

FADE IN

EXT. CORNWALL, SUBURBAN COTTAGE. EVENING

WE OPEN on a dilapidated suburban cottage. The cottage is isolated and there is no movement outside. The cottage is cobblestone and has a large chimney on the left-hand side that is smoking. The front two windows are illuminated by low interior lighting. We see the silhouettes of two young girls in the second window. Their backs are to us. FRANKIE VALLI and the FOUR SEASONS' YOU'RE JUST TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE plays from inside. We push in closer and see the girls brewing coffee and cutting magazines into strips. The door to the front room is ajar. The home phone is ringing.

CUT TO

INT. SUBURBAN COTTAGE. EVENING

A SCRATCHY record player sits on the tabletop. We focus on it. FRANKIE VALLI'S voice crackles through it. Unintelligible conversation between the two young girls. There is an orange lamp beside the record player, turned off. Scattered across the floor are newspaper clippings and girlish clothes. The phone

continues to ring. A small hand snatches at the tonearm, cutting the song.

VERA (V.O)

MAMMY! THE LANDLINE IS RINGING! *(Pause. Louder)* MAMMY!

Just then, MAMMY (38) walks past the open door and toward the phone. She looks older than she is and has a bad habit of rubbing her eyes. Her heels drag behind her. Off-screen, she picks up the phone.

CUT TO

FOYER. SAME EVENING.

Pan to Mammy's legs. She rests her weight on one hip. The perspective cuts off at the fold of her skirt. She is wearing closed-toe persimmon pumps.

MAMMY (O.S)

(Into phone)

Hullo? ... This is she... Yes... (*livelier*) Oh! Yes, hullo, Mr. Greene. She's been a pleasure, as always. Such an angel. My Vera could learn a thing or two from her... (*Pause. She laughs flirtatiously into the speaker*) I'll be sure to let the girls know...

FRONT ROOM. SAME EVENING.

NONNY (10) and VERA (9) stand by the record player, stirring milk into big mugs of hot coffee. Vera's mug is about to overflow. Nonny, tall and smiley, hums the chorus to CAN'T TAKE MY EYES OFF OF YOU.

VERA

(*Sheepishly*)

I've never tried coffee before.

NONNY

All the grown-ups drink it nowadays. We'll be grown-ups soon. (*She lifts her drink to her lips, wafting the steam towards her. Vera watches and does the same.*) That means we have to start acting like it. Drink!

VERA'S POV

Nonny takes a long gulp and lets out a satisfied sigh.

Perspective begins to lower, moving down from Nonny's eye level to her chin and throat as she talks.

NONNY (cont.)

You know, a lot is about to change for us, Vera. We are becoming women. Nanny gave me a training bra this weekend.

It's happening –

Our perspective, lowering throughout the dialogue, is now pointed at her flat, girlish chest. She wears a distinctive silver necklace with Saint Christopher's coin dangling from it.

(excitedly) It's happening! Soon we'll both have husbands and babies and then it'll be REALLY important that we drink coffee. So we may as well start now.

NONNY'S POV

Vera wears large round glasses. The camera does an ultra-close-up of Vera's bright blue eyes. It then pans out to see her glasses fogging up as she takes her first sip of coffee.

She stares down into the mug, her face attentive. She gulps, contorts her face, and shakes her shoulders.

VERA

It's so bitter! I hate it. I don't like coffee.

NONNY (O.S)

(Proudly)

You'd better learn. Me? I love it. I'm so grown up that I'm practically a woman already.

VERA

(Giggling)

An old woman. A big, fat old woman who scares all of the children!

The two girls laugh as Vera, still holding her mug to her face, steps closer into Nonny's POV. Off-left, Mammy hangs up the phone.

NONNY (O.S)

Our children will be best friends. I'm going to have lots of kids, and they're all going to have lots of kids, and then they can all pick and choose who they like the most.

VERA

(Smiling widely)

Can we all live in the same house?

NONNY (O.S)

That won't work. *(Pause)* Unless we buy a big estate. *(Her tone turns lighter)* You can publish your stories and be a big author and I will marry a rich man and then we can use our money to get a mansion!

Both, with increasing excitement:

VERA

With fountains!

NONNY (O.S)

And a butler!

VERA

And a garden to plant our own tomatoes!

NONNY (O.S)

And I can learn how to bake bread and we can make our husbands
brew us coffee every morning. And we can sit on the porch and
drink it together!

VERA

(Making a face)

Coffee...

INTERCUT TO

DOORWAY PEERING INTO THE FRONT ROOM.

MAMMY' s POV

*Vera is now standing so close to Nonny that her bare toes are
gripped onto the ends of Nonny's long skirt. Their faces are
inches from each other.*

MAMMY (O.S.)

(From the doorway)

Girls, it's nearly time for supper, so clean this mess --
(she gestures to the torn-up magazines) — up, please. I
don't want Pappa to see it.

She glances back at the girls. Perspective lowers to Vera's toes on Nonny's skirt. They are dug into the soft fabric of her skirt like she is clinging on for dear life.

For heaven's sake, Vera! Look at yourself! *(Her eyes narrow. Meaner)* Why don't you understand something as basic as personal boundaries? Do you think Nonny likes you being that close? *(Turning to Nonny)* Nonny, do you like her being up in your face like that? *(Pause. Nonny says nothing)*

Vera's face drops and she steps backward, head lowered in embarrassment. Mammy exits, muttering something unintelligibly. There is a long pause. We move from the doorway closer toward the girls, one at each end of the tabletop. STOP. Nonny frowns.

NONNY

Don't you mind her.

Pause. Vera smiles.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

MONTAGE - VARIOUS

- **A) EXT. PARK. AFTERNOON.** Nonny and Vera are now 13 and 14 respectively. They are sitting on a bench in the Country Park, throwing mix at squirrels and laughing as they scamper up to them. We get closer to them, from the back. Nonny is wearing a floral headscarf and Vera's hair is in two braids. Nonny rests her head on Vera's.

- **B) INT. CAR . NIGHT.** Nonny and Vera are now 18 and 19. They are in the front seats of a 1969 maroon Chevrolet truck. The interior is scattered with fast-food wrappers and a few old beer cans. The truck is parked in an empty cliff-edge parking lot, overlooking the beach. Rock music plays softly through the speakers, and the girls sing along holding hands.

- **C) EXT. APARTMENT. NIGHT.** Nonny and Vera are now 22 and 23. Vera's face is puffy and red and she sobs into Nonny's shoulder. In front of them, there is a metal trash can on fire. Nonny holds Vera's ex-boyfriend's clothing in her arms. Vera is rubbing the fabric of one of the jackets between her fingers. Nonny pats her hand and steps forward

to dump the belongings into the fire. Vera turns around and slumps to her knees, clutching herself in anguish. Nonny tosses the clothing into the flaming barrel with a look of disgust on her face. She steps back towards Vera and crouches beside her, holding her and kissing her forehead. Vera howls.

- **D) INT. FAMILY HOME - BEDROOM. MIDDAY.** Nonny and Vera are in Nonny's new home she bought with her husband, MICHAEL. Nonny is in labor with her first child. Michael sits to her left and Vera to her right. She holds both of their hands and pushes, screaming. Vera is wearing a wedding ring. The midwife wipes sweat from Nonny's brow, and Michael and Vera shoot each other a look of comradeship. Nonny screams louder and tightens her death grip. Vera is sitting closer to Nonny than Michael is, and has her free hand on Nonny's head, pushing back her matted hair as she instructs her to *just breathe*.

- **E) INT. FAMILY HOME 2 - DRAWING ROOM. MORNING.** Nonny and Vera are now 32 and 33. Vera is sitting burping an infant as her two daughters, ELLIE, 6, and PENELOPE, 4, run around her armchair. Beside her is Nonny, with her son (HARRY) by her feet and her dog (a spaniel) in her lap. They are

exchanging remarks about school pick-up times. Vera's husband comes in and kisses her before grabbing his briefcase and leaving. Vera's two children pick up Nonny's son and swing him as they all laugh, squealing and tumbling into a heap together. The two mothers grin at each other.

- **F) EXT. PARK. MIDDAY.** Nonny and Vera are at the Country Park with their children having a summertime picnic. Vera is wearing her favorite polka-dot dress and a sunhat. Nonny is playing duck-duck-goose with Vera's children. She leaps up and chases Penelope, now 12, around the circle. Vera pops open a glass of rosé and they all exclaim happily.
- **G) EXT. HIGH SCHOOL. SUNSET.** Nonny and Vera are at Harry's high school graduation ceremony. Nonny's husband jumps up and exclaims as they call him across the stage, whooping like a hooligan. The two families laugh and cheer as Harry waves at them and collects his diploma. Nonny wraps her arms around Vera and presses her cheek into hers.
- **H) INT. HOSPITAL** Vera sits in the waiting room of an austere hospital. She shields her face from the chlorine-white lights and taps her foot nervously. The time of day is unclear. Nonny comes out, her face conveying

despair and helplessness. Vera runs to her as she collapses in a heap. We look into the hospital room to see Michael, bald and sickly, struggling to take deep breaths. A doctor murmurs something about *stage four* and *chemotherapy* as Nonny buries herself into Vera's arms. Vera coo-coo's her as tears well up in her own eyes. The two women cling to each other.

- **I) INT. FAMILY HOME 2. MORNING.** Vera's daughters give Nonny a *Happy Mother's Day* card with the word *Mother* crossed out and replaced by *Auntie*. They hug and kiss her tired face and wrap themselves into her shawl. She smiles weakly at Vera.
- **J) EXT. GRAVEYARD. LATE AFTERNOON.** Nonny and Vera are wearing all black and it is a frostbitten day. Solemn music plays as Harry gives a eulogy for his father, Michael. Nonny has her eyes closed as she cannot bear to look at the coffin. The funeral is small and miserable. Vera reaches her hand out from her overcoat pocket and squeezes Nonny's hand gently. The camera briefly zooms in on Vera's hand – she is no longer wearing a wedding ring. Nonny opens her eyes and looks at Vera gratefully as her lip quivers. Vera nods knowingly and embraces her.

- **K) INT. FRIEND'S HOME. NIGHT.** Nonny and Vera are now 61 and 62. The two women are at a book club meeting with other friends. They sit next to each other, ostensibly closer than anyone else's in the circle. Nonny shields her mouth with the book and whispers something to Vera, who leans in. The two erupt in giggles.

- **L) INT. FAMILY HOME. MORNING.** Nonny and Vera make "coo coo" noises at a pram outside. Nonny has lost some of the shine from her skin and Vera's hands are much bonier. They have shrunk from middle age into seniority. Penelope smiles deeply and reaches into a crib to retrieve a small pink baby wearing a Christening gown. Vera's face flushes with pride as Penelope hands her her first grandchild. She holds her for just a moment, before handing her to Nonny, who gently folds her into her arms and bounces her, grinning ear to ear.

FADE OUT

END MONTAGE

FADE IN

EXT. CORNWALL, SUBURBAN COTTAGE. MORNING

Nonny and Vera are now 79 and 80. They live together in Vera's childhood home, which is coming apart at the seams. Birds chirp as the morning fog rolls in, blanketing the porch. Nonny sits outside on a rocking chair, bundled in a large jacket, hat and mittens. She is crocheting. A few seconds pass as we get closer, and the door to the house opens slowly. Vera, who has now shrunk to half her size, hobbles out, carrying a breakfast tray. Her round glasses are fogged up from the sticky heat of her own breath against the cold Cornish morning. She scuttles toward the rocking chair beside Nonny's, who balances it as she sits. Vera sets the breakfast tray, only holding two large mugs, down. The scene has become more vibrant and saturated in a sickly way.

VERA

Coffee?

NONNY

Two sugars?

VERA

We're out of sugar. Tomorrow Harry will bring us more.

NONNY

Harry's not coming anymore. Milk?

VERA

Why not?

NONNY

He wrote to say that he wasn't. Did you put my milk in it?

VERA

Yes, whole milk two glugs. It's the same every morning, I never forget. (*Long pause. Nonny sniffs and continues crocheting*) Did he say why?

NONNY

I'm not sure. Something about Christine having a meeting in Prague.

VERA

Kirsten. You know - he probably isn't coming because you never get his wife's name right.

NONNY

(*Shrugs*)

I don't care for her.

VERA

Well, neither do I. But you should learn to love her by association. She makes him happy, so that should make you happy.

NONNY

I always told him that he should've went with Ellie. Whatever was wrong with Ellie? She's kind and plain and has good morals.

(Glancing over at Vera, smiling) Raised well, too. By the both of us.

VERA

Yes, well that certainly would've made me happy...it is a shame.

Although, I can't help but feel glad that he made his own decision. You know, as much as we'd like to choose for them, our children are their own people.

NONNY

A child between your Eleanor and my Harry would've had all the best parts of you and me. *(pause)* Of course, I love Christine...

VERA

(interrupting) Kirsten.

NONNY

Right. Kirsty. She's just very... (*she pauses, and gestures outwardly*) loud.

VERA

That's just how Americans are, my love. Especially the gals.

NONNY

It's horrid! I hope my grandbabies aren't so.

VERA

Half-American, half-volume.

NONNY

I can only hope. (*She sets her crochet needles down on her lap and reaches for the steaming coffee. Pause*) Two sugars?

VERA

(*Laughing*)

Oh goodness - you're losing it, Nonny!

NONNY

Losing the bloom in my knickers.

VERA

Oh, awful. You're just funny, aren't you?

NONNY

(Smiling to herself) Yes.

NONNY'S POV

The world is slightly blurred. Nonny brings her cup to her lips and takes a labored sip, her hands shaking gently. She doesn't notice as a trickle of coffee drips onto her sweater. Vera chuckles to herself (O.S.). Nonny looks up. Vera is fishing a handkerchief out of her pocket, offering it. It takes a moment for Nonny to register. The two laugh gently together.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. LIVING ROOM OF SUBURBAN COTTAGE.

It is sometime later than the last scene, although it is deliberately unclear how long (it could be years). The time of

day is also unclear. What is clear is that Nonny is considerably more senile. She is sunken into an old floral armchair. The light is warm to a sickly degree and it fills the room. Red leaves swirl outside. Vera sits across from Nonny on an awkwardly well-upholstered couch. Her body language is constricted.

NONNY' S POV

The world is blurred and noise echoes.

NONNY (O.S)

I want you to stay there. Where I can see you.

VERA

Ok. (*Extended pause*). Why?

NONNY (O.S)

Why what?

VERA

Why do you want me to stay here?

Vera' s POV

Nonny is in clear focus and her voice is sharp.

NONNY

Oh. Because I love you. That's a silly question.

The camera takes on an objective viewpoint. Vera appears disarmed. She sits up, on edge. We see Nonny's face. There is a blankness that makes her 'I love you' seem incongruous with her behavior.

VERA

If that's what you want. *(She forces her smile wider).*

NONNY

Why did you change clothes?

VERA

I haven't; I mean, I didn't.

NONNY

You put on clothes.

VERA

I've always had clothes on.

NONNY

Last time I saw you... I think it's much better if you're naked.

VERA

Nonny, what are you talking about?

NONNY

That mole in the center of your chest... I remember it... It's
good for me to see that mole. I should see it.

VERA

Did you watch me while I was sleeping?

Nonny's POV

*The world is again blurred and noise echoes. Vera appears
uncomfortable and confused. She shifts positions on the couch
and cracks her knuckles.*

NONNY

No, no.

Nonny wags her hand and turns a bit in her chair. Her vision clears slightly.

Don't squabble with me.

VERA

You know you can just climb into bed with me if you wake up in the night, Nonny.

FADE OUT TO BLACK

FADE IN FROM BLACK

FLASHBACK SEQUENCE VERSION 1 – VARIOUS.

A gloomy color palette takes over.

- **A) INT. NONNY'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.** Vera is changing the sheets on Nonny's bed. The sheets are white like a hospital bed and the snow outside. A yellow stain taints the ivory linens. Nonny is sitting on the floor, picking at the rug as if an infant. Vera bundles up the sheets and twitches her nose slightly at the scent. She exits the room and stops in the hallway to gaze at pictures crookedly hung up. In one, Ellie is grinning with the Eiffel Tower behind her.

In another, Penelope and her husband are gazing down at their baby. The words, "She misses you, Mom" are faintly written on the corner of the photograph.

- **B) INT. NONNY'S BEDROOM. MORNING.** Nonny – fully nude – sits in a chair beside her bed. Birds are violently chirping outside, bringing eeriness to an otherwise serene springtime setting. The camera zooms onto wilting tulips on Nonny's bedside and then pans to Nonny's sagging, wrinkled breasts. The camera zooms out again. Vera lifts Nonny's arms and slips her into her polka-dot dress, which is now faded and wrinkled. Nonny grabs Vera's skirt with her toes, smiling childishly.

- **C) INT. KITCHEN. MIDDAY.** Vera is stirring cabbage soup with a long wooden spoon. The clock reads 1:32 pm. It ticks loudly and quickly, creating an aura of anxiety. Sunlight beams into the house. Vera is sweating profusely but wipes her brow before sweat can drip into the soup. Steam rises from the pot, fogging up Vera's glasses. Vera wafts the odorous steam, and, unintentionally, the steam lifts into her blue eyes which are already puffy from exhaustion. Vera blinks a few times and then scoops about a teaspoon of soup

into her spoon. She blows on it and slurps it up.

Immediately, she contorts her face, her tongue burning from the heat. Suddenly, she hears a CRASH. The camera follows Vera from behind, as she rushes to the stairs and sees Nonny who has fallen. Vera swaddles her friend, rocking her back in forth. Vera turns her face toward the camera and silently breaks into tears. Her mouth gapes open in quiet agony. She eventually collects herself, twisting a cross-engraved ring on her finger. The ticking stops.

END MONTAGE

CUT TO

EXT. SUBURBAN COTTAGE. NIGHTFALL.

The same swirling leaves fall outside the cottage. The gloomy color palette continues, bringing a haunted connotation to the orange and red leaves. A sinister piano piece plays quietly.

CUT TO

INT. OUTSIDE VERA'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

The door to Vera's room has been left open slightly. On the door is taped a piece of paper with neat cursive handwriting on it. The note reads "Don't stand there. Come and get into my bed." Nonny holds the note between her thumb and forefinger. She appears to read it carefully.

CUT TO

INT. INSIDE VERA'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Nonny is in Vera's small bed with Vera. Nonny, with little concern about waking Vera up, abruptly lifts the sheet and looks at the mole in the center of Vera's chest. Vera is naked under the sheet. Vera's eyes open, but she is quiet. The camera zooms in on Vera's blue eyes, mirroring an ultra-close-up of her eyes from one of the first scenes of their youth. A tear drops from Vera's right eye. She looks at Nonny intently. It's not clear what the connotation is. Nonny casually switches her glance between Vera's eyes and her mole, unashamed. They are paused here for a few moments. Then Vera lowers the sheet over her body. She stares at the ceiling blankly.

NONNY

Vera, I want to live in a mansion.

VERA

Is that right?

Vera's eyes remain unfixed from the ceiling. She seems disinterested.

NONNY

Yes. And you can be an author.

Vera sighs

NONNY (cont.)

Yes, that's it. *(Smiling contently)*. We'll live in a mansion.

CUT TO

INT. VERA'S BEDROOM, LOOKING OUT ONTO THE FRONT GARDEN. MORNING.

Nonny is looking down onto the barren garden below, dressed in a loose robe. Birds are chirping in the leafless winter trees. It is sunny and bright. Vera is collecting the mail. She is fully dressed, in a kind of conservative caretaker's/semi-professional outfit. She opens the mailbox and sifts quickly through a series of envelopes. The envelopes are addressed to Nonny Boman. She stops at one. It is uniquely gold-tinted and is addressed to Ms.

Elizabeth Nonny Boman. She tentatively goes to the next envelope, but then walks briskly back towards the house.

CUT TO

INT. KITCHEN. SAME BRIGHT MORNING.

The camera zooms into an aerial shot of Vera's hands. Vera has short, well-manicured nails. She is holding a handwritten letter that has three equally spaced-out horizontal folds in it.

VERA (V.O)

(Reading the letter)

Dear Nonny,

My name is Chester Landy. It is good to be finally writing to you. We have never met, but I have reason to believe we are related. There don't seem to be many of us left (we are a near-extinct kind!) so I thought it might be good to get in touch. I am 52 years old and live in Uxbridge. So, funnily, we've been living 20 miles from each other without having realized it.

Vera closes the letter gently before finishing it. She looks straight ahead and breathes deeply through her nose. Her eyes narrow slightly, and she traces the mole on her chest.

FADE TO

INT. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT.

Nonny and Vera sit by a fireplace. The fire is slowly dying, and Vera stands up to add logs. Within minutes, the fire is roaring and is too big for the size of the small fireplace. It seems precarious. The dull room is glowing a blue-tainted, iridescent orange. Nonny and Vera's faces are illuminated by the flames, mirroring the night Nonny and Vera burned an ex-boyfriend's clothes.

NONNY

Do you remember when we took that tiny boat out onto the river?

VERA

Yes, I do (*Said tentatively*).

NONNY

That was a very long time ago, wasn't it?

VERA

Yes. We were eleven.

NONNY

We realized the drain plug had been removed, and we started to sink. It was rather frightening actually, yes. And you threw off your shoe and stuck your sock in the hole and that kept us from sinking until we got back.

Vera's manicured hand reaches over and holds Nonny's hand.

VERA

I love that story. I like the way you tell it.

NONNY

Ah, you know that one.

VERA

Yes. Would you like a cup of tea? Or something to eat?

NONNY

No.

VERA

But you haven't eaten all day.

NONNY

Oh.

Vera exits, sighing. The camera follows her as she prepares baked beans, toast, and coffee for Nonny. She then brings a tray

to Nonny in the living room. Nonny's hands are shaking as she accepts the meal. Nonny slowly brings the coffee to her lips and spills a disturbing amount of the hot liquid on her lap. Both Nonny and Vera have an eerie underreaction for their respective reasons. The coffee violently steams up from Nonny's lap.

NONNY

Oh.

VERA

Oh, deary.

Vera looks fondly into Nonny's eyes.

FADE TO

INT. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT.

Nonny is clutching the naked body of Vera on the couch. Vera is in a fetal position, facing away from Nonny, staring passively into the wall. In a close-up shot, Nonny traces her finger along Vera's lower lip.

NONNY'S POV

The world is extremely blurred. CAN'T TAKE MY EYES OFF YOU plays in echoed, distorted slow-motion. The record player scratches, looping the chorus in a haunting audio sequence.

*Heaven... to touch... touch... touch...
Heaven to... touch... touch... touch... touch
Heaven... Heaven... to... touch... to... touch...*

Vera stands up and attempts to adjust the needle. She is a mere silhouette in Nonny's distorted world. Her efforts produce a SCREECH. She turns off the speaker, fiddling with the controls of the record player. Finally, she turns the speaker back on again and gently places the needle back onto the record. The song continues playing. As the lyric "you're just too good to be true" plays, Nonny's vision sharpens. Her auditory perception enhances. She looks at Vera excitedly. The camera takes on an objective POV.

NONNY

Vera, Vera. Oh, Vera. I've missed you.

Nonny pauses, seemingly waiting for Vera to make a grand exclamation. Vera seems unfazed. She lays back on the couch in Nonny's arms.

NONNY (cont.)

I need to tell you what it's been like, Vera. My mind is like a pale room. Like a frame. I live here. But, not really... a dilution... of me lives here. There's a tree in the frame. There's a tree in the home. Is that bad Vera? A hunter of hunters. I look in the mirror and close my eyes... I am gone. I can't remember what I look like... Can you see me? And then when I open my eyes, I see something. Hello. A person - that's me. But I'm not really sure what to do with this person. But Vera, in a way, I've been connected more closely to something I've always felt.

In a way, I feel clarified. Like I have a more intimate connection to a sort of... wonderful... true expanse of nothing. All those false, silly... sort of... moorings to which we attribute a self are gone. I don't have access to the materials of that sort of self-delusion. I am... free; I am as close to me... to nothing... as I'll get. I am a subject experiencing becoming an object, becoming objective. Becoming something like a lake, or a sail, or... you know... the bicycle (drift into nonsensicality) outside. And that sort of thing. There was never really shape. Yup. I...I... we've... well I've been there. It was... colorful... I remember a sort of smell.

Nonny's POV

Nonny's vision focuses on a scrap of paper on the edge of the fireplace. Suddenly, her vision begins blurring again.

NONNY (O.S.)

No. No...

Nonny's world goes fuzzy. The camera takes an objective perspective again. Vera exhales and goes to pick up the scrap of paper. Before she can, she is interrupted by the record scratching once again. The line "I need you baby" repeats, slowly distorting more and more.

FADE TO

FLASHBACK SEQUENCE VERSION 2 – VARIOUS

- **A) INT. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT.** Nonny and Vera sit by the fireplace. The fire is slowly dying, and Vera stands up to add logs. This time, we see what was previously shielded from Nonny's vision: as Vera adds logs to the fire, she slyly reaches into her jacket pocket, rips Chester's note, and tosses the paper into the flames. One piece drops to the edge of the fire without Vera noticing. In a chilling

sequence, Vera smiles to herself as the paper incinerates. She traces the mole on her chest.

- **B) INT. NONNY'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.** Vera is changing the sheets on Nonny's bed. As Vera exits the room, she inhales the urine-soaked sheets and smiles with pride.

- **C) INT. NONNY'S BEDROOM. MORNING.** Vera has just dressed Nonny. Nonny grabs Vera's skirt with her toes. Rather than be upset, Vera moves over to Nonny's chair and lifts her just enough so she can sit underneath her. Vera rocks Nonny back and forth like a baby, humming ROCK-A-BYE-BABY.

- **D) INT. STAIRWELL. MIDDAY.** With Nonny curled up in her arms at the foot of the stairs, Vera twists her cross-engraved ring. She then quietly mutters a verse from Galatians 5:13: "Serve one another humbly in love." She smiles a sort of creepy Chesire-cat smile and looks up.

- **C) INT. VERA'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.** Nonny spoons the naked and exposed Vera. In a close-up shot, Nonny traces Vera's lower lip with her finger. The camera then pans out. It is clear

now that Vera's lips are curled upward — she is grinning
from ear to ear.

END OF FLASHBACK

CUT TO

INT. LIVING ROOM. SAME MORNING.

*The line "I need you baby" is still repeating. Vera turns off
the record player.*

CUT TO

INT. VERA'S BEDROOM. THE NEXT DAY. EARLY MORNING.

VERA

Nonny, remember, I have to run an errand today. I will be back
in a few hours. Just stay in bed until I'm back, and if you have
to go to the bathroom, just go in bed. I can clean it up when
I'm back. Try your best to remember. I don't want you falling
down the stairs.

*Vera scribbles down what she just told Nonny onto a piece of
bright blue paper. She places the paper on the bedside table.*

She kisses Nonny, who is wearing a flimsy white nightgown that exposes her breasts.

CUT TO

EXT. SUBURBAN COTTAGE. EARLY MORNING.

Vera's car drives away. Moments later, a 1969 Chevrolet truck pulls into the driveway and parks. A man in a well-pressed suit steps out. He is tall and stout. His belt is buckled below his waistline where his fat doesn't protrude. He looks his age except for his hair which is blond and combed over in a poor attempt to mask his baldness. He has smile lines on his face and exudes a jolly demeanor. He hobbles up to the door, knocks, and waits patiently for a response. Nothing. He knocks again. Nothing. He keeps knocking, louder and louder. Finally, Nonny emerges. She is hunched over and wearing her nightgown.

CHESTER

'Ello. You must be the beautiful Nonny. It's nice to finally meet you.

NONNY

(Nonny says in a confused, distressed tone) Do I know you? Who are you?

CHESTER

I'm Chester.

NONNY

Chester?

CHESTER

That's me. I wrote to you by mail, but I never heard back. I figured I'd stop by and introduce myself.

Nonny gives Chester a puzzled look.

CHESTER (cont.)

You see, err, I heard from a few people that you... err... have been on the decline... well, not in a bad way... you know, just how all of us older folk are... I'm happy to assist you in any way that I can.

Nonny looks around. She is extremely disoriented. She starts to lose her balance, and Chester grabs her by the arm to provide stability. He leads her inside to her floral chair and sits her down. He then walks over to the couch and sits down himself.

NONNY'S POV

Chester is an extremely blurred silhouette. Nonny can only make out his movements. His hobbling walk is unique. His feet drag behind him as he walks over to the couch. Suddenly, something clicks in Nonny's mind. Her vision clears. The camera takes on an objective viewpoint again. Nonny is shocked to see a man standing in her living room.

NONNY

Who are you?

CHESTER

Like I said, I'm Chester. I'm from Uxbridge and wanted to check in on you. I... uh... I never heard back from you and wanted to talk in person.

NONNY

Heard back from me?

CHESTER

Well, yes. The letter I mailed you.

NONNY

Letter?

CHESTER

That's right. You must've seen it. It was written on paper the
color of—

*Chester looks around the room for something that matches the
unique gold-tinted color of his stationery. His gaze meets a
scrap of paper near the extinguished fireplace. Chester picks up
the paper and waves it in the air.*

CHESTER (cont.)

This!

Chester recognizes his handwriting on the scrap.

CHESTER (cont.)

Well, wouldn't you know? This is a part of my letter. Curious...

Chester raises his eyebrow and hands the paper to Nonny.

NONNY

Curious... Yes, that's curious. You know, I have trouble with my
memory, so, you know, I could have burned it. Curious. That
doesn't quite make sense. Maybe I'll check my... uhm... well,
her drawer to see if she was planning on writing back to you.

Nonny shuffles up to Vera's room, leaning on the railing for support. At the top of the stairwell, she tucks the paper scrap into the waistband of her underwear. She approaches Vera's desk, opens the top drawer, and finds a letter addressed to Chester. She lets out a sigh of relief. The camera takes an ariel perspective of the letter which is shaking in Nonny's hands.

NONNY (S.O.)

Dear Mr. Landy,

I regret to inform you that Ms. Elizabeth Nonny Boman is no longer with us. Two weeks ago, she suffered a stroke—

Nonny stops talking. She pauses and backs away from the desk slowly. FLASHBACK SEQUENCE VERSION 2 runs again, this time at hyper-speed in Nonny's mind. BAM. FLASHBACK SEQUENCE VERSION 2 ends with Nonny falling to the floor. Chester rushes into the room.

CHESTER

(urgently) Are you alright, what happened?

NONNY

I'm fine. I'm fine.

(Nonny says with a rattled tone).

Chester crouches down, and as he goes to help Nonny up, he sees Vera's letter on the floor. The camera zooms in on the letter as Chester reads it from afar.

CHESTER

(Mumbling to himself)

No longer with us... stroke...?

Chester gives Nonny a worried glance.

NONNY

You need to leave.

CHESTER

Leave?

NONNY

Yes, leave.

Chester appears perplexed and slightly disturbed. He doesn't move.

NONNY (cont.)

I just need you to go.

CHESTER

Ms. Nonny, I'm not sure you're... err... in a state to handle
this on your own.

NONNY

I am not going to say it again.

*Nonny's volume heightens. Her voice takes on a tone of deep
steadiness, but her pace quickens, indicating urgency.*

NONNY (cont.)

Leave. Leave. Please leave.

Chester doesn't budge.

NONNY (cont.)

LEAVE! (*Nonny is now screaming*) JUST GET OUT!

LEAVE! LEAVE!

*Nonny stands up, almost losing her balance, but she regains
stability. She reaches over to the desk, grabs a letter opener,
and points it at Chester who is frozen and dumbfounded.*

NONNY (cont.)

LEAVE! OR I'LL KILL YOU.

Nonny looks at the letter opener in her hand in shock but continues yelling.

IF YOU COME BACK AGAIN, I'LL KILL YOU, TOO. GET OUT!

Chester rushes out of the room, still hobbling, and we hear the front door slam. Nonny takes a few deep breaths and slowly trudges downstairs. She regains her composure and sits down in her floral armchair. She closes her eyes and falls asleep.

FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN FROM BLACK

INT. LIVING ROOM. NIGHTTIME.

VERA

(Loudly) Nonny, I'm home!

Vera sees Nonny asleep in the chair.

VERA (cont.)

Oh, dear Lord, Nonny. I told you to stay in bed.

Nonny is awakened by Vera's voice.

NONNY'S P.O.V.

The world is still in sharp focus. Vera has a handful of groceries with her.

NONNY (O.S.)

Can we talk?

VERA

Sure, Nonny. Let me just set these down in the kitchen.

Vera exits the room. The camera takes on an objective perspective. Nonny stands up with great effort and makes her way to the fireplace. She sits in front of it, legs extended like a child. Vera re-enters the room without the groceries. She sits next to Nonny and rests her head on Nonny's shoulder. Vera looks up at Nonny. Their eyes meet and Vera then sits up. Both women look at the flames before them. Vera is sitting to the left of Nonny, and the left portion of her face is illuminated by the fire. Nonny's face is illuminated on the right side.

VERA

What do you want to talk about this time? The boat on the Sussex? The frog and the scorpion?

(She chuckles to herself)

NONNY

No (Nonny says with a hint of frustration). You.

VERA

Me?

Nonny stares into Vera's eyes intently for a prolonged period. Her hand reaches underneath her dress. She takes the scrap of paper out of her underwear. Vera looks at Nonny with ambiguous intensity. Nonny doesn't avoid her gaze – she stares right back into Vera's blue eyes. Eventually, after an uncomfortable amount of time, Nonny breaks her locked gaze and looks down at the floor. She pauses for a few moments. She then kisses Vera's forehead and gently places the paper on the edge of the fireplace. It is in a location that will eventually burn it, though it isn't doing so presently. Only smoke, not fire, rises from the paper.

NONNY'S P.O.V.

The world slowly blurs. The fire before Nonny becomes a blob of orange, yellow, and red. Nonny breathes heavily. Her hand slightly reaches forward, as if she is about to pull the paper out of the fire.

CUT TO BLACK

END