

# THE SURGE

Written by

Steven Clark

[Steamroller138@gmail.com](mailto:Steamroller138@gmail.com)

FADE IN:

EXT. SHENANDOAH HOTEL - NIGHT

A grand spectacle of a building. Colorful, aquatic accent lighting. Palm trees dot the quiet midnight street.

TITLE: SHENANDOAH HOTEL, FLORIDA -- 1982

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Just enough light to see fine appointments the room provides.

BED SPRINGS CREAK.

A white-collared shirt, tie and slacks thrown across a chair.

And an EVENING DRESS.

A half-empty champagne bottle sweats inside a chiller, three glasses next to it.

On the BED --

SENATOR JOHN HASKINS, 40s, shirtless. He straddles --

MADELINE COPELAND, an elegant beauty in her early 20s. Runs her hands along the Senator's chest.

MADELINE

You know what I want, Senator.

SENATOR HASKINS

You know I don't like it when you call me Senator.

A grin. A beat.

MADELINE

Yes, you do.

She reaches under the pillow and hands him a BUTCHER KNIFE.

SENATOR HASKINS

(shakes his head)  
I just want to fuck you.

She arches her back, spreads her legs.

MADELINE

Put it in then.

Senator looks cautiously at the knife.

MADELINE  
Your cock, Senator.

He complies. Pleasure on his face, beads of sweat on his forehead.

Madeline closes her eyes, sinks her head into the pillow. The veins in her neck stretched tight. Got a good rhythm going.

The Senator holds the knife on the bed like it's glued there. Won't lift it. He doesn't dare.

She MOANS. Opens her eyes, lips part --

MADELINE  
Now, kill me.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Going past lush green thicket, open fields with wooden fences. Simple country homes, all with barn stars, like they give them away with your groceries.

TITLE: PRESENT DAY

The voice of an older man cuts over the scenery. He speaks clear and precise, like he's taking notes.

LARRY (O.S.)  
I think it's safe to say I'm lost.  
Most likely going in circles. This  
is the second time I've seen the  
house with the X-rated whirligig.

HOUSE

Next to a vegetable garden, a contraption on a stake. When the wind blows, a wood cut-out of a farmer thrusts into the unsuspecting backside of his old lady.

INT. CAR - DAY

LARRY RIGBY, 59, speaks into a micro-cassette recorder. Nothing about him says digital. Despite his silvery mane and neatly-trimmed beard, he's in surprisingly good shape.

On the passenger seat lie notebooks and mechanical pencils, spare triple-A batteries and a stash of cassettes.

He holds the recorder to his mouth.

LARRY

I think I'm making progress,  
though. Seeing more farmland. It's  
good to see my acute sense of  
direction is one thing I can still  
rely on.

EXT. SERVICE STATION - MOMENTS LATER

Larry slides a ten dollar bill into the greasy MECHANIC in charcoal overalls.

The mechanic tucks the bill in his pocket. He points.

MECHANIC

You take 9 till ya hit that big  
oak. Take a louie on 29 for a few  
miles until --

INT. CAR - DAY

Larry's reflection silhouetted on windshield glass. Ahead, the road is narrowed, traffic has built and a CROWD has gathered.

He turns onto a side street, finds a place to park and speaks into the recorder.

LARRY

Larry Rigby, June twenty-nine,  
2021. Notes that follow are for  
Huxton Journal story tentatively  
titled... Untitled Tomato Story.

EXT. COUNTY ROAD 29 - DAY

Larry exits the car and slips on a white mesh FEDORA with a scarlet band. Not even noon, the sun's burning.

A line of PEOPLE stretches over a hump in the road. Every age group, occupation is represented --

They're pushing wheelbarrows, or pulling wagons with young CHILDREN inside.

A NURSE in scrubs with a geriatric WOMAN in a wheel chair.

Excited chatter fills the air, like kids waiting on line at the amusement park.

Larry notes all this as he moves past. Stops when he sees a hand painted sign --

TWO HOUR WAIT FROM THIS POINT

He pulls out a handkerchief and wipes his brow.

EXT. HERLIHY'S FARM STAND - DAY

A plastic overhang under wooden studs house WORKERS ringing sales. Money eagerly changes hands.

Baskets and baskets of TOMATOES stand behind them at the ready. FARMHANDS keep bringing more.

Larry, sweating through his shirt, catches the attention of a YOUNG FARMHAND, as he claps dirt from his hands.

LARRY

Excuse me, I'm looking for John Herlihy.

YOUNG FARMHAND

Okay.

He strides past without a second glance.

ELLEN (O.S.)

You that reporter?

ELLEN HERLIHY, 29, dark, shoulder length hair in a white tank top and cut-off jean shorts. Her face is dirty, her hands soiled. Underneath all that is real beauty.

Larry removes his hat.

LARRY

Yeah. Larry Rigby from the Huxton Journal.

ELLEN

Ellen Herlihy. You must be looking for my brother, John.

They shake.

LARRY

I am.

She drags over a paint-chipped Adirondack chair and sets it in the shade.

ELLEN

He's in the field right now. Make yourself comfortable. I'll have one of the girls bring over some lemonade. It shouldn't be too long.

LARRY

Thank you. Some lemonade would be nice.

Larry sits.

ELLEN

You like tomatoes?

LARRY

Hmm? Oh. No. I never eat them. Too acidic.

She raises an eyebrow, gives a good natured *harrumph* before she saunters off.

LATER

Larry takes notes in the Adirondack chair, an empty glass resting on the chair's arm.

Next to the glass, a paper plate of fresh tomato slices that he hasn't touched.

He checks his watch, gets up and makes his way around back.

His phone RINGS. Checks the screen, answers.

LARRY

Amy.

INT. WEDDING BOUTIQUE - DAY

Standing on a red-carpeted enclosure surrounded by mirrors is AMY RIGBY, 32. She's wearing THE ONE, her head arched back so she can see the back of the dress.

BEGIN INTERCUT:

AMY

Hey, Dad. I found it.

LARRY

Found what?

AMY  
My wedding dress, silly. I'll send  
you a picture.

LARRY  
Still going through with it, huh?

Larry crosses to an open field.

AMY  
Yes, Dad, I'm still going through  
with it. You really gotta get over  
this George thing.

Contemplating the dress is DEBRA RIGBY-KERNS, 60s, hair  
tightly wound in a bun. A pencil sticks out.

DEBRA  
(loudly)  
Tell your father to not be a  
kiljoy.  
(on the dress)  
They'll have to take it out in the  
back. Either that or you go gluten  
free.

AMY  
(horrified)  
Mom! Does my ass look fat?

Debra frowns, shrugs.

Larry's listening, but not listening. He quietly contemplates  
the spectacle before him -- nothing but tomato plants as far  
as the eye can see. FIELD HANDS lovingly tend to them.

He stays a moment longer, then heads back.

AMY  
Let me go, Dad. Mom is going to  
make this unbearable.

LARRY  
That's what she does best. And I do  
like George. A little.

AMY  
Okay, Dad. Thanks. Oh hey - happy  
birthday.

LARRY  
Thanks, but my birthday's not for a  
couple days.

Ellen Herlihy passes, carrying equipment.

AMY

I know, but I might not be here.  
George and I are going to his cabin  
on the lake. So, happy big six-0.

LARRY

Oh. Okay. Well, I'm sure I'll catch  
up with you when you get back.

AMY

Okay. Love you, Dad.

LARRY

Love you, too.

END INTERCUT

He hangs up the phone. SIGHS.

Sits back in his chair, glances to the plate of tomatoes. A  
FLY picks across a slice, buzzes off.

ELLEN (O.S.)

It's your birthday?

He looks up. Didn't realize she was there.

LARRY

Not for a couple days.

She brushes hair from her face, smiles.

ELLEN

Well, happy birthday anyway.

LARRY

Thanks.

Like an actress, she turns, her dark eyes lingering for just  
a moment too long.

A shadow looms. A beefy forearm reaches out, attached to a  
thick, work-calloused meat hook of a hand.

JOHN

I'm John Herlihy.

MOMENTS LATER

JOHN HERLIHY, 34, strides with Larry away from the bustle of  
the farm stand. At six-four, he's a tower of a man. Not a  
mincer of words.



JOHN

Not much to tell. We use number 5  
royal seeds. Very flavorful blend.  
Crisp. Very rich soil, low  
alkalinity. Soil's key.

Larry writes in a note pad as he walks.

John points to a modest CEMETERY in a clearing. Old  
headstone, but lovingly kept grounds.

JOHN

Four generations of my family are  
buried here, my father among them.  
He carried on the tradition my  
grandfather started. Survived the  
Great Depression. And whatever else  
they threw at us.

Larry shivers in the late day breeze.

LARRY

Looks like business is booming.

JOHN

We have a very loyal following.

LARRY

Why is that, may I ask?

JOHN

Why do we have a following?

LARRY

Not just that. But so loyal. Almost  
a carnival atmosphere. I spoke to  
some people on the way in. One  
couple came all the way from Covel.

JOHN

So?

LARRY

That's over a hundred miles away.  
Surely there are closer farm  
stands.

JOHN

We harvest earlier than most.

The reporter in Larry is not satisfied.

LARRY

You're telling me people travel  
hundreds of miles just to get some  
tomatoes because you harvest early?

John suddenly turns away. Larry races to catch up.

JOHN

That's the long and short of it.

LARRY

Do they come with a free bottle of  
'shine?

John halts. Spins. The offense is evident.

Larry stops.

John glares at him for a tense moment. Turns away.

An eternity passes before Larry releases a breath.

INT. CAR - DAY

Larry drives, tape recorder in hand. A small bag of TOMATOES  
has joined the batteries and cassettes.

LARRY

He accepted my business card, which  
no doubt ended up in the trash. At  
that point I could tell he was  
growing tired of me...

He lowers the recorder. Beat. Raises it again.

LARRY

Most people do.

EXT. LARRY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A modest two-story home with a porch.

Dusk light hangs over the sycamores. Pollen tumbles through  
the last remnants of sun.

INT. LARRY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - SAME

Larry digs into a can of cat food. A runt of a cat, Tommy,  
rubs against his ankles.

LARRY

It's coming, it's coming.

Larry places the bowl on the floor, watches Tommy eat. Turns to see the bag of tomatoes on the counter.

He contemplates it, opens a drawer and takes out a knife. He slices a small piece and holds it up to the light and surveys it.

Puts it in his mouth. Chews. Waits.

BEDROOM - LATER

Neat room. A picture of Amy and Larry sits on the dresser.

On the wall are numerous CITATIONS and AWARDS. One from the NEW YORK TIMES, another from the WASHINGTON POST.

Larry enters in his pajamas. He places his glasses on a table next to the answering machine. A digital display reads 0 MESSAGES.

He shuts off the light, and gets into bed. Breathes a heavy SIGH. Within moments his long day is over.

INT. LARRY'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - MORNING

Sunlight spills through the window.

Another picture of Larry and Debra at Amy's GRADUATION.

A blue top sheet on the bed reveals Larry's restless sleep.

It also reveals a boner the size of Florida.

Larry wakes. Eyes adjust. Hair a mess. He notices his boner, reaches for his glasses.

LARRY

Hmm...

He throws the covers off, gets up and heads to the --

BATHROOM

Flicks on the light, drops his pants. He spreads his legs, places a palm on the wall and tries to angle himself just right.

Pee hits the water and --

RING. The phone from inside the bedroom.

LARRY

Who the hell is calling this early?

The machine picks up, and through it comes the voice of Ellen Herlihy.

BEDROOM

On the answering machine:

ELLEN (V.O.)

Hi, Larry. I'm not sure I have the right number. I got it from the card you gave my brother. Anyway, it's Ellen Herlihy from the farm stand. Hi. Sorry about the hour, but I took you for an early riser.

BATHROOM

Larry's glasses are askew. Still peeing. Tommy's found his way in and rubs at his feet.

ELLEN (V.O.)

... Anyway, I was just wondering if you'd like to meet me out for a drink later. I figured you might need more info for your story. My brother's not really the talkative type. I am, though.

A stream of pee lands on Tommy's back.

LARRY

Jesus Christ. Sorry, Tommy.

ELLEN (V.O.)

Anyway, you're probably busy, with it being your birthday and all, but, I don't know. Give me a call if you wanna meet up. 537-8642. Okay? Thanks. Bye.

CLICK.

Larry tucks in, grabs a towel.

LARRY

Tommy, come here. I gotta clean you.

The cat darts from the room.

LARRY

Shit.

BEDROOM

Larry stares at the answering machine like it's an alien spaceship. Hits PLAY. Gotta hear that message again.

EXT. LARRY'S HOUSE, CURB - DAY

A WOMAN, 54, running pants, athletic, walks her dog. The dog relieves itself on Larry's mailbox.

Something catches her attention. She looks to the house to see Larry in the UPSTAIRS WINDOW.

He's exercising. Vigorously.

LARRY

One, two, three, four. One, two,  
three, four...

The Woman stares curiously. Her dog finishes its business, and they go on their way.

EXT. MCMANSION - DAY

A big modern house with a long cobblestone driveway that snakes down to the front gate. Sprinklers sprout up, soaking the sprawling lawn. Not a weed in sight.

A JAGUAR parked out front.

Larry rings the doorbell. A pretentious set of chimes sound.

From inside the house:

AMY (O.S.)

It's open, Dad.

INT. MCMANSION - DAY

Larry steps into real wealth. A MARBLE STATUE of some Roman guy peeing into a bowl greets him in the foyer.

He heads down the hall into the --

KITCHEN

Amy and Debra sit at the breakfast nook that overlooks the pool. A laptop between them.

AMY  
Mom, this is a nightmare.

DEBRA  
Relax, dear. Relax. Let me take a  
look. Hello, Lawrence.

AMY  
Hi, Dad.

LARRY  
What are you doing?

Amy SIGHS.

AMY  
Going over the guest list.

LARRY  
What's it under.

AMY  
It's over two hundred.

LARRY  
How many?

DEBRA  
Does she stutter?

Larry looks at the --

SCREEN

A long list of names in two columns, one marked GROOM, the  
other BRIDE. To the side, a third column marker LARRY -- in  
lowercase letters.

BACK

Debra goes down the LARRY column, deleting names.

LARRY  
Whoa, who, whoa. Those are all my  
relatives.

DEBRA  
You don't even know these people,  
Lawrence.

LARRY  
That's not true. You can't just  
edit my family down like you're  
killing one of my stories.

Debra turns to him, eyes like Medusa.

DEBRA  
Fred and Rhonda Scheppman.

Caught in her icy stare.

LARRY  
Who?

DELETE.

DEBRA  
Gary and Lisa Connors.

LARRY  
That's easy. That's my cousin  
Mark's kids.

DEBRA  
I made them up.

EXT. MCMANSION, BACKYARD - DAY

A quarried limestone patio envelops an Olympic-sized SWIMMING POOL. The water ripples and --

Like the Krakken rising, GEORGE DE LA ROSA, 45, emerges. With looks to spare, his dainty SPEEDO clings to his tan body, housing what looks like a python in a burlap sack.

He towels down, heads for the sliding doors.

INT. KITCHEN

George lights up when he sees Larry. Even in normal speech, his voice is smooth and seductive.

GEORGE  
Larry. Papa!

George comes at him with open arms.

Apprehensive, Larry ganders at the prominent display of George's manhood in his Speedo.

George embraces him warmly.

GEORGE  
So good to see you, Larry. Tell me,  
are you puking yet? All this crazy  
wedding business.

LARRY  
I'm puking alright.

George goes to the juicer, throws an orange in.

GEORGE  
I say invite everyone. The whole  
world should celebrate our love.

He hands a glass of juice to Larry, crosses to Amy and kisses  
her forehead.

GEORGE  
Don't you think so, mi amore?

AMY  
Sure.

GEORGE  
Yes. I'm getting chubby just  
thinking about it!  
(raises a glass)  
To love.

AMY  
To love.

DEBRA  
To love.

Larry hesitantly raises his glass.

EXT. MUNRO'S DELI - DAY

Typical downtown storefront. Specials in the window, neon  
OPEN sign. Now, rise above all that. In an apartment window  
is a small sign that reads --

HUXTON JOURNAL

INT. HUXTON JOURNAL - DAY

A ratty office. Old file cabinets. Old files. A computer sits  
on a disheveled desk.

DOUG SIMPSON, 62, sits at the desk. Swipes a hand through his  
thinning hair, land line pressed to his ear.

DOUG  
(into phone)  
How can you write a story about the  
game if you fell asleep during the  
game? I'm not running a day care,  
Kurt. You're not a toddler who  
needs a nap.  
(MORE)



DOUG (CONT'D)

Well, go find the coach. How the fuck should I know? Check the bar. It opens at eleven.

He slams the phone down.

Larry stands near the window, gazing outside.

DOUG

Jesus Christ. The shit I gotta put up with. I'm sorry.

LARRY

Yeah.

DOUG

Larry, frankly, I don't understand your problem. You can't do anything about it, so why risk alienating your daughter because you don't like her husband?

LARRY

Not yet, he's not.

Doug SIGHS.

DOUG

Look, I could sit her all day and play therapist with you, but someone has to run the shittiest paper in town. How's that story on the farm stand coming?

LARRY

Getting there.

DOUG

Getting there? Christ, it's a fluff piece. You could write this with your eyes closed. There's a deadline for this, you know.

LARRY

Deadline? For what -- coupon Tuesday?

Doug sits on the desk, rubs his face.

DOUG

Oh, Larry...

LARRY

What?

DOUG  
It's not like the old days, is it?

LARRY  
No, it's not.

Doug gets up, crosses the room to Larry.

DOUG  
Remember, Larry? The all-nighters  
we'd pull. I swear we had coffee in  
our veins.

LARRY  
Among other things.

DOUG  
(building steam)  
It was journalism that actually  
meant something. Embezzlers,  
crooked politicians. No one was  
safe from us. We had 'em by the  
balls. It was... It was...

LARRY  
Fulfilling?

DOUG  
Yes!

A sudden quiet fills the room.

DOUG  
Should've had a Pulitzer, Larry.

LARRY  
For what?

DOUG  
For that Haskins fucker.

LARRY  
Hard to prosecute with no body,  
Doug.

DOUG  
There was video outside the hotel,  
Larry. People said they saw them go  
in.

Larry shakes his head.

LARRY  
You can't prosecute without a body.

DOUG  
There was a body.

LARRY  
What was left of it.

DOUG  
And then your editor kills the  
story...

LARRY  
Debra had her reasons.

Doug puts his hand on Larry's shoulder.

DOUG  
I'm sorry, Larry. Sorry to keep  
bringing that up.

LARRY  
Forget it.

DOUG  
So, what do you need? You obviously  
didn't come here to get work done.

LARRY  
Are you kidding? I love wading in  
the murky waters of our past  
glories.

DOUG  
So, what is it?

Larry moves closer.

LARRY  
Have you ever known tomatoes to  
increase your virility?

EXT. ELLEN'S HOUSE - DAY

Modest farmhouse next to the farm stand. Early 00s pick-up  
truck in the driveway.

INT. ELLEN'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY

A framed black and white picture on a table -- a MAN in  
overalls next to a YOUNG GIRL in a Summer dress.

Ellen sits in front of a vanity mirror in shorts and a tank top. She applies lipstick. Brushes her hair. She doesn't need much to look stunning.

HALLWAY

John watches her intently. Concern shows on his face.

BEDROOM

Ellen quickly turns, like she felt she was being watched. But no one is there.

Looks back in the mirror. Her finger traces the line of an age wrinkle near the corner of her eye.

EXT. HOOVER'S TAVERN - NIGHT

Your friendly neighborhood watering hole.

INT. HOOVER'S TAVERN - NIGHT

Few scattered PATRONS. COUNTRY music plays on the jukebox. The BARTENDER yawns, wipes a glass.

At a BOOTH is Larry, notebook and pencil on the table.

Across from him is Ellen, her silky brown hair tickling the tops of her shoulders.

LARRY

I wasn't sure you'd actually show.

ELLEN

Why would you think that?

LARRY

I don't get asked out for drinks much by women half my age. Or anyone, for that matter.

ELLEN

You think this is a date or something?

LARRY

No, no. I didn't say that. It's just... funny, is all.

He holds up his notebook as if to prove a date was the furthest thing from his mind.

ELLEN

So, you don't think this is a date?  
Well, now I'm hurt.

Larry laughs.

They raise their beers and drink.

ELLEN

So, did you eat the tomatoes I gave  
you?

LARRY

I tried one.

ELLEN

How were they?

LARRY

I told you already. Tomatoes don't  
agree with me. Too acidic.

ELLEN

You didn't answer my question.

He shifts in his seat.

LARRY

I'd be lying if I said I didn't  
feel something.

ELLEN

Something?

Larry releases a breath. Smiles.

LARRY

Just... strange. Younger somehow.  
You know that feeling you get in  
the pit of your stomach when  
something exciting's about to  
happen?

(she nods)

Like that. This nervous energy.  
Haven't felt that in a long time.

ELLEN

Now you understand why our business  
is so good?

The smile leaves his face.

LARRY

The way I felt this morning could be contributed to anything.

ELLEN

Such as?

LARRY

The weather?

ELLEN

The weather?

LARRY

Chemical reaction. Blood flow. A good nights rest... You saying the tomato made me feel like that?

She downs her beer.

ELLEN

What if I told you it did?

LARRY

Prove it.

ELLEN

This morning wasn't proof enough?

Larry goes to speak, stops and thinks carefully.

LARRY

There's this thing, I don't know if you've heard of it before, but it occurs shortly before death. Sometimes. It's called a burst. It's like this... sudden surge of energy and awareness. Parkinson's tremors stop. Dementia reverts to clarity. It's like, in that moment, as fleeting as it may be, everything's okay. Everything's fine.

ELLEN

Interesting. What made you think of that?

LARRY

I don't know. The mind wanders.

ELLEN

How old are you?

LARRY  
I'll be sixty.

ELLEN  
Sixty's nifty.

LARRY  
That's fifty.

She shrugs. Whatever.

ELLEN  
Want another drink?

LARRY  
Sure. How old are you?

She takes her bottle and gets up, turns.

ELLEN  
How old do I look?

Before Larry can answer, she's leaning against the bar, getting another round.

He takes her in as she leans over. She's perfect.

She returns to the table with the drinks.

ELLEN  
I'm twenty-nine.

LARRY  
You seem older.

ELLEN  
I get that alot... So, do you have enough for your story?

LARRY  
It's really just a fluff piece. I can fill in the blanks.

ELLEN  
Why don't you write about how you felt this morning.

Larry fiddles awkwardly with his notebook.

LARRY  
I don't think anyone would want to hear about that.

EXT. AUTO CAR LOT - DAY

Dozens of shiny, new cars. Attention-grabbing flags flap in the breeze. A WORKER hoses down a car.

INT. AUTO CAR LOT - DAY

Pristine SHOWROOM. A FAMILY sits across from a SALESMAN. The polished wheel covers of a brand new HYUNDAI.

Larry stands next to a car with STEVE GARVEY, 46, a salesman with a lot of hair and perfect teeth.

GARVEY

Twenty-two city, thirty-two highway. Daytime running lamps. Great safety scores, by the way. Automatic headlights in case you have a habit of forgetting.

Garvey seems to laugh using only his lower jaw.

LARRY

It's not for me.

GARVEY

The wife then?

LARRY

My daughter. She's getting married.

GARVEY

Oh. Exciting.

LARRY

Not really.

GARVEY

I'm sorry.  
(leans in)  
Is she marrying an illegal immigrant?

LARRY

Close enough.

LATER

Garvey writes up the paper work. Larry sits across from him. He notices the name tag.

LARRY

You must get a lot of teasing?



GARVEY  
About what?

LARRY  
Your name. You know, Steve Garvey.  
Like the baseball player.

GARVEY  
No.

EXT. MCMANSION, FRONT GATE - DAY

Larry pulls up in the new car. He hits the button and waits.

GEORGE (CALL BOX)  
Larry. Papa! Come in.

The gate swings open. He drives in.

Parked next to George's Jag is an AUDI A6 with a giant red BOW on it.

The door to the house opens. Out come George and Amy. He's behind her, his hands cover her eyes.

GEORGE  
Right this way, my love. Be  
careful, please.

AMY  
What is it?

GEORGE  
You will see. Your father's here?

AMY  
Hi, Dad.

LARRY  
Hi.

AMY  
Is that my surprise?

GEORGE  
No.

George positions her in front of the car.

GEORGE  
Open your beautiful eyes.

He removes his hands. She GASPS in excitement.

AMY

Oh my god! George. What is this?

GEORGE

It's a car.

He hands her the keys.

AMY

Oh, George.

She wraps himself around him. They kiss.

Larry watches on in dismay.

GEORGE

Do you like it?

AMY

Are you kidding? I love it! I don't know what to say.

He puts a finger to her lips.

GEORGE

No words are required. The happiness on your face is enough. It feeds my soul.

Larry rolls his eyes.

George puts his arm around Larry.

GEORGE

I see you've got a new car too, papa. Congrats.

LARRY

Thanks.

A torpedo of BIRD POOP splashes on the Hyundai's hood.

LATER

George takes off in his Jag down the DRIVEWAY, leaving Larry and Amy.

AMY

So, what are you doing here, Dad?

Larry looks at his inferior wedding present.

LARRY

Just popping in.

AMY

Well, I'm glad you're here. Can we walk a bit?

EXT. GROUNDS - MOMENTS LATER

The sprawling yard and vistas make George's home look more like Zamunda, minus the wild animals.

Amy and Larry walk.

AMY

I'm sorry we missed your birthday, Dad. George and I had this trip planned out for a while now...

LARRY

Don't worry about it. We're here now. It's not like you forgot or--

AMY

Dad, how did you know Mom was the one?

LARRY

I didn't. That's why our marriage failed so spectacularly.

AMY

Seriously, Dad. You must have been in love with Mom at some point.

LARRY

Look, I can't speak for your mother, but I think I was more in love with the idea of being married than actually being married.

AMY

I don't want that to happen to me.

LARRY

You're not getting cold feet, are you?

AMY

It's a big step. Getting the dress, even doing the preparations... I actually like all that, but...

LARRY

Sometimes you need to take a leap of faith.

AMY

Leap of faith? That doesn't sound like you, Dad. That doesn't sound like you at all.

Larry shrugs. Stops, looks into her eyes.

LARRY

I took a leap of faith. It didn't turn out too well, but look at what we got out of it. See what I'm saying?

Amy smiles, lowers her head. She gets it.

They come upon a tree, full of purple blooms. It's the only one in the yard. Larry gazes at it.

AMY

That's a desert willow. George had it shipped in from Mexico. Said he wanted a little piece of home.

LARRY

It's actually quite beautiful. Doesn't really fit in, but... It works, you know.

AMY

Yeah.

INT. CAR (DRIVING) - DAY

Larry on his blue tooth.

LARRY

Well, why didn't you tell me George was getting her a new car, Debra? You know how awkward that was?

DEBRA (PHONE)

Need to remind you we're not married, Lawrence? Clueing you in on things is not my responsibility anymore.

LARRY

How about a heads up then?

DEBRA

Heads up. George bought Amy a new car. Happy?

LARRY

No.

DEBRA

Look, while I have you on the phone. I'd like for us to talk. How about dinner? Say around six-thirty? Lawrence? Lawrence...

LARRY

What was that?

His phone BEEPS. Another call.

LARRY

Debra, hold on.

He clicks over.

LARRY

Hello?

INT. ELLEN'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY

Ellen twirls her hair, pacing near her bed.

ELLEN

Hey, you.

LARRY (ON PHONE)

Ellen?

ELLEN

Yeah. How many other cute twenty-nine year olds do you know? So, hey, I was thinking--

LARRY

LARRY

Dammit, can you hold on? I got my wife on the other line.

ELLEN

Your wife?

LARRY

Ex-wife. Hold on...

Larry's car swerves.

Phone BEEPS again. Another call.

LARRY  
Shit. Hold on.

Clicks over.

LARRY  
Hello?

GEORGE  
Larry? Papa! It's George.

LARRY  
What do you want?

GEORGE  
Nothing, papa. I think I butt  
dialed you. So, how are you?

Larry hangs up on him.

CLICKS OVER.

LARRY  
Debra?

ELLEN (ON PHONE)  
Who?

LARRY  
Dammit.

CLICKS OVER.

LARRY  
Debra?

Silence.

He CLICKS back.

LARRY  
Debra?

ELLEN (ON PHONE)  
That's the second time you called  
me Debra.

LARRY  
Dammit, I'm sorry--

Larry looks up. A TRACTOR in the road.

He jams on the brakes. SQUEAL. His head ricochets off the  
steering wheel.

Behind the wheel of the tractor is an OLD MAN in overalls and straw hat. Totally oblivious.

The tractor clears the road and into a field.

Larry's out of breath. Hair's a mess and sweating bullets.

The phone RINGS.

LARRY  
Hello?

ELLEN (ON PHONE)  
Larry?

LARRY  
Yes.

ELLEN (ON PHONE)  
Jesus, are you okay?

LARRY  
(shaken)  
I'm fine. Why do you ask?

ELLEN (ON PHONE)  
So, um, are you up for something?

EXT. WATER PARK - DAY

Water slides everywhere. Thrill seeker stuff. KIDS shriek with delight.

ATOP A STAIRCASE

Larry, shirtless, in swim trunks, chats with Ellen, bikini-clad and absolutely killing it.

LARRY  
I can't believe I let you talk me into this.

ELLEN  
I'm good at twisting people's arms.

LARRY  
That doesn't surprise me at all. You don't expect me to go on this thing, do you?

ELLEN  
Hell yeah. You gonna do the walk of shame all the way back down?

He looks down.

LARRY  
That's the plan.

ELLEN  
I spoke to that guy, Doug, at the paper. He said the story was supposed to be out yesterday.

LARRY  
Yeah, well, Doug's a pretty unrealistic guy.

ELLEN  
You said yourself it was just a fluff piece. How hard can it be?

LARRY  
I don't know. I just feel like there's something more.

ELLEN  
Larry, it's a farm stand. You're not writing for Forbes.

LARRY  
Don't remind me.

Ellen smiles, turns to the side and scrapes her breasts along Larry's arm.

Larry's surprised, but doesn't seem to mind it all that much.

A buff dude, MARK, 26, the ride operator, calls out:

MARK  
Next.

LARRY  
That's my cue.

ELLEN  
You really not going down?

LARRY  
I am going down. Down the stairs.  
I'll see you at the bottom.

He starts his walk of shame. Ellen watches with amusement.

She steps onto the slide. It's mad steep.



MARK

Okay, keep your arms folded across your chest, head back. Got it?

ELLEN

Got it.

Mark smiles.

MARK

You alone?

ELLEN

At this moment I am.

MARK

You here with anyone?

ELLEN

Yes.

MARK

Who?

She leers at him.

ELLEN

Not you.

Mark releases the lever.

AT THE BOTTOM

Larry watches along the railing. She flies down at high speed, eyes shut tight. Face frozen in a smile.

She splashes into the catch pool, goes under, springs up. She whips her head back, the sun reflecting every droplet of water as it cascades from her hair.

Larry can't take his eyes off her. He tunnel vision's. Sees only her --

And it's like he's seeing her for the first time. Like she's moving in slow motion. The way her arms swing, the way her knees bend. Every movement perfect.

She playfully splashes water at Larry.

ELLEN

(laughing)

Told ya you shoulda went down!

A smile creeps upon Larry's face.

He's hooked.

EXT. WATER PARK, LAZY RIVER - LATER

PEOPLE float in inner tubes as the relaxing current pulls them along.

Larry in one tube, Ellen in another.

ELLEN

This is more your speed, huh?

LARRY

Yes, more my speed. Not your thing?

ELLEN

No, no. I do peaceful.

A moment of silence.

ELLEN

Why'd you come out here with me?

LARRY

Because you asked and I wasn't doing anything.

ELLEN

No, I mean, really.

LARRY

I suppose I could ask why did you invite me?

ELLEN

Don't talk in circles. That's bullshit.

They narrowly avoid a waterfall.

LARRY

Because I thought it'd be fun.

ELLEN

It is fun, isn't it?

LARRY

So far. Except for my walk of shame. That wasn't much fun.

ELLEN

You should've came with me, then.

LARRY  
I did go with you.

ELLEN  
Not all the way.

LARRY  
I went as far as I could with you.  
Besides, we're here now.

Ellen gazes at him, closes her eyes and leans her head back.

The current spins their tubes around until the sides of their faces are close.

They touch briefly.

She pushes Larry's tube with her foot, sending him out front.

Leaving her alone. Content.

EXT. HERLIHY'S FARM STAND - DAY

Nearing sunset. Late day shadows.

Larry walks carefully past the closed check-out, crosses around back to the fields.

Distant chatter is heard.

Larry shades his eyes.

Two silhouetted FIGURES between the rows of tomato plants, bagging tomatoes as they go.

Larry looks to the farmhouse, then back.

LARRY  
Hey!

The two FIGURES raise their heads, spot Larry, take off in a full sprint.

LARRY  
That's right. You better run.

SHUCK SHUCK.

The barrel of a rifle pressed into Larry's back.

JOHN  
Don't move.

MOMENTS LATER

Larry is ushered to his car. John behind him, rifle lowered, but his expression no less intimidating.

JOHN

What were you doing out there?

LARRY

There were kids in the field stealing your tomatoes.

JOHN

I'll handle that myself. Why are you here?

LARRY

I-I wanted to ask you some more questions about your business.

JOHN

I ain't got no more answers for you. Now get outta here.

Larry reluctantly climbs into his car.

John's finger dances along the rifle's stock.

LARRY

Why all this hostility, John?

No answer.

LARRY

I don't understand. I think there's something here. Something you're not telling me about and I'm fascinated by it. I truly am. I--

JOHN

Stay away from my sister.

LARRY

What? I...

John's eye twitches.

JOHN

Go.

Larry goes to key the ignition, then remembers it's a push-button star. He pulls away.

John watches until he's out of sight. Exhales deeply.

INT. LARRY'S CAR (DRIVING) - LATE AFTERNOON

Driving through the surrounding neighborhood -- the one with all the barn stars.

He speaks into his recorder.

LARRY

Thursday, July 3. Yesterday, I think I had a date with a girl half my age. Moments ago, I was threatened by her brother with a shotgun. Two firsts in the same week.

He looks to the darkened sky.

The two PEOPLE stealing from the farm stand walk hand-in-hand along the road. They're both seniors. HERB and his wife CLAIRE, both easily in their 70s.

Larry slows alongside them.

They look at him curiously.

HERB

Um, hi.

INT. HERB AND CLAIRE'S HOME, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Pictures of kids and grandkids everywhere.

Herb sits on the couch. A coffee table separates him from Larry, recorder and notebooks out.

The tape in the recorder spins.

HERB

I don't know. It's just fun. I've always been sort of a klepto, but, you know, it keeps me young. That adrenaline rush.

Claire comes in from the kitchen. She hands out drinks from a tray, and three whole tomatoes.

Larry takes the drink, declines the tomato.

LARRY

I gave them up for Lent.

CLAIRE

We're not thieves, mind you.

Larry nods.

Herb take a whole tomato and bites into it. Juice drips down his chin, seeds spit down his shirt.

HERB  
(laughs)  
Excuse me.

Claire sits atop the arm of the couch, her foot bobbing. She eats her tomato the same way.

LARRY  
You really like those tomatoes.

CLAIRE  
We do.

HERB  
Yeah, we do.

LARRY  
Why do you like them so much? I mean, other than them just being tomatoes.

Claire and Herb exchange awkward glances. Claire nods.

Herb rises, goes to the closet. He pulls out an oxygen tank, walkers, two canes. Makes sure Larry can see.

HERB  
I had stage two emphysema, not to mention chronic bronchitis. Could barely breathe. Every day was a struggle. It got so I never knew, when I went to bed at night, if I would wake up in the morning. That's an awful way to live.

He resumes his seat on the couch. Claire puts a loving arm around him.

CLAIRE  
That's when we found the farm stand.

HERB  
Must've passed it a thousand times. Never stopped in. This time we do. Within days my emphysema was gone and I could breathe again. Bronchitis cleared up completely.  
(MORE)

HERB (CONT'D)

Doctor said he never saw anything like it. Said it was a miracle.

CLAIRE

I was facing double hip replacement. Bones were too brittle. But that all changed.

LARRY

You're saying those tomatoes cured you? Is that what you're saying?

HERB

We didn't bother to ask why, Mr. Rigby. All we know is that it did. We were just happy to have our lives back. Been together forty-two years.

Larry watches as they speak -- facial ticks, blinks, hand movements. Watches it all.

LARRY

This is hard for me to accept, you understand that. What you're saying to me is, physically, not possible. You're talking about the fountain of youth here.

Herb throws his hands up.

HERB

I don't know what else to tell you, sir.

Claire and Herb glance at each other. Smile and a nod.

HERB

Let me ask you a question, Larry.

LARRY

Sure.

CLAIRE

We've been looking for something for quite some time now.

HERB

Someone to add to our story.

LARRY

You mean... like a biographer?

CLAIRE  
Would you like to have a threesome?

LARRY  
A what?

HERB  
Claire's libido is insatiable. And,  
well, it's been a long time since I  
sucked a dick, but I'm flexible  
like that.

Claire slides her dress up, exposing a leg that doesn't look  
half bad.

CLAIRE  
What do you say?

Larry shuts off his recorder and gathers his things.

LARRY  
Gonna have to get back you on that.

EXT. HERLIHY'S FARM STAND, FIELDS - DAY

John kneels in the soil between rows of tomato plants. He  
holds a testing prong in the dirt. It BEEPS. Pulls it out and  
reads.

Raises his head and looks around. Concern.

INT. ELLEN'S HOUSE - DAY

Ellen vigorously cleans the kitchen. Tables, chairs.

John enters. The door slams.

JOHN  
Who's messing with the soil?

She stops.

ELLEN  
What are you talking about?

JOHN  
The alkalinity's off. Way off.

They stare at each other for a beat.



JOHN  
It's that guy, isn't it? That buddy  
of yours.

ELLEN  
I haven't even seen him.

JOHN  
Don't lie to me. He was here  
yesterday.

ELLEN  
He was?

JOHN  
He was out back poking around. I  
ran him off.

ELLEN  
What do you mean you ran him off?  
What the hell is wrong with you?

JOHN  
I don't want you seeing him  
anymore.

ELLEN  
(blood rising)  
I'm not a little girl.

JOHN  
It's for the best.

ELLEN  
The best? Best for who?

JOHN  
You should know better. You go  
traipsing around like a little...

ELLEN  
A little what?

JOHN  
Ellen, you don't know what this guy  
could do to us.

ELLEN  
He writes for the Huxton Journal,  
for Christ's sake. What's he gonna  
do? Expose us to the coupon  
clipping crowd?

JOHN  
I don't wanna be exposed to anyone.  
You hear me? No one.

ELLEN  
You can't stop me from seeing him!

JOHN  
He's too old for you.

ELLEN  
You're fucking kidding me, right?

He moves toward her --

JOHN  
Don't you speak to me like--

John goes down on one knee. Grimaces in pain.

ELLEN  
What's wrong?

She goes to him.

JOHN  
Nothing.

ELLEN  
It's not nothing. Is it your hip?

Swats her away. Stands gingerly. Catches his breath, looks directly at her.

JOHN  
Just... Stay away.

He fights the pain, turns and heads away.

INT. LARRY'S HOUSE, OFFICE - DAY

Larry at his desk, laptop open. Takes a bite of a sandwich.  
Stares at the screen.

His phone RINGS.

LARRY  
Hello?

INT. DOUG'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Doug slumped in his recliner. Visibly upset.

DOUG

I thought she'd fallen down.  
Tripped or something. She died when  
we got to the hospital. Just like  
that. Doctor said it was an  
abnormality of the arteries.  
Hypertrophic something...

Larry's across from him.

LARRY

Cardiomyopathy. Happens to athletes  
sometimes.

DOUG

(smirks)

Mary was about as unathletic as you  
can get.

(sighs)

She was sixty-three, Larry. It  
wasn't supposed to happen like  
this...

LARRY

Doug, if there's anything I can  
do... You need me to make some  
calls. Help with the arrangements.  
I'm here.

Doug stares off, not focused on anything. Nods.

On Larry. Helpless.

INT. CAR (DRIVING) - NIGHT

Ellen cuts the wheel. Rain pelts the windshield. Her eyes  
glassy. Unfocused.

DOUG (V.O.)

We were gonna get an RV, go across  
the country. You know how some  
people do that? That was gonna be  
us. Said there was so much she  
still hadn't seen.

*Swish swash.* The wipers like a noisy metronome.

DOUG (V.O.)

I guess the lesson here is don't  
get old, huh? Fuck...

EXT. LARRY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Larry pulls into the driveway. Rain continues to fall. He exits the car, holds his coat over his head and sprints to the front porch.

He slows when he sees --

Ellen in the wicker chair. Drenched. She looks up.

ELLEN

Hi.

INT. LARRY'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

She sits on the couch, holding a cup of coffee. A towel wrapped around her shoulders.

Larry across from her.

LARRY

What's on your mind?

She manages an unsteady grin.

ELLEN

You ever get the feeling something's about to happen, but you don't know what?

LARRY

All the time.

ELLEN

I'm scared.

LARRY

Of what?

ELLEN

How do you feel about getting older, Larry?

Larry laughs.

LARRY

Is that what you're scared of?

She looks right through him.

ELLEN

Don't laugh.

He stops. Pauses. Thinks.

LARRY

I feel like a tire worn down to the radials. Like I'm just... watching things happen around me. My daughter's marrying this man I barely even know. I write fluff pieces for a local rag that aspires to even be the Pennysaver. I guess...

She leans in.

ELLEN

What?

LARRY

I guess things just didn't turn out the way I wanted to.

ELLEN

You feel powerless?

LARRY

I am powerless. Fact is, we don't hold the cards.

ELLEN

Fate?

LARRY

I never believed in fate.

ELLEN

Well, there's something guiding us.

Larry shrugs.

ELLEN

Something brought me here tonight.

LARRY

What?

ELLEN

Do you have any beer?

LARRY

In the fridge...

She gets up, crosses into the kitchen. Comes back with two bottles of beer. Hands one to Larry, sits next to him.

The sound of the rain. Thunder rumbles in the distance.

Ellen chugs half her beer. Belches.

Larry looks like a nervous school boy.

She rises, throws one leg around and straddles Larry. Her wet hair in her face.

They look at each other in silence. The lights flicker.

LARRY

I would never ask you for this.

She draws closer. Smiles.

ELLEN

I know. That's why I made the first move.

Their lips touch. Immediately turns into a deep, passionate kiss. She wraps her arms around the back of his neck.

INT. LARRY'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - MORNING

Larry and Ellen in bed.

He turns to her.

LARRY

Hey. You awake?

No movement.

The cat jumps up. Larry rubs his back.

KITCHEN - LATER

Larry makes breakfast. Sips coffee.

The doorbell RINGS.

FOYER

Larry ties his robe. Doorbell sounds again.

LARRY

I'm coming.

Opens the door --

DOORSTEP

Two MEN, 30s, in tailored suits. One man, GARY, smiles broadly. The other, PETER, carries a briefcase.

Larry looks them over.

LARRY  
Who are you, the FBI?

GARY  
Good morning.

An awkward pause.

LARRY  
Yes?

GARY  
I'm Gary Kewley. This is my brother, Peter. We're in the neighborhood today making some visits with our wives.

Larry looks to the neighbor's house across the street -- two WOMEN with red hair and matching dresses at the door.

LARRY  
Uh huh.

Peters hands Larry a PAMPHLET.

PETER  
Sir, have you received your cop of the Good News?

INSERT: PAMPHLET

A crude picture of JESUS protecting a family of three from the DEVIL, who looks kind of like Tommy Chong with cloven hooves.

BACK

Larry hands it back.

LARRY  
The last good news I got was when my lawyer told me my wife wasn't contesting our divorce.

GARY  
Sir, do you know Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and savior?

Larry rolls his eyes. SIGHS. Not having it.

LARRY

Oh, my god. No. Nor do I want to.  
I've seen his work.

PETER

Sir, we understand if you're not quite ready for the annointment. Why, Gary and I were male prostitutes in Muttontown when our calling came. We're sinners. We've sinned.

(getting going)

But by the grace of God we were washed clean with the Lord's soap. We were plucked from the filth we were wading in and thrown into the light.

Gary, eyes closed, hands raised.

GARY

Have mercy.

Larry rubs his head.

LARRY

Look, I don't have time for you two looney tunes today. All right? I'm righteous enough as it is. Good day to you.

Goes to close the door, when --

GARY

(mumbles)

More like self righteous.

LARRY

What was that?

Peter grins, steps out front.

PETER

What my brother means to say is God bless you. Have a great--

GARY

I didn't say that.

PETER

Gary--



GARY

No, man. This is bullshit! You know how many houses we have to go to and get shit kicked in our faces? I'm sick of it.

Larry steps forward.

LARRY

There's a lot I'm sick of, too. You don't see me going door-to-door bitching about it, do you? You know what? Here's an idea - stop going around telling people about this great news you supposedly have. You know why? You don't have any great news, jerk off! There is no great news!

Larry and Gary reach for each other simultaneously.

ACROSS THE STREET

The SISTERS, chatting up a neighbor, hear the commotion and whirl around.

They're TWINS. Same red hair. Same dress. They race over.

BACK

Gary has Larry in a headlock. Larry takes jabs at his mid-section. Peter tries to break them up.

The TWINS enter the scene, then --

ELLEN (O.S.)

Hey, asshole!

Gary looks up--

BAM!

Ellen clocks him with a roundabout to the jaw. He releases Larry immediately and drops on his ass.

One of the twins, TIFFANY, 30s, rushes forward.

TIFFANY

That's my husband!

Ellen raises her fists. Snarls --

ELLEN

One more step and I'll knock your  
tits inside out, Red.

Tiffany goes silent.

Ellen helps Larry to his feet.

ELLEN

Are you okay?

LARRY

Yeah, I'm okay.

The twins and their husband's shuffle off the lawn.

ELLEN

Christ, who the hell were they?

LARRY

I don't know. Jehovah's Witnesses,  
I think...

ELLEN

Oh, Larry, your nose is bleeding.  
Let's get you inside.

LARRY

Okay. Yeah, yeah. Hell of a right  
hook you got.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Amy pulls up at the curb. He watches curiously as the fiery  
red heads escort Gary and Peter away.

She looks to the front of the house.

EXT. LARRY'S HOUSE, FRONT YARD

LARRY

Oh shit.

Amy exits the car, heads to them. Sees Larry's nose bleeding.  
She's appropriately aghast.

ELLEN

Who's that?

Larry breathes in deep.

AMY  
What in the world is going on here,  
Dad?

INT. LARRY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - LATER

Amy sits across from her father. It's damn quiet.

She checks out the LIVING ROOM --

Five or six empty beer bottles on the coffee table. A couple  
are knocked over.

AMY  
Would you care to explain what just  
happened?

Larry looks away.

AMY  
Dad!

Footsteps are heard descending the stairs.

Ellen steps into the kitchen.

All three look at each other for an awkward moment.

ELLEN  
Well, I guess I'll be heading out.

She shakes hands with Amy.

ELLEN  
Very nice to meet you.

She turns to Larry, hiding a smile.

LARRY  
Ellen.

ELLEN  
Lawrence.

Ellen leaves. Front door slams.

AMY  
Didn't you forget something?

LARRY  
What?

AMY  
The formalities.

LARRY  
Hey! You watch your mouth. She's  
not a prostitute, all right.  
She's...

AMY  
What?

LARRY  
She's a friend.

She shakes her head. Laughs.

AMY  
Christ, Dad. What are you doing?  
She's my age. You know that, right?

LARRY  
Umm...

Amy's eyes widen.

AMY  
Oh. My. God.

Amy buries her head in her hands.

Larry shrugs.

AMY  
She's not coming to the wedding, is  
she?

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Partly sunny.

Thirty or so PEOPLE gathered around a grave site.

The PREACHER, 50s, stands before a casket, holding a mistle.

PREACHER  
And so we lay the body of Mary  
Simpson to her eternal rest, though  
we are comforted to know her soul  
shall live eternally in the hands  
of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Doug stands up front, head bowed. Next to him are his two sons, JEFFREY, 32, TODD, 37.

A few rows back, Larry makes the sign of the cross. Debra stands at his side.

Larry shoots cursory glances across the gathering.

Someone coughs. The Preacher steps away, and slowly, everyone follows suit.

Larry and Debra approach Doug and his boys.

LARRY  
(to the boys)  
So sorry for your loss. Your mother  
was a good woman. I'm proud to have  
known her.

The sons politely thank him.

Debra hugs Doug.

DEBRA  
We're so sorry.

Pleasantries exchanged, Larry and Debra head away.

LARRY  
Walk you to your car?

DEBRA  
Sure.

MOMENTS LATER

LARRY  
Sad.

DEBRA  
Yes. Too bad we'd fallen out of  
touch. I always liked Mary and  
Doug.

LARRY  
They knew that.

That makes Debra smile. She rests her head on Larry's arm, much to his surprise.

DEBRA  
Amy's worried about you.

LARRY  
She said that?

DEBRA  
Said she came by the house the  
other day and you had a...

LARRY  
She wasn't --  
(lowers his voice)  
She wasn't a prostitute.

DEBRA  
I was going to say company. Two red-  
headed women on your lawn who  
looked like the Stepford wives. A  
couple guys with them. Your nose  
bleeding.  
(beat)  
And then, yes, a hooker.

LARRY  
Don't judge. It's a long story.

DEBRA  
I'm not judging. You know me. Just  
curious is all.

LARRY  
Since when are you curious about my  
life?

DEBRA  
I'm not really. Just... There's a  
lot of pieces in play there. You  
want to make sure the right story  
gets out. Or stays in.

Larry laughs.

LARRY  
Still my editor, huh?

DEBRA  
Someone has to be--

Larry's distracted. He squints at the outgoing cars. Spots a  
HUSKY MAN with a cane.

Larry takes off.

DEBRA  
Larry?

LARRY  
Be right back.

Larry gains on the HUSKY MAN, who enters a car.

As the engine starts, Larry raps on the glass.

The man turns. It's John Herlihy. Definitely him. But he looks different. Somehow older.

Herlihy turns away, cuts the wheel and speeds away.

Larry stands there, confused. He watches the car as it disappears from sight.

A late Summer breeze rustles the leaves.

Debra's by his side.

DEBRA  
Who was that?

LARRY  
You want to grab a cup of coffee?

EXT. COFFEE SHOP ON MAIN STREET - DAY

A Mom and Pop place along the strip.

DEBRA (O.S.)  
So, you're telling me the fountain  
of youth is being sold out of a  
farm stand in Huxton?

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

PATRONS at the counter. A SHORT ORDER COOK greases a skillet. Aluminum everywhere. Checkered floors.

Larry and Debra at a booth.

LARRY  
You think I'm crazy, right?

DEBRA  
I know you're crazy.

LARRY  
Look, John won't talk. Ellen, that  
*girl*, *only* alludes to it. Then you  
have that morning I woke up with a  
hard on.

Debra stares at him. Expressionless.

LARRY

And there's the old couple who  
wanted a threesome.

She blinks her eyes.

LARRY

What?

DEBRA

You're still not showing me any  
proof.

LARRY

I'm the proof, Debra. I'm the  
proof. Just trusting my gut here.  
That used to mean something.

DEBRA

Lawrence, you can't write a story  
like this based on instinct alone.  
Peoples lives and livelihoods are  
at stake. You need a smoking gun.

LARRY

Herlihy. At the cemetery. He looked  
older, Debra. He was older.

She sips her tea. Shrugs.

LARRY

You don't believe me.

DEBRA

If you were sitting where I was,  
would you?

Larry fidgets with his silverware.

LARRY

A story like this could move the  
needle. Put me back on the map.

DEBRA

Whose map?

No answer.

DEBRA

You see what I'm saying, Lawrence?  
Is this all about you? What about  
the girl?



LARRY  
Ellen.

DEBRA  
You like her.

LARRY  
I do.

DEBRA  
Understand the risks then. Just because we're older doesn't make us impervious to disappointment. And pain. Getting hurt can still sting like a pissed off wasp.

LARRY  
I know.

DEBRA  
Do you?

LARRY  
Yes.

Debra gets up suddenly.

LARRY  
You have to go?

DEBRA  
Yes. But... If you want I can do some digging on that farm stand. Get you a little background maybe.

LARRY  
Thanks. Still have contacts, huh?

DEBRA  
Just the right ones.

She turns to leave. Stops.

DEBRA  
You should bring her.

LARRY  
Hmm?

DEBRA  
Your friend. You should bring her to the wedding. I'd like to meet her.

She leaves.

Larry sips his coffee.

LARRY  
Sounds like a trap.

EXT. HERLIHY'S FARM STAND - MORNING

Larry's Hyundai sits out front. Stand's closed this early.

EXT. ELLEN'S HOUSE, PORCH - MORNING

Larry ascends the steps. The door is open a crack.

LARRY  
Hello? Ellen?

He pushes the door open, steps in.

INT. ELLEN'S HOUSE, KITCHEN

The room's empty. A vase of flowers rests on the counter. A potted tomato plant next to it.

Larry's drawn to the tomato plant. He smells its leaves, goes to pick it up and --

BLAM!

An earsplitting shotgun blast. The vase explodes.

Larry falls back onto the floor.

LARRY  
Jesus fuck!

John's silhouette in the doorway.

JOHN  
You're trespassing here.

LARRY  
Are you out of you fucking mind!

JOHN  
(nods)  
Mm hmm.

Larry slowly rises.

LARRY

John, put the gun down. Come on.  
This is crazy.

JOHN

Coming into my house uninvited is  
crazy.

LARRY

You gonna kill me?

JOHN

Thinkin' about it.

John limps into the light.

LARRY

How do you know Doug Simpson?

JOHN

Never heard of him.

LARRY

Bullshit. You were at the cemetery  
yesterday. How do you know him?

JOHN

I don't know what you're talking  
about.

LARRY

John, the cracks are showing. You  
forget to put on your make-up?  
Because the man I saw yesterday was  
a good twenty years older than the  
last time I saw you.

Shucks his rifle.

JOHN

I want you out of this house.

Larry stands his ground. Actually steps forward.

LARRY

I'm not gonna leave. You're gonna  
tell me the truth.

JOHN

I'm not gonna tell you shit.

LARRY

It's not you I'm worried about.

JOHN  
Get out of here!

Nothing.

JOHN  
I said get out!

BLAM!

John shoots the cabinet behind the stove. It shreds to pieces. A pile of dishes crash to the floor.

LARRY  
You crazy fuck!

John rushes forward. Face twisted. He cracks Larry in the face with the rifle's stock.

Darkness.

EXT. BLUE JAY GROCERY - DAY

Grocery store, north of Huxton. Rain-slicked street.

INT. BLUE JAY GROCERY, FIRST-AID AISLE - DAY

Larry opens a bottle of ibuprofen. Shakes out four and downs them dry.

His jaw is red and swollen. Hair's a mess.

Goes down the main aisle, then --

Looks back down one of the aisles. It's Ellen.

She lifts her head and smiles. To Larry, she's an oasis.

ELLEN  
Hey, you-- What happened to your face?!

LARRY  
Hazards of the profession.

ELLEN  
John...

She gently touches his face. Kisses his jaw.

LARRY

Your brother looks like Rip Van Winkle.

ELLEN

Shh...

LARRY

Ellen, I'm worried for you. You should be worried, too.

ELLEN

Why?

LARRY

Because you might be next. You...

ELLEN

I once knew a little boy. He died, Larry. He died in my arms. I watched him fight, but in the end, there was nothing they could do. And all that anger I had, and all that pain, wrapped itself into a little ball and sits... right here.

(points to her belly)

And I don't peel those layers back for nobody. But you? With you I felt it move for the first time in years... I felt it beginning to unravel.

LARRY

Ellen, I'm sorry.

Their faces close. Ellen's eyes dancing. The crows feet in the corners of her eyes, tiny wrinkles at the seam of her lips.

LARRY

I find it hard to believe I can move anybody anymore.

ELLEN

Do you ever allow yourself anything? Ever?

She slowly backs away. From him, reaches onto a shelf and knocks a candle to the floor. It smashes. Heads turn.

LARRY

What are you doing?

She doesn't answer. Tips over another candle.

SMASH.

ELLEN  
Whoopsie daisy.

She runs.

SMASH, CRASH!

Larry gives chase.

Ellen runs amok -- a choreographed symphony of destruction.  
Like dancing. And knocking shit off shelves.

OLD LADY  
Hey, you can't do that!

Ellen prances past.

ELLEN  
Just did.

LARRY  
Ellen, stop!

She ducks down an aisle.

SOME GUY  
Dude, you better get your daughter  
under control.

The STORE MANAGER, 40s, on his cell phone, joins the chase.

LARRY  
Ellen! They're calling the cops.

She skips away. Stops in front of a MOM with a BABY in her  
cart.

She kisses the baby's forehead, then heads to the frozen  
foods.

TV dinners hit the floor.

A WORKER, 20s, stands in her path.

Ellen runs toward him like Baby running to Johnny in the  
Dirty Dancing finale.

She jumps into his arms. He swings her in a circle.

Larry rounds the corner.

ELLEN  
Hey, Lawrence.

She kisses the Worker on the lips.

Larry rushes her, grabs her hand.

LARRY  
We have to go.

EXT. BLUE JAY GROCERY - MOMENTS LATER

Ellen traipses haphazardly into the road.

Larry struggles to keep up.

LARRY  
Ellen!

A CAR bears down. Brakes screech. It stops inches from her, and she slaps the hood.

ELLEN  
Fucker!

On a dime -- her smile is gone. Long gone.

Larry grabs her hand again, pulls her away. She jerks free.

ELLEN  
Get away from me!

LARRY  
Ellen. What's wrong?

She slaps him in the face. Hard.

Larry's stunned. Touches his face.

Above, rain clouds rumble.

He grabs her face and kisses her. Passionate and deep.

LARRY  
I love you.

A smile appears on her face. She kisses him.

ELLEN  
Now that was true.

Larry smiles, takes her hand. Leads her away.

LARRY

We better get out of here before we  
get arrested.

A cop car pulls up at the grocery store. Two OFFICER'S run  
inside.

LARRY

Hey... Stop. Wait.

ELLEN

What?

LARRY

Do you have a fancy dress?

EXT. OCEAN - DAY

We glide over rippling, blue, sun-splashed water. A smooth  
YACHT ROCK song play over.

SUPER: THE WEDDING

Resting in the water is a massive YACHT. An excessive display  
of wealth -- sleek, curved lines from bow to stern.

INT. YACHT, CABIN - DAY

A makeshift command center for Amy's pre-game -- make-up  
table, wet bar and a spread of pastries and fruit.

A bridesmaid, SUZANNE, 30s, in a bright blue dress, holds a  
drink and snorts as she bites into a danish.

SUZANNE

Does George have any good looking  
relatives? I mean, I'm not a gold  
digger or anything, but holy shit!

She smiles, blows a kiss to Amy before she leaves --

SUZANNE

See you out there.

AMY

See ya.

Amy sits at the make-up table in her wedding dress. She's  
stunning. Got her wedding glow going on.

Debra is beside her, primed in a evening gown.



AMY  
You think I need more rouge, Mom?

DEBRA  
No.

AMY  
Eye shadow?

DEBRA  
No.

AMY  
Christ, I want to make sure I look good for George.

DEBRA  
Look good for yourself, Amy. You could smear dog shit on your face and George would still think you were beautiful.

Amy stands, throws her arms around her mother.

DEBRA  
Oh... It's okay to be jittery, honey. But you'll be fine. Remember, you're a princess today. No one is allowed to look better than you.

KNOCK, KNOCK at the door.

Larry pokes his head in.

LARRY  
Is everyone decent?

He steps in. In a light-colored suit that borders on casual, he appears as if he could own this yacht.

Behind him is Ellen. Black party dress, small hand bag, sparkly necklace. Freshly done hair. It's a version of Ellen we haven't seen before and she totally owns it.

ELLEN  
(shyly)  
You look beautiful, Amy.  
Congratulations.

Amy looks her over. If she's impressed, she doesn't show it. Still a bit off put.

AMY

Thanks. You look great, too.

Ellen grins, looks at her shoes.

Larry approaches Amy. His glow rivals hers.

LARRY

You're beautiful, Amy.

AMY

Dad...

LARRY

You're the prettiest thing I ever  
laid eyes on. I'm so proud of you.

Amy wipes a tear.

Ellen stands next to Debra. They exchange a quick glance.

ELLEN

I'm Ellen.

Debra slowly turns.

DEBRA

I know that.

INT. YACHT, CHAPEL - LATER

The BRIDESMAIDS, all in blue, hair freshly coiffed. Smiles, smooth skin and lipstick and --

The GROOMSMEN -- they're all Hispanic. Dark hair, one has a gold tooth, another with a tattoo on his face. One is so short all we see is the top of his hair.

The ship's captain, CAPTAIN STAN, stands center. Extends his arms.

MONTAGE:

-- Larry walks Amy down the aisle.

-- He lifts Amy's veil, kisses her.

-- Debra, stoic, but proud, watches on.

-- George eagerly awaits his bride.

GEORGE

I do.

AMY

I do.

-- The crowd applauds as bride and groom head down the aisle.

Two CREW MEMBERS open the doors leading them out, letting in the bright light from outside.

I/E. YACHT, PARTY DECK - NIGHT

The celebration's going full throttle. Dancing and drinking and eating. The shortest groomsman dances with the tallest bridesmaid.

George and Amy visit with their guests.

The music stops. A drum roll sounds...

The DJ, good looking dude in his thirties, grabs the mic.

DJ

Where's all of our single ladies  
tonight?

AT THE BAR

Larry sips on a drink with an umbrella in it. He's talking with Doug Simpson.

LARRY

I'm glad you made it, Doug. You  
know, in spite of everything.

Doug points to the dance floor, where a group of WOMEN have gathered. Among them is Ellen.

DOUG

That her? Your mystery girl.

LARRY

In the flesh.

Doug takes a drink, nods.

DOUG

What do you have on her?

LARRY

She's here of her own free will.

DOUG  
You're a lucky man, Larry. Do you  
see it?

LARRY  
See what?

Amy heads the group on the floor, BOUQUET in hand.

DOUG  
You don't see it. The resemblance  
to Debra.

LARRY  
Now, why would you want to ruin the  
aesthetic like that?

Doug drinks his beer. Shrugs.

DOUG  
Just stating a fact, Larry.

LARRY  
Mm. Worlds apart, personality-wise.

DOUG  
Hence the attraction.

Amy turns her back to the girls on the floor. Ready to throw  
the bouquet. Looks back, giggling.

LARRY  
I ask a question, Doug?

DOUG  
Yes, we knew them.

LARRY  
Who?

DOUG  
The Herlihy's. That's who we're  
talking about. No?

LARRY  
You know-- You and Mary?

DOUG  
We knew John. We both did. Not  
Ellen, though.

Amy tosses the bouquet. The crowd squeals. It tips off a few  
hands, and --

Lands in Ellen's hands. She covers her mouth. Laughing. She hands off the bouquet to a YOUNG GIRL, smiling with delight.

FLASH.

A PHOTOGRAPHER captures the moment.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Thank you.

LARRY

(voice rising)

Jesus, Doug. Why didn't you say something?

DOUG

Larry...

LARRY

They were keeping her alive, weren't they? Those tomatoes.

DOUG

I don't know.

LARRY

Yes, you do.

DOUG

Look, all I know is that they made things better. Okay? I don't know how, but... Somehow it did. Mary was sick, Larry... She was...

Ellen, giddy, joins them.

LARRY

Ellen, meet Doug. We built Stonehenge together.

ELLEN

(somber)

Larry told me what happened. So sorry for your loss.

DOUG

Thank you.

Debra comes over.

DEBRA

(on Larry)

Can I steal him for a minute?

Ellen turns her attention to Doug.

ELLEN  
Give a girl a dance?

She takes Doug by the hand, leads him away.

Debra holds a manila binder.

DEBRA  
Somewhere we can talk?

EXT. YACHT, UPPER DECK - NIGHT

Larry, Debra and the stars. Party music in the background.

Debra opens the binder, pulls out articles and clippings.

DEBRA  
You might find this interesting,  
you might not. I really didn't know  
what I was looking for.

LARRY  
You and me both.

She hands him a clipping.

DEBRA  
Then try this.

Larry puts on his glasses and --

INSERT: CLIPPING

Headline reads -- UFOs OVER HUXTON

BACK

Larry reads.

LARRY  
(reading)  
*Several Huxton residents contacted  
local police claiming to have seen  
bright lights over Indian Ridge, a  
hamlet of Huxton. They were quite  
striking, one resident, who refused  
to be identified, claimed. I've  
never seen anything like it...*

He lowers the paper, looks at Debra.

LARRY

This is from 1959.

DEBRA

The rest of the stories are of the same ilk, same time frame. Some from as far away as East Covel. The stories tapered off a few months later. Anything after that is residual.

He shakes his head.

LARRY

This is what you found? UFOs?

DEBRA

From the out of the ordinary files, yes.

Larry removes his glasses, SIGHS.

She hands him the folder, save for one piece of paper.

DEBRA

However, I did find this.

Larry takes the copy. Another article. Studies it in silence.

LARRY

You're shittin' me.

DEBRA

That's him, isn't it?

INSERT: ARTICLE

A black and white newspaper clipping. A story about Herlihy's farm stand. And a picture of an adult John Herlihy, wearing overalls.

Standing next to him is Ellen.

(Larry looks at the date of the clip -- 1959)

BACK

He's speechless.

Larry leans against the railing and looks out to the dark water. Twinkling lights on the horizon.

Debra joins him.

DEBRA  
That's the year you were born.

LARRY  
Yes, it is.  
(pause)  
Deb, am I crazy to be thinking what I'm thinking? It makes no sense. It goes against every natural law that humanity is governed by.

DEBRA  
Not to mention it's nuts.

LARRY  
It is nuts, isn't it?

She doesn't answer.

DEBRA  
You love her.

LARRY  
I think so.

She puts her hand on his forearm.

DEBRA  
You raised a good daughter, Larry. I hope you know that. And whether you believe it or not, George is good for her. They click. Not like us, where we fed each others' appetites, then starved ourselves to death.

LARRY  
How come you're only telling me this now?

DEBRA  
I was never good at doling out niceties, Lawrence. Just wasn't my style. But I'm saying it now.

LARRY  
Thanks.

DEBRA  
You're welcome.

CRASH! It's from below. Someone screams.

Debra and Larry race to the stairs. A GUEST comes down.



GUEST

Larry!

PARTY DECK

Larry and Debra come into the room to find a crowd of people on the dance floor. He pushes through.

George holds Ellen in his arms. She's limp, hair spilled across her face.

Larry cuts in. Ellen's unresponsive.

GEORGE

Larry, I don't know what happened.  
we were dancing. She just  
collapsed.

Larry opens her mouth, checks inside. Puts his ear to her lips. Still breathing.

Her body convulses.

Larry turns to the crowd.

LARRY

Someone call an ambulance! The...  
Coast Guard. Someone!

George has his cell phone to his ear.

GEORGE

No time for that, Larry.

EXT. YACHT, HELI-PAD - NIGHT

Larry cradles Ellen.

George, Debra and Captain Stan wait with them as a HELICOPTER descends. The rotors deafening.

George helps Larry and Ellen aboard. Doors shut.

George gives a thumbs up to the PILOT.

The chopper takes off.

INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

Ellen rests on a stretcher.

Larry hovers over her. Looks out the window. The city lights grow closer.

LARRY  
How far to the hospital?

PILOT  
Five minutes.

LARRY  
(to Ellen)  
Just hold on, okay? Just hold on  
for me...

Ellen's face has aged slightly. Her skin taut. Crevasse lines along the corner of her eyes.

Larry touches her hair. Gone is the dark, silky brown. Now brittle, some gray.

She's aging by the minute.

LARRY  
Hurry!

EXT. YACHT, SKY DECK - NIGHT

The concerned party-goers watch as the chopper buzzes into the night. Red and green safety lights blinking.

George, Amy, Captain Stan -- they're all there.

We settle on Debra. Her concern is evident. Finally, she turns and walks away.

Amy tracks her steps, but doesn't follow.

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

A tall, modern building that looks peaceful.

INT. HOSPITAL, WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

A lonely clock face reads 11:07.

Larry's slumped in an uncomfortable chair, chin resting on his hands.

A DOCTOR, late 40s, weary, enters the room.

DOCTOR  
Mr. Rigby?

Larry springs from his seat.

LARRY  
Yes. How is she?

DOCTOR  
She stable, but critical. Her  
kidneys are failing. We've got her  
on dialysis. I'm sorry.

LARRY  
What-- What do you mean, you're  
sorry?

DOCTOR  
Mr. Rigby, she's in bad shape right  
now. We're doing everything we can.

Larry tries to process this.

LARRY  
I want to see her.

ELLEN'S ROOM - LATER

A dialysis machine whirs. An IV bag drips. Ellen's vitals on  
a digital screen. The Doctor stands outside.

Larry sits at Ellen's bedside. Just watching her. Can't  
believe what he's seeing. She's gaunt. Eyes half-closed,  
staring at the ceiling.

The Ellen he knew hours ago has vanished.

She coughs. Sees Larry.

LARRY  
Are you in pain?

She motions weakly for Larry to come in close. He moves  
closer, positions his ear above her mouth.

ELLEN  
(weak)  
Get me the fuck out of here.

OUTSIDE THE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Larry and the Doctor.

LARRY  
Why can't I take her home?

DOCTOR  
Are you her proxy?

LARRY  
No.

DOCTOR  
Husband?

Larry thinks.

LARRY  
Yes.

The Doctor appears suspicious.

DOCTOR  
Look, she has no ID on her. You signed her in. She's not out of the woods. Not yet. She needs our care.

LARRY  
What if she signs a discharge?

DOCTOR  
You think she can do that?

Larry knows she can't.

DOCTOR  
I'll check in with you in a little while. She's in good hands, Mr. Rigby.

He leaves.

Larry watches as he plods down the hall, past the nurse's station. He goes back into --

ELLEN'S ROOM

She lies in bed. Eyes now closed. Breathing shallow.

Larry paces until--

A painting on the wall catches his eye. He looks closer. Some weird kind of expressionist thing. But at the bottom is a plaque that reads:

HISPANIC ARTS CENTER, JULIO ALBERTO, 2007.

Larry takes out his phone.

EXT. HARBOR - NIGHT

The yacht is docked. People disembark.

INT. YACHT, PARTY DECK - NIGHT

Debra paces with phone to her ear. She pockets it, glances across the room. Sees --

George at the bar having cocktails with his groomsmen.

She heads over to them.

INT. HOSPITAL, ELLEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Larry puts away his phone. Moves to the window and looks out. His reflection silhouetted on the glass as a monitor beeps.

He SIGHS.

INT. HOSPITAL, LOBBY - NIGHT

The sliding glass doors part like the Red Sea.

George strides in, alpha-confident, wearing his tux and a pair of dark Ray-Bans.

Flanking him on one side are two groomsmen, FELIPE, 20s, RICKY, 30s.

On the other side is Captain Stan.

The strut into the lobby like they own the joint.

George points. The groomsmen veer left.

George and Captain Stan go right. They stop at an elevator, push a button and wait.

HOSPITAL LOCKER ROOM

A NURSE, 30s, scrubs himself down in the shower.

Ricky stands guard at the door.

Felipe tip-toes in. Spots a pair of NURSE'S SCRUBS hanging. He glides over and grabs them. He turns away, bangs his knee on a table and freezes.

The Nurse stops scrubbing for a moment. Listens.

NURSE  
Who's there?

Felipe and Ricky look at each other.

FELIPE  
Custodian.

NURSE  
Oh. Okay.

They quickly leave the room.

ICU, NURSE'S STATION

Quiet. Peaceful, night duty.

Nurse's MILLIE, 53, brutish, and BELLA, 35, not as brutish, finish paper work among amidst the silence.

A noise from down the hall.

They simultaneously crane their necks to see --

George and Captain Stan.

GEORGE  
This is perfect. Just perfect.

Captain Stan, squaring his fingers like a director setting a shot, agrees.

MILLIE  
The fuck is this?

BELLA  
Sir, you can't be here. I--

George leans on the counter.

GEORGE  
Ladies, forgive the intrusion. I don't normally do this and well, I can't recall finding two more beautiful women at this hour of night.

BELLA  
 (re: Captain Stan)  
 What's he doing?

Captain Stan's in his own world. Getting into it.

GEORGE  
 That's Rocco DeMartise. He's the  
 director of my latest motion  
 picture.

MILLIE  
 Motion picture? You an actor?

George smiles sheepishly.

GEORGE  
 Yes, I am. My apologies for showing  
 up like this, but my need for  
 discretion is...  
 (searching)  
 ...very high up on the list. Of  
 lists.

Bella's eyes go wide.

BELLA  
 Are you--?

He removes his Ray-Bans.

GEORGE  
 I am the Antonio Banderas.

HOSPITAL, OUTSIDE STAIRWELL

Behind the closed door to the stairs. A commotion is heard.  
 Banging. Like something just fell down the stairs. Two voices  
 are heard, yelling in Spanish.

The door opens. Felipe, in scrubs, pulls a wheel chair out,  
 followed by Ricky.

Ricky sits in the wheel chair, Felipe pushes him to --

ELEVATOR

The doors open. There's a guy in there -- PAUL, 38, a PA in a  
 lab coat. Looks like he's on his third shift.

Felipe hesitates, then steps in. The doors close.

PAUL  
What's the matter with him?

FELIPE  
Er... poison food.

PAUL  
Looks like he just came in from a  
wedding. I got sick once from  
wedding food. Bad shrimp. Where's  
his chart?

FELIPE  
Umm...

Ricky groans, falls out of the wheel chair.

PAUL  
Oh!

Paul helps Felipe lift him. Ricky wretches, throws up on  
Paul's lab coat.

PAUL  
Jesus Christ.

RICKY  
Sorry...

Elevator bell TINGS. Door open. Felipe wheels Ricky out.

As the doors begin to close, Paul looks out and sees a ward  
sign that says -- PEDIATRICS.

Suspicion on his face as the doors shut.

NURSE'S STATION

George continues to schmooze the nurses.

GEORGE  
Yes, yes. It is me.

Bella GASPS.

BELLA  
Holy shit. It is you! Mr. Banderas,  
I'm such--

George puts his fingers to Bella's lips.

GEORGE  
Please. Call me Antonio.



Even Millie's edges are softening.

Captain Stan whispers something to George.

GEORGE

You think so? Yes... Yes! I see it now.

MILLIE

See what?

GEORGE

We are scouting locations for my next picture. There will be many, many beautiful girls in the film. Do you have head shots?

BELLA

Head shots? No. Do you?

MILLIE

No.

Captain Stan takes out his cell phone.

GEORGE

Do you mind? Please. For me. Strike a pose.

Bella and Millie come out from behind the desk. Bella pouts her lips.

Captain Stan snaps pictures.

GEORGE

Yes! That's it. Mi amore... Give me some Marilyn.  
(checks her name tag)  
Millie. Marilyn Monroe.

Bella gets behind Millie, lifts up her skirt, briefly revealing her grannie panties.

George winces.

Stan takes the pic.

GEORGE

Oh, so sexy! So seductive.

MILLIE

How about Barbarella? Just pretend I'm holding a space gun.

GEORGE

Uh, yes...

George peers down the end of the corridor. Hoping to see --  
Behind the nurses, Felipe and Ricky scoot past.

GEORGE

Yes, there it is!

BELLA

What's the name of your new movie,  
Antonio?

George, distracted --

GEORGE

Huh?

MILLIE

Your new movie?

GEORGE

Oh, umm... Love... Pistol.

BELLA

Ooh... Like that Billy Joel song.

MILLIE

No, wasn't that Captain and  
Tenille?

GEORGE

Exactly.

ELLEN'S ROOM

The groomsmen comes in. Larry gets up, helps them get Ellen  
into the wheel chair.

The IV is in her arm. Larry carefully tries to remove it. Not  
sure of what he's doing when --

Ellen rips it out. She looks up at Larry. Manages a smile.

NURSE'S STATION

Captain Stan's snaps more pics.

George holds his hands up, starts to back away.

Behind the nurses, Larry and Ellen dart past, but Larry's  
heel scuffs on the floor.

GEORGE

That's it, ladies. Thank you very much. I think we have enough. We must bid you adieu. Adieu...

Millie hears the footfalls, turns just in time to see Felipe give a thumbs up.

MILLIE

Hey! Stop!

She runs to the end of the corridor.

Captain Stan cuts her off. She swats him with her beefy forearm and flat out levels him.

George helps Stan to his feet. They take off.

BELLA

Hey! Don't you want our contact information?

GEORGE

Agent will call you.

HOSPITAL LOBBY

A SECURITY GUARD, 30s, all upper body, stands dispassionately next to reception.

DING. The elevator doors open. Larry and Ellen.

George and Stan, out of breath, race to the Guard.

GEORGE

Hey. Two crazy women dressed as nurses just attacked my friend.

Captain Stan points to a welt under his eye.

SECURITY GUARD

Who?

GEORGE

And they have guns!

The Guard unfastens his holster.

Larry pushes Ellen through the waiting room.

The DOOR to the stairs bursts open. Bella and Millie pop out. Millie points at Larry.

MILLIE

Stop them!

The Guard goes to move --

Felipe and Ricky pull up next to George.

MILLIE

Mexicans!

Everyone looks at each other.

GEORGE

Where?

George and his crew take off running in different directions.

The Guard levels his gun. Confused. Not sure what he's doing at this point.

BELLA

Don't hit Antonio!

Millie's seething. Almost frothing at the mouth. She runs after George and --

WHAM!

She crashes into the Guard. They tumble to the floor. He loses control of his gun. It flies through the air and strikes a water fountain --

BLAM! It discharges.

Everyone ducks.

CAPTAIN STAN

They're shooting at us!

EXT. HOSPITAL, PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Larry flinches when he hears the report. He hurries Ellen across the lot, near the street.

They take cover in the brush. And wait.

MINUTES LATER

An Escalade pulls up. George and his crew get out. They help Larry get Ellen into the passenger seat.

George hands Larry the keys.

GEORGE

Take it, Papa. For as long as you need.

LARRY

How you getting back?

George smiles. Winks.

GEORGE

We'll get an Uber.

Larry gets in the truck. Looks back at George.

And for the first time, Larry can see that this is a man who'd run into a burning building for him.

LARRY

Thanks, George.

GEORGE

Au revoir, Papa.

The Escalade drives into the night.

INT. ESCALADE - NIGHT

Larry drives. Stone-faced. Solemn.

ELLEN (O.S.)

We there yet?

Ellen's slumped in her seat. Looks so tired and weak.

LARRY

Almost. Are you okay?

ELLEN

Bumpy road...

LARRY

I'm sorry. I'll drive slower.

Her eyes close. She drifts off.

Intermittent flashes of street lamps illuminate her face -- one moment, bright, next, dark.

Each time she looks different. Young Ellen -- peaceful and dreamy. Old -- helpless and frail. So ready for the curtain to fall.

On Larry, processing this. Emotions clashing.

EXT. HERLIHY'S FARM STAND, HOUSE - DAWN

Pre-dawn dark blue on the horizon line.

Larry exits the Escalade, opens the passenger door and tries to roust Ellen.

He carefully pulls her from the car, and carries her.

He ascends the steps to the porch, opens the storm door.

INT. FARM HOUSE - DAWN

He turns on a light in the kitchen.

LIVING ROOM

He gingerly lays Ellen on the couch. Brushes hair from her face, looks around the room.

Everything so quiet and empty.

HALLWAY

Larry slowly heads to the room at the end. The door is ajar. He pushes it open.

BEDROOM

John sits up in bed, eyes open but glassy. Lifeless.

A RIFLE is pointed directly at him.

Larry GASPS.

John has aged much more than Ellen. Skeletal and frail.

His finger curled around the trigger.

LARRY

John, I...

John mutters something inaudible. Maybe not a word at all. Maybe the last gasp of air leaving his lungs.

His finger squeezes the trigger --

CLICK.

Larry flinches, but no report. Empty.

Larry slumps against the wall.

He turns to find Ellen behind him. He recoils.

LARRY

Ellen, you shouldn't be up.

ELLEN

Shh...

She walks past him to John. Sits on the bed with him, strokes his thin hair. She gazes at him lovingly. A lifetime of compassion and tenderness in her smile.

She kisses his forehead.

ELLEN

(whispers)

Good night, Daddy.

She presses her face against his.

Larry watches. Losing a loved one. Saying goodbye. The moment weighs heavy.

First rays of sunlight creep in through the window.

Ellen slowly breaks away. She walks past Larry, her hand brushing against his chest.

He follows her into the--

LIVING ROOM

Ellen lowers a stylus onto a spinning record, then turns.

ELLEN

Give a girl a dance?

Not quite sure what to say, then --

LARRY

Of course.

The music starts. A slow-tempo, orchestral piece.

He takes Ellen in his arms.

LARRY

I'm not much of a dancer.

ELLEN

Strictly disco, huh?

He smiles. She buries her head in his chest.

They dance. Slow, shuffling. Somehow, their steps move perfectly together.

LARRY

Ellen...

ELLEN

I know.

LARRY

I have so many questions.

ELLEN

Maybe you can write about it.

LARRY

I wouldn't know where to begin.

She looks into his eyes.

ELLEN

Try a love story. Handsome, sophisticated journalist falls for a dirty, uneducated farm girl.

Larry laughs. A tear rolls down his cheek.

LARRY

That's not how I see you at all.

They kiss. Embrace. Dance.

The faded blue curtains ruffle in the breeze.

Ellen closes her eyes, let's the wind wash over her face.

ELLEN

Autumn's coming. Feel it?

LARRY

I do.

ELLEN

The leaves will fall. Pretty soon it'll be winter. Then Spring again....

LARRY

I don't want to leave you.

ELLEN

But, you must.



LARRY  
I want to keep dancing.

ELLEN  
Okay.

And so they do.

EXT. FARM HOUSE - DAY

Morning light washes across the field.

ELLEN (V.O.)  
I left something for you. Take it  
with you before you go.

Larry steps from the house, cradling a potted TOMATO PLANT.  
The morning breeze plays upon his gray hair.

He stops. Allows himself a moment as he gazes out at the  
morning.

INT. SHENANDOAH HOTEL, ROOM (FLASHBACK) - NIGHT

Senator Haskins atop Madeline. Giving it to her.

She opens her eyes. Her lip curls. Almost a sneer.

MADELINE  
I said, kill me, Senator. Kill me!

Haskins, trying not to lose his rhythm.

SENATOR HASKINS  
Stop calling me Senator.

She grins wickedly.

MADELINE  
Senator... Senator! Senator!  
Senator!

SENATOR HASKINS  
STOP!

He raises the knife. Plunges it into the pillow mere inches  
from her head.

There we go.

MADELINE

Now, you're talking. Kill me, you  
little pussy. Kill me.

Haskins struggles to keep his balance. He tears the sheets to  
shreds with the knife. Feathers spill from the pillow.

His face shows it now. Nearing crescendo.

ACROSS THE ROOM

A WOMAN'S hand -- black nail polish -- pours champagne. She  
sits near the window, crosses her legs. An observer. A  
watcher.

She sips. Red lipstick impression on the glass.

It's DEBRA. Younger. Incredibly sexy. That Debra.

Haskins plunges the knife repeatedly, intent on destroying  
that bed.

Madeline screams in ecstasy.

Haskins face contorts. Close. Right there. Gonna cum...

He pulls out, loses balance. Flops hard on top of Madeline.

Madeline GASPS. Eyes like two full moons.

Debra rushes over.

The champagne flute crashes to the floor.

The life quickly drains from Madeline's face.

Haskins drops the knife.

Debra rushes to Haskins' side. She saw it all.

SENATOR HASKINS

Oh fuck! Oh fuck, oh fuck! It-it  
was an accident. Oh fuck. You saw  
it, Debra. You saw it. She wanted  
this! This -- She wanted this! She--

Debra smacks his hard across the face.

DEBRA

Shut up!  
(heads to the door)  
And lower your fucking voice.

She calmly knocks on the door. Three times. Pause. Once. Pause. Three more.

The door opens and three MEN in black suits enter.

MAN (O.S.)  
Get dressed, Senator.

Debra takes a deep breath. Releases.

The room slowly fades to...

INT. DEBRA'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Debra sips tea from a fine china cup. The room is pin drop quiet.

DEBRA  
Are you going to say something?

Larry shrugs.

LARRY  
How do you want me to respond to that?

DEBRA  
I don't know.

LARRY  
That's why you killed my story?  
Because you were complicit?

DEBRA  
Harlen ran with it at the Times.  
Got everything wrong. Is that what you wanted?

LARRY  
I wanted the truth.

DEBRA  
Now you have it.

LARRY  
Why? Dammit, why now?

DEBRA  
Because--

Larry stands. Looks like he wants to punch something. Circles like a caged tiger.

DEBRA  
Lawrence, please. Sit...

He relents. Rubs his face.

DEBRA  
Lawrence, when I saw how you were  
at the reception with...

LARRY  
Ellen.

DEBRA  
Ellen. I'd never seen you so happy.  
For as short as it lasted, it was  
the first time, other than when Amy  
was born, that I'd seen you  
completely vulnerable. It was  
honest. True.

LARRY  
So, because of this, you decided to  
tell me about the threesome you had  
when we first got married?

Debra smiles in spite herself.

DEBRA  
No. I guess I just decided it was  
time for me to honest. I've never  
let myself be vulnerable to anyone.  
Especially you. And now... Here we  
are.

LARRY  
Here we are.

She sips her tea.

DEBRA  
I was young.

LARRY  
We both were.

Larry looks around. Getting antsy.

DEBRA  
So, will you write about this?

LARRY  
Who'd believe it?

She puts her tea down. Leans in.

DEBRA

I would.

EXT. LARRY'S HOUSE - DAY

Late afternoon. Long shadows around supper time.

Larry's Hyundai's parked along the curb. A FOR SALE sign in its window.

The front door opens, Larry comes out with the tomato plant. He sets it down on a table on the porch.

He sits. Cracks open a beer. Exhales deeply. On the --

CURB

Is the woman, BRENDA, 50s, walking her dog. She looks up as the sun catches her shoulder-length brown hair.

She glances over.

BRENDA

Hi.

LARRY

Hello.

BRENDA

Little chilly today. I guess  
Summer's finally over.

Larry nods obligingly. Not quite sure what to say.

Brenda smiles awkwardly, lowers her head. Says something to her dog and starts off.

Larry watches her. Resigned. Powerless. Ready to accept--

LARRY

Would you like a beer?

Brenda stops. Looks up at Larry. Smiles.

BRENDA

I thought you'd never ask.

FADE OUT.