

SHUFFLE

by

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SHOOTING SCRIPT
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For little Zachary,
for whom time stopped far too soon.

BLACK. A clock ticks. We hear a shaky MALE VOICE:

LOVELL (V.O.)

I'm 28.

(beat)

Yesterday, I was 15. The day before that, I was 30. The day before that, I was 8. One day recently, I was past 90. Every day I wake up at a different age, in a different year, on a different day of my life -- and it's scaring the piss out of me. I want it to stop.

Snap to picture:

CLOSE ON LOVELL MILO

28 (at the moment). Two day stubble. Unkempt hair. Bloodshot eyes. Just this side of panicked. Normally, his would be a pleasant, inviting face -- but these are not normal times. His suit, which we'll see in a moment, is crumpled, as if it's been worn too long.

LOVELL (CONT'D)

I need help. I've been awake for over 48 hours trying to get someone like you to talk to me because I don't know where I'm going to be once I fall asleep. Can you help me?

He revolves his head in circles, fighting to stay awake. Reveal he is in...

1 INT. A PSYCHIATRIC OFFICE -- DUSK

1

...talking to a DOCTOR, a sturdy woman in her 40's, seated in a leather chair amidst a sea of oak. Her mouth just hangs for a moment. This is one she doesn't hear every day.

LOVELL (CONT'D)

Have you ever heard of this before?
Anywhere?

DOCTOR

Let me get this straight: You're...re-living days from your past and living days from your future? Is that what you think?

Lovell takes a swig from a cup of coffee on his right...

LOVELL

You're assuming that this is the present. I don't know that. This is just where I am today.

...Then takes a swig from a can of Coke on his left.
Caffeine city.

LOVELL (CONT'D)

I remember nothing before all of this started. These days are all new to me. They're all I know about myself. Except - I know who I am. I know who people are. Things look and feel familiar. I know what I think. And feel.

(then:)

Like right now -- I just really want to ask you to lean forward a bit.

The Doctor's suddenly a touch uncomfortable:

DOCTOR

Excuse me?

The Doctor sits just behind an ornate LAMP, her face in shadow except for her very bright chin.

LOVELL

Or I could...

Lovell gets up sharply, the Doctor jumps back slightly, unsure of what in the hell he's about to do --

...and Lovell moves the lamp so that the light falls nicely on her face. Much better. Lovell re-seats himself.

LOVELL

Sorry. It just...was bugging me. Looks better that way.

A moment.

DOCTOR

Do you use any substances? Aside from caffeine?

LOVELL

None. That I know of.

DOCTOR

When did this start?

LOVELL

I don't know. Time's kind of relative right now.

DOCTOR

Well, what's the first thing you remember?

And with that...OUR EYES OPEN ON:

2 INT. BEDROOM -- DAWN

2

SUBJECTIVE POV

We're laying in bed, in sleeping position. Our POV wanders the room. Old furniture. Camera equipment. Framed pictures all over the walls -- but they're fuzzy to us. Our vision isn't so hot.

Slowly, we turn and look at a FRAMED PHOTO of a large family sitting around a picnic table, sitting on a bedside table next to our head...

And catch our reflection in the photo:

It's Lovell -- in his 90's.

He takes pause -- a bit shocked. Touches his face. Studies his reflection.

DOCTOR (V.O.)

The first thing you remember is being 90?

LOVELL WITH DOCTOR (V.O.)

92, actually.

DOCTOR (V.O.)

How...how did you know your age so specifically?

LOVELL WITH DOCTOR (V.O.)

I don't know, I just knew.

LOVELL'S EYES

make eye contact with his reflection. They gloss over. Then:

BLACK.

DOCTOR (V.O.)

You didn't stay awake long.

LOVELL WITH DOCTOR (V.O.)

I was 92. Gimme a break.

DOCTOR (V.O.)

Where were you next?

BLAMM!!! Dance music pounds, waking us up, and our eyes open on:

3 INT. GRAND HALL - WEDDING RECEPTION -- NIGHT (2004)

3

A fabulous DANCE FLOOR flooded with pulsing bodies.

Flashing lights. A wedding reception is in its 3rd hour.

Look down to see CAMERA EQUIPMENT strapped around our neck.
A CAMERA BAG at our feet. Look up to see a fancy MIRROR:

Lovell. Age 30. In a suit, covered with photographic accessories.

DOCTOR (V.O.)
This was recently, then.

LOVELL WITH DOCTOR (V.O.)
This hasn't happened yet, actually --
this is two years from now. When I'm 30.

He takes a moment to get his bearings, then notices:

The BRIDE and GROOM. Staring at him.
Standing by the CAKE. Ready to cut it. Waiting.

Lovell fingers his camera equipment, then puts 2 and 2 together:
He's the wedding photographer and he fell asleep on the job.

LOVELL
Oh, shit...

Lovell's heart races, he snaps into business mode, dashes over to the cake, and starts positioning the Bride and Groom for photos.

LOVELL
Okay, okay, let's move you over a little
bit this way, away from the ivy, that's
it...

The Bride and Groom, clearly annoyed with him, put on smiles and follow his direction.

DOCTOR (V.O.)
You have no memory of the first part of
this wedding.

LOVELL WITH DOCTOR (V.O.)
None.

DOCTOR (V.O.)
Any memory at this point of having
photographed other weddings?

LOVELL WITH DOCTOR (V.O.)
Nope.

DOCTOR (V.O.)
So how did you know what you were
supposed to do? How did you even know
you were the photographer?

LOVELL WITH DOCTOR (V.O.)
I don't know. I just did. It felt
familiar. I knew how to pose...

Lovell poses the couple, adjusting their hands with the ease
of an old pro.

LOVELL WITH DOCTOR (V.O. CONT'D)
...I knew their names...

LOVELL (PRESENT)
Lucas, stay right there -- Anna, can you
lean forward just a little bit...

The Bride moves her head out of shadow and "finds her light" -
- the same move Lovell made with the Doctor and the lamp.

LOVELL WITH DOCTOR (V.O., CONT'D)
...I knew how to use the light meter...

Lovell clicks the spot meter.

LOVELL WITH DOCTOR (V.O., CONT'D)
...and the camera felt like an old
friend.

His hands turn the f/stop ring. Adjust the flash settings.
Like a veteran pianist frosting the 88 keys.
Lovell fires away:

FLASHFLASHFLASH!!!

Frozen images of the happy couple cake-smashing each other
fly by. A joyful mess.

As the photos end, the Groom - who doesn't realize he's still
got cake on his nose - steps toward Lovell and intones sternly:

GROOM
That's the second time you've fallen
asleep today. Get it together, dude.

4 LATER

4

Lovell sits at the bar, starting to nod off once more...

DRUNK GUEST
Just darling, aren't they?

Lovell snaps awake at the comment, made by a nearby DRUNK
GUEST, who is indicating some too-cute CHILDREN playing on
the dance floor.

LOVELL
Um...yeah. Yeah, they are.

DRUNK GUEST
You got any kids, buddy?

Lovell finds himself saying....

LOVELL
No.

DOCTOR (V.O.)
And you knew that because...

LOVELL WITH DOCTOR (V.O.)
I don't know -- I just knew.

DRUNK GUEST
Well, don't lose heart, my little friend.
Someday you'll find a sweet lady and have
a whole mess o'kids -- you look like a
fertile fella to me...

LOVELL
I don't want kids.

DRUNK GUEST
Well, shit.

DOCTOR (V.O.)
Why did you say that?

LOVELL WITH DOCTOR (V.O.)
I don't know. I just know that I don't.

As Lovell watches the children, he involuntarily nods off again,
dance music pounding in b.g. His mouth hangs open, he knocks
over his glass, his rip-roaring SNORE resounds, echoes off...

BLACK.

DOCTOR (V.O.)
And then?

Our eyes snap open on:

A CEILING

Muted light paints it. Birds chirp in the distance. We're in...

5 A BEDROOM -- DAWN

5

We're in bed. It's hard to see much of the room with the dim
illumination. We get out of bed, step onto the floor --

And find that we're only 4 feet tall.

Look to see our reflection in a nearby window:

It's Lovell -- around age 8.

He gets his bearings, looks around the room -- stuffed animals, a toy train set, colorful posters abound. In the midst of it all, he spots something sitting on his desk:

A BROWNIE CAMERA.

DOCTOR (V.O.)
Of all the things you could have done,
why did you pick up the camera?

LOVELL WITH DOCTOR (V.O.)
I just wanted to.

6 EXT. SMALL TOWN SUBURB -- DAY (1982)

6

Click! Click! Click!

8 year old Lovell races around with unstoppable energy, taking pictures of everything with his little box Brownie Camera:

A tree. A car grill. A flower. A pothole. He's obsessed. And as he lays on a lawn, taking a picture of the cloud-streaked sky, into his wide angle lens comes...

A PUPPY.

A Beagle, to be precise. Licking sloppily at his lens.

LITTLE GIRL (O.S.)
I'm sorry! It's okay, he's friendly!
Howard, c'mere! Off! Off!

An 8 year old LITTLE GIRL with long red hair and loud clothes runs up to pull Howard the Beagle off of Lovell, when he exclaims:

LOVELL
No, wait!

The Little Girl stops:

LITTLE GIRL
What?

LOVELL
That looks supercool! Can you hold him
there?

The Little Girl thinks the request is strange, but does it.

LOVELL
No, get down, you're in the frame.
(she moves down more)
No, lower! You're still in the shot!

LITTLE GIRL

I can't go any farther and still hold
him!

Lovell sighs and clicks the picture -- a comic near-fisheye of Howard the Beagle licking the lens with the Little Girl's head just shoved into the bottom.

7 LATER

7

Lovell keeps jumping around, on fire, taking more pictures of inanimate objects. The Little Girl hangs around watching, Howard the Beagle at her side.

LITTLE GIRL

Did you know that there are 116 different
breeds of dogs?

LOVELL

(he could care less)
No.

LITTLE GIRL

Howard's a beagle.
(Howard starts to move)
Howard, sit. Stay.
(Howard complies)
See how smart he is? He knows all the
commands.

Lovell keeps taking pictures. Practically oblivious to her.

LITTLE GIRL (CONT'D)

What's your name?

LOVELL

Lovell Milo.

Lovell stops, realizing what he just said -- and surprised that he had the answer on the tip of his tongue.

DOCTOR (V.O.)

And you just knew your name? Somehow?

LOVELL WITH DOCTOR (V.O.)

Now you're gettin' it.

LITTLE GIRL

Milo?

LOVELL

No, *Lovell*. Milo's my last name.

LITTLE GIRL
Sounded like you were saying your last
name first. Like they do at school.
(then)
I'm Grace.

No response. Lovell's too engrossed in his picture-taking.

LITTLE GIRL
Wanna take a picture of me?

LOVELL
No.

8 INT. LOVELL'S 8 YEAR OLD BEDROOM -- NIGHT

8

Lovell lays in bed excitedly shuffling through a stack of
PHOTOS, his day's work.

Images fly by: Tires, bottle caps, street signs, etc.
Lovell's beaming. *He did this.*

And slowly, he shuts down...his eyes begin to close...and...

BLACK.

A phone RINGS. Loud. Our eyes snap open on:

ANOTHER CEILING. We're in...

9 INT. ANOTHER BEDROOM -- MORNING

9

Our eyes go immediately to the PHONE on our bedside table.
Reach for it. Answer:

LOVELL (O.S.)
Hello?

Lovell's voice is deeper. He's an adult of some sort.
A WOMAN'S VOICE answers on the phone:

WOMAN (ON PHONE)
What're you still doing home?

Lovell finally catches his reflection in his mirrored closet
doors. He's in his early 20's.

DOCTOR (V.O.)
How old are you here...twenty...?

LOVELL WITH DOCTOR (V.O.)
21.

LOVELL
Who is this?

WOMAN (ON PHONE)

It's Grace, dummy! Are you still asleep?! Do you know what time it is?!

Lovell looks at his clock. It has stopped.
Turns on a lamp -- but it doesn't come on.

LOVELL

I think the power's off. Why?

GRACE (ON PHONE)

Are you drunk? You have the biggest meeting of your life today. With your hero - Steven Roberts? He saw your work, he's near town, he asked you to coffee...none of this rings a bell?

Lovell sees a magazine on his floor open to an article:
"STEVEN ROBERTS - MASTER OF LIGHT."

A photo of PHOTOGRAPHER STEVEN ROBERTS - 60's, hip, sporting a very intimidating still camera - adorns the text.

GRACE (ON PHONE)

You're supposed to be there in an hour, and it takes an hour to get there, so I was a little freaked when I saw your car still out front. I'm outside, I'm coming in.

The phone clicks off. Lovell's heart races.
BANGBANGBANG! There's pounding at the front door.
Lovell dashes toward the sound in his underwear...

10 THROUGH HIS APARTMENT (1995)

10

...and as he whisks along, he sees beautiful FRAMED PHOTOS covering the walls of his semi-collegiate pad. They are really unique, interesting pictures...

DOCTOR (V.O.)

And you just knew...you had taken all the pictures that were on the wall?

LOVELL WITH DOCTOR (V.O.)

Yeah.

DOCTOR (V.O.)

You've been busy since you were 8 years old.

...he makes it to the door, the door's thrown open to reveal a spunky young woman, 21, with long red locks of hair and fun, loud clothes. GRACE. Older. With an older HOWARD THE BEAGLE at her side. She races in...

GRACE
 I'll drive you, c'mon. Nice underwear.
 (then)
 Howard, sit. Stay.

ZOOOOOMMMM...

11 INT. GRACE'S HONDA - DRIVING -- DAY 11

Grace hits the gas, driving fast on the interstate.
 Lovell's in the passenger seat. Howard licks him sloppily
 from the back seat.

GRACE
 So I had a date last night. With that
 super-hot guy who hit on me at that
 gallery thing we went to last week.

LOVELL
 Oh, yeah, how was that?

GRACE
 It was fantastic until he said, "Yeah,
 I'm not crazy about dogs." I was like,
 "Check, please!"

SCREEEECH!!!! as...

12 EXT. CAFÉ - IN THE CITY -- DAY 12

Grace's Honda screams to a stop out front.

GRACE
 Two minutes early. I'll come back for
 you in two hours. Good luck -- now GO!

She kisses him on the cheek, Lovell hops out with a large
 PORTFOLIO under his arm, breathing fast, racing up the walk and...

13 INTO THE CAFÉ... 13

which is empty. Phew. He's not late.
 He sits down in the waiting area.
 His heart pounds in his ears...Bump-BUMP, bump-BUMP, bump-
 BUMP...slowly, the sound dies away, as we DISSOLVE to:

14 LATER 14

Scattered patrons dine, but Lovell still sits in the waiting
 area. Alone. Looks at his watch.

15 LATER 15

The sun's lower. The café's almost empty again.
 And Lovell's still sitting in the same spot. Alone.

Grace excitedly steps into the café. Sees him.

GRACE
How'd it go?

They lock eyes, then Lovell looks away, embarrassed/ashamed. She doesn't need an answer; his face says it all.

16 INT. UPSCALE DINER -- NIGHT

16

Lovell and Grace dine in silence. Not much to say. He's crushed.

Grace looks at him. Eyes filled with empathy. When he's not looking, she starts to reach over to stroke his hair -- but pulls back as he turns toward her. He didn't see the gesture.

Lovell's eyes go to the LEGS of a passing attractive WOMAN. Grace sees this. Retreats. Glances around the restaurant. Then, a well-dressed MAN stops by their table:

MANAGER
Hi, folks -- I'm Brian, the manager. How is everything this evening?

LOVELL
Great.

GRACE
(looking around)
Sir, I have a question. These photos all over your walls -- are these by local artists?

She indicates an eclectic mix of photos adorning the walls.

MANAGER
Some local, some I just find interesting.

Before Lovell knows what's going on, Grace grabs his PORTFOLIO and slaps it open on the table in front of him.

GRACE
How 'bout these? Would you be interested in buying any of these? They're by my friend here.

Lovell's a bit embarrassed. But the manager's not:

MANAGER
(after a moment)
This is pretty great work, man.
(beat)
How much you charge for this one?

17 INT. GRACE'S HONDA - DRIVING -- NIGHT

17

Lovell sits in the passenger seat -- holding a CHECK for \$100.
Grace turns to him:

GRACE

That's the first time anyone's paid you
for a picture, isn't it? Your own
artwork, I mean.

LOVELL

Yeah. I think it is.

GRACE

There'll be more where that came from.
You're gonna be huge someday.

Lovell looks at Grace. She looks back.
Something passes between them. A moment. Thank you.
That meant the world to him. Lovell continues to look at her
as she drives. Filled with affection.

Until he yawns. And starts to drift...

GRACE

You tired?

LOVELL

Oh, God, I'm falling...

LOVELL WITH DOCTOR (V.O.)

...I'm falling...I'm...

Back to:

18 INT. PSYCHIATRIC OFFICE -- DUSK (2002)

18

Lovell swishes his head around, but he's fading fast...

LOVELL (CONT'D)

...falling...Doc, please, give me
something...

The Doctor's flustered, not sure what to do:

DOCTOR

Um, I...

LOVELL

...medication...make it stop...

The Doctor grabs the coffee pot. Races to Lovell.
His eyes are closing...she refills his cup...

DOCTOR

Drink this. Lovell? Drink this...stay
with me...

The coffee moves to his lips...his eyes close...his fingers
lose their grip...the cup tumbles to the floor...Lovell lets
out a SNORE and...

BANG! BLACK -- our eyes open on:

19 INT. WEDDING RECEPTION HALL -- AFTERNOON (2004) 19

Lovell, age 30, snaps awake. He's in a suit again, covered
with camera equipment. At another wedding.

LOVELL

Goddammit!

He looks over to see - a different BRIDE and GROOM staring
at him. Pissed.

GROOM

We're trying to do the bouquet toss.
That okay with you, or you need a longer
nap?

20 EXT. WEDDING RECEPTION HALL - PARKING LOT -- AFTERNOON 20

Lovell races across the parking lot, photo equipment bouncing
all over him. He hops into a TOYOTA and...

21 DRIVES 21

along city streets, pavement races by and...

22 INT. PSYCHIATRIC OFFICE -- AFTERNOON 22

Whoosh! The door flies open to reveal our old friend, the
DOCTOR, who looks up from her desk to see...

Lovell. Panting.

LOVELL

Hi.

The Doctor slowly recognizes him:

DOCTOR

Did you come to see me about two years
ago?

LOVELL

For me it was yesterday.

23 CLOSE ON A PRESCRIPTION TABLET 23

The Doctor scrawls across it.

24 INT. PHARMACY -- NIGHT 24

A CLERK with a prescription BOTTLE calls out:

CLERK
Milo Lovell?

Lovell steps up to retrieve it, correcting her:

LOVELL
Lovell Milo.

CLERK
Sounded like you were saying your last
name first.

25 INT. LOVELL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT 25

Lovell downs capsules from the prescription bottle.

26 LATER 26

He lies alone, awake in bed. Anxious. Waiting for sleep.

LOVELL
Please, God, let this work.

BLACK -- our eyes open on:

27 INT. HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM -- DAY (1988) 27

We're shaken awake at a desk in a full classroom, as a
TEACHER writes on the blackboard before us. Turn to see that
it's 14-year-old red-haired GRACE who is shaking us awake:

GRACE
(half-whisper)
Dummy! Pay attention!

Lovell sees his reflection in the window behind her:
He's 14. It didn't work.

LOVELL
(under his breath)
This is never gonna stop.

28 HANDS IN BLACK LIMBO 28

spray a deck of playing cards right at us, each card sports a PICTURE of a day of Lovell's life with the age in the corner, they fly in our face, all out of order, this swirling mess envelops the screen and...

BANG!!! Black.

29 INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - WEDDING IN PROGRESS -- DAY (2002) 29

Lovell, 28, sits in the back row of the church, covered in camera equipment once again. He's defeated. Exhausted. To say he's depressed would be an understatement.

The beaming BRIDE and GROOM kiss. Lovell snaps a photo.

30 LATER 30

The church is empty now, except for Lovell. He wanders feebly toward the sanctuary. Stares up at the enormous CROSS hanging above the altar.

With that, Lovell drops to his knees. Looks like he might cry. Folds his hands. Prays:

LOVELL
(barely above a whisper)
Make this stop. Help me. Please.

31 INT. RECEPTION HALL -- SAME DAY 31

Lovell sits alone next to the GIFT TABLE. Drink in hand. Loud dance music and flashing lights soak the room.

A 7 year old GIRL WITH PIGTAILS approaches the table and starts shaking the different PRESENTS. Rattle-rattle. Dsssh-dsssh. Then -- CRACK!! Her face goes white. She just broke the contents of a package.

She looks at Lovell. He saw the whole thing. Smiles at her.

LOVELL
I won't tell anybody, just set it down.

She does. And continues rifling through the presents anyway.

PIGTAILS
I hope they like the present we got 'em.

LOVELL
I'm sure they'll love it.

PIGTAILS
You don't even know what it is.

LOVELL
Doesn't matter. People like presents.

PIGTAILS
You don't.

LOVELL
(huh?)
What do you mean, "I don't"?

PIGTAILS
You don't like your present.

LOVELL
I didn't get a present.

PIGTAILS
Yeah, you did. But you don't like it.

LOVELL
I don't know what you're talking about,
sweetie, I'm sorry.

PIGTAILS
You said you wanted it to stop.

Lovell. Freezes. All seems to go quiet.

LOVELL
What?

PIGTAILS
Somebody gave you a present, dummy. But
you said you wanted it to stop.

Lovell. Shakes himself. Look at her.

LOVELL
I'm sorry, I just...

Beat. Lovell sets his drink down. Leans in. Very serious:

LOVELL (CONT'D)
You know what's happening to me?

She nods.

LOVELL (CONT'D)
And you're saying that what's happening
to me...is a present?

PIGTAILS
Mm-hmm.

LOVELL
 (suddenly furious)
 What kind of sick, twisted "present" is
 this? From who?
 (no answer)
 Why?

PIGTAILS
 It's the only way you're gonna learn.

Beat. Lovell's hypnotized, desperate for answers:

LOVELL
 Learn what?

PIGTAILS
 Someone's in trouble. And you're the
 only one who can save 'em.

LOVELL
 (floored)
 ...wha...who am I supposed to save?

Pigtails' MOTHER approaches.

MOTHER
 Hon, stop bothering the nice man and come
 back and finish your dinner.
 (to Lovell)
 Sorry, she's a little outgoing.

Lovell politely acknowledges the Mother, but desperately
 wants an answer. Pigtails looks at him one last time:

PIGTAILS
 Just pay attention.
 (beat, whispers)
 Thanks for not telling on me.

And with that, she disappears into the crowd.
 Lovell watches her go, his mind doing somersaults.

32 INT. RECEPTION HALL - MOMENTS LATER

32

Lovell. Thinks. Stops. Looks at us.
 And addresses the camera:

LOVELL
 Mental Journal Entry #1:

...and starts floating through the reception on the dolly:

LOVELL (CONT'D)
 It's time to pay attention. To
 everything.
 (MORE)

LOVELL (CONT'D)

But since there's no use in writing things down - 'cause I sure can't take it with me - I'm just going to have to remember everything. And so -- here I am...talking to myself.

(then)

So, what do I notice? First, I seem to wake up an awful lot when I'm 30 or just before.

The GRAPHIC of a PLAYING CARD suddenly forms around Lovell -- he is the "suit" and his age - "30" - is the number in the corners.

LOVELL (CONT'D)

And about that period, I've noticed this:

BLACK -- our eyes open on:

33 INT. BEDROOM - DARK -- NIGHT (2004) 33

(NOTE: Lovell will be 30ish during this whole sequence, taking place circa 2001-2004.)

Lovell wakes up in the midst of making love to a GORGEOUS BLONDE. She is NOT happy:

BLONDE

Did you just fall asleep?

Lovell's at a loss for words.

LOVELL

I, um...

BLONDE

Oh my God. Oh my God -- you did NOT just fall asleep. Do you have any idea how humiliating that is?!!

The Blonde shoves him off of her and storms out of the room. Lovell sits on the edge of the bed. Beat red. Embarrassed. He turns to us:

LOVELL

I seem to fall asleep really easily at this point in my life.

34 A COMPUTER DICTIONARY SCREEN 34

talks to us in annoying electronic-speak:

ELECTRONIC VOICE

"NARCOLEPSY" is an inherited sleep disorder, an abnormal tendency to pass directly from wakefulness into dreaming sleep.

(MORE)

ELECTRONIC VOICE (CONT'D)
 Also characterized by a loss of muscle
 control when experiencing intense
 emotion.

Ding!

35 INT. LOVELL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT (2002) 35

Lovell's head rests on his pillow:

LOVELL
 I find I tend to fall asleep easiest when
 something's not stimulating:

Series:

-- Lovell falls asleep in a BAR, listening to a beautiful but
 vain MODEL prattle on. (2003)

-- Lovell falls asleep reading an Income Tax Guide. (2001)

-- Lovell falls asleep watching a speech by George W. (2004)

36 FOUR WAY SPLIT-SCREEN -- LOVELL SNORING 36

Across the screen, we see all four Lovells from the above
 scenarios as they let loose HONKING SNORES -- trading off,
 rhythmically, like a bizarre musical number.

37 INT. LOVELL'S LIVING ROOM -- DAY (2003) 37

Lovell sits on the sofa. Exhausted. Munching on fast food.

LOVELL
 That's one down, I've got a bizarre sleep
 disorder. I also notice that I feel
 exhausted all the time. The thought of
 doing even the smallest things like...

See his TRASH CANS...

LOVELL (CONT'D)
 ...taking out the trash...

See his overflowing LAUNDRY BASKET...

LOVELL (CONT'D)
 ...doing the laundry...

See his TOOTHBRUSH in its hanger...

LOVELL (CONT'D)
 ...brushing my teeth...

See his RAZOR...

LOVELL (CONT'D)
...shaving...

See his SHOWER...

LOVELL (CONT'D)
...showering...

See his WARDROBE...

LOVELL (CONT'D)
...picking out clothes...

Back to Lovell, looking spent...

LOVELL (CONT'D)
...make me feel like going back to bed.

38 LOVELL WALKING DOWN THE STREET (2003) 38

LOVELL (V.O. CONT'D)
It feels hard to move. I feel thick.

Lovell squeezes his "spare tire"...

LOVELL (V.O. CONT'D)
My underwear feels too tight, I don't
feel good in my clothes...

39 LOVELL WITH CAMERA AT ANOTHER WEDDING (2003) 39

Lovell's SILVER WATCH - a pricey Tutima - ticks away...

LOVELL (V.O., CONT'D)
...I wish the day would just end.
(beat, looks at the watch)
I do have a really cool watch, though.

40 LOVELL SEATED IN AN ICE CREAM PARLOR (2004) 40

In mid-sundae, he talks to us...

LOVELL (CONT'D)
I'm hungry all the time. I'm not excited
about anything.

His cell phone rings...

LOVELL (CONT'D)
The sound of the phone makes my skin
crawl...

41 LOVELL IN HIS APARTMENT (2004) 41

His doorbell rings...

LOVELL (CONT'D)
 ...Don't even get me started on the
 doorbell.

He opens the door to find the BLONDE he slept with standing there:

BLONDE
 I'm pregnant.

Lovell. Whoa.

42 EXT. PARK -- DAY (2004)

42

Lovell and the Blonde sit in a secluded grove, talking:

BLONDE
 Look, I don't even know you. It was one
 night. You couldn't even stay awake. I
 don't want to marry you. But you have a
 responsibility here.

LOVELL
 You want money? If you can prove it's
 mine -- fine. I accept when I've screwed
 up. But I'm not going to be a part of
 this. I don't want a kid.

Lovell's face knots up, losing muscle control as he says this.
 He quickly rights himself. A moment.

The Blonde's taken aback, but makes no comment. Finally:

BLONDE
 Can't argue with that.

Beat. Lovell looks at her. Then:

LOVELL
 Could you just lean...
 (directs her "into her light")

43 INT. LOVELL'S TOYOTA - DRIVING -- NIGHT (2004)

43

Lovell drives along, shell shocked. Tries to stay awake.

LOVELL
 (to us, yawning)
 In conclusion, I feel like shit. And I
 just wanna go to sleep.

And with that, Lovell drifts...his eyes close...

...the sleeping Lovell FLIES THROUGH A RED LIGHT.

...and COLLIDES WITH AN ON-COMING CAR. SMASH!!! BANG!!!

BLACK.

LOVELL (V.O.)

Oops.

44 HANDS IN BLACK LIMBO 44

pick a card from a deck, throw it at us and it fills the screen:

Again, the "suit" of the card is a picture of young adult Lovell. The "number" in the corners reads: "24."

The picture of Lovell on the card speaks to us:

LOVELL

I've also been waking up a lot around age 24...

45 EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS -- DAY (1998) 45

We are...RUNNING. Fast.

Reveal -- Lovell jogging in sweats. In great shape.

LOVELL

(to us)

...and here, I feel fantastic.

46 EXT. PARK -- DAY 46

Lovell does numerous push-ups. Fast. Agile.

LOVELL (CONT'D)

I have more energy than I know what to do with.

47 EXT. DOWNTOWN RILEY CREEK -- NIGHT 47

A quaint small-town main street at rush hour.

Lovell's laying in the middle of the street, decked out in full camera gear, taking a time exposure as red and white auto lights race by on either side.

LOVELL (CONT'D)

And I love...

He snaps the shutter -- CLICK!

48 INT. DARKROOM 48

Red light. Lovell develops the photo. It slowly comes to life and we see...

Gorgeous, streaking lights racing toward the horizon.

LOVELL (V.O., CONT'D)
 ...stopping time.

Another photo -- catching a STOLEN GLANCE between two people.

LOVELL (V.O., CONT'D)
 Making a moment live forever.

Another photo -- a WOMAN about to slip and fall on her face.

LOVELL (V.O., CONT'D)
 I can't get enough of it.

49 INT. PHOTOMAT -- DAY

49

Lovell works here. He grabs a stack of FAMILY PHOTOS from a printing machine and brings them to the front desk, where a CUSTOMER waits:

LOVELL
 Here you go, Mrs. Peters -- I printed the last one a couple of different ways for ya. Wanted to get the blacks just right.

MRS. PETERS
 Oh, you're a doll, Milo.

LOVELL
 (corrects here)
 Lovell. Milo.
 (to us)
 I'm working a couple of different jobs...

50 EXT. CHURCH -- DAY

50

Lovell photographs a BRIDE and GROOM exiting a church. He races around with enthusiasm, taking multiple angles.

LOVELL (CONT'D)
 ...and I'm having a great time. And it gives me time to do what I love.

51 INT. LOVELL'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

51

A cornucopia of COLOR. His images, photos blast out from every direction. This apartment is ALIVE.

Snake through the apartment to find Lovell, lying on his bed, flipping excitedly through the day's photos, just like he did when he was 8 years old.

LOVELL
 I don't feel like sleeping. I'm having too much fun.

Looks at his watch, which is not the shiny, silver Tutima, but a more moderate CASIO.

LOVELL (CONT'D)

My watch isn't quite as cool, but I don't care. And one day, I wake up to this:

BLACK. Our eyes open on:

52 INT. LOVELL'S APARTMENT -- DAWN

52

A ceiling. Lovell lays in bed, looks at it. Yawns. Closes his eyes.

And that's when someone leans over, drops into frame and KISSES Lovell. A deep, romantic kiss. He opens his eyes, surprised...

And sees GRACE. 24. Her red hair's cut SHORT.

GRACE

Good morning, dummy.

Lovell's stunned. Tries to process this quickly.

LOVELL

Um...hi.

GRACE

Hi.

LOVELL

Your...your hair. It's different.

GRACE

No different than it's been for the past year. You never wanted to jump me when I had long hair. What does that say about you?

(laughs, raspberry-kisses him)

C'mon. Let's go.

(she dashes out, then off screen:)

Hello, babies!!

Hear multiple DOGS BARK in response off screen.

GRACE (CONT'D, O.S.)

Sit. Sit! Stay.

Lovell watches her go. Processes this. Looks around the room. FRAMED PICTURES of the two of them dot the room. They're a couple.

Bump-BUMP, bump-BUMP, bump-BUMP...Lovell's heartbeat slowly becomes audible. He feels his chest. Breathes. And looks down to see that his hand is shaking. Grabs it.

53 EXT. STATE PARK -- DAY

53

Bump-BUMP, bump-BUMP, bump-BUMP...

Lovell's heartbeat continues to grow on the soundtrack as he jogs with Grace and FOUR BIG DOGS along a winding hiking trail, racing each other.

LOVELL (V.O.)
I'm scared. I don't know why.

Bump-BUMP, bump-BUMP, bump-BUMP...
Lovell and Grace are running full out, neck & neck, Grace starts to slip behind...so she trips him.

Boom! Lovell goes down, laughing. Grace stops, also laughing. The Dogs gather 'round.

LOVELL
That's how you win, huh? Blind-siding me?

GRACE
Didn't see that comin', didja?

LOVELL
Can't say I did.

She leans down. Kisses him.

GRACE
I'm the Queen of Surprises.
(then)
Betcha can't catch me!
(to the dogs)
C'mon!

Lovell watches her disappear around the bend, the Dog Entourage in tow. His heart pounds louder in his ears...
Bump-BUMP, bump-BUMP, bump-BUMP...

He stands. Looks down at his hands. They're SHAKING again. He grabs them. Tries to stop it. Puts them in his pockets...

And finds something. From his right pocket, he pulls a small, furry BLACK BOX.

He looks up in Grace's direction. Then back down at the box. Puts 2 and 2 together.

LOVELL (V.O.)
And suddenly, I knew why.
(beat)
And I knew what I wanted more than anything in the world.

54 AROUND THE BEND

54

Grace has stopped to tie her shoe.

GRACE
My damn lace came undone...

Lovell appears, drops to one knee before her, and opens the box to present a diamond ENGAGEMENT RING:

LOVELL
Will you marry me?

Grace freezes. Caught totally off guard:

GRACE
What?

Lovell has a hard time getting the words out, almost stutters:

LOVELL
Grace -- will you be my wife?

GRACE
I'm tying my shoe, I...

All at once, Grace realizes this is for real. And starts sobbing:

GRACE (CONT'D)
Oh my God...oh my God...

Lovell's kneeling. She still hasn't given an audible answer. Just a lot of crying.

LOVELL
(panicking)
Is that...yes or no? I can't tell...

She gets enough coherence to utter through her sobs:

GRACE
Yes...yes...oh my God, yes...

Lovell breathes a sigh of relief, then reaches up to put the ring on her finger, still shaking. He does, when:

GRACE
(through sobs)
Wrong hand, Lovell.

55 INT. POSH RESTAURANT - BAR AREA -- NIGHT

55

Lovell and Grace are gathered amidst a group of their FRIENDS and FAMILY. Champagne flows. Congratulations. Excitement.

GRACE
 (to friends)
 I've got him completely trained. Watch:
 (to Lovell)
 Honey -- sit. Stand. Heel. Stay.

Lovell clownishly complies with all commands.
 She throws him a bar mint. Laughter.

GRACE (CONT'D)
 See, it's all about repetition and
 reward.

Lovell's Mother, SHELLY, a natural beauty in her mid-40's,
 chimes in:

SHELLY
 That's all there is to it? Wish you'd
 taught me that when he was growing up.

LOVELL
 It only works when she does it, Mom.
 Sorry 'bout that...

Ding! Ding! Ding! Silver hit glassware, calling for a toast.

FRIENDS
 Speech! Speech!

Grace holds the floor, a glass raised:

GRACE
 I have something I want to say:

Lovell holds his glass nervously, awaiting her speech.
 Shelly stands at his side.

GRACE (CONT'D)
 I am an only child. As my folks well
 know.

Grace acknowledges her PARENTS, standing beside her -- DREW &
 KATHLEEN, a sweet, beaming couple in their 50's; we can tell by
 their body language that they are that rare couple that's as in
 love now as the day they met.

GRACE (CONT'D)
 As is Lovell. We were both a litter of
 one, you might say.
 (groans all around)
 It's the veterinarian in me, I'm sorry,
 I'm allowed to be corny today, people,
 it's my engagement party, so suck it up.
 (MORE)

GRACE (CONT'D)

Now, as a good friend of mine once told me, one of the advantages of being an only child is that you get to choose your siblings. And at a very young age, Lovell apparently decided to choose me as his sister -- which I DID NOT want to be.

(laughter)

I was in love with him from day one, but he didn't get it. And for years, I waited and waited for this old dog to learn a new trick.

(laughter)

When he got his first girlfriend, I wanted to be happy for him...but it broke my heart. I died inside. And I tried to forget him. I went out with a parade of different guys. But no one compared. No one else had a name that sounded like it was being said backward. No one else saw the world in such a beautiful way, creating these amazing images which have covered the walls of my bedrooms my whole life. No one else got such joy from their work and kept going, no matter how anyone tried to crush his spirit. And no one else loved my dog the way he did - this was a big one. No one else. And I thought I'd lost him.

Lovell. Learning. Moved.

GRACE (CONT'D)

But then, one day...somehow...he found me.

(applause, laughter)

I felt like a new person. I even chopped off my hair, maybe it was a bit much, I just had to do something drastic to tell the world: He loves me.

(near tears)

You've always taken care of me. And I promise -- I will always be there to take care of you. No matter what -- you're not alone. I only want to see you happy. I love you, dummy.

FRIENDS

Here! Here!

Glasses clink. Lovell fights back tears.
Locks eyes with Grace. Mouths back "I love you."

56 INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

56

In bed, Lovell snuggles a sleeping Grace.
The Four Dogs sleep on the floor all around them.

LOVELL
 (to us, yawning, drifting...)
 I don't think I could feel better...

His eyes close. BLACK. Then:

BEEP-beep-beep-beep-beep... Our eyes open on:

57 INT. BEDROOM -- DAWN (2004) 57

Lovell stirs awake. His fancy SILVER WATCH alarm is beeping like crazy. He stops it. Checks the time: It's 5 AM.

He looks in a nearby mirror and sees his reflection.

He's an adult. Our familiar PLAYING CARD graphic forms around his head with the AGE in the corners:

"30."

Lovell yawns. Fingers his wedding band. Then turns to see:

He's alone in the bed.

He freezes. Looks around.

58 INT. LOVELL'S APARTMENT -- DAWN 58

Lovell stands at the threshold of the room. Surveys the area:

It's a bit of a mess. Dirty dishes overflow in the sink. Paperwork, receipts cover the desk. Stains pepper the carpet. A few framed PHOTOS hang on the walls, which we recognize as Lovell's from his early 20's. But most of the walls are bare. The "couple" photos we saw recently are missing.

Lovell. Frozen. Mind swimming.

Beep-beep-beep-beep-beep...

The silence is shattered as Lovell's watch alarm goes off again. He stops it. A moment. Then:

59 JUMP CUTS AS LOVELL... 59

-- Opens the clothes closet. Finds only male clothes.
 -- Opens the cupboard. Finds old, scratched PET DISHES.
 -- Fingers a stack of bills. Addressed to "Mr. Lovell Milo."

Stops and thinks. He grabs his CELL PHONE off the desk. Finds "Grace - mobile" in the database. Dials. Reaches:

OPERATOR

(Baa-Buu-Bee.) You have reached a number that is disconnected or is no longer in service. Please check the number and dial again...

Lovell hangs up. Mystified.
Beep-beep-beep-beep-beep...his watch alarm goes off again.

60 MOMENTS LATER

60

Lovell's on the phone.

SHELLY (RECORDING, ON PHONE)

Hi, this is Shelly McDougall, leave a message.

(beep)

LOVELL

Hi, Mom, it's me, are you there?

(beat)

Um...where's my wife?

Beep-beep-beep-beep-beep...his watch alarm goes off again.

LOVELL

(tries to shut it off)

Goddamn this thing...

61 INT. SHELLY'S HOUSE / LOVELL'S CHILDHOOD HOME -- DAY

61

Lovell dashes in through the front door, moving fast, looking this way and that...

LOVELL

Mom? Mom, are you home?! Hello?

And finds no one.

Beep-beep-beep-beep-beep...his watch alarm goes off yet again.

LOVELL

(going out of his mind)

Enough!

Lovell's had it. He pulls the ever-beeping watch off of his wrist and tosses it on a nearby end-table...

Next to a hauntingly beautiful framed PORTRAIT OF GRACE. Early 20's. Long hair. At sunset. An intense look in her eyes. It's magical.

Lovell stops. Takes it in.
And grabs the portrait off the end table. Takes it with him.

62 EXT. KATHLEEN & DREW ZENOFF'S HOME -- DAY

62

Lovell's on the front step, cell phone pressed to his ear. It rings in his ear as he waits for a response...and we hear the phone ring inside the house, where no one answers.

Looking in through the front window, Lovell spies a matching framed PORTRAIT OF GRACE sitting on an end table, alongside other FRAMED PICTURES of Grace and her parents, Kathleen & Drew.

DREW (RECORDING, ON PHONE)

Hello, leave a message, please.

(beep)

LOVELL

Hi - Drew, Kathleen - it's Lovell. I'm, uh...on your front step and...looking for your daughter.

63 INT. LOVELL'S TOYOTA - DRIVING -- DAY

63

Lovell dials his cell phone while driving; he tries "Grace - mobile" one more time...and reaches the same message:

OPERATOR

You have reached a number that is disconnected or is no longer...

Click. He hangs up, frustrated. At a loss for what to do. Then:

Beep! Lovell's phone chirps at him. He looks at the screen, which declares -- "New Voicemail Message".

He immediately clicks on it and hears:

SHELLY (RECORDING, ON PHONE)

Hi, honey, it's Mom...um, strangest thing, I...found your watch here in the house, sitting on one of my tables. Don't know how it got there, but...just wanted to let you know. I know how important it is to you since...Grace gave it to you the day she died n'all.

SCREECH!!!

Lovell pulls over to the curb. Shell-shocked by what he's just heard.

SHELLY (CONT'D)

Anyway, it's here. Love you. Bye.

Click.

Lovell just sits there a moment. Processing this.

He looks down at the framed PORTRAIT OF GRACE, which is laying on his front seat. It stares back at him like a ghost. And he HEARS IN MEMORY:

LOVELL (V.O., MEMORY)
...wha...who am I supposed to save?

PIGTAILS (V.O., MEMORY)
Just pay attention.

Lovell swallows. He's got his mission. He immediately dials the phone. Reaches:

SHELLY (RECORDING, ON PHONE)
Hi, this is Shelly McDougall, leave a message.
(beep)

LOVELL
Mom? Mom, are you there?

64 INT. SHELLY'S HOUSE / LOVELL'S CHILDHOOD HOME -- AFTERNOON 64

Lovell bursts back in through the front door.

LOVELL
Mom? Are you here?

There's no answer. He happens across his WATCH, sitting on the end table where he left it. Touches it, now realizing its significance. Puts it back on.

LOVELL (CONT'D)
Mom?!

No response.

65 INT. SHELLY'S HOUSE - OFFICE -- AFTERNOON 65

Lovell types feverishly on Shelly's Mac, entering the Google search:

"Grace Milo Death Record."
...which leads him to the home page for...

"HALL OF RECORDS - TOWN OF RILEY CREEK."
...which has the modifier: "Website coming in 2005! Please call or stop by at..." -- the information is listed.

LOVELL
Damn small towns...get with the program.

Lovell picks up the phone, calls the number:

RECORDING (ON PHONE)

Thank you for calling the Hall of
Records, Town of Riley Creek. No one is
able to take your call right now...

66 EXT. HALL OF RECORDS - TOWN OF RILEY CREEK - LATE DAY 66

Lovell dashes up to the front door, which a CLERK is just
locking for the day...

CLERK

Sorry, sir, we're closing.

LOVELL

Please, I just need five minutes to
locate a record...

CLERK

I'm sorry, sir, business hours are 10 AM
to 5 PM.

(points to watch)

It's 5 PM. Get a good night's sleep and
we'll see you in the morning...

67 INT. LOVELL'S CAR -- NIGHT 67

Lovell sits parked outside the Hall of Records. Pours a cup
of coffee from a THERMOS. Gulps it down as he dials his cell
phone. Shakes his head in circles to stay awake.
His watch ticks. He reaches:

DREW (RECORDING, ON PHONE)

Hello, leave a message, please.

(beep)

LOVELL

Hi -- Drew, Kathleen -- it's Lovell
again...

68 LATER 68

Lovell dials again. Really fights to stay awake. Reaches:

SHELLY (RECORDING, ON PHONE)

Hi, this is Shelly McDougall, leave a
message...

(beep)

LOVELL

Mom, please...you've gotta be there...

69 INT. LOVELL'S CAR -- DAWN 69

Lovell sits in the same spot, clutching the thermos to his chest.
He's exhausted. Sleepy.

Despite every effort and intention, his eyelids involuntarily lower...the watch ticks envelop the soundtrack... Lovell dozes off...a snore breaks forth and...

BLACK. Our eyes open on:

A CEILING. Look at our watch:
It's a Kermit the Frog Special. We're in...

70 INT. LOVELL'S 10 YEAR OLD BEDROOM -- MORNING (1984) 70

Lovell, 10, sits up in bed. Furious.

LOVELL
Dammit!

71 EXT. SMALL TOWN SUBURBAN STREET -- MORNING 71

Lovell, 10 and fully backpacked for school, races down the street and up the walkway of...

72 EXT. GRACE'S 10 YEAR OLD HOME -- MORNING 72

A cozy little one-story, the same home on whose doorstep Lovell stood the previous day at age 30. He knocks on the front door, which is opened by KATHLEEN (Grace's Mother).

KATHLEEN
Hello, Lovell.

LOVELL
(panting)
Hi, Mrs. Z. Is Grace home?

KATHLEEN
She's in her room.

73 INT. GRACE'S 10 YEAR OLD HOME -- MORNING 73

Lovell walks through the hallway, which is bursting with animals. CATS and DOGS scurry about the halls. A PARROT flits about. Good ol' HOWARD THE BEAGLE, still young and frisky, jumps up to Lovell, licking him. He knows him quite well.

LOVELL
Hey, Howard. Good to see you, bud.

Lovell continues down to Grace's door, which is slightly ajar. He stops. Knocks. No answer.

LOVELL (CONT'D)
Grace?

No answer. He enters slowly...

74 INT. GRACE'S 10 YEAR OLD BEDROOM -- MORNING

74

Pastel colors. Pictures and sculptures of all manner of ANIMALS paper the room in every direction. Framed on her desk is Lovell's very first picture of Howard the Beagle, with her head stuffed in the bottom corner.

The room is empty. Lovell turns about.

LOVELL

Grace?

Suddenly, the WHITE CURTAINS behind Lovell move -- JUMPING out at him with a SCREAM!!!

GRACE

Boo!!!

Lovell's tackled from behind, scaring him half to death, knocking him to the ground. He looks up to see:

A GHOST.

Or rather, what looks like a Halloween ghost costume. A little girl covered in a white sheet.

GRACE (CONT'D)

Were you surprised?

LOVELL

Yeah.

GRACE

I'm the Queen of Surprises.

Lovell stands. Grace removes her sheet, revealing herself. Lovell's breath is almost taken away:

She stands before him. Living. His little red-haired girl. Lovell chokes up. Howard the Beagle jumps at her excitedly. Licks her. She licks him back.

GRACE (CONT'D)

(doggie voice)

Howard, you're my baby. Yes, you are.
Sit. Stay.

Howard complies. Grace throws him a treat.

75 EXT. STREETS IN FRONT OF GRADE SCHOOL -- DAY

75

Grace is about to step into the crosswalk toward school. Lovell stops her, holding her back, looking both ways.

GRACE

It's clear.

LOVELL
I just wanna be sure.

GRACE
Dummy, there's a crossing guard.

A CROSSING GUARD holds up a stop sign for on-coming traffic, all the while waving Lovell and Grace on. Even so, Lovell holds fast to Grace's arm as they cross the street.

GRACE (CONT'D)
Why're you so freaked out, dude?

76 EXT. GRADE SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - LUNCH -- DAY

76

Lovell and Grace sit at a picnic table, eating bag lunches.

LOVELL
I think you should go to the doctor.

GRACE
Why?

LOVELL
It's good to get a checkup in case something might be wrong. You never know.

Grace is distracted, staring at someone off camera. Lovell follows her gaze.

GRACE
What do you think of Christopher King?

Lovell looks back. Jealous.

LOVELL
I think he's a jerk.

GRACE
I think he's cute.

LOVELL
No, you don't.

GRACE
I was thinking about asking him to go 'round.

LOVELL
No, you weren't.

GRACE
(brightening)
Are you jealous?

LOVELL
 (getting annoyed)
 Look, I'm serious. I want you to go to a
 doctor. Just to be sure.

GRACE
 Fine, take me to see him if it's so
 important to you.

LOVELL
 Him?

Grace looks at him funny.

GRACE
 (duh...)
 There are only, like, four doctors in
 this town. Who else would you take me to
 see?

And with that, we see a PLATE which reads:

"ORSON MILO, M.D."

on a list with three other Doctor's names in front of:

77 EXT. RILEY CREEK AREA HOSPITAL -- DAY 77

A very small hospital seated on main street.
 Lovell takes in the sign, then leads Grace up the path.

78 INT. FAMILY PRACTICE - WAITING ROOM -- DAY 78

Waiting PATIENTS read on the sofa. Lovell enters with Grace.
 The RECEPTIONIST recognizes him immediately:

RECEPTIONIST
 Hi, hon. You here to see your Dad?

LOVELL
 Um...yeah.

RECEPTIONIST
 He's with a patient. You want to wait in
 his office?

79 INT. ORSON MILO M.D.'S OFFICE -- DAY 79

Lovell and Grace enter the office. Lovell looks around,
 soaking up the atmosphere:

There's something very cold about this room. Formal. Dark brown.

A framed DOCTORATE holds center stage.
 Awards, plaques and trophies pepper the room.

All bearing the name "ORSON MILO, M.D."

Several framed PHOTOS line the walls and decorate the desk. They depict DR. MILO (who we'll meet soon) with various Important Looking People -- the Mayor, Governor, holding the KEY TO THE CITY, etc.

This is the office of an Important Man, at least in his own mind. But there's something missing. Grace gives voice to it:

GRACE

How come he doesn't have any pictures of you?

Lovell doesn't have an answer. Then he spots a lone PHOTO of himself & Shelly. Buried behind the awards. Dusty. Fingers it.

Grace picks up a GOLFING TROPHY:

GRACE (CONT'D)

Your Dad won a golf game?

Lovell looks at it:

LOVELL

I guess so.

And with that, they hear a door open. Voices.

ORSON (O.S.)

...Take it easy on that leg, Simon. For two weeks at least -- that'll give me two weeks to practice up so I can kick your butt on the green.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

(laughing)

Oh, you just wait, Doc. You're gonna wish you'd made me worse, not better.

ORSON (O.S.)

The hippocratic oath forbids that, but that oath means squat on the golf course.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Thanks again, Doc -- you're the best!

ORSON (O.S.)

It's good you can admit it now. Just keep sayin' that.

(laughter)

Something about Orson's voice sounds like a politician. A little too friendly.

Lovell peers around the edge of the door frame:

A thick-framed man in a white lab coat is half-visible, scribbling on a chart...

But he freezes when he sees his office door open. He approaches, enters and for the first time in person we see...

ORSON MILO, M.D.

Late 30's. Stocky, ruddy-faced, balding. The spectacles make the man. The politician switches off his censor; he doesn't look happy:

ORSON (CONT'D)
(to Lovell)
What are you doing in here?

LOVELL
I was just wondering if...

ORSON
(to Grace)
Missy...excuse me...

Orson crosses to Grace and removes the Golfing Trophy from her hands.

ORSON (CONT'D)
...this is not a toy. I don't come to your room and start going picking up your valuables, do I?

GRACE
No.

ORSON
You can extend me the same courtesy. What do you need?

Lovell's nervous, stuttering to get this out:

LOVELL
Well, I was...wondering if you could take a look at Grace. Make sure she's okay.

Orson takes a moment to understand that Grace is "Missy".

ORSON
(to Grace)
What's wrong with you?

GRACE
Nothing.

Orson's confused. Grace looks to Lovell for an answer:

LOVELL

I just thought maybe she could use a checkup.

Orson's annoyance is plastered all over his face.

ORSON

Um...Grace, would you adjourn to the waiting room, please?

Grace quietly leaves the room, watching Lovell, concerned. Orson firmly shuts the door, sealing Lovell and himself in privacy.

ORSON (CONT'D)

(very firm)

This is not a playground to which you can bring your friends. This is my office. I don't do parlor tricks here, I work here. And if her parents want her to get a checkup, they'll set it up and pay me. I'm not a charity service for you to abuse...

LOVELL

I know, but...

ORSON

HEY!

Lovell almost jumps out of his skin.

ORSON (CONT'D)

Don't interrupt me. Do you wanna talk or do you wanna learn?

Lovell, scared into submission, answers:

LOVELL

I want to learn.

ORSON

You don't bring someone to me without an appointment unless they're dying. Clear?

LOVELL

(a moment, then)

Yes, sir.

ORSON

Now, what do you have to say to me?

Lovell takes a moment. What is he talking about? Orson stares at him. Finally, he comes out with:

LOVELL
I'm sorry, Dad.

Orson seems satisfied.

ORSON
Go home. Do your schoolwork.

80 INT. FAMILY PRACTICE - HALLWAY -- DAY

80

Orson's office door SLAMS shut, leaving Lovell alone in the hallway outside. A moment passes.

LOVELL
(under his breath)
Lot of good it is being 10. This is
useless.

A passing PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT, using the nearby water fountain, overhears him:

PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT
Being 10's not useless, hon.

Lovell rolls his eyes. He didn't mean to be overheard. The Physician's Assistant wipes her mouth, then looks at Lovell:

PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT (CONT'D)
(almost a whisper)
Pay attention.

All seems to go quiet. Lovell's instantly mesmerized. She *knows*.

PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT (CONT'D)
You're not here by mistake, dummy.

LOVELL
How does Grace die?

Beat.

PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT
Just pay attention.

81 INT. MILO HOME - DINING ROOM -- NIGHT

81

Lovell sits at dinner with Orson, Shelly and Grace, who is visiting. Everyone eats in relative silence.

Lovell studies the group. Paying attention. After a moment, he pulls out his BROWNIE CAMERA and snaps a photo of Grace, who mugs for him. Orson's annoyed:

ORSON
Lovell. Do you want me to take it away?

SHELLY

Put the camera down, sweetie. We're having dinner.

Lovell puts the camera down. He and Grace share a glance. Oh, well. A smile.

And then, something happens:

Orson spontaneously FALLS ASLEEP at the table. His head hangs down like a robot who's been turned off. He lets out a toasty SNORE.

Grace laughs out loud, but quickly covers her mouth. Lovell watches, transfixed. Shelly kicks Orson under the table, waking him.

Orson rights himself quickly. Looks around. He realizes what's happened, but doesn't acknowledge it. Resumes eating.

A moment passes.

Slowly, Orson nods off again.

Lovell can't believe it. His father has the same illness he does when he's older.

On impulse, Lovell grabs his Brownie and - CLICK - snaps a picture of his open-mouthed, sleeping father. The camera "click" wakes Orson...

...who sees Lovell's camera pointed at him. He shakes awake as he realizes what just happened:

ORSON

Did you just take my picture?

Grace holds back a laugh. Lovell suppresses a grin. Shelly looks nervous. Orson's dead serious.

LOVELL

Why?

ORSON

(firmly)

Did you just take my picture?

LOVELL

What if I did?

Orson stands up, his hand outstretched:

ORSON

Give me the camera.

LOVELL

Why?

SHELLY

(trying to keep the peace)
Lovell, please just do as your father
asks...

Orson walks around the table and grabs for the camera, which Lovell struggles to hold onto, but the stronger Orson wrests it from his hands...

ORSON

Think it's funny to make fun of me?

...reaches inside and rips out the negative, exposing it to the light of day...Lovell's EYES GO WIDE WITH HORROR:

LOVELL

NO!!! I had pictures of Grace on there!

Lovell grabs for the roll of film, but it's too late. It's ruined. Little Lovell is breathless. Grace looks on, immobile.

SHELLY

Lovell, your father asked you not to take pictures at the table.

LOVELL

He didn't have to ruin my film.
(under his breath)
Asshole.

Orson's inflamed. As he heads out of the room with the Brownie:

ORSON

You won't be seeing this thing again
until you're old enough to vote.

Lovell looks like he's been punched in the gut. He races after Orson as he heads...

82 INTO THE STAIRWELL

82

...where Lovell grabs for the camera, digs his claws into Orson, dragging along, fighting, gnashing, screaming:

LOVELL

No! I saved for that!! It's mine!!

ORSON

Maybe now you'll spend more time on your homework instead of taking so many stupid pictures. Let go of me!

Shelly steps in, pulling at Lovell:

SHELLY

Lovell, stop it! Let go of your father!

He doesn't, Orson can't get free, so finally in frustration Orson BACKHANDS Lovell, who falls to the ground.

Grace gasps. So does Shelly. Orson stops. Looks.

ORSON

You okay?

(beat)

I told you to let go of me.

Beat. Lovell says nothing. Orson, satisfied he's done no real damage, turns and marches up the stairs, disappearing with Lovell's most prized possession.

Shelly kneels down to see that Lovell's nose is bleeding.

SHELLY

Let me get you a tissue.

Shelly dashes off, averting her eyes from Grace. She can't believe an outsider just saw that. Grace kneels down next to Lovell, touches his nose. Then kisses it.

LOVELL

(whispered, stifling tears)

I'm never gonna be like him. Never.

The two lock eyes. And with that, Grace rises and soldiers up the stairs after Orson.

83 INT. MILO HOME - MASTER BEDROOM -- NIGHT

83

As Orson places the Brownie on a high shelf of a clothes closet, he hears:

GRACE (O.S.)

His pictures aren't stupid.

Orson does a double-take, not sure what he's hearing. He turns around to see Grace, standing in the room behind him. Solid poise. Not scared in the least.

ORSON

Excuse me?

GRACE

I don't know if you've taken the time to look at his pictures, or if you're capable of appreciating them, but he's really good. He could really be something.

Orson can't believe a 10-year-old is talking to him like this.

ORSON

Who the hell do you think you're talking to, Missy?

GRACE

A man who just gave his kid a bloody nose. The ASPCA says to report even when dogs are treated like that.

Orson. Furious.

ORSON

Get out of my house.

Lovell's now watching from the doorway.

ORSON (CONT'D)

Get out.

Orson starts to lose muscle control, but catches himself.

LOVELL

Grace. C'mon. Please.

Grace locks eyes with Orson. Then leaves the room.

84 INT. MILO HOME - LIVING ROOM -- DAY

84

Lovell, age 10, sits on the stairs alone, watching as...

...an afternoon PARTY is in progress. Hors d'oeuvres abound. Orson works the packed room of "important-looking" folks, while Shelly acts the perfect hostess.

The DOORBELL rings. Shelly crosses and opens the door...

To reveal TWO MEN. Stern faces. Briefcases. They catch Lovell's attention. Something's up.

SHELLY

May I help you?

ACROSS THE ROOM

Orson has noticed the strange guests at his door. Shelly waves him over. She looks perturbed. He approaches...

ORSON
Something I can do for you gentlemen?

FIRST MAN
Orson Milo?

ORSON
I'm Doctor Milo.

FIRST MAN
(displays identification)
I'm Mr. Koehler. This is Mr. Brazil.
Department of Social Services.

ORSON
I have guests right now. What's this
about?

FIRST MAN
We had a domestic violence complaint
filed against you, sir. How 'bout we
find some place private to chat?

Lovell. Reacts. As do many GUESTS, who overhear the
exchange. Orson goes pale with humiliation.

85 INT. MILO HOME - LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

85

It's empty. Dark. Remnants of the party lie about.
Lovell, tense, watches Orson pace. Shelly hovers nearby.
A tough conversation has been in progress.

ORSON
Lovell, you know it was just an accident,
right? I'd never beat up my son, that's
absurd. That little girl was a guest in
our home, and she pulls this...

Orson, enraged, suddenly KICKS a chair. Breaking it.
Lovell jumps back. Shelly winces.
Finally, Orson catches his breath. Turns to Lovell. Locks eyes:

ORSON (CONT'D)
You're never to speak to her again.
Ever.

He turns to leave, muttering under his breath:

ORSON (CONT'D)
(sotto voce)
I could kill that kid.

Lovell freezes at that statement. Watches him go.
The door SLAMS as Orson departs. All goes quiet.

86 INT. ORSON'S BMW - DRIVING -- NIGHT (1989)

86

Lovell, 15, sits in the back seat, still watching...

Orson. Driving in silence. Ominous.
Shelly's in the front passenger seat. They're all dressed
up, probably heading back from a swanky event...

...when, slowly, Orson starts to nod off. Lovell watches him
like a hawk, scared, about to say something when --

SHELLY

Orson!

He snaps awake. Keeps driving. As if nothing happened.

87 INT. THE MILO HOME - HALLWAY -- LATER THAT NIGHT

87

Lovell, 15, stands in the shadows, spying on...

Orson. Having an argument with Shelly. They're visible
through a cracked door frame as they prepare for bed:

SHELLY

...I don't care! This has gone on long
enough! You have a problem!

ORSON

I'm not having this discussion, Shelly...

SHELLY

You selfish, prideful son of a bitch!
What if you fell asleep during a
procedure?

ORSON

Jesus, don't you even know what I do?
I'm not a surgeon anymore, I'm family
medicine, I rarely ever have to do
anything like that, and there are people
in the room besides...

SHELLY

You just don't care, do you? You don't
care who you might hurt, you don't...

ORSON

Shelly, be intelligent about this: I
can't just medicate myself, every last
bit of pharmaceuticals has to be
accounted for. That's illegal. Number
one.

(MORE)

ORSON (CONT'D)

Number two: I go to another doctor to get diagnosed, people talk, it'll be all over town that Doc Milo's got a problem. That could destroy *everything* I've worked for. Everything. Gone.

88 INT. THE MILO HOME - KITCHEN -- MORNING 88

Lovell, 15, watches...

Orson. Dressed for work. Pours himself a HUGE STEEL THERMOS full of COFFEE.

89 EXT. THE MILO HOME -- SAME MORNING 89

Orson walks down the sidewalk, thermos in hand, guzzles a cup of coffee and enters his BMW.

Lovell, 15, watches from a distance, then turns to us:

LOVELL

Mental Journal Entry #2:

(beat)

I think my father's involved in Grace's death.

90 EXT. THE MILO HOME - BACKYARD -- DAY (1998) 90

Lovell, 24, lines up his camera to photograph the backyard. Orson, who's reading a paper in a lawn chair, gets up and walks off, having no desire to be in the picture.

LOVELL

I haven't seen a day past 26 years old in a long time. And all I've been seeing lately is him...

91 INT. THE MILO HOME - DINING ROOM -- NIGHT (1991) 91

Lovell, 17, and Shelly, 40s, eat dinner together. Lovell stares at Orson's EMPTY CHAIR.

LOVELL

...Or the *lack* of him.

92 INT. THE MILO HOME - DINING ROOM -- NIGHT (1982) 92

Lovell, 8, and Shelly, 30s, eat dinner together 9 years earlier. Orson's chair is empty again.

LOVELL

So if I'm not here by mistake...

93 INT. THE MILO HOME - DINING ROOM -- NIGHT (1996) 93

Lovell, early 20s, and Shelly, late 40s. Dinner again.

Orson's chair: empty, as usual.

LOVELL

...if this is important...then he's involved. So be careful. And ready. For anything.

BLACK. Our eyes open on:

A CEILING. Rain shadows dance across it. We're in...

94 INT. LOVELL AND GRACE'S BEDROOM -- MORNING (2000) 94

Lovell sits up. Looks around. The bed's empty. He gets up...and notices something written on the WALL MIRROR in lipstick...gets closer, it comes into focus and reads:

"Happy 26th Birthday, Lovell."

Out of nowhere, Grace embraces him from behind:

GRACE

Happy Birthday, Dummy.

She kisses him. And that's when Lovell notices...

A SMALL WRAPPED PRESENT. "To Lovell - Love, Grace." Sitting on the nearby dresser top. He looks from his wristwatch - the CASIO - to the package.

SHELLY (IN MEMORY)

...Grace gave you that watch the day she died n'all...

GRACE

I gotta hit the head.

She shuffles off to the bathroom. While she's not looking, Lovell picks up the present. Shakes it. Regards it with dread. A watch could very well be inside.

GRACE

Hey, no fair peeking.
(grabs it from his hands)
Not 'til tonight.

95 INT. THE MILO HOME (ORSON & SHELLY'S) - DINING ROOM -- NIGHT 95

It's raining outside. The quiet pitter-patter seeps in.

Lovell stares at...GRACE'S PRESENT. Nestled among a few others and birthday cards on a nearby end table. Reveal that he is...

Seated at a table with Orson, Shelly and Grace as they finish up dinner. A birthday cake with 26 candles is at table's center.

A very large, sharp, scary KITCHEN KNIFE lays next to it...just inches away from Orson...who doesn't look very comfortable having Grace in his home.

SHELLY

26 years. Doesn't seem possible. Seems like just yesterday you were 8.

LOVELL

(under his breath)

Actually, that was two days ago...

The tension between Orson & Grace is palpable. Lovell looks at them. And the Kitchen Knife. It's at Orson's fingertips.

SHELLY

Seems like just last week you were born. I miss having a baby around.

Shelly regrets the words the minute they leave her mouth. Grace has a visible reaction.

ORSON

So how 'bout it? You two got a grandchild in the works for me?

No answer. Shelly covertly gives Orson the throat slash/"cut it off" sign. Grace looks at her food.

ORSON (CONT'D)

What? Never going to be more fertile than you are right now.

SHELLY

Orson.

GRACE

You know, some people don't find that line of questioning particularly polite or considerate.

Lovell puts his hand on Grace's leg. Support.

ORSON

Oh, that's right, you're a pretty tough cookie. Probably don't want kids to mess with your independence.

LOVELL

Dad. Stop it.

GRACE

You know what? You don't know shit, and it's none of your business.

Grace locks eyes with Orson. His fingers rest on the Knife.

ORSON

Think you can talk like that to me in my own home?

LOVELL

Dad. ENOUGH. --

SHELLY

Orson! --

Lovell looks at Grace, and is surprised to see that she's about to burst into tears. She gets up and dashes from the room; she won't let anyone see her cry. Orson stands, Lovell stands, grabs the Knife, pulling it from Orson's reach...

ORSON

I said years ago she wasn't allowed in this house, I had to go back on that 'cause you married her, but I'll be damned if I let her curse at me under my own roof...

SHELLY

(almost in tears herself)
 Jesus Christ, Orson, she has endometriosis. They just tried in vitro and it failed, okay?! She's devastated.
 (closer to a whisper)
They probably can't have kids. You happy now?

Lovell stops. Wow. News to him.

The door SLAMS in the distance. Footsteps run away in the rain. Lovell disengages, turns and dashes after them...

LOVELL

Grace?!

96 EXT. MILO HOME - RAINING -- DAY

96

Lovell races out into the downpour. Looks around. Grace is nowhere to be found.

LOVELL

Grace?! Grace?!

97 EXT. DOWNTOWN RILEY CREEK - RAINING -- NIGHT

97

Lovell walks from shop to shop, restaurant to restaurant. Peers in the windows. Scans the area.

She's nowhere to be found.

98 INT. LOVELL & GRACE'S APARTMENT - RAINING OUT -- NIGHT 98

Lovell waits in the dark with their FOUR DOGS and THREE CATS.
Anxious. Antsy. Going out of his mind.
Clicks "redial" on the phone and reaches:

GRACE (RECORDING, ON PHONE)
Hi, it's Grace. Surprise me.
(beep)

A KNOCK comes at the door. He bolts up and opens it to find:

GRACE. Drunk as all get out. Soaking wet.
Being propped up by a young BRUNETTE, about 24.

BRUNETTE
Does she belong to you?

LOVELL
(relieved)
Yes. Oh, God, honey -- what happened?

Lovell immediately takes hold of Grace, helping prop her up.

BRUNETTE
I tend bar at Lucas Tavern...

GRACE
(barely coherent)
Bathroom...please...

LOVELL
This way.

Lovell leads her toward the bathroom. The Dogs follow,
licking at Grace's hands.

GRACE
Hi, babies...

BRUNETTE
...I found her in one of my back booths.
This was the address on her driver's
license.

They move...

99 INTO THE BATHROOM 99

Where Grace collapses by the toilet and vomits. Hard.
The Brunette backs up. Lovell kneels down by Grace.

LOVELL
Honey, are you okay?

GRACE
(mumbled)
Close-a door. I'm fine, jus' close a-
door.

Lovell gets up, starts to close the door, when Grace makes eye contact with the Brunette.

GRACE (CONT'D)
Thank you, sweetie. Isn't she nice?

The Brunette smiles at her as Grace vomits one more time. Lovell closes the door, giving her privacy.

LOVELL
Is she gonna be okay? How much did she drink?

BRUNETTE
I didn't serve her, I'm not sure how much she drank. Keep an eye on her, but I think she's gonna be fine. I'm pretty good at judging that kind of thing by now.

LOVELL
I...I don't know how to thank you -- what's your name?

BRUNETTE
Linda.

LOVELL
Linda. I'm Lovell.
(indicates the bathroom)
That's Grace. She just...she just ran away...

Lovell stifles his emotion. Linda's a touch uncomfortable:

LINDA
I should get going.

LOVELL
Sure, it's late. Thank you.

As Linda heads for the door, she notices Lovell's PHOTOS along the wall:

LINDA (CONT'D)
Where did you get these?

LOVELL
I took 'em.

LINDA
Get out. They're fantastic.

LOVELL
Thanks.

LINDA
Do you sell these?

LOVELL
Not to someone who brings my wife home.
But you can have one on the house. Which
one?

Linda takes a moment, then points to a photo of a magnificent sunset over Downtown Riley Creek.

LINDA
That one.

LOVELL
Lucas Tavern, right?

LINDA
Uh huh.

LOVELL
(points to Lucas Tavern in the
photo)
You're right there. I'll drop one off.

MOMENTS LATER

As Linda exits, she grabs something near the door...

LINDA
This bag was outside your door.

It's a shopping bag full of LOVELL'S BIRTHDAY PRESENTS, cards announcing "Happy Birthday, Lovell!" We saw them earlier on the end table at Orson & Shelly's house. Lovell's surprised. Shelly must have dropped it off.

Linda looks at him with compassion:

LINDA
Happy Birthday.

Lovell smiles back. Closes the door. Immediately, he tears through the packages, finds GRACE'S PRESENT...

And hears a THUD! emanate from the bathroom.

Present in hand, he races...

100 INTO THE BATHROOM

100

...to find Grace laying on the floor, dogs surrounding her. She's not moving. Is she dead?

LOVELL
Honey? Are you okay?

GRACE
(slurring her speech)
That girl's nice, isn't she? She's really pretty.

Lovell, relieved, kneels down next to her. Wipes her mouth with kleenex. Holds her.

LOVELL
Sure.

GRACE
I'll bet she can have kids. Why don't you marry her?

LOVELL
Honey, you're talking crazy.

GRACE
Why don't you go make lots of babies with her? Just go ahead. She seems nice. It's fine with me.
(to the dogs, who hang nearby)
You're my babies, huh?

LOVELL
Grace, I love you. I don't want anyone else, no matter what.

GRACE
(starts to cry)
I'm sorry, dummy.

LOVELL
You got nothin' to be sorry about.
(she drools vomit on his sleeve)
Except for...that, maybe.

Lovell quickly opens Grace's present to reveal...

It's not a watch. It's a WIDE ANGLE CAMERA LENS. With a note: "To help you see the big picture. I love you."

Lovell sighs relief. Phew. He's about to thank Grace when...

She lets out a big honking SNORE.

VETERINARY ASSISTANT
We're ready for you.

103 INT. VETERINARY CLINIC - CHECK-UP ROOM -- DAY

103

Howard lays on a table, breathing horribly. In pain.
Grace kneels next to him, stroking him, looking into his eyes.

GRACE
(holding back tears)
Look at me, Howard. It's okay. Look at
me. I'm here.

Kathleen and Drew stand on either side. Petting him.
Lovell stands right behind her, his hand on her shoulder.
Everyone tries to control their emotions unsuccessfully.

A VET, a beefy, bearded man with a strangely soothing
countenance, stands behind Howard with a full SYRINGE.
He looks at Grace:

VET
You ready, ma'am?

Grace can't choke out any words. At last, she nods.
Lovell. Watches her.

The Vet slowly, gently brings the syringe needle to Howard's
shoulder blade. Delicately pushes in.

Grace locks eyes with Howard. Trembling.

GRACE
You're not alone, honey. I'm here.

EYES. Grace. Howard. All they see is each other.

GRACE (CONT'D)
You're not alone.

Slowly, the life drains from Howard's eyes.

He's gone.

Lovell. Watches Grace. Her strength. Overcome.
The Vet places a blanket over Howard.

104 EXT. VETERINARY CLINIC - PARKING LOT -- DAY

104

Grace exits the clinic as fast as she can, her blanket-
covered dead dog in her arms. She wants to get the hell out
of there.

As she reaches the car, she bursts out sobbing. Uncontrollable.
Her parents & Lovell follow and group-hug her, Howard's body

still in her arms. Hold for awhile.

The group hug reduces to just Lovell and Grace.

105 EXT. SMALL TOWN SUBURBAN STREET -- SUNSET

105

Lovell and Grace walk in silence. Eyes red in the aftermath. Lovell's CAMERA is strapped to his shoulder.

Slowly, he takes her hand. Holds it as they walk. She looks at him. Eye contact. Intense connection. Silence. Then:

GRACE

I wonder what he saw at the end. I've heard people who've had near death experiences say that when you're close to death, your life flashes before your eyes. Like that old saying.

(beat)

He was 16. Doesn't seem like much.

LOVELL

Well, in dog years, he's what...100 something? That's a hell of a life.

GRACE

Yeah. I wonder what he saw.

LOVELL

He saw you.

(a beat, then:)

He's lucky. If I was gonna die, I can't think of anyone else I'd rather see.

Grace stops walking. Looks at him. Moved beyond words. Lovell looks at her. Somewhat terrified that he just said that.

They just look at each other. A powerful eye-lock. They're both about to dissolve into tears again, when...

Grace can't contain herself anymore. She embraces Lovell and kisses him passionately. He kisses back. Their first kiss. After 15 years. Finally, while kissing:

GRACE

I love you.

LOVELL

I love you too.

GRACE

I've loved you since I was 8 years old.

(beat)

You're shaking.

LOVELL
I'm scared.

GRACE
Me too.

Finally, they look at each other. Lovell starts to back up.
Grace, nervous:

GRACE
What?

LOVELL
I don't ever want to forget this.

Lovell grabs his camera.

LOVELL
Just come forward a little bit...
(moves her "into her light")
Right there.

Grace stops. Smiles at him through her tears:

GRACE
I look like hell, I'm sure.

Grace looks right at him as he clicks the shutter.
And as soon as he does, Lovell freezes.
He's seen this photo before. Flash to:

106 SHELLY'S HOUSE / LOVELL'S CHILDHOOD HOME 106

See Grace's FRAMED PORTRAIT. At sunset. With an intense look
in her eyes. This is the photo Lovell just took. Back to:

107 EXT. SMALL TOWN SUBURBAN STREET -- SUNSET 107

Resume. Lovell's blown away. Talk about déjà vu.

108 INT. LOVELL'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM -- NIGHT 108

Lovell and Grace lie together in bed, naked under the covers.
Grace sleeps; Lovell holds her. Looks at her. Lies against her.
And slowly falls asleep.

BLACK.
Day over. Then, our eyes open on:

A BEDROOM. Take a moment to focus. Look at our watch.
It's 9:15 AM.

Then do a double-take. The WATCH. On Lovell's wrist.
It's the SILVER TUTIMA.

GRACE (O.S.)
 Merry Christmas, Dummy.
 (beat)
 You like it?

Reveal that we are in...

109 INT. LOVELL AND GRACE'S BEDROOM -- DAY (2001) 109

Grace, already awake, hops up on the bed next to Lovell.

GRACE
 Santa put it on your wrist during the
 night.

Lovell just looks at it. Today's the day.
 TICK. TOCK. TICK. TOCK.
 The watch commands the soundtrack. The countdown has begun.
 Lovell gulps. Terrified. Tries to put on a smile for her.

LOVELL
 It's gorgeous.

He embraces her. Holds on tight.

GRACE
 I'm the Queen of Surprises.
 (beat)
 Better get up. We have a big day.

110 INT. LOVELL AND GRACE'S BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER 110

Lovell races to get dressed. Fumbles his clothes.
 Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock.

111 AT THE FRONT DOOR 111

Grace waits with an armful of PACKAGES. Lovell races to her side.

GRACE
 All set?

Lovell nods. Grace reaches down to say goodbye to the DOGS.

GRACE
 Goodbye, babies. Have a Merry Christmas.

Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock.

112 EXT. CARPORT -- DAY 112

Lovell and Grace finish loading the packages into Grace's Honda.
 Grace moves to get in the driver's side...

But Lovell cuts her off.

LOVELL
I'll drive.

Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock.

113 INT. GRACE'S HONDA - DRIVING -- DAY 113

Lovell drives 17 mph along an empty residential street lined with Christmas decorations. Grace is a little confused.

GRACE
Why are you driving so slow?

LOVELL
People drive drunk on holidays. You gotta be careful.

Beat.

GRACE
You're being passed by a bicycle.

Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock.

114 INT. GRACE'S PARENTS' HOME -- DAY 114

Kathleen, Drew, Grace, Lovell. Exchanging gifts. Everyone's having a great time except Lovell, who's tense.

Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock. Then:

BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEP!!!
The Tutima's alarm goes off. Lovell jumps out of his skin.

GRACE
Sorry, it beeps on the hour unless you tell it not to. Here, let me show you...

115 EXT. DRIVING -- DAY 115

We slowly snake through the residential streets.
Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock.

116 INT. THE MILO HOME - LIVING ROOM -- DAY 116

Grace, Lovell, Shelly and Orson sit around a huge Christmas tree. Opening gifts. Lovell sits close to Grace. Keeps a hawk's eye on Orson, who sits apart from the group, constantly looking at his PAGER.

Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock.

SHELLY

(to Orson)

Would you quit fooling with that thing?

ORSON

I'm on call today. All the other M.D.'s are out of town for Christmas. It's a big responsibility, I've gotta keep an eye on it.

SHELLY

Well, it'll beep if you're needed. I'd appreciate it if you'd keep an eye on us too.

Clearly this is an old routine, and she's not fooling around. Shelly opens a new package, revealing a blouse from Grace.

SHELLY

Oh, thank you, honey, that's lovely. Orson, did you see...

She turns to show her new gift to Orson...

And he's fast asleep. As usual. Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock.

117 INT. THE MILO HOME - DINING ROOM -- AFTERNOON 117

The four of them eat Christmas dinner in relative silence. Shelly cuts her ham angrily. Chews with viciousness.

Lovell stays alert, at the ready for anything. Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock.

118 INT. THE MILO HOME - KITCHEN ADJACENT -- SUNSET 118

Lovell and Grace listen from the next room as Shelly and Orson fight in the kitchen. Lovell holds fast to Grace.

SHELLY

You have no interest in what goes on in this family. You never have. You can't wait to get back to work to get out of here. Even on Christmas. Isn't that true?

ORSON

No matter what I say, until your original supposition is validated, you won't be satisfied. You wanna talk, you don't wanna learn...

Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock.

SHELLY

Answer me! Isn't that true?!

ORSON

I'm not going over this shit again. I'm done.

Orson turns and walks out the door. Slams it behind him. Disappears into the night.

Lovell breathes slightly easier. Loosens his grip on Grace. They round the corner to see Shelly doing the dishes. Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock.

LOVELL

Mom? We can do those for you.

Shelly doesn't answer. Just keeps scrubbing a plate.

LOVELL

Mom?

SHELLY

I'm fine. Why don't you two just go home?

119 DRIVING -- MAGIC HOUR 119

We snake through the streets of Riley Creek. Christmas lights are just starting to come on. Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock.

120 EXT. CARPORT -- MAGIC HOUR 120

Lovell and Grace pull into their parking spot. Look at each other. Emotionally exhausted. Chuckle. Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock.

GRACE

I need to blow off steam. Let's go jogging.

Lovell swallows. More opportunity for danger.

LOVELL

You sure? Why don't we just call it a night?

121 EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS OF RILEY CREEK -- NIGHT 121

Christmas decorations light the landscape. Lovell is running. Along a sidewalk. Grace is ahead of him. The DOGS try to keep pace with her.

Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock.

Lovell struggles to catch up with her.
Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock. Closer. Closer...

He pulls up to her, running neck and neck.
And she trips him, like old times.

Lovell tumbles onto a soft lawn. Grace laughs.
She sits down on the grass next to him. Feels his wrist.
His pulse. It's racing.

GRACE
Gonna break your heart.

Grace lays flat on the grass. Lovell takes hold of *her* wrist.
The "Tick. Tock." becomes her HEARTBEAT: Bump-BUMP. Bump-BUMP.
Quiet. For this moment, it's the only sound in the world.

GRACE
(playful)
Am I alive?

Lovell nods. Grace gazes up at the heavens. The night sky
is a clear, gorgeous tapestry of stars.

GRACE
Did you know they used to tell time by
the stars? It's where the calendar comes
from.

Lovell could care less about the stars. He stares at her,
transfixed. Lit softly by the moon.
The Dogs start to wander. Grace calls to them:

GRACE
Hey! Sit. Stay.

Lovell just looks at her. Repeats:

LOVELL
Stay.

A moment. Grace. Kisses him.

GRACE
Betcha can't catch me!
(to the Dogs)
C'mon!

Grace gets up and jogs off. The Dogs fall in.
Lovell races after her.

It starts again: Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock.

122 EXT. ANOTHER STREET -- NIGHT 122
 Orson walks along. Brooding. Thinking.
 Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock.

123 WITH LOVELL 123
 Grace pulls ahead of Lovell. Turns a corner. Out of view.
 Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock.

124 WITH ORSON 124
 Walking. Tick. Tock.

125 WITH LOVELL 125
 He runs as fast as he can toward the corner.
 A SEDAN passes by and turns the corner ahead of him.
 As it disappears from view, we hear in quick succession:
 ...A DOG BARKING excitedly...
 ...Grace shouting for the dog to "come back here -- NOOO!!"
 ...the SCREECH of tires skidding...
 ...And the THUD of IMPACT.
 TICK. TOCK.

126 WITH ORSON 126
 Orson sits down on a shadowed stretch of a rock half-wall in
 front of a home. Pulls out a cigar. TICK. TOCK.

127 WITH LOVELL 127
 Lovell picks up speed, races around the corner toward the
 sounds and sees --
 The Sedan is stopped in the middle of the street.
 The Dogs wander about in the road.
 Grace is not in view.
 Lovell races closer. TICK. TOCK.

128 WITH ORSON 128
 Orson moves to light the cigar. TICK. TOCK.

129 WITH LOVELL 129
 The DRIVER of the Sedan hops out of the car, beside herself:
 DRIVER
 Oh, Jesus...the dog just ran out in the
 middle of the road, she went after it, oh
 my Christ...

TICK. TOCK.

Lovell rounds the front of the stopped Sedan to see...

Grace. Laying unconscious on the asphalt.

130 WITH ORSON 130

Orson's eyes close and he spontaneously falls asleep.
Rolls over into the shadows of the bushes.

131 WITH LOVELL 131

Lovell, hysterical, frantically tries to revive Grace:

LOVELL

Grace. Honey! Oh God, nonononono...

The DRIVER dials 9-1-1 on her cell phone.

132 LATER 132

Flashing lights. An AMBULANCE guns its engines.

133 INSIDE THE AMBULANCE - DRIVING -- NIGHT 133

Lovell rides with Grace. Panicked. Freaking out.
A couple of MEDICS try to revive her.

MEDIC (CONT'D)

(to another Medic)

Have we gotten ahold of the on-call
Doctor yet?

134 EXT. REMOTE STREET -- NIGHT 134

Orson lays sleeping where we left him last.
His PAGER goes off. Beepbeepbeepbeepbeep.
He's sound asleep. Doesn't hear it.

135 EXT. RILEY CREEK AREA HOSPITAL -- NIGHT 135

The MEDICS wheel Grace into the building.
Lovell races alongside, talking into his cell phone:

LOVELL

(frantic)

Mom, where's Dad? They can't find him.

136 EXT. REMOTE STREET -- NIGHT 136

Orson's pager continues to beep. He snores like a baby.

137 INT. RILEY CREEK AREA HOSPITAL - OPERATING ROOM -- NIGHT 137

The Medics work frantically. Lovell watches tearfully through the door.

MEDIC

Jesus Christ, we need a Doctor in here now!!

138 EXT. THE MILO HOME -- NIGHT 138

Shelly races out of the house. Looks around. Screams at the top of her lungs:

SHELLY

Orson!!

All sound drops out. Images:

139 ORSON. 139

Sleeps soundly.

140 GRACE. 140

Glassy-eyed. A moment passes. A hand reaches in and delicately shuts her eyelids.

141 ORSON. 141

His eyes open. Looks around. Realizes where he is.

142 LOVELL. 142

Kneels. Looks at Grace's body. Shattered. He holds her wrist as he did not 30 minutes earlier. This time, there's nothing.

143 AT THE MILO HOME -- NIGHT 143

Orson walks in. Sees Shelly in tears on the floor.

144 BACK TO LOVELL 144

He kisses Grace. Holding her hand. A tear falls onto her face. He reaches down and wipes it away.

145 AT GRACE'S PARENTS' HOME -- NIGHT 145

Drew and Kathleen open the front door to find Shelly, crying.

146 IN THE OPERATING ROOM -- NIGHT 146

Drew and Kathleen embrace the body of their dead daughter. Crying harder than seems humanly possible.

Lovell and Shelly hold their hands. Embrace them.

147 IN A HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- NIGHT 147

Orson, in scrubs, stands with Drew, Kathleen, Shelly and Lovell. He can barely look at them. His shame is overwhelming. He does his best to offer some doctorly support to Drew and Kathleen:

ORSON
I'm...I'm so sorry for your loss.

Silence.

148 EXT. RILEY CREEK AREA HOSPITAL -- NIGHT 148

Orson's getting into his BMW. Lovell stops him.

LOVELL
Where were you?

Orson fumbles for an answer:

ORSON
I was out for a walk. I didn't get the page. Goddamn pager must be broken.

Immediately, Lovell speed-dials a number on his cell phone. Orson's pager starts beeping. Lovell looks at him.

LOVELL
Seems to work just fine.

Orson can barely look back. They both know.

LOVELL
You son of a bitch...

ORSON
She was hit by a car and smacked her head into the pavement, Lovell! It's doubtful there's anything anyone could have done!

LOVELL
But there's a chance! You fell asleep and now she's dead! You bastard!!

Lovell boils over. He picks up a rock and - SMASH! - hurls it through the windshield of Orson's BMW. Orson recoils, stands back and lets it happen.

Lovell storms off. Orson crouches down. Catches his breath. And for the first time, the Big Doctor cracks: He starts to cry. Then vomits.

149 INT. ORSON'S OFFICE -- NIGHT 149

CRACK!!!

Lovell smashes Orson's doctorate.
Tosses his plaques across the room.
Stomps on the photos of Orson with VIPs. Breaks apart the
Golf Trophy that was "too valuable" for Grace to touch.

150 INT. DARKROOM 150

Lovell rifles through shelved boxes like a man possessed.
Pulls out NEGATIVES. Jump cut as:

Lovell prints pictures as fast as he can. His tears fall and
mix with the developing solution. One after another, the
images appear. Stopped time.

Grace. At all ages. A kaleidoscope of her life.
Lovell picks up the first photo he ever took of her -- Howard
licking his lens, with her chopped off head in the corner.
The photo he told her to get out of. Kisses it.

He kisses every photo of Grace. Desperately.

151 INT. DREW AND KATHLEEN'S HOME -- THE NEXT DAY 151

Lovell stands in a corner. He obviously hasn't slept.
He surveys the room:

DOZENS OF PEOPLE mill about. Platters of finger food pepper
the house. The mood is somber but social.

Orson slowly approaches Lovell. Stands there for a moment.
Finally, he speaks -- and aside from his vomiting, this is
his first totally sincere moment in the whole film:

ORSON

Lovell -- I'm sorry. I'm SO sorry.

He tries hard to meet Lovell's eyes. Tears welling in earnest.
A plea for forgiveness.

Lovell doesn't bite.

LOVELL

Don't ever speak to me again.

And walks away. For the first time, Orson looks as if his
insides have been kicked out.

152 LATER 152

Lovell sits with Shelly, off to one side. He's staring at:

Kathleen. Crying in the kitchen with one set of friends.
Drew. Melting in the entryway with another.
They are the picture of despair.

Lovell takes a good, hard look at them, and says to Shelly,
barely above a whisper:

LOVELL
I'm never gonna have kids. Never.

Lovell then spots Orson, by himself, slowly making his way
for the door.

LOVELL (CONT'D)
And I'm never going to be like him.

153 LATER

153

Lovell, eyes red and hair mussed, sits alone, staring blankly
at the television, on which a NEWSCASTER blathers on.
The comfort reception buzzes behind him. He looks at us and
says, exhausted:

LOVELL
Mental Journal Entry #3.
(beat)
I failed. She's gone. All this
"learning" because I was "the only one
would could save someone"...useless.
Maybe I'm just crazy.

NEWSCASTER (ON TELEVISION)
It's not useless, Lovell.

Lovell does a double-take. Is the television set talking to him?

NEWSCASTER (ON TELEVISION, CONT'D)
It's not over. Pay attention, dummy.

LOVELL
Pay attention, up yours. I *am* crazy.

Lovell shuts off the TV. Sits. And, spent, he drifts to sleep.

BLACK.

Our eyes open on:

A CEILING. Sit up. Look around. We're in:

154 INT. LOVELL'S DREARY APARTMENT -- MORNING

154

Lovell's 30-year old apartment. Stained, dirty, dusty.
Same decor. Upon inspection, maybe it's even messier.

Walk to the bathroom. Flip on the light switch.
And in the mirror, we see:

Lovell. In his late 40's. Greying hair. Tougher skin.
Lovell's a bit shocked. He hasn't been this age before.

Our Playing Card Graphic forms around him, his age in the
corners: "47."

155 IN THE LIVING ROOM -- MORNING (2021) 155

Lovell's answering machine light is blinking. He hits it:

SHELLY (ON MACHINE)

Hi, honey, it's Mom. I just...thought
I'd check and see how you're doing.
Haven't talked to you in awhile. I'm at
the office today. Miss you. Love you.
Bye.

As her message plays, Lovell surveys his hovel.

The room looks basically the same way it did 17 years ago,
but if anything, it has degraded further.
No family photos of any kind. No new "art" photos of his own.

Lovell starts to nod off. Catches himself.

He spots a NAME TAG sitting on his desk. Picks it up. It reads:

"PHOTO WORLD -- Lovell Milo, Digital Imaging Technician."

Lovell stares at it. This is his job.

156 IN THE KITCHEN 156

Lovell brews a pot of coffee. He opens his cabinet and finds...

A BIG, STEEL THERMOS. He fills it with coffee.

157 INT. LOVELL'S OLD TOYOTA - DRIVING -- MORNING 157

Lovell, name tag on, drives, sipping his coffee. He's driving
the same car he had at age 30; it's pretty beat up now.

He hits a bump, spilling coffee on his face and hands.
He scrambles for something with which to clean up and finds a
random SCRAP OF PAPER on the floor. He wipes, then
stops...and looks at the paper.

An address is scribbled on it. "819 HANNAH ROAD."
Nothing else.

He looks at it. Suddenly curious.

158 EXT. 819 HANNAH ROAD -- MORNING

158

It's an apartment building with multiple units. The numbers "819" are cleanly visible over the main entryway.

Lovell paces, staring at it. Not quite sure why he's here. Or what he's looking for.

A TEENAGE BOY with a backpack exits the complex, walks to a parked CAMARO and waits, ostensibly for the person with the keys. He eyes Lovell, who is just standing there, staring at the apartment building.

An awkward moment passes.

Then, a familiar face emerges from the apartment complex: The BLONDE, now 47. The woman he fell asleep on. The woman he got pregnant. She spots him. Freezes. Then walks to him:

BLONDE
 (to the Teenage Boy)
 Just a second, honey.
 (approaches Lovell, then
 quietly:)
 What are you doing here?

LOVELL
 (wait a minute...)
 Um...I don't...I don't know.

The Blonde's angry:

BLONDE
 Look -- you can't just show up. That's not okay. He knows who you are.

Lovell looks from the Blonde to the Teenage Boy. And suddenly, he realizes... Oh my God. That's his son.

BLONDE (CONT'D)
 You said you didn't want any part of this, so be consistent. Send the checks and live your life. That arrangement's worked fine.

Lovell's so thunderstruck that he barely heard her. The Blonde turns away and marches back to the Camaro; she and the Teenage Boy get in and drive off.

Lovell watches them disappear around the bend, his head spinning from the discovery.

159 EXT. RILEY CREEK HIGH SCHOOL - FRONT GATE -- NOON 159

Lovell sits in his parked Toyota across the street from the school's main entrance. Kids are flooding out. It's lunchtime.

A pack of STUDENTS waltzes out. Lovell's Son is among them.

STUDENT

Kevin!

Lovell's Son turns in answer to the name. Waves.
Lovell watches. That's his name. Kevin.

160 EXT. RILEY CREEK HIGH SCHOOL - CLASSROOMS -- DAY 160

Lovell stands on the outskirts of the school looking in...

A Classroom Window.

Kevin's in class. Taking notes as an INSTRUCTOR lectures.

The bell rings. Class is dismissed.

161 INT. CLASSROOM -- DAY 161

The Instructor we viewed through the window - a tough but pleasant-faced man in his 50's - sits at his desk doing paperwork. The classroom is empty.

Lovell appears in the doorway. Knocks on the doorframe.

INSTRUCTOR

Yes?

LOVELL

Hi, I'm sorry to bother you. Is this a good time?

INSTRUCTOR

What can I help you with?

LOVELL

I'm Kevin's father. He was in your class that just let out.

The Instructor takes a moment.

INSTRUCTOR

Yeah, I can tell. You look like him.

Lovell. Realizes this for the first time.

LOVELL

I guess...I guess I do, don't I?

INSTRUCTOR
Good student.

LOVELL
Is he?

INSTRUCTOR
Room for improvement, but who doesn't have that? Always says, "Please." "Yes, please." A lot of kids don't do that. I suppose credit for that goes to you.

LOVELL
Well...that's more his Mom, really.

INSTRUCTOR
Props to the better half. Good man. So what can I do for you?

LOVELL
Well, I'm just curious, from your perspective as his teacher...how is he? Is he happy?

The Instructor. Takes a moment.

INSTRUCTOR
Is he happy? Wow. Well, I see him with a few friends -- not a lot, but the ones he has seem pretty solid. Haven't seen him with a girlfriend yet, I think he's a little awkward around 'em still. He lights up when he talks about animals, that's for sure. Sure seems hell-bent on being a vet, as I'm sure you know.

This gets Lovell. Wow. An unexpected reminder of Grace.

INSTRUCTOR (CONT'D)
He's always singing or humming something. That's a sign of happiness, so they say. I assume you're going to his concert tonight?

162 INT. RILEY CREEK HIGH SCHOOL - AUDITORIUM -- NIGHT

162

Lovell stands in the very back of a darkened, packed house, THERMOS in hand, gulping down coffee to stay awake. He's watching a high school CONCERT CHOIR sing a soft, lyrical Requiem Mass in Latin. It's conducted by a balding, portly and very committed MAIN IN TAILS.

Kevin is in the bass section. Their voices are heavenly, and the music is sorrowful, almost as if they were singing just for Lovell and what he's lost:

CHOIR
Requiem aeternam
Dona eis, Domine
Et lux perpetua
Luceat eis

The music takes off, powerful, and Kevin sings out with full gusto -- so much so that you can almost hear him over the choir. It's a bit over the top, but his excitement and commitment make Lovell smile.

The Requiem Mass continues as we see:

163 AFTER THE SHOW 163

The packed house mills about, gabbing. The post-show buzz.

Lovell watches from the shadows as Kevin pounds on the stage piano, banging out a pop song. A PACK OF KIDS hang around the edge of the piano, singing along. He loves the attention.

Lovell. Smiles. Thinks. Takes a deep breath.

164 EXT. HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - ALCOVE - RAINING -- NIGHT 164

An empty alcove with a drinking fountain, a small spot of shelter from the falling rain; the post-performance din can be heard in the distance.

The sweating Kevin pops out of the auditorium and heads straight for the drinking fountain, where he quickly quenches his thirst.

Lovell emerges from the shadows nearby. Watches him. Then finally gets the courage to speak:

LOVELL

Hi.

Kevin stops. Like a deer caught in car headlights. Looks at him. Says nothing.

LOVELL (CONT'D)

Sorry, I didn't mean to scare you. It's okay.

(beat)

That was, um...that was great. Was a really beautiful concert. I could hear you over everyone else a few times when you really...sang out. You've got a great voice. And you play piano great too, you're really talented.

Kevin stands frozen to his spot. Not sure what to do.

LOVELL (CONT'D)

Look, um...I guess you know who I am.
And, uh...I know I haven't been around.
I haven't been a part of your life. The
reason is...this may not make sense to
you...but I've just been really
scared...to know you. I just couldn't
bear the thought of...

(looks at his Wedding Band,
chokes on this)

...falling in love with you and then what
if something were to happen to you?

The Blonde and her muscular HUSBAND round the corner and
happen upon this exchange. They stop in their tracks -- and
do not look happy.

Lovell sees this -- and tries to keep going just the same...

LOVELL (CONT'D)

Does that makes sense? Sometimes it just
seems easier to step away...

BLONDE

What the hell are you doing here?

LOVELL

I'm trying to talk to my son.

(continuing)

But, uh...if you'll let me, I'd like
to...be around.

HUSBAND

Your son? Excuse me, did I hear you say
your son?

BLONDE

(to Kevin)

C'mon, honey, we're going.

HUSBAND

You have to earn the right to say that.

LOVELL

Maybe I could take you to school once in
a while...or maybe dinner, a movie...

The Blonde grabs Kevin by the arm and leads him away.
Lovell starts to follow but the Husband blocks him.

BLONDE

How dare you just show up on his big
night and blind-side him like this...

LOVELL
Please, just think about it, I'll give
you my number...

HUSBAND
Don't come one step closer to him or this
is gonna get ugly. You follow?

LOVELL
Look, be reasonable, I just wanna give
him my number...

HUSBAND
I'm gonna count to three. One...

LOVELL
(searches for a pen)
...do you, do you have a pen, I'll write
down my number...

HUSBAND
Two...

KEVIN
(to Lovell)
Just leave me alone!

HUSBAND
Three.

The Husband hauls off and SOCKS Lovell in the face. Lovell swings back and misses, giving the Husband an opening to pound Lovell twice more, causing him to buckle and fall to the ground, bloody. His thermos crashes to the ground with a clatter.

HUSBAND
Stay away from my son. Or you'll get
worse.

Bloodied and in pain, Lovell watches them go. The rain starts to soak him. He crawls over to his thermos. Picks it up.

And that's when he catches his REFLECTION in a nearby window... and sees a broken old man holding a metal coffee thermos.

He's a lot like someone he vowed never to become.

165 EXT. STREETS OF RILEY CREEK - RAINING -- NIGHT

165

Lovell walks in the rain. Slowly.
He holds his face and stomach in agony.
He discards the thermos. Keeps going.

Finally, he stops. Slowly drops to his knees. Looks up.
And discovers that he's in front of a...

CHURCH.

And once again, as he did at our film's opening, Lovell prays.
Holding back tears.

LOVELL
(in a whisper)
Please...whoever you are...I'm sorry. I
screwed up. Just give me another chance.
Please. Give me another chance.

Close on Lovell. He closes his eyes.
All goes quiet. The rain stops.

At last, he opens his eyes. Pull back to reveal that his
surroundings have totally changed. He is now...

166 IN THE MIDDLE OF A STOPLIGHT INTERSECTION -- NIGHT

166

He's totally alone. It's unnaturally silent.

He turns around to discover that behind him, in the middle of
the road, is a TWO-CAR ACCIDENT.
And it's FROZEN in space and time.
Like a theatrical tableau. Or a wax sculpture meant to
convey motion.

Lovell lets it sink in. He steps closer to the accident.
And realizes something:

One of the two cars looks very familiar. It's his TOYOTA.
He steps right up to it. Inside...

...Is LOVELL. Age 30. Asleep at the wheel.
Being struck on the driver's side.

THIS IS THE ACCIDENT HE HAD WHEN HE WAS 30.

Right after the Blonde told him she was pregnant.
Frozen in time.

Lovell looks at himself 17 years earlier. Total awe.
Hold. Lovell soaks the image. A moment. Then:

GRACE (O.S.)
Hey, dummy.

Lovell spins around to see GRACE. Age 26.
Wearing the jogging clothes she died in.
Lovell's speechless. Doesn't know what to say. Finally:

LOVELL
(incredulous)
Sweetheart?
(MORE)

LOVELL (CONT'D)

(beat)
What's happening?

GRACE

Right now, you're in the middle of this accident. You're 30. This is where it started. This is where it ends.

(then)

See, it's true -- when you're near death, your life flashes before your eyes. I set this up. And I've been with you the whole time.

Dolly around to reveal that standing behind Grace in a theatrical semi-circle are...

The PSYCHIATRIST.

PIGTAILS.

The PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT.

And the NEWSCASTER.

Lovell looks at them, realizing...

LOVELL

All of them...they were all you.
(she nods)
But then...

Lovell approaches, holds Grace...and doesn't want to believe what he's about to say:

LOVELL (CONT'D)

...you're dead.

GRACE

I've been dead for four years, Lovell.

LOVELL

But you said this was so I could learn. Because someone was in trouble and I was the only one who could save them...

GRACE

That's right, but not me.

LOVELL

Then who?

GRACE

You.

Lovell. Stunned.

GRACE (CONT'D)

I couldn't stand to see what happened to you after I died.

(MORE)

GRACE (CONT'D)

I wanted to remind you who you were. And show you where you were headed. I promised I'd always watch out for you. I just wanna see you happy, dummy.

Lovell's overwhelmed.

GRACE (CONT'D)

Didn't see this comin', didja?

Lovell shakes his head.

GRACE

I'm the Queen of Surprises.

LOVELL

But you're dead. It's not fair. Why?

GRACE

(shrugs)

That's just the way it goes. We've all just gotta do our best. Hell, I'm dead and I'm still trying to do my best.

(then)

It's not gonna be easy. Your heart's gonna break again. It looks like you learned something. What you do is your choice. But I just wanted to remind you.

(looks at him)

You're not alone.

Both are now in tears.

LOVELL

Stay.

Grace shakes her head. Can't. They lock eyes for one last moment. Then:

BLAMMMM!!!!!!!!!!!!

The tableau unfreezes. The collision finishes. Lovell's Toyota is slammed across the intersection. Skids sideways with a horrible SCREECH!!!

And finally comes to rest.

167 INT. LOVELL'S TOYOTA - STOPPED -- NIGHT (2004)

167

Lovell's entire driver compartment has been knocked to its right. His window's shattered. His head bleeds.

For a long moment, silence. And then...he breathes. Sharply at first. Then deeply. In and out. Gradually, his breathing becomes the only sound. He's alive.

Hold.

BLACK. Come up on:

168 A PRINTING PRESS 168

Gears whir. Rollers spin. Paper whisks by in a blur. Reveal:

A CALENDAR is being printed. Months fly by in order:
January. February. March. April...
Artful PICTURES accompany each month. Many of the images
look very familiar.

Finally, the COVER is printed. One after another falls into place.
It reads:

"STOPPED TIME -- Photography by Lovell Milo. 2011 CALENDAR."

169 INT. PRINTING PRESS -- DAY 169

Lovell, 36, critiques a print of the calendar with a PRINTING
TECHNICIAN.

LOVELL

I'd like to bring out the reds a little
bit more in July if we can. Otherwise
great work. Looks even better than last
year's.

The Calendars are hung on a rack in...

170 INT. A GALLERY -- DAY 170

A small shop buzzing with people, displaying LOVELL'S PHOTOS
in large ornate frames all over the walls.

Lovell greets customers as they enter.
Directs them to the available coffee and finger foods.

The windows read: "LOVELL MILO GALLERY of Riley Creek."

171 INT. LOVELL'S MERCEDES - DRIVING -- DAY 171

Lovell motors his shiny vehicle down the avenue and into the
driveway of...

172 EXT. LOVELL'S HOME -- DAY 172

An old-school Victorian two-story dwelling.
Lovell's not doing too shabby.

173 INT. LOVELL'S HOME - LIVING ROOM -- DAY 173

Lovell enters to see a SIX-YEAR OLD BOY feeding a carrot to a
caged RABBIT, talking to him in a Bugs Bunny voice.

LOVELL

Hey, Kevin.
 (kisses him on the head)
 How's Bugs?

KEVIN

Not hungry. Don't know what's wrong with
 him. Tryin' to figure it out.

Kevin moves along -- and we see that he's got CAGES and CAGES
 of animals. Hamsters. Rats. Ferrets. Dogs and Cats also
 roam about. It's animal central.

LOVELL

What time's your Mom coming?

KEVIN

Not 'til tomorrow.

LOVELL

Good, so you can have dinner with us.

KEVIN

Not if we're having broccoli again.

A smiling TWO-YEAR OLD GIRL with curly hair waddles up to
 Lovell and grabs his legs.

LOVELL

Hello, Paula, how are you? How have you
 been treating Mommy today?

LINDA (O.S.)

She's exhausting Mommy is what she's
 doing.

LINDA, the bartender who brought Grace home the night she was
 drunk, enters. She's pregnant. Lovell gives her a kiss.

The photo of sunset over downtown Riley Creek hangs over the
 fireplace -- Linda's favorite, the one she asked for.

Nearby is the PORTRAIT OF GRACE.

LINDA

I'm gonna take Paula to Gymboree. We'll
 be back in a bit.

Lovell yawns, fading a tad...

LINDA

Sweetheart -- wake up. You know you
 forgot to take your medication today.

LOVELL

I know, I remembered halfway through the day...

LINDA

I worry about you driving when you forget it. You've already had one accident.

LOVELL

Linda, my dear, you are so right. I will take it straight away.

LINDA

Love you.

LOVELL

Love you too.

174 INT. KEVIN'S BEDROOM -- DAY

174

Kevin shakes fish food lightly into his illuminated FISH TANK. Lovell leans in the doorway, watching him. Drowsy. Yawns.

LOVELL

Is that enough food?

KEVIN

Daaad! You're not *supposed* to feed fish more than that or they'll get *sick*.

LOVELL

I know. Just testin' you.

Kevin sets down the fish food.
Gets close to the glass, watching them.

Lovell, meanwhile, starts to drift. His eyes close.
He slips forward...falls...

...onto the fish tank...knocking it over ONTO KEVIN.

CRACK!!! WHOOSH!!!

The fish tank slams into Kevin. Shatters.
Water blasts out all over the room.
The impact knocks Lovell awake, and he sees...

Kevin. Bleeding. Lying unconscious under the broken glass.

Lovell panics:

LOVELL

Oh, Christ, no -- Kevin!!!

175 INT. RILEY CREEK AREA HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM -- DAY 175

Lovell sits in the waiting area. Linda and Paula at his side. He can't look at them. He's filled with self-hatred.

A PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT speaks to them:

PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT

Kevin's going to be okay. He needed some stitches, and he's got a pretty bad bruise -- but the doctor was able to stop the bleeding in time, so he's going to be okay. We recommend he stay here for at least the next day.

Lovell nods. Avoiding her eyes.

LOVELL

Can I see him?

176 INT. KEVIN'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY 176

Kevin lies bandaged in his hospital bed. The bandages cover the stitches, but the bruise is pretty bad. Lovell enters the room. Eye contact. Acknowledgment.

Lovell almost has to look away. But slowly, he crosses the room. Sits. Quiet. Finally:

LOVELL

How you doin', bud?

KEVIN

Okay, I guess. My head hurts.

LOVELL

(hating himself)
Yeah. Yeah, it would.

Beat.

KEVIN

Are my fishees okay?

LOVELL

Oh, yeah. Yeah, Linda took care of 'em. They're in a bowl.

KEVIN

They have to be in water.

LOVELL

They are. They're in a bowl with water. We're gonna get you a brand new tank. Tons better than your old one.

KEVIN
I was worried about my fishees.

LOVELL
Yeah.

Lovell takes a moment. It's so hard to make eye contact but he forces himself. Takes Kevin's hand:

LOVELL
Kevin, I am so - SO - sorry I forgot to take my medication. That's not fair to you. I don't know if you can forgive me. And I'll understand if you don't. But I'm really sorry.

Kevin looks at Lovell. Like it's no big deal:

KEVIN
It's okay, Dad. Just don't do it again.

Lovell. Wow. Smiles. Holds back tears.
Amazing. It was that simple.

LOVELL
(emphatic)
I won't.

177 INT. HALLWAY IN FRONT OF KEVIN'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY 177

Lovell steps out and catches the passing PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT.

LOVELL
Excuse me, ma'am? Is there any way I can speak to the doctor that worked on my son? I just want to say thank you.

PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT
Certainly, right this way.
(leads him down the hall)
He's with a patient right now, but you can just wait by his office.

And as the Physician's Assistant leads him to the door, Lovell freezes.

PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT
Right here.

She leaves him. Lovell stares at the nameplate on the door:

"ORSON MILO, M.D."

Lovell takes a deep breath. Mixed feelings.

Orson's door is slightly ajar, giving Lovell a glimpse of the office interior. He sees a fragment of something that looks vaguely familiar.

So, he slowly pushes the door open and walks...

178 INSIDE ORSON'S OFFICE -- DAY

178

Lovell stops. Catches his breath.
He's overwhelmed by what he sees:

HIS PHOTOS. The photography of Lovell Milo.
Framed. Decorating the office.
On the desk are PHOTOS of Lovell at different ages.
Shelly. Kevin. Paula.
Lovell and Grace's Wedding Photo.
The calendar on the wall is Lovell's Photo Calendar.

There are no VIP photos. No plaques. No trophies.
His Doctorate remains (a little scratched), but that's it.
Everything else is a monument to the family and the son he lost.

On his desk sits a PRESCRIPTION BOTTLE.
"...take 2 times daily for sleep disorder..."

Lovell soaks in the room. The man truly has changed.

Slowly, Orson appears in the door frame behind him.
Almost 60 now. He no longer looks stern, but relaxed.
A man changed by tragedy and time.

Lovell turns to see him. Eye contact. After 10 years.

Neither says anything for a little while.
There's nothing to say. Everything is understood.

Lovell looks back at the photos. Then back at his father.
Finally:

LOVELL
So, uh...you met Kevin.

ORSON
Yeah. Yeah, he's a strong kid. Brave.

Beat.

LOVELL
Yeah.
(then)
Maybe you could...come over sometime.
Talk to him some more. Have a picnic.
Meet my wife. Linda. And, uh...your
granddaughter, Paula.

Orson's about to burst, but doesn't show it. He calmly says:

ORSON
That'd be nice.

179 EXT. LOVELL AND LINDA'S BACKYARD -- DAY 179

An outdoor cook-out is in progress.
A red checkered tablecloth covers a picnic table.
A barbeque broils burgers. A full array of condiments lays out.
The perfect summer lunch.

In attendance: Lovell, Linda, Kevin, Paula, Shelly, Drew,
Kathleen...and Orson.

Kevin plays catch with Drew & Kathleen.
Paula chases Grandpa around the lawn.
Shelly and Linda talk over a drink.

Lovell runs the grill, watching the proceedings. Content.

180 LATER 180

Lovell sets the timer on his CAMERA, mounted on a tripod.

LOVELL
Okay, everybody ready?

The camera's pointed at the picnic table, around which the
whole family is seated. Lovell hits the button.
Takes his place at the table.

Beep. Beep. Beep. As the timer ticks down, Lovell glances
around the table. Meets the eyes of...

Kevin. Beep.

Shelly. Beep.

Drew. Beep.

Kathleen. Beep.

Paula. Beep.

Linda. Beep.

Orson. Beep.

They've come a long way.
The beeps get faster, the camera flashes...

FREEZE.

The photo holds. Stopped time.

Slowly, we realize this photo looks familiar.
A large family sitting around a picnic table.
We've seen this before.

The photo's in a frame. Rack focus to a REFLECTION in the glass:

An OLD MAN. We've seen him before too: LOVELL. AGE 92.

181 IN HIS BEDROOM -- DAWN (2066) 181

And we hear in memory:

DOCTOR (V.O.)
The first thing you remember is being 90?

LOVELL AGE 28 (V.O.)
92, actually.

DOCTOR (V.O.)
Didn't stay awake long.

92-year-old Lovell blinks and we flash to:

182 -- LOVELL, AGE 48... 182

watching Kevin graduate from high school. Back to:

183 LOVELL AGE 92... 183

staring at the picnic photo.

GRACE AGE 26 (V.O.)
See, it's true...

He blinks again, taking us to:

184 -- LOVELL, AGE 60... 184

dancing with curly-haired PAULA at her wedding. Back to:

185 LOVELL AGE 92... 185

GRACE AGE 26 (V.O.)
When you're near death, your life flashes
before your eyes.

He blinks again, taking us to...

186 -- LOVELL, AGE 85... 186

standing over the coffin at Linda's wake. His THREE CHILDREN
and THEIR SEVEN CHILDREN at his side. Back to:

187 LOVELL AGE 92.

187

LOVELL AGE 24 (V.O.)
That's a hell of a life.

And with that, Lovell smiles, content with what he sees.

The music of Kevin's high school choir returns, like angels singing him to rest:

CHOIR
Requiem aeternam
Dona eis, Domine
Et lux perpetua
Luceat eis

And at last, he closes his eyes for good.

BLACK.

Hold. Our eyes open on:

188 A BRILLIANT LIGHT.

188

It could be the sun. Or something more powerful.
Slowly, the light fades and it becomes clear that we're
looking up at a...

189 SKY.

189

Puffy clouds. Gorgeous. And into our field of view comes:

A DOG.

He stands over us. Licks us in the face.
It's Howard the Beagle. At his youthful peak.

Grace, age 26, radiant as ever, steps up behind him and says
to us:

GRACE
It's okay. He's friendly.

Hold.

THE END