

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

WOMAN IN GOLD

BEST ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY

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THE WEINSTEIN COMPANY

WOMAN IN GOLD

Written by

Alexi Kaye Campbell

INT. KLIMT'S STUDIO, VIENNA. DAY. 1907

During the credits we watch the creation of a masterpiece: GUSTAV KLIMT painting ADELE BLOCH-BAUER, his magnetic muse. Klimt has a larger than life, sexual presence, and there is something almost erotic about the way he paints his model, which the sensual Adele is more than aware of. As his rough hands apply gold-leaf to the canvas, Adele shuffles in her seat. Klimt speaks in German - **marked in italics, as it is throughout the script.**

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| KLIMT | KLIMT (CONT'D) |
| <i>Move to the left a little.</i> | Rück ein wenig nach links |

She does so.

| | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| ADELE | ADELE (CONT'D) |
| <i>Like this?</i> | So? Oder so? |

He walks up to her, touches her just beneath the shoulder, adjusts the angle she is sitting at, then returns to his canvas. As he moves away, she shuffles again.

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| KLIMT | KLIMT (CONT'D) |
| <i>You are restless today.</i> | Du bist unruhig heute. |

| | |
|---|---|
| ADELE | ADELE (CONT'D) |
| <i>I worry too much, you know that.</i> | Ich mache mir zu viele Sorgen, das weisst du. |

| | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| KLIMT | KLIMT (CONT'D) |
| <i>About what?</i> | Worüber? |

| | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| ADELE | ADELE (CONT'D) |
| <i>The future.</i> | Die Zukunft. |

EXT. ELIZABETHSTRASSE, VIENNA. DAY. 1938

The Bloch-Bauer residence on Elizabethstrasse. HEINRICH and KLAUS, two soldiers in Nazi uniform, stand outside it and start pounding loudly on the front doors. Standing behind them in civilian clothes is the Gestapo agent, FELIX LANDAU.

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| HEINRICH | HEINRICH (CONT'D) |
| <i>Open the door!</i> | Öffnen Sie die Tür! |

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREET. DAY.

Superimposed caption : LOS ANGELES, 1999

A car drives down a Los Angeles street and passes by a small knitwear boutique - this little shop looks very European, small and quaint - quite incongruous in the West Hollywood surroundings.

INT. MARIA'S BOUTIQUE. DAY.

The phone is ringing in Maria's knitwear boutique, as MARIA is handing a purple cardigan over to a customer. Maria is an elderly, beautiful woman who oozes old world charm and elegance. Behind her chic ensembles and delicate manner however there is a fair amount of steel as well as an anarchic streak. Her customer is LIZBET, another elderly woman of European provenance.

MARIA

When I saw this one I decided it
had your name on it.

Lizbet tries on the cardigan.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Purple is definitely your colour. I
don't know why it's taken you sixty
years to discover it.

The phone keeps ringing; Maria excuses herself with a smile and answers it.

MARIA (ON THE PHONE) (CONT'D)

Hello? Yes, my dear, it is. I see.
Yes, of course. Thank you for
letting me know.

She puts down the receiver. And in her face we see that she has just received some life-changing news. Lizbet notices.

LIZBET

Are you alright Maria?

And when Maria utters her sister's name, it is to herself.

MARIA

Luise.

EXT. A CEMETERY. DAY.

A Jewish cemetery on a sunny afternoon, an oasis of calm against the Los Angeles skyline. People huddled around LUISE'S coffin as Maria makes a short speech. She looks dignified in an unostentatious suit.

MARIA

My sister and I loved each other
but the truth is that we were
always competing. If life is a
race, then she has beaten me to the
finishing line. But if it is a
boxing match, then I'm the last one
standing.

A ripple of laughter from those who knew them both. With a spade, Maria throws some earth into the grave. And when she speaks again, it is quietly, looking down at her sister's coffin.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Either way, we went through a lot together, and I will miss you. Auf wiedersehen, Liebe Schwester.

EXT. A CEMETERY. DAY. LATER

As the mourners make their way to the waiting limos in the late afternoon sun, Maria is accompanied by BARBARA SCHOENBERG, an old family friend. Barbara is in her sixties; an academic who is intelligent and warm.

MARIA

Thank you for coming, Barbara, to have you here means a lot.

BARBARA

Our families go back a long way. How are you coping?

MARIA

I'm getting used to losing the people I love. Practice makes perfect, my dear.

And that reminds her of a job that needs doing.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Barbara. Your son, the lawyer..

BARBARA

Randy?

MARIA

Last time I saw him he was wearing braces and reading a Spiderman comic. How is he?

BARBARA

Struggling, I'm afraid.

Maria looks at her, uncomprehending.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

After law school he worked at a fancy firm for four years, then decided to set out on his own in Pasadena.

MARIA

So what happened?

BARBARA

It all fell apart. Add those debts to seven years of student loans and things aren't great.

MARIA

I'm sorry to hear it.

They've reached the cars. A chauffeur opens the door for Maria.

BARBARA

Good news is he has an interview coming up with a firm downtown. Something solid.

MARIA

Well, that sounds promising.

The two women kiss and Maria gets into the car.

BARBARA

You need a lawyer?

MARIA

Some letters I found in my sister's belongings. I need advice from someone I can trust.

EXT. A LOS ANGELES ROAD. DAY.

RANDY is driving his tired car a little erratically along an LA road, obviously late. RANDY is in his thirties, eager, with a rough charm. But there is also something a little chaotic and immature about him, as if he is still searching for his centre.

INT. CAR. DAY

Randy has his hands on the steering wheel and is sipping coffee from a paper cup as he rehearses for the upcoming interview.

RANDY

And I really feel that with a firm like yours..and I really feel, *sir*, that with a firm of this reputation...

His cell phone - very much of the period - rings on the passenger seat next to him. He picks it up, placing the cup between his thighs.

RANDY (ON THE PHONE) (CONT'D)

Hello?

BARBARA (O.S.)

Randy, do you remember Maria Altmann? She has something she wants to ask you.

RANDY (ON THE PHONE)

Not a good time, Mom, not a good time. I'll call you later.

He switches it off, puts it back, and aims for his cup. But he drops it, pouring steaming coffee on his crotch.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Shit!

EXT. BERGEN BROWN SHERMAN OFFICES. DAY.

Randy is racing towards the impressive glass and steel building that houses the Bergen Brown Sherman Law Firm. He's running late, has to weave his way through impressive young lawyers on their way to work.

INT. ELEVATOR, BERGEN BROWN SHERMAN. DAY.

And in the elevator of the law firm building, he is still rehearsing under his breath.

RANDY
I sincerely feel that with a firm
of this standing, no, with a firm
of this calibre..

There's a high-powered looking lawyer wearing an impressive suit in the lift - he throws Randy a funny, slightly supercilious look and then spots the coffee stain on the crotch.

RANDY.
It's coffee. Soya cappuccino.

INT. BERGEN BROWN SHERMAN BOARDROOM. DAY

In the impressive glass and steel offices, Randy is now being interviewed by the partners that make up BERGEN, BROWN and SHERMAN, all in their sixties. They sit on one side of the boardroom table and on the other sits Randy, who is delivering his rehearsed spiel with nervy gusto.

RANDY
With a firm as impressive as this,
I would be strongly motivated to
deliver my very best.

SHERMAN has an open folder before him which contains Randy's CV : the name SCHOENBERG in bold letters at the top.

SHERMAN
Any relation to the famous
composer?

Randy is a little put out by the question. One senses he gets this all the time. But he does his best to cover the instinctive response.

RANDY
Arnold was my grandfather, sir.

SHERMAN
His music demands a certain quality
of application but the rewards
validate the effort.

BROWN
A radical.

RANDY

One of the things I would most look forward to is dealing with..

But he's interrupted.

SHERMAN

And Judge Schoenberg is your father.

RANDY

Retired now, but yes sir, he is.

SHERMAN

Outstanding lineage Mr. Schoenberg.

RANDY

Yes, sir.

He gives up, smiles, just a little defeated. It's not as if he's not used to living in these shadows.

SHERMAN

So what happened in Pasadena?

Randy is flummoxed by the question. For a second he flounders, then opts for honesty.

RANDY

I took a risk and it didn't pay off. Working for yourself isn't everything it's hyped up to be.

SHERMAN

So now you're ready to work with others.

And all Randy can muster is a smile. But Sherman decides to give him a chance. He closes the file.

SHERMAN (CONT'D)

Let's give it a go, Mr. Schoenberg.

EXT. THE SCHOENBERGS' GARDEN. DAY.

In the slightly scruffy back garden of the house Randy shares with his wife PAM and baby daughter DORA in the San Fernando Valley, Pam and Randy are drinking champagne. Pam is holding the glasses in one hand, balancing Dora in the other. Randy puts on a mock patrician voice, sending the whole thing up a little.

RANDY

Here's to Bergen, Brown, Sherman, and being able to tell them apart.

PAM

I'm so proud of you. And I was thinking..

RANDY

Uh-oh.

She gives him a playful kick in the shins. He feigns pain.

PAM

We could get out of here, put a down payment on one of those houses we saw in Brentwood. I mean, not now, but soon.

RANDY

Oh my God, I've just come from the interview and she's already calling the moving company.

PAM

It's the first time we can start making plans.

RANDY

What is it you don't like about this place? The leaking taps, the rogue mice, or the psychotic neighbour?

PAM

All of the above. And we could get somewhere with a little room I could turn into a studio.

RANDY

Sounds pretty good.

She kisses him, turns to go into the house.

PAM

I'm putting her to bed and then we'll have dinner. Couscous.

She turns and behind her back he makes a face - he's obviously not a fan of couscous.

RANDY

That's great. I'm going to run out but I'll be back by eight, eight thirty at the latest.

PAM

Where are you going?

RANDY

My Mom's been driving me crazy. Some family friend woman. I need to get it out of the way.

She kisses him.

PAM

Okay. Hurry home.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS STREET. DAY.

Randy is driving towards Maria's house, looking a little stressed as he mutters to himself.

RANDY
Thanks, Mom.

EXT. MARIA'S FRONT YARD. DUSK.

In the early evening, Randy pulls up in front of Maria's little bungalow. He gets out of the car to find her watering her plants.

MARIA
I was expecting you at six. It's ten past.

RANDY
My apologies, Mrs. Altmann, it was gridlock on Wilshire.
And it's lovely to see you too.

As he shakes her hand the sarcasm can't help but seep through his smile. Maria starts to make her way towards the front door; he follows.

MARIA
You look tired and stressed but you're not bad looking.

RANDY
Thank you.

MARIA
Do you know anything about art restitution?

RANDY
Not a thing.

MARIA
Well, it's never too late to learn.
Come in and have some strudel. I made it especially for you.

And as they enter the house, Randy throws a quick glance at his watch. He really doesn't have the time for this.

INT. MARIA'S LIVING ROOM. DUSK.

Randy is walking around Maria's living room, taking it all in. It's as if a small part of pre-war Vienna has been transported to the suburbs of L.A. He's looking at an old family picture on the wall from the 1920s when Maria approaches with a slice of strudel for him.

MARIA
My sister is the pretty one on the right.

INT. LIVING ROOM, ELIZABETHSTRASSE. DUSK.

The photo comes to life: it is the 1920's and the Bloch-Bauers are posing for the photographer: CHILD MARIA and her sister CHILD LUISE, GUSTAV and THERESE, their parents, FERDINAND and ADELE, their uncle and aunt. As each one is mentioned, we see them in close-up as they prepare to have their photograph taken.

MARIA (V.O.)

I'm the moody one in the middle. My parents, my uncle Ferdinand, and my aunt Adele.

ADELE

Come and sit next to me, Maria, darling.

ADELE (CONT'D)

Komm, setz dich neben mich, Maria, Liebling.

MARIA (V.O.)

Adele did not have children, we were like one big family ; I had two sets of parents.

GUSTAV

Try to smile Maria, it's good to exercise your facial muscles at least once a year!

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

Versuche wenigstens einmal im Jahr zu lächeln Maria, es ist eine gute Übung für deine Gesichtsmuskeln!

They all laugh and there's a flash as the photo is taken.

MARIA (V.O.)

The Bloch-Bauers.

RANDY (V.O.)

The famous Bloch-Bauers.

INT. MARIA'S LIVING ROOM. DUSK.

And now they're sitting and he's finished the cake, puts the plate down. Maria hands him a big bundle of letters, tied with a string. He is polite but it's not easy, he doesn't want to be here.

MARIA

I found these amongst my sister's belongings. I've translated them for you on the back.

He starts to scan them, notices the date.

RANDY

1948.

MARIA

From our family lawyer in Vienna, Johann Rinesch. All about our paintings which were stolen by the Nazis.

RANDY

Okay.

MARIA

A month ago I read in the *New York Times* that things are changing in Austria.

RANDY

How are they changing?

MARIA

They're redrafting the art restitution laws. Reviewing old cases.

INT. MARIA'S DINING ROOM. DUSK.

The dining room basks in late afternoon light as Maria opens the sliding doors to it, and it's madness - all of her sister's belongings take up the whole room, books and boxes piled high on the floor and on the table. Randy follows her into the room.

MARIA

My sister finally moves in with me. Only problem is she decides to do it when she's dead.

RANDY

Well, at least you won't be having any arguments that way.

She gives him a look. He flounders, keeps digging.

RANDY (CONT'D)

What I mean is..you know how house-mates argue, like about leaving dishes in the sink and stuff like that.

She gives him nothing. Randy digs some more.

RANDY (CONT'D)

So you won't be arguing. About dishes. Is what I mean. Coz she's dead.

It's agony. He's reached the end. No more space to dig.

RANDY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. That was..it was a joke. Well, it was supposed to be a joke.

She holds it for a beat.

MARIA

I'm glad you went for law and not stand-up comedy.

RANDY

You're not alone there.

She reaches for a box, opens it, takes out a faded old postcard of the Klimt portrait of Adele, hands it to him.

MARIA

Here she is - my Aunt Adele,
painted by Gustav Klimt.

RANDY

That's quite a painting.

MARIA

It's magnificent. She was taken off
the wall of our home by the Nazis.
Since then, she has been hanging in
the Belvedere Gallery in Vienna.

RANDY

And now you want to be reunited.

MARIA

Wouldn't that be lovely?

RANDY

It would make you a rich woman, I'm
sure.

MARIA

And you think that's what it's
about, do you?

Randy is slightly taken aback and admonished. With her hand she indicates the many boxes that lay piled and scattered across the room: a family's history. She picks up an old book - a copy of the famous children's stories *Struwwelpeter* - and runs her hand across the cover. He notices the book.

MARIA (CONT'D)

I have to do what I can to keep the
memories alive. Because people
forget, you know. And then, there's
justice.

And he catches something in her eyes - the memory of a long-lost past and a long-forgotten wrong.

EXT. MARIA'S GARDEN. NIGHT.

Under the warm Californian night, Maria and Randy are sitting in her garden. Randy is holding the postcard of Adele now; Maria is holding the letters.

MARIA

After the war they returned a
couple of paintings to us which
paid for my nephew's education. But
we had to sign export permits to
relinquish any claims to the five
Klimts including that portrait of
my aunt.

RANDY

Export permits?

MARIA

The Klimts were deemed national treasures so we weren't allowed to take them out of the country even though they belonged to us. So we signed them over.

RANDY

Just like that?

MARIA

We didn't have the strength to fight, we were just grateful to be alive. All we wanted to do was mourn our dead. And there was another important reason we didn't contest it.

RANDY

What was that?

MARIA

We were told that Adele had left the paintings to the Belvedere in her will.

RANDY

Had she?

MARIA

We always thought so. Then I read these letters.

And she puts them on the table. Randy picks them up, but once again he throws a quick look at his watch.

EXT. MARIA'S FRONT YARD. NIGHT.

A few minutes later, Maria is walking Randy back to his car. When they get there, she decides to give her verdict.

MARIA

I am sorry to have wasted your time. It was a test and we have both failed.

He looks at her, doesn't know what she means.

MARIA (CONT'D)

I have bored you to tears. Four times you looked at your watch tonight.

RANDY

I got a new job today. I have a baby that keeps me up at night, a wife I want to make happy, several financial institutions who'd like my feet broken, and a plate of couscous waiting at home.

MARIA
So why would you be interested in
ancient history?

She takes the letters from his hand.

MARIA (CONT'D)
It's great about the new job. And I
hope you succeed in making your
wife happy. Enjoy your couscous, my
dear.

He is about to get into the car, then stops.

RANDY
Struwwelpeter.

She doesn't understand.

RANDY (CONT'D)
That book you were holding. My
grandmother used to read those
stories to me. Terrifying. The one
with the boy who got swept away by
the wind...

MARIA
Into a terrible adventure. I too,
found it frightening.

Something small happens; she returns the letters to him.

MARIA (CONT'D)
Just have a look and tell me if I
have a case. That's all I want from
you.

INT. THE SCHOENBERGS' BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Randy and Pam's bedroom, like the rest of their house, is
small and too crowded; it's obvious they've outgrown it.
Randy is lying in bed next to PAM, looking through the
letters.

PAM
Read that one to me.

RANDY
'11th of April, 1948. Dear Luise
Bloch-Bauer,' - that's her sister -
'the Austrian Government has
decided to return to you two of the
paintings which were unlawfully
taken from your family during Nazi
occupation.'

INT. MARIA'S BUNGALOW. NIGHT.

Maria goes from room to room, switching off the lights one by one before she goes to bed. As the portrait of Adele is mentioned we hover a little on the postcard of it which Maria has placed leaning against some books in the dining room.

RANDY (V.O.)

'This however comes with the full understanding that they will hold on to the Klimt portrait of your aunt and the other four Klimts which they insist were bequeathed to the gallery in her will, a fact which they claim as incontestible.'

INT. THE SCHOENBERGS' BEDROOM. NIGHT.

And as Randy reads the last sentence, his interest has grown.

RANDY

'The will itself, I have not seen, despite my persistent attempts to do so. Yours sincerely, Johann Rinesch'.

And he puts down the letter, looks over at Pam.

PAM

So her lawyer never saw the will?

RANDY

Nobody saw the will. Can you believe that? Nobody.

PAM

Nobody?

INT. THE SCHOENBERGS' LIVING ROOM. NIGHT.

In his pyjamas, in amongst Dora's toys, Randy is on the internet, researching the web page of the 'Austrian Government, Ministry of Culture: Art Restitution claims.' And as his eyes scan the page we can tell he's already being drawn in a little.

INT. BERGEN BROWN SHERMAN OFFICES. DAY.

Randy comes out of his office, into the reception area and sees Maria. He's holding a bunch of papers. Maria is sitting, but stands when he approaches. Randy's behaviour is a little furtive, as if he doesn't want to be seen with Maria.

MARIA

Everybody here looks like they are about to have nervous breakdowns.

RANDY

Most of them are. We need to photocopy these.

Through a glass partition he notices Sherman looking at him, wondering who Maria is. Feeling the pressure, Randy starts to walk down the corridor to where the photocopier is, with Maria in tow. He is obviously in a hurry, fitting Maria in between pressing work at the office.

RANDY (CONT'D)
I was up till three, I did some research for you.

MARIA
I'm impressed.

RANDY
Get someone on the ground in Vienna. For the first time in fifty years, they've opened the archives. So you start by trying to find a copy of Adele's will.

They have arrived at the photocopier. He starts to make copies for her.

MARIA
And then what?

RANDY
The Austrian Ministry of Culture has set up a committee to review each case individually. You need to fill in an application for them to consider your claim by the end of next month at the latest.

MARIA
Next month?

He hands her a piece of paper - she scans it with her eyes.

RANDY
I've sent away for one already.

MARIA
Slow down, you're going too quickly for me. You can explain things to me over lunch.

And just then, he sees Sherman again, coming out of a conference room.

RANDY
Oh, no, no, no, no. I can't do lunch. I can't do lunch, Maria.

INT. NORM'S DINER. DAY.

They've had lunch. Randy has placed the photocopied papers on the table, amidst the leftovers.

RANDY
These are three names of the top restitution lawyers in America.
(MORE)

RANDY (CONT'D)

They'll cost you but without them,
it's a non-starter.

MARIA

All I have is my bungalow, my shop,
and a little money I've been saving
for a trip to Hawaii. I don't want
to start throwing cash at some
fancy lawyers.

He hands her the photocopies across the table, starts to put
on his jacket.

RANDY

I need to go.

MARIA

Randy, I don't want to rock your
boat.

RANDY

Well, thank you, how considerate.

MARIA

But maybe you can help me on the
side. Like a hobby.

He makes a sign at the waitress for the check.

RANDY

You can't do this 'on the side'
Maria, this is a full time job,
this is not a hobby.

MARIA

You are quite rude, a little
uncouth, and completely
disinterested in the past.

RANDY

And you have a talent for making me
feel good about myself.

MARIA

But you have the connection.

RANDY

The connection?

MARIA

Your family, Randy. Your
grandparents. They were from
Vienna. We have the same history.

And to this he has no answer.

INT. RANDY'S OFFICE. DAY.

Back on his computer that afternoon, Randy closes a work page
and starts looking for info on the actual painting, finds a
piece about it, and his eyes fall on a sentence about its
estimated value.

With him we read the words : "estimated value is over a hundred million dollars". We watch his reaction at this piece of information.

EXT. LOS ANGELES PARK. DAY.

Randy and Pam are having an evening stroll in a local park. Randy has DORA, their baby daughter, strapped to him. As Randy talks to her about this change of heart, he tries to appear casual, nonchalant - a performance to keep her on his side.

RANDY

I can help her find the will, get the ball rolling, then hand the whole thing over to someone else.

PAM

You mean you're going to go all the way to Austria?

RANDY

So all I need to do is get the firm interested.

PAM

You sure that's a good idea? You've only just started the job, how do you think they'll react if you run off?

RANDY

I'm not going to run off, honey, I just want to persuade them to let me go. It's not a big deal.

PAM

Besides, you think the Austrians will make it that easy for you? 'Here's the files and a pastry'?

RANDY

Nothing to lose.

PAM

Isn't there?

And her question hovers in the air.

INT. SHERMAN'S OFFICE. DAY.

Randy sits in Sherman's impressive office. He's handed Sherman a folder which Sherman is scanning his eyes over.

SHERMAN

I can't have you in Austria chasing paintings, Randy.

RANDY

Not just any paintings sir.

SHERMAN

I know them well. Our daughter went to Vienna and all we got was the lousy fridge-magnets.

RANDY

I see it as a possible investment for the firm.

SHERMAN

Go on.

RANDY

It's all in there, sir. There seems to be a move in Austria towards making reparations for the past. And these paintings are priceless. I'd be..we'd be representing Mrs. Altmann.

SHERMAN

You really think a painting that ends up as a fridge-magnet will ever leave Austria?

RANDY

I think it would be a mistake not to take a look.

For a second Sherman could go either way.

SHERMAN

One week max, I want you back on the 3rd.

RANDY

Thank you, sir!

INT. MARIA'S BOUTIQUE. DAY

Early evening and Maria has just received a new shipment of sweaters at her small boutique. She is taking them out of the containers, placing them carefully onto the shelves. Randy bursts in from the street. She works throughout the scene.

RANDY

Still working.

MARIA

I'll close the shop only when I croak.

RANDY

I've got the green light - I'll go over, try and find the will. Then we take it from there.

She is thrilled.

MARIA

You are chomping at the bite all of a sudden!

RANDY

The bit, yes. And I've got another idea...

He puts a copy of an Austrian newspaper, the *Wiener Zeitung*, on the counter where she's folding the sweaters. Points to an article. The sight of the Austrian paper unnerves her.

RANDY (CONT'D)

My mother sent me this. There's an art restitution conference planned later this month. They're looking for speakers. I think you should be one of them.

MARIA

What are you talking about?

RANDY

Elegant descendant of one of the great Viennese families- the press would love you. It would speed things up, apply pressure.

MARIA

I love your enthusiasm. After all, I'm not a spring chicken, we need to get moving. But in your haste, there's been a misunderstanding.

RANDY

There has?

And suddenly her tone changes, a raw nerve has been touched. She stops her work, folds up the newspaper and puts it in his hands.

MARIA

I'm not going back to that place. Not now, not ever.

RANDY

I don't understand.

MARIA

They destroyed my family. They killed my friends and forced me to abandon the people and places that I loved.

RANDY

Over half a century ago.

MARIA

You think that's a long time?

RANDY

We'd only go back for a few days.

And now she snaps, shows that steel.

MARIA

Randy, you're not listening! I would rather die than go back there. Not for all the paintings in the world.

She suddenly feels she may have over-reacted, pulls back, and smiles at him. But she knows she's made her point.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Anyway, a few days ago you weren't even interested in the case, now you are all over me like a rash. What happened?

RANDY

Against my better judgement, I think I like you.

And she gives him a shrewd look. He can't quite fool her. But despite his shortcomings, she can't help liking him back.

INT. MARIA'S LIVING ROOM. NIGHT.

At home Maria is alone in her living room, sitting in an arm-chair in her dressing-gown, surrounded by all her things. And in her face we see that Randy's suggestion that she should return has unleashed a tumult of conflicting emotions.

INT. THE SCHOENBERGS' KITCHEN. NIGHT.

Randy is feeding Dora, who is in a high-chair. Pam, who is a part-time photographer, has some of her most recent photos spread out on the kitchen table and is going through them. It's obvious that she's not happy about his decision to go.

RANDY

I'll be back before you know it. Four days, a week at most. Depends on the reception I get.

PAM

So what's your plan?

RANDY

It's just a hunch, no real plan.

She stops what she's doing.

PAM

Are you sure about this? We've waited so long for this. You, me, Dora. It's everything we've dreamed of. I don't think we should jeopardise that.

RANDY

I'm not emigrating to the Congo, I'm going to Austria for a few days, with the firm's blessing. What do you think?

She stands up, walks over to him, gives him a kiss on the forehead.

PAM

OK.

And she leaves the room. But her words take the wind out of his sails and plant some doubt in his mind.

INT. MARIA'S LIVING ROOM. NIGHT.

Still in her nightie and dressing-gown, Maria walks up to the old record-player, picks up a record to play. The record is Schubert's *Du Bist Die Ruh*, sung by her husband, Fritz. His name and picture are on the record cover. Near the record-player, there is a photo of them both on their wedding day.

With the music playing, she walks slowly over to the dining room door, opens it. For a few seconds, she stands in the doorway looking at all of her sister's belongings. Almost as if she is frightened of getting closer. Then, slowly, she moves forwards and starts going through them, picking things up from time to time to examine them, objects from their shared past: photographs, letters, books in German, toys. A whole world. And as she goes through them, a change is happening in her, a realisation. Finally, she picks up the old postcard of Adele. And then, a memory returns --

INT. ADELE'S BEDROOM. NIGHT. 1920S

Adele is sitting in front of her mirror, putting the final touches to her outfit for a night out. Out of the corner of her eye she spots Maria, the child, who is peeking through a gap in the door.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ADELE | ADELE (CONT'D) |
| <i>I see you Maria. Come closer.</i> | Ich sehe dich Maria. Komm her. |

Maria edges in and comes to stand behind her.

| | |
|--|--|
| ADELE | ADELE (CONT'D) |
| <i>Why don't you help your aunt put on her favourite necklace?</i> | Möchtest du deiner Tante helfen, machst du mir die kette zu? |

She hangs her diamond and pearl necklace around her neck.

| | |
|---|---|
| ADELE | ADELE (CONT'D) |
| <i>Your little fingers are perfect for the job.</i> | Deine kleinen Finger sind gerade richtig dafür. |

Maria does as she's told, mesmerised by her charismatic aunt and her beautiful necklace.

ADELE
*One day soon you're going to
 have to stop being so timid.
 Life will demand it of you.*

ADELE (CONT'D)
 Bald wirst du aufhören
 müssen, so schüchtern zu
 sein. Das Leben verlangt viel
 von uns.

When the necklace is fastened, she turns around and takes Maria's face in her hands.

ADELE
Your only enemy is fear.

ADELE (CONT'D)
 Dein einziger Feind ist die
 Angst.

INT. THE SCHOENBERGS' BEDROOM. NIGHT. 1998

The phone rings in Randy and Pam's bedroom. They're sleeping. Randy wakes, picks it up.

RANDY
 Hello?

EXT. MARIA'S GARDEN. NIGHT.

Maria is standing under the Los Angeles night in her garden, on the wireless phone to him. As she speaks, it takes some courage to form the words.

MARIA
 I know it's the middle of the night
 but if I wait until the morning, I
 might change my mind.

She stops for a second, takes a breath.

MARIA (CONT'D)
 I've decided to face the ghosts.

INT. THE SCHOENBERGS' BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Randy puts the phone down. Pam has woken, is looking at him questioningly.

RANDY
 She's complicated.

INT. MARIA'S BOUTIQUE. DAY

Maria attaches a piece of paper to the shop door which reads: 'THE SHOP WILL BE CLOSED UNTIL TUESDAY THE 4TH OF APRIL'. And as she does it, the doubt has crept in again: is she doing the right thing?

EXT. L.A. HIGHWAY / INT. CAR DAY.

Pam is driving Maria and Randy to the airport. Maria, dressed to the nines for the trip, is in the front seat. Randy is in the back.

PAM

Your Mom called again this morning. She wants you to visit the Holocaust memorial while you're over there.

RANDY

I know. She's asked me seven times.

PAM

She said you should do it in honour of her grandparents.

MARIA

Siegmund and Malvina. She had the most beautiful eyes, like an owl.

RANDY

I noticed that's a big suitcase you're bringing along, Maria. You sure you're taking enough stuff?

MARIA

If I'm going back, I might as well do it in style. Now Pam, darling, would you mind going a little quicker, we'll miss our flight.

RANDY

It doesn't leave for another four hours.

MARIA

I want to buy perfume and cognac in the duty free.

Pam and Randy exchange a shared look in the rear-view mirror as he pulls a face of mock terror. What is he getting himself into?

EXT. AN L.A. HIGHWAY. DAY

MARIA (O.S.)

Maybe you should change lanes.

PAM

With pleasure, Mrs. Altmann.

And Pam puts her foot down on the pedal and overtakes another car. Maria's bossiness is effective.

EXT. VIENNA STREET. DAY. 1938

An abstract, nightmare vision - a Jewish woman in a fur coat is scrubbing the pavement, surrounded by a jeering, mocking crowd of people. A moment of absolute degradation. And a voice is heard.

STEWARD (O.S.)
*We're about to land in
 Vienna. Please fasten your
 seat-belt.*

STEWARD (CONT'D)
 Wir werden gleich in Wien
 landen. Bitte schnallen sie
 sich an.

INT. AUSTRIAN AIRLINES PLANE, ECONOMY CLASS. DAY.

It was a nightmare - and the voice wakes Maria up with a sudden start. But it's only the air steward. Maria looks out of the window at Vienna, shimmering in the spring sunshine below them.

MARIA
 I never thought I'd come back.

She puts her hand on Randy's. In that one gesture of physical intimacy, all her fear is obvious. And Randy is a little taken aback by it - he senses the emotional nature of the job he's accepted and this makes him a little nervous.

EXT. VIENNA. DAY.

Montage of Vienna, a world away from Los Angeles: the parks, the tree-lined avenues, the Schonbrunn Palace.

EXT. VIENNA TAXI. DAY.

Randy and Maria in the back of the cab taking them from the airport to the hotel. Maria is staring out of the window.

RANDY
 Some guy from the Ministry has
 agreed to see me tomorrow. I have a
 feeling he's in charge of paper-
 clips.

MARIA
 We're lucky anyone has agreed to
 meet us at all.

RANDY
 But you don't have to come, you can
 stay at the hotel.

MARIA
 We haven't even arrived and you're
 already thinking of ways to get rid
 of me.

RANDY
 I didn't really/

MARIA

Anyway, I want to go to the Belvedere to visit my aunt. The postcard doesn't do her justice.

Maria stares out of the window. They are on the Ringstrasse now, and the car stops at a traffic light by a cafe. Maria looks through the cafe window. And suddenly, for a second, through Maria's eyes, it changes. *In the cafe, in amongst all the people in modern dress, she sees herself as a child, with her sister Luise, and her aunt Adele. The girls are eating ice-cream, and Adele is laughing at something one of them has said.*

Maria blinks nervously and it all returns to the present. A momentary memory.

INT. HOTEL RECEPTION. DAY.

At the reception of their small hotel they are signing in. The receptionist, a young Austrian man, is writing down the details from Maria's passport and notices that she was born in Vienna.

RECEPTIONIST

You were born in Vienna Mrs. Altmann?

MARIA

Just round the corner, yes.

RECEPTIONIST

You speak German?

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

Sprechen Sie Deutsch?

MARIA (CONT'D)

Yes. But I choose to speak English these days.

RECEPTIONIST

I hope you enjoy your stay.

MARIA

I'll certainly try.

And there is a nervousness in her which manifests itself in a slight terseness.

EXT. ELIZABETHSTRASSE. DUSK.

Later that night Randy and Maria are walking under the street-lamps of Elizabethstrasse. Suddenly she stops in her tracks. Her family home stands before them. The emotion is clear in her eyes and voice. Randy notices.

RANDY

Are you alright, Maria?

MARIA

There it is. No. 18. Our home.

RANDY
It's beautiful.

But Maria is overwhelmed, and can't speak.

EXT. ELIZABETHSTRASSE. DUSK.

And a few minutes later they are walking round the side of the house, seeing it from different angles and the memories have flooded back.

MARIA
The things this house has seen Randy. Great writers, artists and musicians passed through these doors, including your grandfather of course. And once, Doctor Freud. On my wedding night, half of Vienna was here. The world was changing around us, but we danced on, unaware. Only half conscious.

RANDY
Too much alcohol?

And the minute it's out, he knows he's ruined the moment. She gives him a withering look. She is incensed.

MARIA
Is everything a joke to you?

And she walks away. He stands in her wake, cursing himself.

EXT. VIENNA HOTEL. NIGHT.

They are nearly back at the hotel now, MARIA walking ahead angrily, with Randy in tow, feeling her wrath.

MARIA
I think we've both made a mistake coming here.

RANDY
I'm sorry, Maria.

Just as they approach the hotel, a man emerges from the shadows. It is HUBERTUS CZERNIN: in his mid-forties, handsome, intellectual and aristocratic.

HUBERTUS
Mrs. Altmann?

Maria and Randy are taken by surprise.

HUBERTUS (CONT'D)
I spotted your name on the list of speakers for the restitution conference and I tracked you down.

Randy is immediately suspicious.

RANDY
And you are...?

HUBERTUS
Hubertus Czernin, investigative
reporter. I've been called a thorn
in the Austrian backside. I took it
as a great compliment.

He takes Maria's hand and kisses it. Randy balks a little.

HUBERTUS (CONT'D)
Welcome to Vienna.

INT. HOTEL BAR. NIGHT.

In the empty bar of the small hotel Maria and Randy have a
whisky with Hubertus. Hubertus places a copy of his magazine
PROFIL on the table in front of them.

HUBERTUS
I'm the editor. My little Austrian
baby. It keeps me sane.

Randy flicks through it, still suspicious.

HUBERTUS (CONT'D)
When I wrote a piece exposing the
Nazi past of our own President
Waldheim a man walked up to me in
the super-market and spat in my
face. He called me a traitor. I
said to him I was a true Austrian.
Only I know how much I love this
country.

MARIA
And what makes you interested in a
couple of Californian tourists Mr.
Czernin?

HUBERTUS
I just thought you could do with an
Austrian friend.

Randy hands him back the magazine.

RANDY
What for?

HUBERTUS
Like many Americans Mr. Schoenberg,
perhaps you have a tendency to be a
little optimistic.

RANDY
I do?

HUBERTUS
This whole restitution thing began
as a P.R. exercise. Austria wanted
to improve its image abroad.

(MORE)

HUBERTUS (CONT'D)

But now it's turning into a Pandora's box.

MARIA

They don't want to give away their treasures.

HUBERTUS

So they're going to put as many obstacles in your way as possible. And I might just be able to help you get over some of them.

RANDY

And what's in it for you? What's your motive?

Hubertus smiles at the abruptness of Randy's question.

HUBERTUS

Let's just say it's a very particular brand of patriotism.

He stands.

HUBERTUS (CONT'D)

Now if you'll excuse me, I think I'll treat us to another round of drinks.

MARIA

Wonderful idea.

And he leaves the table and makes his way to the bar. Randy continues to look suspicious and Maria uses the opportunity to score a point.

MARIA (CONT'D)

I like him. At least he has some manners.

But Randy doesn't look convinced.

INT. MARIA'S HOTEL BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Maria is in her nightie, brushing her hair and getting ready for bed. She goes into the bathroom and pours some water over her face. She looks into the mirror questioningly. Has she done the right thing coming back? And YOUNG MARIA appears in the mirror's reflection: *her twenty-two year old self in her bridal dress. And we hear the voice of her husband FRITZ, as he sings a Mozart aria.*

INT. LIVING ROOM, ELIZABETHSTRASSE. NIGHT. 1938

And it's the night of her wedding to FRITZ - the whole of Viennese society in their finery. Fritz comes to the end of the aria and there is applause as Gustav takes to the floor, with Therese at his side.

GUSTAV

When my daughter Maria told me that she was marrying an opera singer I said 'as long as he's not planning to sing Puccini at the wedding'. So we settled on Mozart. Let's keep the whole thing Austrian I said.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

Als mir meine Tochter Maria sagte, sie würde einen Opernsänger heiraten, sagte ich nur, 'solange er nicht vorhat, Puccini auf der Hochzeit zu singen'. Deswegen einigten wir uns auf Mozart. Ich sagte, lass uns das Ganze auf österreichisch machen.

Some laughter, applause.

GUSTAV

I ask you ladies and gentleman to raise a glass to Fritz and Maria.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

Meine Damen und Herren, ich bitte Sie, erheben Sie Ihr Glas und lassen Sie uns auf Fritz und Maria anstoßen.

WEDDING GUEST

Long live the bride and groom.

WEDDING GUEST (CONT'D)

Hoch lebe das Brautpaar.

And everybody toasts to 'Fritz and Maria'.

GUSTAV

These are troubling days. Let us hope that this memorable evening is a harbinger of happier times.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

Das sind finstere Zeiten .Hoffen wir, dass dieser unvergessliche Abend unter einem guten Omen für glücklichere Tage steht.

Vocal agreement by the audience but you can tell that neither they or Gustav are convinced by these last words.

INT. LIVING ROOM ELIZABETHSTRASSE. NIGHT.

Maria and Fritz now make their way through the music and the crowd, being congratulated and feted. They pass by Luise who is dancing the foxtrot brilliantly.

YOUNG MARIA

So like my sister to upstage me even on my wedding day!

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)

Typisch meine Schwester! - Sogar auf meiner Hochzeit stiehlt sie mir die Schau.

And her uncle Ferdinand finds them in the bustle.

FERDINAND

Young man you better look after your treasure here.

FERDINAND (CONT'D)

Junger Mann, passen Sie gut auf Ihren Schatz auf.

FRITZ
I'll do my best sir.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
*Ich werde mein Bestes tun,
 mein Herr.*

FERDINAND
*And now, may I borrow my
 niece for a few minutes?*

FERDINAND (CONT'D)
*Und darf ich meine Nichte
 jetzt auf ein paar Minuten
 entführen?*

FRITZ
She's all yours.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
Bitte sehr!

INT. THE ADELE ROOM, ELIZABETHSTRASSE. NIGHT.

Off one of the corridors, one of the rooms is a shrine to Adele's memory. Nothing in it apart from Adele's portrait, the other Klimts and vases of flowers. A fire-place too with a fire burning. Ferdinand and Maria sit under the portrait.

FERDINAND
*It makes me sad your aunt
 Adele is not here to admire
 you today.*

FERDINAND (CONT'D)
*Es macht mich traurig dass
 deine Tante Adele nicht hier
 ist, um dich heute zu
 bewundern.*

YOUNG MARIA
Me too uncle.

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
Mich auch, Onkel.

FERDINAND
*At least she's not alive to
 witness what is happening to
 the country she loved so
 much.*

FERDINAND (CONT'D)
*Wenigstens muss sie nicht
 erleben, was mit ihrem
 heissgeliebten Land
 geschieht.*

He takes out a small jewelry case.

FERDINAND
*I want you to have this
 Maria.*

FERDINAND (CONT'D)
*Ich moechte, dass du sie
 bekommst, Maria.*

He opens the case: it is Adele's diamond necklace - the same one she wears in the painting, the same one Maria fastened around her neck as a child.

YOUNG MARIA
Her favourite.

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
Ihre Lieblingskette.

Ferdinand stands up and fastens it around her neck. Maria is deeply moved by the gesture.

FERDINAND
*Like her, you are head-strong
 and inquiring. Something of
 Adele's spirit is in you.*

FERDINAND (CONT'D)
*Wie sie, bist du eigensinnig
 und neugierig. Du hast etwas
 von Adeles Charakter in dir.*

YOUNG MARIA
I will always treasure it.

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
*Ich werde sie immer zu
schätzen wissen.*

Gustav enters with Luise.

YOUNG LUISE
*There you are! Come Maria,
it's time for the cake!*

YOUNG LUISE (CONT'D)
*Da bist du ja! Komm' Maria,
es ist Zeit für den Torte!*

GUSTAV
*The whole world has been
looking for you!*

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
*Die ganze Welt ist auf der
Suche nach Dir!*

YOUNG MARIA
Alright, alright.

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
Schon gut, ich komme.

Maria walks up to her uncle and embraces him. He kisses her.
Luise grabs her by the hand.

YOUNG LUISE
Hurry up! I'm hungry!

YOUNG LUISE (CONT'D)
*Mach' schnell ! Ich bin
hungrig!*

And she drags Maria out of the room.

FERDINAND
*That Maria of yours is a
heart-stealer.*

FERDINAND (CONT'D)
*Deine Maria ist
unwiderstehlich.*

He walks up to a small drinks tray and pours himself a whisky
and one for his brother. He hands it to him.

FERDINAND
*The Chancellor has conceded
on every front. Hitler has
made some empty promise about
Austrian sovereignty but my
bet is that before the end of
the month the Nazis will be
marching round the
Ringstrasse in their
jackboots.*

FERDINAND (CONT'D)
*Der Kanzler hat alles
bewilligt. Hitler hat einige
leere Versprechen über
Österreichs Souveränität
gemacht, aber ich wette, dass
die Nazis noch vor Monatsende
in ihren Stiefeln um die
Ringstrasse marschieren
werden.*

GUSTAV
*You really think that is
possible? The Austrians will
not allow it.*

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
*Glaubst du wirklich, dass
das möglich ist? Die
Österreicher werden es nicht
zulassen.*

FERDINAND

I will leave for Zurich on Sunday with Luise. By next week, the rest of you must join us.

FERDINAND (CONT'D)

Ich reise am Sonntag mit Luise nach Zürich. Bis nächste Woche müsst ihr alle dort eingetroffen sein.

GUSTAV

We can't leave, just like that. There will be much to do, we have to take our time.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

Wir können nicht einfach so weggehen. Es gibt viel zu tun, wir brauchen Zeit.

FERDINAND

Like always, you are a dreamer, Gustav. Time is the one thing we haven't got.

FERDINAND (CONT'D)

Du bist wie immer ein Träumer, Gustav. Zeit ist das Einzige, was wir nicht haben.

And Gustav cannot ignore these final words. They strike a chord with him and for the first time, there is a very palpable worry in his eyes.

INT. LIVING ROOM, ELIZABETHSTRASSE. NIGHT.

After the cutting of the cake, Maria and Fritz are surrounded by family and friends. Therese is making the most of the moment as the mother of the bride, making a little speech.

THERESE

Now it is time for the mother to speak! And all I can do is wish these children a life of peace and love.

THERESE (CONT'D)

Jetzt ist es an der Zeit, dass die Mutter ein paar Worte spricht! Alles, was ich tun kann, ist, diesen Kindern ein Leben in Frieden und Liebe zu wünschen.

And breaking the solemnity of the moment, Fritz brings a forkful of cake to Maria's mouth.

FRITZ

The diet is over, you fit into your wedding dress. Now open your mouth and eat some!

FRITZ (CONT'D)

Die Zeit des Abmagerns ist vorbei, du passt doch in dein Brautkleid. Jetzt mach den Mund auf und iss!

YOUNG MARIA

Alright. But I have some news for you. This is the last time you're telling me what to do!

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)

Gut. Aber ich sage dir, das ist das letzte Mal, dass du mir sagst, was ich tun soll!

And everybody laughs as Maria takes a giant bite of the cake.

INT. LIVING ROOM, ELIZABETHSTRASSE. NIGHT.

And now everyone is dancing - the family, the guests, the old and the young. And as the pace of the dance picks up there is a sense in all of them that this may well be the final dance. There is spirit and warmth in the dancers but there is also the knowledge that this is the end of an era. And with that knowledge, the dance turns slightly frenzied, manic, as if all who dance are trying to dance their way out of the terrible fate that awaits them.

INT. ARCHIVES OFFICE, MINISTRY OF CULTURE. DAY. 1998

Randy and Maria are sitting waiting for someone from the Archive Department. No-one is paying much attention to them. Randy looks at the clock on the wall.

RANDY

Forty-five minutes.

MARIA

Something tells me we'll be doing a lot of waiting in Austria.

An ARCHIVE EMPLOYEE appears, a stern looking woman in her fifties. She is holding a file. She speaks German.

ARCHIVE EMPLOYEE

Your application to search the archives has been received but it has not been processed yet.

ARCHIVE EMPLOYEE (CONT'D)

Ihre Anfrage auf Nachforschung im Archiv ist eingetroffen, wurde aber noch nicht bearbeitet.

Randy tries to reply in German but is useless - he has a very strong American accent and completely mispronounces the words.

RANDY

Quickly, please.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Schnell, bitte!

ARCHIVE EMPLOYEE

We will let you know when permission is granted.

ARCHIVE EMPLOYEE (CONT'D)

Wir werden Sie benachrichtigen, sobald die Freigabe erfolgt ist.

And she walks off.

RANDY

I think that's a no.

MARIA

That's Austrian bureaucracy for you. Selectively efficient. And by the way, I thought you said you had forgotten most of the German your grandmother taught you.

RANDY

Thanks, Maria, that's kind.

MARIA

You haven't forgotten most of it.
You have forgotten all of it.

And she's walking towards the door, leaving him reeling in her wake.

INT. OFFICE IN MINISTRY OF CULTURE. DAY.

Randy and Maria are in the office of a junior official in the Ministry of Culture. The man is superficially cordial and smiles a lot but there is an air of impatience to him, as if he has more pressing matters.

JUNIOR OFFICIAL

The Restitution Committee has decided your case is worthy of a review Mrs. Altmann.

MARIA

Young Mr. Schoenberg and I have travelled all this way so we'd appreciate discussing my case with the Committee before they make any decisions at all.

JUNIOR OFFICIAL

The Committee will not be interacting with external parties.

MARIA

We're an external party, are we?

RANDY

The paintings belonged to Mrs. Altmann's family.

JUNIOR OFFICIAL

It is an internal matter. But you must trust that all due procedures will be followed.

And he stands.

JUNIOR OFFICIAL (CONT'D)

And now if you don't mind, I have a reception to go to. Do make sure you enjoy your stay in our beautiful city. It's been a real pleasure to meet you.

And they are ushered into the reception area and the door has closed behind them.

INT. RECEPTION AREA, MINISTRY OF CULTURE. DAY.

Standing in the reception area, Maria and Randy try to come to terms with the manner in which they've just been treated.

MARIA

This man had the smile of a psychopath.

She jokes but Randy notices she's been affected by the meeting.

RANDY
How are you doing?

MARIA
I'm wondering if I have the
strength to deal with these people.
And we've only been here a day.

And she gives him a vulnerable smile.

EXT. THE BELVEDERE. DAY.

Randy, Maria and Hubertus are walking towards the main entrance of the Belvedere in the morning sunshine.

RANDY
It looks like we're not going to
get a copy of the will before we
have to leave after all.

MARIA
The archive department wasn't
exactly helpful.

HUBERTUS
Thankfully I have what is commonly
known as a 'mole' in the Belvedere.
Someone who can speed things up.

Hubertus hands Randy a piece of paper with a number on it.

HUBERTUS (CONT'D)
On Mondays the museum is all locked
up. But my friendly mole will be
waiting for you. I hope you're not
allergic to a little dust.

MARIA
Didn't I tell you he was going to
be useful, Randy?

HUBERTUS
Be patient, Maria. He'll soon come
to see that some Austrians are his
friends, whatever their motives.

RANDY
Keep working at it.

And Randy's little retort is enough for us to know that his doubts about Hubertus are thawing.

INT. THE BELVEDERE. DAY.

Maria, Randy and Hubertus are walking through the Belvedere galleries. Suddenly, Maria stops in her tracks. She sees a portrait she recognises. It is the Klimt portrait of Amalie Zuckerkandl.

MARIA

Amalie Zuckerkandl. Also painted by Klimt. She was a friend of our family. She was murdered by the Nazis.

HUBERTUS

At Belzec death camp, yes. Mrs. Altmann, your aunt is around this corner. Are you ready for the reunion?

They turn the corner and there she is: Klimt's portrait of Adele. The emotion is evident on Maria's face and she can't help but whisper her aunt's name to herself.

MARIA

Aunt Adele.

Randy too is bewitched by the painting, he stares up at it in awe and admiration.

HUBERTUS

Rightly or wrongly she has become embedded in Austria's identity. A national icon. Adele has become part of the country's psyche.

But as he talks Maria's mind has travelled to the distant past --

CUT TO:

INT. THE ADELE ROOM, ELIZABETHSTRASSE. NIGHT. 1924.

Young Maria looks up at the Klimt painting of her aunt which now hangs on the wall. Adele approaches her.

ADELE

Do you like it?

ADELE (CONT'D)

Gefällt es dir?

CHILD MARIA

Why is it all gold?

CHILD MARIA (CONT'D)

Warum ist da soviel gold?

Adele sits on the sofa, indicates to Maria that she should come sit on her knee. She does so. Together they look up at the painting.

ADELE

Ignore all the gold. That's Klimt. Look at my face instead. Does it resemble me?

ADELE (CONT'D)

Vergiss das ganze Gold. Das ist Klimt. Schau lieber statt dessen lieber auf mein Gesicht. Ist es mir ähnlich?

CHILD MARIA

Yes. But I don't think you look happy.

CHILD MARIA (CONT'D)

Ja. Aber du schaust nicht glücklich aus.

Adele is taken aback by her perception and honesty.

ADELE

I wonder what it will be like to be a woman when you are older. Whether you will have to amuse yourself with trivialities.

ADELE (CONT'D)

Ich frage mich, wie es sein wird, wenn du erwachsen bist, wenn du eine frau geworden bist. Ob du dich wohl mit belanglosigkeiten zufrieden geben musst?

She looks at her niece and sees a reflection.

ADELE

Or maybe time will change things.

ADELE (CONT'D)

Vielleicht ändern sich ja die Zeiten.

INT. THE BELVEDERE. DAY.

Suddenly the voice of a tour-guide brings her back to the present. The tour-guide is an Austrian woman and her followers are a pack of teenage school-children.

TOUR GUIDE

Austria's own Woman in Gold, painted by Klimt. One of our most famous paintings, a glorious example of Austria's heritage.

TOUR GUIDE (CONT'D)

Österreichs Goldene Adele, gemalt von Klimt. Eines unserer berühmtesten Gemälde, ein herausragendes Beispiel österreichischen Kulturerbes.

Maria can not control herself. Suddenly, unexpectedly, she snaps.

MARIA

She was stolen by thieves!

MARIA (CONT'D)

Sie wurde von Dieben gestohlen!

The tour guide and the students look at her as if she is a mad woman and then move to another painting. Some of the teenagers giggle at her. Maria pulls herself together.

RANDY

Maria?

With shaking hands she takes out of her bag a small camera.

MARIA

Excuse the temper of an eccentric old woman. Mr. Czernin, will you kindly take a photograph of me and Randy please?

HUBERTUS

With pleasure.

Maria and Randy pose in front of the painting. Hubertus is about to take the shot when they are approached by a gruff guard.

GUARD

Taking photographs is forbidden!

And just as quickly, Maria has returned to her usual self. Calmly, almost flirtatiously, she turns to the guard.

MARIA

This woman is my aunt and this painting belongs to my family. For once, please make an exception to your rules...

She leans forward and peers at his name-tag.

MARIA (CONT'D)

....Franz. Thank-you. You are very kind and most understanding.

The guard is dumb-struck, speechless.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Come on Randy. Relax and smile.

And they pose for Hubertus who's enjoyed what he's just witnessed. As he takes the photograph we see the two women's faces in close proximity - aunt and niece, past and present --

EXT. VIENNA. DAY. 1938.

12th of March, 1938: the Anschluss. Nazi troops marching down the streets of Vienna - and the crowds are jubilant. People are throwing flowers. Maria and Fritz have come to witness it all. They stand behind the crowd, trying to blend in, but find it increasingly difficult. They then run off into a side street off the main thoroughfare and see streams of joyous young people running in the opposite direction to them, and towards the celebrations. Alarmed by all they see, they run.

YOUNG MARIA

Quickly, let's get home!

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)

Schnell, lass uns Heimgehen!

INT. LIVING ROOM, ELIZABETHSTRASSE. DAY.

Maria, Gustav and Fritz are listening to the wireless, trying to hear the latest news, Therese is looking out of the window. And all around them the suitcases which had already been packed.

FRITZ

It says they've closed the borders.

FRITZ (CONT'D)

Sie sagen, dass die Grenzen geschlossen sind.

GUSTAV

My brother was right. We should have left already.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

Mein Bruder hatte Recht. Wir hätten früher fliehen sollen.

THERESE
Come and see!

THERESE (CONT'D)
Shout her!

They all run over to where Therese is by the window, and look out. There is a commotion on the street outside: a woman in a fur coat has been forced to her knees by a group of people and made to scrub the pavement. The liquid she is using is obviously caustic - she seems to be in terrible pain when it comes into contact with her skin. It is the same moment that Maria saw in her nightmare on the plane on the way to Vienna.

YOUNG MARIA
It's Mrs. Klein. The wife of the doctor.

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
Das ist Die Frau Klein. Die Frau vom Doktor.

THERESE
What are they doing? What are they doing to her?

THERESE (CONT'D)
Was machen sie da? Was haben sie mit ihr vor?

GUSTAV
Forcing her to wash the pavements with acid.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
Sie zwingen sie, den gehsteig mit Säure zu reinigen.

THERESE
Why? Why are they doing these things?

THERESE (CONT'D)
Warum? Warum? Warum machen sie das nur?

GUSTAV
Why do you think, Therese?

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
Warum wohl, Therese?

Therese begins to cry. Maria puts her arms around her, trying to comfort her. Gustav has moved away from the window. He sits down on the sofa, almost as if he is in a daze.

GUSTAV
What time is it?

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
Wie spät ist es?

FRITZ
Nearly five o'clock, sir.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
Fast fünf Uhr.

GUSTAV
It's Saturday. Fetch me my cello Maria.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
Es ist Samstag. Hol' mir mein Cello, Maria.

YOUNG MARIA
What for father?

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
Wofür, Vater?

GUSTAV
It's Saturday and it's nearly five o'clock. Why should this Saturday be different from any other?

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
 Es ist Samstag, und es ist fast fünf Uhr. Warum sollte dieser Samstag anders sein als die anderen?

THERESE
Because it is.

THERESE (CONT'D)
 Er ist halt anders.

GUSTAV
I will not allow them! No. I will not. We will continue. I will not allow them to touch us.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
 Ich werde nicht klein begeben! Nein. Das werde ich nicht. Wir werden weiter machen. Ich werde nicht zulassen, dass sie uns ein Haar krümmen.

YOUNG MARIA
Oh father.

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
 Oh Vater.

GUSTAV
The cello, Maria.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
 Das cello, Maria.

INT. LIVING ROOM, ELIZABETHSTRASSE. DAY.

And now they are all sitting around Gustav who is playing the cello. And Therese continues to weep quietly. But there is an extraordinary dignity to the family in this moment.

EXT. A VIENNA STREET. DAY.

Outside the Passport Office make shift tables have been set up to deal with a barrage of people requesting passports. Hundreds of people shouting, pushing, and a general sense of panic. Two officials sit at the table and are being assailed from every direction. Maria and Fritz are at the front and one of the officials is looking at their paper-work. Maria, in crisis, seems to be finding a new strength.

YOUNG MARIA
My husband's brother is in England and my uncle in Switzerland. We have places to stay in both countries. There's only four of us but we need to leave Austria as soon as possible!

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
 Der Bruder meines Mannes ist in England und mein Onkel in der Schweiz. Wir haben in beiden Ländern die Möglichkeit unter zu kommen. Wir sind nur zu viert und wir müssen Österreich so schnell wie möglich verlassen!

OFFICIAL
So do all the other Jews. What makes you special?

OFFICIAL (CONT'D)
 Das trifft auf alle Juden zu. Was unterscheidet Sie von dem Rest?

EXT. VIENNA STREET. DAY.

A young Jewish boy is being forced by a group of young Nazis to write JUDEN on the wall of his father's bakery. One of the young Nazis jeers at him.

YOUNG NAZI MAN
*You had it coming to you,
Jewish scum!*

YOUNG NAZI MAN (CONT'D)
*Jetzt hast du dein Fett weg,
Judenbengel!*

Maria and Fritz walk past nervously, appalled by what they see. People are rushing to and fro, Vienna is a city in turmoil. And then, as they run down the road they see another man painting JUDEN on a wall. As they pass the corner they see a Jewish family being turfed out of their house. Furniture is being taken out and books and papers thrown out out the window. Maria recoils in horror at what she sees but she and Fritz keep walking, trying to remain unnoticed.

YOUNG MARIA
*The hatred. My God, the
hatred.*

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
*Dieser Hass. Mein Gott,
dieser Hass.*

FRITZ
*Don't look my love, don't
look.*

FRITZ (CONT'D)
*Schau nicht hin, meine Liebe,
schau nicht hin.*

INT. BLOCH-BAUER RESIDENCE, STAIRWELL. DAY.

Maria and Fritz ascend the stairwell to their apartment.

INT. ENTRANCE HALLWAY, ELIZABETHSTRASSE. DAY.

They rush into the house. Therese is waiting in the hallway.

THERESE
*Thank heavens. We were
worried.*

THERESE (CONT'D)
*Dem Himmel sei Dank. Wir
haben uns schon Sorgen
gemacht.*

INT. THE ADELE ROOM, ELIZABETHSTRASSE. NIGHT.

Maria comes in and finds Gustav under the portrait of Adele. Something in him has died, he looks a lot older than he did at her wedding a few days ago.

YOUNG MARIA
*Why are you sitting all alone
here Papa?*

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
*Warum sitzt du ganz allein
hier, Papa?*

GUSTAV
Your mother and I. We are older. But you and Fritz must get away. For Therese and me, it's different.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
 Deine Mutter und ich. Wir sind älter. Aber du und Fritz, ihr müsst fliehen. Für Therese und mich, ist es anders.

YOUNG MARIA
We're not going anywhere without you Papa.

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
 Ohne dich gehen wir nirgendwohin, Papa.

Gustav begins to weep and you know it's the first time Maria has ever watched her father cry. He moves his head away from her as if to hide his grief.

INT. THE ENTRANCE HALLWAY, ELIZABETHSTRASSE. DAY.

The next morning there is loud knocking and barking voices at the door. Maria, Fritz, Gustav and Therese congregate in the hallway - they are still in their dressing gowns.

THERESE
They're here!

THERESE (CONT'D)
 Sie sind da!

GUSTAV
Of course they are. Fritz, open the door.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
 Natürlich sind sie da. Fritz, öffne die Türe.

FRITZ
Yes sir.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
 Jawohl mein Herr.

He does so and standing on the threshold is the Gestapo agent Felix Landau in civilian clothes and his two lackeys in uniform, Heinrich and Klaus. Without waiting to be asked Landau steps into the house with an air of ownership. He is obsequious and domineering at once.

LANDAU
Ferdinand Bloch-Bauer?

GUSTAV
My brother is in Switzerland on business.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)
 Mein Bruder ist geschäftlich in der Schweiz.

LANDAU (CONT'D)
Is that what it's called?

LANDAU (CONT'D)
 Ach, so nennt man das?

He starts to move into the main living areas as if the house is his own.

Landau moves around the house, taking it all in.

LANDAU (CONT'D)
Your brother is guilty of tax evasion amounting to one million reichsmark, perpetrated by his sugar company. His assets have been frozen and until the full amount is paid the Oberschütze here will be staying with you - from now on you are all under house arrest.

LANDAU (CONT'D)
 Ihr Bruder hat sich mit seiner Zuckerfirma der Steuerhinterziehung in Höhe von einer Million Reichsmark schuldig gemacht. Seine Konten wurden gesperrt. Bis der volle Betrag bezahlt ist, wird der Oberschütze hier bei ihnen bleiben - sie stehen ab sofort unter Hausarrest!

YOUNG MARIA
My uncle is an honest man and a law-abiding citizen.

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
 Mein Onkel ist ehrlich und gesetzestreu.

Landau continues to move around the house paying particular attention to the art work.

LANDAU (CONT'D)
You are a family who appreciate the power of art.

LANDAU (CONT'D)
 Sie sind eine Familie, welche die Kunst schätzt.

He stops by a Holbein painting.

LANDAU (CONT'D)
Holbein. Impressive.

LANDAU (CONT'D)
 Holbein. Beeindruckend.

INT. DINING ROOM, ELIZABETHSTRASSE. DAY.

Gustav stoically places two sliver candlesticks onto the dining table. It joins a collection of precious objects which have been gathered together and spread out on the table - jewelry, porcelain and objets d'art. And leaning against a wall, Gustav's cello. Landau is standing over the loot and going through all of the objects, calling them out to Heinrich who is making a list of them. The Bloch-Bauers all stand around the room helplessly.

LANDAU
Two gold earring embedded with precious stones. A ladies Patek Phillipe wrist-watch.

LANDAU (CONT'D)
 Zwei Gold-Ohringe mit gefassten Edelsteinen. Eine Patek Phillipe Damen Armbanduhr.

And the next item he picks up is Adele's necklace, Ferdinand's wedding gift to Maria.

LANDAU
A diamond and pearl necklace.

LANDAU (CONT'D)
 Ein Diamant-und Perlenkette.

Maria is devastated. She is about to protest but Fritz puts his arm on hers and stops her. Landau walks up to Gustav's cello and picks it up, examines it closely.

RANDY
Discretion assured.

MARIA
We'd never want to get a nice woman
like you into trouble, would we
Randy?

ANNA
Everything from the museum records
prior to 1972 is held in the same
room. But I have to warn you - none
of it has been computerised yet.

She opens a door which leads to a vast room of archives.

INT. BELVEDERE ARCHIVE ROOM. DAY.

Standing in the doorway, Randy, Maria and Anna look at the
room - hundreds of cabinets which contain thousands of files.

ANNA
I think you're going to have a busy
day.

MARIA
Roll up your sleeves, Randy.

INT. BELVEDERE ARCHIVE ROOM. DAY.

A montage of Randy and Maria over the whole day as they
rummage through thousands of files and documents. The clock
on the wall indicates the passing hours.

INT. BELVEDERE ARCHIVE ROOM. NIGHT.

Just before midnight Randy finds the file he's looking for.

RANDY
Eureka.

He opens it- and sees pages and pages of documents from the
1930s and 40s. He throws it to Maria. She looks down at it -
in big bold letters on the front of the file it has a name:
BLOCH-BAUER. She looks up at Randy, moved and excited.

MARIA
This is it!

INT. HUBERTUS' STUDY. DAY.

The next morning Hubertus is holding photocopies of all the
documents. Maria and Randy are with him in his beautiful
large study of his flat on the top floor of a Vienna palais -
the house of an intellectual, cultured man.

HUBERTUS
Congratulations. Quite a treasure
trove of information.

RANDY

Hubertus and I were up all night
doing some homework.

MARIA

I'm happy to see you're getting on
so well.

RANDY

And now we can start putting
together a picture of all that
happened.

HUBERTUS

Maria, you are the living link to
the past.

MARIA

Hanging on with my finger-nails!

HUBERTUS

Tell us what you know.

MARIA

My aunt Adele died in 1925.

INT. ADELE'S BEDROOM, ELIZABETHSTRASSE. NIGHT. 1925

Adele is dead, laid out in her bed with a weeping Ferdinand
by her side.

MARIA

Meningitis. She was only forty
three years old. My uncle was
devastated. He said that a large
part of him died with her.

INT. HUBERTUS' STUDY. DAY.

RANDY

Was there ever talk of a will?

MARIA

I remember my uncle mentioning that
she'd written one.

RANDY

She had. In 1923, two years before
her death.

HUBERTUS

And now, thanks to your brilliant
detective work..

Hubertus picks out of the photocopies a copy of the will,
shows it to Maria: Adele's signature stands out.

MARIA

Her signature, mein Gott.

HUBERTUS
I'll translate as accurately as I
can. This is the part which
interests us.

He starts to translate a part of the will to them.

HUBERTUS (CONT'D)
"I kindly ask my husband to
bequeath.."

INT. STUDY, ELIZABETHSTRASSE. NIGHT. 1923

In Gustav's study, with Gustav standing by her side, Adele
writes her will.

HUBERTUS
"..my portrait and the other Klimt
paintings after his death to the
Belvedere Gallery in Vienna.."

And we watch her signing it: Adele Bloch-Bauer.

ADELE
Adele Bloch-Bauer.

INT. HUBERTUS' STUDY. DAY.

MARIA
So she did leave them to the
gallery after all. Dear me, we've
come all this way for nothing. Is
this what's known as an anti-climax
Randy?

HUBERTUS
One step at a time. You're right
Maria, she does in fact request for
the paintings to go to the
Belvedere but the request has a
very specific condition attached to
it.

And he picks up the will again, reads a phrase from it.

HUBERTUS (CONT'D)
"Nach seinem Tode".

MARIA
'After his death.'

RANDY
She specifically asks for the
painting to be given to the
Belvedere *after* Ferdinand's death.

HUBERTUS
Let's tell the story
chronologically. Maria, do you have
any idea of what happened to your
family's property after you got
away?

MARIA

Not at all. Unlike Lot's wife, I never looked back.

HUBERTUS

But maybe now it's time to know. Randy, why don't you tell us about the home-work you've been doing.

MARIA

I don't care if it's ten o'clock in the morning. Pour me a stiff drink.

INT. LIVING ROOM, ELIZABETHSTRASSE. DAY. 1939

The space is full of the cream of the Nazi hierarchy and various art curators - all of them walking around the house, admiring the art, making notes, cutting deals.

RANDY

After you escaped Austria Maria, your house became the scene of what can only be described as one of the great Viennese auctions of the day.

HUBERTUS

Your family's belongings ended up in the hands of the most powerful criminals of the Nazi elite.

INT. HUBERTUS' STUDY. DAY.

This news is affecting Maria, every new piece of information like a stab in the heart.

MARIA

All our personal things...

RANDY

Handed over to whoever took a shine to them. And they had a word for it.

HUBERTUS

Aryanisation.

EXT. ELIZABETHSTRASSE - DAY.

Two men in Nazi uniform are carrying a painting out of the house and loading it into the back of a small truck. The painting is not visible, covered in cloth.

HUBERTUS

Did you know for instance that one of your uncle's favourite paintings, a Waldmuller portrait of Count Esterhazy as a boy..

INT. THE LIVING ROOM, ELIZABETHSTRASSE. DAY.

And Maria as a small child is going through her uncle's stamp collection, with Ferdinand by her side. They are sitting on the sofa and on the wall above them hangs the Waldmuller.

MARIA

I remember it, it was in the living-room. One of his favourite paintings..

INT. BERGHOF. DAY.

And the painting is unveiled in a room near a window through which we catch a glimpse of snow-capped mountains.

HUBERTUS

..ended up decorating the walls of no less a place than the Berghof, Hitler's private residence in the Bavarian Alps.

And we see the back of a man whom we suspect is Hitler admiring the new acquisition.

INT. VIENNA STATE OPERA. NIGHT.

A glittering audience populated by Nazis and their female companions fill the Opera House during a performance of a Wagner opera. On stage, a tenor sings an aria. And in the audience, on one of the balconies, HERMAN GOERING sits next to his young wife EMMY who is wearing Adele's necklace and glows with the knowledge that all admiring eyes are on her.

HUBERTUS

Or that your Aunt's necklace, the same one she wears in the Klimt portrait, came to adorn the neck of Emmy Goering, Herman Goering's young wife.

INT. HUBERTUS' STUDY. DAY.

Maria's devastation grows as she hears of the fate of her family's most treasured possessions. She takes a swig of the bourbon that Hubertus has poured for her.

MARIA

I almost wish you hadn't told me all this.

HUBERTUS

None of the proceeds of this sale of course trickled through to your family.

MARIA

Not a shilling.

INT. THE ADELE ROOM, ELIZABETHSTRASSE. NIGHT.

A man sits in the Adele room, looking up at the portrait in admiration as he smokes a cigar: BRUNO GRIMSHITZ.

HUBERTUS

The Nazis themselves were not that keen on the Klimts - they were, after all, a little too degenerate for their taste. But the paintings caught the eye of someone with a more prescient and refined appreciation of art: Bruno Grimshitz, the Director of the Belvedere Gallery.

INT. HUBERTUS' STUDY. DAY.

MARIA

Grimshitz. An appropriately named character.

INT. THE ADELE ROOM, ELIZABETHSTRASSE. NIGHT.

And now we watch the portrait of Adele being taken off the wall in Elizabethstrasse by two men in Nazi uniform with Grimshitz supervising.

HUBERTUS

The paintings were taken off the walls of your family home and carefully transported to what became their final resting place.

INT. THE BELVEDERE. DAY

And we watch the portrait of Adele being hung carefully in the Gallery as Grimshitz looks on.

RANDY

Grimshitz knew a masterpiece when he saw it.

And then, out of nowhere, a constantly changing parade of museum visitors through the post-war decades from 1946 to the present pass by the painting, many pausing to admire it.

HUBERTUS

Of course, certain facts had to be altered. Like your Aunt's name for instance. And her Jewish provenance of course. For a short while after the war she became simply known as..

And a visitor leans in to observe the name of the painting written on a plaque: WOMAN IN GOLD.

INT. HUBERTUS' STUDY. DAY.

RANDY
Woman in Gold.

MARIA
Even her identity was stolen from her.

HUBERTUS
It was not enough to rob your family and try to destroy it. You had to be eradicated from history.

MARIA
We were Jewish, after all.

RANDY
So the paintings reached the Belvedere...

HUBERTUS
In 1941. Your uncle, if I'm not mistaken Maria died..

MARIA
At the end of the war, in forty-five.

HUBERTUS
A whole four years later.

RANDY
So contrary to the request in Adele's will they were there well before his death.

MARIA
He died in that hotel in Zurich alone, having lost everything.

HUBERTUS
And if I'm not mistaken, he wrote his own will before he died..

MARIA
He did, yes.

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM, ZURICH. DAY.

Ferdinand writes a will in his hotel bedroom and we see the two names of his nieces as he pens them: Luise, Maria.

HUBERTUS
Leaving his entire fortune, or at least the shreds that were left of it, to you and your sister, his only living heirs.

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM, ZURICH. NIGHT.

Ferdinand sits on the edge of his bed, staring into the past, alone, approaching the end of his life.

HUBERTUS

It was one of the last things he did before he died a few days later.

INT. HUBERTUS' STUDY. DAY.

HUBERTUS

After the war your sister appointed the lawyer Johann Rinesch to see what he could do. An honest man I think, but slightly ineffectual.

RANDY

That's a kind understatement.

HUBERTUS

He started making inquiries about the will but didn't get very far.

RANDY

Eventually, the Belvedere persuaded him to sign the export permits as guarantee that you'd never go after the Klimts.

HUBERTUS

And from that point on, either through oversight or intent, the manner in which the paintings got to the Belvedere in the first place was concealed.

MARIA

So for decades the truth was obscured.

RANDY

Until now.

MARIA

But even if all this happened, the simple fact is that Adele's will does ask for them to go there. So we haven't really got a case.

HUBERTUS

We've kept the best for last. Randy why don't you show Maria our trump card?

And Randy triumphantly brings out an official looking document from the Bloch-Bauer file.

MARIA

What's this?

RANDY

A declaration by your father that Ferdinand paid for the paintings. He was the rightful owner, not Adele.

HUBERTUS

The paintings weren't hers to give away.

And the magnitude of what they reveal suddenly dawns on her.

MARIA

The will is invalid.

RANDY

Technically, it's not even a will. It's not legally binding. It's a wish, that's all.

MARIA

Adele's wish.

HUBERTUS

So now we need to get all this to Rudolf Wran, the head of the restitution committee.

Randy punches the air, starts moving around the room, he can't control his excitement.

RANDY

Yes! And then your aunt is coming home with us, Maria!

HUBERTUS

Randy, wait, take a deep breath, sit down, listen.

Randy does as he's told, he sits.

HUBERTUS (CONT'D)

She is the Mona Lisa of Austria Randy.

RANDY

I don't care if she's Botticelli's fucking Venus! They haven't got a leg to stand on.

Maria and Hubertus look at each other.

MARIA

That's what happens when he gets excited. He starts expanding his vocabulary.

INT. THE RESTITUTION COMMITTEE OFFICES. DAY.

Randy and Maria are trying to arrange a meeting with RUDOLF WRAN, the chairman of the Restitution Committee but are not having much luck with his receptionist.

RANDY

The thing is I've already left him four messages this morning.

SECRETARY

Mr. Wran is very busy you understand.

MARIA

We realise that but it's essential that we speak to him.

SECRETARY

Why don't you leave him a message?

MARIA

My dear girl, we're going around in circles.

Suddenly, at the far end of the room two men walk out of Wran's office and start to make their way to the main entrance of the building. Maria spots them.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Is that him Randy?

Randy looks and starts to move towards him with speed, Maria in tow. The secretary shouts after them.

SECRETARY

I think it's best if you leave a message.

Randy and Maria catch up with Wran who is now alone - the other man has left the building. Randy is out of breath.

RANDY

Mr. Wran? Rudolf Wran?

Wran looks apprehensive.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Randy Schoenberg. And this is my client, Mrs. Altmann.

WRAN

Of course. I am so sorry I haven't had a moment to reply to your calls.

Maria decides to play her flattering card.

MARIA

Please don't apologise, important men like yourself must be very busy.

RANDY

There's quite a bit of new information the restitution committee needs to be aware of before it comes to any sort of decision about the Bloch-Bauer case.

WRAN
Is there indeed?

Randy gives Wran the folder.

RANDY
It's all in there. I've made some observations in the margins.

WRAN
You've been busy during your stay in Vienna I see.

MARIA
We didn't come here to eat cakes.

WRAN
Mr. Schoenberg, I heard you are the composer's grandson. Do you know what a fan I am of his work?

RANDY
Glad to hear it.

MARIA
I can tell you have very refined taste, Mr. Wran.

WRAN
The genius of the twelve tone compositional system should not be underestimated.

RANDY
I couldn't agree more.

WRAN
Thank you for your efforts. But we have all the information we need.

He places the file back in Randy's hands.

WRAN (CONT'D)
Now if you'll excuse me, there is work to be done.

Wran is off and Randy is left holding the file.

RANDY
At least he's a fan of my grandfather's music.

MARIA
That fills me with confidence.

EXT. ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS. DAY

In the morning sunlight Randy and Maria approach the Academy.

On a big sign outside it reads: ART RESTITUTION CONFERENCE, 1998.

RANDY

So weird to think that Hitler once applied to be an art student here.

MARIA

I wish they'd accepted him. Who cares if he wasn't a Picasso? It would have been a lot better if he had spent his life doing tacky paintings.

INT. ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS, VIENNA. DAY.

The main room is full of descendants of families who had their art looted by the Nazis and also by members of the government and media. The room is buzzing. Before the speakers commence, all the invited guests are having coffees. Maria, Randy and Hubertus are standing in the middle of the throng. Maria looking resplendent in a pink suit.

HUBERTUS

They're all here. The woman just coming in the door..

We see ELIZABETH GEHRER being welcomed into the room.

RANDY

Elizabeth Gehrer. Minister of Culture.

And we see Rudolf Wran greeting her with an embrace.

HUBERTUS

With your new friend Rudolf Wran of the restitution committee.

MARIA

Our music lover.

HUBERTUS

Quite a turn-out. They're putting on a very good show.

INT. ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS. DAY

Everyone is seated and there's a procession of speakers at the podium and we hear snippets of their speeches. The first speaker is Elizabeth Gehrer. The whole event is being filmed for TV.

GEHRER

Welcome to the Restitution Conference. This is a first step in beginning to make reparation towards those whose art was unlawfully taken away from them.

INT. ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS. DAY

And now we watch a montage of elderly refugees and Holocaust survivors giving their testimonies on the art that was stolen from their families. Firstly, a woman of Maria's age, who speaks in German:

ELDERLY REFUGEE LADY
The beautiful mountain landscape hung in the main room of our house. It was the first thing you saw when you opened the front door.

ELDERLY REFUGEE LADY (CONT'D)
 Die schöne Berglandschaft hing im Wohnzimmer unseres Hauses. Es war das Erste, was man gesehen hat, wenn man das Haus betrat.

INT. ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS. DAY

We watch Maria's reaction to these speeches and how they resonate with her. And now, an elderly man with a strong German accent is speaking from the podium.

OLD MAN
 I will never forget the day that they stormed into our house and took our paintings off the walls. We sat there, not being able to say anything, to do anything.

INT. ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS. DAY

It's Maria's turn : she is on the podium and speaking with quiet confidence - but it is not easy, her voice trembles slightly with emotion.

MARIA
 When people see the portrait of my aunt, they see a masterpiece by one of Austria's finest artists. When I see it, I see a woman who talked to me about philosophy while I brushed her hair and who told me off for biting my nails.

There is a ripple of laughter from the audience at this very particular memory.

MARIA (CONT'D)
 A woman who, had she not died young, would have had to escape Austria or die in a camp because she was Jewish. You see, restitution is an interesting word. Of course it means compensation, but it means something else as well. I looked it up in the dictionary.

There is some laughter from the audience as she puts on her glasses and reads from a small piece of paper.

MARIA (CONT'D)
 'Restitution: the return of
 something to its original state.'

She puts down the paper, looks at her audience.

MARIA (CONT'D)
 I know I can't be a little girl
 again but, like so many of my
 generation, who were forced to flee
 from this city, I would like to
 return to my original state. I
 would like to be re-united with my
 family.

As she speaks these words, quietly and with dignity, she can't help the emotion leaking through. And we watch how her words affect Randy.

EXT. ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS. DUSK.

The conference is over and people are leaving through the main doors into the cold Vienna evening. Randy and Maria are on the steps of the building. As Maria is putting on her coat, they are approached by BERNARD KOHLER, a high-ranking employee of the Belvedere. He hands her his card; she looks at it. Randy is immediately suspicious.

KOHLER
 Mrs. Altmann. Bernard Kohler, I
 work at the Belvedere Gallery.

MARIA
 How can I help you, Mr. Kohler?

KOHLER
 If the decision of the committee is
 in your favour, take the three
 landscapes. But we implore you, not
 the portraits.

MARIA
 You have grown attached to them.

KOHLER
 We can not imagine Austria without
 them.

MARIA
 Once the past has been put to
 right, I would be open to reaching
 an arrangement with you.

KOHLER
 I am delighted to hear it. After
 all, we are all victims of history,
 Mrs. Altmann.

Randy is incredulous at what he's hearing.

RANDY

Maria, can I speak to you for a minute?

MARIA

Now if you'll excuse me, I have a feeling that my lawyer is getting a trifle nervous.

KOHLER

My phone number is on the card. Please feel free to call me so we can resume the conversation.

Kohler smiles, gives a little bow, and walks away. Randy is fuming.

RANDY

I think we should be careful what we say, Maria.

MARIA

What you mean is you think *I* should be careful what *I* say.

RANDY

Just now, you called me your lawyer. People tend to take advice from their lawyers.

MARIA

When they ask for it. Now, if you've finished lecturing me, I think I'm going to walk back to the hotel.

And she walks off. Randy watches her go, shakes his head, irritated. The tensions of the visit are getting to them both. Hubertus approaches him, holding his phone. He has just received a text message. He shows it to Randy.

HUBERTUS

Bad news: they've postponed the announcement of the verdict till Wednesday.

RANDY

Perfect. Two days after I'm expected back at work. That's just perfect.

(NB - RANDY'S LINE IS COPIED HERE AND BELOW, SO THAT THE BELOW SCENE CAN BE ADDED WITHOUT CREATING EXTRA PAGES)

EXT. ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS. DUSK

Annoyed by her small altercation with Randy, Maria starts to make her way down the steps of the Academy. But halfway down the steps, an elderly aristocratic Austrian man, who is putting his jacket on, talks to her, casually throwing his words over his shoulder, not looking at her in the eyes.

ELDERLY AUSTRIAN MAN

A powerful speech you gave. But when will you let the past be the past? You people never give up, do you? Not everything is about the Holocaust.

She reels at this sudden, unexpected burst of anti-Semitism. For a second she looks as if she might reply. But then she decides that this man does not merit an answer. She moves on, down the steps, and towards the road, her dignity intact.

RANDY

Perfect. Two days after I'm expected back at work. That's just perfect.

EXT. PHARMACY, VIENNA STREET. NIGHT.

Maria is walking through the back-streets of the old town when she suddenly sees a place she recognises - an old pharmacy that doesn't look as if it's changed in a hundred years. She stops, looks through the window. She lifts her hand and touches it, as if convincing herself that she's not imagining it. And then, memories come flooding back --

INT. LIVING ROOM ELIZABETHSTRASSE. DAY. 1938.

Fritz is on the telephone. Maria is standing by his side. He places down the receiver and turns to her. They speak in hurried whispers because they know that Heinrich the guard, is in the next room.

FRITZ

My brother has booked the last two tickets on a flight to Cologne. We don't need passports.

FRITZ (CONT'D)

Mein Bruder hat die letzten zwei Flugscheine nach Köln gebucht. Wir brauchen keine Pässe.

YOUNG MARIA

And then what?

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)

Und was dann?

FRITZ (CONT'D)

From Cologne we make our way to the German-Dutch border. There's a contact - a farmer. He's been paid to smuggle us across.

FRITZ (CONT'D)

Von Köln aus versuchen wir zur deutsch-holländischen Grenze zu kommen. Dort gibt's einen Kontakt - einen Bauern. Er ist bezahlt, uns hinüber zu schmuggeln.

YOUNG MARIA

When is the flight to Cologne?

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)

Und wann geht der Flug nach Köln?

FRITZ

Eight o'clock this evening.

FRITZ (CONT'D)

Um acht heute Abend.

Maria comes up closer, whispers.

YOUNG MARIA
I can't leave my parents.

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
Ich kann meine Eltern nicht
im Stich lassen.

FRITZ
It's our last chance, Maria.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
Es ist unsere letzte Chance,
Maria.

And she knows he's right; they've run out of options.

FRITZ
*But someone has to collect
the tickets for us and take
us to the airport.*

FRITZ (CONT'D)
Aber jemand muss die
Flugscheine für uns abholen
und uns zum Flughafen bringen.

YOUNG MARIA
*A friend of my father's owes
him a favour.*

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
Ein Freund von meinem Vater
schuldet ihm einen Gefallen.

FRITZ
*He will never let us out of
his sight.*

FRITZ (CONT'D)
Er wird uns nie aus den Augen
lassen.

YOUNG MARIA
*I have an idea. But first, I
have to say goodbye to them.*

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
Ich habe eine Idee. Aber
zuerst muss ich ihnen auf
Wiedersehen sagen.

INT. GUSTAV AND THERESE'S BEDROOM. DAY.

That afternoon, Gustav is in bed, coughing. He looks very ill, as if his health is deteriorating rapidly. Therese is sitting by him, reading. The door creaks open and Maria sticks her head in.

YOUNG MARIA
Mother..father.

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
Mutter...Vater.

They look up at her and smile weakly.

THERESE
*Come here, my darling. Come
and sit with us for a while.*

THERESE (CONT'D)
Komm her, meine Schatz. Komm
und setz dich einen Moment zu
uns.

THERESE
The time has come, hasn't it?

THERESE (CONT'D)
Es ist Zeit Abschied zu
nehmen, stimmt's?

And Maria has no answer.

INT. THE ENTRANCE HALLWAY, ELIZABETHSTRASSE. DAY.

Maria is putting on her coat and gloves with determination oozing out of every pore - she is giving the performance of her life. Fritz stands by Maria's side but lets her do the talking. Heinrich is looking resistant.

YOUNG MARIA

You know as well as I do that they won't let my father into the hospitals because he has committed the crime of being Jewish. So the least you can do is let us go and get him some medication from the pharmacy.

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)

Sie wissengenau so gut wie ich, dass sie meinem Vater nicht erlauben, ins spital zu gehen, weil er das Verbrechen begangen hat, Jude zu sein. Wir können nur zur Apotheke gehen und ihm Medikamente holen.

HEINRICH

And why do both of you need to go?

HEINRICH (CONT'D)

Und warum müssen Sie beide gehen?

And now Maria turns with real stridency to Heinrich, she is becoming a force to be reckoned with.

YOUNG MARIA

Oh for God's sake, if you're that worried we're going to run away why don't you come with us?

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)

Ach. Um Himmels Willen, wenn Sie so besorgt sind, dass wir weglaufen, warum kommen Sie nicht mit?

Heinrich resigns grudgingly, picks up his coat.

HEINRICH

I take you there but we come straight back.

HEINRICH (CONT'D)

Ich bringe Sie hin, aber wir kommen sofort zurück.

YOUNG MARIA

That's a shame. I was hoping we could all go to the cinema.

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)

Schade. Ich hatte gehofft wir gehen alle zusammen ins Kino .

And she throws Fritz a look: this is it.

EXT. PHARMACY, VIENNA STREET. DUSK.

It is dusk as Maria, Fritz and Heinrich arrive at the pharmacy on a quiet side street. It is the same pharmacy that Maria comes across as an older woman. As they approach, Heinrich takes out a pack of cigarettes.

HEINRICH

I'm going to smoke a cigarette. Don't be longer than a minute.

HEINRICH (CONT'D)

Ich rauche eine Zigarette. Sie haben eine Minute.

The relief is evident on Maria's face. Everything is going according to plan.

YOUNG MARIA
One minute, that's all.

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
Eine Minute. Das reicht.

And Maria and Fritz walk in.

INT. THE PHARMACY. DUSK.

Through the window we can see Heinrich smoking. Maria leads Fritz up to the counter. They are both nervous and the PHARMACIST, a hawk-like man picks up on it. He gives them a wary look. Maria clocks the door that leads to the back of the pharmacy.

PHARMACIST
What can I do for you?

PHARMACIST (CONT'D)
Was darf es sein?

YOUNG MARIA
My father has a very high fever and a cough. We need something that will help lower his temperature.

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
Mein Vater hat sehr hohes Fieber und Husten. Wir brauchen etwas, das die Temperatur senkt.

PHARMACIST
Wait here.

PHARMACIST (CONT'D)
Warten Sie hier.

He makes his way towards the medicine shelves which stand at the back of the area behind the counter. Maria takes Fritz by the hand and they go to the door that leads to the back of the shop. They open it and dart through it.

INT. CORRIDOR BEHIND PHARMACY. DUSK.

Maria and Fritz rush down a small corridor at the rear of the pharmacy towards a door that leads to the back street. They try and open it but it is locked. They both start to panic as they look around for another way out. But there isn't one. Fritz notices a big bunch of keys hanging on the wall. He grabs them and starts trying different keys in the door, looking for the right one. Maria keeps looking over her shoulder.

INT. THE PHARMACY. DUSK.

The pharmacist turns back towards the counter with the medication in hand.

PHARMACIST
This should do it.

PHARMACIST (CONT'D)
Das sollte helfen.

But he sees they've gone. He looks around the shop, can't see them. Then he notices Heinrich, in his uniform, waiting for them outside. He becomes suspicious.

And then he sees the open door that leads to the corridor. He goes through it, like a dog on the scent of something.

INT. THE CORRIDOR BEHIND PHARMACY. DUSK.

The pharmacist walks into the corridor and sees Maria and Fritz trying the different keys in the door.

PHARMACIST
What are you doing?

PHARMACIST (CONT'D)
Was machen Sie da?

YOUNG MARIA
I'm feeling faint. I need some air. Please open the door.

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
Ich fühle mich schwach. Ich brauche etwas Luft. Bitte öffnen Sie die Tür.

PHARMACIST
This is a private area. If you want air, go out the way you came in.

PHARMACIST (CONT'D)
Dies ist ein privater Bereich. Wenn Sie Luft brauchen, gehen Sie dahin, wo Sie hergekommen sind.

Fritz is desperately trying the keys in the door.

PHARMACIST
Put those keys down! You have no business being here!

PHARMACIST (CONT'D)
Legen Sie diese Schlüssel hin! Sie haben hier nichts zu suchen!

Maria knows she can't keep the act going. She tries to appeal to his kindness.

YOUNG MARIA
Please! Please let us out. We have done nothing wrong. Please help us!

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
Bitte! Bitte lassen Sie uns raus. Wir haben nichts Unrechtes getan. Bitte helfen Sie uns!

PHARMACIST
The soldier smoking on the street is with you?

PHARMACIST (CONT'D)
Der Soldat, der auf der Straße raucht, gehört zu Ihnen?

YOUNG MARIA
No. Please, quickly, open the door.

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
Nein. Bitte, öffnen Sie die Tür, schnell.

PHARMACIST
I saw you arrive together.

PHARMACIST (CONT'D)
Ich habe Sie zusammen ankommen sehen.

YOUNG MARIA
PLEASE!

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
BITTE!

And then, he figures it out.

PHARMACIST
Of course, you are Jews.

PHARMACIST (CONT'D)
Natürlich, Sie sind Juden.

And he runs back into the shop and starts shouting to Heinrich on the street.

PHARMACIST
They are trying to get away!

PHARMACIST (CONT'D)
Die versuchen abzuhauen!

EXT. THE PHARMACY. DUSK.

Heinrich hears the pharmacist calling him. He throws his cigarette on the pavement and runs into the pharmacy.

INT/EXT. THE CORRIDOR BEHIND PHARMACY. DUSK.

And just as Heinrich comes hurtling into the corridor from the pharmacy, Fritz finds the right key to the door, opens it, takes the key out again. He and Maria go darting out into a courtyard at the rear of the building.

EXT. PHARMACY COURTYARD. DUSK.

Fritz and Maria burst through the door just as Heinrich reaches it. They struggle as Heinrich tries to open the door and Fritz to close it. Then, when he manages to slam it shut, Fritz quickly sticks the key in the lock and locks it. We can hear Heinrich pounding on it. Fritz and Maria leap up the steps into the courtyard area where a woman is hanging her laundry. For a second, her eyes meet Maria's; she could go either way. But she decides to help them. She points to the exit.

WOMAN IN COURTYARD
That way!

WOMAN IN COURTYARD (CONT'D)
Hier lang!

Maria and Fritz run out of the courtyard and into the streets.

INT/EXT. THE CORRIDOR BEHIND PHARMACY. DUSK.

And in the corridor, Heinrich is cursing and looking for a way out. He sees a fire hydrant, picks it up, smashes it against the door. The door panels break; he sticks his arm through them and unlocks the door from the other side. He opens the door and rushes out in close pursuit, past the woman with her washing and into the street.

Maria hands him their tickets which he scans.

NAZI OFFICER
Travelling to Cologne?

NAZI OFFICER (CONT'D)
Reisen Sie nach Köln?

FRITZ
Cologne, yes.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
Nach Köln, ja.

NAZI OFFICER
You have no luggage?

NAZI OFFICER (CONT'D)
Haben Sie kein Gepäck?

Fritz is about to talk but looks as if he might lose it; Maria steps in with great confidence.

YOUNG MARIA
It's all very unexpected. We are going for one night. My husband is understudying Wotan at the Cologne Opera as their Baritone has fallen ill. Von Karajan is conducting, we're very excited.

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
Es ist alles sehr unerwartet. Wir bleiben nur für eine Nacht. Mein Mann springt für Wotan an der Oper in Köln ein. Der Bariton ist krank. Von Karajan dirigiert, wir sind sehr gespannt.

For a beat it looks as if he won't buy it. But then it all sounds so far-fetched that he does; he hands back the papers.

NAZI OFFICER
Good luck.

NAZI OFFICER (CONT'D)
Viel Glück.

YOUNG MARIA
Thank you.

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)
Danke schön.

And he moves on. And then there is an announcement made for the departure of the Cologne flight. And the passengers start to cross the tarmac in order to board the plane.

EXT. THE AERODROME FIELD. DUSK.

It's getting dark now and the passengers form a queue on the tarmac in preparation to board the plane. A stewardess stands at the bottom of the aircraft stairs. Suddenly, one of the pilots emerges from the plane and comes down the steps. He whispers something to the stewardess and she then turns to the passengers.

STEWARDESS
Ladies and gentlemen, bad news I'm afraid. Due to extreme weather conditions our departure will be delayed by half an hour. We apologise for the inconvenience.

STEWARDESS (CONT'D)
Meine Damen und Herren, Aufgrund der extremen Wetterbedingungen wird sich unsere Abflug um eine halbe Stunde verzögern. Wir entschuldigen uns für die Unannehmlichkeiten.

Some of the passengers make noises of protestation and annoyance, but Maria and Fritz just look at each other with anxiety.

THE. THE AERODROME FIELD. NIGHT.

A few minutes have passed and then the pilot gives a sign to the stewardess from the top of the steps. She turns to the passengers.

STEWARDESS
We are now ready to start boarding. Please have your tickets ready for inspection.

STEWARDESS (CONT'D)
Wir beginnen jetzt mit dem Einsteigen. Bitte halten sie ihre Flugscheine zur Kontrolle bereit.

Suddenly, a vehicle approaches, and stops. A YOUNG NAZI OFFICER and a SOLDIER jump out of it and run up to the queue. Maria and Fritz throw each other a nervous look, whilst still trying to act composed. The officer comes to the side of the queue while the soldier bars the passengers from boarding.

YOUNG NAZI OFFICER
There are passengers who will not be boarding this flight tonight.

YOUNG NAZI OFFICER (CONT'D)
Es gibt Passagiere, die heute nicht mitfliegen werden.

He looks down at a piece of paper.

YOUNG OFFICIAL
Mr. Stephen Neumann and Mr. Karl Neumann please, make yourselves known.

YOUNG OFFICIAL (CONT'D)
Herr Stephan Neumann und Herr Karl Neumann, melden sie sich bitte.

Nobody replies. Then, slowly, two figures step forward: a well-dressed older man, and his teenage son.

YOUNG NAZI OFFICER
Please follow us, both of you.

YOUNG NAZI OFFICER (CONT'D)
Bitte folgen sie uns.

And, defeated, the two men follow them, leaving behind them Mrs. Neumann and her younger son, 9, looking bereft. The boarding now continues. As they climb the steps to board the aircraft, Fritz can hardly suppress his relief. But Maria is looking at the men led away, wondering what their fates will be.

EXT. THE AERODROME STRIP. NIGHT.

The small plane takes off in the night for its flight from Vienna to Cologne.

INT. THE AIRPLANE. NIGHT.

Maria looks at Fritz with relief in her eyes. But as she looks out of the window at the fading lights of Vienna below it is replaced with unfathomable sadness as she thinks of leaving her mother and father.

INT. HOTEL RECEPTION. DAY. 1998.

Randy is in the hotel reception area, leaning over the reception counter and talking on the phone to Pam. Maria comes out of the elevator and starts walking towards him.

RANDY (ON THE PHONE)
I know, it's just they drag their feet a lot so the whole thing took longer than I thought it would.

EXT. THE SCHOENBERGS' GARDEN. DAY.

Pam is on the wireless phone, Dora is in a stroller.

PAM
What did the office say? Don't they want you back?

INT. HOTEL RECEPTION. DAY.

Randy is still on the phone to Pam and Maria is tugging on his sleeve in an excited state.

MARIA
Come on, hurry up, they're announcing the decision in an hour.

RANDY (ON THE PHONE)
They're okay with it, so you needn't worry. How's Dora?

EXT. THE SCHOENBERGS' GARDEN. DAY.

Pam tries to keep it light and playful but she's feeling lonely.

PAM (ON THE PHONE)
Dora's missing her Dad. Dora's decided she's not a Gustav Klimt fan and that Vienna sucks. She's teething and really looking forward to just a tiny bit of normality in her life. That's how Dora is. How are you?

INT. HOTEL RECEPTION. DAY.

And Maria is tugging on his sleeve again.

MARIA
We haven't got all day, hurry up.

He turns to her, snaps a little.

RANDY
Maria, it's Pam, it's my wife. Will you please give me a moment?

She's slightly taken aback by his rather gruff tone. He returns to the phone conversation.

RANDY (ON THE PHONE) (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, honey, I need to run, I
need to run. Love you.

He replaces the receiver, knows that Pam is not happy.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Okay. That went well.

He's feeling the pressure and the tensions are slowly rising. But Maria is still at his elbow, handing him a scarf.

MARIA
And put your scarf on. I don't want
you to catch pneumonia.

INT. RUDOLF WRAN'S OFFICE. DAY.

Rudolf Wran, Elizabeth Gehrer, GOTTFRIED TOMAN and a YOUNG WOMAN who takes notes throughout the meeting are in the room. Toman is bald, elegant, with an immaculate beard and sharp, intelligent eyes. They are all on edge but cordial as they greet Maria and Randy. Randy has trouble hiding his nerves.

WRAN
And this is Minister Gehrer.

MARIA
How do you do?

GEHRER
Dr. Toman here is our principal
attorney on this very complicated
case. He has a wide and profound
knowledge of both history and the
law.

RANDY
That's reassuring.

GEHRER
Please, sit.

They all take their seats and the tension is palpable. Wran opens up a folder.

WRAN
Some cases are more complicated
than others. But after much
deliberation, we regret to inform
you, Mrs. Altmann, that the
committee has decided that the five
Klimt paintings hanging in the
Belvedere will remain there.

RANDY
Please tell me this is a joke.

MARIA
They are not joking, Randy.

TOMAN
Your Aunt's will should be obeyed.

Randy picks up his brief-case, starts to rummage through some files and papers he has in there.

RANDY
But that's the point..it's not even a will. The paintings weren't hers to give away...here, where is it..

A folder falls from his case, scattering a whole lot of papers on the floor. He kneels down and starts to pick them up, talking as he does so.

RANDY (CONT'D)
We have proof that the paintings were Ferdinand's property, not his wife's, which makes her will invalid.

He looks up and sees them all staring down at him. Toman has picked up one piece of paper which he hands to him.

TOMAN
I think this is the one you are looking for.

RANDY
And that's ignoring the fact that there was a deliberate cover-up to conceal the manner in which the paintings ended up in the Gallery.

MARIA
I don't think they are interested in facts, Randy.

Randy sits back in his chair, in shock. Toman takes the opportunity to state his argument.

TOMAN
Your Aunt's request needs to be respected, Mrs. Altmann.

RANDY
It's not a legally binding will!

Maria tries a different tact. She speaks quietly, with great emotion restrained by dignity.

MARIA
When my aunt wrote those words Austria was not the same country. It was not imprisoning and killing her friends, her people.

GEHRER
Our decision is non-negotiable. If you don't agree with it, your only option is to pursue the case in court.

A pause. And then Maria stands up.

MARIA

Come on Randy, let's go.

She makes her way to the door, turns around. Looks straight at Toman, speaks with a quiet ferocity in her voice.

MARIA (CONT'D)

You speak of my aunt, Dr. Toman, as if you knew her. You did not know her. And I can tell you now that what you have decided today would make her ashamed to call herself an Austrian. And it should make you ashamed, as well.

And she opens the door and goes. An on the faces of the Austrians we know that her words have touched a chord.

EXT. VIENNA STREET. DAY.

Later that afternoon, Maria and Randy are walking back to their hotel with Hubertus, trying to come up with another solution.

HUBERTUS

It's not America. In order to pursue the case in Austria the government demands a deposit against the cost of \$1.8 million dollars. And that's for starters.

MARIA

One point eight million?

HUBERTUS

Based on a portion of the estimated value of the paintings.

RANDY

On the one hand they're saying 'take us to court', on another it's financially impossible for us to do so.

HUBERTUS

Your hands are tied behind your back, correct.

RANDY

What about some sort of arbitration? Here, in Vienna.

HUBERTUS

Nobody here will decide to give you back the paintings, Randy. It would be a waste of time and money.

It's a dead end and they all know it.

MARIA

Hubertus, thank you so much for all your effort.

(MORE)

MARIA (CONT'D)

But no more day-dreams. Come Randy,
we have some packing to do.

INT. MARIA'S HOTEL ROOM. NIGHT.

Maria is at the window of her room, the TV on silent in the background. She is looking out over the Vienna roof-tops. Her suit-case is open on the bed. Suddenly, it looks like she might break down - all the tensions and frustrations of the return to Vienna have taken their toll. There's a knock at the door. She pulls herself together and opens it; it's Randy.

RANDY

Just checking on you.

MARIA

Come in. Sit down.

He does as he's told, sits on the edge of her bed as she continues packing.

MARIA (CONT'D)

I'm exhausted. That's what happens
when you have to deal with a lot of
grim shits.

They laugh together. Then she starts to pack.

MARIA (CONT'D)

They will never admit what they
did. Because if they admit to one
thing, then they have to admit to
it all.

RANDY

Admit to what?

MARIA

They were never victims. Most of
them threw flowers and opened their
arms to greet the Nazis. That's the
simple truth.

Suddenly, Randy spots Elizabeth Gehrler on the CNN news. He grabs the remote control and turns on the volume.

GEHRER

It is with great pleasure that I
announce that Adele will be
remaining in Austria. This is a
victory for the Belvedere Gallery
and a victory for the Austrian
people.

Randy picks up a pair of socks he finds on the bed and throws them at the TV in rage. Maria picks up the remote and switches it off.

MARIA

Enough. Tomorrow, we go home. And on the way to the airport, we pay our respects. That way, we will not have come here in vain.

EXT. THE HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL, VIENNA. DAY.

And in the soft morning light, Maria and Randy visit the Rachel Whiteread Holocaust memorial in Judenplatz. Randy is running his fingers across the engraving of the word Treblinka.

RANDY

The place my great-grandparents were murdered.

MARIA

I remember them well. They lived in a house with a cherry blossom in the garden. She always gave me sweets when I visited. And she had the most beautiful eyes.

RANDY

Like an owl.

She is surprised that he remembers how she describes them.

MARIA

Your mother reminds me of her.

And once again he runs his fingers over the engraved word.

RANDY

And then they were taken away in the middle of the night.

Both are clearly affected by this experience.

MARIA

Come, we should be leaving for the airport.

RANDY

I know, perfume and cognac. Give me a minute, I just need to use the men's room.

And he heads to a nearby cafe.

INT. CAFE TOILETS. DAY.

Randy is in the toilets and he finds an empty cubicle. He walks in, closes the door behind him. Something has happened. Everything has accumulated - the stress, the disappointment, the injustice. And the visit to the memorial has suddenly made the wound go deeper. He erupts, banging his fist against the cubicle wall. In this one moment, we begin to see how the events of his experience are changing him profoundly as a human being.

EXT. LOS ANGELES. DAY.

Montage of Los Angeles - the sunshine, the freeways, the suburbs, the water-sprinklers.

EXT. THE SCHOENBERGS' GARDEN. DAY.

Maria, Randy, Pam, Barbara and a few friends have convened for a welcome-back barbecue. Randy stands in the middle of the group, with Pam at his side.

RANDY

Grandfather Zeisl once said that the three things he hated most in life were Hitler, his grandmother, and the Los Angeles sun. But right now I'm going to have to disagree with him on the third one. Right now, everything about Los Angeles is pretty wonderful.

MARIA

If my darling Fritz was still alive today he would surely be singing an aria to welcome us back. Any excuse was good enough!

BARBARA

Welcome back! Ladies and gentlemen, raise your glasses to Randy and Maria!

Laughter and applause. They all raise their glasses and toast Randy and Maria. But in that moment, as if she can now read him, Maria knows the jollity is a pretense. She goes up to Randy, speaks privately.

MARIA

We did our best. That's what matters. We did everything we could. The past is the past and now we must let it go, my dear.

But they both know it won't be easy.

INT. THE SCHOENBERGS' BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Pam wakes up - Randy isn't in bed beside her.

INT. THE SCHOENBERGS' LIVING ROOM. NIGHT.

Pam comes into the living room, finds him lying on the floor, with Dora asleep on his chest.

PAM

Randy?

RANDY

I went for the money.

She looks at him, not quite understanding.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Those paintings are worth over a hundred million dollars. And that's why I went out there with her. I went for the money, Pam.

PAM

It's okay. It's natural, don't beat yourself up about it. (But now you're back and that's all that matters.)

RANDY

Is it?

She doesn't quite understand what he means. But she knows him enough to know that she's witnessing a shift in him.

INT. THE SCHOENBERGS' LIVING ROOM. DAY.

And we see Randy doing a lot of research over the next year and a half into various legal matters - on the living room floor receiving some papers coming through on the fax machine and we see the heading: ART RESTITUTION: INTERNATIONAL CLAIMS.

INT. RANDY'S OFFICE, BERGEN BROWN SHERMAN. NIGHT.

And in his office too, poring over various files at night, with the lights of L.A. twinkling in the background.

INT. THE SCHOENBERGS' KITCHEN. NIGHT.

And then back in the kitchen - and the clock says it's 3 a.m. And he's on the internet and he's looking under something titled : FOREIGN SOVEREIGN IMMUNITIES ACT. But he's getting nowhere, he can't crack it, he's getting frustrated reading the small print.

EXT. BARNES AND NOBLE BOOKSTORE. DAY.

Randy walks towards the bookstore.

EXT./INT. BARNES AND NOBLE BOOKSTORE. DAY.

Randy is in a Barnes and Noble bookstore in LA, looking through books. He's in the Art section and he suddenly sees a book on Klimt. Picks it up, leafs through it. Then his eye falls onto another book nearby: a glossy Belvedere catalogue. He's struck by an idea- gets excited. He takes the book up to the counter, gives it to the CASHIER.

CASHIER
That's twenty nine dollars sir.

EXT. MARIA'S BOUTIQUE. DAY.

Randy runs up to Maria's shop holding the Belvedere catalogue. He is out of breath. He can see Maria through the window, helping a WOMAN CUSTOMER, but still rushes in, waving the catalogue.

INT/EXT. MARIA'S BOUTIQUE. DAY.

As she puts the customer's sweater into a bag, Randy enters the shop and stands there, out of breath and holding the catalogue. Maria is still helping her customer.

MARIA
There you go. I hope your husband
likes you in it as much as I do.

As the Woman Customer walks by Randy on her way out, she can't help giving him a funny look. He smiles back at her.

MARIA (CONT'D)
Thank you, Mrs. Scheff.

And she's gone. Randy is still breathless.

MARIA (CONT'D)
Well, fancy seeing you after all
this time.

RANDY
Belvedere Gallery catalogue. On
sale. In Barnes and Noble. On
Wilshire.

MARIA
Hello to you too. Now will you
please explain to me what you are
babbling on about?

RANDY
Maria, you don't understand. You
can sue them here! In the U.S.

MARIA
Oh, not all that again. Anyway, I
thought you said we couldn't sue
them over here. That Foreign State
Immunity thing.

RANDY
I did. But I found a loophole.
Three conditions.

MARIA
Which are...?

RANDY

When the property was taken in violation of international law.

MARIA

Which it was.

RANDY

Thank you. When the property is owned by an agency of a foreign state.

MARIA

You mean the Belvedere Gallery?

RANDY

Thank you. When that agency is engaged in a commercial activity in the USA.

MARIA

Selling a book in Barnes and Noble?

RANDY

Tick, tick, tick. Three ticks. If you meet all these criteria, you can sue. You meet them. So you can sue.

MARIA

Only trouble is, I don't think I want to.

He looks at her, uncomprehending.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Don't you remember what I said to you, Randy? There comes a time when you have to move on.

But from his incredulous expression, it's clear that that time hasn't yet come for Randy.

INT. BERGEN BROWN SHERMAN OFFICES. DAY.

Sherman is striding through the offices, late for a lunch appointment. Randy is stalking him excitedly. As he walks Sherman scans a file that Randy has given him.

SHERMAN

It's a long shot. For starters there's no precedent.

RANDY

There's one case I found, it's in there, Jewish family from Argentina lost a hotel. Sued the Argentinians over here because they'd advertised the hotel in the U.S.

They get to the elevator. Sherman gets in, Randy doesn't.

SHERMAN
The answer is no.

RANDY
I have a feeling about this sir.

SHERMAN
Since when have we been paying you
to have feelings?

And the elevator door shuts in Randy's face.

INT. THE SCHOENBERGS' KITCHEN. NIGHT.

Randy and Pam are at the table, eating dinner. The atmosphere is heavy, Randy isn't fully present.

PAM
Are you okay?

RANDY
Fine, I'm fine.

PAM
Coz it's like you're never here
anymore. Ever since you went on
that trip to Austria it feels as if
a part of you never came back.

He looks at her. He knows she's right. But he doesn't have an answer. Pam gets up and starts clearing the dishes from the table.

PAM (CONT'D)
And I'm getting so tired of it,
Randy.

He walks up to her, puts his arms around her, tries to kiss her. But she semi-playfully pushes him away and he knows he's testing her patience in a way he never has before.

RANDY
I'm sorry.

EXT. L.A. STREET. DUSK.

And at dawn, with a newly discovered grit, Randy is jogging. And even as he jogs, the mental wheels are turning. But he's made his mind up now. (NB - NO AMENDMENT, changes on 77 pushed scene onto an A page).

INT. SHERMAN'S OFFICE. DAY.

And a few hours later he's with Sherman again, standing in front of his desk.

SHERMAN
It's commonly known as an
ultimatum, Randy.

Randy says nothing; waits for Sherman to elaborate.

SHERMAN (CONT'D)

I humoured you. Let him go to Europe, I thought, let him flex his muscles. God knows, I suppose there was a small part of me that hoped you were onto something.

RANDY

I think I am, sir.

SHERMAN

You're not, Randy. There isn't a case. There's no enforcement mechanism between the U.S. and Austria. Unless you think the US Marshals will show up in Vienna with a warrant.

RANDY

Just one more go, sir.

SHERMAN

No more goes. I need you here now. No more extra-curricular stuff. No more Klimts.

And he goes back to his work. Randy just stands there. But there's a reckless look on his face.

EXT. FEDERAL BUILDING. DAY.

Randy runs into the Los Angeles Federal Building, fuelled by an urgent purpose.

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING. DAY.

Randy walks up to a Court House employee who is sitting behind the filing window.

RANDY

Hi there. I'd like to file a law suit against the Austrian government. I've filled in the summons and here's the complaint.

COURT HOUSE EMPLOYEE

That'll cost you a hundred and sixty five dollars.

He hands her the documents and a cheque.

COURT HOUSE EMPLOYEE (CONT'D)

I wanna go to Austria one day with my daughter. She loves kangaroos.

EXT. MARIA'S FRONT YARD. DAY.

Maria is kneeling down in her garden, planting seeds, when suddenly Randy appears in front of her, full of purpose and short of breath.

RANDY

Maria. Can you come with me please?
I want you to witness something.

INT. THE AUSTRIAN CONSULATE. DAY.

And now they're in the reception of the consulate and Randy makes a bee-line for the receptionist. Maria follows, and watches the whole scene with growing bewilderment.

RANDY

Is Consul Brandstetter around?

CONSULATE RECEPTIONIST

I'm afraid not, sir.

RANDY

Tell him Mrs. Altmann and Randy Schoenberg dropped by. I think he may have heard of us.

CONSULATE RECEPTIONIST

Okay.

Maria tries to pull him aside.

MARIA

What do we want with the Austrian Consul?

Randy turns back to the receptionist.

RANDY

Please inform him we're just dropping off a summons and complaint. We're taking the Austrian Government to court.

He takes an envelope out of his jacket pocket, hands it to her. Maria is flabbergasted.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Have a nice day.

And he makes his way to the exit, with Maria at his heels.

EXT. PARKING LOT. DAY.

On the open top floor of a car-park, with the L.A. skyline in the distance, Randy walks briskly with purpose towards the car. Maria is a few feet behind him.

MARIA

Can you slow down a little and tell me what's going on here?

RANDY
We're taking them to Court, Maria.

MARIA
You can't do this Randy, just going ahead like a mad steam-roller.

RANDY
Can't I?

MARIA
Stop walking so fast! I can't keep up with you!

He stops at her admonishment and she catches up.

RANDY
I'm sorry.

MARIA
I told you I have no intention of suing them. I've had enough excitement. I have returned to my quiet life and I have begun to find some peace again.

RANDY
Say that again, with conviction.

And she snaps.

MARIA
Oh don't be so stupid.

And she pulls herself together, takes a second.

MARIA (CONT'D)
Besides, you don't have the time to do this. You have a full time job, remember? You have a family to support.

And Randy's expression says it all. Maria gets it. He's quit.

EXT. THE SCHOENBERGS' GARDEN. DAY.

Randy approaches Pam at the bottom of the garden, out of earshot of Dora who is playing with some toys in the distance. Randy drops his atom bomb.

RANDY
I quit.

Pam is incredulous, in utter shock. It hasn't sunk in.

PAM
What do you mean, you quit?

RANDY
My job. I quit my job. I quit, I quit, I quit.

Pam makes a noise of desperation - a sound of utter despair and rage - and turns away, storms into the house.

INT. THE SCHOENBERGS' KITCHEN. DAY.

She bursts into the kitchen and rockets through it, on her way to the bathroom, with Randy in close pursuit.

RANDY

I spoke to my Dad, he said he can lend us some cash to keep us going for six months.

PAM

Great, now we owe your parents money, too. Three hundred thousand dollars of debt isn't enough!

INT. THE SCHOENBERGS' HALLWAY. DAY.

And Pam reaches the bathroom door, turns on him.

PAM

I'm sick of it, Randy, I'm sick of you gambling with our lives!

And she slams the door in his face. Randy takes a deep breath, leans against the door, attempts a confession, speaks quietly, from the heart.

RANDY

I'm sorry..I..I'm so sorry. You're right - what you said the other night - a part of me never did come back. Something happened out there, Pam. I don't know what it is but I can't let it go. I think it's important. But I also know that I can't do it without you. Not for a single day, not for an hour.

There's a beat, and the door opens. She's been crying but you can tell his words have already softened her. And then, she too drops a bomb.

PAM

I'm pregnant. I was going to tell you over dinner.

It hits him like a train but he does his best to cover.

RANDY

Wow. Okay. Wow. That's - I mean, that's...okay. We'll manage. You'll see. We'll manage.

He steps forward and puts his arms around her. For a second she resists, then lets him. And in that moment they are both aware that their lives are entering unknown territory.

INT./EXT. RANDY'S CAR. DAY.

An early Californian morning, just after dawn, and Randy is driving Maria to the District Court. They are both smartly dressed for a day in Court. Maria is holding a cup of coffee and a chocolate donut.

RANDY
They've hired Stan Gould from
Heimann Rose, a hot-shot Jewish
law firm.

MARIA
Nice of them to give jobs to Jewish
boys.

RANDY
They're trying to dismiss the case
on procedural grounds.

MARIA
In the hope that I will die before
we have a trial. But I will do them
the favour of staying alive.

RANDY
Staying alive would be an
advantage.

MARIA
Now, hurry up, because the
chocolate on your donut is melting.

INT. COURTROOM, THE DISTRICT COURT.

In the courtroom Randy and Maria are greeted by STAN GOULD and Toman. Gould is an impressive looking lawyer whose whole demeanour breathes with quiet, understated confidence. Randy has just finished his donut, there is a tiny smidgen of chocolate on his nose.

RANDY
Mr. Gould.

GOULD
Mr. Schoenberg, Mrs. Altmann.

RANDY
Lovely of you to come all the way
from Austria Dr. Toman. We're
flattered.

TOMAN
I've always wanted to visit
Disneyland. Two birds with one
stone as they say.

MARIA
I hope we make your visit
worthwhile.

TOMAN

Mrs Altmann, may I say you are looking even younger than you did in Vienna.

MARIA

Thank you Dr. Toman. This morning I'm feeling as if I have another fifty years in front of me.

Toman looks confused at the private joke between Maria and Randy.

COURT OFFICIAL

All rise.

JUDGE FLORENCE COOPER enters. She is an impressive woman with great authority but not intimidating. Maria takes a small handkerchief out of her hand-bag and dabs the chocolate off Randy's nose.

INT. COURTROOM, THE DISTRICT COURT. DAY.

The court case. Judge Cooper sits at the bench. Randy and Maria on one side, Gould and Toman on the other. The session is in full swing.

GOULD

Your Honour, the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act was passed in 1976, a good thirty eight years after the events in question. It seems to me obvious that the FSIA rulings can not be applied retroactively and I am bewildered that Mrs. Altmann's counsel has not advised her of this fact. It would have saved her a great deal of inconvenience and an equal amount of false hope.

Suddenly, Maria puts her hand up and speaks.

MARIA

It really isn't much of an inconvenience. If I wasn't here, I'd either be at my shop or at home watching 'Days of Our Lives'.

Randy is mortified at her interruption, the others can't quite believe it. Judge Cooper steps in.

JUDGE COOPER

I'm glad to hear that, Mrs. Altmann. But from now on, would you mind speaking only when you are asked? There are certain procedures which need to be adhered to in a court-room.

And Maria smiles apologetically. Randy is still reeling.

INT. COURTROOM, THE DISTRICT COURT. DAY.

And now Randy is giving his response.

RANDY

Your Honour, Mr. Gould is right to point out that the FSIA was enacted in 1976 but he is mistaken in his theory that it can not be applied retroactively.

He lifts some documents; hands them to a COURT MARSHALL. The Court Marshall hands them over to Judge Cooper, who scans them. Meanwhile, Randy passes copies of them to the opposition.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Despite the fact that actions accruing before 1976 are rarer, they very much exist, these are just three examples of them.

JUDGE COOPER

Thank you, Mr. Schoenberg, I'm sure these will prove to be a riveting read. Let's adjourn for ten minutes.

And Randy smiles at her sarcasm.

INT. COURTROOM, THE DISTRICT COURT. DAY

Gould again, still confident but a little less so.

GOULD

This is a domestic matter for Austria. Anything else would be a violation of its national sovereignty. After all, there is a forum available for Mrs. Altmann to pursue her case in Austria without resorting to the use of American courts and American tax-payer's money.

INT. COURTROOM, THE DISTRICT COURT. DAY

Randy is becoming more confident as he goes on.

RANDY

Your Honour, I applaud Mr. Gould's concern for the American tax-payer but taking the defendant to court in Austria would require her to be a multi-millionairess. It is not an option. In a matter of fact your Honour, we have exhausted all other options. If we hadn't we wouldn't be standing before you today.

INT. COURTROOM, THE DISTRICT COURT. DAY.

And JUDGE COOPER gives her verdict from the bench.

JUDGE COOPER

The plaintiff has adequately proved that the FSIA can apply to pre 1976 events. Also, due to prohibitive costs, this Court has decided that Austria provides an inadequate forum for resolution of plaintiff's claims.

GOULD

Your Honour..

JUDGE COOPER

Defendant's Motion to dismiss is denied.

COURT OFFICIAL

All rise.

People stand as Judge Cooper exits. Randy whispers to Maria.

RANDY

First hurdle down.

MARIA

I've always thought there should be more women judges.

INT. COURTROOM, THE DISTRICT COURT. DAY.

Randy approaches Toman as he is about to leave the courtroom.

RANDY

Dr. Toman.

TOMAN

Congratulations Mr. Schoenberg. An unexpected outcome which no doubt has delighted you.

RANDY

You're a busy man who can't be that keen on spending the good part of his life traipsing through the U.S. Court system. I would urge you to consider mediation.

TOMAN

There will be no mediation Mr. Schoenberg. You have been exceptionally lucky today, that is all. Good-day to you.

Maria, who's been over-hearing the conversation, waves at Toman.

MARIA

Enjoy Disneyland!

And Toman walks away.

INT. MARIA'S LIVING ROOM. DAY.

Maria is having her hair done at home. EIGHT MONTHS have passed and she is looking a little more frail. A HAIRDRESSER, a middle aged woman, has just finished and is showing her the back of her head with a portable mirror.

MARIA

Appeal, appeal, appeal. The Austrians keep appealing and they're denied every time.

HAIRDRESSER

They don't give up easily, that much you have in common.

MARIA

So now we're going all the way to the Supreme Court. Which is why I need you to make me look like a million dollars.

The phone rings and she leans over and answers it.

MARIA (ON THE PHONE) (CONT'D)

Hello? Randy, what's happened to you? I'm getting my hair done Washington style.

EXT. THE SCHOENBERGS' GARDEN. DAY.

Randy is on the wireless phone in the garden when Pam approaches him. She is very noticeably pregnant.

RANDY (ON THE PHONE)

Okay, that's fine, so I'll see you at the airport.

And he switches it off. She's picked up that he's troubled by something.

PAM

What's wrong?

RANDY

I chickened out. I don't have the heart to tell her.

PAM

Tell her what?

RANDY

Our own Government has filed a brief in Austria's favour. Can you believe that?

PAM

Why?

RANDY
The Iraq war.

PAM
They need as many friends as they
can get?

RANDY
They don't want to start
antagonising their allies.

PAM
So now you're fighting the
Americans as well...

RANDY
Feels like I'm fighting the whole
damn world.

And Pam looks at him. Something in her can't help admiring
him. And that same thing starts to change her. She doesn't
want to be one of the people he's fighting anymore.

PAM
My money's on you.

EXT. BURTON WAY, L.A. DAY.

In the afternoon sunshine, Maria crosses the street on her
way to The Four Seasons Hotel.

INT. FOUR SEASONS HOTEL CAFE. DAY.

Maria is in the cafe of The Four Seasons being walked to a
table by a waitress. At the table sits RONALD LAUDER, a man
who exudes elegance and wealth. He stands.

LAUDER
Mrs. Altmann, I'm Ronald Lauder.

MARIA
The son of Estee. I've always loved
your mother's cosmetics. Her lip-
stick is my favourite.

INT. FOUR SEASONS HOTEL CAFE. DAY.

A few minutes later. Maria and Lauder are having tea, Lauder
talking with focussed intensity.

LAUDER
The art works stolen by the Nazis
are the last prisoners of World War
Two. And Adele is their queen.

MARIA
My aunt would be flattered.

LAUDER

I was a young man when I first saw the portrait and I instantly fell in love.

MARIA

She has that effect on people.

LAUDER

Which is why I want her for the Neue Galerie in New York. I will put my offer in writing but have no doubt, it will be substantial.

MARIA

We are jumping the gun a little, Mr. Lauder.

LAUDER

One needs to do what one can to make a favourable outcome as likely as possible . Which brings me to young Mr. Schoenberg. He's been a formidable ally.

MARIA

And continues to be one.

LAUDER

But he's not cut out for the Supreme Court Mrs. Altmann. A little like sending a school-boy onto the front line.

MARIA

You think so?

LAUDER

I'm willing to pay for you to have the finest representation from this point on. The man I have in mind is to art restitution what Einstein is to relativity. He's done his homework on your case and I'm ready to parachute him in. Can I ask him to call you?

MARIA

You can ask him to take a hike.

Lauder is flummoxed.

MARIA (CONT'D)

I'm sticking with my school-boy, Mr. Lauder. And that's final.

INT. THE SCHOENBERG'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Randy is lying in bed surrounded by pages and pages of work documents, rehearsing for his imminent appearance at the Supreme Court. He practices out loud.

RANDY
Your Honours, this repeated attempt
by the defence to have the case
dismissed..

Pam appears at the door in her nightie. Considering what she's about to say, her attitude is quite relaxed.

PAM
Randy. We need to drop Dora off at
your mother's and get to the
hospital.

RANDY
You think I should go deeper with
the voice?

PAM
Honey. My water broke.

He looks at her, taking on what she's just said. In shock. He jumps up.

RANDY
Okay. Stay calm, stay calm.

But she is calm, he's the one freaking out as he hurriedly dresses. Pam calmly takes an overnight bag out, places it on the bed, and starts putting clothes into it.

PAM
Randy, I'm fine.

RANDY
You're having a baby.

PAM
I'm aware of that.

RANDY
I'll get the car. Do you need to
sit? Do you need a glass of water?

PAM
Randy, relax.. I've done this
before, I'll be okay.

She takes some of his ties out, throws them on the bed.

PAM (CONT'D)
Which tie are you going to wear to
the Supreme Court?

RANDY
Are you sure that's important right
now?

She chucks him a slightly old-fashioned green one.

PAM
Wear the one your Dad got you for
good luck. With the blue shirt.

And then she sits on the bed, signals for him to do sit next to her. He does.

PAM (CONT'D)

You need to take me to the hospital and then you need to go to Washington. You need to do it for all of us.

RANDY

Are you sure that's what you want?

PAM

Listen to me. I got it wrong. Whatever I said, I want you to know I'm with you now. And if it doesn't work out, we'll manage. Either way, we'll be okay. You're doing the right thing, and I love you.

She touches his face, smiles warmly. And he knows that she now understands something of why he had to take on the case. Then, suddenly, movement. She flinches, looks down.

PAM (CONT'D)

He's getting twitchy.

RANDY

We need to go. I'm not good at the whole midwife thing.

EXT. WASHINGTON. DAY.

Washington in the winter sun: Capitol Hill, the White House, The Supreme Court.

INT. WASHINGTON HOTEL. DAY.

Maria is sitting on the edge of the bed coaching Randy who stands before her.

MARIA

Do it again without the arms.

Randy starts speaking with his arms glued to his side.

RANDY

Mr Chief Justice and may it please the Court..

MARIA

Now you look like a pillar.

RANDY

This is great for my confidence.

MARIA

Move them but not like before. Somewhere between a windmill and a pillar.

RANDY

Maria, this really isn't helping. I need to go through the briefs.

MARIA

Alright, I'll leave you alone now.

She gets up and makes her way towards the door. Then turns to him.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Speak from the heart, Randy, and you'll be fine.

RANDY

Will I?

And his question hovers in the air. Suddenly, they're both aware that they might be well out of their depth.

EXT. THE SUPREME COURT. DAY.

In the morning sunshine, the Supreme Court stands proud.

INT. THE SUPREME COURT. DAY.

And in the Court, everybody is settling down for the session to begin. Randy on the one side with Maria, Gould, Toman and FRANKS (representing the US Government) on the other. Maria leans over to Randy again, offers him a cough-sweet.

MARIA

Have a cough drop. They are cherry flavoured.

Randy takes it but he is a nervous wreck as he shuffles through his documents. Maria leans further in, puts her hand on his arm.

MARIA (CONT'D)

You know, my dear, even if we go no further, we made it to the Supreme Court. Who'd have thought it? A little Austrian girl like me...

INT. ELLIS ISLAND DETENTION WARD. DAY. 1938.

On a hot July day, with a view of New York seen through a window, a few poorly dressed people mill around their bunks in a dormitory of a tenement for newly-arrived refugees. One man is tuning an accordion, some children are looking at a comic book, a woman sits on the edge of her bed, staring ahead. In amongst them, lying on a bunk, are Maria and Fritz. They sit on the bed with brochures promoting California spread out before them. They are sharing a bottle of cheap wine, and trying to stay cheerful in this new, unknown country.

YOUNG MARIA

Can you please show me the way to the wash-room, sir?

FRITZ

Now say it again, but with an American accent. If you say it like that, nobody will understand you.

YOUNG MARIA

You can talk! You sound like a silly Frankfurter!

FRITZ

I am a man, not a sausage!

Just then, as they giggle, the door opens and a WARDEN walks in, someone who works at the tenement. He is holding a telegram.

WARDEN

Maria Altmann! Which one of you is Maria Altmann?

YOUNG MARIA

I am!

Maria jumps off the bed and runs up to the man, who hands her the telegram, then walks out a little gruffly. Maria opens it, reads it. And we know that whatever it is she is reading, has suddenly shaken her to the very core. She walks back to the bunk, almost falling on to it, as her legs buckle. Fritz puts his hand on hers.

FRITZ

What is it?

FRITZ (CONT'D)

Was ist los?

YOUNG MARIA

It's from my sister. She's waiting for us in California. But she's had news from Vienna.

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)

Es ist von meiner schwester. Sie wartet auf uns in Kalifornien. Aber sie hat Nachrichten aus Wien.

FRITZ

Your parents?

FRITZ (CONT'D)

Deine Eltern?

She collapses into his arms, and weeps.

INT. THE SUPREME COURT. DAY.

The session has begun. CHIEF JUSTICE REHNQUIST speaks - he is an intimidating, authoritative presence.

CJ REHNQUIST

We'll hear argument next in 03-13,
the Republic of Austria v. Maria
Altmann. Mr. Gould.

GOULD

Mr Chief Justice, and may it please
the Court: I'll keep my argument
succinct sir: this is a domestic
matter for Austria. It has no place
in the American Courts.

CJ REHNQUIST

Mr Franks, representing the United
States Government, your opening
statement please.

Franks is talking now and his age and experience emanate from
his every pore.

FRANKS

Mr Chief Justice, if this law were
to be applied retroactively it
could open claims brought against a
number of foreign states which
would further complicate our
international relations.

CJ REHNQUIST

Give me an example.

FRANKS

Well there are currently cases
pending against countries such as
Japan and France with which..

CJ REHNQUIST

So what you're saying is that Mrs.
Altmann shouldn't try and reclaim
her paintings because it might
affect our relations with Japan?

FRANKS

That could be a possible outcome
Your Honour.

CJ REHNQUIST

Mrs. Altmann, it seems that if your
case goes forward world diplomacy
will collapse and you will be
solely responsible.

Subdued laughter from the audience.

INT. THE SUPREME COURT. DAY.

Randy stands for his big moment. He is very nervous, very
stiff.

RANDY

Mr. Chief Justice and may it please the Court: We believe that applying the FSIA is not impermissibly retroactive.

Chief Justice Rehnquist starts to ask him a question. Randy is like a bunny in the headlights of a car.

CJ REHNQUIST

Why isn't it just as easy to say that it does operate retroactively because the question is when should it exercise jurisdiction for a particular purpose?

Randy is completely lost.

RANDY

I'm sorry. I didn't understand the question.

The embarrassment is palpable. Maria looks at the floor. Toman can't help but let out a little smirk.

CJ REHNQUIST

I don't think I did, either.

And the tension is burst. Everyone laughs and Randy sighs with relief.

CJ REHNQUIST (CONT'D)

Did anyone?

And more laughter.

INT. THE SUPREME COURT. DAY.

We watch him grow in confidence and stature with every word.

RANDY

We're very sensitive to the Government's concerns, Mr Chief Justice, the can of worms argument. But each country is different and poses different conditions. Unlike say Cuba, in Austria's case there's a treaty so there's no dispute as to what type of law could apply. We recommend opening the can but extracting our one little worm with a pair of tweezers. And then closing it shut again.

And laughter from the audience.

RANDY (CONT'D)

The defendants have continuously tried to frustrate our attempts, raising every possible objection and threatening an Armageddon in international relations.

(MORE)

RANDY (CONT'D)

But let's put things into perspective here: this is a case about one woman wanting back what is rightfully hers. Mrs. Altmann came to America as a young woman in search of peace. Let's give her justice too.

Maria looks up at Randy and her eyes are beaming with pride.

INT. AN ANTEROOM, THE SUPREME COURT. DAY.

In a room just outside the courtroom, Maria and Randy find themselves in the middle of a media scrum. A REPORTER places a mike under Maria.

REPORTER

Mrs. Altmann were you surprised that the U.S. Government supported the Austrians in trying to get the case dismissed?

MARIA

Everybody wants me to hurry up and die, why not the Americans as well?

The journalists laugh. Randy is standing at the side when he is approached by another COURT REPORTER.

COURT REPORTER

David Pike, Court Reporter. You were impressive in there, no doubt.

RANDY

Why, thank you. Randy Schoenberg.

He gives him his card.

COURT REPORTER

Takes about three months for the verdict to come though. But there's no way you're gonna win.

RANDY

Okay.

COURT REPORTER

I've been doing this job for thirty-four years and I'm always right. It's in their body language.

RANDY

Well, thank you very much. That's a cheerful way to end the day.

COURT REPORTER

No problem.

And he ambles off leaving Randy dumb-struck to digest what he's just heard.

INT. THE SCHOENBERG'S BEDROOM. DAY.

Randy rushes into the bedroom with a ridiculously large bouquet of flowers. And then he sees them: Pam, in bed, holding their new baby son.

PAM
Hey. Say hi to your son.

RANDY
Hi Nathan.

And he is overwhelmed.

EXT. THE SCHOENBERGS' GARDEN. DAY.

Superimposed caption: *THREE MONTHS LATER.*

Maria, Pam and Randy are sitting on the lawn - Pam is holding Nathan in her arms while Dora runs laughing around Maria. Dora is looking older than when we last saw her, she's a real toddler.

MARIA
She takes after her father. Can't sit still for a moment!

RANDY
Are you calling me hyper-active?

MARIA
Like you have spiders crawling in your underwear all the time.

Randy keeps looking at his watch.

PAM
Sweetie, will you stop looking at your watch every two minutes?

MARIA
You're making us all nervous.

RANDY
They said we should hear by noon.

The phone rings. Randy runs indoors to answer it. Maria and Pam look at each other and smile at the speed with which he's run into the house.

INT. THE SCHOENBERGS' KITCHEN. DAY.

He answers the phone. Through the window we can see Pam and Maria playing with the kids, though obviously on tenterhooks themselves.

RANDY
Hello?

EXT. THE SCHOENBERGS' GARDEN. DAY.

Randy comes out, walks up to where Maria and Pam are sitting. He looks downcast, as if the news is bad.

MARIA

I told you not to get excited but you didn't listen to me.

RANDY

Bad news I'm afraid. You can't give up yet. The fight goes on.

MARIA

What are you talking about?

RANDY

The Supreme Court has ruled in our favour. We can take the Austrians to trial, Maria.

Pam jumps up and hugs him.

PAM

Oh my God, Randy, you did it!

Maria too stands up, walks to him, takes his face in her hands.

MARIA

From the first moment I saw you, I knew you were the right man for the job! That's why I ignored all the terrible bits.

And she plants a big smacker on his cheek. Randy smiles but is holding back a little bit; almost as if he can't quite allow himself to feel the joy of the moment.

EXT. THE SCHOENBERGS' DRIVEWAY . DAY.

And in the evening light, Randy and Pam are waving at Maria as she is driven away in a taxi. Randy is holding Nathan, Pam is holding Dora. But Pam has picked something up in Randy's behaviour.

PAM

Are you okay? I thought this was the outcome you wanted.

RANDY

Just something I've been thinking over that kind of puts a damper on the celebrations.

She looks at him, not understanding.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Sure, we can take them to court. But they'll find other ways to stretch it out. Could take a few more years. She might not live to see the outcome.

(MORE)

RANDY (CONT'D)

And we can't afford it. Four more months and the bailiff's at the door.

PAM

We've come so far, there's no way we can stop now. I'm frightened, but I'm with you.

And he kisses her - in acknowledgement of how far she's travelled. And then, in that moment, an idea comes to him.

RANDY

There's only one more thing we could try.

And then, Pam too, well-versed in the case, gets it.

PAM

Mediation.

INT. BOARDROOM. DAY.

In a slick board-room in Los Angeles, Randy and Maria sit on the one side of the table, Toman on the other. And between them sits Professor DIETER BINDER, an elderly Austrian historian who is the mediator.

BINDER

Welcome.

RANDY

Funny how things turn out in the end.

TOMAN

We really want to avoid going to trial here in America.

MARIA

You've done an effective job proving that Dr. Toman.

TOMAN

So we're happy to consider other options. Austria is all ears.

MARIA

How very refreshing.

RANDY

Despite my protestations, my client is prepared to meet you half way.

MARIA

As a gesture of reconciliation I am willing to allow the paintings to remain in the Belvedere. All you have to do is admit that you took them illegally.

RANDY

And then come to an agreement with us on the question of compensation.

TOMAN

I'm afraid we're not budging, and that is final. We will not be paying for something we believe is ours and we will fight you to the death before we concede on this.

Another impasse. Binder steps in.

BINDER

I'm assuming you all want this to be over so let's study the other options we have.

Randy talks but he is already nervous at how his next words will be taken by Maria.

RANDY

Arbitration in Vienna.

MARIA

Randy!

RANDY

We chose one of the arbitrators, you choose another. The third is neutral.

Toman can hardly believe his ears and has trouble concealing his joy.

TOMAN

Now you are talking sense. This sounds like a reasonable idea.

But Maria is in shock.

MARIA

Randy, can I speak to you in private for a moment?

And from her tone, Randy knows she's having none of it.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE THE BOARDROOM. DAY.

Maria and Randy are standing outside the boardroom. Through the glass wall we can see Toman and Binder. Maria is fierce and adamant. Randy was prepared for this and is doing his best to reassure her.

MARIA

Have you lost your mind?

RANDY

I want to see you getting your paintings back Maria. I'd like you to get them before..

MARIA
Before, I die is what you mean.

RANDY
Well, frankly, yes.

MARIA
And you're crazy enough to think that some arbitration in Vienna will vote in our favour?

RANDY
I honestly don't think we have a choice.

MARIA
But that means we have to go back to Austria.

Randy starts to lose his patience with her.

RANDY
Maria. Listen to me. I can't sit here arguing with you, okay? I'm doing what I think is best. You need to just be quiet for once, and trust me.

MARIA
No, Randy, I will not be quiet! I'm sorry. Enough is enough.

And she's already opened the door to the boardroom.

INT. BOARDROOM. DAY.

She strides up to where her handbag is, picks it up, turns to Toman and speaks, dignified and strident in equal measure.

MARIA
Congratulations, Dr. Toman. Your tactics have succeeded. I am not playing this game anymore. Goodbye, gentlemen.

And she sweeps out of the boardroom, leaving Binder speechless. Toman can't help but release a tiny look of satisfaction.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE THE BOARDROOM. DAY.

And she sweeps by Randy, not stopping for a second.

EXT. MARIA'S FRONT YARD. DAY.

Randy drives up to Maria's bungalow, pulls over, gets out, and runs towards the front door. He is worked up, fuming. He rings the doorbell and a couple of seconds later, Maria opens the door but doesn't let him in.

RANDY
Nice one, Maria. Thank you.

MARIA
I'm not in the mood, I don't want
to talk to you.

RANDY
The feeling is mutual but we don't
have the choice right now.

She tries to close the door, he puts his foot in it and
blocks it.

INT. MARIA'S HALLWAY. DAY.

Exasperated, Maria opens the door, walks into the hallway.
Randy follows her into the house. She turns on him. And when
she speaks it is with a quiet steel in her voice. She's made
her mind up.

MARIA
It's over, Randy! We made a
mistake.

RANDY
What's over? What are you saying?

MARIA
I'm saying that we have to accept
defeat and return to what's left of
our lives.

RANDY
Are you insane?

MARIA
I'm saying that I'm tired and that
they can keep the paintings. I'm
saying Randy, that as of this
moment, I no longer need your
services.

Randy can not believe what he's hearing. And when he erupts
Maria is not prepared for the full force of it.

RANDY
Are you kidding me? I have given
everything I have! I am HALF A
MILLION DOLLARS in debt and my wife
and I are..my children, everything
I fucking care about in this
world....and you have the
nerve..everything I've done I've
done to get those goddamn paintings
back for you...I wish you'd never
asked me.. and you have the nerve
to come to me and say that it's all
over!

And he stops and Maria is standing there, looking at him,
shaken by his rage. And, softening, he speaks quietly.

RANDY (CONT'D)

We've come so far...just hang in there.

MARIA

The Austrians will never let go. And I won't be humiliated again. Go back to Vienna if you have to. But this time I'm not coming back with you. You're on your own Randy.

And the two of them stand silently opposite each other in the hallway of her small house, shaken by their emotions.

EXT. VIENNA. NIGHT.

Montage of Vienna at night.

EXT. VIENNA STREET. NIGHT.

Randy and Hubertus are walking down a street in the old part of town.

HUBERTUS

The man you chose for the arbitration panel is a safe bet.. but I'm a little worried about the other two, I can't lie. The one chosen by the Austrian State is a strict traditionalist. I can't see him deciding in your favour. And as for the third..well,it's a gamble.

RANDY

Here's hoping.

HUBERTUS

But I never thought you'd come back. And personally, I need to be honest - I don't think it's the right decision. You are betting on Austria having changed.

And Hubertus' eyes suggest that it might be a bet too far. They pass by a small concert hall. A poster catches Randy's eye: there's an Arnold Schoenberg concert starting in twenty minutes. He looks at Hubertus and they smile at the coincidence. Randy checks his watch and runs to the box office, gives his credit card to the female BOX OFFICE EMPLOYEE, who takes it.

RANDY

Two tickets, please.

BOX OFFICE EMPLOYEE

It starts in two minutes.

And then she notices the name on the card.

BOX OFFICE EMPLOYEE (CONT'D)

You have the same name as the composer.

Hubertus looks at Randy and they smile to each other.

HUBERTUS
What a coincidence.

INT. CONCERT HALL. NIGHT.

Randy and Hubertus sit in the darkened concert hall. Randy listens proudly to his grandfather's music, watching the orchestra playing and the crowd appreciating it. And something is inspired in him.

INT. THE ARBITRATION ROOM. DAY.

The arbitration. A large room in a Government building in Vienna. At a long table sit the three arbitrators. In the room there is also a sizeable audience which includes Hubertus, Elizabeth Gehrler, Wran and Toman. Randy stands near the panel. One of the arbitrators stands.

ARBITRATOR
The Austrian Government has provided its case in writing for our perusal. Mr. Schoenberg, you too were offered the opportunity to do so but you have opted to present the introductory points of your argument orally as well, is that correct?

RANDY
I have, yes.

ARBITRATOR
The floor is yours.

RANDY
Thank you sir.

Randy stands in the centre of the room and it feels like the whole of Austria is his audience. He clears his throat, takes a deep breath but looks uncertain - almost as if he can't do it. He begins but his tone lacks confidence, it wavers.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Ladies and gentlemen, I'm happy to be standing before you today for two reasons. Firstly, like my opponents in this case I always believed that this was a domestic matter for Austria that needed to be decided within her borders.

Suddenly he's interrupted: a door opens at the back of the room. His eyes are drawn to it. It's Maria. She's come after all. She walks up to the front of the room and sits. Randy comes to her, leans in, and they whisper to each other.

RANDY (CONT'D)
I wasn't expecting to see you here.

MARIA

The first time I came back for myself. This time I came back for you. Now, stand up straight.

He looks at her, takes strength from her words, straightens up, and resumes his opening speech - she has moved and inspired him. He takes a deep breath and he looks two inches taller. And the speech is now driven by a new confidence.

RANDY

And the second reason I'm happy to be in Vienna today is because my client Mrs. Altmann and I are both Austrians.

Some of the audience seem surprised but Maria knows what he means.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Oh, don't get me wrong, we're very much Americans too. But our families and the *roots* we share are situated in the culture of this very city.

INT. CONCERT HALL, VIENNA. NIGHT.

And we see a flashback to the night before and Randy observing the audience as they listen to his grandfather's music

INT. KLIMT'S STUDIO. DAY.

And now we see Adele being painted by Klimt once more, as he puts the final touches to the great painting.

RANDY (V.O.)

And somewhere, in the heart of this world, stands the woman whose portrait both sides are fighting for. Adele Bloch-Bauer.

INT. THE ARBITRATION ROOM. DAY.

Randy in full flow now, the confident, experienced lawyer he has become.

RANDY

During my visits to this country I have discerned that there are two Austrias: the one that opposes restitution to the victims of Nazism, and another that recognises the injustice committed against Austria's Jewish population and seeks to rectify it.

We watch Dr Toman, Elizabeth Gehrler and Rudolf Wran responding to what he is saying and then we land on Hubertus: the two Austrias.

RANDY (CONT'D)
 As I hope I demonstrate in my
 written arguments, the law favours
 restitution.

And now, during these next few scenes we watch a *flashing montage of the journey of the painting and the way it ended up in the Belvedere* --

EXT. VIENNA. DAY.

The Anschluss: The Viennese crowds greet the Nazis in celebration, women throwing flowers to welcome them.

RANDY (V.O.)
 A string of events and misdeeds
 point to the incontestible fact
 that the paintings in question
 reached the Belvedere Gallery and
 remained there for over half a
 century in a manner that was both
 dishonest and illegal. And that
 Adele's will itself was not legally
 binding.

INT. LIVING ROOM ELIZABETHSTRASSE. DAY.

The auction at Elizabethstrasse.

EXT. ELIZABETHSTRASSE. DAY.

The painting of Adele being loaded onto a truck.

INT. THE BELVEDERE. DAY.

And the painting coming to hang on the wall of the Belvedere under Grimshitz's supervision.

INT. THE ARBITRATION ROOM. DAY.

And as Randy reaches the conclusion he slows his tempo a little to make sure these last few words really land.

RANDY
 In its own way Ladies and Gentlemen
 this is a moment of history, a
 moment in which the past is asking
 something of the present. Many
 years ago, (in this very city,)
 just beyond these walls, terrible
 things happened. People dehumanised
 other people - they persecuted
 them, sent many to their deaths,
 and decimated whole families
 breaking them apart forever. And
 they stole from them - properties,
 livelihoods and the objects that
 were most precious to them.
 (MORE)

RANDY (CONT'D)

Amongst those people were the Bloch-Bauers, the family of a very dear friend of mine. So now I am asking you - as Austrians - as human beings - to recognise that wrong. (Not just for Maria Altmann but for Austria.) I am asking you today to look at the past, as I have, and to restore what has been taken away.

And his eyes meet Maria's. And by articulating these last words, he understands that he too, in some profound way, has been restored. And it is clear that his words have resonated with his audience, especially on the faces of Toman and Wran.

EXT. THE PRATER PARK. DAY.

Maria, Randy and Hubertus are walking in the shade of the Ferris Wheel. Randy is checking his phone.

RANDY

They said they should announce the verdict by four.

HUBERTUS

One thing is for sure. This country is about to decide what it really is.

They approach a bench and sit down on it.

HUBERTUS (CONT'D)

When I was a child, my father used to bring me here on Sundays.

MARIA

For waffles and ice-cream, eh?

HUBERTUS

And a ride on the ferris wheel.

And he knows that now is the moment to confide; their friendship has earned it.

HUBERTUS (CONT'D)

He was an impressive man, tall and domineering with his hair always combed back. Handsome, I suppose. As a small boy I looked up to him, worshipped him.

MARIA

You wanted to grow up to be like him.

HUBERTUS

When I was fifteen I discovered that he had been a Nazi, Maria. A passionate follower of the Third Reich.

His words are coming out with great difficulty, almost as if he hasn't spoken them before.

HUBERTUS (CONT'D)

All my life I've been trying to make up for the sins of the father. Every day, asking myself how he could be the person he was. And every day trying to move away from him.

He turns to look at Maria and Randy.

HUBERTUS (CONT'D)

How's that for a motive, Randy?

RANDY

It's pretty damn good.

Randy smiles guiltily at the memory of his initial scepticism of Hubertus. Maria leans over and takes Hubertus' hand.

MARIA

You are a fine man, Hubertus. A good man.

Then Randy's phone goes: a text. He looks at it.

RANDY

Decision time.

INT. THE ARBITRATION ROOM. DAY.

The room is packed to the rafters. A tense atmosphere - the moment everyone has been waiting for. Maria, Randy and Hubertus are squeezed in and nearby are Wran, Toman and Gehrer. There is also a large media contingent. The main arbitrator stands and there is a hushed silence.

ARBITRATOR

We, the arbitrators have now studied both sides of this complex case. Trying to keep an open mind as we examined the evidence we have reached our final verdict.

He walks over to the other arbitrators. One of them hands him an envelope, which he slowly opens. He puts on his glasses and reads from it.

ARBITRATOR (CONT'D)

Our decision today is that the portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer and the other Klimt paintings in question should be returned to her niece, Maria Altmann.

A huge wave of emotion sweeps across the room and on the faces of all the audience we see a myriad of responses. Hubertus is profoundly moved and buries his face in his hands, Randy squeezes Maria's hand who seems overwhelmed. Cheers clash with sounds of consternation. Wran and Gehrer make a quick exit.

INT. HALL OUTSIDE ARBITRATION ROOM. DAY.

In the excited crowd Randy, Maria and Hubertus embrace and congratulate each other.

HUBERTUS

For the first time in a long while
I am proud to call myself an
Austrian.

MARIA

You should be.

RANDY

The press are waiting outside
Maria. They want a statement. How
do I look?

MARIA

Sexy and victorious! And how do I
look?

RANDY

Sexy and victorious!

Suddenly, out of nowhere Toman approaches Maria.

TOMAN

Mrs. Altmann, may I have a word?

MARIA

Dr. Toman.

They go to one side.

TOMAN

I am defeated. But I will ask you -
beg you, entreat you - not to let
these paintings leave their
motherland. Let us come to an
arrangement. I am sure we can make
a generous offer.

MARIA

It makes me sad too that they will
not stay in Adele's country. But
Dr. Toman all along I have tried to
negotiate, to keep the dialogue
open. And all along you have
thwarted me, closed the doors in my
face. I am tired, Dr. Toman, and my
aunt is now crossing the Atlantic
to make her home in America, like I
once did. Excuse me.

And she makes a move away from him, visibly emotional and starts to walk down the hall, looking for some privacy. Hubertus notices; points it out to Randy.

HUBERTUS

I think our friend might be needing
a little attention.

Randy sees Maria enter a room off the hall, and follows. But turns one last time to Hubertus, casually throwing his words over his shoulder as he moves away.

RANDY

Have I said that we couldn't have done it without you?

INT. ROOM OFF THE ARBITRATION HALL. DAY.

Maria has found and entered an empty room off the hall and closes the door behind her. There is a window and she walks towards it. She suddenly looks quite frail, takes a few deep breaths. She is overwhelmed. And then, she remembers the last time she saw her parents. The goodbye --

INT. GUSTAV AND THERESE'S BEDROOM. DAY. 1938

Maria moves into the room and joins Gustav and Therese by the bed. She kneels down, takes their hands in hers and the three of them hold on to each other, knowing this may well be the last time they ever see each other. Therese is crying. When Gustav speaks it is with some effort, his breathing is laboured.

YOUNG MARIA

Papa, Mutti, I'm leaving now.

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)

Papa, Mutti, ich gehe jetzt.

GUSTAV

You are doing the right thing.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

Du tust das Richtige.

YOUNG MARIA

But I don't want to.

YOUNG MARIA (CONT'D)

Aber ich will nicht.

THERESE

You have to live, Maria. You have to move forward into the future and this place has no future for you.

THERESE (CONT'D)

Du musst leben, Maria. Du musst in die Zukunft schauen und dieser Ort hat für dich keine Zukunft mehr.

Gustav clutches her hand and looks deep into her eyes. And, when he next speaks, he speaks in English to her. His accent is strong but he speaks it beautifully.

GUSTAV

English will become your language and America will be your home.

YOUNG MARIA

Yes, papa.

GUSTAV

We speak English from now on. You listen to me now in the language of your future.

And he manages a little laugh. Through tears, Maria laughs too. But then, still speaking English, his tone changes.

GUSTAV (CONT'D)

When our family moved to Vienna, Maria, they were not rich people. We worked hard, we did everything we could to contribute, and to belong. We are proud of what we have done and we are proud of our children. Nobody can take that away from us. And now, as you go, I ask you only one thing, mein lieblich.

YOUNG MARIA

What is it Papa?

GUSTAV

Remember us.

And father, mother and daughter fall into each others' arms and embrace for the very last time.

Maria stands and walks to the door. When she reaches it, she turns back one last time and looks at her mother and father.

THERESE

Take us with you, in your heart, and learn to be happy again.

THERESE (CONT'D)

Behalte uns in deinem Herzen, und lerne, wieder glücklich zu werden.

And Maria goes.

INT. ROOM OFF THE ARBITRATION ROOM. DAY.

Randy knocks on the door and tentatively pushes it open. Maria is still standing by the window.

RANDY

Maria?

MARIA

In a moment Randy.

RANDY

Are you alright?

He approaches her. Fighting a huge surge of emotion, she tries to express herself.

MARIA

Thank you my darling, thank you with all my heart for what you've done. But foolishly I thought that it would make everything alright, make it better.

He looks inquiringly at her, trying to understand. And she breaks.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Nothing can ever do that Randy. I left them here, I left them here, my love.

And he opens his arms to embrace her. She falls into them, and she weeps.

EXT. ELIZABETHSTRASSE. DAY.

Later, after all the madness, Randy and Maria walk in the late afternoon sun.

RANDY

So now..

MARIA

I've been thinking of that smart Mr. Lauder. I think I want Aunt Adele to go and live in his little gallery. My only condition is that she will always be on public display, for everyone to marvel at. After all, I think she's a little too big for my bungalow.

RANDY

You can move house, Maria, buy anything you want.

MARIA

I'm quite happy where I am, thank you. And the money can go to relatives and good causes. I think it's what she would have wanted.

RANDY

What about you?

MARIA

Well, I do need a new dish-washer.

She winks at him jokingly, but there is a sadness in her voice. Suddenly, they are approached by a young Austrian woman, Susi.

SUSI

Mrs. Altmann? I just wanted to say how happy I am that you have got back the paintings. I will miss seeing them in the Belvedere, but it is the right thing. For you, and for Austria.

MARIA

Thank you, my dear.

The young woman smiles and runs off. Maria and Randy walk in silence for a couple of seconds. And then, quietly, Maria speaks.

MARIA (CONT'D)
Your grandfather would be proud of
you. Without even knowing it, you
have become a torchbearer.

He looks at her, not understanding.

MARIA (CONT'D)
The one who keeps the memory alive,
Randy.

RANDY
I didn't do it on my own.

And then, a few seconds later, Randy looks up. They are
outside the Elizabethstrasse house. Maria is visibly moved.

And on the spur of the moment, she makes a decision.

MARIA
Give me a moment.

She walks up to the entrance of the building and through the
gate.

INT. ELIZABETHSTRASSE, STAIRWELL. DAY.

Maria walks up the stairs to her former home. She pushes it
open.

INT. THE ENTRANCE HALLWAY. ELIZABETHSTRASSE. DAY.

Inside, the offices of the Rail Company look like any other
offices - a little bland. A young man who is a RAIL COMPANY
EMPLOYEE walks up to her, smiling.

RAIL COMPANY EMPLOYEE
Can I help you?

RAIL COMPANY EMPLOYEE
(CONT'D)
Kann Ich Ihnen helfen?

MARIA
*I know this house. I want to
look around. Just a few
moments.*

MARIA (CONT'D)
Ich kenne dieses Haus. Ich
würde mich gern ein wenig
umsehen. Nur einen
Augenblick.

A little baffled, he smiles.

RAIL COMPANY EMPLOYEE
Of course.

RAIL COMPANY EMPLOYEE
(CONT'D)
Natürlich.

And he goes back to work. Maria edges her way forward into
the house. *And suddenly, it starts to change.*

INT. ELIZABETHSTRASSE. NIGHT. 2002 / 1930S

Through Maria's eyes, the house magically transforms into what it used to be: a warm family home. Music fills the rooms, something rich, evocative and moving.

As she moves around the house Maria is bedazzled by what she sees. She wanders from room to room and comes across scenes from a beautiful childhood and a resplendent Austrian past:

First, in the dining room, she sees her mother Therese arranging flowers in a vase and being helped by Maria and Luise, as children.

Then she walks across the hallway, to the living room, where Gustav is playing the cello for his family: Maria and Luise, now young women, and Therese. Enraptured, they cluster around him, enjoying the music.

And then she turns and in another part of the room, she sees herself and Fritz dancing on their wedding night, twirling through the admiring guests. She walks through the crowds to the Adele room and pushes open the door.

She enters and is amazed at what she sees. The room is buzzing with people - artists, writers, Vienna at its best. There is art on the wall, and books, and clusters of people in animated discussion. She makes her way through the crowd towards the end of the room : Adele sits directly beneath the Klimt portrait, surrounded by Ferdinand and a group of friends as they argue passionately about politics, and art, and life. And next to her is the painter himself, Gustav Klimt.

Maria approaches them. Ferdinand smiles at her lovingly. And finally, Adele looks up at her and reaches out for her hand, and takes it in hers. And when she speaks, it is in German.

ADELE
Thank you.

ADELE (CONT'D)
Dankeschön.

MARIA
I did it for all of us.

MARIA (CONT'D)
Ich habe es für uns alle
getan.

EXT. ELIZABETHSTRASSE. DAY.

Randy is waiting for Maria outside the house. He hears something, and turns. And there she is, standing on the threshold of the house. She walks towards him and when she reaches him she looks slightly different - in her eyes, the knowledge that even though the past can never be put right, she has fulfilled her purpose by restoring justice. With that, comes a relief. And she wouldn't have been able to do it without him. Job done.

MARIA
Let's go home, Randy. Your family
is waiting.

INT. BELVEDERE GALLERY. DAY.

We watch a montage of the paintings' long journey from Vienna to America: being taken off the wall at the Belvedere.

Superimposed caption: *SIXTY EIGHT YEARS AFTER THE KLIMT PAINTINGS WERE LOOTED BY THE NAZIS FROM HER FAMILY, THEY WERE RETURNED TO MARIA ALTMANN.*

INT. THE BELVEDERE LOBBY. DAY.

And now the paintings are being carried out by staff.

EXT. A VIENNA STREET. DAY.

And as the truck traverses Vienna on its way to the airport, it drives by a large bill-board advertising a local magazine and the words CIAO ADELE plastered across it.

EXT. NEW YORK BRIDGE. DAY.

And on another side of the Atlantic, another truck crosses one of the bridges that lead from Queens into Manhattan.

INT. CHRISTIES AUCTION HOUSE. DAY.

And now, the paintings are carried off this other truck outside the famous auction house. Some of the staff have gathered around.

Superimposed caption: *FOUR OF THE PAINTINGS WENT TO AUCTION AT CHRISTIES IN NEW YORK AND FETCHED A TOTAL OF \$192 MILLION DOLLARS.*

INT. NEUE GALLERIE. DAY.

The portrait of Adele hangs in the Neue Gallery in New York and the queues snake out of the Gallery doors and round the block.

Superimposed Caption: *THE PORTRAIT OF ADELE BLOCH-BAUER WAS PURCHASED BY RONALD LAUDER FOR \$135 MILLION, THE HIGHEST PRICE EVER PAID FOR A PAINTING. IT IS NOW ON PERMANENT DISPLAY AT THE NEUE GALLERIE IN NEW YORK.*

EXT. LOS ANGELES PARK. DAY.

Randy, Pam and their three children are walking in the park - one of them, JOEY, is a baby that Pam is holding. And Maria is there too. Pam is taking a photograph of them all.

Superimposed caption: *RANDY AND PAM HAD A THIRD CHILD, JOEY.*

WITH THE MONEY EARNED FROM MARIA'S CASE RANDY SET UP HIS OWN LAW FIRM IN LOS ANGELES WHICH SPECIALISES IN ART RESTITUTION AND PAID FOR A NEW BUILDING FOR THE LOS ANGELES MUSEUM OF THE HOLOCAUST.

INT. HUBERTUS' HOUSE. DAY.

We see Hubertus at his desk, surrounded by papers and working tirelessly for justice. He takes his glasses off, rubs his eyes, looking tired by his endless work.

Superimposed caption: *HUBERTUS CZERNIN DIED IN JUNE 2006 OF A RARE ILLNESS. HE WAS FIFTY YEARS OLD.*

INT. MARIA'S BOUTIQUE. DAY

Maria is in her shop, folding sweaters. She is older, frailer, but there is a quiet contentment to the way she works. A woman who has fulfilled her purpose in life.

Superimposed caption: *IN HER WILL, MARIA ALTMANN LEFT HER LARGE FORTUNE TO HER MANY RELATIVES AND TO VARIOUS CHARITIES, INCLUDING THE LOS ANGELES OPERA.*

INT. MARIA'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

And finally, we see Maria back at home, in her bed. She is about to go to sleep and as she leans over to switch off her bed-side lamp we see two things on the table beside her bed: a photograph of her family taken on her wedding day and the postcard of the portrait of her aunt Adele.

Superimposed caption: *SHE DIED AT HER HOME IN LOS ANGELES IN FEBRUARY 2011.*

She leans over and switches off the light.

THE END.

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