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Woman in Gold

By Alexi Kaye Campbell

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

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

KLIMT KLIMT (CONT'D)

Move to the left a little. Rück ein wenig nach links

She does so.

ADELE ADELE (CONT'D)

Like this? So? Oder so?

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

KLIMT KLIMT (CONT'D)

You are restless today. Du bist unruhig heute.

ADELE ADELE (CONT'D)

I worry too much, you know Ich mache mir zu viele that. Sorgen, das weisst du.

KLIMT KLIMT (CONT'D)

About what? Worüber?

ADELE ADELE (CONT'D)

The future. Die Zukunft.

EXT. ELIZABETHSTRASSE, VIENNA. DAY. 1938

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

HEINRICH HEINRICH (CONT'D)

Open the door! Öffnen Sie die Tür!

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREET. DAY.

Superimposed caption : LOS ANGELES, 1999

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

INT. MARIA'S BOUTIQUE. DAY.

The phone is ringing in Maria's knitwear boutique, as MARIA is handing a purple cardigan over to a customer. Maria is an elderly, beautiful woman who oozes old world charm and elegance. Behind her chic ensembles and delicate manner

however there is a fair amount of steel as well as an anarchic streak. Her customer is LIZBET, another elderly woman of European provenance.

MARIA :

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

Lizbet tries on the cardigan.

MARIA (CONT'D)

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

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

MARIA (ON THE PHONE) (CONT'D)

Hello? Yes, my dear, it is. I see.

Yes, of course. Thank you for letting me know.

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

LIZBET :

Are you alright Maria?

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

MARIA :

Luise.

EXT. A CEMETERY. DAY.

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

MARIA :

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

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

coffin.

MARIA (CONT'D)

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

EXT. A CEMETERY. DAY. LATER

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

MARIA :

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

BARBARA :

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

MARIA :

I'm getting used to losing the people I love. Practice makes perfect, my dear. And that reminds her of a job that needs doing.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Barbara. Your son, the lawyer..

BARBARA :

Randy?

MARIA :

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

BARBARA :

Struggling, I'm afraid. Maria looks at her, uncomprehending.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

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

MARIA :

So what happened?

BARBARA :

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

MARIA :

I'm sorry to hear it.

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

BARBARA :

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

MARIA :

Well, that sounds promising.

The two women kiss and Maria gets into the car.

BARBARA :

You need a lawyer?

MARIA :

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

EXT. A LOS ANGELES ROAD. DAY.

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

INT. CAR. DAY

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

RANDY :

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

reputation...

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

RANDY (ON THE PHONE) (CONT'D)

Hello?

BARBARA (O.S.)

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

RANDY (ON THE PHONE)

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

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

RANDY (CONT'D)

Shit!

EXT. BERGEN BROWN SHERMAN OFFICES. DAY.

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

INT. ELEVATOR, BERGEN BROWN SHERMAN. DAY.

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

RANDY :

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

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

RANDY.

It's coffee. Soya cappuccino.

INT. BERGEN BROWN SHERMAN BOARDROOM. DAY

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

RANDY :

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

SHERMAN has an open folder before him which contains Randy's

CV :

SHERMAN :

Any relation to the famous
composer?

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

RANDY :

Arnold was my grandfather, sir.

SHERMAN :

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

BROWN :

A radical.

RANDY :

One of the things I would most look
forward to is dealing with..
But he's interrupted.

SHERMAN :

And Judge Schoenberg is your
father.

RANDY :

Retired now, but yes sir, he is.

SHERMAN :

Outstanding lineage Mr. Schoenberg.

RANDY :

Yes, sir.

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

SHERMAN :

So what happened in Pasadena?

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

RANDY :

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

SHERMAN :

So now you're ready to work with others.

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

SHERMAN (CONT'D)

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

EXT. THE SCHOENBERGS' GARDEN. DAY.

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

RANDY :

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

PAM :

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

RANDY :

Uh-oh.

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

PAM :

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

RANDY :

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

PAM :

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

RANDY :

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

PAM :

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

RANDY :

Sounds pretty good.
She kisses him, turns to go into the house.

PAM :

I'm putting her to bed and then we'll have dinner. Couscous.
She turns and behind her back he makes a face - he's obviously not a fan of couscous.

RANDY :

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

PAM :

Where are you going?

RANDY :

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

PAM :

Okay. Hurry home.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS STREET. DAY.

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

RANDY :

Thanks, Mom.

EXT. MARIA'S FRONT YARD. DUSK.

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

MARIA :

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

RANDY :

My apologies, Mrs. Altmann, it was gridlock on Wilshire.

And it's lovely to see you too.

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

MARIA :

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

RANDY :

Thank you.

MARIA :

Do you know anything about art restitution?

RANDY :

Not a thing.

MARIA :

Well, it's never too late to learn.

Come in and have some strudel. I made it especially for you.

And as they enter the house, Randy throws a quick glance at

his watch. He really doesn't have the time for this.

INT. MARIA'S LIVING ROOM. DUSK.

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

MARIA :

My sister is the pretty one on the right.

INT. LIVING ROOM, ELIZABETHSTRASSE. DUSK.

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

MARIA (V.O.)

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

ADELE ADELE (CONT'D)

Come and sit next to me, Komm, setz dich neben mich, Maria, darling. Maria, Liebling.

MARIA (V.O.)

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

GUSTAV GUSTAV (CONT'D)

Try to smile Maria, it's Versuche wenigstens einmal im good to exercise your facial Jahr zu lächeln Maria, es ist muscles at least once a year! eine gute Übung für deine Gesichtsmuskeln!

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

MARIA (V.O.)

The Bloch-Bauers.

RANDY (V.O.)

The famous Bloch-Bauers.

INT. MARIA'S LIVING ROOM. DUSK.

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

MARIA :

I found these amongst my sister's belongings. I've translated them for you on the back.
He starts to scan them, notices the date.

RANDY :

1948.

MARIA :

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

RANDY :

Okay.

MARIA :

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

RANDY :

How are they changing?

MARIA :

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

INT. MARIA'S DINING ROOM. DUSK.

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

MARIA :

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

RANDY :

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

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

RANDY (CONT'D)

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

She gives him nothing. Randy digs some more.

RANDY (CONT'D)

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

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

RANDY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. That was..it was a joke.

Well, it was supposed to be a joke.

She holds it for a beat.

MARIA :

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

RANDY :

You're not alone there.

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

MARIA :

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

RANDY :

That's quite a painting.

MARIA :

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

RANDY :

And now you want to be reunited.

MARIA :

Wouldn't that be lovely?

RANDY :

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

MARIA :

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

Randy is slightly taken aback and admonished. With her hand she indicates the many boxes that lay piled and scattered

across the room:

-a copy of the famous children's stories Struwwelpeter - and runs her hand across the cover. He notices the book.

MARIA (CONT'D)

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

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

EXT. MARIA'S GARDEN. NIGHT.

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

MARIA :

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

RANDY :

Export permits?

MARIA :

The Klimts were deemed national treasures so we weren't allowed to take them out of the country even

though they belonged to us. So we signed them over.

RANDY :

Just like that?

MARIA :

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

RANDY :

What was that?

MARIA :

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

RANDY :

Had she?

MARIA :

We always thought so. Then I read these letters.

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

EXT. MARIA'S FRONT YARD. NIGHT.

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

MARIA :

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

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

MARIA (CONT'D)

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

RANDY :

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

MARIA :

So why would you be interested in ancient history?

She takes the letters from his hand.

MARIA (CONT'D)

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

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

RANDY:

Struwelpeter.

She doesn't understand.

RANDY (CONT'D)

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

MARIA :

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

Something small happens; she returns the letters to him.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Just have a look and tell me if I have a case. That's all I want from you.

INT. THE SCHOENBERGS' BEDROOM. NIGHT.

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

PAM :

Read that one to me.

RANDY :

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

INT. MARIA'S BUNGALOW. NIGHT.

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

RANDY (V.O.)

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

INT. THE SCHOENBERGS' BEDROOM. NIGHT.

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

RANDY :

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

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

PAM :

So her lawyer never saw the will?

RANDY :

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

PAM :

Nobody?

INT. THE SCHOENBERGS' LIVING ROOM. NIGHT.

In his pyjamas, in amongst Dora's toys, Randy is on the

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

INT. BERGEN BROWN SHERMAN OFFICES. DAY.

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

MARIA :

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

RANDY :

Most of them are. We need to photocopy these.

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

RANDY (CONT'D)

I was up till three, I did some research for you.

MARIA :

I'm impressed.

RANDY :

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

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

MARIA :

And then what?

RANDY :

The Austrian Ministry of Culture has set up a committee to review

each case individually. You need to fill in an application for them to consider your claim by the end of next month at the latest.

MARIA :

Next month?

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

RANDY :

I've sent away for one already.

MARIA :

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

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

RANDY :

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

INT. NORM'S DINER. DAY.

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

RANDY :

These are three names of the top restitution lawyers in America.

(MORE)

RANDY (CONT'D)

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

MARIA :

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

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

RANDY :

I need to go.

MARIA :

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

RANDY :

Well, thank you, how considerate.

MARIA :

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

He makes a sign at the waitress for the check.

RANDY :

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

MARIA :

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

RANDY :

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

MARIA :

But you have the connection.

RANDY :

The connection?

MARIA :

Your family, Randy. Your grandparents. They were from Vienna. We have the same history. And to this he has no answer.

INT. RANDY'S OFFICE. DAY.

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

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

EXT. LOS ANGELES PARK. DAY.

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

RANDY :

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

PAM :

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

RANDY :

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

PAM :

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

RANDY :

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

PAM :

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

RANDY :

Nothing to lose.

PAM :

Isn't there?

And her question hovers in the air.

INT. SHERMAN'S OFFICE. DAY.

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

SHERMAN :

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

RANDY :

Not just any paintings sir.

SHERMAN :

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

RANDY :

I see it as a possible investment for the firm.

SHERMAN :

Go on.

RANDY :

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

SHERMAN :

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

RANDY :

I think it would be a mistake not to take a look.
For a second Sherman could go either way.

SHERMAN :

One week max, I want you back on

the 3rd.

RANDY :

Thank you, sir!

INT. MARIA'S BOUTIQUE. DAY

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

RANDY :

Still working.

MARIA :

I'll close the shop only when I croak.

RANDY :

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

MARIA :

You are chomping at the bite all of a sudden!

RANDY :

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

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

RANDY (CONT'D)

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

MARIA :

What are you talking about?

RANDY :

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

MARIA :

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

RANDY :

There has?

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

MARIA :

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

RANDY :

I don't understand.

MARIA :

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

RANDY :

Over half a century ago.

MARIA :

You think that's a long time?

RANDY :

We'd only go back for a few days. And now she snaps, shows that steel.

MARIA :

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

the world.

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

MARIA (CONT'D)

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

RANDY :

Against my better judgement, I think I like you.

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

INT. MARIA'S LIVING ROOM. NIGHT.

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

INT. THE SCHOENBERGS' KITCHEN. NIGHT.

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

RANDY :

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

PAM :

So what's your plan?

RANDY :

It's just a hunch, no real plan. She stops what she's doing.

PAM :

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

RANDY :

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

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

PAM :

OK.

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

INT. MARIA'S LIVING ROOM. NIGHT.

Still in her nightie and dressing-gown, Maria walks up to the
old record-player, picks up a record to play. The record is
Schubert's Du Bist Die Ruh, sung by her husband, Fritz. His
name and picture are on the record cover. Near the record-
player, there is a photo of them both on their wedding day.
With the music playing, she walks slowly over to the dining
room door, opens it. For a few seconds, she stands in the
doorway looking at all of her sister's belongings. Almost as
if she is frightened of getting closer. Then, slowly, she
moves forwards and starts going through them, picking things
up from time to time to examine them, objects from their

shared past:

whole world. And as she goes through them, a change is
happening in her, a realisation. Finally, she picks up the
old postcard of Adele. And then, a memory returns -

INT. ADELE'S BEDROOM. NIGHT. 1920S

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

ADELE ADELE (CONT'D)

I see you Maria. Come closer. Ich sehe dich Maria. Komm
her.

Maria edges in and comes to stand behind her.

ADELE ADELE (CONT'D)

Why don't you help your aunt M