

How the Light Got In

Inspired by a true story

Written by



1A INT. PARK PLAZA VICTORIA, AMSTERDAM. FIFTH FLOOR HOTEL ROOM. DAY 1A

OPENING SCENE

Film flashes "Amsterdam" on the screen

NADINE is positioned on her hotel room floor unable to move. She's an Irish/Italian, size 10 woman in her mid-forties. A pretty freckled face with green eyes and long, wavy auburn hair. She opens her eyes to find the faces of AMBULANCE TECHNICIAN #1, who speaks English as a second language, and her co-worker/friend, MADDY, who comes from United Kingdom, is also in her mid-forties, has a petite body frame and an uncanny resemblance to Julie Andrews from the Sound of Music.

AMBULANCE TECHNICIAN #1
We're going to take you out the window now, okay? It will be just a minute.

NADINE
(groggy, confused and panicked)
Wait. What? The window?
No, I don't want to go out of the window.

Maddy strokes Nadine's hair to reassure her.

MADDY
It's okay, Love. Remember, European lifts are not as wide as the ones in the US so they can't fit your stretcher in there. This is the only way. But I promise, I'll be waiting for you downstairs to make sure you get down safely before they take you to the hospital. I promise. Okay?

1B EXT. PARK PLAZA VICTORIA, AMSTERDAM. FIFTH FLOOR HOTEL ROOM WINDOW. DAY 1B

Uncertain, Nadine nods her head and they proceed. Ambulance technician #1 is helped by her colleague, AMBULANCE TECHNICIAN #2 and they attach Nadine's stretcher to a contraption that slowly extracts her from the hotel window down to the street.

Film shows blue sky and white clouds above as the stretcher makes the descent.

NADINE V.O.

There's a famous quote from Ernest Hemingway that says "We are all broken, that's how the light gets in."

I could never really relate to what that saying meant until now. I was 44 years old, in the prime of my career and on a work trip in Amsterdam, when suddenly, and with no permission from my tenacious, impatient, type A personality, the proverbial rug was ripped out from under me.

No warning. No flashing lights. Just ripped.

But I did not know at this point, that this had to happen.

This was a gift that gave me the perspective to see what's important and what's not in life. And to know what true happiness and love really looks like.

This is my story...

1C EXT. PARK PLAZA VICTORIA, AMSTERDAM. STREET OUTSIDE THE HOTEL. DAY 1C

Once the stretcher descends to the street, Maddy is at Nadine's side again stroking her hair.

MADDY

You see? Piece of cake. I knew you could do it.

NADINE

(still confused)

Where's Tim?

Maddy looks a distance to the main doors of the hotel which are crowded with onlookers, including TIM, who is in his mid-fifties, tall, slender, with grey hair and eyes that match.

MADDY

(smiling)

Tim is right over there. Can you see him? Like the good boss that he is, he's very concerned, but I told him you're going to be okay. Isn't that right? You're going to be just fine.

Nadine is preoccupied trying to find Tim.

NADINE

Will you tell Tim I'm sorry about
all of this and I will call him on
Monday when I'm back in California?

Confused, Maddy realizes Nadine does not comprehend the
severity of the situation.

MADDY

I will. But in case you're not, I'm
going to try to get a flight back
from London to come see you in a
couple of days. Will that be okay?
Tim and I have to go soon to catch
our flight to the UK, but I promise
I'll be back. Yeah?

NADINE

Yeah. I'll see you when you come
back.

Nadine begins to fall asleep as she and Maddy part ways. The
ambulance technicians put her stretcher into the back of the
ambulance and close the doors.

2 INT. ONZE LIEVE VROUWE GASTHUIS (OLVG) HOSPITAL, AMSTERDAM. 2
FOURTH FLOOR HOSPITAL ROOM. DAY

Nadine is put in an open bed closest to a wall of windows in
a four-bed room. The other three patients all vary in
severity.

Nadine spends the first three days mostly asleep in bed, with
doctors coming in to check her vitals and nurses to aid with
her bodily functions.

3A INT. OLVG HOSPITAL, AMSTERDAM. FOURTH FLOOR HOSPITAL ROOM. 3A
DAY

Nadine begins to wake and is met by a pretty nurse with brown
eyes and long, curly hair that matches her eye color. Her
name is MARIAH, and like all of the residents there, she is
of Dutch descent but speaks English as a second language.

MARIAH

Wakey, Wakey Nadine. Have you
decided to join us today?

Nadine slowly nods her head.

MARIAH (CONT'D)
Okay, then let's get you up and
showered. My name is Mariah and
I'll be taking care of you while
you're here.

Mariah helps Nadine to get seated. Nadine realizes she has no
feeling on her right side and can't move those limbs.

NADINE
(groggy and confused)
Why can't I move my right side?

MARIAH
(comforting)
The doctor will come in in a little
bit and explain everything. Okay?
In the meantime, let's focus on the
task at hand.

Mariah places her arms around Nadine's chest and lifts her
from the bed into the wheelchair that is placed next to them.
She then wheels her into an oversized bathroom.

3B INT. OLVG HOSPITAL, AMSTERDAM. FOURTH FLOOR RESIDENT BATHROOM. DAY 3B

Mariah places Nadine in front of a sink with a mirror above
it. Nadine sees herself. Her hair is matted to the back of
her head and remnants of mascara run down her face.

NADINE
My god, I look like shit.

MARIAH
Nothing that can't be cured by a
little soap and water.

Nadine appears unconvinced. Mariah wheels her over to the
shower head on the wall over top a handicap accessible shower
chair and puts the water on so it can get warm.

MARIAH (CONT'D)
Ready? Let me help you take that
gown off.

Nadine is self-conscious once her hospital gown is off since
she's naked. Mariah feels the water to see if it's warm
enough. Once it is, she begins to lift Nadine from the
wheelchair to the shower chair and begins to shampoo Nadine's
hair.

MARIAH (CONT'D)
Wow. This is so beautiful!
Is this a tribute or something?
Who is Theresa?

Nadine realizes Mariah is referring to the large tattoo on her back.

NADINE
That was my mother. She died 8
years ago.

Nadine's head is tilted downwards and she starts to cry.

MARIAH
Oh, Nadine. I am so sorry.

Nadine nods as tears stream down her face.

NADINE V.O.
My mother. I can't believe I have
to go through this, the scariest
time of my life, without my mother,
who was and will always be the most
important person in my life.

BEGIN FLASHBACK SCENES OF NADINE'S MOTHER

Nadine V.O. narrates the below scenes:

NADINE V.O. (CONT'D)
The best way for me to describe our
relationship is to use the term
Soulmates. Everyone is always
looking for their soulmate.
A friend of my mom's once told me
of a time when they were all
sitting around talking about their
soulmates.
Each woman had their own story
about the romance shared with a
man, or woman, who had ultimately
changed their life in the most
profound way. Except my mom.
Her response was very simple and
extremely unconventional.
"My daughter is my soulmate." She
said proudly.
Today, I know exactly what she was
talking about. She was my soulmate.
And suddenly I could feel her
strength and love all around me.

(MORE)

NADINE V.O. (CONT'D)

I took a deep breath, stopped my crying, and lifted my head a little to help Marian get the soap, and tears, off my face.

3C INT. NADINE'S CHILDHOOD HOME. DINING ROOM. DAY 3C

Circa late 1980's/early 1990's. NADINE'S MOTHER, who is in her 40's, is quite attractive and has all the right Italian traits; long, curly, dark hair that is big and bold, a curvy figure and hazel eyes that sparkle, is hosting her legendary Thanksgiving dinner with the dining table filled with people and food.

3D INT. NADINE'S CHILDHOOD HOME. LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN. NIGHT 3D

Circa late 1980's/early 1990's. Nadine's mother is hosting her annual Christmas Eve party with the rooms filled with people, food and alcoholic drinks.

3E INT. NADINE'S COLLEGE GRADUATION. AUDITORIUM. DAY 3E

Nadine's mother and several family member's cheering Nadine on at her college graduation.

3F EXT. DUBLIN, IRELAND. CASTLE AVE APPT BUILDING. DAY 3F

Nadine and her mother are shown standing outside Nadine's apartment building, each one carrying a box or bag and making their way into the building to setup Nadine's temporary lodging.

3G INT. JENSEN BEACH, FL. NADINE'S MOTHER'S CONDO. BEDROOM. NIGHT 3G

Nadine is seated by Nadine's Mother, staring at her as she takes her last breath.

END FLASHBACK SCENES OF NADINE'S MOTHER

3H INT. OLVG HOSPITAL, AMSTERDAM. FOURTH FLOOR RESIDENT BATHROOM. DAY 3H

Mariah puts conditioner on Nadine's hair and then soap on a sponge and hands it to Nadine so she can wash her body using her left hand.

Both finish doing their part and then Mariah turns off the water, dries Nadine off, puts a clean gown on her, helps her put on her Depends like underwear, combs her hair and moves her from the shower chair to the wheelchair.

MARIAH

Ahh. See? That's much better!

NADINE

(sarcastically)

Yes. And now I don't stink anymore.

Mariah smiles and wheels Nadine out of the bathroom.

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INT. OLVG HOSPITAL, AMSTERDAM. FOURTH FLOOR HOSPITAL ROOM. 4 DAY

Mariah wheels Nadine back to her room, and places Nadine at a table next to the windows, where Nadine can look down at the street and see the people passing by.

NADINE

Thank you, Mariah. I feel much better now.

MARIAH

You're welcome, Nadine. The doctor will be here in a bit. In the meantime, they're bringing lunch around now so make sure you get some.

Mariah pats Nadine on the shoulder and as Nadine looks up at Mariah, she can see the LUNCH LADY entering the room and making her way towards the table. The lunch lady quickly places Nadine's lunch down. Nadine thanks her, then she departs, and Nadine is left to pick at her food as she stares out of the window. Maddy sneaks up behind her.

MADDY

Hello Lovely. See anything special out there?

Nadine looks from the window and sees Maddy.

NADINE

(tearful)

Maddy! You came back!

Maddy leans down to give Nadine a hug.

MADDY

(smiling)

Of course I did. I said I would, didn't I? Besides, Tim has been a nervous wreck about not getting here himself because of his work obligations. So here I am. We didn't want you to go through this alone.

NADINE

(smiles back with tears
in her eyes)

Thank you, Maddy. I appreciate it.

Both look over at the entrance of the hospital room, where DR FIJTER is beginning to make her entrance. Dr. Fijter is petite in size and wears a tight bun of straight, black hair. The doctor smiles at Nadine and shakes Maddy's hand.

DR FIJTER

Hello. My name is Dr. Fijter, and I'm Nadine's doctor. You must be her co-worker, Maddy. Right?

MADDY

Hi. That's right. Co-worker and friend. I promised her family and friends I would be over as often as I could to make sure Nadine's okay until she gets home to the states.

DR FIJTER

Ahh, that's what I've heard. Nadine has had a major stroke, which has left her with partial paralysis on her right side. Ya? They have told you this?

MADDY

Yes, I have heard that.

Nadine looks confused as she has not been briefed yet.

DR FIJTER

It's unclear to us as to why the stroke occurred but there are a multitude of reasons that could be at the root cause...

MADDY

Yeah, I've been told that her birth father's family has a history of strokes and heart attacks.

NADINE
(alarmed)
What? They do?!

Maddy nods her head and Nadine's eyes leave them to their conversation as she reflects.

NADINE V.O.
Stupid Sperm Donor. Of course, I would get this from him. He earned that name over 25 years ago once my parents had an ugly divorce and our relationship came to a severe halt after fighting over unpaid college tuition and his future wife's lack of interest in maintaining anything from my father's past, including his daughter. I was devastated at the time, since we were extremely close and shared a bond as firm as concrete, until debt and resentful possessiveness turned it to mush.

Nadine turns back to listen to the conversation between Maddy and the doctor.

DR FIJTER
We also think that she may have developed a blood clot in one, or both, of her legs on the flight from California, and she's been on a vey robust dose of birth control for the past month, which, at her age, could also be a cause. We don't even prescribe the brand here because it's considered too strong, and quite dangerous.

MADDY
(perplexed)
You were on birth control?!

NADINE
I wanted to be prepared in case I ever met someone.

Nadine appears guilty. Maddy and Dr. Fijter try to hide their smiles.

DR FIJTER

There are a few more tests we would like to run on her, but hopefully if all goes well, we'll be able to send her back to the States within a couple of days. Plus we want to get her started with her physical therapy, although most of her progress won't be realized until she gets back home.

Nadine, the good news with your stroke is that you survived. You made it through, so don't ever forget that, and once you've made it through and you get all of the physical, occupational and speech therapies that you need, you should be able to make a full recovery. With some patients it takes six months, nine months, even more than a year to reach full recovery but they usually do get back to normal.

NADINE V.O.

Six months. I will get better in six months. I mean it can't take longer than that because I've got places to go, people to see. Men to have sex with. Well, I'd like to anyway.

Dr. Fitjer and Maddy look confused because they are unsure as to which part of her speech Nadine has latched onto.

DR FIJTER

Just be patient with yourself. Okay? You more than likely will get back to 100%, but there is no set time limit so just give yourself the time you need.

Nadine nods her head again and smiles at the doctor. Dr. Fitjer still looks at Nadine with great concern but decides to let it go. Maddy interjects.

MADDY

Okay, Dr. Fijter. Thank you.

The doctor exits the hospital room, while Mariah re-enters the room.

MARIAH

Nadine, are you ready to get back into your bed now?

Nadine nods her head.

NADINE

Mariah, this is my friend, Maddy.

Maddy smiles and reaches her hand out to shake Mariah's.

MARIAH

Nice to meet you, Maddy. Your friend has been on quite the adventure, but I can tell she's a strong one.

MADDY

That she is. She's an absolute tyrant at work.

Maddy looks pleased at the shock on Nadine's face.

MADDY (CONT'D)

(laughing)

There, there, now. It's all good.

Mariah pulls Nadine's wheelchair out so she can transport her to her bed, and then works with Nadine and her left side to finagle her back into bed. Nadine is exhausted.

MARIAH

Nadine, why don't you try to get some rest. I'm sure your friend won't mind.

MADDY

Not at all. Rest Up. I'll stay here for a little while longer and then I'll have to head back home but I'll be back in a couple of days. Okay?

NADINE

(nods her head)

Okay. Thank you so much for coming.

Maddy puts her hand on Nadine's shoulder.

MADDY

Of course, Love.

Nadine closes her eyes and drifts off into sleep.

5 INT. OLVG HOSPITAL, AMSTERDAM. FOURTH FLOOR HOSPITAL ROOM. 5
DAY

Mariah is seen helping Nadine get back into her bed. Nadine is exhausted from the different therapies she's gone through. Dr. Fijter and Maddy are off to the side, with the doctor briefing Maddy on Nadine's progress.

MARIAH
I'll bet your tired after all of
your therapies. How about some hot
tea before you go to sleep.

NADINE
(nods her head)
Can you make that tea a Long Island
instead?

Mariah looks confused.

NADINE (CONT'D)
Yes, a hot tea would be perfect.
Thanks, Mariah.

Mariah smiles and exits the room. Maddy and the doctor finish their discussion. The doctor exits the room. Maddy walks over to the edge of Nadine's bed.

MADDY
You're doing quite well with all of
these therapies. It must be tough.
And yet, you keep smiling and are
pleasant to everyone, even if they
make you do something you're not
prepared for...

Nadine raises her shoulders as best she can, up towards her ears.

NADINE
I have to, right? What else can I
do?

Maddy smiles at Nadine, whose eyes appear to be closing yet again.

MADDY
Rest up, Dear. I'll sit here for a
bit before I have to head back for
my flight.

Nadine's eyes close, and Maddy sits and observes Nadine.

6

INT. OLVG HOSPITAL, AMSTERDAM. FOURTH FLOOR HOSPITAL ROOM - 6
TWO WEEKS LATER. DAY

MADDY

(smiling)

Hey, are you ready to go home?
You've been here for almost two
weeks now and the people in the
States are getting antsy to get you
back home.

Nadine wakes up confused to find Maddy, the doctor and the
international travel nurse, SYDNEY standing around her bed,
while Mariah is busy gathering her belongings for her
departure. Sydney is Canadian, Asian descent and small but
mighty given her line of work.

NADINE

Home? I get to leave now?

DR FIJTER

Yes, you can go home now. We've
done all the tests we can do and
have started enough of your
physical therapy so that Sacramento
can take over from here. Sound
good?

NADINE

Thank you for everything, Doctor.

DR FIJTER

Of course. You take care of
yourself, Nadine, and continue to
get better. Ya?

NADINE

(mimicking the doctor's
accent)

Ya.

I mean yeah.

All 3 people around the bed smile, and the doctor says
farewell to Nadine, shakes Maddy's hand and makes her final
exit.

Mariah then comes to Nadine's bed and begins to help her get
up from her lying position so she can dress her. Sydney helps
her. Maddy stands off to the side.

SYDNEY

Hi. I'm Sydney, your travel nurse
and I'll be traveling with you back
to the states.

Nadine smiles courteously at Sydney recognizing her American accent, but then looks to Maddy nervously.

MADDY

Hey. You're going to be fine and well taken care of. Sydney will get you home and Sunny has been in touch with several members of your family, as well as your friends, so they can take turns coming out and you don't have to go through this all alone. And Sydney tells me you get to fly home first class where the seats go all the way back, so that's a plus. I wish I got to do that.

Maddy smiles but Nadine is on the verge of tears and tries to hide it. Maddy bends over to lean in so only the two of them can hear her.

MADDY (CONT'D)

Hey. Look at me. You've got this. You are one of the strongest people I know. Look at everything you've been through in the last few weeks, and you've handled all of it. You're a rock and I know you can do this. Right?

Nadine wipes any tears from her face with her left hand, straightens her shoulders and smiles reluctantly.

NADINE

Yes. I've got this.
Sydney - let's go check out that first class.

7 INT. SUTTER HOSPITAL AND REHAB FACILITY, ROSEVILLE, CA. 7
NADINE'S HOSPITAL ROOM. DAY

Film flashes "California" on the screen

Sydney stands at the side of Nadine's bed, while a NURSE begins to get Nadine situated in her hospital room.

SYDNEY

Well, you're all set now so I think this is where I make my exit.

Sydney puts her hand on Nadine's shoulder. Startled by her touch, Nadine looks up to see her bright smile.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

You okay?

NADINE

I am. Thank you!

Sydney squeezes Nadine's shoulder one last time and walks towards the exit. She then turns around to Nadine to smile and wave. Nadine smiles back but is quickly distracted by SUNNY, CINDY, DAVE and JOEL waiting to enter the room and making their entrance. Sunny is 6' tall, and beautiful with her light green eyes and long, brown hair. Dave is Sunny's match, with height and good looks, as is Joel. While Cindy is shorter in height, curvier in body shape, but just as pretty.

SUNNY

Nay! You scared the hell out of us!
Don't ever do that again. You hear
me?

Sunny hugs Nadine. Her eyes are red and puffy from crying.

NADINE

I'm so sorry, you guys. But I loved
Amsterdam so much that I had to
find some reason to stay longer.

SUNNY

Yeah, yeah. No jokes from you right
now, Missy.

Nadine gives a slight smile to Sunny and then gives hugs to the rest of the party, starting with Cindy, then Dave and Joel. As she finishes, all 4 of them try to make small talk, when a crotchety and impatient NURSE #1 comes into the room.

NURSE #1

There's not supposed to be more
than two people visiting at a time.
Some of you will have to leave.
Nadine's got a big day tomorrow
with PT and needs to get rest.

Nadine looks at the nurse with raised eyebrows and slanted lips. Cindy laughs quietly under her breath.

CINDY

We were just saying our goodbyes.

Everyone gives Nadine a hug/kiss and begins to follow the nurse out of the room. Sunny is the last one to get to the door and tells Dave to go ahead without her.

She closes the door and turns to face Nadine, then takes a deep breath and slowly approaches Nadine. Nadine V.O. chimes in as Sunny walks towards her.

NADINE V.O.

Ahh Sunny. She is, in fact, one of the most beautiful people I know. We've been best friends for over 10 years now and I swear she was sent to me through my unwavering prayers, because God couldn't take hearing anymore about my need for a friend not related to work. And don't think for a second that Sunny wasn't behind everything post stroke, making sure all of the dots were connected, because that's what she does, always, and I'd be lost without her. I hope she knows it. Especially now.

Sunny grabs the chair next to Nadine's bed, sit down and begins to speak.

SUNNY

Now listen to me, Nay. I know that you and I will continue to have our never-ending argument about why bad things happen to good people. You can tell me that it is God's way and that something good will come from it. You can tell me that and I will still argue with you. I will still argue with you, because this should not have happened to you. Not you, of all people.

Sunny paused, and Nadine starts to cry. Sunny too has tears in her eyes but takes a deep breath and continues.

SUNNY (CONT'D)

So, I say we forget about all of that for now and get on with it. Yeah? You know you can get through this and will be fine. Better than fine. Right?

NADINE

Right. Good God, I said I wasn't going to cry over this anymore!

Nadine wipes the tears from her face with her left hand.

SUNNY

(smiling)

Aww. It's okay to cry now. We can do that. But tomorrow...

NADINE

Yes. Tomorrow, no more tears.

Both nod their heads, hug and Sunny gets up and starts to walk towards the door.

SUNNY

See you first thing tomorrow?

NADINE

Yes, tomorrow!

Sunny walks out the door and Nadine is left alone to wipe her face dry and think about what's ahead.

8 INT. SUTTER HOSPITAL AND REHAB FACILITY, ROSEVILLE, CA. 8
NADINE'S HOSPITAL ROOM. DAY

Nadine, dressed in a workout outfit, sits in her wheelchair next to the hospital bed and rummages through her purse with her left hand. She finds a compact mirror and holds it up to her face. Tiny black hairs are found on her chin and above her lip. Sunny walks into the room to bring in clean clothes and places them in a drawer in the cupboard against the wall.

SUNNY

Good morning!

NADINE

Sunny! Never, ever let me be seen with these hairs sticking out of my face. You hear me?! My god, I look like Sasquatch!

Sunny smiles at Nadine and then watches her try to position the mirror on the tray next to her bed with her left hand so she can try to shave the hairs with a razor. Nadine becomes very frustrated.

SUNNY

Do you need help, Nay?

NADINE

Yes, please.

Sunny begins to shave the pesky hairs, when BONNIE enters the room, with a perplexed look on her face but then realizes what's happening and smiles.

Bonnie is a NY transplant and it shows in her appearance, with dark hair, Italian coloring and an accent that she could never get rid of.

BONNIE

You must be Nadine. I'm Bonnie and I'll be responsible for your physical therapy while you're here, plus I'll also get you set up with the occupational and speech therapies as well.

NADINE

(hesitantly)

Where are you from?

BONNIE

Long Island, New York. Why?

NADINE

Because I'm from New Jersey and can recognize a fellow Northeasterner any day.

BONNIE

Ahh. Well then, you'll know that it may sound like I'm yelling at you but I'm really not.

Sunny smiles with apprehension but Nadine is fully on board.

NADINE

Yep. You are my people.

BONNIE

(smiles)

Right.

Now the traditional stay here is 2 weeks, then you should be ready to go home and make do there.

So, what do you want to accomplish in the next two weeks?

NADINE

I want to be able to walk normal again.

BONNIE

Okay. Then let's get started.

Bonnie wheels Nadine's wheelchair out of the room, as Nadine stares back at Sunny, smiles and waves goodbye. Sunny smiles and does the same.

BEGIN US THERAPY MONTAGE

Montage music begins to play.

9A INT. SUTTER HOSPITAL AND REHAB FACILITY, ROSEVILLE, CA. 9A
PT/OT MAIN ROOM. DAY

Nadine is shown with a US OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST trying to use her right hand for different tasks and makes a little more progress than in Amsterdam but her movements are still extremely limited.

Nadine is shown with Bonnie and a US PHYSICAL THERAPIST doing various physical exercises using her right leg. She is assisted at all times and seen on the parallel bars, walking up and down 4 stairs and walking just a few steps before she is exhausted.

9B INT. SUTTER HOSPITAL AND REHAB FACILITY, ROSEVILLE, CA. 9B
DAY

Shows Sunny's daily visits (sorting through insurance and short-term disability paperwork with Nadine as well as playing card games and doing crossword puzzles), as well as Cindy and Joel visiting.

9C INT. SUTTER HOSPITAL AND REHAB FACILITY, ROSEVILLE, CA. 9C
SPEECH THERAPY ROOM. DAY

Nadine is shown with a US SPEECH THERAPIST doing different vocal exercises and playing word games. The US speech therapist notices something and smiles.

NADINE
(confused)
What? Why are you smiling?

US SPEECH THERAPIST
Do you curse a lot?

NADINE
Curse?

US SPEECH THERAPIST
Yes. Almost every time I ask you to solve a word puzzle, you anxiously say 'shit' before you say the word you're supposed to.

NADINE
Oh. Really?

US SPEECH THERAPIST
 (smiling)
 Yes. You do.

NADINE
 (smiling)
 Well that's not the worst curse
 word I know so you should be glad I
 chose that one.

Nadine and the US Speech Therapist laugh.

END US THERAPY MONTAGE

10 INT. SUTTER HOSPITAL AND REHAB FACILITY, ROSEVILLE, CA. 10
 NADINE'S HOSPITAL ROOM. DAY

Nadine is seen in her room alone, standing with her weight on her left side and trying to reach for a pillow in one of the cupboards above. Nurse #1 comes in the room.

NURSE #1
 What do you think you're doing?!

Nadine freezes in her pose.

NADINE
 Getting an extra pillow?

NURSE #1
 You can't be doing that unattended!
 Never attempt to do anything like
 that unsupervised. Understand?

Nadine nods her head and stops. She retreats back into her wheel chair, while Nurse #1 gets the pillow for Nadine. Nurse #1 then places a bright orange band around Nadine's waist and leaves the room. Nadine has a disgruntled look on her face.

11 INT. SUTTER HOSPITAL AND REHAB FACILITY, ROSEVILLE, CA. 11
 NADINE'S HOSPITAL ROOM. NIGHT

Nadine is in her bed and is aggressively pressing the nurse's button because she needs help getting to the bathroom. She waits forever, and pushes the button again, but decides to try to get from the bed to the wheelchair on her own. She's halfway there and nurse #1 comes in.

NURSE #1
 Nadine! I thought I told you you're
 not allowed to do things
 unattended?!

NADINE

Well unless you guys don't mind me
peeing in my bed or on the floor,
then I suggest you answer the
buzzer quicker than this!

Nurse #1 is shocked at Nadine's sarcastic rebuttal. She helps Nadine get to her wheelchair and then places the bright orange band around Nadine's waist before taking her to the bathroom.

12 INT. SUTTER HOSPITAL AND REHAB FACILITY, ROSEVILLE, CA. 12
NADINE'S HOSPITAL ROOM. DAY

Nadine is her wheelchair next to her bed, dressed for the day with the orange band attached. Bonnie comes in with a smirk on her face, eyeing Nadine's waist. Nadine looks at her confused.

BONNIE

Nadine, do you know what the belt
means?

NADINE

(looks down at her waist
confused)

No. That I'm special?

BONNIE

(smiles sarcastically)

No. Although no one would question
that you are, in fact, special, the
belt has been put on you whenever
you are caught trying to do
something on your own and
unattended. The last time they
caught you, you were trying to get
out of your bed alone and go to the
bathroom...

NADINE

Well, I had to pee, and I pressed
the call button twice and no one
was coming. And I didn't want to
pee on the floor, now did I?

Bonnie raises her left eyebrow, staring at Nadine.

BONNIE

Another time you were trying to
stand out of your wheelchair to get
something from one of the wall
cupboards.

NADINE

I wanted to get an extra pillow?

Bonnie struggles not to smile. She looks down at Nadine, shakes her head and begins again.

BONNIE

You can't do this. Aside from the liability that you are putting SRI under, we don't want you doing anything that is going to bring more damage or set you back farther than you are now. Do you get that? They've decided to keep you here longer than two weeks because of all of this. Understand?

Nodding Nadine's head, she regretfully agrees.

BONNIE (CONT'D)

I wish I had an answer for you or a magic wand that could make this go away, but I can't. You're going to need help. I know that's hard to accept given your independent nature but for now, you need it, so you have to ask. Okay?

NADINE

Okay.

BONNIE

Okay. Good.

Bonnie stares at Nadine for a long moment. Nadine looks vulnerable and squirms in her seat. Sensing Nadine's uneasiness, Bonnie smiles, and turns around to leave her room.

NADINE

Hey Bonnie?

Bonnie turns around with a smile on her face.

BONNIE

Yes?

NADINE

Thank you for letting me know.

Bonnie nods her head and US Physical Therapist comes in to get Nadine for the day's activities. All 3 leave the room at the same time.

13

INT. SUTTER HOSPITAL AND REHAB FACILITY, ROSEVILLE, CA. 13
NADINE'S HOSPITAL ROOM. NIGHT

Nadine lies awake in her darkened room.

NADINE V.O.

Tomorrow's the day I finally get to go home. I've learned my lesson and haven't done anything else on my own, even though I get frustrated at times waiting. I mean seriously. Don't these people know that patience and I are not friends.

Too anxious to sleep, she realizes she has to go to the bathroom. She presses the nurse's button and waits. After pressing the button one more time, NURSE #2 enters the room. She is of Asian descent, speaks English as her second language and is the absolute opposite of ornery nurse #1; her demeanor is sweet and caring.

NURSE #2

(speaks cheerfully, but quietly due to the time)
Hello, Ms. Nadine, did you need something?

NADINE

(mimicking the nurse's low voice)
Hey. I have to go to the bathroom. Can you help me?

NURSE #2

Sure. Sure. Let me get your wheelchair.

Nurse #2 grabs Nadine's wheelchair from the corner of the room and brings it to the side of the bed.

NURSE #2 (CONT'D)

Ready?

NADINE

Ready.

Nadine transfers herself from the bed to the wheelchair. Nurse #2 stands close by and watches.

NURSE #2

Good job!

NADINE

Thank you. Thank you.

Nurse #2 wheels Nadine to the outside of the bathroom and helps her to stand up and walk inside to the toilet. Both are winded from the effort. Once there, Nurse #2 stands at the doorway to watch.

NADINE (CONT'D)
I think I might be a while so it's
okay if you wait outside.

NURSE #2
(confused)
Are you sure, Ms. Nadine? I can
wait here.

NADINE
I'm fine. I'll call when I need
you.

NURSE #2
(suspiciously)
Okay. I have to check on another
patient and then I'll be back.
Yeah?

NADINE
(smiling)
Yes. Go. I'll be right here.

Nurse #2 waits another second and then is gone. She leaves the bathroom door cracked open so Nadine could be heard when she was through. Nadine is seen waiting for a few seconds and then relieves herself. Once finished, Nadine flushes the toilet and waits for Nurse #2 to take the queue that Nadine is ready to return to bed. Listening carefully to what's on the other side of the door, Nadine hears nothing.

NADINE (CONT'D)
(speaks softly)
Hello?

Waits two minutes more, and repeats.

NADINE (CONT'D)
Hello?

The toilet seat is now making a U shape on Nadine's butt, and she wants to get up.

NADINE (CONT'D)
Hello, Nurse?

There's no response, so Nadine decides to get up on her own. She leans with her left hand to make contact with the shower wall bar next to the toilet.

She tries to pull herself up with her left side but is unsuccessful. She tries 3 more times and is finally successful on her fourth try. She is now in a standing position, but needs to walk to the bathroom door so she can reach her wheelchair on the other side.

From the current stance, she can see her right leg is in its normal kick-stand position, meaning her left leg is standing regularly, while her right is intensely off to the side, and she somehow must get it to a normal state and then move it forward to take a step. When she tries, she fails miserably and ends up falling on the ground. There's a big crash and she tries to pull herself back up when she hears Nurse #2 enter.

NURSE #2
(panicked)
Oh no! Ms. Nadine are you all right?

NADINE
I'm all right. Just couldn't get my bearings.

NURSE #2
Let me go get help!

Nurse #2 turns to run to get another nurse.

NADINE
(desperate whisper)
No!!!

Nurse #2 stops dead in her tracks and looks at Nadine confused.

NADINE (CONT'D)
Now listen, you can't tell anyone about this, because they won't let me go home if you do. Understand? No one needs to know because I want to go home. They'll want to keep me here longer, but I've been here long enough. Got it?

Nurse #2 looks conflicted.

NADINE (CONT'D)
Please! Help me.

Nurse #2 decides she will help Nadine and nods her head.

NURSE #2
C'mon. Let's get you back to your
wheelchair.

NADINE
Oh my God. Thank you!

Nadine has tears of gratitude lining the edges of her eyes. Nurse #2 nods her head and navigates Nadine to her wheelchair and then back into her bed. Once Nadine is tucked in, Nurse #2 starts to leave the room. Nadine grabs Nurse #2's right arm with Nadine's left hand. Nurse #2 turns to look at her.

NADINE (CONT'D)
What's your name?

NURSE #2
Alice.

NADINE
Alice, thank you. You have no idea
how much this means to me.
Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Nurse #2 nods her head and pats Nadine's left hand.

NURSE #2
(smiling)
You're welcome.

Nurse #2 quickly turns and leaves the room.

NADINE V.O.
Shit.
Shit.
Shit.
Well, that was a dumbass move to
make now wasn't it?! Too bad that
your ass was getting too sore from
sitting on the toilet. You should
have waited! You impatient loser.
But that's okay. Danger diverted,
thanks to Alice. My sweet savior,
Alice. Let us give thanks to Alice.

Nadine begins to fall asleep, knowing that tomorrow she will
be able to go home.

Nadine is seated in her wheelchair in her living room, with
the front door open and Sunny is standing at the entrance.

Outside, Dave pulls up in his truck with AUNT RITA, MARIE and AUNT KATHY inside. Aunt Rita is in her early 70's and resembles Bette Midler in every sense of the word. Aunt Kathy is also in her early 70's and resembles Kathy Bates, while Marie is much like Sunny. She too is 6' tall, and beautiful, but a lighter version with blonde hair and fairer skin.

They start to get out of the truck when Nadine V.O. speaks and the film zooms in on each one as they are spoken about.

NADINE V.O.

I've been home now for at least 4 weeks with several people coming to lend a hand. There was Lisa and Alex, both co-workers who have become lifelong friends; My brothers, Vinnie from Arizona and Jimmy from Florida, and now these three.

Aunt Rita, who comes from New Jersey, was my mother's best friend since they were 20 something, and the closest thing I have had to a mom since my mother's passing.

Marie, also from New Jersey, and has been a best friend since we were babies. Like Sunny, she is one of the most beautiful creatures I know of, and she was also especially close to my mom, sharing the same birthdate, which is a bonus.

And finally, Aunt Kathy, from my paternal side. She lives in Arizona and remains close to me, despite her ill-fated relations with the Sperm Donor. Aunt Kathy always reminds me to think of my father as someone with a rather large cast... on his head... that makes it hard for him to function normally, like the rest of us.

Sunny greets them all as they walk in. Everyone looks to Nadine and hides their surprise at her handicapped appearance, except Aunt Rita.

NADINE

Aunt Rita, you're not supposed to look at me like that.

AUNT RITA

What? Like what? I wasn't looking at you funny.

NADINE

(smiling)

You weren't? Because I could have sworn you were looking at me like I was handicapped or something.

AUNT RITA

(panicked)

Well, that's just a temporary thing. Right? They said this is temporary. Didn't they?

AUNT KATHY

You look great to me.

Aunt Kathy bends down to kiss Nadine. Marie does the same.

SUNNY

Nay, I'm going to head out now so you can spend time with these special ladies but I'll come by tomorrow. Okay?

NADINE

Okay, Sunny. I'll call you later.

They all exchange good-byes and Sunny and Dave exit.

NADINE (CONT'D)

C'mon then. Someone needs to wheel me around my house so I can show you where you'll be sleeping and what kind of exercises the PT people have given me.

Marie wheels Nadine into the next room, with Aunt Rita and Aunt Kathy following behind, commenting how much they like Nadine's house.

15

INT. HOME, LINCOLN, CA. KITCHEN. DAY

15

The 4 of them, plus Sunny, are sitting around the kitchen table playing Quibble. Aunt Kathy brings up Nadine's father, aka Sperm Donor.

AUNT KATHY

So, your father called today... That's the phone call I took in one of the guest bedrooms earlier.

NADINE

(says jokingly to hide
her apprehension)

Ahh... so it wasn't a potential man
then...

Sunny and Marie look at each other and smile to Nadine to give her comfort, while Aunt Rita's left eyebrow is arched, and her glance is piqued waiting to hear the rest of what Aunt Kathy has to say.

AUNT KATHY

No, no, no. It was a man but not
one I'd want. Just your father.

Everyone laughs at her comment.

AUNT KATHY (CONT'D)

He's very worried about you.
Ironically, he called me right when
I had gotten the news of you in
Amsterdam, so I was able to brief
him then, and now he called again
because he knew I was coming to see
you. He feels bad and partially at
fault since the heart problems and
strokes seem to come from our side.
We all have something. I didn't
know this until recently, but your
father had to get a pacemaker put
in and he's been in and out of the
hospital with congestive heart
failure ever since.

NADINE

(jokingly)

Good God, we're all a mess.

AUNT KATHY

Yes, we are. Anyway, he wanted me
to let you know he was thinking
about you.

NADINE

(hesitantly)

You can tell him he can contact me
if he wants.

AUNT RITA

(dumbfounded)

Wait. What? Are you serious,
Princess?

NADINE

I am. I could be dead right now,
Aunt Rita, and we wouldn't be
having this conversation...
For so many years I worried about
him going first and me not being
able to make peace.
And now, well, it could have been
the other way around. But I have a
say in that. It's time. I truly
believe that. I don't want to have
any regrets, so again...

Aunt Rita stares at Nadine with great concern, while Marie,
Sunny and Aunt Kathy look on.

AUNT RITA

I don't know. Marie, what do you
think?

MARIE

(hesitantly)

I trust Nadine.
If she feels she's ready, then
she's ready. Just remember, your
life turned out very well whether
he was in it or not, and we have no
idea what his life has been like so
just try to be a light in his.

AUNT RITA

A light?! What do you mean, a
light? You mean like light a fire
under his ass... Is that what you
mean? That must be what you mean.

Everyone laughs.

AUNT RITA (CONT'D)

Sunny? Anything you'd like to add?

SUNNY

(like Marie, she
hesitates)

Umm... What Marie said.

AUNT RITA

Right, well I can see I'm
outnumbered here. Just be careful.
I'll kill him if he hurts you
again.

Aunt Rita pushes her nose up in the air, to let everyone know
she's not joking.

Everyone smiles and picks up their cards they have just been dealt. Nadine leans over and puts her left hand on Aunt Rita's arm.

NADINE
He won't. I promise.

Nadine retracts into her normal sitting position and looks over to Aunt Kathy.

NADINE (CONT'D)
Tell him to contact me.

AUNT KATHY
Will do. I will let him know the next time we speak.

Aunt Kathy looks to Aunt Rita as she has the same concerns, but she has left the decision up to Nadine.

NADINE
So are you all packed and ready to go for tomorrow? You must be sick of me after the past two weeks.

AUNT RITA
We are. Well I am anyway. Sick of you, I mean.

Aunt Rita gives Nadine a sarcastic smile. Nadine smiles at her the same.

AUNT RITA (CONT'D)
I'm kidding!
Are you ready for Vince to come tomorrow?

Aunt Rita looks again to Nadine with a sarcastic look.

NADINE
What?

AUNT RITA
What? I didn't say anything.

NADINE
(smiling)
Yes. I'm ready.

The ladies finish their round of cards.

16

INT/EXT. HOME, LINCOLN, CA. LIVING ROOM. DAY

16

Nadine is seated in her wheelchair in her living room, with the front door open and Sunny standing at the entrance. Outside, Dave pulls up in his truck with VINCE inside. Vince is a good looking man of Italian descent, but from the northern part, so his coloring is lighter. He has grey hair that is balding, light blue eyes and a medium build.

As Vince gets out of the truck, he heads towards the front door and begins to enter as Nadine V.O. narrates:

NADINE V.O.

Dad. My 'dad' is my stepfather, Vince, and has been in my life since my mid-teens.

My mother had to sort my financial care with the Sperm Donor via Lawyers, Judges and Court systems, but Vince was happy to be a father to me in every other sense of the word, and all feelings of abandonment from my real father were quelled for the most part by Vince.

He wanted to come from Florida, where he and my mom retired, to be with me earlier, but the rest of the family delayed him until he could come to stay long-term.

VINCE

Honey! Let me get a look at you!

Nadine smiles at Vince because she can tell at first sight that he has been crying from constant worrying. He leans in frantically to hug and kiss Nadine.

NADINE

I'm fine, Dad.

VINCE

Are you sure?

NADINE

Yes, Dad. I'm fine. I promise.

VINCE

Okay. Don't ever do that again. I was worried sick and couldn't get to you and...

The tears begin to well up in his eyes.

NADINE

Dad.

This is Nadine's final attempt to make him stop.

VINCE

Okay. Okay.

Dave brings Vince's suitcase from outside to inside the house and wheels it to the middle of the room.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Oh, thank you, Dave.

Vince reaches into his pocket to grab his billfold and tries to slip Dave a \$20 bill.

DAVE

What's this?

NADINE

Dave, that would be my dad trying to slip you a tip for all that you've done today. That's how the Italian men do it back east.

Dave and Sunny both smile.

DAVE

No, no, you keep your money. It was my pleasure.

VINCE

Seriously, I want to do something for you two. You've done so much to care for Nadine.

Vince and Dave begin to argue back and forth while Sunny and Nadine smile.

NADINE

Dad. Keep your money. I'll find a way to repay Sunny and Dave for everything. And you can't be offering to tip everyone. That's not how it's done out here. We have to go to my first out-patient PT session tomorrow. Are you going to be offering them a tip too?

VINCE

Will they take one?

Nadine looks at Sunny and Dave and then shakes her head.

NADINE

No! Seriously... I will tell you when it's appropriate to tip someone. Otherwise, don't do it. Got it?

VINCE

Okay. Okay.

NADINE

Now let's show you my house.

Vince begins to look around while he pushes Nadine's wheelchair further into the house and Sunny and Dave follow behind.

VINCE

Honey, this is lovely...

17A INT. SUTTER OUT-PATIENT REHAB CENTER, ROSEVILLE, CA. 17A
FACILITY. DAY

At the entrance there is a check in counter for the patients to wait, and towards the back, a large room with knee height tables for stretching and toning patients, exercise bikes and funny looking workout equipment that requires staff supervision.

Vince paces the floor of the large room, looking at the other patients while Nadine meets NERISSA for the first time. Nerissa is in her mid-thirties, and is a lesbian of Hawaiian/Philippian descent so her skin always looks sun-kissed.

They're in one of the small evaluation rooms off to the side. Nadine is accompanied by her cane and an ankle-foot-orthosis (AFO) and is reacting strangely to something that Nerissa has just said.

NADINE

Six months to a year?

NERISSA

Well, I said 6 months to a year, but it will probably be more like 6 months.

NADINE

And when you say 6 months, do you mean from today or from when I had the stroke?

NERISSA
(hesitantly)
From today.

Nadine looks at Nerissa and then squeezes her forehead together with her left hand.

NERISSA (CONT'D)
Hey. What's wrong?

NADINE
Sorry, Nerissa. I just figured I'd be done with this by the time I hit the 6-month mark but it's proving to take a bit longer, that's all.

NERISSA
Ahh. Well, there are no guarantees. We can only do our best. Right? So, I say 6 months from today, but you can do what you can to prove me wrong and make it faster. Deal?

NADINE
Deal.

Nerissa takes Nadine out into the large room and begins to work her PT magic.

17B INT. SUTTER OUT-PATIENT REHAB CENTER, ROSEVILLE, CA. 17B
FACILITY. DAY

Nadine (wearing different clothes for each visit) is with 3 different PT people (including Nerissa) to show her progress, which has her walking with a cane, an AFO and a slight rise in her right hip by the end of PT sessions, and she can move her arm and hand, but struggles to write and type with her right hand. Nadine's dad is always there to show his support and be her chauffeur.

18 EXT. TWELVE BRIDGES LIBRARY, LINCOLN, CA. PARKING LOT. 18
DAY

Nadine convinces Vince to take her out driving. The car is in one of the empty parking spots. Vince is seated on the passenger side, while Nadine sits in the driver seat. She is preoccupied with the car's controls and steering wheel since it's been months since she drove.

VINCE

The library is closed today since it's Sunday and the parking lot is empty. So I just want you take your time and breathe.

Nadine nods her head. She takes a deep breath, carefully puts her right foot (AFO on) on the brake, with a little help from her left hand, then puts the car in reverse.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Now ease your foot off the brake so you can begin to back up.

Listening to her dad, Nadine drags her foot off the brake as slowly as possible until the car begins to reverse.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Good job!

Smiling back at him, Nadine puts her foot on the brake yet again, shifts the gearshift into drive, eases her foot off the brake and drags it over to the gas pedal so she can begin to move the car forward. Her foot makes too much contact with the gas pedal and the car takes off.

VINCE (CONT'D)

(quietly shouts!)

Easy! Easy!

Dragging Nadine's foot off the gas and on to the brake, both jerked forward in their seats from the drastic change. Vince is now sweating and his breathing becomes staggered.

NADINE

You okay, Dad?

VINCE

Yeah, yeah. Let's just get the car back to its parked position. Okay?

NADINE

Got it.

Vince has had enough for the day. So has Nadine's right foot. He takes his hanky out of his shirt pocket and wipes his brow, puts it back from where it came from and then braces his arm against his door to make sure he's ready for impact, in the event there is any.

Nadine takes her foot off the brake, the car eases in the direction she has turned the steering wheel, and she eases her foot on the gas pedal.

Slowly the car eases into the parking space, but as she attempts to take her foot off the gas pedal, it slips downward into full throttle and the car takes off, up the curb and into the bushes and freshly planted flowers.

VINCE
(screams as he's in full
panic mode)
Jesus Christ! Take your foot off
the gas pedal!

Listening to what he says, Nadine's foot is now on the brake and the car has slipped back from the shrubbery to the actual parking space. Again, he takes his hanky out and wipes his brow.

NADINE
(smiling and trying to
hide her laughter)
Now that was funny. Wasn't it?

VINCE
(sarcastic)
Real funny, Honey.

NADINE
Right. So, what have we learned
from this driving fiasco today? We
have learned that my right foot is
not strong enough to manage it...
yet. So, when do you think we can
practice this again? Tomorrow?

VINCE
Ha. We'll see. Maybe not tomorrow.

Nadine looks at Vince and although he still seems to be a little shaken, she must push on as it is one of the keys to having her independence back.

NADINE
Dad? Although I totally appreciate
everything that you've been doing
for me while you're here, you know
this is only temporary, right? It
should be your mission to think of
all the things that I'll have to do
on my own once you're gone, and
make sure that I'll be able to do
them. I need to get my independence
back, and I'll need your help to
make sure that happens. Understand?
You've got to let go a little more
so I can fly.

VINCE

I understand that honey, but I don't want you to get killed in the process. I mean look at that bush and those flowers that you destroyed over there.

NADINE

True. All right then. I think we've both made our point. Maybe we'll take tomorrow off. But the day after that.

Nadine smiles at Vince, who offers her a quip.

VINCE

Fine. Now switch seats with me so my blood pressure gets back to normal again.

For the rest of the film, and whenever Vince is with her, Nadine is seen driving while Vince is tense in the passenger's seat, bracing himself just in case.

19A INT. HONE, LINCOLN, CA. MASTER BEDROOM. NIGHT

19A

It shows 12:30 am on the nightstand clock. Nadine is asleep but is jolted awake by her cell-phone ringing, which is next to the clock. She looks at the phone and sees a 609-area code. New Jersey... 3:30 am there and the number comes up as 'Blocked.' To avoid having the ring tone wake up Vince in the other room, she answers the call.

NADINE

Hello?

INTERCUT

19B INT. NEW JERSEY. SPERM DONOR'S HOUSE. RUN-DOWN FAMILY ROOM. NIGHT

19B

SPERM DONOR is seen in a dark room, sitting in an old, beaten up recliner. Once a handsome 6' tall man, he now looks very worn and ragged. He's in his mid-seventies, has greying hair that sits above his shoulders, blue/green eyes that look a bit ruddy, and his smile that once dazzled now does nothing for the beholder.

SPERM DONOR

Hello Nadine! It's your father.

NADINE
(hesitantly)
Hey Dad. How are you?

SPERM DONOR
I'm good. I'm good.
So, how are you feeling after the
stroke?

NADINE
I feel fine. I'm still having major
mobility issues with my right side
but other than that...

SPERM DONOR
What do you mean? Mobility issues?
Can't you walk?

NADINE
Barely. But I'm still working on
it.

SPERM DONOR
Good. Good. You know I have a
pacemaker now, right?

NADINE
Ah, I think Aunt Kathy mentioned
that, and I've concluded that I get
all my health problems from you and
your side of the family.

SPERM DONOR
Yes. You probably do. But don't
worry, we're strong people! You're
gonna be fine.

NADINE
If you say so.

SPERM DONOR
What? You will. You watch.

There is an uncomfortable silence on the phone, and Nadine
does her best to fill in the blanks.

NADINE
So how have you been in the last 20
plus years? Are you still a master
in Karate?

SPERM DONOR
Good god, has it been that long?
I am, I am.

(MORE)

SPERM DONOR (CONT'D)

Well, I try to, but I've had my own health battles. I've got 4 more kids now. Did you know that?

NADINE

I think I remember hearing that from someone. How old are they?

SPERM DONOR

The oldest is 19. Mathew. The second oldest is 17, that's Christian and the twins, Jeremy and Jennifer are 15. Three boys and a girl.

NADINE

(flabbergasted)

And how old are you now? Seventy-five?!

SPERM DONOR

(laughing)

Pretty much. When I go to Christian's lacrosse games, he ignores me because he says people think I'm his grandfather.

NADINE

Yikes!

SPERM DONOR

What can you do. They all pretty much ignore me. They get that from their mother. She's a very cold person. To me anyway. My main purpose has always been to be the breadwinner for this family and when my only resource now is social security, things get a little tough and I get treated poorly, if not just ignored.

NADINE V.O.

I have heard stories about what his life has become with his wife and 4 kids. His house was condemned twice by the township until their living situation became more habitable, his kids were taken twice by DYFS, he was picked up one Christmas Eve on a DUI.

(MORE)

NADINE V.O. (CONT'D)

The stories were countless and as I got older, my heart would break for him and his kids.

NADINE

Do the kids know about me?

SPERM DONOR

Well, the oldest one does but the others do not. And the oldest only knows about you because of Facebook. I guess you're friends with Uncle Marty, and Mathew asked me who you were one day.

NADINE

What did you tell him?

SPERM DONOR

I told him that you were his half-sister. And he didn't ask me anything else, so I didn't offer.

NADINE

So, I take it your wife still likes to pretend I don't exist?

SPERM DONOR

Yes, she does. Listen, I'm sorry about all of this. I'm sorry for the way things went. I'm sorry I let them get out of hand the way they have.

NADINE

It's fine, Dad. Really. Let's just go from here. Sound good?

SPERM DONOR

Yes! Definitely. Hey - so I'm just curious. How much do you weigh now?

Nadine is shocked at the question and prepares herself for battle.

NADINE

What? What kind of a question is that?

SPERM DONOR

What? I want to know. It was something you always struggled with, and I want to know where you're at with it.

NADINE

Dad, you can't ask me that question anymore. Next question.

SPERM DONOR

(indignant)

Why not? I want to know.

NADINE

Because Dad, it's irrelevant. I've done well in my life. I've got a great job, just survived a stroke, have tons of friends and family who love me and all of that was achieved at whatever weight I decided to be at the time. And reporting my weight to you brings back way too many bad memories and I don't feel like going back there. Okay?

SPERM DONOR

Ahh. Okay. Okay. I didn't realize. I won't ask again.

NADINE

Thank you.

They continued the conversation until there was not much left to say and an uncomfortable silence got caught in the air waves.

SPERM DONOR

Hey, so is it okay for me to call you on this number now? Is that okay?

NADINE

Sure. I'd like that.

SPERM DONOR

But I'll do the calling, okay. Still don't want my wife to find out about this. She's pretty nasty these days.

NADINE V.O.

Unreal. His daughter, me, is treated like a mistress. But I'm used to it and couldn't care less at this point. I'll get to talk to him again and that's my main concern.

NADINE
I know the drill, Dad. That's fine.

SPERM DONOR
Great. Great. Well, it was good
talking to you, Nudge. Remember I
used to call you that?

NADINE
(smiling)
I do.

SPERM DONOR
I love you, Nadine.

Nadine is startled by his final statement.

NADINE
(hesitantly)
I love you too and we'll talk soon.
Well, the next time you call.

SPERM DONOR
(laughing)
Okay. Bye for now.

Nadine hangs up the phone, places it back on her nightstand
and hears a faint knock at her door.

NADINE
Come in.

Vince peaks his head into the darkened room.

VINCE
Honey, are you okay? I thought I
heard voices.

NADINE
I'm fine. The Sperm Donor just
called.

Vince tries to act like he doesn't care but it's obvious he
does.

VINCE
Oh yeah. What did he want?

NADINE
He just wanted to see how I am, how
I turned out and fill me on his
life, which sounds complicated and
messy.

Unable to tell what kind of response he is having since he just stares straight ahead, and the room is still fairly dark.

VINCE
Just be careful. Please.

NADINE
I will. I promise.
Hey, Dad?

Vince was in the process of turning around, closing my door and returning to his room when he suddenly has to stop.

VINCE
Yeah?

NADINE
(smiling)
You know you're still my number 1
dad, right?

I mean, who else is going to take
me out driving with my screwed up
right foot or stand by while I try
to unload the dishwasher with my
right hand? That's right. It's you.
Numero Uno. Am I right?

VINCE
Right. It's me.

NADINE
Amen, Sister!

VINCE
(smiling)
Good-night, Honey.

NADINE
Sweet Dreams, Dad.

20 INT. HOME, LINCOLN, CA. FAMILY ROOM - DAY

20

Nadine is sitting at her work desk at the back of her family room and is on a Zoom call with Tim and Maddy. Vince is offscreen sitting in one of the bedrooms, watching TV.

TIM

(smiling)

Right, so now that we've gotten the work stuff out of the way, how are you feeling? Good? No major issues to report?

NADINE

Not really. Just that I still walk funny and can only use my right hand to control my mouse, but if I have to type with it, we'll be here forever!

MADDY

Ah, but that's all right. We all have something strange that we're dealing with. I mean Tim, we've all walked funny from time to time, haven't we?

All 3 laugh.

TIM

Remind me... have you gone full time yet with work?

MADDY

That starts next week, right, Nadine?

NADINE

Look at you, Maddy... You know my schedule better than I do! Yes, it starts next week. At 6 months I started to work 4 hours a day. At 7 and a half months, I bumped it up to 6 hours, and next week starts 9 months since the stroke and I'm back at 8 hours a day.

Nadine sounds a bit depressed when she says 9 months

TIM

Hey, what's wrong?

NADINE

(trying to hold back
tears)

Sorry. Sorry. I just thought I'd be back to normal by 6 months, so I get a little impatient and frustrated as the days go on...

MADDY

Ahh but you're still alive! You can't overlook that. You're still here!

NADINE

I know. I know. You're right.

All 3 smile at one another.

TIM

Just be patient with yourself.

NADINE

Tim, you know I struggle with patience, right?

TIM

I do, but I also know that you will do what you must to see this through. You're too tenacious not to. True?

NADINE

True.

Nadine begins to lower her voice now so that Vince can't hear her.

NADINE (CONT'D)

I have to go now because I have to take my dad to the airport so he can finally go home. He's a nervous wreck about leaving me.

TIM

Are you fine that he's going?

NADINE

I am fine. I'm a little nervous too, but he's done everything he can and if I really need help, my friends are on call. It will be fine, I just need to make him see it, and I need my independence back. And when I think about living with a man in my late 40's, it's not my dad!

TIM

Well, I can't say that I would feel much differently from him if this were one of my kids, but if you feel you're ready...

MADDY

She'll be fine. She's got a great support team in place and if worst comes to worse, I can fly over there to lend her a hand.

NADINE

That is an awesome idea, Maddy! You can work at my kitchen table and sleep in my spare room!

TIM

All right you two. Let's hope that won't be necessary.

Maddy and Nadine look at each other and smile.

Tim smiles as well, and they say their good-byes.

Nadine stands up from her desk and grabs hold of her cane with her AFO already attached for the day.

NADINE

Dad? Are you ready to go to the airport?

21 EXT. SACRAMENTO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, SACRAMENTO, CA. 21
DEPARTURE GATES DROP-OFF. DAY

Nadine pulls her car up at the airport, with Vince on the passenger side, only slightly bracing himself.

NADINE

Look at that, Dad! You've got me driving like a pro...

VINCE

Yeah, yeah. Listen, don't get out. I think it will be easier this way, for me emotionally, and you, physically.

NADINE

Alright.

VINCE

You know how much I love you, right?

NADINE

More than any dad has ever loved his daughter on this planet.

(MORE)

NADINE (CONT'D)

And you know how much I love you as well, yeah? You are Numero Uno. Always.

Vince starts to sob very quickly and pulls his hanky out of his pocket to wipe his nose. Nadine puts her right hand on his shoulder and wipes a tear from her eye with her left hand.

NADINE (CONT'D)

Can you imagine Mom looking down at us right now? Two blubbering idiots at the airport?

That comment makes Vince sob even worse.

VINCE

Mom. God, I miss her. She was simply the best. Wasn't she?

Nadine nods her head yes.

NADINE V.O.

Vince's love for my mom grows by the day. There is no doubt in my mind that my mother was the love of his life. But Vince was often blamed for all the problems that he, and all the men that came before him, had caused. And I only wish that she could now see how much love he still holds for her.

NADINE

Yes, she was. But let's focus on the task at hand, shall we? I have had my right hand on your shoulder for the duration of this conversation, and you haven't even acknowledged it yet? I mean don't I get a star or something?

Vince looks at Nadine's right hand and smiles.

VINCE

Very good, Honey.

NADINE

I know, right?!

Both smile.

NADINE (CONT'D)

Dad. I'm extremely grateful to you
and for everything you've done for
me. Seriously, I don't know what I
would have done.

VINCE

I know. I know.

Vince begins to sob again.

NADINE

Should I stop saying things so you
can pull it together?

VINCE

Please!

NADINE

Okay then. Let's do one more hug
and then you can go.

Vince grabs hold of Nadine and hugs her with all his might,
kisses her on the cheek, they both say 'I love you' and then
Vince exits the car, grabs his suitcase from the backseat and
waves good-bye as he blows his nose. Nadine wipes the one or
two tears shed, begins to drive off and takes a deep breath
as the scene ends.

22 EXT. HIGH HAND NURSERY, LOOMIS, CA. OUTSIDE GARDEN PATIO. 22
DAY

Nadine is sipping her tea, seated at one of the 7 tables
located on the outside garden patio of the nursery. The table
has a vase filled with pink tulips on it. On one side of the
patio there is a cash register stand, and on the other a
Starbucks kiosk. The cash register is on the far end of the
patio and is surrounded by several bins with different floral
arrangements individually bound and available for purchase,
plus a barrage of different plants, both hanging or free
standing. The Starbucks kiosk is located outside the main
entrance of the building, and Cindy is seen waiting for her
coffee to be served. Once her coffee is ready, Cindy takes it
and slowly approaches the table, where she places it on the
table and then kisses Nadine on the cheek in greeting.

Nadine's V.O. narrates when Cindy first appears.

NADINE V.O.

This is Cindy, who I've known for
almost 20 years through work.

(MORE)

NADINE V.O. (CONT'D)

Out of all my friends, Cindy probably understands my personality best, since she has seen me on a personal and professional level. We both know that when dealing with professional situations, I have no verbal filter and she has no physical filter, which has left us with some comical memories. I love Cindy and consider her to be a friend that I can't manage my life without.

CINDY

Hello, my friend. I see you picked the table with tulips!

NADINE

Of course. They're my favorite.

CINDY

(smiling)

Yes, I know.

Cindy then looks at her and realizes something is amiss.

CINDY (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

NADINE

What? Why would you say that?

CINDY

Because you've got that look on your face. What's on your mind, Nay?

Nadine smiles at Cindy's perceptiveness.

NADINE

Well, you know how I always thought it was absurd to set out with personal goals and that if you just did what you were supposed to do and tried your best, things just had a way of working themselves out?

CINDY

Yes. I remember.

NADINE

Well, I think I was wrong. I think I need to set goals.

CINDY

Yeah? You know I've always been in favor of personal goals. What is it that you want to do?

NADINE

Well, I miss my nieces and nephews from New Jersey. We both know that I never really wanted kids of my own, but I miss that connection I used to have with them when I lived closer to them when they were young.

CINDY

I know the perfect solution for that. My friend from work recently joined the Big Brothers/Big Sisters organization and she loves it! I think it would be great for you as well, since it's not like adoption or fostering kids, where I think that would be way too much commitment for you. Yes?

Nadine shudders at the thought.

NADINE

Oh my god, yes, that would be way too much.

They both smile at Nadine's uncomfortable action.

CINDY

With this, you can determine how much time you want to dedicate per week, bi-weekly or even monthly. And hopefully you'll get a good match, and for the kid, well, who wouldn't love you, Nay?

Both smile again.

NADINE

So, what do I have to do?

CINDY

I think you just look up the local chapter's phone number in Sacramento and make an appointment to go and talk to someone about it.

Nadine nods her head at Cindy.

NADINE

Okay. I'll do that and let you know how it goes. Thank you!

CINDY

No problem! What other goals do you have?

NADINE

There is one post-stroke goal that I am still considering.

Cindy continues to stare, waiting for Nadine to blurt out her truth.

NADINE (CONT'D)

I want to ride a motorcycle again. I took that class over 10 years ago and finished it pretty successfully but never rode again. And now I want to try again, disability and all. Plus, there might be some other physical type goals that I want to try out as well, and I'm not talking about sex, although that wouldn't hurt either.

Cindy smiles but then stares at Nadine contemplatively.

CINDY

Nay? Are you sure you want to do that again? The motorcycle part, not the sex.

Nadine straightens her back and pushes her shoulders back to show she want this.

NADINE

Yep.

CINDY

Hmmm... Well, you're on your own for that one. Not because I disagree, which to be honest, I'm not 100% on board with it, but I know nothing about motorcycles! What else?

NADINE

Hmmm.
I'll have to think about it.

CINDY

What about love, Nay?

NADINE

(snarky)

What about it?

Cindy smiles.

CINDY

Don't you maybe want to give it a try? It might be time to tackle your commitment issues and dive into the dating pool. It's looking pretty scarce these days but I'm sure if you looked you'd find the perfect guy. For you.

NADINE

You know, I've been thinking about love now that I've made amends with the Sperm Donor. For years, I suffered such abandonment issues because of him that when I did decide to give it a try, I would always choose the wrong guys. The players. The cheaters. The assholes. Knowing I would get hurt, and that I could blame them for hurting me. But if you think about it, and in looking back at it now, it was my choice to love the wrong ones. Maybe so that I would always be alone. I think that's why I always kept the extra weight on as well. My mother said I always used it as my shield. And now, I look at the Sperm Donor and think THIS is what I tortured myself over all these years? So, in summary, I always picked the wrong guys. And it's kind of my fault.

They both smile hesitantly at one another.

CINDY

And what about now? Are you ready to look for the right one?

NADINE

(awkwardly)

And what kind of guy do you think will want to go out with me now. With these disabilities?

CINDY

The right one!

NADINE
Yeah, yeah. We'll see...
Anyway, what's going on with you?

Scene ends with the conversation shifting over to Cindy and Nadine listening and laughing at something Cindy has said.

23

INT. HOME, LINCOLN, CA. FAMILY ROOM. NIGHT

23

Nadine sitting in front of her computer screen typing up her goal list, primarily with her left hand. A bouquet of tulips purchased from the nursery sits on her computer desk.

NADINE V.O.
Let's see... I can come up with 10
goals to achieve. Right?

They don't have to happen in order
on the list... and definitely not
within the same year. No, this can
be a 5-year plan.

Right. So, let's see...
Number 1 is to get a little sister.

NADINE
I will definitely make phone calls
tomorrow to get that started.

Number 2 - Ride a motorcycle

Nadine begins to google motorcycle brands to see what's out there other than Harley Davidson. She looks through the images that appear on her screen and comes across a picture with a man standing on top of the seat of his bike while the bike glides down the road.



NADINE V.O.
Wait. Who is that?

Nadine looks closer at the image and realizes who it is.

NADINE V.O. (CONT'D)
Is that Keanu Reeves???

Nadine pauses for a minute and then continues.

NADINE
Number 2 - Ride a motorcycle (with
Keanu Reeves as my instructor)

NADINE V.O.
Go big or go home, right?

Tomorrow I'll have to look up his
publicist's name on IMDB and email
her. I'll have to be convincing
enough, but that shouldn't be a
problem. I think.

Quite satisfied with herself, Nadine smiles, nods her head in
confirmation and continues.

NADINE
Number 3 - Singing in front of a
large audience.

NADINE V.O.
This one scares the hell out of me,
but I've got to give it a shot. My
singing exposure was limited to the
shower and singing with two of my
high school friends in a makeshift
recording studio. But since the
stroke, I lost my vocal tuning, so
no better reason to try. Right?

NADINE
Number 4 - White Water Rafting

Number 5 - Archery

NADINE V.O.
Did it in high school but would be
curious how my right hand would
handle that now.

NADINE
Number 6 - Horseback riding

NADINE V.O.
That ought to be fun. I think.

NADINE
Number 7 - Shoot a gun

NADINE V.O.
My mother was an excellent
markswoman, so let's hope it's
hereditary. And that my right hand
can handle it.

NADINE
Number 8 - Shoot Pool

NADINE V.O.
I was an absolute pool shark when I
was in college and in my 20's. Well
scratch that. The one thing I say
about myself is the most consistent
thing about me, is that I'm
inconsistent. So people had to
watch out when I was consistent!

NADINE
Number 9 - iFlying

NADINE V.O.
Skydiving would be the ultimate
goal, but I say take baby steps!

And the final goal is...

NADINE
Number 10 - Top Golf

Nadine looks at her list and feels quite satisfied. She saves
the file.

24A EXT. SACRAMENTO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, SACRAMENTO, CA. 24A
PARKING TERMINAL. DAY

Film shows Nadine's experience traveling based on the
narrative below now that she has disabilities.

NADINE V.O.
Traveling has taken a hit since I
had the stroke, but it still hasn't
deterred me from doing it.
I still drive myself to and from
the airport, but now I get to park
in a handicapped spot.

(MORE)

NADINE V.O. (CONT'D)
 I walk slowly with the cane, AFO
 and wheely suitcase to the check-in
 area.

24B INT. SACRAMENTO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, SACRAMENTO, CA. 24B
 CHECK IN COUNTER. DAY

Film shows Nadine's experience traveling based on the
 narrative below now that she has disabilities.

NADINE V.O.
 The check-in attendants order me a
 wheelchair at this point, and I am
 then wheeled up through security.

24C INT. SACRAMENTO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, SACRAMENTO, CA. 24C
 DEPARTURE GATE. DAY

Film shows Nadine's experience traveling based on the
 narrative below now that she has disabilities.

NADINE V.O.
 To the gate where I get to board
 the plane first with those disabled
 or with families with small
 children. So, piece of cake, once I
 got used to people staring. Today
 I'm heading home to New Jersey to
 see Aunt Rita, Marie, and the Sperm
 Donor, who I haven't seen since my
 twenties. I promised to meet him at
 a deli restaurant in his hometown
 so I could help him out with some
 money, and begged Aunt Rita and
 Marie to come with me.

25A INT. DELI MARKET/RESTAURANT, NJ. INTERIOR MARKET AREA. 25A
 DAY

Film flashes "New Jersey" on the screen

Nadine, Aunt Rita and Marie are all looking around at the
 different exported sundries while Sperm Donor starts to
 speak.

SPERM DONOR
 Isn't this a great place? The owner
 is a nice guy. He lets me run a tab
 here. Right, Sal?

Sperm Donor looks over to the register counter where 'Sal' is standing. Sal nods his head to Sperm Donor. Aunt Rita gives Nadine a suspicious look, as Marie rubs Nadine's back to give her comfort. Sperm Donor's appearance is quite haggard, and he walks with a large wooden stick that comes up to his chest. All of them order their food from the food counter and make their way over to a table, while Nadine makes her way over to the register.

NADINE
Hey. Sal, right?

SAL
Yes, it's Sal.

NADINE
I'm Jim's daughter, Nadine.

SAL
Hello.

NADINE
I want to pay for his tab, as well
as what we've all ordered today.
So how much does he owe you?

SAL
(reluctant)
Your dad's tab is \$396.

Nadine is shocked.

NADINE
Can you add that to our order?

SAL
Are you sure?

NADINE
Yes. Please.

Sal finishes processing the order and gives Nadine her credit card back. Nadine smiles at him.

NADINE (CONT'D)
Thank you.

Nadine starts to make her way to the open seat at the table where their food has been served and hears the conversation the Sperm Donor is initiating with Aunt Rita.

SPERM DONOR

Rita, doesn't this remind you of that little place we used to get breakfast down the shore? What was that place called again?

AUNT RITA

Umm. Perkins?

SPERM DONOR

Perkins! That's it. Perkins... Geez, we had some good times back in the day, didn't we?

Sperm Donor continues this kind of conversation with Aunt Rita, who gives him one-word answers.

NADINE V.O.

This is my father trying to make small talk with Aunt Rita, because even though they used to be best friends' way back when, it's apparent that she does not like him anymore. Actually, she loathes him. I mean look at her.

Cut to Aunt Rita with a look of indifference and disgust, and Marie looking a bit sad.

SPERM DONOR

Isn't this great? I'm so glad we got to do this. I'm sorry things went the way they did. It's just, well my wife...

NADINE

Ugh, Dad. And things were going so well up until now. I thought we agreed, no mention of her until I'm allowed to be a part of your life and am not hidden like a mistress?

Sperm Donor laughs, Aunt Rita looks like she wants to murder him, and Marie, once again, is rubbing Nadine's back to give comfort.

SPERM DONOR

You're right. You're right.

AUNT RITA

We should be going soon.

SPERM DONOR

So soon. Okay, okay.
Hey, do you think you can give me a
ride over to the high school to
watch Christian's game. It's
literally right around the corner.

NADINE

Your car is still not working?

SPERM DONOR

No. And I'm a little cash poor
right now to get it fixed.

Since Aunt Rita is driving, Nadine looks to her to see if
it's okay. Aunt Rita agrees against her will.

AUNT RITA

I guess.

25B EXT. CHRISTIAN'S HIGH SCHOOL, NJ. PARKING LOT - DAY 25B

All 4 are in Aunt Rita's Vibe, with Marie and Sperm Donor in
the backseat, and Aunt Rita and Nadine in the front.

SPERM DONOR

Here we are. You can drop me off
over there to the right.
Remember, we have to be discrete
because I'm old enough to be
Christian's grandfather, so he
wouldn't be too happy I'm here.

Sperm Donor laughs, but Marie and Nadine look sad, and Aunt
Rita just wants the day to be over.

Aunt Rita pulls her car up to the curb and stops so Sperm
Donor can get out.

SPERM DONOR (CONT'D)

Well, it was good seeing you both,
Rita and Marie. Maybe we can meet
again for lunch sometime?

AUNT RITA

(lying)

Yeah sure... Give us a call.

Nadine tries not to smile at her. Nadine opens the passenger
side door to get out carefully with her disabled side bracing
itself on the car door. Nadine is in a standing position and
leaves the door open to use it to help with her balance.
Sperm Donor comes around to give her a hug.

Nadine starts to reach into her wallet to grab the five hundred dollars she had promised him.

NADINE

Here's the money. It's all I could give you at this point.

SPERM DONOR

Oh, thank you, Nadine. Now I can get my wife off my case and make her happy.

About to hand him the money, Nadine pulls it back and holds it, as she looks confused.

NADINE

Your wife?! Why does your wife know about this? Or me, for that matter?

He says nothing. He realizes that his story doesn't add up to all that he has told Nadine and isn't sure how to respond.

NADINE (CONT'D)

Dad, I was giving this money to you! Not your wife. This money was supposed to be solely for you, so you could get what you need, since every time we talk, you seem to need so much because everything is taken from you. By your wife nonetheless!

NADINE V.O.

Looking at him, I'm reminded of what he truly is. Lost and beaten down by his existence. Despite his ability to crack an unfunny joke from time to time, this man is so lost, but nothing will change for him until he decides he wants it to change. And there's nothing I can do to help him.

NADINE

Dad, this is the last time you can ask for any money from me. This is all that I have for you. Got that? You can't ask me for anymore. Understood?

SPERM DONOR

Yes. I understand.

NADINE

Okay then.

He hesitantly asks the next question, since he wasn't prepared for things to go the way they did.

SPERM DONOR

I'll call you when you get back to California. Okay?

Nadine looks at him and sees he is lost and feels bad.

NADINE

Yes.

Nadine gives the Sperm Donor a kiss on the cheek, and then he turns and starts to walk towards the field where his son is playing his game. Getting back into the car, Nadine looks to Aunt Rita.

AUNT RITA

Are you for real? He told his wife about the money?

Nadine gives her a look that lets her know she can't take much more.

NADINE

Don't...

AUNT RITA

I mean come on. Are you fucking kidding me? Now you're giving money to him and that bitch and those innocent kids?

Looking at Aunt Rita again, Nadine tries to make sure she sees that she's had it. Staring back at Nadine, Aunt Rita acknowledges how Nadine's feeling but makes one final comment.

AUNT RITA (CONT'D)

Fucking Asshole... I mean really! Marie, are you still holding out for the old version of him to appear? Are we still hoping for a rainbows and unicorns filled happy ending? Because I can tell you now, it's not happening. Sorry girls. That piece of shit.

Nadine looks in the backseat at Marie and they both smile and shake their heads. Aunt Rita is now done and ready to move on. She takes a deep breath and smiles.

AUNT RITA (CONT'D)
Ready to go back to my house and
have some tea?

MARIE
Yes, please!

Nadine nods her head and stares off in the distance as the scene ends with the car driving off.

28A EXT. EMERALD ISLE STABLES (aka SHADOW GLEN STABLES), 28A
FAIR OAKS, CA. STABLES PREMISES. DAY

Film flashes "California" on the screen

Nadine, Marie, Sunny and Cindy pull up to the handicapped parking spot in front of the main 'welcome' building. Marie is driving Nadine's car.

Off to the immediate left, there is a group of 8 horses eating hay and drinking water, preparing for their pending ride.

There are also goats and chickens walking about the property, plus 50 more outdoor stables further to the left that are filled with horses.

The place is lovely and very welcoming.

The 4 of them start to depart the car.

NADINE
Thanks for driving, Marie.

SUNNY
Yes, Marie! We're so glad you got to come out and enjoy checking this goal off her list. And thank you so much for driving!

NADINE
One time! My foot got stuck under the brake one time and I'm not allowed to drive anymore!

SUNNY
Are you sure it was just the one time?

Nadine looks at Sunny as if to argue with her but realizes she's probably right and scrunches her lips and raises an eyebrow. Sunny smacks Nadine on her butt.

SUNNY (CONT'D)
C'mon hotshot, let's get
you up on a horse.

Nadine touches the spot where Sunny has just hit.

NADINE
Ouch...

All 4 smile and continue to walk up to the main building.

CINDY
How did you hear about this place
again?

NADINE
My friend, Christine. She's one of
my physical therapists and when I
told her about my goal list, she
knew about this place for horseback
riding. She's supposed to be
meeting us here with 3 of my other
PT techs to make sure I get on the
horse okay.

Nadine looks around and sees CHRISTINE, plus Nerissa,
JENNIFER and STEPHANIE walking up from the parking lot. All
four ladies are of average size and weight, but have one
defining quality that makes them unique; Christine has long,
dark, curly hair that goes on for days and grabs your
attention, Jennifer possess a quiet strength that makes
anyone feel immediately safe, Stephanie is high energy fun,
all the time, while Nerissa gives off a mother hen vibe which
suits her given she's their PT manager.

CHRISTINE
Hey! Are you ready for your ride?

NADINE
I think so...

Nadine gives hugs to all 4 PT women and then introduces them
to Sunny, Marie and Cindy.

CHRISTINE
I'll let them know we're here.

The women stand around as Christine goes up to the Dutch door
to speak with an older woman, SIOBHAN, who is managing all
the paperwork on the table that's on the other side of the
door, as well as a bouquet of fresh tulips. Siobhan is Irish
through and through, which is known because of her accent and
attractive native features.

She is early 70's, has greying hair, blue eyes and is wearing a name tag, so her name is known.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)
Hey Nadine. Can you come here please?

NADINE
Sure.

Nadine slowly makes it over with her cane and AFO.

CHRISTINE
This is Nadine. The friend I called about. She has some slight disabilities from her stroke, so we just need to make sure she's taken care of.

SIOBHAN
Ahh yes. We will. My granddaughter, Finola, will walk you guys through a short instructional demo and then when we're ready for you, we'll take you to your horses.

Nadine, you will mount your horse from a platform, next to the first set of outdoor stables. Now, I need you all to fill out these waiver forms so we can get started. Okay?

CHRISTINE
Sure.

Christine takes the forms and distributes them to the group, while Nadine stays at the door.

NADINE
What part of Ireland are you from?

Siobhan looks at Nadine and it's like she is seeing her for the first time. She sees the warmth and beauty that Nadine possesses and smiles.

SIOBHAN
Limerick. Do you know it?

NADINE
I do! I actually lived in Ireland for a little bit in the early 2000's and got to travel around and see parts of it.

SIOBHAN

And how did you like it?

NADINE

I loved it! It's my favorite place
in the world.

They both smile.

NADINE (CONT'D)

How long have you been in the
States?

SIOBHAN

Ahh geez, well over 50 years now.

NADINE

Do you think you'll ever go back?

SIOBHAN

To visit? We go back at least once
a year. But to live? No. My son and
grandchild are both born here, so
this is where I'll stay.

NADINE

Ahh.
Well, I better fill out my waiver.
It was nice to meet you, Siobhan!
And I love your tulips... they're
beautiful.

SIOBHAN

You too, Nadine.
Ahh yes, tulips are my favorite.

NADINE

Mine too!

They both smile at one another, and Nadine makes her way back
over to where her friends are standing so she can fill out
her waiver.

Siobhan is standing in the same spot looking at some
paperwork, when her son, LIAM walks up behind her. Liam is
over 6' tall and extremely handsome. He has dark hair that is
now greying and a little longer than the average guys
haircut. He is barrel chested and everything about his
appearance screams 'cowboy.'

LIAM

Who was that?

Siobhan jumps, not expecting anyone to be in there with her.

SIOBHAN
Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Liam! Are
you trying to kill me or what?

Liam chuckles.

LIAM
Sorry.

Siobhan answers him with her head down doing paperwork.

SIOBHAN
That was the woman they called
about that had a stroke.
Her name is Nadine.
Nice girl.

Siobhan slightly looks up to see her son staring out the
window at Nadine and smiles.

SIOBHAN (CONT'D)
Why don't you go out there and see
if they need any help?

Liam looks at his mother suspiciously.

SIOBHAN (CONT'D)
What?

He smiles at her and then takes his exit.

28B EXT. EMERALD ISLE STABLES (aka SHADOW GLEN STABLES), 28B
FAIR OAKS, CA. OUTSIDE STABLES. DAY

Nadine and the 7 other women are taken by FINOLA for their
demo and then to the stables to get their horse assignments.
Finola is 5'7" tall, in her late teens, and very attractive,
taking after the two generations before her.

FINOLA
You're Nadine, right?

NADINE
I am.

FINOLA
I'm Finola.

They both smile at one another.

FINOLA (CONT'D)
We're going to put you on Ace
today.

(MORE)

FINOLA (CONT'D)

Ace is one of our larger, more docile horses and I know he will take good care of you, so why don't you come up here on the ramp and we'll get you saddled up.

Ace is positioned by a platform and Nadine has to walk up a ramp to get onto the platform. Jennifer and Stephanie help Nadine up the ramp and they, as well as 3 of the horse INSTRUCTORS, including Finola, help Nadine to mount the horse. The hardest part is getting her right leg over the horse's body, which proves to be a challenge, so they take it slowly.

FINOLA (CONT'D)

Nadine, try to get comfortable in your saddle, so you bring more balance to your torso.

Nadine adjusts in the saddle and then gives Finola a thumbs up.

Nadine then begins to walk Ace over to where the remaining 7 riders already have mounted their horses, with all 8 riders now off to the side of the main working area.

Suddenly another horse is seen with a saddle coming off his back. The horse does not like this feeling. He panics, starts to buck and runs past the 8 riders, who all panic themselves. All riders hold their harnesses tighter, while one of the instructors begins to speak urgently to Liam.

INSTRUCTOR #1

Liam, we need your help.

Liam seems to appear out of nowhere and runs in front of the spooked horse. He holds his two arms up in front of the horse and starts speaking to him.

LIAM

Easy, boy. Easy.

As Liam grabs hold of the horse's harness and continues to calm him with his soothing talk, two of the instructors grab hold of the saddle and begin to strap it back on the horse properly.

Once the horse has settled, Liam begins to walk him back past the 8 riders, making sure to look up at Nadine and lower his hat a little with his hand.

MARIE

Who was that?!

SUNNY

That was Rip from Yellowstone!

CINDY

And it looks like he wants Nay to be his Beth! Minus the bat-shit crazy version!

NADINE

What? No, he doesn't!
He was just being polite because of my leg.

SUNNY

I call bullshit on that.

CINDY

Me too!

NADINE

Okay. Shut up now so I can concentrate on not falling off my horse.

MARIE

Enjoy it, Nay. He's hot.

NADINE

Marie?! You, too?

SUNNY

Yay, Marie! Come on over to the dark side.

They all laugh with Nadine shaking her head.

28C EXT. EMERALD ISLE STABLES (aka SHADOW GLEN STABLES), 28C
FAIR OAKS, CA. RIDING TRAIL. DAY

Instructor #1 leads the riders out onto the trails while Finola and instructor #2 follow behind to watch how the 8 riders are managing their horses. Occasionally, they call a rider out by their horse's name and let them know where they need to make adjustments.

Again, Liam comes out of nowhere and begins to temporarily ride with their group. Finola smiles.

FINOLA

Checking up on us, Dad, to make sure we're all okay?

Liam smiles.

LIAM

Maybe.

All 3 instructors smile.

Liam then rides down the line of riders, but when he gets to Nadine, he keeps his stride equal with her horse.

LIAM (CONT'D)

Are you doing okay?

NADINE

(hesitantly)

I am. Thank you.

LIAM

You feel secure on Ace?

NADINE

I do.

LIAM

Okay, good.

Liam nods his head to Nadine and continues to ride through the rest of the riders in silence and then circles back to return to the stables.

CINDY

See! Rip is looking for his Beth.

Marie and Sunny laugh while Nadine is embarrassed.

28D EXT. EMERALD ISLE STABLES (aka SHADOW GLEN STABLES), 28D
FAIR OAKS, CA. OUTSIDE STABLES. DAY

The instructors finish their ride and bring the riders back to stables where they all dismount, except Nadine, who is brought back to the platform on her horse. Two of the instructors, plus Jennifer, Stephanie, and Liam all gather around Nadine to help her off. Liam grabs her right leg and begins to aggressively lift it over the horse's back.

NADINE

No! No! No!

Easy... You have to go very easy with
the right leg.

Liam stops what he's doing, listens to what Nadine has said and then carefully moves her leg over.

Nadine is finally off the horse but has a hard time walking down the ramp for fear her right leg might give out, so Jennifer and Stephanie carefully walk her down with Liam walking backwards in front of them in case Nadine falls.

NADINE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry I got so aggressive with you a minute ago. You just need to be really careful with my right leg.

LIAM

Noted.

They both smile and make it to the end of the ramp.

NADINE

Well, thanks again.

Liam nods his head to her and watches as Jennifer continues to hold onto Nadine's right side and brings her up to the same spot where everyone met initially. Sunny, Marie and Cindy, as well as the rest of the PT women are waiting for them.

CHRISTINE

How did you like it? Was it everything you hoped for? Can you check horseback riding off your list?

NADINE

Yes! It was awesome!
Thank you, Christine, for getting this setup. And to all of you, for making this happen!

Christine, Jennifer, Nerissa and Stephanie all hug Nadine, say their farewells and leave.

Nadine and her three friends are about to make their way to Nadine's car but are interrupted by Liam.

LIAM

Hey Nadine?

Nadine turns to see Liam is coming towards her.

NADINE

Yeah?

LIAM

I feel really bad about what
happened earlier with your leg, and
I wanted to know if, maybe, I could
take you out for coffee or
something to make up for it?

Nadine is about to tell him it's not necessary, when Sunny
chimes in.

SUNNY

Yes, you can!

Nadine looks at Sunny, when Cindy adds her two cents.

CINDY

In fact, you can take her now if
you'd like.

Marie is smiling beside them, trying not to laugh.

Nadine takes a deep breath.

NADINE

I feel I might be murdered if I say
no.

Nadine and Liam both give each other a closed mouth smile.

LIAM

I think you might.

NADINE

Okay, then. I would like that.
Do you want my phone number?

LIAM

I can get that off the waiver you
signed.

NADINE

Ahh right.
Well, the balls in your court.

Liam gives her a chuckle.

LIAM

I'll be in touch.

Liam shakes Nadine's right hand and is surprised she has good
strength in that hand.

LIAM (CONT'D)

Ladies...

He nods his head to the other 3 women, who all say goodbye.

The 4 women start to walk to the car.

CINDY
Nay's gonna get laid!

SUNNY
Woohoo!

MARIE
I'm so glad I got to be here in
California and witness this!

Nadine is thoroughly embarrassed.

NADINE
We're just going for coffee!

SUNNY
Yeah, but we all know where that
leads... Boom-chica-bow-wow...

They all laugh.

29 INT. B&B BAKERY AND BOBA, LINCOLN, CA. INSIDE SEATING AREA. NIGHT 29

Liam is seated at one of the tables, when Nadine walks through the front door. He is without his cowboy hat and has a bouquet of tulips in his hands. Nadine's walking disability is noticeable so Liam gets up to see if he can help.

NADINE
I'm okay.

Liam reaches in to give Nadine a hug before she can sit down. Nadine hugs him back and then they both sit.

They both adjust in their seats, look at each other and smile. Liam hands the tulips to Nadine.

NADINE (CONT'D)
Tulips? These are my favorite!
Thank you.

LIAM
So I've heard.

They both smile.

LIAM (CONT'D)

What would you like to drink so I can tell the waitress when she comes?

NADINE

Umm... Irish Breakfast tea with half and half.

LIAM

Irish Breakfast tea? Did my mother tell you to order that?

They both laugh. Their waitress comes up, takes their order and then leaves them alone.

LIAM (CONT'D)

So, let's get the obvious question out of the way... What happened that caused you to have a stroke?

NADINE

Wow. That's the first question? Well, I guess that's good. I usually like to talk about it first so people know.

Liam smiles, looks at her and nods his head.

NADINE (CONT'D)

It happened in Amsterdam. I was traveling for work, and they don't know what caused it because it was too late by the time they found me. I was there for a week prior and noticed that my ankles had been swollen all week. So much so, that I would put them up on my laptop bag during our meetings to make the swelling subside. But it wouldn't go down.

I was supposed to leave on that Friday and the night before I sent a picture of my ankles via text to my friend, Sunny, saying 'Look at these ankles!' She said 'Nice Kankles. They'll be gone when you get home tomorrow.' And then I went to bed and woke up at around 5:30 in the morning not knowing where I was, what was happening and why I couldn't move my right side.

LIAM

Wow.
How long did they keep you in
Amsterdam?

NADINE

About two weeks longer.
And then I came home to a ton of
PT, OT and speech therapy. I
thought I'd be better within 6
months, but here we are, years
later and I'm still broken.

Nadine gets a little sad at her last sentence. Liam senses it
and wants to alleviate her sadness.

LIAM

Broken? How so?

NADINE

Are you serious?

Nadine looks down at her right side, and then looks at Liam
with one eyebrow raised. Liam smiles with his mouth closed.

LIAM

But that's just minor and it's only
on the outside.

NADINE

(surprised)
What did you just say?

LIAM

Everyone is a little broken on the
outside.
Want to see where I'm broken?

NADINE

I guess.

Liam puts both of his hands on the table and his right hand
is missing its middle finger, while his left one has about
half of the middle finger left.

LIAM

Happened during one of the rodeos I
was in.
And I've gotten used to it after
all these years, but can you
imagine how frustrated I get when I
want to flip someone off?

(MORE)

LIAM (CONT'D)

I go to my right hand and realize
it's a lost cause but then when I
try to use my left hand... well that
doesn't work either since I've only
got half of it.

Liam tries to demonstrate these actions while he speaks.
Nadine laughs at his attempt.

NADINE

Well look at that, ladies and
gentlemen, he's funny too.
You're very surprising to me, Liam.
Thank you.

LIAM

As you are to me, Nadine.

They both smile and continue to talk as the scene ends.

30A INT. GRANITE SPRINGS CHURCH, LINCOLN, CA. GENERAL
AUDITORIUM. DAY

30A

Cut to the screen showing an overview of the room from the
back part of the auditorium, then show Nadine, seated at the
front of the auditorium, next to the stage with her little
sister, ALANA (15 yrs). She is tiny in stance and size, and
pretty as can be with her light brown, highlighted and long
hair, light green eyes and a smile that lights up her entire
being when she decides to share it.

Tamraloo Studios is hosting their semi-annual music recital,
and there are at least 75 people in the seats watching each
child perform their vocal or musical talent. Sunny, Liam and
MICHELLE, Alana's mother, are seated in the back of the
auditorium watching. Michelle is larger than her daughter,
has darker features, and that same smile that people wait
for.

Alana speaks quietly as not to interrupt the act on the
stage.

ALANA

How are you feeling? Are you
nervous?

Camera focuses in on Alana's face.

30B INT. NUGGET GROCERY STORE, ROSEVILLE, CA. CAFE. DAY 30B

Cut to FLASHBACK to match what Nadine V.O. is saying below. ALANA (10 yrs), Michelle, Nadine and the BIG SISTER COORDINATOR are all seated in the grocery store cafe, meeting for the first time. Alana appears to be very awkward but extremely curious of Nadine. Nadine is wondering what she is getting herself into, but is already falling for Alana, and Michelle seems cautious but hopeful that Nadine will be a good match.

NADINE V.O.

Alana. My little sister. We were matched up by the big sister's organization almost 5 years ago. She was almost 10 at the time and the counselor asked if I could meet her and her mother in the food court at a local grocery store.

We met and I fell in love with her on the spot. Her mom raised some concerns for me though as she kept asking the counselor if I knew their "story."

Usually a "story" in these types of situations can only mean one or all 3 of the following: Drugs, drama or a stint in prison.

And wouldn't you know it, their story contained all three. But in looking at Alana and how innocent and lovable she was, or Michelle, who obviously was doing her best to turn her life around, I definitely knew I wanted to be a part of their dynamic.

Since then, I have learned so much from Alana and her mom, and hopefully was able to teach her a thing or two. They are family to me now and I am grateful we found each other.

30C INT. GRANITE SPRINGS CHURCH, LINCOLN, CA. GENERAL AUDITORIUM. DAY 30C

Cut to the beginning of scene 26A. Nadine is staring at Alana, who is now trying to get her attention.

ALANA

Hello?
I think it's time for you to go on
stage now.

Nadine nods her head and gets up from her seat. Alana helps Nadine by making sure there is a clear path to the steps that lead up to the stage.

ALANA (CONT'D)

You got this?

Alana's not only asking about the upcoming performance but Nadine's ability to get up the stairs.

NADINE

(smiles hesitantly)

Yeah. I got this.

ALANA

Yeah, you do. Now go get 'em.
Love you, Nay.

NADINE

Love you, too.

Nadine begins to carefully walk up the steps, while Alana heads to the back of the auditorium to sit with her mom, Liam and Sunny.

Nadine heads to the center of the stage where she is standing next to ROSE, her vocal coach, while musical instructors BRITTA and DOUG are seated behind a set of drums and an electric guitar, ready to play Nadine's song [I WISH I WAS A PUNK ROCKER by Sandi Thom]. All three are post-grad liberals and have the look and vibe that indicate as much.

Nadine begins to speak to the audience.

NADINE (CONT'D)

I'm sure you're all wondering why this older woman would want to be in a recital tailored towards all these wonderful kids.
Well, I had a stroke a few years ago and as I was working through the recovery process, I realized I had never really set personal goals for myself, so I came up with 10 goals, from Archery to Horseback Riding, and today you get to become a part of the goal of singing in front of a large audience.

The audience gives a loud applause.

NADINE (CONT'D)
So, are you ready for it? Let's
hope I am.

The audience laughs, with one member yelling "You can do it!"

NADINE (CONT'D)
And my coach, Rose, is going to
help with harmonizing.
So here we go.

As Nadine and Rose begin to harmonize the song, Nadine V.O.
chimes in:

NADINE V.O.
Aside from singing, which did not
make me as nervous as I
anticipated, I have also completed:
Getting a little sister. And I
could not ask for a better sister
than Alana.

BEGIN LIAM/POST STROKE GOAL MONTAGE

Following scenes appear while Nadine V.O. narrates below:

NADINE V.O. (CONT'D)
Then there's Horseback riding -
which is how I met Liam.
If you wait until mid-life to
really try dating, let me tell you,
it's a joke. Addicts run amuck and
most men, and women for that
matter, are suffering from
something that makes you want to
run away as fast as you can. But
then I met Liam and things are just
so easy with him. They just flow
naturally. I don't know... it's
like we are connected. Bound to one
another. It definitely has me
puzzled, that's for sure, and to be
honest, it scares me at times but I
haven't wanted to flee yet. So
that's good. And the orgasms! Good
god, this man is talented. Missing
middle fingers and all. But I
digress... What was I talking
about? Ahh, yes, the goals...

30D INT. NADINE'S HOME. FAMILY ROOM. NIGHT 30D

Liam and Nadine cuddled on her couch watching TV

30E INT. LIAM'S HOME. KITCHEN TABLE. NIGHT 30E

Nadine going to Liam's house to have dinner with Liam, Siobhan and Finola

30F INT. LOCAL BAR. BAR SEATING AREA. NIGHT 30F

Liam going for drinks at a bar with Nadine, Sunny and Dave;

30G INT. NADINE'S HOME. KITCHEN TABLE. NIGHT 30G

Liam, Nadine and Alana playing card games at her house

30H INT. NADINE'S HOME. MASTER BEDROOM. NIGHT 30H

Liam and Nadine kissing before going into her bedroom for sex.

NADINE V.O.

Let's see, there's white water
rafting - Sunny and Dave got
soaked!

30I EXT. AMERICAN RIVER, CA. WHITE WATER RAFTING. DAY 30I

Image of white water rafting that includes an RAFTING
INSTRUCTOR, Nadine, Liam, Sunny, Dave, ERIC and ASHLEY

NADINE V.O.

Archery!

30J INT. WILDERNESS ARCHERY, ROSEVILLE, CA. DAY 30J

Image of Nadine (shooting with her handicap), Cindy and
JESSICA trying Archery

NADINE V.O.

Bowling.

30K INT. LUCKY STRIKE, ROCKLIN, CA. DAY 30K

Image of Nadine (bowling with her handicap), Sunny, Dave,
JASON and Jessica bowling.

NADINE V.O.

Shooting a gun, which I think I
would have made my mom proud given
she was an excellent marksman!

30L EXT. LINCOLN RIFLE CLUB-DILLMAN RANGE, LINCOLN, CA. DAY 30L

Image includes Nadine, Liam, Sunny, Dave, Eric and Ashley
shooting rifles and guns.

NADINE V.O.

Shoot Pool.

30M INT. LOREE'S LITTLE SHACK, ROSEVILLE, CA. NIGHT 30M

Image includes Nadine (shooting pool with her handicap),
Liam, Cindy and Joel shooting pool.

NADINE V.O.

And... iFlying

30N INT. IFLY, ROSEVILLE, CA. DAY 30N

Image shows Nadine, Sunny and Cindy iFlying

300 INT. GRANITE SPRINGS CHURCH, LINCOLN, CA. GENERAL 300
AUDITORIUM - DAY

Scene cuts back to church's auditorium, with a focus on
Nadine singing the song.

NADINE V.O.

Left on my list is riding a
motorcycle... with Keanu Reeves of
course.

This list has definitely made me
aware of my limitations but has
also let me know what I can still
do.

I may have to take things much
slower than I would have, but I've
been told it's so I can learn
patience. Again, enough with the
patience thing. I'm trying, dammit.

Regardless, completing the list has
been fun and who knows, I may add
more to the list!

Nadine finishes her song and gets loud applause, and the scene ends with a closeup of Nadine's face and a huge smile.

31 INT. SUTTER OUT-PATIENT REHAB CENTER, ROSEVILLE, CA. 31
NERISSA'S OFFICE - DAY

Scene opens with a closeup of Nadine's face looking distressed.

NADINE
What do you mean?

NERISSA
Since you've come back to PT again recently, you said the technician at the brace place said he did not see you improving any further than what you are now, and I can't say I disagree with that assessment.

Nerissa stares at Nadine, while Nadine is struggling with what she's just heard.

NERISSA (CONT'D)
Hey. Look how far you have come. Do you know how many people suffer from strokes and don't make it back at all? Most only make it to about 30 to 40% back, but you're at least at 70%.

Nadine is upset but refuses to cry.

NADINE
I wanted it to be at 100%. I've been working all this time with going to a trainer, chiropractor, acupuncturist, you name it, with the expectation that I would get back to normal.

NERISSA
I understand, and I'm sorry, but I know I don't need to tell you the alternative.

NADINE
I know. I know.
I did not have to wake up at all after the stroke.

NERISSA

Try to be okay with this. Every time you come here, it's with a smile on your face and a positive attitude to get through whatever me or one of the other techs make you do. Don't lose that. You make our job that much easier.

NADINE

Yeah, well that was when I thought I would reach 100%. Now I'm going to make everyone pay.

Nadine gives a small smile to let Nerissa know she's kidding.

NERISSA

Are you going to be okay?

NADINE

What other choice do I have?

Nadine and Nerissa both stare at one another. Nerissa finally smiles and pats Nadine on the back.

NERISSA

Okay, well we'll see you next week then. Sound good?

Nadine nods her head and gets up to leave.

32 START - EXT. SUTTER OUT-PATIENT REHAB CENTER, ROSEVILLE, 32
CA. NADINE'S CAR. DAY

END - INT. HOME, LINCOLN, CA. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

As she walks out of the PT place and heads towards her car, NADINE V.O. narrates and is heard from when she gets into her car, the drive home, and when she gets into her home and throws herself on her bed to finally have a hysterical cry:

NADINE V.O.

The news from Nerissa was not what I wanted to hear at all. Since I had the stroke, I've cried a total of 5, maybe 6 times. Always tears of frustration, but never to last too long. In fact, the last time it happened, the tearful episode lasted less than a minute because there was no point in wasting tears when I knew what the outcome would be;

(MORE)

NADINE V.O. (CONT'D)
 this moment of weakness would be
 overruled by the end result. I
 would eventually get back to
 normal.

But now I was being told I've maxed
 out on my recovery and that
 realization stung.

The positive attitude I've
 maintained post stroke has deserted
 me for this tearful, pathetic,
 overwrought version, and there was
 nothing I could do about it.
 Please God, the Universe, tell me
 what I should I do. Make this go
 away...

Nadine eventually succumbs to sleep.

DREAM SEQUENCE

33

EXT. ON A BEACH - SOMEWHERE IN FL. NIGHT

33

Nadine is lying with her head in her mother's lap. The night
 time colors on the beach are magical and Nadine's Mother is
 stroking her hair. She is in her 40's/50's so she looks the
 same age as Nadine and is dressed in a red evening gown. Her
 dark hair is big and bold to match her gown and her eyes
 shimmer in the night sky. Nadine slowly awakens to feel her
 mother's presence. She sits up and looks at her mother.

NADINE'S MOTHER
 Well, hello my sweet angel.

NADINE
 Ma?

NADINE'S MOTHER
 Yep, it's me.
 So, you decided to come for a
 visit? Which is the perfect time
 really since I'm hosting a
 Christmas party later and we'll get
 to celebrate that I got to talk to
 you.

NADINE
 A Christmas party? But it's not
 even Christmas time?

NADINE'S MOTHER
It's whatever time I want it to be
here.

Nadine's mother gives her a wink.

NADINE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
Now why are you here?

NADINE
What?

NADINE'S MOTHER
Why are you here? I've been
watching you from afar and am so
proud of all that you've
accomplished and who you've become,
so I'm just a little curious.

Nadine looks down at her body and sees that her right side is
only about 50% visible, where the rest of her body is 100%
solid. Nadine's mother follows Nadine eyes to see what the
problem is.

NADINE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
Is that all? You're worried about
that?

Nadine begins to cry.

NADINE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
Hey. What's this? You can't cry. I
made you tougher than that!

NADINE
I know you did, but sometimes Ma, I
just get so frustrated.

NADINE'S MOTHER
I see. But what are you worried
about your outsides for? It's
what's in here that counts.

Her mother touches the middle of Nadine's chest.

NADINE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
It's like what Liam said. He's
handsome by the way.

Her mother winks again.

NADINE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
Everyone can be a little broken on
the outside.

(MORE)

NADINE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

People face challenges every day
that leave them with some type of
external scar, big or small, but
what really matters is how they are
on the inside, and you, my child,
are perfect on the inside.

Of course, some minor tweaks,
because I'd be an arrogant mother
if I didn't say that.

But between you and me... perfect.

Nadine's mother smiles and bumps shoulders with Nadine.

NADINE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

I learned that from you, you know.

NADINE

From me?

NADINE'S MOTHER

Yes, you!

I was always so worried about how
my life appeared to be to everyone
on the outside.

Did I have the right house, the
right figure, the right husband?
And you rebelled against all of
that.

You made me realize that I should
just be happy with who I am on the
inside and leave it at that.

Nadine stares at her mother and starts to feel infinitely
better.

NADINE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

So now I ask you again... Why are you
here?

You are perfect to me. Now and
always.

Nadine can finally take a deep breath in and smiles.

NADINE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

Yes?

Nadine shakes her head and wipes her tears.

NADINE

Thank you, Ma.

You have no idea how much I needed
to hear that from you.

NADINE'S MOTHER

Yes, I do. I'm your mother, Nadine.
And we always know.

Nadine and her mother both smile and then embrace each other in a hug. Nadine's mother then gets up with high heels held in her right hand, while her left hand holds up the edge of her dress, so it's not covered by the sand.

NADINE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

Now let's talk about Mr. Liam. Way to wait FOREVER to start dating and then you find a guy like that? Well done, Sweetheart. He's definitely a keeper. Yeah?

Nadine shrugs her shoulders.

NADINE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

Yeah. He's a keeper. You don't have to be afraid with that one. Trust me. So don't use your "commitment issues" or Ms. Independence bull crap either. I'm telling you...
Keeper.

Her mother smiles at her and waits until she gets a smile back from Nadine.

NADINE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

Right. I have to go and host my Christmas party now. Are you good?

Nadine shakes her head.

NADINE

Yes, I'm good.

NADINE'S MOTHER

Okay, then.
I love you, Nadine. My perfect child.

Nadine's mother bows to her and then runs off in the distance.

NADINE

I love you, Ma.

Nadine is left sitting there on the beach and then lies down on the sand and goes back to sleep.

34

INT. CASA RAMOS RESTAURANT, LINCOLN, CA. INSIDE EATING
AREA - NIGHT

34

Nadine and Liam have just finished dinner and are walking to the exit of the restaurant when Liam hears his name.

JACKIE

Liam! Over here.

Liam turns around to see his ex-wife, JACKIE. Liam then turns back to Nadine frustrated. Jackie looks like she missed trying out for the next Real Housewives of wherever show. She is a tiny, buxom, blond and gorgeous. Most women would be intimidated by her appearance.

LIAM

Ugh. It's Jackie.
I'll be right back.

Nadine nods her head to Liam and watches him as he approaches Jackie's table. Liam is very stiff in his appearance, while Jackie tries to be extremely engaging, with how she looks and speaks to him. Jackie has TWO FRIENDS with her, who also seem to be entranced by Liam. They continue to make small talk, while the Nadine V.O. narrates:

NADINE V.O.

Well, well, if it's not the infamous Jackie. The woman who Liam tells me is broken on the inside. Liam has mentioned your desire to get back together, despite your cheating and all the lies you told. Who cares that you look so damn perfect. Who cares that you and Liam must have looked like the perfect couple. Who cares...

Nadine stops for a minute as she realizes that Jackie is now looking at her with pity in her eyes, and commending Liam for putting up with Nadine's disabilities.

NADINE V.O. (CONT'D)

Wait a minute.
Are you congratulating Liam for being with a cripple? Is that what you're doing?
I am no cripple, dammit!
I don't need Liam, or anyone else for that matter. I can get through this life just fine on my own.

Liam begins to say good-bye to Jackie and her friends and then walks back over to Nadine. When he reaches her, he gives her a kiss on the lips.

LIAM

Sorry about that. Are you ready to go?

NADINE

I am. But Liam, I'm suddenly not feeling well. Can you take me home so I can rest?

LIAM

Sure. I just need to make a phone call to make sure Finola's okay if I stay with you tonight.

NADINE

No, don't do that. I just want to go home and sleep this off. My stomach is just feeling queasy. Must be the Mexican cheese. You can just drop me off. I prefer it that way.

LIAM

(perplexed)

Are you sure?

NADINE

Yes. I'm absolutely sure.

Nadine takes Liam hand with her right to show him it's okay, even though his exchange with Jackie has made her feel differently and it shows on her face. Liam doesn't like where they've left things for the night but leaves it alone for now.

35A INT. HOME, LINCOLN, CA. KITCHEN. DAY

35A

Nadine is standing at her kitchen island, frantically looking on her cell phone for flights back to New Jersey, when the phone rings.

NADINE

Hello.

INTERCUT

35B EXT. EMERALD ISLE STABLES (aka SHADOW GLEN STABLES), FAIR OAKS, CA. STABLES PREMISES. DAY

35B

LIAM

Hey Nay. Do have a minute to chat?
I want to talk about what happened
at Casa Ramos last night.

NADINE

Hey Liam. I don't actually.
My father died and right now, I'm
trying to get a flight back east.

LIAM

What?! But didn't you just talk to
Vince the other day? I don't
remember you mentioning anything.

NADINE

Oh, sorry. I meant by birth father,
aka the Sperm Donor. Not Vince.

LIAM

Oh. What happened?

Nadine is upset now but tries her hardest not to cry.

NADINE

I woke up this morning and felt
like something was wrong with him.
He usually calls once a month, but
I haven't heard from him in over 2
months, and when I tried to call
him, his phone gave an automated
message that his phone number was
not accepting calls from this area
code.
So, I just started to get a strange
feeling and contacted his sister
and brother to see if they had
heard anything.
They hadn't so my uncle started to
make some phone calls and found out
he had passed two days ago.

LIAM

Oh wow.

NADINE

Yeah. And you want to know the
kicker in all of this? I was not
acknowledged in his obituary. His
wife and four kids are named. Even
his sister and brother are in
there, minus their actual names.
But nothing was said about me.

(MORE)

NADINE (CONT'D)

Marie found the obituary online this morning and told me about it. It also gave information about his viewing, so we're going to go.

LIAM

Well, I want to come with you. Can I come?

Nadine pauses for a second because she knows he is not going to like what she is about to say.

NADINE

Liam, I don't think that's a good idea.
I need to do this on my own.
So, I think it would be better if you didn't go.

LIAM

(hesitates)

Okay. Well what time do you have to go to the airport? I'll just have to finagle things around in the schedule here at the stables, but then I can take you.

NADINE

No, Liam.
I can do it myself.
I will be fine.

LIAM

I know you can do it by yourself.
But I want to be there for you.

Nadine pauses on the phone to stop the tears that are trying to seep through. She knows that Liam is trying to be there for her, but she's also trying to make sure she doesn't need anyone's help.

NADINE

I know. And I thank you for it.
But I'm okay to do this on my own.

LIAM

(reluctantly)

Okay.

NADINE

I'll talk to you when I get home.

LIAM

Wait. Can't I at least call you to make sure you're okay?

NADINE

I'll text you to let you know I got in okay, but it will be a quick trip and I don't know how emotional I'll be so we can talk when I get back.

Liam is at a total loss but knows Nadine has made her mind up, so he leaves things as they are for now.

LIAM

Okay.

NADINE

I'll call you when I'm back.

LIAM

Can you at least send me your itinerary, so I know what flight you're on?

NADINE

Yes. I can do that.
I'll talk to you when I get back.

LIAM

Okay. I'll talk to you then.

NADINE

Okay.
Bye, Liam.

LIAM

Bye.

36A INT. UNITED AIRLINES AIRPLANE - RED-EYE, HEADED TO NJ. 36A
NIGHT

Nadine is seated in an aisle seat at the front section of economy. The plane reaches 30,000 feet, and a 'ding' is heard by all passengers, then a FLIGHT ATTENDANT makes an announcement over the overhead speakers.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT O.S.

We have surpassed the 30,000 feet marker, which means you may now enjoy the movies or music offered on the in-flight entertainment system.

(MORE)

FLIGHT ATTENDANT O.S. (CONT'D)

In addition, the flight attendants will be making our way through the aisle with beverage service shortly, so keep the aisle clear.

Thank you!

It's obvious that Nadine has been crying on and off for a while now. To distract herself she plugs her cell phone headphones into the in-flight entertainment system and watches John Wick: Chapter 3 - Parabellum with Keanu Reeves.

Once Nadine is done watching the movie, she presses the arrows on the touch screen until it brings her to the music section. She selects the Southern Rock station and playing is [FREE BIRD BY LYNRYD SKYNYRD].

Thoughts immediately go to her father. This song reminds her of her father and the relationship they shared.

*If I leave here tomorrow
Would you still remember me?
For I must be traveling on, now
'Cause there's too many places I've got to see
But, if I stayed here with you, girl
Things just couldn't be the same
'Cause I'm as free as a bird now
And this bird you cannot change
Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh
And this bird you cannot change
And this bird you cannot change
Lord knows, I can't change
Bye, bye, baby it's been a sweet love
Yeah, yeah
Though this feeling I can't change
But please don't take it so badly
'Cause the Lord knows I'm to blame*

Nadine's eyes fill with tears. Closing them to try to stop the flow, Nadine sees in her mind's eye all the good times her father and she had while growing up.

FLASHBACK SEQUENCES

36B EXT. HOME, NEW JERSEY. DRIVEWAY. DAY

36B

Circa 1977 - shows Nadine at age 7, laying in the back seat of his 1965 convertible Mustang, staring up at the sky while the Sperm Donor tinkers with the engine.

36C EXT. NORTHERN CALIFORNIA, CA. DAY. 36C

Circa 1987 - shows Nadine at 17, the Sperm Donor and Aunt Kathy driving up the winding mountain roads for a wedding.

36D EXT. CHINESE RESTAURANT, NEW JERSEY. DINING ROOM. NIGHT. 36D

Circa 1986 - shows Nadine at 16 and the Sperm Donor eating Chinese food in a packed restaurant.

36E INT. UNITED AIRLINES AIRPLANE - RED-EYE, HEADED TO NJ. 36E
NIGHT

Finally, she hears his voice in her head.

SPERM DONOR O.S.
I love you, Nadine.

As the song reaches its climax, Nadine takes a deep breath in and opens her eyes to find Keanu Reeves kicking ass on the monitor in front of her while Free Bird is still rocking on in her headset. There must have been some kind glitch in the in-flight entertainment system, but to her it couldn't have happened at a better time because Keanu, the men in Lynyrd Skynyrd and her father were all telling her the same thing:

NADINE V.O.
I am worthy.

He can not hurt me anymore.

He will not break me again.

And I will be just fine.

Scene ends with Nadine wiping the tears from her face, straightening her posture and giving a slight smile.

37 EXT. FUNERAL HOME, NJ. PARKING LOT. DAY 37

Film flashes "New Jersey" on the screen

Nadine is standing outside of the funeral home and is flanked by Aunt Rita, Marie and 5 OTHER PEOPLE that knew Nadine's father way back when and wanted to pay their respects, as well as show Nadine support. There are barely any cars in the parking lot.

NADINE
Looks like we're the first people here.

MARIE

Are you ready?

Nadine takes a deep breath in.

NADINE

I am.

Nadine begins to walk up the path towards the entrance with her posse following.

38

INT. FUNERAL HOME, NJ. MAIN VIEWING ROOM. DAY

38

They walk into the room to find they are the first visitors to arrive.

The SPERM DONOR'S WIFE and their 4 children are standing at the front of the room, next to the box filled with the Sperm Donor's ashes and a picture of him from when he and his wife were married. The Sperm Donor's Wife looks miserable, but it's a misery that expands far passed Nadine's father's passing. This is a depressive state that had taken possession of her soul years prior.

This is the first time Nadine is seeing her half-siblings and it's surreal to her. CHRISTIAN is the first in line to greet the visitors. At seventeen, he is the Sperm Donor reincarnated 40+ years ago. He is very handsome and has that confident swagger and poise that their father exuded in his youth.

Nadine and the others start to pay their respects, beginning with Christian.

NADINE

Hi Christian. I'm Nadine. It's so nice to meet you and I'm sorry it's under these circumstances.

Nadine reaches her right hand to shake his, and there is immediate recognition on his part. But rather than shun her existence, he is sweet and warm as he flashes a huge smile.

CHRISTIAN

Thank you, Nadine. It's so nice to meet you.

They smile at one another, and then Nadine moves on to the next person to pay her respects. It's her half-sister, JENNIFER, who is 15 years old, and is the typical high school nerdy kid, with the customary acne and awkward appearance.

Nadine shakes her hand as well, but Nadine can tell Jennifer doesn't feel comfortable with the action, so Nadine quickly moves on.

Next is the Sperm Donor's wife, and Nadine puts her hand out to shake hers, but instead the wife puts her arms out to Nadine. But Nadine knows from years' experience that although she seems like a nice person, she is not to be trusted.

SPERM DONOR'S WIFE

Give me a hug. I'm so glad you
could make it.

NADINE V.O.

Liar. Fake. Bitch.

My old programming to dislike her
is still hanging on, but I have to
try to save face and not create a
scene since I really don't know who
the ultimate culprit was in the
tattered relations between her, my
father and me.

Leaning in, Nadine gives her a quick hug.

NADINE

I'm sorry for your loss.

Glad to get that over with, Nadine sees that MATHEW is next. The one that asked about her. And like Christian, he resembles Nadine's father greatly, but Nadine can also see the resemblance that he shares with her.

NADINE (CONT'D)

Hi Mathew. I'm sorry for your loss.
May I give you a hug?

Mathew seemed uncertain at first since Nadine was breaking protocol from how she greeted his other siblings, but he let Nadine hug him.

MATHEW

Thank you.

Mathew gives Nadine a slight smile as they finish.

Finally, Jeremy stood on the end. He seems a bit odd, like his twin sister, so Nadine offers him her hand to shake. As he shook her hand, he stared at Nadine the entire time.

NADINE V.O.

I know you have questions for me
but can't ask them based on your
own family dynamic, but when you
are ready, I'm here.

Nadine nodded to him as their hands parted.

As Nadine finished paying her respects to each of them, she started to make her way over to the second aisle of seats and waited to sit down until the rest of the crew joined. Her posse made their stop special by not only giving their condolences, but also telling them of some memories they had of the Sperm Donor that would leave them all smiling or laughing, except the Sperm Donor's Wife.

Once Nadine and her crew were all seated, Nadine starts to take in the rest of the room. Additional people start to flow in; there are three ladies that look to be friends of the wife, the wife's brother and sister-in-law are seated in the aisle in front of Nadine, several high school kids, and a ton of boy scout troops. Literally, there appeared to be at least two rather large troops in the place. But no one was there for the Sperm Donor. No karate allies or work-place companions. Just Nadine and the group she came with.

Marie leans in and begins to speak quietly to Nadine.

MARIE

I can't stop looking at them.
Especially the two oldest boys. So
handsome and I see so much of your
father in them.

NADINE

I know. I feel the same way.

MARIE

Your brother Jeremy and all those
people over there keep staring at
you.

Nadine looks over at Jeremy, but he quickly turns his head, so he's not caught staring. Same for the other people in the room. Nadine looks their way, they look away.

Aunt Rita begins to speak quietly to Marie, as she sits in between Nadine and Aunt Rita.

AUNT RITA

We've got to say something to them.

Marie nods her head and then the two of them continue with their private conversation.

At the same time, they both notice Nadine staring at them, trying to figure out what they are planning. Aunt Rita then pats Marie's hand and nods her head, indicating they had to end their conversation for now since they had just been found out.

NADINE

What are you up to, Aunt Rita?

AUNT RITA

Nothing.

Marie and Nadine glance at each other. Marie shrugs her shoulders and puts her left hand on top of Nadine's right.

MARIE

It will be all right. Trust us.

Not knowing what to do with either of them, especially Aunt Rita, Nadine readjusts her focus to the FUNERAL HOME DIRECTOR, who is standing at the main section of the room, next to the Sperm Donor's wife and her kids.

FUNERAL HOME DIRECTOR

We would like to thank everyone for coming today to pay respects to James Keaton.

This concludes the service.

We would ask that you let the family exit first, and once they leave, you may do so as well.

Nadine and her crew are surprised that there is no eulogy or tribute spoken.

His wife is the first to leave the room, followed by all 4 kids.

AUNT RITA

That's it? No eulogy?
No gathering afterward?
No get together?

She looks confused, as did the rest of the crew.

We start to get up to leave, but Marie stops Nadine.

MARIE

Nay, the guest book is over there.
Why don't you sign it and make sure
you put your contact info in there
in case one of them wants to reach
out to you in the future?

Agreeing with her, she and Nadine walk over to that area while everyone else in their party leaves to go outside.

Once positioned over the book, Nadine records her name, address, and phone number. Conscious of her current writing capabilities, Nadine makes Marie check that it's legible enough, which she agrees it is.

MARIE (CONT'D)

Do you want to say your final good-bye?

The room had almost cleared of the visitors now, so Nadine walks up to her father's picture and looks at it. Although the picture should have represented a happy day in his life, Nadine can see in his eyes that he looked a little troubled. And then she hears the words chime in her head from the song she claimed as his on the airplane.

*Bye, bye, baby it's been a sweet love
Though this feeling I can't change
But please don't take it so badly
'Cause the Lord knows I'm to blame*

Again, Nadine's eyes begin to well up with tears.

MARIE (CONT'D)

You okay?

Looking at Marie, Nadine wipes the tears from her face and takes a deep breath.

NADINE

Yes. Let's go.

As they turn to leave the room, Mathew and Christian begin to make their entrance.

Aunt Rita is standing at the exit doors, letting Nadine know she had managed this meeting. She nods to Nadine in acknowledgement and lets the door close behind her.

NADINE (CONT'D)

Hi.

MATHEW

Hi.

We just wanted to say thank you for
coming today.

It meant a lot to both of us.

They both smile, as does Nadine, trying to stop the tears in
her eyes from falling.

NADINE

There is so much about our father
that I want to tell you.

Countless stories about his house
remodeling for the neighborhood,
karate tournament escapades, horse-
playing with the kids, including me
and Marie, etc.
So much...

Marie has a huge smile on her face to let them know Nadine
speaks the truth.

NADINE (CONT'D)

But I guess the most important
thing for me to say is that our
father was a good man.
Just know that.

At some stage of the game, he was
good.
Yes?

They both nod their heads.

NADINE (CONT'D)

And there will be times when you
question that or get sidetracked,
but just remember. He was good.

Nadine says this smiling. They both smile back at her.

NADINE (CONT'D)

Well, I know you have my contact
information on Facebook Mathew so
hopefully we can keep in touch.
And Christian, you're not on
Facebook so you can just contact me
through Mathew if you want. Sound
good?

They both agree.

MARIE

I mean you guys have to keep in touch. You're family. And you all have the same eyes. Can you see that?

Nadine, Mathew and Christian all agree.

CHRISTIAN

Well, again, thank you for coming and it was so nice to meet you.

Mathew nods his head in support of Christian's words.

The two of them start to leave, but Nadine isn't finished yet.

NADINE

Hey. Can I get a hug?

CHRISTIAN

Of course.

MATHEW

Yes.

Hugging each of them, Nadine is careful not to squeeze as tight as she wanted or needed to at that time. They both hug her back, one after the other, and then smile and walk away to exit the room.

MARIE

I am so proud of you, Nay.
So, so proud.

Marie puts her arm around Nadine's shoulders to give her a hug, Nadine shakes her head in agreement and then they both begin to exit the room.

39A INT. HOME, LINCOLN, CA. GARAGE. DAY

39A

Film flashes "California" on the screen

Nadine leans her cane against her trunk and begins to grab her suitcase.

LIAM

Hi.

Startled by Liam's stealth approach, Nadine reacts shocked and winded.

NADINE

Jesus, Liam.
You scared the crap out of me.

Nadine looks at Liam, who appears to have aged a few years from the apparent loss of sleep the last few days. In his hands he is carrying a bouquet of tulips.

LIAM

Sorry.
Here, you take these and let me
take that.

Liam grabs Nadine's suitcase from her and hands her the tulips. Nadine continues to watch him and realizes her actions before she left may have caused some damage, so she smiles slightly at him. Liam returns the same type of smile. Nadine turns to enter her house through the garage door, with Liam following.

39B INT. HOME, LINCOLN, CA. HALLWAY. DAY

39B

Nadine enters her hallway towards the kitchen, with Liam following.

NADINE

Thank you...

Liam nods his head.

LIAM

How was the funeral?

NADINE

Actually, it was good.
Brought me the closure that I
needed, and I got to meet my half-
siblings. I actually spoke to two
of them, which was great.

You can put that right there.

Nadine motions to Liam to leave her suitcase in the hallway outside of her bedroom.

LIAM

That's nice. Do you think you'll
start to have a relationship with
them now?

39C INT. HOME, LINCOLN, CA. KITCHEN. DAY

39C

Nadine and Liam continue to head towards the kitchen. Once there, Nadine gets a vase from the cabinet, fills it with water to house the tulips and places them on the kitchen island, while Liam stands on the opposite side of the island.

NADINE

It's hard to tell. I don't really think I'd fit in their world. Plus, I'm old enough to be their mother!

They both smile.

NADINE (CONT'D)

I left the ball in their court.

Both stand there in temporary silence staring at one another.

LIAM

Can we talk about what happened at Casa Ramos now?

Nadine smiles slightly at Liam to alleviate his apparent discomfort.

NADINE

Yes.
Can we sit?

Liam nods his head and they both begin to make their way over to the kitchen table. Sitting next to one another.

NADINE (CONT'D)

May I go first?

Liam nods his head, and Nadine clears her throat to start speaking as she knows it will be hard to get through it.

NADINE (CONT'D)

I was upset at Casa Ramos because of Jackie.

Liam starts to interject but Nadine smiles and puts her hand up to stop him.

NADINE (CONT'D)

This was not a jealousy thing. Luckily, I know enough about your dislike for her that I didn't feel the least bit jealous. Plus, I know she's broken on the inside.

Again, Nadine smiles a little and Liam does the same.

NADINE (CONT'D)

I was upset because it looked like she was pitying me because of my disability, while praising you for putting up with it. And I did not like that.

That made me feel vulnerable and like I needed someone, when I don't.

I don't need anyone.

Liam finally gets why Nadine was behaving the way she was but is also hurt because she just said she doesn't need him.

NADINE (CONT'D)

Now this is the hard part of what I wanted to say.

Again, Liam looks concerned.

NADINE (CONT'D)

This is the first real relationship I've ever had.

I've always been single, minus the occasional assholes I decided to succumb too, but ultimately, single, independent, on my own. But then there's you, and although I have said I don't need you, I know, without a doubt, that I want you.

Liam's face lights up and he grabs Nadine's face to cradle it in his hands.

LIAM

You want me?

NADINE

I do.

LIAM

You want me!

Liam's excitement makes Nadine laugh.

LIAM (CONT'D)

Now can I say something?

Liam takes his hands off of her face so he can take both of her hands in his. Nadine nods her head.

LIAM (CONT'D)
I love you.

Nadine suddenly looks panicked.

LIAM (CONT'D)
I know. I know. I haven't said it
in forever when I really, really
wanted to because I was afraid you
would run. It's scary and I'm not
saying it to make you say it.
But I have never felt this way
about anyone before. Over fifty
years old, and never.
I love my family, and I thought I
loved Jackie, but nothing can
compare.

Nadine's eyes begin to well up with tears.

LIAM (CONT'D)
And I need you to let me love you.
Can you do that for me?

Nadine hesitates but then nods her head.

LIAM (CONT'D)
Yeah? Let me really love you and I
promise, it'll be okay. You will be
okay. I promise. Okay?

Again, Nadine shakes her head and Liam kisses her their most
passionate kiss yet.

40A INT. HOME, LINCOLN, CA. LIVING ROOM. DAY

40A

Film flashes "A few days later" on the screen

Nadine and Liam are standing in her living room, by the
home's entrance. Liam has his arms wrapped around Nadine's
waist, with his cowboy hat on since he has to go to work.

LIAM
Say it again.

NADINE
No, Liam. C'mon. You have to go to
work!

LIAM
Once more. Please.

Nadine smiles at Liam, who still has his arms wrapped around her.

NADINE
I love you.

LIAM
Yeah? You do?

NADINE
Yes. I do.
Now go before your mother yells at
me for making you late.

LIAM
She could use the excitement.
I love you, too.

Liam kisses Nadine as the doorbell rings.

Both look at each other, not knowing who it could be.

Liam releases Nadine from his hold, she grabs her cane that stands on the wall next to them and begins to walk the few steps to open the door.

Both are stunned when they see KEANU REEVES, with GARRETT and JOSH standing behind him, waiting at the door. All three possess the best motorcycle vibes on the planet in their appearance.

KEANU
Hi.
I'm Keanu.

Nadine squints her eyes and puckers her lips.

NADINE
I know who you are.

Liam is still standing behind Nadine with his mouth slightly ajar. Keanu smiles.

KEANU
And these are my friends, Garrett
and Josh.

Both men say hello, while Nadine does the same.

KEANU (CONT'D)
So, I heard from my publicist that
you want me to teach you to ride a
motorcycle again?

NADINE
She got my emails?

LIAM
Emails? That's plural. How many
emails did you send?

KEANU
I believe there were three. Yes?

LIAM
Three?!

Liam looks stunned, while Keanu and his friends smile.

NADINE
Yes, I sent three.
But that was my limit, because
anything after that point would
appear stalkerish.
And I am not a stalker!

Liam shakes his head and smiles.

KEANU
Well, my friends and I thought we
could take you out for a ride today
to see how you do, and then you can
come down to our shop in the LA
area so you can ride by yourself
later. With my help, of course.

Nadine smiles excitedly.

NADINE
That sounds fine.
So, who will I ride with?

KEANU
With me, if that's okay.

Nadine's smile lights up her face, while Liam smiles slightly
behind her.

NADINE
Yep. That will work.

Liam chimes in.

LIAM
Her right hip likes to act up, so
you have to be extremely gentle
with it.

(MORE)

LIAM (CONT'D)
I'll come help to make sure she
gets on okay.

Nadine begins to follow the 3 men, with Liam trailing behind her and the scene ends with the camera on Nadine's face with a huge smile.

40B EXT. HOME, LINCOLN, CA. NADINE'S DRIVEWAY. DAY

40B

The credits for the film begin to run, while Nadine is seen being helped on the bike by Liam, Keanu, Garret and Josh and then Nadine rides off with Keanu on his bike.

The End.