

CHRISTIAN MORRIS

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. NOVEL HOSPICE CENTER - ATLANTA - MORNING

An UBER pulls up to the main entrance doors of NOVEL HOSPICE CENTER. The UBER DRIVER (40s), African American greets a somber DOMINIC RHOADES (27), African American. He grips a large SPIRAL NOTEBOOK in hand as he leaves the center.

Dominic turns and rests his eyes back on the building one last time with a heavy expression. He enters the cab, and it pulls away.

INT. UBER - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

UBER DRIVER
Good morning, sir.

Dominic looks at the driver and acknowledges him. He clutches the notebook firmly and rests his head on the back headrest and closes his eyes.

DOMINIC (V.O.)
I can say I was prepared for this,
but honestly I wasn't. As a Doctor,
sometimes watching people die is
part of my job, but nothing can
ever prepare you for losing someone
you deeply love.

The DRIVER adjusts the REAR VIEW MIRROR looks back at Dominic.

UBER DRIVER
The Intercontinental Hotel,
midtown, sir?

DOMINIC
Yes.

Dominic rests his head back on the headrest and closes his eyes.

DOMINIC (V.O.)
Christian Morris, my best friend
and brother is dead. Before reading
his journal I never knew how
troubled he was.
(MORE)

DOMINIC (CONT'D)

I always thought he was like that because he was selfish, uncaring and didn't give a damn, but I never knew he was molested as a child, nor did I know how the events that took place with his father, our father would affect him forever.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - WALTER REED MEDICAL CENTER - DAY

The large crowd of MILITARY DOCTORS stand up and walk toward the exits and into the hallway of the lobby. Dominic's phone VIBRATES and BEEPS.

He takes out his phone and walks over to an empty auditorium seat and sits down and dials a number. Dominic's Receptionist, SUSAN WILLIAMSON (30s), answers on the other end.

DOMINIC

Hi Susan, I got your text.

SUSAN (V.O.)

Dominic, you received an urgent call from Wendy Morris and I'm afraid it's not good news. She said Christian's in hospice.

Dominic pauses as his demeanor changes.

A short beat.

DOMINIC

Hospice, Did she say anything else?

SUSAN (V.O.)

She said he's in Atlanta and didn't elaborate further. She provided the name and address of the facility.

DOMINIC

Please arrange a flight and a hotel for me in Atlanta and forward me the itinerary. Thank you, Susan.

SUSAN (V.O.)

You're welcome.

He hangs up.

EXT. NOVEL HOSPICE CENTER - ATLANTA - MIDDAY

An UBER stops in front of the hospice center. Dominic opens the door and exits. He makes his way into the facility.

INT. NOVEL HOSPICE CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Dominic walks up to the information desk, where a YOUNG FEMALE RECEPTIONIST (20s) sits.

DOMINIC

Hello, I'm here to see Christian Morris?

She shifts her stare to the monitor screen and types.

RECEPTIONIST

Yes, sir, he's on the 10th floor, room 1012. Check in at the nurse's station and they'll assist you. You can use the elevators down the hall to the right.

DOMINIC

Thank you.

Dominic proceeds down the hall and to the ELEVATORS. The DOORS open and he walks in and pushes the 10th floor button.

INT. 10TH FLOOR - HOSPICE FLOOR - DAY

The elevator doors open and Dominic walks follows the directional sign, directing him to the NURSES'S STATION.

The sound of many heart monitors BEEP loudly in steady tones throughout the hallway.

NURSE WINTERS (50) is sitting behind the counter writing notes on a pad when Dominic approaches.

DOMINIC

Good morning, Nurse--

He peeks around a stack of MEDICAL RECORDS, squints and looks down at her name tag.

DOMINIC

Nurse Winters, I'm here to see Christian Morris.

Nurse Winters shifts her stare to the whiteboard behind her.

NURSE WINTERS
He's in room 1012.

DOMINIC
Thanks. Uh, how's he doing?

NURSE WINTERS
He's doing better than most and
we're making him as comfortable as
possible.

Dominic walks down the long corridor, passing by several open rooms.

ROOM 1009 -- A FRAIL WOMAN has a feeding tube attached to her stomach. Members of her FAMILY are sitting by her bedside holding her hand.

ROOM 1010 -- An ELDERLY MAN sits on a chair with an I.V. is on a pole next to him, watching TV. An adult diaper is seen through his robe's opening.

ROOM 1011 -- A BALD WOMAN sits up in her bed, coughing violently as she chats with VISITORS. One of the female visitors is crying and holding her hand.

Dominic reaches Room 1012. Taking a deep breath, he enters.

INT. CHRISTIAN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dominic stops in his tracks as he stares ahead at his ailing friend, CHRISTIAN MORRIS (27), light-skinned African American. He looks very emaciated, covered with lesions and the bed is moving from side to side at a slow medium pace.

Christian is sleeping on his back and his breathing sounds compromised. He has a breathing mask over his mouth. Even in his weakened condition, his good looks are apparent.

There's an empty I.V. bag in front of the bed. Dominic carefully tip-toes forward and hears Christian struggling for air. Dominic looks down on the bedside nightstand and sees several small picture frames.

He leans in to get a closer look and sees a picture of Christian and a woman in their FLIGHT ATTENDANT UNIFORMS.

A picture of Dominic and his family together.

A picture of his MOTHER SOPHIE (52) and his SISTER WENDY (30). Next to those is a photo of a healthy Christian with his wife, CHERYL MORRIS, (27), and their DAUGHTER, KEISHA (6) and a single picture of his NEWBORN BABY, ALESHIA (1).

Dominic picks up and stares at another picture of a younger him, Cheryl and Christian at the HIGH SCHOOL dance, laughing...

FLASHBACK - EXT. STERLING HIGH SCHOOL - EVENING

SUPER: 10 YEARS EARLIER

Cars pull into the school's parking area as the sun begins to set. Dressed-up high school SENIORS walk to the main doors of the school gymnasium, pumping out loud DANCE MUSIC.

INT. STERLING HIGH SCHOOL - GYMNASIUM - CONTINUOUS

The lights are dim in the decorated gym, a school dance well underway. SCHOOL PRINCIPAL GARNER (45) Caucasian and heavysset, and some other FACULTY greet the arriving seniors as they enter the room.

Standing near the refreshment table, watching his peers, is Dominic (now 17). RODNEY SHELBY (17) African American, medium height, walks up to Dominic and looks at his watch before turning to pour himself a drink.

RODNEY

Where's Christian?

DOMINIC

If I know Christian, he'll be--

Just then, a younger, healthier, incredibly handsome Christian (now 17) entered with a pretty young Cheryl Anderson (now 17), the woman from the photo, draped on his arm.

Rodney nudges Dominic.

RODNEY

Dominic! Look! Christian's with Cheryl Anderson!

DOMINIC

The freakin' cheerleader?

Dominic whips around to see Christian and Cheryl shaking hands with Principal Garner.

Several DANCING GIRLS notice Christian and start to whisper as they look at Cheryl and glance over to a group of FOOTBALL PLAYERS, who sit unaware at a faraway table.

Dominic shifts his stare over at the footballer's table, spotting BRADY LANE (17) African American, tall, muscular. Dominic watches him closely, checking to see if Brady has noticed Cheryl.

Christian takes Cheryl through the crowd of dancing teens and they begin to dance. Dominic hurries over and taps Christian on the shoulder.

CHRISTIAN
Hey D, what's up?

DOMINIC
Come on, we need to talk.

Cheryl looks at Christian with a clenched jaw. An angry Christian look at Dominic and sighs.

CHRISTIAN
Right now, D? Can't you see I'm dancing!

DOMINIC
Yes, right now, Christian!

Christian whispers into Cheryl's ear then follows Dominic toward the hallway.

INT. SCHOOL GYMNASIUM HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Dominic and Christian enter the deserted hallway, still hearing the THUMPING MUSIC from the other room.

DOMINIC
Are you fucking crazy, or do you have a death wish?!

Christian smirks.

CHRISTIAN
Crazy? Why am I crazy, D!?

DOMINIC
For bringing Brady's girl to the dance -- Nah, shit, that's not crazy, it's suicide!

Christian looks through the double HALLWAY GYMNASIUM DOORS at Cheryl moving to the beat of the playing music.

CHRISTIAN
Just look at her, D!

DOMINIC

Christian, if Brady sees you with her, he's gonna break your neck--

CHRISTIAN

Why!? She asked me to the dance. What was I supposed to do, say no?

DOMINIC

Yes, dummy! Dammit, they've been together since the beginning of summer school!

CHRISTIAN

She said he had another girl, so she wanted the next best thing.

DOMINIC

Well, you better hope she was right because here he comes.

Dominic peers through the door and sees Brady talking to Cheryl, who gestures toward Christian through the window.

Brady clenches his fists and runs to the door, forcefully ripping them open, slamming the double doors with several football team players trailing him.

BRADY

What the fuck, Morris?! Why did you bring my girl to the dance?

CHRISTIAN

Because she asked me.

BRADY

She asked you!?

Brady turns and looks at his teammates. They all shrug.

CHRISTIAN

She said you broke up with her.

BRADY

We didn't break up, asshole; we're just on a little hiatus.

Brady and all of his teammates laugh.

DOMINIC

She's not with you anymore, Brady, so why don't you and your boys go back inside and enjoy the rest of the dance?

Brady laughs and turns to his boys, and they begin to laugh. Dominic is getting angry.

DOMINIC

I said, take your boys, go back inside and try to have fun with each other.

Christian laughs. Brady unclenches his fist.

CHRISTIAN

I'll make it easy for you: ask Cheryl who she wants to be with, and let's see what she says? Bet money she'll pick me.

BRADY

You're betting on yourself, pretty boy?

Brady slowly walks closer to Christian, and they stand face to face. Brady with nostrils flared and a smirk glares at Christian.

BRADY

I should knock your teeth out.

CHRISTIAN

Tell you what--

Christian pauses and reaches in his pocket and pulls out TWENTY-DOLLARS and hands it to Dominic.

CHRISTIAN

I'll bet you she'll leave with me after the dance and if I'm wrong, you're twenty dollars richer. Whaddya say?

Brady glares over at his teammates to see if anyone is laughing.

BRADY

You're a pretty motherfucker, but I've got two years with her, and I know her better than you, light bright.

CHRISTIAN

Then prove it!

Brady nods his head.

BRADY

Ok, pretty boy, I'll take your bet, but when you lose -- and you're gonna lose -- then I'm gonna beat your ass.

CHRISTIAN

We'll see about that.

Brady looks over at Dominic, turns, and walks through the doors with his teammates following. Dominic walks up to Christian.

DOMINIC

He isn't playing, Christian! He's gonna beat your ass! You don't have anything to prove, so please stop this nonsense!

CHRISTIAN

No, D! I came here with her and I'm leaving with her!

DOMINIC

All you're gonna do, Christian Morris, is get your ass kicked tonight. Grow the fuck up, man! You've been doing the same shit since grade school!

Dominic points to the gym full of teenage girls.

DOMINIC

Look out there, Christian -- you can have the pick of the litter, so why Cheryl Anderson?

CHRISTIAN

Because she's the finest girl in the school, that's why! And because I can't stand that asshole!

DOMINIC

Yeah, well, I'm getting tired of patching your ass up every time you do this. The last time it was Mr. Jenkins's wife and now Brady? I'm not going to be around to save your ass like before, Christian. After graduation, I'm leaving for Johns Hopkins.

Christian gets angry.

CHRISTIAN

Yeah, sorry, congratulations, D. I was thinking about joining the military.

DOMINIC

The military? I thought you'd go into modeling? You told me some rich magazine lady liked your portfolio.

CHRISTIAN

If my portfolio you're referring to is my dick, then yes, she loved it!

Christian tries to wipe the grin off his face as he holds onto his crotch.

DOMINIC

You slept with her?

CHRISTIAN

Yeah, so what?

Dominic rolls his eyes.

CHRISTIAN

She told me to come back and see her once I graduate. I might take her up on it.

DOMINIC

Not if you're dead, dumbass!

Christian looks at the reflection of his face in the door glass and smiles as he checks himself out from numerous angles.

CHRISTIAN

I'm not worried about that, D. She already showed me some of her nasty cheers. So, I'm not concerned about her picking Brady over me --

Dominic looks through the doors and clears his throat.

DOMINIC

Hey Romeo, Brady's leaving with Cheryl.

CHRISTIAN

Shit!

Dominic and Christian look through the door into the gymnasium and see Brady forcefully grabbing Cheryl's arm and dragging her out of the Gymnasium entrance.

Cheryl rips her arm free and runs back into the gym and runs straight for Christian with glee.

CHRISTIAN

See, I told you! Hey there's the school photographer let's get our picture taken.

PRESENT DAY - INT. CHRISTIAN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dominic snaps out of the memory. He places the photo back down on the table. Christian slowly wakes up. His piercing HAZEL EYES look up at him.

DOMINIC

Hey Buddy, it's me, Dominic!

Christian smiles at Dominic. He is very weak and not speaking. He coughs and tries to catch his breath. Christian tries to raise his weak hand to cover his mouth.

Dominic grabs two surgical gloves and takes Christian's other hand and holds it tightly.

DOMINIC

Hey, buddy. I got Wendy's message. How ya feeling?

Dominic clenches his jaw and shifts his focus away for a beat.

DOMINIC

Sorry man, stupid ass question. I've been working non-stop since my divorce. Got to live on the road now because Patricia is killing me with child support.

Christian nods his head in agreement.

DOMINIC

My Pops died. He had a stroke while mowing the lawn. It was fast and I don't think he suffered. I should of told you earlier, but... It's been hectic trying to get his affairs in order. He was a very complicated man.

(MORE)

DOMINIC (CONT'D)
 The girls are fine and healthy...
 Just trying to make it...

Christian coughs louder. His hand trembles as he pulls down the breathing mask from his face. He mumbles incoherently and directs his finger towards the drawer of the stand.

CHRISTIAN
 I... I...

DOMINIC
 What?

CHRISTIAN
 Look in the note...

Dominic looks down and opens one of the nightstand drawers and pulls out a large spiral notebook.

He opens the notebook and looks at the filled pages. Christian pulls down his oxygen mask and mumbles again.

CHRISTIAN
 Read, understand?

DOMINIC
 Yes, yes, I understand.

Dominic opens the notebook to page one and reads Christian's finely printed words out loud.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
 It's hard to put this on paper what I am feeling now knowing that I'm slowly dying. As I write my thoughts it's been over a year since my initial diagnosis. Cheryl and I are very distant. To be honest, she hates me for what I did to her, and we haven't spoken since Aleshia was born. I really fucked up this time!

DOMINIC
 Christian, what did you do?

Dominic keeps reading.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
 Nothing can ever prepare you for getting bad news. I always thought I was lucky.

(MORE)

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)

Getting through the abandonment by my Father to getting molested as a child by a friend of my Mother, but nothing can ever compare you for what I was about to experience.

Christian starts coughing and slowly covers his mouth. Dominic puts on some latex gloves and wipes Christian's mouth, staining the gloves with blood.

DOMINIC

Sounds like you have Pneumonia. I hear it in your lungs and your cough. What are they giving you?

Christian shakes his head. Dominic leaves the room in a hurry.

INT. NURSE'S STATION - CONTINUOUS

Dominic approaches the nurse's station. Nurse Winters is on the phone and filling out a shift report log.

DOMINIC

Excuse me, nurse!

Nurse Winters pauses talking and looks up at him.

NURSE WINTERS

I'll call you back later.
(hangs up)
Yes, sir?

DOMINIC

Why is Mr. Morris in 1012 not receiving anything for his cough? He's in pain and coughing up blood!

NURSE WINTERS

Sorry, we can't give him anything.

Dominic walks closer to the counter and looks down at her.

DOMINIC

I didn't formally introduce myself to you earlier. I'm Doctor Dominic Rhoades from the New York University Medical Center. I'm not asking you to break any HIPAA rules, but may I please speak with Mr. Morris's attending?

NURSE WINTERS

Unfortunately, his treating physician, Doctor Samuel will not be in for another hour, but I assure you we are making Mr. Morris as comfortable as possible. Mr. Morris did list you as his next of kin, so no HIPAA rules are affected.

Dominic sighs and nods.

NURSE WINTERS

As you're well aware, Doctor Rhoades, AIDS severely attacks the immune system, and unfortunately Mr. Morris is in the final stages.

DOMINIC

AIDS?

NURSE WINTERS

I'm sorry, you didn't know?

DOMINIC

No..., I knew he was dying, but--

NURSE WINTERS

Doctor, I'll let you know soon as I hear from Dr Samuel.

Dominic nods slowly, still processing the information.

She looks at him as he turns away and he walks down the hallway and back into Christian's room.

INT. CHRISTIAN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dominic returns stunned and his eyes fixed to the floor. Christian is embarrassed and his face looks angry.

DOMINIC

(looking up, sorrowful)

Now I understand why Cheryl hates you.

Christian points to the notebook. Dominic sits in the chair next to the bed. He opens the notebook and allows his eyes to scan the pages.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

I knew my infidelity was bound to catch up to me one day.

(MORE)

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)

But I never knew that I would be dead by 28 and eventually go on to infect others including Cheryl and our newborn Aleshia. Everyday that goes by I think about the pain I caused to so many people. It feels like a nightmare I can't wake-up from.

Dominic stands up and turns facing the window, sadness in his watery eyes.

DOMINIC

Fuck!

Christian looks over at Dominic and sighs.

A heavy beat.

Christian tries to talk, but can't. He tries to sit up but falls back on the bed. He coughs and points again to the notebook. Dominic reads.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

You might be infected is all that I hear in my head. Those four words are very powerful and can change a life in seconds. I had to tell several women those exact four words and it was the hardest thing I ever had to do.

NURSE REED (40s) enters the room carrying two small I.V. bags. She changes one of Christian's empty I.V. bags. Dominic moves to Christian and leans in close to his ear with raised brow.

DOMINIC

How careless could you be!?

Nurse Reed looks over to Dominic confused at what she heard and leaves the room.

DOMINIC

You've been pulling this kind of shit since I first met you. I know you would never knowingly infect any of those women, and this is not the time for me to be upset with you.

Christian coughs up more blood and points to his notebook again. Dominic relaxes and turns the page.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

For anyone reading this. My name is Christian Morris, I'm selfish, inconsiderate, shallow, a narcissist and downright vain, but despite all of my flaws and weaknesses, I would never knowingly infect anyone with this deadly disease. Especially my family!

Nurse Reed enters again and injects something into Christian's I.V. line.

DOMINIC

Nurse, what's that?

NURSE REED

It's Dilaudid.

DOMINIC

Oh... Dilaudid, thank you.

Nurse Reed looks down at Christian and notices his soiled gown.

NURSE REED

It should take effect in a few minutes.

Christian shakes his head side to side at Dominic as he mumbles incoherently.

CHRISTIAN

No...

DOMINIC

It's fine, she gave you Dilaudid. It'll periodically stop your coughing.

In another room, a patient's monitor alarm loudly BEEPS.

NURSE REED

It'll make him a little drowsy. I'll be right back to change you. I have to see about that alarm.

She hustles out of the room. Christian turns to Dominic like he's asking a question.

DOMINIC

I know you're scared Christian and I don't know what you've been told by your Doctor, so I'll give it to you straight, all right.

Christian nods.

DOMINIC

Fluid is building up in your lungs. I can't speculate how long you have left, but I've seen this before and it's not good.

Dominic pauses for a beat.

Christian nods and rubs his hands slowly across his face and touches the lesions around his head. He mouths something over to Dominic.

DOMINIC

I know, but does it really matter, Christian?

Christian nods.

DOMINIC

You want to know how you look?

Christian nods yes.

DOMINIC

You and your precious looks. Good to see that some things haven't changed.

Dominic leans in closer.

DOMINIC

But real talk, Christian? You've lost a tremendous amount of weight, and your face and body are covered in lesions. Now, I'm going to ask you a question, Ok?

Christian nods.

DOMINIC

You slept with a lot of women, and you cheated on Cheryl. My question is, how did you tell the other women that you were sick?

Christian's shaking hand points back to the notebook, and he flashes two fingers twice. Dominic fast forwards through the pages until he comes to a stop.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

I've been very fortunate throughout this entire process. With the help of my Primary Care Physician Dr. Anderson, I've learned a lot about this disease and what I've learned has literally kept me alive. I've shared most of my journey with my fellow HIV infected brothers and sisters and I turned my life around completely. What I've learned is that all HIV cases don't turn into AIDS, but 40% of them do. There are some exceptions though, but it mainly depends on the person's physical health and their immune system. I tell people that I never had sex with another man, shared a needle with a junkie, or any of that. I had unprotected sex with an HIV positive woman.

Dominic pours a glass of water and takes a sip.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

These next few pages have been so difficult to write. It wasn't easy telling any of those women, especially, Cheryl. I hesitated, imagining what they would say to their families once they found out. I was ashamed, embarrassed, and I felt awful, but I had to do it.

FLASHBACK - INT. CONCORDIA AIRPLANE CABIN - AFTERNOON

SUPER: Several Months Earlier

A very fit and strikingly handsome Christian is in his tailored flight attendant's uniform, looking at himself in the LAVATORY MIRROR.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

After high school, I tried to join the military, but I didn't get accepted.

(MORE)

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)

I worked for a year at a retail department store, then the Airlines started hiring again, and I interviewed for a position as a flight attendant. Concordia hired me on the spot, and I spent eight years with them. Thousands of women have come and gone off my flights, and they were everywhere!

His HAZEL EYES look back at him as he conceitedly winks at himself.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

I flew with my friend Stacey Collins. Stacey and I were like two peas in a pod, we loved the attention, and we had our pick of the litter at 35,000 feet.

STACEY COLLINS (25) and Christian serve PASSENGERS coffee in First Class.

CHRISTIAN(V.O.)

I met countless attractive women while flying, and I screwed plenty of them.

He hovers over a beautiful BUSINESSWOMEN. His body leaning in towards her with an open expression.

CHRISTIAN

So, you like it "black"?

She smirks and Christian walks away. Several other FEMALES look at Christian's BUTT as he passes. They drop their mouths open and grin.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

Women would throw themselves at me left and right! And they'd do anything to spend time with me. It was very addictive.

QUICK SERIES OF SHOTS --

--Christian has sex with WOMAN #1 in the airplane's rear bathroom.

--Christian makes out with WOMAN #2 in the airplane bathroom, then gently pushes her head down toward his crotch.

--Christian and Stacey discreetly make out in the plane's food service alleyway.

INT. CHRISTIAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Christian is in the bathroom looking at himself in the mirror. His piercing hazel eyes look back at him.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
Cheryl and I got together right
after High School. A year later,
our first born Keshia arrived.

Cheryl helps KESHIA MORRIS (6) get dressed for school.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
Cheryl and I had our issues, I
wanted to leave her so many times,
but I couldn't. Instead, I decided
to be unfaithful.

Christian reaches in his UNIFORM JACKET POCKET and finds a pair of unfamiliar female PANTIES. He quickly hides them as Cheryl and Keshia rush in. Cheryl Keels down and quickly washes behind Keshia's ears.

CHERYL
Christian, can you help me please?
I need to get dressed too.

CHRISTIAN
I can't right now Cheryl, I have an
International flight today and
Stacey's gonna kill me if she has
to prepare the cabin by herself.
Why didn't you get her clothes laid
out last night?

CHERYL
Christian! I need some help! I have
a meeting to go to.

Cheryl glances down at Keshia.

CHERYL
Honey, go see your father so Mommy
can get dressed.

Ignoring Cheryl, Christian is in the bathroom looking in the mirror again. Keshia walks in and looks up at him.

KESHIA

Daddy, did you sing to me when I was a little girl? Mommy said you have a beautiful singing voice.

CHRISTIAN

(smiling)

Did she? Yes sweetie, I used to sing to you all the time. I sang one of your favorite songs.

Christian drops to one knee and holds her hands and begins to sing.

CHRISTIAN

(singing)

Hush little baby, don't say a word,
Daddy's gonna buy you a
mockingbird.

KESHIA

I remember that song.

CHRISTIAN

I used to sing that to you every night before you went to bed.

Christian stands up.

KESHIA

Where are you flying to today,
Daddy?

CHRISTIAN

To Germany. Can you tell me the capital of Germany?

KESHIA

The capital of Germany is Berlin.

Cheryl watches from the bathroom doorway and walks into the bathroom. She gives Keshia a big hug.

CHERYL

My baby is smart!

CHRISTIAN

She's smart and pretty too. Cheryl, have you seen the wings for my jacket?

CHERYL

They're in the nightstand drawer on the left-hand side.

He walks into the bedroom.

CHRISTIAN
I got 'em, thanks.

CHERYL
When are you coming back?

CHRISTIAN
Tomorrow evening, I have to be back
for my physical on Wednesday.

CHERYL
Are you OK?

CHRISTIAN
I think so. It's also time for my
yearly physical. I need to ask why
I've been tired all the time. Do
these pants look big on me? I've
lost a few pounds.

Christian puts on his flight attendant jacket and cap and
picks up his car keys.

CHERYL
You look OK to me, honey. Do you
want me to make you breakfast?

CHRISTIAN
Nah, I'll grab something at the
airport. That's if I get through
traffic this morning.

He picks up his overnight bag and looks down at Keshia.

CHRISTIAN
Come give Daddy a kiss.

Keshia runs up and jumps into his arms.

KESHIA
Be safe, Daddy.

Christian puts down Keshia and walks over and kisses Cheryl.

CHERYL
See you tomorrow, honey. Have a
safe flight. I love you.

Christian looks back at Cheryl and kisses her again.

CHRISTIAN
Love you too.

KESHIA
Daddy?

CHRISTIAN
Yes, baby?

KESHIA
Can you bring Mommy and me back something?

CHRISTIAN
How about some German chocolates?

Christian and Keshia exchange a pleasant smile.

EXT. INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

The International Terminal is busy. Several large Jumbo Jets are taking off and landing. Christian walks off the airport shuttle and into the airport entrance doors.

INT. INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - CONTINUOUS

Several FEMALE BYSTANDERS look at Christian as he walks into the terminal. After going through the security check-in, he takes off his sunglasses and approaches Terminal Gate 23.

Several female passengers stare as he walks past the gate and down the long ramp to the Concordia Airplane.

INT. CONCORDIA AIRPLANE CABIN - LATER

Stacey reaches up into the overhead compartment putting away her carry on bag.

GATE ATTENDANT
We're preparing for boarding. Get ready to greet the passengers.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
Our layover in Germany was fulfilling. I met this beautiful woman on the plane, her name was Natalie Rue. She was a model with Vogue.

INT. CHRISTIAN'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Christian's hotel room door SLAMS open. He pushes NATALIE RUE (22) African American, beautiful up against the door.

They kiss and fondle each other as they stumble over to the bed and fall into it.

NATALIE

Did you bring protection?

CHRISTIAN

No... do you want me to stop?

NATALIE

No, just don't cum in me, OK?

Christian smiles and proceeds to undress. He turns her over and takes her from behind. Natalie's MOANS becomes louder and louder as her eyes begin to close, and she tightly grips the bedsheets.

NATALIE

Oh God! Oh Christian! Yessss!

PRESENT DAY - INT. CHRISTIAN'S HOSPITAL ROOM

Dominic reads intently beside Christian, he turns the page.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

I didn't see Natalie anymore after that. We exchanged numbers and I tried to contact her after my results. Two months later, I found out she died in a car accident.

Dominic looks over to Christian with heavy eyes.

DOMINIC

So the majority of these women were from your flights?

Christian nods.

DOMINIC

You referred to them as Stickers. You called them one-timers, the ones you didn't ask to see again unless they want to hook up. The ones that would leave your room when you're finished with them.

Dominic shakes his head in disbelief, rolling his eyes away from Christian. He turns the page.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

After I returned to the States, I wasn't feeling well.

(MORE)

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)
I was dehydrated and had gotten sick on my flight back, so I scheduled an appointment with my doctor. Cheryl wasn't feeling well that morning either and that's when she surprised me --

FLASHBACK - INT. CHRISTIAN'S HOME - MORNING

Cheryl comes running into the bedroom, yelling.

CHERYL
Christian, wake up! Wake up!

CHRISTIAN
What's the matter, what's wrong!?

CHERYL
Look at the stick! -- Look at the stick!

Cheryl gives Christian the home pregnancy test stick.

CHRISTIAN
What's this?

CHERYL
It's positive!

CHRISTIAN
Positive for what?

CHERYL
I'm pregnant, Christian!

CHRISTIAN
Pregnant!?

CHERYL
I told you a few days ago I wasn't feeling well. I knew something like this was going to happen, shit!

Christian drops his head slightly bringing his vision to the ground. He takes a breath.

CHERYL
I don't need this right now.

CHRISTIAN

Are you sure this is accurate?
These cheap home tests aren't
always reliable.

CHERYL

It's the same test I used with
Keshia, Christian, it's right --
I'm pregnant. What are we gonna do?

CHRISTIAN

What do you mean, Cheryl? We're
gonna have a baby.

CHERYL

I can't go through this again!
Keshia was a miracle baby after
those other miscarriages!

Christian holds Cheryl tightly in his arms. She begins to
cry.

CHRISTIAN

It's gonna be Ok, we'll get through
this together.

Keshia walks into the bedroom and looks up at them. Cheryl
wipes the tears from her face.

KESHIA

Why are you crying, Mommy?

CHERYL

No reason, honey. I'm OK.

KESHIA

Daddy, why is Mommy crying?

CHRISTIAN

We're having a baby.

KESHIA

(excited)

Am I going to have a little sister
or brother?!

CHRISTIAN

We don't know sweetie, Mommy needs
to see the doctor first.

KESHIA

I hope you're having a baby, Mommy!
I want someone to play with me.

They both laugh.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
That was the week before my
diagnosis.

PRESENT DAY - INT. CHRISTIAN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Christian is in his bed reflecting as a tear rolls down his face. Dominic turns the page and looks at Christian.

DOMINIC
It's Ok, Christian. I know you're
blaming yourself and I know it's
hard for you.

They share a solemn look as Dominic turns the page and keeps reading.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
I went to see Dr. Anderson. He'd
been my Primary Care Doctor since I
first started at Concordia. I gave
a urine sample and a lot of blood
samples. A couple of days later, I
got a voice message asking me to
come to his office.

FLASHBACK - INT. DR. ANDERSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Christian walks into the office, passing by PEOPLE in the waiting area. He walks up to the receptionist, DONNA SIMMONS (20s).

CHRISTIAN
Good morning, I'm here to see Dr.
Anderson.

DONNA
No need to sign in Mr. Morris --
Dr. Anderson is expecting you.
It'll just be a few minutes.

Donna looks over at Christian, and he looks back at her and smiles. He picks up a SPORTS MAGAZINE SWIMSUIT ISSUE and flips through it, stopping on a picture of Natalie Rue posing in a swimsuit kicking a beach ball. Christian smiles.

The door opens and NURSE SCOTT (46), looks out into the waiting area.

NURSE SCOTT
Mr. Morris? Dr. Anderson, will see
you now.

Christian walks through the door and proceeds straight into
Dr. Anderson's office.

INT. DR. ANDERSON'S EXAMINATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nurse Scott directs Christian toward the EXAM table.

NURSE SCOTT
Please take a seat, Mr. Morris. Dr.
Anderson will see you shortly.

She turns to leave. As she closes the door, Nurse Scott
slowly shakes her head in disappointment as Christian gets
comfortable.

A moment later, the door opens and DOCTOR ANDERSON (52),
enters, sits down and slowly exhales.

DOCTOR ANDERSON
Hello Christian, how are you
feeling?

CHRISTIAN
I'm OK. I was just wondering why
you called me down here?

DOCTOR ANDERSON
Christian, I wanted to go over your
lab results. I'm afraid I have a
bit of unpleasant news for you.

CHRISTIAN
I know I've been off that
cholesterol medication for a while,
but I've had a hectic flight
schedule and I promise to take--

DOCTOR ANDERSON
(stops him)
It's not about your cholesterol,
Christian.

Dr. Anderson opens up Christian's medical folder and looks at
his lab results. His brow lifted.

CHRISTIAN
Then what's going on?

DOCTOR ANDERSON

There's no other way to tell you this, but your test results show you've tested positive for HIV.

CHRISTIAN

(upset)

You must have the wrong chart; I don't have fuckin' AIDS! You're mistaken!

DOCTOR ANDERSON

It's no mistake, Christian-- and you don't have AIDS. You have HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. Your immune system was compromised.

Christian sits back in the chair, surprised. He stifles a sarcastic laugh and crosses his arms over his chest.

CHRISTIAN

Those test results are wrong! I'm not gay and I don't use drugs!

DOCTOR ANDERSON

Son-- you need to calm down and listen to me. You are feeling tired because the virus is starting to attack your immune system. To be sure of the results, I've run the test several times. There is no mistake--, Christian, you need to stay focused and listen carefully to what I'm about to tell you.

Christian uncrosses his arms and leans forward. His hands are shaking and he begins to sob as he breathes heavily.

Dr. Anderson leans forward.

DOCTOR ANDERSON

It would be best if you told your partner...or partners. They need to know about your HIV status so they can be tested immediately.

CHRISTIAN

I can't tell anyone about this! I can't-- Cheryl, she's gonna--

DOCTOR ANDERSON

(forceful)

Listen to me, Christian-- I know this news is painful to hear, but you need to take responsibility for this. You need to tell everyone you've had sex with within the last 12 to 15 months no matter how difficult it is for you; do I make myself clear!?

CHRISTIAN

No! I..., I can't tell!

Christian places his head in his hands. His sobs echo in the exam room..

DOCTOR ANDERSON

Yes, you will! You must tell your partners about your status and allow them to get tested! As a physician, I'm obligated and must report this to the CDC.

PRESENT DAY - INT. CHRISTIAN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Christian looks at Dominic and lets out an angry exhale. Dominic turns the page and reads the last sentence.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

I left his office in shock. I walked out to my car and sat there thinking of what I've done to Cheryl and all those women-- Wondering how was I going to tell them.

DOMINIC

You slept with a lot of women Christian. How many? You spoke of Cheryl, Stacey, Natalie, who else?

Christian shrugs his shoulders.

DOMINIC

So, that's it!?

Christian shakes his head no. Dominic slowly shakes his head in disbelief and steps back towards the window. He leans against it and glares outside with an empty gaze.

DOMINIC
More than ten?

Christian shakes his head no.

DOMINIC
Twenty, Thirty!?

Christian shakes his head no, again.

DOMINIC
Over Fifty women?

Christian shakes his head yes and points back to the notebook. Dominic turns the page.

DOMINIC
This is a lot to take in,
Christian. I can't read anymore
right now. I really need something
to eat.

Christian nods, Dominic looks up at the clock on the wall. He gets up from the chair and walks toward the door.

DOMINIC
I'll be back.

Dominic walks out of the room and down the hallway.

INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA - EVENING

Dominic stands in line, looking at the food behind the glass. He points to something, and the SERVER puts some chicken and vegetables on his plate. He walks to the dessert line and spies one last BANANA PUDDING.

He reaches out for the pudding, just as another HAND reaches for it too. Dominic stops and turns to see the hand belongs to an attractive, classy female doctor; BLAINE SAMUEL (28) African American.

Blaine looks over at Dominic and they laugh.

DOMINIC
I'm sorry, you can have it.

BLAINE
No, no you take it, it's yours.

Dominic places the banana pudding on his tray.

DOMINIC

Since it's the last one and we both like banana pudding, how about splitting it with me?

BLAINE

Split it? Oh no, I don't split my desserts with strangers. But thanks anyway--

DOMINIC

Hi, I'm Dominic Rhoades.

BLAINE

Hi, Dominic, my name is Blaine.

She looks at the banana pudding with vanilla wafers around the dish and looks over at him with her eyes squinted in thought.

BLAINE

Nah, go ahead, you keep it. I just came from my pilates class. I was craving something sweet, plus my shift starts in a few minutes.

They approach the register, and she feels around in her medical coat pocket.

DOMINIC

Is there a problem?

BLAINE

I must have left my credit card in my locker.

DOMINIC

It's OK, it's on me.

BLAINE

You don't have to do that. I can run and get it.

DOMINIC

You can pay me later, I'm visiting my brother on the 10th floor.

Blaine smiles.

BLAINE

That's funny, I work on the 10th floor.

DOMINIC

You do?

BLAINE

Yes, I'm treating several patients up there.

DOMINIC

By any chance is one of your patients, Christian Morris?

BLAINE

Yes, He's one of mine.

DOMINIC

So, you're Dr. Samuel?

Dominic laughs. The CASHIER acknowledges Dr. Samuel and rings up both meals. Dominic pays for them. They take a seat at an empty table. Blaine looks at her watch.

DOMINIC

Can I ask you a question since Nurse Winters said I'm listed as his next of Kin.

Blaine takes a sip of her drink.

BLAINE

Sure...

DOMINIC

I just got here and wasn't allowed to see his chart, but how long does Christian have? I mean...

BLAINE

I know, well, I'm afraid Mr. Morris doesn't have long. I'd say a day if not sooner. He's a real fighter.

Blaine takes a bite of her meal.

BLAINE

It's just a shame he lost contact with his family.

DOMINIC

This whole ordeal has been difficult for everyone.

BLAINE

So, you're the one he's been ranting about "Dominic this, Dominic that".

DOMINIC

Really, what did he say?

BLAINE

When he was speaking, he said you two were best friends and how you saved his life in High School, something about you being his personal bodyguard and beating up the football team? Something like that...

Dominic laughs.

DOMINIC

It wasn't like that. My Brother always had a knack for taking women that didn't belong to him.

BLAINE

That's funny, he never mentioned a brother. His file only lists his mother, his sister and you as an alternate proxy.

DOMINIC

An alternate proxy? Well, it all depends on who you ask. If you'd asked my father before he passed, he wouldn't agree with that.

BLAINE

I'm sorry, what does that mean?

Dominic pauses, eyeing Blaine seriously.

DOMINIC

Because of the circumstances, I'll keep it short. Christian and I are biological half-brothers. We have the same father. Our mothers know nothing about it and neither does Christian.

Blaine mouths the word "Wow".

DOMINIC

Since I arrived, I've been beating myself up if I should tell him before he dies. I suppose it would be best if I didn't, given his frail condition, but... I'm still thinking about it.

BLAINE

That's a big secret to hold on to, Dominic. So, how did you find out he was your half-brother?

DOMINIC

After my dad died, I went through his safe deposit box and found pictures of Christian, his sister Wendy and his Mother. My Dad was a carpet salesman. He was on the road all the time. He told me he met my Mother close to where we lived. They hooked up. She got pregnant and had me the same year Christian was born. A few years later, he left Christian's Mother jumped on the number five bus and moved right in with us. Christian and I lived a few miles from each other, and we never knew.

He shakes his head in disbelief.

BLAINE

He just walked out on his family like that? What kind of man does that?

DOMINIC

I've also been trying to unravel that mystery. My Dad would get easily angered. He lost it when he couldn't have things his way. I'm pretty sure he knew what he was doing.

BLAINE

You and Christian don't have the same last name?

DOMINIC

I took my dad's last name, which I found out later he had changed from 'Morris' to 'Rhoades' after he left.

BLAINE

(stunned)

If you and Christian were best friends growing up, how come he never met your parents?

DOMINIC

He often saw my mom, and I even met his. My dad, however, was rarely home. When he was, he watched my wrestling matches from the highest bleachers. I didn't understand why until I found those pictures. He must have known Christian, and I were best friends. That's why he always looked out the window—he knew about our friendship and couldn't face him.

Blaine reaches out and touches Dominic's arm.

BLAINE

Dominic, I know we just met and clearly you love Christian very much.

DOMINIC

Yes..., yes I do.

BLAINE

So, pardon me for saying this, but I think you should tell him the truth.

Dominic looks at her.

DOMINIC

I don't want him hating me for keeping this from him... I don't know what to do. Dad passed away over a year ago and I've kept all of this from him!

BLAINE

Well, you need to decide soon. He's not going to make it till morning.

Blaine looks down at her watch again.

BLAINE

Well Dominic, my shift ends at 5:00 am, maybe we can do breakfast. My treat?

DOMINIC
 Sure, but it all depends on
 Christian.

BLAINE
 I understand.

Blaine walks toward the door and leaves the cafeteria.

INT. CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL ROOM - EVENING

An oxygen mask covers Christian's nose and mouth. The bed is automatically moving his emaciated frame from side to side.

Dominic walks into the room and observes Blaine as she stands with gloves on over Christian, listening to his heavy, congested breathing.

Blaine places her stethoscope on his chest.

BLAINE
 Your lungs are not getting any
 better. Did the Dilaudid help?

Christian nods.

DOMINIC
 It seems to have helped a lot.

Blaine looks over at Dominic.

BLAINE
 Good, you need to be still now.
 I'll be back shortly.

Dominic nods and steps back as Christian gathers himself. Christian starts coughing again and tries to sit up but doesn't have enough strength.

Christian points towards the notebook again as Dominic begins reading.

DOMINIC
 Hmm, where was I... Monica
 Williams?

FLASHBACK - INT. CONCORDIA AIRPLANE CABIN - AFTERNOON

SUPER: A Year Earlier

A super-hot, curvy, confident woman, MONICA WILLIAMS (32), African American comes out of the plane's lavatory.

She walks by Christian gently rubbing up against him and goes back to her seat in First Class.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

Monica Williams... I remembered sleeping with her. We met on a flight to Las Vegas. She was an Atlanta attorney with the law firm of White, Williams & Walters.

Monica sees Christian again and presses the flight attendant button. She nudges her girlfriend, GAIL SUMMERS (30), sitting next to her.

Christian walks down the aisle and turns off the page.

CHRISTIAN

Hello ladies, what can I get for you?

MONICA

It all depends... my friend and I were wondering; do you have any brothers? I said if not, then she's out of luck.

Monica looks at Christian's name tag.

MONICA

Christian, what a beautiful name.

CHRISTIAN

Thanks, and you are?

MONICA

I'm Monica.

Monica looks him up and down.

MONICA

You married?

CHRISTIAN

I am. And you?

MONICA

Do I look like I need to be held down?

CHRISTIAN

Looks can be deceiving.

MONICA

Christian, can you bring me and my girlfriend a glass of wine?

CHRISTIAN

What kind of wine would you like?

MONICA

You tell me, Christian, what do you suggest?

CHRISTIAN

We have a European Chardonnay, a sweet Riesling from Germany, and our signature Red Wine from Italy.

MONICA

You have an accent, where are you from?

CHRISTIAN

I'm originally from New York but live in Atlanta now.

Christian looks over at another flashing call light. He looks down at Monica.

CHRISTIAN

Call me when you're ready to order.

Monica pulls Christian towards her.

MONICA

Can I have anything I want?

Christian looks down at Monica and smiles.

CHRISTIAN

Hit the button when you've made up your mind.

Monica looks at Gail and smiles.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

It wasn't too hard getting Monica in bed --

INT. MONICA'S HOTEL ROOM (VEGAS) - LATE EVENING

A partially naked Christian is thrusting harder into Monica, she arches her back and grabs the sheets.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

She was everything I expected in bed and more. I left her asleep and flew back to Atlanta the next day. We hooked up one last time, but I didn't see her again until nine months ago. Luckily, I got her number before I left.

FLASHBACK - INT. LAW OFFICES OF WHITE, WILLIAMS & WALTERS -
AFTERNOON

SUPER: 9 MONTHS LATER

Christian walks into the law offices of White, Williams & Walters. Receptionist, VERONICA RAWLS (24), looks up at Christian.

VERONICA

Hello sir, can I help you?

CHRISTIAN

I'm here to see Monica Williams. Is she in today?

VERONICA

Ms. Williams is in a partners meeting, but I expect her out soon.

CHRISTIAN

Thank you, I'll wait.

VERONICA

Can I ask what this is in reference to?

CHRISTIAN

It's in reference to a health case she may be taking.

VERONICA

She'll be right with you. Please have a seat in the waiting area over there.

CHRISTIAN

Thank you.

VERONICA

My pleasure.

She steady watches as he walks into the waiting area. Monica appears from around the corner and peeps into the waiting area.

MONICA
Hey handsome, how are you?

CHRISTIAN
Hi Monica, you got a minute?

MONICA
I got five for you handsome, come with me.

Christian stands up and follows her down the hallway and into her office.

INT. MONICA'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Monica closes her office door and grabs him by the shirt and throws him against the door and kisses him. She reaches down and loosens his belt. Christian pushes her hand away.

CHRISTIAN
No Monica! That's not why I came here-- we need to talk.

MONICA
Did you forget how this works?

Monica kisses his neck. Christian eases her away.

CHRISTIAN
Seriously, I need to talk to you--

Christian slowly eases past her. Monica hunches back against the wall upset.

MONICA
What could be this important for you to drive all the way down here and not want to fuck me?

Monica laughs.

CHRISTIAN
You need to sit down.

Monica sits down at her desk.

CHRISTIAN
This is hard to say, so I'm just going to put it out there.
(MORE)

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)
I'm HIV positive.

Monica pauses and slowly sits back in her chair.

MONICA
You're what? Stop playing,
Christian. You're playing, right!?

CHRISTIAN
I just found out and I'm contacting
everyone I've been with.

Monica leans back on in her chair in disbelief. Tears roll
down her face as she starts to cry.

CHRISTIAN
Look, I don't know what that means
for you, but you need to get
tested.

MONICA
HIV positive, you've got to be
shitting me. This can't be
happening... No, this can't be...

CHRISTIAN
Monica, please get tested first
before you tell anyone. I'll give
you the number for my doctor. He's
discreet if you're worried about
this getting out...

Monica sits quiet, crying and shaking her head, looking at a
photo of her hugging a man, African American in his mid 40s.

CHRISTIAN
I know what you're feeling right
now, Monica. Now I have a chance to
do something right for a change.
Please go get tested.

Monica picks up the telephone and dials.

MONICA
Veronica, cancel all of my
appointments today.

Monica slowly hangs up the phone.

CHRISTIAN
Monica, besides him, is there
anybody else you need to tell?

Monica stands up and walks over to the large office window and opens the door to an outside patio.

She stands in heavy thought, tuning out Christian, looking down at the cars and people on the street.

MONICA

I'm sorry, what did you say?

CHRISTIAN

I said, is there anyone else you need to... I mean, how many men have you slept with after me?

MONICA

No one else! I only slept with you and Kevin. He's, my fiancé.

Monica bursts into tears again.

MONICA

(sobbing)

How am I supposed to tell him this, shit?

CHRISTIAN

Nothing is confirmed yet, Monica, but you have to get tested right away.

Monica wipes the tears away and looks over at Christian. She falls back into her chair and starts crying uncontrollably.

Christian sighs, drops his eyes to the ground, and walks out of the office, closing the door behind him.

PRESENT DAY - INT. CHRISTIAN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - EVENING

Dominic finishes the passage and looks over at Christian.

DOMINIC

You wrote that she didn't test positive. Man, that's great news!

Christian acknowledges as Dominic turns the page.

DOMINIC

Cathy Bishop? You slept with Cathy? Jesus...

Christian nods.

DOMINIC

Bifocal wearing, chubby ass Cathy
Bishop, you slept with her?

Christian embarrassingly nods and points to the notebook. He starts to cough. Christian waves at the notebook. Dominic reads.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

Cathy Bishop was a girl from my high school, and she didn't look the same anymore. She really grew or should I say cosmetically evolved into her looks. I ran into her at the airport, and she gave me her number.

Dominic turns the page and continues reading.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

When I got back from Italy, I called her and we met for dinner--

A heavy beat. Then...

FLASHBACK - INT. BURGERS ARE US - EVENING

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

Cathy was much different than she was in High School. She was more confident now, but also had major mental health issues too.

Christian walks into BURGERS ARE US, near their old High School. CATHY BISHOP (25) Slim, very pretty. Her face pulled tight and tucked.

Cathy is sitting by the door with phone in hand.

CATHY

I'll call you later, bye, girl!

Cathy hangs up, stands and gives Christian a hug.

CATHY

Wow. I started laughing when you told me to meet you here. I have so many shitty memories about this place.

CHRISTIAN

If you want to go somewhere else, Cathy, it's OK.

CATHY
Nah! I'll be, Ok.

They sit down in an empty booth.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
After a few too many drinks, Cathy started to tell me about her problems growing up.

An intoxicated, Cathy yells out.

CATHY
And my mom and Dad got divorced. So what about you, are you married?

CHRISTIAN
Yes.

CATHY
Anyone, I know?

CHRISTIAN
Maybe, she was Brady Lane's girlfriend. I don't know if you remember her.

CATHY
Is her name Cheryl? Head fucking cheerleader, right?

CHRISTIAN
Yes, Cheryl... We own a daycare center, and we have a 6-year-old and she's pregnant again.

CATHY
You're a father!? Christian Morris is a Father-- Wow!

Christian pulls out a picture and shows it to Cathy.

CHRISTIAN
Her name is Keshia.

CATHY
I always wondered what type of woman could tie you down. I remembered what they said about you in school.

CHRISTIAN
What did they say?

Cathy makes a horse sound and touches Christian's leg.

CATHY

They said you were like an illegal drug. Is that true?

Christian looks embarrassed. They start to laugh as Christian changes the subject.

CHRISTIAN

I can't believe how beautiful you are.

CATHY

Really?

CHRISTIAN

I remember when you wore braces and those thick glass...

CATHY

Yeah, that was a long time ago. I have 20/20 vision now, hell, it cost enough. I got picked on everyday wearing those coke bottle glasses. They told me my glasses were so thick I could see into the fucking future.

Cathy starts drunk laughing. Christian covers his mouth, but laughs too.

CATHY

I told myself one day I was going to shut those skinny ass cheerleading bitches up. Ha, now look at me!

CHRISTIAN

Still holding a grudge?

Cathy points her finger at Christian.

CATHY

(loud drunk talking)

Those stuck-up bitches don't have anything on me now! I've got hella Lipo, my face done and a full-body lift. I'm not the same fat bitch you remember in High School, am I, Christian?

(MORE)

CATHY (CONT'D)

I can't wait until I see their flabby skin, six kid having, bitch asses at the class reunion, I'll show them, but now I'm starting with you tonight.

CHRISTIAN

Starting with me, what are you talking about?

Cathy starts to slur her words and places Christian's hand on her breast.

CATHY

We're going back to my apartment, and you're gonna do to me what you did to those skinny hoes. I've got ten years to make up for, so let's go!

CHRISTIAN

Seriously?

CATHY

(forceful)

I said let's go!

Cathy stands up and picks up her handbag. Christian calls for the SERVER.

CHRISTIAN

Check, please!

INT. CATHY BISHOP'S APARTMENT - EVENING

The door to Cathy's bedroom is open, and clothes scattered everywhere on the floor.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

Cathy was drunk. I know, I should've walked away, but I couldn't resist. She got what she asked for and more.

Christian and Cathy are making love. Cathy loudly shouts and moans. Finally, she rolls off of Christian and lays in his arms and falls asleep. She starts to snore.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

I left her sleeping.

Christian slowly slips out of bed.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
 I heard from her again, but my
 flight schedule was too hectic, and
 we never got a chance to meet
 again.

PRESENT DAY - INT. CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL ROOM - EVENING

Dominic looks over at Christian with a puzzling look on his
 face.

DOMINIC
 Hey, did you go to the class
 reunion? Damn!

Christian with a sleepy and tired look, shakes his head no.

DOMINIC
 Me neither, I forgot all about it.

Christian looks away as Dominic keeps reading.

DOMINIC
 Damn, she tested positive!

Dominic keeps reading.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
 I went to tell Cathy after my
 results came back. By that time,
 I'd lost a lot of weight, and I
 didn't look the same anymore.

FLASHBACK - INT. CATHY BISHOP'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Christian knocks hard on Cathy's apartment door. Cathy opens
 the door with a large bath towel wrapped around her waist.

CATHY
 Damn, don't break down my door, I
 was taking a shower!

CHRISTIAN
 I've been leaving you messages for
 the past two weeks, why haven't you
 called me back?

CATHY
 Call you back for what, Christian!?
 I got what I wanted the last time
 we were together!

CHRISTIAN

I needed to talk to you, Cathy. I need to tell you something very important!

CATHY

(angry)

Tell me what, Christian? That you added another trophy to your mantle?

CHRISTIAN

Listen, Cathy, you started all of this, not me, but never mind that? Listen to me...!

Cathy opens the bath towel, exposing her naked body.

CATHY

Is this what you came over here for, Christian!?

CHRISTIAN

No Cathy, put your towel back on. That's not why I'm here. Please, Cathy..., I need you to sit down and listen!

CATHY

Make it fast, Christian, I have a date tonight.

Cathy sits on the couch.

CHRISTIAN

I'm just going to come out and say it, I found out I'm HIV positive, and you need to get tested right away, and you need to inform everyone you've had sex with since we've been together.

Cathy's expression rapidly changes to a sour frown and bug eyes.

CATHY

(angry)

What the fuck are you talking about!? Are you telling me that you infected me with HIV?

CHRISTIAN

No... I mean, yes... I don't know, Cathy, but you have to get tested right away.

CATHY

(angry)

Christian! You were the only one I've been with in three years.

Cathy's eyes close.

CHRISTIAN

Cathy, did you hear what I just told you?

CATHY

Yes, yes I heard you.

Cathy places her hand over her eyes, bursts into tears, and stands up.

CATHY

Christian fucking Morris. The son-of-a-bitch who never paid any attention to me in school, and when I finally fuck the first motherfucker in three years, you tell me that I may be HIV fuckin' positive!

Cathy turns to Christian with a glaring expression and pursed lips.

CATHY

(angry)

Get the fuck out of here before I kill your sorry ass!

Christian stands up and tries to comfort Cathy as he extends his arms towards her, but she pushes him away.

CHRISTIAN

I know you're upset, Cathy, but I never meant to harm you or the others.

CATHY

(angry)

Wait! There are more women!? What the fuck!? Do you go around sticking your dick in every wet hole you come in contact with!?

CHRISTIAN

No Cathy, it's not like that...

CATHY

Was I just another fucking hole to you? You careless motherfucker!

Cathy turns around and runs into the kitchen. Christian stands up and slowly eases toward the front door.

Cathy runs back into the room, holding a butcher knife in her hand.

CATHY

You inconsiderate, fucking son-of-a-bitch! If I don't stop you, you'll do this again to someone else.

CHRISTIAN

I know you're upset Cathy, but listen to me...

CATHY

Upset?! You haven't seen upset!

Cathy throws the butcher knife, just missing Christian's head. The knife sticks in the door.

Cathy runs back into the kitchen, and Christian runs out the front door. Cathy runs out of the kitchen and notices Christian has gone.

She stops and drops to the floor and cries into her hands that cover her face.

PRESENT DAY - INT. CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Dominic's mouth is agape at what is has read. He turns the page.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

When Cathy tested positive. I tried contacting her, but she wouldn't return my calls.

DOMINIC

Christian, I want to apologize for what I said to you earlier I thought you were a jerk, but I never knew you... to take responsibility for anything?

(MORE)

DOMINIC (CONT'D)
 You're dying and I'm reading all of
 this. I don't know what to say.

Dominic flips through the pages and stops. His eyes lock on
 the pages. He takes a deep breath.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
 I couldn't be selfish anymore. I
 needed to make amends and finally
 take responsibility for all of
 this. I deserved this, but not
 them.

Dominic pauses and keeps reading.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
 A really great friend once told me
 "There comes a time when a boy has
 to grow up and be a man". I've
 lived dirty most of my life, and I
 didn't care about anything. I
 especially didn't care about anyone
 who loved or cared about me. My
 family wants nothing to do with me
 except for my mom. I've become numb
 to everyone, and I guess that the
 case when you're molested.

Dominic stops reading and looks at Christian surprised with
 wide eyes and open mouth.

DOMINIC
 (surprised)
 Oh my God! You were molested?

Christian shakes his head and wipes the tears from his eyes.
 Dominic keeps reading.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
 After my father left, Momma's shift
 at work changed to nights, and she
 hired a sitter.

FLASHBACK - INT. CHRISTIAN'S CHILDHOOD HOME - NIGHT

A pre-pubescent Christian stares up at his BABY-SITTER.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
 She began rubbing me and made me
 touch her... I was only 11 at the
 time, I didn't know any better.

BACK TO:

PRESENT DAY - INT. CHRISTIAN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dominic stops reading again as Christian becomes angry as he shakes off the traumatic memory. Dominic turns the page.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

I didn't have a father like my friend Dominic to keep me safe! My mom was weak, and she wouldn't have understood any of that shit! She was always working and never around and I couldn't tell anyone.

Dominic slowly pauses as he reads the last passage.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

And I envied Dominic for having someone I didn't have in my life, a father who cared.

Dominic stands up and approaches Christian's bed.

DOMINIC

So, that explains everything. Your lack of respect for women, your lust for sex and your insecurities, but you don't need a father, Christian, to make you a good man. You should have got professional help from someone that could have helped you cope with all that shit, especially being molested as a kid! Your dad abandoned you because he was a fucking asshole, that's it! He was selfish, irresponsible and didn't care about you or your family!

Suddenly, a loud, steady TONE of the heart monitor coming from across the room, followed by the sounds of shoes SCUFFING down the hall and running into the room next door.

Christian looks over at Dominic and a sorrowful look appears. Nurse Reed enters the room.

NURSE REED

Sorry gentlemen, we have an emergency next door. I'm going to close your door.

DOMINIC
Ok, thank you...

Dominic walks over to the door, opens it and looks out to see Blaine and several Nurses come out of the room.

Blaine has her hand on an ELDERLY MAN (60's) shoulder as he is crying.

Christian turns his attention from the hallway sounds. Dominic picks up the notebook and begins reading again.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
My mom has been awesome since my diagnosis. I was scared at first, but after talking with her, she gives me the strength to fight as long as I can. She told me to keep reaching out to Cheryl to ask her to bring the girls to see me, but Cheryl never returns my calls.

Dominic glances up at Christian.

DOMINIC
Can you blame her, Christian? You gave them a deadly disease and no you're not an evil man. What happened to Cheryl and the others was your fault, but none of this has been easy for any of you.

Christian while coughing points to the notebook as Dominic continues reading.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
I'm not Magic Johnson; I couldn't afford all those expensive medications needed on a flight attendant's salary. After I left Concordia, I had to give up my portion of the medicine to save Cheryl and Aleshia. That's why my symptoms escalated. I got too sick to fly again. Then I lost weight, and the lesions showed up. I knew it was just a matter of time before someone found out, but I had to tell my co-worker, Stacey.

Christian coughs as Dominic let's out a loud sigh.

DOMINIC
Oh my God, not Stacey --

FLASHBACK - INT. CHRISTIAN'S HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Christian, dressed in his uniform, stands beside his rolling flight suitcase. He has a lesion on his face.

Stacey, also in uniform, leaves her room with her rolling suitcase. He stops her in the hallway. He sighs.

CHRISTIAN

I didn't want to tell you until we finished our flight, but I should have told you as soon as I found out.

STACEY

Found out what, Christian?

CHRISTIAN

Can we go to your room?

Stacey is half angry, half joking.

STACEY

(angry)

Damn it, Christian, you're scaring me. What is it...?

CHRISTIAN

Let's just go in and sit down.

Stacey looks stunned for a beat, then retreats into her room.

STACEY

OK. Sure.

They walk inside Stacey's room. Christian sits on the bed, and motions for Stacey to sit opposite him. Cautiously, Stacey sits. Christian stares at her.

The MUFFLED conversation is heard, followed by Stacey's shearing SCREAM.

STACEY

(scared)

No...! No! This can't be!

CHRISTIAN

Stacey, I'm sorry!

PRESENT DAY - INT. CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Christian's eyes are glassy with tears. Dominic scans the next notebook page.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
 Stacey took another flight back,
 and I had to smile for the
 passengers back to Atlanta, knowing
 that I just lost my best friend
 again. My selfishness and lust for
 sex destroyed us!

Dominic stands up and looks down at a tearful Christian with
 tears rolling down his face.

DOMINIC
 Christian! Stacey slept with you,
 too. It was mutual. Don't you know
 that things never go the way you
 want them to go, even when bad
 things happen?

Christian cries loudly with slight coughs in the middle.

DOMINIC
 I know you're scared, Christian. I
 know you don't want to die, but you
 can't spend your last hours
 remembering the pain of who you
 used to be.

Christian coughs and gasps for air, then slowly closes his
 eyes.

Dominic nods his head at a now sleeping Christian. Dominic
 eases towards the door and out into the hallway.

INT. NURSE'S STATION - CONTINUOUS

Dominic approaches the Nurse's Station, where Dr. Samuel and
 Nurse Winters are talking.

BLAINE
 (to Dominic)
 Is he sleeping?

DOMINIC
 He's trying, but he's having a hard
 time breathing. I'm going
 downstairs for some air, can I
 bring you anything?

BLAINE
 No, but thanks.

DOMINIC
 What about you, Nurse Winters?

Nurse Winters picks up another chart.

NURSE WINTERS
No, thank you.

DOMINIC
I'll be right back.

Dominic walks down the hallway to the elevators and pushes the button, and the elevator doors open.

INT. MAIN FLOOR LOBBY - NIGHT

The bell RINGS, and the elevator doors open on the main lobby. Dominic walks off the elevator and outside to the street.

EXT. HOSPITAL OUTSIDE SMOKING AREA - CONTINUOUS

The loud NOISES of cars and other street sounds fill the night.

Dominic takes out a small cigar case and looks into the window of the hospital lobby. He sees Cheryl, Keshia, and baby, ALESHIA, walking out of the Hospital Chapel. Dominic waves to get Cheryl's attention.

DOMINIC
Cheryl, hey Cheryl, over here!

Cheryl looks over and sees Dominic waving and walks over to him. Cheryl is very slim. Keshia is pushing Aleshia in a stroller.

DOMINIC
(excited)
Cheryl, How are you?

CHERYL
Hi Dominic, I'm doing the best that I can, given the circumstances. So, you've heard about, Christian?

DOMINIC
Yeah... but I didn't know he was dying.

CHERYL
How is he?

DOMINIC
Not doing well. He doesn't have
long.

Dominic looks down at Keshia with a pleasant grin.

DOMINIC
Hey sweetheart, do you remember me?
You've gotten so big.

KESHIA
You're my Uncle Dominic!

DOMINIC
I sure am. And who is this pretty
little thing?

KESHIA
That my sister, Aleshia, she's one
year old.

Dominic looks into the stroller. Aleshia looks up from the
stroller as her piercing hazel eyes looks back at him.

She smiles and bites on plastic rubber keys.

DOMINIC
Cheryl, there's still time for you
and the girls to see him.

CHERYL
We've been coming here every day,
we say a prayer in the chapel, and
we go home. I still can't forgive
him for what he's done to us,
Dominic.

DOMINIC
Nothing is going to change that,
Cheryl. I'm reading his notebook
and all the things he's been
keeping to himself for a very long
time. It's like he wrote his own
private confession. He wants
forgiveness from everyone,
especially you.

Cheryl clenches her jaw, and grabs Dominic's jacket sleeve
tightly.

CHERYL
(angry)
Don't you understand, I can't
forgive him!
(MORE)

CHERYL (CONT'D)

I can never forgive him! I don't understand it..., I've been a good wife to him! I've washed his clothes, cooked his food, and did everything I was supposed to do! I didn't deserve this! Look at me, Dominic! Look at what he did to our family!

Cheryl holds back the tears. Dominic pulls Cheryl closer and rubs her back.

DOMINIC

It's OK, I understand... Christian was just being Christian, but deep down, he's holding on just long enough to see you and the girls. He's told me everything so far, and I'm sure I'll read it soon, but how did he tell you about his HIV diagnosis.

CHERYL

(angry)

I can't ever forget that day? I was at home getting ready for work, just like any other day --

FLASHBACK - INT. CHRISTIAN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Christian is in a daze lying on the CHAISE LOUNGE CHAIR in his bedroom. He stands up and pulls down the strings on the BLINDS. Sunshine enters the bedroom.

Cheryl is getting dressed for work and sees Christian looking out of the window.

CHERYL

What time did you come to bed last night?

CHRISTIAN

About 3 am, I didn't get much sleep.

CHERYL

I need to get out of here, honey. I left some breakfast on the stove for you.

CHRISTIAN

Cheryl, there's something I need to tell you. I've been trying to gather the words. I...

CHERYL

I don't have time now, Christian. The city is sending over an inspector to inspect the daycare; then I have to get ready for a parent's meeting this afternoon; and, I need to write to the city about that broken street light. Can this wait until later?

Christian sits and takes Cheryl's hands.

CHRISTIAN

No..., No, it can't wait.

He flashes a phony grin at Cheryl.

CHERYL

Hey, I forgot to tell you, I have my first prenatal appointment on Friday, can you go with me?

Christian guides Cheryl to sit down.

CHRISTIAN

I've been keeping to myself, and I guess you're wondering what's wrong with me.

CHERYL

Yeah, but I told myself you'd talk to me when you're ready. You don't look so well, are you Ok?

CHRISTIAN

I've been stalling, trying to find the right words, but I...

CHERYL

Are you leaving us, Christian?

CHRISTIAN

No, no, Cheryl, don't be silly, but I need you to be calm, listen and hear me out, ok?

CHERYL

Ok, so what's the matter?

CHRISTIAN

I saw Doctor Anderson for my yearly physical and...

CHERYL

Is it your knee, do you need to have surgery?

CHRISTIAN

No, no, Cheryl, nothing like that.

Christian takes a deep breath and sighs.

CHRISTIAN

My blood work came back... Dr. Anderson told me...

Christian hold Cheryl's hands tighter. He clears his throat. Tear rolls down his face. He takes a deep breath.

CHRISTIAN

I tested positive.

Cheryl shrugs her shoulders.

CHERYL

Tested positive for what, cocaine?

CHRISTIAN

No, I tested HIV positive.

Cheryl snatches her hand away from Christian.

CHERYL

That isn't funny, Christian. Stop playing games!

CHRISTIAN

I'm not playing, Cheryl. I'm HIV positive.

CHERYL

Are you telling me that you have AIDS? That I have AIDS...?

CHRISTIAN

Jesus, no, Cheryl, but you need to get tested immediately!

CHERYL

Oh my God! What about Keshia and the baby? Christian..., are you gay?

CHRISTIAN
No..., Cheryl, I'm not gay! It's
complicated.

Christian takes a long beat.

CHRISTIAN
I've been sleeping with other
women.

Cheryl cries uncontrollably. She pulls away from Christian
and stands up. Christian walks towards her.

CHERYL
(angry)
You what!? You motherfucking
selfish ass piece of shit! How
could you do this to me, to Keisha
and our baby...!?

CHRISTIAN
I know you're upset Cheryl and I
just want to say I'm...

CHERYL
(angry and confused)
What, Christian?! Tell me that
you're sorry?

Cheryl leans against the wall with her eyes turned away from
Christian.

CHRISTIAN
I know I fucked up Cheryl, and I
know I haven't been faithful to
you, but I never knew this would
happen! I never meant to bring this
home to you. I was having fun and
look at what I've done! Please
forgive me. I love you! Please
forgive me, oh Jesus, please
forgive me for what I done!

Christian eases towards Cheryl. He wraps his arm around her
waist. She stifles her tears.

CHRISTIAN
(begging, pleading)
There's still a chance, but you
must get tested to make sure you
and the baby are okay.

Cheryl pushes Christian away and walks toward the bedroom
door.

She stops, glances back at Christian with a spiteful glare, moves against him, and grabs him by the collar.

CHERYL

(angry)

How many women, Christian?! How many women have you fucked?! How many others have you infected?!

CHRISTIAN

I don't know.

Cheryl SLAPS Christian's face and starts beating on his CHEST. She grabs his arm and pulls the middle of his shirt.

CHERYL

(angry)

Five, fifty, one hundred?! Does it really matter. It only takes one, Christian!?

CHRISTIAN

I know that, Cheryl. None of that matters now! I'm sorry!

CHERYL

(angry)

You're damn right you're sorry, you selfish bastard!

Cheryl runs to the closet and grabs an empty suitcase and throws it at Christian. He blocks it as it flies over his head.

CHERYL

(angry)

Pack all your shit and get the fuck out of here. Get your nasty cheating ass out, or God help me, I'm gonna kill you!

PRESENT DAY - EXT. HOSPITAL OUTSIDE SMOKING AREA - NIGHT

Keshia is standing next to Cheryl, tugging at her coat.

KESHIA

Mommy, mommy, can I have some ice cream, the machine is over there?

Cheryl reaches into her coat pocket and gives some change to Keshia.

CHERYL
Here honey, do you need help?

KESHIA
No Mommy, I can do it.

Keshia walks over to the ice cream machine, puts in the coins, and presses the button. An ICE CREAM BAR falls to the bottom of the vending machine.

DOMINIC
Look at her, she's so smart.

Cheryl wipes her face.

CHERYL
Yes, she's too smart for her age.

DOMINIC
Does she know?

CHERYL
She knows he's sick, and she's been trying to piece it all together, but...

DOMINIC
She needs to know that her father..., I mean, both her parents are sick.

Dominic looks at Cheryl's hands and face. Several small lesions are forming.

DOMINIC
Have you been taking your viral medications?

CHERYL
I ran out. Once the rumors started and the parents found out about my HIV status, I had to close the daycare center. Christian's insurance lapsed, and the medication became too expensive to buy.

DOMINIC
So, when did you last take your medication?

CHERYL
Two, maybe three weeks ago, I don't remember.

DOMINIC

(angry)

Three weeks ago!? Cheryl, didn't your doctor tell you that if you stop taking the viral medications, there's a strong chance the disease will escalate into AIDS? You and Aleshia need to get monthly checkups and get medicated, or your immune systems could become more compromised, especially after waiting this long.

CHERYL

Are you saying we could have AIDS now?

DOMINIC

I'm not saying that, but I've seen these symptoms before, and you don't look good. I know you're still upset with Christian, but he's dying up there, and the girls need to say goodbye to their father. Please don't take that away from them or him.

Dominic looks down at Keshia. She is sharing her ice cream with Aleshia. He places his hand on Keshia's head.

DOMINIC

Take care of your mommy and your little sister, Ok?

Keshia nods. Aleshia face is covered with ice cream.

CHERYL

You ready to go, honey?

KESHIA

Yes, Mommy.

Cheryl wipes the tears from her eyes and the ice cream from Aleshia's face. Keshia waves goodbye to Dominic, and they leave.

Dominic takes out a cigar and lights it.

INT. CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Several nurses and Blaine stand around Christian's bed. A full bottle of brownish bile is at the bottom side of the bed.

Dominic enters the room and sees Christian is wincing in pain.

DOMINIC
What's going on?

BLAINE
He's in a lot of pain. We're trying to drain some fluid from his lungs.

DOMINIC
Why don't you put him under, does he have to be awake?

BLAINE
If I sedate him in this present condition, there's a strong chance he won't wake up.

Dominic stares at Christian with heavy eyes.

DOMINIC
Hey.

Christian coughs, nods while giving a shaky THUMBS UP.

NURSE WINTERS
We're almost through Mr. Morris, just a little more fluid to go.

Blaine looks over at Dominic and Nurse Winters.

BLAINE
The more fluid we drain, the more fluid he makes.

DOMINIC
I know. Just make him comfortable and I'll keep an eye on him.

Blaine looks down at Christian's urine bag. The urine is dark brown.

BLAINE
Whatever you have to say to each other, you need to say it soon. His kidneys are failing.

Dominic turns looking at Christian.

DOMINIC
How ya doing, buddy?

Christian slowly nods.

Dominic moves in closer to Christian.

DOMINIC
Cheryl and the girls were
downstairs. Cheryl told me they're
here every day, praying in the
chapel.

Christian heart monitor beeps faster. Dominic pats him on the
shoulder.

Blaine walks into the room.

BLAINE
Dominic can I see you in the
hallway, please?

Dominic nods and walks out into the hallway.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

BLAINE
I just got my ass handed to me by
hospital management. Christian
signed a DNR and in it he said that
he wanted no further medical
treatments. He's here to die and I
can't give him anymore relief. I'm
sorry.

Dominic buries his head in his hands and sighs.

BLAINE
What is it?

Dominic leans forward.

DOMINIC
That's why he didn't want the
Dilaudid.

Dominic shakes his head and glances off.

DOMINIC
I should have known.

Dominic strolls back into the room.

INT. CHRISTIAN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

DOMINIC
Sorry, Christian, where were we?

Dominic picks up the notebook and begins reading.

FLASHBACK - INT. STACEY COLLINS HOME - BATHROOM - MORNING

Stacey is in the bathroom crying, smoking a cigarette and holding a handgun. She stares down at her positive test results and takes a long drag of her cigarette as tears hit the letter.

She points the gun at her right temple and steps out of frame.

A LOUD GUNSHOT is heard, followed by a loud THUMP as her body hits the floor.

PRESENT DAY - INT. CHRISTIAN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

DOMINIC
OMG! Christian... I'm sorry.

Christian coughs and looks over at Dominic wiping his tears. Dominic seeing only a few pages remaining, turns to the next page.

DOMINIC
Charlotte Stewart?

Christian's monitor beeps faster. Dominic continues scanning the pages of the notebook with intensity.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
When I met, Charlotte Stewart my
life changed forever.

FLASHBACK - INT. CONCORDIA AIRPLANE CABIN - DAY

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
I couldn't ask for a better flight.
Stacey was in rare form, flirting
with the passengers and I was
attending to a cabin full of very
fine women returning from vacation.

The low ROAR of jet engines surrounds the cabin. CHARLOTTE STEWART (45) Caucasian staggers out of the lavatory carrying small a black bag.

She sits back in her seat and nods off. She is sitting with two children, TREAT (15) and JAMIE (12). Jamie wakes Charlotte.

JAMIE

Momma, can I have a chocolate milk?

CHARLOTTE

Yeah, I don't care.

Charlotte reaches up and pushes the call attendant button. Christian walks over and turns off the call button.

CHRISTIAN

Hi, can I help you?

A groggy Charlotte wakes up, slowly scratches her arm, and looks up at Christian.

CHARLOTTE

Oh my God, look at you, your eyes are... Oh sorry yes, can I have a diet coke and chocolate milk, please?

Christian smiles.

CHRISTIAN

Nice accent, where you from?

CHARLOTTE

I'm from the Netherlands. I grew up in Amsterdam.

CHRISTIAN

Really, It's so beautiful there. So what brings you to Atlanta?

CHARLOTTE

We moved to Atlanta after the Army transferred my Husband.

CHRISTIAN

Your Husband's a fortunate man.

CHARLOTTE

He's just a man, but lucky is what he is. What's your name, cutie?

CHRISTIAN

Christian, and you are?

CHARLOTTE

Charlotte, nice to meet you.

Christian looks across the aisle.

CHRISTIAN

Are these your children?

Charlotte scratches her arm again and starts to smile, looking over at her children.

CHARLOTTE

Yes, these two baddies are mine. That's Treat over there, he's the oldest and this one next to me is Jamie, she's my baby girl. I have two others at home.

CHRISTIAN

They're beautiful like their Mother. Excuse me, I'll be right back.

Christian walks into the first-class food galley. Stacey is fixing a cocktail. He pours a diet coke and then pours chocolate milk into a glass.

STACEY

Damn Christian, did she paint on that dress? Jesus, look at her breasts! How old is she?

CHRISTIAN

She's from Amsterdam.

Christian walks back to a snoring Charlotte carrying two drinks. Christian clears his throat and Charlotte wakes up.

CHRISTIAN

Can I get you anything else?

CHARLOTTE

Well, that all depends on what you mean.

Christian looks over at the children who are busy listening to music and watching an in-flight movie.

CHRISTIAN

So, you mentioned a husband?

CHARLOTTE

We left him in Germany; he's headed to Afghanistan tomorrow for another tour.

CHRISTIAN

Wow, so what do you do?

CHARLOTTE
I'm an interior designer.

CHRISTIAN
I'm looking at remodeling my closet.

CHARLOTTE
Is it a his-and-hers closet, or a his-and-his?

CHRISTIAN
(laughing)
No, no it's a his-and-her closet.

CHARLOTTE
You never know with all the same sex relationships going on today. Maybe you can come to my office, and I'll give you a quote. I'm sure we can work something out.

CHRISTIAN
Do you have a rough idea how much is it going to cost me?

CHARLOTTE
Who said anything about money? Give me your number? I'll call you and set something up. I promise you won't be disappointed.

Christian writes his number on a Concordia Airlines napkin and hands it to Charlotte.

CHRISTIAN
Here you go Ms. Charlotte. When can we talk about my closets?

CHARLOTTE
What about tomorrow? If you're free, I'll call you around noon, ok?

CHRISTIAN
Tomorrow's good.

Christian turns to assist another passenger. Charlotte leans to the side of her seat and watches Christian walk down the aisle and into the food galley and closes her eyes.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
She called me the next day and I was very eager to get over and see her. As my mom would always tell me, never judge a book by it's cover.

EXT. CHARLOTTE STEWART'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Christian parks his car along the side of the long driveway to the house. He walks to the door and rings the doorbell. Charlotte opens the door wearing a robe with long sleeves. Christian walks in.

INT. CHARLOTTE STEWART'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Christian makes his way through the house behind Charlotte.

CHRISTIAN
Nice house.

CHARLOTTE
Thanks, it was built in the mid '70s, and it's one of the prettiest houses on the block. Can I get you anything?

Christian smirks.

CHRISTIAN
Maybe.

Charlotte smiles and they walk into the living room.

CHARLOTTE
I didn't think you'd show up.

CHRISTIAN
Why?

CHARLOTTE
I don't know. You looked so damn innocent when I saw you. Do you know you look like one of those underwear model ads? Do you do this a lot?

CHRISTIAN
What, show up at a stranger's home? Sometimes, it all depends on how I feel.

Christian listens and looks around.

CHRISTIAN
Are your kids home?

CHARLOTTE
No silly, they're in school. They
get out at 4:00, so we need to
hurry. Did you bring any condoms?

CHRISTIAN
No, I didn't bring any.

CHARLOTTE
Why not? You didn't expect to fuck
me without one, did you?

Charlotte laughs.

CHARLOTTE
I'm fucking with you, I have
plenty. Come with me.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
We went straight into the living
room and sat on the couch.
Charlotte didn't waste any time.
She pulled off her robe and as I
looked at her, I couldn't believe
she had birthed four children. Not
a stretch mark anywhere.

Christian starts to undress as Charlotte looks at him, taking
off his shirt quickly.

CHARLOTTE
Slow down, take your time. I want
to see everything.

CHRISTIAN
OK.

Christian slowly unbuckles his belt.

CHARLOTTE
(in a soft voice)
Slower.

Christian slowly takes off his pants. Charlotte takes off her
panties. She stands next to him naked. From a rearview, he
pulls down his boxers, and she looks down at him.

CHARLOTTE
Oh my!

Charlotte positions him on the couch and reaches over and pulls out a condom from a small music box on the table and hands Christian the condom.

CHARLOTTE

Now put it on.

She straddles Christian and begins to ride him up and down slowly. She goes from slow to fast. Her eyes close.

CHRISTIAN

Oh shit, stop, I think the condom broke!

Charlotte keeps moving faster and faster.

CHARLOTTE

Oh, my God! I can't stop, I can't stop, I'm, I'm...

Charlotte arches her back and flings forward as she lets out a loud yell. She continues to pump up and down on him as she climaxes.

Christian tries to hold back but can't. Charlotte falls back on Christian, jumps up and staggers into the kitchen and comes back with a hot towel.

CHARLOTTE

That was just the appetizer.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

Charlotte was like a machine, and I loved every minute of it. We met a few more times after that, but a few weeks after my diagnosis I tried to contact her and that's when I found out what she did to me.

FLASHBACK - EXT. CHARLOTTE'S HOUSE - DAY - WEEKS LATER

Christian's car turns the corner and pulls up in the driveway of Charlotte's house.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

I saw a for sale sign outside her house when I drove up.

A realtor, REBA BLAKE (35), stands outside of the front door with her back turned. Christian walks up the walkway and yells.

CHRISTIAN
Charlotte?

Reba turns around.

REBA
Hi, no I'm Reba. Are you here for
the open house?

CHRISTIAN
Open house? No. I was looking for
Charlotte Stewart, the woman who
lives here.

Reba looks somewhat surprised.

REBA
Nope, she's doesn't live here
anymore. What a shame...

CHRISTIAN
What?

REBA
You're not from around here?

CHRISTIAN
No, no I'm not.

REBA
Well, Mrs. Stewart took ill some
time ago. The rumor is she used
needles, Heroin from what I heard,
but I don't listen to gossip,
mister.

Christian looks surprised.

CHRISTIAN
Heroin?

REBA
Yeah, that's what I heard. They
said her husband had to come back
from Afghanistan to put the house
on the market. He moved her and
kids to Arizona, said something
about seeing a specialist. I didn't
know they had a specialist for
that, especially in Arizona. I
heard the husband was sick too.

Christian turns around and walks away, angrily toward his
car.

CHRISTIAN

(sotto)

Fuck... I can't believe this!

Reba yells at Christian as he gets into his car --

REBA

Are you sure you're not interested in seeing the house? I can give it to you for \$20,000 off the listing price.

Christian looks back at Reba with a hesitant glare.

CHRISTIAN

Nah...

He starts to laugh and then wipes a tear off his face as he gets in the driver's seat.

PRESENT DAY - INT. CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Christian's heart monitor beeps faster as Dominic turns the page.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)

Charlotte died a few months ago and her husband died too. I'm 95 pounds and dying because the condom broke. Ain't that a bitch!?

Christian hearing Dominic gasps and struggles for air and passes out.

DOMINIC

Christian!

Dominic runs into the hallway and yells.

DOMINIC

Dr. Samuel! Nurse Winters!

They run down the hallway and into Christian's room. Blaine looks down at Christian with a grim, knowing look.

BLAINE

It's his lungs. There's nothing else we can do.

Nurse Winters shakes her head.

BLAINE
He's here to die, Dominic, and
they're not going to approve any
more treatments.

DOMINIC
I need to contact Cheryl and his
Mother!

Blaine looks over at Nurse Winters and nods.

BLAINE
They need to get here fast, he
doesn't have long.

Blaine ushers towards Christian. Dominic leaves the room and
rushes down to the Nurse's Station.

INT. NURSE'S STATION - CONTINUOUS

Nurse Winters hands Dominic the phone numbers, and he picks
up the phone.

DOMINIC
Hello, Ms. Morris? It's Dominic
Rhoades, I'm sorry to contact you
so early, but--

Dominic exhales.

DOMINIC
Yes, ma'am, I'm the same one that
went to school with him.

Dominic nods.

DOMINIC
It's about Christian. It's time.
Please get here right away.

Dominic holds back tears as he wipes his eyes.

DOMINIC
Don't cry, Ms. Morris, just hurry,
please.

Dominic hangs up and dials another number. The phone rings.

CHERYL (V.O.)
Hello?

DOMINIC
This is Dominic, it's time.

CHERYL (V.O.)
Oh my God, is he--

DOMINIC
No, but it's just a matter of time,
if you love him then please--

Suddenly, a steady dial tone. Dominic hangs up and walks sadly down the hall toward Blaine, who is standing outside Christian's room.

BLAINE
Did you get anyone?

DOMINIC
I called his Mother and Cheryl.

BLAINE
I doubt his wife will come. I made
him comfortable. All we can do now
is wait.

DOMINIC
Is he conscious?

BLAINE
Last I checked he was still out.

Dominic nods and walks into the room.

INT. CHRISTIAN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Christian's breathing is congested, and his heart monitor is BEEPING in a slow, loud, steady beep.

Dominic puts on rubber gloves and wipes Christian's face with a wet towel. Christian opens his eyes.

DOMINIC
Hey buddy. You have a very high
fever.

Dominic places an ice cube in Christian's mouth.

DOMINIC
There's something I need to tell
you, Christian. Something that I
should have told you a long time
ago.

Christian glances up at Dominic. His breathing is weak as he fights for air.

DOMINIC

I wanted you to know that you are
my brother and I love you.

Keshia peeps around the corner and looks into the room.

KESHIA

Daddy, is that you?

Christian's face lights up with enjoyment as his eyes see
Keshia looking into the room. Keshia looks at him and backs
away, frightfully into the hallway.

CHERYL

Keshia come back. Don't be afraid.

Suddenly, Cheryl walks in pushing Aleshia in the stroller.
Christian's heart monitor beeps faster.

CHERYL

Hello, Christian.

Christian desperately tries to sit up.

DOMINIC

No Christian, you need to save your
strength. Lay down.

Christian looks upwards. His eyes roll back in his head.

CHRISTIAN

(faintly whispers)
God is good. He's really good!

CHERYL

I wasn't going to come, but...

Christian looks in the stroller at Aleshia sleeping.
Christian mumbles something.

DOMINIC

Look at your baby girl Christian;
she's beautiful. Cheryl, go closer
so you can hear him.

CHERYL

I...

Cheryl walks closer to the edge of the bed and sits down in a
chair next to Christian.

CHRISTIAN
(faintly speaking)
Look at you; you're so beautiful.
You still look like the girl I took
to the dance.

CHERYL
I do?

Cheryl looks at Christian's face.

CHERYL
Is that how I'm going to look?

CHRISTIAN
(softly whispering)
No, no, not as long as you keep
taking your medications. Do you
have enough?

Cheryl looks over as Dominic nods his head yes.

CHERYL
Yes, I have enough medication. I
made an appointment for Aleshia and
me to see the doctor next week.

Christian swallows hard. His eyes roll back in his head.

CHRISTIAN
Cheryl?

CHERYL
Yes, Christian?

Christian cries and coughs harder. He takes a deep breath.

CHRISTIAN
(faintly whispering)
I'm sorry. I know I can't erase the
hatred you feel for me. I let you
and our family down, and I
destroyed the lives of many other
people too because of my
carelessness. Please forgive me,
Cheryl, please don't let me die
hating me. Please forgive me.

Tears fall down Cheryl's face. Keisha walks back into the
room keeping her distance. She cries too.

KESHIA
Don't cry, Mommy.

Christian starts breathing heavy, trying to gasp for more air.

CHRISTIAN
(faintly whispering)
Keshia...

Keshia steps back behind Cheryl.

CHRISTIAN
Don't be scared honey, come see
Daddy.

CHERYL
Go ahead, honey, it's OK.

Keshia walks over to Christian. With all of his strength left, he reaches out and touches Keshia with his index finger.

CHRISTIAN
(slowly speaking)
Daddy loves you very much.

KESHIA
Don't die, Daddy, please come home.

Tears fall down Christian's face. Cheryl shouts out.

CHERYL
I forgive you, Christian!

Christian reaches and looks over at Keshia and breathes in one last time.

CHRISTIAN
(very weak)
Can you sing our song baby girl?

Keshia looks over to Cheryl and she nods. Keshia hesitantly and slowly sings.

KESHIA
Hush little baby, don't say a word,
Daddy's gonna buy you a Mock-ing-
bird and--

Christian lets out a deep breath then moments later a loud, steady TONE fills the room.

KESHIA
Daddy, Daddy, wake up! Wake up,
daddy!

Keshia grabs Christian's arm and shakes it.

KESHIA

Daddy, wake up! Please don't leave
us, Daddy!

Dominic picks up Keshia and hugs her. Cheryl wipes her eyes.
Just then, SOPHIE (54) and WENDY MORRIS (32) rushes into the
room.

They stop short, realizing they're too late.

SOPHIE

No... No!

Sophie drops to the floor, crying. Wendy cries and comforts
her mother. Blaine walks over and turns off the heartbeat
monitor. Dominic holds Keshia tight as they depart the room.

EXT. NOVEL HOSPICE HOSPITAL - ATLANTA - EARLY MORNING

Dominic, Blaine, Sophie and Wendy are at the main entrance.
Dominic hugs Sophie and Wendy and they depart to their car.
Dominic turns to Blaine.

DOMINIC

Thanks for taking care of
Christian.

BLAINE

Sorry you didn't get a chance to
tell him everything before he
passed. I'm sure he would have
understood.

Dominic smirks.

DOMINIC

He would've been upset, but he
would've loved to have a brother.

Blaine hugs Dominic.

BLAINE

What hotel are you at?

DOMINIC

The intercontinental hotel midtown.
I don't leave until tomorrow night.

BLAINE

How about we meet for dinner later?
I'm off tomorrow and I can show you
the city.

Dominic smiles and blushes.

DOMINIC

That'll be nice, I'll call you
later, Ok?

Blaine smiles back.

BLAINE

Ok.

In the distance, a large four door SUV pulls up to the main
doors.

DOMINIC

Here's my Uber. I'll see you later.

Blaine waves as Dominic clutching the notebook get's into the
SUV.

INT. UBER - EARLY MORNING - CONTINUOUS

UBER DRIVER

Good morning, sir.

Dominic looks at the driver and acknowledges him. He clutches
the notebook firmly and rests his head on the back headrest
and closes his eyes.

The DRIVER adjusts the REAR VIEW MIRROR and looks back at
Dominic.

UBER DRIVER

The Intercontinental Hotel,
midtown, sir?

DOMINIC

Yes.

Dominic rests his head back on the headrest and closes his
eyes.

EXT. INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL - 30 MINUTES LATER - MORNING

The Uber pulls up to the front entrance of the hotel and
Dominic exits the vehicle.

He tries to adjust the notebook and an envelope drops on the ground. Dominic bends and picks it up. The letter reads "In the event of my death, open this"

Dominic opens the envelope and pulls out a single letter which reads, "Call this number, 770-993-2241".

INT. JULES JACOB LAW FIRM - LATE MORNING

Dominic sitting in the waiting area greets LAWYER JULES JACOB (45), Caucasian.

JULES

Good morning Mr. Rhoades. Sorry we have to meet like this. Please follow me.

DOMINIC

This is a first. Why so secretive?

JULES

Mr. Morris expressed that you hear what he has to say in private.

DOMINIC

(mumbles)

Just like Secret Squirrel to be so dramatic.

INT. JULES JACOB LAW FIRM - PRIVATE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jules leads Dominic into a private room. There is water and snacks on the table. There is an ALL IN ONE DVD/VHS PLAYER on the DESK.

JULES

Make yourself comfortable Mr. Rhoades. Push play on the DVD player when you're ready.

Dominic presses play on the DVD player. Muffled audio is heard and the video fades to a seated Christian Morris.

He looks very sick. He's face is very slim, and his clothes are baggy on his skinny frame from the weight loss. His skin is pale with dark sickly circles around his sunken in face. His voice sounds weak as he speaks to Jules.

CHRISTIAN

Are we filming? We ready?

JULES

Yes, go ahead.

Christian tries to adjust his appearance.

CHRISTIAN

Hi Dominic, if you're watching this video then I'm dead. If you finished reading to the last page of my notes, you found the letter to call my lawyer. I told him not to give this video to you, unless you found it yourself. What I'm about to tell you I couldn't write down.

A beat. Christian sits up in his seat and wipes his sweaty forehead.

CHRISTIAN

I didn't know if I would see you, before I passed, but man, do I have a lot to talk about.

Christian holds up the notebook and flips through the pages.

CHRISTIAN

I'm finishing up and it should be ready for you to read soon. I put everything about what happened to me in my notebook. Please share it with everyone especially Cheryl and my mom.

Christian sighs and continues.

CHRISTIAN

When I found out I was dying, I hired a P.I to find my dad. I had to look for him, the man who abandoned me and my family. He left us with nothing and scarred me for life. A few months ago, I got a call from the investigator. He told me that the man who I called my father died a two months ago from a stroke and the reason why it took so long to find him is because he had changed his last name. He changed his name to Edward Rhoades.

Dominic starts to shake.

CHRISTIAN

He lived at your address Dominic.
He's your father. He was my father
and we are brothers.

Christian leans forward.

Dominic nods and smiles as he wipes the tears from his face.

CHRISTIAN

Once you finish reading my notes
you'll understand I'm not the same
Christian. I'm only human D and
I've made plenty of mistakes along
the way too, but hopefully my words
will help shed a better light on
what happened to me. I love you
brother. Goodbye.

INT. FRIENDSHIP BAPTIST CHURCH - A WEEK LATER - DAY

The choir ends their song. Fans are waving as many families,
and friends of Christian take their seats as PASTOR MARTIN
RAWLS (50), African American, portly build, large stature
takes the stage resting behind the pulpit.

PASTOR RAWLS

Christian Morris was small in
stature but large in personality.
Can I get an Amen.

The congregation answers in unity.

PASTOR RAWLS

He and I had many discussions once
he received his diagnosis about
what awaited him on the other side.
He promised to come back and tell
me and I begged him not to.

The congregation laughs quietly.

PASTOR RAWLS

On his death bed days before he
died, he had but one request of me.
He asked that I get Dominic Rhoades
his childhood best friend up here
to say a few words. Brother,
Dominic...

Dominic looks around nervously, rising to his feet. He glances over at Cheryl and Keisha, adjusts his suit jacket and nervously straightens his watch as he makes his way to the pulpit.

Pastor Rawls pats him on the back as they pass each other by. Dominic stands silently, looking into the crowd, searching for his words.

DOMINIC

Good Afternoon, I wasn't prepared to speak today. As usual, leave it to Christian to put me on the spot.

Some of the congregation laugh. Dominic clears his throat, struggling to compose himself and exhales.

DOMINIC

As some of you know, you can always be yourself around Christian, and he had no problem being himself around you, especially the ladies.

Dominic and the congregation laugh.

DOMINIC

He was just that type of guy. He made you feel as though it was ok just to be you. Our friendship goes way back. I've seen Christian's transition through many stages in life, and ultimate I watched him unto his death. Deep-down though he was a good-hearted, kind and loving father and husband.

Dominic clears his throat and holds back tears in his eyes.

DOMINIC

I'm going to be completely honest with you.

Dominic takes a deep breath and exhales.

DOMINIC

Christian Morris was a selfish, conceded, egotistical, and a habitual womanizer who hurt many people in life.

Dominic goes silent, swallows, and begins again.

DOMINIC

Even as he knew the end was nearing, he confided in me for once in his life to be the hero I knew he could be. He knew he'd made mistakes. He knew he hurt a lot of people, but he, I mean Christian was only human. In fact, he was by biological brother.

Sophie and Wendy look up at Dominic, not knowing where his story is going but listens. Blaine nods her head.

DOMINIC

My father David Rhoades died over a year ago. As I was looking in his safe deposit box, I found pictures of Christian and his mother Sophie. I couldn't believe it.

The audience reacts, and Sophie stands.

SOPHIE

(angry)

That's a damn lie!

Wendy angrily looks at Dominic and gently motions to Sophie to sit down.

DOMINIC

I'm not here to embarrass you or Wendy, Ms. Morris. I'm here to say my peace. I found out that my dad changed his name from Charles David Morris to Edward Rhoades after he abandoned your family. He left you and set up a brand-new home just a few miles away. The day before Christian died, I went to the hospital to tell him about this, and I just couldn't. Remembering his face when we were kids after I told him about the great time I had with my dad, not knowing that the same man who raised me was the same selfish son-of-a-bitch who abandoned you'll.

The audience reacts with surprise.

DOMINIC

(angry)

Night after night, my dad told me he loved me, but he never shared those same words with Christian, his firstborn son. It wasn't until I saw those photos that the puzzle came together for me. I finally understood the reason behind Christian's hatred for his father and how this betrayal shaped his identity.

Dominic steps down from the stage and takes Wendy's hand.

DOMINIC

I couldn't see the disappointment in his frail and dying eyes anymore. Although I let him down in death, I'm also a caring brother who cherished him deeply in life, desiring to shield him from the pain of knowing the truth on his deathbed. I'm sorry and I didn't mean to upset you, or anyone here.

Dominic looks over at Blaine and smiles.

Pastor Rawls nods to the organist to begin playing. Dominic walks off the podium, hugs Wendy. He takes Blaine's hand and hugs her.

SUPER: SIX MONTHS LATER

INT. WALTON MIDDLE SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

Keshia is standing in the hallway, rehearsing her award speech. A now healthy-looking Cheryl comes out of the auditorium and sees Keshia talking to herself.

CHERYL

You almost ready, honey? You've been practicing your speech for over a week now.

KESHIA

Yes, Mommy.

CHERYL

Ok, they're ready. Don't be afraid and remember to speak clearly.

(MORE)

CHERYL (CONT'D)
I'll be on the other side of the
curtain if you need me.

KESHIA
Ok, Mommy.

Cheryl fixes Keshia's dress and kisses her on the cheek. They walk into the auditorium.

INT. AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

The full auditorium has PARENTS, TEACHERS, and middle school STUDENTS seated in rows, facing out at an empty stage.

Sophia and Wendy are amongst them. Dominic and Blaine enter, dressed up and holding hands.

DOMINIC
(whispering to Blaine)
We made it!

They scurry quickly to their seats, just in time to see PRINCIPLE SCOTT (45) walking onto the stage and tap the microphone.

PRINCIPLE SCOTT
Ladies and gentlemen, can I have your attention? Up next is Keshia Morris. Keshia is this year's Newton Award Winner for outstanding student of the year and the recipient of the Bailey Bank and Trust young humanitarian of the year award. Please give a big round of applause for Keshia Morris.

Keshia walks down the aisle and up the stairs to the front of the auditorium stage. The auditorium's APPLAUSE is echoing as everyone in attendance stands up.

Their applause eventually settles, and everyone sits down. Keshia stands in front of the microphone.

KESHIA
I want to thank everyone at Walton Middle School and Bailey Bank and Trust for these beautiful awards. I got involved in AIDS awareness because my Mommy and Sister are HIV positive and because my Daddy died a few months ago from it.

Keshia smiles at Cheryl.

KESHIA

I didn't understand the disease at first, but now I do. My Mommy is still taking care of my little sister and me, and she has to take her medication every day, but there are still so many people out there who cannot afford the medication. That's why I decided to help those who can't afford it. I want to thank my entire school for helping raise \$40,000 for HIV medication. I want to thank my Uncle Dominic for helping me start the Christian Morris Foundation, and I want to tell my Mommy--

Keshia pauses as she wipes tears from her eyes and sniffles.

KESHIA

I want to tell my Mommy that I love her more than anything, and I want her to live a long time, so she can see us grow up.

Keshia looks upward with a huge grin.

KESHIA

And I want to tell my Dad that I love him very, very much. Thank you.

The audience stands and uproariously APPLAUDS. Sophie and Wendy wipe their tears, stand and, join in.

Dominic and Blaine clap proudly before turning to each other and share a kiss. Cheryl walks up to Keshia, drops to one knee, and hugs her.

FADE TO BLACK