Hazel follows Gus inside. She quickly notices all sorts of engraved plaques and framed signs with phrases like “Home is Where the Heart Is” and “True Love is Born from Hard Times.” Hazel looks at Gus quizzically.

GUS
My parents call them “encouragements.”
(rolling his eyes)
Don’t ask.

Gus’s MOM and DAD (40s) are in the kitchen making dinner.

GUS (CONT’D)
Hey guys.

GUS’S MOM
Augustus, hi. New friend?

Gus’s parents don’t seem surprised to see Gus with some random girl in their house. Hazel takes note of that.

GUS
This is Hazel Grace.

HAZEL
It’s just... Hazel.

GUS’S DAD
How’s it going, Just Hazel?

GUS
(abruptly)
Downstairs if you need us!

Gus drags Hazel to the next room. As she’s pulled:

HAZEL
Nice to meet you!

They walk down the carpeted stairs - Gus having an easier time with his one leg than Hazel is with her oxygen tank and weak lungs.

Eventually they arrive at Gus’s basement bedroom. There’s a TV with a video game console, a few band posters, and a whole host of basketball memorabilia (autographed sneakers, school trophies, framed images etc.) Gus sees her looking at them.
GUS
I used to play.

HAZEL
Must have been pretty good.

GUS
These are mine. And these. The rest of it’s just cancer perks.

Gus grabs a DVD from his stack of DVDs. Hazel sits down on the bed, her breathing noticeably heavier.

HAZEL
Need to sit.

Gus sits down next to her on the bed.

HAZEL (CONT’D)
Don’t get any ideas.
(catching her breath)
All that standing... and stairs... and then more standing... lotta standing for me.

GUS
I understand.

HAZEL
I’ll be fine in a minute. Unless I faint. I’m a bit of a Victorian lady, fainting-wise.

Gus smiles. He waits for her breathing to slow down. In time:

GUS
You ok?

Hazel nods, smiles.

GUS (CONT’D)
So what’s your story?

HAZEL
I already told you my story. I was diagnosed --

GUS
Not your cancer story. Your story. Interests, hobbies, passions, weird fetishes...

(CONTINUED)
HAZEL
Um...

GUS
Don’t tell me you’re one of those people who becomes their disease.

HAZEL
No. I’m just... I don’t know... un-extraordinary.

GUS
I reject that out of hand.
(beat, Hazel shrugs)
Think of something you love. First thing that comes to mind.

HAZEL
“An Imperial Affliction.”

GUS
Ok. What’s that?

HAZEL
It’s a novel. My favorite novel.

GUS
Does it have zombies?

HAZEL
(laughing)
What? No.

GUS
Stormtroopers.

HAZEL
Seriously?
(he shrugs)
It’s not that kind of book.

GUS
Sounds horrible.

HAZEL
It’s not, it’s... kind of my bible actually.

GUS
Interesting. What’s it about?

(CONTINUED)
HAZEL
Cancer.
(off his look)
But not in that way, trust me. The guy who wrote it, Peter Van Houten, he’s... well, the only person I’ve ever come across who seems to a) understand what it’s like to be dying and b) not have died.

GUS
(intrigued)
In that case... I am going to read this horrible book with the boring title that does not contain zombies or stormtroopers. And in exchange...

Gus pulls a book from his bookshelf.

GUS (CONT’D)
... all I ask is that you read this brilliant and haunting novelization of my favorite video game.

Hazel looks at the slim, ridiculous novella. She laughs.

GUS (CONT’D)
Don’t laugh, it’s awesome! All about honor and sacrifice, bravery and heroism, embracing your destiny, leaving a mark on the world.

HAZEL
(beat)
But mostly it’s things blowing up.

GUS
Hell yeah!

She laughs again. She’s adorable when she laughs. He holds the book out for her and she takes it. And as she does, their hands get tangled together for a brief, charged moment.

GUS (CONT’D)
Your hands are cold.

HAZEL
Not so much cold as under-oxygenated.

GUS
Hazel Grace...
(beat)
I love it when you talk medical to me.

(CONTINUED)
Hazel blushes. And off her completely smitten smile, CUT TO:

EXT. HAZEL’S HOUSE - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

A LIGHT on in an upstairs window. Hazel’s Bedroom.

INT. HAZEL’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Hazel sits in bed reading Gus’s novella. Frannie enters carrying folded laundry, notices the new book.

FRANNIE
That’s different.

Hazel shrugs. Frannie looks intrigued.

FRANNIE (CONT’D)
Did he give it to you?

HAZEL
By “it” do you mean herpes?

FRANNIE
A mother can dream, can’t she?

(ALT)
Feisty! I like it.

Hazel rolls her eyes. At which point, her phone buzzes. She excitedly checks it - only to be disappointed. Frannie notices.

FRANNIE (CONT’D)
Don’t worry. I’m sure he’ll call.

HAZEL
I’m not worried. Please. It’s not like I’m waiting for him to call or anything. I just... we hung out. No big deal.

Frannie says nothing to that. Her silence says it all. Hazel rolls her eyes. CUT TO:

QUICK SERIES OF SCENES:

Hazel continues “not to wait” for Gus’s call. We see her:

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Brushing her teeth. And checking her phone.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Watching TV. And checking her phone.