 ***The Star dedicated unprecedented coverage to the funeral of 55-year-old Shelagh Gordon – interviewing more than 100 of her friends and family – to show how a modest life can have a huge impact.***

Le Star a fait une couverture sans précédent pour les funérailles de Shelagh Gordon qui avait 55 ans – en interviewant plus de 100 personnes de son entourage – afin de montrer comment une vie tout à fait modeste peut avoir un impact immense.

J'ai rencontré Shelagh Gordon à ses funérailles.

Elle était fraîche, belle, pleine de vitalité, sans prétention, spontanément amusante. Je pouvais voir son esprit transparaître dans le funérarium et se répandre en rires.

Elle était à la fois seule et débordée d'amour. Dans d'autres domaines, on l'aurait considérée comme une célibataire – ni mari ni enfants – mais sa maison était pleine de chiens, de sœurs, de neveux et nièce et de son « partenaire dans la vie » - un homosexuel – qui passait les nuits d'été à lire au lit à côté d'elle, avec ses lunettes de vue.

Ses relations étaient aussi riches que les gâteaux au chocolat qu'elle faisait au batteur.

Elle courrait dans les ravins, les aéroports et les verres de vin (qu'elle cassait). Elle inondait le monde et Facebook de messages et de textos, pleins de fautes, dans sa hâte à se connecter.

Ensuite tous les après-midis, elle se plongeait dans un bain où elle mangeait des oranges et des carottes et parcourait un roman.

I met Shelagh Gordon at her funeral.

She was soap-and-water beautiful, vital, unassuming and funny without trying to be. I could feel her spirit tripping over a purse in the funeral hall and then laughing from the floor.

She was both alone and crowded by love. In another era, she’d have been considered a spinster — no husband, no kids. But her home teemed with dogs, sisters, nieces, nephews and her “life partner” —a gay man — who would pass summer nights reading books in bed beside her wearing matching reading glasses.

Her relationships were as rich as the chocolate pudding pies she’d whip together.

She raced through ravines, airports and wine glasses (breaking them, that is). She dashed off dozens of text messages and emails and Facebook postings a day, usually mistyping words in her rush to connect.

Then, every afternoon, she’d soak for an hour in the bath while eating cut-up oranges and carrots and flipping the damp pages of a novel.

Elle se nommait elle-même une « hippie », au début c’était par réalisme, et ensuite c’est devenu une fierté.

Mais mon impression la plus aiguë sur Shelagh, l’autre jour, tandis que des personnes endeuillées se pressaient autour de moi, était sa gentillesse à couper le souffle. Shelagh était une éternelle amoureuse réfléchie.

Si elle remarquait des trous dans vos chaussures, elle vous en donnait des nouvelles. Quand vous admiriez sa cafetière, vous vous réveilliez avec la même. Pour la Saint Valentin, vous trouviez un sac de chocolat sur la poignée de votre porte, avec des passages de journaux qu’elle pensait vous intéresser.

Shelagh faisait en sorte que les gens autour d’elle ne se sentent pas seulement aimés, mais convoités. C’était le fil d’or qui reliait les coutures ordinaires de sa vie.

Assise au quatrième rang à ses funérailles, je pouvais me voir en elle. Elle vivait une vie sans prétention, comme la plupart d’entre nous, loin de la guerre, des épidémies et de la pauvreté. Ses combats étaient intimes. Mais le monde qu’elle assemblait avec soin était riche et plein de sens même si elle ne s’en rendait pas compte.

She called herself a “freak,” at first self-consciously and, later, proudly.

But my sharpest impression of Shelagh that day, as mourners in black pressed around me, was of her breathtaking kindness. Shelagh was freshly-in-love thoughtful.

If she noticed your boots had holes, she’d press her new ones into your arms. When you casually admired her coffeemaker, you’d wake up to one of your own. A bag of chocolates hanging from your doorknob would greet you each Valentine’s Day, along with some clippings from the newspaper she thought you’d find interesting.

Shelagh made people around her feel not just loved but coveted. That was the golden thread that stitched together the ordinary seams of her life.

Sitting in the fourth row at her funeral, I could see myself in Shelagh. She lived a small life, as do most of us, untouched by war, disease, poverty. Her struggles were intimate. But the world she carefully assembled was rich and meaningful in ways she never grasped.

Alors que sa famille et ses amis parlaient d'elle, mes pensées revenaient à ma propre vie. Est-ce que j'aime aussi profondément que Shelagh ? Est-ce que j'exulte comme elle dans les petits plaisirs de la vie ? Comment est-ce que je veux qu'on se rappelle de moi ?

Les funérailles sont autant des méditations collectives que des adieux larmoyants à une personne. Nous utilisons la vie disparue comme une loupe pour faire le point sur la nôtre. Celle de Shelagh Gordon est le point de comparaison parfait, celle d'une femme prétendument ordinaire dont la vie avait en fait une portée immense et aussi aussi valable à examiner que celle d'une célébrité. Shelagh c'est vous. Shelagh c'est nous.

C'est étrange de rencontrer quelqu'un quatre jours trop tard.

As her family and friends spoke of her, my thoughts kept pulling to my own life. Do I love as deeply as Shelagh? Do I exult in the small pleasures of life the way she did? How do I want to be remembered?

Funerals are as much collective meditations as tearful goodbyes to one person. We use the departed life as a lens to assess our own. In that way, Shelagh Gordon is the perfect choice of an allegedly ordinary local woman whose life was actually huge in scope and as worthy of scrutiny as any big-life celebrity. She is you. She is us.

**It is odd to** meet someone four days too late.

L'avis de décès de Shelagh est paru le 14 Février 2012, le jour de la Saint Valentin. C'était le 19$^{ème}$ sur 56 dans le Star ce jour-là, au milieu de trois pages consacrées aux parents survivants, aux diagnostics de cancer, et à la logistique funéraire. La famille de Lloyd David Smith demandait « qu'à la place de fleurs, faites un acte de gentillesse en souvenir de Lloyd. ». George Everest Munro, un vétéran de la seconde guerre mondiale qui était mort à 88 ans, adhérait au dicton de Roald Dahl : « Un peu de folie ici et là est apprécié par l'homme le plus sage. » Ronald Schewata a vécu 26 ans sans prononcer un seul mot parce que « Il ne savait même pas comment aimer. » Les vies de ces hommes renfermaient de précieuses leçons.

Shelagh's obituary ran on Feb. 14, 2012 — Valentine's Day. It was the 19th of 56 in the *Star* that day, buried in three pages of surviving relatives, cancer diagnoses, funeral

logistics. Lloyd David Smith's family requested "in lieu of flowers, please perform an act of kindness in Lloyd's memory." George Everest Munro, a World War II veteran who died at 88, adhered to the Roald Dahl motto, "a little nonsense now and then is cherished by the wisest of men." Ronald Schewata lived 26 years without ever speaking a single word, "but did he ever know how to love." These men's lives held precious lessons.

But 55-year-old Shelagh's death notice stopped me. "Our world is a smaller place today without our Shelagh," it began. "Our rock, our good deed doer, our tradition keeper, our moral compass." It stated she was the "loving aunt and mother" to a list of names, without differentiating among them. And it mentioned she was a "special friend" to two people — one a man, the other a woman. The secrets tucked here were intriguing. I called Shelagh's sister Heather Cullimore with a request. Would she let the *Star* come to her funeral and ask the people gathered there about her life?

Mais l'annonce de la mort de la Shelagh de 55 ans m'a attirée. Elle commençait ainsi : « Notre monde est devenu plus petit aujourd'hui sans notre Shelagh, notre roc, notre faiseuse de bonnes actions, notre garante des traditions, notre boussole morale ». Elle disait qu'elle était la mère aimante et la tante d'une liste de noms sans les différencier. Et elle mentionnait qu'elle était une « amie spéciale » pour deux personnes – un homme et une femme. Intriguée, j'ai appelé sa sœur Heather Cullimore en lui demandant si elle accepterait que le Star vienne à ses funérailles et pose des questions sur sa vie aux personnes rassemblées autour de sa dépouille.

If every life is a jigsaw puzzle of memories, relationships, achievements and tragedies, could we put together the disparate pieces after that person was gone?

Cullimore agreed instantly. "Boy, did you pick the right person," she said of her younger sister. Shelagh, it turns out, was an avid *Star* reader, diligently poring over — and clipping — articles in every section daily before dashing through the crossword. Newspapers ran in her blood: her great-great grandfather, Joseph T. Clark, was editor-in-chief at the *Star*. Shelagh also loved the spotlight. The night before her death, a CP24 crew interviewed her briefly on the street about the Everywoman reaction to Whitney Houston's death, which thrilled her. She was texting friends about it just before she died.

"Shelagh would have thought this was stupid perfect," Cullimore said of the *Star*'s proposal.

So I arrived at the Mount Pleasant Cemetery visitation centre four days after Shelagh collapsed on her bed from a sudden brain aneurysm — while getting changed for an appointment to choose flowers for the wedding of her niece Jessica. A team of *Star* reporters placed letters on all 186 chairs of the lofty sanctuary, explaining our intention to paint one life fully, using the brushstrokes of the people who knew her. We

asked for names and telephone numbers, and over the next two weeks, 14 reporters interviewed more than 130 of the 240 people who spilled out of the room. We set up a video camera in a quiet spot and taped 10 volunteers talking about Shelagh's life and their reflections during her funeral.

**Shelagh was** born on Jan. 14, 1957, the second of four daughters of Susan and David Gordon, possibly the hippest couple in Lawrence Park. He sold industrial real estate, she was a Marcia Brady look-alike — blond bangs, iceberg-blue eyes, olive-green Cutlass convertible. Their rambling red brick home was the neighbourhood social hive where Neil Diamond records played, strays were welcomed, and parties were packed and frequent.

When Shelagh was eight years old, her aunt — a bellower by her mother's description — discovered she was "deaf as a post" in her left ear. Somehow, amid all the noise and houseguests, no one had picked up on it till then. But it explained why Shelagh was doing so badly in school. She couldn't hear her teacher, who regularly humiliated her for being "deliberately obtuse" and sent her scurrying to the washroom, where she'd sob in a stall.

Doctors diagnosed her with complete nerve damage in her left ear. No hearing aid would correct it. Later in life, she'd use this to her advantage — plugging her good ear from her perch on the couch, to quietly finish a chapter of her book before joining the party. But as a kid, she hated it. She felt like a freak, her mother says.

If not an explanation, then Shelagh's deafness is a symbol of her awkward childhood aloofness. She didn't quite fit into the family's bubbly, outgoing lifestyle. You can detect it in the black-and-white photos from back then — her three sisters all smiling widely with their mouths and eyes, while Shelagh holds something back.

She wasn't musical or athletic. In fact, she was notably uncoordinated.

She was drawn to animals. When Shelagh was around 16, she came home with a golden retriever she'd quietly bought with her saved-up allowance. On weekends, she volunteered at a big-cat sanctuary in Leaside, cleaning out the cages and playing with the baby lions.

She wasn't popular like her sisters. She made a few select friends who remained close for the rest of her life.

She managed one year of studying English literature at York University before dropping out to work in a restaurant. Then she landed a job as a wine and spirits rep, which sent her off to vineyards in New Zealand, France, Chile. . . By the time the company changed owners and let her go, Shelagh could discern the grape variety, region and year of harvest of a wine by taste. Her nephew Matt's job at the Gordon Christmas parties was

to present her the bottles guests had brought for grading. The plonk went out for drinking, the good stuff was stashed in a cupboard.

When Shelagh's eldest sister, Heather, gave birth to Jessica, the first of her four children, Shelagh restarted her life as an aunt. Not a regular, see-you-at-Christmas and Thanksgiving aunt. Rather a come-to-my-house-in-your-pyjamas-on-Saturday-morning-and-drink-fireman's-tea-with-me aunt. (Fireman's tea translated to much milk, little caffeine.)

She moved into an apartment down the street and left her front door ajar so her nieces and nephews could walk in whenever. She bathed them and read them bedtime stories and rushed over at 7 a.m. to French-braid their hair before school. Every horse show, gymnastics meet, dance recital, rugby game, she was there. She organized their annual Easter egg-dyeing and gingerbread-decorating parties. She baked money cakes for their birthdays. When they got older, they moved in with her.

They all call her a second mother and best friend. Her sisters call her their epoxy. She glued together the gaps in their lives — arriving in the middle of the night when one kid needed to go to the hospital, picking their kids up from school in emergencies, hauling out their garbage when they'd forgotten to. She'd call from the grocery store to announce chicken was on sale and what else did they need?

One story: last spring, Jessica got engaged. Shelagh became her one-person wedding support system — scouring vintage and second-hand stores for items and driving Jessica to Woodbridge bridal gown stores. When Jessica discovered the candle holders she wanted at an Indigo store, Shelagh quietly crisscrossed the city to five different outlets until she found 75 — one for every table. The wedding was three weeks after Shelagh's death. For her vow, Jessica declared: "In honour of Shelagh, I promise to love you fiercely."

Shelagh had found her calling — loving people fiercely and with abandon.

Not just family, but friends she met at the dog park, at work, on the street or through her family. The three most uttered sentiments to describe her at her funeral were generous, open-hearted and loyal. A former neighbour remembered how Shelagh, after hearing her admiration for Heather's patio umbrella, dropped one off on her front porch. An old dog-walking friend recalled a dog walkers' party in the park that Shelagh organized one cold night, lugging bottles of wine and beer with her to pass around. When Tyrone Cromwell was going through a dark time, Shelagh peppered him with invitations to chicken soup in her apartment and big family dinners. What's telling is that Cromwell is a friend of Caitlin Cullimore, Shelagh's niece, and 27 years her junior.

It's hard not to feel inadequate listening to these stories. Surely, Shelagh was compensating for some deep feeling of inadequacy. No one is naturally this loving to so

many people, right? Or perhaps, Shelagh's life demonstrates that most of us set the love bar too low.

Heather believes Shelagh's full transformation into the family's soul was cemented by the death of their father 21 years ago. Trim, fit, full of life, he was midway through a doubles tennis game, casually walking with his partner from one end of the court to the other, when he dropped dead from a heart attack.

The tragedy drew the family closer. Shelagh, above all, learned then to treasure relationships.

One more story: that very winter, the Gordon women decided to head south for a week of bonding. The trip became an annual tradition.

Two or three years later, four of them were squeezed into a single room with a glorious view of the Antigua beach. Sitting out on the balcony after arriving, Shelagh's youngest sister Susie announced they'd found paradise, save one small oversight. If only they could sip their morning tea out there, instead of trooping down to the restaurant.

The next morning, sure as the sunrise, Shelagh woke her with a fireman's brew.

In recent years, she'd taken to packing her own tea supplies. The electric kettle and tea mug occupied a healthy portion of her suitcase.

**A few years ago,** Shelagh was getting her photo retaken for her work pass.

She was wearing those loose linen pants she always wore — the kind with the elastic waistband. The photographer got her to stand up against a wall and somehow, a nail snagged and broke the elastic. In the middle of the shoot, her pants dropped to her knees.

"She was crying, she was laughing so hard," recalls workmate Wendy Campbell. "We had to retake that photo 12 times."

This is my favourite thing about Shelagh. She wasn't blandly nice. Her warmth came with salt.

She fell into hot tubs and accidently drank from paint cans. She spilled wine liberally, then whipped off her stained shirt for cleaning in the middle of a party.

The woods around her sister Cynthia's cottage are decorated by Frisbees that Shelagh flung off-course.

That klutziness became her trademark.

Her family calls it “pulling a Shelagh.” They’d know she’d arrived at the party when they heard the sound of something breaking. Ellen Kaju — one of the two “special friends” mentioned in the obituary — brought a set of plastic wine glasses just for Shelagh, who’d been her best friend since Grade 9.

It was as if Shelagh’s body was in constant excitement, overheating. She was an enraptured chef, her kitchen floor sprayed with bits of onion and potato and sudsy water. She was a chronic interrupter, bouncing in her seat to add her bubbling thoughts or stories. (Her family recently instigated a new rule: if Shelagh wanted to speak, she had to raise her hand like a student in class.) At her weekly work meetings, “she *was* the meeting,” says Campbell. “She would not stop talking. This past year, she started to zip her lip with her finger in the meeting to let everyone else talk. That was Shelagh — talking up a storm.”

She didn’t walk, she charged. She didn’t wash glasses, she cycloned through them. In the summers at one of her sisters’ cottages, she didn’t swim once a day, she went 17 times.

The only time Shelagh was calm and graceful was when she was asleep — which she often was in the middle of a family game of charades or a movie. She’d wake up to give an answer, then fall back to sleep, her full glass of wine in hand, balanced perfectly.

Shelagh was a character — something we all secretly strive to be. She was different. She wasn’t perfect.

**Funerals can** often feel like camp singalongs — all glow, no shadows. The nice things are all said out loud, the rest brims in people’s bowed heads.

What were Shelagh’s human failings? What advice, had she had the chance, might she have doled out from her deathbed?

I walked through her home looking for signs. I wanted to meet Shelagh quietly, on my own.

Three years ago, Shelagh bought a duplex with her sister Heather five blocks from their childhood home. Shelagh lived in a two-bedroom apartment on the top floor. Cullimore and her husband Jay lived downstairs, often with one of their four children.

Shelagh no longer had to leave her door open; her family just walked upstairs.

Stepping inside, I was surprised to see a dangling crystal chandelier above an antique wood piano-turned-dining room table. I had assumed Shelagh’s klutziness would translate to a sloppy home. I was wrong.

Her living room was lush and creamy, her kitchen warm with wood floors, and treasures were scattered everywhere — a wooden birdhouse and rusted bell in her kitchen, two heart-shaped stones on the radiator by her bath, an angel-shaped knob above her mirror. Wedged into one corner of her bathroom, where the wainscoting of two walls meets, I found a small white stone with the word “strength” on it.

They seemed like totems, reminding Shelagh to not save life for the weekends, but delight in it here and now.

Two wishbones sat on her kitchen sill, and I found a bunch of laminated four leaf clovers in a pile on her desk. Shelagh believed in luck. She bought a lottery ticket every week without fail. What was she hoping for?

Her closets were disasters — hats, scarves, a scuffed-up pair of Blundstones and old silk kimonos all thrown together. Shelagh didn’t spend much time on how she looked, I could see. There wasn’t a tube of mascara or cover-up in sight. Her favourite shoes, her sisters told me, were a hideous pair of black Crocs.

While the front three rooms were warm and beautiful — perfect for entertaining — the back two rooms felt different. Shelagh’s bedroom is a museum piece from the 1940s — old wooden furniture dotted with antique photos, a “Home Sweet Home” needlepoint above her high metal bed, green hospital-like curtains.

Who could love in a room like this?

Her study next door felt like a university dorm room— cold white walls, ugly stained carpet, a black computer chair ripped in the seat. The temperature was five degrees colder than the rest of the place.

This is Shelagh’s office. Clearly she didn’t love her job.

After she lost her position selling wine, Shelagh went to work at the same place her sister Heather did, Trader Media Corp., selling ads in the*Resale Home & Condo Guide* to real estate agents. Colleagues say she was a natural salesperson, building friendships with clients. And she enjoyed the freedom of working from home with her front door open and her dog by her feet. But over the past few years, the job had lost its lustre.

A company takeover resulted in mass firings — former colleagues called it a “bloodbath” — continual territory changes and increased pressure to bump up sales, particularly online. A corporate culture replaced the casual, family-like ambience. Suddenly, Shelagh was the oldest sales agent by more than a decade, and the only one who didn’t arrive to client meetings in a suit.

Two years ago, she started taking “happy pills” — antidepressants and anti-anxiety medication. Last summer, she took a three-month stress leave from her job.

It couldn’t have been easy being the one unmarried Gordon sister. Two of her sisters stayed at home; their husbands’ jobs were lucrative. All three owned cottages. Shelagh, meanwhile, struggled with bills and her mortgage.

Standing in her cold study, I could hear Shelagh thinking in panic: “Who is going to hire a 55-year-old woman?” And: “What happened to *my* rich husband?”

Why didn’t Shelagh, who loved so much, ever get married? She had the chance. Three chances, in fact. Shelagh ended all three of her great love affairs. In one case, she had moved all her furniture into her boyfriend’s house before abruptly leaving him. Later, she explained it was because he hadn’t wanted children, but to her friends and family, that seems a hollow excuse.

Why did the ultimate lover hide from making the ultimate commitment?

Her mother thinks “part of her was closed.” Her oldest friend, Ellen Kaju, puts it down to bad luck — Mr. Right never arrived. Her sister Heather says it was one of Shelagh’s enigmas — “I don’t think she understood that either.” Andy Schulz, the gay costume designer Shelagh called her soulmate, thinks Shelagh was just born different. She knew her path was neither straight nor narrow.

The story of Shelagh and Schulz is a beautiful one. They met 19 years ago in a park, walking their puppies. Within a week, Shelagh hit him in the head with a stick she’d impossibly thrown from in front of him. They became, in the words of Anne Shirley, bosom friends. They vacationed together, dined together, called and text-messaged daily, hosted one another’s birthday parties. They crawled into bed together with their dogs and read books. Their families came to see them as a unit — a married couple without the sex, although Schulz says their relationship was more special than marriage.

They planned to retire together.

“This is such a shock and a tragedy,” he said during her funeral. “I don’t know how anybody or anything is going to fill this void that I have.”

Thinking of Shelagh’s life, a line from an Adrienne Rich poem comes to mind: “These are the materials.”

Whether she worked with what she’d been given or sought out alternative fabrics, the quilt of love Shelagh stitched was luminescent.

**The night before** she died, Shelagh organized her family to go to Emma McCormick's photography exhibit and fundraiser, called Hearts and Arts. McCormick is dating Shelagh's nephew Evan Cullimore.

Typically, Shelagh had emailed and texted and phoned every family member, cajoling most to come out and sharing plans for dinner before.

The family — 11 of them — squeezed into a corner booth at Fran's, a downtown diner a block from the fundraiser. Shelagh sat in the middle, loudly ordering cheap glasses of wine, sweet potato fries, onion rings (her favourite), fish and chips, and of course, a "healthy" Caesar salad to compensate for the grease. They all shared.

The next morning, Shelagh woke up early as usual to walk her Polish lowland sheepdog, Jerzy. She read the *Star*, section by section, charged through the crossword, checked in with Heather downstairs and with Schulz, who had missed the fundraiser for a work function and was feeling hungover. She texted some friends about the CP24 interview she'd done on the street the night before.

Jessica was meeting with her florist — an old family friend — to go over the wedding flowers, and Shelagh's presence was demanded. Some time between noon and 12:30, Shelagh was in her bedroom, getting ready to go, when a rush of blood flooded her brainstem.

At 12:39, Heather was outside their shared house waiting for her. "Where are you?" she typed in a text message. They had planned to leave at 12:40 and Shelagh was normally early.

She found her sister upstairs on her bed. Her face had already turned blue.

Shelagh's family and friends gathered at Sunnybrook Hospital, where doctors worked to revive her

Her diagnosis changed from a heart attack to aneurysm. Her mother, Sue, alerted staff that Shelagh had wanted to donate her organs. The critical-care nurse with the Trillium Gift of Life Network commented that most of the Gordon clan gathered in the waiting room had red hearts drawn on their hands. Had they drawn them as a tribute to Shelagh?

"No," Sue told him. "She has one too."

The hearts were from McCormick's fundraiser — a sign for the people at the door that they'd each paid the cover.

But in reflection, the hearts seemed like another one of Shelagh's scattered totems, to remind them all of her love and life's joys.

Each plan to get it tattooed on their body in her memory.

Four weeks since her death, Shelagh's friends and family are still gasping at the hole she's left in their lives. She was such a constant, they didn't understand the breadth of her caretaking until it disappeared. Each has made small promises for change — to treasure this moment, to be more open, to love more fully.

Shelagh's niece Caitlin has moved into her house, wrapping herself in her aunt's molecules and memories. In a speech at her sister Jessica's wedding three weeks after Shelagh's death, she promised "to be your Shelagh."

I'm mourning Shelagh too. She's consumed me since her death — her quirks, her kindness, her mysteries. I have never met anyone as abundantly generous as Shelagh. I aspire be like that.

Wandering around her house one recent afternoon, I fished one of her mud-caked Blundstones from the closet and slipped it on, wondering "What is a life worth?"

In the past, I have often answered this question with achievements — campaigns, masterpieces, spiritual or literal changes to humankind and the world. The measure, I've thought, is Sophie Scholl or Charles Darwin or Nelson Mandela.

Shelagh's life offers another lens. She didn't change the world forcibly, but she changed many people in it. She lightened them. She inspired them, though she likely didn't realize it. She touched them in simple ways most of us don't because we are too caught-up and lazy.

Her life reveals that it doesn't take much to make a difference every day — just deep, full love —and that can be sewn with many different kinds of stitches.

Some of Shelagh's friends feel terrible they didn't get a chance to say goodbye and tell her how much she meant to them. There is a lesson there.

For, as I see it, Shelagh herself didn't need to say how much they meant to her. Her daily life was a kiss of love.