

VALENTINO

by  
Laura Hesse

WGAw: 1767185

CONTACT:

Laura Hesse  
963 Riley Rd  
Parksville, BC  
Canada V9P 2L7

Phone: (250) 248-7589  
E-mail: RunningL@shaw.ca

Website: [www.RunningLProductions.wordpress.com](http://www.RunningLProductions.wordpress.com)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FADE IN:

INT. MCNABB HOUSE - DAY - FEBRUARY 13

IN THE BATHROOM

Fourteen year-old MADDIE MCNABB, a pretty slim girl with long hair, stands at the bathroom sink brushing her hair. The lovable furry face of her best friend, her YELLOW LABRADOR, SAMMY, grins back at her reflection in the mirror.

Maddie slips on the ear pieces to her iPod, turning up the volume to her latest favourite tune. She reaches for the stack of toothbrushes beside the sink, fingering each one in turn until she finds her own.

There is something odd about Maddie, the strange way she holds her head, just a little bit to the left, and the way that she uses her fingers to find the tube of toothpaste and her toothbrush.

When she finishes brushing her teeth, she picks up a pair of dark sunglasses.

MADDIE

Mum says I look like Audrey  
Hepburn? What do you think, Sammy,  
do I look like a movie star?

The DOG RUFFS in agreement.

Maddie reaches for the handle on the dog's harness. That is when we realize that Maddie is blind and Sammy is her guide dog.

DOWN THE STAIRS

Dances Maddie holding tightly to the dog's harness.

IN THE KITCHEN

Maddie slides to a stop, and sniffs the air. She follows the scent to a tray of freshly baked muffins sitting on the counter. She picks one up and breaks it in half, nibbling on one half and giving the other to the dog.

Maddie's mother, BETH, enters the kitchen. Beth is a handsome woman, late-30's. She is dressed in a green nurse's uniform. Her eyes are sunken, her shoulders drooping in exhaustion from having worked a double shift in the ER.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BETH

Stop feeding the dog muffins, you know it upsets her stomach? You need to leave a couple for later too.

MADDIE

I only gave her half.

BETH

That's a half too much, young lady.

Beth kisses Maddie on the cheek before scooping a couple of muffins out of the tray and wrapping them in a brown paper bag. She then places the muffins in a cooler pack beside two ham sandwiches, two oranges and two apples. Beside those is a plastic bag of dog kibble and milk bones.

IN THE FOYER

Maddie slips on a pair of rubber boots and a down filled winter jacket. Her mother breezes by her, the cooler in her hand.

BETH

Don't forget your hat and gloves.

MADDIE

I won't.

CUT TO:

EXT. MCNABB HOUSE - BLUSTERY DAY - FEBRUARY 13

The McNabb family home is a modest two storey Cape Cod house situated on a quiet cul-de-sac in a suburban northwest coastal neighbourhood.

A new van and old diesel pick-up truck with a tall workman's fiberglass canopy on it are parked in the driveway. "MCNABB ELECTRIC" is stenciled on the side of the truck. The van has several bumper stickers on it: 'PUT THE CHRIST BACK IN CHRISTMAS', 'YOU CAN'T FIX STUPID', the Christian FISH, and 'I(heart) LOVE LABRADORS'.

An RV and a Bayliner motor boat with a covered cockpit are parked alongside the house. DAWN TREADER is stencilled on the stern of the boat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Out of the house strides hardworking family man, JOSEPH MCNABB, late 30's, a fit electrician. He has a jaunty step and a devil-may-care attitude. He wears blue jeans, scarred work boots and a worn down filled jacket.

JOSEPH

jumps into the pick-up truck and backs the truck up to the boat trailer in a cloud of black diesel exhaust. He turns off the engine and steps out of the truck.

He begins to hitch up the trailer when the front door to the house BANGS open.

OUT OF THE HOUSE EMERGES

Beth, Maddie, and the dog.

A duffel bag with extra clothes for Maddie is slung over Beth's shoulder and she carries a thermos and lunch box in either hand.

Maddie's sweat soaked form is bundled up like a snowman. Her shaded glasses reflect her mother's concerned face.

The dog leads Maddie towards the truck, Maddie holding onto Sammy's halter with one hand and TAPPING her white cane against the ground with the other.

MADDIE

Excited, aren't you, girl?

The dog WHINES in happiness.

BETH

Promise me you'll stay warm? I don't want you coming down with a cold tonight, not with Valentine's Day and your birthday tomorrow. I've put extra meds in your pack too just in case.

MADDIE

Stop worrying so much. I'm already roasting in this parka and I haven't had a seizure in months.

BETH

I know, I know, I'm a worry wart. Humour me.

MADDIE

S'okay, mum. It's just a....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BETH

(singing the theme to  
Giligan's Island)

Three hour tour...I know, but look  
what happened to those castaways.  
I mean, hey, they just raised the  
Minnow off the reef it sank on.  
That's not that far north of here.

MADDIE

(exasperated)

Mom! Relax!

JOSEPH

(walking towards his  
wife)

We'll be in a Bayliner, honey, not  
a relic. Maddie's right. Relax,  
babe, you're just dead on your  
feet. You've got that crazed,  
Chicken Little, the-sky-is-falling  
look.

MADDIE

And you smell a bit like Chicken  
Little too.

BETH

So now I smell bad? And I rushed  
home from a double shift to make  
you fresh muffins for your date  
with Dad?

JOSEPH

She's not saying that at all, are  
you, sweetie?

MADDIE

(quietly)

Uh, yeah!

Joseph scoops his wife up in his arms. He gives her a  
long, lingering kiss, before taking the pack, lunch box  
and thermos from her hands, and placing them in the back  
of the truck.

Out of the house crashes, BOBBIE MCNABB, 17, a younger  
version of his father, carrying hockey gear and the keys  
to the van. He BEEPS the remote and the van doors unlock.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JOSEPH

Be careful with your mother's new van, Bobbie. Make sure the boys don't scratch it.

BOBBIE

I will, Dad.

Bobbie tosses his gear into the back of the van, and then pops over to give his mother a hug. He then playfully goes to punch his sister on the arm, but she ducks away. The dog BARKS.

BOBBIE

I'll never figure out how you do that.

MADDIE

It's easy. You are sooooo predictable.

Bobbie laughs.

BOBBIE

See you later. Have fun on the water, sis. Don't barf!

MADDIE

Bro, that's your territory.

JOSEPH

(moving Maddie out of the way as his son backs the van out of the drive)

We better get going or we won't be going anywhere except around the harbour.

He kisses his wife one more time and then escorts Maddie and her dog to the truck. Maddie gets in the front. The dog jumps into the back. Maddie rolls down the truck's window.

JOSEPH

(over his shoulder)  
Enjoy having the house to yourself. Have a bubble bath and get some sleep.

BETH

So now I look awful and I smell?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

JOSEPH  
I didn't say that.

BETH  
(playfully)  
Oh, yes you did, and you're right,  
I do. How far up the coast are you  
going?

JOSEPH  
(running around the  
truck to the  
driver's side)  
I don't know. Depends on the  
weather. Maybe just to the island  
and back again. It's Maddie's  
call. It's her birthday run.

MADDIE  
(through the window)  
Depends on how much I barf.

BETH  
Maddie McNabb!!

MADDIE  
Love you.

BETH  
(with a laugh)  
Love you too.

Joseph waves to his wife before pulling out of the yard,  
boat in tow.

Maddie blows a kiss.

Beth instinctively blows one back.

CUT TO:

INT. MCNABB HOUSE - DAY - FEBRUARY 13

IN THE MASTER BEDROOM

Beth disappears into the ensuite. We hear BATH WATER  
RUNNING INTO A TUB. She comes back into the bedroom and  
sits wearily down on the edge of the bed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

On the night stand is a family picture taken in Moscow of a younger Beth and Joseph with three year-old Maddie holding onto their hands and six year-old Bobbie grinning proudly at his new little sister.

Beth fingers the picture and smiles.

She heads to the bathroom, disrobing as she does so. She starts singing the theme to Gilligan's Island once again, and then stops, laughing at herself as she closes the door to the ensuite.

CUT TO:

EXT. STRAIT OF GEORGIA - ON THE BAYLINER BOAT - FEBRUARY  
13 - LATER

The McNabb's Bayliner heads north along the coast.

MADDIE'S POV: EVERYTHING IS BLACK. WE HEAR THE THRUM OF THE BOAT'S ENGINE, THE WIND IN OUR EARS, THE SLICE OF THE HULL AGAINST THE WAVES.

Maddie and her dog hang their heads around the corner of the cabin, over the rails, lapping up the smells and the taste of the sea as the wind lashes against them.

MADDIE

Woohoo!

The dog BARKS.

Maddie laughs. Her father laughs with her.

Joseph checks his location on the GPS and does a quick double check on the weather.

The sky to the northeast is dark; sheets of rain are visible.

JOSEPH

Maddie? There's quite a storm coming. We're going to have to turn around soon.

MADDIE

I know, I can smell it, but not yet, Dad. Please. The Dawn Treader can handle it.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

JOSEPH  
 Alright, another twenty minutes,  
 and then we head for home.

Maddie resumes hanging her head over the side.

CUT TO:

INT. MCNABB HOUSE - DAY - FEBRUARY 13 - LATER  
 IN THE MASTER BEDROOM

Beth tosses and turns in bed. She kicks at the covers.

She rolls over and looks at the clock. It's 3:00 pm. She groans and rolls back over.

CUT TO:

EXT. STRAIT OF GEORGIA - FEBRUARY 13 - STORM SEQUENCE

A fishing trawler bounces over the waves, slicing through the swollen and angry sea as the storm builds to hurricane force. The trawler's name is the My Fair Lady.

CUT TO:

EXT. PETE TRAWLER - FEBRUARY 13 - STORM SEQUENCE

Aboard the trawler is the Pete family (Haida/Native): Grandfather, BEN, 60, son, GEORGE, 38, and grandson, AUGUST, 14. August is a handsome, athletic young man with close cropped hair. He is mature for his age.

Through the windshield, we see BEN at the helm.

GEORGE and AUGUST, in yellow slickers, fight to secure the rigging and haul in the last net as the waves toss the boat about.

CUT TO:

EXT. STRAIT OF GEORGIA - FEBRUARY 13 - STORM SEQUENCE

The McNabb's Bayliner comes into view. The Bayliner pulls up alongside the Pete trawler, keeping a safe distance.

CUT TO:

EXT. PETE TRAWLER - FEBRUARY 13 - STORM SEQUENCE -  
CONTINUOUS

August stumbles towards the bridge, slips and tumbles  
across the deck, his safety line snapping taught.

George rushes for his son. He falls, his own line keeping  
him from going over-board. He races to his son and hauls  
him onto his feet. He points at the cabin. August nods  
and stumbles towards the bridge.

August reaches for the door, unfastens his safety line  
and starts to step inside.

CUT TO:

INT. MCNABB BOAT - FEBRUARY 13 - STORM SEQUENCE -  
CONTINUOUS

JOSEPH  
(picking up the radio  
mike)  
My Fair Lady, this is the Dawn  
Treader. Do you need assistance?  
Over.

BEN (V.O.)  
(through a static  
connection)  
My Fair Lady. No, we're good.  
Thanks, Dawn Treader.

JOSEPH  
You want me to stay off your  
starboard for awhile? This storm's  
way worse than it was supposed to  
be.

BEN (V.O.)  
Chatter is they've named her.

Joseph glances at his daughter.

JOSEPH  
That's not good.

MADDIE  
(hanging on to the  
back of her dad's  
chair)  
What isn't good, Dad?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOSEPH

They only name hurricanes.

The radio CRACKLES.

BEN (V.O.)

We're high tailing it for the fish plant. You should come with us?

JOSEPH

Thanks, we've got to get back to the mainland.

BEN (V.O.)

Plant's closer.

JOSEPH

(To Maddie)

He's right. Be safer.

MADDIE

I'm good. You're the skipper.

JOSEPH

We'll follow you in.

The radio CACKLES TWICE.

CUT TO:

EXT. STRAIT OF GEORGIA - FEBRUARY 13 - STORM SEQUENCE - CONTINUOUS

The trawler and Bayliner are hammered by the now hurricane force winds.

CUT TO:

EXT. PETE TRAWLER - FEBRUARY 13 - STORM SEQUENCE - CONTINUOUS

George walks spread-eagled to the bridge.

The boat slams into a wave.

George slides across the deck, screaming. He slams into the gunwhale, breaking his arm, his safety line snapping taught.

August runs to save his father. He forgets to snap on his safety line.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE  
August! Safety Line!

Too late, August turns, reaches for the line, but the boat pitches. He falls and slides across the deck. His father grabs his hand, but his father can't hold on, and August slips overboard into the raging sea.

CUT TO:

EXT. STRAIT OF GEORGIA - FEBRUARY 13 - STORM SEQUENCE -  
CONTINUOUS

August flails in the water. He tugs on his life vest's handle and it inflates.

AUGUST POV: HE SEES HIS FATHER'S HAND REACHING FOR HIM OVER THE SIDE OF THE BOAT. THE LIGHTS IN THE TRAWLER'S CABIN BLINK ON AND OFF AS THE WAVES APPEAR TO SWALLOW UP THE TRAWLER.

CUT TO:

EXT. PETE TRAWLER - FEBRUARY 13 - STORM SEQUENCE -  
CONTINUOUS

Ben races onto the deck, snapping his safety line in place as he does so. He runs to George, grabbing hold of his injured son.

BEN  
(screaming into the  
wind and rain)  
Where's August?

GEORGE  
Over-board.

Ben is silent as he helps George to his feet. They stumble towards the bridge just as...The Bayliner hurtles towards them on a collision course.

CUT TO:

INT. MCNABB BOAT - FEBRUARY 13 - STORM SEQUENCE -  
CONTINUOUS

Too late, Joseph sees the trawler adrift with two men on deck. He spins the wheel, trying to avoid them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE SCREEN GOES BLACK

MADDIE'S POV: WE HEAR THE CRUNCH OF METAL AS THE TWO BOATS COLLIDE AND MADDIE'S SHARP GROAN AS SHE COLLIDES WITH THE CAPTAIN'S CHAIR.

MADDIE

DADDY????

JOSEPH

(To Maddie)

S'okay, honey.

(Into the radio)

Mayday, Mayday, Mayday. This is The Dawn Treader. Dawn Treader and My Fair Lady are going down. We're just off the southern tip of Texada Island. Mayday, Mayday, Mayday.

THE BOAT GROANS AND CREAKS AS IT LISTS SIDEWAYS.

BACK ON THE BRIDGE OF THE BAYLINER

Joseph scrambles to get Maddie into a survival suit.

The radio CRACKLES.

JOSEPH

Maddie, help me out here.

MADDIE

Dad! What's happening?

JOSEPH

We're going down, honey. You'll be alright in this. Zip up.

Maddie helps get into the suit as best she can.

MADDIE

What about Sammy?

JOSEPH

Sammy's got her life jacket on. Piece of cake for her. Remember how much she loves the water?

The dog whimpers.

Joseph inflates his daughter's life vest.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MADDIE

Daddy, I'm scared.

JOSEPH

Help's coming, honey, and I'm with you. What's the number one rule?

MADDIE

(sniffling)

Never, ever give up.

JOSEPH

That's right.

RADIO OPERATOR (V.O.)

Dawn Treader. (CRACKLE/STATIC)  
What's your (STATIC) Say Again.  
Over.

A wave hits the boat. The boat tips sideways. Joseph is knocked unconscious against the bulkhead.

MADDIE

DAD!

Another wave hits. Maddie and her dog are thrown overboard into the sea.

CUT TO:

EXT. STRAIT OF GEORGIA - FEBRUARY 13 - STORM SEQUENCE -  
CONTINUOUS

Maddie treads water, the survival suit and life jacket helping her stay afloat. She spits out sea water.

MADDIE'S POV: THE WORLD IS BLACK. WE HEAR ONLY THE ROAR OF THE STORM, THE WAVES SLAMMING INTO THE BOAT, AND THE PANTING OF A DOG AS IT SWIMS TOWARDS HER.

MADDIE

DAD! DADDY! SAMMY!

The dog swims towards a terrified Maddie as she bobs in the water. Maddie wraps an arm around the dog. The dog pulls her into open water.

There is a fleeting glimpse of a life raft bobbing up and down on the swells, but Maddie can't see it.

ON THE RAFT

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEN  
AUGUST!

GEORGE  
AUGUST!

Ben and George search the waves for any sign of the boy. They spot an object in the sea and paddle as hard as they can towards it. They discover the unconscious form of Joseph McNabb and haul him into the boat.

CUT TO:

EXT. STRAIT OF GEORGIA - FEBRUARY 13 - DUSK

On the horizon, a life raft bobs. Inside the raft are a comatose Joseph with a bloody laceration on his head, and George and Ben Pete. George nurses a broken arm.

A Coast Guard cutter approaches.

CUT TO:

INT. COAST GUARD CUTTER - FEBRUARY 13 - DUSK

TWO COAST GUARD CREWMAN wrap Ben and George Pete in blankets IN THE FIRST AID ROOM. Joseph is tied into a stretcher, another CREWMAN takes his vitals.

GEORGE  
(nodding towards  
Joseph)  
Will he make it?

CREWMAN 1  
He's alive.

GEORGE  
That's not what I asked.

CREWMAN 2  
Honestly, I don't know.

CREWMAN 1  
He's in a coma, right now.

BEN  
Any news about my son?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CREWMAN 1  
The hovercraft is on scene.  
They'll find him, sir.

Ben and George fall silent.

CUT TO:

INT. MCNABB HOUSE - FEBRUARY 13 - NIGHT

IN THE MASTER BEDROOM

Beth is startled awake by a nightmare. She flips on a light and then looks at the clock. 8:00 pm.

She tugs on a nightgown.

BETH RACES DOWN THE STAIRS AND INTO THE LIVING ROOM  
FLIPPING ON LIGHTS AS SHE GOES.

Beth looks out the front window. No boat. No truck. No van.

BETH RUNS TO THE KITCHEN

She grabs her cell phone off the kitchen table. Maddie's phone, wrapped in a pink case with a unicorn sticker on it, sits on the table beside hers. She picks up her daughter's phone and then puts it back down. She dials her husband's cell. It goes to voice mail.

JOSEPH (V.O.)  
You've reached Joseph McNabb of  
McNabb Electric. Leave a message  
and I'll call you back.

BETH  
Honey? Where are you? Please call  
me, okay? The sky is falling, you  
know.

She tries to call her son. It too goes to voice mail.

BOBBIE (V.O.)  
You know what to do.

BETH  
Bobbie, it's mum. Have you heard  
from your dad or your sister? They  
aren't home yet and I'm worried  
sick. Call me, okay? Thanks, baby.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

Beth paces back and forth in the kitchen. The phones are silent.

She shakily picks up the land line and dials 911.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - FEBRUARY 13 - NIGHT

IN THE ER

Joseph is hooked up to a bank of monitors. A NURSE hovers over his still form, monitoring his vitals.

Across from Joseph sits George and Ben on hospital beds, waiting to be discharged, bruised and bandaged. George's arm is in a sling.

An RCMP officer walks in.

RCMP OFFICER

George and Ben Pete?

GEORGE

Yep.

BEN

Found my son yet?

RCMP OFFICER

No, sir, but we're still looking.

Ben is grief-stricken. The odds are against his son.

Beth races into the room, Bobbie at her side. They race to Joseph's bedside.

BETH

(crying)

Joseph! Oh, my God.

BOBBIE

(equally shaken)

Dad.

NURSE

Your husband is stable right now.  
I'll tell the doctor you're here  
and he'll explain more.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BETH  
(weakly)  
Thanks.

The nurse leaves.

RCMP OFFICER  
Mrs McNabb?

BETH  
(through tears)  
Officer.

RCMP OFFICER  
Your husband's lucky. The Petes  
found him.

BETH  
(noticing George and  
Ben for the first  
time)  
Thank you, thank you so much.

BEN  
You're welcome.

GEORGE  
You're husband's a strong man.  
He'll come around.

BETH  
Where's Maddie? I guess they  
wouldn't allow Sammy in?

RCMP OFFICER  
Who's Maddie and Sammy?

BETH  
(crumpling)  
Oh, no. Oh, no!

BOBBIE  
My sister. Her name is Maddie.  
Sammy is her guide dog.

GEORGE  
Oh, Lord have mercy.

BEN  
We didn't know there was anyone  
else.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GEORGE  
We didn't see your daughter.

BEN  
Or a dog.

RCMP OFFICER  
(into his shoulder  
radio)  
Dispatch? Dispatch, contact Coast  
Guard...

Beth wails and collapses to the floor.

Bobbie, Ben and the RCMP officer rush to her aid.

The nurse runs back into the room.

CUT TO:

EXT. JEDIDIAH ISLAND - BEACH CLOSE TO FARMHOUSE - DUSK -  
FEBRUARY 13

*Note: While this story takes place on Jedidiah Island off  
the coast of British Columbia, any rugged west coast  
island or promontory can be used to film.*

Jedidiah Island is a rugged island about 2 km long and  
0.5 km wide, nestled between Lasqueti and Texada Islands,  
midway between the mainland and Vancouver Island. It was  
donated to BC Provincial Parks in the early 1990's. It is  
a popular destination for boaters. The island has two  
abandoned homes, a farmhouse and a homestead. There is a  
small population of wild sheep and goats, plus one  
Quarter Horse, Will(now deceased).

ON THE BEACH

An exhausted Maddie drags herself up onto the beach close  
to the farmhouse. Rain pounds against the wind lashed  
coast and the shivering blind girl.

BARKING is heard over the WIND.

MADDIE  
(croak)  
Sammy!

The dog rushes to her side and kisses her face.

Maddie cries tears of joy and then slips into  
unconsciousness.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The dog whimpers and lies down beside her, using its body to warm the lost girl.

CUT TO:

EXT. JEDIDIAH ISLAND - NORTH END OF ISLAND - BEACH CLOSE TO HOMESTEAD - DUSK - FEBRUARY 13

Farther up the island's coastline, August Pete washes up on shore. He appears dead until he slowly opens his eyes. He groans and drags himself onto the beach.

CUT TO:

EXT. JEDIDIAH ISLAND - BEACH CLOSE TO FARMHOUSE - DUSK - FEBRUARY 13

A light drizzle rains down on Maddie.

A steady CLIP-CLOP sound is heard.

The dog looks up and whines. Her tail wags.

DOGS POV: A HUGE HORSE'S HEAD LOOMS OUT OF THE MIST.

The old horse walks towards the dog and unconscious girl. Dog and horse sniff.

THE HORSE AND DOG STAND SENTINEL OVER THE GIRL.

CUT TO:

EXT. JEDIDIAH ISLAND - NORTH END OF ISLAND - BEACH CLOSE TO HOMESTEAD - DUSK - FEBRUARY 13

AT THE BEACH

August staggers to his feet, beating himself around the chest with his arms. Hypothermia has set in. He shivers uncontrollably. He is soaking wet.

He slips away from the beach and walks a short ways inland. He finds a tall fir tree and crawls beneath its boughs.

BENEATH THE TREE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

August tugs off his wet boots and rain jacket. He digs into the drier earth and needles beneath the tree and piles the debris over his body. He then tugs the rain suit over his body and curls into a ball.

HE HUMS A PRAYER TO his ancestors.

August closes his eyes and lets the darkness engulf him.

CUT TO:

EXT. STRAIT OF GEORGIA - FEBRUARY 13 - DUSK

A Coast Guard cutter continues its search. They pass by Jedidiah Island.

CUT TO:

INT. COAST GUARD CUTTER - FEBRUARY 13 - DUSK - CONTINUOUS

ON THE BRIDGE, THE CAPTAIN and TWO CREWMAN search the waves and shoreline.

CREWMAN THREE  
(looking through  
binoculars)  
There's old Will. I can just see  
his silhouette.

CAPTAIN  
The horse?

CREWMAN THREE  
Yep. He's standing on shore  
watching us.

CAPTAIN  
Poor old fellow, probably wishes  
we were picking him up.

CREWMAN THREE  
Probably does.

A radio call comes in. The captain takes it. He listens.

CAPTAIN  
Couple trawlers on the mainland  
side of Texada say they've found a  
debris field. Let's go.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The crewmen tuck away their binoculars as the boat turns and heads off in another direction.

CUT TO:

EXT. JEDIDIAH ISLAND - BEACH CLOSE TO FARMHOUSE - DUSK - FEBRUARY 13

The coastline is desolate, the storm battering the island.

Maddie and the dog are curled up beneath the horse's belly. The horse uses his body to shield Maddie and the dog from the storm, but he also shields them from view.

CUT TO:

EXT. JEDIDIAH ISLAND - NORTH END OF ISLAND - BEACH CLOSE TO HOMESTEAD - DUSK - FEBRUARY 13

ON THE STRAIT

The Coast Guard cutter cruises by the island.

ON SHORE

August sleeps beneath the fir tree, hidden from view, his body half buried in the earth.

CUT TO:

EXT. JEDIDIAH ISLAND - BEACH CLOSE TO FARMHOUSE - MORNING - FEBRUARY 14

It is a dismal, drizzly day. Maddie awakens to find the horse and dog gone. She is cold, alone and lost. Maddie stands up, a blind girl on a strange island.

Behind her, a smattering of debris from the boat wreckage is washing up on the incoming tide. There is a thermos, a small cooler packed with sandwiches, a lone orange, a life jacket, and a plastic jug of water.

Ahead of her, up a narrow slope, is an abandoned old farmhouse. The farmhouse is deserted, a couple of windows broken, but a couple are still intact.

On the stoney beach below the slope leading to the farmhouse, numerous Inukshuks (stone cairns in the symbol of a man) have been built by visitors to the island.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MADDIE  
(panicky)  
DAD! DAD! SAMMY! SAMMY, COME!

Maddie frantically WHISTLES for her dog.

Her hands tremble. She moves from side to side, trying to get warm. Tears stream down her face.

MADDIE  
SAMMY!

MADDIE'S POV: WE HEAR THE WIND ON THE WAVES, THE EXCITED BARKING OF THE DOG AND CLIP CLOP OF GALLOPING HOOVES ON SAND.

MADDIE  
What on earth?

The dog runs across the beach towards Maddie, the horse trotting along behind it.

MADDIE  
(reaching tentatively  
out for the horse)  
Who did you bring with you, Sammy?

Maddie grins, her hand touching the horse's nose and then instantly pulling away.

MADDIE  
Oh, my gosh. It's a horse!

The horse snuffles her arm and pockets. Maddie rubs its nose.

The dog spots the orange bouncing on the waves. The dog bobs for the orange in the surf. The dog, on catching the orange, plunks it down at her feet, but Maddie doesn't see it.

Maddie lets her hands rove over the horse's body. She is familiar with horses.

MADDIE (CONT'D)  
(excitedly)  
Wow, you're a lot bigger than Smokey. Smokey's the pony I hang out a couple times a week... Wait a minute, if you're here, then you must have a stable too, which means you must have an owner!  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MADDIE (CONT'D)

Can you take me to him, big fella?  
Maybe he can help me find my dad.

The horse turns and starts walking away.

Maddie reaches a hand out for Sammy. The dog moves to her side, picking up the orange as it does so.

Maddie carefully follows the horse, the guide dog leading her, one arm out in front of her as she doesn't have a cane, across the sandy beach, over the rocks, and to the old farmhouse.

Maddie stumbles and falls twice, but gets up after each tumble and motors on.

CUT TO:

EXT. JEDIDIAH ISLAND - NORTH END OF ISLAND - BEACH CLOSE  
TO HOMESTEAD - MORNING - FEBRUARY 14

On the other side of the island, August is hard at work building a signal fire on the beach, but the rain makes it smolder. He has a mound of mussels, clams, and seaweed fronds at his feet.

He coaxes a flame into life, and then breaks the clam and mussel shells open with a rock, before placing them on a stick to slow roast over the coals. He dries the seaweed fronds on a rock.

August eats in silence.

He looks out to sea. There are no boats on the horizon, no signs of rescue.

He is a lonely and desolate figure.

CUT TO:

EXT. FARMHOUSE - MORNING - FEBRUARY 14

A herd of wild sheep and goats scatter into the trees when Maddie, Sammy and the horse, mount the rocky incline up to the farmhouse.

The guide dog steers Maddie towards the porch.

Maddie puts out a hand. She finds the side of the abandoned farmhouse and feels her way around it to the front door.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

MADDIE

Hello? Hello in the house? Is  
anybody there? I need help.

No one answers.

Maddie KNOCKS on the front door.

MADDIE

Hello? Anyone? Please, I need  
help.

Maddie turns the handle. The door CREAKS open.

MADDIE

I'm sorry, but the door was open  
and I need help. Please, someone  
answer me.

Maddie stops in the doorway.

She puts up a hand, feeling and smelling the dusty  
emptiness of the house inside.

CUT TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE - MORNING - FEBRUARY 14

The living room and kitchen are one open room. There is  
no furniture. Dust is everywhere. There is mouse and rat  
droppings in the corners, spider webs hang from the  
ceiling. A stone fireplace with old burnt logs lines one  
wall of the living room.

In the kitchen, an old straw broom is propped up against  
the wall. A couple of battered steel pots hang on wall  
pegs. There is a kitchen sink with no faucets. There is  
no stove or fridge.

Maddie walks into the abandoned farmhouse, the dog  
sticking to her like glue. Floorboards CREAK.

Maddie, one hand outstretched and one hand on the dog's  
back for guidance, walks around the empty living room.  
There is no furniture to bump into.

MADDIE

It's empty. It's an empty house,  
isn't it Sammy?

The dog drops the orange and BARKS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Maddie's spirits sink. She is hungry and cold.

She crumbles to her knees and starts to sob. The dog licks her face.

MADDIE

At least I have you, eh, Sammy?  
And we're out of the rain.

The dog whines and then lifts up the orange and drops it in her lap.

MADDIE

What's this?

She sniffs the orange, and starts to laugh, rubbing the dog's head. She peels the orange and eats it.

MADDIE

I don't know where you found this,  
but if you find more, you know  
what to do. Problem is that I've  
nothing for you.

(finishing the  
orange)

Maybe the horse lives somewhere  
else? Maybe he'll bring someone  
back to find us? I hope so. I'm  
scared, Sammy, really scared.

Maddie dries her tears and stands up. She has to survive.  
There is nothing else to do.

MADDIE

Rule number one: never, ever give  
up. Think, Maddie, think! What  
would Dad have me do, Sam?

She carefully walks around the empty farmhouse, through  
the dusty rooms to the kitchen.

IN THE KITCHEN

She discovers the broom and BANGS it on the floor,  
breaking the old straw from the base.

MADDIE

Yes! My new cane.

She explores the rest of the kitchen, finding a couple of  
dented pots hanging on the wall and a scattering of  
utensils in one drawer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

She is startled by a RUSTLING behind her. She swings around, holding the cane like a sword. The dog GROWLS a warning.

MADDIE

Who is it? Who's there?

A large rat skitters away into a hole in the wall. The dog gives chase.

MADDIE

Get that mouse, Sammy!

She waits for a minute, waiting for the dog to settle, and then walks back into the living room, sweeping the cane back and forth in front of her.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

She feels her way to the stone fireplace. She knows how to light a fire. Her father taught her.

She feels around the mantle until she finds an ancient pack of stick matches.

She puts her hand into the fireplace, feeling for the draft, so that she knows when the flume is open. She then runs her hands over the whole fireplace, feeling the dusty burnt coals, and continues her search to see if wood has been left on the floor close to it.

Her teeth chatter. No luck.

MADDIE

I am sooooo cold, Sammy. We're going to have to go back to the beach to dig us up some clams for breakfast.

Maddie returns to the kitchen where she gathers up the two pots.

MADDIE

(nervously)

That's what we'll do, Sam. We'll make like we're camping. I can handle that. One step at a time, eh? Dad will find us soon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CUT TO:

EXT. FARMHOUSE - MORNING - FEBRUARY 14

Maddie places one pot on a rock just outside the doorway to collect rainwater.

She gathers up the dog. The horse pushes his way in for a hug. She giggles.

MADDIE  
(cradling the horse's  
head in her arms)  
You are a lovey-dovey fellow,  
aren't you? I almost forgot, it's  
Valentine's Day and my birthday.  
Some birthday, huh? How about I  
call you Valentino? What do you  
think?

The horse snuffles her pockets once again.

MADDIE  
Sorry, no treats. You'd have to  
fight me for them anyway.

The dog BARKS and WHINES.

MADDIE  
(heading off towards  
the beach, the pot  
tucked under one  
arm)  
Sammy too.

Maddie leans into the wind and rain.

CUT TO:

EXT. JEDIDIAH ISLAND - BEACH CLOSE TO FARMHOUSE -  
AFTERNOON - FEBRUARY 14

Maddie crouches on the rocky section of the beach at the high tide mark building an Inukshuk. She places one stone on top of the other, balancing them until they look like the image of a stone man.

The tide is high. She can't go clamming.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MADDIE  
(To the dog and  
horse)  
Don't you guys go knocking my  
Inukshuk over. If Dad sees it,  
he'll know where to find us.

She carefully places the final stone atop the stone arms.

The tide washes a thermos in, it bumps against her boot. She lifts it up and undoes the top. She sniffs and takes a sip of tea.

MADDIE  
Whoohoo!

Maddie greedily gulps down the tea.

The dog BARKS. The dog has found a cooler floating on the tide. The dog chases it until she catches it, and then deposits it in front of Maddie.

Maddie opens up the cooler and discovers two ham sandwiches, an apple and Sammy's baggie of kibble and milk bones.

MADDIE  
Oh, my gosh, it's ours. Thank you,  
God. Thank you, Mom. Good girl,  
Sammy. Find some more! Go! Go!

The dog races off and carries back a water bottle.

MADDIE  
What a good dog! Skip that. What a  
GREAT dog, you are.

Maddie gives the dog a milk bone and then gathers the pot, thermos, water bottle and cooler into her arms and stands up. She is beside herself with joy.

She cautiously makes her way up the rocks, heading back towards the farmhouse.

IN EITHER DIRECTION: INUKSHUKS STRETCH ACROSS THE  
CRESCENT OF BEACH, MADDIE'S JUST ONE OF MANY.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CUT TO:

EXT. FARMHOUSE - AFTERNOON - FEBRUARY 14 - LATER

The wind picks up and the temperature drops.

Maddie emerges from the farmhouse and stands in silhouette against the open door. She tugs the door half shut behind her. We can see her breath in front of her face.

MADDIE  
(faking throwing a  
stick)  
Sammy, go find the stick!

The dog runs into the brush, tail wagging.

MADDIE  
Good dog, find the stick!

The dog races back with a stick in its mouth and then drops it at Maddie's feet.

Maddie gives the dog a portion of a milk bone. While the dog is eating, she tosses the stick into the house, making sure the dog doesn't see it.

She then imitates throwing another stick.

MADDIE  
Go get it! Get the stick!

The dog bounces off in search of the stick again. Maddie smiles with mischief.

The horse watches the dog run back and forth into the bush, as if in amusement.

CUT TO:

EXT. JEDIDIAH ISLAND - NORTH END OF ISLAND - BEACH CLOSE  
TO HOMESTEAD - LATE AFTERNOON - FEBRUARY 14

AT HIS SHELTER

August builds up his shelter. He adds more tree limbs to the already thick screen of boughs, creating a wall of limbs at the base of the old fir tree that he slept under.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He pinches some tiny fir buds off of the ends of a fir branch and eats them.

ON THE WIND, A FAINT ECHO OF A DOG'S BARK IS HEARD.

He stops abruptly and listens.

ONLY THE WIND IN THE TREES AND THE WAVES BREAKING ON THE ROCKY BEACH ARE HEARD.

August returns to the beach.

AT THE BEACH

The area around the fire pit is littered with broken clam and mussel shells. He grabs a burning limb from his signal fire. He returns to his shelter.

INSIDE HIS SHELTER

He scoops away the earth, making a tiny fire pit, and then places the smoldering brand atop a bank of dried kindling, blowing on it gently to coax the flames to life.

He rolls onto his back and looks up at the tree's limbs, stretching higher and higher above him.

CUT TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE - EVENING - FEBRUARY 14

Maddie works hard to get a small fire going: blowing softly on a small teepee of sticks and moss while holding a match underneath them. It takes a couple of tries for the fire to crackle into life.

The dog is silent. Maddie ruffles her fur.

Beside her is a stack of sticks and broken tree limbs.

She settles down on the floor and checks the cooler. There are only two sandwiches inside.

MADDIE

We're going to have to be careful,  
Sammy. I know Dad's going to find  
us, but better to be safe than  
sorry.

She gives half of one sandwich to the dog and eats the other half herself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She closes the cooler and leans back, enjoying the warmth from the fire.

WE HEAR THE WIND HOWLING AND RAIN BEATING DOWN ON THE ROOF.

The horse pokes his head through the broken window. He is soaking wet.

MADDIE

Valie? Is that you?

The horse SNORTS and then pulls his head back through the window. We hear the CLIP CLOP of his hooves as he leave.

Maddie curls up around the dog and closes her eyes.

MADDIE

(murmuring to the  
dog)

I don't know why Valentino hasn't  
gone home yet. Maybe he's alone  
too.

The dog thumps its tail.

CUT TO:

EXT. JEDIDIAH ISLAND - NORTH END OF ISLAND - BEACH CLOSE  
TO HOMESTEAD - EVENING - FEBRUARY 14

AT THE BEACH

Waves pound the shore. The WIND SHRIEKS. Rain drives in a sheet.

AT THE SHELTER

The small flames of the flickering fire can be seen  
beneath the boughs of the ancient fir tree.

BENEATH THE TREE

August is curled around the warmth of the tiny fire like  
a sleeping cat. Cedar fronds blanket his lower body.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - FEBRUARY 14 - NIGHT

Beth McNabb is curled around her comatose husband on the hospital bed. She hugs him to her breast.

A NURSE comes in and checks Joseph's vitals, careful not to disturb the sleeping Beth.

The nurse smiles and leaves the room, closing the door behind her.

CUT TO:

INT. MCNABB HOUSE - FEBRUARY 14 - NIGHT

IN THE KITCHEN

Bobbie McNabb sleeps at the kitchen table with his head on his arms.

There are a dozen birthday presents for Maddie stacked up on the table, a Valentine's Day chocolate box, and a dozen red roses in a vase. The card on the roses reads: 'DID I TELL YOU HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU YET TODAY?'.

CUT TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE - MORNING - FEBRUARY 15

Maddie yawns and stretches, stiff and sore from sleeping on the bare floor. Propped against the wall behind her is her makeshift a cane. The mound of dried sticks and broken logs pushed off to one side of the fireplace is much smaller than the night before.

Her dog nuzzles her. She smiles and strokes the dog's head.

The fire is out. It is damp and cold.

Maddie sits up. She opens the cooler and then shares part of the last sandwich with the dog. She holds onto the apple for lunch.

She reaches back in the cooler and pulls out the baggie of milk bones and kibble. She rations out a small portion of kibble and gives the dog one milk bone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She sips water from the water jug and then pours some into her hand for the dog to drink.

MADDIE

Let's hope Dad comes today, Sammy.  
Half a stale sandwich for  
breakfast just doesn't cut it.

The dog gets up and runs for the door. The dog scratches at the closed door.

MADDIE

Have to go, pee? I hear you.

Maddie stands up, reaches for the walking stick, and then makes her way to the door. She knows the house now: how many steps to the kitchen, how many to the door.

Maddie lets the dog out, and then TAP, TAPS her way with the stick to the kitchen. She retrieves a pot and then heads for the front door.

CUT TO:

EXT. FARMHOUSE - MORNING - FEBRUARY 15

Maddie squats behind a tree, peeing a few metres away from the house. The dog rests close by. The pot is on the ground beside her.

She bobs up and down a couple of times, to get rid of drips, and then stands up, yanking her pants up as she does so.

MADDIE

(to the dog)  
Wonder where Valentino is this  
morning?

She WHISTLES.

No horse.

MADDIE

(picking up the pot)  
Guess he's busy somewhere else.  
Probably having his breakfast too.

Maddie and the dog head off towards the beach.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUT TO:

EXT. JEDIDIAH ISLAND - BEACH CLOSE TO FARMHOUSE - MORNING  
- FEBRUARY 15

ON THE STRAIT

Mist hangs in the air. The mainland and other islands are shrouded in grey. Sounds are muffled.

The water is calm.

ON THE BEACH

A lone figure, Maddie, digs for clams and mussels, the battered pot at her side is almost full. Her dog helps her dig, sand flying in every direction.

Sand hits her in the face. She wipes it away with a giggle.

She sits back on her haunches, staring sightlessly out at the water, straining to listen for signs of a rescue boat or plane, but she hears nothing.

She stands up and turns towards the farmhouse. She walks slowly towards it as if the weight of the world were upon her.

CUT TO:

EXT. JEDIDIAH ISLAND - NORTH END OF ISLAND - BEACH CLOSE  
TO HOMESTEAD - EVENING - FEBRUARY 15

IN HIS SHELTER

August awakens. His stomach GROWLS.

He warms his hands over the smoldering coals of his fire, adding a few sticks to coax it back to life. He makes a small breakfast of muscles, clams and seaweed jerky.

Once done eating, he douses the flames with earth, making sure the fire is out.

OUTSIDE THE SHELTER

August looks out to sea. He is stoic and resigned to his situation.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

August faces the east towards a rising sun that he cannot see. He closes his eyes to envision the sun.

He begins the Haida Prayer: *He raises his hands thumb tips touching and index fingertips touching, forming a triangle, and then moves his hands downward from shoulder to shoulder, by the heart and to the groin, and then back up repeating this prayer.*

AUGUST

Big Spirit, I ask for:  
The STRENGTH to be Strong enough  
to be Weak,  
The COURAGE to be Tall enough to  
not be Small,  
The CLEAR VISION to see Where I  
have Been,  
The GUIDANCE to take me where I am  
Going,  
and the PROTECTION I need on my  
Journey.

He completes the prayer and then looks south down the beach, and then north. He picks up a stick that is bulbous on one end and pointed on the other. He twirls it in his hand and then drops it. The pointed end points north, in the opposite direction from Maddie's farmhouse.

August takes a couple of pieces of driftwood and makes an arrow pointing north, the direction he is about to walk.

He searches for signs of a rescue boat once more, before walking away.

CUT TO:

EXT. JEDIDIAH ISLAND - NORTH END OF ISLAND - MORNING -  
FEBRUARY 15

August journeys onward, up a rocky incline and then down a slope. He stops and sips water off of a tree leaf along the way.

He resumes his walk around the northern tip of the island until he finds a meandering walking trail.

He startles a herd of wild sheep and goats on the trail. He quickens his step.

(CONTINUED)