

"GIVERS & TAKERS"

by

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INT. SAM AND GRACIE'S NEW YORK APARTMENT — MORNING

MUSIC plays.

We see an empty bed with sheets and bedding tossed about. To the right, the bathroom door opens. Steam escapes.

Then, a robed Gracie sings with the music as she emerges from the bathroom. As she walks, she dries her hair with the end of her towel that is draped around her neck.

Gracie stops singing.

GRACIE

Sam! Sam!

She looks at the alarm clock. The music continues to play. She starts to hum to the music. Then, she walks out of the bedroom. We see her travel down the hallway, further and further.

GRACIE (CONT'D)

Sam, you missed out on a great run.

Sam sits in their darkened living room.

GRACIE (CONT'D)

Sam!

SAM

What!

On the TV screen, face-to-face, George Peppard and Audrey Hepburn wears cat and dog masks in a toy store.

GRACIE

Ahh. Breakfast at Tiffany's, again?

SAM

It makes me feel better.

Gracie flips off the TV.

SAM (CONT'D)

Hey.

GRACIE

You missed a great run.

SAM

I know. What about getting out of the City this weekend?

Gracie shakes her head no.

SAM (CONT'D)
Come on. We can leave after I
teach my last class.

GRACIE
Where to this time?

SAM
Upstate for a hike.

Gracie rubs his shoulders and stares down.

GRACIE
I've got work. Remember?

SAM
Work? Gracie, you on call again?

GRACIE
We spoke about this on Monday.

SAM
But you worked last weekend?

GRACIE
Someone needs to be there.

SAM
Yes, but why does that someone
need to be you.

Gracie gives him her all-knowing smile and says nothing.

SAM (CONT'D)
Over achiever.

Sam unties her robe.

GRACIE
I have five minutes, Sam.

SAM
That should do.

Gracie giggles as she is attacked by the man she now loves.

INT. SAM AND GRACIE'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - LATER

Sam eats a bowl of cereal.

SAM
So, Gracie, road trip?

Gracie emerges from the bedroom, smartly dressed in a USPHS officer's uniform.

GRACIE
Not this time. You will need to
settle for Sunday dinner.

SAM
Marco's?

GRACIE
Why not.

Gracie gives him a kiss on his shoulder.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
Good-bye.

EXT. WORLD TRADE CENTER MEMORIAL - DAY

Out on a run, Gracie stops at the memorial: a chain-fence of flowers, flags, candles and pictures of those lost.

Gracie touches a worn photo of Stacie.

GRACIE
Hi, Stacie.

A WOMAN approaches with fresh flowers in her hands.

WOMAN
Hi.

GRACIE
Hi.

The woman looks at Gracie then the photograph of Stacie.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
My sister.

The woman places the flowers near a photograph of a middle-aged man. Gently, she pats the photo.

WOMAN
My brother.

The two strangers embrace and console one another.

INT. MARCO'S RESTAURANT — SUNDAY NIGHT

Sam and Gracie eat at a Fondue Restaurant. It's a small dark intimate restaurant full of candlelit, romance, and splendid atmosphere.

Gracie places a stick with tofu into the pot.

GRACIE
I went to the memorial, yesterday.

SAM
I'm not there yet. I find my
solace in the woods.

GRACIE
Do you think Stacie would
understand us?

SAM
I think Stacie would want us to be
happy, and move on.

GRACIE
Yeah. So, how was your hike?

SAM
Good. Rained a bit but I like
that. How was work?

Grace takes a sip from her wine.

GRACIE
Interesting.

SAM
Interesting? How so?

GRACIE
The Surgeon General is looking for
volunteers for Gitmo.

SAM
Cuba?

EXT. GUANTANAMO BAY NAVAL BASE, CUBA — LATER

Establishing Gitmo's grounds. Within the detainee cages, KOVIC, an American soldier talks down to DETAINEES in bright orange jumpsuits.

The prisoners are on their knees with their arms bound.

SUPER: "Detention Camp X-Ray. 2003."

KOVIC
 Welcome to Camp X-Ray, ass-holes!
 (sings)
*You can check out any time you
 like... but you can never leave.*

Arrives CONWAY, a second soldier.

CONWAY
 Why be such an ass?

KOVIC
 I'm from Brooklyn. These
 fuck-holes messed up my view.

INT. GUANTANAMO BAY NAVAL BASE — NIGHT

Gracie provides direct clinical and consultative services to TROUBLED OFFICER with psychological problems. She sips from a coffee mug that reads, "I Love N.Y."

TROUBLED OFFICER
 Doctor Dover?

GRACIE
 Gracie.

TROUBLED OFFICER
 Gracie, the detainees?

GRACIE
 What about the prisoners?

TROUBLED OFFICER
 We're not interrogating these men.
 No... worse. We're torturing them.

Gracie looks up from her scribbles and eyes the officer.

GRACIE
 Torturing them?

Gracie reaches out and touches the officer's hand. She stares into his weary, watering eyes.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
 Why?

The officer breaks eye contact.

TROUBLED OFFICER
 Orders.

GRACIE
Orders? Who's?

TROUBLED OFFICER
Hell if I know. This crap trickles
down. Shackles. Beatings. We're
treating them worse than animals.

GRACIE
Hmm. That's not right.

TROUBLED OFFICER
One day we're going to regret
this.

EXT. SAM AND GRACIE'S HOUSE - LATER MORNING

Newspaper boy delivers today's edition to her drive.

SUPER: "Fall, 2013. Ten years later."

INSERT - NEWS HEADLINE, which reads, "Ebola Outbreak."

BACK TO SCENE:

A rope-wearing Gracie walks out and retrieves her paper.

INT. SAM AND GRACIE'S HOUSE - LATER MORNING

The newspaper rests on the counter as Gracie makes
pancakes.

Sam, now Gracie's husband, plays with his tie.

Their child HOLDEN, 6, eats pancakes at the kitchen table.

SAM
Has anyone seen my new blazer?

GRACIE
It's in your closet.

SAM
I just checked.

With pan in hand, Gracie walks to the table and unloads
fresh pancakes onto Holden's plate.

GRACIE
I hung it there yesterday fresh
from the cleaners.

SAM
You sure?

GRACIE
Stacie! Your pancakes are getting cold.

Sam leaves the kitchen to check his closet again.

STACIE, 8, enters.

STACIE
Mom, I'm right here.

From upstairs, Sam screams down.

SAM
Found it!

Gracie shakes her head and eyes her daughter who looks exactly like her.

GRACIE
What are we going to do with daddy?

Gracie moves closer to her daughter's face.

STACIE
How about love him?

Gracie brushes a stray curl from Stacie's face.

GRACIE
You ready for your piano recital?

STACIE
That's this weekend?

GRACIE
Next.

STACIE
Whew. I need more practice.

GRACIE
Good idea.

Gracie picks up Holden's dirty dishes and takes them to the sink.

Sam reappears.

SAM
Fridays.

At the sink, Gracie adjusts Sam's tie.

GRACIE
That's better.

SAM
What would I do without you?

GRACIE
You're going to be late.

Gracie hands her children their lunches as they head out.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
Here you go, Holden. Peanut butter
on a wheat bagel. Make sure you
eat your fruit today. Okay?

HOLDEN
I will.

SAM
Stacie. Your father will pick you
up this afternoon.

SAM (CONT'D)
I am?

GRACIE
Unless, you want to do the grocery
shopping.

Sam looks at his daughter.

SAM
I'm picking you up.

Stacie gives Gracie a peck on the cheek.

STACIE
Thanks, mom.

Gracie looks out the kitchen window as he sips from her
coffee "I Love N.Y." mug.

GRACIE
Bus.

Everyone rushes out except Gracie. She moves to...

THE LIVING ROOM

She hears on the TV...

NEWS ANNOUNCER

In other news, the World Health Organization said Thursday the West Africa Ebola outbreak has killed more than three-thousand people and infected more than sixty-five-hundred.

Gracie stops cold. She turns toward the TV.

EXT. MILITARY BASE - PARKING LOT - DAY

In uniform, Gracie walks from her car to her office. She runs into a fellow active duty psychologist in the United States Public Health Service.

CALLIE, in uniform, early 30s, black, highly educated, newbie mother emerges from her minivan.

Gracie rushes over to help her.

GRACIE

Callie, it looks like you have your hands full.

CALLIE

Gracie, tell me it gets easier.

GRACIE

What?

CALLIE

Raising kids.

GRACIE

I'm afraid it doesn't.

CALLIE

Lie then.

Callie struggles with her breast pump and briefcase.

CALLIE (CONT'D)

Maybe I should just stay home?

GRACIE

Trust me, Callie. You would miss the adult interaction and the feeling your part of something bigger than yourself.

Callie stops and smiles at her friend.

CALLIE
Gracie, you always know what to
say.

GRACIE
Occupational hazard.

CALLIE
Happy Friday.

EXT. UNIVERSITY — DAY

Blue-capped chapel looms over campus.

INT. UNIVERSITY CLASSROOM — SAME

A black-and-white film ends. We hear the sound of rolling
tape. Then, we see the Sam behind the white lights. He
switches off the projector.

SAM
Before there was the Internet,
there was Burton Holmes.

Sam walks across the room and flips on the lights.

SAM (CONT'D)
Describing the indescribable.

His students, young, well-off twenty-somethings, refer to
Sam fondly as Dr. U.

SAM (CONT'D)
So, what does everyone think?

The students respond with awkward silence. They look at one
another in search of a savior. Someone to respond to Dr.
U's question. None do.

SAM (CONT'D)
Come on. Think. That's what
matters. So, tell me. What you
saw. And more importantly, how did
it make you feel?

TABATHA
Well, Dr. U, seeing the world in
pure black and white is
challenging for me.

JOEY
You mean, boring.

TABATHA
N-o-o. A f'n distraction.

THE ROOM
Yeah.

TABATHA
The B.W. world is too artsy.
Gritty.

SAM
How so?

WENDY
Well, ending the movie at the
church fountain at daybreak, the
streets void of people, was...

SAM
Yes.

WENDY
Unrealistic. Staged.

JOEY
Dr. U. In the age of the selfie.
Every mundane moment is captured
by a smartphone. Then tweeted, and
re-posted.

TABATHA
We see what's real. And relevant
to us.

SAM
Exactly, Tabatha! Excellent point.
So where is the relevance? The
truth?

JOEY
The truth? Who cares? I need an A
to make sure I get into the right
law school.

SAM
Film allows us to see what we want
to see. Shows us snapshots of what
was... so. How does it pertain to
the modern day? Peter. Peter?

PETER
What? Oh. I liked it.

SAM
What?

PETER
The movie.

SAM
Why?

PETER
Because you want me too.

SAM
Do I?

PETER
Why else would you be showing it
to us?

SAM
To educate.

PETER
Educate, please. This University
only cares about the checks my
parents write, not me.

SAM
Does that same notion pertain to
me?

PETER
No.

SAM
Yet I am employed by the
University.

PETER
You are. That's your problem.

SAM
What is my problem... exactly?

PETER
You care about us. And here, that
makes you a liability.

Sam clears his throat.

SAM
Okay. Okay. We will continue this
conversation next time.

The students start to leave.

SAM (CONT'D)
Remember, the films I show you
expand your thinking, if you allow
them to. Right, Peter?

Peter turns back to Sam when he reaches the door, gives his
professor a half-hearted smile.

PETER
Dr. U, I think too much. That's my
problem. Movies are meant to be
escapes, not novels.

Sam's smile fades.

Peter sees his words hurt the only instructor he likes. He
adds.

PETER (CONT'D)
But I will try, Dr. U.

SAM
That's all I ask, Peter.

Sam clears throat.

SAM (CONT'D)
Okay. I don't have office hours on
Friday. So your troubles will have
to wait until Monday.

Sam says this to an empty room.

INT. GRACIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Gracie sits opposite a COLONEL, a spit-and-polish Academy
grad, ten years her senior.

The Colonel looks out the window, not at Gracie.

COLONEL
My wife moved out.

GRACIE
The two of you have been
discussing that option for some
time.

The Colonel eyes meets Gracie's.

COLONEL
True. But I never imagined she
would really leave.

GRACIE
Why is that?

COLONEL
I'm not a man that these things
happen to.

GRACIE
Well, there was broken trust.

COLONEL
So.

GRACIE
How's your work?

The Colonel brightens.

COLONEL
Never better.

INT. MEGA GROCERY STORE - MEAT COUNTER - LATER DAY

Gracie inspects the wide choices of meat for their cookout.

Behind the counter, the BUTCHER hands Gracie a
white-wrapped package of brats.

BUTCHER
Anything else?

GRACIE
Anything good on sale? Ideal for a
cookout?

BUTCHER
I know just the thing.

Gracie sees beef being shredded into hamburger.

As he works the meat shredder, he shares.

BUTCHER (CONT'D)
It doesn't get fresher than this,
miss. Moo.

EXT. SAM AND GRACIE'S BACKYARD - EVENING

Sam's grills brats and burgers as other university
PROFESSORS and FAULTY exchanges stories.

SAM
I backpacked through Europe and
met Burton Holmes, at his Austrian
Abbey.

MIKE, the retiring professor laughs out.

MIKE
Bullshit.

SAM
I'm serious.

Gracie arrives. She wears her Battle Dress Uniform (BDU).
DOVER is stenciled over her left breast pocket, with the
insignia of a Bald Eagle Clenching Arrows shows to everyone
her rank of Captain.

As Gracie enters the party, the guests look as if she is a
Martian from another planet.

Sam stands at the grill and waves.

HANK, 30s, a bit of a male chauvinist who's an assistant
professor of Oral History.

HANK
Are we being invaded?

GRACIE
Hi, guys. I'm a tad overdressed.

Mike moves closer to Gracie.

MIKE
No, you look great. Thanks for the
party.

Gracie gives Mike a hug.

GRACIE
Congrats, Mike. Where's Sally?

MIKE
Inside.

Sam wanders over.

HANK
Gracie, what exactly do you do?

GRACIE
Help people.

HANK
I know that. Army. Navy?

GRACIE
I'm a Captain in U.S. Public
Health Services.

HANK
The what?

GRACIE
It's a branch overseen by the
Surgeon General. Focuses on
Health. My Captain status goes
back to the service's Navy roots.

SAM
Back away boys. A captain in the
Navy ranks up there like a colonel
in the other branches.

HANK
Wow. A colonel. I didn't know
women went that high.

GRACIE
I will be right back.

EXT. SAM AND GRACIE'S BACKYARD — LATER

Colorful Japanese lanterns hang overhead. As guests talk
and huddle by the fire pit's ample flames. At this point of
the party, all are feeling warm and at their best.

Kids of various ages play about in the dark.

Sam sees Gracie in a chair away from the fire. He sits as
he sees shadowy images dance across her face.

Gracie smiles back.

GRACIE
I think everyone is having a good
time.

SAM
What's on your mind, Gracie?

GRACIE
What?

SAM
You're pondering something.

GRACIE
How did you know?

SAM
Your body is all tense. So... out
with it.

GRACIE
The Surgeon General contacted me
today.

SAM
Oh no. Not Lipperman.

GRACIE
Yes. He's the acting Surgeon
General now.

SAM
Gracie, our daughter's birthday is
a month from now.

GRACIE
I know.

SAM
You missed her first because of
Hurricane Charley. Her sixth
because of Joplin. Now this one
because of...

GRACIE
Ebola.

SAM
West Africa? Are you f'n kidding?

GRACIE
No. I'm leaving Sunday. CDC's has
a week-long Ebola Safety Course in
Alabama. There I will learn how to
properly suit up. Then, Africa. We
will be in country until
Christmas.

SAM
Great. In country. Gracie, you're
a psychiatrist. Not a green beret.

GRACIE
The caregivers need, and deserve
care too, Sam.

SAM

Well. This is great. What about the kids?

GRACIE

They know I love them. And I wish to be an example to them. To fight for those in need.

SAM

Fight. Hmm. There must be others willing to go, Gracie. You have had your run.

GRACIE

None. Infectious diseases freaks people out.

SAM

I imagine so. This isn't about your sister is it?

GRACIE

No. Why would it be?

SAM

Okay. So, your mind is made up?

GRACIE

Yes. I can make a difference.

Sam heads toward their brightly lit home.

SAM

Well, try making a difference here. Good night.

INT. SAM AND GRACIE'S HOUSE — KITCHEN — NEXT MORNING

Over their coffees, Sam and Gracie watch CNN and argue.

NEWS ANNOUNCER

West Africa is experiencing the largest Ebola outbreak in history. Three-thousand confirmed dead. The virus, which doesn't have a cure, has for more three months been ravaging a region ill-equipped to fight it. The CDC is organizing an Humanitarian mission.

Sam takes a sip of his coffee.

GRACIE
It's my job.

SAM
It's more than that.

Holden ENTERS into the kitchen. His hair is a wreck. With eyes half open he grabs a box of cereal.

GRACIE
Do you want to deal with the
crisis there, or here?

Sam gets up, pulls a carton of milk from the fridge.

SAM
But Gracie--

GRACIE
It's three months.

SAM
Yes, at ground zero of an
outbreak.

HOLDEN
Why are you fighting?

SAM
We're not fighting, son.

Gracie hugs Holden.

GRACIE
Mommy needs to go away again to
help people.

RUN NEWS CLIP on TV

President Obama speaks on the outbreak.

PRESIDENT OBAMA
Here's the bottom line. Patients
can beat this disease. And we can
beat this disease. But we have to
stay vigilant. We have to work
together at every level – federal,
state and local. And we have to
keep leading the global response,
because the best way to stop this
disease, the best way to keep
Americans safe, is to stop it at
its source – in West Africa.

EXT. ANNISTON, ALABAMA - OLD ARMY POST - DAY

Establishing: Old abandoned army post with World War Two wooden buildings surrounded by tall weeds. Deteriorating roads crisscross the area.

SUPER: "Near Anniston, Alabama, 2014."

A couple desert-camouflaged Humvees parked along with cars, SUVs near an old cinderblock building. A sign reads: "CDC Ebola Safety Course."

INT. BUILDING - TRAINING ROOM - SAME

Windowless room made of cinderblock.

DOCTOR in a white hood, goggles, and yellow hazmat suit.

DOCTOR

Good afternoon folks. You have two patients that we need bloods drawn from.

A suited-up Gracie stands beside a BIG BLUE BUCKET on the cold concrete floor. The biohazard bucket is labeled 'VOMIT.' In the cot is a plastic mannequin child.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

We're all aware that there is a risk and that we must be extremely careful. However, we also know that if we wear the protective equipment properly and follow the protocols. We'll be okay.

EXT. REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA - AIRPORT - DAY

Gracie's white U.N. aircraft lands on the runway, parks near a small terminal building.

SUPER: "Republic of Liberia - Roberts Airport - 30 miles from Monrovia."

As Gracie departs the plane she feels heat.

On a tarmac a masked NURSE shouts.

NURSE

Form two lines. We need to take your temperature.

Gracie gets in line.

Nurse points a device that looks like Sci-fi laser gun at her head.

NURSE (CONT'D)
You're normal. Get on the bus.

EXT. M.M.U. BIO-CONTAINMENT UNIT — SAME

As Gracie arrives, she sees a colleague she knows waiting.

SUPER: "Camp Eason - Monrovia Medical Unit."

Gracie grabs her equipment. As she gets off.

Helps TED a dashing doc who has a crush on Gracie.

GRACIE
Thanks Ted. When did you get here?

TED
Three weeks ago.

GRACIE
Over achiever.

TED
How was your ride in?

GRACIE
My teeth are still rattling.

TED
Well, welcome to M.M.U.

In the background crews of Navy Seabees construct the 25-bed facility from the ground.

GRACIE
Is it always this hot?

TED
Today is cooler than most.

GRACIE
Great.

Gracie sees a sign that reads Camp Eason.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
Camp Eason?

TED
In honor of the first African
American officer in the USPHS. He
served here.

GRACIE
Captain John Eason. Good choice.

EXT. M.M.U. BIO-CONTAINMENT UNIT - NIGHT

Ted gives Gracie a tour of the compound.

TED
Here's the entrance to high risk.

GRACIE
The red tape on the ground?

TED
We are entering the red zone.
Restricted to suspected Ebola
patients.

GRACIE
I see. The team has done a great
deal in a few weeks' time.

TED
We need to do more.

INT. M.M.U. BIO-CONTAINMENT UNIT - NIGHT

Ted and Gracie suit up. In their hazmat suit, Ted grabs a
sharpie and writes Gracie on her blue plastic apron.

TED
There. A name makes us human.

GRACIE
What about you?

TED
They all know me now.

INT. M.M.U. BIO-CONTAINMENT UNIT - NIGHT

Close-up of Ebola patient's bloody mouth. Teeth are missing
and the gums are red and inflamed.

Ted touches the infected caregiver.

TED
All this people here are nurses
and caregivers to the first wave
inflicted with the virus.

Fifteen patients in various stages of the disease line the
ward in hospital beds.

GRACIE
Where are the others?

TED
Dead.

EXT. M.M.U. BIO-CONTAINMENT UNIT - DAY

A suited up Gracie carries an eight year old boy from the
staging area to the restricted red zone.

Ted approaches.

TED
What do we have here?

GRACIE
He tested positive for Ebola.

TED
Family?

GRACIE
They didn't make it.

Gracie hands him over.

TED
Let's see if we can save him.

EXT. M.M.U. BIO-CONTAINMENT UNIT - NIGHT

Ted and Gracie sits in folding cars underneath a canopy of
stars.

GRACIE
How's the boy?

TED
Time will tell.

EXT. M.M.U. BIO-CONTAINMENT UNIT - DAY

Ebola survivor's board in yellow letters on a blue background reads, "Today I Am Healed. Tomorrow I Return to Heal Another."

TED

This is why we are here. To save lives.

Ted grabs Gracie's hand and places it over a yellow handprint of a discharged survivor.

GRACIE

Today I am healed.

TED

Good.

The sexual tension grows between them.

INT. OFF-BASE LIBERIAN HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Down a long linoleum corridor is a room where Gracie comforts a woman caregiver on the brink of a nervous breakdown.

WOMAN CAREGIVER

I watched everyone on them die.
First the old. Then the young.

GRACIE

How well did you know these people?

WOMAN CAREGIVER

They were from my village. People I grew up with. Now they're all gone.

GRACIE

You did all you could for them.

WOMAN CAREGIVER

Did I?

GRACIE

It's okay to grieve.

WOMAN CAREGIVER

I have no tears left.

The woman reaches for a cup of coffee.

WOMAN CAREGIVER (CONT'D)
Not even for my sister.

Gracie reflects on this.

GRACIE
I lost my sister too.

WOMAN CAREGIVER
From Ebola?

GRACIE
No. From hate.

INT. FACULTY ROOM - DAY

Sam pours himself a cup of coffee. Then, he wanders over to a chair next to Mike.

SAM
Mike, I failed at what other's
thought I should be until I found
teaching.

MIKE
Do you think we are really making
a difference with these kids?

SAM
Sure.

Mike eyes Sam hard.

SAM (CONT'D)
I would say most. But not all.

MIKE
I always wanted to teach. But
anymore I can barely get through
my lectures.

SAM
Why is that?

MIKE
There is no engagement at all.
It's like I'm not even there.

SAM
Well, the Russian Revolution is
not for everyone.

MIKE

How do you do it? Get them talking?

SAM

I treat them like equals. Some deserve it. Others don't. But the main thing, I never lecture them. I begin conversations. And see where that goes.

INT. SAM'S OFFICE - DAY

Crammed space full of books, papers, and film canisters. Sam gazes out a window at leafless trees. Sam looks at a photo of Gracie. Then, he returns to grading papers.

Tabatha appears in the doorway.

TABATHA

Knock. Knock.

Sam looks up.

SAM

Oh. Hi, Tabatha. Office hours aren't until four.

Sam gets up and greets her.

Tabatha comes in.

TABATHA

I know.

She moves closer into Sam's personal space.

TABATHA (CONT'D)

Dr. U, you're so different from everyone else.

SAM

I'm afraid I'm not. So, what's this about?

She purrs.

TABATHA

Extra credit.

EXT. SAM AND GRACIE'S HOUSE — DRIVEWAY — DAY

Stacie places her hand in the mailbox and pulls out a postcard from her mother. She runs inside.

INT. SAM AND GRACIE'S HOUSE — KITCHEN — DAY

Sam catches Stacie as she caroms into him.

SAM
Hey. What's the hurry?

STACIE
A note from Mother!

SAM
What does it say?

Stacie stares at the image of her mother.

STACIE
It's a picture of her room.

SAM
Great. What does she say?

Stacie has the postcard cupped in her hands. Then, she starts to read it.

STACIE
Dear Sam, Stacie...

CLOSE-UP: Postcard of Gracie in her tent.

GRACIE (V.O.)
And Holden. Here you can see me in my room in Liberia. I'm glad I have the mosquito bed net because there lots and lots of bugs here! Once I crawl inside I do not have to worry about mosquitoes, spiders, or giant beetles! I miss you all and cannot wait to see you in a few more weeks. I love you!
Mom XOXOXO

INT. M.M.U. BIO-CONTAINMENT UNIT — DAY

Team of scientists wears yellow hazmat suits. The group travels beyond a red line on the floor that marks the boundary between the high-risk zone and the low-risk zone.

They move to...

SECURE ROOM

Gracie removes her headgear and visor. She watches another doctor do the same.

TED
I think the containment is
working.

GRACIE
Finally.

TED
What are you doing tomorrow?

GRACIE
I'm off. Nothing.

TED
Let's explore. The beaches here
are spectacular.

GRACIE
Why not?

EXT. COASTLINE ROAD - DAY

Ted drives an open top Humvee fast along the coastline road high above the Atlantic Ocean.

Ted eyes Gracie. Her image reflects off his Ray-Bans. She smiles. He smiles back. When, Ted shifts down to a lower gear, the Humvee's engine roars.

Gracie howls in delight.

EXT. SHORELINE BEACH - DAY

Vibrant blue water, white capes, and a long pristine sandy shoreline void of people except Ted and Gracie. In the distance is their Humvee.

In a T shirts, shorts, and shades, Ted and Gracie walks and talks along the sand.

TED
Shame we can't swim.

GRACIE
Sharks?

Ted moves closer to Gracie.

TED
More the undertow.

GRACIE
Oh.

Gracie turns her head at the last minute.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
We should be getting back.

Ted walks back to the Humvee.

TED
Okay.

EXT. M.M.U. BIO-CONTAINMENT UNIT - OUTSIDE - DAY

Sitting in two folding chairs, Gracie ends a section with a nurse struggling to come to terms what she has experienced.

NURSE
They have so little. And this
virus strips them of everything.
Even their dignity.

GRACIE
We're making a difference.

NURSE
Are we? Their are only three
handprints on the survivor's
board.

GRACIE
That's better than zero.

Nurse starts to cry.

NURSE
There needs to be more.

GRACIE
There will be. It just takes time.

INT. SAM AND GRACIE'S HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Sam and Stacie sits at the kitchen table for lunch. They watch the news on CNN.

NEWS ANNOUNCER

Today, a health care worker from Dallas was transferred to Emory University Hospital in Georgia for treatment after contracting the Ebola virus while helping to treat Thomas Eric Duncan, the first patient to have the disease in the U.S.

Phone RINGS.

The number says "Mommy."

STACIE

Mommy!

SAM

Wait. Wait.

He holds off his daughter and answers it.

SAM (CONT'D)

Gracie?

EXT. M.M.U. BIO-CONTAINMENT UNIT — NIGHT

Gracie walks around a tiny circle with her iPhone in hand attempts to get the best coverage.

INTERCUT BETWEEN SAM AND GRACIE

GRACIE

Hi everybody!

SAM

Gracie, you don't sound good.

GRACIE

I'm fine. I just need sleep.

SAM

Well, I'm worried sick.

Gracie sees Ted approach with a bottle of wine, holds up her hand, and he backs off.

GRACIE

I don't have much time, Sam. How are the kids?

SAM

Good. I'm not?

GRACIE
What's wrong?

The call drops.

SAM
I miss you. And there's a student
that... Gracie you there?

Ted approaches Gracie.

GRACIE
It cut off.

Sam hangs up.

SAM
Great talk.

INT. M.M.U. BIO-CONTAINMENT UNIT - DAY

In the Red Zone, a suited up Gracie visits the young boy she carried days before. SOE, who is fighting for his life. He's the same age as Holden.

Gracie uses a wet sponge to cool his face, chest.

GRACIE
There. There. It's going to be
okay.

Ted approaches. He grabs the chart and reads it.

TED
John Doe?

GRACIE
He has not been identified yet.

Ted flips through the cart.

TED
Well. We've done everything we
can. Now it is just a matter of
time to see if the meds work.

GRACIE
It's not fair. This boy should be
playing outside. Not fighting for
his life.

TED
I'm growing so numb to this,
Gracie.

GRACIE
I know. There is only so much pain
a person can witness.

TED
Yeah. So much death, we're hardly
making a difference.

INT. GRACIE'S TENT - NIGHT

Ted comes in Gracie's tent. Gracie is in tears. He holds a
bottle of wine.

TED
Gracie? You okay?

GRACIE
Am I a terrible person?

TED
No.

GRACIE
You sure?

TED
Let's get out of here.

EXT. ROCKY ROAD - NIGHT

Ted drives his Humvee away from camp. Gracie is by his
side. They travel through the darkness with the high beams
on. They sit in silence. Until they reach a ridge over
looking a valley.

GRACIE
Why am I here?

TED
What's wrong?

GRACIE
I miss my family.

Ted hands over his satellite phone.

TED
You should call them.

Gracie dials Sam's number.

INT. SAM AND GRACIE'S HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Sam's iPhone rings on the kitchen table as he cooks dinner.

SAM
Gracie?

INTERCUT BETWEEN SAM AND GRACIE

GRACIE
Sam.

Static starts.

SAM
Whose phone is this?

Static gets louder.

GRACIE
Ted has a satellite phone.

The call drops on Gracie's end.

SAM
Ted? I didn't know he was there.

The call drops on Sam's end.

SAM (CONT'D)
Great.

Holden comes into the kitchen from the dining room. He wears soccer gear.

HOLDEN
Hey Dad. I'm late for soccer.

SAM
Tonight?

Stacie strolls in.

STACIE
Dad, can I go to Megan's house?

SAM
We are having dinner.

HOLDEN
Dad, practice.

SAM
Just a second.

Sam searches for his car keys in the other room.

STACIE
Dad! Dinner!

Burns on the stove top, food in the case iron skillet.

SAM
Wonderful.

He grabs the hot skillet bare-handed.

SAM (CONT'D)
Hot! Damn it, Gracie!

Sam tosses the skillet in the sink. BANG!

Holden and Stacie turns and looks at another in silence.

INT. M.M.U. BIO-CONTAINMENT UNIT - RED ZONE - DAY

A suited up Gracie watches over Soe. His body fights the disease.

Soe opens up his eyes.

GRACIE
Ted! He's awake.

Ted rushes over.

TED
Hi, there.

Soe stares up at the intravenous.

TED (CONT'D)
There's medicine in there to make you better.

SOE
It didn't work for my parents. Or my brother.

GRACIE
They were treated too late.

SOE
Hmm.

GRACIE
What's your name?

SOE
Soe.

SOE (CONT'D)
What's yours?

GRACIE
Gracie.

SOE
G-r-a-s-s-y?

GRACIE
Gracie.

SOE
Ah.

He looks around the hospital ward. There were three other people in beds just like his. Two men in their forties and a child younger than him.

TED
Soe, we're here to help.

SOE
Why is this happening?

GRACIE
It's a virus. A bad one. But you can beat it.

SOE
My family didn't.

INT. SCHOOL BUS - EARLY MORNING

Gracie returns from a night shift at a Monrovia hospital.

The bus is half full of other medical personnel. Most are asleep. Not Gracie. She stares out as daybreak comes.

Images we see: Rubble and ruins.

Fellow passenger leans over to Gracie.

PASSENGER
Remainders of Liberia's civil war.
Claimed over two hundred thousand
lives.

GRACIE
How sad.

Gracie watches small children playing in the rumble. Then, she see a few carrying blue buckets on their head.

PASSENGER
Water. Each day they need to walk
miles to wells to fill them. We
can't relate.

GRACIE
They have so little.

PASSENGER
Yeah. It's hard to comprehend.

The passenger leans back and falls asleep.

Gracie leans closer to the window, and sees her own reflection.

GRACIE
Why am I here?

INT. SAM'S CLASSROOM - DAY

In a dark room, Sam stands before his students. White lights illuminate his face.

SAM
Class. Today, is nine-eleven.
Watch this and tell me what you
see.

Sam writes, "9/11/01" on the whiteboard.

SAM (CONT'D)
Some of you weren't even born on
this date.

Sam steps closer to his class.

SAM (CONT'D)
Therefore, today's lecture comes
from you.

TABATHA
What?

Sam looks at Tabatha.

SAM
Explain the importance of this
date to me as if I'm alien from
outer space.
(MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)
 Some one with no emotional
 attachment. To get you in the
 proper frame of thought, I crafted
 a brief montage of that day.
 Lights! Action!

EXT. TWIN TOWERS - PRISTINE MORNING - 9/11 MONTAGE

Defiant and undamaged, the towers encompasses the sky.

Begins footage of videos from News Agencies and New Yorkers
 on the streets.

Then, the first plane strikes the North Tower.

EXT. STREET LEVEL - SAME

Amateur video: smoke pours out of the North Tower.

CAMERA WOMAN
 Oh, my god. Oh, my god. Oh, my
 god.

Bystanders scream "No, no, no."

SOUND: SIRENS.

EXT. STREET LEVEL - SAME

Races the first responders: police cars, ambulances, fire
 trucks to The World Trade Center with their SIRENS on.

INT. BREAKING NEWS STUDIO - SAME

Appears a frazzled NEWS ANCHOR behind his desk. Live
 footage appears over his shoulder. News streams at the
 Bottom: "A plane has crashed into the World Trade Center."

NEWS ANCHOR
 A plane has...

Over his shoulder, a plane flies into the South Tower.

NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D)
 Impossible.

EXT. STREET LEVEL - SAME

Amateur video: flame bellows out of the South Tower. Then, each tower collapses.

WALLA

No.

New Yorkers' shocked reactions. Disbelief covers the crowd's faces.

Then, a cloud of white smoke rushes down the street like an avalanche of ash.

WALLA (CONT'D)

Run!

The masses seeks shelter as they run towards the camera.

A white clouds WHOOSH.

Recorded cellphone message starts as the screen is ash white.

FEMALE HOSTAGE (V.O)

Listen, honey. You've to listen.
I'm on a plane that has been
hi-jacked. I don't have much time.
Tell the girls I love them.
(tears)
Tell them, Mommy loves them.

INT. OVAL OFFICE - SAME

President Bush addresses the nation.

PRESIDENT BUSH

Good evening. Today, our fellow
citizens, our way of life, our
very freedom came under attack in
a series of deliberate and deadly
terrorist acts. The victims were
in airplanes or in their offices:
secretaries, business men and
women, military and federal
workers, moms and dads, friends
and neighbors.

Sam's montage ends with a photo of Stacie with white text:
"For Stacie."

His classroom is in utter silence, they have been moved.
Sam flips on the lights.

SAM
Peter, let's start with you. What
can we learn from that?

Tabatha stands up and moves to the image of Stacie. She
touches Stacie's face.

TABATHA
Dr. U. This is your wife, isn't
it?

SAM
Nope. Her sister.

Tabatha turns.

TABATHA
Twins.

SAM
Identical.

PETER
Did Stacie die that day?

SAM
Yes. She did. When the North Tower
collapsed.

Sam turns.

SAM (CONT'D)
Her remains like so many others
that day, were never discovered.

Tabatha tears up.

TABATHA
Bastards.

INT. M.M.U. BIO-CONTAINMENT UNIT - RED ZONE - NIGHT

Gracie checks in on Soe. He looks terrible. She sees a
nurse approach.

GRACIE
How is he doing?

Nurse shakes her head.

NURSE
His vitals are bad. And he's
burning up.

GRACIE
How's his blood pressure?

NURSE
Stable.

GRACIE
Good.

NURSE
It's a bad bug.

Gracie sits and grabs a wet sponge to cool him.

GRACIE
I hate that I can't touch him.

NURSE
Soe's highly contagious.

GRACIE
I know. Still.

Gracie sponges Soe's face.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
Keep fighting.

INT. SAM AND GRACIE'S DINING ROOM — DAY

Stacie sits at the head of the table at her Birthday Party. Girls her age surround her. Sam stands and takes pictures.

Holden carries out from the kitchen a homemade cake covered with candy. They all sing "Happy Birthday" to Stacie.

Stacie blows out her candles.

SAM
What did you wish for?

STACIE
I can't tell you, Daddy. Those are the rules.

SAM
Ah, yes.

Sam smiles and looks at his daughter.

Stacie looks up at him.

STACIE
What?

SAM
I wished you could have met your
namesake.

Stacie raises her forefinger to her lips.

STACIE
Shh. It may not come true.

Sam scoops her up and kisses her.

SAM
Who wants ice cream?!?

PARTY GUESTS
Me!

INT. DINING ROOM - LATER IN DAY

From the window Sam watches Stacie running about in the
backyard with her friends.

SAM
Keep running, girl.

Sam turns. As he scoops up some paper plates with the
remnants of birthday cake, he hears the TV.

He walks downstairs to...

BASEMENT

Sam sees his son watching the news on TV.

NEWS ANNOUNCER
Rubble and ruins. The scattered
remainders of Liberia's bloody
civil war that claimed over
two-hundred-thousand lives. Here,
a global coalition responds to the
Ebola outbreak.

HOLDEN
Where's Mom?

SAM
Let's turn this off.

HOLDEN
Where's Mom?

SAM
At work.

HOLDEN
 Hmm. What do you think Mom's doing
 right now?

SAM
 Maybe getting up.

Holden walks past his dad.

HOLDEN
 I wish she was here.

SAM
 Me too. Tomorrow, let's go on a
 hike.

INT. M.M.U. BIO-CONTAINMENT UNIT - RED ZONE - DAY

Gracie enters the Red Zone sees Soe's bed empty with crisp
 clean sheets.

GRACIE
 No. No!

She rushes to the bed. No nurses are around. She stares at
 the other patients, all near death.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
 Why him? Why?

A nurse enters the Red Zone.

NURSE
 We are going to have one more hand
 for that wall.

Gracie near tears.

GRACIE
 Soe?

Nurse nods.

NURSE
 His fever broke this afternoon.

GRACIE
 And the Ebola?

NURSE
 Gone. The meds worked.

GRACIE
 Where is he?

EXT. HIKING TRAIL — DAY

Late fall leaves are down and their colorful remains litter the trail. Together Sam and his children enjoy a Sunday afternoon hike.

Holden carries two toy bows across his shoulders and large plastic dagger in one hand. He runs ahead of the others.

HOLDEN
For Gondor!

SAM
Go get him Legolas.

STACIE
More like Frodo.

Sam laughs and looks down at his child that reminds him so much of his wife, Gracie.

STACIE (CONT'D)
Dad.

SAM
Yes, cutie.

STACIE
Why does Mom always have to leave?

SAM
Work, honey.

STACIE
I know. But it was my birthday.

SAM
She bought you gifts.

STACIE
Yes. Like last time. But I just want her here. That's the present I wanted.

SAM
I understand dear. But she is helping others.

STACIE
I know. But she's never around when I want her to be.

Sam looks down at her and pats her on the head.

SAM
She will be back before you know
it.

STACIE
You think she misses us?

SAM
I hope so.

INT. M.M.U. EBOLA FREE WARD - NIGHT

Soe looks much better.

Gracie is by his side as his eyes open.

GRACIE
Ted. He's awake.

Ted hurries over.

TED
Hi, there.

SOE
Where am I?

TED
With friends. Do you remember
getting sick?

Soe looks away.

SOE
They're all dead aren't they?

Gracie fights back tears.

GRACIE
Yes.

SOE
My Mother. My Father. My older
Brother. Gone.

GRACIE
But you beat it.

EXT. M.M.U. HOSPITAL TENT - DAY

An exhausted Gracie emerges from the hospital tent.

Ted approaches her.

TED
Off duty?

GRACIE
Just now.

TED
Tired?

GRACIE
I'm beyond that.

Ted smiles hard.

TED
Good.

EXT. COASTLINE BEACH - DAY

In a S-shape fashion, Ted drives at high speed his Humvee down a pristine beach. As sand kicks up, Gracie sticks her head out and HOWLS.

MUSIC like Blind Pilot's We are the Tide plays.

A Ray-Ban wearing Ted looks up at Gracie.

TED
Three-hundred and fifty miles of
lush, white shoreline. Driving
like this makes me feel alive!

Gracie looks down.

GRACIE
(more to herself)
Surrounded by so much death, we
tend to forget.

TED
What?!?

GRACIE
The moment. Soe's alive. Drive
faster!!!

Ted does.

EXT. BEACH - TWILIGHT

The Humvee parks in the tide as a huge orange sun sets into a vast the blue ocean.

Behind the wheel, Sam stares at the horizon.

TED
There it is. Going. Going.

GRACIE
Gone. Just like life.

TED
Ready to head back?

GRACIE
I need to swim.

Gracie heads into the water, takes off her top and pants.

TED
What about the undertow.

GRACIE
I will take my chances.

Gracie, in her bra and panties, dives in.

Ted hurries to join her.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

A campfire illuminates a still soaking Ted and Gracie.

Ted looks beyond the fire, out to the dark ocean.

GRACIE
Survived the undertow.

TED
I was more worried about the sharks.

GRACIE
Yeah.

Gracie looks at Ted and smiles.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
Ted?

TED
Yeah.

GRACIE
Why did you volunteer for this?

TED
To drive my folks crazy.

GRACIE
Seriously?

TED
I am serious. Both my parents are doctors. They work eighty-hours a week, not for the good of it... just for the lifestyle.

GRACIE
No other reason?

TED
Maybe.
(clears throat)
I'm sure you husband loves the idea of you being five thousand miles from home. Why are you here?

GRACIE
Me... I'm here for the beaches.

TED
Seriously. Gracie? You have been acting funny all week.

GRACIE
Yeah, nine-eleven. I can never escape it.

TED
Did you know someone that was killed?

GRACIE
My sister. My twin.

TED
Wow. I didn't know?

GRACIE
How could you. She died so young.

TED
What happen?

GRACIE
Life happens. You go to work one day, and you just don't come back.

TED
Do you want to talk more about it?

GRACIE

Yes.

EXT. BEACH - LATER NIGHT

Gracie rests against Ted as the campfire burns low.

GRACIE

Gracie died that morning. I didn't even get up to say good-bye.

TED

Don't.

GRACIE

What?

TED

It wasn't your fault.

GRACIE

No, I guess not. But... I married the man my sister loved. At the time it seemed to be the right thing to do.

TED

Stacie and Sam?

GRACIE

Yes. After she died, we leaned on one another to get through our days.

TED

Do you love him?

GRACIE

Yes. As a woman loves the father of her children.

TED

Anything more than that?

GRACIE

I don't know. There are moments.

Gracie gets up.

GRACIE (CONT'D)

I'm psychologist for god's sake. I know trauma brings out the darnedest things. Hmm... Ted, Ted, Ted, Ted.

TED
What?

GRACIE
Let's head back.

Gracie looks up at the star-filled sky.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
Before I do something I will
enjoy... but regret.

TED
Okay.

As the two walk back to the Humvee, stars twinkle in the
background.

MATCH CUT:

EXT. COLLEGE BAR PATIO - NIGHT

Sam sits alone at a outdoor table. A string of lights
dangles in the background. As he stares up at the stars, he
hears.

TABATHA
Is this sit taken.

SAM
Be my guest.

TABATHA
Your montage moved me.

SAM
Yeah. In a tribute to some one I
cared about.

TABATHA
Stacie?

SAM
Yes.

TABATHA
What was Stacie like?

SAM
Very much like you.

FADE TO BLACK:

FLASHBACK - HOW SAM AND STACIE MET

EXT. NEW YORK'S CENTRAL PARK - RESERVOIR - DAY

Starts with sound of shifting gravel.

Stacie runs along the reservoir's gravel path. Manhattan drapes in the background.

SUPER: "August, 2001."

Sam runs a little ahead. He wears an Indiana University basketball t-shirt.

Stacie increases her pace to catch up to him.

STACIE
It's bullshit what they did to
Bobby.

SAM
What?

STACIE
B town?

Sam looks down at his shirt.

SAM
Oh. No, this is my roommates.

STACIE
You don't like basketball?

SAM
Nope.

STACIE
Awkward.

SAM
I prefer the movies.

STACIE
Movies? Like what?

SAM
Anything with Cary Grant or Audrey
Hepburn in it.

STACIE
Who?

SAM
Utter sacrilege. Quick, repent.

STACIE
Repent what?

SAM
Breakfast at Tiffany's is playing
at the Metrograph.

STACIE
Breakfast at Tiffany's? That's a
million years old.

Sam eyes Stacie.

Stacie smiles back.

STACIE (CONT'D)
What?

SAM
Pretty girl, I like to think of
myself as a leading man.

STACIE
What does that even mean?

SAM
In means, you've been slowing me
down for too long. Bye.

Sam increases his stride and races off.

SAM (CONT'D)
Movie starts at seven.

Stacie smiles as she watches him.

STACIE
Hmm. Fast boy.

Then, she giggles to herself.

STACIE (CONT'D)
A softy though. Refreshing.

EXT. METROGRAPH THEATER - LATER EVENING

Stacie crosses the street.

Sam holds up two tickets by the box office.

The theater's marquee reads "Breakfast at Tiffany's," starring Audrey Hepburn and George Peppard.

INT. METROGRAPH THEATER - SAME

Stacie and Sam eats popcorn as they see George Peppard and Audrey Hepburn kiss in the rain.

EXT. METROGRAPH THEATER - LATER

Laughing, Stacie and Sam EMERGES from the theater.

STACIE
What do you think happened next?

SAM
I don't know. But good movies make you think.

Stacie stops.

STACIE
Sam?

SAM
Yes.

STACIE
Thank you.

SAM
What was your favorite scene?

STACIE
The toy store.

SAM
Mine too.

EXT. COLLEGE BAR PATIO - PRESENT DAY

Sam stares off beyond his drink. Tabatha sits at his side.

TABATHA
Did you love her?

SAM
Instantly.

TABATHA
You shouldn't compare the two?

SAM

Who?

TABATHA

Stacie and Gracie.

SAM

I know. For some reason, this time of year I do.

Tabatha gets up.

TABATHA

Mark Twain said nothing kills joy quicker than comparison.

Sam looks up.

SAM

Sounds like him.

TABATHA

You know, when you start comparing yourself to others. You think you are better or worse.

SAM

Hah. And both of those are ego issues.

Tabatha leans down closer to Sam's face.

TABATHA

The reality is everyone has their strengths.

SAM

And weaknesses.

TABATHA

Walk me home.

Sam struggles for a moment.

SAM

Not tonight.

Sam laughs.

SAM (CONT'D)

You find your own way home.

She flirts.

TABATHA
Too bad.

SAM
Good night, Tabatha.

TABATHA
Good night, Dr. U.

INT. TENT BARRACKS — DAY

Gracie and Ted eats cold MREs.

Super: "Thanksgiving, 2014."

TED
Meals Ready to Eat. Yum.

Ted smacks his lips, reads the label.

TED (CONT'D)
Diced Turkey Breast with gravy?

GRACIE
Well, the Army really outdid
themselves with this meal.

Ted grabs a bottle of wine from a table. Then, he pours
some into two cups.

TED
Here. Something to wash down the
roast beast.

Gracie laughs, grabs her cup and raises it up high.

GRACIE
Happy Thanksgiving. Cheers.

TED
So why did you come?

GRACIE
I wanted to make a difference.

Ted eyes Gracie.

TED
Really?

GRACIE
Well, my sister is a part of it.

TED
How?

GRACIE
I feel guilty.

TED
Why?

GRACIE
I don't. I just do.

TED
Because you lived.

GRACIE
And she died. Yeah.

TED
Hey... I forgot to tell you. They
found Soe's uncle.

Gracie pops up and gives him a hug.

GRACIE
That's great news!

Ted holds her closer.

TED
Yeah.

Gracie gently pushes him back.

GRACIE
Ted. I know how you feel. But some
day you will meet someone who can
reciprocate your love.

Ted backs away, grim faced.

TED
Okay.

GRACIE
And by the way.

Ted leaves. Then, he stops and turns back to Gracie.

TED
Yes?

GRACIE
You are exactly my type.

TED
Is that suppose to make me feel
better?

GRACIE
No.

Ted turns, EXITS.

TED
Thanks. I think.

INT. SAM AND GRACIE'S - DINING ROOM - DAY

Golden glazed turkey on a platter. White table cloth, the
works.

Sam sits at the table with two children. He looks hard
Gracie's chair.

SAM
Hmm. Stacie. If you want. You can
give thanks this year.

STACIE
Okay Daddy. I'm thankful for my
parents. I'm thankful for having a
nice house to live in. I'm
thankful for the wonderful
backyard we get to play in.

Sam smiles.

STACIE (CONT'D)
I'm thankful we have food. Because
lots of kids don't have as many
things as we have.

EXT. M.M.U. BIO-CONTAINMENT UNIT - DAY

Nurse runs up to Gracie.

NURSE
Gracie you have to see it.

EXT. M.M.U. EBOLA SURVIVOR'S BOARD - SAME

Soe places his hand in yellow paint and smacks it against
the board. A new survivor has been added.

Gracie smiles down at Soe.

Approaches Soe's UNCLE.

UNCLE

Soe would not be here today if it
wasn't for all of you. Last
Saturday he had Ebola. Today, he
does not. God Bless you all.

Gracie hugs Soe, who hugs her back.

SOE

You are good. Thank you.

GRACIE

So are you.

EXT. M.M.U. BIO-CONTAINMENT UNIT — NIGHT

Gracie with her iPhone in hand calls her family. For once
the line appears clear.

GRACIE

Hi everyone!

INT. SAM AND GRACIE'S HOME — MORNING

Sam sees the call comes in from Gracie.

SAM

Hey guys! It's Mom on the line.

He answers it.

INTERCUT BETWEEN SAM AND GRACIE

SAM (CONT'D)

Gracie?

GRACIE

The second team arrives tomorrow.

SAM

That's fantastic.

GRACIE

Yes, and Soe was released today.
We saved him.

SAM

You did. Now, get on that plane.

EXT. M.M.U. - TENT BARRACKS - DAY

A new NURSE from Team Two unpacks her belongings, as Gracie packs up her's. She holds up a family photo taken before her deployment.

CLOSE-UP: family photograph in their backyard.

Gracie places the picture in her sack and leaves. As she does, she nods to the new Nurse.

GRACIE
Good luck.

NEW NURSE
Thanks.

Gracie walks to the...

SURVIVOR'S BOARD

Gracie sets down her bag.

GRACIE
Today I am healed, tomorrow I
return to heal another.

Gracie places her hand over Soe's yellow handprint.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
Bye, Soe.

INT. U.N. PLANE - DAY

Gracie boards and makes her way to her seat. When she reaches it, she looks out one last time.

EXT. VICENZA, ITALY - TARMAC - DAY

Italian carabinieri military police wear full hazmat gear as Gracie lands at the Army base in northern Italy - about 45 miles west of Venice.

SUPER: "Vicenza Army Base - Italy - Winter, 2014."

She calls Sam.

GRACIE
I just arrived in Vicenza.

EXT./INT. SAM'S VAN - SAME

Sam drives on the interstate.

INTERCUT: SAM AND GRACIE

Sam talks on his hands-free. Checks the kids in the rearview.

SAM
Great. So, if all goes well with
your tests, you should be home in
two days.

GRACIE
Let's hope.

INT. SAM AND GRACIE'S HOME - DEN - NIGHT

Sam takes a sip of tea as he grades papers.

His phone rings.

SAM
Gracie?

GRACIE
They want us to stay in Italy for
my quarantine.

SAM
That's twenty-one days. Why?

GRACIE
Because one of our team was
infected with Ebola, I guess.

SAM
Okay. No Christmas together.

GRACIE
Sorry.

SAM
I get it. Work on that tan, girl.

GRACIE
I miss you.

SAM
Yeah.

INT. VICENZA, ITALY - ARMY BARRACKS - DAY

Barracks are decorated with a tinsel and a makeshift tree.

Gracie approaches the Christmas tree.

OFFICER
Merry Christmas, Gracie.

GRACIE
Merry Christmas.

Gracie's wet eyes stares down at the wrapped presents below the tree.

INT. SAM AND GRACIE'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Stacie and Holden opens up their presents. Sam sits and watches them tear into them. Then he gazes out the window at the falling snow.

INT. AIRPORT HANGAR - NIGHT

Massive, white lit hangar. Huge American flag drapes down from the rafters on the far wall.

Families gather with 'Welcome Home' signs and await their loved ones.

A military band starts up, plays "My Country 'Tis Of Thee."

Holden holds a 'Welcome Home Mom' sign.

A group of doctors, nurses, and one psychiatrist appears.

STACIE
Mommy!

Gracie EMERGES from the group and races toward her family.

Holden and Stacie runs to Gracie.

Gracie scoops up her kids.

GRACIE
I have missed you two so much.

Tears roll down Gracie's cheeks.

STACIE
Don't cry, Mommy. Today is a happy day.

GRACIE

It is.

She kisses Stacie.

GRACIE (CONT'D)

We named you right. I love you,
little girl.

STACIE

I love you, Mommy.

HOLDEN

Hey. What am I?

Gracie places her hands on the sides of Holden's cheeks and
stares into him.

GRACIE

When was the last time you cut
your hair?

Holden stands a little taller.

HOLDEN

I was growing it long for you.

GRACIE

My little surfer dude.

HOLDEN

I missed you, Mommy.

Sam watches a few steps back.

GRACIE

I missed you too, Holden.

Approaches Sam.

SAM

It's about time. Group hug.

The four huddle together.

GRACIE

Thank you, Sam.

SAM

You were right to go.

HOLDEN

Mommas home.

GRACIE
Yes. Momma is.

EXT. MEGA GROCERY STORE - PARKING LOT - DAY

Gracie walks with Holden and Stacie by her side. Sam pushes the grocery cart behind them.

HOLDEN
Can I get more Sugar Snaps?

GRACIE
No.

HOLDEN
But Dad let me.

Sam looks away.

GRACIE
I'm sure he did. But Mommy is not.

SAM
Mom's back.

INT. MEGA GROCERY STORE - ENTRANCE - SAME

The scale of the store's offerings are tremendous.

Gracie acts intimidated by it.

GRACIE
Wow. I forgot how big this store was.

STACIE
Let's divide and conquer!

GRACIE
Great, idea. You two fetch the the yogurt and milk.

HOLDEN
Sugar Snaps?

GRACIE
No.

HOLDEN
Okay.

SAM
I'll grab the steaks.

GRACIE
I will get the cake.

They split up.

Holden yells back to his mom across the store.

HOLDEN
We need more peanut butter!

GRACIE
Okay! I will grab some.

INT. MEGA GROCERY STORE - PEANUT BUTTER AISLE - SAME

Gracie stares at the fifty different options of peanut butter all in various sizing.

GRACIE
Let's see. What brand does he
like?

The magnitude of options combines with her recent trip to Africa where there were never any options. This causes an anxiety attack in Gracie. She has trouble breathing. So, she looks around as her heart beats faster and faster.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
There's so many.

Gracie falls to her knees and begins to cry. Everything she has held in during her trip to Africa, comes out now.

Sam passes the aisle.

SAM
Gracie! You okay?

GRACIE
We have so much.

SAM
What's going on?

GRACIE
I don't know.

INT. SAM AND GRACIE'S - KITCHEN - NIGHT

A boiling pot on the kitchen stove BLOWS!

Sam removes the pot and pours Gracie some green tea.

SAM
What happened?

Gracie holds the warm cup in both hands.

GRACIE
I felt overwhelmed. By all things
peanut butter.

SAM
You really haven't told me what
your deployment was like.

GRACIE
I.... I'm not ready too, yet. This
mission was different.

SAM
Okay. Do you think you should talk
to someone?

Gracie laughs.

GRACIE
A psychiatrist?

Gracie takes a sip of her tea.

SAM
What about Callie?

GRACIE
Yeah, Callie. She would
understand. I will call her in the
morning.

SAM
Good.

Sam gives his wife a soft kiss on the forehead.

SAM (CONT'D)
Let me run you a bath.

GRACIE
Thank you.

Sam heads to start the bath.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
You're too good to me.

Sam turns back.

SAM
It's good to have you home.

GRACIE
It's good to be here.

INT. SAM AND GRACIE'S HOME - STACIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Gracie enters her daughters room.

Stacie reads in bed, under the covers.

Gracie tugs her in. Then, she sits on the edge of the bed.

GRACIE
I missed this.

Gracie plays with Stacie's hair.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
Hmm. You have my sister's eyes.

STACIE
I have your eyes.

GRACIE
Yes. That's what I meant. Good
night, dear.

STACIE
Good night, Mommy.

Gracie switches off the light.

INT. SAM AND GRACIE'S BEDROOM - SAME

In a night gown, Gracie exits the bathroom.

Sam with glasses on reads in bed.

SAM
How are you feeling?

GRACIE
Better.

Gracie slides into bed.

Sam puts his book down.

SAM
You sure?

GRACIE

Yes.

Gracie kisses Sam on the cheek.

SAM

Good.

Sam rolls to turn off the light.

SAM (CONT'D)

Luv 'ya.

GRACIE

Love you too.

Sam turns off the light.

BEGINS DREAM
SEQUENCE:

INT. MMU BIO-CONTAINMENT UNIT — WESTERN AFRICA — DAY

Gracie in a yellow hazmat suit travels beyond a red line on the floor. She breaths in and out, heavy and laborious, like Darth Vader.

Gracie enters the high-risk zone. She wanders further down the corridor of blinding white. At its end, she finds a patient in a hospital bed. It is Stacie, her twin sister.

Gracie hurries to her.

Stacie looks up. She appears infected with Ebola. Her eyes are red.

STACIE

Hell of a bug.

Gracie removes her headgear and visor. Then, her gloves.

STACIE (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

Gracie touches her sister's cheeks, as tears roll down her cheeks.

STACIE (CONT'D)

We're twinless, no more.

GRACIE

Stacie, I have missed you. I don't know who I am in the world without you. Your death created such a void.

STACIE

How's Sam?

GRACIE

He misses you too, but never shows it.

STACIE

Good. And your kiddos?

GRACIE

We were too hard on Mother.

STACIE

I know.

GRACIE

You don't realize it until you have your own.

STACIE

I will take your word for it, sis. How are you?

Gracie tears up more.

GRACIE

Good.

Stacie smiles up.

STACIE

B-u-l-l-s-h-i-t!

GRACIE

I...

STACIE

Shh. Give me your hand.

Gracie gives Stacie her hand.

STACIE (CONT'D)

I will always be here for you, sis. You know that right?

GRACIE

Yes.

STACIE
Good. Ah, life. It's more than you
can imagine.

Gracie crawls into bed with Stacie.

GRACIE
I love you.

STACIE
I know. So, tell me more about
your boy and girl.

END OF DREAM
SEQUENCE:

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Gracie and Callie both in workout gear sit and enjoy one
another's company over coffee.

GRACIE
That's how the dream ends.

CALLIE
Stacie's death created a void in
you and Sam's life. You both
attempted to fill it with one
another.

GRACIE
Yet, we still don't feel whole.

CALLIE
None of us fully understand the
effects trauma and loss plays on
the human psyche.

GRACIE
I'm beginning too.

CALLIE
Your panic attacks.

GRACIE
Moments of paralyzing fear.

CALLIE
You maybe suffering from
short-term PTSD.

GRACIE
Post Traumatic Stress Disorder?

CALLIE
Why did you go to Africa?

GRACIE
Because I thought I could help.

CALLIE
Gracie. Why did you go to Africa?

GRACIE
I told you. Its better to fight
the outbreak there.

CALLIE
What was the real reason you went?

GRACIE
Stacie and I faced life together
for twenty-nine years. We never
imagined life without the other.

CALLIE
And?

GRACIE
We had an unspoken pact to care
for one another.

CALLIE
When she died suddenly on
nine-eleven, you...

GRACIE
Questioned who I was in the world
without her.

CALLIE
You're suffering from a
catastrophic loss. It's time to
properly grieve your sister's
passing.

GRACIE
Survivor's guilt?

Callie offers Gracie's her hand.

CALLIE
Survivor's guilt.

EXT. CAMPUS - LATER DAY

Gracie runs through campus. As she turns the corner. she
bumps into a WEST AFRICAN STUDENT.

WEST AFRICAN
My apologizes.

GRACIE
It was my fault. Sorry.

The student smiles and moves on with his day.

Gracie finds a nearby bench and sits down. She cries for all those they couldn't save, including her sister.

The tower chimes the hour. She bounces up and hurries across campus.

INT. SAM'S CLASSROOM – SAME

Sam hums Ode to Joy as he wonders into his classroom.

SAM
So what did everyone think of your assignment?

PETER
Who doesn't love Star Wars?

SAM
George Lucas states it's a B-Movie at best, but why do we love watching it?

JOEY
It's good vs. evil.

SAM
True. What else?

TABATHA
It's a mishmash of many genres.

SAM
Like what?

TABATHA
A Fantasy Film. Based on myths and legends, a long, long time ago in a galaxy...

THE CLASS
Far, far away.

SAM
Yes! Exactly.

PETER
It's a Faith Film. With the Force.

WENDY
And the Old Man who leads the
Chosen out of the desert.

Gracie enters the room.

SAM
Hi, Gracie. Hmmm. Class. This is
my globetrotting wife. Gracie,
this is my class.

GRACIE
Hi.

TABATHA
She's beautiful.

PETER
Congratulations Dr. U.

Gracie looks to Sam.

GRACIE
Were we ever this young?

SAM
No.

Sam walks the room.

SAM (CONT'D)
Class, here's your shot. Ask Mrs.
Dr. U, a question. Before she runs
off again.

Tabatha sits up.

TABATHA
What was West Africa like?

GRACIE
I'm still coming to grips with
it...

Gracie looks back at Sam.

SAM
Tabatha.

GRACIE
Tabatha? Hmmm. Pretty girl.

Tabatha shrinks down in her chair.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
You see Tabatha, we have so much.
They so little. Yet, there was a
little boy I met there who taught
me to appreciate our lives.

Gracie turns to Sam.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
Do you have the video I sent you?

SAM
Sure. Just give me a minute.

Sam goes to his computer and finds the video. When he's
already he plays it.

SAM (CONT'D)
Here you go.

GRACIE
This is Soe, one of my Ebola
patients. I thought he was going
to die. But the meds worked.

ON THE SCREEN:

Gracie interviews Soe.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
Soe. What do you like to do?

SOE
Eat.

Gracie laughs.

GRACIE
What else?

SOE
Play futbol with my brother.

Soe grows quiet.

SOE (CONT'D)
I want him back.

GRACIE
I know, Soe.

DISSOLVE TO CLASS:

Gracie walks closer to the screen.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
Soe now stands before our
survivor's board.

PETER
Survivor's board?

GRACIE
When you're battling a virus as
bad as Ebola, we lose so much of
the time. When we win, and a
patient is cured. We ask the
survivors to leave their handprint
on this board before returning
home.

DISSOLVE TO:
SURVIVOR'S BOARD

Soe places his gloved hand into the paint, and imprints a
yellow handprint on M.M.U's Survivor's Board.

DISSOLVE TO: CLASS

Gracie places her hand on the screen over the survivor's
board.

SAM
See class. Life's truth. The
camera can reflect it. Exalt it.

GRACIE
That board shows us that we made a
difference. We saved lives. We
saved his. Just as my husband is
attempting to enrich yours.

EXT. SAM AND GRACIE'S BACKYARD - SPRING DAY

Holden's Birthday Party in the backyard.

Gracie speaks with Callie.

CALLIE
You okay?

GRACIE
Yeah. Thank you for our talks.

CALLIE
You're welcome. How are you
feeling?

GRACIE
Better.

CALLIE
Good.

Callie sees some kids circling the birthday cake.

CALLIE (CONT'D)
You scavengers, get away from that
cake.

Gracie looks around at her family and friends.

Sam approaches her from behind.

SAM
You okay?

Gracie leans deeply into him as she watches kids dip their hands into containers of various colored paints. Then, they press their hands against a sliding door window. Varying handprints covers nearly every inch of the glass.

GRACIE
I am now.

FADE TO BLACK:

THE END