

STEP OUTLINE

The Art of Demolishing the House Bunica Built (or Burning the Little House on the Prairie)

Don Goodes (Gudz/Moroz), 2008

The Art of Demolishing the House Bunica Built is an allegory about the enduring effects of assimilation. It seeks to flatten urban over rural hierarchies, and asks the question, "When is the past worth keeping, and when is it best just to eliminate it?"

1. Bunica voice over narration commenting on what is happening in the visuals for entire scene
2. T weeds her large garden
3. J walks on the streets of old Montréal, every once in a while someone recognizes him and is angry with him, J tries to avoid these people
4. K is fired. She leaves the suburban office building with her things
5. K is in a traffic jam on the freeway in Calgary.
6. J is in a traffic jam on an urban street in Montréal
7. J arrives at his renovated turn of the century home in Outremont. He fights with his wife. He leaves in his car angry.
8. K arrives at her monster home (McMansion) in a new Calgary suburb on the edge of town. She burns pages she tears out of books on her giant gas barbecue
9. J & K voice over: discuss plans for trip to Manitoba to sell the farm they inherited from their father a year earlier. Visual: various shots scrutinizing Bunica's old abandoned farm house
10. J meets friend on the street they discuss how boring Winnipeg and the prairies are.
11. J & K are in Manitoba heading for the farm. J drives confidently on paved, then gravel roads in his rented PT Cruiser. K rides in a taxi down gravel roads, but is stopped when a herd of cattle blocks the road.
12. J & K meet in Bunica's yard. They look around the yard and at Bunica's house from outside.
13. J drops K in the yard of T's parents' cattle farm.
14. T drives a bulldozer in a winter corral with an older man. She is learning to pile manure.
15. T drives K to the house on the back of her quad.
16. T politely protests K & J's plans to demolish Bunica's old house and the other buildings on the farm to get the land ready to sell. K does not back down.
17. T shows K to her room.
18. Driving down a serpentine road, at the bottom of a vast prairie valley, J & K see T coming out of the bushes. T is carrying a rifle. T is hunting a coyote that had disturbed their cattle.
19. J & K meet with a real-estate agent in Roblin who is a distant cousin. The real-estate agent

reminisces about delivering wood to Bunica's house. The house and land are put up for sale.

20. J & K buy some groceries in the Roblin Co-op supermarket.
21. Walking back to their car they meet T at a table with some others selling winter vegetables and taking orders for organic baskets.
22. J buys some garlic.
23. J & K venture inside Bunica's house. J & K reminisce about what it was like visiting Bunica. He remembers the good things, K remembers the bad and complains.
24. T arrives and gives J & K history of house, how it was made, etc.
25. T leaves after argument with K.
26. T & K watch Terrance knock down an old weathered barn at another farm in the area with his back-hoe. They discuss hiring him to do the same with the buildings in Bunica's yard, and then watch as he burns the pile of wood that was once the barn.
27. J goes to pick up K but she is still in bed. He walks around the farm and comes across T and her friends planting a huge garden. T explains the market garden and they talk, getting to know one another.
28. J & K visit the restored granaries in Inglis. At the end of the tour, they come across the Ukrainian quilt production co-op in the museum hall. T is there working with a bunch of other people. J & K talk to T about the co-op as she works.
29. K buys six quilts.
30. The real-estate agent puts up the for-sale sign on Bunica's property.
31. J & K celebrate. The real-estate agent leaves. K calls Terrence to come earlier to demolish the buildings. He can't.
32. J finds some tools in an old garage. He and K demolish an old granary by hand.
33. T arrives, she is angry. She tries again to express why she wants to keep the buildings. K is angry.
34. K gets a court order keeping T off their inherited land.
35. Aunt Vickie with help from T butchers and cleans 12 chickens in her yard.
36. Inside her house, a group of women and men make perogies and rice rolls at a long table. J & K arrive. J joins in helping to make the food and washing dishes. K organizes the memorial with Aunt Vickie.
37. T & K don't speak.
38. Boy makes buttered popcorn in T's parents' kitchen.
39. A large group of people from the community are assembled to watch the Hindi movie *Swades* at a cinema night. T sets up the film.
40. K goes to her room.

41. J and the others watch and comment on the movies.
42. Everyone goes home.
43. J finds T on the computer in the basement. T learns that she has been invited to give a lecture in Africa.
44. J & K attend the Romanian Orthodox memorial service at the Lennard Church.
45. K stays in the church but J goes off to smoke a joint.
46. The procession goes out to the cemetery to bless the many graves of J & K's ancestors. J speculates on how fragile the community is and how it will all disappear one day soon. The graves are far from the city and will be forgotten.
47. J & K are at the memorial dinner in the church basement.
48. J & K are driving back to the house. J is drunk so K has to drive. She drives erratically over blind hills, skidding on the picturesque gravel roads.
49. K comes over one hill and almost hits T on her bike. The car ends up in a ditch.
50. J and K and T have a big argument. T dominates both of them. Afraid, K backs down.
51. K is furious after T leaves. She yells at J. She chases after him, pushes him and beats on him as she did when they were kids. (fight scene)
52. K lies on a tilled field exhausted. J tries in vain to get the car out of the ditch.
53. They walk back to the farm down the gravel road in silence.
54. K & J sit on a round bale watching the sun go down. K drinks from a bottle of alcohol and J smokes a joint. J remembers things from when they were kids; K continues to think about selling the farm.
55. J asks K what really made her come out. K pushes J off the bale. When J comes back up, she tells her story.
56. In flash back. An Arian Nation leader gives a passionate talk at a white power meeting explaining why historically Eastern Europeans are not considered white. She says they should purify their group.
57. Everyone in the group is shouting "bohunk" and pointing at K.
58. K describes how this incident ended up making her lose her job. J consoles her.
59. K remembers how J always wanted to be different growing up.
60. J tells his story about completely integrating into Quebec francophone culture and being rewarded for this. Then how everything fell apart when he writes something critical about *accomodement raisonable* on his blog.
61. J on talk show trying to defend himself.
62. J describes the problems that ensued: his contractors stopped returning his calls, family problems and work problems.

63. It is dark. T sleeps in J's trailer. J finishes his joint behind the barn and falls asleep in the grass.
64. T finds J and brings him back to the trailer.
65. J & K talk a bit then go to sleep together.
66. J & K wake up to the sound of hammers and saws, and people talking.
67. K exits the trailer. A little girl, 6 years old, says to her that she doesn't want them to demolish Bunica's house.
68. A big gang of people from the community and the New University are on a work bee in the yard restoring Bunica's house and the other farm buildings.
69. J & K meet T at the food table. T explains why she wants to make Bunica's house her office and home, and live there rent free. J & K accept this.
70. The work bee continues throughout the day. A group of Baltic musicians (Zeellia) plays as they work.
71. In the evening there is a big party and a bonfire with the wood from the old granary that K & J demolished. J takes down the for-sale sign to throw in the fire.
72. Archival video of Bunica in her kitchen. Bunica voice over tells about living in the village and being accepted for who you are
73. Credits
74. Vignette: T plants a row of garlic in a community garden in Calgary with recent immigrants and artists.
75. Vignette: J plants a garden with his kids at the farm.
76. Vignette: T gives a talk at a conference in a big hotel, with a PowerPoint presentation with her videos and photos.
77. END