

JUDY

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The Weinstein Company LLC
345 Hudson St., 13th Fl.
New York, NY 10014
NY Tel. 646-862-3400
Fax 917-368-7000

FADE IN:

1 EXT. OVERHEAD OF GRAND RAPIDS -- LATE MORNING. 1

It's gray. We're flying over winterbare land speckled with little white houses surrounded by blue lakes and little ponds. We stop by a TWO-DECK, WHITE CORNER HOUSE surrounded by winter-frozen gardens. We've arrived at the Gumm Residence.

Two YOUNG GIRLS laugh as they run through the snowy front yard, gathering large chunks of snow. They are MARY JANE (7) and VIRGINIA GUMM (5).

They build a tiny fortress of snow where they seek cover. Three other children aged between five or seven huddle on the other side, behind their little snow fortress.

A small girl with piercing dark eyes runs out the front door.

MARY JANE

Baby, c'mon get over here!

BABY GUMM (3), races to the Gumm Sister fortress, and lies prone with her sisters, they huddle together as they begin to make snowballs.

VIRGINIA

Try not to get hit, Baby.

On the opposing fortress a small boy, BERNARD (6), giggles as he adds chunks of snow to a rock. The other kids protest by shaking their heads --

Gumm sister fortress - Mary Jane hands a snowball to Baby.

VIRGINIA

No, I wanted to throw it, you threw the first one yesterday.

MARY JANE

Oh, let her do it.

VIRGINIA

Fine.

(to Baby)

Just don't miss. We want to win this time.

Baby rises and clumsily attempts to throw the snowball --

WHAM!

(CONTINUED)

Baby is struck in the head by a massive snowball. She falls flat on her behind before she could throw. SHE BURSTS INTO TEARS.

MARY JANE
(tending to Baby)
Baby!

Bernard laughs. Mary Jane is infuriated. She charges angrily at Bernard and tackles him. She begins to pound on him with all her strength.

All the kids watch shocked.

Mary Jane tires out. Bernard is crying.

MARY JANE
That will teach you to mess with my
baby sister!

Bernard runs away, crying.

Mary Jane races back to the whimpering Baby. She gently smacks some snow on the growing bump on her forehead. She takes Baby into her arms and comforts her....

The front yard of kids clear out as snow begins to fall. The Gumm sisters head inside their home.

We look up into the gray sky as snow continues to pepper down as the day suddenly grows darker...darker...and darker....until --

2 EXT. PARK -- NIGHT.

2

A stand of snow-covered trees silhouetted against the jet-black sky.

A small, gentle hand reaches and touches the snow-covered ground, feeling the snow between her fingers.

We slowly REVEAL a young, gorgeous woman with piercing dark, wistful eyes. Gold, red-hair molded into perfection over a beige headscarf. This is JUDY GARLAND, (21) at the time. She sits underneath a tree, in a beige long coat.

Judy gently smears the snow on her face. She smiles brilliantly, this happiness almost brings tears to her eyes.

There is some chatter in the distance behind. A vivid light flashes suddenly. The dark trees come to life in their cold deadness. There is some cheer among a small crowd.

(CONTINUED)

A shadow emerges from the bright light. Steps slush over ice. Closer and closer...

The shadow looms over Judy. She looks up at --

VINCENTE MINNELLI (40). Black hair slickly combed back. Suit under his long coat.

VINCENTE

Judy?

Judy slowly rises, Vincente helps her up. Judy looks behind her, to the bright light.

JUDY

Finally got it fixed, eh?

Vincente nods, reading the somber look on her face which she tries to hide.

VINCENTE

Are you alright?

Judy nods exaggeratedly.

JUDY

Yes. Yes. I'm ready. Let's go.

They walk side by side to the bright lights. A set piece for the film in **"MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS"**.

Hold on Judy's clutched hand. She releases a small ball of snow from her hands. It drops.

HOLD on the ball of ice in its fall....

...as it smacks against a slab of brick, framed against a frost-covered window.

WIDE to reveal an extravagant, colossal building --

3

EXT. THE RITZ HOTEL -- NIGHT.

3

A single speck of light emits from the window where the chunk of snow has landed.

LONDON 1968

Slowly we push in...closer...closer to the window until --

4 INT. BEDROOM SUITE -- CONTINUOUS.

4

It's dark. Except for a dim lamplight that brings a TAPE RECORDER into view, and a glass of Scotch set beside it. A small, fragile finger presses the record button. Silence carries out on the recording tape...

REVEAL a woman with a waif look in her tired eyes shrouded in shadow. These dark eyes are unmistakably those of Judy Garland, (46) here.

She brings a small microphone to her mouth...

JUDY (VO)
(in monotone)
For such a...*mixed-up*...life -
later, it started out beautifully.

We close in on the bright lamp light...things grow brighter and brighter....

Until we begin to hear the applause of a small audience --

5 INT. THEATER ROOM THE NEW GRAND -- NIGHT.

5

The bright light eases...slowly until it dims. Two girls in stage costumes have finished a song routine. They are MARY JANE (6) and VIRGINIA GUMM (4). They wave and blow kisses to the audience members seated in the dim theater room.

BACKSTAGE WING -- a kneeling FRANK GUMM peers through the curtains. Wrapped on his arm is a little girl bustling with energy. She is dressed in a white net dress with little sprigs of holly pinned on it. She is BABY GUMM (2).

The Gumm sisters come off stage. Frank gives Baby a small dinner bell.

Frank releases Baby. He gently pushes her to the stage.

FRANK
You're on baby.

Baby walks to the stage.

AUDIENCE - gasps of surprise. laughter. applause. The sight of Baby is endearing. Unlike anything anyone has ever seen.

JUDY (VO)
I made my stage debut at the age of
two in my daddy's theater in Grand
Rapids, Minnesota. I remember it
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JUDY (VO) (cont'd)
all so vividly. The crowd was
alive. They wanted me.

Baby bows before the audience. Then starts to sing "Jingle Bells" as she rings the bell on suitable notes. Her performance is untarnished. The crowd roars with applause and cheer.

NEW YEAR'S DAY 1925

BABY'S POV: She looks at the audience who stands for her. Cheers for her. Loves her.

She bows again. The applause begins to die down. Baby is still on stage.

ETHEL GUMM (late 20s) sits on a bench in the piano pit below the stage. She stands and waves her arms at Baby. Baby looks.

ETHEL
Get off, Baby, you're through.

Baby shakes her head stubbornly.

BABY
I wanna sing some more.

Baby starts the "Jingle Bells" chorus again. Ethel chokes with laughter as she plays along with the piano. The crowd roars with cheers and applause.

BACKSTAGE WING - Frank and the two Gumm Sisters beckon baby with loud whispers.

FRANK
Baby! Come off! - Come off!

JUDY (VO)
I didn't want to. I sang until the
fifth chorus...

AFTER THE FIFTH CHORUS OF "JINGLE BELLS".

Frank marches to the stage and perches Baby over his shoulder. The audience is caught in a wave of laughter and cheers. Baby continues to sing even after she disappears backstage.

JUDY (VO)
I was finally taken away from the
stage. From the audience, and the
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JUDY (VO) (cont'd)
love they were giving me. I knew
one thing for certain that night. I
wanted to perform every night.

6 INT. OFFICE - NEW GRAND -- DAY.

6

Frank Gumm, one year older signs a few documents. A large,
hoary man takes these documents. He is FRED BENTZ.

JUDY (VO)
About a year later my father sold
his share of the theater to his
associate, Fred Bentz. It was final
that day.

Fred Bentz reaches inside a safe box for a DIAMOND RING.
Frank wears it on his 4th finger. The men shake hands.

7 INT. TRAIN - MOVING -- DAY.

7

Ethel and the girls ride on the train. They look outside the
window, and sit in complete silence. Everyone is one year
older.

JUDY (VO)
We were moving to Los Angeles. I
remember the town making a big fuss
over it.

8 INT. NEW GRAND LOBBY -- EVENING.

8

Close friends from the Grand Rapids community pay their
farewell. Balloons and all sorts of embellishments are set
up, along with food and drinks. Baby Gumm is squeezed with
hugs by Ethel's friends.

JUDY (VO)
I met so many people that night I
never even knew. It was quite the
farewell party.

9 INT. BUICK - MOVING -- DAY.

9

Frank drives in his Buick. All sorts of luggage in the back.

JUDY (VO)
But as to why we moved - it was
because of a man my father knew
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JUDY (VO) (cont'd)
before I was even born. A man by
the name of Marc. Marc Rabwin to be
exact.

10 EXT. TRAIN STATION IN L.A. -- EVENING.

10

MARC RABWIN (24) greets Ethel and the girls. He helps out with the luggage. Baby holds a look on Marc. Marc notices and hugs Baby as if she were a long lost sister. He holds her up into the air and spins her around. Baby laughs.

JUDY (VO)
It was him who insisted the warm
climate would benefit my
undisclosed illness - something
known as "acute acidosis" - I never
really knew what it was, I just
knew when it came, it was bad news.
I was just a little over one year
old when it got me....

11 INT. BUICK - MOVING -- NIGHT.

11

A blinding snowstorm. Frank drives nervously, over-hasty. Ethel rides in the back. Baby Gumm - one year old here is wrapped in heavy blankets. Her little face blanched. She is very ill.

JUDY (VO)
I will always remember that night.
Where the snow was falling against
the back window of that car...

BABY'S POV - REAR VIEW WINDOW: Sheets of snow pepper down from the jet-black sky. Slowly they smack against the window.

JUDY (VO)
My mother beside me.

Ethel whispers into Baby's ear. Humming a lullaby.

JUDY (VO)
Singing to me as my father drove
and drove through stretches of
roads in that blinding snowstorm.

12 INT. DULUTH HOSPITAL IN MINNESOTA -- NIGHT. 12

Baby Gumm is received by a SPECIALIST who hurriedly wheels her in a stretcher.

JUDY (VO)

I found out later; my daddy drove over eighty miles to a hospital in Duluth. For me. I was not expected to live...but I did. And within a month things were fine and dandy all over again.

13 EXT. TRAIN STATION IN L.A. -- CONTINUOUS. 13

Marc continues to spin Baby in the air...Baby is laughing.

JUDY (VO)

Sometimes I wonder how different my life would have been without him. A life without the glamour...without the lights. A life where "Judy" didn't exist.

FREEZE FRAME ON THE THREE YEAR OLD BABY LAUGHING.

JUDY (VO)

But it was this man who was destined to play a major role in the scenario the fates were about to write about me, and this even before I was born.

14 EXT. MINNESOTA -- EVENING. 14

A coach travels through the iron country of northern Minnesota which is comprised of bucolic fields and gorgeous basins.

JUDY (VO)

It all began in the summer of 1921.

The coach is destined to reach Grand Rapids.

15 EXT. GRAND RAPIDS, MINNESOTA -- MORNING. 15

A small town with the population of around fourteen hundred people. The coach stops by the town's only MAIN STREET.

(CONTINUED)

JUDY (VO)

His name - as you know; was Marc
Rabwin.

MARC RABWIN (19) emerges; looks around. Marc begins to walk down the street, searching for the NEW GRAND movie house.

16 EXT. MAIN STREET, GRAND RAPIDS -- LATER THAT MORNING. 16

Marc comes across a one-story clapboard structure with a painted wooden sign above that reads: "THE NEW GRAND".

SUMMER OF 1921

A few people enter the movie house: kids, mothers, all ready to see the show. Marc sets down his leather satchel, then adjusts his tie and hair. He opens the glassed door, then enters with a determined stance.

17 INT. LOBBY - THE NEW GRAND -- CONTINUOUS. 17

Marc looks around the modest theater. He spots a MAN behind the counter in his thirties. He serves the customers popcorn and handles the ticket purchases. The customers walk into the theater room, little by little the line diminishes. Marc steps closer to the counter, modestly he says to the man:

MARC

Excuse me, sir?

The Man ignores Marc as he continues to make more popcorn and serve bottled drinks to his customers. Marc gets closer.

MARC

Sir?

The Man in a frenzy looks back irascibly:

MAN

Yes?

MARC

Are you Frank? Frank Gumm?
Proprietor of this movie house?

FRANK GUMM continues to handle the money and purchases.

FRANK

Yes. Who are you?

(CONTINUED)

MARC

Oh, hello, I'm Marc Rabwin I work
for the Hodkinson company --

FRANK

Can't you see I'm busy.

MARC

Yes, sorry. I just wanted to talk
to you --

Frank finally looks him in the eyes;

FRANK

Look, let's say we skip the
formalities for now, I have work to
do so if you please.

MARC

May we talk later? --

FRANK

Yes. yes. Stay around if you must,
just stay out my way for the time
being.

18 INT. LOBBY - THE NEW GRAND -- MOMENTS LATER.

18

The audience have all gone inside the theater room. Marc
waits, seated on a wooden bench. Frank is still behind the
counter, wiping the counter and handling the money in the
safe box. Frank looks up to Marc and gestures him to come
close. They move to a door behind the counter, into -

19 INT. CUBBYHOLE OFFICE - THE NEW GRAND -- CONTINUOUS.

19

Frank goes behind his small desk, where he files some papers
inside the desk drawer, without looking at Marc, he says:

FRANK

You may sit if you want.

Marc takes a seat.

MARC

Thank you.

Marc keeps an eye on Frank who continues to clear his
office. Keeping things organized. Frank fidgets around:

(CONTINUED)

FRANK

So - what brings you to my theater?

Marc still continues to scrutinize Frank's movements, he sees something in his demeanor that is unwholesome.

MARC

I come from the town of Eveleth,
and I have an array of western
films that you might be interested
in purchasing from the Hodkinson
company for your theater --

FRANK

You traveled across the state just
to do business with me?

MARC

Yes - well, many of the men I rode
with were a little apprehensive of
me being here and --

Frank begins to laugh to himself.

FRANK

And that didn't stop you?

MARC

They said it was two years since
they saw you. I thought I'd give it
a try.

Frank stops organizing. Watches Marc, intrigued by his honesty.

FRANK

How old are you? You're the
youngest salesman I've ever dealt
with in all my years of running
this theater.

MARC

I'm nineteen. I helped my father
run the theater in Eveleth - the
Empress - for a few years.

Frank is amused by this.

FRANK

Did you like helping around?

(CONTINUED)

MARC

Of course.

Frank sits on the chair behind his desk.

MARC

Do you run the theater by yourself?

FRANK

No. My wife lends a hand here - she's in the pit playing the piano, and my daughter Mary Jane helps out on occasion, sweeping the floors - minor work only. We have shows here on Fridays. My two daughters perform, Mary Jane and Virginia, you're welcome to see them any time.

MARC

Sounds like a lovely family.

FRANK

Why, yes they are. Thank you.

Frank smiles for the first time.

FRANK

So, you work for the Hodkinson company...?

MARC

Correct. It's only a summer vocation to earn a few extra dollars. I'm actually a medical student.

FRANK

Medicine. That's very impressive.

MARC

(beat)

So, how long have you had this theater?

FRANK

Oh, about....six years now. I have a great associate, Fred Bentz.

(beat;)

Now, your father's theater in Eveleth, is it bigger...?

(CONTINUED)

MARC

No, no. It's about the same as this one. He has plans of making a bigger theater soon.

FRANK

Well, I hope that goes well for you and your father.

MARC

Thank you.

Frank is enthralled by Marc's genuine courtesy. So is Marc. It is not what he expected out of Frank.

FRANK

Tell you what. Why don't we catch the show, and...uh, then we can do business when the show is over. Sound good?

Marc nods in agreement and smiles. They stand and shake hands.

20

INT. THEATER ROOM - THE NEW GRAND -- MINUTES LATER.

20

Dark. The silent film in progress runs from the kinetoscope projector in the back. The audience is caught in the film as a fast, clunky piano tune plays from the pit. Marc and Frank sit in the back. As the film: "The Cyclone" with Tom Mix plays. Frank leans in close to Marc and whispers --

FRANK

That's Ethel down there at the piano, she's got the fastest fingers on the keys you ever saw.

Marc sees ETHEL shrouded in the darkness, huddled over as she plays a brisk piano.

Marc nods with a genuine smile to Frank. She's good.

21

INT. THEATER ROOM - THE NEW GRAND -- AFTER THE SHOW.

21

The lights are on. The patrons have cleared out of the room. Marc and Frank sit side by side in the back. They are talking and laughing, almost as if they were old friends.

JUDY (VO)

And just like that within a few minutes of becoming acquainted, they were good friends.

(CONTINUED)

Frank leafs through some documents on a clipboard and signs some contracts for the Hodkinson company.

FRANK

There.

MARC

Those are some good films.

Frank hands the clipboard to Marc who files them in his leather satchel.

FRANK

Well I think so too. Come now. I want you to meet my wife.

22

INT. LOBBY - THE NEW GRAND -- MOMENTS LATER.

22

A small, plump woman darts across the lobby in her high heels. She herds the patrons out the door with smiles and goodbyes. As the last clear out she locks the door and sees Frank and Marc emerge from the theater room. This is ETHEL GUMM, (30s).

FRANK

Ethel?

ETHEL

Yes, dear, give me a second.

Ethel finishes locking up. She darts to them with nervous energy.

FRANK

I'd like you to meet, Mr. Marc Rabwin.

Ethel and Marc shake hands. She smiles.

ETHEL

How do you do, Mr. Rabwin?

MARC

Very well, thank you, Mrs. Gumm.

ETHEL

Oh, please, call me Ethel, darling.

FRANK

Marc here is a medical student, he came all the way from --

(CONTINUED)

ETHEL
(politely)
Darling, he can talk, let him
introduce himself.

FRANK
Yes, sorry.

MARC
I come from the town of Eveleth --

ETHEL
Eveleth? Isn't that way up north?

MARC
Yes.

ETHEL
You're a long way from home.

MARC
Well, I have few other towns to
visit, so I won't be home in a few
weeks.

ETHEL
Where will you stay?

Marc thinks.

MARC
Do you know any hotels? --

FRANK
Oh, no. We don't have any decent
hotels in Grand Rapids.
(beat)
You know my wife is the best cook
in town and we have an extra room
in our home; you should stay with
us.

ETHEL
Yes, you can save yourself the
money. We would love to have you as
our guest, please.

Marc is intrigued.

23 INT. UNKNOWN THEATER -- DAY. 23

Marc does business with an old theater owner. The old theater owner signs some contracts. This is followed by a handshake.

JUDY (VO)

In the next two weeks Marc traveled to and fro. Selling contracts to other small theater owners around the state during his stay.

24 INT. KITCHEN - GUMM RESIDENCE -- DAY. 24

Marc and Frank sit across each other from the table. They page through the family album.

JUDY (VO)

And within a few days, Marc found himself taken into the family almost as though he were a grown son.

CLOSE IN ON a picture of FRANK with a mustache, wearing a derby - an immaculately dressed man, very dapper, very handsome - his diamond ring gleaming on his 4th finger. A picture from his Vaudevillian days.

JUDY (VO)

My father told him everything from his early days in Murfreesboro, Tennessee - to his Sewanee Military Academy days, to the night he met my mother, Ethel at the Princess Theater in Superior, Wisconsin --

25 INT. PRINCESS THEATER -- 1914. 25

The PRINCESS MANAGER introduces Ethel (20) to Frank (27), and Frank to Ethel. He leaves. Frank and Ethel stare deep at each other. Love at first sight.

JUDY (VO)

My father used to tell us all these stories, especially about his Vaudevillian days. My parents put up an act, they were known as: "Jack and Virginia Lee, Sweet Southern Singers".

26 INT. THEATER IN MINNESOTA -- NIGHT.

26

A dark stage. Small audience awaits. The lights turn dim. The red, satin curtains slowly rise, revealing:

Ethel in a lovely black dress, seated by a piano. Frank stands beside her in splendor.

The audience in silence. Frank steps up:

FRANK

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen.
My name is Jack Lee, and this is
Virginia Lee, my wife.

Ethel rises and does a little bow. Then sits.

FRANK

Virginia Lee will now open our
program by playing "Alexander's
Ragtime Band". I would like you all
to observe how small her hands are.

Ethel turns sideways on the bench. Flashes her small hands. Back and front. She begins to play the piano.

JUDY (VO)

They toured the tiny Gus Sun
circuit, made up of small rural
movie houses in the Central and
Northern states. Their opening
number won the audience.

27 INT. THE NEW GRAND THEATER -- DAY.

27

A much younger FRED BENTZ and Frank Gumm, still 27 - speak. Frank removes the DIAMOND RING from his 4th finger and hands it over to Fred. They shake hands.

JUDY (VO)

A few months later, my mother was
pregnant with Janey. My father went
into business with Fred Bentz and
the New Grand. It was the start of
a new life for them. They finally
settled in Grand Rapids for good.

28

INT. LIVING ROOM - GUMM RESIDENCE -- EVENING.

28

Marc sits on the sofa. Ethel arranges music sheets on her piano. Ethel hums a song as she plays a few notes.

JUDY (VO)

Within a few days, Marc found
himself taken into the family
almost as though he were a grown
son.

She looks upstairs:

ETHEL

Okay, I'm all set up here. You
girls come down now.

Ethel looks behind. Marc smiles not knowing what to expect.
He eats pudding topped with whipped cream - a special
dessert meal that Ethel made.

ETHEL

Well, now you just try to enjoy
yourself.

MARC

Oh, you bet I will, Mrs. Ethel.

Ethel and Marc look up as MARY JANE GUMM (5), and VIRGINIA
GUMM (3) descend from the staircase in tailored stage
outfits. Frank gently ushers them from behind to the living
room. Marc smiles, charmed.

JUDY (VO)

Marc fell in love with them. He
loved watching Janey and little
Jimmy perform whenever he could.
Music and entertainment is all my
family knew, and Marc loved it.

Ethel inspects and adjusts the girls' outfits. Ethel turns
around to her piano. The two girls position themselves
behind Ethel.

Despite their early age, they have done this routine
numerous times. The first piano note starts as Frank sits on
the sofa with Marc.

The girls perform "Rememb'ring" - a Duncan Sisters dance
routine and song.

They enjoy the show.

29

EXT. GUMM RESIDENCE -- LATE MORNING.

29

The entire Gumm family has gathered outside. Frank helps Marc with his small load of luggage to a coach that will take him to the train station.

JUDY (VO)

The final day of his short business venture had finally come.

They finish. Marc and Frank have a fatherly embrace.

FRANK

It was a pleasure having you Marc.
You come back any time, you hear.

MARC

Yes, sir. It was a great pleasure to stay here with your lovely family.

Marc walks over to Ethel. They also embrace.

ETHEL

You take care, my son.

MARC

I'll miss your cooking.

Mary Jane and Virginia in their night pajamas, hold out their arms for a hug. Marc holds them both in his arms.

MARY JANE

We'll miss you Uncle Marc.

MARC

I'll miss you too, Janey.
(to Virginia)
You too, little one.

Marc heads for the coach.

MARC

We'll keep in touch every week,
Frank.

FRANK

Yes. I won't forget.

Marc stalls for a few seconds...;

(CONTINUED)

MARC

Frank?

FRANK

Yes?

MARC

Have you or Ethel ever been told
you have goiters?

FRANK

(surprised)

No. I had a visit with my doctor a
few months ago. I had an ear
infection, but there was no mention
of goiters. My wife as well.

MARC

I just noticed these past few days,
that your behavior might point to
hidden goiters. I might be wrong,
but I would gladly appreciate it if
you saw your doctor about it.

FRANK

I will. I'll look into it. I
appreciate your concern.

MARC

Very well.

Marc boards the coach. Everyone says "bye". Marc waves as
the coach moves away from The Gumm Residence.

30 INT. TRAIN CAR -- MOVING -- NIGHT.

30

Marc writes on his journal.

31 EXT. TRAIN STATION - MINNEAPOLIS -- EARLY MORNING.

31

Marc emerges from the train. He is now in Minneapolis where
he attends the University Of Minnesota Medical School.

JUDY (VO)

In Eveleth that autumn, Marc
returned to school in Minneapolis,
the elder Rabwin was in trouble.

32

INT. DORM ROOM - UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA -- NIGHT.

32

Marc is on the phone. The room is dark, except for the lamplight on his study desk where he sits.

MARC

What do you want me to do dad...?

MR. RABWIN (50s), is on the other end. He is worried.

MR. RABWIN

I'm all out of ideas, son. I don't know what to do now. I offered to buy them out with twice as much, they still won't budge. I need, I need you to think of something please --

MARC

Look....; fine. Just give me some time, I won't be able to do it right away, ok?

Mr. Rabwin exhales worriedly.

MARC

Dad, are you listening to me?

MR. RABWIN

Yes, yes, I'm listening. I just, I need this --

MARC

And I will get it back. Just give me time, those people don't want to be there. Are you feeling, ok?

MR. RABWIN

Yes, it's just this cold weather, the damn weather is always so damn cold.

MARC

I want you guys to go --

MR. RABWIN

Go? Go where?

MARC

Anywhere where it's warm, take mom on a trip, enjoy yourselves. All this stress is bad for you. I want you to go as soon as you can. I'll

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MARC (cont'd)
be back home soon and take care of
this, ok?

33 INT. MAIN STREET OF EVELETH -- DAY.

33

There are two theaters across from each other. One is a quaint, small house known as THE EMPRESS movie house. The other is a new, large movie theater called THE REGENT.

Marc walks into the Regent.

34 INT. OFFICE - REGENT THEATER -- MOMENTS LATER.

34

Marc sits behind his father's desk. He dials a phone number from a crinkled piece of paper he saved from one of Frank's letters.

MOMENTS - LATER. MARC ON THE PHONE.

MARC
You see my father opened this new theater in prospect of gaining more business, but it didn't work out that way. The ticket price is higher -- people just aren't coming, Frank. He gave up the lease of the Empress and now the new owners won't sell it back.

FRANK
Why?

MARC
I'm not sure. They had a big quarrel, and - well one thing led to another and now they want to run my father out of business.

FRANK
Well. I'm very sorry for that, but what do you want me to do?

BEAT.....;

MARC
I want you to buy it from them, please Frank. I'll give you the money - when you get there you tell them you are a theater operator from Grand Rapids and you're

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MARC (cont'd)
looking to buy one in Eveleth. This
would mean a lot to me and my
father, Frank.

FRANK
Well of course. Just give me some
time, I can't go out right away.

35 INT. THE EMPRESS THEATER -- DAY - WEEKS LATER.

35

Frank sits with the EMPRESS OWNER, a man around the same age
as Frank. They have coffee and biscuits with honey.

FRANK
I've always wanted to operate a
theater of this modest size. I like
doing things myself.

EMPRESS OWNER
Well, to tell you the god honest
truth, we hate this hunk of scrap.

FRANK
(shocked)
Oh...

EMPRESS OWNER
I imagine you've taken time to see
the Regent. Right across the
street?

FRANK
Yes.

EMPRESS OWNER
Well we bought this place in hopes
of running the only theater in
Eveleth. As you can see right
outside, that did not happen. We're
not making the kind of money we
thought we would, in fact we've
lost some. No thanks to the Regent
and its stubborn owner. We could
have invested this money
elsewhere...well
(beat)

You're probably wondering why I'm
telling you this. I don't want to
hand over to you my burdens. I am a
fair man, and a Christian man. And
I've come clean with the truth. You

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

EMPRESS OWNER (cont'd)
want to buy this place, you say. I
say it's a waste of money and a bad
investment. The Regent owner has
offered to buy me off -- but I
don't want anything from that man.
He double crossed me and my family,
and has caused too much trouble.

The Empress owner rubs his eyes, frustrated.

FRANK
I am sorry for all your troubles.

EMPRESS OWNER
Well, now that you know. Do you
still want to buy this theater?

Frank reaches inside his coat. He places a FIVE THOUSAND
DOLLAR check on the table and slides it to the Empress
owner.

36 INT. BISTRO -- DAY.

36

Frank and Marc drink coffee. Frank hands him the keys to the
Empress theater. Marc holds the keys in his hands, deeply
moved.

MARC
....I don't know what to say.

FRANK
Why you don't have to.
(beat)
You'd do the same for me right?

MARC
Yes. I certainly would.

Frank stands, he gathers his hat and coat.

FRANK
Well, I've got to get going, my
train leaves in a couple of hours,
I have too much to do when I get
back home.

Marc stands. Frank and Marc embrace goodbye.

(CONTINUED)

MARC

You take care now, Frank. I owe you one.

FRANK

Yes, well you take care as well my boy, hopefully you'll come to visit us again someday. The girls miss you.

MARC

Well. I'll be back there someday.

BEAT;

FRANK

Goodbye, then.

MARC

Bye.

Frank walks out of the Bristo and out into the snowy weather. Marc watches him walk away from the window.

FADE OFF TO:

NOVEMBER OF 1921

37 INT. BOARDING HOUSE - UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA - LATE NIGHT.
37

Marc is sound asleep in the dark room. The buzzer sounds over and over. Marc awakens; groggily makes his way to the front door and opens.

JUDY (VO)

It didn't take long for my father to ask for something in return. He traveled a great distance from home that day.

There stands Frank Gumm. A year older. A look of despair on his face. He looks up at Marc. Removes his hat.

FRANK

I'm sorry to bother you at this hour, Marc. But I've just come in from Grand Rapids and I've got to talk to you.

MOMENTS LATER

(CONTINUED)

Frank paces nervously around the room. Marc sits on his study desk, looks at Frank...

FRANK

We - we've tried everything to get rid of it. She's - we've run out of options and having this child, would make our lives impossible, we just don't have the time or the money to take care of another one - Marc.

MARC

How far in is she?

FRANK

Two months - about two months.

BEAT.....;

FRANK

Well, now....I want you to help me, Marc. I want you to help me like I once helped you.....this child will be a burden on us all -- we can't have it...we can't.

MARC

Frank.

(Frank paces nervously)

Frank.

Frank stops to listen.

MARC

You're talking about abortion. That's terribly dangerous, and it's against the law. If someone found out about this I could lose my license and go to prison, or any other doctor in the state. It's murder.

Frank leans against the wall. Depressed.

FRANK

I don't know what else to do.

MARC

Frank, I'm telling you as a professional. If Ethel chooses to get an abortion, she might not make it. She could die of infection or

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MARC (cont'd)
blood loss; the fatality rate for
these practices are very high, and
even if she got through it safely,
there could still be aftereffects
that might last the rest of her
life.

Frank paces around again.....it gets VERY QUIET...;

FRANK
Look, Frank. Let her have the baby.
After the baby is born, you
wouldn't take a million dollars for
it.

Frank sits on the sofa. Deep in thought. Marc looks at him
from across the small room.

FRANK
.....Ok.....
(beat)
I'll talk to Ethel. I'll tell her
what you said. And...hopefully
she'll understand.

MARC
Good. You're doing the right thing,
Frank.

Frank slowly nods.

FRANK
I'm terribly tired....I've been on
the move all day.

Marc rises and grabs some folded blankets and a pillow from
a closet. He places them on the sofa next to Frank.

FRANK
Thank you.

MARC
Everything will turn out fine,
Frank. You'll see.

38 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS.

38

A disheveled Ethel pushes for the last time. The cries of a
newborn baby fill the room. Ethel falls back exhausted, as
Frank who is by her side holding her hand, holds his breath.

(CONTINUED)

The doctor severs the umbilical cord and hands over the baby to a nurse. She cleans the baby and wraps it in a cloth.

DOCTOR
Congratulations. It's a girl.

FREEZE FRAME - Frank and Ethel share a look of disappointment.

JUDY (VO)
I knew I wasn't wanted. And after
two girls I might at least have had
the decency to be a boy. God knows;
I was fighting not to be born.

The nurse brings the baby to Ethel. She holds her in her arms.

JUDY (VO)
If I could have talked that
morning, I would have said, "Look I
object to you as much as you object
to me!".

The baby looks just like Ethel. Ethel smiles *lightly* as Frank leans in closer....they both look into the baby's eyes.

JUDY (VO)
But I had nothing to say, then - or
ever.

The image freezes. Like a Kodak moment:

JUDY (VO)
And despite my mother's heinous
attempts to get rid of me --

39 INT. GUMM RESIDENCE -- FLASHBACK.

39

Ethel launches herself down the staircase, she rolls down hard, hitting her pregnant belly in the process.

JUDY (VO)
...by launching herself down our
very own staircase.

40 INT. KITCHEN - GUMM RESIDENCE -- FLASHBACK. 40

Ethel gulps down a cup of castrol oil. She gags, but tries to hold the substance inside of her.

JUDY (VO)
And gulping down large sums of
castrol oil. And among other
things...

41 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS. 41

Frank and Ethel continue to look at the baby.

JUDY (VO)
I was born a perfectly healthy baby
and weighed a whopping seven
pounds.

Ethel looks up to Frank who is tired.

ETHEL
We'll call her Frances. Frances
Ethel Gumm.

42 EXT. HOSPITAL -- EARLY MORNING. 42

Frank and Ethel look out the window as the morning sun begins to rise....

JUDY (VO)
My life, unbeknownst to me at the
time, was saved by this man...

We stay on the hot sun.....pull back WIDE to reveal --

THE FREEZE FRAME OF BABY GUMM. IT UNFREEZES.

Marc Rabwin sets Baby down. Then continues to help with the luggage.

JUDY (VO)
Dr. Marc Rabwin.