

EVERY TIME IT SNOWS

Written By:

KATHY CRANFORD

WGA #1884177
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kcranford@aristotle.net

FADE IN:

EXT. ST. LUKE'S HOSPITAL - DAYBREAK

As the sun begins to rise, casting a warm glow on the massive structure of St. Luke's Hospital in Houston, Texas, we ZOOM IN, capturing the intricate details of the hospital's exterior. Christmas lights twinkle, adorning the surroundings, including a palm tree. The serene hospital garden lies enshrouded in early morning fog.

KRISTA (V.O.)
(contemplatively)

I never believed in Christmas miracles or angels and the like. Houston wasn't exactly the place for snow or reindeer. Our holiday memories were made of sand and seashells. After losing my mother, my father would take me to the beach each year for the holidays. He was lost himself, unsure of what to do. And years later, I found myself in a similar situation, alone with a young child, afraid to hope or pray... until that year. That's when my own Christmas miracle arrived, unexpectedly and from someone I barely knew. Perhaps I had been praying all along, without realizing it. But one thing is certain - I will always be grateful, and always remember it...every time it snows.

EXT. ST. LUKE'S - ENTRANCE - DAY

Emerging from the mist, walks SISTER ANGELA, mid-20s, possessing a serene beauty that radiates from her. Clad in nurse scrubs, she wears a silver cross around her neck, catching the light. Sister Angela gazes up at the towering hospital building, exhales softly, and confidently heads toward the entrance.

INT. ST. LUKE'S HOSPITAL - A BUSY MEDICAL FLOOR - DAY

NURSES, ORDERLIES, AIDES and OTHERS bustle like a beehive. The hospital is coming alive with morning activity.

CLOSE ON ELEVATOR DOORS. THEY OPEN.

We once again we see Sister Angela. She surveys the chaos afoot and steps quietly from the elevator. She walks to the Nurses' desk.

SISTER ANGELA
(To the Receptionist)
Good Morning. My name is Sister
Angela. I believe I've been
assigned as a nurse on this unit.

Even though her voice is low, it is as everyone hears her above the din and silence descends as all eyes turn questioningly toward her.

ANGLE ON TWO ORDERLIES.

ORDERLY #1

What the.....? Sister Angela? Are you kidding me? I heard a rumor that we were going to have a nun working on the floor but I was thinking she would look like....

He looks O. C. where we see an ELDERLY NUN coming through the hallway door

ORDERLY #2

The others?

Both return to staring at Sister Angela in disbelief.

ORDERLY #1

Yeah. Exactly. Who knew they made nuns that look like her?

ORDERLY #2

I didn't even know girls did that anymore.

The RECEPTIONIST smiles warmly at SISTER ANGELA.

RECEPTIONIST

(Rising from her seat)

Oh yes! Sister Angela! They told us you'd be coming today.

She extends her hand and takes Sister Angela's. She continues to shake her hand, while still smiling and staring questioningly. She obviously continues to shake too long. She too is taken aback that THIS is Sister Angela.

ANGLE ON DOORWAY BEHIND NURSES' DESK

A MIDDLE AGE WOMAN appears. She is obviously in charge. As she steps from her office, everyone who was standing and staring goes immediately back to their work. She is the HEAD NURSE, DONNA FORT. She approaches Sister with her hand held out in greeting, a welcoming smile on her face.

DONNA

Sister Angela....we're so glad you're here.

(MORE)

DONNA (CONT'D)

Administration told me to expect you this morning. This is your first nursing assignment I understand.

SISTER ANGELA

Yes. It is. I'm so very happy to be here.

DONNA

Well, we are delighted to have you. I don't think we've ever had one of the Sisters working with us before.

Sister Angela is amused.

SISTER ANGELA

Well, this is a Catholic Hospital, is it not? The nuns were the first nurses you know. A long line of Sisters of healing have come before me.

Donna is slightly embarrassed.

DONNA

Oh yes, yes of course. And we still have our beloved Sisters here in the hospital and many were nurses at one time, but none of them....

SISTER ANGELA

....Are so young?

She's amused.

Donna laughs self-consciously.

DONNA

Well...yes. I guess I just imagined that....oh well, never mind. Let me introduce you to Krista, your preceptor.

She looks around the many people still buzzing about the nursing station and finally spies KRISTA SHEPHERD exiting a patient room. Krista early 30s, very pretty and professional, in control. On closer inspection though, she appears as someone who perhaps carries a deep, unhealed wound.

DONNA (CONT'D)

Krista, there you are. Come and meet your new co-worker. This is Sister Angela.

Sister Angela extends her hand in greeting. Krista gently pushes it away and instead envelopes her in a hug and then smiles warmly.

KRISTA

I'm so glad you're here Sister Angela. I always welcome help... And a friend I hope.

Sister Angela smiles warmly and knowingly back at her.

SISTER ANGELA

Oh yes. That's why I've come. Hopefully to be a great help....and a friend.

A Beat as Sister Angela seems to look into Krista's soul. Krista breaks the gaze.

KRISTA

Well come on then. Let me show you around this madhouse and then we'll get to work.

They walk down the hallway, Krista leading the way past the two orderlies. As they pass, both young men take a long and admiring look at Sister Angela. Donna spies them immediately and in a firm but amused tone admonishes them.

DONNA

Terrence. Oliver. Do I need to find additional work for the two of you?

ORDERLIES

(In unison)

No Ma'am!

They shrug to each other and return to their work.

INT. HOSPITAL FLOOR - DAY

Varying scenes of the morning work. Krista introducing Angela to various employees and patients, stocking supplies, charting records, etc.

ANGLE on HALLWAY DOOR.

An elderly man, early 90s, pushes through, newspaper under his arm, a coffee in one hand and a bouquet of flowers in the other. His pace is slow but deliberate as he makes his way to the door of ROOM 710. This is JOSEF GRUBER.

SISTER ANGELA
(to KRISTA)

Who is that?

KRISTA

THAT... is Mr. Gruber, the sweetest soul that ever lived. His wife, Anna was just admitted a couple of days ago. She's been treated for cancer recently. They're here from New York.

SISTER ANGELA

Such a long journey for someone who is so ill.

KRISTA

I thought the same thing. They said their only Grandson lives here and they wanted to be near him for Christmas. I haven't met him, they told me he's been out of town working, he's in the oil business or something, but he's headed back now that he knows his grandmother has been hospitalized.

They watch as Josef pushes the door to the room gently and begins to enter.

SISTER ANGELA

Sweetest soul who ever lived, huh?

KRISTA

(smiling)

Come on, see for yourself.

They follow Josef through the door.

INT. ANNA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

There in the darkened room we see ANNA GRUBER. Elderly and frail, with a turban covering her bald head. When she sees Josef, she pats her turban, straightens her night gown - trying to look pretty for him.

JOSEF

Ah, Guten Morgen my beautiful Anna.

He speaks with an Austrian accent.

JOSEF (CONT'D)

I tried to find flowers as beautiful as you, but there weren't any....so I settled for these.

A blush of pure love comes to Anna's pale cheeks and she smiles weakly.

ANNA

Oh Josef, don't lie to me. I'm an old woman. No beautiful flower anymore for certain.

Her accent matches his.

JOSEF

Bah! You are an entire garden of the prettiest flowers

He leans over to kiss her forehead. Afterward she notices Krista and Sister Angela watching on from behind.

ANNA

Now there are two beautiful flowers!

Josef turns to greet them.

JOSEF

Ah! There is our wonderful Krista. Our beautiful nurse, but always so sad.

KRISTA

Josef, don't say that. I'm not sad.

She sounds like she is not only trying to convince him but also herself.

JOSEF

Oh yes, so you say. But Anna and I, we know things. But it is Christmas. Time for happiness and miracles. The season of light... and of love.

He looks lovingly to Anna. His gaze then moves to Sister Angela. From his POV we see the silver cross hanging from a chain around her neck.

JOSEF (CONT'D)

And who do you have with you this morning? A new friend?

Krista is glad to have the conversation turn away from her.

KRISTA

Yes. I'd like to introduce Sister Angela. This is her first day with us. She will be working as a nurse on staff here.

JOSEF

And a nun also?

She smiles at him but then moves nearer Anna's bed. She takes Anna's hand. And looks from Anna to Josef.

ANGELA

It's so very nice to meet both of you.

And then to Josef

ANGELA (CONT'D)

And yes....also a nun.

Anna is studying Sister Angela carefully, there's something she can't quite put her finger on.

ANNA

I feel like I should know you, but that isn't possible is it?

Sister Angela is still holding her hand.

SISTER ANGELA

Oh, I wouldn't think so. I'm new here. Maybe I just look like someone you've known.

Anna is still eyeing her, trying to place her.

ANNA

Yes, yes, maybe that's all it is. You look like someone I've known...sometime... your eyes I think.

She smiles weakly and lays her head back on the pillow, obviously needing a rest.

KRISTA

You rest now Anna. We'll be back to check on you.

ANNA

Yes. I have to rest. My grandson is coming home today. I'm just so sorry that he has to see me in this hospital bed. I had so wanted to spend my last....

Beat as she glances at Josef.

ANNA (CONT'D)

...Christmas with him. That's why we came all the way from New York.

JOSEF

Anna, darling, no more talk. Rest only.

Anna closes her eyes and as she drifts off, she whispers...

ANNA

.... Christmas.

Sister Angela smiles knowingly as she nods and exits the room.

EXT. HOUSTON INTERCONTINENTAL AIRPORT - DAY

Scenes of a MAJOR AIRPORT at Christmas time. People hurrying to catch flights, to retrieve luggage. Lines at the TSA. Too many people. CLOSE on one of them. An early 30s young man, tall, exceptionally good looking, getting more frazzled by the moment as he waits at the luggage carousel. This is GARRETT GRUBER. He selects a bag off the conveyor and a LARGE WOMAN immediately wrestles it away from him with an angry look. He holds up both hands in surrender and returns to searching for his bag. Finally, he has it! He's off to find his car and get out of this place. As he walks, we detect a slight hitch in his pace, as if he had a bad knee possibly, barely noticeable, but there.

EXT HOUSTON, TEXAS FREEWAY - DAY

Now he is stuck in traffic and becoming more impatient by the second. He initiates a phone call from his car.

The SOUND OF THE PHONE responding to his request.

GARRETT

Call Mark at the office

We hear the sound of the phone ringing in response.

A FEMALE VOICE - PURE TEXAS
 (O.C.)
 Good morning. Texas Oil Holdings.
 Mr. Newman's office.

GARRETT
 Anita, good morning, it's Garrett
 Gruber. Is Mark in?

A FEMALE VOICE (O.C.)
 Good Morning, Garrett. Yes, but I'm
 afraid he's in a meeting. Are you
 still in Tulsa?

GARRETT
 No, that's why I'm calling. I'm
 back in Houston. My grandmother's
 been admitted to the hospital and
 I'm on my way there now. Would
 you tell him that the deal is taken
 care of with the oil rights and the
 rigs are checking out okay, there's
 just a couple loose ends to be tied
 up but I think we're good to go on
 everything, but....I had to come
 home. I may be out of the office a
 few days, I don't know how long.
 I'll call when I know more.

A FEMALE VOICE (O.C.)
 Of course I'll tell him, Garrett.
 I'm sorry about your Grandmother,
 it being so close to Christmas and
 all. Is she okay?

GARRETT
 I don't know. I'm on my way to see
 her. She's been so ill, but they
 insisted on coming for the
 holidays, and now this has
 happened. I'll let you know as soon
 as I know something.

He ends the call. As we CLOSE on his face, we see there is something in his eyes very akin to what we see in Krista's, a sadness, a deep unhealed wound.

INT. ANNA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Krista cracks the door of the room and peaks in, Anna is asleep but wakes the moment she hears the door.

ANNA

Garrett?

KRISTA

No Anna. It's me. It's time for your medicine.

Anna is disappointed but nods her head and waves her hand. She's being sarcastic.

ANNA

Oh yes, medicine. The only thing keeping me alive. Always more medicine.

Krista enters with the med cart. As she hands the cups of pills to Anna we see from her POV, that there are numerous PHOTOS placed beside the bed and on the window sill, we each of them.

KRISTA

Your photos are beautiful.

ANNA

Oh yes. All taken by my grandson, Garrett. He's quite a photographer. There's something in his soul that recognizes beauty and he's able to capture that in a photo. He has a gift.

She smiles.

Krista's gaze comes to rest on one last photo, obviously old, in black and white. A picture of a YOUNG GIRL around twelve years old, sitting on a beautiful horse, riding in the snow, laughing, her head thrown back in the joy of the moment.

KRISTA

And this one? I don't think your Grandson took this.

Anna's voice softens.

ANNA

Oh no. That is me. Josef took that one. Many years ago, before the war. Before we left Austria. And that...

She points to the horse.

ANNA (CONT'D)

That was my beautiful horse. His name was Pius. My sister insisted that we name him after the Pope. Can you imagine such a thing?

She laughs softly and Krista can't help but join her.

KRISTA

Well, Pius was a beauty. Have you always loved horses?

ANNA

Oh yes, in books and in my imagination. But when I was eight years old, as a Christmas gift that year, my father took me to the famous riding school in Vienna - the one with the dancing horses...

Anna's eyes take on a far away look as we...

FADE TO:

DREAM SEQUENCE

BLACK AND WHITE, 1930s era, people crowd the Spanish Riding School in Vienna as the snow white Lippizans and their riders go through their paces to the strains of classical music. CLOSE on an eight year old girl, this is Anna as a CHILD, who is mesmerized by their beauty. She looks up at her FATHER and hugs him with joy.

ANNA (V.O.)

I truly fell in love with them that day. They danced on air - like magic. Like a dream to me. All I could think of after that day was to have a horse of my own. I knew my father couldn't afford one, but I begged him anyway. Every chance I got.

Back to the present in Anna's hospital room. She still has a faraway look in her eyes.

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KRISTA

Well, it looks like you got your wish.

FLASHBACK:

EXT. -COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

Continue V. O.

The Young Anna rides her horse through an open field, through a stream. She looks out on the land from a hillside.

ANNA (V.O.)

Oh yes. Papa liked to spoil me. We were poor, but he traded his gold watch so that I could have my dream. It was the only thing of real value that he owned.

A beat

ANNA

And that dear, is when I learned what love truly is.

Back to present in Anna's hospital room.

ANNA (CONT'D)

I thought no one could love me more than my Papa...until I met Josef. I have been so lucky to have two men in my life who have loved me so much.

Anna smiles and pats Krista's hand. Krista's eyes are moist.

KRISTA

(whispering)

Oh yes, yes you are.

A beat as Anna studies Krista's face.

ANNA

Josef is right. There is a sadness in you, child. You are so young and so beautiful. But I also see it in your eyes. Did you know the eyes are the windows of the soul?

KRISTA

Yes. I've heard that before.

ANNA

What troubles your heart so?

KRISTA

Is is that obvious?

ANNA

Quite so.

Krista hesitates before answering. Her eyes are lowered as she begins to speak.

KRISTA

I'm raising my son alone. It's been very hard for me. My father helps me a great deal, but my husband....I'm a widow. My husband was killed in the war eight years ago... while I was pregnant. My son never knew his father.

Anna nods sadly and looks into the distance.

ANNA

What a cruel thing war is...mankind must put an end to war before it puts an end to mankind.

KRISTA

John F. Kennedy said that.

Anna is surprised.

ANNA

Not many people would know that, especially one as young as you. You're a student of history then?

KRISTA

Let's just say I've studied too much about war.

ANNA

Hmmm. Yes. A good student of a terrible subject.

Krista nods. She can see that she Anna also is disturbed by the thought of war, although she's not sure why. She straightens, brightens her face and attempts to change the subject.

KRISTA

I think that's enough talk for now, you have to rest for your grandson.

Anna nods and smiles weakly and closes her eyes.

ANNA
(barely above a whisper)
War.... such a terrible thing.

KRISTA
Enough war talk for today. You
rest and I will be back in to check
on you, OK?

ANNA
I will count on it.

Krista turns to leave, as she exits the door she bumps
straight into Garrett and Josef who are about to enter the
room.

JOSEF
Look who I found lost and wandering
around.

Krista places her finger to her lips.

KRISTA
Shhhh. She just fell back asleep.
Let's let her rest a bit.

She looks up at Garrett with a fleeting sense of appreciation
of his good looks.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
She's been waiting for you. She'll
be so happy that you're here.

Garrett has the same reaction as he looks down at her, but
then something else...a moment of recognition. He hesitates.

GARRETT
I'm glad I'm finally here. I've
been so worried about her.

Krista notices the camera he has around his neck.

KRISTA
So you're the photographer?

She sweeps her hand back to all the photos lining the room.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
She's very proud of you.

GARRETT
Well, yeah, I do a little
photography. Just a hobby...

A beat

GARRETT
....I'm sorry, but do I know you?

JOSEF
(somewhat to himself)
There's a lot of that going on
around here today. Everybody looks
like somebody...

They both ignore him. They look at each other - a little too
long maybe.

KRISTA
No. I don't think we've ever met.
I don't think that would be
possible. I think I would remember
you, so I'm sure that we haven't...

A beat

KRISTA (CONT'D)

Met.

She's talking too much and she knows it. She gathers her
composure and side steps them to exit the room. She turns as
she leaves for one more admonishment.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
Remember....shhhh

Garrett and Josef both smile and nod as they disappear into
Anna's room.

INT. - ANNA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Sister Angela is hanging an IV bag at Anna's bedside.

ANNA (O.C.)

My sister's name was Angelena. The
same as yours. Named for the
angels.

She pronounces it "An-hel-ena".

Sister Angela smiles at her.

SISTER ANGELA

It was? It's a good name. I'm not sure I always live up to it. All the other Sisters here think I'm a bit of a radical.

ANNA

Do they?

SISTER ANGELA

Yes, you know, I'm young, I wear a little makeup, carry a Smartphone.

She giggles softly.

ANNA

You know...my sister also wanted to be a nun.

SISTER ANGELA

Really? And did she become one?

ANNA

No, no. She was not so fortunate. She was killed many years ago when the Nazis took over Austria. That was 1938. She was only a girl, seventeen. All her life she had wanted to join the convent...she was so filled with faith and with love. She wanted me to come with her but I was too independent for that. I was filled with love also, but not the same kind. I had fallen in love with my Josef

She smiles and nods toward the photos of the two of them.

ANNA (CONT'D)

And I thought I had my life planned even though I was only twelve.

She gives a wink to Sister Angela, but then darkens in thought.

Anna has a faraway look in her eyes as she remembers as we...

FADE TO:

DREAM SEQUENCE

Nazi controlled Austria during WWII. SOLDIERS ransacking homes and churches, marching priests, NUNS and OTHERS into the street. They remove a cross from atop a church and replace it with a Swastika flag, laughing and cheering.

ANOTHER DREAM SEQUENCE.

A YOUNG WOMAN is pushed and shoved into the street. She is with nuns dressed in habits although she is wearing street clothes with a simple veil covering her head. We hear screaming and then gun shots.

ANNA (V.O.)

When my father heard what was happening at the churches, he did everything possible to get to my sister. But he could not. They had taken our only vehicle, so one night Papa saddled my horse, and headed for the convent where my sister was staying. The Nazis had the road blocked though and they stopped him. They searched him, roughed him up a little but they let him go. But they kept my horse. They took whatever they wanted and they needed horses and he was big and strong, so they took him. They spared my father's life, but I never saw my Pius again...and I never saw my sister again. We got word that the Church had been raided and everyone there marched into the street and shot down. All of them.

Sister Angela covers her face with her hands as if trying to block the vision of this. It's as if she too remembers what happened that night.

She regains her composure and places her hand on Anna's.

ANNA

When I was a little girl, my sister told me she would always be there to take care of me, but then...she wasn't.

SISTER ANGELA

Anna...

Beat

SISTER ANGELA (CONT'D)

I think you can be assured that your sister is with the angels of heaven. She could have made no greater sacrifice than dying for her faith.

ANNA

I have tried to believe that all these years. I like to think that she watches over me...and Josef....and Garrett, all of us.

SISTER ANGELA

I'm sure of it.

ANNA

You are so kind. You have truly found your calling.

Anna looks closely at Sister Angela.

ANNA (CONT'D)

You know, it's finally come to me. It's her that you remind me of. Something about you that was so like her...the smile...the eyes...the gentle heart.

Sister Angela smiles back at her.

SISTER ANGELA

Well then, I am deeply honored. I hope I can someday prove to be as brave as she was.

A beat

SISTER ANGELA (CONT'D)

Now, it's time to rest for a bit. And time for me to get back to work.

Sister Angela rises and turns to leave the room.

ANNA

Sister?

She turns back.

SISTER ANGELA

Yes, Anna?

ANNA

I know I don't have much time left.
Thank you for choosing to come
here...to this place. You are a
blessing and my family needs a
blessing more than anything right
now.

SISTER ANGELA

That is my entire reason for being
here.

She turns again to leave.

ANNA

Sister...do you think it will snow
before Christmas?

Once again she turns back to Anna.

SISTER ANGELA

(she laughs)

Oh, I hardly think so...it's 70
degrees outside. I don't think it
snows here.

ANNA

Hmmm...We shall see. Where is your
faith, my "Angelena"?

She calls her by her sister's name.

Sister Angela puts her finger to her lips and winks to Anna.

Anna lays back and again says softly...

ANNA (CONT'D)

We shall see.

INT - HOSPITAL FLOOR - LATER THAT DAY

Sister Angela is standing in the hallway talking with a
DOCTOR and another NURSE. She spies Josef coming from Anna's
room and excuses herself from the conversation. She
approaches Josef.

SISTER ANGELA

How is she?

JOSEF
 Finally resting. She says that is
 all anyone ever says to her is
 "rest".

Sister Angela smiles at him.

JOSEF (CONT'D)
 How about a cup of coffee? My
 treat.

She looks at her watch.

SISTER ANGELA
 I'm overdue for a break, so OK, I'm
 not much of a coffee drinker... but
 a cup of tea would be lovely.

JOSEF
 Then tea it is!

INT. - HOSPITAL CAFETERIA - DAY

Josef and Sister Angela sit at a corner table in the busy
 cafeteria with their steaming cups.

SISTER ANGELA
 Anna told me today that she thinks
 it will snow for Christmas.

Josef chuckles.

JOSEF
 Ah yes. Anna loves the snow. We
 are from the mountains of Austria,
 so of course we always had snow at
 Christmas. It was very beautiful
 there when we were young. So many
 good memories...

ANNA
 She said you knew each other as
 children.

Josef smiles and nods, fondly remembering as we...

FADE TO:

DREAM SEQUENCE

Josef and Anna (as children circa 1930s Austria) various
 scenes of laughing and playing in the snow, throwing snow
 balls, sledding, skating and at a village Christmas party.

JOSEF (V.O.)

Oh yes. She has been part of my life since before I can remember. We had a very happy life...before the War came...and then, all that was gone.

We are back in the...

HOSPITAL CAFETERIA - PRESENT DAY

SISTER ANGELA

She told me her sister was killed.

Josef sighs as we...

FADE TO:

Various scenes of the family distraught as Anna's father returns home with the news and then of hurried packing and scenes of leaving their home in the night.

JOSEF (V.O.)

Yes. She was. And I thought I had lost my Anna forever also. After that night, her father took the rest of the family and fled. We didn't know where they had gone, we didn't know if they were alive, but all I could think was that I had to find my Anna. And that was my only thought...for years. The War kept me from searching for her, but my heart never forgot. When it was over and that was more than seven years, I began my search for her.

SISTER ANGELA

And you found her. How?

JOSEF

Well, that is the story of my miracle.

FADE BACK TO:

Scenes of 20 year old Josef walking from town to town, talking with various people who all shake their head no. No one knows anything of the family. Josef lying in bed at different times - awake - thinking of Anna. Then talking with the PRIEST. Selling all his belongings and purchasing a ticket to America. Standing in long lines. On a large ship. Time passing. Finally reaching mid- 1940s New York. Standing in more lines - asking questions. Looking through ships' records. And then finally standing in front of a humble home in rural New York, the snow falling on him as he knocks on the door. A twenty year old Anna answers the knock and falls into his arms immediately.

JOSEF (V.O.)

I asked about in every town and village I could think of, I had no vehicle, not even a horse, not even a bicycle. I walked miles. Every day. No one knew the family or what happened to them. Every family had a story of tragedy - their's was just one more. Then one day, as I was nearly out of hope, a new priest came to the Church in our village - he was the first since the murders at the church so many years before. As I spoke with him, I asked if he knew anyone who was at the church before the Nazis came and he said that, yes, his brother was the priest who was killed there. This was incredible so I told him the story of Anna and her family, and that is when the miracle happened. He said that he had met Anna's family. He told me they had escaped to France and had hidden in the seminary where he was studying. After learning where they were from and of the death of his brother, Anna's sister and the others, he and the other priests helped them get passage to Paris and then to America...and to safety. He said the last he knew, they had made it safely to New York. When I heard this, I hardly gave him time to finish. I rushed home with more hope in my heart than I had had in years. I had no money, but I sold what little I owned to buy passage to America, to New York.

(MORE)

JOSEF (V.O.) (CONT'D)

It took me another year, but that made no difference in my mind. And in the end I did find her. December 23rd, 1946. She was twenty years old. I had not seen her since she was twelve - more than eight years, but our hearts had never forgotten. We were married the next day.

SISTER ANGELA

So, in just a few days...

JOSEF

Yes. Our wedding anniversary.

He looks intently at Sister Angela.

JOSEF (CONT'D)

What do you think the odds were of that priest coming to my small village, meeting me and knowing the whereabouts of my Anna?

SISTER ANGELA

Well, in the real world, fairly small. But then sometimes, it seems we run across just exactly the help we were needing. Sometimes, it just shows up...out of nowhere.

JOSEF

Hmmm, so it seems. A miracle. And do you believe in miracles, Sister?

SISTER ANGELA

I do. Most certainly.

JOSEF

Then I would ask that you pray for one now. For my Anna.

She reaches out and takes his hand with a smile.

SISTER ANGELA

Miracles are all around us, Josef closer to us than we think.

INT. - ANNA'S ROOM - EVENING

Garrett is standing and staring at a beeping IV pump, perplexed at how to stop it's blaring noise.

Krista enters.

GARRETT

Perfect timing. I was just getting ready to call someone. This thing is on the fritz or something, it won't shut up.

Krista approaches and pushes a button which immediately quiets the machine.

GARRETT (CONT'D)

I already tried that, but it kept beeping.

The blasted machine begins beeping again. Krista pushes the button again, fiddles with the other controls, but this time it does not stop.

GARRETT (CONT'D)

See what I mean?

Krista sets her chin and give the machine a good wallop on it's side. It immediately quiets and begins to work properly.

She smiles back to GARRETT

KRISTA

An old trick I learned in the Army.

He laughs, he thinks she's kidding.

GARRETT

Army? Yeah right.

KRISTA

No. I was really in the Army.

He's not laughing now.

GARRETT

Seriously?

KRISTA

Yes. Nurse Corp. First Lieutenant.

He becomes even more serious, the first piece of the puzzle begins to drift into place. Why does she look so familiar?

He returns his attention to her along with his smile. He turns to go back to his chair and she notices his slight limp.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
Are you okay?

He sees that she's noticed his leg.

GARRETT
Yeah. My leg gives me a little trouble some time.

She looks concerned. He changes the subject.

GARRETT (CONT'D)
So, how is she doing?

He looks toward the sleeping Anna.

GARRETT (CONT'D)
Any chance we can get her out of here before Christmas?

KRISTA
She's still dehydrated but we're working on that with the fluid she's getting. The cancer treatments have weakened her and make her susceptible to other problems, so we're watching her closely. And then there's her age...

GARRETT
I know. She's 91 now. She just means everything to Pop...and to me. She's been more like a mother to me than a grandmother. I'm just so worried about both of them.

KRISTA
Of course you are. We're doing everything we can for her. She is so happy that you are here and I know she wants to go home for Christmas. We'll do everything we can to make that happen.

A beat

GARRETT
She thinks it's going to snow.

He shakes his head and chuckles.

Krista smiles.

KRISTA
Who knows? Maybe it will.

Their gaze locks for a beat. He breaks it first.

He nods then looks to the IV pump as it now purrs contentedly in obedience.

GARRETT
Looks like you fixed it.

KRISTA
Well, sometimes you have to use force if the enemy won't be persuaded.

GARRETT
More Army wisdom?

KRISTA
Yeah.

She smiles at him then turns to leave.

GARRETT
Well, thanks for the..."show of force", Lieutenant.

He smiles and salutes as she exits the room.

EXT. GARRETT'S CAR - DRIVING

LATER THAT SAME EVENING

He is driving in traffic, but lost in thought as we...

FLASHBACK

Repeating the conversation with Krista about the Army. The thought of her haunts him. Who is she?

KRISTA'S VOICE (O.C.)
(IN AN ECHO)
Nurse Corp. First Lieutenant

INT. GARRETT'S HOME - NIGHT

Garrett opens a closet door and rummages through some papers, file folders, other junk, he can't find what he's looking for. And then we see it from Garrett's POV. A box, sealed with tape sitting in the far corner of a shelf. On it's side the words are printed PHOTOS/DEPLOYMENT. The box has obviously been unopened as Garrett pulls it down and sets it gently down on his desk. He sits down, carefully removes the tape and takes the photos from the box. Photos he has not seen in years. He sighs and takes a drink from his beer.

From Garrett's POV we see his hand reach into the box and remove a stack of photos. Scenes of the Middle East, the beauty of the countryside and people contrast with scenes of war and destruction, bombed buildings, oil wells burning. Photos of soldiers at work and at play. He flips slowly through. Painful memories mixed with some that evoke a smile. And then he sees it. A photo of a young GI, 20s, DAVID SHEPHERD, in a Santa hat. He is smiling holding a photo of a beautiful young woman close to his face as if they are together. The woman is Krista.

FLASHBACK as Garrett remembers the moment.

EXT. ARMY BASE - DAY

David is laughing holding up a photo. Garrett wears his camera around his neck. David motions to Garrett.

DAVID

Hey, photo man. Take one of this.

David holds the photo close to his face. As we CLOSE IN, we see a photo of the smiling Krista.

GARRETT

Pretty! Your girlfriend?

DAVID

Better. My wife. She really wanted us to be together for Christmas, but looks like this is the best I'm going to be able to do.

The camera makes it's noise snapping the photo.

GARRETT

(Showing him the image)
Well, here you go. Christmas together.

David becomes more serious.

DAVID
 Hey, thanks man. She's Army too.
 We've only been married a little
 over a year. Only had one Christmas
 together and she's expecting our
 first baby...a little boy.

GARRETT
 She's Army?

DAVID
 Yeah. Nurse Corp. We met at Base
 back in Colorado.

GARRETT
 Well, you're a lucky man. She's
 the prettiest soldier I've seen in
 awhile.

DAVID
 Yeah, she is.

He looks down longingly at the photo and smiles.

DAVID (CONT'D)
 She outranks me. Likes to remind
 me of it too.

A beat

DAVID (CONT'D)
 I miss her...

Another beat as they both contemplate the loneliness of
 deployment.

GARRETT
 I'll get this photo to you so you
 can send it back home.

DAVID
 Thanks man. It'll mean a lot to
 her...to both of us.

David wipes his eye. He's a little embarrassed and makes a
 quick excuse.

DAVID (CONT'D)
 Blasted sand. It gets in
 everything.

Garrett knows it isn't the sand.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Really...thanks.

FADE TO:

(CONT'D)

PRESENT as Garrett stares at the photo.

GARRETT
Oh my God. It can't be....that's
who she is. That's why I knew her
face. I could never forget that
face. No....

GARRETT (CONT'D)
(barely above a whisper)

No...

INT. HOSPITAL FLOOR NIGHT - THE NEXT DAY

Krista is finishing up her work before her shift ends, making her last entries into the computer and other day-end chores. A clock on the wall shows the time as 7:20. She sighs. She stops to look out the 7th floor window of the hospital at the Christmas lights that have appeared as the darkness closes.

FADE TO:

DREAM SEQUENCE

CUE MUSIC "EVERY TIME IT SNOWS"

Krista remembering her time with David; learning to snow ski, playing in the snow, Christmas in Colorado; together at a military event, both in uniform; at their wedding, she in a white gown, he in dress uniform smiling into the camera; various shots and video of their time together.

FADE TO:

INT. ANNA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

MUSIC CONTINUES

Josef is looking out on the same Christmas lights. Intersperse with scenes of helping Anna with her dinner, covering her with a blanket, kissing her forehead as she goes to sleep. As he continues to stare out the window at the lights.

FADE TO:

DREAM SEQUENCE

Josef is remembering them as children in Austria, playing in the snow; his first Christmas gift to her; Anna riding her horse in the snow; the long winters during the war when he only had her photo to remember her by; him finally appearing at her door in America, the snow falling around him, in December 1946.

INT. SAME HOSPITAL FLOOR - NIGHT

AS MUSIC FADES

Krista is still lost in thought, continuing to stare out the window as the music fades and we hear a CHILD'S VOICE O.C. It is Krista's son, DAVEY a happy 8 year old, as he comes bursting through the ward door accompanied by a man in his early 60's, this is Krista's father, TOM CAMPBELL.

DAVEY (O.C.)
Mom! We're here!

Krista turns to see them in the hallway.

DAVEY (CONT'D)
Are you ready to go eat Pizza? I'm starving!

KRISTA
I'm almost done and I'm starving too! And nothing will do but pizza.

She envelopes Davey in a hug and then looks up at her Father.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
Thanks for bringing him, Dad.
Sorry I'm running late.

TOM
No problem, honey. You've got an important job here.

Krista grabs Davey and gives him another hug.

KRISTA
Well, I've got an even more
important job right here. Just
give me one second and then
Pepperoni here we come!

She gives Davey a kiss on the top of his head.

ANGLE ON DOORWAY as the door suddenly bursts open and Garrett
comes through nearly bumping into them.

GARRETT
I'm so sorry! I wasn't expecting
anyone on this side of the door. I
should be more careful.

Tom turns to see who has caused the commotion.

KRISTA
No worries, we're pretty quick on
our feet.

And then, admonishing him.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
Luckily it wasn't a patient in a
wheelchair.

An awkward beat

GARRETT
Sorry...I

Tom interrupts. He's no slouch. He immediately picks up on
the energy between them.

TOM
Is this a friend of yours, Krista?

KRISTA
No Dad, he's the grandson of one of
my patients.

She smiles forgivingly at Garrett. He smiles appreciatively
at her, but then remembers his manners and extends his hand
to Tom.

GARRETT
Garrett Gruber, sir.

KRISTA
Garrett, this is my father, Tom
Campbell.

They exchange a handshake.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
And this is my son, Davey.

Davey extends his hand, trying to act very much the adult.
He smiles up at Garrett, as we immediately...

FADE TO:

FLASHBACK

From Garrett's POV we see that same smile on David Shepherd's
face as they laugh over the Christmas photo. Davey looks
very much like his father.

Garrett is taken aback but he reaches out to shake Davey's
hand as he speaks softly to him.

GARRETT
Davey. It's an honor to me you,
Davey.

A beat and then Davey brightens the mood.

DAVEY
We're going to eat Pizza. Would you
like to come?

Krista is shocked.

KRISTA
No!

A beat

KRISTA (CONT'D)
I mean, no. Mr. Gruber is here
visiting his grandmother. She's
very sick.

Krista looks to Garrett apologetically.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
Sorry.

She mouths the word silently.

GARRETT

Well actually....I'm really hungry
and I was just thinking of food,
pizza to be exact...and a man has
to eat...so...

DAVEY

Yes! No one ever goes to eat with
us except Grandpa Tom...

Tom feigns being insulted as Davey looks at him.

KRISTA

Davey!

She's embarrassed. Davey ignores her.

DAVEY

Do you like Pepperoni?

GARRETT

My favorite.

Krista squints her eyes at the two of them. She knows she's
been bested.

KRISTA

I'll get my jacket.

EXT. OUTSIDE PIZZA RESTAURANT - NIGHT

We are looking in from the street through the large glass
window of the Restaurant.

Garrett, Krista, Tom and Davey are enjoying their meal,
laughing and talking. WAITERS and CUSTOMERS coming and going.

EXT. OUTSIDE PIZZA RESTAURANT - NIGHT - LATER

Tom and Davey have already made their way out the door and
headed toward their parked SUV. Garrett holds the door for
Krista. They pause for a moment.

GARRETT

I do eat more than pizza, you know.

KRISTA

Well you could have fooled me, the
way you put those slices away.

Garrett chuckles.

GARRETT
 Seriously, could I invite you for
 dinner sometime?

She's uncomfortable with this. She hesitates.

KRISTA
 I really don't date, Garrett.

GARRETT
 Oh? Well... I wasn't asking you
 for a date.

She's puzzled now.

GARRETT (CONT'D)
 Maybe we could meet and go over, I
 don't know...Army regulations or
 something.

She laughs at his attempt.

KRISTA
 I'll think about it.

GARRETT
 Good.

She heads toward the waiting SUV.

GARRETT (CONT'D)
 (calling after her)
 Not a date. Brush up on your
 regulations. I have a lot of
 questions.

Her back is facing him, but we see her smile. She waves back to him in acknowledgment without looking and gets into the SUV.

Garrett is left standing alone. He smiles and waves as the SUV pulls away, his smile fades slowly and he sighs.

GARRETT (CONT'D)
 (under his breath)
 What am I doing?

INT. AND EXT. A SERIES OF IMAGES: DAY & NIGHT

A COUPLE DAYS PASSING

CUE MUSIC - "A CHRISTMAS TIME WITH YOU"

Varying scenes of Garrett and Krista. Garrett watching Krista care for Anna. Having lunch in the hospital cafeteria. Walking inside/outside the hospital admiring Christmas Decorations. Talking, laughing - a budding relationship.

INT. HOSPITAL FLOOR - NIGHT

Krista is exiting a patient room. She meets Garrett in the hallway.

GARRETT
You're still here?

KRISTA
Yeah, working late as usual.

GARRETT
Do you have time to get something to eat?

KRISTA
No, sorry. Dad's bringing Davey again tonight. The hospital is hosting a Christmas carnival and I promised Davey we could go.

GARRETT
A Christmas Carnival? Is that some kind of Texas thing?

Krista laughs.

KRISTA
I have no idea. Maybe.

GARRETT
And what does one do at a Christmas carnival?

KRISTA
Well, I'm not really sure. This will be our first one. I think they have games and food for the kids. And Santa Claus for sure.

GARRETT
Sounds like fun.

A beat. He's waiting.

KRISTA
You're welcome to come...I mean if you want to see Santa or whatever.

She's teasing him.

GARRETT

Give me just a minute to get my wish list. Meet you there?

KRISTA

Sure. It's outside. Parking Lot Three.

She eyes him and then turns to leave
We hear Garrett O.C. as she walks away.

GARRETT (O.C.)

A Texas Christmas carnival! Ho! Ho!
Ho!

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING DECK - NIGHT

Even though we are outdoors, it is Houston. It's warm and people only wear light jackets or none at all. There are Christmas lights strung everywhere, various games set up with children playing, tables filled with Christmas goodies, cookies, cakes. A gaily lit Carousel. In the middle of it all - SANTA CLAUS with a line of children waiting to sit on his knee. People happily milling about. Jazzy Christmas music playing somewhere. A Christmas carnival!

Garrett looks over the crowd trying to catch sight of Krista and Davey. A LITTLE GIRL, about five, is anxious to see Santa and accidentally runs into Garrett.

LITTLE GIRL

Here, you can have this.

She shoves a large sticky candy cane into his hand. He has no idea what to do with it. Her MOM, a harried 30ish young woman, is close behind.

MOM

I'm so sorry. She's a little excited by all this.

She hands him a wadded piece of tissue, which also promptly sticks to the candy, and hurries off after her daughter. He's a mess.

KRISTA (O.C.)

Need some help with that?

She pulls a wet-wipe out of her purse.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
 You have to come prepared when
 you're going to be around kids.

GARRETT
 My first Christmas carnival and I'm
 already a failure.

Krista laughs as she cleans the sticky mess off him.

CUT TO:

A SERIES OF IMAGES

Krista, Garrett and Davey playing games, riding the carousel,
 eating Christmas goodies. Krista sitting on Santa's knee,
 laughing. She returns to Garrett and Davey who have been
 watching.

KRISTA
 (TO DAVEY)
 Okay, your turn.

Davey shakes his head. He's a little shy.

DAVEY
 Nah, that's okay. I'm too old for
 Santa Claus.

KRISTA
 If I'm not too old then neither are
 you. C'mon!

He rolls his eyes.

DAVEY
 Ok, Mom. I'll go sit on Santa's
 knee.

And under his breath...

DAVEY (CONT'D)
 I hope this doesn't show up on
 Facebook.

Davey is greeted by the jovial Santa.

SANTA
 Ho! Ho! Ho! What's your name young
 man?

DAVEY
 David Shepherd, Jr.

SANTA
Well, David Shepherd, Jr., what
would you like for Christmas?

DAVEY
(shrugging)
I don't know. I really don't
believe in all that Santa Claus
stuff and I've already got
everything I need.

Santa won't give up.

SANTA
Oh come on, a video game, a
football?

DAVEY
Nah.

SANTA
Nothing at all?

DAVEY
Well... maybe just one wish, but
not for me.

He looks O.C. We see Krista and Garrett lost in conversation,
her laughing at whatever remark he just made. She's happy.

DAVEY (CONT'D)
I'd like for my Mom to be happy
like that all the time.

Now Santa also looks to see them, now both really laughing
about something.

Jolly Santa melts a little when he looks back at Davey.

SANTA
You know, David Shepherd, Jr., I
would call that a Christmas-worthy
wish. Santa's going to put in a
special order to see if we can't
make that wish come true, even for
a young man who doesn't believe in
"Santa Claus stuff"

Davey smiles at him.

DAVEY
Thanks Santa. That would be great.

Davey hops off Santa's lap and returns to Garrett and Krista. Santa looks after him. He's doesn't know what to think of such an unselfish child. He removes his glasses to wipe his eyes quickly before the next child climbs on his knee.

From the rear we see Krista, Garrett and Davey walking away. Both their arms are around Davey's shoulders as they walk.

INT. DAVEY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Krista is tucking Davey into bed. His room is typical of an eight year old boy. Posters on the wall. A football and model cars, an "Elf on the Shelf". ANGLE ON his bedside table where we see toy soldiers lined up as if for battle. Behind them a Photograph of an ARMY RANGER in full gear, smiling at the camera. It is David Shepherd.

DAVEY

Mom?

KRISTA

Yes, sweetie?

DAVEY

I had a really good time tonight.

KRISTA

Me too, honey.

DAVEY

Mom?

KRISTA

Yes?

DAVEY

I like Garrett.

Krista smiles and smooths his hair.

DAVEY (CONT'D)

I think he likes us too.

KRISTA

You do?

DAVEY

Yeah...you know, I like to think maybe my Dad was like him.

Her heart melts a little.

KRISTA

Your Dad was a lot like him, Davey. Your Dad was kind and funny and smart. He was a brave soldier and always a gentleman and he could make me laugh...

DAVEY

Garrett makes you laugh.

KRISTA

Yes, yes he does.

DAVEY

I like it when you laugh, Mom.

KRISTA

Me too, honey. Me too. I haven't done enough of that, have I?

She pulls the blanket up around him.

KRISTA (CONT'D)

Now, it's time for you to go to sleep. You've got school tomorrow.

DAVEY

I love you, Mom.

KRISTA

I love you too, sweetie.

DAVEY

More than chocolate doughnuts?

KRISTA

More than chocolate doughnuts.

We see them continuing to talk for a moment as she kisses his forehead.

CUE MUSIC - LULLABY MY LOVE

She continues to sit on his bed as he falls asleep. Her gaze shifts to the photo of David as we...

FADE TO:

FLASHBACK

INT. MILITARY HOSPITAL - EIGHT YEARS EARLY - DAY

MUSIC continues.

Krista on duty in the Military hospital. She is pregnant. She is going about her work, when HER SUPERVISOR summons her into an office. As she enters she immediately sees TWO MILITARY OFFICERS standing inside the room. She knows why they are there. Her hands go to her mouth in horror as her knees buckle. The officers catch her and sit her down, tears stream down her cheeks as she shakes her head - NO!

CUT TO:

EXT. MILITARY CEMETERY - DAY

A crowd is gathered under the funeral tent. Krista, attired in Dress Blues sits on the front row. Solemn but now tearless. As before, she is noticeably pregnant. Her father sits beside her, his arm around her shoulder. She is still in shock. TWO SOLDIERS take the flag from the coffin, fold it and hand it to her with a salute. She nods. Suddenly we hear the explosive sound of rifle shots. Krista shudders at each of the three blasts. Her father stands and salutes the casket. Tears now stream down Krista's face.

CUT TO:

EXT. MILITARY CEMETERY - SEVERAL MONTHS LATER - DAY

Krista, now in civilian clothes stands over a military grave marker inscribed with David's name. She holds an infant in her arms. Her father, Tom, is again with her. Again, he solemnly salutes.

CUT TO:

SUPER: FOUR YEARS LATER

EXT. MILITARY CEMETERY - DAY

Krista stands over the same grave marker. Davey, now a four year old, stands with her. Her Father is also there and again, performs his customary salute. Davey looks up at him, taking it in. He then turns toward the grave marker and performs his own child-like salute.

FADE TO:

INT. DAVEY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

We have returned to current day. Davey is asleep. Krista is now holding the photo of David. She wipes a tear from her cheek.

KRISTA

(To the Photo)

I hope you know how much like you your son is. I wish he could have known you. He would have loved you as much as I did. No one can ever replace you, my love. I will miss you forever. I hope you don't mind that Davey likes Garrett and well, I guess I like him too...he is so much like you...

She kisses the photo and places it back on the nightstand. She gives Davey one more kiss on the forehead, turns out the light. As she exits the room, she turns

KRISTA (CONT'D)

Goodnight my sweethearts. I'll love you both forever.

As the music...

FADES OUT.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY - NIGHT

ANGLE ON ELEVATOR DOORS as they open. Garrett steps out into the lobby. He turns and walks a short distance and stops at a door with a stained glass window. HOSPITAL CHAPEL is inscribed on a wall plaque. He pauses then enters the darkened chapel. Votive candles are burning to one side. He walks over, lights one, places money in the collection bin and then walks slowly to the front of the chapel. A soft light illuminates the altar. He sees a figure kneeling in prayer on the front row. It is Josef.

GARRETT (O.C.)

I thought I'd find you here.

Josef looks up with a soft smile.

JOSEF

It's a good place to take a nap.

He's kidding, but he sees Garrett has something on his mind.

GARRETT
Do you get any answers here, Pop?

JOSEF
I like to believe I do. Are you
looking for answers?

GARRETT
Yeah, I guess I am.

JOSEF
What's troubling you, son? Your
Grandmother?

GARRETT
Well, yes, of course. I'm really
worried about her and....

Josef interrupts.

JOSEF
But that's not why you're here is
it?

A beat

GARRETT
No.

JOSEF
I've seen it in your face for a
couple of days. What is on your
mind?

A beat - he knows the answer

JOSEF (CONT'D)
Ahhh.. it is our pretty young
nurse, isn't it?

Garret is surprised at Josef's insight.

GARRETT
What makes you think that? I hardly
know her.

JOSEF
I wasn't born yesterday, Garrett.
I know that look. I've seen it on
my own face when I look in the
mirror. More than 70 years now.

He smiles.

GARRETT
That obvious, huh? I guess I have
kind of fallen for her.

JOSEF
So what's the problem? You're both
young. You aren't married...and she
is quite the beauty...

A beat

GARRETT
I know something, Pop...about
her...I know why she looked so
familiar to me that first day.

Josef leans forward, anxious to hear the revelation.

JOSEF
And?

GARRETT
(almost speaking to
himself)
I don't know how this could have
happened. Why it happened. What
could have ever brought us
together...

JOSEF
What are you talking about,
Garrett? What is it?

GARRETT
Pop, her husband...

Josef fills in the details...

JOSEF
...Who was killed serving in the
military...

GARRETT
Yes.

A beat

GARRETT (CONT'D)
I knew him.

JOSEF
You knew him?

GARRETT

He was one of the Rangers who guarded us when we went out to inspect the oil wells. I have a photo that I took of him, just before...well, just before...

JOSEF

How do you know that was her husband?

GARRETT

He showed me her photo. I took a picture of him holding it. That's why I remembered her face. He told me she was his wife.

Garrett puts his head in his hands as JOSEF studies him with concern.

JOSEF

That's not all that happened, is it?

GARRETT

I wish it was.

FLASHBACK

THE DESERT - DAY

As Garrett begins his story in V.O., we see the events that unfolded that day. SOLDIERS riding in an Army Transport, traveling out over a barren desert road. David armed and peering out a window. Garrett looking out the window with binoculars. We see Oil Wells in the distance. The soldiers are tense, wary. Danger everywhere.

GARRETT (V.O.)

It was a few days after that. We were scheduled to go out and inspect one of the oil wells to see how much damage there was. We knew it was dangerous, our CO said we might should delay a couple more days until the area was more secure, but the oil companies were pressuring us to inspect those wells and that's what I was there to do. That was my job, I was the chief engineer. I was the one who ultimately decided to go. Sgt.

(MORE)

GARRETT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Shepherd was one of the Rangers assigned to go out on guard with us.

FLASHBACK CONT'D

Suddenly we hear a LOUD EXPLOSION, the transport rocks and fills with fire and smoke. Soldiers screaming, yelling. Chaos.

We are back to:

THE PRESENT.

Garrett's head sinks deeper in his hands as his voice begins to crack with emotion.

GARRETT

It was me, Pop. I can't take that day back. Two men died and three were badly injured and I can't change any of that. I thought I could come here and go to work in a normal job and put that nightmare somehow behind me. And I thought I was doing OK...I thought I was doing OK...but then, out of nowhere, she walks in...

JOSEF

Garrett, why did you not tell us all this before?

GARRETT

I don't know, Pop. I was just so filled with guilt and grief, for everything and worst of all, selfishly for myself. I just wanted everyone to think I was all right. I thought when I was able to heal my own wounds, get over my own losses and get back into the real world, go back to work again, that it would be over and no one would know that I wasn't all right. That none of it was all right.

Garrett looks up at Josef, his eyes are moist.

GARRETT (CONT'D)

What was God thinking, Pop? It's like this entire thing was orchestrated out of some kind of...I don't know...horrible irony.

Garrett lowers his head again, shaking it. He has so many questions...

GARRETT (CONT'D)

How am I going to tell her? Should I tell her? How can there ever be anything between us if I don't? But...how will she ever understand? How could she ever forgive this?

Josef places his hand on Garrett's shoulder.

JOSEF

So many questions, my son. I don't know the answer to any of them. My own faith has been tested so much lately. And so I come here and I pray and I wait for the answers but still I do not know.

A beat

JOSEF (CONT'D)

But I do know this...you must tell her. There can be no truth between you until you do.

Garrett nods in agreement.

JOSEF (CONT'D)

Good then. You will do the right thing. And then you will go on from there.

Josef rises.

JOSEF (CONT'D)

Come on now, let's go check on your Grandmother.

They walk toward the exit of the chapel and through the door. CAMERA ANGLE on a darkened corner of the chapel where we dimly see in the darkness the figure of a woman kneeling. A soft light illuminates the silver cross of her necklace. CLOSE IN to reveal it is Sister Angela. She looks toward the chapel altar, nods her head and smiles.

INT. KRISTA'S HOME - HER BEDROOM - EVENING

Krista in front of a mirror. She puts on one outfit, then another. She fiddles with her hair, checks her makeup more than once. She's apprehensive but finally sighs and shrugs, satisfied with her appearance.

INT. KRISTA'S HOME - THE KITCHEN - A LITTLE LATER

Tom and Davey are sitting at the table, just starting to eat their dinner. Krista walks through the door. She's glowing but trying not to appear excited.

TOM
So, where are you going on this date?

KRISTA
It's not a "date", Dad.

TOM
Oh yeah. Right. Not a date.

He looks to Davey and winks. They both smile knowingly.

TOM (CONT'D)
So, where are you going on this "not a date"?

KRISTA
Just to dinner. We're going to go over a few things. I'm sure he wants to talk about his Grandmother, what kind of care she will need when she's home, you know, business.

Tom nods and looks back to Davey, winking.

TOM
Right. Business.

Krista attempts to change the subject.

KRISTA
Dad, what are you feeding him?

DAVEY
Chili Dogs!

KRISTA
Dad!

She pretends annoyance.

TOM
Don't worry, honey. They're healthy.

DAVEY
Yeah, they're turkey dogs, so
they're healthy.

He smiles at her with chili on his face.

KRISTA
Hmmm. Well I guess an occasional
chili dog is okay.

She goes to the table to give them both a hug.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
(To Davey)
Finish your homework, no video
games...

DAVEY
I know, I know.

KRISTA
Shower and into bed by nine.

She eyes her Dad with a suspicious squint.

TOM
Shower and into bed by nine. No
homework, only video games. Got
it.

KRISTA
Dad!

She heads out the door. Tom gives one more wink to the
smiling Davey.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Garrett and Krista make their way to a table, escorted by a
MAITRE' D. They are seated. Krista is bright and cheery.
She's happy to be out with Garrett. He smiles as she talks,
but his mood is a little more somber. He knows what has to
be done. A waiter pours a glass of wine for Krista and she
takes a sip.

KRISTA
So, since this isn't a date, I did
pull out my old Army manual and
study up. Quiz away!

Garrett smiles at her.

GARRETT
I do want to talk about the Army,
Krista, just maybe not in the way
you're thinking.

She senses a change in the tone of the evening.

KRISTA
Okay. What do you want to talk
about?

GARRETT
Krista, there's something you need
to know.

She's puzzled.

KRISTA
Something I need to know?

GARRETT
Yes. I was in the Army too.

KRISTA
You were?

He pulls the photo out of his jacket pocket and hands it to her. Her face is quizzical as she takes it from him, but immediately falls when she focuses on the photo. Shock registers on her face and she sits in stunned silence for a moment as she stares at the photo and then back up at him.

She's incredulous.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
(her voice trembling)
Where did you get this?

A beat

GARRETT
I took that photo, Krista.

KRISTA
You what?

Tears start to form in her eyes.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
What are you talking about?

GARRETT
I was there. I knew your husband.

KRISTA

Oh my God.

And then quieter...

KRISTA (CONT'D)

Oh my God.

She looks up at him.

KRISTA (CONT'D)

Why are you just now telling me this?

GARRETT

I don't know. I mean, I didn't know at first. I just knew that you looked so familiar to me and I didn't know why. But after you told me you had been in the Army, the pieces started to fall together a little and I went home and I found the photo in some of my old things. That's when I knew.

KRISTA

And when was that?

GARRETT

A few days ago...I'm sorry, Krista. I just didn't know what to say. How to...

She interrupts him.

KRISTA

How could you not tell me this?

GARRETT

There's more, Krista.

She is truly incredulous now. She's afraid of what he's going to say as the tears start anew.

GARRETT (CONT'D)

I was with David on the transport that day.

She's silent but shaking her head in denial. She was falling in love with him and now... the unthinkable.

GARRETT (CONT'D)

You see, I was an engineer in the military too.

(MORE)

GARRETT (CONT'D)

I was assigned to that unit because we were inspecting the oil wells, seeing what could be salvaged. We were on our way out that day...to one area, we knew it was dangerous. David wasn't on the roster to go that day, but he volunteered because we needed an extra lookout.

He hesitates a beat.

GARRETT (CONT'D)

We discussed waiting another couple days to go to that particular well because of some trouble in the area, but we were behind schedule and getting pressure to secure those rigs and I decided we needed to get out there.

She holds her hand up to stop him.

KRISTA

You decided?

GARRETT

Yes. I was the lead engineer. It was my decision.

Anger and disbelief well in her eyes as she begins to lose her composure.

KRISTA

Let me understand this. My husband died because of a decision YOU made that day?

GARRETT

We were at war, Krista. We were soldiers and we were doing our job.

KRISTA

And your job was getting people killed?

She is becoming a little hysterical now. He knows she doesn't mean what she's saying.

GARRETT

Krista, I would give my life if I thought I could change what happened that day.

It escalates.

KRISTA

Well, you didn't give your life,
did you? But David did. My
husband died that day, and you? You
walked away. And now you're sitting
here having a nice dinner with the
dead soldier's wife. How very merry
for you.

A lingering beat

GARRETT

(solemnly)
I didn't walk away that day,
Krista.

She glares at him.

He leans down and pulls up his pant leg to reveal a
prosthetic leg.

Krista looks down, stunned. She has no words, she can only
shake her head as she fights back the tears. She pushes
herself away from the table. OTHER DINERS are looking now.

GARRETT (CONT'D)

Krista, wait...please

KRISTA

I have to go. I have to go.

She starts to walk away.

GARRETT

Krista, let me take you home.

She doesn't respond but walks out the door with every eye now
on a very uncomfortable Garrett. He gets up to follow her.

EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Garrett emerges frantically from the restaurant, just in time
to see a Taxi driving away with Krista inside. He calls
after her but it is futile.

GARRETT

Krista! Please....

He is defeated. It was worse than he had imagined.

A SERIES OF IMAGES:

CUE MUSIC - "SORRY"

Krista in the back of the taxi, anguished and broken; raindrops cover the windows.

Krista entering her darkened house - alone; in her bedroom staring into the same mirror she used previously; looking out her bedroom window at Christmas lights; lying in her bed, unable to sleep.

SIMULTANEOUS:

Garrett driving home in his car, he too anguished and broken. The rain continues.

Garrett entering his own darkened house - alone; in his bedroom, he also stares into a mirror; looking out his own window; lying in his bed unable to sleep.

Each's actions mirror the other.

INT. KRISTA'S HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT - A DAY LATER

Krista is busying herself with chores. She is obviously preoccupied, she does her work hurriedly, in silence, impatient with even simple tasks. Tom sits at the kitchen table with his evening newspaper, watching her over the rim of his glasses.

TOM

You were home early last night.

KRISTA

Yep.

TOM

How was the dinner?

KRISTA

There wasn't a dinner.

She is curt. He is concerned with her demeanor. He removes his glasses and continues.

TOM

Would you like to tell me what happened?

KRISTA

Nothing happened.

TOM
Krista, I'm your father. It's been
a long time since I've seen you as
happy as you were when you left for
dinner last night. And now
this....something did happen.
Would you like to talk about it?

KRISTA
I can't talk about it, Dad.

TOM
Krista...

She turns to face him and now he can see the tears.

TOM (CONT'D)
Honey, come sit down.

She sits down at the table facing him and only now does he
see the complete anguish in her face.

KRISTA
Garrett knew David.

She's blunt.

TOM
(shocked)
What?

KRISTA
They were stationed at the Base
together.

TOM
That's some coincidence. How did
you make the connection?

KRISTA
He had a photo, it was one that
David sent me just a few days
before...

She wipes her eyes.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
Garrett took that picture.

TOM
Well, that's incredible that you
should...

KRISTA

That's not the half of it,
Dad...he, he was on the transport
when it hit the IED. He was the
engineer that David was escorting
that day. It was his decision to
go out there...

Her voice is rising and she's becoming a little hysterical
again.

KRISTA (CONT'D)

It was him, Dad. If he wouldn't
have been there, and if he hadn't
insisted they go on that stupid
mission, David would still be
alive. He killed him, Dad!

Tom retorts quickly.

TOM

Krista! Stop it!

A beat. Tom takes a deep breath.

TOM (CONT'D)

They were doing the job they were
there to do. There was no wrong
doing. They were soldiers - in
harm's way, and something bad
happened and David was killed. But
he was doing his job. I was Army,
you grew up with it. And you were
Army, Krista, you understand that.

She flies back at him.

KRISTA

I was a nurse, Dad!

Now it's his turn to raise his voice.

TOM

You were an officer first!

A beat

KRISTA

(softer now)

No. No. I was a wife first.

Tom sighs. His daughter's heart is broken.

TOM

Honey, those men were doing their duty. All of them. David died doing what he wanted to do more than anything. Serve his country. He gave the ultimate sacrifice for that. Don't dishonor it.

Krista sinks in her chair. She knows he's right.

KRISTA

I know, Dad. I had to come to terms with that a long time ago. I had to pick myself up and go on, no matter what, because I had a son to raise - without a father. You know, Garrett's grandmother said something to me... War is so cruel. And she's right. It has taken everything from me. It took my husband, it took my son's father, it took my happiness and now it's taken away my one little glimmer of hope for me... and for Davey.

A beat at Tom considers what to say.

TOM

It doesn't have to be that way, honey. This is shocking, to say the least, but it's not something you can't overcome if you want to.

KRISTA

I don't know, Dad. I was out of my mind last night with anger and pain. I said some pretty awful things to Garrett. I don't know if we will ever be able to get past this.

TOM

Don't you think Garrett is hurting too?

KRISTA

Oh, Dad. I know he's hurting. He didn't come away from that attack unscathed. He....he lost his leg.

TOM winces.

TOM

Oh Krista...

Her tears start again as he reaches out to take her hand.

TOM (CONT'D)

Then more than anyone else, you two understand each other. You two need each other.

A beat

TOM (CONT'D)

Krista, I was never a very religious man. I never raised you in a church as I probably should have. I had my own demons to deal with after we lost your mother, but as I've gotten older and watched you struggle with your own loss, I've begun to see the fault in that. And when I hear this story, well... I'm not sure whose hand is at the wheel, but I am very persuaded to believe that this was no coincidence, you and Garrett finding each other.

She is listening closely, with something close to hope in her eyes now.

TOM (CONT'D)

If both of you can see your way through this pain you share, you may come out on the other side with something unbreakable...if you can give it a chance. Are you willing to do that?

She nods her head, still dabbing her eyes.

TOM (CONT'D)

Then go find Garrett. He needs someone right now. He's losing his grandmother. Go do your job. Be a nurse and a comforter to that family and then...let things come together as they will. I have a feeling that's what is meant to be.

He takes her in his arms and hugs her.

KRISTA

Thank you, Dad. I don't know what I would do without you. I love you so much.

TOM
More than chocolate doughnuts?

She laughs a little through the tears.

KRISTA
More than chocolate doughnuts.

INT. KRISTA'S HOME - NIGHT - DARKENED HALLWAY - OUTSIDE THE KITCHEN

Davey, in his pajamas, a plastic army figure in his hand. He has heard the entire conversation. He is worried as he looks silently at the toy soldier he holds.

INT. HOSPITAL FLOOR - DAY

Krista approaches the door to Anna's room. She quietly peeks inside and we see from her POV Anna asleep in her bed. Beside her, Garrett sleeps half-propped in a bedside chair. Krista stares at him longingly for a moment then enters. She begins to check the IV pump.

ANNA (O.C.)
You came back.

Krista startles at Anna's voice.

KRISTA
Of course I'm back.

ANNA
You didn't come yesterday. I thought maybe you didn't want to be my nurse anymore.

KRISTA
Oh Anna, of course I do. Don't ever think that. I just had the day off, that's all.

A beat

ANNA
Garrett told us what happened between you.

Another beat

Krista sighs, the weight of the confrontation is still with her.

KRISTA

I'm afraid I was very cruel to him.

ANNA

It was very hard for him to tell you about what happened. He's lost a great deal because of war. Did he tell you about his father?

KRISTA

No...your son?

ANNA

Yes. Our son, Michael. He died in the Gulf War when Garrett was only 10. And then, in its own way, war left Garrett an orphan.

KRISTA

What do you mean?

ANNA

It took his mother too. She couldn't survive her grief after Michael was killed.

KRISTA

What happened to her?

ANNA

She struggled with it for nearly a year, and then one evening she came to our house and asked if we would keep Garrett for the night while she went to dinner with friends. Josef and I were delighted! We hoped that she was coming around and willing to go out and have a little bit of a good time....

KRISTA

But that isn't what happened?

ANNA

She went home and swallowed a bottle of pills. And then she was gone and Garrett was alone. As I said, war is very cruel.

Anna is saddened as she remembers, but then she brightens with a new thought.

ANNA (CONT'D)

But that is how we have our
Garrett. All those years growing
up. Such a joy to us. So much
like his father.

ANGLE ON Garrett, he moves a little but is still sleeping.

Anna's mood darkens again.

ANNA (CONT'D)

And too much like him as it turns
out. After he graduated from
college, he came to us and said
that he wanted to join the
military. He was a Petroleum
Engineer and he'd been told that
because of all the oil wells and
destruction in that part of the
world, his talent and education
were in high demand. We were
terrified for him to go, but what
were we to say? He wanted to go
for his country....and for his
father. He promised that his job
wouldn't be active combat, but an
engineering position. We were
still afraid, but what could we
say? So he went....and 6 months
later....he came home.

Krista's eyes are still moist. This is too close to her own
heartbreak.

A beat as Anna considers what she will say next.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Did he tell you he was married?

Krista is taken aback.

KRISTA

No.....I had no.....I walked out
before he could finish his story
I'm afraid.

ANNA

She was a lovely girl. Diana. But
like his own mother, she could not
get past the loss, not of all of
him, but of even a part of him.

A beat as Anna sighs.

ANNA (CONT'D)

She needed to be strong for both of them, but she couldn't. So she left him. Seven years now. He said he couldn't stay in New York, there were just too many memories. He wanted to start again, somewhere else. Somewhere new. And so, he is here. And so WE are here...to be with him. If even for a little while.

KRISTA

I had no idea. I was so selfish. He's suffered as much as I have and I was so heartless to him...

We hear the sound of shuffling O.C. as Garrett awakens from his nap. He stretches, yawns and then looks up to find Krista looking down at him.

GARRETT

Sorry....I must have drifted off.

KRISTA

It's all right. I was just checking on Anna.

Garrett rises and moves toward the door, wanting to get out of an uncomfortable situation.

GARRETT

I'm going to go down for some coffee. Back in a bit, Gran.

Garrett gazes at Krista for a moment and then blows a kiss to Anna and then he is gone out the door.

ANNA

Not many people know. He doesn't talk about it. I think that is his way of getting past what happened. To his leg...and to his life. He seems so strong, but deep inside I believe he thinks others will reject him...like Diana did. The leg is healed, but HE is still wounded.

Krista darkens with the thought.

KRISTA

I know how deep and dark that wound is.

ANNA

I know you do, dear. But let me tell you something. I have been in that dark place many times in my life and what I've found is that, in that darkness is where hope begins. I hope you can find that also.

Krista nods in agreement, her eyes misty again.

INT. ANNA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - EVENING

Josef stands looking out the window. From his POV we see an illuminated sign in the distance that reads 68 DEGREES.

ANNA (O.C.)

Is it snowing yet?

Josef turns to her smiling. He chuckles.

JOSEF

No dear, no snow.

ANNA

I'm afraid I don't have much time left, Josef.

Josef turns to her, concerned and comes to her side, sitting down on the bed.

JOSEF

Nonsense, my love. The doctors have said you are getting stronger. Maybe home before Christmas.

Anna shakes her head.

ANNA

I don't think so.

Josef takes her hand.

JOSEF

Do you remember what day this is?

ANNA

How could I forget? This is the day you came to my door in America. I couldn't believe you had come.

(MORE)

ANNA (CONT'D)

When I opened that door and you were standing there, every prayer I had said for all those years was answered.

She smiles lovingly at him.

JOSEF

Not so long ago...eh?

ANNA

A very long time ago, I'm afraid.

She looks to one of the photos at her bedside. It is a young Anna and Josef on their wedding day. She is dressed, not in a wedding gown but a nice dress, he in a somewhat shabby suit. They are radiantly happy.

ANNA (CONT'D)

We were so young.

JOSEF

And so poor. But so happy. I had found you after so many years. I had nothing to offer you - but it didn't matter. I had you back and I promised I would never let you go again...and I am still not ready to let you go.

Anna smiles and nods then looks back to the photo again.

ANNA

You know, I still feel like I'm that young girl inside. This old woman I've become, I don't know who she is. There..

She points to herself in the photo.

ANNA (CONT'D)

That is still me.

JOSEF

That is still the way I see you, my love. Always young, always beautiful.

ANNA

You are too kind, my Josef. But no matter, I am old and I am very sick. I know the time is soon. Oh how badly I wanted to spend this time with you...and Garrett.

(MORE)

ANNA (CONT'D)

And I still wish it would snow.
We've never had a Christmas without
snow.

JOSEF

Stop worrying about yourself, you
will go home with us for Christmas.
And you needn't think anymore about
the snow.

He chuckles a little.

JOSEF (CONT'D)

It's not going to snow here. I have
told you before I need sandals and
short pants to even go outside.

She smiles at his humor.

ANNA

I think it shall snow, my love. If
I'm in heaven on Christmas.

Josef becomes somber now.

JOSEF

Anna, I cannot bear for you to go.

He lays his head on her chest. She nods her head. She's made
her decision.

ANNA

(softly to him)
It will snow. When you see it, you
will know I'm there.

INT. ANNA'S ROOM - CHRISTMAS EVE - DAY

A DOCTOR is examining Anna, he listens to her chest with his
stethoscope. There's some concern on his face as he listens.
Josef and Krista stand nearby watching.

DOCTOR

Anna, I'm a little concerned with
what I'm hearing...some wheezing.
I'd like to take you down and get
an Xray of your chest. We want to
make sure you're not getting
pneumonia.

JOSEF

Pneumonia? I thought she was
getting better?

DOCTOR

We think she is. I just want to be safe and not miss anything.

JOSEF

Will she still be able to go home tomorrow? Today is Christmas Eve.

DOCTOR

We're still going to try for that. Let me see the Xray results, and then we'll be better able to make any decisions.

Josef nods his head sadly. The doctor turns and exits the room.

KRISTA

He's right, Josef. We need to be sure everything is all right.

An Orderly enters the room with a wheelchair, Krista helps Anna into the chair and she is wheeled from the room.

Josef calls after her.

JOSEF

I'll be here waiting for you, love.

Josef flops into the bedside chair. He is drained.

Krista sits down in the chair beside him.

KRISTA

I know this is very hard for you.

JOSEF

It's like I'm losing her all over again. Little by little, and all I can do is watch...and wait.

KRISTA

I know. I'm so sorry. I have to deal with sickness and death every day. It's my job, but it never gets any easier.

Josef looks at her intently.

JOSEF

Then you of all people should know how precious time is.

KRISTA

Yes. I do.

JOSEF

And you should also know how precious love is.

She gets his meaning.

KRISTA

Yes.

A beat

KRISTA (CONT'D)

I don't know if there's any chance for that now. I don't know that Garrett even wants to talk to me, that he could ever forgive me or if I should dare even ask him to.

JOSEF

I think you are underestimating what love can do.

KRISTA

Do you think he...

JOSEF

I think you should go to him.

KRISTA

I don't know what to say...

JOSEF

If this is meant to be, if you are meant to be together, then the words will be given, to both of you. I learned many years ago that love is the most powerful force there is. Nothing is impossible to it and nothing can stop it.

She nods as she wipes away a tear.

JOSEF (CONT'D)

Now go.

KRISTA

I don't know where to...

JOSEF

He said he was going to the chapel, I think you'll find him there.

KRISTA
All right, I'll go then.

She turns to leave, but hesitates then looks back.

JOSEF
(reassuringly)
Go to him.

She smiles and nods and exits the room.

INT. HOSPITAL CHAPEL - DAY

Krista opens the door quietly and peaks in. Two elderly nuns are exiting and she nods politely to them. In the dim light from her POV we see Garrett. He is sitting alone in the front pew, where he and Josef had sat earlier. The darkened room is apparently empty except for his lone figure.

KRISTA (O.C.)
Josef told me I would find you here.

She walks toward him as he turns to see her. He turns back to face the front of the chapel.

GARRETT
It's a good place to take a nap.

She smiles. She stands beside the pew now.

KRISTA
Garrett...I...Is it okay if I sit down?

He doesn't look at her, but moves down to make room for her to sit.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
I don't know what to say to you. I wish I could take back what happened the other night. I was hurting and I just lashed out at you and you didn't deserve that.

He shrugs, still not looking at her.

GARRETT
Well, you certainly can give as good as you get.

He finally looks at her.

GARRETT (CONT'D)

I didn't know how to tell you, Krista, but I knew that I had to. I'd only known you for a few days but I was already, well, falling for you. When I finally discovered who you were, it was like my whole world that I was trying to piece back together, suddenly came crashing back down around me. I knew if things went any further without you knowing the truth, that there would never be any chance for things to work between us. The last thing I wanted was to hurt you.

KRISTA

I know that. I knew it on the ride home that night. I was just very confused...about everything. I guess I thought that grief and loss were my own personal demons that no one else ever had to deal with. When I was with you, for the first time in a very long time, I was able to push it away and actually feel happy again, hopeful again and then...it all came back, like a huge wave, just crashing down on me. Like I was never meant to truly put it all behind me. Now I just keep asking myself over and over, what could have brought us together in the same city, in the same hospital, in the very same room? If even one thing had been different, we would never have met.

GARRETT

I've asked that same question a hundred times in the past few days. I still don't know the answer.

KRISTA

I don't know either. We were just two people who were both devastated by something beyond our control and struggling to put the wreck of our lives back together again.

A beat

KRISTA (CONT'D)
Your grandmother told me about your
wife...leaving after..

Garrett looks away.

GARRETT
Yeah.

KRISTA
I'm so sorry, Garrett. Like I
said, I thought I had cornered the
market on loss. I had no idea.

It's obviously still painful for him.

GARRETT
Well, she did what she had to do.
She moved on. And I moved on.
She's still in New York and I'm in
Houston.

KRISTA
I know the pain you are feeling,
Garrett. It's the same pain I have
had all these years. I know how it
feels to be in a place so dark that
you can't see the light even if
it's all around you. But you know
what your grandmother told me about
the dark?

He looks back to her.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
That sometimes, it is the place
that hope begins.

A beat

GARRETT
Krista.

He reaches for her and takes her in his arms. We see tears
on her cheeks as he holds her. The hug ends and he takes her
face in his hands and kisses her.

The kiss ends.

KRISTA
I really need to get back to work.

GARRETT
I know. You take such good care of
Gran.

KRISTA
She's a very special lady.

GARRETT
She always has been.

The mood has lightened a little.

GARRETT (CONT'D)
She is still waiting for it to
snow, you know. I know it's
probably not possible but I wish I
could give that to her.

KRISTA
Well, you never know. My Dad
thinks this entire thing has been
"orchestrated" somehow. And well,
what does Anna always say? We
shall see.

They stand now and Garrett hugs her again. He whispers into
her hair.

GARRETT
We shall see.

PAN OUT toward the back of the Chapel, where again we see,
kneeling in a darkened corner, Sister Angela. The light
glints off her silver cross. She smiles.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Anna's doctor stands in the hallway talking to Josef and
Garrett. We see Josef drop his head. He's just received bad
news. Garrett places his arm around him.

DOCTOR
Mr. Gruber, the Xrays confirmed
what I suspected. Your wife has
contracted pneumonia.

JOSEF
But how? She only came in because
she was weak and dehydrated. We
thought she would only be here a
couple of days.

DOCTOR

Your wife has been very ill, Mr. Gruber. With her history of cancer and her age, it is very easy for something simple to turn into something much worse. I'm afraid it has.

GARRETT

So what do we do now?

DOCTOR

We're going to start some antibiotics, continue hydrating her, but she's much weaker now than when she was first admitted.

JOSEF

Is she going to get well?

DOCTOR

I can't tell you that. We're going to do everything humanly possible, but at some point...we're going to have discuss how much more we can do.

Josef looks away - stricken, and then back to the Doctor.

JOSEF

Isn't there anything else?

DOCTOR

We're going to keep her comfortable of course...

A beat as he considers Josef.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

If you know any good prayers, now would be a good time to say them.

The Doctor places his hand on Josef's shoulder, nods solemnly to Garrett and walks away. Josef is defeated. He looks to Garrett.

JOSEF

What are we going to do? She is the light of our life.

GARRETT

I know, Pop. I love her too. She's my grandmother, but she was also a mother to a little boy who didn't have one. I learned everything I know about love from her.

Josef dabs his eyes with a handkerchief and nods.

GARRETT (CONT'D)

Anytime I was sad; when I was missing Mom and Dad, then when Diana left, she would always tell me that grief is just another kind of love. It's love with nowhere to go.

A beat

GARRETT (CONT'D)

Come on. Let's go home for just a little while, Pop. Gran needs to rest and so do you. We'll come back a little later.

Garrett places his arm around Josef's shoulder and together they head down the hallway.

INT. ANNA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY - LATE AFTERNOON

Sister Angela enters Anna's room. Anna is propped in bed, awake and holding a photo. She runs her hands over it lovingly. We see from Anna's POV that it is the photo of her and her horse. She looks up as Sister Angela enters.

ANNA

I've had a dream of my Pius the last three nights.

Sister Angela smiles and sits down by the bed.

SISTER ANGELA

What was your dream?

ANNA

I dreamed he was running toward me in a beautiful field but he was a long way off. And then the next night, it was the same field but he was a little closer. And then last night he was even nearer.

(MORE)

ANNA (CONT'D)

He didn't come to me but stood a little ways off and nickered - like he used to any time he saw me. What do you think that means?

SISTER ANGELA

I don't know. I wish I could tell you.

ANNA

It's almost like when I was a girl. He would see me walking down the road - from very far away and he would nicker to me. He was always waiting for me...every day.

SISTER ANGELA

Well...maybe that is your answer. Maybe he is still waiting for you.

Anna's eyes brighten at the prospect.

ANNA

Oh, that would be wonderful. Do you think such a thing is possible?

A beat

Sister Angela takes Anna's hand.

SISTER ANGELA

I have learned that all things are possible, Anna. All things.

Another beat as Anna sighs.

ANNA

I think in my dream tonight, he will come to my side and I will reach out and touch him. The time for that is near. We shall see.

SISTER ANGELA

It's not for you to worry about that now.

ANNA

I'm not worried now. Not anymore. Thank you, Angelena. I knew you would know what that dream meant.

Sister Angela smiles at her.

SISTER ANGELA

I love that you call me "Angelena".

She pats Anna's hand again.

SISTER ANGELA (CONT'D)

I have to go back to work now.
Josef and Garrett will be back
soon.

Anna nods and closes her eyes. She's very weak now, but a look of peace is on her face.

INT. ANNA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Josef sits by Anna's bed. They are alone in the room. Her eyes are closed as he reads to her from a book of poetry.

JOSEF

My love is like a red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June
My love is like the melody
That's sweetly played in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in love am I
And I will love thee still, my
dear,
Till all the seas gone dry.

Till all the seas gone dry, my
dear,
And the rocks melt with the sun
And I will love thee still, my
dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee well, my only love,
And fare thee well a while
And I will come again, my love,
Though it were ten thousand mile.

He looks up as he finishes.

ANNA

(Eyes still closed)
That's always been my favorite.

JOSEF

Mine too.

ANNA

I remember when you first read it.

She opens her eyes and looks to him.

ANNA

(CONT'D)

Our wedding night. It is our story
isn't it? How many Christmas Eve's
have you read it to me?

JOSEF

All of them.

ANNA

Yes. All of them

JOSEF

Happy Anniversary, my dear Anna.

A beat

ANNA

I will miss this, Josef. I will
miss you, my love.

Josef takes her hand, tears in his eyes.

JOSEF

I will miss it too. You are my
life.

Anna smiles. She is so weak. She closes her eyes.

ANNA

Would you read that last part to me
again?

JOSEF

Yes. Yes of course.

He repositions his glasses and takes the book back up, he
reaches for her hand and begins to re-read the last stanza.

JOSEF (CONT'D)

And fare thee well, my only love,
And fare thee well a while
And I will come again, my love,
Though it were ten thousand mile.

When he finishes he looks back to her. Her hand that he
still holds has gone slack. He knows she is gone. He lays
his head on her hand and weeps.

The room is suddenly filled with SOFT LIGHT. We see Josef
still with his head on Anna's hand from someone else's POV.

ANGLE ON the opposite side of the room. Two young women stand there. They are bathed in the same soft light. It is Sister Angela and the same young woman in Anna's wedding photo. The now young Anna speaks.

ANNA

It was you all along wasn't it? My Angelena. You came for me.

SISTER ANGELA

Yes. I came for you. Didn't you know I was always with you?

ANNA

Yes. I had always hoped.

A beat

ANNA (CONT'D)

Then it was you who helped Josef so long ago.

SISTER ANGELA

Yes.

ANNA

And Garrett and Krista?

Sister Angela nods and smiles.

SISTER ANGELA

A little help there too. They needed to find each other.

ANNA

Yes. They did.

Anna takes Sister Angela's hand as the door opens. Garrett looks into the room and sees Josef with his head still on (the elderly) Anna's hand. Neither Garrett nor Josef are aware of the presence of the two young women in the light.

GARRETT

Pop!

Josef looks up.

JOSEF

She is gone, Garrett.

GARRETT

Oh, Gran.

He comes to her bedside and kneels down beside Josef, he takes her hand now as sobs rack him. Josef puts his arm around Garrett.

JOSEF

She's with the angels now.

We now see the two of them from (the young) Anna and Sister Angela's POV.

SISTER ANGELA

It's time, Anna.

Anna nods but takes one look back as they and the soft light fade.

SISTER ANGELA (O.C.) (CONT'D)

It's all right for us to go now
Anna, they have each other.

INT. HOSPITAL FLOOR NURSE'S STATION - NIGHT

Krista comes to the nurse's desk from the hallway. She stops as something catches her eye on a TV MONITOR situated in a waiting area. There is a WEATHERMAN giving a report.

WEATHERMAN

Well, believe it or not folks, if you haven't been outside today, it is turning COLD in Houston. We have a cold front heading our way out of the Northwest and we're already seeing temperatures in the 30s as far south as Austin. Stay tuned for more on this unprecedented weather event on our 10 o'clock news.

Krista's face registers shock.

KRISTA

(TO Herself)

What? Oh that can't be.

She shakes her head at the TV and walks on to the NURSE'S STATION.

KRISTA (CONT'D)

Has anyone seen Sister Angela?

RECEPTIONIST

No, I haven't seen her in quite some time. Earlier today maybe.

KRISTA

That's odd. I needed her to look in on a patient for me and I can't find her anywhere. I've paged her twice but she doesn't answer. This just isn't like her.

Krista heads for Anna's room.

KRISTA (CONT'D)

(To herself)

Well, she can't have just disappeared into thin air, she's got to be here somewhere.

She opens the door to the room and sees Garrett and Josef beside Anna's bed. She instantly knows what has happened.

She leans back against the wall and closes her eyes

KRISTA (CONT'D)

Oh Anna....

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - OUTSIDE ANNA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Krista is still standing by the door when Garrett and Josef emerge. Garrett is somber and Josef looks even older and more frail than before.

GARRETT

It's Gran.

KRISTA

I know. I wanted to give the two of you time alone with her. I'll need to notify her doctor.

Garrett nods his head.

GARRETT

I need to get Pop home.

KRISTA (CONT'D)

Sure. I understand.

JOSEF

I'd like to stop by the chapel before we go if that's all right with you.

GARRETT

Sure, Pop. Anything you want. Do you want me to go with you?

JOSEF
 No, no. I would like to go alone.
 For the last time.

GARRETT
 Ok, Pop. I'll meet you downstairs.

Josef nods and heads slowly in his halting gait, toward the exit door as Krista and Garrett look on with concern.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY OUTSIDE THE CHAPEL - NIGHT

A LITTLE WHILE LATER

Garrett exits the Chapel where KRISTA is waiting.

GARRETT (CONT'D)
 He's not in there.

KRISTA
 Where could he be?

GARRETT
 I don't know. I have to find him
 though.

He's worried.

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Krista and Garrett exit hurriedly from inside the hospital. The doors swing open. As soon as they are out, the wind blows Krista's hair and she wraps her arms around herself. She only wears a light sweater over her scrubs.

KRISTA
 Whoa! It's freezing out here.
 Where did that come from?

GARRETT
 This is unbelievable! Have you ever
 felt it this cold here?

KRISTA
 Never!

Something in the distance catches Krista's eye. From her POV we see Josef, sitting on the wooden bench outside the hospital garden. His shoulders are slumped as he gazes down forlornly. He's lost the love of his life.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
 What is he doing out here?

GARRETT

He's going to be the next one with pneumonia.

KRISTA

Oh Garrett, go get him. It's so cold.

She shivers again and hugs herself.

EXT. HOSPITAL GARDEN - NIGHT

We see Josef sitting on the bench from the POV of someone inside the garden.

We now see the Young Anna and Sister Angela standing in the garden, bathed in the same soft light as previously.

ANNA

It's hard to leave him here.

SISTER ANGELA

I know. It won't be long until you see him again.

Anna smiles.

ANNA

You didn't forget my parting gift?

SISTER ANGELA

How could I forget?

Sister Angela looks skyward as she closes her eyes.

As she does we see Krista look up to see snow flakes beginning to fall. Garrett also stops and looks up as the snow begins.

Now we see Josef's jacket sleeve from his POV. A snowflake falls on it, then another. He looks up incredulously. He smiles. In V.O. we here Anna's voice.

ANNA (V.O.)

If I am in heaven by Christmas, it will snow. When you see it you'll know I'm there.

Josef nods and looks up to the sky as Garrett reaches him. Josef.

GARRETT

Pop, what are you doing out here?

Josef looks up to Garrett.

JOSEF
She's there.

Garrett now smiles and nods. He knows what Josef means.

GARRETT
Yes. Yes she is.

The Young Anna and Sister Angela both smile, give one more look toward Josef and Garrett, then turn and walk into the mist that enshrouds the garden.

(O.S.) We hear the WHINNEY OF A HORSE.

FADE OUT:

CUE MUSIC: GREATEST GIFT OF ALL

Krista approaches Garrett who is putting his coat around Josef. They all share a hug. Garrett and Krista begin dancing in the falling snow as Josef watches, now with a smile on his face. He looks up to the sky one last time and nods knowingly.

THE END

