

THE GHOST MACHINE

Based on the novel  
*The Man Who Would Not Die*  
by Thomas Page

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INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY - (CORPORATE VIDEO)

SEXY LIGHTING makes the MACHINE GLOW...sleek and futuristic, dominating the room.

TECHNICIANS swarm urgently... studying HI-RES MONITORS... watching the domelike capsule... *and the patient inside.*

NARRATOR (V.O.)

By repurposing patented artificial intelligence design protocols from our aerospace division, Stendahl-Holmes has created the future of lifesaving technology.

DOCTORS react to medical readouts that continually populate from the machine as LAYERS OF MEDICAL DATA appear superimposed over the video images. *It's visual overload.*

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Capable of 24-hour monitoring of 600 life functions. The LS-600 Life Support system is self-calibrating... with autonomous functioning. Physicians are only required to authorize treatment... in accordance with Federal regulations.

The machine glows with different colors... rays indicating different functions, as an ARRAY OF CHIRPS, BEEPS AND PINGS signal life-saving processes underway.

MULTIPLE CAMERA ANGLES show us life being restored in vivid color.

INT. CONVENTION AUDITORIUM - DAY

The PROMOTIONAL VIDEO is being projected on a HUGE SCREEN, *the camera closing in on it.* Slowly, the capsule opens, retracting upon itself, revealing the PATIENT inside...

NARRATOR (V.O.)

The LS system eliminates user error by scanning the body for potential ailments, treating each and every one that it finds -- a total health analysis system that eliminates disease, known and unknown with the capacity to save and extend countless lives.

The huge hall is dark... silent... then the CROWD rustles in their seats, watching as the video ends, a huge STENDAHL-HOLMES logo taking its place.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

We at Stendahl-Holmes thank you for witnessing the first appearance of the LS\_600, and we hope to greet you as customers when Beta testing is complete.

A LONE FIGURE, IRWIN BICKEL, 60, stands in the shadows... then -- BLAM... a spotlight hits him.

BICKEL

Ladies and gentlemen... I...

INCREDULOUS DOCTORS erupt, arguing, openly challenging Bickel who patiently waits for the din to subside. He grips the podium, smiling as he surveys the disbelief.

*Here I go...its now or never...*

BICKEL (CONT'D)

You can imagine our surprise when we made the discovery.

He clicks a button, and the next slide appears, an image of ELEANOR CODY, 74, white hair and a soft, plump body -- Calmly, he composes himself, leaning in to the microphone.

BICKEL (CONT'D)

Doctors, please. If you would let me continue...

The arguing dies to a murmur.

DOCTOR IN CROWD

(shouts)  
...You better...

BICKEL

(smiles calmly)  
We have nothing to hide. All of the trials data are available to you...

DR. EVELYN BRANCH stands boldly -- late 60s, tall, thin, grey hair and steel-rimmed glasses give her a very strict look.

BRANCH

It's impossible. No machine can do what you say this one can.

BICKEL

It's all true. We'd love an opportunity to test the system in one of your hospitals. That's why we unveiled at this convention... to give you the opportunity to see the LS machine in action.

A grizzled doctor with a craggy frown squirms in the 3rd row.

DOCTOR 2

Every boondock meathouse in the country has its own life support system on the market. All filled with empty promises.

Bickel grips the podium, staring intently at Doctor 2.

BICKEL

Not this one.

(a beat)

In one test, it successfully started a heart after twelve minutes without oxygen.

The CROWD GASPS... then an UPROAR more intense... everyone talking, debating with each other.

DOCTOR 3

Twelve minutes without oxygen is impossible.

BICKEL

Believe it or not, it's not. The LS-600 has revived a comatose patient who had been given up for dead.

The MURMUR subsides.

BACKSTAGE:

Eleanor watches as Bickel speaks, the crowd shifting uneasily. She shuffles, nervous.

BICKEL (CONT'D)

Eleanor was on the table for an intestinal blockage when she suffered a stoke, her second such event. Prior to the surgery, she agreed to a clinical test of the LS machine.

(MORE)

BICKEL (CONT'D)

By the time we got her into the capsule, she had been without a heartbeat for twelve minutes.

DANIEL FORRESTER, late 30s, blonde-haired and blue eyes in an expensive blue blazer... hands Eleanor a bottle of water. He smiles, compassionately, gently laying a hand on hers. He winks at her.

DANIEL

You're gonna be great. Just remember, they wanna see a miracle. YOU'RE that miracle.

She isn't sure, shakes her head... *Oh dear, oh dear...* takes a sip of water for courage. It drips on the floor.

BICKEL (O.S.)

But our very special guest is eager to tell her story to you directly. Esteemed colleagues, I give you... Eleanor Cody.

Eleanor freezes, hearing her name.

DANIEL

That's your cue. Break a leg, my dear.

ON STAGE:

Bickel claps, looking backstage. No Eleanor. He whispers...

BICKEL

Eleanor?

*Uh oh, this better not be happening...* turns back to the audience -- fighting nervousness as...

BICKEL (CONT'D)

I promise she's not a ghost.

Some smirks and laughter. Bickel waits, getting impatient.

BICKEL (CONT'D)

Eleanor, your public awaits.

Finally, Daniel ushers Eleanor out from behind the curtain. He offers her an arm, and she takes it. He leads her onto the stage and into the spotlight, whispering to her.

DANIEL

You're gonna be great.

She looks up at his charming smile and pats his hand.

ELEANOR

Thank you, dear boy. You're so kind.

BICKEL

Eleanor Cody, ladies and gentleman.  
A miracle of modern science.  
Eleanor, please come join us.

He begins to clap his hands, Daniel making his way back behind the curtain. The audience claps in a polite welcome.

ELEANOR

(Its sort of memorized)  
Hello. My name is Eleanor Cody. Dr. Bickel asked me to come speak with you today to talk about the Stendahl-Holmes Life Support System. My muscles had atrophied from a previous minor stroke. The machine strengthened them... It truly is a miracle... that I'm alive. Apparently, it even kept my eyeballs lubricated.

A compassionate laugh from the crowd.

She stops... looking down at the lectern... her face clouds. Her tone is different...

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

There's another part to this miracle. I went to another place... ***It was beautiful!!***

EXT. FANTASY LANDSCAPE - DAY

We're FLYING OVER A LUMINOUS, BRIGHT, COLORFUL WORLD... *It's her beautiful memory...* that feels hyper-real, warm and welcoming.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

...Full of contentment...even joy, pure joy. A place no one would EVER want to leave.

Abruptly **we are wrenched backward away from it with a horrible PAINFUL SCREECH**

INT. AUDITORIUM STAGE - DAY

Eleanor stops, trembling, recovering, staring out over the crowd.

SILENCE...

The crowd RUSTLES as seconds drone on...

Bickel edges over to Eleanor, and covering the microphone...

BICKEL

Are you ok?

She nods her head mechanically, and he backs away.

ELEANOR

You want to know if the machine works. Of course it works! I'm proof of that. But I don't think...

Bickel steps forward and tries to take the microphone from her, attempting to wedge his way in there.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

Don't you DARE, young man!!

The crowd is shocked. He steps back.

BICKEL

(whispering)

Eleanor.

ELEANOR

I've been cheated...ROBBED.

(looking at Bickel)

You cheated me. Now I have to --

(screams)

-- **DIE AGAIN!!**

She slams her hand down on the lectern, knocking over the mic.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

I have to suffer all that pain...

all over again...

She leaves the stage, slowly... as the auditorium launches into an UPROAR.

*What the hell just happened.* Bickel glares, shocked at Eleanor, as...

OFF-STAGE

Eleanor shuffles off-stage, drained. Daniel reaches out and nearly pulls her over. He's frantic.

DANIEL

Eleanor, what was that?!

The crowd RAGES, and Bickel struggles to contain it. He throws a look at Daniel... *Get her out of here!*

BICKEL (O.S.)

Ladies and gentlemen, ladies and gentlemen.

Eleanor looks up at Daniel.

DANIEL

Eleanor, we saved your life. The machine has the ability to save millions more. You gotta look at the positives here. You could be a tremendous help. This machine can change medicine for the better..

CRACK... She lashes out with a nasty slap across his face.

He's stunned... shocked, wounded.

ELEANOR

If you like it so much, why don't you try it?

INT. AIRPLANE CABIN - DAY

Daniel fidgets uncomfortably, eyeing the WOMAN next to him, KATE BURNHAM, 35. *She's a babe. What luck sitting next to her.*

Kate smoothly taps the keys of her small laptop.

Daniel tries to be discrete, but she catches him. Daniel looks away -- she moves the laptop.

DANIEL

I'm sorry. I wasn't reading.

Kate continues writing, barely glancing up... then sneaks a glance again out of the corner of her eye.

*...Anyone who is that beautiful must be conceited...*

KATE

Then what were you doing?



He gives her a dashing smile...

DANIEL  
Stretching my neck.

She SCOFFS... continues typing... angling her laptop away.

A VOICE comes over the loudspeaker.

CAPTAIN (V.O.)  
This is your Captain speaking.  
We're beginning our initial descent  
into Denver.

Daniel leans over to Kate...

DANIEL  
Ok, you're right. I was trying to  
get your attention.

She doesn't look.

KATE  
Congratulations, you did.

DANIEL  
You stopping in Denver? Or are you  
just connecting?

She shoots him a sideways glance.

KATE  
Why?

Confidence shaken, he frowns.

DANIEL  
Just making conversation.  
(a beat)  
I'll leave you... to your  
writing....

Daniel faces forward and whispers the words coming over the PA system, in perfect karaoke precision.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT (V.O.)  
Ladies and gentlemen, please make  
sure that your seat backs are  
straightened and that your tray  
tables are in their upright and  
locked positions.

Kate LAUGHS, looking at him.

DANIEL

They always say the same thing.  
When you're on as many airplanes as  
I am, it gets funny after a while.  
Like it's groundhog's day everyday.

She smirks, turning back to her laptop.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Traveling for work?

KATE

I am. And I'm on a deadline. So if  
you don't mind...?

DANIEL

Of course. Sorry...Writer?

Kate smiles and nods, fingers tapping keys as she does.

INT. AIRPORT COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Kate waits for her coffee. A MALE BARISTA smiles at her. He hands her a coffee.

Daniel pays his order at the counter. Beside him on the wall is a poster for a ski resort "Ultimate Skiing - Clayton Lodge." He leaves the line and nearly bumps into her. Kate lifts her coffee to avoid him.

DANIEL

So sorry --  
(a beat)  
-- Oh, hey, its you.

Kate is suspicious.

KATE

Still me...

DANIEL

Hey -- I was wondering if I could  
interest you in the latest health  
care invent--

Kate interrupts --

KATE

(a little annoyance)  
--CRAZE? What is it?...a new  
diet... an excerciser? I get those  
offers on my phone all the time.  
(MORE)

KATE (CONT'D)

Do you have one on you? Are you a doctor?

DANIEL

Do I look like a doctor? Well, thanks! ... No, I'm on my way to Clayton to deliver one... It's a --

The barista listening, announces his coffee...

BARISTA

Tall mocha latte for Daniel...

Daniel winks at him.

DANIEL

Thanks, Champ.

The barista scowls at him... returns to his work... taking one long last look at Kate.

Daniel turns his cup, showing her the block print letters: DANIEL.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I'm Daniel, by the way.

She smiles. *I was right...he's preening for me.*

KATE

Doctor Dan...! Kate. I'm on my way too... to ski and write and forget about people -- so if you'll excuse me...

DANIEL

Skiing -- Nice! What are the odds? I'm going to be working hard also -- selling! But I love to ski.

KATE

(skeptical)  
Really! Good for you.

DANIEL

How about I tell you all about it over a drink when we get to Clayton?

He holds out his hand to her. She fights the urge...

KATE

Who said I'm going to Clayton?

DANIEL

How about 7:30. I saw there was a bar called the Frozen Cork?

She turns...glances back, smiles... and walks away.

Daniel sips his coffee, watching her. He looks back at the barista who seems satisfied that he has been rejected. Daniel winks at him and heads toward the gate.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

NORA STONE, 40s, bookish, with a polite, genteel manner, sits by herself in the dark, in a master bedroom, knitting furiously. The large space is adorned with antique furniture. The NEEDLES CLICK in a rapid rhythm, Nora focused. She glances at the clock. 8:00 pm.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Nora's scarf is long, scaling to her ankles from the chair. She knits like a machine, again glancing at the clock. 1:00 am...

Suddenly... BANG... a door slams... ANOTHER BANG.

She rises calmly, gracefully, places the scarf on the chair and stands in the doorway, expecting... something.

She breathes ice, the air around her frigid.

FLASHCUT TO IMAGES: A CHILD'S HAND SLAPS ON TO THE OUTSIDE OF A WINDOW PANE AT NIGHT -- A WOMAN'S HANDS GENTLY LIFT THE WINDOW OPEN A CRACK, LETTING IN A GUSH OF EERIE BLUE LIGHT.

Nora is re-living painful memories --

CREAK... *It's coming from the hallway...* She turns her head slowly, waiting. Nothing.

She enters the hallway, walking slowly... assessing.

NORA

Hello. My name is Nora. I know you know I'm here.

She stops, listening... Nothing.

NORA (CONT'D)

I mean you no harm I'm here to help you.

A COLD RASP of air WHISTLES across Nora, blowing her hair.

NORA (CONT'D)

It's ok. You can come out.

She freezes... staring down the hallway... FAINT FOOTSTEPS INDENT THE RUG. Nora takes a step back, shifting out of the doorway.

NORA (CONT'D)

That's it. Easy. I know you're there.

Another footfall, and the shadow of a leg appears, wisps of smoke forming the loose shape of a WOMAN.

NORA (CONT'D)

I see you now.

The figure approaches her... blue shimmering light. She edges close to Nora, and there's a sadness in her blue face.

NORA (CONT'D)

You don't have to be afraid. I'm here to help you.

Nora reaches out... the ghost dissipates... a thrall of air rushing past Nora. She sighs -- *I'm not doing very well tonight*... and returns to her knitting.

INT. CLAYTON MEDICAL CENTER - EXAM ROOM- DAY

DR.LAWRENCE DUTTON, 40s, tall, dark and -- (YES) very handsome -- enters and sees SAM, 70s, waiting. Dutton prepares to check blood pressure as...

DUTTON

Ah! My favorite patient... How are you? Sam...

SAM

i guess you'll tell me...

I've looked at your blood panel. I thought we talked about the drinking.

SAM (CONT'D)

We did, Doc, but the thing is, vodka and Alka Seltzer tastes great, is super cheap, and I never get a hangover.

DUTTON

That's because you barely have any liver left. In fact, you barely have any guts at all. They've been dissolved by the booze -- Seriously, Sam, you need to stop drinking... for me!

SAM

Oh, Doc, get off my case. When you're my age, the only hope is that you can keep ticking a little while longer and enjoy every ounce of entertainment you get.

Dutton's face turns grave as he administers the shot.

DUTTON

Sam, no drinking for 24 hours.

Sam smiles at him.

SAM

Jenny'll be pissed.

DUTTON

Jenny? --

A huge CLAMORING SOUND down the hall...

SAM

-- What the Hell is all that noise?

DUTTON

Just some equipment that we're having installed. We're apparently testing a revolutionary new life support system.

SAM

(laughing)  
Here? In Clayton? Ha... maybe you'll test it on me!

DUTTON

I certainly hope not. Now who is this Jenny?

SAM

Oh, found her on... Uh, the internet.

Dutton winces. *Sam is counteracting everything he tries to do.*

DUTTON

Sam, we've also talked about your heart.

SAM

She's good for my heart. I never thought I'd be having so much sex when I got old. Old's hot now, Doc.

DUTTON

So I hear...

INT. CLAYTON MEDICAL CENTER - HALLWAY - DAY

ARNOLD JAMESON, early 40s, is an intense-looking, moon-faced doctor with a restless personality. He hustles up the hallway of the small medical center.

Dr. Evelyn Branch hurries after him.

BRANCH

Doctor Jameson! Hold up!

Jameson ignores her, pushing through a door as...

INT, CLAYTON MEDICAL CENTER - EXAM ROOM - DAY

Jameson enters and stops short, seeing Dutton sitting with Sam.

JAMESON

Sorry for the intrusion, Dr. Dutton. I didn't know you were with a patient.

DUTTON

Doctor Jameson...?

Branch enters, chastising Jameson with her glare...

SAM

Three doctors!

He cranes his neck, looking through the door, as...

SAM (CONT'D)

Is there a mortician back there, too?

BRANCH

Please excuse Dr. Jameson. He was just leaving.

JAMESON

Dr. Dutton, you gotta come and see  
this thing...

BRANCH

Not right now, Dr. Jameson!

Branch fumes. *These boys need to be taught something.*

JAMESON

They're gonna demo in a minute or  
two...

Dutton looks at Sam...

DUTTON

I'll only be a minute. I've almost  
finished Mr. Ford's exam.

Jameson ducks out as quickly as he entered. Dr. Branch  
stands there, scowling at Dutton as...

BRANCH

(to Sam)

Again, I'm very sorry for this, Mr.  
Ford.

SAM

Oh, I don't give a goddam. Doc  
Dutton's the only thing keeping me  
alive, after all.

Dutton realizes she's pissed...

DUTTON

I'll be right with you, Doctor  
Branch...

Branch leaves, storming down the hallway.

SAM

She's a feisty one.  
You think she's my type?

DUTTON

I think she'd eat you for  
breakfast!

Sam howls.



INT. OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Branch enters a suite and KNOCKS on another door. From the other side, the KIND VOICE of DR. JONES...

JONES (O.S.)  
Please, come in.

Branch enters. Jones looks up from his writing and smiles at her from behind a desk. He is Black, 50's, (but hard to pinpoint his age) -- extremely bright...and always calm.

JONES (CONT'D)  
Evelyn. Why am I not surprised.

BRANCH  
(smiles)  
Gareth... Always writing...

JONES  
Not always. Sometimes, I practice medicine.

The mutual courtesy and respect between them is evident. *He's the most skilled and respectful on staff...*

BRANCH  
I value your input... I'm relying on your technical evaluation. You're going to be stimulated by it.

A look from him, then...

JONES  
So this is really happening?

BRANCH  
It better be... after what I went through to get it.

Jones rises. *Could new hardware possibly impress him?*

JONES  
Then let's go see this monster.

INT. ROOM 112 - DAY

The exam room has been converted into a lab, the LS machine dominating its center, wires snaking to terminals. TWO TECHNICIANS are finishing the assembly as Dutton strides through the door.

DUTTON

Oooh. I'll have to polish my bedside manner to convince patients to get in that... it looks like a coffin.

Dutton joins Jameson, Jones and Branch. A technician confers with Bickel and Daniel as... METAL GRINDS.

BICKEL

Sorry for the noise. It's not a quiet assembly.

Bickel motions to four chairs...

...the doctors sit as... One last GRATING SCREECH, then silence. The technicians face their monitors, tapping on keys.

BICKEL (CONT'D)

There we are.

Dutton elbows Jameson.

DUTTON

Looks pretty hi-tech... Imagine the fee you'd charge.

Irritation flickers across Jameson's eyes as...

JAMESON

Looks expensive, too.

Branch nods in agreement. *I'll bet it is. But is it worth it!*

Daniel captures their attention by moving to the capsule.

DANIEL

It offsets so many other costs that will disappear. Put a patient in here for six hours and the machine will project for two days what treatments you need and probable complications. And then it will tell you how to treat those complications if they arise.

Branch crosses her arms. *You'll have to prove it to me.*

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Is it time for my death scene?

Bickel nods as..

BICKEL  
Seems to me like they need to see  
it.

Daniel stands behind the machine...strips down to his  
underwear.

JAMESON  
A word of advice... you should do a  
simple demo with a dummy?

BICKEL  
(chuckles)  
We are!

Daniel removes his underwear... comes out in front of the  
capsule -- standing before them naked.

BICKEL (CONT'D)  
Climb in, Dummy.

Daniel looks at Branch.

DANIEL  
-- Could use company.

Dutton is amused -- then catches himself when he sees...

Branch is impassive...stewing. *How could he be so arrogant  
and sexy at the same time?*

Jameson looks bored... Jones watches the technicians.

Daniel dips a toe in the viscous liquid. It reacts to his  
presence...it collects around his ankles eerily.

Daniel shudders. *This is the part I don't like!* He climbs in,  
sinking down to his knees.

BICKEL  
Now -- never put a patient in face  
down or they'll drown. The  
breathing apparatus connects from  
the inner lid.

Daniel suddenly realizes something... snaps his fingers.

DANIEL  
I think I remember now -- St.  
Louis!

Puzzled looks from all. Daniel looks at Jameson.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I thought you looked familiar, Dr. Jameson. Were you at Memorial in St. Louis? Somewhere around 2009, 2010?

*Jameson's look changes -- revealing something to us... He shakes his head.*

JAMESON

Excuse me?

DANIEL

SLMH... I was installing a telesurgery device there, state of the art for the time --

JAMESON

-- No, I've never worked in St. Louis.

DANIEL

-- Really? I coulda swore it was you.

JAMESON

Nope, sorry.

Daniel shrugs. *Has he got something to hide?... What?*

DANIEL

Oh well. Surf's up.

He plunges himself in somewhat gracelessly, resting his head on the plastic pedestal. The lid starts to close as...

Branch rises, looking at Daniel through the tinted glass, the solution rippling over all but his face, distorting his body.

Bickel leads her to the central terminal as...

BICKEL

It's voice activated. Just punch in your key, authenticate with a biometric print... and speak. Here's a demo passkey. We'll have keys made for each of you.

Branch takes the slip of paper and punches in the passkey. She sticks her thumb on an indentation in the console. It reads her fingerprint and the LS MACHINE, AKA LISA, springs to life.

LISA  
Good afternoon.

BICKEL  
Hi, Lisa.  
(a beat)  
I named her Lisa -- We should all  
be on a first name basis with our  
attending physician -- Don't you  
agree?

Branch eyes him. *You really think that's what this thing is?*

BRANCH  
What do I do from here?

BICKEL  
Speak. The real secret isn't the  
capsule but the brain.

He taps the console. They all look at Branch.

BRANCH  
Lisa, begin the demonstration.

LISA  
As you wish.

The machine immediately takes control of the capsule.

LISA (CONT'D)  
Patient name: Forrester, Daniel.  
(a beat)  
Hello, Daniel.

DANIEL  
How ya' doing, darlin'? Hey, don't  
zap me, Ok? I got a date tonight.

CLICK... the capsule is firmly shut. It bolts in place, and Daniel closes his eyes, a strained look on his face.

DANIEL (V.O.)  
I hate this.

In seconds, information starts scrolling on the consoles. The doctors marvel at it. It's every level, reading, and diagnostic they could want.

INT. INSIDE THE CAPSULE - DAY

Wires and sensors snake out from the sides and the lid and attach to his body. A headpiece emerges from the front cone, connecting to him like a helmet.

Daniel watches... tense... listening to the CLICKS, WHIRS, and BEEPS. Outside, Branch and Bickel converse. Jameson and Dutton join them, Jameson tapping on the glass.

DANIEL (V.O.)

Yeah, I see you. And I don't think it's the first time I've seen you, either.

Daniel smiles. Lisa's metallic voice drones inside the capsule.

LISA

Daniel, your blood pressure is rising. Please nod to let me know you are Ok.

Daniel nods... closes his eyes and breathes deeply as...

LISA (CONT'D)

Daniel, please be calm.

Daniel looks around.

LISA (CONT'D)

Daniel?

ANOTHER PERSON appears in his view, angling in beside Branch and Jameson. He is blurry but... has blonde hair, unnaturally striking blue eyes, and a blue blazer. He gets closer and closer to the capsule.

DANIEL (V.O.)

Jesus Christ, that guy looks like me.

His face is nearly against the glass, solidifying as it does.

LISA

Daniel...try to relax. This is a simulation...

DANIEL (V.O.)

**What the fuck, that is me!!**

LISA

Daniel, please relax.

Daniel starts to move around inside of the capsule. His doppelganger taps slowly on the capsule wall.

DANIEL DOPPLEGANGER  
Get out, Daniel.

LISA  
Daniel, I'm administering a mild  
sedative . . .

BLACK.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Daniel walks out of the small hospital and joins Bickel who is waiting, shivering and stamping his feet in the cold.

DANIEL  
Hot shower felt good. That tank  
slime is sticky.

BICKEL  
Screw you, I'm freezing out here.  
What happened? -- You looked  
rattled in there -- Did LISA do  
something...?

DANIEL  
I'm fine... A weird reflection --  
but I'm not getting into LISA  
again.

BICKEL  
Look, Dan -- Let's get out of here  
as soon as we can. You can pull  
this together in a a week, right?

DANIEL  
Just through the next weekend.

BICKEL  
If you ask me this place is run by  
psychos. The boss lady is nearly  
extinct, and that Jones character  
is in his own world.

DANIEL  
They're the B team alright.

BICKEL

Well, this piddly-shit place is all we get for Beta test thanks to your idea of marching Eleanor out in front of that whole fucking convention.

DANIEL

(scowls)

Enough said. -- Its Jameson that bugs me. I've seen him someplace before, but he doesn't want to be recognized.

INT. FROZEN CORK - NIGHT

The bar is full of SKIERS who eagerly flirt with one another.

Daniel sits at a table by himself... sips a beer... thumbs the condensation, searching the room for Kate.

He pulls out his phone and checks his texts, then --

He is startled -- his phone rattles to the table -- Eleanor is sitting directly across from him.

DANIEL

JESUS!!... I didn't see you sit down.

Daniel recovers... forces a smile. She stares at the crowd behind him.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

What the hell are you doing here?

Daniel looks behind him. No Kate. Eleanor says nothing, just staring at Daniel.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Mrs. Cody, you didn't have to come all the way to Colorado to apologize. You screwed things up for us in a pretty big way, you know.

Eleanor closes her eyes.

ELEANOR

Daniel, I'm here to tell you...

Daniel, distracted, sees Dutton enter the bar. He tries to catch his attention but cannot.



DANIEL

Yes...?

Daniel is getting frustrated. From across the room, he sees Kate enter. Dutton pounces almost immediately, introducing himself with a handshake and dapper smile.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Mrs. Cody -- Eleanor. I'm really sorry. I'm meeting someone. she just arrived and...

Kate sees Daniel and points to him. Dutton peers over at Daniel and smirks. Daniel begins to rise.

ELEANOR

Stop.

She slaps the table in front of him.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

(gently)  
Leave Clayton, dear boy. Now.

DANIEL

What? I'm not leaving until next week.

INSERT - ELEANOR'S HAND ON TABLE

She pulls her hand back, leaving a cold imprint that evaporates.

ELEANOR

Your machine is responsible. You're not to blame. Leave now. Its not too late yet.

BACK TO SCENE

Daniel looks at her blankly... then over to Kate. Dutton is hot on Kate's heels, so...

Daniel leaves Eleanor at the table by herself, joining Kate.

DANIEL

Hey. You look like a writer looking for company.

KATE

Am I late?

DANIEL

I wasn't really sure if you'd come  
at all.

Daniel looks over her shoulder at Dutton, who plays it cool,  
hanging back, pretending to see Daniel for the first time.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

He pestering you?

Kate smiles at Dutton.

KATE

Is flirting pestering or  
flattering?

Daniel nods to Dutton as...

DANIEL

It depends on who's doing it --  
Join us if you want.

Dutton smiles and shakes his head, nods to a new target and  
moves on.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

... Your loss.

Kate wonders...*Is that a compliment to me or himself?*

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I had a table, but...

He turns around -- Eleanor is gone.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Bizarre. I was just talking to her  
a minute ago. She --

KATE

-- She?

DANIEL

She told me to leave town.

Kate smiles and takes Eleanor's seat.

KATE

You were coming on a little strong,  
eh?

Daniel hesitates before sitting, still rattled.

DANIEL

No. She was...

On Kate's puzzled expression...

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Nora continues her knitting, the scarf taking shape. She looks up occasionally, pausing to listen. She glances at the clock, 12:59 am.

As the clock strikes 1:00 am, she puts her knitting down, rising gracefully and silently. Placing her handiwork across the chair, she exits the room, entering the hallway.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Nora leans against the door frame, staring up the hallway.

NORA

My name is Nora Stone, and I'm here to help you.

Hairs raise on her arms, and the air chills.

NORA (CONT'D)

(nervous)

Don't be afraid. We can't hurt each other.

The ghost materializes, more quickly this time, striding toward Nora. The wisps of air whip around Nora, and she frowns.

NORA (CONT'D)

(more nervous)

It's ok. I'm here to help.

The ghost picks up her pace... Nora straightens up, facing it... the ghost closer now...gaining speed aggressively...wind and aura encircling Nora.

NORA (CONT'D)

(unsure)

It's ok. Be calm. I'm not here to hurt you.

The ghost disappears...

FLASHCUT TO IMAGES: A CHILD'S HAND SLAPS ON TO THE OUTSIDE OF A WINDOW PANE AT NIGHT -- A WOMAN'S HANDS GENTLY LIFT THE WINDOW OPEN A CRACK, LETTING IN A GUSH OF EERIE BLUE LIGHT -- A YOUNGER NORA SITS UP IN BED AFRAID.

Nora exhales, relieved of the memories. The wind and aura die out. Nora turns back to the bedroom.

WHAM! -- THE GHOST'S ANGRY FACE APPEARS, INCHES AWAY. The ghost opens her mouth... and SCREAMS -- a shrill echo reverberates through the house.

Nora stumbles backward into the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Nora trips as she scrambles backward, landing hard on the floorboards. She grimaces, looking up at the angry spirit. Blue, icy energy sprawls throughout the room and around her.

The ghost reaches out her hands.

NORA  
I'm here to help. Please, calm  
down.

The ghost projects itself forward, appearing again directly in front of her. It reaches out, and Nora tries to scramble backward. But she's caught.

The ghost wraps icy fingers around her neck, and they extend, a noose around her -- She struggles to breath.

NORA (CONT'D)  
(gagging)  
Please. Stop.

Nora pulls herself back, struggling against the spirit. She reaches for the chair, trying to pull herself up. The writhing spirit thrashes her against it, and it topples over.

Nora struggles to breathe. She reaches for a wall and props herself against it, trying to stand... gasping -- her breath nearly gone... her own face turning blue.

THE SPIRIT THRUSTS A TENDRILIOUS HAND INTO HER MOUTH, pouring itself down her throat -- and she gags.

Her eyes turn crystal blue, widening, and she collapses, the spirit inside of her.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

*IT'S A VISION IN NORA'S MIND -- SPAWNED BY THE SPIRIT CONNECTION INSIDE HER!*

Eleanor wakes with a start... her husband, HENRY, 70s, still asleep next to her. Slowly, she pulls herself out of bed, rising.

The bedroom is large, with images of family littered throughout. Eleanor picks up a FRAMED PHOTO from her dresser. In it, a YOUNG WOMAN, DAPHNE, 25, has her arms wrapped around Eleanor and Henry. They are all smiling. Behind them, a banner hangs, HAPPY 50TH ANNIVERSARY, HENRY AND ELEANOR.

LINDSAY (O.S.)  
(sexy)  
Henry?

Eleanor whirls around, confused. She looks in the direction of her bathroom, notices the light on under the door. It opens and...

LINDSAY, a 25 year old bombshell emerges -- *completely naked*. Her hair is wet and it descends in loose waves down to her breasts.

Eleanor gasps...

LINDSAY (CONT'D)  
Time for your medicine...

Henry stirs, GRUNTING as he rolls over onto his back. He opens his eyes.

HENRY  
Then you better get it over here.  
It's the only thing keeping me up.

Lindsay smiles, seductively, walking toward him, right in front of Eleanor.

ELEANOR  
What the fuck are you doing here?  
Henry?

She looks back toward her husband, and Lindsay *passes directly through her*, sauntering toward Henry.

He pulls the covers off of his naked body. He's in good shape for 70, and she climbs on top of him, straddling him.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)  
Henry!

Eleanor whirls away. She Can't look! The room is spinning...

She looks at her hands...

They're transparent --

as the ecstasy MOANING begins, Eleanor tries to grip a beautiful antique dresser -- her hands slipping directly through it...

She turns back, watching as her husband's hands wrap around Lindsay's hips as she rides him.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT (BACK TO SCENE)

Nora is motionless, propped against a wall -- dead blue eyes wide and glassy. Suddenly she blinks, and -- her eyes are brown again. She breathes, COUGHING and CHOKING.

Nora falls to her hands and knees, CHOKING, blue ooze seeping from her mouth. She looks up, sees the ghost in the doorway. It's calm, emanating, her face sad.

NORA

Eleanor!

Nora COUGHS, spitting out more of the ooze. She watches as the spirit exits the bedroom, slowly dissipating.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM 112 - NIGHT

The room lights are off. Only the capsule and the data console glow with an eerie blue light.

Dr. Jones is at the LISA console, typing in a login command.

JONES

Lisa, do you learn from each patient occurrence?

LISA

Each patient case exhibits differing conditions, data and therefore treatment.

JONES

Do you learn more from the data you collect?

LISA

I have embedded, the most recent AI processors. Yes.

(MORE)

NORA (CONT'D)

JONES

What is death?

LISA

Cessation of vital functions.

JONES

Is it more than that? Is there something else?

Jameson enters, switches on the lights, sits on a stool and opens a file of legal papers.

JAMESON

This machine is going to turn us all into goddamn secretaries.

Jones rolls his eyes at him, reading...taking notes in his journal.

JAMESON (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

Jones ignores him.

JAMESON (CONT'D)

You know, you should be in charge around here. Not that Branch woman. I hate taking orders from her.

Jones scowls to himself. *Couldn't he go bother someone else?*

JAMESON (CONT'D)

Man of few words. That's probably why you never got the top job.

Jones looks up -- irritated.

JONES

What are you doing?

(no response)

You know, your gifts are fast diagnosis and acutely accurate drug balances -- You should apply yourself more.

JAMESON

-- And I'm a whiz at real estate transactions...

(brandishes his legal file)

...Private pilot... Being a doctor is just a sideline.

(MORE)

JAMESON (CONT'D)

I do what I'm good at. *And I don't need advice from you.*

Jones is riveted to the screen, absorbed with the images.

JONES

Did you ever take the time to think about death? The LS is going to change our view of it. Suppose death actually occurs before the heart stops.

Jones's eyes change, puzzled -- he enlarges an image.

JONES (CONT'D)

Look at that! What is it? -- Right when his vitals were in fear state...

On screen a small grey cloud hovers over the capsule above Daniel's head. Jameson looks over.

JAMESON

It's a magnetic field -- Forrester's magnetic personality trying to escape the asshole.

Jameson LAUGHS -- Jones abruptly picks up his phone...

JAMESON (CONT'D)

Now what're you doing?

JONES

Registering a complaint against you with HR.

JAMESON

Screw you!

JONES

I'm calling Bickel. I wanna see the records of any other patients that have been in the machine.

Jones gets up, leaving Jameson to his own devices. As soon as he's gone, Jameson drops the paperwork and pulls out his phone, tapping the screen feverishly.

INT. FROZEN CORK - NIGHT

The dance floor has filled up, singles mingling, drinks in hand as POPULAR MUSIC BLARES.



Daniel and Kate at their back table are oblivious to what's around them.

KATE

You have the look of somebody who's befuddled.

DANIEL

Good word.

KATE

I'm a writer...

DANIEL

-- Yeah, it's been a weird day.

KATE

Weird how? -- Promise not to depress me.

DANIEL

I don't depress people. I psyche them up. I'm a salesman, remember? Did you know that salesmen have a very high ESP rating?

KATE

Are you a good salesman? -- Because of ESP, I mean...

DANIEL

I can't predict plane crashes or anything. But I can read customers better than any marketing gurus... And I get hunches --

Kate interjects quickly, without stopping his thought...

KATE

-- Feelings!  
(smiles)  
I have those too.

Daniel continues without missing a beat.

DANIEL

-- Got one about you.

She looks at him. He looks at her. SILENCE... It's a REAL MOMENT... he relaxes as...

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Today was... a *doozie*. A little birdie tells me to get out of the medical equipment business. What I'm selling is...I don't know...

KATE

Boys with hi-tech toys! I get it... Maybe I can cheer you up -- help you sell a machine. I can do a testimonial for you.

DANIEL

What do you think the commission is for a twenty million dollar machine?

Kate nearly chokes on her drink.

KATE

What does it do -- cure cancer?! And they think hospitals are going to pay that kinda cash to install it?

DANIEL

(shrugs)

We'll see... What about you? I'm fascinated -- a writer. What are you writing?

KATE

Um, articles. You might call it relationships... lifestyle articles.

DANIEL

I really hope you're not a lonely hearts columnist?

KATE

No way.

Daniel flags one of the WAIT STAFF.

DANIEL

Another round?

KATE

-- You buying?

DANIEL

-- Of course.

KATE  
 You know nothing's gonna happen  
 tonight, right?

He holds up his hands, innocent.

DANIEL  
 I'm just testing life support  
 systems here.

KATE  
 Mmm...uh huh... me too.

Daniel's phone rings. BICKEL.

DANIEL  
 Speak of the devil. I should take  
 this.

KATE  
 It's ok.

DANIEL  
 Don't disappear, ok?

With a heartwarming look to her, he answers, gestures to the  
 WAITRESS for another.

DANIEL (CONT'D)  
 Irwin, has anyone ever told you  
 that you have the worst timing.

He rises and wanders away from their table. As soon as he's  
 gone, Dutton plops down his drink, sits down with a big grin.

DUTTON  
 Katie. You need a real friend.

EXT. RESTAURANT SUN DECK - NIGHT

Daniel comes out the door of the Frozen Cork into the chill  
 night air on his cell phone, and paces.

DANIEL  
 (lighthearted))  
 So what's so important? What's up  
 with Dr. Jones?...ha, ha... No-No-  
 No. I am not doing another demo if  
 that's what you mean. Jones has  
 seen everything the LS600 can do...  
 Well, call him and find out...  
 Whatever he wants, let him have it.

He taps the call to end it. Closes his eyes and looks up at the sky.

DANIEL (CONT'D)  
 (whispering)  
 Goddamit Bickel. Don't screw this  
 up or I'll be fucked.

INT. JONES'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Jones is on the phone, looking at the books on his bookshelf.

JONES  
 I understand, but I've found some  
 anomalies that I'd like to compare  
 against other records.

BICKEL (V.O.)  
 It's a highly unusual request.

Jones shakes his head, pulling a book from the shelf, *Medical Anomalies of the 20th Century*.

JONES  
 Really? What about your position of  
 being completely transparent. I  
 believe the phrase was 'we have  
 nothing to hide'?

He sits at his desk and opens his book, waiting for a response.

BICKEL (O.S.)  
 It's proprietary data, Dr. Jones.

JONES  
 Should I call your boss and tell  
 them that we're not going to  
 participate in the study?

Jones has a page leafed, and he flips open to it. It's an image of a magnetic field surrounding a CT Scanner.

BICKEL (O.S.)  
 With all due respect, that's not  
 your call, Dr. Jones. Dr. Branch is  
 the primary P.I.

JONES  
 And who do you think she's gonna  
 listen to? Someone she's known for  
 15 years or you and your salesman?

Silence on the other end of the line. Jones is extremely patient, flipping the page.

BICKEL (O.S.)  
I'll get back to you.

Jones hangs up the phone, picks up a pencil, makes notes.

INT. FROZEN CORK - NIGHT

Daniel returns, agitated. He freezes as he sees...

Kate smiling and laughing with Dutton. Kate nods to Daniel, and Dutton whirls around.

Daniel puts on a face. *If he wasn't the goddam client...*

DANIEL  
Hey, how you doing?

DUTTON  
Tell this lady, I'm a doctor, will ya? I don't think she believes me.

DANIEL  
He's a doctor. But I didn't think doctors hung out in places like this.

DUTTON  
What'd you say your name was again? David. Damian.

DANIEL  
Daniel -- And you're in my seat, pal.

Daniel flushes with rage, balling a fist. Kate notices, and Dutton doesn't move. Instead, he throws his arm around the back of the chair and cranes his neck to look at Daniel. *They lock eyes as...*

DUTTON  
Daniel, right. Well, I hang here every night. You never know where you can find a warm body.  
(taking Kate's hand)  
Kate, it's been nice -- Too short, but nice.

Kate gives him a polite smile, tense -- but ignoring a fuming Daniel.

KATE  
Hope to see you again.

DUTTON  
Keep coming here and you will. I'm  
a creature of bad habits.

Kate appreciates him... Dutton rises, winks at her... nods to Daniel, and moves off. Daniel watches him in anger.

DANIEL  
Fucking hack doctors around here...

She recoils.

KATE  
You know -- jealousy isn't a turn  
on. And its way too early for  
that.

DANIEL  
(Sighs)  
I know... I'm sorry. I'm not  
usually the jealous type. You may  
not believe this -- but I don't  
actually have a habit of flirting  
with women on airplanes.

KATE  
So I'm special, am I?

DANIEL  
Damn right... You're... electric!

Her cheeks flush. *Whoa! Accelerating this fast is a little breathtaking!*

KATE  
Daniel Forrester, I think I've had  
enough for one night.

She rises, collects her belongings.

DANIEL  
You have a number?

KATE  
Maybe -- But no more of that shit!

...and she exits.

He SIGHS and flags his WAITRESS for a check... pulls out his cellphone, sees another message from Bickel. *Oh hell!*

The waitress surprises him as...

WAITRESS  
Here's your check.

DANIEL  
Thanks.

WAITRESS  
Also, your lady said you dropped  
this.

She hands him Kate's business card with her phone number.  
Daniel pulls out his wallet, puts two hundred-dollar bills  
into her hand.

DANIEL  
Thanks. Keep it, honey.

On her glowing look to him.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Nora sits, scrolling patiently through images on her  
computer. Completely locked in, she fails to see her HUSBAND,  
MIKE, 40 come from behind.

He massages the back of her shoulders with his fingertips,  
one hand holding an unopened can of beer.

MIKE  
I worry about you, honey.

NORA  
I know... Are the kids down?

MIKE  
(sighs)  
You should spend more time with  
people who love you, less with  
people who aren't here.

NORA  
They're somewhere else, and they  
need help.

MIKE  
Maybe you need help...

*She's on a mission and doesn't need distractions.*

NORA  
(annoyance)  
(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)  
Oh, Mike -- Stop it!

He carries his beer into the adjacent living room, plunks himself down on a couch... turns on the TV.

INT. DINING ROOM - LATER

The television drones in the background, and Nora glances over her shoulder at Mike. He's sleeping soundly.

She stretches her neck, yawning... clicks to the next set of images, suddenly...

She stops, sits back in her chair -- staring at the screen.

The image is a perfect match to the photo of Eleanor's 50th anniversary from her vision.

NORA  
Gotcha.

She clicks on the image -- it takes her to a social media page for DAPHNE CODY.

Yaayy! She closes her eyes and pumps her fists, a silent celebration.

Nora clicks on an icon -- a dialogue box emerges with Daphne's image in it. She begins writing.

INT. JONES'S OFFICE - DAY

Bickel enters Jones's office, carrying a briefcase...he opens it...slaps down a document on Jones' desk.

Jones sits at his desk...drinks a coffee... studies the notes from Daniel's test.

BICKEL  
Dr. Jones...!!

JONES  
Mr. Bickel...  
(a beat)  
What about the files?

BICKEL  
Just what is your reason for  
wanting to see the files?



JONES

I'm a scientist, just like you. I need to see all of the science.

BICKEL

I'm the Senior Project Engineer. I have led development on this for the past four years. The science involved is AI, born from satellite and missile guidance systems. Its so far beyond your comprehension... you make me laugh!

JONES

You're paid to sell us a machine. I'm paid to make sure it's worth buying.

BICKEL

Worth buying?... You old fucker! You don't want anything to change.

JONES

I want to know about how your machine interacts with a patient -- before I make any changes.

BICKEL

The operations manual gives all the information you need. The rest is proprietary.

JONES

Proprietary?... Full transparency -- that's what you claimed!! There's no deal without that.

BICKEL

Any prior tests with patients are beyond the scope -- and Confidential.

JONES

You say you know your machine -- I know about the patient. You have no idea how your creation might really impact a patient's life -- or afterlife.

STUNNED SILENCE... Bickel is frozen with confusion.

JONES (CONT'D)  
I need the files because I know  
what to look for.

Jones remains deathly calm... waits... then...

Bickel opens the briefcase...slams the files on his desk.

BICKEL  
They're not to leave this room.

EXT. CLAYTON STREET - DAY

Daniel walks with Kate. She smiles brightly, enjoying their conversation. They reach a street corner, and Daniel quickly crosses, thoughtlessly trying to catch the light.

Kate pulls up short, stopping and waiting.

As Daniel finishes his scamper to the other side, he looks back as...

Kate SCOWLING at him from the far side, arms crossed. *What a butthead!* When the light turns, he crosses back over to meet her in the middle of the street. He holds her hand tightly.

EXT. SKI SLOPE - DAY

Kate skies down a slope with a polished, practiced grace.

Daniel tries to keep up, but cannot. Kate slows periodically so that they can stay together. They reach the bottom, Kate laughing.

DANIEL  
You've got a smooth, elegant style.  
I'm jealous.

KATE  
You're doing OK. Let's try a higher  
run,

Daniel looks up at the mountain, watching the chair lifts disappear over a ridge.

DANIEL  
Sure, what the Hell.

EXT. MOUNTAINTOP - DAY

Kate and Daniel stand at the top of the mountain, the view across the peaks *glorious*. The sun high in the sky, SKIERS plummet down the slopes.

*Nature is magnificent.* Kate breathes it all in... her eyes aglow.

Daniel takes her hand, and she doesn't resist.

KATE

Men like you look at home with mountains nearby.

DANIEL

I'll try to live up to the image...

KATE

You will. *It's all so beautiful up here!*

Kate digs a pole into the snow, moves next to him and pecks a kiss on his cheek -- and with two furious strides accelerates down the hill. She calls back to him...

KATE (CONT'D)

-- Last one down buys dinner.

Daniel scrambles after her. He plunges down the mountain, confident, poised, expert. Taking huge carving turns, he passes her.

Kate CAN'T BELIEVE IT!

They race to the bottom of the mountain, Daniel winning easily, confidence oozing at the bottom.

Kate comes to a stop -- exhausted, bewildered, hurt.

INT. KATE'S ROOM - DAY

She enters and throws her ski gloves on the bed, angrily. Agitated and fuming, she opens her laptop and continues on her writing in progress. Suddenly she stops.

KATE

You're a phony, and manipulative...  
and fucking gorgeous.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PEAKS - SUNSET

The ski lodge is bathed in a warm glow.

INT. KATE'S ROOM - SUNSET

Kate is primping nervously at the mirror, dressing for dinner, thinking hard. She suddenly relaxes, then makes up her mind -- *Serves him right!*

KATE  
Did I mention that I'm married?  
(smiles)  
Adios, Daniel!

EXT. RESTAURANT SUN DECK - NIGHT

Daniel and Kate dine, an open bottle of wine sitting in the middle of the table, meals half-eaten. The sun sets as they flirt quietly.

KATE  
So, you can't ski, huh?

DANIEL  
I never said I couldn't ski.

KATE  
Then why the act?  
(a beat)  
Wait... you were giving me a sales job, weren't you?

DANIEL  
I'm not trying to sell you anything.

KATE  
Except *yourself*. It's your salesman strategy -- right?...It's a ploy, hide your superiority to get sympathy...

His cat is out of the bag. He takes the abuse silently.

KATE (CONT'D)  
What the fuck, Daniel? Why would you do something like that?

*Now it's either repentance or defensiveness as...*

DANIEL

I don't know... I guess to keep you interested, guessing -- wanting to know more...

Anger surges... her face reddens.

KATE

I am not one of your prospects you can play games with!... I don't want to guess. I want to know you're genuine.

DANIEL

Yeah, you do.

She's angrier still.

KATE

NO... I fucking don't, Daniel.

Daniel takes a drink, as THUNDER rumbles in the mountains.

KATE (CONT'D)

I wrote an article on it. Sales theory portrays the prospect - ME - as being a gullible sap to be manipulated. Well it's a goddamn scam, and I resent it.

DANIEL

You wanna know the truth?

KATE

(sarcastic)

--Is it the truth? --

DANIEL

You keep men guessing about you... you've had men falling at your feet your entire life --

She takes a sip of her wine, staring down the glass at him.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

--And you can get them to do anything you want.

KATE

Bullshit!...

It's DEFENSE -- she can't admit to anything -- yet. Her tone softens as...

KATE (CONT'D)

Is that what you think?... You know the tragedy is -- I can't trust you... *now that I want to.*

A louder CRACK OF THUNDER.

DANIEL

Okay, truce. I'll let you in on a little secret. I've never met a girl like you. Someone who can get in my head and... stay there -- and I like it! -- *I love it!* There's nowhere I'd rather be on my last night in this godforsaken place than right here -- with you.

He reaches across the table and takes her hand. She doesn't pull away. A FLASH of LIGHTNING startles them. The waiter appears as...

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Two double brandies -- quick.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM 112 - NIGHT

Jones pores over FILES AND IMAGES, several folders open on a desk... more piled on top of the LS machine.

Jameson watches him work... sneering. *What an ultimate nerd!*

JAMESON

Goddam night shift -- *with you again.*

Jones doesn't even look up at him.

JAMESON (CONT'D)

Hey, I'm talking to you.

JONES

I know. I'm working, and if we have to be here together, I'd much rather we be here in silence.

JAMESON

Maybe I'll go find that new nurse ...see if she wants to ride with me in the Beechcraft Bonanza.

Jones looks up at him, shaking his head.

JONES

Maybe you should -- But you should also maybe take a look at this.

He holds up two images. They look almost identical.

JAMESON

Is this like some kid's game where I have to find the difference in the picture?

JONES

No, this one is Daniel Forrester... This one is from Eleanor Cody, the very first person that they put in there.

JAMESON

-- So...

JONES

-- So, the same aura is floating above the top of the capsule. In each case, the serotonin levels drop precipitously.

JAMESON

You've been reading too many of your goddamn books again, Doctor.

JONES

I know you don't believe any of my theories, but what if we're seeing a soul departing from the body before it dies. What if death, in a metaphysical sense, occurs before the body.

JAMESON

(laughs)

If I had that on tape, the ethics board would draw and quarter you.

Jones concentrates on the file, murmuring to Jameson.

JONES

Well, medical malpractice is going around like the plague these days anyway... Oh, that's a shame!

JAMESON

-- What?

JONES

Eleanor Cody died last week.

Jameson GUFFAWS, slapping his knee and nearly toppling out of the chair.

JAMESON

You hear that, Lisa? -- Stupid machine can bring people back, but can't keep 'em alive. Now if you could kindly take out Daniel Forrester I'd love it.

JONES

What IS your problem with Forrester?

JAMESON

I...just don't like him. He's nosy.

JONES

Look I don't care for them either -- but Forrester flies to Denver tomorrow --

JAMESON

They come in here acting like they know how to practice medicine, selling snake oil... Bullshit artists.

JONES

I'm not gonna argue with you. But if you're not even going to feign interest in the data...just go fly away in your airplane, *please*.

Jameson becomes thoughtful as an idea begins to form...

JAMESON

You know, Doc, that's the first intelligent thing you've said to me yet -- but its not an airplane. Its a nine-hundred thousand dollar limo for the sky.

Jameson gets up and smiles, patting Jones on the shoulder as he passes.

JAMESON (CONT'D)

Don't worry, I'm not gonna fly tonight.

(MORE)



JAMESON (CONT'D)

I'm not a good enough pilot to fly  
through this storm.  
*But you gave me an idea...* Gonna  
get some coffee. Want some?

Jones nods.

JONES

You know... they call your Bonanza  
the doctor killer.

On Jameson's smile as he pushes through the door...

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Nora sits on a chair, patiently waiting, staring at the door.  
Next to her, Daphne, 25, fidgets, rubbing her dress.

DAPHNE

Are we allowed to talk?

Daphne's face is ghastly white, and she's shaking.

NORA

Yes, of course. And you don't have  
to stay if you don't want to. I  
don't want you to feel any  
pressure.

DAPHNE

I'm. I don't know... Afraid? I know  
you said it's my grandma, but how  
do you know? I mean...  
(a beat)  
...this is really weird.

Nora rises, rubs her shoulders, motherly.

NORA

I know. I would never have  
contacted you if I didn't think it  
was critically important for you to  
be here.

Daphne smiles, holding Nora's hand.

NORA (V.O.)

You know, the first time I met a  
real ghost, I was about your age.  
Right outta college, trying to make  
a home.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

The house is stark, boxes still piled in corners, unpacking feverishly underway. A YOUNGER NORA cuts open a box, a YOUNGER MIKE carries another to a different room.

A SCRATCH at the window, SHRILL and LONG -- startles Nora.

The SCRATCHING again, and Nora stands up, edging to the window, leaning to look out, then --

YEYAAAH!... she screams. IT'S A BADLY BURNED FACE... A BOY, 7, HOVERS NEXT TO THE WINDOW GLASS. She SCREAMS in terror again... there is BLUISH HUE emanating from the boy... and she topples backward.

Mike flies into the room as the boy GRATES his agonized fingers against the glass.

MIKE

Jesus, what is it, Nora?

Nora -- speechless, points to the window

Mike rushes past her, peering out the window as...

There is nothing out there. *Merciful heaven -- it's gone!*

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Nora lies awake, watching the shadows dance across the ceiling. Mike sleeps soundly next to her.

SCREECH, SCRATCH -- A ghastly noise at the window...

Nora sits up in fear... and dares to look out the window next to her, and...

The gruesome boy is there, staring expressionless -- with deep, blue, hollow eyes.

Softly, she leaves her bed, and enters the bathroom. -- *In the mirror she can still see the boy.*

TAP --TAP -- SCRAATCH.

Nora and the boy lock gazes, then... Nora closes her eyes and takes a deep breath --

NORA

-- Don't hurt me, ok?

The boy shakes his head -- *Nora is baffled... unsure.*

Mike stirs, but quickly settles back to sleep.

Nora silently approaches the window. *This takes unbelievable courage!* The boy is just inches away -- as Nora unlocks it, he slaps a hand on the glass (as we have seen before.)

NORA (CONT'D)

Don't hurt me, please.

The boy NODS and slowly, soundlessly, Nora opens the window. It needs only a crack before a rush of eerie blue light enters the bedroom, icy cold.

The specter flies away in a streak of bluish light to another room -- Nora follows...

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Nora, awestruck and terrified, watches as the ghost solidifies, hovering just above the carpet. He looks back at Nora -- a haggard, burned face -- then floats to a wall.

He drops to his knees, tries to pry away the baseboard. But his hands pass directly through it.

He looks at Nora. She edges toward him... kneels next to him, searching for a seam. She finds it easily, a small section of baseboard that has been pulled on and off for years.

She pulls it off. The boy reacts instantly, excited...He dives down onto his stomach, reaching into a small hole in the wall. When he pulls his hands out again, they are empty. He points to the hole.

Nora reaches in and pulls out an ancient baseball card. She holds it up for him to see. He smiles his grim, burned smile.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Daphne stares at Nora who smiles, sadly.

DAPHNE

He wanted a baseball card?

NORA

-- He did.

DAPHNE

-- Why?

NORA

It was the last gift his father  
gave to him before he died.

A CREAKING from the hallway, and Daphne clutches Nora's hand.

DAPHNE

How do you know that?

NORA

He showed me...

DAPHNE

-- How?

NORA

The same way your grandmother  
showed me...

The CREAKING is louder, *unnaturally loud*, STAMPING and quick.  
The cold engulfs them.

NORA (CONT'D)

Everyone who returns needs  
something.

DAPHNE

And my grandma needs me?

NORA

I think so.

*The wind whips around them, THE ROOM GLOWS WITH A BLUE ENERGY.*

NORA (CONT'D)

Eleanor. I know you're here. I've  
brought someone to see you.

Daphne hides behind Nora.

NORA (CONT'D)

Eleanor, you're frightening Daphne.  
Please, I know what you feel. I  
know the anger. But there are still  
people who love you.

The wind dissipates -- the energy coalescing into a flowing shape. It solidifies as footsteps approach.

NORA (CONT'D)

Daphne, can you say hello?

NOTHING... Daphne whispers into Nora's ear.

DAPHNE  
I can't see her.

NORA  
Can you feel her?

DAPHNE  
-- Yes.

NORA  
-- Then tell her.

Daphne edges out from behind Nora.

DAPHNE  
Grandma. It's me... Daphne.

The energy brightens... glowing beams of light. Nora puts a hand up in front of Daphne -- shielding her.

DAPHNE (CONT'D)  
-- What's wrong?

Nora is becoming concerned. *But -- it has to happen.*

NORA  
Nothing... Keep going.

DAPHNE  
Grandma, this woman found me because ... you *showed her* a picture of us together at your anniversary.

The light beams converge inward, revealing a shape as...

ELEANOR WALKS OUT OF THE LIGHT and stands in front of them.

DAPHNE (CONT'D)  
Now I can feel that you're here. I wish I could really see you -- One more time...

Eleanor looks inquiringly at Nora... and brushes blue tears from her face.

NORA  
It's all right -- I know you're in pain... but that secret's safe with me.

Eleanor seems relieved... and reaches out for Daphne -- but stops, dropping her hands. The bluish glow fades as...

NORA (CONT'D)  
 It's ok, Eleanor...  
 (a beat)  
 ...Daphne, your grandmother would  
 like to show you something now.  
 Would that be alright?

Daphne weeps, choked up -- and nods her assent.

NORA (CONT'D)  
 She's ready, Eleanor. *But please be  
gentle.*

Eleanor takes Daphne's hand -- and Daphne's head whips back,  
 the light and spirit soaking into her -- She chokes.

Daphne drops to the floor, eyes blue, coughing.

NORA (CONT'D)  
 Eleanor -- oh dear, oh dear...

Daphne takes fleeting, rasping breaths, muscles tightening.

NORA (CONT'D)  
 Eleanor. Enough. STOP!

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Dr. Jameson is on his cell sitting in a darkened car. RAIN  
 and an occasional LIGHTNING FLASH punctuate his angry  
 conversation.

JAMESON  
 I don't really give a shit what it  
 takes. Lock em out ... and toss  
 their stuff in a dumpster. If you  
 can't manage the property I'll find  
 someone who isn't a total --  
 INCOMPETENT. IDIOT!

He drops the phone on the seat and gets out of the car.

EXT/INT. RURAL AIRPORT - NIGHT

CAMERA FOLLOWS as he walks up to the door of a small airport  
 hangar, unlocks it... goes to one of the two planes inside.

He pulls out a small bag from his jacket. He takes off the  
 gas cap of the plane. In the darkened hangar we can't see  
 what it is... that he pours into the gas tank.

(WE'LL FIND OUT IN THE NEXT EPISODE THAT ITS SUGAR!)

He glances up at the plane window. LIGHTNING FLASHES on a *hazy old face staring at him*. He freaks out and falls backward, dropping the gas cap.

He searches frantically, sweeping his hands over the pavement in the dark... suddenly he freezes as...

CLACK CLICK CLACK... It's *footsteps...coming nearer*.

A misty outline of a figure steps around the nose of the plane -- and stops.

He doesn't see it -- He jumps up -- replaces the gas cap and runs out the door.

ELEANOR -- transparent in light and shadow -- watches him go and DISSOLVES away.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Kate and Daniel stumble down the moody hotel hallway. Its right out of a Film Noir movie! *They are plastered.*

KATE

Somewhere I read... drinking at high altitude is like double -- an' you better believe it.

Daniel laughs, stumbling also...getting handsy with her. She fumbles with the key and the door. Daniel wrenches it open as...

INT. KATE'S ROOM - NIGHT

They careen into the room and bounce on the bed, laughing. Daniel starts taking off his coat, shirt. He pulls at his shoes and tumbles to the floor with a curse. Kate, with her sweater half-way over her head, bursts out laughing.

They begin some drunk foreplay.

INT. KATE'S ROOM - NIGHT (3AM)

SNOW BLOWS and WIND HOWLS outside, blowing tree branches.

Daniel wakes with a start... sweating... pulse pounding... gasping for breath. He looks at Kate, sleeping next to him.....

A CREAK and THUMP from the bathroom... He slips out of bed, goes to the window -- his naked body rimmed in night glow.

He looks out, sees tree branches banging the wall. His breath fogs the glass...

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

He closes the door gently, leaves it ajar. He does not turn on the light, instead operating in the eerie glow of the small bathroom night light. He looks around. He's alone, but at a glance, he can see...

THE BED THROUGH THE CRACK IN THE DOORWAY, KATE STILL SLEEPING SOUNDLY.

He cups his hands and sucks water from the sink faucet. He looks up at the mirror...

PARALYZING SHOCK.

DANIEL

*Holy Christ!*

There are TWO reflections of himself -- side by side, staring back. He reaches out to touch the mirror -- two Daniels reach out!

DANIEL (CONT'D)

(urgent whisper)

Kate!!

He looks through the partly open door --

OH MY GOD. IT'S ELEANOR... She's standing over Kate, watching her sleep. She turns and looks at him.

ELEANOR

(whispering)

Don't go, Daniel. Now it's too late.

DANIEL

(stressed)

Kate, please come here...

She stirs and mumbles --

KATE

What?

DANIEL

Please come in the bathroom...

She rolls out of bed and walks through the moonlight naked --  
*No trace of Eleanor.*



KATE  
Everything ok?

DANIEL  
What's better than me in your  
room... ?

KATE  
Huh?

He points to the mirror...

DANIEL  
Two of me in your room. You see  
it?

KATE  
See what?

He sighs...and two reflections sigh with him

DANIEL  
Either Something's wrong with my  
head or there are two reflections  
of me. What do you see?

KATE  
Two beautiful, naked jaybirds.

DANIEL  
You don't see anything -- standing  
right between us?

She shakes her head.

DANIEL (CONT'D)  
What does this mean? I must be  
going crazy.

KATE  
I read that Abraham Lincoln saw a  
double image in a mirror before he  
died... I'm getting cold.

She leaves the bathroom. Glancing back, she nods to the bed,  
smiling.

Daniel flicks the light on-and-off, then follows as...

In the mirror behind him, the reflection of his back shows  
him leaving the room --

SUDDENLY HIS REFLECTION MORPHS INTO THAT OF ELEANOR STARING AFTER HIM -- WITH AN URGENT, ALARMED EXPRESSION!!

She lunges out of the mirror -- reaching out to grab him... and barely misses.

INT. ROOM 802 - EARLY MORNING

A warm, cozy dawn glow pours in through the windows.

Daniel, impeccably dressed, watches Kate sleep from the desk chair. With a pen in his hand, he writes in phrases... thinking of the right words... carefully pausing to ensure that he's not disturbed her.

When he's satisfied, he folds the note in half... writes her name on it. He rises without sound and deftly crosses the room. He drops the note on the kitchenette counter.

He glances back only once before opening the door and leaving Kate behind.

EXT. SMALL AIRFIELD - EARLY MORNING

Daniel climbs into the small private plane that warms up on the apron. It taxis and takes off into a sky with rugged cloud banks.

A man watches from beside the plane parked in the hangar. The SILHOUETTED MAN steps into the sunlight -- watching. Its Jameson!

INT. AIRPLANE - EARLY MORNING

Daniel jostles in the small charter plane. The only passenger on this BUMPY ride, he grips the armrest. He opens the window shade, looks outside.

Clouds are black and foreboding, and swirling snow drives against the fuselage.

PILOT (O.S.)

Mr. Forrester, we're hitting some turbulence. I'm looking for some better air so we can ...

The engine SPUTTERS and DIES. The plane lurches throwing Daniel against the side wall, slamming his head. Dazed, he looks over at the pilot.

PILOT (CONT'D)  
Mr. Forrester. We're going down.

INT. HOSPITAL RECEPTION DESK - MORNING

BERNICE, 30, is the reception nurse on the emergency call phone... She is listening with growing alarm and...PAIN!

BERNICE  
Of course, Sheriff. We'll respond right away.

She slams the phone down... rushes down the hall to...

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Dr. Dutton peers out of an office...

BERNICE (CONT'D)  
DR. DUTTON! It's a plane crash on the mountain.

Dutton grabs his medical bag and a jacket and rushes out, Bernice hustling with him as...

DUTTON  
Get Jones, get everybody! Prep the LS with type O and plasma.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT

Dutton, rushing to the ambulance, almost knocks over Dr. Branch. She reacts with astonishment.

DUTTON  
Plane Crash. One survivor. It's bad.

The ambulance screams off with him.

EXT. PLANE CRASH SITE - DAY

Dutton runs from the ambulance, through the snow to the victim... a mass of bloody clothes, crumpled legs and arms, *and a horribly mangled face.*

*Dutton has seen a lot of ruined bodies before -- but even Dutton is horrified at this --*

DUTTON (CONT'D)  
-- Oh my god...Forrester!

INT/EXT HOSPITAL ENTRANCE - DAY

Dr. Branch waits with Jones and Nurse Bernice at the door.  
The ambulance pulls up. Dutton bursts out of the doors.

DUTTON  
We'll need the LS. Bernice, call  
Bickel, STAT...

Evelyn Branch freezes... eyes widening with shock as she sees  
the gurney coming toward her.

BRANCH  
Dear God!

Jones sees the incoming stretcher, and his face sinks.

JONES  
Jesus Christ. Is that? --

SERIES OF SHOTS - SLOW MOTION

The paramedics rush the bloody gurney through the doors and  
down the hall.

Bernice looks in horror and hurries down the hall.

Jones calls Bickel and screams in the phone.

Branch follows as fast as she is able... struggling.

Blood drips from the dangling hand on the gurney, leaving a  
trail on the floor.

The doors swing open in room 112 and the gurney is pushed up  
next to the open capsule of the LS machine.

Bernice and another nurse start cutting clothes off the body.

Jones authenticates his credentials at the console of the LS  
Machine.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM 112 - MORNING

The LS screen comes to life.

LISA  
Good morning, Dr. Jones.

JONES  
Please run diagnostics.

LISA  
As you wish.

Daniel sinks into the ooze, the tentacles gripping him. There is a stunned silence in the room as the machine takes over. The capsule closes, the headpiece clicking into place. Daniel is released into suspended animation.

LISA (CONT'D)  
Patient name: Forrester, Daniel.  
(a beat)  
Hello, Daniel.

END OF EPISODE 1