

SOMETHING FOR DR. THODE

Written by

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INT. ELLIOT'S BEDROOM - MORNING

FADE IN on a covered form sleeping soundly in the bed. All is peaceful. Even the rhythmic SNORING is calming, as WE PAN items in the room - photos of a middle-aged couple and their son, hairbrushes, perfume bottles, a class photo of serious, well-dressed college students, some insignificant modern art objects. It's a bedroom paid for by a middle-upper-class doctor, and decorated tastefully and conservatively by his wife. The PAN ends on a neatly packed suitcase with an airplane ticket and cane on top.

ANGLE TIGHT ON a woman's bare feet, as the bedroom door opens slowly, and she enters the room. WE TRACK her feet, as she makes her way to the bed and slips under the covers.

ANGLE ON the sleeping person, who has turned over exposing his face. A trickle of drool pools on the pillow below his open mouth. He is DR. ELLIOT THODE, a psychiatrist specializing in Jungian dream analysis - mid-forties, thinning up front, a stylish goatee that doesn't quite work.

His wife DAISY sidles up close behind Elliot, then surrounds him. He SNORTS awake, looks around. He realizes what is happening and smiles, then turns over to face her.

ELLIOT
(Yawning in her face)
Hi.

DAISY
Morning, Dr. Thode.

He pulls her in closer.

DAISY (CONT'D)
Ooo, glad to see me?

He GROWLS, closes his eyes.

DAISY (CONT'D)
I made your favorite breakfast.
(He smiles)
Eggs Benedict with fried tomatoes
and a big fat sausage.

ELLIOT
Why are you so nice to me?

DAISY
Because it's your special day.

After a moment to process, his eyes pop open.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT
What time is it?

He tries to focus on the alarm clock, can't, grabs his glasses. He shoots straight up.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Oh no. It's eight, thirty.

DAISY
So?

ELLIOT
My flight is at ten.

He is up and running, heart pounding.

DAISY
Oh, I'm sorry.

He grabs his cane, ambles to the closet and starts throwing clothes on - his suit, tie, shirt, and shoes having been neatly arranged the night before.

ELLIOT
The alarm didn't go off.

DAISY
I turned it off so you could sleep.

ELLIOT
Oh Daisy, why?

DAISY
I didn't think you'd leave this early.

ELLIOT
It's the only flight I could get this time of year.

DAISY
But Christmas isn't until next week.

ELLIOT
I didn't make the rules.

DAISY
Is there anything I can do?

ELLIOT
No.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He tries to contain his frustration. She starts to weep.

DAISY
I'm sorry.

ELLIOT
It's okay. Don't cry.

She has obviously reacted this way before.

DAISY
They'll wait for you, won't they?
They can't start without you.

ELLIOT
I'm not the only one being honored.
If I'm not there, they'll just skip
over me.

She cries again.

DAISY
After all this and I screw it up
for you.

Her crying only adds to his growing frustration.

ELLIOT
It's okay. You didn't know. It was
my fault for not telling you.

DAISY
Can I drive you to the airport?

ELLIOT
No, no. It'll be faster if I just
do it myself.

DAISY
I'm sorry. I'm so sor-

ELLIOT
It's okay. You're not helping.

DAISY
I know. What about breakfast?

ELLIOT
There's no time.

DAISY
Tommy got up early and made coffee
and waffles...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ELLIOT

Put something together and I'll eat
it in the car.

DAISY

Okay.

(On her way out)

I can wrap some eggs in an English
muffin, with some bacon. Do you
want coffee?

ELLIOT

Put some in my thermos.

He finishes and checks himself in the mirror. A little
crooked here and there, he'll fix himself later. He goes into
the bathroom and comes back a moment later with a toothbrush
in his mouth and running a shaver over his face. His zipper
is down.

He grabs his overcoat and tears out of the bedroom. A moment
later, he comes back in, grabs his suitcase and ticket,
juggles those items with his cane, and runs back out.

INT. ELLIOT'S ENTRYWAY - MORNING

As Elliot makes his way toward the door, grabbing a scarf and
hat on the way. Daisy and TOMMY their 12-year-old son meet
him carrying a portable breakfast wrapped hastily in foil,
and his thermos.

DAISY

What about orange juice?

ELLIOT

I got to run.

TOMMY

I'll get it.

Tommy runs to the kitchen. Elliot hands Daisy the shaver and
grabs the food, while putting on the overcoat.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Tommy, never mind, I got to go.
There's no time.

DAISY

Good bye.

A quick hug and kiss. Tommy runs in with a glass.

ELLIOT

Tom, I can't take that in the car.
Thanks anyway.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TOMMY

Bye.

ELLIOT

Bye. I love you.

DAISY

Good luck.

He's off.

DAISY (CONT'D)

Have a wonderful time. I wish I could be with you. I love you. I'm sorry.

ELLIOT (O.S.)

Don't be sorry.

INT. CAR - MORNING

Elliot is sitting in his BMW sedan, stuck in slow highway traffic. Snow is falling steadily. He is attempting to eat chunks of the messy breakfast, as he changes radio stations.

RADIO (V.O.)

Heavy snow is forecast for the Lake Champlain area throughout the day and into the night. If you have travel plans, check with your airline to make sure your flight is on time or has not been cancelled...

He attempts to turn off the radio and the heater comes on full force and lights start flashing. He pounds the steering wheel and angrily presses buttons randomly on the infotainment screen until the NOISE and lightshow go away.

Traffic stops. Elliot checks the cars around him. All lanes are jammed behind a slow traffic light way off in the distance.

He settles back in his seat and daydreams.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ELLIOT'S OFFICE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

CLOSE on an official letter from the American Analysts Conference: CONGRATULATIONS!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON ELLIOT, seated at his neat New England desk reading the letter. Slowly, his expression brightens and he stands. He grabs his cane and paces excitedly, does a subtle wahoo.

He finishes the letter and flies out the door, in an uncharacteristic display of exuberance, to the waiting room.

INT. ELLIOT'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM (FLASHBACK)

As Elliot enters, a waiting client and the receptionist GLENDA look up. He tries to maintain a professional demeanor, as he nods to the client and approaches Glenda.

ELLIOT

Glenda, will you please reply to this letter and tell them I will be able to attend and thank them... uh very much?

GLENDA

Sure, what is it?

She reads.

ELLIOT

It's a... it's a psychiatric conference. They need to know how many will be attending. You know. So they can plan how many Cornish game hens to pluck. We can talk about it later...

GLENDA

(Suddenly excited, under her breath)
They're honoring you?!

ELLIOT

Yeah. It's an honor thing...
A little plaque and a free meal.

GLENDA (CONT'D)

Analyst of the year? My God.
Elliot, this is... umm

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

It's good news.

GLENDA

Congratulations.

ELLIOT

Thank you.

Elliot turns to Mrs. KRAVITZ, an overweight woman in stretch pants.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Mrs. Kravitz, how you doing?

He points to his office and she leads him in, starting the session before she gets to the door.

MRS. KRAVITZ
Could be better. So, what else is new? I've been having dreams about Melvin again lately. I'm running around in this mall with no doors telling people my gall bladder's about to burst and no one listens. I figure that's got to be some kind of pent up rage or something.

Elliot turns to Glenda and smiles and rolls his eyes.

ELLIOT
Thank you for the nice card, by the way.

MRS. KRAVITZ
(Changing gears)
Isn't that something?! That crazy girl. How is your leg anyway?

ELLIOT
Better.

He follows Kravitz in.

MRS. KRAVITZ
Good. I hope you don't think I'm that nutty.

ELLIOT
(Smiling)
I don't think you're even close to that nutty, Mrs. Kravitz...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAR - MORNING

Elliot is one car away from the intersection. The light turns yellow. The car in front of him slips through. Red. He floors the pedal and flies through.

Racked with guilt, he leans forward, eyes set. He has no choice. He shifts to a lower gear and guns the engine. He risks it all, changing lanes, back and forth, weaving his way around the sluggish vehicles, faster and faster, the snow piling higher and higher.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Then, up ahead it's another red light and traffic comes to a halt.

He leans back, closes his eyes.

ELLIOT (PRE-LAP)
Oh you guys. What could this be?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MEXICAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Elliot, Tommy and Daisy are seated with chips and drinks. Daisy hands Elliot a hastily-wrapped present.

He rattles and squeezes it.

TOMMY
Just open it.

DAISY
I had to cash-out our retirement plan, but it's worth it.

ELLIOT
Ha ha.

The gift is a cheesy plastic trophy with the inscription: World's Best Dad.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
You shouldn't have.

DAISY
It was nothing.

ELLIOT
That's why you shouldn't have.

TOMMY
It's real gold-like plastic.

DAISY
I had it engraved special for you.

ELLIOT
I'm touched.

DAISY
There's more. Keep unwrapping.

He digs deeper and finds a small velvet box.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT
 What's this?
 (Opening it)
 It's beautiful.

He pulls out a shiny gold watch on a chain.

DAISY
 I remembered you said you wanted
 one.

ELLIOT
 I did. I'm really fond of these
 things. Thank you.

TOMMY
 It'll make you look more like a
 psychiatrist.

ELLIOT
 (Noting the goatee)
 I thought I already looked like
 one.

TOMMY
 Eh. You could use a little help.

He dangles the watch in front of Tommy's eyes.

ELLIOT
 Vatch da vatch. You are getting
 sleepy.

TOMMY
 It's not working.

ELLIOT
 You're not concentrating. Just let
 your mind drift.

TOMMY
 I think you're hypnotizing Mom.

Her eyes are half-lidded from the Margaritas.

ELLIOT
 When I snap my fingers, you will
 remember only that I was trying to
 hypnotize you.

SNAP.

TOMMY
 It didn't work.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELLIOT

What?

TOMMY

Hypnotizing me.

ELLIOT

I wasn't trying to hypnotize you.

TOMMY

Yes you... Oh, I see what you're trying to do.

ELLIOT

See what?

As the two continue, a group of Mariachis surrounds the table and the waiter sets a flaming dessert in front of Elliot.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Oh no.

The group begins to play and sing a Mexican birthday song loudly. Tommy and Daisy laugh, Elliot rolls his eyes and shakes his head. Then, everyone in the restaurant joins in with the HAPPY BIRTHDAY SONG. They put a sombrero on Elliot, and take a Polaroid as Elliot blows out the dessert. They CLAP and CHEER.

QUICK CUT TO:

INT. AIRPORT GATE - DAY

CLOSE ON the monitor behind the ticket agent desk: FLIGHT 429B CANCELLED.

ON ELLIOT. He looks from the monitor down to the bedraggled ticket agent, typing madly. Elliot is out of breath from running through the concourse, his zipper is still down and his cheek has a smudge of toothpaste.

ELLIOT

The flight was cancelled?

TICKET AGENT

Yup.

He waits for more information.

ELLIOT

So...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TICKET AGENT

I can put you on standby for the next available flight if you want.

ELLIOT

(Relieved)

Thank you.

Elliot slumps and hands her his tickets.

EXT. AIRPORT SMOKING AREA - DAY

Ten or so pathetic smokers are huddled and pacing under an awning as the snow drifts down into thick, fresh piles around them.

Elliot steps from the terminal with a cigarette dangling from his mouth, checking his pockets for the matches. He approaches a short, stocky man wearing a worker jacket and cap.

ELLIOT

Excuse me, you got a light?

He hands Elliot a book of matches.

SMOKER

Here, keep 'em.

ELLIOT

Thanks.

Elliot hungrily lights up and takes a long drag. Then, he stands impatiently and stares at the sheet of falling snow, his mind a million miles away.

ELLIOT (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)

Who is the man with the half-hidden face?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ELLIOT'S OFFICE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

ANGLE ON HEATHER GOLDMAN lying on the couch staring at the ceiling. Heather is 20, thin. She dresses and has the tanned, processed appearance of a young woman who is using daddy's fortune to buy beauty that just isn't there.

HEATHER

I don't know. A demon. Some kind of evil monster.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT (O.S.)

Do you know anybody who is tall,
thin, maybe a little stooped at the
shoulders?

She thinks deeply.

ELLIOT (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You may not recognize the person on
a conscious level, because your
mind has constructed him from bits
and pieces of all kinds of people
in your memory. It could be part
someone you met on the street, saw
on TV, a friend, relative-

Suddenly, an important realization comes to her.

HEATHER

It's my father.

She is at once terrified and ecstatic.

ELLIOT (O.S.)

Your father?

HEATHER

Yes, it is definitely my father.

ELLIOT (O.S.)

Hmm. Keep going.

HEATHER

He is the demon in the dream. And
other dreams. Whenever I think I've
found the way out, he's right there
blocking me, holding me back. My
God. Do you think?

She opens her eyes and rises to a sitting position, as if
weightless.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

It makes sense. It makes so much
sense.

ELLIOT

He holds you back.

HEATHER

He does.

ELLIOT

And not just in your dreams.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HEATHER

Yes, yes. Whenever I feel the slightest bit good about myself, he's right there telling me I'm nothing. Cutting me down, pushing me back, making me feel small, never seeing the good in me.

ELLIOT

Give me an example.

HEATHER

You know, like grades in school. I'd kill myself to get a B, but no, that's not good enough. It has to be an A. B's are for losers. I could never bring home boyfriends, because none of them were any good. 'He's a loser.' 'You can do better than that.' No matter what I did, it was always...

(Like a Jewish father)

'Hon, you have so much potential. Why do you waste it?' No matter what I did, I could NEVER please him. Never!

ELLIOT

Sounds like he could turn a compliment into a condemnation.

She stands and paces to help her think.

HEATHER

(Starting to cry)

Yes. He condemned me!

ELLIOT

He condemned you with kindness.

HEATHER

Yes. Condemned me with kindness!

ELLIOT

Maybe he simply wanted you to try harder, but what you heard was 'you're no good, you're a failure.'

HEATHER

Yes!

She stops at the window, looking out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ELLIOT

Heather. You are not a failure. I know that. You must know that in your heart. And I'm sure your father knows it too. He was a high school drop-out. You got through high school and you're half-way through college, and doing very well. He is projecting his feelings of failure on you. It's not you. It's him.

HEATHER

Are you sure?

ELLIOT

What do you think?

She paces, slower, as the truth sinks in. She sits, facing him.

HEATHER

You're right. Of course, you're right.

ELLIOT

How do you feel about your father?

HEATHER

I think I still love him.

ELLIOT

And if you love him, he can't be wrong about you, he wouldn't try to hurt you. Right?

HEATHER

Yeah.

ELLIOT

So, if he can't be wrong, then you must feel...

HEATHER

I'm a failure. Daddy can't be wrong, because I love him.

ELLIOT

The conflict. But the truth is...

HEATHER

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

ELLIOT
What is the truth?

HEATHER
I am not a failure.

She leans back.

ELLIOT
Your father can love you very much
and you can love him very much, but
your father is only human. He can
make mistakes, not handle things
right. He can be wrong. And that's
okay. Do you see what I'm getting
at?

HEATHER
I can love him, he can love me, but
that doesn't mean he's right.

Elliot smiles.

HEATHER (CONT'D)
I love you.

She reaches out and hugs Elliot with feeling. He is a bit surprised, but carefully reciprocates. He would love nothing more than to let go and celebrate the moment with her, but knows full well the inherent danger in a hug.

SMOKER (PRE-LAP)
Every year, it gets a little worse,
don't it?

EXT. AIRPORT SMOKING AREA - DAY

Elliot snaps back to reality.

ELLIOT
(Agreeing to anything)
Hmm.

SMOKER
I don't know why I keep doing it.
It's killing me and I keep doing
it. Life is a precious thing,
right?

Smoker turns to face Elliot, and leans on a railing.

SMOKER (CONT'D)
I'm unemployed. How about you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT
I'm a psychiatrist.

SOKER
A shrink, huh? Hey, I got one for you. My wife thinks I'm crazy because I don't worry. I don't know. I've heard of people being crazy because they worry too much, but not because they don't worry at all. You know. It's not as if I'm a slacker or nothing. I work when I got work. But maybe I am. What do you think?

ELLIOT
Hmm?

SOKER
Do you think I'm crazy?

ELLIOT
You're not crazy.

SOKER
I didn't think so. Well, one less thing to worry about, huh?

Elliot stares into the snow, taking one last deep drag.

INT. AIRPORT GATE COUNTER - DAY

Elliot faces the Ticket Agent.

TICKET AGENT
I'm sorry, Mr. Thode. We called your name several times.

ELLIOT
But the flight wasn't until...

He looks at the ticket.

TICKET AGENT
Eleven.

ELLIOT
Eleven.

He must have misread the ticket.

TICKET AGENT
I'm sorry, we couldn't wait. Do you want me to put you on standby for-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT

Sure.

INT. GATE SEATING AREA BY WINDOW - DAY

Elliot paces while waiting with his cell phone. The snow has reduced visibility to nothing.

ELLIOT

Hi, it's me. The flight was cancelled and I'm on standby.

INTERCUT

BETWEEN:

INT. ELLIOT'S KITCHEN - DAY

As Daisy cleans up. The house is warm and cozy, all decorated up with Christmas stuff. Tommy is reading in front of the fireplace in the den area.

DAISY

Are you going to make it?

ELLIOT

Yeah, if I can get on the next flight.

DAISY

How are you doing?

ELLIOT

I'm fine. It's okay. Everything's fine.

BEAT.

DAISY

Why don't you come home?

ELLIOT

What?

DAISY

Just come home. Call the conference people, tell them you couldn't get a flight.

ELLIOT

Daisy, you don't understand, this is... a really important thing for me. I have to be there. I can't just not show up. That's not an option.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAISY

I know.

ELLIOT

I don't think you do.

DAISY

I'm sorry.

ELLIOT

Don't be sorry. I'll make it. I've got plenty of time.

DAISY

I know. But... I know it's important...

ELLIOT

I'll call you when I get there.

DAISY

Okay. Have a good t-

The cell phone BEEPS. Elliot looks at it, then tries again.

ELLIOT

Daisy, you there. Hello? Damn it.

It's dead. He shoves it in his pocket. An announcement comes over the PA...

PA (V.O.)

Attention all passengers, we have just received notice that all flights have been cancelled, due to weather conditions.

Elliot's jaw drops. What more could go wrong?

PA (V.O.)

This affects all flights from this point forward until further notice. We regret any inconvenience...

INT. CAR - DAY

Elliot is crawling along once again in heavy traffic, through near white-out conditions.

RADIO (V.O.)

A multiple-car fatality is blocking all lanes of Interstate 89 south of Waterbury. Alternate routes are recommended in that area.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RADIO (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 All highways are very slow out of
 Burlington. We are expecting
 accumulations of up to nine inches
 by-

Elliot SNAPS off the radio and is once again floating in a
 field of white and flashing lights.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ELLIOT'S DEN - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

As Tommy, Daisy, and Elliot sit reading in front of the
 fireplace. Elliot lowers his book and studies Daisy, then
 Tommy. Looks at his watch. He goes back to the book, but
 quickly gives it up and sets it down.

He pulls out his phone and checks his texts.

ANGLE ON PHONE, He has sent a number of texts to Heather -
 "How are you doing?", "Please let me know if you're ok",
 "Heather, please text me!" - but no reply.

ANGLE RESUME GROUP. Daisy comes over to him and sits.

DAISY
 Would you like me to make some
 cocoa?

ELLIOT
 No thanks.

She rubs his shoulders, senses something.

DAISY
 What's wrong?

ELLIOT
 It's one of my clients.

DAISY
 Oh. The same one?

ELLIOT
 Yeah. She's suicidal. I'm
 thinking... I feel I should... do
 something. Maybe check on her.

DAISY
 So, do it.

ELLIOT
 Yeah, maybe I should.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Daisy withdraws her arm from his shoulder. She looks deeply in his eyes. He looks away in thought, then turns back to her. She hasn't turned away.

DAISY

You know what I'm thinking.

ELLIOT

You've made yourself perfectly clear.

INT. ELLIOT'S STUDY - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

As Elliot holds the phone waiting for an answer. Nothing. He hangs up. He is tense and worried.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

As Elliot passes under a freeway sign: Montpelier.

Visibility is near zero, cars are parked and smoking, barely creeping along. Up ahead is a surreal light-show of flashing red and blue. Cars are being diverted to one lane around a massive accident.

Elliot leans back.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SORORITY HOUSE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

A LOUD PARTY is in full swing - music is throbbing, young people are LAUGHING and SHOUTING. Several couples on the porch are engaged in various stages of love-making.

ANGLE ELLIOT, as he watches from the sidewalk. (No cane.) After steeling himself, he heads up the walkway to the porch steps and into the house.

INT. SORORITY HOUSE MAIN ROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

As Elliot enters and looks around in the darkness. The MUSIC is deafening and students are packed in tightly, dancing and playing. The 40+ psychiatrist looks and feels conspicuous and out of place. He makes his way slowly across the room to a staircase, and up.

INT. SORORITY HOUSE 2ND FLOOR HALL - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

He looks up and down the hall, stops a passing student.

ELLIOT

Excuse me. I'm looking for Heather Goldman.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STUDENT
(Pointing)
Last door on the left, I think.

ELLIOT
Thanks.

He goes to the door and KNOCKS. Heather opens it. She is obviously very intoxicated on some sort of depressant.

HEATHER
(Surprised)
Elliot.

ELLIOT
(Cheerfully)
I came by to see how you're doing.

She doesn't believe him.

HEATHER
(Smiling)
You already know how I'm doing.

He enters cautiously...

INT. HEATHER'S ROOM - NIGHT

It is small, dark and over-decorated with weird, depressing objects and pictures. The only illumination comes from a lava lamp and indirectly from a blue light behind the single bed. She turns the CD down.

ELLIOT
Are we alone?

HEATHER
Yeah, Lisa's downstairs.

She takes this as a sign that Elliot wants to play. She faces him and runs her hands along his arms.

ELLIOT
Heather, let's talk.

HEATHER
Why?

ELLIOT
That's why I came over.

HEATHER
I don't want to talk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT

I know, but we need to-

She grabs his arms and falls back on the bed, pulling him on top of her, LAUGHING. He panics, pulls his arms free and manages to stand. He straightens his shirt, turns back, notes the door is still open, knows he's made a big mistake.

HEATHER

What's wrong?

ELLIOT

You know I can't do that.

HEATHER

Why?

ELLIOT

It wouldn't be right.

She turns her back to him and curls up in a ball.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

You are a very attractive woman,
and it is very difficult for me,
but we can't have sex. It would be
wrong. We can talk. Okay?

He pulls a desk chair over and sits next to her.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

I'm... I'm not judging you. I'm not
your father.

HEATHER

My father would have had sex with
me.

His planned talk suddenly falls apart.

ELLIOT

He would have?

HEATHER

Yes.

ELLIOT

He did?

She nods.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

(Regrouping)
I didn't know that.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
You've never mentioned it.
(BEAT)
How old were you?

HEATHER
A little girl.

Elliot isn't sure where to go.

ELLIOT
We can talk about it if you want?

HEATHER
No.

ELLIOT
That's fine. We can talk later.

HEATHER
You must think I'm a slut.

ELLIOT
I don't. I just think maybe you
could be confusing caring with sex.
(No response)
Do you want to tell me what your
father did?

HEATHER
No. Not now.

ELLIOT
That's fine. Tell me why you think
I think you're a slut.

She rises to a sitting position, with her knee touching his.
He notes this.

HEATHER
Dr. Thode, I don't want to talk
now.

ELLIOT
(Cautious)
I understand. When you're ready. I
think there's a lot that you need
to get out. We'll have a lot to
talk about at your next visit.

A long SILENCE.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Heather, can I say something to
you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

She nods.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
I'd like you to look at me. Can you
do that?

She shakes her head.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Have you taken your medication
tonight?

She nods.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Will you tell me what else you've
taken?

HEATHER
That's all.

ELLIOT
I am concerned about you. Can you
promise me something?

No response.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Can you promise me that you will
not try to hurt yourself?

No response.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Heather, I'm not... I'm not going
to leave until you promise me. Your
father can't hurt you anymore. He's
not here. He's just a memory...
that you own and can do whatever
you want with. I am concerned. I
care about you and I want to help
you get through this and feel good
about yourself. Isn't that what you
want?

She nods.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
You are a good person. You are a
success, not a failure. You deserve
a chance to live and be happy, and
you can. Will you please promise me-

She reaches out and hugs Elliot tenderly, crying.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

HEATHER

Dr. Thode, I'm sorry. I won't hurt myself.

ELLIOT

Do you promise?

HEATHER

Yeah.

ELLIOT

Can you look me in the eye and say that?

HEATHER

(She does)

I promise I will not hurt myself.

ELLIOT

(Smiling)

Good. Phew. You had me worried. You have my phone numbers. Right?

HEATHER

Yes.

She points to a business card on her night stand.

ELLIOT

Call me anytime. Okay?

She nods.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

You're a good person, a good woman. We need you.

He stands.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

I'll check with you in the morning before school. Okay?

She nods. Elliot goes to the door, still not sure.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Take care of yourself. Get some sleep.

She nods and attempts a smile. He walks out. After the door closes, she lowers her head and turns back into a ball.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAR - DAY

Elliot takes the last drag from his last cigarette, and tosses it and the empty pack out the window.

He can make out a cop ahead waving traffic around a serious crash scene. As he gets closer, he begins to see the magnitude of the accident - multiple cars sit in crumpled steaming heaps. Workers transport the dead and injured into waiting ambulances, and firemen fight the deluge of snow to unbend the metal cages that trap more bodies. The suffering is palpable.

As Elliot passes, he looks to the side and makes unexpected eye contact with one of the victims - a man about his age, standing in his shirtsleeves with a dazed, dead look. The man has lost it all and no one can help him, and he will not release Elliot from his gaze. He stares forever, until an Officer breaks the trance and waves Elliot on.

Elliot jerks his head forward and slams down on the peddle. The car slides and lurches ahead into the field of white. Elliot checks his mirror until the flashing lights fade away, and he is enveloped, and driving blind.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

As the main doors fly open and Elliot runs in. He heads to the nurses' station. It is very late. A resident doctor is standing at the station reading charts.

ELLIOT

I'm Dr. Thode to see Heather Goldman.

RESIDENT

Oh yes. She's in E5.

ELLIOT

Where's uh?

RESIDENT

I'll show you.

ELLIOT

Thanks.

WE TRACK the two, as they hurry down the hall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RESIDENT

The on-call put her on oxygen, fluids, adrenaline, and gave her 2 milligrams of benztropine for some dystonic reaction. We think she OD'd on the olanzapine you prescribed. When emergency got to her she was unconscious, heartrate and BP were very low. She's stable now. We're going to move her to a private room, as soon as it's ready.

ELLIOT

Has anyone contacted her parents?

RESIDENT

I'm pretty sure. Left a message anyway.

They come to a large window overlooking the ICU. Several patients are sleeping, connected to IVs and monitors. Heather is the one on the end. Elliot is struck cold at the sight of her limp body and gray skin, and the machines. He is barely able to talk.

ELLIOT

Thank you.

RESIDENT

Not much you can do now.

The resident leaves Elliot staring, speechless.

INT. CAR - DAY

Brake lights flash on and Elliot SKIDS to a stop. Another slowdown. He looks to the side and sees the off-ramp to Waterbury, which appears to be free of traffic.

The car in front of him moves ahead a few inches. Elliot cranks the steering wheel hard to the right and floors it down the off-ramp.

ELLIOT (PRE-LAP)

(Quietly)

Heather. Heather.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PRIVATE HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING (FLASHBACK)

Heather is lying in bed, beginning to come to. Elliot is standing beside her, repeating her name.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

After a moment, her eyes open slowly, painfully. She GROANS. As consciousness returns, she becomes increasingly disoriented and confused.

HEATHER

Oh my God. Doctor...

ELLIOT

You're in Burlington General.
You're okay. Do you remember last night?

HEATHER

Oh.

She squeezes her eyes closed.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Why are you here?

ELLIOT

I was very worried about you. How do you feel now?

HEATHER

My head...

ELLIOT

You will have a hangover for awhile.

HEATHER

I'm really hungry.

ELLIOT

(Smiling)

Good. We'll get you some breakfast. It's a beautiful morning.

HEATHER

(Opening her eyes)

Yeah.

ELLIOT

The nurses are still trying to contact your parents.

She GROANS, opens her eyes a bit.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Would you rather not see them now?

She nods.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

I understand.

HEATHER

I wish they would understand. I wish everybody would understand.

ELLIOT

I know.

(BEAT)

The hospital is not going to let you go until I tell them it's okay, and you're safe... and you won't try to hurt yourself again.

HEATHER

Can I just think about it?

ELLIOT

Of course. You rest.

He starts to pull away, but she reaches for his hand.

HEATHER

I'm sorry.

ELLIOT

For what?

HEATHER

That you had to come down here.

ELLIOT

It's all right.

HEATHER

You're so good to me. I don't deserve it.

ELLIOT

Yeah, you do.

HEATHER

No, I don't.

ELLIOT

Yes, you do.

HEATHER

No.

ELLIOT

Okay, fine. But you do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HEATHER

Stop it.

(They smile)

Ow, my head. I'm sorry about the way I acted last night. I felt really bad after you left.

ELLIOT

You don't have to feel bad. It was a misunderstanding.

HEATHER

Why do you keep trying with me?

ELLIOT

Because you're worth it. You're a good person. I want you to get better and be happy.

HEATHER

Is that the only reason?

ELLIOT

No.

(With difficulty)

I care about you.

HEATHER

The same way you care about all your patients?

ELLIOT

(After a moment)

No.

He turns away from her. Heather waits for more.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Let me see about getting you some breakfast, okay?

Heather won't let go of his hand. He stops and looks her in the eye, then covers her hand with his.

EXT. TWO-LANE HIGHWAY - LATER

As Elliot passes at a fast clip down the empty road. The storm is lighter now with visibility of over a mile, revealing a bucolic landscape of farms and pine trees in shades of gray and white. It's early afternoon, but the sun is sinking rapidly.

INT. CAR - DAY

Elliot presses buttons randomly on the infotainment screen until the heater comes on QUIETLY.

As he stares at the endless road, his mind wanders.

ELLIOT (PRE-LAP)
Daisy, is something wrong?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

As he steps out of the room into the busy corridor and heads toward the nurses' station. Daisy is standing there, looking his way.

DAISY
I was worried. You came home late last night and then left early this morning.

He looks at his watch.

ELLIOT
I'm sorry. I was, uh... wanted to check on Heather.

DAISY
How is she doing?

ELLIOT
(Smiling)
Fine. She's fine. Thank God.

DAISY
God?

ELLIOT
(Smiling)
Whatever.
(To a passing nurse)
Excuse me, can you check on Heather Goldman. She's conscious now, doing fine, she could use some breakfast.

The nurse nods.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
(to Daisy, yawning)
She just came around a few minutes ago.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAISY

Do you want to get some coffee?

ELLIOT

I don't know. I'm pretty worn out.

DAISY

(Looking him in the eye)

I think we should get some coffee.

INT. HOSPITAL COFFEE BAR

They are seated in a secluded spot outside, facing each other across a small table. They speak quietly. They've had this conversation before.

DAISY

Last night. Did you break the rules?

ELLIOT

The guidelines. Yes.

DAISY

In what way.

ELLIOT

I went to her dorm room... and we talked and she hugged me. I pushed her... away, gently. But she was heavily medicated... and we did touch. It happened.

She looks him in the eye for a few beats.

DAISY

(Shaking her head)

You can't do that. Of course you know that.

ELLIOT

She's over 18, so...

DAISY

Doesn't matter. It's your word against hers, and you know who's side they'll take.

ELLIOT

It was an impossible situation.

DAISY

Not really. It's pretty straightforward, you-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT

Alright. I admit last night got away from me, somewhat. But I was... I kept my wits. I knew what I was doing.

DAISY

But did you know what she was doing?

BEAT.

ELLIOT

I'm learning more every day.

DAISY

Elliot. I know you want to give patients the best treatment you can. And you care. And I like that you care. And your patients are better for it. But... You can't let them manipulate you... And get you in trouble.

ELLIOT

I know.

DAISY

Do you?

ELLIOT

Yes, I do. But it's... there are the protocols and the rules and the science and they all sound good, but when you're right there with the patient and they're crying and in pain and you can see it in their eyes and they're reaching out and asking for another human being to care about them and listen to them and share their pain, sometimes you can't find the right protocol to make them feel better. You just have to... take their hand, give them a hug, be a friend, for just a minute until they can get their footing.

DAISY

(Shaking her head)

I get it. I do. But it scares me. You do things like this all the time, where you make up your own protocols...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DAISY (CONT'D)
and skirt the ethical guidelines. I guess it's just your style, walking this fine line, but it scares me. And I wish you'd think about yourself... and us when you do these things.

ELLIOT
I hear you.

DAISY
Someday you're going to find yourself on the wrong side of that line. And I just wonder if you're going to be aware of the consequences when you do?

He's heard it a million times.

ELLIOT
I don't know why I do it sometimes. It's not good.

DAISY
(Taking his hand)
How can caring not be good?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAR - DAY

As Elliot drives in a half-dream state. The snowfall is thickening.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ELLIOT'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

As Elliot rushes in the front door, removing his coat (no cane). He is surprised to see Heather sitting there waiting for him next to a strange man.

ELLIOT
Heather. Hi. This isn't Tuesday, is it?

HEATHER
(Standing)
No.

ELLIOT
Phew. Thought I'd lost it there for second.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She seems very uncomfortable.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
What's up?

HEATHER
This is my Dad.

Her father stands and extends his hand. This is not a friendly visit.

ROBERT
Robert Goldman.

ELLIOT
Elliot Thode, nice to meet you.

ROBERT
Do you have a moment?

INT. ELLIOT'S OFFICE (FLASHBACK)

Robert and Heather face Elliot across his desk.

ROBERT
Heather will be leaving the university.

ELLIOT
Oh?

ROBERT
She's going back to Florida to live with us. We'll find a school there.

ELLIOT
Well, I'll be sorry to see her go.

ROBERT
I'm sure you will.

Elliot is taken aback.

ELLIOT
(To Heather)
Are you planning to continue therapy?

ROBERT
I think we've had enough with therapy.

ELLIOT
Her medication will need to be-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERT

Dr. Thode, we're taking Heather out of school and bringing her home BECAUSE of therapy.

ELLIOT

I don't-

ROBERT

Before she started seeing you, she was depressed, a little mixed up maybe, but she never attempted suicide. I thought therapy was supposed to prevent those kinds of things from happening.

ELLIOT

Ultimately yes, but sometimes when a patient starts to open up-

ROBERT

That's not the worst of it.
(Choked up)
You took advantage of my daughter.

Elliot's shock is total.

ELLIOT

You've got something wrong.

ROBERT

She told my wife, she was... in love with you. And she tried to kill herself because of you.

HEATHER

(Frightened)

I told her Dr. Thode was the only one who cared-

ROBERT

(Threatening)

Heather. We'll talk later.

ELLIOT

Mr. Goldman, people in therapy often-

ROBERT

So, you don't deny it.

ELLIOT

It's very common for patients to feel they're in love-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ROBERT

I'm disgusted. How could you allow this to go on? To take advantage of a young woman who placed her trust in you. It makes me... sick.

ELLIOT

I didn't feel-

ROBERT

And once you had her under your control-

HEATHER

Dad, he didn't-

ROBERT

You controlled her. You could do whatever disgusting, perverted thing you wanted.

ELLIOT

You're wrong.

ROBERT

(Standing)

I suggest you get a good attorney, because I'm not going to let go of you until I see you burn in hell.

Robert turns toward the door. As Heather stands, she looks at Elliot. Their eyes meet. Elliot searches for an answer, but sees only that she is very confused and very much in love with him.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TWO-LANE HIGHWAY - DAY

The snowfall has abated, but a thick, stubborn fog is covering the hills and pastures ahead. As Elliot passes straight through an intersection, WE PAN to a half-hidden road sign that indicates a right-turn for Boston.

PINE (PRE-LAP)

Dr. Thode, how long have you been married?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LAW FIRM MEETING ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Elliot sits next to his attorney, STORCH, across the table from Goldman's attorneys, FEINMAN and PINE, as they take Elliot's deposition.

ELLIOT
Fifteen years.

PINE
Children?

ELLIOT
One boy, age twelve.

PINE
Any previous marriages?

ELLIOT
No.

PINE
Ever have an affair while you were married?

ELLIOT
(To Storch)
Do I...?

STORCH
(To Pine)
Mr. Pine, where are you going with this?

PINE
Either answer the question or don't.

STORCH
Go ahead and answer the question, Elliot.

ELLIOT
(Getting steamed)
No. No extramarital affairs. I'm happily married and love my wife and son. I have several young female patients and I'm not having affairs with them or any other of my patients.

PINE
Fine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STORCH

Elliot, just answer the questions.
You don't have to disclose anything-

ELLIOT

I realize that.

Storch watches Elliot carefully.

FEINMAN

How long had you been seeing
Heather Goldman?

ELLIOT

Heather had been my client for six
months, starting in the fall, right
after the beginning of the school
term.

FEINMAN

How often did you see her?

ELLIOT

We met twice a week in my office
for two months, then once a week
every Tuesday.

FEINMAN

(Looking straight at
Elliot)
How often outside the office?

ELLIOT

(A beat)
She would have these episodes of
intense depression.

FEINMAN

Please just answer the question.

ELLIOT

When she was alone outside the
office I was-

FEINMAN

Please.

ELLIOT

I stopped in at her dorm a few
times to check on her.

FEINMAN

Exactly how many times?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELLIOT

Oh...

FEINMAN

Once a month? Once a week?

ELLIOT

Two or three times total.

FEINMAN

Why?

ELLIOT

Uh, I have to be careful here.

FEINMAN

Why?

ELLIOT

To protect her privacy.

FEINMAN

Fine. Tell us as much as you can.

ELLIOT

All right. We were making some very important and profound progress in her treatment. She was opening up to me. Often when patients begin to discover the sources of their emotional illnesses, they become more vulnerable. I felt she was at risk of harming herself in some way, so I stopped in a few times to see how she was doing.

PINE

Do you devote this much time and attention to all your patients?

ELLIOT

(Beat)

No. If they require...

PINE

Dr. Thode, I've spoken with several psychiatrists and none of them visit their patients. I would venture to say that it is not a common practice. Do you agree?

ELLIOT

I do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

PINE
Why do you think that is?

STORCH
Mr. Pine, come on. You're asking
him for an opinion-

PINE
Fine. Don't answer.

ELLIOT
Most psychiatrists I suppose feel
it is not necessary.

STORCH
Elliot. You don't have to answer
those questions-

PINE
Do you charge a fee for house
calls?

ELLIOT
No.

PINE
Do you have a full patient load?

ELLIOT
Very much so.

PINE
You have a full patient load, a
wife and child, and yet you still
make time for house calls, for
which you charge no fee?

Elliot nods.

PINE (CONT'D)
For how many patients do you make
house calls?

Elliot searches for the right thing to say.

PINE (CONT'D)
How many patients are you currently
visiting at their homes?

ELLIOT
Just Heather, now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

PINE
 (Quietly, feigning
 sensitivity)
 Did you know Heather was, in her
 words, in love with you?

ELLIOT
 It is common for a patient to bond
 emotionally with their therapist.

PINE
 Meaning?

ELLIOT
 Patients can feel they are in love
 with their therapists.

PINE
 Do you feel that is the case with
 Heather?

ELLIOT
 Yes.

PINE
 Did you discourage her? Let her
 know that this attachment was wrong
 or ill-conceived, a by-product of
 the therapy?

ELLIOT
 No. But I didn't encourage-

PINE
 She was in love with you and you
 didn't discourage her, and you
 visited her at her dorm, and you
 see nothing wrong here?

Storch stiffens.

ELLIOT
 (Quietly, confidently)
 No.

INT. ELLIOT'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING (FLASHBACK)

ANGLE CLOSE on a glass tumbler, surrounded, but not held, by
 a male hand. The ice has long since melted, leaving a quarter
 inch of amber liquid.

A female hand reaches in and gently removes the glass.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON ELLIOT seated in his corner of the couch, as he startles awake. Daisy stands over him with the glass.

ELLIOT
Daisy, what, uh...

DAISY
It's seven am.

He looks at the morning light and winces, rubs his eyes.

ELLIOT
My head.

Then, he remembers. She goes back to the kitchen. He stands slowly and follows her.

INT. ELLIOT'S KITCHEN - MORNING (FLASHBACK)

As he stands in the doorway and watches her. She faces away from him, making a pot of coffee. She senses he is there, but has nothing more to say. After a long moment, he turns away.

EXT. RURAL GAS STATION - DAY

The fog is thick and icy. The station is a small, rustic building, hidden in the forest on a narrow, two-lane highway.

Elliot's car is parked at the pump.

INT. RURAL GAS STATION - DAY

Elliot hands the GAS STATION CLERK his credit card.

ELLIOT
Give me a pack of, uh, generic
cigarettes too.

The clerk grabs a pack.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
We anywhere near Concord?

GAS STATION CLERK
Same state.

ELLIOT
I'm trying to get to Boston. I must
have gone off course somewhere.

GAS STATION CLERK
Which way you headed?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT
(Pointing)
Umm, that way.

GAS STATION CLERK
That's east. You're headed into
Maine, just passed Gorham. You want
to go back three miles and get on
route 16 going south.

ELLIOT
Okay. Then that'll get me back to
89?

GAS STATION CLERK
No. You take route 16 to 302. Then
you follow that for about 10 miles.
It turns back into 16. Then just
past Chocorua, you want to turn
onto route 25. Take 25 west to
route 3. Then stay on 3, it turns
into 10 or 11, I think, for a few
miles around Laconia. But just stay
on 3 to the Interstate.

ELLIOT
89?

GAS STATION CLERK
No 93. You'll take 93 to Boston.

ELLIOT
So that's route 16 south to
Chocorua, and 25 to...

GAS STATION CLERK
Route 16 to 302, then it turns back
to 16. Don't you have GPS?

ELLIOT
I don't think so. My phone's dead.
A map would help.

GAS STATION CLERK
I'll see if I have any. Been a lot
of disoriented people through here.
Where you from?

The clerk bends over and searches through mounds of stuff
behind the counter.

ELLIOT
Burlington.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Elliot looks at the odd assortment of items in the store.

GAS STATION CLERK

You ARE off course. Why didn't you just take 89?

ELLIOT

Tried to get around some traffic.

He looks through some out-of-date Christmas cards, mostly photos of New England in the snow.

GAS STATION CLERK

Well, sometimes the best way to get around traffic is to stay in it. Known what I mean? You'd probably be there by now, if you'd stayed on 89.

ELLIOT

Mmm.

GAS STATION CLERK

I see it all the time. People in a hurry, thinking they can make up time, trying to find a better route somewhere.

Elliot stops on a card of a Rockwell-type family sitting around a big fireplace with a Christmas tree and presents.

GAS STATION CLERK (CONT'D)

I guess they're hoping some magical highway will just materialize out of nowhere. Sometimes I wonder if they really know where they want to go.

The clerk reappears.

GAS STATION CLERK (CONT'D)

Fresh out of maps, sorry about that. Would you like me to draw you out the directions?

ELLIOT

No that's okay. I'll just, uh...

GAS STATION CLERK

Go back to route 3.

ELLIOT

Yeah and head south.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

GAS STATION CLERK

You gotta get through the White Mountains soon before the next snow starts. That'll be the toughest part now.

EXT. TWO-LANE HIGHWAY - DAY

The snow has stopped for now, but fresh piles lie thick on the sides of the road. Elliot turns onto a narrow highway heading toward tall hills and dark clouds.

INT. CAR - DAY

As Elliot drives. He checks the time: 2:30. The cell phone is charging. He picks it up and dials. Still nothing. He settles back and watches the dark clouds ahead.

PRE-LAP the sound of a cordless phone RINGING.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ELLIOT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

As Daisy's eyes open slowly and she reaches for the cordless phone.

DAISY

Hello. Yes.

As she listens, her eyes open completely. She sits up and checks the clock. It's 2:17 AM.

DAISY (CONT'D)

Yes, he is. Just a second.

She covers the mouthpiece and shakes Elliot gently.

DAISY (CONT'D)

Elliot, wake up.

ELLIOT

What is it?

DAISY

It's for you.

She says no more. Elliot takes the phone.

ELLIOT

Hello.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. MIAMI POLICE STATION - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Robert Goldman is standing with the phone. A woman, his wife, is seated, talking to a detective as he questions her and takes notes. They are out of control.

ROBERT
(Almost shouting)
Dr. Thode?

ELLIOT
Yes.

ROBERT
Robert Goldman.

ELLIOT
Robert... Um, is uh...

ROBERT
Heather is missing.

Elliot is suddenly wide awake. He gets out of bed and paces.

ELLIOT
Missing...

ROBERT
I am calling because there's a good chance she will attempt to contact you. If she does, it is in your best interest and that of Heather's to call me or the Miami Police immediately.

ELLIOT
Did she run away or...

ROBERT
Immediately. That means don't talk to her, don't try to help her, don't try to detain her, don't give her money, don't give her advice, and don't provide her shelter. Keep away from her and call me immediately.

ELLIOT
I understand. Can you tell me...

ROBERT
Under the circumstances, I do not think it's appropriate or necessary to tell you anything else.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERT (CONT'D)
I have told you what happened and
what you are expected to do-

ELLIOT
Mr. Goldman, I can't help you
unless you-

ROBERT
(Exploding)
I don't need your help. Your "help"
is the reason my daughter has left.
Your "help" has done nothing but
cause harm to my family. I wouldn't
be here now, if it weren't for your
"help." Do you understand? I'm not
asking for anymore help. I am
"telling" you what you must do in
order to avoid further damage to my
family and your career.

ELLIOT
Can you tell me how long she has
been missing?

ROBERT
The last time I saw her... she was
in the house yesterday morning. She
became missing sometime after that.

ELLIOT
Do you know why? Did she leave a
note?

ROBERT
(Barely able to talk)
We both know why. You don't need to
know anymore.

He SLAMS the phone down.

Elliot turns to Daisy. Her look says it all.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAR - AFTERNOON

As Elliot drives. He is distant and troubled. He comes to a
curve, slows and downshifts.

EXT. CURVE IN HIGHWAY - AFTERNOON

As he slows for the curve. It is shaded by trees next to a
thick pile of snow in a wooded area flanking the highway. Mid-
curve, the car hits an icy patch and begins to spin out.

INT. CAR - AFTERNOON

As Elliot attempts to maneuver out of the spin.

EXT. CURVE IN HIGHWAY

It's no use. The car continues sideways and slides off the road into a ditch. He puts the car into a low gear and applies gas, but the wheels only grind deeper into the compact snow.

Elliot gets out the passenger side with his cane, and surveys the damage. The car is okay, but is hopelessly stuck. He checks his watch and looks up and down the deserted road. Then, he tries the cell phone.

ANGLE ON PHONE. It appears to be charged, but there's no signal.

RESUME ELLIOT, as he POUNDS his fist on the roof.

EXT. STANBRO SERVICE STATION - AFTERNOON

As Elliot approaches, walking with his cane from the highway. He is tired, cold, and pissed. His black leather shoes and dress suit are no good for hiking two miles through slush and ice, and his leg is killing him.

The station appears to be closed. The lights are off and there's no movement.

A hill next to the station leads up to a small house with a tin roof. Smoke is issuing from the chimney.

INT. TIN ROOF HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Elliot is standing at the front door as it opens, revealing FRANK. He is in his seventies, but looks much older with his long, matted hair and sallow, unshaven face. His clothes are old and worn, and he's in a perpetual state of inebriation.

He looks at Elliot and waits.

ELLIOT

Hi, I've got a little problem. I have to be in Boston in a few hours and my car got stuck in ice about a mile down the road. Is there any way... can you help me?

FRANK

Sorry.

He moves to close the door, stops.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT

Do you know of anyone around here with a winch? The car's okay, I think. I just need someone with a winch to pull it out.

A young girl, maybe 5, appears behind Frank. She stares at Elliot as she grabs onto Frank's leg.

FRANK

(Reluctantly)
Yeah, I got one.

ELLIOT

That's great. I'll make it worth your time. I'm kind of desperate at this point.

FRANK

It ain't the money. It's my back.

And the fact that he can barely stand up.

ELLIOT

Well... I can drive and do all the lifting. How about that? All you have to do is show me how to work the winch.

Elliot checks his watch, his patience growing thinner by the minute.

FRANK

It's not that easy.

ELLIOT

What?

FRANK

It's tricky. You got to know how to... Ah, hell. Come on. Come on, Isabella.

Frank heads back into the house, followed by the girl and Elliot.

EXT. CURVE IN HIGHWAY - AFTERNOON

Frank is under Elliot's car checking the tow line. Elliot is standing by the winch controls on the truck - an ancient, rusted-out, gas-guzzler. Isabella looks on from inside.

Frank climbs out, stands, wipes his hands on his coveralls.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANK
(To Elliot)
All right, reel it in slow.

Elliot starts the winch. The line slowly becomes taut and starts to pull the car unevenly, which causes the suspension to CREAK and GROAN. Elliot panics and stops the winch.

FRANK (CONT'D)
It's okay, keep it reelin'.

The car slowly starts to pull free and Elliot adds more power.

FRANK (CONT'D)
(Yelling)
Slow it down!

Elliot stops the winch.

FRANK (CONT'D)
I didn't say stop it.

Elliot starts the winch again, and an awful, METAL GRATING SOUND comes from the tow line connection.

FRANK (CONT'D)
(Yelling)
Stop it!

Elliot does. Frank bends over and checks the line and connection.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Oh hell.

Frank clutches his chest and falls to his knees. Elliot runs to him and checks him over, feels for his pulse. Frank is in great pain, unable to take a breath.

ELLIOT
Okay Frank, I need for you to lie
on your back.

Isabella gets out of the truck and approaches slowly. Elliot gives him CPR - pumping his chest and checking for a pulse. After a moment, the attack passes.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
How do you feel?

FRANK
I'm okay now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELLIOT

Good. I need to get you to a hospital.

FRANK

I said I'm okay.

ELLIOT

Are you taking any heart medication?

FRANK

Hell, no.

Elliot looks around, checks his watch.

EXT. TWO-LANE HIGHWAY - LATE AFTERNOON

As the truck passes.

INT. TRUCK - LATE AFTERNOON

As Elliot drives slow in the fading light. Isabella is in the middle. Frank is curled up, resting on her.

FRANK

Left the house open.

ELLIOT

It'll be okay. Just rest.

FRANK

How the hell am I supposed to pay for a Goddamn hospital?

ELLIOT

Don't worry about it. We'll figure it out. You don't have a choice.

FRANK

You some kind of doctor?

ELLIOT

I'm a... yes.

FRANK

What do I have?

ELLIOT

I think you just had a heart attack. Have you had this feeling before?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANK

Yup.

He winces in pain and closes his eyes again.

ELLIOT

Don't worry, Frank. Just rest.

Frank rests and Isabella stares out the window. Elliot's mind drifts off.

DAISY (PRE-LAP)

Why don't you come to bed?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ELLIOT'S KITCHEN - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

As Elliot sits at the table reading a paper, unable to sleep. Daisy enters, yawns, pours a glass of milk and watches Elliot.

ELLIOT

No, I can't sleep now. I'll be okay.

Daisy starts to leave and the PHONE RINGS. She stops. Elliot picks up the cordless next to him.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Hello.

HEATHER (V.O.)

Dr. Thode?

ELLIOT

(Standing)

Heather.

HEATHER (V.O.)

Yeah.

ELLIOT

Are you okay?

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. AIRPORT PASSENGER PICKUP - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Heather is on her cell phone. A suitcase is next to her.

HEATHER

I made a mistake. I need help.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT
What kind of help?

HEATHER
I need to talk to you.

ELLIOT
(Shaking his head)
Heather-

HEATHER
I'm at the airport.

ELLIOT
Which airport?

HEATHER
Burlington.

ELLIOT
Do your parents know where you are?

She hangs up, hesitantly.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Hello, Heather. Damn.

He hangs up.

DAISY
Elliot, call the police.

He looks down.

DAISY (CONT'D)
Don't do it, please.

ELLIOT
She needs help.

DAISY
The police can help.

ELLIOT
Do you really think that? Do you
really think they'll help?

DAISY
You have no choice.

ELLIOT
I do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DAISY

If Goldman finds out, Elliot, he won't stop until he destroys you and us.

ELLIOT

And Heather. He's destroying her too.

DAISY

But... this is the wrong way to handle it.

ELLIOT

There's no right way, is there?

DAISY

Call the police and explain the situation.

ELLIOT

I have to do what I think is best. I have to. I'm not... Hell, I'm just no good at this.

DAISY

Oh stop.

He paces and thinks.

ELLIOT

I'll be back very soon. I promise.

He starts to leave.

DAISY

That girl is going to get you in big trouble.

ELLIOT

You can't blame her.

DAISY

Then, I blame you.

Elliot hesitates for a moment, then walks out.

INT. TRUCK - LATE AFTERNOON

As Elliot drives in SILENCE. He looks to his side. Isabella is staring at him, her eyes penetrating his soul. Frank appears to be sleeping.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Elliot reaches for Frank's wrist and checks his pulse, as Isabella watches every move. Elliot returns to driving and Isabella returns to staring at him.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. AIRPORT BAGGAGE CLAIM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

As Heather sits alone, facing an empty room. Her clothes are sloppy, hair a mess. She doesn't care anymore. After a long moment, she turns. She sees Elliot approaching her from the street. Heather stands and runs to him, as if her life depended on it.

She reaches out, surrounds him, holds him tight. He reaches around her. The hug lasts forever. Finally, she starts to breathe again. She gasps for air and the tears flow and flow. The ice that had encased her for months melts and the human being is wild with pain as it emerges.

Still holding onto his sleeves, she pulls back.

HEATHER

I love you.

ELLIOT

Tell me what's going on.

HEATHER

I made a big mistake.

ELLIOT

What?

HEATHER

It was like I never left. The same shit happened, only now it's worse.

ELLIOT

Did he hurt you? Molest you?

HEATHER

No. It's just him. And I kept thinking of you. I can't stand being away from you. I love you.

ELLIOT

What mistake did you make? Tell me.

HEATHER

I ran away from him because I had to be with you. But I shouldn't have. I'm hurting you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HEATHER (CONT'D)

You're so good to me, and all I do is hurt you. But I can't go back. It'll be worse, it'll be so bad. You have to help me. I don't know what to do.

ELLIOT

Okay, I'll help you. But if you love me, you have to trust me.

HEATHER

I can't go back.

ELLIOT

You don't have to go back.

She looks up.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

You're over 18. You can do whatever you want.

She calms, as if she has never realized this.

HEATHER

Can I stay with you?

ELLIOT

That wouldn't be a good idea, would it?

HEATHER

What am I going to do?

ELLIOT

The first thing you're going to do is call your father and tell him where you are. Then, YOU can decide what to do.

HEATHER

He'll send the cops to get me.

ELLIOT

They can't take you. You haven't done anything wrong. Have you?

She lets go of his sleeves and steps back.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

All they care about is that you are no longer missing. They'll just take you off their list.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HEATHER

I'm free?

ELLIOT

You're free.

She walks away from him, sensing her new-found freedom.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Your father can't hurt you anymore.

HEATHER

I want to stay in Burlington, okay?

ELLIOT

You can do that.

HEATHER

Maybe get an apartment.

ELLIOT

Go back to school?

HEATHER

Maybe not. Maybe I'll get a job at a Starbucks, make coffee or something. Why not?

ELLIOT

Why not?

HEATHER

I want to see you.

ELLIOT

Not a good idea.

HEATHER

I got you in trouble.

ELLIOT

I got myself in trouble. It's not your fault.

HEATHER

Well, if you feel like seeing me, I'll be here.

ELLIOT

Okay. But...

HEATHER

I know. I know. But if you need a friend...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ELLIOT
Same goes for me.

HEATHER
I'm so glad you're here.

She hugs him again.

HEATHER (CONT'D)
You made me feel good again. I've
felt bad for so long. I'm hungry.
Let's get some breakfast. I haven't
eaten since like yesterday morning.

ELLIOT
Heather, you have to call your
father right now.

HEATHER
Later. Let's eat something first.

ELLIOT
I'll call him, then.

HEATHER
Why are you doing this?

ELLIOT
Because he's worried.

She is confused, detects a small lie.

HEATHER
But I can do whatever I want. He
can't stop me now.

ELLIOT
That's true, but you are listed as
missing with the police and-

HEATHER
He talked to you, didn't he?

ELLIOT
Yes.

HEATHER
And he threatened you?

ELLIOT
He did.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

HEATHER

What did he say? That he would ruin your practice and destroy your family if you talked to me?

No answer.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

What else did he say?

ELLIOT

Heather, this has been very tough for me and my family.

HEATHER

How can you say I'm your friend when you're plotting behind my back?

ELLIOT

I'm not plotting.

HEATHER

Who can I turn to? I thought I could trust you, but you're just like him. I came back here because you were the last person on earth I could trust, who knew me and what I was going through.

ELLIOT

Heather, listen to me now-

HEATHER

Did he promise to drop the lawsuit if you turned me in?

ELLIOT

How can he? It's in your name.

HEATHER

My name?

ELLIOT

You are suing me. Your father and his attorneys are just handling it for you.

Another revelation for Heather.

HEATHER

I can stop it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

ELLIOT

Of course. I'm just asking that you call your father and tell him you're all right. You can tell him you want to stay in Burlington, if you want. I'm not betraying you. I'm not. I'm just... trying to make everybody happy. If you want to help yourself, you're going to have to...

He stops and looks at her. It hits him. She is just lost, frightened and helpless, and needs a hand.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Get started. It's your life. Your life. You can tell your father that you're safe and you're all right, and when he tells you to come home, you can tell him... you don't want to, you've decided to stay in Burlington for awhile, or whatever you want.

HEATHER

He'll come after you.

ELLIOT

(Shrugging)

Then, he'll come after me. What can he do?

HEATHER

I don't want him to hurt you.

ELLIOT

And I don't want him to hurt you.

HEATHER

We're friends.

They hug.

INT. ELLIOT'S LIVING ROOM - DAWN (FLASHBACK)

The first hint of morning light washes the room with warm, deep tones as Elliot enters from the front door. He glances into the room and sees Daisy asleep in her rocking chair.

He comes to her and gently smooths her hair. She awakens.

DAISY

Elliot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT

Let's go to bed. It's been a long night.

DAISY

How did it go?

ELLIOT

She called her father.

DAISY

And...

Elliot sits on a table beside her.

ELLIOT

Everything is fine. Everybody's happy.

DAISY

I don't believe you.

ELLIOT

I think she'll drop the suit.

DAISY

And Goldman will just magically have a change of heart and let her do that.

ELLIOT

How can he stop her?

DAISY

I can't believe you're saying that.

ELLIOT

You know what? I don't care what he tries to do.

DAISY

I do. That girl needs help. Why does it have to be you? Why do you have to get involved?

ELLIOT

I'm already involved.

DAISY

Then get uninvolved. Let somebody else handle her. Let her work things out with her father. I don't trust him.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DAISY (CONT'D)
He's liable to go off the deep end
and do something really harmful.
You're only making the situation
worse.

ELLIOT
I have to do what I feel is right.

DAISY
Elliot, this time you're wrong.

She stands and walks away from him toward the hall.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CONCORD GENERAL HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Frank's truck is parked by the emergency entrance.

INT. CONCORD EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

Frank is in a bed, connected to an IV and heart monitor. DR.
RAYBURN is finishing his exam. Elliot stands at the end of
the bed beside Isabella.

RAYBURN
You're a lucky man, Mr. Sanders.
You had a fairly severe heart
attack.

He glances at the child and softens the wording.

RAYBURN (CONT'D)
We got you on some medication now
to help the circulation around the
heart. After a few days, you should
be good enough to go home. Okay?

He turns to Elliot.

RAYBURN (CONT'D)
Is this your daughter?

ELLIOT
She's uh... Mr. Sanders is her
guardian. I'm a friend. We brought
Frank in.

RAYBURN
I see.

He approaches Elliot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT
 (To Isabella)
 Isabella, why don't you go sit in
 the chair next to Frank and keep
 him company?

She does.

ANGLE WITH RAYBURN AND ELLIOT, as they step away from Frank.

RAYBURN
 (To Elliot only)
 So, what's the story here?

ANGLE WITH FRANK AND ISABELLA. He turns to his side. Isabella is watching him with the same hypnotic gaze. Frank is a somewhat frightening sight with the tubes, oxygen mask, and sallow complexion. He holds his hand out and she takes it.

Suddenly Frank starts MOANING LOUDLY and clutching his chest. Rayburn and a nurse rush to him and check the monitor.

RAYBURN (CONT'D)
 (To Elliot, all business)
 Take the girl, please.

Elliot takes her hand.

ELLIOT
 Come on, Isabella. The doctor needs
 to help Frank now.

Isabella refuses to move. She is transfixed by the sudden and violent activity, as the medical team moves in quickly. Elliot doesn't know quite what to do.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
 Isabella, the doctors want us to
 leave, so they can help Frank. We
 have to go.

She starts YELLING.

ISABELLA
 No, no, no...

Elliot picks her up and she starts to kick and SCREAM. He hauls her away under his left arm, while trying to ambulate with the cane.

INT. CONCORD EMERGENCY ROOM CORRIDOR - NIGHT

As Elliot approaches a nurse.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT

She's upset. Do you have a waiting room where she won't disturb others?

NURSE 2

(Irritated)

Can't you get her to stop?

He shakes his head.

NURSE 2 (CONT'D)

All right, follow me.

Nurse 2 leads them hurriedly into a family waiting room and closes the door behind them.

INT. FAMILY WAITING ROOM

Elliot lets her go and she immediately begins destroying the room - throwing magazines and toys, knocking over lamps. A number of nurses watch from the hall through a window.

Finally, realizing that she isn't just going to stop on her own, Elliot goes after her. He grabs her and holds her hands. Then, he sits with her and attempts to hold her closely to restrain her. She bites him. He HOWLS and restrains her head.

A nurse enters.

NURSE 3

Do you need some help?

Elliot rocks Isabella and she begins to calm down.

ELLIOT

No, thank you.

The nurse retreats to the hall.

Slowly, the restraint turns into a hug. Isabella begins to enjoy being held and rocked. After a while longer, she relaxes and Elliot moves her next to him, and puts his arm around her.

He looks up at the clock. It's 6:30. He looks down. Isabella is staring at him with the same penetrating gaze.

DAISY (PRE-LAP)

Don't forget to water the plants in the backyard.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ELLIOT'S DRIVEWAY - DAY (FLASHBACK)

As Tommy, Daisy and Elliot squeeze the last pieces of luggage into Daisy's car. No one is smiling. Elliot closes the door.
(No cane)

ELLIOT
Oh yeah. Is it on the list?

DAISY
I don't remember.

ELLIOT
I'll check. Don't worry.

He hugs Tommy, and then reaches out to Daisy. She turns away and heads toward the driver's side door. Tommy gets in the passenger side.

She starts the car and puts it in gear.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
You guys have a nice time. Call me
as soon as you get there. Okay?

DAISY
Bye.

ELLIOT
I love you. See you Sunday.

She backs out and drives away. Elliot watches until the car turns a few blocks away and drives out of view.

Then, as he turns and heads toward the garage, he notices something across the street.

ANGLE HIS POV an old, dark-green economy car parked halfway down the block.

RESUME ELLIOT as he watches the car, then goes into the garage and presses the button to close the door.

INT. NEIGHBORHOOD BUTCHER SHOP - DAY (FLASHBACK)

As the butcher sets a package of meat on the counter. Elliot takes the package and turns. He nearly runs into Heather.

ELLIOT
(Startled)
Heather, wow, where did you come
from?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HEATHER
(Half smile)
Just thought I'd buy some meat.

ELLIOT
Well, how are you doing in your new
apartment?

HEATHER
Okay.

ELLIOT
That's good.

He heads toward the door and she follows.

HEATHER
Dr. Thode.

ELLIOT
Yes.

HEATHER
I'm really not doing okay.

ELLIOT
Oh?

They continue out the door.

EXT. STREET BY BUTCHER SHOP - DAY (FLASHBACK)

As Elliot and Heather leave the shop and head down the
sidewalk slowly.

HEATHER
I need to see you.

ELLIOT
Heather, we've talked about-

HEATHER
I'm going to kill myself. And this
time, I'm not kidding.

ELLIOT
Heather.

HEATHER
I was making such good progress
with you and now I feel worse than
before. You have no idea. I can't
sleep. I can't work. I can't think.
I feel so... so terrible.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT
Are you seeing Dr. Mendoza?

HEATHER
I stopped.

ELLIOT
Why?

HEATHER
She's a bitch. I hate her. She
doesn't understand me or care about
me. She's cold and mean like my
father.

They stop and face each other.

HEATHER (CONT'D)
Only you can help me.

ELLIOT
That's not true. If you don't like
her, we can find someone else-

HEATHER
There's no one else. No one. I love
you and you love me. And that's all
there is to it.

ELLIOT
Heather, none of that matters
because I cannot see you.

HEATHER
Yes, you can.

ELLIOT
No, I cannot.

HEATHER
You can do whatever you want.

ELLIOT
I know, and I choose not to see
you. It's not right, and I don't
want to. I want you to respect my
decision.

HEATHER
No. I don't believe you.

ELLIOT
I'm very sorry. I wish things were
different, but-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HEATHER
You can make them different.

ELLIOT
No, I can't.

HEATHER
(Hopefully)
Yes, yes. You always used to tell me how we can change our lives. We can-

ELLIOT
Well, there are some things we can't change.

HEATHER
You can leave them and be with me. And we can-

ELLIOT
I don't want to.

HEATHER
But you said you wished things were different.

ELLIOT
Yes.
(With great difficulty)
I wish we had never met. That's what I wish.

She is stunned.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
And I wish you were happy and I wish I could help you and I wish you would... stop trying to change my mind, and I wish you would leave me and my family alone. But there are some things I can't change.

She is speechless and devastated, doesn't know what to do. Then...

HEATHER
Okay.

She turns away from him and walks toward the street slowly. Without missing a beat, she steps off the curb and continues across the street through the heavy traffic. Cars HONK and drivers slam on their brakes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

It all happens in a flash. Elliot can't believe his eyes. He immediately runs to her, and grabs her arm just as a car speeds past. He pulls her toward the curb.

When they are safe on the sidewalk, she suddenly reaches around him and hugs him tightly, won't let him go.

INT. HEATHER'S BEDROOM - MAGIC HOUR (FLASHBACK)

There is still a hint of light outside. Heather is lying in bed, staring at the ceiling. Elliot is sitting in a chair, staring out the window at the purple sky.

He stands after a moment and walks to her bedside. He sets a bottle of pills on the night stand.

ELLIOT
I'm going now.

She looks at him. She appears so fragile and small in the dim light.

HEATHER
Thank you.

He nods and then turns toward the door.

HEATHER (CONT'D)
I'm sorry.

He stops at the door, and without turning back...

ELLIOT
It's okay.

He walks out.

INT. ELLIOT'S ENTRYWAY - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Daisy is holding a suitcase as she closes the front door. Elliot is facing her. She turns and looks him in the eye solemnly.

DAISY
What did you do while we were away?

Elliot cannot talk. His eyes plead. She turns and walks away from him down the hall.

RAYBURN (PRE-LAP)
Sometimes these things just keep snowballing.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FAMILY WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Elliot is seated, half-watching Isabella play with toys and watch an animated movie tape. Dr. Rayburn is standing over Elliot, speaking so Isabella can't hear.

RAYBURN

Mr. Sanders is stable now. It was a multiple infarction. Pretty extensive. We'll just have to see how he does in the next five or so hours. I'm leaving now. Dr. Benson is taking over. We'll keep a close eye on him. Meanwhile, someone has been sent for to watch the girl. I'm sorry. It's a bad situation. Hang in there.

ELLIOT

Thanks.

Rayburn leaves. Isabella is off in her own world.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ELLIOT'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

ANGLE CLOSE on a small fire blazing in the fireplace. WE PULL BACK to reveal Tommy sitting in a beanbag chair, reading a book, and Elliot and Daisy seated far apart, reading different parts of the same newspaper. The lights are low, and it is very still and QUIET. There is a sense of uneasiness and tension in the air.

Daisy finishes a section and turns to Tommy.

DAISY

Tommy, shouldn't you be working on your mythology project?

TOMMY

I guess.

She waits.

DAISY

You guess what?

TOMMY

I guess I should be working on it, but I can't.

DAISY

Why not?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TOMMY

I need more information.

Another wait.

DAISY

Well?

TOMMY

I need more information... so I can't work on it.

DAISY

(Raising her voice)

What do you need?

TOMMY

Stuff about Greek gods.

DAISY

Tommy, what about the Internet? We have a number of books on mythology right here. All you have to do is ask.

TOMMY

Oh.

DAISY

Elliot?

He looks up. She looks down.

ELLIOT

Anything in particular?

TOMMY

No.

Elliot stands and walks to a long, tall bookcase next to a corner window, and starts browsing.

DAISY

Tommy, you're in seventh grade now. You have to learn to take more responsibility for getting your homework done. You're not a little boy anymore.

TOMMY

Middle school grades don't count.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DAISY

That's not true. Of course they count.

TOMMY

Grades don't start counting until high school.

DAISY

Well, I'm not going to argue about it. I expect you to do your homework and study.

Elliot finds a book and looks up. Something in the window catches his eye. He turns.

Heather is standing there, just outside the window, staring at Daisy. Elliot freezes. Heather turns suddenly to Elliot, unaware that he had been watching her. Their eyes meet. Neither of them moves for a long time. Heather has a wild, mad look in her eyes that sends a chill through Elliot. Slowly, she looks down and backs away. Then, she melts into the darkness.

Elliot turns to Daisy. She is looking his way.

DAISY (CONT'D)

What's wrong? You look like you've seen a ghost.

Tommy checks him out. Elliot stares at them, searching for something to say. Then, he shakes it off and attempts a smile.

ELLIOT

Nothing. It's nothing.

Daisy doesn't buy it. Elliot closes the drapes.

INT. ELLIOT'S KITCHEN - DAY (FLASHBACK)

As Daisy goes through a stack of mail. She picks up a plain letter with no postage.

ANGLE ON LETTER. It is addressed simply to Daisy.

RESUME DAISY as she opens it carefully and pulls out a piece of folded note paper. She opens it and is suddenly gripped with fear.

INT. ELLIOT'S STUDY - DAY (FLASHBACK)

ANGLE TIGHT ON NOTE. In large block letters, "You're a dead woman."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE TWO-SHOT, Daisy seated staring hard at Elliot, who is seated at his desk with the note.

ELLIOT
It's Heather.

DAISY
You're sure about that?

ELLIOT
Yes.

DAISY
What are you going to do about it?

ELLIOT
I... don't know. I'll need to think about it.

DAISY
(Losing it)
Jesus Christ, what do you mean, think about it? The woman is out of control and dangerous. I can think of a number of really appropriate things to do right now. No thinking required.

ELLIOT
I know. I'll call the police and the attorneys.

DAISY
Get a restraining order, at least.

ELLIOT
Good idea.

DAISY
You probably have a good case for having her committed or arrested.

ELLIOT
Right. I'll take care of it. Don't worry. I really don't think she poses that much of a danger-

DAISY
(Standing)
Well Elliot, it sure as hell looks like it to me.

ELLIOT
Please don't worry. I'll take-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DAISY
(Starts pacing)
I'm leaving.

ELLIOT
Daisy.

DAISY
No. This woman has got you so
wrapped around her little finger.
It makes me sick.

ELLIOT
Daisy.

DAISY
She's manipulating you. She's
desperate and she'll stop at
nothing to ruin you... and us.

ELLIOT
I know. I know.

DAISY
And she's succeeding and all you
can do is... feel sorry for her.

ELLIOT
I don't feel sorry for her. I
understand her. She needs help.

DAISY
Elliot, WE need help. Can't you
see? Can't you see what she's
doing? Maybe she does need help,
but who cares, let someone else
handle it. Please.

ELLIOT
Of course. I said I'd call-

DAISY
(It comes to her)
Do you know what it is? It just hit
me. You can't let her go because
that would be like admitting you
failed. You can't bear the thought
of someone else helping her. That's
it, isn't it.

Elliot looks away.

ELLIOT
I said I'd call the police tomorrow-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DAISY

I'm taking Tommy now and we'll stay at Ellie's until... it's safe and things have been resolved. This woman is unpredictable and dangerous and I'm very worried. I don't think you take this seriously enough.

ELLIOT

I do. Don't worry about her. I'll get a restraining order-

DAISY

She is not the only thing I'm worried about.

She looks long and hard at Elliot, then walks out.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CONCORD EMERGENCY ROOM CORRIDOR - NIGHT

As Elliot paces in thought, waiting for Isabella. He looks up and sees her walking casually away from him down the corridor. He hobbles quickly to catch up, then walks a pace behind.

INT. HOSPITAL ELEVATOR - NIGHT

As the two ride alone in SILENCE. The elevator stops, doors open. A nurse rolls a patient in on a gurney. Isabella stands close to the patient and watches his face, dispassionately as usual. The man glances at her with an annoyed look.

PATIENT

(To Nurse 4)

Don't suppose there's any way you could roll me outside for a smoke.

NURSE 4

After you get x-rayed I'll find somebody to take you out.

PATIENT

(Coughs)

All this fresh air is getting to me.

The nurse has heard it before. He turns his head to the side and makes funny faces at Isabella. She steps back and takes Elliot's hand.

INT. HOSPITAL KIDS AREA - NIGHT

As Isabella sits and watches two little boys playing noisily and fighting.

INT. HOSPITAL MAIN LOBBY

As Isabella moves from one seat to another in the large waiting area. Elliot watches her, checks the clock. It's 8:04.

INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA

As Elliot and Isabella sit quietly at a booth and eat junk food.

ELLIOT
Have you ever been to Boston?

ISABELLA
Yeah.

ELLIOT
What did you do there?

ISABELLA
I visited my Mom at her house.

ELLIOT
And your Dad?

No answer.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
I was going to Boston tonight. But now I can't.

ISABELLA
Why?

A question from Isabella surprises Elliot.

ELLIOT
Well, I was supposed to go to a meeting, like a party with food and people talking, and I was going to get an award.

She seems interested, so he continues.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
I'm a kind of doctor, and other doctors got together and all decided that I was...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

that I was a good doctor. And they thought the award would make me happy... and feel good. Sometimes adults do that. And children too. We give each other awards, so we feel appreciated, and so everyone knows that we are doing a good job.

ISABELLA

I got six gold stars.

ELLIOT

What did you do?

ISABELLA

I cooperated and I was quiet and listened.

ELLIOT

Those are hard things to do.

She goes back to her hot dog.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CORRIDOR BY MATERNITY ROOM

He comes to a "T" intersection and looks to his side. He spots Isabella looking through a large window at the babies. She seems contented for the moment, so he leans against the wall and watches her.

INT. CORRIDOR BY MATERNITY ROOM

ANGLE CLOSE ON NEWBORNS sleeping in their Plexiglas cribs.

ELLIOT

What is your baby's name?

ANGLE ON ISABELLA, focused on the one closest to the window. She is holding and cradling a small, tattered baby doll.

ISABELLA

Baby.

ELLIOT

Tell me about her.

ISABELLA

It's a boy.

ANGLE WITH ELLIOT

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT
Okay. Tell me about him.

ISABELLA
He's very sick and he can't talk
and needs help all the time or
he'll die.

ELLIOT
Is he sad?

ISABELLA
Yeah.

ELLIOT
Do you help him?

ISABELLA
Yeah.

ELLIOT
What does he like to do?

ISABELLA
He doesn't like to do anything,
because he doesn't like anything,
because everything hurts him.

ELLIOT
Even you?

ISABELLA
I don't know. I never asked him.

ELLIOT
What does he think about the other
babies?

ISABELLA
He doesn't like them because
they're not sick. But they're not
special like he is. He's gifted. Do
you know what gifted means?

ELLIOT
No. What?

ISABELLA
It means he has special powers that
make people feel better.

She hands the doll to Elliot and he cradles it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELLIOT

It works. I do feel better.

Isabella looks at Elliot with the doll, then turns and walks away.

INT. ELLIOT'S CAR - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

He drives slowly through his neighborhood. He is alone, tired, and emotionally drained. He approaches his house and slows to pull into the driveway. As he does, he notices something down the street and stops.

ANGLE HIS POV. Heather's car is parked, partly concealed by a large truck, a block and a half down the street.

RESUME ELLIOT. He looks at his house.

ANGLE HIS POV. All the lights are off inside.

RESUME ELLIOT, as he hits the garage door opener and continues in.

INT. GARAGE (FLASHBACK)

He gets out of the car and walks to the house door.

INT. ELLIOT'S HALLWAY (FLASHBACK)

Elliot opens the door. It is dark. He turns on the hall light and enters. He closes the garage door and interior door, and then stands in the hall. He looks in both directions into the darkness. It is QUIET and empty.

INT. ELLIOT'S KITCHEN (FLASHBACK)

He enters, turns on the light and checks around.

INT. LIVING ROOM (FLASHBACK)

He enters from the kitchen. He walks through the room, turning on lights and checking everywhere. He closes the drapes over the corner window. Then, he makes sure the front door is locked.

INT. ELLIOT'S HALLWAY (FLASHBACK)

He walks toward the other end of the hall into the dark.

INT. ELLIOT'S STUDY (FLASHBACK)

He enters and turns on the desk light. He checks around, beginning to relax. Then, he turns back toward the hall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Heather is standing in the doorway, facing him, holding a small purse close to her side.

HEATHER

Dr. Thode.

Elliot's heart skips a beat.

ELLIOT

Good Lord, Heather.

She is not normal. Her hair and clothing are a mess. She is tense and strung-out.

HEATHER

Sorry, I scared you.

ELLIOT

What are you doing here?

HEATHER

I need to talk to you.

ELLIOT

This is not a good time and you should not be here.

HEATHER

I know, the restraining order...

ELLIOT

Right. So, please leave. You cannot be here and I cannot talk to you.

HEATHER

(Straight)

What are you worried about? Your wife is gone.

ELLIOT

That has nothing to do with it.

HEATHER

It was her idea.

ELLIOT

It was our idea.

HEATHER

Are you afraid of me?

(Stepping closer)

What do you think I'm going to do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELLIOT

I don't know. You have been doing some very inappropriate things lately, things that concern me very much.

HEATHER

If you only knew what was going on in my mind.

ELLIOT

You need help. Have you been to see doctor-

HEATHER

No. I have no interest in seeing her. I have no interest in seeing anybody. I don't care about anybody or anything.

ELLIOT

Heather, I would like to help you, but I can't, and you know why.

HEATHER

I don't want your help. I don't want anybody's help. I can't be helped.

ELLIOT

Yes, you can.

HEATHER

The only thing I want in this world, I can't have!

Elliot looks down.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Do you feel anything for me? Do you care?

ELLIOT

Heather don't. We've already been through this-

HEATHER

(Sounding like a TV soap opera)

You cared about me when there was nothing to care about.

(She cries)

You gave me hope. That's all I needed. Now, That's gone.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HEATHER (CONT'D)

I have nothing. No one cares. I love you. I know you don't love me, but-

ELLIOT

(Tired of it)

What do you want me to do?

She steps toward him, puts her hands on his arms.

HEATHER

See me again. Talk to me. Let me be with you. Care about me. Just be there. Is that too much to ask?

ELLIOT

Yes, it is. I can't and you know why.

She turns her back to him.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

I want you to leave now. I suggest you check yourself in to a psychiatric care-

She turns to face him, holding a gun.

HEATHER

(Dramatically)

I'm not leaving. I'm never going to leave.

She puts the gun to her head, and closes her eyes.

ELLIOT

Heather, please don't do that. I know things are difficult. I wish they-

She suddenly realizes she's getting nowhere with dramatic manipulation, so pure anger bursts through.

HEATHER

Difficult! Things aren't difficult, they're... you make it sound like all I have to do is think happy thoughts and I'll be all better. You have no idea what it's like being me. Jesus. I haven't slept in a week. I've just been walking around the city all day trying to figure it out. I can't. I want to, but I can't.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

HEATHER (CONT'D)

I can't live anymore like this. I'm at the end. It's all black and dead. Life sucks so bad... It's not difficult, it's completely fucked up. I don't know what I'm doing. I just do things and I don't know why.

The words stop. Every muscle in her body is tensed and ready to snap.

ELLIOT

Give me the gun and we'll talk.

She shakes her head.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

So, that's your plan - to shoot yourself in front of me?

She just stares at the gun and shakes.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Have you given any thought to how I will feel if you do that? I know you're in terrible pain, but...

Elliot can no longer suppress what he wants to say to her, to the world.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

After going through all that with you. I'm just feeling really... used... I feel like I gave so much to you and all I get in return is a damn lawsuit and you killing yourself in front of me...

HEATHER

I'm in pain-

ELLIOT

So am I. So am I. I can be in pain too. I'm a human being, just like you, and I have needs and I feel pain and right now I feel every bit as low as you do.

HEATHER

No way.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

ELLIOT

You won't leave me alone, you send threatening letters to my wife, you break into my house and now you want more-

HEATHER

You don't understand.

ELLIOT

You want me and my family and the whole fucking world to be as miserable as you are.

HEATHER

No.

ELLIOT

Do you really think that's going to make you feel better? It sure as hell doesn't make ME feel any better. What do you think killing yourself is going to solve?

HEATHER

Killing myself is going to make me feel nothing. That's what I want.

ELLIOT

I'm sorry. I don't buy it. Your whole game is control and getting your own way. You're selfish. You're a selfish, spoiled child who enjoys making others suffer. You don't love me. I don't think you love anybody, including yourself. Your idea of love is attaching yourself to a host like a parasite and then draining the life out of them. Killing yourself is just a selfish act of desperation. You don't want to feel nothing. It's all about power and control. And this is the game you play-

HEATHER

Stop it. Why are you trying to hurt me?

ELLIOT

I don't want to hurt you. But you need to know the truth. You don't know what you're doing-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

HEATHER

I know exactly what I'm doing.

She puts the gun to her temple. Elliot grabs her wrist and they wrestle for the gun. It goes off.

Somehow, she gets the advantage and pushes Elliot back against the desk. Then, she aims the gun at him. She is trembling, about to explode.

ELLIOT

Heather, please.

HEATHER

Stay back! How can you say I don't love you? You don't know anything about me. You don't know what I feel. You don't know anything about the hell I go through to stay alive. You don't care. You don't care. You say you care, but it's all a game with you, so you can feel big and important. You're the one that wants power. I'm not the power freak. I know what love and feeling are. I feel! I know! Feeling is hell!

ELLIOT

Heather, think about what you're doing... to both of us. Give me the gun.

He takes a tenuous step toward her and she FIRES the gun. The bullet hits him in the stomach or leg and he falls back. On the way down, his head strikes the corner of the desk. He lands in a heap on the floor - out cold.

Heather stares at him for a long time - waiting for some movement or sign of life. Nothing. She backs out of the door and runs out of view down the hall.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CONCORD EMERGENCY ROOM CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Isabella is standing, holding Elliot's hand facing someone O.S. WE FOLLOW her as she lets go of his hand and walks tentatively to Ms. Teckel from Family Services. Teckel smiles and takes her hand. Isabella studies her carefully.

Elliot waves and turns away from them. He takes two steps and Isabella breaks away from Teckel and runs to him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He turns back and she wraps her arms tightly around him. A smile comes to his face, and he pats her back and smooths her hair.

INT. FRANK'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

It's dark, except for a tiny night light behind the bed. Frank is lying there, under heavy sedation with his eyes closed. Elliot approaches.

ELLIOT
(Whispering)
Hey Frank. Frank.

He pries his eyes open.

FRANK
Hey, doc.

ELLIOT
How you feeling?

FRANK
Like hell.

ELLIOT
Well, hang in there. Listen, I'm taking off now.

FRANK
(Grabbing Elliot's arm)
Thanks for everything, man. You saved my ass.

ELLIOT
Don't worry about it.

FRANK
Is it too late for your Boston tea party?

ELLIOT
Yeah, I'm afraid so. That's okay. Besides, I don't have any way to get there.

EXT. FREEWAY - NIGHT

As Frank's truck passes driving in the slow lane.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Elliot travels in SILENCE. The urgency is gone now, his moment in the sun reduced to a slow drive in an old truck, heading toward something that no longer exists. His face is lit only by flashes from passing headlights and an occasional sweep of a streetlight.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HEATHER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

As the front door opens. Heather enters and walks through the dark into her bedroom.

INT. HEATHER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

As she enters and turns on the overhead light. She picks up the phone and dials 911, hesitantly.

911 OPERATOR (V.O.)
911, what is your emergency?

Heather tries to form the words.

911 OPERATOR
Hello, are you all right? Is anyone there?

Goldman appears behind her.

ROBERT
Heather.

She startles, hangs up, turns.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
Where have you been? I've been sitting here all day waiting for you.

HEATHER
What?

ROBERT
I decided I'd better come up and talk to your Dr. Thode in person.

HEATHER
Why?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERT

Why?!

(As if she doesn't know)

I need to get to him before he tells the attorneys what you told him. Why did you do that? It was between you and me.

He notices that she is shaking.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

HEATHER

Nothing.

ROBERT

Come on. Get in the car.

HEATHER

No.

ROBERT

You have to show me where he lives.

HEATHER

I can't.

ROBERT

What the hell is going on here?

HEATHER

He's dead.

ROBERT

What?

HEATHER

I killed him.

ROBERT

Jesus Christ. Are you sure? How did you... what did you...

HEATHER

I shot him.

ROBERT

What? What was he doing to you?

HEATHER

Nothing. We were talking.

He thinks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ROBERT

All right. Get in the car. I'm taking you back to Florida.

HEATHER

No.

ROBERT

Heather, I'm not in the mood. Do you have a clue how much trouble you're in, we're in? There are going to be cops all over this place. We'll go back to Florida and-

HEATHER

No. I'm staying. You can't control me.

ROBERT

Like hell I can't.

HEATHER

(Shouting)

This is my house and my life and you have no right-

ROBERT

I'm not arguing with you.

He grabs her, she resists with every ounce of strength she has.

HEATHER

Neither am I. I'm staying and I'm going to handle it... my way. And I AM telling the attorneys that you molested me and did horrible, horrible things to me-

ROBERT

No, you're not.

HEATHER

And then I'm going to see you-

He starts slapping her, but she refuses to give in.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

I'm going to take everything of yours and see you suffer the way I suffered for years-

The beating intensifies, but it only strengthens her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Years of torture and feeling sick
as you raped me over and over, and
made me feel low and cheap and
horrible. I hate you. I hate you.
I'm not going to stop until-

He lands one last punch hard against her face, and she falls back on the bed, apparently unconscious.

Goldman turns away from her and sits in the desk chair, closes his eyes and rubs his forehead. It is all QUIET for a moment, then a GUN FIRES and Goldman pitches forward onto the floor.

WE PAN to Heather, holding the gun, trembling uncontrollably. Then, she picks up the phone and dials 911.

911 OPERATOR (V.O.)

911, what is your emergency?

HEATHER

(Composed)

Hello, my name is Heather Goldman.
I just killed two people.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HOTEL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

It's a big expensive chain hotel in Boston. The old truck is parked a few rows back from the front entrance. WE SEE the silhouette of Elliot sitting motionless in the driver's seat.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ELLIOT'S FRONT DOOR - DAY (FLASHBACK)

As Daisy opens it. The MAIL CARRIER is standing on the porch with a five-inch stack of letters.

MAIL CARRIER

Mornin'.

He hands her the stack.

DAISY

Oh my. This is even more than
yesterday.

MAIL CARRIER

I'll need a bigger truck if this
keeps up. How's he doing?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAISY

He's doing better, thank you. Leg's better, anyway.

The mail carrier sees it in her face.

MAIL CARRIER

Good. Well, tell him we're rooting for him down at the office.

DAISY

I will. Thanks.

She closes the door and heads into...

INT. ELLIOT'S KITCHEN - DAY (FLASHBACK)

She walks to the backdoor, thumbing through the letters. She looks out the window in the backdoor.

ANGLE HER POV ELLIOT, facing away from US in the backyard, sitting in a comfortable wicker chair with his leg propped up on a footstool. He is motionless, staring at a tree or something. A small table sits next to him, stacked with unopened letters and cards.

EXT. ELLIOT'S BACKYARD - DAY (FLASHBACK)

As she comes out and approaches him quietly. He continues staring at nothing.

DAISY

It's the mail. Big pile today. Biggest one yet, I think.

He smiles. She sets the stack on the table and sits next to him. Then, she pulls out a thick legal-sized envelope.

DAISY (CONT'D)

Hey. Looks like you got something from Goldman's attorneys.

He nods.

DAISY (CONT'D)

So, I guess it's official now.
(Tosses it back on the pile)

One less thing to worry about, huh?
Need anything?

She opens cards at random, not sure what to do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT

No, thanks.

DAISY

It's all good news. Everyone's on your side. You should feel good about that. Even made the New York Times. They somehow got an interview with her. Do you want to see it?

ELLIOT

Nah, that's okay.

She stops and watches him. He's so low now - never been low a day in his life. And it seems nothing she says makes it any better.

DAISY

She's where she needs to be. You know that. Don't you? You did what you thought was best. And... she's uh... she's moved on. Getting what she needs, deserves.

He nods.

DAISY (CONT'D)

(Reading a card)

Who's Doris Kravitz?

ELLIOT

Husband died suddenly and she started having post-traumatic nightmares.

DAISY

Hmm. Well, she's a big fan.

She shows him the get-well card with a cartoon therapist and patient.

ELLIOT

(Smiles)

I'll be seeing her first thing tomorrow, as a matter of fact.

DAISY

You know, you don't have to go back so soon. It wouldn't hurt to take another week or two off. We could go someplace - the Cape, the Vineyard? Someplace nice and warm.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELLIOT

Nah. I need to get back.

She watches him. Anyone else would be glad it's all over, but he sees it as a failure and great loss.

Daisy leaves him and goes back inside.

Alone now, Elliot turns to the table. He reaches out and riffles through the stack of letters.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOTEL CONVENTION ROOM LOBBY - NIGHT

ANGLE ON A TENT SIGN, reading, "American Analysts Conference, Analyst of the Year." A person reaches in and removes the sign and folds the easel it was on.

WE PULL BACK. The area is mostly empty and dark now. Hotel workers are cleaning up and stacking chairs. Elliot comes into VIEW, standing in the middle of the room, leaning on his cane, watching the clean-up. The show is over, the energy replaced by the sound of vacuum cleaners and bus carts rolling by.

He makes his way over to the conference COORDINATOR, who's placing left-over hand-out material in boxes.

ELLIOT

Excuse me.

COORDINATOR

Yes?

ELLIOT

I'm Elliot Thode. I was... I was delayed unavoidably and missed the conference.

COORDINATOR

Dr. Thode. Yes. We were looking for you.

ELLIOT

I'm sorry. My plane was cancelled and then I had car trouble. It's a long story.

COORDINATOR

Well, as you can see, it's all over now. Sorry, you couldn't make it. It was quite a show.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She continues working.

ELLIOT

I was supposed to receive... a trophy or...

COORDINATOR

Yes, of course. I can ship it to you, as soon as I get back to the office. Actually, you know, you can grab it, if you like. Save me the shipping. I think it's still behind the podium.

ELLIOT

Sure, uh...

COORDINATOR

In that room.

ELLIOT

Thanks.

He heads toward the double doors.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - NIGHT

As Elliot enters. The room is large. We can see by all the empty seats and trash that the room held several hundred people. The large chandelier is unlit now, only the stark work lights show the way to the podium area.

Elliot walks to the center table and sees a box on the floor beneath the podium. He picks it up and sets it on the table. Inside is a heavy glass trophy. He takes it out and looks at the inscription: "Analyst of the Year, Dr. Elliot Thode."

He notices a smudge and attempts to rub it off. That only makes it worse. He reaches into his pocket, and pulls out his handkerchief, and polishes away the blemish.

When he puts the handkerchief back, he feels some other objects. He pulls them out and tosses them on the table.

He places the trophy in the box and starts to leave, then looks back. He sees Frank's car keys. He sets the box back down and puts the keys in his pocket. Then, he notices the gold watch, half-hidden under the handkerchief and places it in the box. Then, picks up the baby doll from Isabella. He puts the doll in the box. Then, he picks up the matches and places them in the box. Then, he stops and looks at all his gifts.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT
(In a whisper)
Thank you.

The silence is broken by the sound of his cell phone RINGING.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Daisy?

DAISY
Elliot, where are you? What
happened? Why didn't you call?

ELLIOT
My God, Daisy. The phone died and
I've been trying to call you all
day. It's a miracle.

DAISY
Did you make it in time?

ELLIOT
I got here too late. Missed the
whole thing, but I got the award.

DAISY
Did you have to drive? How are you
going to get back? The snow is
three feet deep.

ELLIOT
I'll stay at the hotel in Boston
and try to get back in a few days,
The car got stuck somewhere in the
white mountains, so I have to deal
with that first.

DAISY
How did you get to Boston?

ELLIOT
It's a long story. I was getting
the car pulled out of the ditch,
when the tow truck guy had a heart
attack, so I drove his truck to a
hospital in Concord.

DAISY
What the heck?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The CAMERA CRANES UP as Elliot walks slowly back through the large, empty ballroom, managing the cane in one hand, the box with the other, and balancing the phone on his shoulder.

FADE OUT:

THE END