

When Angels Sing

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. HOTEL 'FUTURE' - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

A black shiny Bentley stands out like a sore thumb among a handful of clapped-out old junkers. The blood moon, is the only source of light.

The highway next to the hotel, is surprisingly empty.

A large sign reads "Beverly Hills 5 miles".

INT. HOTEL 'FUTURE' - BAR - NIGHT

MARTIN (60s), tall and thin, pale face, the only patron, stares at his drink. Next to his glass, his Bentley and room keys, rest upon a yellow paper file labeled "HOSPITAL".

The music from an old jukebox ceases.

The young BARTENDER (30s) closes up on Martin.

BARTENDER

I'm sorry sir, the bar is closing.  
If you want, I can move your drink  
to your room.

Martin eyes the bartender.

MARTIN

Can I have another five minutes?

BARTENDER

(hesitant)  
Of course.

Martin smirks, whispers a 'thank you'.

JAMES (60s), a fearsome pimp-alike mother--, emerald green eyes, rushes inside the bar, stops behind the cash machine, checks the cash.

The bartender approaches James, whispers a few words. James flicks glances at Martin.

JAMES

Goodnight kiddo, go get some rest.

The bartender retires, James approaches Martin.

JAMES  
Tough day huh?

Martin shakes head.

MARTIN  
More or less.

James grabs a bottle of whiskey, two glasses, fills them up. Gently offers one of them to Martin.

JAMES  
You know bartenders are better  
listeners than shrinks. Plus we're  
cheaper.

Martin's grave look breaks, compresses smile.

MARTIN  
How much cheaper?

JAMES  
Well, as the bar owner, I  
usually make around forty dollars  
per hour, but--

James points to the yellow file with his finger.

JAMES  
If your story is good, I'll give  
you my expert advice for free!

Martin raises eyebrows.

MARTIN  
This is actually the first time in  
years, that someone offered me  
anything for free.

James' eyes glow greener in the dark, Martin doesn't notice.

JAMES  
I'm a bartender, this is my job you  
know.

Martin reaches for his inner suit pocket, gets his thick leather wallet out. Opens it up, a pack of Benjamins reveal inside.

He takes the money out, rests his wallet back into his pocket.

Martin counts it; ten grand. Lays the money on the bar, slides it towards James.

MARTIN

Well, this is how much my shrink usually gets per visit, so let's just say you're certified too.

James, more excited than surprised, takes the money, no questions asked, stuffs it into his pocket.

James conjures a glittering coin, hands it to Martin. Eyes the jukebox--

JAMES

You choose the song.

Martin does not hesitate, rushes towards the jukebox, checks the song list. Inserts coin, selects--

We listen to the music; It's opera, Bocelli's "Time to say goodbye". James looks impressed.

Martin returns to the bar, a swig of whiskey follows.

James lights up a cigarette--

JAMES

I'm listening.

Martin removes his golden Rolex, checks the time. 01:00 a.m. He stares at the jukebox, looks like daydreaming-- surroundings seem to grow darker, music gets louder too. Into this fantasy flashback--

BEGIN MONTAGE

A) INT. MARTIN'S MANOR HOUSE - LIBRARY - DAY

We see a ten years-younger version of Martin, who reads a book seated relaxed behind his fancy desk.

Behind him on the wall, we see clearly a computer chip in a glass box, surrounded by various magazine pages with his face on them that read "from zero to hero", "a stunning chip turns young computer prodigy into a billionaire", "working 24/7 can get you millions", "forget your wife, your kids, this is the route to glory and fame; waste no time, the Martin's case".

HELEN (30s), stunning redhead, crying face, storms inside, paper file in hand, rushes towards his desk.

NICKY (12), daughter, stands by the door, ready to burst into tears.

Helen slams the file upon the desk, it reads 'Divorce Agreement'.

Martin, unconcerned, turns to the last page, a signature follows, moves the file to the side, continues his reading.

Nicky runs into his arms, hugs him. He doesn't respond.

Helen grabs the file, storms away.

B) EXT. ONTO A YACHT - DAY

On a huge white super yacht named Nicky, in the middle of the endless ocean, a party for the ages takes place. Lots of supermodels in tiny bikinis dance around a handful of men, all of them around 40s. A healthy, wild spirited Martin, tall and muscular, half naked, is one of them. All eyes are fixed on him.

C) EXT. SOME SKYSCRAPER ROOFTOP - NIGHT

A couple of laser systems blaze northern lights-alike in the black sky. Half naked girls in a rampage party mode dance around Martin, who is undoubtedly the center of attention. Martin, looks drunk, jumps into the pool, the girls follow.

D) INT. SOME BAR - NIGHT

Another party, the bar looks pretty classy, prestigious. Bodyguards surround Martin's table, sexy girls in between, dressed in slutty outfits. Martin, unbuttoned shirt, looks physically weaker, most of his chest muscles are gone, drinks without a pause. Money, drinks, cocaine, in full excess on and off the table.

E) EXT. SOME BEACH - NIGHT

A sandy exotic private tiny island; a beach bar in the middle, make this island look inhabitable.

An exhausted Martin, looks very ill, sits almost unconscious around fifty or more exotic girls.

F) INT. SOME HOSPITAL - DAY

A very skinny version of Martin lies in bed.

Slowly comes back to his senses. Opes eyes, checks around.  
No one is there.

A doctor around fifties enters, couple X-rays in hand, sits  
besides him. The doctor, whispers Martin a couple of words.

Martin's face breaks, despair dominates him.

The doctor, grave as hell, shakes head.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. HOTEL 'FUTURE' - BAR - NIGHT

A scuffling sound, music dies. We're back to reality.

Martin checks the time again, it's still 01:00 am sharp.  
Looks a bit confused.

James grinds out the stub of his cigarette in the ashtray.

Martin, drinks his whiskey, bottoms up.

JAMES

So it's been ten years since you  
last saw your family and now you  
have just ten days left in you.

Martin raises eyebrows.

MARTIN

Nicky sent me this letter, she is  
getting married in six days. Do you  
know what gift she asked for?

JAMES

Ten million?

In all seriousness, a mood breaker. Martin smirks.

MARTIN

No, that would be Helen actually.

James laughs hard.

MARTIN

She asked for a dance with her  
father.

Laughs evaporate in a blink of an eye.

JAMES

Well, you know, I have a daughter too. And this is why I'm still working day and night in this shit hole. She deserves all the money of the world.

MARTIN

So, what's your five grand advice then?

James looks skeptical. Lights up another cigarette. Gets a business card out of his pocket, with a dancing lady figure on top. Signs it at the back. Hands it to Martin.

EXT. MARTIN'S MANOR HOUSE - YARD - DAY

A luxurious estate, a huge yard, non-stop activity; tents rise, platforms for music groups, portable pools with clusters of florists leaning over the edge to arrange lily pads within. Looks like wedding preparations take place.

Helen and Nicky storm light and left, give orders here and there, supervise everything.

The main gate opens, Martin walks inside. A few feet behind, a young BUTLER (30s) carries his luggage.

Nicky is the first to spot him, screams in happiness.

NICKY

Daddy!

Nicky rushes into his arms, hugs him like never before. Martin uses all of his strength to lift her up.

Helen notices, you can't tell if she's happy or angry. She closes the distance.

HELEN

Perfect timing.

Martin does not speak a word, his sad face says enough.

HELEN

You can sleep at the guesthouse.

Martin silently agrees.

EXT. MARTIN'S MANOR HOUSE - YARD - 3 DAYS TO THE WEDDING - DAY

Helen enjoys her morning coffee, people work relentlessly around her.

Martin is up, formally dressed, walks by Helen, nods a good morning. Helen, grave, does not respond.

Martin gets to the car, butler starts the engine, car disappears.

Nicky spots Martin leaving, approaches Helen.

NICKY

Where is daddy going?

HELEN

To meet one of those underwear models obviously.

EXT. MARTIN'S MANOR HOUSE - YARD - 3 DAYS TO THE WEDDING - NIGHT

Martin returns, Helen flicks glances at him.

HELEN

So you didn't change at all. Coming back awfully late once again--

Martin, stoic, heads towards the guesthouse, enters, shuts the door behind him.

EXT. MARTIN'S MANOR HOUSE - YARD - 2 DAYS TO THE WEDDING - DAY

The sun is out, Helen checks the table flowers.

Martin exits the guesthouse, looks like running late for something, he is ready to disappear again.

HELEN

You look like shit Martin. All that midnight workout with those sluts didn't do any good to you.

Martin lowers head, paces away.

Gets into the car, disappears again.



EXT. MARTIN'S MANOR HOUSE - YARD - 2 DAYS TO THE WEDDING - NIGHT

Helen sits at the porch, next to the wine bar.

Martin returns, passes by a few feet away Helen. They trade looks, no one speaks a word.

EXT. MARTIN'S MANOR HOUSE - YARD - 1 DAY TO THE WEDDING - DAY

Martin walks away, looks fragile, weak. He hardly manages to get into the car, succeeds. The car disappears.

EXT. MARTIN'S MANOR HOUSE - YARD - 1 DAY TO THE WEDDING - DAY

The butler returns, Helen approaches him, mumbles a few words to his ear.

Nods everyone around to continue the wedding preparations.

Helen gets into the car. The butler drives away.

BEGIN MONTAGE - BEVERLY HILLS DOWNTOWN

A) Into the car, Helen has a vivid chat with the butler.

B) The car stops in front of a dancing school.

C) Through the glass, Helen stares at Martin who dances around with a female instructor. She looks like a pro. He is not that bad either.

D) Helen looks shocked, orders the butler to leave.

END MONTAGE

EXT. MARTIN'S MANOR HOUSE - YARD - 1 DAY TO THE WEDDING - DAY

Helen returns, storms out of the car, rushes into the guesthouse.

INT. MARTIN'S MANOR HOUSE - GUESTHOUSE - 1 DAY TO THE WEDDING - DAY

Everything looks extremely tidy, like no one stays there. On the desk, a leather briefcase next to an old family picture of the three, draws Helen's attention.

She opens the briefcase. A couple of paper files alert her instincts.

One of them is the hospital file, the other one reads "Living will declaration".

More intrigued than concerned, she reads Martin's will.

MARTIN (V.O.)

I give my entire interest in the real property to my beloved wife Helen, the only woman I ever cared and loved --

Helen looks shocked, continues to read.

MARTIN (V.O.)

I give my entire interest in my company's shares and all of my bank accounts totaling seven point two billion dollars to both Helen and Nicky, wife and daughter --

Helen pets her hair, like she cannot believe it. Tears faintly appear.

MARTIN (V.O.)

And one million dollars will be transferred to James Morrison, owner of the 'Future' hotel, for her daughter's dance lessons.

Helen shuts the file, checks the medical one.

Lots of X-rays, she cannot really figure it out. Reads the doctor's note.

We see the memo, we focus on "five to twenty days estimated until the cancer forces the heart to stop".

Helen bursts into tears, powerful emotions dominate her, more sad than angry, places the files back into the briefcase. She bolts outside.

EXT. MARTIN'S MANOR HOUSE - YARD - 1 DAY TO THE WEDDING - NIGHT

Helen awaits stoically for Martin to return. A half empty bottle of wine next to her is her only company.

Martin does not return. Her eyelids are heavy, she shuts her eyes.

EXT. MARTIN'S MANOR HOUSE - YARD - WEDDING DAY - DAY

Early morning, sun rises, Helen opens her eyes. She slept outside the whole night.

She gets up, storms towards the guesthouse.

Opens the door, enters.

INT. MARTIN'S MANOR HOUSE - GUESTHOUSE - WEDDING DAY - DAY

Martin, half naked, lies in bed. He looks more like a corps than a living person. Dead white, skinny, huge peculiar marks all over his body.

Helen stares at him, tears explode away. Gets to his side, grabs his palm.

HELEN

Why? Just give me this, why?

Martin gives everything still left in him to open his eyes. One of the succeeds.

Smiles, raises hand, caress Helen's cheek. With a trembling voice --

MARTIN

My beloved wife, I'm sorry for everything..

Martin turns his head to the other side, his palm drops dead. He shuts his eyes.

His surrounding grow darker, as Helen screams in despair.

HELEN

Help! Somebody help me!

Even more dark, Helen's screams slowly fade away.

INT. MARTIN'S MANOR HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - WEDDING DAY - DAY

The room begins to transform, darkened windows turn translucent, admitting light. We find ourselves in the master bedroom.

Everything is blurred, a sunbeam penetrates the window, scratches Martin's eye.

MUSIC UP: BOCELLI'S TIME TO SAY GOODBYE

JAMES (V.O.)  
Some will call it a second chance,  
others, heaven.

Helen dressed like royalty, moves back and forth between the bed and the window.

She mumbles unstoppably, but we can't hear what she says.

She violently drags the sheets off the bed.

Martin's body looks in great shape with no signs of illness. He opens his eyes, flickers awake, disoriented.

Helen gives him a kiss, points towards the yard. She tries everything to make him get up and hurry.

Martin is struck by the image of smiling Helen, staggers up, looks dazed by the fact that he is still alive and in perfect physical shape. He stands up, regains footing.

Helen hands him his wedding costume, rushes out of the room.

EXT. MARTIN'S MANOR HOUSE - YARD - WEDDING DAY - DAY

Martin gets out of the main house, his favorite song still plays. Surveys the magic scene straight ahead.

Hundred of guests applause and cheer upon his presence.

Martin eyes Nicky and Helen, who await for him on the dance platform.

Nicky nods him to come closer, not to miss the song.

Martin walks through the guests who make way for him, part like the red sea.

He gets to Nicky. Holds her tight, they waltz!

They keep on dancing until the music fades away.

FADE TO BLACK

SUPER: For the fathers who didn't make it on time.

FADE OUT.