

SAVING EMMA
"Calling all Angels"

by

Gene Cartwright

SAVING EMMA

YOUNG GIRL'S P.O.V.

Her "bird" finger-puppet is held up against a full moon.

REVEAL

EXT. PALOS VERDES, CALIFORNIA ESTATE - NIGHT

At rear wall, 7-YEAR-OLD EMMA STEWART is in baseball cap, her face hidden, she stands atop a stone bench. She lowers hand.

REVEAL MORE

Rear grounds of modern 2-story hilltop estate above Pacific.

Sound of waves CRASH below.

A light beam SWOOSHES across a brilliant sky. Emma points.

EMMA

(Whispery)

Oooh, wow. Look it.

CHIRPING gulls sweep across frame.

ADULT FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

Emma, sweetheart. Where are ... Oh, there you are. You be careful now.

Emma glances back, no response, returns her gaze to sky.

ADULT FEMALE VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Aren't you getting a little cool out here? We've got a real busy day ahead tomorrow. Almost done with the gift wrapping. Just a few left.

EMMA

Coming, Mom.

A reluctant Emma takes in view, extends uplifted arms, turns, plops down to deck, looks back up at sky, begins slow trek across patio. She skirts pool edge, heads to rear entrance.

Adult female has re-entered house.

Repeated BARKING of small dog breaks silence. Emma is startled, wheels back as BARKING stops. She sees nothing,

Emma heads to door as light SWELLS on it. She turns, gazes at sky, mouth agape, as ERUPTION of bright light DRENCHES her.

EXT. CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF LOS ANGELES - DAY

INT. JUVENILE ONCOLOGY

KIDS, STAFF, PARENTS, DOCTORS in party hats, with noisemakers. Emma, 6, bi-racial, in red cap/sneakers, stands at table, gives gifts, hugs to kids brought forward to her.

NURSES STATION

KHAREN STEWART W-F, late 30s, dark hair, with HEAD NURSE, F. Nurse in party hat, records scene on her smartphone.

PA SYSTEM (V.O.)

Doctor Orsini to 6 Zero 6E. Doctor Orsini to 6 Zero 6E.

HEAD NURSE

Never had a party like this. Emma's birthday but others get the gifts.

KHAREN

Was her idea. Since the kids can't come to her party tomorrow, she --

HEAD NURSE

-- Brought it here. That's Emma.

KHAREN

And insisted we wrap every gift. Girl, we were up past midnight.

HEAD NURSE

Kharen, you two wrapped all those?

KHAREN

No-no-no. No, we had help. Doctor Hudson was a lifesaver, I swear.

HEAD NURSE

Hudson? Oh, Paul's former law partner. So, she finally arrived. Wait, she's a lawyer and a doctor?

KHAREN

Yep. Has a P-h-D in economics. So I insist on calling her doctor. She earned it. And Emma just loves her.

Nurse lifts phone to record. Kharen motions her to rotate it to horizontal. Nurse gives a thumbs-up. Kharen goes to Emma.

ADMINISTRATOR, F, hugs Kharen and Emma then faces crowd.

ADMINISTRATOR

Okay. Okay, my darlings. Listen up. Way in the back, hold on. I need everyone's help, including all you doctors. You do not want to hear me sing by myself. I promise ya. Okay?

LAUGHTER, as some staff clean up wrappings in background.

ADMINISTRATOR (CONT'D)

C'mon, you didn't have to agree so fast. Now, on three. Ready? Thomas, (boy tosses balloon) we're waiting. Okay? One-two-three. Hap-py Birth-day to you. Happy/ --

Administrator sings off-key, but is drowned out. All finish song. Emma blows out candles, blushes during applause.

ADMINISTRATOR (CONT'D)

Oh, one more thing. Just so you all know, the cake is sugar and gluten-free. And it's delicious, I hear. And it's great to be able to gather again, after being apart so long.

EXT. LOS ANGELES - NIGHT (DUSK) (MOVING)

View montage of key SoCal sites, freeways, Pacific Ocean.

EXT. PALOS VERDES, CA. STEWART ESTATE - NIGHT

Front grounds show a multi-car detached garage.

STREET AT ESTATE DRIVEWAY ENTRANCE

A black Luxury SUV eases into frame at curb. Stops.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

DRIVER: BAD GUY #1, heavy, 50s, PASSENGER: BAD GUY #2, 30s, thin, in dark suits. Bad Guy #2 focuses binoculars on home.

BAD GUY #2

Coulda used a drone for this, huh?

BAD GUY #1

Heh. Who cares? Pay's the same.

Bad Guy #2 switches to SLR camera. CRANKS rapid pic CLICKS.

EXT. SUV

Bad Guy #1 eases downhill, out of frame, lights out, then on.

Kharen's SUV passes them, enters her driveway, pulls onto apron. Kharen, Emma exit. Taillights flicker when SUV locks.

Kharen & Emma enter front door.

INT. STEWART RESIDENCE - NIGHT

EMMA'S 2nd Floor GIRLY BEDROOM

SUPERIMPOSE: 2 Hours Later

Full bookcase, posters: BEYONCÉ, ROSA PARKS, E.T. On dresser, red roses in vase, pic of ANNIE (Kharen's twin) 31, blonde bride with groom, RICHARD, BM 30s, in Marine dress-blues.

Emma, in bed, tosses, YELLS OUT but remains asleep.

EMMA

Oh no. Look out. Stop. Stop.

AT ROOM'S LARGE BAY WINDOW

Opening in sheer curtains shows light beam STREAK across sky.

KHAREN

Kharen in pjs, enters room, ignores window, sits bedside.

Emma bolts awake. Kharen hugs her, rocks her to comfort her.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Mom. Mom, where am I? Where --

KHAREN

-- Shhh. It's alright, sweetheart.
Shhh. It's okay. It's oaky. Shhh.

Emma thrashes, her eyes lock on bay window, past Kharen.

AT WINDOW

A loud WHOOSH at sheer-curtained window with bench seat. Light streams in, fills room. Emma stares wide-eyed. Points.

EMMA

Mom, look. Look. Look.

KHAREN

What is it, sweetheart? What's --

EMMA

-- Look. The light, mom. See it?

Emma jabs finger at window. Kharen turns.

KHAREN'S P.O.V.

She turns, sees nothing unusual, then turns back to see glowing light illuminate Emma's face then fade.

Kharen stares, mouth agape, holds Emma in a tight embrace.

EXT. STEWART ESTATE - DAY (MORNING)

LIMO is set in driveway at residence entry.

FRONT ENTRANCE LANDING

A smiling, stately Dr. GLORIA HUDSON, BF, 60s, in business suit. Exchanges waves with Emma. Limo heads toward street.

INT. LIMO ON FREEWAY - DAY (MOVING)

CHAUFFEUR, FEMALE, 70s. Kharen in summer attire. Emma in jeans & top, red cap & sneakers. Emma adjusts A-C vents.

EXT. LIMO

A dirty, dated 4-DR Sedan follows, determined to keep up.

INT. DIRTY SEDAN

CRAIG MARQUEZ, 40s, WM, unshaven, seedy sport coat. Unlit cig dangles. He cuts off PET PLANET van wrapped w/pet pic.

INT. LIMO

Kharen and Emma share LAUGHS. Emma winces. Kharen alerts.

EMMA

I'm fine, Mom. Really. Pinky-swear.

KHAREN

Yeah, right. You always say that.

EMMA

But I am. So don't look sad. Smile.

Kharen forces weak smile. Emma does a mocking frown.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Love your new hair color, Mom. Dad will too, you'll see. It has a nice sorta sheen to it. Brunette, right?

Emma flashes a thumbs-up. Kharen gives a "Nice Try" look.

EMMA (CONT'D)

No-no-no. I really like it. I do. You know I'd tell you, if I didn't.

A stare-off. Emma blows Kharen a kiss with a wink.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Sorry I woke you. That dream was so weird. I mean, like weird. Okay? I was like in this store, I guess, and everything was falling and --

KHAREN

-- You had a bad dream. We all do.

EMMA

But was I screaming, like some kid?

Kharen shrugs, rolls eyes, looks away.

EMMA (CONT'D)

C'mon, Mom. Tell me. Was I? Huh?

KHAREN

Well, just once. Maybe twice.

EMMA

Uh-oh. A pee ya pants kinda scream?

KHAREN

Emmahhh.

EMMA

Oopsie. But our secret. Promise?

KHAREN

Meaning, don't tell Dad, right?

EMMA

Please? It's so juvenile. See, that's okay when you're six but --

KHAREN

-- But not seven. I get it. I was seven, once, thirty-one years ago.

Emma mouths "thirty-one?" Scrunches her face.

KHAREN (CONT'D)
I saw that, Miss Emma Lynn Stewart.

EMMA
Whoa. Say my name again. Please?

KHAREN
What? Emma?

EMMA
No-no-no, my whole name, Mom.

KHAREN
What? Emma Lynn Stewart?

EMMA
No, wait. Just the Emma Lynn part.

KHAREN
What are you ... Okay. Emma Lynn.

EMMA
That's it. I love it. From now on,
I'm Emma Lynn. Sets me apart from
all other Emmas, don't you think?
Right? *Say my name, say my name/.*

Emma sings Beyoncé's title line in song, arms raised. Kharen does a drop-jaw with eye-roll. Emma laughs out loud.

EXT. BUSINESS JET IN FLIGHT - DAY

INT. COCKPIT

FEMALE PILOT and FEMALE CO-PILOT at controls.

PILOT
Roger, tower. Cleared to Aeroplex
runway Two-Five Right. Over.

Pilot checks instruments. Keys on cabin speaker.

INT. JET CABIN

PILOT (CONT'D.) (V.O.)
Mister Stewart, we're cleared into
Long Beach. E-T-A. is about five.

PAUL STEWART, 40, WM, GQ, is sole passenger. He sits at desk, dials on his cell, his suit coat draped over chair.

PAUL
Carol.

EXT. HIGH-RISE CONDO POOL - MORNING

CAROL SARINO, WF, Mid 30s, in swimwear, sunglasses. Rests on beach-toweled pool chair. She grips smartphone.

INT./EXT. - PAUL ON PLANE/CAROL AT POOL

PAUL (CONT'D.)
Sorry to interrupt your day but --

CAROL
-- Uh-oh. Uh-oh. Not a good start.
Okay? But go on, I'm listening.

Removes sunglasses. Leans forward.

PAUL
It gets better, Carol. Look, I need you to get to the office before Glodt arrives. We survived COVID in 2020 but he's just as bad, Okay?

Pause. Waits for response.

PAUL (CONT'D)
This is where you say, no problem.

CAROL
I'm sorry, I don't have the script.
No problem. Now what's the problem?

PAUL
Funny. It won't even take an hour.
Hundred-dollar bonus in it for ya.

CAROL
Nope. It's Saturday. Make it two.
One is my birthday gift to Emma.

PAUL
Done. Now, I need you to go access Sam's log and get to Glodt's files.

CAROL
Whoa. C'mon, boss. Sam eyeballs every keystroke. You know that.

PAUL
You can do this. Use the Ghostware.

CAROL
The Ghostware? Oh, that's serious.
But what if he asks why I'm there?

PAUL

He won't. If he does, you forgot something yesterday. Just copy the Maxwell file to a thumb drive, put it in my safe and leave. Capisce?

CAROL

Ah, Capisce, already. You back yet?

PAUL

I'm just minutes out. And keep a lookout for snoops upstairs.

CAROL

Like one, Carol Sarino? Thanks.

INT. JET CABIN

Paul puts phone away, fastens seat belt, lifts newspaper.

INSERT WASHINGTON, D.C. NEWSPAPER HEADLINE:

"DR. ROBERT ORSINI to RECEIVE PRESIDENTIAL MEDAL OF FREEDOM"
Include photo of WM, 60s, cherubic, distinguished, greying.

EXT. LONG BEACH AEROPLEX AVIATION CENTER - DAY (MORNING)

The dirty from SEDAN freeway is parked on edge of tarmac.

INT. MARQUEZ'S DIRTY SEDAN

Marquez lifts a 9MM pistol from his holster, checks it.

INT. STEWART LIMO REAR SEAT - DAY

EMMA

But what was that weird light, Mom?

Kharen feigns a puzzled look, tries to play it off.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Came through the window, filled the whole room. You must've seen it.

KHAREN

The window? Well, I saw --

Emma turns, points out window. Kharen sighs with relief.

EMMA

-- Daddy's plane. There it is.

Both gaze through right rear window at jet on approach.

EXT. LIMO

Chauffeur moves closer, stops, exits, opens rear doors.

AT LANDED JET

Boarding steps lower. Paul appears, flashes a wide grin. Bounds down steps with briefcase, computer shoulder bag.

Emma dashes towards her father. Kharen fast-walks. Paul places his gear down, waits with outstretched arms.

EMMA

Daddy. Daddy. Daddy.

PAUL

There's my angel. Just look at you.

Lifts Emma, kisses and lowers her. He eyes a subdued Kharen. They kiss. He kneels, ties loose string on Emma's shoes.

KHAREN

She's in her red-phase, as I'm sure you can see. Says she's gonna make red caps cool again. And it's now Emma Lynn, Okay? Not Emma.

PAUL

Hmmm. I see. Well, Happy Birthday, Miss Emma Lynn. Daddy missed you.

EMMA

Missed you, too. Love my red roses.

PAUL

Oh, great. They got here in time.
(to Kharen)
Love your hair. I leave a blonde and return to a brunette. Cool.

Attendant takes luggage to limo. Paul focuses on Kharen, his look shows he's aware she's holding back. Show she sees that.

KHAREN

Later, Paul. So, how was your trip?

PAUL

Let's say, it's good to be home.

EMMA

Mom said you'd get back in time.

PAUL

Of course. And she was right.

Paul eases an arm around Kharen. Emma struggles to lift his computer bag. Chauffeur takes it. All head to limo.

EMMA

Oooh. Your mustache is gone, Dad.

Paul SHUSHES her, puts index finger to his lips.

KHAREN

Sorry you couldn't see your mother.

PAUL

Me, too. Boston was out. We even worked the fourth, although the Senate's in an undeserved Summer recess. They're all panicked over Senator Bascom's indictment.

KHAREN

Well, some of them are likely next.

PAUL

And someone from our L.A. office will head his defense. Even Johnnie Cochran would pass on this one.

KHAREN

Someone? Any someone I know?

Paul gives a sly shrug.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

Oh, the mustache, it wasn't you.
I'm so glad you killed that thing.

Craig's car moves closer. Paul spots it. Kharen does, too.

PAUL

Sorry, babe. You were saying?

KHAREN

Who is that?

PAUL

Take Emma to the car. It's okay.

Paul walks away. Kharen and Emma walk on, keep looking back.

P.O.V. OBSERVER USING BINOCULARS

View from across tarmac shows Paul striding to Craig's car.

EXT. MARQUEZ'S DRIVER'S DOOR

Craig climbs out, leans against driver's door. Paul arrives.

CRAIG

You know, my dear ol' Mom still
says I shoulda gone to law school.
She does. Still. You believe that?
After all these years. I mean...

Paul gives him a long, silent stare.

PAUL

Detective Marquez. You are not here
to discuss career choices, right?

CRAIG

Ya' got me, Counselor. I'm busted.

PAUL

So, why are ya here, Craig?

Craig releases a loud, gaping yawn, covers his mouth.

CRAIG

Sorry 'bout that. All this twenty-
four-seven protecting and serving.

PAUL

C'mon, I don't have time for --

CRAIG

-- Hey, I was in the neighborhood,
looked up, spotted your jet and ...

INT. STEWART LIMO

Emma stares at her father and Craig.

EMMA

I don't like that man. Daddy okay?

KHAREN

Why? What's wrong? He's fine, baby.
Oh, and you were right about my
hair. He does like it.

Emma does not respond, returns her gaze on Craig.

EXT. MARQUEZ'S SEDAN

CRAIG

Look, you've got enemies, okay?
It's about that, my good friend.

PAUL

Yeah, like every self-respecting
lawyer. That's not breaking news.

Paul glances back toward limo, waves to Kharen.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Listen, time's up. Gotta go.

CRAIG

Hey, not everyone sees you as a
sweet little Irish-Catholic lad
from Ol' Southie, like I do.

PAUL

Want a lollipop? Gotta go. And lose
the coat. And this ah, wannabe car.

CRAIG

Oooh, that is so shady. I mean,
just stop it. Stop it. Jeeze.

PAUL

Anyway, how'd you know I'd be here?

CRAIG

Hello? I'm as good at what I do, as
you are at what you do. Bet on it.

A stare-off. Paul nods agreement.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

Give my happy birthday to Emma.

PAUL

Thanks. 'Preciate that. And shave.

INT. BLACK LUXURY SUV ON TARMAC - DAY

Bad Guy #1, with binoculars in one hand, phone in other,
speaks to JOHN GLODT, and eyes Paul. Bad Guy #2 looks on.

Paul heads back to limo.

BAD GUY #1

He's leaving. What now, Mr. Glodt?

GLODT (V.O.)
Vanish, 'til you hear from me. Go.

EXT. PAUL'S LIMO

Paul removes coat and tie, enters. Limo exits airport.

EXT. STEWART PALOS VERDES ESTATE - DAY

INT. LIMO

Limo eases onto driveway and stops. Rear door opens.

EXT. STEWART HOME FRONT DOOR - DAY

Dr. Hudson exits carrying a JACK RUSSELL TERRIER, 6-mos,
joined by RENÉ JARDIN, WF 30s, MAID.

EXT. LIMO'S PASSENGER DOORS

All exit. Emma zeroes in on dog, she bolts ahead.

EMMA
Mom. Dad. Oh my god. He is so --

KHAREN
-- Emma. Emma Lynn, slow down.

Emma, winded, breathing hard, reaches Dr. Hudson.

EMMA
He's so beautiful. I can take him.

DR. HUDSON
Well now he is a he, alright.

EMMA
Dr. Hudson, May I hold him? May I?

KHAREN
Dr. Hudson, I'm just not ... he
looks different than the dog I --

DR. HUDSON
-- Oh? I'll grab the papers so --

KHAREN
-- No-no. He just ... maybe it's
just me. It's okay. It's okay.

EMMA
May I hold him, Mom? May I? May I?

KHAREN
Well, go on. Just be careful.

Dr. Hudson turns to Emma.

DR. HUDSON
Careful, now. He's a handful.

Emma struggles. During hand-off, dog bounds to driveway, takes off running.

EMMA
Get him, Daddy. Get him. Please?

DR. HUDSON
I was afraid of that.

Paul's looks on, his eyes track dog. Emma starts to chase.

DR. HUDSON (CONT'D)
Let your daddy get him, Emma.

Kharen restrains her. Dog bolts, criss-crosses lawn.

PAUL
Oh God. Here, doggie. Here, doggie.

Paul drops his gear to driveway. He looks confused.

KHAREN
Doggie? Really, Paul? Doggie?

PAUL
Suggestions? Okay. Here, Fido.

FOLLOW DOG/PAUL (MOVING)

Dog SCAMPERS across lawn, under limo, onto car roof. Paul is winded. He doubles over, hands on knees.

KHAREN
Don't you have a heart attack, now.

Paul flashes Kharen a pointed gaze, continues chasing. Has several near falls, slips, slides, stumbles.

EMMA
Shasta. Come here. Come here, now.

Dog stops, turns, races to Emma, sits at her feet.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Good boy. Good boy. Oh wow.

Eyes pop, jaws drop. Paul stares at Kharen, she at him.

PAUL

Wait a minute. What just happened?

Kharen shrugs, looks at Dr. Hudson who stares back. Emma kneels, strokes and pets Shasta. He WHINES, stares up at her.

EMMA

You like that name? Huh? Do you?

Shasta emits repeated BARKS, wags his tail.

EMMA (CONT'D)

He likes it. May I name him Shasta?

Kharen and Paul exchange puzzled gazes. Both shrug.

PAUL

Works for me. But why Shasta?

Emma shrugs. Kharen has puzzled stare. All start inside.

INT. FRONT DOOR ENTRY

Chauffeur enters, places luggage on deck, leaves.

DR. HUDSON

Welcome home, Paul. Been a while.

PAUL

It's insane. But it's great to be home, finally back to some sanity.

René enters with Paul's briefcase. Dr. Hudson spots Kharen.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Thanks, René. Put it in the study.

STAIR LANDING

CONNIE, HOUSEKEEPER, 50s starts up with luggage, coat, tie.

DR. HUDSON

Doctor Orsini called, earlier.

KHAREN

Oh? What did he say?

Emma listens in, pretends to not pay attention.

DR. HUDSON

First, he thanks you for the Medal of Freedom congratulations gift. And sends a happy birthday to Emma.

KHAREN

Great. By the way, it's Emma Lynn, now. She decided that this morning.

DR. HUDSON

Emma Lynn? Love it. Oh, the good doctor said to call him after six.

Kharen grimaces, starts away. Paul observes then joins in.

DR. HUDSON (CONT'D)

She'll be okay. She's just been under considerable stress, lately. She'll tell you all about it.

PAUL

That's another reason I didn't go to Boston. I'll talk to her.

DR. HUDSON

But without your lawyer's hat on, alright? Oh, a courier left a package for you. It's in my office.

PAUL

Thanks, no rush. I'll get it later.

FOLLOW as Dr. Hudson, Emma, Shasta head toward kitchen.

DR. HUDSON

So, now there's feeding, cleaning up after him, taking him out to --

EMMA

-- Venice Beach, Redondo, Catalina.

Paul looks around as if house is unfamiliar to him. A CRESCENDO of WIND rises. Paul does a three-sixty. Sound stops. He looks confused, sees no one else reacts.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Kharen sits on bed, leafing through baby book. Paul enters.

PAUL

So, what's up with that dog?

No response. Kharen lifts book. Paul goes to her, looks on.

KHAREN
Can't believe it's been this long.

PAUL
I know. Seven years already. Seven.

KHAREN
Remember when we first saw this?

PAUL
She was just six months old, right?

Kharen nods. Paul sits by her, drapes arm around a shoulder.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Every birthday is like her first.

KHAREN
Born July 6. 7 pounds, 18 inches,
hazel eyes. God, Annie was such an
amazing sister and mother. And
Richard, an unbelievable dad. Now
both are gone, and we're raising
their little angel. Time just...

Kharen tears up. Paul leans over to hug her. She stiffens.

PAUL
Sweetheart --

KHAREN
-- Never told you this but there
are times, most times, I feel like
an imposter-- like so me pretender.

PAUL
Imposter? Why? What do you mean?

KHAREN
Just that. An imposter.

Paul holds back response. Kharen grimaces.

KHAREN (CONT'D)
Just imagine what it's like when I
look into my mirror, and see my --

PAUL
-- Hey, it's okay, babe. It's okay.

KHAREN
And I see my sister looking back at
me. Then to have Emma call me,
mother. It's like --

PAUL

-- But you are her mother. We've taught her about Annie and Richard.

Kharen stands, moves to dresser. Paul joins her.

KHAREN

Mother? I am and I'm not. I wrestle with that whenever she calls me, Mom. I'm her Aunt, Paul. Her Aunt.

PAUL

I love you. And I won't pretend to know what it's like to lose your twin sister then become the mother of her child. That's just ...

Kharen takes deep breath to force calm. Exhales.

KHAREN

Sorry, I'm just... Even though we've kept no secrets from her.

PAUL

None. She knows who she is. And She sees the stares from some whites and blacks who have no idea about our story. The question of race is real, especially with the killing of so many black men and women. But we can't change the fact we're rich, privileged white folk. It's about what we do. We make sure she knows and spends time in Houston with the Jemisons - Richard's parents, and her extended family. But we're Mom and Dad.

(pause)

What else are you not saying?

Kharen grabs tissues, dabs her eyes. Silence.

KHAREN

Emma's tests. The A.L.L. Looks like it's fighting back. I wanted to wait 'til you were home to ...

Paul embraces her, holds both her hands.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

But she seems fine. You saw her.

PAUL

I did. So, what did Orsini say?

KHAREN

God. He said her bone marrow blast threshold is too high, again - that it may soon affect her remission.

PAUL

He wants to hospitalize her again?

Kharen nods yes.

PAUL (CONT'D)

But she's only been home a month.

KHAREN

Thirty-six days.

(pause)

I got a second call from BBDO. I'm thinking of selling the firm.

PAUL

Selling? Why? It's doing so well.

KHAREN

Yes, but this is all about Emma.

PAUL

Of course. But you've built a --

KHAREN

-- A business. It's a business. Honestly, I just feel I should spend every possible moment with her. Our sole purpose is to see Emma lives her best life.

Both absorb moment.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

Everything else is secondary. The business, the law firm, the Bascom case, your conflict with John Glodt. It's all secondary.

PAUL

Forget Glodt. He's just a --

KHAREN

-- A what? You say all that.

Paul hesitates, notes Kharen's demeanor.

PAUL

I know you're in no mood to hear my rah-rah, positive-thinking bit.

KHAREN

I know it all by heart. After years
of fertility specialists, then ...

Kharen paces. Her expressions alternate between frowns and
smiles, then a blank gaze.

PAUL

Kharen --

KHAREN

-- Then, Emma came to us. She was
like a rainbow after a terrible
storm. Then, two years later, I
finally get pregnant. And all was
fine, until it wasn't.

PAUL

Babe, we'll all get through this.

KHAREN

You guarantee that? Do you?

Paul looks wounded. Kharen rubs her brow, exhales.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

Sorry. That wasn't fair. I'm ...

Paul gives an understanding shrug.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

What is so remarkable is the fight
in Emma. Her Faith, her --

PAUL

-- I know. I envy her, that. I do.

KHAREN

Her embrace of life. She actually
lifts us up. She really does.

PAUL

She handles it better than we do.

Kharen dabs her eyes with tissues. Paul appears tentative.

PAUL (CONT'D)

But we can't blame ourselves.

KHAREN

It's not that, really. It's not.

PAUL

We just have to have Emma's Faith.

KHAREN

She certainly has plenty of that.

PAUL

Despite everything. We're lucky. I think of parents with so much less, those with kids taken from them.

INT. EMMA'S BEDROOM

Shasta is on his haunches, barks, paws at E.T. poster. Emma strokes his head, lifts him. Both stare at poster.

EMMA

You like him? He's kinda cute, huh?

Shasta looks at her, barks. Emma gives a thumbs up.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Understood.

Emma snuggles Shasta to her chest. He WHINES then quietens.

INT. DR. HUDSON'S BEDROOM - DAY

Minimal décor, spotless, with Hawaii scene photos. Dr. Hudson is at desk, near bay window, she holds framed photo.

INSERT PHOTO

GIRL, Black, 7. She's smiling, hands pressed to her chest.

Dr. Hudson clutches photo, kisses it, swipes tears. She places photo on desktop, stands, goes to stare out window.

INT. HALLWAY TO MASTER BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

Emma in jeans, t-shirt, socks. Reveal her short hair. She carries Shasta, tiptoes to her parents' bedroom door.

EMMA

Shhh. Not a peep. Capisce?

A tap on Emma's shoulder. Startled, she wheels around, releases a loud exhale.

DR. HUDSON

Capisce? Where'd you learn that?

The two step away several feet.

EMMA

Oh, I hear things, in passing.

DR. HUDSON

In passing? Meaning what?

EMMA

Meaning, I learn by listening, even when I'm busy doing other things.

DR. HUDSON

Hmmm. Very insightful, and cunning.

EMMA

As in sly or astute?

DR. HUDSON

Sly or ... Okay. As in both. So, why were you at your parents' door?

All three start away down hallway, then back toward stairs.

EMMA

To ask Mom if she's seen my E.T. DVD. I know it's old school but I'm stuck with DVDs and an old iPod. I don't have access to Netflix or Hulu, and Shasta wants to see it.

DR. HUDSON

And just how did he convey that?

EMMA

Meaning, how did he tell me?

Dr. Hudson purses her lips, suggesting Emma knows answer.

EMMA (CONT'D)

He saw my poster and started barking and barking and --

DR. HUDSON

-- And you understood him.

Emma nods, yes. Dr. Hudson studies her, then a squirming Shasta. Emma cradles him. All three continue down stairs.

DR. HUDSON (CONT'D)

Aren't you helping with the party?

EMMA

Me? Why? I'm the guest of honor.

DR. HUDSON

Right. Come. I have something to show you. And close your eyes.

EMMA

A surprise? I love surprises.

DR. HUDSON

I know.

Emma closes her eyes. Dr. Hudson takes her hand.

DR. HUDSON (CONT'D)

Hold on. Hold on. I'm watching.

FIRST FLOOR CORRIDOR

At office, next to Paul's study.

DR. HUDSON (CONT'D)

Keep your eyes closed. No peeking.

EMMA

They are so closed. Promise.

DR. HUDSON

I trust you.

Both reach closed door. Dr. Hudson turns to Emma.

INT. OFFICE

Art, bookcase, flowers. Framed wall pic of MLK and LBJ at OVAL OFFICE 1965 'Voting Rights Act' signing.

DR. HUDSON

Almost ready. Hold on.

She guides Emma to desk and LAPTOP with red bow, opposite wedding picture of her father, Richard, BM, 30s in Marine Dress Blues embracing Annie, in wedding dress.

DR. HUDSON (CONT'D)

Okay, open them. Happy Birthday.

Emma eyes bug out, her mouth falls open, she rushes to desk, puts Shasta in chair, hugs Dr. Hudson with both arms.

DR. HUDSON (CONT'D)

I know you would've preferred an iPad or a --

EMMA

-- Or an iWatch or iPhone.

DR. HUDSON

I know, but your mom and dad --

EMMA

-- They say, not yet. But this is way cool. I love it. Now, we're partners for real.

DR. HUDSON

Wait a second. Weren't we before?

EMMA

We were. I mean, we are. Thank you.

DR. HUDSON

Well, you're welcome, partner.

Emma examines laptop, turns solemn, lifts Shasta.

EMMA

Dr. Hudson, may I ask a big favor?

DR. HUDSON

Favor? Sure. What?

EMMA

Would you please convince Mom and Dad I'll be okay, no matter what?

Dr. Hudson fights back tears. She nods yes, winks, smiles. She and Emma exchange a fist bump, then a hug.

DR. HUDSON

You are one inspiring soul, Emma Lynn. I mean that. And you will be okay. I have no doubt about that.

(pause)

You know, in this short time, I've learned so much from you. So much.

Emma flashes wide-eyed surprised, points finger at herself.

EMMA

From me?

DR. HUDSON

Indeed.

EMMA

Like, what?

DR. HUDSON

Well, since I arrived, I've seen you do all you can to spare your mom knowing when you're not feeling well. You smile and push through. There are adults who are unable to do that. Just be honest with her.

EMMA

I am. But when I hurt I call on my Angels. They're my nine-one-one.

DR. HUDSON

Your nine-one-one. Your Angels?

EMMA

Yes, ma'am. After I say my prayers at night, I call for them and they come. I just close my eyes and imagine they're in my body fighting those mean old cancer cells, right?

Dr. Hudson clutches both hands to her chest.

EMMA (CONT'D)

And anytime the pain grows, I just call for more angels? That's it.

DR. HUDSON

And they always come?

EMMA

Yes, ma'am. Always. That's why I can tell Mom I'm okay. That's it.

Dr. Hudson purses her lips, takes a deep breath, nods head.

EMMA (CONT'D)

The pain doesn't always totally go away, but it helps. I can tell.

DR. HUDSON

I believe you, Emma. Emma Lynn.

Emma smiles. Dr. Hudson gazes at Emma. Emma's focus turns to framed wedding pic of Annie and Richard. Dr. Hudson watches.

Emma sits in chair, Shasta in her lap. She leans forward, lifts picture, stares at it then flashes a smile.

DR. HUDSON (CONT'D)

What are you thinking, now?

Emma exhales, shows she's gathering her thoughts.

EMMA

I'm trying to find the right words.

DR. HUDSON

I understand. Just let them out. We promised to do that, remember?

Emma nods yes then eases photo back in place. Silence.

EMMA (CONT'D.)

I sometimes wonder how it would be, if they were here, you know? I dream about it. I look in the mirror, and I see both of them in me. So, they're really still here.

DR. HUDSON

They are, indeed. They really are.

EMMA

Mom and Dad often talk about them. But I don't say much because I don't want them to feel bad.

DR. HUDSON

You and I did talk about that.

EMMA

They were both here on my very first birth - day, right?

Emma chuckles at her own word play. Dr. Hudson joins in.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Paul in jeans, unbuttoned shirt, stands near Kharen. She appears lost in thought. Paul kisses her, buttons his shirt.

KHAREN

They had a ball... doctors, staff, everybody. I've got pics and video.

Bedside phone chimes. Paul answers.

PAUL

Yes. I'll take it in the study.

Paul hangs up, turns to Kharen. She looks disappointed.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I won't be long. See you at the party. C'mon, smile for me. I love ya'. Hey, this shirt look okay?

KHAREN

Kharen nods yes. Paul blows a kiss and leaves. Kharen goes to dresser, stares into mirror, examines her face, traces her frown lines, lifts a framed photo.

INSERT PHOTO

Paul, Kharen, and Emma, 3. She returns it, goes to window.

KAHREN'S P.O.V.

Emma with Shasta near gazebo. Dr. Hudson with René decorate pool-patio area.

EXT. POOL AREA - DAY (AFTERNOON)

Emma tries coaxing Shasta to lift his paws.

P.O.V. CAMERA VIEWFINDER

Shasta turns, aims a piercing gaze.

Kharen is there taping with DSLR camera. She lowers camera.

EMMA

Raise just one, okay? Like this.

Emma demonstrates for Shasta, looks back at Kharen.

EMMA (CONT'D)

You getting all this, Mom?

KHAREN

I am, sweetheart.

PATIO ENTRANCE

A dozen NEIGHBORHOOD KIDS, various ethnicities, arrive.

PARTY TABLE

Dr. Hudson chats with ADRIAN BONELLI, IM, 40s, CHEF, playboy persona. He arranges food and décor, flirts with René.

RENÉ

Just do your work, Adrian Bonelli.

MAGICIAN, in tuxedo, sets up to perform. A CLOWN makes animal balloons for excited kids.

INT. PAUL'S STUDY

STUDY/MAN CAVE. Huge desk, w/folders, desk computer, laptop. Golf simulator, TV. Paul is on phone, seated at desk.

PAUL

I knew you could do it. Glodt's had that file off the grid for a reason. I'll be in early, Monday.

CAROL (V.O.)

And the thumb drive?

PAUL

I'll get it Monday. Go have fun.

Paul hangs up, lifts large padded envelope. He opens it, turns it upside down. Stacks of currency tumble onto desk. Stunned, Paul thumbs through banded hundred-dollar bills.

PAUL (CONT'D)

What-in-the ...

A gentle knock at study door. Paul looks up.

AT STUDY DOOR

Emma, sans her cap, enters room with Shasta. Paul yanks open desk drawer, rakes in cash then stands. Shasta dashes over.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Sweetheart, the party.

Emma follows Shasta. Dog heels at Paul's feet, stares up at him. Paul leans down, strokes his head.

PAUL (CONT'D)

You can't be late, sweetheart.

EMMA

We won't. We came for you, Dad. Besides, we have a question.

PAUL

We? Okay, sure. What is it?

EMMA

Is everything alright with you?

PAUL

With me? Of course. Why?

Emma stares at him, holds gaze.

PAUL (CONT'D)

What is it?

EMMA

The men at the airport.

PAUL

Men? You mean, the man I spoke to?

EMMA

No, Dad. Two men in a black SUV. They were on the other side, just sitting there, watching you.

PAUL

Other side? That would've been pretty far away. Guess I just missed that. And you could see them that far away?

EMMA

Yes. You were busy with the man in the old beat-up car. But don't worry, Shasta and I have your back.

PAUL

My back? Well now, I do feel better already. C'mon, let's go party.

Paul hugs Emma. They head to door, out into hallway.

INT. HALLWAY

EMMA

By the way, I changed my mac and cheese recipe.

PAUL

Changed it? Why? It was already great. I always stuff myself on it.

EMMA

I know. Thanks but I put real bacon bits on top, now. Real bacon, not that *I-don't-know-how-they-make-it* fake stuff. And just a little bit.

PAUL

Sounds delicious. But just a little, right? Gotta eat healthy.

EMMA

Yes, but it is mac and cheese, Dad.

PAUL
Touché. Point made. Point made.

EXT. POOL AREA - AFTERNOON

A dozen more PARENTS with KIDS (mixed ethnicities) are present. A MAGICIAN performs to animated applause.

All gather at table. Paul lights seven cake candles. Kharen directs birthday song, urges participation.

KHAREN
Sing everyone. Adrian, you too.

René points at Adrian, laughs. All sing.

KHAREN (CONT'D)
Okay, Emma Lynn. Make a wish.

Paul videotapes. Dr. Hudson takes photos. Emma closes her eyes, makes a wish, blows out candles to animated applause.

DR. HUDSON
Alright, everyone. No posing.
Candid shots only. Be natural.

Cake and ice cream are served. On table, a portable phone rings. Paul picks up, steps away.

KHAREN
No business, today. You promised.

PAUL
Hello.

Shasta dashes toward gazebo. Emma chases him.

EXT. YACHT "NOT GUILTY" OFFSHORE - DAY (MID-AFTERNOON)

PAUL/GLODT PHONE CONVERSATION

JOHN GLODT, WM, 50s, 'Made-Guy' look, tan, in Captain's attire, seated in deck chair, sunglasses.

JANET KOZLOWSKI WF, 35ish, in bikini hands Glodt a drink.

GLODT
Paulie. I see wonder-boy is back.

PAUL
John G. Glodt. You missed me, huh?

GLODT
Word is, you impressed the gods.

Glodt sips drink. Swipes his lips with napkin.

GLODT (CONT'D)
You ex-Wall Street lawyers are --

PAUL
-- Now-now-now. No name-calling.

GLODT
You're all just a gaggle of restless tycoons looking for a new hobby. So, you --

PAUL
-- Heard you were a little sick.

GLODT
Me? Sick? Neh. Old news. I'll be in on Monday to wrap up Maxwell. You can count on it.

Glodt ends call, scowls. He turns, points to Janet.

GLODT (CONT'D)
You've a job to do, Ms. Kozlowski.

RETURN TO EMMA'S PARTY

Paul rejoins others. Phone rings. He checks I.D. Kharen gives him a disapproving glare. Paul smiles, hands phone to Kharen.

She takes phone, steps away.

KHAREN
Hello.

KHAREN/WOMAN ON PHONE

WOMAN ON PHONE
Mrs. Stewart, this is Janine at Pet Planet. I'm so sorry for the delay.

KHAREN
Hi, Janine. Delay? What delay?

Kharen flashes puzzled look.

WOMAN ON PHONE
I know we promised to have your dog there by noon. We're running a tad behind and need another hour.

KHAREN

Wait, I don't understand.

WOMAN ON PHONE

Maybe even less than an hour.

KHAREN

Hold on. What do you mean? We already have the dog.

WOMAN ON PHONE

Okay. If you made another purchase, I do understand, and we'll just --

KHAREN

-- No, no, listen. We have the dog.

WOMAN ON PHONE

But ma'am, that's not possible. I spoke to our driver just moments ago, and he told me --

KHAREN

-- But I'm looking at him, as we speak. So, whatever the mix-up, the problem is on your end.

WOMAN ON PHONE

I understand. So, you-have-the-dog. Whoa. Okay. I'll have our driver return but stop in Monday with your dog, and we'll figure this out.

KHAREN

Fine. Fine. I'll do that.

Kharen ends call, looks mystified. She gazes towards Shasta. Paul notes her reaction, joins her.

FROM ACROSS REAR GROUNDS NEAR FENCE

We see Paul and Kharen converse. Kharen signals Dr. Hudson who joins them. Dr. Hudson soon hurries into house.

EXT. STEWART REAR GROUNDS - DAY (DUSK)

After birthday party. Shasta dashes to perimeter wall, stares out over ocean. Emma joins him.

EMMA

What do you see out there?

AT REAR WALL

Kharen joins Emma and Shasta.

Sunlight gleams in Shasta's eyes. He releases a guttural rumble, his ears point. Kharen stares at him, embraces Emma.

INT. STEWART KITCHEN BREAKFAST NOOK - NIGHT

Paul with Kharen, in pajamas, sip coffee.

PAUL

Half the guests didn't show again
but Emma had a ball. So did Shasta.

KHAREN

It's Emma Lynn, remember? Oh, and
speaking of Shasta.

Kharen hands Paul a sheaf of papers. He checks them. Frowns.

PAUL

I'm stumped, which is rare. Okay?

KHAREN

It should read, Pet Planet, not Pet
Drome, which does not exist. I
Googled it. Nada. But Dr. Hudson
absolutely saw the logo on the
man's uniform. I asked her twice.

Silence, head-shakes, shoulder shrugs, coffee sips.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

I called Dr. Orsini. He wasn't in,
so I left a message. I have no
doubt he wants to readmit Emma.

PAUL

God, let's hope not. If he does,
I won't go to D.C. I'll stay here.

KHAREN

He's doing remote monitoring. So...

Kharen stares at doorway, spots Shasta, eyes fixed on them.

PAUL

What is it?

Kharen turns to Paul then at empty doorway. Her jaw drops.

INT. EMMA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Emma, in nightwear, and Shasta sit in large bay window with sheer curtains drawn back. Both are bathed in moonlight.

EMMA

We have to talk, so listen up.

Shasta emits a soft WHINE, gazes up at Emma.

EMMA (CONT'D)

You really are listening. Wow. Cool. Anyway, so this morning, I called you Shasta. Now, I have no idea where that came from. No idea. I mean, none.

Emma gazes out window at night sky, then back.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Everyone was just stunned. Me too. It just happened, like I knew you.

Brief stare-off. Shasta emits another soft WHINE.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Dr. Hudson - she's the one who gave you to me, she says there's order to everything. She says everything has meaning and purpose. Okay? I have to trust her on that.

Shasta tilts head to one side. Emma tilts hers.

EMMA (CONT'D)

She's very smart and thoughtful, in that way. But I'm afraid. I'm afraid she's going to leave when I'm well again. Ya know?

Shasta WHINES, wags his tail. Emma yawns. Shasta yawns.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Guess we're both sleepy, right?

Shasta WHINES again.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM

HOWLING WIND awakens Paul. He bolts up, wakes Kharen.

PAUL

You hear that?

KHAREN

I do now. Let's check on Emma.

Both bolt out of bed.

INT. HALLWAY

Kharen with Paul tiptoe to Emma's room. Wind still howls.

EMMA'S BEDROOM

Paul eases door open. At window, curtains flail and thrash. Paul and Kharen gaze wide-eyed, mouths open.

KHAREN

Paul, that window doesn't open.
What's happening? Oh, my god.

Wind ROAR stops, curtains fall still. Both ease to window. Paul lifts curtains, touches window.

PAUL

That's crazy. What's going on?

KHAREN

How is that possible?

Paul hunches his shoulders. He and Kharen see Emma is asleep but Shasta is on his haunches, on a blanket next to her bed.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

I think he's watching us.

Paul and Kharen ease out of room, close door. Both give puzzled stare at each other.

INT. BREAKFAST ROOM - DAY (MORNING)

Paul, Kharen, Emma and Dr. Hudson have finished breakfast. Shasta is on floor with empty bowl, near Emma.

KHAREN

I am so stuffed. Seriously, guys.

EMMA

Me, too. And so is Shasta.

PAUL

I'll bet you guys haven't eaten this well in weeks. Thank-yous accepted. I can use a big Yelp review, okay? I'm just saying.

KHAREN

There he goes, bragging again.

DR. HUDSON

He does do a mean Sunday breakfast.

Paul stands, takes a bow then sits.

PAUL

So, we're off to Catalina. And Dr. Hudson's driving to Santa Barbara. Wow. She may even drop in on Oprah.

DR. HUDSON

Can't wait. I'm all set. And who knows, I just may give her a call.

PAUL

Good. The '57 Chevy is ready to go.

DR. HUDSON

Okay, now we're talking. Look out, Jay Leno. My Dad had one of those.

EXT. CENTURY CITY OFFICE TOWER - DAY (NEXT MORNING)

INT. LAW OFFICES GREENE, O'CONNOR, DAVIS & WELCH

CORRIDOR OUTSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM

Meeting ends. Attorneys exit. Paul walks out. Glodt follows.

CAROL

From the look on Glodt's face, I'd say things went pretty well.

Paul smiles. Both continue en route to Paul's office. Fellow attorney, PHIL GIRARD, W-M, 50+, bald, approaches them.

GIRARD

Great job, Paul.

PAUL

Thanks, Girard.

INT. PAUL'S OFFICE

Paul places his iPad on desk.

CAROL

What was all that skinning and grinning about?

PAUL

Girard?

CAROL

Yeah. Great job, boss.

PAUL

I hear ya. That's only the second time Phil Girard's spoken to me since Glodt brought him in three months ago, after Hilyard left.

CAROL

He is a little weird - no, a lot weird. And his breath stinks.

PAUL

Okay. Throwing a little shade, huh?

CAROL

What do you know 'bout shade?

PAUL

Plenty. I do have a young daughter, right? Anyway, I'm leaving, soon. I'm in court Wednesday, on Revello.

CAROL

No-no-no. Revello is Thursday.

PAUL

Thursday? You sure?

CAROL

Am I... You're just a little distracted. I understand all that, okay? I do. Now what about that thumb drive?

Enters Janet Kozlowski, attorney and Glodt yacht-guest. She carries a file folder. Carol gives her an icy stare.

JANET

Oops. Didn't mean to interrupt.

Carol reacts with a glare then starts towards door.

CAROL

I was just leaving.

PAUL

We'll finish up later.

JANET
Listen, I can --

CAROL
-- Give your wonderful wife, Kharen
and lovely daughter, Emma my best.
Oh, Miss Kozlowski.

Carol leaves. Janet watches her exit, drops file on desk.

JANET
Woooo, I don't think she likes me.

PAUL
What can I do for ya, Janet?

JANET
Right to the point. Oh-kay. Got
time to discuss Hampton, and --

PAUL
-- Hampton? Of course.

EXT. MARINA DEL REY OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

INT. STEWART MEDIA, INC. RECEPTIONIST AREA

VIDEO EDIT SUITE

Kharen peers over shoulder of JIM, BM, 40s, at editing bay
viewing footage of TV commercials.

KHAREN
Jim, you're right. I see what you
mean. So, let's roll through the
three-second action intro before
the high-impact music splash.

JIM
Will do. It'll work.

INT. OFFICE SUITE CORRIDOR

Kharen exits en route to her office. She accepts a file from
WF, 18ish "punker-attire."

STEVE MACLIN, WM, late 70s, 'Sidney Greenstreet Clone' in
seersucker suit, white shirt, red bowtie approaches.

KHAREN
Mr. Maclin, how goes it?

STEVE MACLIN

Great, boss. All set for GM. The final package is all ready.

KHAREN

Sounds good. Give me a minute.

Steve flashes a thumbs up, both move on.

INT. KHAREN'S OFFICE

Kharen enters, walks to her window, views distant Pacific Ocean from large window, drops file onto her desk.

Phone sounds. She answers.

KHAREN

Kharen Stewart.

She freezes, grimaces. Her face reflects shock from bad news.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

Oh no. Oh, my God, no.

A distraught Kharen slumps down onto edge of desk.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

When did it happen? No, I'm not okay. I'm not okay. I understand. I understand. Thanks for calling me.

Kharen hangs up, swipes tears, gazes out window just as her door opens. She wheels around.

PAUL

Surprise.

Kharen loses fight to hold back more tears, breaks down.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Hey, what's wrong? What's wrong?

KHAREN

Dr. Orsini. He's gone. He's --

PAUL

-- Gone? Gone? You mean, he's dead?

Kharen manages a weak nod, yes.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Oh my God. When? What happened?

KHAREN

Heart attack. They found him in his office this morning. He'd worked all night ... slept there. He was due at the White House next week.

Paul is stunned. He and Kharen share a long embrace.

EXT. REDONDO BEACH - DAY (EVENING)

Paul and Kharen, on pier, watch sun sink into Pacific.

INT. STEWART HOME - NIGHT

Emma chases a barking Shasta, wearing large pink sunglasses, down hall into kitchen. Dr. Hudson watches with amusement.

EMMA

You're gonna get me in trouble.

Shasta stops at doorway to kitchen.

EMMA (CONT'D)

What is it?

Shasta whines. Emma looks surprised. She kneels, pats Shasta's head, removes glasses, continues to kitchen.

Connie places a tray, with a silver bowl, onto a footstool on floor and leaves. Shasta sniffs it, refuses to eat.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Sorry. Didn't mean to yell.

DR. HUDSON

Aww, he's sulking. He wants a hug.

Emma hugs him. Dr. Hudson looks on. Emma lies next to Shasta while he eats. Emma sits up, legs crossed, stuffs sunglasses in her pocket.

EMMA

Dr. Hudson, do you think we're the only ones out here in space?

Dr. Hudson prepares to sit on floor, too. She grunts, huffs.

DR. HUDSON

Give me a sec. Been a while.
Whew. Now, of all the things to ask, whatever made you ask that?

EMMA

Well, I've been thinking. Earth is in space, and we're on earth. So we're all space beings, right?

DR. HUDSON

Well, that is a fact, for sure. And that's some pretty sound reasoning.

EMMA

Thank you. And we're out here, not down here. There is no up there. So, do you think there are others out there? I think there are, and they have to be smarter, too.

DR. HUDSON

Emma Lynn, you've got some kinda mind. Now, you've got me wondering. It's good to wonder, and imagine. Are you sure you're only seven?

EMMA

I do wonder about a lot of things. I often feel I've been here before.

NURSE ELIZABETH DOWNING, 30s, approaches, in uniform, enters. She places her bag onto counter, removes iPad, Emma's meds.

Emma pops up. Dr. Hudson takes a bit longer.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Alright, I'm ready for dessert, Nurse Downing.

NURSE DOWNING

Dessert? My, that's a new one. I like it. But it's Elizabeth, right?

EMMA

Sorry. No first names. Mom says only when I'm older.

NURSE DOWNING

Well, if your mom says so.

Emma serves Shasta a bowl of water.

EXT. FRONT OF STEWART HOME - NIGHT

In Kharen's SUV, Paul turns onto drive, up to front entrance and parks. They sit in silence.

INT. STEWART HOUSE

Paul and Kharen enter, start upstairs. Dr. Hudson, in her robe, observes them from top of stairs. Kharen spots her.

KHAREN

Sorry. Did we wake you?

DR. HUDSON

Oh, no. I tucked in Emma Lynn at about nine, then settled in with a book and a cup of tea.

Dr. Hudson waits as she's joined at top of stairs.

DR. HUDSON (CONT'D)

We also hung out in our office for a bit. Oh, would you like some tea? It's China Green and Pomegranate.

KHAREN

No-no-no. We're fine. How was she?

DR. HUDSON

Good. She had a good day.

(pauses)

So sorry about the good doctor, and just when he's being honored. What about Emma? How do you tell her?

Kharen places a hand on Dr. Hudson's shoulder.

KHAREN

We're not. At least, not just yet.

DR. HUDSON

Sure, I understand. That's best.

KHAREN

How's Shasta?

DR. HUDSON

A little moody but frisky as ever.

Kharen nods, starts away.

INT. EMMA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Nightstand lamp is on.

Paul and Kharen ease door open, peek in at Emma.

KHAREN
Wonder what she's dreaming about?

PAUL
Wish I knew.

Paul points to Shasta, awake on a blanket next to bed.

KHAREN
I don't think he ever sleeps.

Both exit room. Paul eases door closed.

INT. STEWART HOME - DAY (MORNING)

FIRST FLOOR CORRIDOR LEADING TO LAUNDRY ROOM

High-pitch BARKING. René and Connie race to laundry room. Door is ajar, they throw it open.

RENÉ
Oh, my god.

Hampers are tossed all over floor. Shasta is buried in dirty clothes. He barks, romps, rolls, tries to fight his way out.

CONNIE
No wonder we couldn't find him.

RENÉ
Dr. Hudson has to see this.

CONNIE
Hold on, I'll get her.

Connie dashes to get Dr. Hudson. René watches Shasta.

CORRIDOR TO LAUNDRY ROOM

Shasta barks non-stop. Connie takes lead. Dr. Hudson and Emma arrive. René points at Shasta entwined in laundry.

LAUNDRY ROOM DOOR

Emma rushes in.

EMMA
Shasta. Shasta. What have you done?

DR. HUDSON
What a sight. Where's my camera?

EMMA

Oh boy, we're really in trouble.

DR. HUDSON

Where's my phone?

Lifts her smartphone from her pocket, starts recording.
Emma rescues Shasta. He snuggles up to her.

EMMA

It's okay. It's okay. You were just
having fun, right? It's okay.

An amused Dr. Hudson, and others, survey mess.

EXT. CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: EIGHT WEEKS LATER

INT. ONCOLOGY NURSES STATION

Patients, staff, and parents interact at station and beyond.

A nurse pushes YOUNG MALE PATIENT, SEAN, 12 in wheelchair.

NURSE

Sean, you should be pushing me.
You're much stronger than I am.

Sean smiles. They continue past Nurses' station.

HOSPITAL CORRIDOR

OFFICE DOOR NAMEPLATE: DR. REID WELBORN

INT. DR. WELBORN'S OFFICE

Décor features life-sized cartoon characters, animal chairs,
colorful walls. Desk is odd-shaped table.

Paul and Kharen sit on sofa, hold hands. DR. WELBORN, B-M,
50's, in WHEEL CHAIR, holds an iPad.

DR. WELBORN

You know, these kind of results
make what we do so gratifying.

PAUL

But Dr. Welborn, are you sure?

Dr. Welborn nods yes, leans forward.

KHAREN

I'm shaking. Heart's pounding.

PAUL

Two months ago, Emma was not where we hoped she'd be, especially after we finally told her about Doctor Orsini. Now, she's in remission?

Dr. Welborn smiles, nods.

KHAREN

God bless you.

DR. WELBORN

Well, we're a team here. Doctor Orsini explained that with A-L-L, kids tend to be more responsive to therapy than with other cancers.

Paul and Kharen nod agreement.

DR. WELBORN (CONT'D)

Remission is always our goal, and is achieved in oh, ninety-five percent of cases. About fifteen to twenty percent do relapse. But I caution, there's no guarantee.

KHAREN

We understand.

DR. WELBORN

You two just be happy. Now, I repeat, remission is not cure.

KHAREN

-- Understood.

DR. WELBORN

However, ninety plus percent of those who attain it are cured, with vigilant post-remission therapy.

KHAREN

I read that. But is Emma's case as miraculous to you as is to us?

Dr. Welborn leans back, removes his glasses, toys with them.

DR. WELBORN

We doctors are often reluctant to use the words miracle or Faith.

(MORE)

DR. WELBORN (CONT'D)

We like to think success is mostly owed to efficacious treatment. But it's more than that.

PAUL

Meaning?

DR. WELBORN

Meaning, we can't discount Faith and desire. Emma has that, and shares it. When she's here, she encourages and prays for the kids. Many show improvement. Amazing.

KHAREN

-- She's always been a giver.

DR. WELBORN

She is. and what's important is the love she receives, including that of her little four-legged friend.

PAUL

You mean, Shasta?

DR. WELBORN

Exactly. Best gift ever. Pets can be vital in the healing process, with kids and seniors. We see this.

Dr. Welborn's iPad sounds alert. He prepares to go.

DR. WELBORN (CONT'D)

Stay as long as you like. I'll advise on post-remission therapy tomorrow. And listen, be happy.

Paul shakes Doctor Welborn's hand. Kharen hugs him.

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - DAY

Paul and Kharen sit alone, holding hands.

EXT. BEACH BELOW STEWART HOME - DUSK

Paul, Kharen and Emma walk barefoot on beach. Emma and Shasta move ahead. Emma wears her cap. Show her hair shows regrowth.

Paul and Kharen watch her toss a Frisbee ahead of Shasta.

EMMA

C'mon, Shasta. C'mon. Get it, okay?

KHAREN

She wants to celebrate Shasta's two-month birthday tomorrow.

PAUL

Two? I thought he was eight months.

KHAREN

Eight plus. We've had him for two.

Emma tosses Frisbee into surf. Shasta ignores it, races to her, barking. He tugs hard on her pant leg.

EMMA

What're you doing? These are new.

Tide starts out. Paul and Kharen reach them. Kharen spots a broken glass bottle protruding, inches from Emma's foot.

KHAREN

Emma. Don't move. Oh, my god.

Paul reaches Emma, pulls up glass chard, shows Kharen.

EMMA

Oh wow. Good boy, Shasta. Good boy.

Emma kneels, hugs Shasta. A stunned Paul and Kharen watch.

A sun's final rays reflect and glow on ocean.

EXT. STEWART ESTATE REAR GROUNDS - NIGHT

Full moon's reflection shimmers on distant Pacific Ocean.

Emma and Shasta sit side-by-side on bench near masonry wall bordering rear grounds.

We hear footsteps behind them. Both turn. Kharen reaches them, sits next to Emma. All gaze at endless ocean view.

EMMA

It's like a painting that keeps changing colors. See? Look.

KHAREN

I never thought of it that way.

EMMA

Mom, Shasta and I were talking.

KHAREN

Oh?

EMMA

Yes. We've decided to give the hundred-dollars, from Ms. Sarino, to the Kids' Christmas fund.

KHAREN

Ahh, that's so sweet and generous.

EMMA

I would ask you and Dad to add to it, but it's from Shasta and me.

KHAREN

I see. I'm proud of you - you both.

EXT. LARGE SHOPPING MALL - DAY

Kharen and Emma exit. Emma carries small package.

EMMA

Think about it, Mom. You wouldn't want an unwrapped gift, would you?

Kharen shrugs.

KHAREN

Depends.

EMMA

On what?

KHAREN

Shasta is special, but he won't be upset if we don't wrap his gift.

EMMA

Trust me. He will.

KHAREN

Well, I suppose you'd know.

INT. KHAREN'S CAR ON FREEWAY - DAY (MOVING)

EMMA

If you give me the paper, I'll wrap it. I do have the experience, now.

Kharen is focused on traffic.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Deal, Mom?

KHAREN

Fine, you win. Jeez, I think we've got another lawyer in the family.

EMMA

You think so?

Kharen nods yes.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Cool. You're the best.

KHAREN

I know.

Both laugh. Emma removes gift from bag – a leather collar with red rhinestones.

EXT. FRONT OF STEWART RESIDENCE - DAY

Paul's Luxury Sedan is parked near detached garage. He transfers golf clubs from trunk into house.

Shasta follows. Paul tosses a tennis ball and enters house. Shasta chases ball to edge of front grounds, and driveway.

EXT. BLACK SUV

Bad Guy #1 and Bad Guy #2 are parked down street, then SUV races forward. Bad Guy #2 leaps out, dashes to driveway, grabs Shasta. He leaps in. Shasta loses a stream of BARKS.

EXT. KHAREN'S AUTO - DAY (MOVING)

INT. KHAREN'S SUV

EMMA

You didn't answer, Mom.

KHAREN

Sorry, I forgot the question.

Emma feigns exasperation.

EMMA

Am I going to have a sister or brother before I'm too old?

KHAREN

Before you're too old?

EMMA

Yes.

Emma tilts head, leans forward, awaits an answer.

KHAREN

Do we need a bow? I'm not sure we have any left.

EMMA

Never mind. I'll ask Dad.

Kharen focuses down street, as she nears home.

KHAREN

He wouldn't know about bows.

EMMA

Not bows. About a baby. You're able to have one yourself, now. Right?

Kharen, grimaces, gazes into rear view mirror, then ahead.

KHAREN'S P.O.V. Through Windshield

Paul, neighbors, and a POLICE OFFICER at edge of driveway.

INT. KHAREN'S SUV - DAY

EMMA (CONT'D.)

What's wrong, Mom?

KHAREN

You wait here. I'll be right back.

EXT. KHAREN'S SUV

She pulls over, exits, dashes towards Paul. He sees her.

The Officer continues jotting notes, speaks to neighbors.

KHAREN

Paul. What is it? What's happened?

Kharen turns, sees Emma exit car and start toward them.

PAUL

Shasta's gone. He's gone. He's --

KHAREN

-- Gone? What do you mean, gone?

PAUL

I was inside, heard him barking,
ran out, saw a black SUV speed away
over the hill and out of sight.
There's no doubt he was taken. It
was all so fast. It just happened

Paul's eyes flare, he appears to reflect on something.

EMMA (V.O.)

No, Dad. Two men in the black SUV.

KHAREN

But who would --

PAUL

-- I'm not sure. I checked Shasta's
GPS. It's not being picked up.

Emma reaches them.

EMMA

Daddy, what's wrong? What's wrong?

Kharen hugs Emma.

PAUL

Angel, come inside with me and Mom.

INT. STEWART ENTRY - FROM UPPER LEVEL

Dr. Hudson joins them all. Paul kneels, faces Emma. Show
him speak to her. Emma's knees buckle. Paul lifts her.

EXT. VARIOUS SHOPPING CENTERS/INTERSECTIONS - DAY/NIGHT

Paul, Kharen, volunteers post reward notices at businesses,
public locations, pet stores, grocery stores, etc.

EXT. STEWART RESIDENCE - NIGHT

INT. PAUL'S STUDY

Empty room. TV is on Local TV News (muted), shows image of
Shasta. Chyron shows \$50,000 reward accompany news story.

EXT. SHOPPING CENTER ENTRANCES - DAY

Volunteers in Shasta T-SHIRTS hand out flyers.

INT. EMMA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Emma, in PJs, stares out bedroom window.

INT. HALLWAY AT EMMA'S BEDROOM DOOR

Kharen peeks in. Emma stands near bed, picks up pink teddy bear from pillow, plops onto her back, clutches bear to her. Kharen, near tears, starts to enter but closes door.

IN HALLWAY

Kharen stands at door, a hand cupped to her mouth.

EXT. POOL AREA - DAY

Paul and Kharen sit at table with stack of reward flyers.

PAUL

Four days, thousands of flyers, a fifty-grand reward, and no calls.

Adrian places sandwiches on a table. Dr. Hudson approaches.

DR. HUDSON

Has Emma, Emma Lynn had lunch?

KHAREN

No, I'll take something up, thanks.

Dr. Hudson nods, starts back inside, then turns back.

DR. HUDSON

Oh, I know this isn't top of mind right now, with what's happened, but I encrypted the household files and uploaded them to the cloud.

PAUL

Great. Now, I know you cringe at praise but this reminds me how our New York office could not have made it without you. It's true. And thanks for interrupting your Hawaii retirement to rescue us here.

Dr. Hudson smiles, waves off compliment, starts inside.

KHAREN

I'm worried about Emma. I felt so awful not right away telling her the truth about Dr. Orsini.

PAUL
I know. And now Shasta's gone.

KHAREN
I was only thinking of her and --

PAUL
-- And I agreed.

Kharen leaves to take lunch to Emma.

INT. EMMA'S ROOM - DAY

Emma lies on her back, looks weak, clutches her teddy bear,

HALLWAY OUTSIDE EMMA'S DOOR

Kharen taps on door, enters.

KHAREN
Brought some food, sweetheart.

INT. EMMA'S ROOM

Kharen looks stunned. There is no sign of Emma.

KHAREN (CONT'D)
Emma Lynn? Where are you?

Kharen places tray on dresser, turns to leave. Emma steps from behind room door, unsmiling.

KHAREN (CONT'D)
Well, I'm glad to see you're up to playing tricks on your poor mom.

Emma's walks past Kharen, returns to bed. She plops down.

KHAREN (CONT'D)
It's alright. You just startled me.

EMMA
Sorry. Didn't mean to scare you.

KHAREN
No-no, I'm fine. Really, I'm not upset. I'm not.

EMMA
Sorry.

KHAREN

Don't be sorry. Okay? Alright?

Kharen joins Emma on bed, strokes her face.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

How do you feel? Talk to me.

Waits. No response.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

I know. We'll find Shasta. We will.

Kharen retrieves tray, returns with upbeat demeanor.

Emma stares past her.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

Your favorite sandwich - smoked turkey, spinach, avocado, tomatoes.

Emma shakes her head, refuses food.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

Aw, but it's really good, huh?

Kharen sits on bed, tray on her lap.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

Just a little? You can't have medication on an empty stomach.

Kharen waits, stands, leaves tray on dresser. She returns to Emma's bed, tries to coax her out of her gloom.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

Did I tell you Dad once gave me a dog? I was your age. A Skye Terrier with hair covering his eyes.

Emma shows mild interest. Kharen sits, grasps Emma's hands.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

One day, when your mom and I came home from school, he wasn't there.

EMMA

Why? Did my mother have a dog, too?

KHAREN

No, she had a parrot named Wally.

Emma flashes a smile that vanishes.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

Anyway, at first, your grandmother, Gloria said he ran away. I didn't believe it but didn't say so. I knew Charlie wouldn't run away.

EMMA

Charlie. Did he ever come back?

Kharen shakes her head, no.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Sorry. Were you sad?

KHAREN

It was so long ago. But yes, I was very sad. Very. I cried for days. I was always sure he was stolen.

Emma caresses Kharen's hand.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

I only felt better when, a month later, Dad bought me a new dog.

EMMA

I think I know where this is going.

Emma folds her arms, tilts her head.

KHAREN

Oh, do you? Well, I didn't want another dog, not at first. But I changed my mind. So --

EMMA

-- I don't want another dog. Shasta didn't run away. Someone stole him. He'll find his way back. He will.

KHAREN

Darling, I understand. And it's great you feel that way. Look, just know that we love you. You'll feel better when you get back to school and see your friends, and --

EMMA

-- I do miss them, especially Doctor Orsini. He always shook when he laughed. You ever notice that?

Kharen fights back emotion, hugs Emma, strokes her face. She next takes tray, starts for door then turns back.

KHAREN (CONT'D.)

Want to see Cirque du Soleil? I
know you'd prefer Beyoncé but ...

Bedroom door opens. Paul peeks in. Kharen turns to him.

PAUL

Just thought I'd come see what
rebellion you two were plotting.

KHAREN

No plots, just girl-talk. We're
thinking maybe Cirque du Soleil
tonight. Right, Emma? Emma Lynn?

Emma shrugs, manages a smile. Paul claps his hands.

PAUL

I do believe that's a yes. Yessir.
So, with that, I leave to prepare
the royal carriage and royal purse.

Paul leaves room, does an over-the-head fist pump.

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE - NIGHT

Stars and full moon fill night sky.

INT. PAUL'S STUDY

Paul sits at desk, examines a law volume. He looks up, sees a
solemn Kharen enter. He closes law book.

PAUL

What's wrong?

Kharen plops down on sofa across from Paul's desk.

KHAREN

Emma has a slight temperature. All
this stress. She's asleep now.

Paul stands, goes to sofa.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

Hope all this doesn't affect her
remission. I'm just afraid she --

PAUL

-- Did she finally eat? I hope.

KHAREN

Only half the sandwich, some juice.

Paul steps closer.

PAUL

She's clearly more lethargic and despondent the past few days.

KHAREN

Losing Shasta was devastating. And learning about Dr. Orsini was --

PAUL

-- It was awful. We see Dr. Welborn on Tuesday. He may modify her therapy. He said to expect that.

KHAREN

Hope he won't hospitalize her.

Paul nods agreement, walks back to his desk.

PAUL

She's such a fighter. It's amazing.

KHAREN

And so strong-willed. Has does have a Marine's blood and spirit in her.

PAUL

She'll be okay. She will.

Kharen curls up on sofa. Paul's phone rings, he answers.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Hello, Janet. What is it?

Kharen's ears perk, she half-turns.

PAUL/JANET ON PHONE

JANET

I need to talk. Can you come over?

PAUL

Now? What's wrong? You okay?

JANET

There're things I need to tell you. I'm reluctant to even call but ...

Paul glances toward Kharen, sits. Kharen leaves room.

PAUL

Things are tough, here. Shasta's still missing. Emma's not feeling well. How about lunch tomorrow?

JANET

Sure. Sure, that'll work. Good.

INT. JANET'S CONDO LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Janet has cell phone pressed to her ear.

JANET

Alright. My best to Emma.

Janet ends call, sits on of sofa, looks up with apprehension. John Glodt, in suit, stands near her, staring expressionless.

JANET (CONT'D)

He's not coming. His daughter's sick, and her dog is missing.

Glodt laughs, then his laugh morphs into a scowl.

JANET (CONT'D)

What's so funny?

GLODT

How could he turn you down? He must really love that exotic little daughter of his.

JANET

You're pathetic. Leave him alone.

Glodt leans in, glares at Janet.

GLODT

Hear me, well. You'll do exactly as I say. That hybrid daughter is the key. Understand? She's the key.

INT. EMMA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Emma tosses and turns, she talks in her sleep.

EMMA

Shasta, it's you. It's you.

Emma awakens, bolts straight up, just as Kharen enters, rushes to her, sits on bed.

KHAREN

I'm here, baby. I'm here.

EMMA

I saw him. I saw Shasta, Mom.

KHAREN

Shasta? Sure, baby. It's okay.

EMMA

I did. I saw him. He was here.

Paul enters room.

PAUL

Another bad dream?

EMMA

Daddy, I saw Shasta. I touched him. He was here. But I don't know where he went. He was --

KHAREN

-- I came to check her temperature, and she was calling out to him. You were dreaming, baby, okay?

PAUL

Mom's right, sweetheart.

EMMA

But I saw him. Don't you believe me? Don't you believe me?

PAUL

Just try to go to sleep, baby.

Kharen coaxes Emma to lie back and close her eyes. She resists, at first, but then lies back.

INT. PAUL'S LAW FIRM CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY (MORNING)

A dozen attorneys crowd table. KYLE GREENE, WM, late 60s, cocky, chairs meeting. Paul is next to Glodt, faces Janet.

GREENE

Modesty aside, we have the best lawyers anywhere. Bascom knows it. K-Street and all of D.C. know it.

Laughter. Greene waits then raises a hand for silence.

GREENE (CONT'D)

Our fee's covered by past campaign millions he stashed. But we're not here to judge. All our clients are innocent, until proved insolvent.

More laughter.

GREENE (CONT'D)

That aside, we've selected one of our most talented to represent the Honorable Senator, Hiram J. Bascom.

Paul is poker-faced. Glodt's jaws clench.

GREENE (CONT'D)

So, it's either congratulations or condolences to Paul Stewart, here.

Applause, except from Glodt. Greene motions Paul to stand.

INT. PAUL'S OFFICE

Paul exhales with relief, sits at his desk. His phone buzzes

PAUL

Yes, Carol.

CAROL (V.O.)

It's the light of your life.

Paul laughs, keys call, leans back.

PAUL/KHAREN ON PHONE

PAUL

Hi, gorgeous.

KHAREN (V.O.)

Congratulations, Counselor.

PAUL

Thanks. But how'd you know?

INT. KHAREN'S OFFICE - DAY

Kharen stands, gazes out her window toward marina.

KHAREN

I just know how smart Greene, O'Connor, Davis, and Welch are.

(MORE)

KHAREN (CONT'D)

By the way, I'm sure glad Welch is there. Otherwise the firm's acronym would be G-O-D. That wouldn't be good at all.

PAUL (V.O.)

I hadn't thought about that. Whoa.

KHAREN

I digress. Listen, I'm sure you'll make the right decision. We both --

PAUL (V.O.)

-- Of course. We'll both decide.

KHAREN

You read my mind. I'm proud of you.

KHAREN'S OFFICE

Her SECRETARY, RAJ, 40s, enters, hands her a note. Kharen glances at it, mouths a 'thank you'. Raj leaves.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

Thanks, Raj. Listen, Paul, my GM meeting is at six. I'll dash home, check on Emma and change. Will you be early?

PAUL (V.O.)

I'm pretty sure.

KHAREN

Good. I love you.

PAUL (V.O.)

I love you. Have a great meeting.

INT. PAUL'S OFFICE - DAY

Paul hangs up. Janet enters exhibiting her best "Marilyn Monroe-walk". She closes door, goes to his desk.

JANET

Sorry about last night.

PAUL

No problem. We still on for lunch?

JANET

Oops. Sorry, can we reschedule?

Paul shrugs, nods yes. Janet winks and leaves.

INT. STEWART HOME - DAY (AFTERNOON)

Emma with teacher, MISS LAWSON, 30s in informal dining room. Miss Lawson's attaché, textbooks, iPad are on table. Adrian, sets tray of granola bars, orange juice on table.

EMMA

Thanks, Mister Bonelli.

ADRIAN

Homemade granola bars, fresh OJ.
Plenty for you, too, Miss teacher.

MISS LAWSON

Thanks but, no thanks.

ADRIAN

Ahhh.

Adrian smiles, with a playful air.

ADRIAN (CONT'D)

Then, how about dinner at eight. My place. Word is, I'm a great cook. But hey, no is no. I tried.

MISS LAWSON

Emma, where were we?

EMMA

Wow, he's really into you.

Adrian leaves room, blows Miss Lawson a kiss.

MISS LAWSON

Excuse me. Back to work.

FROM DOORWAY

Connie and Dr. Hudson exchange a wave and a nod. Connie leaves for the day.

MISS LAWSON (CONT'D)

We can't read closed books, right?

EMMA

Sorry, Miss Lawson, but I don't want to study anymore. Not today.

Emma jumps up, darts from room, past Dr. Hudson.

MISS LAWSON

Emma Lynn.

DR. HUDSON
It's alright.

MISS LAWSON
I'm worried about her. I really am.

DR. HUDSON
Well, she's been this way since
Shasta disappeared. It'll take a
while. She'll be okay. She will.

INT. HALLWAY AT EMMA'S ROOM - DAY (EVENING)

Emma's door eases open. She peeks out, checks in both directions then exits, tiptoes downstairs, past kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN

Dr. Hudson speaks with Adrian. She gets a glimpse of Emma passing doorway.

INT. ENTERTAINMENT SUITE

Emma enters, opens DVD storage section, removes a DVD.

INT. HALLWAY

Emma tiptoes past kitchen. Dr. Hudson sees her.

INT. EMMA'S ROOM

Nightstand lamp is on. Emma inserts a DVD into a player, grabs remote, climbs into bed, clicks play.

Wait for startup.

DVD shows Shasta, Emma, her parents at her birthday party, at parks, Venice Beach, on hikes, fishing from a yacht.

Emma beams during scenes of family visits to Children's Hospital with Shasta. She turns solemn when clip ends.

EMMA
Shasta, where are you? Where are
you? Was I just dreaming?

Emma falls back onto her pillow, closes her eyes.

EXT. STEWART RESIDENCE - DAY (SUNSET)

The sun sinks into Pacific Ocean on horizon. CHIRPING Gulls fly overhead. Faint sounds of LAPPING Waves rise.

INT. FIRST FLOOR LAUNDRY ROOM DOORWAY

Kharen stands next to Dr. Hudson, grips her attaché. Both stare at a sea of soiled clothes strewn over floor.

DR. HUDSON
Wanted you to see for yourself.

KHAREN
Can't believe this. I --

DR. HUDSON
-- Reminds me of --

KHAREN
-- I know. I know.

Two steps farther inside to survey scene.

DR. HUDSON
That morning Shasta got tangled up in the laundry. Couldn't get out.

KHAREN
Did you speak to René and Connie?

DR. HUDSON
I spoke to everyone, including Emma Lynn. No one had the slightest idea what happened. But, I must say, Emma was quite amused.

KHAREN
Oh? How is she?

DR. HUDSON
A little sluggish, no appetite. We had quite a time together, though. She took her medication, like always. I think she's asleep now.

KHAREN
I'll peek in on her.

AT EMMA'S DOOR

Kharen stops cold. She hears laughter, conversation inside. Leans closer to listen.

EMMA (O.S.)

Nope. No way. I'm afraid to close my eyes. You might go away again.

Kharen cups a hand to her mouth, continues to listen.

EMMA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Stop, Shasta. Please? If you rip my sheets, I'll be in big trouble.

Kharen cracks door to a slit.

Kharen sees Emma sitting on floor next to her bed. She appears to hold one of Shasta's paws in one hand.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Give me the other one, too.

She appears to reach for other front paw.

EMMA (CONT'D)

That's it. That's it. Now, I'm gonna turn loose. Hold it. Good.

Kharen eases door closed, stands back against hallway wall, her eyes closed. She takes a deep breath.

EMMA'S BEDROOM

We See Emma on floor with Shasta. She hugs him.

EXT. STEWART RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Grounds are bathed in moonlight.

INT. KITCHEN

Paul and Kharen sit at counter, sip coffee. Kharen glances at doorway, then back to Paul.

KHAREN

You're probably right. She's likely just coping with losing Shasta.

PAUL

Likely? What else could it be?

KHAREN

I know, but it was so realistic.

PAUL

So, now you're explaining it?

KHAREN

Because of what happened in the laundry. I spoke to Lisa, Doctor Wang, tonight, told her everything.

PAUL

And what did she say?

KHAREN

That it's likely her way of coping. We shouldn't make a big deal of it.

Paul takes his cup to sink, rinses it, turns to Kharen.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

Before going to sleep, she asked Dr. Hudson for a bowl of milk.

PAUL

But she doesn't like milk. We know that. And why a bowl? Where was I?

KHAREN

In your study, I guess. Dr. Hudson took her your soy milk. When she went back, the bowl was empty.

PAUL

Okay. Okay, so, she probably drank it, or poured it out. It was just part of her pretending.

KHAREN

Maybe. But who was her audience?

PAUL

Audience? Okay. But what other explanation is there? Tell me.

KHAREN

You're right, but it's so --

PAUL

-- Hey, don't go female on me. Just tell me what else happened.

Kharen wheels around, aims an acid stare. Paul shrinks, covers his face, shows he realizes he's screwed up.

PAUL (CONT'D)

That was dumb. And stupid. Skewer me later, okay? What else happened?

Kharen steps back, looks away before continuing.

KHAREN

Dr. Hudson says René found the hampers overturned, like before.

PAUL

Look, do you realize what you're suggesting? Huh? That means --

KHAREN

-- I'm not suggesting anything.

PAUL

Oh, sure you are. So, Shasta is now in some altered state of being?

KHAREN

'Course not. Emma could have done it. I'm only telling what happened.

PAUL

There is no other logical answer, okay? Hey, time out, already.

KHAREN

Time out? Really? Time out? How can you be so dismissive?

PAUL

Dismissive? I'm just worried if her malaise continues it'll affect her therapy. If pretending helps, cool.

Paul's eyes flash. He SNAPS his fingers.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Hold on. I've got a great idea.

KHAREN

Hmm. I'll be the judge of that.

PAUL

No-no-no. Just listen. Hear me out. Take her to a pet store. If she sees some cute little puppies --

Kharen waves him off, shakes her head, "no".

KHAREN

-- She doesn't want another dog?

PAUL

I know that's what she says, but --

KHAREN

-- I won't push her. Give her time.

Paul embraces, kisses Kharen. She resists a bit. Pause.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

Yeah, right. I've got a headache.

Turns, starts from kitchen.

PAUL

Seriously? Where're you going?

Kharen keeps walking. Paul stares at empty doorway.

EXT. A PET STORE PARKING LOT - DAY

INT. PET STORE

Kharen, Emma and Shasta enter.

EMMA

Mom, why are we here?

KHAREN

Well, I just thought we'd look around. You know, just take a --

EMMA

-- I don't need, or want another dog. I have Shasta right here.

Kharen nods, smiles in concession.

CAT FOOD END-CAP DISPLAY

All pass a towering display of cat food. Shasta barks, leaps at large cut-out image of a cat.

BEDLAM erupts. Displays with cat food CRASH down, creates chain-reaction with other displays, products, pet cages.

KHAREN

Oh my god. Oh my god. No. No.

Displays with cages overturn. Small animals escape. Some jump over counters, SHRIEKING, MEOWING, BARKING, CHIRPING.

EMMA

Oh no. Look out. Stop. Stop.

KHAREN

(whisper)

She said that in her sleep. This was her dream? Oh, my god.

Emma wheels around, hand to mouth, looks in every direction.

NEAR EMMA

An aquarium crashes, spills water with FLOPPING fish.

Patrons panic.

Employees scramble to rescue animals, fish.

Emma clutches Kharen's arms. Kharen is speechless. Shasta cowers behind Emma, who trusts both hands to her face.

EMMA

See what you've done. This is bad.

KHAREN

Oh my god, Emma Lynn. What is it?

EMMA

I'm Sorry, Mom. He didn't mean it.

KHAREN

What are you saying? He who?
He who? What are you --

EMMA

-- Shasta. Shasta, Mom. Wow.

Kharen takes Emma's hand, hurries to exit. Shasta follows. Kharen stops at door, tries to console Emma.

KHAREN

Sweetheart, Shasta's not here.

EMMA

He is. He is. He's right there,
Mom. Why can't you see him? Why?

Shasta stares at Kharen, tail wagging.

KHAREN

Emma --

EMMA

-- Why can't you see him?

Kharen struggles to calm Emma, then plays along.

KHAREN

I do. I see him, just not as well
as you, okay? Let's go. But promise
to keep an eye on him. Promise me?

Emma nods a doubtful yes. All three exit store.

Frantic STORE MANAGER stands amid chaos. She clutches her
head with both hands.

INT. DR. WANG'S OFFICES INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: A WEEK LATER

Emma with DR. ANNA WANG, CHINESE-AM, 40s, talking at table in
odd-shaped room with kid-friendly décor.

INT. ADJOINING VIEWING ROOM

Paul with Kharen watch via 2-way mirror. Doctor Wang leaves
Emma busy at laptop. She joins Paul and Kharen, enters, sits
across from Paul and Kharen.

ON EMMA

She thumbs through books. Returns to computer.

All watch Emma entertain herself at various stations.

DR. WANG

She's a bright, perceptive child.

KHAREN

Thanks.

PAUL

Thanks.

DR. WANG

I'm sure you're both very proud.

KHAREN

We are. We are.

DR. WANG

Emma, Emma Lynn seems in good
spirits. Is she this way of late?

KHAREN

I'd say yes, for the most part.

Kharen glances at Paul. Paul nods agreement.

DR. WANG

When Kharen and I spoke I suggested the pretending was likely a coping mechanism. That's good, short-term.

PAUL

I think I understand what you mean.

DR. WANG

However, you should know, in her mind she's not pretending at all.

Paul and Kharen exchange glances.

PAUL

So that's why she gets angry with us for not seeing Shasta, too?

DR. WANG

Angry? I'd prefer disappointed. She's more disappointed than angry. For a moment, just imagine her struggle to rationalize everything.

Another pause. All observe Emma back at computer.

DR. WANG (CONT'D)

Children, even more than adults, often have difficulty accepting permanent loss. Then there's losing Doctor Orsini. Just imagine what processing that is like for her.

Paul and Kharen watch Emma walk around, examine room.

DR. WANG (CONT'D)

Fortunately, children often have a self-preservation mechanism to protect themselves in the face of traumatic events. That may be what you're seeing, in my opinion.

KHAREN

Reminds me of my own childhood.

DR. WANG

Same here. At nine, after losing my sister, I created this imaginary friend. She was very real to me ... was always there. I told her things I didn't dare tell anyone else.

KHAREN

Lisa, I've known you ten years.
I never knew about your sister.

DR. WANG

Right. Honestly, I'm still healing.

KHAREN

I am so sorry. Thanks for sharing
that with us.

DR. WANG

I seldom talk about it. Anyway.
(pause)
So, the pet shop event was a week
ago. Any other incidents since?

KHAREN

No, not like that. But she ...

Kharen stops, as Emma walks up to mirror.

DR. WANG

Give her more time. Be patient. And
get her more involved with other
kids, especially those with pets,
and other black kids, if possible.

KHAREN

We do make sure of that. That's why
we'd like to get her back in
school, but Dr. Welborn's ordered a
hospital stay for next week. He's
very concerned about relapse.

FROM VIEWING ROOM

At mirror, Emma makes wild faces, gestures.

Emma places her hands on mirror. Kharen flinches.

KHAREN

You sure she can't see us?

DR. WANG

No-no. It's a two-way. It's okay.

Doctor Wang waves to Emma, to make her point. They continue
watching her make faces in mirror.

IN INTERVIEW ROOM

Emma returns to a computer.

INT. VIEWING ROOM

Kharen, Paul and Dr. Wang head for door.

DR. WANG

Paul, you mind giving Kharen and me
a moment for a little girl-talk?

PAUL

No. Not at all. I'll be with Emma.

DR. WANG

Thanks. Could be two or three.

Both smile. Paul exits. Dr. Wang waits, closes door.

DR. WANG (CONT'D)

So, how are you, really? Did your
biopsy results come back yet?

KHAREN

Nope. And the waiting is awful.

DR. WANG

I do remember. You know, we have a
lot in common. And we both have
lost sisters to breast cancer.

KHAREN

I still haven't gotten over that.

DR. WANG

I understand. You never really do.
You just try and live your best
life. Just know I'm here for you.

They embrace.

KHAREN

Thank you. Same here. By the way, I
haven't told Paul about my biopsy.
So much is going on right now.

DR. WANG

No surprise. You will, in your own
time. You'll know when it's right.

KHAREN

With Emma waging her own fight I --

DR. WANG

-- I do understand. Look, I didn't
share my diagnosis with Andrew
right away, either.

(MORE)

DR. WANG (CONT'D)

But that's another story. I'll have to tell you about it, one day.

KHAREN

If the test is positive, I may just take the Angelina Jolie's solution.

DR. WANG

Oh? Well, that is an option. I've been in remission six years. Just don't embrace some fait accompli.

KHAREN

No, I won't. I won't. I promise.

Both share another hug.

INT. EMMA'S BEDROOM - DAY (EVENING)

Emma sits in bed, appears weak, more lethargic. Dr. Hudson is with her, encourages her to eat her soup. René enters.

RENÉ

I'm leaving, now. See you tomorrow, Emma Lynn. Oh, and goodbye, Shasta.

EMMA

Shasta's not here anymore.

RENÉ

Oh? I'm so sorry. Where is he at?

EMMA

You mean, where is he. He's in Heaven. Something awful must've happened. But only I can see him.

RENÉ

Oh, no. I'm so sorry. We'll keep hoping he returns, okay? We must stay positive, no matter what.

René waves goodbye, leaves. Emma folds her arms.

EMMA

Only you, really believe me.

Dr. Hudson gives a gentle head shake to suggest Emma should not feel that way.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Mom doesn't. Daddy doesn't. Miss Jardin doesn't.

(MORE)

EMMA (CONT'D)

She means well, but she was patronizing me. I may be a kid, but I know. I am seven, now.

Dr. Hudson sets food tray aside, pulls up a cushioned stool next to bed. Sits and grasps both Emma's hands.

DR. HUDSON

Please, close your eyes.

Emma flashes a questioning look.

DR. HUDSON (CONT'D)

It's okay. I'll close mine as well.

Both close their eyes. Dr. Hudson's body tenses. Seconds later, she has a brief shudder then opens her eyes.

DR. HUDSON (CONT'D)

It's okay. Open them, now.

EMMA

What happened?

Dr. Hudson pauses to measure her words.

DR. HUDSON

Emma Lynn, dear, you have the gift.

EMMA

The gift? Whoa, my grandmother in Texas says that. I have a lot of relatives there. You look like her.

DR. HUDSON

Well, I'm so thrilled to know that. And she's right. There is healing in your touch. Your friends at the hospital feel it when you visit.

EMMA

Well, I do hold their hands, and tell them they're gonna be okay.

DR. HUDSON

Of course. You see what others can't. Don't be frightened by that. Where some need proof, your Faith, your power of love, and belief give you sight. But that doesn't mean your mom and dad don't believe you.

EMMA

I know they love me, but --

DR. HUDSON

-- Oh, very much. So do I. You see, as we grow older, we develop the mind of an adult but, sadly, lose the hopeful heart of a child. I pray you always possess both.

Dr. Hudson hands Emma a shopping bag. Emma peeks inside, gives a wide grin. Both share a long hug.

INT. PAUL'S LAW OFFICE - NIGHT

Paul is at his desk. He places folders in his briefcase, closes it, grabs his jacket and briefcase, and leaves.

INT. LAW OFFICE CORRIDOR

Paul strides down corridor toward reception area. He passes Phil Girard's open office door. Girard hurries to door. He watches Paul turn next corner.

EXT. UNDERGROUND GARAGE - NIGHT

Glodt hunkers in rear seat of a White Luxury SUV (Different than black SUV). Bad Guys #1 and #2 are in front seats.

INT. SUV

Bad Guys and Glodt see Paul exit elevator, head to his car.

GLODT

Tonight. And don't call. And don't tell me about it. Just do it.

BAD GUY #2

So, do we take the daughter?

Paul enters his car.

GLODT

Is English your second language, or what? Jeezus. The IQ of a gnat.

Paul pulls away.

EXT. WHITE LUXURY SUV - NIGHT

The SUV heads for garage exit.

INT. EMMA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lights are on. Emma is barefoot in bed, reading a novel, Half Moon, Full Heart, wears jeans, T-Shirt with image of Shasta.

A tap at door. Paul enters, walks to bed, sits on edge. He, kisses Emma's forehead. She smiles, places book, face down, onto bed. Paul takes a long look.

INSERT BOOK JACKET

PAUL

That's a beautiful love story.
Mom's favorite. I hear it's gonna
be a movie.

EMMA

Great. And it is age-appropriate,
Dad. Doctor Hudson gave it to me.

PAUL

Good. Good. I missed you today. So,
Dr. Welborn says you'll only be at
the hospital a week at the most.

EMMA

I'm okay with that.

Paul chuckles, picks up her bear, places it in her arms.

PAUL (CONT'D.)

You know, my dream is to again be
like you, someday. I was, once upon
a time. Listen, Angel, I know you
believe Shasta's come back, and --

EMMA

-- I don't believe, Dad. I know it.

PAUL

I know. When I was a kid, I played
make-believe, too. But when you're
older, you'll understand things
like that just can't happen.

EMMA

Then, I don't want to be a grownup.

PAUL

Don't say that, sweetheart.

EMMA

Smartphones and moon landings were once make believe, too, Dad. But, I'm not playing make-believe.

PAUL

I certainly know that feeling. But you'll change your mind, someday.

EMMA

Don't think so. I like my mind the way it is. And I believe Shasta is in heaven. Heaven is real, right?

Paul caresses Emma's hand.

PAUL

Heaven? Yes. Heaven is also in your heart. How can I explain this?

EMMA

But is it real or imagined? Like if I imagine super-hard, with all my heart, then anything is possible?

PAUL

Well, yes. But we believe heaven is real. And imagination is essential for all things ever created. Right?

EMMA

Ever? Ever-ever-ever? So, God imagined everything first, like stars, planets, time, air – which we can't see but know exists?

PAUL

Well, you see --

EMMA

-- And whole endless universe? God first imagined all that? Then where was he when all this was happening?

PAUL

Whoa-whoa. You're taking me into some deep water, sweetheart. This could be a very long conversation.

EMMA

I'm fine with that. No rush.

PAUL

I know, but --

EMMA

-- But you have work to do.

PAUL

A little. But I want you to rest,
okay? We'll talk more about this.

Paul kisses Emma, exhales then stands with a ponderous look.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I'll be downstairs.

EMMA

Alright. I love you, Dad.

PAUL

Love you. I'll look in on you
later. And we'll continue our
conversation.

EMMA

Love you some more, Dad. Don't work
too long.

PAUL

I won't sweetheart. And you don't
try to finish Half Moon in one
night. I know it's tempting.

Emma flashes a brief smile.

EMMA

It is, but I'll stop before long.
If Shasta were here, I'd read it
aloud to him. He'd love it.

PAUL

I know. And I have no doubt he'd
listen to every word, and love it.

Paul exits, leaves room door ajar.

AT EMMA'S BED

Emma squeezes her eyes shut, then opens them, looks about
room with visible expectation. Nothing. Her expression falls.
She tries again. Nothing happens.

Emma leans back on pillows, stares at ceiling then raises up,
places open book on pillow then turns over, lies on stomach
to continue reading.

Then, a DOG WHINING pierces silence.

Emma freezes. The soft WHINE repeats.

EMMA sits up, wheels to edge of bed. Her mouth falls open.

Shasta is a few feet away from her, sitting on his haunches - his head tilted to one side.

EMMA

Oh, wow. Oh, my god. Shasta? No-no-no, I'm not really seeing you, right? You're back, or am I ...

Emma stands, goes to Shasta, kneels, wraps both arms around him. He nestles in her arms. She rocks back and forth. Tears stream down Emma's face.

EMMA (CONT'D)

But how did you get here? Where were you? Wait-wait, am I dreaming?

SHASTA

He squirms from her arms, moves toward room door, stops, turns back, looks back at Emma.

Emma springs up, puts on her red sneakers, red cap. She squeezes her eyes shut, clenches her fists, grimaces then opens them to see Shasta is still there.

Shasta moves past opening in doorway to hallway.

INT. PAUL'S STUDY - NIGHT

Paul works at his computer.

A sudden SOUND, as if front door eased open then closed.

Paul looks up, unsure if he heard anything.

Paul resumes working, but stops, stands, walks to study's doorway. He glances out, pauses, shakes his head, chuckles, blows whole thing off, returns to work.

EXT. CENTURY CITY OFFICE TOWER - NIGHT

INT. PHIL GIRARD'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Girard stands at his desk, closes his briefcase, pauses then lifts it, and leaves room. He enters dimly-lit corridor.

INT. LAW OFFICE CORRIDOR

Girard eases to Paul's office door.

INT. PAUL'S LAW OFFICE

Girard inserts a key, enters, slips behind Paul's desk, puts his briefcase on top. He opens a drawer, then his briefcase.

P.O.V. OVERHEAD SECURITY CAMERA

Girard slips a thick brown package beneath drawer contents. He closes drawer, grabs his briefcase, leaves office.

INT. PAUL'S STUDY - NIGHT

Paul removes a book from bookcase, returns to his desk. Dr. Hudson enters with urn of coffee, with cup on a tray.

PAUL

You are a Godsend, Doc. I swear.

DR. HUDSON

Thanks. I'll take that all day,
every day. That's what friends do.

Paul nods yes, pours coffee.

PAUL

After you retired, we just lost all
contact. My fault, hundred percent.
But you reached out, found us just
when we needed you. Really amazing.

Dr. Hudson smiles. Paul lifts cup. She eases toward door.

DR. HUDSON

Well, listen, Hawaii wasn't quite
full retirement. There's always so
much to do, and so little time.

PAUL

Bless you. Go. Go on. You've done
enough for one day. And sleep well.

Door CHIME sounds. Paul stands, looks surprised.

PAUL (CONT'D)

You go on. I'll get it.

Dr. Hudson leaves. CHIME sounds again. Paul checks his phone screen, frowns, shakes his head.

INT. HALLWAY

Paul moves to front door, opens it, sees Janet. She's winded, frazzled, distraught.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Janet?

Janet keeps glancing over her shoulder. Paul guides her in.

JANET

So sorry to just --

PAUL

-- Come in. Come in.

JANET

Forgive my showing up like this. I should have called. It's just --

PAUL

-- No-no-no. You okay? You look like ghosts were chasing you.

Janet exhales, runs her fingers through her hair.

JANET

Worse.

PAUL

Worse? This way. Come on. Come on.

INT. PAUL'S STUDY

Both enter. Janet plops onto sofa. Paul grabs his coffee.

JANET

I was ordered to get you to come to my place tonight. It wasn't my --

PAUL

-- Ordered? By whom?

JANET

Glodt.

PAUL

Glodt? I should've guessed.

JANET

Look, If he finds out I came here, he'll kill me. He will. He will.

PAUL

Wait. Wait. Kill you? What are you talking about. That's nuts.

Janet nods, yes. Paul hands her his cup. She grabs it with trembling hands, sips, places cup onto coffee table.

JANET

I know way too much, now. I do.

PAUL

Too much about what? Slow down.

Paul goes to his desk, CLICKS record on computer's security feed for his study, takes tissue box to Janet.

JANET

He's determined to destroy you.

PAUL

Destroy me? We're not BFFs but --

JANET

-- No, not hardly. He hates you. You're the golden boy, taking what he feels is rightfully his. He's psycho, plain and simple. He --

PAUL

-- I knew he wasn't a fan but --

JANET

-- Look, I'm serious. He arranged to have a courier deliver you ten-grand. They're gonna say it was --

PAUL

-- Say it was what?

JANET

A drug deal payoff. The cops know about it. It's all part of a sting.

Janet buries her face in her hands.

PAUL

Well, it was delivered more than two months ago. I reported it to the police, gave them everything.

JANET

Thank God. But that's only part of a larger scheme. That courier was wearing a hidden camera, okay?

PAUL

I was flying home. Who'd they tape?

JANET

The timing was botched. The clowns working for him are just sycophants who'll do whatever he says. Period.

PAUL

Wait. How do you know all this?

Janet hesitates, gives a loud exhale.

JANET

I'm ashamed to admit this to you.

Janet loose a loud exhale.

PAUL

Wait. Wait a minute. Wait a minute
Let me guess. Glodt's using you.
He's got something on you, right?

Paul aims a laser stare. Waits.

JANET

Yes. And yes.

PAUL

Like, what? What?

JANET

This is so hard to say. I have an addiction. John's supplied me for more than four years.

PAUL

You?

JANET

Yes, me. Whether it's cocaine, opioids or whatever, there's no default look, age, or job description. But I blame myself.

Incredulous. Paul shakes his head with disgust.

PAUL

So, that's what you've been doing?
Helping him try to frame me? Huh?

JANET

I can't blame you for being angry.

PAUL

Angry? Is that all I get to be?

Paul leans in, as if speaking into a microphone.

PAUL (CONT'D)

You wearing a wire? Are you? Well?

Janet takes a deep breath, tries to compose herself.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Well?

JANET

No, Paul. I'm only here because I couldn't go on this way. Honest.

Paul shows more stunned disgust.

PAUL

Is this all about Bascom? Is it?

JANET

He craves the recognition the case will bring. But, he thinks your role in the firm brings him down.

PAUL

Look, none of this, none-of-this is more important to me than Emma. She's my only focus.

JANET

And I truly understand that.

PAUL

I just had to say it.

JANET

I'd expect nothing less.

Paul perches on front edge of his desk, arms folded.

JANET (CONT'D)

Greene and the others know what's going on but won't challenge him. That's why I was shocked when they passed him up on the Bascom case.

Paul waits, gives Janet time to continue.

PAUL

What's the rest of the story?

JANET

Okay. Glodt devised a scheme, involving big banks, to conceal laundering millions in dirty money from top kingpins, via the firm.

An angry, disgusted Paul steps forward, begins pacing.

PAUL

Wait, wait. You're telling me --

JANET

-- Hold on. The plan was to thwart the Justice Department's RICO assaults on legal fees. See, banks still feel they're too big to fail.

PAUL

So, what's the scheme? Tell me.

JANET

Simple. The firm's on retainer by big cartels. They prepay millions that's kept offshore. Maxwell paid millions before charges were filed.

PAUL

So, that's why Glodt has hoarded the Maxwell files all this time. When they need defending, and the Feds seize their money under RICO, the firm's covered. That it?

JANET

Bingo. Prepaid legal services.

PAUL

Yeah, right. On a grand scale. No, It's money-laundering. They can move millions this way.

JANET

Not can. Have. And for a long time.

PAUL

And cartels recoup on the backend.

Paul shakes his head. Janet nods yes.

JANET

Refunds, via real estate deals by shady L-L-Cs, Oligarchs. They've moved hundreds of millions. More.

PAUL

And what about you, now?

JANET

Me? I meet with the U.S. Attorney tomorrow, enter rehab next week. I'm so sorry. Please, forgive me.

Paul moves towards Janet. She stands to meet him then ...

AT STUDY DOORWAY

Kharen appears, briefcase in hand. Paul's eyes alert Janet who turns to her.

PAUL

Sweetheart, you're home.

Paul moves toward Kharen. Kharen eyes Janet, head to toe.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Darling, you remember Janet.

KHAREN

From last year's Christmas party.

JANET

Yes, it was.

KHAREN

Good to see you again.

Kharen and Janet exchange a quick, chilly handshake.

JANET

Good to see you.

Janet flashes a self-conscious smile, inches toward doorway.

JANET (CONT'D)

It's late. Paul, that was all. I just wanted you to know right away.

Kharen places briefcase on sofa, stands with arms folded.

PAUL

Thanks. Glad you stopped by.

KHAREN

Please. Don't rush.

JANET

I have to. I have a brief to edit.
Nice seeing you again, Kharen.

Kharen flashes a smile. Paul leaves to escort Janet out.

AT SOFA

Kharen kicks off her heels, sits in chair near Paul's desk.
Paul reenters, goes to Kharen. Kisses her. She stands.

PAUL

How'd it go, sweetheart?

KHAREN

I usually get that kiss seconds
after I walk through the door.

PAUL

Oops. Guilty. My loss, sweetheart.

Kharen goes to sofa, retrieves her shoes. She turns to face
Paul. There's a brief glare-off. Paul blinks first.

KHAREN

How's Emma?

PAUL

Fine. Probably sound asleep by now.
She was reading Half Moon, earlier.

Kharen nods then yawns.

PAUL (CONT'D)

You're tired ... had a long day.

Kharen blows off his observation with a side glance.

KHAREN

I'll look in on her, anyway.

PAUL

First, how was your meeting? Tell
me how the rest of your day went.

KHAREN

Great. Yours?

PAUL

Kharen, c'mon. Don't. Janet had a
problem she needed to discuss.

Kharen shrugs, smiles, starts for door. Desk phone chimes.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Kharen...

Kharen leaves without looking back. Paul stares at empty doorway. Phone keeps chiming then stops.

SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY

Kharen reaches Emma's room, turns doorknob, eases door open.

INT. EMMA'S ROOM

Kharen enters. Comes to a quick stop. She sees Emma's bed is empty. She checks behind door, rest of room.

KHAREN

Okay, sweetheart. Where are you?

Kharen flips on light, checks closet, frowns. She notices Emma's red sneakers, red cap are missing.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

Emma? Come on, dear. Joke's over.
Where are you? Mommie's tired.

Kharen's expression morphs into look of concern.

INT. HALLWAY

Kharen exits Emma's room. She searches other 2nd floor rooms, passes Dr. Hudson's bedroom. Dr. Hudson opens her door, steps into hallway.

DR. HUDSON

Something wrong?

KHAREN

It's Emma. I can't find her.

DR. HUDSON

You can't find her?

KHAREN

I've checked her room, all the others. She must be hiding.

Kharen races to banister, yells down to Paul.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

Paul. Paul, come here.

Kharen turns back to Dr. Hudson.

DR. HUDSON
I'll get him. Don't worry. I'm sure
everything's alright.

INT. PAUL'S STUDY

Paul runs into Dr. Hudson just outside his study door.

SECOND FLOOR

Kharen is frantic. She reenters Emma's room, hears an eerie,
low-level, PULSING HUM.

INT. EMMA'S BEDROOM

Kharen searches again then stops, still. She shudders,
clutches her shoulders, as if slammed by a cold breeze.

KHAREN
Emma Lynn Stewart, if you're
playing a game, please stop.

Kharen backs away to door. She bumps into Paul, is startled.

PAUL
What is it?

KHAREN
I can't find Emma. This is crazy.

PAUL
What do you mean, can't find her?

KHAREN
She's not here, is what I mean. Her
red sneakers and cap are gone, too.

Aims pointed stare at Paul. Paul has incredulous expression.

ON EMMA'S ROOM DOOR

Paul enters room, moves past Kharen, as Dr. Hudson appears in
doorway.

INT. EMMA'S BEDROOM

Paul checks entire room.

KHAREN

I've looked. I thought she might be playing a joke or something, like she did before. But I can't find her. And you've just looked, too.

PAUL

Wait, wait. Wait a minute. She has to be here. She's has to. Right? Maybe she went downstairs.

Air is tense, frantic. Paul rushes from room. Kharen follows. Dr. Hudson follows both down stairs.

FIRST FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

PAUL (CONT'D)

Maybe she came down while I was working ... went to the kitchen maybe. But I would've heard her. And she would've gone back up.

DR. HUDSON

She was in her room when I went to bed. Let me check my office.

DR. HUDSON'S OFFICE

Dr. Hudson eases open her office door, steps in, searches room. Sees no Emma.

FIRST FLOOR HALLWAYS - (MOVING)

A frantic Paul and Kharen search other first level rooms.

KHAREN

How could you be so engrossed you couldn't watch our daughter?

PAUL

She was upstairs. And I wasn't --

KHAREN

-- What was more important?

PAUL

Please. C'mon, you're upset and --

KHAREN

-- Upset? You're right, I'm beyond upset. I'm going out of my mind.

PAUL

So am I. But let's think about this. Emma has to be here. She must be playing a game. That's it.

Silence. Pointed staring. Paul steps away then back.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Let's just find her. We can argue later, okay? Two hours ago, she was in her room. She was in her room, reading a book when I left her.

KHAREN

Well, she's not in this house. We've looked everywhere. What about the security system?

INT. PAUL'S STUDY

All are in study. Paul is on computer, checks security footage. Kharen is anxious. Dr. Hudson look on.

INCLUDE COMPUTER SCREEN

Paul clicks play. View from several cameras around property perimeter reveal no activity.

PAUL

Nothing. This is absolutely nuts. I'll go check outside. There-is-no-way she'd go out, but we have to look. This is not the Twilight Zone, okay? It just feels like it.

Paul grabs flashlight. Kharen and Dr. Hudson follow Paul.

INT. LOWER LEVEL (MOVING)

Kharen and Dr. Hudson continue searching inside.

EXT. STEWART RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Perimeter lights are on. Paul searches grounds, aims flashlight in wide sweep, approaches pool with trepidation.

REVEAL

Pool is empty. Paul closes his eyes, sighs with relief, continues searching

REAR GROUNDS - PERIMETER.

Paul, grim-faced, anxious, searches rear fence/wall areas.

INT. STEWART RESIDENCE - NIGHT

INT. PAUL'S OFFICE

KHAREN

Call the police, right now.

PAUL

The police?

KHAREN

Yes. She's gone. She's not here.

PAUL

This isn't real. We're gonna wake up any minute. Wait. Hold on, I didn't check the garage. But she wouldn't be there. Besides, the cameras would've picked her up.

KHAREN

Look anyway. Look everywhere, but only after you call the police.

INT. ENTERTAINMENT SUITE

Dr. Hudson and Kharen continue searching. Kharen shows more and more frustration, fear.

Both exit room.

HALLWAY OUTSIDE ENTERTAINMENT SUITE

KHAREN

Where is she? There's no way she'd just walk off on her own. And the cameras cover the entire exterior.

DR. HUDSON

Everything will be okay. It will.

EXT. STEWART RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Three LAPD police vehicles, including a CANINE UNIT and an EMS vehicle, line Stewart driveway and parking apron.

Officer Marquez, in new suit, exits new unmarked car.

INT. STEWART RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Officers, uniformed and plainclothes, fill downstairs.

AT STAIRS

Plainclothes officers, Craig Marquez, with JULIA MARZON, 40s, follow Paul and Kharen upstairs.

HALLWAY AT EMMA'S BEDROOM

Paul, Kharen, officers approach Emma's room. Craig and Officer Marzon slip on gloves before entering.

INT. EMMA'S BEDROOM

Craig motions Kharen and Paul to hold near door.

Marquez with Officer Marzon enter, survey room, notice posters, including E.T. Poster, dresser items.

Craig signals Paul and Kharen to enter room.

CRAIG

Did either of you, or Dr. Hudson disturb anything?

PAUL

I don't think we did. I mean, we searched everywhere we could think of, inside and out, trying to find her. I even searched the pool. God.

CRAIG

Understood. I'll speak to Dr. Hudson, shortly. Are there friends, neighbors she may possibly have --

KHAREN

-- She'd never do that. Besides, the cameras would have captured it.

CRAIG

Maybe. She either left on her own or was taken. And there're no blind spots in your cam coverage, Paul?

PAUL

None. None.

CRAIG

I'll look later. But you say her favorite shoes and cap are gone. I wonder if the likelihood she left, involuntarily, argues against --

KHAREN

-- She was too ill to go on her own. Trust me. She wouldn't leave.

CRAIG

She ever talk about running away?

PAUL

Never. Never.

CRAIG

Even jokingly?

PAUL

Never, as in never.

CRAIG

Sorry. I have to ask all this.

Paul nods he understands.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

Kharen, I need you to give Officer Marzon recent photos of Emma and --

KHAREN

-- Anything.

CRAIG

And a clothing item. If you have video, we can use that, too.

Both officers begin careful examination of bedroom. Craig spots a framed picture. He lifts it, looks at it.

INSERT PHOTO

Annie with long blonde hair. Craig returns pic.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

Nice picture.

Kharen's eyes tear. She turns to Paul, back to Craig.

KHAREN

My sister, Annie. She died shortly after Emma was born. We're twins.

CRAIG

Oh, I'm so sorry, I didn't know.

Kharen nods, it's okay. Paul and Kharen move to, and stop near Emma's bed. Dr. Hudson looks on from doorway.

OFFICER MARZON

She zeroes in on Shasta's blue blanket on floor next to Emma's bed. She retrieves it, examines it.

OFFICER MARZON

What is this?

KHAREN

That was Shasta's -- her dog's. He always slept near her bed.

OFFICER MARZON

You said, was?

KHAREN

Yes. He was recently lost. We believe, taken. We're sure of it.

Officer Marzon absorbs details, continues examining area.

OFFICER MARZON

Did she take losing him very hard?

KHAREN

Of course. We all did. It affected her health. Shasta is like her --

OFFICER MARZON

-- But you don't believe she was upset or depressed enough to run away, try to find him on her own?

PAUL

Officer Marzone?

OFFICER MARZON

Marzon. Z-O-N. But close enough.

PAUL

Emma was not depressed. I want to make that clear. She was --

OFFICER MARZON

-- I'm sorry. I was only ...

Kharen appears on the verge of saying more then ...

KHAREN

There is something we should probably mention, although --

Officer Marzon turns to Kharen.

OFFICER MARZON

-- Don't leave anything out. We need to know all you can tell us.

Kharen and Paul show hesitance.

KHAREN

Well, not long after Shasta was taken, Emma begin pretending he had returned. But only she could see him. Of course, that was just her way of coping. The doctor agreed.

OFFICER MARZON

Her doctor?

KHAREN

Yes. A child psychologist.

OFFICER MARZON

Go on. Please.

KHAREN

We tried to just go along with her.

OFFICER MARZON

Did she feel you believed her?

KHAREN

To be honest, no. But --

Paul grows annoyed and steps forward to interrupt.

PAUL

-- Look, I see where this is going and I have to be clear, Emma did not run away. She's in remission and she needs regular medication. We have to find her. Right now.

OFFICER MARZON

I understand, sir. We must consider every possibility. We have to.

CRAIG

You both agree nothing appears to be out of order, except for the --

PAUL

-- The sneakers and cap? Right.

CRAIG

Fine. Look, I can't imagine what you're both feeling, right now. But I want you to take your time, and look over the room again.

PAUL

We did, already.

CRAIG

But you were, understandably, upset before. I would be as well. But just take your time now.

Paul nods, yes. Kharen appears she's holding back.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

Is there anything else missing? Anything at all, no matter how insignificant?

KHAREN

Well, there is one thing. Shasta's new collar is missing. He never wore it before he was taken.

Paul looks puzzled. Marzon and Craig exchange glances.

CRAIG

We'll keep looking. Let's just say someone took her. But how? There is the fact your property isn't gated, and you say Shasta was taken from out front. But Emma was inside.

Paul embraces Kharen. Both fight to compose themselves.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

Wait. The collar. That new collar may be her way of being connected with her dog. But --

PAUL

-- But what?

CRAIG

A kidnapper wouldn't want a victim to stand out. Red sneakers and cap would definitely stand out.

OFFICER MARZON

Her wearing them was her choice.

PAUL

Look, all this talk. Just tell us what we have to do. Do something.

Craig places one of Emma's other caps in an evidence bag.

CRAIG

We'll take this but we don't yet know it's a kidnapping. I can only imagine how you both feel. You say the footage shows nothing, yet she's not in the house. That's --

KHAREN

-- Again, she wouldn't just leave.

CRAIG

I understand. But for now, we'll have to regard her only as missing.

Craig hands bagged items to Officer Marzon.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

Like I said, there're no signs of a kidnapping. But if it is, there will almost surely be demands.

PAUL

You mean, a ransom?

CRAIG

Yeah. Almost always. So, I'm gonna need one of you here at all times. And we'll need a full chronology from you both. From everyone.

Paul paces, grows more agitated. Kharen is tortured.

PAUL

I have to do something - anything. We've already alarmed neighbors.

CRAIG

You spoke to some neighbors? They report anything?

PAUL

Nothing. But I can't just sit here, Craig. I'll go crazy.

CRAIG

We'll do all we can. TV news,
Canine search, canvass neighbors,
Amber Alert, bulletins, Child-Find,
TV networks... everything.

PAUL

Facebook, Instagram, --

CRAIG

-- Everything. The first twenty-
four hours are critical.

KHAREN

We'll pay whatever. I don't care.

CRAIG

Right now, I need a list of staff,
a chronology of everyone's evening,
any contacts with --

PAUL

-- Anything.

CRAIG

Kharen, I need you to speak with
officer Marzon downstairs. Paul,
you stay here. Officer Marzon will
speak to Dr. Hudson afterwards.

Kharen, visibly shaking, leaves room with Officer Marzon.

Craig closes door, turns to Paul.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

We're friends, but I have to ask
you some tough questions. Alright?

PAUL

Go ahead. Whatever.

CRAIG

Okay. Do you, Kharen, or anyone
you're aware of or have any knowledge
of, or are in any way responsible
for your daughter's disappearance?

PAUL

No, of course not. Craig, look --

CRAIG

-- Listen. I wanna say something.

PAUL

What is it? Please. What is it?

CRAIG

I was only a couple miles away,
when I picked up this call. We were
headed over anyway.

PAUL

Headed here? Why?

CRAIG

I told you I was working on things.

PAUL

And?

CRAIG

And I have been, along with D-E-A,
the U-S-Attorney, the Coast Guard.

PAUL

I'm lost. Spell it out. C'mon.

CRAIG

The U-S-Attorney obtained a warrant
for the laundering of millions in
drug proceeds. Your bosses will be
served tomorrow.

PAUL

What? You mean, Kyle Greene and --

CRAIG

-- And all, for starters. And we've
got a BOLO out on Glodt. Of course,
you learned some details tonight.

PAUL

You mean, Janet?

CRAIG

She came in two weeks ago, told us
everything. So we wired her.

PAUL

Wired her? And tonight?

CRAIG

She had to. But I'm concerned about
what we still don't know.

PAUL

Well, this is all secondary, now.

CRAIG

I knew you were clean but I had to prove it. We've had eyes in your office for a few weeks now.

PAUL

My office?

CRAIG

The firm. A court-order. Your Sam Fender was our go-to guy. Of course, this is all confidential.

PAUL

Craig, Emma is missing. None of this matters to me right now.

CRAIG

I understand that. I do. Okay? We'll do everything possible, even the impossible to find her.

Both take another look around Emma's room.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

It baffles me she could have left without someone seeing or hearing her, or the system picking her up. It's like she just vaporized. Whoosh. One more thing. We've got our canine unit outside.

PAUL

Canine?

CRAIG (CONT'D)

I said we're doing it all. We'll check to see if Prowler detects any signs she was recently outside.

PAUL

Do it. Whatever it takes.

EXT. STEWART RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Paul and Craig join canine officer with his dog, PROWLER. The dog is presented one of Emma's T-shirts. He gets scent, officer gives him a loose leash to go search.

All watch Officer and dog circle entire house, grounds, perimeter fence area, but he doesn't make a hit.

PAUL
What now? What does it mean?

CRAIG
There's clearly no indication she was out here. I was hoping Prowler would get a hit. Show me the security camera footage.

Paul and Craig reenter house.

SUPERIMPOSE TIME: 11:00 pm.

INT. PAUL'S STUDY

INSERT LAST SECONDS OF SECURITY FOOTAGE

Playback stops. Paul and Craig push back from desktop computer screen that displays still of front grounds.

PAUL
Nothing. Emma's nowhere in this.

Craig stands, arms folded, stares at screen.

EXT. STEWART RESIDENCE - NIGHT

SUPERIMPOSE TIME: 1:16 AM.

Paul paces alone in driveway, stares at phone, paces more.

INT. ENTRY AREA

Paul enters house, leaves door ajar. Dr. Hudson approaches from formal living room, closes door.

PAUL
Is Kharen still down here?

DR. HUDSON
She's in the master bedroom.

Paul races upstairs. Dr. Hudson watches then starts up.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM

Paul enters. Kharen is in bed, coiled against pillows.

PAUL
Sweetheart, please say something.

KHAREN

If anything's happened to her, I
don't want to be here anymore.

PAUL

What are you saying?

KHAREN

I have-to-be-alone. Please.

Kharen gets up, races from room. Paul stares at doorway.

INT. EMMA'S BEDROOM

Kharen stares at Emma's bed. Room light flickers, dims, goes
dark, then light returns.

Kharen's looks startled, hands pressed to her chest, she
backs out of room, leaves light on, door open.

INT. PAUL'S STUDY

Paul hangs up phone. A disheveled Kharen enters, stands mute.

DR. HUDSON

Kharen?

Kharen begins pacing. Paul and Dr. Hudson watch. Paul
intercepts her. Dr. Hudson leaves room.

PAUL

I've hired a private detective — a
team. They'll be here at midnight.

Paul strokes Kharen's face. She turns away then back.

KHAREN

What difference will it make?
Emma's gone and we're just waiting?

PAUL

I admit, it does feel like we're in
some alternate universe, and that
this is not happening. But it is.
We will find her. We will.

KHAREN

I wanna believe that.

PAUL

We will. And soon.

KHAREN

You say that, but you must be thinking what I'm thinking. Something awful has happened, and we can't explain any of it.

PAUL

Please, Kay. Don't cry. We --

KHAREN

-- Don't cry? Don't cry?

PAUL

I'm just trying to stay --

KHAREN

-- Stay what? In control? Unflappable? Cool and calm?

PAUL

As calm as possible. Sane.

KHAREN

Sane. Yes, sane, by all means. You're right. You're right.

PAUL

Why do you say it like that?

Kharen, grips sides of her head, steps away then back.

KHAREN

Ever since Emma became ill, I've listened to all your treatises on logic, positive thinking and --

PAUL

-- Go ahead, it's okay. let it out.

KHAREN

And I've listened to 'Don't cry, Kharen. Just be --

PAUL

-- Kharen --

KHAREN

-- Be strong, Kharen. But being strong does not mean always having a steady voice and dry eyes. You --

PAUL

-- That's not what I've suggested.

KHAREN

It is so. And I'm sorry I can't always project a sunny facade. I am a real, feeling, human being. I feel pain right now.

PAUL

'm sorry. I didn't realize you felt this way. I hurt too. I do.

KHAREN

In your own way. But when was the last time you actually cried?

Paul walks away then turns back to Kharen.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

When was the last time you hurt so, real tears actually rolled down your face, Paul? When?

PAUL

I understand why you're --

KHAREN

-- What about all those years we desperately tried to have children?

PAUL

May I answer?

KHAREN

Did you cry when Emma first got sick? Did you? I never saw it.

Both reflect. Air is tense.

PAUL

What are we doing? Our daughter is missing. I can't get my head around the fact there're no signs she left, yet her things are missing. In what world is this possible?

Paul and Kharen embrace. Room lights flicker then go black. Entire house VIBRATES several seconds then stops.

KHAREN

What's happening? An earthquake?

PAUL

I don't think so. There's no alert.

Paul glances down at his phone.

EXT. LONG BEACH MARINA — NIGHT

A white luxury SUV approaches, screeches to a halt.

John Glodt exits in a rush, dashes toward locked marina gate leading to dock ramp. He unlocks it, bolts through.

Feet away, he meets two men in suits: one tall, one short.

GLODT

Hurry. Get the gasoline and carry that stuff to the car. Go. Go.

TALL MAN

In our hands?

GLODT

You got a better idea? Put that crap in pillowcases, or anything. Just get it in the car, numb nuts. We don't have all night. Go.

Glodt starts past, continues to yacht. His men follow.

TALL MAN

They got security patrols out here.

Glodt grabs him by collar.

GLODT

Well, I guess we'll just have to be careful. Let me worry about that.

INT. YACHT — NIGHT

All three storm aboard 'Not Guilty', into cabin. They stuff plastic-wrapped bundles into pillow cases, luggage.

Glodt's men carry items out. Glodt stuffs file folders into two briefcases. He stops, glances around at boat.

Both men return for a final trip. Glodt turns to them.

GLODT

Torch it.

Glodt's men stare at him like he's nuts.

TALL MAN

We didn't get it all out yet.

GLODT

We don't have time. Torch it.

TALL MAN

What the...?

Glodt reaches stairs leading to deck, turns as his men prepare torch yacht.

Glodt places one briefcase down, pulls a gun with silencer from his waist, FIRES, striking both men. They collapse.

EXT. YACHT - NIGHT

Glodt lugs briefcases off to ramp, towards SUV. Its driver waits at open rear hatch, helps Glodt load them.

GLODT

That's it.

INT. YACHT - NIGHT

Glodt dashes back to yacht, into cabin. He grabs a can of gasoline, pours it on wide area.

EXT. MARINA - NIGHT

From end of parking lot, a convoy of POLICE VEHICLES storm toward SUV. SUV driver dashes toward driver's door.

An officer tackles him, just as his hand reaches handle.

EXT. YACHT - NIGHT

Glodt comes topside, continues dousing boat. He tosses gas can aside, steps off boat, removes a flare from his pocket, STRIKES it.

High intensity lights flash on him. A VOICE BOOMS. Officers storm gate, take aim from positions on nearby boats.

LOUD VOICE (P.A.)

Police. Freeze. Drop the flare into the water. Do it now.

GLODT

What the...

Glodt, blinded by intense light, shields eyes with one hand. He tosses flare onto his yacht, dives into water.

Yacht ERUPTS in fire, EXPLODES, SPEWS burning debris.

POLICE OFFICER

We'll get him. Get those fire boats
in here. Hurry, Hurry, before the
whole marina goes up. Jeezus.

EXT. STEWART HOUSE - NIGHT

All Police vehicles are gone.

A BLACK LUXURY SUV eases up, lights out, drives onto
driveway, slows to a stop.

INT. PAUL'S STUDY

Dark. Paul moves to study's doorway. Kharen follows.
Dr. Hudson has returned. She joins them.

There's a knock. Paul races to door. Kharen follows.

PAUL

Probably the PIs.

Paul yanks open door without looking out. Bad Guys #1 & #2,
guns drawn, in ski masks, storm inside.

KHAREN

Oh, my god. Who are you?

Bad Guy #1 aims his gun at her, slams door shut.

BAD GUY #1

Shut up and do what we say.

A HIGH-PITCHED, PULSING sound. Vibration RATTLES items.
Blue light pulses from upstairs.

BAD GUY #1 (CONT'D)

What's going on here? What's that
noise? Turn on the lights.

PAUL

Who sent you? Who sent you here?

BAD GUY #1

Shut up and hit the lights or else.

PAUL

The power's off. What do you want?
Take whatever you want.

Bad Guy #1 looks around with trepidation.

BAD GUY #1
What's that light, that shaking?

BAD GUY #2
Forget the light. Let's just get
the girl and get out.

PAUL
What? Emma? You're here to kidnap
our daughter? Glodt sent you here,
didn't he. Answer me.

BAD GUY #2
Shut up. And move.

PAUL
If he did, you're out of luck.

Paul lurches forward. Kharen, alarmed, grabs his arm.

KHAREN
She's not here. She's not here.

DR. HUDSON
Dear God, who are you people.

BAD GUY #1
God's busy tonight. Get over here.
(to Paul)
You've got five seconds to get her.
Where's her room?

BAD GUY #1 (CONT'D)
Answer me.

Bad Guy #1 aims gun at Kharen. Paul points upstairs.
Bad Guy #1 motions them upstairs then follows.

BAD GUY #1 (CONT'D)
Move it. Move it.

Blue light spills from underneath Emma's room door.

BAD GUY #1 (CONT'D)
What is that? What is that?

Kharen grabs Paul's arm. Dr. Hudson stares man down.

A deep resonant HOWL grows louder, LOUDER.

KHAREN
What's happening? What --

BAD GUY #2
 -- I said, what is that?

Bad Guy #1 hunches his shoulders, eyes search.

BAD GUY #1
 How would I know? Hurry up!

Paul fumes but leads way.

KHAREN
 What's happening, Paul? Oh, my god.

PAUL
 I don't know.

BAD GUY #1
 What did you say? Tell me.

All approach Emma's room. Paul eases door ajar. Blinding, pulsating light bursts through opening. Bad Guys #1 and #2's eyes reflect panic, fear.

Paul, Kharen freeze. Dr. Hudson stares, unblinking.

BAD GUY #2
 What the ...

Paul eases door open, shields his eyes from light.

BAD GUY #2 (CONT'D)
 Hey man, let's get outta here!

BAD GUY #1
 No. We leave, we lose everything.

All are forced inside. Both "Bad Guys" recoil.

PAUL
 God help us. What's ...?

INT. EMMA'S ROOM

Roiling light grows brighter, envelopes wall. HOWL rises.

BAD GUY #2
 You can stay. I'm gone.

BAD GUY #1
 Hold on.

Bad Guy #2 storms out, falls, scrambles to his feet.

BAD GUY #1 (CONT'D)

Crap.

His partner lowers his gun, backs from room.

KHAREN

Oh my God. What's happening?

PAUL

I can't move. I can't. I can't.

A diffused image of Emma forms within roiling light. Behind her are translucent images of Annie in wedding dress, Richard in Marine Dress-Blues.

Behind them, a lush garden.

Images begin to fade.

EXT. STEWART RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Bad Guys #1 & #2 men race out front entrance towards their SUV. They're drenched in binding spotlights.

Craig Marquez, other officers hold behind patrol cars.

CRAIG

Police. Freeze. Show me your hands.
I said, show me your hands. Now.
Drop the guns and turn around,
slowly. Slowly. Keep your hands on
your head. And don't look at me.
Back up to my voice. Keep coming.

Both men comply. Craig motions uniformed officer to take charge. He and Officer Marzon race for front door.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

I hope to God they're all okay.

INT. EMMA'S ROOM

Image on wall grows more defined, evolves into a transparent image of Emma in WHITE baseball cap and WHITE sneakers.

Kharen and Paul stare, mouths agape.

KHAREN

Oh, my God. Looks like Emma. But
her clothes are different and --

PAUL

-- This is Emma's room. This can't be real. The wall is... It can't.

Emma's image grows more distinct, eases forward. Her lips move but only a HOWLING wind is heard. Kharen inches forward.

BEDROOM DOORWAY

Craig and Julie stand frozen, eyes bulging, mouths open.

CRAIG

What the ...

KHAREN

Emma. Paul, it's Emma. It's her.

PAUL

No. No. This can't be. It just --

KHAREN

-- It's Emma. It's her. It is.

PAUL

Wait. It only looks like her.

KHAREN

No, it's her. It's her, Paul.

Emma's image lifts its arms, reaches out for Kharen, with plaintive expression, mouths Mom, Dad.

KHAREN

White light covers Kharen's chest, lingers then fades. Paul grasps Karen's arms. She pulls away from him.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

She's trying to get back to us.
I don't care if I don't understand
any of this. I don't care!

PAUL

Kharen.

Kharen rushes to wall, arms outstretched, tears streaming. Emma reaches out to Kharen.

EMMA

Mom. Help me, Mom.

Emma's hands lack substance. Kharen's hands pass through.

Emma's image begins to fade.

KHAREN

No. No. Come back, Emma. Paul, help me. Please, help me.

Paul eases forward. All are now buffeted by a rising wind. He joins Kharen, extends both arms toward Emma.

EMMA'S IMAGE

Emma's image begins to solidify.

Kharen and Paul grasp her hands, struggle to reenter room.

ON EMMA.

Her image is full. All are overcome with emotion, embrace as wind howl subsides. Blinding light softens.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

This has to be a dream. It has to be. This-is-not happening, but you're here. You're here.

PAUL

Angel, is it really you?

EMMA

(barely audible)
Mom, Dad, what's --

KHAREN

-- It's okay, sweetheart. It's okay. My God, how can this be?

Paul and Kharen hug Emma. Her cap falls, reveals long hair.

KHAREN (CONT'D)

My God. What ...

Paul and Kharen stare, they touch Emma's hair, hug her.

Dr. Hudson looks on, loses a faint but lasting smile.

Emma eases her right hand into jeans pocket, removes Shasta's original collar. Paul and Kharen stare, stunned speechless, mouths agape.

AT BEDROOM DOORWAY

Marquez and Marzon remain frozen, stupefied.

Dr. Hudson is not seen.

PAUL

Paul turns towards doorway, as if he expects to see Dr. Hudson. He steps out into hallway, looks in both directions.

Craig and Officer Marzon stare speechless. Craig turns, to observe Paul disappear from Emma's bedroom door.

CRAIG

Paul, I need to ...

Craig goes to door, stops, turns to look back.

Paul starts down hallway to Dr. Hudson's bedroom.

AT DOOR

Bedroom door is closed. Paul grasps door knob, opens door, takes a couple of halting steps inside.

INT. DR. HUDSON'S BEDROOM

Paul enters. His eyes bulge. He shakes his head.

BEDROOM

Bedroom has only furniture, no bed linen, no pictures, no signs of having been occupied. Sheer curtains cover window.

INT. HALLWAY

A zombie-like Paul backs away, heads back toward Emma's bedroom. Craig turns, sees him approach and meets him.

PAUL

I don't understand. I don't --

Craig observes Paul's spaced-out look.

CRAIG

-- What? What is it?

PAUL

Dr. Hudson. Her room. Her room.
She's not there. Nothing's there.

Craig looks away then back at Paul, fumbling for words.

CRAIG

My god. Look, Paul. Paul, look.
There's something ... I don't know
how to tell you this.

PAUL

Where is she? She was just here.

CRAIG

Paul, listen to me. Listen. I don't know how to say this but --

PAUL

-- What? Nothing's real. Am I real? Are you? Are any of us? This is --

CRAIG

-- Paul, wait. After we left, we ran a check on a Doctor Gloria Marie Hudson of Honolulu. How do I ... Paul, she died a year ago.

PAUL

She died? Who died a year ago? You're saying Mrs. Hudson's dead?

CRAIG

We confirmed it. She drowned in Maui saving a seven-year-old girl who had gone into the water after her dog ... a Jack Russell Terrier named Shasta.

PAUL

No, no that's not possible. She was here. She lived with us, talked and laughed with us. We all saw her. You saw her.

Blank stares on all show disbelief.

CRAIG

I did. God help me, I know. I spoke to her. But then I couldn't have.

Paul aims unblinking stare at Craig, grasps his shoulder.

EXT. EMMA'S BEDROOM WINDOW - NIGHT

FRONT GROUNDS

Emma's Room, above, is bathed in light. Silhouettes are visible through bay window.

STEWART ESTATE AND NEIGHBORHOOD

Deep sky, full moon, bright stars, a streaking comet. Police vehicles cover driveway and apron.

AT CURB

A white, unmarked van with Angel Wings on plates sits silent.

AT PASSENGER DOOR

A MAN, W-M, 20s, in white suit and shoes stands at open door.

ON LOWER TORSO OF FEMALE FIGURE

Figure in white suit, white heels, approaches van.

REVEAL

Driver opens passenger door for Dr. Hudson. She enters. Van driver closes Dr. Hudson's door, walks around to driver's door, enters.

INT. VAN

A dog WHINES. Mrs. Hudson turns as Shasta appears from rear, between driver and passenger seats.

Dr. Hudson helps him through, holds him in her lap.

EXT. VAN

On van driver's door, bold letters begin forming.

INSERT WORDS: "PET DROME"

Van eases away, in silence, disappears as it descends hill.

ON NIGHT SKY

Full moon in brilliant sky. A distant star FLARES and fades.

NARRATOR (V.O)

There are wonders and miraculous events in our lives which defy comprehension. They occur, not as a result of cosmic accidents but are glorious works that flow from our recognizing our limitations, and calling all Angels.

FADE TO BLACK

CLOSING CREDITS TO INCLUDE PSA FOR DONATIONS TO ST. JUDE AND CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF LOS ANGELES