

The Stones Speak  
Synopsis for a Motion Picture  
by Nancy King and Andrew Adleman  
Based on a novel by Nancy King

Dr. Naomi Goldman is a very attractive divorced woman in her 60s, a professor of narrative storytelling in Boston, and a lover of hikes in the woods. While visiting Santa Fe, Naomi falls in love with a house, abandons her characteristic caution and buys the property. To the surprise of her friends on the East Coast, she leaves her academic post to craft a new life for herself in the beautiful Southwest.

An unexpected phone call causes Naomi's buried past from forty years earlier to invade her carefully constructed new life. She maintains her usual silence, hiding her secret from everyone, even her longtime friend Priscilla, a widow and successful anthropologist in her 50s who lives in Santa Fe.

Fun-loving Priscilla has warm, caring relationships, yet keeps an emotional distance that meshes well with Naomi's need to hide the tumultuous time in her life that she has long denied. They talk frequently, mostly about their professional experiences as women. In addition, Priscilla constantly goads Naomi into finding a man.

As the mysterious calls continue, Naomi has memories of being a student visiting Spain in 1959, during the ruthless reign of the dictator Franco. She had a brief encounter with a young anti-Franco revolutionary named Pablo, which set into motion a series of events that the phone calls are bringing to the surface of Naomi's current life.

When Naomi seeks refuge from her anxiety by hiking on Atalaya Mountain, an apparent stray dog adopts her. But the dog's owner, Paul, shows up. When he sees that his dog would rather stay with Naomi, he becomes angry and threatening. Several days later, the dog still refuses to choose between them. So Naomi and Paul decide to share the dog and begin to forge an unlikely emotional connection. Still, Naomi does not tell Paul of the unsettling calls, and Paul does not tell her why his dog is fearful of him.

Priscilla and her current "bedwarmer," a handsome younger man, are shocked that Naomi would consider a relationship with the dog's owner who, in their opinion, is an angry, dangerous man. For the first time in her relationship with Priscilla, Naomi ignores Priscilla's judgment and continues to spend time with Paul.

Naomi works on a book and teaches writing to a group of troubled young women who attend the classes as part of their parole. Although she tries to keep a professional distance, after one of the students is severely beaten, Naomi disregards the rules to help. When the hospitalized student dies, another student wants more help than Naomi believes she can give. Naomi is compelled to look at herself honestly, and see why she has chosen to nurture young people rather than have children of her own.

All these events coalesce as Naomi finds the courage to confront the secret shame and pain she has lived with since her twenties. During her time in Spain, she made love with the young revolutionary, Pablo, who was subsequently arrested. Naomi was questioned, threatened, and deported. After that, she was not able to find Pablo. Back in the United States, Naomi gave birth to a boy who she also named Pablo.

At an extremely hopeless emotional and economic point in her life, she was persuaded by a "helpful" childless couple who wanted to allow them to adopt her three-year-old son. They convinced Naomi that they could take better care of her son, and made her sign an agreement never to see the boy again. Now, years later, her son had found her and asked his attorney, as an intermediary, to set up a meeting. It's the attorney who has been calling

Naomi. Once Naomi decides to see her son, she faces her son's anger and accepts the difficult choice she made as a young woman.

Several days later, a confrontation with Priscilla about Paul reveals the change in Naomi's character. She no longer hides. She no longer backs away from anyone or anything. And, she is no longer willing to do anything to keep Priscilla's friendship. As a result, Priscilla changes her way of relating, revealing some of her own secrets. Naomi forges a new bond with her longtime friend, while her promising love relationship with Paul moves dynamically forward.

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