

## Decoding Ads: Sample – “Heather Cream Liqueur”

SHOT	ENCODED SIGN	DECODABLE MEANING
1. Long overhead reverse tracking shot	<p>SYMBOLIC: Scottish Highland loch and castle</p> <p>TECHNICAL: View from an aeroplane</p>	<p>The ‘real’ Scotland – wild, traditional, natural</p> <p>– overtones of a travel advertisement (sense of ‘being there’)</p>
2. Dissolve to medium long (continues tracking)	<p>SYMBOLIC: Fields of heather below a mountain landscape</p> <p>AUDIO: Non-diegetic soundtrack – a rock-pop version of <i>Auld Lang Syne</i></p>	<p>– unspoilt; healthy; natural</p> <p>– Tradition (Scottish New Year)</p>
3. Tracking ends in close up	<p>SYMBOLIC: Heather blossom growing luxuriantly on hillside</p>	<p>– wild but benevolent and fruitful nature</p>
4. Dissolve to close up of label on bottle	<p>SYMBOLIC: Real heather becomes bottle on label</p> <p>AUDIO: Song of <i>Auld Lang Syne</i> reaches climax</p>	<p>– All previously signified values (authentic, pure, natural, romantic) captured in drink</p>
5. Zoom out from the label	<p>TECHNICAL: The zoom-out mirrors in reverse the opening sequence of tracking shots</p> <p>SYMBOLIC: Bottle revealed in an evening interior with log fire and guests in unfocussed background</p>	<p>– dynamic opposites of day to night; going in the bottle to coming out</p> <p>– genie-like power of drink to deliver our desires, transform us and our surroundings</p>
6. Medium c-u of bottle freezing on two hands toasting	<p>SYMBOLIC: Male and female hands toasting glasses of milk coffee liqueur in front of bottle</p>	<p>– Social (&amp; heterosexual?) bonds harmonised and idealised through drinking alcohol</p>
7. Medium c-u of bottle & two empty glasses	<p>SYMBOLIC: People moving &amp; relaxing around fire</p> <p>AUDIO: Traditional lyric altered from “sake” to the more sensual “<u>taste</u> of <i>Auld Lang Syne</i>”</p>	<p>– Intertextuality: annual ritual song of remembrance transformed into celebration of indulging desires of the moment</p>
8. Extreme c-u of bottle	<p>SYMBOLIC: Medium shot dissolves into c-u of bottle beside flickering firelight</p> <p>AUDIO: song ends before v-o</p>	<p>– Imposing genie-like bottle, a magic repository of friendship, romance, authenticity &amp; good times</p>
9. same	<p>WRITTEN: “Between Friends” superimposed in dissolve</p> <p>AUDIO: heavily accented v-o – “Heather Cream, from Scotland”</p>	<p>– intimacy and openness</p> <p>– authentically Scottish</p> <p>= True friendship only guaranteed by the rituals of drinking</p>