

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)

ON A CLOSE SHOT of an official letter from the American Analysts Conference.

(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...

GLENDA (CONT'D)

Analyst of the year? My God.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Yeah, it's a little plaque and a free meal.

GLENDA (CONT'D)

Good God, Elliot, this is... umm.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

It's good news.

GLENDA

Congratulations.

ELLIOT

Thank you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Mrs. Kravitz, how are 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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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.

Then, he notices a flashing light, the WHOOP of a siren.

ELLIOT

Ah, for Pete's sake.

He looks in the mirror, pounds the steering wheel.

EXT. HIGHWAY - LATER

As Elliot sits in his car on the shoulder, waiting for the cop to call on the radio and organize his papers.

INT. CAR

He looks at the cars in the slow lanes. Passengers turn and smile, a few flip him off. The state cop is in no hurry. He approaches, flipping pages on his ticket book. Elliot runs the window down.

OFFICER

Can I see your license please?

Elliot pulls it out and hands it to him. Meanwhile, passengers in the cars continue to gawk and jeer, honk their horns.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

Mr. Thode.

(Painfully slow)

I'm stopping you because you drove through a red light and then continued to drive recklessly in particularly hazardous-

ELLIOT

(Snapping him off)

I know. I'm aware of what I was doing.

OFFICER

(Checks him out)

In a hurry, then?

ELLIOT

Yes. No. I, I just... I didn't want you to waste your time explaining what I already know.

(Smiles)

I'm sorry. I broke the law.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OFFICER

Don't worry about wasting my time
Mr. Thode, I'll let you know if you
are wasting time.

The Officer walks around the car slowly checking the plates.
Elliot is grinding his teeth to stubs. It's 9:30.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

I'm giving you a warning this time,
Mr. Thode. But let me give you some
advice.

(Elliot tenses)

You're not going to get anyplace
today being in a hurry. Okay?

Elliot nods, as he clenches the steering wheel, tighter and
tighter.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

(slowly, deliberately)

Stay calm and take it one...
step... at a time, or you're not
going to make it at all. Okay?

Elliot nods.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

Here's your warning. Consider it a
gift. Happy holidays.

The Officer walks off and Elliot rolls up the window. Another
passenger flips him off. The snow is unrelenting.

INT. AIRPORT GATE - DAY

Elliot is running with his bag and cane through a throng of
slow people, down the concourse. His zipper is still down and
his cheek has a smudge of toothpaste. He looks ahead. The
gate counter is empty, not a good sign.

A TICKET AGENT is working on the computer. Elliot approaches
and waits for the bedraggled agent to look up.

ELLIOT

Has flight 429B left?

TICKET AGENT

No.

ELLIOT

Oh, thank God.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TICKET AGENT
It was cancelled.

ELLIOT
Cancelled!

TICKET AGENT
It was taken out of service for
maintenance. Do you want me to put
you on standby for the next
available flight?

ELLIOT
(Relieved)
Sure.

Elliot slumps and hands her his tickets.