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Working Title:

Then and Again

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Short: Drama

Script

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Change the angle on son to 15 to 16 years of age

Taking Dad's place

Setting: 1930's small town America architecture. Nothing is initially visible to establish the film's timeframe other than what would *currently* be classified as *Antiques*.

Establishing Shot: Leading to Front of house. All B&W. Switch to color at note.

Series: Hand Cam following. Night. Mother and daughter joined hands. Mother on left with valise in left hand. Through streets of Old Town.

Hand Cam Segments:

1. Long. Across tracks toward depot – stepping carefully up and over tracks.
2. Mid. Through Depot (glimpse of Kingman sign).
3. Full frame behind and following. Up 4th street past courthouse (Brick).
4. Past Old Elks building.
5. Past courthouse.
6. Up Spring past historic homes (Helen), lead to right.

Static shot of front of Court St. – wide as possible.

7. Enter frame.
8. Hunched and to gate.
9. Fumble gate latch.
10. House light on.
11. Porch light on.
12. Up walkway.
13. Harried inside.

14. Porch light out.

CUT to inside. Set in Dining room. Catch ceiling and trim to date the image. Chroma windows with Green on outside. Static Cam. Through with pan left to exit to back. Both women embrace, with child clinging to mother's skirt. They carry a single suitcase and two overcoats – one for child and one for mother. The coats are folded in such a way that there is a yellow emblem stitched on each coat, but its shape is not clearly discernible.

Act I

GRETA

(Break off embrace) Take your coats off. You don't need them here. (She quickly removes and folds coats to obscure emblem. Over her arm.)

MOTHER

I am so frightened, Greta...

Long pauses between lines.

GRETA

There is nothing to be frightened about, I promise. You'll be safe here.

MOTHER

But for how long?

GRETA

How long will you be safe? For as long as it takes...I won't let anything happen to you...I won't.

CHILD

(Looking up)

Or me?

GRETA

(Sad laugh and hand to face)
Or you. Nobody can harm you here.

Try: Looks upward in hope. Try: Holding eyes. Pull apart holding arms. Eye-to-eye.

GRETA

I've made everything ready for you in the basement. It's small I know, but no one will look there – no one knows about it. I'll cover the cellar door with a rug once you're down there...there are no windows.

MOTHER

I'm worried about you: What will they do if they find us? To you, I mean. I know what they'll do to...

GRETA

Ssh! Let's not talk about what won't happen. Besides, who cares? This is a world gone mad with hate. I see nothing but anger...

MOTHER

And hate and torment...and...

GRETA

Fear. Much fear. The world is too much for me, anyway. I've outlived my husband, and I've outlived...

(Turns away)

I'm sorry, forgive me. How stupid of me to go on about myself.

MOTHER

Don't be – it is for us you feel sorrow. I know in my mind that it's only been a month since my husband was...

(Looks down at child and stops herself)

...taken from us. So much has happened. So much...It just seems like years ago. When I close my eyes I can't see his face.

GRETA

(Hold on her face)

We should make you comfortable right now: it will be dark soon. This way...

Pan left. Follow and FADE-OUT

FADE-IN

Stairway to basement (A-B, maybe to interior). Mother and Child are maybe seated – crowd the shot to get all three as an establishing shot in frame. Work with tight space for best layout of bunks, bucket, lighting. Maybe scrim over 400W soft spot as only lighting.

GRETA

(Preparing to leave)

Now, please remember what I told you...no...

CHILD

Noise after you turn off the radio...

GRETA

Yes.

(Smile)

I'll open the door...

CHILD

Once a day at daytime to bring us food and new water.

GRETA

(Smile)

Yes...Are my nerves showing?

MOTHER

We are all nervous. Don't worry.

GRETA

And we'll empty the toilet
and let you walk around for a
little while in the
daylight...with the blinds
pulled.

MOTHER

(kindly)

We understand, Greta. Don't
worry.

GRETA

It's not fair. You have to
stay down here. It's not
fair. It's not right...

CHILD

Will you keep the radio loud
enough so we can hear?

GRETA

I won't be able to play it
too loudly without attracting
attention to the house. But,
if you're quiet as a mouse,
you should be able to hear
it.

MOTHER

(Affirming)

We'll be fine here. It is a
nice home you have made for
us. God bless you for what
you are doing.

GRETA

Perhaps...I am sure he will
protect all of us.

(Turns to leave)

Oh, and if you hear
footsteps...you know...other than
mine...

CHILD

Don't breathe.

(Smiles)

GRETA

Well breathe but not too
loudly.

FADE-OUT

FADE-IN

Near darkness. Match strikes and hand puts to candle.

CHILD

It's not so bad, Mama.
Look...You see, everything we
need is here.

MOTHER

Yes.

(Hand to child)

CHILD

How long do you think we'll be
here, really, Mama?

MOTHER

Oh...

(Exasperated)

Maybe a month or two. Maybe a
bit more. This craziness can't
last forever.

CHILD

I wish Papa wouldn't have
been...He could be with us and
make it easier.

MOTHER

I know. I wish he were here,
too. But we have to do for
ourselves now, just the way he
would want us to.

CHILD

You didn't tell me what
happened. You promised to, but
you didn't.

MOTHER

It's not for a child's ears.

CHILD

I'm not a child anymore.

MOTHER

OK. Yes, I did promise you, and no, you're not a child any longer. That makes me both pleased and worries me, too. But you have to promise me that it will only be this once. I will tell you what happened, but my heart can only do that once. Do you promise me?

CHILD

Promise.

MOTHER

(Numerous pauses)

Your father had taken Emergency Room that night. It was madness on the streets. Some people were rioting and breaking into homes and stores. The militia had been called out and were patrolling the streets – arresting and shooting looters. Some of them were not killed. Some were. Two men in the militia were injured very badly, I was told. One man...his arm...

Your father worked on him for many hours trying to put his arm back the way it should be, and to stabilize his condition. He had only so much time to do this before the man would die, do you see?

CHILD

Yes.

MOTHER

But he could not. This man – the one with the very bad arm – he died. Four other men of the militia were waiting. They had been there for hours waiting on their friend, I guess.

The one man who was shot died almost immediately. Your father came out to talk to them – to tell them what happened to both men. They turned away and, the nurse told me, talked alone for awhile. One man shouted something terrible calling your father a name...

CHILD

What name?

MOTHER

Nothing for you to hear.

(Pauses)

Then, the man who was in charge – a colonel I was told – pulled out his pistol and called your father something terrible. I was told that your father tried everything to save both of the men. But he could not. He was a doctor. It is what he had promised always to do. It made no difference to him who these people were – they were people, like us.

(Pause)

The colonel shot your father...in the...face...

(Tears and embrace, and...)

FADE-OUT

Different clothes. Different day. Different time of day. Implication – some time much later.

FADE-IN

Low light. Mother and child asleep. Stomping boots overhead. Tight-in on mother then child as they awake, frightened. Slides quickly to mother's embrace.

CHILD

Mama...

MOTHER

(Hand over child's mouth.
Whispered)

Sssh.

Muffled voices through floor above

GRETA

Get out of my house!

MAN

You have no authority to tell
me to leave. Now sit down and
shut up!

GRETA

I will not!

Slap and fall to floor. Child slips quietly up stairway. Mother tries to hold child back.

MOTHER

No...no, no.

CHILD

I have to hear, Mama.

On landing, listening to muffled conversation

MAN

Check the house!

More boots to floor above. Child's eyes follow the tracks above. Eventually, slamming of front door. Footsteps of woman above to basement door. Existing light more visible on face of child. Mother slowly joins child. Hold.

FADE-OUT

Act II

FADE-IN

Mother and child crowded together on landing below basement door.
Camera to opening below door. Rug lifts slightly.

GRETA

(Whispered)

They're gone.

MOTHER

Are you OK?

GRETA

Don't worry about me - I'm
fine. Don't fear.

Fingers through crack in basement door. Mother squeezes her hand.

GRETA

Tomorrow you can come out.
You better stay there today.
There are patrols everywhere..
(Quickly with drawn breath)
I've got to go.

Rug back and quick steps above. Loss of light leaves landing in
darkness.

MOTHER/CHILD

(Still at landing. Child joins
in after few words: Qur'an
(39:53))

O My servants who have
transgressed against your own
souls:
do not despair of God's mercy,
for God forgives all sins.
It is He who is the Forgiving,
the Merciful.

FADE-OUT

FADE-IN

Low light. Different clothes. Alternate between two outfits:
Wrinkled, soiled? Focus on mother. Shoot continuous of mother with
varied expressions to cut away in edit.

MOTHER

A-B to color

I wish we knew what was
happening today. It seems so
quiet out there. What does
your iPad say?

Cut to and hold throughout:

CHILD

Not much more than yesterday:
I just (What would child
say?) *checked* the news a
little while ago. There was
something new about the work
camp in Phoenix...let me find
it again.

(Knees up with iPad
searching)

Here it is...The relocation
camp administrator – some man
named, Arpaio – says that the
population in the camp in
Phoenix is expected to remain
at not more than ten thousand
by year end.

MOTHER

How can that be? They're
arresting hundreds –
thousands every day. Where
are they putting them, if not
in Phoenix?

CHILD

They don't say. They have a
list of all of the camps
here. There's Phoenix for the
western United States and two
others – one in Detroit in
Michigan and one in
Tallahassee, Florida.

MOTHER

This is so worrisome...

FADE-OUT

FADE-IN

Mother next to child who is on bunk.

MOTHER

You need to sleep...it's been a long day...the world is too much with us. Tomorrow it will all be over, I am sure.

CHILD

It's too cold to sleep here tonight, Mama. I can't get comfortable.

MOTHER

(Lost in thought, aside)

It's nearly winter.

(Directly)

Maybe the others are going to the other camps.

CHILD

Maybe they are just being killed...like Papa.

MOTHER

(Harsh)

Don't speak of such things.

(Disturbed by comment but soothing)

Here, let me cover you up.

Mother moves to child on bunk and places her coat over child, smoothing the cover with her hand thoughtfully. On the coat is stitched a yellow crescent. Child looks down at her mother's hand on the symbol's fabric.

CHILD

Why do they make us wear this on our coat?

MOTHER

So they will know who we are...

FADE-OUT

FADE-IN

Early morning, apparently. Mother and child remain asleep until the thunder of boots overhead awakes them. They are unmoving and unspeaking. Voices muffled through floor. Greta screams.

CHILD

Mama...what are they doing?

MOTHER

Ssh! Say nothing. Quiet.

CHILD

But...

MOTHER

Ssh!

Boots directly overhead. Orders being spoken. Pause. Sound of basement door harshly opening. Child in bright light.

MAN

Here, sir!

GRETA

No!

CHILD

(Wide shot. Mother struggles
to child on stairs)

Mama!

FADE-OUT