was
all alone in the house again. I lay
in bed and cried, I know, everyone
lies in bed and cries at some
point, but... Someone said that to
pray is not to talk to God, but to
realize despair, to throw yourself
down on the ground because that's
all you can do... a bit like having
a broken heart and thinking over
and over: call me, you must regret,
take me back... And I was there, I
had ruined everything and was alone
and I lay there crying. And then,
for the first time... I sat down
and prayed. It's hard to explain...
I don't know who I prayed to, but I
just said: "help me, I can't do
this, I can't do it alone, I want a
home, I want a home."

The last lines hit her hard. She is moved. Without saying
anything more, she sits down and begins to read.

LATER

Agnes is tidying up the kitchen, trying not to make noise. She glances at Nora in the living room reading - intensely focused.

She goes over and opens the blinds, letting in daylight. Nora doesn't seem to notice that the light changes around her.

LATER

Nora is done. She puts away the manuscript. Agnes, who has been watching from the couch, comes over.

NORA (CONT'D)

You haven't talked to Dad about...
about my suicide attempt and stuff
back then?

AGNES

No, of course not.

Nora is silent. She is clearly affected by what she has read.

AGNES (CONT'D)

I thought the same... how did he
know all that...? I mean, it's
mixed in with Dad's Dad's stuff
with his mother, but... There are
scenes where I feel like he almost
must have been there while you were
going through those things.

NORA

But he wasn't...
(pause)
It was you who were.

Agnes places her hand on her arm. Nora is thoughtful.

NORA (CONT'D)

Why can't he just talk to me?

Silence.

AGNES

I don't know.

Nora looks down at the script.

NORA

This is probably what he can give.

Agnes nods.

A LITTLE LATER

The sisters sit in intimate conversation.

NORA (CONT'D)

How did it end up like this... how did you turn out so good and I so fucked up?

AGNES

That's not true.

NORA

I mean, how did you become such a good person with our upbringing?

AGNES

It hasn't always been easy for me either.

NORA

No, but... you've managed to... have a family. You have a home.

AGNES

You know, there's a big difference in how you and I grew up.

(Nora doesn't understand)

I had you.

(pause)

I know you think like you can't show care and stuff, but you were there for me, in those periods when Mom was flaky... you washed my hair and combed it... Got me to school.

(smiles)

I felt safe.

Nora is moved. But she's still sad.

NORA

I'm so scared... scared of going back there.

Agnes hugs her.

175

EXT. NATIONAL THEATRE - DAY

175

A new day. Nora enters the theatre through the side entrance.

176

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE/DRESSING ROOMS - EVENING

176

Nora in her dressing room. NOISE and conversations outside.

177

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE/MAIN STAGE AND AUDITORIUM - EVENING 177

Nora and the others come off stage after the performance. Everyone is excited. APPLAUSE continues inside the auditorium. They turn and go back on stage to bow once again to the audience.

In the auditorium, people clap as the actors come out.

Nora bows.

As she looks up, she catches sight of a familiar face. Rachel is in the audience, clapping.

178

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE/FOYER - EVENING

178

Next to the entrance to the stage, Rachel waits.

Nora - who has changed into civilian clothes - opens a door to the backstage area.

They look at each other. Rachel's hair resembles Nora's. They both wear the same pants. They notice it and have to smile.

NORA

I couldn't really believe it when they said you were here to see me.

RACHEL

Thanks for taking the time.

179

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE/BACKSTAGE - EVENING

179

They move through the backstage towards the stage.

RACHEL

(about the performance)

It was great.

NORA

(smiles)

Oh yeah? Did you understand anything?

RACHEL

I got the feel of it... It's not like I don't know the plot. You were very good.

Nora leads her onto the empty stage. Rachel stands in the middle of the stage and looks out over the auditorium, becoming a bit reverent.

180

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE/ MAIN STAGE - EVENING

180

They sit in the auditorium among the empty seats.

NORA

So... why did you come to see Norwegian Hamlet?

Silence. Rachel gets to the point:

RACHEL

Why didn't you want to do the role?

A beat.

NORA

I can't work with him, you know.

RACHEL

Why?

NORA

We can't really talk.

RACHEL

But he wanted you to do it?

Silence.

NORA

I don't know.

Rachel sighs.

RACHEL

I really thought this was right for me. Everyone thought it was a bad idea, you know. I had to fight for it.

Nora understands where this is heading.

NORA

Are you thinking about not doing it?

RACHEL

I don't know... I just keep thinking he made a big mistake.

Nora waits for her to continue.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

I just can't get a handle on her - the character, I mean - it's frustrating how she... Everyone is trying to help her, but she keeps pushing everyone away.

A beat.

NORA

She's a complex character. She doesn't really like herself, and that... that makes her real.

(pause)

It's tough to be in that place, you know. She feels everyone is better off without her.

RACHEL

No, she's a great character, she broke my heart reading the script, but... the more I study her the more lost I feel trying to be her, you know? Like her sadness, it's such an overwhelming part of her, I mean, is it the cause of everything or just a symptom of something deeper? I don't know...

(pause)

She's just... She's just so... so broken.

Silence.

NORA

I don't know. Maybe.

Silence. A STAGEHAND crosses the stage far up ahead. He seems to be looking for something before he disappears off stage. *

RACHEL

I don't want to disappoint him, you know.

NORA

So is that why you came here - to the angry daughter - so I'd tell you it's okay to drop out?

Rachel looks at her, surprised.

NORA (CONT'D)

He is a deeply flawed individual, but... he's a great director. And he obviously sees something in you.

(pause)

You'd be stupid to walk away.

This makes an impression on Rachel.

181

INT. FAMILY HOUSE - NIGHT

181

The two friends Michael and Gustav sit together in armchairs in the living room, drinking. MUSIC plays from a stereo.

GUSTAV

I think... we may need to find another boy. Erik... I don't think he can do it.

Michael looks at him, it's clear something is bothering his friend.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

It usually doesn't feel like this, I usually have control...

(MORE)

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

and what I didn't have control over, I used to like not having control over, you understand?

MICHAEL

No.

GUSTAV

I just mean... I'm too old.

(Michael laughs)

There's barbed wire on the prairie... The last of the mohicans, for fuck's sake...

(Michael laughs more)

The new guy keeps sending me moodboards... I miss Peter. When did he become so fucking frail?

(pause)

I'm too tired, Micke. What the hell happened, 15 years ago I was 55...

Michael takes him seriously, he becomes thoughtful too.

MICHAEL

You might be right, maybe we have become too old and that this is our last film... But Gustav, fuck being current! You have to make this film... and you have to make it your way.

Gustav notices his friend's seriousness and listens.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

You have dabbled a bit with these themes before, but you have never approached it so purely, personally, as this. So, it took all these years to get here. That's just how it is. But you have to make this film.

This makes an impression on Gustav.

LATER

*
*

Michael gets ready to leave.

GUSTAV

(tired)

Do we have to do it now?

MICHAEL

Yes, for fuck's sake. I mean, she's on her way, she insisted. We have no film without her so...

Michael seems nervous.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
 And if she has cold feet, you
 reassure her. You're good at that.

They hug.

GUSTAV
 Trust me.

MICHAEL
 Call me when she has left.

182 **EXT. FAMILY HOUSE - NIGHT**

182

A black car stops outside. Rachel gets out. She looks up at the family house.

The windows on the first floor light up. Gustav comes out on the terrace. He waves to her.

Rachel walks up to the porch.

GUSTAV
 So to what do I owe the honor? Are you okay?

RACHEL
 Yeah, I guess.

GUSTAV
 A drink? I must admit I already had one.

RACHEL
 I'm fine, thanks.

GUSTAV
 A cup of tea, maybe?

Gustav opens the veranda door for her.

RACHEL
 Yes, why not. It's so cold.

GUSTAV
 I have some warm socks you can use.

183 **INT. FAMILY HOUSE - NIGHT**

183

Gustav puts the kettle on the stove.

GUSTAV
 So... You don't want to do the film anymore?

A beat. He's right.

RACHEL

I... I don't want to let you down,
you know. I won't drop out on you,
if you really want me to stay.

Gustav nods. He pours water into a cup with a tea bag.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

The last thing I want is to
disappoint you, you know.

He hands her the cup.

GUSTAV

Come.

A LITTLE LATER

They sit at the kitchen table.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

Most actors would do the role, even
if it felt wrong... or just leave
and let the agents sort it out.
You're a good person.

Rachel is suddenly moved. Gustav sees it.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

I let you down, Rachel, I'm sorry.

Rachel starts to cry. Gustav slides his chair closer and
holds her in a comforting, fatherly way.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

You go home, Rachel. I'll be fine.

Gustav holds her.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

I'll be fine.

184

INT. FAMILY HOUSE - NIGHT

184

Gustav walks Rachel out. He helps her with her coat.

She can't help but to glance towards the room where Gustav's
mother took her life.

RACHEL

I'm never going to get it... how a
mother could do that.

GUSTAV

Me neither... me neither.

She walks towards the door. Before she leaves, he says:

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

Don't think back on this as a failure.

(she turns)

I meant it, you would have been great. Now go...

(waves her away)

Go and be great in something else.

Rachel smiles. She leaves.

Gustav is left alone.

185

INT. FAMILY HOUSE - MONTAGE OF DIFFERENT TIMES

185

The camera moves around the house, from room to room. The movement is continuous, but the time in the house shifts, from one period to another, from night to day. The view through the windows goes from summer to winter... It's as if all the times in the house overlap. It creates a dreamlike effect, almost ghostly: we hear voices, laughter, snippets of conversations as we move between the rooms.

We glimpse some of the people who have lived in the house, but always move on. The sequence ends in the present:

186

INT. FAMILY HOUSE - NIGHT

186

Gustav stands in the living room in a house full of memories. Oppressive silence.

He goes and turns on MUSIC to drown out the silence.

LATER

The music continues. Gustav sits drinking whiskey. His phone RINGS. It's MICHAEL.

He lets it just ring and ring until it stops.

He takes a sip. The phone starts RINGING again. Gustav goes and turns the music up loud so it drowns out the ringing. It's almost uncomfortably loud.

187

EXT. FAMILY HOUSE - NIGHT

187

Gustav escapes out the back door and into the garden. He's not dressed for the cold - without a coat - and frosty breath comes out of his mouth, but he doesn't seem to be bothered.

MUSIC plays loudly inside the house.

He walks down the stairs to the garden.

Gustav sits down on a garden chair and looks up at the house. He gives the house the finger and laughs to himself.

He's clearly drunk, and we see that he's only wearing wool socks on his feet.

He feels the cold a bit and wraps his arms around himself.

He's clearly tired and his eyes flicker.

188 **EXT. FAMILY HOUSE - DAWN**

188

Day is beginning to break, but all the lights are still on in the first floor of the house, and MUSIC plays loudly inside.

Gustav lies motionless on the ground by the garden chair.

189 **INT. HOSPITAL/ CORRIDORS - DAY**

189

Nora walks through some corridors, she seems stressed.

LATER

Nora and Agnes stand in a hospital corridor. Agnes tries to reassure.

AGNES

It's going to be okay, he got very cold, but... he's been conscious and all.

190 **INT. HOSPITAL/GUSTAV'S ROOM - DAY**

190

Nora enters a quiet room in a hospital.

A bed is empty. On the other side of a curtain lies a figure (Gustav) connected to a heart monitor.

She walks over. Her father is sleeping. (The scene reminds us of the start of the film when the mother had just died.)

Nora sits down next to him. He looks disheveled, unshaven, and his thin hair in all directions. Frail. He writhes in his sleep.

She takes his hand and sits there with him in silence.

191 **INT. HOSPITAL/CORRIDOR - DAY**

191

Agnes is about to buy coffee from a coffee machine. The machine GRINDS coffee loudly. Nora stands next to her, they both seem lost in thought.

Agnes takes the paper cup with coffee. At the same moment, Nora hugs her. Agnes is unprepared and has the coffee in her hand but accepts the hug.

They stand like that. Two DOCTORS walk by.

192

INT. HOSPITAL/CORRIDOR OUTSIDE GUSTAV'S ROOM - DAY

192

Nora and Agnes hold their paper cups of coffee as they walk towards their father's room. The door is open and they can hear his voice. He sounds surprisingly energetic.

GUSTAV (O.S.)

Oh, but it's wonderful to see something so beautiful when you wake up.

They hear a woman's laughter. They look at each other: what's happening?

They walk closer to the door and see that a YOUNG NURSE is caring for their father. The curtain covers his upper body and face, but it's clear he likes her.

YOUNG NURSE

Do you want some more juice?

She brings a glass with a straw over to him.

GUSTAV (O.S.)

You have such beautiful skin...

do people say that often?

(she laughs)

Does your boyfriend say that? ...

He should.

Nora and Agnes are embarrassed by their father's flirting, but they have to smile.

193

INT./EXT. FAMILY HOUSE - MONTAGE SALE & RENOVATION

193

The house is completely empty. Images of the now familiar empty rooms. The garden. There are for sale signs at the entrance and on the door. The house is being sold.

MONTAGE of the house being renovated beyond recognition:

Soulful wooden planks and old wallpaper are covered with plasterboards. Everything is painted white.

The kitchen, where we spent so much time, is torn out.

The old fireplace in the office is broken into pieces. A new modern stove is ready to be installed.

Finally, the house stands finished as a typical soulless white box. Like most other Norwegian interiors.

The beautiful shadow of the sun through the trees and window (as we saw in the sequence about the house's history) reminds us that this is the same place.

194

INT. FAMILY HOUSE (FILM STUDIO) - DAY

194

Nora stands making sandwiches in the kitchen of the family house. It's disorienting; here is the old kitchen counter we just saw being torn out: Have we gone back in time?

It's a home someone lives in, clutter, children's drawings and pictures on the fridge (including Erik in a soccer kit). *

ERIK

Can I bring some cookies?

NORA

You know that...*

ERIK

(interrupts)

Omar gets cookies every day... many others too. With chocolate and stuff like that too.

Nora wraps the sandwiches in wax paper. A short moment passes before she replies.

NORA

But then you can't just eat the cookies.

ERIK

(pleased)

Sure.

Nora grabs a packet of oat crackers from a drawer and places three of them in a small tupperware box. She closes it and puts it in his lunchbox. Everything is done quickly and efficiently, it is clear that she has made many lunchboxes before.

She walks over to Erik and puts the food into his backpack.

Outside the windows we see not the view we are accustomed to seeing outside the house, but a green screen. (*This is a film set built in a film studio.*)

This is the final shot of Gustav's film - the long uninterrupted take that he described to Rachel. Now we are inside this shot, with Nora and Erik acting. Their interaction is lively, they are believable as mother and son.

Nora follows Erik out into the hallway. She walks behind him - her face (which he doesn't see) shows that something is not entirely right.

ERIK (CONT'D)

Bye!

Erik gives her a quick hug and runs out.

The camera stays on Nora as she hears the SOUND of the front door opening and closing.

A shadow passes over her. Finally, she can drop the facade that cost her so much. *

She sees a jacket on the floor. She picks it up and hangs it on a hook. Automatic gestures - her thoughts are somewhere completely different. *

She walks towards the room at the end of the hallway. The camera remains in the doorway looking in: she drags a chair onto the floor and finds a wire. *

She steps onto the chair and stands on her toes to loop the wire over the hook in the middle of the ceiling, a fiddly task.

The SOUND of someone trying to open the veranda door. She stops what she's doing, steps down from the chair, and walks out into the hallway. She closes the door behind her. A knocking sound. *

The camera follows her in the direction of the sound. Erik stands outside the veranda door in the library, wanting to be let in. *

She walks over and opens the door. *

ERIK (CONT'D)
I forgot my phone.

He runs to fetch the cell phone he has forgotten in the living room. (*The script has been changed following Rachel's input.*) *

He walks back towards the door again.

She just stands there looking at him as he says goodbye and walks out. He looks at her, notices that something is a bit off, but runs away.

She says nothing, just shuts the door behind him.

The camera pans with his movement and lands on Nora's face watching him.

Nora walks over to the window, where Gustav described that we would see the boy leave the garden and disappear, but outside this window, there is also just a green screen. The camera moves and captures Nora's face looking out.

GUSTAV (O.S.)
And there... there you see me
disappear.

Gustav gives instructions from somewhere behind the camera. Nora is not surprised and doesn't break character, but what he says (that he says "me"?) affects her. Sadness surfaces.

She turns away, determined now. She goes back into the room. The camera remains outside as she closes the door behind her.

HERE WE LEAVE WHAT GUSTAV'S CAMERA IS FILMING:

The inside of the door with Nora. As soon as she closed the door, she is no longer in the shot and is now just waiting for her father to say cut.

We now see the team working behind the camera. A CAMERA OPERATOR sits on a dolly filming the closed door. A GRIP stands wide-legged with a firm grip on the dolly. A BOOM OPERATOR holds a long pole with a microphone overhead. ANOTHER BOOM OPERATOR is inside the door with Nora in the office.

Only the HUMMING of the film breaks the concentrated silence. Gustav sits behind a monitor. Peter - his old cinematographer - sits next to him, watching the screen where the filmed footage is displayed. (Behind them, many others, including Michael, are visible.)

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

Cut.

The camera stops. Gustav is clearly moved. Nora comes out of the door and looks at him. Everyone looks at Gustav, waiting for him to give his opinion. He looks straight at Nora as he says:

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

Perfect.

At that moment, everyone in the team starts to move. Voices BUZZ, work on the next shot is already underway. Nora and Gustav stand motionless in the bustle, looking at each other. They are clearly moved by what they have achieved together. Wide shot of the film set: The family house - or at least most of the first floor - is built inside a large film studio. There are lights and cables everywhere. Erik comes over to Gustav, who puts his arm around him. Nora walks over to them. The camera moves even further away: People work like busy ants on the outskirts of the set. Erik runs over to Agnes who stands on the edge, watching.

Nora and Gustav stand motionless in the center.

THE END