

(Printed with the demonstration version of Fade In)

EELS

1 EXT. A VAST, FLAT LANDSCAPE - THE FENS - (PRE-DAWN) 1

The silhouette of two figures sat waiting.

ALICE WOODS (mid 20's) stares ahead like a condemned prisoner.

CIARA WOODS (14) gazes at her sister.

CIARA (V.O.)

When she wor my age this older boy
wanted to marry `er.

CUT TO:

2 EXT. A DOORWAY (DUSK) 2

The sound of ragged breath. We see Alice's feet slip into leather boots.

CUT TO:

3 EXT. A RIVERBANK, (DAWN) 3

Alice is serene, sat by the river, wringing her hair out.

CIARA (V.O.)

An she runs out the back and leaps in
the river. Father were frit.

CUT TO:

4 EXT. A RIVERBANK, (SAME) 4

Alice shakes a long black hair from her finger into the river.

CIARA (V.O.)

(MORE)

CIARA (V.O.) (cont'd)
She come back two days later like
nowt 'appened.

CIARA (V.O.) (cont'd)
(Doing her best Dad
impression)
"You're as slippery as an eel girl".

Alice watches the hair wriggle away in the current, eel-
like.

CIARA (V.O.) (cont'd)
But when father says it, e' don't
look angry?

She swirls her hand freely through the water.

CUT TO:

5 EXT. A VAST, FLAT LANDSCAPE (SUN RISING NOW)

5

CIARA gazes at her sister.

CIARA (V.O.)
I think thass what boys like.

WE SEE THE GIRLS FROM BETWEEN A GAP IN A WALL

CIARA (V.O.) (cont'd)
Nicole Kent? From Sunday School?
She told me:

CLOSE ON:

The whiskery mouth of KARL (late 20's)

He silently mouths the following:

CIARA (V.O.) (cont'd)
The first unmarried man you see on
Valentine's Day mornin' will be the
one you marry.

6 EXT. A VAST, FLAT LANDSCAPE (SAME) 6

The sisters both chuck an apple peel over their left shoulder. They giggle as they try to make out what initial it's made.

KARL

Looks like a K.

Alice looks up. KARL stands over her.

7 EXT. A VAST, FLAT LANDSCAPE (AN HOUR LATER) 7

Alice & Karl walking holding hands.

Karl's hand re-adjusts so it's on top.

Alice replaces hers on top of his.

Karl's hand replaces Alice's.

She tries to pull away but his grip tightens.

CUT TO:

8 EXT. THE YARD OF A FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE (ONE MONTH LATER) 8

KARL sits smoking a clay pipe, a simple band on his wedding finger. He mends a willow eel trap.

Through the pipe smoke we see ALICE. She stands in the corner repairing Karl's fisherman jumper.

They are as far apart as the tiny yard will allow.

The sound of a ship's horn in the distance.

CLOSE ON:

Alice dumps the jumper into his arms.

He carefully hands her the trap.

9 EXT. A RIVERBANK (DAWN, GREY & MISTY) 9

SPLASH!

ALICE drops the eel trap in the water. She looks round cautiously and puts her hand in the river.

CUT TO:

10 EXT. A WOODEN BOAT (DAWN) 10

KARL, wearing his jumper, is surrounded by pipe smoke. He leans lazily over the side with his hand in the sea.

CUT TO:

11 EXT. A RIVERBANK (SAME) 11

ALICE sits in silence, hand in the river.

CUT TO:

~~12 EXT. A WOODEN BOAT (DAWN) 12~~

KARL

~~You there?~~

CUT TO:

13 EXT. A RIVERBANK (SAME) 13

ALICE

Yep.

CUT TO:

14 EXT. A WOODEN BOAT (DAWN) 14

KARL

You still breakin' the eggshells Al?

CUT TO:

15 EXT. A RIVERBANK (SAME) 15

ALICE

It's a rhyme for kids Karl.

She shakes her head.

CUT TO:

16 EXT. A WOODEN BOAT (DAWN) 16

Karl smiles.

KARL
I saw that.

CUT TO:

17 EXT. A RIVERBANK (SAME) 17

ALICE
I thought we could only hear each other?

CUT TO:

18 EXT. A WOODEN BOAT (DAWN) 18

KARL
Seems there's a lot you don't know. You don't know about this, dunno how to catch eels, dunno know about the eggshells -

CUT TO:

19 EXT. A RIVERBANK (SAME) 19

ALICE
Oh never leave your eggshells unbroken in the cup. Think of us poor sailor men and always smash them up.

O.S - Karl joins in with the rhyme.

ALICE (cont'd)
For witches come and find them and sail away to sea.

CUT TO:

20 EXT. A WOODEN BOAT (DAWN) 20

KARL
An make a lot of misery for mariners like

CUT TO:

21 EXT. A RIVERBANK (SAME) 21

ALICE
me. Cos I'm one too now.

CUT TO:

22 EXT. A WOODEN BOAT (DAWN) 22

KARL
Ain't for long. I'm back soon.

He sharply pulls his hand out the water & dumps the contents of his pipe in the sea.

23 EXT. A RIVERBANK, (SAME) 23

Alice slowly takes her hand out the water, dazed.

24 EXT. A RIVERBANK, (LATE MORNING, LATER THAT DAY) 24

ALICE pulls the eel trap out the water.
She pulls an eel out and raises it to eye-level.
She watches it wriggle helplessly in her grasp.
She tosses it into the bucket.

25 EXT. A RIVERBANK (NOON, LATER THAT DAY) 25

CRACK!
Alice brings her knife down through an eggshell.
CRACK! Another eggshell smashes.
Beat.
Her knife pauses over the final eggshell.

CUT TO:

26 EXT. A RIVERBANK (DUSK, ONE WEEK LATER) 26

CLIVE (60's) with a sad, weathered face is talking to her.

But she can only hear the sound of howling wind. Then the sound distorts into the bass-heavy sound of waves heard underwater.

Alice eyes are fearful. She's holding her breath.

Clive's eyes meet hers.

CLIVE

Did you?

Did you - want this Al?

He hands her Karl's wet, torn jumper.

She turns her back and begins walking away.

She finally exhales and the sound of evening birdsong washes in.

27 EXT. A VAST, FLAT LANDSCAPE. ST. VALENTINES DAY, ONE YEAR LATER (SUNRISE)

27

Alice's boots can't stop jiggling.

Ciara is gazing again at Alice.

CIARA (V.O.)

Nicole Kent were wrong. You can believe in all this but bad stuff still happens. Alice's mum died giving birth to 'er. Al shouts in her sleep and she lets me wipe the tears off her cheeks. Then Karl drowns -

Alice takes off her boots, her bare feet beneath.

She sinks her toes into the mud. ~~She ain't running away.~~

ALICE

Why you always starin'?

Ciara opens her mouth, then stops. Her eyes are full of admiration.

She smiles shyly and shrugs.

CIARA (V.O.)

(MORE)

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8.

 CIARA (V.O.) (cont'd)
 You can believe in it or not, no one
 knows if it really works.

Alice turns to look at the horizon and allows herself the
smallest of smiles.

END