

THE VISITOR

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FADE IN:

INT. ELENA'S HOME - RIGA IN THE MID 1940'S - DAY

A woman called ELENA (20), is standing by the window. She's looking out and sees all the returning soldiers, but her husband is not amongst them.

INT/EXT. VIEW FROM THE WINDOW - SQUARE OUTSIDE - DAY

We see what Elena would see. A busy square. People are rushing everywhere and coming from all directions. Many of the people Elena can see are soldiers, returning from the front.

INT. ELENA'S HOME - DAY - CONTINUOUS

We see a large cross on the wall.

INT. ELENA'S HOME - DAY - THE SAME

A dresser with a pictures of Elena's husband.

INT. ELENA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Elena is in her nightdress and knelling by her bed. She's praying, clutching a rosary.

INT. ELENA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - THE SAME

Elena is in the bed by herself. She's crying.

EXT. STREET - RIGA - DAY

We follow Elena as she walks on the streets and is being greeted and greets various people that she knows.

One of them is a friend whose husband came back from the front 4 months. She stops to chat to IRINA (22) and JOANNS (23), her husband .

ELENA

I'm so happy for you both! What a wonderful news. Any names yet?

Her friend Irina is gently stroking her swollen stomach.

IRINA

No, not yet...

JOANNS

But we have some ideas!

He smiles as he looks at his wife.

IRINA

Any news of your husband?

ELENA

Nothing...

IRINA

I'm sure he'll be back soon
enough. It's just a question
time...

ELENA

I'm not sure... To be honest, I'm
fearing the worst.

Irina gives Elena a tight hug. Then they part after
bidding one another goodbye and Elena continues walking
towards the bakery down the road.

INT. BAKERY - RIGA - DAY

Mr. BALODIS (58), is an old baker whose son went to the
Great War as well.

BALODIS

Ah, good morning Elena! What a
fine morning!

ELENA

And what a fine smell it is too
Mr. BALODIS! Good morning to you.
And any news of your son?

BALODIS

I'm afraid, I'm like you... I
don't know if Sasha is even
alive...

Elena's head drops down. She so empathises with the old
man. They both smile sadly at each other. Then she
points at a lovely loaf of bread on the shelf.

ELENA

I will have that one Mr. Balodis,
if you please.

BALODIS

Of course. There you are.

CUT TO:

INT. ELENA'S HOME - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Elena is studying the picture of her husband, when the phone rings.

ELENA

Hello? Elena Mireniev speaking.

GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL (V.O)

I'm very sorry to tell you Mrs. Mireniev, but your husband went missing in action. It is very likely that he fell, though his body has not been yet recovered...

Elena is speechless for a while - unable to say anything.

ELENA

Thank you. Will you inform me of any further developments?

Her lips are quivering and her eyes are welling up. She nods to the phone and then hangs up.

She's now crying & sobbing - bending over with grief. She's clutching onto the back of a chair to stabilise herself.

FADE OUT:

BLACK SCREEN - 10 YEAR LATER - DANCING HALL - NIGHT

Elena is now 30 years old and at a dancing event. She's chatting with some of her female friends, when a handsome man called ANDRIS (33), approaches her to dance with him.

ANDRIS

May I have this dance?

She smiles at him and nods to say yes. From her eyes you can tell that she really likes him.

Montage: of the two dancing the entire evening. Different music and different angles indicate the passage of time.

EXT. MEADOW SOMEWHERE OUTSIDE RIGA - DAY

Elena and Andris are sitting together on a grassy hill. They are gently whispering to each other and giggling. Then they hug.

INT. A YEAR LATER - CHURCH - WEDDING DAY - DAY

Andris and Elena are getting married. There are lots of people in the church and after the priest blesses their marriage, they kiss.

CUT TO:

INT. ELENA & ANDRIS'S HOME - KITCHEN - DINNER - EVENING

Elena and Andris are feeding their two children - a boy, aged 2 and a girl, aged 4.

They're all chatting and enjoying the dinner together.

ANDRIS

Here you are my little angel...
Open you mouth now.

Andris puts a small spoon full of mashed up food into the mouth of his two year old boy.

GIRL

Mama, I want some more bread!

ELENA

And what is the world that you
say when you ask for anything
Iveta? Mm?

GIRL

PLEASE!

ELENA

GOOD GIRL!

They all laugh and the dinner carries on, when suddenly, there's a hard knock on the door of Elena and Andris's home.

Andris goes to the door, since his wife is still busy with the children, and none of them have finished their dinners yet.

INT. ELENA & IMNAT'S HOME - EVENING

Andris opens the door on a shabby looking man. This is DIMITRIY (43), Elena's long lost husband.

ANDRIS

Hello, how can I help you?

DIMITRIY

(Uncertainly)

Does Elena Mireniev live here?

Andris doesn't react immediately as it starts to dawn on him who this man might be.

ANDRIS

Elena Jansons lives here, my wife.. Why, may I ask?

DIMITRIY

Oh, I, I... It's been too long--

Elena comes to the door, overhearing what was going on at the front door.

ELENA

Dimitri? (Beat) Oh God! I thought you were...

She stares at him in disbelief.

DIMITRIY

Dead... Yes... it's me.

INT. KITCHEN - DINNER - EVENING - CONTINUOUS

Dimitriy walk into the kitchen with Elena and Andris, who looks positively bewildered. Elena introduces Dimitriy as an uncle to the children, and they smile at him.

ELENA

Children, this is uncle Dimitri... Err... An old friend of the family.

(To Dimitriy)

Please, do sit down...

Andris doesn't like this one single bit, but he's a polite man and therefore offers Dimitriy something to drink. Dimitri shoots him a look.

ANDRIS

Would you like a hot drink or
perhaps something stronger?

(Under his breath)

Like rat poison....

DIMITRIY

A tea would be fine, thank you.

Your children are very beautiful.

He looks from Elena to Andris, and Andris registers this and a gesture of good will. He's feels he's able to relax a bit more now.

ELENA

(To Dimitriy)

Why don't we move to the sitting
room...

(To Imants pleadingly)

Could you please take the
children to bed? I won't be
long...

ANDRIS

Alright...

Andris looks worriedly in Elena's direction, whilst she and Dimitriy move down to the living room and Elena bids Dimitriy to sit down on the sofa, while she sits in the armchair opposite him.

ELENA

Where were you all this time
Dimitriy?! It's been--

DIMITRIY

(Interrupts her)

15 years, I know! I'm sorry...

ELENA

Dimitriy, I thought you were
dead! In all this time, not even
a single letter, or a phone call?

DIMITRIY

I was in the Gulag. The Soviets
captured me after the war,
because they thought I was a spy.
(Slowly) I lost my memory and for
a long while, I did not know who
I was, so I ended up believing

them....

ELENA
(Whispers)
Oh God.... I'm so sorry Dimitriy.
I don't know what to say...

Elena starts crying.

DIMITRIY
(Whispers to her with a lot
of emotion)
You're still my wife Elena...

Elena raises her head and shakes it from side to side.

ELENA
Forgive me, but I'm not... I'm
now married to Andris. He's a
good man Dimitriy.

Dimitriy hangs his head down for a while. Then slowly...

DIMITRIY
(Pleadingly)
Don't you love me anymore Elena?
Don't you remember any of the
good times we had together as a
husband and wife? You are
Russian - don't you forget that!

Elena is choked up and nothing is coming out of her
mouth. Finally...

ELENA
(Whispers)
I know I'm Russian, just like you
are, but I'm also Latvian now,
and so is my husband. It's been
so long.... I...

DIMITRIY
(Probingly)
What Elena?! Answer my question!
Do you still love me?!

ELENA
I...I don't love you the way I
used to! Andris is my husband
now... My loyalties are with him!

DIMITRIY

(Angrily)

You were my wife first! I came
back, didn't I? You belong to me
Elena!

Elena stands up and moves to the other side of the room
and crosses her arms.

ELENA

Dimitriy, please don't do this...
You came out of nowhere... After
15 years! I waited and waited...

DIMIRIY

Well, it seems you haven't waited
long enough, have you!

ELENA

(Angrily)

This is not true Dimitriy! I
waited for you for 10 long years.
You cannot do this to me now. I
have children - I have a new
life!

Andris comes into the room. Looking angrily at Dimitriy.

IMANTS

Are you alright my love?

Elena nods, and Dimitriy raises from the sofa.

DIMITRIY

I better go.... Thank you for
your hospitality.

He walks towards the door. Elena decides to catch up
with him, while Andris is still standing in the middle of
the living room, unsure what to do.

ELENA

Where will you go?

DIMIRIY

Don't worry yourself with
that.... You have your own life
to live - you said so yourself...
Goodbye.

ELENA

Wait! Let me give you some food...

Dimitriy stops for a moment in the hallway, looking hesitant, while Elena darts into the kitchen, grabbing a plastic container from the shelf and putting some leftover chicken, potatoes and carrots in it, then sealing it.

She now goes to the kitchen drawer and withdraws a fork from it. She also takes down a kitchen towel from the peg and wraps the fork it. Then she goes over to the fridge and takes out a small bottle of vodka and puts it in a plastic bag, along with all the food.

ELENA

Here, please take it...

Dimitriy looks rather gratefully at the bag Elena is handing him over. Imants sees how pathetic a figure Dimitriy is cutting and his expression softens.

DIMIRIY

Thank you... Thank you for that.
Goodbye.

They both nod and he leaves. And Elena and Imants stare at each other in disbelief.

ANDRIS

What was that all about? Ghost from the past, or what?!

Elena just looks at him, unable to say anything, but breathing heavily.

IMANTS

Bloody hell Elena! WHERE HAS HE BEEN ALL THIS TIME? Is he gonna come back again? Hustling us all the time!? Does he think that--

ELENA

(Interrupts him)

Stop that Andris! You know nothing about him... He spend all this time in the Gulag, until those bastards released him! Just imagine... It took him another 3 years to come back!

Elena turns away from Andris and walks away in the direction of their bedroom.

EXT. PARK NEAR ELENA & IMANTS'S HOME - MORNING

Dimitriy is in a park, huddled up in a sleeping bag under a tree. He cannot get comfortable. The plastic bag Elena gave him last night is still next to him, though it looks a lot emptier now.

Andris is on his way to work, taking a short cut through the nearby park, when he notices what looks like his wife's ex husband. He momentarily stops, but then decides to carry on walking.

INT. ELENA & IMANTS'S HOME - ATTIC - DAY

Elena is in the attic, taking out some boxes from an old chest. These are photographs of her and Dimitriy. She carefully studies them. Then strokes them - her eyes welling up with tears.

ELENA
(Whispers)
Why did you have to come back?

EXT. PARK NEAR ELENA & IMANTS'S HOME - NIGHT

Andris is going home from work and, again, takes a short cut through the park. To his surprise, he still sees Dimitriy huddled up under the tree inside a flimsy sleeping bag.

ANDRIS
Dimitriy, what are you doing
here?

DIMIRIY
None of your business. I'm not
bothering you, so don't bother
me!

ANDRIS
(Somewhat dismayed)
Suit yourself.

Andris pauses for a little while, and then leaves Dimitriy alone and heads home. There, he finds Elena's mother, Yelena (68) visiting for the day.

They have dinner together, but after it, Andris decides

to come clean about seeing Dimitriy in the park.

ANDRIS

I saw Dimitri in the park
earlier. He was roughing it--

ELENA

What? And you didn't tell me?

ANDRIS

Well, I spoke to him and he told
me to get lost. He was quite rude
actually...

Elena, just looks at him.

ANDRIS (cont'd)

Ok, I think we need to go out
now...

ELENA

(Frowning)

Yes, we do!

Yelena, looks confused.

YELENA

What's going on? Why do you have
to go out? What for?

ANDRIS

Don't worry mum, we just need to
get something sorted out, that's
all... Can you look after the
kids for a little while?

YELENA

Of course!

EXT. PARK - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Andris and Elena are in the park now. Andris points in
the direction of Dimitriy. They go up to him together.

We see them from the distance as they both speak to him.
With their help, he eventually gets up and goes with them
in the direction from where they came from.

INT. ELENA & IMANTS'S HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

We see Dimitriy at the kitchen table, eating voraciously,
while Elena and Andris are smiling at each other.

ANDRIS

We have a spare room... Would you like to stay with us until you get on your feet?

Dimitri looks up at them in great surprise.

DIMIRIY

Are you sure about this? I mean... I've invaded your...

ELENA

Shshshhh... Don't worry about that anymore... You suffered enough... We want to help you.

Andris nods his head in agreement and Dimitri smiles at them both gratefully, and continues eating his dinner.

INT. CHILDREN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Meanwhile, Yelena falls asleep in the children's bedroom. Elena enters the room.

ELENA

Mum, it's time to go home.... I'm gonna call you a cab now.

YELENA

Oh, thanks love, that would be lovely. Sorry, I must've doused off... Is everything alright?

ELENA

Yes, perfectly...

INT. HOURS LATER - SPARE BEDROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

We see Dimitri fast asleep in his new bed. Then the camera pans to Elena and Andris, standing at the door of the spare bedroom. They gently close the door to the room and walk away.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Elena and Andris are now both sitting at the dining table - across from each other - holding hands. They're lovingly looking into each other's eyes, without saying a word. The house is bathed in complete silence...

FADE OUT.

