

## **Who Is My Mother**

by John Halas, ScreenwritersForHire.Com

based on the book, *Who Is My Mother*

by Maureen Downey

### Logline

An attractive young girl finds a stable family that saves her from her unstable life with her mom. She leaves the family and makes some wrong decisions based on falsehood.

### Character Description

**Gina** is a young girl who experiences instability in her childhood. Her birth mother moves around a lot and makes her stay home to care for her younger ones. She is unable to start school when others do, and that affects her reading. She finds a family in the Kerrys but soon leaves them due to wrong information, leading to getting pregnant at a young age.

**Maura** is the woman that loves Gina and seeks to have her as a foster daughter. She endures the stress that comes with taking in an extra child and the court proceedings that ensure Gina finds a haven in her home.

**Julia** is the birth mother of Gina. She is pretty and lives off her appearance, leading her to have children for different men. She has a mental condition and is seen as unfit to raise her children, especially Gina, in a stable family.

**Mrs. Mercer** is Gina's welfare officer. She works with Maura to ensure Gina has a stable family to be a part of.

**Lillian** is Gina's grandmother. She informs Maura of her and her husband's inability to continue caring for Gina.

## Three-Act Summary

### **Act One**

- The Kerry family pack their luggage, accompanied by their pets, and head to Sandy Bay for the summer. Their cottage is spacious, but they also have a large garden and an easy-to-open gate. Maura is in the kitchen while the kids are out on their usual neighborhood tour. She hears giggling outside and thinks it is the regular friends her kids play with. She goes out to say hello but realizes it's a new girl. She is surprised at how attractive the girl is. Her daughter introduces them; her name is Gina. She spends time with the family and returns home after supper.
- The next day, Maura wakes early and opens the window a crack. She feeds the cat and looks outward to enjoy the scenery, only to see Gina sitting on the picnic table. She tells the girl the kids aren't up yet, but she asks if he can stay until they do. Maura allows her into the cottage, and the typewriter in the living room catches her interest. Maura leaves her and returns to see that she has taken to the books and is consuming them.
- Gina continues to visit with the family, and Maura begins to be curious about her family. She suggests that Gina inform her grandparents, who she lives with, about their trip. Gina answers that her grandparents are always busy and won't mind her being away with them. Gina explains why she is living with her grandparents to Maura. She bids them goodbye when it is time for them to leave Sandy Bay.
- The Kelly family returns to Sandy Bay, and Gina welcomes them and meets Maura's mom, Dorrie. She invites them to her end-of-year concert, noting that her mother and siblings are not back yet and her grandparents are too busy to come. Maura agrees, and they go to the party. There is a general agreement that the party is fun, and they return to the mainland.
- When school is out, the family returns to Sandy Bay and expects Gina to show up, but she doesn't. Maura goes to Gina's grandmother, Lillian's medicine store, and inquires about Gina. She tells her that Gina is off visiting her

father, and they hope she stays there as they don't have room for her in their house anymore.

- Maura is disturbed by that and wonders what will happen if Max, Gina's father, cannot keep her. She approaches Lillian and Henry about taking Gina in if her father is unable to take her. Lillian promises to call and inform Max and Gina. She visits Maura at the cottage to tell her of Gina's agreement to move in with their family. Gina comes to the cottage after returning from her father's and follows the Kerry family to the mainland to start a new life.

## **Act Two**

- Life with Gina, now being part of the family, seems different than Maura had thought. She realizes the level of freedom Gina had makes it difficult for her to fit into the family right away. Ben and Amy complain that she wants everything to go how she wants. Steve and Dorrie begin to get impatient with Gina's attitude.
- A social welfare worker, Mrs. Mercer, contacts Maura about the proceedings of having the Kerry family Gina's foster family. She comes to the house and sees the living conditions Gina has. Max calls to have Gina visit him for the weekend. He comes over and meets Maura. He explains why things didn't work out between him and Julia, Gina's mother, and why he cannot keep Gina.
- Gina soon starts to adjust to the family rules in the Kerry house. She confides in Maura and tells her how hard it is for her to make friends. She also mentions how she often stays home to care for her younger ones and misses school. She finds it hard to read and has a lot of catching up to do in school. She also shares how her living condition was when she was with her birth mother.
- Gina and the Kerry family go to Hawaii to spend the Christmas season and return the following year. Maura receives a telephone call from Julia, who asks to speak with Gina after thanking Maura and informing her that she's now back in Sandy Bay. Gina speaks with Julia and tells Maura that her mom wants her to return to Sandy Bay. Maura contacts social services, and Gina's welfare officer comes

to take her to her mother. Due to Gina's eagerness to return to Julia, Maura realizes that all children love their mother no matter how bad they are.

- They move on with their life. Gina rejoins her mother, and Maura receives a sad letter from Gina, explaining how she spent Christmas and expressing how she wants to return to the Kerry family. She seldom goes to school and helps with raising her siblings. Julia calls Lillian and Mrs. Mercer and informs her of the letter's content, asking for her help on what to do.
- She visits Gina in Sandy Bay and takes her out. Gina eats like she's been starved and soon becomes her lively self. She tells Maura how things are with her mum and siblings and wants to return to the mainland. Gina tries to explain how custody works and assures her they will work something out. She returns to the mainland, consoling herself that Gina will get help.
- One day, Gina returns from school to find their cottage empty; the only things left are the boxes with her items. Julia has left with Scott and Lucy to her grandparents and informs them of the development. They call Maura and tell her. She informs Mrs. Mercer, and they return Gina to the Kerry family temporarily.
- They return to Vancouver, and life resumes. Gina resumes school again and continues to abide by the family rules. Some months pass and Maura receives a call from Lillian informing her that Julia is back and wants Gina back. Maura calls Mrs. Mercer to inform her, and a return call tells her that a date to determine the custody of Gina.
- The date arrives, and Julia represents herself in court. She arrives late, and some social services staff have gone in search of her. Julia explains how and why she has left Gina back at Sandy Bay. After court proceedings, Gina is to stay with the Kerry family temporarily for an undetermined period.
- Things are sailing well, and Julia moves away from Sandy Bay. Maura receives a call from Julia, telling her she is now in Vancouver and would like Gina to visit. The visits become frequent, and Maura promptly picks Gina from Julia's

every time she visits. However, Gina usually becomes somber when she leaves her Julia, not wanting to stay but not wanting to be around her mother.

- On one of such visits, she meets a man named Ron who takes a liking to her. Maura notices this and is uncomfortable with it. She realizes Gina's visits to her mom usually exclude moments between Julia and her daughter but more between Gina and her siblings.

### **Act Three**

- Gina visits her mum, and Maura notices another man, Dave. She soon realizes that they know about the custody issue with Gina and tells her Gina belongs with Julia. Gina confesses to not wanting to go to her mum's place because of Ron and Dave. She does not like the way Ron gives her compliments.
- Maura informs Mrs. Mercer of her concern, and when help doesn't seem to be forthcoming, she accepts help from Betty. The latter knows the Superintendent of Children Welfare. The Superintendent goes through Gina's file, and he recommends that the government take custody of Gina. Her case goes to family court.
- Julia represents herself in court and gets pregnant during the custody battle. When proceedings resume, the Judge makes her decision, after interviewing Gina, and passes that Gina should be in the custody of the Superintendent. Gina continues to live with the Kerry family.
- Gina makes friends with Isabella, and her friend's brother takes a liking to her. She visits her friend, Kelsey, and on her return from that visit, she begins to misbehave. Gina becomes rude and, after that summer vacation, is arrested for shoplifting. She informs Mrs. Mercer she is not happy living with the Kerrys anymore, and she lives in a foster group home.
- Gina gets pregnant, and Maura is devastated but has not seen her. She meets Gina after some time, and she explains that she has given her daughter up for adoption and has

gone back to school. The next time she sees Gina, she is now working as a secretary but is still studying?