

THE EVERYDAY ELLIOTS

Written by

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Based on

Persuasion by Jane Austen

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EXT. NORTHERN CALIFORNIA HOUSE

ANNE ELLIOT, 26, heaves a suitcase into an older, beaten-up SUV. Her roommate, DIYA, same age, Indian, comes outside while carrying a chili plant.

ANNE

That's the last of it.

DIYA

If Don Verde dies, it's your fault for trusting me with such a delicate and complex life form.

ANNE

I'll take him with me if you're serious.

DIYA

Joking, Anne. Joking. A future geriatric physician of America should be able to handle a chili plant.

They hug.

ANNE

Good luck this summer. Call me if you need anything, Diya.

DIYA

It's you who needs some luck.

ANNE

It's just home.

An alarm goes off on Anne's phone. She turns it off.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Gotta go.

Diya waves from the sidewalk as Anne pulls away.

EXT. CALIFORNIA ROAD

The car travels along the highway.

ANNE (V.O.)

This is the story of the summer break that changed everything: the break before my residency, when I made the crazy mistake of going home to help with the failing Elliot family finances.

INT. HUNTINGTON BEACH - KELLYNCH - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

A group of pretty people sit around a conference table in a sleek office, dressed to the nines in to-the-moment fashion. On one wall, a metal sign reads "Kellynch Financial." JOHN CLAY, 60s, sits at the front of the table.

A group of elderly, suited professionals enter the room and sit around the pretty people.

ELIZABETH ELLIOT, 30s, in the oversized sunglasses of a Hollywood hopeful, lounges in a chair, chewing gum.

ANNE (V.O.)

My family. First up: Elizabeth. Older sister. Third-rate model and wannabe actress.

Everyone in the room seems to be waiting on something; John stands up to quiet the room.

ELIZABETH

Well, if you've got something to say about mommy's company, you'd better get on with it. Is it the trusts?

JOHN

It's--

WALTER ELLIOT, a tan, good-looking but plasticine man in his 50s, bursts into the room. He wears all white and has a ridiculous, 90s hairstyle. An ATTENDANT follows him.

WALTER

Well, here I am, John. There was such a to-do at the rehearsals, you wouldn't believe it.

ANNE (V.O.)

Father: Walter Elliot. Yes, that Walter Elliot. But avoid using the words 'washed up' around him.

He takes off the sunglasses and hands them to the attendant, who goes to pull out a chair for him.

JOHN

Yes, well we were hoping to get started--

WALTER

Oh, Elizabeth, your skin! You're glowing!

They kiss each cheek in an affected European style.

ELIZABETH

It's the cleanse, daddy. Ghost chilies in water with vinegar and cod oil. Three times daily.

Walter snaps his fingers. The attendant comes closer.

WALTER

Write that down. I just have to try it.

Across from Elizabeth and Walter, Anne grimaces. She's dressed much more professionally than her family members.

ANNE (V.O.)

Me, obviously. I'm just a med student.

ANNE

Hi, dad.

Walter looks her over.

WALTER

Oh, Anne. Yes. Let's get on with the meeting, then.

He takes a seat by Elizabeth.

ANNE (V.O.)

I also have a younger sister, Mary. But we'll get to her later.

Elizabeth, already bored, pulls out her smartphone.

JOHN

Thank you, Walter. As you and the members of the board know, Kellynch has been in decline since the passing of our founder and your late wife nearly twelve years ago.

(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)

The recent economy has turned this decline into outright disaster.

WALTER

Please, John, leave the drama to the professionals.

John glares at Walter.

LAURA RUSSELL, 50s, elegant, leans back in her chair.

LAURA

Walter, let's hear what he has to say.

ANNE (V.O.)

Laura Russell, unofficial pseudo-aunt and mom's close friend. Sort of a surrogate mother to all of us.

JOHN

I'll keep it simple: we owe money. More than we can possibly pay off. Unless you all can agree to forgo dividends for the year and approve a new CEO to actively change Kellynch's direction, this company will go bankrupt.

A murmur of shock goes around the room.

ELIZABETH

No dividends? But, daddy?

WALTER

Absurd!

JOHN

We'll all have to make sacrifices until we are back in the black.

Elizabeth pouts.

JOHN (CONT'D)

As for the CEO, we've brought several candidates to this board's attention without any success.

WALTER

I won't have some gauche pantsuit running this company. I have a reputation to uphold.

(MORE)

WALTER (CONT'D)

You don't land roles on *Medical
Emergency*, season seven,
associating with those people.

Elizabeth nods at this, with respect. Anne grimaces.

JOHN

With all due respect, Walter, if
you don't compromise, there won't
be any company left to run. We've
had a very good offer, as I
mentioned in the email.

WALTER

(melodramatically)

My poor wife! To see her legacy
ruined! I cannot think of a single
time this company has taken
unnecessary risks... I'm sure I
speak for the whole board when I
say that we all live and work
simply and frugally. Our humble
dividends speak to that. We're
practically Amish -- each and every
one of us.

John hangs on to the last of his patience, jaw clenched.
Walter drops the melodrama.

WALTER (CONT'D)

My point is, why rush this? Let's
take our time, see who else we can
find. A good fit. One that Kellynch
can be proud of.

JOHN

I understand your concerns, Walter,
but don't underestimate the
importance of timing on this. We
owe it to ourselves -- and to your
late wife -- to act now. Sophia
Croft is a fantastic candidate.
With a match like that -- you don't
want to miss out, that's for sure.

Walter folds his arms petulantly. Anne snaps to attention.

ANNE

Sorry, did you say Sophia Croft? Of
Croft and Mariner?

JOHN

That's right, Anne. She's willing to consider an acquisition, and it's an offer we have to take seriously.

Anne zones out, a flush climbing her cheeks. We hear her heart pumping for a moment and then we're thrown into a memory...

EXT. STANFORD - QUAD - SEVEN YEARS AGO

A young man, ALEX WENTWORTH, 23, sexy in a computer nerd way, sits on the grass on a sunny day. He's speaking, smiling, but we don't hear him; Anne is too focused on his hands, on the curve of his face.

ANNE (V.O.)

Alex Wentworth. Sophia Croft's brother. My fiancée. Ex-fiancée.

INT. KELLYNCH CONFERENCE ROOM

JOHN

Anne?

Anne jumps back to attention. Everyone's staring at her.

LAURA

Your vote, Anne?

ANNE

Right. Yes.

JOHN

In favor?

ANNE

(false confidence)
A--Assuredly.

JOHN

That settles it, then. I'll speak with Sophia Croft to begin the process. Thank you, everyone.

Everyone gets up and makes their way to the door. Anne stays seated.

ANNE (V.O.)

Oh. No. I just voted for her. His sister. She's going to be here. Is he going to be here?

Laura puts a hand on Anne's shoulder. She jumps.

LAURA

Don't take it too hard, Anne. At least Kellynch is still here. Your mom would be proud of that, even if you had to make the hard decision.

ANNE

(unfocused)
Of course.

Walter comes over.

WALTER

Come on, Elizabeth. We're off to bigger and better things. Anne, lets hope your little vote doesn't come back to haunt you.

Elizabeth grabs Walter's hand and holds it in solidarity.

ELIZABETH

Be strong. Think of the future. Envision the lights -- the photographers!

Elizabeth leans over to Anne.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

We're working on a new show, "The Everyday Elliots." Like the title? It's supposed to make us relatable. And it's so clever.

ANNE

Is it, though?

LAURA

I for one am excited to see you two pushing yourselves on this show. Couldn't be prouder. I'm in a few episodes, of course.

Walter pulls out his smartphone and turns the camera on himself -- using it as a mirror to fuss with his hair.

WALTER

It's going to take reality by storm. We're moving to Beverly Hills to shoot; the house is so beautiful it'd make a man with less regular beauty in his life speechless.

ELIZABETH

(to Anne)

You know John's daughter, Penelope Clay?

Walter takes a selfie with Elizabeth. The attendant claps.

ANNE

Vaguely.

WALTER

Not a bad looker, though you wouldn't guess from dear old dad.

Anne shoots a concerned and slightly disgusted glance towards Laura.

ELIZABETH

Well, we're having Penelope play you. Since you're doing the doctor thing -- though we're still looking for a stand-in. Child labor laws.

LAURA

Ah. Just how old is she?

ELIZABETH

Don't worry, she's gorgeous. Looks like she's sixteen. Or maybe even younger!

ANNE

What about Mary?

ELIZABETH

(incredulously)

Mary? There's no need for her to be in the show. There's enough of us already!

WALTER

Even if we asked, her health couldn't stand up to it.

(to Anne)

(MORE)

WALTER (CONT'D)

That reminds me, Mary's just texted to say she's sick again. Be a good girl and stay with her this summer?

ANNE

Don't worry about me. I can take care of the house while you're filming.

ELIZABETH

Oh, but we're renting it out. Any sacrifice for the sake of art; we're co-producing the show. So there's really no space for you outside of Mary's house. If you stay with us, you'd have to sign a contract. Plus, she's the only one who needs you.

ANNE

(unhappily)

I see.

EXT. MARY'S HOUSE - HUNTINGTON BEACH - DAY

An older SUV pulls up to Mary's house, which is an exercise in grandiose Mediterranean architecture.

Anne lugs a suitcase out of the car. A large, very muscular man, CHARLIE MENDOZA, late 30s, Hispanic, picks the suitcase up with ease.

CHARLIE

Need some help with that?

ANNE

Charlie!

They half-hug.

ANNE (V.O.)

Charlie Mendoza, former pro runningback. Current purveyor of Mendoza's Mustangs, and my brother-in-law.

CHARLIE

Come in. Mary keeps asking for you.

Anne follows inside.

INT. MARY'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM

The interior of the house matches the exterior: large, overstuffed. MARY MENDOZA, all of 24, lounges luxuriously in her over-the-top king-sized bed with a rag on her face.

She moans when Anne enters.

MARY

Charlie, I don't think I'll ever recover. I'm sure it's brain cancer. I read all about it online.

ANNE

Brain cancer? Now that's very serious.

Mary takes the rag off her face, surprised.

MARY

Anne! I'm so glad you're here. Nobody will take my illness seriously. Charlie actually said to me that I should take an aspirin. Like that poison isn't what's probably caused my condition!

ANNE (V.O.)

My younger sister, Mary. Professional hypochondriac, self-declared naturopathic connoisseur, owner of over 200 pairs of shoes.

Anne puts her hand on Mary's forehead.

MARY

Charlie told me to go to the doctor, but I said, no, I want Anne -- even if I have to wait. You really have to hold out for what you want sometimes. It's the only way to achieve a healthy emotional balance.

ANNE

Well, you don't feel hot. I guess you won't make it to dinner?

MARY

No, my head just aches. Fetch me some organic ginger ale, will you? The diet kind; I wouldn't want the calories.

ANNE

Poor thing. We were going to head to that new hot restaurant. The one all the stars go to.

Mary sits up.

MARY

Blue Slipper Number 5? Tonight?

ANNE

That's it.

MARY

It'd be a shame for me not to come, don't you think? As a doctor?

ANNE

You know I'm not a doctor yet.

MARY

Close enough. I have to eat, in my frail condition. For strength.

ANNE

(dotingly)

Only if you think you can manage it.

Mary nods effusively.

INT. BLUE SLIPPER NO. 5 - EVENING

Mary, dressed to the nines, sits next to Charlie and across from Anne in a super-posh, busy restaurant.

A waiter puts a plate down in front of Anne with a tiny portion of food/foam/wood.

WAITER

The edible wood with maple foam, and the apricot caviar.

Mary nods, and the waiter puts a spoon filled with orange bubbles in front of her.

MARY

Anne, you won't believe who Charlie met the other day at work. Go on Charlie, tell her who you met.

Anne nibbles at the wood awkwardly, attempting to cut it with her butter knife.

CHARLIE

You mean--

Anne gives up on the wood and shoves it in her mouth all at once.

MARY

That's right. Admiral Croft, Sophia Croft's husband. The one taking over Kellynch. I would have come to the meeting, but in my state... You know, the Admiral very well-known. Lots of connections in the industry.

ANNE

(muffled, by food)
Finance?

Mary looks at Anne incredulously. Anne chugs water.

MARY

Don't be ridiculous. The only industry that matters. Hollywood.

CHARLIE

He came in looking for a Mustang and I said, that's the name of the game here at Mendoza's Mustangs.

MARY

And you won't believe what else he said.

Anne manages to swallow.

ANNE

I probably won't.

CHARLIE

They're moving to the neighborhood.

MARY

It looks like they'll be renting out a house just down the street. On the better side of the street, of course. I'm always telling Charlie that side's better. The light, you know.

Mary laughs a terrible, embarrassing laugh at nothing.

CHARLIE

It's less than five minutes down the road.

MARY

Charlie, what do you think? Should we invite them? To the party, I mean?

ANNE

Party?

MARY

This weekend. It's Ox's fourth, you know. We're the principle shareholders -- why wouldn't they want to meet us?

ANNE (V.O.)

My sister named her sons 'Axe' and 'Ox.' That's the unforgivable truth.

MARY

We're having a big thing - Charlie's sisters will be coming to visit, and, of course, the Señor and Señora Mendoza will be there. You're coming, aren't you?

ANNE

Sure. It'll be at the house?

MARY

Yes and no. It's such a special day. We really wanted to remember it -- so we're going parasailing!

ANNE

For his fourth birthday?!

Anne struggles to keep a neutral expression.

MARY

Well Ox won't be parasailing, of course. He's too small. But he can join us on the boat. Afterwards we're having a little get together at the house, open the presents and all that. I'm sure the Crofts will have a great time.

ANNE

Maybe we shouldn't bother them. You know, since they're probably tired from the move--

MARY

You can be so un-neighborly. What do you think, dear?

CHARLIE

The more the merrier. But make it three invitations. The Admiral and his wife, and the brother. He's staying with them, something about looking for a house in the area. Had his eyes on that '71 'stang. Good taste.

ANNE

Brother? The Admiral's brother?

Charlie shrugs.

CHARLIE

Must have been.

Anne seems relieved.

ANNE

So, what do you think Ox wants for his birthday?

Mary and Charlie share a glance.

I/E. MARY'S HOUSE - DAY

Anne hauls a large, heavy box through the house and into the backyard. She sets to work opening it up, only to cut her finger.

Anne sets into the house, returning with scissors. She struggles on the edges and corners; the heavily taped up box fights against her.

Once it's finally open, Anne pulls out the metal and mesh of a trampoline, along with an assembly guide.

She flips through the assembly guide, which is made up of only pictures.

ANNE
 (to herself)
 Okay, Anne. You can do this. You
 practically have a medical degree.

EXT. MARY'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - LATER

The frame of the trampoline is set up. Anne starts connecting all the springs.

ANNE
 (to herself)
 Now we just put the springs on, and
 I will be the best aunt ever. Ox
 will be so happy someone's keeping
 everything held together.

As she says this, she's connected too many springs on one side of the trampoline. She goes to even it out. Snap! The trampoline frame collapses from the strain.

Anne stares forlornly at the mess. She starts again.

INT. MARY'S HOUSE - LATER

Anne, clearly worn out, walks into the kitchen. Outside, the fully set-up trampoline sits in the backyard.

Mary drinks a glass of strange liquid in the kitchen. She's surrounded by sticky notes and a yellow writing pad.

MARY
 Anne, have you tried this skin
 detox? Cod oil and ghost peppers? I
 think it's rectifying my condition.
 You know how my gut leaks when I
 eat gluten.

ANNE
 (catching her breath)
 I finally finished the trampoline.
 It's really more of a two person
 job.

MARY
 I'm sure the boys will be so
 excited. You look terrible, you
 know. Try some of this.

Mary gestures to her glass and swallows the drink. For a moment it looks as though she's going to spit it out, but she keeps it down and forces a smile.

MARY (CONT'D)
Quenches the thirst.

Anne frowns.

ANNE
What's with the notes?

MARY
Just a few final party details.

Anne examines a sticky.

ANNE
(reading)
Flame dancers enter at four pm.

MARY
Do you think that's too early?

ANNE
I'm sure it's fine.

Anne picks up the writing pad.

MARY
That's the guest list. I want everything to go smoothly for the Menozas; you know how the Señor nitpicks. They'll be staying in the guest house, and they're bringing their daughters.

Anne nods and continues reading the list. She hitches when she sees "Admiral and Sophia Croft" written.

ANNE
(flatly)
So the Crofts are coming after all.

MARY
I need everything to go just right tomorrow. This whole party is going to be perfect.

Anne looks it over again.

ANNE
I don't see Admiral Croft's brother on here.

MARY
It's alphabetical. Look under W.
Alex Wentworth.

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

It's not a loss after all -- he's very rich. Founded that app everyone's crazy about.

ANNE

Bafflegab.

MARY

That's it! With the messaging and everything. I saw him on the news, you know. High profile.

ANNE

He's Sophia's brother, not the Admiral's.

Mary leans in confidentially.

MARY

Apparently, he just broke up with some tramp model he was dating... Perhaps one of the Mendoza girls will win his heart while he's here?

Anne is distraught.

ANNE

I have to go.

Anne flees.

MARY

But, Anne? Aren't you going to help me?

Mary pouts and looks over the sticky notes.

INT. BATHROOM

Anne leans over a sink, breathing heavily. Her eyes are puffy. She splashes some water on her face.

ANNE

(to the mirror)

Get it together, Anne. It's been seven years.

Anne approaches the door. She stops short, instead grabbing her phone and dialing.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Diya, hi. It's me. It's about Alex. Maybe I can take you up on that extra room? I don't know. Just call me.

She hangs up and looks again in the mirror.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Anne sleeps. Footsteps come thundering down the hall. Charlie bursts in.

CHARLIE

It's Axe -- Come quick!

Anne jumps out of bed in a ratty T-shirt and shorts. She dashes downstairs.

EXT. BACKYARD - MORNING

Anne runs into the backyard, where Mary and Ox crowd around Axe. Axe lies on the grass near the trampoline, cradling his arm and crying.

MARY

Anne!

Anne hurries to his side.

ANNE

Give him some space. Charlie, go start the car. It's going to be okay, Axe.

Charlie goes.

MARY

Is it broken?

ANNE

Axe, can you tell me how many fingers I'm holding up?

Anne holds up three fingers.

AXE

Three.

MARY

My baby! Oh! I think I might faint.
This is stressing my lower
intestine!

ANNE

(sharply)

Then get out of the way.

Mary seems surprised but moves away from her son.

Anne shines a phone flashlight in Axe's eyes.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Do you remember falling?

AXE

I was playing.

ANNE

Where does it hurt?

Axe lets go of his arm, which is swollen, white and blue.

ANNE (CONT'D)

It looks broken. I'm going to pick
you up now, okay?

AXE

Okay.

Anne picks up Axe and carries him into the front of the
house, where Charlie is waiting in a luxury SUV.

Mary follows, looking lost in the driveway.

ANNE

Mary, stay here and take care of
Ox. Axe will be okay.

Anne slams the door shut. The car speeds out of the driveway.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - DAY

Charlie and Anne sit in the emergency room. Charlie seems
nervous. Anne suddenly takes stock of her clothing: ratty
pjs, messy hair, smudged makeup from the day before.

Charlie taps his fingers on the arm of the chair annoyingly.

A male nurse approaches them.

NURSE
Mr. and Mrs. Mendoza?

ANNE
Actually--

CHARLIE
We're Axe's family.

Anne stands back, letting Charlie, who pure, genuine concern, take the reigns.

NURSE
Axe's arm fractured in multiple places. We could send him home today, but we'd like to keep him overnight for observation. Just as a precaution.

CHARLIE
But he will be okay? It'll heal?

NURSE
In a few months, yes.

CHARLIE
Thank God. Oh -- but I'll have to call off the party. Mary will be crushed.

ANNE
It's too late.

CHARLIE
We won't get our deposit back, but what else can we do? No -- either it's off, or, perhaps Mary could stay. Then I can talk with the Crofts, get them to buy that car.

Charlie dials. It rings several times.

ANNE
I'll stay. I may as well.

CHARLIE
We couldn't--

ANNE
It's the only option that makes sense -- after all, I'm in medical school, and Mary and Ox need you.

CHARLIE

Thank you, Anne.

ANNE

Don't mention it. Have fun at the party.

CHARLIE

No, I mean it. I know you and I didn't work out, but I'm really thankful that you're here now. You keep the family running.

Unused to praise, Anne smiles.

ANNE

Go take care of them.

Charlie pats her on the shoulder a little awkwardly, and then leaves.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Axe sleeps with a cast on his arm. A TV blares the news in the background. Anne sits in a chair at his side, staring off into the distance.

She focuses on inhaline. Exhaling.

ANNE (V.O.)

Right now, at this exact moment, Alex Wentworth is at my sister's house. They're opening presents and eating cake. And he either hates me or -- worse -- he's forgotten me entirely.

EXT. STANFORD - QUAD - SIX YEARS AGO

Golden light filters through the palms as ANNE, 19, lies on her stomach in the grass, reading a textbook.

Alex sits next to her, watching a group of summer-dressed students rush into a building.

Alex picks grass off the hem of Anne's skirt. Anne taps her fingers on the book.

ALEX

Worried?

ANNE
It's a third of the grade.

ALEX
But you know the material.

Alex playfully grabs the book.

ALEX (CONT'D)
Here, I'll test you. What's the
third law of thermodynamics?

ANNE
(effortlessly)
The entropy of a perfect crystal is
zero when its temperature is
absolute zero.

ALEX
And I thought programming was bad.
Come on, Anne, you're going to ace
the chem final, and in three years
med schools will be fighting over
you. But we only have two weeks
'till I head south for the job.
Let's do something fun.

ANNE
Such as?

A smirk edges across Alex's face.

ALEX
Let's get married.

Anne half-laughs, but then sits up, serious.

ANNE
Is that a joke?

Alex digs in his pocket. He pulls out a ring box with a
plastic ring inside and shifts onto his knee.

ALEX
Anne Elliot, I've never loved
anyone in the world so much as I've
loved you. I can't bear leaving
you. Not for a job, not for
anything. I can't.

Anne is surprised, confused, and delighted all in one.

ANNE
Alex...

ALEX

I know it's not much -- but, Anne,
will you marry me?

Anne springs to hug him, the tears already streaking down her cheeks.

ANNE

Of course!

They kiss. They open their eyes, faces close, something electric and pure between them.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Anne jumps; her phone buzzes in her pocket. She pulls it out to see that Diya is calling.

ANNE

Diya?

DIYA (V.O.)

I got your message. Tell me everything. I heard Croft & Mariner is taking over Kellynch?

ANNE

How did you hear that?

DIYA (V.O.)

Are you kidding? Entertainment news, obviously. They're having a field day with "The Everyday Elliots." It's always on in the hospice unit. Is it true they're filming 24 hours a day, no breaks?

ANNE

Don't know, don't want to know. Listen, Alex is at Mary's house right now for my nephew's birthday party.

DIYA (V.O.)

Wait, what? Why?

ANNE

His sister just moved to the neighborhood, and they're all going parasailing to celebrate my nephew's fourth birthday.

(under her breath)

(MORE)

ANNE (CONT'D)

There's a sentence I never thought I'd say.

DIYA (V.O.)

How could Mary do this -- surely she knows?

ANNE

No -- only dad and Elizabeth know. But that doesn't matter; it's Mary's new life goal to befriend the Crofts. You know her; she's unstoppable when she wants something. Like a lion hunting an antelope.

DIYA (V.O.)

Get out of there -- I never understood why you went in the first place, the way they treat you.

ANNE

They need me.

DIYA (V.O.)

Do they?

ANNE

My nephew just broke his arm. My sister is convinced she has brain cancer. I'm pretty sure my dad is hitting on a high schooler. What do you think?

DIYA (V.O.)

Well, my couch is open all summer if you change your mind.

ANNE

I think it's the right thing to do. It's what mom would want. Even if he hates me.

DIYA (V.O.)

Don't tell me that somewhere in the back of your head you think this is going to work out.

Anne pauses, fiddling with the edge of the bed.

ANNE

No, I know. I had my chance.

DIYA (V.O.)

Listen, call me if you need me. I'm sure the Alex thing will blow over. He'll fly off to Bali to go surfing with hand models or something.

ANNE

I sure hope so.

EXT. MARY'S HOUSE - MORNING

An exhausted Anne gets out of a taxi. Axe scoots out behind her, his arm in a fresh, brightly-colored cast.

INT. MARY'S HOUSE

Anne opens the front door.

ANNE

We're home!

Mary comes running.

MARY

My darling!

She scoops up Axe dramatically and carries him into the large kitchen/living room area, where the whole family sits around the breakfast table: SR. AND SRA. MENDOZA (50s, elegant), and their daughters LUISA (tall, thin, 20) and JULIA (tall, thin, 23), plus Ox. Charlie cooks at the stove.

Behind them, a crew cleans up the staging in the backyard. Anne follows Mary in.

MARY (CONT'D)

It was such a wonderful party. There's some cake left over, if you like.

She motions to what is essentially a half-eaten wedding cake that's lavishly decorated like a parasail.

CHARLIE

The eggs are almost finished.

Luisa and Julia jump up to talk with Anne.

LUISA

Anne! It's so good to see you!

ANNE

Luisa!

She hugs Luisa.

ANNE (CONT'D)

And Julia!

She hugs Julia.

JULIA

I haven't seen you since - was it
Stanford graduation? How's medical
school?

ANNE

Exhausting. But I'll be finished in
a year.

Señor and Señora Mendoza come over. The Señor kisses Anne on
the hand, formally, and Señora Mendoza kisses Anne on the
cheek.

SEÑOR MENDOZA

Anne, savior of our little
grandson!

ANNE

Señor Mendoza!

SEÑORA MENDOZA

Welcome back, querida. You have
done us a great service. Eat, eat!

ANNE

It was really nothing, Señora.

SEÑORA MENDOZA

I'm sorry to hear about your
family's company. If only your
mother --

ANNE

Yes, but Kellynch will turn around.
We needed fresh faces.

LUISA

Speaking of -- we have so much to
tell you about last night. It was
absolutely incredible.

Anne takes a seat; Charlie puts a huge platter of eggs down
in the center of the table.

CHARLIE
Dig in, everyone.

It gets hectic: everyone filling up plates and talking.

MARY
It went off just perfectly, though the flame dancers were 8 minutes late. Can you imagine it? For the money we're paying them?

CHARLIE
That Admiral Croft's the life of the party. He drove the boat while we were parasailing -- went up to the driver and said, 'sir: I believe I outrank you on this vessel.' It was mutiny!

Charlie passes around a platter of bacon.

JULIA
But, Anne, you should have met Alex Wentworth. He was just -- droolworthy.

LUISA
Keep it in your pants, Julia. You have a boyfriend.

JULIA
Not for long, maybe.

MARY
Well it made me feel better to know the company is in good hands. Plus, Alex really is the most charming, smart--

JULIA
(interrupting)
Incredibly rich, super-hot--

MARY
Those things too, though surely you don't believe that matters to us. I have much more refined tastes -- it's all about character. Integrity.

Julia scoffs.

JULIA
His muscles have incredible
integrity. And his butt!

SEÑORA MENDOZA
Julia!

Charlie's phone rings. He gets up from the table to answer it
in the other room.

CHARLIE (O.S.)
Hello?

Luisa leans in to speak with Anne, almost confidentially.

LUISA
Everyone's saying he's single, too.
You'd love him. I'm already half
way there.

ANNE
Right. I think I should go lay
down. It's been a long few days.

Charlie returns with the phone in his hand. He grasps Mary by
the shoulder.

CHARLIE
(proudly)
Mary, you've done it. That was
Admiral Croft. He enjoyed the party
so much, he insists that we join
him on their sailboat this evening.
We'll get the nanny to stay the
night and everything.

Mary grasps his hand on her shoulder and beams. Anne walks
out of the kitchen.

MARY (O.S.)
Charlie, didn't you say Alex was
going surfing with you?

As Anne reaches the entryway, the doorbell rings. She sees
the form of a person through the privacy glass. Anne opens
the door automatically.

It's Alex. He's no longer the skinny computer nerd of her
memories. He's filled out, and is wearing a wetsuit zipped up
halfway. He's carrying a wrapped package (literally).

They're both frozen, deer in headlights.

INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Anne paces by a window, talking on the phone.

ANNE

Laura, it's not like that. We're happy, I'm trying to tell you that.

LAURA (V.O.)

I'm just concerned you're throwing you life away. You're young, you have a career to pursue. If it's that important to you, why not have a long engagement?

Anne listens, fiddling with the engagement ring on her finger.

EXT. COLLEGE HOUSE - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Anne walks up the path to the door. She slips the ring from her finger and knocks.

Alex answers.

ALEX

Anne!

He comes in close, hands at her waist, but Anne steps back.

ANNE

I'm sorry.

She holds out the ring. Alex looks betrayed.

ALEX

I don't understand.

ANNE

I can't get married to you. Not now. Maybe in a few years, if we could wait--

ALEX

You can't marry me? What, am I not good enough?

ANNE

No--

ALEX

Is it money, then? I know your family--

ANNE

Why would you jump to that? My dad--

Alex snatches the ring.

ALEX

It's about him, then? I should have known. You're supposed to be different from all them. I really thought you were above --

He starts to get upset, and cuts it short. He slams the door shut. Stunned, Anne turns and runs away from the house.

INT. MARY'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

ANNE (V.O.)

Oh shit.

Charlie comes to answer the door.

CHARLIE

Alex! I'll be right there -- time got away from me. I'll be right back.

He notices Anne and Alex staring at each other.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Oh -- this is Anne Elliot. My sister-in-law. Anne, this is Alex Wentworth.

Alex practically reviles at hearing Anne's name, and stands there stiffly.

ALEX

We've met.

CHARLIE

Really, Anne? You never said.

ANNE

(flustered)
It was at school.

CHARLIE

Oh? Well, give me one minute and I'll be ready to go.

Charlie leaves the two of them alone.

ALEX

I heard the kid broke his arm.

He motions to the package.

ALEX (CONT'D)

It's an action figure. It's silly.
I... hope he feels better.

ANNE

Yes.

ANNE (V.O.)

Keep it together. I'm an adult. I
am not a bag of emotional goo. I am-
- oh God, I'm in my PJ's.

Anne swipes at her hair and folds her arms.

Luisa and Julia round the corner.

JULIA

Alex! You're back!

LUISA

Are you and Charlie going surfing?
I've always wanted to learn.

ALEX

Let me teach you -- I'm staying
with my sister until the end of the
week.

LUISA

And then where will you go?

ALEX

To visit a friend. I just sold my
company, so I'm taking a break for
a while.

Julia sidles up to Alex.

JULIA

Really? I love a man who's...
successful.

Anne backs away from the entryway and half-walks, half-runs
upstairs.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Anne hastily shuts the door. She face-plants onto the bed.

ANNE (V.O.)
Has it really been seven years?

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

There's a knock at the door. Anne lies on her bed reading *Persuasion* by Jane Austen.

Luisa lets herself in. She's wearing an over-the-top nautical outfit, all navy and white stripes with coral accents.

LUISA
Wake up Anne, you have to get ready! Oh -- reading?

ANNE
Uh, yeah.

Anne hides the book under the covers.

LUISA
So, what do you think?

Luisa does a little twirl.

LUISA (CONT'D)
Mom and I just bought it today. Do you think Alex will like it?

ANNE
You look... great. I mean, you should dress for you, anyway.

LUISA
Obviously. I know I look fierce, but I look fierce in everything. The question is, does he go for more of a preppy naval pinup girl or, like, a sex lioness?

Anne raises an eyebrow.

LUISA (CONT'D)
Right. I'll ask Mary. Get dressed, okay.

Anne looks through her suitcase and pulls out a wrinkled, simple but classy dress.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

She hangs the dress up and turns the shower on high. She steps into the water and lets it run down her back.

ANNE (V.O.)
Having to see him again for the first time: that's the worst it can get.

Anne puts on the dress and smooths it out in the mirror.

ANNE (V.O.)
After what I did, this is probably what I deserve.

Her reflection looks troubled, tired.

I/E. CAR - AFTERNOON

Anne sits in the back, squeezed between Luisa and Julia, looking out the window. A second car follows.

ANNE
But it's not over yet.

The cars pull up to the harbor.

EXT. HARBOR

Each of the Mendozas climbs aboard the sailboat, which is more of a large, sailing yacht, roughly 50 ft long. ADMIRAL CROFT, a jolly man in his 50s, welcomes everyone aboard with a hearty handshake.

THE ADMIRAL
Welcome aboard! Mary! Charles! And you must be the Señor and Señora.

Anne stands at the back of the line to get on the boat. Alex gives a hand to everyone climbing aboard.

When it comes Anne's turn to get on, Alex moves to untie the ropes.

ANNE (V.O.)
So that's how it's going to be.

Anne awkwardly steps aboard in her heels, gripping the side-railing for dear life. She gets one foot on and takes a deep breath.

The Admiral starts the engine. Anne loses her balance from the jolt. She's about to fall into the water, when Alex grabs her by the arm and pulls her aboard.

ANNE
(surprised)
Thank you.

ALEX
Be more careful.

He walks away, clenching the hand that touched her into a fist.

Anne folds her arms defensively and joins the gaggle of her family. The Admiral takes the wheel and steers the boat from the dock.

ADMIRAL
(shouting)
Good catch, Alex. You must be Anne.

SOPHIA CROFT (late 40s), a classy, corporate-looking woman, offers her hand to Anne.

SOPHIA
I'm Sophia Croft. It's such a pleasure to meet a member of the Kellynch family.

Anne takes her hand rigidly.

ANNE
Wonderful to meet you.

SOPHIA
I have to say -- you're the spitting image of your mother. She was a real inspiration -- I attended a few of her lectures, if you'd believe it. Oh -- Where are my manners? This is Alex Wentworth, my brother.

ANNE
Yes, we met this morning.

SOPHIA
You should've said, Alex.

ALEX
Must have blocked it out.

SOPHIA

And of course, my husband, Admiral
Croft.

ADMIRAL

Just 'The Admiral' is fine, Anne.
We're all friends here. Take a
seat!

The group sails out of the harbor and into the ocean.

EXT. OCEAN SAILING - SUNSET

A SERVER makes the rounds of the party carrying hors
d'oeuvres. Everyone has moved to the front of the boat, and
the sails are up; the ship moves along gently. The coast
twinkles in the background, and the sun sinks towards the
ocean in the west.

Julia grabs food off the server's plate. She's whispering
angrily with Luisa:

JULIA

You always get in the way when he
clearly likes me better. You always
take what I want.

LUISA

At least I'm single!

The Señora walks up to them and puts her hands around each of
them.

SEÑORA MENDOZA

Girls, girls.

The server passes Charlie, the Señor, and the Admiral, who
chat by the wheel.

CHARLIE

Now a Camaro is a fine car, there's
no doubting that -- but there's
something unique -- something red-
blooded and American -- about a
Mustang.

The Admiral nods along with him.

The server keeps walking to the bow, where Sophie, Mary, and
Alex chat. Anne stands near them, not talking so much as
staring off into the horizon.

SOPHIA
 (to waiter)
 Bring out the champagne, will you?

MARY
 Oooh, champagne! Nothing I love
 like a little bubbly. You'll DD for
 us, won't you Anne?

ANNE
 Uh --

Luisa and Julia join them. Anne stands off to the side of
 their little circle. She opens her mouth to speak.

LUISA
 (to Alex)
 Of course she will. Anne doesn't
 really drink. She's too smart for
 frivolous things. But the rest of
 us love to have a little fun.

ALEX
 Is that so?

Anne shifts grumpily in her seat.

The waiter returns with champagne and glasses on a tray. Alex
 pops the champagne open.

Alex puts his arm on the small of Luisa's back, right in
 front of Anne. The server pours.

Luisa giggles and raises her glass.

LUISA
 To all of us here. Together.

They all cheers and drink.

ANNE
 (muttering to server)
 Keep it coming, thanks.

Anne picks up a champagne flute from the tray and guzzles it.

SOPHIA
 I cannot tell you how happy I am to
 have all of you aboard. As
 neighbors, of course, business
 partners, and friends. Anne, Mary,
 I'm so excited to be working with
 Kellynch and to seeing what the
 future brings.

MARY

I'll drink to that!

SOPHIA

And, of course, I'm so happy my baby brother could join. I haven't seen you in ages.

ALEX

I know, the last few years have been crazy. Work--

SOPHIA

(interrupting)

--And that horrible ex-girlfriend of yours. Sorry if I'm bringing her up. But the way she clung to you. Like a disease. I hope some day you'll find a nice girl. Someone kind.

Luisa closes the space between her and Alex.

ALEX

Don't worry, Soph. I'm ready to find someone myself. I've made my fortune, I figure, and, if I'm being honest, it's time to find someone to spend it with.

Alex places a hand on Luisa's ass. Luisa grins.

JULIA

(flirting)

And what would this lucky lady be like? Nice?

ALEX

(serious)

Nice is fine, but most of all she has to be decisive. She should know exactly what she wants.

Anne cringes as Alex shoots a glare her way.

ALEX (CONT'D)

After that, she's got to be independent; there's nothing worse than someone who can't trust their own gut. Especially people who care more about their friends' opinions than their own.

LUISA

I've never understood fickle women.
If I want something, I go straight
for it, no matter what anyone
thinks. Nothing can stop me.

Luisa makes significant eye contact with Alex and smiles her
winningest smile. He moves even closer to her.

JULIA

(bitterly)
I'll drink to that.

Julia drinks alone.

SOPHIA

I'd be happy to meet any new girl
that catches your eye, Alex. Just,
make it better than last time.

ALEX

I've learned my lesson. None of my
exes would make the list. Ever.

SOPHIA

I think that deserves its own
toast. To finding someone new.

Everyone toasts, but Luisa is loudest and most enthusiastic.
Anne barely lifts her glass for the toast, and polishes off
the rest of her drink.

Anne retreats towards the stern of the boat, passing a server
with a tray of tiny desserts. She grabs three and then
snatches the champagne from an ice bucket on her way to the
back.

ANNE (V.O.)

Well, this little slice of hell
can't last forever.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

A phone buzzes in the bed. Anne is a total mess, still in her
clothes from the night before, her hair a windswept and sea-
blown rat's nest.

ANNE

(croaking)
Hello?

MARY (V.O.)

It's terrible, Anne. Just terrible.
My head. I'm sure I'm dying. It's
probably the tannins in the
champagne.

ANNE

Mary. There are no tannins--

MARY (V.O.)

--Charlie says it's just a hangover
but you know it's worse than that.
I think I need an IV. And an MRI.

Anne sighs.

ANNE

You're not joking.

MARY (V.O.)

Do you think you could come pick us
up? It's too bright outside to
walk; my psoriasis will act up, I'm
sure of it. Oh, and bring the kids;
the nanny should have already made
breakfast.

Anne looks around her, confused.

ANNE

I'm at your house. Where are you?

EXT. CROFT'S HOUSE

Anne pulls the SUV up to a tasteful, modern house near the
beach. She rubs her temples and opens the door to the back
seat. She helps Ox and Axe out of the car.

Ox is playing with the action figure that Alex gave to Axe.

AXE

That's mine!

OX

No.

They tussle for it; Anne gets between them and grabs the
action figure for herself.

ANNE

Okay, you two. On your best
behavior. We're going inside to see
your mom and dad.

OX

I'm not going. I want the toy!

Ox attaches himself to Anne's leg. Axe tries to crawl up on Anne to get to the action figure.

ANNE

What are you guys-- hey!

OX

(yelling)

I'm not going I'm not going I'm not going --

ANNE

Both of you quiet down or I'll--

Axe starts hitting Anne in the face with his good hand.

Someone pulls Axe off from Anne. She turns; it's Alex.

ALEX

You look like you could use some help.

Anne's surprise spreads over her whole face. She smiles - blushes; he smiles, holding Axe.

Ox kicks her in the leg, bringing her back to reality.

ANNE

Ow! Ox Henry Mendoza, you little -- you are in so much trouble young man!

Mary comes out the front door of the house like Jackie Kennedy: heavy sunglasses on, a big hat with its brim down low, moderately fabulous.

OX

Mom!

He scampers to her. She scoops him up. Alex puts down Axe, who also runs over to Mary.

MARY

Hi baby! How are my perfect boys?

Anne turns to where Alex was standing.

ANNE

Thank you.

--But Alex has walked away, to the other side of the yard, where he's ostensibly checking the mail.

Anne sighs and gets into the car.

INT. CAR

Anne rubs her temples. Charlie climbs into the back seat.

CHARLIE

Thanks for bringing the car.

ANNE

Mary said she felt terrible, but she sure doesn't look it now.

CHARLIE

It's for my parents, mostly. I think we wore them out. They should be out soon -- and then they're driving the boys back home for a few weeks.

ANNE

Oh, so she's not just parading her children around to the Crofts?

Charlie doesn't get the chance to answer; instead, Mary knocks on the window.

MARY

Anne, do you smell this fresh air? It's incredible! I think it's giving me the strength I've been missing. It must be this house! It's so much closer to the beach.

ANNE

We're only five blocks from where you already live.

MARY

But I'm always telling Charlie we should move further this way. In the same neighborhood, of course.

ANNE

How thoroughly interesting.

MARY

And I just heard that something even more interesting is happening at the shore, Anne.

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

Something you won't be so you about. You'll come with me, won't you? To look after my health?

ANNE

What, right now?

MARY

Of course. And Charlie?

CHARLIE

Yes, dear. Coming.

EXT. HUNTINGTON BEACH PIER - DAY

The trio walk along the pier, the ocean stretching along behind them and people around them flying kites, surfing, and fishing. Mary seems to be looking for something on the shoreline as they walk.

CHARLIE

Those Crofts are good people. They're all so nice. Not enough people are genuinely nice anymore.

MARY

Although Alex was frosty about Anne. When you left all of a sudden, right in the middle of the party -- What were the words he used? 'Completely unrecognizable.'

ANNE

You mean --

MARY

To be fair, The Admiral prompted the question about how you knew each other beforehand.

Anne pales.

MARY (CONT'D)

I can see Alex's point, though... the way you were so set on walking home -- and being alone -- you weren't yourself. You were supposed to drive us home, you know.

ANNE

God, did I embarrass myself?

MARY

No, don't worry about that. Julia's the one who ought to have a little shame, hissing over Alex with Luisa. I'm surprised she stayed with the two of them this morning. Especially after those two...

Mary raises her eyebrows dramatically.

MARY (CONT'D)

...returned to the bedchamber, so to speak.

Mary snort-laughs.

ANNE

Alex and Luisa? Last night?

MARY

She's getting her claws in. If she can keep him around, it'll be worth her time... and not a small step up, either, financially speaking. Though I'd prefer if Julia had him. She's just a hair prettier, don't you think?

CHARLIE

Mary. That's enough. Julia's engaged, and to a good enough man.

MARY

(gleefully)

It is what it is, Charlie, family friend or not. She's stepping down. Plus, I bet Luisa and Alex's wedding will make all the magazines. Imagine it; on a beach or a private island. Do you think he has a private island?

Anne opens her mouth to speak, but Mary cuts her off.

MARY (CONT'D)

Ah! There they are!

Mary points over the edge of the pier to a group of people clustered by the shore.

EXT. HUNTINGTON BEACH - DAY

There's a basically naked female MODEL squirming on the sand, covered in seaweed and smoldering towards a camera crew, plus JULIA'S FIANCEE, late 20s, Hispanic.

EXT. HUNTINGTON BEACH PIER - CONTINUOUS

MARY

Oh my, it's Julia's fiancée, the commercial director you like so much, Charlie. I'd like him much more if he'd switch into something worthwhile. He could be blackballed, if he isn't careful.

ANNE

More worthwhile?

MARY

You know, something that matters to the world, something that makes a difference. Like those superhero films. The big budget ones.

CHARLIE

Do you think it's another swimsuit edition?

Charlie goes over to get a better look.

ANNE

He doesn't seem so bad.

MARY

I really don't care for him -- you know he's dabbled in--

Here Mary looks around her, to see who's listening--

MARY (CONT'D)

--porn. No dedication to art... at least that's what the rumors say. Julia denies all of it. But I did think we'd see Luisa or Alex here.

ANNE

You were just with them all night long. And now you're engineering ways to see them?

MARY

You can hardly fault me for being interested in my own family. Their engagement could be the biggest news in years.

ANNE

Doesn't the bankruptcy of mom's company qualify for that?

MARY

Nonsense. Look, there's Luisa and Alex. Julia too. Told you.

Mary points; the three of them are walking along the beach towards the commercial shoot.

Anne's phone rings. She gestures to it.

ANNE

I'll be right back.

She answers.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Diya, hi.

EXT. HUNTINGTON BEACH - DAY

Mary approaches Luisa, Julia, and Alex, who are all walking on the sand.

MARY

Fancy seeing you here. It's a beautiful day for a walk.

LUISA

We're going to see Julia's fiancée. Aren't we, Julia?

Julia shines a big, bitter smile.

JULIA

Of course. I think we can all agree we're too hungover for this sunshine. And yet here we are.

Julia marches towards the commercial set on her own. Mary turns to Alex.

MARY

I'd follow but I'm not interested in ending up in the tabloids, not with his name next to mine. I very rarely associate with their kind of people. You're nothing if not your reputation, you know.

Mary lets out a nervous laugh.

LUISA

(harshly)

Though you don't end up in any kind of news much, do you? Since you don't really do anything.

Mary's face falls, but she recovers.

MARY

Yes. Well perhaps my future perfume line isn't much on your radar, since it's been delayed for my health. I better be getting on. Where is my husband?

Mary stamps off, away from them.

EXT. HUNTINGTON BEACH PIER - DAY

Anne paces near a few street performers while she takes a call.

DIYA (V.O.)

How is going on a sunset cruise with the fam avoiding Alex Wentworth?

ANNE

What?

DIYA (V.O.)

Someone must have sent photos to the press, because it's all online now.

ANNE

(sighing)

My sister.

DIYA (V.O.)

What are you going to do?

ANNE

Honestly, Diya, I'm going to pretend it isn't happening. I'm hot and very thirsty and slightly nauseated, and I'm going to stick my head down and ostrich my way through this.

DIYA (V.O.)

And get your heart broken? Again?

ANNE

I saw him today. Again. Actually, I'm looking at him right now.

DIYA

You have to get out of there.

ANNE

It's like I said before. I'm needed here.

DIYA

Your family doesn't deserve you, you know. Why do you work so hard for silly, vapid people like them? They treat you like a doormat!

Anne sort of nods to this, but then a flash of hurt spreads across her face.

ANNE

But you don't really get to say that.

DIYA (V.O.)

I'm sorry?

ANNE

(getting upset)

Maybe you don't get it, Diya. Mom's dead. I'm the only one left -- and if not me, then what? You don't get to --

Anne gets choked up.

DIYA (V.O.)

Okay, hey -- I'm sorry. I'm just worried, alright? But you have to get over him. It's okay to think about yourself sometimes.

EXT. HUNTINGTON BEACH - DAY

Anne wanders down from the pier. She sees Luisa from behind, as Luisa conspires with Alex under the pier.

LUISA

She's got that Elliot family pride; sometimes I really wonder if Mary's just racist. If only Charlie'd gotten with Anne when he had the chance.

ALEX

Anne? With Charlie?

Anne stops, hiding herself behind a pier pillar.

LUISA

I guess you wouldn't know. They dated for a while. I think he even proposed - which mom liked, since Anne's the only one of them she can stand. But my theory is that the family friend, Laura Russell, must have convinced Anne to dump him. Mom said she didn't see it anyway. Anne's heart didn't seem in it.

ALEX

Really.

LUISA

It's hard to tell with her -- she's a little vanilla, isn't she? But I swear, Laura never thought Charlie was smart enough for her. Then Anne introduced him to her teen sister Mary and, a flash pregnancy later, the two got hitched. She's the best of them, though. You should meet her other sister.

ALEX

I had no idea.

LUISA

I don't know how she does it. Us Mendozas -- we're made of different stuff than the Elliots. Passion, you know? It doesn't matter what anybody else's opinions are, you can't let anyone push you around about the people you love. I'll push back. Look at Julia.

(MORE)

LUISA (CONT'D)

Most people are a little ashamed to know her boyfriend, with all those rumors about him. But the heart wants what it wants.

ALEX

That's what I like about you.

Anne has flattened herself against the pillar. Her eyes are squeezed shut.

LUISA (O.S.)

Do you know what my heart wants?

ALEX (O.S.)

What's that?

Anne opens her eyes. She peeks around the column to see them getting hot and heavy against another column. Alex opens his eyes as he kisses Luisa's neck, and he makes a flash of eye contact with Anne.

Anne runs away, towards the commercial shoot on the beach.

The sound of a HEARTBEAT becomes louder, and the color suddenly fades from the scene.

Anne slows; the world spins around her; she stops and falls to her knees, slumping over in a faint.

EXT. DARKNESS - CONTINUOUS

ALEX (V.O.)

(distorted)

Anne! Anne! Someone get some water!

EXT. HUNTINGTON BEACH - DAY

Anne slips towards consciousness with a host of faces around her. Alex pulls off Anne's shirt and hands it to Julia, next to him. Anne's wearing a lame white bra under her shirt.

ALEX

Fan her, quickly. She's overheating.

Julia fans.

Alex taps her on face, trying to bring her back. Charlie runs over, carrying water. Alex pours it into her mouth.

Anne sits up, suddenly.

ANNE

What --

ALEX

It's heat stroke. I saw it a lot in Africa. Drink.

Alex hands her the water bottle.

JULIA

Oooh, Africa? What were you doing there? Charity work?

Julia rubs up on Alex; he scoots away.

ALEX

(to Julia)

Regular work.

(to Anne)

Deep breaths. Charlie, are they back? Bring the car as close as you can. Anne, can you stand?

ANNE

Yeah. Sure. I just-- too much to drink. Can I have my shirt back?

She stands up unsteadily and woozes back and forth. Julia holds out the shirt.

JULIA

You've got to take better care of yourself.

Charlie points to the road.

CHARLIE

They're over there.

ALEX

You don't look so good.

ANNE

I'm fine, just give me a minute.

She puts the shirt on but sways in place.

ALEX

Here.

Alex picks up Anne, not in a romantic bride-y way, but in a sack-of-potatoes way -- over the shoulder. Anne's eyes go as wide as they can; she's totally freaking out. He makes his way towards the road.

ANNE (V.O.)
I think I'm freaking out.

ALEX
If you're going to hurl, say something.

ANNE
What?

ALEX
We all had a lot to drink last night.

ANNE
Yeah.

Alex gets to the car and dumps her in the back seat; Señora Mendoza drives.

ANNE (CONT'D)
Thanks, I could've--

ALEX
Yeah, but I was there.

Anne narrows her eyes at this.

Alex slams the door.

ALEX (CONT'D)
(to Sra. Mendoza)
Make sure she gets some water and lots of shade. Turn on the AC as high as it goes.

INT. CAR - DAY

Señora Mendoza pulls the car away. Anne, flustered, struggles with her seat belt in the back.

SEÑORA MENDOZA
It is very hot today. You have to be careful.

ANNE
Yeah, I should know better. So much for being in medical school.

SEÑORA MENDOZA
Well, we all make mistakes here and there. Good thing Alex knew what to do.

ANNE

Yeah.

SEÑORA MENDOZA

He's very forward with my daughter, no? I like him, but I wonder about her.

ANNE

About Luisa?

SEÑORA MENDOZA

Ever since she was young, Luisa's been impulsive. She attaches to whatever's new. Perhaps Alex is different. But I can't help thinking Julia might be better for him.

Anne closes her eyes and rests her head on the back of the seat.

INT. MARY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Anne opens her eyes and she's now lounging on the couch with a bag of ice on her head. She closes her eyes, and people come and go around her in hyperspeed. She barely moves.

ANNE (V.O.)

I could have denied it before, but it's the truth. I'm still in love with Alex Wentworth.

Anne rolls over and pulls the pillow over the back of her head.

Mary sits near Anne.

MARY

Anne. It's awful.

Anne groans.

MARY (CONT'D)

Yes, it really is that bad.

Anne rolls over to face Mary.

ANNE

What, your 'condition'?

MARY

No, it's worse. Wentworth is leaving us. For Catalina.

ANNE

Horror of horrors.

MARY

I know. The call came this afternoon. His friend is apparently dealing with an emergency. Some other friend of their's, suicide watch. It's truly terrible, having my closest friends ripped from me, just as my fragile condition starts to mend!

ANNE

Unfortunate.

MARY

Unfortunate? It's a tragedy! Think, Anne. We'll have to find some way to join them, naturally.

ANNE

No.

MARY

No?

ANNE

Just ask him if you want to go. He probably has a house.

MARY

Asking -- that's genius!

ANNE

But I'll stay here. I've had enough of -- all that.

MARY

Don't be silly, Anne. I need you - we all do!

Anne looks at Mary incredulously.

MARY (CONT'D)

Well -- what if one of us gets hurt?

Anne deadpans her. She lifts the ice pack on her head as if to say: what do you think this is?

MARY (CONT'D)

And Alex will be there, and Luisa
and Julia too, and I'm sure Charlie
can take off work --

Anne just closes her eyes.

MARY (CONT'D)

And there's my health, of course.

Mary taps her leg, annoyed.

MARY (CONT'D)

But most of all, this friend -- Ben
Wick is his name -- is on suicide
watch. If the friendship of your
own, poor family won't convince you
to come, then at least do it for
this human soul. He needs a doctor
like you!

ANNE

Fine.

MARY

Really?

ANNE

If Alex invites you, I'll come. For
the friendship of my own poor
family, as you put it.

Mary squeals --

MARY

Great!

-- and runs off.

ANNE

(to herself)

But I'm going to have some fun
while I'm there, so help me God.

EXT. CATALINA ISLAND

A helicopter lands on a private pad. Behind it is an over-the-top, amazing house perched along the hills of Catalina.

Alex gets out the front of the helicopter, where he's greeted by two men, HARRY HARVILLE, late 20s, and BEN WICK, also late 20s. Both men are young business-types, although Ben is disheveled compared to Harry's immaculate dress.

Alex hugs each of the men as the helicopter winds down. Charlie and Mary get out of the back of the helicopter, dragging huge suitcases.

They're followed by Julia and Luisa, also dragging heavy luggage, and finally, Anne with a carry-on.

Anne holds down the brim of her wide hat while gawking at the house.

ANNE

Really.

Anne pulls suitcase of the helicopter and follows as the rest of the crew moves inside.

INT. HARVILLE'S HOUSE

Harry opens a bottle of champagne and fills up several glasses.

HARRY

I'm so glad all of you could make it. This house feels empty without company.

MARY

So, Harry, how do you know Alex?

HARRY

Alex? He and I go back. We met the summer after he graduated school... He was this lanky, mopey intern. Always sad about something. A girl, probably --

Alex claps Harry on the back.

ALEX

Yes, well. And you were a terrible supervisor.

HARRY

You had some good ideas. Bafflegab? That was all this guy. I did all the heavy lifting, of course.

Ben is sort of moping in the corner, behind everyone.

ALEX

And Ben made sure we didn't fail. We'd have given up without him.

(MORE)

ALEX (CONT'D)

He was always typing away, so slowly, hours on end.

BEN

Well, I didn't have anywhere better to be. In the words of Neitzche, "What does not destroy me, makes me stronger."

Harry shoots a concerned look to Alex.

MARY

I think it's pronounced 'Kanye,' actually.

Ben chokes on his drink. A wide-eyed beat.

ANNE

Mary, I think Ben's referring to the nineteenth-century philosopher. *Twilight of the Idols*, right? I read it in college.

HARRY

Ben has recently been reading a lot of German philosophy.

BEN

The existentialists, mostly. I've been doing a lot of thinking.

ALEX

Well, are we toasting to this vacation yet? I'm ready to see this beach you're always talking about, Harry.

JULIA

Good thinking!

LUISA

Yes, the beach!

Harry smiles obligingly.

INT. HARVILLE'S HOUSE - GUEST ROOM

Anne looks at herself in the mirror, having changed into a swimsuit and cover up. She pulls down her sunglasses and looks over her shoulder at her reflection.

ANNE (V.O.)

That's it. I'm having fun out here,
if it kills me. Sunshine, sea,
alcohol -- that's a solid three-
step get-over-your-ex recovery
program, right?

She clicks out the light and leaves the room.

INT. HARVILLE'S HOUSE - HALLWAY

Anne wanders down the hall. Ahead of her, a door is cracked open, and she can hear the voices of Mary and Charlie drifting down the hall.

MARY (O.S.)

German philosophy. Excuse me for
trying to lighten up the mood.

CHARLIE (O.S.)

I wouldn't worry about it, dear.

MARY (O.S.)

I like the other one.

CHARLIE (O.S.)

You know what Alex said. Ben's wife
left him after a week of marriage.
Took the money and ran.

MARY (O.S.)

But can you really blame her? Look
at him. I'd run too.

Anne frowns and continues down the hall.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

It's a beautiful day, and Anne lounges on a beach chair in the sand. Harry and Charlie are swimming, Julia and Mary are tanning, and Ben is drinking under an umbrella near Anne, a copy of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* in hand.

Alex and Luisa walk across the sand carrying surfboards.

ALEX

Charlie, want to join us? The
water's not bad!

CHARLIE

I'll leave you two to it.

ALEX
Just you and me, then.

LUISA
Student and teacher. I love it. So
what's the first step?

Alex puts the board down in the sand.

ALEX
Basically, you lie on the board
like this--

He demonstrates paddling on the surfboard.

Alex continues to give the demonstration of popping up on to
his feet in the sand.

Ben watches them from the shade.

BEN
In *The Antichrist*, Nietzsche said,
"Woman was God's second mistake."
He was right. Who is she?

ANNE
She's my cousin. Or, sister's
sister-in-law, technically.

BEN
She's something, that's for sure.

JULIA
That's my sister you're talking
about.

Ben shrugs. Julia rolls over.

Anne chews it over.

ANNE
That quote. Doesn't that make man
God's first mistake?

Ben snaps his gaze from the sand-paddling Luisa to Anne.

ANNE (CONT'D)
Look, I'm sorry about what your ex
did to you. It wasn't fair. But you
can't blame all women for her
actions.

BEN
Nietzsche--

ANNE

It doesn't matter what he said. A dead guy with a bunch of books doesn't make you any less of a dick.

JULIA

(under her breath)
Go, Anne!

Anne gets up and closes her book.

ANNE

Let me know when you're done with your reading, anyway. I'm pretty sure you're interpreting his philosophy wrong.

Anne struts over to the water.

BEN

(shouting)
How's that?

ANNE

(shouting)
You think it's a negative view of the world.

BEN

Isn't it?

ANNE

Not really. It's about loving fate. The good and the bad!

Anne smiles. She jumps in the water and swims out.

Ben watches her, a small smile tugging at the corners of his mouth.

On the sand, Mary takes puty selfies while she tans. Ben stands near her, his shadow falling over Mary.

MARY

Do you mind?

Mary scoffs and turns over.

Anne swims out against the waves in a strong freestyle stroke.

EXT. ROAD OVERLOOKING THE BEACH - CONTINUOUS

A handsome, fit man with dark features and designer workout wear jogs along the road. This is WILLIAM, 30.

We hear the music from his iPod as he finishes his run.

William slows his jog as he approaches a beautiful house that overlooks the same beach where Anne & friends are tanning. He enters.

INT. BEAUTIFUL BEACH HOUSE

William tracks through the house towards the back balcony. He removes his earphones and takes off his sweaty shirt.

On the balcony, a pitcher of water is set out on a table. He pours himself a glass.

William leans against the balcony railing, drinking the water. He focuses on Anne swimming below.

INT. HARVILLE'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - LATER

Anne applies lotion to her sunkissed arms in the expansive bathroom. She wears casual clothing; a cotton skirt and shirt. Mary barges in, dressed in tropical/slutty cocktail attire.

MARY

Sorry, Anne. I have to use your mirror. Charlie's steamed ours up so much I can hardly see!

Mary stops in her tracks.

MARY (CONT'D)

Oh no. You're not going to the beach club in that. I thought you were trying to catch Ben's eye.

ANNE

What? Ben?

Mary busies herself with putting on mascara in the mirror.

MARY

You know, Luisa's thing -- the DJ tonight? And don't pretend about Ben -- Charlie's convinced he has a crush. Though I'm not sure I see it.

ANNE

She didn't mention it to me. But
anyway, I have plans.

MARY

Plans?

EXT. BEACH - SUNSET

Anne walks barefoot along the sand, an uncorked bottle of
wine in one hand.

She rounds a promontory and enjoys the view on the empty
stretch of sand. She takes a swig from the bottle.

ANNE (V.O.)

Anyone who doesn't think this
counts as plans is dead wrong.

A sound; Anne turns. A playful dog is running towards her,
with William in tow. The leash drags behind the dog.

Anne bends down to pet the dog. William catches up, winded.

WILLIAM

Thank God you caught her! You tried
to outrun me, didn't you, Biscuit?
She pulled the leash right out of
my hand.

William grabs the leash.

ANNE

No problem.

WILLIAM

I'm William, by the way.

He offers his hand, which she takes.

ANNE

Anne.

WILLIAM

Not at the beach club with everyone
else? Seems like the whole island
made the trek.

ANNE

Yeah, I heard. It didn't seem like
my scene.

William points to the wine bottle.

WILLIAM

So is this more your scene?

Anne flushes.

ANNE

Oh no, I don't normally do this. I mean, I drink. But not alone. Usually.

William smiles.

WILLIAM

Well, you're not alone anymore, unless you want to be.

Anne offers him the wine bottle, which he takes.

ANNE

The more, the merrier.

EXT. HARVILLE'S HOUSE - BACK BALCONY - NIGHT

Alex, Harville, and Ben stand out on the balcony overlooking the beach. Harville smokes a cigar.

HARVILLE

Really. I'm glad you're here, Alex.

ALEX

Sure. Thanks for accommodating everyone.

HARVILLE

I mean it. You've barely been around these past two years. It's good to see you with someone real and human, instead of just working yourself the way you do.

ALEX

With someone? Me?

HARVILLE

Luisa. Surely you've--

ALEX

I don't know if you'd call it being "with someone."

HARVILLE

What else would you call it?

ALEX

I don't know. We haven't really labeled it.

Ben scoffs.

BEN

That's what's wrong with everyone these days. We refuse to say what we mean.

Ben takes the last swig from his drink.

BEN (CONT'D)

You either like her or you don't, Alex. Everything else is playing games.

Ben slams his glass on the table and storms out.

HARRY

(gently)
He's still torn up.

ALEX

He married that girl for arm-candy status. I don't know why it's surprising to him that she married him for money.

HARRY

You know Ben -- he doesn't have much experience at this stuff. Plus, he wears his heart on his sleeve.

Harry looks thoughtfully at his drink.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Well, that's enough for me. You coming in?

ALEX

Yeah, in a minute.

Harry picks up Ben's discarded drink and heads inside. Alex takes a deep breath and lounges against his chair.

Suddenly, Alex can hear the voices of Anne and William drift up from the beach.

WILLIAM

And that's how you decided to become a pediatrician?

They both laugh.

ANNE
Well, here we are.

Alex gets up to peer over the balcony railing.

Anne and William stand close to one another, dog in tow.

ANNE (CONT'D)
I'd invite you in for a drink, but
it's not my house.

WILLIAM
That's okay. I'm staying just
across the way, actually.

He points.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
You're welcome to a drink if you're
willing to hike up the hill.

ANNE
I'll take a rain check on that.
It's already -- geez, it's 2 am!

WILLIAM
Then I won't insist. But I honor my
rain checks. Don't forget.

ANNE
Of course. It's been... really
great to meet you, William.

William leans in to kiss her, and she meets him.

Alex grips the balcony and turns away.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Mary has resumed her position on the sand, tanning.

Julia sits up next to her, watching Alex and Luisa, who bob
in the water on their surfboards.

JULIA
(to Mary)
I hate losing.

MARY
What's that?

JULIA
Just look at them.

Mary glances over to the happy couple, then back to Julia.

MARY
Have you tried eating less? I know
a great cleanse for troublesome
bellies.

Julia becomes self-conscious of her stomach; she covers it
with her towel.

JULIA
Why would you even say that?

Charlie trots along the beach in a life-vest and swimsuit,
stopping near Mary.

CHARLIE
You're sure you don't want to join?

MARY
I didn't come to the beach to move
around, Charlie. Go with Alex.

CHARLIE
He's... busy.

Anne walks down from the house.

ANNE
I'll come. You're going jet skiing?

CHARLIE
Yeah, I wanted to see if anyone
else wanted to join. It's me and
Harry right now.

ANNE
What about Julia?

JULIA
Not a chance.

ANNE
Ben?

Ben, sitting in the shade, looks up from his books.

BEN
No, I--

ANNE

Come on, Ben. If you sit around
resenting everything, you'll never
move forward.

They walk away from Mary's tanning spot.

MARY

(to herself)
It is a crush.

EXT. OPEN OCEAN - DAY

Jet-ski montage: Anne, Ben, Harry and Charlie jet ski across
the water. Everyone's happy, smiling, even Ben.

EXT. DOCK - DAY

Anne ties up the jet ski on the dock and gets off, along with
Charlie, Harville and Ben. Everyone walks up from the dock to
land.

HARRY

Alex definitely did not mention
that all his new friends were such
daredevils.

ANNE

When in Rome.

Charlie pats Anne on the shoulder.

CHARLIE

Anne's like a sleeper cell. She'll
surprise you.

ANNE

(surprised)
Thanks, Charlie.

Ben stops walking on the dock. He squints towards the parking
lot.

BEN

Is that Will Eisenberg?

HARRY

Where?

Ben points to a Land Rover in the parking lot, where William
is unloading SCUBA gear. William looks up and waves to Anne.

Ben hesitates, then waves back.

BEN
Do you know him?

HARRY
No.

ANNE
I met him last night.

HARRY
Really? I've been trying to get in
his finance circle forever. He's
kind of a rising star right now.

Anne shrugs.

ANNE
He's all right. We should grab the
others and eat.

She forges ahead and the guys follow.

EXT. BEACH - AFTERNOON

Julia gets up and marches inside. She tosses a crappy romance
novel behind her as she does.

JULIA
It's always the wrong girl!

Mary has fallen asleep and is turning a shade of bright red.
She barely stirs as the book falls near her.

In the water, Luisa lazes on her board. Alex paddles nearby.

ALEX
I think you've really got the hang
of it.

LUISA
I have a great teacher. Plus, I've
made up my mind that this is my new
sport. Acroyoga's out the window
now.

ALEX
You can do both, you know.

LUISA
(pointedly)
I'm more of an all or nothing girl.
(MORE)

LUISA (CONT'D)

In everything, even relationships.
I like to know where I stand, you
know?

ALEX

Huh. I don't even know what acro-
yoga is.

Anne, Harry, Ben and Charlie return to the beach.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Look at that. Our friends are back.

Luisa looks crestfallen.

HARRY

(shouting)
Lunch!

ALEX

Ready to head in?

LUISA

Not yet. I want everyone to see
what a great teacher you are.

Luisa waits for a wave; she paddles, gets up, rides the swell
for a second as Alex claps.

LUISA (CONT'D)

Check this out!

She tries to hang ten on the front of the board.

The board flips out from behind her. The leash around her
ankle ricochets the board back at her head.

Luisa hits the water, hard, and is sucked under.

On the shore, everyone gasps at Luisa's fall. The water's
still for a second.

ANNE

She's not coming back up.

Anne pulls off her cover-up and dives into the water.

Alex panics on his board, then flops off of it and swims
toward Luisa.

Anne gets there first. She lugs Luisa onto the surfboard.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Help me get her to shore.

Alex and Anne paddle the unconscious Luisa to shore, where Anne then drags her to the sand.

ANNE (CONT'D)
Mary, your towel!

Anne drags Luisa onto the towel and listens to Luisa's chest.

ANNE (CONT'D)
She's not breathing.

Anne performs CPR. She pumps Luisa's chest -- nothing -- breathes into her mouth, pumps again --

Suddenly, Luisa coughs up some water.

Anne examines Luisa's eyes for movement. She then moves to the wound on the back of Luisa's head.

ANNE (CONT'D)
Ben, give me your shirt. Mary, get water. Harry, the car.

Mary and Harry run off, while Ben quickly pulls off his shirt to give to Anne.

Anne presses the shirt to the back of Luisa's bleeding head.

ANNE (CONT'D)
(to Alex)
Apply constant pressure. Don't let sand get in the wound.

Alex follows her directions, completely bewildered. He looks to Luisa, then his friends around him, then back to Anne, who is now examining Luisa's body. His hands shake.

Anne removes the surfboard's leash right before Harville comes back with his car on the beach.

ANNE (CONT'D)
Lift her evenly. I'll go with her to the hospital.

Charlie, Alex and Ben lift, while Harry drives. The car drives away with Anne, Luisa and Harry inside.

Alex, Ben and Charlie watch it go, dumbstruck.

Mary comes running back outside, hands full of water bottles. Julia trails her.

MARY
I got tap and bottled!

She stops, only to see the car pull away.

MARY (CONT'D)
(upset)
Did I miss it?

BEN
Come on, let's go.

Alex continues to look bewildered.

Ben holds up a set of car keys.

INT. CATALINA MEDICAL CENTER - WAITING AREA

Anne and Harry sit in a homey medical center's waiting area.

HARRY
(babbling)
It was such a beautiful day, you'd never expect anything bad to happen. And she was surfing really well. I can't believe it -- if it's bad --

ANNE
Let's just see what they say is wrong with her.

HARRY
Right. Of course. She might be fine. You were fantastic by the way.

ANNE
Oh, no.

HARRY
Really. You must have picked up something in school.

ANNE
Just doing my best.

The rest of the crew rush into the waiting area.

Mary collapses into Anne.

MARY
I'm worried sick -- and in my health, I swear my nerves can barely take it. And then you were all gone -- it's a nightmare.

Anne pats Mary's head. Julia glares.

ANNE

You did well, Mary. Just have to keep it together a little longer.

JULIA

This is keeping it together?

HARRY

We're waiting to hear back -- they're thinking it's a TBI.

MARY

Is it contagious?

Charlie elbows Mary in the ribs.

CHARLIE

TBI?

HARRY

Anne?

ANNE

A Traumatic Brain Injury. It's hard to say how bad it's going to be until they read the CT scan. But she'll need rest. Lots of it.

HARRY

She's welcome to stay here. It's just Ben and me, and there's plenty of room. And all the rest of you can stay, of course.

ANNE

That's good; she should take it easy. No helicopters.

Mary and Charlie both nod, very seriously.

MARY

Write that down, Charlie. No helicopters. So we don't forget.

JULIA

I'll call mom and dad.

Julia dials and walks outside.

HARRY

I'll put her on the ground floor.

MARY

I just feel terrible; it's all my fault. Remember, Anne? I said you had to come with us in case someone got hurt -- and now look! I think I'm suffering from shock --

Anne gives Charlie a significant look towards Mary.

CHARLIE

Right. Mary. Let's take a walk around the room, get our heads straight, all right?

Charlie holds her around the shoulder as they walk around.

ALEX

I want to help. However I can.

Julia returns.

JULIA

Someone needs to pick up my parents. They're freaking out.

ANNE

It's going to be a long recovery process. It could take weeks -- even months.

JULIA

Then someone will need to grab Luisa's things. I'm not leaving her side.

ALEX

I can fly the helicopter. Mary and Charlie can go with me to pick everything up.

MARY

Go? Me? When my own family is injured?

ALEX

You all probably want to see your kids -- and there's nobody I trust more than Anne with tending to Luisa.

MARY

Anne? You'd trust Anne? Who has nearly no relationship at all with Luisa? I studied nursing for a full year before leaving to model!

ALEX

I just --

MARY

No. Everyone always chooses Anne over me, don't they? You all think nothing of me --

CHARLIE

Please, dear. Don't be upset --

MARY

I'll be upset if I want to be upset!

ANNE

I'll go. Luisa will be in fine hands here, and I have a key to their house. We'll call the nanny. Come on, Alex.

Anne leaves the building.

INT. CAR

Harry drives his SUV with Anne in the passenger seat and Alex in the back.

ANNE

Thanks for having us, Harry.

HARRY

You're not leaving for good, are you?

ANNE

I think it's busy enough without me. I'll stay at Mary's for a while, get my things. My dad and sister are in Beverly Hills. They can make some room for me. Laura Russell lives there, and so does my old roommate.

ALEX

But you hate Beverly Hills.

ANNE

Yeah, I really do. But I'm not needed here.

INT. HARVILLE'S HOUSE

Anne tosses her stuff into her bag and zips it shut.

She rolls the bag into the living room. It's getting darker, and the lights in the room are all off. Alex lies down on a couch.

ANNE

Ready?

ALEX

I just froze back there. I had no idea how to help her.

ANNE

It came out of nowhere. But you did fine.

ALEX

Only because you told me what do. It was good you were there.

ANNE

Thanks.

ALEX

I always knew you'd be a good doctor. You saved her life.

ANNE

It was really nothing.

ALEX

You know, I wish it didn't end the way it did.

ANNE

Yeah, I'm worried about her too. But everyone's going to be here. Mary and Charlie and Julia. They'll help, so you don't need to worry.

Alex opens his mouth to speak, but she turns away from him.

ANNE (CONT'D)

I'm ready whenever you are. I know you want to get back to her.

EXT. HARVILLE'S HOUSE

Alex moves to lift Anne's bag, but Anne doesn't see him. She heaves the bag into the back of the helicopter.

EXT. CALIFORNIA SKIES

The helicopter turns away from the island and soars over the ocean. The lights of the city twinkle in the distance.

INT. HELICOPTER

They yell at each other over the din of the rotor blades and the engine. The com system gives their voices a crackly finish.

ALEX

(yelling into the mic)
You don't have to go to Beverly Hills if you don't want.

ANNE

(yelling back)
What?

ALEX

There's room. You can stay.

ANNE

No. Mary's right. That's their thing.

Alex looks at her, sitting in the passenger seat. She's looking out at the ocean. He smiles sadly, and looks to her hand, gripping her seat.

Alex focuses on flying the helicopter. Anne sneaks a glance at him and quickly turns away.

INT. MARY'S HOUSE

Anne turns on a light in a bedroom. Luisa's clothes are spread all over the room.

Alex follows her inside.

ANNE

You can go wait in the car, if you want. I'll throw everything in a bag.

ALEX
I can help.

ANNE
No, I got it.

Anne grabs the clothes lying around and tosses them into a bag along with the contents of a dresser.

Alex leans against the doorway awkwardly, watching her work.

ANNE (CONT'D)
All done.

She hands him the bag.

ALEX
I guess this is goodbye.

ANNE
Yeah. Good luck.

They hold eye contact. Anne stands back four feet or more.

ALEX
Sure. Have a good summer. Don't be too hard on yourself.

Alex shoulders the bag and turns away.

Anne watches him retreat down the hall. She turns out the light.

ANNE
Goodbye, Alex Wentworth.

INT. MARY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

Anne opens the fridge and stares into it. She closes it empty-handed.

Anne turns away, then turns back and re-opens the fridge. It's quiet. A clock ticks.

INT. MARY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Anne sits down and eats from a bag of hyper-organic and healthy chips. We hear them crunch as she chews.

ANNE (V.O.)
Stop it, Anne.

Anne's phone buzzes. It's a push notification from Bafflegab, which is basically Snapchat.

She opens the video, which is from Mary.

Video: Alex pours water into a glass. He puts it on a tray with hot soup and carries it to Luisa, who lies propped up in bed. It turns onto Mary's face, and she mouths the words "So cute" to the camera.

Anne holds the phone limply, then dials.

ANNE

Hey, Diya. Listen -- I'm really sorry about snapping at you last time we talked. It's been a weird week.

DIYA (V.O.)

No worries. Actually, I'm headed south. It's Katie -- did you hear?

ANNE

Katie? What's wrong?

DIYA

Her mother passed yesterday. You should come up -- she'd really appreciate it. I'll be in Beverly Hills tonight.

ANNE

I'm on my way.

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS - DAY

Anne drives her car down a wide, palm-tree-lined boulevard.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - DAY

Diya opens the door and gives Anne a hug.

DIYA

I'm so glad you came.

KATIE, late 20s, also hugs Anne.

KATIE

Anne! Good to see you!

ANNE

I'm so sorry to hear the news.
Whatever you need, we'll take care
of it.

KATIE

Thank you. It means a lot. It was
just so fast, you know? One day
she's fine, and then boom --
aneurysm. I should never have
waited to do anything. There's so
much I wish I'd done.

They move into the center of the small apartment.

KATIE (CONT'D)

There's not much room -- the prices
here are insane. You wouldn't
believe what they charge for this
place -- but it makes nannying
easier, being in the center of it
all. My clients who-must-not-be-
named are just two blocks away.

ANNE

I'm staying at my dad's -- it's not
far. I'll visit every day; anything
you need, just let me know.

INT. BEVERLY HILLS HOUSE - DAY

Anne enters a monstrosity of marble and stucco, and tracks
across the foyer into a living room. The whole house is
crawling with REALITY TV CAMERAMEN, who follow her as she
hugs her sister and father.

PENELOPE CLAY, roughly 16, all boobs, preens into her
smartphone.

WALTER

Anne, here you are. Isn't our new
home wonderful? It's the most
expensive on the street.

(to the cameramen)

Cut this part -- obviously. We
can't have two Annes.

ELIZABETH

Have you met Penelope? John Clay's
daughter -- we told you about her
at the Kellynch meeting.

Anne and Penelope shake hands.

ANNE

Good to meet the person playing me.

PENELOPE

You look different than I expected.
I hope I'm not in the way.

ELIZABETH

Please, Penelope, you know how much
you mean to us.

ANNE

How old are you?

ELIZABETH

I know, I could just eat up her
skin. Filming is going wonderfully.
The show's testing super well with
divorcees under 30 and people who
buy gym memberships to use the
elliptical once a month.

Walter fusses with lint on his clothes.

WALTER

We should have left Kellynch's
sinking ship for this ages ago.
We're finally getting the
recognition we deserve. But you
won't believe who we just met --
everyone's talking about him. Looks
like he might save Kellynch. He's
at the Beverly Hills branch, of
course.

ANNE

Really.

WALTER

William Eisenberg. Good-looking
guy.

ELIZABETH

You might be seeing him soon. He
drops in once in a while.

PENELOPE

He's head over heels for Elizabeth.
We're building a subplot around it
for the next episodes -- just as
soon as he fills out all the
releases.

Elizabeth fusses with her hair in a mirror.

ELIZABETH

He did heart my last selfie on Bafflegab. But so did ten thousand of my followers -- so who knows. He is good looking, though. You'd die if you saw him.

ANNE

I've met him.

ELIZABETH

Really? And how's that?

ANNE

Catalina.

WALTER

That's just like Will. He knows all the right people. It's all about who you know in this town. I don't mind being seen with him at all.

ELIZABETH

Yes, well -- Anne, you look better than usual.

ANNE

The beach.

WALTER

You should spray tan. Fewer wrinkles. But I say -- you look five years younger; did you finally try that cleanse?

ANNE

It must have been the R&R. I'm not much of one for ghost chillies.

WALTER

And Mary? The last time I saw her she seemed -- sickly.

ANNE

It's all in her head. But Luisa is very hurt.

WALTER

Who?

ELIZABETH

Charlie's relations. Don't worry about it, dad, she's nobody you'd have heard of.

WALTER

Well, there's a spare room upstairs. Just try to stay out of the way of the cameras. We're contractually obligated to act as though you don't exist.

ANNE

Not a problem.

Anne goes to leave the room.

WALTER

Oh -- and if they do ask who you are, just say you're a family friend or something, would you?

ANNE

Got it.

EXT. CATALINA ISLAND - BEACH

Alex and Harry walk along the beach behind Mary, Luisa and Julia. Luisa walks ahead of them, her pashmina fluttering in the wind.

MARY

This sea air is doing wonders for my leaky gut. We should bring Axe and Ox out here -- they've been sickly children their whole lives.

JULIA

Only because you refuse to vaccinate them.

MARY

I'd rather they suffer a brief bout of polio than risk them becoming antisocial nerds.

JULIA

(under her breath)
That's messed up.

Harry stops to pick up a shell, holding Alex further back.

ALEX

She's looking better. This is even further than we walked yesterday.

HARRY

Yes. You must really love her.

ALEX

What?

HARRY

Luisa.

ALEX

Luisa? And me? Love?

HARRY

You've been fawning over her since we met the Mendozas.

ALEX

No -- It was just a hookup. A fling.

HARRY

Maybe in your eyes. But that's a dangerous path to tread, especially now that she's injured. It could take months -- a year for her to be back to normal. Leaving her in the middle of that? You couldn't.

ALEX

It didn't seem right to go, after I brought them here. I was just being supportive --

HARRY

So you don't --

Alex raises his voice.

ALEX

No, not in that way. I mean, yes, she's beautiful. But no. It was once. Maybe twice. But not since --

Harry's voice gets progressively lower, and the pair hang back further from the group.

HARRY

Her family doesn't see it that way, and neither will the tabloids. It'll be a field day.

ALEX

(whispering)

Then am I stuck with her? For what, a year? Two? I can't break up with her -- we're not even dating!

HARRY

Tech-Billionaire Leaves Sick
Girlfriend has a nasty ring.

ALEX

You've got to help me. I never
meant to -- I was just angry. Now
I've probably killed it for sure,
my only chance. And what she must
think of me -- !

HARRY

We're not talking about Luisa, are
we?

ALEX

Anne, of course! You saw her -- who
else could it possibly be?

HARRY

You've been nothing but cold to
her.

ALEX

She hurt me -- but it's always been
her, since before you met me. Don't
you remember?

Harry stops in his tracks.

HARRY

You mean -- Anne is that Anne? The
one who--

ALEX

Yeah.

HARRY

You'd better get out of here. Let
the Luisa thing cool -- I'll update
you with how she's doing.

ALEX

I'll pack tonight -- maybe my
brother's place.

HARRY

Is he in California?

ALEX

No. Maine. A cabin near Portland.

HARRY

Perfect -- out of the limelight.
Then give it a shot again. It's not
over 'till its over.

INT. BEVERLY HILLS HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

A reality-show camera sneaks into the kitchen, where Anne is pouring herself a glass of juice. Laura Russell sits opposite her, drinking coffee.

We see through the lens of the TV show; a banner slides across the screen reading: "Dumpy and Unimportant Person" under Anne.

ANNE

Alex and Luisa. It seems serious. I hate to say it, but he should be checking for holes --

LAURA

She wouldn't.

Anne looks incredulous.

LAURA (CONT'D)

She might. But are you okay?

ANNE

What else could I do?

Laura spots the camera.

LAURA

Shh.

Anne looks up and freezes.

CUT TO:

INT. REALITY SHOW INTERVIEW ROOM

Laura Russell faces the camera. The room is over-the-top in its opulence: overstuffed cushions threaten to burst in purple and red velvet; a discarded boa hangs on a coat-rack behind the interview chair. A golden curtain forms the background.

LAURA

Her name is -- Ann...a...stasia.
She's a friend. Don't worry about
her. She's just visiting.

INT. BEVERLY HILLS HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Anne slowly, deliberately drinks the entire glass of OJ to fill time. Laura catches on.

LAURA

We're talking about the big premiere, of course. It'll be the event of the year. And we'll stream it live, Saturday, July 9, only on The Everyday Elliots.

INT. REALITY SHOW INTERVIEW ROOM

Walter scoots to the front of his chair.

WALTER

Sally Dimple's big premiere? She's our cousin, you know, through my great-grandfather. We're a family of the arts. Changed her last name to 'Dimple' because of those baby cheeks. Plus, think of it: Shirley Temple. Sally Dimple. It's gold.

Now Elizabeth is interviewed.

ELIZABETH

We're all so proud of her, and really looking forward to getting to know one another better. Blood's thicker than water, you know?

INT. BEVERLY HILLS HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

LAURA

Sally's having a party next week. You should come.

ANNE

Sally who?

Walter busts into the room.

WALTER

Oh! It's awful! My Italian Brogues have a scuff! Come see!

The cameras chase Walter down the hall.

INT. BEVERLY HILLS HOUSE - KITCHEN

Anne exhales nervously.

ANNE

It's harder to avoid them than I thought.

LAURA

So Elizabeth and Walter haven't mentioned Sally to you yet? She's your cousin. Child actress. You should go to the premiere.

ANNE

Never heard of her.

Anne washes her dishes.

LAURA

But she's all over the news. The new movie, *Hop on Pop*? You should set the record straight about who you are -- off camera, of course.

ANNE

Hop on Pop? The Dr. Seuss book?

LAURA

It's almost all Walter can talk about. Can't say it has much of a plot, though.

ANNE

I'm more concerned about this Dad-Penelope situation. The last thing we need is a child star. You know his youth thing.

Laura picks through the social section of the paper.

LAURA

So Penelope's beautiful. I'm not sure that's a problem.

ANNE

But how old is she?

LAURA

It's rude to ask.

Anne shuts off the water, looking at Laura seriously.

ANNE

If we don't do something, he's going to end up in jail. What if she's actually fifteen?

Laura stares.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Think of Kellynch -- all my mother's work, thrown away.

LAURA

-- and the show will tank, obviously. But he wouldn't --

ANNE

I need your help on this.

Elizabeth barges in the room.

ELIZABETH

Oh, it's just you two. I thought...

The doorbell rings.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

William!

She hustles off.

LAURA

He's a good guy, William. Your sister's ecstatic.

ANNE

I suppose he doesn't know we're sisters. How could he?

LAURA

You don't mean...

INT. BEVERLY HILLS HOUSE - ENTRYWAY

Anne walks in on Elizabeth, Walter, and Penelope waiting for the door to be opened. The cameramen set up their posts.

WALTER

Everyone in their positions? Ok.
Go!

A butler walks out from behind them and opens the door. Will Eisenberg walks in.

ELIZABETH

Will! So nice of you to join us.

WILLIAM

Good to see you. I actually came to see Anne -- I had no idea --

PENELOPE

(surprised)

Me?

WILLIAM

No, Penelope. Anne.

William points to Anne, who lurks the corner. Penelope giggles falsely.

PENELOPE

I am Anne, you silly!

But William ignores her, striding towards Anne.

WILLIAM

A friend mentioned he'd seen you in town -- I came right after -- That rain check, you remember it?

ANNE

I never thought --

WILLIAM

(dropping his voice)

Yeah.

He turns, noticing everyone watching. Elizabeth, in particular, has grabbed a nearby porcelain vase with a vice-grip, and looks as though she might crack it over someone's head.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Maybe we should talk in private.

ANNE

Yeah.

The two leave, as the rest of the family watches in astonishment.

ELIZABETH

She always ruins everything!

PENELOPE

Perhaps I should go. She is your real sister.

ELIZABETH

Please. She's nothing to me
compared to you.

She puts the vase down roughly, and slams the door as she
leaves the room.

WALTER

Ugh, this footage! Cut it all --
it's useless now.

Penelope leans into Walter, her hand gently pressing his arm.

PENELOPE

Don't worry. I'm sure we can spin
this. We need a good editor.

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS HOUSE - LAWN - DAY

William pulls Anne in tow.

WILLIAM

Let's just get away from the
cameras.

They walk a few more paces, then stop; William faces her
intensely.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Listen, Anne. I can't stop thinking
about you. That sounds cheesy, and
who knows what your sister has been
telling you, but I wanted you to
hear it from me first. Everything
between me and her is fake. For the
show. The producers thought it'd be
a nice twist because I work at the
family company.

ANNE

At Kellynch?

WILLIAM

I didn't mention -- I'm set to
become Head of North American
Operations soon. Sophia Croft's
currently at the helm, but if I
keep going, there's a good chance
I'll be in the running for top
brass down the road.

ANNE

But if Elizabeth really cares --

WILLIAM

She cares about her ratings. The producers thought Elizabeth and I had some kind of poetic balance. But... I can't fake it like that. Not when I could have the real thing.

ANNE

Ok. I -- sorry, I just don't know what to say to that.

WILLIAM

Just say yes. To a date. With me. That's all.

ANNE

Um... Alright, fine. Yes.

William smiles, almost kisses her, then stops and pulls back.

WILLIAM

I'm getting ahead of myself. Ok. Tomorrow -- dinner. I'll pick you up.

William trots off the lawn and towards the street. Anne smiles to herself.

Behind Anne, Penelope watches through the window. Her face is dark, unreadable.

INT. KATIE'S HOUSE - EVENING

Anne sits on the couch, looking uncomfortable in her nicer, date-going clothes. Diya is cooking in the kitchen; Katie opens a bottle of wine.

KATIE

It'll be good for you. Look happier! I've already heard all about your supporting role on the show. They're spinning it into a commentary on how less-rich friends mooch on their wealthier counterparts.

ANNE

How -- ?

KATIE

If it happens here, I'm the first to know. Trust me. It's the power of the blogosphere.

DIYA

I can't remember the last time you went on a date. Seriously. I can't. But it's so your life that he has to pick you up from here because of all the cameras at your house.

ANNE

I know. I thought it'd be much easier to stay out of their way.

KATIE

This is such a big moment. The first date since the big breakup.

ANNE

I've been on dates. I went on one last year -- remember Steve? From Nebraska?

DIYA

But was there a second date?

ANNE

No.

Diya gives Anne a look.

ANNE (CONT'D)

What? He was rude to the waiter. Not everything in my entire love life traces itself back to Alex Wentworth.

(muttering)

Not directly, anyway.

Diya crosses her arms.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Will's okay. He seems to like me a lot. Maybe if I try, I'll feel the same way, eventually.

DIYA

(sarcastically)

You're such a romantic, Anne. Go ahead, analyze your feelings into submission.

ANNE
I'm just hoping to make it through.

Anne's phone buzzes.

ANNE (CONT'D)
Speak of the devil -- Okay. I'm gone.

DIYA
Good luck!

EXT. KATIE'S HOUSE

Anne steps outside and takes a deep breath before making her way up the walk, where William waits in a nice car.

WILLIAM
Hey.

He hops out of the car and grabs the door for her.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Whoever said chivalry's dead?

ANNE
Thanks.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alex texts on his phone: "Going camping. Will be unplugged for a while. How is she? Am I in the clear?" and sends it to Harry.

Alex stares out the window, lost in thought. He sighs.

EXT. BEVERLY GARDENS PARK - NIGHT

Anne and William walk. He puts his arm around her shoulder.

ANNE
I'll be dreaming of that tart for years. Thanks again. This has been really... nice.

Will laughs. The pair make their way towards the Electric Fountain.

WILLIAM
Nice. I'll take nice.

ANNE

It's a compliment! Nice is underrated... It's what I aim for. Nice people who are easy to talk to, nice people who are funny -- that's good company.

WILLIAM

No, good company is much easier than that. Well-dressed people with the right ZIP codes and investment accounts. What you're talking about is the best company.

Anne smiles and leans into him. They watch the fountain light up.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Listen, Anne. I should be honest with you. It's about your father. I know this is going to sound insane. Everyone at Kellynch is concerned that he's going to do something... bad. Kellynch has the chance to make a major recovery.

ANNE

I don't see --

WILLIAM

Penelope. It's hard to figure out exactly -- her age is a big hushed-up secret. But I have it on good information that she's a minor.

Anne swallows nervously.

ANNE

He hasn't --

WILLIAM

No. Not yet, anyway. But if he does -- the connection is too well known. It's no secret that youth and beauty are his weaknesses. Our stock will plummet.

ANNE

That company is everything we have.

WILLIAM

It'd be best to have some kind of stunt -- something that shifts the eye off them, so his attention to her fades. That's the only reason I agreed to that stupid plot with Elizabeth. To keep watch.

ANNE

The Dimple girl --

WILLIAM

I hope it's enough. We have to play our cards carefully.

INT. REALITY SHOW INTERVIEW ROOM

Elizabeth leans back in her seat, a glass of white wine swilling in her hand.

ELIZABETH

She comes to my house and thinks she can steal my man?

She takes a swig of wine.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

Oh, it's on.

INT. BEVERLY HILLS HOUSE - NIGHT

Anne gently enters through the front door. Elizabeth awaits her, thundering from on the stairs.

ELIZABETH

Oh? Didn't bring him home with you?

ANNE

Elizabeth --

Elizabeth stomps down to get in Anne's face.

ELIZABETH

Next time I want a knife in my back, I'll be sure to call you --
Anastasia!

Elizabeth glowers and raises her hand as though she's going to slap Anne. She freezes midair, then totally drops the act.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

Did we get all that?

A cameraman appears from behind a curtain.

CAMERAMAN

Yup!

ELIZABETH

Good.

She resumes position and holds her hand up -- then suddenly softens.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

(in a soap opera style)

No. I won't sink so low. Get out my way!

Elizabeth chokes back a truly unconvincing sob and takes shelter in another room.

Anne stands there, dumbfounded.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Anne's phone makes a happy notification sound. She rolls over in bed and grabs it off the nightstand.

It's a notification from Bafflegab. Anne hits play on the video.

Mary's shaky camera centers on a finger with a ring on it. She steps back -- it's Luisa, grinning from ear to ear while sitting up in bed.

LUISA

I'm getting hitched!

Anne's face falls; she tosses the phone on the bed, where the video keeps playing. She lets out a sob.

The video continues:

MARY (O.S.)

Where's the lucky guy?

The camera turns on Ben, who puts his hand in front of his face, but smiles despite himself.

BEN

No -- no --

MARY (O.S.)

Oh, come on, Ben! We're so happy for you!

Anne looks up and lunges for the phone.

ANNE

Ben?!

She watches the last of the video:

MARY (O.S.)

Give the woman a kiss!

BEN

All right, all right.

Ben bends over Luisa on the bed and plants one on her.

The video ends.

Anne squeezes her pillow in joy and rolls over.

INT. BEVERLY HILLS HOUSE - DAY

Anne digs through her purse near the front door. Elizabeth comes into the main hall in her trendiest casual-cool outfit.

ELIZABETH

Is that what you're wearing? We're about to go.

Anne looks down at her normal clothing. Walter barges in.

WALTER

God, give me strength. You can't go to Sally's pre-premiere party like that. We have a reputation to keep up.

ANNE

Don't worry. I'm not going. I'm visiting my friend -- Katie.

WALTER

Katie? And just what does she do that's so important?

ANNE

Katie's a nanny. She works very hard.

WALTER

I don't care if she works as hard as a pilgrim.

(MORE)

WALTER (CONT'D)

Spending her youth covered in baby vomit and diapers -- worse, that you'd go visit her instead of taking the chance to help your sister and I in our pursuits -- Sally Dimple is your own flesh and blood. Are you so selfish -- does we really mean nothing to you?

Anne stands there, impassive.

ELIZABETH

Let's go, daddy. We'll have to save face.

WALTER

I'll absolutely never understand you. Priorities!

They leave in a huff, slamming the door behind them. Penelope emerges.

ANNE

Better hurry.

Penelope scurries after them.

EXT. MAINE WOODS - MORNING

Alex unzips a tent and emerges in the brisk morning.

He stokes the ashes of the campfire. He puts a coffee pot on the fire and rubs his hands together.

INT. HARVILLE'S HOUSE

Harry paces with his phone on his ear.

HARRY

Come on, come on, come on...

The phone clicks over to voicemail.

ALEX (V.O.)

This is Alex. Please leave a message.

Harry stops, hangs up, and dials again.

EXT. MAINE WOODS - CONTINUOUS

Alex's phone sits in the pile of his sleeping bag and blankets.

Alex inhales deeply and exhales fully, as the water starts to boil.

INT. KATIE'S HOUSE

Katie pulls a massive casserole out of her freezer, and sets about putting it in the oven.

Diya sprawls in her chair, and Anne sits on the ground nearby. She's analyzing the Jenga tower on the coffee table.

KATIE

I can't tell you how much I appreciate the help in eating these casseroles. Once mom died, people just started giving them to me, more and more of them. People I don't even know, just showing up with casseroles. When I see them crowding up the fridge like that...

DIYA

Don't worry. I willingly volunteer my digestive services.

ANNE

(mock-seriously)
And I, of course.

She stops, and then speaks sincerely.

ANNE (CONT'D)

People try to find replacements for the people we lose. It's a natural urge. But there's no match... there's no replacement for the original.

Diya side-hugs Anne.

DIYA

But you have us, yeah?

KATIE

Yeah.

The oven dings.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Anyway. Let's talk of happier things. The date? How was the date?

ANNE

Fine.

KATIE

So you like him.

ANNE

I don't have any reason not to.

Anne pokes at the Jenga tower, trying to loosen a brick.

DIYA

Your enthusiasm is overwhelming.

ANNE

I mean, there's nothing wrong with him.

KATIE

Those producers are right -- there is some kind of poetic justice to marrying within the Kellynch world. Think about it.

ANNE

Who said anything about marriage?

DIYA

It's where things lead. She's just looking ahead.

ANNE

Very, very far ahead.

Anne keeps poking at the tower until she finds a loose brick.

KATIE

The connection to Kellynch is only part of it... Will is well-known and well-respected. He knows money, so he can help you take care of the rest of your relatives -- so you don't have to do it all alone for once. And he is good-looking. You said so yourself.

ANNE

You guys are so bad. I'm not going to go running into a marriage like -
- like Luisa and Ben.

Anne pulls the brick loose.

KATIE
I know. I heard.

DIYA
What, so the Alex thing is off?

The tower topples.

KATIE
He's gone off the radar. *Star's* speculating it's heartbreak.

Diya gives Anne a look.

ANNE
Don't get any ideas, Diya. It's over. He hasn't forgiven me; he made that clear.

DIYA
I'm not the one with ideas. You're the one with ideas. I didn't say anything.

Anne sighs.

INT. BEVERLY HILLS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Anne lounges on the couch, reading. Her phone rings.

ANNE
Mary?

MARY (V.O.)
You've heard about the wedding, I assume. Well, we're all heading your way to help choose dresses and rings, all that stuff. And to see daddy and Elizabeth, of course.

Anne holds the phone away from her ear, cringing.

ANNE
Uh-huh.

MARY
Everybody's so excited to see the new house -- is it as wonderful as Elizabeth keeps saying? She's b-gabbed me so many pictures.
(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

There's so much marble! It's like a castle for a princess!

Anne shuts her eyes.

INT. HARRY WINSTON STORE - DAY

Luisa and Mary burst into the store in a rush. Anne follows.

MARY

You're so lucky to have hit your head the way you did. It's providence, I tell you, the way you two were thrown together. Now I personally think sapphires would be the best look for you. Don't you just love sapphires?

Mary and Luisa continue deeper into the store.

Anne lingers near the door and pulls out her phone. She looks at a text from William that reads: Are you free tonight? Dinner?

Anne starts to type a reply.

A gust of wind accompanies the opening of the large, heavy door. Anne looks up to see Alex.

ANNE

Oh.

ALEX

Anne!

ANNE

I -- didn't expect to see you here. Mary and Luisa have come to look for a ring.

ALEX

Yes. I'm staying with Harry.

Both of them seem at a loss for words. Anne pockets her phone.

ANNE

(whispering)

It was a big surprise, the wedding. I really didn't think he liked her at all.

Alex relaxes a little.

ALEX

I just found out. It's -- well, I have to admit, I didn't see it coming. Just weeks ago Ben was telling me how love never dies and he'd never recover.

ANNE

But he seems to treat her well. As long as they're happy. She'll make him more adventurous, maybe.

ALEX

And he'll teach her all the intricacies of the German nihilists, I'm sure.

They share a laugh.

ANNE

It's good to see you again. Our group is all here, excluding your sister. Are you visiting for a while?

ALEX

No. Or, well, it depends. I came to make something right again. Something that's been wrong for a very long time. My actions --

Anne's phone rings, and a picture of William comes up.

ANNE

Oh, it's -- sorry, I should get this. By the way, we're all going to a movie premiere. It's a kid's thing - tomorrow afternoon. Maybe it's not your scene -- but we have room for one more if you're free.

ALEX

I'll come.

ANNE

Ok.

She answers the call.

ANNE (CONT'D)

William, hi.

Anne makes her way around Alex, who stands in the doorway, and out of the shop. Alex watches her go.

EXT. CHINESE THEATRE - DAY

The Elliots are out in full force and dressed to the nines. Walter preens for the cameras with Elizabeth at his arm and Penelope not far behind. Laura Russell stops for the cameras coolly, as if it were natural for her.

Teal and purple Dr. Seuss-themed decorations make the carpet surreal.

Mary, Charlie, Ben and Luisa follow, though the cameras largely ignore them.

Anne and William stand back from the entrance to the red carpet, watching the show go down. They're both dressed nicely, but less over-the-top as Anne's family.

ANNE

Are you sure there isn't a side entrance somewhere? I read that there are sometimes ways to get around all this.

WILLIAM

You look beautiful, don't worry.

ANNE

That's not --

Alex shows up behind her.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Alex! You came.

ALEX

I did. To see you.

But Anne doesn't hear the last part of what Alex said, because just then, the precocious SALLY DIMPLE, 12, emerges from a limo to a roar from the crowd.

ANNE

(shouting)
What was that?

ALEX

(shouting)
What?

The crowd's roar dies down some, as Sally waves to the people. Walter and Elizabeth come running back down the red carpet with Laura trailing.

WALTER

That's her -- that's Sally Dimple!

Walter hitches in his step when he sees Alex.

WALTER (CONT'D)

Anne -- is this -- no, not now --

LAURA

I didn't expect to see you, Alex.

ALEX

Yeah.

Walter and Elizabeth attempt to regain their composure as Sally turns from the crowd and adjusts her furry jacket.

WALTER

Sally, our cousin! We're so excited to be here today -- and where's your mother? Let's get a photo together for the cameras --

Anne shakes her head slightly and makes her way down the red carpet alone.

William talks to Penelope in front of the cameras.

Alex chases after Anne.

ALEX

Your dad's the same as I remember him.

ANNE

Sorry about that.

INT. CHINESE THEATRE

Anne and her clan occupy the center section of the theater, with Anne sitting in the aisle. Alex sits across the aisle from her, while William sits right next to her.

William puts an arm around Anne and whispers something in her ear.

Alex seems uncomfortable, and bounces his leg against the ground.

The lights dim. William goes in for the kiss.

Alex shoots out of his seat and hurries out of the theater.

ELIZABETH
(loud whispering)
Rude! As usual.

Anne follows, catching up with him in the lobby.

ANNE
Alex!

He stops and turns.

ANNE (CONT'D)
What's wrong?

ALEX
I should go.

ANNE
Are you not going to see the movie?

ALEX
I've seen enough.

He rushes out. Anne is confused, and looks heartbroken. When she turns around, William waits in the door.

WILLIAM
Is something wrong? I was sent to see if you're ok.

ANNE
I'm fine. Let's go back inside.

WILLIAM
Listen -- I wanted to talk to you alone. Away from cameras -- you understand.

William comes closer, and holds one of Anne's hands.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
I know we've just started to get to know one another, but every minute of it has been incredible. You might think it's just a producer's note, but this is real for me. And I hope -- it's a promise, really -- that I'll never have to drop this act, if that's what it is.

(MORE)

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

It sounds crazy, but I hope to marry you someday.

ANNE

Marry me? But --

WILLIAM

You don't have to answer that. It's not a proposal, just a statement. I'm in it to win it, you understand?

ANNE

It's just so early --

WILLIAM

I know. I hope that doesn't scare you off. But I know what I want when I want it.

He squeezes her hand, and she looks back, terrified. A photographer in the lobby snaps a picture of the two of them.

INT. BEVERLY HILLS HOUSE - BEDROOM - MORNING

Anne lies in the center of her bed, staring at the ceiling.

ANNE (V.O.)

Sometimes you have those days where the whole world seems to have lost its mind.

INT. BEVERLY HILLS HOUSE - ENTRYWAY - MORNING

Anne walks down the stairs. A door slams open, and Elizabeth storms out of it with a tablet in hand.

ELIZABETH

What is this? You think you can beat me at my game?

She shoves the tablet in Anne's hands; Anne looks to see herself and William on the front of a tabloid website. The headline reads: "KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY" and suggests that the pair will be married soon.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

He was into me first! Why did you even come here?

She stomps away. Anne's astonished.

Anne's phone buzzes, and she looks to see that she has ten texts. Most of them are from Katie and Diya, but there's also one from Alex.

She opens it to read: "I have to talk to you about something important. I'll be at your house around 11."

ANNE
(to herself)
Eleven?

The time on her phone's home screen ticks over from 10:59 to 11:00.

There's a knock at the door.

She opens the front door ahead of the butler, who comes rushing from the house. It's Mary, Luisa, Ben and Charlie.

MARY (O.S.)
Anne! Are you all ready to go?

Anne blankfaces her. They all move into the house.

MARY (CONT'D)
Don't tell me you've forgotten about the dress. It's girls only in dress shops, you know that. And I need a second opinion.

Just then, Alex walks up behind them.

MARY (CONT'D)
Alex!

CHARLIE
Good to see you again -- I didn't get a chance to talk during the premiere. How long are you in town for? Where are you staying? We've missed you this summer.

ALEX
Not long. Anne?

Anne grabs his hand and pulls him through the throng.

ANNE
Sorry. Just a minute.

Anne ushers Alex into the nearest side room and shuts the door behind her.

MARY

Well!

INT. BEVERLY HILLS HOUSE - SIDEROOM - CONTINUOUS

Anne leans against the door.

ANNE

It's been a crazy day. Already.

ALEX

I guess I really don't have good timing.

They stare at each other for a second. Anne's phone rings, and she silences it.

ANNE

So... what did you need to talk about?

ALEX

Right. I'm leaving town today -- my plane is in a few hours, so I thought I'd get this out of the way. My sister wants me to talk to you -- in the light of the news, she says she'd be happy to consider to position at Kellynch temporary, and to groom William for leadership. I'm told he has a knack for it, actually.

ANNE

Sorry, what?

ALEX

My sister says --

Her phone buzzes again, and she ignores it.

ANNE

No, I got that, but why would she do that?

ALEX

Because of his proposal. I mean -- Anne, you're getting married to William Eisenberg.

Anne scoffs in surprise.

ANNE

I always thought you had to agree to that sort of thing.

ALEX

You mean --

ANNE

It's a rumor in the tabloids, Alex. You can tell your sister that I am -- absolutely -- not engaged. And I'm not planning on it any time soon.

Relieved, Alex moves closer to her.

ALEX

Then --

Laura Russell, focused on her newspaper, barges into the room.

LAURA

Oh! Alex Wentworth.

ANNE

Alex -- you remember Laura.

ALEX

How could I forget?

LAURA

Anne, have you seen?

ALEX

Well, I better head out. My sister will want to know.

LAURA

Good to see you, Alex.

Alex leaves.

LAURA (CONT'D)

So, is it true? I wish you had let me know earlier.

ANNE

It's not. I have to go.

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS HOUSE - LAWN

Anne rushes outside. Alex's car is pulling out of view; another car screeches to a halt in the driveway. The windows roll down, and it's Katie and Diya.

KATIE

Anne! I tried calling.

ANNE

What?

DIYA

You gotta learn to answer your phone -- it's important!

KATIE

It's William. Don't hate me, but I couldn't live with myself if you didn't know.

DIYA

I had no idea it was him. We never met him -- but Katie immediately recognized him in the paper.

KATIE

He's a terrible person. You can't marry him -- it's all an act. My friend dated him for years -- it was horrible -- until he finally dumped her for Penelope Clay.

ANNE

Penelope! She's 16!

KATIE

He's stringing her along to try to hold sway on your father. He's known for blackmail. All he talks about -- all he thinks about is power, taking over Kellynch. That's why he was so interested in Elizabeth and getting on the show. And that's why he met you in Catalina -- it wasn't by chance.

DIYA

You can't marry him -- trust us, please. We wouldn't make this up.

ANNE

So why chase me?

DIYA

He probably does like you. But ultimately you're a tool to climb higher in Kellynch. And he's still with Penelope.

Anne's disgusted.

ANNE

Don't worry -- I'm not marrying him anyway.

Behind her, Ben and Charlie walk out of the house.

BEN

Anne, Mary's going ahead without you. Laura took your place in the car.

CHARLIE

We're headed to Harry's to burn some daylight. Want to come?

ANNE

(muttering)

Harry's -- that's where Alex is.

She hugs Diya and Katie.

ANNE (CONT'D)

I've got to go.

INT. HARRY'S SECOND HOUSE - DAY

Harry leads Ben, Charlie, and Anne into his penthouse.

HARRY

Glad you guys could come. I was just watching the game. Anne -- long time no see. You guys want a drink?

They hug.

HARRY (CONT'D)

I thought I'd have to watch this one alone. Alex is flying off tonight.

CHARLIE

He mentioned it.

They come into the kitchen/living room. A Dodgers game is playing on the big screen. Alex works on a computer, headphones in. He does a double-take when Anne walks in.

ALEX

Hey everyone. I'm just doing a little work.

Anne hangs back by the door.

HARRY

Can I get anyone a drink?

CHARLIE

Beer?

BEN

Gin and Tonic?

HARRY

Coming right up.

Ben takes a seat on the couch with Charlie. Anne moves toward the bar, while Harry starts mixing the drink. She fidgets with her nails.

HARRY (CONT'D)

What would you like? I've got pretty much everything.

BEN

(watching the game)

Oh!! You're out!

Anne drops her voice, and stops fidgeting.

ANNE

Whatever Ben's having. He's so different than when we were all in Catalina.

Alex removes an earbud and eavesdrops on their conversation.

HARRY

He's bounced back. I never thought he'd forget his heartbreak so soon.

ANNE

Men.

HARRY

(jovially)

Oh, so it's all of our faults?

ANNE

If there's any real difference
between us -- men and women -- it's
that we don't forget you as soon as
you forget us.

Harry smiles, handing her the drink he's just made.

HARRY

I think you've got it backwards.
Men are the ones always being left
behind by fickle women. That's why
'fickle women' is even a phrase.

ANNE

A phrase invented by the
patriarchy, I'm sure.

HARRY

Fair enough.

They snicker.

Alex starts typing furiously, his keys clacking loudly

ANNE

Maybe I should be more specific.
I'm not saying men don't have
feelings -- of course they do, and
they're just the same as ours.
We're not, ultimately, all that
different. But women are much more
likely, in my opinion, to keep on
hoping and loving -- even when
there's no chance. That's all.

Harry pours himself a whiskey on the rocks.

HARRY

There's something we can agree on --
being not so different. Cheers to
that.

They both take a drink.

Charlie walks over.

CHARLIE

Mary's just texted to tell me her
car's broken down. She's terrible --
never does maintenance for that '67
Fastback of hers. It's tragic. I'll
see you all later?

ALEX

Which way are you headed? I have to pick something up from town.

Alex clicks something with confidence, and closes his computer.

CHARLIE

A few blocks over. We could walk. Are you good with engines? It's a simple setup.

ALEX

I could use some air, if nothing else.

The two head out.

Anne's phone vibrates in her pocket to tell her that she has unchecked email. She glances at her inbox and opens an email from Alex. She reads excitedly, her hand to her mouth.

ALEX (V.O.)

Anne, there's no way to say this easily -- and forgive me for not having the courage to say this to your face. I am clearer than I have been in a long time; and closer than ever to the truth. Here it is: You pierce my soul.

Does that sound cheesy? I'm half-positive you'd forgive me, love me, and half-positive of the exact opposite. Tell me that I'm not too late.

My heart is more yours now than ever, more than before you nearly broke it. You say that men forget sooner than women -- but it's not true. All this time, there's been nobody but you. I've been weak, angry, jealous, proud, petty -- but not fickle. Not in my heart and soul. Give me a sign and I'll be yours -- or gone forever.

Her eyes well up.

HARRY

Is something wrong?

ANNE

I've been a complete idiot. I have to go.

Harry smiles as she runs out of the room.

HARRY

Good luck, friend.

INT. HARRY'S SECOND HOUSE - BUILDING

Anne sprints down the stairs and outside.

EXT. HARRY'S SECOND HOUSE - DAY

Anne gets out on the sidewalk, and looks both ways.

ANNE

Alex!

She runs in one direction, and stops at the corner of the next block.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Alex --

She spots him ahead a few blocks, walking with Charlie. She runs to catch up with them.

ANNE (CONT'D)

(winded)

Alex.

CHARLIE

Anne? Are you okay?

ANNE

Could I have a minute?

CHARLIE

Is something wrong?

ANNE

No, I--

ALEX

Go on ahead, Charlie. We'll catch up.

Charlie makes himself scarce. The two look at each other intensely.

ALEX (CONT'D)

You read that quickly. I really thought I'd buy more time --

Anne quickly closes the space and pulls him into a kiss.

ANNE

You never were good at timing.

They kiss again. They start walking down the sidewalk, and Alex puts his arm around Anne's shoulders.

ALEX

So I guess I was a prick this summer. And before that.

ANNE

Yeah, you really were. Wait, so that time in the helicopter -- ?

ALEX

I tried. I'm so sorry. And back then, you were right. I was too angry to admit it, but it really wasn't the right time to get married. Not with all of our plans.

Anne leans into him.

ANNE

Come on. Let's not look back anymore.

EXT. PRIVATE YACHT - DAY

CAPTION: ONE YEAR LATER

The whole crew -- the Admiral, Sophia Croft, Mary, Charlie, Julia and her boyfriend the director, the Mendozas, Axe and Ox, and Harry, plus Alex and Anne, stand at the bow of an anchored yacht. Everyone wears a variety of swimwear/coverups and sandals.

Luisa and Ben face each other as the Admiral officiates. Luisa's wearing a white bikini under a gauzy cover-up; Ben wears a black swimsuit and bow-tie (no shirt).

ADMIRAL

By the power vested in me by the State of California, I now pronounce you husband and wife. You may now kiss the bride.

The two kiss; cameras flash.

 LUISA
 Let's do this!

Luisa pulls off her cover up and she and Ben leap off the bow of the boat and into the water, hand-in-hand.

Axe and Ox follow; then Mary and Charlie. Anne and Alex step up to the edge of the boat. Alex squeezes Anne's hand.

 ALEX
 Ready?

 ANNE
 Nope!

She jumps off the boat, dragging him with her. They hit the water with a splash.

 FADE OUT.

 THE END