

Everything's Better

Written By

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BLACK.

WE HEAR — a woman's voice. Then a man.

Woman
So, what does this translate to?

Man
What do you mean?

Woman
I mean, you get the money. You
make the movie. (Brushing Teeth)
What movie are you making?

Man
It's a love story.

Woman
With a figment. Or a delusion.

Man
You are also a real person.

Woman
But, I'm not going--
SHE'S not going to make this
movie.

FADE IN.

The Man is in his mid-30s and mildly handsome. He's tall and honest looking. He immediately strikes us as a little neurotic, but sweet, a little defensive but confident.

Man
I'm serious. Maybe she's the
gambling type. Get the script
to her agent. Then...

Woman
You really believe that can
happen. Honestly?

Man
I do.

Woman
She's going to play the figment
of her that is in your mind? John? Really?

WE SEE now that John is getting ready for work and the
WOMAN is in the bathroom.

John
 You aren't a figment. You're
 a coping mechanism. Besides,
 I'm barely a fan.

Woman
 What? Barely a fan?

John
 You're not really her. Or are you?
 I'm late for work.

The woman leans out of the bathroom door and gives him a
 peck on the cheek.

WE SEE the woman is Sandra Bullock, or at least John's
 version of her.

John
 Thanks, figment!

Sandra
 Don't be cute. We're grilling steaks
 later.

John
 Shall I invite the neighbors?

Sandra
 No. Not until you get her in
 your movie. Otherwise, it'll
 just be sad. And weird.

John
 Bye, babe.

Sandra
 Smooches.

CUT TO:

EXT. JOHN'S WORK — WAREHOUSE — DAY

John walks between several large trucks.

Mac, a portly driver with a large disposition, waves John
 down after parking his truck. They walk.

Mac
 What's up, Hero?

John
 Good morning, Mac. How's Etter?

Mac
She's good. She wants you to
come out to a pig pickin' this
weekend. She's--

John
I don't need a date, Mac. But
give Etter my love.

Mac
Don't you even want to hear about--

John
Mac--

Mac
It's my cousin's niece's sister's
friends---(stops)She's hot. She's
smoking hot. You should just stop
by and--

John
Mac. It's sweet. I appreciate it. I'm
just not that into--anyone. I'm fine.
I've got a lot going on. This is my
last week before Gee gets home from
camp. Then it is going to be too busy
for me to be dating.

Mac
How is she?

John
She's awesome. We've been face-timing
every night the last week. She's a
little homesick. I'll tell her you asked
after her.

Mac
John. Eric's looking for you.
He's on a tear.

John
I owe you one.

Mac
You owe me a pig-picking.
Think about it.

John laughs and breaks away from Mac.

John enters the building and makes his way down a long
corridor.

Lisa, the Ops Manager, in her 40s, serious but cute, bustles by him.

Lisa
Good morning, darling. I dropped the Edelstein deal on your desk. Sign the requisitions and fill out the sales order for Mars, please. Kevin's already signed off on the samples.

John
Thank you, ma'am.

Lisa
(making her way into her office)
You really should stop by and have dinner.

John
Thank you, ma'am.

Lisa
I'm serious. Oh, and Eric's looking for you.

John
Awesome! Thank you, ma'am.

INT. Main Office/Bullpen – Day

Eric is a taller, older man with long gray hair and thick glasses. He oozes seriousness and exasperation.

He is chattering into a landline phone.

Eric
I understand John signed off on it. I'm working on getting the approvals IN WRITING. Then I'll approve the deal and cut the checks. I have to have more signatures than just John's for that amount of money and he knows it.

John passes in the hallway as Eric talks. Like Eric has eyes in the back of his head, he terminates the call and focuses on John.

Eric
John! MR. JOHN! Can I see you?

John comes back and pokes his head in the door.

John
I don't know. Can you?

Eric
Did you sign off on Shang Wu's offer?

John
I did. It had a deadline. It was just a preliminary part of the larger deal.

Eric
It's all engineering product. It's going to take a fortune. Have you seen the proposal?

John
I signed off on it. I had a conference call with Xi, Zhu and Zhao. We all agreed to--

Eric
You can't sign off on that much money without getting Kevin's signature first.

John
Do you have the proposal?

Eric rifles through his desk.

Eric
Somewhere. I have the numbers. And the projections.

John
Hold on.

Eric
Don't tell me to hold on. This is serious protocol violation.

John
It's not.

John finds the proposal in his bag.

Eric
It is. You've been warned about this. You may get away with--

John opens the proposal and shows a page to Eric.

Eric

But--

John

I split the up fronts four ways. David is covering the materials costs. Zhu, Zhao and Xi are splitting the rest. They are waiting on check's from elsewhere.

Eric rapidly flips through the papers.

John

I felt like it was top heavy. But we needed to do it. In the current form, Kevin wasn't going to sign off. I wasn't going to sign off. Not really. We needed to do something different.

Eric

What's our stake?

John

Same as before. David's not making a percentage return. But machines run.

Eric

What resources do we have to allot?

John

Alex. But he was already on the project. Your tracking program. Our logistics department. We're responsible for--

Eric

But, it's only for half my ask--

John

Keep reading. I spread it out so you get paid at the beginning of the next three projects. This isn't just one project. It's all three. Look at the back page. Bottom line. If you still have an issue with it, let me know. If Kevin won't sign off on it, let me know. (long pause) Congratulations. You just solved the Green Fence problem with China from rural North Carolina. Anything else?

Eric is flabbergasted.

John
Can I go?

John leaves the bullpen and makes his way to his tiny office in the corner of the warehouse.

In John's office, the floor, walls and desk are littered with plastic regrinds, parts and other odds and ends.

His desk is covered with photo's of his ten year old daughter and artwork she has no doubt provided. His computer is up and a manuscript sits open on the desktop.

John drops his bag in the corner of the room and goes to his desk, sitting in front of the screen.

WE SEE – John jumps, startled by the voice of –

Kevin
How did you do this?

Kevin, tall and lean, in his fifties, has a copy of John's proposal in his hand.

John
What? My great American novel?
I stole it.

Kevin
This is the third proposal you've rejiggered this month. It's impressive, but I'm getting the impression you are planning on exiting.

John
Au Contraire. I'm not leaving. I just thought with Gee going into the fourth grade, if I set it all up now. In the summer. Maybe I could have some more flexibility in the fall when school starts.

Kevin
Good thinking. How is she?

John
I think she's homesick, but she's good.

Kevin
How are you?

John
You tell me. You happy with that?

John indicates the proposal Kevin is leafing through.

Kevin
Absolutely.

John
I'm going to be fine if--

Kevin
Katie has someone she wants---

John
Kev. No. No dinners. No blind
dates. No--

Kevin laughs.

Kevin
Fair enough. I won't ask again
today. Don't you think you are
working a bit much.

John
I get my downtime at night.
I'm fine. This is my investment
in my kid.

Kevin
Everything going okay in therapy?

John
It's therapeutic. (Pause) It's fine.
I'm making progress with all of it.

Kevin
Well, let me know if you need
anything. I would say you can
definitely take some time off.
Let me know when and we'll--

John
I have one more side deal I am
doing with Zhao. Once I get
those folks set up, I'll do all
the visa paperwork with the
lawyers and I'll take some time.
I would take it now but--

Kevin
But, you want to spend it with Gee.

John
Right.

Kevin
Okay. Let me know if I can--

Kevin closes the door as he exits and his voice trails off.

John smiles and settles into his keyboard.

A clock ticks by in the distance.

John's cellphone rings.

John
Hello?

Sandra
Whatcha doing?

John
I am thinking of you. What else?
Oh, and writing the greatest
fictional love story ever told.

John leaves his office and walks along large rows of
plastics materials in boxes and super sacks in the
warehouse aisles.

Sandra
Is it weird? That other people
don't know?

John
That I'm talking to myself?
I don't know. It's better to
have a fake relationship with
a figment than to go out on
endless dates with people that
have little interest.
I'm on the cusp of figuring out
how to tell the world enough
about this that it will make it okay.

Sandra
Everyone does it.

John stops and looks at her.

John
Everyone does what?

Sandra
They think about things in a way--
they daydream. They may not do it
like you do. But they do it. It's
how people cope.

John
Man, you just implemented my
post-bathroom dialogue from this
morning on you. On me?

Sandra
I did. But that was five or
six hours ago.

John
Wait. What? What time is it?

Sandra
It's like three.

John
Holy shit. I've been writing
that long? Weird.

Sandra
What'd you write?

John pauses.

John
I have no idea. Maybe I wrote
this scene. I was writing
something about Gee. Then...

Sandra
I wish I could meet your kid.

John
I guess you could.

Sandra
I mean, I wish, there was a
way for the figments in your
brain to come to life.

John
Me, too.

Sandra
It would make the complexity
of this so much easier.

John
And weirder. Definitely weirder.

Sandra
Have you thought about what
this is?

John
This? Like us this? Or like ---

Sandra
Yes. Is it PTSD? Is it a psychotic
break? Some oddly named medical
disorder that a character from
Dawson's Creek might pontificate on.

John
No. I try not to question it too
much. I think I'm currently too
self aware for it to be bad.

Sandra
But, I could still be a bad
thing? Right?

John
I don't think anything that
makes everything better could
be a bad thing. Ever.

Sandra
And yet—you can't tell anyone
about me? Not and have a smidgeon of
credibility left after.

John
I don't think you'd use the
word smidgeon.

Sandra
I might. If you met me. I might
say a smidgeon of pigeon is good
for the soul.

John
That's not a real saying.

Sandra
Maybe I'm the hero in your story.

John
Heroine. And maybe you are. Maybe
that's what I wrote about this morning.

Sandra
It's our anniversary soon.

John
Ahhh. Awkward of awkward. Are all relationships this dialogue heavy?

Sandra
No. But, I am made up of firing synapses.

John
Yes. You are. You are a hot synapses.

Sandra
So, I know you have to get back to work.
But, I just wanted to say Hi.

John
Hi.

Sandra
Hi. (pause) See you later?

John
I wouldn't miss it.

John hangs up the phone and makes the long walk back to his office with a huge smile.

INT. WAREHOUSE — DAY

The end of the day has come and gone and most of the employees are gone.

John is sitting at his desk typing and Eric stops at his door.

Eric
What are you writing?

John
Hey.

John looks at the screen.

John
I honestly don't know.

Eric
About this morning—I don't mean to keep you on such a tight leash. You really don't know what you are writing?

John

I do. I don't know the why.
I just sit down and type.
Sometimes it's a proposal.
Sometimes a screenplay. The great
american novel may just
be keystrokes away.

Eric

You put some of it up on the
server file drop. I read it.
It made sense to me. Very poignant.

John

Really? You read it?

Eric

A lot of the poems. A few of
the short stories. They weren't
password protected, so I figured
you wouldn't care.

John

I don't.

Eric

Well. They're good. I wanted
to tell you I appreciate what
you did on the Shang Wu project.
For me.

John

It fit. You're welcome. You deserve it.

Eric

What are you going to call it?

John

Call what?

Eric

The collection of stuff you are writing.

John

I hadn't thought about it.

Eric

You should self-publish it or put it on the
inter-webs or something. It's cool.

John

Everything's Better.

Eric
On the web?

John
No. I think that's what I
will call it.

Eric
That's cool. Very positive.
Not hyper anything. (pause) I
saw in the paper that there's
a true crime program coming
on one of the cable channels my
mom watches about your...

John
Really? Already? Don't they
have to ask to do that stuff.
For permission or whatever?

Eric
Right after everything happened,
there were lots of people around.
I just assumed, at some point,
you stopped answering or even
unplugged your phone.

John
But, they can just take your
life and put it out there?

Eric
Well. Yeah. The main reason
I am bringing it up--

John
I don't think I'll watch it.

Eric
I wasn't thinking of you, actually.
I know you are in your own place
with all of it. But, with your
daughter coming home, you might
want to check in with her counselors
and see that they don't let it
show on the television or web
programming there. And you might
want to unplug the television
at home for a while.

John
Good thinking. I'll do that.

Eric
I never got to ask you. I never
felt like it was appropriate.
But, I guess, are you okay with everything?

John
I think so. My therapist. My therapists
might say otherwise. I'm a good dad.
I'm okay with being alone.

Eric
Right. But anytime the brain experiences
that kind of trauma it can manifest
itself in some crazy ways.

John
Are you saying you think I'm crazy?

Eric
Oh, I know you're crazy. I'm just
saying, genuinely, I hope, in spite
of it all that everything is good.

John
Everything's better.

Eric
Ahhhhhh. That's what all of this is.

John
The news. The world. It has so much
down---so many downers. It's sad.
Really. I just had to get a coping
thing going. And then, it really was better.

Eric
Well. I'm off to hot yoga, then. Cheers.

John
Cheers, man.

Eric leaves John alone in his office.

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

John's house is quaint, but not cramped. He sits on the
couch, stretched out with a large Rottweiler at his feet.

He is listening to a podcast of himself and drifting off.

Meg (VO)
....joining me tonight is my brother,
John. John is the man behind the idea for

Meg (cont'd)

Everything's Better with Sandra Bullock. And I've brought him on tonight in a more rare form. (Audience laughter) He's here to not do his many character voices for you all. Not to tell you a story. Well, not a fictional one. He's here to tell you all about what inspired the EBSB blog and pod cast and everything that came from his own experiences. So, I'll let him tell you a little about himself and what we are trying to do. Take it away, Johnny Boy.

John

Wow. I forgot you no longer did this thing in your basement at home. (Laughter) I keep looking around expecting to see Mom and Dad coming down to tell us to shut the hell up and go to bed. (loud laughter) It's great to be here.

Meg

They know that you-- they know who you are and the case information. I assume, being the snoopy people I know them to be (laughter) that a lot of them have seen more about you than I have. But, I think they are most familiar with what you did with it. And how it became this big thing about being positive and putting light into the world.

John

Well. Yeah. (Laughter) I guess you have to do something with it. I know my face has this massive grin on it right now and that's what you generally get with me. It wasn't always like that. I owe a lot of my life to my sister and her family. Her kids. Her husband. Their friends. In the months, after the--umm, incident. You guys were just awesome. And that's what...that's what got us here...

John has drifted off while listening.

Sandra pulls the earphones away from his ears.

Sandra

If you aren't going to listen, can I?

John smiles and hands her an earbud, returning to the pod cast. She settles in on the couch beside him.

John (in podcast)

It all started off with Standing in Hell with the Devil at Three which was a book I wrote. That got rejected everywhere. (laughter) I kept stacks and

John (cont'd)

stacks of rejection notices. I even had like a little black book with all the addresses in it. (laughter) I liked it. They, the people rejecting it, didn't have to. It was odd poetry and I wrote it in verse. And I just had to sort of vomit it out. And then I realized it was too much. I like to think it was just ahead of it's time. But, it was my best writing, and it was not that great. It was fun and it was cathartic. And then I put some crazy songs out there. People latched on to...

Meg

And they weren't just crazy.
And the book wasn't bad.

John

Right. I just tend to stay in a healthy level of self deprecation. But, I realized, I had to do something scandalous or something really awesome to get people to...pay attention? I guess? So, I wrote this short story. It was called. My Summer with Sandra Bullock. And she's America's sweetheart. And I put it out on a blog somewhere. And everyone ate it up. And it was so wrong. Because it was fiction. And people were seeing truth in it. And I didn't know her.

Meg

While it was fiction, it was really good writing. It was fun.

John

It was fun. And it was light-hearted and it was the opposite of everything I had been going through. And, by day, I work in a pretty obscure job.

Meg

You recycle plastics. My brother is a genius. He works as a consulting engineer slash sales guy slash operations guy. He keeps the future safer for our kids. (Loud applause)

John

I'm a pretty boring guy. (Laughter) So, for people to latch on to this Sandra Bullock thing, we had something that was great. And probably going to get us sued. But, I wanted to give everyone the credit. And I'm not sure what we're doing is actually legal, but I started painting these---

Meg

Scenarios.

John

Yes. Scenarios. These scenes and ideas and vignettes of how we needed more Sandra Bullock. And not just one thing. I can—I could see how carefully her career had been crafted. And I didn't want to take away from that. I didn't want to make it a negative thing. I wanted to pay tribute as it were to what she was in the world. And love her or hate her. She's good looking. She's funny. She's self deprecating. She's great. And I realized the idea of Everything being better with Sandra Bullock was something I could run with. And I did.

Meg

And we are up to...SEVENTY SIX episodes.
(Loud applause) That's a lot of Sandra Bullock.

John

It is. And for those of you who don't know what we've been doing we have taken ideas of movies past and television past and we've taken some original ideas and we've sort of re imagined them. In a way that could successfully use the many, many talents of Sandra Bullock.

Meg

Have you ever met Sandra Bullock?

(Oohs and Aahs)

John

That's complicated. Well, no. I haven't met Sandra Bullock. Not in real life. My acting coach in college was her acting coach in college. Teacher. Professor. Guy named Don Biehn at ECU.

Meg

But, you have this complex relationship with the character she has become.

John

Right. And we've had her fighting zombies. That's my favorite. I think you guys have three episodes about the zombie apocalypse and how she'd be a great thing. I know. Well, I assume, she's not going to be doing a Zombie movie. So, I feel safe with that.

Meg

I'm going to pause you right there. I want you to tell us a new story. If you don't mind. About Sandra Bullock and the zombie apocalypse. You okay with that? Guys?

The audience goes nuts.

John

You guys want a new one huh?
Alright. I can do that.

CUT TO:

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE — DAY

John is asleep on the couch in his pajamas.

WE HEAR — a loud CRASH.

WE SEE — a shadow go past the window of John's living room.

Sandra

John! John! Get up.

John groggily rises to his feet and goes towards the kitchen as Sandra gathers gear.

Sandra loads a shotgun, then a second shotgun, then begins to check bullets in several pistols.

She lays them all out.

Sandra

John! This is serious. We've got to go.

John comes back with a cup of tea.

Sandra

What?! No time for tea.

John

What's going on?

Sandra

It's here.

John

What? What's here?

Sandra

The apocalypse, John.
The zombies are here.

John's expression changes to amusement.

John
You are so cute--

A loud banging interrupts John's sentence.

The front door bursts open and Sandra takes out not one, not two, but three zombies with a pistol and a shotgun.

Sandra
Get dressed. Get your boots on.
I'll watch the front door.

John's teacup falls to the floor in slow motion and shatters.

John disappears and returns decked out for battle.

Sandra
That's more like it.

Zombies approach the house from the road and the highway.

John and Sandra fight their way to an ORV and take off.

As they approach the end of the long, rural driveway, a zombie latches on to the side of the vehicle.

John leans out and takes the zombie out.

Sandra and John switch places so that Sandra can drive.

John
Where are we going?

Sandra
To save our families.
And our kids.

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

SANDRA tucks John in under a blanket on the couch in the house as the scene fades back to the podcast and John sleeping.

Meg (VO)
...join us next week.
We'll be talking Tara Craft
and how she came to be and
we'll be looking at Mrs. Dad.
All new stories here at

Meg (cont'd)
Everything's Better. Until then,
thanks to my brother, John
who made all of this craziness
possible. And, as always...
we'll see you next week. And
a special thanks over to
Sandra Bullock especially
to her lawyers for not shutting
us down. Good night, everyone.

Laughter and Applause as the sign off jingle for the show plays.

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE - DAY

John is still sleeping on the couch.

His alarm clock goes off.

John rises and plods out of the room.

WE SEE - a montage of John prepping for work.

John leaves his house and drives away.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

John walks alone through his workplace.

He takes a seat in his office.

His phone rings.

John (punching the speaker)
Good morning.

Kevin
John! How are you?

John
I'm well. How's the French Quarter?

Kevin
Awesome. Listen. Chad Crayling called.
He's ordering all of the excess on
the propylene orders. Good work.

John
You didn't even want to take that
meeting. Thanks for listening.

Kevin
I'm thinking it's about time
for some time off.

John
Ya think?

They both laugh.

Kevin
I understand you have to meet Zhu
and Zhao today. Another program?

John
Yes. I think I've gotten everything
locked down on it.

Kevin
Good work!

John
Be safe, man! I'll catch you later.

They hang up.

John pulls up his computer and turns to SEE--

The figment of Sandra Bullock sitting in his office.

Sandra
I've been thinking--

John
Oh, you have huh?

Sandra
I'm serious. I think it's time.

John
Time for what?

Sandra
Time to try and make the movie.

John
What changed your mind?

Sandra
I read your script last night.

John
Really?

Sandra
And I listened to a bunch of
your sister's podcasts. You've
done something really amazing.

John
I know. We have.

Sandra
There's always something good--

John
Everything's Better.

Zhao enters the office. He is a young, Chinese business man
with a serious look, a jovial disposition and a big smile.

Zhao
What the hell are you doing?

John is slightly embarrassed.

John
Long story. How's things?

Zhao
Good. Very good. You going
to cut your hair now?

John laughs.

John
Did I say that? That I'd cut
my hair if we got these done?

Zhao
No. Listen. Shang Wu. He wants
to know about the stuff that
you have going on...You're
kind of a celebrity in China.

John
For what?

Zhao
The podcast. The Sandra Bullock
thing. He wants to know if
you can introduce him.

John
I don't really know her--That's
just how I dealt with.

Zhao
Oh. It's fictional? It seems--

 John
I don't mean to mislead him. Or
anyone else. It's just my way
of dealing with the--

 Zhao
I'll clue him in. Maybe once this
deal goes through you'll meet her.

 John
How so?

 Zhao
You're about to be a rich man.

They laugh.

 Zhao
I'm meeting Eric. Lunch later?

John nods.

Zhao shuts the door as he goes.

Sandra laughs.

 John
What?

 Sandra
I'm just laughing at what
your dating life is going
to be like when you're done.

 John
Done?

 Sandra
You aren't planning on staying
here with everything are you?

 John
Where would I go?

 Sandra
Retire. Settle down and have a
family. Take your daughter and
travel.

 John
I hadn't thought about leaving...

Sandra
I know.

John
Why would I date? I have you.

Sandra
And that's healthy.

John
It's the safest dating ever.

Sandra laughs.

John
What?

Sandra
You should go find the real me.

John
What the hell would Sandra Bullock
want with me?

Sandra
I don't know. Maybe to be happy.

John
How can I make her happy?

Sandra
You're funny, for one. You're
honest most of the time. You're
cute. You're rugged. You're funny.

John
Cute and funny?

John embraces the figment.

John
Are you just a piece of my id or
ego or whatever?

Sandra
I'm America's Sweetheart.

John
I know that. But--

Sandra
I'm a representation of what
you want in the world. I'm a
way for you to escape the pain

Sandra (cont'd)
you've had since your wife was
gone. And I'm a way for you to
cope.

As they talk, they walk from John's office.

The scene changes behind them to become a street in a
foreign town.

EXT. STREET FOREIGN TOWN - DAY

John is suddenly in a nice suit with the jacket over a
shoulder.

Sandra is dressed in designer evening attire.

Music plays throughout.

Sandra
I am your reintroduction to
your world.

John
What are we doing here?

Sandra
Writing a new "Everything's Better"
story for your sister. But we
have to make some choices.

John
We're dressed awfully nice.

Sandra
And we are in a foreign town.

John
Can't be Pretty Woman.

Sandra
No. But I love Julia Roberts.

John
A modern take on Pygmalion?

Sandra
Maybe?

John
Breakfast at Tiffany's but
with a twist.

There are people populating the streets.

John
Ooh. I know where we are.

Sandra
I can't figure out how we can
not sully a classic here.

John
So....we update it. You're Ilsa
but we make her American.

Sandra
You're a new take on Rick.

John
And Everything's Better with
Sandra Bullock in...Casablanca.

They dance as soft classical music plays.

Sandra
You've got to help me get home.

John
I will. But after what you did...
leaving me just as we were beginning.
It's a wonder I talk to you.

Sandra
I think of you, often.

John
What about your husband? Does he
think of me? How's that work?
And now, you show up in my life
again. And I'm too soft on you
to even fight it. I'll get you
a passport and safe passage.

A man appears at the top of the street with a gun.

Sandra
They've found me.

John smiles wryly and pulls a wad of bills from his coat.

Sandra
You don't even have a gun.

John
I don't need a gun.

Sandra
They'll kill me.

John
No. They won't. Trust me.

And she does.

John hands the bills to a passing car's driver who promptly stops and opens the door for them.

John
Step on it, driver.

The driver nods and off they go.

The man with the gun gets into a waiting taxi and a car chase begins.

John hands a piece of paper to the driver.

The driver nods again.

He looks into the rearview window and catches Sandra's eye.

Sandra
I'm not some woman that needs
taken care of by a man, blah, blah,blah.

John
I know.

The cab pulls down an alley and pauses.

John pulls a hatch in the floor.

Sandra
Now what.

Beneath the hatch is a manhole cover.

John pulls Sandra down past two men in the manhole and the two men switch places and get into the cab.

John
Thanks, guys.

The cab zips away just as John pulls the manhole cover closed.

John lights a lighter and smiles.

Sandra
We've got a nice set of catacombs?

John
These are tunnels. Now, tell me
again. What do they want?

Sandra
Honestly? I don't remember.

John
The husband again?

Sandra
I'm thinking maybe.

John
Maybe? I get maybe? I just
saved your skin.

Sandra
And I owe you one. Again.

John
You weren't around long enough
for me to collect on the last one.

Sandra
You're gonna stick in some dialogue
here so you can kiss me again, aren't
you?

John
No.

They emerge from the catacombs inside a nice saloon.

John moves to lock the front door.

A young foreign man is sweeping the front of house.

Mal
Hi there, John. I see you've
brought a guest.

John
We're not staying for lunch, Mal.
I'm just seeing my lady friend
safely to the border.

Mal
Well, we can help you out...

Sandra
This is exactly how I imagined it.

John
I know.

Sandra
What do we call this one?

John
I'm not sure yet. It's only half
to the end. We'll need to play
it out further.

Sandra
Less Casablanca? More Bourne Identity?

John smiles.

INT. JOHN'S OFFICE — DAY

John and Sandra are sitting in front of his computer.

John is typing as they talk.

John
I like the Bourne thing. There
was this one, The Parsifal Mosaic
that they should have done.

Sandra
What happens next?

John
I'm not sure. I was going to kill
off the other guy. But, I'm not
sure how to.

Sandra
Mind if I-- (points at the screen)
Step in here and —

Sandra shoulders John from his chair, laughing.

John grabs her.

John
I feel like I should intervene.
My imagination writing my novels
and scripts though.

Sandra
See? You should let me--

She points at the keyboard again.

She has no intention of NOT writing the scene.

They wrestle for the keyboard.

She wins.

Sandra
You just have to get it open.

John
Get what open?

Sandra
The possibility. For love--

John
What does that do for it?

Sandra
Watch!

John shrugs and sits next to her, smiling ear to ear.

INT. CAFE - FOREIGN COUNTRY - NIGHT

Sandra is standing in front of a mirror, getting ready.

Tony, her husband in this story, enters.

Tony
Babe. I need to talk to you.

Sandra
I found him. I can get us...

Tony is holding a gun.

Tony
I know.

Sandra
That's not showing gratitude.
I'm trying to--

Tony
You were never supposed to leave.

There is a knock at the door.

John calls out.

John(O.S.)
Hey there. You home?

Sandra
No. I mean-- Give us a minute.

John
What's going on in there?

Tony thumbs the safety free.

Tony
He's just in time.

Sandra
What is this?

Tony
You know what this is--

John
Everything okay?
John knocks again.

Sandra
It's fine. Give me a--

Tony raises the gun at Sandra.

She kicks the gun free and in the struggle, the dresser near the door blocks John from entering.

Tony
You bitch.

Tony and Sandra wrestle for the gun.

The gun clatters free of their hands and slides across the floor.

Sandra climbs over Tony and kicks him to keep him down.

Her fingers slam into the floor, inches short of retrieving the gun.

She reaches for it and gets her finger on it.

Tony slams into her from behind.

The gun slides out of reach and she grabs a lamp base instead.

Sandra slams the vase into Tony's head and kicks him away.

He falls, unconscious on the floor.

John bursts through the door.

John
What the hell happened?

Sandra shrugs, obviously shaken.

John
Who is that?

Sandra
My husband.

John
Shit. Get whatever you need.

John goes back to the door and hears approaching voices and footsteps.

THEY'VE BEEN SET UP and it registers in both of their faces.

John turns back to Sandra.

John
Take his gun.

John searches the room for an exit.

Sandra stops being shaken and takes charge.

Sandra
Get my bag.

John grabs her bag.

Sandra is rigging a device on the balcony.

John
What are you doing?

The voices and footsteps get louder.

John braces several heavy items in the room against the door.

Sandra
Come on. Hold on tight.

John steps onto the balcony and Sandra fires the device.

A harpoon and wire slam into the next building.

John
What?

Sandra
I said...

John grabs Sandra and they jump.

Sandra pulls a cord and the device grabs them, pulling them through the air and onto the next building.

Sandra
Hold on!

Sandra and John run along the rooftops to their escape.

INT. JOHN'S OFFICE – DAY

Sandra and John are laughing as she types.

Sandra
See? Done. Now you can continue
the story and the romance part.

John
Perfect.

Sandra
I told you.

INT. CAR – DAY

John is driving home, listening to the podcast.

Meg (O.S.)
...and each story that people tell
is an escape. That's why comics and
television and movies and books are
so popular. We are able to get away
from the troubles of everyday life.
And that's why I love so much what my
brother did with all of this.
And I owe him for that story. Another
fun way for us to escape. A big thanks
for all of our readers today.

Massive applause and cheering.

...And this has been another episode
of Everything's Better.

The jingle plays.

INT. GROCERY STORE – NIGHT

John is shopping for one.

Sandra is walking along with him as he shops.

John
I always wanted to be in a Stephen
King story. Or maybe Dean Koontz.

Sandra
No way. Not me. That is nuts.

John
Not really.

Sandra
The zombie apocalypse stuff is
as close as I get.

John
But sometimes, there's redemption.
There's hope. Even when it's scary.

Sandra
It's still scary.

John
The price of fresh produce is scary.

The grocery suddenly grows dark and the lights flicker as
the power goes in and out.

Sandra
Seriously? A horror movie. In
a grocery?

John
Just try it.

Sandra
I did. Already.

John
No. Those were thrillers.
No sci-fi. No gore. Let's
see what happens if we--

There is a loud roar in the distance.

The grocery shakes and people stream from the doors.

Sandra
Fine. What kind of horror movie
is it?

John
No clue.

Sandra
Alien invasion? Monster? It's
clearly not a slasher flick.

John
Could be a giant monster slasher
from outer space.

Sandra
Fine. What do we do now?

John
We do whatever you want.

The grocery shakes and WE SEE —

PANDEMONIUM past the grocery front windows.

John grabs a six pack of waters and a first aid kit
as they make their way to the front of the grocery.

Sandra
What are the rules?

John
There are no rules.

The scene cuts back to the non-movie start of the scene.

John and Sandra are chatting about the movie in the
"aisle".

Sandra
It's not as fun if you don't lay
the scenes out.

John
You ran with the spy story earlier.

Sandra
This one's your genre. It's your
thing.

John pulls a jar of pickles from the shelf.

John
I got dill and bread and butter.

Sandra
Good. Now. Tell me the rest.

Suddenly, John and Sandra are back in the scary movie.

John runs ahead of Sandra.

John
Put your head down. I'll take the
lead in this one. Watch out for--

A giant tentacle lands in the street outside the window.

John
Let's stay here for now.

An entire section of the ceiling collapses and nearly separates them.

Sandra
John! There's a little girl.

John turns around and sees a little girl behind them, screaming in the grocery.

Sandra makes her way through the debris as an electrical line crashes down beside her.

John leaps past her and grabs the little girl as a giant creature's foot slams into the grocery.

John runs towards the back of the store with the girl.

Another foot crashes into the store.

WE HEAR the sound of jets and helicopters in the distance.

John runs down an aisle as food packaging envelopes him.

Sandra tries to follow him but the aisles collapse on each other.

From overhead, we can see John running down the back of the store and Sandra paralleling his movements in the front.

The store is rapidly becoming unrecognizable.

The little girl is squalling for her parents.

John ducks towards the front of the store and races towards Sandra.

The last of the aisles collapse around him as he hands the little girl to Sandra who pulls her to safety just outside of the store.

John
Don't look up.

Sandra holds tight to the little girl.

A crying mother and father take her from John and Sandra.

John
Let's get out of here.
DON'T look up.

Sandra glances up.

Sandra
Holy shit.

John
I told you not to look up.

Sandra
That's why I looked. That thing
is --- It's--

John
Get in the car.

Sandra
But, we have to--

John
We have to get in the car.

John drives this time.

Sandra
If that's from outer space--

They pass through a crowded area and John drives through a side street and they pass a long line of government vehicles.

John
It's definitely not from around here.

Behind them, in the window, we can see jets and planes and a giant alien creature descending on the town.

Sandra
We have to go back.

John
Nope. We don't.

Sandra
We can't let all those people die.

John
We don't want to die with them.

Sandra leans against the door, shocked by what she's just seen.

John continues to drive.

It begins to rain.

Sandra
What's happening?

John
I'm changing the scene.

Sandra
Why?

John
Because you don't like it.

Sandra
I like your mind. I like anything
you come up with. I like you.

John
Right. But, it's not your kind
of thing. So, I'm changing it.

Sandra
You can't just change the path
because I didn't like it.

John
I can. And I did. Now, everything's
better.

In the distance, something crashes into a field.

Sandra
What the hell was that?

John pulls the car over.

In the distance, the town has changed is now intact.

John
I don't know.

They get out of the car and look for the object that crashed.

Sandra
It's too far to walk. Let's drive out there.

John gets back in the car.

Sandra hesitates.

John
Come on. I'll drive you closer.

Sandra
You know, this is amazing. Right?

John
What?

Sandra
You doing this for me.

John
Well, since I made you up, I'm doing it for me. Right?

Sandra
You know what I mean.

John
Probably.

The car pulls up to a giant crater.

John and Sandra get out of the car and stand at the top of the crater.

Sandra grabs John's hand.

He looks down at her hand.

The rain slows, then stops.

The clouds clear and the moon is huge, illuminating the crater below.

Sandra kicks at a strange looking rock on the lip of the crater.

John
Careful.

Sandra
What is this?

John
Scary movie, take two?

Sandra
I'm serious. What is it?

John
I don't know.

Sandra
We've got to go look. Someone
could be hurt. They could need us.
We might have to do something.

John
I'll check the car.

John grabs a first aid kit and a baseball bat from the
car's trunk.

He wields a large steel flashlight.

John
That's all I have.

Sandra
Let's get a closer look.

They descend into the crater.

Sandra lags just behind John.

John uses the flashlight to illuminate a path through the
massive grooves in the ground.

They disappear into the crevices, forging ahead.

Sandra
I've always wanted to discover
something.

John
This could be your chance.

Crystals have formed in the upturned dirt.

The crystals are illuminated.

John
What is that?

In the center of the crater is a craft of some kind.

It's not as big as one would think. Only six feet in length and several feet wide.

Smoke seems to be emanating from the surface of the craft.

Sandra
It's from the stars. It's--

John
Don't touch it. Don't get too close.

Sandra
We have to--we have to try and help--

John
I don't think they need our help.

Sandra
What if? What if they do?

John
Look. If we--

A loud alarm sounds from the craft.

The sky is suddenly illuminated by dozens of crafts.

One bears down on John and Sandra in the crater.

John
I think someone's trying to take them home.

As suddenly as they arrive, the additional crafts disappear.

Sandra
John!? What's happening?

John
Take my hand.

John leans in and grips a slot on the side of the craft.

As he opens the craft, there is a loud hiss and then--

John and Sandra are standing in the grocery parking lot.

Sandra
Oh. That's not fair.

John
What?

Sandra
Ending it there.

John
What do you mean? I'm trying
to leave you something for
your imagination.

Sandra
It was just getting good.

John
What? Are you mad?

John finishes loading the groceries and gets in.

Sandra
No. It just feels--

John
Incomplete? Yeah. I know.
But, then, look at us.

Sandra
That's a good story though.
You should run with that one.

John
You think?

Sandra
Oh yeah. I like it.

John
It's kind of been done before.

Sandra gets in to the car.

Sandra
I know. But, it was very--

John
Real? Creepy?

Sandra
Yeah.

John
I'm telling you. She can do anything.

Sandra
I'm starting to believe you.

INT. JOHN'S HOME - DAY

John is in the kitchen.

His phone is ringing repeatedly.

John
Hello?

Meg (O.S.)
Good morning!

John
Good morning.

Meg
Listen, I was wondering if
you had time to meet this
week. We'd like to talk to
you about the whole package
that we've put together.
Plus, we've got some exciting
news.

John
Sure. When were you thinking?

John turns to see Sandra going through a closet, throwing
athletic gear into a pile.

John
Do you have to do that now?

Sandra makes a face. Then goes back to doing what she was
doing.

Meg
Are you talking to someone?

John
No.

Sandra
Can she hear me?

John
No.

Meg
Yes. Yes. I can hear her.

Meg (cont'd)
Who's that? You've got a girl
over? Well. Let me let you
go. We'll talk later.

John hangs up the phone.

Sandra looks at John with wonder.

John
What the hell? How--

Sandra
She can read your mind.

John
What?

Sandra
Your SISTER can read your mind.

John
No way.

Sandra
Yes way.

John
What does that mean?

Sandra
I have no idea. But, it
must be important, right?
Like, a sign from the universe
or something? Right?

John leaves.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

The warehouse is bustling as John sits at the end of the
long hallway near his office, eating his lunch.

The warehouse seems to move in flash forward.

At the end of the movement, John is still seated. Clearly
eyes open and conscious, but not aware.

It is now night outside the warehouse and John is alone.

Sandra walks in.

Sandra
Hey.

John
Hi.

Sandra
Adventure movie.

John
What?

Sandra
I always wanted to do
an adventure movie.

John
All movies are an adventure.

Sandra
For you.

John
For most people.

Sandra
Think for a second. About who
you've constructed here.

John
Ahhh. The well-seasoned legend.

Sandra
Indiana Jones. Romancing the Stone.
The Goonies.

John
A romantic adventure.

Sandra
I bet you can't come up with one.

John
You bet me?

Sandra
Maybe.

John
Are we too old for adventures?

Sandra
Hell no.

John
I really like The Goonies.

Sandra
Who doesn't?

John
But it can't be just like...

Sandra
Right. It has to be...

John
An original adventure. That's
half the fun. In acting. In
the watching. In a movie.

John
The Discovery.

Sandra
The Discovery.

John
I know.

Sandra
So...

John
I don't know. Let me think about
it.

Sandra
What? You wanted a horror movie
or whatever, you through me right
in there. I ask for an adventure.
And I get let me think about it?

John
I didn't mean forever.

Sandra
How long have you been sitting here?

John
Since lunch. I think.

Sandra walks back down the hallway.

John
Where you going?

Sandra pauses and throws a great smile over her shoulder.

Sandra
On an adventure, asshole.

She winks.

EXT. JUNGLE — DAY

John is rowing a boat down a deep jungle river.

He has a mobile computer setup watching something with his head phones on.

WE HEAR — Drums of the locals.

WE SEE — Someone racing through the jungle.

The scene cuts back and forth between John on the river and the shadow (SANDRA) running through the jungle.

SOMEONE is chasing Sandra.

Sandra trips and stumbles into the forest as--

John parks the boat and gathers his gear.

John hikes into the forest as--

Sandra holds her head, a slight trickle of blood emerging.

She is surrounded by "natives".

At their center is a large Spanish man.

The Stranger (in Spanish)
Hold back.

Sandra
One little girl. And you need all
these guys.

WE SEE that there are dozens of the people in tribal garb.

The Stranger (Spanish)
I want the coin.

Sandra
What coin?

The Spanish stranger chuckles and nods.

He makes a hand sign to the tribals and they raise spears and bows in Sandra's direction.

Sandra
You guys really know how to treat a lady, you know that?

The Stranger (in English now)
I want the coin.

Sandra
I don't know what you are talking...

John looks down at his watch.

He pictures Sandra entering a cave and retrieving a treasure from a secret panel in the rock wall.

John ticks off time in the air, then pulls out his compass and a map.

John marks a spot and looks at the sun.

John
Let's pick up the treasure.

Sandra attempts to get up and the tribals hold her down.

Sandra
You would hit a woman? Or maybe you need to be big men and shoot me?

The tribals take a step back.

Sandra (in Spanish)
This? This is your leader? This man is bad. You can't let him hurt me.

A large tribal woman emerges.

The Stranger
No man will harm a woman here.
But, she will make you compliant.

Sandra
You sure that's a she?

The woman and Sandra fight (Indiana-Jones-style).

Sandra gets ahead but eventually is overcome by the huge and much stronger woman.

Sandra gets up and holds out a pouch.

The stranger takes the pouch and holds it up for the tribals.

He opens his hand and dumps the pouch into it.

The pouch is full of sand.

The stranger howls in anger.

As he turns--

Sandra is gone.

John is at the peak of a mountain ridge, readying a hot-air balloon.

Sandra is running through the thick jungle again.

John shoves off the balloon.

Sandra reaches a different ridge.

John
Wrong ridge!

Sandra waves at John as the balloon goes up.

She races along the ridge.

John points at a cliff in the distance.

The tribals are coming and getting closer.

John is powerless in the balloon, moving along the ridge and readying drop weights to make the balloon go higher.

Sandra runs from the tribals and towards the cliff.

John slows the balloon and loses height simultaneously.

The tribals sling huge rocks at Sandra.

The rocks hit close as she runs, but miss her.

A large rock zooms by her and slams into a wooden structure on the ridge and Sandra attempts to launch herself over it and--

Sandra finds herself trapped in cave in the ridge. She races through the caves tunnel, dodging spider webs and a large snake.

John slows the balloon and readies a crossbow at the tribals running into the cave after Sandra.

At the last second, he lights the bolt on fire and sends it careening into the crowd of people.

Sandra leaps across a steep crevice and pulls herself up on a vine.

Sandra finds an exit to the cave.

As Sandra emerges, the balloon lines up above her, but moves to far for her to reach.

John fires a second flaming bolt into the mouth of the cave's tunnel.

Sandra races along and John drops weight and throws a life preserver.

At the last second, she leaps from the cliff and grabs the preserver.

John reels her in.

Sandra

I don't know if that was exhilarating or not.

John

I think it was exhilarating.

Sandra

I thought you were going to change that shirt.

John

I thought you were going to be on time.

Sandra

Look at that sunset.

The horizon fills with the sun and the balloon in silhouette.

John

I'm glad you're safe.

Sandra

Me, too.

Sandra holds up jewels and a coin.

John
How's this for an adventure?

Sandra
The sunset's pretty. But, it wasn't exactly what I was thinking of.

John
You are kidding me, right?

Sandra
No. Listen. I appreciate the effort. It was awesome. I just meant--

John & Sandra
--something different.

They giggle as the balloon sails away.

Sandra
Seriously? A Hawaiian shirt?

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Sandra is still walking down the hallway.

John grabs his bag and follows her.

John
I'll work on it.

Sandra
I know you will.

They walk arm and arm into the night and the streetlights.

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE - DAY

It's early morning now and Sandra is in the shower.

John is dressed and walking past the bathroom on his way out.

John
You know. For a daydream, you use an awful lot of water.

Sandra
Have you ever thought that maybe I'm really Sandra Bullock and you are the figment of my imagination?

John
Nah. It's only the second act.

Sandra
Maybe there's ANOTHER twist.

John
I'm glad we aren't doing--

Sandra
Finish the sentence.

John
I don't actually know what the hell
we're--what I'm doing.

Sandra
You don't get to leave me out.

Sandra stops the shower and holds her hand out for a towel.

John hands her the towel and averts his eyes.

Sandra
And you won't even look at me naked.

John
It's not that--

Sandra
I know. Your kid is coming back.
I go away for a while.

John
What happens if--

Sandra
if what?

John
Nothing. I just. Can I do this
for the rest of my life?

Sandra
Probably not. But maybe you are
already gone too far to turn back.

John
Right. Right.

INT. OFFICE — DAY

John is sitting, dressed a little nicer than usual, waiting.

Kevin, then Eric, then Lisa, then several Chinese folks enter.

Shang Wu introduces himself via translator.

Kevin
It's a pleasure to meet, Mr. Wu.

John
Thank you. For meeting us.

Mr. Wu (in Chinese)
I look forward to a strong future.

Eric (in Chinese)
And we, also.

Mr. Wu smiles.

Kevin
John has finished the numbers.
Eric has your projections redone
to match the most recent proposals.

Mr. Wu (in Chinese)
We are simply here as a formality.
I estimate the numbers will be double
and maybe triple the estimates.
I am excited to work with you and your
people. (in English) Thank you, Kevin.
Thank you, John.

Everyone smiles and a bottle of bubbly is opened.

Glasses are poured in celebration.

INT. WU WAREHOUSE — DAY

John has wandered from the group.
He stands looking down at a huge plastics extrusion line
with his champagne in hand.

Eric
I didn't know you even drank water,
let alone champagne.

John
I know right.

Eric
Did you look at what Kevin did
with the revised estimates you
gave him?

John
No.

Eric
You might want to look at
this.

John
Okay...

John skeptically looks at the tablet in Eric's hand.

Eric
We had to add this in.

John
That's a big-ass random expense.
What happened?

Eric
That's your salary.

John
Ha. Seriously?

Eric
Yeah. But act surprised. He wants
to tell you. But, I figured he'd
be distracted and forget.

John
Why?

Eric
This is all from your brain cloud, man.
Without your crazy cumulus thoughts, it
would have been just a figment.

John
You guys are awesome.

Eric
No. That's all Kevin. However, I
got a request on your behalf.

John
From whom?

Eric

Your sister. She asked we bump up your vacation days and give you some immediate time off. She has something she wants you to do. I suspect it's R and R for when your kid gets home? I've approved it already.

Lisa and Kevin walk out and join them.

Lisa

Oh, thank you. I am so glad this whole thing is done. I think we need to dive into the first batch of polyethylene pellets and take a long nap.

Kevin

Well, guys. Congratulations. Job well done. I could not have done it without you three.

John

Thanks for all of your support.

Kevin

You told him, didn't you?

John

Don't blame them. I drug it out.

Lisa

I didn't do anything.

Eric

I'll confess. It was I.

Kevin holds up his glass.

Kevin

To many, many, many more deals.
To health and to life.

They toast and clink.

Kevin

I have to get a car. Katie is waiting for me. Thank you all. See you soon.

Lisa

I'll walk out with you. Bear should be downstairs.

Eric
I, too, bid you adieu. Don't work
too late.

John
Just a few more things.

They leave John standing above the lines.

Sandra
Why is it off?

John (startled)
Hi there. It's off because
this is the new expansion.
The papers were signed. They'll
duplicate this at our place.
And that will be the last time
these machines are off for a long time.

Sandra
So, tell me now. What is it you did here?

John
I saw someone's idea. And I brought it
to life.

Sandra
Hmmm.

John
That doesn't answer your question?

Sandra
Not really.

John takes her hand.

Sandra
What? We're going to dabble in reality.

John
Well. Halfway.

John walks to the end of scaffolding above several
containers of plastic pellets and dangles his feet down
into them.

He removes his shoes and puts his bare feet in as if it
were an ocean and Sandra joins him, doing the same.

Sandra
Ooohhh. Why are they warm?

John
These are the test lots the engineers
ran today.

Sandra
And you did all of this?

John
No. I did none of this. I just...
I just put the pieces in the right
light.

Sandra plays in the pellets.

Sandra
I want to hear your story.

John
It's a movie of the week. Boring.
Or maybe an episode of snapped.

Sandra
But, it's yours. And I want to hear it.

John
My ex-wife filed a bunch of false
charges and kidnapped my kid.

Sandra
All that creativity and I get two
sentences. You are definitely a man.

John
Fine.

There is a long, awkward pause.

Sandra
Who does all of the planning?

John
For my life?

Sandra
To re-use all of this plastic?

John
We all do. Well, it's different
now. It's bigger. But, we all
know how to do the bulk of it.
Except Eric. He's a numbers and
theory guy. Kevin started it.
He's been doing this since there

John (cont'd)
really was plastic to recycle.
It started with vinyl siding.
He started reclaiming it at a time
when the first big rush of vinyl
was going to be replaced. And he
kept looking for more and more.
From manufacturing to demolition.

Sandra
And you? How'd you get here.

INT. COLLEGE DINING HALL - DAY

John is sitting by a window with a legal pad.

Sandra is in line, getting food.

Sandra
Oh, man. My meal card's out.

John crosses the room to get a fresh bowl of cereal and
hears Sandra whining to the cashier.

John approaches and offers to buy her meal.

Sandra
I'm not going to sit with you
or anything.

John
You don't have to. My mom
put extra cash on it while
I have play practice.

Sandra
So, you're in drama. Ugh.

John
Don't knock it. I like it.
What do you do?

Sandra
Class. I go to class.

John
Any particular aim of class?

Sandra
Maybe pre-med. Maybe dance.
For now, I'm just in general ed.

John
Dance huh? If you want to dance,
don't you have to do that stuff
all four years?

Sandra
It's my first semester, genius.
And I am in a dance class.

John
My bad. I've gotta run.

John picks up his skateboard and backpack, tucking his
legal pad into it.

Sandra
What do you sit here and write?

John
Movies. Poetry. Songs. Essays. Crap.

Sandra
What are you doing later?

John
Probably going to the Elbow. Maybe
smoking a bowl. I have an English
paper due. Play practice. You?

Sandra
Maybe I'll give you my dorm number.

John
Maybe you will.

Sandra
4897.

John
I'll call you.

John leaves the dining hall and--

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Sandra interrupts.

Sandra
You can't put me in your college days.

John
Actually, I can.

Sandra
Why is that?

John
Sandra Bullock and I went to the same school. We were in the same program.

Sandra
Get out of here!

John
She was there a few years earlier. But, a lot of the same professors. Our acting professor was the same.

Sandra
That's funny. But I still wasn't there.

John
I'm using you as a double construct.

Sandra
That sounds kinky.

John
I'm a little fuzzy on the details of those four years. It's simpler if I tell you a story where I just use you as the person on the other side of it.

Sandra
More screen time for me.

John
Exactly. And it saves me looking like an ass for not remembering old friends.

Sandra
You mean, girlfriends.

John
Both. Either way.

INT. COFFEE HOUSE — NIGHT

John has finished his day and is sitting in the back corner of the coffee shop, writing again.

Sandra and her friend, Brooke, approach.

Sandra
You are still writing?

John
I paused earlier. Finished class.

Brooke
You write a lot?

John
I do.

Sandra
Are you trying to be mysterious?

John
What? By writing? Probably.

Sandra
You come here much?

Brooke
I see you all the time.

John
I've seen you around, too.

Sandra
Do you play an instrument or...

John
Nope.

Brooke
So, what do you do?

John
I drink coffee. I go to class.

Brooke
Want to go do some tequila shots?

INT. DORM ROOM – DAY

The sun is up.

Brooke, Sandra and John and a few extra people are passed out in the tiny dorm room after an awesome night out.

John awakens and groggily dresses and exits.

INT. WAREHOUSE – NIGHT

Sandra and John are still sitting and talking.

Sandra
I'm pretty sure you've caught me up on this stuff.

John
Want me to skip ahead?

Sandra
Just a little.

John
Can't you just read my mind?

Sandra
As much as you let me. But
the Dawson's Creek thing.
That's not creative. Why
do you give all your creativity
away? Why not keep some of it?
You probably deserve it.

John
I don't know.

Sandra
Well, think about it. And let me
know what I can do to assist.

EXT. HARBOR — NIGHT

The skyline is beautiful.

Sandra is walking along the skyline.

We hear a voice speaking a foreign language in the
distance.

Sandra runs towards the sound.

Sandra
Hello? Is anyone there?

The sound fades then re-sounds further away.

John is sitting on a chaise lounge on a fancy apartment
balcony above.

John
I'd be careful out here. This late.
A pretty girl like you alone.

Sandra
Did you hear someone screaming for help?

John
No. You imagining someone screaming?

Sandra
It wasn't exactly screaming. Maybe pleading.

John
That's a big difference.

Sandra
I think it was Russian maybe.

John
How do you know they were
asking for help?

Sandra
The tone.

John
So, you want me to know if I heard
someone saying something in a foreign
language that sounded, tonally, like
they were in distress?

Sandra
A simple yes or no would suffice.

John
I said no.

Sandra
Right. Well.

John
Why are you all dressed up? But
wandering around looking to assist
random Russians?

Sandra
I had a bad break-up tonight I'm
not in the mood.

John
Need a rebound?

Sandra
No. I don't. I don't need anything.
And I don't think it counts as a
rebound when it's really been over
for almost a year.

John
Really? A year?

Sandra
Really. A year.

John
Want to talk about it?

Sandra
Yes. Actually. I really would.
Are you an axe murderer?

John
Not that I'm aware of. But I can
check.

Sandra
Will you come down here and meet me
here?

John
It's fine if you come up. The neighbors
would hear you scream. Thin walls this city.

Sandra
No. I just want someone, for once, to
do what I ask because I'm cute or at
least I think I am cute. And because
I asked nicely. Will you come down here
and stand with me, in the cold, on the
sidewalk. And talk to me. Please?

John
Sure. If that's what you'd like.
Give me just a second.

Sandra
Thank you.

John enters the apartment and grabs a jacket and scarf.
As soon as John opens the door, Sandra is standing there.

John
Oh, look.

Sandra
You were nice. And I thought I'd
meet you halfway.

John
This isn't halfway. This is at my door.
Moments after you asked me to come down.

Sandra
See how easy that is? To do something
to meet someone some percentage of the
way when something else is expected.

John
Sounds complicated.

Sandra
Exactly. But, by saying nothing,
look how much we already know.
About each other, I mean.

John
And here we are.

Sandra
Here we are.

Magically, music plays in the apartment.

It is a slow song.

Sandra
You know what would make my night?

She reaches out to John.

John
A dance?

Sandra (nodding)
A dance.

John
Why don't people slow dance
anymore? Like, really, slow dance?

Sandra
It's not fast paced enough
for today's youth.

They begin to dance.

John
Weddings. People still dance
at weddings.

Sandra
They line dance. And they
shake their groove thing.
Why do people drink at weddings?

John
To celebrate.

Sandra
To commiserate.

John
Is that an 80s song?

Sandra
I think so.

John
What part of my story is this?

Sandra
The sweet, carefree part if you
will close your mouth and dance.

John
I can do that.

EXT. ROOFTOP — NIGHT

It's snowing out. There is a beautiful city below.

The scene has changed but the dance is the same.

Sandra
Do you mind?

John
Not at all.

Sandra
So, tell me more.

John
My daughter is nine. She's gorgeous.
And she told me this story about, the
Christmas her mom took her.
She told me about how she had
Christmas in a hotel room.

Sandra
Who does that?

John
Her mother.

Sandra
What did she say?

John
I don't know. But, I do know
that I wonder what Gee thought.

Sandra
Not her mom. Your daughter?

John
She's resilient. She's Gee.
She's already programming
computer games. She's great.

Sandra
You okay?

John
I'm fine. Everything's better.

Sandra
And you thought you were
the writer.

John
Is that a challenge?

Sandra
No. Well, maybe. Is it?

INT. LARGE SHIP – DAY

Sandra is in chains in the bottom of the ship.

She is not happy to be there.

Her dress suggests royalty, in spite of being in tatters
and ragged.

It's clearly been a long trip.

Sandra
JOHN! JOHN! JOHN!

WE SEE – through the planks of the deck of the ship, John
stands with a sword in hand.

Pirates in all sorts of garb surround him.

A long plank is extended off the side of the ship.

Remnants of rope and chains surround his feet.

A huge captain, imposing and silent, stands at the back of
the circle of pirates.

John hears Sandra in the deck below.

John
I'll be there in just a moment.

First Mate
Not likely.

John leaps across the deck of the ship and with a swipe of the sword, sends the pirates scattering, some falling overboard.

The captain waits unmoving and watching.

One pirate grabs John and he swings the man into the remnants of the circle.

John kicks the next pirate over the side of the ship and finds himself face to face with the silent, unmoving leader of the group and freezes.

John turns and grabs a rope.

He leaps to the plank and in one fell move, John drops the rope over the end of the plank and crashes into the lower deck.

Sandra
Great. Now what?

John
Now, I rescue you.

A pirate swings in behind John and crashes with him to the floor.

Sandra
Not likely.

Sandra grabs John's sword and swings it awkwardly at the pirate.

John regains his composure and grabs Sandra 'round the waist.

He ushers her towards the hole in the hull.

John and Sandra leap from the deck and--

they grab the rope together and swing up and onto the main deck.

John hits the deck running.

Sandra stumbles, but quickly regains her footing and follows.

Sandra
Now what?

John grabs a torch and a canister from the Captain's platform.

Sandra takes the container and pours it between them and the pirate.

John lights the liquid on fire and the two of them run towards the masthead.

At the last moment, the fire engulfs the men and Sandra and John leap onto the masthead and into the air...

OVER BLACK

Sandra
You don't have to interrupt
my story.

EXT. BEACH — NIGHT

Sandra
But, I'll compromise.
No pirates, but we can
dance by the ocean.

John and Sandra are dancing on a pier over the beach.

John
You wanted adventures.

Sandra
I did. I do. And sometimes
the most important adventure
is when you stand right here.
In the right now. And take the
next step. To getting life back.

John
Does that involve tequila?

Sandra
No. It doesn't. Not yet, at least.

They dance.

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE — DAY

John marks off days on a calendar that he has clearly been keeping track of his daughter's time away on.

He checks one off and picks up a large jar of tea.

John grabs his bag and leaves.

INT. WAREHOUSE — DAY

John is walking along with a group of chattering folks from the two companies involved in the merger.

Some are from China. Some are clearly not.

Sandra enters on a forklift, in coveralls and a hard hat.

John sees her and stifles a laugh.

She runs into something at the end of an aisle, then gets off the lift and looks around to see if anyone saw her.

She slinks away from the lift quietly.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO — DAY

John is sitting and listening to recordings.

Meg, a pretty blonde, and John's younger sister is smiling.

The recording ends.

Meg
So, that's what I am sending over
for the clearances.

John
Awesome.

Meg
What do you think?

John
I think you are doing great.

Meg
And...

John
It's really funny.

Meg
That's it?

John

No. I think you've created a franchise. A book. A podcast. Maybe a movie. I mean. You can do this a thousand times over.

Meg

We. We can do it. I can't write this stuff. This comes from in your noodle. It's funny. And it is awesome. But, it's all you.

John

I didn't do this. Not much at least of this.

Meg

You don't like it?

John

I love it.

Meg

You don't have to quit your job. But, I need you to sign a contract that you will keep writing the material.

John

I'll keep writing it. You don't need a contract.

Meg

Yes. I do. I know it's a technicality, but I get paid by the advertisers at this point. And with the Sandra Bullock stories, I have to have your commitment in writing. I need it for the legal folks.

John

That's a lot of money.

Meg

Look at the backpay. We're making a lot of money.

John

Off of Sandra Bullock.

Meg
Off of Everything's Better.

John
What if they say no?

Meg
Then you already said it:
We branch out. We write it
to be other people and sell
them. The stories are just that.
You aren't slandering her.
There's no libel. If she heard
it, she'd think it was funny.

John
Or not.

Meg
Or not. And it doesn't matter.
That contract is proof it's
really good writing and the
number of downloads proves it
has an audience. And it has its
own live show to record.

John looks closer at the last page of the contract.

John
It's...

Meg
It's awesome AND Everything's
Better. You and your nutty
life made for some really funny
crap. And I'm going to make sure
our kids go to college with all of
the craziness. This is the universe
saying: Here's a little gold at
the end of your rainbow, buddy.
And you don't need to analyze that
page like it's going to change.
That's what I'm already paying you.

John signs.

John
What?

Meg
Give me that.

John hands her the contract.

John
What do you mean?

Meg hands him an envelope.

Meg
Back pay, my brother. Back pay.

John opens the envelope just slightly.

He peeks at it and Sandra appears and peeks with him.

Sandra
Maui.

Meg
She's here.

John
What?

Sandra
I told you she could hear me.

John
No.

Meg
Yes. I can.

John
This is nuts.

Sandra
This is awesome.

Meg
I agree.

Sandra
She can hear ME.

Meg
Is that Sandra Bullock?

John
No.

Sandra
Yes.

Meg
Wow. She's really in there.

Meg looks at the contract in her hand.

John
I think you and I were just
working closely enough on...

Sandra
He thinks you are reading his
mind.

Meg
That makes sense.

John
No. It doesn't.

Meg
Does this mean Sandra Bullock
needs a writing credit?

John
What?

Sandra
Yes. (long pause) Please.

John
Sandra Bullock didn't write
this stuff. I did.

Sandra
I beg your pardon.

Meg
I thought you were kidding.

John
Kidding?

Sandra
About what?

Meg
She's really here?

John
No.

Sandra
Yes.

Meg
Then she's really in your
head?

John
No.

Sandra
Yes.

John
This was just my way of
dealing with the whole
kidnapping, fake rape case
thing?

Meg
Oh.

John
She's just a coping mechanism.

Sandra is gone.

John
I'm sorry. I'm nuts. This is
just dumb.

John leaves.

Meg
No. John, I'm sorry.
Don't leave because--

She follows him out, but he has already gone.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

John sits just inside the dock doors of the warehouse.

He is drinking a beer.

John
I'm really sorry.

He's talking aloud, but only to himself.

John
I really wanted to...
I don't know what I wanted to do.

Sandra
You wanted to get over some
stuff. I get it.

John
Yeah. But that's not fair.

Sandra
You made me up. I can't have
feelings. Can I?

Sandra has clearly been crying.

John
I don't know anymore.

Sandra
It's okay. I don't think you
were going to need much more
from me anyways.

John stands up and walks away.

INT. CAVE - DAY

Deep inside a dark cave, John holds a headlamp.

WE HEAR - Children chattering further in the cave.

John
Guys? Wait up.

John stoops and slips into the cave's entrance.

John
Noah. Alec. You and your friends.
Wait for me.

Sandra
Good thing I packed snacks.

John
Yeah. Did you get a head count?

Sandra
I did. We've got five. Plus two.

John
Great. I thought there were four.

She indicates the two of them.

John
How deep can this thing go?

Sandra
I think we are about to find out.

They turn on flashlights and plunge into the darkness.

INT. DEEP CAVE – DAY

John's flashlight is going out just as he catches up with the kids.

Gretchen
Dad. Dad. (pointing) Look.

Gretchen is leaning over the side of a steep crevice.

Before them and at the end of her pointing finger is a massive staircase from many, many, many years ago.

Noah
Are we gonna go down there?

Gretchen
If my dad says we can.

Gretchen looks at John and Sandra hopefully.

John
First, we have to get some light.

Tony
I've got light.

Tony, a short boy of Asian descent around ten, pulls a road flair from his bag.

He breaks open the flair and jams it into a makeshift torch.

He passes it off to John.

John
Well, Sandra. You wanted an adventure. This do?

Before them is a giant, winding stone maze, showing that the stair case is only the beginning.

It disappears deep into the ground.

Sandra
You know what? I think it will.

John turns with the torch and inadvertently ignites a thin fuse-like strand of silk.

John
How do we get through this thing?

Gretchen
Dad! Look!

The fuse slithers through the stone maze, igniting the twists and turns.

Gretchen
Think the treasure's down here?

John
I think we're gonna find out.

Gretchen
Awesome. Follow me, guys.

Sandra
Thank you.

John
Yeah. Yeah. Just...be careful.

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE — NIGHT

John is sitting on the couch, writing on his legal pad.

Sandra is standing in the doorway, watching him.

John
Can I help you?

Sandra presses play on a wireless speaker.

Meg (O.S.)
...so, yes, that means that here on Everything's Better with Sandra Bullock. The podcast. We are actually getting a very special guest in next week's podcast. And thanks for tuning in to our story tonight We're prepping a lot more fun and a lot more fantasy. And remember. Everything's Better. And Everything's Better with Sandra Bullock. Have a great night!! Woo hoo!

Loud applause, then a closing jingle fill the air.

Sandra
You are really something.

John
Thank you. For everything.

Sandra
What do you do for an encore?

John
I dunno.

Sandra
Tell me something funny.

John
It's late.

Sandra
Please.

TRAILER TAKES OVER.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

NARRATOR (VO)
In a world, where parenting
is a challenge

Sandra Bullock is readying her children for school, in business attire.

John appears as her husband, in a shirt and tie.

VO
It becomes even more challenging for
one woman and one man.

Sandra at work, busy.

John and Sandra at play with their kids.

VO
These kids are about to
lose their father.

John appears in drag, standing in a master bedroom.

Sandra enters and screams.

Sandra
What the hell is this?

John
I need to talk to you.

Sandra
I'd say.

Sandra mugs for the camera.

John
I'm becoming a woman.

The kids standing in front of Sandra and John.

Kid 1
Does this mean we have two moms?

Kid 2
What is everyone going to say?

Sandra crying.

Sandra
No. No. I am not going to...
Kid's. Cover your ears. NOW!

The kids close their eyes and cover their ears.

Sandra
Are you keeping it?

John
What?

Sandra
IT! Where will IT be when you
are....finished with your
transformation.

John
No.

Sandra
Dammit, John. Seriously?

John
I'm sorry.

Sandra
Sorry doesn't cut it.

She pushes the kids.

Sandra
Eyes and ears open, kids.

John
What are you doing?

Sandra
Kids. John. I am going to support your father as he goes through this time. And I...I am going to become a man.

VO
One family is making it work.

Sandra as a man at work.

Sandra as a man walking down a street.

John as a woman.

John, Sandra and the kids walking down the sidewalk.

VO
MRS. DAD. Coming Soon.

John is hiding in the bedroom.

Sandra
Our kids need both parents, John. One of us has to man-up. Oh, and for the record, I had the surgeon keep yours. I always liked it. It's mine now. It really always was.

"Summer 2015"

Sandra, as a man, leaps on John, as a woman, in the bedroom.

She pins him on the bed.

Sandra
How's this for a role reversal?

John's facial expression is of horror and extreme surprise.

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE — NIGHT

Sandra and John are laughing so hard they are crying.

Sandra flops down beside John.

John
There's more.

Sandra
Not just this second.

John
But seriously...there's more.

Sandra
But seriously. I think I just peed.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Kevin and Eric are talking at the end of the hall.

John passes them, smiling and waves.

Kevin
Do I have to suspend you
to get you to go on a real
vacation?

Eric
I think we're going to have
to do just that.

John
This is my last day for
two weeks. My kid is back.
I have two days to finish
the prepping for a fishing
trip. Then two days of silence.

Kevin
I approved your sister's request
that you join her as well.

John
Join her where?

Eric
You might want to talk to your
sister.

John grabs his bag and heads back out of the warehouse.

John
Bye, guys. Thanks.

Mac stops John on his way to his car.

Mac
Congratulations, man.

John
For what?

Mac
For all of this.

John
I didn't do it.

Mac
Etter says she's been listening
to your podcast. She says
you are pretty funny.
For a white boy.

John
Tell her I said thanks. I send
her my love.

Mac
Have a good vacation, man. I
just wanted to say thanks. At
least for the job security.

John
Thanks for everything you do,
Mac. I'm serious.

John drives away.

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE — DAY

John is packing.

Sandra
Why did you pick the zombie
apocalypse story that kicked
all of this off?

John
It was an honest response.
And there was a running joke
about 28 days later vs. 28
days.

Sandra
Oh. Wow. That kicked this off?

John
It did.

Sandra
How many are there?

John
Things that would be better
with Sandra Bullock? Movies?

Sandra
Yeah.

John
As far as I am concerned, the
number of things that would
be better is infinite. But it's
more what she represents. To me.
To a lot of folks.

Sandra
What's that?

John
That levity doesn't have to be
something of lesser quality.

Sandra
You turned this into a serious
moment. What happens now?

John
Vacation.

Sandra
You know how you read those
stories when you were a kid
and things could come to life?

John
Yes.

Sandra walks from the room.

John finishes packing.

EXT. SMALLTOWN SQUARE – DAY

The utility vehicle pulls up (from the Zombie Apocalypse
Story in the podcast) and stops.

John emerges with a gun.

Sandra covers him as he sprints to the door of the
pharmacy.

John
Clear.

Sandra
Open the door.

John pushes the door and steps in as a bell rings.

John
Still clear.

Sandra picks up her pack and a massive machine gun.

She makes her way to the door, in spite of being slightly off balance with the weight of the machine gun and pack.

John
You gonna carry that everywhere?

Sandra
It makes me feel safe with all of these....things out here.

John
Sounds like a plan.

Sandra
Why do people always go to the drugstore?

John
To buy drugs?

Sandra
Not really. You go there and buy lots and lots of random crap at twice the price.

John
Pretty sure it's free right now.

A slow, lumbering zombie appears in the window.

Sandra is startled.

Sandra
John.

Sandra is whispering, trying not to attract the attention of the creature.

She pulls John down behind the cash register.

John
It's a slow one.

John pulls a bag from the counter.

Someone's knitting project is sticking out of the bag.

John grabs a needle.

John
Cover me. But don't shoot that
thing unless you have no other
option.

Sandra nods.

John slips from behind the counter and pushes open the
pharmacy door.

He grabs the zombie and jerks it into the door before it
can make a sound.

John jabs the creature in the head with the needle.

The creature flops for a minute, then stops dead.

Sandra
Gross.

John
Let's raid the pills and first aid
supplies. Get some water. Get
back on the road.

Sandra
How far are we from your kid?

John
We can be there by dark. I just
don't want to get stuck on the
road.

John slips towards the pharmacy area. He jimmyes the
security door to get inside and--

A LOUD ALARM SOUNDS.

John and Sandra search quickly to find how to cut off the
alarm.

John
We aren't going to find it.
Let's just hurry.

Sandra grabs a shopping cart and fills it with water and supplies.

The alarm continues to ring loudly.

Several different types of creatures are gathering at the front of the pharmacy, but still in the street.

Sandra
It's not just the slow ones.
We've got speedies. We've got
the strongmen. We've got hooded
ladies.

Each name describes a specific looking former human now zombie creature.

A large, muscled looking creature slams into the pharmacy door.

Sandra
John. We've got company.

The alarm goes silent mid-sentence and Sandra sounds like she's shouting.

John holds a finger up.

The creature seems to be hunting them in the small store, sniffing the air and making cow-like sounds as it scours the aisles.

The creature has no eyes.

John drops several bags of drugs into Sandra's cart with the supplies they've already gathered.

John crouches at the end of an aisle next to Sandra.

On the wall are women's sanitary supplies and prophylactics.

John reaches for a large box of prophylactics.

Sandra
Seriously? You think?

John turns and reaches instead for a box of tampons.

Sandra
I appreciate your sense of humor
in almost any situation. But, I think
that THIS is an exception.

John pushes Sandra's head down as the creature leans in to sniff her face.

John leans around the counter and looks t the door.

Several creatures are making their way into the drug store.

John points at a rear exit to the building.

John
I'll load the car and pull it
up to the door. When I honk,
you get in.

John slips the cart out of the rear door and into the alley beside the store.

John pushes the cart to their car as creatures slip deeper into the store and closer to Sandra.

Sandra readies a hand gun, but keeps one hand on her machine gun.

The larger creature is still searching, but several others have joined in the search.

Sandra sees them in the security mirror.

One of the creatures nearly rounds the corner and she readies the gun.

John empties the cart into the rear of the vehicle.

He racks a shotgun and slips into the car.

In the store, a creature gets too close to a display on the counter and knocks it onto Sandra, startling her.

Sandra steps back and opens fire on the store with the powerful weapon, mowing down several creatures and angering the rest.

John revs the engine and slams the car into the store to retrieve her.

The car takes out the creature nearest Sandra.

John
Get in.

Sandra
You don't have to tell me twice.

Sandra is in and buckled as a large horde of creatures descend on the store.

John
Get ready.

Sandra
I am.

John slams on the gas and Sandra feeds the growing pile of creatures bullet after bullet.

The car bursts through the rear of the pharmacy and drags creatures with it, scattering the rest like seeds in the wind.

John and Sandra speed off.

As John and Sandra pull to the edge of town, there is a massive explosion that throws their car sideways.

John tries to recover, but the car crashes anyways.

Once the wreckage settles, John sees Sandra on the sidewalk, many feet from the car.

John pulls himself up and quickly decides to grab the supplies and slip them into the bed of a nearby pickup truck.

Sandra is dazed and bleeding, but okay.

John
Come with me, dear.

John picks Sandra up and places her in the cab of the truck.

He slips in beside her and attempts to hot wire the truck.

The hordes of creatures are surrounding them at a distance.

John takes off the parking break.

Sandra looks for the gun.

Sandra
Get the big one. Put it in the bed.
I'll ride back there.

John steps out of the truck and grabs the huge machine gun.

He puts it in the bed of the truck and Sandra crawls awkwardly through the window.

Sandra readies the gun.

John throws the truck into reverse as--

Sandra unleashes a maelstrom on the crowd of zombies.

John floors the truck forward and Sandra loses her grip for a brief moment, nearly shooting the truck, but never stopping firing.

John
Hold on tight.

John roars through a crowd of zombies and Sandra fires until the gun runs out.

As the gun dries, Sandra crawls back into the cab.

They are clear of the creatures.

John
Good job, girl. You okay?

Sandra
I'll be fine. Where did you learn to drive like that?

INT. CAVE - DAY

Gretchen is the leader of the group of five kids. She unfolds a map on stones below.

A picturesque waterfall and cracks in the rocks above illuminate the scene for the children.

As Gretchen unfolds the map, John and Sandra stand over the kids, looking at the map and listening to their plans.

Gretchen
Guys. If we can go this way the cave at the end of it should have the chest of crystals. It might even have gold.

Meg appears from behind John and Sandra.

Meg
What crystals?

The group is startled.

John
Gee thinks there is buried
treasure.

Meg
There's buried treasure everywhere.

Sandra
I'm not in this one. I'm just
along for the adventure.

Meg
You are like eight miles deep in
the Earth. Why is my son eight
miles deep in the Earth?

John
Because...

Sandra
Well, Gretchen found a map.

Gretchen
Aunt Meggie, look.

Meg
Where did you get this?

The map is old and clearly marked.

Meg reads the map's Spanish and Latin phrases.

Meg
This is real. I mean, really real.

Gretchen
How can you tell?

Meg holds the map and looks at their surroundings.

Meg
Your dad used to tell me this story
growing up. People moving west said
that in the Linville Caverns, Linville
or some family members had hidden all of
their jewels and gold. It may not be
what it says here. But, think about
what Money and Gold from two hundred
years ago and Jewels would be worth
today.

Gretchen and the kids cheer.

Meg takes the map and the lead as they descend in the caves.

John
My family. The spelunkers.

EXT. OCEAN PIER – DAY

John stands on the edge of the ocean, looking out.

His young daughter walks up behind him.

Gretchen
Can I bring my tablet?

Gretchen holds up a bag.

John
Sure. I brought my phone.

John grabs Gretchen and brings her aboard after giving her a huge bear hug.

As John shoves the boat off, Sandra slips onboard.

INT. BOAT CABIN – NIGHT

John and Gretchen read a book in the cabin on the tablet.

Gretchen falls asleep.

John retrieves a beer from a small refrigerator and heads to the top deck.

John
I saw you.

Sandra sits on the bow of the boat.

Sandra
I know.
John
You're a really good imaginary pal.

Sandra
Yeah. You're a really good
dad.

John
I keep telling myself that.

Sandra
Everything's better. Isn't it?

John laughs.

John
Here.

John hands Sandra a beer.

Sandra
You know. I don't know
how you do all of this.

John
It's my first vacation in
a while.

Sandra
Not just this. The whole
life is a movie thing.

John
Life is what you make of it.

Sandra
When does it end?

John
When you die. I guess.
Maybe not. Why do we have
to figure it out.

Sandra
When did you start doing it?

John
Making movies in my head?
When I was ten? I guess.
Making movies for you in my
head? When I was thirty four.

They laugh.

Sandra
You should be good by now.

John
Four hundred short films, six
unsold screenplays, and three
writing awards later, I am
a plastics engineer.

Sandra
And a good dad.

John
And a good dad.

EXT. BOAT — MOONLIGHT

John is listening in on a satellite phone.

The boat rocks gently in the ocean.

Meg
...he's joining us from
a much needed vacation.
And he's got a new story
for you all. Big hand for
my brother, John.

Loud Applause.

Meg
Say hello, John.

John
Hello, John.

Meg
Smart ass. How's the ocean?

John
Big. Really, really big.

Meg
How's my favorite niece?

John
Once again enjoying he reign
as the queen of my world.

Meg
I understand you have something
to add to to-nite's show from
out there in the ocean.

John
I do. In the Everything's Better
with Sandra Bullock world.

Meg
Well, give it to us.

Jingle plays.

John
Alright then.

John peeks in on Gretchen, sleeping in the cabin.

BLACK

"MPAA LOGO"

"Coming Soon"

VOICE OVER

In a family of detectives...

Sandra Bullock is standing in a field.

She looks very seriously past the camera at her partner.

VOICE OVER

Five sisters and their police chief mother fight to control crime in a small Iowa town.

Sandra Bullock's partner is also Sandra Bullock.

Sandra 1

What do you think happened?

Sandra 2

I think he was murdered sis.

Sandra 1

I'd bet all the corn in Iowa that we can find out who did it.

A body lies in the field.

Sandra 2

We have to turn this over to the State folks, sis.

Sandra 1

We have to turn it over, but that doesn't mean we have to stop investigating this. She's blood.

The body is also Sandra Bullock.

INT. POLICE STATION

Sandra 1 and Sandra 2 enter the station.

Uniform Cop

The chief wants you in her office.

They enter the chief's office.

The chief has her back to them, looking out the window.

Chief

It will be a cold day in hell
before I let this murder go unsolved.

Sandra 1

I know, Ma. We got this.

Sandra 2

I'm just so upset. I don't know...

The chief turns as she speaks to reveal she too, is Sandra Bullock.

Chief

I don't know what you don't know.
But I want you to find out what you
don't know and I want you to know that
I know that you know what you don't
know and you're going to need to
find out whatever else you need
to know and --- solve this case.

The chief slams her hand on the desk.

EXT. POLICE STATION

A uniformed cop pulls up to park as Sandra 1 and Sandra 2 walk to their unmarked car.

Sandra 3

Hey guys.

The uniform cop is also Sandra Bullock.

Sandra 1

Yah, sis?

Sandra 2

I'm just so upset.

Sandra 3

I know. Me, too.
Need any help?

Narrator (VO)

Starring Sandra Bullock,
Sandra Bullock, Sandra Bullock.

Clips of each version of Sandra Bullock playing all of the sisters but one and the police chief accompany the narrator's voice over.

Narrator
 And Sandra Bullock.
 And introducing Sandra Bullock.

The scenes show all the Sandras sitting around a family dinner.

Chief
 I want you to band together
 and find this evil bastard.

Narrator
 A harrowing tale of family
 bonding and true crime.
 "NEARSTAY".

"NEARSTAY"

"Coming this Holiday Season"

LOUD APPLAUSE and LAUGHTER.

Meg
 Would you listen to these
 jokers? It's about murder
 people. Even if Sandra Bullock
 is playing herself twelve times.
 (Laughter) That's very funny.
 See, the salty breeze is helping
 you get some good out.

John
 Thanks guys.

Gretchen appears on the deck of the boat.

Gretchen
 Daddy. I think you're on teevee.

John
 Guys. Thanks for laughing I've
 got to go.

John hangs up the satellite phone and rushes to his daughter.

As John walks into the cabin, her tablet is playing.

John
 I thought you were sleeping.

Gretchen
 I was, but I heard you talking...

John
Sorry about that.

John sees the television just as it pans off a photo of his ex-wife.

A true-crime talking head is talking over images of their home, their life, etc.

TRUE CRIME PERSON
And I'll just be honest,
the false criminal charges
were enough for me, but to
disappear into another country
with their child is just
ridiculous...

John closes the show.

John
I'm not going to skip this.
But we aren't going to watch
this. Okay?

Gretchen nods.

John
Let's go with a story about
Princess Gretchen for now. Okay?

Gretchen nods and lays down.

John
Once upon a time, there was a
beautiful princess who lived in
a marvelous castle...

EXT. BOAT — VERY EARLY MORNING

John is having tea on the deck of the boat.

Gretchen is sleeping.

The satellite phone starts ringing.

John grabs the phone and tries to silence it, nearly dropping the phone.

John
Hello?

Meg
You actually answered?
I thought you'd be vacationing.

John
Right? Well. You called.
And like three people have
this number.

Meg
I know. I just wanted to
make sure you were answering.

John
Why?

Meg
Just in case.

John
Okay...

Meg
Also, I made some changes
to your vacation schedule.
Log on later and look at
the calendar.

John
Got it. Sleep tight.

Meg
How'd you know I hadn't slept?

John
I read your mind.

Meg
Very funny.

John hangs up the phone and sits on the side of the boat.

Sandra walks out, stretching.

Sandra
You have a very nice boat.

John
It's a rental.

Sandra
You have very nice taste in
rental boats.

John
What are you doing?

Sandra
Joining you for tea.

Sandra sees the legal pad.

Sandra
What movie are you writing?

John
Something about me. I wrote it
once. Needs an edit.

Sandra
That sounds like fun. Can I read?

John
Of course.

John leaves the legal pad and casts out a line from the rear of the boat.

Gretchen appears.

Gretchen
Can I fish with you?

John
I was just about to cast
a line for you. But, I think
I should let you have this one
and I'll scrounge up some
breakfast.

Gretchen
Orange juice first, please?

John
Coming right up. Still no pulp?

Gretchen
Nope. Pulp is fine now. Can I
have a sip of your tea?

John hands her the cup and ducks into the cabin.

MONTAGE of JOHN AND GRETCHEN ON BOAT throughout the day
doing father and daughter activities.

EXT. BOAT — NIGHT

John is putting Gretchen to sleep.

John takes the tablet computer and turns it off.

The satellite phone rings.

John rushes to find it and answer it in the moonlight.

John
Seriously, Meg?

There is silence.

Sandra Bullock
Nope. Not Meg.

John
What?

EXT. BALCONY — DAY

Sandra Bullock is on the phone.

Sandra Bullock
This is Sandra Bullock.

John
Ha. Ha. Ha. Very funny.
My sister put you up to this?
I'm on vacation. Pranks later.

Sandra Bullock
Nope. Your sister sent your script.
To my production company. With
a copy of all the stuff that's
going on with her podcast.

John is speechless.

Sandra Bullock
You really wrote all this stuff?

John stammers but still no words.

Sandra Bullock
John, am I gonna need a restraining
order? I--

John
No. No. Not at all.

Sandra Bullock
When is your vacation over?

John
When do you want it to be?

Sandra Bullock
Well. I'm busy. Personally.
But, I might want to make your
movie. If you want to make it.

John

I do.

Sandra Bullock

Because, clearly, you need an actress that looks like Sandra Bullock.

John

I guess you could say that.

Sandra is having tea, listening.

John

I'm sorry if I come across as starstruck or whatever. It's just...I don't really know what I thought would happen.

Sandra

I have a hundred and twenty page script in my hand that says otherwise.

John

Right. I guess so.

Sandra

I read it twice. Just in case. You're funny. Weird. But funny. Are you good looking?

John

No clue.

Sandra

Well, let's find out. And bring your kid. I'll get a sitter. We'll go out and do some blow and get hammered in Beverly Hills.

John

I'm not--

John doesn't want to offend her but doesn't know how to respond.

Sandra

John, I'm kidding. We'll have coffee and fresh mart. We'll talk. This is a meeting. Not a date. Wear your pants. Okay? Promise me that when you show up to talk to me you will wear your pants.

John
I promise I will try to wear pants.

Sandra laughs.

Sandra
I like you already. See you soon.

She disconnects the call.

John turns and sees "his Sandra" standing at the rear of the boat.

She is crying.

John
I thought you'd be happy.

Sandra
I am. I'm just...

Sandra grabs the side of the boat and begins to jump.

John runs to grab her.

John reaches her just in time and grips her wrist.

EXT. MOUNTAIN CLIFF – DAY

Sandra dangles from John's arm.

John
I can't let you go.

Sandra struggles at the end of his arm to be let go.

Sandra
The ocean wasn't dramatic enough?
Really?

John
This is a serious moment.

Sandra
For you. In your head. I'm
hanging from a cliff. Let go.

John
Are you mad?

Sandra
I'm not mad. You just talked
to Sandra Bullock. The real one.
I'm just...whatever. Let go.

John
I can't let you go. You mean
everything to me.

Sandra
Meant. Past tense. Done. Finito.
You have to let me go.

John
I could never do that.

The satellite phone rings.

Gretchen
Dad?

Gretchen appears on the cliff behind John.

John lets go of the fictional Sandra and she falls
screaming.

Gretchen
Dad? The phone?

EXT. BOAT — DAY

John is laying in an awkward position half-on and half off
the boat.

John
Be right there.

Gretchen walks over and hands her dad the phone.

Meg
Did she call you?

John
She did.

Meg
And...

John
She wants to meet--

Meg screams and John drops the phone in the ocean.

Gretchen and John laugh.

As John turns and grabs his tea, Gretchen attends the rod
and reel that's still cast.

THE END.

CREDITS ROLL.

The ending plays over the title and credits and around it in a montage-interrupted style.

It includes:

Sandra Bullock on a late night show touting the podcast and movie.

The host key line: "Everything is really better with Sandra Bullock. I've got some things I'd like Sandra Bullock to be better with. What about you folks?"

Sandra Bullock in a tabloid news headline.

Movie Critic stating: "I have to agree everything is better with Sandra Bullock".

More relevant moments captured about the movie and some famous people/premiere.

CODA:

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE — DAY

John is shaving in the bathroom.

The shower is running.

The real Sandra Bullock (played as a little angrier than the construct of John's mind) pokes her head out.

John
Yes?
Sandra
Where are the kids?

John
The bodyguard took them
to the pond.

Sandra
We've got to join them.

John smiles at her.

John
We will. Shower first.

Sandra
Do not tell me what to do, John.
I swear to God...

John
You'll what?

Sandra
I am not a figment of your
imagination. When I punch you,
it will hurt.

John hands a mug into the shower.

Sandra
Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

John
You're welcome, gorgeous.

BLACK

"THE END"