

Baldy

Written by

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Final Draft

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EXT. DAY - DRIVEWAY - BOSTON MASSACHUSETTS - SEPTEMBER

Girls are loading soccer equipment into the back of a minivan as they giggle. A black Lab leaps into the vehicle.

DENISE WILLIAMS
Hurry girls, we need to leave.

LIZ WILLIAMS
Okay mom, jeez. Let's go guys.

The crowded minivan travels down the busy street.

LIZ
Mom, turn around. I forgot my gear.

Frustrated, Denise turns back to the driveway.

LIZ (cont'd)
Thanks, mom.

DENISE
Liz, make sure you are not forgetting anything else. We are late.

Liz surveys the circular driveway and yard.

LIZ
This is all I need. Nothing else here to bring with us.

Denise points out the window shaking her finger.

DENISE
Liz, you're forgetting your father!

RICHARD WILLIAMS
Do I need to be a ball to be seen?

All the girls snicker. Nikita secures equipment.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY - SOCCER FIELD - MANY PEOPLE - SUNNY

They arrive at the game with moments to spare. The excited girls rush onto the field at different speeds.

DENISE
These girls keep me chugging coffee.

Richard smiles, kissing Denise on the cheek.

RICHARD
This is what we prayed for!

Denise hugs Richard and kisses his cheek.

RICHARD (cont'd)
Our girls are our life, baby!

The game is vigorous and competitive. Family and friends cheer enthusiastically. Liz runs over to her mom.

LIZ
I'm thirsty! What do we have?

DENISE
You know what we have, Liz. You helped pack it in the car.

LIZ
Mom, chill out. I'm a kid. I forget things. Love ya!

Denise and Richard shake their heads as Liz rushes back out onto the crowded field.

DENISE
Do you think we spoil our daughter?

Richard roars with a smile.

RICHARD
Honey, we are parents. We are not perfect beings. We try, just like any other parents do for their kids.

Denise smiles then takes Sam for a walk. Liz makes a tremendous save for the team by falling on her chest. Slowly she walks off the field rubbing under her shoulder blade.

LIZ
Dad, where's mom?

RICHARD
Liz, that was a great save. Did you get hurt on the play, honey?

Liz groans while rubbing her chest. Nikita holds her.

RICHARD (cont'd)
Mom is walking Sam. Can I help?

LIZ
No Dad, mom has to check me!

Denise returns with Sam, and she inspects Liz.

DENISE
Honey, I think it's a pulled muscle
or maybe an inner bruise. Anyway, the
game is over and you won! I have
medicine at home for you.

Liz cautiously hugs her mom, then gently walks to her
friends and joins in the celebration of victory.

CUT TO:

INT. THAT NIGHT - LIZ'S HOME - DINNER TIME

Denise removes ointment from the kitchen cabinet.

DENISE
Liz, come into the bathroom so I can
rub this on your chest.

LIZ
Mom, can you just do it here? I am
eating my dinner and it is mad yummy.

Denise points Liz to the bathroom.

DENISE
No, we cannot do it here. Your father
is at the table and you are a
maturing girl. Now in the bathroom.

RICHARD
I can take my dinner in the other
room if needed.

DENISE
Richard, sit down and eat!

Richard immediately obeys his wife.

In the colorful bathroom the girls sit on a bench.

DENISE (cont'd)
Liz. I think you have a good muscle
sprain of some sort. If it still
hurts in a few days, we will go see
the doctor for an x-ray.

Liz fearfully shakes her head as Denise mildly caresses the
cream into Liz's athletically toned young body.

The girls return to the kitchen.

RICHARD
Feeling better, princess?

Liz adjusts her clothing.

LIZ
Yup! Healed by Dr. Mom.

Parents beam at one another.

Early two a.m. Liz is shaking her mom in bed.

LIZ (cont'd)
Mom, wake up. My chest hurts.

Richard awakes first. Then he wakes Denise.

DENISE
What is it, Liz?

Liz is crying, clutching her chest.

LIZ
My chest is burning. I can't sleep.

Denise tenderly massages Liz's upper chest, as Richard enters the bathroom. When he returns the girls are gone.

RICHARD
Denise, Liz, where are you guys?

Richard sees a light on downstairs, and rushes down.

DENISE
It's okay, Richard. I have tomorrow off. Go back to bed. Liz must have torn the muscle pretty good.

RICHARD
If you say so. But wake me if you need me. Mom will take care of you, sweetheart. You'll be fine.

Richard kisses them both. He and Sam return to bed.

LIZ
Mom, I'm scared. I don't want to be hurt. I hate being sick in any way.

Denise lovingly brings Liz's head close to hers.

DENISE

We will sleep down here tonight, and
watch funny shows for awhile.

LIZ

And snack on junk food!

Soon mom and daughter cuddle together surrounded by a pile
of sweets, chips, soda, and a begging dog.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY - THAT DAY - STREET

Richard is a police officer and he phones home to check on
how Liz is feeling.

RICHARD

Hi, honey! How are you feeling today?

LIZ

Hi, Dad, much better thanks!

RICHARD

Wonderful news, honey. I'm so glad to
hear it. Please have mom call me when
she has a chance. I love you!

LIZ

Yup, okay. I love you too!

CUT TO:

INT. SAME DAY - MOMENTS LATER - LIZ'S HOME

LIZ

Mom, please call dad when you can. He
wants to speak with you.

Denise yells from the other room.

DENISE

Okay, sure thing sweetie. Thanks!

Liz's girlfriends are visiting as they get ready to leave
her house.

LIZ

Wow, so much fun! You guys are mad
cool. I am so lucky. Bye guys!

CUT TO:

INT. THAT NIGHT - RESTAURANT

Richard flags down the maitre d and secures a table within the busy family-style establishment.

DENISE

Richard, you surprised Liz and I.

LIZ

Yeah dad, You're pretty cool for an old guy, I guess.

RICHARD

Old guy! I bench pressed a lot of weight today in the police gym.

Richard flexes his muscles. The girls laugh and look around, hoping no one has seen him.

LIZ

Dad, like really!

The girls cannot stop making fun of Richard.

RICHARD

I don't mind being a fool for my beautiful ladies.

The trio enjoys a hearty meal. Richard leaves a twenty-dollar tip on the glass table for the waitress.

LIZ

Dad, that's like mad money you gave her. Why so much?

RICHARD

Because she gave us mad great service, and it's mad work.

DENISE

Yes, Liz. Working in a restaurant requires people to move fast and have a great memory for their customers.

LIZ

Do they get free food?

Richard and Denise now laugh at Liz. Liz suddenly grabs her chest with a grimace, and leans forward in her chair.

DENISE
What's wrong, Liz?

RICHARD
That does it. You are going to the
Doctor tomorrow.

CUT TO:

INT. THE NEXT DAY - DOCTOR'S OFFICE

A crowded waiting room prompts Liz to twirl her hair and
inspect the silent group.

NURSE AMY
Liz Williams.

LIZ
Yes. That's me.

NURSE AMY
Doctor Priti will see you now.

DENISE
Come baby, let's go see the nice
doctor. She will help you.

Liz is comforted by her mother's words.

DR. PRITI
Hi, Liz! I haven't seen you for some
time. But I guess that is good,
right? No need spending time here.

Liz securely grasps her mom's hand.

LIZ
Yes, ma'am. It's been some time.

Dr. Priti sits on a swivel chair in the exam room.

DR. PRITI
Please, sit down ladies. Tell me what
is going on with you, Liz.

Liz stares at her mom. The doctor, watching Liz grip
Denise's hand, and attempts to relax Liz.

DR. PRITI (cont'd)
I know how you feel, honey. My
daughters do the same with me. Girls
always feel secure beside their mom.

DENISE

Doctor, Liz made a big save the other day at her game and she has been having this chest pain ever since. We are very concerned.

The doctor presses her hands on Liz's chest.

DR. PRITI

Where does it hurt, honey?

LIZ

In the upper right corner. It feels like a radiating burning pain.

Doctor Priti listens to her lungs and heartbeat. And then reads her blood pressure.

DR. PRITI

Well, your vitals are normal.

Denise and Liz express delight at this news.

DR. PRITI (cont'd)

Let me run some tests to be sure. We can have an x-ray and blood tests done today. I'll call you with any news. For now, try to rest a lot and keep rubbing on muscle cream.

DENISE

Thank You, Doctor. I feel at ease now. I know my husband will too.

DR. PRITI

Yes, our husbands can be bigger worriers than us women.

Liz finishes dressing.

LIZ

Thank You, Doctor.

They all exit the room heading for the nurse.

NURSE AMY

This won't hurt a bit, Liz. Just relax and stare at the picture of the puppies on the wall.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME DAY - MINIVAN

Liz sleeps on the bench seat while Denise drives home.

CUT TO:

INT. THAT SAME NIGHT - LIZ'S HOUSE

Everyone is in a different room. Sam sleeps on the welcome mat in the foyer. His big eyes scan the house.

DENISE

Time to eat!

Sam arrives first in the kitchen, wagging his tail.

LIZ

Wow! I see Sam is hungry too.

Everyone sits at the table. Richard leads in prayer.

RICHARD

Dear Lord, thank you for this food,
our home, and please heal Liz. Amen.

Even Sam is quiet during prayer.

RICHARD (cont'd)

So how did the doctor's appointment
turn out? What's the news?

The girls gaze at each other waiting for who will speak first to inform Richard.

DENISE

Yes, all good news. Seems like a
common muscle strain. But the doctor
did order an x-ray and some bloods.

Richard nods his head while chewing his food.

LIZ

Yeah, Dad. I have to chill for a few
weeks I guess. Ya know, like rest.

RICHARD

Then like mad chill, girl. Eat up!

Sam is tossed some food.

CUT TO:

INT. THE NEXT DAY - DENISE'S OFFICE AT WORK.

Denise receives a call from the Doctor.

DR. PRITI
Hello, this is Doctor Priti, how are you, Denise?

DENISE
I am fine, Doctor, yourself?

DR. PRITI
Very well, thank you! Would you please stop by the office before you go home today?

Denise pauses before answering.

DENISE
Why yes, of course doctor. Is there anything urgent?

The doctor hesitates.

DR. PRITI
I'll see you when you get here. Bye for now.

Denise clenches the phone. After a moment, and a loud dial tone, she frantically calls Richard.

DENISE
Hi, honey, please meet me at Doctor Priti's office today around six o'clock sharp!

RICHARD
Why? Is something wrong!

DENISE
I'm not sure. The doctor called and wants me to meet her there. I am a little nervous. Anyway, I have a meeting now. Love you, bye!

RICHARD
Love you too! Bye, honey.

Denise receives another call from the school. Liz is in the nurses office complaining of chest pains.

CUT TO:

INT. THAT NIGHT - DOCTOR PRITI'S OFFICE

Liz was sent home earlier from school. She napped for a few hours and now is with her folks at the doctor's office. The three of them are sitting in an exam room waiting for the doctor to come in. No one is speaking as the doctor enters.

DR. PRITI

Hello! Thank you all for coming in on such a short notice.

The Doctor sits down and ignores the parents. Sympathy saturates the doctor's face. The doctor reaches for Liz's hand and she backs away in dread.

DR. PRITI (cont'd)

I'm so very sorry to inform you...

The doctor fights her overwhelming emotions.

RICHARD

Inform us of what, Doctor?

DENISE

Yes, please tell us!

A lapse in the Doctor's response keeps the family on edge, as she clears her nose and wipes her red puffy eyes.

DR. PRITI

The reason Liz is having chest pains is she has a very aggressive form of cancer spreading inside of her body, and we desperately need to begin treatments if we want to have any hopes of saving her life.

Silence.

DR. PRITI (cont'd)

Liz, give me your hand, honey. I will do all I can to help you.

Liz clasps her trembling hand within the caring doctor's.

DENISE

I-I-, don't know what to say. M-my life has just been shattered!

Richard continues to reach for tissues as he embraces Liz's other hand. The doctor replaces the tissue boxes as Liz's head droops toward the tile floor.

LIZ
How long do I have to live?

DENISE
Don't ask that question! I would like
a second opinion please.

RICHARD
Yes, I agree. That would be needed
now with such a serious diagnosis.

The Doctor caresses Liz's hand.

DR. PRITI
Of course. We will send any
information to any doctor's office
you ask us to. Please search quickly.
Time is our enemy now!

RICHARD
Doctor, I am a grown man, and a
police officer. I don't get sacred
easily.

Denise nods her head in agreement as she squeezes Richard's
trembling hand in hers.

DR. PRITI
I'm so very sorry for Liz, for all of
you. I'll leave you alone now. We
will provide a list of competent
doctors for second opinions. You are
also free to choose your own. I'm
here to help! Good Night!

Denise fumbles through her pocketbook and removes a few
tissues.

LIZ
I'll take one of those.

The discouraged family embraces.

RICHARD
Mom and I are going to help you get
healthy. But first we have to have a
few second opinions. There could be
some kind of mistakes here. Maybe
things are not as bad as they sound.
We need to try.

The girl's cascading emotions consume them.

Denise and Liz embrace.

LIZ
You mean the Doctor could be wrong?

RICHARD
Sure she could be! We have to find out for sure. And even if it is true, we are going to triumph, just like so many other people do everyday!

Denise comforts Richard.

DENISE
I knew I married the best husband ever. Yes, we will win.

LIZ
I will do my part.

CUT TO:

INT. THE NEXT DAY - LIZ'S HOUSE

Denise is calling doctor's offices to find specialists in cancer treatments. Scribbled notes fill the coffee table.

DENISE
Hello, I would like to make an appointment for my daughter to see a doctor, please. Yes, we can come in tomorrow at 11am. Thank you!

Denise immediately shares the information with Richard and Liz. Liz has a few friends over in her room. They are singing and playing with phones when Denise enters.

NIKITA PATEL
Everything will be okay, Liz. I just know it. Don't sweat it. I love you!

JING LEE
Yes, I agree. Love is the cure!

The three girls enjoy their iced soda. All four girls now nestle. A slow dance consumes the room. Every eye displays concerns. Richard gazes into the room for a moment, then vanishes. He struggles with his own weaknesses while meandering the halls.

Entering the kitchen, he peers through the oven window.

The four girls solemnly stroll downstairs and devour fresh baked cookies. Richard exits the emotionally charged room to find solace in the garage.

CUT TO:

INT. THE NEXT DAY - NEW DOCTOR'S OFFICE

Richard and Denise lean on Liz's shoulders, as she texts someone. It is nearly six o'clock p.m. when the doctors lead them into a conference room.

DR. STANLEY
Thank you folks for waiting so long today. I am sure this situation is very worrisome for you.

The family precariously sits as they listen to the doctor.

DR. STANLEY (cont'd)
My associates and I sadly confirm the diagnosis given to you by Dr. Priti.

Richard's emotions explode. Denise and Liz melt together. Richard is wearing his police uniform. He is unable to hear over the police radio so he squelches it.

RICHARD
Please forgive me, doctors. I know you see a novice before you, but I am trying to learn all I can about this diagnosis.

DR. STANLEY
We are all learning. No one knows it all. We suggest Liz begin treatments at once! We will provide any documentation you need.

DENISE
Thank You. What is the prognosis?

LIZ
Am I going to die, doctor?

The doctor shuffles some papers around and looks at his colleagues. Then he comforts Liz.

DR. STANLEY
There is always hope, young lady.

DENISE

What is the survival rate for Liz at this point of diagnosis?

An empty stare fills Denise with little reassurance, leading her to respond as a shattered mother.

DR. STANLEY

I'm sorry! I can only hope as you do.

RICHARD

That's it? doctor! Hope? It sounds like you are not very hopeful at all. Liz is young and strong. We will fight this. We will triumph over this horrible disease.

The doctor calms Richard.

DR. STANLEY

Please excuse us. The nurses outside will set up your treatment schedules.

The family crumbles to reality.

Then they wander to the nurses' station.

DENISE

Ye - yes. We need appointments for chemotherapy and radiation for my daughter Liz Williams, please.

The nurse focuses as she sets up appointments.

DENISE (cont'd)

Nurse, have you worked here long? Have people responded well to the treatments?

The nurse clears her throat.

NURSE JOYCE

four years here. I don't know.

Richard smiles at the nurse.

LIZ

At least there are places like this.

The nurse finishes. Liz offers a hand to shake. Her parents follow suit. They fold the papers and leave.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME NIGHT - LIZ'S HOUSE

Liz rests on the floor in her room staring at a book title ... "A girl's senior prom." Painstakingly she turns the pages focusing on the life expressed within the colorful illustrations before her.

Denise taps on the door and enters. Liz is transfixed on the cheerful and lively images leaping off the pages before her. Liz's gaze studies the book.

DENISE
We are going to beat this cancer,
Liz. Don't be afraid, honey.

Denise reacts when she sees the pictures in the book.

LIZ
I hope I can go to my prom. I mean, I
know I will be here ... I just hope I
am not sick in the hospital.

Denise surfs Liz's wavy hair with agitated fingers.

DENISE
Of course you will be here, Liz. And
one way or an other, you will be at
the prom. Or we bring the prom here.

Gleeful eyes permeates Denise.

LIZ
Thanks, mom.

Sam enters the room with his leash. Wagging his tail vigorously he rubs up against Liz repeatedly.

LIZ (cont'd)
Come, Sam. Lets go out for a walk!

Denise's painful smile sinks into Liz.

DENISE
Wear a coat. It's chilly tonight!

LIZ
Yeah, mom!

Denise struggles to drop the book. Her emotions sprinkle the tan edges of the lively pages.

CUT TO:

INT. THE FOLLOWING DAY - THOMAS REED'S OFFICE

Thomas Reed is a wealthy tech business man. He has been having pain in his left leg and his assistant is making an appointment for him to see his doctor.

JULIE ANDERSON
Excuse me, Mr. Reed. I have an appointment for you today to see your doctor. It's at two o'clock.

Reed extends disgust with Julie.

THOMAS REED
Two o'clock! I can't do it. Have the doctor come here. I have a meeting. You know how I love my meetings, Julie. I get to hear how much money I am earning and how badly my competition is suffering.

Julie displays her frustration with Thomas.

JULIE ANDERSON
Sir, it doesn't work that way. You must go to the doctor's office! Now you have been in pain for weeks. You have to go today!

THOMAS REED
Are you my boss, or am I yours?

Julie's stance suggests submissiveness.

JULIE ANDERSON
You are my boss. But today, I am yours. Now get ready for your appointment. I will call the limo for you. I will give you a report about the meeting. Oh, and your mom called again today.

THOMAS REED
What did she want?

JULIE ANDERSON
The same thing all mothers want. She asked me to tell you, she loves you.

Thomas's boyish gesture surprises Julie!

CUT TO:

INT. SAME DAY - THOMAS REED'S DOCTOR'S OFFICE

Thomas sits in a large exam room waiting for his Doctor. A polite knock and the door opens.

DOCTOR WISEMANN
Ah, Thomas. How are you?

THOMAS REED
I'll let you tell me how I am, Doc.

Doctor Wisemann leans towards Thomas.

DOCTOR WISEMANN
Thomas, I'm afraid you have some mild cancer in your body.

Thomas's silence prompts the Doctor.

DOCTOR WISEMANN (cont'd)
Oh, don't worry, Thomas. It's an extremely mild form of cancer and no one has ever died from it. But you will need some treatments to ensure it doesn't spread anywhere else.

THOMAS REED
I guess that is wonderful news then!

DOCTOR WISEMANN
Of course it is. I'll make the arrangements for you. We will be in touch. There are no restrictions with lifestyle activities.

THOMAS REED
That's good, doctor. I cannot afford to be a wimp. I am running multi-million dollar enterprises.

The Doctor completes Thomas's vitals.

DOCTOR WISEMANN
It's all good for today. You should really get married and have some children, Thomas.

THOMAS REED
I am married to my career. My employees are my children. Bye.

CUT TO:

INT. THE FOLLOWING DAY - THOMAS REED'S OFFICE

Thomas summonses Julie into his office.

THOMAS REED

Julie, keep this a secret. I have a mild, but safe, form of cancer that needs some treatments soon.

JULIE ANDERSON

Oh dear God, no!

Thomas responds with an agitated shrug.

THOMAS REED

I told you I am okay! Relax, please. I do not want this leaking out to the board members. Hush hush! We can play it off as some muscle strains. In others words, we will lie!

JULIE ANDERSON

If you think that is best, Mr. Reed.

Thomas's stare questions her comment.

THOMAS REED

Yes, I think it's best. Thank You! That's why you work for me.

Julie chuckles.

JULIE ANDERSON

And that's why I do all your work and run your life. Without me, your life is in chaos!

Reed reluctantly agrees.

THOMAS REED

Thank you! But you sill, work for me. Please get me the records to read for today. I want to see who we are crushing into the pavement. Oh, my doctor's office will be calling with appointments, please keep me informed. Thx!

JULIE ANDERSON

Good thing you are my boss, huh!

CUT TO:

INT. THE SAME NIGHT - LIZ'S HOUSE.

The family sits down for dinner.

LIZ
Dear Lord, please help me to be well
and live a long life. Thank you!

Her parents struggle to bow their heads.

LIZ (cont'd)
Well, what else am I suppose to pray
for at this time in my life?

Denise and Richard barely muster a smile.

DENISE
Liz is right. We need our strength,
Richard. Eat your dinner!

RICHARD
You first.

A stern look from Denise and Richard dives into his meal.

DENISE
I heard from the Doctor's office
today. We are to report to Franklin
Research Care Center for Liz's
treatments. It's just for children.

RICHARD
Oh, Franklin, huh? The police dept
has a charity for them every year.
They do wonderful work for kids.

Liz sneaks Sam a piece of her steak.

DENISE
Honey, Sam has his own food.

LIZ
Mom, you said we all need our
strength. That includes Sam.

Sam wags his tail and closely watches Liz.

DENISE
After dinner we can watch a movie.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY - THREE DAYS LATER - FRANKLIN RESEARCH

Families are rushing about with children in wheelchairs, while others teeter across the colorful hallway. Youthful screeching permeates the startled parents.

LIZ
Mom, Dad. Do you hear those loud
echoing sounds?

A staff member soothes Liz's concerns.

STAFF MEMBER
Don't be alarmed. The screaming you
hear is the dancing class in session.
Come with me, I will show you.

Passing by the many afflicted, Liz and parents survey the bustling room. Some children are physically incomplete, though lacking any sign of gallantry.

RICHARD
Thank you for going out of your way
to help our daughter feel more
comfortable. And quite frankly, we
are happy to here.

LIZ
I hate being sick!

The staff member smiles and walks away leaving them to study the class. The intercom announces Liz's name and they all return to the reception area.

DENISE
Hi, Liz Williams here for treatment.

The clerk confirms the reservation.

CLERK JAN
Oh yes, welcome! Did you bring
everything Liz will need for her stay
with us?

DENISE
Excuse me. Stay?

CLERK JAN
Yes, ma'am. Liz must stay here for
some time. This form of cancer
requires intense treatments, and the
doctors need her here so they can
monitor her progress ... if any.

RICHARD

Okay! I guess you hangout here for awhile. We will be visiting you often, and with good food.

A doctor quickly introduces himself.

DOCTOR CONNOR

Hello, I'm Doctor Connor. Please come this way with me.

The doctor directs them into a private room away from the turmoil encompassing the help desk.

DENISE

Doctor, we were not informed of a long stay here. No offense. We have heard marvelous stories of wonderful care here at Franklin.

Richard comforts Liz.

DOCTOR CONNOR

I'm sorry for the inconvenience you are experiencing. We desperately need to begin treatments for Liz. It's in her best interest to stay here. You may stay overnight if you wish.

LIZ

I don't want to live here. I want to live in my own bedroom.

DOCTOR CONNOR

Let us help you, honey. There are many nice people here. Lots of games, dancing, you can have your friends visit and stay the night also. But you must have these treatments over the next few months.

Richard and Denise buckle simultaneously.

DENISE

Next few months?

Denise implodes further. The doctor fixates on Liz, as she fastens to her mom's extended arm. The doctor exits the combustible room.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE SAME DAY - PARKING LOT FRANKLIN RESEARCH

A long black limousine drives into the parking lot. Two men exit the vehicle and walk towards the building.

THOMAS REED
So this is Franklin, huh?

CHAUFFEUR
Yes, sir. This is the address given to me by your secretary.

Thomas scans the exterior further.

THOMAS REED
This is a children's hospital!

Thomas calls his secretary.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
Julie, is this a joke? This is a children's hospital. Why would I come to Franklin for treatments?

JULIE ANDERSON
No! It is not a joke, Mr. Reed. You have to go inside and meet with the staff for a few moments, and then you are out. Now, get in there. Bye!

Thomas returns his phone inside his pocket.

THOMAS REED
Well I guess she told me ... again.

The two men walk to the service desk.

NURSE JOYCE
Hello, sir. May I help you?

THOMAS REED
May you help me? Yes! You may help me. Take away my cancer so I can get back to tearing up companies. Thank you!

NURSE JOYCE
You must be Thomas Reed.

Thomas smiles and shakes her hand.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY - SAME DAY - DOWN THE HALL

DENISE

Well Liz, let's go back home and get your things, then bring you back.

RICHARD

I can stay tonight if you want me to, Liz. It's up to you.

LIZ

Mom is staying tonight Dad, but thanks a lot.

Liz hugs Richard tightly. They leave the exam room and pass by Thomas Reed. He is filling out papers. As they leave the building they see the limousine.

LIZ (cont'd)

Wow! That's like mad awesome!

RICHARD

You will own a limo company one day, Liz. Just focus on that.

DENISE

Richard, you are the best dad a kid could ever have. Thank you!

Richard holds Denise's hand and kisses it.

LIZ

Dad, none of that mushy love stuff in public when I'm around, okay dude?

Liz's folks embrace again.

Meanwhile, back inside at the reception desk.

NURSE JOYCE

You are all set, Mr. Reed. See you very soon. Be sure to bring clothes for a week or more.

Thomas stares directly at Joyce.

THOMAS REED

What? I can't stay here a week. Are you, crazy? I need to earn money. Anyway, I'll have my secretary call you tomorrow. Good day!

CUT TO:

INT. THE SAME NIGHT - LIZ'S HOUSE

Denise and Liz scramble around the house to get all she needs for her stay at the hospital.

LIZ
I am awfully afraid, mom. But if there is hope for me, then I want to do whatever I can.

DENISE
That's the way to power up, girl!

Richard is in the kitchen gathering extra snacks and sandwiches for Liz.

RICHARD
I have food here. I am not sure of the feeding schedule there, and I want Liz to have plenty of food.

LIZ
Feeding schedule, dad? I'm not a horse, ya know.

The girls break out, as Richard humbly walks away. They run after him, smothering him with affection.

RICHARD
Thanks for the love, ladies.

DENISE
You were walking away with your tail between your legs and we didn't want to feel guilty for joking with you.

Richard reassures their efforts.

DENISE (cont'd)
Let's hurry, so we can get Liz settled in for the night.

LIZ
Mom, you said you were staying!

DENISE
I am baby, I am!

After the minivan is loaded up, including Sam, they listen to songs along the way back to the hospital.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME NIGHT - FRANKLIN RESEARCH HOSPITAL

Liz and parents are escorted to her own room. A few kids stop by to say hello. They offer sweets and hugs. Then Liz and folks are left alone in the room.

DENISE

That was very sweet of them, Liz.

LIZ

Yup! I got some candy I haven't had in a few years.

RICHARD

They seem very cool to me.

LIZ

Dad, really. What do you know about being cool? You are a police officer. You have to be brave and strict.

Denise sits on the bed laughing.

RICHARD

Well Liz, I am not brave. I am just a guy like every other guy. But I think you are cool too.

LIZ

Okay, so maybe you know a little about being cool.

Richard shrugs his broad shoulders.

DENISE

Yeah, dad. You're a little cool.

Richard kisses his girls goodnight and leaves for home.

LIZ

Mom, do you think dad will be okay after?

DENISE

After what, honey?

LIZ

After I'm dead.

Denise ignores the question and enters the bathroom.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY - THE NEXT DAY - THOMAS REED'S OFFICE

Thomas searches about fearfully for his Julie.

THOMAS REED
Where the hell is Julie?

Everyone is silent. He rushes into his office. The phone begins ringing steadily, he pushes speaker on.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
Hello, Reed speaking!

JULIE ANDERSON
Hi Mr. Reed, I'm in a meeting downstairs.

THOMAS REED
Ah, thank goodness! I almost had to worry about you. Maybe fire you!

Julie laughs on the phone.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
Am I a comedian?

JULIE ANDERSON
Not a very good one, I'm afraid!

THOMAS REED
Get here A.S.A.P.

Thomas fumbles through his paperwork. He then makes himself tea. Later Julie arrives.

JULIE ANDERSON
Good morning, sir! What is it you are so worried about?

THOMAS REED
This damn hospital wants me to stay up to a few weeks, while they run tests or whatever. How do I run a company from a hospital bed?

JULIE ANDERSON
How do you run a company from the cemetery?

Thomas stares at Julie. He walks over to the window, then turns to face her, placing his tea on the glass table, he points his finger.

THOMAS REED

Why are you being my mother?

JULIE ANDERSON

I'm being your friend! You need this treatment, sir. It's not that bad. Many people do it. None have died. We can set you up with an office there. I have already spoken with the hospital regarding it.

Thomas smiles, picks up his tea and relishes it.

THOMAS REED

A very good answer. Have I given you a raise lately?

JULIE ANDERSON

No!

Both remain silent.

JULIE ANDERSON (cont'd)

Everything will go well. Then you can give me that raise I deserve.

THOMAS REED

Deserve!

Julie brushes him off.

JULIE ANDERSON

Whatever!

Thomas chokes a little on his tea.

THOMAS REED

Get back to work!

Julie storms out of the office.

Thomas is alone in his office talking aloud.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)

Everybody wants money from me. No one has a backbone. They all want to be pampered. It's a vicious society out there boys and girls. If you can't be tough, you're done!

Julie studies him through the glass as he paces his office.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT - THE SAME NIGHT - FRANKLIN HOSPITAL

Sitting in the cafeteria eating dinner, Denise and Liz stare out a window being mesmerized by two squirrels chasing one another in the botanic gardens under the lights.

LIZ
I wish I had their energy, mom.

Denise stops drinking her coffee.

DENISE
Liz, are you feeling tired at all after treatments?

LIZ
Yes I am.

Denise quickly stands up from her chair.

DENISE
Honey! You have to tell me these things so I can relate them to the doctor. Or you tell the doctor.

Liz keeps staring out the window. Denise rushes to the front desk and picks up a red service phone.

DENISE (cont'd)
Hello, yes, I am Denise Williams, at the front desk. May I please speak with a doctor? Thank you!

A few minutes later a doctor approaches the desk.

DOCTOR CONNOR
Yes, how can I help you?

DENISE
Hi, doctor. Liz says she is feeling very tired after treatments.

DOCTOR CONNOR
That is completely normal, Mrs. Williams. It is to be expected with these aggressive forms of treatments.

The doctor rubs her arm. He walks her to a chair and brings her water. He hands her a pamphlet to read. "*Coping with the illness of a child.*" He is called over the intercom and excuses himself.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SAME NIGHT - LIZ'S FRIENDS NIKITA'S HOUSE

The colorful feminine room is swarming with teenage girls in pajamas. Music fills the air, and food covers the bed as active girls dance around the room singing and texting.

NIKITA PATEL
Hey guys, can we sit for a few
please? I wanted to talk to you
about, Liz Williams.

One girl turns off the long boombox. The rest join in a circle on the floor with a drink and food.

NIKITA
I spoke with Liz's mom today. Liz is
undergoing treatments now. The
doctors have to watch her closely. As
for now, she is okay.

JING LEE
I miss her dearly!

The entire group holds hands.

BETH SUMMERS
Liz hates to be sick. She is always
the soft spoken type and easy to
please. She doesn't like
confrontation at all.

LINDA GAULT
Liz would rather not argue and fight
about anything. Peace is her motto.

NIKITA
She may die, you guys. You do know
that, right?

The girls ponder.

JING
I wonder what it is like to be dead.

NIKITA
I don't wonder at all! I want to live
forever and have fun, and I don't
want anyone to ever have to die.

All the girls agree. The music is turned back on and the fun resumes, as they look down at phones.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY - THE NEXT DAY - POLICE STATION

The Chief calls Richard into his office.

CHIEF WATERS
Richard, welcome! Please sit down.
Can I get you anything?

RICHARD
No thank you, Chief.

The Chief paces his office for a moment.

CHIEF WATERS
Richard, I am very sorry to hear Liz
is sick. She will recover. She is a
strong girl, and has two strong
parents as well.

RICHARD
Thanks, Chief. I needed a boost.

CHIEF WATERS
Anything you want to talk about?

RICHARD
I'm terrified, Chief!

Richard expresses his humanity.

RICHARD (cont'd)
I'm such a wimp for this community.

The Chief listens with a concerning affection.

RICHARD (cont'd)
I'm afraid of this disease. It
frightens me so badly, Chief. I lose
sleep and an interest to be with my
wife. I'm a mess!

CHIEF WATERS
You are not a mess, Richard. You are
a human being. No one, no one,
expects you to be an Angel. This
situation you face would knock anyone
over a few times.

RICHARD
For years I have responded to calls
for help from citizens and I rushed
to place myself between them and
danger. But I cannot help Liz!

RICHARD (cont'd)
I cannot put myself between her and
this cancer. It truly sucks!

CHIEF WATERS
You have the thoughts and prayers of
this entire station with you and your
family. We have services to offer for
counseling as well. Sometimes you can
get some great ideas from talking to
others about a challenge in life.

RICHARD
I'll think about it, Chief. Thx.

A firm knock on the Chief's door.

CHIEF WATERS
Come in, please.

CAPTAIN SPARKS
Hi Richard. I am here for you at any
hour. Any hour!

RICHARD
Thanks, Cappy.

The Chief and Captain look at one another.

CHIEF WATERS
I was just telling Richard everything
would be fine and to keep up his
chin. Ever forward!

CAPTAIN SPARKS
Yes, sir! I agree.

Richard cautiously stands up.

RICHARD
Thanks a lot, guys. I truly needed a
pep talk. Just like old college days.

Both men comfort Richard.

CHIEF WATERS
The door is always open, Richard.

RICHARD
Thank You, Boss!

CUT TO:

INT. THE SAME NIGHT - FRANKLIN HOSPITAL

Liz returns to her room after a long treatment. She is sleeping on the transport. The staff gently moves her onto her cluttered bed, and Denise covers her up.

DENISE

Hi honey. I know you are sleeping,
but mommy is right here for you. I'm
not going anywhere, baby. I love you!

Denise fights her emotions. Richard walks into the room. Denise's face illuminates. Richard looks tired. He searches for a place to sit.

RICHARD

How is she?

DENISE

Wiped out. But she is strong.

RICHARD

That's our lil princess. I want you
to take a break and go out with your
friends for dinner or a run.

Denise looks at Richard with contempt.

DENISE

How can you ...?

Richard interrupts.

RICHARD

Do it for Liz's sake.

Denise looks down at Liz peacefully sleeping.

DENISE

I'm sorry, Richard. Please forgive
me, honey?

RICHARD

Denise, nothing to forgive. We both
need to relieve each other, so we
don't crack under pressure.

DENISE

I guess you're right. Let me see if
Liz's friends can come and help out
too. A few sleepovers.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY - ONE WEEK LATER. FRANKLIN HOSPITAL

Liz notices a man staring at her from outside her room.

THOMAS REED

You mean to tell me I have to share a room with a snot nose little brat? I have billions of dollars, I want my own room, now!

DOCTOR CONNOR

You need treatment for your illness. This is all we have for now. She is a delightful girl, 17 years old. Please, sir ... let us help you so you can return to your work.

Thomas thinks for a few seconds.

THOMAS REED

She better like sports.

NURSE JOYCE

She loves sports. Liz is on her school's soccer team.

Thomas enters the room. Thomas walks around then tosses his things on a bed. Liz's eye grow as she stares at his black suitcase on the other bed.

LIZ

Excuse me, sir!

Thomas turns to her.

LIZ (cont'd)

I think you have the wrong room, sir. This is a girl's room. You are a man. So please leave!

Thomas sheds a sarcastic grin at Liz.

THOMAS REED

Well baldy, I will correct you. This is now a co-ed room, like it or not. I live here until my treatments are done. After which, I will be only to happy to abandon your shining head!

Liz covers her mouth. Nurse Joyce enters the room with a few of Liz's friends. They stare at Thomas. He takes out his cell phone and calls his office. He hangs up.

Cont'd

NIKITA
Who are you, sir?

THOMAS REED
My name is Mr. Reed. If it's any
business of yours.

Nikita acts offended.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
Who are you?

NIKITA
None of your business!

The girls laugh. Thomas turns back to Liz.

THOMAS REED
Listen here, baldy. If these are your
friends, they better be nice to me.

JING
OMG! I can't believe you called her
baldy.

THOMAS REED
Well, open your eyes and look at her!

JING
OMG! You have a mad sour attitude.

LIZ
Leave him alone, guys. I have to deal
with him, not you.

Thomas turns in frustration to the nurse Joyce.

THOMAS REED
When is dinner around this place? And
I need the fasted internet speeds and
direct phones in this room.

LIZ
Mr. Reed, sir. I go to bed early. So
don't make a lot of noise here, or I
will get cranky. I need my beauty
sleep, ya know.

The girls are amused by Liz. Thomas responds quickly so Liz
understands him.

THOMAS REED

You sure do need your beauty sleep.

NURSE JOYCE

Dinner is at 6pm every night of the week. There is always food available should you get hungry at any time.

NIKITA

Mad cool! Can we go get some food now? I'm starved.

THOMAS REED

Hey, are you a resident here?

NIKITA

No!

THOMAS REED

Then have your parents feed you at home, or wherever you exist!

The nurse sets Liz into the wheelchair and brings all the girls down the hall. Nikita sticks her tongue out at Thomas as they leave the room. He smirks at her. He calls his office again and again while the girls are gone.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)

Finally! Where the hell have you been?

Julie says nothing.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)

I have to share a room with a bald-headed girl and her witch friends who come to visit her. I hope I don't do a homicide while I'm here. Talk to you later. Come by soon, bye!

Thomas walks around the room as Richard enters.

RICHARD

Excuse me, sir. I must have the wrong room. I'm looking for my daughter, Liz. I thought this was her room.

THOMAS REED

She just flew down the hall with her friends.

Richard appears puzzled.

RICHARD
What do you mean she flew?

THOMAS REED
Don't all witches fly?

Richard quickly approaches Thomas.

RICHARD
Who the hell are you and why are you
in my daughters room? I see her stuff
on this bed. This is her room. Why
are you here?

Nurse Joyce walks into the room.

RICHARD (cont'd)
Joyce, who is this man in my
daughter's room?

NURSE JOYCE
This is Mr. Thomas Reed. He will be
sharing the room with Liz.

RICHARD
Oh no he won't!

THOMAS REED
Oh yes, I am!

RICHARD
Did you say, Thomas Reed?

NURSE JOYCE
Yes!

RICHARD
The technology guru billionaire?

NURSE JOYCE
That's the one!

Thomas looks at Richard with authority and pride.

RICHARD
You owe me an apology for calling my
daughter a witch.

THOMAS REED
If the shoe fits, buddy.

Richards walks more closely towards Thomas.

Cont'd

LIZ

Dad!

Richard turns suddenly to see Liz with no hair. Shocked, he walks slowly towards her with his hand held high to touch her shiny head.

RICHARD

I'm sorry, baby.

LIZ

Dad, what are you doing here trying to start a fight with my roommate?

Thomas shakes his finger at Richard.

RICHARD

This guy said you were a witch.

LIZ

I kinda acted liked one when he first came in. But then I realized I'm not the only one who needs help here.

Thomas grins.

NIKITA

I'm sorry, Mr. Reed, that I was rude to you. Please forgive me.

Thomas hands her a nearby broom and smiles.

THOMAS REED

Forget about it. I have work to do.

RICHARD

Well, I guess I too am sorry, Mr. Reed. I was only defending my daughter. Just being a dad.

THOMAS REED

Let's move on with life.

Thomas exits the room.

NIKITA

That guy is a billionaire ya know!

The girls turn to watch Thomas walk down the hall.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT - THE SAME NIGHT - LIZ'S HOUSE

Denise is on the phone with Richard at the hospital.

DENISE

Richard, what do you mean a grown man
is sharing the room with our
seventeen-year old daughter?

Denise furiously paces the house.

DENISE (cont'd)

I'm coming over there right now!

She rushes out of the house and leaves the door open. While
backing out the driveway, she notices and stops, then locks
the door and heads towards the hospital.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT - SAME NIGHT - FRANKLIN HOSPITAL

Denise storms through the doors past the front desk and into
Liz's room. Pointing a finger at Thomas while he is on the
phone, she walks up to Thomas and disconnects his call,
throwing his phone on the bed.

DENISE

Just who the hell are you? Why are
you in my daughter's room?

LIZ

Mom, please!

DENISE

Shut up, Liz!

Thomas turns to Richard.

THOMAS REED

Nice catch, buddy.

RICHARD

Alright, that's it. I'm going to
place you under arrest.

THOMAS REED

Excuse me!

RICHARD

You heard me, get up and turn around.

Cont'd

Thomas makes a call.

THOMAS REED
Is Chief Waters your boss?

RICHARD
What's it to you? Stand up!

THOMAS REED
Oh, hello Chief Waters, this is Thomas Reed. I think I have a problem with one of your officers, here he is, I'll put him on the phone.

RICHARD
Hello. Yes Sir. Bu-bu-but Sir.

Richard gives the phone back to Thomas.

RICHARD (cont'd)
I guess you got friends.

THOMAS REED
You bet, and I got money too!

DENISE
Arrest this guy, Richard.

RICHARD
I can't!

DENISE
Why?

RICHARD
Because my Chief just told me to lay off him and leave him alone, or else I am in big trouble!

Thomas smiles at everyone.

LIZ
Don't worry guys, I will stay out of Mr. Reed's way. He is only here for awhile. Then he gets to go back and live a full life.

THOMAS REED
Stop trying to break my heart, baldy. Many before you have tried, even my own mother. So back off!

Cont'd

LIZ

Yes, Sir.

THOMAS REED

Now if you folks don't mind, I would like to go to sleep. Goodnight!

DENISE

Whoa, there! I am her mother and I am sleeping here in this room tonight.

THOMAS REED

Oh, I'm sorry. My bed only fits one.

RICHARD

I'd like to ...

THOMAS REED

Careful now, I'll call your Chief.

Richard leaves after kissing the girls goodnight. Denise changes in the bathroom, then climbs into bed with Liz.

LIZ

Mr. Reed, sir.

Thomas is annoyed by Liz.

LIZ (cont'd)

Would you like me to pray about something for you?

Thomas moves his head around.

THOMAS REED

Yes! As a matter of fact I would.

LIZ

What is it, sir?

THOMAS REED

That you would be healed and out of my life forever. Thank you!

Liz looks down, and remains quiet.

DENISE

What kind of man are you? A little girl, greatly ill, thinks of you, and you pick on her. You should be the one who is truly sick.

Cont'd

LIZ

No mom! It's not his fault I am sick.

Thomas smirks at Denise.

THOMAS REED

I need to sleep now. So shut up! I,
unlike you people, have a lot to live
for ... Money!

The girls drift off to sleep soon. A few hours later the
nurses come in to check vitals and turn off TVs and lights.
Thomas waves her over.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)

What's baldy's story?

NURSE JOYCE

She has a very rare and aggressive
form of cancer. We have her in here
for treatments. Most likely they will
fail and she will die. Sad, huh?

THOMAS REED

I hope her parents have a life
insurance policy out on baldy.

Joyce extends a cold stare and returns to the desk.

NURSE JOYCE

While I was in Liz's room, Mr. Reed
said he hopes Liz's folks have life
insurance on her.

The other staff members look at each other. During the night
Liz uses the restroom. She then visits the desk.

LIZ

Hi. I don't mind this man in my room.
At least I won't be lonely some
nights. He may be rude, but he is
still a person.

NURSE JOYCE

You are the bigger person, sweetie!

Joyce walks her back to bed and tucks her in next to her
mommy. Then gives her a high five.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY - THE NEXT DAY - MORNING - FRANKLIN HOSPITAL

Breakfast is being brought into the room.

LIZ

Wow! this is great, Mom! Breakfast in bed. Mad cool.

DENISE

Yes, dear. Very nice indeed.

Thomas shakes his head at both of them.

THOMAS REED

You people don't get out much, huh?

Denise now shakes her head at Thomas.

DENISE

Actually sir, we are well traveled.

THOMAS REED

Do you think you can well travel out of this hospital today?

Denise gets up and slides over the cardboard door.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)

I can still hear you thinking and it is disrupting my peace.

LIZ

Enjoy your breakfast, sir.

Thomas grumbles. Denise whispers to Liz.

DENISE

He's just a miserable old man, honey. Pay him no mind. He will be gone soon. He is probably an only child.

THOMAS REED

I heard that, witch hazel. I have a brother and sister. Maybe I will buy this hospital and evict your dying daughter. You can care for her on skid row, with the other losers.

Denise erupts out of bed and storms over to Thomas's bed.

DENISE

You, sir, are a diabolical man!

Cont'd

THOMAS REED

Of course I am. I'm a billionaire!
Now get your unattractive self away
from me ... now! Oh, makeup helps!

Denise tightens up and walks away.

LIZ

Mom, why do you take his bait?

DENISE

His words are cruel, very cruel.

LIZ

You just want to defend me because I
am your daughter and I am dying.

Denise rubs her hand across Liz's bald head.

THOMAS REED

Hey, does either of you want my hash
browns before I ditch them?

Liz and Denise are surprised.

LIZ

Yes, sir ... I will have them,
please?

THOMAS REED

Well, come and get them, Baldy. I
haven't got all day ya know.

Liz walks to his bed slowly. They stare at each other.
Thomas lifts the plate to give it to her.

LIZ

Thank you, sir.

THOMAS REED

Don't mention it, Baldy. But, you
have to take this other stuff off my
bed too. That's the deal.

LIZ

Yes, sir!

Liz clears his bed of everything, as Denise watches and
holds back all frustrations.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY - SAME DAY - LUNCH - LIZ AND THOMAS'S ROOM.

The staff brings in lunch. Liz and Thomas are in their beds. After the staff leaves, Thomas drops his milk carton on the floor. Liz rushes out of her bed to help.

LIZ
Here you are, Mr. Reed. Have mine!

Liz wipes it off with a napkin. Thomas stares at her.

THOMAS REED
Thanks, Baldy. I'm only sixty-five.

LIZ
Okay, you are sixty-five years old.

They finish their lunch and vitals are taken again. Thomas's phone rings but he can't get to it as he is with the nurse. Liz picks up his phone.

LIZ (cont'd)
Hello, Mr. Reed's office, may I help you please?

The nurse and Thomas watch in amazement.

LIZ (cont'd)
I'm sorry Mr. Reed is busy right now, may I help you, please?

A slight pause.

LIZ (cont'd)
Yes, of course. It will be my pleasure to relay this message to Mr. Reed. Thank you, have a nice day!

She puts the phone down and writes out the message, then hands it to Thomas. He looks at it, then at the nurse.

THOMAS REED
Wow, Baldy. That's quite the detailed message. I must say I am somewhat impressed by your secretary skills.

LIZ
Thank you, sir!

THOMAS REED
This is an important business deal.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY - SAME DAY - LATER - FRANKLIN HOSPITAL

The nurses and a doctor come into the room.

DOCTOR CONNOR
Excuse me, Mr. Reed. It's time for
your treatment.

Thomas looks down, and then over at Liz.

NURSE JOYCE
It's not that bad! Just little over
an hour, and back you come.

Thomas slowly gets out of bed. So does Liz.

NURSE JOYCE (cont'd)
Can I do something for you, Liz?

LIZ
Yes! I want to go with Mr. Reed. He's
my friend, and I want him to know I
am there for him.

Thomas looks at the staff and smiles.

THOMAS REED
Thanks, Baldy. But I think I got this
one. Anyway. My phone may ring and
you need to be here to answer it, and
take any messages. So back to work.

Liz smiles and darts to her bed to get her note pad and pen.

NURSE JOYCE
We will be back soon, Liz. See you
then. Buzz if you need help.

Liz smiles and sits down next to Thomas's bed.

THOMAS REED
Well, got to make some use of her
while I'm here.

The doctor leaves as Joyce wheels Thomas to the test.

NURSE JOYCE
Mr. Reed, we will help you get well.

The test concludes and Thomas is brought back to the room
where he finds Liz sleeping, and two sheets of paper filled
with very detailed notes on his pillow.

Cont'd

The staff help Thomas into bed.

NURSE JOYCE (cont'd)
Well, I guess your new secretary is
working out just fine.

THOMAS REED
Yeah, and the best part is she is
free. Gotta love that!

Joyce shakes her head as she leaves the room.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
Aw, c'mon, now. It's all about the
bottom dollar.

He laughs, but doesn't awaken Liz. He reads the notes and
makes some calls.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
What do you mean they want a lower
price? They already agreed to a
price! You tell them it's the
original deal, or no deal!

Thomas uses the restroom. Liz is moving in the bed, but
still sleeping. He looks over at her, and talks to himself.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
Well baldy, you saved me five -
hundred thousand. Thanks!

An hour later the nurse wakes up Liz.

NURSE JOYCE
Liz, honey. It's time for your
treatments again.

Liz is groggy and cranky.

LIZ
Do I have to go now?

NURSE JOYCE
Yes!

LIZ
It's lonely in that machine. I don't
like it at all.

She hugs her pillow tightly.

Thomas stands up out of bed and walks over to Liz.

THOMAS REED

Listen, Baldy. I cannot share a room with a wimp. So get your little rear end out of that bed and go to treatment. Don't worry, I won't eat all your candy while you're gone.

He pats her head a few times. She gets out of bed and leaves for her treatments. Thomas takes a handful of candy.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)

Hmm, not bad! Tastes good. I guess her friends have some level of good taste for things after all.

Denise and Richard walk into the room moments later.

DENISE

Excuse me, sir.

Thomas looks up.

THOMAS REED

Baldy is at treatment now.

DENISE

Her name is Liz.

THOMAS REED

Well, she doesn't seem to mind me calling her Baldy.

They walk away from Thomas and sit on Liz's bed and close over the sliding door. Thomas chuckles. Liz is wheeled into the room moments later, sleeping again.

DENISE

Hi, Joyce. How is she?

NURSE JOYCE

She is tucked out for sure. She did fine in the treatments. She needs to rest now. Maybe you should come back later to see her.

DENISE

We just got here.

THOMAS REED

Come back later, Baldy needs to sleep! She needs quiet. And so do I.

Cont'd

The nurse and Liz's parents leave the room and go to the front desk.

RICHARD
Is this guy in there for real? Being such a success in life, and acting so damn miserable?

NURSE JOYCE
He's miserable because he wants to be back at his office destroying other companies and earning millions.

They all shrug and sit down.

NURSE JOYCE (cont'd)
We see and deal with all kinds of life stories here. We cannot take it personally, we have to focus on the care of the patient.

Richard and Denise leave to go home for the night.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME NIGHT - NIKITA'S HOUSE

The girls are sitting on the bed talking. Music is low in the background.

NIKITA
I guess Liz is tired a lot these days. The treatment is kicking her butt, her mom says.

All the girls simply look down.

NIKITA (cont'd)
Guys, we have to deal with this.

JING
I don't want to! Liz is like a sister to me and I feel so helpless.

BETH
Ditto!

LINDA
Echo dat for sure!

cont'd

The girls hold hands.

NIKITA

Liz is a sister to me too.

The tissues are passed around.

LINDA

Let's try to visit her as much as possible, even on weekends.

BETH

That is a great idea! We can do shifts. This way she has a visitor just about all day long.

NIKITA

Let's turn up the music and dance for awhile. Then we can eat pizza.

The bed empties.

CUT TO:

INT. THE NEXT DAY - MORNING - LIZ'S HOUSE

Breakfast is a slow process for Richard and Denise.

DENISE

I heard from Nikita today. She and the other girls are going to make rotating visits to see Liz.

Richard puts his hands together and looks up.

RICHARD

Thank you!

DENISE

Isn't that so sweet, Richard?

RICHARD

I love it, baby ... love it!

DENISE

We need to eat a good meal this morning. We cannot afford to be sick. Liz needs us.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY - SAME MORNING - FRANKLIN HOSPITAL

Thomas and Liz finish breakfast. Liz takes all of Thomas's food and mess out into the hall. Then returns to the room.

THOMAS REED

Wow, Baldy. You are energetic today.

Liz smiles and cuddles back under her blankets. Thomas carefully watches nurse Joyce as she enters the room.

NURSE JOYCE

Mr. Reed, it's time for treatments again. Are you ready?

THOMAS REED

I have a choice?

Joyce laughs at him.

NURSE JOYCE

I'll take you down the hall.

Liz quickly gets out of bed and rushes to Thomas.

LIZ

Mr. Reed, sir. Would you like me to go with you? This way neither of us will be alone.

THOMAS REED

Sure, Baldy. But I have to concentrate on my treatments, so don't make a lot of noise.

Liz smiles.

LIZ

Yes, Sir!

All three walk down the hall. Liz and Joyce push Thomas in his wheelchair. Back at the front desk, Richard and Denise are checking in.

DOCTOR CONNOR

Ah, hello folks! Nice to see you.

DENISE

Hello, doctor. How is Liz feeling?

DOCTOR CONNOR

Let's go ask her!

They all enter Liz's room.

RICHARD
Where is she?

Denise checks the bathroom.

DENISE
She's not in there.

DOCTOR CONNOR
I don't know. She could be at the chapel, kitchen, recreation room, or just about anywhere in here.

Joyce enters the room.

NURSE JOYCE
Hi guys, what's up!

DENISE
Hello Joyce. Do you know where Liz is by any chance?

NURSE JOYCE
She is in the treatment room keeping Mr. Reed company.

Richard and Denise express frustration.

NURSE JOYCE (cont'd)
Whoa! Now wait a minute. Liz offered to go with him. She didn't want to be alone. It made her feel happy!

DENISE
Joyce, don't tell me what makes her happy. She's my daughter!

Liz enters the room unnoticed.

LIZ
Mom, dad ... leave it alone!

The doctor looks at everyone.

DOCTOR CONNOR
Now that's a take-charge girl.

LIZ
I wanted to go. Chill out!

Her folks sit down quietly.

Cont'd

Denise gets up and walks over to Joyce.

DENISE
I'm sorry, Joyce!

The ladies hug!

NURSE JOYCE
Come with me while I show you my new
bag I just bought.

The ladies leave the room and go to the desk area.

NURSE JOYCE (cont'd)
Denise, I did not buy a new bag. I
needed you alone for a minute. Liz
and Thomas are respecting each other
to good extents. If something makes
Liz feel good, I want her to do it.
This will improve her healing.

DENISE
Okay, I guess you're right.

They return to the room. Denise holds Richard's hand.

DENISE (cont'd)
It's all good, Hubby ... no probs!

RICHARD
Okay, whatever you say.

The staff bring Thomas back into the room.

LIZ
Hi, Mr. Reed. You conked off, so I
came back to the room to check if
your phone was ringing. No calls.

THOMAS REED
Thanks, Baldy! I may have to fire
Julie and hire you!

Liz's face beams.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
I'm tired.

LIZ
Mom, dad. Let's go to another room so
Mr. Reed can sleep.

Thomas smiles at the Parents.

RICHARD
Wait a minute, I just got ...

LIZ
Dad, pronto!

DENISE
Richard, out!

In the kitchen at the hospital.

RICHARD
Who the hell does this guy think he is? Now he is ruling the time I spend with my daughter.

DENISE
No, Richard. If it makes Liz happy, let's do what she wants to do!

Denise nudges Richard under the table.

The doors to the kitchen open and Nikita, Linda, Beth and Jing all enter the room for a visit with Liz.

LIZ
OMG! You guys are mad awesome!

NIKITA
We brought pizza for you.

BETH
And fries too.

JING
And lots of soda you like.

LINDA
And dark chocolate for dessert.

Denise eyes the chocolate. Nikita kisses the chocolates.

DENISE
Oh! I'll have some of this.

All the girls burst with enjoyment.

RICHARD
I'm good for now, thanks girls.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT - THE SAME NIGHT - FRANKLIN HOSPITAL

Liz is on her bed watching Thomas sleep. He awakes suddenly, rubbing his eyes and yawning, staring at Liz.

THOMAS REED

Oh great, now I'm going to be up all night gazing at your bald head!

Liz shrugs her shoulders. Thomas picks up the hospital phone and speaks to the staff.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)

Hello, this is Mr. Reed. I slept late and I am starving, what's to eat?

Liz holds up a pizza carton!

THOMAS REED (cont'd)

Never mind, bye!

LIZ

My friends came by and brought a lot of pizza, fries, and coke, Mr. Reed. I saved you some because I thought you might be hungry when you wake up.

Thomas points to the microwave. She heats up the food.

LIZ (cont'd)

Here you are, sir! I hope you like it. I thought it was delicious.

THOMAS REED

Well, Baldy. You and I don't agree on a lot of things I'm sure. So how about you let me eat in peace and I'll tell you later how it was. Okay?

Liz bows her head and walks to her bed.

LIZ

Oh, and you had two calls. Messages are on your table.

Thomas raises the pizza to her.

LIZ (cont'd)

You're welcome.

Thomas finishes all the food as Liz falls asleep. The staff come into clean the room. They try to take the pizza carton and other trash from Thomas's bed. He stops them.

THOMAS REED
 Leave it there! Baldy will clean it
 tomorrow when she wakes up.

The staff leaves with a frown. Thomas gets out of bed and walks over to Liz's bed and turns out her light. He peers down on her.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
 Thanks for the food, Baldy.

He walks back over to his bed and climbs in. He makes a few phone calls and watches TV until he falls asleep.

CUT TO:

INT. NEXT MORNING - LIZ'S HOUSE

Sitting by the picture window, Richard and Denise drink their fresh coffee and discuss the day's plans.

DENISE
 What time you off of work?

RICHARD
 Four-thirty. What are your plans?

Denise raises a finger, taking a few more sips.

DENISE
 Ah, good! I am going to stop by the
 office for awhile and then to the
 post office, bank, and hospital.

The phone rings. She puts it on speaker.

DENISE (cont'd)
 Hello, Nikita.

NIKITA
 Hi, Mrs. Williams. I want to go to
 see Liz today, but I can't get a ride
 as my folks are busy. Can you please
 take me and bring me home?

DENISE
 Sure, sweetie, what time?

NIKITA
 Anytime after 4pm is fine.

Denise gives Richard the thumbs up.

Cont'd

DENISE

Well, I will be picking up Nikita after 4pm, to bring her to Liz.

RICHARD

Sounds great!

DENISE

See you then Nikita, bye!

NIKITA

Thanks, bye!

Denise puts the phone down.

DENISE

Well, at least Liz has some wonderful friends, honey.

RICHARD

Amen to that! Ya know Denise, we still have to be there as much as we can for Liz.

Denise turns her palms up in the air.

DENISE

I know, why would you say that to me?

Richard moves back on his chair.

RICHARD

Just a reminder, dear.

DENISE

Next time keep your reminders to yourself, Richard!

Denise leaves the room crying and locks herself in the bathroom. Richard apologizes through the door, but no reply. He leaves for work.

DENISE (cont'd)

Richard, darling, are you home?

She exits the bathroom. She goes about her day. She picks up Nikita and drives over to the hospital. She gets a text from Richard. She smiles. She texts back!

CUT TO:

INT. SAME NIGHT - FRANKLIN HOSPITAL.

Liz is surprised to see her friend and Mom.

 NIKITA
Hey dude, I brought McDonald's!

Thomas looks at Nikita.

 THOMAS REED
Aren't dudes suppose to be guys?

 NIKITA
It's just slang, sir. Maybe you don't
understand ... with all due respect.

Thomas waves his hand for Nikita to come over to him.

 THOMAS REED
Do you see this ring?

 NIKITA
Yes, sir.

 THOMAS REED
Good! It's from eight years of
college at Harvard University.

Nikita's face glows!

 NIKITA
For real! I want to go there for
college. I'm an honor roll student.
Actually so is Liz.

Thomas waves Liz over also.

 THOMAS REED
Yes! For real. There is very little I
don't understand in life ... with all
due respect to you, young lady.

Nikita bows her head in respect.

 NIKITA
I'm sorry if I offended you, sir.

 THOMAS REED
Good! Now we got that out of the way.

Denise asks the girls to let Mr. Reed rest. He looks at her
and waves her away.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
Mrs. Williams, can't you see I am
having mad fun with my new friends?

The girls delight in this new side of Thomas.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
Have you ever been to Harvard U.?

NIKITA
No! I would love to go there.

Liz hugs Nikita. Nurse Joyce walks in.

LIZ
I hope we all get into the schools we
choose and do well in life.

NURSE JOYCE
Mr. Reed, it's time for treatment.

The girls object.

LIZ
No, can it wait?

NIKITA
Yeah, can he wait and go later, after
I go home, please?

Joyce is stunned. She looks around the room, and at Denise.
She shrugs her arms up in the air.

NURSE JOYCE
Okay, I'll be back in one hour. But
that's it! This has to be done!

The girls give Thomas a high five. Denise follows Joyce out
to the desk and sits down.

DENISE
What the hell just happened?

NURSE JOYCE
You got me! Maybe he's paying them!

The two ladies bend in laughter. Back in the room. The girls
and Thomas continue talking. Denise drives Nikita home.
Richard stops by the hospital for some time and has an ice
cream with Liz. She yawns a lot. Denise is returning for the
night with Liz.

CUT TO:

INT. THE NEXT DAY - MORNING - HOSPITAL

Liz and Denise are together under the blankets. Joyce walks into the room with a cart of breakfast and drinks. Thomas is bright eyed and hungry.

NURSE JOYCE

Good Morning, sir. Here is your
breakfast and coffee.

Thomas smiles slightly. Joyce looks over to see the others are fast asleep still. She leaves the cart by the bed for them. Later they wake and eat. Liz gets out of bed and walks over to Thomas.

LIZ

Good Morning, sir! Did you have a
nice breakfast?

Thomas seems puzzled.

THOMAS REED

What, are you a food critic?

Liz doesn't understand the comment.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)

Go back over there to your mother.

LIZ

Yes, sir.

Denise now walks over to his bed.

DENISE

Good morning, sir! Did you have a
nice breakfast?

Thomas shakes his head.

DENISE (cont'd)

I'll just eat your home fries since
you haven't finished them.

Denise grabs a handful and walks away.

THOMAS REED

Hey Baldy, you better teach your old
lady some manners!

Denise amuses herself.

CUT TO:

INT. THREE DAYS LATER - EVENING - LIZ'S HOUSE.

Richard and Denise just finish dinner and have cleaned the kitchen. The phone rings and Denise answers it.

DENISE

Hello!

A woman's voice is crying badly on the other end.

DENISE (cont'd)

Hello, this is Denise. Whom am I speaking with please?

The voice is trembling.

DENISE (cont'd)

Can I help you please?

RICHARD

What's up?

Denise shrugs.

DENISE

OMG! NO! NO! NO!

RICHARD

What happened to Liz?

Richard is in a panic, holding his chest. Denise covers the phone. She's crying badly. Waving him to sit down.

DENISE

When, how? OMG! We are coming over now! Bye!

Denise slams down the phone and shoots up from the chair.

RICHARD

Honey, what's going on?

DENISE

Ni - Nikita was killed in an automobile accident today!

Richard's drink hits the floor. He struggles for balance.

RICHARD

We mustn't tell Liz anything!

DENISE

Richard, they were friends.

RICHARD
This news will kill our Liz! We
cannot tell her a word.

Denise is shaking badly, picking up her keys.

RICHARD (cont'd)
Oh no you don't! I'm driving! Let's
go right now!

In the car, on the way to Nikita's house.

RICHARD (cont'd)
Call Liz's friends and tell them not
to tell Liz anything about Nikita.

Denise makes the calls and finishes as they pull up to the house with lots of cars outside. An ambulance was called for Nikita's mom. She gets taken to the hospital. Her Husband climbs in the ambulance next to his wife.

They leave Nikita's house, and drive to the hospital to see Liz. Both Richard and Denise are distraught.

RICHARD (cont'd)
We have to pull it together for Liz,
honey. Let's do all our crying now.
We must be composed for Liz!

DENISE
I'm trying, baby ... I'm trying!

Richard and Denise reach the hospital, and go inside.

THOMAS REED
She's been out cold for an hour now.
She had a good day, though. No
friends visited. But the kids here
played with her a lot.

DENISE
Thank you!

RICHARD
Yes, thank you!

THOMAS REED
Sure.

They head out to the front desk and inform the staff of what happened to Nikita, and to please be silent.

CUT TO:

EXT. TWO DAYS LATER - CEMETERY - RAINING - MANY PEOPLE

The ceremony ends and people walk away. The cemetery staff seals and locks Nikita's casket and lowers it into the ground forever. Nikita's mom is in a wheelchair and heavily medicated. Her Dad is being a fortress for the family.

Richard approaches Nikita's father.

RICHARD

Call us for anything you need, any
hour, any day ... we will be there.

Nikita's father shakes Richard's hand and walks away with his children, and pushing his wife in the wheelchair.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Don't get mad at me now, Denise, for
what I am about to say.

Her makeup is changing colors.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Poor Nikita died young, seventeen
years old. And she was healthy. Liz
may live a long life. We never know.

DENISE

I understand you, sweetheart! I'm not
mad. Just brokenhearted! All these
girls are like daughters to us.

RICHARD

To every family I'm sure. Let's keep
praying for Nikita's family. They
need it so much now!

They get into their car, and drive.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Why don't we get some breakfast at
McDonald's for Liz and Mr. Wonderful?

Denise chuckles and laughs a little. Richard does too.
Denise leans over and kisses Richard softly.

DENISE

I could use some food and a very
strong coffee now.

They drive up to the board and place their order.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME DAY - FRANKLIN HOSPITAL

Richard and Denise arrive at the hospital. Liz and Thomas have already eaten breakfast.

LIZ
Hi Mom, Dad!

Thomas glances over.

DENISE
Hi, sweetie!

Richard smiles at Liz.

DENISE (cont'd)
We brought you some food.

LIZ
Awesome! Lunch will be in about an hour and a half, but I will eat this food instead!

DENISE
Excuse me, Mr. Reed.

Thomas looks up from his morning paper.

DENISE (cont'd)
We brought you some breakfast. I hope you like it, sir.

Thomas nods his head and smiles at Denise and Richard.

LIZ
I have a coffee today from McDonald's, mad yummy!

Liz brings Thomas his food and sets it upon his bed with napkins and coffee.

THOMAS REED
You keep this up, Baldy ... and you will be my new secretary.

Liz is happy and walks back to her bed.

RICHARD
Did you sleep well last night, honey?

With a mouthful of hash browns she nods. Denise sips her coffee also as everyone eats. Nurse Joyce walks into the room and sees the feast.

NURSE JOYCE

Well I guess lunch won't be served in here today.

LIZ

What's on the menu?

Everyone looks at Joyce.

NURSE JOYCE

Cheeseburgers and fries, onion rings, and Coca-Cola from the tap.

Liz and Thomas look at one another.

LIZ

Please bring our lunch in here anyway, maybe a few hours late. I will heat it up for us.

Joyce looks at Thomas.

NURSE JOYCE

I can see you have her on the payroll.

THOMAS REED

Almost!

Joyce asks Denise to come to the front desk with her.

NURSE JOYCE

How was the funeral? A lot of people?

DENISE

Dear Lord, yes. My heart is crushed!

NURSE JOYCE

I bet. I'm so sorry. She was a beautiful and smart girl. How is hubby doing?

DENISE

He's okay. When a child has a lot of close friends and they spend time in your house, they become part of the family. No matter what happens, good or bad ... you feel the impact!

Denise returns to the room and Richard and her spend more time with Liz before she starts another treatment. The staff bring Liz down the hall for her session.

In the room.

THOMAS REED
Looks like I'm getting fat today.

NURSE JOYCE
That was nice of them to remember you
this morning with a hot breakfast.

THOMAS REED
I was still hungry.

NURSE JOYCE
I said, that was a nice thing for
them to do.

THOMAS REED
I said ... I was still hungry.

Thomas makes his point clear to Joyce. She turns to him.

NURSE JOYCE
Mr. Reed, you have to learn some
manners. I don't care if you are a
billionaire and have all sorts of
contacts. That doesn't give you any
rights over others. Time to grow up
and act like a man, and not a spoiled
little brat!

Thomas just listens. Joyce leaves the room angry.

THOMAS REED
Well, I guess she told me ... she
believes. Maybe I should marry, her?

Thomas chuckles and enjoys his coffee. Liz returns later and
is sleeping again. The staff gently places her in bed, where
she sleeps for a few hours. Thomas walks to Liz.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
Baldy, hey Baldy.

Thomas is shaking Liz while she is sleeping.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
Baldy, wake up!

A groggy Liz turns over to look at Thomas. He pats her bald
head a few times at the top. He uses his fingers to open her
eyes. He wiggles her nose. She smiles.

Then he points to the food.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
Get out of bed, Baldy. I am hungry
and you need to make my food for me.

LIZ
Okay, Mr. Reed.

Thomas walks back to his bed and climbs in and waits for Liz
to heat up the food and his coffee, then serve him.

LIZ (cont'd)
Here you are, sir. Just the way you
like it, nice and hot. I think I too
may be hungry.

THOMAS REED
Well, go make yourself some
breakfast. You're not broken!

LIZ
No sir, I am not.

Thomas's secretary Julie walks in the room.

THOMAS REED
Hey, Baldy! This is the lady you will
soon be replacing.

Liz looks at Julie in awe.

JULIE ANDERSON
Hello, my name is Julie. I am Mr.
Reed's personal secretary.

THOMAS REED
Not for long!

Julie laughs, and places her pocketbook on his bed.

LIZ
Good day, madam. My name is Liz.

THOMAS REED
Madam ... whoa!

Julie shakes her head at Thomas.

JULIE ANDERSON
Nice to meet you, Liz.

Julie sits on a chair next to Thomas's bed and gives him a
piece of paper to read and sign.

THOMAS REED

Well, well! Finally we killed those bastards over there at XYZ steel. I knew they would cave. How much we getting for this acquisition?

JULIE ANDERSON

One hundred-forty million dollars.

THOMAS REED

You hear that, Baldy? Keep doing your homework. One day this can happen to you also, if you are tough!

Julie glances over at Liz.

JULIE ANDERSON

I just wanted to come by in person and give you the good news.

THOMAS REED

Great news! Hey, while you are here doing nothing ... Clean this stuff off my bed.

Thomas stares at Julie with expectation. Julie cleans the mess for him.

JULIE ANDERSON

Mr. Reed. I do not like the way you talk to me, or even treat me, sometimes. You need to change.

THOMAS REED

Hey, find yourself another job!

Julie shakes her head.

LIZ

It's okay, Miss Julie. We have to be tough in this world if we want to survive. Being a wimp will never help you become wealthy and powerful.

Julie turns to Thomas with indictment.

JULIE ANDERSON

I see you've had plenty of time to brainwash her.

Thomas agrees, as Julie walks over to Liz and pats her shoulder gently.

JULIE ANDERSON (cont'd)
It's okay, honey. His bark is just
that, a bark. Underneath all that
growl ... is a helpless worm.

Liz acts insulted.

LIZ
You shouldn't speak that way about my
friend, ma'am.

JULIE ANDERSON
I see you have been brainwashed!

Julie walks out of the room.

LIZ
I'm sorry she spoke about you that
way, Mr. Reed. She must be having her
period I guess.

THOMAS REED
In any event, she won't leave me. I
pay her too well.

Nurse Joyce enters the room with another staff member.

NURSE JOYCE
Mr. Reed, time for treatments again.

THOMAS REED
Is there like some federal regulation
on treatments? You guys come for me a
lot. I'm going to call my lawyer.

NURSE JOYCE
Whatever! Get your ass in the
wheelchair now! My job is to make
sure you get your treatment so you
don't get worse, or die.

LIZ
There is no need to swear at Mr.
Reed. You get more with honey, than
with vinegar.

THOMAS REED
I love it! See ya soon, Baldy!

Liz is sleeping. Thomas returns and sees her in bed. He
declines help into bed. He asks for a hot coffee. Joyce
brings him one. She doesn't wait for a thank-you. She
doesn't get one, anyway. Thomas sips and stares at Liz.

Cont'd

Liz moves about the bed and her blanket falls off. Thomas gets out of bed and walks over to cover her up with the blanket. He pats her head a few times.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
Stay warm, Baldy!

He walks back over to his bed, turns to get in, and notices Liz is sitting up looking at him.

LIZ
You really do have a good heart,
don't you Mr. Reed?

THOMAS REED
I bet you're real good at keeping
secrets, huh?

LIZ
For a friend ... anything!

Thomas smiles at her and blows her a kiss.

LIZ (cont'd)
I am going to have some hot coffee
and a fresh muffin, would you like a
muffin too, boss?

Thomas gives her the thumbs up sign. After some time the staff comes for Liz again. Later she comes back. This time she is awake and energized.

THOMAS REED
That coffee worked well.

LIZ
Yes, it did. I'm glad. I don't want
to sleep at all now.

THOMAS REED
Good! Come here and clean my reading
glasses for me.

Liz brings the glasses into the bathroom. She returns them to Thomas sparkling clear. They decide to walk the halls together. The staff is speechless. They stand at the candy machines. Thomas takes out money, makes two selections, and they walk on. The staff takes the opportunity to clean the room while they are out.

CUT TO:

INT. THAT SAME NIGHT - LIZ'S HOUSE.

Richard and Denise watch the television.

DENISE
When do you want to go see Liz?

RICHARD
I'm flexible.

Denise stares at Richard.

DENISE
What does that mean, Richard?

RICHARD
Denise, chill out! It means I am
ready whenever you are.

Denise stands up and walks away, then turns to Richard.

DENISE
Why don't you just stay home tonight.

She walks out of the house without Richard saying another word to her. He then walks into the kitchen, he eats a snack and feeds Sam.

RICHARD
Sam, I don't know what the heck is
making her so moody these days. We
are all going through the same
issues. We are all human here.

Sam looks up at Richard.

RICHARD (cont'd)
Oh, sorry Sam.

Richard texts Denise. Later she comes home.

RICHARD (cont'd)
Hi! How was Liz?

No response from Denise.

RICHARD (cont'd)
Honey! How is Liz doing?

DENISE
I didn't see her tonight.

Richard sighs in frustration.

RICHARD
Then where did you go?

No answer as she sits on the bed.

DENISE
Richard, I need to be alone for
awhile. I'm sleeping in Liz's room
tonight. Good night!

She walks out without a hug, kiss, or I love you. Richard
slams his hand against the wall.

CUT TO:

INT. THE NEXT DAY - POLICE STATION - CHIEF'S OFFICE

The Chief lays a muffin before Richard.

CHIEF WATERS
What's troubling you, Richard?

RICHARD
That obvious?

The Chief leans back in his chair.

CHIEF WATERS
Well, yeah! Your hair is all messed
up, you haven't shaved, you're
wearing a tie over a t-shirt, and you
haven't reported to roll call. Just a
few subtle hints.

Richard looks down at his shirt. He shakes his head and
removes the tie. Tears trickle down his face. The Chief
picks up the phone.

CHIEF WATERS (cont'd)
This is Chief Waters, Patrolman
Williams is excused today, Sergeant.
Thank you!

Placing the phone down, the Chief slowly walks around the
desk, and sits on the edge.

CHIEF WATERS (cont'd)
Why don't we get a strong cup of
coffee and talk this thing out.

Richard agrees and stands up then leaves the office with the
Chief.

Cont'd

Down the hall in a private room.

CHIEF WATERS (cont'd)
I'm sure glad we have a local cafe
branch right here in the station.

Richard replies softly.

RICHARD
Yeah. Their coffee is good.

CHIEF WATERS
So what's eating at you?

Richard looks directly into the Chief's eyes.

RICHARD
Denise may be cheating on me.

The Chief sits back in the chair.

CHIEF WATERS
What gives you that idea, at this
time in your lives?

RICHARD
Last night she said she was going to
see Liz. She came home, was quiet. I
asked how Liz was, no reply. Then she
said she didn't see Liz. And she said
she wanted to sleep in Liz's room,
and walked out without saying another
word, or even giving me a hug.

The Chief locks his fingers.

CHIEF WATERS
Richard, a sick child is the toughest
time in a parent's life. Denise, like
you, has her own struggles with this
situation. Not to mention Liz's
friend just died. And from my
understanding, she was very close to
you folks. So Denise is feeling
potentially two loses here.

Richard lowers his coffee.

RICHARD
Two loses, Chief?

Cont'd

CHIEF WATERS

Yes. She may feel she is going to lose Liz as well. Sorry to say those words to you, Richard. But she is mostly scared of that possibility. As you are. But she was very close to Nikita also. Denise is terrified!

Richard keeps using the napkins on his face.

RICHARD

I guess you're right, Chief.

CHIEF WATERS

Of course I am. It's a very stressful time for everyone, even me. I'm worried about Liz, Denise and you!

Richard drinks his coffee slowly.

RICHARD

Thank you. Those words are comforting to me now, boss.

CHIEF WATERS

That's the spirit, guy! Why don't we go back to the office, my wife gave me half an apple pie, help me eat some of it, will ya?

RICHARD

I'll try.

Back in the office the Chief cuts the pie.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Wow, the Mrs. sure can bake a pie!

The Chief displays his appreciation for kind words.

CHIEF WATERS

Just don't tell anyone you ate some. If it gets back to my wife, she won't bake me any more.

They both chuckle softly.

CHIEF WATERS (cont'd)

I'll clear you for a few days off.

CUT TO:

EXT/INT. THE SAME DAY - AFTERNOON - MALL/HOSPITAL

Richard gets a text from Denise. It makes him smile. He texts back to her. He buys flowers for Liz. He stops to have a bite to eat. He leaves the mall and drives to the hospital searching for a parking spot.

He walks into Liz's room.

LIZ
Hey, Dad, great to see ya!

Richard hands her the flowers. Thomas smiles.

RICHARD
Here you are, princess.

Liz hugs the flowers.

RICHARD (cont'd)
Has Mom been here today?

Liz looks at the door.

LIZ
She's here somewhere. Must be out at the front desk.

RICHARD
I was just there. Didn't see her.

Liz places the flowers in a vase shaped like a pencil.

RICHARD (cont'd)
Cool, always thinking about writing and learning, huh?

LIZ
Yup! I had my treatment and I wasn't afraid today.

Richard secures her firmly.

RICHARD
Wonderful! Keep up the good work.

Thomas walks over to Richard.

THOMAS REED
Ya know, Baldy is very active around here. Everyone likes her.

Richard just listens. Thomas walks back to his bed.

Cont'd

Denise enters the room and walks up to Richard and kisses him. Then she kisses Liz.

LIZ
Mom, that's like the tenth kiss since
you got here.

Denise swallows up Liz tightly.

DENISE
And you may get ten more before I
leave this place tonight.

Liz looks surprised.

LIZ
Mom, you're not staying the night?

DENISE
I can't baby. I have a huge meeting
in the morning.

Thomas over hears the conversation.

THOMAS REED
Meeting? I love meetings. Whom do you
work for?

Denise is reluctant to answer him.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
C'mon! It can't be that much of a
secret. Who? Who?

Richard waves his hand at Thomas to be quiet.

DENISE
Okay. I work for Olsen and Butler.

Thomas pauses, and then explodes in laughter.

THOMAS REED
Well then, you work for me!

Everyone is still.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
Yup! As Baldy says! They are a sister
company of my home office.

Richard and Denise stare at each other.

Cont'd

LIZ
Wow, Mom! That's mad cool! Imagine
Mr. Reed being your boss.

THOMAS REED
Imagine!

Thomas walks out of the room.

RICHARD
Can it be true? Can you be working
for this tyrant?

LIZ
Tyrant, Dad? He's not like that at
all. He's just grumpy a lot.

Denise seems worried.

DENISE
Let me make some phone calls.

Richard pats Liz on the shoulder.

RICHARD
How about I stay the night here. They
can bring in an extra bed. We can
stay up and watch horror movies.

Liz thinks about it.

LIZ
Okay, Dad. But please don't embarrass
me here.

Richard looks at Denise, then back at Liz.

RICHARD
I'm always nice to the staff, honey.

LIZ
No, I mean with Mr. Reed.

Richard places his hand over his heart.

RICHARD
I promise!

A giant grin fills Liz's face. She checks the TV listings.
Denise puts her phone down.

Cont'd

DENISE

It's true. I work for Mr. Wonderful.

Richard pats her knee.

RICHARD

Doesn't seem to bother Liz a bit.

DENISE

I guess I will have to remember that.

Thomas enters the room.

LIZ

Hey Mr. Reed, my dad is spending the night and we are going to watch horror movies together.

Thomas gives her the daily paper.

THOMAS REED

There ya go, Baldy. Lots of horror in there everyday.

He climbs into his bed and turns the lights out on his side of the room.

LIZ

Goodnight, sir!

Thomas gives the thumbs up! Denise kisses them, then leaves for the night. Liz turns off the lights and closes over the partition door. She cuddles up next to her dad while watching the scary movies. Later she shifts to her own bed.

CUT TO:

INT. THE NEXT DAY - LIZ'S HOUSE.

Denise feeds Sam. Then she sits at the table eating her food and drinking coffee. Sam rests at her feet. The phone rings.

DENISE

How was your night with Liz? That's very good. I'm so irritable about working for Reed. I know, Richard, but you don't have to work for him!

CUT TO:

INT. THE SAME DAY - SAME CALL - HOSPITAL - MORNING

LIZ
Does Mom want to talk to me?

Richard slowly puts down the phone.

RICHARD
No, she had to go. She will call you later she said.

Liz looks at her dad and grabs his hands.

LIZ
I know my being sick is placing you both under enormous stress. I'm sorry I am causing you guys to be upset.

Richard brings Liz into his chest.

RICHARD
Liz, don't you ever think you are the cause of anything. You being sick is not an issues for us. Promise me you understand that fully?

Liz breaks down in her Dad's arms.

LIZ
I promise Dad!

RICHARD
Mom is concerned about other matters. Let's go eat some food.

A sedated stroll leads them to the kitchen.

THOMAS REED
Hi, Julie, get me some info on a Denise Williams who works at Olsen and Butler. Now!

Later that day Julie calls Thomas.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
Yes, okay. Good.

He ends the call. Richard has left the hospital.

LIZ
Mr. Reed. I have treatment again. I kinda don't want to go.
(MORE)

LIZ (cont'd)
I have been feeling tired after, and
I sleep a lot. I don't want to miss
any fun here.

Thomas pulls her over by her shoulders.

THOMAS REED
You listen here, Baldy. Life is a
viper pit. And you have to be the
viper who bites first. So what if you
are tired now. Afterwards you gain
strength and courage. No one can take
that from you. Go to your treatment,
spit in its face. You want to work in
a vicious world, you better learn to
be vicious also. Now get going. I
don't like chickens!

Liz leaves the room crying. Later she returns.

LIZ
I'm back! I spit on the machine like
you said. It worked!

Thomas claps his hands.

LIZ (cont'd)
I'm not a chicken. So I guess you
have to like me now.

Thomas reaches for her ribs and yanks her to his bed.

THOMAS REED
Hey, bald girl! I don't have to like
you, or anyone else.

He shakes her.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
Do you understand me?

Liz backs off from him and climbs into bed. She begins to
cry a lot under the blanket.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
Chicken, baby chicken!

Liz pulls the blankets over her head more.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
I'll make a man out of you yet!

CUT TO:

INT. THAT SAME NIGHT - TREATMENT ROOM - HOSPITAL

Thomas is arguing about having to do a test because it makes him feel uncomfortable. Liz is walking the halls to get out of the room, and overhears him with nurse Joyce.

LIZ
Well, well, well.

Thomas is startled by the faint voice.

LIZ (cont'd)
Do I hear the voice of a chicken?

Liz flaps her arms like wings.

LIZ (cont'd)
Mr. Reed, you are a wuss. And I don't
allow wuss's in my room. So unless
you man up ... you're out!

She storms out of the room laughing.

NURSE JOYCE
Now are you really gonna let her get
the best of you?

Thomas begins the tests. He later returns to the room where Liz has fallen asleep.

THOMAS REED
Baldy! Hey, Baldy. Wake up.

Liz wakes up and looks at Thomas.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
Thanks!

He goes to bed for the night. Trying to hide his humility.

LIZ
Don't mention it, Boss!

She then stands next to his bed tucking him in. He is speechless. Liz then pulls his face to hers and she kisses him on the cheek. Thomas is silent.

LIZ (cont'd)
Tomorrow will be a better day.

Thomas then kisses her forehead.

CUT TO:

INT. TWO DAYS LATER - DAY - LIZ'S HOUSE

Richard and Denise drink coffee in separate rooms. Richard keeps looking into the living room. He brings his cup of coffee in there and sits next to Denise.

RICHARD
Honey, you don't have to worry about Thomas Reed. He's so busy with his job, he doesn't have time to worry about employees working at other buildings. Besides, you are the best employee there.

Denise stares downward at the table.

RICHARD (cont'd)
I know Baldy, I mean Liz ...

Denise turns quickly to face Richard.

RICHARD (cont'd)
Sorry, just a nickname.

DENISE
Don't ever again refer to our daughter as Baldy!

Richard takes his coffee and walks back into the kitchen. He pets Sam a few times and leaves for work. Sam jumps up next to Denise now. She rubs her hand over his ears as he surveys her with loving eyes.

DENISE (cont'd)
This is so very hard for me, Sam.

The phone rings.

DENISE (cont'd)
Hello! Oh, hi. How are you? Okay, I will stop by to see you. Sam, I'll be back in awhile.

Denise walks Sam and leaves the house. Cut to: Denise pulls up to Nikita's house. She walks to the door and it opens before she reaches the front stairs.

MRS. PATEL
Hi! Thank you for coming by.

DENISE
Of course!

Cont'd

Mrs. Patel is holding a few locks of long black hair in her shaking hands. Denise stabilizes her hands. Mrs. Patel is overwhelmed with emotion.

DENISE (cont'd)
Is this Nikita's hair?

Mrs. Patel wipes away tears. The ladies hug tightly.

MRS. PATEL
Yes. We had her hair shaved before
she was buried. This way we could
always have her with us.

Denise kisses her cheek.

DENISE
You were a loving and supportive mom.
She is in heaven telling everyone how
awesome you were to her.

Mrs. Patel struggles to chuckle.

MRS. PATEL
Thank you. We wanted you to have some
of Nikita's hair.

Now Denise starts crying heavily. The ladies embrace again.

DENISE
I don't know what to say.

Mrs. Patel leaves them in Denise's hands.

MRS. PATEL
Carry them with you forever!

Denise holds the shiny hair to her heart.

MRS. PATEL (cont'd)
How are you and Richard doing with
your own struggles?

Denise shrugs her shoulders.

DENISE
I think I sometimes take my
frustrations out on Richard and I see
it hurts him. I feel badly a lot.

Mrs. Patel pours tea, spilling some on the carpet.

Cont'd

MRS. PATEL

Both of you are going through difficult times, not just one. It will take both of you to survive on one another's love and strength.

Denise pats her hand a few times.

DENISE

Yes, you are right. I feel as though I am losing hope and interest in my marriage and job. I already lost, Nikita. And she was your daughter.

The two women cry more. Denise wipes the carpet.

MRS. PATEL

My husband and I must help carry on her name by helping each other. We buried Nikita nine feet down.

DENISE

Why so far down?

MRS. PATEL

My husband wanted someone in our family, hopefully many years from now, to be buried on top of her. We have our plots like this, so the family stays together. We too have lost interest in things. But we have three more children to raise.

Denise cradles her tea.

DENISE

May I please have some of Nikita's clothes? A shirt, pants, shoes? I want to keep them in a bag, along with her hair, taking them everywhere I go, never being without her!

The two ladies walk into Nikita's decorated room.

DENISE (cont'd)

Wow! She really knew how to design.

They both chuckle.

MRS. PATEL

She would always design a new look.

Cont'd

DENISE

What are you going to use this room
for now?

Mrs. Patel rubs a giant teddy bear on the bed.

MRS. PATEL

We will keep it as it is. Undisturbed
for all our lives.

Denise notices a bunch of mail, notes, presents on the bed.

DENISE

What are these, honey?

Mrs. Patel trembles. Denise holds her in her arms. Then Mrs.
Patel reaches for the items on the bed.

MRS. PATEL

These are messages from people who
called asking about Nikita. Or,
messages from people who did not yet
know she died. She had a birthday, as
you know. We placed the gifts and
everything here on her bed for her.

DENISE

You guys are so wonderful! She is
right here with us now. Only we
cannot see her.

MRS. PATEL

I feel it too. I truly do!

The two ladies leave the room with a few items for Denise.

DENISE

Thanks for having me over.

MRS. PATEL

Focus on your family. You need each
other these days. Love triumphs all.

A big hug together. Denise walks to her car. Mrs. Patel
walks back into Nikita's room alone. She clutches the giant
teddy bear, crying uncontrollably, laying on the bed.

MRS. PATEL (cont'd)

Why did you have to leave, mommy!

CUT TO:

INT. THE SAME DAY - HOSPITAL

Thomas and Liz are having a spitball fight. Nurse Joyce walks in, catching them in the act.

NURSE JOYCE

Do you guys want to pay to have this place cleaned?

Thomas and Liz find her comments amusing.

THOMAS REED

We were just having some fun.

Joyce takes away the straws.

LIZ

We're just being kids!

Joyce pushes the wheelchair next to Liz's bed. Liz stares at Joyce and then pulls the blankets over her.

NURSE JOYCE

Now, Liz, we have been through this ordeal before. Get out of the bed, now! I don't have all day. I have other patients to care for.

Liz doesn't move. Joyce pulls the blankets off, and yanks Liz out of bed. Liz pushes Joyce and she falls over. Thomas leaps out of bed, rushing over to the girls.

THOMAS REED

Baldy, what the hell are you doing?

Thomas helps up Joyce. Joyce slaps Liz on the arm and storms out of the room holding her head.

LIZ

Today is the worst of all treatments. I hate this frigging test. I'm not doing it any longer. I don't care if I die! No, I won't do it!

Thomas walks back to bed shaking his head.

LIZ (cont'd)

Well, aren't you going to argue with me, Mr. Reed?

Thomas waves his hand to brush her off. Liz sticks her tongue out at Thomas. Joyce comes back in the room.

Cont'd

NURSE JOYCE
Liz, you hurt me!

Joyce stands waiting for a reply from Liz.

LIZ
I'm not doing that test any longer.
If you try to make me, I will call
the police. I have rights!

THOMAS REED
Let the little brat die if she wants.

Liz throws her soda at Thomas. It nearly misses him.

NURSE JOYCE
That's it! You are being transferred
to another room.

Joyce gets on the phone and calls the Doctor. A few moments
later the Doctor and a few others enter the room.

DOCTOR CONNOR
Liz, this is a mild sedative.

Liz picks up a knife by her bed and points it towards the
Doctor and others, while locking eyes.

DOCTOR CONNOR (cont'd)
Call her parents! Now!

Joyce calls Denise and Richard. They arrive later. Everyone
in the room is silent.

DENISE
What's going on?

Thomas yells out before anyone can speak.

THOMAS REED
Baldy has flipped her lid! That's
what's going on. She threw a soda can
at me, pushed Joyce down, and has had
that knife in her hand for an hour
now. She's nuts!

Richard slowly walks over to Liz.

RICHARD
Honey, I know you're scared, but I'm
here with you now. Let's do the test.

Cont'd

Liz puts the knife down. She leaves the room with Richard. She doesn't speak to her mother.

DOCTOR CONNOR

This is very common with patients who are treated with these medicines. The stress does wear off.

THOMAS REED

That's good to know!

DENISE

I apologize for Liz's actions. She didn't mean it. It's the stress and medicine.

Thomas brushes off Denise. Everyone leaves the room but Thomas and Denise.

THOMAS REED

Please leave the room so I can sleep.

Denise displays her feelings then leaves the room. In the hallway she speaks to the Doctor.

DENISE

We are sorry for this behavior.

DOCTOR CONNOR

It's nothing new to us. Don't worry.

Richard and Liz return. Richard leaves the room while Liz gets changed.

THOMAS REED

Excuse me, young lady. We have a bathroom where you can change.

LIZ

Seen one, Thomas ... seen them all!

Thomas covers his face! Richard comes back in the room.

RICHARD

All set now?

THOMAS REED

Yeah, and she changed right in front of me. She didn't use the bathroom.

Richard seems puzzled by Thomas's words.

Cont'd

LIZ
He didn't see anything, Dad!

Thomas chuckles.

LIZ (cont'd)
Sorry, Thomas. I was in a hurry.

THOMAS REED
Okay, Baldy. No problem. All is forgiven. But you owe me a foot rub.

LIZ
Deal!

Richard and Liz leave the room.

RICHARD
A foot rub, Liz. Isn't that a little personal?

Liz disagrees.

RICHARD (cont'd)
Denise, we are going to go for dinner. Do you want to take your car, or mine?

Denise is caught off guard.

DENISE
I can't, guys. I have work here with Joyce. We have to get these forms filled out for financial help.

LIZ
Mom, we are not poor.

DENISE
No, we are not. But these meds are not all covered and if we have to pay out of pocket, we will be poor!

RICHARD
Should I stay and help?

DENISE
No! You guys go. Bring me back a salad please.

CUT TO:

INT. THAT SAME NIGHT - GREEK RESTAURANT

Richard and Liz finish dinner.

LIZ
Dad, I ate like a shark!

Richard examines her plate.

RICHARD
I guess so, sweetie. Anyway, it will
give you more strength.

LIZ
I like to eat good food!

RICHARD
Let's get mom a salad and go back!

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT - THE SAME NIGHT - HOSPITAL

Richard and Liz return. Liz rushes to the desk with the
salad for her mom.

DENISE
Thank you, sweetheart! Oh, Liz. You
owe Joyce an apology!

Liz bows her head and embraces Joyce.

LIZ
I'm so sorry I acted violently. I
don't know what's happening to my
mind at times.

Joyce extends her affection to Liz.

NURSE JOYCE
Thank goodness we know!

They all smile.

DENISE
This salad is so huge. Joyce let's go
in the kitchen and kill this thing!

NURSE JOYCE
Oh look! It's my break time too.

The ladies walk to the kitchen constantly talking.

Cont'd

Richard spends a few minutes with Liz.

RICHARD
Mom will be here a while longer. She
will stop by soon.

LIZ
Mad cool, I love you, Dad!

RICHARD
I love you too, Liz!

THOMAS REED
Aw, someone give me a tissue!

Liz shakes her head at Thomas.

LIZ
You have to earn love, sir!

Richard leaves without saying goodnight to Thomas.

LIZ (cont'd)
Mr. Reed, I will get better and if
you ever need me to take care of you,
I will ... no matter what!

THOMAS REED
I guess I earned my love!

Denise enters the room later. She turns out the lights and
climbs into bed with Liz. She cuddles into the curves of
Liz's body. The morning comes with hot breakfast for
everyone.

LIZ
Yum! Hey, Mr. Reed, you want to split
my chocolate chip pancakes with me?

Thomas hands Liz his plate.

LIZ (cont'd)
Here ya go!

THOMAS REED
Thanks, Baldy! Here, you can have my
homefries. I was gonna give them to
the squirrels. They have to eat too.

Liz hurries to collect them from his plate.

Cont'd

LIZ
I have to eat first!

Nurse Joyce comes in a few minutes later.

NURSE JOYCE
Liz, did you forget to feed your mom?

Liz turns to her mom's plate.

LIZ
Nope, she eats fast!

Denise smiles at Joyce.

NURSE JOYCE
Okay, as long as mom got some food.
Be ready soon for a three-treatment
day, Liz.

Liz's excitement abstains.

LIZ
A three-treatment day? What does that
mean, exactly?

Joyce consoles Liz and Denise.

NURSE JOYCE
It means the cancer is spreading
throughout your body. We have to amp
up the treatments and be very
aggressive now.

Denise cries. Liz tilts into her mom.

LIZ
I need to make my peace with God.

NURSE JOYCE
Thomas, you are making excellent
progress and you should be home very
soon, so you can go to your office.

Thomas's fists soar to the ceiling.

THOMAS REED
My office, my home!

Joyce takes vitals from both Liz and Thomas.

Cont'd

NURSE JOYCE

Mr. Reed, you too have a busy day of treatments. So I'll be back for you both in an hour.

Joyce leaves the room.

LIZ

Mom, did you hear that? Mr. Reed is going home very soon.

DENISE

Yes, honey, that is good news!

LIZ

Then why are you crying?

DENISE

Because I want you to come home.

LIZ

I will, Mom ... gotta have faith!

Denise puts down her coffee and puts on her coat.

DENISE

I will come by later honey. I have some errands I have to do.

LIZ

Okay, love you, Mom!

Denise turns back to Liz.

DENISE

Oh how I love you, Liz!

She blows a kiss to Liz and departs.

NURSE JOYCE

Well, who's first?

Liz and Thomas look at each other.

THOMAS REED

Take her!

LIZ

Take him!

The room fills with laughter.

Cont'd

THOMAS REED
Can we go at the same time!

Liz abruptly focuses on Joyce.

NURSE JOYCE
Well, it's not suppose to be that way
... but, I guess we can bend the
rules once in awhile.

Thomas grabs a double wheelchair. He sits down. Then he directs Liz to sit next to him. Joyce pushes them both down the hall, as they make faces at the kids walking by.

CUT TO:

INT. LATER THAT DAY - LIZ'S HOUSE

Richard and Denise's emotions collide.

DENISE
Well fine, Richard. If you are so
strong, you stay with Liz at night!

Richard paces in circles.

RICHARD
Honey, Nikita is dead. Say it!

Denise rushes to Richard's face.

DENISE
What the hell did you say to me?

Richard attempts to provide solace to Denise as she remains still and tightened.

RICHARD
You have been a mess since her death.
I know the three of you were
inseparable, but she is gone now,
Denise. You are mourning her far
worse than her own parents. Let her
go, please!

Denise moves away from Richard.

DENISE
How about I let you go?

Cont'd

Richard walks out of the house. Denise doesn't look his way. She sees his car drive away, as she collapses.

CUT TO:

INT. THAT SAME NIGHT - HOSPITAL

Thomas and Liz are alone in the room.

LIZ
I'm sorry I got changed in front of
you, sir.

THOMAS REED
Seen one body, seen them all!

Liz gives Thomas a high five.

LIZ
I hope my body is alive and well for
many, many years.

THOMAS REED
You will be, Baldy.

Liz sits down. She wavers back and forth.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
You look tired. Hit the sheets!

Thomas tucks her in bed and kisses her forehead.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
You know something, Baldy.

Liz probes Thomas's eyes.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
If I ever had a child ... I would
want him or her to be like you in
every way possible.

LIZ
Really? Why?

THOMAS REED
Because you came into this disease
frightened, and you are becoming
courageous. That is how we need to be
in all areas of life.

Cont'd

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
It's never easy for anyone. Life
bites us, we have to bite back!

Liz is nodding off.

LIZ
Okay, yeah, sure, we can have
chocolate milk later.

Thomas pats her head a few times and lets her sleep. Then he
returns to his bed.

CUT TO:

INT. THAT SAME NIGHT - LIZ'S HOUSE.

Denise walks into the bedroom as Richard and Sam are lying
on the bed. She sits on the opposite end.

DENISE
I'm sorry! I have to go to Liz.

Richard pats the bed a few times and Denise turns around.

RICHARD
Come to bed honey. It's just stress.
We will both see Liz in the morning.

Denise walks to the top of the bed. She lifts up the sheets.
She takes her pillow and walks out of the room, while
Richard fights back tears.

He yells to Denise.

RICHARD (cont'd)
I'm here if you need me, honey!

Sam gets up and goes in with Denise.

RICHARD (cont'd)
Now I guess I am really alone. Maybe
I should go sleep at the hospital?

Richard gets dressed to go to the hospital. He notices it is
one A.M. He gets back into his bed. Richard wakes up later
to find Denise in bed next to him, and Sam. He slowly moves
out of bed. He takes Sam for a walk.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME DAY - HOSPITAL - SUNRISE.

Thomas uses the restroom. After coming out he notices Liz is out from underneath the blankets. He walks over to tuck her in. He moves the double wheelchair. Reaching for the blankets he stops and whispers.

THOMAS REED

Hey, Baldy, you're gunna catch the dickens of a cold if you ...

He then looks closely in the sunlight. Liz is blue. He freezes, and can't stop staring at her open, still eyes. Thomas begins to break down.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)

I-, I-, I'm so very sorry you had to die, Baldy. You were my best friend! Rest in peace. I love you!

Emotional, Thomas darts out of the room to the front desk. They are stunned to see him crying. Joyce instantly rushes into the room before Thomas can say a word.

In the room ...

NURSE JOYCE

Oh, my dear Liz.

Joyce leans over Liz, getting Liz's face wet. She closes Liz's eyes. Joyce calls for Doctor Connor. Thomas enters the room. He sees Joyce putting the blanket over Liz.

THOMAS REED

Wait!

Joyce looks over at Thomas. He slowly walks over to the bed.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)

Excuse me, please.

Thomas picks up Liz's hand. He looks over to Joyce.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)

She's cold as winter.

Then he turns to Liz. He kisses her on the forehead a few times, pats her head. Joyce watches in agony.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)

Sweet dreams, Baldy.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME DAY - LIZ'S HOUSE.

The phone rings and Denise answers from bed, as Richard and Sam are downstairs. She puts the speaker on.

DENISE

Hello!

Denise hears a man crying.

DENISE (cont'd)

Hello sir, may I help you please?

She hears chokes and clearing the nose sounds.

THOMAS REED

Hello, Mrs. Williams?

DENISE

Yes, speaking.

THOMAS REED

This is Thomas Reed.

Denise's face fills with dread.

DENISE

Oh no!

THOMAS REED

I'm terribly sorry, ma'am ... Baldy died this morning.

A loud scream fills the house and causes Richard and Sam to rush upstairs. Denise is shivering badly.

RICHARD

What is it?

DENISE

Liz is...dead!

Richard picks up the phone.

RICHARD

Hello, hello! Who is this?

THOMAS REED

This is Thomas Reed. Your daughter died this morning, sir. I'm sorry!

CUT TO:

INT. THE SAME DAY - HOSPITAL

Richard and Denise sit in unrelenting grief.

DOCTOR CONNOR

I'm very sorry, folks. You may see Liz now if you wish. Ah, I must warn you, she is changing colors quickly.

DENISE

I don't care what my daughter looks like, I want to see her!

They all walk down the hall to a nearby room. Denise is holding Richard's hand and it is red. The doctor opens a steel drawer. A body covered in a white sheet slides out.

DOCTOR CONNOR

I'll leave you two alone.

Richard and Denise battle fear and anguish.

RICHARD

I- I've done this a thousand times before ... but I can't now.

Denise lifts the sheet. Liz is a light blue and gray.

DENISE

Bye, baby. I love you! I will miss you forever! You were my life and all I hoped for happiness! I love you!

Richard grasps the metal drawer.

RICHARD

I love you too, princess. See you in the next life, baby! I'm so sorry you got sick. It should have been me.

The Doctor quietly returns.

DOCTOR CONNOR

You will need to make arrangements for a funeral home to come and get Liz to prepare her for burial or cremation. I'm truly sorry.

DENISE

Does your staff still have her hair? I will need it please, Doctor.

The doctor smiles.

Cont'd

DOCTOR CONNOR
Of course we do.

Denise and Richard return to Liz's room. Thomas's secretary is there. They are packing his suitcase.

DENISE
I'm sorry Mr. Reed if you have to be inconvenienced and move as they sterilize this room.

Julie turns to Denise.

JULIE ANDERSON
Mr. Reed is being discharged today. His treatments ended early. He is fine and no more cancer.

Thomas walks over to Denise and Richard. He hugs Denise. He pats Richard on the shoulder.

THOMAS REED
Here is my card. If you need anything, at all ... please call me.

DENISE
Thank you from both of us.

Later that day the school announces Liz's death. School is canceled the next day. Some friends come to help Richard and Denise leave the hospital. Denise ends up being admitted to an emergency room and heavily sedated. Richard stays alone with Sam. Neighbors come by to check in on him.

The following morning Mrs. Patel arrives at Richard's house. They sit for coffee. The house echoes in silence.

RICHARD
Thanks for coming by today. Liz is at the funeral home now. I'm not sure what we are going to do. Denise can barely speak and is so doped up.

Mrs. Patel simply listens with a broken heart.

MRS. PATEL
It wasn't so long ago we buried our daughter Nikita. I'm so sorry!

Richard crumbles before her.

Cont'd

RICHARD
Does it ever get any better?

Mrs. Patel moves next to Richard.

MRS. PATEL
No, honey! Not this time around. It only gets further away from that awful day.

She pulls out paperwork from her purse.

MRS. PATEL (cont'd)
My husband and I had Nikita buried nine feet down. By law, we can place someone on top of her. That's how we planned for it to be in our family.

RICHARD
Soothing sentiment, not to be alone.

MRS. PATEL
We want to bury Liz with Nikita.

Richard holds Mrs. Patel tightly.

MRS. PATEL (cont'd)
Liz was family to us. So if you want, have the funeral home call these folks. They will arrange everything.

RICHARD
I'll call today! Denise is not in the place to make decisions now.

MRS. PATEL
I was also where she is. I told Denise about this another time. She won't mind. Do you have Liz's hair?

Richard fumbles through a plastic hospital bag.

RICHARD
Yes, here it is.

MRS. PATEL
If you don't mind, I will have this braided with Nikita's hair. Then we will all have them right with us at all times, Richard.

Cont'd

RICHARD

That is very sweet. I would love it!

MRS. PATEL

Come over for dinner later. You need to eat food. You and Sam can stay with us for awhile. No need in being lonely now. May I take Liz's clothes?

RICHARD

Yes. My Captain gave me a month off with pay. To take care of business.

MRS. PATEL

You will surely need the time.

She gets up and hugs Richard, kisses him on the cheek.

MRS. PATEL (cont'd)

We journey this road together.

RICHARD

Thank you.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY - ONE WEEK LATER. CEMETERY - THANKSGIVING DAY

A massive crowd of people fills the service for Liz. A special police salute is performed. Fire trucks and EMT vehicles cover the landscape in red and blue lights. Thomas Reed is there to share some words.

THOMAS REED

I always knew I was a man, but I never knew how to act like a man ... until I met, Baldy. She changed me, and I changed her. We laughed, and we cried in each other's arms.

The falling autumn leaves blanket Liz's casket.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)

I am donating twenty-five million dollars to various research laboratories ... to help find a cure for the disease which confiscated my best friend's life ... from me.

(MORE)

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
And I am available to her parents for
any needs they may have, small or
large. Simply ask, and consider it
done!

Thomas looks down. He reaches into a bag and pulls out a
giant teddy bear that was Nikita's, and a smaller one which
belonged to Liz. He gently places them on the casket with
the roses and autumn leaves.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
Two beautiful young ladies rest in
eternity here. Their spirits and
souls remind us daily that family is
a nutrient no human being should ever
be deprived.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
I have a new enemy in Cancer! This
foe shall I pursue with an insatiable
thirst. A mission my friend Baldy can
no longer endure.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
I will laugh with you again where
disease and death are extinct. Where
the pizza never ends, and the coffee
never bitters. Until then ... may we
left behind, always be worthy of your
prayers, protection and care.

THOMAS REED (cont'd)
I will miss you deeply! Thank you,
for your love. Rest In Peace, Baldy!

A large beautifully chiseled marble head stone reads ...

"Friendship is never lost, as long as there are those who
are willing to seek her out."

"If your day leads you past this grave, please remember the
tortured hearts of grieving parents everywhere!"

Nikita Patel: Died 17 years of age.

Liz (Baldy) Williams: Died 17 years of age.

Together now for all the ages.

"In our brokenness we give thanks for their short lives."

R.I.P.

-The End.