

ORIGAMI

teleplay by

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FADE IN

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

SILENCE. A darkened room, starkly furnished. Barely discernible is the silhouette of a figure, kneeling motionless in the center of the room. Very slowly, the CAMERA PASSES the figure, moving towards a curtained window just behind it. The window is open, its raised sash forms a perfect square. The curtains shift slightly, as if nudged by a breeze. The CAMERA MOVES CLOSER AND CLOSER to the window, as if about to exit through it. The movement of the curtains subsides to an eerie stillness.

Suddenly, a BLAST of wind, the curtain lashes out violently--

INSTANT FADE OUT.

A TELEPHONE RINGS in the distance. The rings become louder and louder.

VOICE

Wait, I'm coming!

A rush of FOOTSTEPS down stairs. They are light and quick.

FADE IN:

INT. MATSUOKA HOUSE - MORNING (MID-1970'S)

The kitchen phone is RINGING. 17 year old KAY MATSUOKA, dressed for school, rushes towards the phone and grabs it.

KAY

Hello.

(pause)

No, he's not home right now.

(pause)

Yes, she's here somewhere--hold on.

(yells out)

Mom!

Kay waits a few seconds, then returns to the line.

KAY (CONT.)

I'm sorry, she's around, but I can't find her. May I take a message?

She fumbles around for a pencil and pad of paper while listening. Suddenly, her searching stops and her expression changes.

MIMI (O.S.)

Who is that?

KAY

(hastily)

My mother's coming now--you can tell her.

MIMI, Kay's mother enters. Kay hands her the phone.

MIMI

Hurry up, you're going to be late for school. Don't forget your obento.

Kay gets her lunch, but lingers in the kitchen, watching Mimi.

MIMI

(into the phone)

Hello, this is Mrs. Matsuoka. Who?

(her tone alters)

Yes ...excuse me one moment.

(glances quickly at Kay)

Kay, you should get going.

KAY

Is it anything important?

MIMI

(nervously)

Go on. Hurry.

Kay departs. Mimi waits a few moments. There is the SOUND OF A DOOR SLAMMED SHUT.

MIMI (CONT.)

Yes, I'm back. When did she pass away?

CAMERA SLOWLY FOLLOWS the path Kay has taken, rounding the corner of the kitchen doorway to find her pressed against the wall, listening to her mother.

MIMI (O.S.)

(long pause, shaken)

But, why? Doesn't anyone know?

(pause)

Yes, I'll tell him right away. We'll come down as soon as possible. I apologize for all the trouble this must have caused you. Thank you. Goodbye.

ANGLE ON MIMI

Obviously distraught. CAMERA FOLLOWS Mimi as she comes out of the kitchen, agitated. The living room is empty. Mimi returns to the kitchen; there is the sound of DIALING.

MIMI (O.S.)

Hello, Tom? Oh, is Mr. Matsuoka there? Thank you.

CAMERA SLOWLY PANS to the figure of an exquisite, glass-encased Japanese doll with serene features then on to the fireplace mantelpiece where there are a number of photographs the CAMERA COMING TO REST UPON one, a black and white portrait of a young woman in her twenties in a kimono. As Mimi continues to SPEAK O.S. in muffled tones, there is the SOUND OF A DOOR QUIETLY BEING CLOSED.

INT. CLASSROOM - LATER THAT MORNING

The English teacher, MR. DELLAROSE, is handing out homework papers. Kay is among the students, the only non-Caucasian in the classroom. She stares into space, oblivious to the activity around her.

MR. DELLAROSE

John, Susan, Annamarie, Joseph,
Kay...

JOSEPH leans over to see Kay's grade.

JOSEPH

A-minus. You're slipping, Kay.

MR. DELLAROSE

Martin, Diane, Trevor..

TREVOR, a British exchange student is sitting directly behind Kay. Mr. Dellarose hands Trevor his paper with an expression that might say, I'm not sure if you're brilliant, pulling my leg, or certifiably insane. Trevor grins as if to say he's all three.

MR. DELLAROSE

Reading your first homework assignments was an illuminating and terrifying experience. I can only surmise that the minds of quite a few individuals here have been affected by too much sun this summer.

Door opens. CHIYO, an Asian girl enters uncertainly. The class quiets immediately, inspecting the newcomer.

MR. DELLAROSE

Hello, may I help you?

CHIYO

Is this English Four class?

MR. DELLAROSE

Yes it is.

CHIYO

I'm sorry I am late, I went to the wrong classroom. My name is Chiyo Nomura.

The students look at Chiyo, then at Kay, who glances at her briefly, then studiously ignores her.

MR. DELLAROSE

Oh yes. You're our exchange student from China.

CHIYO

Yes. Japan.

MR. DELLAROSE

Of course. Welcome to the class.
Please sit down. Charles, why don't
you be a gentleman and take one of
the back seats so that Chiyo--is that
right? Chiyo can sit closer to the
front.

Charles reluctantly lumbers out of his seat next to Kay and heads
towards the back of the classroom. Chiyo sits down. Kay gives her a
stiff smile, then turns her attention to Mr. Dellarose. Trevor leans
over towards Chiyo and holds out his hand.

TREVOR

Hello, my name is Trevor. I'm
another temporary tourist here.

Chiyo smiles uncertainly and shakes the proffered hand. The classroom
door opens and the PRINCIPAL enters. He confers with Mr. Dellarose,
glancing at Kay.

PRINCIPAL

Kay, would you come with me? You may
bring your things.

Kay gathers her books and bag and walks towards the door, as if she
already knows why she is being summoned.

The door closes behind Kay. The class BUZZES with speculation.

STUDENT (O.S.)

Maybe she's the one being exchanged.

ANOTHER STUDENT (O.S.)

(snickers)

Same make, different model.

MR. DELLAROSE

Quiet, class. Get out your Norton
Anthologies. Remember, you should be
thinking about the poems you're going
to recite by memory over the next few
weeks...the poems must be from the
anthology; you cannot use lyrics from
the Rolling Stones.

As Mr. Dellarose talks, Trevor observes the Principal speaking to Kay,
through the window of the closed door, putting his hand on her shoulder.
Kay nods stiffly, as if what he is saying doesn't terribly concern her.
They both depart, Kay glancing back at the classroom. For a brief
moment, she sees Trevor watching her. Trevor starts to smile, but she
has already gone.

EXT. PARK - LATER THAT DAY

Kay is sitting alone on a bench in a deserted park. She massages her
head as if to relieve a headache. She looks up at the sky.

KAY'S P.O.V. - OVERHANGING BRANCHES

of the trees wave in the wind.

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

MEMORY (EARLY 1960's)

(NOTE: This scene and all other memory scenes that follow throughout the teleplay are shot in black and white)

TODDLER'S P.O.V.- OVERHEAD BRANCHES

moving by, as if one were riding in a car, passing by trees, on a journey to an unknown destination. CAMERA FOLLOWS toddler's gaze as it drops, REVEALING the front dashboard of a '63 Ford. CAMERA PANS to the right to Mimi, a young mother in her late 20's, knitting. PANS to the left to Tom in his early 30's, at the drivers wheel, looking tense.

ANGLE ON KAY

as a toddler, desiring to see the world beyond the car's interior.

KAY'S P.O.V. - DASHBOARD OF CAR

CAMERA PANS up to see the tantalizing glimpses of the trees.

ANGLE ON KAY

As she attempts to stand up to get a better view.

TOM

Sit down!

Kay wavers, determined to stand.

TOM (CONT.)

Sit down!

Tom attempts to pull Kay to a sitting position, but she SHRIEKS ANGRILY and swats at him, falling against Mimi.

MIMI

She just wants to see the scenery.

TOM

What's there to see? Grass. Trees.
Road. She's seen it already.

MIMI

She's just curious.

TOM

She's going to get hurt.

Kay again attempts to stand.

TOM (CONT.)
 (harshly)
 Dame desu yo!

He pulls her down roughly, forcing her to sit.

ANGLE ON KAY'S FACE

She does not like this. She stares ahead resentfully.

KAY'S P.O.V. - the dashboard of the car.

CAMERA PANS UP to teasing glimpses of the treetops through the window. Suddenly, a paper airplane flies past, like a bird.

DISSOLVE TO:

PRESENT SCENE - ANGLE ON PAPER AIRPLANE

At Kay's feet. She picks it up. Trevor emerges from behind a tree. He peers about with exaggerated concern.

TREVOR
 Pardon me, but I seem to have misplaced my plane. You haven't seen a lightweight aircraft veering this way have you? I was just about to get in, when it rudely took off without me.

He pretends to see the paper airplane for the first time in Kay's hands.

TREVOR (CONT.)
 Oh! I see you've found it. Or perhaps it's found you.

Kay holds it out for him to take, but he turns away and begins pacing.

TREVOR (CONT.)
 (theatrically)
 Now, I suppose you think it is just yet another aerodynamical accident that this missile has landed at this very spot. But, fair nymph, all thy orisons, etc., this is no mere paper plane traveling randomly, aimlessly throughout the universe, it has a mission. Observe its banner.

KAY
 There is no banner.

TREVOR
 (rattled)
 No banner? But I--shit, it must have fallen off. How can...I know I...
 (MORE)

TREVOR (CONT.)

(sheepishly)

Oh, how embarrassing, I forgot to attach it.

In the manner of a magician, Trevor pulls from his sleeve a large, colorful and very long banner that the plane could not possibly have carried, and presents it to Kay. She reads it as it unrolls from his sleeve: *Unnervingly handsome, devastatingly intelligent, exceptionally modest British pub expert seeks clandestine soirees with Oriental female of equal qualities. Immediate response requested.*

KAY

Sorry, I don't think this is meant for me. Perhaps it's for that other "Oriental female" who seems to have landed here.

She hands back the banner and gathers her things and begins walking away. Trevor rushes after her.

TREVOR

Listen, Kay, I'm sorry if I've offended you in any way, this is my first week here, and perhaps chaps, uh, guys in the States ask girls out in a culturally different manner, I believe "Hey, whattareya doin' Saturday night?" is the more classically American approach, but I'm British and ignorant, okay? However, in the interest of totally immersing myself in the subtle nuances of American behavior and social customs, I beg to inquire:

(pause)

Whattareya doin' Saturday night?

He waits expectantly. Kay is flattered by his absurd antics to get her attention, but endeavors not to show it.

KAY

(flippantly)

I don't know. I may be going to a funeral.

Trevor is caught off-guard, less from Kay's response than at her deliberate indication that the funeral doesn't mean much to her.

TREVOR

I'm sorry to hear that.

Kay shrugs. Trevor assumes it must be someone she hardly knows, and relaxes.

TREVOR (CONT.)

(lightly)

It's not your usual Saturday night activity, I hope?

KAY

No, this is a special occasion.

TREVOR

May I inquire as to the identity of... the guest of honor?

KAY

My grandmother.

Trevor is taken aback by this news. He looks at Kay, trying to figure out why her grandmother's death means so little to her.

TREVOR

(cautiously)

I hope her passing was a peaceful one.

KAY

I don't know. I wasn't there.

TREVOR

Well, ah, I'm really very sorry to hear this.

KAY

Why? People die all the time.

(pause)

Don't you stay with the Leimgrubers?

TREVOR

Yes.

KAY

They live the other direction.

TREVOR

I thought I might walk you home.
Offer you support and comfort in this time of loss.

KAY

I don't need support and comfort.

TREVOR

I also thought I might find out exactly where you live, so when we go out some Saturday night when you're not otherwise engaged, I'll know where to pick you up.

Kay looks at him and cannot help smiling at his persistence.

INT. MATSUOKA HOUSE - DAY

Trevor glances about the living room. Kay watches. His gaze is caught by some photographs on the fireplace mantelpiece.

TREVOR

Is this your father with your mother?

KAY

Yes.

CLOSE ON COLOR PHOTO

a recent snapshot of Tom and Mimi at a social function.

TREVOR

Are they from Japan, or were they born here?

KAY

Born here. My grandparents came over. That's my grandfather. He died before I was born.

CLOSE ON BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO

a portrait of Grandfather in his fifties.

TREVOR

He's very handsome. And who's this Japanese James Dean?

CLOSE ON BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO

of a roguish looking young man in his twenties in a white T-shirt and a cigarette hanging out of his mouth.

KAY

My uncle. He died in a motorcycle accident when I was about seven.

TREVOR

And this young woman in a kimono?

CLOSE ON BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO

of Grandmother.

KAY

That's my grandmother. I think that picture was taken before she came to the United States.

TREVOR

She seems very intense. Is--was she like this in person?

KAY

I don't know.

TREVOR

Haven't you ever seen her?

KAY

I visited her when I was little once or twice, I think, but then she got too sick. I don't really know. My parents don't like to talk about it.

Trevor replaces the photo.

KAY (CONT.)

What do your parents do?

TREVOR

My father is a diplomatic plumber fixing the leaks and clogs of the policies of our better-known, incontinent, er, incompetent diplomats. My mother is a professor of linguistics at one of the universities.

KAY

Your parents sound interesting. Not anything like mine.

TREVOR

Well, at least yours are still married. Mine are in the middle of a divorce. They have to determine the custody of a son and an Irish setter, and they're both fighting furiously over the Irish setter. They're vastly relieved I decided to spend a year abroad as a ward and responsibility of the United States. But here I am chattering away like a magpie on amphetamines, boring you to death.

Trevor begins inspecting the rest of the room with interest. He is particularly drawn to the few Japanese items.

TREVOR

You've a very intriguing home.

(as if he were a pompous decorator)

Americanus suburbicus with intimations of the Far East.

KAY

It's probably nothing compared to yours.

TREVOR

Mine? I don't really have one, unless you call a succession of boarding schools home. So, does your house have any eccentricities? Ghosts? Hidden treasures? Any wardrobes through which you can pass into other, less mundane worlds?

KAY

A door.

TREVOR

Pardon?

KAY

That one.

She points to a closed door.

TREVOR

What's down there?

KAY

California around 1930.

Trevor looks at her skeptically.

KAY (CONT.)

My father has a really elaborate Western train set. He's been working on it for years. After dinner he usually goes down to the basement to fiddle with it. He spends hours and hours down there.

TREVOR

(enthusiastically)

I'd love to see it. I've always had a fascination for trains. May I?

Trevor tries the door. Kay watches him jiggle the knob, unsuccessfully.

KAY

He keeps it locked.

TREVOR

Why?

KAY

Once, when I was a kid, I played with the trains when he wasn't around and messed them up. He's kept it locked ever since.

TREVOR

But you're older now.

KAY

(shrugs)

It's fine with me. If he wants to lock himself in the basement, drink sake, watch a toy train running around in circles, never really going anywhere, nothing ever really changing, that's his business.

TREVOR

Well, I hope he'll show it to me. It sounds fascinating, especially the sake part...oh Lord, this is magnificent.

He picks up a samurai sword from the rack. Trevor slowly draws the gleaming blade from its sheath, fascinated by its terrible beauty.

KAY (O.S.)

(distantly, as if hearing a voice from far away)

She was a poet.

TREVOR

(turning, sword in hand)

Pardon?

Kay looks at Trevor with a strange intensity.

KAY

My grandmother was a poet. My uncle told that to me. I remember now.

TREVOR

Do you have her poems?

Kay shakes her head. Trevor sheaths the sword, replacing it on the rack.

TREVOR (CONT.)

Well, maybe they'll turn up with her things. I have to go now. You'll allow me to return, I hope?

KAY

(distractedly)

Sure.

TREVOR

Au revoir, mademoiselle.

Trevor kisses her hand with an exaggerated flourish. He looks at Kay to ascertain what impression he has made. He is disappointed to discover that her thoughts are elsewhere and she barely seems to see him. He waves a conventional, forlorn goodbye, and exits.

Kay closes the door. She returns to the mantelpiece where she picks up the photo of her grandmother and stares at the image, which, of course, stares right back at her.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

It is raining outside. The door opens and a very wet Mimi comes through, lugging a box.

MIMI

Kay, Kay, are you here?

Kay emerges.

KAY

I'm here.

MIMI

Did you ever find that umbrella you lost? We got so wet because we didn't have an umbrella.

KAY

Why didn't you just buy another umbrella?

MIMI

Why should we buy another umbrella when we have a perfectly good umbrella that we can't find?

KAY

Because we can't find it.

MIMI

If you hadn't lost the umbrella in the first place, we wouldn't have this problem to begin with. Do you know where it is?

KAY

If I knew where it was, then it wouldn't be lost, would it?

Tom enters lugging a large, cumbersome box. He hears Kay retorting.

TOM

Don't be smart.

KAY

I'm not being smart, I'm being logical.

TOM

You shouldn't talk to your mother that way.

KAY

You don't even know what we're talking about.

TOM
It doesn't matter.

MIMI
Tom, you shouldn't carry that heavy
box. Think of your back.

TOM
My back is fine, don't worry,

MIMI
Well, then think of your heart.

TOM
Don't worry about my heart, will you?
Jesus!

MIMI
Tom!

DOORBELL RINGS.

KAY
What does it matter? We're Buddhist.

Tom opens the door.

TOM
(exasperated)
Will you two just be quiet?
Jesus!

Tom turns and faces a drenched and bedraggled Trevor.

TREVOR
Well, actually, my name's Trevor
Burnsville-Somers. I'm a classmate of
Kay's. I just stopped by to say
hello.

TOM
(staring at him)
Hello.

MIMI
Who's that?

TREVOR
You must be Mr. and Mrs. Matsuoka.

KAY
(to Mimi)
A friend from England.

TOM
That's pretty far away, isn't it?

TREVOR

Well, it was a bit of a swim. I saw you carrying some boxes in, is there anything I can help you with?

TOM

No, Kay's grandmother passed away and we've just brought back some of her things.

MIMI

There's that trunk with all those heavy books in it.

TREVOR

Let me help you with that.

TOM

That's okay--

Trevor, however, is already on his way to the car.

MIMI

Let him help. Think of your back.

TOM

Mimi! Jesus!

Tom follows after Trevor.

MIMI

Who is he? How long have you been friends?

KAY

Mom, don't get excited, he's just a guy. What's this?

Kay points to a box in a plastic bag.

MIMI

That's something we think Grandma left for you. It has your name on it.

KAY

For me? What is it?

Kay touches the Japanese characters written on the box. Trevor and Tom come in with the trunk. Tom spots Kay with the box.

TOM

(sharply)
What are you doing?

KAY

(defensively)
Mom said Grandma left this for me.

TOM

Can't wait for anything, can you?

KAY

Why should I wait?

Tom starts to retort, then realizes there is a guest present.

TOM

Then what are you waiting for? Open it.

Kay looks at Trevor as if to say, see what I've got to live with.

KAY

It's so light, I don't think there's anything inside.

She shakes it. There is a RUSTLING SOUND. As Kay opens the box, Mimi and Trevor observe, curious. Tom watches with a certain tenseness.

The box is filled with perhaps a hundred origami cranes. Tom relaxes.

KAY (CONT.)

(disappointed)

Origami? Why would she leave me origami?

TREVOR

Maybe there's a note.

Kay rummages around in the box. Tom watches closely. Impatient, Kay turns the box upside-down, and all the cranes tumble to the floor.

MIMI

Kay, you shouldn't dump the origami on the floor like that!

KAY

It's just paper...There's no note. Well, I don't know what the point of this is.

TOM

(relaxing again)

Mimi, let's get the luggage upstairs.

Trevor gets up to help, but Tom waves him away. Tom and Mimi exit with their bags. Trevor bends down to inspect the mound of cranes.

TREVOR

I happen to think they're charming, myself. And useful. You can string them up and make a mobile. Or put them on a Christmas tree for decoration. Or use them to illustrate proverbs like: A bird in hand is worth two in the--

TREVOR (CONT.)

(looks at Kay; hastily)

Maybe not.

KAY

I just wish I knew why she gave me this.

TREVOR

Maybe there was no special reason.

KAY

There had to be. You just don't go and leave your granddaughter a bunch of paper birds without any purpose or explanation.

TREVOR

These origami are really interesting. Look at all the different types of paper they're made from.

CLOSE ON ORIGAMI

constructed from paper bags, magazines, gift wrap. Trevor holds one up.

TREVOR (CONT.)

I love this one. A Japanese paper crane made from Wild West gift wrap. I love the incongruity of it.

KAY

That seems familiar somehow. Let me see it.

TREVOR

(giving it to her)

Why?

KAY

I don't know. It just does.

Mimi and Tom re-enter.

MIMI

Trevor, would you like to stay for supper?

TREVOR

I'd love to, Mrs. Matsuoka, but Mrs. Leimgruber's expecting me back. She always serves dinners at 5:45 on the dot.

KAY

It's 6:05 now.

TREVOR

(jumping up)

Oh shit, I mean, shoot, sorry, Mrs. Matsuoka. I have to go.

MIMI

Do you want a plastic bag for your head?

TREVOR

Pardon?

MIMI

We'd be glad to lend you an umbrella, but Kay left it somewhere and we can't find it

KAY

Mom--

TREVOR

Oh, I'm very used to rain, it's practically England's national weather. Any way, a little rain never hurt anyone.

LOUD CLAP OF THUNDER

TREVOR (CONT.)

Alot of rain, though, on the other hand--

TOM

Why don't I drive you.

TREVOR

I wouldn't want to trouble you.

TOM

No trouble at all.

TREVOR

Well, I--

ANOTHER CLAP OF THUNDER

TREVOR (CONT.)

--gratefully accept your kind offer. Goodbye, Mrs. Matsuoka. I'll see you in school, Kay.

Tom and Trevor exit. Kay returns to the mound of paper cranes which she begins putting back in the box.

MIMI

He seems like a very nice young man, doesn't he? Kay, I'm talking to you.

KAY

I didn't think you were saying anything.

Mimi sighs and returns to the kitchen. Kay puts the last of the cranes in the box and closes the lid. She lifts it again and takes out the Wild West crane. She closes the lid and places the crane on top.

CLOSE ON KAY

gazing at the crane, as if perhaps it held the key to her questions.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - LATER

Tom is sorting through his mother's belongings. Those few items which he intends to keep he places on the floor, tossing everything else into two large cardboard boxes.

CAMERA PANS to reveal Kay, hiding in the shadows, observing her father. Of particular interest to her are three volumes that Tom takes from the trunk. He opens one--it appears to be a journal with a few scattered photos. Kay strains to see it. After staring at the page, Tom closes his eyes, as if what he sees pains him. He puts that volume in the cardboard box. Without opening the other two volumes he places them, too, into the box. Tom pauses to rest, unsettled by this brief contact with the past.

Kay MAKES NOISES as if to signal she is coming into the room. Tom hastily resumes his task. Kay casually approaches.

KAY

Those are grandma's things...

TOM

Yeah. She kept a lot of junk.

KAY

What are you doing with it?

TOM

Throwing it out.

KAY

All of it?

TOM

Most of it.

KAY

(cautiously)

You haven't seen any of her writings, have you?

Tom stiffens.

KAY (CONT.)

I remember Uncle saying Grandma was a poet.

TOM
Your uncle exaggerated.

Tom resumes his task. Kay edges towards the cardboard box.

KAY
Isn't there anything else we might
want to save? What about...books?

TOM
They're all in Japanese.

KAY
I might learn it someday.

TOM
(derisively)
Hah! That I'd like to see.

Kay quells her resentment at this remark. While her father's back is turned she offhandedly reaches in the box and picks up one of the volumes to casually leaf through it. Tom turns to throw some more items in the box and sees the book in her hand.

TOM (CONT.)
(violently)
Don't touch that!

Kay is shaken by the force of this outburst and nearly drops the book.

KAY
(defensively)
I was just looking.

TOM
Put that back!

Kay does so reluctantly.

TOM (CONT.)
I'm trying to finish this and now you
want to mess everything up.

KAY
I didn't do anything.

TOM
You were about to. Why don't you
just go and get ready for dinner.

KAY
I don't want dinner. I have a
headache.

TOM
So, you want to give me one, too, is
that it?

Kay glares at Tom and STOMPS up the stairs to her bedroom.

Mimi enters.

MIMI

Supper's ready. Where's Kay?

TOM

In her room. She doesn't want to eat. She says she has a headache.

MIMI

Again? Oh my, have you sorted through everything already?

Mimi investigates Tom's work. With a disapproving cluck she pulls a patterned dress from one of the large boxes.

MIMI (CONT.)

Don't throw these away. We can give them to Goodwill.

TOM

No.

MIMI

But--

TOM

Listen, I don't want to see some kurombo walking down the street wearing my mother's clothes, okay?

MIMI

All right.

Mimi replaces the dress, slowly, as if something is bothering her.

MIMI (CONT.)

(hesitantly)

Tom?

TOM

What?

MIMI

Don't you think we should tell Kay?

TOM

Tell her what?

MIMI

You know, about your mother.

TOM

I thought we discussed this.

MIMI

But what if--

TOM

(irritably)

Listen, I don't want to hear any more
of this, all right?

MIMI

(resigned)

All right.

She returns to the kitchen. Tom lifts the cardboard box and heads for the front door.

LATER

Tom, having finished dinner, takes a bottle of sake and goes to the basement door. He fumbles in his pocket for the key, unlocks the door and goes down the stairs, shutting the door behind him. SOUND OF A LOCK BEING TURNED.

Kay goes down the stairs and pauses by the basement door. She then goes out the front door.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Kay carefully closes the door behind her and makes her way to the garage. She lifts the lid off of one of the trash cans and rummages around. She lifts the three volumes from the trash. She hesitates, then takes the patterned dress as well. Kay replaces the lid and begins to go. She stops. She puts some big rocks in the trash and covers them up. She leaves.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Kay comes in the front door and carefully climbs the steps.

Kay enters her bedroom. She lays the volumes down on the bed, and closes and locks the door. She opens up one of the volumes.

The volumes seem to be a combination of a few photographs, clippings, and extensive handwriting in Japanese, with a few English words as headings and scattered in the main text. The pictures are of her grandmother, grandfather and her father when he was about ten years old, and her uncle, about eight. The earlier photos shows the family in front of a house. The family members pose somewhat awkwardly, but a few candid pictures show them smiling and laughing. Then there is a clipped out article announcing America's declaration of war on Japan.

The next section of the diary "INTERNMENT CAMP" written in English. The tone of the pictures that follow is different from the earlier ones. The photos seem to have been taken at another location. It is cold and the family members are not dressed very warmly. There are several unfamiliar Asians in the background, going about their business. The Matsuokas are smiling in these photos, but their smiles seem forced. Kay's grandmother is not smiling, and mostly avoids looking at the camera.

Intrigued, Kay flips to an earlier, smiling picture of her grandmother, and a later one, in which she is alone. It is raining and she is staring directly at the camera with unnerving intensity, as if barely holding back anger. There is something written in Japanese under the latter picture. Kay flips back and forth, back and forth between the two photos.

INT. MATSUOKA HOUSE - NIGHT

Mimi sets down a bowl of unfamiliar vegetables in the middle of the dining room table which is filled with an exotic banquet of Japanese fare, replete with tiny cups of sake for everyone. LORI OLSON, Kay's popular classmate, looks dubious. Sitting beside her is her mother, MRS. OLSON (SUSAN), delighted at this opportunity of cultural exchange, and MR. OLSON (GEORGE), resigned to yet another social evening away from Monday night football. Chiyo is also present, as is Kay, slouching unhappily in her seat. Tom surveys this scene with a host's anxious pride.

MRS. OLSON

It's so nice of you to invite us over, Mr. and Mrs. Matsuoka. I know Chiyo misses having Japanese food, and I'm afraid I just don't have the talent to make it.

MIMI

We would have invited you sooner, but Kay forgot to tell us that there was an exchange student from Japan this year.

LORI

(surveying the table)

This sure is different. I don't recognize anything.

MRS. OLSON

I'm sure the Matsuokas will explain what everything is.

Tom beams at his cue, and begins pointing out the various dishes. Mrs. Olson reacts with extreme interest, Mr. Olson with bemusement, and Lori with skepticism.

TOM

This is makezushi--rice with different things-egg, carrots, eel, wrapped in seaweed. That's sashimi, raw tuna, you dip it in that green horseradish paste over there. This is sea urchin, and this is abalone.

LORI

Are those things with the suction cups what I think they are?

TOM

Octopus. It's a little chewy, but very tasty.

MIMI

We made a special trip to New York-- you can't find these things in Connecticut.

LORI

Wow. I'm not sure I can eat this.

MRS. OLSON

You should try something, Lori. This is an opportunity to sample food from another culture.

(to Tom and Mimi)

We're trying to broaden Lori's horizons. Lori, why don't you try the octopus. Octopus tastes just like squid, which the Italians eat all the time, isn't that right, George?

MR. OLSON

I don't know. I'm not Italian.

LORI

What are those little black thingies over there?

TOM

Black beans. For fertility.

MR. OLSON

You stay away from those, Lori.

MRS. OLSON

George! My husband's just joking.

DOORBELL RINGS. Kay rise quickly.

MIMI

I'll get it. Sit with our guests.

Mimi leaves. Kay reluctantly sits down. Tom holds in his chopsticks a white root with holes in it.

TOM

This is sliced hasu. Lotus root. You're supposed to look through the holes and see the future.

LORI

You mean I can hold it up and see if I'm going to get an 'A' in my chemistry exam that I didn't study for?

MRS. OLSON

I try to tell Lori she should be just like Kay with all her good grades and all those honors. But now that Chiyo is staying with us, we have a role model right in the house.

CHIYO

Oh, no, Mrs. Olson, Lori is a role model for me. She is so popular with everyone. I envy her.

Kay rolls her eyes at this conversation.

LORI

Everyone likes Chiyo, too. All the guys are trying to get her to go out with them, but Chiyo's being a nun.

MR. OLSON

Maybe she just has good taste.

Trevor enters, followed by a beaming Mimi carrying a bouquet of flowers. The guests look up at the new arrival. Tom looks pleased and Lori looks particularly pleased.

LORI

Trev!

TOM

Hello, Trevor.

MIMI

Trevor came by to bring some flowers, so I invited him in.

TREVOR

(sitting)

I couldn't resist the temptation of authentic Japanese cooking. It's my favorite cuisine.

LORI

Well, there's some really great stuff here. It's really delicious.

TOM

Do you know everybody here? Mr. and Mrs. Olson, Chiyo --you seem to know Lori.

TREVOR

Oh yes, everyone knows Lori.

MRS. OLSON

Now, what part of England are you from, Trevor?

TREVOR

I live just outside of London. My father was originally from York, and my mother is from Wales. It's an extraordinary place, Wales. The land is like...music. Rolling hills, the clearest streams, incredibly dramatic skies. It's as if you're in another world, outside of time.

MRS. OLSON

(dreamily)

We were thinking of taking our vacation there.

MR. OLSON

We were?

TREVOR

If you go, you should definitely take the train to see the countryside. Wales has the only steam-driven railroad line in all of England.

TOM

Steam-driven, huh?

MIMI

Tom is very interested in trains. He even has--

TOM

They don't want to hear about these things, Mimi. Why don't you just get everyone more coffee.

MIMI

I just did.

TOM

Well, get some more.

Mimi exits.

TREVOR

Chiyo, I haven't had a chance to ask you why you decided to spend a year here.

CHIYO

My father thought it would be a good idea. He works for a trading company and I am the only child. He thought I needed to be more independent and to see what opportunities women had in places other than Japan. Women still cannot do very much in Japan. We are not very liberated.

MR. OLSON

We have to be careful he doesn't get too liberated here, or her father might not recognize her when we send her home.

TREVOR

Do you ever get homesick?

CHIYO

It is hard to get homesick when Mr. and Mrs. Olson and Lori take such good care of me.

Mimi returns with a coffee pot

MIMI

Who would like more coffee?

Mimi begins pouring. Chiyo's answer doesn't fool Trevor, and he looks at her sympathetically. Chiyo avoids his gaze.

MRS. OLSON

Kay you've been very quiet, or maybe it's that we've been chattering so much that we haven't let you say anything.

KAY

There's not much to say.

TOM

She never talks. We have to pry things out of her.

LORI

She's like that in school, too. Never says anything. Except to Trevor.

MR. OLSON

Maybe that's why she gets good grades. The rest of you talk so much that it's no secret that you don't know anything.

MRS. OLSON

George!

LORI

But he's right, Mom. He tells it like it is. That's why I love him.

Lori gives her father a big, noisy kiss. The Matsuokas, Chiyo and Trevor regard this open display of affection with various degrees of intrigue and embarrassment.

TOM

(to Trevor)

Uh, so, how do you like everything?

TREVOR

It's exquisite. The Leimgrubers feed me well, but I doubt if I'll ever see maguro sashimi on their dinner table.

TOM

Give him some more, Kay.

Kay doesn't know what he is referring to. Chiyo hesitates, then swiftly picks up a raw tuna slice and puts it on Trevor's plate.

TREVOR

Thank you. You should try some, Lori.
Fresh raw fish. Yum!

He eats it with deliberate relish and Lori, despite her grin, is nauseated.

MRS. OLSON

I didn't know that you knew Japanese, Trevor.

TREVOR

Just a few words. Mostly food.

MRS. OLSON

Do you speak Japanese, Kay?

KAY

(hesitates)

My German is better than my Japanese.

MRS. OLSON

Oh, what a shame. We were hoping that you could talk to Chiyo in her native language. It would be a break for her, hearing English all the time.

CHIYO

Oh, it is not important. I came here to learn English and I should speak it always.

LORI

I got a great idea. Kay can help Chiyo with English, and Chiyo can help Kay with Japanese. Wouldn't that be perfect?

Caught unawares, Kay just manages to contain her aversion to this proposition. Chiyo glances at Kay.

CHIYO

(quickly)

Kay is probably too busy.

TOM

She has plenty of time.

KAY

(suddenly)

Excuse me, I have a headache, I'm just going to get some aspirin and maybe lay down. I'll be back soon.

Kay leaves. CAMERA FOLLOWS Kay as she goes to the upstairs bathroom and gulps down several aspirin. She heads to her bedroom.

MIMI (O.S.)

(apologetically)

She gets these headaches.

MRS. OLSON (O.S)

It must be migraines. I get them, too. They're just awful.

LORI (O.S.)

So, Trev, are you coming to the party next week? We need you to yodel again with Billy. That was sooo hysterical--

KAY' BEDROOM

Kay pulls out the box of diaries from under her bed. She takes the Wild West crane from its perch. She lies down on her bed and cradles it in her hand.

DISSOLVE TO:

MEMORY

CLOSE ON NARROW RECTANGULAR PACKAGE

wrapped in the Wild West wrapping paper, clutched in young Kay's hand.

The Matsuokas are in the parking lot. Mimi is straightening out Kay's outfit. Tom is nearby, smoking nervously.

Tom, Mimi and Kay begin walking up a long pathway to a building in the distance.

They go into the building, to a reception area.

NURSE

She's right this way, Mr. Matsuoka.

The Nurse leads the way. The Matsuokas walk by hospital staff and patients. They stare at Kay as she passes by, some coo and wave to the child. Wary, Kay walks closer to Mimi.

NURSE (CONT.)

She's been much better with the new medication. We told her you were coming with your daughter and she's been practicing her English. Here we are.

They enter a room.

KAY'S P.O.V. - HANDS

slowly, deliberately and precisely folding a piece of paper.

TOM

(in Japanese)

Hello, Mama.

The hands continue to fold the paper.

BACK TO SCENE - CLOSE ON KAY

intrigued by this activity. She comes a little closer.

TOM (CONT.)

Mama, how are you feeling?

CLOSE ON HANDS

still folding.

TOM (CONT.)

Mama, this is Kay. You haven't seen her for a long time.

ANGLE ON KAY

coming nearer, intrigued.

TOM (CONT.)

(a little desperately)

Mama, do you hear me?

CLOSE ON HANDS

which have stopped their activity. They lift up the folded piece of paper which has been transformed into a crane.

ANGLE ON KAY

entranced by this bit of magic. The hand offers the crane to Kay. Kay reaches up for it. CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal Grandmother holding the crane. SOUND OF KNOCKING.

DISSOLVE TO:

PRESENT SCENE - CLOSE ON ORIGAMI CRANE

in Kay's hand. The KNOCKING continues.

TREVOR (O.S.)

Kay, Kay, it's me, Trevor. Are you awake?

Kay gets up and unlocks the bedroom door. Trevor enters.

TREVOR (CONT.)

The Olson entourage has left and your parents absolutely refuse to let me help clean up. How are you feeling?

Kay shrugs.

TREVOR (CONT.)

I'm sorry to hear that. Sit down. I'll massage your neck.

Kay eyes him warily. Trevor ignores her reservations. He firmly sits Kay down and touches her neck. She flinches. Trevor persists.

TREVOR (CONT.)

Relax. Close your eyes. You're as tense as a piano wire. No wonder you have headaches.

Trevor's soothing fingers probe Kay's neck as if to locate more than her physical pain. Kay is unaware how intently he observes her as he talks.

TREVOR (CONT.)

(off-handedly, musing)

Lori kept trying to get me to eat those black beans, she said they're for virility. I didn't know whether to be flattered or insulted.

(pause, casually)

You didn't seem very happy out there tonight.

(pause)

Why are you so allergic to Chiyo?

Kay, who was beginning to relax, stiffens and pulls away from Trevor.

KAY

(irritably)

I'm not allergic to her, I just don't have anything in common with her, okay?

Kay begins gathering up the diaries from the bed.

TREVOR

What are those?

KAY

They're my grandmother's diaries. Dad was throwing them away, but I got them out of the garbage.

TREVOR

What do they say?

Kay give him a look.

TREVOR (CONT.)

Oh, yes, your German is better than your Japanese. So what are you going to do?

KAY

I can't ask my parents to translate.

TREVOR

What about asking Chiyo?

KAY

(vehemently)

No!

(pause)

They're my grandmother's. I don't want her looking at them reading her thoughts.

(pause)

I'm going to do it.

TREVOR

(in disbelief)

But Kay, you don't know any Japanese.

KAY

I can teach myself. I've already started.

TREVOR

Kay, there are thousands of characters in the Japanese language! You'll be a grandmother yourself before you'll be able to read what she wrote.

KAY

(stubbornly)

I don't care if I'm dead before I can read them, I'm going to do it. I've already translated something.

Kay opens the page to the photo of her grandmother in the rain and points to the writing underneath the picture.

KAY (CONT.)

It says, I think it says, "It rains and there is no umbrella". I could figure it out because she used some katakana, the simpler characters.

TREVOR

She does look awfully wet.

KAY

(furious)

You think this is a joke? You think everything is a joke, don't you?

TREVOR

(contrite)

I'm sorry--are you all right?

Kay is holding her head as if it is pounding.

KAY

It keeps beating in my head. I can't stop it. *It rains and there is no umbrella. It rains and there is no umbrella.* You can feel the cold rain soaking through her dress and the wind chilling her body. She's crying out that there's no protection, no shield from life, isn't she? Why did she write this? Why did she feel that way? I've got to know. I've just got to know.

Kay hugs the volumes to her chest.

KAY (CONT.)

(passionately)

These diaries will tell me, I know it. When I hold them I feel like I have her life in my hands. They're the only things in the world I really care about.

TREVOR

That excludes an awful lot.

Surprised, Kay looks at Trevor, his tone was casual, but she can see that he is hurt.

KAY

Trevor, don't be silly. I care for you...

Kay pauses, unable to express her feelings. Her glance alights on the wild west crane.

KAY (CONT.)
(indicating the crane)
...as much as I care for him.

TREVOR
(with forced laughter)
The origami? You care for me as much
as for a paper bird?

Kay looks at Trevor, astonished that he could so misunderstand her, then softens as she sees him struggling to conceal his wounded pride. She touches him.

KAY
Don't laugh. I keep him out...the
others are all in the box, but I keep
him out on the dresser. I like to
look at him, sitting there so quiet
and still, like a little secret..and
even though it's silly, I pretend
that there'll be a moment that he'll
speak to me, like a creature out of a
child's book that comes to life at
the magic hour.

Silence, as they look at the mute crane.

Trevor kisses Kay.

SOUNDS OF FOOTSTEPS climbing stairs.

TOM (O.S.)
Trevor? Kay?

Trevor and Kay part and scramble to hide the diaries and make everything seem normal. Kay lies on the bed with her arm over her head, and Trevor sits solicitously on a chair a discreet distance away. Tom enters Kay's room. Despite the earnest tableau, he senses disorderly vibes.

TREVOR
Hello, Mr. Matsuoka. Kay was just
showing me her, ah, origami cranes.

TOM
(suspiciously)
The cranes, huh? Didn't you see them
before?

TREVOR
Yes, but I didn't get an opportunity
to fully appreciate all the fine
details, the folds, the meticulous
care in the folding, the detail, and
the creases! Such exact creases!
(MORE)

TREVOR (CONT.)

The workmanship that went into making those cranes. It's all so absorbing, isn't it, Kay?

TOM

Creases?

TREVOR

Just amazing. Which reminds me of another piece of outstanding workmanship in this household that remains a secret from public knowledge. Mr. Matsuoka, I understand you have a fabulous train set in your basement. I hope that one day you'll allow me to see them. I have a great-uncle who is one of the premier railroaders in Britain, and I've always had a great admiration for the artistry that goes into creating the sets. I'm really hoping you'll allow me the privilege of seeing what you've done.

Tom is overwhelmed by this barrage of flattery.

TOM

You would, would you? Well, I don't see why not. You want to look at them now?

Tom's offer surprises Kay. She looks at him, then Trevor, a bit jealous.

TREVOR

(hesitating)

Actually, I'd better be going. Perhaps you might be able to spare an evening next week?

TOM

Sure. I'll be around. And the trains aren't going anywhere.

TREVOR

Wonderful. Well, I should return to the Leimgrubers before they call the police to report a runaway. They've done that once already. Goodbye, Kay. I hope you feel better.

Trevor waves at Kay chastely, then, out of Tom's sight, he throws a glance of relief and only slightly exaggerated ardor at her before he exits. CAMERA FOLLOWS Trevor and Tom down the stairs.

TOM

Mimi! Trevor's leaving.

Mimi appears with an aluminum tin with leftovers covered by cellophane wrap. Various goodies, including octopus legs, are in the tin.

MIMI

Trevor, it was so nice of you to join us. Here's a little something to take back with you.

TREVOR

Thank you, Mrs. Matsuoka. I'm sure Henry will be especially fascinated by the octopus and all his little suction cups. I'll have to make sure he doesn't start sticking them on the walls--that wouldn't go over very well with Mrs. Leimgruber. Thank you for everything. I'll look forward to seeing you and your trains next week, Mr. Matsuoka.

TOM

(beaming)

Sure, sure.

MIMI

Goodbye, Trevor. Thank you so much for the flowers.

Trevor leaves.

MIMI (CONT.)

(to Tom)

You're going to show him the trains? How nice.

TOM

He asked to see them. Didn't think kids paid attention to things like that these days.

MIMI

Trevor seems like such a nice boy. All those big words he uses. Sometimes I'm not exactly sure what he's saying, but it always sounds good.

KAY'S BEDROOM

Kay gazes at the Wild West cranes.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

CAMERA PANS across a Western landscape, vast stretches of sagebrush, barbed wire fences, a ranch in the distance with cattle grazing, a road leading towards town, the figure of a cowboy leaning against his mare. something is very strange. Everything is too quiet, too perfect, too still. Suddenly--

something is very strange. Everything is too quiet, too perfect, too still. Suddenly--

A FREIGHT TRAIN SCREECHES BY

shattering the silence. The ROARING metal blur fills the foreground. The last car passes by, revealing

TWO HUGE EYES

framed by black rimmed glasses. They overpower the landscape. These massive, quivering orbs dart quickly over the hapless land and its inhabitants. The eyes turn their gaze to the right to another set of eyes that crinkle with delight at the world before them.

CAMERA SLOWLY PULLS BACK revealing that the scene is actually an elaborate and finely detailed miniature train set, and the eyes belong to Tom who is surveying his basement domain with rapt and intense pleasure, and Trevor his privileged and genuinely entertained guest.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Kay passes by the basement door, locked against her. She presses her ear to the door, but can hear only MUFFLED SOUNDS. Frustrated at being excluded, she makes as if to pound the door, but her fist stops an inch away from its surface, and departs in silence.

INT. BASEMENT

Tom is putting foliage on a small tree, while Trevor is circling the train set. A small cup of sake is in his hands.

TOM

I'm not sure if I should let you have that. We have a law that you can't drink if you're underage.

TREVOR

To be utterly truthful, I am seventeen years, ten months, twenty days and roughly thirteen hours old, however, I would think that your law applies to only to U.S. citizens. I would think it perfectly reasonable to assume that a British citizen drinking Japanese sake would be exempt from American legalities.

TOM

Sounds logical to me.

Trevor peers at the details of the elaborately designed landscape.

TREVOR

This set you've built is incredible, Mr. Matsuoka. I cannot begin to imagine how much work you've put into it.

TOM

I started it a couple of years after Kay was born. Didn't take it too seriously at first. But you start doing it, and little by little you get hooked.

TREVOR

When do you think you'll be done with it?

TOM

I'll never be done with it. That's the beauty of it. There's always something to add, something to change. There's always just one more step to take--

TREVOR

Like life!

TOM

Exactly! Something like that.

TREVOR

I especially like the fish pond with that bug-eyed little fellow.

CLOSE ON A GLOBE-EYED FISH

a particularly unattractive member of an Oriental exotic species swimming in the pond. It is the only incongruity in the Western scene.

TOM

Yeah, I saw him at a pet store one day. He was so different and ugly that no one wanted him.

TREVOR

That footbridge must have taken you a long time.

CLOSE ON FOOTBRIDGE

TOM

Twenty three days. It's real wood, not plastic. You see those grain marks and knots? I made them with dental tools. See the part of the bridge that's most worn out, and the handrails, lighter on the top, where people's hands have rubbed the paint off. And the path leading to the bridge, it's mostly bare ground because people have trampled on the grass.

Trevor watches Tom as he speaks; it is obvious he loves the set.

TREVOR

How did you become interested in this? Did you always like trains? Have you ridden on them much?

TOM

Only twice. Once, when the trains took us to Arizona where the government put us Japanese Americans during the War. The second time was after the war to take me out East.

TREVOR

You were in the internment camps?

TOM

(surprised and impressed)

You know about them? Most young people don't.

(pause)

Most old people don't.

Tom takes a sip of his sake. He and Trevor watch the trains going around and around the track. Trevor glances at Tom.

TREVOR

You look very pensive, Mr. Matsuoka.

TOM

I was just thinking. Trains. You know, when the war broke out, my parents had the option of going back to Japan, because they were born there. So, they were ready to pack us up and go back. And here we are, two brothers born here, there was no way we wanted to go to Japan--it was a foreign country. So we wrote a speech saying we wanted to stay. I had to read it because I was the oldest. I was so scared. You didn't tell your parents what to do, it was unthinkable. So, there, in the night, when they were figuring out what they would take to Japan, my brother shoved me out with this piece of paper. So I read it.

(pause, remembering)

My parents didn't say a word, they couldn't believe what they were hearing. Suddenly, my mother started screaming that I was trying to split up the family, to destroy it. I never heard her like this, never. But when I heard her saying we were all going back to Japan, I yelled back that I would jump off the train and run away.

TREVOR

What happened then?

There is a long silence.

TOM

She hit me.

(pause)

And we stayed in America.

TREVOR

(after a pause,
sympathetically)

The camps must have been hard on your family.

TOM

For us kids, it wasn't too bad, kids can survive, have fun anywhere. But for the older folks--they lost everything, had to live in horse stalls, no privacy...it was tougher on them.

(pause)

Kay's grandmother had a hard time with it. She had gone to university in Japan, not many women did that back then you know, she was real smart, smarter than the whole family put together. But camp was tough on her. She didn't want to be there. Hell, none of us wanted to be there.

(pause)

But it was hard for her. She was a proud woman. She--

Tom seems to want to say something more, but instead takes another sip of sake. He turns to Trevor.

TOM (CONT.)

You know, all this camp stuff, it's between you and me, okay?

TREVOR

(hesitates)

Sure.

TOM

It's just that it's not...healthy to talk about these things. It's done. It's over, it's part of the past. It won't change anything. It's better to forget and go on.

TREVOR

Don't you think it's important to understand, too? For...Kay to understand?

TOM

How can you understand something that doesn't make any sense? Besides, Kay is interested in other things, you know, things that girls are interested in.

TREVOR

I think Kay's looking for something.

TOM

Looking for what?

TREVOR

I'm not sure she knows.

TOM

We'll, that'll be a first. She thinks she knows everything. She thinks she's smarter than us, her parents. But, tell me, who does she get her brains from? Me!

TREVOR

(smiling)

I can't argue with that, Mr. Matsuoka.

LATER

Trevor emerges from the basement.

TREVOR

Thanks, again Mr. Matsuoka. Next time I'll bring a copy of the illustration to show you. It'll work perfectly.

Trevor closes the door, turns and nearly bumps into Kay.

TREVOR (CONT.)

That's a fantastic set your father's built! You should have joined us.

KAY

(coldly)

You forget, I wasn't invited.

TREVOR

(jovially)

You should have crashed the party.

(pause)

How's the decoding going? Hmmm?

Trevor entwines his fingers in Kay's hair and tries to draw her near him, but she pulls away.

KAY

You stink of sake.

Kay goes up to her room and closes her door. Trevor looks at the shut bedroom door, then at the shut basement door. He closes his eyes, and GROANS softly, as if trouble, or a hangover is on the way.

INT. KAY'S BEDROOM - DAY

The bed is strewn with the diaries, a Japanese-English dictionary, Japanese language textbooks. The translation attempts are not going well. Frustrated, Kay goes to the closet and takes out her grandmother's patterned dress. She holds it against her body and gazes at the mirror. Still holding the dress, Kay goes to the window and looks out.

KAY'S P.O.V. - TOM AND TREVOR

raking leaves in the yard. Mimi comes by with sodas for the two. Trevor gesticulates wildly, he appears to be telling a funny story for Tom and Mimi begin laughing.

BACK TO SCENE

Kay returns to her bed. She places the back of her left wrist against her eyes. There is the SOUND OF A TICKING WATCH.

FADE TO

MEMORY

TOM'S VOICE

(in Japanese)

Open it, Mama.

FADE UP

INT. GRANDMOTHER'S HOSPITAL ROOM

Grandmother holds the package wrapped in the Wild West paper.

TOM (CONT.)

Open it.

MIMI

(also in Japanese)

Kay helped me wrap it. She chose the paper.

Grandmother opens the package, first carefully removing the wrapping paper so that it is not torn by the scotch tape. She opens the box and inside is a beautiful watch. She looks at it in silence. Kay peers at the gift while Tom and Mimi look at Grandmother anxiously. Grandmother continues staring at the watch, and though her face is void of emotion, one might wonder what use a watch would be in this place. Suddenly she bows deeply, far more deeply than a mother should bow to her son.

GRANDMOTHER
(thanking Tom profusely)
Doomo arigato gozaimasu. Doomo
arigato gozaimasu.

TOM
(embarrassed)
Mama, it's just a small gift.

GRANDMOTHER
(bowing)
Doomo, arigato gozaimasu.

TOM
Mama--

The Nurse re-enters.

NURSE
Mr. and Mrs. Matsuoka, we have some
documents which need both of your
signatures. Would you please come
this way for a moment. Oh, you can
leave your daughter here with your
mother.

MIMI
(nervously)
I don't know--

NURSE
She'll be perfectly fine. I'm sure
your mother would like to spend some
time with her granddaughter.

TOM
(in Japanese)
Mama, we have to see these people for
a few minutes, we'll be right back.
You take care of Kay for a few
minutes, okay?

The Nurse, Tom and Mimi leave the room. Kay watches them depart, then
looks like she is about to cry.

GRANDMOTHER
(singing)
Kay-san, Kay-san.

She takes Kay's origami crane and pretends to make it fly in the air.
Kay forgets her departed parents and raptly watches the flying crane.

DISSOLVE TO:

AUTUMN LEAF, BORNE BY THE WIND
seen through a window.

*She takes Kay's origami crane and pretends to make it fly in the air.
Kay forgets her departed parents and raptly watches the flying crane.*

DISSOLVE TO:

AUTUMN LEAF, BORNE BY THE WIND

seen through a window.

CAMERA PULLS BACK, revealing

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY - ANNAMARIE

a student, has just begun reciting a Robert Frost poem by memory. Her voice is quiet and musical, and evokes a certain mystery. After the first stanza, the CAMERA SLOWLY PANS from Annamarie to others listening in the classroom, some resting their chins on arms folded on top of their desks, one student is asleep, to Chiyo looking a little anxious, to Trevor who is watching Kay. During the last stanza the CAMERA LINGERS on Kay who seems mesmerized by the words.

ANNAMARIE

*Whose woods these are I think I know
His house is in the village, though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch the woods fill up with snow.*

*My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the wood and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.*

*He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.*

*The woods are lovely, dark, and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.*

MR. DELLAROSE

Thank you very much Annamarie. Let
me just say before the bells rings--

THE BELL RINGS. The class LAUGHS. Unperturbed, Mr. Dellarose continues
as the students gather up their belongings.

MR. DELLAROSE (CONT.)

Let me just say after the bell rings,
tomorrow Paul, Scott and Chiyo will
recite their poems.

Chiyo comes up to Mr. Dellarose.

CHIYO

Mr. Dellarose?

MR. DELLAROSE
It seems fine today.

CHIYO
I will try, but...

MR. DELLAROSE
Don't worry. You'll do very well.

Nevertheless, Chiyo seems very distressed over the prospect of reciting in class. Mr. Dellarose realizes this.

MR. DELLAROSE (CONT.)
I have a thought. You get along well with Trevor, don't you?

CHIYO
(uncertainly)
Yes.

MR. DELLAROSE
Trevor! Please come here for a moment.

Trevor, who was gathering up this things, comes to the desk.

TREVOR
Yes, sir?

MR. DELLAROSE
Would you have time after school to go over Chiyo's poem with her, let her practice reciting it on you, before she does it in front of the class tomorrow?

TREVOR
(with genuine regret)
I'd love to, but I have football practice.
(pause)
What about Kay?

Kay who is watching this from a distance while gathering her things, sees Trevor glancing towards her.

MR. DELLAROSE
What an excellent idea. Kay!

CHIYO
(protesting)
Mr. Dellarose, I will be fine.

Kay comes up to the desk, casting Trevor a questioning glance.

MR. DELLAROSE

Chiyo would like some practice with reciting her poem. If you have time this afternoon, it might be nice for you to listen to her speak and give her a bit of confidence for tomorrow.

KAY

I'd really love to, Mr. Dellarose, but I have an honor society meeting this afternoon and--

TREVOR

(innocently)

Didn't it say over the P.A. this morning that the meeting is postponed?

Kay pretends to look surprised over this news.

MR. DELLAROSE

Yes, you're right. Well, then, Kay, would you be willing?

CHIYO

It is really not necessary--

TREVOR

Oh it will be great. You can go to the park, by the bench under the old tree. It's a beautiful day and you'll have lots of privacy.

MR. DELLAROSE

So, is it all set?

KAY

(brightly)

Sure.

Trevor, knowing Kay would like to kill him, grabs Chiyo's arm and begins moving out of the classroom.

TOM

Come on Chiyo, I'll walk you to the next class and give you directions on where the bench is. Does three-thirty sound all right to you, Kay?

KAY

Just fine.

CHIYO

Thank you, Kay.

MR. DELLAROSE

Don't forget, Trevor, your turn is coming up soon.

In response, Trevor spews out his chosen poem in a dramatic frenzy, at the same time maneuvering Chiyo and himself out the door.

TREVOR
*Stasis in darkness
 Then the substanceless blue
 Pour of tor and distances.
 God's lioness,
 How one we grow,
 Pivot of--*

His VOICE FADES in the distance.

ANGLE ON KAY

Trying to mask her resentment at her task.

MR. DELLAROSE
 (shaking his head)
 Amazing.
 (to Kay)
 Thank you, Kay. It's just to calm
 her nerves. To give her a little
 more confidence.

Kay forces a smiles and exits.

MR. DELLAROSE (CONT.)
 (musing)
 Poetry in the park.

The idea pleases him. CAMERA PANS to Kay's stormy face as she closes the classroom door.

INT. KAY'S BEDROOM - SAME DAY

Mimi is putting some freshly washed and folded clothes on Kay's bed. He foot bumps into something under the bed. Mimi bends down and drags out the box containing the diaries. She opens one and realizes it must be her mother-law's diaries.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Tom comes in, carrying a load of firewood. He dumps it by the fireplace.

TOM
 (calling out)
 Mimi, we're going to have to get the
 car from the garage, soon.

Mimi enters.

MIMI
 I see you gave Kay your mother's
 diaries. I didn't think she kept
 any.

TOM

What do you mean I gave Kay my mother's diaries? I threw everything out the other night.

MIMI

Well, Kay has them in her room. I found them when I was putting clean clothes on her bed.

Tom immediately goes up to Kay's room. He begins searching for the diaries.

TOM

Where are they? I don't see them.
Where are they, I said! Mimi!

MIMI

They're...they're under her bed.

Tom pulls out the volumes and returns to the living room. Tom begins putting paper and kindling into the fireplace.

MIMI (CONT.)

Maybe Kay wants them for some reason.

TOM

(with quiet fury)

I threw them out for a reason, and without telling me, she sneaks out and takes them from the trash. Did she ask me? No. She just went ahead and did it. She has no respect for her parents. None.

MIMI

Why don't you hold onto them until she comes home from school and discuss it with her?

TOM

There is nothing to discuss.

Tom stacks heavier pieces of wood into the fireplace. Mimi departs. Tom strikes a match and lights the fire. As it begins to roar, Tom picks up one of the diaries. His hands begin to tremble violently, as if he is about to cast his mother's body into the fire. He drops the diary onto the burning wood.

ANGLE ON FIRE

As the edges of the diary begin to catch fire and darken.

ANGLE ON TOM

staring as the flames become more and more engorged.

EXT. PARK - LATER THAT DAY - CLOSE ON CHIYO'S HAND

starting to write Japanese characters on a sheet of paper. She pauses and puts the sheet away. She resumes writing, this time in English: *Dear Papa, How are you? I miss you very much. Everything is fine and I am having a wonderful ti--*

A wet blotch suddenly appears on the word "wonderful". Chiyo's finger hastily brushes it away.

SOUND OF A TWIG BREAKING. Chiyo turns quickly.

ANGLE ON KAY

She looks at Chiyo, her face carefully void of any expression.

KAY

Hi.

Chiyo hastily puts away the letter.

CHIYO

Hello, Kay. You are very kind to help me with the poem.

KAY

Well, I don't know that you need all that much help.

CHIYO

(eagerly)

But I do. I know my English sounds funny. I want to speak it as if I were born here. Just like you.

KAY

Just like me. I see. Well, which poem are you doing?

Chiyo opens a book to the marked page.

CHIYO

This one. By D.H. Lawrence.

KAY

Okay. Why don't you read it through once, then we'll go back, and I'll tell you what you're doing wrong.

CHIYO

(hesitates)

All right.

(reading imperfectly, but with feeling)

Softly, in the dusk, a woman is singing to me;

Taking me down the vista of years, til I see

*A child sitting under the piano, in
the boom of the tingling
strings
And pressing the small, poised feet
of a mother who smiles as she
sings.
In spite of myself, the insidious--*

KAY

(rudely interrupting)
So, why'd you choose this poem?

CHIYO

It reminded me of when I was little,
My mother used to sing to me,
Japanese songs, of course.

KAY

I see. It's an okay poem. I little
too sentimental and schmaltzy for my
taste, though.

CHIYO

Schmaltzy--I don't know that word.

KAY

Oh, I guess you can define it as
being sickeningly sweet. Sort of
nauseating.

CHIYO

(bewildered)

I thought it was very beautiful.

KAY

It's just that it's...well, you'll
understand, eventually. Maybe.
Anyway, I'll read the first stanza
through the right way, and then we'll
go over it line by line.

(reading perfectly, rapidly
and totally without feeling)

*Softly, in the dusk, a woman is
singing to me;
Taking me down the vista of years,
til I see
A child sitting under the piano, in
the boom of the tingling
strings
And pressing the small, poised feet
of a mother who smiles as she
sings.
Da da da da da. All right. Let's
take the first line. "Softly, in the
dark, a woman is singing to me"*

CHIYO

Soffrey--

KAY
No, it's "softly"

CHIYO
Soft-ery,

KAY
Not "ry". It's "ly". Soft-ly

CHIYO
Sof-fer-ry

KAY
Softly is two syllables, not three.
Softly.

CHIYO
Of course. I am so stupid. Soff-ry.

KAY
You've got to remember the "t".
softly. Well, let's go on, or we'll
be on the first word forever.

CHIYO
(distressed)
I'm sorry. I will practice.

KAY
Okay, now. "Softly in the dusk, a
woman is singing to me"

CHIYO
Soffry in dzra dusk--

KAY
"The" is "the", not "dzra".

CHIYO
Dz-dza--

KAY
No, put your tongue between your
teeth. Like this: Thhhhhhhhh.

CHIYO
(stuttering)
Thdz, thdz--it is very difficult.

KAY
If you want to speak like a real
American, you've got to get this
down. It's one of the most used
words in the English language. "The
the the the the".

CHIYO
(near tears)
Thdza...thdza...

KAY
(mercilessly)
The the the the the the the the--

CHIYO
(breaking down)
Zadth...thz...I am too much an idiot
to learn! I am too stupid. I am
sorry for taking up your time.

Chiyo blindly gathers up her things.

KAY
You just need practice.

CHIYO
No. I am sorry. I should not have
bothered you. Thank you for your
trouble. Good bye.

Chiyo exits hastily, almost bumping into Trevor. She glances at him in bewilderment and shame, quickly bows her head and walks swiftly past him. He stares after her, then looks at Kay who is coolly collecting her things.

TREVOR
What happened?

KAY
We were practicing our English.

TREVOR
She seemed a little upset.

KAY
English is a difficult language. One
gets frustrated at times.

TREVOR
I see. What exactly was frustrating
her? Or should I say, who exactly
was frustrating her.

KAY
I think she was frustrating herself.

TREVOR
(shouting)
You bitch. You bloody bitch. That
girl was crying. You made her cry.

KAY

Why are you saying that I'm the one who made her cry? Maybe it was you who made her cry by setting up this whole thing to begin with!

TREVOR

You had no right to hurt her.

KAY

Maybe she just couldn't take the criticism she said she wanted.

TREVOR

You bullied her, didn't you? got out your bloody knives and twisted them around to see how much pain--

KAY

You were the one who made this happen.

TREVOR

Kay, don't play games.

KAY

It's you who's playing games with me! Did I ask for any of this? No. It was your brilliant idea, wasn't it, to force the two of us together. What for? Because our ancestors came from the same islands? What kind of reason is that? I told you I didn't want anything to do with her.

TREVOR

What's wrong with you, Kay? She's a lovely, sweet person, and you don't--

KAY

(deliberately)

She's a perfect, prissy, Japanese doll. I don't like her, and I don't have to like her.

Trevor stares at Kay as if seeing her for the first time.

TREVOR

(pause, quietly)

Kay, what is it that you're saying?

KAY

I'm saying I hate this, all of this. And I especially hate your trying to manipulate all of us--me, my parents, her--trying to weave us all together into the one big sick happy family that you don't have.

TREVOR

(stung)

I am not trying to manipulate
anybody--

KAY

And you're a liar and a hypocrite,
just like all the rest of them.
Trevor, you know, you talk so much
and you never say anything.

She begins striding away.

TREVOR

Kay!

KAY

(yells back)

Just stay away, okay? Go to Chiyo,
go to Lori, go to all those others.
Just stay away from me and my
family... and if you can't do that,
at least stay away from me.

Trevor watches helplessly as Kay turns and runs away.

INT. HOUSE - MINUTES LATER

CLOSE on doorknob of front door. It wriggles violently, evidently locked. SOUND OF KEY being inserted into the lock. CAMERA PULLS BACK QUICKLY as Kay enters, extremely stressed, looking as if she has a massive headache. She SLAMS the door shut. She looks around as if to ascertain there is no one at home. CAMERA FOLLOWS Kay as she goes to her room.

As she enters the room, she stops, seeing it in disarray. She tries to figure out what must have happened and why. A dreadful premonition overcomes her. She drops to the floor and reaches for the box. Her fingers grasp at nothing.

Kay is in a panic. She runs to her parents room, looks around, sees nothing. She dashes down the stairs and out the door. CAMERA FOLLOWS as she heads to the garage.

EXT. GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

CAMERA STAYS with Kay as she claws at the refuse in the garbage can, finding nothing. CAMERA FOLLOWS her as she rushes back inside the house.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Kay looks around the dining room to see if the diaries might be hidden somewhere. Something makes her turn to the fireplace. She approaches it slowly

KAY'S P.O.V. - THE FIREPLACE.

Still smoldering are the charred remains of the diaries.

ANGLE ON KAY

As she drops to her knees, pulling the remnants of the diaries from the ashes. She is in shock, clutching the crumbling fragments, as if she cannot believe the journals no longer exist. She presses them against her chest and rocks back and forth on her knees, as if silently keening.

Then, she stops. Kay lays the charred pieces back in the fireplace. She sits still for a moment, then rises. She goes over to the glass-encased Japanese doll.

Kay removes a key from under the doll case. She returns to the fireplace and takes one of the iron firepokers.

Kay goes to the basement door and inserts the key.

INSIDE BASEMENT, ANGLE ON KAY

As she opens the door.

Kay descends the stairs. The world of the train set is before her. Kay stares at it.

ANGLE ON UGLY, THE FISH

whose movements are somewhat agitated, as if sensing something is amiss.

ANGLE ON KAY

As she raises the firepoker. She wavers, then rage overcomes her.

ANGLE ON FIREPOKER

Descending with furious speed--

ANGLE ON UGLY

darting in panic.

SICKENING CRASH of the poker slamming into the set as a wave of water assaults the CAMERA like a tidal wave.

INSTANT FADE OUT.

SOUNDS OF TOM AND MIMI BICKERING, coming closer.

FADE UP

INT. HOUSE - LATER

Tom and Mimi enter.

TOM

(irritated)

I still don't understand how you
could forget to bring a check.

MIMI

I thought you had brought one.

TOM

You're the one who's supposed to take care of the house things.

MIMI

But this is the car.

TOM

It's part of the house.

Trevor rushes up to them.

MIMI

Hello, Trevor!

TREVOR

Hello, Mr., Mrs. Matsuoka. Have you seen Kay?

MIMI

We just got back. She wasn't here when we left.

TREVOR

If she's home. I'd really like to see her. We've had a slight misunderstanding and I'd--

Trevor stops as he sees Tom standing frozen, staring at ash-strewn fireplace and the open basement door. Tom slowly approaches the door. He hesitates for a long moment, then slowly goes into the basement.

MIMI

(agitated, whispering)
The diaries. He burned the diaries.

ANGLE ON TOM

As he descends the stairs. Suddenly, he clutches at the wall for support. CAMERA SLOWLY PULLS BACK to reveal the remains of the train set. It is demolished, as if a raging tornado had ripped through mercilessly. Shaken, Tom approaches the table.

ANGLE ON TOM'S HANDS

Trembling, hovering above, yet not daring to touch the wreckage, as if the touch would make this destruction real. Then, his fingers gently lift up the limp body of Ugly, the fish.

ANGLE ON TOM

Rushing up the stairs past Mimi and Trevor up to Kay's room. He begins pounding on the door as if to break it down. Mimi follows.

MIMI

Tom, please, Tom, Tom, please stop!

TOM

(yelling hoarsely)

I'm going to kill you, you bitch! I
want you out! You stink up this
house. I never want to see you.
Ever! Get out! Get out!

Tom begins yelling in Japanese. Suddenly the door opens. The unexpected light momentarily blinds Tom. Kay is standing there, wearing her grandmother's printed dress, the origami crane cradled in her hands.

KAY

I'm sorry, I don't speak your
language.

Tom recovers and reaches to grab Kay, but she raises the origami ever so slightly, like a talisman, and he stops.

TOM

You...you...

KAY

You took my grandmother from me.

Tom raises his arm to hit her.

KAY (CONT.)

(shouting)

Don't touch me! Don't you dare touch
me again over your stupid trains!

TOM

I forbid you to say that about the
trains!

KAY

All you can ever see is your trains,
your stupid, idiotic trains. Can't
you understand? You took my
grandmother from me!

TOM

Who gave you the right to read the
secrets of dead people?

KAY

Who gave you the right to bury them?

TOM

Those diaries were her private
property. You had no right to look
at them.

Kay stares at her father, as if something is beginning to dawn on her.

KAY

(accusingly)

You threw those diaries away because you were afraid of them. You were afraid of her thoughts, what she would write. You were afraid of what she might write about you--

TOM

You don't know what you're talking about. You're making all of this up in your head. You think you're so smart. You think you know everything. Well, I have news for you, you don't know everything.

KAY

You burned her diaries. You destroyed who she was. You killed her.

TOM

She killed herself.

KAY

(obstinately)

No, you killed her.

Last fragment of Tom's restraint shatters.

TOM

She killed herself! She committed suicide!

QUICK FLASHBACK TO WIND-WHIPPED CURTAIN

CLOSE ON KAY'S FACE

ANGLE ON TOM

TOM (CONT.)

(sarcastically)

So, now are you happy? Is that what you wanted to hear? Your grandmother was crazy and she killed herself. With a knife. She thought she was a samurai and committed seppuku. It was terrible. How do you think we felt? Did you think we wanted you to know all this? What kind of parents do you think we are? Your grandmother was a sick woman. Yes, she wrote all these poems, and you want to know what she did with them? She destroyed them herself in a fire that nearly killed all of us, her family.

(MORE)

TOM (CONT.)

That was when we knew she was dangerous in addition to being crazy. But that night told me something else, too. It told me that she didn't want anyone else to see her poems. How can you possibly think she would want anybody to see her diaries, huh? The only thing, the only decent thing I could do was respect her feelings, to do what she would have wanted.

KAY

(shaken)

She never told you to burn them.

TOM

I know what she felt.

KAY

You never in your life knew what she felt!

TOM

And if I didn't know her, do you expect me to believe that you know her better than me? You, who was building up this humongous fantasy about a woman who was crazy? A woman who had only enough brains to make paper birds?

Tom clutches his chest in pain. He leans against the wall and slowly slips to the floor to a sitting position.

MIMI

Tom!

TREVOR

Mr. Matsuoka, I think you'd better lay down for a moment. Kay, can you ring for a doctor?

Trevor looks up to see Kay staring at him vacantly. She backs away and heads to the stairs.

TREVOR (CONT.)

Kay!

Kay runs down the stairs and disappears outside.

TREVOR (CONT.)

Mrs. Matsuoka, can you ring?

Mimi exits. Trevor grabs a pillow and puts it under Tom's head. He begins pulling Kay's bedspread off her bed.

TOM

(weakly)

She's right. I took my mother's life.

TREVOR

Mr. Matsuoka, I think you should just keep quiet for a while.

TOM

(anguished)

I forced her stay here...I made her crazy...but I was just a kid--how could I know? How could I know?

FADE OUT

SOUND OF KAY'S FOOTSTEPS stumbling away in the darkness.

MEMORY

FADE IN

EXT. HOSPITAL GROUNDS - DAY

ANGLE ON SMALL KAY'S FEET

Trotting along besides her grandmother's. They are walking along a road that leads outside the hospital grounds, the guard is nowhere to be seen. They leave the hospital property and walk along a deserted road. Grandmother's skirt blows against Kay's face. Kay clutches the origami crane. The old woman sings to herself in Japanese. Unused to a small child, Grandmother goes too fast for the toddler and Kay stumbles over her feet. Grandmother slows down. She looks mischievously at Kay.

GRANDMOTHER

(in careful English)

Do you know where we are going?

Kay shakes her head.

GRANDMOTHER (CONT.)

(smiling in happy complicity)

We are going to Japan.

They continue to walk. Grandmother begins a conversation with Kay in Japanese extolling the wonderful things they will see and do in Japan. Kay, not understanding a word, trots along obediently

The SOUND OF A CAR driving in the background. Grandmother's pace quickens, dragging Kay along.

The Matsuoka's car, then another, appears in the background. The cars speed up.

Grandmother picks up Kay and begins running.

The two cars pull over. Tom, Mimi and HOSPITAL AUTHORITIES dash out.

TOM

(to the hospital workers)

Please, let me talk to her.

Tom approaches his mother, who backs away from him with Kay still in her arms. He pleads with her in Japanese to put Kay down and come back with him. She begins screaming at him.

GRANDMOTHER

(in Japanese)

Don't you dare talk to me. You are not my son. You are my jailor--you forced me to stay here during the war, and now you keep me in a prison of fools and idiots. Crazy people! All of them! I went to the university, I am a scholar, I know fifty times more than these stupid doctors and nurses who treat me like an imbecile. Why am I here? Why am I here? You are a devil son. You keep me in a country that took everything from me and spat on me. I spit on you! It would have been better to have died in the war than to be dying like this for twenty five years. This is what you did. Did a son ever treat his mother the way you have? I am going to Japan, I don't care what you do. You do not exist. I wish you were never born. You don't deserve to have children.

Tom is ashen, immobilized. Grandmother turns to Kay and then points accusingly at Tom, as if to mark him forever in his daughter's eyes.

GRANDMOTHER

(bitterly, in English)

I gave your father life...and he took away mine.

Tom cannot stand this. He runs up and pulls his daughter from his mother's arms. Grandmother hits Tom. He stands, stunned, as if the blow were an echo of the one dealt twenty five years before. The hospital authorities grab the angry woman who fights back viciously, spewing invectives in Japanese. An excited Mimi grabs Kay from Tom, trying to reassure the toddler while screaming at her mother-in law in a mixture of English and Japanese to leave her husband and child in peace. The origami crane gets torn and mutilated, and in the jostling drops from Kay's hand. The hospital authorities force a straitjacket on Grandmother, her rantings reach a hysterical, almost inhuman pitch of anger, rage and despair.

Tom is caught between his mother and his daughter, not knowing to whom he should go, what he should do. Agony and shame at his impotence floods him. Tom holds his head in his hands and doubles over in pain.

SLOW MOTION of the action, then CAMERA PULLS BACK SWIFTLY and we SEE from a distance in INCREASINGLY SLOWER AND SLOWER MOTION, the small pitiable figures of the three generations separated, never to come together again. FREEZE FRAME. The scene bleaches out to whiteness.

DISSOLVE TO:

SNOW-COVERED GROUND

SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS walking in the snow.

EXT. PARK - WEEKS LATER - DAY

Trevor is walking, lost in thought. He passes by a huddled figure on the bench.

VOICE

Trevor.

Trevor turns around, startled. It is Kay, very thin and wan.

TREVOR

(startled)

Kay! How...how are you?

KAY

Fine. Thanks.

Trevor looks at her searchingly. Kay averts her gaze.

TREVOR

I tried to see you while you were...out...but your parents said you didn't want to see anyone...and I gathered that included me.

KAY

Thanks for calling.

There is an awkward pause.

TREVOR

Kay, did you have to do that to your father's trains? Did it have to be an eye for an eye?

KAY

(quietly)

Maybe. I don't know. It doesn't matter now, anyhow.

TREVOR

You left him that night.

(pause)

He could have been dying.

KAY

I know.

TREVOR

And you didn't care?

KAY

I knew that you'd do what could be done. You've been better to them than I ever have.

TREVOR

Kay, there are things you don't know about your father, what he had to do, that you should understand--

KAY

I've stopped trying to understand. It causes too many problems...too many hurts. It's not worth it ...understanding.

(pause)

The reason I stopped you was to ask a favor. You're on your way to see Chiyo at the library, aren't you.

Surprised, Trevor looks at her to see how she knows.

KAY (CONT.)

Could you please ask her to come here for a moment? I just want to say something to her. It won't take long.

TREVOR

Why don't we go to the library. It's warmer.

KAY

I'd rather not. Please.

TREVOR

All right.

(pause, uncertainly)

Well, it's good to see you again.

Kay does not respond. Trevor begins to go.

KAY

(softly)

Trevor?

TREVOR

Yes?

KAY

I just want to say thanks. For everything.

TREVOR
(surprised)

Sure.

Trevor starts again, then hesitates and turns around. Kay remains huddled on the bench. Her lips are moving, but there is no sound to the words she forms: *It rains and there is no umbrella.*

TREVOR (CONT.)
Kay, are you all right?

Kay doesn't seem to hear him. She keeps staring at the snow, as if mesmerized. Then, with effort, Kay looks at Trevor. Her eyes are filled with great pain.

KAY
Would you please get Chiyo now?
(pause)
Please?

Trevor turns and walks away very quickly.

CLOSE ON KAY

Who keeps gazing at ground. As she remembers fragments of the Frost poem, the CAMERA PANS from Kay's face to her P.O.V.--the cold white blanket of snow, through which jagged branches, stones and dead leaves still emerge.

KAY (CONT.)
(whispering to herself)
He gives his little bells a shake
...some mistake...
Between the woods and this lake...
(pause)
The woods are lovely, deep and dark..
In this park...I will sleep...
In these deep...dark--

CAMERA PANS UP to reveal Chiyo. She is a distance away from Kay and stands with the dignity and wary pride of one who will no longer allow herself to be abused. Kay slowly rises. The two girls gaze at each other for a moment.

CHIYO
You wanted to see me.

KAY
Yes. Thank you for coming...I've
been very unkind. I'm sorry...that's
what I wanted to say.

Chiyo looks at Kay, then silently inclines her head in acknowledgement. Kay reaches inside her coat and takes out the Wild West origami crane.

KAY (CONT.)

I want to, I'd like to give you this.
My grandmother made it. She... it's
just a little thing. It's not much,
but it...I'd just like you to...

Kay falls silent. Wordlessly, she holds the origami crane out to Chiyo. Chiyo reaches for it, but a gust of wind blows it from Kay's hand and the paper bird alights on the snow. Chiyo retrieves the origami and brushes off the snow, raising the bird slightly above her eyes. A frown appears on her brow, and she brings the origami closer to her gaze.

CHIYO

Kay, do you know that there is
writing on the paper? It is all
folded up inside, but I can see it
when I hold it up to the light. If I
unfold it, perhaps we can read what
it says.

Kay says nothing. Chiyo looks at her, then carefully begins to unfold the crane.

CHIYO (CONT.)

(excitedly)

It is a poem! Look!

She tries to give the paper to Kay who stares at it dumbly.

KAY

(whispering)

I can't...I can't read Japanese.

CHIYO

Of course, how stupid of me. It
says...

Life

*is a square piece of paper
creased and folded
until it becomes
a beautiful crane*

Death

*is a crane
unfolded
until it becomes
a beautiful square piece of paper*

Origami.

Chiyo repeats the poem to Kay in its original Japanese. The words, strange and solemn, grace the still air.

CHIYO (CONT.)

Trevor told me your grandmother left
you a whole box of origami--there may
be a poem written in each one--

Chiyo stops, realizing that Kay is just barely holding herself together.

CHIYO (CONT.)

(softly)

Kay, if you like, I am happy to read
the poems for you, please let me
know, okay?

KAY

(barely audible)

I'd...just...

There is a long silence. Chiyo understands. She places the paper into Kay's hand, but it is as if Kay's fingers are numb, and Chiyo has to fold them around the paper for Kay to grasp it. It is the first time the two girls have ever touched. Her task done, Chiyo lingers, looking at Kay with concern and empathy. She slowly and reluctantly walks away.

Alone, Kay's body racks with suppressed sobs. Finally she cries out with grief and emancipation.

CLOSE ON KAY

pressing the square of origami paper against her tear-streaked face as the wind flutters it against her cheek.

FADE TO

DREAM

SLOW MOTION. CLOSE ON KAY'S FACE

which is now tranquil and serene. Her eyes are closed as she rests her head against a woman's lap. The woman's patterned dress ripples in the slight breeze and the well-worn fabric caresses Kay's face. A hand reaches down and gently strokes Kay's hair. Kay opens her eyes and gazes at her unseen grandmother, as her grandmother's hand continues to stroke her hair.

FADE OUT.

THE END

END CREDITS

ALTERNATE CLOSING SCENE, OR BACKGROUND SCENE FOR END CREDITS:

OVERHEAD VIEW of the now deserted park bench and surrounding snow-covered area. The particular pattern of the footprints left by Kay, Trevor and Chiyo seem to etch their story, giving silent witness to the events that have happened.

It is snowing, and almost imperceptibly, the footprints begin to vanish.

CHARACTERS & LOCATIONS
for 11/1/92 draft of ORIGAMI

CHARACTERS

(roles: on camera, speaking - 14, silent featured - 1, silent bit - 3)

Kay
Trevor
Tom
Mimi
Chiyo
Lori Olson
Mrs. Olson
Mr. Olson
Mr. Dellarose
Grandmother
Nurse
Annamarie
Principal
Joseph
Young Kay (silent featured)
Hospital attendant #1 (silent bit)
Hospital attendant #2 (silent bit)
Charles (silent bit)

EXTRAS 30-40

students for 2 classroom scenes (20-25)
staff and patients for hospital (memory) scenes (10-15)

LOCATIONS

Matsuoka house (int./ext.)
classroom (int.)
park (ext.)
hospital (int./ext.)
parking lot (ext.)