

The Story – Script based on *In the Skin of a Lion* (Michael Ondaatje, 1987)

By Jade Pai

Slide 1

I'd like to tell you a story. A story of a boy who grew up in rural Ontario in the early 20th century.

Lucy: Never again will a single story be told as though it was the only one.

As a boy he saw Finnish loggers skating with torches at night, like fireflies [**skate**]

As a boy he learned how to make dynamites, from watching his father [**Paul covers ear, Lucy pops a balloon**]

(tap) Together: His name is Patrick Lewis

Slide 2

In 1919 in Toronto, a bridge was being built [**hammer**]

A Macedonian immigrant worked on that bridge [**continue hammering**]

Lucy: He is famous on the bridge, a daredevil. He is given all the difficult jobs and he takes them. He descends into the air with no fear. He is a solitary (p. 34).

On a stormy night [**make wild wind**],

A nun fell off the bridge [**Lucy falls off**]

The Macedonian immigrant caught her [**Paul catches Lucy**]

(tap) Paul: His name is Nicholas Temelcoff

(tap) Me, Lucy: Her name is Alice Gull

Slide 3

On December 2, 1919, a millionaire went missing

He disappeared with a million dollars

Patrick moved to Toronto in an attempt to look for him [**Lucy drives, Paul searches**]

Patrick didn't find him

But he found his mistress, and fell in love with her

Paul: Hello.

Lucy: Sing to me

Paul: What?

Lucy: I want it formal. Can you sing (p. 64)?

(tap) Together: Her name is Clara Dickens

Clara went away to join the millionaire in his hiding

She left Patrick [**weep**]

But through her Patrick met Alice [**shake hands**]

Slide 4

In the dark, Patrick moved to the Macedonian neighbourhood [**chat friendly**]

Lucy: He had lived in this country all of his life. But it was only now he learned of the union battles up north. And all of his life Patrick had been oblivious to it, a searcher gazing into the darkness of his own country, a blind man dressing the heroine (p. 157).

Patrick remembered what his father did when he was a child, and he did the same [**Paul covers ears, Lucy pops a balloon**]

His coworkers had some political ideas

Patrick went to a puppet show [**move like a puppet**]

Only to discover the puppet was Alice

Lucy: Alice had once described a play to him in which several actresses shared the role of the heroine (p. 157).

In no time he became the second father of her daughter

Together: Her name is Hana [**pause**]

Lucy (Alice): I wasn't married. Her father is dead. He was like a *comitidjiis*. A *chetnik*. Do you know what that means?

Paul (Patrick): [**shakes head**]

Lucy: They are national guerrillas. Political activists. Freedom-fighters in Bulgaria and Turkey and Serbia. They were tortured, then some of them came here. They had a very high level of justice. They are very difficult to live with

Paul: I think I have a passive sense of justice.

Lucy: I've noticed. Like water, you can be easily harnessed, Patrick. That's dangerous.

Paul: I don't think so. I don't believe the language of politics, but I'll protect the friends I have. It's all I can handle. (p. 122)

Alice died of a horrible death [**Lucy repeats "Alice died of a horrible death gradually getting louder"**]

Patrick was outraged [**Paul repeats "Patrick was outraged" gradually getting louder"**]

He set the Muskoka Hotel on fire [**Lucy and Paul speak very loud one last time"**]

Slide 5

Patrick was thrown to jail

There he met a thief, a talented thief

The thief stole a painting and twisted his ankle [**Paul grabs a large frame, running"**]

He hid in a mushroom farm, and met his future wife [**Lucy tends Paul's ankle"**]

Patrick and another friend painted the thief blue, the colour of the jail roof [**Lucy paints Paul"**]

So the thief ran away [**Paul runs away"**]

The thief found an empty cottage and stayed there

A woman said to him,

Lucy: You have aquamarine on your neck

(tap) Together: His name is Caravaggio

Slide 6

After four years, Patrick saw Hana again after he was released

He met up with Caravaggio, and prepared a dynamite [**Paul covers ear, Lucy pops a balloon"**]

In the dark, Patrick swam in the giant intake pipe, and reached the filtration plant [**Paul swims"**]

Patrick set the dynamite next to the chloride tank [**make dynamite"**]

He walked towards Harris the commissioner with the blasting-box [**walk"**]

Lucy (Harris): Do you know me?

Paul (Patrick): I worked for you, Mr. Harris. I helped build the tunnel I just swam through.

Lucy: Who are you? How dare you try to come in here!

Paul: I'm not trying this, I've done it. Everything is wired. I just press the plunger on this blasting-box.

Lucy: What do you want? Who are you?

Paul: I'm Patrick Lewis.

Lucy: I was practically *born* in City Hall. My mother was a caretaker. I worked up.

Paul: You forgot us.

Lucy: I hired you.

Paul: Your goddamn herringbone tiles in the toilets cost more than half our salaries put together.

Lucy: Yes, that's true.

Paul: Aren't you ashamed of that?

Lucy: You watch, in fifty years they're going to come here and gape at the herringbone and the copper roofs. We need excess, something to live up to. I fought tooth and nail for the herringbone.

Paul: *You* fought. *You* fought. Think about those who built the intake tunnels. Do you know how many of us died in there?

Lucy: There was no record kept.

Paul: Turn off the lights (p. 235). [**Jade turns off the light**]

(tap) Together: This is our story.
