

(Printed with the demonstration version of Fade In)

FIRES IN THE HEATHER

Written by
David Mills

Copyright Ohwa Film (c) 2026

Draft
V1

Contact
susan@ohwafilm.com

(Printed with the demonstration version of Fade In)

ACT ONE

EXT. MOUNTAIN WATERFALL — DAY

We rise up a thunderous waterfall, water racing past as we climb higher and higher. Dark stone gives way to swathes of warm green moss clinging to the cliffs like a thick winter coat.

Clouds roll beneath a high ledge where a large nest rests. Three pure white eggs press together. One shivers. An eagle settles beside them, checks the eggs, and lets out a long, proud cry to the mountain.

She lifts off — we follow.

We ride her flight over the glen. Rivers thread the valley; peat and heather stretch like an ancient blanket. A single road winds through the land. A tiny moving dot travels along it.

As we drop closer, the dot becomes a cyclist.

EXT. HIGHLAND ROAD — DAY

MAVIS (80) is alone on the open road, pedalling uphill. Dirt on her cheek, jaw set, shoulders tight. Tired but driven. Determined. Exhausted. Unstoppable.

She climbs the incline, heading into the mountainous Highlands of Scotland.

The air is ominous, pre-storm. The wind picks up. The road ahead looks fierce. Drops of rain hit her eyes. She wipes them clear, still pedalling hard.

She doesn't give up.

Mavis cuts through the glorious but treacherous landscape as the first sheets of rain begin to fall.

INT. TRUCK — CONTINUOUS

A DRIVER grips the wheel. Through the windscreen, the long road stretches ahead.

Rain hammers the glass. Wipers slam back and forth, fighting to clear the view.

EXT. HIGHLAND ROAD – CONTINUOUS

Eyes full of rain, clothes drenched, Mavis pedals on. She gasps for air as the rain fills her panting mouth.

The huge truck ploughs through the torrent, its wheels throwing up gallons of water. The dark but stunning glen road strains to hold onto this ten-ton beast.

Mavis cycles toward us. Far behind her, the truck hurtles forward, closing the distance.

INT. TRUCK – CONTINUOUS

The driver peers through the rain-soaked windscreen, wipers thudding noisily. He squints at something on the road ahead.

What is it?

EXT. TRUCK – CONTINUOUS

Rain attacks the cab from all angles. The driver's face tightens as he realises there may be danger ahead.

EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE – CONTINUOUS

Water pours down the dark hillside, dragging rocks and debris with it as it tumbles, feeding the sense of danger below.

EXT. ROAD – CONTINUOUS

From above: the truck bears down the road on one side of frame, Mavis on the other. The distance between them shrinks.

The rain intensifies.

Mavis, oblivious to the danger behind, pedals hard. Her foot slips. Her feet slam to the ground and she's thrown forward onto the handlebars.

She stops.

She catches her breath, groans with pain, removes her helmet and clears her eyes.

She reaches into her saddlebags, pulls out a towel, and wipes her face. The rain is so heavy the effort is futile.

EXT. ROAD – CONTINUOUS

The truck closes the gap. Mavis stands a few hundred yards ahead, stopped in the road.

INT. TRUCK – CONTINUOUS

Through the windscreen, the driver finally sees her clearly – a lone cyclist in the middle of the highway.

His expression shifts from concern to cold realisation. He yanks the wheel, trying to avoid her, and slams the horn.

EXT. ROAD – CONTINUOUS

Mavis starts putting her helmet back on.

The truck barrels toward her, now only fifty yards away, the driver fighting to steer the massive vehicle away. The horn blasts, relentless.

Truck and cyclist share the same shrinking strip of road, the world compressing around them. The vehicle shudders, almost out of control, fighting not to jackknife as it swerves.

Mavis struggles with her helmet.

Her face turns slightly, listening. Something – a horn, a rising roar – is getting closer. In this rain it's hard to hear anything else.

She turns further, looking back to see what it is...

Fear floods Mavis's face. This is it. This is where it all goes wrong.

The truck's lights hit her. Her eyes widen, her mouth opens in terror.

The horn drowns out all other sound.

Mavis's helmet lands in the road.

MATCH CUT TO:

A pot of colourful pens spilling over onto a display.

INT. MODERN MUSEUM-STYLE GIFT SHOP – DAY

MISS WILSON (30) turns to four SCHOOL CHILDREN at a stationery display stand.

CAMERON (10), in school uniform, stands slightly embarrassed, holding a colourful pen as the rest scatter around him.

He looks to his teacher with a face that says, "It wasn't my fault."

MISS WILSON

(soft Scottish
accent)

Don't make me regret letting you come on this trip, Cameron. Right, tidy up this mess before they kick us out. I want you all outside by the main entrance in two minutes.

(beat)

And Cameron – go pay for that pen.

Cameron quietly passes the pen to his friend CHLOE, who accepts it with disdain. JOSEPH and RUBY hide their sniggers.

MISS WILSON (cont'd)

Why did you give the pen to Chloe?

CAMERON

I don't know, Miss.

Joseph lets out a loud chuckle.

MISS WILSON

And Joseph, tuck in your shirt – you look like a wee dafty.

JOSEPH

Yes, Miss.

Joseph shoves his shirt dutifully into his trousers.

MISS WILSON

Let's go. We have lots to do. See you all outside.

They all nod sheepishly. Miss Wilson gives them a knowing, warm smile before walking away.

CHLOE

Numpty. I'm not paying for this.

She passes the pen back to Cameron.

CAMERON
Why am I the numpty? You wanted it!

JOSEPH
(interjecting)
You did ask him to get it for you
Chloe.

CHLOE
You can be quiet, you wee dafty. You
can't even dress yourself.

Joseph checks his uniform again.

JOSEPH
(sotto voce)
But you did ask for the pen... just
sayin'.

Ruby leans in from behind.

RUBY
Can we just pay for the pen and go? I
don't want to miss our assignment.

Chloe, Joseph and Cameron all turn to Ruby in disbelief.

CAMERON
(looking at Ruby)
You can pay for the pen, numpty.

Cameron throws the pen at Ruby, who catches it with ease. He runs out of the shop, Chloe and Joseph follow close behind.

Ruby tidies the mess up and then quietly heads out.

EXT. MEETING AREA – BOTANICAL GARDENS – DAY

HEADTEACHER MR. THOMSON (58) stands in front of a group of SCHOOL CHILDREN near the botanical garden entrance. Miss Wilson and a few other TEACHERS stand beside him.

The public manoeuvre around and through the group as they head into the gardens. It's a summer's day; flowers and plants are at their finest.

MR. THOMSON
(counting heads)
Is this everyone? I count eighteen.
Have we lost someone?

Ruby rushes in to join the group.

The children hold drawing pads and art gear, ready for their assignment. Chloe, Cameron and Joseph watch as Ruby elbows through the line of children blocking her path.

She fumbles through the crowd, awkwardly miming an apology to Miss Wilson, who gives her a "don't worry" look.

Ruby joins her friends and rummages in her bag, pulling out her pen and pad, ready to take notes.

The headteacher patiently waits for Ruby to settle in before addressing the children.

MR. THOMSON (cont'd)

Are we ready - Ruby?

Ruby nods nervously.

MR. THOMSON (cont'd)

Right, let's get on with it. As you've already been told by your tutors, today's very important for your end-of-year assessments. By the end of today you need to have finished a drawing or painting of your chosen plant.

Ruby dutifully takes notes.

MR. THOMSON (cont'd)

I want you all back here in three hours for lunch - at half twelve precisely. If anyone's late, you won't be allowed your free time this afternoon. Is that clear? Everyone?

The children mumble back -

CHILDREN

(in unison)

Yes, Mr Thomson.

MR. THOMSON

Okay. Your tutors will be closely watching all of you, so stay out of trouble and don't upset the other visitors. Cameron? Did you hear me?

Cameron looks up from his play fight with Joseph.

CAMERON

Sorry, sir - what did you say?

MR. THOMSON
Stay out of trouble.

CAMERON
Yes, sir.

MR. THOMSON
Good. Right, off you go.

The children scatter in multiple directions, keen to escape the teachers and explore the gardens.

Chloe and Ruby hang back and walk slowly together as Cameron and Joseph run ahead.

RUBY
Do you think we'll find a good spot to draw something? I need to find a rhododendron.

CHLOE
A roadie—what?

RUBY
A rhododendron. It's a—

CHLOE
(interrupting)
Stop worrying — you always do the best work. Follow me — I know a great spot where we can go. Come on before anyone else finds it!

RUBY
But I need to—

Chloe runs off. Ruby is left by herself, clutching her art tools and bag. She slings the bag over her shoulder and pauses, anxious and a little sad.

She pulls herself together and runs after Chloe.

RUBY (cont'd)
(calling out)
Wait!

EXT. EDINBURGH STREET — DAY

Close on a bicycle wheel rolling downhill on a cobbled street.

An 85-year-old woman cycles in a full light—pink evening gown — something you'd wear to meet royalty.

She cuts through traffic with confidence. People on the street stop and stare; they wave and point as she causes a stir around town.

It's Mavis. She pulls up on the pavement and leans her bike against the wall outside a bike shop, chaining it to a lamppost. She heads inside.

INT. BIKE SHOP – DAY

The bell RINGS as Mavis enters. JANE (30), a shop assistant working on a customer's bike, turns. Her face lights up in recognition.

JANE
Mavis Paterson!

Mavis looks surprised to be recognised.

MAVIS
(soft Scottish
accent)
Hello. Do I know you?

JANE
No – but we all know you around here.
You're all over the local news. Come
in, can I get you anything? Tea,
coffee, water – wow! You look
amazing!

Mavis looks down at her evening gown and gently smooths the creases.

MAVIS
(politely)
Thank you.

Her warm smile lights up the shop.

MAVIS (cont'd)
I don't want to get anything else
over this frock. But I do need a new
helmet – this one's a bit tight.

She wrestles with the helmet.

JANE
We can help with that. Let me show
you what we've got over here – but we
definitely don't have anything that
will go with that stunning frock...

MAVIS
(missing the humour)
No, no. I just need something easy to
put on - big enough for ma big head.

Jane chuckles and leads her toward the helmet display.

JANE
They're over here. Any particular
style?

MAVIS
No, not really. Just something
comfortable.

Mavis carefully navigates through the display bikes, making
sure her dress doesn't catch.

Jane swaps helmets with her.

JANE
These are easy to put on. Give it a
go.

Mavis tries the helmet, careful not to ruin her hair.

JANE (cont'd)
I saw your photos from Kilimanjaro.
That last ridge looked terrifying.

Mavis struggles with the fit.

MAVIS
Only coming down. Going up was a
breeze.
(fiddling with helmet)
It's a bit tight.

JANE
(helping Mavis)
Let me. You just need to adjust these
straps. There you go - a perfect fit.

MAVIS
That's better. Thank you.
(beat)
Do you have it in red?

The request makes Jane smile.

JANE
Let me just take a look out the back.
Don't go anywhere.

