

AN AUSTRIAN HOLIDAY

A FILM

BY ANN HAWKER

INT. ADA'S HOUSE - DAY

The veined, purple hands of an old woman wind up an antique gold carriage clock with a small golden key.

The same hands put a coat and shoes away in a wardrobe of startling neatness.

Again the hands wind up the carriage clock.

The same hands dead-head nodding geraniums on a balcony.

Another turn of the key in the carriage clock.

The hands polish the glass of a Gold Medal certificate from the Institute of Science.

Another wind of the clock.

A shaking hand puts lipstick on a mouth creased with age.

A face is revealed. ADA, (75), hair freshly set, neatly buttoned into a sober navy trouser suit, sits at a dressing table. She carefully presses powder into her lined face, then stares at herself in the mirror.

INT. HOSPITAL CONSULTING ROOM - DAY

The silhouette of a human brain, cross sectioned, glows on a light box. Intricate patterns of grey, woven around an ominous pool of black in the middle of the brain.

The voice of a CONSULTANT talks with studied calm.

CONSULTANT (O.S.)

The MRI shows the head sliced in half, like a grapefruit. We can see what's happening inside and...

The consultant, low key, business like, points at the charts.

CONSULTANT (CONT'D)

These enlarged areas of black indicate an abnormal amount of brain shrinkage, which is consistent with a diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease.

Ada watches intently, her gaze doesn't flicker.

ADA'S POV

The grey swirls and patterns on the light box loom at her. She is drawn deep into the fault lines of her brain.

CONSULTANT (CONT'D)
 (Distant and fading)
 If we were to look at an unaffected
 brain what you would see....

The consultant's voice fades to an unintelligible murmur. The MRI image fills Ada's vision. Its centre is a pulsating black hole in a sea of grey.

Another voice cuts above the consultant's drone.

ZOE (S.O.)
 Mum?

ZOE (42), ripped jeans and baggy jumper, artfully dishevelled, sits next to Ada.

ZOE (CONT'D)
 Mum, are you alright?

Zoe puts her hand out, but Ada keeps her fists firmly clenched in her lap. Zoe can only give her a gentle pat.

CONSULTANT
 The degeneration is relatively advanced for a first diagnosis. I suspect the symptoms have been masked for some time, which is often the case in high functioning individuals.

Ada carefully straightens up.

ADA
 If the symptoms are masked I must be coping. As I've always said, no need to fuss.

ZOE
 No Mum, you need to listen. He's saying you've got--

CONSULTANT
 --What I'm saying is be prepared for a significant change in how you manage over the next year.

Ada looks again at the brain scans glowing on the lightbox.

CONSULTANT (CONT'D)
 Do you have any questions?

Ada smiles politely.

ADA
 May I go?

She stands and walks out as resolutely as her stooped back and walking stick will allow. Zoe hurries after with an apologetic smile to the consultant.

INT. ADA'S SITTING ROOM - DAY

A gold carriage clock dings a chime of twelve as it is cupped in Ada's hands.

Ada carefully places the clock on the mantelpiece. She adjusts it until it sits dead centre.

The television burbles out a repeat of University Challenge.

JEREMY PAXMAN

(on the television)

In 1996, the metallic form of which gas, originally discovered in 1766 by Henry Cavendish, was created?

ADA

Hydrogen.

JEREMY PAXMAN

Correct.

Ada advances on two glass candlesticks on a shelf.

ADA

Those don't belong there.

Ada places the candlesticks on either side of the clock, absolutely symmetrical.

ADA (CONT'D)

Somebody's been fiddling.

JEREMY PAXMAN

What tissue was the source of the nucleus transferred to an embryonic cell to produce Dolly the sheep?

ADA

A mammary gland.

JEREMY PAXMAN

Correct.

Ada nods her head, then turns to inspect the rest of the room. A row of books jut out on a high shelf. Ada wobbles onto a stool, jabbing them back with stabs of her stick.

ADA

Nobody - should - be - touching -
my - books.

Coming down, she spots the glass candlesticks.

ADA (CONT'D)
Who's moved those?

Ada snatches up the candlesticks.

ADA'S POV

The room goes out of focus. The bookshelf leans down towards Ada. The walls swim out of shape. The sound from the television becomes louder and louder.

JEREMY PAXMAN (V.O.)
Alfred Bestall wrote and
illustrated stories of which
children's character who first
appeared in The Express in 1920?

Ada knits her brows in concentration. The clock ticks. She shakes her head.

JEREMY PAXMAN
Time's almost up.

Ada covers her ears with the candlesticks.

JEREMY PAXMAN (CONT'D)
No? Passing it over.

Ada angrily rounds on the television.

ADA
Stop it!

Ada snaps off the television. She looks down in surprise at the candlesticks in her hands. They glint as the light shines through the prism of the glass. A kaleidoscope of colour dances before her eyes.

Voices drift into her.

ZOE (V.O.)
We'll have to get someone to look
after her.

Ada shuffles silently through the hallway to see Zoe framed in the kitchen doorway.

INT. ADA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN.

Zoe arranges cakes on a china plate with the help of MICHAEL (56), a thin stick of anxiety in a hipster cardigan.

MICHAEL
It's still early days.

Zoe turns to stare out of the window at the sagging geraniums in the window box.

A battered compact camera hangs round her neck. Zoe lifts it to frame a shot of fallen petals on the soil.

Neither Zoe nor Michael has spotted Ada hovering behind the doorway.

ZOE

According to that blog they can start peeing in strange places.

Ada bristles as she listens, unseen.

MICHAEL

Only masochists Google symptoms. We're not there yet.

ZOE

It's a one way street. We'll get there eventually.

Ada moves into the room.

ZOE (CONT'D)

Mum! There you are!

ADA

You've been moving my things.

Ada very deliberately puts the candle sticks down on the kitchen counter and glares.

ZOE

I haven't touched anything.

ADA

Well someone has.

ZOE

Don't worry about the candlesticks. Let's have tea. I've brought cakes.

Ada scrunches her nose at a plate full of creamy eclairs.

ADA

Very rich.

ZOE

The cream ones are for me.

Zoe, whose curves aren't really hidden by her jumper, takes a defiant bite from one of the eclairs.

ADA

Are you still on your diet?

ZOE

We all deserve a treat now and then.

ADA

You've always had a sweet tooth.

ZOE

Brought on by a childhood deprived
of sugar, no doubt. Here, have a
cake.

Zoe and Ada silently challenge one another across the table.

Ada points with her stick at the candlesticks, agitation
rising.

ADA

I want you to stop touching my
things.

Ada thumps her hand roughly down on the table.

EXT. ADA'S HOUSE - DAY

Ada stands at the door of her neat town house.

Zoe gives her an awkward hug. Ada remains stiff.

Ada ducks away and shuts the door firmly.

INT. ADA'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Ada stares at the cakes on the kitchen table.

She picks up the delicate willow pattern plate of eclairs,
raises it up high, and lets it fall.

ADA'S POV

The plate falls in extreme slow motion, spinning and turning
in the air. An explosion of pieces slowly arcs across the
floor; a shattered mosaic of pattern.

Ada crouches amongst the shards of crockery and slumps her
head. A small black cat creeps into the kitchen and licks at
the cream on the floor.

INT. SMALL PHOTOGRAPHIC GALLERY - DAY

Michael's hands hold up large photographic print of fallen
geranium petals against a wall.

Zoe watches. It's the photo she took at Ada's house.

ZOE

Left a bit. Up. Yes, there.

Zoe looks around the small white walled space. It's hung with other landscapes and nature photos. Beautiful, but safe.

Michael catches her uncertainty.

MICHAEL

It's going to be great.

Zoe doesn't look convinced.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

You'll blow the socks off that picture editor.

ZOE

If she comes. This feels so stupid now Mum's...

MICHAEL

Life goes on. She knows that.

Zoe picks up her phone and dials.

ZOE

I need to check on her.

INT. ADA'S HOUSE - DAY

Ada is crouched over a large wooden chest. A phone rings continually in the distance.

Ada pulls out a series of folders, stuffed with fading paperwork. She adds them to the piles of papers strewn across the floor and table.

The phone still rings.

Ada shuffles round the room, picks up a letter, puts it down. She moves to a different pile, picks up a bill, stares at it, then puts it away. She is aimless, uncertain.

The phone finally rings off.

Ada stands and stares at the strewn mess in front of her. Her eye lands on a pile of Sudoku books.

INT. ADA'S HOUSE, THE KITCHEN - DAY

Ada sits with a stop watch and Sudoku puzzle book. She starts the stopwatch and works at a puzzle. Her pen hesitates, her face is intent with concentration.

Her thin black cat winds itself pathetically round her feet and miaows at her plaintively.

Ada fills in the last square and checks her stopwatch. It reads 5.00.

ADA

Useless.

Ada drops the note book in disgust. The cat skitters off.

Ada turns to her puzzle book and tears out the pages one by one.

EXT. ADA'S HOUSE - DAY

Zoe pulls up in her car. She rings the doorbell. There's no answer. She lets herself into the house.

INT. ADA'S HOUSE - DAY

Zoe picks her way through the piles of paper scattered in disarray around the sitting room.

ZOE

Mum? Mum are you OK?

Zoe stops at the windows which look out onto the back garden. Ada is in front of a roaring bonfire in the middle of the lawn.

EXT. ADA'S GARDEN - DAY

A pyre of Sudoku books burns. Ada feeds more and more books onto the fire until they become a towering mass of flames.

Charred remnants from the pages fly around her like black rain. Ada's attention is drawn to the floating ashes. She follows one, like a child chasing bubbles.

She catches the blackened paper; the numbers curl up and disappear in her hand.

Zoe steps out into the garden.

ZOE

Mum! What on earth?

Ada is pulled back into the moment with a start.

INT. ADA'S HOUSE - DAY

Zoe gives Ada a mug of tea. They sit perched amidst the sea of old letters, bank statements and bills.

ZOE

You should have called me.

ADA

I can sort myself out.

Zoe eyes the paperwork doubtfully.

ZOE

Yes, but how about I come and help you? Once the show's done.

ADA

If you like.

ZOE

And you're still OK for tomorrow?

Ada looks blank.

ZOE (CONT'D)

The PV.

Zoe points to an invitation to a private view of her exhibiton on Ada's mantelpiece. Ada's memory is jogged.

ADA

I'm sure you don't need me there getting in the way.

ZOE

You won't be. It's stuff I've been working on for a while, you might want to see.

ADA

It's lovely you haven't given up, but you know I'm useless at understanding anything arty.

ZOE

It's only pictures. I'll come and pick you up.

ADA

No, no. You'll be far too busy for that. I'll take a cab. I'm not an invalid, yet.

Zoe submits, she doesn't want a fight.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

Zoe's car pulls up and she gets out, her camera slung around her neck.

She stops at the gate of a small terraced house with a sigh. She points her camera skywards, framing the scudding clouds for a long moment. The camera whirrs in a series of shots.

INT. ZOE'S HOUSE - DAY

Zoe enters her house, it is colourful and cluttered, but bashed and grubby.

ZOE
Hello! Anybody home?

The lounge is taken up by a sprawl of teenagers. OWEN (16), a beanpole with a quiff, is horizontal on the sofa, SOPHIA (13) young and fresh, is curled in an armchair. They have headphones on and are glued to their phones.

ZOE (CONT'D)
How's things?

Nobody responds. Zoe ruffles Owen's hair. He doesn't look up, but gives a vague grunt as he smooths his hair back.

ZOE (CONT'D)
So, yes, I had a great day thanks
for asking.

Zoe waits for a response for the teenagers. Nothing comes, she turns upstairs.

INT. ZOE'S STUDIO, ZOE'S HOUSE - DAY

Zoe stops in the door way. Her small studio is cluttered, with prints and bits of camera equipment.

She thumps down a cardboard box and sweeps the contents of her messy desk into the box.

Michael appears in the doorway. Zoe spins round, surprised.

ZOE
I thought you'd gone back to the
office.

MICHAEL
No... I...the museum report. Any
reason you're dismantling your
studio the day before your first
show?

ZOE
I'm thinking ahead. We're going to
need a bedroom.

MICHAEL
For?

ZOE
Mum.

MICHAEL

Not yet.

ZOE

Sooner than you think.

MICHAEL

Seriously? And peace and harmony
will reign.

ZOE

It's not like that. She's changing.

MICHAEL

She won't want to come and if she
does it will be a nightmare. You
know that.

ZOE

I have to do something.

Michael puts an arm around her.

MICHAEL

Live your life.

Zoe isn't really comforted, but she takes a hug.

INT. ADA'S KITCHEN - DAY

Ada in her dressing gown shuffles into the kitchen. She
draws open the blinds and looks out at the morning.

She fills a glass of water and opens a cupboard door to
reveal row upon row of vitamin bottles.

Her hand hesitates over a bottle labelled "Mindfocus". With a
sudden lunge she sweeps out all the bottles. They crash onto
the ground.

One by one Ada opens the bottles and pours the pills over the
floor. Her cat, thin and tentative, noses around. It
scrabbles the pills together and pees.

ADA

(to the cat)

My little pea brain. I'm sorry.

Ada sits next to the cat which crawls painfully onto her lap.
Ada and the cat shut their eyes.

EXT. VET'S SURGERY - DAY

A VET gently palpitates the tummy of Ada's scrawny cat. Ada
watches.

VET

The cancer is advanced. Kidney tumours are common in elderly females. How old is (*checks notes for name*) "Pee" now?

ADA

"Pi" as in R squared. I've lost count. We're both ancient.

Ada strokes the cat, who nudges at her blindly.

VET

I'm sorry there's very little we can do. It's a matter of when, not if.

The cat miaows, crouched, miserable on the consulting table.

VET (CONT'D)

Unfortunately cats cling on well past the time they have any real quality of life. Steroids are a possible temporary measure.

ADA

Or?

VET

We can put her to sleep.

Ada rests her hand on Pi who looks back at her blindly.

ADA

I'd like to do that.

VET

Are you sure? Do you need some time to think about it?

ADA

It's better if we do it straight away.

The vet assesses Ada and nods.

VET

I'll give you a moment to say your goodbyes.

The vet leaves the room.

Ada picks up Pi. Pi licks her hand and lies limp. Ada puts her nose down to Pi and nuzzles the cat's face.

She lays Pi gently down on the consulting table.

Ada sniffs back a tear; she's not about to seem weak.

The door opens and the vet enters with a syringe. Ada silently grips Pi. The cat protests with a small miaow.

The vet looks at Ada and she nods. He inserts the needle into the nape of Pi's neck.

Ada strokes the cat while the life slowly ebbs from its body.

Pi lies completely still. The vet nods. He curls Pi into a sleeping position. Ada touches the cat's head.

Stiff, and still determinedly dry eyed, she holds out her hand to the vet.

ADA

Thank you.

Ada rests her hands on the cat's body in a last goodbye.

INT. PHOTOGRAPHY GALLERY - NIGHT

A small crowd of people mill in front of the photos, everyone clutches a glass of warm white wine.

Zoe checks her watch. Michael catches the look.

ZOE

Mum should be here by now.

MICHAEL

Give her some time.

ZOE

Yeah, right. She never really did give a shit, so why start now?

Michael nods towards the door as MELISSA (32), confident and street chic, enters.

MICHAEL

You've got other things to think about. New job prospects are walking through the door now.

Zoe takes a glup of wine.

INT. ADA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ada folds Pi's collar onto his cat basket. She sits and stares at the empty basket.

A burst of decisiveness and Ada stands.

She marches through her house. All the previous calm order has dissolved into chaos.

Piles of books are strewn across the floor. The table is still covered with a mess of financial papers and newspapers. A lifetime of stuff has been dislodged and dismantled.

BATHROOM

With a loud crash Ada sweeps the contents of her bathroom cabinet on the floor. Toothpaste and old medicines go flying.

Ada snatches up the medicines.

INT. PHOTOGRAPHY GALLERY - NIGHT

Zoe hovers, anxious as she watches Melissa float through the exhibition. Melissa gives the work a cursory glance.

MELISSA

Beautiful. So sweet. I can see you've worked hard.

Somehow this does not feel like a compliment. Zoe ploughs on.

ZOE

I'm rebuilding my portfolio. I'm hoping to get back into editorial.

Melissa assesses Zoe.

MELISSA

So what type of work are you looking for?

ZOE

Anything really, news stories, features.

MELISSA

People I take on need to have something really significant to say.

ZOE

Right.

Melissa gets out her phone and tabs through. She shows Zoe.

MELISSA

This week's cover. The photographer's only 25, but he's seen three war zones. It's like he's an old soul.

ZOE

Yeah great. Really strong.

MELISSA

Let me know when you have some
fresh work.

Melissa wafts out of the gallery.

INT. ADA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ada sits on the edge of her bed, an assortment of pill
packets next to her. She swallows a pill from the pile.

ADA

Simpler.

She swallows another pill.

ADA (CONT'D)

No fuss.

Then another pill, and another, as she talks to herself.

ADA (CONT'D)

No bother.

INT. ADA'S BEDROOM - LATER - NIGHT

The bed is littered with empty blister packs. Ada lies down
carefully on her bed and shuts her eyes.

Downstairs a phone rings. Its sound is muffled and
increasingly distant as Ada drifts away.

The phone continues to ring.

Ada's eyes flicker behind her closed lids.

ADA'S POV

Her cat, its mouth open in a yowl of pain stares, wide eyed.
The black mouth gapes, becoming larger and larger.

The animal's mouth slowly fades into a white pool of light
until it completely disappears.

WHITE OUT.

EXT. ADA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A blue light flashes, filling the screen. Zoe's frightened
face looks on as an unconscious Ada is heaved into an
ambulance on a stretcher.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

Ada lies in the hospital bed, eyes shut, wired up to a drip and a monitor. Zoe sits, hunched, at her bedside.

Ada's eyes flicker open. When they land on Zoe her face creases. Tears fill her eyes. She can barely talk.

Zoe takes her hand. Ada shakes her head and shuts her eyes.

Ada lies still, almost corpse like. Her face is hollowed out and blue against the sheets.

Zoe watches Ada sink back into sleep. She lifts her battered camera, slung around her neck, and takes a shot of the sleeping Ada.

CONSULTANT (O.S.)

She'll pull through.

Zoe swings round and hastily puts her camera away.

ZOE

Thank you. For everything.

CONSULTANT

We're obviously very concerned about Ada. Her care provision is inadequate.

ZOE

Sorry. I mean none of us realised--

CONSULTANT

--She will have a psych assessment, but I think it's fair to say she can no longer live on her own. The nurses have a list of recommended care homes you can contact.

ZOE

Of course.

Zoe looks at the sleeping Ada.

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S CONSULTING ROOM - DAY

Ada and a PSYCHIATRIST (50s), a thin woman wrapped in a baggy cardigan and middle class concern, face one another in sagging armchairs.

PSYCHIATRIST

So this is called a memory and capacity check.

ADA

Is this really necessary?

PSYCHIATRIST
I promise it won't take long. Can
you tell me what day it is?

ADA
This is silly. Monday.

PSYCHIATRIST
And the year?

ADA
2018

PSYCHIATRIST
And the date?

ADA
The 18th of February.

PSYCHIATRIST
I'd like you to draw me a clock
face please.

Ada draws a clock on a piece of paper.

PSYCHIATRIST (CONT'D)
Mark on it half past four.

Ada marks up the clock with a defiant flourish.

PSYCHIATRIST (CONT'D)
Now, I want you to remember three
words. Bird, yellow, tractor.

ADA
Bird, yellow, tractor.

PSYCHIATRIST
See if you can hold those in your
head. And who is the prime
minister?

ADA
Goodness who cares? Can you not let
me be?

PSYCHIATRIST
Did you really want to die when you
took those pills?

ADA
Of course.

PSYCHIATRIST
What about your daughter? Your
family?

Ada dismisses the psychiatrist with a wave of the hand.

ADA

I should go to Austria. They have a nice place in the mountains there.

PSYCHIATRIST

Austria?

ADA

Everybody's doing it nowadays.

PSYCHIATRIST

I think you might mean Switzerland.

ADA

Why can't the doctors here give me an injection and help me on my way instead of all this?

PSYCHIATRIST

There are still many things you might want to live for. Happiness doesn't end simply because you have Alzheimer's.

ADA

It does if you have no hope. You should be helping me to go instead of all this.

The psychiatrist shakes her head.

PSYCHIATRIST

Assisted suicide is against the law in this country and if anyone allows you to kill yourself they're liable to five years in prison.

ADA

Stupid Nanny State.

PSYCHIATRIST

At the moment there is nothing stopping you enjoying your life. You can live for the day.

ADA

How much living can a fish out of water do? I'm rotting from the head down.

The psychiatrist nods and writes in her notes.

PSYCHIATRIST

Can you remember those three words I gave you?

Ada looks at the psychiatrist blankly and shakes her head.

ADA
What words?

EXT. ZOE'S HOUSE - DAY.

Zoe and Ada get out of a black cab. Zoe pulls out a small suitcase and they turn into the house.

INT. ZOE'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY

Ada sits on the bed in Zoe's re-purposed studio. Her suitcase remains unopened.

INT. ZOE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Michael serves up an evening meal. Owen attacks his food. Sophia picks. Michael sits down, serious

MICHAEL
So now Ada's here--

ZOE
--no lectures.

Michael looks at her, questioning.

ZOE (CONT'D)
What choice do we have? I can't leave her on her own and a home is just too...

Zoe trails off. Michael nods.

SOPHIA
But why do I have to have all your photo stuff in my room?

OWEN
Because you're small and unimportant.

Sophia jabs him.

MICHAEL
Perhaps we can get a carer allowance?

ZOE
Sure. Maybe. Let's just get her back on track.

SOPHIA
Why isn't she having tea anyway?

OWEN

She's heard about Dad's lasagne.

Zoe remains tight lipped, but dishes up a plate and takes it upstairs.

INT. BEDROOM, ZOE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ada sits in bed. Zoe places the food in front of her.

ADA

Not for me, thank you.

Zoe clamps a smile to her face.

ZOE

I don't know what Owen's said about Michael's cooking, but don't take any notice of him.

ADA

I don't need anything. No need to fuss about me.

Zoe's smile freezes.

ZOE

We can't let you go hungry.

ADA

I'm perfectly able to look after myself.

Zoe backs out, dismissed.

INT. LANDING - NIGHT

Zoe bumps into Michael.

MICHAEL

OK?

ZOE

Yeah, great.

MICHAEL

It'll take a while to settle down.

Michael turns into his study.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Sorry. I've got to finish this rationalisation report for the museum. Babylonian carvings are being repatriated.

He smiles apologetically and shuts the door.

Zoe turns into their bedroom with a sigh and curls herself onto the bed.

INT. BEDROOM, ZOE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ada sits, stiff and isolated, in the bed. She stares at the darkened window. A burst of night shadows shiver across the room. She shudders into herself and shuts her eyes.

INT. ZOE'S HOUSE - DAY

CONTINUOUS ACTION

Zoe, whose camera is slung around her neck, takes a shot of a plate of food: a breakfast array of fresh fruit and pastries.

Michael comes in, coat on, and grabs a cup of coffee.

MICHAEL

Not exactly war zones.

Zoe looks daggers. She follows him out into the hall.

ZOE

That was unnecessary.

Ada, unnoticed by either of them, is at the top of the stairs. She stops to watch.

MICHAEL

I'm sorry. Only...

He tails off. Zoe looks at him expectantly. Michael sees Ada.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Don't get blown off track. Think about the future,`, that's all.

Michael heads off quickly. Ada looks on from the stairs.

ADA

I'm causing trouble, aren't I?

Zoe swings round.

ADA (CONT'D)

I should get back home.

Ada descends the stairs and enters the kitchen carrying last night's dinner.

Zoe follows her. Owen and Sophie bound down the stairs.

They all watch as Ada walks to the bin and tips in the dried up food.

OWEN
 Yep. I did warn you, Gran.

ZOE
 (glares at Owen)
 Not helpful.

Zoe takes hold of Ada by her arm and firmly leads her to a seat in front of the plate of fruit and pastries.

ZOE (CONT'D)
 Have some breakfast.

Ada wrinkles her nose and turns her head away.

ZOE (CONT'D)
 You must eat.

Zoe cuts open a pastry and offers a piece. Ada shakes her head.

ZOE (CONT'D)
 I know you like croissants.

Zoe reaches for her camera and frames a shot of Ada.

ZOE (CONT'D)
 Smile. Your first morning here.

Ada stares back, confused and scared.

ADA'S POV

Ada sees the lens of the camera, a black circle looming towards her, threatening. Zoe leans in to take another shot, the camera lens bears down even further, sinister, probing.

Ada grabs a pastry and throws it at the camera.

ADA
 Stop pointing that thing at me!

ZOE
 Sorry. Just please eat. We don't want you to go into a home do we?

The children have stopped their breakfast. They watch the argument with alarm.

ADA
 I'll go back to my house.

ZOE
 That's not possible after...You're with us now.

Ada pushes the pastries away, across the table, angry.

ZOE (CONT'D)

Mum, if you don't eat you can't stay here.

SOPHIA

Mum!

Sophia rushes to put her arm round Ada.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

It's alright granny.

OWEN

Chill. You're scaring her.

Everyone stares, hostile, at Zoe as she gathers her coat and car keys.

ZOE

Sophia, come on, school.

SOPHIA

I'll take the bus.

ZOE

But..

SOPHIA

Mum, it's beyond embarrassing you taking me anyway.

Owen picks up his bag and gestures to Sophia to come. The door bangs shut.

Zoe droops into a chair and looks at Ada.

ZOE

That went well.

ADA

You should be getting to work. Isn't that what Michael said?

ZOE

Mum, I've explained I'm freelancing now. I work from home.

Ada ignores Zoe and talks across her.

ADA

You mustn't give up your job for me. I always worked, I said to your Dad--

ZOE

--"I was never going to rot at home."

ADA

So go on then. You have to make something of your life. Don't waste your time fussing over me. I wouldn't.

ZOE

I always knew what mattered to you.

Zoe grabs her camera and leaves. The front door slams

Ada surveys the mess on the table.

Ada picks up a mug of tea and slowly and deliberately pours it over the plate of pastries.

EXT. LONDON SUBURBAN STREETS - DAY

Zoe wanders, aimless, down the streets. She lifts her camera to take a shot of a scrawl of graffiti across a wall: "Don't be another brick in the wall".

She shrugs into a cafe.

INT. BEDROOM, ZOE'S HOUSE - DAY

Ada perches on her bed, she folds and refolds a newspaper article in her hand. It's impossible to see the headline.

Slowly she hooks her suitcase towards her with her stick. She carefully tucks the newspaper article into the case.

Methodically she gathers her coat, zips up the case and wheels it out of the room.

INT. CAFE - DAY

Zoe stares at the delicate pattern swirled on her cappuccino froth. She frames it in her camera lens.

INT. ZOE'S HOUSE - DAY

Ada slowly bumps her suitcase down the stairs. She gathers her breath then lets herself out of the front door.

EXT. RAILWAY BRIDGE - DAY

Zoe slouches her way across a railway bridge. A train passes underneath with a beep of the horn. She raises her camera, then lowers it without taking a shot.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS - DAY

Ada wheels her suitcase purposefully down the street. She gets to a bus stop and waits.

A bus draws up. Ada gets on. The doors close behind her.

INT. ZOE'S HOUSE - DAY

Zoe lets herself back in. She dumps her camera bag and calls up the stairs.

ZOE
Mum? Mum, I'm sorry.

Zoe checks through the downstairs rooms. No Ada. She goes upstairs. The bedroom is empty.

With more urgency Zoe checks every other room. Nothing.

ZOE (CONT'D)
Mum!

Zoe rushes out of the house.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Zoe looks up and down the street. No sign of Ada.

She runs to the junction and looks again, left and right, up the streets. Nothing.

A fast train hurtles past on the neighbouring railway track. The metal wheels of the train ring out. Zoe shudders.

INT. UNDERGROUND PLATFORM - DAY

Ada stands close to the edge of the platform. She stares at the tracks as an underground train comes roaring into the station.

INT. ZOE'S CAR - DAY

Zoe drives slowly along the streets. She scans the pavements as she drives. A car toots impatiently behind her.

She pulls in and gives the passing driver the finger.

INT. ADA'S HOUSE - DAY

SITTING ROOM

Ada looks around. The daffodils nodding in her garden, the carriage clock, the candle sticks.

Her hand curls around the candle sticks in a caress.

DINING ROOM

Ada sifts through the chaos of papers on the dining table. She's searching for something. She shoves piles of papers onto the floor. Her search is intense.

INT. BUILDING SOCIETY - DAY

Ada faces a BANK TELLER through the glass partition. The teller looks at Ada, worried.

BANK TELLER

I'm sorry we can't give you that amount in cash. There is a limit of six thousand pounds for each withdrawal.

ADA

Well, that will have to do. Although it's my money isn't it?

The teller brings out a wad of cash.

BANK TELLER

How would you like your notes?

ADA

Fresh ones - not wrinkled up.

BANK TELLER

I mean twenties or fifties?

ADA

Anything clean.

The teller counts out the cash in fifty pound notes.

BANK TELLER

You can buy yourself some treats with that.

The teller folds the money into an envelope and passes it over.

Ada shuffles away from the counter.

A YOUNG MAN in the bank watches Ada as she stuffs the envelope into her handbag.

She pulls her bag protectively towards her.

INT. ADA'S HOUSE - DAY

Zoe walks through the house. She picks over the mess on the floor.

ZOE
Mum? Mum! Where are you.

No reply. Zoe searches through every room in the house increasingly desperate.

INT. KITCHEN, ZOE'S HOUSE - NIGHT.

Michael places a cup of tea in front of Zoe. She sits at the table with a POLICE OFFICER.

POLICE OFFICER
Nine times out of ten elderly
wanderers turn up within 24 hours.

Michael puts a comforting hand on her shoulder.

MICHAEL
It'll be OK.

ZOE
And the fact she's suicidal?

Michael and the policeman exchange anxious glances. Zoe goes to the window and stares out into the darkness.

EXT. SEEDY LONDON B AND B - NIGHT

Ada stiffly bumps her suitcase up the steps of the Xanadu Hotel. Its windows are framed with grubby nets and plastic pot plants.

A TRACKSUITED MAN, smoking on the steps, watches her coldly. Ada's handbag droops down her arm. She stops to hitch it up as he looks on.

INT. ZOE'S HALL - DAY

In the half light of dawn Zoe puts on her coat. Michael holds her gently back with a warning arm.

MICHAEL
We need a plan.

ZOE
Get the police to drag the river?

MICHAEL

I'm sure she's safe having
breakfast somewhere.

ZOE

Do you really believe that?

Zoe bends to lace up her trainers. Her phone rings. She answers it on speaker, not wanting to lose time.

ZOE (CONT'D)

Hello?

INTER-CUT PHONE CONVERSATION.

Melissa walks to her desk through a newspaper newsroom. Busy, harassed, she clicks on her computer and sifts through images as she speaks.

MELISSA

Zoe? Are you free? I need a
stringer for the Women of
Achievement Awards today.

ZOE

What? I mean I...

MELISSA

(Interrupting)

I've been let down by one of my
regulars who's off to Darfur.

Michael listens in to the phone call.

ZOE

Only the thing is, I've got a
situation.

MELISSA

It's straightforward stuff, I need
portraits of the big name
finalists. I mean if you don't
think you can handle it...

ZOE

No, it's not that..

MICHAEL

(whispering)

Go on. You can do it. I'll look for
your Mum, I promise.

MELISSA (V.O.)

So?

Michael nods encouragingly at Zoe.

ZOE

Sorry. I've got something on.

Zoe pulls on her coat and heads out.

INT. HEATHROW AIRPORT, DEPARTURES HALL - DAY.

Ada walks slowly through the departure hall dragging her suitcase behind her. She hunches into a chair.

ADA'S POV

The constant flow of people around her swing in and out of focus. Everyone is busy, everyone has somewhere to go.

The people merge into blur of lights, signs and faces. Announcements echo around her.

She looks up at the departure board. The names of a range of European cities in yellow lights blink back at her.

INT. AIRPORT - DAY

Ada, clutching her passport and boarding pass, is carried on a baggage buggy by a PORTER. Her handbag lies next to her.

The porter deposits her at a departure gate.

Ada is guided through the gate. Her handbag lies forgotten on the buggy.

At the last minute the porter spots the bag and runs to hand it to Ada.

EXT. SUBURBAN HIGH STREET- DAY

Zoe scans the shops and cafes as she passes. She peers inside a coffee shop. A woman with her kid stares back, through the plate glass, passive aggressive.

Zoe enters. Through the window she can be seen showing a picture on her phone to the BARISTA who shakes her head.

EXT. SUBURBAN PARK - DAY

Zoe walks quickly through the park. She looks from side to side and checks everyone's face as she passes.

In the distance she spots the back of a grey haired woman sitting on a park bench, buttoned into a smart navy coat.

She sprints over.

ZOE

Mum!

As Zoe gets closer the woman turns. It's not Ada. Zoe turns away defeated.

INT. JUMBO JET - DAY

Ada stares out of the plane window; the sky is clear blue with wisps of clouds. Down far below are the snowy peaks of the Alps.

FLIGHT STEWARD (V.O.)

We will shortly be arriving at Innsbruck Airport. Please ensure your seat belts are fastened and the seats are in the upright position.

Ada watches as the mountains get closer.

INT. INNSBRUCK AIRPORT - DAY

Ada, a tiny stooped figure, shuffles into the Arrivals Hall wheeling her suitcase behind her.

Ada stands in the middle of the crowd.

ADA'S POV

People swirl around her, there is an unfocused glare of yellow and white signs. Announcements in German echo overhead.

EXT. INNSBRUCK AIRPORT, TAXI RANK - DAY

Ada stoops into a taxi. The DRIVER, young and brusque, bangs her bags into the boot.

INT. TAXI - DAY

The driver gets into the taxi.

DRIVER

Where do you go?

Ada looks confused.

ADA

I don't know.

DRIVER

You have a hotel? What hotel do you have?

Ada shakes her head. She's exhausted.

ADA

Any.

The driver turns to look at her. His eyes fall on her handbag clutched in her veined hands. Ada pulls herself up with an effort.

She points with her stick at a distant motel sign

ADA (CONT'D)

There. Take me there.

The driver nods and starts the engine.

Ada watches the airport buildings slip away.

EXT. AIRPORT MOTEL - DAY

Ada gets out of the taxi in front of the featureless, functional hotel. The driver deposits her bag by her.

DRIVER

Fifty Euros.

With a shaking hand Ada fumbles with her bag and takes out the envelope stuffed with sterling. The driver shakes his head.

DRIVER (CONT'D)

Euros.

ADA

I don't have Euros.

Ada offers the envelope again. The folds of money stick out.

The driver takes the envelope and looks through. He can see there's thousands of pounds in notes. He takes a generous wad of notes, and returns the depleted envelope.

Ada looks at the envelope confused, but the driver is already in his taxi and away.

INT. INNSBRUCK MOTEL, RECEPTION - DAY.

Ada stands at the counter of the cheerless hotel, faced by a gangly teenage, male RECEPTIONIST (18).

HOTEL RECEPTIONIST

You are in Austria on holiday?

Ada puckers her brow. Then smiles, nervous.

ADA

I have something I need to do here.

HOTEL RECEPTIONIST

How many nights will you stay?

A cloud of doubt passes across Ada.

ADA

I don't know.

HOTEL RECEPTIONIST

Do you need breakfast?

Ada shakes her head, uncertainty and fear growing.

ADA

I don't know.

HOTEL RECEPTIONIST

Do you want an early morning call?

Ada puts her hands to her ears to block out the receptionist.

ADA

(shouting)

Sshhh.

The receptionist shrugs and passes over the room key.

HOTEL RECEPTIONIST

(reciting by rote)

We hope you enjoy your stay, please
ask at reception for information on
sightseeing tours of Innsbruck.

ADA

Sightseeing?

Ada puckers up her brow.

ADA (CONT'D)

No thank you. I think I might be
busy.

Ada shuffles off with her suitcase.

INT. BEDROOM, INNSBRUCK MOTEL - DAY

A small functional room, taken up mainly by the bed.

Ada stares out the window at the urban landscape of motorway
and airport buildings. The shadow of a low flying plane
crosses the window. The building shakes. Ada covers her ears.

There's a knock at the bedroom door. Ada starts with a little
animal cry. She hunches, scared, behind the bed.

Another knock at the door. Ada stays crouching until the footsteps walk away.

Hidden behind the bed Ada sinks down.

She drags her handbag towards her. She pulls out everything, searching. She can't find what she needs.

She tips open her suitcase. The contents spill out. Amongst them lies the crumpled newspaper article. The headline is clear: "Help to Die - The Alpine Suicide Hotel."

Ada reads. A memory floods back into her mind.

Clutching the crumpled paper she heads back to the door.

INT. RECEPTION, INNSBRUCK MOTEL - DAY

Ada shows the tattered paper to the receptionist.

ADA

Excuse me. Please could you tell me where I can find this place.

He inspects the newspaper article. Then looks at Ada, puzzled.

RECEPTIONIST

So you will not stay?

ADA

I have to go there.

RECEPTIONIST

But this is in Switzerland.

ADA

Have I got things wrong?

Ada is trying to process.

RECEPTIONIST

It is possible to get there, but first you must take a train. To Zurich.

ADA?

Zurich? Is that near?

RECEPTIONIST

Not so far with the train. You want a taxi?

A look of fear spreads across Ada's face.

ADA

No taxi.

RECEPTIONIST

A bus?

Ada nods. Her hands tremble as she rummages through her bag.

ADA

Yes, I need a ticket.

The receptionist lays a calming hand on her arm.

RECEPTIONIST

Please, we offer guests a complimentary ticket to the city.

ADA

Is that what I need?

The receptionist pulls a tourist map towards him.

RECEPTIONIST

So first you must take the 251 bus to Marie-Theresen Strasse.

With a flash of his pen he draws quickly on the map. Ada watches. She nods, but is uncomprehending.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

Then you take the tram C to the train station where you buy your ticket to Zurich.

He hands the travel map and bus ticket to Ada with a rehearsed smile.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

The bus stop is outside the hotel.

Ada nods.

INT. ZOE'S HOUSE - DAY

Zoe sits at the table with Michael. She sorts through a pile of homemade A4 posters in front of her. Ada's face is on the front, under the heading "MISSING".

Owen and Sophie enter, straight back from school.

SOPHIE

So you haven't found her?

ZOE

No.

Sophie's face crumples as she picks up the poster.

MICHAEL

Don't worry. It'll be fine. You two grab some posters.

ZOE

We need maximum coverage. Let's do every lamp post on the High Street.

SOPHIE

Maybe if you hadn't been so crap to her we wouldn't be doing this?

ZOE

Meaning?

SOPHIE

She wouldn't have gone would she?

Zoe crumples.

OWEN

Leave it Sophie.

SOPHIE

Gran is out there on her own. She could be walking under a bus right now. Nice work Mum.

MICHAEL

That's enough. We all need to pull together.

Sophie picks up a pile of posters and storms out.

INT. BUS, INNSBRUCK - DAY

Ada gets on a bus and sits at the back. She watches as the hotel disappears from view

Large, anonymous blocks of flats pass by the window. Ada stares out, clutching her bag.

EXT. BUS, CENTRE OF INNSBRUCK - DAY

The bus rolls through the city centre and comes to a stop.

INT. BUS, INNSBRUCK - DAY

Ada sits in the same place at the back of the bus. She watches as the doors hiss open, passengers get on and off.

Ada stands up, she clutches her handbag uncertain.

ADA'S POV

Cars streak past the bus window with a blare of horns. There is a roar in her ears: traffic noise jumbled with foreign voices. The crowds on the pavement stare through the window, hostile, unsmiling. A dark figure lurks in the shadows of a building. Ada shudders.

INT. BUS, CENTRE OF INNSBRUCK - DAY

Ada sits back down and pulls her bag back toward her.

The bus sets off again.

Ada watches the buildings pass by. Another stop, the doors open again. Ada watches, as people get on and off. She pushes herself further into the back corner of the bus.

EXT. BUS STATION, INNSBRUCK - DAY.

The bus draws up at the bus depot.

INT. BUS - DAY

Ada is the only passenger on the bus. She remains at the back clutching her bag. The driver turns to look at her.

BUS DRIVER
Endstation. Alle Passagiere
aussteigen müssen.

EXT. BUS STATION, INNSBRUCK - DAY

Ada emerges tentatively from the bus. She stands, bewildered, her suitcase next to her, still clutching her bag.

The bus driver locks the vehicle and looks at her, concerned.

BUS DRIVER
Alles in ordnung?

Ada shuffles away from him as quickly as she can. Not looking where she is going, she bumps into the bus shelter and stumbles.

The driver pulls her up.

BUS DRIVER (CONT'D)
Achtung! Fehlt Ihr was?

Ada shrinks away, her whole body shakes, her eyes full of doubt. The bus driver lets go of her.

Ada totters off, pulling her case behind her. She's a shrunken figure swamped by the modern buildings and office blocks surrounding her. A bus roars past.

EXT. CENTRAL INNSBRUCK STREET - DAY

Ada wheels her suitcase along a busy pavement.

ADA'S POV

A rushing stream of people pass her by on either side. She is jostled. Someone bumps against her. She loses balance, and sways on her feet.

At a crossroads she is confronted by five equally alien streets, all busy, hostile, yawning up at her.

Ada is drawn to an empty strip of tarmac ahead of her. She walks; horns blare around her.

Ada reaches the safety of the empty tarmac. She stops to rest.

Through the fog of traffic noise the distant horn of a tram comes closer and closer. The sound becomes more and more insistent until it blares out.

Ada covers her ears. She turns to see a large red tram bearing down. The red face of the tram screams at her.

Voices from the crowd shout out.

CROWD

Bewegung! Geh aus dem Weg!

Ada freezes, staring at the tram. Until it comes to a shuddering halt only a few feet away.

A circle of people crowd around Ada. Ada comes to life, grabs her bag and hobbles through the murmuring crowd.

EXT. INNSBRUCK RIVER BANK - DAY

Ada leans over the embankment to stare at the fast flowing river which cuts its way through the snow covered banks.

The winter sun dances across the turquoise water as shards of light reflect back at her.

In the middle of the water a shape appears; it's the translucent shimmer of the face of a spectral girl, YOUNG ADA, (8). Her pale face, blue with cold, floats on the surface of the water. Her eyes lock onto Ada.

Ada starts and shivers.

ADA

I'm cold.

The girl smiles and disappears.

Ada scans the water. Nothing. She hobbles down a set of steps to the icy foreshore.

She looks again. The water is grey and swirling.

Ada slips on the snow and falls. The face of the girl rushes up towards Ada, twisting though the rushing water. The girl's mouth is distorted into a silent scream.

ADA (CONT'D)

No! I'm coming.

Ada rushes forward.

From the embankment a police whistle pierces the air.

A POLICEMAN looks down at the figure of Ada, ankle deep in the icy water.

INT. ZOE'S HOUSE - DAY

Zoe flings clothes into an overnight flight bag and hurriedly zips it up. Michael watches her in the doorway.

MICHAEL

I'll hold the fort here. You don't need to worry. I can stay at home. Work won't mind.

ZOE

I won't be long, promise.

MICHAEL

Sure. You did the right thing, by the way.

ZOE

Doesn't feel like it.

MICHAEL

I mean turning down that job. I was stupid to even say do it. I was just worried about money.

Zoe pauses as she bustles down the stairs.

ZOE

Is everything OK?

MICHAEL

Yes. Sure.

ZOE

With work? They're really OK about you taking time off?

MICHAEL

Yes. No problem at all. In fact it makes things easy for them.

The catch in Michael's voice makes Zoe look at him sharply.

ZOE

What do you mean?

MICHAEL

Hey, nothing. Nothing.

ZOE

No, there's something.

MICHAEL

It's fine.

Zoe walks slowly back up the stairs.

ZOE

What are you not telling me?

Michael stops pretending.

MICHAEL

I've been made redundant. Seems like I rationalised myself out of a job with that report I was doing.

He gives an attempt at a laugh.

ZOE

My God! Why didn't you say?

MICHAEL

You had other things to cope with.

ZOE

Shit. I'm sorry Michael, but it will be OK. You'll get more work.

MICHAEL

I'm a 56 year old unemployed museum curator, hardly head hunter material am I?

Zoe puts an arm round him.

ZOE

We'll sort something out. Promise.

Michael forces a smile.

MICHAEL

Of course. Sorry, sorry. Those extra years have got to count for something, eh? Your mum needs you.

ZOE

We'll be back tomorrow.

Zoe kisses Michael and heads to the front door.

INT. CORRIDOR, PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL, INNSBRUCK - DAY.

Ada sits, coat on, bag next to her. She is by a key code door at the end of a modern, white institutional corridor.

Nurses come and go through the door, business like and efficient.

One nurse stops by Ada and bends to pat her arm. Ada pushes her firmly away. The nurse moves on.

INT. WARD, PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL, INNSBRUCK - DAY

Zoe walks with an AUSTRIAN CONSULTANT, 40s, a calm, efficient woman with easy empathy. She holds Zoe back.

AUSTRIAN CONSULTANT

You know the Alzheimer's journey is like a series of cliff edges. You can spend a long time at the top looking down, then something happens, maybe some trauma, and you fall, hard.

Zoe nods.

The consultant leads her to the corridor and gestures.

At the end of the long white corridor the lonely figure of her mother is hunched over her stick. Ada is swallowed up by her coat, head bowed.

The consultant nods and leaves.

Zoe watches the diminished figure, unnoticed by Ada. She hesitates, shocked by the change in her mother. She swallows a lump in her throat.

Zoe reaches for her battered camera under her coat. Hesitantly she stares through the viewfinder. She composes a shot of Ada, lost and isolated, framed by the institutional corridor.

The camera clicks.

Ada turns her head and stares. After a moment the film of worry lifts from her eyes and she recognises Zoe.

Ada smiles, and feebly lifts her stick. Zoe goes to her mother. They hug and hold one another for a long time.

INT. SMART HOTEL ROOM, INNSBRUCK - DAY

Ada inspects the hotel bed with pleasure. She pokes the plumped up pillows with her stick.

ADA
Proper pillows.

Ada sits on the bed and bounces, gently. Zoe smiles at her.

Ada wanders into the bathroom, opens one of the bottles of complimentary toiletries and sniffs. Zoe watches her.

ZOE
When was the last time we went on holiday together?

A cloud of doubt spreads across Ada.

ADA
I don't think this is a holiday.

ZOE
I don't know what else it is. You still haven't told me why you came here.

Ada creases her forehead.

ADA
I...

Ada trails off. She wanders to the window and looks out at the winter city scape of Innsbruck's picturesque streets, the snow capped mountains beyond. Zoe joins her.

ADA (CONT'D)
It's pretty here. I like the snow.

ZOE
It's like a fairy tale isn't it? Snow White should be running out into the forest away from her wicked step mother.

ADA
In the folk story it was her real mother who tried to kill her.

ZOE
I know. You always told me that.

Ada turns away from the window.

ADA
I'm hungry.

INT. OLD FASHIONED CAFE, INNSBRUCK - DAY

The busy cafe has a decorous hum of diners.

Zoe pours a coffee from a silver coffee pot into a bone china cup. The pot dribbles a black dot onto the starched white table cloth.

With her eyes Ada follows the progress of a trolley loaded with pastries and cakes.

ADA
I would like some cake.

ZOE
(surprised)
Really?

Zoe surreptitiously checks her wallet.

ZOE (CONT'D)
OK. We should treat ourselves.

The trolley arrives, festooned with chocolate torte, profiteroles, apple strudel and every type of fruit tart.

ADA
(pointing to the torte)
I'll have that.

The waitress places a large piece of cake in front of Ada. Ada points at a creamy strawberry tart.

ADA (CONT'D)
And one of those.

ZOE
(smiling)
Why not?

ADA
And an éclair.

ZOE
(worry creeping in)
That's probably enough.

Ada puts her fork into the chocolate torte and takes a large mouthful. She nods with approval as the other cakes are loaded onto the table and looks again at the trolley.

Zoe reaches for her camera to distract Ada.

ZOE (CONT'D)

Smile.

She takes a shot of Ada and the cakes.

The waitress moves on, but Ada loudly calls her back.

ADA

Waitress, stay here please. I haven't finished.

The waitress stops, a little confused. Zoe shakes her head and motions for her to go on.

ADA (CONT'D)

(loudly)

I said stay here please! I need more cake.

Heads turn at the other tables, the cafe customers stare. Zoe smiles, apologetic, as the waitress returns.

ZOE

I'm sorry, she's been ill.

ADA

Give me some apple strudel and the fruit cake.

Ada reaches for another éclair and adds that to the crowded table.

ZOE

That's enough now Mum.

Zoe gestures the waitress away. Ada calls after her.

ADA

And a hot chocolate with cream.

Zoe sees a MIDDLE AGED COUPLE on the table next to them smirk at one another. She flushes and turns her head away.

Ada tucks into her cakes. She eats loudly, slurping the cream. She stuffs in large mouthfuls. A dribble of cream runs down her chin.

Ada burps, loudly. Zoe winces, but smiles at Ada.

ZOE

I'm glad you've got your appetite back.

ADA

I need to build up my strength.

ZOE

Yes. For what?

Ada greedily spoons a large piece of strudel into her mouth.

ADA
I know it won't be easy.

ZOE
No.

Ada pushes some cake towards Zoe.

ADA
I'm glad you're here. I need your help.

ZOE
I couldn't leave you here could I?
And we'll be back in London before
you know it.

Ada puts down her spoon.

ADA
No. I'm not going to London.

ZOE
Of course we are. Where else?

Ada rummages in her handbag and pulls out the crumpled newspaper article. She shows it to Zoe.

ADA
There. That's what I want.

Zoe looks at the article and shoves it back at Ada, shocked.

ZOE
For goodness sake Mum! And I
thought this was some weird holiday
you were after.

ADA
I keep forgetting where I'm going.
I need you to keep me on track.

ZOE
No. I'm not taking you to some
Swiss clinic to kill yourself.

ADA
Why would you do that, when it's in
Austria anyway?

ZOE
Well I'm not taking you to Austria
to do it either. Except that's
where we are so...

Ada stuffs an oversized piece of chocolate torte into her mouth.

ADA
I want you to help me.

ZOE
I will, by bringing you home.

The women confront one another silently.

Ada punches her spoon into her chocolate torte, it spatters everywhere.

ADA
No.

Ada has the face of a grubby toddler, smeared with chocolate.

ADA (CONT'D)
You can't make me do anything.

ZOE
Neither can you.

ADA
Then I'll do it on my own.

Ada shovels in another spoonful of chocolate torte.

Zoe lifts her camera and takes a shot of Ada's belligerent, chocolate smeared face.

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM, INNSBRUCK - NIGHT

Zoe sits in front of her lap top. Ada lies sleeping in the bed.

Zoe toggles through the images she has taken of Ada. She lingers over the picture of her mother in the psychiatric hospital - lost and lonely.

There's a rustle behind her. Zoe turns to see Ada sitting on the edge of the bed in her nightdress.

Ada pulls out her suitcase and gets up, stuffing her feet into her slippers.

ZOE
Mum? What are you doing?

ADA
I need to get there.

Ada finds her coat and puts it on over her nightdress, she picks up her suitcase.

Zoe gently takes Ada by the arm.

ZOE
It's night time now. It's not the
time to go travelling.

Ada pushes past her and heads for the door, pulling her
suitcase behind.

ADA
I have to go. You can't stop me.

Zoe blocks her way.

ZOE
Everywhere's shut. It's cold out
there.

Zoe leads her back to bed.

ZOE (CONT'D)
Let's wait till morning. You need
sleep. It's a long journey.

Ada nods her head and allows Zoe to put her back into bed.

She lies staring at the room.

ADA
I think I'm lost.

ZOE
I know.

Zoe takes her hand.

EXT. INNSBRUCK AIRPORT - DAY.

Zoe helps Ada out of a taxi. They stand in front of the
arrivals hall with their bags.

Ada looks up at the entrance, then sits down abruptly on her
suitcase.

ADA
If I go back I'll forget why I
came.

ZOE
Mum, I need to get home.

ADA
Go then.

ZOE
I can't leave you.

ADA

Yes you can. If you won't help me.

ZOE

I am not letting you kill yourself.

ADA

It's my life.

ZOE

And there's still so much of it you can enjoy.

ADA

Oh for God's sake! Do you really believe that? Each morning I wake up wondering which part of me will disappear.

ZOE

I know it's hard.

ADA

If you did you would let me go.

ZOE

I can't take you to kill yourself. They've arrested people for doing that.

ADA

Don't be a coward.

ZOE

I'm not.

ADA

You've never stuck your neck out. Nothing's changed. You could have been anything, but you never had the nerve.

ZOE

Shut up.

Zoe angrily yanks Ada up by her arms and pushes her towards the airport.

ZOE (CONT'D)

You're coming with me.

ADA

(shouting)

Let me go! Tell her to stop! Stop touching me.

Ada pulls away from Zoe. A group of anxious passengers stop and stare. Zoe grabs Ada's arm and propels her towards the arrivals hall.

ADA (CONT'D)
 (screaming)
 You can't make me do this. I won't
 go. I won't go!

Ada struggles. The crowd gets bigger, a POLICEMAN heads towards them. Zoe lets go of Ada. She holds up her hands in surrender.

ZOE
 Alright, alright.

POLICEMAN
 Alles in ordenung?

ZOE
 Yes, yes, everything's fine. She's
 frightened of flying, that's all.

The Policeman watches carefully as Zoe gathers the bags.

ZOE (CONT'D)
 So I think we'll try driving
 instead. Won't we mum?

Ada watches Zoe as she wheels her suitcase away then slowly follows.

EXT. RENTAL CAR PARK - DAY.

Zoe flings the bags into the boot of the car. She opens a car door and gestures to Ada.

ADA
 Does this mean you'll take me
 there?

ZOE
 Funnily enough you've really won me
 over. No.

Ada clings onto her bag when Zoe tries to take it.

ADA
 Don't make me go on my own.

ZOE
 Well this trip has proved you can't

Ada places her veined hand over Zoe's.

ADA
 So, please.

Zoe looks down at Ada's hand. She gives out a long sigh.

ZOE

Why don't we talk about this on the way back? Calmly. And then once we're home if you really still want to then we can plan a - a trip to Switzerland properly.

ADA

(puzzled)
Switzerland?

ZOE

That's where your dying place is.

ADA

But it's in Austria, in the mountains. You mustn't get confused.

ZOE

OK, So we can plan a trip there. Maybe. We'll see.

Zoe ushers Ada towards the car. Ada resists and turns to face Zoe.

ADA

Can I trust you?

ZOE

Of course. I'm here for you.

Ada shakes her head, doubtful.

ADA

Yes. That's what your father used to say.

Ada stiffly bends herself into the passenger seat and shuts the door.

INT. ZOE'S HIRE CAR - DAY

Zoe drives fast. Ada is next to her as a blur of motorway signs flash past.

Zoe fiddles with the radio and finds a station playing 1980s rock. She turns it up.

Ada covers her ears. Zoe, sighs and flicks the station onto a German talk radio.

ADA'S POV

The foreign names loom down at her. A lorry's horn blares as it passes. The German voice on the radio merges with the traffic into a wall of sound in her head. Ada covers her ears and cowers in her seat.

ADA

It's too loud. Too many cars.

Another roar of a lorry in her ears. The cars on the opposite carriageway rush towards her.

INT. ZOE'S HIRE CAR - DAY

Zoe looks over at Ada, her arms up, shielding her face.

ZOE

Shall we stop?

ADA

I don't like this road. We should be in the mountains.

ZOE

It'll take forever if we come off the motorway.

Ada stares at the snow capped mountains on the horizon. The snow glints in the sun. A white cloud hovers by the peaks.

ADA

I need to go there.

ZOE

It's not really on the way home...

Zoe stops herself before finishing the word home.

ADA

But we're going to the place in the mountains aren't we? You promised..

ZOE

No, I

Another car whizzes past and Ada flinches and fumbles with the car door and opens it.

ADA'S POV

The tarmac screams past her, cold and black. The sound of the wind roars in her air. A blast of air is hurled in her face.

Ada leans towards the racing tarmac.

INT. ZOE'S HIRE CAR - DAY

Ada tilts precariously out of the open door. Zoe brakes hard.

ZOE
For God's sake!

Zoe swerves the car into the hard shoulder.

ZOE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Right, we'll go via the mountains.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - NIGHT.

The car crawls along a mountain road, the snow lies thick on the ground.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Zoe cranes forward to see through the darkness. She checks the GPS on her phone, brow wrinkled.

The lights of a village are ahead. Next to her, Ada stares out, eager faced.

Zoe drives the car into a picturesque village and pulls up outside a small hotel.

INT. ZOE'S HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT.

Ada slowly unpacks her suitcase. Inside are a few bare essentials. She places each item carefully on the bed, inspecting them as if for the first time.

She takes her wash bag into the bathroom. She looks at her toothbrush and the toothpaste. She discards the brush and squirts toothpaste directly into her mouth, grimacing at the taste. She spits and shuffles out of the bathroom.

Zoe is on her phone. She watches as Ada settles into an adjoining bedroom and shuts the door.

ZOE
Hiya love. You OK?

INT. ZOE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Owen stands in the hallway.

OWEN
Yeah.

INTER-CUT PHONE CONVERSATION.

ZOE
What's been going on? Have you eaten?

OWEN
Yeah.

ZOE
Homework?

OWEN
Yeah, yeah.

ZOE
You've got to keep on top of it. The exams will be here before you know it.

OWEN
Thanks mum. Totally motivated now.

Michael pops out of his study and gestures at Owen for the phone.

MICHAEL
Hi love. How long before you're home?

ZOE
So I'm driving.

MICHAEL
What?

ZOE
Mum won't fly, she won't go on the motorway and insists we drive through the mountains. Apart from that it's going great.

MICHAEL
Christ! Can we afford a grand tour of the Alps?

ZOE
I know, I'm working on it. You OK?

Michael forces an upbeat tone into his voice.

MICHAEL
Yeah, all good. Nothing to worry about here. You get your Mum sorted.

INT. ZOE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT.

Zoe goes over to her laptop and toggles through the photos of her mother, lingering on a shot of Ada staring at her, hostile, from the cafe in Innsbruck.

INT. ADA'S HOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT.

Ada tosses and turns in her bed. She opens her eyes and looks at the ceiling.

The corners of the room are in deep shadow. As Ada stares the shadow expands across the ceiling. There's the sense of a black mass moving, heaving. Something alive.

The sound of scraping. The wind? But more and bigger. The shadow lurches and morphs into the pulsing dark face of a MAN (30s). His lips curl in an angry snarl. The face twists, the body rises up and his fist flies towards Ada's face.

INT. ZOE'S HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT.

A sudden YOWL of terror and pain makes Zoe sit bolt upright. It comes from Ada's bedroom. It is animal like in its intensity.

Zoe rushes toward the door.

INT. ADA'S HOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT.

Ada sits, hunched and wailing, in her bed. Zoe flies over and puts her arms around her.

ADA
(sobbing)
Something, somebody in here. He was hitting me.

ZOE
Ssh. Who? Nothing's here. It was a bad dream that's all.

Ada trembles as she clings on to Zoe's hand.

ADA
He was here with his fists.

ZOE
Who?

Ada focuses in on Zoe. Recognition lights up her face.

ADA
Zoe. You're here?

ZOE
You've had a bad dream. You saw
somebody?

Ada nods her head.

ZOE (CONT'D)
Who did you think was here?

Ada shakes her head.

ADA
I can't say.

ZOE
Try to sleep.

Zoe settles Ada back in bed. Ada grips her hand.

ADA
I'm scared.

ZOE
I'll stay.

Ada pushes herself back up.

ADA
I don't want it. Please, you must
promise.

ZOE
What?

ADA
You will help me.

Zoe shakes her head. Ada grips her hand even tighter.

ADA (CONT'D)
Please.

Ada sinks back down onto the bed.

Zoe smooths back Ada's hair and lies next to her. She wraps her body around the trembling Ada, just as she would a child.

Zoe watches her mother drift into sleep. A fragile, small figure, curled in the bed.

INT. ZOE'S HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT.

Zoe picks up her camera and goes to Ada's bedroom.

She takes a shot of Ada, diminished, sleeping like a baby.

Zoe returns to her laptop. She flicks back through the same images of Ada. Ada angry at her kitchen table, Ada lost and alone in the Psychiatric Hospital, Ada greedily eating her cakes.

Zoe types a message above the pictures. "Something I'm working on - my mother's suicide mission. Interested?"

She hesitates; her cursor hovers over the send button. Then she clicks.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROADS, AUSTRIA - DAY

The snowy mountains rise up ahead of them. Ada rolls down her window and sticks her head out, like a dog enjoying the wind.

From Ada's point of view she is dazzled by the white glare of the snow on the peaks. The snow glitters in the sunlight. Ada stares into the flashing whiteness.

A cable car inches its way up the mountain ahead.

INT. HIRE CAR - DAY

Ada draws her head in.

ADA
I need to stop.

ZOE
Shall we wait until the next
village?

Ada shifts, agitated. It looks like she needs the toilet.

ADA
I can't.

Zoe sighs and pulls in to the car park of the cable car.

EXT. CABLE-CAR CAR PARK - DAY

Zoe and Ada get out of the car. Ada shuffles off towards the cable car buildings. Zoe's phone rings.

ZOE
Melissa. Hi!

Zoe turns away, Ada continues to shuffle towards the cable car.

ZOE (CONT'D)
I'm so sorry I couldn't do....

MELISSA (V.O.)
 (interrupting)
 It's fine. Your photos told me
 everything.

Zoe takes a breath. This conversation is going better than she hoped.

INT. MAGAZINE NEWSROOM - DAY

Melissa walks towards her desk, coat on, just arriving.

She sorts through a pile of post as she talks.

MELISSA
 Where are you now?

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

Zoe paces away from the cable car building.

ZOE
 The Alps. My mother wants me to
 take her to an assisted suicide
 clinic in Switzerland.

MELISSA
 My God. Amazing.

ZOE
 She's got Alzheimer's.

MELISSA
 Gutting. You poor thing. Listen, I
 love what you've sent me. It's so
 brave and honest.

ZOE
 I mean I don't know what's going to
 happen. I don't want her to do it.

MELISSA
 I know, hon. It must be horrible
 for you. But you're documenting
 it, right?

Zoe gnaws at a nail. She looks around and sees Ada in the distance by the cable car station.

ZOE
 Iyes.

MELISSA
 It could make an amazing feature
 spread. Will you be documenting it
 to the end? I mean I don't want to
 intrude on what's going on.

(MORE)

MELISSA (CONT'D)

This is up to you, but we could use this material.

Zoe takes a deep breath.

ZOE

I mean obviously only if that's what she wants, but yes, great.

MELISSA

Well done. Keep me posted hon.

The phone clicks off.

EXT. CABLE-CAR CAR PARK - DAY

Zoe wipes the sweat from her hand as she puts her phone away. She looks around for Ada, but can't see her.

ZOE

Mum?

Zoe runs towards the cable car entrance.

ZOE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Mum?

Zoe looks up and sees her mother's face in the window of a fast disappearing cable car, high above her head.

INT. CABLE CAR - DAY

Ada stands squashed against the window of the cable car surrounded by SKIERS. She is oddly out of place in her wool "Sunday best coat" and trouser suit. The only person not in full ski gear, with skis and goggles.

ADA'S POV

The mountains shimmer beneath her. As the cable car climbs she sees the wispy white cloud twist in the valley below.

The snow scuds in the wind across the mountains. The sheets of white glint at her, magical and beautiful.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TOP - DAY

Zoe slips and slides in her city shoes as she pushes her way frantically through a crowd of skiers, all strapping themselves into their skis, putting on their goggles.

Zoe turns in circles, looking, panic rising.

There at the top of a run she sees Ada lying down in the snow, pushing her arms and legs backwards and forwards.

The skiers crunch past, giving her a wide berth until A GROUP OF YOUNG CHILDREN stop. They laugh as they watch Ada.

A CHILD lies down in the snow next to Ada and does the same, making a snow angel.

Zoe cautiously pulls out her camera and takes a shot of Ada and the laughing child.

Zoe watches for a moment before advancing.

ZOE
Mum, Stop! You'll freeze.

Zoe gathers Ada by the arms and pulls at her to come up.

ADA
No.

Ada pushes her off and scoots away on her bottom, sliding towards the edge of the slope.

The child next to her does the same, scooting perilously close to a fenced off edge. The CHILD'S MOTHER swoops down and picks up the child.

She turns to Ada, angry.

CHILD'S MOTHER
Was machen Sie? You are a stupid woman. You shouldn't be on the mountain.

Ada looks at the woman bewildered. Zoe hurriedly pulls her away.

EXT. MOUNTAIN VILLAGE - DAY

Ada and Zoe walk through the skiing village. Ada is cold and shivering, her woollen trouser suit is soaking wet. They turn into a clothes shop.

INT. CLOTHES SHOP - DAY

Ada and Zoe browse the racks of clothes. Zoe chooses a sensible blue waterproof jacket and winter trousers. She shows them to Ada, who shakes her head.

Ada picks out a lurid purple jump suit with a bright turquoise pattern, more teen snow boarder than seventy year old sobriety.

ADA
This.

ZOE
It's lovely, but this might go with
more things.

ADA
I like this.

Ada turns to look at the hats. She laughs as she picks up a large furry pink hat with rabbit ears sticking up.

ZOE
Mum, those are meant for kids. How
about this one? It would go with
the blue coat.

Zoe offers a blue hat and slides it gently on Ada's head. Ada lets out a loud wail. She grabs the hat and throws it on the ground.

ADA
You're hurting me.

Ada pushes away from Zoe, covering her head.

ADA (CONT'D)
(wailing)
Stop it!

An alarmed SHOP ASSISTANT heads towards Zoe.

ZOE
OK. OK. Here.

Zoe thrusts the furry rabbit hat towards Ada.

EXT. MOUNTAIN VILLAGE - DAY

Ada walks slowly through the village resting on her stick, but resplendent in rabbit hat and bright jump suit. Zoe is awkward by her side.

A GIRL passes and smiles. Ada waves back.

Ada stops to rest on a bench in the village square. All the passers by turn their heads as they pass, amused.

Zoe moves herself away from Ada and watches. Ada is childishly regal as she raises her stick to greet the passing pedestrians.

Zoe pulls out her camera and takes a shot of Ada, Queen of nothing.

Snow falls across the square in large flakes.

Zoe helps Ada up and they continue their progress through the village.

The snow falls heavily as they turn into a chalet style, mountain hotel.

INT. MOUNTAIN HOTEL, RECEPTION - DAY

Zoe and Ada stand at the reception desk. Ada stares out the window at the heavily falling snow. The blue skies have gone. The mountains are grey, lost in cloud.

ZOE

The snow's blocked the roads. I'm booking us in for the night.

Zoe looks through her wallet, worried. Ada watches, then pulls out the envelope of remaining cash from her handbag.

She hands the envelope over to Zoe. Zoe in surprise counts through the folds of notes. She nods with relief at Ada and turns to the receptionist.

Ada wanders her way into the hotel lounge.

INT. MOUNTAIN HOTEL, LOUNGE - DAY

A large picture window takes up the back wall of the lounge, the mountains laid out in a startling panorama.

The snow falls, silent and heavy.

Ada shuffles to the window and presses her face against the pane.

ADA'S POV

The Young Ada emerges from out of the cloud. She's grey, cold, wearing 1950s clothes. The girl is a translucent mirage folded into the mist.

The girl sees Ada. She cries out and runs towards the glass, her face creased in frightened tears. She presses her palms against the glass and screams at Ada - yet no sound penetrates the glass.

Ada gives out a little cry. She puts her hand against the girl's.

ADA

She's cold, let her in.

INT. HOTEL LOUNGE - DAY

A HOTEL WORKER passes by. He stops.

Ada stands against the picture window, staring out at an empty landscape, her hand pressed against the glass.

ADA
(talking to herself)
She's only a child. Let her in, let
her in!

The worker smiles, confused, and passes on quickly.

Ada hobbles towards the hotel exit.

EXT. MOUNTAIN HOTEL - DAY

Ada stands with the snow falling around her. She holds out
her hands.

ADA'S POV

The Young Ada hovers in the distance, her face melting into
the falling snow.

Zoe comes to the doorway and watches her mother.

Ada shuffles towards a fir tree and pushes at its branches.
The snow tips and falls. Ada stands under the snow shower,
arms outstretched.

Zoe frames Ada in her camera lens; her childish hat, the snow
falling gently on the shoulders of her garish coat, her hands
held out, pleading. Zoe takes the shot.

Zoe moves towards her mother.

ZOE
What can you see?

Ada turns to Zoe.

ADA
They've left me alone.

ZOE
I'm here.

ADA
Why does he hate me?

ZOE
Who are you talking about? Nobody
hates you.

ADA
I've seen the way he looks at me.

Ada shivers, pulls her coat around her and hobbles back
inside the hotel. Zoe is left in the falling snow.

INT. HOTEL RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Zoe sits opposite Ada who noisily scrapes off the last of a chocolate mousse from her plate.

ZOE
Who was it you saw outside,
earlier?

ADA
I don't know.

Ada stares out of the window worried.

ADA (CONT'D)
Is someone there?

ZOE
You said he? Who was that?

Ada shakes her head.

ZOE (CONT'D)
Was it something to do with Dad?

ADA
Of course not.

ZOE
Only you never talk about him.

ADA
he was brilliant man, he died too--

ZOE
--Died too young. I know and you
were left holding the baby. But I
wish I knew more, while you still
remem... I mean before.... Shit.

ADA
(a flicker of anxiety)
Have you spoken to him?

ZOE
No, No. He's been dead for years.
you know that.

Ada processes the information.

ADA
No point in dragging up the past
then. A waste of everything.

Ada slowly runs her finger across the chocolate on her plate and sucks like a child. She gets up and makes her way out of the restaurant.

INT. ADA AND ZOE'S HOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ada sits on the side of her bed.

Zoe sleeps soundly in the twin bed next to her.

ADA'S POV

Ada itches at her hand. She looks down to see a shadow move across the hand. For a moment the shadow morphs into a swarm of insects crawling over her fingers and under her nails.

Ada whimpers with fear. She itches at the hand desperately.

A sound comes from the dark corners of the room. A whispering and scraping. Something moves in the shadows. A shape by the door. The Man from her nightmare looms into view, face sneering, laughing.

Ada backs her way to the window and pushes it open. The grey light throws away the shadows of the room. The man has gone.

Outside the window the snow covered mountains glint in the half light of dawn.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PATH - NIGHT

Ada wobbles up the narrow, icy path towards a faint lightening of the sky ahead. She slips and slides on the snow. She stops constantly to get her breath, but each time continues on, determined.

INT. ZOE AND ADA'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY.

Zoe opens her eyes and sleepily stares at the empty bed next to her.

She sits up, alarmed. The curtains flap at the open window.

She shivers and shuts the window. On the mountain path opposite there is a distant figure hunched over a stick. It slips as it weaves a slow zig zag up the path.

Zoe looks closely. The rabbit ears of Ada's hat are unmistakable.

ZOE

Shit.

Zoe hurriedly pulls on some clothes. As she leaves the room her hand hovers over her camera. She scoops it up.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PATH - DAY

Zoe sweats her way up the path, forcing herself to walk faster.

EXT. MOUNTAIN RIDGE - DAY

Ada wobbles up to a crest in the hill. The view is spectacular. The path runs next to a sheer drop down into the valley.

Ada pushes through thick snow to stand right at the edge. She teeters as she looks over. The snow and rocks below yawn up at her.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PATH - DAY

Zoe trudges onwards. Her walk has slowed, she is red faced, her chest heaving.

The crest of the hill is ahead.

As she gets to the top Ada is revealed. She sits below the ridge, perched on a rock.

Zoe edges her way forward, slipping as she goes. She sinks onto the rock next to Ada. Ada inspects Zoe's sweaty face.

ADA

You should exercise more.

ZOE

Thanks. Today was a start.

The pink sunrise warms the sky in front of them. Ada gestures at the shimmering snow in the valley.

ADA

It's beautiful isn't it? The white.

ZOE

You scared me. I thought you were coming to...

Zoe trails off.

ADA

To what?

Zoe shakes her head. Ada turns to her puzzled.

ADA (CONT'D)

Why are we here? Is there something we need to do?

Zoe struggles with her answer.

ZOE

You wanted a trip to the mountains.
I came to help you.

ADA

I like it here. I want to stay. Can
we?

Ada smiles. She is sweet and trusting. Zoe nods. Ada takes
her hand and pats it.

ADA (CONT'D)

Thank you. You're a good girl.

Zoe stares at Ada's clouded eyes. Then smiles.

The valley yawns below them.

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM - DAY.

Zoe quietly hunts through Ada's suitcase, then her handbag.
She finds what she's looking for; the dog-eared newspaper
article.

Zoe folds it and zips it into the back pocket of her handbag,
together with her passport.

Zoe's phone rings.

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

ZOE

Melissa, Hi.

MELISSA

Hi hon. How's it going? Have you
got any more material you can send
through?

ZOE

I....well, a few more shots yes.

MELISSA

Great, I've got my monthly pitch
meeting with the editor so the more
you can send the better. Something
to make the team sit up.

ZOE

Right. I'll have a look through.
Only I don't know how far this will
go now.

MELISSA

Sure - but stick with it. That's
the main thing.

(MORE)

MELISSA (CONT'D)

I know it must be hard, but I'm here if you need to talk. Bye hon.

Melissa clicks off the phone.

Zoe pauses for a moment, then dials. The phone clicks to answer machine.

ZOE

Hi, Michael. Good news. Mum's better, a bit. It's kind of like a weird holiday, so, um, I've decided to stay on a few days, let her relax. Oh and don't worry. Mum's paying.

Zoe puts the phone down.

EXT. PONY CARRIAGE - DAY.

Ada laughs free and uninhibited. Pure joy in her face. She sits next to Zoe, wrapped in a blanket as the pony carriage trots through a picture postcard, snowy valley.

Ada sticks out her hand to catch the snowflakes which fall around her. She shows the melting snow to Zoe. Zoe lifts her camera and takes a shot of Ada, preoccupied and childish, licking the snow from her hand.

INT. MOUNTAIN RESTAURANT - DAY.

Ada dribbles a large stringy lump of cheese into her mouth from a fondu. Zoe watches as Ada sucks at the cheese.

EXT. TELECABIN STATION - DAY

Zoe leads Ada into a telecabin. Ada shuffles on, frail. She stares out of the window as the cabin climbs high. A smile lights up her face.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TOP - DAY

Zoe and Ada stand together on a high view point looking out at the mountains laid out below them. Ada pulls her furry rabbit hat down over her head. She's happy.

Zoe lifts her camera and takes a shot. Ada frowns.

ADA

Isn't it time you stopped?

ZOE

Don't you like it?

ADA

You're always taking photos.

ZOE

I'm catching moments. Things which won't come back. It's what I do.

ADA

You mean it's your job?

ZOE

Yes.

ADA

Funny job.

Ada turns back to look at the mountains.

INT. MOUNTAIN HOTEL - NIGHT

Ada dozes by the fire. Zoe is on her phone.

ZOE

Hello sweetheart. How are you?

INT. ZOE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sophia, dressed to go out, raids the fridge and drinks from a carton of juice.

SOPHIA

Fine. How's Granny? Are you two friends yet?

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

ZOE

Yes, of course, we were always... I'm missing you all loads.

SOPHIA

Why don't you come home then?

ZOE

I am, soon. Promise. One more day and that's it. Fancy a girly day at Westfield when I get back?

SOPHIA

Yeah, OK, if you like, only I've got youth club now, so got to go.

ZOE

I don't want you walking back on your own.

SOPHIA
Don't fuss. I'll be OK.

ZOE
Is Owen there?

SOPHIA
He's out. I'm kinda late, so bye.

The phone clicks off. Zoe hears the line go, but still talks into the phone.

ZOE
Love you.

Zoe puts the phone away with a sigh.

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Ada shuffles along the corridor. She tries the handle of every room she passes. They are all locked. She is increasingly confused and frustrated.

Zoe arrives in the corridor as Ada shakes a door in anger.

ADA
They're locking me out.

ZOE
Not there Mum.

Zoe leads her towards another door. She takes the key card from Ada's hand and shows her how to open the door.

ZOE (CONT'D)
Like this see. Room 203. Remember?

Ada shuffles inside, she's still angry.

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ada looks through her handbag. She takes things out and puts them on the bed. She looks through all her bits of folded up paper, receipts, money, travel documents. She stacks them carefully.

ZOE
Did you enjoy today?

ADA
Yes. It was nice. What did we do?

ZOE
A trip in a cable car, remem...

Zoe cuts herself off. Of course she doesn't remember.

Ada turns back to her pieces of paper. She smooths them down again and again.

ADA
I'm sure I had more. There's
things missing.

Zoe gently takes the papers away and puts them back in Ada's bag.

She leads Ada to the bathroom.

ZOE
Don't worry about that. It's late
now, time for bed.

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ada lies asleep in bed.

Zoe toggles through the images of Ada she's shot that day. Ada stares at her from the top of the mountain, she looks straight down the lens, questioning.

Zoe's hand overs over the delete file button. She pauses, then instead presses save.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - DAY.

An aerial view of the mountains spread below. The sky is a piercing blue.

The sound of the burner of a hot air balloon firing up.

EXT. HOT AIR BALLOON - DAY

Ada holds her hand out into the blue sky as she watches the patchwork of mountains, paths, ski lifts and frozen rivers laid out below.

She turns her face into the sun. Happy. Free.

Zoe watches her with a smile and takes a photograph.

ZOE
I wanted us to do something special
on our last day.

Ada's face falls.

ADA
Is it over?

ZOE
We have to get you home.

Ada looks at her, confusion in her eyes.

ADA
I don't want to go. I like being here.

ZOE
I know, but your home's in London.

ADA
I have a daughter who lives in London.

Zoe tries to hold her smile, keep her tone light.

ZOE
But you know I'm...

ADA
(interrupting)
She's younger than you though.

Zoe takes stock. She takes Ada's hand and holds it tight, Ada pats her, but her eyes show no recognition of Zoe.

ZOE
She'll be there to look after you.

ADA
That's not what I want.

ZOE
Why?

ADA
We don't get on.

ZOE
What?

ADA
We don't see eye to eye.

Zoe pulls her hand away. Her disappointment mounting.

ZOE
What's she like, your daughter?

ADA
Arty farty, she never has a penny to her name. It makes things difficult.

ZOE
That's families for you I guess.

ADA
We paper over the cracks.

ZOE

But underneath there must be a connection.

ADA

I wouldn't want anything bad to happen to her, I suppose.

ZOE

And how does your daughter feel?

ADA

The same. She never sees me. Too many arguments I suppose.

Zoe turns away so Ada can't see her face.

ZOE

I'm sure she still cares for you. She visits doesn't she?

ADA

I can't remember.

ZOE

I expect she sees you more often than you think.

The balloon gently hisses as it climbs over the mountains.

ADA

I didn't want to have her, that's the truth of it. It was too difficult.

A sharp intake of breath from Zoe. She turns back to look at Ada. She's wounded now.

Ada misinterprets the shock in her face.

ADA (CONT'D)

You mustn't be shocked. You couldn't run to the doctors and get rid of a baby back then. You had to go through with it. Do you have children?

Zoe stares out for a long time as the balloon serenely sails over the mountains. She swallows back her emotions.

ADA (CONT'D)

Was that the wrong thing to ask? I didn't mean to upset you.

ZOE

No, no it's OK. I do have kids, Yes, two.

ADA

Well, you understand then don't you? You do everything for them and they grow up and never want to see you again.

ZOE

That's not always true.

The two women stand side by side watching the mountains below them. The hiss of the balloon the only sound.

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT.

Ada walks into the bedroom. Zoe has Ada's suitcase on the bed and is folding Ada's clothes into it.

Ada pushes Zoe away from the bag.

ADA

What are you doing touching my things?

ZOE

We have to go home.

Ada prods Zoe again with her stick.

ADA

Get away..poking and prying.

Ada stands protectively in front of her belongings. Zoe holds up her hands and retreats.

ZOE

I was packing, that's all. I'll do my bag shall I?

Ada watches Zoe as she pulls out her suitcase.

ADA

But we haven't finished yet.

ZOE

What?

Ada shakes her head. She strikes the ground in frustration with her stick.

ADA

It's important I know.

Zoe turns to her packing. Ada watches.

Zoe is busy, her back sharply in focus, but whenever her face turns towards Ada it is a featureless blur. Alien.

ADA (CONT'D)

Am I paying you?

ZOE

I'm Zoe, your daughter. I've come to take you home.

ADA

No. Zoe's in London.

Zoe pulls a photo from the bottom of her case.

ZOE

Here. Look at this.

The photograph flashes at Ada, something familiar. Ada stares hard. It is of herself and Zoe as a teenager.

There is a sound of laughter; her voice and Zoe's are mingled.

ZOE (V.O.)

(Distant)

Ready? Smile, five, four...

EXT. WINDSWEPT ENGLISH BEACH - DAY

A younger Ada (40s) poses on the beach, Zoe (14) rushes back to stand with her and they smile at a camera on a self timer.

YOUNGER ZOE

Three, Two, One...

The camera flashes and they both laugh.

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT.

Ada snatches at the photograph.

ADA

Give me that. What are you doing with my picture?

Zoe points at Ada in the photograph.

ZOE

Who is this?

ADA

Me.

ZOE

And?

ADA

My daughter.

Zoe points to herself in the picture.

ZOE
That person is me.

Ada looks at Zoe for a long, long time.

ADA'S POV

Zoe's face comes in and out of focus. She puts up her hand to touch Zoe's hair.

A half formed memory.

EXT. ENGLISH BEACH - DAY

The fourteen year old Zoe smiles at Ada and lifts her camera to take a photo. There's the whirr of the shutter and a camera flash.

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ada inspects the lines and signs of age on Zoe's face.

ADA
What's happened to you?

Zoe laughs.

ZOE
Thirty years.

ADA
Don't lie. Zoe's in London.

Ada pushes past Zoe, tipping up the case.

ADA (CONT'D)
What else have you stolen?

Ada rummages through Zoe's case and bag, scattering the contents everywhere. She pulls out a pile of documents, Zoe's passport and the dog-eared newspaper cutting.

Ada looks at the passport, picks it up and inspects it.

ADA (CONT'D)
But this is Zoe's.

ZOE
Yes. It's mine. I'm Zoe.

Zoe takes the passport and holds it next to her face.

ZOE (CONT'D)
Mum?

Ada stares at Zoe, her face pulls into focus. Ada sags under the recognition.

ADA
Is it you?

Ada sits on the bed, weariness pushing her down.

ZOE
It's OK.

ADA
No. It's not. When I wake up tomorrow will I know you?

Zoe sits next to her.

ZOE
I don't know.

ADA
Perhaps I will, but there'll be a time when I won't, ever. I should have died years ago.

Ada, agitated, pulls her handbag towards her and rummages through it.

ADA (CONT'D)
There's something I need in here. I have to find it.

ZOE
What?

ADA
A letter, I think. It's important. It tells me where to go.

Zoe watches Ada cast about among her things.

ADA (CONT'D)
Help me.

Zoe picks up the dog-eared newspaper article lying on the bed. She fingers it carefully. After a long pause she gives it to Ada.

ZOE
Is it this?

Ada reads the article. A memory sinks back in. She looks at Zoe.

ADA
And will you take me?

Zoe sits down next to Ada and puts an arm round her.

ZOE
Is that what you want?

ADA
Yes.

Zoe slowly nods her agreement.

EXT. MOUNTAIN HOTEL - NIGHT

Zoe shivers in the cold. She has the phone glued to her ear. It rings for a long time.

Zoe stares through the window at a family inside the hotel, laughing and eating together.

Finally an answer

ZOE
Michael?

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Michael wipes down all the surfaces, too many times, the phone tucked under his chin.

MICHAEL
So how's your holiday?

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

ZOE
It's not a holiday. Not any more.
Are you OK?

Michael scratches at a stubborn mark with his cloth.

MICHAEL
(false positive)
Cracking on. We're missing you.
What's up?

Zoe stares in again at the family group eating in the restaurant. The mother of the family stares back at her.

ZOE
I can't come home. Not yet. I've
promised my Mum something.

MICHAEL
Surely you've visited every village
in the Tyrol by now.

ZOE
She wants me to take her to
Dignitas.

MICHAEL
For God's sake!

ZOE
Don't be cross.

MICHAEL
You can't.

ZOE
She wants to die.

MICHAEL
She can't make that decision, she's
too far gone.

ZOE
I think she can. It's why she came
here.

MICHAEL
She's mad. If you do this you're
killing her. Do you understand?

ZOE
I made a promise to my mother.
That's all.

Zoe clicks the phone off.

EXT. MOUNTAIN HOTEL - DAY.

Zoe packs the suitcases into the boot of the car. The
mountains around her are covered in grey, heavy cloud.

Zoe helps Ada slowly lower herself into the car.

They drive off.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - DAY.

Zoe drives in silence. Ada is next to her. The mood is
heavy.

Zoe looks across at her mother.

ZOE
Tell me. Do you know where we're
going?

Ada nods.

ADA
To Switzerland.

ZOE
And why are we going?

ADA
So I can die.

The two women stare ahead as the grey clouds fill the valley.

EXT. MOUNTAIN VALLEY.

The hire car disappears into the mist as it snakes its way along the mountain road.

EXT. ASSISTED SUICIDE APARTMENT, ZURICH - DAY

The car stops outside an anonymous low rise set of modern buildings.

Zoe helps her mother out of the car.

Zoe's phone rings. She sees Melissa's name flash up. She hesitates for a moment then presses the end button.

INT. ASSISTED SUICIDE APARTMENT, ZURICH - DAY.

Ada and Zoe are shown around a spartan, functional flat by an ASSISTANT (40), calm and business like, a cross between a saleswoman and a doctor.

She points to a comfy sofa in front of a small table.

ASSISTANT
This is where the client will normally sit. Family can be with them all the way until the end. You will be given as much time as you need before the act.

Ada and Zoe sit together. The assistant places a small glass on the table with a jug of water.

ASSISTANT (CONT'D)
Are you able to swallow?

Ada nods.

ASSISTANT (CONT'D)
Here we put the pills that you take with water. It is important that you swallow these yourself and no-one helps you.

Ada and Zoe nod their understanding. Ada picks up the jug and pours herself a glass of water.

Zoe frames a shot of the glass of water with her camera.

ASSISTANT (CONT'D)

The procedure is very quick.
Within seconds you will fall
unconscious, as if in sleep, and
then your heart will stop. No
pain, no distress.

Ada nods calmly.

ASSISTANT (CONT'D)

So is this what you were expecting?

Ada nods.

ZOE

Are you sure?

ASSISTANT

To continue you must have a
psychiatric evaluation to show you
are of sound mind. Do you want me
to arrange this?

Ada nods.

INT. WAITING ROOM, ASSISTED SUICIDE CENTRE - DAY

Ada and Zoe sit in the featureless room. Ada scribbles feverishly on a wad of paper. Her hand spiders across the page, black ink filling the pages.

Zoe looks askance.

ADA

If I forget, I can show them this.

Zoe looks at the dense scrawl of writing, half of it illegible.

ZOE

No need to write too much. It will
be hard to remember.

The door opens and a male SWISS PSYCHIATRIST, (35), a well groomed European intellectual, beckons Ada into the consulting room.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST

Mrs Hamilton?

Ada rises, her notes falling to the ground. Zoe helps her reassemble the muddle of notes.

Zoe takes Ada's arm. The psychiatrist holds up a warning hand to her.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST (CONT'D)

I must see your mother on her own.
Her answers cannot be influenced in
any way.

Ada looks towards Zoe, anxious. Zoe smiles at her encouragingly as the consulting room door shuts.

INT. ASSISTED SUICIDE CENTRE, PSYCHIATRIST'S CONSULTING ROOM - DAY

Ada sits opposite the psychiatrist. His room is bare, with a few pieces of modern designer furniture and abstract art on the wall.

In her hand Ada fingers the battered newspaper article, and her scrawled notes.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST

You are here because you have an important decision to make.

ADA

Yes. I've made it.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST

Tell me about that.

ADA

I want to die, now.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST

To help you do that, I need to know why.

Ada glances down at her notes. She reads out from them.

ADA

I'm losing my mind and I want it to stop.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST

But are you certain of this? Are there not still things you enjoy in life despite the Alzheimers'?

ADA

I want to go before it is too late.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST

Is there nothing to live for?

ADA

I don't think so.

Ada glances at her notes again.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST

Here, give me your notes. There is no need to worry.

Ada reluctantly hands over her notes.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST (CONT'D)

We will first check your memory. I want to make sure your mind is working well, because otherwise we cannot let you carry on with the procedure.

He passes over a pen and paper.

ADA

I know I'm losing it. That's why I'm here, before it's too late.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST

The test is nothing to worry about. A few simple questions first.

Ada nods, nervous.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST (CONT'D)

What year are we?

ADA

2019.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST

And today's date?

ADA

10th of March.

Ada smiles, victorious. Her brain is working. The psychiatrist nods and writes down her answers.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST

Do you know the prime minister of Britain?

ADA

Not personally.

The psychiatrist arches an eyebrow.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST

Can you tell me the person's name?

ADA

It's that woman, not Mrs T, the other one. I've done all this before, you know.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST
Of course. Now please can you draw
a clock face on your pad?

Ada nods and shakily draws out a clock and numbers it, but every number is random, no order.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST (CONT'D)
And show me ten to three on the
clock drawing.

Ada obediently bends to draw. She hesitates over where to draw the hands, in the end she inks in a random time.

The psychiatrist smiles at her.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST (CONT'D)
Very good. Now I want you to
remember three words. Cow,
Mountain and boat.

ADA
Cow, Mountain and boat.

Ada nods and scratches, distracted, at her skin.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST
Tell me about your family.

Ada scratches harder at her arm.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST (CONT'D)
Do you have any children?

Ada nods.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST (CONT'D)
Can you tell me who they are?

Ada stares at the psychiatrist, she searches through the fog in her mind.

ADA
I have a daughter.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST
Is she with you?

ADA
I don't know. Is she? She must be
sick of me by now.

She scratches at her arm again.

Ada looks down and sees a trail of insects, small black, crawling over her arm.

She pulls away with a whimper. The room darkens in front of her eyes. Shifting shadows move across the room. The sound of a woman crying gets louder and louder, a fist hurtles towards Ada's face. Ada cries out.

The psychiatrist watches as Ada hunches into herself.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST

Ada?

Ada doesn't answer.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST (CONT'D)

Ada? Can you hear me?

Ada slowly brings her focus back on to the psychiatrist. Fear is replaced by confusion in her eyes.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST (CONT'D)

Can you tell me why you have come to Switzerland?

ADA

I need the mountains, to make me better.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST

How?

ADA

I need the light, to take the shadows away.

The psychiatrist nods and closes his notebook. He leans forward and touches Ada's arm.

SWISS PSYCHIATRIST

Ada, listen to me. It's time for you to go home. We can't help you at this clinic. Your doctors in England will help you now.

Ada looks at him and nods bleakly. The psychiatrist helps her up and shuffles her to the door.

INT. HIRE CAR - DAY

Zoe drives fast down the motorway. She stares straight ahead. The motorway sign reads "France" as it flashes past.

Ada is in the passenger seat. She moans softly to herself and rocks backwards and forwards. Zoe looks at her sideways.

ZOE

It's alright Mum. We'll be home by tonight.

ADA
They didn't like me.

ZOE
There's nothing to worry about. We need to get you home and comfy.

ADA
When am I taking the pills?

ZOE
There's been a delay. We'll sort something out I promise.

Ada stares out at the squat hills ahead.

ADA
Where are the mountains?

ZOE
We're going home. We've had to say goodbye to the mountains.

Ada rolls her head against the window and stares out at the dull sweep of grey hills.

As Ada presses her face against the glass she sees the Young Ada, just as she saw her up in the mountain hotel. She is walking out of the mist. Ada whispers.

ADA
I didn't mean to be bad.

The girl holds out her hands towards Ada, pleading.

ADA (CONT'D)
No. It's too cold.

The car sweeps past, but the girl appears again a shadowy figure in the mist ahead. Ada cries out.

ADA (CONT'D)
It's cruel. How can he?

Zoe winces at Ada's anguished distress. She puts out her hand to Ada. Ada seizes it and squeezes Zoe's hand so hard she cries out in pain.

INT. MOTORWAY SERVICE STATION, FRANCE - DAY.

Zoe guides Ada through the shopping aisles and fast food outlets.

Ada shields her eyes from the harsh strip light. She shuffles, holding Zoe's hand.

The loud laugh of a GROUP OF TEENAGERS makes Ada start.

Zoe guides Ada to a coffee machine.

ZOE

Stay close.

As Zoe searches in her bag for coins Ada drifts away into the crowd.

Zoe's phone rings. It's Melissa. She grimaces and lets the phone ring out.

Zoe looks round for Ada.

Ada stands stock still in the middle of a crowded shopping aisle as the people push past her on either side. She is a lost, frail figure in the crush.

Ada turns back and stares directly at Zoe. There is no hint of recognition in her eyes.

From ADA'S POV she is surrounded by a sea of unfriendly faces. Each person stares at her, hard and hostile.

Zoe, watches Ada and reaches for her camera. She frames Ada, alone and ignored by the world, but she doesn't take the shot.

Zoe lowers her camera and runs towards Ada. She pushes through the crowd.

From Ada'S POV she sees a dark figure, The Man from her dreams, anger blazing in his eyes, pushing his way towards her.

Ada raises her arms and screams.

Ada rushes towards Zoe. She cries out and strikes blindly. Ada's fist lands in Zoe's face.

BLACKOUT

INT. SITTING ROOM 1950'S HOUSE - DAY

A young Ada, wearing 1950s clothes stares up at a suited, dark faced man, her FATHER (40s). She is mutely defiant.

His hand swings onto her face. SLAP. Stinging and loud.

The same single action is repeated again and again. The father's face looms larger and larger.

The hand on the cheek.

The father's eyes blazing.

The red mark branded on her cheek.

EXT. 1950'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The young Ada, shivering in the winter cold, flecks of snow resting on her hair, stares in through the window of the house. She flattens her palm against the pane and bangs.

Inside the lighted room, her Father turns away and walks out.

INT. 1970'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A younger ADA (30s) is backed into a corner. She is hunched with fear.

The face of the Man from her dreams, eyes bright and burning, hurtles into vision. His fist flies towards her.

She screams.

A baby wails in the background.

Bone crunches as the fist impacts on her face.

BLACKOUT

EXT. MOTORWAY SERVICE STATION - DAY

Zoe sits on the benches outside the shop. She wipes at a cut on her face. A purple bruise spreads across her cheek.

Ada watches her, quiet, cautious.

ADA

Let me.

She takes the tissue and gently dabs at the wound.

ADA (CONT'D)

You can't stay with him. Not if he does this.

Zoe holds Ada's hand, stopping her actions. She looks searchingly at her mother.

ZOE

Who do you think hit me?

ADA

You don't have to pretend to me. I understand.

ZOE

Do you think it was Dad?

Ada suddenly flinches as if to protect her from unseen blows.

In ADA'S POV a fist comes swinging towards her, The Man's face, fierce and angry, behind it.

ADA

No! Leave her alone.

Ada shoves her body in front of Zoe. She stumbles, pulling at Zoe.

The two women fall together to the ground.

Zoe lies on her back, her eyes staring up at the sky.

Next to her, Ada is hunched her face covered with her hands. She flinches as if being struck, again and again.

Zoe watches Ada. Then without warning a series of long, hard choking sobs well up from inside Zoe.

Ada turns at the sound and sees the sobbing Zoe. She reaches out and puts her arms around Zoe and pulls her towards her.

The two women cling on to one another as they lie together.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD, THE AUSTRIAN ALPS - DAY

A car winds its way up a mountain road. The peaks of the Alps, snow covered, glisten in the sunlight as they rise up on either side.

INT. HIRE CAR, AUSTRIAN ALPS - DAY

Zoe drives. Her face has the cut bruise on the cheek from where Ada hit her. Ada is next to her.

Ada reaches out and touches Zoe's cheek, gently curious.

Ada looks cautiously at Zoe then reaches out to the radio. She fiddles with the dial. There's the crackle of white noise and foreign voices.

Zoe frowns. Ada hurriedly flicks the radio off.

Zoe reaches for the radio, turns it back on and smoothly turns the dial. A station plays a familiar, up tempo pop song, from the 70s.

Zoe looks at Ada who smiles, nods her head with the beat and sings along. Zoe listens to her mother's cracked voice for a verse. Then smiles and joins in. They sing together.

As the song finishes Zoe puts her hand over mother's.

Ada presses her face against the car window. She cranes her neck to look up at the top peaks.

The white snow glows, luminous, in the bright winter sunlight.

The white mountains slide past her in a glittering kaleidoscope, a mix of luminous sun shafts and snow dazzle.

Ada opens the window and leans her head out. Her hair whips in the wind and she laughs.

EXT. MOUNTAIN HOTEL - DAY

The car draws up outside the same mountain hotel. Zoe helps Ada, frail and stooping, out of the car.

INT. LOUNGE, MOUNTAIN HOTEL - DAY

Ada sits next to the large picture window, her chair pulled up close to the glass.

She stares long and unblinking into the mountains. She watches the clouds scud about the mountain tops. A swirl of snow lifts into a cloud of white dust which scatters along the ice.

Zoe pulls out her camera and frames a shot of Ada. The sound of the camera makes Ada turn and register Zoe.

ADA

He's coming.

ZOE

No. You're safe now.

ADA

He's angry.

ZOE

No.

ADA

He looked at me as he was lying there. He knew I wouldn't save him.

Zoe studies her mother, taking in what she has heard.

ZOE

You could have helped him?

Ada nods.

ADA

I know what I should have done. But I didn't. I couldn't. And now he's come back for me.

Ada looks past Zoe anxiously. She stands up to search around the room.

ADA (CONT'D)

Have you seen my daughter? She's only little. Always running off. I have to keep her close or I'll lose her.

ZOE

She's playing. She'll be alright.

ADA

I did it for her. She never knew. But if you love someone you have to be brave and I loved my little girl very much. More than she ever knew. More than I ever told her.

Zoe sits next to her mother and gently takes her hand. They look out of the window together.

ZOE

I know.

Zoe sits in silence with Ada.

Behind them the hotel staff are busy clearing the breakfast things away.

INT. LOUNGE, MOUNTAIN HOTEL - DUSK.

Outside the picture window the mountain peaks glow in the last rays of sunlight.

Zoe and Ada sit in the same place. The light in the sky fades to an inky black. Gradually the lights in the village shine out, yellow strings of warmth in the night sky.

Ada shuffles to her feet. Helped by Zoe, she slowly makes her way out of the room.

EXT. HOTEL - DUSK

Zoe takes in the evening sunset. Her phone rings. It's Melissa. This time she knows she has to answer.

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

ZOE

Melissa, hi.

MELISSA (O.S.)

Hi Hon, I've been trying you all day. Great news.

(MORE)

MELISSA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

We've got a centre spread in the magazine, with a front page. You've done it!

Zoe's face freezes.

ZOE

That's great.

MELISSA

So we need to plan. When will you be ready to send more? I know this is a difficult time for you. So I'm not going to rush you.

ZOE

That's good. Thanks. I...

Zoe let's the conversation hang as she at the darkening sky.

ZOE (CONT'D)

Delete the images.

MELISSA

Sorry Hun?

ZOE

Delete everything I sent you. I made a mistake.

MELISSA

Zoe, I want you to think about this. It's obv--

Zoe phone clicks off. She puts the phone away and wipes her hand as if it's dirty.

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT.

Ada lies in bed, awake. The room is dark, only a sliver of light comes from behind the drawn curtains at the window. In a twin bed next to her Zoe lies sleeping.

Ada stares up at the ceiling. The dark shadows in the room flicker.

A shape sweeps across the ceiling. Ada shrinks back. The lonely whistle of a mountain wind fills the room. It grows in intensity.

Ada, hair wild, baggy nightdress falling off her thin frame, pulls the duvet tight around her. She looks round, her eyes flicking fast from corner to corner.

She hears whispering. It grows, mixed with jeers and laughter. Ada covers her ears and buries her head.

Gradually the rush of noise subsides. Ada cautiously lifts her head. Silence, apart from the wind at the window.

Then a scraping sound, like the wind pushing branches against the window. Without warning the Man's dark figure looms from the shadows, his face distorted in a snarl.

A fist snakes out. Ada puts up her hands to protect herself. They are covered in a swarming mass of black beetles. Ada cries in alarm.

Ada stumbles to the window. There in the distance a weak light brightens the dark sky, a shadow of pink at the top of the mountains.

Ada puts her hands on the window pane, as if to touch the mountain top. She presses her face against the glass and smiles at the mountains.

A shadow passes across her. The shape of the man behind her is reflected in the glass.

Ada cries out, grabs a dressing gown, stuffs her feet into her slipper boots and escapes.

As the door slams Zoe sits up in bed. She looks across at Ada's empty bed, then goes to the window.

Below her a door opens. Ada shuffles out, leaning heavily on her stick. She's still in her dressing gown and slippers, with only her pink woolly hat with rabbit ears, stuck over her wild hair to ward off the cold night air.

Ada strikes out with her stick, pushing her shuffle to a staggering trot. She heads for the mountain path opposite the hotel which glints white in the moonlight.

Zoe watches the distant figure of Ada, pink hat bobbing, as she works her way up the hill. Finally her determined silhouette disappears amongst the fir trees.

Zoe slowly and deliberately pulls on her clothes. She laces her boots.

Her camera lies on the dressing table. Her eyes rest on it as she grabs her coat.

She steps out of the room.

The door bangs behind her. The camera remains on the dressing table.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PATH - NIGHT.

The snow crunches under Ada's feet. The damp seeps into the fur of the slippers.

The branches of the trees pull at Ada's dressing gown.

Ada slips, but catches herself with her stick. She pauses, panting and weak. Her breath rasps in the cold night air.

Above her a lump of snow falls with a thud from a fir tree. Its branches sway, the shadows scatter across the path.

The moonlight shines bright on a patch of snow ahead, clear of the trees. Crystals of ice glint at her, inviting.

Ada pushes on, slowly, slowly, slipping and sliding with every step, but still she walks.

EXT. LOWER DOWN THE MOUNTAIN PATH - NIGHT

Zoe trudges slowly through the trees. Shafts of moonlight break through the branches.

Zoe follows the shuffling footprints left by Ada. It's a zig zag trail, arching up the path.

Ahead she sees something pink and fluffy lying in the snow. She makes out Ada's rabbit hat. Zoe picks it up.

Through the trees a shape moves. Ada.

Zoe walks on slowly. Tracking Ada with every step.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TOP - NIGHT.

Ada drags herself up a path. She heads towards the ridge of a mountain in front of her.

She wades through the heavy snow, grasping the rocks for balance.

Finally she has the view of the valley. Laid out in front of her are sheets of shimmering snow. Magical, white, gently beckoning in the silver moonlight.

Ada sits, sinking deep into the snow. She rests her hands on the snow next to her.

She smiles at its crisp wetness.

Ada plunges her hands deep into the snow and holds a handful in front of her.

She buries her face in the white crystals. She mounds it in front of her, taking more handfuls, then watches as the snow melts, slowly dripping from her hands.

A small low cloud drifts across the valley. Ada shivers. Her whole body shakes.

From the cloud the Young Ada emerges. She walks towards Ada her arms outstretched.

Ada holds her arms out wide to the girl.

ADA

I'm here.

Ada beckons her down next to her.

ADA (CONT'D)

Come, I will keep you warm.

Ada puts her arms around the girl. She rests her head against Ada.

The girl lies in the snow and Ada lies herself next to her. She shapes her body around the girl protectively, curling foetal like around her.

Ada looks out as the sky lightens above the mountain peaks.

She shuts her eyes.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TOP - DAY

A thin dawn sun breaks through the clouds.

A dusting of snow lies on Ada's pink dressing gown.

Ada and Zoe lie together, Ada's body curled around her daughter's.

Ada's gnarled purple hands are knotted tight around Zoe's hands.

Zoe opens her eyes. She feels Ada's hand. Stiff and cold.

Zoe sits up.

Ada lies still. Zoe gently moves the snow from Ada's hair.

The sun pierces through the clouds and lights up Ada's face. It is stiff and grey, even in the warm sunlight.

Zoe touches Ada's skin. Cold and lifeless. She bends her head to her chest, no heart beating.

Zoe strokes Ada's wild hair back from her face. She lifts Ada's head and lays it gently on the rabbit hat.

The sun lances down, the snow shimmers around them and then sky glints a clear blue.

Zoe takes the dead woman's hand and waits.

FADE TO BLACK.