

Title: **Downsizing**

By: Jenna Arnold

Director: **Melody Thorburn**

Genre: Dark Comedy

Synopsis:

Time passes and that lovely, aging family home that has witnessed years of laughter and tears starts to become more of a burden than a joy. The neighbourhood is changing and the new neighbours are strangers disinterested in a quick chat over the fence or an occasional cup of tea. With their children well and truly out of the house and building their own lives, Fiona and Allen, sick of rattling around in their large, largely empty house, have decided the time is right to downsize and make a new start.

Characters: (3)

FIONA - Wife to Allan. Middle to older age. (They have two adult children, Belinda who is married to Todd and a son.)

ALLAN - Husband to Fiona. Middle to older age.

REAL ESTATE AGENT - Any age. Well dressed, very 'toffee', up to date with the current trends in property marketing. (Could be male or female. Character is written as Roberta Travis but could be Robert Travis.)

Setting - Table and three chairs. There are papers in stacks on the table and two laptops.

RUNNING TIME: 13 mi)

AGENT No Allan. We are aiming for a blank canvas so buyers can imagine how their own furniture and goods will look. I'll give you the number for short term storage and a removalist.

ALLAN Is that covered in the stylist costs?

AGENT No that will be a separate cost. Once emptied, the stylist will be able to recommend display furniture and how to dress the house.

ALLAN We have to dress the house? My wife is dressed, won't that be sufficient?

AGENT You do have a good sense of humour Allan. The current furniture just brings down the tone of the place.

ALLAN Not my TV chair though.

FIONA ALLAN!

AGENT There are three things critical to adding value: One: Paint it white; Two: Stage it; Three: Landscape.

ALLAN We have to repaint?

AGENT We recommend either white or neutrals like Quarter Strength Hedgehog which buyers love. Bunnings have small samplers if you want to patch test. I would recommend polished timber floors downstairs. You do have floor boards under this old carpet?

FIONA Yes, I think so.

AGENT Excellent, and you'll replace the carpet upstairs in the bedrooms of course.

ALLAN Of course.

(Fiona studying the list the agent has made).

FIONA It says here, we have to renovate the kitchen, the main bathroom, the ensuite, build an entry hall and re-floor the verandah.

AGENT The laundry could do with a makeover too but painting and new tiles should suffice.

FIONA And we pay for this work before the house goes on the market?

AGENT Naturally, but you get your investment back with interest.

ALLAN About how much will this cost?

AGENT I think you might get away with under say *(pause)* \$100,000 It's a pity you don't have a fourth bedroom or a butler's pantry.

ALLAN Would you like us to do an extension?

AGENT Would you, that would be brilliant. Oh, I see, you were joking. Don't worry, we can work around those omissions.

ALLAN All this work will take months.

AGENT We have very reliable trades that supply fast and efficient quotes and do quality work.

ALLAN Tradies are impossible to nail down and then there is the weather. We have had a lot of rain lately. It will delay us putting the house on the market. *(Allan looks pleased)*

FIONA We were hoping for a reasonably quick sale. *(Fiona scowls at Allan)*

AGENT I am sorry, I have been pointing out the sticky bits, haven't I? The property has a great flow, the rooms sweep gracefully and that will be a big selling point.

ALLAN *(aside)* What is she talking about?

FIONA *(aside)* Shut up. Ms Travis, I would like to point out, everything in the house works very well.

AGENT Yes, that is true, it works well for you.

ALLAN Well what is wrong with that?