"A SMILE BEHIND THE TEARS"

by
Christiaan Laan

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FADE IN:

1  INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT
KATE (9) sits on a sofa watching television.

2  EXT. ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS
PETER (35) walks up the path in a drunken stupor. He reaches the front door and fumbles in his pocket.

He loses his grip on some keys and they drop to the ground. He kneels and reaches for the keys. After a moment he gets a hold of them again and rises.

Peter tries a few keys before fitting the proper one. He turns it and opens the door.

3  INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS
Peter stumbles in.

Kate pushes herself off of the couch in the adjacent living room and runs into the foyer.

KATE
Dad, I'm hungry.

She stops and looks up at him.

KATE
What's wrong?

Peter pulls out the key and shuts the door.

PETER
Make it yourself.

He kicks off his shoes.

KATE
I don't know how.

Peter looks at her. He reaches a hand towards her.

PETER
Helen?

Kate steps back.
KATE
Daddy...

Peter blinks to restore his vision. He tries to stand straight.

PETER
(real drunk)
Make something yourself. It's not that hard.

Peter uses the walls to push himself to the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kate runs past Peter through the living room to the kitchen.

Peter lies down on the sofa and shuts his eyes.

Kate comes back into the living room with a package in hand.

KATE
Help me, dad.

She stops in front of him.

KATE
What does this mean?

She holds the package to him with a finger on the instructions.

KATE
Dad.

Peter opens his eyes and sits up.

PETER
(angry)
Can you not give me some quiet?

He snatches the package from Kate and throws it against the wall.

KATE
But I need your help.

Peter smacks her across the cheek.

Kate flinches, her eyes tear up.

FADE OUT:
A SCHOOL BELL RINGS.

FADE IN:

INT. SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

KATE (17) comes out of a classroom into the hallway with a backpack in hand. She walks to a locker nearby; all the while other students ignore her.

She opens the locker and pulls out a coat and puts it on. Lastly she grabs a scarf and shuts the locker.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

The sky is overcast, its dark presence threatening rain at any moment. The wind blows briskly.

Kate exits the school with her backpack over her shoulder and jacket done up. She wraps the scarf around her neck and makes her way through the crowd of students to a bike rack nearby.

She undoes a combination lock and tosses it in her backpack. She yanks the bike loose from the bars and heads off towards a small wooded area.

EXT. ABANDONED INDUSTRIAL PARK - CONTINUOUS

Kate emerges from the trees in an old industrial park. Her eyes are set on the ground at her feet. Her cheeks turn light pink from the cold, her dark blond hair blows in the increasing wind.

ROLL TITLE

Every few steps Kate looks up to see where she is going. At the other end of the lot a road is visible with little to no traffic.

To Kate's left lies a row of empty buildings. On her right is a damaged chain-link fence RATTLING in the wind. Beyond the fence lies a lake with a bridge far in the distance.

As Kate nears the end of the fence a portion shakes loose and collapses to the ground.

She stops and looks at the fence blankly. A lone tear etches down her cheek. She wipes it away and continues walking.
Kate reaches the end of the industrial park. There is no traffic on the road. This is a ghost area of town. Old brick buildings loom in either direction. Wild growth has overtaken much of the area.

Kate looks back at the still, empty industrial park. She looks down the line of damaged buildings.

A beat.

She hops on her bike and rides out of the industrial park to the left.

8 EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS
Kate rides past the old buildings.

9 EXT. INTERSECTION - CONTINUOUS
A small commercial area. The main street has right of way, the side street with 'STOP' signs. A pedestrian looks both ways and crosses the street to a coffee shop.

The occasional car passes through on the main road.

Kate approaches the intersection on the main stretch. The building on her right goes right up to the corner obstructing the side streets view.

She enters the intersection.

A rushing car SCREECHES to a halt. Too late. It smashes into Kate with its nose well ahead of the stop line.

Kate is sent flying off of the bike into the intersection. She lies motionless, her bike caught and crippled beneath the car.

A BUSINESS MAN rushes out of the car to Kate's side. His face is filled with panic. He fumbles to pull out a cell phone from his pocket.

A gold, crescent moon pendant slips out from Kate's jacket caught by the chain around her neck. It sways gently to a halt above the pavement.

10 INT. HOSPITAL - KATE'S ROOM - DAY
Kate lies motionless, her eyes closed. She is wired to a monitor reading her vital signs. Catheters and a feeding tube protrude from her body.
INT. HOSPITAL - HALL - CONTINUOUS

PETER MORGAN (43) stands in the hall outside of Kate's room. He is wearing a worn out jacket and jeans. His hair is dark and slicked back. His face is covered in two-day scruff.

With him is a NURSE (39). She is slender and tall. Her long hair is tied back in a ponytail.

PETER
(frustrated)
Isn't there anything else you can do? No other way you can wake her?

NURSE
We have done all we can. Time is all that is needed now.

PETER
It's been months already. How long can it take?

NURSE
Sometimes years.

Peter hits his hand against the window.

PETER
What's the point in leaving her here then?
(pause)
She might as well be dead.

Peter makes for the door to the room.

The nurse grabs his arm.

Peter hits her hand away.

PETER
(angrily)
She is my daughter. Who are you to stop me from going to her?

DR. TRENT PHILLIPS (48) comes rushing down the hall. He stands about six feet tall. His black hair is scattered with the greying of age. He wears black half-framed glasses with a neck string attached to the sides.

He steps between the nurse and Peter.
TRENT
What seems to be the trouble?

The nurse turns and walks away.

PETER
What more do you want from me?

Peter leans hard against the wall.

A beat.

TRENT
The board wants to move Kate.

PETER
What do you mean?

TRENT
This is a small hospital, Peter. We don’t have many rooms and we have a small staff. The board wants Kate sent to a larger hospital up state where they can attend her properly.

Peter slumps his shoulders.

PETER
That’s a long drive. I can’t afford such trips. I can’t afford any of this.

TRENT
You could move.

PETER
(pained)
She has to be here. My job, my life, everything I’ve ever had is here.

TRENT
(regretfully)
She will be transferred next Monday with or without my blessing. There’s nothing else I can do for her.

A pain is visible through Peter’s facial features as he looks through the window. He COUGHS a few times into his hand.
PETER
You can end the life support.

TRENT
(shocked)
You can’t be serious? Isn’t she
the only family you have?

PETER
I can’t bear to see her like this
any more.

Peter turns away from the window.

PETER
I doubt she wants to return anyway.

TRENT
Look, there might not be any more I
can do personally, but let me speak
to the board. Maybe if I explain
the situation they will change
their mind.

PETER
Would they do it so easily?

TRENT
Just wait a few more days.

A beat.

PETER
Alright, but incase nothing
changes, have the legal stuff
ready. Kate has suffered enough.

Peter walks away COUGHING again.

PETER
(quietly)
I have suffered enough.

Trent watches him disappear down the hall. He turns to the
window and rests his shoulder against the edge of the frame.
He wipes his chin with the back of his hand.

The nurse returns.

NURSE
What are you going to do?

Trent straightens up from the window ledge.
TRENT
I'll go see the board.

NURSE
It's been two months already. Do you think she'll come out her coma soon?

TRENT
I can hope.
(pause)
I don't want to see her go like this, not until I’ve exhausted all options.

Trent goes into the room and stands by the monitor.

The nurse peaks into the room.

NURSE
Page me if you need anything.

She watches him for a moment before walking away.

INT. HOSPITAL - KATE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Trent writes down some numbers in a log report and places it back down on the monitor. He sits down in the chair by the bed.

TRENT
Be strong, Kate.

Trent leans back in the chair and continues to watch her.

INT. BOARD ROOM - DAY

The BOARD OF DIRECTORS are seated around an oval table. At the head of the table is the CHAIRMAN. Beside him to either side is the hospital's administrator, RICHARD, an ACCOUNTANT and other members.

Richard is an older man, middle to late fifties.

Trent sits off to the side by the entrance of the room.

CHAIRMAN
Before we get started with the agenda, we have a guest that would like to address the board. Doctor Phillips, you may proceed.
TRENT
Thank you.

Trent gets up and goes to the open space at the end of the table. He is directly across from the chairman.

TRENT
Last week it was decided that the coma patient, Kate Morgan, will be moved up state.

(pause)
The father has expressed his displeasure. If she is unable to stay here he wants to end life support.

Trent takes a deep breath.

TRENT
I know we need space, but can’t we make an exception here? She is my patient, and more than that, she is some one’s daughter.

ACCOUNTANT
You would like the hospital to further its expenses because of this?

CHAIRMAN
There is no reason for this patient to remain here when up state is better staffed and has more suitable facilities.

TRENT
(desperately)
If it is staff you are concerned about, I’ll put in the time. The patient is healthy. She could wake up any day. Let me do this.

RICHARD
Can you say when exactly?

TRENT
No, I can't. Comas are unpredictable.

CHAIRMAN
We are still a business, Dr. Phillips. We have responsibilities to the people of this city.
ACCOUNTANT
The costs could end up in the hundreds of thousands. We can't make any exceptions otherwise we would have to extend such requests to others.

Richard watches Trent.

CHAIRMAN
We have to maintain our level of standards. This is a small hospital, but we are one of the finest because of our methods.

TRENT
Isn't saving people part of that standard?

Richard turns to the chairman.

CHAIRMAN
She will still be helped, just not by our hands. Other people need our care too, Dr. Phillips. That means knowing when to move patients so we can accommodate others.

Trent looks among the board. Their faces like steel in the midst of such words, all except for Richard's.

TRENT
You would have me give up on Kate then? How can I accept that, to let a patient, my patient, die?

CHAIRMAN
The father has made that decision for you.

TRENT
(pleading)
But they are family. Does that mean nothing to you?

A beat.

Trent steps back from the table and rushes out of the board room.

Richard stands up.
RICHARD
Excuse me for a minute.

He leaves the room.

14
INT. HALL - CONTINUOUS
14
Richard closes the door behind him.

RICHARD
Trent.

Trent is far down the hall. Richard runs after him.

RICHARD
Trent, hold on a minute.

Trent stops.

Richard comes up to him.

RICHARD
Let me speak with them. I might be able to buy you some time.

TRENT
(upset)
You could have spoken up in there. It was like they weren’t even listening to me.

RICHARD
There is a certain order to things, Trent. After the agenda ends there will be opportunity for me to bring this up again.

TRENT
You'll just get the same answer, Richard.
(pause)
I have failed. I’m supposed to save lives, not take them away.

Richard rests his back against the wall.

RICHARD
(respectfully)
You are one of the best doctors around. Your desire to help those in need is proof of that.
(pause)
RICHARD (cont'd)
I was once like you. Can't you give me a chance?

TRENT
A good doctor wouldn't let this happen.

Trent begins to walk away.

RICHARD
Don't give up hope, Trent.

Trent disappears around the corner.

Richard returns to the board room.

INT. DR. TRENT'S OFFICE - LATER

Trent sits at his desk with a cup of coffee and files before him. The door to his office is open.

Richard walks in and knocks on the open door.

Trent looks up.

TRENT
Richard. What did they say?

Richard sits in a chair on the other side of the desk.

RICHARD
It wasn't exactly what I was hoping for, but you have three days. In that time you must find an alternative.

TRENT
How?

RICHARD
Many of us have children of our own. I myself have three; two of them are off starting families of their own.

Richard gets up.

RICHARD
When placed in a similar situation, I asked what they would want.

Trent gets up.
TRENT
(relieved)
I can't thank you enough.

Richard and Trent walk towards the door.

RICHARD
Don't thank me just yet. I called a few other local facilities already, but none of them will take in a coma patient.

TRENT
(troubled)
What else is there?

They stop at the door.

RICHARD
You're a smart man. I'm sure you'll think of something.

Richard shakes his hand.

RICHARD
Good luck, Trent.

Richard leaves the office.

INT. DR. TRENT’S OFFICE - DAY

Trent sits at his desk. His head is resting on his fore-arm on the desk as if he were sleeping.

On the desk is a pack of cigarettes unopened and some nicotine gum.

There is a KNOCK at the door. Trent slowly stirs and lifts his head. He straightens himself out.

TRENT
Come in.

The door opens and EDWARD (48) walks in. He is average height and weight. He wears glasses and his hair is cut short with traces of balding. He has on a spring jacket and cored pants with dress shoes.

Edward closes the door behind him.

Trent gets up and comes around the desk. He shakes Edward's hand.
TRENT
Thank you for coming, Edward.

EDWARD
I came as soon as I could, Dr. Phillips.

TRENT
You can call me Trent, old friend. Please, have a seat.

Trent returns to his chair behind the desk. Edward sits in the visitors chair in front of the desk.

EDWARD
It's been some time since we last met.

A beat.

TRENT
Ten years I believe. So how are things at the orphanage?

EDWARD
As well as can be expected. It's still hard to find homes for many of the children.

TRENT
It's never easy to take on that responsibility.

Edward shakes his head.

TRENT
How is Sarah?

EDWARD
She is doing very well. (chuckles) Still putting up with my selfishness.

Edward notices Trent's hand.

EDWARD
(curiously) You still have your wedding ring on, or is that a new one?

Trent looks at his hand.
TRENT
Every now and then I put it on again. Strange isn't it?

Trent pulls the ring off of his finger and drops it in a drawer of the desk.

EDWARD
I see it as two things; either you regret what has happened, or you want to find someone again. They are related in a way.

TRENT
Maybe.

A beat.

EDWARD
So what is so urgent? This isn't like before is it?

TRENT
It's a little more complicated.
(pause)
Think of this one as a personal favour to me.

Trent turns to a coffee percolator on the side table and pulls out the carafe. He pours two cups of coffee.

TRENT
Do you read the papers?

He hands a cup to Edward. Edward leans forward and takes it.

EDWARD
I do.

Trent moves a jar of sugar cubes and some creamer packets to his desk.

TRENT
Did you read about the girl who was hit on her bike a few months ago?

Edward drops a lump of sugar in his coffee. He reaches for a packet of creamer and opens it into his coffee. He shakes his head.

TRENT
It was all over the front pages.
Trent hands Edward a stir stick.

**EDWARD**
(recalling)
Oh yes, the girl hit by the public safety commissioner. There was a chance she wouldn't survive if I remember correctly. How is she now?

**TRENT**
We were fortunate to save her. She is actually completely healed now or at least from what we can tell.

**EDWARD**
That's great. Her family must be relieved.

**TRENT**
(disappointment)
I wish that were the case. She remains in a coma. The board wants to move her to a larger hospital and the father wants her to stay.
(pause)
If I can't find somewhere for her to go she'll die.

Edward leans back in the chair and sips the coffee.

**EDWARD**
How much longer does she have?

**TRENT**
Three days.

Edward's eyes open wider.

A beat.

**TRENT**
The only facility that I can trust this task to is your orphanage. You have the funding, the nurses and hopefully the space. I'm sure the board would be alright with this, and I can talk my administrator into lending you the required equipment.

Trent pulls a folder out from his desk drawer and hands it to Edward.
TRENT
All of the details are there. I don't expect an answer right away, so take it back with you and think it over.

Edward glances through the contents.

EDWARD
Have you told the father about this? It's not something he wanted is it?

TRENT
It's nothing against what he wants. He was just put into a corner and I want to give him a way out.

Trent looks Edward in the eyes.

TRENT
Please, Edward, do what you can to help save her.

Edward takes a long drink of his coffee.

TRENT
(discouraged)
Sad isn't it, me always asking you for favours like this?

EDWARD
(comfortingly)
We save people in different ways, Trent. Sometimes they serve the same purpose.

Edward gets up.

EDWARD
Give me a few days to clear things up on my end with the staff and my government sponsors.

Trent stands up with a small glimmer of hope in his eyes. He comes around the desk and shakes Edward's hand again.

TRENT
Thank you, Edward. You're a good friend.

(pause)
Would you like to see her?
EDWARD
It's best I don't. Wouldn't want to raise any false hopes.

They walk out of the office together.

INT. HOSPITAL - OFFICE HALL - CONTINUOUS
Trent shakes Edwards hand again.

TRENT
Take care, Edward, and say hello to Sarah for me.

EDWARD
I'll do that. Talk to you soon.

Edward walks off towards the foyer.

INT. HOSPITAL - HALL - LATER
Trent walks up to Kate's room and looks through the window. The same nurse from before is inside. She is moving Kate's arms, bending the joints. She sees him and puts Kate's arm down.

She walks out of the room and comes up next to him in the hall.

NURSE
Anything come up?

TRENT
I'll know soon enough.

A beat.

NURSE
I know it isn't my place but, may I ask why you are going this far for her?

Trent looks at the nurse and then back at Kate.

TRENT
I feel that we as doctors, nurses, surgeons; whatever we may be it is our obligation to do all in our power to help our patients. It is why I am here, to help people.
Trent looks back into the room.

TRENT
(regretfully)
But looking at Kate now, I feel that it might be because I have no children of my own.

NURSE
I think you would make a great father. You are very caring and dedicated.

Trent looks at the nurse and mocks a smile.

TRENT
That's why I'm without a wife.

He walks past the nurse down the hall.

The nurse watches him with a sorry look.

INT. DR. TRENT'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Trent sits at his desk with the desk lamp on. He is crouched over some files and paper work with a cup of coffee in hand.

On the wall, the clock reads 7:34 PM. Trent looks at it and then to a calendar. He gets up and grabs a pen. He walks over to the calendar and crosses out the date.

Right next to the date he crossed is a circled one.

Trent sits back down and leans his head back.

The phone RINGS.

Trent reaches for the phone and picks it up.

TRENT
Hello, Dr. Phillips speaking.

He rests his elbows on the desk, phone to his ear.

TRENT
Hello Edward, good to hear back from you.
(pause)
Yes, what is it?

A beat.
TRENT
(disbelief)
How can that be? Just one room, one bed is fine. Please. Anything to keep her alive.

A beat.

TRENT
You are my last hope. (begging)
Can’t you make the decision yourself for one life? I beg you.

The color leaves Trent’s face. He rests his forehead against his other hand.

TRENT
I’m sorry, Edward. It was a lot to ask of you. Thanks for trying. (pause)
Bye.

Trent drops the phone on the desk. He clasps his hands in front of his drooping head.

INT. HOSPITAL - HALL - LATER
Trent stands outside of Kate's room looking through the window. He has his hands in his pockets.
He turns around and hurries down the hall.

INT. DR. TRENT’S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS
Trent comes in and grabs his coat from a hook on the wall and his keys off of the desk. He rushes out of the office and closes the door.

EXT. ORPHANAGE - DRIVE LOOP - LATER
A new looking sport utility vehicle pulls into the driveway. Trent jumps out of the driver side.

EXT. ORPHANAGE - ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS
Trent walks up to the door and KNOCKS. He turns away from the door and looks around while he waits.
The door opens.

Trent turns around.

EDWARD
(surprised)
Trent, what are you doing here so late?

TRENT
(grabbing Edward’s hand)
Please, Edward. One last time I’m asking you...
(dropping to his knees)
I’m begging you, do something for this girl.

EDWARD
(regretfully)
I can't put this on my staff.
Without the funding for another nurse we just can't do it.

Trent lets go of Edward’s hand.

A beat.

TRENT
(encouraging)
There doesn't necessarily need to be a nurse at all times, just someone to check on her. If it is an issue of money I can help.

Their eyes meet.

A beat.

Edward looks behind him. He SIGHS.

EDWARD
(gives in)
Alright. Alright we'll do it.
Sarah is going to rip me apart for this.

TRENT
Thank you.

Trent shakes his hand vigorously.
EXT. HOSPITAL - FRONT - DAY

A van pulls up in front of the hospital. Edward emerges from the passenger side and opens the side door.

He folds out a wheelchair ramp. A girl with glasses wheels herself out of the van, guiding the wheelchair with a joystick on the right arm rest.

This is ELLIE (17). She is of average size yet pretty. Judging from the wheelchair she might be five and a half feet tall. She is dressed warmly, her eyes darting around with curiosity.

Edward sticks his head into the van.

EDWARD
Drive around to the emergency entrance, we'll meet you there.

Edward folds the ramp back up and closes the van door.

He walks with Ellie beside him towards the hospital entrance.

INT. HOSPITAL - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Trent is waiting in the lobby as Ellie and Edward come in. He smiles and comes forward to greet them.

TRENT
(shaking Edward's hand)
Good to see you, Edward.

Trent looks down at Ellie.

TRENT
And who might this be?

ELLIE
(quietly)
Ellie.

She extends her hand and gives Trent a light hand shake.

EDWARD
This is the last one you sent me.

Trent looks at Ellie long and hard.
TRENT
My have you grown. I couldn't recognize you.

Edward LAUGHS.

EDWARD
That's what kids do. Shall we go see her?

Trent leads them out of the lobby.

INT. HOSPITAL - HALL - CONTINUOUS

They make their way through the hall doors into the intensive care wing.

TRENT
You must be anxious to see Kate.

EDWARD
Not as much as Ellie. She kept pestering me to come when she found out that we were taking her in.

Ellie gives Edward a silly snarl.

ELLIE
Hey.

Ellie and Edward exchange playful smiles.

Ahead of them some HOSPITAL STAFF stand by in wait.

Trent walks up to the windowed room on the left of the hall near the staff. Inside the nurse is waiting.

TRENT
There she is.

Edward takes a look through the window. He steps aside to let Ellie have a peak.

Ellie's smile quickly fades.

ELLIE
How long will she be like this?

Trent goes to the door and opens it.

TRENT
Your guess is as good as mine.
Trent enters the room with the staff.

EXT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Kate is carefully transported from the hospital to an ambulance in wait. All of the life support is hooked up to a battery pack as she is wheeled down the walkway.

Ellie, Edward and Trent stand off to the side. The paramedics from the ambulance slide the stretcher carefully into the back, taking extreme care of the catheters and wires.

The nurse hops in the back of the ambulance with Kate. The paramedics hop in the front of the ambulance and wait.

TRENT
Thanks again for doing this, Edward. I spoke to the father. He said to do as we wished that she wasn't his concern anymore.

EDWARD
Not much of a father is he?

TRENT
At first I didn’t think he was, but he came to visit often.
(pause)
I think for Mr. Morgan, life doesn’t exist outside of this town.

A beat.

EDWARD
Will you be keeping him up to date on her status?

TRENT
Yes. I told him where she will be in case he has second thoughts about leaving her.
(pause)
I hope that isn't a problem.

EDWARD
It shouldn't be. I'll be sure to keep you updated.

Edward gives Trent a hearty pat on the shoulder.
EDWARD
We'll look after her from here.
Take care of yourself.

Trent smiles.

TRENT
Thank you.

Edward walks toward their van in front of the ambulance.

ELLIE
Good-bye.

TRENT
Bye, Ellie.

Edward looks back as Ellie starts to follow and gives Trent a final wave.

INT. ORPHANAGE - KATE'S ROOM - LATER

Ellie watches from the doorway to Kate's room.

Edward and SARAH (47) stand next to the bed.

Sarah is average height with long brown hair left loose down her back. She has caring eyes behind her half-frame glasses. She wears a light sweater, casual pants and slippers on her feet.

Sarah looks at a clipboard with a chart on it. She waves it to get Edward's attention.

SARAH
(frustrated)
You know we only have three nurses. We can't just devote all of our time to Kate. How could you do this without consulting me?

EDWARD
(defensively)
Trent was practically begging me, Sarah, I couldn't push him away. Besides, at night it shouldn't be a problem and during the day I can help out. There isn't a whole lot that needs to be done.

SARAH
It still won't be easy.
EDWARD
When has it ever been easy?
(pause)
We'll just have to get by with what we have.

Sarah nods.

EDWARD
I will sit through tonight with Vanessa and show her what to do.

Sarah smiles and gives him a kiss on the cheek.

She leaves the room. Edward motions for Ellie to come in after Sarah is gone.

Ellie comes in next to the bed.

EDWARD
You have taken a great interest in her.

ELLIE
(quietly)
Is that bad?

EDWARD
No, I think Kate could use a friend.

Ellie smiles. She looks at Kate lying still on the bed.

ELLIE
I wonder if she knows what is going on.

EDWARD
There is a possibility she can hear us. We won't know unless we ask her when she wakes up though will we?

Ellie looks at her eyes closely.

ELLIE
I think she can.

EDWARD
What makes you say that?
ELLIE
Her eyes move whenever we talk,
like she is dreaming.

She smiles again.

ELLIE
Can I stay with her?

EDWARD
Of course.

Edward gently touches Ellie's shoulder.

INT. ORPHANAGE - KATE'S ROOM - DAY
Edward is asleep in the chair next to Kate's bed. The readings on the monitor are all steady.

VANESSA, a young nurse, lets Ellie in as she leaves the room. She WHISPERS something in Ellie's ear and moves on.

Ellie moves herself to the other side of the bed by the window.

Edward wakes up and sees Ellie.

EDWARD
(yawning)
Ellie, how long have I been out?

ELLIE
I just came in a few minutes ago.
(pause)
Vanessa went to get a drink.

EDWARD
Shouldn't you be getting ready for school?

ELLIE
I'm not feeling well. Can I stay home today?

EDWARD
I'll go call the school. Think you can keep an eye on her for me?

Ellie nods with a smile as Edward gets up.
EDWARD
If something happens just use the intercom next to the bed.

Edward leaves the room and closes the door QUIETLY behind him.

A beat.

Ellie manoeuvres around the bed to the other side. She gets as close as she can to the bed without disturbing it.

She looks at Kate's closed eyes and watches her slow breaths.

A beat.

Slowly she extends her hand towards Kate's on the bed. She touches it and brushes her fingers up the hand until her whole hand covers Kate's.

For a brief moment Kate's heart rate jumps up on the monitor and then settles down again.

INT. ORPHANAGE - KATE'S ROOM - LATER

Edward comes into the room and stands by Ellie.

EDWARD
What do you think she is dreaming about?

ELLIE
If it were me, it would be of my family.

Edward sits back in the chair.

A beat.

EDWARD
I called the school and told them you'd be in tomorrow.

He gives Ellie a smirk.

EDWARD
You're not really sick are you?

ELLIE
No.
(pause)
I want to be with her.
EDWARD
You only have a few weeks of school left. You can spend all summer with her.

ELLIE
I know.

EDWARD
She’s going to be fine, I promise.

Edward takes Ellie's hand to reassure her.

31 INT. OFFICE - DAY

Peter Morgan sits in his cubical. He fiddles with a pen over some papers. On the computer screen is a partially completed document.

Books and binders are stacked messily around his desk. Partially hidden behind posted notes is a picture. Visible is a woman and the face of a small girl.

Peter tosses the pen down on the desk and leans back in his chair. He looks to be in rough shape.

A larger man comes up to his cubical. He is the manager, GREG. He has on a shirt and tie and has a folder in his hand. He puts his arm on the wall of the cubical and looks in.

GREG
Peter.

Peter turns to him. He COUGHS hard into his hand.

PETER
Yes, Greg?

GREG
I need that report. You're already three days overdue. So, you have it?

PETER
It's... not done.

Greg shakes his head.
GREG
(disappointed)
You've been with us a long time
Peter and you've done some great
work. But I can't keep playing
favorites with you.

PETER
What's that supposed to mean?

Peter COUGHS again.

GREG
It means since you can't perform
your tasks as assigned, we're going
to have to replace you.

Peter gets up and steps towards him.

PETER
Come on Greg, I need this job. I
have nowhere else to go and you
know that.

A beat.

GREG
Pack your things and head over to
filing. I'll set you up with a job
over there for now.

PETER
Thank you.

Peter sits back down. He COUGHS harder than before into his
hand.

GREG
Are you feeling okay?

PETER
Yeah, it's nothing.

GREG
Alright then. I want that report
by the end of today. Got it?

Greg walks away.

PETER
Yes, sir.
There is sputum in Peter's hand from coughing. He takes a scrap piece of paper and wipes it off.

Peter looks at a family portrait hanging on the cubicle wall. He pulls it off and looks at it.

A beat.

He tosses it into the trash bin.

32

INT. CASINO - NIGHT

Peter sits at a black jack table. He has a few chips left in front of him and a glass of scotch. He antes up as the DEALER throws down a new set of cards.

He shoots down some of the scotch. He has a four and a jack in front of him. He tosses a few more chips into his pot and asks for a hit.

The dealer tosses him down an eight. He busts. He tosses the remaining chips at the dealer.

   PETER
   Cash me out, I'm done.

He takes the cash from the dealer and chugs down the rest of his drink. He heads over to the slot machines.

33

INT. PUB - LATER

Peter sits at the bar. Two empty glasses sit in front of him. He is slouched over. He looks up towards the BARTENDER.

   PETER
   (drunk)
   Another.

   BARTENDER
   Same thing?

Peter nods and tosses some change on the bar.

The bartender slides him the drink and scoops up the change.

   BARTENDER
   So what's the occasion?

Peter sips from the glass and COUGHS it back up.
PETER
Got demoted.

BARTENDER
That's tough man.

He slides the change back to him.

BARTENDER
This one's on the house.

Peter continues to sip on his drink. He picks up the change and looks at it.

EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Peter stumbles down the sidewalk. The orphanage is just ahead of him.

He makes his way onto the orphanage driveway.

EXT. ORPHANAGE - ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Inside the orphanage it is mostly dark save a distant light.

Peter braces himself against the door frame. He reaches towards the doorbell and fumbles around until he connects with it.

He RINGS it a few times and starts pounding on the door.

INT. ORPHANAGE - ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Sarah comes down the stairs in a nightgown. Edward is already at the door.

SARAH
Who's there?

Edward takes a look through the spy hole.

EDWARD
It's a man. He looks drunk.

Edward straightens up from the spy hole.

EDWARD
Go call the police.
EXT. ORPHANAGE - CONTINUOUS

Peter continues to BANG on the door.

PETER
(incoherently)
Kate!  Kate!  Come on, open up.

INT. ORPHANAGE - CONTINUOUS

Sarah comes back with a cordless phone to her ear.

EDWARD
I think it's Kate's dad.

The door starts to shake.

PETER (O.S.)
Let me see my daughter!

The door bell RINGS again.

Sarah hangs up the phone.

SARAH
They'll be here any minute.

Edward leans his body against the door.

EDWARD
You better leave. The police are on their way.

EXT. ORPHANAGE - CONTINUOUS

Peter hits the door a few more times and falls to his knees.

PETER
I don't care. Just let me see my daughter.

Peter's head hits against the door as a police car pulls into the driveway.

Two OFFICERS rush up to the door and grab hold of Peter. They drag him back towards the police car.

PETER
No! Let me go!
Peter tries to kick himself loose of the officers' hold.

The officers lock his arms in theirs and toss him into the back of the car.

The officers return to the door as Edward comes out.

OFFICER
Don't worry, we'll keep him locked up for the weekend, straighten him out. Do you want to press charges?

EDWARD
No, it's okay. Thanks officer.

The officers walk to the car and drive away.

Peter wakes up in a cold sweat. He throws off the lone blanket and sits up in the cot. He wipes his forehead with his sleeve.

The jail GUARD opens the jail cell and stands aside.

GUARD
You're free to go.

Peter gets up and leaves the cell.

Peter walks out of the station. His clothes are all wrinkled and his hair a mess.

He walks down to the sidewalk and flags down a cab.

Peter comes into the office and walks down the hall. The left of the hall is lined with glass windows and doors. Ahead are all of the cubicles.

Greg is sitting at his desk. Peter starts walking by his windows. The door to his office is open.
GREG
Peter, come in and close the door.

Peter enters the office and shuts the door.

GREG
Have a seat.

Peter sits down. He avoids eye contact with Greg.

GREG
(disgusted)
Gees Peter, you look like crap. I got a call saying you caused some trouble. Care to tell me what happened?

Peter looks across the desk and finally makes eye contact with Greg.

PETER
Nothing.

Greg pulls a stamp pad out of his desk.

GREG
As far as my boss is concerned, you are right, nothing has happened. We're going to have to let you go, Peter.

PETER
You can't be serious? This job is all I have left. Come on, Greg.

GREG
There is nothing more I can do for you. You've been on a downward spiral ever since your wife passed away.

Greg slowly pushes the stamp down on the file on his desk. 'TERMINATED'

GREG
You've hit the bottom, Peter. You need to pick yourself up and move on.

Peter gets up. He COUGHS before clenching his fists.
GREG
Go grab what you need and I'll walk you out.
(pause)
I'm sorry, Peter.

Greg gets up and comes around the desk. He opens the door.

Peter comes forward and pushes Greg hard against the glass. The glass rattles and gets the attention of everyone.

PETER
Don't do this to me, I'm begging you.

GREG
What more can I do? You go out, get drunk, and come to work looking like street trash.

He pushes Peter off.

GREG
What happened to you?

SECURITY comes running down the hall and comes into the room.

GREG
Escort him out.

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Peter is pushed out of the Greg's office. The security guards walk him out on either side.

Greg comes into the hall. He straightens out his shirt and watches Peter leave.

Peter COUGHS more as he exits the building.

EXT. ORPHANAGE - DRIVE LOOP - DAY

The sun is high in the sky. The familiar handicap van pulls into the drive of the orphanage and stops.

Edward comes down from the orphanage entrance leaving the door open. He opens the side door and lowers the ramp for Ellie. Ellie manoeuvres out of the van and Edward lifts the ramp and closes the door.

The van pulls away.
EDWARD
How was your exam?

ELLIE
(confidently)
Easy, as always.

Ellie smiles.

EDWARD
So you are all done now?

Ellie nods and goes up to the entrance. Edward follows her in.

INT. ORPHANAGE - ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS
Edward closes the door behind him as Ellie makes her way out of the foyer.

EDWARD
Are you going to see Kate?

Ellie stops and looks back.

EDWARD
Want me to bring you something to drink?

ELLIE
I'm fine, thank you.

She continues on her way.

INT. ORPHANAGE - KATE'S ROOM - LATER
Ellie is in the room with Kate. She is reading a hard cover novel, the title not visible. Kate's eyes are still closed as if asleep.

Edward steps into the room and comes up to the bed.

EDWARD
I wonder how long she'll stay in a coma.

Ellie lowers her book.

EDWARD
What do you think she is waiting for?
ELLIE
You mean...?

EDWARD
To wake up. She is supposed to be completely healed.

A beat.

ELLIE
Memories.

Edward gives Ellie a questioning look.

ELLIE
Do you remember when I first came here?

EDWARD
Yes, you cooped up in your room. Wouldn't even come out to eat.

ELLIE
I think this is similar. She's in a strange place and has painful memories. Maybe they are so terrible that she doesn't want to come back.

EDWARD
Maybe.

A beat.

ELLIE
Will we be able to help her?

EDWARD
You'll be able to help her more than any of us, Ellie.

ELLIE
How so?

EDWARD
You have moved on as well as we could have hoped through those first years. Now you can take Kate's hand and help her do the same.

Ellie takes her right hand off of the book and looks at it.
EDWARD
I'll leave you to your reading.

Edward leaves the room and closes the door quietly.

Ellie slowly reaches her hand forward and touches Kate's hand with her finger tip.

A beat.

She pulls her hand back and goes back to reading.

EXT. DOWNTOWN SIDEWALK - DAY

Peter walks through the crowds with a bottle concealed in a paper bag. He bumps into people left and right.

He COUGHS and pushes a PEDESTRIAN in his path out of the way.

PEDESTRIAN
Hey, watch it!

Peter continues on.

PETER
(mumbling)
In my way, they're all in my way, taking everything from me.

He turns into an alley.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Peter hits against the side of the alley as he enters. He pulls a half empty whisky bottle out of the paper bag. He twists off the lid and chugs a portion of it.

PETER
Now I have nothing left.

He makes his way farther down the alley. He knocks over garbage cans and kicks bags on his way.

Half way through the alley Peter begins to COUGH uncontrollably. He loses his grip on the whiskey bottle and it SHATTERS on the ground.

PETER
(panicking)
No!
Peter sits himself up against the alley wall. Leaning forward he reaches a shaky hand towards the broken glass and spilled whisky.

He flinches as he cuts the tip of his finger on the glass. He picks up a large pointed piece of glass and holds it with both hands.

Peter pulls up the sleeve on his left arm. He presses the glass up against his wrist at an awkward angle. He pushes gently at first until a trace of blood appears.

He closes his eyes and begins to push harder.

His face twists in pain.

INT. ORPHANAGE - KATE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ellie is reading her book.

Suddenly Kate's eyes open. Her face appears stricken with grief as she jolts upright in the bed. She looks around breathing deeply, almost gasping, her arms reaching for nothing.

Ellie drops her novel, the pages fold as they hit the floor. She SLAMS her finger on the BUZZER next to the bed.

Kate's eyes fall upon the tube in her arm circulating blood. She panics.

Ellie is startled, unable to move.

Sarah and Edward come rushing into the room as Kate grabs the tube in her arm.

Ellie backs away from the bed.

Sarah gets a hold of Kate's arm to stop her from yanking the tube.

Edward helps hold Kate still. Kate continues to struggle and try to get at the tube in her arm.

    EDWARD
    It's okay, Kate, calm down. Can you hear me?

Kate nods furiously.
EDWARD
The tubes are of no harm to you.
We need you to sit still so we can
remove them. Understand?

Kate nods again less sporadically. She stops struggling.

Edward and Sarah gradually free her of their restraint.

Ellie moves back to the bed and gently touches Kate's hand.
Kate clenches her hand and pulls it away from Ellie’s.

Kate looks nervously from Edward to Sarah and lastly at
Ellie.

ELLIE
I'm so happy, you are finally
awake.

SARAH
Everything is going to be alright
Kate. We're here to help you.

Edward gets up and places his hand on Ellie's shoulder. He
leans down to her ear.

EDWARD
(quietly)
Let's leave her to Sarah for now.
We'll come back later and bring her
some food.

Kate looks at her hand as Ellie leaves with Edward.

INT. ORPHANAGE - HALL - NIGHT
Ellie KNOCKS on Kate's door.
A beat.
She KNOCKS again and opens it.

INT. ORPHANAGE - KATE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS
Kate is sitting on the bed looking out the window. Her arms
shake holding herself up. The last rays of sunset reach from
beyond the yard.

Behind Kate is the majority of her meal uneaten on a tray.
INT. ORPHANAGE - HALL - CONTINUOUS

Ellie moves into the doorway.

ELLIE
Can I come in?

INT. ORPHANAGE - KATE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kate nods without looking back.

Ellie comes in and closes the door behind her. She turns the light on.

Kate turns around quickly and falls onto the bed. She looks at Ellie with a hand reaching towards the light switch.

Ellie flips the lights off.

Kate pushes herself back into a sitting position with much effort.

Ellie comes around the bed and turns her wheelchair towards the window.

Kate remains seated without moving. Her breathing is very soft and barely noticeable. Her face is blank, hiding emotion.

Ellie looks at the dinner tray.

ELLIE
Not hungry?

Kate doesn't respond.

ELLIE
Would you like to see the rest of the... Never mind.

Ellie looks at Kate's arms shaking as they hold her up. Ellie puts her hand on the joystick.

ELLIE
I think I'll go back to my room.

Before she can move Kate manages to grab her hand. There is no force in her grip, her touch soft.

Kate's face doesn't show it, but something in her eyes makes Ellie release the joystick.
ELLIE
Okay, I'll stay.

Kate's stare returns to the window.

A beat.

ELLIE
Do you like the sunset?

Kate nods. Ellie looks out the window to watch it with her.

INT. ORPHANAGE - KATE'S ROOM - LATER

The room is dark. Only the faint city light reaching from beyond the window illuminates it.

Ellie turns to see Kate collapsed on the bed.

There is a light KNOCK on the door. Sarah peers into the room. She turns on the light.

Ellie closes the curtain and takes the meal tray from the bed.

Sarah repositions Kate and manages to get her under the blanket.

INT. ORPHANAGE - HALL - CONTINUOUS

Edward is outside of Kate's room waiting. Ellie comes out first. Sarah shuts off the light and closes the door behind her.

INT. ORPHANAGE - PLAY ROOM - LATER

It is a big room with a large television, couches, chairs and small tables. The walls are lined with book cases filled with books, games and toys.

A few older children, middle to low teens, watch television with a volunteer, ROY.

Roy is a young man, not overly handsome but a trusting face. He wears glasses and has shaggy blonde hair.

Edward and Ellie are sitting a little ways back from the television. They have a chess board set up on the table between them. The game is about half way through.
Edward advances his knight.

EDWARD
She didn't say anything?

ELLIE
Neither of us did.

EDWARD
(disbelieving)
For two hours?

ELLIE
It didn't seem that long. It just sort of happened.

Ellie pushes a pawn forward to attack the knight.

EDWARD
Do you think she is a mute?

Edward pushes his queen forward taking the pawn.

ELLIE
I don't believe that. She'll talk when she wants to.

Ellie looks at the board and randomly advances her bishop.

EDWARD
This is unlike you, Ellie. You're not concentrating.

Edward advances into a check with his queen. It is safely guarded from the king by the knight.

ELLIE
I'm sorry; I can't do this right now.

She topples her king. She starts to move away from the table.

ELLIE
Good night.

EDWARD
Good night, Ellie.

Ellie goes out of the play room down the hall.

Edward sits back and shakes his head in bewilderment.
Peter is asleep in a hospital bed. His wrist is heavily bandaged and taped.

Trent comes into the room and checks to make sure everything is in order.

Peter comes to.

TRENT
Peter, you're awake sooner than I expected.

PETER
(weak)
What am I doing here?

TRENT
You lost a lot of blood, but we got you just in time.
(with a reassuring smile)
There's nothing to worry about, you'll be fine.

Peter looks at his bandaged wrist.

PETER
I don't want to be here. Why couldn't you just leave me?

TRENT
It's my job, Peter, to save those that are brought to me.

Peter tries to tear off the bandage on his wrist.

PETER
(struggling with the bandages)
I don't want to live, there's no reason for me anymore.

Trent holds his arms away from each other.

TRENT
I will have restraints put on you if necessary.

Trent takes a deep breath.
TRENT
How could you throw it all away?
First Kate's life and now your own?
I'd give anything to trade places
with you.

Peter continues to struggle.

PETER
This life is not so precious. It
has been nothing but suffering;
disappointment after
disappointment.

TRENT
You would give up on life so
easily?

PETER
I gave up a long time ago.

Peter looks him fiercely in the eyes.

PETER
You were there the day my wife
died. Why didn’t you save her?

Trent looks at Peter trying to remember. His grip loosens
and Peter gets a hold of his bandages and rips them.

The stitches tear and his wrist opens up again.

Trent presses the bandage back against the wrist.

TRENT
(desperately)
Help! Somebody help me!

Two ORDERLIES rush into the room.

INT. HOSPITAL - PETER'S ROOM - DAY

Peter has an unimpressed look on his face. His wrists are
bound by straps to the bed.

Trent comes in and takes a seat.

TRENT
What am I going to do with you, Mr. Morgan?

Peter turns away.
TRENT
You won't eat; you don't show any indication of wanting us to take the straps off. At this rate I only have one option.

Peter turns back.

PETER
What's that?

TRENT
A mental institute. They will give you the help you need.

PETER
(forcefully)
You can't do that. Just because I hate my life doesn't make me insane does it?

TRENT
It can when there are others that need you, like your daughter. Have you ever thought about how anybody else felt; how she feels about you?

Trent gets back up.

A beat.

TRENT
It's your choice Peter.

Trent leaves the room.

60

INT. MENTAL INSTITUTE - DAY

It is early in the morning. Trent comes through the entrance with Peter in a straight jacket being led by a DOCTOR.

61

INT. MENTAL INSTITUTE - CUBE - DAY

The room is all white. The walls and floor are padded. Peter is led in to the room by the doctor. The doctor leaves.

Trent comes into the doorway.
TRENT
You don't have to be here forever. Just until you realize that life is precious, not just to yourself but others as well.

Peter slumps down in the corner.

TRENT
For the time being you'll be on anti-depressants. When you decide you've had enough of this place, I can arrange a counsellor for you. She is very good.

PETER
Why do this for me?

Trent lowers himself to Peter's eye level.

TRENT
I think families should find a way to be together regardless of circumstance. Like you and Kate.

Trent stands back up.

TRENT
When you want that counselling, let me know.

Trent walks out of the room and turns back.

TRENT
I almost forgot, Kate is awake. She'll begin rehabilitation soon. Maybe it's time you do the same.

Trent walks away. The door to the cube is closed.

Peter falls to the ground with tears in his eyes. He cries softly.

Unable to cover his mouth he COUGHS. Some SPUTUM and BLOOD splatter on the floor in front of him.

INT. REHAB CENTER - MAIN CORRIDOR - DAY

A female THERAPIST pushes Kate out of a room into the corridor. Edward is sitting in wait.
THERAPIST
She is responsive to touch and from what I can tell, her hearing and eyes are fine. She doesn't respond though, so can't be too certain.

Edward gets up.

EDWARD
She hasn't spoken at the orphanage either.

He follows the therapist through the corridor.

THERAPIST
We will begin muscle therapy so she can walk on her own. Many of the stretches and exercises can also be done at home every few hours.

EDWARD
That would be very helpful.

They enter the gym.

INT. REHAB CENTER - GYM - CONTINUOUS

The gym is large and spread out. There are many exercise machines and large open area. Stacked in the corner are body mats. In the open area parallel bars are setup at waist height.

The therapist pushes Kate over to the open area with Edward in tow.

THERAPIST
Edward, can you put a mat out for us?

Edward goes to the stack and pulls down the top mat.

THERAPIST
Alright, help me bring Kate to it.

Edward takes one side and the therapist the other. They lift Kate up with her arms wrapped around their shoulders. She drags her feet barely moving them.

They set Kate down on the mat and lay her on her back.

The therapist begins with her left leg and lifts it up.
THERAPIST
Tell me if it starts to hurt.

She continues to push the leg up. At about sixty degrees Kate hits the mat with her hand.

THERAPIST
Good.

The therapist stops and holds the leg there.

A beat.

She lowers the leg and starts pushing the right leg up.

THERAPIST
Same thing.

At about the same height Kate hits the mat again.

A beat.

The therapist bends Kate's knee and pushes the leg forward with the knee bent. She pulls it back straight and bends it forward in succession. Then she repeats the process with the other leg.

THERAPIST
Try moving your legs; you don't have to force it.

Kate moves her legs a little bit with great effort.

The therapist puts Kate into a seated position. She starts moving Kate's arms in circular motions and bending the elbow.

INT. REHAB CENTER - GYM - LATER

Kate is seated on a recumbent bike machine. She peddles slowly, her legs uneasy. Her foot slips off and she has difficulty getting it back on.

The therapist places the foot back on and tightens the strap.

THERAPIST
Try again.

Kate continues to peddle.
THERAPIST
We'll stick to stationary exercises; focus on getting your muscles used to movement again.

Kate stops peddling. Edward and the therapist move Kate to a machine nearby. It is similar to the bike machine, but for the hands.

They set Kate on the seat. There is a padded bar set up for Kate to rest her shoulders against.

THERAPIST
 Lean up against the bar.

The therapist helps Kate lean forward.

THERAPIST
 Good.

She places Kate's hands on the peddle grips.

THERAPIST
 Okay, hold onto the grips and peddle.

Kate does so. Her arms move more steadily than her legs.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Trent is seated by the window with a coffee already half finished.

The door opens to the shop and JULIE (44) walks in. She pauses in the entrance and has a look around. She is average height with shoulder length hair. She is wearing business attire.

Julie spots Trent and walks over. She takes a seat across from him.

JULIE
(short of breath)
Sorry I'm late, Trent. My last session ran longer than I thought.

TRENT
Don't worry about it.
(pause)
You are looking well, Julie. How have you been?
JULIE
Good. Keeping busy as always. How are things at the hospital?

TRENT
Hectic, nothing out of the normal.

Trent looks at his coffee.

TRENT
Did you want something? A coffee or tea, something to eat?

JULIE
I'm fine, thank you. So, you had some business you wanted to discuss?

Trent picks up an UNDERARM folder case. He lays it on the table and pulls out a slim folder. He slides it over to Julie.

TRENT
I would like to hire you as a counsellor for this man.

Julie opens the folder and looks over a report of Peter Morgan.

JULIE
Alright.

She closes the folder.

JULIE
When do you want me to begin and for how long?

Trent closes his folder case.

TRENT
As soon as you can, this week if possible. I trust your judgment, so however long is needed to make him better, I leave that to your discretion.

JULIE
I can begin on Thursday.

Julie checks her watch.
JULIE
I'm sorry, Trent. I have to run for my one o'clock.

She gets up and stands in front of Trent. Trent stands up.

JULIE
It was nice seeing you again.

They hug.

TRENT
You too.

Julie puts a hand on his cheek.

JULIE
Take care.

She leaves.

Trent sits back down and watches Julie hurry by the window. He finishes his coffee.

INT. MENTAL INSTITUTE - ROOM - DAY

Peter sits at a table with his hands folded in his lap. His head is slouched forward. There are no windows to the room, the walls pure white. It is completely sealed save a steel door entrance. A single light floods the room from above the table.

Julie enters the room and shuts the door. She has a portfolio in hand. She walks over to the table and extends a hand to Peter.

JULIE
Mr. Morgan, I'm Julie, your counsellor.

Peter lifts up a hand and reaches it forward.

Julie shakes it and sits down. She places the portfolio on the table and opens it.

JULIE
Alright. To start off, I just want to confirm a few details. You can just nod your head if you don't want to answer.

Julie looks at her sheet.
JULIE
Your birthday is August 4th, 1966.

Peter nods.

JULIE
You are a single parent to a girl named Kate.

Peter nods.

JULIE
You work for Premier Analysts as a data tracker.

Peter shakes his head.

JULIE
Okay. Did you lose your job? Quit?

Julie crosses it off.

PETER
Fired.

Julie pulls out a note pad and closes the portfolio.

JULIE
So I'm here to help you overcome a few things, is that right?

PETER
I don't want to be in here.

JULIE
And you are here because...?

Peter hangs his head down.

JULIE
You tried to kill yourself. Is that right?

Peter nods.

Julie pulls the report out of the portfolio and looks at it.

JULIE
You were also uncooperative at the hospital and refusing to eat.

A beat.
Peter nods again.

JULIE
Is there anything else you want to add? What do you hope to get from this?
(pause)
Nothing that you say leaves this room, Peter.

Peter looks at her.

PETER
(stuttering)
I... I would like to see my daughter again.
(pause)
But that might not be possible.

He lowers his head again.

JULIE
Look at me, Peter.

A beat.

Slowly Peter brings his head up again and looks at Julie.

JULIE
(with a warm smile)
Everything is possible for the person who believes.
(maintaining eye contact)
Never forget that.

Julie takes a pen out from the portfolio.

INT. REHAB CENTER - GYM - DAY

Kate is in a rowing a machine. The tension is low. She is able to pull the grip with ease, working the joints in her arms and her back.

She stops and the therapist and Edward lift her into the wheelchair.

They go back to the walking support bars. Body mats have been placed beneath them.

Edward and the therapist lift her to the start of the bars.
Kate grabs onto the bars. Her legs shake beneath her weight.
THERAPIST
Edward, if you could walk with her.

Edward nods.

THERAPIST
Don't feel like you have to get to the end right away. Take it slow. If you can't hold yourself up, just let go. That's why the mats are there.

Edward gets next to Kate on the outside of the bars. Kate moves one hand forward. She lifts one foot forward. Her arm waivers from the weight.

THERAPIST
Try and put some more weight on your legs.

Kate moves her other hand forward and steps again. Her leg gives way and she falls. Her arms catch on the bars.

Edward hurries to hold her up.

EDWARD
It's alright, I got you.

The therapist hurries to help lift Kate back up.

THERAPIST
Let's try again.

Kate moves again, first her hands, then her feet. The therapist follows along this time.

After a few steps she falls again.

THERAPIST
One last time.

Kate pulls her arms away from Edward and the therapist. She sits on the mat, upset.

THERAPIST
It's understandable to be frustrated. This is necessary to help you walk on your own again.

The therapist holds out her hand to Kate.

THERAPIST
That is what you want, isn’t it?
A beat.

Kate takes her hand.

INT. ORPHANAGE - KATE'S ROOM - DAY

A KNOCK on the door, it opens. Edward comes in with a breakfast tray; a glass of juice, toast, cereal and an orange cut in four quarters.

Kate is sitting up in the bed. Her curtains are still closed, but the room is fairly bright from the morning light.

EDWARD
How are you feeling?
(pause)
The rehabilitation must have been tough, but it's over now.

Edward sees the crutches in the corner.

EDWARD
Do you want me to leave the crutches for you just in case?

Kate nods as Edward hands her the tray.

EDWARD
Feel free to walk around the orphanage when you want. You don't have to stay in your room all of the time.

Edward withdraws back to the hall.

EDWARD
If you need anything at all, come find me.

The door is closed.

A beat.

Kate begins to eat.

INT. ORPHANAGE - KATE'S ROOM - LATER

Kate stirs from her sleep. There is an empty breakfast tray beside her.

She looks outside and sees the sun high in the sky.
There is a KNOCK at the door.
Kate makes her way to the door. Her legs are a little wobbly under her weight. She opens the door without hesitation.
Ellie is there with a warming smile.

ELLIE
Would you like to go to the park with me?

Kate walks away from the door.

70
INT. ORPHANAGE - HALL - CONTINUOUS

Ellie tries to look in without being too nosy.
A beat.
Kate returns with her shoes.
Ellie smiles as Kate closes the door to her room. Kate follows her slowly down the hall.

71
EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

It is a gorgeous afternoon. A refreshing breeze SINGS through the trees of the residential sub-division.
Ellie leads Kate along the sidewalk. Kate holds on to one of the handles of the wheelchair for support.
Kate looks to be enjoying the wind and the sun as her hair blows back and forth. Her lack of a smile might suggest otherwise.
They round a corner and make for a forested area ahead.
Kids chase each other on a nearby yard. Further down the street a man is washing his car on the driveway.

72
EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Ellie and Kate leave the sidewalk and pass through a gravel parking lot. The lot is filled with middle-class cars.
A path leads off of the lot. There is a trail map off to the side with a garbage can and recycle bin next to it.
Ellie leads Kate to the path.
EXT. PLAYGROUND - CONTINUOUS

Ellie and Kate pass by the jungle gym. Children are running around, crossing monkey bars and sliding down the slide.
Parents stand off to the side or sit on benches watching.
On the swing set a young girl, no older than eight, is being pushed by her father.
Kate stops and watches. A glimpse of childhood memory traps her.
Ellie comes back to Kate and tugs on her hand.

ELLIE
Everything okay?

Kate snaps back to reality. She nods and continues on with Ellie along the path.

EXT. PARK FIELD - CONTINUOUS

A dog retrieves a frisbee lying on the path and brings it to its master.

ELLIE
I always enjoy coming here. It makes me smile to see all of these children so happy.

Ellie leads Kate onto a shaded trail.

EXT. TRAIL - CONTINUOUS

The faint sound of FLOWING WATER becomes ever present as Ellie and Kate move down the trail.
The trail clears out from the cover of trees. A bench lies off the path where there is a clear view of the river.
Ellie pulls up next to the bench.
Kate goes to the river and flops down on her knees in the grass. She looks at her reflection in the water. She dips her hand in to the water and swishes it back and forth to blur out her reflection.
An OLD COUPLE walks by hand in hand TALKING among themselves.
Kate bores of her reflection and sits on the bench by Ellie. She continues to watch the river flow.

A beat.

ELLIE
I was seven when I came to the orphanage. I was in the car with my parents and little sister when a snowstorm hit.
(pause)
My dad lost control of the wheel and we slid into an oncoming truck. They say my parents died on impact.
(pause)
I watched my sister die in the hospital next to me.

Ellie looks at her legs.

ELLIE
I was lucky to survive. My legs were paralyzed. I'll never walk again but, thanks to Doctor Phillips, I'm still here.
(pause)
To that I am grateful.

Kate continues to watch the river.

A beat.

ELLIE
Whenever adults came to adopt, they wouldn't give me a second glance. They didn't want the trouble of my disability.
(sadly)
The other kids at the orphanage avoid too, just like at school.
(pause)
Sarah and Edward are the only friends I've had for a long time.

All is silent save the FLOW of the river. Ellie leans her head back and closes her eyes to the brightness.

A beat.

KATE
(with difficulty)
Why are you telling me this?
Ellie brings her head back down in surprise and opens her eyes.

ELLIE
(cheerfully)
We are the same age and I thought we could be friends. I want someone I can trust and share secrets with like everyone else.

Kate finds a rock beneath the bench and lazily throws it towards the river.

KATE
Trust is always fake. People turn their backs and you end up all alone.

ELLIE
(defensively)
That's not always true. Edward and Sarah have never lied to me.

KATE
(sarcastically)
Must be nice.

ELLIE
(disappointed)
So it's a no?

KATE
What is?

ELLIE
You don't want to be friends.

KATE
I didn't say that.

Kate turns to Ellie for the first time in the conversation.

KATE
I thought of you as a friend since the first night.

Kate touches Ellie's hand with her finger tips.

A beat.
ELLIE
It's funny; Edward thought you might not be a mute. This is the first time you’ve said anything.

KATE
I didn't want to.
(pause)
I've never had much to say.

ELLIE
That's not a bad thing.

A beat.

KATE
There's nothing to say when you’re alone.

Kate looks back to the river.

KATE
How did I end up here?

ELLIE
I don't know. They never told me why you were brought to the orphanage.

KATE
Doesn't matter. Can’t be worse than living with my dad.

ELLIE
You could ask Edward, he'd be able to tell you.

A beat.

KATE
You really have no friends at school?

Ellie nods.

KATE
It's the same for me.

Some children run passed them on the path LAUGHING.

Kate relaxes back in the bench and looks at the sky.
KATE
(sarcastically)
It's too nice to be outside.

INT. MENTAL INSTITUTE - ROOM - DAY

Julie takes off her jacket and rests it on her chair. She
looks around the room.

JULIE
They couldn't make this room any
more lively.

She sits back down.

JULIE
Was there a specific event that
caused you to take up drinking and
gambling?

Peter places his hands on the table. He looks at his hands
and fidgets.

A beat.

PETER
I lost my wife and was left with a
nine year old girl that constantly
reminded me of her.

JULIE
So you wanted to stay away from
home?

PETER
It helped me forget about work and
passed the time too. I went out
most days after work and all
weekend.

Julie writes notes on her pad.

JULIE
Who took care of Kate?

PETER
(bitterly)
She did, although not very well.
The kitchen was always a mess with
food and dishes.
Peter clenches a fist in anger. Julie notices and makes a quick note.

JULIE
Why are you angry at that? She was still young. You could have helped Kate, taught her what to do.

A beat.

PETER
(stutters)
I don't know.
(pause)
She got by alright, isn't that enough?

JULIE
So you would come home drunk and see a mess. What did you expect to see? Your wife?
(pause)
A meal on the table?

PETER
(frustrated)
I don't know! It just bugged me.

JULIE
But you were never home anyway.

PETER
She was there in front of the TV whenever I came home. She should have taken care of things!

Julie writes 'GROUPS' on the paper.

JULIE
Peter, before we continue, I want you to take a few focus groups. The institute has them every week and they can help you.

PETER
What groups?

JULIE
For now we'll start with alcoholism. Then we can move on to others.

She writes down some other focus groups on the paper.
JULIE
Understanding your problems and overcoming them is an important process.

Peter hunches his shoulder and tries to hold back a cough. Unable to do so he begins to COUGH heavily into his hand.

Julie looks at his hand.

JULIE
(worried)
Your hand, it's covered in blood.

Peter holds his hand out in front of him. His hand is coated with blood spray from his coughing.

PETER
It's worse than before.

JULIE
How long have you been coughing blood?

PETER
A few days now.

Julie packs her things up.

JULIE
I'm taking you to the hospital.

PETER
I'm not supposed to leave.

JULIE
This is an exception. (getting up) Come on.

Peter gets up, his hand still held out in front of him.

INT. HOSPITAL - QUARANTINE - DAY

Peter is lying down in a hospital bed. A DOCTOR in disposable robe, face mask and gloves enters the room.

The doctor tightens a strap around his upper arm and holds the end out.
DOCTOR
Can you hold on tightly to this for me?

Peter takes hold of it with his other hand.

Next to the bed is a tray with rubbing alcohol, cotton balls, two needles and another bottle.

The doctor picks up the alcohol and opens it, then picks up a cotton ball. The doctor puts the cotton ball against the opening of the bottle and tips it quickly.

The doctor applies the wetted cotton ball on the skin of the forearm.

The doctor picks up the needle and pushes it into the bottle. Pulling back the syringe, the needle fills with the fluid.

The doctor finds a vein in the wetted area of the arm. The needle is pushed in and the fluid inserted to the blood stream.

The doctor picks up another cotton swab and pushes it against the punctured skin.

A beat.

The doctor lifts the swab and checks the skin. He grabs a piece of medical tape and tapes the cotton swap in place.

Peter lets go of the strap and the doctor removes it.

The doctor tosses out the swab and needle and grabs a face mask out of a box.

DOCTOR
Put this on and follow me.

Peter puts on the face mask and gets off of the bed.

INT. HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The doctor and Peter come into the waiting room where Julie is waiting.

DOCTOR
Julie, if you will come with me.

Julie gets up and follows the doctor.
Peter sits down and fiddles with the mask, unaccustomed to it.

Trent comes up to him with a pill jar and a report in hand.

    TRENT (concerned)  
    You have tuberculosis, Mr. Morgan.  
    It's gotten quite severe.

    PETER  
    Is it that serious?

Peter coughs into the mask.

    TRENT  
    It can be if we are too late.

Trent holds the pill jar and a prescription that is attached to the report out for Peter.

    TRENT  
    This is rifater, medication for tuberculosis.

Peter takes the jars and the prescription from Trent.

    PETER  
    Will this get rid of it?

    TRENT  
    It should help fight it off.

A beat.

    PETER  
    For how long?

    TRENT  
    Six to twelve months. However, I’d like for you to come back for a check up in two weeks. If it isn’t getting any better we’ll get you on ethambutol as well.

Peter turns the pill jar in his hand to look at the label.

EXT. ORPHANAGE - SUN DECK - NIGHT

The moon and stars shine brightly overhead. Kate sits alone slouched in one of the wooden deck chairs.
Ellie opens the screen door to the deck from inside.

**ELLIE**

They are starting the movie now.
You coming?

**KATE**

I think I'll stay out here.
(turning to look at Ellie)
I'd like to speak to Edward. Can you get him for me?

80  INT. ORPHANAGE - PLAY ROOM - CONTINUOUS  80

Ellie closes the screen door and heads towards the crowd of seated children.

81  EXT. ORPHANAGE - SUN DECK - CONTINUOUS  81

Kate gets up and moves to the railing. She leans forward and rests her arms on it.

82  INT. ORPHANAGE - PLAY ROOM - CONTINUOUS  82

There are at least thirty children of age three to fourteen sitting on chairs and cushions throughout the room.

A male volunteer, ROB (21), hits the power switch on the DVD player. He jumps onto the couch with some of the younger children and scoops a remote from the small table. He pushes play and the movie begins.

Along the wall towards the hall is the nurse, Vanessa, and some other STAFF.

Ellie comes up to Edward and Sarah seated at the back of the crowd.

**EDWARD**

Doesn't Kate want to see the movie?

**ELLIE**

No.
(pause)
She wants to speak to you.

Edward glances at Sarah.

**EDWARD**

Alright.
Edward gets up.

Vanessa shuts off the light switches and darkens the room.

EXT. ORPHANAGE - SUN DECK - CONTINUOUS

Edward steps quietly onto the deck and shuts the screen door. He comes up to the deck railing and leans on it next to Kate.

Edward looks to the stars.

EDWARD
It's a beautiful night isn't it?

Kate nods in response.

KATE
The last thing I can remember was leaving school with my bike.

Kate looks to see if Edward is paying attention.

KATE
How long has it been?

A beat.

EDWARD
You were in a coma for over three months. During that time you were at the hospital and then you came to us.

KATE
(uncaring)
Did something happen to my dad?

A beat.

EDWARD
Kate, your father tried to help you. He really did.

(pause)
You had to be moved to a larger hospital and things just didn’t work out.

Kate doesn't change her facial expression at all.

EDWARD
It must have been hard on him... to have to let you go like that.
KATE
I doubt it.

EDWARD
Your father knows you are still alive. What happens now is up to the two of you.

Kate LAUGHS.

KATE
(coldly)
I'm better off without him. He abandoned me a long time ago.
(pause; regretfully)
I thought he might change back, but he just got worse.

Kate grips the rail tightly.

KATE
I was just an eyesore, another mouth to feed.

EDWARD
Those are some harsh words.

A beat.

KATE
I'm not sure he even properly looked at me since then.

Edward straightens up from the rail.

EDWARD
(curiously)
Since when?

Kate loosens her grip and returns to leaning on her forearms.

KATE
It's nothing.
(pause)
I want to be alone.

Edward steps back and looks at her for a moment. He turns and heads back inside.
Ellie watches Edward return to his seat. He leans over and WHISPERS in Ellie's ear. The words are drowned out by the movie.

Ellie withdraws and moves closer to the sun deck. She continues watching the movie from the back of the room.

Edward looks back at Ellie.

Sarah puts an arm around his shoulders.

SARAH
What did she want?

EDWARD
Some answers.

SARAH
Is she alright?

EDWARD
She's trying to act strong, but I get the feeling she is struggling.

SARAH
What should we do?

EDWARD
I don't think I'm qualified to deal with this sort of thing.

Sarah pulls him closer to her.

Edward gives Sarah a quick kiss and they continue to watch the movie.

Julie enters the room and shuts the door. Peter is seated at the table with a face mask on.

JULIE
Hello Peter, how are you feeling?

She comes over to the table and sits down.

PETER
Better, I think. I haven't been coughing quite as much.
Julie pulls her note pad out from the portfolio.

JULIE
That's good.
(pause)
Trent said it should be alright for you to remove the mask.

PETER
Are you sure?

Julie nods. Peter slowly pulls it off.

Julie opens up her notes and looks at the first page.

JULIE
Well, let's get started.
(pause)
You mentioned it might not be possible to see Kate again. Why is that?

PETER
I ignored her for so long. I don't know anything about her now.

JULIE
Can't you find things out by spending time with her again?

PETER
I'm afraid I'll just see my wife again and get angry at her.

JULIE
Why do you get angry at Kate?
(pause)
Shouldn't you be angry at yourself?

PETER
It's not my fault she looks like Helen.

A beat.

JULIE
What would you do when you got angry?

PETER
I would yell at her.

Peter starts to tremble.
PETER
(shamefully)
Eventually I started to take out my frustrations on her; throw things around.

He starts to tear up.

PETER
I blamed everything on her.
(pause)
Kate would sit huddled on the couch as I hit her repeatedly. She never made a fuss.

Julie writes a few notes. She reaches into her jacket pocket and pulls out a handkerchief. She hands it to Peter.

PETER
I have no right to be her father.

He takes the handkerchief and wipes at his tears.

JULIE
Peter, do you think you can change from that?
(pause)
If you can, then we might be able to let you see Kate again.

PETER
I want to try, I really do.

He coughs into the handkerchief by accident.

JULIE
Controlling ones emotions can be hard but, if you really want to see her then you can do it.
(pause)
Just have some faith.

Peter dries off his tears again and hands the handkerchief towards Julie.

JULIE
It's okay, you can keep it.

PETER
Sorry.

Peter wraps his hand around it and pulls it back.
EXT. TRAIL - DAY

Kate and Ellie are on the same trail as before. They follow it along the river at a slow pace. Ellie has her usual warm smile and Kate seems in a rather placid state.

They pass in and out of sunlight from the cover of the trees. The trail leads to a small lake that feeds the river ahead.

INT. ORPHANAGE - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Edward sits in his office reading a newspaper. His chair is reclined back, his feet resting on the desk.

Sarah enters the office with a cup of hot coffee in hand. She places it in front of him. Edward lowers the paper to look at her.

EDWARD
Thank you.

He takes a sip, it is still too hot.

EDWARD
I still haven't told Kate about her father. After last night, I'm not sure she really needs to know.

SARAH
How so?

EDWARD
I got the feeling they didn't even know each other. Would you care about someone attempting suicide if that were the case?

SARAH
I think I would. Regardless of the circumstances, they are family.

EXT. LAKE - CONTINUOUS

Where the lake and river meet is a fair sized bridge to handle pedestrian flow.

By the lake is a small grass field with maintained flower beds. In the middle of the field is a small wooden gazebo.
There are a few people walking the path across the bridge.

Ellie and Kate go into the shade of the gazebo and look out over the lake. They watch the ducks swim in the water.

ELLIE
I can't remember the last time I was really happy since I lost my family.

Kate looks at her.

ELLIE
We were going to visit my grandparents for Christmas. I couldn't wait to see them.
(pause)
Then in a split second it became the worst day of my life.

Ellie lets out a SIGH.

KATE
You look happy to me.

Kate bends over the rail of the gazebo and tries to touch the flowers. After a failed attempt she just leans on the rail.

ELLIE
It took a long time but I gradually got past it. I’ve realized I have a lot to be thankful for at least.

KATE
Like what?

A beat.

ELLIE
Well, I’m alive. I have people that help me and take care of me.
(pause; happily)
And I got to make a friend.

Kate tries again to touch the flowers.

KATE
You aren't going to ask about me?

ELLIE
If you want to tell me anything it will be without my asking.
Kate manages to touch a flower. She is about to grab it but straightens up and returns her eyes to the lake.

    KATE
    Do you miss them?

    ELLIE
    Who?

    KATE
    Your parents.

    ELLIE
    Of course.

    KATE
    Do you think about them?

    ELLIE
    All the time.

A faint smile betrays Kate.

A beat.

    KATE
    I miss my mom too.

**EXT. ORPHANAGE - DRIVE LOOP - DAY**

A sport utility vehicle pulls into the driveway of the orphanage. Trent steps out of the vehicle and makes his way to the front door.

**EXT. ORPHANAGE - ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS**

Trent presses the doorbell and waits patiently.

A moment later the door opens. Sarah stands there with BETH (8) by her side.

    SARAH
    (surprised)
    Trent, is that you? What a pleasant surprise.

Trent smiles and puts his arms out.

    TRENT
    Hello, Sarah.
Sarah gives him a hug.

TRENT
How have you been?

SARAH
Very well, thank you. I couldn't imagine being happier.

Sarah steps back and playfully messes Beth's hair.

SARAH
What about you? It's been a long time.

TRENT
(fatigued)
I'm still getting by, but it's been harder lately. A lot of overtime at the hospital.
(pause)
Thought I'd check up and see how Kate is doing.

SARAH
She's getting better. Finally started talking a few days ago.

91  INT. ORPHANAGE - ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS
Sarah leads Beth back inside. Trent follows her in.

SARAH
(closing the door)
Edward is on the patio watching the children. I'll go get some tea ready.

TRENT
That would be lovely, thank you.

Trent walks down the hall towards the back of the orphanage.

92  EXT. ORPHANAGE - FIELD - CONTINUOUS
There is a soccer game involving many of the children. Rob is in the middle of it cheering them on.

One of the YOUNG BOYS scores a goal and his team CHEERS.
Edward smiles and CLAPS.

The screen door opens and Trent steps onto the patio.

Edward looks over his shoulder from his chair.

EDWARD
Trent, it’s good to see you.

Edward extends his hand as Trent comes over. They shake.

TRENT
I was finally able to get away for a day.

Trent grabs a chair from the corner of the patio and brings it over.

TRENT
I hear everything is going well.

EDWARD
(joking)
Nothing unusual.
(pause)
If you came to see Kate she is at the park with Ellie. They've been going there a lot the past few days.

TRENT
I’m glad they became friends.
(pause)
Has Kate mentioned anything about herself yet?

EDWARD
No. There is something there, but I don't want to impose on her. She knows why she is here at least.

TRENT
How did she take it?

A beat.

EDWARD
She didn’t really seem to mind.
(pause)
EDWARD (cont'd)
I get the feeling there is a lot of distance between them.

Sarah comes out with tea set up on a tray. Beth steps out behind her.

SARAH
Beth, can you bring a side table over please?

Beth nods and hurries to grab a small folding table leaning against the wall.

Beth opens it up in front of Edward and Trent. She smiles and hides behind Sarah.

SARAH
Thank you.

Sarah places the tray on the table.

EDWARD
Thank you dear.

Sarah and Beth return inside.

A beat.

EDWARD
When Ellie first came to us we had time to get to know each other. Kate is already seventeen. I just don't know what to say to her.

Trent drops a cube of sugar in his tea.

TRENT
Let her take it easy. She's still recovering.

Edward sips his tea without adding sugar or cream. He rests the cup on his knee.

EDWARD
How is work at the hospital?

TRENT
We are understaffed and overworked. I'm at the hospital twenty hours or more a day, nothing new.

Trent drinks some of his tea and cradles the cup in both hands.
TRENT
(lamenting)
I understand why my wife left those many years ago. I always put work ahead of everything else, including her.

EDWARD
Some of us make sacrifices. What matters is what makes us happy.

Edward adds some cream to his tea.

TRENT
I was, or at least I thought I was. But not anymore though.

EDWARD
What's changed?

TRENT
It started when I decided to save Kate. I didn't remember until recently, but everyone from that family has come to me in the hospital. Maybe it's fate.

EDWARD
You have certainly gone out of your way for them.

A beat.

TRENT
I'm going to retire at the end of the summer.

EDWARD
(taken aback)
Already?

TRENT
I want to be a father, have a new responsibility. I'm not that young anymore, but I'm thinking of taking in the girls.

EDWARD
Kate and Ellie?
TRENT
(nodding)
I'd like to do what I can for them, if they will accept me as their guardian.

Edward looks to the field where the children are still playing.

EDWARD
Did you want me to tell them?

Trent shakes his head.

TRENT
I'd like to be the one to do it, but not yet.

Trent drinks some more tea.

EXT. ORPHANAGE - ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Kate and Ellie come up the path to the entrance. Sarah stands with the door already open.

SARAH
Welcome back. Did you have a good walk?

Ellie smiles to her.

Sarah steps aside to allow the girls through.

SARAH
Doctor Phillips is here. Why don't you head to the patio and say hello?

Kate stops in the doorway. She doesn't look at Sarah.

KATE
Edward mentioned him before. Who is he?

SARAH
He cared for you at the hospital and he is an old friend of ours.

INT. ORPHANAGE - ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Ellie looks over her shoulder.
ELLIE
Come with me.

Ellie heads down the hall without hesitation. Kate steps inside and follows her.

EXT. ORPHANAGE - PATIO - CONTINUOUS
Ellie comes out onto the patio.
Trent stands up and turns to her.

TRENT
Ellie, good to see you again.

ELLIE
Hello, Doctor Phillips.

Kate arrives at the patio but stops inside. She looks around at all of the children. She takes a step back.

Trent steps forward.

TRENT
Hello, Kate. I'm doctor...

KATE
(apprehensively)
I know.

Trent is startled by the interruption. He regains his composure.

TRENT
It's good to see you well.

A beat.

Trent sits back down. Ellie moves herself next to Trent.

ELLIE
You don't have to be shy. Grab a chair and sit with us.

Ellie points towards the chairs.

Kate peaks outside. Slowly she steps out and grabs a chair. She places the chair next to Ellie and shoves it against her wheel chair.

Trent watches as Kate sits and clutches Ellie's hand like a little child.
EXT. ORPHANAGE - ENTRANCE - LATER

The sun has nearly set. Trent, Sarah and Edward stand outside of the orphanage. Trent gives Sarah a hug and shakes Edward's hand.

Trent walks to his SUV and gets in.

Sarah and Edward wave as he drives off.

INT. ORPHANAGE - ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Ellie is on a small elevator. The lights indicate only two floors. The indicator flashes from floor one to two and the door opens.

INT. ORPHANAGE - PLAY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ellie emerges from the elevator in the hall just off of the play room. She goes around the back of the play room and looks among the children. Kate is not with them.

Ellie turns to the sun deck and sees a shadow standing in the dark.

EXT. ORPHANAGE - SUN DECK - CONTINUOUS

Kate stares at the sky. She holds onto the rail and leans back.

Ellie comes up behind her.

ELLIE
Do you not like Trent? You didn't talk to him at all.

KATE
Was I supposed to?

ELLIE
He saved you.

KATE
(rudely)
I didn't ask him to. I didn't ask for anything.
(pause)
Have you ever thought it might be better if you had died?
Ellie moves next to Kate.

ELLIE
How can you think like that? Life is a gift.

She reaches for Kate's hand on the rail.

KATE
I just do, alright.

Ellie pulls her hand back.

ELLIE
(hurt)
There's people that care for you, I care for you.

KATE
That doesn't suddenly make everything better.

ELLIE
No, but you could tell us how you feel.

KATE
It is none of your concern.

Tears begin to stain Ellie's cheeks.

ELLIE
Is talking to others so hard?
(pause)
I thought I was your friend?

Kate shifts her body and leans on the rail. She looks at the dark field behind the orphanage.

A beat.

Ellie turns and heads back inside. Kate finally looks at Ellie as she closes the door behind her.

KATE
(to herself)
I'm sorry.

Ellie forces the joy stick as far as it will go. She speeds through the play room while wiping at the tears on her face.
INT. ORPHANAGE - HALL - CONTINUOUS

Ellie nearly hits Edward as she comes around the corner. She comes to a stop but doesn't look at Edward.

EDWARD
(concerned)
Ellie, what's wrong?

ELLIE
(crying)
Nothing. I'm going to bed, good night.

EDWARD
Good night.

Ellie hurries away from Edward.

INT. ORPHANAGE - PLAY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Edward comes into the play room and looks outside.

EXT. ORPHANAGE - SUN DECK - CONTINUOUS

Kate sits in a deck chair and pulls her knees up to her chest. She hides her face.

Through the sliding door Edward drops his shoulders in a defeated manner.

INT. ORPHANAGE - ELLIE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ellie is in her wheel chair near the bed. The walls are covered in posters of fictional beings; unicorns, angels, dragons, etc.

On the bed is a long blue night gown. A side table by the bed has an alarm clock and lamp. At the base of the lamp is a bible. There is a glasses case and a picture of Ellie and her parents from long ago. On the shelf of the table are a bunch of fantasy novels.

Ellie reaches for the wall just above the night stand. There is what appears like a door bell wired into the wall. Next to it is a rosary hanging from a small nail. She pushes the bell and waits.
Sarah comes in and helps Ellie from the wheel chair to the bed.

Sarah notices her wet eyes.

    SARAH
    (worried)
    Are you alright?

    ELLIE
    I'm okay.

Sarah gives her a hug. Ellie hugs her back.

    ELLIE
    Thank you.

Sarah gets up.

    SARAH
    Good night.

Ellie turns on the lamp on her side table.

    ELLIE
    'Night.

Sarah shuts the main light off on her way out and closes the door.

106  INT. ORPHANAGE - HALL - CONTINUOUS

Kate comes down the hall and stops outside of Ellie's room.

107  INT. ORPHANAGE - ELLIE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ellie tosses her tee shirt on the wheel chair. Now in her bra and underwear she reaches for the night gown. She holds it for a moment in front of her before putting it on.

She pulls it down past her waist and shuffles herself under the blanket. She takes off her glasses and puts them in the case.

Ellie grabs the rosary and holds it both of her hands. She closes her eyes.

108  INT. ORPHANAGE - HALL - CONTINUOUS

Kate continues to her room and closes the door forcefully.
INT. ORPHANAGE - KATE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kate jumps onto the bed. The chain of her pendant hangs loose in front of her. She takes a finger and pulls the chain until the crescent pendant falls out.

She grasps it in her hands and shuts her eyes.

EXT. MENTAL INSTITUTE - COURT ROOM - DAY

Peter is sitting outside in a small court yard. There are plants and trees among the paths and some wooden benches in the middle where Peter is.

Julie walks over and sits next to him.

    JULIE
    I've made all of the arrangements.
    Even pulled a few strings and got you a new job.

    PETER
    I can't thank you enough.

A beat.

    JULIE
    Are you all set?

Peter fidgets nervously.

    JULIE
    (praising)
    You've done very well, Peter.
    (pause)
    We're looking at setting up a time for you to see Kate at the orphanage.

A beat.

    PETER
    I don't know if I'm ready.

    JULIE
    Don't worry; you'll have time to prepare. She still has to agree to it.

Julie reaches into her pocket and pulls out a folded piece of paper.
JULIE
In the meantime you should get used to your job. You start tomorrow.

Peter takes the paper from her.

PETER
Will Kate really want to see me?

A beat.

PETER
It doesn't matter to me if she won't have me as a father. I just want to try being her friend and make up to her all the pain I've caused.

JULIE
Find out soon enough.

A beat.

Julie gets up.

JULIE
It's time to go.

Peter stands and follows her out of the court yard.

111   EXT. CITY GARDEN - DAY

Trent and Julie walk along a park path in casual wear. Julie has a small purse in hand. Trent has his hands pocketed.

JULIE
So you're really leaving the hospital?

TRENT
Yeah. I'm working on getting a research grant. I'm thinking of continuing the work on my thesis from medical school.

JULIE
You'll have a lot more free time.

TRENT
That's the idea.

They follow a branch of the path towards a pond.
JULIE
Peter has been released from the institute.

A beat.

TRENT
I hope I didn't cause you too much trouble.

Julie shakes her head.

JULIE
It just shows how big of a heart you have.

Near the pond are a few benches set off the path. Trent and Julie take a seat on one.

TRENT
Something else has been on my mind of late.
   (pause)
   Do you remember my sessions with you after my divorce?

JULIE
A little bit. Why?

A beat.

TRENT
You said when it was done that we were the perfect couple that could never be together.

JULIE
(giggling)
Oh yes! Because we were both in love with our jobs.
   (pause)
We tried a few times though didn't we?

TRENT
It never did work out.

Trent turns to her.

TRENT
I want to adopt Kate and another girl, Ellie.
JULIE
That's a lot of responsibility.

Trent breathes deeply and clasps his hands with his arms resting on his legs.

TRENT
(nervously)
Well, I was thinking you and I could do it together.

Julie is surprised, unable to respond.

TRENT
I don't expect you to give an answer right away. Unless it is a no, come see the girls, then make a decision.

JULIE
(dumbfounded)
It's definitely not a no. I just wasn't expecting this, Trent. I can't say I haven't thought about it.

Trent takes her hand.

TRENT
We don't have to separate ourselves from each other anymore.

A beat.

JULIE
Alright.
(cheerfully)
Let's give it a try.

TRENT
(overjoyed)
Really? Thank you, Julie.

Trent suddenly hugs her. She takes a moment to get over it and hugs him back.

INT. ORPHANAGE - PLAY ROOM - DAY

Kate sits in the play room. She has THE GAME OF LIFE open on the table in front of her. She reads the instructions and fiddles with the pieces.
Rob comes over and sits down across from her. Kate looks up for a second and then continues reading.

    ROB
    (kindly)
    Hey, I haven't had a chance to introduce myself yet. My name's Rob. I stayed here a few years ago.

Rob takes up one of the pieces.

    ROB
    Would you like to play?

A beat.

    KATE
    (shyly)
    Okay.

Rob starts to set up the board.

    KATE
    Why were you here?

Rob stops.

    ROB
    What? Oh, well I still have parents.
    (pause)
    Back then my parents were abusive and violent. They were always getting in fights and throwing me in the middle.

Rob places the spinner on the board.

    ROB
    A few months after I arrived here, my parents wanted me back. They went through counselling but it didn't fix anything. I was back here within two weeks.

Rob places the life tiles on the board and starts to sort out the piles of money and cards.

    KATE
    (nervous)
    I agreed to see my father tomorrow. Do you think it will be the same?
ROB
Are you going to live with him again?

KATE
No, I don't think so.

Kate picks a car and places it at the starting position.

KATE
He'll be coming here.

ROB
There shouldn't be any problems then.

Rob gets his car in place at the start.

ROB
You can spin first.

KATE
Thank you.

Kate gives the wheel a good twist with her fingers.

INT. ORPHANAGE - VISITING ROOM - DAY

Kate sits with Sarah and Ellie beside her. She is nervous. There is a tray with tea and some cookies on the coffee table.

INT. ORPHANAGE - ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Edward shakes Peter's hand as he lets him in.

EDWARD
Hello, Peter. I'm Edward, director and owner of this orphanage.

PETER
(nervously)
Hello.

EDWARD
Have you been adjusting well?

Peter removes his shoes.

PETER
Okay, I guess.
A beat.

EDWARD
How is your new job?

PETER
Hard labour, but keeps me occupied.

EDWARD
Good to hear.

Edward motions to the side.

EDWARD
This way. They're waiting in the visiting room.

Peter doesn't move.

PETER
I don't know how Kate will react to seeing me.

Edward gives him a pat on the shoulder. Peter shakes at the sudden jolt.

EDWARD
Just start by saying hello.

Peter follows him.

INT. ORPHANAGE - VISITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Edward walks in well ahead of Peter.

Kate sees Peter walk in and freezes. Her eyes stare at the floor.

Peter comes over to the coffee table with Edward.

EDWARD
This is my wife, Sarah; Ellie and, of course, your daughter.

PETER
(towards Sarah and Ellie)
Hello.

SARAH
(smiling)
Nice to meet you Peter.
(softly)

Hi.

Peter looks towards Kate. Kate still looks at the floor.

(anxiously)

Hello, Kate.

Edward sits down across from the girls.

Have a seat.

Peter sits next to him.

Help yourself to the cookies. Would you like some tea?

No, thank you.

Kate hesitates to look up.

You look well, Kate.

A beat.

She recovered quickly. There are no lasting side effects from her coma.

Kate lifts her gaze a bit.

That's good.

Good to hear.

Peter tries to smile.

(upset)

Good? You left me to die. All these years and now you finally care?

Peter’s face masks over in rejection.
PETER
(stuttering)
I don't expect your forgiveness. I just wanted to talk, see how you are doing.

KATE
What a joke. You never wanted to talk before. It was all good as long as I kept my mouth shut and stayed out of your way.

Edward passes a cup of tea to Kate to interrupt.

EDWARD
That's in the past Kate. Your father got help. He's changed.

Peter reaches for a cookie.

Kate catches a glimpse of it. She instinctively retreats and curls up on the couch.

KATE
Stay away from me. I hate you!

Peter slumps back in his seat.

PETER
(anguish)
I'm sorry, Kate.

Kate gets up.

KATE
Just leave me alone. I never want to see you again!

She runs out of the room.

SARAH
Excuse me.

Sarah gets up and chases after Kate.

Peter coughs under his breath.

Sarah KNOCKS on Kate's door.
SARAH
Kate? Kate, come back down. He's not going to hurt you.

She KNOCKS again.

117 INT. ORPHANAGE - ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS
Sarah comes into the entrance.
Peter has already slipped his shoes on. Edward stands by to the side.

SARAH
You're leaving already?

PETER
(hurrying to tie the laces)
This is what Kate wishes. For once I will grant it for her.

Peter opens the door and steps out.

PETER
Thank you for your hospitality.

118 EXT. ORPHANAGE - ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS
Peter hurries away. Edward and Sarah watch from the doorway a moment before closing the door.

119 EXT. SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS
Peter walks fast up the sidewalk. He starts coughing hard. He pulls out Julie's handkerchief and coughs into it.

He stops coughing and looks at the handkerchief. There is blood splattered on it. Peter stops. He has a worried look on his face.

FLASHBACK

120 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT
Kate (15) sits on the sofa with her legs up off the floor. She is leaning on one hand. She watches intently with a straight face.
INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Peter (41) comes in the entrance and tosses his coat into the closet.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

He doesn't acknowledge Kate as he stumbles in a drunk walk towards the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

There is a pot with a lid partially opened and a spoon handle sticking out on the stove. The double sinks are filled with dirty dishes soaking in water.

Peter lifts the lid on the pot and looks in. He slams the lid back down. It ricochets off the pot and falls to the floor.

He looks back and sees the sink. He pulls the spoon out of the pot and whips it down, shaking loose the food that was clinging to it.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Peter storms back into the living room. He is clearly angry and YELLING something at Kate.

Kate turns to him.

Peter raises the spoon and approaches her.

Kate retreats to the far end of the couch. She curls into a defensive ball as the spoon comes down upon her.

Again and again she is hit.

Finally Peter stops. He is breathing deeply. He hurls the spoon into the kitchen and walks out of the room.

Kate stays curled on the couch. Her eyes look out from just above her knees. Tears pour from her eyes, a big bruise on her cheek.

END FLASHBACK
INT. ORPHANAGE - KATE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Kate wakes up. She touches her cheek recalling the pain. She gets up.

INT. ORPHANAGE - ELLIE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ellie is asleep. A lone socket night light casts a blue glow in the room.

A soft KNOCK on the door.

A beat.

Another KNOCK, this time harder.

Ellie stirs in the bed and rubs her eyes.

ELLIE
(groggy)
Who is it?

KATE (O.S.)
It's Kate. Can I come in?

Ellie pushes herself into a seated position. She reaches over and turns on the bed lamp.

ELLIE
Yes.

Kate slips in slowly and closes the door gently behind her. Kate takes small steps towards Ellie with her pendant clasped in her hands. Her face is dirtied from dry tears.

Kate stops next to the bed.

Ellie looks at her hands and then to her face.

ELLIE
What's wrong?

Kate rests the pendant on her palm and holds it out.

KATE
(sadly)
This was my mothers. My dad gave it to her for their anniversary.

Kate sits on the bed.
KATE
It was eight years ago when my father and I rushed into the hospital.
(pause)
My mother died when we got there.

Kate holds herself with her hands.

KATE
My dad held me close and began to cry. Soon I was crying too.

More tears seep from her eyes.

KATE
At her funeral my dad gave me the pendant. I haven't been happy since she died.

Kate turns to Ellie, more tears running down her cheeks.

KATE
I was scared to see my dad. What if he hasn't changed? What if he starts hitting me again? I don't want to feel that kind of pain.

Ellie pulls her in and holds her.

ELLIE
Edward was there next to him. Sarah and I were with you too. You didn't need to worry.

KATE
It makes no difference who or where. He is a monster. I'd rather be alone than see him again.

A beat.

ELLIE
I thought I was alone too. In the end I shared my pain with Edward and Sarah. They helped me get through it.

Kate lifts her head and makes eye contact with Ellie.

ELLIE
Will you let me share yours?
Kate puts her arms around Ellie.

    KATE
    Will you stay with me?

    ELLIE
    Yes.

    KATE
    Forever?

Ellie nods.

Kate wipes her eyes. She lies down next to Ellie. She takes Ellie's hand in hers.

    KATE
    Thank you.

Kate closes her eyes.

Ellie tries to reach for the light but Kate blocks her reach. She gives up and pushes herself back under the blankets.

She kisses Kate's forehead and rests her head near Kate's. She watches her for a moment before reaching up and gently wiping Kate's cheek with the sheet.

INT. ORPHANAGE - VISITING ROOM - DAY

Trent and Julie sit in wait.

Ellie and Kate come in.

    TRENT
    Hello girls. I'd like you to meet Julie.

Julie gets up and approaches them.

    JULIE
    Pleased to meet you.

Julie shakes their hands.

    ELLIE
    I'm Ellie.

    KATE
    Kate.

Julie sits back down.
TRENT
Please, have a seat, Kate.

Kate sits where Ellie can wheel next to her at the end of the coffee table.

KATE
What's this about?

TRENT
Julie and I have been talking and we decided to become your legal guardians.

Ellie smiles.

ELLIE
(surprised)
Really?

JULIE
That is if you two are willing.

Ellie snatches up Kate's hand.

ELLIE
Isn't that great, Kate?

A beat.

KATE
Is it really okay? I was very rude to you.

TRENT
You have been through a lot Kate. I don't expect you to warm up to us right away.

JULIE
It will take time to learn about each other, but if we work hard at it, we can become a family.

ELLIE
Come on Kate.

Kate looks at Ellie.

TRENT
We are still getting the house organized. You can think about it.
A beat.

            KATE
            No.
            (pause)
            I'll do it.

She grips Ellie's hand.

            JULIE
            That's great. We should be ready
            in a few days.

            TRENT
            For now we should go. There is
            lots to do, unless you girls have
            anything you'd like to ask.

Ellie and Kate exchange looks. They shake their heads.

Trent gets up and offers Julie a hand. She takes it and he helps her stand.

            TRENT
            Alright, we'll see you soon.

            JULIE
            Good bye, girls.

            ELLIE
            Bye.

Just before Julie and Trent leave the room Kate stands up.

            KATE
            Bye.

Trent turns around.

            TRENT
            Good bye, Kate.

Trent and Julie continue out.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Peter sits in the living room. There is an unopened bottle of vodka on the table. He has a bottle of pills in his hands.

He shakes the bottle of pills and plays with it in his hands. He eyes the bottle of vodka.
On the stand next to the television is a picture from years ago. A very young Kate stands in front of Peter and Helen.

Peter gets up and goes to the television stand. He picks up the photo.

PETER
I'm sorry, Helen.

Peter puts the picture back down and places the pill bottle by the bottle of vodka. He walks out of the living room...

129 INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS
... Into the foyer. He slips on his shoes and a jacket and leaves the house.

130 EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - LATER
Peter walks onto the site of an early building construction. The steel girders are set in place. Lifts and cranes are located among the girders to move building materials.

131 INT. OFFICE TRAILER - CONTINUOUS
The FOREMAN sees Peter coming.

132 EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - CONTINUOUS
The foreman steps out of the office trailer and comes down the steps.

FOREMAN
You're late, Peter.

PETER
I'm sorry, I wasn't feeling very good.

FOREMAN
Well get your gear on; we need you up there ASAP.

PETER
Yes, sir.

Peter walks passed him.
FOREMAN
Oh, how did it go with your daughter?

Peter stops.

PETER
Fine. She is doing well.

FOREMAN
That's great. I'll take you for a drink when the day is done.

PETER
I gave up drinking.

FOREMAN
(joking)
Coffee too?

PETER
(smirks)
Coffee is fine.

Peter goes into the trailer.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

A nice two-story house sits in the middle of a nice fenced in yard. It has a large driveway that loops by the front door to a garage. Trees litter the yard.

A van is parked outside the front door of the house with its rear doors open.

Trent leads Kate and Ellie to the door. He has two small boxes in his arms. Kate has a duffle bag on her shoulder and is carrying some poster tubes.

The door opens as they near the door and Julie steps out.

JULIE
Welcome to your new home.

ELLIE
It's very nice.

TRENT
Wait 'til you see inside.

Trent leads the girls in.
INT. HOUSE - ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

The house appears spacious from the moment of entry. The fair sized entrance leads straight to the kitchen in the back. A staircase along the side of the hall leads to the upper floor.

To one side is a large living room. On the other is a study.

INT. HOUSE - STUDY - CONTINUOUS

Trent leads Kate and Ellie through the study to another room. Julie follows behind them.

The study has many unopened boxes. In the corner is a desk setup with a computer and work materials.

INT. HOUSE - ELLIE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

It is a large bedroom with a connected bathroom. Trent steps off to the side so the girls can enter. There is already a bed put together centered on the far wall.

TRENT
This will be your room Ellie. I hope it is to your liking.

ELLIE
(smiling)
It will be great.

JULIE
Trent, why don't you show Ellie around down here? I'll take Kate to her room.

Ellie nods in agreement. She moves through the room to check the bathroom.

JULIE
Follow me.

Julie leads Kate out of the room.

INT. HOUSE - KATE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The door is open. It is a good size bedroom. There is a bed against the wall with a bag of pillows on it.
The bed is older judging by the wood frame. Some boxes are stacked neatly along the wall.

INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALL - CONTINUOUS

Julie and Kate walk down the hall from the stairs. Julie stops outside of the room and lets Kate enter first.

INT. HOUSE - KATE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kate walks in slowly. She sees her things. Julie comes just inside the door.

JULIE
Your dad brought your stuff for you.

Kate walks over to the stacked boxes and drops her duffle bag.

JULIE
I'm going to help finish bringing in Ellie's things.

Kate looks over the boxes.

Julie waits a moment and then leaves the room.

Kate takes the top box off of the stack and places it on the floor. She gets on her knees and rips off the tape. Slowly she opens the box revealing a folded blanket. She pulls it out and it falls messily to the ground.

Kate moves the blanket through her hands slowly. It is covered in stars. In the center is an angel sitting on a crescent moon.

Kate engulfs the blanket in her arms. She closes her eyes and pushes her cheek against it.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

A kitchen table stands evenly spaced between the kitchen island and the wall. Pizza boxes lie half shut with a bottle of ginger ale on the island.

Kate, Ellie, Trent and Julie sit at the table eating. Glasses of ginger ale sit in front of each of them.
Trent takes a bite out of his crust and places it on the edge of his plate. He gets up and grabs the bottle of ginger ale. He tops off all of the glasses.

TRENT
We'll have a proper dinner tomorrow. Things were a little crazy today.

Kate takes multiple bites of the pizza, stuffing her month. She swallows a bunch and gives out an unexpected BURP.

KATE
(still chewing)
Excuse me.

Trent LAUGHS.

TRENT
You have quite the appetite.

Kate swallows the last of it and finishes her soda. Ellie takes small sips from her drink and fights to finish her pizza.

KATE
It’s been a long time since I had pizza.

TRENT
(matter-of-factly)
It's been a long time since I've shared the dinner table with anyone.

Ellie puts down the last of her pizza.

ELLIE
Are you two married?

TRENT
No. Not yet at least.

ELLIE
If you like each other you should.

JULIE
Some day.
(pause)
How are your rooms coming?

Trent puts the pizza boxes in the fridge.
ELLIE
Good. Kate helped me with most of it.

KATE
I haven't started yet.

Trent sits back down.

ELLIE
When are you done at the hospital?

TRENT
Another week. Then I'll be able to look after you properly.

JULIE
Until then I'll be taking some time off.

KATE
I can help too.

JULIE
That would be a great help, Kate. Thank you.

Kate smiles and snatches Ellie's leftover pizza.

INT. HOUSE - KATE'S ROOM - LATER

Kate slips on the last pillow cover and tosses the pillow at the front of the bed. She picks up her blanket and lays it over top.

Her boxes are opened, her things thrown about in a mess. One box isn't opened yet.

Kate pulls off the tape from the side. She unfolds the flaps. Inside the box are some small pictures upside down on top of teddy bears.

Kate picks the pictures up and puts them on the edge of the bed without looking at them. She pulls out a few of the teddy bears and hugs them.

The top picture slips off of the stack and falls on the ground face up. It is a picture of HELEN in a wedding dress. She is young and beautiful with sunlight sparkling off of her blonde hair.
Kate throws the teddy bears on to the bed and picks up the picture. They look very similar.

Kate stands with the picture held in both hands. Her face is shadowed in sadness; her eyes start to tear up. She sits on the bed, the photo held in her lap. Some tears fall and slide down the glass in front of the picture.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

Peter is up in the steel girders. He has on a safety helmet, work vest, tool belt and steel-toe boots. A lift is on its way to him with support beams. They are strapped onto a platform.

He walks along a planked walkway towards the lift.

Peter gets to the lift and helps guide it onto the supports.

Peter starts coughing VIOLENTLY. He kneels and spits up lots of blood on the lift.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Julie is in the living room organizing flowers and lamps among the shelving and small tables.

The phone RINGS.

Julie heads out of the living room.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Julie picks the phone up on the counter.

JULIE
Hello? Yes, Trent, how is work?
(pause; troubled)
That's awful.
(pause)
Yes, I'll tell her right away.

Julie hangs up the phone and hurries out of the kitchen.

INT. HOUSE - ELLIE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Julie looks into the room. It is empty.
INT. HOUSE - STAIRS - CONTINUOUS
She runs up the stairs.

INT. HOUSE - KATE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS
She looks in Kate's room, nobody.

INT. HOUSE - ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS
Kate and Ellie come in the house as Julie runs down the stairs.

    KATE
    (confused)
    What's going on?

Julie reaches the bottom of the steps.

    JULIE
    Ellie, can you leave us to talk for a minute?

    ELLIE
    Sure.

Ellie goes to the kitchen.

    KATE
    What is it?

    JULIE
    Kate, your dad is in the hospital.

    KATE
    (uncaring)
    So?

    JULIE
    It's serious. It doesn't look like he'll live.

Kate is getting flustered.

    KATE
    That's none of my concern. He is out of my life now.

Kate walks passed Julie to the stairs. Julie grabs her hand.
JULIE
Kate, I know things were tough between you. But all your father wanted was to try and get to know you and make up for what he had done.

Kate snatches her hand loose.

KATE
Then he can go ahead and die!

Kate runs out of the front door.

JULIE
Kate!
(yelling after her)
Without forgiveness you will forever be trapped in the past!

149 INT. BUS - LATER
Kate sits on the back seat of a bus by herself. It travels through a rural area.

150 EXT. BEACH - LATER
Kate gets off of the bus. It is a nice long beach populated with people of all ages.

Kate walks down a walkway passed various merchant stalls; food, equipment rentals, etc.

She continues on down the beach kicking sand up with her feet. Ahead she sees a MAN sitting beneath a beach umbrella. He has his face buried in a newspaper.

Kate stops. She looks out to the water.

Just off the shore a young GIRL is tossing a ball around with her MOTHER. The mother tosses the ball out into the water and the girl gives chase.

She retrieves the ball and smacks it back to her mother.

GIRL
Daddy! Dad, come play with us!

Kate looks back at the dad.
He pulls down the paper and smiles towards the girl. His face resembles Peter, only younger.

MOTHER
  Don't bother your father, dear.
  He's busy.

The dad lifts the paper back up.

The mother tosses the ball further out. The girl dives under the water towards the ball.

Kate turns around and hurries away.

151 EXT. COMMERCIAL STRIP - LATER

Kate walks along the sidewalk of a commercial street. The stores are all small; little boutiques and restaurants. At the end of the strip is a park.

Kate hurries across the crosswalk.

152 EXT. COMMUNITY PARK - CONTINUOUS

The park is comprised mainly of cut grass and trees spread throughout.

A few people walk around, others play catch, toss frisbees or play with their dogs.

Kate wanders aimlessly across the park. She comes upon a tree providing lots of shade. She sits down in the shade, her back against the tree.

She stretches her legs out and picks at the grass.

A girl's LAUGHTER grows in volume as if getting closer to Kate.

Frustrated Kate tosses the picked grass aside. She gets up in a hurry and loses her balance. She falls on all fours. On the other side of the tree she sees a father with his daughter on his shoulders.

The daughter has her arms spread out like an airplane as the father runs in a random pattern.

DAUGHTER
  Faster dad!
She smiles and LAUGHS. The father makes AIRPLANE sounds as he heads towards...

The mom. She is setting up a picnic on a large cloth spread out on the grass.

The father lifts the daughter down from his shoulders and sits on the cloth. The daughter leaps at the mom with her arms out.

The father LAUGHS as the daughter knocks the mom over.

Kate looks at her hands. Tiny rocks have left their imprint on them along with some dirt. She gets up and rubs her hands on her shirt.

She hurries out of the park.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - LATER

The graveyard sits on the top of a hill. It is surrounded by an iron fence and filled with large trees. Many paths weave through the grave stones. The grass is short, the stones kept clean.

It is a large graveyard, but Kate is the only one there. She walks down the main path through the center of the graveyard.

Kate's face is filled with mixed emotions. Her shirt is dirty from before. Gripped hard in her hand is a rose. She is unaware of the thorns piercing her skin. A trace of blood slips from her palm.

She passes rows of large stones. She goes towards the back of the graveyard at the edge of the hill.

A few rows from the fence Kate stops and looks around. Her eyes fall to a spot where there doesn't appear to be a grave. She leaves the path and walks towards it.

Kate stops in the grass and looks down. There is a memorial plaque dug into the ground.

The plaque reads: 'Here lies Helen Alice Morgan, Born 1968, Deceased 2001 - An angel returned to heaven.'

Kate kneels in front of the plaque and places the rose on it.

KATE (frustrated)
Everywhere I go, I see us, and how things used to be.
KATE (cont'd)
(pause)
We were once so happy.

She is unable to hold back her tears.

KATE
(accusingly)
Look at what happened to us. I needed you so much. How could you leave me? Was I not good enough? Was I a bad daughter?

Kate leans forward and puts out her hands to rest on.

KATE
You were what made us complete. Now dad's going to die too.
(pause)
What should I do? Tell me mom, please, tell me what I should do.

Kate lowers her head to the plaque and clasps her hands together. She cries over her mother's grave.

INT. HOSPITAL - HALL WAY - NIGHT

Kate busts through the doors at the end of the hallway. Following a ways behind her is Julie and Ellie.

Kate runs past nurses and doctors, bumping into some along the way.

Ahead Trent waits outside of a room. Kate stops.

TRENT
(compassionately)
I'm sorry, Kate. Your father has tuberculosis. It was worse than we thought and the medicine stopped working.

A beat.

KATE
How long does he have?

TRENT
A few weeks, month at best. It all depends on how much his system can fight it.

Kate walks into the room.
Kate stops just inside the room.

Peter is asleep in the bed. Around the bed is a sealed see-through curtain to contain him. An air pump circulates air into it.

Kate approaches him slowly.

INT. HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Julie and Ellie stop outside the room with Trent.

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kate comes up to the side of the quarantined bed.

KATE
(worried)
Dad?

Peter stirs awake. He blinks to clear his vision.

PETER
Kate?

Kate can't hold back her tears. She puts her hand against the see-through curtain.

Peter puts his hand against hers from the other side of the curtain.

KATE
I'm sorry.

Peter starts to cry.

FADE OUT:

THE END