

FADE IN:

EXT. CEMETERY- DAY

Clouds cover the sky, hiding the sun. A breeze makes its way across the grounds.

A funeral is in progress. Dozens of people stand together, motionless. We hear muffled moans, cries, sniffing.

The FUNERAL DIRECTOR, 50s, a bearded man with glasses, is beside the casket that is waiting to be lowered into the ground.

MARK, 32, husband of the deceased, stands in front.

Next to him is their little daughter, MAYA, 9. Wearing a nice black dress, she has her hair held back in a pony tail, exposing her pink cheeks. She is remarkably poised.

We can see that he is not holding her hand.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR

... She filled her life with love. She married the man she had loved since their days in high school, and, together, they brought their beautiful daughter, Maya, into the world.

*(beat)*

Mark and Elizabeth were a perfect match in every way. They were wonderful companions who cared deeply for one another...

Mark's face is empty.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

Elizabeth had an uncompromising devotion to her daughter. She and Maya were the best of friends. Simply said, there wasn't a thing in the world that Elizabeth would not do for her.

Maya's eyes swell, spilling tears.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

This is indeed a sad occasion. One that will be repeated thousands of times by people in the coming days.

*(beat)*

If it is of any help at all- you are not alone.

CONTINUED:

FUNERAL DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

The anger, confusion and sadness that you are feeling- please understand that you are not alone.

She looks up at her father.

No response.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

You are embraced among all the other families who lost loved ones on the Eleventh of September. You are embraced by people all across the country.

*(beat)*

I understand that words can be insufficient. However, ceremony can help us express our profound thoughts and feelings, together.

*(beat)*

And in order to heal, we must now shift our relationship with Elizabeth from one of physical presence- to one of memory.

FADE TO BLACK:

OPENING TITLES

FADE IN:

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET- MORNING

Time has passed since the funeral. The trees in this middle-class neighborhood have blanketed the ground with the rich colors of autumn.

A PAIR OF BOYS with backpacks make their way down the street.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME- CONT'D

The house looks unoccupied- the lawn neglected and driveway hidden under leaves.

Maya exits the front door and walks to the corner to wait for the school bus. The pair of boys are waiting too, staring at Maya as she approaches.

CUT TO:

INT. MARK'S BEDROOM- CONT'D

Mark is curled up in bed, focused on a picture of Elizabeth on the bedside table. He's holding her nightgown in his hand.

The window shades are still drawn- sunlight is trying to break through the edges.

The alarm clock switches to 8:00 AM. The radio blares-

COMMERCIAL

... then we've got the solution! Our pills are made from an all-natural herbal formula that will quickly and easily reignite the old spark in your relationship! And if your partner doesn't notice a complete change in 30 days, we offer a-

Mark finally moves, shutting it off. He puts the nightgown to his face...

A moment passes- and he rises out of bed.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN- LATER

Dressed in a shirt and tie, Mark is at the table with a full bowl of cereal. He raises a spoonful- then changes his mind.

He walks to the sink, pours out the cereal and leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING- DAY

The gray ten-story building blends with the overcast sky.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE BUILDING- CONT'D

In the standard office break room, Mark is pouring himself coffee.

EVELYN, 65, a gray-haired woman with a kind face, approaches.

EVELYN

Mark! It's great to see you back.

CONTINUED:

MARK

Hi, you too.

EVELYN

*(gently)*

I haven't heard from you in a month-  
since the funeral.

MARK

Sorry, just been a little busy.

EVELYN

No, no- it's okay. I understand. I was  
just hoping that you were doing alright.  
I tried calling-

MARK

I know, I apologize. Just been busy.

EVELYN

*(touching his arm)*

How are you, Mark?

MARK

I'm fine.

*(moving)*

I've got so much to catch up on. I've  
got to head back to my desk.

EVELYN

Oh. Yes, absolutely. I'm really glad  
you're back. We all are. I'm here if  
you'd like to talk.

MARK

*(exits)*

Thanks.

CUT TO:

INT. MARK'S OFFICE- CONT'D

He closes the door immediately, exhaling as he sits down at  
his desk.

The room's small dimensions and drab appearance perpetuates  
his sense of loneliness.

He looks at the two framed pictures in front of him.

CONTINUED:

One is of he, Elizabeth and Maya at a birthday party- the other is Elizabeth at their wedding. His face in the picture suggests an entirely different person from who we see now.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE- LATE AFTERNOON

Arriving home from work, Mark drives up to the house. He spots a man and a woman at his front door. They hear the car and turn around. It's BEN and CAROL PRATT, both attractive and salutary. They wave.

Mark parks the car and walks towards them, holding a bag of fast food.

BEN

Hey buddy. How you been?

MARK

Hi guys-

CAROL

It's so good to see you.

Mark struggles to maintain eye contact.

MARK

Yea- I agree.

CAROL

How are you Mark?

BEN

You doin' okay?

MARK

Well- I'm just trying to-

He notices a container of cookies in her hands.

CAROL

Oh! We brought this for you-

BEN

- thought you and Maya would like yummy homemade cookies.

MARK

That wasn't necessary-

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