MAUDIE

Written by

Sherry White
EXT. AUNT IDA'S HOUSE - DAY -- DIGBY, NOVA SCOTIA, 1937

MAUD DOWLEY, (32) an odd, impish little creature, with huge saucers for eyes, is lying on the tall, overgrown grass staring up at the sky, smoking a cigarette. Her fingers are gnarled, her knuckles swollen with arthritis. A shadow repeatedly moves across her face and leaves it.

The shadow is from an old swing made of rope and wood, dangling from the branch of a tree. The swing is swaying back and forth. As it slows down, Maud reaches up and gives it another push. She keeps staring at the sky, blowing her smoke towards the sky and watching as it blends into the clouds above. She stares at the clouds curiously, suddenly finding shapes and objects: A bunny rabbit. A steam engine. Kittens.

AUNT IDA (55), a sturdy, robust woman comes out, carrying a mop and bucket. She is wearing an apron and a scarf around her head. Her sleeves are rolled up passed her elbows. She's heavily into her spring cleaning. Beads of sweat run down her forehead.

Maud picks herself up from the ground and takes a seat on the swing. Her feet dangling, unable to reach the ground. Ida hurries past Maud, a woman on a mission.

The clothesline is filled with sheets, billowing about in the wind. The fence is lined with hooked rugs, out for freshening. Aunt Ida chucks the water from the bucket off to the side of the house. She takes the mop and starts to whack the rugs. Little clouds of dust appear with each whack.

IDA
Look at that, tsk tsk. The dust is going on the sheets.

Ida takes the sheets off the line piling them up in her arms. Maud chucks her cigarette butt, gets up and starts to help. She takes the armload of sheets from Ida.

MAUD
I got it.

But then Maud gets tangled in a sheet still on the line, and stumbles. She drops a sheet.

IDA
Maud. I'll have to rewash it now. It's easier if I do it alone, you're too awkward.

(CONTINUED)
Ida takes the sheets from her and heads into the house. Maud sits back down on the swing - discouraged.

But then, she leans back, stares up at the clouds, as they move swiftly across the sky. The rabbits in the clouds are almost bunny-hopping their way across the sky.

Maud gets up and walks towards the house. As she stands on the veranda, she looks out on the landscape in wonder.

Then she lights up another cigarette....

TITLE: MAUDIE

INT. AUNT IDA'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM -- DAY

Maud sits at the table, while Ida brings her tea and biscuits into the austere dining room.

AUNT IDA
Here you go. Would you like jam?

MAUD
That'd be nice.

As Ida leaves the dining room:

MAUD (CONT'D)
But I can get it myself Aunt Ida.

Moments later, she places the jam down in front of her. As Ida fusses around the dining room:

AUNT IDA
Your brother is coming by tomorrow.

Maud looks up, surprised.

MAUD
Why? Is he taking me back home?

AUNT IDA
He's moving to Halifax. So he's dropping off a few of your things.

MAUD
If Charles and his wife are moving to Halifax, the house'll be empty. I can live there and take care of it.

Irene says nothing. Maud takes a sip of her hot tea and it slips from her hand, spilling everywhere.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

MAUD (CONT'D)

Ow.

AUNT IDA
Stay there, I'll clean it.

MAUD
I can do it.

AUNT IDA
I'll clean it.

Irene rushes to grab a cloth.

INT. AUNT IDA'S HOUSE - MAUD'S BEDROOM -- MORNING

Maud is standing in the mirror, fixing her hair, a little smile on her face.

MAUD
I'll be down in a minute, okay?

Her suitcase is on the bed, with her belongings packed neatly inside. She struggles to put the last bobby pin in her hair, then grabs her belongings, and hurries out of the room.

INT. AUNT IDA'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM -- MORNING

CHARLES DOWLEY (37), Maud's handsome brother, is leaning against the door frame as Ida brings in his tea.

AUNT IDA
Take a seat.

CHARLES
I can't stay long.

AUNT IDA
At least stay for a cup of tea and a bit of cake.

CHARLES
So has she been out, looking for trouble?

AUNT IDA
So far, no. She keeps to herself. She's been asking to go home.

CHARLES
Did you tell her?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

AUNT IDA

Not yet. I thought it best you do it.

By now, Maud is standing in the doorway, having overheard the last bit of this conversation. She tries to hide her nervous concern with a smile.

MAUD

Hi Charles. Nice to see you.

Sizing him up:

MAUD (CONT'D)

Oh my, that's a good jacket you're wearing, it's a good fit. You're always such a spiffy dresser.

She smiles at him.

MAUD (CONT'D)

I can't tell the difference between a rag and a ball gown.

She chuckles, nervously. Then:

MAUD (CONT'D)

So? You've come to take me home?

He shifts on his feet, and says nothing.

MAUD (CONT'D)

What's the big secret?

CHARLES

It's business. Financial matters.

MAUD

Well, I'm a natural at math. Remember, I used to double check your numbers when you were in school?

CHARLES

I don't have much time, I've got to be going, but I wanted to drop off a few things.

(CONTINUED)
He points to a little stack of things: books, photographs, and old blanket.

MAUD
Lordy. You cleared out my room. Why?

CHARLES
Because I sold my house.

MAUD
What house. Our house?

CHARLES
It was my house. Mom left it to me. I sold it and I'm moving to Halifax with the band.

Maud is taken aback.

MAUD
You can't sell that house. I woulda moved back there. I'd be more than happy to have my own place, I'd look after it --

CHARLES
You can't look after yourself, let alone a house, and a yard, and bills.

MAUD
I'd get a job, or something.

CHARLES
Job doing what?

MAUD
I don't know, something.

CHARLES
I'm sorry Maud. It's gone.

He smiles tightly, then heads towards the door. Maud follows him.

MAUD
Did you spend all the money they left behind? Because I haven't seen any of that either.

CHARLES
They didn't leave it for you Maud.
MAUD
We both know mother would have
expected you to look after me.

CHARLES
She also would have expected you to
behave like a decent girl. But you
didn't.

He keeps going towards the door.

MAUD
Wait. Charles.

AUNT IDA
Maud, come get your tea.

MAUD
Charles!

He turns to her.

CHARLES
Good-bye sister.

He leaves. Maud watches out the door, a little stunned.
Ida sees she is upset.

AUNT IDA
He's a busy man, Maud.

Maud fights back tears.

MAUD
Yeah. I know.

Maud takes the package and goes back into her room.

6 OMITTED

6A EXT. AUNT IDA'S HOUSE - VERANDA -- DAY

Maud is sitting on the swing, looking through the contents
of the package of her things: photos, trinkets. A photograph
of her as a little girl with her cat Fluffy. Some old paint
brushes and paints. Melancholy.

7 INT. AUNT IDA'S HOUSE - MAUD'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Maud is still sitting on the edge of her bed, the lights now
off. She's still waiting, waiting. She watches through the
crack in the bottom of her bedroom door as the SHADOW of
Aunt Ida's footsteps pass by her room.

(CONTINUED)
Seconds later, the light from the hallway is turned off, and the CLICK of a bedroom door being shut.
Moments later, Maud gets up and gently opens her bedroom door and sneaks out.

**EXTERIOR. JAZZ CLUB – NIGHT**

Music pours out of the jazz club as Maud approaches, trying to contain her excitement. She smiles at a couple who giggle their way out of the club, arms around each other. Maud gathers her nerve and heads inside.

**INTERIOR. JAZZ CLUB – NIGHT**

Inside a jazz club, filled with people, the flame on a cigarette illuminates a dark corner...

It is Maud, puffing on a cigarette, hiding from the crowd, her eyes scouring the room. She has become an expert at being inconspicuous. She smokes with one hand, and with the other she fiddles with her sweater, pulling it up over her chin as she sways to the music.

She spots a couple dancing. Studies them for a bit. She looks to another couple sitting at a table, talking intimately. She scours the room. Her eyes land on a group of women. She studies them with quiet admiration as they laugh. She takes note of one woman, **DINA SHEA** who is obviously pregnant. As she makes her way toward them, she bumps into a short, stubby, and bald **MAN**. Maud sees him, and her face lights up.

**MAUD**

Not sure who was gonna knock over who.

(quickly searching for what to say next)

Mmmmm. You smell like turkey supper. In a good way.

(giggles.)

He tries to make his way around her, but she stops him.

**MAUD (CONT’D)**

I love this music. Gets my feet going like a couple a hammers.

He shoves her aside, annoyed.

**MAN**

Christ, get out of my way. Who let you in here?

He walks around her. She watches him for a moment, feeling the sting. But then moves on, with a hopeful determination.
CONTINUED:

Men everywhere. But she is completely invisible to them.

_INT. JAZZ CLUB - NIGHT_

With the band now on break, Maud maneuvers her way through the dark club. She is smaller than everyone else in the room, and mostly goes unnoticed. She's feeling discouraged.
She is about to give up and go home, until she sees Dina, the pregnant woman, sitting on a bar stool by herself. Maud sidles up next to her.

MAUD
Bet you're seven months.

Maud smiles at the woman. She's very attractive, even though she's tired. She's smoking a cigarette.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Have you started nesting? Getting your house all fixed up nice and cozy?

DINA
Yeah, a little.

Maud smiles, looking somewhat envious.

MAUD
If you're looking to hire a sitter, I'm looking for work.

Dina smiles politely.

DINA
We won't be hiring a sitter.

MAUD
No harm in asking.

Awkward silence for a beat.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Not often you sees a lady in your condition out at night.

DINA
Yeah, well, my old man is the guy with the trumpet, I like to make sure he gets home alright, if you know what I mean.

Maud smiles and leans in.

MAUD
You love it when it kicks? Fluttering like a fish in a bowl.

Maud stares at the woman's belly.

(CONTINUED)
MAUD (CONT'D)
The heartburn, that's no fun. And the trips to the bathroom.

Maud laughs to herself - as if remembering. The woman isn't sure how to take Maud.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Oh my, worth it though.

Since Maud isn't going away, the woman finally engages.

DINA
How old is your baby?

MAUD
Oh, I don't have a baby.

The woman is surprised.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Died at birth.

DINA
Sorry.

MAUD
I didn't see her, but they told me she was really deformed. Sad.

Then she looks at Dina, who is mid-puff of a cigarette, somewhat disinterested.

Maud can't resist:

MAUD (CONT'D)
Always worried it was cuz I smoked.

Dina stops inhaling.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Prob'ly wasn't. Still, you never know.

Dina hands her cigarette to Maud. Maud takes it, takes a big inhale. She smiles at the woman.

MAUD (CONT'D)
(referring to the cigarette)
Thanks.
INT. AUNT IDA’S HOUSE – UPSTAIRS HALL – NIGHT

Maud sneaks her way back to her room, tip toeing up the stairs, carefully trying not to make noise. All the lights are off in the house. But as she arrives at the top --

Aunt Ida is standing there. A stern look on her face.

AUNT IDA
You better not tell me you were out at that club.

MAUD
I wasn't going to tell you that.

AUNT IDA
Where were you?

MAUD
I was at the club. But I wasn't gonna tell you.

She smiles. Ida is pissed.

MAUD (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, I couldn't sleep.

AUNT IDA
You get in trouble again, I'm tossing you out on your duff. Do you understand me?

MAUD
I'm only looking to meet friends.

AUNT IDA
That's what you said last time, and look where that got you. In your room.

Maud keeps her head down and walks to her room.

INT. AUNT IDA’S HOUSE – DINING ROOM – MORNING

Maud is standing in the doorway as Ida and the Presbyterian Women's Group gather for morning prayer.

AUNT IDA
Prepare our hearts and minds, O God, to receive your Word. Silence in us any voice but your own, that, hearing, we may obey your will through Jesus Christ our Lord.

(CONTINUED)
ALL WOMEN

Amen.

DONNA

Lord, open our hearts and minds by the power of your Spirit that we may hear your living Word as the Scriptures are read and interpreted.

ALL WOMEN

Amen.

Maud tries to get Ida's attention.

MAUD

Pssst.  Psssst.

Aunt Ida notices her, but it's her turn to pray. She glares at Maud while she says her next bit.

AUNT IDA

Speak to us, O Lord, as you open to us the Scriptures and interpret them to us for this day.

ALL WOMEN

Amen.

Then everyone looks to Maud.

MAUD

I wanted to get your tea ready for after your prayer but you're out of tea bags. And you need flour.

AUNT IDA

Not now, Maud.

MAUD

Do you want me to run to the store?

AUNT IDA

I'll do it later.

MAUD

Let me do it, I'll take the wagon.

AUNT IDA

Fine, fine.  
(to the women)
Sorry about that.

Maud walks out the door.
12 EXT. DIGBY STREET - DAY

Maud walks up the street, pulling a little wooden wagon. She is somewhat hunched and walks with a little limp, so she moves slowly.

As she passes by one house, she admires a family playing with their LITTLE GIRL in a pink dress. She smiles to herself as the little girl squeals over something.

She continues on, and gets many strange looks from people on the street, but she does her best to ignore them.

13 INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

Maud walks into the general store, her wagon left outside. She immediately heads towards the aisles. Her eyes pour over the shelves. MR. MCDougAL, the storekeeper, nods at her.

MR. MCDougAL
Can I help you with something Miss Dowley?

MAUD
I need a sack of flour.

MR. MCDougAL
You won't find it on the shelves, I have that over here.

MAUD
I know. I like to look at the cans. All the different colours. It's pretty.

She smiles at him - he gives an awkward smile back, not knowing how to take her.

As Maud walks through the aisles, the bell on the door rings as someone else enters the store. Maud continues to study the shelves.

MR. MCDougAL (O.S.)
Well look who's gracing me with their presence today. What can I do for you, Everett?

EVERETT (O.S.)
(quietly)
I'm looking for a woman.
A what?

MR. MCDougAL (O.S.)
By now, Maud's interest is piqued. She gazes around the corner, catching a look at Everett Lewis (45), a tall, gaunt, curmudgeonly man. Everett shifts on his feet, awkwardly.

**EVERETT**
*A housemaid, a housemaid.*

Mr. McDougal looks at him, not sure if he understands.

**MR. MCDOUgal**
Not the kind a thing we sell.

Everett gives him an angry look.

**EVERETT**
Am I an idiot? I want to put up a *sign*. A whadayacall. I need you to write it.

Everett hands him a square of paper. The store keeper looks at him skeptically for a moment, then takes up a pen. Everett dictates.

**EVERETT (CONT'D)**
"Looking for a housemaid. Must bring their own..."

Everett struggles to find the word.

**EVERETT (CONT'D)**
What's the word I'm looking for?

**MR. MCDOUgal**
Sense of humour?

**EVERETT**
"Cleaning tools". That's good enough. Sign my name onto it. Say my house is over the road in Marshalltown.

**MR. MCDOUgal**
You really need a housekeeper at that little house?

**EVERETT**
What does size got to do with anything? You don't got that big of a store, and you got three or four people works here. I need a hand, I need a hand.

Everett takes the note and heads toward the back of the store. As he goes, Maud tip toes along to continue to observe.
CONTINUED:  (3)

Everett POSTS the sign.

CLOSE ON: the sign - "Looking for a housemaid, must bring cleaning supplies. Contact Everett Lewis, Main Rd, Marshalltown.

Everett leaves without another word. After the bell on the door jangles, indicating Everett's departure, Maud approaches the bulletin board. She looks up and sees Everett's sign: Looking for a housemaid...

She studies it with great interest. She reaches up to get the note, but it's too high. Maud sees a stool, and she drags it across the floor, climbs up on it. She reaches once more for the piece of paper, this time she snatches it.

Then Maud runs to the door and watches as Everett pushes his wheelbarrow down the street. She continues to watch him as he heads off in the distance.

EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - EVENING

Everett wheels a wheelbarrow along a winding, lonely road. Dogs are barking loudly in the near distance. This alerts Everett, causing him to speed up.

He approaches a TINY HOUSE that sits on the side of the road. His yard is littered with junk. His two dogs are tied on outside a woodshed. The dogs are both very agitated, aiming their attentions at the house.

EVERETT
What's going on?

Everett creeps over to his house carefully once he sees his door is swinging opened.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
I said who's there?

The INTRUDER bolts out of the house, and makes a run for it.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Hey! What did you take!

Everett chases him up the road. But he's not fast enough, the man heads off through the back woods.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Lord Jesus.

Everett debates continuing the chase, but realizes it's useless.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

Everett stops chasing him and stomps back to the house, and glares at the dogs.
EVERETT (CONT'D)
What good are you if you don't scare anything away? Useless mutts.

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Everett is taking his money, and stashing little bits in different places - a bill inside a mug, a few coins in a jar. Then he lifts up the cold storage trap door in the floor and hides more money in a tin can, then stuffs it into the cold storage and closes the hatch once more.

He grumbles to himself. His 13x13 house is cluttered and messy. Lit by a lantern, and heated with a wood stove.

After Everett finishes stashing his money, he climbs the ladder up to his loft.

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - LOFT -- NIGHT

Everett pulls off his two socks and lays them side by side, dangling over the bedpost. He climbs under the cover and tucks himself down in his bed. He reaches towards the lantern and turns down the flame until the room goes black.

He lays there, in the dark, a tiny bit of moonlight illuminating his face as his heavy breathing attempts to settle into a rhythm. He closes his eyes.

EXT. LANDSCAPE - MORNING

A wide, landscape shot of the fields and landscape surrounding Everett's little house, which sits small and alone among the huge, overcast sky.

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

Everett is alone in a small, dimly lit shack, stoking the fire in the potbelly stove. It's quiet, not a sound except for the hiss and dull roar of the fire.

As he sips on his tea, he picks up a little toy tin badge, and tries to fix the broken clip on the back, that has come loose.

EXT. MAIN ROAD, MARSHALLTOWN - DAY

Maud is now dressed in her Sunday best, wearing a dainty pair of shoes, as she makes her way up the road.

To one side, a large, old Poor House, DIGBY COUNTY ORPHANAGE, set back from the road.
A few young children, dressed in modest grey clothing, run about on the field playing a game of tag. She smiles as she passes them.
19 CONTINUED: (2)
Then she looks across the field, and pauses to watch the
COWS grazing.

MAUD
Hello big boys.
(whistles)
Hello there.

She smiles at them, and keeps going.

Finally, she comes upon Everett's lone, small, gloomy house.
The yard is filled with junk, wood piles, and an old Model T
Ford in the driveway.

She stops, and looks around, a little bewildered. Then she
sees the wheelbarrow parked outside the house. She gathers
her courage and heads towards the door. The dogs see her
approaching.

20 INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Everett continues to fiddle with the tin badge, when he hears
the dogs start barking outside.

MAUD (O.S.)
Hello little pups. Hello little
pups.

Everett is startled by the sound of a voice. He stands
frozen.

INTERCUT WITH:

21 EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Maud looks down at the dogs, smiling.

MAUD
Whatcha got on your feet? Woolens?
Are you wearing a pair of woolens?

The dogs are barking more aggressively. Everett sneaks over
to the window, tries to steal a look.

He can't quite make her out.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Think I'm the enemy, do ya? Dying
to chew on my limbs, aren't you?
Want my jacket? Take it, creature,
you can have it. Good boy.

(CONTINUED)
ON EVERETT as he creeps over to the other side, standing next to the wall, and peers out the other window. No sign of her at all. Then suddenly, she KNOCKS on the door.

Everett jumps. He hesitates for a moment before opening it. Maud looks up at him with her two huge bright brown eyes, and smiles widely.

    MAUD (CONT'D)
    I'm Maud. Dowley.

Her nose is running from the cold.

    EVERETT
    Dowley.

    MAUD
    That's right.

She sniffs again. He just stares at her. She continues.

    MAUD (CONT'D)
    I was, I got the ad at the store, the one you posted, looking for a house maid, I'm answering it.

He looks at her distastefully.

    EVERETT
    I'm looking for a woman.

Maud giggles.

    MAUD
    What do you think I am?

Everett sizes up the tiny, odd looking, misshapen woman as he walks past her, and heads towards his shed.

    EVERETT
    Don't know.

She follows him.

    MAUD
    I walked here from Digby. My feet are knobbed off.

He gathers an armload of wood. She huddles her arms close to her body for warmth.

*(CONTINUED)*
MAUD (CONT'D)
Wouldn’t mind a cup a tea, you can
tell me what your lookin’ for.

He looks at her skeptically, then jerks his head for her to come in. She follows him into the house.

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE – CONTINUOUS

He tries to watch her out of the corner of his eye, as she takes the place in, a grin on her face. Suddenly, Everett is more aware of his rundown, filthy little house. The air is thick with heat and smoke from the stove. Every surface is filled with clutter and dust.

MAUD
So...you’re looking for a cleaner.
A live in?

EVERETT
I dunno about live in.

Maud looks around the one room house.

MAUD
Gonna say. You’re lookin’ for a small woman.

Maud gives him a big smile as she refers to herself.

MAUD (CONT’D) (CONT’D)
Mom always joked that I was a size “tiny”.

Maud chuckles. Everett doesn’t.

MAUD (CONT’D)
I was hoping you were looking for a live in just the same.

Everett is surprised at her boldness. Maud walks towards a chair. She sits, a polite smile on her face. She looks around some more, “admiringly”.

MAUD (CONT’D) (CONT’D)
So this is all yours? This house?

Everett can’t help but boast.

EVERETT
Used to belong to Captain John Ryan.
I moved it all the way from the wharf to here.

(CONTINUED)
MAUD
Lordy. You own this land too?

EVERETT
Was given to me by the Orphanage for all the work I does for them.

MAUD
You must do some good work.

EVERETT
Guess how many Ox it took to move her here?

Maud smiles, glad to be having conversation.

MAUD
Two?

EVERETT
Seven Oxen.

Everett stokes the fire, tosses another chunk of wood in on top of it. Silence for a moment.

MAUD
Be nice for you. Have someone give you a hand around here.

He says nothing.

MAUD  (CONT'D)
Yeah, be hard to do it all.

EVERETT
I been doing it all my whole life.

MAUD
Every business man needs staff.

EVERETT
Well, you got that right, Madam.

MAUD
What sort of stuff do you do?

EVERETT
I sell fish, I sell chopped wood, does work for the Orphanage down the road -

MAUD
Lordy. How do you keep it straight?

(CONTINUED)
EVERETT
I've got a lot on my plate. A lot of valuable things in this house, too. With nobody here all day, there's always someone lurking about, trying to rob me.

MAUD
Well, I'm good at scaring off people.

She chuckles. He doesn't. She looks around once more.

MAUD (CONT'D)
I'd like the job.

Everett hesitates.

EVERETT
You're a bit older than I was picturing.

Maud laughs uncomfortably.

MAUD
They says I get on like I'm twelve, so...

She pulls the sweater up over her chin, an obvious nervous tick. Everett gets an old dirty mug, pours a bit of water in it, swishes it around and gives the water a flick. It sprays across Maud. She giggles again.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Oh, there you go. No need for a wash tomorrow.

She giggles again. He doesn't.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Just joshin'.

Everett sticks a teabag in the mug and takes it over to the stove. He splashes some boiling water from the kettle into the cup and brings it over to Maud.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Oh thank you.

EVERETT
Are you sick or something? Can't bring in a cripple, next thing I'd be lookin' after YOU.
Maud smirks.

MAUD
Nah, I was just born funny. I can do the work of five women.

EVERETT
Where you from?

MAUD
Born in Ohio, Yarmouth County, but I lives with my Aunt over in Digby. Aunt Ida. Ida Dowley on Point Road?

Everett gets a look of recognition in his eye.

EVERETT
That bag of wind. Is that where you live? She kickin' you out?

MAUD
Lordy, no. She'd never do that, she's too Christian. She's good as gold, but a woman needs to have her own life, right? Her own purpose, her own home - not that this'd be my home either, it's yours -

She sips her tea. The dogs are now curled up at her feet.

* She continues to nervously ramble:

MAUD (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Never had dogs growing up, don't know why, Momma always loved em. I did too, but they made my brother sneeze. I had cats. Weren't allowed in the house, but oh my I love cats.

Everett stares blankly at Maud, making her more nervous, which makes her talk more.

MAUD (CONT'D)
We had one, Tom. Big ole cat. Some fat. Used to sit on the ledge of my window.

She sips her tea.

MAUD (CONT'D)
He went missing. Sad. Likes dogs though.

(CONTINUED)
Everett gets up, opens his door. He gives his foot one stamp, the dog jumps up and obediently runs out the door. Maud lights up a cigarette.

MAUD (CONT'D)
You got an ashtray?

Everett points to the floor.

EVERETT
Flick em there.

She does.

MAUD
Many people apply for the job?

EVERETT
You finished your tea?

Maud looks at her almost empty mug.

MAUD
Might as well say.

She swallows the last of it.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Well, you do need the help, I can see that.

EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE -- DAY

Everett practically shoos Maud out the door.

MAUD
Long walk home alone. Kids'll throw rocks at me again. Buggers.

EVERETT
Who throws rocks at you?

MAUD
People don't like a different sort of person. I don't care. Be easier if I wasn't alone, but...

She looks up at him, hopefully. Everett doesn't know what he is supposed to do.

EVERETT
S'pose I can walk you home. I'm doing my rounds anyway.

(CONTINUED)
MAUD
That'd be nice.

EXT. MARSHALLTOWN ROAD -- DAY

Everett and Maud walk along the road in silence together, the dog running along beside them. Everett pushes his fish trolley.

Maud covers her mouth with her sweater. The two make an odd pair as they walk along the road.

Everett is almost twice the height of Maud. Maud walks even more awkwardly than usual. She smiles up at Everett.

MAUD
It's a lot of work to break in a new shoe. My heels are galled off.

She giggles.

EVERETT
This is as far as I'll go.

MAUD
Oh. Okay.
(thinking fast)
Oh, could you come by our house tomorrow? She needs a good piece of fish.

EVERETT
Who?

MAUD
Aunt Ida. She told me to tell you she wanted to buy fish.

Maud smiles. He heads back towards his house.

MAUD (CONT'D)
See you tomorrow.

She heads back towards her house, filled with new hope.

EXT. WHARF - THE NEXT DAY

Everett is standing by, waiting for Frank to finish splitting the fish. Arms folded, shifting from one foot to the next:

EVERETT
You getting paid by the hour or the fish.

(CONTINUED)
FRANK
You want it to be clean.

EVERETT
I don't care either way, just give it to me.

He takes the fish from Frank and puts it in his wheelbarrow.

EXT. AUNT IDA'S HOUSE - DAY

Maud is looking out her window when she sees Everett approaching the house with fish. She picks up a feather duster and hurries towards the door, opens it.
MAUD
Oh, hello. You caught me in the middle of my chores. I'm sweating buckets.

He holds out the fish.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Aunt Ida. There's someone here to see you.

Aunt Ida rounds the corner and shows up at the door. When she sees Everett she bristles.

AUNT IDA
Never thought I'd see you on this step again.

Everett stands there, holding a stick with several fish on it, dangling from their gills.

He shifts on his feet, agitated.

EVERETT
I thought you wanted fish.

IDA
Not from you I don't.

EVERETT
She said you did. Plus you still owes me a nickel from the last time.

Maud hurries off towards the kitchen.

INT. AUNT IDA'S HOUSE - DAY
She comes back, wearing an apron, with a cloth in her hand. Making sure she is in Everett's full view, Maud starts to vigorously polish the furniture.

IDA (O.S.)
I don’t owe you anything.

EVERETT (O.S.)
Y-y-you do so, you owe me for that split fish.

ON IDA AND EVERETT:

IDA
I'm sure I paid you.

(CONTINUED)
EVERETT
You did NOT pay me.

Suddenly Everett notices Maud cleaning in the background. Once she sees him look her way, she scrubs even harder.

IDA
And the truth is it was fausty. So...

Everett glares at Ida, angrily.

EVERETT
The only thing fausty around here is you...plus you got a face like a prune and an arse like a sack a potatoes.

Maud stifles a giggle.

Ida is shocked. She slams the door on Everett. Maud hurries back into the dining room...

INT. AUNT IDA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN -- DAY

...And reaches her hand into Aunt Ida's change purse and swipes a nickel. She takes her hand out of the purse in the nick of time, as Ida walks into the room, all in a huff.

IDA
The manners of a horse. Why would anyone talk to me like that? I'm a good Christian.

She stomps through the house, paying zero attention to Maud as she passes. Maud walks out of the room...

EXT. AUNT IDA’S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH -- DAY

...And heads out the front door.

EXT. DIGBY STREET -- DAY

Maud looks up the road and sees Everett off in the distance, pushing his wheelbarrow. She heads towards him.

Several children scatter, giggling and screaming, when they see Everett coming. Everett embraces it.

EVERETT
RUN!!!! Pile a monkeys. Oooga booga booga!!!!

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

Everett raises his arms and dances, makes as if he is going to chase the children. They scurry off, TRULY terrified. Maud is amused. She hurries to catch up with him. He sees her coming and speeds up.

MAUD
Wait. Hold on.

He doesn't.

MAUD (CONT'D)
She got a mind like a sieve. She musta forgot. Wait. Hold up.

He keeps going.

MAUD (CONT'D)
I have something for you.

This intrigues him. Without looking at her, he stops to wait until she catches up. She arrives by his side, winded.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Here... A nickel.
(catching her breath)
Sorry about...Aunt Ida....she don't know it but...she's a bit...odd.

He looks down at her big brown eyes. Her strange little face, beaming up at him. She smiles.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Some job to keep up to your legs.

She holds her hand out further.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Here. Take it.

She motions for him to take the nickel. He finally reaches out and she drops the coin in his hand. He puts it in his pocket and says nothing.

He keeps going.

MAUD (CONT'D)
When are you gonna make a decision?

EVERETT
I'm not in any rush.
MAUD
I understand. So I should let you know, I do have another job offer.

This catches his attention.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Yeah. Cleaning a house over the road. Starting in a couple of days.

She smiles. He looks displeased.

MAUD (CONT'D)
But this house is big, really big.

EVERETT
Piff. Nothing worse than a big house.

MAUD
I feel the same way. It's not cozy. Some people got too much money, you ask me.

EVERETT
Makes people lazy.

MAUD
I likes a good hard worker myself. But oh well. That's it. I need a job now, so I'm going to have to take it.

He shifts on his feet, wanting to say something. But he doesn't. So she continues.

MAUD (CONT'D)
So, yeah. Starts in two days.

She laughs nervously.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Who am I to complain? I loves a bit of work, so I should just be grateful. But you'll find someone else, I bet loads of women applied.

She smiles at him.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Whoever you end up hiring, she's a lucky woman. Nice meeting you.

(CONTINUED)
Everett watches as Maud heads back towards Ida's house. As Maud walks away, she's grinning from ear to ear.

**INT. DIGBY COUNTY ORPHANAGE - WASHROOM -- DAY**

With a bar of soap in his hand, Everett is waiting in line with a bunch of boys, various ages. Each boy takes a few seconds to slap some water and soap on the face and hands, then hurry off.

Once they leave, Everett is alone. He pulls off his shirt, then slowly starts to lather up his soap and begins to wash himself.

**INT. DIGBY COUNTY ORPHANAGE - DINNER HALL -- DAY**

A long table of boys, all of them eating. And among them, the tall, lanky and freshly cleaned Everett. Everyone is focused on their food. No attempts at interacting with the children, but comfortable just the same.

Mr. Hill walks through the dining hall, nodding and smiling at the boys. He sees Everett and salutes him – a friendly gesture.

**EXT. DIGBY COUNTY ORPHANAGE -- DAY**

Everett roots through a stack of junk, sorting things he deems useful and putting them in his wheelbarrow.

Mr. Hill is clipping the weeds that are growing around the fence.

Mr. Hill
Not much there worth anything Everett.

Everett keeps sorting.

Everett
Might not be worth anything to you.

He finds a piece of tar paper, throws it in his wheelbarrow.

Everett (Cont'd)
I've got to stock up on everything, because I keep getting robbed.

Mr. Hill
Who's robbing you now?

Everett
Who's not robbing me.

(More)
EVERETT (CONT'D)
Every time I turn around. No matter where I hide my money, they sniff it out.

Everett spits.

MR. HILL
I told you, open a bank account.

EVERETT
I'm not paying someone to hold my money.

MR. HILL
Weren't you thinking about hiring a woman?

EVERETT
Yeah. But there's slim pickins applied for the job.

MR. HILL
Someone actually applied?

EVERETT
Maybe I'd be better off with one of those young fellas. They could look out for the house during the day.

MR. HILL
These kids are under ten. They can't stay home alone all day.

EVERETT
I did the work of ten men when I was his age. I cleaned this yard, chopped up all the wood -

MR. HILL
Yes, but you were here, around people. Your house is up the road in the middle of nowhere.

* Everett has finished loading his wheelbarrow. He starts to walk away.

MR. HILL (CONT'D)
Everett, if someone applied for that job, hire them.

Everett waves him off without looking. But as he walks away, it's obvious that he's considering...
33. **INT. EVERETT'S MODEL T FORD -- DAY**

Everett straightens out his hair, as he sputters down the road, shaking his knee nervously.

34. **INT. AUNT IDA'S HOUSE -- LIVING ROOM -- DAY**

Maud is helping Ida shaking out the sheets that cover the rarely used living room. I

    IDA
    Shake it. You have to let a bit of air under it to get lift. Up. Up.

    MAUD
    Lordy. Takes muscle, don't it?

    IDA
    Higher. Let me show you.

Then suddenly, an impatient horn beeps repeatedly.

    IDA (CONT'D)
    What is that racket?

As the horn keeps beeping, Maud looks out the window. She sees that it's EVERETT.

Maud heads towards the front door. Ida follows her.

35. **INT. AUNT IDA'S FRONT HALLWAY -- DAY**

Ida watches in horror as Maud makes her way down the sidewalk towards Everett.

    IDA
    God almighty help save us all.

36. **EXT. AUNT IDA'S HOUSE -- DAY**

Maud walks up to the truck, acting calm.

    MAUD
    Nice day out.

Everett doesn't bite with the small talk. He blurts it out.

    EVERETT
    S'pose I'll give you a try.

    MAUD
    That'd be nice.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:  

He stiffens up, and looks away.

EVERETT
Well don't stand there all day.

INT. AUNT IDA'S HOUSE - DAY

Ida watches from the window. She looks up and down the road in a panic, checking to see who else might be a witness to this.

Maud leaves the truck and heads back towards the house. Everett’s truck stays parked outside the fence.

IDA
God in heaven.

Maud comes back in the house and walks right by Ida, ignoring her glare. Maud heads towards her bedroom, Ida follows.

IDA (CONT'D)
What's going on?

INT. AUNT IDA'S HOUSE - MAUD'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Maud is hurriedly packing up her things.

MAUD
I’m gonna be his housemaid.

Ida nearly chokes.

MAUD (CONT'D)
I’m a grown woman. I need to go off and have my own place.

IDA
You can’t look after yourself, Maud.

MAUD
I know you think that.

Maud starts to pack her things in a bag, when Ida, in a desperate move, KNOCKS her belongings out of her hand. A hand mirror, a hair brush. She and Maud stare at each other for a moment. Then Maud softens.

MAUD (CONT'D)
You been nice to take me in.

Maud picks up her things and leaves the bedroom.
INT. AUNT IDA’S HOUSE – HALLWAY -- DAY

As Maud walks through the house:

MAUD
I'll make sure to tell everyone that you're a good Christian. I’ve been nothing but a scourge to you.

IDA
You're determined to put a stain on our family name.

Maud leaves though the front door. Ida follows Maud onto the veranda.

EXT. AUNT IDA’S HOUSE – DAY

Maud keeps walking towards the truck, determined not to look back.

IDA
Think of your mother. What would she think if she were alive?

This stops Maud for a moment.

MAUD
Ma wanted me to have what everyone else had.

IDA
That includes a bit of pride. Common sense. Dignity. She would be ashamed of you.

Maud feels stung by this.

MAUD
I'm sorry.

IDA
If you leave you are not coming back. You know that, right?

Maud looks at her for a moment, considering this. Then Everett "toots" the horn.

EVERETT
Don’t got all day, woman.

Maud turns and continues towards him. Everett gets out of the truck and takes her bags, throws them in the back.
Maud stares out the window as they drive down the road in silence. He watches her out of the corner of his eye.

EVERETT
You're not bawling, are you?

She takes a breath, gathering herself.

MAUD
Trying to figure out how to ask you about pay.

He wasn't expecting this.

MAUD (CONT'D)
I'm assuming I'm working for room and board, but I was thinking an extra twenty five cents a week spending money as well.

He snarls at this.

MAUD (CONT'D)
To make it feel official.

His silence is a begrudging "yes". She smiles.

Everett walks into his shack, Maud follows behind. He leaves Maud standing there by the door with her bag as he stokes the fire.

She looks around the place. Everett stands, awkwardly shifting on his feet, after a moment, he turns and leaves the house again.

More awkwardness as Maud looks for a place to lay her bag. There is no room. Everything is caked in dirt and grime. Finally, Maud sits in a chair, her bag on her lap. She studies several old worn mugs that hang on nails along the wall. Mugs that are chipped and stained, but that had once been quite pretty.

Everett comes back in with a stack of wood in his arm.

MAUD
There you are, thought you left me.

She giggles. He drops the pile of wood by the fire, and a chunk of wood lands on Maud’s foot.

(CONTINUED)
She tries to hide the pain.

MAUD (CONT'D)
So...what do you want me to do first?

EVERETT
I dunno. I guess -

He looks around, not sure what to say. Their mutual discomfort thickens the air. Finally...

EVERETT (CONT'D)
If I got to stand here and tell you everything, I’ll just do it myself.

He leaves again. Maud looks around the tiny home. ONE room with a tiny staircase going to a loft upstairs.

Nothing but a table, two chairs, an arm chair, a wood stove, and some shelves. Some potatoes and a turnip, some carrots sit on the floor next to the stove. A bucket with water in it as well. Maud stands up. Where to begin?

Finally, she unzips her little bag, and starts to unpack a few of her things.

She notices a horizontal wooden beam, and neatly lays her things on it, in a row: her brush, her mirror, a picture of her mother, one of FLUFFY, her cat, etc.

EXT. EVERETT’S HOUSE – DAY

Everett is outside, curious about Maud, as he discreetly peers in through the window. He watches as she hobbles around collecting the dirty dishes.

He can hear the sounds of her humming to herself. He turns up his nose at this cheeriness. As he pulls a trolley, Everett does a sharp whistle to the dogs. They follow him as he heads down the road.

INT. EVERETT’S HOUSE – EVENING

Maud has a pot of soup on the stove, and she has a portion of the house cleaned.

But she has gotten distracted by Everett’s things, unable to resist poking around. She sits in a rocking chair as she sifts through his old tin can filled with tattered photographs and oddities: A photograph of a young boy, with a woman, looks like his mother. A tiny wooden incomplete chiseled wooden horse. The little tin toy sheriff's badge, we saw him fix. A little toy gun, made out of wood and nails.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

Maud studies them with interest. Then Everett walks in the door, startling Maud.

EVERETT
What is going on here?

Maud drops the can of photos.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Get outta my stuff! You think that’s what I brought you here for?

Maud gets on her hands and knees, picking up the photos.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Look. You hardly lifted a finger since I left. Rootin’ around in my gear.

He sees a pot cooking on the stove.

MAUD
I was taking a break. I made soup.

He dips the ladle in, tastes the soup. He sneers and throws the ladle down aggressively. Maud jumps with fright.

EVERETT
What you put in that? I might look stupid, but I’m far from it. Look, you haven’t even cleaned the table.

MAUD
I was getting to that...

Everett looks at her, it suddenly dawning on him.

EVERETT
You wanting money, and for what? You don't know a click about cleaning. Do you?

MAUD
I just need to get the hang of it.

EVERETT
I don't want a lazy arse around here. Pack up AND GET.

He swipes her little belongings off the shelf and onto the floor. Then he gets up and climbs the ladder to the loft. Maud can’t believe her ears.

(CONTINUED)
MAUD
Where am I s'posed to go?

EVERETT
You shoulda thought about that when you were sitting around twiddling your thumbs.

MAUD
I needed a day to find my feet, you never told me where anything was, what you wanted me to do with your stuff, I'm just gettin' a lay of the land.

EVERETT
I'm not gonna look after ya!!! I wants someone who'll do the lookin' after. Not some crippled up little thing looking to rob me. Now get out.

He climbs up to the loft. Maud watches in disbelief, unsure of what to do.

EVERETT (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Get OUT!!!

Maud fights back the tears as she gathers her things and leaves.

EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - EVENING

Maud stands outside of Everett's house. The wind blows wildly.

Maud starts to walk towards the road, but she stops and looks back to Everett's house. She is completely lost as to where to go. Standing in the middle of nowhere, Maud looks as if she's about to cry. But instead...

...She turns her back to the wind and leans against it. It is so powerful that it almost holds her up. She outstretches her arms and lets the wind beat against her.

This action starts to soothe her. She finally closes her eyes, a smile spreading across her face.

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS LOFT - NIGHT

Everett stares out his window at Maud as the wind gives her a beating while she stands in the middle of the yard.
CONTINUED:

He blows out his lantern, and climbs into bed.
The next morning, Everett wakes up to sounds coming from downstairs. He climbs down from the loft and sees Maud scrubbing the floor.

He stares at her in disbelief. She is sweating buckets, as she uses all her force to ring out what is left of her cloth. It is killing her hands, but she presses on.

Meanwhile, she has made an attempt to set the table. His mug and his plate are neatly placed. Two slices of toast wait for him. Some freshly picked wildflowers are placed in a bottle.

Everett completely ignores her and climbs down the stairs. He gathers his things to head out for work. He grabs the toast, slugs back the tea, and heads out the door, without saying a word.

She smiles. Then starts to clean the smoke stains from the walls. Her crippled hands makes scrubbing very difficult, but she withstands the pain to get the job done.

Maud digs a chicken out of the coop, but it breaks free. She chases it around the yard. She finally catches it.

**MAUD**

Don’t blame you my son. I’d run too.

She takes it over to the wood stump, it fights to break free, but she holds on tightly.

**MAUD (CONT'D)**

God bless you, poor soul.

Maud sends the ax down on the chicken’s neck. Feathers and blood fly about as Maud winces.

Maud has a stew cooking on the stove as she continues to clean, despite the pain it is causing her.

As she removes things off the shelf, she notices the once blue shelf is thick with dust. She looks at it thoughtfully for a moment before she closes her eyes and BLOWS on it. Some of the dust blows away, but revealing more dust and grime. The blue is still buried.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

On her way to get the scrub brush, she notices an old can of green paint. Maud eyes it.

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE — DAY

Maud has just finished the last touches of paint on the shelf. It is now a bright green. She smiles, pleased with herself.

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE — NIGHT

Everett comes in late at night. Maud sits waiting nervously in the arm chair.

Everett says nothing. He sits on a broken chair by the door and removes his boots. He sees the steamy pot of stew on the stove. He looks around, checking the place out, then looks at Maud.

EVERETT
That’s my chair.

She gets up.

MAUD
Let me get you a bowl a’ stew.

She goes over to the stove and scoops up a hefty serving, then places it at the table.

Everett sits down and eats. He eyeballs her little things on the shelf, bothered by the presence of her belongings.

Maud goes over to Everett’s boots and neatly places them side by side. She watches out of the corner of her eye as he eats.

EVERETT
Where’d you get the chicken.

MAUD
Killed it. The scrawny one.

Everett is surprised, and silently impressed.

MAUD (CONT'D)
So...am I able to stay then?

EVERETT
We’ll see if you can follow my rules.

Maud watches him eat, half afraid to speak.

(CONTINUED)
MAUD
Where am I to sleep?

EVERETT
You clean upstairs?

MAUD
Only one bed up there. I’m wondering where I should settle in.

Everett gets up, scoops himself up another bowl of stew.

EVERETT
No room for princesses here.
When I was a youngster, sleeping in the orphanage, there’d be seven or eight of us in the bed. Feet up my nose, elbows in my arse. You’re too fancy to pile in up there, you can pack up your little knick-knacks and go on.

Maud has no choice.

MAUD
I’m only the size of a flea. S’pose I can fit somewhere.

52

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS LOFT - NIGHT

Everett and Maud lay on either side of the mattress in the loft bedroom.

It is awkward, and silent. Maud tries to keep her eyes closed, but she can’t sleep. She hears heavy sighs coming out of Everett lying next to her.

Meanwhile, on Everett's side of the bed, he is forcing the sound of his breathing, feigning sleep, while he lies there, completely awake, his wheels turning.

53

TIME PASSAGE - NIGHT

The moon slowly disappears, while the light begins to change from black to orange. As the sun rises over the landscape, Everett's little house stands alone against the colorful sky....

54

EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

Maud is trying to feed the dogs as they jump up on her.
MAUD

She shoves them off of her.

MAUD (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Go on, Blackie. Out of my way.

Everett is loading up wood in his truck. He looks at her, suddenly resenting her presence.

EVERETT
Who said you could talk to them like that?

MAUD
They were gettin' mud on me.

EVERETT
They been here longer than you, and I tell you, they been a lot more useful.

MAUD
I’m only tryin’ to feed them.

EVERETT
Shut your gob woman! I’ll tell you how it goes. It’s me. It’s them dogs. Them chickens. Then it’s you.

He climbs in the truck and leaves. Maud watches resentfully, biting her tongue as Everett drives away. She continues to feed the dogs while they jump all over her.

EXT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

Maud sits on the bench outside the general store, eating a can of sardines with her fingers, when Aunt Ida approaches the store. When she sees Maud, she stiffens.

MAUD
Hi there. I’m taking a break from work.

IDA
Nobody believes you are working for that man, he’s practically a beggar. Everyone's talking he has you barred up in there as his love slave. It's disgusting.
CONTINUED:

Maud bursts into a fit of laughter. She covers her mouth, shyly, but can't stop laughing.

MAUD
(laughing)
Everett with a love slave.

Ida keeps walking into the store.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Would it make it more proper if I married him? Then maybe they won't talk so much.

Ida ignores this.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Would you like to visit me sometime? At my new house?

Ida balks.

IDA
I wouldn't be caught dead. I wouldn't even drive by that house.

Ida turns and walks into the store. Maud waits for a moment, then gets up and makes her way down the road.

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

Maud sits at her spot at the table, painting a picture. A little girl in a PINK DRESS at the centre.

INT. EVERETT'S TRUCK - DAY

Everett is driving his truck, with a young, pleasant looking man, FRANK (30) in the passenger seat.

EVERETT
We're dumping this stuff off, then you go on, don't go lingering around like a horsefly. I got work to do.

Frank laughs.

FRANK
Gee, really? You're not going to invite me in for tea?

But Everett is agitated. They pull into his driveway.
EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

Frank is helping Everett unload some scrap metal from the back of the truck.

FRANK
What are you gonna do with all this, Ev.

EVERETT
Sell it. Leave it here.

FRANK
Who'd buy that?

Maud comes to the door, smiling. Frank is taken aback.

MAUD
Nice day.

Frank takes Maud in, then smiles at her.

FRANK
Ahhh. Hello there. Everett got a woman.

Everett, embarrassed, glares at Maud.

EVERETT
Go in the house, you.

He looks back at Frank.

FRANK
What's this?

EVERETT
She's working for me. I gotta have someone to mind the house while I'm away, otherwise they'll rob me blind.

FRANK
(laughing)
You've got a tiny little woman to guard your house? Couldn't you get a meaner dog? Or a gun?

Frank lays down his end of the scrap metal.

FRANK (CONT'D)
(to Maud)
Wait, come'ere. I'm Frank.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
FRANK (CONT'D)
I'm the fisherman Everett tries to cheat every day.

MAUD
He wouldn't cheat you, he's a good man.

FRANK
Oh, so you don't know Everett well I see.

Frank smirks at Everett, who sneers back. Maud walks towards him, timidly smiling.

MAUD
Oh hi. I’m Maud.

FRANK
Nice to meet you. You're working here?

MAUD
I'm living here.

Everett bristles.

EVERETT
That's enough.

FRANK
So you've got a live in Maid, do ya?

Frank looks at Everett, teasing. Everett reacts defensively.

EVERETT
I'm gone all day, every day.
I'm a busy man. I deserves a clean house when I get home.

FRANK
(to Maud)
Where do you fit in there?

Maud is happy to be having pleasant conversation. Everett is staring in disbelief and outrage.

MAUD
Oh, I'd fit anywhere, I'm sure.
More room in there then you'd think.

She smiles. Looks to Everett.
MAUD (CONT'D)
We find it cozy in there, don't we?

Then out of nowhere, he raises his hand to Maud, and SLAPS Maud in the face. Maud is taken aback. So is Frank. Even Everett is a little stunned by his actions. But he stiffens, refusing to apologize.

EVERETT
Get in the house.

A shocked Maud turns and runs inside.

INTERCUT with:

INT. EVERETT’S HOUSE – DAY

Maud runs into the house, humiliated.

OUTSIDE: Everett continues to rant to Frank.

EVERETT
I'm the boss of this house, and if she don't know it, she'll learn it.

INSIDE: Maud looks - with all the chairs still outside, Maud has nowhere to sit, so she flops down on the floor in the corner, leaning into the wall.

OUTSIDE: Frank continues to unload the truck.

FRANK
Nobody in their right mind will put up with that for long.

EVERETT
Yeah, well she ain't in her right mind, that's one thing I know.

INSIDE: Maud sits there, holding back all her tears. Then she notices the can of GREEN PAINT again. She slides the cover off and dips her finger in the paint. Then she draws a little picture of a TREE on the wall. It comforts her. Calms her.

Moments later, Everett walks into the house. He sees her on the floor. As she wipes her finger off in her apron, she glares at Everett.

EVERETT (CONT’D) (CONT’D)
I hope you learned your lesson.

(CONTINUED)
MAUD
I’m learning something, for sure.

EVERETT
Sulkin’ in the corner.

MAUD
Do you want me here or don’t you?

Everett says nothing.

MAUD (CONT’D)
Cuz I’ll go, I’ll walk out right now. Do you want me here or not?

He refuses to answer.

MAUD (CONT’D)
If you’re just gonna kick me out one of these days anyway, say it and I’ll get.

He stares at her angrily, but doesn’t speak.

MAUD (CONT’D)
And If you're gonna keep on being that kind of boss... I'd like my pay please.

He sneers at her, but she stands defiantly, her crooked hand held out.

MAUD (CONT’D)
You haven't paid me yet, not once.

After a moment, he reaches into his pocket and pulls out a couple of quarters. He flicks them on the table and leaves. After the door shuts, Maud gets up off the floor.

She exhales, relieved, then takes a seat – in EVERETT’S chair.

INT. EVERETT’S HOUSE – DAY

Maud is in the midst of cleaning when there is an aggressive knock on the door. She looks up, startled.

SANDRA (O.S.)
Open the damn door, I know you're in there.

Maud freezes in her spot.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

SANDRA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
There's smoke coming from the chimney.
I know you're home.

Maud gently tip toes over to peer out the window. But just
as she does the woman moves towards the window, so Maud hits
the floor.

EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

The woman, SANDRA (40) a spunky, attractive woman, presses
her face to the window.

SANDRA
You can't hide in there forever.

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

Maud gently crawls over towards the door, and peaks through
the crack between the door and the floor.

SANDRA (O.S.)
I suppose you think I'm a dumb woman
and I wouldn't notice. You are wrong.

All she can see are the woman's shoes. Beautiful, burgundy
leather shoes with a tiny bow on them. Maud studies the
detail of the shoes.

EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

Sandra is getting agitated. She lights up a cigarette.

SANDRA
You don't know who you're dealing
with. I invented the word stubborn.

She sits there, in silence for a moment.
Then...

MAUD (O.S.)
They're some snazzy shoes.

Sandra stops inhaling the cigarette. Is she hearing things?

SANDRA
Hello?

Sandra looks around. She can hear someone shuffling around
inside.

Maud creaks open the door.

(CONTINUED)
MAUD
I said you're wearing snazzy shoes. They comfy?

Sandra looks at Maud in disbelief. Who is this creature?

SANDRA
Ah, they're not bad. Sorry, are you the fish peddler's wife?

MAUD
Gonna ask you the same thing. You're so mad, I figured you had to be married to him.

SANDRA
He short changed me one time too many. Is he around?

MAUD
Who?

SANDRA
The fish peddler.

Maud chuckles to herself.

MAUD
"Fish peddler". I usually calls him the old crab.
(then serious)
But not to his face.

Maud, realizing the woman has business on her mind.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Everett's out on the rounds.

SANDRA
Well...I paid him for fish and he never delivered.

Maud hides her embarrassment and tries to cover for Everett.

MAUD
He's doing so much, sometimes he forgets.

SANDRA
I paid him, plus a handsome tip. Now, I'm here from New York for the whole summer, I can give him my business or not.

(CONTINUED)
Maud smiles.

MAUD
From New York, the city. That must be different.

SANDRA
I'm having a dinner party tonight, I need three fish.

Maud is determined to give Everett the benefit of the doubt.

MAUD
You sure he never dropped the fish off? Maybe your dog ran off with it -

SANDRA
I don't have a dog -

MAUD
- Or your cat. Cats love a fish.

Sandra gets firm with Maud.

SANDRA
No cat.

Sandra tries to take a bold step inside.

Maud stands her guard, all while smiling up at Sandra politely.

MAUD
I'll tell him you came by.

But Sandra is distracted when she sees the paintings on the walls. She studies them: A happy looking Chicken, and several bright flowers.

MAUD (CONT'D)
I'll tell Everett to square up with you when he gets home.

Sandra looks at Maud with a new interest.

SANDRA
I'd appreciate that. Did you paint that happy little chicken?

MAUD
Oh, yes.

(MORE)
MAUD (CONT'D)
(looking at the chicken)
That's Ches. He was a chicken out in the yard. I killed him.
For supper. I wanted to remember his happier days.

Sandra smiles, charmed.

SANDRA
What's your name?

MAUD
I'm Maud.

Sandra looks at Maud curiously.

SANDRA
Nice to meet you Maud. I'm Sandra.

They smile at each other, and Maud closes the door. Maud goes back to the table by the window, and finds a scrap of card stock.

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE – EVENING

Maud is standing fairly close to Everett as she attempts to serve up his supper. He watches her, but she's clumsy and slow. Finally he grabs the serving spoon out of her hand.

EVERETT
Gimme some elbow room woman.

Maud backs off. Everett scoops up his own plate of food.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Whole goddamned place is taken over. Feel like squirrels moved in. Who told you to put them rat tracks on my walls?

MAUD
Just doing what you asked.

EVERETT
Yes, I told you to paint fairies all over my house.

Maud giggles.

MAUD
That's a bird.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
MAUD (CONT'D)
You told me to make the place look alright. I think it looks alright. You?

He looks around. Then begrudgingly gives in.

EVERETT
Leave that wall behind the stove alone. That's MY wall.

Maud sits down at the table with him as he eats. She waits a moment before speaking.

MAUD
Thinking about my brother Charles.

Everett doesn't look up.

MAUD (CONT'D)
He used to run one a them jazz clubs for awhile. Always people on his back for money he owed them. He always said people were trying to rob him out, but he couldn't prove it. Must be tough running a business.

EVERETT
I owes nobody.

MAUD
Apparently Charles never owed anyone, but he never had proof. It was hard to keep track of it all.

EVERETT
Only if you're stupid.

MAUD
Maybe. And you're not. You're a really smart man. Too smart probably. You can keep track of all this in your head but most people can't.

Everett likes the sound of this, but says nothing.

MAUD (CONT'D)
You got to dumb it down.

EVERETT
What's that?
MAUD
Well. I guess you gotta think like
a dumb person, and write it all down.
I can help you, you want.

Maud holds up one of her little cards. She has made crooked
lines on it, a place for the name/amount in/amount out.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Never mind who you owe money to.
Who owes you money?

Everett thinks, skeptically. Then...

EVERETT
The Donovan's owes me for two fish.

He thinks some more. Can’t think of anyone else. Maud writes
the name down on the card, and the amount owed.

MAUD
And can you think of anyone you owes
fish to?

Everett slinks back in his chair.

EVERETT
S’pose I owes Linehan’s, I owes them
two fish.

Maud writes this on a new card.

When she is finished, she turns the card over, revealing a
simple, scenic painting on each card. Flowers, Trees, birds.
He looks at the paintings.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
What's this?

MAUD
Oh, I thought it'd make the cards a
little friendlier looking.

She smiles at him. He shakes his head at her, but lets it
go.

INT. EVERETT’S HOUSE – UPSTAIRS LOFT – NIGHT

Maud and Everett are tucked in their bed. Maud's eyes are
closed, while Everett is wide awake. He stares at Maud for
a bit. Then gathers the courage to approach her, albeit a
little ungracefully.
CONTINUED:

He gently touches Maud's hair. Then he rolls over and lies on top of her, and fumbles around, trying to lift up her nightdress. Maud looks at Everett strangely.

MAUD
Are we gonna get married?

Everett looks at her, almost surprised to hear her speak.

EVERETT
Foolish. Money racket, that is.

Maud giggles.

MAUD
Only if you invite people, and have a dance and stuff. Give everyone supper.

EVERETT
It all costs money, even the license to do it costs money. Won't catch me at it.

Maud stares at the ceiling.

MAUD
Hmmmm.

Everett snorts.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Charles had a wedding. His wife wanted a fancy wedding, so he had to scrounge up every cent he had. I said, if I ever get married, I won't be inviting anyone. I'd just do it for cheap, at the town hall.

Everett yanks the blanket up over his shoulder. Maud keeps talking.

EVERETT
Why are you yakking about him, I don't care about him.

MAUD
Well. If you plan on rolling over to my side of the bed, I think we better get married. I got in that sort of trouble once before, I don't think I should be at it again.

(Continued)
EVERETT
What trouble?

Maud hesitates, then...

MAUD
Oh. You know. Wasn't married, had
a baby, shamed my family.

Everett looks at her, in disbelief. She looks at him, hoping
he'll understand.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Baby died. Never even saw her.
Charles and Aunt Ida buried her while
I was sleeping.

Everett stares at Maud for a moment, a little dumbfounded.
Then he turns over on his back again, and closes his eyes to
go to sleep. After a moment, Maud does the same.

EXT. MARSHALLTOWN ROAD - DAY

Maud walks with Everett who pushes his wheel barrow. She
has a scarf tied around her head, as she walks proudly down
the road. She has a hard time keeping up to him, but does
her best.

MAUD
You're gonna have to wait up.

EVERETT
You're gonna have to speed up. Or
I'll put you in the wheelbarrow.

People stare at the two of them strangely.

EXT. SANDRA'S SUMMER HOME - DAY

Maud hangs back on the step as Everett knocks on Sandra's
door.

After a moment, Sandra answers it. She's a complete disaster -
covered in flour, and holding a wooden spoon in her hand.

SANDRA
Well, look who it is. You've caught
me at my most domestic. I'm making
a thing called "chocolate chipped
cookies".

Everett's not in the mood for small talk.

(CONTINUED)
EVERETT
Here, look.

He hands her three fish.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
The three fish you wanted. I only owed you for two fish. Now you owes me for one.

Sandra looks at him strangely.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
We figured it out on the card, look. Now you owes me back for one fish.

Maud steps up.

MAUD
We’re rendering accounts, so there won’t be a mix up.

EVERETT
I never told you to speak.

Maud puts her head down.

Sandra looks at the card, skeptically.

SANDRA
How do I know this is right?

EVERETT
Cuz I said it was.

Maud looks up again.

MAUD
Maybe we should just start clean, from now on we’ll keep track.

Everett shoots her another look.

EVERETT
I said shut UP.

Maud looks down again.

Sandra looks at Everett, annoyed.

SANDRA
Give me a minute.
Then she takes the card and goes back in the house.

Maud picks a speck of paint off of her hands as Everett rants. Everett glares at Maud who waits on the lower step, eyes to the ground.

**EVERETT**
I’m the boss, you does what I say.
I’m the boss, don’t forget it. Who brings in the money?

**MAUD**
You do.

**EVERETT**
That's right. Don't forget it.

---

**INT. SANDRA’S SUMMER HOME - DAY**

As Sandra goes to get her purse, she tosses the card down on the table, finally noticing the beautiful little painting on the back - A winter wonderland scene.

**EXT. SANDRA’S SUMMER HOME - DAY**

Sandra comes out again, with money and the card in hand.

**SANDRA**
I'll pay you. If you make me some more of these cards.

She looks at Maud, who looks back, stunned.

**SANDRA (CONT'D)**
Christmas cards. More like this.

Everett doesn't know what to think. Maud looks to him.

**MAUD**
I dunno. It's up to the boss. I does what he says.

Everett is dumbfounded for a moment.

**EVERETT**
Alright. Throw in an extra five cents.

**SANDRA**
Fine. How about ten cents a card.

Wow. Even better than he intended.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

Everett grabs the money from Sandra, who ignores him, but smiles at Maud.

**SANDRA (CONT'D)**

I look forward to them very much.

She and Maud smile at each other warmly. Everett clocks this.

**EXT. STREET - DAY**

As they walk down the road, Maud struggles to keep up.

**MAUD**
You're good Ev. I gotta say, I never woulda thought to ask for that money. You really know what you're doing.

Everett is somewhat pleased as well, as he walks ahead of her.

**EVERETT**

Get in second gear woman.

**INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY**

Maud sits at the little table in the corner by the window as she paints an apple tree on a little card. A bright beam of sunlight shines in on her.

She looks out the window and sees a group of children walking by - one little girl in a pink dress among them. She studies her closely....

**INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY**

More of Everett's house has been painted - a butterfly on the door, flowers around the windows. Maud is now painting the stairs on the way up to the loft.

**EXT. WHARF - DAY**

Maud is with Frank. He has found some old cans of paint, and he's handing them off to Maud.

**INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY**

Maud sits at the table with her paints. She dips a paintbrush into a little container of paint. She scrapes it against a paint splattered sardine can.

*(CONTINUED)*
continues:

She looks at herself in the mirror for a moment. It's difficult for her. But she smiles a little, and takes her paint brushes and paints a little tiny flower on the frame.

Then she turns back to a large painting on a wooden board that is half-way finished. She makes her large, unrefined paint strokes. An outdoor scene. A tire swing now hangs from a tree. A little girl in a pink dress.

Maud looks out the window, and sees Everett chopping wood. He effortlessly splits each wood chuck in two with one fell swoop. He is concentrated, and relentless.

Maud stops her painting for a moment and watches him admiringly. A sweet, shy smiles comes across her face.

She turns her attention back to the painting, and starts to paint Everett, in his plaid shirt, hard at work.

INT. GENERAL STORE – DAY

Everett is collecting money from Mr. McDougal.

    EVERETT
    Here's a few more to sell.

The storekeeper looks at the cards skeptically.

    MR. MCDOUGAL
    I don't know why people are paying money for these. My five year old can do better.

Everett looks out the window of the store, where Maud is waiting outside. Then, he leans into the storekeeper, angrily.

    EVERETT
    You don't know what you're talking about. How foolish are you. These are good drawings, and that's why people are paying good money for it. You, my son, are an idiot.

Everett stomps off, outside the store to join Maud.

EXT. DIGBY FIELD – DAY

Maud and Everett walk across the wide open field, two colorful specks among the dull yellow grass.
INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE – DAY

Maud and Everett are in the house, Everett is poking the wood stove as Maud sits at the table, painting. Everett leans over and sneaks a peak at what she's doing.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

It's one of Three Black Cats.

MAUD
You like em?

He looks away.

EVERETT
Like what?

MAUD
My paintings.

EVERETT
How am I supposed to know if they're good or not. That's women's stuff.

But he stops and looks at them. Takes them all in. Then he notices down at the bottom, where her name is signed, it says...

Maud LEWIS.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
What's that? I know what that says, that's my name there. But you're a Dowley.

Maud bites her lip.

MAUD
Well. Yeeeeeah. But I figured, where we're partners, and the painting is half yours. So... part of your name should be on it too. Right?

He looks around the house. Nothing's been done. It's a bit of a mess.

EVERETT
You gonna get at some of the housework now, or what?

MAUD
I've got to finish a few more of these first.

EVERETT
Lord, woman, you can't neglect the chores.
MAUD
I know, but there are only so many hours in the day.

EVERETT
Might as well start doing it all myself.

He grabs the apron. Maud smiles to herself.

EXT. EVERETT’S HOUSE – EVENING

Maud and Everett are sitting down to a quiet supper when there is a knock on the door.

EVERETT
Whoever it is, tell 'em to vamoose.

Maud gets up to open it. It's Sandra.

SANDRA
It's cold out here, may I come in?

Maud looks back to Everett. Everett gives a sharp point towards the road - in other words "get". Maud looks back at Sandra and smiles.

MAUD
Um, we’re just gettin’ supper ready.

But Sandra isn’t deterred, taking in Maud and her surroundings.

SANDRA
Smells like it. I won't stay long.

Sandra smiles at Maud, as she nudges her way in.

INT. EVERETT’S HOUSE – CONTINUOUS

Everett looks up from the table, in disbelief. Maud stands nervously between the two of them.

MAUD
He likes it quiet when he eats -

SANDRA
I didn't think he could hear.

EVERETT
I hear fine.
Everett glares at her as she plunks herself down on a chair. She ignores Everett and turns to Maud excitedly.

**SANDRA (CONT'D)**
Show me one of your larger paintings.

**MAUD**
Don’t do larger paintings, just the cards.

**SANDRA**
Oh, you must. I’m willing to pay your price.

Maud just shakes her head.

**EVERETT**
Yes she does.

Everett reaches down under the couch, and pulls out the painting of the little girl and the tire swing. Maud looks at him, shaking her head "no". But he grins.

**EVERETT (CONT'D)**
Some fine gobs of paint flicked on this board. Right up your alley -

**MAUD**
I’m not even finished that.

**SANDRA**
Let me see it.

Sandra studies it.

**SANDRA (CONT'D)**
Beautiful.

Maud shrugs, smiling shyly.

**SANDRA (CONT'D)**
This tree has red leaves, and this one has green. What season is it?

Maud shrugs again.

**MAUD**
Oh, guess it’s everything that’s pretty about all seasons.

**EVERETT**
How much?

(CONTINUED)
SANDRA
What’s your price.

MAUD
Nah, not for sale, sorry.

EVERETT
Five dollars.

SANDRA
Done.

MAUD
No. I’m not selling it.

EVERETT
Already sold.

Everett takes the painting and hands it to Sandra. Maud throws Everett a look.

MAUD
But, I’m not finished it.

He sees something in her eyes. A pleading look. Sandra doesn't notice, she's absorbed with the painting. He grabs the painting from Sandra.

EVERETT
Only joshing you. It's not for sale.

Sandra looks back at Maud, realizing she's not getting her to budge.

SANDRA
You know what would be even better? If I commissioned you to paint something for me.

She takes out five dollars and goes to give it to Maud. Maud refers it to Everett. Sandra begrudgingly gives it to Everett.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
Paint me anything. On a board like this, just whatever you want. You can send it to me in New York. Show me how you see the world.

Maud smiles shyly.
INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

Maud looks at the framed scenery outside her window. It's a cold, dreary, bleak day. Rain is pelting down hard. EVERETT is outside, carting loads of wood out of the shed. Maud watches through the window as Everett heads towards her with the wheel barrow. His face stern. Serious, as he shields himself from the pelting rain. She can hear him muttering curses. Vulnerable, but hard. She smiles to herself.

She looks back down at the painting. It is of Everett, enjoying his work on a sunny day.

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS LOFT - NIGHT

Maud and Everett are in bed. It is almost completely dark, and Maud is nearly asleep.

Everett reaches under the blanket and pokes at Maud.

EVERETT
You awake?

Maud can barely open her eyes.

MAUD
Yeah.

He pokes at her some more. Then moves a little closer to her and starts to rub up against her. She doesn’t respond, but she fully wakes up.

Everett gropes at her more aggressively. She turns to him.

MAUD (CONT'D)
You know, I think we can afford that marriage license.

EVERETT
Foolish.

MAUD
Well, we can.

Everett rolls over and away from her.

She looks at him, a little beam of moonlight shines across his face. His eyes glisten as he stares at the ceiling.

EVERETT
Everyone wants wants wants. If I want something, I gotta fork out.

(Continued)
CONTINUED:

Maud listens.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Stay on your side of the bed, you won't catch me over there again.

Maud stares at the ceiling, so does Everett.

MAUD
I want to, I just think we should get married first.

EVERETT
Never mind your bribing. Leave me alone.

He turns his back to her.

MAUD
I’m sorry. I’m not bribing. I just...

She moves over and puts her arms around him. She snuggles into his back. Everett looks at her, his face softening.

He moves closer to her and fumbles around under the blanket. Maud lays still as the dark room is filled with the sounds of Everett’s awkward grunts.

Maud hangs onto Everett, appreciating the closeness. She hugs tightly into him.

But it lasts only momentarily. Within moments, he is finished and he rolls off of her.

She smiles at him. He suddenly seems shy and nervous.

MAUD (CONT’D) (CONT’D)
That was nice.

Everett says nothing. He seems pained. Awkward. She reaches over and touches him, but he recoils.

EVERETT
Don't.

He is suddenly really uncomfortable with the closeness.

EVERETT (CONT’D)
Don't think you're worming your way into my life, like this, cuz you're not.

(MORE)
EVERETT (CONT'D)
If you stop doing your job, you are out on your duff in a flash, you understand? And if you think I’m going marrying you so I can do that, you're sick in the head. Rather do it to a knot in a tree.

Maud glares at him, furiously, then climbs out of bed.

EVERETT (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Where you goin’ now?

Maud says nothing, but disappears down the ladder.

After a moment, he hears the sound of the door slam.

EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - NIGHT
Maud sits outside and smokes a cigarette while sitting in between the two dogs, Blackie and Brownie.

She looks at the dog who stares at the house.

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - NIGHT
Everett is downstairs, watching Maud through the window. He can see that she is talking to the dogs, and she doesn't look too happy. But he stubbornly heads back upstairs.

EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - MORNING
Everett comes outside with two cups of tea. He sees Maud, curled up next to the two dogs where she spent the night. She hears the door slam closed and sits up.

Everett approaches her, holding out the cup of tea. She won’t take it.

MAUD
S’pose you’ll throw that in my face next.

EVERETT
I might.

She refuses the tea. After a moment, he tosses the tea across the ground.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
If you don't know what I'm like by now, you're stunned-er than you look.

(CONTINUED)
She looks down at her feet.

MAUD
We live together in this house, we might as well get married.

EVERETT
Just cuz I don't have women beating down my door, doesn't mean I got to marry up with the first one who'll have me.

MAUD
Well. Why not? We've been living in this house together now for almost a year.

Silence. Everett is biting the side of his cheek.

MAUD (CONT'D)
It'd be nice to be like normal people, wouldn't it? That's what normal people do, they get married.

EVERETT
You're not a normal woman.

MAUD
You need me.

He looks away.

EVERETT
I don't need anybody. Never did.

MAUD
Foolish. Everybody needs somebody. That's life. And you don't need many people. But you need me.

INT. DIGBY COUNTY ORPHANAGE - DAY

Maud is wearing her best dress, her lovely broach pinned to her chest, and a flower in her hair. She stands, nervously, waiting for...

INT. DIGBY COUNTY ORPHANAGE - WASHING ROOM -- DAY

Everett is putting on a tattered suit that has been cleaned and pressed. He stands in the mirror, straightening himself out. Smoothing down his hair.
Maud stands against the wall, observing as a line of young boys pass by her. She smiles, tickled by their cute faces. Mr. Hill is at the end of the line.

Then, Everett comes out, shiny clean.

MAUD
You look nice.

EVERETT
Let's go.

As they walk down the hall, Mr. Hill smiles at Maud.

MR. HILL
Big day for you two. Congratulations.

She smiles, and tucks her chin into her sweater. She's nervous. Happy. Because...

EVERETT and MAUD come out of the church having just gotten married. Maud is holding a bouquet of flowers. Frank is there with his wife. Frank smiles at Maud.

FRANK
I don't know if I should offer congratulations or condolences, Maud, but give me a hug.

He hugs her. Then offers his hand to Everett.

FRANK (CONT'D)
You be nice.

EVERETT
Yeah yeah yeah.

But Everett shakes his hand. Maud links her arm into Everett’s as they walk down the step. At first he tenses up, but then he relaxes.

A smile almost appears on his face.

Maud, still in her modest wedding dress, sits in the wheelbarrow, proud as a princess, as Everett pushes her through an open field filled with yellow daisies.
EXT. EVERETT’S HOUSE – NIGHT

The sound of Maud and Everett having sex in the loft.

INT. EVERETT’S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS LOFT – NIGHT

Maud looks at him with love as they have sex. It is awkward, but gentle.

He rolls over when they are done.

EVERETT (CONT’D)
Don’t go thinking that everything’s all mushy now. I’m still contrary.

MAUD
I know.

EVERETT
Every time I says something cross, you can’t run off to the shed and bitch to the dogs.

Maud smiles.

MAUD
We’re like a good pair of socks.

He gives her a sarcastic look.

EVERETT
Oh yes. One shriveled up sock, all clinging, the other one long, too thin, full a holes –

She laughs.

MAUD
Better than only one sock.

EVERETT
Yeah, maybe.

She gently lays her head on his arm, wanting the intimacy, but not wanting to scare him off. She smiles. Happy.

EXT. EVERETT’S HOUSE – TIME PASSAGE – 1953

The sun begins to set into the landscape, as a flock of birds head off in a hurry across the darkening sky. The tinny sound of music blares from the minuscule house...

(CONTINUED)
A 1950's car cruises along the road, passing by the Lewis' home...

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE – EVENING

An older Maud is sitting down at the table, her increasingly feeble hands hold a copy of the Star Weekly magazine, which she reads from. Everett is now washing the dishes, wearing the apron that Maud sometimes wears.

A tiny transistor radio plays music in the background.

MAUD
"...Her paintings can be found on display at her home in Marshalltown Nova Scotia, where she lives with her husband, Everett Lewis", see they do mention you "a local fish peddler."

EVERETT
They said my name? Let me see?

She holds out the paper as his eyes study the words, looking for a word he recognizes. He spots it and points to it.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
That's it there.

She smiles proudly as she places the paper down. He wipes his hands dry, and starts to slice and butter a few pieces of bread.

MAUD
Bet we'll sell more paintings now.

EVERETT
Next you'll be wanting us to get electricity or something.

MAUD
Foolish.

EVERETT
We'll have to buy a television.

MAUD
What do we want a television for? I got that radio. Might need some new batteries soon.

He brings over a plate of sliced bread. They both eat a piece.

(CONTINUED)
MAUD (CONT'D)
We can afford batteries.

Quiet moment as they eat their bread. She looks back at the article.

MAUD (CONT'D)
I wonder who is out there reading this right now?

EVERETT
Nobody. You know what people are doing with this article? They're lighting their wood-stoves with it. So don't go getting too big for your britches. You're still my employee.

Maud laughs.

MAUD
I'm not your employee. I'm your wife.

EVERETT
Well, I'm still the main earner.

MAUD
Of course. I'm only practicing up. If people pays money for it, that's your doin', not mine.

He nods, satisfied with this "agreement".

EVERETT
As long as you don't start getting fancy.

EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

Maud's hands are clearly worsening as she carries an old painted board with the words "Paintings for Sale". She walks out towards the road. Then, she leans the board against an old rock.

EXT. MARSHALLTOWN ROAD - DAY

Everett walks home from a day's work, looking tired and worn out. As he nears his own house, he slows down as he passes by the sign.
He walks into his driveway, and looks at Maud, who is standing next to Sandra, and several other curious visitors. Maud has many paintings leaning up against the house. A few interested people have pulled off on the side of the road, and are now milling about the house, admiring Maud and her work.

Everett looks on nervously. When Maud sees him, she smiles. He smiles back. Awkward, but slightly excited. As Sandra is distracted with talking to potential customers, Everett walks over to Maud.

**EVERETT**
How much money we get today?

**MAUD**
I think around eighteen dollars. Maybe more.

Everett looks pleased by this.

**EVERETT**
Give it, I'll put it somewhere safe.

Maud takes the money out of her apron pocket and hands it to Everett. He looks at Sandra, annoyed.

**MAUD**
She still bugs you.

**EVERETT**
I don't trust her.

**MAUD**
She's my friend.

**EVERETT**
Pff!

Everett goes back to chopping his wood.

Sandra rejoins Maud.

**SANDRA**
Shall we have a cup of tea?

**MAUD**
Why don't we go for a walk. Give Everett some peace.

(CONTINUED)
As they walk away, Everett doesn't notice. He keeps chopping his wood, his back to them.

EXT. FIELD - MORNING

Maud and Sandra are strolling along a wide open field.

SANDRA
If he made you some stretched canvases, you'd get a lot more money for those paintings.

MAUD
I wouldn't ask him.

Sandra helps Maud along. Maud's much more feeble than Sandra, and the walk is a little difficult for her.

SANDRA
So what's it like being married to such an ass?
(off Maud's look)
Sorry. "Grump".

MAUD
Never been married to anyone else, so what would I compare it to?

Sandra looks at her for a beat before speaking.

MAUD (CONT'D)
What?

SANDRA (CONT'D)
I've been dying to ask you for years. Do you ever feel you are in love?

Maud smiles shyly.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
You do? You mean you think you love Everett? Actual love?

Maud shrugs, embarrassed.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
And is he in love with you?

MAUD
This is foolish talk. How would I know that?
SANDRA
Well...does he smile at you when you walk into the room, does he do little nice things to show you he cares? Does he pay you compliments.

Maud and Sandra sit on the grass, and Maud slips off her shoes, and gives this some thought.

MAUD
If that's what it means, then no, I wouldn't say Everett loves much.

Maud SCRUNCHES her feet in the grass. Sandra does the same.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Guess your husband must be nice to you.

SANDRA
God, no. I didn't marry for love, I married for...I don't know. Money? To make my parents happy? Boredom? Stupid really. Marriage should be preserved for great love.

MAUD
Nah, we need to be happy with what we got.

They sit side by side, it's peaceful.

EXT. EVERETT'S WOODSHED - DAY

Everett is still splitting wood when he looks over and sees his dog Brownie, lying on her side, looking ill.

He goes over to her.

EVERETT
Brownie, get up. What's going on?

He whistles sharply. The dog doesn't respond. He bends down toward the dog, suddenly worried.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Brown?

No movement. Very laboured breathing from the dog. The other dog, Blackie, stands beside Everett, looking on. Everett looks over to where Maud was.
EVERETT (CONT'D)
Miss. Miss!

But she's not there.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Something's wrong with Brownie! Miss.

Everett is becoming extremely upset. He looks back at the dog.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Don't leave me Brown.

He heads towards the house.

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

When he opens the door to the house, he is surprised to discover Maud's chair empty.

EVERETT
Maud?

EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

He looks up the road. No Maudie. Down the road. No Maudie.

EVERETT
God Damnit.

Everett stands still, the world suddenly spinning. He looks around frantically.

Then Everett goes back to the dog. The dog is dead. He's unsure of how to deal with his emotions.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Woman! Woman!!!

Then he sees Maud walking towards the house in the distance. His frantic panic turns to anger as he steadies his breath, watching her as she hurries towards him.

As she gets closer:

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Where the hell where you?

MAUD
Went for a walk with Sandra. What's wrong?

(CONTINUED)
EVERETT
Brown's dead.

MAUD
No.

She hurries over and looks at Brownie.

EVERETT
But never you mind, go off on your fancy prance around town with the priss bag.

MAUD
Want me to help you bury her?

EVERETT
No.

EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Everett and Maud sit on the ground next to Brownie's body, just the two of them.

Everett looks pained, but he sucks on his teeth and pulls himself up off the ground. He scratches Blackie on the ears.

Everett gets up and gets the shovel. Maud walks over and takes the collar off of the dead dog. She looks back at Everett.

MAUD
Poor old girl.

EVERETT
Yeah yeah yeah, she had a good life. Blackie's the poor one now.

She reaches out for Everett's arm, but he brushes it off.

She gets up, giving him the space.

MAUD
I'll go make sure the kettle's on.

She walks back to the house, feeling uneasy.

MAUD (CONT'D)
I'm sorry I wasn't here. When you needed me.

EVERETT
I didn't need you.
101 CONTINUED:
She goes inside.

102 EXT. FIELD - TIME PASSAGE
A beautiful vista of the house sitting alone against a crispy morning sky as the vista is covered in a blanket of bright white snow...

103 EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE -- DAY
Maud is outside of her house, placing her paintings as a car pulls up. Maud is surprised to see who's driving - it's her brother CHARLES. He looks older, and more tired. When he sees Maud he forces a big smile.

    MAUD
    Charles?
    CHARLES
    Sister.

He comes over and gives Maud a hug. It's polite, but awkward.

    MAUD
    What are you doing here.
    CHARLES
    I read about you, had to come see for myself. An artist.
    MAUD
    Foolish. I painted when we were kids, you never called me an artist then. No different now.

Charles studies the house, trying to be polite.

    MAUD (CONT'D)
    Can I get you some tea?
    CHARLES
    No, thank you for asking.

Charles walks around.

    CHARLES (CONT'D)
    Where's your man?
    MAUD
    Out on his rounds. Should be back soon, if you want to meet him.
CHARLES
Don't have a lot of time. Wanted to come by and maybe get one of your paintings.

Maud smiles.

MAUD
Pick whatever one you want.

CHARLES
That's kind of you.

Then...

MAUD
Big ones are five dollars.

Charles is taken aback.

CHARLES
Aunt Ida said he is a miser. That you don't see a nickel of money from these paintings.

Charles bites his lip, changing tactics.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
What's he doing with your money, Maud?

Maud doesn't know how to answer.

MAUD
Saving it, I s'pose.

CHARLES
Why isn't he building onto the house? Getting the place wired?

MAUD
Don't s'pose we need it. That's his choice to make.

CHARLES
You're capable of making decisions aren't you?

MAUD
You never thought so.
CHARLES
When I read about you in the paper, I thought to myself, "that girl went out and got a life for herself after all." But here you are. Still being ruled by someone else.

Maud can't argue with this. Charles walks around, staring at the paintings politely.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
You need someone to give you advice on how to handle your money. Someone a little more savvy than him. Someone who can find the proper investments.

MAUD
Like you?

CHARLES
I know money.

MAUD
You had to sell momma's house to pay off your debts. So I bet you do know money. And how slippery it is.

Charles bristles, then glances up the road and sees Everett heading towards the house on his bicycle.

Everett pulls up on his bike. Hops off, sizing up Charles, but saying nothing.

MAUD (CONT'D)
You know my brother Charles.

EVERETT
Yup.

Charles shifts uncomfortably. As he looks back to the paintings:

EVERETT (CONT'D)
You gonna buy one or what?

CHARLES
Maybe another time.

Charles nods a polite "goodbye" to Everett, then gets into his car. Everett waits for the car to pull out then, then goes straight to his shed and gets at his work.
Maud watches Charles' car pull away. Then, she glances back at Everett feeling conflicted.

**INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY**

The house is buzzing with flies.

Maud sits at her table, even more stooped and her hands more gnarled. She swats away the flies. Coughs periodically. A nagging, recurring tickle. Everett is peeling carrots.

**MAUD**

We need to get a screen door put up.

**EVERETT**

Where is the money coming from? I'm working fourteen hours a day just to keep you going with your hobby over there in the corner.

**MAUD**

I bring in money with the paintings -

**EVERETT**

You bring in a few pennies but you don't do a lick of work, I got to do everything.

Everett puts a pot of water on the stove. He puts the carrots in the pot. Silence for a moment. Maud senses something is wrong.

He pulls potatoes out of a bag, and starts peeling them.

Maud looks at him, with his back to her. A quiet unease between them. Maud goes back to painting at her spot in the table. Swatting away the flies. She COUGHS again.

**EVERETT (CONT'D)**

Think you can manage to keep that fire going? I like to have a cup a tea when I get home.

**MAUD**

Gets hot in here in the day.

**EVERETT**

Well open the door.

**MAUD**

Then we get more flies. The screendoor --

(CONTINUED)
EVERETT
Shut up about the screendoor.

Maud sees a letter on the table, and quickly hides it. But he sees this, and goes to grab it.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
What was that?

MAUD
Oh, nothing.

EVERETT
Give it to me.

He grabs it, and looks at it. The envelope has the U.S. Presidential seal on it.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Who is it?

MAUD
Vice-President Nixon.

EVERETT
What does he want?

MAUD
Oh nothing. Paintings.

Everett sneers up his lip. Maud catches this, and immediately downplays it.

MAUD (CONT'D)
But I'm telling him, I don't care how fancy he is, if he sends the money like everybody else, I'll send him a painting.

She looks to him, hoping this pleased him. But Everett leaves the house, without saying a word.

Maud sits at her table, watching out the window as Everett heads up the road. Maud's eyes are filled with worry and uncertainty. After he is out of sight, she turns back to her painting. She coughs again.

EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Everett walks away, a nervous, insecure man. He starts his way up the road, then stops.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

EVERETT

God dammit.

He turns back towards the shed and gets his wheelbarrow - he'd forgotten it. Then he heads down the road again.

EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE – DAY – 1965

The road outside Everett's house is now painted, and a post office box is placed on the side of the road as well. The little house is looking more shabby, with paint fading and peeling a little....

EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE – FIELD -- DAY

It is a cold, grey day outside. The wind is blowing. Everett looks well shaven. Tidy and clean.

But he is on his knees, diggin up potatoes. He does it with ease. But he seems aggravated. Self-conscious. He shakes his head and starts mumbling to himself.

EVERETT

Don't know what's so interesting about pulling potatoes out of the ground.

WE realize he's talking to a film crew.

They are set up behind him. Everett puts the potatoes in a bucket. He picks up the bucket and walks towards the house.

The camera crew scurries to follow him...

EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE – LATER

Everett walks around the front of the house, where there is a CBC van parked, and several other crew members. Maud is standing up talking to the two filmmakers. As the camera person repositions the camera, Maud looks up at Everett and smiles.

MAUD

There you are.

Everett wipes the dirt off his knees as he looks at the crew skeptically.

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE – DAY

They are interviewing Maud. Everett sits in the background, trying desperately to smile politely and naturally. Maud is being interviewed by a young man named STEVEN.

(CONTINUED)
Yeah. I’m working on another one of Oxen, yeah.

STEVEN (O.S.)
You like Oxen, why is that?

MAUD
Dunno. They’re strong, but helpless.

STEVEN
You always paint outdoor scenes?

MAUD
Yeah. Always.

STEVEN
Why is that?

Maud shrugs.

MAUD
He works outdoors a lot. People like pictures of outdoors. No big reason I guess.

Maud laughs uncomfortably. She looks over at Everett, seeing he’s also uncomfortable. She motions for him to move closer. He does so, awkwardly, trying to force a smile.

EXT. EVERETT’S HOUSE – DAY

Maud and Everett now side by side, being interviewed outside their house, showing the paintings she has displayed for sale.

MAUD
This one is of seagulls. There’s flowers painted on the door, here.

Maud refers to Everett.

MAUD (CONT’D)
He thinks I’m foolish for painting on the walls. (looking at Everett) Don't you?

He looks at the camera, trying to force a smile.

EVERETT
It’s—it’s not you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
EVERETT (CONT'D)
The people who comes around are the-the-the foolish ones.

Maud tries to cover up with a chuckle.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
One chap come up, wanted to buy the bird on the door, I said lord man, you can't buy our door.

Maud smiles.

MAUD
He got me to whip him up another bird on a board.

EVERETT
The man wanted to fork over his money, I wasn't about to say no.

MAUD
Everett's good at selling. We each does our thing, and it all works out pretty good. I paint most of the time, he does everything else.

Maud smiles at Everett. He is very uncomfortable, but struggles to keep it hidden.

STEVEN (O.S.)
Everett you must feel very lucky to have Maud as your wife.

The camera goes in closer on Everett's face, revealing his nervousness, his insecurity. He swallows, then clears his throat, trying to find something clever to say.... The pressure is mounting.

EVERETT
...Yes.

Steve waits for him to say something else.

MAUD
We're lucky to have each other.

His stiff smile twitches in the uncomfortable moment.

INT. SANDRA'S SUMMER HOME - NIGHT

Sandra and a FEW FRIENDS mingle with drinks, as Sandra shushes everyone, while standing in front of the TV.
CONTINUED:

111

SANDRA
Here she is, look.

WOMAN
She's a sweet talented lady. Why does she stay with that man?

Sandra watches with delight, as her friends gather around.

112

INT. AUNT IDA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ida is propped up on the couch, looking sickly and exhausted, but awake enough to watch Maud and Everett on TV.

TV SHOW HOST (O.S.)
- Her paintings have even been sold to Vice-President Nixon. This happy couple who only live with the bare necessities of life, and yet somehow they flourish...

Ida stares at the image ON THE TELEVISION: Maud and Everett, walking around their yard, talking.

ON IDA'S FACE, filled with regret and sadness.

113

INT. JAZZ CLUB - NIGHT

Maud's brother Charles, worn out and tired, is sitting on a bar stool, drinking a scotch, as a band sets up in the background. He is watching Maud on the little TV playing behind the bar, a sad look on his face.

TV SHOW HOST (O.S.)
Who would have thought that this little arthritic woman, living on the fringe of society, would have such incredible and far-reaching success. You can find Maud Lewis still selling her paintings from the front step of her little house in Marshalltown, Nova Scotia...

114

EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

Everett is across the road from his house, getting the mail out of his mail box. A STACK of envelopes.

He stands there, ripping open the letters, taking the money from them and shoving them in his shirt pocket, then ripping the letters up into bits. Then, he hops on his bike and rides away...
EXT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

Everett is riding his bike as he pulls up to the store, looking more slouched and self-conscious than ever.

A few PEOPLE trickle out of the store, staring at him with more interest. He keeps his eyes to the ground, ignoring the stares. He mutters to himself.

But then Everett notices Ida, who is in a wheelchair, being helped into a car. She looks deathly ill, but when she sees Everett, she props herself up anyway, just to glare at him.

IDA
I saw you on the news. You lucked into it with her, didn't you? She's all smiles, and you nothing but grumbles.

EVERETT
Pfff.

He starts to ride off, but she calls out.

IDA
Wait. I want you to tell her to come see me. Please.

He rides down the road.

EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

As Everett pulls up to his house, he sees a LINEUP of cars outside his home. Crowds of people admire the house, and Maud's paintings.

He pushes through the people.

EVERETT
Watch it. Move. Move.

He bumbles through them, flustered, and heads into the house.

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

Maud is sitting at the table, across from Everett.

MAUD
How sick was she?

EVERETT
Never mind how sick she was. I asked if I came across nasty on the TV.

(CONTINUED)
MAUD
No Everett.

EVERETT
Well why is everyone giving me queer looks. I'm starting to feel like I can't show my face without people talking.

MAUD
Never mind what anyone is saying.

EVERETT
Easy for you to say. Everyone thinks you're sweet and so good at your painting, they don't know what you're like to live with.

Maud gets up from the table, ignoring his jibes.

MAUD
I got to go see Aunt Ida.

Maud grabs her jacket.

EVERETT
What for?

MAUD
Because what if she dies and I never went to say goodbye.

She hurries to the door.

EVERETT
What if I dies and you're not here? You're always going off here, going off there. Starting to get fed up.

Maud is about to walk out the door.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
I said no. You can't go.

She turns back to Everett.

MAUD
I have to.

She grabs a little painting and hurries out the door.

Everett stares out the window, watching as she walks away. His breathing heavy. Fuming. He paces the tiny floor space.
Then brushes his hand across Maud's table, filled with her paint supplies, scattering everything across the floor.

He goes back to the window and watches her again as she's walking off in the distance.

EXT. MARSHALLTOWN ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Maud is walking out the long, empty paved road, a little painting tucked under her arm. A tiny speck in a vast empty space. Nothing between her and their little house, behind her in the distance. She hurries, as fast as her little crooked legs can move.

INT. AUNT IDA'S HOUSE - DAY

Maud walks into the front hallway. The nurse sees Maud and smiles.

NURSE
She’s awake in her room, go on up.

Maud goes in.

INT. IDA’S HOUSE - BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Maud walks into Ida’s room, clutching her painting. Ida looks up, is clearly ill. She sees Maud and smiles feebly.

Maud hands her a painting.

MAUD (CONT’D)
I like painting flowers. Here.

IDA
Thank you.

Ida takes the painting, and looks at it.

MAUD
You don't need to stay mad at me forever.

Ida is about to fight back, but then resigns from it.

IDA
I watched you on the TV and it dawned on me. You are the only one in our family who ended up happy. I thought it was impossible for you to have a good life.

Maud sits on the side of Ida's bed.
IDA (CONT'D)

I don't want to die full of regrets.

MAUD

You're not gonna die --

Maud takes Ida's hand.

IDA

I regret not letting you see her, at least. Your baby.

MAUD

You did it to protect me. She was dead and deformed, it would have been too much --

Ida hoists herself up a bit.

IDA

Maudie. She wasn't deformed.

This is startling to Maud.

MAUD

What do you mean? Why'd she die?

Ida looks at her for a moment. Then...

IDA

She didn't.

MAUD

What?

IDA

Charles sold her.

Maud stumbles backwards.

MAUD

He sold her. For money.

Finally...

IDA

He sold her to a good home. Older people. The man was a minister.

Maud stares off, in complete shock...
IDA (CONT'D)
We didn't think you would be able to take care of a child.

Maud recoils. She stands up, not sure what to do next.

IDA (CONT'D)
Charles and I decided --

Ida reaches out to Maud's arm.

IDA (CONT'D)
I was told she's been well loved.

Maud paces a little, trying to process this.

MAUD
And is she normal? Was she a normal baby, or was she crooked, or what?

IDA
She was fine.

Maud gathers herself.

MAUD
Have your soup, Ida. I gotta go.

She leaves the painting on the bed.

IDA
I'm sorry. Maud...

Maud hurries out of the room.

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

Everett is now taking all of Maud's painting supplies and throwing them into a wooden crate. Sardine cans, paint brushes, cans of paint, old boards, all aggressively being chucked into the box.

He knocks over the table, dishes.

EXT. DIGBY STREET - DAY

Maud has left Ida's house, and she wanders up the road, lost in her confusion. Looking around, at people's faces, at houses. Who could she be? Where is she?

It begins to rain. Maud hugs her coat tightly into her and hurries down the road.
INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

When Maud comes home, she is still in a daze. She hardly notices Everett, who is sitting in her chair, with a scowl on his face.

EVERETT
I'm sick of you.

MAUD
Ev, don't, not now.

EVERETT
I never asked for this. Go out in the morning, people, come home for lunch, people, back at the end of the day, more people. Didn't like 'em before, don't like em now. I never wanted my face on the TV for the whole world to laugh at.

MAUD
Everett. Ida told me -

EVERETT
If I'm not good enough for you, you want to find something better then what I can give you, go. Go find it.

But Maud is desperate to talk to him - her husband. She persists.

MAUD
Listen to me Everett. All these years, I've figured I was half a woman cuz I gave birth to some little gnarled up creature that couldn't live. It wasn't even true.

She bites her lip.

MAUD (CONT'D)
The baby lived. My brother - he sold her.

Everett stares at her for a moment, then suddenly he pounds his fist down on the table.

EVERETT
Give up talking about that God damned baby. The brother, the baby. Christ.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Nothing but a pain from the minute you stepped into my life. You want to go find your bastard baby, go. You want to whine to your invisible brother, go. Leave me alone.

MAUD
My brother is as good as dead to me --

EVERETT
And you're dead to me. I like my life simple, you brings nothing but misery. I was better without you.

He starts to shove her out the door. She braces herself.

MAUD
Wait - what are you doing.

EVERETT
Get the hell out of my house, this is my house, I don't want you here.

She grabs hold of the sleeve of his checkered jacket.

MAUD
Everett stop.

EVERETT
You are half a woman, not even that. Get out, and don't come back.

He picks her up and hoists her out the door, and slams it behind her.

Everett leans on the door, as Maudie knocks on it. He is full of pain and sadness, as he closes his eyes and grits his teeth.

EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

Maud knocks on door repeatedly, as the rain pelts down on her. After a few moments, Maud kicks the door, and turns to leave.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Maud walks down the road in the rain, alone and confused. She's coughing, and exhausted.
EXT. SANDRA'S SUMMER HOME - DAY

Maud approaches the steps of Sandra's cottage. Tears stream down her face, and she wipes them away with her little hands. She is soaking and frozen. She knocks.

Moments later, Sandra comes out on the step.

SANDRA
Maud. What's wrong?

Maud hurriedly wipes her face dry, and puts on a brave face.

MAUD
Oh.

She looks up at Sandra and smiles.

MAUD (CONT'D)
I thought I'd pop in for a visit.

Sandra looks at her - a little shocked.

MAUD (CONT'D)
But it's probably not a good time, I'll go.

SANDRA
No. Come. Otherwise I'll be getting drunk by myself in here, so come in. Let's get you warmed up.

INT. SANDRA'S SUMMER HOME - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Maud is immersed in the bathtub. Only her eyes and nose are above the water, the rest is completely enveloped by bubbles. She nervously looks around the brightly lit, cheerily decorated bathroom as Sandra talks from outside the room.

Maud doesn't know what to think of it.

SANDRA (O.S.)
Is the water warm enough?

MAUD
Too warm, I'd say. I love it, but you shouldn't be wasting all this hot water. Be a different story if you boiled it. Even then. Don't get me wrong, I love it. My mother used to have long baths. But I coulda just used a wash cloth.
SANDRA (O.S.)
You're not in there to get clean, 
you're in there to relax.

Maud giggles, and continues her nervous chatter.

MAUD
Can't see me relaxin'.
But everything looks so perfect. 
Almost too perfect. It's lovely, 
really, but I'm half afraid I'll 
break something.

SANDRA (O.S.)
Do you like shrimp sandwiches?

MAUD
I don't need to be that fancy. Not 
that I don't love em, but bread and 
butter's just as good. You want me 
to get out now?

SANDRA (O.S.)
Stay as long as you like.

Maud sinks back down in the water, her eyes still gazing 
around the room curiously.

INT. SANDRA'S SUMMER HOME - THE NEXT DAY

Maud is now walking around the immaculate, cozy country home, 
weaving Sandra's mauve coloured housecoat, her head wrapped 
in a towel. The housecoat drags on the floor, and Maud looks 
ridiculously out of place. She looks out the window at the 
clouds in the sky.

Sandra is drinking a glass of wine, sitting on the sofa.

MAUD
When I was young, me and my brother 
would gawk at the clouds. He’d see 
monsters and dungeons. Or guns. 
I’d see hearts and puppy dogs. He’d 
get mad at me for turnin’ his 
nightmares into something simple. 
It’s not that I couldn’t see monsters. 
But if it’s a game, and if the rule 
is we get to choose to see what we 
want, why make it dark and dreary?

Sandra smiles, charmed by Maud’s simple wisdom.
SANDRA (CONT’D)
Come to New York with me.

MAUD
Nah. Wouldn’t like it.

SANDRA
You could have an actual career,* Maud. As an artist. I could help you.*

Maud smiles awkwardly.

MAUD
That’s a word Everett would have no time for. Career. Sounds too fancy.

INT. EVERETT’S HOUSE – DAY

Everett is sitting down to a meal by himself. Lonely in his little house. He stares around the room, seeing Maud’s paintings all over the walls.

Very lonely. He gets up and storms out of the house.

INT. SANDRA’S SUMMER HOME – DAY

Maud is now dressed. Staring off into space. Sandra sees that Maudie is bothered.

SANDRA
When I’m mad at someone, I find it helpful to let it out.

Maud says nothing.

SANDRA (CONT’D)
It feels good. Watch.

Sandra pours herself another glass of wine, takes a gulp and then...

SANDRA (CONT’D)
Ahhhhhhhhh!

Maud is startled by this aggression. Sandra composes herself.

SANDRA (CONT’D)
Your turn.

MAUD
No thanks.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

130 Sandra takes another swig of wine.
CONTINUED: (2)

SANDRA
My husband Jacob is an arrogant pompous know-it-all, his voice is like nails on a chalkboard, I am sick of his feet, I'm sick of his breath, I'm sick of his stttt-uupid face.

She looks at Maud, relieved.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
Ahhhh. Now your turn.

Maud chuckles.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
Go ahead. I know you're mad at him.

MAUD
Nah. Not like that.

Sandra holds up the bottle of wine.

SANDRA
Then you need more wine.

Maud pauses for a moment, then holds out her glass.

131 OMITTED

131A EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

Everett is cutting the weeds around his house, aggitated. * Impatient.

132 EXT. SANDRA'S SUMMER HOME - FRONT PORCH -- EVENING

Sandra and Maud now sit on the swing on the front porch, their feet kicked up. Maud is now piss eyed drunk. So is Sandra.

MAUD
Um...He's a complainer -

SANDRA
Let it out. Come on. He's a bastard.

MAUD
He's cranky. He's mean. But he's sweet in his own way -

SANDRA
You're doing it again.

(CONTINUED)
MAUD
He gets mad if I don’t, if I paints
all day he’s mad, if I don’t paint
all day he’s mad, no pleasin’ im.
But I miss him.

SANDRA
Maud you aren’t playing right.

She hiccups.

MAUD
I gotta go to bed, I feel like I
might heave up.

Sandra watches her go, then pours herself another glass of
wine. She stares up at the sky.

INT. EVERETT’S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS LOFT - NIGHT

Everett lies on his side of the bed, staring at Maud’s side.

EXT. WHARF - MORNING

Everett is down on the wharf with Frank, gutting fish. Frank
notices Everett seems different.

FRANK
Something up, Pal?

EVERETT
She left me.

FRANK
Oh well. About time.

Frank smiles, teasingly.

EVERETT
Stop. Stop your wise cracking.

Everett slits open another fish, and hauls the guts out,
then flicks his hand into the bucket.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
If someone had a baby and they give
up to another family, around here,
how would I go about finding out who
it was give up to?

Frank processes this for a second.
CONTINUED:

FRANK
How in the hell would I know?

Everett starts to walk away, frustrated. Frank feels for him. He calls after him.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Everett. You grew up in the poor house, you still do work for them sometimes don't ya?

EVERETT
Mr. Hill died fifteen years ago.

FRANK
Well, Mr. Higgins is there, he'd help you. There's still records there, or paper work or something.

EVERETT
You think they'd know?

FRANK
It's the orphanage. If someone gave up a baby around here, they'd know what happened to it.

Everett nods.

EXT. SANDRA'S SUMMER HOME - MORNING

There is a knock on the door. Sandra answers it. It's EVERETT.

EVERETT
Looking for my woman.

SANDRA
Maud?

Maud stands up, secretly delighted to see him. She goes to the door.

EVERETT
Get your things and come on.

MAUD
Why should I, when you talk to me like that?

Maud stands firmly, playing tough. He grabs her by the arm and starts to haul her out the door.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

135

MAUD (CONT’D) (CONT’D)

Stop it!

Sandra intervenes.

SANDRA
Hey!!! Let her GO!!!

EVERETT
You’re coming home!!!

MAUD
Leave me ALONE Everett!

Maud is furious, Everett is taken aback. Embarrassed, he marches out the door and down over the steps. Maud, still spittin’ mad, follows him out on the step.

MAUD (CONT’D)
Don't know why you can't be nice for once in your miserable old life.

He stops and turns to her, then finally lets his guard down.

EVERETT
For crying out loud, woman.

Maud looks at him, winded and frustrated, but concedes.

136

EXT. SANDRA’S SUMMER HOME - BACK YARD - DAY

Maud and Everett both awkwardly sit on the hammock.

EVERETT
You’d never last here. You’d have to walk seven miles to the store.

MAUD
Well I’m not one of your old dogs.

EVERETT
No cuz at least they knew how to listen. They did what they were told.

MAUD
I’m better than a dog.

EVERETT
Maybe. Bigger pain in the ass too.

Silence.

(CONTINUED)
MAUD
   I’m more than that. I want you to say it.

Everett lies back in the hammock, staring at the sky. The changing shape of the hammock unsteadies Maud and she falls back on him. She starts to get up, but he puts his arm around her, keeping her by his side.

EVERETT
   (whispering)
   You’re more than that.

He holds her there for a moment. He takes a deep breath. Calming himself. They stare up at the clouds. Maud lights up a cigarette.

MAUD
   That cloud looks like a rabbit.

Everett shrugs. Maud decides to quiz him.

MAUD (CONT’D) (CONT’D)
   What do you see?

Everett stares at the sky for a moment longer.

EVERETT
   Clouds.

MAUD
   You can see more than that. Try.

Everett looks at her skeptically, then back up at the sky.

EVERETT
   I sees a woman. With a big arse. A few teeth missin’.

Maud laughs. Despite herself.

EVERETT (CONT’D) (CONT’D)
   Bald on the one side of her head.

She laughs harder.

EVERETT (CONT’D) (CONT’D)
   She’s in her old man’s drawers.

Maud playfully shoves him as she laughs even harder.

(CONTINUED)
EVERTT (CONT’D) (CONT’D)
Foolish are you. That’s your job
Maudie. I sees what’s there, you
sees what could be there.

MAUD
Kinda how you sees me as something
to own. I sees me as your wife.

Evertt unfolds his arms.

EVERETT
I sees you as my wife, miss. Always
did. Didn't want you to leave me.

MAUD
Why would I leave you?

EVERETT
You could find better than me.

MAUD
I got everything I want with you Ev.
Everything.

EXT. SANDRA’S SUMMER HOME - DAY

Evertt is putting Maud's things into his truck as she says
goodbye to Sandra.

SANDRA
Now I have no excuse not to go back
home to my boring husband.

MAUD
Go on.

Maud smiles at Sandra.

MAUD (CONT’D)
You're my only friend. You know
that? Since momma died.

Maud smiles at Sandra. Maud heads to towards the truck, and
Evertt helps her to get in. Sandra watches, thoughtfully
as Maud and Everett drive down the road.

INT. EVERTT’S TRUCK – DAY

As Evertt and Maud drive down the road, he turns onto a
road that she doesn't recognize.

(CONTINUED)
MAUD
Why we going up here?

He says nothing.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Where we going Ev?

Tight-lipped, he keeps driving. Eventually, he pulls off onto the side of the road. The Street is lined with nice, modest little bungalows. He stares ahead, she looks at him, a little confused.

MAUD (CONT'D)
What are we doing here, Ev?

He takes a breath, and exhales.

EVERETT
Her house is there. The white one.

MAUD
Who?

EVERETT
Her. Your girl.

Maud looks on, in disbelief. She sees the house where he is pointing.

MAUD
She lives in there? My baby?

EVERETT
She's a woman now.

Maud nervously opens the door.

EXT. STREET - NEIGHBORING COMMUNITY - DAY

As Maud walks up the street, she sees KAY (late 20's), a slight, attractive young woman, out doing gardening, wearing a bright pink sun hat. A young man comes out.

PAUL
Hungry?

KAY
A little. I think I'll make something with the raspberries for dessert.
Maud watches with overwhelming delight as Kay smiles at her husband. Maud studies her hands. Her feet. Her face. She is beautiful and perfect. Maud can hardly take her eyes off her.

She decides to walk past them.

Maud hobbles along the side of the road, getting closer to the couple.

PAUL (O.S.)
I'm going to wash up for dinner.

KAY (O.S.)
Okay, I'll be in shortly.

Maud observes them, without looking up. But she studies the young woman out of the corner of her eye.

INT. EVERETT'S TRUCK - DAY

Everett sits in the truck, his eyes closed. Working even harder to steady his breath.

EXT. STREET - NEIGHBORING COMMUNITY - DAY

Maud slows down as she is in front of the house, she bends down and picks a pebble out of her boot.

Maud watches Kay through the fence, now almost being eye to eye. The RASPBERRY BUSH is between them. At this exact moment, Kay eyes one of the berries, as Maud eyes the other. Together they both take a raspberry off the bush and EAT IT, savouring the taste.

Kay is so preoccupied with the berries, she doesn't even notice Maud.

Maud smiles watching her, then stands up and continues on past the house, without looking back. As she walks towards Everett, she smiles. Sitting in the truck, he beams a smile back at her.
INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - LOFT - NIGHT

Everett and Maud lie in bed, only lit by moonlight. He can't sleep. Neither can she.

MAUD
I couldn't believe it was her. But I knew it was her.

EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY -- 1969

The wide, open landscape surrounding Everett's house, as Everett, older, more stooped, carries wood into his house. The paint on the house has faded with time...

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

Everett walks into the house and dumps the wood by the stove, as The DOCTOR continues doing a check up on Maud.

MAUD
I'm more concerned with the state of my arthritis then my lungs. It's getting harder and harder to hold a paintbrush. Ev thinks I should strap the brush onto my hands.

He's holding the stethoscope to her back.

DOCTOR
Breathe.

She does. It's labored.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
You haven't given up smoking yet, have you?

MAUD
I gives it up sometimes.

She smiles.

DOCTOR
You have Emphysema Maud. You can't smoke.

EVERETT
She won't be smoking again, I tell you that.
DOCTOR
And air this place out a bit Everett.
The air's too thick.

Everett walks the doctor to the door.

EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

Fewer paintings outside.

Maud comes out of the house, gathers her unsold paintings for the night and takes them inside. Her breathing is a little laboured. She seems tired.

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

EVERETT (O.S.)
You coming to bed, Maudie?

Maud tries to go upstairs, but she can’t hoist herself up.

She goes over to Everett's chair and sits down.

MAUD
I'll be up in a minute.

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - MORNING

Maud wakes up to Everett hovering over her on the chair.

EVERETT
What’s wrong with you?

Maud wakes up for a moment, she is not feeling so good.

MAUD
Guess I fell asleep.

EVERETT
I've had enough of this! Falling asleep, up all night coughing, lounging around the house, you don't paint anymore you does nothing. Now smarten up and get lively!

She tries to smile.

MAUD
I'll get up in a minute. Come sit by me Ev.

Everett can't hide his concern as he sits next to her on the floor.

(CONTINUED)
MAUD (CONT'D)
You should get more dogs. Less lonely with dogs.

EVERETT
Don't need dogs, I got you.

MAUD
Still. Be nice if you had more dogs.

EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

Maud sits in a chair outside as Everett displays her paintings—there are less than before. Maud is getting to be too tired and ill to paint as much as she used to. But there are still some paintings, and some visitors, admiring them.

Maud doesn't really engage in conversation, but then she looks up and sees KAY AND PAUL approaching her house.

She watches carefully as Kay weaves through the crowd, admiring Maud’s paintings.

After a few moments, Maud hurriedly goes into the house. Then, she comes out, holding the painting of the girl in the pink dress.

Maud looks around for Kay, unable to find her at first. But then she sees her and approaches her with the painting.

MAUD
Bit chilly today.

Kay looks up and smiles brightly at Maud.

KAY
Oh, hello. Your paintings are so cheerful and optimistic.

Kay smiles at the work.

KAY (CONT'D)
I like that you ignore the shadows.

Maud smiles, unable to think of what to say. Finally she holds out the painting.

MAUD
You might like this one.

Kay studies it for a long time. Maud watches Kay proudly. Kay seems almost speechless. Her face is serious.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

KAY
I need this painting. I love it.

Maud smiles.

MAUD
Have it.

KAY
How much do I owe you?

Maud shakes her head.

MAUD
You don’t owe me for that, take it.

KAY
No no, you can’t give it away. How much?

Maud sees Everett walking towards her. She speaks quietly.

MAUD
I think that little girl is you. Please take it.

She smiles at Kay. Kay smiles back, somehow understanding. She takes the painting and walks away.

Maud discreetly tries to keep her eye on Kay as she climbs into the car. She watches, fixated, as the car pulls off the side of the road and drives off into the distance. Everett stands by her for a moment.

INT. EVERETT’S HOUSE - NIGHT

Maud sits at her table painting, her work only half finished. She works quietly. Then without warning, she suddenly BURSTS into tears. She lets herself cry, and after a moment she flops over on the table, onto her painting. She cries and cries.

Then she gets up. The paint from her picture now on the side of her face and her shirt. She looks at her ruined painting, wipes away her tears and starts to fix it.

Everett is up in bed, Maud still sits at her table, staring out the window into the black, quiet night. She wipes the paint off of her face and her shirt with an old wet rag. Then Maud hoists herself out of the chair and heads towards the ladder.

(CONTINUED)
Her foot slips on a rung, and Maud tumbles over and falls to the ground.

    EVERETT (O.S.)
    What's going on down there?

Everett pokes his head down to see what has happened, and sees Maud laid out on the floor.

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

Frank and Everett CARRY in a little day bed, as Maud sits, feebly, at her table.

    FRANK
    Back your end in there, Ev.

    MAUD
    That's lovely. Lovely.

    EVERETT
    Watch out.

Everett lays his end down, and they squeeze the day bed in the corner.

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - EVENING

Maud now lays back on a DAY BED that has been squeezed into the small home. Her things have been rearranged downstairs. She paints a painting from her bed. She's slower now. Still thoughtful, but there is less joy in it. Everett brings her a cup of tea.

    MAUD
    Some housemaid I became.

    EVERETT
    The only one applied for the job.

Everett gives her a slight smile.

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Everett comes downstairs and stokes the fire.

Maud is asleep on the couch, her breathing is sounding increasingly laboured.

    EVERETT
    Maudie? You alright?
CONTINUED:

Everett goes over to see her, and realizes she isn’t very responsive.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

Maud.

She tries to open her eyes and speak.

MAUD

Ev.

EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Everett has Maud bundled up in a blanket and carries her to the truck. He lays her in the passenger seat, then gets in the truck.

They speed away down the road.

INT. TRUCK - MOMENTS LATER

They drive down the road, Maud tries to speak but can’t. Everett is in a panic.

EVERETT

Shut up Miss. Don’t go tryin’ to speak til the Doctor’s see you.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

As they wheel Maudie away, Everett is frantic. He runs up to the nurse with money in his hand.

EVERETT

Here, look, ten dollars, just make sure she's alright.

NURSE

Sir, we don't need your money —

EVERETT

Take it take it. Just go look after her.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Maud is hooked up to tubes in the hospital bed, Everett is by her side. She is more alert now. She reaches out to touch Everett, but he’s too far away. He moves in closer.

EVERETT

I knew you were getting sicker, every time I'd ask you, you'd lie to me.

(CONTINUED)
He sits on the edge of her bed.

She slowly, feebly traces the outline of the rose on his arm.

He gently strokes her face.

**EVERETT (CONT’D) (CONT’D)**
You got beautiful eyes Maud Lewis.

Maud smiles feebly, flattered. He points to her chest.

**EVERETT (CONT’D) (CONT’D)**
So much beauty in there, it’s spillin’ out your two peepers. Sometimes I look at them eyes, I think the sun is shining in my face.

**MAUD**
Go on.

**EVERETT**
It’s true. I look at your face and I can’t believe I ever thought you weren’t perfect.

She reaches over with her gnarled up hand, and struggles to outstretch her fingers. She wraps them around his hand.

**MAUD**
I wish...I wish I was better at looking after you, everyone always had to be looking after me.

**EVERETT**
Shut up. You looked after me. You looked after me.

He points to his heart, as he fights back tears.

**EVERETT (CONT’D) (CONT’D)**
You looked after me Miss. Now gimme five more years.

She “shhhhh’s” him. She pulls him in closer to her face.

**MAUD**
I know you love me Ev.

**MAUD (CONT’D)**
We didn't have the things people think you need in order to be lovable. But yet we had love.

*(CONTINUED)*
MAUD (CONT'D)
Who woulda thought two odd socks
would make such a perfect pair.

He looks at her pleadingly, but she closes her eyes and fades away...

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Everett is trying to start his truck. It won't start. He punches the steering wheel.

EVERETT
God DAMN stupid truck.

He gets out of the truck and lifts up the hood. He fiddles around with it, trying to fix it. Swallowing all his emotions. He gets back in the truck, tries again. This time, it starts. He pulls out.

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

Everett is home by himself. The brightly painted, jam-packed little house feels empty. Everett sits in Maud's chair and paints a little "Maud-like" painting on a card. He paints dogs. Nowhere near her detail or charm.

He stops and stares at her paintings on the wall. The little chicken. So cheerful. So happy. He reaches out and touches the bird. Then turns back to the painting. He scraps the paintbrush on an old sardine tin, thick with Maud's paint.

Then he signs the card "Everett Lewis". He stares at it long and hard, his eyes filling with tears. Having a second thought, he PAINTS over the name.

He looks out the window. No cars. No visitors. Nothing.

He looks back to the painting, and once again paints her name on the board. Then he THROWS the paintbrush across the room.

EXT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - DAY

Everett sits outside his house, with paintings propped up against the house, to sell. His poor knock-offs, which lack Maud's care or detail. He stares off into space as a couple of stragglers walk around looking at the art work, the faded paintings on the walls.
Then suddenly SANDRA pulls up. She gets out of her car. She stares at Everett. He looks sad, and incomplete.

She stands at a distance for a moment. Then finally walks towards him. Then she sits down next to Everett.

SANDRA
I missed the funeral.

He doesn't look at her. She doesn't look at him. They just sit in silence together.

INT. EVERETT'S HOUSE - LATER

Everett walks into the house. Everywhere he looks, everywhere he rests his eyes, there is the hand of Maud.

He sits down on the day bed. He kicks off his boots and pulls off a sock. He stares at his feet, one sock on, one sock off. He runs his hand along the empty space of Maud's bed, before clutching her pillow.

Then, he looks out the window, and looks up at the clouds. Suddenly, he's able to see the clouds take shape: a cheerful puppy dog, surrounded by white puffy flowers.

As we fade out...

*Everett Lewis died in 1979, nine years after Maud, in their little 13x13 home.*

*This little house can be found at a permanent exhibit at the Nova Scotia Art Gallery in Halifax, Nova Scotia...*

**THE END**