

**A SCOTTISH GEM**

Screenplay by

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Based on a true story and novel  
Carole's Story...A Scottish Gem

by Michele M. Rodger

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FADE IN:

TITLE: Port Glasgow, Scotland - 1972 (BLACK AND WHITE)

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

**MARGARET**, 39, brown eyes, short brown hair turns on the radio and walks briskly out of the kitchenette.

KIDS BEDROOM

**CAROLE RODGER**, 6, **LINDA**, 9, **DEKA**, 11, and **ELAINE**, 3, skinny and pale sleep on two old shabby, unclean beds, shivering underneath their worn-out coats.

MALE RADIO VOICE (O.S.)  
(soft background music)  
Christmas Eve Morning in Port  
Glasgow. A happy time for some  
people, last minute shopping,  
lighting the tree, presents for the  
lucky ones, some aren't so lucky...

Margaret holds baby **CHRISTINE**, 1, crying, in her arms.

MARGARET  
Get up you lazy brats.

The kids, wearing pajamas, jump out of bed, but Carole takes her time. The alarm clock shows 7:02 AM. The mother pulls Carole by the hair.

MARGARET (CONT'D)  
Hey, little princess, there's  
laundry to be done.  
(to Linda)  
And kitchen duty for you.

Linda timidly rushes by her mum.

YOUNG CAROLE  
Mummy, it's so so early. Please!

Margaret raises her hand but hurries after Deka who has disappeared.

## KITCHEN

Deka opens the small refrigerator containing only a milk bottle, some eggs, and butter.

MARGARET

Don't you dare to touch that bottle! It's for the baby.

YOUNG DEKA

Mum, we're all hungry.

MARGARET

There is no money for breakfast. And I can't pick up my food stamps until this afternoon. AND you good-for-nothing got fired from your job.

Young Linda and Carole stroll in.

YOUNG LINDA

Mum, Daddy will come home for Christmas, right?

MARGARET

Nae, only could handle his bottle but not his family.

YOUNG CAROLE

But we need at least a Christmas tree.

MARGARET

Hell nae!

## KIDS BEDROOM

ZOOM into a 1971 newspaper POSTER AD hanging on the wall:

"World Heavyweight Championship **JOE FRAZIER VS. MUHAMMAD ALI**. Fight of the Century at Madison Square Garden in New York City: March 8, 1971."

Deka bites his lips while pulling out an aged shoe box from underneath the bed, opens it, and removes three of his Muhammed Ali collector trading boxing cards. He manages to sneak out of the house.

## KITCHEN

Carole is scrubbing dishes when Deka returns with a skinny

Christmas tree and a loaf of fresh bread wrapped in a newspaper. Margaret is quick to rip it out of his hands and slaps Deká's face.

MARGARET

Great, just great. My son has become a thief; like father, like son.

YOUNG DEKA

No Mum, I paid for it!

Margaret ignores Deka and begins tearing the tree apart. Then, she shuffles the pieces into the stove. Deka wraps his arms around his weeping sisters.

YOUNG DEKA (V.O.)

Someday, I'll get us out of this mess. I swear!

INT. MCMANN'S HOUSE/FOYER, LINLITHGOW, SCOTLAND, 1999 - MORNING (IN COLOR)

**CAROLE MCMANN**, née Rodger, now 33, a stunning redhead, big brown eyes, petite, charming, playful, passes an antique Lowboy. There are two framed photographs: a wedding picture, showing her at age 24 and her husband **RICHARD** aka **DICK MCMANN**, at age 31, jet-black hair, blue eyes, tall, slender, easy on the eye, but temperamental. The second one is with their kids **KRISTY**, almost 6, brown hair, big green eyes, naturally ruby red lips, rather shy, and **JOSEPH**, 2 1/2, brown hair, blue eyes, round face, making a funny grimace. On display are also cards "Happy 40th Birthday to my lovely Husband, Happy 40th Birthday to Dad," and "Happy Birthday to my Son." Before reaching the door, Carole shouts out:

CAROLE

(singing)

Linda, I'm heading out now. I'll be back in a couple of hours.

LINDA (O.S.)

(now 36)

Okidoki, take your time.

The kids stick their heads out from the upstairs railing.

EXT. GARAGE

Carole drives out of the garage which is attached to a luxurious house. The rain throws a glittery blanket over the manicured garden's grass.

EXT. MARIE'S BOULANGERIE, VICTORIA STREET, EDINBURGH

Carole exits the Bakery shop, carrying a large shopping bag.

WOMAN (V.O.)  
Merry Christmas, Mrs. McMann

CAROLE  
Thank you. Merry Christmas, Marie.

Rain begins to kick in and Carole struggles to open her umbrella. Exiting a Coffee shop from across the street, Dick, dressed in a stylish outfit, wraps his arm around a bleach-blond **MARILYN MONROE** look-alike. **CATHERINE**, mid-20s, hurries around a black sports car while Dick opens the driver's side door. That's when his eyes catch a glimpse of Carole's face disappearing behind the umbrella, rushing down Victoria Street.

INT. MCMANN'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Carole and Linda's chitter-chatter and laughter flow freely while decorating the Christmas tree.

CAROLE  
(singing)  
It's the most wonderful time of the  
year. With the kids' jingle  
belling and everyone telling...

Carole retrieves the angel tree topper from a box and places the angel on top of the tree. Footsteps create a crackle effect on the wood floor. Carole turns her head smiling at Dick, who is dressed in his usual business suit.

CAROLE (CONT'D)  
Nice surprise to see you coming  
home so early.

He responds with a hard look and leaves Carole briefly confused.

DICK  
Caz, we need to talk.

His head gestures towards Linda to leave.

CAROLE  
Nae, Linda stays. What's going on?

Carole steps down from the stool.

DICK

C'mon, Caz. You can't be that naïve. We both know that things haven't been the same between us anymore for a long time. We're way over our heads with this lifestyle.

Linda abruptly withdraws herself from the scene.

CAROLE

Stop it, Dick! You were the one who wanted to get married, have children, move into this house...

DICK

Give me a break. Now, you sound just like your mother.

CAROLE

And you live right up to your name.

DICK

And I can't ever live up to YOUR expectations. It always is the Rodger way, isn't it? You're setting your bar so high!

(pause)

I've been seeing another woman!

Carole's gaze wanders into the distance.

INT. KITCHEN 1971 - DAY (BLACK AND WHITE)

Snowflakes dance outside the window. A skinny Christmas tree leans against the wall. The kids being scared hold each other's hands.

THEIR FATHER

(waving a Whisky bottle)

I'm so sick and tired of you, Maggie. I'm leaving for good!

He takes a big gulp out of the bottle, taps his index and middle finger against his temple and salutes. Carole's teary eyes meet with her Dad's...

BACK TO PRESENT:

DICK

I've already packed a few things and get the rest after Christmas. Caz, I want a divorce!

INT. FOYER 1997 - DAY

A very pregnant Carole clutches little Kristy's hand. Dick kicks the umbrella stand and his hand trembles as he reaches for the doorknob. Carole bites her lips. He storms out the door yelling.

BACK TO PRESENT:

Carole shakes violently her head and tears up.

DICK

Caz? Caz, did you hear what I just said?

CAROLE

Yes, loud and clear, you bloody bastard. I hate you, Richard McMann! I always thought that you'd be different, better, but you're just a man...

She punches both her fists into his chest. Dick stands there coldly and unmoved.

Kristy and Joseph come running in.

KRISTY

Daddy...

JOSEPH

Dada...

Linda rushes in and collides with Dick as he is about to leave.

DICK

Daddy has to go back to work, okay? I'll be back in a few days.

KRISTY

But Daddy, it's Christmas!

Dick ignores Kristy's plea and hurries out of the room.

LINDA

Kristy, take Joseph back upstairs for a little while, okay?

Kristy reluctantly leads her brother away. A sudden loud bang comes from the front door. Carole makes a dart for the window. She watches with teary eyes as Dick drags two suitcases and a large duffle bag into his silver Range Rover.

LINDA (CONT'D)

What in the world is going on, Caz?

CAROLE

Eh dinna ken. I guess, I always knew that there was something wrong. But for the kids' sake, I wanted to believe Dick that he had to work late and stay out overnight because of all those Millennium preparations.

LINDA

Well, that's a normal reaction.

CAROLE

Damn! Linda, Dick is f...ing leaving us! Do you think that I drove him away just like Mum drove Dad away?

(regaining composure)

Linda, please keep this to yourself for now. I can't spoil everyone's Holidays.

LINDA

Caz, you're not like Mum at all. And yes, I'll ...

Suddenly, Carole winces and moves her left hand underneath her right armpit.

LINDA (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

CAROLE

Not sure. It's probably just from the stress at work and working out at the gym.

But then, Carole breaks down in tears. Linda gently puts her arm around her.

INT. DINING ROOM - DECEMBER 31, 1999 - AFTERNOON

Margaret, now 66, frail, set the table for dinner. Glittery banners display "Happy Millennium New Year." The doorbell rings.

CAROLE

(singing)

I'll get it.



FRONT DOOR/FOYER

Carole opens the door and greets her brother Deka, now 38, blue eyes, short military-style red hair, athletically built, the backbone of the family, and his lovely wife **MICHELE**, 35, petite, long curly brown hair, hazel eyes. Carole quickly picks up the newspaper sitting on the small foyer table.

INSERT - NEWSPAPER HEADLINE - 12 December 1999

***One of our own: Deka Rodger (pictured), born and raised in Port Glasgow, has won the title as the new World Welterweight Boxing Champion!***

BACK TO SCENE

With her head bowed like a servant, Carole extends her arm.

CAROLE

(singing)

Hi Michele. *Halò* big Bro. I'm so pleased to have the honor of having a newly minted Champ over for dinner tonight.

DEKA

Well, thank you, Sis. But I am no Muhammad Ali...

Carole gently punches her brother into his chest.

LIVING ROOM - SOME TIME LATER

Carole dances around while handing out drinks.

DEKA

Nice big house you got, ugh! A far cry from where we grew up.

CAROLE

Days from the past. Let's keep them there. But thanks, Deka.

MICHELE

Where is Dick?

CAROLE

Well, he has to work all night.

DEKA

You must be joking.

MICHELE

What a shame. He'll be missing his amazing own Millennium Party.

CAROLE

He should be home by early tomorrow morning.

Michele frowns at Carole's rather harsh tone.

CAROLE (CONT'D)

I don't know about you guys, but I'm starving.

DINING ROOM

Chatter and laughter while enjoying all the different kinds of delicious food.

LINDA

I can't eat another bite. And your carrot coriander soup was delicious as always.

DEKA

We need some fine Port.

Michele is the only one waving her index finger indicating a "no." Linda and Deka nurse their Port, then raise their glasses.

DEKA (CONT'D)

To the Queen!

LINDA

To the Queen!

DEKA (CONT'D)

*Halò, a h-uile duine.* Does anyone know the difference between a wedding and a funeral?

(without hesitating)

Well, the funeral has one less drunk.

MICHELE

I can never get used to your Scottish humor.

CAROLE

(singing)

It's time to go outside and ring in the New Year.

MARGARET

You go ahead. I'm staying here in case the kids wake up.

Carole nods her head. Deka opens the front door and they are greeted by lots of singing neighbors and blowing horns *Auld Lang Syne* - "Let's drink to days gone by."

INT. CAROLE'S LIVING ROOM - January 1, 2000 - PAST MIDNIGHT

The party resumes. Music in: ROD STEWART "Having a Party." Everyone is dancing. Deka opens a bottle of Shieldaig Islay Single Malt Scotch Whisky while Margaret is placing glasses on the table. He gently hits a spoon against his glass. The singing stops.

DEKA

Michele and I want to share some news with you. My job contract has been extended until September 2002. But after that, we'll move to New York. I simply couldn't pass on that offer. And Michele loves the fact of being closer to her family.

CAROLE

Wow, so far away. I miss you guys already, but I'm happy for both of you. Let's drink to happiness.

Michele's eyes are on Carole as she empties a big glass of Whisky in one gulp. She shakes her head while elbowing Deka.

INT. CAROLE'S KITCHEN - MORNING

Carole hits the buttons on the wall phone like she wants to kill someone.

CAROLE

Dick, where are you?

DICK (V.O.)

What's up?

CAROLE

What's up? Kristy and Joseph are at the door waiting for you for the past hour.

DICK (V.O.)

Caz, I am so sorry. I just needed time to figure this all out.

(MORE)

DICK (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
I left Catherine for good. I want  
to come back home!

CAROLE  
Oh, really? You got some nerve,  
Mr. McGarrigle. How in the world  
can I ever trust you again, Dick?  
You can't just come back into our  
lives like nothing ever happened.

DICK (V.O.)  
I know, believe me, I know.

CAROLE  
Listen. The kids want to know  
where their Daddy is, and it breaks  
my heart to make up all these lies.

DICK (V.O.)  
Caz, I'm really sorry.

CAROLE  
You're a pathetic human being.

DICK (V.O.)  
You're right and I deserve  
everything you're saying. But I  
want my family back. I still love  
you.

CAROLE  
Let me think about it for the sake  
of Kristy and Joseph. But that  
doesn't mean that things will go  
back to just the way they were.  
And Dick, don't be late.

DICK (V.O.)  
I'll make it up to you, Caz. I  
promise. I even go to marriage  
counseling if you want me to.

A sudden click and silence from Carole's end.

VESTIBULE - MOMENTS LATER

Kristy and Joseph, bundled up in their winter jackets and  
wool caps look constantly towards the front door. Their  
overnight bags sit on the floor.

KRISTY  
Mummy, why is Daddy always late?

CAROLE

I just spoke to him, my *douce*.  
Something came up from work last  
minute, but he promised to make it  
up to you and Joseph.

Kristy's eyes become moist and Joseph frowns as usual. The kids turn around and quietly walk upstairs.

INT. CAROLE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Carole and Dick sit on the sofa, and just as he takes Carole's hand into his, the doorbell rings. She unwinds her hand to answer the doorbell.

INT./EXT. FRONT DOOR

Carole opens the front door only to lock eyes with a young, provocatively posing woman.

CAROLE

Yes, can I help you?

CATHERINE

Is Dick here?

Carole arches her eyebrows. Her face changes into disgust.

CAROLE

Oh, you must be Catherine. I wish  
I could say it's a pleasure to  
finally meet you, but hell *nae*,  
damn you coming to my house!

CATHERINE

I need to speak to Dick.

CAROLE

Have you ever stopped seeing him?

CATHERINE

No, of course, not!

CAROLE

Well, that's really interesting  
because my husband just told me  
that he left you and wants to come  
back home to us, his family. I  
suppose, once a liar, always a  
liar.

Carole's hand trembles as she slams the door in Catherine's face. Seconds later, Dick appears in the foyer.

DICK  
What's going on?

CAROLE  
Your mistress is outside MY house!  
You know what? I actually consider  
myself darn lucky to get rid of you  
"Ash hall."

Dick slowly moves towards the front door, pauses, and turns around.

DICK  
Well, Caz, I didn't get a chance to  
tell you that...

CAROLE  
*Och aye*, just get the hell out of  
here, Dick before I'll kill you!

DICK  
Very well, then. I find my way out.

He quickly dashes out the front door while she throws a shoe after him. Carole leans against the door and slides down into a fetal position and collapses.

INT. CAROLE'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Margaret glances through a magazine while the kids sit on the floor playing with their toys. Carole appears with a stack of books tucked under her arm. The top cover reads "PRICE WATERHOUSE - Business Marketing, Part II & III."

CAROLE  
Mum, thanks for watching the kids.

CAROLE (CONT'D)  
One more semester to go. They  
already offered me a pay raise.

MARGARET  
I very much enjoy spending time  
with my *ogha*. Caz, you can always  
count on me.

CAROLE  
Well, you have no idea how much  
this means to me. Mum, there is...  
(hesitating)  
(MORE)

CAROLE (CONT'D)

There is something that I wanted to talk to you for quite some time.

Margaret raises her eyebrows.

CAROLE (CONT'D)

Mum, I'm touched that you're helping me out with Kristy and Joseph and how affectionate you've become towards them. I just wish you could have loved me like that.

MARGARET

What are you saying? I always loved you. All of you.

CAROLE

But Mum, you never showed it. You were always angry. You never gave us any affection. Mum, you...

PETER

May God forgive you, Carole, for accusing me of such awful things. I did the best I could. You know that.

CAROLE

It's all good now. It really is!

But her mother is briskly heading out of the room.

INT. FOYER CAROLE'S NEW HOUSE - DAY

**BRENDA**, late 30s, athletic physique, short brown hair, rings the doorbell and finds the front door slightly ajar. She slips into the house.

BRENDA

*Halò*, anyone home?

Carole is surrounded by several unpacked boxes.

CAROLE

Oh, hi Brenda.

BRENDA

Hi Carole. Good to see that you've been pretty much settled in. Hey, listen. I joined a rock climbing club in Edinburgh. Why don't you come with me next Saturday?

CAROLE

Sounds exciting, but I don't know anything about rock climbing.

BRENDA

Oh, don't worry. You can try it out on an indoor wall and if you like it, you can move on to outdoor climbing.

CAROLE

I don't know...

BRENDA

C'mon, Carole. You need to get back living your life!

CAROLE

Well, it sounds great but...

BRENDA

Shush! I'll pick you up Saturday morning at ten, okay?

CAROLE

Let me check with Mum or Linda. Oh, and before I forget, do you want to join me and my friends from work for a few drinks late Friday afternoon?

BRENDA

Sure.

EXT./INT. "THE FOUR MARYS," PUB - LINLITHGOW - EVENING

Carole, Brenda, **JACQUI**, tall, long blond hair, **FAY**, and **DARYL**, both of medium height, brown hair, all early to mid-30s sit at the jam-packed Bar. Jacqui slips off the bar stool strolling behind the bar counter and firmly knocks on it several times. **CRAIG**, the Bartender turns around.

JACQUI

Hey, Craig. You don't mind serving us our usual red wine, do you?

CRAIG

Sorry, been darn busy. Oh, my, yes, it's Friday, THE night of my "Four Usuals" just like Legend has it that Queen Mary and her other four friends, all named Mary, snuck out for drinks.

(MORE)



CRAIG (CONT'D)  
 (saluting)  
 But aye, at your service, Ma'am.

JACQUI  
 Thanks, Craig. You're the best,  
 and make it this time for five,  
 please.

He instantly starts filling the glasses with red wine and places them in front of the girls. Clink, clink...

THE FIVE WOMEN  
 To our friendship!

EXT. CAROLE'S BACKYARD - DAY

Carole walks barefoot across the flower garden towards the terrace door while taking off her gardening gloves.

INT. BATHROOM/SHOWER

The back of Carole's silhouette reflects in foggy steam. The sound of running water almost drowns out Carole's singing. With one arm up at a time, she examines her breasts and armpits. Suddenly, the singing stops.

INT. DR. STEWART'S OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Stewart ushers Carole to the chair across from his desk. She notices her patient folder, dated August 22, 2000. Carole tries to read his face.

DR. STEWART  
 Mrs. McMann. The results showed  
 that there are cancer cells  
 present. I'm so sorry, but you  
 have estrogen-based breast cancer  
 and need to see a specialist  
 immediately.

Carole doesn't respond, seemingly in a state of shock.

DR. STEWART (CONT'D)  
 Mrs. McMann?

CAROLE  
 What? What are you saying? Three  
 months ago, you assured me that  
 there was nothing to worry about.

Their ongoing conversation is inaudible.

INT. HOSPITAL RECOVERY ROOM - DAY

Carole opens her eyes, looking surprised at the room she is in. And then, a middle-aged man, **DR. PALMER**, leans over her. Now it dawns on her where she is.

DR. PALMER

Mrs. McMann, I'm Dr. Palmer. How are you feeling?

CAROLE

Well, I definitely don't feel like dancing. But frankly, Dr. Palmer, it scares the living daylights out of me to ask you...

DR. PALMER

Mrs. McMann, we had to do a mastectomy. But the good news is that we caught it all.

Carole closes her eyes and tears are running down her cheeks.

CAROLE (V.O.)

Please, dear God, tell me this is not happening to me!

DR. PALMER

Unfortunately, your cancer spread and we had no other choice but to remove your right breast. We suggest that you'll receive hormone injections in your abdomen once a month instead of chemotherapy and radiation. This way, your hair won't fall out.

Carole avoids meeting his eyes.

DR. PALMER (CONT'D)

I'll refer you to a Physical Therapist, and you need to discuss with your doctor the option of breast reconstruction. A mastectomy is a very difficult experience for every woman. You're not the only one, you know that.

CAROLE

(sarcastically sighing)

Very well, then. I always wanted a boob job anyway.

DR. PALMER

Mrs. McMann, please, try to get some rest and I'll be seeing you tomorrow, okay? I also suggest that you talk this over with your family.

Dr. Palmer writes some notes on the chart and nods at Carole. Left alone getting sick and fevered half a sleep she grabs the phone dialing a number.

CAROLE

Hi sweetie. Yes, I can see Big Ben from my hotel window. Yes. Yes, if I have some extra time, I'll go to visit the Queen and the Palace. As soon as the conference is over, I promise to come home. But listen to me and be a good girl, okay? And get Nanny back on the phone. Miss you very much too. Kiss, kiss.

INT. CAROLE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Carole writes in her diary:

9 July 2001. Best news ever! I'm cancer-free and able to watch my children grow up. Thank you, dear God, thank you! So glad to have spared my family from all of this.

EXT. BEN LOMOND MUNRO, 3196 FEET - SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS - DAY

Carole, looking healthy with visibly enhanced boobs, Brenda, their guide IAN and three more **CLIMBERS** gather on top of the Munro.

BRENDA

You must be thrilled climbing your first Munro, Ben Lomond.

CAROLE

You bet. It feels like a new start. I'm glad that you kept pushing me.

BRENDA

I'm so proud of you, Carole. But listen.

(MORE)

BRENDA (CONT'D)  
I've been training to climb the  
Matterhorn in Switzerland.

CAROLE  
Wow, shut the front door. That  
sounds like a real adventure.

BRENDA  
It's every climber's dream, you  
know. But why don't you join me  
for the training and we could climb  
the Matterhorn together?

The group stops for a break capturing the breathtaking one-  
hundred-mile panoramic view, surrounded by thousands of  
wildflowers.

CAROLE  
This must be heaven on earth.

BRENDA  
Just wait until you're on top of  
the Matterhorn.

CAROLE  
That's way out of my league,  
Brenda. Right now, my thighs are  
about to fall off.

BRENDA  
That's normal, love. I know you  
can do it. I'll help you with a  
more serious training schedule.

CAROLE  
You know what? Aye, I can do this.

CAROLE (V.O.)  
I beat cancer and yes, I can climb  
the Matterhorn.

CAROLE (CONT'D)  
I just don't know if I have the  
heart to leave my two *wee bairns*  
for such a long time.

BRENDA  
Carole, you only live once. I'm  
sure that your Mum and Linda will  
look after them for a week or so.

Brenda and Carole exchange a high five.

INT. BRENDA'S KITCHEN - EVENING

Brenda pours herself a glass of red wine. A Scottish Landscape calendar hangs on the wall, displaying May 2002. She picks up the phone and dials a number.

BRENDA

Halò Carole, it's me. Sorry for the late hour. Quick question. Would you be interested in going on a blind date?

INT. CAROLE'S LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Carole relaxes on her recliner armchair feet up.

CAROLE

Wot?

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

BRENDA

Yes, you've heard me right. Jim's American cousin Sean is visiting and wants to meet a Bonnie Scottish Lassie.

CAROLE

Jim who?

BRENDA

Jim and Fiona from the climbing club.

(beat)

He is very handsome.

CAROLE

Who, Jim?

BRENDA

No, Sean, silly you. Any interest?

CAROLE

Sure. Why not.

BRENDA

Sean suggested meeting you this coming Sunday the 19th.

CAROLE

Shut the front door. That's the day before my Birthday. This must definitely be a lucky sign.

EXT. LINLITHGOW PALACE, OUTER GATE - MAY 19, 2002 - DAY

Aerial view of St. Michael's Church and Linlithgow Palace from the Peel, a ruin, surrounded by luscious greens and a loch, then focusing on the four European orders of chivalry, engraved above the arch of the fore entrance. One plaque displays: "Mary - Queen of Scots 1542 - 1587," and the other one shows a sign: "The Old Entrance."

**SEAN MCGARRIGLE**, 37, very tall, piercing blue-green eyes, high cheekbones, dark brown hair, handsome, athletically built, and a gentle soul. A big pre-digital camera with a zoom lens is hanging around his neck. He looks nervously at the people around him.

Suddenly, feeling a light tap on his shoulders and he slowly turns around. And there she is, flashing a wide smile, gorgeous with a mane of luscious, red hair dancing in the wind. Bedazzled by her appearance, his eyes sparkle with excitement, and a shy smile escapes his lips.

CAROLE

(a soft lilting voice)

You must be the American boy.

SEAN

Carole?

CAROLE

Aye. I'm Carole with an "e" at the end. And my middle name is Ann without an "e" at the end.

The ice is immediately broken and Sean holds Carole's hand longer than intended.

SEAN

How did you know?

Her eyes glide over his handsome face to point out the big camera and short trousers. Sean's face slightly turns reddish.

CAROLE

Never mind.

SEAN

Very nice to meet you, Carole with an "e."

CAROLE

Very pleased to meet you too, Sean. But my family and all my friends call me Caz.

The tip of his left collar is stuck underneath the woven camera strap which she spontaneously pulls out.

CAROLE (CONT'D)  
You've got beautiful eyes.

Sean extends his right arm and Carole slides her arm under his.

EXT./INT. LINLITHGOW PALACE - MAIN BUILDING

Inside the ruins of the Palace, they reach the disused King's Fountain in the courtyard. Visitors take pictures. Carole and Sean are engaged in a vivid, inaudible conversation. They pass the ancient five-meter King's Fountain and then arrive at the historic panels called "The Peels." Sean is pointing out the plaques with an inscription in French.

SEAN  
Hmm, I wonder what it says.

CAROLE  
It says that at the top of one of the tall turrets, Queen Margaret's Bower can be seen which is reputed to be haunted by a lady in white.

SEAN  
Oh, you know French?

CAROLE  
No French, just English. If you must know, the other side of the plaque displays the English version.

SEAN  
(grinning)  
I was just teasing you. I knew of the English version.

CAROLE  
Ah, I see. What else do you like to do?

SEAN  
Besides looking at you, I like hunting, playing bagpipes, motorcycling, and skiing.

CAROLE  
Cool. What else?

SEAN

Looking at you, kid. I love the  
sound of your voice. I ...

Carole blushes, puts her index finger on Sean's lips and  
grabs his hand. They proceed towards the Linlithgow Palace  
Great Hall. She looks at her wristwatch, which is  
displaying 12:18 PM.

CAROLE

I don't know about you, but I feel  
a bit *peckish*. There is a nice  
little Café on High Street that  
serves great pizza. And after  
that, we could go to my house for a  
cup of tea.

SEAN

I'm in.

INT. CAROLE'S LIVING ROOM

Carole and Sean relax on a rustic-style leather sofa,  
engrossed in their conversation. Sean is about to laugh when  
suddenly a grey-haired CAT moves silently into the room,  
jumping on Carole's lap when simultaneously, Sean jumps off  
the sofa.

SEAN

You have a cat?

CAROLE

Yes, I do. "Flossy meets Sean.  
Sean meets Flossy."

Sean freezes up.

CAROLE (CONT'D)

You look like you've just seen a  
ghost.

SEAN

Not a ghost, just a cat. I'm  
highly allergic to those creatures.

CAROLE

Don't worry about Flossy. She's  
very pleasant.

SEAN

Carole, I'm not worried about your  
cat. I'm worried about myself!



He begins sneezing and scratching his arms.

CAROLE

OMG, you're indeed allergic to cats. Sean, I'm so sorry that I made fun of you.

SEAN

Yeah, yeah, I got it.

Carole picks up Flossy and disappears. She opens the windows and allows the fresh air to come in.

CAROLE

Better?

SEAN

Much better.

CAROLE

I'm glad. But hey, tell me more about yourself.

SEAN

Well, a major point in my life was that after my Dad passed away seven years ago, my Mum has been living in my house. I just remember a funny story. Dad was always showing off that his sister's husband, my uncle Malcolm, delivered milk jugs with a kid named Sean Connery in the late 40s.

CAROLE

THE Sean Connery? Wow, shut the front door. My Dad also passed away seven years ago. But my parents were divorced for many years. Anyhow, I like that you're taking care of your Mum.

SEAN

Well, yes. It was the right thing to do. But it must have been hard on your Mum to raise so many children on her own.

She hesitates for a brief moment, her face overshadowed by a sudden sadness. He nods encouragingly.

CAROLE

Let's just say it wasn't easy for me and my siblings either. I got divorced two years ago.

SEAN

Sorry to hear.

CAROLE

Don't be. He was cheating on me.

Sean pulls out his wallet from the back of his pants. He removes a photograph of himself, dressed in a navy blue Police uniform, a Gold Tin #962 on his hat, standing next to a Police car from Suffolk County, Long Island, NY. She spontaneously takes the photograph out of his hands.

CAROLE (CONT'D)

Wow, you're a Policeman?

SEAN

Yeah, I'm a Police Sergeant at a local Police Department on Long Island.

CAROLE

A Detective, ugh. So, you live and work on Long Island?

SEAN

No Detective, just a Sergeant.

CAROLE

I don't care about ranks just the uniform.

Carole gets a good chuckle out of him.

CAROLE (CONT'D)

My sister-in-law's family is also from Long Island. They live in West Hempstead.

SEAN

Really? That's only about thirty-five minutes from my house. I live in East Islip. Are you a stay-at-home Mum?

CAROLE

No, I've been working for Price Waterhouse in the Marketing Department in Edinburgh since 1991, but before that in London in 1984.

(MORE)

CAROLE (CONT'D)

They offered me a job in Manhattan,  
but obviously, I didn't take it.

Sean's eyes catch all the photos on top of the chest of the drawer. He saunters away towards it and removes a particular photo and holds it in both his hands:

Carole, Kristy, and Joseph beaming with happiness.

The next photo shows Carole with a wide smile inside the cockpit of a Cessna, holding the control wheel firmly with both her hands.

SEAN

That looks pretty real, but...

CAROLE

Excusez-moi. I was flying that plane. My boyfriend at that time, and now ex-husband arranged a few lessons for my 21st Birthday.

SEAN

No way!

CAROLE

I've always had a knack for adventure.

He takes three more photographs in his hands - Carole inside a gigantic black and yellow hot air balloon, holding a glass of Champagne. Carole, dressed in a 1990-style outfit, is inside a rustic Cottage living room juggling six balls with both her hands. The other one shows her swallowing a small stick on fire which looks like a flaming sword.

SEAN

Why am I not surprised? You seem to be quite the daredevil. Speaking of flying. I'll be heading back home in a few days and I want to see you again. I'd like you to meet my Mum and my cousin. How about tomorrow?

CAROLE

You sure are moving fast, my American boy. But, yes, I'd love to.

SEAN

What's that all about calling me, my American boy?

Carole giggles. Then, he catches the time on Carole's wristwatch showing 5:30 PM.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Boy oh boy. Time flies if you have a good time, right? Thank you for a wonderful day, Caroleeee.

CAROLE

I really enjoyed your company as well. Sean, there is something I'd like to ... Never mind. *Ta ta fer new*, see you tomorrow?

Sean gets up and stands there as if hit by lightning. She blows him a kiss as he heads for the door.

EXT. BUS STATION

Sean hurries to the bus station as he sees the arriving bus.

INT. INSIDE THE BUS

Sean pulls out his wallet from the back pocket of his pants and pays his fare. He takes a seat at the window, wrapped up in daydreaming. Pretty houses fly by along the tree lined streets. Sean bolts up from his seat once he sees the Street sign: "Edinburgh 24Km."

SEAN

Shoot. I am traveling in the wrong direction.

The guy sitting next to him gets a good chuckle out of it. Sean jumps from his seat and presses the stop button.

INT. CAROLE'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Carole's eyes glide over her letter to Sean.

CAROLE (V.O.)

(reading)

*My dear American Boy. I had the most wonderful time spent with you. I felt this immediate, almost magical connection between us. Even though my family thinks that I'm completely nuts visiting a total stranger, I look so much forward to visiting you in New York.*

(MORE)

CAROLE (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
*The photo shall remind you not to forget me. And I can't still get over it that you live on Carole Lane. This must be a good omen for sure! TTFN (Ta ta fer new). Carole.*

Carole now writes on the back of her portrait "Linlithgow, Scotland, 1 June 2002, Carole." Then, she inserts the letter and photo into the envelope addressed to "Sean McGarrigle, 6, Carole Lane, East Islip, NY 11730, USA."

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Carole, the kids, Margaret, and Linda gather around the breakfast table. Carole pokes nervously around her plate. Margaret's wristwatch shows 7:52 AM. Linda takes the brochure lying on the table into her hands, featuring the picturesque village of Zermatt.

CAROLE  
 It still seems so surreal that I'm on my way to Switzerland. But I'm not at ease leaving Kristy and Joseph behind.

LINDA  
 Don't worry, Caz. This is a chance of a lifetime. We are so proud of you.

KRISTY  
 Mummy, everyone in my school is rooting for you. We'll be fine.

INT. TAESCH TRAIN STATION, SWITZERLAND - EVENING

A large sign reads: "Taesch Bahnhof." The big glass roof covering the train station reflects still daylight. The big clock on the wall shows 6:10 PM. Carole and her group wait next to their luggage carts on track number five. The "Matterhorn Gotthard Bahn"/train's red locomotive with the white logo "Glacier Express" and seven white and red cars arrive and come to a halt. Passengers exit and Carole and her friends get on the train.

MONTAGE - The train departs and the passengers press their noses against the panoramic windows, smitten by the magnificent view.

EXT. TRAIN STATION ZERMATT, SWITZERLAND

**SVEN**, mid-40s, very tall with a rugged and tanned face welcomes Carole, Brenda, and twins **JOHN** and **IAN**, late 20s.

SEAN

(heavy Swiss accent)

Hi everyone. My name is Sven. I'm your mountain guide. Please follow me. The hotel isn't far from here.

They proceed towards the exit into the auto-free village of Zermatt, nestled at the foot of the majestic Matterhorn. They're all in awe of the beautiful alpine charm.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY ROOM

SEAN

Tomorrow, you'll get to rest and adjust to the high altitude. But on Wednesday, everyone needs to be ready to leave at six in the morning sharp. The climb is broken into two days. The distance between the valley base and the hut is 1640 meters which equal approx. 5380 feet.

EXT. MOUNTAIN REGION - WEDNESDAY MORNING

Sven and his group trek towards the hut on a trail that is winding along steep glacier moraines with stairways firmly implanted into the side of the mountain. They arrive at a two-story white building with grey shutters. Carole takes a seat at one of the picnic tables outside the hut and soaking in the breathtaking view.

INT. BREAKFAST ROOM - EARLY MORNING

Sven looks at his wristwatch. It's 3:35 AM. He briefs his group while having breakfast. They appear surprisingly awake and excited.

SVEN

I've been climbing the Matterhorn for over twenty years. I'm not trying to frighten you, but there have been accidents. Some ended in death. So, if I give you a directive, I expect you to listen.

(MORE)

SVEN (CONT'D)

I never lost a climber and I don't intend to start now. The weather conditions don't look great right now, but let's meet in ten minutes.

EXT. TERRACE

The chilly winds are howling. The Matterhorn appears very intimidating in the pitch-black sky. Carole and Brenda check their backpacks, helmets, harnesses, ropes, and crampons. Brenda nods encouragingly at Carole with a thumbs up.

Sven leads the way through the rocky mountain way. Each person wears head torches to be able to see better in the dark. The strong winds push everyone around like a rag doll.

SVEN

It's too dangerous to go any further. We need to return to the hut immediately before we'll get stuck up here.

JOHN

Oh, C'mon. We've come this far.

Sven gives him a stern look. After observing another group passing by, they turn around to return to the hut.

EXT. JAMESPORT FAMILY FARM, MATTITUCK, NY - MORNING

Carole, Kristy, Joseph, and Sean stroll around the barnyard animals and kids' activities. Joseph grabs Sean by his hand and tries to pull him away. His finger points to the Pumpkin field.

SEAN

After lunch, my wee guy, okay? And after that, we'll go to the beach.

JOSEPH

I'm not hungry.

While they continue to the food stands, no one notices that Joseph separates himself, heading towards the Pumpkin field.

KRISTY

Mummy, may I have two hot dogs?

CAROLE

Sure. What about you, Joseph? Joseph, OMG, where is Joseph?

They run around looking for him, approaching people wildly and gesturing with their hands. An older boy points towards the Pumpkin field. And there he is, easy to recognize with his white and bright orange LONG ISLAND DUCKS Baseball team logo branded T-shirt and matching baseball cap. Totally relieved, they just rush into the field, hugging him.

EXT. NORTH SHORE, ROBERT MOSES BEACH, LONG ISLAND - SAME DAY

Carole and Sean sit on the highest dune they could find. Seagulls fly by. The waves crash against the shore. There is not a single cloud in the sky. Sean wraps his arm around Carole to warm her from the chill in the air. Kristy and Joseph play on the beach, building a sand castle.

Sean, seemingly nervous, abruptly gets up and offers his hand to pull Carole up from the dune.

SEAN

Carole, I feel like I've known you all my life. I fell in love with you the moment I met you and I want to share the rest of my life with you. Will you marry me, my beautiful Linlithgow lady?

CAROLE

Absolutely, I will.

Sean wrestles with his jacket pocket and removes a small blue velvet box. He slowly opens it, handing the ring to her. Carole's mouth drops open when she sees the beautiful trilogy ring.

CAROLE (CONT'D)

Oh, it's perfect! I love how it represents the three loves of my life: you, Kristy, and Joseph.

Sean places the engagement ring on her finger. Carole keeps staring at it. The three diamonds set next to each other in a platinum setting. Sean pulls her close to his chest. They seal the proposal with an intense kiss and stroll down to the beach. The noise of the wind and crashing waves muffles their voices when they tell the kids. Kristy doesn't say a word.

JOSEPH

Mummy, I need to go to the toilet.

A look of disbelief is quickly followed by laughter.



INT. SEAN'S LIVING ROOM

Sean, Carole, the kids, and Sean's Mum sit at the dining table, enjoying a typical Scottish dinner. Sean jumps right in:

SEAN

Mum, are you ready for some great news? Carole and I will get married next June, and she and her two kids will move in with me.

The happy mood changes instantly. Elizabeth responds with a scowl on her face. Joseph shrugs his shoulders and rolls his eyes.

KRISTY

Mummy, why can't Sean move to Scotland?

Carole strokes Kristy's hair.

CAROLE

Don't worry, sweetheart. Everyone will come and visit us. And we can go back to Scotland anytime to visit them.

Kristy begins to cry.

CAROLE (CONT'D)

Everything will be all right. Once you start school, you'll make plenty of new friends.

ELIZABETH

Son, I want you to be happy, but what's the big rush?

She now turns to Carole.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

You're not expecting, are you?

SEAN

No, she isn't. But this is what we both want.

ELIZABETH

*Don't mind me.*

Carole distressfully walks away. She removes her flip phone from her purse and begins dialing.

INT. DEKA'S LIVING ROOM

DEKA

(into the phone)

You're what? I mean, I love the idea that you'll be moving over here and be close to us. But what's the rush, Caz? It's such a big decision.

INT. SEAN'S LIVING ROOM

CAROLE

(into the phone)

Not you, too, Deka. We're very much in love and don't want to wait. Sean is so good with the kids. We already set the wedding date for next year on the 20th of June at Linlithgow Palace. Deka, will you give me the honor to walk me down the aisle?

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

Deka

Of course. I only want what's best for you, Caz.

CAROLE

I know. It just feels so right, you know? I'm absolutely positive about this.

DEKA

Okay, let's have a wedding.

CAROLE

Is Michele nearby?

DEKA

Aye. Hold on. Michele? Caz is on the phone. She wants to talk to you.

MICHELE (O.S.)

I'm coming. Give me a minute.

He hands the phone to her.

MICHELE (CONT'D)  
 Hi there. From what I just  
 overheard, congratulations Carole.  
 I'm really happy for you.

CAROLE  
 Thank you so much, Michele. Yes,  
 Sean and I are getting married.  
 I'd like you to read "Footprints."

MICHELE  
 Yes, I'd love to.

CAROLE  
 This was the easy part. Now, I  
 have to tell Dick.

MICHELE  
 Ugh, good luck. And congrats  
 again, Carole.

INT. CAROLE'S KITCHEN - DAY

Carole paces nervously back and forth. Composing herself,  
 she grabs the phone and dials Dick's number.

CAROLE  
 Dick. It's me. I need to talk to  
 you about something very  
 important. Is this a good time for  
 you?

DICK (V.O.)  
 Sure. What's happening?

CAROLE  
 Listen, I've been dating someone  
 and...  
 (beat)  
 We've decided to get married next  
 June.

Dick (V.O.)  
 What did you just say? Are you  
 f..... kidding me?

CAROLE  
 Give me a minute to explain. Sean  
 is American and we'll be moving to  
 New York.

DICK (V.O.)  
(slamming his fist onto  
his desk)  
What do you mean, you'll move to  
New York and take our children with  
you? No way!

CAROLE  
How no. You don't get to tell me  
what to do anymore. We'll be  
moving before the new school year  
starts. I want to work out a  
schedule for Kristy and Joseph to  
visit you during their holidays and  
summer break.

Silence on Dick's end.

CAROLE (CONT'D)  
Dick? Are you still there?

DICK (V.O.)  
Don't expect me to pay you full  
child support once you move to New  
York.

CAROLE  
You're so pathetic.

DICK (V.O.)  
That's the deal. You'll get half  
of it or I am not signing any  
papers allowing Kristy and Joseph  
to live in another country. Are we  
clear on that?

CAROLE  
You only care about your damn  
money.

DICK (V.O.)  
You got that right, sweetheart.

A click and Dick is no longer on the phone.

INT. CAROLE'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Immigration papers lay scattered all over the kitchen table.

CAROLE  
Our relocation process is far more  
complicated than we expected, isn't  
it?

SEAN

Well, there might be an easier way and we have to file as a married couple. Let's get married now and we can still have our reception and honeymoon in June.

CAROLE

Yay, this way I can buy two wedding dresses. One for the winter and one for the summer. And, you have to buy me two anniversary gifts.

SEAN

That's my girl. So, Valentine's Day seems the perfect date for a wedding, isn't it?

CAROLE

Oh, my wonderful, wonderful American boy. Yes, yes.

EXT. ST. MICHAEL'S PARISH CHURCH, LINLITHGOW PALACE,  
SCOTLAND - VALENTINE'S DAY, 2003 - DAY

The historic St. Michael's Parish Church sits on high grounds. A black town car pulls up. Pink-red signs dangle on the antenna reading: "Happy Valentine's Day." The car drops off Carole, Margaret, Linda, and the children in front of the church. A sunny sky hangs over them, but they are greeted by chilly winds and cold temperatures. Carole wears a winter-white fur hat. She looks breath-taking in her tailored above-the-knee winter-white dress and a matching jacket, trimmed with fur cuffs, just like from the movie "Doctor Zhivago." They're singing and laughing "Going to the Chapel, gonna get married, etc."

INT. ST. MICHAEL'S PARISH CHURCH

Twenty GUESTS are taking their seats shortly before Carole begins her walk down the aisle. Kristy is the flower girl and wears a red cape over a white dress. Her black hair is crowned with a tiara. Carole and Joseph, wearing a kilt and visibly nervous amble down the aisle arm in arm.

Carole makes him stop for a brief moment and lifts up her eyes to the stained-glass window with its brilliant colors that light up the church. They continue to saunter past the beautifully decorated choir benches. Carole's eyes search for Sean. And there he is in his Stewart Clan Tartan kilt.

FATHER MCGULLIGAN, early 60s, with a full head of white hair, a bit overweight, meets Carole and Sean in the middle of the altar.

FATHER MCGULLIGAN  
Welcome, everyone. We are gathered here today to celebrate the holy matrimony of Carole and Sean.

FATHER MCGULLIGAN (CONT'D)  
Carole, have you come today of your own free will to give yourself to Sean in marriage?

CAROLE  
Yes, I have.

FATHER MCGULLIGAN  
Sean, have you come today of your own free will to give yourself to Carole in marriage?

SEAN  
Yes, I have.

FATHER MCGULLIGAN  
Carole and Sean. Are you both willing to honor and to love one another as husband and wife for the rest of your lives, and will you both...

The rest of their vows is inaudible. Carole and Sean exchange Celtic rings and then, the Priest blesses the newlyweds. The bride and groom seal their vows with a kiss.

EXT. SEAN'S STUDY - EVENING

Sean's hands search through a pile of Immigration papers lying on the table until he finds a letter, dated April 9, 2003.

SEAN  
(on the phone)  
Hey precious, it's me.

INT. CAROLE'S KITCHEN - SAME DAY - DAY

Carole opens the fridge when the phone rings. Kristy stands at the stove, stirring in a large pot. Joseph plays with some toys on the floor. With the phone tucked between her ear and shoulder, she removes the salad from the fridge.

CAROLE

Oh, hello love. Didn't expect your call today.

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

SEAN

Well, I got a letter that your Visa application was received but some information is missing. They require to submit a new application.

CAROLE

Oh, no! Good grief. Did they say what's missing?

SEAN

No, but probably some stupid mistake on their end. I'm gonna fill out everything for you guys, fax it to you and all you need is to sign it.

CAROLE

I'm going to freak out if the papers won't be approved before the 20th of June.  
What? Yes, I know. It's been way too long. Kiss, kiss. Can't wait to see you. Love you, too. Nighty night.

EXT. LINLITHGOW PALACE, JUNE 20, 2003 - WEDDING DAY - DAY

A black Victorian horse-drawn carriage, lined with royal blue velvet seats, pulled by two jet-black horses, travels down the High Street. As it arrives at the Palace, Deka, dressed in his Stewart Clan Tartan kilt, steps off the carriage, extending his hand to assist Carole. She looks like a Queen in her long white strapless gown. Little white flowers crown her upsweep hairstyle.

Sean's sparkling eyes and his smile belong to Carole. He separates himself from the family members and the one hundred and twenty guests to hurry over to the carriage. Michele follows him. The women wear light summery dresses despite the late morning chill. Deka puts his jacket over Michele's shivering shoulders.

SEAN

Don't I get to ride in this carriage, Your Majesty?

CAROLE  
 Yes, but after the ceremony,  
*m'eudail.*

INT. THE GREAT HALL

The wedding guests are seated in the open-aided Great Hall. Carole and Sean standing in front of the altar.

Father McGulligan addresses the guests.

Father MCGULLIGAN  
 Michele is going to read the first  
 prayer.

Michele rises and catches Carole's moist eyes while she is walking toward the lectern.

MICHELE  
 One night, a man dreams he is  
 walking along the beach with the  
 Lord. As scenes of his life flash  
 before him, he notices that there  
 are two sets of footprints in the  
 sand. He also notices at his  
 saddest, lowest times there is only  
 one set of footprints.

Michele's reciting continues to be inaudible. At the end of the reading, she winks at the bride. Carole motions back "thank you." Father McGulligan blesses the bride and groom, then gestures they may kiss each other.

EXT. LINLITHGOW PALACE

Carole, Sean, and guests step out of the Great Hall. Kristy and Joseph each hold their Mum's and Sean's hands. Kristy looks like a Princess and Joseph's kilt matches Sean's. Everyone assembles to get ready for taking photographs outdoors. A man approaches Sean, whispering something in his ear. Sean is totally flabbergasted.

SEAN  
 May I have your attention, please?  
 It seems that our coachman hit the  
 turn too quickly and his truck  
 upended the carriage. Luckily, the  
 horses are safe, and the man too.



CAROLE  
 (upset but also amused)  
 Oh, my goodness. No ride for you  
 then, my prince charming.

Joseph keeps pulling on Carole's dress to get her attention.

JOSEPH  
 Mummy, can Kristy and I stay with  
 Sean while you'll be in Italy?

Carole takes a gasp to respond...

SEAN  
 Well, my wee guy, now that your  
 Mummy and I are married, I'll be  
 going with her to Italy.

Kristy playfully slaps her brother on his arm. Sean offers a high five to Joseph.

DEKA  
 C'mon, everyone. It's time to go  
 to the hotel and celebrate in a  
 real, old-fashioned Scottish style.  
 Three cheers for Mr. and Mrs.  
 McGarrigle.

WEDDING GUESTS  
 Hip, hip, hooray. Hip, hip,  
 hooray. Hip, hip, hooray.

INT. CAROLE'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Tons of boxes are placed in the hallway. Movers work their way through. Carole, her Mum, Linda, Kristy, and Joseph are getting ready to say their goodbyes.

MARGARET  
 We're going to miss you.

CAROLE  
 I'm going to miss you, too. I  
 can't thank you enough for all  
 you've done for me and the kids.

Everyone tears up and even Flossy senses that something is off. They almost miss the doorbell ring. Kristy pulls on Carole's sleeve.

KRISTY  
 Mummy, the taxi is here.

CAROLE

Oh, already. Mum, I love you.  
I'll call you once we arrive in New  
York, okay? We'll be back for  
Christmas, I promise.

MARGARET

Take care of yourself and my  
grandchildren will you?

Margaret and Linda walk them to the door and watch the taxi driving away. Carole rolls down the window, waving her hand while Kristy and Joseph, in tears, sit in the back seat.

EXT. SEAN'S HOUSE, BACKYARD, LONG ISLAND - Day

Carole and Sean enjoy a leisurely afternoon alongside the pool. His mother and his sister **ANNE**, 32, brown wavy shoulder lengths hair with extra weight from her last pregnancy return from the house. They both carry two big platters filled with food and drinks.

Carole, obviously upset, stomps off, back into the house. Sean follows her.

SEAN

Caz, what's bothering you?

CAROLE

Your mother and your sister disrespect me and my kids and don't accept us as your new family. I don't like that they help themselves with everything in our fridge without ever asking or chipping in and walk around like it's their house.

SEAN

Stop it, Carole, please. You knew exactly what you were getting yourself into that my Mum has been living here, and my sister and her family are used to considering this their second home.

CAROLE

Yes, but where I come from, we respect each other's privacy. Your Mum has two beautiful rooms, a kitchenette, and a bathroom for herself. I would never dare to...

SEAN

Well, what do you expect from a bachelor who lived all his life with his mother in the same house? I'll talk to them again, okay? As much as I love you and the kids, I needed to get used to having you guys around 24/7.

CAROLE

Yes, but I didn't expect it to be still an issue after one year.

Carole walks briskly out of the room.

MASTER BATHROOM - UPSTAIRS

As Carole passes by to check up on the kids, she catches Anne red-handed using her Gucci perfume. Their eyes meet in the mirror.

ANNE

I hope you don't mind. I wanted to check on our kids and saw the bathroom door open...

CAROLE

Be my guest!

Anne, embarrassed, quickly rushes out.

BEDROOM - NIGHT

Carole is already in bed while Sean is getting undressed.

CAROLE

Sean, I ...

SEAN

Yes?

CAROLE

I'm so sick of it the way your mother and your sister...

SEAN

Caz, not again. I really had it with you. I'm gonna leave right now.

CAROLE

What? What did you just say? You can't just leave! Your Scottish mother should know better. Sean, you're supposed to be on my side. Sorry, but you have to pick a side.

Sean jumps out of bed, removes his pajamas and putting on shorts and a T-shirt. As he hurries towards the door, Carole tries to prevent him from leaving. Sean slams the door.

CAROLE (CONT'D)

Yes, yes, "déjà vu." Damn you, Sean, damn you Dick!

There is a quick knock on the door and Elizabeth storms in.

ELIZABETH

What's going? You're waking up everyone in the middle of the night. Where is Sean?

CAROLE

Excuse me? You can't just march in like that! Stop interfering. This is none of your business. Leave me alone, please.

Elizabeth throws her head around and rushes out the door. Carole tries to find some sleep but keeps checking the alarm clock: past midnight, 12:22 AM, 12:51 AM... Finally, Carole hears a faint noise coming from the door. Sean tries to sneak in but Carole immediately jumps out of bed and flies into his arms.

CAROLE (CONT'D)

How dare you, Sean. Do you know what time it is? I was going out of my mind worrying about you. Where have you been? But worst of all, your mother had the nerve to show up in our bedroom unannounced.

SEAN

Sorry, Caz, didn't mean to upset ya. I went for a walk and had to cool off.

They relax their embrace, gaze into each other's eyes and make up right there.

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

Carole, Sean, the kids, and Sean's Mum Elizabeth indulge in Elizabeth's homemade beef stew.

KRISTY

Mummy, I don't understand why you  
and Sean ...

ELIZABETH

(cutting her off)

Kristy, how many times do I need to  
remind you not to speak with your  
mouth full.

Joseph shows Kristy his tongue and makes a grimace. Carole immediately points her index finger at him. Kristy swallows her food.

KRISTY

Mummy, why are you and Sean  
fighting so much?

Joseph kicks Kristy on her shin bone and she shoots a stern look back at him.

CAROLE

Kristy, what's gotten into you?

ELIZABETH

With all due respect, Carole, I  
have to agree with Kristy.

Carole's face grows red and she turns to Sean begging for his support. But he shrugs his shoulders, smiles with his boyish grin, and continues enjoying dinner.

CAROLE

Ah, I see. Suddenly, your dear  
mother takes sides with my  
daughter. But mostly, we have to  
tiptoe around you guys. Especially,  
when you are in one of your "great"  
moods.

(to Elizabeth)

And Elizabeth, this is between Sean  
and me, okay?

ELIZABETH

I can't believe what I'm hearing.

KRISTY

Mummy, please.

SEAN

That's enough, now. Thanks for  
spoiling my appetite.

He pushes his chair briskly back and stomps off. Carole angrily follows him. Kristy shoots a sad look at Elizabeth who ignores her but tends to Joseph and strokes his head gently.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Sean, dressed in a suit, reappears in the door frame. Music in: VIC MIZZY "theme music of Green Acres." Carole, Kristy, and Elizabeth are watching TV, the digital clock shows 8:39 PM.

SEAN

Okay, girls. I'm heading out.  
Behave yourselves, will ya? See ya  
later.

He waves at Carole to meet him at the door.

SEAN (CONT'D)

We're all good again, right? I had  
another talk with Mum and set the  
record straight that there can only  
be one lady boss in the house.

Carole responds with a thumbs-up and a silent "thank you."  
Sean blows her a kiss and is out the door.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Sean sips on his coffee and is about to pick up the "New York Post," dated August 2, 2004, when Carole walks in.

SEAN

Good morning, my precious. You  
look a bit pale but stunning as  
always.

She puts her hand on her stomach and takes a deep breath.

CAROLE

I feel a bit jittery.

SEAN

You'll be fine, Caz. You're gonna  
wrap everyone around your little  
finger.

Carole leans down to kiss Sean and heads for the door.

INT. UNITED WAY - CAROLE'S OFFICE - DAY

Carole sits at her desk. She places a framed portrait consisting of her, Sean, and the kids all smiling next to the Business Card holder. Carole removes a Business Card from the holder, displaying *the United Way Logo and the address 819 Grand Boulevard, Deer Park, NY 11729*. She lets her fingers run over the letters *Carole McGarrigle, Marketing & Communications Community Impact*. A firm knock on the door wakes her up from daydreaming. It's **RHONDA**, mid-30s, an attractive appearance.

RHONDA

Hey. I'm Rhonda. You must be Carole, our latest addition. Welcome to the United Way family.

CAROLE

Yes, that's me. Very nice to meet you too, Rhonda.

Their further conversation remains inaudible.

INT. CAROLE'S STUDY - EVENING

Carole stands in front of a blackboard mounted to the wall, displaying Sunday through Saturday and each name of the household. In her own section on Saturday, she writes 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM, volunteer at Animal Shelter. Sean's weekly section indicates his shift from 10:00 PM - 8:00 AM.

CAROLE

Hello, my handsome Loverboy.

Sean hides two brochures behind his back while kissing her on the lips.

SEAN

Great job keeping our schedules up-to-date. Gotta go, Caroleeee. See ya in the morning.

CAROLE

Please, make sure to tuck in Joseph before you leave.

SEAN

Will do that, love. See ya in the morning.

Sean is waving two brochures in her face and putting them down on top of the Halloween Costume Magazine. One brochure displays the Family Theme Hersheypark in Hershey, PA. The other one is from the Adventure Family Fun Center at Lake George, NY.

CAROLE

What's that?

SEAN

I know you don't like surprises, but we'll talk about this later. Gotta go, now. Internal Affairs don't like me to be late.

CAROLE

I don't mind that kind of surprises. You definitely deserve a "Hershey kiss" for that.

INT. KITCHEN - SATURDAY - EVENING

Sean and Joseph stand at the kitchen island, having fun making-home made pizza. Heavy snowflakes dance against the window. Kristy pets **OLIVER**, the cat, while inhaling the cooking smell.

KRISTY

Mummy will be surprised that Sean knows to cook more than just his usual Teriyaki dish.

Joseph throws some leftover dough in Kristy's direction. Carole arrives with something tucked in her arms, covered up with a scarf. Faint meow out of nowhere and suddenly, a grey Kitten peaks her face from underneath the scarf. Sean begins to sneeze.

CAROLE

Okay, guys. Come on here and welcome your early Christmas gift. This is Oliver's girlfriend Gizmo.

JOSEPH

Yippee yay.

KRISTY

Yippee yay.

They all take each other's hands and are dancing around Carole still holding Gizmo.



INT. UPSTAIRS - SOME MONTHS LATER - MORNING

Sean returns home from his night shift. Kristy and Joseph still wear their pajamas.

SEAN

Why aren't you guys in school?  
Where is your Mum?

KRISTY

Mummy was throwing up all night.  
She told us to wait for you to come  
home.

SEAN

Why didn't you ask grandma  
Elizabeth?

KRISTY

She isn't our grandma.

MASTER BEDROOM

Sean gazes over Carole's sleeping face and leaves.

KRISTY'S BEDROOM

The kids are now dressed in spring outfits.

SEAN

Let's go, guys. School is waiting.

MASTER BEDROOM

As Sean walks in, Carole opens her eyes and he rushes to her bedside.

SEAN

What's wrong, precious?

CAROLE.

After you left last night, I  
started to feel ill.

Carole jumps out of bed and runs to the bathroom. Sean follows her immediately.

SEAN

Are you pregnant?

CAROLE  
(chuckling)  
I'm two months late and have been  
craving pickles.

SEAN  
Caroleeee, that would be just greart  
news, and don't worry, I'm gonna  
buy you as many pickles as you  
want.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

The entire family gathers at the table. Sean and Carole hold  
each other's hands.

SEAN  
Attention, please. We have an  
announcement to make. Well...  
(beat)  
We're expecting!

KRISTY  
A baby?

Kristy turns excitedly to her Mum, Joseph grimaces and  
Elizabeth frowns in displeasure.

INT. DR. HOFFMAN, ONCOLOGIST, OFFICE - DAY

DR. HOFFMAN, in his mid-50s, slowly takes off his glasses,  
his eyes reflecting concern. Carole senses his tension.

DR. HOFFMAN  
Carole, I wish I had better news.  
But your cancer is back.

Carole gasps for air.

DR. HOFFMAN (CONT'D)  
I requested all the X-rays from  
Scotland including the ones when  
your cancer was gone. And if your  
Gynecologist hadn't been concerned  
about your weight loss, we would  
have wasted precious time.

CAROLE  
What about my baby?

Dr. Hoffman shows Carole images of the X-ray and CAT scan.

DR. HOFFMAN

At this point, your baby is fine.  
But only time will tell. Carole,  
you're approaching forty which puts  
you at a higher risk anyway.

CAROLE

What are you saying, Dr. Hoffman?

DR. HOFFMAN

I'm saying that your prognosis  
looks a bit bleak. And you got a  
secondary tumor in your chest wall.  
I'm almost positive that your  
breast implants triggered this  
outbreak. Carole, it's malignant  
and stage four.

She wildly shakes her head.

CAROLE

Stage four?

DR. HOFFMAN

It means that this time the cancer  
has metastasized beyond the breast  
and nearby lymph nodes to other  
organs of your body.

Carole's face grows pale and she has a hard time breathing.  
Dr. Hoffman gets up from his chair to comfort her.

CAROLE

Dr. Hoffman, I don't want to die.

DR. HOFFMAN

Carole, I don't know how to put  
this. The cancer is not curable at  
this point but could be controlled  
with treatment for several years.  
There is a twenty-five percent plus  
chance that a patient will survive  
stage four cancer for five years or  
more. You need to discuss this  
with your family as soon as  
possible.

Carole breaks down in tears.

INT. CAROLE'S STUDY - NIGHT

Carole sits fevered, half a sleep in the dim light in front  
of the computer. It's 12:13 AM.

The screen displays a website featuring Astor Memorial Cancer Center, New York City. Then, the advanced search leads to the website of the Cancer Institute at Humanitarian Hospital, West Islip, NY. She makes remarks in her diary.

Carole hears a creak coming from the door and immediately X's out from the website.

KRISTY

Mummy, I was looking for you. I had a bad nightmare. What are you doing down here?

Carole reaches out her arms to take Kristy in.

CAROLE

I couldn't sleep and ended up doing some more research for Friday's meeting.

BEDROOM - NIGHT

Carole tosses around in bed and eventually turns on the nightstand lamp. She walks over to the chest of the drawer and removes her diary, hidden underneath a bunch of sweaters. She begins writing...

EXT. MOHONK MOUNTAIN HOUSE, CATSKILL, NY - DAY

Surrounded by a breathtaking Mountain area, the bright sunlight reflects glittery stars onto the hotel as several cars arrive.

INT. HOTEL DINING ROOM

The hotel dining room is decorated with colorful balloons. A birthday banner reads "Happy 40th Birthday, Carole, May 20, 2006." Bottles of expensive chilled Champagne in special ice boxes are waiting to be opened. Sean, Kristy, Joseph, Margaret, Linda, Michele, Deka, and their boys **BRADLEY**, 6, light brown hair, brown eyes and **CAMERON**, 1, red hair, blue eyes, sit at two large round tables. Carole rises from her chair and taps on her glass.

CAROLE

I'd like to say a few words before we start eating. It means the world to me that you all are helping me celebrate my Big Four O.

(MORE)

CAROLE (CONT'D)

Thank you, thank you so so much for supporting me through some difficult times adjusting not only to a new life here in the States but also to my unexpected pregnancy at this "old" age.

(laughter from everyone)

I could not have done it without your love.

Her face turns to her mother and Linda and blows them a kiss.

CAROLE (CONT'D)

Mum, Linda. Thank you for looking after me, Kristy, and Joseph.

Then, she locks her eyes with Sean.

CAROLE (CONT'D)

Sean, you continue to be my rock. You are the love of my life and a loving father to my kids, our kids...

Her eyes now search for Michele and Deka.

CAROLE (CONT'D)

Michele and Deka, thank you for reminding my darling husband about ordering the Champagne, which he forgot. Well, thanks to you guys, we get to drink the most expensive Champagne.

(beat)

You all know how important family is to me. That's why I'm so very happy and blessed to have you all by my side on this special day.

The champagne corks are popping with a loud bang and everyone stands up, raising their glasses.

EVERYONE

(singing)

*Co-là-breith sona dhut, etc. Lang may yer lum reek.* At least to a hundred years, Caroleeee.

INT. RHONDA'S OFFICE

Rhonda looks out the window and notices Carole hurrying to her car. Her wristwatch shows 11:46 AM.

EXT. CANCER INSTITUTE, HUMANITARIAN HOSPITAL, WEST ISLIP, NY  
- NOON

Carole enters the facility, checks in with a nurse at the front desk, and walks briskly down the hallway. She opens a door labeled with large letters "Adjuvant Chemotherapy."

INT. CAROLE'S OFFICE - DAY

There is a knock at the door and Carole turns her chair around. It's Rhonda.

RHONDA  
Carole, do you have a minute?

CAROLE  
Sure. What's up?

RHONDA  
Hey, listen. It's none of my business but I like you. And that's why I wanted to talk to you. Some people noticed that you've been taking extended lunch hours lately.

CAROLE  
Yes, I know and I appreciate your concern. I wanted to wait to tell everyone, but...  
(beat)  
Rhonda, I'm pregnant.

RHONDA  
Oh, Carole. That's wonderful news. How far along?

CAROLE  
Almost three months.

EXT. LARGE BEAUTIFUL CORNER HOUSE, GREAT RIVER, NY - DAY

Colorful flowers are lined up in front of a beautiful large corner house with a nicely manicured lawn. A maroon Kawasaki Concours Sports motorcycle is parked next to the garage.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Carole and Sean stand at the large glass door, overlooking the backyard and the built-in swimming pool where Anne and her kids and also Kristy and Joseph are playing.

Elizabeth heads to the pool, jiggling a tray of sandwiches and Lemonade.

CAROLE

I just love it here.

SEAN

Me too. This is a perfect home to build many happy memories for all of us.

CAROLE

It'll definitely help me believe too...  
(sighing)

SEAN

Yes?

CAROLE

Never mind. And Sean, I'm really glad that we agreed on your mother finding an adult living community for her. I have to admit that I'll feel much better once she moves out, sorry.

SEAN

Caz, I don't want to explain that to you over and over again. I'm not your enemy and neither is my Mum. She is not a bad person. Mum adores little Joseph and really tries her best to get along with you and Kristy. You can't deny that. And, she's been helping us with the kids while you're at work.

CAROLE

Let's just drop it for now. Right now, I'm more excited to live just blocks away from the beach and be able to take long walks.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Sean wakes up by the sound of running water in the adjacent bathroom. His eyes turn toward the alarm clock. It's 8:13 AM. Kristy and Joseph, still in their pajamas, knock on the bedroom door and enter without waiting for permission. Kristy notices that her Mum isn't in bed.

## MASTER BATHROOM

The room is filled with steam. Carole's silhouette, washing her hair, is barely visible behind the shower glass. Suddenly, Carole releases a shrill scream.

SEAN (O.S.)

Caz. What the heck is going on?

Carole is holding a clump of her beautiful red hair in her hand, but also blood streams from between her legs.

CAROLE

(sobbing voice)

I'm all right.

BACK TO:

## MASTER BEDROOM

To his surprise, Sean finds the bathroom door locked.

SEAN

Caz, why is the door locked? Open it.

CAROLE (O.S.)

Don't worry. Please, just give me a few minutes.

SEAN

Carole, open the door, you're scaring the kids and me.

He frantically tries to break down the door. The kids are watching him in horror.

## MASTER BATHROOM

CAROLE

Give me a damn minute, okay! I'll be right out.

Now, Carole wears her bathrobe. She stares into the bathroom mirror terrified of her own image.

She eventually opens the door. Sean and the kids storm in and she collapses into Sean's arms.

SEAN

Kristy, take your brother and go find my Mum. Tell her to call an ambulance.



Frightened, Kristy and Joseph close the door behind them. Kristy dials 911 from the master bedroom's phone.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

While Sean is sitting next to Carole's bed holding her hand, the doctor exits. He bites his lips.

SEAN

Oh, Caroleeee. Why didn't you ever tell me that you had breast cancer?

CAROLE

I was afraid you wouldn't want to marry a woman like me. I was horrified to even tell my family. They were all so happy with their lives.

SEAN

I'm your husband, I love you, Carole. You're the love of my life.

(moaning)

And we lost our baby.

CAROLE

Alicia.

SEAN

What?

CAROLE

Her name is Alicia...

SEAN

(tearing up)

A girl, a mini Caroleeee?

Sean takes Carole into his arms. They're both sobbing.

CAROLE

I wanted to be strong for Kristy and Joseph. I needed to protect our marriage and spare everyone else the pain.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - EVENING

Carole and Sean lay in bed. She's visibly marked from her illness now. Carole removes her headphones and the CD "Inspirational Meditation."

CAROLE

I can't believe I've got to live through this nightmare again. Sean, why me? It's just not fair. I need a kiss right now.

Sean takes her in his arms and kisses Carole.

CAROLE (CONT'D)

This time, I want to do a lot of research on my own. I'm going to be involved in all of my treatments. If they can't cure me, at least, they're able to control it. And, I have to get a second opinion, right?

SEAN

Yes, you definitely should. I know you'll be all right. Remember, no dark clouds.

CAROLE

Yes, I am just fu..... F.I.N.E!

INT. LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Carole and Sean pull Kristy and Joseph closer.

CAROLE

I got great news. The chemo and radiation made the tumor shrink and my doctor is confident to operate after the New Year.

Kristy hugs her Mum tightly. Joseph snuggles up to both of them.

CAROLE (CONT'D)

I've been trying very hard to be in good spirits, you know that, right? But sometimes, I get just so angry and frustrated.

Kristy nods her head in agreement.

CAROLE (CONT'D)

I have more good news. Daryl, Jacqui, and Fay will visit us next week.

SEAN

And while your Mum will tour the city with her girlfriends, the three of us will have some fun too.

Kristy jumps up and down while Joseph is clapping his hands.

INT. CAROLE'S STUDY - DAY

Michele hides her surprise that Carole debuts her bald head.

CAROLE

Sean is constantly angry now that I don't involve him in everything that's going on with my treatments. The kids and I feel like we're walking on eggshells.

MICHELE

Maybe it's better to just give him some space. Sean is dealing with a lot of pressure too. Keep that in mind. Carole, it will work out, you know that.

CAROLE

But I'm not getting any better. I can feel it.

MICHELE

Carole, try to focus on the positive things in your life. But more importantly, when is your surgery date again?

CAROLE

17th of January. Can't wait until that's over and done.

MICHELE

I just know you're getting that miracle!

CAROLE

I'm trying hard to deal with nausea, pain, and fatigue. But this cancer is just so cruel.

Carole puts a damp cloth on her bald head.

MICHELE

It'll grow back, don't worry. You should be glad that the treatments are working. Now, we can really celebrate Christmas.

INT. ROSE AND HOWARD UHL'S LIVING ROOM - CHRISTMAS DAY

Christmas Day at Michele's parent's house **ROSE**, early 70s, short blonde hair, hazel eyes, thin stature. **HOWARD**, early 70s, hazel eyes, brown with grey streaks, and Carole, Sean, Kristy, Joseph, Linda, Margaret, Michele, Dekka, little Bradley, and baby Cameron. Carole surveys herself in the mirror and adjusts her red wig. Kristy notices her Mum's satisfied look.

KRISTY

Mummy, may I touch her?

Carole bends down and Kristy strokes the wig.

KRISTY (CONT'D)

Oh, this one feels soooo soft.

CAROLE

Yes, and she doesn't itch very much. I like my new best friend Alicia.

KRISTY

Aww, you're funny Mummy.

Kristy hugs her mother tightly and leans her head against her chest. Rose waves at Carole and Kristy to come over. Bradley and Joseph prance down the stairs into the living room dressed as reindeers with red noses.

ROSE

Attention, please. The annual Christmas play is about to start.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

A blackboard on the wall is marked with January 18, 2007 and the clock shows 8:09 AM. Sean is right next to Carole lying on a gurney. She looks at Sean in search of his encouragement. When he takes her hand into his, Carole closes her eyes.

CAROLE (V.O.)

God, please be with me during this operation. I know that you will carry me through it.

Sean squeezes her hand real tight while managing a smile. He kisses her on her lips. A nurse arrives and starts wheeling her gurney down the hallway. Sean walks alongside Carole. The nurse stops in front of the operating room.

NURSE

This is as far as you can go.

SEAN

It'll see you in a few hours, precious. Don't worry, you're in good hands. I love you very much.

CAROLE

Love you, too.

Tears escape her eyes while the nurse wheels her into the operating room. Carole holds up her right arm waving at Sean. She disappears into the brightly lit room and the door closes behind her.

HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM

Sean paces up and down the room and looks at his wristwatch. It's 11:23 AM. His eyes shift to the clock on the wall, which shows the same time. He hurries to the nurse station.

SEAN

I'm sorry to bother you again, but Dr. Dreyfus told me that the surgery would take about two hours.

The nurse shrugs her shoulders pointing in the opposite direction. Sean turns around and **DR. DREYFUS**, mid-40s, is walking toward him.

DR. DREYFUS

Hi Sean. Relax, the operation was very successful. We took out the tumor and only had to open the rib cage with clamps. Luckily, there was no need to remove a rib. We shaved a bit of it and removed part of the sternum.

SEAN

OMG, my wife must be in a lot of pain. Can I see her now?

DR. DREYFUS

As soon as she is back in her room. Carole will be sore for a while but considering the circumstances, she's...

SEAN

What do you mean by "considering the circumstances?"

DR. DREYFUS

Don't worry. We'll talk about it later when Carole is fully alert. For now, all I can say is that I'm extremely pleased with the outcome.

SEAN

Best news ever. Thank you, Dr. Dreyfus. Thank you so much.

The two men shake hands.

HOSPITAL ROOM

Sean stands at Carole's bed waiting for her to wake up. Her eyes begin to flutter and then finally open. For the first time, it hits him how sick his wife is.

CAROLE

Sean, what happened?

SEAN

Hey precious. How are you feeling? Dr. Dreyfus told me that the operation was a success.

CAROLE

Very sore. Where are Kristy and Joseph?

SEAN

On their way.

Soon after, the door opens and the kids are running into the room. Michele follows right behind. Carole's face shows exhaustion, but also joy. Kristy and Joseph carefully take each of their Mum's hand into their own hands.

CAROLE

I'll be home soon. I promise.

INT. MCGARRIGLE'S KITCHEN - EVENING

Elizabeth helps Sean prepare dinner. As Kristy approaches to enter, she overhears their conversation.

ELIZABETH

Son, with your looks, you could have married any woman. But no, you had to get stuck with a sick one and with extra baggage.

SEAN

Mum! I can't believe what I'm hearing. I'm afraid that my wife was right about you.

ELIZABETH

Sean, at this point, I'm afraid, I don't have to say anything anymore.

Kristy watches them silently, waiting to exhale.

EXT. MCGARRIGLE'S BACKYARD - DAY

Carole relaxes on a lounge chair, enjoying the sun. She talks into her cell phone while Kristy struggles with a large cup of tea.

CAROLE

Michele, hold on a sec. I'm just getting another call.

Carole presses the hold button and answers the incoming call.

CAROLE (CONT'D)

Hello? Oh, hi Dr. Dreyfus.  
Really? Thank you so much, Dr. Dreyfus. Okay. Yes, will do. Bye.

Carole gets back to her call on hold.

CAROLE (CONT'D)

Michele. Michele? Are you still there?

MICHELE (V.O.)

Yes, I'm here.

CAROLE

I just got fantastic news. Dr. Dreyfus told me that my numbers look really good.

MICHELE (V.O.)

Carole, that's awesome. I have to tell Deka right away. I told you that you're going to get that miracle. Sorry to keep it short, but I have to help Bradley with his homework. Talk soon. Bye.

Carole lifts her smiling face to the comforting sun.

EXT. SEAN'S BACKYARD - DAY

Carole, Sean, Kristy, Joseph and Elizabeth sit around the table with the Long Island Newspaper, displaying its front page of the colored print "Newsday," dated Tuesday September 5, 2007.

INSERT - NEWSPAPER HEADLINE

"Central Islip, NY, Sept. 4, 2007, Ducks auction off special pink bats and jerseys to benefit fourteen Cancer Organizations. On Monday, the Ducks were defeated by the Patriots, 4-3, in their First Annual Breast Cancer Awareness Night. For the contest, Long Island donned commemorative pink jerseys and played with pink bats.

Carole McGarrigle, pictured, a Breast Cancer Survivor herself from Great River and Marketing & Community Manager at United Way was given the honor together with her ten-year-old son Joseph to throw the first pitch."

BACK TO SCENE

CAROLE

That was such a cool event, wasn't it?

JOSEPH

Oh, yeah, Mummy. Everyone in my school was so jealous.

Title: Long Beach State Park, NY - American Cancer Society's 14th Annual Making Strides Against Breast Cancer five-mile Walk, October 21, 2007

EXT. LONG BEACH STATE PARK, NY - MORNING

Carole wears a pink outfit and is part of a huge crowd walking at the Breast Cancer Walk. Sean, Kristy, Joseph, Michele, Deka, Bradley, and Cameron are cheering loudly from the sidelines.



INT. DR. DREYFUS' OFFICE - DAY

Carole and Sean are waiting in Dr. Dreyfus' office. Thick snowflakes dance against the window.

The door opens. Carole and Sean get up from their chairs to greet Dr. Dreyfus. Carole immediately senses the tension in his face. After the initial greeting:

DR. DREYFUS  
Carole, for some reason, your numbers have gone up again. I want you to go for a PET scan.

CAROLE  
What are you saying, Dr. Dreyfus?

DR. DREYFUS  
I'm truly sorry, Carole. We'll need to start treatments right after the holidays.

She struggles to breathe. Carole and Sean look defeated.

DR. DREYFUS (CONT'D)  
Carole, are you with me?

She refuses to look at Dr. Dreyfus. Instead, she focuses on Sean.

CAROLE  
Of all days, I got to get this news before Christmas?

Carole buries her head in the crook of her arm and begins crying. Sean puts his arm around her and draws her close.

INT. CAROLE'S KITCHEN - DAY

Sean notices Carole's pain-ridden face as she is talking to herself.

CAROLE (V.O.)  
Who will look after my children once I'm gone?

He clears his throat to get her attention. Sean reaches for Carole and wraps his arms around her.

CAROLE  
Sean, I was talking to Linda about what's going to happen with Kristy and Joseph if I don't make it.

(MORE)

CAROLE (CONT'D)

Promise me that they'll stay with you and not Dick!

SEAN

What the hell are you talking about? Caz, I can't do this without you.

CAROLE

Sean, you're not listening. They're my blood, my everything. How can you say you don't want them? I don't know how much longer I have the strength to fight this damn cancer. We discussed it at my weekly support group to have a plan in place in case we won't survive.

SEAN

I'm not saying I don't want them. I'm saying that I don't think I can do this without you! I'm scared. I really am, Carole.

CAROLE

Sean, I need you to be strong.

SEAN

If it ever should come to that, I'll work it out between myself, Linda, Deka, and Michele. Please, don't worry. And remember, we want to climb the Matterhorn together. Promise?

INT. CAROLE'S STUDY ROOM - DAY

A blizzard of newspaper articles lie on the table next to the computer and also a letter from Dick. The computer displays a website of someone called **JOHN KANZIUS**. Carole reads that "he uses radio waves to kill cancer cells and it leaves the good cells alone. John has invented the machine that has the potential of treating cancer without chemotherapy and radiation."

Carole dials a phone number.

EXT. MICHELE'S BACKYARD - SAME TIME

MICHELE

Carole, calm down.

## INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

CAROLE

How can I calm down, Michele?  
Would you if it were about your  
kids and Deka not being able to  
stay strong? Michele, I want you  
to be Kristy's mentor and either  
Sean or Deka for Joseph.

MICHELE

Kristy's mentor?

CAROLE

You know me, Michele. I always  
need a plan for everything. I  
don't like surprises. You would be  
just perfect for my little girl.

MICHELE

Where do you think you're going?  
You are not checking out, are you?

CAROLE

Of course not. I just need to know  
that my kids will be looked after  
in case...

MICHELE

You know, Carole. Deka has been  
taking it quite hard.

CAROLE

I know. He's not used to being in  
a helpless position.

MICHELE

Carole, may I ask you a very  
personal question? Have you ever  
considered making a Last Will?

CAROLE

Nope. I never really thought about  
that. But you're right, I should.  
Dick might try to take Kristy and  
Joseph away from Sean.

MICHELE

I can give you the name and address  
of our Estate Lawyer.

CAROLE

Michele, why is God putting me through this again?

MICHELE

Don't blame God, rather ask him to heal you instead.

CAROLE

Maybe, he has answered my prayers. I've done more research and found a very interesting article about a man called John Kanzius.

MICHELE

Never heard of him. Who is he?

Carole's explanation is inaudible.

CAROLE

I also started creating a magazine for women who battle cancer. It's a guide to help them navigate through all the available information that I've researched.

MICHELE

Great idea. What's the name?

CAROLE

"Hope & Future."

MICHELE

Love it. And Carole, if you don't mind, please bring your carrot & coriander soup on Easter Sunday.

CAROLE

Sure. See you soon. Bye Michele.

Carole picks up Dick's letter.

CAROLE (CONT'D)

(reading)

*Carole, I need a huge favour. My wife Heather and I plan to adopt a baby boy. I need you to send a letter to Child Services to vouch for us.*

She lays down the letter and puts her face in both hands.

Carole opens the computer and types into the "To" section *family@lives.org.uk*

"To Whom It May Concern: About Mr. Richard McMann, my ex-husband's request, I am willing to vouch for him..."

INT. DR. DREYFUS' OFFICE - DAY

DR. DREYFUS

The cancer has spread to your lungs. We'll continue the treatments and have to drain the built-up fluid by inserting a tube under local anesthesia.

Carole's hands tremble and she seems to be on the verge of fainting.

CAROLE

How many more times do I have to go through this hell?

DR. DREYFUS

Carole, I can schedule the procedure for next Thursday.

CAROLE

It doesn't look like I have a choice, do I?

INT. MICHELE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Michele, her parents, Rose and Howard, Deka, Carole, and Sean make themselves comfortable on the sofa and love seats. Carole has difficulties breathing and her body is slightly shivering. Michele throws a blanket for her.

CAROLE

Since my recovery from the second drain is taking so much longer, Sean and I decided to cancel our trip to St. Thomas. But sadly, also the one back home to Scotland.

MICHELE

This is so upsetting. But more so, Carole, you have to come with us to the Padre Pio shrine in Pennsylvania as soon as possible.

Michele opens her purse and takes out a small, golden-framed photograph of **PADRE PIO**. She places it in Carole's hand.

INT. CAROLE'S STUDY ROOM - AFTERNOON

Monsignor Walsh and Carole are having an intense discussion.

MONSIGNOR WALSH

Carole, I'm more than happy that you decided to continue our weekly sessions. It's not just you who struggles. Sean especially has a difficult time accepting the fact that he might lose you. But God chose Sean to help you carry your cross.

CAROLE

I know. Luckily, Kristy and Joseph haven't gotten the full extent of it yet.

Tears begin to flow.

CAROLE (CONT'D)

Why me, Monsignor Walsh? Why? Why? I don't want to die!

INT. DR. DREYFUS'S OFFICE

Dr. Dreyfus shakes hands with Carole and Sean and gestures to have seat. He positions himself behind the desk. Dr. Dreyfus hesitates, letting the silence expand. Then, he firmly locks eyes with Carole.

DR. DREYFUS

The treatments are not as successful as we hoped. We decided to stop them. Carole, Sean, I'm afraid that there is nothing we can do for you anymore.

Carole remains stonily silent. Sean bolts up from his chair.

SEAN

You can't be for real!

Carole wrings her hands in her lap, struggling for words.

CAROLE

Dr. Dreyfus, how much time do I have left?

DR. DREYFUS

That's hard to tell. Three, maybe six months? We simply have no treatments left that we could try.

Dr. Dreyfus gently pushes the tissue box within Carole's reach to dry her eyes. A crestfallen Sean buries his head into his hands. Dr. Dreyfus rises from his chair and strides away from his desk to gently help Carole get up. They head for the door.

INT. CAROLE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Carole is calling Deka. After a few rings, the line is picked up.

CAROLE

Hi Big Bro, it's me.

(beat)

Listen, I don't know how to say this. So, let me be just very frank. Dr. Dreyfus told us today there is nothing else they can do for me.

INT. DEKA'S KITCHEN - SAME TIME

Deka's face goes blank for a brief moment.

DEKA

What? No f..... way! Caz, we have to find another doctor, someone who doesn't give up on you. Going to your funeral is not an option!

CAROLE

Oh, Deka. I'm so scared. That's why I'm so glad that Linda will be visiting soon.

DEKA

Have you already told Linda? Is that why she's coming? What about Mum?

Sean enters the room waving a printed piece of paper about the T. Webb Cancer Treatment Centers, Philadelphia, PA.

CAROLE

No, Linda doesn't know yet, and neither does Mum.

(MORE)

CAROLE (CONT'D)

Hold on a second.

(beat)

Sean just handed me some info about that new T. Webb Cancer Treatment Centers of America in Philadelphia. I'll keep you posted. Talk more soon, okay? Love you and kiss Michele and the boys for me.

DEKA

Caz, you can always count on me.  
Carole? Hello?

Deka hears the sound of a click and immediately dials Carole's number. After five rings, she picks up the phone.

CAROLE

Deka, don't worry. I am all right. As soon as Linda gets here, we'll come to visit you and Michele.

DEKA

I know you too well, you stubborn lil' sis. Promise me to keep fighting, please. Love you.

CAROLE

*A loue ye.*

INT. CAROLE AND SEAN'S HOUSE/FOYER - MORNING

Carole, Sean, and the kids are heading out the door. Elizabeth extends her arms to grab Carole's hands.

ELIZABETH

Carole, I know we've been having our differences, but I want you to know that Ann and I will keep praying for you. And no worries about the kids, all right?

CAROLE

I appreciate that coming from you, Elizabeth.

Elizabeth hugs Carole spontaneously.

ELIZABETH

Good luck, Carole. Bye kids, see you soon.



Carole swallows hard and responds with a slight nod of her head. Kristy ignores Elizabeth's comment and Joseph waves goodbye.

EXT. JFK INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, CURBSIDE - DAY

Aerial view of a landing airplane. Sean, the kids, and a very skinny, almost unrecognizable Carole stand with a broad grin at the curb. Carole wears a portable oxygen tank. Linda walks through the arrival door. The wall clock displays 1:41 PM.

LINDA

Caz, you are too much. We agreed that you didn't have to come to the airport.

CAROLE

Well, you know me, sis. I just had to come. *A misst ye sae muckle.*

Carole takes a step toward Linda. The portable oxygen tank's shoulder strap slips off down her arm. Sean reacts quickly and moves the strap back up.

SEAN

These Gucci handbags are not what they used to be...

Loud laughter follows. They hug each other under tears and Kristy and Joseph stand clutching both women.

CAROLE

Gee, thanks, Sean. Listen, Linda. There's a change of plans. I hope you don't mind that we're heading straight to Michele and Deka. I fill you in on the way to New Jersey.

LINDA

No worries. That's quite all right.

Linda's eyes move past Carole and meet Sean's tear-filled eyes. He shakes his head but immediately puts on a happy face.

SEAN

Howdy, my favorite sister-in-law. So glad you're here.

Sean loads Linda's suitcases in the trunk. Once in the car, they head for the exit.

EXT./INT. GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE - SEAN'S TRUCK - DAY

Sean is driving with Carole next to him. Linda, Kristy, and Joseph are in the backseat. The kids are playing with their Beanie Babies. The Chevy Avalanche travels on the upper deck of the Bridge. Entering New Jersey, they run into heavy traffic. Ahead of them, there is to the right a green road sign with white letters: "EXIT 47, number 46 on white background, WEST, Parsippany, 1 1/4 MILE."

JOSEPH

Mummy, I have to pee.

SEAN

C'mon. Can't you wait till we're at Aunty Michele's house?

CAROLE

I need to use the toilet, too. It's still fifty minutes to their house. Can't we just exit here in Par-si-pani?

SEAN

Parsippany, my sweet bonnie.

CAROLE

Whatever just let's get off the road.

Sean maneuvers his truck towards Exit 47, Parsippany.

EXT. THE RODGER'S HOUSE, FLEMINGTON, NJ

The truck is rolling into their circular driveway with its horn honking. The front door opens. Deka, Michele, Bradley, and Cameron welcome them as they exit the car. Hugs, kisses...

INT. T. WEBB CANCER TREATMENT CENTERS OF AMERICA, PHILADELPHIA - RECEPTION AREA - DAY

Carole and Sean walk up to the Reception Desk. A friendly nurse greets them. Their conversation is inaudible. The nurse points to the appointment entry sheet for March 11, 2008. Carole writes "Carole McGarrigle, 9:45 AM."

INT. DR. FOSTER'S OFFICE

**DR. FOSTER**, mid-40s, warmly greets Carole and Sean at the door and gestures to have a seat.

DR. FOSTER

So very pleased to meet you both.  
I'm glad that you found your way to  
our Cancer Center.

CAROLE

So are we, Dr. Foster.

DR. FOSTER

I want you to know that we don't  
just offer conventional treatments.  
You'll get your very own care team  
which includes...

The rest of their conversation remains inaudible. Both their eyes are glued to Dr. Foster's words.

Carole fishes for something in her purse. She hands a letter to Dr. Foster and he glances over it. *Astor Memorial Cancer Center, New York, NY, March 8, 2008. To Whom It May Concern:* Its further content is visible to Dr. Foster only. He places the letter on his desk, locking eyes with Carole.

CAROLE

Dr. Foster, is there a chance at  
all of getting well again, or am I  
running out of time?

DR. FOSTER

Carole, given the fact that you  
were able to walk in here on your  
own...

(beat)

We have several choices to offer.  
I'd say, there is at least an  
eighty percent chance of recovery.

CAROLE

Wow! Eighty percent?

DR. FOSTER

We need to develop an  
individualized plan tailored to  
your unique diagnosis. Once you  
agree to the treatments, we'll put  
you through a series of tests for  
the next three days. You'll be in  
good hands here, Carole.

He looks expectantly at Carole and Sean. New hope reflects on both their faces.

DR. FOSTER (CONT'D)

I suggest that you don't waste any more precious time. We have an opening on March 25th.

CAROLE

That sounds very promising. Thank you so much, Dr. Foster.

DR. FOSTER

So, I see you then on the 25th?

CAROLE

Yes, of course. You're my only hope that I have left.

Carole and Dr. Foster seal the deal with a firm handshake.

EXT. NATIONAL PADRE PIO CENTRE, BARTO, PA - WALK WAY BETWEEN OUR LADY OF GRACE CHAPEL AND MUSEUM/GIFT SHOP - DAY

On their way to the museum and gift shop, Carole, Sean, Michele, and Dekka pass by the statue of Padre Pio and three little children which are placed in the luscious landscape.

INT. PADRE PIO CENTRE, MUSEUM

Carole, Sean, Michele, and Dekka are seated inside to watch the video.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Padre Pio became famous for exhibiting stigmata for most of his life. **VERA CALANDRA**, being introduced to the life of Padre Pio through reading a book, traveled to San Giovanni Rotondo, Italy in 1968 to meet the priest. She brought two of her small children with her, one very sick little girl named **VERA MARIE**. The doctors had removed Vera Marie's bladder during one of the many operations she had undergone prior to her pilgrimage.

Mrs. Calandra had two audiences with Padre Pio where he blessed her and her children, placing his sore wounded hands on their heads. Upon their return to Pennsylvania and yet another consultation at Children's Hospital, the doctors discovery was a rudimentary bladder growing in place of the one they had removed from Vera Marie. A true miracle!

The National Centre for Padre Pio has been recognized by the Holy See for its spiritual work.

In 1987, Mrs. Calandra received the Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice award, an honor bestowed by the Pope for outstanding work with the Catholic Church. On May 2, 1999, during the Beatification Ceremony of Padre Pio in Rome, Italy, Mrs. Calandra was given the great privilege of representing the United States of America and was asked to read the first reading at the Solemn Mass.

CAROLE (V.O.)

This is incredible. Please, Padre Pio, grant me the same miracle. Please.

INT. PRIVATE AREA NEXT TO MUSEUM AND GIFT SHOP

A **CLERK**, an older man, hands over Padre Pio's glove to Carole. She takes the first-class relic and holds it next to her chest, lungs and heart.

EXT. MICHELE AND DEKA'S HOUSE - FLEMINGTON, NJ - DAY

Carole, Sean, Michele, Deka, Linda, Kristy, Joseph, Bradley and Cameron are all standing outside the house.

DEKA

Don't forget to call us once you get there, Caz. We'll visit you soon.

KRISTY

Mummy, can we go with you?

CAROLE

Sweetie, you know it's not possible. But once I get settled in all of you can visit me, okay?

Joseph gets close to his mother and holds on to her hand. Kristy forces a weak smile, but tears begin to flow. Sean points at his wrist watch.

SEAN

Caz, we need to get on the road.

Hugs and kisses. They stand there waving until the car is out of sight.

INT. SEAN'S TRUCK

Carole and Sean are quiet during the drive. She is mostly staring absentmindedly out the window at the landscape flying

by. They drive past a road sign: "Leaving Readington Township." Sean turns to Carole.

Carole moves her face away from the window, smiling at him. They pass a green directional road sign: "Philadelphia."

EXT. T. WEBB CANCER TREATMENT CENTERS BUILDING, PHILADELPHIA

Carole and Sean arrive at the Center's parking lot and exit the car. Sean gently wraps his arm around Carole while walking towards the building.

SEAN

Let's do this, love.

INT. DR. FOSTER'S OFFICE

Carole's skinny frame seems almost lost in the large office. The door opens and Dr. Foster emerges.

DR. FOSTER

I'm glad to see you both.

CAROLE

We're happy to see you as well, Dr. Foster. You're my only hope.

DR. FOSTER

Carole, you've got stage four breast cancer and you're down to one hundred ten pounds. As we discussed previously, we'll give you four different types of chemotherapy all at the same time.

(pausing)

But I need to make you aware that there is a risk associated with this combination. The chances of damaging your respiratory system are a thousand to one. I'd really like to start with the first injection today.

CAROLE

Today? I am so terrified!

INT. ICU SECTION - HALLWAY - DAY

A terrible sound of a shrill alarm goes off. There is an announcement over the PA system. Doctors rush to Carole's room.

ICU - HOSPITAL ROOM

Carole lays in her hospital bed looking terrified and very ill. Dr. Foster addresses Carole and Sean with a grave voice.

DR. FOSTER

That was a code blue alert. I'm afraid that the chemotherapy has attacked your respiratory system. Sean, I need you to leave the room for a little while.

A young nurse rushes Sean out of the room. He follows her reluctantly and is looking back at Carole.

A few hours later, Sean stares at Carole in disbelief. She has a tube down her throat. Carole is coherent but unable to speak. Sean kisses her on her forehead. Then, he places her hand on his heart.

SEAN

Love, we'll never leave you alone. Michele is going to be here tomorrow and I'm back on Friday, okay?

She nods a "yes" with wide-eyed teary eyes.

INT. ICU - HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Carole's hospital room is decorated with photographs of her family, friends, and many "Get Well" cards. Soft inspirational music fills the room. Carole is swollen up with edema and is unable to speak. Sean hands her a small Dry Erase Board, but she has difficulties holding it. He writes the alphabet across the board.

SEAN

Just point at the letters and I'll read what you want to say.

Carole can't do it and gets frustrated. She pushes the board aside. She formulates some words and Sean tries to read her lips. Carole just rolls her eyes and shakes her head. She closes her eyes and drifts off.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Caz, are you awake?

He ignores the fact that she doesn't answer and begins the rosary with the Padre Pio Novena.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Hail Mary. Full of Grace. The  
Lord is with thee...

Carole wakes up and her eyes stare at Sean while he inserts a CD. Music in: OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN "Stronger Than Before" is playing. Sean starts massaging both legs with a Lymphatic Drainage lotion. Michele arrives in her upbeat and smiling way.

MICHELE

Hi ya. How is Carole doing?

Sean signals her to come to the other end of the room. The beeping sound of the machine drowns out their voices.

MICHELE (CON'T) (CONT'D)

I didn't expect her to look like  
that.

SEAN

I know. Thanks so much for coming,  
Michele. I need to take care of a  
few things and pick up the kids.  
I'll be back on Sunday.

He bends over, kissing Carole on the cheek, and heads for the door. Carole wakes up.

Michele tries to have a conversation with Carole. She is very agitated that Michele doesn't understand her and points uncomfortably at her tube. Carole looks unrecognizable because of her grotesquely looking, swollen face.

MICHELE

Are you in a lot of pain? The  
doctor told us that the swelling  
will go down. Just rest and let me  
know if you need anything.

Carole shakes her head. She lifts her swollen hand and examines it in disbelief. Carole closes her eyes and eventually dozes off. Michele makes herself comfortable on the couch. Different nurses come in to check on Carole. Suddenly, Carole starts moaning. The clock shows 2:36 AM. Michele is immediately awake and jumps up. Carole appears to be in panic and grabs with both hands the tube.

MICHELE (CONT'D)

Carole, what's wrong? Don't touch  
that tube! I'm getting the nurse  
right now.



Michele speeds out of the room and immediately returns with a nurse. As they walk into the room, Carole is pulling out the tube.

NURSE

No! What are you doing?

She immediately turns on the main light and picks up the phone. There is an announcement over the PA system. A doctor and more nurses come running into the room. One of the nurses gently escorts Michele out.

HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM

Michele desperately paces back and forth, constantly looking at her wristwatch.

MICHELE (V.O.)

Oh, God. Please don't let anything happen to her.

The door opens and Dr. Foster arrives. Michele tries to read his face, eyeing him fearfully. It feels like slow motion before he reaches her.

DR. FOSTER

I'm Dr. Foster. Are you a relative of Carole?

MICHELE

Yes. I'm Michele Rodger, her sister-in-law.

DR. FOSTER

Michele, Carole is a very lucky woman, let me tell you. But we needed to put her in an induced coma hopefully only for a few days.

MICHELE

Thank you, Lord that Carole is alive! Can I see her now?

DR. FOSTER

Not yet. They're still cleaning her up. Someone will come to get you soon. I would suggest that you inform her husband.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Michele, Kristy, and Joseph step out of the elevator. Both kids try to break loose from her hands, but she manages to stop them.

MICHELE

Remember, your Mom looks different than the last time you saw her. She is still asleep and not able to talk to you. But I don't want you to worry, she'll be okay.

HOSPITAL ROOM

Nothing could prepare Kristy and Joseph for the shock to see their mother so swollen and having a tube inserted in her neck.

KRISTY

Mummy!

JOSEPH

Mummy!

They both stare at their sleeping mother and then, their fearful eyes turn to Michele. Both kids return to her bedside, carefully hugging her.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Yep, that's still my Mummy. A little bit puffier than normal.

Kristy can't help herself but giggle too. Michele's mouth hangs open loosely.

KRISTY

Mummy, when will you come home? I don't like staying with Elizabeth. She always lectures me. But she likes this guy here because he charms her all the time, you traitor.

JOSEPH

That's not true. You're just jealous. I like Elizabeth. She's nice.

KRISTY

And how come she never visit Mummy in the hospital?

Kristy sticks her tongue out while Joseph shrugs his shoulders. Michele raises an eyebrow and then, gently strokes Kristy's and Joseph's hair. Michele looks at Carole, hoping for some kind of reaction.

MICHELE

Well, both of you have a lot of fun  
with your cousins during sleepover  
at our house, right?

JOSEPH

Yep. I hope that Mummy hears me  
and that we'll come back to visit  
her next weekend for my Birthday.

Michele gives him a thumbs-up, but her eyes are filled with  
tears.

INT. ICU - HOSPITAL ROOM - EVENING

Carole has awakened from her coma and her eyes hang on Sean's  
tired face. He places a vase with flowers on the table. His  
eyes are shifting nervously to Michele, Deka, Rose, and  
Howard who are gathering around his wife's bed.

SEAN

My love, we've arranged for nearly  
a thousand people around the Globe  
to say the same prayer at the same  
time for you. We're just waiting  
for the lady from the Padre Pio  
Shrine to show up.

The face of the clock shows 6:57 PM.

MICHELE

She said she'd be here on time.

In mid-sentence, there is a brief knock on the door. A  
middle-aged **WOMAN** enters the room gesturing for an excuse.  
She immediately walks to Michele and hands her Padre Pio's  
glove which Michele gently places on Carole's chest.

The face of the clock shows now 7:00 PM.

They all hold hands for the prayer "Hail Holy Queen" which is  
inaudible. Then,

EVERYONE

Dear God. Through the intercession  
of Padre Pio, Jesus, and the  
Blessed Mother, we ask that you  
bless Carole McGarrigle and cure  
her of illness and sickness. Amen.

INT. DR. FOSTER'S OFFICE - DAY

Sean and Dr. Foster look out the window.

DR. FOSTER

I was very certain that Carole won't make it. I have to admit that your wife is the strongest person I've ever met. Whatever you are doing, keep it up.

SEAN

That's my Carole, the miracle girl.

DR. FOSTER

I can see that. I think that your wife might even be well enough to spend a weekend at home.

SEAN

Really? Wow, the kids are going to go nuts about that.

INT. ICU - HOSPITAL ROOM

Carole sits up in her bed as Sean appears in the door frame. Her edema has slowly been subsiding. Sean makes himself comfortable at Carole's bedside and silently takes her in his arms. They remain in this position for a while.

INT. ICU - HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING

Sean, Michele, and Deka stand at the far end, talking in a low voice. Sean can hardly keep his emotions in check.

SEAN

Dr. Dreyfus is completely perplexed and told me this morning that the infection in Carole's stomach isn't draining as quickly as the first infection did. They have to operate to clear it out.

DEKA

Is she strong enough for an operation?

SEAN

They won't operate unless her numbers are better, and they want my consent. The doctor's biggest fear is kidney failure.

(MORE)

SEAN (CONT'D)

I'll need to ask Carole if she wants the operation.

MICHELE

You can't ask her. Carole is not in any state of mind to make that decision.

DEKA

I fully agree with Michele. You shouldn't tell Carole about this.

SEAN

No, I promised her that I'd always tell her what was happening.

MICHELE

I understand, but she can't even talk anymore. The medication sometimes makes her act like a zombie. She is too drugged up.

DEKA

How in the world can she possibly grasp what's going on?

SEAN

And at other times she understands everything. I've asked the nurse to slow down the medication so I can talk to her.

Sean ambles to Carole's bedside and whispers into her ear. Michele and Deka abruptly exit the room. Sean lifts his head briefly when he hears the door close.

HOSPITAL HALLWAY

Sean catches up with Michele and Deka who are heading to the cafeteria.

SEAN

Guys, we're all in this together. Please, don't let us down.

MICHELE

I guess, we owe you an apology. You're truly a rock, Sean. You know that. We're so grateful for everything.

SEAN

Thank you.

INT. ICU NURSE'S STATION - EVENING

The Nurse hands the phone to Sean.

SEAN  
 (into the phone in  
 disbelief)  
 Dick? Where the hell did you get  
 this number?

DICK  
 Is Carole dying? I need to know so  
 I can get things...

SEAN  
 (cutting off Dick)  
 Carole is gonna live and she's  
 making it out of here!

Dick disconnects the line leaving Sean visibly upset.

INT. ICU - CAROLE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

The calendar shows Tuesday, MAY 20, 2008. Her room is filled with colorful balloons and a banner is placed in the middle of a huge flower bouquet with "HAPPY 42ND BIRTHDAY, CAROLE. Surprisingly, Carole is able to sit up in her bed, surrounded by Margaret, Linda, Sean, Michele, Dekka, and the four kids.

MARGARET  
 Caz, I hope you understand that  
 Linda and I need to go back home  
 for a while. We'll be leaving  
 tomorrow, but I promise that I come  
 back in a month or so, okay?

Carole fights back tears while wearing a happy face. Margaret and Linda kiss Carole on her cheeks and hurry out without looking back.

Music in: "Solo Piano." The ICU room sequence repeats with the calendar date moving forward to FRIDAY, MAY 23, Sean sits next to Carole's bed typing on his laptop for a while. SATURDAY, MAY 24, Sean massages Carole's feet. SUNDAY, MAY 25, Sean reads the rosary and massages her feet. MONDAY, MAY 26, Michele arrives. TUESDAY, MAY 27, Michele plays the CD OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN'S "Stronger Than Before." WEDNESDAY, MAY 28, Dekka sits at his sister's bedside talking to her; only the muscles of her upper eyelids move. THURSDAY, MAY 29, Dekka massages Carole's feet while Michele gently taps her face with a washcloth. FRIDAY, MAY 30, Sean holds Carole's hands while she briefly opens her eyes.

INT. DR. FOSTER'S OFFICE - DAY

Sean recognizes the change in Dr. Foster's face and locking eyes with him.

DR. FOSTER

Sean, I'm not sure how much strength Carole has left to fight. Her kidneys are failing and she has unusually low blood pressure.

Sean's ashen face and his eyes go blank. He shakes his head in disbelief. Dr. Foster slightly touches his arm in a comforting way.

DR. FOSTER (CONT'D)

The long pauses in her breathing rhythm normally last three days before the body shuts down. I'm so very sorry, Sean!

INT. ICU - CAROLE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Deka, Kristy, and Joseph enter the room. The calendar shows SATURDAY, MAY 31.

KRISTY

Mummy, when are you coming home?

Carole doesn't respond. Deka's concerned look doesn't go by Kristy.

DEKA

Let's go and beat the traffic.

Kristy tries to shake loose but gives in. She and Joseph kiss her good night, but no sign back from their Mum.

KRISTY

See you in the morning, Mummy.

JOSEPH

Yes, Mummy. See you, tomorrow.

Reaching the door, Deka hesitates and walks back to Sean.

DEKA

Do you want me to stay the night with Caz and you go home with the kids?

SEAN

No, let me stay with Carole. I've been having a strange feeling...

He stops mid-sentence as Kristy and Joseph turn around once more looking at their Mum before leaving.

DREAM SEQUENCE - INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Carole, Sean, and Deka reach the top of the MATTERHORN. They place a small, Scottish Flag. Carole picks up a rugged stone and carves "CAZ" with her Swiss Army knife.

END DREAM  
SEQUENCE

INT. ICU - CAROLE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Sean is sitting next to Carole and praying. She opens her eyes and looks at him and his hand is grasping Carole's.

SEAN

I love you.

CAROLE

(silently)

I love you more.

Carole closes her eyes and drifts off. Soon after, Sean has fallen asleep. The loud beep alert from one of the machines wakes him up. The dim light leaves a warm glow on Carole's face.

SEAN

C'mon, my love, you have to fight.  
Please, please, fight! Don't give  
up on us now. Carole, we need you,  
I need you!

INT. THE RODGER'S KITCHEN - JUNE 1, 2008 - SUNRISE

Michele watches the sun rise above the trees from the kitchen window. Deka pours himself a freshly brewed cup of coffee. The phone is ringing and Michele looks at her wristwatch. It's 6:28 AM. She grabs the portable phone and recognizes Sean's number.

MICHELE

Deka, it's Sean.

With trembling hands, she picks up the phone.



MICHELE (CONT'D)

Sean? What? Sean, no!

Michele's eyes scream at Deka. He immediately knows and bends down to his knees placing his head in between his hands.

INT. ICU - CAROLE'S HOSPITAL ROOM

Sean and Deka hug each other and weep together without saying a word. They stare at Carole's empty bed. Sean looks worn out and overwhelmed.

SEAN

I'd like to get Carole back to Long Island today.

DEKA

Yes, I get it, but we need to get back to my house first and tell Kristy and Joseph.

INT. THE RODGER'S HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

Deka and Sean just step into the foyer when Michele emerges with the kids. She hugs Sean very tightly and can't avoid crying. Kristy senses the tension and turns to Sean.

KRISTY

Are we leaving soon to visit Mummy?

Without responding, Sean takes Kristy and Joseph by their hands gesturing toward the living room.

LIVING ROOM

SEAN

Kristy, Joseph. Mummy passed away during the night.

Joseph mumbles incoherent words and Kristy's body violently shakes.

KRISTY

No, not my Mummy. Please, no!

They all weep and comfort each other. A bit later, the kids write a farewell letter to their Mum. Sean joins them while holding Carole's diary in his hands.

SEAN

Kristy, I found this in your Mum's belongings. I think that she wanted me to give it to you.

Sean places the diary into Kristy's hands, and she presses it against her chest weeping.

EXT. OUTSIDE FUNERAL PARLOR, GREAT RIVER, LONG ISLAND - DAY

There is not a single cloud in the June sky. The black Limousine follows the hearse with Carole's casket. The Limousine's windows reflect a glimpse of Sean, Kristy, Joseph, Deka, Michele, Bradley, Cameron, and Linda's mourning faces.

TRAVELING ON THE MAIN ROAD

Fifty cars follow the hearse which gets a full Police escort to the church. The hearse passes Carole's and Sean's house. A single red rose is placed on the doorstep.

IN FRONT OF THE CHURCH

The hearse arrives at the local church and is greeted by the **PIPE- AND DRUM BAND** of the Suffolk County Police. They stand proudly in their kilts. Music in: "Amazing Grace." The cars come to a halt and everyone emerges from them to proceed to the church's entrance.

INT. CAMERON'S BEDROOM - EVENING

CAMERON

Mommy, is Aunty Carole still sleeping in the Treasury Box with all the beautiful Gem stones?

MICHELE

No, sweetheart, she is now in heaven, playing with the Angels and making God laugh.

TITLE: Neist Point Lighthouse, Isle of Skye, Scotland, August 2008.

EXT. NEIST POINT LIGHTHOUSE, ISLE OF SKYE - DAY

The view adds a breathtaking grandeur to the remarkable landscape. A group of family and friends gather to pay their respects to Carole. Sean places one of Padre Pio's mass cards on the footsteps of the Standing stones. While he presses her urn tightly to his body, he discovers a stone engraved with "CAZ." He shakes his head in disbelief, picks up the stone to put in his pocket. Sean notices an **OLDER COUPLE** and Dick's younger **BROTHER**. He searches for Dick, but there is no sign of him. Then his eyes meet Kristy and Joseph.

SEAN

Carole fell immediately in love with this place. Anyone who met her felt like they knew Carole all of their lives. She has been utterly heroic with her illness. Witty as always and brave. Carole had a natural ability to touch people in a way that we'll never forget. Her generosity has extended to encouraging us to live fully, take opportunities, and strive for adventures. Our precious Gem, Caroleeee, was taken from us way too soon. We love you to the moon and back. Your spirit will always be with us.

Sean opens the urn. A sudden light breeze lifts her scattering ashes into the blue sky. The bright sunlight reflects on it like a million glittery stars.

EXT. DICK'S BACKYARD - DAY

Dick dials a phone number on his cell phone.

DICK

Sean, it's Dick. Hey, listen. The kids decided to stay with me and have no desire to return to the States.

SEAN (V.O.)

What's going on, Dick? No way! I don't believe you. Put Kristy on the phone. I want to hear from her if it's really true.

Dick simply disconnects the call.

INT. CLIFFORD, HOGAN & SMITH LLP, LONDON - AFTERNOON

The letters on the door read: "Clifford, Hogan & Smith LLP, Attorneys at Law". Linda and Sean sit across a very elegantly dressed, middle-aged MAN. Their intense conversation is inaudible.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Gray sky and light rain. Linda and Sean stand alongside the Rental car. Sean's eyes catch a red Toyota coming to a halt. A bleach-blonde FEMALE and Dick's BROTHER emerge with Kristy and Joseph. They both firmly hold the kids' hands while approaching Linda and Sean. Their heated conversation is inaudible. Lots of tears. Linda and Sean hug and kiss the kids and then separate looking at each other one more time.

EXT. BEACH / LIVERPOOL - DAY

Kristy and Joseph walk hand and hand on the beach, stop, and kneel. Kristy draws a heart in the sand with her finger, writing "Mummy, we love you." Joseph lays the white rose on top of it. A smile hushes over their faces. Kristy removes Carole's Padre Pio mass card from her dress pocket. Joseph leans onto her and she turns the card: "Do not stand at my grave and weep. I am not there. I do not sleep..."

INT. CAROLE'S FORMER HOUSE, LIVING ROOM, LINLITHGOW - DAY

Sean decorates the Christmas tree. As he retrieves the angel tree topper from a box, the door opens and Linda enters with Kristy and Joseph. The kids run into Sean's open arms.

SEAN

Merry Christmas, kids! Seeing you again is the best gift ever. And, I have a big surprise for you.

JOSEPH

What is it?

SEAN

I bought your Mummy's house and moved in here to stay and be with both of you. How about that? And, are you ready for more great news? I hired a lawyer and he has been working very hard to get me custody of you guys!

Sean, Kristy, Joseph, and Linda laugh and scream while dancing around the Christmas tree.

#### EPILOGUE

Music in: Sean's self-composed slow air bagpipe tunes. A few names were changed to respect their privacy. Some parts of this true story have been fictional. Even though Carole passed away, her legacy inspired not only her immediate family but so many other people who were blessed to meet her.

Dick tried to lure Kristy and Joseph into living with him and his new wife for financial reasons.

Sean's lawyer won the custody case for Kristy and Joseph.

Photograph of real Carole taking her first flying lesson, climbing her first Munro, and attempting to climb the Matterhorn. Carole and Sean at both weddings, dated February 14, 2003, and June 20, 2003. Sean still possesses both of Carole's wedding dresses, the "Lara - Dr. Zhivago" hat and tiara.

Current photo of the real Sean, 58, playing the bagpipe. He never remarried and never got over Carole's death. He spends his time between Kristy, Joseph, the Scottish Highlands, and Upstate NY.

Current photo of the real Kristy, 30, who completed a biotechnology postgraduate degree, enjoys her full-time job as an Associate Medical Writer and got married five years ago. She lives now with her husband in Carole's old house in Linlithgow, Scotland.

Current photo of the real Joseph, 27, who graduated with a Ph.D. in Chemistry at Sheffield Hallam University, England, and advanced to researching how to detect cancer in its early stages. Joseph and his girlfriend live in Leeds, England.

Current photo of the real Michele. In 2010, she wrote and published her book "Carole's Story... A Scottish Gem" which helped her and the entire family to heal. Some of the proceeds went to alternative treatments for those diagnosed with stage four cancers with the hope they would not need to die from this horrible disease. Michele is determined that Carole's story will eventually turn into an inspirational movie.

Current photo of the real Deka. His sister's passing changed his whole career leaving him with the need to help people. Deka decided to return to school and qualified in Human Clinical Medical Nutrition in 2009.

He continued in the field of education becoming a Board Certified Doctor of Naturopathy.

Current photo of Sean and Deka with their arms placed around each other's shoulders. Sean holds the stone engraved with "CAZ" in one of his hands. They prepare to climb the Matterhorn together in memory of their beloved Carole.

FADE OUT.

THE END