

Strength of a Soul

By

Frank B. Hansen

hansenfb1@cox.net

Copyright(c) 2020

FADE IN:

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

In pink pajamas with princess prints, on her knees, ZOE HUNTER (5), a ray of sunshine with curly long hair, big brown eyes, peers out a window. A teddy bear rests in her lap.

A smile with dimples to match as she cranes her neck, catches a glimpse of a police car with flashers on.

As the police car zips down a street, her dimples fade.

She kisses the stuffed animal.

ZOE
I love you, Bear.

FAMILY ROOM

A flat-screen TV across from a couch, a coffee table, end tables and a bookcase with a few novelties.

ZOE (O.S.)
Mommy.

Next to the couch, in a lazy chair, ANGELINA HUNTER (30), brunette, pale face, wears glasses, touches a rose gold ring with a single diamond on her right ring finger.

ZOE (O.S.)
Mommy.

ANGELINA
Yeah.

ZOE
Why isn't dad coming home?

Angelina slips off her glasses, dark circles under her eyes.

ANGELINA
Come here.

On a side table, Angelina puts her glasses next to a phone, lifts Zoe onto her lap.

ZOE
Are you and dad fighting?

ANGELINA
No, we're not fighting.

ZOE
Did I do anything wrong?

ANGELINA
No, sweetie.

Angelina runs a hand through Zoe's hair.

ANGELINA
Sometimes grown-ups need some alone time to think things over.

ZOE
I can give dad lots of hugs so he doesn't feel lonely anymore.

ANGELINA
That's sweet, but dad isn't lonely. He needs some time alone. It's like when you and Bear play in your room. Just you and Bear. Nobody else. That's your alone time.

ZOE
Why can't dad do his alone time in the bedroom like Bear and me?

ANGELINA
Grown-ups do things a little bit differently than kids.

ZOE
Okay.

ANGELINA
Just remember. Even if dad is away, he loves us very much. Don't you ever forget that.

They hug.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

With the teddy bear tucked under one arm, Zoe turns to Angelina, puts a finger to her lips.

ZOE
Be quiet.

ANGELINA
Why?

ZOE
Grandpa's sleeping.

ANGELINA
Okay.

Zoe tip toes. Angelina follows, mimics Zoe's steps.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

LIAM HUNTER (60), crew cut, deep eye sockets, rugged, shoulders broad enough to cause a solar eclipse, paces a floor in a dark suit and tie.

With his head down, he drags his feet toward a door marked, "Intensive Care Unit."

INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - WAITING ROOM

A sign posted behind a reception area, "Information Center." An ADMINISTRATOR monitors computer screens.

Dim lighting. Booths with tables. A row of chairs against a wall. Art work of nature on earth tone colored walls.

In a booth, An OLDER COUPLE holds hands. A WOMAN sobs in the arms of a MAN.

Liam steps up to a window, snuffles, loosens his tie, stares out a window with puffy eyes.

INT. HOUSE - KID'S ROOM - NIGHT

Bright colored walls. A princess poster above a pink bed. Next to the bed, a table lamp throws light on a framed photo of Zoe hugging a bear mascot.

Against a wall, a floor mirror stuck between a dresser and a storage bin with toys.

Angelina sits on the bed, tucks in Zoe and the teddy bear.

ZOE
Is grandpa okay?

ANGELINA
Grandpa is getting better, but it'll take a bit more time before he gets well and can talk again.

ZOE
He's spending a lot of time at the
hospital.

ANGELINA
The doctors are helping grandpa
getting his voice back.

As Zoe dips her head, Angelina cups Zoe's chin, lifts her
head up.

ANGELINA
Grandpa will be staying with us for
awhile, so when he gets well, you
can tell him all your stories and
give him lots of hugs.

ZOE
I'll save lots of hugs and stories
for grandpa ... and dad.

Angelina smiles.

ZOE
Mommy?

ANGELINA
Yeah.

Zoe pulls the cover up under her chin.

ANGELINA
What is it? You can tell me.

Zoe wets her lips.

ZOE
Are you going to need some alone
time too?

Angelina clears her throat.

ANGELINA
No, sweetie. My time is with you
and Bear.

Angelina kisses her forehead.

ZOE
Bear too.

As Angelina kisses the stuffed animal, she wiggles her nose.

ANGELINA
Bear needs a bath.

Zoe giggles.

ZOE
Can I pray for dad to come home and
grandpa to get better?

ANGELINA
They would like that.

Zoe crosses the stuffed toy's paws, folds her hands.

Angelina flicks off the table lamp.

ANGELINA
Sleep tight, sweetie.

ZOE
Night, mommy.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Angelina leaves the kid's room pink door ajar. Faint prayers
seep through the crack.

KITCHEN

Rain slams against a window.

At a counter, Angelina pours a glass of red wine.

She raises the wine glass, stares out the window, sips.

KID'S ROOM

With folded hands, Zoe eyes the ceiling.

FAMILY ROOM

In the lazy chair, Angelina reclines, sips wine.

INT. HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

In a corner, Liam pulls a digital recorder and ear buds from
an inside suit pocket, connects the ear buds, cradles it.

He pushes a play button on the recorder.

LIAM (V.O.)
(recorded)
How about blowing a raspberry on
your tummy?
(fart sounds/baby giggles)
You like that, huh?

He forces a smile.

LIAM (V.O.)
(recorded)
Oh, boy, that must have been a
healthy breakfast. Did you drain
mommy completely?

He sniffles.

LIAM (V.O.)
(recorded/baby coos)
One more raspberry then diaper
change. You ready?
(fart sounds/baby laughs)
Okay, time to clean you up ...

A fist to his mouth.

LIAM (V.O.)
(recorded)
... feels like yesterday.

His eyes tear up.

LIAM (V.O.)
(recorded)
As I look at this beautiful woman
before me, I can't help reflect on
the girl she was or should I say
the baby she was and the woman she
has become.

He clicks off the recorder, pockets it and the ear buds.

As he coughs into the palm of his hand, he pulls a white
handkerchief from a suit pocket, wipes blood from his mouth
and his hand.

INT. HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

Low volume on the TV.

With the wine glass in her lap, Angelina's eyes flutter shut.

KID'S ROOM

Zoe grabs the teddy bear, flips the bed cover.

FAMILY ROOM

In the lazy chair, Angelina snores.

Her fingers go slack. The wine glass tilts, paints her sweatshirt red.

INT. HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Parked in a chair, Liam folds his hands, lowers his head.

INT. HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

Angelina whimpers. She wiggles. The wine glass rolls off her lap. As it shatters on the floor ...

QUICK FLASHBACK - EXT. CITY INTERSECTION - DAY

A black SUV slams into a town car.

INT. HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT - PRESENT NIGHT

... Angelina jerks forward in the lazy chair. Chest heaves as she gapes at the TV.

She shakes her head, shuffles away.

ON THE TV

At a train station, flashing red and blue lights from emergency vehicles. A handful of COMMUTERS. A rescue team kneels next to a sheet laid out over the tracks in front of a train. At the bottom of the screen, "Breaking news: A boy run over by a train."

KITCHEN

Shards of glass slide off a dustpan into a trash can.

At the counter, Angelina turns on a faucet, splashes water on her face, dries off.

Her eyebrows tighten as she squints through the window at red and blue flashing lights at a distance with a train visible in the midst of all the lights.

(O.S.) A door slams shut.

Angelina jerks, whips her head at a doorway.

ANGELINA
Dad? Is that you?

(O.S.) Footsteps.

She snaps her head at a clock on a wall. It reads, "11:00pm."

Her eyes bulge.

In rain boots and soaked pink pajamas, Zoe paces past the doorway with a headless teddy bear in one hand.

ENTRYWAY

Angelina rushes to the doorway.

Her eyes go wide.

On top of the stairs, Zoe dangles the headless stuffed animal in one hand, the head in the other hand.

ON THE TV

A FEMALE REPORTER (30) shakes as she talks into a microphone.

FEMALE REPORTER
According to eyewitnesses, a boy
ran onto the tracks to pick up what
seemed to be a stuffed toy when he
was hit by a train.

KID'S ROOM

Next to the bed, two furball pieces hit the floor.

With the rain boots on, Zoe crawls into bed, pulls the cover, closes her glazed eyes.

Silhouetted in the doorway, Angelina pauses, gawks at Zoe and the two stuffed animal pieces.

Angelina rubs Zoe's shoulder.

ANGELINA

Sweetie.

Zoe's eyes pop open. Angelina jerks.

ZOE

Bear's hurt.

Angelina's hand trembles as she pushes hair away from Zoe's face.

ANGELINA

Are you okay?

ZOE

A boy. I was fighting for Bear.

ANGELINA

What'd you mean? Fighting?

Angelina jerks, clutches her chest, grimaces.

INT. HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - ROOM7 - NIGHT

A heart monitor displays an irregular beat.

INT. HOUSE - KID'S ROOM - NIGHT

A tiny hand tugs Angelina's arm.

ZOE (O.S.)

Mommy.

Angelina catches her breath.

ZOE

What's wrong?

ANGELINA

I'm okay. Are you hurt?

Zoe shakes her head.

ZOE

Dad didn't listen to my prayers so Bear and me went to see him.

ANGELINA

What?

ZOE

In deep heaven.

ANGELINA
Deep heaven?

Zoe nods.

ZOE
We couldn't find him.

ANGELINA
Sweetie, you were sleepwalking.

ZOE
No, I wasn't sleeping. I don't
remember too much, but It was cold
out there.

Zoe's voice trails off.

ZOE
I'm tired.

ANGELINA
We'll talk about this in the
morning, okay?

ZOE
Can doctor mommy help Bear?

ANGELINA
Yeah, doctor mommy will take care
of Bear. Let's get you cleaned up
and you can sleep with me tonight.

EXT. HOSPITAL - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

A sedan fills a vacant spot.

INT. SEDAN - PARKED - NIGHT

With hands on the steering wheel, COLTON ASH (40), fresh cut
on his forehead, trimmed beard, unkempt hair, peers through
the windshield.

He draws a breath, taps his phone.

The phone plays a video clip of Zoe and Colton.

ZOE (V.O.)
(recorded)
Dad, you look almost as beautiful
as mom.

COLTON (V.O.)
(recorded)
Isn't that too much makeup?

ZOE (V.O.)
(recorded/giggles)
No, you need a lot more. You got
too many wrinkles.

His eyes well up.

COLTON
I'll see you soon.

He taps the phone, pockets it.

COLTON
Love you, sweetie.

INT. HOUSE - KID'S ROOM - NIGHT

Angelina picks up the two furball pieces.

She flinches.

A red stain on the carpet.

She flips the stuffed toy pieces, stares at red colored fur.

As she smells the stuffed animal, her eyes go wide.

ENTRYWAY

Angelina pushes down on a door handle, opens the front door.
She pauses, closes the door, locks it.

LAUNDRY ROOM

With crossed arms, Angelina leans against a counter, stares
at a dryer as two furball pieces bang against a window of its
front door.

MASTER BEDROOM

Angelina places the clean one-piece teddy bear under the bed
cover next to Zoe.

EXT. HOSPITAL - MAIN ENTRANCE - NIGHT

A taxi pulls up.

Liam raises a hand.

INT. SEDAN - PARKED - NIGHT

Through the windshield, Colton tracks Liam as he gets into the taxi.

EXT. HOSPITAL - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Colton gets out, slams the door shut.

He buttons his jacket.

With half of his shirttail untucked, he drags his feet between rows of cars.

INT. HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - NIGHT

Rooms with windows and glass sliding doors surround multiple nurses' stations. Some rooms with curtains drawn. NURSES pace the floor.

NURSE ISABEL STONE (45), a saint in scrubs, look closely and you might catch her halo, limps up to a station, places a tablet on a counter.

Behind the counter, NURSE TRICHA EDWARDS (40), hair in a bun, petite, decked out in a uniform pantsuit, taps a desktop computer keyboard.

As Colton shambles across the floor, his visitor badge drops on the floor.

NURSE ISABEL (O.S.)

Sir.

At a sliding glass door with a "7" posted on the wall above a door sensor, Colton turns.

As Nurse Isabel picks up Colton's visitor badge, she grimaces, grabs her leg.

NURSE ISABEL

Lost your badge.

A pause as she stares at the badge.

COLTON
How's your leg?

NURSE ISABEL
Still attached.

She hands him the badge.

He nods, clips it onto his shirt.

COLTON
I'm truly sorry.

He waves a hand over the sensor. The glass door opens.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

In a driveway, the taxi stops behind a crew cab truck.

Liam exits.

The taxi backs out the driveway.

INT. HOUSE - ENTRYWAY - NIGHT

A key in a lock.

The front door opens.

Liam enters.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Liam paces past the pink door, pauses, backtracks, pushes the door open.

KID'S ROOM

A shaft of light expands across the floor, illuminates Zoe. Next to the bed, on her knees, she tucks in the teddy bear.

She turns, smiles at Liam.

ZOE (O.S.)
Grandpa.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Liam whips around.

ZOE
Is Bear okay?

Frozen, he gapes at Zoe.

ZOE
Is he sleeping?

A slight nod as he thaws.

ZOE
Okay. Can you leave the door open a
bit. Bear likes that.

She rushes away.

ZOE
Night, Grandpa.

He turns, stares at the stuffed toy all tucked in, paws and head visible.

He shakes his head, leaves the pink door ajar.

GUEST ROOM

Liam switches on a table lamp, slumps onto a bed, dry washes his face with both hands.

On a side table, a framed photo of Liam and EVELIEN HUNTER (60), long silver grey hair, red dress. A yellow smiley-face card sits beside the framed photo.

He kicks a backpack out of the way, pulls out a side table drawer, picks up a notepad and a pen, dumps them in the backpack, zips it shut.

He stands, wriggles out of his jacket, drops it on the bed.

A tie lands on top of the jacket.

GUEST BATHROOM

A shower runs behind obscured glass.

GUEST ROOM

In street clothes, Liam reaches under the bed, grabs a gun safe chained to the frame of the bed.

He punches a code on a keypad, opens it, picks up a gun, closes the safe, slides it under the bed.

KITCHEN

Next to a table, Liam pours coffee into a white cup with pink inscriptions, "Best Grandpa Ever."

He gulps, upends the cup on a plate, grabs the coffee pot, fills a thermos.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

At the front door, with the backpack over one shoulder, Liam keys the lock, tugs on a door handle.

INT. CREW CAB TRUCK - PARKED - DAY

The backpack lands in the passenger seat.

Liam slides in behind the steering wheel, slams the door shut, keys the ignition. Engine turns over and catches.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

The crew cab truck backs down the driveway, comes to a stop in the middle of the street.

INT. CREW CAB TRUCK - STOPPED - DAY

With firm grips on the wheel, Liam fills his lungs with air.

Through the windshield, he gazes at an orange and yellow glow on the horizon.

Behind him, a horn blares. High beams flash.

Liam jerks, whips his head at the rear view mirror, tromps the gas pedal.

EXT. HOUSE - STREET - DAY

The crew cab truck roars away.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL STREET - DAY

The crew cab truck blows a stop sign.

INT. HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

In bed, next to Angelina, Zoe yawns, rubs her eyes.

ZOE
(whispers)
Mommy, are you sleeping?

A low hum from Angelina.

Zoe flips the bed cover.

KID'S ROOM

As the door opens, a slice of light cuts through darkness, brightens the teddy bear all tucked in on the bed.

ZOE
(whispers)
Bear, are you sleeping?

In the doorway, Zoe nods, leaves the pink door ajar.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

With one hand on the banister, Zoe descends the stairs.

EXT. HOUSE - STREET - DAY

Sun bleeds through clouds.

A truck with a road sign trailer pulls up to a curb. Cones, barricades and equipment crowd the cargo bed. A Los Angeles city logo on the door reads, "Bureau of Street Services."

In a safety vest and a hard hat, NOAH DIXON (45), scrawny, U-turn moustache, scruffy, elevated pant legs, slides out the driver side. A raspy cough as he slams the door shut.

SAMUEL WARD (50), round face, no neck, droopy abs, beefy arms, in a safety vest, slides out of the passenger side.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

At the window, on her knees, Zoe peers at Samuel and Noah.

EXT. HOUSE - STREET - DAY

Samuel puts on protective glasses, drops a hard hat on his head, slings two A-frame barricades over his shoulders.

Noah grabs a stack of orange cones.

A police car slows down, honks as it passes Noah and Samuel. Noah waves with the cones in his hands.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Zoe gets on her feet, presses the palms of her hands against the glass, catches a glimpse of the police car before it vanishes down the street.

EXT. HOUSE - STREET - DAY

Noah glances at the house. He raises an arm, waves.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Zoe waves at Noah.

EXT. HOSPITAL - MAIN ENTRANCE - DAY

With the backpack over one shoulder, Liam enters.

INT. HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - DAY

At the sliding glass door with the "7" posted on the wall, Nurse Tricha stands next to Liam.

He clips a badge onto his shirt.

She puts a hand on his shoulder.

NURSE TRICHA
Anything I can do, let me know.

He waves a hand over the wall mounted sensor.

The sliding glass door opens.

INT. HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

In bed, Angelina snores.

ZOE (O.S.)

Mommy.

With her eyes closed, Angelina mumbles.

ZOE

Bear feels a lot better. Thank you
doctor mommy.

ANGELINA

You're welcome, sweetie.

ZOE

What's sleepwalking?

Angelina grabs the phone off the nightstand, taps it.

ANGELINA

Early bird, huh?

ZOE

What kind of bird is that?

ANGELINA

It's a very nice bird.

Angelina props herself on one elbow, taps the mattress.

ANGELINA

Come here.

As Zoe sits, Angelina wraps an arm around her.

ANGELINA

Sleepwalking?

ZOE

Yeah.

ANGELINA

Why sleepwalking?

ZOE

You said I was sleepwalking, but
that's not true. I was walking, but
I wasn't sleeping.

Angelina lifts her eyebrows.

ANGELINA

Oh, right.

INT. HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Framed diplomas and awards on a wall. Books crowd shelves.

Behind a desk, in a lab coat, DOCTOR HENRY GRANT (55), lean and tall, clean shaven, wears glasses, eyes a medical spreadsheet on a computer monitor.

Next to Doctor Grant, Nurse Isabel taps a tablet.

NURSE ISABEL
Got it. Thank you.

DOCTOR GRANT
Appreciate it, John.

JOHN (V.O.)
(speaker)
Anytime, Henry.

Doctor Grant clicks off the speakerphone.

(O.S.) Knocks.

DOCTOR GRANT
Yes.

Liam peeks in.

DOCTOR GRANT
Come on in, Liam.

As Nurse Isabel limps past him, she smiles.

NURSE ISABEL
Good morning.

With a hand up, Liam nods, closes the door.

Doctor Grant rises from the chair, circles the desk.

They shake hands.

DOCTOR GRANT
Have a seat.

Liam drops the backpack on the floor beside the desk, sits across from Doctor Grant.

DOCTOR GRANT
Liam, I'm truly sorry. Please, let us know if there is anything we can do to help you during this very difficult time.

A notepad and a pen land on the desk.

DOCTOR GRANT
Any questions, let me know.

Liam scribbles, flips the notepad, "Sometimes she moves. Makes sounds. Eyes always closed."

DOCTOR GRANT
These are random reflexes, which do occur with patients in coma due to head injury.

Doctor Grant leans forward, folds his hands on the desk.

DOCTOR GRANT
Maia's unconscious. She's not awake and not aware of herself and what's going on around her.

Liam fidgets, rubs the armrests.

DOCTOR GRANT
We're looking for any signs of initial recovery, like open eyes and how she responds to simple physical stimulus and sounds.

A pen shoots ink onto the notepad, "Recovery? Prognosis?"

DOCTOR GRANT
It's too early to tell. We have to wait and see, but I expect to know more in a week or two.

Liam jots on the notepad, "How's she?"

DOCTOR GRANT
She's resting. No pain. We had some concerns about her heart condition and elevated blood pressure, but there's no damage to her heart and blood pressure is under control with medication.

Liam points to the side of his head.

DOCTOR GRANT
The bandage?

With his hand up, Liam nods.

DOCTOR GRANT
Protecting stitches from a fairly
deep gash.

Liam stands, steps up to a window.

A hand on Liam's shoulder.

DOCTOR GRANT
Keep in mind, the brain has a
remarkable way of repairing itself,
finding new pathways so to speak.

They lock eyes.

DOCTOR GRANT
Please, have a seat and I'll take
you through her test results. It
might clarify some of your concerns
and questions.

INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - ROOM7

Nurse Tricha closes curtains.

NURSE TRICHA
How are you doing, Maia? Ready for
your beauty treatment? We'll be
back in a couple of minutes.

The sliding door opens.

She exits.

INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - DOCTOR'S OFFICE

Doctor Grant taps the keyboard.

DOCTOR GRANT
It would be very helpful if you
could bring anything Maia would
recognize. A photo, music, perfume,
your recorded voice. This could
help trigger her senses and aid in
her recovery.

Liam zips the backpack shut, slings it over his shoulder.

DOCTOR GRANT
On a personal note. Taking care of
yourself when caring for a loved
one is very important.

Doctor Grant puts a hand on Liam's shoulder.

DOCTOR GRANT
Take breaks. Get sleep. You got my
number. Don't hesitate to get in
touch with me.

They shake hands.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

In a robe, armed with a pair of scissors and gloves, Angelina snips off red roses.

EXT. HOUSE - STREET - DAY

The jackhammer obliterates asphalt.

At an open manhole, with eyes glued on Angelina, Noah pauses, rubs his chin.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Angelina lays the bouquet of red roses on the counter.

On her toes, she opens a cabinet, grabs a red tinted vase in front of two bottles of booze.

She places the vase in the sink.

As she turns on the faucet, pipes burp.

She flips the faucet off and on, no water, sticks the red roses in the vase.

Her eyes close as she inhales the scent of the flowers.

INT. HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - ROOM7 - DAY

The heart monitor shows a regular beat.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

With her eyes closed, a soft smile on Angelina's face.

(O.S.) Taps on the window.

A tear escapes the corner of her eye.

(O.S.) Knocks on the window.

Her eyes burst open, whips her head at Noah.

NOAH

Ma'am. We had to shut off the
water. Should be back shortly.

She gawks at him.

NOAH

Water should be back shortly, okay?

With a hand up, she nods.

She sets the vase with the red roses on the table.

EXT. HOSPITAL - MAIN ENTRANCE - NIGHT

A moonlit sky.

Liam exits, stops, fills his lungs with air.

EXT. HOSPITAL - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Liam keys the car door lock.

INT. CREW CAB TRUCK - PARKED - NIGHT

The backpack flies across the driver seat, bumps against the
passenger seat door.

Liam keys the ignition.

EXT. CHURCH - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The crew cab truck stops next to a gate.

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

Liam trudges the grounds.

As he passes an illuminated church, he stops.

FLASHBACK - INT. CHURCH - DAY

Filled to capacity.

At the end of an aisle, Evelien in a wedding dress and Liam in a black tuxedo, hold hands in front of PASTOR ADAM (55).

PASTOR ADAM
You may now kiss the bride.

A smooch.

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT - PRESENT NIGHT

A lamp post throws a dim light over a gravestone, surrounded by flowers.

An engraved cross divides the gravestone in two halves. On the left half engraved, "Evelien Hunter, May 5, 1960 - April 2, 2020. Life was a gift." The right half, blank.

Liam kneels, folds his hands, lowers his head.

The lamp post flickers, lights out.

Moonlight paints a silhouette of a motionless Liam.

Unsteady on his feet, he stumbles up to the headstone, runs a hand on top of it.

He sidesteps the tombstone, down on one knee. One arm rests on his knee as he touches the ground.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

The crew cab truck pulls into the driveway.

INT. HOUSE - GUEST ROOM - NIGHT

Liam flicks on the table lamp, drops down on the bed.

MASTER BEDROOM

In bed, Angelina moans, throws her head from side to side, kicks her legs.

GUEST ROOM

Liam places his gun in the safe, locks it, slides it under the bed.

MASTER BEDROOM

Angelina flips the cover, swings her legs over the side of the bed, draws heavy breaths.

On her forearm, a tattoo of "two crossed arrows."

From the nightstand, she picks up a phone, taps it, "4:00am."

She places the phone on the nightstand, hunches into a robe.

GUEST ROOM

On the bed, Liam sits, touches the framed photo of Evelien and Liam, runs small circles around a rose gold ring with a single diamond on Evelien's left ring finger.

From his pant pocket, he pulls out the rose gold ring with a single diamond, rubs it as he stares at the framed photo.

He palms the ring.

Light knocks on the door.

ANGELINA (O.S.)

Dad.

He stuffs the ring back in his pocket.

ANGELINA (O.S.)

Dad. Can I come in?

Liam tightens the grip on the framed photo.

On the floor, Angelina crosses her legs.

ANGELINA

Play it, dad.

He raises his head.

ANGELINA

Please.

On the frame, he pushes a button.

LIAM (V.O.)

(recorded/speaker)

Your smile. A brief moment in time, but a memory of a lifetime. Thirty five years later, the memory of your first smile still warms my heart. Happy birthday. Love always.

ANGELINA
Beautiful. We all miss her. Always
in our hearts.

His eyes well up.

ANGELINA
Good to hear your voice, dad.

She sniffles.

ANGELINA
I'm making some hot tea. You want
to join me? Sip, talk and listen.

He places the framed photo on the side table.

ANGELINA
I still have a jar of your favorite
honey. Would do your throat good.

ZOE (O.S.)
Mommy.

In the doorway, Zoe rubs her eyes, dangles the cuddly bear in
one hand.

ZOE
I can't sleep.

ANGELINA
Did we wake you?

ZOE
Is grandpa okay?

ANGELINA
Yeah. Let's get you and Bear back
to bed.

Angelina grabs Zoe's hand.

ANGELINA
Dad, let me know if you want a tea
and honey conversation.

ZOE
Good night, grandpa.

KID'S ROOM

Angelina tucks in Zoe and the stuffed toy.

ZOE
Are we having breakfast with
grandpa tomorrow?

ANGELINA
Yes.

Zoe raises her arms.

ZOE
Yeah.

ANGELINA
Get some sleep.

Angelina places a good night kiss on Zoe's cheek and another
kiss on the stuffed animal's face.

ANGELINA
Bear smells a lot better.

Zoe smiles.

ANGELINA
Night, sweetie.

ZOE
Good night, mommy.

Angelina flicks off the table lamp, leaves.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Angelina leaves the pink door ajar.

Light knocks on a door.

ANGELINA
Dad. You still awake.

She puts an ear to the door, paces away.

GUEST ROOM

An empty bed.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Angelina descends the stairs.

KITCHEN

At the counter, water pours into a pot as Angelina gazes out the window.

The pot overflows.

She shakes her head, pours most of the water out.

A stove top burner ignites.

She places the pot on the burner, opens a refrigerator, picks up a jar of honey.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

The crew cab truck backs out the driveway.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

At the table, Angelina drops a spoonful of honey in a cup of tea, stirs.

She slips off the rose gold ring with a single diamond, peeks at the inside engraving, "a figure eight on its side," the infinity symbol, followed by the inscription, "Love."

She slips the ring back on her right ring finger, rubs it.

ANGELINA

Love you, mom.

KID'S ROOM

In bed, Zoe tosses and turns, kicks the bed cover off her body. Her eyes closed, lids twitch.

A slice of dim light expands, illuminates Zoe.

In the doorway, Evelien pauses.

Wrapped in a red dress, she shuffles toward the bed, sits next to Zoe.

Ashen-faced, Evelien stares at Zoe. Her eyes well up as she pulls the bed cover, tucks Zoe in.

EVELIEN

Listen to me, sweetie. You didn't do anything wrong. Not your fault. It was an accident.

Her hand rests on Zoe's shoulder.

EVELIEN

I know it's a very confusing time
for a little girl.

Zoe whimpers.

EVELIEN

You're not alone. You might not
always feel my presence, but I'm
always with you in spirit.

Evelien rubs Zoe's hand.

EVELIEN

Keep those dimples alive.
Everything will be okay.

A thin smile spreads on Evelien's face as she gently touches
Zoe's cheek.

EVELIEN

(voice cracks)

I love you so much. See you soon.

Evelien kisses Zoe on the cheek.

Zoe's eyes snap open.

ZOE

Grandma.

Zoe grabs the teddy bear, flips the cover, gets out of bed.

GUEST ROOM

At the side table, Evelien picks up the framed photo of her
in the red dress and Liam.

UPSTAIRS - HALLWAY

Zoe pushes the guest room door open, stares at the framed
photo of Evelien and Liam next to a yellow smiley-face card
on the side table.

ENTRYWAY

The front door closes.

KID'S ROOM

Zoe gets into bed, pulls the bed cover, tucks in the stuffed animal, stares at the ceiling with a slight smile.

ZOE
Grandma, you're my angel.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - NIGHT

The crew cab truck zips along a lake.

INT. CREW CAB TRUCK - MOVING - NIGHT

Liam blinks, fights to keep his eyes open.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - NIGHT

The crew cab truck drifts into the oncoming lane.

A horn blares. Headlights flash.

INT. CREW CAB TRUCK - MOVING - NIGHT

Liam's eyes pop open, bulge at two bright head lights.

He yanks the steering wheel to the right, catches a glimpse in slow motion of a GIRL (5) in a car seat as a dark colored SUV narrowly misses sideswiping his truck.

He tromps the brakes.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - NIGHT

Wheels lock as the crew cab truck skids to a stop.

Liam stumbles out, vomits.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

Sun peeks over mountain tops.

The crew cab truck winds its way up a hill.

A cabin at a distance.

INT. CREW CAB TRUCK - MOVING - DAY

Liam tightens his eyebrows as he peers through the windshield as smoke rises from the cabin's chimney.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

The crew cab truck comes to a stop.

Liam slides out, slings the backpack over his shoulder.

INT. CABIN - DAY

A door opens, Liam enters with eyes locked on an empty fireplace. On the mantel, a smiley-face card.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Liam stares at the chimney.

No smoke.

INT. CABIN - DAY

On a side table, next to a rocking chair, a stack of compact discs and a couple of cassette tapes.

Liam drops into the rocking chair, lifts a pink boombox onto his lap.

He inserts a cassette tape, hits play, runs a finger over a chipped corner of the pink boombox.

YOUNG MAIA (V.O.)

(recorded)

Say something, dad. I'm recording.

LIAM (V.O.)

(recorded)

Okay, happy birthday, Maia. Seven years old today. You're growing up too fast.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

The pink boombox sticks out from the backpack as Liam saunters toward the crew cab truck.

As he opens the truck door, he pauses, looks over his shoulder, shrugs, gets in.

INT. CABIN - DAY

The rocking chair moves. The smiley-face card sits on the side table.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Smoke rises from the chimney as the crew cab truck disappears down a hill on the dirt road.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Palm trees line the shore. Fog lifts. Seagulls screech. Waves crush rocks. Distant rumble of surf. A few BENCH WARMERS. PEOPLE walk.

Parked on a bench, Colton touches a tattoo of "two crossed arrows" on his forearm. A styrofoam cup next to him.

NURSE ISABEL (O.S.)

Colton.

He rolls down the sleeve, buttons the shirt.

NURSE ISABEL (O.S.)

Colton.

COLTON

Oh, hi. Morning.

NURSE ISABEL

You mind if I join you?

COLTON

Please.

She puts a styrofoam cup and a purse on the bench, opens a brown bag.

NURSE ISABEL

Want some?

COLTON

No, thanks.

NURSE ISABEL

Friendship, huh?

COLTON

What?

NURSE ISABEL

Your tattoo.

COLTON

Oh, yeah.

She bites into a muffin, flushes it down with coffee.

COLTON

Thanks for everything you're doing for Maia. It feels good to know she's in great care.

He rubs the cup.

NURSE ISABEL

Thank you for saying that.

COLTON

If you don't mind me asking, but how do you cope with your job?

NURSE ISABEL

Listening to the waves. Smelling the ocean. Sipping coffee. It relaxes me before I go to work.

A seagull lands next to them.

NURSE ISABEL

My job is a taste of heaven and hell. Like a roller coaster ride. Don't get me wrong, I love coasters. Most days they stay on the tracks, but some days I feel like they go airborne.

She crumbles the brown bag, tosses it in the trash can.

NURSE ISABEL

Ever since my son was killed in a car accident, I struggled to accept he was gone. Didn't visit him for quite awhile.

He eyes her.

NURSE ISABEL

Acceptance became an integral part of my daily work routines and healing in my personal life. I saw him the other day.

She drains the cup, drops it in the trash can.

NURSE ISABEL

Work is calling. Take care.

COLTON

Thanks for the talk.

As she hobbles down the boardwalk, he stands.

COLTON (O.S.)

You smelling the ocean tomorrow?

She gives a thumb up.

INT. HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Zoe tugs Angelina's shoulder.

ZOE

(whispers)

Mommy. Wake up.

One eye opens, squints at Zoe.

ZOE

(whispers)

We made breakfast. Your favorite, coffee and toast.

ANGELINA

Thanks. Why are you whispering?

ZOE

Bear is sleeping. He's tired.

ANGELINA

Where's Bear?

ZOE

My room.

Angelina rubs her eyes, cups Zoe's face with both hands, kisses her nose.

Zoe giggles.

ZOE

Hurry up.

ANGELINA

I'll be down in a few seconds.

As Zoe leaves, Angelina slips into a robe.

MASTER BATHROOM

Angelina splashes water on her face.

With both hands on a vanity, she gazes into a mirror. Water drips from her face.

She grabs a towel.

MASTER BEDROOM

At a dresser, Angelina pulls her hair in a pony tail.

KITCHEN

On the counter, coffee brews.

At the table, Zoe pours cereal into a black bowl with gold rim. Half of the cereal lands on the table.

Next to Zoe, tableware in black with a gold rim, toast and butter on a plate. Steam rises from a cup.

As Angelina paces past Zoe, she eyes the brewing coffee maker, raises an eyebrow.

Zoe scoops up the cereal on the table, loads it in her mouth.

ZOE

Can I have some milk?

ANGELINA

No talking with food in your mouth.

Milk flows into the cereal bowl.

Zoe points to a glass.

As Angelina pours milk into the glass, Zoe shovels a spoonful of cereal in her mouth.

Angelina stares at the overturned cup on a plate on the other side of the table next to a thermos.

ANGELINA
Where's grandpa?

Zoe puts a hand up, points to her mouth, chews.

ANGELINA
Didn't you and grandpa make
breakfast?

Zoe shakes her head, swallows.

ZOE
Dad's friend helped me.

ANGELINA
Dad's friend?

(O.S.) A door slams shut.

ENTRYWAY

Liam leans the backpack with the pink boombox against a wall.

KITCHEN

A newspaper lands on the table.

ANGELINA
Morning, dad.

ZOE
Hi, grandpa.

Liam sits, opens the thermos.

ANGELINA
Freshly brewed coffee in the pot.

He puts a hand up, flips the cup with pink inscriptions,
"Best Grandpa Ever," pours coffee from the thermos.

Angelina shrugs, butters the toast.

Liam buries himself behind the newspaper.

ANGELINA
Who set the table?

Zoe puts a hand up, points to her mouth, swallows.

ZOE
I did.

Angelina lifts an eyebrow.

ZOE
Mommy, you said we can use
grandma's cups and plates for a
special ...

Zoe eyes Angelina.

ANGELINA
... Occasion.

Her dimples come to life as she beams at Liam.

ZOE
Yeah, today's special. We're having
breakfast with grandpa.

Liam puts the paper down, cracks a thin smile, sips coffee.

ZOE
It would be double special if dad
was here.

Angelina rakes her hand through Zoe's hair.

ANGELINA
I know, sweetie.

ZOE
(whispers)
Why doesn't grandpa like grandma's
cups and plates?

ANGELINA
He does, but he really likes your
birthday gift.

Zoe gulps milk, gasps for air as she puts the empty glass on
the table.

ZOE
I finished my milk. Can I go and
see if Bear is awake?

As Angelina picks up a napkin, Zoe wipes her milk moustache
with the back of her hand.

With the napkin, Angelina wipes Zoe's hand.

ANGELINA
Give Bear a hug from me.

ZOE

A hug from you too, grandpa?

Liam straightens the newspaper.

Zoe leaves.

Angelina leans back, crosses her arms, expels a long breath.

ANGELINA

Dad, you could at least acknowledge her presence.

Liam flips a page.

ANGELINA

Sorry about mom's china. I know it's too soon, but Zoe was just trying to do something nice. I'll make sure the cabinet is locked.

Angelina leans forward, sips coffee.

ANGELINA

Dad, please put down the paper.

A folded newspaper drops on the table.

ANGELINA

How's your throat?

Liam gulps coffee.

ANGELINA

Loading up on caffeine isn't what the doctor ordered. Remember?

Liam cradles the cup.

ANGELINA

What's going on? What is it, dad? Write me something. I feel we're drifting apart. We're not communicating anymore.

As he upends the cup on the plate, his hand quivers.

ANGELINA

Mom's passing has been tough for all of us, but we're still a family, aren't we?

Angelina stands, picks up the black and gold china, places it in the sink, turns on the water.

ANGELINA
 If you need a shoulder to lean on,
 talk, a hug, anything. I'm here for
 you. Okay?

Liam paces toward the doorway.

ANGELINA
 Love you, dad.

Liam grabs the door frame, turns, stares at Angelina, leaves.

Angelina washes a black cup with gold rim, places it in a
 dish rack on the counter.

Zoe enters, eyes Liam's overturned cup on the plate.

ZOE
 You forgot grandpa's cup.

ANGELINA
 Just leave it. He wants to clean
 his own cup.

ZOE
 Why?

ANGELINA
 Don't know.

ZOE
 He's a mule.

ANGELINA
 You mean, he's stubborn as a mule.

ZOE
 Yeah, a stubborn mule.

Zoe leaves.

EXT. HOUSE - STREET - DAY

The jackhammer pounds the asphalt.

At the truck, Noah picks up tools from the bed, pauses,
 glances at the house.

Samuel shuts off the jackhammer, takes a deep breath, lifts
 the helmet, wipes beads of sweat from his face.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Angelina dries a black cup with gold rim.

(O.S.) Zoe giggles.

ANGELINA
Sweetie, what's going on?

Zoe sticks her head out into the doorway.

ZOE
Dad's friend is being funny.

Angelina pauses.

ANGELINA
Dad's friend? What's his name?

ZOE
Just dad's friend.

(O.S.) Raspy coughs.

ZOE (O.S.)
Are you okay?

ANGELINA
Does he know grandpa?

Zoe leaps into the doorway.

ZOE
No.

With a smile, Angelina picks up a bowl from the dish rack.

ANGELINA
Can I meet dad's friend?

ZOE
His break is over. He has to go
back to work.

ANGELINA
What kind of work does he do?

ZOE
He drives a truck and fixes roads.

Angelina peers out the window, eyes Samuel leaned against the truck. She leans forward, scans the street.

(O.S.) Laughters.

ZOE (O.S.)
Dad's friend gave me an early bear
hug for my birthday.

Angelina places the bowl on the counter, picks up a black
plate with gold rim.

ANGELINA
That's nice.

Zoe leaps into the doorway, holds the stuffed animal above
her head.

ZOE
Mommy, you didn't get it. Bear. He
gave me a bear hug.

Angelina smiles.

ANGELINA
Why don't you invite him for your
birthday next week.

ZOE
He can't.

ANGELINA
How come?

ZOE
He'll be at the cemetery next week.
Six feet under.

Angelina whips her eyes at Zoe.

ANGELINA
What?

In the doorway, Zoe wets her lips, swallows hard.

ZOE
Dad killed him.

The black plate wobbles on the counter.

Angelina's face twitches.

ANGELINA
Go to your room.

ZOE
But, it was an --

ANGELINA

Go to your room and close the door.

Angelina jams the black plate in the dish rack.

ANGELINA

Zoe. Now.

ENTRYWAY

Zoe tramps up the stairs.

ANGELINA (O.S.)

Close the door.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Zoe opens the pink door, pauses, slams it shut, tip toes back to top of the stairs, drops to her butt.

KITCHEN

Angelina's eyes bulge at the doorway.

ANGELINA

What the hell was that, dad?

Her lips quiver.

ANGELINA

Feeding your granddaughter that garbage. Why?

She trembles.

ANGELINA

Get in here.

Her chest heaves as she glares at the doorway.

She yanks open a drawer, grabs a notepad and a pen.

ANGELINA

I talk, you listen. You write, I read. Okay?

She slams the notepad and the pen on the table.

ANGELINA

I said. Get in here.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Zoe clutches the cuddly bear.

KITCHEN

With a swift motion, Angelina snatches a black plate with gold rim from the dish rack.

The plate shatters on the floor.

ANGELINA

Now.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Zoe leaves.

KITCHEN

Angelina whips her head, catches a glimpse of Liam through the window.

(O.S.) A door slams shut.

Unsteady, she grabs the edge of the counter with one hand, eyes Liam as he paces past the doorway.

Her knees give in, hits the floor, buries her face in her hands, sobs.

GUEST BATHROOM

At a vanity, Liam covers his face with shaving gel.

EVELIEN (V.O.)

Let it go, Liam. Nothing you could've done.

He runs a shaver down his cheek, stares into a mirror.

EVELIEN (V.O.)

Don't be a hero. Some things in life are not fixable.

With both hands, he grips the edge of the vanity, lowers his head, closes his eyes.

EVELIEN (V.O.)
 Gilt will rip you apart and I'm not
 sure I'm ready to share my space
 with you yet.

As he coughs, a swirl of blood and shaving foam drain down
 the sink.

EVELIEN (V.O.)
 (yells)
 Are you listening?

He snaps his head up, gawks at a reflection of Evelien.

As he spins, foam and blood fly through the air.

At the doorway, Angelina taps her chin with a finger.

ANGELINA
 You nicked yourself.

Wide eyes on her.

ANGELINA
 You okay?

He raises a hand, turns, peers at his own reflection.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

At the pink door, Angelina grabs the door handle, inhales.

KID'S ROOM

Knocks on the door.

In bed, Zoe pulls the bed cover over her face.

ANGELINA (O.S.)
 Can I come in?

ZOE
 (muffled)
 Okay.

The door opens.

ANGELINA
 Hello, is anybody in here?

The bed cover moves.

ZOE
(muffled)
Dad's friend says he's very, very
sorry for what he said.

Angelina pulls the bed cover off Zoe.

ANGELINA
Okay.

They hug.

GUEST ROOM

Liam holsters his gun, closes the gun safe.

As he slings the backpack over one shoulder, he pauses, picks up the yellow smiley-face card, rubs it, puts it back on the side table, leaves.

KID'S ROOM

Angelina and Zoe sit on the bed, side by side.

ANGELINA
Sweetie, do you think dad's friend
is a little sad? Maybe angry cause
he misses his family?

Zoe squeezes the stuffed toy to her chest, nods.

ANGELINA
Maybe he's a little bit lonely too.

Zoe's face lights up.

ZOE
No, cause he got me and Bear.

Angelina kisses Zoe's forehead.

ANGELINA
Is he nice to you and Bear?

ZOE
Very nice and funny. He's like a
friendly ghost.

Angelina raises an eyebrow.

ANGELINA
Why don't you let him know that
we're his family too, okay?

Zoe smiles, nods.

ANGELINA
You want to invite him for
breakfast tomorrow?

They exchange a stare.

ANGELINA
Would be nice to meet him.

ZOE
Okay.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

The crew cab truck backs down the driveway, bounces off a curb onto the street, leaps forward.

EXT. HOUSE - STREET - DAY

Orange cones flop around as the crew cab truck zips away. Samuel extends a middle finger, yells.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

In front of a cabinet, Angelina sets the black and gold rim china on the floor, pulls on a bottom door handle. Locked.

She pulls out a drawer, pushes papers aside, picks up a key, unlocks the bottom door.

On her knees, she places the china next to other dinnerware, locks the door, tugs on the handle.

She gets on her toes, drops the key on top of the cabinet.

KITCHEN

On the table, withered red roses in the red tinted vase with no water.

Angelina's eyes locked onto the laptop screen, "Children and imaginary friends."

ZOE (O.S.)
 Mommy, can I write grandpa a card
 so he can feel better.

ANGELINA
 Sure.

ZOE
 Is it okay if I ask him to give
 Bear a bath?

ANGELINA
 He'd like that.

FAMILY ROOM

Zoe hurries in, squats next to the bookcase, pulls out a
 drawer, grabs an orange smiley-face card and a pen.

KITCHEN

Angelina taps the laptop keyboard.

ANGELINA
 You want me to help you?

ZOE (O.S.)
 Dad's friend is helping me.

She lifts her head as Zoe darts past a doorway.

ANGELINA
 What card did you pick?

Zoe sticks her head out in the doorway, flashes a big smile
 with the orange smiley-face card in one hand.

Angelina nods.

With elbows on the table, Angelina rests her chin on
 interlaced fingers. She clears her throat, scans the room,
 taps the laptop keyboard, "What if your child's imaginary
 friend is actually a ghost."

EXT. PHOTO STORE - DAY

Liam exits, pauses, pulls a silver photo frame from a bag.
 His eyes blink.

INT. CREW CAB TRUCK - PARKED - DAY

Liam gets in behind the wheel, places the bag on the passenger seat, next to the backpack with the pink boombox.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Angelina puts the laptop on the table, rubs her eyes.

GUEST ROOM

Two smiley-face cards sit on the side table. One yellow, the other orange.

Angelina picks up the yellow card, sits on the bed.

ZOE (V.O.)

(reads card)

Hi, grandpa. Hope you're feeling better soon. I have lots of stories to tell you and many hugs to give you. P.S. Please, give Bear a bath. Love, Zoe.

A smile on her face as she gently rubs the scribbled signature at the bottom, "Love Zoe."

She grabs the orange card, opens it.

Her jaw goes slack.

Her hand trembles as she runs a finger over perfect handwriting, touches the scrawled signature at the bottom, "Love Zoe."

On her lap, side by side, her eyes dart between the cards.

Different handwriting. Identical words. Same signature.

EXT. HOSPITAL - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

A starlit sky.

Liam opens the driver side door.

The backpack lands on the passenger seat.

He gets in behind the steering wheel, closes the door.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL STREET - NIGHT

The Crew cab truck hits a speed bump hard, blows a stop sign.
Cars honk.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

High beams flood the garage door as the crew cab truck rolls
up the driveway.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

At the counter, Angelina rinses a plate.

Red and blue lights reflect off the window.

She leans over the counter, peers through the window, shakes
her head.

Zoe dashes in.

ZOE

Dad and grandpa are home.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

With flashers on, a police car comes to a stop behind the
crew cab truck. The flashers go off.

INT. HOUSE - ENTRYWAY - NIGHT

With Zoe in tow, Angelina opens the front door, peeks out,
eyes the back of a POLICE OFFICER next to the crew cab truck.

ANGELINA

Sweetie, It's not dad.

ZOE

But --

ANGELINA

Stay here.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

The Police Officer fills out a ticket pad, hands the ticket
to Liam.

ANGELINA (O.S.)
Is everything okay, dad?

Behind Angelina, Zoe sticks her head out as the police car backs out the driveway.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Angelina leans against the counter, her hands on Zoe's shoulders.

Liam stomps in, slams the ticket on the table.

ANGELINA
What happened?

As he leaves, Angelina picks up the ticket.

ZOE
What is it?

ANGELINA
Grandpa has a lead foot.

ZOE
A what foot?

ANGELINA
He was speeding. Driving too fast.

Angelina lays the ticket on the counter.

GUEST ROOM

On the bed, Liam sits with the gun in one hand, head down.

ZOE (O.S.)
Grandpa. Are you okay?

He jerks, covers the gun with both hands, nods.

In the doorway, Zoe dangles the teddy bear in one hand.

ZOE
Mommy said I shouldn't disturb you
because you need your alone time,
but I wanted to tell you that I
wrote you a card so you can feel a
lot better.

He eyes the yellow smiley-face card on the side table.

ANGELINA (O.S.)
Zoe. Bedtime.

ZOE
Oh, grandpa. P.S., means pinky
swear, okay.

She wiggles her pinky.

ZOE
Good night, grandpa.

As footsteps fade, he rubs his eyes, wiggles his pinky.

He reaches under the bed, grabs the gun safe, punches the
code on a keypad, opens it.

He pauses, rubs the gun, places it in the safe, locks it,
slides it under the bed.

He pulls the digital recorder from a dark suit pocket, drops
it in the backpack, picks up the yellow smiley-face card.

His hands shake as he opens it.

Lips move, MOS.

ZOE (O.S.)
Grandpa.

He lifts his head.

ZOE
I wanted to tell you that I asked
mommy if it was okay to ask you to
give Bear a bath. Mommy said it was
okay and you would be very happy,
so I wrote that on the card.

ANGELINA (O.S.)
Zoe, where are you?

ZOE
Love you, Grandpa.

She leaves.

KITCHEN

Liam scoops up the pink-slip from the table, crumbles it.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

The crew cab truck backs out the driveway.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Sun struggles to penetrate dark clouds. Waves lap rocks. Seagulls and pigeons screech their morning concerts.

On a bench, Nurse Isabel and Colton converse.

NURSE ISABEL

No words need to be spoken. Your presence gives Liam support and Maia comfort. That's what matters.

A crushed brown bag lies next to her. She cradles a cup.

He pulls a phone from his pocket, taps it, scrolls photos, hands her the phone.

COLTON

One of my favorites. Zoe and Liam.

She looks at a photo of Liam with his arms around Zoe and the teddy bear.

NURSE ISABEL

Adorable.

She hands the phone back to Colton.

NURSE ISABEL

A grandfather that needs support and a beautiful girl ... who needs her dad.

As she sips, he eyes her.

EXT. HOUSE - STREET - DAY

Birds shred from trees as Samuel fires up the jackhammer.

INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

A robe flaps over a nightshirt as Angelina paces the floor. At top of the stairs, she ties the robe, yawns.

(O.S.) Voices. Giggles.

She pauses, grabs the banister, descends the stairs.

ANGELINA
Sweetie, what's going on?

KITCHEN

Angelina enters

At the table, the stuffed toy sits on a chair next to Zoe.

On the table, three settings of china, black with gold rim, Liam's overturned cup on a plate and droopy red roses in the red tinted vase with no water.

Toast on a black plate with gold rim. A thermos next to it.

ZOE
Dad's friend couldn't stay for
breakfast. He had to work.

Angelina sits beside Zoe, stares at the china.

ZOE
Bear got his own chair.

ANGELINA
Where's grandpa?

ZOE
Grandpa left already.

Angelina picks up the thermos, shakes it.

ZOE
Coffee for you.

Coffee pours into a black cup with gold rim.

ANGELINA
Sweetie, why are we using grandma's
cups and plates?

ZOE
You said dad's friend is like
family. He's special.

Angelina gives a slight nod.

ANGELINA
Did you set the table?

ZOE
Yeah.

ANGELINA
Can you show me how you picked up
grandma's china?

ZOE
China?

Angelina points to the black cup with gold rim.

ANGELINA
Grandma's cups and plates.

LIVING ROOM

At the cabinet, Zoe pulls out the drawer, shuffles papers,
picks up the key, unlocks the bottom cabinet door.

ANGELINA
I didn't put the key in the drawer.
Who did?

ZOE
I don't know.

ANGELINA
Who told you about the key?

ZOE
Grandma.

ANGELINA
Grandma told you?

Zoe nods.

ANGELINA
Grandma is in heaven. She doesn't
know where the key is.

Zoe looks down, rubs her hands together.

Angelina kneels, holds Zoe's hands.

ANGELINA
Listen. You know what --

Zoe wrestles free of Angelina's grip, leaps to her feet.

ZOE
I'm not lying.

They exchange stares.

ZOE

Bear is all by himself.

ANGELINA

Okay, why don't you go and keep
Bear company. I'll be there in a
couple of minutes.

As Zoe leaves, Angelina gets on her toes, swipes the top of
the cabinet.

Only dust in the palm of her hand.

On her knees, Angelina dry washes her face, blank eyes at the
open cabinet door.

EXT. FLOWER STORE - DAY

Liam exits with flowers and a candle in a glass jar.

EXT. JAVA JOLT COFFEE BAR - DAY

At a corner of a city intersection, on a sidewalk, Liam
stops, eyes a sea of flowers and lit candles in glass jars
against a chipped wall. Windows boarded up.

With one knee on the ground, he places the bouquet of flowers
against the wall, lights the candle in the glass jar, sticks
it next to the bouquet of flowers.

He folds his hands on his knee, lowers his head, squeezes his
eyes shut.

Motionless for a few seconds.

(O.S.) Horn blares. Screams. Tires screech.

He whirls around.

A black SUV slams the street upside down. Windows explode.
Metal pieces and glass propel through the air as the black
SUV tumbles toward him.

He leaps to his feet, dives, rolls on the sidewalk, whips his
head up, gapes at a three car crash in the street. DRIVERS
get out, shout, gesticulate, point fingers. No black SUV.

On his behind, elbows on his knees, he takes deep breaths.

INT. HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - DAY

On the floor, with her back against the lazy chair, Angelina brushes Zoe's curls. The teddy bear relaxes beside them.

With glazed eyes, Angelina drops the brush, pauses, strokes Zoe's hair.

Zoe grabs the teddy bear.

ZOE
Mommy, is Maia dying?

ANGELINA
What?

ZOE
Grandpa spends a lot of time at the hospital. Is Maia okay?

ANGELINA
We talked about this, Zoe. And who's Maia?

Zoe hugs the cuddly bear.

ZOE
Grandpa's daughter.

Angelina yanks on Zoe's hair, pulls it into a ponytail, slaps on a hair band.

ZOE
That hurts.

ANGELINA
Turn around.

Face to face with Angelina, Zoe squeezes the care bear.

ANGELINA
If grandpa had a daughter named Maia, she would be my sister and your aunt. Do you understand?

Zoe nods.

ANGELINA
Do I have a sister?

Zoe shakes her head.

ANGELINA
Do you have an aunt named Maia?

ZOE

No.

ANGELINA

Where is this coming from?

Big eyes on Angelina.

ANGELINA

Zoe, what's going on?

Zoe's lips move, MOS.

ANGELINA

Did anyone tell you?

With a slight nod, Zoe lowers her head.

ANGELINA

Who?

Restless, Zoe fidgets.

ANGELINA

Zoe, who told you?

ZOE

You did, mommy.

They hold each others eyes.

INT. HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - ROOM7 - DAY

Dim lights.

With a purse over her shoulder, Angelina steps up to a bed.

Surrounded by medical equipment, in bed with her eyes closed, MAIA HUNTER (30), a carbon copy of Angelina except blonde hair and a side shaved bandaged head. Intravenous in her arm.

Angelina's eyes land on the pink boombox and a silver framed photo of Maia and Liam on a side table. Headphones and the digital recorder next to the silver framed photo.

As Angelina circles the bed, she eyes the heart monitor at regular beats.

From the side table, she picks up the silver framed photo of Maia and Liam.

A single tear carves its way down her cheek, free-falls off her chin onto the glass of the silver framed photo.

She wipes the glass, places the photo back on the side table.

She palms her mouth, stares at the pink boombox with the chipped corner.

As Maia grunts, Angelina snaps her head back at her.

She pulls a chair closer to the bed, sits.

ANGELINA
(whispers)
Maia.

Angelina clears her throat.

ANGELINA
Maia, can you hear me?

Maia's eyes flutter open, stares at the ceiling.

ANGELINA
Maia.

With a nervous smile, Angelina squeezes Maia's hand.

ANGELINA
You feel me?

Maia jerks her arm back, turns on her side, exposes the rose gold ring with a single diamond on her right ring finger.

Slack jawed, Angelina rubs her empty right ring finger, gawks at Maia.

Maia closes her eyes.

Nervous fingers slip off the ring.

Angelina gapes at the inside of the ring's engraved inscriptions, "a figure eight on its side," followed by the word, "Love."

She clamps a hand to her mouth, utters a muffled yelp.

Her eyes well up as she slips the ring back on Maia's right ring finger.

NURSE ISABEL (O.S.)
A beautiful ring.

Angelina spins, leaps from the chair.

NURSE ISABEL
 Sorry, didn't mean to startle you.
 I'm Isabel, one of Maia's nurses.

Hesitant, Angelina shakes hands with Nurse Isabel.

NURSE ISABEL
 Someone must've slipped the ring on
 her finger. I'll take care of that.
 No jewelry policy.

A slight nod from Angelina.

NURSE ISABEL
 You family?

ANGELINA
 Yeah.

NURSE ISABEL
 We need to see a visitor badge at
 all times.

ANGELINA
 Sorry, I'll get one.

Angelina hurries toward the sliding door.

NURSE ISABEL (O.S.)
 Forgot your purse.

Nurse Isabel hands her the purse.

NURSE ISABEL
 I'll see you soon.

EXT. HOSPITAL - MAIN ENTRANCE - DAY

Angelina and Zoe exit.

In hoodie and boots, with the care bear tucked under one arm
 and the other hand locked in Angelina's hand, Zoe catches a
 glimpse of Liam.

ZOE
 Mommy.

ANGELINA
 Not now. We need to get home.

INT. HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - ROOM7 - DAY

On her back in bed, Maia rests, eyes closed.

Liam picks up the headphones and the digital recorder. His hands shake as he slips the headphones on her head.

In the chair, he pushes a button on the digital recorder. His eyes glued on her.

Restless, she whimpers. Her eyes flutter open.

He leans forward.

Their hands touch.

EXT. HOSPITAL - PARKING LOT - DAY

Angelina pushes a car key fob.

ANGELINA

Where did I park?

ZOE

Mommy, you didn't drive.

INT. HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - ROOM7 - DAY

The sliding door opens.

Doctor Grant enters. Nurse Tricha follows with a tablet in her hand.

DOCTOR GRANT

Good Morning, Maia. I'm doctor Grant. How are you doing?

Doctor Grant sits on the bed, holds her hand, rubs her arm.

DOCTOR GRANT

Your dad told us you opened your eyes this morning, listening to his voice.

Maia, on her back, her eyes closed, motionless.

As Doctor Grant pinches Maia's arm, her eyes flutter open.

DOCTOR GRANT

Good morning. Sorry, for the uncomfortable wake-up call.

Doctor Grant gestures toward Nurse Tricha.

NURSE TRICHA

Maia, can you hear me? I'm Tricha,
one of the nurses taking care of
you. Can you hear me?

Maia with lifeless eyes at the ceiling.

(O.S.) Hands clap.

Not a single twitch on Maia's face.

Regular heart beat.

DOCTOR GRANT

Can you follow my hand?

He moves his hand from side to side. Maia, unresponsive.

Doctor Grant clicks on a pen light, shines it in Maia's eye.
She whimpers, face twitches. She turns on her side, closes
her eyes.

Doctor Grant nods at Nurse Tricha, rubs Maia's shoulder.

DOCTOR GRANT

Very good, Maia.

Nurse Tricha taps the tablet.

DOCTOR GRANT

Let's schedule her for an MRI. I
want to get a read on the oxygen
level and her neural activity.

INT. HOUSE - ENTRYWAY - DAY

Zoe enters. Angelina follows.

ANGELINA

Why don't you go and play in the
family room.

Zoe stares at Angelina, struggles to pull back the hood.

Angelina wiggles out of her coat, kicks off her boots.

As Angelina sprints up the stairs, Zoe picks up the stuffed
toy, steps away in hoodie and boots.

MASTER BEDROOM

At the dresser, Angelina grabs a jewelry box, flips it open.

She stares at an empty box.

A flashlight beam prowls under the dresser.

With her phone in flashlight mode, on her stomach, she points the phone under the nightstand.

ZOE (O.S.)
Mommy, what are you looking for?

ANGELINA
Nothing, sweetie.

ZOE (O.S.)
But, if it's nothing, why do you
keep looking?

Angelina leans against the bed, taps off the flashlight,
turns to Zoe.

ANGELINA
Come here.

Angelina unties Zoe's hoodie, pulls it back.

ANGELINA
I'm sorry.

She drops the hoodie on the floor, removes Zoe's boots.

ANGELINA
Cute sweater.

ZOE
Bear's favorite.

Angelina runs a hand through Zoe's hair.

ZOE
Mommy, what's that drawing you have
on your arm?

ANGELINA
Drawing?

Zoe pulls up Angelina's sleeve, touches the tattoo of "two
crossed arrows" on her forearm.

ANGELINA
Oh, that's called a tattoo.

ZOE

Why do you have a tattatoo?

ANGELINA

A tattoo. Dad and I wanted to get matching tattoos before getting married. To show our friendship and love for each other.

Angelina touches her tattoo.

ANGELINA

Two crossed arrows means friendship. Friends forever.

ZOE

Are you and dad still friends?

ANGELINA

Of course we are.

ZOE

Can I get one?

ANGELINA

Not until you get older.

ZOE

How much older?

ANGELINA

Much, much older.

KID'S ROOM

With her back to the mirror, Zoe kneels next to the bed, puts the teddy bear on its back.

A red marker lies beside the stuffed toy.

Behind Zoe, reflected in the mirror, a hand pulls a knife from a sheath.

ZOE

You know what a tattoo is, Bear?

She moves the stuffed animal from side to side.

ZOE

It's like a drawing on your arm so we all can be friends forever.

She bobs the cuddly bear's head, rolls up its sweater sleeve, rubs its tummy.

ZOE

Don't be afraid, Bear. I promise to be careful.

With the red marker in her hands, she huffs and puffs as she struggles to uncap it.

MASTER BEDROOM

Angelina paces the floor with the phone to her ear.

ANGELINA

(nervous voice)

I really need to talk to you. I sent you a text. Get back to me as soon as you can. Please, dad.

KID'S ROOM

In the mirror, the knife rests on a forearm.

Zoe holds the stuffed toy's paw as she eyes the two red marked fuzzy crossed lines with blobs of ink at each end.

She rolls down the cuddly bear's sweater sleeve.

ZOE

Now, it's my turn.

KITCHEN

On the phone, Angelina scrolls through photos.

A sudden inhale as she gapes at a shot of brunette Maia in a salon. Added text reads, "Last day as a brunette."

With a fist to her mouth, eyes glued on the photo, she stares at a carbon copy of herself.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

The pink door closed.

(O.S.) Zoe screams.

KID'S ROOM

Reflected in the mirror, blood splatters on work boots.

KITCHEN

Angelina swipes the phone, gawks at a photo of Maia with the words, "Finally blonde."

(O.S.) Screams.

She whips her head up.

ENTRYWAY

Angelina leaps the stairs.

ANGELINA

Zoe.

KID'S ROOM

In the mirror, a hand wipes blood off the knife, slides it back in the sheath.

ANGELINA (O.S.)

Zoe.

The pink door flies open. Angelina darts in.

On the bed, Zoe leans up against the headboard, clutches the teddy bear.

ANGELINA

What happened? You okay?

ZOE

A big spider crawled on Bear.

Angelina sits next to Zoe, puts an arm around her shoulder.

ANGELINA

Is Bear okay?

Zoe nods.

ANGELINA

Where's the spider?

ZOE

You stepped on it.

Angelina lifts her foot. A crushed spider stuck to her sock.

ZOE
Is it dead?

ANGELINA
Sorry, sweetie.

ZOE
It was an accident.

They hold each others eyes.

INT. HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - ROOM7 - NIGHT

Next to the bed, Liam leans back in a chair, folds his hands on his stomach. As his eyes close, his chin drops.

On the other side of the bed, Colton sits, rubs his face. His eyes glued on Maia.

INTENSIVE CARE UNIT

At one of the stations, Nurse Tricha punches a keyboard.

NURSE TRICHA
Isabel, some help. Please.

At the sliding door to room7, Nurse Isabel turns.

Nurse Tricha shakes her head.

NURSE TRICHA
Never mind. I got it.

INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - ROOM7

Liam wheezes on every inhale, rattles on every exhale.

A hand on Colton's shoulder.

Colton jerks.

NURSE ISABEL
You wanted to ask me something?

COLTON
Can we step outside?

INTENSIVE CARE UNIT

Nurse Isabel converses with Colton.

INT. HOUSE - KID'S ROOM - NIGHT

Angelina flicks off the table lamp.

ANGELINA
Night, sweetie.

ZOE
Good night, mommy.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Angelina leaves the pink door ajar.

KITCHEN

Wine pours into a glass.

Angelina puts a bottle on the counter, picks up the glass,
drains it in a few gulps.

GARAGE

Angelina rips open a cardboard box.

INT. HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - ROOM7 - NIGHT

The sliding door opens. Nurse Tricha enters.

She picks up a blanket from a side bed, drapes it over Liam.

INT. HOUSE - KID'S ROOM - DAY

In bed, Zoe yawns, rubs her eyes, grabs the cuddly bear,
slides out of bed.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Tiny bare feet pace across the floor.

MASTER BEDROOM

Zoe peeks in.

An empty untidy bed.

GUEST ROOM

In the doorway, Zoe stands with the stuffed toy tucked under one arm.

ZOE

Grandpa.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Zoe descends the stairs.

ZOE

Mommy, where are you?

KITCHEN

On the table, Liam's overturned cup on the plate and the withered red roses.

The open bottle of wine next to the empty wine glass sits on the counter.

ZOE

Mommy.

(O.S.) Noises.

Zoe paces up to a half open door, pushes it.

GARAGE

A side door opens.

Zoe peeks in.

In a soaked nightshirt and barefoot, Angelina rummages through a cardboard box.

Next to a car, a pile of open boxes scattered on the floor.

ZOE

Mommy, are you making breakfast?

Angelina wipes her forehead.

ANGELINA
Have you seen the pink boombox?

Zoe tightens the grip on the teddy bear.

ANGELINA
You hungry?

Zoe nods.

ANGELINA
Why don't you wake grandpa.

ZOE
Grandpa's gone.

Angelina takes a deep breath.

ANGELINA
Shit, I need to talk to him.

ZOE
You said a bad word.

ANGELINA
Sorry, sweetie. I'll be there in a second. Okay? I'll make breakfast.

Zoe closes the side door.

KITCHEN

The clock on the wall reads, "7.00am."

Zoe sits at the table, eyes the withered red roses with most of the petals on the table.

INT. HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - ROOM7 - DAY

Sun seeps through partially drawn curtains.

In the chair, Liam calls hogs.

NURSE TRICHA (O.S.)
Liam.

He grunts, opens his eyes.

NURSE TRICHA
Good morning.

His hand goes up.

NURSE TRICHA
Time for Maia's bed bath.

He stands, folds the blanket, drops it on the side bed, slings the backpack over his shoulder, mouths a "thank you" to Nurse Tricha.

INTENSIVE CARE UNIT

Doctor Grant converses with Nurse Isabel and a MALE NURSE.

EXT. PARK - DAY

KIDS kick a ball around. A pond fountain squirts water high up in the air.

On a bench, plugged into his phone, Liam sits. Next to him, a styrofoam cup.

He picks up the cup, sips, cradles it.

Faint shrill whispers and a few quacks.

He lifts his head.

A duck and seven ducklings cross a paved path.

A slight smile on Liam's face as the duck family waddles toward the pond.

He glances at his phone, stands, tosses the cup in a trash can, paces down the paved path.

INT. HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - DAY

On the floor, Zoe brushes the stuffed animal.

GARAGE

The side door opens. Zoe peeks in.

ZOE
Mommy, I'm hungry?

ANGELINA
Where's that boombox?

ZOE
Grandpa knows.

Angelina whips her head up.

ANGELINA
Where is grandpa?

ZOE
At the hospital.

ANGELINA
(yells)
What is he doing at the hospital?

Zoe closes the door.

A cardboard box flies through the air.

Angelina wipes her face with her nightshirt.

KITCHEN

With the teddy bear in her lap, Zoe sits at the table.

Angelina stumbles in, eyes the clock on the wall, "11.00am."

ANGELINA
I guess we'll do brunch.

She gives Zoe a hug.

ANGELINA
Sorry, for yelling at you.

ZOE
You don't smell good.

EXT. HOUSE - STREET - DAY

At the truck, Noah struggles to pry open a container with a knife. It slips, cuts his hand.

NOAH
Shit.

He drops the knife, yanks a rag from the bed of the truck, wipes his hand.

INT. HOUSE - ENTRYWAY - DAY

Angelina pulls on the front door handle, locked.

FAMILY ROOM

On the couch, Zoe relaxes, watches TV cartoons.

ANGELINA

I'm taking a bath before we go and see the doctor. Okay, sweetie.

ZOE

Are you sick?

ANGELINA

No, just a check up.

ZOE

Okay.

ANGELINA

I'll leave the door open a bit.

MASTER BATHROOM

Bubble bath churns into a foam as water pours into a bathtub.

Angelina puts her phone on the vanity, closes the door.

She turns off the water, disrobes, steps into the bathtub.

FAMILY ROOM

On the floor, Zoe grips the cuddly bear's front paws as she bobs her head from side to side in tune with cartoon music.

TV VOICE (V.O.)

To all kids out there. Today we're going to give our favorite stuffed animal a bath.

MASTER BATHROOM

Angelina's head rests against a bath pillow. Her eyes closed.

FAMILY ROOM

A cartoon plays on the TV.

On the floor, the stuffed toy leans against the couch.

(O.S.) Water runs.

KITCHEN

A plastic bottle of dish washing liquid hits the floor next to a wash basin.

On a chair, with a pull out faucet in her hand, Zoe pours water into the wash basin.

The water shuts off.

Zoe shakes the pull out faucet, no water, leaves it dangling over the counter.

MASTER BATHROOM

In the bathtub, Angelina snores.

She jerks, mumbles.

As her head slides off the bath pillow, she gulps water, bolts upright, coughs.

KITCHEN

On the floor, a trail of water puddles.

FAMILY ROOM

The plastic bottle of dish washing liquid lies beside the stuffed toy.

Water sloshes as Zoe drags the wash basin in front of the TV.

As she loses her balance, she falls on her butt, giggles.

She squirts half the dish washing liquid in the water basin, sloshes the water into foam, a lot of foam.

She picks up the cuddly bear, sticks one paw in the water.

ZOE

Is it okay, Bear? Not too cold?

She bobs the stuffed animal's head.

A doorbell chimes.

She squeezes the care bear to her chest.

The doorbell chimes again.

ENTRYWAY

Knocks on the front door.

The door handle moves down.

MASTER BATHROOM

(O.S.) Muffled music thumps louder.

With her eyes closed, Angelina's chin rests on her chest.

A splash as the teddy bear hits the water, face down.

Her eyes snap open wide at the stuffed animal, whips her head at Noah, wraps an arm around her boobs, screams.

Red colored water and bubbles expand around the furball.

NOAH

Bear needs a bath.

He smirks, exposes a rack of yellow teeth.

With eyes glued on him, she rips a towel off a rack, covers her prized possessions.

ANGELINA

Get out. Get the hell out.

Blood dribbles from his hand, splatters on the floor next to bloodstained work boots.

NOAH

Didn't mean to disturb you, ma'am.
We had to shut off the water.
Should be back shortly.

ANGELINA

Get the hell out. Zoe. Zoe.

NOAH

She can't hear you.

Her lips quiver, eyes dart between him, the closed door and her phone.

ANGELINA

What'd you do? Zoe. Zoe.

NOAH

Have a good day, ma'am.

He leaves a trail of muddy footprints on the floor as he shuffles toward the door.

At the vanity, he stops, turns.

NOAH

Why keep fighting it? Let it go.

With the stuffed animal in one hand, she gawks at him.

He rolls up a sleeve, exposes "two crossed arrows" freshly carved into his forearm.

NOAH

We're all friends. Aren't we?

Eyes lock in a penetrating stare.

A raspy cough as he grabs the door handle.

Ear splitting music fills the air as he opens the door.

ANGELINA

Zoe. Zoe.

She leaps out of the bathtub.

As she swipes the phone off the vanity, she slips.

The phone and the stuffed toy go airborne.

Her head hits the floor with a sickening crack.

INT. HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - ROOM7 - DAY

In bed, on her back, with her eyes closed, Maia jerks, grimaces with faint whimpers.

The heart monitor displays rapid beats.

INT. HOUSE - MASTER BATHROOM - DAY

Angelina motionless on the floor as blood seeps from her ear. A pool of blood expands around her head.

Hands grab the edge of the vanity as she stumbles to her feet, catches her breath.

ANGELINA
(yelps)
Zoe.

She scoops up the stuffed animal.

Her hand trembles as she picks up her phone, punches it.

ANGELINA
No. No. Shit.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Angelina grabs the banister. Blood drips down her neck. Unsteady, she scrambles down the stairs with the teddy bear in one hand.

ANGELINA
Zoe. Answer me.

KITCHEN

Pipes burp.

Water gushes from the pull out faucet onto the floor.

ENTRYWAY

At the bottom of the stairs, Angelina trips, tumbles, hits the floor face down. The teddy bear still locked in her hand.

Droplets of blood next to her face.

Dazed, she lifts her head, gets on her knees, rubs her ear.

With her head down, eyes closed, her shoulders heave.

She lifts her head.

Her eyes go wide.

FAMILY ROOM

A lifeless Zoe lies on the floor. In the wash basin, the teddy bear all soapy and wet.

ENTRYWAY

Angelina gapes at her empty hand, snaps her head at Zoe.

ANGELINA

Zoe. Zoe.

FAMILY ROOM

On the TV, cartoon characters dance. Music blares.

TV VOICE (V.O.)

Okay, kids. Time to wake up, rinse
off and dry our most favorite
stuffed animal.

Zoe rises, splashes water on the furball.

Angelina hits the floor on her knees, chokes up tears, crawls
the last few feet toward Zoe, squeezes Zoe in a tight hug.

ZOE

Mommy, you scared me.

The embrace lingers.

ZOE

I can't breath.

With the remote control, Angelina flicks off the TV.

ZOE

I gave Bear a bath.

Zoe covers the stuffed animal in a blanket.

Angelina cups Zoe's cheeks, kisses her forehead.

ZOE

I turned up the TV so Bear could
hear too.

Angelina recoils as she gawks at Zoe's blood smeared cheeks,
sloshes her hands in the wash basin, wipes Zoe's face.

ANGELINA

I love you so much.

Zoe points to Angelina's ear.

ZOE

You're bleeding.

ANGELINA
Just a scratch.

Another hug.

As Angelina eases away from Zoe, she cranes her head.

ANGELINA
Stay here.

KITCHEN

Angelina tip toes on the wet floor.

ANGELINA
Shit.

ZOE (O.S.)
I'm sorry, mommy.

ANGELINA
Not your fault, sweetie.

She flips off the water, yanks the pull out faucet back in the holder, freezes as she peers through the window at Noah with a bandaged hand.

EXT. HOUSE - STREET - DAY

Noah gestures to Samuel, brandishes his hand.

NOAH
I got to stitch this up. Worse than
I thought.

In blood stained muddy boots, Noah shuffles toward the truck.

As he gets in the truck, a wallet slides out from a back pocket, lands in the gutter.

INT. HOUSE - ENTRYWAY - DAY

Angelina eyes the dead bolt, pushes down the door handle, pulls, locked.

GARAGE

The side door opens, Angelina peeks in. Eyes rove.

FAMILY ROOM

Angelina tugs on a sliding door, locked.

ZOE

What are you doing?

ENTRYWAY

Zoe sits on the bottom stairs with the stuffed animal.

MASTER BATHROOM

On the floor, at the vanity, a small pool of blood. No muddy footprints. No traces of blood across the floor.

Angelina picks up her phone, taps it, shakes her head.

She sways, dives for the toilet, blows her lunch.

ENTRYWAY

With one hand on the banister, Angelina descends the stairs, plunks down next to Zoe, catches her breath.

ANGELINA

Remember when we talked about not opening the door for strangers?

ZOE

I know. You told me not to let strangers in the house.

ANGELINA

Did anyone ring the door bell or knock while I was taking a bath?

ZOE

Yeah, but I didn't open the door.

ANGELINA

You did the right thing.

ZOE

What if dad's friend rings the door bell or knocks?

Big eyes on Angelina.

ZOE

He's not a stranger. He's family.

Angelina stares at Zoe.

ANGELINA

If that ever happens, you come and
get me. Okay?

ZOE

Okay.

Angelina kisses the top of Zoe's head.

KITCHEN

In the doorway, Zoe on her knees.

As Angelina mops the floor, she grimaces, clutches her chest.

The mop handle bangs on the floor.

ZOE

Mommy.

Zoe hurries, crosses the floor.

ZOE

Mommy.

In a fetal position, Angelina moans as Zoe kneels next to
her, tugs Angelina's shoulder.

ZOE

What's wrong?

ANGELINA

Mommy needs help.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

The garage door rolls up.

With the teddy bear tucked under one arm, Zoe dashes out from
under the garage door, rushes barefoot across a grassy area.

INT. TRUCK - MOVING - DAY

Noah opens a console between the front seats, empty.

He taps his back pocket.

NOAH

Shit.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

The truck makes a U-turn.

EXT. HOUSE - STREET - DAY

Zoe slips, tumbles down a slope, hits a sidewalk face down.
The teddy bear still in her hand.

With a scraped knee, she stumbles to her feet, wipes her
eyes, waves at Samuel.

ZOE
Mommy needs help.

Asphalt cracks as he drives the jackhammer into the ground.

She trips on the curb, loses the grip on the stuffed animal,
eats the gutter.

The teddy bear lands a few feet from her.

INT. TRUCK - MOVING - DAY

Noah shakes his head. As his eyes turn glossy, he slumps over
the steering wheel.

The horn blares.

EXT. HOUSE - STREET - DAY

Samuel turns off the jackhammer, wipes his face.

In the gutter, Zoe raises her head, eyes on the furball.

The truck bounces off the sidewalk, scrapes the curb.

INT. TRUCK - MOVING - DAY

Noah jerks.

His eyes bulge at the sight of Zoe in the gutter.

He grabs the steering wheel, stomps on the brake.

EXT. HOUSE - STREET - DAY

A wheel skids on the teddy bear, shreds it to pieces.

Bang.

A police car rams the front of the truck.

In police uniform, Colton leaps from the car.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

On her knees, Angelina gasps for air. She reaches for the edge of the counter, fights to pull herself back on her feet.

A sudden twitch on her face. Her hand clutches the chest. Her eyes pop as she collapses to the floor.

Hazy eyes. No more chest heaves. No breathing.

INT. HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - ROOM7 - DAY

The heart monitor flat lines.

EXT. HOSPITAL - MAIN ENTRANCE - DAY

Leaves rustle. Dark clouds brewing. Distant thunder. Drizzle.

Liam exits, pushes a PERSON out of his way.

EXT. HOSPITAL - PARKING LOT - DAY

Liam drags his feet past a few cars.

He leans on the crew cab truck, picks a set of keys from his pocket. His hand shakes as he struggles to key the door lock.

With his fist he hammers the car door, drops to his knees. A harsh cough racks his body.

He whips his head up. Strings of spit mixed with blood dribbles down his chin.

A hoarse scream as rain pelts his face.

INT. HOSPITAL - LOBBY - NIGHT

With a phone in his hand, Colton rests in a chair next to Zoe with the shrivelled up care bear on her lap.

He taps a text.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

The crew cab truck clunks onto the driveway, comes to a stop inches from the garage door.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Muddy footprints.

The backpack hits the floor.

At the counter, Liam yanks open the cabinet door.

As he grabs a bottle of booze from the top shelf, he knocks over the red tinted vase.

It splinters on the counter.

He unscrews a cap, takes a long swig from the bottle, winces, coughs, pounds his fist on the counter.

His eyes pop. Face contorts. A low pitched harsh yelp as he gapes at a shard of glass lodged in his fist.

He pulls the shard of glass from his fist, jerks a dish towel off a rack, wipes his hand.

GUEST ROOM

A door swings open, bangs against a dresser.

Silhouetted in the doorway, Liam dangles the bottle of booze in one hand, the backpack in the other hand.

With the bottle, he swipes a light switch.

A ceiling light turns on.

He sways, takes a long pull from the bottle.

The backpack flies through the air.

It hits the side table. The table lamp wobbles, the yellow smiley-face card falls to the floor.

He plops down on the bed, takes a swig from the bottle.

With his head down, elbows on his thighs, he dangles the bottle between his legs.

The bottle hits the floor, tips over, soaks the carpet, rolls to a stop.

His eyes land on the yellow smiley-face card.

He picks it off the floor, stuffs it in an inner coat pocket.

He grabs the notepad and a pen from the backpack.

With squinted eyes, he scribbles on the notepad, "Dear Family", snuffles as a tear free falls off his chin, smears the ink on the notepad.

A huff transitions into a hideous laughter as he rips the page from the notepad, crumples it, hurls it across the room.

He leaves his phone on the side table, places the framed photo of Evelien and him, face down.

He reaches under the bed, grabs the gun safe, punches the code on the keypad a couple of times, opens it.

An empty stare at the gun as he touches it.

Unsteady, he scrambles to his feet, staggers out of the room with the gun in one hand.

INT. HOSPITAL - LOBBY - NIGHT

With a phone to his ear, Colton paces between rows of chairs.

INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - DOCTOR'S OFFICE

Doctor Grant leans on the desk. A phone to his ear.

INT. HOUSE - GUEST ROOM - NIGHT

On the side table, Liam's phone rings.

INT. HOSPITAL - LOBBY - NIGHT

Colton pockets his phone, squats in front of Zoe, runs a finger across her cheek.

COLTON
Sweetie, wake up.

Her eyes flutter open, yawns.

COLTON
You want to go and see mom.

She flashes a just woke up smile.

EXT. CHURCH - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

A wheel skids in murky water, bounces off a concrete stopper.

INT. CREW CAB TRUCK - PARKED - NIGHT

Windshield wipers work overtime as Liam slumps over the steering wheel.

He lifts his head. Bloodshot eyes. His hand trembles as he kills the ignition. Wipers stop in the middle of a swipe.

He pulls a handle, pushes the door open.

EXT. CHURCH - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Boots splash in a puddle as Liam stumbles out. He slams the door shut, loses his balance, bumps against the truck.

He plods past the truck, stops, turns, squints into headlights, shrugs, paces on.

At the gate, he lifts his head, closes his eyes, mumbles as rain slams his face.

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

The church bathes in floodlights.

Liam staggers across the grounds.

Lightning paints the sky. Thor swings the hammer. Thunder swipes the horizon.

A tarp and fresh soil next to Evelien's gravestone.

On his knees, he folds his hands. Eyes locked onto Evelien's headstone as his lips move, MOS.

Unsteady, he gets on his feet, steps up to the headstone, touches Evelien's engraved name.

As he sways, he grabs the top of the stone, takes a deep breath. With a finger, he draws, "Liam", on the empty half of the stone.

A hand peels the tarp off an open grave.

He kneels at the edge of the open grave, pulls his gun from a coat pocket, drops it in his lap.

His eyes lock onto the dark hole as he pulls the yellow smiley-face card from the inner pocket.

He opens it.

His lips move as rain rips the ink off the card.

ZOE (V.O.)
That's okay, grandpa. I can read
the card for you.

A blank card. Ink gone. Words gone.

With his head down, eyes closed, he rocks back and forth.

ZOE (V.O.)
(reads card)
Hi, Grandpa. Hope you're feeling
better soon. I have lots of stories
to tell you and many hugs to give
you. P.S. Please, give Bear a bath.
Love, Zoe.

He presses the card to his chest, stares across the open grave, gently stuffs the card in an inner pocket.

His eyes close as he jams the gun against his temple.

A shot rings out.

A bolt of lightning.

Thor expresses his opinion.

Water runs off the tarp, seeps past a single bullet hole.

(O.S.) A hoarse scream.

Bullets rip into the tarp.

Liam pumps the trigger, unloads the entire magazine.

He stuffs the gun in a coat pocket, bawls.

EXT. HOUSE - STREET - DAY

Sun peeks over the horizon.

All cones and barricades gone.

No signs of Noah and Samuel.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Coffee pours into the white cup with pink inscriptions, "Best Grandpa Ever."

With both hands, Liam cradles the cup, sips, turns, gazes out the window.

KID'S ROOM

The door opens.

Liam peeks in.

In bed, the teddy bear tucked in under the bed cover, paws and head visible.

He picks up the stuffed toy.

GUEST BATHROOM

At the vanity, Liam rubs soap and water on the stuffed animal, rinses it.

As he dries the stuffed toy, he stares into the mirror, catches a reflection of two big eyes through a cracked open door.

As footsteps echoes away, a thin smile on his face.

GUEST ROOM

In a dark suit, shirt and tie, Liam sits on the bed.

He eyes the framed photo of Evelien and himself.

His phone chimes.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

A taxi backs out the driveway.

INT. HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Zoe sprints in.

ZOE

Mom. Me and dad made breakfast.
Your favorite. Toast and coffee.

A grunt from under the covers.

ZOE
Hurry. Grandpa left already.

KITCHEN

Coffee brews. A toaster pops.

On the table, three sets of tableware, black with gold rim and the red tinted vase with the withered red roses.

Zoe pauses as she eyes the white cup with pink inscriptions, "Best Grandpa Ever." It sits right side up.

She circles the table, reaches for the cup, overturns it on the plate.

ENTRYWAY

Colton enters with a newspaper, steps up to the stairs.

COLTON
(yells)
Honey, we need to get going. Liam
left already.

INT. TAXI - MOVING - DAY

In the back seat, next to Liam, the teddy bear and a bouquet of lilies wrapped in baby's breath.

DRIVER JOE (50) behind the steering wheel.

Liam gazes out a side window.

FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The black SUV zips past a few cars.

INT. BLACK SUV - MOVING - DAY

In the back, strapped in a car seat, dressed in a pink frilly dress, Zoe grips a basket filled with red rose petals.

Dressed in a tuxedo, Colton steals a glimpse of Zoe in the rear view mirror.

COLTON

The prettiest flower girl that I've ever seen.

ZOE

I know, dad.

Dimple showtime.

END FLASHBACK SEQUENCE.

EXT. CITY INTERSECTION - DAY

The taxi stops at a red light.

INT. TAXI - STOPPED - DAY

Liam peers through the windshield at the light.

FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

INT. TOWN CAR - STOPPED - DAY

A CHAUFFEUR (40), double chin, talks on a phone.

In the back seat, Maia in a wedding dress with a bouquet of red roses in her lap. The rose gold ring with a single diamond on her right ring finger.

Liam stares out a side window, folded hands in his lap.

She touches his hand.

MAIA

She'll be okay without her teddy bear. Don't worry about it.

She squeezes his hand.

He glances at his phone.

MAIA

Doing okay on time?

He nods.

As he pockets the phone, his eyes bulge.

He jerks forward, grabs the Chauffeur's shoulder, shakes him.

EXT. CITY INTERSECTION - DAY

On a red light, the town car rolls forward.

Horns blare. Tires screech.

A sickening crunch as the black SUV rips the front off the town car.

The black SUV goes airborne as the town car spins.

At a Java Jolt Coffee Bar, Nurse Isabel exits with a cup in her hand. Patrons crowd tables on the sidewalk. Curb side, Noah and Samuel get into the truck with Los Angeles city logo, "Bureau of Street Services."

The black SUV tumbles, picks up speed down a slope, flattens the cab of the truck, slams into the Java Jolt Coffee Bar.

END FLASHBACK SEQUENCE.

INT. TAXI - STOPPED - DAY

In the rear view mirror, Driver Joe steals a glimpse of Liam.

DRIVER JOE

You okay?

Liam clears his throat, nods, loosens his grip on the teddy bear and the bouquet of lilies.

EXT. CITY INTERSECTION - DAY

On a green light, the taxi makes a left-turn.

The church looms ahead as the taxi sputters down a street.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

At the table, Zoe chokes out sobs.

Colton kneels next to her.

COLTON

Sweetie, what's the matter?

Zoe stutters on every inhale. Utters unrecognizable words.

Colton thumbs away tears from her eyes.

A tattoo of "two crossed arrows" on a forearm as a hand taps Colton's shoulder.

MAIA (O.S.)
 (whispers)
 She hasn't cried since the
 accident. Happy tears. We're a
 family again.

With the shaved and stitched side of her head facing away from Zoe, Maia kneels next to Zoe and Colton.

ZOE
 Mom, is Angelina okay?

Maia nods, taps her chest with one hand.

MAIA
 Even my spirit couldn't escape
 coma. I'm so sorry for the
 confusion, sweetie.

ZOE
 I said goodbye to dad's friend.

Zoe's eyes light up.

ZOE
 Grandpa gave Bear a bath.

A family bear hug.

EXT. CHURCH - PARKING LOT - DAY

The taxi pulls up to the gate.

INT. TAXI - STOPPED - DAY

Driver Joe shakes his head as Liam hands him cash. Liam nods, taps his shoulder.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

As Liam drags his feet up the stairs, the taxi parks.

EXT. HOUSE - STREET - DAY

No fresh patches. No new asphalt.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

At one end of the table, on a plate, right side up, sits the white cup with pink inscriptions, "Best Grandpa Ever." No withered red roses in a red tinted vase on the table.

GARAGE

Cardboard boxes stacked against one wall.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

A door clanks open.

Liam enters, nods at PRIEST EVE (45) at the end of the aisle.

As he strides down the aisle, his eyes never stray from three caskets, surrounded by a sea of flowers. A small casket placed between two larger caskets.

At the end of the aisle, Liam tucks the teddy bear under his arm, shakes hands with Priest Eve.

He steps up to the first casket.

On a stand, a photo of blonde Maia.

He runs a finger across the photo. His eyes blink overtime. Tears fight to escape.

He pulls a lily from the bouquet, places it on the casket. His hand rests on the casket for a moment.

A deep breath as he shuffles past the small casket, pauses in front of a photo of Colton in police uniform, puts a hand on the photo.

He lays a lily on the casket, rests his hand on the flower.

He steps up to a photo of Zoe, a ray of sunshine with dimples to match and the teddy bear on her lap.

He kisses the last lily, places it on the casket with the baby's breath.

His hand trembles as he touches the photo of Zoe.

With both hands, he grips the teddy bear, takes a step back.

LIAM
(whispers)
I gave Bear a bath.

As he forces a nervous smile, he lays the care bear next to the lily and the baby's breath.

His knees give in.

Priest Eve fast paces toward him.

Liam puts a hand up.

Priest Eve steps aside.

On his knees, with folded hands on the small casket, he lowers his head. His body trembles as floodgates open.

EXT. CHURCH - PARKING LOT - DAY

All spots taken. Overflow of cars parked on grassy areas.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

A flow of PEOPLE enter.

In the first row, Liam sits.

A hand on his shoulder.

He turns, stares into Nurse Tricha's red and puffy eyes. She sits behind him.

Liam stands, eyes a sea of People. Doctor Grant and Driver Joe side by side. All seats filled. Standing room only.

He puts a hand up, bows.

PRIEST EVE

A lot of people care about you.

Priest Eve sits next to the pulp pit stairs.

The door clanks shut.

Distant bells ring.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Sun shines. Birds chirp.

Liam places fresh flowers in front of Evelien's headstone.

Next to Evelien's stone, a white wooden cross stuck in fresh soil with the names inscribed, "Zoe, Maia, Colton Ash."

On one knee, he places flowers and a ceramic bear against the cross.

Leaves rustle.

He lifts his head.

A cough.

He pulls a clean handkerchief from a pocket, wipes his mouth.

No blood.

He stuffs the handkerchief back in his pocket, saunters away.

FADE OUT.