Vanessa’s car pulls up into the driveway of Julia’s home and stops the car.

INT. VANESSA’S CAR - DAY

VANESSA

Good luck, Julia.

Julia looks over at Vanessa. She smiles briefly and nods her head.

JULIA

Yeah, I’m gonna need it. Thanks, Vanessa, I know this hasn’t made things very easy for you.

VANESSA

This is just weird for me. Usually, you’re the one always supporting me with my problems. Break-ups, stalkers, my blond hair crisis, you name it. You’ve been there for me. I’m not used to it being the other way around this time.

JULIA

Yeah, me neither. I’ll talk to later, all right?

VANESSA

(nods her head)

Bye, Jules. Take care.

Julia smiles warmly at her best friend and steps out of the car holding her black business suit that she had worn yesterday. Vanessa watches her friend walk up to her door and unlock it.

EXT. JULIA’S HOUSE - DAY

Julia waves at Vanessa as she pulls out of the driveway and drives off. Julia then opens the door to her house.

INT. JULIA’S HOUSE

Julia walks into her front door. She make a left into the family room to look for her children. As she walks further into the family room, she sees her children through the glass doors that lead out to the pool and the backyard. Her children are playing on their swing-set. Kim takes turns pushing Spencer in his swing and Emma in her baby-swing.

Julia sighs and smiles as she watches her children. She sets her black suit and purse onto one of the white cushioned chairs in the family room and slowly walks to the glass doors. She stops briefly at the glass doors to take in a deep break and put a smile on her face.
JULIA
Hey kids! Mommy’s home!

Spencer jumps off his swing and runs to hug his mother as she bends down to his level. Julia continues to smile, trying to pretend like nothing is wrong.

SPENCER
Where have you been, Mommy?

JULIA
Mommy stayed over at Aunt Vanessa’s last night. She had a problem and needed to talk with me about it.

Kim walks over to Julia as Spencer runs back to the swing-set and begins swinging again.

KIM
Hi, Julia. You’re home early today.

JULIA
Well, it is so nice outside today. I just couldn’t resist taking the rest of the day off.

KIM
Oh, I don’t blame you. We’ve had fun playing outside all day haven’t we Spencer?

Spencer, now swinging high in his swing, smiles and nods his head quickly.

JULIA
Kim, you can go ahead and go home early today. Enjoy the rest of the afternoon.

KIM
Thanks, Julia. I guess I’ll see you tomorrow then!

Julia smiles as Kim walks back to the swing-set.

KIM
Bye kids! Practice on that swing, okay Spencer!

SPENCER
Okay!

Kim walks past Julia and towards the glass doors of the house.
JULIA

Bye, Kim.

Julia walks over to the swing set and picks up Emma, who is playing with a rattle, from the baby swing. Spencer continues to swing.

JULIA

So, Spencer, what do you want to do this afternoon?

SPENCER

Well, what about the flowers?

JULIA

Flowers?

SPENCER

Yeah, the red flowers we were suppose to plant in the garden yesterday. Did you forget?

JULIA

No, of course not. I didn’t forget. I was thinking that the park sounded like fun. Would you like me to take you to the big park that has all of the big slides and big swings?

SPENCER

Yeah!

JULIA

Okay, let’s go inside and get you a jacket in case it gets a little chilly out later.

Spencer jumps off the swing and runs inside as Julia picks up Emma from the baby swing.

DISSOLVE TO:

67 INT. MICHAEL’S OFFICE

Michael is on the phone at his desk. His office is large and spacious. A knock is heard at the door. Michael, not wanting to be interrupted, ignores the knocking.

MICHAEL

Yeah, that should be coming in sometime next week. Yeah, that shouldn’t be a problem. Let me --

Vanessa peeps her head in through the door and Michael’s concentration is broken.
MICHAEL
Larry, let me get back to you later. Yeah, that sounds good. Okay, goodbye.

Vanessa steps into Michael’s office as he hangs up the phone.

MICHAEL
Vanessa, hi. What’s new?

VANESSA
Hi. I just thought I would stop by and tell you that I just got back from bringing Julia back to your place.

MICHAEL
Really? Is she all right?

VANESSA
Yeah, I think she’ll be all right.

MICHAEL
I’m going to give her a call real quick.

Vanessa stays in the office as Michael uses his phone to call his wife. He waits for a few seconds and then hangs it back up.

MICHAEL
Hmmm.... No one’s home. I think I’m going to leave work early today and see Julia. This whole mystery is really driving me insane.

Michael gets up and puts his jacket on as Vanessa lingers in the office. When Michael collects his briefcase and is about to walk past her to leave the office, Vanessa stops him by grabbing his arm.

VANESSA
By the way, Julia doesn’t know that I called you this morning. Do me a favor and don’t bring it up, okay?

MICHAEL
Sure, I won’t. Why?

VANESSA
Well, I just don’t want her to think that I was trying to interfere or anything. You know...

MICHAEL
Hey, if you hadn’t called me, I’d probably have gone mad or something by now. At least I knew that she wasn’t hurt or had gotten in an accident.
Michael and Vanessa have worried expressions on their faces, but they still exchange smiles before they leave the office.

DISSOLVE TO:

68  EXT. PARK - LATE AFTERNOON

Julia and her children are playing at a large city park. Julia sits on a swing with Emma on her lap as Spencer slides down on the nearby jungle gym. Julia nervously looks down at her wrist watch. When she looks up, Spencer is at her side.

SPENCER
Mommy, when are we going home? I'm hungry!

JULIA
Pretty soon, honey. Don't you want to play more? Sit down on the swing next to me and swing with me and your sister. Come on!

Spencer, always full of energy, excitedly jumps on the swing next to his mother.

JULIA
Let's see who can swing higher!

Spencer and Julia laugh as he swings higher and higher. Julia swings low, because she has Emma in her lap. As Spencer laughs and swings on, Julia looks again at her watch. The look of anxiety crosses over her face for she is nervous to go home and face her husband.

DISSOLVE TO:

69  INT. JULIA’S HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

Michael walks into the house and turns the lights on. He walks through the hallway into the kitchen area.

MICHAEL
Julia?

He walks into the family room over to the glass French doors to peer outside. He discovers that the pool area and the swing-set are both vacant. He turns back into the kitchen.

MICHAEL
(exasperated)

Julia.
He sighs and collapsed down on one of the chairs at the kitchen table, too tired and disappointed to go anywhere else. His hands cover his face to hide his pain.

CUT TO:

70 INT. JULIA’S CAR - EVENING

In the backseat of the car, Spencer is eating a sandwich from a fast food restaurant, and Emma is drinking from a bottle. Julia is nervous as she drives. She looks in her rear view mirror and tries to hide her anxiety from her children. She smiles as she watches her children eating contentedly.

   JULIA
   How’s your dinner?

   SPENCER
   (with food in his mouth)
   Good! Are we almost home? I want to show Daddy my new toy.

   JULIA
   Spencer, don’t talk with your mouth full. We’ll be home in a few minutes.

Julia’s eyes dart to the digital clock in her car. The clock reads 6:10.

71 EXT. JULIA’S CAR

The car pulls up into the driveway of Julia’s house.

72 INT. JULIA’S HOUSE - KITCHEN

Michael still sits as the kitchen table - he has been for a few hours now. The sound of the door opening and closing jolts him out of his daze. Spencer excitedly runs into the kitchen.

   SPENCER
   Daddy, look what I got!

He shows his father the toy he got from his fast food meal. But as Julia walks into the room with the baby in her arms, Michael’s attention is focused on her. She smiles nervously, avoiding eye contact with Michael as she walks over to the refrigerator to refill Emma’s bottle with more milk. Michael’s gaze remains fixed on Julia.

   SPENCER
   Daddy, look!
MICHAEL
(unenthusiastic)
That’s nice, son, what is it?

SPENCER
It’s a wolf-man robot. His name is Howler. Isn’t it cool?

MICHAEL
Yeah, it’s neat. Why don’t you play in the family room or watch one of your videos. Okay?

SPENCER
Okay, Daddy.

Julia nervously turns around to face Michael as he glares at her. She is still holding Emma, and takes a moment to give her fresh bottle. She looks back at him.

JULIA
(nervously)
I took the kids out to dinner tonight. Have you eaten yet?

MICHAEL
What’s going on, Julia? You never came home last night. I was worried sick about you. I thought you were in an accident of some kind. I called your mother...I called everyone. Then I find out from Vanessa that she had picked you up late last night in the city --

Julia walks towards the table where Michael is sitting and takes a seat in a chair across from him.

JULIA
How did you know that?

MICHAEL
She came to my office today. She came to tell me that she had taken you home. So I left work early today hoping to see you --

JULIA
(looking guilty)
You did? I didn’t think you’d be home until five as usual. So I took the kids to the park. I guess we lost track of time.
MICHAEL
(sounding angry and as if he doesn’t believe Julia)
Uh huh. So are you going to tell me what’s been going on here for the past two days or am I going to have to guess. Believe me, I’ve had plenty of time to sit here and think of a million different scenarios.

JULIA
Michael, please.

MICHAEL
Julia, I was up all night last night racking my brain, trying to figure out what had happened to you. I didn’t know what to do. Should I call the hospitals or what? I was waiting all night for a phone call from you or some indication that you were all right. Do you remember that promise that we made to each other even before we got married?

Michael waits for a beat, but Julia just looks up at him with sorrowful eyes.

MICHAEL
(continuing)
We promised each other that we would always call or leave a note for the if we were going to be late or went somewhere without the other person knowing. We made that promise to each other so that we wouldn’t have to worry about the other.

JULIA
I know. I realize everything that you must have gone through. I’m sorry, I really am. I just wasn’t thinking straight last night. Everything has happened so fast and I’m getting lost in the dust.

MICHAEL
What are you talking about?

Julia looks down and strokes the blond curls on her daughter’s head. Emma sits on her mother’s lap, looking sleepy as she continually drinks from her bottle. Julia clears her throat as she begins to get very emotional.

JULIA
Michael, I have to tell you something.

MICHAEL
(looking worried)
Yes? What it is?

Tears well up in Julia’s eyes.
JULIA
I don’t know how to tell you. This is just too difficult.

MICHAEL
Just take your time. We have all night.

He looks at her intently as she takes a deep breath. He is just as nervous as she is. A tear runs down the side of her face as she begins to speak.

JULIA
Michael.....Michael, I might have AIDS.

Michael looks stunned and can’t believe what he has just heard.

MICHAEL
What?

JULIA
I might have AIDS.

MICHAEL
How?

JULIA
Yesterday I found out that his girlfriend Lydia died eight months ago from AIDS. And she gave it to Jake. But who knows if she gave it to him before or after he met me.

Michael looks shocked as he shakes his head in disbelief.

MICHAEL
Don’t tell me this is really happening.

Julia starts crying.

JULIA
I walked around all last night trying to think of how I could tell you. I couldn’t think of a way. I wanted so bad to take back my past. God, it’s destroying my future. Our future.

Michael grabs his wife and hugs her. She cries even harder in the arms of her husband. He tries to comfort her, but looks stunned himself.

DISSOLVE TO:

73 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Julia, dressed in night clothes, lays in bed on her side. She looks sleepy and dazed.
Her face is red and swollen from crying. Michael, dressed in shorts and a T-shirt paces around the room with a cordless phone in his hand.

MICHAEL
Damn it! They keep transferring me around. This is nuts.

Julia sits up in the bed.

JULIA
Michael, do you have to do this now?

MICHAEL
Yes. I have to find out if this is possible or if this guy Jake is just jerking us around, trying to cause trouble.

Julia looks frustrated and lays back down in the bed.

MICHAEL
Yes, I’m still here. Yeah.....

He sits down on the edge of the bed.

MICHAEL
(continued)
Yes. Um, eight years I guess. Yeah.... Uh huh.

He looks disappointed instead of angry now.

MICHAEL
(continued)
Oh, I see. Up to ten years. Okay. Is possible to make an appointment for my wife to come in and get tested tomorrow?

Julia bolts up in the bed, with a frustrated and angry expression on her face.

MICHAEL
(continued)
Okay, I see. Thank you for your time.

He hangs up the phone, but sits on the bed in deep thought.

JULIA
Well?

He turns around to face his wife.

MICHAEL
You’re right. A person with HIV can go about ten years without
showing any signs or having any symptoms.

She lays back in bed again, looking depressed. She rolls over on her side.

**JULIA**

I told you.

**MICHAEL**

Well, it’s not a matter of who’s right and who’s wrong. The important thing is for you to get tested right away.

She rolls over on her back to face Michael.

**JULIA**

What if it’s true? What if I carry this awful disease and have infected you and the children as well?

**MICHAEL**

We can’t think of that now. First thing’s first, we get you tested at the hospital. Tomorrow. Then if need be, we deal with the other stuff if we have to.

**JULIA**

I can’t deal with any of it.

**MICHAEL**

We don’t really have a choice, do we?

A tear falls from Julia’s face as she slowly nods her head. Michael, realizing that he’s being too hard on his wife when she is emotionally drained, moves over to her and gives her a hug.

**MICHAEL**

This is tough, Julia. For both of us. Probably the toughest situation we’ve come across yet. But I’m here for you. Always. Don’t forget that. You’re not alone in the situation, we’re in this together.

She nods her head in silence. Michael kisses her and moves over to turn off the light. She then turns over on her side and keeps her eyes open, looking stunned and confused.

DISSOLVE TO:

**74** INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Julia lies on her side in the bed, still asleep. Michael, dressed in his suit, kneels down by the bed to kiss his wife. She stirs awake.
MICHAEL
Hey, I didn’t want to wake you yet. You look so tired.

JULIA
I am.

MICHAEL
How about you get dressed and I’ll take you to the hospital this morning before I go into work. I can be there for you when you get tested. Maybe it won’t be so traumatic then.

JULIA
I don’t think so, Michael.

MICHAEL
Julia, we need to get this done as quickly as we can. Why waste time worrying if we don’t have to?

JULIA
I know. It’s just that I’ve gone through so much during these last few days. I’m tired of thinking about it. I just don’t want to deal with it today.

Michael sighs and pauses for a moment before he speaks.

MICHAEL
Okay. Do you want me to stay home with you?

She shakes her head.

JULIA
No. I’ll be okay.

MICHAEL
Are you sure?

She nods her head, looking depressed.

MICHAEL
All right. Well, Kim’s already here. I’ll have her stay so that you can test and catch up on your sleep, okay? We can deal with this later when I come home. Hopefully you’ll be feeling better then.

He waits for a response, but Julia just lays on the bed, not saying a word. Michael then gets up from his kneeled position and kisses his wife on the cheek.
MICHAEL

Bye, honey. Get some rest.

He leaves the room and shuts the door behind him.

75 Michael stands outside of the bedroom door just after he shut it. He hesitates for a moment as if he wants to go back into the bedroom and talk to his wife. Instead, the look of sorrow crosses his face as he sighs. He then collects himself, and walks on through the hallway out of frame.

76 IN HER BEDROOM, Julia lays on her side - her usual position - in her bed. She looks depressed and exhausted. She looks older than thirty years old, in her old pajamas and bed-head. A tear rolls down her face and she wipes it away.

DISOLVE TO:

77 INT. BUILDING - DAY

Michael walks through the elevator and knocks on the door of Vanessa and Julia’s office. The door is already opened, so he looks in. Vanessa, busy typing on her computer, looks up from her work.

VANESSA

Michael, hi, come in.

He walks in and sits down in a chair near Julia’s desk. He sighs and rests his elbow on Julia’s desk. He sighs and props up his head with his extended arm and looks deep in thought.

VANESSA

Well? What did Julia say?

MICHAEL

I know the whole story now.

Vanessa nods her head and leans back in chair, waiting for Michael to continue.

MICHAEL

I don’t know what to say. This is so sudden. So unexpected.

VANESSA

I know. I couldn’t believe it either. Here, I thought she was just going to have a nice lunch and maybe set me up on a date.

Michael gives Vanessa a look that tells her that this isn’t the time to joke.

VANESSA

Sorry, I was only kidding.
MICHAEL
To be honest with you, this wasn’t what I was expecting Julia to tell me.

VANESSA
Well, who would?

MICHAEL
No, what I meant was that I was expecting Julia to tell me that she had cheated on me or something. I feel awful for thinking that, but that was the only reason I could come up with for her not wanting to come home or tell me what was wrong.

VANESSA
Did you tell her that?

MICHAEL
Oh, God no. I would never admit that to her. I knew Jake was someone in her past, and I thought that one day they might come across each other one day. But not like this.

VANESSA
That’s what’s so bad about this. This guy comes out of a hole after eight years, but it’s not just to catch up with Julia and find out about her life. He’s telling her that he might have ruined her life and that everything around her might change because of that. And to think that he’s known about the AIDS for years now.

MICHAEL
For years!

VANESSA
Yeah, he’s known for at least two year now.

Michael shakes his head in disbelief and disgust.

MICHAEL
God, I can’t believe this guy. Who does he think he is? First he breaks Julia’s heart and steps all over it in college. You’d think he’d had enough then, but no, he has to crush her to death now. How much more can she take?

VANESSA
I don’t know. I don’t know how Julia can still stand the sight of him. Maybe that’s why she got so spooked yesterday.

MICHAEL
What? She saw him yesterday?
VANESSA
Yeah, when I took her to the hospital.

MICHAEL
You took her to the hospital?

VANESSA
Yeah, I took her here to get her an AIDS test, but she freaked out after she visited Jake while we were waiting around. I take it she didn’t tell you any of that either?

Michael shakes his head in silence and stares off into space. Vanessa looks concerned, not knowing what to say as they sit there in silence.

DISSOLVE TO:

78 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

The room is dark - the blinds covering the windows block the sunlight. Julia lays on her bed, eyes glued to the television set in her bedroom. She is in a daze as she stares at the television screen with a dull expression. She is still in her night clothes and hasn’t taken a shower yet.

Light knocking is heard at her door.

SPENCER
(filtered through the door)
Mommy, will you come out and play with me?

Julia lays in silence, not hearing her son.

SPENCER
(filtered)
Mommy, can you hear me? Are you in there?

Footsteps are heard coming towards Julia’s room.

KIM
(filtered)
Spencer, your Mommy is sleeping now. She’s not feeling well. Let’s go outside and play, okay?

The two sets of footsteps are heard leaving the hallway as Julia remains fixated on the television screen.

The phone rings. Julia ignores it, and it stops ringing after two rings.

Footsteps are heard again approaching Julia’s room.
KIM
(filtered)
Julia, it’s your mother on the phone. Michael told me not to disturb you, but your mother says she really wants to speak to you.

Julia looks frustrated as she reaches over to grab the phone on the small night-stand next to the bed.

JULIA
I got it, Kim.

She puts the phone up to her face.

JULIA
(sounding unenthusiastic)
Hello.

MRS. WHITFIELD
(filtered through the phone)
Darling, hello! I called you at work, but Vanessa said you were home sick. Are you all right?

JULIA
Yeah, mom. I just have a little touch of the flu.

MRS. WHITFIELD
(filtered)
Oh, you poor thing. I hope that’s why you haven’t called your mother this week. Didn’t Kim tell you I called the other day?

JULIA
Oh, I don’t know. I guess I’ve just been really busy.

MRS. WHITFIELD
(filtered)
Well, I’ve been worried about you. Michael called here the other night looking for you. He sounded so worried. But I guess everything’s all right now, huh?

Julia begins to get emotional. She is trying to cover up facts to her mother so that she won’t be worrying about Julia and the HIV test as well. But it is hard for Julia to lie to her mother.

JULIA
(clears her throat)
Um. I was working late that night. I think Michael forgot.
MRS. WHITFIELD
(filtered)
Oh, I see. Honey, are you all right? You sound really upset.

Tears run down Julia’s cheek as she tries to cover up her sniffles.

JULIA
I just don’t feel very well.

MRS. WHITFIELD
(filtered)
I’m sorry, dear. Maybe it was that long day at the office. You work too hard, Julia!

Julia fakes a little laugh.

MRS. WHITFIELD
(filtered)
Well, darling, I’m very curious about something. Has Jake Lancaster called you by chance?

JULIA
How did you know about that?

MRS. WHITFIELD
(filtered)
Well, he called us shortly after we got home from your surprise party last weekend. He wanted to know if you still lived in Chicago and what your phone number was. He sounded so sincere, so I didn’t think that you would mind if I gave it to him. What a surprise, huh? So, did he call then?

JULIA
Yeah, he called.

MRS. WHITFIELD
(filtered)
Well, what did he have to say?

JULIA
Oh, I don’t know. Not much.

MRS. WHITFIELD
(filtered)
Not much? After eight years he didn’t have much to say? And after he went through the trouble of finding your phone number? Come on, Julia, I’m not letting you off the hook that fast!
JULIA
Mom, I really can’t talk about it right now. I’m not feeling well right now. I’ll call you later when I feel better.

MRS. WHITFIELD
(filtered)
All right, darling. You’ll have to give me all the juicy details another time. Take care and give my grandchildren kisses for me, okay? Oh, and don’t forget about your father’s birthday party coming up, okay?

JULIA
Okay, Mom. I love you, goodbye.

She hangs up the phone and returns to the comforts of her bed. She now lays on her side, curling up in a ball and looking very pitiful. She falls asleep.

Dissolve to:

79 Int. Bedroom - Evening

Michael opens the door to the bedroom, bringing light into the pitch-dark bedroom. He is surprised to find Julia still in bed. She is unshowered and asleep. He turns on the light by her bed and kneels down by her as she slowly wakes up.

MICHAEL
Are you still tired?

JULIA
I feel like I could sleep forever.

MICHAEL
I was just about to make dinner. Why don’t you join us out there? You can play with the kids while I make dinner. Spencer’s been asking about you all evening.

JULIA
Maybe later. Just let me sleep a little longer, okay?

Michael looks disappointed as she strokes Julia’s unwashed hair. He looks concerned for her.

MICHAEL
Aren’t you hungry?

JULIA
No, not really. I’m just tired.
MICHAEL
Okay, I’ll leave you alone so that you can sleep more.

She closes her eyes as he stares at her for a moment, afraid of what is happening to his wife. He then gets up, turns off the light, and leaves the room.

DISSOLVE TO:

80 INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Julia wakes up to see her husband getting dressed for work.

JULIA
Is it morning already?

MICHAEL
(cheerfully)
Hey, you’re up!

He sits on the edge of the bed, facing her.

JULIA
You never woke me back up last night for dinner.

MICHAEL
I know. I was going to, but you just seemed so out of it. I thought after another good night’s sleep that you’d feel better. So, how do you feel this morning?

JULIA
I feel a lot better. I’m not so tired anymore. I could still sleep more, but I feel more rested.

MICHAEL
Okay, since you’re feeling better today, why don’t we stop at the hospital this morning after you shower?

Julia looks annoyed and sits back into her bed.

JULIA
Michael, please, can you stop with that. I will get tested. I will, but let me take my time with this. I have a lot to think about. This is still a big shock for me. Let me have some time with this.

MICHAEL
Okay, Julia. I won’t bug you about it anymore. I just want to make it clear to you what my feelings are. I think you should get tested as soon as possible.
JULIA
I know, Michael. You have made that perfectly clear to me numerous times. Between you and Vanessa, that’s all I have been hearing. I’m just getting a little tired of people constantly telling me what I need to do. I’m not a child anymore. I know what needs to be done.

MICHAEL
Well, Julia, nothing’s going to get done by sitting in bed all day.

JULIA (sarcastically)
Well, thank you for being so understanding.

MICHAEL
I’m trying my best, Julia. I want to be here for you, but you need to do the logical thing. You need to take the next step. But, that’s all I’m going to say about that, because I am not going to tell you what to do.

He stands up and finishes tying his tie as Julia looks frustrated from their disagreement. Her arms are crossed and she has a stern expression on her face. Michael puts on his jacket and heads for the door.

JULIA
Aren’t you forgetting something?

Michael stops by the bedside.

MICHAEL
I didn’t think you’d want a kiss from me today.

JULIA
Don’t be silly. Don’t I always?

He bends down and gives her a quick kiss. But from the expression on Julia’s face, one can tell that she expected more of a kiss than the one her husband gave her.

MICHAEL
Bye, honey.

He then exits the room and Julia is left looking frustrated. She sits in bed, still with her arms crossed.

CUT TO:

81 INT. FAMILY ROOM - DAY
It is a beautiful day outside, but Julia is watching television again, her eyes glued to the screen in a daze as she eats a bowl of cereal. She hasn’t showered in days, her usually shiny brown hair looks oily and mousy; she has it pulled back in a ponytail. She is also wearing the same pajamas has she has been for the past few days.

Kim holds Emma and waits at the foot of the stairs as Spencer comes running down in his swim trunks. Kim looks over at Julia before taking the kids outside, but she doesn’t say anything as she sees that Julia is occupied. Julia ignores them as they walk out of the glass French doors to the swimming pool.

As Julia sits and stares at the television, the phone rings. Julia impatiently looks out at the pool area to see if Kim had brought the cordless phone outside, but Kim is now swimming in the pool with the children.

Julia sits still, letting the answering machine pick up the call.

**ANSWERING MACHINE**
Hello, you’ve reached the Donovan’s at 555-6734. We’re not home right now, so leave us a message and we’ll get back to you as soon as possible.

The answering machine makes a clicking sound and then picks up the call.

**JAKE**
(filtered through the phone)
Julia, this is Jake. I was just calling to let you --

Julia quickly sets down her cereal bowl on the table in the kitchen as she grabs for the phone.

**JULIA**
(slightly out of breath)
Jake?

82 INT. JAKE’S HOSPITAL ROOM

Jake is sitting in his hospital bed, looking healthier than he had looked when Julia had seen him last. A nurse comes and sets down a tray of food in front of Jake as he talks on the phone.

**JAKE**
Julia! I was hoping to catch you. I wasn’t sure what your work schedule was like. If you worked full time or part time. But I thought I would call you anyway.

**JULIA**
(filtered through the phone)
Yeah, what did you want?

**JAKE**
Well, are you busy right now?
INT. FAMILY ROOM - DAY

JULIA
No, not really.

JAKE
(filtered through the phone)
Well, I was wondering if you could pick me up today. I get released from the hospital today.

JULIA
Ummmm...Okay, I could do that. Give me an hour. Is that all right?

INT. JAKE’S HOSPITAL ROOM

JAKE
(cheerful)
Sure, that would be great. Thanks a lot Julia. I can’t tell you how nice it will be to get out of here and get some fresh air.

INT. FAMILY ROOM

JULIA
(half smiles)
Okay, I’ll see you soon.

EXT. POOL AREA

Kim is busy playing in the pool with the kids. She is trying to watch out for Emma, who is in a little round tube that keeps her afloat, from Spencer’s splashes. She doesn’t notice Julia come outside. Julia, finally showered again, looks more like herself again. She is wearing a simple flowered sundress that stops above her knees.

JULIA
Kim, I’m --

Kim looks startled to hear a voice. She looks over at Julia, and looks surprised to see her looking normal again.

JULIA
(continuing)
I’m going out for awhile. I should be home before Michael gets home, all right? See you later, kids!

Julia waves goodbye as she turns around to walk back into the house. Kim and even Spencer still looked surprised by the change of attitude in Julia.
Julia walks into the hospital room just as the nurse that had talked with Julia before puts Jake into a wheelchair. Jake smiles brightly as Julia walks in the room.

**JAKE**

There she is! My ticket to freedom!

Julia and the nurse exchange smiles as Julia follows her and Jake out into the hallway.

**EXT. JULIA’S CAR**

Julia pulls her car up to the hospital doors where the nurse is waiting with Jake. The nurse wheels Jake over to the car and helps him get inside.

**NURSE**

Bye, Jake. Take care!

Jake waves as Julia pulls away.

**INT. JULIA’S CAR**

Julia looks over at Jake uncomfortably, waiting for him to say something. She just smiles at her.

**JULIA**

Well, where to, Jake? Where are you staying right now?

**JAKE**

Actually, I thought we’d swing by a real estate office. I’m in the mood to buy some property today.

**JULIA**

Like buy a house?

**JAKE**

Sure, why not? I need a place to live in for awhile.

She studies his face for a minute, and sees that he’s totally serious.

**JULIA**

(shakes her head in amazement)

Okay, if that’s what you want.

**JAKE**

That’s what I want.
He smiles at Julia and she can’t help but smile back.

DISSOLVE TO:

90 INT. BEACH HOUSE - DAY

Jake and Julia follow a woman into a small, but spacious already-furnished beach home. As they walk in, Julia studies the house. The woman lead them to the main room that has fluffy white sofas and sparse white walls.

REALTOR
As you can see, this house is mostly furnished with the most comfortable and classy furniture imaginable. And the walls are still pretty bare, but you’re an artist, Mr. Lancaster. I’m sure you could take care of that.

Jake smiles and walks towards the drapery-covered French doors, as Julia follows.

REALTOR
And let me show you the grand finale.

She opens the drapes of the glass doors to display a beautiful view of the lake. Julia gasps at the beauty of the view.

JAKE
I’ll take it!

REALTOR
Wow, I guess an artist knows a muse when he sees one, huh?

She looks at Julia and smiles. Julia, not knowing what she is really talking about blushes. She looks at Jake and he smiles brightly. She looks back out at the view as Jake leaves the room to speak to the Realtor about the details of buying the house. Julia opens the glass doors and steps out onto the patio. She leans against the railing, staring out at the deep blue lake. The summer breeze blows through her hair. Jake comes up behind her and startles her when he brushes up against her shoulder.

JAKE
It’s beautiful, isn’t it? So peaceful and serene. Nothing like life.

She nods her head and halfway smiles.

JAKE
Do you know what it reminds me of?

JULIA
Hmmm?
She turns around and faces him.

JAKE

That painting I did for you.

Julia looks away and smiles.

JAKE

Do you still have it?

JULIA

Of course I do. How could I ever give it up?

JAKE
(smiles)

I remember that day when I painted it for you. We spent the whole day at the lake and made this big picnic lunch. And you kept telling me to stop painting, because you wanted to take a walk on the beach. I just kept painting until it was done and when I looked for you, you were asleep on the blanket behind me!

Julia laughs quietly, remembering that day fondly

JAKE

Oh, those were the days..... Hey, I have an idea!

What?

JULIA

Jake grabs Julia’s hand, and tries to pry her away from her spot.

JAKE

I can’t tell you, it’s a surprise!

Julia resists Jake’s attempts, taking her hand out of his grasp.

JULIA

Jake, I’m really in no mood for anymore surprises.

JAKE

Come on, you’ll like this one, I promise!

She rolls her eyes and follows him.

JULIA

Okay, whatever.
Julia and Jake walk into the house carrying plastic bags full of supplies.

**JULIA**
I can’t believe that you talked me into this.

**JAKE**
This will be fun. It will be just like old days.

He props up the easel that he had just bought and places a thick matte board on it. Then he sets up a duplicate one.

**JAKE**
If you ever wanted to have your own art studio again, it’s here for the taking.

Julia watches Jake as he sets up the second easel.

**JULIA**
I can’t believe you are serious about this.

**JAKE**
Why? What’s the problem?

**JULIA**
Jake, I haven’t painted in years. I wouldn’t know where to start.

**JAKE**
Oh, come on, Julia. You don’t forget how. You’re either gifted or you’re not gifted. We are gifted. Now sit.

Julia sits in front of the easel and laughs when Jake hands her a tray of assorted paints.

**JAKE**
Now, get to work!

She stares at the white board in front of her for a few seconds before looking back over to Jake’s board. He has already began painting a dark blue base. She leans over towards him, in awe of how fast he has already begun working.

**JULIA**
What are you painting?
JAKE
Well, I always wanted to go to Hong Kong. I haven’t made it there yet, and I’m never going to, so I thought I would paint one of the boats that I’ve seen in one of my father’s old photographs.

JULIA
Jake, you can still go there. There’s time left.

JAKE
No. All I want to do is spend the remainder of my time here painting.

JULIA
Are you going to submit your work to your galleries?

JAKE
No, I sold them.

JULIA
You sold them! But why?

JAKE
I don’t want any strings attached to my life anymore. I want simplicity from now on. I have a new house. I have my paintings, and I have a friend.

He looks into her eyes and gives her a warm smile. She looks confused for a second, but then returns his smile.

JULIA
This disease has really changed you, Jake, hasn’t it?

JAKE
Yes, but I don’t think that it is necessarily bad. It has made me realize what is important in life. Now, I want to live the rest of what life I have following that. That isn’t so bad, is it?

She looks away and stares back at the white board in front of her, deep in thought.

DISSOLVE TO:

92 INT. JULIA’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING

Michael and the kids are eating dinner at the table as Julia walks in. Michael looks surprised when he sees that she looks like her usual self again.

MICHAEL
Joining us for dinner, Julia?
She walks into the kitchen and hesitates to join them, but sees the earnest look on her son’s face.

JULIA
Sure, what are we having?

MICHAEL
Spaghetti with meat sauce.

Julia grabs a plate and makes herself up a plate at the counter where the remainder of the spaghetti is sitting.

MICHAEL
So, where’d you go today?

Julia joins her family at table.

JULIA
I went to the hospital.

MICHAEL
(looking hopeful)
You did?

JULIA
Ya, Jake called me and wanted me to pick him up. He was released today.

She looks up at her husband to see his disapproving look.

MICHAEL
Julia, how can you talk to that man after everything he has put you through. And is still putting you and our family through.

JULIA
Michael, he doesn’t have anyone else. He needed a ride and he called me. What was I suppose to do? Leave him to the streets?

MICHAEL
I’m sure he isn’t too bad off. I just don’t understand you, Julia.

JULIA
What’s to understand?

Michael shakes his head in frustration. He gets up and washes his plate. Julia looks stunned as she looks at her husband from the back.
JULIA
Michael, what do you want me to do?

MICHAEL
Julia, I think you know the answer to that.

JULIA
Michael, I just can walk away from him. He came here to tell me this awful news, yes, but I think he also came here for help. He really didn't have anyone real out in California or New York that he could trust.

Michael turns around, not looking happy at all.

MICHAEL
So, he picks you.

Julia shrugs her shoulders, not knowing how to explain the situation as she sees it.

JULIA
I don’t know, Michael. I’m just trying to do the right thing.

MICHAEL
Don’t you stop and think about what he’s putting you through?

JULIA
Of course I do. I can’t get that off my mind for one minute. But I can’t blame him for that. How can I?

Michael looks right at Julia.

MICHAEL
Well, I blame him.

JULIA
Do you blame me, too?

Julia waits for Michael to say something, but when he doesn’t, she gets up from her seat at the table. She looks right at him and he looks down, not saying anything. She looks as if she is going to cry as she storms out of the room.

CUT TO:

93 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Julia pretends to be asleep as her husband walks in the room. He gets into bed and turns off the lights. After he does this, Julia opens her eyes. Tears begin to fall from her eyes, as she still feels the pain of her most recent argument with her
husband. This situation is putting a strain on their relationship.

DISSOLVE TO:

94  INT. BEACH HOUSE - DAY

Jake is busy painting as he hears knocking at the door.

JAKE
(yelling)
Come in!

Julia, wearing shorts and a T-shirt, walks in with a paper bag. Jake turns around to see her.

JAKE
Julia! What are you doing here?

JULIA
Hey, I thought you said I had a studio here.

He laughs and coughs.

JAKE
You do, you do. I’m just surprised to see you. Come sit.

She walks over and studies his painting. It is of a beautiful ocean day with a historic looking ship looming in the background.

JULIA
Wow, breath-taking.

JAKE
Thanks, it’s my newest. And I started one for you last night.

JULIA
A painting for me?

JAKE
Yeah, it’s over there.

He points to an easel in the corner of the living room with a white sheet draped over it. She sits down next to him.

JAKE
It’s a surprise though, and it’s gonna take me awhile. You can’t see it until it’s done, okay?
Julia nods her head and smiles.

JAKE
I also finished two yesterday. They’re drying in one of the bedrooms right now.

JULIA
Two!

JAKE
Yeah, can you believe it? I’ve never worked at this pace before, I guess I feel like I have to finish a huge collection before the grim reaper visits.

JULIA
How are you feeling, Jake?

JAKE
Oh, so. I think I’m coming down with something, but what’s new. It’s AIDS, right?

Julia ignores Jake’s joking attempts.

JULIA
Are you taking any medication?

JAKE
Yeah I have some AZT and other drugs. I take them when I remember to.

JULIA
Jake, you should be taking them every day!

JAKE
I know, but sometimes the drugs make me feel worse. I was in terrible shape when I first started to use the AZT. I was vomiting every other minute it seemed like. But, thank God my body is used to it now.

JULIA
Well, are you feeling up to any food? I stopped by a bagel shop in the way here and got a few different varieties.

JAKE
Gee, what service. I might try one a little later. I’m already losing too much weight. Anyhow, enough about the sick talk. How are you doing?
JULIA
I’m all right.

JAKE
Julia, have you gotten tested yet?

Julia rolls her eyes.

JULIA
Please, Jake, don’t start this. This is all I hear about.

JAKE
I know, but it’s something you need to do. What’s holding you back, Julia?

JULIA
Fear, I guess.

JAKE
Fear? Of finding out that you have AIDS

JULIA
Yes, I see what you are going through and I know I can’t handle that, Jake.

JAKE
But that’s just it, Julia. If you get tested and find out that you don’t have AIDS, then you don’t need to worry about it. You won’t have to think about it anymore. And that will be a relief, wouldn’t it?

JULIA
Yeah, but I fear that the nurse will come back and tell me that the results are positive.

JAKE
I know, Julia, believe me I do. But I you do have AIDS, or HIV, I mean, you have to deal with it sooner or later. And the sooner the better. Look at me. I am fading away because I waited too long for treatment. The sooner you start treatment, the longer you can put off the onset of AIDS.

She nods her head.

JULIA
It’s almost easier not knowing.
Vanessa looks up from her computer.

**VANESSA**
Michael, I haven't seen you in awhile.

**MICHAEL**
I've been trying not to think about this, but it's getting out of control.

**VANESSA**
Why, what's going on, now?

**MICHAEL**
I was trying to be more understanding about the situation. You know, not bug her about getting tested. Let her do it on her own and in her own time. But, now she's never at home. I think she's always with Jake.

**VANESSA**
Really? I haven't talked with her for awhile. Every time I call your house, Kim says that she's always gone.

**MICHAEL**
I thought she wanted to take off time from work to be with the kids and get some rest, but it's almost like she doesn't even live there anymore.

**VANESSA**
Does she spend the night with him?

**MICHAEL**
No, but she might as well. She comes in late every night and says that she is too exhausted to talk.

**VANESSA**
Oh, on. I didn't realize that things were so bad. I've been wanting to talk to her and find out when she was going to come back here. It's sad, but I'm getting used to being alone in here. It sure isn't the same with her gone.

Michael nods his head in silence.

**MICHAEL**
But she's gone even when she is here. At home, I mean. It's like the life has been sucked out of her or something, and she won't talk to me about it. I don't know what's going on anymore. Things can't go on like this.
VANESSA
I think I will stop by after work and see her for myself. Maybe I can get her to talk and find out what’s going on.

MICHAEL
I hope you can.

DISSOLVE TO:

97 BEACH HOUSE - DAY

Jake’s house now looks like the combination of an art museum and an art studio. Paintings cover the walls, and others scatter the floors on top of newspapers, waiting to dry. Jake and Julia each paint on separate easels, they look like they have showered in days, with messy hair and paint all over their grubby clothes. Julia sits back and smiles as she studies her newest painting.

JULIA
I finished another one.

Jake stops working and leans over to critique her work.

JAKE
Wow, I never thought I’d see an abstract painting from you, Julia. I love it. What made you decide to deviate from your norm?

JULIA
Well, I thought I would try something new. Even landscapes get boring after awhile. A person must always experiment, right? You can’t learn by doing the same thing over and over again.

Jake sits back for a beat and smiles at her.

JAKE
How do you feel, Julia?

JULIA
Feel?

JAKE
How do you feel about being an artist again?

JULIA
Wonderful. I never knew how much I missed painting and living like an artist. I let the rest of my life take over and I forgot about one of the things that meant the most to me.
JAKE
You won't forget that now, will you?

She smiles and shakes her head. Jake gets up from the floor and walks towards the adjacent kitchen.

JAKE
Can I get you something?

Julia adds finishing touches to her painting, not watching Jake.

JULIA
Sure, I'll have a glass of lemonade.

As Jake enters the kitchen, he doubles over and grasps his stomach. He grabs on to the counter to keep his balance, but slips anyway. Thud! Julia, startled, looks up, and quickly runs to the kitchen to help Jake off the floor.

JULIA
(alarmed)
Jake, what's wrong? What should I do?

He doesn't answer, his face cringing from the pain.

JAKE
Help.... Help me....to the bathroom.

Julia struggles to help Jake off the kitchen floor. She pulls one of his arms around her neck and struggles to bring him into the bathroom.

98 INT. BATHROOM

Julia brings Jake into the bathroom, as he immediately goes to the toilet.

JAKE
Go outside, Julia.

JULIA
What?

JAKE
(sounding urgent)
Go outside, now!

She immediately leaves the bathroom.

99 INT. HALLWAY

98
Julia shuts the door to the bathroom. Sounds of Jake vomiting are immediately heard. Julia begins to get emotional. She looks very upset and she leans against the bathroom door. She slowly slides down the side of the door, until she is sitting on the floor. Her hands collapse over her face.

DISSOLVE TO:

100 EXT. JULIA’S HOUSE

Vanessa steps out of her car, that she had just parked on the driveway. She walks up to the house and rings the doorbell. Kim answers the door, with Emma in her hands.

**KIM**

Hi, Vanessa, come in.

Vanessa smiles and steps into the house.

101 INT. VANESSA’S HOUSE - ENTRYWAY

**VANESSA**

Oh, let me see my precious Emma.

Kim hands the baby over to Vanessa as Vanessa makes funny faces to the baby and makes her laugh.

**VANESSA**

I haven’t see you in awhile, Kim. How are you doing?

**KIM**

Just fine, thanks. Are you here to see Julia?

**VANESSA**

Yeah, is she home?

**KIM**

(shaking her head)

No, it’s the same as when she was working.

**VANESSA**

Oh. Well, did she say when she would be back?

**KIM**

No, sometimes I don’t even see her leave. We haven’t talked much lately.
VANESSA
Yeah, neither have we. I’m worried about her. I’m just going to wait until she gets here. You don’t have to stay here, Kim, you can leave whenever you want.

KIM
Oh, I think I should stay until Michael gets home.

VANESSA
He wanted me to tell you that he stopped at the grocery store on the way back from work. Really, it’s fine for you to go. I haven’t seen my favorite two kids in awhile. I’ll go out back and play with them.

KIM
Okay, I need to go to the store myself. It was nice seeing you, Vanessa.

Kim leaves as Vanessa walks through the family room with the baby outdoors.

102 EXT. HOUSE

Spencer is playing on the swing-set as Vanessa takes a seat on one of the lounge chairs by the pool.

SPENCER
Aunt Vanessa, what are you doing here?

VANESSA
Hey, that’s not happiness to see me!

Spencer laughs as he continues playing.

VANESSA
How are you doing, little buddy?

SPENCER
Fine.

VANESSA
Just fine?

SPENCER
Will you let me swim? I can show you my newest jump off the board. Mommy’s never here anymore to see me do it.

VANESSA
Really? Is your Mommy gone a lot?
Spencer nods his head.

**SPENCER**
When she is home, she and Daddy are always fighting.

**VANESSA**
Well, sometimes parents fight, but it's not because they don't love you. Sometimes things come up that are hard to deal with, and it makes people upset.

Spencer stares at Vanessa, as if he doesn't comprehend everything that she is saying. She laughs when she sees this.

**VANESSA**
Okay, I'll let you go swimming. Go on inside and get changed.

He smiles and runs inside the house as Vanessa plays with the baby in her lap.

DISSOLVE TO:

103 INT. BEACH HOUSE - HALLWAY

Julia is still in her balled up position on the floor. Her head is buried in her arms. The doors open suddenly and jolts her awake. She looks up to see Jake at the door. He looks extremely weak and sick - completely pale. She quickly rises from the floor to help him into the next room.

104 BEACH HOUSE - MAIN ROOM

Julia helps Jake onto one of the white sofas.

**JULIA**
Jake, should I call the hospital?

He shakes his head.

**JULIA**
Maybe you need to be re-admitted again.

**JAKE**
No, I don’t want that.

**JULIA**
Jake, they can do more for you than I can.

**JAKE**
Julia, I don’t want a life of hospitals and medications. When my time comes, it comes. I'm not trying to fight it.
Julia gets emotional again.

**JULIA**
Jake, your so sick. You need help. I can’t believe that this happened all of a sudden.

**JAKE**
No, it’s not all that sudden. You just haven’t seen me yet at my worse. I do a good job of covering it up most of the time.

**JULIA**
Why? Why cover it up?

**JAKE**
Because I want our time together to be about painting and friendship. Not about sickness. I’ve tried hard to keep as much of this from you as possible, but it’s getting harder. The sickness is progressing. I can feel it.

**JULIA**
What do you want me to do?

**JAKE**
There’s nothing you can do for me except to be with me. These past week has done wonders for me. It really has. You have helped me to go on longer than I thought I would. I don’t know how I could get through this without you.

**JULIA**
I’m here for you, Jake. Whatever you need. Do you want me to stay the night and take care of you?

**JAKE**
No, you’ve done so much for me as it is. I’m taking up too much of your time. You should go home and be with your family. They need you, too.

**JULIA**
But, Jake, will you be okay by yourself?

He nods his head.

**JAKE**
Please, don’t worry about me. Go home.

Julia hesitates, looking full of sorrow as she looks down at Jake. He closes his eyes and she watches him, fearful that he might die at any time.
DISSOLVE TO:

105 INT. JULIA’S HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

Julia walks into her family room, looking exhausted from the day. She hears laughing outside and walks over to the French doors. She looks surprised when she sees Vanessa outside.

106 EXT. HOUSE - POOL AREA - EARLY EVENING

Julia walks outside. Spencer jumps off the diving board and creates a big splash. Vanessa screams out gleefully as some of the water splashes on her. She then sees Julia watching them. Vanessa stands up and walks over to Julia.

VANESSA

Julia....

JULIA

Vanessa, what a surprise. What brings you out here?

VANESSA

(looking a little uncomfortable)
Well, we haven’t talked in so long that I thought I’d stop over after work. Where were you?

JULIA

Just out.

Julia avoids making eye contact with Vanessa for fear that she’ll be able to see through her.

VANESSA

Oh, well I was thinking that we could go out and get a bite to eat or something.

JULIA

Well, I would, but I guess Michael’s not home now.

Just then, Michael stick his head out of the glass French doors.

MICHAEL

I’m home!

Vanessa waves at him as Julia turns around to see him.

VANESSA

Oh, Michael, you’re home. I was just asking your wife if she’d like to go out to dinner with me.
MICHAEL
Oh, sure, honey. You two have fun. I'll take the kids out for burgers.

Julia looks back and forth between the two of them, as if she thinks that there is something a little odd about the situation.

JULIA
Okay......Let me go in and change first.

Julia walks in, looking straight at her husband as she passes him. Vanessa and Michael exchange knowing looks.

DISSOLVE TO:

107 RESTAURANT - EVENING

Vanessa begins eating a salad as Julia joins her at the table, sitting across from her and placing her salad from the buffet onto the table.

VANESSA
Julia, how are you doing with everything? I haven't heard from you in so long. Why haven't you called me?

JULIA
I don't know. I guess I'm just tired of talking about and hearing about AIDS.

VANESSA
Julia, we have a lot more to talk about than that. Come on, I'm suppose to be your best friend. I'm here for you when you need to talk. About anything and everything. Whatever you want.

Julia nods her head and smiles lightly, taking a bite of her salad.

VANESSA
I miss you at the office Jules, when do you think you'll be coming back?

JULIA
I'm not sure. I haven't really thought about it. To tell you the truth, I've been enjoying my time away from the office and the hustle and bustle of downtown.

VANESSA
Oh, really? So, how have you been occupying your time?
JULIA
I’ve been painting a lot.

VANESSA
(smiles and looks excited)
Really? What brought this on?

JULIA
Jake initiated it. He thought it would be fun for us to paint together again. Like we did when we were in college.

Vanessa’s face darkens.

VANESSA
Jake?

JULIA
Yeah, he bought a small house on the beach a week or so ago. I helped in pick it out. You should see it, Vanessa, it’s beautiful.

VANESSA
Jules, why are you spending so much time with Jake?

JULIA
Why does it matter to you?

VANESSA
I’ve been talking to Michael, Julia.

Julia rolls her eyes and sits back in the booth, crossing her arms.

JULIA
I know Michael doesn’t approve of me seeing Jake.

VANESSA
Well, do you blame him? First, he tells you that you might have AIDS, and that your family might have it too, and then you spend all your time with him like none of that bothers you. How is Michael suppose to feel?

JULIA
Vanessa, who’s side are you on? Did you bring me all the way here to lecture me?

VANESSA
Just listen to me, Jules. I’m not on anyone’s side. And no, I’m not trying to lecture you. I’m looking at this from all sides, and I have to say that I see where Michael’s coming from.
Julia sighs and looks out of the window for a second.

**JULIA**

No one understands.

**VANESSA**

Help me to understand. I want to understand what you’re going through Jules, I really do.

**JULIA**

Vanessa, you didn’t see Jake today. He got so sick. Who knows, he could have died today. He really needs me right now.

**VANESSA**

But so does your family, Jules. You have a husband who wants to be there for you, but you won’t let him. You have two children at home who desperately want their mother, but instead of spending time with them, you’re spending all your time with some sick guy who just screws around with your life.

**JULIA**

Who are you to judge me?

**VANESSA**

I’m not judging you. I just think you need to step back and see what’s going on around you. Open your eyes, Julia. There’s more involved in this situation than just you and Jake.

**JULIA**

Don’t you think I know that? Don’t you think that every time I look at my kids I think that I might be killing them at the same time? And Michael? Don’t you think that I don’t look at him and wonder how this is affecting him? God, Vanessa! I can’t look at them! I can’t be around them right now. Because that’s all I think about.

**VANESSA**

Then get tested and find out for sure. That’s the only solution.

**JULIA**

I know it is. I know.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**108 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Michael sits on the bed, looking at some papers. Julia walks in the room, looking exhausted as she tossed her purse on the floor. She sits on the edge of the bed and
takes off her shoes. Michael watches her, waiting for her say something. She just goes about getting dressed for bed.

MICHAEL
Did you have a good evening?

JULIA
Sure, whatever.

MICHAEL
Whatever?

JULIA
Michael, you know what we talked about. Don’t act like you don’t.

He takes the stack of papers and places them on the floor.

MICHAEL
Well, did it help?

She slumps back onto the bed, looking depressed. She gets emotional, ready to start crying at any time now.

JULIA
I don’t know, Michael. I know what I have to do, but I just can’t. I can’t bring myself to find out the truth. I can’t.

MICHAEL
I know, Julia. But time is slipping away from us. Has it gotten any better by not doing anything about it?

She shakes her head.

MICHAEL
When I look at you, I see someone in great pain. Someone who has a great weight on her shoulders that could easily be taken off. Come on, Julia, let’s just talk about this and get everything out into the open.

JULIA
Please, Michael. Not tonight.

MICHAEL
Well, when then? We haven’t really talked in weeks. You’re never home anymore and when you are you might as well be gone. I know you are going through pain, Julia, but so am I.
JULIA
(nods her head, beginning to cry)
I know. I'm just too tired tonight. I can't think about this anymore tonight. We'll talk tomorrow night, I promise.

MICHAEL
We'll be at your parents' house, remember?

JULIA
(shakes her head)
What? I don't --

MICHAEL
Your dad's birthday party, remember?

JULIA
Oh, God, just what I need. I can't deal with that right now.

MICHAEL
Julia, you can't not go to that. Your mother's been setting up for that for weeks now. She called tonight to talk to you about the plans, but I just told her that we would come by early tomorrow evening.

Julia lays down in bed.

JULIA
Great. This just adds to it.

She closes her eyes, as her husband stares at her. He can't believe this is his wife - she seems like a totally different person right now.

DISSOLVE TO:

109 EXT. WHITFIELD HOUSE - DAY

Julia, Spencer, and Michael (holding Emma), walk up the a large white mansion. They are all dressed nicely and Julia carries a casserole dish. They walk up to the door and ring the door bell.

110 INT. WHITFIELD HOUSE

Mrs. Whitfield, dressed in a long white dress, answers the door.

MRS. WHITFIELD
Darlings! So glad you could come early! I am running around trying to tie up the loose ends.
Julia and her family walk inside the house. Spencer runs off immediately. Michael laughs as he runs off, but Julia is quiet and expressionless.

**MRS. WHITFIELD**
Someone’s in a hurry!

She looks right at Julia

**MRS. WHITFIELD**
Darling, you look so thin! Have you been starving yourself since your birthday party?

**JULIA**
(looking annoyed)
No, Mom, I haven’t.

**MRS. WHITFIELD**
Michael, if you like, you can go in the parlor where Thomas and some of the other men are. Julia, will you help me set the table?

CUT TO:

111 INT. DINING ROOM

The dining room is spacious and ritzy looking - with a chandelier hanging from the ceiling and expensive crystal goblets already placed on the table. Julia helps bring in dishes with her mother to set the huge dining room table. Julia looks pensive and is quiet and reserved around her mother. Mrs. Whitfield looks at her daughter after setting down the last dish.

**MRS. WHITFIELD**
Honey, is something the matter?

**JULIA**
No, why do you ask?

**MRS. WHITFIELD**
You’re just so quiet. It’s unusual for you.

**JULIA**
I’m just tired from work. We’ve been really busy lately.

**MRS. WHITFIELD**
But Michael told me on the phone last night that you were taking some time off from work.

Julia flushes and looks guilty, having been caught telling a fib. Her mother looks at Julia and is about to speak when the doorbell rings.
Mrs. Whitfield runs out of the room as Julia breathes in a sigh of relief.

DISSOLVE TO:

112 Music bed begins as Julia sits among the guests in the dining room. Everyone excitedly talks and eats their dinners as Julia looks lost among the crowd of people. She sits quietly, digging her fork around in her food. Feature in on her as she looks in a daze, everyone around her just seems to fade out.

DISSOLVE TO:

113 INT. WHITFIELD HOUSE - ENTRYWAY

Mr. and Mrs. Whitfield say goodbye to the last few guests at the door. They then close the door. Mrs. Whitfield leans towards her husband, who is dressed in a nice suit, and puts her arms around him.

MRS. WHITFIELD
How was your birthday, darling?

MR. WHITFIELD
Wonderful as usual, dear.

He leans forward and give his wife a kiss. Mrs. Whitfield then pulls back and gives her husband a warm smile.

MRS. WHITFIELD
Have you seen Julia?

MR. WHITFIELD
Not since after dinner, why?

MRS. WHITFIELD
I’m worried about her, Thomas. She isn’t acting like herself. She was totally unsociable the whole evening. She hardly even talked with Michael. I wonder if they are having problems.

MR. WHITFIELD
Hmmmm...I don’t know....It really isn’t our place to ask anything unless she mentions something to us, don’t you think?
MRS. WHITFIELD
I don’t know, honey. Maybe she feels embarrassed for some reason to talk to me about it. Or maybe she is waiting for me to approach her. At any rate, I am going to find her and have a talk with her. Maybe I can find out if something’s wrong.

CUT TO:

114 INT. GUEST BEDROOM

Julia, alone in the bedroom, takes out some children’s clothes from a small duffel bag that is on the bed. She folds the clothes and stacks them on the bed. Her mother opens the door and walks in.

MRS. WHITFIELD
There you are, darling. I have been looking everywhere for you.

JULIA
Oh, I’m sorry. I’m just taking out the children’s pajamas. They need to go to bed soon.

MRS. WHITFIELD
They’re having fun with Uncle Joe right now. I think Michael’s with them.....

She waits for Julia to say something, but Julia just continues to unpack.

MRS. WHITFIELD
Julia, what’s wrong, darling?

JULIA
Nothing, mother, I told you that earlier.

MRS. WHITFIELD
Well, you’re just not acting like yourself. Usually you’d be talking with everyone and having a good time, but I don’t even remember seeing you after dinner. Where have you been?

JULIA
I took a walk outside. I needed some fresh air.

MRS. WHITFIELD
Darling, forgive me for asking, but are you and Michael having marital problems?

Julia turns around, stunned.
JULIA
What would make you say that?

MRS. WHITFIELD
You just don’t seem like your usual perky and happy self. You seem down and depressed. I can’t help to wonder if that may be an issue.

Julia turns back around and begins to refold the clothes, trying to avoid eye contact with her mother.

JULIA
(sounding as if she is about to cry)
No, mother. It’s not.

Her mother can tell from Julia’s voice that something is wrong. She walks over to her and gently grabs her by the arms, turning her around. By now, Julia has tears in her eyes.

MRS. WHITFIELD
Darling, tell me what’s bothering you. I know there is something, you can’t hide it from me, you’re my daughter and I’ve known you for thirty years now. Tell me.

Julia begins to cry and then hugs her mother. Her mother strokes her long brown hair and rubs her back.

MRS. WHITFIELD
Shhhh.....It’ll be all right.

JULIA
No, mom, it won’t.

Mrs. Whitfield pulls back so that she can look into her daughter’s eyes.

MRS. WHITFIELD
Why is that?

JULIA
Mom, I’m going through something terrible right now.

MRS. WHITFIELD
What is it?

JULIA
Mom, remember how you were so intrigued by Jake Lanscaster’s call?
MRS. WHITFIELD
Yes, darling that was weeks ago.

JULIA
I know it was. He told me something terrible.

Mrs. Whitfield looks at Julia intently.

JULIA
Mother, Jake has AIDS and he came to Chicago to tell me that I could have it, too.

Her mother looks stunned and doesn’t say a word.

JULIA
So, for the past few weeks, I have been going out of my mind wondering if I could have this disease as well. Wondering if I also gave it to my kids and my husband.

Her mother grabs her daughter and hugs her again.

MRS. WHITFIELD
Why didn’t you tell me sooner?

JULIA
I didn’t want you to know. I was trying to hide it, but obviously wasn’t doing a good job.

MRS. WHITFIELD
(still hugging Julia)
Oh, darling, we will deal with this together. Let me help you.

Julia, in tears, nods her head.

DISSOLVE TO:

115 ANOTHER GUEST ROOM

Michael sits in bed, reading a magazine as Julia walks in. His focus immediately turns to her when he sees the tear stains on her face.

MICHAEL
Julia, what is it?

JULIA
I was talking to my mother. I told her everything.
MICHAEL
(stunned)

You did?

She nods her head and gets into bed with him.

JULIA
Michael, I’ve been awful lately. I realize that now. I have been selfish, keeping this all to myself as if this was only my problem and not yours, too. I have been ignoring the situation instead of facing it like you told me to do from day one. Being in this house made me realize that. I have been so spoiled growing up. I had anything I ever wanted to. If I had a problem, my parents dealt with it. I never had to face anything major on my own.

MICHAEL
But you’re not on your own.

• JULIA
I know, but what I’m trying to say is that I’ve never had to deal with a situation like this before. I don’t know how to deal with crises.

Michael nods his head, knowing that this is all true.

JULIA
I am ready to deal with this now. I don’t want my fears and selfishness to come between us and destroy our marriage. What we have is too precious to be destroyed by something like this.

MICHAEL
(smiles)
I’m glad you feel that way.

JULIA
Please, Michael just hold me.

He reaches over for her and she collapses in his arms. He holds her tightly.

MICHAEL
I haven’t held you in so long.

JULIA
I know. Forgive me, please. For all of the pain that I have caused you these past few weeks. It’s going to stop now. I promise. But, Michael, there’s something else that I’ve been thinking about.
MICHAEL
What is it?

JULIA
I’ve been painting a lot during these past few weeks. I feel like I have found my talent again.

MICHAEL
Julia, it never went away.

JULIA
I know, but I hadn’t painted in so long that I kind of forgot about. But I don’t want to forget about anymore. I think that painting is my true calling. How do you feel about that?

MICHAEL
Whatever will make you happy, Julia. I just want you to be happy again.

JULIA
Even if it means not working or only working part time at the office?

MICHAEL
Julia, I want you to follow your dreams. If quitting your job at my company will help you in doing that, then go for it.

JULIA
(smiles)
I was hoping you’d say that.

DISSOLVE TO:

116 INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM

A music bed begins playing. Julia and Michael walk into the waiting room and up to the counter.

CUT TO:

116A Julia and Michael sit in the waiting room chairs. He has his arm around her, and she lays her head on his shoulder. The nurse called out a number, and Julia and Michael look at each other and hug before she gets up.

CUT TO:

116B Julia gets her blood drawn from a nurse.
116C Michael hugs Julia as she walks back into the waiting room. They exit the waiting room.

DISSOLVE TO:

117 INT. PARK - DAY

Julia, Michael, and their kids have a picnic. Julia is smiling again and looking like her old self again. They push their kids on the swing-set and play act like a family. Music bed ends.

DISSOLVE TO:

118 INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

Julia, Michael, and the kids are at the dinner table eating dinner. They all seem very happy, like a weight has been lifted off their shoulders, even though Julia has not received the results from her HIV test yet. The first step is over, now they just have to wait. For Julia, at least everything is out of her hands for the time being. She is enjoying being back with her family again. The family is laughing about something when the telephone rings. Julia slowly gets up from the table to get it.

JULIA

Hello?

JAKE

(filtered through the phone)

Julia, it's me.

JULIA

Jake?

Julia turns around to look at Michael, as he looks over from the table, with a curious expression on his face.

JULIA

(cont.)

Jake, I'm sorry I haven't seen you in awhile. How are you doing?

119 INT. BEACH HOUSE

Jake is curled up in a blanket on his couch. He is sweaty and looks dirty and sick.

JAKE

I need to see you. I'm not doing very well.
AT JULIA'S HOUSE. Julia looks hesitant for a second.

JULIA
Okay, I'll be there soon.

She hangs up the phone and slowly turns around to face her husband, who is still sitting at the dinner table.

MICHAEL
Do you have to go?

She slowly nods her head.

JULIA
Yeah, he's not doing very well. Michael I --

MICHAEL
It's okay. I understand.

He smiles lightly. She smiles, glad that he understands, and bends down to kiss him.

JULIA
Thank you for understanding.

DISSOLVE TO:

120 INT. BEACH HOUSE - NIGHT

Julia opens the front door and walks right in. She surveys the room, and sees the new assortment of paintings on the walls. She then sees him curled up on the couch and runs over to his side.

JULIA
Jake, you look terrible! What can I do for you?

JAKE
(between coughs)
Just be with me.

She sits on the edge of the couch, and he takes her hand and clutches it. She looks sad as she looks down at their hands intertwined with his. PAN from their hands to his face. He looks up at her with sad eyes. Julia shakes her head as tears fall from her face.

JULIA
Jake --
JAKE
Shhhh......don’t feel sorry for me. Please.

She nods her head and is silent for a beat.

JULIA
Jake, you would be proud of me. I got tested a few days ago.

He looks up at her and smiles through his pain.

JAKE
You did?

JULIA
Yeah, I finally went in. I should know the results in a few days.

Jake nods his head.

JAKE
Whatever the results are, be strong. For your family, and for me.

JULIA
I will. I’m learning how to be.

He nods his head and closes his eyes.

DISSOLVE TO:

121 INT. BEACH HOUSE - MORNING

Julia sleeps on Jake’s couch as she slowly stirs awake, hearing sounds of scraping. Jake is up painting another picture. As Julia sees this, she bolts up in the couch.

JULIA
Jake! What are you doing?

He turns around and smiles at her.

JAKE
I feel better today.

JULIA
You feel better? After last night?

JAKE
Yeah, it’s great isn’t it? Now I can go about my business again.

Julia looks shocked.
JAKE
That’s just how the disease works, Julia. One minute you’re almost dead and the next minute you are perfectly fine.

JULIA
Wow. You had me really frightened, Jake.

JAKE
I know. Thank you for staying with me last night. You didn’t have to, but I really appreciate the fact that you did.

Julia smiles. She then looks at her watch.

JULIA
Well, since you are feeling better now, I should probably get going. I promised Spencer I would swim with him today.

JAKE
(smiling)
I wish I could meet your family someday.

JULIA
You will, you will. In fact, I wanted to tell you something. You’re not going to believe it.

JAKE
What?

JULIA
Well, the work that I’ve done here.... I’m going to submit it.....to a gallery downtown.

JAKE
Julia, that’s excellent! I’m so proud of you!

JULIA
(smiling proudly)
My mom has been telling me to submit some paintings for a long time. But, until now, I haven’t painted anything for a long time. I would really like you to come. You could meet my kids.....and my husband.

Jake is silent for a beat, thinking to himself.

JULIA
Well?
JAKE
When is it?

JULIA
This Saturday evening. Please say you’ll come. I want you to be there.

JAKE
(nods his head)
Sure, I’ll come. I wouldn’t miss it for anything.

Julia stands up, looking very happy.

JULIA
Great! I’ll call you later to give you all the details.

They smile at each other before she leaves.

DISSOLVE TO:

122 EXT. DOWNTOWN BUILDING - NIGHT

The brick building has a big banner across it that says “New Gallery Opening.”
People dressed in formal attire walk into the building.

123 INT. BUILDING

Julia stand with her husband and a crowd of people, talking and drinking champagne. Julia wears the same red formal dress that she was wearing in the first scene of the movie. The crowd disperses, leaving Julia and Michael with Vanessa. Michael wears a tux as Vanessa wears an extremely low cut black dress.

VANESSA
Great party, Jules!

JULIA
Yeah, I know. You should tell my mom that later. She’d be delighted to hear that. She organized this whole event, ya’know.

Vanessa smiles at her best friend.

VANESSA
I can’t begin to tell you how nice it is to have the old Jules back.

Julia smiles.

JULIA
I can’t believe the test came back negative.
VANESSA
It didn’t surprise me for one minute. I knew that you were all right. You worried all that time for nothing.

JULIA
(nodding her head)
But, in a way, it makes me appreciate everything so much more now. For awhile, it was almost like I had AIDS, too. And now that I know for sure that I don’t, I have a new appreciation for life, for living. And I’ll never forget what it felt like before.

Vanessa nods in understanding. She then catches sight of an attract man looking at some of the paintings on the nearby wall by himself. Her eyes widen.

VANESSA
I think it’s time to mingle!

Michael and Julia laugh as Vanessa walks off to make her move. All alone for the first time that evening, Michael hugs his wife.

MICHAEL
This is wonderful, honey, I’m so proud of you.

JULIA
Thank you, Michael.

MICHAEL
Now, we can truly get on with our lives.

She steps back looking worried, showing him that it’s not all over yet.

JULIA
(worried)
I just wonder why Jake isn’t here. He promised me that he’d come. I even called him today and he said he was feeling great and was still planning on coming.

MICHAEL
I’m sure he will. Maybe he’s in traffic right now. Don’t worry, dear, he’ll come.

Before she can say anything else, Julia’s parents walk over with Mr. Alvarez by their side. Mrs. Whitfield hugs her daughter immediately.

MRS. WHITFIELD
Darling, your work is fabulous. Everyone’s been asking me about them. They’ve been asking about prices!
JULIA

Oh, mom!

Mr. Whitfield hugs his daughter.

MR. WHITFIELD

They really are wonderful, Julia. It looks like you've tried some new styles.

JULIA

Yeah, I have in fact.

MR. ALVAREZ

Well, I'm just glad that your mother finally convinced you to submit some of your work.

Julia and Mrs. Whitfield smiled at each other.

MRS. WHITFIELD

In the end, she really didn't need any convincing.

MR. ALVAREZ

Well, I think I can safely say that the opening is a hit. And I owe it to the mother and daughter duo with their wonderful contributions. Cheers!

All five toast with their champagne glasses. A WOMAN walks up to Julia with a phone.

WOMAN

Excuse me, ma'am, are you Julia Donovan?

JULIA

(looking concerned)

Yes I am.

WOMAN

You have a call.

Julia takes the phone and immediately looks panicked.

JULIA

Hello? (a beat) Oh my God!

She hands the phone to Mr. Alvarez and looks bewildered.

MICHAEL

What is it? The kids?
JULIA
No, Jake’s in the hospital!

MICHAEL
Okay, let’s go!

They run out of the gallery, leaving Mr. and Mrs. Whitfield and Mr. Alvarez looking confused.

CUT TO:

124 EXT. CAR - NIGHT
It is raining outside as Julia in Michael, in their car, pull up to the emergency room. Julia jumps out of the car, her arms circling her because of the chill in the air.

MICHAEL
I’ll meet you in there.

She nods her head quickly.

MICHAEL
Here, wear this so you won’t get wet.

He takes off his jacket and hands it to her. She smiles, drapes it over her shoulders and runs in the hospital. Michael takes off in his car to find a parking space.

CUT TO:

125 INT. HOSPITAL

From Jake’s point of view, he is being rushed in through the doors into the hospital. He is lying in bed and can just barely see Julia running towards him.

JULIA
What’s going on? What’s happening?

Jake shakes his head, trying to talk. However, the doctors hover over him. They block his view of Julia as he wiggles around in the stretcher, trying to catch a glimpse of her.

DOCTOR 1
Can you get a pulse?

DOCTOR 2
Yes, but his heart rate is slowing down. He’s breathing is sporadic.
JULIA
Can someone tell me what’s going on? Please!

Jake struggles to say something to Julia, but since he can’t manage to, he stretches out his hand to Julia, who runs alongside the emergency team.

JAKE
(weakly)
Julia.

Julia, still running along with the emergency team, puts her hand over her mouth.

JULIA
Oh, God!

Suddenly, Jake can’t see Julia anymore as the emergency team moves him through some different doors.

126 IN THE HALLWAY, Julia stands alone, looking sad and leaning against the wall. She looks bewildered and confused. Suddenly, Michael runs up to her.

MICHAEL
Where is he?

JULIA
They just took him into the emergency room.

She looks as if she is going to cry.

MICHAEL
Oh, Julia.

He hugs her tightly.

DISSOLVE TO:

127 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Julia slowly walks into Jake’s room with Michael behind her. Jake looks terrible. He has tubes running in and out of his body everywhere. He is also on a machine to help him breathe. He looks very weak, barely able to keep his eyes open as he sees Julia. He tries to smile at her. Julia takes a minute to collect herself. She tries not to get too emotional, she doesn’t want to make things worse for Jake.

JULIA
Jake, how are you doing? Stupid question, huh?

Jake tries to smile, nodding his head.
JULIA

This is my husband, Michael.

She motions to Michael as he steps up closer to the bed. Michael smiles, but he looks very uncomfortable. He is finally meeting the infamous Jake, but it is unfortunate circumstances.

MICHAEL

(whispering to Julia)
I’ll leave you alone, honey. I’ll go call on the kids and see how they’re doing.

Julia nods her head in agreement as Michael slips out of the room. She takes Jake’s hand into hers. Tears fall down from her face. Music bed starts.

JULIA

Jake, I don’t know what to say.

JAKE

You don’t have to say anything.

JULIA

Do you think it’s time?

He nods his head.

JULIA

It’s too early.

JAKE

No, it’s just the right time.

JULIA

Jake, I don’t have AIDS. I found out early today. My result was negative.

Tears of happiness fall from Jake’s eyes.

JAKE

(choked up from crying)
That’s the only thing left in the world that I wanted to hear. Thank God. Now you can go on with your life now.

She nods her head, tears of happiness and sorrow running down her face.

JAKE

I’ll always love you, Julia Whitfield. Always.
Crying, she bends down to hug him.

DISSOLVE TO:

128 EXT. CEMETARY

A crowd of people dressed in black circle around the freshly dug grave as the minister speaks. Feature in on Julia, standing with Spencer and Michael (who is holding Emma). She has already shed her tears, as she stands looking sorrowful and in peace. Music bed ends.

DISSOLVE TO:

141 INT. BEACH HOUSE

Michael and Julia walk into Jake’s house. The slowly survey the main room.

MICHAEL
Did you want to take any of these paintings?

JULIA
Yes. I think we should do something special with them. We should give them to an AIDS charity auction or something that would benefit AIDS research and the memory of Jake.

Michael nods his head, gathering up some of the paintings. Julia walks over to the back corner of the room. The secret painting that Jake wanted to surprise Julia with is still covered in a white sheet. Julia slowly approaches it, almost afraid to uncover it. She slowly lifts the sheet and gasps at the scene. Michael looks up from across the room.

JULIA
Michael, come here.

Feature in on the painting. A man and a woman sit on a beach with a little boy and an baby. It is night in the picture and there are stars in the sky. An angel is painted into the sky, looking down on them. Tilt down to the signature in the corner. “I will be your guardian angel now. Love always, Jake.”

JULIA
Oh, God.

Julia, covers her mouth with her hand as a tear runs down her face.

JULIA
It’s our family, Michael.

He looks down at the painting and nods his head. He looks at his wife and smiles.
This one....we'll keep.

They smile at each other and hug.

FADE TO BLACK.