

SOMETHING FOR DR. THODE

Written by

Bill Birney

Copyright 2003, Bill Birney

1134 Al Anderson Ave.
Langley, WA 98260
(425) 890-0391
bill_birney@hotmail.com

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.

INT. GATE SEATING AREA - DAY

The area is packed with people - all seats taken. People are standing, sitting on their luggage, huddled on the floor. Elliot surveys the area. He looks worn, disheveled, needs a shave, a chunk of egg yolk dangles from his tie.

He eyes a rotund woman and her messy two-year-old, seated with their luggage occupying the seat next to them. He sneers and stands over them. The woman looks up from her cell phone and notices the cane.

AIRPORT WOMAN

Sorry. You want to sit?

ELLIOT

Please.

She moves her stuff to the floor and he sits, rubs his sore leg.

A moment later, her kid approaches Elliot with a lime sucker in her mouth. She studies him with large brown eyes. Feeling invaded, he smiles and retreats from her. She offers him her sucker. He smiles, shakes his head. She persists.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

No thank you. You eat it. Thanks, anyway.

She's still there. The woman turns to him and smiles. The girl offers the sucker again.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

(Like a kid)

I'm kind of full.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
 (Rubs his stomach)
 You can have it. Thanks.

He turns to the woman.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
 She doesn't understand.

Neither does the woman. They persist.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
 Don't you want it?

She shakes her head.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
 Okay.

He takes the sucker and makes a yummy sound. The two continue to watch him with amusement. He can't take it any longer.

He stands and pats his pockets, pulls out a pack of cigarettes. In another pocket he finds matches.

INT. AIRPORT GATE

The ticket agent looks up.

ELLIOT
 (to the Ticket Agent)
 Excuse me, where's the smoking area?

TICKET AGENT
 (Again, painfully slow)
 Take the escalator down to the main floor, go out to the ticketing area, turn right and walk down to the opposite end of the concourse. Turn left at the turnstiles. It's by the north end of the south terminal entrance.

He turns away, flustered. He checks for his ticket, grabs his bag and juggles it with his cane, the sucker, cigarettes and matches, and then heads across the concourse. As he passes a trash can, he mistakenly tosses the matches and puts the sucker in his coat pocket.

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

ELLIOT
Excuse me, 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 nothing, his mind a million miles away.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MEXICAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Elliot, Tommy and Daisy are seated. The adults have oversized Margaritas. Daisy raises hers.

DAISY
I want to make a toast.

TOMMY
You said I could.

DAISY
You can do yours after mine.

TOMMY
No fair.

DAISY
To Dad, who has always been there for us through thick and thin, may he go on forever in our hearts as Dad of the year. Congratulations on being an honored shrink, but nobody loves him more than his family. Bottoms up.

They clink their glasses and drink.

TOMMY
That sucked.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAISY
Okay, let's hear yours then.

TOMMY
(Sarcastic)
Uh oh, the pressure's on.

Daisy punches his arm.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
(clearing his throat)
I propose a toast to Elliot Thode,
famous Psychiatrist, who is about
to be honored for his many years of
tireless service, helping all those
nut-cases...

DAISY
Tommy.

TOMMY
(Laughing)
All right, neurotics and psychotics
and psychopaths and lunatics with
guns, and wack jobs to overcome
their problems and become normal
human beings again. Only a few
brave men have what it takes to win
this honor, because only a few men
care as much about their patients,
and are as dedicated, and are as
good at healing people. So this
toast is to honor Dr. Thode,
otherwise known as Dad, and to let
him know that... we like him too.

DAISY
Phew. Here, here.

They toast.

ELLIOT
That was amazing you guys. Thank
you.

DAISY
And as a token of our esteem... Ta
da.

She hands him a present.

ELLIOT
Oh you guys. What could this be?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

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
This is touching.

DAISY
There's more. Keep unwrapping.

He digs deeper and finds a small velvet box.

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

TOMMY

It'll make you look more like a
psychiatrist.

ELLIOT

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.

ELLIOT

What?

TOMMY

You hypnotizing me.

ELLIOT

I wasn't trying to hypnotize you.

TOMMY

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

ELLIOT

See what?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

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.

The group leaves. Elliot loads scoops of whipped cream on two fingers and plasters Daisy and Tommy on the nose.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. AIRPORT SMOKING AREA - DAY

Elliot's reverie is interrupted.

SMOKER

Every year, it gets a little worse,
don't it?

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?

ELLIOT

I'm a psychiatrist.

SMOKER

A shrink, huh? 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?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT

Hmm?

SMOKER

Do you think I'm crazy?

ELLIOT

You're not crazy.

SMOKER

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

Elliot smiles at that.

SMOKER (CONT'D)

Been unemployed for six months. Some guy in China's doing my job now, I think. I don't blame him. Who needs the job anyway? I can't worry about it. Something will come along, huh? It always does. Something always comes along.

Elliot moves away from the man, but he tags along.

SMOKER (CONT'D)

Where you headed?

ELLIOT

Uh, Boston.

SMOKER

Business, right?

ELLIOT

Yeah.

SMOKER

Thought so. I'm going to Florida to see my sister. Get out of this soup for awhile. The wife's always harping on me. Think big, she says, set your sights high. What are you wasting your time and money going to Florida for? I tell her, because I don't believe in thinking big. I believe in thinking small. Small is where it's at. You think big, you get ulcers and you worry yourself to death. Big things come and go, or they don't come at all. But it's the small things that matter, all the millions of small things.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Elliot is only half-listening. Smoker throws his butt on the ground.

SMOKER (CONT'D)
Nice talking to you, doc. Have a good trip.

ELLIOT
You too. Thanks for the matches.

SMOKER
No problem. Think small, okay?

ELLIOT
Right.

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

INT. AIRPORT GATE COUNTER - DAY

As 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. The flight is full and about to push off. How about if I put you on standby for the two PM flight?

ELLIOT
Fine.

TICKET AGENT
And I suggest you be at the gate by 1:30 at the latest and listen for the announcements...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT
I know. Please, don't patronize me.
If your smoking area wasn't so damn
far away, I would've...

Elliot sees the agent's reaction and puts his child away.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Do what you can. Thanks.

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 the next flight.
Just wanted to let you know.

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. They'll understand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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.

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 time. We love you.

ELLIOT

I love-

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

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

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.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

We regret any inconvenience this may cause you. Ticket agents will be available at the gates to issue refunds or to reschedule your flights. Again, all flights for this afternoon and evening have been cancelled...

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. All highways are very slow out of Burlington. We are expecting accumulations of up to nine inches by...

Elliot SNAPS off the radio once again.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

As Elliot passes under a freeway sign: Montpelier.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FREEWAY - LATER

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.

INT. CAR - DAY

Elliot's patience with traffic and slowness has been chipped away to one raw nerve. He takes the last drag from his last cigarette and angrily tosses it and the empty pack out the window.

He can make out a cop ahead waving traffic around the 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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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, the same one who gave Elliot the ticket, 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. ELLIOT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

As Elliot and Daisy finish making love. It was intense and fulfilling. Elliot pulls back and looks down into her eyes.

DAISY

That was...

ELLIOT

(Covering her mouth
gently)

Shh.

DAISY

(Whispering)
What's wrong?

ELLIOT

Nothing. I just don't want to spoil
the moment with talk.

After a moment.

DAISY

But you're talking.

He makes a zip motion on his mouth.

DAISY (CONT'D)

Can I just say one thing?

ELLIOT

Shh.

(Closes his eyes)
Just relax and feel... the moment.

DAISY

You're talking.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT
Only because you keep talking.

DAISY
I love you.

ELLIOT
Shh.

DAISY
I do.

ELLIOT
(Kidding)
How can we have an intimate moment
if you keep saying I love you?

DAISY
Do you know how ridiculous that
sounds?

ELLIOT
(Smiling)
Shh.

DAISY
Can I just say one thing?

ELLIOT
No.

DAISY
Please.

ELLIOT
We're losing the moment.

DAISY
Just one thing.

ELLIOT
Annnnd it's gone.

His eyes open.

DAISY
I really have to pee.

He releases her and she runs to the bathroom.

ELLIOT
Aren't you supposed to do that
before sex?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DAISY

I didn't have time. You were forcing yourself on me before I could properly prepare.

Elliot can hear her pee and unwind a wad of toilet paper.

ELLIOT

So is this the end of our intimate evening?

DAISY

Not necessarily. What do you want to do?

ELLIOT

I don't know. Tommy's asleep. We can do whatever we want.

DAISY

Like what?

ELLIOT

Oh, play video games, watch some TV. What do you mean, like what? What do adults normally do?

She comes back to the bed.

DAISY

Play mahjong? Shampoo the rugs? Drain the oil? By the way, the heater broke in the hot tub.

ELLIOT

Oh great, well that takes care of one of my suggestions.

They get cozy again.

DAISY

Honey, do you think the romance has gone out of our marriage?

ELLIOT

Yes.

DAISY

What can we do about it?

ELLIOT

Nothing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DAISY

How will it ever get better if we don't do something about it?

ELLIOT

It is getting better.

DAISY

But you just said the romance is gone.

ELLIOT

Right.

DAISY

How come I can never get a straight answer from you?

ELLIOT

Because I would be lying.

DAISY

I'm afraid to ask. Why?

ELLIOT

Because there are no straight answers.

DAISY

We have lost the ability to communicate.

ELLIOT

Then, we agree on something.

DAISY

Shh.

They snuggle again.

ELLIOT

Can I just say one more thing?

DAISY

No.

ELLIOT

(Whispering)

I love you.

They kiss. Then, Elliot grimaces in pain and rolls on to his back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

DAISY
Do you still think about Heather?

ELLIOT
With every step I take.

PAN TO his cane leaning against the nightstand.

DAISY
I'm sorry.

ELLIOT
Don't be sorry.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAR - DAY

Brake lights flash on and Elliot comes 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.

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 mid-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 starts to wander.

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.

ELLIOT (O.S.)
Who is the man with the half-hidden
face?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HEATHER

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

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HEATHER

He does.

ELLIOT

And not just in your dreams.

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.'

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HEATHER

Yes!

She stops at the window, looking out.

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...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

HEATHER

Yes.

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. After a long emotional hug, she pulls back.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. That was a little weird.

ELLIOT

It's okay. I understand. I think you've made some good progress.

She hugs him again, only this time without any restraint. Elliot feels her joy in his heart, but holds back. 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.

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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
Just 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.

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. 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.

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.

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. You know that.

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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.

This is news to Elliot.

ELLIOT

He would have?

HEATHER

Yes.

ELLIOT

He did?

She nods.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

I didn't know that. You've never
mentioned it.

(Taken aback)

How old were you when he did that?

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

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

Okay. 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.

There is SILENCE for a long moment, as Elliot regroups.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Heather, can I say something to you?

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

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 or make you feel bad. He's not here. He's just a memory - 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.

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

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

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

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RESIDENT
Oh yes. She's in E5.

ELLIOT
Where's uh?

RESIDENT
I'll show you.

ELLIOT
Thanks.

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

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.

ELLIOT
I know. I'll just check her over.

The resident leaves and Elliot goes into...

INT. ICU - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

As Elliot walks to her bedside. He quickly checks the instruments and IV bottles, then checks her eyes. He takes her hand and rubs it gently.

INT. PRIVATE HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING (FLASHBACK)

As Elliot enters. He checks Heather, and then goes to the window and watches the morning light spread slowly across the hospital campus.

The QUIET is broken by the rustling of sheets. He turns. Heather is moving. He goes to her side. After a moment, her eyes open slowly, painfully. She GROANS.

ELLIOT
Heather, Heather.

He continues repeating her name. 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 does and closes her eyes.

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT
(Smiling)
Good. We'll get you some breakfast.
It's a beautiful morning.

HEATHER
Yeah.

She closes her eyes to block the pain.

ELLIOT
The nurses are still trying to
contact your parents.

She GROANS and closes her eyes tighter.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Don't worry. I'll talk to them.
Would you rather not see them now?

She nods.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
I understand.

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

ELLIOT
I know.
(A 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.

Her eyes open.

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?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HEATHER

I'm sorry you had to come down here.

ELLIOT

It's all right.

HEATHER

And making you feel bad. 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.

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

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. Then, she lets go of
his hand and he turns to the door.

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.

ELLIOT

Daisy, why uh, is anything wrong?

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 nurse)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

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.

DAISY

Do you want to get some coffee?

ELLIOT

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

DAISY

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 there was some touching. 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...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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-

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?

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. Okay? 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 their hands, just 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.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

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... 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 know. I'm aware of what I'm doing and why.

DAISY

But 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 smiles in his half dream.

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.

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.

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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-

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

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
love their-

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Elliot searches for an answer, but sees only that she is very confused and very much in love with him.

DISSOLVE TO:

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 is off in another world as he finishes filling his tank, and heads toward the mini-mart.

INT. RURAL GAS STATION - DAY

Elliot approaches the GAS STATION CLERK, who is ringing him up.

GAS STATION CLERK
That's \$62.45.

Elliot hands him a 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?

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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. You need a map?

ELLIOT

Yeah, I guess.

GAS STATION CLERK

Don't you have GPS?

ELLIOT

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

GAS STATION CLERK

All right. 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.

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

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?

ELLIOT

(Half-listening)

Hmm.

GAS STATION CLERK

You'd probably be there by now, if you'd stayed on 89.

ELLIOT

Maybe.

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. But they get lost. Then they end up here, and I show 'em the map and they see there's no magical highway. Just what's right there in front of their eyes. 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?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

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

GAS STATION CLERK
Go back to route 3.

ELLIOT
Yeah and head south.

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

ELLIOT
Okay. Thanks a lot for your help.

GAS STATION CLERK
Wait a minute.

The clerk looks through a drawer. Then finds a small object
and tosses it to Elliot. It's a toy compass.

GAS STATION CLERK (CONT'D)
It's not much, but it works.

ELLIOT
Hmm.

GAS STATION CLERK
Maybe it'll do you some good.

ELLIOT
Thanks.

GAS STATION CLERK
Good luck.

Elliot leaves. The clerk shakes his head, grabs a Cracker
Jack box and eats a handful.

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.

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.

PINE

Dr. Thode, how long have you been married?

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT

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.

STORCH

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

ELLIOT

I realize that.

Storch watches Elliot carefully. He can tell Elliot's blood is beginning to boil.

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELLIOT

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

FEINMAN

Exactly how many times?

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...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

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.

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.

FEINMAN

For how many patients do you make house calls?

Elliot searches for the right thing to say.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

FEINMAN (CONT'D)

How many patients are you currently
visiting at their homes?

ELLIOT

Just Heather, now.

PINE

(Quietly, as if he is
being sensitive)

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.

FEINMAN

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.

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.

INT. CAR - AFTERNOON

As Elliot drives to Boston. The clouds gather above.

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 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...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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. I have told you what happened and what you are expected to do-

ELLIOT

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

ROBERT

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

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.

He walks up to the station and tries the door. It's locked. He looks in the window. The lights are off and there's no movement. He POUNDS on the door and SHOUTS.

ELLIOT
Hello! Anybody in there!

Nothing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He walks around the side of the building. Across a car graveyard up a dirt road, he sees a small house with a tin roof and smoke coming from the chimney.

He starts to make his way through the field of dead cars and something catches his eye. He stops and turns. A girl about seven is standing alone, watching him, half-hidden behind an old truck. She has long, straight black hair, deep, brown eyes, and a flat, distant expression.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Hello, do you...

She turns abruptly and runs away from him, up the road to the house. Elliot follows.

EXT. TIN ROOF HOUSE - AFTERNOON

As Elliot makes his way up to the front porch and KNOCKS on the screen door. He waits, leaning on the doorjamb to take the weight off of his sore leg. No answer. He tries again, his patience growing thinner. He looks in the front window. The shades are drawn and it's dark. He is about to give up when the front door opens.

FRANK is in his seventies, but looks older. His hair is long and matted, he's unshaven, clothes are old and worn, and he's in a perpetual state of inebriation. He looks at Elliot and waits.

ELLIOT

Hello. My car got stuck about two miles down the road and I need a tow. Can I use your phone? My cell phone is... there's no signal, I guess.

Frank checks him over with rheumy eyes.

FRANK

Yup.

He heads back into the house. Elliot follows him in.

INT. TIN ROOF HOUSE LIVING ROOM

As Elliot enters. The house is dark, old, piled with dusty books, magazines and boxes.

ELLIOT

Thanks. I appreciate it.

Frank continues down a short hall away from Elliot, and points back over his shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANK

Over there.

Elliot turns back, sees the phone. Then, he removes his wallet and fumbles through it, looking for his auto club card.

INT. TIN ROOF HOUSE KITCHEN

The girl, ISABELLA, is standing on a stool at the counter making two peanut butter sandwiches. Frank enters and sits at the kitchen table.

ISABELLA

What's he doing?

FRANK

Using the phone.

ISABELLA

Hmm?

FRANK

Car's stuck.

Isabella puts a sandwich on a paper towel and brings it to Frank. He starts to eat. She eats hers, as she walks down the hall.

INT. TIN ROOF HOUSE LIVING ROOM

She enters and stands a safe distance from Elliot, watching him. He is frustrated and in pain.

ELLIOT

...On highway nine near Northwood I think, a few miles east of the Stanbro Service Station. Listen, I'm in a real bind. I need to get to... Can you suggest another service? All right, thanks.

He hangs up and turns. He sees Isabella and gives her a weak smile, as she continues to stare at him.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Umm, could I speak to your... dad?

She goes back to the kitchen. Elliot follows hesitantly.

INT. TIN ROOF HOUSE KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

As Elliot enters. Frank is seated at the table facing away from him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT

Thank you for the use of your phone.

FRANK

(Without turning back)

Sure.

ELLIOT

Umm, listen, I've got a little problem. I can't find anyone who can give me a tow and I have to be in Boston in a few hours. Is there any way... can you help me?

FRANK

Sorry.

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 of the ditch.

Frank doesn't answer, downs a big gulp of whiskey. Isabella watches from a distance. Frank gets up, sets the empty glass on the counter.

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, how about if I drive and do all the lifting? 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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELLIOT

What?

FRANK

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

Frank heads out the back door, 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.

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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.

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?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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?

FRANK

Yup.

ELLIOT

That's probably it. They can check you out at the hospital.

FRANK

Why can't you check me out?

ELLIOT

You need a heart monitor and medication.

FRANK

What good's a doctor if he can't do anything without a bunch of machines?

ELLIOT

The machines need doctors to operate them.

FRANK

The machines need the doctors, huh?
(Groans with another jolt
of pain)
What's going to happen to me?

ELLIOT

The sooner we get you there the better.

FRANK

Am I going to die?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELLIOT

You'll be fine.

FRANK

No, I ain't. What about Isabella?
What the hell's going to happen to
her if I die?

ELLIOT

Everything will be fine. I'll take
care of everything. Just rest.

He closes his eyes.

FRANK

She doesn't have anybody.
Isabella's folks split up and left
her with me. Nobody wants her
because she's got a touch of
autism. You know what that is,
don't you?

ELLIOT

Yes.

FRANK

It makes it hard for people to love
her because she doesn't show love
the way most people do. I'm all
she's got.

ELLIOT

Don't worry, there are plenty of
people who understand how to deal
with autism.

Frank starts to get riled.

FRANK

I know there are people who can
DEAL with her. She doesn't need
someone to DEAL with her. She needs
someone who cares. A friend.

ELLIOT

Of course. I meant there are-

FRANK

You know. Autistic kids have powers
that most people don't know about.
She doesn't take to just anybody.
But when she does, the love she
gives is... powerful... it changes
your life.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

FRANK (CONT'D)

She's like a little lightening bug that stays dark until just the right moment, then glows brighter than the sun, until she's all used up.

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.

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.

DAISY

Why don't you come to bed?

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HEATHER
I made a mistake. I need help.

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELLIOT

I do.

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. 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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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. What am I going to do?

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. 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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

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.

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?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

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...

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. Let's get
some breakfast.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

HEATHER (CONT'D)

I haven't eaten since yesterday morning. I'm starving all of a sudden.

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.

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?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

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 with him 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?

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...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

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.

DISSOLVE TO:

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. 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. 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 living room and sees Daisy asleep in her rocking chair.

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAISY

Elliot.

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.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DAISY (CONT'D)

Let her work things out with her father. I don't trust him. 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:

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

FRANK

That's it ahead on the right.

Frank is awake now, looking out the window. Elliot sees the hospital turn-off O.S.

ELLIOT

How are you feeling?

FRANK

Felt better.

ELLIOT

Still have pain in your left arm?

FRANK

Yeah and everywhere else.

EXT. CONCORD GENERAL HOSPITAL - NIGHT

As the truck pulls up to 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. One of your coronary arteries is blocked and that caused a small area of your heart muscle to die.

He glances at the child and softens the wording.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAYBURN (CONT'D)

Had you waited much longer to get in here, there's a good chance that there would've been more complications. We have you on some medication to help circulation around the heart. We'll want to keep you here for observation for the next day or two.

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.

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.

ANGLE WITH ELLIOT AND RAYBURN.

RAYBURN

If he stays on the medication we give him, there's a good chance he'll survive. Does he have any next of kin?

ELLIOT

I don't know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAYBURN
What about the girl?

ELLIOT
She was abandoned and Frank took
her in.

RAYBURN
Well, we'll worry about a long-term
solution later I guess. For now,
I'll have family services locate
someone to watch her.

Elliot looks at a clock and shrugs. 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.

ISABELLA
(Very defiantly)
No.

ELLIOT
You want to help Frank feel better,
don't you? Then, we...

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.

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.

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 lid.
(No cane)

DAISY
(without looking at
Elliot)
Don't forget to water the plants in
the backyard.

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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.

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HEATHER

No. I don't believe you.

ELLIOT

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

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...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

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.

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?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FAMILY WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

RAYBURN

Sometimes these things just keep snowballing.

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 (CONT'D)

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 for more.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 DAISY
You guess what?

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

 DAISY
Why not?

 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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

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.

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.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FAMILY WAITING ROOM

ISABELLA

I have to pee.

Elliot opens his eyes and sees Isabella standing before him, with that stare.

INT. CONCORD EMERGENCY ROOM CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Elliot and Isabella are looking for the restrooms. He looks down. He likes how Isabella is starting to take a shine to him. They come to a restroom.

ELLIOT

Can you go by yourself?

She nods and pushes the door open. Elliot wanders across the hall and looks into a holding area with several emergency patients on gurneys. He spots Frank across the room. Frank looks bad, with the tubes and wires connected to him.

Elliot steps back into the corridor. He leans against the wall and waits for Isabella.

DISSOLVE TO:

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."

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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's that dangerous.

DAISY

(Standing)

Well Elliot, it sure as hell looks like it to me.

ELLIOT

Please don't worry. I'll take-

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

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-

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

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. She stops occasionally and looks at something or handles some medical apparatus, then continues on.

ELLIOT

Isabella, do you want to walk
around for awhile?

She nods. He walks alongside her.

A sick, elderly woman, MRS. DOWNS, is sitting in a wheelchair, parked against a wall. Isabella stops and watches her.

MRS. DOWNS

Hi, what's your name?

ISABELLA

Isabella.

MRS. DOWNS

That's a pretty name. I'm Mrs.
Downs.

Isabella touches her arthritic hand. Then, she turns and walks on. Elliot smiles and shrugs for Mrs. Downs. Then, he rushes to catch up with Isabella.

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PATIENT

(To Nurse 4)

Don't suppose there's a 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. The elevator stops and he is rolled out.

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

Do you like the hot dog?

She nods.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

What do you and Frank eat at home?

ISABELLA

Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches,
Tooty Frooties, and bologna, and
sometimes hamburgers, and sometimes
macaroni.

ELLIOT

What are Tooty Frooties?

ISABELLA

Cereal.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOT
Do you help Frank in his store?

ISABELLA
Yeah.

ELLIOT
Do you go to school?

ISABELLA
Yeah.

The clock says 8:39.

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
be given an award.

She seems interested, so he continues.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
I'm a kind of doctor, and other
doctors were honoring me, giving me
the award because... they got
together and all decided that I
was... that I was a good doctor.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

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

ISABELLA

I got six gold stars.

ELLIOT

Gold stars are awards. What did you do?

ISABELLA

I cooperated and I was quiet and listened.

ELLIOT

Those are hard things to do, even for adults.

She goes back to her hot dog.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ELLIOT'S CAR - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

As 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 large truck, a block and a half down the street.

RESUME ELLIOT, as 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)

As he gets out of the car and walks to the house door.

INT. ELLIOT'S HALLWAY (FLASHBACK)

As Elliot opens the door. It is dark. He turns on the hall light and enters.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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)

As he enters, turns on the light and checks around.

INT. LIVING ROOM (FLASHBACK)

As 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)

As he walks toward the other end of the hall into the dark.

INT. ELLIOT'S STUDY (FLASHBACK)

As he enters and turns on the desk light. He checks around. He is beginning to relax. Then, he turns back toward the hall. Heather is standing in the doorway, facing him, holding a small purse close to her side.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL MATERNITY WING

Elliot is waiting for Isabella to finish drinking from a water fountain. Then, he bends down to take a quick drink. When he looks up, she is gone.

He walks down the hall, with his cane, checking every crevice and open door. He stops a passing nurse.

ELLIOT

Excuse me, did you see a girl about
this tall with short, brown hair?

She shakes her head and Elliot continues.

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.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ELLIOT'S STUDY (FLASHBACK)

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:

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

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

(She starts to cry)

You gave me hope. That's all I needed. Now, That's gone. I have nothing. No one cares. I love you. I know you don't love me, but-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELLIOT

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 surfaces.

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. 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.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HEATHER (CONT'D)

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 burst.

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 you don't.

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

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-

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

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, just 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. 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 I tell him
don't be that way. 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. Elliot follows after a moment.

INT. CONCORD EMERGENCY ROOM CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Ms. Teckel from Family Services stands with Isabella and Elliot.

MS. TECKEL

I think we'll get along just fine.
And we can stay here with Mr.
Sanders until he needs to rest and
then we can hang out someplace
else. Okay?

Isabella nods.

ELLIOT

Thank you for stepping in the last
minute, Miss uh...

MS. TECKEL

Teckel, Irene Teckel.

ELLIOT

Nice to meet you.
(Turning to Isabella)
And it was nice to meet you,
Isabella.

He extends his hand and they shake.

As Elliot turns, Isabella breaks away from Ms. Teckel, reaches out, and 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

Frank is in bed still connected to tubes, when Elliot enters.

FRANK

Hey, doc.

ELLIOT

How you feeling?

FRANK

Like hell, but I want to thank you
for everything. You saved my ass. I
don't know how I'm ever going to
repay you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

As 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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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?

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

I don't know where he lives. You have to show me.

HEATHER

I can't.

ROBERT

What the hell is going on here?

HEATHER

He's dead.

ROBERT

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

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.

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.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HEATHER (CONT'D)

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.

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 goes off 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?

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. Thank you.

She closes the door and heads into...

INT. ELLIOT'S KITCHEN - DAY (FLASHBACK)

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

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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.

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

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.

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?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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.

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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 his hand out quickly. His handkerchief is stuck together by the lime sucker from the kid at the airport. He peels off the sucker and sets it on the table.

The handkerchief is a sticky mess, so he folds it carefully and puts it in another pocket. When he does, he feels some other objects. He pulls them out in several clumps and tosses them on the table. Then, he checks his other pockets and removes more items.

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 picks up the keys.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FRANK'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Repeat of part of a previous scene. Elliot is with Frank, who's lying in bed.

FRANK

I wanted to thank you for everything. You saved my ass. I don't know how I'm ever going to repay you.

ELLIOT

Don't worry about it.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BALLROOM - RESUME

He puts the keys in his pocket. Then, he notices the gold watch, half-hidden under the handkerchief. He picks it up.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MEXICAN RESTAURANT (FLASHBACK)

Repeat of part of a previous scene. As Elliot unwraps his present from Daisy and Tommy.

ELLIOT

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

I thought I already looked like one.

TOMMY

Eh. You could use a little help.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BALLROOM

He looks over the watch, then places it in the box. He checks through the other items to make sure he hasn't left anything else important. Then, he notices the compass.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RURAL GAS STATION (FLASHBACK)

Repeat of part of a previous scene. The gas station clerk is looking for a map behind the counter as Elliot looks at cards.

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.

GAS STATION CLERK (CONT'D)

I guess they're hoping some magical highway will just materialize out of nowhere. But they get lost. Then they end up here, and I show 'em the map and they see there's no magical highway. Just what's right there in front of their eyes.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GAS STATION CLERK (CONT'D)
 Sometimes I wonder if they really
 know where they want to go.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BALLROOM - RESUME

He puts the compass in the box too. Then, he picks up the matchbook.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. AIRPORT SMOKING AREA (FLASHBACK)

Repeat of part of a previous scene. Elliot is smoking outside with the guy who gave him the matchbook.

SMOKER

The wife's always harping on me. Think big, she says, set your sights high. What are you wasting your time and money going to Florida for? I tell her, because I don't believe in thinking big. I believe in thinking small. Small is where it's at. You think big, you get ulcers and you worry yourself to death. Big things come and go, or they don't come at all. But it's the small things that matter, all the millions of small things.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BALLROOM - RESUME

He puts the matches in his pocket. Then, he notices the warning.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAR (FLASHBACK)

Repeat of part of a previous scene. The Officer is giving Elliot a warning.

OFFICER

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?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Elliot nods.

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.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BALLROOM - RESUME

He puts the warning in the box and sees the baby doll that
 Isabella gave him.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CORRIDOR BY MATERNITY ROOM (FLASHBACK)

Repeat of part of a previous scene. Elliot and Isabella are
 standing by the maternity room window.

ISABELLA
 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.

ELLIOT
 It works. I do feel better.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BALLROOM - RESUME

He puts the doll in the box. Finally, Elliot picks up the
 lime sucker and smiles.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GATE SEATING AREA (FLASHBACK)

Repeat of part of a previous scene. Elliot is seated next to a woman and her daughter. The girl offers him the sucker again.

ELLIOT
 (Like a kid)
 I'm kind of full.
 (Rubs his stomach)
 You can have it. Thanks.

He turns to the woman.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
 She doesn't understand.

Neither does the woman. They persist. He takes the sucker.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BALLROOM

He adds the sucker to the box. Then, he stops and looks at all his gifts.

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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?

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

#