

SMALL THINGS LIKE THESE

December 1984 - dawn and still dark.

We're looking down on the grey/brown rooftops of terraced houses in New Ross, County Wexford, Ireland.

Various shots of narrow residential streets - two-storey houses packed beside one another - orange street light lighting them.

Steep black tarmacked streets are wet from last night's rain - they lead up from the town centre.

Under street light - the small town centre with its shops and pubs - waits silently for people to arrive.

Some properties are boarded up - the exteriors mostly tired and worn by the Irish weather and hard economic times.

And yet some colourful shop signs ping out from the grey on Quay Street. \*

The blue exterior of Hanrahan's Shoes.

The copper monument to a 1798 martyr.

The exterior of 'Keogh's Pub' off Quay Street on Conduit Lane. \*

The town is empty - not yet woken.

Everything is fused in damp-coldness - poverty already palpable.

The exterior of the Coal Yard. A large metal fence (15ft high) dominating and over this fence

- an ordered yard with bags of coal and cylinders of gas and stacks of chopped firewood covered in tarpaulin.

At the rear of the yard - a prefab, its door open. The faint glow of light from inside as some person (FURLONG) - works.

The deep, full sound of the river is heard.

A view of a dark narrow laneway towards the quay. \*

We move slowly down this laneway - the noise of the river constant.

SEAGULLS hang over the River Barrow - catching the wind - looking down on the black perilous river beneath them.

From the wide bridge - the surrounding countryside is shown - a black/dark presence that encircles the town.

The position and shape of the town is clearer to us now. It's built on a steep hill around this large river - the spires of the two churches dominating these small houses.

In those houses - a number of the chimneys are already burning fuel - plumes of acrid smoke spiral upwards.

2	OMITTED	2	*
3	OMITTED	3	*
4	OMITTED	4	*
5	EXT. QUAY STREET. MORNING	5	*

A little later - morning light is appearing in the sky as street lights switch off. \*

Quay street is blocked with cars and vans making deliveries into the various shops and pubs. \*

Peoples' days have begun - their pattern restarting.

6	EXT. BILL FURLONG'S COAL YARD. MORNING	6	
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The large fence is open and the yard is dominated by an open-backed Leyland truck piled with loose coal (the truck we saw earlier by the quay).

Two of the MEN (part-timers, PJ and BARRY (late teens) are busy shoveling the coal from the truck.

The coal is packed into sacks and weighed and then piled by the wall next to turf briquettes and gas canisters and chopped wood.

BILL FURLONG (40s) - quiet and contained - stands by the truck's cab.

Another man, PAT (50s) (Furlong's regular work mate) is crouched down replacing the flat front tyre with the spare tyre.

7	INT. BILL FURLONG'S COAL YARD. PREFAB. MORNING	7	
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A radio somewhere and dialed into RTE RADIO 1 - Gay Byrne barely audible.

The prefab is packed with old files and papers - a small tea area with cups in a basin - the desk piled with loose invoices (some order to it), the thick delivery book, the telephone.

Furlong stands by the desk opening the petty cash box - Pat stands at the door waiting for him.

There's only a fiver and loose change in the box.

Furlong reaches into his trouser pocket and pulls out a few tenners.

PAT  
That'll do it.

Furlong hands the notes to Pat - who turns away.

He's gone.

Furlong places the cash box down on the desk - and leaves, back into the yard. Farmer's truck pulls in. \*

8 EXT. BILL FURLONG'S COAL YARD. MORNING/LATER 8

The coal is off the back - and Pat and Barry are at the front - placing the newly bought tyre under the truck.

Distant music from the radio in the prefab is barely audible - Alison Moyet's 'Invisible'.

A FARMER (50s) has arrived with a truckload of timber. This is being unloaded and chopped by PJ and piled against the wall.

Furlong works filling and weighing sacks of coal - lugging them into piles.

9 EXT. BILL FURLONG'S COAL YARD. DAY 9

The sound of both church bells calling out at midday.

The men have paused their work in the yard. They wait their turn to wash their blackened hands under the outdoor tap.

Furlong looks over the yard - tired and satisfied. Everything is in its place.

10 INT. KEHOE'S PUB. DAY 10

A neat and well-upholstered pub interior - though bland, despite a smattering of Christmas decoration - being put up by a YOUNG BARMAID.

Some of the tables have working locals eating their lunches.

Pat is walking to an empty table with his plate of food.

PJ, Furlong and Barry are at the buffet counter with its meats and vegetables.

Barry's already holding his plate of food and hovers/waiting.

MRS. KEHOE (40's) stands behind her counter.

PJ

I'll take the soup, Mrs. Keogh.

MRS. KEHOE

You'll need more than soup - aren't ya hungry?

PJ

-

MRS. KEHOE

Isn't Bill payin' ya enough?

She glances at Furlong - and continues to grill PJ -

MRS. KEHOE (CONT'D)

Don't be shy come on!

BARRY

He's savin' for Christmas - a present for some young one.

MRS. KEHOE

If there's a girl involved ya'll be needin' the energy, PJ.

Furlong smiles a little.

MRS. KEHOE (CONT'D)

I'll give you the beef and mash.

She's already filling the plate with food.

PJ

(beaten)

Right grand.

Barry wanders away with his plate.

PJ takes his lunch - and wanders off towards the others.

MRS. KEHOE

Enjoy that now!

Mrs. Keogh looks at Furlong -

MRS. KEHOE (CONT'D)  
Ya have to break the boy to make  
the man.

FURLONG

-

There's someone at the bar that needs serving.

MRS. KEHOE  
Sit down there, I'll take your  
chicken over ta ya.

Furlong turns away and walks towards the others.

Heads down and they're already at their food.

Furlong sits down at the table. He takes off his coat -  
placing it on the back of his chair.

He looks out the window.

Outside the street's Christmas lights are switched on.

11 EXT. KEHOE'S PUB/CONDUIT LANE/QUAY STREET. DAY 11 \*

From out of the pub - the other men and Furlong walk onto  
Conduit Lane - pulling their coats in around them against the \*

Furlong glances up at 2 MEN on a tractor with a loader -  
about to hang more Christmas lights overhead.

They turn onto Quay Street (a large crib is being put up) and \*

passing shops then.  
Furlong's head already in his afternoon's work.

12 EXT. BILL FURLONG'S COAL YARD. AFTERNOON 12

The truck having been loaded with fuel and PJ jumps down from  
the back.

Furlong stands reading the delivery book - rechecking the  
orders, the various amounts and times of delivery etc.

His handwriting neat.

He brings the book into the truck's cab with him - and closes  
the door shut.

13 INT. FURLONG'S TRUCK. DAY 13

Nik Kershaw's 'The Riddle' faint and badly tuned into the truck's radio.

Furlong drives the truck down a narrow country road - the hedgerows stripped of any green, reach high on either side.

We travel with him.

The hedgerows thinning out - a larger countryside visible now - the winter sun on his face.

14 INT. OLD FARM - THE BIG HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 14

A farmhouse kitchen - a YOUNG WOMAN (24) is standing by the sink filling it with water.

On the draining board beside her is a small navy duffle coat - the back of it visible and covered in what looks like spit.

She mixes washing-up liquid into the water - gets a sponge into it - and wipes the spit off the coat.

She's been crying and is upset still.

The coat's owner - a small BOY (8)- is behind her standing at the kitchen table looking for something in his school bag.

He takes out a book (A Christmas Carol) and sits down to read it.

15 INT. OLD FARM. THE BIG HOUSE. DRAWING ROOM. DAY 15

A fine old room - full of nice antique things.

A WOMAN (60) is sitting in an armchair by a marble fireplace - the fire lit.

She sips a sherry out of a glass.

The boy is standing beside the large tastefully decorated Christmas tree.

He's reading his book to her out loud - being careful not to make a mistake.

BOY

(reading)

"I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future.

(MORE)

BOY (CONT'D)

The Spirits of all three shall  
strive within me. I will not shut  
out the lessons that they teach..."

WOMAN

What happened your coat?

The boy looks up at her.

BOY

-

WOMAN

Sarah said there was spit on it.

A pause.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

What is it they said to you?

A slight pause.

BOY

(quiet)

Nothin.

A pause.

WOMAN

Don't be listening to them -  
they're only brats.

The boy closes his book - his reading must be over.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

What is it you wrote to Santa for?

BOY

A jigsaw.

WOMAN

A jigsaw!

BOY

A difficult one, I hope.

WOMAN

And what would the picture be of?

BOY

Anything at all. A farm with  
animals, maybe.



WOMAN

Sure I can help you if you get stuck on it.

BOY

-

WOMAN

Are you ready for another Dickens in the New Year, do you think?

BOY

Yes, Mrs. Wilson.

MRS. WILSON

Good boy. Put the record on for me.

The boy walks towards a fine cabinet with a record player on top of it.

He lifts up the arm - the record spins - he gently places the needle down on it.

Maurice Ravel's 'Pavane pour une infante défunte' plays.

16 INT. OLD FARM. THE BIG HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY - CONTINUOUS 16

The boy's coat has been washed and is drying on the back of a chair in front of the Aga stove.

Ravel is heard continuing in the other room.

17 INT. OLD FARM. THE BIG HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. DAY - CONTINUOUS 17

Ravel continues.

Mrs. Wilson - eyes closing - loses herself in the orchestration.

The boy stands beside the record player holding his copy of 'A Christmas Carol'.

He turns and looks out the window.

Outside he can see the young woman (SARAH) in the farmyard talking to a man. This is NED (mid-30s) - the man who works the farm.

She's still upset about what happened the boy at school.

Ned seems awkward - not knowing how to bring the comfort that she needs.

The boy continues to look at them.

Small Things Like These	White Shooting Script (01.03.23)	9.	
18	EXT. COUNTRY ROAD. DAY	18	
	Furlong's truck travels along a narrow country road.		
19	EXT. BUNGALOW HOUSE. DRIVEWAY. DAY.	19	
	The truck is parked outside a modern bungalow.		
20	EXT. BUNGALOW HOUSE. BACK GARDEN. DAY	20	
	Furlong empties a bag of coal into the family's concrete coal bunker at the back of the house.		
A 20	EXT. NEW ROSS. BRIDGE. MORNING	A 20	*
	Furlong's truck passes over the bridge.		*
20A	EXT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. COAL SHED. MORNING	20A	*
	Furlong's truck enters the grounds as SECONDARY SCHOOL GIRLS are seen leaving the school next door.		*
20B	EXT. STREET/THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. MORNING - CONTINUOUS	20B	*
	Furlong walks towards his truck.		*
	At the front of the imposing convent building is a courtyard and in it a square coal shed.		*
	Visible inside - Furlong is seen emptying a bag of coal.		*
	He walks out holding other emptied bags and walks back towards a gate.		*
21	EXT. OLD FARMHOUSE. YARD. DAY	21	
	The truck parked in a farm yard - and Furlong lifts a bag of coal off the back of it and onto his shoulder.		
	A FARMER pauses his work and chats to Furlong.		*
	Furlong walks across the yard - towards a small outdoor building.		
22	EXT. VILLAGE. JIM BYRNE'S PUB. DAY	22	
	In a village in County Wexford - half of his deliveries have been made - and Furlong stands by the back of the truck making sure everything's in order.		
	The BARMAN walks out of 'Jim Byrne's' and hands Furlong what's owed.		

Words are passed - the barman goes back inside - and Furlong walks to the truck's cab.

23 INT. FURLONG'S TRUCK. DAY 23

The radio playing a news item - the news reporter faint.

Furlong drives along a narrow country road - and in the distance he can see a small figure stepping off into the side of the road.

As he nears the walker - he sees that it's a YOUNG BOY of about 10 - a scrap of a thing without a coat - and holding an old sack full of something.

Furlong recognises the boy.

The boy holds up a hand to acknowledge Furlong.

24 EXT. NARROW COUNTRY ROAD. DAY 24

The young boy steps back onto the road.

He places the sack down - it has a few sticks that he's been gathering.

He watches Furlong's truck pull over and stop ahead of him.

Furlong steps down from the cab and walks back to the boy.

FURLONG

You alright?

YOUNG BOY

Yeah.

FURLONG

You're Mick Sinnott's boy?

YOUNG BOY

Yes, Sir.

Furlong looks at the boy's filthy shoes and jumper - the child's got nothing. He sees he's gathering firewood.

FURLONG

You're a couple miles away from home, aren't ya?

YOUNG BOY

I came out for sticks with the dog and he ran off'a me again.

FURLONG

Won't he come back later on?

YOUNG BOY

Probably yeah. Ya'd never know -  
he's a right dope.

FURLONG

-

YOUNG BOY

3 years old and he still doesn't  
know his name.

Furlong smiles.

FURLONG

I can drop ya home if you want.

YOUNG BOY

Nah I'll be fine, Mr. Furlong.

FURLONG

Ya sure?

YOUNG BOY

Yes, Sir.

Furlong reaches into his pocket and takes out some money.

He gives the boy two 50 pence pieces.

FURLONG

-

The boy takes it - but he doesn't know what to say.

Somehow he seems sad.

Furlong sees that he might have overstepped a mark.

FURLONG (CONT'D)

Say Happy Christmas to your family  
for me.

YOUNG BOY

Yes, Sir, you too.

A little hesitant - the boy picks up his sack of sticks.

He then turns and runs down the road.

Furlong walks back to the truck.

25      INT. FURLONG'S TRUCK. DAY/CONT'D      25

Furlong sits down behind the wheel and closes the door.

He starts up the engine.

He can see the boy in his rear view mirror - now far in the distance and still running.

Furlong drives off.

26      OMITTED      26

27      OMITTED      27

28      EXT. BILL FURLONG'S COAL YARD. EVENING      28      \*

His deliveries over - the truck is parked in the yard and Furlong closes the gate over and padlocks it shut.

29      EXT. QUAY STREET. NIGHT      29      \*

Furlong walks.

Ahead of him some of the lights are on in the shops - the shoppers gone home.

He can see a couple of familiar faces outside a pub.

PJ and Barry are hanging drunk - in need of chips.

Furlong slows his pace.

The two young men wander down quay Street - and unseen by them - Furlong takes the hill up Chapel Lane.      \*  
\*      \*

30      EXT. CHAPEL LANE. NIGHT      30      \*

The steepness of the hill and Furlong feels the effects of the day's work.

31      EXT. MICHAEL STREET. FURLONG'S HOUSE. NIGHT      31      \*

Beneath orange street light - Furlong walks on a street of small two-storey terraced houses.      \*  
\*      \*

He arrives at his plain fronted house - the curtains and blinds are closed with light behind them.      \*

He turns the lock and opens the door.      \*

31 A      INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. HALLWAY. NIGHT - CONTINUOUS      31 A      \*

Furlong enters and closes the door behind him.      \*

He takes off his coat and hangs it next to the other coats in the hallway. \*

He walks past the kitchen, its door a little open - the sound of the family heard - but barely. \*

He walks towards and enters the bathroom at the end of the hallway. \*

32 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. BATHROOM. NIGHT - CONTINUOUS 32 \*

An ordered, simple bathroom - a small square window of mottled glass - the moonlight outside. \*

Furlong is by the sink - and from beneath it he takes up a Tupperware container - some red carboric soap and an old worn nail brush inside it.

He fills the sink with hot water - and begins to clean his hands and nails still stained in the coal dust he couldn't get off in the yard.

He soaks his hands in the cloudy/dirty water.

32A INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. HALLWAY. NIGHT 32A \*

His hands washed and dried and Furlong walks out of the bathroom down the hallway - voices from the kitchen a little louder now -

PRE-LAP O/S -

SHEILA (O.S.)  
Let me hold it then...

GRACE (O.S.)  
Don't crease it - took me ages!

EILEEN (O.S.)  
When is the test?

The door into the kitchen still partly open and Furlong hesitates outside before he enters.

GRACE (O.S.)  
Monday.

JOAN (O.S.)  
Sheila don't grab! Let Kathleen hold it.

Furlong enters -

33 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 33

Even without the family in it - the kitchen would feel small. It's homely, nonetheless, and right now it's lively.

Furlong gets his dinner (it's covered and left on a plate on the side counter). He finds a space at the table.

Dinner for the others is over and Furlong sits with his 5 daughters, KATHLEEN (17) and JOAN (15) in grey school uniform - SHEILA (12), GRACE (11) and LORETTA (7) - all black-haired girls with fair complexions.

Their mother - EILEEN (early 40's) - as striking as they are - has cleared the dirty plates to the sink.

Grace hands Kathleen the map of Ireland she's working on.

EILEEN

Kathleen you be the teacher.

KATHLEEN

(to Grace. As a teacher)

Suigh síos - not a word!

Grace sits quickly and puts a finger over her mouth like an obedient child.

Kathleen's staring at the traced map -

KATHLEEN (CONT'D)

What do you want me to do exactly?

EILEEN

Kathleen!

KATHLEEN

But there's nothing on it!

JOAN

There's the rivers look!

SHEILA

Just point and ask her!

KATHLEEN

But where are the answers?

EILEEN

Have you forgotten the names of the rivers?

KATHLEEN

No!

EILEEN

Dirty liar.

KATHLEEN

Right I have it, hang on.

Eileen gently places her hands on Furlong's shoulders as he eats. He looks back to her. Sweet affection between the two.

KATHLEEN (CONT'D)

(pointing to one of the  
rivers)

What's that wiggly one there?

GRACE

The River Shannon.

SHEILA

That's easy!

FURLONG

(quietly)  
Sheila.

Sheila looks at Furlong - backs down.

KATHLEEN

River Shannon - correct.  
(pointing to another)  
This fella here?

GRACE

The Boyne - the River Boyne.

KATHLEEN

Correct again!  
(pointing to another)  
This fella?

GRACE

The River Lee.

KATHLEEN

(pointing to another)  
This?

GRACE

River Liffey.

KATHLEEN

(pointing to another)  
This?



GRACE

Corrib.

KATHLEEN

Name me them three here.

GRACE

Suir, Nore and Barrow.

KATHLEEN

(handing Grace back her  
map)

You're a genius! Top 'a the class!

EILEEN

(to Grace)

Show your Dad how you learnt them.

Grace nudges in beside Furlong - the two pieces of the traced map between them.

GRACE

I got two pieces of tracing paper and traced the outline of Ireland and the rivers on one piece - and then laid another piece of tracing paper on top and wrote the names.

SHEILA

You should do the same for the mountains.

LORETTA

(to her mother)

Can I do some tracing?

EILEEN

You can.

JOAN

(to Grace)

Do you know all your counties yet?

GRACE

Yeah-a-course.

FURLONG

(to Grace)

I saw one of your school friends earlier.

A slight pause.

GRACE

Yeah who?

FURLONG

Mick Sinnott's son.

SHEILA

Diarmuid's his name.

GRACE

Whereabouts?

FURLONG

Out on the road by Tullogher  
gathering firewood.

JOAN

Did you not stop and give him a bag  
of timber off the truck?

EILEEN

Don't be daft.

GRACE

Did ya stop and talk to him, Daddy?

FURLONG

I did-yeah.

GRACE

What d'ya talk about?

Eileen's leaning against the sink looking at him.

FURLONG

I just said hello to him. Happy  
Christmas to his family.

GRACE

That all?

FURLONG

I gave him some loose change.

EILEEN

Why would you do that?

FURLONG

-

EILEEN

Sure his dad will only drink it -  
he's never not drunk that man - he  
needs to pull himself out of it.

FURLONG

He might be trying - we don't know.

EILEEN

Right girls - any homework to finish? -

JOAN/KATHLEEN

Yeah.

EILEEN

- Come on so - chop-chop!

The girls are up.

School bags are taken up from the floor - Loretta disappears out the kitchen door.

Furlong remains where he is - allowing the activity to sort itself out - finishing off his dinner.

34 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 34

Joan and Kathleen are seated at the kitchen table quietly doing their homework.

35 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 35

The small front living room - and the fire is lit.

The Christmas tree is in one corner - it's colourful lights switching on and off.

A couch and an armchair face the glow of the television.

Eileen is sitting on the couch - half looking at 'Dempsey and Makepeace'.

36 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. FURLONG AND EILEEN'S BEDROOM. NIGHT 36

Furlong sits on the bed taking off his shirt. He's so tired - he moves slowly.

The bedroom - a small double bed and teak wardrobe.

The heavier curtains are open still - and the glow of the orange/yellow street light is coming through the net-curtains.

37 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. FURLONG AND EILEEN'S BEDROOM. NIGHT 37

It's in the middle of the night and Furlong's awake in bed - Eileen asleep beside him.

Not able to get back to sleep - he sits up.

He looks back at Eileen - her moving, slightly - almost awake.

Dressed in pyjamas - Furlong leaves the room.

38 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 38

It's quiet in the house/in the world.

The blue moonlight coming through the window of the kitchen.

The kettle is just off and steam is coming from it - it curls in the light.

39 INT/EXT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. MICHAEL STREET. 39 \*  
VARIOUS IMAGES. NIGHT

The clock ticks clearly on the mantelpiece.

Sitting in the near darkness and Furlong has turned and moved the armchair to face the window - a nightly routine.

He's sitting there - a cup of tea on the arm of the chair.

He's staring through the netted curtains - to the lit road outside his house - the flat concrete wall opposite.

Through the curtains - he sees various people walking home from their work or the pub - their shadows cast behind them on the wall.

Everything in the orange glow of the street light.

Later - a DRUNK couple stop and kiss against the wall - the woman trying to push the man away - him holding her tighter.

Later - a poor DOG wanders around on the street outside. He stops by the wall and sits down. He curls himself tighter against the cold.

40 INT. OLD FARM. LIVING QUARTERS. DAWN 40

Sarah's single bed is next to the boy's bed who sleeps.

We realise here that he must be her son.

A dawn/white light is visible through the break of the curtain.

Beneath his blanket he secretly looks at her.

She's dressed in her nightdress - and sitting on the edge of the bed - she's tying a ribbon around a wrapped Christmas present.

She's already wrapped another small gift in the same green wrapping paper.

The room spartan but comfortable.

The boy smiling to himself.

41 EXT. QUAY STREET. TOWN HALL. NIGHT 41 \*

On a small stage built outside the Town Hall - the girls choir from St Margaret's School are singing the final verse of 'Silent Night' in the Irish language (Oíche Chiúin) - conducted by SR. CARMEL (late 30s) - tall and imposing.

A crisp cold night and the PEOPLE of New Ross are gathered around - soaking in the Christmas spirit - an unlit large Christmas tree is next to the monument to the 1798 martyr. \*

Amongst the crowd Furlong stands with Eileen - their second eldest daughter Joan is front row in the choir.

42 EXT. QUAY STREET. NIGHT/LATER 42 \*

A LOCAL COUNCILLOR (70s) (in civic regalia), the PARISH PRIEST (60s) of St. Mary and Michael's Church and the Mother Superior of The Good Shepherd, SR. MARY (60) - are on the stage.

The councillor flicks a switch of some sort - and the town's Christmas coloured lights are switched on overhead and on the tree and on the Town Hall itself - and how pretty everything looks. \*

The crowd cheer and applaud.

43 EXT. QUAY STREET. NIGHT 43 \*

Colourful lights overhead are hung right down Quay Street. \*

People look in on the crib - the Nativity figures newly painted from last year.

Baby Jesus is laid down in his manger by the parish priest.

A MAN (30) and his 6 YEAR OLD SON (we will see them again in Sc. 157) are the first to kneel down by the crib. The boy blesses himself.

Those shops that are open have their interior windows decorated with tinsel and fairy-lights.

People chat to each other on the street - or wander in and out of shops.

Other people steal themselves away and enter pubs to get out of the cold.

The girls from St. Margaret's are still glowing from their performance - they walk up and down the street pulling looks from TEENAGE BOYS.

The cheekier boys hanging off the girls and teasing them - looking for some action, maybe.

Mothers and their SMALLER CHILDREN are lining up to see Santa Claus in his grotto - an empty shop that's been reupholstered into a "Winter Wonderland".

Amongst all this - Furlong and Eileen are seen walking up the street with their daughters. \*

Furlong and Eileen stop outside 'Hanrahan's Shoes'... the girls walk on and join the line for the "Winter Wonderland". \*

44 EXT. QUAY STREET. HANRAHAN'S SHOES. NIGHT/A LITTLE LATER 44 \*

Away from the bustle - and outside Hanrahan's Shoes - Furlong and Eileen are looking in the window. \*

A shoe's a shoe to Furlong - but Eileen is staring at a navy patent pair.

EILEEN

Don't I have a handbag the same colour as those fellas?

FURLONG

Them navy shoes?

EILEEN

Yeah.

FURLONG

God I don't know.

She smiles and playfully digs him in the ribs - but she's made her point/chosen her gift.

She instinctively kisses his cheek. They seem younger when around one another.

Eileen recognises a WOMAN (NORMA) walking towards them with her HUSBAND in tow.

EILEEN  
There-ya-are-now.

NORMA  
Are yas buyin'?

EILEEN  
Nah-only-lookin'.

NORMA  
Aren't the lights lovely?

EILEEN  
They are - sure it's a proper  
Christmas now.

The husband looks at Furlong but chooses not to say hello.  
Furlong sees this.

NORMA  
And we saw Joan there in the choir,  
(to her husband) didn't we Mick?

EILEEN  
Front and centre - she's not shy  
that one.

MICK  
They sounded great though, didn't  
they?

NORMA  
Sr. Carmel has them well drilled.

EILEEN  
Oh she does yeah.

Ahead and Furlong can see Grace, Sheila and Loretta queuing  
up to get to see Santa.

NORMA (O.S.)  
So are ya all set, Eileen? Cake  
made and everything?

Loretta is upset - Kathleen is trying to console and reason  
with her.

EILEEN (O.S.)  
I am not - God no! Cake will be  
made tonight - that's the plan.

\*

NORMA (O.S.)

I made mine back in September. It's  
taken all my energy not to cut inta-  
the-thing...

Furlong walks off quickly towards Loretta.

Eileen watches him go.

Kathleen looks up at Furlong as he approaches - Loretta's now  
crying harder.

GRACE

(about Loretta)

She's afraid of Santa.

Furlong crouches down to talk to Loretta -

FURLONG

What's the matter?

LORETTA

I don't want to go in there.

FURLONG

Sure he's not the real Santa at all  
- it's just a man in a costume.

LORETTA

Please, Daddy, I don't want to see  
him!

Seeing her this upset, shakes Furlong.

Eileen is there -

EILEEN

(to Loretta)

What is it?

KATHLEEN

She's scared...

Lifting Loretta in her arms -

EILEEN

Come-on-now-stop-that-don't-be-  
silly...

GRACE

Da can we still go in - we're just  
there?



FURLONG

-

Some of the mothers in the queue are looking at Loretta crying - Furlong can feel their judgement.

GRACE

Da?!

Furlong looks at Grace.

GRACE (CONT'D)

Can we still go in?

He turns and sees that Eileen is already carrying Loretta away.

Furlong follows them.

45 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT

45

Loretta is sitting at the kitchen table - her crayons taken out of a shoebox - she settles down to do some drawing.

In front of her there's regimental activity as three of the girls are helping their mother make the Christmas cake.

In a large mixing bowl, Eileen is whisking up the butter and eggs with a hand mixer. Sheila is measuring out all the ingredients (the dried fruit and nuts and sugar) - and placing them into a bowl. Grace is sifting through the sultanas and raisins and removing any unwanted stalks they might have. Joan is lining the cake tin with grease proof paper.

Furlong is shoveling in small amounts of coal into the Rayburn oven - and regulating the draught to keep the heat low and steady for the night.

He stands and turns and looks at the bakers.

Kathleen (her coat on) comes into the kitchen carrying a plastic carrier bag - an orange and two lemons she just got from the shop. Eileen directs her to get the grater from the drawer.

All the ingredients in the large bowl - and Eileen mixes it with a wooden spoon.

46 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT

46

Later and the cake mixture is in the cake tin - Eileen is wrapping the outside of it with brown paper - fastening the tin tight with twine.

At the sink - Sheila and Grace are washing and drying the used bowls and spoons.

Kathleen is wiping down the kitchen table - putting the unused ingredients away in the press.

From another shoebox - Furlong's unpacking a writing set of paper and envelopes. Loretta's excited.

The cake is placed in the oven.

47 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 47

Eileen is alone in the living room - sitting behind her ironing board - a mound of unironed clothes beside her on a kitchen chair.

The Christmas lights flicking on and off on the tree behind her.

The RTE News has a feature about Christmas shopping in the Recession.

48 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 48

Her letter written and Loretta has gone to bed - but the other girls are seated at the table writing their letters - glasses of Ribena next to them.

Furlong's at the Rayburn toasting soda bread on the top.

GRACE

"Santa Claus, The North Pole." That can't be all.

KATHLEEN

Sure everyone up there knows where Santa lives.

GRACE

Yeah but how will we know if the letters get there on time?

Furlong places some butter and a jar of jam on the table.

KATHLEEN

Daddy will post them first thing tomorrow.

JOAN

Everything for Santa goes by Express.

Their toast ready and Furlong places it on a plate in front of them.

SHEILA

Did Santy ever come to you as a little boy, Da?

FURLONG

He did of course.

GRACE

Awww.

FURLONG

He brought me a jigsaw one year.

GRACE

Did he?

SHEILA

What only a jigsaw!?

FURLONG

I didn't want much.

JOAN

Not like you, Sheila...

SHEILA

I changed what I asked for!

JOAN

Show us what you wrote then!

FURLONG

Butter your toast before it gets cold.

GRACE

How long can we stay up?

FURLONG

A half hour, that's your lot.

Grace and Shiela are delighted - this is a real treat.

Furlong watches as the girls busy themselves with their toast.

49

INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT

49

The kitchen is empty - their daughters in bed - the house quiet - but for the hum of the Rayburn still on.

50

INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT

50

The ironed clothes are folded on top of one another on the ironing board.

Eileen's sitting on the couch - a glass of sherry is on the coffee table in front of her.

Their daughters' letters to Santa Claus are opened from their envelopes and lie beside her on the couch.

EILEEN

Isn't it great to see them not asking for the sun and the stars? We must be doing something right.

FURLONG

It's mostly your doing, Eileen.

EILEEN

Sure we're not a penny owed and that's all down to you.

She takes a sip of her sherry. Smiles to herself - looks to the fire.

A pause.

EILEEN (CONT'D)

Do you think Sheila still believes in Santa?

FURLONG

I think she's still wanting to believe. You wouldn't know with her.

Eileen glances down on Grace's letter -

EILEEN

What about this 'Surprise' Grace wants?

FURLONG

(he has no idea)

EILEEN

Maybe a small globe?

FURLONG

(surprised. Smiles.)

EILEEN

Wouldn't she like that?

FURLONG

She would - it's a good idea.

Eileen gathers up the letters -

EILEEN

I'll head into Waterford on the bus  
in the morning and shop while  
they're at school.

FURLONG

I could drop you in.

EILEEN

You'll have no time, Bill, it's  
grand.

She goes to the fire and throws in the letters.

The television is on and showing 'On Golden Pond' - the  
volume down completely.

EILEEN (CONT'D)

So have you decided what you're  
getting me then?

FURLONG

I took the hint this evening.

EILEEN

God isn't it great that you still  
notice?

He smiles at her dig.

EILEEN (CONT'D)

What is it you want yourself?

FURLONG

There's nothin' I need really.

EILEEN

Would you not like a new shirt or  
something?

FURLONG

Maybe a book.

EILEEN

Yeah?

FURLONG

I might stay in and read over the  
Christmas.

EILEEN

What sort of a book?

FURLONG

I don't know.

(slight pause)

'David Copperfield'. I never got around to reading that.

She smiles.

A long pause.

Some coal quietly collapses in the fire.

EILEEN

D'ya hear that the people out there in Wilson's have sold all the livestock -

FURLONG

-

EILEEN

- that the land and house will be sold in the new year?

FURLONG

I didn't hear no.

EILEEN

Haven't ya spoken with Ned?

FURLONG

Not for a while. I must call out some evening.

EILEEN

Invite him for Christmas Day if he wants.

FURLONG

You wouldn't mind?

EILEEN

Sure the house is full - what's one more?

FURLONG

-

Another long pause.

Eileen looks over at him.

EILEEN

Is everything all right?

FURLONG

-

EILEEN

It's been a while since you've been yourself.

FURLONG

In what way?

EILEEN

You're awful quiet.

Maybe he does have something to explain. Furlong doesn't know what to say.

A long pause.

Then -

FURLONG

Don't you ever get worried?

A slight pause.

EILEEN

Well comin' up to Christmas and the expense of it all - that's a time for worry...

FURLONG

Do you think you're doing alright?

EILEEN

-

A slight pause - she's surprised by the question.

EILEEN (CONT'D)

I'm putting money by in the Credit Union every week. We should have the windows in the front done before this time next year...

FURLONG

I didn't mean that...

EILEEN

I don't think you know what ya mean. Is it that you're just tired?

Whatever conversation he wants to have - he can't find the words.

FURLONG

That must be it.

EILEEN

Ya'd wanta stop sittin' up in the middle of the night - it's not good for ya.

FURLONG

-

A long pause.

She gets up and leaves the living room.

51 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 51

Eileen's taken the Christmas cake out of the oven - it's now on the kitchen table.

She presses a knife into the centre of the cake to make sure that it's cooked through.

Her head returns to Furlong in the living room and their conversation. A sense of unease with her now.

She unscrews the cap off a Baby Power bottle of whiskey and drizzles it into the cake.

52 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 52

The Christmas lights switching on and off.

Furlong is still sitting in the glow of the television.

53 INT. THE BIG HOUSE. KITCHEN. MORNING 53

The kitchen is empty of people but Christmas dinner is being prepared - the turkey on the side ready to go in the oven.

54 INT. THE BIG HOUSE. DRAWING ROOM. MORNING 54

Robert Schumann's Op 9. Eusebius is playing quietly on the record player.

Mrs. Wilson is in her chair by the lit fire. She's unwrapping the present we saw Sarah wrapping.

Opposite her - Sarah is seated - she's excited.



The boy is knelt down on the carpet beside her - a wrapped present in front of him.

A copy of 'David Copperfield' he's just opened from another gift is also seen.

Mrs. Wilson unwraps a small china foal from the paper.

MRS. WILSON

Oh that's gorgeous!

SARAH

I thought he might be a good companion for the other one you have.

MRS. WILSON

And the same colour too.

SARAH

-

MRS. WILSON

Thank you, so much, Sarah.

SARAH

You're welcome, Ma'am.

MRS. WILSON

God he's lovely! What a character.  
His little ears! Oh thank you, pet.

Sarah smiles - she did well.

MRS. WILSON (CONT'D)

Right, William!

(to Sarah)

Is this the present from Santa Claus now?

SARAH

Yes, Ma'am, this is it.

MRS. WILSON

Freshly delivered! God the excitement!

SARAH

(to young Bill)

Go-on-so.

Young Bill Furlong quickly takes up his present.

He carefully unwraps it - Mrs. Wilson watches.

He takes out a small hot water bottle (not the jigsaw he wrote for).

He tries his best to disguise his disappointment but Mrs. Wilson can see it.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Oh isn't Santa so good, Bill?

YOUNG BILL

Yes, Mammy.

SARAH

You'll be nice and cozy with that.

He drops his head so no one can see.

SARAH (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Thank you again for my gloves, Mrs. Wilson.

MRS. WILSON (O.S.)

A pleasure, Sarah - you've been a great help to me.

His eyes fill with tears.

SARAH (O.S.)

Is 2.30 all right to eat, Ma'am?

MRS. WILSON (O.S.)

That's fine.

54A	EXT. THE BIG HOUSE. YARD. MORNING	54A	*
	Young Bill Furlong comes out of the house.		*
	Head down he quickly crosses the yard and walks towards the cow shed.		*
			*
55	INT. STORAGE SHED. MORNING	55	*
	Young Bill is in the near darkness of the storage shed.		*
	His head in his hands - he's crying.		
	He wipes the tears from his eyes.		
	He goes to a large metal container - the water frozen at the top of it.		
	With his fist - he breaks the ice.		

He rolls up the sleeves of his shirt and places his arms in the freezing water.

He stays there as long as he can take it...

NED (O.S.)

There ya are.

Startled and young Bill takes his arms out - and turns and sees Ned standing close by.

YOUNG BILL

-

NED

Your Mam asked me to come get ya in.

Young Bill dries his hands on his trousers.

Ned can see that he's been crying.

NED (CONT'D)

Didn't ya get the jigsaw ya wanted?

YOUNG BILL

(quiet)

No.

A pause.

NED

Next time ya can tell me and I'll let Santa know. We're great friends me and him.

YOUNG BILL

-

NED

Will ya be all right, Bill?

YOUNG BILL

Yes, Ned.

Ned holds out his hand -

NED

Come on then.

The boy takes his hand and they walk out of the shed.

56 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 56

The broadcast finished for the night - but the television is still on and glowing dark - the Christmas lights still flickering.

Furlong remains sitting in his chair - his head in his past.

57 EXT. NEW ROSS. A SERIES OF IMAGES/SHOTS.EARLY MORNING/DARK 57

Dawn and still dark - and looking down on the rooftops of the terraced houses of New Ross -

- and many CROWS are visible by street light - and on roofs and walls and in flight - a number of the chimneys burning fuel.

A tree stripped of its leaves and full of crows roosting on branches - squawking at each other.

A few crows walk down North Street like they own the place - pecking at last night's rubbish - scavenging for anything.

In the car park of St. Mary and Michael's Church - the lit church looming above - more crows fight over bits of food spilling out of black bin bags.

Morning light now - and 2 COUNCIL MEN are on jack hammers - chewing up the tarmac of a road.

The exterior of the Coal Yard - and the truck parked inside the locked fence.

58 EXT. IRISHTOWN. ST. MARGARET'S SECONDARY SCHOOL/THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. MORNING 58

The sky - a huge slate grey above the school and convent - a mob of crows are noisily flying at one another.

From high above we watch a white van pull up outside the convent.

A DELIVERY MAN appears out of the van and opens the back doors.

He takes out a large metal basket on wheels full of hotel laundry that needs cleaning.

CUT TO:

Sr. Carmel opens the black iron gate into the convent grounds to accept the delivery.



Furlong stands looking at Kathleen sitting behind the desk checking her notes -

KATHLEEN

Mrs. O'Shea wants an extra bag with her lot and Doolin's in Clonroche messed up her order.

FURLONG

By how much?

KATHLEEN

20 bales.

FURLONG

Tell them it'll be two days.

Kathleen makes a note of that.

FURLONG (CONT'D)

You're okay?

KATHLEEN

Yeah.

FURLONG

Any of these men giving you guff?

KATHLEEN

No.

FURLONG

If they did you'd tell me.

KATHLEEN

There's been nothin' - honest.

FURLONG

Swear to God?

KATHLEEN

I swear to God.

FURLONG

(he knows something's  
up)  
Anythin' else?

KATHLEEN

I was going to go out later to Waterford to buy some presents - but the bus is at 4. I'll ask one of the lads to look after the phone.

FURLONG

I'll say it to Pat.

KATHLEEN

You sure?

FURLONG

I'll see ya later.

He turns and leaves.

KATHLEEN

Thanks, Daddy.

He gets into his truck. \*

63 OMITTED 63 \*

63A EXT. NEW ROSS. BRIDGE. MORNING 63A \*

Furlong's truck passes over the bridge away from the centre of town. \*

63B EXT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. COAL SHED. MORNING 63B \*

Furlong's truck enters the grounds. \*

64 EXT. STREET/THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. MORNING 64

Furlong's truck is parked outside the convent - the black iron gate open into the convent grounds.

65 EXT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. COAL SHED. MORNING 65

Inside the coal shed - Furlong is seen placing a bag of coal inside beside five other bags he's delivered.

He walks out and back towards the gate.

66 EXT. STREET/THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. MORNING 66

Furlong lifts a bag from the truck onto his shoulder.

A car pulls up beside the curb behind him - he glances back to see a WOMAN (50) getting out of the car.

67 INT/EXT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. COAL SHED. MORNING 67

Furlong places the bag of coal next to the other bags he's delivering.

A movement gets his attention and he looks out the open door into the courtyard leading to the convent.

The woman leads her DAUGHTER (17) towards the convent's door -  
the girl furious/terrified -

DAUGHTER  
(snaps)  
Mammy don't! Stop it!

Her mother has her by the scruff of the neck -

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)  
Fucking bitch!

- the two of them swiping at one another.

Without them ringing the doorbell - the door is opened - 2  
NUNS grabbing the girl - her screaming -

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)  
(screams)  
Get offa me! NO! NO!

She's dragged inside - the door slamming shut.

Her screams from inside the convent are still heard - as  
Furlong walks out of the coal shed.

He glances towards the convent door.

68 EXT. STREET/THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. MORNING 68

At the back of the truck - Furlong reads the delivery  
docket/invoice - buying himself time before he has to go back  
there.

He looks up at the parked car behind him.

The WOMAN'S HUSBAND (50s) sits impassively in the driver's  
seat - waiting.

Invoice in hand and Furlong goes back into the convent  
grounds -

69 EXT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. COAL SHED. MORNING/ - 69  
CONTINUOUS

- and walks towards the door.

He stops.

He sees that the door is already open a little.

He hesitates - but then gently pushes the door fully open -  
stepping into the convent -



70 INT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. CORRIDOR/RECEPTION ROOM/HALL.  
MORNING - CONTINUOUS

The corridor floor beautifully tiled, dark wood-panelled walls stretching to a grand Hall - an air of imperialism and wealth.

Furlong gently closes the door behind him - the mortice lock locking.

The distant sound of a baby crying from behind a door somewhere.

He passes doors along the corridor - there's one door open ahead of him.

As he nears it he can see inside.

The newly arrived mother is staring down at her daughter seated - the girl's head in her hands - shaking/traumatised.

SR. ANNE (O.S.)  
(flustered)  
Can I help?

Furlong looks up and SR. ANNE (60s) is walking towards him - shocked to see him there.

FURLONG  
Am looking for Sr. Carmel or Sr.  
Mary...

SR. ANNE  
For what?

The door into the reception room is closed by the mother.

FURLONG  
Some fuel I've delivered needs  
checking...

SR. ANNE  
Sr. Carmel's straight ahead in the  
Hall.

Sr. Anne opens the Reception Room's door.

Furlong sees that she's holding a scissors.

He walks on - hearing the door close behind him.

He nears the Hall - the sound of the baby crying still heard.

He sees at first, one - and then 5 TEENAGE GIRLS on their hands and knees polishing the parquet floor with tins of polish and rags. \*

They're all dressed in their own clothes - though all without shoes and just wearing socks or barefoot. We notice that some of them are far into their pregnancy.

The Hall is adorned with religious paintings and statues. A large window looking out on a stark Winter garden.

The teenage girls are aware of Furlong standing there now.

They stop their work.

As he looks - there's no sign of Sr. Carmel -

- but suddenly one of the girls is off her knees and walking quickly towards him - taking his arm -

TEENAGE GIRL (18)  
Mister won't you help us?

Furlong stepping back from her.

TEENAGE GIRL (CONT'D)  
Will you take me to the river? Or  
get me to the other side of the  
gate...

FURLONG  
It's not up to me...

TEENAGE GIRL  
(crying/and louder)  
Don't leave me here! Take me home  
and I'll work for you, Sir, I swear  
it...!

She suddenly drops to her knees - and starts polishing again (as do the others).

Furlong turns and sees Sr. Carmel approaching -

SR. CARMEL  
What are you doing in here!?

FURLONG  
-

She takes the invoice from his hand -

SR. CARMEL  
Don't you usually ring the bell?

FURLONG

-

She walks away from him down the corridor towards the entrance - Furlong following.

SR. CARMEL

Ridiculous....!

Furlong glances at the closed Reception Room as he passes it.

Sr. Carmel takes the keys out of her pocket.

She unlocks the mortice lock - pulling the door open...

71 INT/EXT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. COAL SHED. MORNING 71

Invoice in hand and Sr. Carmel is looking down on the bags of coal and slack - Furlong standing by, waiting.

SR. CARMEL

(still annoyed)

Ya can take two of the coal away-with-ya and give us 5 bales of the briquettes.

FURLONG

I'll have to come back to ya.

SR. CARMEL

This afternoon so.

FURLONG

I have a delivery of turf in a couple of days - it'll be then...

SR. CARMEL

We can call Ford's in Wexford. They'd come straightaway no bother.

FURLONG

-

SR. CARMEL

Hold two back and empty out the rest of it.

She hands him back the invoice.

SR. CARMEL (CONT'D)

We can't have people walking in and out whenever they want.

FURLONG

-

SR. CARMEL

You understand me, Bill?

FURLONG

Yes, Sister.

SR. CARMEL

Bring me that turf when you get it -  
and we'll pay ya for the lot then.

Sr. Carmel walks through the courtyard to the entrance.

Furlong begins to empty out the coal from their bags.

72 EXT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. COAL SHED. MORNING/LATER 72

A little later and Furlong comes out of the coal shed - the plastic bags wrapped up in his hand.

He slides over the bolt on the door - locking it.

Hearing the door to the convent open - he turns and sees the mother from earlier leaving the building.

She's crying now - she glances at Furlong as she crosses and gets into the car. \*

Her husband yelling at her to stop whinging. \*

The car leaving through the gates. \*

Furlong gets into the truck and looks through the windscreen. \*

Beyond the gates - PEOPLE are going about their day - chatting to each other - normal life continuing. \*

Overhead in the grey sky - the crows continue to fight. \*

73 OMITTED 73 \*

74 OMITTED 74 \*

75 EXT. FIELD. EVENING 75

A Spring evening - and SWALLOWS are seen and heard arriving in the sky. \*

8 year old Bill Furlong is walking with his white plastic football under his arm. \*

He sees Ned going about his work - just ahead him. Ned sees the boy and turns to him. \*

Young Bill drops and taps the football in front of him, soccer style - Ned squaring up and ready to take him on. \*

Bill kicks the ball between Ned's legs and goes to run around the man but Ned grabs him - the boy laughing. \*

75A EXT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. TERRACED STREET. NIGHT 75A

Furlong approaches - and then opens the door to his house.

75B INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 75B

Furlong enters.

We watch him stand by the coats in the hallway and begin to take off his coat.

76 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. BATHROOM. NIGHT 76

Furlong has filled the sink with water - and opens the Tupperware box with its carbolic soap and nailbrush.

77 EXT. FIELD/COW FIELD. EVENING 77

The ball under his arm - and Young Bill walks on through the field. \*

Mrs. Wilson's large country house in the distance - the various sheds and outer buildings around it - the scene, bucolic.

78 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. BATHROOM. NIGHT 78

Furlong washes his hands.

79 EXT. ROAD TOWARDS THE BIG HOUSE. EVENING 79

Through the fields and Young Bill continues to walk back to the house - passing the football between his hands.

In the distance he sees his mother, Sarah, and she too walking to the big house along the driveway.

79A INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. BATHROOM. NIGHT 79A

Furlong cleans his hands with the nailbrush.

80 OMITTED 80

81 EXT. DRIVEWAY. BIG HOUSE. YARD. EVENING 81

Young Bill nears the big house - in the distance he can see his mother walking towards the house.

Suddenly he sees her collapse - her head hitting the cobblestones beneath the central tree in the yard.

The football falls out of his hand - and Bill starts running - we stay on him - on his terror.

He enters the yard - and Mrs. Wilson is already by Sarah's side - trying to wake her.

Bill stops yards from his mother's body.

Her head has split - blood on the cobblestones and on Mrs. Wilson's hands - Ned arriving and he too trying desperately to bring Sarah back - young Bill crying...

82 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. FURLONG AND EILEEN'S BEDROOM. NIGHT 82

The atmosphere and picture - completely still.

The heavy curtain not yet pulled - the orange glow of street light through the net curtains.

Furlong is sitting on the edge of the bed.

FURLONG

She came up to me and asked me get her out. To take her as far as the river.

Eileen standing.

EILEEN

And what did you say?

FURLONG

That it wasn't up to me.

EILEEN

Well it's true - it's none of our business.

FURLONG

She was scared, Eileen.

EILEEN

Aren't they kept warm and fed - and learning a trade? If it wasn't for the nuns they'd have nowhere to go.

FURLONG

I know that.

EILEEN

So what have we got to answer for?

FURLONG

Have you never questioned it?

A pause.

EILEEN

If you want to get on in life - there are things you have to ignore.

FURLONG

-

EILEEN

You've always been soft hearted - giving away the change in your pocket - when you don't really know the lives of people. I mean, be honest - it's far from hardship that you were reared, Bill.

FURLONG

What do you mean by that?

EILEEN

Well there's girls out there who get in trouble - that much you do know.

A slight pause - it was a terrible thing for her to say.

EILEEN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry - I shouldn't have said that.

A slight pause.

EILEEN (CONT'D)

You have to think about what we have and stay on the right side of people. None of ours will have to go through what those girls are going through.

FURLONG

But what if it was one of ours?

EILEEN

This is what I'm saying to ya -  
they are not ours.

FURLONG

Well amn't I lucky that Mrs. Wilson  
didn't share your ideas? Where  
would my mother have gone if it  
wasn't for her help? Where would I  
be without what she did for me?

EILEEN

Sitting up in that big house with  
her pension and land to farm and  
people working under her. She was  
one of the few women who could do  
as she pleased.

The door opens and Grace has just woken -

GRACE

Mammy..?

EILEEN

What is it? - come here pet.

Eileen places her hand on Grace's forehead to read her  
temperature.

EILEEN (CONT'D)

I'll give you some Aspirin - come  
down with me for a minute.

Eileen gets off the bed and brings Grace out of the room and  
downstairs.

Furlong remains standing by the window.

82A INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT

82A

Furlong sits alone and eats his dinner at the kitchen table.

83 INT. THE BIG HOUSE. DRAWING ROOM. MORNING

83

It is post funeral and young Bill (neatly dressed) is seated  
in the drawing room with Mrs. Wilson sitting opposite.

MRS. WILSON

You'll be sleeping in this house  
now William. I've had a room made  
up for you.



He doesn't answer her.

MRS. WILSON (CONT'D)

You can have another week off  
school and then you best get back,  
all right?

She looks at him - his head bowed.

Then -

YOUNG BILL

Do you think my father knows what's  
happened?

A slight pause.

MRS. WILSON

I don't know.

They sit in silence.

84 EXT. BILL FURLONG'S COAL YARD. MORNING 84

The morning's work in the coal yard is underway.

PJ is up on the back of the truck and packing it with what  
needs delivered - Furlong carries the bags of fuel over to  
him.

Pat and Barry are sawing up timber (a recent delivery) and  
piling the wood by the wall.

85 EXT. BILL FURLONG'S COAL YARD. DAY 85

The sound of both church bells calling out at midday.

Furlong washes his hands under the outdoor tap.

86 INT. KEHOE'S PUB. DAY 86

A few hungry people waiting to be served by Mrs. Keogh - the  
lunchtime crowd filling the tables.

Furlong, Kathleen and the men are eating their lunches.

The younger men, PJ and Barry, are having pints with their  
food - and clearly playing out to impress Kathleen.

Though sitting with them - Furlong is miles away -  
disconnected.

Mrs. Keogh is looking down at Furlong - her expression  
serious.

She's heard something about him.

87 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD. DAY

87

The truck travels the narrow road.

The hedgerows are scraping the sides of the truck as it speeds past them.

This goes on for several moments.

The sight and sound of it - disturbing.

88 INT. FURLONG'S TRUCK. DAY/CONT'D

88

Suddenly Furlong hits something on the road - the tyre exploding - he grabs at the steering wheel trying to control the truck...

88A EXT. COUNTRY ROAD. DAY

88A

\*

Furlong has stepped out of the truck holding a torch - he closes the door.

He checks under the truck to see if he's hit anything.

By torchlight - he sees that his tyre has been punctured.

89 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD. EVENING/DARK - LATER

89

\*

Furlong is on his back on the ground. He's under the truck with the torch and getting the new spare tyre out from beneath.

90 INT. ST. MARGARET'S SCHOOL CHAPEL. NIGHT

90

A packed chapel and the CONGREGATION (made up of PARENTS and SCHOOL GIRLS) are standing and singing 'Hark the Herald Angels Sing' with the Girls Choir in front of the altar conducted by Sr. Carmel - for the St. Margaret's Christmas Concert.

Furlong stands at the back of the church - having arrived late.

Looking through the crowd he can see Eileen and his daughters standing half way down by the central aisle.

He walks down to them - a few disapproving looks from other parents. He sees the father and boy (as seen in scene 43)

\*

He stands in beside Sheila.

Eileen turns and briefly looks at him - annoyed that he's late.

Furlong glances down at his hands - still not cleaned from his work.

91 EXT. ST. MARGARET'S SCHOOL CHAPEL/THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT 91  
NIGHT

The parents and students are leaving the church - the temperature has dropped outside and coats and scarves are pulled tighter.

Furlong holds Loretta's hand.

He looks up at the lit windows into the convent - those unseen girls locked inside there. The lights go off.

Furlong sees Eileen is talking to Sr. Mary at the chapel's entrance.

He then sees Sr. Carmel surrounded by some of the members of the choir - Joan in amongst them.

Sr. Carmel looks over to Furlong - her expression cold.

Eileen walks back towards Furlong.

92 EXT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. EARLY MORNING 92

Dawn - and all is still and quiet.

The outside of Furlong's house under street light - the ground heavy with frost.

A simple holly wreath has been pinned to the door.

93 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. FURLONG AND EILEEN'S BEDROOM. EARLY 93  
MORNING

Orange light is coming through the break in the curtains.

Furlong - his head under his blanket - is awake and staring at Eileen's back as she sleeps.

A sense that she too is awake.

Nothing is said between them.

93A INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. HALLWAY. MORNING 93A

Furlong stands by the coats in the hallway.

He takes down his coat and puts it on.

He opens the front door and leaves -

93B                      EXT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. MICHAEL STREET. MORNING/DARK -                      93B  
CONTINUOUS

Furlong appears outside - closes the door and walks down his street - orange street light around him.

94                      EXT. CHAPEL LANE. EARLY MORNING/DARK                      94                      \*

Furlong walks down Chapel Lane.                      \*

The tarmac frosted beneath him - his breath visible in the cold air.

95                      EXT. BILL FURLONG'S COAL YARD. EARLY MORNING/DARK                      95

There's not a soul on Priory Street - and Furlong has his keys out and goes to open the padlock on the gate.

The padlock freezing to touch - the key won't turn in the lock - the mechanism inside must be frozen.

He looks down the street and 100 yards away he can see a light on in the downstairs of a small terraced house.

He walks towards it.

96                      EXT. SMALL TERRACE HOUSE ON PRIORY STREET. EARLY MORNING/DARK

Furlong gently knocks on the front door - can hear nothing from inside.

When it feels that it won't be answered - the door is opened by a MAEVE (30's) still dressed in her nightdress.                      \*

   MAEVE                      \*

-

   FURLONG

I'm sorry to bother ya. I'm from just across the way and trying to get into the yard but the padlock's frozen.

   MAEVE                      \*

Is it a kettle you're after?

   FURLONG

Aye, if you don't mind.

   MAEVE                      \*

Come in -

FURLONG

Thanks.

MAEVE

- I'm with the children...

\*

97 INT. SMALL TERRACE HOUSE ON PRIORY STREET. EARLY MORNING - 97 \*  
CONTINUOUS \*

Furlong steps into the house - waits by the door - closing it over a little to keep out the cold.

He can see into the kitchen - the 3 SMALL CHILDREN settling down at the table.

Maeve standing by the stove - the kettle already being boiled for her. \*

A slightly awkward silence.

FURLONG

Are you visiting here?

MAEVE

Yeah I'm Ber's sister, Maeve - am lettin' her sleep-in. (*about the children*) You must know these little tinkers? \*

\*

FURLONG

I do yeah.

Standing there by the stove he looks at her.

Maeve looks back to him. \*

\*

Almost blushing - he looks down to the floor.

She approaches with the kettle.

98 EXT. BILL FURLONG'S COAL YARD. EARLY MORNING/DARK 98

Bill walks the street - back towards the gate - carrying the kettle.

He pours the hot water over the lock - places the key into the padlock and unlocks it.

He swings the gate open.

99 INT. SMALL TERRACE HOUSE ON PRIORY STREET. KITCHEN. EARLY 99 MORNING/DARK \*

Maeve stands in the kitchen - can see the front door she left ajar - push open. \*

She smiles.

MAEVE \*

You're-sorted?

Bill walks towards her with the kettle - \*

FURLONG

I am. Thanks.

She takes a pan of hot milk off the stove.

MAEVE \*

Will you come and have a cup of tea with us?

FURLONG

Ah I'm grand.

MAEVE \*

Sure it will only take a few minutes to boil.

He watches her pour the hot milk on the children's Weetabix.

MAEVE (CONT'D) \*

(to the children about the hot milk)

Better blow on that now.

The children blow on their milk.

MAEVE (CONT'D) \*

That's the job.

The scene feels cozy.

He steps into the kitchen - and places the kettle back on the stove.

MAEVE (CONT'D) \*

Tea?

FURLONG

I should get goin'.

MAEVE \*

All right so.

Furlong turns and walks away towards the front door - Maeve following. \*

He opens the door.

FURLONG  
I'll get one of the men to leave a  
bag of logs for ye.

MAEVE  
There's no need honestly. \*

FURLONG  
Happy Christmas.

Furlong walks away. \*

MAEVE  
Same to you. \*

100 EXT. PRIORY STREET. EARLY MORNING/DARK - CONTINUOUS 100

From the house - Furlong arrives at the gate back at the coal yard - and opens it. \*

The truck already loaded for delivery - he gets into the cab. \*

101 OMITTED 101 \*

101A EXT. BRIDGE. EARLY MORNING/DARK 101A

Furlong's truck is seen passing over the bridge away from the town centre.

102 EXT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. EARLY MORNING/DARK 102

The truck is parked outside the convent - and Furlong stands at the back of it lifting down two bales of turf briquettes.

Having already opened the iron gate - he walks into the courtyard in front of the convent.

103 EXT/INT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. COAL SHED. EARLY MORNING/DARK - CONTINUOUS 103

Furlong places the two bales down on the ground - and slides open the bolt on the door of the coal shed.

In the darkness inside he's aware of a movement - a dog perhaps.

Furlong steps back - weary.

103A INT. FURLONG'S TRUCK. EARLY MORNING/DARK 103A

Furlong reaches into the cab and grabs his torch from the glove compartment. He slams the truck's door shut.

103B INT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. COAL SHED. EARLY MORNING/~~DARK~~ \*

Furlong walks towards the coal shed - switches on the torch and points it inside.

A flash of something wet - the ground soiled - the face of a terrified girl.

She's crouched on the ground barefoot and wears a filthy skirt and thin shirt stained by the coal. She's shivering from the cold.

Furlong takes off his coat and holds it out to her.

FURLONG  
(gently)  
It's all right.

She gets up and he places his coat around her. \*

Her hair roughly cut - her face filthy -

- but Furlong recognises her as the girl who was brought in just two days ago by her mother. Her eye is marked from where she was struck.

GIRL  
Is it the day or night, Mister?

FURLONG  
It's dawn - it'll be light soon. \*

GIRL  
I'll have my baby here. Not for three months they said.

FURLONG  
-

GIRL  
Sister Mary said it will go to a good home.

FURLONG  
Where is it you're from?

GIRL  
Ardboe, Sir. Daddy didn't want me home.



103C EXT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. EARLY MORNING 103C \*

In silence - and morning light now - and Furlong and Sarah approach the door into the convent. \*

Furlong presses the bell - the girl momentarily pulls away from him - like she might run. \*

The convent door opens and a NUN (SR. FRANCES) appears.

She sees Furlong with the girl - and immediately closes the door.

Furlong presses the bell again.

The two of them wait in silence - the girl beginning to cry quietly.

The door reopens and Sr. Francis and ANOTHER NUN (20's) allow Furlong and the girl to step inside -

104 INT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. EARLY MORNING - CONTINUOUS 104

The 2 nun's in a state of shock/panic.

Sr. Mary is walking towards them all -

SR. MARY

So good of you to come early, Bill -  
come in come in! My God you gave us  
an awful fright, child!

The door is closed.

SR. MARY (CONT'D)

Sr. Frances was about to call for  
the guards to look for ya -

FURLONG

She was locked in the shed -  
whatever had her there...

SR. MARY

- you poor, girl, good Lord!  
(taking Furlong's coat  
off her)  
Sisters, take her upstairs and get  
her clean and bring her back to my  
office.

The nuns lead the girl away down the corridor. She briefly turns back and looks at Furlong.

SR. MARY (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
(handing him back his  
coat)

Thank God you came when you did,  
Bill.

Sr. Mary begins to walk away -

SR. MARY (CONT'D)  
We'll have some tea.

FURLONG  
I have to get on my way.

SR. MARY  
You have time to sit - and sure my  
purse is in the office - come on  
now!

Reluctantly Furlong follows her.

SR. MARY (CONT'D)  
Leave your coat off - you'll feel  
the benefit later.

105 INT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. KITCHEN. EARLY MORNING 105

Sr. Mary leads him through a large pristine kitchen - tiled  
floor and walls - industrial metal cabinets.

2 GIRLS are at the sink cleaning potatoes and turnips for  
later.

106 INT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. CORRIDOR. LAUNDRY. EARLY 106  
MORNING

Furlong follows Sr. Mary and is led down another corridor  
(more institutional than what we've seen) - a loud rolling  
mechanical noise echoing off the walls.

He's never been in this side of the convent before.

They pass by a partly opened door.

Furlong glancing inside -

A number of girls around large wooden tables folding  
laundered bedsheets - huge cast iron washing machines -  
their noise deafening, churning constantly...

107 INT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. SR. MARY'S OFFICE. EARLY 107  
MORNING

Furlong stands alone - the noise from the laundry barely audible now.

The office large - a long table covered in a white table cloth, a mahogany desk, a picture of a John Paul II over the mantelpiece - a fire already lit with two chairs in front of it.

The door opens and Sr. Mary enters.

SR. MARY

Sit down and warm yourself - tea will be a minute.

Furlong goes and sits by the fire.

SR. MARY (CONT'D)

So all is well at home, Bill?

FURLONG

Yes, Mother.

SR. MARY

And Kathleen has the Leaving Cert this year.

FURLONG

She does.

She stokes the fire with the tongs.

SR. MARY

And what will she do with herself?

FURLONG

She wants to study Business in Waterford.

SR. MARY

Oh she'll do it well - she's a good girl. And I've seen Joan in choir. Sr. Carmel says that she's as bright as her sister. They get an excellent education next door. And you have another two coming to us, don't ya?

FURLONG

Another three.

SR. MARY

Three?

FURLONG

Sheila will be coming next  
September. Then Grace and Loretta.

SR. MARY

There's so many trying to get in -  
it's no easy task trying to find a  
place for everyone. We'll do our  
best for your girls.

FURLONG

-

SR. MARY

It must be a little disappointing  
all the same?

FURLONG

What do you mean?

SR. MARY

To not have a boy to carry on your  
name, ya know?

A slight pause - he hears it as a taunt.

FURLONG

I have my mother's name and no harm  
came from that.

SR. MARY

You did well for yourself - fair  
play to ya.

A long pause.

She remains standing.

She can sense that Furlong is uncomfortable. Good.

The door opens slowly and Sr. Anne enters with a tray with  
the tea and a plate with slices of fruit cake on it -

SR. MARY (CONT'D)

Put it down there - and let it  
brew.

\*

A spoon falls from the tray onto the floor.

Sr. Mary glances over at Sr. Anne with quiet disdain.

Sr. Anne places the tray down on the long table - and goes back to pick up the spoon.

Sr. Frances walks into the office with the girl.

Her face and hands have been quickly scrubbed. She wears pyjama bottoms and a cardigan over her top.

SR. MARY (CONT'D)

Ah there she is - the girl who caused all the drama! Sister get a chair and bring it next to Billy.

Sr. Anne does this.

SR. MARY (CONT'D)

(to the girl)

Sit down there, child.

As the girl sits down - she glances at Furlong.

Sr. Mary waves Sr. Anne out of the room.

Sr. Frances sits at the far end of the long table.

SR. MARY (CONT'D)

Sure here we are now! Thank God for the fire - and where would we be without the coal men. You see they're forecasting snow for us, Bill?

FURLONG

-

SR. MARY

I think it'll arrive today - you can smell it.

The girl looks down at her hands on her lap - her nails filthy from the coal - she hides them.

SR. MARY (CONT'D)

Sure the whole world looks pretty under snow.

(to the girl)

You're having tea, child?

GIRL

Yes, please, Mother.

SR. MARY

And some cake too - of course you will.

Sr. Mary pours the tea into the cups -

SR. MARY (CONT'D)  
Perfect - neither weak nor strong.

She hands the girl a cup of tea - and holds out the plate with the cake on it.

SR. MARY (CONT'D)  
There ya go now.

GIRL  
Thank you.

The girl takes a slice of fruit cake and places it down on her lap.

SR. MARY  
They did a fine job on the crib in town, didn't they Bill?

FURLONG  
-

SR. MARY  
A lick of paint was all that was needed - but the figures came up well, thank God.

She hands Furlong a cup of tea.

SR. MARY (CONT'D)  
And fruit cake for you, pet?

FURLONG  
Just the tea.

Furlong watches Sr. Mary get her own tea - and sit herself down opposite.

She looks across at the girl who's too nervous (still too shaken) to start on her cake.

SR. MARY  
Don't be thinking that you're in any trouble. Tell us how you came to be locked in that shed?

The girl freezes.

SR. MARY (CONT'D)  
Who put you in there?

The girl looks down the table at Sr. Frances - who's told the girl what to say.

GIRL  
They hid me, Mother?

SR. MARY  
Hid you? Really?

GIRL  
Yes, Mother.

SR. MARY  
Who hid ya then?

GIRL  
The other girls did.

SR. MARY  
And how did they do that?

GIRL  
We were playing a game.

SR. MARY  
Aren't you a bit old to be playing  
Hide n'Seek!?

GIRL  
-

Sr. Frances smiles.

SR. MARY  
And did they not think to let you  
out when the game was over?

The girl suddenly bursts out crying.

SR. MARY (CONT'D)  
Good Lord, what's wrong with ya! -  
wasn't it only a silly game?!

GIRL  
(she cries)

SR. MARY  
What was it, child?

GIRL  
It was a big nothing, Mother.

SR. MARY  
A big nothing, that's it.

The girl cries - she looks at Furlong for help.

Furlong seeing her deep fear.

SR. MARY (CONT'D)

What you need is your breakfast and  
a good, long sleep.

Sr. Mary wants her out of there.

SR. MARY (CONT'D)

Sr. Frances - won't ya fry up  
something for this child. Take her  
into the kitchen and let her eat  
her fill.

The girl is getting up from her seat holding her tea and  
cake.

SR. MARY (CONT'D)

And no work for her today. Let her  
get her strength back.

Furlong watches the girl being led out of the office by Sr.  
Frances.

The door closing.

Furlong and Sr. Mary are alone.

SR. MARY (CONT'D)

The poor creature.

Sr. Mary drinks her tea.

A long pause.

She stands and goes to her desk - sits down and writes a note  
into a blank Christmas card.

She places a twenty pound note into the card and puts it all  
into an envelop.

SR. MARY (CONT'D)

(without looking at him)

Do you have an invoice for me?

Furlong stands and reaches into his pocket - and goes to her  
with the invoice.

She signs the envelop - 'Eileen'.

Furlong handing her the invoice - she reads the amount.



SR. MARY (CONT'D)  
Didn't Christmas come in quickly  
all the same?

He doesn't answer - and just stands there waiting.

She counts out his money on the desk.

SR. MARY (CONT'D)  
(about the money)  
That's it, right? We're settled?

FURLONG  
Yes, Sister.

He takes the money off the desk.

She holds out the envelop to him.

SR. MARY  
Here's a little present - am sure  
Eileen will appreciate it.

He hesitates.

SR. MARY (CONT'D)  
Take it, Bill, come on.

He takes the card.

She watches him put it in his coat pocket.

She's finished with him.

SR. MARY (CONT'D)  
That's us done I'd say.

108 INT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. CORRIDOR. LAUNDRY. DAY 108 \*

Furlong follows Sr. Carmel - the noise of the washing  
machines all around him.

They pass the laundry - the door now closed.

109 INT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. KITCHEN. DAY 109 \*

Sr. Carmel and Furlong come through a door to walk through  
the kitchen.

The girl is sitting there waiting - as Sr. Frances cooks her  
fry.

Furlong goes up to the girl -

FURLONG

What's your name?

GIRL

(whispers)

Sarah Redmond...

SR. CARMEL

(calling back to him)

Mr. Furlong...!

She walks back to him -

FURLONG

(quickly)

Bill Furlong is my name - and I  
work in the coal yard near the  
quays -

SR. CARMEL

That's enough!

FURLONG

- if there's anything you need -  
just come down or send for me, you  
understand?

Sr. Carmel grabs his arm -

SARAH REDMOND

Yes, Sir.

SR. CARMEL

Out!

Furlong walks away accompanied by Sr. Carmel.

Sr. Carmel throws a look back at Sarah Redmond - she's going  
to be got.

110 INT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. HALL. DAY 110 \*

Furlong walks through the Hall escorted by Sr. Carmel - 15  
girls are lined up in twos - waiting. \*

111 EXT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. COAL SHED. COURTYARD. DAY 111 \*

Furlong carries the last bale of briquettes into the coal  
shed - as snow begins to fall.

He can see the girls (in their socks) being walked towards  
the chapel by Sr. Carmel. A few of the girls look over at  
him.

He throws the turf inside the shed - closes the door - and slides the bolt over.

Turning and he sees Sarah Redmond leave the convent with Sr. Frances and join the back of the line of girls

He walks through the courtyard.

112 INT. FURLONG'S TRUCK. DAY 112 \*

Shaken/furious with himself - Furlong drives the narrow country roads around New Ross.

Snow falling - the windscreen wipers are working hard.

His headlights on - a white glare is shining back at him from the snow.

Furlong takes a road to the left - the truck scraping on the hedgerows - the gears grinding.

He takes a right turn in the road - but can't see where he is -

Another sharp turn to the right - the white blinding.

For safety - Furlong pulls the truck over onto the side of the road. \*

113 OMITTED 113 \*

114 EXT. FURLONG'S TRUCK. COUNTRY ROAD. DAY - CONTINUOUS 114 \*

Furlong gets out of the cab - slams the door shut.

CUT TO:

115 EXT. FURLONG'S TRUCK. COUNTRY ROAD. DAY - CONTINUOUS 115

He then notices in the distance a dark figure (like some cloud) walking in the middle of the road away from him - leading a dog or animal beside him.

He walks the road - the snow falls around him around him - the wind whipping loudly. \*

Visibility is no more than five yards ahead of him now.

He walks through it - and eventually the figure comes into view.

It's an OLD MAN (80s) - a threadbare coat around him - a rope in his hand around the neck of a GOAT.

FURLONG  
(calls)  
Hello!

The old man stops and turns to Furlong.

His face worn and impassive.

Furlong approaches -

FURLONG (CONT'D)  
Am not sure where I am. Where will  
this road take me?

OLD MAN  
This road?

His voice surrounded by the wind.

FURLONG  
-

OLD MAN  
This road will take you to where  
ever you want to go, son.

The old man turns away.

Furlong watches him walk into the blizzard/into the noise.

He disappears until all is -

White.

116 EXT. NEW ROSS. A SERIES OF IMAGES/SHOTS. MORNING 116

That deep silence that snow brings -

- and looking down on the rooftops of New Ross scattered with snow. \*

A skeletal tree emptied of its crows - its bare branches lined with snow.

For Christmas Eve - North Street is free of cars and looking like an image on an old tin of biscuits. Overheard the colourful lights suddenly switch on.

The town's crib - the interior and Bible figures within it are marked with snow - as is the crib's roof. \*

Various shots of empty residential streets lightly scattered with snow. \*

117 EXT. MICHAEL STREET. FURLONG'S HOUSE. MORNING 117

The exterior of Furlong's house - snow within the holly wreath on the door.

118 EXT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. MORNING 118

Through the iron gates and looking at the front door of the convent.

A scattering of untouched snow in the courtyard. \*

119 EXT. NEW ROSS. BRIDGE. RIVER. MORNING 119

The bridge over the River Barrow scattered in snow. \*

The dark black waters of the river pass slowly beneath it.

We hear Sr. Mary delivering the Responsorial Psalm through the river sounds -

SR. MARY (O.S)

"The Lord is compassion and love,  
slow to anger and rich in mercy.

The Barrow - sluggish. \*

SR. MARY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

He does not treat us according to  
our sins, nor repay us according to  
our faults." Response.

CONGREGATION (O.S.)

The Lord is compassion and Love.

120 INT. ST. MARY AND ST. MICHEAL'S CHURCH. DAY 120

Various shots of the vast Gothic-Revival interior of the church - the pointed-arch stain-glass windows - the beautiful timber ceiling - the devoted congregation standing.

SR. MARY (O.S)

"For as the heavens are high above  
the earth, so strong is his love  
for those who fear him. As far as  
the east is from the west,  
so far does he remove our sins."  
Response.

CONGREGATION

The Lord is compassion and Love.

Sr. Mary stands on the altar behind the lectern.

SR. MARY (CONT'D)

"As the father has compassion on his children, the Lord has pity on those who fear him; for he knows of what we are made, he remembers that we are dust." Response.

CONGREGATION

The Lord is compassion and Love.

Furlong stands with his family staring up at Sr. Mary - we focus and move in on him.

SR. MARY (O.S.)

"The love of the Lord is everlasting, upon those who fear him; his justice reaches out to children's children, when they keep his covenant in truth." Response.

CONGREGATION (O.S.)

The Lord is compassion and Love.

121 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. DAY 121 \*

A scene from 'All Creatures Great and Small' fills the screen - the volume too loud.

Loretta and Sheila are slouched on the sofa watching it on television.

122 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 122 \*

Grace is noisily trying to play 'Jingle Bells' on the accordion.

GRACE

(singing)

Bells on bobtails ring  
Making spirits bright (etc)

At the table - Eileen has got Kathleen and Joan making mince pies.

As she carefully rolls out the marzipan to place on top of the Christmas cake - she's looking out on Furlong in the back garden.

123 EXT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. BACK GARDEN. DAY - CONTINUOUS 123 \*

Furlong fills the scuttle with coal from their coal bunker

124 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY - CONTINUOUS 124 \*

Grace continues to play 'Jingle Bells' - as Furlong enters from the back and closes the door (his head is hurting).

GRACE  
(singing)  
Jingle bells, jingle bells  
Jingle all the way  
Oh, what fun it is to ride (etc)

He places the coal by the oven on the Rayburn and leaves the kitchen.

Eileen hesitates - and then follows him.

125 INT. FURLONG HOUSE. BATHROOM. HALLWAY. DAY - CONTINUOUS 125 \*

Furlong is washing his hands in the sink.

EILEEN (O.S.)  
Are you not going to tell me?

He looks to her - she's standing in the hallway - Grace still heard in the kitchen singing.

EILEEN (CONT'D)  
I spoke to Sr. Mary after Mass and she said she'd given you a card for me.

Gesturing to his coat hung up by the front door -

FURLONG  
It's in my pocket.

She goes to get it.

EILEEN  
And weren't you going to give it to me?

FURLONG  
I forgot all about it.

EILEEN  
I said you probably did.

He steps out from the bathroom.

She's opening the envelop -

EILEEN (CONT'D)

It's like we don't appreciate it -  
it's bad manners.

Taking out the 20 pound note.

EILEEN (CONT'D)

See that's nice of her. It'll pay  
for the turkey and ham. I hope you  
thanked her for it?

She enters the living room -

126 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. HALLWAY. DAY - CONTINUOUS \* ~~125~~

- Eileen goes to the mantelpiece and places Sr. Mary's card  
with the other Christmas cards.

She turns and sees Furlong standing by the door.

Eileen competing with the sound of the television -

EILEEN

What ails you!? - you haven't said  
a word all day!

Sheila looks up at them.

FURLONG

Comin' down with a cold...

EILEEN

Right.

She leaves the room and walking right past him.

Furlong looks to the fire.

127 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. FURLONG AND EILEEN'S BEDROOM. MORNING 27

Silence.

Yellow street light comes through the gap in the curtains.

Eileen wakes in bed.

She turns and sees that Furlong isn't there.

128 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. STAIRS. MORNING 128

Still in her nightdress - Eileen walks down the stairs.

The beginnings of what feels like dread.



The house is still and silent.

129 INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. MORNING 129

Eileen enters the living room.

Furlong's armchair has been moved and faces the window - still dark outside.

His tea untouched and on the chair's arm.

He's not there.

We stay on Eileen as she stands alone in the room.

130 EXT. GRAVEYARD. MORNING/DAWN 130

All is still - no wind - no sound of anything - Ireland is paused. The surroundings - all fields and countryside - beautiful, vast, stark.

Furlong walks through a graveyard.

He's holding in his hand a winter flower he's taken from the side of the road. \*

He stops at his mother's grave.

It's a small headstone with the inscription - "Sarah Furlong - God Bless This Girl".

He places the flower and blesses himself and prays. \*

131 EXT. GRAVEYARD. MORNING/DAWN/LATER 131

From a distance - Furlong is seen walking back through the graves.

132 OMITTED 132 \*

133 INT. THE BIG HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 133

Furlong stands in the kitchen in Mrs. Wilson's house - the sun coming through the window. \*

He looks at the large tree in the yard where his mother fell and died. \*

He turn as -

- Ned (70s now) enters the kitchen - and walks over to fill the kettle to boil it.

134 INT. THE BIG HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY/LATER 134

Later - and Ned and Furlong sit at the table - their cups of tea in front of them.

An ease between the two men.

FURLONG

Been a good year then, Ned?

NED

The best, I'd say. That'll be it.  
The cattle sold and land leased by  
Winter time. House sold by next  
Spring, I'd say.

FURLONG

Haven't they told ya yet?

NED

They'll tell me when they know  
themselves. They've been fair to  
me. Not turfed me out anyways.

FURLONG

It's been a long time.

NED

What has?

FURLONG

You being here.

NED

It has.

FURLONG

-

NED

10 years Mrs. Wilson's gone - can  
you believe it, Bill?

FURLONG

-

NED

Time is terrible.

Ned looks down at his cup.

Furlong looks at him - there's something he wants to ask Ned -  
he's nervous again.

But then -

NED (CONT'D)

You know I was thinking the other day about this fella who worked with us - you were a toddler then - and he came and worked the mornings - milkin' and that. Anyway - he had a donkey, this fella, and he kept on asking me for hay - 'cause ... it was a bad Winter.

Furlong listens.

NED (CONT'D)

So in the evening I'd fill a sack with hay - and sneak it out to him at the end of the lane when it was dark. This went on for a good while. And then one night - I swear to God I saw a creature - not real, ya know, Bill - and maybe it was just a shadow playing tricks or somethin'...

FURLONG

(smiling)

A banshee?

NED

Nah a nothin' - but it scared the life out of me. Anyway - it put an end to my stealing. And of course I never told anyone but a priest at confession once - but I never did tell Mrs. Wilson even - which... I'm sorry about - 'cause she was only ever kind to me.

FURLONG

-

NED

A lovely lady really. She never once regretted takin' your mother in. Never took advantage of her. The wage was small - but we had roofs over our heads, didn't we? And she was a fair woman - treated you like her own, Bill.

FURLONG

-

NED

And after Sarah died... well. There she was.

FURLONG

You both raised me - that's the truth, come on Ned.

Ned's almost blushing -

NED

And look at ya now - your own business. A boy born on April the first - everyone thought you'd be a fool of a man.

They laugh a little.

We stay on Furlong momentarily.

NED (CONT'D)

But you're doing well, I'd say.

FURLONG

It's grand.

NED

Ah better than grand, Bill.

FURLONG

We'll make a good Autumn and Winter, am sure. Take on a couple of lads to help us out.

NED

You've got enough money to feed the family and somethin' spare.

FURLONG

I do-yeah.

NED

Sure that's it then. It's a good life you and Eileen made. Fair play.

A long pause.

Furlong needs to say what he's come to say.

Then,

FURLONG

D'you remember I asked you once -  
about who my father was - whether  
you knew him or not?

NED

-

Ned listens - the air charged suddenly.

FURLONG

And you said you didn't know for  
sure - that my mother never told ya  
who he might be - but some  
relations of the Wilson's had come  
the Summer before I was born - from  
England.

NED

Nice/good people. They used to rent  
a boat and fish on the Barrow. Well  
to do people.

FURLONG

But you don't remember any names -  
where they came from in England  
even?

NED

I don't.

A pause.

NED (CONT'D)

Your mother would never step-out  
with a bad one. One mistake is all  
Sarah made.

FURLONG

-

NED

You worked out well enough.

FURLONG

I wished I'd known him is all.

NED

What good would it do ya?

FURLONG

I don't know really.

NED

There then.

FURLONG

It's on my mind.

Ned wants the conversation over.

Furlong can see it.

NED

No need digging up old stories,  
Bill.

FURLONG

Why not?

NED

'Cause there's enough livin' in the  
present to be getting on with.

FURLONG

Let our secrets live on, ya mean.

NED

Sure ya have to - that's the way.

FURLONG

-

NED

Life turned out all right. That's  
it.

FURLONG

-

Ned picks up the cups from the table and goes to the sink.

He looks out on the sun in the yard.

NED

The short days are comin' in.

Ned washes the cups.

Furlong remains seated at the table.

135

EXT. THE BIG HOUSE. YARD. MORNING

135

We cut back to the present and Winter greyness.

Furlong walks from his truck and glances at the large tree  
that dominates the yard.

He walks towards the front door - looking through the living room window.

Inside it's been emptied of its furniture - large cardboard boxes are ready for 'the moving'.

Furlong rings the bell - and waits.

The door is opened by a WOMAN (mid-30s).

WOMAN

Hi.

FURLONG

Hi, is Ned about?

WOMAN

(her accent quite  
posh/urban Irish)

No he's not. He's been in hospital.

Furlong can see past her into the kitchen - where a LITTLE GIRL is visible. \*  
\*

WOMAN (CONT'D)

He's fine but I'm not sure where he is exactly - my brother knows...

FURLONG

-

WOMAN

Easily know you were related - Is Ned your uncle? You're welcome to wait... \*

FURLONG

It's fine.

WOMAN

Are you Bill? \*

Furlong half-smiles.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

My God I'm sorry! - I'm Emma - we visited here when we were little kids! Emma and Peter.

FURLONG

-

EMMA

The house is sold - Ned told you,  
right?

FURLONG

He did.

EMMA

Will ya come in for a bit...

FURLONG

I don't want to interrupt...

EMMA

Peter will want to see you. He'll  
be a half an hour...

\*  
\*

FURLONG

Was it Wexford Hospital you said?

EMMA

Yeah but he's in a Nursing Home  
outside of it... He's fine. He had  
pneumonia - Peter knows the place,  
I'm sure...

He's backing away.

EMMA (CONT'D)

You can't wait?

\*

FURLONG

I have to get back to town, sorry.

EMMA

But are you well Bill?

FURLONG

I'm good, thanks.

EMMA

And your family?

FURLONG

They're all fine. Nice to see you  
again.

EMMA

You too.

FURLONG

Say hello to Peter for me.



EMMA

Yeah of course.

He turns and walks away.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Happy Christmas, Bill.

She watches him walk across the yard and back towards his truck.

She closes the door.

Furlong gets into the truck's cab.

135A INT. FURLONG'S TRUCK. MORNING

135A

Furlong drives the road away from Mrs. Wilson's farmhouse - we stay on him for many moments.

136 INT. KEHOE'S PUB. NIGHT

136

His coat off and he's been there a while and warmed by the pub - and Furlong makes his way through a boisterous crowd in Keogh's.

Times are tough and money's tight - but those who are out are determined to celebrate this Christmas Eve.

Mrs. Keogh and ANOTHER WOMAN are pulling pints, reaching for the spirits.

Furlong makes his way to his table - the men from the coal yard are throwing themselves at their drinks.

Pat stands up smiling and holds out a hot whiskey to Furlong as he approaches -

PAT

It's medicinal.

FURLONG

I won't be having it.

PAT

Sit down and get it into ya.

FURLONG

I'm feeling better - am grand with the tea.

Furlong's sitting.

PJ

Sure if it's going to waste!

PJ reaches over and grabs the glass - and knocks some of it back.

He screams.

The others laugh.

BARRY

Ya dope!

People at the other tables are looking in on the craic.

PAT

It's a hot-fucking-whiskey!

PJ

Scolded meself! Lemme cool it down!

He glugs some of his pint back -

PJ (CONT'D)

Jaysus!

- exaggerating the need to put out the fire inside him.

Laughter.

The conversation scrappy - barely heard in the din.

PAT

Ya animal!

PJ

That could have ruined my Christmas Day tomorrow! Could have blistered the roof of me mouth!

BARRY

Wouldn't be able to taste the turkey.

PAT

Sure there's no turkey in his house.

PJ

A plate of corned beef if we're lucky.

BARRY

And no spuds even.

PJ

Taytos and corned beef - sure where  
-would-ya-be?

Furlong's head is somewhere else.

BARRY (O.S.)

He'll be too hammered to eat  
anyways.

PJ (O.S.)

A feed a pints is all ya need.

Furlong looks around the bar at the town getting stewed. \*

PAT (O.S.)

You'll hit the bed tonight, skip  
Christmas Day and wake up on New  
Years! \*

PJ (O.S.)

And sure that's the plan... \*

137 INT. KEHOE'S PUB. NIGHT/LATER

137

The bustle of earlier has thinned out - the real drinkers are  
settling in.

His coat on to leave and Furlong is shaking hands with his  
men - wishing them a happy Christmas.

He makes his way through the crowd towards the bar.

Mrs. Keogh is behind the bar with the other bar staff and  
pulling pints.

He catches her eye.

She gestures that he should go back towards the kitchen.

138 INT. KEHOE'S PUB. STORAGE ROOM. NIGHT

138

Furlong hands Mrs. Keogh what's owed - the muffled din of the  
bar is heard. \*

MRS. KEHOE

(teasing him)

Will you be puttin' money behind  
the bar for the lads for Christmas  
Eve? \*

FURLONG

(smiling)

No. Wish I could. \*

MRS. KEHOE  
Sure they've enough already. \*

FURLONG \*

- \*

MRS. KEHOE  
You gave them a bonus as well as  
their lunches, Pat said. \*

FURLONG  
They deserve it. \*

MRS. KEHOE  
You're a good man, my God.

FURLONG  
(about the cash)  
Are we sorted?

MRS. KEHOE  
We are. Thank you, Bill.

She puts the money in the pocket of her apron.

MRS. KEHOE (CONT'D)  
Did I hear about what happened in  
the convent? That you had a run-in  
with herself.

FURLONG

-

MRS. KEHOE  
It's no affair of mine - but you'd  
want to watch what you'd say about  
what's there.

FURLONG

-

MRS. KEHOE  
Keep the bad dog with ya and the  
good dog won't bite, isn't that it?

FURLONG  
Right.

MRS. KEHOE  
Them nuns have a finger in every  
pie, Bill.

FURLONG

They've only as much power as we  
give them, I thought.

MRS. KEHOE

I wouldn't be too sure about that. \*

FURLONG

-

Friend to friend - she lays it out clearly.

MRS. KEHOE

You've worked as hard as myself to  
get to where you are - and you know  
there's only a wall separating that  
place from the school. You make a  
nuisance of yourself you'll be  
denying your younger ones an  
education - never mind how you'll  
look to the rest of the town.

FURLONG

And what's that then?

MRS. KEHOE

People can make things difficult  
for ya.

FURLONG

Don't I know what people are like.

MRS. KEHOE

Then do the sensible thing and look  
after your family and business, is  
my advice. You get me?

FURLONG

I do.

She gives his arm a reassuring squeeze -

MRS. KEHOE

Best get back to the beer.

FURLONG

-

MRS. KEHOE

Happy Christmas to the family for  
tomorrow. Will I see ya over the  
holidays, Bill? \*

\*  
\*

## FURLONG

You'll see me about town, I'd say.

\*

139 INT. KEHOE'S PUB. NIGHT - CONTINUOUS 139

Furlong and Mrs. Keogh come through the door back into the main lounge and the noise.

Furlong walks through the bar towards the exit.

140 EXT. KEHOE'S PUB. CONDUIT LANE. QUAY STREET. NIGHT 140

The night clear - and small flakes of snow falling on Furlong as he walks away from Keogh's - and out onto Quay Street.

He looks at the town's Christmas tree - and beneath it a microphone is being set up by a YOUNG PRIEST (30) - who's ushering a SCHOOL BOY (12) over to sing his song.

An OLD COUPLE across the road - kneel down in front of the crib and bless themselves.

\*

140A EXT. LANEWAY TOWARDS MARY STREET. NIGHT 140A

Furlong walks through the laneway - he passes PEOPLE smoking and drunkenly talking to each other.

\*

\*

The voice of the school boy singing, 'O Holy Night', is heard through speakers.

\*

\*

His voice is pure.

\*

Furlong walks on -

\*

141 EXT. MARY STREET. NIGHT - CONTINUOUS 141

- and onto Mary Street.

\*

The street is clear of cars - and shoppers wander in and out of lit shops - the coloured lights overhead sparkling.

The gentle snow falling around him - Furlong's walk slows.

A feeling of suspension - like he's seeing the town for the very first time.

He stops outside 'Forrister's Jewelers'.

He looks at the rings and bracelets in the pretty window display.

In 'Stafford's Old Shop' beside Forrister's -

\*

The window is gloriously chintzy and decorated with Christmas tinsel and baubles - the display packed with Lego, dolls, plasticine, a child's hurley and slioter...

There's a jigsaw box near the front.

Furlong focuses in on it.

It's a painting of a farm scene in Summer with farm animals and beautiful countryside - a young boy feeding chickens.

Furlong looks at each element of it and smiles - but there's a certain/definite heartache in him.

In the window's reflection - he sees Deacy's Barber Shop. \*

142 OMITTED 142 \*

143 INT. DEACY'S BARBER SHOP. NIGHT 143

On entering - the little bell on the door 'tinkles' - and it turns the heads of waiting customers and the TWO ELDERLY BARBERS (the Deacy brothers) doing their job.

They acknowledge Furlong with a nod.

The 5 people waiting before him - shift up on the bench - and Furlong sits down.

Ahead of him the barbers go about their work - the long mirror in front of them reflecting the small room.

With no conversation - the room's silent just for the gentle sound of the scissors clipping.

144 INT. DEACY'S BARBER SHOP. NIGHT/LATER 144

Later - and 3 men, including Furlong - are seated on the bench now.

Ahead of them and 2 SMALL BOYS are getting their hair cut.

The quiet atmosphere unchanged.

Furlong stares at his reflection from the mirror.

145 INT. DEACY'S BARBER SHOP. DAY (A SPRING DAY) 145

Younger Ned sits where Furlong sits.

In front of him 8 year old Bill Furlong is getting his hair cut by the barber.





- 151 INT. DEACY'S BARBER SHOP. NIGHT 151  
Furlong thinks further on this moment.
- 152 INT. THE BIG HOUSE. DRAWING ROOM. MORNING 152  
Young Bill continues to look out the window at his mother and Ned.  
Ned steps in closer to Sarah - their heads touching now. \*
- His hand gently wipes the tears from her cheek. \*
- It's intimate, loving. \*
- Sarah folds in closer to him - he holds her - kisses the side of her head softly. \*
- 153 INT. DEACY'S BARBER SHOP. DAY (A SPRING DAY) 153  
Ned sits waiting for young Bill as he gets his hair cut.  
The boy chatting easily with the barber.  
Ned looks at young Bill's reflection in the mirror - as a father would look at their son - with complete love and pride.
- 154 INT. DEACY'S BARBER SHOP. NIGHT 154  
Furlong stares ahead at his own reflection.  
The quiet certainty that Ned is his father arrives to him - and fills his eyes with tears.  
He lowers his head so no one will notice them.  
Furlong stands and walks out of the barber's. \*
- 155 EXT. BARBER SHOP. MARY STREET. NIGHT 155  
The snow has stopped falling - and fresh snow underfoot as Furlong walks back down Mary Street - shoppers wandering - the atmosphere as easy as before. \*
- The scene - pretty.
- 156 INT. HANRAHAN SHOES. NIGHT 156  
The well dressed SHOP ASSISTANT (NIAMH, 30s) is behind the counter talking with a WOMAN (KATE, 40s) about the shoes she just purchased.  
Furlong stands in the shop waiting.

NIAMH

I'll put them in a bag for ya -  
hang-on-a-minute.

KATE

Delighted with them.

NIAMH

Oh they're lovely. And you'll get  
years out of them. Great quality.

\*  
\*  
\*

She places the shoe box carefully into a Hanrahan's plastic  
carrier bag and hands it to the woman.

KATE

Thanks Niamh.

NIAMH

Happy Christmas to ya.

KATE

And to you and the family. Will see  
ya at Christmas Mass tomorrow so.

\*  
\*

NIAMH

You will. Bye Kate.

KATE

Bye, love.

Kate leaves the shop - and Niamh turns to Furlong - her  
demeanour immediately less friendly.

NIAMH

Now.

FURLONG

Just picking up a pair of shoes -  
under the name of Furlong.

NIAMH

Mens or Ladies?

FURLONG

For my wife. A navy pair.

NIAMH

Furlong?

FURLONG

-

NIAMH

The coal man.

The smallest of smiles to herself - and Furlong feels her quiet/invisible disdain for him.

She goes to a neat pile of shoe boxes with small notes attached indicating the customer's name.

She looks down through them - takes out a box - turns back to him.

She opens up the box - places the navy patent shoes on the counter.

NIAMH (CONT'D)

Size six?

FURLONG

I paid before.

She checks the sales book to be sure that he's paid.

She places the shoes in the box - folds the tissue paper over the shoes.

She places the lid on top of the box.

She places the box in a plastic carrier bag.

All of this happens slowly.

Furlong watches it impassively.

There's a quiet/deepening shift in his energy now. We see it.

Niamh looks up to Furlong and hands him the bag.

157 EXT. HANRAHAN SHOES. NIGHT

157

Furlong stands outside the shop - holding the bag by his side.

Something happened.

A decision was made.

The full sound of the river is heard.

Furlong walks down the Quay Street towards it.

\*

A MAN (30) and his 6 YEAR OLD SON (seen in Sc. 43) walk on the other side of the road towards Furlong. The Man greeting him -

MAN

Happy Christmas, Bill.

Furlong doesn't respond and walks on.

158 OMITTED 158

159 EXT. BRIDGE. NIGHT 159

The moon is large.

The river - its waters a brilliant black - the current churning slowly.

Furlong walks across the bridge that's been made white from snow.

The carrier bag in his hand.

160 EXT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. STREET. NIGHT 160

Under orange street light - Furlong walks on a path - his head focused and at ease with itself.

161 EXT. IRISH TOWN. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. NIGHT 161

Furlong stares over at the convent - the windows inside unlit - the girls have been put to bed. \*

He crosses the road and walks towards the building. \*

162 EXT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. COAL SHED. NIGHT 162

Furlong walks through the courtyard at the front of the convent to the coal shed.

He slides open the bolt - and opens the door.

There's enough light from the full moon to shine into the darkness - and catch the face of Sarah Redmond inside there.

Dressed in a filthy shirt and skirt - she's sitting on the ground - her arms are wrapped around her legs - her feet filthy and barefoot.

The pitiful sight of her still catches his breath. Her skin blue-white from the cold. She's shivering and emptied of tears.

She's been hit - her face bruised - cuts now scabbed.

Furlong holds his hand out to her.

FURLONG

Come on, Sarah.

He gently helps her up - takes off his coat and holds it to her.

She hesitates -

SARAH REDMOND

Will you not be cold yourself?

FURLONG

I'll be fine.

She puts on his coat - him helping her.

SARAH REDMOND

Are you taking me away, Mr. Furlong?

FURLONG

I am.

They walk through the courtyard towards the iron gates.

162A EXT. THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT. STREET. NIGHT 162A \*

Under orange street light - Furlong walks with Sarah. \*

163 EXT. BRIDGE. NIGHT 163 \*

Furlong and Sarah cross over the bridge back towards town - a light wind against them. \*

They can see the Christmas lights ahead of them. \*

Feelings of fear for them both. \*

163A EXT. BRIDGE STREET BEND. NIGHT 163A \*

They walk on - \*

The girl weak/unsteady - she stumbles to the ground. \*

Furlong gently lifts her up. They walk. \*

\*

164 EXT. QUAY STREET. NIGHT 164 \*

Furlong and Sarah walk in the middle of the road beneath the coloured Christmas lights.

The shops now closed - but some people are walking along the pavement.

They slow their walk or stop - and look as Sarah passes with Furlong.

Her head bowed - she knows she's been watched - and Sarah looks at her feet passing on the snow.

Norma and Mick (the couple that Furlong met before with Eileen) have just stepped out of a pub - Norma seeing Furlong and the girl.

NORMA  
(calls)  
Bill what happened?

Furlong glances at her and walks on.

NORMA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Bill!

Furlong ignores her.

He looks to Sarah -

FURLONG  
Are you alright?

SARAH REDMOND  
Yes, Sir.

They walk on.

Sarah glances at the lit up crib - at the figures inside - and how pretty they look.

She smiles to herself.

165 EXT. CHAPEL LANE. NIGHT

165 \*

Furlong and Sarah walk up the hill - a car passes - and new snow can be seen falling through the street lights.

FURLONG  
(to Sarah)  
It's not long now. We're almost home.

166 EXT. MICHAEL STREET. FURLONG'S HOUSE. NIGHT

166 \*

It's quiet on his street - the glow of interior lights from his neighbours' houses on either side of them - as Furlong and Sarah near his home.

They both stop outside the house.

Furlong opens his front door.

The two of them enter the house.

The door closes quietly behind them.

166 A INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. HALLWAY. BATHROOM. NIGHT - CONTINUOUS A

There's laughter coming from the kitchen - the door partly open - the family inside unseen.

Sarah watches Furlong hand up his coat and walk to the bathroom at the far end of the hallway.

He places the Hanrahan's plastic bag on the floor - and turns on the light - and enters.

He fills the sink with water.

166 B INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. BATHROOM. NIGHT - CONTINUOUS 166 B

Furlong looks in the mirror impassively/ but at ease.

166 C INT. FURLONG'S HOUSE. HALLWAY. BATHROOM. NIGHT - CONTINUOUS C

Sarah remains in the hallway - life in the kitchen continuing inside - Furlong is seen quietly washing his hands.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLES.

THE END

Screenplay by

ENDA WALSH.

(Based on the novel 'Small Things Like These' by Claire Keegan)

