

"THE HORSE WHISPERER"

Screenplay by

Eric Roth

Revised by

Richard LaGravenese

Based on the novel by

Nicholas Evans

Second Draft

1/21/97

FADE IN:

A DREAM:

INT. STABLES; PILGRIM'S STALL - MORNING

Sunlight illuminates the darkened stable, highlighting the contours of a magnificent HORSE (PILGRIM) in surreal, dream-like imagery: his legs, his muscles, his sheen, his mane... his eyes. He shakes his head and stamps his feet. He seems confined. Eager to run.

INT. STABLES - MORNING

Pilgrim bursts through the stall and runs out the stables into a blinding white morning.

EXT. AN OPEN FIELD LEADING TO WOODS - BRIGHT MORNING

Whiteness. Snow and sky without any discernible line between. Camera is POV, as if on the horse, riding through the whiteness. Snow kicks up from the side. We hear the breathing of the horse. As we travel on hills, through trees, we experience of sense of wild, exhilarating freedom.

We hear the giggles of a GIRL (GRACE) on the horse. An occasional line;

GRACE (O.S.)
Yeah, fly boy... that's it... go...
go... go...

END OF DREAM as we CUT TO:

INT. GRACE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Grace awakens, calmly. Takes a breath. Slides out of bed and stands before a window, overlooking a beautiful Connecticut country house. We see a snow-covered field and distant woods.

Grace presses her faces against the cold, frosted window eager to get out.

INT. MACLEAN NEW YORK APARTMENT - MORNING

Alarm rings, ANNIE MACLEAN awakens. She shuts the alarm and scoots up in bed. She waits. Seconds later the television across the foot of her bed turns on from a timer – to a CNN 24 NEWS channel.

INT. HALLWAY/ANNIE & ROBERT'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Grace, fully dressed except for her boots, tiptoes past a partially opened bedroom door. Her father ROBERT is asleep, alone, on his huge king size bed.

INT. MACLEAN FARMHOUSE KITCHEN - MORNING

Grace is putting on her boots on a bench beside a back door.

She is wearing her mother's outfit. As she slides the boot on, we see behind her a row of framed photos – Robert, Grace and Annie in happy times.

She slaps a note on the refrigerator, with a magnet – "Gone riding. Back around 10. Love, G."

EXT. MACLEAN FARMHOUSE, BACK ENTRANCE - MORNING

Grace slips on her jacket and hat as she comes down the steps, her feet hitting the walk...

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - MORNING

Annie's feet hit the ground, running – her breath showing

in the cold air. She passes other joggers with ease. She crosses the street and heads for an elegant CPW building.

INT. MACLEAN'S NEW YORK APARTMENT - MORNING

Dressed in running clothes, Annie opens the door and picks up several newspapers that were delivered. She carries them into the kitchen and sets them beside a huge stack of publications, magazines, papers, etc... Knowing she must read all of them at some point, she breathes a disgusted sign. She thumbs through the POST as she pours herself a cup of coffee. Something catches her eyes and she snarls:

ANNIE
That little shit!

She dials a portable phone and moves through the apartment as she talks:

ANNIE
Hi Lucy?... Did I wake you?... Have you read the Post?... They've got a little item about me and Fiske. He's saying I fired him and that I faked the new circulation figures... Ha, ha... Oh, please... It's the last act of a desperate gnome... Set up a phone call with Don Farlow for 9:30...

Throughout the phone call, Annie is selecting clothes, turning on the shower, undressing...

EXT. DYER HORSE FARM - MORNING

The snow has stopped falling. Grace walks along a hill, hands in pocket. Spread out on the landscape are horses, on a horse farm, standing like statues in the white covered fields.

As Grace comes along the hill, we see another GIRL (JUDITH) coming from the opposite direction. She doesn't have Grace's lean elegance but her warm, friendly smile brightens her face. Upon reaching her, Grace returns the smile with a hug.

JUDITH
It's warmer than I thought.

GRACE
You want to go to a movie tonight?

JUDITH
I thought your mom's coming up?

GRACE
(prickly)
So?

Judith immediately senses a problem so she continues casually, as they begin walking away from Camera...

JUDITH
My parents are having friends from college over. They're really nice... They have this gorgeous son who wants to be a forest ranger.

GRACE
Can I come? I'll start a fire...

Judith laughs as they continue talking, their voices trailing off, as the girls head for the stables.

INT. STABLES, THE DYER HORSE FARM - MORNING

There are several horses in their stalls. Grace and Judith enter, talking, carrying their English saddles. Judith stops at a stall, disappearing into it as she says "Hello?" ..., Grace continues to the end stall.

Pilgrim (the horse from the dream) stands looking at her.

GRACE
Hello, beautiful boy.

He's a massive figure beside her but she shows no inhibition.

She enters, touching his muzzle. He plays with her by nudging her back.

GRACE
Stop... Will you stop!

EXT. DYER HORSE FARM - MORNING

They lead their horses, now saddled and ready, from the barn.

Pilgrim tosses his head, prancing, playing with the snow.

GRACE
Show-off.

The girls mount the horses and ride off together.

INT. ANNIE'S MAGAZINE OFFICE - MID-MORNING

Annie, casually dressed, enters the empty offices of her magazine. She turns on the light, revealing a large row of stalls and glassed in private offices. Everywhere we look, we see indications of the kind of magazine she edits.

She strolls to her office – the largest – surrounded by windows. The office walls are covered with photos, most of which are COVER STORIES ON ANNIE.

(One photo is of Annie's father MARTIN. A BRITISH AMBASSADOR with his young daughter on his lap, her arms affectionately around his neck. Her mother stands right behind them, posing like a member of the royal family.)

Annie sits and takes a breath. The only photo on her desk is a family portrait, taken when Annie was given the Crystal Award – Robert, Grace, herself and the Award. She checks her watch – it is almost 9:30.

INT. MACLEAN FARMHOUSE, MASTER BEDROOM/CLOSET - MID-MORNING

A WALK-IN CLOSET of the master bedroom; one side is Annie's, one side is Robert's.

Robert stands before his bureau in the closet – he has just showered and is putting on his watch and ring which lay beside his cologne assortment. A FRAMED PHOTO OF HE AND ANNIE in India – younger, vibrant, in love... when they first met.

THE PHONE RINGS. Robert enters into the bedroom to pick up.

ROBERT
Hello?

INSERT ANNIE: They speak in dulled, emotionless voices:

ANNIE
It's me.

ROBERT

Hi.

ANNIE

Hi.

Awkward pause.

ROBERT

So, what, uh, what train are you taking?

ANNIE

I should be in by two.

ROBERT

Okay. You want me to pick you up?

ANNIE

Sure... What's Grace up to?

ROBERT

Riding with Judith.

Beat.

ANNIE

I'm sorry about last night. I shouldn't have brought it up over the phone.

ROBERT

That's okay. We have to talk about it and we're not always in the same place... so... I just have to get used to it.

(beat)

What do you want to do about dinner?

ANNIE

I don't know. We'll figure it out.

Pause. There is a lot unspoken but understood between them.

Annie's other phone line rings. Robert hears it as well.

ROBERT

Okay. We'll see you later then.

ANNIE
Yeah. Bye.

Annie picks up the other line and her manner brightens, her energy boosts...

ANNIE
DON! My love, how are you? Did you hear about Fiske?... No, suing is too civilized. Can't we get your friend at Le Cirque to serve him a fatal piece of poached salmon?... Ha, ha... That's even better...

EXT. CONNECTICUT COUNTRYSIDE - MORNING

LONG SHOT of the girls riding at an easy pacing, talking all the time. Grace is an elegant rider, quite self-assured for a 13-year-old... We come into the scene at the moment the girls have just shared a secret or a fantasy. Judith is giggling uncontrollably. Grace laughs as she says:

GRACE
...Oh, come on! You think the same thing!

JUDITH
I just could never say it!

They stop at the end of the field, facing the woods.

GRACE
Do you want to go around by the old road?

JUDITH
Why don't we just cut through the woods?

Grace nods. They ride into the woods, continuing their talk.

EXT. WOODS - MORNING

The girls ride down, along a stand of hickories and poplars to a RIVER. They stop the horses and their conversation, to listen to the sound of the water. Below them, off in the distance, they can just make out a two-lane country road.

GRACE

You want to go down or stay along
the river?

JUDITH

We already did the river. Let's go
down and across the old bridge. We
can circle back.

They begin to make their way.

INT. ANNIE'S OFFICE - MORNING

Annie's office is now crowded with a dozen or so employees;
sitting on the couch, on the window sills, on the arms of
chairs, against the walls... Paper bag emptied of bagels,
cream cheese, orange juice, paper plates...

Hand Held Camera captures the energy of the room as it follows
overlapping lines, laughter, etc... yet, no matter how casual
it all seems, Annie is very much at the center of control...
We enter the scene of LAUGHTER, as Annie asks KEVIN, a feature
writer:

ANNIE

...So what did you say to her?

KEVIN

I said, thank you very much...
(LAUGHTER, AD LIBS)
I really should do the interview...
But perhaps if you'd like to have
dinner...

LAUGHTER... Everyone starts Ad Libbing...

VARIOUS CHARACTERS

Dinner!!... He's so cute.... Why
don't I get those kind of
interviews?... Look, he has husband
number eight written on his
forehead...

ANNIE

All right, all right, all right...
Kevin, good job. Write the interview.
If I don't like it, you may have to

sleep with her for a follow-up!
(laughter)
Now... I'm thinking about another
fashion designer spread... Who's
news out there?

Characters shout out designer names and comments as the phone
rings and LUCY picks up... speaking amidst the talking...

LUCY
Hold on.
(presses hold)
Gottschalk.

The room goes dead quiet, instantly. Then erupts in laughter
as everyone realizes it. Annie, however, waves her hand as
she takes the phone...

ANNIE
Quiet... Quiet!

Everyone obeys. Annie presses SPEAKER PHONE.

ANNIE
David?

DAVID GOTTSCHALK (V.O.)
Who's there?

ANNIE
Everyone. Working overtime. Just for
you.

DAVID GOTTSCHALK (V.O.)
Did you speak to Farlow?

ANNIE
Yes. We're suing.

DAVID GOTTSCHALK (V.O.)
Is that absolutely necessary? It'll
just make it a bigger story.

ANNIE
David, he signed an agreement that
he wouldn't talk to the press and
he's libeled me by saying I faked
the figures. You're not going soft

on me, are you?

Silence. Gottschalk doesn't immediately respond. Everyone waits. Covert looks between characters suggest this is interesting – has Annie over-stepped her bounds with the magazine's owner? Annie waits without a shred of anxiety – even though she might have some. Finally:

DAVID GOTTSCHALK (V.O.)

Well, I suppose we could use another good public feud...

ANNIE

Exactly...

Everyone silently acknowledges Annie guts and influence.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - MORNING

It's perfectly still. We are looking down an empty TWO-LANE ROAD covered with fresh snow. We see the girls slowly riding out of the woods, talking. They cross the road and start up into the woods on the other side... They are trying to sing a LIZ PHAIR song, "CHOPSTICKS"

GRACE/JUDITH

(singing)

"I met him at a party and he told me how he like to drive me home... He said he liked to do it backwards..."

GRACE

(singing)

"...I said it –"

JUDITH

(singing)

"...and I said that" ...

GRACE

(stops singing)

No, wait, it just goes... "he said he liked to do –" ...

Suddenly there's the SOUND OF THE METAL OF JUDITH'S HORSE scraping on some sheer ice hidden under the soft snow. Judith notices first...

JUDITH
What was –

The horse staggers... Judith looks to Grace –

JUDITH
Grace!

The horse tries to find tracing with his hindfeet, kicking up sprays of snow and ice shards. The horse suddenly falls on the ice and goes down hard on its knees...

GRACE
JUDITH!

The horse stumbles to get back on its feet, slipping again.

Frightened, it rears and Judith, caught off balance, is thrown, her foot catching in the stirrup...

JUDITH
GRAAAACE!

Her horse, unable to find its balance, starts to slide backward down the incline.

GRACE
PILGRIM, COME ON! MOVE!

Grace, directly behind Judith, tries to turn Pilgrim to avoid being hit by the errant horse.

What follows, we see from Grace's perspective. The details that form the images and sounds of Grace's mind are fast, disembodied, almost surreal as –

Judith's horse bulldozes into Pilgrim, taking his legs out from under him, sending both horses careening down the icy slope. Grace hangs onto Pilgrim's neck. Judith, her leg helplessly tangled in the stirrup, is dragged, her head bouncing on the frozen ground.

They slide all the way back down to the COUNTRY ROAD. Pilgrim is the first to find his legs and stand. Grace manages to sit up in the saddle. She sees Judith's horse stumbling back onto its feet, one of his legs broken at the ankles, walking in confused circles, dragging Judith – her face bleeding, her leg hanging from the stirrup.

GRACE
(frightened)
Jude, you okay?

JUDITH
(softly, crying)
I'm okay... I'm okay.

She tries to extricate her leg from the stirrup.

Grace sees it before she hears it. A GLINT off of steel. We then hear the rumbling SOUND of a TRUCK coming around the bend... The Girls on their horses in the middle of the road...

The Truck, an 18 wheeler carrying logging equipment, comes around the turn... Grace grabs the bridle, trying to get Judith's horse out of the road... The driver, seeing them, lays on the air horn. The Horses bolt at the sound, the bridle slipping out of Grace's hand...

GRACE
JUJUDE!!!

...The horses turn apart. The Driver starts furiously downshifting, trying to brake... He seems to get it under control when suddenly THE TRUCK SKIDS on some ice. It begins to slide, out of control, the truck bed and the cab jack-knifing. The truck literally plows over the helpless Judith and her horse – the horse going down on the pavement, Judith disappearing under him. The truck's cab, like a mythic monster, heads right for Grace and Pilgrim... Grace looks right into the Driver's helpless, frightened eyes... Suddenly, Pilgrim rears up at the truck, sending Grace flying, bouncing her off the pavement and under the wheel of the truck.

Pilgrim instinctively jumps onto the hood of the truck, his hooves caught between the rear-view mirrors like some grotesque ornament. His head and chest slams into the window, shattering through the glass.

And then it is still.

The truck has stopped halfway in the road. Judith's horse lies in the road, motionless. Pilgrim, on the truck's hood, his legs splayed, stuck, his head and chest, bleeding. He shrieks, struggling to get to his feet. He manages to free his legs and, stepping off the cab onto the road, walks off,

wounded, in pain, into the sanctuary of the woods...

The Driver stumbles out of the cab, his head bleeding, in shock. He sits on the ground. All we hear is the sound of the river and the wind in the trees.

Grace, halfway under the truck, frozen, stares up at the beautiful morning sky.

WE HEAR THE SOUND OF A HELICOPTER...

INT. MACLEAN FARMHOUSE/KITCHEN - LATER MORNING

ANGLE ON GRACE'S NOTE on the refrigerator as Robert enters from the outside with two bags of groceries. He places them on the counter near the PHONE MACHINE. He sees ONE MESSAGE is there. He presses PLAY as he puts away the groceries.

A BEAT LATER the PHONE RINGS and he picks up, with the machine still playing...

ROBERT

(on phone)

Hello? Paul, hi – are you guys back?
How was it? Oh that sounds great. Oh
Paul.. hold on...

LIZ

(on machine)

Robert! Are you there?... Robert!
It's Liz!... Look, there's... there's
been an accident... Uh... Jesus...
uh...

As Robert listens, the voice of Liz's on the machine from inside, pulls his attention. On hearing "accident," Robert lowers the receiver, frozen, as he listens to Liz...

LIZ

(on machine)

Robert, just call me on my call
phone... 1-917-449-7805...

EXT. THE WOODS - LATE MORNING

Pilgrim is hiding in the shadows under an old railroad bridge, standing up to his knees in the river. His chest is cut open, bleeding. His face cut, contorted and swollen. LIZ HAMMOND,

the local veterinarian, hides a hypodermic needle in her jacket, quietly walking into the water.

A Policeman is going into the water downstream from Pilgrim, whose chest is heaving, blood drips into the water. He watches Liz. She is almost to him when suddenly he bolts, running upstream.

The Policeman behind him shouts and waves his arm. Frightened, Pilgrim wheels back toward Liz, who manages to stick the hypo in his neck. He rears, knocking her down, then runs out of the river, the hypo still in his neck. He runs for the sanctuary of the woods.

INT. TRAIN - LATE MORNING

Annie sits on a train – her laptop out, notes beside her, her cellular phone, ever-ready. The train passes through beautiful countryside but Annie is focused on an editorial she's writing.

The train pulls into a station and stops, causing Annie to take a break and stretch her arms and neck. She looks out the window for the first time and sees:

A MAN, his hands in his pockets, waiting on the platform. She watches as the Man holds out his arms to his two young children, who are getting off the train. He picks them up as his wife enters the scene, kissing him and wrapping her arm around his waist. The children talk a mile a minute and the father listens to every word.

Annie doesn't even realize she is staring. As they leave the platform, she turns back to her laptop. As the train begins to move again, Annie returns to work.

HER CELLULAR PHONE RINGS. She answers.

ANNIE

Yeah?... Hi. I made the 1:00 so...

The expression on her face sinks into a stunned panic.

INT. HOSPITAL, CONNECTICUT - DAY

Annie is running through the corridors, her bags in tow. She sees Robert standing in the corridor talking to a DOCTOR. She runs for them.

When she appears, Robert and the Doctor stop their conversation. Robert looks to Annie, who is waiting for news.

ANNIE
WHAT!?

Robert is teary eyed, beaten down.

ROBERT
Judith's dead.

Annie's horrified, waiting for news of Grace.

ANNIE
What about Grace?

ROBERT
She was in pretty bad shape. They've done a C.A.T. Scan – she has some hemorrhaging...

DOCTOR
But nothing we can't handle...

ANNIE
(impatient)
Where is she now?

DOCTOR
Surgery.

ANNIE
Surgery! For what?

ROBERT
(interrupting)
Annie, her leg was shattered – what they call the distal epi.. epi..

DOCTOR
Distal epicondyle of the femur...

ROBERT
(quietly, crying)
They have to take the leg off.

Annie responds without tears and cries but with a quiet shock.

We can tell her mind is racing, trying to process the information, until finally she asks:

ANNIE
Which leg?

The Doctor and Robert are surprised by the question.

ROBERT
What difference does it make?

Annie stares for a beat, then nods apologetically.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Pilgrim is sedated, lying in his own blood in the snow, surrounded by Police and trackers. He is being attended to by LIZ HAMMOND, who is dictating to her assistant:

LIZ
...His skull, cheek, and nose are severely fractured. He has a deep chest wound. I'm not even sure it can be closed.

LOCAL TRACKER
(deadpan, local accent)
Animal should be put down – anybody can see that.

Liz looks up to him, resentfully, but knows he's right.

INT. GRACE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Camera moves from Grace's face down her body to Robert's hand, which rubs her good leg. He looks at her lovingly, pushing the hair from her forehead.

Annie, needing to do something, tenderly straightens Grace's blankets. It is plain to see where her leg had once been.

Robert can't look. Annie, one to face her fears, bravely looks at it head on. She notices the I.V. Bag and rises on:

ANNIE
That bag's almost empty.

ROBERT

(looking)
No, it's got a little left. They'll
be in to change it.

ANNIE
(as she exits)
Robert, you leave it up these
people...!

Robert is about to respond but Annie is already out the door.

We hear the O.S. DIALOGUE as Robert listens.

ANNIE (O.S.)
Excuse me, my daughter needs a new
I.V.

NURSE (O.S.)
We have her down, we'll be right in.

ANNIE (O.S.)
I'd like it taken care of now please.

Annie enters first.

ANNIE
You have to keep on top of these
people or else they just sit on their –

But Robert is ignoring her. Facing Grace, smoothing away her
hair. He's giving her the silent treatment. Annie knows this
means Robert doesn't approve of her dictatorial behavior.

Annoyed, she turns away as well.

The Nurse enters with a new bag and begins to replace the
old one as Robert backs away.

ROBERT
I'm sorry.

ANNIE
Tch. What are you –

Annie, about to respond to his inappropriate politeness, is
stopped by Robert, who finally looks at her. It's a powerful
look that tells her to calm down and shut up. It's a look
that, for all of Robert's sensitivity, affects Annie. She

gets the message and stays calm.

As the nurse leaves, Annie is about to say thank you, but Robert beats her to it.

ROBERT

Thank you.

Annie and Robert stand facing each other, when the PHONE RINGS.

Annie picks up.

INTERCUT

EXT. WOODS - DAY

LIZ HAMMOND on a cellular, walking away from the crowd.

LIZ

Annie, it's Liz. How's Grace?

ANNIE

(journalistic)

Her leg was shattered so they had to, uh... remove it. She had some bleeding but it's under control.

LIZ

Oh God, Annie, I'm so sorry. I... I know you're being hit with a low now, I don't want to take too much of your time but I have to talk to you about Pilgrim.

Annie hears the name as if it's some distant echo she can't quite identify; Liz speaks quickly as Annie watches Grace breathing in her sleep –

LIZ

It's not good. I've never seen an animal with these injuries still breathing. I know this is difficult to hear right now I'd like your permission to put him down. It's the really best thing we can do for –

That was too much information for Annie;

ANNIE

Wait, uh, I, I don't understand.
Start again – He's alive...

LIZ

Yes, but he's in a tremendous pain...

ANNIE

Well, of course, right...

ROBERT

What is it?

LIZ

(overlapping)

We really shouldn't wait...

ANNIE

(overlapping)

Hold on, Liz...

(to Robert)

Something about Pilgrim...

The Doctor pokes his head in.

DOCTOR

(overlapping)

Mr. and Mrs. MacLean...

ANNIE

(overlapping)

– put him down. She says...

ROBERT

(overlapping, to Doctor)

Yes. Hi.

(to Annie)

Tell her you'll call her back.

He exits with the Doctor.

ANNIE

Liz, listen, the Doctor's here and I
just can't, uh... talk now... so –

LIZ

(interrupting)

I understand, but Annie, please...

ANNIE

(overlapping)

See, what you can do for him...

LIZ

(overlapping)

Annie, no matter what I do, this horse will never be the same.

ANNIE

...I just don't know right now! Do whatever you can and when Grace is –

LIZ

It isn't right to make him suffer...

ANNIE

And I can say the same thing about my daughter! But she is suffering! Can you solve that problem!

(Liz is quiet)

I can't deal with this now, Liz! If you need a yes or no right now, then no – don't do it! Not until I know Grace is all right. Now, please! Just do what you can. Okay?

(softer)

Please.

Liz is stopped by Annie's almost pleading tone.

LIZ

All right...

They hang up. Annie takes a breath. Robert re-enters.

ANNIE

What did he say?

ROBERT

Nothing new. He's just going off duty.

Beat. Silence.

ANNIE

I'm going to get all the nurses' names... It's good to know all their names.

Robert nods. But neither of them moves. They stand motionless for a beat, then Annie begins to break down and eases herself into Robert's arms.

Robert embraces her, kissing her head, with an almost fatherly comfort. His expression tells us it's the moment he's been expecting... and wanting. Now she'll be all right, in his arms.

Whatever distance between them, whatever problems felt insurmountable last night on the phone, are now, for the moment – for Robert – gone.

But Annie's expression tells us something different. Her instinct to hold him was honest... but the effect isn't the same anymore. Something doesn't feel right. Something isn't working anymore about his comforting embrace.

ANNIE

I should go get some of her things.

ROBERT

No, let me go.

ANNIE

(gently pushing away)

No, I'll go. You stay... In case she wakes up.

INT. THE UNIVERSITY ANIMAL HOSPITAL, RECOVERY STALLS - NIGHT

A line of recovery stalls with various sick and hurt animals.

Liz, exhausted asleep, on a chair outside a stall. There's a slight scratching sound. A hoof against the stall. It gets louder, awakening Liz. She gets up and looks inside the padded stall:

Pilgrim is lying in the stall, heavily bandaged. He is waking up. His first instinct is to kick at the padded stall walls.

He looks at Liz, his eyes filled with madness – enraged to still be alive.

INT. GRACE'S BEDROOM IN FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Annie opens the door and enters, flicking on the light.

Camera is on her back, as she places a small suitcase on the bed and opens it. She begins her task with cool efficiency.

Opening drawers and closets, assessing what should be taken, what isn't necessary.

Suddenly, she stops. She feels disoriented for a moment. She can't remember the last time she was inside this room. She takes a moment to pause and actually look around.

In the light, we now see more of Grace's inner sanctum. Horse riding prize ribbons in various colors adorn the walls.

Books. A girl's bureau cluttered with teenage possession ranging from childhood toys to items that suggest a reaching towards adulthood. Annie examines some items, affectionately.

A GOOD LUCK CHARM from India sits among her things. Annie takes it to pack in the suitcase.

She notices a framed 8X10 of Grace sitting proudly atop Pilgrim with Judith at her heel. She then notices the edge of another picture behind this one, in the frame. She pulls the Pilgrim photo out to reveal: An old 8X10 of Annie hugging Grace as a toddler. With her back to Camera, Annie remembers:

MEMORY:

INT. GRACE'S ROOM - A DAY REMEMBERED

Annie is playing with toddler Grace. Chasing her around the room. Picking her and tossing her onto a small, toddler bed.

Blowing into her stomach. Grace is laughing uncontrollably.

END OF MEMORY

Annie slides the Pilgrim picture back into the frame, then returns to her task of packing.

INT. GRACE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Annie enters. No one else is there. She places the suitcase

on a chair and opens it. She takes out the INDIAN LUCKY CHARM and some horse books, and places them on her bedside table.

She takes care to prop up the Lucky Charm.

She wets a cloth with some water from a pitcher and gently wipes Grace's sweaty brow... INSERT VISUAL FLASHBACK HERE, instead of in Country House.

Annie then continues unpacking the suitcase. She opens Grace's closet and sees a hospital bag filled with Grace's clothes at the time of the accident. Annie examines them and discovers they are hers. Annie shoves the clothes into a bag and starts unpacking.

INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA - PRE-DAWN

The clock is ticking on the wall. The cafeteria is empty except for one tired Intern, drinking coffee on a break.

Robert and Annie are having a cup of coffee. In the silence, they search for things to say. Until:

ROBERT

I saw Judith's parents while you were at the apartment...

(Annie listens)

I wanted to say something...

(beat)

But I... I was so relieved that Grace was still... that it wasn't our daughter.

ANNIE

We're very lucky.

ROBERT

(nods)

The funeral's on Friday.

He rises and crosses to the self-help coffee dispenser as he continues...

ROBERT

Oh, uh, I meant to tell you... Alex brought that fabric over...

ANNIE

Okay.

ROBERT

It's on the table by the phone. I
didn't know what to tell him...

(returns to table,
sits)

...Whether or not we were...

(beat)

...if we still we're thinking of
redoing the couch.

Annie just nods. She senses Robert is looking for some kind
of reassurance, but she can't give it to him. He continues;

ROBERT

...And uh... Mario called about moving
the wisteria?

ANNIE

Oh. Right. I'll call him.

Pause. Annie looks at her husband as he stares off to the
side, deep in his thoughts. She can sense he's sinking as he
fidgets with the napkins. She remembers:

MEMORY:

INT. A SMALLER APARTMENT, KITCHEN - A NIGHT REMEMBERED

A younger Annie stands in a bathrobe, noticeably pregnant,
cooking at a stove – reading instructions from a propped up
cookbook. FRANK SINATRA IS BLASTING as she sings along, in
full voice, without inhibitions;

ANNIE

"SHE'S LOVES THE THEATRE BUT NEVER
COMES LATE... SHE NEVER BOTHERS WITH
PEOPLE SHE HATES... THAT'S WHY THE
LADY IS A TRAMP!..."

A younger Robert, wearing a suit, arrives home from work.
Seeing her, he smiles affectionately. He puts down his
briefcase and bursts into his own playful Sinatra
impersonation:

ROBERT

"She loves the free..."

Startled, Annie turns around and smiles:

ROBERT
(sexily undoing his
tie)
"...FRESH, WIND IN HER HAIR... LIFE
WITHOUT CARE... SHE'S BROKE... BUT
IT'S 'OK'...

ANNIE
(a la fan)
Sing it to me, Frankie!

ROBERT
(a la Sinatra cool)
How's my pregnant chick!

She moves to him and they embrace... He wraps his arms around her. They kiss. Annie laughs.

ANNIE
You can hardly get your arms around
me. How depressing. You're so early.

ROBERT
I had to excuse myself from a meeting.
It's ridiculous. I kept thinking
about the baby... you... and, I swear,
I was going to start bawling right
into my briefs.

ANNIE
(loving it)
Aw... that's so sweet.

ROBERT
I love you.

ANNIE
Do you? Do you really?

They turn to each other and kiss.

END OF MEMORY.

INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA - PRE-DAWN

Annie and Robert sit silently at the table in an empty hospital cafeteria, a lifetime later.

INT. GRACE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAYBREAK

The room's lights are dimmed. Dawn is being to break through.

Grace, slowly, opens her eyes coming out of sedation. She takes a moment to figure out where she is... to remember.

She uses her hands to hoist herself up, but she's unsteady and knocks into her bedside table – knocking the Good Luck Charm from India off the table. It rolls under the bed, with a water tumbler. Grace never sees the Charm.

Grace looks where her leg once was. She feels the blanket, the empty space where her leg once was... just like her mother did (did her father couldn't). Instead of self-pity, she's oddly fascinated.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GRACE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER THAT DAY

Daylight pours in. Robert and Annie enter. Robert, loaded with gifts, immediately crosses to Grace, on the side of her good leg. Annie takes her position beside the lost leg.

Robert kisses his daughter;

ROBERT

Hi, sweetheart...

Annie's hand finds Grace's hand, and holds one of her fingers tightly. Grace responds by wrapping her hand around her mother's. They exchange a look of respect and gratitude.

GRACE

Have you heard from Judith's parents?

ROBERT

No, not yet.

GRACE

How's Pilgrim doing?

ANNIE

Liz is taking care of him.

(to change the subject)
The doctor said the sooner you start
therapy the better the chances are
you can –

GRACE
I can't even get out of bed yet!
You're already putting me in therapy!!

Annie, slightly hurt, drops it as Robert takes over:

ROBERT
The doctor said whenever you're ready.
Take your time. You tell us... But
he thinks it'll only be a few months,
then –

As Robert continues talking, Annie drifts to the Nurse.

Needing to manage something, she asks:

ANNIE
Did you get her fresh towels?

SOME TIME LATER:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK WEST APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

A limousine drives up as the Doorman gets the car door. The
weather is slightly warmer. People's clothing looks as if
spring is coming nearer.

Annie exits first, carrying a jacket for Grace. She is
followed by Robert, who immediately turns to help Grace. We
hear her O.S.

GRACE (O.S.)
Dad! I can do it, OK?!

ROBERT
OK, OK.

Annie shoots him a disapproving look.

We see Grace's good leg exit first... then two crutches,
followed by... a PROSTHETIC LEG. Grace scoots into view, and
takes a breath.

GRACE

You all go ahead. I'll be up by
Christmas.

INT. CENTRAL PARK WEST APARTMENT - NIGHT

The three sit at a dinner table, eating dinner. Grace picks at her food. Robert can't help staring at her. Annie eats, watching them both.

ROBERT

Do you want something else, honey?
We order something else?

GRACE

No, I'm just not that hungry.

ANNIE

Why don't you go lie down?

GRACE

I don't want to lie down. I've been
lying down enough.

ROBERT

You want to watch some television?

GRACE

(edgy)
Maybe... look – just...

Robert and Annie wait. She doesn't continue. She rises, reaching for her crutches. Robert moves to help.

GRACE

I got it! I got it!

She exits into her room. Annie looks at him disapprovingly.

INT. ANNIE AND ROBERT'S BATHROOM/BEDROOM - NIGHT

Annie and Robert stand before their separate sinks, talking to each other through their separate mirrors, as they wash up for bed.

ANNIE

You've got to stop doing that?

ROBERT
Doing what?

ANNIE
Helping all the time! Running to her
every time she trips or falls...
Anticipating her all the time.

Robert shuts off his sink and dries his face, without a word.

He exits into the bedroom, and gets into bed. For a beat, he
stares up at the ceiling – then says quite plainly.

ROBERT
You know, Annie, this didn't just
happen to you.

Annie is applying moisturizer when she hears this. As it
sinks in, she doesn't like it.

INT. GRACE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Grace stands by her door and can hear her parents muffled,
tense voices. Annie is angry at his complacency. Robert just
wants what's best for Grace. She closes the door. Silence.

She puts her crutches against the wall and tries to walk
towards her bureau without them. It is a struggle, but she
does... almost falling, but grabbing the bureau just in time.

The 8X10 of her and Pilgrim, falls face down. She props it
up and looks at it – focusing on her horse, then on Judith.

Suddenly, she lashes out, knocking the photograph onto the
floor...

ROBERT (O.S.)
Honey, you all right? Did something
fall?

GRACE
(angrily shouts)
NO!

EXT. GRACE'S PRIVATE SCHOOL - MORNING

Annie pulls up in a Range Rover and stops. Grace moves for
the door. Annie asks respectfully;

ANNIE

Do you want any help?

Grace doesn't even bother to answer. She manages to get onto the pavements, then turns for her bag...

Annie notices other kids looking at Grace from behind, as they enter the school.

ANNIE

Dad'll pick you up today, all right?

GRACE

Okay.

Grace looks up to her mother. What is unspoken between them is the understanding that today will be difficult and there's nothing either one can do about it.

ANNIE

You'll be fine.

Grace nods and turns to the school. Annie watches her go.

INT. GRACE'S SCHOOL - MORNING

Grace makes her way through the hall. It is the first time she has had to maneuver through a crowd. Some of the younger children are especially unconscious. Grace sweats her way through, trying to maintain her balance and her sanity.

As Grace slowly moves along, whatever small faith she had that she could get through this day, begins to diminish.

INT. ANNIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Annie moves about the office, hands in pocket, in front of her wall of windows. LUCY and her staff sitting around the office. Annie is speaking to a YOUNG WOMAN staff member;

ANNIE

I don't care what he told you! The man's a liar! The man's an actor, for Christ's sake. They're all liars! They'll say anything to get a cover...

The Young Woman looks insulted. AN ASSISTANT comes in to

give Annie a note;

EXT. GRACE'S SCHOOL - DAY

Annie is crossing an empty school yard. Grace is sitting on the ground, her back against a wall, her "legs" in front of her. She has been crying. She looks up to her mother.

GRACE
It's too hard.

Annie kneels before her sympathetically brushing her hair away:

ANNIE
Oh, honey... What happened?

GRACE
Doesn't matter. I... I don't want to come back, that's all.

ANNIE
(softly)
Oh. Well, what are you going to do?
You have to go to school, honey. I mean, what –

GRACE
(snaps)
I'm not coming back! That's it! I want to go home!

ANNIE
Grace, listen to me. Your body is just healing. You have to give the rest of you time as well...

GRACE
Is that your version of a pep talk?

ANNIE
You are not staying home all day feeling sorry for yourself. You're going to get up and you're going to figure this out.

GRACE
(snotty)

Fine!

ANNIE

It's still early. What's your next class?

With secret delight, Grace viciously utters the word:

GRACE

Gym!

INT. ANNIE AND ROBERT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Annie is at her desk studying Grace's book on Horse Whisperers.

Robert is on his bed with briefs laid out before him.

INT. GRACE'S BEDROOM - SAME NIGHT

The door is closed. A SONG blares on her stereo. Grace is in her bed watching a video of her and Pilgrim... riding at a horse show. There's a shot of Annie standing proudly, watching her ride. Another shot of her and Judith, both of them on their horses, waving to camera.

INT. BEDROOM - SAME NIGHT

Grace enters.

GRACE

Dad?

Both Robert and Annie look up.

ROBERT

What, sweetheart?

GRACE

(beat)

I want to see Pilgrim.

Robert and Annie exchange an anxious look.

EXT. DYER HORSE FARM, CONNECTICUT - DAY

It's raining. The MacLean car is parked by the barn. They are walking towards the stables under their umbrellas as Liz

runs to greet them.

LIZ

Hello...

(to Grace)

It's so good to see you. How ya doing?

ROBERT

She's doing just great. Aren't you kiddo?

GRACE

I'm fine.

LIZ

Well, come on. He's out back now...

(leads them)

Mind how you go. It's pretty muddy back there.

GRACE

Why is he in the back? Why isn't he in the barn with the other horses?

Liz stops, causing everyone to stop. She turns to face Grace, realizing she doesn't know. She looks at Robert and Annie, accusingly. She tries to explain:

LIZ

Well, Grace, you see... Pilgrim just... isn't the same horse he used to be.

(to the parents)

As a matter of fact, maybe now's not the best time to –

GRACE

I really want to see him.

Liz looks at Annie. Annie nods. Liz leads them on.

They reach a row of empty old stalls. They cross to one of the stalls – its doors are closed. Liz draws back the bolt on top half of the door.

There is an immediate explosion of sound inside the stall, the sound of fear, startling them. Then it's still. Liz slowly opens the door. Grace, with the aide of her cane, walks to

the stall. She hesitates, then looks in. It takes a moment for her eyes to grow accustomed to the dark. She sees Pilgrim with his head down in the shadows...

GRACE

Hello, beautiful boy...

He lifts his head at the sound of her voice. Grace, and the audience, see him for the first time – His mad eyes, his terrible disfigurement...

Grace cries out, stepping backwards, nearly stumbling in the mud... What is left of her horse are gone. Annie realizes what's happened and, together with Robert, rush to her... They too see the monster Pilgrim has become and are horrified.

Grace angrily pushes away from them and "runs" off. Robert goes after her.

Annie is standing in the rain with Liz – her eyes unable to move away from the sight of Pilgrim.

LIZ (O.S.)

You should have told her, Annie. I tried to explain to you how bad it was... I guess you had to see it. But, there's nothing to be done. This animal's beyond help. Annie, can I have your permission now to put him down?

Annie stands in the rain, hands in pocket, fixed on Pilgrim and more determined than ever;

ANNIE

No.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK WEST APARTMENT - NIGHT

Alone in her study, Annie sits before her computer searching the Internet for information on HORSES – Veterinarian Journals, Therapies, Accidents, Histories... We sense she's been at it a while...

She locates an ITEM TITLE – HORSE WHISPERERS. Interested, she brings it up on the screen.

INT. NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY - NIGHT

Annie sits in the huge reading room, books spread out before her, under a green reading lamp. Her voice tells us what she's reading:

ANNIE (V.O.)

"It was in America that horses first roamed..."

In the books, we see pictures, lithographs, paintings and drawings...

ANNIE (V.O.)

"A million years before the birth of man, they grazed the vast empty plains of grass and crossed to other continents over bridges of rocks... They first knew man as the hunted knows the hunter, for long before man saw horses as a means to killing other beasts, man killed them for meat..."

ANNIE'S V.O. CONTINUES OVER;

INT. PILGRIM'S STALL - NIGHT

ANNIE (V.O.)

"...The alliance with man would forever be fragile – for the fear he'd struck into their hearts was too deep to be dislodged... Since that Neolithic moment when a horse was first haltered, there were those among men who understood this..."

INT. GRACE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Grace sits alone in her darkened room, staring out the window but not looking at anything. There's a discomforting distance in her expression.

ANNIE (V.O.)

"...They could see into the creature's soul and soothe the wounds they found there..."

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A FAIRGROUNDS PARKING LOT, CALIFORNIA - DAY

A hot, dusty fairgrounds horse arena. The worn wooden bleachers, crowded. Lines of cars and pick-up trucks.

ANNIE (V.O.)

"...For secrets uttered softly into troubled ears, these men were known as The Whisperers..."

One particular pick-up truck has its back door opened. A MAN'S LEG is sticking out, putting on a pair of boots.

A moment later the Man gets out of the car. Holding a cowboy hat, he has a certain quality, a self-respect, that men who know themselves seem to have. TOM BOOKER.

A weathered redheaded woman named RONA – late forties, strong, wiry horsewoman's build – is walking towards him.

RONA

Hey, darlin'.

TOM

Hey, Rona. Sorry I'm late.

RONA

I wouldn't know what to do if you were on time.

They walk together towards the fairgrounds.

TOM

You're looking fit.

RONA

Fit? You want to check my teeth.

(Tom laughs)

Good crowd today. I think you'll have some fun. You going to stay for dinner?

TOM

If it's not too much trouble, I thought I might.

RONA

(playful)
Kind of trouble I'm in the mood for.

TOM
Oh-oh... Maybe I better get back in
the truck.

Rona lets out a hearty laugh as they enter the horse arena.

EXT. HORSE ARENA, CALIFORNIA - DAY

Inside the corral, a small black thoroughbred is being worked by Tom. As he rides and narrates into a radio microphone to the crowd, we sense this is a man of good humor and great skill – guileless, sensible, of the earth.

TOM
...It's always kind of interesting
to hear the horse's side of the
story...

The crowd laughs warmly. He directs his comments to a WOMAN wearing an expensive Ralph Lauren western outfit, standing outside the corral...

TOM
Now if he was cranky or lazy, like
you say he is, we'd be seeing his
tail twitching there and his ears
back, maybe. But this isn't a cranky
horse, it's a scared horse. You see
how braced he is up around the neck
back there. He just doesn't know
which way to turn...

The Woman nods. Tom turns the horse on a dime so that he always stays facing the circling thoroughbred...

TOM
You see how he keeps pointing his
hindquarters in at me? Well, I'd
guess the reason he seems reluctant
to move out is because when he does,
he gets in trouble for it.

THE WOMAN
He's not good at transitions, you
know? When I want him to move from a

trot to a lope, say...

TOM

(smiles)

Well, I'm sure that's what you think but that's not what I'm seeing. You may think you're asking for a lope, but your body may be saying something else altogether. You might be putting too many conditions on him. For instance, you might be saying "GO, but, hey, don't go too fast." He can tell that from the way you feel. Your body can't lie. You ever give him a kick to make him move out?

THE WOMAN

He won't go unless I do.

TOM

And then he goes and you feel like he's going too fast, so you yank him back?

(she nods)

And next thing you know, he's bucking.

(she nods again)

Well, if someone told you to go, stop, go, stop – you'd buck too.

The people laugh. The Woman smiles self-consciously.

TOM

It's a dance, see... Somebody has to lead and somebody has to follow.

Tom gracefully moves his horse around the ring, "dancing". He then takes up a long coiled rope and throws it so that the coils slap against the black horse's flank, making it burst into a lope. And again... Making the animal go from a trot to a lope, letting it slow, then up to a lope again.

TOM

I want him to get so he can leave real soft. He's getting the idea now. He's not all braced up and tense like he was at the start. He's finding out it's okay.

He throws the rope again and this time the transition to the lope is a smooth one.

TOM

You see that? He's getting better already. Pretty soon, if you work at it, you'll be able to make all these transitions easy on a loose rein.

(sotto voce, wry)

Yeah, and pigs'll fly.

(to Woman)

He's going to be okay – so long as you don't go yanking on him.

She nods, but he can see she's upset, feeling foolish. He walks the horse over to her, turns off the microphone and speaks sympathetically:

TOM

Look, the truth is it's all about self-preservation. These animals...

(with great affection)

...well, they just have such big hearts, you know? There's nothing they want more than to do what you want them to do. But when the messages get all confused, the only thing they know to do is try and save themselves... Now, why don't you go saddle up and see what happens.

Feeling better, and not a little attracted to his heartfelt man's man, the Woman smiles and reaches for his hand to climb over the rail. Her horse lets her come right up to him and stroke his neck. Tom comments;

TOM

They won't ever hold a thing against you. They're the most forgiving creatures God ever made.

Turning on his mike and turning back to the crowd, he says:

TOM

Okay, who's next?

A Young Boy leads a mule into the ring. Tom smiles:

TOM
Now God has another idea entirely
with the mule.

EXT. THE FAIRGROUNDS - LATER THAT DAY

Tom has finished his "show." People are shaking his hand, thanking him, as he walks away from the corral, towards a trailer.

The Woman in the Ralph Lauren approaches:

WOMAN
Excuse me.

He faces the Woman:

WOMAN
Hi. I'm Dale. I just wanted to – I
can't get over the way he felt under
me after you'd finish with him.
Everything had just, I don't know,
freed up or something.

The Woman is flirting. Tom shrugs, uncomfortably;

TOM
Well, that'll happen.

WOMAN
Where did you learn all this stuff?

TOM
What stuff is that?

WOMAN
About horses? I'd love to learn more
about it myself. Do you offer any
private lessons for riders?

TOM
(getting the message)
Well... Dale... you know, a lot of
this stuff... it's just... nuts and
bolts.

WOMAN
What do you mean?

TOM

Well, if the rider's nuts, the horse bolts.

(smiles)

That's the whole lesson right there. You have a good day now... Just... keep on freeing yourself up.

He leaves her, entering the trailer.

INT. RONA'S TRAILER - NIGHT

A small, well-used trailer. Tom and Rona are finishing dinner like comfortable old friends. Rona rises, taking the plates into the kitchen and starts rinsing them:

RONA

Oh I clear forget. You had a call from some woman in New York. She sounded pretty wound up.

TOM

I don't any woman in New York. But from what I hear, most of them are wound up.

RONA

The number's by the phone.

He nods but doesn't move. He just looks at Rona and smiles.

She's a good woman. But Tom hopes she doesn't want anymore than what they have together. Rona notices him looking and smiles:

RONA

What are you looking at, young man?

TOM

How long were you married?

RONA

Long enough.

TOM

You ever miss it?

RONA
Does a horse miss a saddle?

TOM
Sometimes.

She chuckles, shuts the water off and crosses back to him, sitting beside him.

RONA
Well as a matter of fact, I don't...
most of the time.

She starts unbuttoning his shirt.

TOM
You know, Rona, we weren't all that
good together even when we were good
together.

RONA
Honey... I was always good.

Tom smiles as Rona leans in. They kiss.

INT. ANNIE'S OFFICE, N.Y.C. - MORNING

Annie is looking over a magazine cover with Lucy and her staffers.

She is unhappy.

ANNIE
You know it's perfectly shot, it's
perfectly cropped, it's perfectly
laid out and I'm so bloody bored,
I'd rather buy a Motor Racing magazine –
Start over.

Some general whines and groans as her assistant hands her a note.

ANNIE
Uh, would you all excuse me a moment?

She waits for them to leave as she sits before the phone.
One of her lines is lit:

EXT. A ROADSIDE SERVICE STATION SOMEWHERE IN UTAH - DAY

An endless sky. An empty ribbon of two-lane highway in Utah.

A small roadside station. Tom's pick-up truck, his horse trailer hitched to it, getting gas.

Tom is on the pay phone. We hear Annie's voice:

ANNIE (O.S.)
This is Annie MacLean.

TOM
Yeah. Hello. This is Tom Booker. I got a message you called.

INTERCUT ANNIE IN HER OFFICE:

ANNIE
(efficient,
expeditiously)
Oh! Yes. Thank you for calling back.
Uh, all right, let me try to explain my situation as briefly as possible...
You see, my daughter had an accident with her horse... They were both injured and she, my daughter, she hasn't been able to... fully... uh...
It was an extremely traumatic experience... and uh...

Tom, sensing her turmoil, listening compassionately.

ANNIE
I went on the Internet and found this article about you... It says you're a Horse Whisperer, that you... you help people with horse problems. And you have quite a success rate when it comes to traumatized –

TOM
Well, see, truth is, ma'am, I help horses with people's problems.

ANNIE
Well, you know, however you want to put it – I got your information

from the publisher of the article. I called Montana and your sister-in-law, I think, gave me this number.

(trying to be charming)

I've been hot on your trail you could say because I was hoping you'd consider coming to New York and taking a look at my daughter's horse and possibly –

TOM

Ma'am, I'm very sorry about your problems and I appreciate what your daughter must be going through, but I'm afraid you've misunderstood whatever it is you read. I don't do that sort of thing.

ANNIE

Well, if you could just come for the day. New York's only a few hours by plane, I'd have you home by dinner...

TOM

Look, even if it was nearer, that's just not what I do. I give clinics. And I'm not even doing them for a while. I'm heading back to Montana right now. I got a ranch to take care of...

ANNIE

(interrupts, abruptly)

I'll pay you for your fare. I'll send you to Montana first class.

TOM

(getting impatient)

Ma'am, first class to Montana is a waste of good money. Now, am I being too polite here or when I say NO in Utah, does that mean YES in New York City?

Annie is taken aback. Tom feels badly.

TOM

I, I don't mean to sound insensitive.

I understand your situation. But there's nothing I can do. You just called the wrong person, that's all. I hear there are a bunch of therapists in New York. Maybe you should call one of them.

ANNIE

Mr. Booker, if I could just ex –

TOM

I am very sorry, ma'am. Goodbye now.

He hangs up before Annie can continue.

INT. GRACE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Annie reaches for Grace's bedroom door, then pauses. She realizes she should knock. She does and whispers:

ANNIE

Grace?

(knocks again)

Grace, it's mom.

Annie slowly opens the door. She finds Grace's bed empty. She looks over to the window to find Grace sitting in a chair, in the dark, looking out the window.

ANNIE

Grace. What are you doing?

Not looking up, Grace speaks in a hollow voice.

GRACE

I can't find that charm Daddy gave me from India.

ANNIE

I brought it to you in the hospital.

GRACE

No, you didn't.

ANNIE

Grace, I put it on the table near your –

GRACE
(apathetic)
Doesn't matter.

Beat.

ANNIE
Have you decided about Pilgrim?

GRACE
What about him?

ANNIE
Well... how you feel all right about
telling Liz to put him down...

GRACE
I think we should. It's not fair to
let him suffer. He's not much use
anymore. He'd hate living like that.

ANNIE
I think that's... very compassionate
and... mature way of looking at it.

GRACE
Mom?

ANNIE
Yeah?

GRACE
Maybe they should put me down too.

ANNIE
What?

GRACE
I mean, I'm not much use anymore.
Why can't they be compassionate to
me?

What frightens Annie most is the calm and apathy in Grace's voice. She's surrendering... Annie, for the first time in a long time, feels she's losing control.

INT. CENTRAL PARK WEST APARTMENT - NIGHT

Annie sits alone at the kitchen table, nursing a glass of wine.

Robert enters and sits opposite her, wearing a tuxedo – his tie and collar undone.

ANNIE

How was the dinner?

ROBERT

(wry)

All our "favorite" people were there saying all their "favorite" things about their "favorite" subjects. I thought to myself, we've been friends with these people almost twenty years and nobody knows anybody. We're so afraid we won't like each other and have nobody go to dinners with.

ANNIE

Why did you go?

ROBERT

(surprised)

They're still our friends, Annie. It's nothing serious. You kid about them all the time... And I could tell Paul really appreciated me being there.

He drinks Annie's wine as she looks at him.

ROBERT

Did you get a hold of that horse guy?

ANNIE

Yeah.

ROBERT

What did he say?

ANNIE

No.

Robert nods. Accepting. Silence. Annie sips her wine. Then:

ROBERT

I was thinking... Maybe we should think about the three of us going someplace warm... Remember that house we rented in Bermuda... The pink one with the –

His arm accidentally spills the wine.

ROBERT

Shit.

As he bends down to wipe it up with a napkin, Annie watches Robert clean the spill. Something about his movements, his posture – a sense of weakness, of surrendering, of not having the inclination to fight, of just accepting and smoothing over the rough spots – strikes her hard. Annie realizes the love she feels for Robert isn't fading. It's gone.

He finishes cleaning and sits.

ROBERT

What was I saying?

ANNIE

About us going someplace warm...
Someplace Grace'll have to wear shorts
or bathing suits or summer dresses...

Robert looks at her and realizes it's a bad idea. He nods, again, getting the message. Silence. In that silence, Annie looks at him... and makes a decision:

ANNIE

Robert, I want to take Pilgrim out
to Mr. Booker. Drive him out to
Montana... With Grace.

Robert is confused... and a little worried.

ROBERT

I don't understand. You just said he
said no.

ANNIE

He did, but... I think I can change
his mind.

ROBERT

That's the craziest thing I ever heard. Absolutely not.

ANNIE

Robert, Grace isn't adjusting to school. And she can't sit in this apartment all day... I think it would be good for her.

ROBERT

(at a loss)

NO! What are you – you're serious about this?

ANNIE

I've called Liz. They can set me up with a trailer for Pilgrim. I thought we'd stay at motels along the way...

ROBERT

(overlapping)

You've already made arrangements!?

ANNIE

No. I was just researching. Calm down.

ROBERT

I come home and you tell me we're going to drive a psychotic horse to Montana! I can't just pick up and leave...

ANNIE

I'm not asking you to. I'll do it.

ROBERT

You want to do this by yourself? How? You can't take care of Pilgrim all the –

ANNIE

He'll be sedated. I know horses, Robert. I'm the one who taught Grace how to ride.

ROBERT

(overlapping)
What... No... What about the magazine?

ANNIE
I'm in charge. I went back very soon after the accident. They didn't expect me for a couple of months. I'll just take that time now... I can still oversee things from Montana... Take my fax... My computer...

Beat. Robert fears this is about the marriage. Yet –

ROBERT
No. It's, uh... No, I really don't think it's a good idea

ANNIE
Why?!

ROBERT
(searching)
Her psychiatrist... said... she needs security now... stability...

ANNIE
I can't say he's been all that effective with her.

ROBERT
Are you a psychiatrist? He said it takes time.

ANNIE
I don't care what he says! We have to do something, Robert! I can't sit here and trust everything's going to work out just by pretending it will.

ROBERT
I'm not pretending anything!

Beat. Robert just stares at her. He looks concerned... almost worried. Annie gets uncomfortable.

ANNIE
What?

It is very difficult for Robert to say;

ROBERT

I thought... well, ever since the accident, I just thought we...

He stops. Annie knows where he headed and prays to God he doesn't continue. He doesn't. A thick silence hangs between them.

ROBERT

I really wish I could understand why you think this is so necessary.

ANNIE

(frustrated)

Robert, we're losing her. We're losing her.

(he listens)

I don't care what the doctors say. The truth is, they don't know anymore than we do – less, when it comes to Grace... This may not sound sensible or... logical, but nobody's suggesting anything better. I can't explain it, Robert. I just have this feeling... this annoying... bloody feeling that if... if, somehow, Pilgrim can be made all right... then so can Grace. I just know it!

Robert can feel the strength of her will. He can find no way around it.

ROBERT

What if she doesn't want to go?

ANNIE

She will if you think she should.

ROBERT

And you think it's best if I don't come.

ANNIE

(hesitates)

No, that's not what I said. I'm not a dictator. If you feel you should

come, then come. Just do whatever
you think is right.

At some moment, they realize Grace is standing at the entrance
to the kitchen. They are surprised.

GRACE

I'm not going! I don't care what she
says!

Annie lowers her head. Robert stares at Grace as she walks
to him.

GRACE

Daddy?... I don't want to go.

Grace stands next to Robert. He holds her hands. Annie looks
at him, without sympathy. Robert looks back. In his face is
the total acceptance of what must be. As well as the sadness
of it's inevitability. He looks back at his daughter, whose
eyes have never left him.

EXT. JOAN DYER STABLE - DAY

Pilgrim is being loaded into the trailer by four strong stable
men, violently kicking and pulling all the way.

Annie watches with anxiety – an almost giddy Liz by her
side.

ANNIE

Maybe we should give him another
sedative.

LIZ

Problem is, there aren't many
volunteers. He's already had enough
to sink a battleship. You have a
pin, just in case?

ANNIE

Of course not.

LIZ

Probably best. You may want to shoot
yourself half way to Ohio.

In the back seat of ANNIE'S SUBURBAN sits Grace – her back

to the action. Hearing Pilgrim's struggle. Putting her walkman on her ears and raising the volume... We hear –

GRACE'S MUSIC, ON THE SOUNDTRACK, bringing us to:

EXT. A HIGHWAY, IN PENNSYLVANIA - DAY

Annie's Suburban drives along Route 80, pulling the horse trailer behind.

INT. SUBURBAN - DAY

Grace, in the back seat, wearing her headphones, listening to her music (maybe LIZ PHAIR OR HOLLY COLE). Detached. Non-committal. As trucks pass by, their tires slapping the pavement, she reacts and turns to the other window.

Annie, in sunglasses, shifts her attention between the road and her rear-view mirror – checking on Grace.

EXT. HIGHWAY IN - EARLY MORNING

The Suburban drives as the sun begins to set.

EXT. MOTEL IN OHIO - NIGHT

The Suburban and Horse Trailer are parked in the lot.

INT. MOTEL ROOM, OHIO - NIGHT

A small furnished motel room with two twin beds.

Grace sits up in bed watching TV, with no expression. A sitcom with canned laughter serves as a hypnotic drug.

Annie enters from the bathroom, after showering, drying her hair. Grace doesn't bother to look up.

ANNIE

You want to take your bath?

(Grace shakes her head)

We have to get up early tomorrow.

You may not have enough time to –

GRACE

Fine – I'll take my bath.

She begins moving off the bed.

ANNIE

No, I don't mean you have to. It's just that we may not have enough –

GRACE

– enough time tomorrow. I know.

ANNIE

Look, if you want to take it in the morning, that's fine.

GRACE

(interrupts on "fine")

I don't care.

Annie realizes she may have pushed too hard, but she also realizes there's no talking to Grace now. So, she achieves her goal –

ANNIE

Take it now.

Grace hobbles off the bed, enters the bathroom and shuts the door.

INT. MOTEL ROOM IN OHIO - NIGHT

The lights are off. Annie lays in bed, wide awake. It is the middle of the night.

Grace, asleep in the other bed, begins whimpering. She's having a bad dream. Annie rises – considering whether or not to intercede... Finally, Grace begins to cry out... softly at first, but with increasing intensity until she awakens in fear... Annie appears right by her side.

ANNIE

What, sweetheart? What?

Shaken, Grace cannot fight how much she needs her mother at that moment. She wraps her arms around her, tightly, and tries to catch her breath.

ANNIE

It's sleeping in a strange bed, that's all. Happens sometimes. It's Ok.

It's OK.

EXT. ANOTHER ROAD, MID-WEST - DAY

The Suburban continues its journey.

Once again – Annie, in the front, and Grace, in the rear, drive without a word between them.

INT. SUBURBAN - DAY

Grace and Annie occupy their same positions. Annie is on the car phone with her office.

ANNIE

Okay, listen – let's do this. When I get to the next motel, I'll see if they have a fax. If not, I'll call you tomorrow to –

Annie continues O.S. when we hear a shifting, a rocking in the trailer behind them. As if Pilgrim made a sudden move.

Grace quickly turns her head. Annie looks in the rear view at Grace.

ANNIE

Uh Lucy, look, I have to go. OK...
Later.

Annie hangs up and smiles at Grace through the mirror. Grace reaches for her walkman and headphones. Annie offers;

ANNIE

Grace! GRACE!

Grace lowers one side of her headphones;

ANNIE

Would you like to put your music on up here?

Grace shrugs. Annie shrugs it off as well. Grace replaces the headphone. Annie turns on the radio – nothing but country or gospel or religious talk shows... She shuts it off. Frustrated, Annie looks up ahead and sees:

TRUCK STOP DINER

Annie yells to be heard through the headphones;

ANNIE
IT'S ALMOST LUNCHTIME. ARE YOU
HUNGRY!?

GRACE
(shrugs)
Whatever you want.

ANNIE
Fine!

GRACE
Fine.

Annoyed, Annie pulls onto the gravel and stops, talking to herself –

ANNIE
Fine!

She exits the car, banging the door. As she walks around the car to help Grace, she talks to herself in a sarcastic whisper:

ANNIE
"Whatever you want!" Well, this is what I want. I want to eat lunch and I want to smoke a cigarette and I want to keep talking to myself for the next two thousand fucking miles...!"

She opens Grace's door. Grace senses her mother's anger.

INT. TRUCK STOP DINER - DAY

Annie and Grace enter. They look around:

Formica floors, truckers in caps and beer bellies stuffed into booths or at the counter. There is not a single space available.

Annie and Grace stand near the entrance. Another Trucker enters and they step aside, huddled together in this foreign land.

INT. MOTEL IN IOWA - NIGHT

Grace and Annie enter the room to find A DOUBLE BED instead of two twins. Neither comments.

Annie exits O.S., carrying the bags inside, as she says:

DISSOLVE TO:

ANNIE

You should call your dad before it gets too late.

GRACE

I already did.

(Annie's surprised)

This morning. When you went running.

ANNIE

Oh. You didn't tell me.

GRACE

I didn't know I had to.

ANNIE

(stares angrily, speaks softly)

You don't.

Silence. Annie exits past her to the car.

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER

Grace is asleep in her twin bed. Once again, Annie is wide awake. The clock reads: 4:55 AM. But Annie can not sleep.

Camera moves away from Annie, past her side of the bed, to the other side of the room.

WE SEE THE SHADOW OF A WOMAN coming towards the bed. She comes in camera angle and we follow to her back to the bed, which has now transformed into –

A BED FROM THE PAST, IN WHICH A TEN-YEAR-OLD ANNIE IS SLEEPING

WITH HER YOUNGER BROTHER GEORGE.

WE ARE IN MEMORY.

The Woman gently shakes little Annie awaken.

WOMAN

Annie... Annie, sweetheart... wake
up.

The little girl, with sleep in her eyes, turns and sees her.

WOMAN

Bad news I'm afraid. Your Daddy's
gone.

END OF MEMORY.

Annie, in present time next to Grace, thinks of this as she stays awake. Putting her jogging parka on over her nightgown, she goes outside.

EXT. IOWA MOTEL - NIGHT

She crosses the motel parking lot to the horse trailer. She looks in through the siding at Pilgrim, checking on him. She sees he is caught his halter on the side of the van. She crosses to the trailer door, hesitates, then opens it.

Pilgrim looks at her. Gathering her courage, she climbs inside. He is still, looking at her. She carefully frees his halter. And suddenly he bares his teeth, biting at her. She stumbles back out of the trailer, slamming the door shut. She stands leaning against the trailer – wondering if she's out of her mind for attempting this.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. IOWA MOTEL - LATER THAT SAME MORNING

Annie is returning from her jog, sweating. As she crosses to her motel room, she stops by the window, looking in to see:

Grace, on the floor, straining to do her exercises.

Annie fills with compassion for her girl – reminded of the struggle she faces everyday.

EXT. THE BADLANDS - DAY

In the distance, the Suburban and horse trailer look like a dot on the horizon, moving across the Badlands.

INT. THE SUBURBAN - ANOTHER TIME, DUSK

Grace leans against the window in the back, in one of her darker moods. Annie switches radio stations, from Bible thumping to Farm reports. She shuts it off. Silence.

She sees a ROAD SIGN: "LITTLE BIGHORN NATIONAL MONUMENT".

ANNIE
Grace, look!

Grace reads the sign.

ANNIE
Would you like to see that?

GRACE
I don't care.

ANNIE
(overlapping)
I don't care.

Annie's comic mimicking, throws Grace off center.

Annie turns off onto the exit. They drive by a massive casino – it's neon sign flickering. They drive up a hill past a cafe, two Indians in high crowned Cowboy hats standing outside of the cafe. She drives up a hill towards the parking lot of the Monument...

ANNIE
This'll be nice. We haven't seen any
of the sights yet. It's history.
When I was thirteen I used to love
seeing things like this.

GRACE
You were never thirteen, Mom.

Annie laughs, taking it as a joke. Grace almost smiles.

But, Annie drives up to sign only to find a CLOSED SIGN. The

park was closed at six. Annie stops the car. She's hit a brick wall once more. Silence. Finally, Grace speaks with her usual sarcasm;

GRACE
Great idea. So now what?

Beat. Annie's patience snaps;

ANNIE
How long is this going to go on?

GRACE
What?

ANNIE
You know what I mean?
(turns to the back
seat)
Is this it now? Is this the way we're
going to be from now on?

Ignoring her, Grace edges to the passenger side and exits the car. Annie gets out of the driver's side and walks around as she speaks:

ANNIE
Do you want us to turn around and go
back home? Do you?

GRACE
What are you asking me for? You didn't
ask me if I wanted to come in the
first place – now I get to decide?
Forget it!

She begins to turn away. Annie grabs her arm.

ANNIE
Who do you think I'm doing this for?
I'm doing this for you!

GRACE
Bullshit! It's about you! About you
deciding! About you always being
right! You always getting everything
your way, controlling everybody –
like we work for you or something!

ANNIE

I don't believe this!

GRACE

You just want to get away from Daddy and you're using me to do it!

ANNIE

That's not true! Whatever problems your father and I are having, have nothing to do with this.

GRACE

You're amazing! You act like I don't live in that house! Don't you think I hear the two of you!? Don't you think I can tell what's going on? I'm not five years old, Mom!

(Annie is stopped)

You want to divorce Daddy and Daddy doesn't want to.

ANNIE

Did he tell you that?

GRACE

He doesn't have to! It's, like, so obvious you can't stand him.

ANNIE

That's not true!

GRACE

Then why do you want to leave?

ANNIE

It's... it's not that simple to explain. I know you think it is, but it's not. The truth is, I don't really know what I want to do. I don't have all the answers.

GRACE

No, you just act like you do.

Annie is choked with fury. She doesn't know whether to scream, cry or strangle Grace. She turns away and begins walking

quickly, blindly, up past a grove of trees. She comes to a CEMETERY enclosed by a black railing. At the crest of the hill there's a stone monument "The Little Bighorn Cemetery."

In the growing darkness, she sees, scattered on the hillsides below her, white tombstones. A place of sorrow. A cool breeze ruffles her coat and she sticks her hands in her pockets.

Frustrated, alone, at a complete loss as to what to do, what action to take – Annie, for the first time in frozen, standing still – and with her, comes a rush of emotion.

She sits with her back against the monument and begins to weep. For Grace, for Robert, herself, for the tombstones, for everyone.

A FLASHLIGHT shines on her face. It is a PARK RANGER.

PARK RANGER

You okay, ma'am?

ANNIE

(wipes face)

Yes. Fine.

PARK RANGER

That young lady is getting a little worried.

Annie realizes she left Grace alone as it got darker.

ANNIE

I'm sorry. I'm sorry...

Annie rises and is escorted back to the Suburban by the Ranger. She sees:

Grace is sitting in the front seat now, waiting for her – like a little girl lost.

INT. SUBURBAN - CONTINUOUS

Annie gets into the driver's seat. Buckles up. Grace holds back tears.

ANNIE

You buckled up?

(Grace nods)

You cold?

GRACE

Little.

Annie reaches into the back seat and pulls a blanket out, handing it to Grace, making sure it covers her. Grace turns towards the window and closes her eyes. Annie starts the car.

EXT. MONTANA, BACK ROAD - MORNING

C.U. on Pilgrim's head in the trailer as we PULL BACK to reveal the Suburban coming down an empty, seemingly infinite stretch of two-lane road in Montana.

INT. SUBURBAN - MORNING

Annie and Grace, both in front seats, eating doughnuts and coffee. They stop.

POV – Through the windshield is an endless sky and a rolling sea of land.

GRACE

Gee, this looks like a fun place.

ANNIE

Don't they believe in signs here?

GRACE

What would they say? "Ten miles to big rock." "Twenty miles to bigger rock."

ANNIE

There was supposed to be a turn off. Did I miss it?

GRACE

I didn't see it.

Their Suburban is the only vehicle on what seems like miles of road. Annie sighs and puts the Suburban in drive.

EXT. PETERSON'S MOTEL & STABLES, RED FORK MONTANA - DAY

The Suburban and the horse trailer, pulls into Peterson's –

a collection of motel cottage adjacent to an expanse of land that includes stable, corral, a main house and various riding trails into the mountains.

Mr. Peterson runs out from the main house to greet Annie as she gets out of the car.

INT. SUBURBAN, ON ANOTHER MONTANA BACK ROAD -
LATER THAT DAY

Annie, showered and changed, is trying to follow Mr. Peterson's directions to Tom's ranch – written on Peterson motel stationary. She is lost once again.

ANNIE
(reading)
...after left, stay on main road
until rise, then...
(frustrated)
What bloody rise?!? What main road!?

She stops the Suburban (no longer carrying the trailer).

EXT. ANOTHER MONTANA BACK ROAD - CONTINUOUS

From outside the Suburban, we see, but cannot hear, Annie hitting the steering and cursing in frustration.

INT. SUBURBAN - CONTINUOUS

Annie, panting, looks ahead and sees nothing but empty space, above and below – as if the earth and sky met with nothing in between.

She sighs and starts the car again. As she moves forward, she senses an almost indistinguishable rise in the road – as we follow her POV up the road through the windshield to reveal:

POV – A BREATHTAKING VALLEY just beyond the rise, hidden from view only a few yards before. THE DOUBLE DIVIDE RANCH sits nestled in the valley, a few miles away. Annie is impressed.

EXT. THE DOUBLE DIVIDE RANGE - DAY

Men are working in the corral, saddle horses standing nearby, trying to get a sick calf to suckle a cow. One of the men is

Tom Booker, working along side his brother FRANK, and his nephew, JOE. Frank is a good man – solid work ethic, Christian fearing, wry sense of humor. With the build of a football player, his strength never overwhelms his boyish, good-natured heart. Joe is eleven, wearing his cowboy hat like a badge of honor. The three men seem as inseparable to each other, as they are to the land. As they work:

JOE

Can we take a look at Bronty's foal when we're done here, Dad?

FRANK

Sure. As long as she don't mind.

JOE

There's a kid at school says we should've imprint-trained him.

Tom and Frank don't say anything. Just nod, knowingly.

JOE

He says if you do it soon as they're born, it makes them real easy to handle later on.

FRANK

That's what some folks say.

JOE

There was this thing on the TV about a guy who does it with geese. He has this airplane and these baby geese all grow up thinking it's their mom, and he flies it and they just follow.

(to Tom)

You hear 'bout that, Uncle T?

TOM

Yeah, I hear about that.

JOE

Well, what do you think about that stuff?

TOM

Well, Joe, I'll tell ya – I don't know a whole lot about geese. Maybe

it's okay for them to grow up thinking they're airplanes. But horses, as far as I can tell, can't fly.

Frank laughs. Joe smirks as Tom messes his hat up. There's the sound of a car. They turn.

The Suburban is coming over the ridge, heading down the driveway in a cloud of dust.

JOE

We expecting company?

Frank shakes his head. As the Suburban slows down, Tom recognizes the driver.

TOM

I don't believe it.

FRANK

You know her?

Annie, out of her element, hiding behind sunglasses, gets out as Tom approaches her by himself. Annie girds herself for the confrontation.

ANNIE

Hello, Mr. Booker. Annie MacLean.
From New York. We talked on the phone.

She extends her hand. TOM shakes it, nodding, staring at her curiously.

ANNIE

It's, uh... beautiful country. I had a little bit of a hard time finding the place. There are no signs.

TOM

Plenty of signs – just none of them printed. Who do I get the idea you're not just passing through!

ANNIE

Well... OK... here it is... Uh...
I'd like you to take a look at my horse. Now – it won't take long and if, after that, you still don't

feel...

TOM

Were you thinking of personally driving me back East?

ANNIE

Oh no. She's here. I brought him along. And my daughter, too. We're staying at Peterson's...

TOM

You mean you hauled him all the way out here? Just like that?

ANNIE

(slightly taken aback)

Well... yes... I had a trailer. It's not like I made him run along side of the car.

TOM

All by yourself?

She nods. Tom cannot help be impressed by her guts and fortitude.

Camera cuts away for a moment to a window in the ranch house, through which DIANE – Frank's fiery, loyal pioneer wife – looks at the duo with suspicion.

TOM

I uh... ha, ha... I don't think I ever met a lady quite like yourself and I appreciate all the pains you've gone through to –

ANNIE

Look! Please! Don't do the "shucks, ma'am" thing again!

(Tom, surprised, listens)

I've driven a few thousand miles for a few minutes of your time. I've brought him here – to your neck of the...

(seeing no woods)

– mountains. Just take a look at

him. If you still feel the same way,
I'll be on the road by morning and
you'll never see me again. OK? Deal?

Tom tries to hide a smile of respect. Annie, thinking she
may have him, starts backing away towards her car – as one
would a dangerous animal they think they might have tamed...

ANNIE

We're at Peterson's. Whenever you're
free. You don't even have to call.

She gets into the Suburban. Tom watches her drive off.

EXT. ANNIE AND GRACE'S COTTAGE - DAY

Tom walks up some wooden steps to a door and knocks. He hears
a TV on inside. And Grace's Voice:

GRACE (O.S.)

MOM! The door!

He hears Annie's muffled reply from O.S. He hears some banging
as Grace fumbles for her crutch and comes to the door. She
opens it only so far as to reveal her upper body:

GRACE

Yeah?

TOM

Uh, I'm Tom Booker. Your mother
around?

Grace hops to the side as Tom walks by her, into the room.

Grace is closing the door as he turns to see, for the first
time, that Grace is one leg.

GRACE

She'll be right out. She's on the
phone.

Grace hops back to the bed in front of the TV. Tom nods and
puts his hat down – noticing the prosthetic leaning against
the window, near her bed. He hears Annie on the phone and
looks to the other room, the door ajar – seeing only her
legs, seated on the edge of her bed, as she talks. Her foot
taps impatiently.

TOM
First time in Montana?

Grace, rudely nods, still looking at the TV.

Beat. Tom doesn't like her manner, but can easily see through it. He sits.

TOM
She gonna be long?

GRACE
Probably. She's on the phone twenty-three hours a day.

TOM
What does she do?

GRACE
She's an editor.

TOM
Mmm. An editor.

GRACE
Not like books or literature or anything. Just a magazine... Just in case she hasn't told you – which I'm sure she hasn't – I don't want to be a part of this, OK?

Tom just sort of nods. A beat or two later, Annie enters.

ANNIE
Sorry about that. Hi. Grace, this is Mr. Booker... Have you looked at Pilgrim?

Tom sees Grace turn away, just as Annie enters. He takes a moment. He could say no right there, but something stops him.

TOM
Uh, no. I was gonna take a look now.

ANNIE
You want us to come with you? I just

have to run to the main house and give Mr. Peterson a check.

TOM
Doesn't matter.

ANNIE
Grace?... Grace, you want to come with us, take a look at Pilgrim?

Grace keeps looking at the TV. No reply. Tom is half way out the door when he says to Annie – making sure Grace can hear –

TOM
Probably best she stays behind, anyway.

He disappears. Annie gives Grace a final look and exits, closing the door.

Alone, Grace flings her body across the bed, reaching for her prosthetic – putting it on feverishly. She is completely intrigued by Tom.

EXT. PETERSON'S STABLES - DAY

Tom stands alone at the stable. Opening the bottom door, ducking under the stall, he goes inside.

TOM
Okay now... Okay now...

Walking towards him, Tom raises his hand, showing Pilgrim a sign of respect, of trust... He quietly makes his way along Pilgrim's side, along his flank, prompting Pilgrim to move out from the shadows, into the light. Tom moves to look at him. And Pilgrim suddenly kicks out at him. Tom, not cowed, stands his ground. He bends, looking at Pilgrim's withered legs. He looks up at his scarred head. He looks into the pools of the horse's tortured eyes. Pilgrim stands still – allowing Tom this brief intimacy.

As Grace walks towards the stable, she realizes that the door is open and Tom must be inside. She is amazed.

Annie, appearing behind her, is also impressed.

Tom exits the stable and sees them, as he closes the doors.

ANNIE

Well... You're closest anyone's gotten.

He walks straight towards them – veering more to Grace. He stops in front of her and they look into each other's eyes – in a way that reminds us of how Tom looked at Pilgrim.

Except, Grace is made even more uncomfortable by the intimacy.

She turns away and walks to the corral, to lean on a post – as if she doesn't care. Tom turns to Annie.

TOM

I have to be honest. I still feel you made a long trip for nothing.

He looks at Annie. Annie has no more words – just an ever-present pleading in her face.

Tom watches as Grace makes a small, naked movement – putting her hand on her cheek, like a hurt child.

He can't help but see these three being connected by one wound.

TOM

But before I even think about it, I need to know something here and now. It's a question for Grace here.

Grace stiffens.

TOM

When I work with a horse, it's no good just me doing it. It doesn't work that way. The owner needs to be involved too.

ANNIE

Well, that'll be a little complicated –

TOM

You can make it as complicated or as easy as you like. But she's the one who's gonna be riding him, am I right? So here's the deal. I'm not sure I

can do anything, but I'm prepared to
give it a go –
 (to Grace)
– if you'll help.
 (Grace gives a bitter
 laugh)
You have a problem with that?

GRACE
Isn't it like, obvious?

TOM
Not to me. Either you want to or you
don't.

ANNIE
Look, I'll talk to Grace and call
you later–

TOM
Excuse me, with all due respect, but
this is her decision, not yours. And
I don't want to waste anybody's time –
mostly mine.

Grace reacts anew to Tom's remark. She likes her mother being dis-empowered. Annie keenly understands the importance of Tom putting it this way to Grace. Grace has all eyes on her – just what she wants. All waiting for her response. She turns away, flicks her head and says:

GRACE
Well, there's nothing else to do
around here.

Annie smiles in relief. But Tom isn't satisfied.

TOM
Not good enough. I can't help you.

He starts walking away. Annie doesn't know what to do. Grace mumbles.

GRACE
What do I have to do?

Tom keeps walking out... Grace says it louder.

GRACE

I said, what do I have to do?!

Tom stops and looks at her. Annie holds her breath.

INT. THE RANCH HOUSE, DOUBLE DIVIDE - NIGHT

Frank, Tom, Joe and TOM'S TWIN BOYS, 6 years old, sit at a dining table eating dinner, as Diane serves. We parachute into the middle of the conversation:

DIANE

...well, I just think she's got a lot of nerve showing up here. Draggin' that child and that poor animal all the way...

(to one of the Twins)

You eat with those fingers again and you know what'll happen!

(the boy cowers)

Frank, don't you think she's got a nerve?

FRANK

Oh hell, I don't know... According to Tom, she's a pretty determined woman. Must've thought it was worth it.

DIANE

(sits down)

I guess they'll want feeding and all, out here all day long.

TOM

I don't believe they'll expect that.

DIANE

What, they ain't going forty miles into Choteau everytime they want a hamburger.

FRANK

Mixed salad.

DIANE

What?

FRANK

(slyly)

I believe women from New York eat mixed salads. Ain't that right, Tom?

Tom hides a grin – he knows Frank into teasing her now.

TOM

I believe so. Saw it on a television show, once.

DIANE

Well, that's just what we need on a cattle ranch – a vegetarian from New York.

Everyone eats. Beat.

JOE

When you figure on branding?

FRANK

Weekend after next...

TOM

If the weather holds.

Frank nods. Silence again. Everyone eats. Beat.

JOE

What's an editor do anyway?

DIANE

(playing)

We're not sure, sweetheart, but they eat like rabbits.

Tom and Frank chuckle. Diane smiles – in on the joke with them. The children are curiously confused.

INT. ANNIE AND GRACE'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Camera moves to reveal Annie on the phone in front of her computer and fax... plugging in extension cords as she talks:

ANNIE

...the phone company's putting in extra lines. I'll call back with the

numbers. Oh, and I want you to get in touch with this lady in town here – they say she's sort of a physical therapist for the rodeo boys but keep the one at the hospital we already contacted on call...

Grace sits alone in the living room. Watching TV, but anxious and disturbed about what she's committed herself to.

INT. DOUBLE DIVIDE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Diane is in her bathrobe doing bills at the kitchen table, as she listens to a BOOK ON TAPE. Her hand on her forehead, her other hand writing. Tom enters to take his hat off the sideboard. He moves to the table and reaches over for a cookie from a plate of cookies. Without looking up, Diane slaps his hand. Tom then pours himself a cup of coffee... then swiftly sneaks his hand back and grabs a cookie. Diane smiles.

Tom exits.

It is only then that Diane looks up after him.

INT. UPPER FLOOR OF RANCH HOUSE - NIGHT

Camera follows Tom towards his bedroom – passing the others.

Perhaps we see Frank sprawled out asleep already in his underwear. We might see the Twins in their bunks. One of the Twins' lower torso is laying outside of the blanket. He casually flips the blanket over the kid's bare feet and continues to his room.

INT. TOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tom enters and closes the door. Turns on a stereo which plays a cello piece by Yo-Yo Ma. Books fills his room. He sits at his desk, puts on eye glasses and looks through some paperwork.

Suddenly he stops, looking over the paperwork, into space. A thought passes by. We don't know what.

FADE OUT:

EXT. THE RANCH, A CORRAL - DAYBREAK

First light of day. Pilgrim stands stock still in the middle of the corral. Tom, motionless, is crouched on his haunches in the corral – watching him.

TOM'S POV: As Pilgrim moves, he can see that the horse is stove up.

He softly tosses a handful of dirt at Pilgrim's withered legs... Pilgrim, sensitive to the slightest provocation, bucks, wheeling away from him. Then stops. Tom sits on his haunches again... and watches him.

Frank appears, exiting from the barn (perhaps).

FRANK

Tom?

TOM

Yeah.

Tom leaves Pilgrim, hooking up with Frank – the two brothers go off, discussing the ranch work that is ahead of them.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE RANCH - ANOTHER DAY

Annie and Grace arrive in the Suburban. They exit. As they head towards the ranch, they see in the distance:

Pilgrim standing along the fence of a round pen. Tom stands in the pen, holding a rope, looking at Pilgrim.

EXT. THE ROUND PEN - DAY

Tom stands in the pen with Pilgrim. He looks to see Annie and Grace approaching but makes no acknowledgment. He turns his focus back to Pilgrim.

Annie and Grace appear. Grace takes a position (that is to become her regular spot) a distance away from the pen. Annie moves in closer, beside SMOKEY (a ranch hand) with one leg up on the pen fence.

SMOKEY

Howdy...

(sees Grace)

Howdy.

He and Annie watch as Tom stands before Pilgrim – turning sideways... then standing...

ANNIE
What's he doing?

SMOKEY
Trying to get his eye.

ANNIE
How's it going?

Smokey doesn't respond – how it's going is exactly how it looks. Tom takes a few steps, stops and stands still again. We sense the process is long and requires great patience.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ROUND PEN - DAY

Two hours later. Grace is in the same spot. Smokey is gone, doing his work. Annie has taken a different position, looking over SEVERAL PAGES OF FAXES on her lap.

Tom is still standing in the pen trying to get Pilgrim's eyes.

Joe has joined the proceedings, sitting on the pen rail.

Tom deftly throws a hoolihan, gently lassoing Pilgrim around the neck. And Pilgrim, at the touch of the rope, crazed, resists, pulling back, striking at the rope... The rope cutting into Tom's hands. Tom gives him some slack, giving his head, letting him relax... then gently heads him by the rope, walking him around the pen, getting his feet to moving.

Grace's eyes never leave Tom.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DOUBLE DIVIDE - DAY

Tom, off in the distance – against a sky that seems to be touching the land – is riding along a creek. Closer up, we see he's rustling the bushes with a stick. Some stray cows run out of the bushes. Tom races after them. His horse shepherds the cow across the creek and up a hillside.

At the top of the hill, with the ranch spread out endlessly before him, Tom sees Frank on his horse, chasing strays. Tom whistles. Frank waves back. In the near distance, a pickup truck is parked on the range.

Joe and the TWINS are throwing food pellets out of the back of the truck. Cattle come from across the range for the food.

What begins as a handful of cows becomes dozens, then hundreds – the truck virtually disappearing among them.

Tom stops for a moment to look out at his ranch. Far off in the distance, he sees Annie's Suburban coming along the road to the ranch. He watches as Annie's distant figure gets out of the car with Grace. Annie instinctively turns and looks across the land. Even though there is such a distance, there's a sense Tom and Annie are looking at each other.

Tom senses Joe driving Frank's truck, slowly moving off the range – the Twins in the back, the cattle following. Tom sits on his horse atop the hill.

EXT. THE DOUBLE DIVIDE - ANOTHER DAY

Pilgrim, his scarred head above water, legs moving in odd syncopation, swimming. We discover he is in a pond, tethered to a pole... Except for the sound of his legs in the water, everything is quiet and focused on Pilgrim.

SMOKEY, holds the pole, walking on the outside of the pond, leading Pilgrim back and forth as he swims. Tom, crouched by the pond, silently concentrating on Pilgrim...

Grace watches, off by herself... Annie stands beside Joe. She can't help but be intrigued by the sight. She asks Joe;

ANNIE

I though horses were afraid of water?

Joe doesn't answer her. Grace likes that. Annie, frustrated, feels she has the right to simple shout out to Tom.

ANNIE

Is that to get his strength back?

Tom pays her no mind – concentrating on Pilgrim.

Suddenly, Annie's CELL PHONE rings, jarring the proceedings.

Tom turns to Annie. She hides her embarrassment by answering it, walking away. Tom gives her a look. Grace is loving this.

Tom turns back to Pilgrim. After a few moments –

Tom, taking the rope tether, unhooks it from the pole. He starts to lead Pilgrim out of the water. Pilgrim, fearful, fights him. He rears, splashing Tom, not wanting to come out of the water. Grace is worried. She looks to Joe and sees he is concerned too, though he stands quietly.

Annie hears the commotion from where she stands and finishes her call to return to the pond.

Tom enters the pond, waist deep in water, trying to grab Pilgrim's rope. Pilgrim rises up, rearing at him. Joe and Smokey, sensing danger, come closer to the pond. Annie appears beside Grace and watches as Tom reaches for the rope again. Pilgrim rears again. Tom stumbles backwards from his hooves. Annie gasps. Grace turns to walk away from the pond.

She can't watch – it brings back too much. But as she does, she is stopped by the sight of –

Tom, righting himself, unphased, calmly walks back to Pilgrim.

The horse, baffled by this man's lack of fear, lets him take the rope and walk him out of the pond.

Grace can't help but be impressed. Joe nods. Annie is shaken.

ANNIE

Mr. Booker, I'm not at all comfortable with you taking those kinds of chances...

As Tom leads Pilgrim out, the horse suddenly whirls, bolting, knocking Tom down...

ANNIE

Oh, God!

Pilgrim runs off, pulling the wet rope behind him. Joe runs over and grabs for the rope.

TOM
NO... LET HIM GO!

Joe obeys. Pilgrim runs past the corral and down into a hill out onto a pasture, He keeps on running into the distance – running across the pasture, not knowing where he is going...

Tom, arms folded across his chest, watches him run. A concerned Annie approaches.

ANNIE
He's running away! How are you going to get him back?

Tom doesn't respond. He walks off down the hill out onto the pasture, stops, arms folded and watches Pilgrim. Annie turns when she hears Smokey, who appears behind her:

SMOKEY
He don't really want to run. Don't know where he's going. All this open space scares the daylight out of him.

Confused, Pilgrim stops running and walks, in no particular direction.

SMOKEY
My guess is he's spent his life in a six-by-eight stall... He's forgot what it's like to be a horse...

Smokey ambles off and she turns back to see Tom crouching on his haunches, sitting in the grass, just waiting. Pilgrim walks back towards the ranch, stops a distance from Tom, looks at him... Annie, needing to know exactly what's going on, crosses down the hill to him.

ANNIE
So what now? Should we leave?

Tom continues watching Pilgrim. Annie looks at him, sitting there motionless and feels like an idiot. Clearly she doesn't understand all this and clearly no one thinks this is the time to explain to her.

ANNIE
Well, we're going to go then...

Without looking at her, Tom just nods. Annie, awkwardly, walks back up the hill to where Grace is...

ON THE GRASSY HILLSIDE, Grace is watching the scene by herself as Joe appears, staring at her leg... It makes her uncomfortable.

She turns to him with a curt, impatient tone;

GRACE
What?

Their eyes meet. Joe is so guileless, Grace is taken off guard when he asks in such a compassionate voice;

JOE
Does that hurt you?

Grace tries to think of an answer – and of how to say it:

GRACE
Only when I kick somebody.

Her gentle delivery makes him smile. She smiles, then:

GRACE
Don't you go to school?

JOE
Twice a month they give you a day off to work on the ranch.

He tips his hat down as he looks out to Pilgrim with respect;

JOE
Look at him out in the pasture –
Yeah, he must've been a big, beautiful looking horse. How was he to ride?

Grace is uncomfortable again. She looks away, just struggling.

Joe senses she's done talking;

JOE
Excuse me. I got chores to look after.

He tips his hat and walks off, passing Annie as she arrives.

ANNIE
You ready to go?

Grace hesitates. Then mother and daughter take one more look –

POV – Pilgrim standing in the pasture with Tom crouching in the grass waiting for him.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PASTURE - LATER THAT DAY

Tom is still sitting in the grass, just where we left him – waiting patiently. Pilgrim is still out in the pasture.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PASTURE - STILL LATER THAT DAY

Afternoon shadows cross the ranch. Tom is in the exact same spot and position. Pilgrim is somewhat closer – but still at a distance – watching him.

Frank rides back from work. As he passes Tom, the two nod as if nothing usually is going on. Frank rides up to the barn.

INT. PETERSON'S MOTEL

Grace is flicking the television – repeating the only three channels over and over...

Annie works at her computer, surrounded by work. She notices the time, gets a thought and dials the phone...

ANNIE
Hello, Mr. Booker... Oh, hello, Frank.
This is Annie MacLean... I was
wondering, has...

(LISTENS)
Uh-huh... And Pilgrim? ...
(listens)
Still? ... Uh-huh...
(politely cheery)
Okay then. Thank you.

She hangs up, pauses, then speaks to the window out loud

enough for Grace to hear –

ANNIE

He's still sitting in that damn field.

GRACE

(w/o looking at her)

I think they call it a pasture.

Annie looks at her as if to say the last thing I need to know is a lesson on the local lingo...

ANNIE

Let's go see what's going on, then get something to eat.

EXT. DOUBLE DIVIDE RANCH - DUSK

The sky is changing colors, the temperature has dropped. Tom is still sitting in the grass, although someone has brought him a blanket for his shoulders. Pilgrim is in the pasture, but now – he too is motionless, looking back at Tom.

The sound of a car makes Tom turn to see Annie driving up.

She gets out, stands by the car with a proprietary air, watching Tom and Pilgrim. Grace remains in the car. There's a sound. She turns to see Diane coming out of the house...

DIANE

There's coffee inside... I was just bringing this to Tom.

ANNIE

Would you mind if I did? I'd like to talk to him.

Diane, knowing full well Tom ain't in a talking mood, hands her a cup...

DIANE

Sure.

(seeing Grace in car)

Does your daughter want to come inside?

ANNIE

Uh, no, we're going to dinner... Is

this the way to the pasture?

DIANE

Pasture? Oh, that stretch of field
near the hill? Yeah.

She's gone. Annie grimaces, then crosses the hillside to where Tom is squatting down. She appears to his side and, without speaking, tries to indicate she has his coffee by leaning it toward him. Tom sees her and accepts it with a grateful nod. Annie waits. Nothing happens. Feeling foolish, she begins to walk back.

At some point, she turns to see Pilgrim moving across the pasture toward Tom. He stops in front of him, just a few feet away. Tom says something to him. Annie is intrigued – and she knows enough to stay quiet now. She watches Pilgrim walk over to him. She watches as Tom gets up and pats Pilgrim's scarred head. In spite of herself, Annie is somewhat moved by this act.

Only we see Grace, peering out from the car, seeing this act of communion as well. Only we see her reaction to it.

As Tom turns and walks back to the ranch, Pilgrim follows him.

As he passes Annie, all he says is...

TOM

From now on, leave your phone
somewhere else...

As he moves past her, Annie responds;

ANNIE

But I have business calls I have to –

Tom keeps heading for the barn as he suggests, without turning back;

TOM

Then drop off Grace in the morning,
go on back and do your business.
Come pick her up around dinner.

Standing there, Annie has the impulse to respond to this suggestion, but has no idea what to say and saying it wouldn't

make much sense since Tom is already out of ear shot.

Diane appears from the house and calls out:

DIANE

Mrs. MacLean – why don't you and daughter stay for dinner?

ANNIE

Oh uh, thank you. No, we don't want to impose.

DIANE

No imposition. Plenty of food. Gonna get pretty dark soon. Hard to find a place.

Annie looks up to the alien sky and realizes she's right. She looks to Grace, who doesn't seem to oppose the idea.

INT. RANCH HOUSE/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Everyone sits around the kitchen table. Joe, still wearing his hat, eyes Annie and Grace with acute curiosity.

DIANE

Joe, take off the hat – I'm not going to say it again.

Joe obeys. Diane puts the last of the serving plates on the table – pork chops, potatoes, gravy, peas, bread... And a big bowl of mixed salad. The boy can't help eyeing how the "vegetarians" will act.

Annie and Grace eye the food. Annie reaches out for a serving ladle, picking up Grace's plate to serve her as Grace reaches for a piece of bread, when:

FRANK

Dear Lord, we are humbly thankful for...

Annie and Grace freeze as Frank continues his prayer – they notice everyone's head bowed slightly.

FRANK

(continues)

these gifts. For the blessings on

our home, our family and our guests.
Bless those that aren't as fortunate.
Bless all God's creatures.

EVERYONE

Amen.

Everyone begins eating. Annie and Grace breath a sigh of relief.

Silence. Utensils hitting plates, the only sound.

FRANK

Bank out us a couple more men to run the cattle.

TOM

We should be fine, then.

Beat. Annie and Grace listen...

JOE

Teacher asked me why we raise Black Angus-Herefords 'stead of Pure Herefords.

FRANK

Tell her they suit the weather better. Their udders are black, 'stead of pink.

TOM

They don't get burned by the sun bouncing off the snow. And they're good mother.

FRANK

Our daddy raised Pure Herefords.

Silence... Eating... Annie tries her hand at conversation:

ANNIE

You know, that's interesting. I always wondered when I went into a restaurant what was the difference between a regular steak or a Black Angus steak. I couldn't taste any difference although I could swear one was more

tender. I didn't know there was that big a difference between cows...

(silence)

I've never been on a cow farm before. I must say, the bulls seem to have the best time of it. Just laying around the fields all day until they're asked to...

(uncomfortable)

do their... work.

FRANK

Well, get born a bull, got a ninety percent chance of getting castrated and served up as hamburger. On a balance I reckon I'd choose being a cow.

(to Grace)

Would you mind passing that salad young lady?

DIANE

How's Peterson's holding up for you?

ANNIE

(lying)

It's fine. Comfortable. I still can't get used to how dark it gets around here, though. When we leave the ranch, I always hold my breath until I can see the motel.

FRANK

(innocently)

You know, Tom, while you're working on that horse of theirs, Annie and Grace should move into the old Creek house.

Diane and Tom react accordingly; Diane hiding her annoyance, Tom hiding his surprise and pleasure.

FRANK

Nobody's using it. Silly for her to be driving back and forth when she don't know her way around that well...

ANNIE

Oh, I don't know...

FRANK

Well, I know Peterson's. Old place is as good as falling down around your ears.

DIANE

(overlapping)

They're already all settled in, Frank. Anyway, I'm sure Annie wants her privacy.

FRANK

It's got doors, Diane. Private as can be. Tom?

TOM

I don't have a problem with that. It's up to Annie.

ANNIE

Well, it's worth it, really? I mean, how much longer do you think you need to work with Pilgrim?

TOM

That's up to Pilgrim.

Everyone waits on Annie's answer as she considers this.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Grace is on the phone with Robert. Annie is packing things up. Grace is telling him about the day;

GRACE

(listens)

I know. Me, too. Why don't you come one weekend?

Annie reacts to this.

GRACE

We'll have more room because we're moving onto the ranch. They have this empty house near this creek. It's actually pretty... OK... I love

you.
(to Annie)
Dad wants to talk to you.

ANNIE
(takes the phone)
Hi.

INTERCUT:

INT. CENTRAL PARK WEST APARTMENT - NIGHT

Robert is burning the midnight oil in the study with files all around him.

ROBERT
Hey... She sounds like she's doing all right. How is she?

Grace exits into the bathroom. Annie talks softly;

ANNIE
(cautious)
Yeah. She seems to be getting more comfortable on the ranch, which is why I said yes to this move. But, whenever it's just the two of us, I don't know... Anyway... what's happening with the Delco lawsuit?

ROBERT
Taking forever. I just got an additional list of sixty-two employees to interview before Monday. I don't know how I'm going to do it.

ANNIE
Well, it's good that you're there.

Robert didn't mean to validate his separation from them.

ROBERT
So, how are you doing in Marlboro country? Is the magazine complaining at all?

ANNIE
Yeah, but nothing I can't handle.

Lucy tells me she thinks Gottchalks's plotting, but what else is new.

ROBERT
When are you coming home?

ANNIE
You know, I just asked that myself tonight. He doesn't know.

ROBERT
Well then... maybe I will take some time... come visit.

ANNIE
Okay.

Beat. Annie knows Robert needed an invitation from her. But she can't do it. Robert tries again.

ROBERT
I miss you, Annie.

ANNIE
I know. We miss you too.

ROBERT
Good night.

ANNIE
Night.

Awkwardly, they hang up. Grace exits the bathroom.

GRACE
Did you ask him to come visit?

ANNIE
You already did.

GRACE
Did he mention it?

ANNIE
(resumes packing)
Yeah, he's going to think about it.
You want me to pack for you?

Grace looks at her disapprovingly as she passes to go to the bathroom. Annie registers this.

INT. RANCH HOUSE - LATE DAY

Diane is washing windows while listening to an audio book on her tape player. Through the windows, she sees:

Joe and the Twins helping Annie and Grace move into the Creek House.

Diane has conflicting feelings about this. She continues her work.

INT. CREEK HOUSE - LATE DAY

VARIOUS SHOTS of ANNIE CONNECTING HERSELF BACK TO THE REST OF THE WORLD, BY PLUGGING IN HER COMPUTER, FAX, ETC...

Grace is in the other room, as she was in the motel. Alone.

With no television, she is just listening to her music laying on the couch. The two women remain separate no matter where they are.

But we see a small difference. Grace rises and walks to the window. She looks out;

POV: She sees people working about the ranch. Maybe Joe is among them – riding his horse as he works. Or maybe it's just a vision of people with tasks to complete – who do so with pride, discipline and clarity.

Grace looks out the window longingly.

EXT. THE RANCH - ANOTHER DAY

A cloud of dust. A dozen or so horses are running in an arena by the stables. Tom is riding among them, holding a long stick with an orange flag at the end of it, waving it at the young horses, making them run away from him. The colts stay close together. One of the horses, PILGRIM, stays at a distance, off to himself.

Grace watches from along the railing. She alternates her attention from the horses... to Tom.

TOM

What we're doing here, Grace, is trying to get him to learn how to be a horse again.

He cracks the flag, the horses move together...

TOM

The others already know, see. That's how they are in the wild – herd animals...

(cracks the flag)

...When they've got a problem, like they have now with me and this flag, they look to each other. But old Pilgrim there has forgotten. I'm the rock and they're the hard place. He thinks he hasn't got a friend in the whole wild world...

C.U. on GRACE, who clearly feels the same way... but wants desperately not to. She watches him ride off towards Pilgrim who has stopped like all the others at the far end of the ring. He stands by himself, tossing his head, snorting, not wanting to be around other horses. Tom cracks the flag, keeping them moving. Pilgrim does his own private dance.

Tom rides by Grace and hands her the stick;

TOM

Hold this for a minute...

Grace stiffens. She doesn't want to, but she's afraid to say "No" to Tom. He just insists by tossing it to her...

TOM

Hold onto it, go on...

She's forced to catch it. He turns and rides away, chasing down Pilgrim, trying to edge him toward the herd. For a moment, he has him breaking to the left with the horses. But as soon as he's clear of Tom, he separates himself and comes to stop on his own.

Tom rides back to Grace, taking back the flag.

TOM

We'll get there, Grace.

As he says this, he flashes a small, reassuring smile and a little wink. Grace melts just a little. As he rides away.

Annie appears, having come from the Creek House. She calls:

ANNIE

Grace? The clinic just called...
They had to change your physical
therapy appointment. We have to leave
now.

Grace frowns a little – her mother's "perfect timing." Annie approaches the arena, watching Tom riding. As he passes her;

TOM

Hello, Annie...

Annie notices how he says her name.

ANNIE

Mr. Booker...

He flashes a smile in her direction and Annie's expression comically matches her daughter's reaction. She quickly covers it, however. Her eyes follow him as he glides around the arena. It's like watching a great ballet – his control of the horses, his effortlessness, his grace, his strength... She smiles to herself in appreciation. Then catches herself:

ANNIE

(to Grace)

You got everything you need?

GRACE

If I had everything I need, I wouldn't
be going to physical therapy.

Tom approaches as he overhears Grace respond;

ANNIE

(trying to cheer her)

Honey, come on. Would you like to
stay in town for dinner? Maybe see
what movie's playing tonight?

GRACE

Why? There's no food in the house?

ANNIE

No. I just thought... forget it.

He's getting a clearer view of their relationship.

TOM

You know, we're branding here tomorrow. If you two want to come by to watch or give a hand, you're welcome.

ANNIE

(laughs)

Branding?

(sarcastic)

I haven't branded in years.

Tom chuckles.

GRACE

I'll come.

ANNIE

Uh, I don't, honey. Branding? Oooh... I think we'd just be in Mr. Booker's way.

TOM

As long as you don't get in the way of the branding iron, it doesn't matter too much.

Annie smiles. She turns to Grace, questioningly. Grace says matter-of-factly, to prove her point.

GRACE

I watched Margo Neuberger get a tattoo.

Tom squints. Annie shrugs and nods.

ANNIE

Okay.

As Grace and Annie walk to the car, Tom says:

TOM

Hey, Grace – maybe we can get your

mom to put me and you branding on the cover of her magazine. Start a whole new fashion craze.

They continue walking as Grace smiles, enjoying being singled out for his joke. Annie responds, almost flirtatiously.

ANNIE

Try not to fall off your high horse, Mr. Booker.

Tom tips his hat and rides away... Annie smiles and nods...

Grace doesn't like their sudden familiarity. Or her mother's coy manner. As they enter the Suburban, Grace asks point blank;

GRACE

Did you call Dad today?

Annie is caught off guard.

Tom, riding in the arena, catches himself looking after them... then goes riding after Pilgrim.

EXT. DOUBLE DIVIDE - DAY

The air smells of scorched flesh. There is nothing but NOISE.

Calves, separated from their mothers, "cry." They are moved out through a series of connected pens into a narrow chute, and then one by one into a holding pen. They're clamped and lowered sideways onto a table and given a shot, a yellow insect tag in one ear, branded, then sent back to their mothers. The bulls, in a pen by themselves, stand haughty, paying no attention. Frank helps "doctor" the calves. Joe brands.

Annie and Grace are standing by the railing, watching with a mixture of fascination and disgust.

Tom moves in the feeder pen, waist deep in calves, moving them through the chute. He looks to Annie.

TOM

Hey, over there, you want to make yourself useful?

It isn't a question.

TOM

Hank, I got you a volunteer!

Annie and Grace realize they have no choice.

—

WHAT FOLLOWS IS A SEQUENCE OF SCENES SHOWING ANNIE AND GRACE PARTICIPATING IN THE BRANDING. AND HOW THEY GRADUALLY COME TO LOSE THEMSELVES IN THE EXPERIENCE.

SEQUENCES WILL INCLUDE:

– HANK, A RANCH HEAD, HELPING ANNIE INTO THE CHUTE... ANNIE GETTING KICKED BY A CALF.

– GRACE BEING SHOWN HOW TO HOLD THE BRANDING IRON.

– HANK TEACHING ANNIE HOW TO SAY "HYAH!!"...

—

TOM IN THE HOLDING PEN WITH HIS ARMS AROUND GRACE, SHOWING HER HOW TO APPLY THE BRAND... GRACE, A LITTLE FRIGHTENED OF THE BRAND, IS IN HEAVEN IN TOM'S ARMS...

– ANNIE IS STILL TRYING TO SAY "HYAH"!! WITH THE PROPER FORCE. SHE CLAPS HER HANDS, PUSHING THE CALVES ALONG, KNEE DEEP IN COW SHIT.

– GRACE CLOSES HER EYES AND THE IRON TOUCHES THE CALF'S HIDE.

TOM

That's good... firm but gentle...

(Grace opens her eyes)

It hurts but he'll get over it.

Grace smiles proudly.

TOM

You handled that pretty well. Think it's time you earn your keep around here. So, when we're not working and when you don't have your therapy, I'd like you to help out with the horses... Rubbing them, cleaning up the stalls... You think you can handle

that?

Grace knows him well enough to know;

GRACE

That's not a question, is it?

TOM

You're catching on.

Grace smiles.

– Annie turns and, not looking where she's doing, trips over a calf, falling down. And calves, coming down the chute, start to run towards her. Suddenly, Tom grabs her by the leg and pulls her to safety. He helps her up and dusts her off.

TOM

(not wanting to smile,
but...)

You okay?

ANNIE

It is cocktail hour yet?

Tom laughs. She takes a big breath.

EXT. THE RANCH - LATE AFTERNOON

The ranch is colored in amber light.

Near the house, two long tables pushed together to make one long one... A gentle breeze ruffles the tablecloth. Everyone is seated for a meal. We hear laughter and conversation... We parachute into the middle of the moments;

– Hank helping with his wife get to their three children to sit still for dinner...

– Diane organizing the women and their various plates of side dishes...

– The Ranch Hands piling up their plates and kidding each other...

– Joe is instructing Grace on the various sauces for the ribs. The Twins are making fun of him behind his back.

– Tom and Smokey are barbecuing, the last one to sit.

– Frank assists his frail mother, ELLEN BOOKER, at the table, filling her plate with all the things she can't reach for.

DISSOLVE TO:

The faces are beautiful. Laughing. Eating. Everyone is tanned and exhausted after a long day, but filled with life and eager to live it. The tables are covered with heavy food.

The communion at this table is as much a part of the ritual as the branding itself...

Annie and Grace look different to us. Tanned from the sun, their bodies sore – they feel softened, yet more vital. As if the artifice had been worn off... the armor of urban life. As the table thrives with conversations, we focus on:

Annie and Ellen Booker. Annie looks calmer than we've seen her – and more naturally beautiful. She is seated beside Ellen Booker. We sense they have been talking for a while.

Annie is so sincerely interested in listening to her, she's hardly touched her own plate...

ELLEN BOOKER

...he was a blacksmith by trade, my father. My grandson Joe was named for him. But he always dreamed of having his own place and raising horses...

We see Tom a few places down and across from Annie and his mother – but fully aware of their conversation.

ELLEN BOOKER

He'd heard of some land. What's Stockett now. Rode out there. Got off his horse and walked about as far as he could in one way. Then he walked as far as he could another way and another until he got back to where he started and that's where he put his roots down... That's where my husband and I ranched and raised Frank and Tommy...

She motions proudly to Tom who looks up. Annie smiles to him.

He looks to her with gratitude for the respect she's showing his mother.

ELLEN BOOKER

Quite a different life from what you know, I expect. Which place to you call home?

ANNIE

Well, I was born in London, but my father was an ambassador and we moved constantly. I've lived in a lot of places but I don't really know what I'd call home.

Tom listens to this.

ELLEN BOOKER

An ambassador! My! That's very important.

ANNIE

He was a wonderful man.

She looks to Tom and he can sense a sadness around this in her eyes.

DIANE

(to Grace)

I sure hope you're gonna eat more than that, young lady. You're a growing girl.

GRACE

I've never eaten this much in my life.

DIANE

Probably never worked so hard, neither. Those arms of yours are gonna be pretty sore tomorrow. I'll give you a little bit of ointment I make. It's a magic recipe my Mama gave me.

FRANK

We used to call Diane's mother
Medicine Woman. None of us never
went to the doctor when she was alive.

Annie and Grace listen in...

HANK

Too bad she wasn't here for old Henry
Vanoker...

FRANK

Not much would have helped him.

DIANE

I never got that whole story, what
happened?

HANK

Old Henry was changing a flat tire
on his truck over on 118 when that...
(laughs)
...two-hundred-year-old jack he has
gives way and the side of that truck
come slamming down on that rock he
calls head...

There's laughter – everyone knows Old Henry. Except:

ANNIE

What happened?

HANK

Knocked him out for a while. He woke
up, finished putting on the tire and
drove himself to the hospital.

DIANE

Old Fool... Darling, pass down those
peas for me, thank you.

Annie and Grace don't know how to respond... But everyone
else takes it their stride as they continue eating...

Grace notices Joe is whispering something to Frank, who nods
his head and speaks to the table.

FRANK

Huh, Joe here has something to say.

Joe stands, somewhat formally, with his hat on.

JOE

I wrote this for you Grandma...

Mrs. Booker, and Diane, beam. Annie and Grace don't know what to expect. Joe stands straight as an arrow and recites a poem from memory...

At first, Annie and Grace appear to be embarrassed for the boy but soon they can't help but be won over by his guilelessness.

He finishes and everyone applauds. Hank's wife asks:

HANK'S WIFE

That was lovely. Who wrote that, Joe?

JOE

I wrote it myself, ma'am.

FRANK

Now son, you tell 'em when it came from.

JOE

Be honest, I can't say I did it all myself. My grandma helped me get the words right.

OOoo's and aah's and smiles and conversations erupting over each other.

Only we see, Grace looking over to Joe who gives her kickass, shy grin...

TOM

(raising his beer)

Well, I'd like to welcome Annie and Grace to their first branding...

FRANK

And next time, Miss Annie, you can run down the calves...

ANNIE
I'll drink to that...

Everyone toasts and drinks. Annie and Tom exchange a look.

She smiles, but not in a alluring way – rather, in a grateful way. Grateful for this brief moment of community and good feeling. And somehow, Tom knows what she's feeling.

No one notices this silent exchange – except for Diane, who sees everything that's going on.

INT. RANCH HOUSE, DINING ROOM - NIGHTFALL

The Women are bringing in dishes and plates and food from the tables through the house and into the kitchen. Annie is among them, feeling apart of the group. She enters carrying a large bowl, that held the corn.

Diane is replacing newly-cleaned forks and knives in her dining room drawers, above which are several FAMILY PICTURES.

ANNIE
(referring to clean
bowl)
Where does this go, Diane?

DIANE
Oh, you can just set up on the dining
table. I have to rearrange my shelves
tomorrow.

Annie complies. She notices the framed pictures on the wall in the dining room.

ANNIE
Is this Mr. Booker? Tom's grandfather?

Diane looks at a faded photo circa late 1800's.

DIANE
Mm-mm. I never knew him. He died
before Frank and I met. This here's...
(another photo)
Frank and Tom's mother and father...
there's little Frank and Tom...

ANNIE

She calls him Tommy...

DIANE

Always did. I think she favored him a little. You tend to when you have more than one, even though you love 'em all the same.

She studies the old faces of Tom's Parents – although 20th Century people, there is still a pioneering strength in their visage... a stoicism and power.

DIANE

(putting away forks)

Ha, she loves telling this story about how when he was two years old, he ran off. They found him in the barn, sleeping between two giant hooves of a Percheron stallion. She said that horse was protecting him and nobody could convince her otherwise.

ANNIE

I got a little confused though. The ranch Ellen was talking about – that's not this one?

Diane is sorting silverware throughout the following:

DIANE

No. See, Frank and Tom were raised near the Clark's Fork River, right between the Pryor and Beartooth Mountains. Beautiful piece of land. But they had this uncle Ned – useless man, never interested in ranching. And when the grandparents died, he left for the city and sent word through lawyers he wanted his claim to the land so he could sell it. Three years of legation broke their father. Frank took it all in stride, but Tom... Tom loved that land. I don't think he ever got over it – His home being sold out from under him. Seeing his father like that. Once he and Frank got their folks

set up in a new place, Tom left...
went off. We didn't see him for
years...

Annie is intrigued by what she's learning about Tom.

Something outside the window catches her eyes. She watches:

POV;

Tom and Frank, on either side of Ellen, are escorting her to
a car that will drive her home.

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - NIGHT

Annie wanders out, passing Grace and Joe on her way out. The
two are sitting in a glider. As Annie exits O.C., we hear
them;

GRACE

Why do you always wear that hat?

JOE

Because it fits my head. You want to
try it on?

Grace doesn't know if she should.

Annie continues towards Tom who's sitting in a rocker playing
with the twins.

TWINS

Show us again! Come on! One more
time! It's my turn now!

TOM

All right, all right. Hold out your
finger.

Annie takes a seat nearby and watches as Tom holds out the
first finger of his right hand. The Twins holds out his. Tom
splits his focus between Annie and the Twins as he takes a
small piece of rope out of his back pocket. He ties the ends
together making a loop. He puts the loop over the Twin's
finger. And holding the other end of the loop taut with his
left hand, he draws one side of the cord over the other with
the middle finger of his right hand. Then he rolls his hand
over so it's under the loop, and back over it again, so that

his finger is tip to tip with the Twin's. The loop seemingly knotted around their touching fingertips, and can only be removed if their touch is broken.

TOM

The loop's knotted, right.

(Twins nod)

Looks like the only way to take it off, is if we break our touch...

(they nod)

Watch now...

Annie and the Twins look down at the touching fingers as Tom gently pulls the rope away, revealing they are still knotted, and without even breaking their touch...

TWINS

Again! Again. One more time!

TOM

Oh, no. No, no. I only fall for that once. Go inside now before your mother starts hunting you down. Go on.

The Twins exit. Annie and Tom make eye contact.

TOM

(smiles, relaxes back)

So how was your first and last day of branding?

ANNIE

Don't be so sure it's my last. There are a few people back home I'd like to put under a red hot iron.

Tom looks at her with a sly expression, and notices she's shivering.

TOM

You got too much sun today... Here...

He takes his jacket and puts it around her shoulders.

ANNIE

Thank you.

He sits back down. Annie crosses her arms over her chest,

looks around, unconsciously swinging her foot. Tom watches her leg. Annie notices him watching;

ANNIE
What?

TOM
You ever just stand still for a minute?

ANNIE
You stand still too long in New York you get hit by a bicycle messenger.
(smiles wryly)
You know, sometimes, I get the feeling, Mr. Booker, that you're laughing at me. Why is that?

Tom shrugs. Annie waits a beat, then:

ANNIE
That's your cue to say you're not laughing at me.

TOM
Oh, I see, you write both sides of the conversation?

ANNIE
It's a man's world, Mr. Booker. Most women have to.

TOM
Well, maybe I am laughing a bit... I just thought, as long as you're here, it would be nice for you to relax into the place a little.

ANNIE
(understanding)
Well... It's beautiful country, I'll give you that. And I could see having some kind of vacation place. Retreat. But I don't know how you do it full time. Don't you miss the rest of the world?

TOM

What's that to miss?

ANNIE

Ha... if you've never lived in a city with museums, theater, music, restaurants, uh... god, a million things, then it's something I can't explain.

TOM

(thinks, teasing a bit)

Does Chicago count?

ANNIE

(surprised)

You lived in Chicago?

TOM

When I was first married.

ANNIE

(stunned)

You were married to a woman in Chicago?

Tom likes disturbing her picture of him as the predictable cowboy. He smiles;

TOM

I once heard Itzhak Perlman guest star with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. He played Rachmaninov's Vocalize Opus 34. No. 14. It was one of the most beautiful pieces of music I ever heard. I actually forgot where I was for a time.

(Annie is floored)

You seem surprised?

ANNIE

(not wanting to insult)

Well, I, uh... you didn't...

TOM

Just who's been laughing at who here?

Tom says this with a wry smile. Annie returns with a smile –

as an understanding is reached between them: they've both stereotyped the other. They are both pleased – and attracted – by what they don't know.

INT. CREEK HOUSE - NIGHT

Grace is fast asleep, exhausted. She does not stir when the phone rings.

Annie picks up from her own bed, awakened, still dressed in her branding clothes, having just passed out on the bed.

ANNIE

Hello?

INT. CENTRAL PARK WENT APARTMENT - NIGHT

INTERCUT: Robert, alone, in the vast apartment.

ROBERT

I thought you guys were going to call me.

ANNIE

Oh, Robert, I'm sorry. We were so tired from the branding. Grace barely made it to her bed and I didn't have the energy to take my clothes off.

ROBERT

Oh well... branding will do that to you.

ANNIE

Everything all right.

ROBERT

Huh-huh. You?

ANNIE

Fine. Actually, today was a good day. You should have seen her.

ROBERT

I wish I did.

The sound of self-pity was so obvious for both of them, so Robert quickly re-groups, resorting to something he knows is

important to her;

ROBERT

Well, uh the real reason I called, actually, was to tell you I saw Lucy at Jo-Jo's tonight and she seems very worried.

ANNIE

About what?

ROBERT

Apparently, Gottschalk's been seen around town lunching with some very prominent magazine editors. Lucy said she tried to call you, but no one answered so she faxed you the list of names. She said one of them have contracts up fairly soon.

ANNIE

Oh. I didn't look at my faxes today. We left before sunrise.

ROBERT

Honey, I hope you're not endangering your position. Listen, if you need to come back and you want me to come take over, for a while, I'll work it out. I mean, the firm's got other lawyers, but the magazine's got only one of you.

After a day of hard work and simple pleasures, Annie begins to succumb to old anxieties and pressures.

INT. CREEK HOUSE - NIGHT

Annie is awake reading the faxes Lucy sent. One after other.

As she flips through them, one falls to the floor near the bed.

She gets down on all fours to retrieve and sees something under the bed. AN OLD, BATTERED CELLO CASE. She pulls it out to find the initials R.B. carved on the top. She opens it to find papers, receipts, bills – all from Tom's married life.

EXT. THE DOUBLE DIVIDE - EARLY MORNING

Tom rides a young colt along the creek. He hears footsteps.

He turns and sees Annie running along the creek on the other side. He stops to watch. When his horse SNORTS, Annie looks up to see him. She stops. He tips his hat to her.

ANNIE

I've decided it's impossible to properly say hello in this place without a hat.

TOM

A jogger, huh?

ANNIE

I don't jog, Mr. Booker. I run.

TOM

Lucky for you. The grizzlies around here only go for joggers.

ANNIE

If I can survive rush hour, I figure I can handle grizzlies...

TOM

(smiles)

You sleeping all right in that house?

ANNIE

I don't sleep all right anywhere. But the house is fine.

Tom walks his horse across the creek to her, comfortable in the silence. Annie moves about, uncomfortable in the waiting.

ANNIE

Who's R.B.?

Tom is finding Annie's blunt curiosity more endearing.

ANNIE

I found this old cello case filled with bills and receipts.

TOM

Sorry about that. I thought everything got cleared out. R.B. is my wife... ex-wife... Rachel. We used to live in that house together.

ANNIE

I thought you lived in Chicago?

TOM

I thought you were an editor, not a reporter?

Annie smiles and nods, realizing she's asking too many questions.

She tries to casually reach out to touch the horse's head, but it's too abrupt and the horse tosses his head away, taking a couple of steps back. Annie is embarrassed.

ANNIE

I have a way with animals.

TOM

It's all right. He's young. Just hold out your hand a little lower so he can get the smell of you.

ANNIE

Oh yes. I forgot.

She does and the horse sniffs at her hand.

ANNIE

He's beautiful.

TOM

Why don't you ride anymore? Grace told me you used to ride when she was younger.

ANNIE

She did?

Annie is somewhat moved by her daughter telling him that.

ANNIE

I don't know, really. No time mostly.

A cold wind blows. She folds her arms across her breasts.

ANNIE

I thought it was supposed to be
spring.

Tom can't help but notice her nipples are hard from the cold.

He looks away. She laughs.

ANNIE

Are you shy, Mr. Booker?

TOM

Just polite. Well, maybe you'd like
to try riding again, some time before
you go home.

Annie is struck by the words "before you go home." Tom ambles
off on his horse.

TOM

Enjoy the day.

ANNIE

You too.

Annie steps across the rocks at the ford, crossing the creek.

Her foot slips, one of her shoes goes into the water.

ANNIE

Shit.

TOM

Need a lift?

ANNIE

I can handle it!

She crosses the creek. She turns, giving him a small wave.
He touches his hat. She runs off. Tom watches her go, head
down, concentrating...

INT. CREEK HOUSE - DAY

A tense Annie is having a difficult phone with DAVID
GOTTSCHALK;

ANNIE

...David, we've been behind a day or two before. But Lucy just Fedexed me all the material and it'll be approved by the end of the day.

DAVID GOTTSCHALK (V.O.)

If nothing goes wrong. If the faxes don't go down. If the phone lines are opened. I can't have this magazine hitting the streets by the skin of its ass, Annie.

During David's lines, Diane has entered, carrying fresh towels – she crosses into the bathroom.

ANNIE

Oh, come on! This is such bullshit! The work is getting done, David. Lucy keeps me on top of everything.

DAVID GOTTSCHALK (V.O.)

Lucy isn't you. We're losing something without you being here. Now, I know this is a rough time for you, but I think we should make another arrangement.

Without Annie's awareness, Diane re-enters and takes her time leaving, so she can take in all of Annie's things; her business "office," books, etc...

ANNIE

What the hell does that mean? How much more do I have to do to prove how important this magazine is to me?

DAVID GOTTSCHALK (V.O.)

If this magazine is so important to you Annie, why are you in Montana?

Diane can't help but notice a slight vulnerability in Annie.

DAVID GOTTSCHALK (V.O.)

Look, this is what we're going to do. Finish up this issue. I'll set

up a conference call in a few weeks.
Just you, me and your lawyer and
we'll just work this out so that
everyone will be taken care of. Fair
enough?

Annie is now aware of Diane's presence and chooses to play
it cool. It's not the moment.

ANNIE

Uh, yes... Sure, David.

DAVID GOTTSCHALK (V.O.)

All right. Speak to you then.

He hangs up. Annie forces a smile to Diane.

ANNIE

Thank you. You're all doing too much.

DIANE

Oh, it's... I wanted to tell you
that, if you'd like, you being so
busy, I could take Grace to her
therapy exercises for you. I have to
go in once a week for shopping anyway.

Annie doesn't know whether or not to accept.

ANNIE

Oh... Well... thank you very much. I
don't –

Before she finishes her line, the phone rings again.

ANNIE

Sorry.

(to phone)

Hello? Hi, yeah, I just spoke to
him. Oh, you know David, Mr. Strong
Arm...

Diane feels out of place and exits. Annie doesn't notice
until she hears the door close. She pushes back her hair and
takes a deep breath. She looks out through the side window
and sees:

Grace and Joe doing chores. Grace looks involved and not at

all self-conscious. A moment of gratitude and calm for Annie.

EXT. THE DOUBLE DIVIDE - DAY

Pilgrim bursts out of a chute and into the riding arena. He runs to the far end and abruptly stops. Tom is holding the orange flagstick, and coiled rope, coming through a gate into the arena, crossing to the middle of the ring. Something in his demeanor tells us that fun and game are over.

Pilgrim and Tom stand there, motionless, eyeing each other.

Pilgrim snorts and takes a few, small steps backward. Tom takes a beat, then starts slowly towards Pilgrim, lifting the flag and "cracking" it. At the sound, Pilgrim whirls away from him and runs, around the arena. He starts to slow, looking at Tom. Again, Tom cracks the flag and Pilgrim runs, round and round the arena... like a ringmaster, Tom keeps Pilgrim moving, cracking the flag.

Something about Tom's demeanor tells us it isn't going well.

EXT. THE RANCH - DAY

Tom, carrying a saddle, comes around the side of the barn.

Through the slats, he sees Grace working in the barn, watering a horse. She has stopped and is looking through the cracks of Pilgrim's stall at him. She turns and sees Tom through the slats. She goes back to work as Tom comes to the barn door.

TOM

Come and take a ride with me.

EXT. THE RANCH - DAY

They walk towards his pick-up truck.

TOM

Can you drive?

GRACE

Drive? I'm not old enough yet.

TOM

It's never too soon to start.

He enters the passenger side.

GRACE

I can't...

TOM

I don't have all day.

She hesitates and gets into the truck.

INT. PICK-UP TRUCK - DAY

Grace doesn't know what to do.

TOM

Put the key in and turn it.

(Grace obeys)

The right pedal is gas, the other one's the brake.

GRACE

I don't know if I can with my leg.

TOM

Well, there's only one way to find out.

(puts truck in gear)

Give it a little gas.

She awkwardly puts her prosthetic foot on the gas pedal. Too much. It lurches forward. She takes her foot off.

TOM

Well, we know you can. Now you just got to feel how much. Try it again.

She does. They slowly, very slowly, move along the dirt road.

TOM

Nice, real nice. There's a little road down at the end here, turn onto it.

Grace badly oversteers, but makes the turn. She drives along the road, across a pasture, heading toward distant mountains.

TOM

Just follow this. Nothing to it. I'm

going to shut my eyes here for a little while. Just keep going till you run out of road.

GRACE
(afraid)
I don't know if I can.

TOM
Not a question of if you can – you are. Just keep your eyes on the road and your foot on the pedal and the rest will take care of yourself.

Folding his arms over his chest, shutting his eyes, Tom relaxes back. Grace locks her hand on the steering wheel and her eyes straight ahead...

EXT. DOUBLE DIVIDE - DAY

The truck is parked at the foot of a mountain. Grace, very pleased with herself, sits beside Tom on the cab's roof, looking around them at the great Montana. After a beat;

TOM
Where did you get Pilgrim from?

GRACE
We bought him in Kentucky. My mother and I took a trip down there to see him.

TOM
That must have been pretty special.

Grace nods. It is a pleasant memory. He motions for her to be quiet. An old ELK with a prodigious rack of antlers, has come down out of the mountains. Seeing them, he stops in his tracks, dead still. They watch each other. Then the elk turns and runs back up into the mountains. Tom smiles at Grace who smiles back – partly because of the elk, partly because she's alone with Tom.

GRACE
Are you afraid of anything?

TOM
(thinks)

Getting old. Not being of much use,
I guess.

(beat)

What went on out there, Grace? With
Pilgrim?

Grace doesn't say anything. Tom nods then;

TOM

You see, Grace, I've got a problem.
When I'm working with a horse, I
like to know its history. Now, most
times, the horse can tell you pretty
much the whole story, but sometimes
he can be so messed up in his head
that you need more to go on. You
need to know exactly what went wrong.
Often times, it's the obvious thing,
but something that went wrong just
before that, maybe even some little
thing...

Grace is quiet. She doesn't want to think about that.

TOM

It's like if I'm driving and run
into a tree. When somebody asks me,
"Well, what happened?", I don't say,
"Well, I plowed into a tree." I'd
say, "The sun was in my eyes." or "I
skidded." or "I took my mind off the
road for a second." See what I mean?

(Grace nods)

I don't know how you feel about
talking about it and I can understand
you might not want to. But if I'm
going to figure out what's going on
in his head, it'd sure help if I
knew exactly what happened that day.

Grace looks away. Tom smiles and gently puts his arm around
her shoulders, which has a soothing effect on Grace – making
her feel safe...

TOM

Not today – whenever you feel like
it. I leave it up to you.

Grace looks into Tom's eyes, wanting so much to unburden herself to him and have him make everything all right. She nods.

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - LATE AT NIGHT

Tom is making his way to the house at the end of the day, when he stops and looks over to the Creek house –

POV – the lights are on. And he can see Annie, exhausted... approving pages, talking on the phone and faxing all simultaneously.

He gets an idea.

EXT. CREEK HOUSE - MORNING

Annie sits on the porch of the creek house, with a guilt over herself, sipping coffee and deep in thought. She looks up to see:

Tom riding towards the house on his horse, leading another horse behind him. He looks to her and smiles.

ANNIE
(murmurs)
Oh-oh.

Tom reaches the house as Annie rises.

ANNIE
The answer's no.

TOM
You haven't heard the question yet.
Truth is, you'd be doing me a favor.
I got all these eager young colts
need riding and poor old Rimrock
here is feeling kind of left out...

ANNIE
Poor thing.

TOM
He'd be grateful, he'd take real
good care with you.

ANNIE

Is this how you're going to make me pay my phone bill?

TOM
No, ma'am, I'm afraid that's extra.

She gives him a crooked smile.

EXT. THE RANCH, PASTURE - DAY

Annie, in Levis and a jacket, rides Rimrock beside Tom across the pasture. We overhear them in the midst of talking.

TOM
Relax our center... It's just sitting in a bucket.

ANNIE
Yeah, it's been a while, but I... I remember the basic ideas...

TOM
OK. I'll stop talking then.

He rides a few steps ahead as Annie realizes she doesn't remember. She just went into automatic "I don't have to be told anything" mode.

ANNIE
Actually, I never rode Western. I'm sorry. Go ahead.

TOM
Well, he don't know that. Just sit the horse.
(watches her ride)
Good... You have a nice seat.

ANNIE
Thanks.

TOM
Feel good?

ANNIE
Yeah.

TOM

You look all right. You want to pick it up a little?

ANNIE

OK.

Tom urges his horse into a center. Annie canters alongside.

TOM

Watch your reins, he'll go with you, give him some room, let him do the work. Relax, don't grab him with your thighs, just so long as he can feel your body.

Annie responds to every suggestion without resistance. And she experiences this sense of pleasure – this great animal beneath her, the physicality and the surrender of letting someone else lead...

TOM

You want to let it go some more?

She begins to let herself go, losing herself in the experience.

She just nods... Tom breaks into a full gallop... Annie follows suit... She lets everything go – her job, her marriage, motherhood, guilt, anxiety... all of it. Her only focus is the horse beneath her, and the man on the horse leading her...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DOUBLE DIVIDE - DAY

They ride along the creek, crossing at a ford. They ride up towards the mountains.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE MOUNTAINS - DAY

They ride through a narrow pass with sheer rock walls, riding by a waterfall...

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

They ride across a meadow, cattle stepping lazily aside to let them pass. And as they ride alongside each other, appreciating the silence...

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

They ride up along a sloping ridge covered with pine trees.

They come to the rim of a high bluff. They stop. They look out at the twin valleys that gave the ranch its name. And they can just see the old CREEK HOUSE hidden in the shade of some trees along the creek...

Tom looks over at Annie, who is looking out over this beautiful vista.

ANNIE

It's a whole other world you have going on here. It just goes along, doing what it has to. And you're a part of it, you just wake up and, and there you are... And everything that seems like life or death some place else – doesn't affect any of this one bit.

Tom is impressed by her feelings. He sees her saddle cinch needs fixing and gets off his horse.

TOM

Lift your leg.

Annie complies once she realizes what he's doing.

ANNIE

How long did you live here with your wife?

TOM

Five years. My son was born here.

ANNIE

(opens her eyes)
Son?

TOM

Yeah. I haven't seen him in a while.
He used to come to the ranch over

summers, but then he started having friends and was going off to college, so... Good boy. Hal. Lives in New York near his mom.

ANNIE

How did you meet her?

TOM

College. In Illinois. She was playing the cello. I hadn't heard cello music growing up. She had the reddest hair, the bluest eyes. When she played, it was...

Tom can't find a beautiful enough word. But Annie understands.

TOM

She was the most beautiful thing I'd ever seen.

Annie sees Tom as if with new eyes – his love for this woman he lost.

ANNIE

Why didn't it work out?

TOM

She was never really happy here. She did the best she could.

Annie looks at him and for the first time senses a kinship – an understanding they both have of being torn between two worlds... a desire for home...

TOM

Grace told me you have a country house in Connecticut. Sounds like a beautiful place.

ANNIE

It is. It's lovely.

TOM

Ever think of moving there full time?

ANNIE

We did at one point. When we thought

we'd have more children. And we after
tried. We tried everything, but...
wasn't meant to be.

There is an awkward silent beat for a moment. Annie is
momentarily self-conscious. Tom helps by speaking of himself;

TOM

I hear that! See, I knew she was
never going to be a ranchest, but I
wanted to try – I thought maybe
she'd give music lessons to the kids
in town or at the school, maybe even
recitals. My son would grow up here.
Maybe have one or two more. I'd teach
'em what I could. They'd play with
my brother's kids. All grow up
together. And even if they all decided
to go out into the world, they'd
always know where home was – cause
we'd keep it for 'em...

ANNIE

That's very important to you, isn't
it? Home.

TOM

Yeah, I think it is. And I don't
mean everybody's got to be married,
have kids – It's more like, knowing
where you're from, where you belong,
what feeds you, where you can go no
matter what happens... Knowing what
you're supposed to be doing while
you're here.

ANNIE

How did you find out all that?

Tom looks right into her eyes and confesses without a shred
of self-consciousness.

TOM

I got lost.

They smiles.

EXT. CREEK HOUSE - NIGHT

The world is in silhouette. Off in the distance, we see Tom standing by his horse, offering his hand to Annie, helping her off. There's an awkward moment, neither of them wanting the day, or the moment, to end.

INT. CREEK HOUSE - NIGHT

Grace is standing by the window, looking out at them. Their movements indicate an intimacy that upsets her.

EXT. CREEK HOUSE - NIGHT

After a beat; Tom gets back on his colt. He takes Rimrock's reins and leads him off. Annie stops for a moment, watching him ride away...

She watches her mother walk towards the house;

INT. CREEK HOUSE - MOMENT'S LATER

Grace watches her mother stand there a moment, then turn and walk towards the house. Grace moves away from the window, her emotions churning – jealousy, anger – and enters her bedroom, shutting the door.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE PASTURE - EARLY MORNING

Joe, hat tipped low, is riding his horse, leading some young horses, exercising them in the morning pasture. He sees Grace, walking with her cane, coming across the pasture.

JOE
(shy)
Hi...

She stops. After a beat;

GRACE
Would you let me ride your horse?

JOE
(hesitates)
Have you talked to Tom about it?

GRACE

Of course I have.

JOE

(beat, then:)

I don't know... You sure Tom said
it's all right?

She nods. He hesitates.

GRACE

Are you going to give me a hand or
aren't you?

He gets off his horse and holds it. She puts down her cane,
then puts her hand on the saddle horn. She puts her prosthetic
leg into a stirrup. Frightened, she starts to shake;

JOE

You sure?

Angry, determined, Grace tries to swing her leg onto the
horse. She can't do it. Tears of frustration on her face.
She tries again. She manages to pull herself halfway on, her
prosthetic leg buckles and she falls. Frightened, Joe runs
to her.

JOE

You okay?

She gasps to catch her breath. He reaches to help her up.
She pulls her hand away. Embarrassed, she "runs" off. Joe
remains still. He hears little VOICES. He turns and sees the
TWINS having been watching the whole thing from a small hill.
As they run off, he yells, threateningly.

JOE

You better not say anything!!!

EXT. CREEK HOUSE - NIGHT

We follow Joe running towards the creek house, fastening a
good shirt. He's dressed and cleaned for dinner. He's late.

INT. CREEK HOUSE - NIGHT

Annie is in the midst of making a spaghetti dinner. She's a
little frazzled but she's on top of it. Grace enters wearing
a lovely dress – it is the first time we have seen her in a

dress. Annie hears her enter before she sees her, asking;

ANNIE

Honey, would you see if anybody wants –

Annie notices Grace standing there, in her dress. She stops.

ANNIE

You look really pretty.

Grace is a little self-conscious but grateful. She begins taking forks out of her dress pocket.

GRACE

I thought there were too many forks
on the table.

ANNIE

Well, one was for salad...

GRACE

Mom, they don't mind eating with one
fork.

ANNIE

(thinks, then)

You're right. Good.

Grace puts them away.

ANNIE

Does anybody out there want something
to drink?

GRACE

I'll take care of it.

ANNIE

Thanks, honey.

Grace nods and exits to the living room.

LIVING ROOM:

The room is silent because every Booker is **READING A DIFFERENT COPY OF ANNIE'S MAGAZINE**. Frank covertly glimpses at the scantily-clad models... The Twins sharing a magazine, doing the same thing as their father, but keeping an eye out for

mom... Diane is looking at pictorial exposes on the kind of lives she only hears about on audio tapes...

Tom sits off to the side, amused by the sight.

Grace enters as Joe enters. They nod across the room to each other with a little smile.

GRACE

Would anyone like something to drink?

We hear a CRASH in the kitchen, then:

ANNIE (O.S.)

SHIT!

Everybody looks up for a minute. The Twins giggle. Diane gives them a dirty look.

TOM

I'll give your mom a hand.

Diane watches him enter the kitchen, then returns to her magazine.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Annie has dropped a hot pot into the sink, after pouring the tomato out of it, and into a terrine.

TOM

Everything under control?

ANNIE

(laughs)

Not really. I'd forgotten how long it's been since I've done this. And I couldn't get any Parmesan cheese.

TOM

Just make yourself comfortable.

ANNIE

I am comfortable.

TOM

Ha, ha... all right, well, uh I guess you can bring out the pasta.

She undoes her apron and crosses towards the bowl. Tom's eyes never leave her. It's the first time he's seen her in her dress, sans apron. As she lifts the bowl to hand to him, she realizes he's been looking at her. There's a silent moment, then;

ANNIE

You missed a button.

TOM

Huh?

She looks for it. Tom crosses to her and buttons it, then takes the bowl.

ANNIE

Thank you.

They're quiet for a beat as they exchange a look. Suddenly, Grace enters – she clearly doesn't like the two of them being alone, Annie quickly covers;

ANNIE

Oh, good, Grace, would you bring in the bread... I'll get the salad and then we're all set.

Tom has already exited by the time Annie finishes, and Grace grabs the bread basket.

INT. CREEK HOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT

We parachute into the middle of the meal. The spaghetti is a hit... We cut to different conversations and reactions around the table.

Frank is in the middle of saying;

FRANK

It'd be a whole lot easier to pay the feed end of the month...

TOM

I don't think Warren would go for that.

Grace is talking to Joe and the Twins.

GRACE

...like, for instance, you can go on the Internet and access this thing called The Visible Man – who was this murderer they caught in Texas that was executed and donated his body to science and you can call him up on the screen and dissect him, like in Three-D...

Grace eats as she talks. Joe and the Twins are fascinated.

Annie asks Tom, Frank and Diane;

ANNIE

Well, did you ever think about hiring a business manager?

FRANK

We have a business manager. The best around.

DIANE

Ha...

TOM

Diane takes care of the books. I don't know how, but at the end of every month, everything adds up to the penny.

DIANE

Ain't brain surgery.

ANNIE

It's pretty impressive. Where I come from, you'd be a gold mine.

Diane doesn't know how to accept that, but inside she's bursting with pride. She focuses on the Twins who fight;

TWINS

This is MY fork. That's YOUR fork, ya idiot!

DIANE

Hey. You stop that kind of talk at

the table.

FRANK

I'll have another round of that spaghetti if may?

ANNIE

Absolutely. I made enough for an army.

DIANE

I uh... I like the sauce very much. Maybe I get the recipe.

Annie is so pleased and is about to reply, but Grace, noticing Tom smiling at Annie:

GRACE

It's from a jar.

There's an odd silence as a deflated Annie serves Frank.

FRANK

Thank you.

Finally, Diane saves it.

DIANE

Well, I tried jar sauce once – wasn't this good. Ya gotta know which brand to buy. I'd like to get the name of this one.

Annie is grateful. Grace feels foolish.

TWIN (SCOTT)

Can we see the dead body on the screen?

DIANE

What?

GRACE

It's just my computer.

DIANE

Oh, I don't –

ANNIE

It's okay. Grace, show them. I'm going to put the coffee on. I made an apple tart for dessert.

The Twins excitedly move to the computer. Joe waits for Grace.

DIANE

I'll help you with the coffee.

ANNIE

Well... I know I should reject that offer, but I'm not going to.

DIANE

(jovial)

No reason you should, no reason you should.

They exit into the kitchen. Frank continues eating.

Tom looks around – Grace showing the boys the computer. Annie and Diane in the kitchen. For a second, we see Tom realize an image of the life he once thought he could.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

As Diane and Annie prepare coffee and dessert;

DIANE

I was looking in one of your magazines and saw that picture of the couple getting married at the Pyramids. Were you ever in Egypt?

ANNIE

I was there for that shot, actually.

DIANE

What was it like?

ANNIE

Oh, God – I think it was the fourth or fifth time I'd been there, so all I remember was the heat and how incompetent the photographer was...

She laughs as she directs this last line to Diane, who just

smiles. And Annie realizes that's not what she meant at all.

This woman is starving for glimpses into this other life.

ANNIE

But, uh, Egypt is, well, it's like nothing else. It's like going back in time.

(Diane listens)

I remember as a kid trying to imagine what a kid my age, centuries ago, walking over that same ground, was wondering about or, if they had the same problems as me... and I felt, connected to... to time itself, almost. Ha, I never realized how hard it was to describe.

DIANE

I'd love to go there one time...

ANNIE

You and Frank ever take a vacation?

DIANE

Soon. We're going to Branson, Missouri to see my cousin Emma married. Frank loves it there.

Annie can sense the disappointment in her voice, and at the same time, the comfortable resignation.

Suddenly, from inside, they hear LOUD OVERLAPPING VOICES as the children fight.

TWIN

IT WAS MY TURN!

JOE

YA JUST HAD A TURN. IT WAS NOT.

TWIN

WAS SO!

LIVING ROOM:

Diane and Annie enter to find Joe and Scott fighting, as Tom tries to break them up...

TOM
Boys! Settle down!

TWIN
You never let me have a turn!

JOE
Don't be such a baby!

TWIN
You just showing off for her!

JOE
You shut up, stupid!

TWIN
You're the one who's stupid – letting
her go and fall off your horse!!

Everyone goes quiet, except for the computer screen.

JOE
You little shit!

DIANE
JOE!

TWIN
I saw 'em. In the pasture. Her trying
to get on Gonzo! I saw 'em.

ANNIE
What does he mean?

GRACE
Nothing.

ANNIE
Did you go riding?

JOE
Little shit!

Joe lunges for Scott and the two start rolling in a fight.

Frank and Tom work to pull them apart as Diane yells.

DIANE

Annie, I'm so sorry, but they're just tired. We'll have dessert another time. Frank, get them out of here.

(to other Twin)

Come on. Say good night and thank you...

Voices everywhere. Yelling. "Thank you's!!" During which, Grace quickly turns and exits. Annie eyes follow her out of the room, but with her guests and the chaos, she doesn't know whether or not to leave.

FRANK

Dinner was delicious. Thank you.

(to Twins)

Say thank you!!

Diane and Frank usher the kids out. Tom holds onto Joe until they're gone, then lets him go.

JOE

Sorry, ma'am, I thank you for dinner. It was very good.

ANNIE

Did Grace try to ride, Joe?

JOE

(hesitates)

I expect you should talk to Grace about that, ma'am. And if I did anything wrong, then I am sorry.

Ever the gentlemen, Joe exits. Annie looks to Tom. He's about to leave, when he stops and says:

TOM

Don't let her turn you away.

Tom exits.

Annie stands and faces Grace's closed door. Slowly, she lowers herself to her knees and sits on them, thinking... reminiscent of Tom, waiting for his moment with Pilgrim, in the field.

INT. CREEK HOUSE, GRACE'S ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

We don't know how long Annie waited, but she knocks gently, then enters to find Grace, in her nightgown, on her bed, with the night stand light on. Her prosthesis is against the wall.

ANNIE

Grace? Is everything all right?

(no answer)

Can we talk?

GRACE

About what?

ANNIE

Well...

(nervous)

So you tried riding again?

GRACE

(snotty)

Yeah. Does that mean I'm cured?!

ANNIE

Honey, nobody's trying to cure you –

GRACE

...You worried everything all right now and we'll have to go home?

ANNIE

What are you talking about?

GRACE

You... not wanting to go home because you hate daddy so much.

ANNIE

Grace, I don't hate your father.

GRACE

I can't remember the last time you made him dinner.

ANNIE

I was just trying to say thank you to Diane and Frank and –

GRACE

Tom?

Annie sits by the bed, Grace moves away a little.

ANNIE

Look, I just wanted to say, I think it's great you're riding again. And... and I think I know why you, you needed to do it alone... without anyone knowing...

GRACE

Yeah, you know everything!!

ANNIE

STOP IT! Why can't I talk to you!!

GRACE

NO, YOU STOP IT! Stop pretending like you care! Like this really isn't about you and Tom.

ANNIE

(angry)

WHAT?! How can you –

(at a loss)

I'm sorry if my friendship with Tom bothers you so much, but I happen to value having someone to talk to, especially when my own daughter ignores me night and day because no matter what I say, it's wrong and no matter what I do, it's wrong... I'm sorry I'm such a disappointment to you.

GRACE

Well, now you know what it feels like.

Beat.

ANNIE

I don't deserve that. I have never looked at you as a disappointment. If I'm on your back to do better, if I push you to try harder it's because I want you to be the best you can

be.

GRACE

FOR YOU! Because I'm your daughter
which means you're the best mother!
Isn't that what you're always talking
about in interviews – having it
all, the great career, the great
family... Proving everybody wrong.
Wanting everybody to think you're
this perfect woman!

Beat. They're both exhausted.

ANNIE

Listen, if... if there's a part of
you as parent that... that takes
pride in your child – that, you can
look at them and see something you've
accomplished as well... if that's
wrong, then I'm sorry.

(no answer)

But it wasn't my intention. I don't
push for me. I do it for you... So
you don't waste half your life feeling
like you don't know where you belong.

GRACE

Yeah, well, you've done a great job.

Beat. Annie feels deeply hurt.

ANNIE

Well, then I do apologize... But
what I'm most sorry for is turning
you into a spoiled brat who can only
think about what she's feeling...
who can't admit when she's wrong and
who can't forgive when she's not.

GRACE

LEAVE ME ALONE!!

Annie stops to exit as Grace says something under her breath.

Annie stops.

ANNIE

What did you say?

GRACE

I said... I started.

Grace starts to sob. Annie doesn't understand.

ANNIE

Started what?

GRACE

My period.

ANNIE

(softer)

When? Tonight?

GRACE

(nods)

I felt it happen downstairs and when
I went into the bathroom.

Annie reaches down to touch Grace's shoulder. Grace turns – there is no anger in her face. Annie sits and takes her in her arms. Grace clings to her and sobs like a little girl.

Annie sees tears run – gratefully, lovingly.

GRACE

Who's going to want me now?

ANNIE

What?... Oh baby...

GRACE

Who's ever going to want me? Nobody
will.

ANNIE

That's not true.

GRACE

Why should they?

ANNIE

Because you are... one of the most...
incredible, bravest, most beautiful
woman I have ever met. The efforts

you make. Your courage and your
dignity.

(laughs thru tears)

I don't know where you got it? I
honestly don't know how I would have
handled all this if I were you.

Grace is so grateful, they cling to each other even harder.

As the tears subside, Grace manages to admit...

GRACE

I'm sorry... about what I said. It's
just that – all those times you and
Daddy were trying for another kid,
I... I used to pray at night that it
would work. And not because of you
guys or that I wanted a brother or
sister... but... just so I wouldn't
have to be...

ANNIE

What?

GRACE

So special. Because I was the only
one. You both wanted me to be so
good at everything, so perfect and I
wasn't. I was just me. And now I've
completely ruined everything,
anyway...

They both start crying again as Annie rocks her gently.

ANNIE

Sshhh... Ssshhhh...

They hold each other as if for dear life...

LATER – CAMERA PANS to discover mother and daughter, fast
asleep, in each other's arms.

INT. TOM'S ROOM, RANCH HOUSE - NIGHT

Tom sits alone, writing at his desk. His music is playing.

He stops to look out the window overlooking the Creek House.

Annie and Grace fell asleep with the lights still on in the living room.

Tom is thinking of Grace and Annie – wondering what happened after he left... conflicted by what he feels for Annie...
And remembering why they're here in the first place...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CREEK HOUSE - NEXT MORNING

The phone rings, awakening Annie first, then Grace.

ANNIE
Hello?

OPERATOR (V.O.)
Hello, this is ATT Conference Service.
Is this Annie MacLean?

ANNIE
Yes.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
I have a conference call scheduled
for you with Mr. Gottschalk and Mr.
Farlow.

ANNIE
(remembering)
Oh. Oh, yes. One moment, please.

GRACE
Who is it?

ANNIE
Uh, nothing. I'm going to pick it up
in the other room – would you hang
this up for me?

GRACE
Sure.

Annie moves to the other room, sits down at her office space,
takes a breath, then picks up, yelling to Grace;

ANNIE
Okay, Grace...

(click)
Operator?... I'm ready.

EXT. RIDING ARENA - LATER THAT MORNING

Annie and Grace are standing by the arena fence. Frank, Joe and the Twins are sitting on the fence rail. Joe is holding a saddle and a bridle, standing in some shadows in an empty arena. Pilgrim comes running into the ring. Out of habit, he starts circling the ring. He sees Tom holding a saddle.

Pilgrim walks towards him. Curious, he stops, looking at him.

Tom puts the saddle down, sitting crossways on it. Pilgrim walks towards him again. He stops, looking at Tom again. Tom just sits there, playing with the bridle. Pilgrim walks around him. Tom doesn't show him any interest. Pilgrim comes closer. He looks at the saddle. He runs off. He stops, looking back. Tom just sits. Pilgrim walks back over. Tom stands and shows him the bridle. Pilgrim comes closer, sniffing it. He rubs his nose against the leather. Tom pats his head. Then, in one quick, but deft motion, he puts the bridle on him. Pilgrim tosses his head, but it doesn't seem to bother him. Grace and Annie watch intently. Tom takes the reins, walking Pilgrim around the ring. He walks him to the saddle. Pilgrim paws at it with his hoof. He turns and runs off. Tom lets him go. Pilgrim runs around the ring, slows down, looks over at Tom. Tom picks up the saddle. Pilgrim, cautiously, comes back over. Tom, with the saddle, walks away from him. Pilgrim, again curious, follows him. He nudges Tom.

Tom stops. Pilgrim comes around to take a good look at the saddle. Tom rubs his back. And gently, like laying down a sheet, puts the saddle on his back. Pilgrim shuffles slightly at the touch. Tom quickly cinches it. Taking up the reins, he walks Pilgrim around the ring again. He starts to jog.

Pilgrim jogs with him. And in the middle of the jog, Tom grabs onto the saddle horn, and without breaking his stride, pulls himself back up onto his back. He lays across the saddle, letting Pilgrim feel his weight. He sits up, and without letting him break his stride, he urges Pilgrim with his thighs, keeping him in the jog, riding around the ring.

Grace and Annie cheer. Tom tips his hat to them...

INT. THE BARN - DAY

Grace is cleaning stalls, etc... She exits one of the stalls with a pail and stops – looking down the barn to where she knows Pilgrim is. She places the pail down and gathers her courage. She walks to Pilgrim's stall. She stands motionless for some moments before she opens the doors and enters...

Pilgrim steps back a bit. He looks at her. He pins his ears back. Stomps his feet. Grace is about to turn and leave, but she stops herself and remains still.

Slowly, she reaches out to touch Pilgrim's head... and he lets her. We see in Grace a maturity of character, a willingness to face what she must face... the beginning of a compassion, not only for Pilgrim, but perhaps for herself as well.

EXT. DOUBLE DIVIDE - NIGHT

A full moon lights the ranch. Tom pulls up to the ranch house in his truck, parks and gets out. As he walks towards the house, he hears:

Grace exits the Creek House and coming towards him, a coat over her nightgown. Tom waits until she reaches him.

GRACE

I was waiting for you to come back.

Tom instinctively knows what she wants.

TOM

You hungry?

INT. RANCH HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Grace sits at the table. Tom is cooking at the stove. It feels as if they are the only two people on earth. Grace gets up her nerve... and begins:

GRACE

Judith was telling me about this boy she really liked. She never even had a chance to tell me his name...

She starts to quietly cry, but it doesn't stop her.

GRACE

We were going to go around by the
railroad bridge...

And we see the accident all over again... But this time, a
movie – as clear as reality – but in deathly silence. Just
the sound of Grace's voice, and her heartbeat...

EXT. THE WOODS, CONNECTICUT - EARLY MORNING

The horses are going up the icy path...

GRACE (V.O.)

We were laughing about something, I
don't remember what. Her horse fell...

Judith's horse suddenly stumbles on the ice, going down,
throwing Judith, her foot helplessly caught in the stirrup.

Her horse sliding back down the hill.

Grace tries to move Pilgrim to avoid the errant horse, but
it's too late, the horse plows into them, the horses sliding
back down the hillside onto the empty COUNTRY ROAD...

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD, CT. - EARLY MORNING

Pilgrim is first to find his legs. Judith's horse, its leg
broken at the ankle, walks in a confused state. Judith's
foot is helplessly caught in the stirrup...

GRACE (V.O.)

...Judith's foot was caught in the
stirrup... she couldn't get up, she
was so scared...

(cries)

I saw this truck, coming around the
turn...

She sees the glint of the steel. The Truck suddenly appears
from around the bend.

GRACE (V.O.)

...He was honking, trying to get us
to move... I tried to grab the reins
to get Judith's horse out of the
way...

Grace grabs the reins of Judith's horse. The horses are

spooking...

GRACE (V.O.)

...And the truck started skidding...

The truck skidded on the icy road, going out of control, jack-knifing, heading right for them...

GRACE (V.O.)

...It was coming right at us... There wasn't any time to do anything... It ran right into Judith's horse...

The truck bed plows into Judith's horse...

GRACE (V.O.)

...Judith just disappeared... And it came right at Pilgrim and me...

We see this...

GRACE (V.O.)

...And Pilgrim reared up at the truck and I fell off...

Grace falls onto the road, the truck running over her.

INT. RANCH HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Grace sobs uncontrollably now.

GRACE

Judith... Oh God, Judith. I'm sorry...

Tom is near and holds her as she puts her head on his chest.

TOM

I won't tell you it'll stop feeling this bad... But I can tell you, you didn't do anything wrong... The same thing would have happened to me... or Frank... or Joe... And there's no sense in looking for a reason why things happen...

(self-reflective)

I used to try and... always came up short. I don't think the why so's important as... what we do with what

we get. I remember this boy I'd see up on the Blackfeet Reservation. He was sixteen. Great kid. Strong. He'd gone swimming and dived headfirst into a rock. Snapped his neck, paralyzed him... After the accident, I'd look in on him from time to time... and he wasn't there anymore. His mind, his spirit, whatever you want to call it, it just disappeared. And what was left was nothing but anger... It's like the boy I knew just went away somewhere...

GRACE

I know where he goes.

TOM

I know you do. Don't you disappear.

(holds her tighter)

You do whatever you have to, to hold on...

(thinks)

I'll tell you one more thing... When Pilgrim reared up to face that truck... you know what I think?... I think that damn horse loved you so much, he was trying to protect you... That's what I think.

Grace listens to this. As Tom holds her in silence, it's almost as if they were father and daughter...

EXT. THE CORRAL - PRE-DAWN

Tom stands with Grace in the corral. Tom's horse, Rimrock, is saddled nearby. Tom takes Grace's cane.

TOM

Let me hold that...

Grace stands, looking at the horse...

GRACE

I can't... not yet...

TOM

There's no hurry. Take your time.

She's trying so hard to be brave. After a moment, she reaches for the saddle horn. She puts her prosthetic leg in the stirrup, takes a breath and swings her leg up – slipping, falling to the ground. Tom doesn't say anything. She pulls herself back up. She repeats the action... determinedly. She swings her leg over again and sits squarely on the horse. Tom remains still, but proud.

As the day breaks, we leave them in silence – Tom standing, hands in pocket... Grace sitting up on the horse, proudly.

EXT. DOUBLE DIVIDE, THE PASTURE - EARLY MORNING

Endless sky. Annie is jogging off in the distance when she looks up and stops to see: Tom and Grace, both on horses, stopped on a rolling hill. They do not see her.

Annie is filled with emotion... pride for her daughter, gratitude for this amazing man.

As the two ride off into the distance we do a slow:

FADE OUT:

SHOCK CUT:

BRIGHT SUNSHINE... CATTLE DRIVE...

EXT. THE MOUNTAINS - DAY

Frank and Diane, with the Twins, dogs at their heels, ride in front of the herd. Behind them, Joe riding alongside Grace.

Smokey and some Hands ride among the herd, keeping them moving.

And riding behind the herd are Annie and Tom...

MONTAGE OF VARIOUS MOMENTS THROUGHOUT THE DAY DURING THE CATTLE DRIVE... Highlighting, in particular, those in which the rising sexual tension between Tom and Annie is apparent.

EXT. THE MOUNTAINS - NIGHT

The cattle stands in silhouette. We hear singing.

Everyone is sitting around a campfire. Frank's playing the

guitar, singing along with Tom. They laugh when a lyric or a note goes wrong. Everyone is enjoying it.

Annie, her arms around her knees, sits off by herself. The song ends and people applaud.

Frank hands the guitar to Hank;

FRANK

Play that sweet one you know. The one makes my wife here so friendly.

DIANE

(slaps his shoulder)

You!

Hank begins to play and sing a painfully pretty song. His sweet voice is stark contrast to his gruff, strongman appearance. Frank offers his hand to Diane, she slaps it away and laughs, he helps her up and they start to dance. As everyone watches...

Joe stands and offers his hand to Grace;

JOE

You wouldn't want to dance with me, would you?

GRACE

I don't think you'd want me tripping all over you in front of everybody.

JOE

(sweetly)

I wouldn't let it happen.

GRACE

(affectionately)

You know, you're a good kid.

Joe smiles and helps her up. They come together and start dancing.

Annie is watching, holding her breath with gratitude.

Tom notices Annie off by herself and crosses to her. He extends his hand. She hesitates, looks again to Grace with Joe, then accepts...

His hand slide to her back. Her hand to his shoulder. They dance. Their bodies closer than they've ever been. Slowly, she leans her head against his body. And surrenders, for the moment...

Diane sees them. She holds her husband fast, and buries her head on his neck.

EXT. THE MOUNTAINS - DAY

MORE CATTLE DRIVE MONTAGE – Taking Tom and Annie a bit further in their intimacy; perhaps Tom takes extra special care to explain things to Annie, or fix her saddle cinch, or make her laugh...

EXT. THE MOUNTAINS - EVENING

The cows stands in the pasture, grazing. Annie and Diane are cleaning some pots and pans in the stream.

DIANE

Must be nice for you to take a few days off from your work, huh?

ANNIE

Well, I have more than a few days, ha, ha... I uh... I'm sort of... not an editor anymore... right now... First time I've said it out loud.

DIANE

They fired you?

ANNIE

No, it's more like a leave of –
(stops)
Ha, ha, ha. Yeah, they fired me.

DIANE

You don't seem to upset?

ANNIE

Delayed shock. Or maybe not. I know I could talk my way back if I wanted or... go to another magazine, someplace... Just not sure if I want to.

DIANE

Guess you don't have to figure it out until you go home.

This phrase "go home" stings Annie – though Diane said it innocently.

ANNIE

Did you always know this was the life you wanted?

DIANE

I fell in love. After that, I never thought about being anything but a rancher's wife. I never saw it like I was losing some other life, just felt like I was gaining one. I know that's not a popular opinion nowadays and I ain't saying it's the right one. We all have to find the life meant for us.

ANNIE

Frank's a good man.

DIANE

They don't come better. But I don't deny there are times I wonder about things I won't have. Maybe one day I'll get to see Egypt. Maybe not. But I know if you try too many different lives, you can wind up with no life at all...

ANNIE

Sounds like something Tom would say.

DIANE

Yes, it does.

Annie and Diane resume washing the dishes in silence. Annie deep in thought. Until Diane stops. After a beat, Annie notices.

ANNIE

What?

DIANE

Annie, I'm not good at this kind of talk – goes round and round a thing but never comes to it – so let's just say what it is. When you first came here, I didn't like you and I was worried. Tom means a lot to me and this family. Don't go looking here for whatever you looking for. Don't make that man go through something it took him a long time to see his way clear out of the first time.

ANNIE

I don't think anybody can make Tom do anything he didn't want.

DIANE

He's a good man, Tom is. He's got a gift, come from heaven above, I swear. But he's still a man. And a woman can lead a man into the middle of a mountain lake – and still make him think he's on dry land.

Diane's words ring in Annie's head.

EXT. THE MOUNTAINS - DEAD OF NIGHT

Dead in stillness. The cattle dark and motionless. Everyone asleep in bedrolls around the pasture.

Annie awakens, looks up at the moon, watching it go in and out of the clouds. She looks over to sleeping Grace... Then looks to where Tom is – and sees his sleeping bag is empty.

Quietly, she rises and looks for him.

She starts across the grass and sees him crossing on his haunches, wearing a slicker, sitting in the grass by the stream, drinking some water. She watches him.

Tom senses something and turns. For a moment, they just look at each other – half disbelieving the inevitable is so close at hand. Annie approaches as Tom rises.

They meet. They kiss. Tentative at first, but more, just to

make that very, precious first moment of discovery last as long as it can. The kiss grows more passionate. They begin to lose themselves in each other.

Until, suddenly, aware of their surroundings, they part. No words. Their expressions to each other tell all. Annie separates herself and goes back to her bedroll... Tom stands in the grass, by the stream... the moving water, the night's only sound.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DOUBLE DIVIDE - DAY

The cattle drive returns. Tom, Annie, Grace, et al... are on their horses, heading back towards the ranch when Grace sees in the distance;

GRACE
Dad?

Annie looks up and sees:

POV – ROBERT has come to the ranch. He is waiting for them with his luggage beside a rental car... standing out like an Like The Man In The Gray Flannel Suit in the middle of Wyeth's "Christina's World."

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - DAY

Everyone is being introduced to Robert, as Grace hugs him from the side, never letting go of him. Frank, Diane – who introduce their kids, then Tom and Robert shake hands...

ANNIE
This is Mr. Booker, Robert.

TOM
(extends hand)
Tom.

ROBERT
Hi. It's a pleasure. I'm very grateful for the way you took in my girls here. I bet you were surprised when they just showed up out of nowhere.

TOM

Oh yeah...

Laugh. Awkward silence...

ROBERT

Well I uh... I can already see a change.

(hugging Grace)

And I'm very grateful to you.

Robert is so sincere – in that openly, modern, "express your feelings" kind of way. Tom just nods.

GRACE

Did you notice – no cane?

ROBERT

I know. Amazing.

GRACE

Can we show him Pilgrim, Tom?

TOM

Oh, we're gonna show your dad plenty. Why don't you all get settled in and we'll do the tour. Excuse me.

As Tom walks away, a nervous Robert feels compelled to say:

ROBERT

See you later!

Tom just nods and keeps walking. Annie and Robert face each other for a beat.

ANNIE

Let's bring your bags inside.

GRACE

Wait till you see this – we have the whole house to ourselves...

The MacLeans walk to the Creek House.

EXT. DOUBLE DIVIDE - DAY

In the distance, we see the pick-up truck parked out in the pasture. Tom is standing with Robert – in jeans, now – and

Grace, telling Robert about the ranch. Robert has his arms around Grace, asking questions, interested in everything...

Grace is loving being with her two favorite men...

EXT. RANCH - DAY

Grace waits in the truck as Tom leads Robert through the cows and cowshit, climbs up and hops over a wood fence. Robert follows suit – not as gracefully – and gets a splinter...

INT. RANCH KITCHEN - DAY

Diane is busy in the kitchen when Annie enters.

ANNIE

Is there anything you need? I'm going food-shopping.

DIANE

Well, I am going to go after lunch.

ANNIE

No, no, I'll go – just give me a list.

Annie is determined. She needs to be by herself for a bit.

EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE RANCH - DAY

Tom continues his tour as the dogs run about them. Tom pays the dogs no attention, except to bark an order. Robert, however, engages with them – picking up a stick and throws it. A dog returns and gives it back. Robert kneels and begins rubbing the dog's fur, talking to it, looking like an anachronism in his baggy jeans with designer cowboy belt and spanking new designer cowboy boots.

Tom waits patiently for Robert, who... and carries on with the dog a bit too long. When Robert gets up, he habitually brushes the dirt off his jeans, maybe even his boots, and makes sure his outfit is hanging properly.

INT. BARN - DAY

Grace is in the stall with Pilgrim. Once again, close enough to touch him, which he allows.

Outside the stall, stand Robert and Tom. Robert squeezes his splinter...

ROBERT
I can't believe it's the same horse.

TOM
We still have a way to go.

ROBERT
How much longer do you think?

Tom understands this man wants his family back.

TOM
Well, like I told your wife, it's really up to Pilgrim.

ROBERT
I understand...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KITCHEN - EARLY MORNING

Everyone is seated around the table, eating, talking, laughing.

Grace is right by her father's side. Frank's in the middle of telling Robert:

FRANK
We thought we lost him in the snow storm... Told the kids. Had a funeral for the damn thing. Finally, snow stops. Staring to warm up. I go out and start cleaning the truck... Goddamn if that dog doesn't jump out from the back seat covered in snow... I nearly stained myself.

TOM
He thought it was a ghost.

JOE
A dog ghost!

Laughter all around.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - NIGHT

Everyone is outside enjoying the night after a long day.

Diane and Annie are on the porch. Diane is showing Annie how she does her needlepoint. Annie is genuinely interested.

Tom and Frank and Robert are sitting out front. Grace is at Robert's feet. Joe sits on the ground in front of his father, opposite Grace.

TOM

Is the poverty worse, now, you think?

ROBERT

I haven't been back in over twenty years, but I wouldn't be surprised. The population's larger.

FRANK

What were you doing over in India?

ROBERT

Uh, this was right after college. I was in the Peace Corps.

FRANK

That right?

Back on Diane and Annie, who hear the laughter O.S. and look.

Diane smiles, seeing how much Grace is enjoying her dad.

DIANE

She sure loves her daddy, huh?

Annie smiles and looks herself. Yes, she does, she thinks. Why can't I?

Back to the others. Everyone is very interested in Robert's stories... especially Tom.

ROBERT

...and I thought before I settled into law school – everybody knew

that was the plan – I'd take this time for myself.

Grace rises to go to the Creek House.

ROBERT

And I tell you, Frank, it was one of the –

As Grace passes by, she stumbles a bit and Robert habitually rises to help, but Grace ignores him and rights herself, continuing. Robert quickly sits back down, continuing.

ROBERT

...one of the uh... greatest times of my life... I had experiences that, I think, changed my outlook forever. I came back a different person, literally.

Tom listens with great interest and respect.

Back to Diane and Annie, who watch as Joe follows Grace.

DIANE

I think I'm going to have my hands full with the son of mine when you leave. Just might be his first broken heart.

ANNIE

Oh, how sweet.

A burst of laughter pulls their attention to the group –

Robert is now standing, acting out a story.

ROBERT

...and I have no idea what he's saying because I don't understand Hindu...

Everyone is listening, with big expectant smiles. Annie watches – having heard this story before. Her eyes gradually shift to Tom, who is enjoying the story.

ROBERT

...So, finally I'm trying to explain to him that I'm allergic to wool and

would he please get his sheep out of
my car –

Laughter. Robert continues, giving a quick look to Annie –
who is looking at Tom... Robert lets it go, continuing his
story.

INT. CREEK HOUSE - NIGHT

Grace is asleep. Robert sits by her bed, lit by the moon
through a window. He stares at this creature he loves so
much. He rises and enters Annie's room.

ROBERT
Tired?

Annie shrugs. Robert looks at the bed. He teases.

ROBERT
Small bed. Maybe I should sleep in
the barn.

ANNIE
(teases back)
You're allergic to hay.

ROBERT
(smiles)
I apologize for the surprise, but
the days only opened yesterday and I
figured...

ANNIE
You don't have to explain. You have
every right to come.

ROBERT
I can see why you put your faith in
him. He's a genuine... good guy...
Good at what he does. That's rare.

Annie nods. She tries to hide her discomfort. Robert sits on
the bed before her.

ROBERT
You were right about coming here.
I'm sorry for not thinking...

ANNIE

No, it's okay. Believe me, there were plenty of times I didn't know what the hell was right.

ROBERT

How are you feeling about work?

ANNIE

Let's not talk about that now.

And they're quiet. He moves to kiss her. It's awkward. They look to each other – as they try to remember how to make love together...

ROBERT

I feel like I'm on a first date.

Annie smiles sympathetically.

EXT. BARN DANCE, HANK'S RANCH - DUSK

Cars and pick-up trucks haphazardly parked along a dirt road... Smoking open grill barbecues. Ranchers and families move about the ranch, sit and eat at picnic tables with gingham tablecloths... Some teenagers hanging around the corral, talking. Diane and some other women, eating and talking... Frank with a group of men, drinking beer, telling stories.

A BAND has been set up by the barn. People are dancing under the harvest moon. Grace is dancing with Joe... Tom is dancing with a local woman... Annie with a rancher... Everyone is having a good time...

Robert is enjoying a smoke with some men. He looks over to the dance floor and smiles when he sees Grace and Joe.

Joe and the Rancher trade place... Joe dances with Annie, the Rancher with Grace... But Tom sees his chance and switches with the Rancher so that he can dance with Grace... She is thrilled and he guides her effortlessly across the floor.

Joe and Annie are interrupted by another couple. Joe switches partners, but Annie smiles and excuses herself – she wants to rest.

Robert continues talking with some of the men. He puts out

his smoke and looks over to the dance floor. He sees Grace now dancing with Tom... His eyes search for Annie. He moves away from the men until he sees, from a distance; Annie, sitting by herself, amidst the crowd... No one would notice her unless they were looking for her... But Robert does

– and what he sees is Annie looking at Grace and Tom... then, only looking at Tom... Smiling to herself gently... Watching his every move. Suddenly, she rises and exits out of the barn to get some air.

EXT. HANK'S RANCH - NIGHT

Annie finds an isolated spot, behind the main house, to be by herself and catch her breath.

INT. BARN - NIGHT

Tom and Grace continue dancing. She's in heaven. Robert approaches and Tom quickly allows him to take over. Grace loves the attention from both men. As they dance off, Tom crosses the dance floor and is met by Hank's wife;

HANK'S WIFE

Oh Tom, would you check the shed and see if there's anymore chairs.

TOM

Sure.

EXT. HANK'S RANCH - NIGHT

Tom is walking along when he turns the corner of Hank's house and finds; Annie sitting alone, staring up at the night. They see each other. From behind the house, no one else can see them.

It is as if the fates brought them face to face and alone.

Without any will to stop it, they embrace and kiss passionately. But when they look into each other's eyes, there is no joy in the kiss. Tom releases her and walks away, heading for the shed. Annie quickly pulls herself together and enters the main house through the back door.

INT. DOUBLE DIVIDE RANCH, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Diane is once more sitting at the kitchen table, looking

over some bills before bed. Her tape player is on softly.
Tom enters and crosses to the sink to get a glass of water.

Diane looks up, seeing Tom with his back to her – standing
at the sink, filling his glass – staring out the window
over the sink. She looks to the dish of brownies on the table.

DIANE

I have some brownies left over. Want
one?

TOM

(w/o turning around)
No thanks.

Diane senses an uneasiness in Tom. She looks as he drinks
his water.

MEDIUM CLOSE-UP ON TOM'S BACK, as if from Diane's POV.

But when we pull back we find ourselves;

INT. BARN - NIGHT

Tom is standing in front of Pilgrim's stall. He opens the
door. They look at each other. He strokes him and begins to
whisper;

TOM

There's something you have to do
tomorrow, boy...

Camera gently moves away... and Tom whispers to Pilgrim what
must be done...

EXT. THE RIDING ARENA - DAY

There's a stillness. A sense of import. Annie, Robert, Frank,
Diane, Joe and Smokey, are all at various spots along the
fence.

Grace stands inside the ring. Tom is standing beside Pilgrim
in the middle of the ring. Pilgrim is bridled and saddled.

Tom adjusts he stirrup. He walks over to Grace...

TOM

All set?

Grace swallows hard, nodding. She's worried...

TOM
Sure?

GRACE
(softly)
Sure.

Tom puts his arms around her shoulders and walks out to Pilgrim. The horse pricks up his ears as they approach. Tom motions Grace to stop a short distance from Pilgrim so as not to crowd him. Tom walks over alone, reaching to gently take hold of him. Holding him by the bridle, he puts his head beside Pilgrim's, quietly speaking to him, soothing Pilgrim's neck with his other hand...

Annie and Robert are fascinated. Anxious.

Pilgrim never takes his eyes off Grace. Tom tries to ease him forward. Pilgrim resists, lifting his head and looking at Grace so you can see the white at the top of his eye. Tom turns him away, walking him in circles, trying to calm him.

He leads him back to Grace. Pilgrim tosses his head and stomps his feet.

Robert grows more anxious. Annie is calmer, more focused.

Tom climbs up on him, riding him around the arena in an easy lope. Grace watches them go round the ring. She looks at her parents and tries to smile. They try as well.

Tom dismounts and leads Pilgrim back to Grace. Pilgrim balks again, violently throwing his head, kicking... Grace's shoulders slump, she presses her hands in her pockets, fighting not to cry...

TOM
Smokey...

Smokey climbs over the rail into the ring as Tom says something to him. Meanwhile Frank reassures Grace:

FRANK
He'll be okay, Grace. Just you hang on there a minute or two. Tom'll get

him, okay, you'll see...

Smokey jogs over to the gate, climbing it, and disappearing into the barn. Tom crosses to Grace.

TOM

There's still something going on inside of him I can't reach. So me and Smokey here, we're going to try laying him down. Okay?

GRACE

What does that mean?

TOM

It's more or less how it sounds. Sometimes it's not pretty to watch. Some horses fight it real hard. Your fella's already shown us he likes a good fight. So if you don't want to watch, I'll call you when it's done.

GRACE

I want to watch.

Smokey re-enters the ring, carrying some rope. He talks briefly to Tom. Pilgrim, sensing something, turns and runs to the far side of the ring. Tom, his arms spread, walks over to him, keeping him by the fence. Tom takes him by the bridle. Smokey comes beside him. Tom unhitches the bridle and in its place slips a rope halter Smokey passes to him.

Smokey then hands him two long ropes, one at a time. Tom fastens one under the halter and ties the other to the saddle horn. Tom asks Smokey.

TOM

You got that soft rope?

Smokey hands it to him. Tom quietly talks to Pilgrim, runs his hand down Pilgrim's left foreleg and lifts his hoof.

Pilgrim slightly shifts. And when he's still, Tom slips the loop at the end of the soft rope over the hoof making sure it's snug. And taking the other end of the rope, he hoists the weight of Pilgrim's raised hoof and ties the rope to the saddle horn. Pilgrim stands on three legs – an explosion waiting to happen. Tom moves away from Pilgrim, taking the

halter line from Smokey. Pilgrim, trying to move, finds he's crippled. Scared, he lurches, hopping on his right foreleg.

Seeing he can't walk, panicked, he tries to run. Tom and Smokey, brace themselves, lean back on their ropes and force him around them in a tight circle. He goes around and around like a crazed rocking horse with a broken leg. Tom looks over and sees Annie has left Robert outside the ring to stand by an anguished Grace – her hands on her shoulders, gripping her. Robert watches, feeling too much a foreigner...

GRACE

Why is he doing this?

FRANK

It'll be OK, Grace.

But even Frank isn't so sure. Pilgrim, covered in sweat, still circles. As he runs, his hobbled foot jabs at the air, trying to find peace. He runs and runs as Tom and Smokey lean on the ropes – until he can't run any more and stops. Tom and Smokey let the lines go slack. Pilgrim, stands there, his wet sides heaving, panting like an asthmatic, making loud rasping sounds. Tom and Smokey speak. Smokey hands him his rope.

Turning, he gets a coiled lasso out of the sand. He swings the rope in a wide loop and makes it fall over Pilgrim's saddle horn. He pulls it tight. And he takes the other end of the rope to the far side of the fence and ties it in a quick release knot to the bottom rung. Coming back he takes the other two lines from Tom. Tom crosses to the rail. He starts putting pressure on the rope. Pilgrim feeling it, braces himself. The pressure tilts the saddle hold downward.

FRANK

(to Grace and Annie)

He's trying to get him to go down on his knees...

Pilgrim fights. Tom pulls on the rope. Pilgrim, slowly, begrudgingly, gives ground. Tom, brings him to his knees, but it is short lived. Pilgrim is muscling his way back to his feet. Tom pulls him down to his knees again. Pilgrim, fighting with every bit of strength, slowly gets to his feet again. But the pressure Tom is putting on the saddle is too strong and relentless and finally Pilgrim goes down on his knees and stays down. Yet Tom keeps the pressure on... Tom

shouts to Smokey.

TOM

Drop the lines and come help me...

Smokey, dropping the line, runs over. They both pull on the saddle rope.

GRACE

That's enough! Stop it!

Pilgrim snorts and foams at the mouth, fighting. But slowly, like a wounded bird, she starts giving in. He rolls over on his side and lays his head in the sand and is still. It seems like a total, humiliating surrender.

Grace starts to sob, burying her face in Annie's chest.

Robert feels impotent to help.

TOM

GRACE!

Tom and Smokey stand over the fallen horse like two big game hunters at the carcass of a kill.

TOM

GRACE! Will you come here, please!

Grace shakes her head "NO." Frank motions to Annie for her to let Grace go... to let stand alone... We see that it's not easy for Annie to trust this, but she does.

And she steps back to where Robert stands...

Tom, his face set, walks toward Grace...

TOM

Grace, I need you to come with me.

Grace violently shakes her head "NO"... Robert gets up the courage to say aloud:

ROBERT

Well maybe she shouldn't be here...

Annie quickly turns to him and says with quick intensity:

ANNIE

Robert! Let him handle it! Please!

Robert can't watch this. He turns and takes a few steps.

Just stops... standing behind and apart from Annie, to just watch... slowly becoming transfixed, like someone who can't stop staring at an accident.

Tom reaches Grace and puts his hand tenderly on her shoulder...

TOM

Grace, I need you to come with me.

GRACE

No, you're only going to hurt him some more.

TOM

He's not hurt. He's okay. Look at him.

GRACE

(turned away)

No!

TOM

Grace, Listen... you've got to do this. Just trust me one more time.

Grace looks into his eyes and is reminded of all this man has done for her... and she remembers her trust.

GRACE

Do what?

Tom, prouder of her now than ever before.

TOM

I'll show you.

Tom leads her across the ring, with his arm around her shoulder. Annie tries to maintain her composure. Robert remains still and focused.

Tom and Grace come to Pilgrim, lying in the dirt, his breathing plaintive. Tom speaks gently;

TOM

I want you to lay down with him. I want you to stroke him. I want to start with his hindquarters and rub him, feel him all over.

Grace is shaking her head "NO." He speaks more firmly.

TOM

Grace, you've got to do what I say.

Grace knows there's no way out. She takes a breath and slowly kneels in the dirt beside him, with Tom's help. She lays on him, rubbing him, his hindquarters, his legs, his side, softly rubbing his neck and the wet silky side of his head.

TOM

Now, listen. I want you to stand on him.

ANNIE

What?!

Tom responds to their voice without looking at them:

TOM

PLEASE!

(they stop)

Grace, do what I'm telling you. Stand on him... now!

Grace obeys him through her tears. She lets Tom take her hand and guide her up onto the curve of Pilgrim's belly. Then he lets go. Grace stands there with tears steaming down her face – standing on the animal she loved most in the world.

ANNIE

It's so cruel.

FRANK

No. He had the choice.

ANNIE

What choice!!?

FRANK

Either fight the way things are or
accept it.

Robert, however, is hypnotized by the event. He is having a private epiphany of sorts.

Grace sits in the dirt by Pilgrim and strokes him quietly – she begins talking to him, the way Tom does. Tom watches, as he cautiously steps further away. Pilgrim looks up at Grace out of the dark pool of his one sad eye. They look at each other. And we understand there's a connection once more. A moment of understanding... and forgiveness.

Grace starts to untie his ropes. Smokey is about to stop her but Tom shakes "NO"...

Pilgrim, like an infant coming out of the water, breathing life for the first time, gets to his feet. Grace and him look to each other. And all is still.

Grace grabs the saddle horn. Pilgrim shuffles as if he's going to bolt. Grace quietly reassures him... She then carefully puts her prosthetic leg in the stirrup. Pilgrim shifts slightly. Annie covers her mouth so as not to scream out her fear. Robert breaths heavily. They watch as Grace swings her leg, determined, and pulls herself into the saddle. Sitting on his back, Pilgrim tosses his head and looks as he's going to run off. But Grace puts her arms around his neck, and once again, quietly reassures him.

She starts to ride him, slowly, her arms around his neck, talking all the while, around the ring.

Annie laughs as she cries – emotion overwhelming her. Robert feels almost numb with fascination, gratitude, confusion...

The slow ride turns into a trot... then a lope... then a canter... round and round the ring. Frank and Diane smile.

Diane looks to Tom and knows what he's feeling...

Tom watches as any father would – his heart pounding with pride for the miracle of his child. But he doesn't let on for a second.

Grace brings Pilgrim to a stop, lifts her arms to the heavens, victorious. Everyone cheers. Smokey helps her off the horse. She stops to look at Tom, who busies himself with picking up

the ropes... So she re-focuses on her parents. They run to each other and embrace... First, she and Annie... then, she and her father...

But, as Robert and Grace hold each other and begins to exit, Annie manages to make eye contact with Tom... and tell him with one look, how grateful she is... and how much she loves him. And he receives it...

EXT. DOUBLE DIVIDE - DAY

WE FOLLOW THE DAYS AFTER THIS EVENT...

Work on the ranch goes on as usual while Tom and Grace keep nurturing Pilgrim back to life.

EXT. PASTURE - ANOTHER DAY

Grace and Annie go riding...

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - DAY

Robert takes an isolated hike up the mountain until he comes upon a ridge overlooking an inspiring vista. We can tell Robert is moved by the sight. Sweaty, tired, he find a place to sit... to be still... and to consider his life.

EXT. THE RANCH HOUSE - DAY

Frank's car is parked up for the trip to the airport that will take the Bookers to Branson, Missouri for Diane's cousin's wedding...

Grace, Annie and Robert are outside saying goodbye to the Bookers; Diane, the Twins... and Joe... Joe awkwardly shakes her hand... then removes his hat and puts it on her head.

Everyone laughs. They want to hug each other, but don't know if they would...

Frank and Tom are packing the car...

DIANE

Oh Frank, don't forget the wedding present – it's behind the door in the laundry room.

(to Robert and Annie)

I got her a pasta maker from the

catalogue... Not that they'll know what to do with it in Branson, Missouri... Probably use it as a planter.

FRANK

Diane!

DIANE

(whispers)

Frank's touchy about his cousins.

(they laugh)

Well, it was nice to meet you, Mr. MacLean.

ROBERT

Same here, Mrs. Booker. Thank you again for all your kindness.

DIANE

Ah...

Diane turns to Annie. Robert instinctively steps away, saying goodbye to Joe and the boys... The two women look at each other with respect and concern.

DIANE

Now, are you sure you want to drive that horse back yourself? There are plenty of people 'round here who do that sort of thing.

ANNIE

I already know the way... and it's not like I have a job I have to rush home for.

(Diane nods)

Between you and me, I could use the time alone.

Diane understands.

DIANE

And you'll be all right by yourself here,

(referring to Robert and Grace)

after they've gone?

Tom hears this bit of info as he passes by with the wedding present and puts it in the truck. Annie makes sure to avert her look.

ANNIE

It's just one night. If I get uncomfortable, I'll go over to Hanks.

DIANE

(double meaning)
Promise?

ANNIE

Promise.

Diane just nods, knowingly. She extends her hand. The women shake.

DIANE

Good luck to you, Annie.

ANNIE

You too, Diane.

They part. Diane starts giving order as she gets in the car:

DIANE

All right, everybody in. Frank, we all set...

Camera widens as we hear the voices of departure... see the MacLeans waving... See Tom off by himself, waving... but thinking of something else...

INT. CREEK HOUSE - NIGHT

In the midst of packing, Annie has made dinner for Grace and Robert. In the midst of eating, Robert asks:

ROBERT

Shouldn't we have invited Tom over?

GRACE

I did. He said he had work to do until late.

Annie remains silent.

EXT. RANCH HOUSE – NIGHT

Tom exits with a small, leather satchel. He crosses to his truck, tosses in the satchel, gets in and drives off.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BARN - MORNING

Grace enters the barn to say goodbye to Pilgrim.

INT. BARN - CONTINUOUS

She moves to his stall and opens the doors. He stands there, without any fear of her. She smiles and enters. She wraps her arm around his neck, pets him and whispers.

GRACE

I'll see you home... OK?

INT. CREEK HOUSE - DAY

Everything is being packed up. Robert is dressed for travel.

Annie is taping up the boxes containing her computer equipment.

ANNIE

Are you going to stay in the city or go up to Connecticut?

ROBERT

Connecticut. I told the office I'd work out of there next week. When are you planning to start back?

ANNIE

Probably first thing in the morning. It's too late to start now. I'm going to try not to do too much driving in the dark.

ROBERT

May I have a suggestion?

ANNIE

Yeah, what?

ROBERT
Take your time.

ANNIE
(innocently)
What do you mean?

Annie looks up from the box to see Robert is calmly staring at her. His demeanor is different. Something's going on.

ANNIE
You look like something's wrong.

This is Robert's moment. He knows it. He takes a breath and hopes it comes out right:

ROBERT
I'll tell you something, Annie – I stood there looking at what was happening to that horse... And, I swear, it felt like the same thing was happening to me.

ANNIE
I don't understa-

ROBERT
(continues)
And I have two choices. I can either fight the way things are, or accept them.
(Annie waits; he smiles)
See, I always knew I loved you more. Didn't bother me. I always felt lucky... a little amazed... that such a vibrant, beautiful woman would want to be with a man like me... And I guess I thought as long as I did everything right – if I was the best husband I could be, the best father... even being a good lawyer only mattered to me because of what it meant for us... if I could do all that, it wouldn't make any difference if we loved each other the same or not... I wasn't asking for more. I told myself I didn't need more.

(smiles)
But you don't know how you feel about
me. You don't know... if you want a
life with me anymore...
(bravely)
And I don't want you to come home
until you do know...
(the hard part)
...one way or the other.

Annie cannot remember a time when she ever loved her husband more than in this moment – knowing what it took for him to say this. She would not disrespect it with denials. Her throat is choked with tears, she swallows down. She nods.

Robert nods, feeling both pride and heartbreak in the same moment. He picks up his bag, kisses her goodbye and exits.

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - DAY

Annie and Robert walk towards the car to find Grace, leaning against it – looking depressed.

ANNIE
What's the matter, honey? Gonna miss
Pilgrim?

GRACE
Tom's gone.

Both Robert and Annie are surprised.

GRACE
Smokey told me he left last night to
look at some horses in Sheriden. He
won't be back for three days. I can't
believe he didn't want to say goodbye.

ANNIE
(hiding her own
distress)
Well... honey... you know... that's
just not his way. Maybe you can write
him a letter or something. Say thank
you... Don't think about it... You
take care and I'll see you home.

She embraces Grace and, over her shoulder, watches Robert

enter the car. Grace follows suit. The car drives off leaving Annie alone at the Double Divide.

EXT. CREEK HOUSE - DUSK

The ranch is still. Annie stands on the porch, her arms folded, vulnerable, looking at the ranch. All her boxes are packed and stacked in the room. She looks over to the Ranch House... to Tom's window.

INT. TOM'S ROOM - DUSK

A light goes on. Annie enters, cautiously. She's never been in this room. She crosses to the desk, touches it. She notices a tape player and pushes it on. MUSIC PLAYS... She sees a small framed photo – of Tom's son, years ago.

Suddenly, she feels like an intruder. She shuts the music off and exits...

INT. BARN - DUSK

Annie faces Pilgrim... she gently lifts her hand and caresses his face. He returns her gentleness. Annie is remembering Robert's words, her heart is heavy with conflict. She jokes:

ANNIE

Why do I get the feeling you know
what I should do, but you're not
telling me?

She hears a truck pull up... Then, a door open and close. Her heart races...

EXT. BARN - DUSK

ANNIE EXITS THE BARN AND SEES:

Tom, walking away from the truck with the headlights left on... is walking right towards her.

Annie begins moving towards him, When they meet:

TOM

I won't apologize for this. And I
won't hide it. Not for anybody.

ANNIE

I won't ask you to.

He takes her in his arms and they kiss.

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - NIGHT

Tom leads Annie to the front door. She waits as he unlocks it.

INT. RANCH HOUSE, SECOND FLOOR, TOM'S ROOM - NIGHT

Tom leads her to his room. Annie cups his grasp on her with both hands. He opens the door for her, ushers her in, then closes the door. He hangs his hat. She turns to him. They embrace, surrendering to each other's passions.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RANCH - DAWN

Camera passes from Tom's window, bright with dawn, past his desk upon which his classical music is playing, over to the two lovers in bed, kissing and embracing. Then:

ANNIE

Oh, God, what are we going to do?
I'm supposed to –

TOM

Ssshhh...
(she stops)
Stand still, Annie. Take what we've
got, just for now. Can you do that?

Beat. She nods. The permission Tom is giving her acts like a great burden being lifted, and for the time being, she surrenders and accepts the gift of what they feel. They kiss.

EXT. THE RANCH - DAY

Since the ranch must continue, Tom and Annie move through a day of ranch chores –

– TOM AND ANNIE CLEANING STALLS AND FEEDING THE HORSES.

–

TOM IS TRYING TO SHOW ANNIE HOW HE HAS TO FIX SOMETHING.
ANNIE INTERRUPTING WITH HER OWN IDEAS... TOM TRIES TO EXPLAIN

BUT ANNIE KEEPS TALKING, EXCITED BY HER PLAN... TOM LAUGHS.

INT. CREEK HOUSE - DAY

ANNIE HAS UNPACKED HER COMPUTER AND HOOKED IT UP, SHOWING TOM HOW TO USE IT. HE PUSHES THE WRONG BUTTON AND MAKES A FRIGHTENED FACE... ANNIE SCREAMS, THEN LAUGHS AND HUGS HIM.

DISSOLVE TO:

THEY ARE MAKING LOVE ON A BLANKET AMIDST OF THE MOVING BOXES IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY.

INT. KITCHEN, RANCH HOUSE - DAY

– ANNIE COOKING LUNCH IN THE KITCHEN, SEEING TOM WORKING WITH SMOKEY...

EXT. PASTURE - DAY

–

THE TWO ARE EATING LUNCH IN THE PASTURE. THEY ARE TALKING SERIOUSLY ABOUT SOMETHING... PERHAPS EVEN DISAGREEING... ANNIE SHAKES HER HEAD, NOT WANTING TO LISTEN. THEY EAT IN SILENCE.

DISSOLVE TO:

– THEY ARE WALKING AND DISCUSSING, HOLDING HANDS... UNTIL TOM WRAPS HIS ARM AROUND HER AND HOLDS HER CLOSER... ANNIE, BURYING HER HEAD IN HIS BODY.

EXT. THE MOUNTAINS - DAY

Tom and Annie, their horses packed with gear, ride across the high mountain pasture through the grazing cattle...

EXT. THE MOUNTAINS - DAY

Annie and Tom sit overlooking a breathtaking view. Tom is showing her the rope trick... She looks down at their touching fingers and he gently pulls the rope away, still knotted, and without ever breaking their touch... Annie looks into his eyes, understanding what this means, raises his hand to her mouth and kisses it. She looks up at him with a curious expression;

ANNIE

Show me again.

TOM
Annie!

ANNIE
One more time.

EXT. THE MOUNTAINS - DUSK

Annie lays asleep in Tom's arms, under a blanket. He picks up another blanket with his free hand and shimmies it under her head, laying her down. She snuggles with the blanket and keeps sleeping.

Tom takes a moment to look at her as she sleeps, gently brushing her hair away from her eyes. He's deeply in love with this woman and wants to keep her with him. But there is a sad resignation in his look. A confusion.

He rises and walks to a stream nearby. He bends down to take some water when he hears something. He looks up and sees on the other side:

A WILD HORSE giving birth to a foal in the tall grass. And a WHITE STALLION steps in between Tom and the mare, as if protecting her.

Tom rises slowly to his feet. Then stands stock still. He and the Stallion penetrate each other.

Suddenly this beautiful, powerful Stallion rears – violently.

Tom remains still, but clearly the horse is treating him as an invader...

It's as if the Whisperer is now being guided by the Horse towards understanding. As Tom receives it, he remembers;

TOM (V.O.)
Summers are short here, Annie. There isn't much of a fall. Before you know it, the roads are closed... the nights get long.

WE BEGIN TO FADE OUT ON TOM

ANNIE (V.O.)

I don't care! We'd be together.

TOM (V.O.)

Two people can't just be alone together in the world. At least not us...

ANNIE (V.O.)

I can't do this. I can't leave you...

Voice-Overs have carried over into a...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CREEK HOUSE - NIGHT

Tom and Annie make love...

ANNIE (V.O.)

I won't.

But there is a difference in their lovemaking. There's a slowness, a reverence... a sense of two people so bounded, that they are outside of time... Their love is so strong it almost feels like despair – their need to connect has gone beyond their bodies and into their spirits, for which there is no earthly satisfaction.

EXT. CREEK HOUSE - MORNING

The sun has risen.

INT. CREEK HOUSE - MORNING

Annie awakens in bed and discovers she is alone. She looks around for Tom. She rises and enters the other room to discover:

All her boxes and all her luggage have been removed.

Her heart sinks. Tom re-enters, fully dressed, to get the last box. He sees on her face a look of confusion and hurt.

TOM

I figured, whenever you decided to go, you'd be all set.

ANNIE

(curt)
How thoughtful of you. And what if I
decide not to go?

Tom doesn't know how to respond. He looks away and bends
down to reach for the box when Annie commands:

ANNIE
Leave me alone!

Beat. They stand awkwardly for a moment, until;

TOM
(pleadingly)
Annie, please...

Tom reaches to embrace her, but Annie attacks him. Punching
his chest... pulling at his shirt as Tom tries to put his
arms around her...

ANNIE
NO!... NO!... YOU DON'T DECIDE
THIS!... NO!...

Tom's heart is breaking as he manages to get his arms around
her and hold her... as she breaks down and softly, the rage
passes... Annie speaks softly.

TOM
(struggling)
I don't know any other way, Annie.

ANNIE
(more adamant)
Why?

Suddenly;

TOM
You think this is easy for me!?

Annie is struck by the powerful sincerity of his words;

TOM
It's just happened this way sometimes.
I can't explain it. But I look at
you and see Grace and I see Robert,
and no matter what you decide about

him, I just know this is right. Your life isn't here and you know it.

Annie looks into his eyes and asks, softly defiant;

ANNIE

Then what have we been doing? I mean what was the point?

TOM

(confused by her question)

The point was to love each other.

ANNIE

Why?

As if there has to be a result... Tom looks at her and says with an almost innocent conviction:

TOM

Because we had to... And I'll never stop loving you, Annie. Here. Where my life is.

The simplicity, and truth, of it hits Annie strongly.

Annie releases herself from him and turns away... despondent.

Realizing the utter truth and inevitability of what he says.

She starts shaking her head. Tom can't hear it... He reaches for her;

TOM

Annie...

She turns back into his arms and they kiss passionately... holding each other... as if for the last time.

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - DAY

Tom is escorting Pilgrim into the trailer attached to the Suburban. He looks across the ranch to see the figure of Annie, standing alone, perfectly still, in the pasture, looking out to the horizon... (reminiscent of Tom earlier in the film)

EXT. THE PASTURE - DAY

Tom approaches Annie from behind, stopping a few feet away.

TOM
Annie?

She doesn't answer... as if she has found her own private place within her, at last... A place of strength. She looks as if she knows what must be done... She hears him about to walk away when she asks:

ANNIE
Can we go for one more ride?

Tom stops. Considers this. Then:

TOM
Sure. I'll saddle them up.

He exits. Not seeing the tears in Annie's eyes.

INT. BARN - DAY

Tom enters the barn slowly. He crosses to Rimrock's stall... then stops. As if he is waiting. As if he knows...

Then... he hears the sound of Annie's Suburban starting up. He looks up and knows she's leaving. He waits.

EXT. DOUBLE DIVIDE - CONTINUOUS

Wide angle of Annie driving away in the Suburban with the trailer.

INT. SUBURBAN - CONTINUOUS

Annie doesn't look back – her eyes wet with tears – but no sobs.

INT. BARN - CONTINUOUS

Tom lowers his head. It is not his way to say goodbye. And he is moved by Annie's knowing.

EXT. HIGHWAYS & ROADS ACROSS AMERICA - DAYS & NIGHTS

A MONTAGE of images of Annie traveling home...

Across different terrains, we see Annie driving – missing Tom... thinking of what she will decide by the time she gets home. Remembering IMAGES OF TOM:

- Riding on Rimrock and tipping his hat to her...
- Sitting in the pasture, staring at Pilgrim. Ignoring her.
- Seeing her arrive at the ranch for the very first time.

EXT. A DIFFERENT HIGHWAY OR COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Annie drives, she continues remembering...

- She and Tom in the branding...
- She and Tom dancing around the camp fire at the cattle drive.
- She and Tom kissing in secrecy behind Hank's house the night of the barn dance...

EXT. ANOTHER HIGHWAY OR COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Annie continues driving and remembering;

- Annie and Tom coming towards each other that first night after everyone had left the ranch...
- Tom opening the front door to the ranch house...

Suddenly we;

CUT TO:

INT. ROBERT'S HOUSE IN INDIA - A DAY REMEMBERED

A much younger Annie waits, surrounded by luggage, as A DOOR OPENS revealing a much younger, more vital, very handsome Robert:

ROBERT
Yes?

ANNIE
Hi. Um, there doesn't seem to be any hotel room available and someone

told me to come here and ask for "Tubab" who might to have a place for me to stay. Are you "Tubab"?

ROBERT
No. I am a "tubab."

ANNIE
What do you mean?

ROBERT
Tubab means white man.

Annie is first surprised, then embarrassed but Robert seems so charming and his smile breaks into a laugh, that she just nods and laughs herself.

INT. ROBERT'S HOME IN INDIA - A NIGHT REMEMBERED

Over a meal, Robert talks excitedly of his experiences. Annie is captivated.

INT. ROBERT'S BEDROOM IN INDIA - A NIGHT REMEMBERED

After Annie and Robert have made love, Robert sleeps with his arms wrapped around Annie. She lies awake, feeling safe and loved.

FADE OUT:

EXT. LITTLE BIGHORN NATIONAL MONUMENT - TWILIGHT

Annie stands where she stood when she and Grace stopped here on their way to Montana...

She removes from her pocket the KNOTTED LOOP he made for her, and looks at it.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MACLEAN CONNECTICUT HOME - DAY

A car is driving up the driveway to the house. It stops.

Robert and Grace get out as Annie exits from the front door.

She looks beautiful – but in a completely different way than ever before. There is a calm center to her. A softness

and a strength. She smiles and walks to meet them.

ANNIE

Oh, I miss you. You look beautiful.

GRACE

So do you.

ANNIE

How's everything?

GRACE

Good.

ANNIE

(to Robert)

Hi.

ROBERT

Hi.

They kiss as Grace watches.

ROBERT

Was the trip okay?

ANNIE

Mmm. I made good time.

(to Grace)

Pilgrim's in the back. I found a new stable, but they can't take him until tomorrow.

GRACE

Great!

ANNIE

Go ahead...

Grace exits excitedly O.C. Annie and Robert face each other.

Robert doesn't know what to expect... but he softens when Annie smiles:

ANNIE

I have so much to tell you.

ROBERT

You want to take a walk with me?

ANNIE

(a little nervous)

Where to?

ROBERT

(smiles)

I don't know. Let's just go and...
we'll see...

Annie nods. He reaches for her hand, and Annie gives it willingly... They begin to walk away from Camera... together.

Annie begins to speak, telling him what we already know. How he will react or what will happen, is unknown. But these two people will no longer avoid their life together... somehow, they will make the effort to face it together.

As Camera widens, we see included in the frame, Grace and Pilgrim... as she strokes him and whispers in his ear... and leads him for a walk...

THE END