

ELFREDA

original screenplay by

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FADE IN:

EXT. WOODED AREA - NIGHT

Crime scene, a gruesome sight in the bushes is untouched, a young girl butchered. Elfreda's feet are elevated and her head left sunken below. Her throat has been slit.

ELFREDA (16), was known to have kind happy eyes and a smiling face, pleasing looking, if not pretty, with long dark hair. In height about the average size of a women, just over five feet tall.

TITLE: CRIME SCENE ELFREDA PIKE, HARBOUR GRACE, 1870

TITLE CARD: ELFREDA

based on a true story

TITLE: Narration is original text from The Express newspaper of 1870.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

She was full-grown and in the full flush of womanhood. The lower jaw was broken by a compound fracture. The head wounds alone were sufficient to destroy life. Spine at the right end of the wound is marked by five distinct cuts of a sharp instrument. Crowds of people followed thither, and there indeed was seen the body of a girl dead, murdered, slaughtered by the hand of some miscreant, devil incarnate, monster of blood. Seeking with savage butchery the life of his deliberate victim.

(dramatic beat)

Elfreda ...

CLOSE UP: Elfreda's silhouette, lying on her back, her coal black hair now tangled with blood and covering her face.

INT. PIKE FAMILY HOME - NIGHT

EDWARD PIKE (42) and his wife MARIE (40), Elfreda's parents, receive a bulletin about the murder on Featherbed Road.

BULLETIN: *Murder on Featherbed Road. All townspeople return home at once.*

EDWARD

Chief sent a bulletin. There's been a murder.

Holds up the paper. Marie grabs it.

MARIE

Elfreda is at Grandmother's.

EDWARD

She may have heard and is too scared to return by herself.

MARIE

Thomas works on the ship in Harbour Grace. He won't be able to get her until later.

EDWARD

Whoever did this is still out there.

MARIE

She can't walk alone. Go get her. Now.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Edward Pike stands well over six feet tall and is a fisherman, rugged.

He walks over the bridge towards his mother's house. The road seems busier than usual with people gathered.

Edward draws closer to the scene of the murder, he sees that it has been roped off.

He catches the townspeople whispering.

TOWNSPEOPLE

Was a young girl. Murdered.

EXT./INT. GRANDMOTHER PIKE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Edward is cold when he reaches the house where he grew up.

He opens the storm door, a welcome blast of heat rushes out and he quickly slams the door behind him to prevent the warmth from escaping. GRANDMOTHER (82) is surprised to see him.

GRANDMOTHER

Glory be to Jesus it's cold, is Joseph home?

EDWARD

Yes, Mom. Where's my girl? Where's Elfreda?

His mother looks up bewildered.

GRANDMOTHER

She left around four to go to Parsons'
store for the matches you asked for.
Isn't she home?

EDWARD

Home... no.

GRANDMOTHER

She must be with Thomas. She was
going to meet him at the store and
then head home.

Edward doesn't respond and heads for the door.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Men, women, and children look oddly at Edward as he barrels
up through Mosquito Cove in panic.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Crowds gather around the police station, wildly shake their
fists.

Edward frantically pulls people back as he forces his way to
the door.

He pulls on the latch to get in. The door is locked. He bangs
harder and yells into the air.

EDWARD

Let me in. Let me in, now.

EXT. POLICE STATION - LATER

Edward begins to beat on the door again.

EDWARD

I want to find my little girl! Let
me in!

Somebody grabs him from inside the door and pulls him in. You
can see the morning light come up over the crowd.

EXT./INT. POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

CHIEF MITCHEL (28) pulls Edward in from the crowd crushing
him.

Edward hears his son, JOSEPH (18), come up behind him.

JOSEPH

Dad.

Edward pulls on his son, so that they are both dragged in by Chief Mitchell.

EXT./INT. POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

Chief Mitchell leans back out through the door.

CHIEF MITCHELL
Everyone go home! We have nothing to report. Wait until tomorrow's coroner's inquest.

Chief Mitchell pulls Edward and Joseph inside further.

He tries to get the two of them to settle down. Joseph a strapping young man, can't sit still.

EDWARD
I think it's Elfreda. She didn't come home last night.

CHIEF MITCHELL
Edward. Let's not panic.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Chief Mitchell insists Edward and Joseph take a seat.

CHIEF MITCHELL
Sit down Edward. Now.

He passes them a cup of tea.

EDWARD
I need to see if it's her. I'm afraid it's my daughter.

He is shocked.

CHIEF MITCHELL
Ed, I know your daughter. I've seen a body and I can't say who it is.

EDWARD
Jesus Christ, man. I have to know. Where is the body?

Edward jumps up, and throws his cup across the room. It smashes to pieces against the wall.

CHIEF MITCHELL
I don't want you to go, Edward.

JOSEPH
I'll do it. I'll identify her -
Elfreda's my sister.

CHIEF MITCHELL
Let's get to the hospital.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

Edward rubs his forehead. Chief Mitchell paces. Edward leans his head against the wall.

INT. MORGUE DOORWAY - DAY

Joseph opens the double doors to the ward and comes out of the morgue, lead by a policeman, his face is expressionless like that of an undertaker. He is shaking.

JOSEPH
It's her Pa, it's her!

Edward, traumatized, suddenly tries to barrel into the morgue.

It takes Joseph and two policemen to restrain his father as he tries to enter the morgue.

Edward finally surrenders to the resistance and screams. He drops to his knees in pain and sobs aloud.

EDWARD
Elfreda, Elfreda... Who did this?

Chief Mitchell and Joseph lift Edward to his feet.

CHIEF MITCHELL
Keep yourself together. For your
wife.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Joseph and Chief Mitchell ride in the police buggy with Edward.

As the somber entourage proceeds through town, candles are lit in every window.

INT. PIKE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Marie Pike looks on in shock as Edward hauls himself in over the doorstep followed by REVEREND PRETTY (72).

MARIE
Ed? Where is she?

EDWARD

She's gone. Our Elfreda is gone.
Murdered.

Edward trembles in tears.

Marie begins to wildly hit Edward on his chest.

He finally grips her wrists and looks into her eyes.

Marie takes two steps towards the kitchen daybed before she faints.

Joseph manages to catch her before she hits the floor and gently lays her on the bed.

REVEREND PRETTY

Bow your heads in prayer. Dear Father
in Christ, help this family have
strength to ride out this storm of
sorrow and grief ...

Reverend Pretty looks up as he finishes the prayer and Marie is delirious.

She begins to flail her arms and curse at the top of her voice.

MARIE

Goddamn the bastard who did this! My
baby. Goddamn him to the fires of
hell. Goddamn him forever.

INT. COURT ROOM - DAY

Courtroom doors burst open.

JUDGE PETERS(48) enters and all hands in the courtroom become silent.

JUDGE PETERS

All rise. I am presiding over the
coroner's inquest on the death of
Elfreda Pike of Mosquito Cove. Let
us commence.

THOMAS GUY (18) and CAPTAIN HART (58) sit on the wooden bench.

Edward and Joseph are in the courtroom, looking haggard, no sleep.

Chief Mitchell marches towards the bench, and salutes Judge Peters.

CHIEF MITCHELL

Elfreda was last seen by Mrs. Parsons at her shop with Thomas Guy. She overheard Elfreda telling Thomas that she no longer wanted to be with him.

JUDGE PETERS

Order in the court!

CHIEF MITCHELL

Captain Hart said that Thomas had barred himself in the stable the night he heard of Elfreda's murder. He was out of his mind.

JUDGE PETERS

Order! Quiet in this room! Quiet in this room!

Chief Mitchell reads Const. James Furey's statement.

CHIEF MITCHELL

Const. James Furey, the first on the scene of the crime, found no evidence. Only her coin purse could be salvaged from the poor girls remains.

The courtroom erupts once more with the sound of muffled conversations.

JUDGE PETERS

Calm down. This is your last warning.

Chief Mitchell loosens his shirt collar, beads of sweat run down his face. He reaches into his vest and grabs his handkerchief.

CHIEF MITCHELL

Mrs. Parsons said that Thomas Guy had been rejected by Elfreda. She said another man had shown interest in her. She didn't have a name.

Crowd hurl comments. They hold Thomas back from leaving.

Sheriff opens the front doors and allow Thomas and Captain Hart to exit.

There's an eerie silence.

JUDGE PETERS

Elfreda Pike has been murdered on January 5th, 1870.

(MORE)

JUDGE PETERS (CONT'D)

Her Majesty's Court is now suspending this coroner's inquest until further notice, at which time I will probe into this young woman's untimely death. At this time nobody has been charged, that includes Thomas Guy.

EXT. MANSION - EVENING

CONST.JAMES FUREY (36), distracted, rushes up the path as he brushes off his clothes.

INT. MANSION - TEA ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Const.James Furey uniform is casual, wrinkled.

SALLY (21), is appropriately dressed for her first date, lady gloves and a dress.

The tea room is romantic, candles lit above a fireplace.

SALLY

I don't think I would be able to do what you do. You had to remove Elfreda's body from the woods.

CONST.JAMES FUREY

It's hard to talk to family and friends, such as you.

MARY ANN SHEA (14) brings in a tray of tea and sweats. She curtseys, and Sally and Const.James Furey nod.

Const.James Furey takes particular note to follow Mary Ann with his eyes, as she leaves the room.

SALLY

You were saying, about family.

CONST.JAMES FUREY

It's hard to talk to family, of course.

SALLY

After the horror that was done to her. It would never leave my mind.

CONST.JAMES FUREY

It's different when you know the victim.

SALLY

You never met Elfreda?

CONST.JAMES FUREY

No. I can't imagine what you're going through.

Sally reaches out and holds his hand.

Const.James Furey knows it's too soon, but he wants to kiss her, but he pulls away.

He hears the town bell.

SALLY

That's an alert.

CONST.JAMES FUREY

(shows less surprise)

I have to go. That alarm is for police, too.

He rushes to the door.

EXT. THOMAS' FAMILY HOME - NIGHT

Const.James Furey climbs the hill to the old barn. He runs into Chief Mitchell coming down. There are flames from the wooden building and barrels rolling on the outside over the hill.

CONST.JAMES FUREY

Did they get out alright, Sir?

CHIEF MITCHELL

Well, they got out.

CONST.JAMES FUREY

What happened?

CHIEF MITCHELL

Smoke from the back house. They went to investigate, but were beaten back by flames.

CONST.JAMES FUREY

Was there kerosene or a lantern?

CHIEF MITCHELL

There was a pile of splits out in the back house and kerosene. It was dry, for sure.

CONST.JAMES FUREY

Are you saying someone intentionally burned them out?

CHIEF MITCHELL

It's suspicious. I saw some men rush over the hillside. There's no doubt Thomas has to pay. But it's awful to do this to his parents.

CONST.JAMES FUREY

We'll head over the hillside.

CHIEF MITCHELL

I'm sure he's long gone. But if you can catch Thomas, he's our killer. I'm sure of it.

As he walks away.

CONST.JAMES FUREY

Hard to get used to a small town. Everyone's a hero.

INT. PIKE HOME - MONTH'S LATER

Edward opens the door to Const.James Furey. Edward looks surprised, concerned, to see him.

CONST.JAMES FUREY

Good day, Mr. Pike. I want to drop something off to you both.

EDWARD

We have a visitor.

The kitchen is warm and cozy. An indoor clothesline stretches across the kitchen with clothes hanging up above the wood stove.

MARIE

Good day. Please sit.

Edward looks at Const.James Furey, stone cold.

EDWARD

You mentioned you've something you want to give us.

He passes Edward an envelope.

CONST.JAMES FUREY

We want the family to have record of the final investigation.

Edward opens the paper work slowly.

CLOSE UP - COURT DOCUMENTS: *Elfreda Pike murder investigation closed. Thomas Guy convicted. At large, on the loose in Boston.*

EDWARD

This is all you have to show for
your work. You call yourself a
Constable.

Edward makes a lunge for Const. James Furey. Marie pulls him
back.

MARIE

What does Chief Mitchell say of this?

CONST. JAMES FUREY

He signed off. Our only suspect was
Thomas. He is convicted. But at large
in Boston. As you know.

EDWARD

I know nothing. Only what you've
told me. It's not enough.

Edward swings his arm and throws the documents back at
Const. James Furey.

EDWARD (CONT'D)

Joseph doesn't think Thomas murdered
Elfreda.

Const. James Furey is aggressive.

CONST. JAMES FUREY

Joseph's in touch with Thomas, then.
Hiding him, is he? He's working in
Boston?

EDWARD

He is. He has nothing to do with
Thomas. He may not be the only
suspect, that's all.

CONST. JAMES FUREY

Another suspect?

EDWARD

They said in court, there was another
man lurking. An admirer. And Joseph
agrees.

CONST. JAMES FUREY

That's odd, an admirer?

EDWARD

What the court tells us. That's all
we know.

CONST.JAMES FUREY
Evidence pointed to Thomas, but it's
hard to know.

MARIE
And now we'll never know.

CONST.JAMES FUREY
It's a closed case. I'm sorry, Mrs.
Pike.

EDWARD
You'll never find the truth?

CONST.JAMES FUREY
Some cases run cold. With the most
skilled of murderers. It's true.

Const.James Furey motions to the doorway, slows down as he
sees a young woman's, Elfreda's, coat in the porch.

He passes his hand along the sleeve, before the Pike's come
to the door to say good-bye.

Startled as they draw near, he takes his hat off and tips it
in respect.

EXT. PIKE HOME - DAY

Const.James Furey walks back up over the hill.

EXT. FUREY RESIDENCE, ST. JOHN'S, 1880 - DAY

TITLE: TEN YEARS AFTER ELFREDA'S MURDER, 1880.

A colonial style house in St. John's, with a large garden,
accustomed to well to do families, with a sign out front.

SIGN: SERGEANT JAMES FUREY Family Home.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Const.James Furey (46) and Sally (31) stand by the piano, a
wedding photo behind them, they are happy.

There is a plaque on the wall, honouring Sergeant James Furey.

Large window with sheer curtains, two young boys, their sons,
run in the front garden.

The house is pristine, not a speck of dust to be found.

SALLY
Are you ready for church dear? The
children are dressed and outside.

CONST.JAMES FUREY

I don't think I'll be able to attend this morning. My stomach is feeling ill.

SALLY

Not from something I've cooked, I hope?

CONST.JAMES FUREY

Certainly not. Life with you is fit for a king.

He reaches into his pocket and pulls out some money.

SALLY

Well, if this is your donation, the Reverend may not want you back in church again.

CONST.JAMES FUREY

Charity is for more than church walls, and there are many who struggle in this town.

SALLY

You're always thinking of others. I'll send your regrets to the Reverend.

She leans in and kisses him on the cheek.

CONST.JAMES FUREY

I'll curl up with a book in the study.

EXT./INT. HOUSE - LATER

Sally walks out to join the children.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Const.James Furey goes to the front window and watches them leave the yard, he peers through the blinds.

He looks at the walls in his home.

CLOSE UP: Medals on the wall to Sergeant James Furey.

INT. STUDY - LATER

BEGIN MONTAGE:

-- Const.James Furey runs his hand over his collections of medals on the wall, as if in a museum.

-- CLOSE UP: Toy military statuettes, animals teeth, a knife collection on the wall shimmers in the light.

-- He opens a closet with many of his uniforms, intact. Uniforms range from dress wear to police uniforms.

-- He runs his hand over the clothes until he holds a uniform that is older and covered in a garment bag.

-- In the side pocket he pulls out a girl's tam, blood on it. He takes the girl's tam in his hand and lies on the day bed to fall asleep.

END MONTAGE.

DREAM SEQUENCE:

INT. THOMAS FAMILY HOME - NIGHT

Const. James Furey stumbles in the shed and covers rags with gasoline and ignites the flame.

He leaves quickly through the back as the fire inflames the shed and spreads to the house.

INT. WOODS - NIGHT

Elfreda's feet are elevated, and her head left sunken below in the bushes. Elfreda is on her back, her coal black hair now tangled with blood covers her face.

NARRATOR

He drags the body into the road and there he cut the throat across from ear to ear. Right back to the spine and as if intent on severing the head. The spine at the right end of the wound is marked by five distinct cuts of a sharp instrument.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

TITLE: ST. JOHN'S, 1920

CHIEF MITCHELL(78), looks at the BOSTON GLOBE paper.

NEWSPAPER: *Thomas Guy seeks justice for unsolved Newfoundland murder case, now over 50 years old.*

CHIEF MITCHELL

(to himself)

Thomas is alive?

Chief Mitchell walks up to, CLARE SHEA (40), who sits behind the desk.

CLARE
All caught up on your weekly newspaper, Chief Mitchell?

CHIEF MITCHELL
It's just Peter, now Mary, I've been retired for some time.

CLARE
As they say, once a cop always a cop.

CHIEF MITCHELL
Some truth to that, I suppose. Is Const. James Furey still at the same house in town? Or should I say Sergeant?

CLARE
Oh yes, he still has us send his mail to his house from here. He is sick. I believe close to his death.

EXT. FUREY RESIDENCE - DAY

Chief Mitchell walks up and knocks several times. He carries the newspaper under his arm.

INT. FUREY RESIDENCE - LATER

SALLY (71), answers the door, and is startled to see Chief Mitchell for the first time since Harbour Grace.

Chief Mitchell walks in, eying the room, like an investigator.

CHIEF MITCHELL
I heard of James' condition, and I thought to look in on him.

SALLY
He isn't well. He's weaker as the days go by.

CHIEF MITCHELL
I won't stay long.

SALLY
Want me to take your coat?

CHIEF MITCHELL
No, I'll keep it. Thank you.

She leads him down the hall.

SALLY
He's awake.

Opens a door to peek in, speaks to Const. James Furey.

SALLY (CONT'D)
Chief Mitchell here to see you.

CONST. JAMES FUREY (86) is old and frail, looks to Chief Mitchell with suspicion.

Months of being bedridden has taken its toll on his appearance. He reaches for his glasses on the bedside table.

SALLY (CONT'D)
I'll excuse myself.

Sally exits.

CONST. JAMES FUREY
I thought you may visit.

CHIEF MITCHELL
Have you read the paper? It seems Thomas is alive.

CONST. JAMES FUREY
I'll save you the trouble.

CHIEF MITCHELL
You knew Thomas was alive?

CONST. JAMES FUREY
Open the top drawer and you'll find an addressed letter. I'll be dead before you convict anyone.

Chief Mitchell opens the letter in care of the Harbour Grace postmaster.

INSERT LETTER: *I, Sergeant Const. James Furey, confess on my deathbed. I murdered 16-year-old Elfreda Pike. A perfect crime. My only crime. I killed her. I killed Elfreda. I am notorious in death. As too, is Elfreda. You never suspect. I cannot explain the horror of my ways, evil was within me.*

CONST. JAMES FUREY (CONT'D)
If you wait until tomorrow, the people will have their killer.

CHIEF MITCHELL
(shaking the letter)
Why?

CONST. JAMES FUREY

I knew best.

CHIEF MITCHELL

You?

CONST. JAMES FUREY

She tempted me. You know.

CHIEF MITCHELL

No, I don't know. You're meant to protect. You were under my watch.

CONST. JAMES FUREY

She rejected me. Cast me aside. People would think I was nobody. A fool. I had to show them. I sacrificed her from evil.

CHIEF MITCHELL

From your evil?!
(shaking in pain)
I should've known.

CONST. JAMES FUREY

There was no way to know. I made sure of it. I'm notorious. Don't you see. It's a perfect crime. They'll remember me.

CHIEF MITCHELL

I failed. You should have been executed. You killed Elfreda.

CONST. JAMES FUREY

You were a good cop. And I am a good husband. But goodness is not in all of us, all of the time.

Chief Mitchell goes over to the drawer as if to return the envelope and put it back inside, but he takes the letter and slips it into his coat pocket.

He starts to leave and looks back toward Const. James Furey with a look of hatred.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Chief Mitchell walks in and hands Clare the letter.

Clare seems to be covering up something behind her desk. Stacks of mail are laid on the desk and boxes.

CHIEF MITCHELL
Sergeant Furey gave me this letter.
Can you post it to Judge Peters
successor, please.

CLARE
In Harbour Grace?

CHIEF MITCHELL
Most certainly. They are anxious to
get closure.

Chief Mitchell starts to head out, and he hears the sound of
a baby. He turns back, and leans slightly to peek over the
counter.

CHIEF MITCHELL (CONT'D)
You're secret's safe with me.

Clare, embarrassed.

CLARE
Thank you, Chief. Please, no one can
know.

CHIEF MITCHELL
At least that ones young enough to
learn the truth. What's her name?

CLARE
Francis. Francis Shea.

CHIEF MITCHELL
Beautiful name it is.

Chief Mitchell tips his hat and walks toward the door.

Clare gets ready to post the letter. She opens the unsealed
letter.

Reads it. Horrified. Shock comes over her.

She prepares the letter to be delivered. Then puts it to the
side.

Looks closely at it again, in disbelief.

Clare looks at her baby in the carriage.

INT. CHURCH ALTER - DAY, 1990

TITLE: HARBOUR GRACE, NEWFOUNDLAND

KATE HANNAFORD (14) and her Grandmother, FRANCIS SHEA (70)
are at the front of the church.

They grasp onto two coffins, side by side, covered in flowers.

Francis tries to pull Kate away from the coffin as she clings to it for dear life.

On top of the caskets are embossed brass plates Michael Hannaford on one casket and Beatrice Hannaford on the other.

They walk to the side doors to leave.

INT. DOORWAY - DAY

Kate and Francis walk to the entranceway of the church and stand solemn to greet the parishioners as they leave the church.

Francis hangs onto Kate's hands with all her might. She wears cloth gloves for church, and her rings dig into Kate's hand.

Church goer, MARIE (64), stops to give her condolences.

MARIE

Oh Francis, I have no words. Thine
is the power and glory of the Lord,
God rest their souls.

FRANCIS

I prayed and prayed for Bea to move
home from Boston, but not like this.
In a wooden box.

MARIE

Tragic. Those highways, see. They
didn't have a chance.

FRANCIS

Not with the likes of him driving.

MARIE

(nods down to Kate)
Make no wonder she got out alive.

FRANCIS

This ones my keeper. She'll get
through. I'll see to that.

MARIE

Yes, you'll be just fine. I will
drop bread and cookies off, would
you like that?

Kate tries to break a half hearted smile.

EXT. ROAD- DAY

Kate and Francis walk along the dirt road in Harbour Grace with the graveyard in the background.

They walk over the hill past the small harbour and wooden houses. Kate carries her coin purse on a strap.

FRANCIS

I bet you don't have these down there.

KATE

Have what?

FRANCIS

Dirt roads. That's what.

KATE

Who wants one?

FRANCIS

It's just something a little different that's all. You were born here, you know.

KATE

I was?

FRANCIS

Yes, you were. Your mother swooped you away when you were only 3 months. Your father was a professor.

KATE

He is ... was smart.

FRANCIS

Yes, he was that. Your mother was pretty bright to. I saw to that. She did her lessons.

Kate swings her coin purse, agitated.

KATE

She always helped me. Read to me, when I was young.

FRANCIS

You'll get used to it here, before you know it. Might have to get some street sounds for you, awfully quiet here I'm sure.

Kate drops her purse by the side of the dirt road near the trees, so unnerved, she doesn't notice.

Francis slows down and looks back.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)
You dropped your purse, my dear.

Kate walks back to the side of the road, while Francis waits.

She sees a rock with a plaque on it, about 8 feet in from the edge of the dirt road

KATE
What's that?

FRANCIS
What's what, my dear?

Francis starts to walk back toward Kate to see what she is looking at in the grass.

She gets closer.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)
That's a burial.

KATE
Like Mom and Dad's?

FRANCIS
Yes, pretty much.

Kate walks in closer to see the rock.

KATE
(stumbles to say it)
Says Elfreda ...

FRANCIS
... Elfreda Pike, She was 16. That she was. God rest her soul.

KATE
How did she die?

FRANCIS
She was murdered.

KATE
Murdered!

FRANCIS
Yes.

KATE
You said it was safe here. You said it was so quiet, it was deafening.

FRANCIS

It is my love. We've never heard the likes of that since or before.

KATE

How was she murdered?

Francis grabs her by the hand, strong.

FRANCIS

Never you mind that now. Lets get home for lunch. They'll drop bread and cookies. You heard them.

Kate starts to cry.

KATE

I'll never see my Mom and Dad again.

Francis grabs her by the hand,

FRANCIS

I know my love. I know.

INT. FRANCIS'S KITCHEN - WEEK'S LATER

Kate sits at the kitchen table, studies.

Francis putters around, cooks and bakes bread.

KATE

It says here that Elfreda was on her way to her Grandmother's house.

FRANCIS

Are you sure you need to do a project on this murder, Kate?

KATE

There's a full article written in the 1870 Express newspaper. I found it at the museum.

FRANCIS

I imagine there is one or two things in that museum that shouldn't be dug up.

KATE

They say she was a good girl and a church goer. Why would they say that?

FRANCIS

They always say things like that about young women. It's as if we were to blame for it all.

KATE

But she was murdered. How can any of it be her fault.

FRANCIS

If there is a way for a man to hold a woman to blame, they will.

Francis is deep in thought.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

I guess we should have a chat.

KATE

About Elfreda?

FRANCIS

No, that we won't.

KATE

What?

FRANCIS

Don't say 'what', it's not becoming.

Kate rolls her eyes. Francis sits down and lunges into a lecture.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

You're older now. And there's a few things you'll need to know.

(hesitates)

You may want to be with a man.

KATE

You mean sex. Myself and Josie talk about that all the time.

Francis is in shock.

FRANCIS

All the time.

KATE

We've read Judy Blume like a 1,000 times. You know the book *Forever*.

FRANCIS

Well, that's a good word for it.

(MORE)

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

Cause there are some things that are for forever, and there are some things that are not.

KATE

Like what?

FRANCIS

Well, if you are with a man you need to take care and go to the nurse. Before you know you're with him. Cause' if not, a baby can be forever and a man is not always there forever, that's for sure. But you should not be with a young man to start with. I'm just saying, if it happened.

KATE

Oh, you mean birth control. Yeah, I read about that. I'm not ready just yet.

Francis takes a deep sigh of relief, wipes her brow with her apron.

FRANCIS

There's more.

KATE

Like what? Not what. But you know, what do you mean?

FRANCIS

Men aren't always what they seem. They can be nice. But if they make you afraid. Well, don't put up with it. You're not meant to ever, ever, be hurt by a man.

KATE

Is that what Grandpa did? Is that why he's gone?

FRANCIS

Never you mind that, now. He's gone. I'm just saying stand up for yourself. Especially where the men are concerned.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Kate is in a group with her other classmates, JACOB (15) and TED (15).

Elfreda in big letters is on the Bristol board, and index cards on her desk.

The desks are arranged in groups of four facing each other.

JACOB

Are you still doing that project on the dead girl?

KATE

She's not just dead. She was murdered.

TED

My grandma said that woods is haunted. And she should have known better.

KATE

It's not haunted. There was an investigation. It's a real crime.

TED

How do you know? You're not even from here.

(uses an accent)

You're from *Boston*.

KATE

I am... I'm from here. My family is from here. My mom, my dad.

JACOB

But they're dead. They're not here.

KATE

My grandmother is here.

Kate wells up with tears but covers it up, not to let on to the guys she is bothered.

KATE (CONT'D)

You're just chicken to go to the woods that's why you said your grandmother said it was haunted.

TED

It is haunted.

JACOB

Are you sure?

Ted winks to Jacob without Kate seeing him.

KATE

Prove it.

TED

Meet us there after school. You'll see.

KATE

Where?

JACOB

By the gravestone. There's another stone in further on the path where the murder happened.

KATE

Really? It did say in this newspaper it was in from the road by a tree.

TED

Oh yeah, and we know where that tree is and we can show you.

JACOB

Yeah, we can show you.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Kate walks confident toward the gravestone.

She looks up and down the dirt road and tries to see if she can see the boys come by.

They shout out.

JACOB

We're in here.

TED

We're far in. A ways longer.

KATE

I hear you.

Kate pushes tree branches and shrubs out of her way.

KATE (CONT'D)

See I know my way around these woods.

Kate suddenly falls through a bunch of loose bows that cover a hole.

Ted and Jacob go into fits of laughter. And start to run back out of the woods.

Ted bolts ahead back to the road and Jacob starts to slow down as he hears Kate cry out.

KATE (CONT'D)
 Hey, I'm stuck. Assholes.

Jacob stops and goes back to get Kate.

Ted from up ahead looks back.

TED
 You're not helping that crazy one.

JACOB
 Shut up!

TED
 Ahh, someone's got a crush.

JACOB
 Shut up.

TED
 You know you get two crazies, Kate
 and Elfreda. She's obsessed.

Ted walks to the road. Jacob runs back to get Kate.

KATE
 I'm slipping.

Jacob reaches over to pull Kate's hand and both arms, harder
 and harder, to shimmy her out of the pit.

JACOB
 You think it's deeper than it really
 is. But it was a sucky thing to do.

KATE
 Sucky. Sucky. I could have broken
 both my legs.

JACOB
 I came back didn't I?

KATE
 Oh, you're kind, now? Are you crazy?

JACOB
 Nah. Ted said you were crazy.

Kate and Jacob sit on the path with their legs folded, covered
 in leaves and twigs.

KATE
 You don't even really know me.

JACOB
He's right. You're obsessed with
this murder thing. Elfreda.

KATE
You don't want to know about a murder
that happened down the road from
where you live?

JACOB
It's like over 100 years ago.

KATE
But no one knows who did it.

JACOB
But he's dead now.

KATE
How do you know it's a man who did
it?

JACOB
Usually is. On the news anyway.

KATE
Thanks for coming back.

Kate starts to stand up and Jacob helps her.

JACOB
Are you okay? I know it was stupid.
I should've stopped it.

Jacob starts to pull twigs out of Kate's hair. He gently pulls
Kate close, just to hug her.

KATE
I would've hugged you. You didn't
need to push me in a ditch, you know.

He smiles and takes her by the hand.

JACOB
We were lucky. You could've been
hurt.

KATE
You were lucky. You don't know what
my grandmother, Francis, would do to
you.

JACOB
Yes I do. Why do you think I came
back.

INT. FRANCIS'S KITCHEN - DAY

Kate races in through the door.

Francis looks up alarmed to see her.

She is covered in twigs and branches. Her school clothes tattered and torn.

FRANCES

What's this? Twigs in your hair from the library?

KATE

I went with some classmates to see more about Elfreda's murder site.

FRANCES

Murder site? I warned you, Kate.

KATE

I went with friends. I met one good guy and then one not so good guy.

Francis looks to Kate as if to give her a warning.

FRANCIS

You're not to look for a good young man, Kate. You want a great young man. And I will see to that.

KATE

I warned him about you.

FRANCIS

Good. Cause he won't get in over this doorstep until I say.

Kate laughs. Francis embraces the moment.

INT. ATTIC - YEARS LATER

Kate crawls into the attic, under a peaked roof.

There are trunks, old and dusty, covered with blankets. Brown boxes with string tied around them.

Kate sees some letters coming out of one of the boxes. She picks it up and underneath there is a tin can.

LABEL: Mary Ann Shea (Grandmother) security box.

Kate looks behind her to the crawl space opening. She makes sure Francis is not coming.

KATE

She can't get up here. I hope.

Kate turns the latch on the security box.

There's a passport and birth certificate. Secretarial diploma.

Kate reads the birth certificate: *MARY ANN SHEA*.

KATE (CONT'D)

Odd. That's Francis last name. Not a husband's name.

Underneath she finds a photo of two school girls marked Mary Ann and Elfreda. Elfreda carries the coin purse.

Kate gasps.

KATE (CONT'D)

She did know Elfreda.

Kate hears Francis below, downstairs, singing out.

FRANCIS

Kate, I'm going to town. Coming?

Kate hurries to put back the birth certificate.

She looks down from the attic, climbs through the hatch door, down the ladder and lands inside the closet.

Kate waits until Francis walks past.

She closes the closet door, just in time not to get caught.

Kate sings out to Francis in the kitchen.

KATE

Sure, I'll come. Let me get my things.

EXT. KITCHEN WINDOW - LATER

Kate sits with Francis, looking out the kitchen window onto a huge field that meets the oceans edge.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

Kate looks nervous.

KATE

What about your Mom and Dad. You never talk about them.

Francis puts on the kettle. Gets cups and saucers, makes herself occupied.

FRANCIS
Never met my father.

KATE
Ever?

FRANCIS
Not once. But there was enough of my
mom for both of them. She was a strong
woman.

KATE
What was her name?

FRANCIS
Clare Shea and her mother was Mary
Ann Shea. We are a line of three
women, without husbands.

Kate doesn't dare mention the photo.

KATE
You have her name?

FRANCIS
That I do - Shea. She raised me on
her own. Worked everyday. Took me to
work when I was a baby, she says. No
husband's name for her. Or *me*. Your
mother was the first to take a
husband's name my dear - Hannaford,
your name.

KATE
What did she do?

FRANCIS
Secretarial. At the police station.

KATE
Interesting. I bet she saw lots of
stuff.

FRANCIS
She was smart as a whip. Just like
your mother. Must have skipped over
me.

KATE
You're a pretty bright light.

Francis laughs. Kate acting older than her age.

FRANCIS

You're the same age as my Grandmother when she had my mother Clare.

KATE

She was a teenager.

FRANCIS

That she was. We survived illness, poverty, malnutrition.

KATE

That sounds horrible.

FRANCIS

We were so poor, we could only afford one side of the bread.

Kate laughs.

KATE

Hard to butter that. Yet, here you are.

FRANCIS

Here I am. And here you are. Like it never happened.

KATE

Do you think your mom knew about the murder, from her mom. She would have only been two years younger than Elfreda.

FRANCIS

You tricked me. I thought I had you onto something new.

KATE

I love hearing about your Grandmother. I just noticed her birth certificate was two years younger than Elfreda's.

Kate barely has the words out of her mouth and gasps.

FRANCIS

How do you know that? You weren't up in that attic, I hope. That's not for you. Who knows what stories are in those trunks.

KATE

I'm sorry. I won't ...

FRANCIS

That you won't.

Francis and Kate sit down to tea.

INT. KATE'S BEDROOM - NEXT DAY

Kate pokes her head out of her bedroom to see if she can catch Francis lurking in the hallway.

INT. HALLWAY - LATER

Kate carefully walks down the hallway.

She opens the closet door with ease, not making a sound to be caught.

Once inside she looks up to the hatch in the ceiling, the passageway to the attic, and can see a giant padlock on the trap door.

KATE

Damn.

INT. KATE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kate, drowsy, lies in bed looks at the attic above her. She starts to doze off to sleep and dreams of Elfreda.

DREAM: *Elfreda stands erect walking through the trees, translucent, and powerful.*

NARRATOR: *Excerpt from 1870 Express newspaper.*

NARRATOR

What mind can grasp the intensity of agony which the poor victim must have undergone, the struggle for life, the very tormented, the fearful death wound, the pool of blood, the melancholy tragedy, a human being mangled and butchered by a human being, ten thousand times worse than the beast that perishes!

Elfreda continues to walk through the trees, erect, as if she will levitate into the sky.

Kate wakes up, alarmed.

She realizes it's a dream, and grabs the blankets tight around her to console herself.

INT. MUSEUM - DAY

Kate walks up to a display case with a little coin purse in it, encased with a glass cover.

She is familiar with the purse and looks nervously to see if MRS. THORNE (58), the Museum director, is behind her.

Kate slyly removes the glass lid, she knows she can hold the coin purse if she doesn't get caught.

She picks it up and fondles it in her hand as if to muster up the presence of Elfreda.

She closes her eyes, deep in prayer.

By the purse there is a card to identify it and Kate reads it in a whisper to herself.

KATE

Last known artifact to be found of
Elfreda Pike, in the woods near her
body that was brutally murdered on
January 6th, 1870. No one has yet
been convicted for this heinous crime.

Kate can hear Mrs. Thorne walk up behind her. She panics and barely gets the glass cover back on the podium.

She fumbles and shakes with it in her hands, but manages to put it over the coin purse just in time to reveal a very guilty look on her face, as Mrs. Thorne comes in the room.

MRS. THORNE

You can't have much more to look at
on that coin purse, you come see it
almost every day.

KATE

I know. I'm sorry. But it's my project
at school now.

Kate beams as if she has saved herself from an interrogation with Mrs. Thorne.

MRS. THORNE

It's not natural for a young girl to
spend so much time thinking about a
murder.

KATE

You don't want to know who killed
her?

MRS. THORNE
 You'll never find that out now.
 You're not likely to find out who
 killed young women today, let alone
 over a 100 years ago.

Kate looks extremely uncomfortable.

KATE
 We have to try.

MRS. THORNE
 What's your Grandmother think of you
 and all of this talk of death, after
 what you've been through.

KATE
 It's my studies.

MRS. THORNE
 You should be off chasing the boys
 and having fun.

KATE
 I have friends.

MRS. THORNE
 You hold that coin purse like a genie
 in a bottle, and it's not going to
 give you any answers.

Kate gets sheepish.

KATE
 I'll find the answer someday, you'll
 see.

Kate heads out the door.

EXT. MUSEUM - LATER

Kate heads down the grass path and looks back towards
 Mrs. Thorne as she stands in the doorway.

EXT. MUSEUM - LATER

Mrs. Thorne leans on the side of the door frame, and
 contemplates if she should encourage Kate, as she looks at
 her in the field.

MRS. THORNE
 They say there was a letter.

Kate stops in her tracks and turns back.

MRS. THORNE (CONT'D)
There could be a letter.

KATE
What kind of letter?

MRS. THORNE
A confession.

KATE
A confession. Well that's something.
That's a lead.

MRS. THORNE
I've never seen nor heard tell of it
in this museum.

KATE
But it could be here.

Mrs. Thorne shuts the Museum door abruptly, afraid she let on too much.

Kate starts to hurry off and leave the museum garden.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Kate comes in, books in hand, looking at the clock to make sure she's not late.

KATE
I went to the museum.

FRANCIS
Again? Mrs. Thorne is going to put
you on display, if you don't stop
bothering her.

KATE
She said there was a letter. About
Elfreda. A confession.

FRANCIS
She said there was a rumour of a
letter, I bet.

KATE
Does it exist?

Francis pours a cup of tea slowly.

FRANCIS
Tea?

KATE

Sure.

FRANCIS

There was a rumour of a letter. Your mother tried to find it.

KATE

She did?

FRANCIS

And she walked past that grave more times than I can count, too.

KATE

My Mom.

FRANCIS

She also combed the files in Boston while she was studying to teach.

KATE

Why Boston?

FRANCIS

Plenty of Newfoundlanders went to Boston. Telegrams went back and forth all the time.

KATE

Did they think he escaped there.

FRANCIS

There was talk of it.

KATE

I'm going to Journalism school. I'm going away that's for sure.

Francis looks distraught.

FRANCIS

You are, are you? We'll see about that.

KATE

I can't stay here. What would I do?

FRANCIS

There's work at the fish plant.

Kate gives her Grandmother a hug, to console her.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

I can't lose you too.

KATE

You won't, I promise, you wont.

TEN YEARS LATER:

EXT. BOSTON CITY - DAY

Boston city center. Activists march for women's rights and pour down the street en masse they wear pink pussy hats with placards "Women's Rights are Human Rights".

INT. UBER CAR - DAY

KATE (28) rests her head on the back of the taxi seat. She is fast asleep, her hair blows from the open window and she shakes herself awake, startled and frightened from a bad dream.

There's opera music on the radio. Uber driver, BEN (52) looks burly and man-kept, a bachelor.

Ben pauses up ahead in front of the women activists who block off the road. A sea of knitted pink 'power pussy hats' come toward the car.

Ben, in a gruff voice, pauses to let the protestors go.

KATE

Some of these women march forever.

Ben waves them on.

BEN

Ladies first.

KATE

We all may be in the grave before this one's over.

BEN

Listen lady, I'm one of the good ones. I hold doors open for the women.

KATE

How chivalrous.

BEN

Some of you need to be treated with kid gloves.

KATE

I've had more doors slammed in my face...

BEN
You can handle yourself. City girl
like you ...

KATE
I was born in a small place.

BEN
Off the Atlantic?

KATE
Raised by my grandmother. As she
would say, "Don't rely on a man.
Open your own doors."

BEN
I don't argue with Granny.

The march goes by very close to the car.

BEN (CONT'D)
Making decisions for women - that'll
land 'em in hot water.

KATE
It's her body. Should the state own
her body?

BEN
Politicians not so bright, am I right?
Am I right?

EXT. BOSTON HERALD - DAY

Ben pulls up outside a tall concrete building.

KATE
Just pull up ahead, please.

BEN
Doing an interview?

KATE
No I'm a journalist. Would you like
to do an interview?

Laughs.

BEN
You need a hand?

KATE
No. I'm good, thanks.

BEN

You're welcome, Ma'am.

KATE

Ma'am. Okay, now you're just being an asshole.

BEN

Nah, I'm just being a man.

Kate gives a mischievous evil look back.

INT. TV STATION - DAY

Kate is on a TV TALK SHOW with HOST, ANGELA (38). The set is two armchairs, coffee-style talk show.

Kate has copies of an original article printed from the Express newspaper.

NEWSPAPER: *Elfreda's murder, 1870, horror in Harbour Grace.*

ANGELA

Why are you so taken with this woman Elfreda?

KATE

I was born in Newfoundland. Newfoundland in 1870 is a very unlikely place to have a brutal slaughtering of a 16-year-old girl. Or even today for that matter.

Angela reads from the original EXPRESS NEWSPAPER article of 1870.

ANGELA

The unfortunate victim: Elfreda Pike only 16 years of age, bearing an excellent character and respected by all who knew her.

(dramatic beat)

What does excellent character mean?

Kate continues reading from the EXPRESS article of 1870.

KATE

It means just what you're thinking.

(Kate reading)

With regards to the character of poor Elfreda, we rejoice to say that it was of a truly good young woman, of Christian parents, her moral character known to be perfectly free

(MORE)

KATE (CONT'D)

from stain. She was a regular attendant at her church.

ANGELA

The young woman has been slaughtered and they boast in the newspaper that she hasn't been sexually compromised?

KATE

The newspaper article concerns me as much as the crime itself. I'm intrigued by the visceral details written up in the paper. The crime isn't sexual in nature which is rare.

ANGELA

Do you think that a newspaper article today would give as much detail about a crime?

KATE

Not sure. It's 1870, Harbour Grace, Newfoundland.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - MORNING

Kate sits and drinks a coffee on her own. She eyes a young woman ZOE (20), who looks like she just snuck in and is homeless. Zoe rushes to the table.

ZOE

You have the password?

KATE

Maybe the waiter has it.

ZOE

He'll just kick me out.

WAITER walks to Kate's table and glares at Zoe.

KATE

An espresso, please. And?

Zoe looks surprised.

ZOE

Coffee. Black. Looks like I'll stay, after all.

KATE

Another woman killed on campus.

ZOE

Men hate women. Men kill women because they can.

KATE

I won't argue with that.

ZOE

So many women are killed without so much as a fine. You're a lawyer?

KATE

Journalist. Boston Herald. Gender media specialist.

ZOE

That's a thing?

KATE

Did you see those women march this morning?

ZOE

(snarky)

Nah, I slept in.

KATE

There's always a march. Trigger laws still get past. A minor needs parental consent before having an abortion....

ZOE

I was a minor once.

KATE

Your body, your decision.
If not the men in suits decide.

ZOE

Welcome to our world.

KATE

There's still hope.

ZOE

Hope. Like free coffee for the couch surfers.

KATE

Maybe you want to write for the paper.

Zoe dismisses Kate and downs her coffee.

INT. BOSTON HERALD OFFICE - DAY

Kate and VIVIAN HARRIS(25) sit in big office chairs. Tea cups, kettle, sweaters, and pillows are all over the tables and couch.

TV clips run in the background.

VIVIAN
How was the interview?

KATE
I don't think she got it.

VIVIAN
You're still looking for the letter?

KATE
I don't think it was printed or I would have come across it by now. There's supposed to be a written confession.

VIVIAN
Sent to the Boston Herald?

KATE
Could be. I'm heading to our archives, to check.

VIVIAN
I can check online, the Boston Print Archives?

KATE
I'm also trying Newfoundland, but I still haven't found it.

INT. SAPPHIRES RESTAURANT - EVENING

Kate is sitting on her own in the restaurant and scans the menu. She sees Zoe eye the plates left behind by others in the restaurant. She mischievously takes a dinner roll from the plate.

Kate calls out to Zoe and beckons her towards the table where she dines.

KATE
Join me?

Zoe hesitates but joins Kate. The waiter looks suspicious, as Zoe comes over.

KATE (CONT'D)

She's with me.

ZOE

How do you know I won't steal something?

KATE

Doesn't matter.

ZOE

I'm Zoe.

KATE

Do you stay around here?

Points to the patio outside.

ZOE

Exactly right here. Sometimes over there. Wherever.

KATE

Living outside?

ZOE

So, a journalist?

KATE

Gender media specialist. Yes, a journalist.

ZOE

Nice light topic. Equality vs. *How it really is*, hey?

KATE

Do you ever think to tell your story?

ZOE

My story? On the street? I knew you were after something.

KATE

No. I'm not. It's up to you.

ZOE

That'll make it all legit, right? Drivel for the charitable? So you can have peace of mind and sleep at night.

KATE

I know it may not help. But it may.

ZOE
Thin sheets and thick skin.
What could go wrong?

KATE
Your family?

ZOE
They don't think me being homeless
is 'artsy' or "feminist" I can tell
you that much. I don't see my family.

KATE
I'm sorry.

ZOE
What am I? Your case study? Your
date?

KATE
I hate to eat alone.

ZOE
So?

KATE
I can see why you think it's
pretentious for me to drag you in
here.

ZOE
Hey, if you buy dinner, you can
dissect me to bits.

KATE
Not what I'm doing. But I get it.

ZOE
No, you don't. You don't get it at
all. But that's okay. I'll have prime
rib.

KATE
You're leery of those who 'try' to
help?

ZOE
Some nights if I lay in a *real* bed
what difference does it make what
they 'try' to do to me.

INT. OFFICE - LATER

Vivian and Kate are in the office looking at documents in
file boxes and online.

VIVIAN

She's slaughtered and they boast in the newspapers that she is of good moral character? And hasn't been sexually compromised?

KATE

That's what the interviewer kept harping on.

VIVIAN

Well it's very odd.

KATE

And it's written in the newspaper in 1870 for every family to read in a small town.

VIVIAN

It says, *a truly good young woman, left behind a stone to die*, according to the newspaper.

KATE

Today's paper; she's wearing a short skirt, walking alone, had too much would be drink and was assaulted.

VIVIAN

Do you think you will find out who killed her?

KATE

I'm not sure.

VIVIAN

Harbour Grace must of been horrified. Her parents.

KATE

Can you imagine. She would have been the only murder in Harbour Grace. Man, woman or child.

VIVIAN

The details are fierce in this article. Every murder is a human, not a statistic.

Vivian reads the document from the file box.

KATE

I wonder if people are as horrified now, when they hear these stories everyday from our paper?

VIVIAN
I don't think so.

INT. BOSTON HERALD - HALLWAY - DAY

Kate sees Zoe as she scurries through the door, but she's barely visible, as they get closer.

VIVIAN
Who's that?

KATE
The woman I met and took out to dinner. I think she has a story.

VIVIAN
Will she tell us?

Kate rushes through the door and tries to catch up to her, but she's gone. Kate walks on ahead up over the stairs.

INT. BOSTON HERALD - COFFEE SHOP - LATER

Vivian rounds the corner of the coffee shop, her head down. She bangs directly into Zoe without realizing it.

Zoe moves closer to stand directly in front of Vivian, as if to block her. Vivian is startled at first.

VIVIAN
So, that was *you*, I saw run out.

ZOE
I haven't seen *you* around the shelter?

VIVIAN
So you're who Kate is helping out?

ZOE
She's not helping *me*.

VIVIAN
You don't have to be there - at the shelter.

ZOE
You sent your co-worker to rescue me?

VIVIAN
I had nothing to do with it.

ZOE
She saved you?

VIVIAN
Nobody gets saved.

ZOE
What's she get in return?

VIVIAN
Nothing. She wants nothing.

ZOE
So, that's it then. You've made it.

VIVIAN
Being in a shelter wasn't *my* choice.

ZOE
And you think it's mine. You've told Kate, then?

VIVIAN
There's no reason.

ZOE
She doesn't need to know your past?
That you were a victim, like the women she writes about.

VIVIAN
We all heal in different ways.

ZOE
And that includes me?

VIVIAN
I don't need for people to know my past. Maybe you want to write something?

ZOE
Tell her *your* story. And leave mine out of it.

Zoe lets the crowd slip in between herself and Vivian and she quickly leaves.

Vivian looks vacantly off into the room, but Zoe is nowhere to be seen.

INT. SAPPHIRES RESTAURANT - EVENING

Kate and Vivian have dinner near the window in the restaurant. They've ordered and the meal has arrived.

KATE

This is nice. It's about time we did this. We work too hard. Cooped up in that office.

VIVIAN

You mean 'cause we have a tea kettle, blankets and a laundry basket at work, I should worry?

KATE

I guess it's all consuming.

VIVIAN

There's a lot to worry about. You know women don't have to be on the street to be murdered.

KATE

True.

VIVIAN

Sometimes the worst guy is the one who tucks you in at night in the fanciest home.

KATE

Fuck.

VIVIAN

All men are on the hit list, you know?

KATE

I hope you're dating a good guy.

VIVIAN

First off, you'd have to hope I'm dating a dude to wish that.

Kate is completely humiliated.

KATE

So much for my feminist mantra. Fuck, I have no idea why I assumed.

VIVIAN

We'll blame it on your Grandma's Catholic ways and let you off the hook.

KATE

You're kinder than I deserve. You should just say, fuck you, to make me feel better.

Vivian catches the eye of Zoe walking along outside in the other direction behind Kate's head and out of sight from Kate's view.

Zoe makes kissing faces and pushes her two mitten covered hands together, like puppets smooching and kissing.

Vivian catches Zoe's eye but keeps a poker face, not to draw attention to Zoe behind Kate.

KATE (CONT'D)

I've got this.

Kate picks up the cheque.

EXT. CITY STREET - EVENING

Kate and Vivian start to walk out of the restaurant, past homeless people who lie in the street.

Vivian is nervous at first and thinks Zoe lurks around the corner, but she is long gone.

They take a side street that is remote but still in city center. A young woman walks on her own and crosses the street when a man walks toward her.

She takes out her phone and pretends to walk up to a house door as a car goes by.

Another woman starts to walk on the road near the curb, to steer clear of the dark bushes.

Kate and Vivian look to each other and immediately know each move the women are making and why.

KATE

Do you think men know all our habits to 'try' and keep us safe.

VIVIAN

Walk out the wrong exit from a subway, then duck back in to go home in the right direction.

KATE

Work extra hours so you can walk down the staircase with someone at night.

VIVIAN

We found one plus, all those extra hours got you a promotion.

KATE

Fuck, such a colossal waste of time,
this dance around men's violence.

VIVIAN

I really didn't think I would see us
get less rights in my lifetime.

KATE

Remember that year we let a Reality
TV star become president.

Vivian and Kate arrive at the front door to her apartment
building.

VIVIAN

Are you sure you're okay walking?

KATE

My condo is just one more block.
I'll text when I get in.

INT. VIVIAN'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Vivian opens the front door of her apartment, as she turns
the key she can see the door isn't locked.

Cautiously she stands back, kicks opens the door, but doesn't
enter.

In the doorway she can see that Zoe sits at her kitchen table
with candles lit in the dark.

She has poured a glass of wine and is in Zara's bathrobe.

ZOE

I showered. Hope you don't mind.

VIVIAN

A little late now.

ZOE

I thought I'd give you some hands on
research.

VIVIAN

That part of our relationship is
over.

ZOE

You afraid if you touch the other
side, you'll go back to the other
side.

VIVIAN
I wasn't very good at being an addict.

ZOE
Most of us aren't.

VIVIAN
You seem clean- cleaner.

ZOE
Some folks just do drugs because we like drugs, you know.

VIVIAN
Is it too early to ask if it's for good.

ZOE
You gave up asking I believe when you left.

VIVIAN
Hard place to look back.

ZOE
You just didn't look back.

VIVIAN
I landed there 'cause I was almost beaten to death.

ZOE
You didn't choose us 'cause your husband beat you.

VIVIAN
I know. I couldn't choose us, if it meant not making it. I had to make it.

Zoe gets up to walk towards Vivian intimately. She is radiant and strong in the candlelight.

ZOE
And now that you've made it ...

Zoe leans in to kiss Vivian and they make out.

INT. BOSTON HERALD - HALLWAY- DAY

Kate and Vivian hear a thunderous parade.

Women rally with placards. Zoe and her friend LOIS (32) march, a strong force, enraged.

SIGNS: #Womensrightsarehumanright

ZOE
Stop the rape! Stop them now...

LOIS
Stop the killing!

Women carry placards #Womensrightsarehumanrights.

KATE
Another young girl raped in the
stairwell on campus.

VIVIAN
All over the internet, the video, a
badge of fucking honour.

KATE
Might as well be in the classroom.
Fuck. Fuck. Fuck.

Women look weathered and have been on the streets.

WOMEN
Stop the rapes. Work. School. In the
streets. No more! No more!

Kate notices Zoe and then Vivian also catches her eye.

Kate summons Zoe over and introduces Zoe to Vivian, not knowing they have a relationship.

KATE
I knew we would get you to come in,
one way or another.

ZOE
One of the street kids found the
phone. It can be traced.

KATE
Vivian, this is Zoe. The woman I
told you I met for dinner one night.

Vivian and Zoe play it cool. Zoe is coy and Kate just takes their interaction as flirtatious.

VIVIAN
This march is great.

ZOE
I always try to do what's right.

VIVIAN
Another horrific crime.

Zoe smiles to Vivian in a very personal way.

ZOE
I thought you media types said women
could make a difference.

Kate picks up on their connection.

KATE
You're getting it from all sides.

ZOE
Motherfuckers to the right and the
left of me.

VIVIAN
They have to find that bastard.

ZOE
I'd say bastards.

KATE
Only to watch him get a suspension
from university if we fight for it.

ZOE
You're the media. Do something.

VIVIAN
It's not that easy.

ZOE
Can't help you. I'm not on the inside,
now am I?

Zoe does a dance and sways and walks backward as she turns to
catch up with the rally.

KATE
She's a hard one to crack, that girl.

VIVIAN
She knows exactly what she's doing.
Trust me.

EXT. CITY STREET - LATER

Zoe and the group continue into the street with the rally.

She sticks with the crowd of women from the shelter, at first.

Lois sees Zoe head toward where a drug dealer is squatting.

LOIS
You seem pretty close with those
'Snobs'.

ZOE
Not really. Just wasting time,
chatting.

LOIS
You're just doing research like them,
I bet. You don't have to be here.

ZOE
If you ask 'members' of society,
none of us have to be here.

Zoe makes a quick right off the main street up an alley towards
a hanging fire escape ladder.

LOIS
Where are you headed?

ZOE
Becoming a member of society, living
the dream.

Zoe skips with a spring in her gait.

Her downtrodden clothes are the only sign she is not on top
of the world.

LOIS
Zoe, don't do it. You don't need it.

ZOE
Not about need, my friend. I want
it.

Lois walks on looking defeated.

EXT./INT. WINDOW TRAP HOUSE - LATER

Zoe climbs the metal stairs and crawls into the window, excited
like a child in a playground.

INT. TRAP HOUSE - LATER

A decrepit drug den, wall to wall of addicts, using drugs.
Bodies strewn across the halls and in corners.

Men who run the drug ring set up at a table distribute drugs.

Wailing noises come from the rooms and desperate sounds of
sex come from those who are conscious.

Zoe is barely in through the window and the only sign of real life is a group of 3 men, THUGS, who come up the steps inside and have arranged to meet Zoe.

This scene is shot in BLACK SILHOUETTE with only AUDIO playing over the footage.

THUG 1
There she is. The infamous Zoe.

THUG 2
Larger than life.

THUG 1
But not larger than *our* life.

ZOE
So, you have what we agreed on?

THUG 1
Did we agree on something for our good friend, Zoe.

THUG 2
We did.

THUG 1
Let's give this upper class bitch, what she came for.

THUGS push Zoe in an empty and scum infested room. In BLACK SILHOUETTE without vivid detail.

The men assault and have their way with Zoe, and beat her within a breath of her life.

SOUNDTRACK is raw and visceral and reveals the horror of the attack.

INT. BOSTON HERALD - NIGHT

Kate and Vivian work late. They look tired, papers stacked on the desks.

Vivian's cell phone rings, it's the hospital.

Vivian listens while Kate looks on and realizes the seriousness of the call.

VIVIAN
It's Zoe. She's in hospital. It's bad.

KATE
Let's go.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Kate sits down just outside the hospital room door.

Vivian walks in cautiously to Zoe.

Vivian sits on Zoe's bedside and puts her hand on her shoulder, and prays for Zoe to come to.

Zoe's eyes open up.

ZOE

This is what it takes to get you by
my bedside.

VIVIAN

You don't miss a beat.

Vivian streams tears.

ZOE

I'm sorry.

VIVIAN

It's my fault. I should've been there
for you.

ZOE

There's no *me* left.

VIVIAN

Zoe, you're here. You are here.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Kate sits outside Zoe's room.

A very distinguished man SENATOR RAMOS (52) starts to walk by Kate. She recognizes him from TV.

SENATOR RAMOS

Did she make it this time?

KATE

It's bad. They're keeping a close
watch on her.

SENATOR RAMOS

That girl tests the good Lords
patience.

KATE

If the Lord is as good as you say,
I'm sure he'll make time for Zoe.

SENATOR RAMOS
Do you work at the shelter?

KATE
No. Do I recognize you from TV,
Senator Ramos?

SENATOR RAMOS
Not here, you don't. I'm Zoe's father.

KATE
Sorry about Zoe, we're worried. My
colleague Vivian is in with her now.

SENATOR RAMOS
Colleague. If it's the same Vivian,
they've shared a mattress and needles
for years. This is not my first near
death call...

Kate tries to pretend she knows about Vivian and Zoe.

Vivian comes out of the room completely emotional and shaken.

Vivian runs face to face with Zoe's father. They know each
other.

VIVIAN
Mr. Ramos.

SENATOR RAMOS
Vivian. I was just speaking with
your colleague.

VIVIAN
It's bad Mr. Ramos.

SENATOR RAMOS
You left her behind for the wolves.

VIVIAN
I tried, Sir.

SENATOR RAMOS
Not hard enough.

He pushes through the door to Zoe's room.

INT. VIVIAN'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Kate has come to check in on Vivian. She has brought her
coffee.

VIVIAN
He's right. I didn't try hard enough.

KATE

What could you do?

VIVIAN

She was there for me, I was flung out of a car onto to the shelter steps covered in blood, the hair barely attached to my head.

KATE

Fuck, Vivian. You never said.

VIVIAN

What's there to say. He was my husband. Not like he was a wanted criminal.

KATE

And you never pressed charges.

VIVIAN

No. Skipped right over that and went straight for heroine. That's how Zoe and I got started, and then it was more than that.

KATE

You loved her.

VIVIAN

Still do. But you don't leave someone you love behind. Not in that living hell.

KATE

You tried.

VIVIAN

Tried. And tried and tried. Then I got this job, and your past is less and you don't even know who that person was anymore.

KATE

Did you see her after?

VIVIAN

After you started bringing Zoe around. She came here the other night. We spent the night together.

KATE

Vivian. I'm sorry.

VIVIAN
 He's right. She saved me and I fed
 her to the wolves.

Vivian breaks down in tears. Kate holds Vivian and tries to console her.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Kate and Vivian walk into the hospital room.

Zoe is recovering, her face is healing and she still has a broken arm and half cast on her leg.

There are two police officers at the end of Zoe's bed, who finish up their report and leave as Kate and Vivian walk in.

VIVIAN
 What did they say?

ZOE
 You got what you deserve, in their
 new politically correct voice.

KATE
 Can your father help, put pressure
 on them.

ZOE
 You didn't fill her in. My father is
 practically why I'm an addict.

KATE
 Conservative.

ZOE
 Religious bootcamp was taken literally
 for the dear Senator.

VIVIAN
 Fuck. You being in there with those
 fucking monsters kills me.

ZOE
 Monsters don't hide.

Vivian holds Zoe again and Kate notices they need time and gets ready to leave.

KATE
 I'll leave you two alone. I can drop
 over food to your place, for you
 both. Same code?

ZOE
We're a we all of a sudden?

VIVIAN
She's right. I want you to come stay
with me.

ZOE
I have been broken to shit for the
last time. I do need you.

VIVIAN
I'm here.

KATE
Anything I can do. I will.

ZOE
Just keep me out of that murder
mystery. Got it.

KATE
Fair.

INT. VIVIAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Vivian grabs her things to go to work.

Zoe is with crutches, dressed, her arm in a sling.

Vivian goes around the apartment and makes sure Zoe has
everything she needs, TV remote, phone, coffee.

ZOE
I'm not an invalid.

Vivian gives an evil eye.

VIVIAN
You know how the security works. You
have to buzz anyone in, you can see
them at the front. The counsellors
are coming by, one from NA, trauma
specialist, and a case worker from
social assistance.

ZOE
House calls? Is that 'cause of you
and Kate or does someone care I was
almost left for dead.

VIVIAN
It was fucking bad, Zoe. I think the
system may be catching on.

ZOE

I always said social assistance was a sign of failure. Not sure what I saw as successful.

VIVIAN

(leans in to kiss Zoe)
Living is succeeding. That's what we're doing. One day...

ZOE

At a time. Got it.
(looks at a text on her phone)
Fuck the Senator wants to come by.

VIVIAN

He was at the hospital. Maybe it's time to give him a chance.

ZOE

Nothing more sobering than Dad.

VIVIAN

Use the security camera... okay?

ZOE

Got it.

Vivian blows a kiss good-bye to Zoe. She races down the stairs.

EXT. VIVIAN'S APARTMENT - STAIRCASE - DAY

Vivian rushes down the stairs and runs directly into Zoe's father Senator Ramos coming into the apartment.

VIVIAN

I thought you'd be later.

SENATOR RAMOS

I called up.

VIVIAN

You haven't upset her, I hope.

/SENATOR RAMOS

I offered money.

VIVIAN

Not what she needs.

SENATOR RAMOS

She said. She's choosing this lifestyle?

VIVIAN

And what lifestyle do you mean, the drugs, the abuse, *me*. Or all of it?

SENATOR RAMOS

She needs a way out, Vivian. It seems you've cleaned up your act.

VIVIAN

You may not remember, my act was my husband slamming my head. And your daughter took care of me. I owe her everything.

SENATOR RAMOS

I don't approve of you two together, or even understand it. But if you can keep each other off the street, that's enough. And the offer for money still stands.

VIVIAN

How much does it cost for you to try and understand?

SENATOR RAMOS

That's what Zoe said. Maybe you're meant to be together.

VIVIAN

Maybe.

Senator Ramos continues up the stairs.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

Don't upset her.

He goes up the stairs.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Kate is in her office. As she hears Vivian walk towards the door she swings around in her chair abruptly.

KATE

I dropped some food.

VIVIAN

We got it, thanks.

KATE

How is she?

VIVIAN

Holding on. She wants to get sober.
(MORE)

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

It's a tall order.

KATE

I've been so worried. And the two of you?

VIVIAN

Are Zoe and I together now, 'cause of you? It somehow became a blur.

KATE

And the counsellors?

VIVIAN

On their way over, as well as her Dad.

KATE

Senator Ramos?

VIVIAN

He's done quite the number on Zoe growing up. He motioned the abortion by parental consent clause because of Zoe's teenage pregnancy.

KATE

For fuck sakes.

VIVIAN

I messaged the therapist to be there for her after he's gone.

KATE

Do you think she'll get through?

VIVIAN

I may be fooling myself, but I do. I think this time she'll make it.

KATE

She will, with you. I have to head back to Newfoundland. Will you be okay?

VIVIAN

We will. You've done so much. More research?

Vivian smiles to Kate.

KATE

Always.

INT. VIVIAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Vivian cautiously enters the apartment.

Zoe is at the table, two placemats are set, candles are lit.
There is a box of cheerios on the table.

ZOE
Come join me.

VIVIAN
Hell of a day?

ZOE
Hell of a big fucking day? I spent
all day making dinner, too.

VIVIAN
The milk jug is a nice touch.

Vivian puts her hand on Zoe's.

ZOE
Cereal for supper is a good sign.

VIVIAN
I know.

INT. AIRPLANE - DAY

Kate is leaning against the window.

Eyes are opening and closing in and out of sleep.

She can hear Francis (V.O) in her DREAM.

KATE
I try to save her all the time - in
my dreams. I can't stop thinking
about her.

FRANCIS (V.O.)
That's not dreaming. Dreaming is
hope. Trying to save a murdered woman
is poison.

KATE
I should stop trying?

FRANCIS (V.O.)
Everyone has a story. But trying to
save Elfreda, will eat you alive.

KATE
All those women ...

Kate shakes herself awake.

DREAM SEQUENCE ENDS:

INT. FRANCIS KITCHEN - DAY

TITLE: HARBOUR GRACE

Francis (84) lays tea on the side table. Kate sits on a small stool at her Grandmother's feet and looks up to her.

FRANCIS

You were young when your mother and father were killed.

KATE

And you've been pouring my tea every since.

FRANCIS

I had to catch up quick to raise a feisty young teenager like yourself.

KATE

I should've stayed.

FRANCIS

You took after your mother, you wanted school and that was that.

KATE

I didn't give you a say?

FRANCIS

You've made something of yourself. A journalist.

KATE

For what's good its done.

FRANCIS

If I'd known you would leave I'd made you work at the fish plant.

KATE

I'd probably be better off, can't say this research is going anywhere.

FRANCIS

It'll come to you. Why don't you take a walk around the town. I'll have supper on for you when you get back.

EXT. WOODS, HARBOUR GRACE - LATER

Kate takes a long walk, at first she just hikes.

She knows exactly what rock that Elfreda was killed by. The rock is marked now with a bigger sign, as if it's a draw for tourists.

She walks through the woods past the rock going through the motions as she has done many times and then continues on up over the hill outside in the schoolyard.

INT. MUSEUM, HARBOUR GRACE - LATER

Kate continues to walk through town, along the road and stops into the museum, where the Museum Guide, TORI (16), cheerfully greets her.

TORI
Hello again, Kate.

KATE
Nice day.

TORI
Back for more research.

KATE
You know me too well.

TORI
The coin purse is still on display.
I kept an eye out for the letter you
mentioned and asked around, but
nothing came up.

The Museum Guide's boyfriend comes in and she is distracted, they laugh and carry on and hang out closer to the backdoor.

Wind blows through the museum and Kate takes the beaded coin purse from the display case.

Kate holds the coin purse tight in the palms of her hands.

INT. FRANCIS KITCHEN - DAY

Kate leans her head on her Francis' lap, as she strokes her hair.

KATE
I think about Elfreda all the time.

FRANCIS
Horror of a story.

KATE

Her body just lay there until church
goers went by.

FRANCIS

It's so wrong.

KATE

And it's not going away.

FRANCIS

I wouldn't want folks to think that's
who we are.

KATE

I didn't say this town are murderers.

FRANCIS

It's not like where you live now. It
was a shock.

KATE

I'm sure a woman's daughter found in
an alley in a big city is also a
shock.

FRANCIS

You read the Express from that time?

KATE

Yes, lots of strange details, like
she wasn't 'compromised'.

FRANCIS

Thanks be to God.

KATE

So, that's a blessing.

FRANCIS

They did god awful things back then
to women.

KATE

Not like this?

FRANCIS

No, and not as common as today.

KATE

And her family?

FRANCIS

They were never right again. They
were church people, see.

KATE

So, in their mind her virtue being in tact was a blessing.

FRANCIS

She was lead into the woods by the devil himself.

KATE

He had to have a name. Do you ever wonder who it was?

FRANCIS

That child's soul wouldn't have a moments grace, if that's all we thought of her.

KATE

And my mother tried to find out who did it? So odd.

FRANCIS

She went to the museum just like you and through almost every attic in this town. And nothing.

KATE

What about our attic? You think something will show up.

FRANCIS

My mother, Mary, had her own life. Her belongings are personal. That's all. No more.

KATE

And justice for Elfreda?

FRANCIS

Not yet.

KATE

You think it can be solved?

FRANCIS

You're a writer. Every story has an ending, my love.

KATE

I know.

FRANCIS

That misfit may openly reject God and embrace evil. But he'll meet his maker.

KATE

I try to save her all the time- in my dreams. I can't stop thinking about her.

FRANCIS

That's not a dream. Dreaming is hope. To save a murdered woman is poison.

KATE

I should stop trying?

FRANCIS

To save Elfreda, will eat you alive.

KATE

There are still so many women murdered.

FRANCIS

Write your article. You won't stop the killings, but you need to do it.

KATE

Why are men who kill above the law?

FRANCIS

I told you they will have their day.

KATE

Judgment day? I don't have your faith Grandma.

FRANCIS

You must believe in good.

KATE

I would like to come face to face with these murderers. I need to know why.

FRANCIS

Why a man is evil, will not make it go away.

KATE

If only I could let it go.

FRANCIS

Let it go, my love.

INT. FRANCIS KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Francis cooks dinner in the kitchen.

INT. COMPUTER DESK - LATER

Kate opens her laptop.

She is on an online journalism site Canadian- American Press to post her article on Elfreda.

ARTICLE: *Her Killer Can Not Be Named. Her name is Elfreda ...*

Notification pops up BOSTON HERALD POST authors Vivian Harris and Zoe Ramos.

ARTICLE: *Activist Vivian Harris, says life on the street is not a choice, and drug mules and trap houses in this city consider women disposable.*

KATE

*A drug den in city centre is brought down with the help of Zoe Ramos. Zoe, daughter of Senator Ramos, confided in reporters.
(dramatic beat)
They did it.*

PHOTO: Senator Ramos, Zoe, and Vivian in front on the Boston Herald office.

Kate keys in under the article on a chat heading.

GROUP CHAT: *You did it. Thank you, Zoe and Vivian. From all women, everywhere. Even Harbour Grace. Xx Kate*

Kate glances in to see Francis is still cooking.

INT. HALLWAY - LATER

Kate walks stealthily through the hall. You can hear a pin drop, her breath is shallow.

INT. ATTIC - LATER

Kate goes to the closet and looks up, the hatch is unlocked. She climbs the wooden ladder, like a teenager. Pokes her head through the trap door.

Kate gasps. The attic is almost empty. Racks of clothes, furniture, are all gone.

In one corner there is a trunk and on top of it the same security box marked Mary Ann Shea.

Kate acts quickly, opens the trunk with lace table clothes, small babies dresses, and a few photos.

She opens the security box and rifles through the papers; the same birth certificate, passport. Kate flips through it.

A photo of a young mother Mary Ann Shea, a baby, and a man in a police uniform. Kate turns the photo over. Mary Ann Shea, Clare Shea and Const. James Furey written on the back.

Kate uses her phone to zoom in on the photo and reads on the police officer badge Constable James Furey.

Kate horrified.

KATE
He was her grandfather.
(dramatic beat)
Our family.

Kate looks weak. She knows she is close.

She looks around the room. She sees a floor board is loose and pushes on it. Another tin can.

Kate pulls it out, opens it, and finds a letter.

LETTER: Attention Townspeople of Harbour Grace. From Const. James Furey.

KATE (CONT'D)
It's it. It's the confession.

Kate reads the letter.

KATE (CONT'D)
Fifty years later in 1920, Constable Furey, investigator of Elfreda's murder, confesses on his deathbed.
I, Sergeant Const. James Furey Furey, confess on my deathbed. I murdered 16-year-old Elfreda Pike. A perfect crime. My only crime. I killed her. I killed Elfreda. I am notorious in death. As too, so is Elfreda. You never suspect. I cannot explain the horror of my ways, evil was within me.

Kate takes a photo of the letter and also grabs the letter and takes it with her.

INT. KATE'S BEDROOM - LATER

Kate goes to her room and secures the letter inside her book on her bedside table.

INT. FRANCIS KITCHEN - LATER

Francis passes Kate over a hot meal, chicken dinner.

KATE

My favourite. Just the way I like it.

FRANCIS

There's been a lot of careful living to see you do well, my dear.

KATE

Poverty is horrid. Was there more?

FRANCIS

There's always more.

Francis straightens up the table putting hot tea biscuits and butter on the table and sits down to join Kate.

KATE

Secrets?

Francis still tries to act coy.

FRANCIS

Secrets in this town are too many to count.

Kate persists.

KATE

Our family secrets. I was in the attic, again.

Francis looks ahead.

FRANCIS

I told you to stay out of there. If you loved me at all you would stay out of there.

Kate holds up the photo.

KATE

I found this. He gave birth to us.

FRANCIS

He had nothing to do with us.

KATE

He's the killer.

FRANCIS

You hear me. He is not who we are.

KATE

I found the letter of confession. In our attic.

FRANCIS

(raises her voice)

You hear me. He is not *us*.

Francis storms up from the table knocking over a glass of juice onto to the floor.

Kate gets up and grabs a cup towel and helps Francis clean up.

They are both on the floor cleaning and look in each others eyes.

Francis breaks in tears.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

She did not know. She did not know.
He killed Elfreda. We did not know.
We did not....

(dramatic beat)

My mother was given the letter and the photo. She couldn't let others know. The town would hang her. And she a new mother. It would haven been the end of her.

Kate takes her by the hand as they are cleaning. Tries to pull her close. Francis is guarded, and pulls back.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

You do what you need to with that photo. But they will never know who we are. We have the name Shea. It's up to you who you say this monster is. But he is not my flesh and blood, you hear me.

Kate tries to calm down her grandmother's shaking.

KATE

I know. I know. I understand.

FRANCIS

No, you don't. We're all research to you. We lived it. If you were my mother and had to find that out, what would you do?

(MORE)

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

And have the strength to raise a child on her own. She buried the letter from the people in town. She had to. It was 1920. How do you think people get through, knowing their family is evil incarnate.

(dramatic beat)

What'll you do, now?

Kate hangs her head. Sheepish, from her own thoughts.

KATE

I don't know. I really don't know.

INT. BOSTON HERALD OFFICE - DAY

Kate comes in to Vivian and Zoe fielding calls about the release of their article.

There are several copies over the desk with Zoe, Vivian and Senator Ramos on the front page.

KATE

Did we make amends?

ZOE

Some strides.

VIVIAN

It's been quite the week. How about you?

KATE

It's been quite a week. You can say that.

VIVIAN

There's been some 'strides' as Zoe would say, with Senator Ramos. He's reconsidered the bill on parental consent.

Kate pipes up.

KATE

That's great.

ZOE

I guess the next generation can benefit from his *new* wisdom. Even if it's lost on me.

KATE

It's good for you to get him to deal with the truth. Do you feel better?

ZOE

Not really.

KATE

I get it.

Kate looks to Vivian.

KATE (CONT'D)

Great job on the article. I see awards in your future.

VIVIAN

Only award I need is for them to take care of us on the street.

KATE

Will it do that?

VIVIAN

For now. Until the next wave of poison hits us.

KATE

You finding the truth matters to me.

Kate passes Vivian the CONFESSION LETTER.

KATE (CONT'D)

Can you see if it can be squeezed in the paper somewhere.

Vivian takes a look at the letter dated 1870.

INSERT LETTER: I, Sergeant Const. James Furey, confess on my deathbed. I murdered 16-year-old Elfreda Pike. A perfect crime. My only crime. I killed her. I killed Elfreda. I am notorious in death. As too, is Elfreda. You never suspect. I cannot explain the horror of my ways, evil was within me.

Vivian is shocked to see the letter.

VIVIAN

(hesitates)

Does it feel good to have the truth?

Kate starts to walk away.

KATE

Not really.

(MORE)

KATE (CONT'D)

(pause)

It can go to print.

CUT TO:

EXT. FIELD HARBOUR GRACE- PRESENT DAY

Kate walks between the museum and Francis house in the tall blades of grass.

MONTAGE:

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT, 1870

Elfreda (16) has freed herself from the murderer and has started to run through the tall trees in the woods as far and as fast as she can.

EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS

Elfreda's long dark hair flows as she gets up off the ground and walks away through the woods.

Her wounds disappear in the morning light and she starts to run without scars.

She runs faster and faster through the woods.

EXT. WOODS- CONTINUOUS

Elfreda stands erect walking through the trees, translucent, and powerful. Excerpt from 1870 Express newspaper.

NARRATOR

*In the midst of life we are in death.
Nothing should be left undone publicly
or privately, to discover the
murderer. Justice would best be
satisfied were the regular process
of trial then to be executed on the
spot where he so brutally murdered
his innocent victim. Notorious in
his deed of savagery.*

EXT. GRASSY FIELD - PRESENT DAY

Kate lies in the big grassy meadow. Schoolgirls run out of the school into the field. They run free and don't stop. Underneath there is the sound of school bells and the sound of school children running.

EPILOGUE:

Elfreda Pike was a sixteen year old from Harbour Grace, who was horribly murdered on January 5, 1870. This crime is considered one of the most shocking and infamous crimes in Newfoundland criminal history. The murder went unsolved for over 50 years, until the real killer confessed to the murder on his death bed. He was a former Harbour Grace police officer by the name of constable Furey, who had been involved in the actual Pike murder investigation. This revelation sent shock waves through the community and especially through those close to him.

There is no visible headstone for Elfreda, she is buried close to her grandfather Captain Edward Pike in the Coughlan United Church Churchyard.

The End.