

Second Chances:
A Screenplay

HONORS THESIS

Presented to the Honors Committee of
Texas State University-San Marcos

In Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements

For Graduation in the Mitte Honors Program

By

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San Marcos, Texas

May 2007

Foreword

This is a project that I have been working on for many years. The idea originally came to me when I was a senior in high school. I was listening to a piece of music entitled “Fragments of Memories” when the idea came to me. I am a two-time Leukemia Survivor, and I hadn’t seen any films that discuss the treatment and later lives of the survivors. I began creating ideas and fleshing out scenes, and it wasn’t until my sophomore year here at Texas State that I finally realized how determined I was to finish. In a playwriting workshop with visiting artist Velina Hasu Houston, I wrote several small scenes and created a conflict beyond the cancer for the main character. I also wrote the scene with Coldplay’s “The Scientist” long before I had ever seen the powerful music video, and it is pure coincidence that there are several parallels.

This is a work of fiction.

While there are many scenes that have been inspired by real ones, this story is not real. Thankfully I have been in remission since 1996, and have been in good health over the years. Over the years, the treatments that patients undergo to fight cancer are smarter, more effective, and less damaging to the normal cells. We continue to strive for the day when there is no more cancer. The fight continues.

I would like to thank Dr. John Fleming, my Thesis Supervisor, Professor, and Friend. He has helped me through this very long process, and also promoted growth in myself overall. I also would like to thank my loving family and friends, as they have been the foundation of a powerful support system, and I would be nothing without them. There have been many people who have helped me and influenced me throughout these many years, and I thank them all.

Abstract

William is a twenty-two year old male who is a two-time childhood Leukemia Survivor. Throughout his life he has dealt with the issues of acceptance and returning to a normal life, as well as the idea of late effects that could result from his treatment. His worst fears become a reality when at his current age he is diagnosed with a relapse of his cancer. William's best friend Bruce is a former athlete who lost his career to baseball with a massive leg injury. He is a smoker, and William hates this habit. Bruce is afraid of losing William, his closest and only true friend. Another issue that William faces is his genuine feelings of love and affection for two women in his life, his friends Sarah and Emily. The conflict between Sarah and him is her growing distance because she has a fiancé, is busy with her wedding, and is afraid of losing William. The dilemma between Emily and him is his inability to tell her his feelings for fear of what happened when he told Sarah his feelings. She is attracted to him, but is fearful to fall in love with someone is going to die in a few months. William also has old feelings for Rachel, a woman who he met when he was younger and fell in love with her. He never got to tell her his feelings before he lost her. Each character has a Second Chance to change their lives one way or another. So the question becomes, will they take it?

EXT DAY RESTAURANT

Screen is completely black and silent as credits finish.

WILLIAM

So why do you do it?

BRUCE

Do what? (Lights a Cigarette)

WILLIAM

Kill yourself?

BRUCE

Umm (Pause) I'm still here (Pause) I don't think I'm killing myself right now.

Lights fade up on WILLIAM'S face. WILLIAM, aged 22, clean shaven, and hair decently groomed, but quite nappy.

WILLIAM

No, no, no. You're not listening.

Lights fade up on BRUCE'S face, cigarette burning in mouth. BRUCE aged 22, 5-o'clock shadow, hair short cut, almost to scalp.

BRUCE

Actually, I've been listening to you for the past two hours.

WILLIAM

Ok...fine. Maybe my question isn't clear enough.

BRUCE

You can say that again... (Take a long drag).

WILLIAM gives BRUCE an incredulous look.

BRUCE

What? Don't look at me like that William.

WILLIAM continues to stare.

BRUCE

Jeez man. You're really starting to freak me out more than usual.

WILLIAM clears his throat and points to his lips.

BRUCE

Do I have something in my teeth?

WILLIAM finally gets fed up and takes the cigarette from BRUCE'S mouth and throws it across the room. The light of the cigarette burns like a bright flare. MEDIUM SHOT WILLIAM and BRUCE, who are sitting at opposite ends of a table at an outdoor restaurant. The cigarette slowly fades as BRUCE looks back to WILLIAM.

WILLIAM

Why Bruce, do you always do that?

BRUCE

Haven't we been over this a million times?

WILLIAM

No, you're still not listening. You know I can't stand the smell of smoke—especially over the past mo...

WILLIAM tries to finish his words but begins to have a coughing fit, BRUCE slides over a glass of water to him, he downs it quickly and the coughing slowly subsides.

WILLIAM

Thanks.

BRUCE

I'm sorry.

WILLIAM

I know Bruce...

BRUCE

Let's get out of here.

He puts some money on the table and moves over to WILLIAM, who is helped up as a faint thunder clap is heard as the screen slowly fades to black. Thunder gets louder.

INT Doctor's Office Waiting Room. Late Morning.

The office is very stark and very clean. WILLIAM and BRUCE sit in uncomfortable chairs in the waiting room. BRUCE is reading a science journal, and WILLIAM is sitting nervously, which BRUCE notices.

BRUCE

You ok there bro?

WILLIAM doesn't respond to BRUCE, but stares blankly.

BRUCE

Hey. HEY! (He taps WILLIAM hard on the shoulder)

WILLIAM

(Startled) What?!

BRUCE

You spaced out on me again bro.

WILLIAM

I did?

BRUCE

Yeah.

WILLIAM

Sorry...

BRUCE

Nothing to be sorry about William.

WILLIAM

Okay. (Shifts in chair and stares off)

BRUCE

What's wrong William?

WILLIAM

What?

BRUCE

Are you worried that this is something serious?

WILLIAM

Well...

BRUCE

We've been friends for what, like four years?

WILLIAM

Yes.

BRUCE

Now I've been your friend for this long, and I am not going anywhere.

WILLIAM

What reason would I have to think that you'd go somewhere?

BRUCE

None, but I wanted to say...

WILLIAM

Then why bring it up? Right now all I need is patience and time, something to calm my nerves.

BRUCE

Well, there's always...

WILLIAM

(Firm and cold) No.

BRUCE

I was only kidding William.

WILLIAM

Do you honestly think this is a joke?

BRUCE

No...

WILLIAM

I haven't had any complications in ten years. And as the years have progressed, I've felt better, felt safer. But now with these recent sporadic pains, I don't know what to think.

BRUCE

I know William. (He pulls out a cigarette and twirls it between his fingers)

WILLIAM

You're not serious are you?

BRUCE

About what?

WILLIAM

About lighting up in a doctor's office.

BRUCE

Look. I haven't smoked in a long time, and you know how edgy I get when I haven't smoked.

WILLIAM

I need you here Bruce.

BRUCE

I'll be back in five minutes. (Bruce leaves.)

WILLIAM sits and looks at clock and it moves to five minutes later. BRUCE walks back in as DOCTOR steps out. BRUCE smirks.

DOCTOR

William. You can come on back now.

BRUCE helps WILLIAM walk into the back, as the scene cuts to.

INT DOCTOR'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM EARLY AFTERNOON

DOCTOR

How are you feeling William?

WILLIAM

Alright so far, all things considered.

DOCTOR

Things had been progressing well since your transplant, correct?

WILLIAM

Yes.

BRUCE

Look...not to be rude, but could we spare the small talk?

WILLIAM

Bruce...

DOCTOR

No William, I understand what your friend is saying. (He opens the records and pulls out the top page.)

WILLIAM

So, what is it Doctor?

DOCTOR

I'm sorry William...We're trying to figure out how, but your cancer has returned, and it's more aggressive than ever.

WILLIAM stares at disbelief and he looks to BRUCE with tears in his eyes. BRUCE looks back with equal disbelief. BRUCE'S face becomes flushed as he moves to WILLIAM, who is bursting into tears as the scene fades to black. A loud thunder clap is heard.

INT BRUCE AND WILLIAM'S APARTMENT EVENING

Fade in with panning view of room shows William sitting at window, watching rain storm. The room is covered in a few posters, some of them movie ones, others are of various designs, but on one wall is a large number of pictures. He hears door knock and looks towards it. Bruce opens door and Emily steps in. Bruce exchanges hugs with and kisses on the cheek with her. Emily has long, red hair, with a freckled face and slender build. Her smile and warmth fill the room and William is quickly off of the window ledge. She hugs him tight and kisses both of his cheeks several times. He looks over Emily's shoulder and sees Sarah hugging Bruce, who is also looking at William and smiling. Emily lets William go and he steps with difficulty towards Sarah, who kisses his cheek and hugs him as well. William smiles and lights slowly fade as camera moves away from the two.

INT: Dining Room. Evening

Dining room is simple, with take-out Chinese food covering most of the table. The group laughs and talks as camera moves around slowly. Slow fade out to black as it finally focuses on William, who at first laughs, but then looks awkwardly around but tries to cover it.

INT LIVING ROOM LATE EVENING

Dining room table is strewn with empty Chinese food boxes. Camera moves to living room. William awkwardly sits in silence, and Bruce too seems even more solemn. Eventually the two women grow quiet.

SARAH

What is it?

EMILY

You're scaring me William.

WILLIAM

You're scared...

SARAH

What are you talking about William?

The group again goes silent as the focus falls to William.

EMILY

It's not your cancer is it?

WILLIAM

Well, yes, and no...

SARAH

What do you mean?

William grows silent and shifts in chair.

BRUCE

William went to visit the doctor this afternoon, for the strange symptoms he had been having.

WILLIAM

(Mustering up the courage) It's not the cancer they cured; it's another type, a more aggressive form.

Emily and Sarah both look at Bruce and William with bewilderment and confusion.

EMILY

Wait, what are you talking about?

WILLIAM

While the chances for relapse are small, there are other locations possible for relapse.

SARAH

In English please?

BRUCE

The cancer they got rid of came back somewhere else, and is killing him.

EMILY

Well that's putting it delicately.

SARAH

So what do we do about it?

EMILY

Sarah, I don't think it's as simple as...

BRUCE

What do you think this is some...?

WILLIAM

(Interjecting) Bruce! You're not helping this any!

The group goes silent.

WILLIAM

What I need from each of you is your support over the next few months. I called you here because you are my closest friends and wanted you to know first.

EMILY

Does your mom...?

WILLIAM

No, she doesn't.

SARAH

Oh my God...

BRUCE

You didn't call her?

WILLIAM

(Building up more and more angrily) How can I? What do I say to her? "Hi mom, it's you son. Guess what? All of the treatment they did on me that was supposed to cure me? It doesn't equate to SHIT!" (He completely breaks down.)

Emily rushes over to him and holds his head as he collapses into her lap.

WILLIAM

(Sobbing) I don't know what I'm supposed to do...It's like all of it seems like it's for nothing...

Emily continues to stroke his hair soothingly as she fights back her tears.

BRUCE

William, look at me. (He does.) You're not dead yet, and you've gone through too damn much to quit now.

Sarah sits silently and watches. William slowly begins to calm back down and looks at her.

EMILY

You're still with us William, and we're not going anywhere.

William sticks his hand out towards Bruce, who looks and grabs it tight.

BRUCE

I'm right here bro, I'm right here.

William smiles and closes his eyes as the scene fades out.

EXT PATIO LATE NIGHT

Bruce sits on covered patio with a cigarette in mouth. He lights it and takes a long drag and exhales, watching the smoke linger into the rainstorm. Sarah steps out from the door and sits down on the other side of the patio. Bruce looks up.

SARAH

Didn't you quit?

BRUCE

Yeah, about three days ago.

SARAH

I see how long your commitments last...

BRUCE

Look, are you here to lecture me? You're not my mother, and I don't need another William correcting me on my habits. (He takes another long drag and exhales.)

They both sit in an awkward silence for a few moments.

SARAH

I...

BRUCE

Don't worry about it. (He finishes the cigarette and flings it out into the storm.) So how is he?

SARAH

Well, Emily's in there right now talking to him. But how are you Bruce?

BRUCE

How am I now? I'm fine.

SARAH

Don't lie to me Bruce.

Bruce looks at her and bites his lip.

BRUCE

The truth?

SARAH

Yes Bruce, the truth.

BRUCE

Well, nothing has been the same since William and I met.

SARAH

Do you regret meeting him?

BRUCE

Sometimes yes, sometimes no, it all depends on the day I think.

SARAH

What do you mean?

BRUCE

Sarah, I love William like a brother. But at the same time, having to deal with all of this mess really isn't helping any.

SARAH

Do you blame him?

BRUCE

For what?

SARAH

For ruining your life?

BRUCE

No, he hasn't ruined my life...

SARAH

Then why are you complaining?

BRUCE

I don't think you completely understand our history.

SARAH

Then tell me, I've got time.

BRUCE

Now?

SARAH

Yes, now.

BRUCE

(He pulls out another cigarette and lights it) Well let's see. We met four years ago next week, which was the same day that I fractured my arm and lost my baseball scholarship...

SARAH

Why do you mention the scholarship?

BRUCE

Because it happened on the day we met...

SARAH

No, you met him at the hospital afterwards, as he was the only one of your team who even took a second's care about you.

BRUCE

How do you know what happened?

SARAH

William told me. Told me how you didn't know who he was, your team manager, but that you were glad someone was there besides the coach and your family.

BRUCE

What else has he told you?

SARAH

(Smiling) Nothing incredibly revealing. Other than he's glad to have found someone who understands him, especially a guy who does.

BRUCE

What do you mean?

SARAH

If you haven't noticed, most of William's friends are female.

BRUCE

And this is a bad thing?

SARAH

Well, it was when most of the guys he knew thought he was gay because of his large circle of female friends. And it was also because he wasn't trying to get in bed with them like most guys.

BRUCE

Oh.

SARAH

(Leaning in.) Be sure you stick with him Bruce, he's going to need all of us over the next few months.

BRUCE

I know. William's the only real family I've got.

SARAH

What about your parents?

BRUCE

Our relationship has been...interesting over the past few years.

SARAH

Interesting?

BRUCE

We've lost touch.

SARAH

Oh, I'm sorry.

BRUCE

Don't worry about it.

SARAH

(Pause) Poor William...I wish there was more we could do...

Bruce looks to her as she smiles and he returns it as the lights fade out.

WILLIAM'S ROOM LATE NIGHT

William is sit/laying up in his bed, with Emily sitting to the side of him. She is smiling softly at him as he looks at her slightly puzzled.

WILLIAM

What are you smiling at?

EMILY

(Blinks and looks almost puzzled herself) I'm sorry, what was I doing?

WILLIAM

You were smiling at me, but sort of lost in it.

EMILY

I guess it's because I'm so glad to see you.

WILLIAM

(He runs his fingers through her hair) Well, I'm glad to see you too. (She giggles) What's so funny?

EMILY

(Smiling) It just feels nice.

WILLIAM

And I forget that you giggle a lot when you're happy.

EMILY

You didn't forget silly.

William smiles and begins to look at Emily intently.

EMILY

Whatcha thinking?

WILLIAM

How I'm so lucky to have people like you, Sarah and Bruce who take the time to care.

EMILY

Well, that's what friends are for William.

WILLIAM

I know...I don't mean to put this burden on you...

EMILY

(Stopping him) William, you are a burden to no one, especially not those who care about you.

WILLIAM

Yeah...

EMILY

And besides, you've done a lot of great things in your life...like you volunteer work and public speaking...

WILLIAM

What does that have anything to do with being a burden?

EMILY

Well, I was just trying to change the subject, let you know how great of a life you really have, that things aren't as bad as they look.

WILLIAM

I suppose, it sure doesn't seem like it.

The two sit in silence for a few moments. Emily fiddles with her thumbs as if she's eager to say something. William catches on.

WILLIAM

What is it?

EMILY

(Looking quickly) Nothing.

WILLIAM

Emily, tell me please.

EMILY

I...Can we talk about something else William?

WILLIAM

You don't trust me?

EMILY

I trust you...

WILLIAM

Then tell me, please?

EMILY takes his hand and smiles.

EMILY

We'll talk about it later. Now's not the time.

There is an awkward silence again.

WILLIAM

Do you think you replay your life before you die?

EMILY

You're not dying. Don't talk like that.

WILLIAM

Seriously though, I've been having these images of my past, memories that seem so real, as if it was all on replay...

She smiles and kisses his hand. He brings her hand to his face and she gently caresses it.

EMILY

Get some sleep William. (She gets up to leave)

WILLIAM

Emily?

EMILY

Yes William?

WILLIAM

Would you stay here with me until I fall asleep, please?

EMILY

Sure thing hunny.

She moves behind him as he curls up onto his side facing the camera. She lays up on her side and gently strokes his hair while he smiles and closes his eyes as the scene fades to black.

EXT EARLY AFTERNOON PLAYGROUND

Fade up to a bright sun with sounds of children playing. View is first person, and rises up from a bench and looking around. The view pans and fixates on a swing set and begins to walk towards it. Small child hands grab the chains and slide onto the seat and the view looks down to their feet, which are swinging back and forth above the gravel. Camera changes view to behind the child, viewing waist down, aged five who is kicking feet back and forth, and eventually begins to swing higher and higher.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

I have always enjoyed swings, the freedom you feel as you swing back and forth. It's the closest you can get to flying without being worried about heights. Higher and higher you can climb, feeling the weight of the world sweep away. Until you hear the voice of the bully telling you to get off the swing.

BULLY

Hey! Get off the swing!

Camera slowly pans around and out, showing the boy on the swing. Camera stops with the boy smiling as he swings back and forth, and he goes out of focus as it focuses on the bully several feet away.

BULLY

Hey! I'm talking to you, I said off the swing!!

Close up of child smiling.

WILLIAM

And you really don't care, because you're there on the swing, and you're free. And then you feel like your flying more than you should, and then next feeling you have is the ground coming fast towards your face.

Child's eyes open, and as he realizes that he's airborne, they get larger and a look of terror crosses quickly as camera cuts to black with a loud thud of a body hitting gravel and a loud groan comes from the child.

INT DAY HOSPITAL BEDROOM

Same child is laying on his bed groaning as his parents stand to his side, hands gently placed on him.

MOM

My poor baby, what hurts?

YOUNG WILLIAM

(Relaxing some, still strained)
Everywhere.

DAD

I don't understand it, he hurts wherever we touch him, and he can't manage to walk any more.

MOM

Where's that doctor?

William sobs some more as the scene fades out to black.

INT DAY

The following shots are in Black and White. The images fade in and out as William describes each.

Image of young William, overweight, in a wheelchair, an IV pole next to him, being pushed down a hall.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

So there I was, age five, and diagnosed with Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia. It's one of the most common forms of childhood cancer, and had been running freely inside me for many weeks while different doctors told me I had everything wrong with me, everything but cancer.

Images of spinal taps and bone marrow aspirations flash during the sequence.

WILLIAM

Times during the treatments were difficult. Dealing with people who didn't understand and just getting over the sickness.

The images continue with many needles, blood being drawn, and other drugs as scene fades to black.

INT AFTERNOON

Young William, age 6, wearing a baseball cap and mask, walks with his mother in a grocery store. As they round the cereal aisle, another mother and child, a little older than William are pointing at various boxes and arguing over which is healthier.

BOY

But I want the Cocoa Puffs!

MOTHER

No, you're getting the Cheerios; too much chocolate is bad for you.

The boy continues his fit some and looks down the aisle and catches a glimpse of William and his mother. William pulls off his hat to scratch his head, and we see that he is bald.

BOY

Mommy...

MOTHER

Just a minute.

BOY

Why does that freak not have any hair?

The mother stops and looks up to see her boy pointing at William. William notices that the boy is pointing right at him and hugs his mother tight. William's mother looks down and sees the boy pointing, and his mother just stares. William's mother looks to William assuring and slowly walks towards them with William shaking less. The mother takes a slightly defensive position of her son. William's mother speaks in a soothing but powerful voice.

WILLIAM'S MOM

Do you wonder why my son has no hair?

The boy nods.

WILLIAM'S MOM

You see, my son has Leukemia, and the medicine the doctor gave him to fight it causes him to lose his hair.

MOTHER

But why does he wear the mask?

WILLIAM'S MOM

Because he is neutropenic, meaning he doesn't have the white blood cell count that we have to fight sickness, and so it's for his protection.

William seems to muster up some kind of courage and sticks his hands out.

WILLIAM

My name's William, what's yours?

The mother pulls her boy closer.

WILLIAM'S MOM

My son is not contagious. Leukemia cannot be spread through touch.

The mother looks at William's mother worriedly as the boy extends his hand to shake William's.

BOY

I'm Timmy; I hope you feel better soon.

William's eyes brighten as scene cuts to black.

INT LATE NIGHT

Loud thunderclap is heard with howling winds as William snaps awake in his bed. He looks around in the dark room and watches the rain trickle down the glass door to the patio, the drapes open. Bruce is sitting in a chair with legs propped up uncomfortably on a box. William notices that Bruce is shivering and is just in shorts and a light t-shirt. William gets a blanket and drapes it over Bruce, who takes a moment, but curls up with the blanket. William sits back on bed and curls up with blankets. Close up shot of William as he leans to turn on a small lamp and pulls out a journal and pen. Journal opens and the top of the page says, "IGNORANCE."

WILLIAM (V.O.)

After the incident in the supermarket that day, I've always had a particular disappointment for those who are ignorant to the point that it breeds stupidity and fear.

William looks up to Bruce who is still sleeping and starting to snore some.

WILLIAM

Well, we all are ignorant until we are taught...but that choice of understanding and use of that knowledge is what makes us

better, or just stupid. I'm guilty of being stupid, as I have made assumptions about others that were unfounded. So is Bruce, even though he's so dense he'd never willingly admit it.

Bruce snores loudly and then gets quiet again.

WILLIAM

Just like in the supermarket, school presented its own challenges and stupidity, but there you have to deal with grades, teachers, and of course, your peers.

Camera fades on the word "peers" to black.

INT SCHOOL YARD LATE MORNING

WILLIAM, age 6, wearing his baseball cap, walks onto the school yard. A few children point and stare, and begin to whisper in each others' ears.

BOY

Look at him.

GIRL

He doesn't have any hair, what's wrong with him?

BOY

He's bald.

GIRL

Oh...

BOY

HEY BALDY! WHY DON'T YOU GO HOME?

The boy runs over and slaps WILLIAM'S Hat off. Some of the children laugh and point.

CHILDREN

BALDY!!! BALDY!!!

WILLIAM tries to grab his hat, but falls to the ground. The yard spins rapidly around WILLIAM as the children continue to laugh and the scene fades to black.

INT WILLIAM'S BEDROOM LATE MORNING

BRUCE wakes up and looks around the room. The sun is out and shining brightly through the window. He looks to where WILLIAM would be sleeping, but he is not there. Sounds of cooking are slowly getting louder as BRUCE gets up to leave room.

INT KITCHEN LATE MORNING

Camera pans along wall looking at posters as it stops at entryway to kitchen, where WILLIAM is cooking. He is cooking bacon, eggs, hash browns, and pancakes, truly a full breakfast. He seems a new person, happy while humming a tune to the sounds of the crackles and pops of the breakfast. BRUCE moves very groggily to the table and sits down, and WILLIAM hears him come in.

WILLIAM

Good morning, how did you sleep?

BRUCE

Umm...sleep, yes...that I did do...the good sleep had I...

WILLIAM

Do you need some coffee?

BRUCE

No...I'm good, just need to sit and wake up...

WILLIAM

Well, I've got a pot here, so don't hesitate to take some.

BRUCE

Mhmm...

BRUCE looks around the room, which seems neat and tidied as well, and he seems to awaken a bit more.

BRUCE

How long have you been up?

WILLIAM

A couple of hours, why?

BRUCE

The apartment is...clean...I haven't seen it this clean in...hell, I forget.

WILLIAM

Well, my parents are coming today.

BRUCE

(Now fully awake) What?

WILLIAM

Yeah, they'll be over in a couple of hours.

BRUCE

Do they...

WILLIAM

Yes, I called them after I woke up and told them.

BRUCE

How did they take it?

WILLIAM

Can't say, sounded like my mom dropped the phone and my dad was even more confused. They said they're on their way.

BRUCE

How long did you say again?

WILLIAM

(Looking at his watch) Well, I guess my watch is off; they should be here within the hour. Breakfast is almost done.

BRUCE

Will...

WILLIAM

Yes?

BRUCE

Since when did you start cooking?

WILLIAM

Since when couldn't I?

BRUCE

I don't know, just you've never actually cooked a big breakfast before.

WILLIAM

That was something my family always did together, especially on birthdays when we all were home, cook and eat a big breakfast together.

BRUCE

Are they coming over for breakfast?

WILLIAM

No, they already ate, though I'm sure they lost any appetite they would have had.

BRUCE

Weren't you going to wait until they saw you in person?

WILLIAM doesn't answer and finishes the food, putting them into a big tray to carry all of the food. He stops and finally turns to BRUCE.

WILLIAM

If I've learned anything from my experiences about dealing with cancer, it's never a good thing to have my parents be kept in the dark and told to go somewhere to find out the answers, (He turns back to the food and picks it up delicately) especially my mother.

BRUCE

Isn't that how...

WILLIAM

Yes, they tried to have my mom come in on her birthday when I relapsed. (He brings the tray to the table and sets it down.) She wanted to know right there, and they told her. I didn't find out until I got home. As soon as I got in and saw my mom on the couch...I knew...At age twelve I collapsed to my knees and could only utter the words, "Happy Birthday Mom" to her...It was one of the worst days of my life...

BRUCE looks WILLIAM in the eye with sadness. WILLIAM snaps out of it and hands BRUCE a plate, smiling.

WILLIAM

Hell, let's enjoy a good meal shall we?

BRUCE

Yes...let's...

BRUCE and WILLIAM eat their breakfast quietly, exchanging no words between them. The silence seems serene, not tense at all, as if a complete understanding between the two has been reached on the issue. They both clean up the dishes and table and move to the living room and sit and wait. No sooner than they sit down, there is a knock at the door, BRUCE is immediately at the door, and WILLIAM stands as his parents are seen in the doorway. A pause occurs before WILLIAM'S MOTHER rushes in and hugs WILLIAM, who hugs back tight, she visibly crying hard, WILLIAM fighting back tears as the scene fades to black.

INT LIVING ROOM LATE AFTERNOON

WILLIAM, BRUCE, MOM and FRANK all sit at the table in a clockwise arrangement in that order. WILLIAM speaks, with BRUCE seeming to chime in on occasion. SALLY and FRANK sit with a look of shock and frustration. WILLIAM looks to each, and finally SALLY calms down, drinking some coffee. FRANK seems calmer, while BRUCE seems somewhat ill at ease, and WILLIAM seems the most calm of the group. There is further silence for a few moments, until SALLY begins to cry profusely.

FRANK

Come now Sally, be strong for our son.

WILLIAM

No, it's fine dad. We all sometimes just need to let it out in our different ways. (He reaches over and touches her hand.) It's ok mom, I'm still here.

BRUCE

The doctor says there may be something they can do to make things easier.

SALLY

But can they save you?

WILLIAM

I honestly don't know mom, Cancer always seems stronger when it comes back.

FRANK

We should have looked at other treatment options...They should have done more radiation, or tougher Chemo...

SALLY

Frank...

FRANK

Sally...

WILLIAM

Dad, at the time we were there it was what they had or nothing. I had the choice to make whether or not I wanted to go through with it, and it was the most promising. They're finding new ways to make the treatment even more effective, with less late effects, and longer remissions.

SALLY

What can we do to help William?

WILLIAM

Support me as you always have.

FRANK

We're always here son, even if we aren't physically.

WILLIAM

I know...thank you both for coming.

BRUCE

(Trying to change the subject) So Will, what did we have planned for today?

WILLIAM

I don't know...honestly I'm sure the next few weeks are going to be spontaneous until I figure out what's completely going on.

SALLY

I...think I understand...

FRANK

We understand.

BRUCE

(Changing the subject) Well, you two missed a show this morning...

FRANK

What?

BRUCE

Yeah, Iron Chef Will here was cooking up a storm, full course breakfast with all of the essentials.

SALLY

Really?

BRUCE

Yeah, bacon, eggs, hash browns, pancakes...

FRANK

(Stunned) I thought you hated cooking pancakes?

SALLY

(Instantly brighter) Remember how I'd make you get up so I could make you chocolate chip ones?

WILLIAM

(Chuckling) Yeah, I do remember. I guess the cooking reminded me of home.

FRANK

That's great to hear.

SALLY

(After a long pause) I still can't believe you cooked pancakes!

BRUCE

They were good too!

They all laugh heartedly as the scene fades to black.

INT WILLIAM'S BEDROOM EARLY EVENING

WILLIAM sits at his desk writing in his journal again. The pages are worn, as it seems that this journal has seen some better days, but WILLIAM continues to write.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

It was so great to see my parents. Granted I see them and talk to them frequently enough, but as close as we are, it's always refreshing to see them and spend time with them...(He pauses) it would seem that love is something that eludes me. I mean, I love, am told that I am loved, but sometimes I just don't feel it. Sarah is someone who I care about so much, but she will never love me the way I would like her to...

WILLIAM (V.O.)

What am I saying? She's engaged to Greg and I'm sure they'll have many kids and live in a big house out in the country and enjoy themselves.

WILLIAM drops his pen and looks to a picture on his desk of Sarah and him on a roller coaster. She is screaming and he is excited in the picture. WILLIAM laughs and sees something behind the clutter. He moves several things away to reveal a picture of him and another woman, he visibly younger than he is now.

WILLIAM

Wow, I thought I had lost this.

He rubs off the dust from the picture and sets it up on the desk.

WILLIAM

Rachel...

He thinks for a moment and goes back to his journal.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

Rachel was the first woman I ever had real feelings for, perhaps the first woman I ever loved. I was 13, she 16 when we first met. She was one of the people I met at Camp, a place where so many memories and growth of my life took place.

Camera moves to a close up of the picture.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

And to think, each session lasted only a week.

Scene fades to black.

EXT SUMMER CAMP LATE AFTERNOON

Scene comes up on the American Flag waving proudly in a strong wind, below is the Camp Flag, waving just as proudly. The camera pans around and sees children running around with water balloons and water guns, a battle of the sexes. Various images of water splashing, balloons exploding, and hoses spraying the others are seen in slow motion.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

Camp, the best time of the year. Every year in July around a hundred and thirty children aged seven to eighteen would venture out to Camp. The children there all shared a common bond; they all had dealt with cancer, some of them still under treatment when they would go to Camp. It was the one place where we weren't given dirty looks, the one place we were 'normal.'

Close Up Shot of YOUNG WILLIAM, age thirteen.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

I personally don't like the word normal, but Camp was the one place that felt like our home away from home, our escape from the rest of the world.

EXT CAMP DANCE PAVILION EARLY EVENING

Scene cross fades to WILLIAM, age 13, sitting on a bench with two other boys his age. They are dressed in various outfits resembling tuxedos, one wearing a shirt with a tuxedo design on it. The campers range in age from 7-18; some of the older ones dance as couples. Other adults are there as well.

SAM

So William, are you going to ask her to dance?

WILLIAM

What?

DAVID

Yeah man, Cindy's been looking at you all night, why don't you ask her to dance?

WILLIAM

I couldn't do that, I'm too nervous around girls. Remember a few years ago when I swung my camera around and gave that girl a black eye? Or what happens when they come and ask me?

DAVID

You run...

SAM

We all run...can't blame you William, it's just our nature I guess.

SAM looks up and hears a girl's voice asking him to dance. He smiles coyly and nods, taking her hand. He salutes to his friends, who salute back.

DAVID

Poor Sam...

WILLIAM

We lost him...

They both slam their punch cups back and look around the room.

DAVID

So how about it William?

WILLIAM

Are you never going to let go of this?

DAVID

Look, this is your first year back since your transplant. I'm not moving until you ask her.

WILLIAM

And what if I don't?

DAVID

Then I'm not going to drop it.

WILLIAM

Why does it have to be her?

WILLIAM points towards CINDY and sees that she is now gone and dancing with another guy.

WILLIAM

See what I mean? Now it's pointless to ask her.

DAVID

(Determined) I am not budging...

WILLIAM

For someone who's afraid of the bunny hop, you sure seem pretty determined to see me dancing.

DAVID looks around and motions for WILLIAM to come closer.

WILLIAM

What?

DAVID

(Whisper) It's actually the Chicken Dance that scares me the worst...

Not a moment passes before the sound of the Chicken Dance begins to play as a pure look of terror crosses DAVID'S face.

DAVID

Abort mission! (Leaves in a hurry)

WILLIAM now sits on the bench alone; he looks around and takes in the dance. A few girls smile, some giggle, and some run away.

WILLIAM

(Quietly) Am I really that scary? Or is it that the girls are just like us, but with longer hair?

His view crosses a few of the girls who have no hair, obviously from treatments.

WILLIAM

(Slightly embarrassed at himself) Well, I suppose that there are exceptions to the rule.

He continues to look around and hears a slow song begin to fade in. It is Boyz II Men's "The End of the Road." WILLIAM realizes this is his cue to find the restroom, when he hears a voice that stops him in his tracks.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Would you like to dance?

WILLIAM stands in fear, visibly shaking. The voice is sweet and angelic.

WOMAN'S VOICE

(Giggling) I'm not going to bite, and slow dances are the easiest.

WILLIAM finally seems to muster the courage and turns around to see RACHEL, age 16, two years younger than picture, standing in a very elegant dress. WILLIAM gulps.

RACHEL

Wow, you are very handsome this evening.

WILLIAM is even more nervous and red by the remark.

RACHEL

Come on, let's dance.

She extends her hand towards him, he looks up and makes eye contact with her, a smile begins to cross his face and he takes her hand and moves to the dance floor. She places her hand on his shoulder and shows him how to slow dance. Without much difficulty he picks up the simple motions, and looks up to her, smiling. She smiles back and the song continues as the camera slowly zooms out and shows DAVID running back in, then immediately moves to him.

DAVID (V.O.)

Whew, survived the Chicken Dance rush.
Had three girls all wanting me to join.
Thankfully I was able to hide in the
bathroom stall. Where'd William go?

DAVID looks out and sees WILLIAM dancing with RACHEL.

DAVID (V.O.)

What the? Did he? Did she? Man, I hate
being so afraid of girls.

DAVID looks and notices that CINDY is no longer dancing with the guy he and WILLIAM saw earlier.

DAVID (V.O.)

Where did Cindy go?

DAVID feels a tap on his shoulder and a giggle. As he turns, CINDY, age 14, is standing behind him. DAVID immediately goes white.

DAVID

Hi...uuhhh...Cindy...

CINDY

Hi David, would you like to dance?

DAVID turns to WILLIAM who is dancing with RACHEL, and SAM who is still dancing with his same girl. He furrows his brow and with a powerful and determined voice stands up.

DAVID

I will not be the only guy from our cabin
that did not dance tonight!

DAVID takes CINDY'S hand and moves to the dance floor, dancing to the last bit of the song. As the song ends he looks around and lets go.

DAVID

Well...that was a great dance...

Another slow song cues in and CINDY grabs his arm.

CINDY

You're not going to count that as a dance
are you? The boys will never let it go.

DAVID looks around and notices that WILLIAM and SAM
are still dancing with their female partners.

DAVID
You girls sure are smart.

CINDY
(Giggling) You're silly.

Camera moves to WILLIAM and RACHEL. WILLIAM is
awkwardly staring at RACHEL, then looking away.
RACHEL tries to make conversation.

RACHEL
So I didn't see you last year.

WILLIAM
Really? People notice that?

RACHEL
Yes. We are a big family here, when one
of us isn't here, we all take notice.

WILLIAM
I see what you mean.

RACHEL
Are things improving?

WILLIAM
As much as they can be, I mean, I'm a
about a year out now, after ten they can
be even more assured that the cancer is
cured.

RACHEL
That's great to hear.

Several moments pass with them dancing still, silence
between them continues.

WILLIAM
So why'd you pick me?

RACHEL
What?

WILLIAM
Out of all of the guys here, why did you
pick me?

RACHEL
Are you trying to say that...?

WILLIAM

No, please don't get me wrong, I think you're very pretty and I'm thankful for you picking me...I suppose I'm just...well...something like...

RACHEL puts her finger to his lips, smiling.

RACHEL
(Gently) Shut up and dance with me.

WILLIAM and RACHEL continue to dance as the scene fades out.

INT WILLIAM'S BEDROOM EARLY EVENING

Scene fades up back on the picture of WILLIAM and RACHEL. WILLIAM sits there and stares at the picture, gently rubbing it with his thumb. He picks it up and looks at it closer. A close up view of the picture is seen as several tears hit the picture. A loud knock sounds on the door as WILLIAM puts the picture down and quickly cleans his face.

WILLIAM
Yes?

BRUCE
Mind if I come in?

WILLIAM
Do you really need to ask?

BRUCE walks into WILLIAM'S bedroom and takes a seat on his bed.

BRUCE
Working on the journal again?

WILLIAM
Yeah, one of my friends said it would be a good idea.

BRUCE
Does it work?

WILLIAM
So far yes, mainly have been things in my past...

BRUCE
Are they any of your dreams?

WILLIAM
(Taken aback) How did you know about that?

BRUCE
Emily told me.

WILLIAM

Oh...

BRUCE

After you went to sleep she came out and the three of us just talked for a while.

WILLIAM

Did Sarah say anything?

BRUCE

What about?

WILLIAM

Don't worry about it...

WILLIAM looks back to his desk and sighs.

BRUCE

You've still got a crush on her, don't you?

WILLIAM

What?

BRUCE

No offense Will, but you're easy to read. I can tell that you still have feelings for her.

WILLIAM

So? What of it?

BRUCE

Have you told her?

WILLIAM

Yes.

BRUCE

Recently?

WILLIAM

No...

BRUCE

Are you ashamed of it?

WILLIAM

I'm confused I suppose. It's as if I should tell her, but if I do, things will be even more awkward than they are already.

BRUCE

You call their visit awkward? They care about you. That's why we're here.

WILLIAM is silent.

BRUCE

Look, I'm not going to tell her, ok? I know that will just complicate things even further and right now I don't need any more complications.

WILLIAM nods.

BRUCE

Good. Now, it's a Saturday night, and you and I are going to go out.

WILLIAM looks up.

WILLIAM

Out where?

BRUCE

Does it matter? You and I have been in this apartment for too long without venturing out and seeing what we can see.

WILLIAM

I guess...

BRUCE

You guess? William, remember when you once told me that you have to live life to the fullest, live every moment as it's your last?

WILLIAM

Yeah, but generally you haven't been given a death sentence.

BRUCE

Even more reason to get off your lazy butt and get out there! And I'll be with you in case anything does happen, which nothing will. Nothing bad that is.

WILLIAM finally agrees.

WILLIAM

Sure, where to?

BRUCE

You'll see. Dress...casual but nice...

WILLIAM

Nice casual...isn't that just a relaxed formal?

BRUCE

Does it really matter? (Exits)

WILLIAM

Bruce...The things you do, I don't know how
I will ever be able to thank you.

WILLIAM moves around the room and gets himself ready.
His lethargy is beginning to show as it takes him a
good bit of time to get himself ready. BRUCE comes
back in a bit later with a huge grin on his face.

EXT APARTMENT EARLY EVENING

BRUCE and WILLIAM leave the apartment, with BRUCE
helping WILLIAM along the way as needed, even though
WILLIAM resists.

INT Bruce's Car Early Evening

The two drive and begin to head down the highway, and
BRUCE turns on the radio. "Here's to the Night" by
Eve6 begins to play. BRUCE reaches to change the
station, but WILLIAM reaches out to stop him and BRUCE
puts both hands on wheel. WILLIAM curls up on the
seat and begins to drift asleep as the focus blurs on
WILLIAM'S face.

INT HOSPITAL ROOM EARLY AFTERNOON

Focus becomes clearer on WILLIAM, age 12 with a faint
beeping sound. He groggily looks around and sees a
hospital room around him. His parents are next to
him, his mother growing even more excited.

SALLY

Thank God you're awake.

WILLIAM

Where am I?

FRANK

You don't remember do you? All of those
medications must be really messing with
you.

SALLY

You're in the transplant ward, the bone
marrow transplant ward.

WILLIAM

The what? I'm so tired.

FRANK

Rest son, you need it.

SALLY

Go to sleep, we're not going anywhere.

BRUCE (Voice)

Hey sleepy head.

WILLIAM

I want to sleep now.

BRUCE

Come on man...

INT BRUCE'S CAR EVENING

WILLIAM snaps awake back in present day.

WILLIAM

Where are we?

BRUCE

Man, you were out cold.

WILLIAM

How long have we been driving?

BRUCE

About an hour, traffic was a bit of a pain, but you slept right through it. Come on, let's go. Do you need your wheelchair?

WILLIAM

No, I'll be fine, just have to take things slow that's all.

BRUCE

Take as much time as you need Will.

EXT PARKING LOT EVENING

BRUCE helps WILLIAM out of the car, and WILLIAM walks slowly on his own accord. He looks up to see a cinema bistro in front of him. WILLIAM turns to BRUCE.

WILLIAM

This is your idea of a well spent Saturday night?

BRUCE

Yes, it's better than barhopping. It's cheaper, smoke free, and you have some people who want to see you.

WILLIAM

Who? What's playing?

BRUCE

(Grinning) You'll see.

As they open the doors; EMILY rushes WILLIAM and almost knocks him over with her bear hug, which he returns.

EMILY

Oh William, it's so good to see you.

WILLIAM

It's good to see you too Emily.

EMILY lets go and WILLIAM jokingly gasps for air, which EMILY only replies with sticking her tongue out at him as she embraces BRUCE.

BRUCE

Thanks for coming Emily.

EMILY

Sure thing.

BRUCE

Any word on...

EMILY

Family and wedding issues...

WILLIAM

Sarah?

EMILY

Sorry hunny. She said she wishes she could be here.

WILLIAM

I understand.

BRUCE

What are we standing here for? Let's see this movie!

WILLIAM

Again, I ask what is it?

WILLIAM looks up and sees that the movie being showcased is Back to the Future.

EMILY

(Kissing his cheek) Only your favorite.

WILLIAM

(Blushing) You guys are the greatest.

BRUCE

(As Doc) If my calculations are correct, when this baby hits eighty-eight miles per hour... you're gonna see some serious shit.

BRUCE leads the way and WILLIAM leans on EMILY who holds him up and they walk off inside.

INT CINEMA BISTRO EVENING

The interior of the bistro is casual but still has the feeling of elegance. As the three walk around, WILLIAM stops and stares at the ceiling, at an odd mosaic, and along the walls there are old posters from movies dating back many years. BRUCE goes on ahead and gets the tickets and looks back to EMILY who is standing next to WILLIAM, her arm wrapped around his.

WILLIAM

Wow, this place is awesome.

EMILY

You've never been here?

WILLIAM

Can't say I have.

EMILY

Well, it's a good thing Bruce thought of this place.

WILLIAM

He planned all of this?

EMILY

Yep.

BRUCE walks back towards them.

BRUCE

Hey, I got the tickets, you gotta tell me what you want to eat.

WILLIAM

Yeah, let's go. And thanks again Bruce, this place is really neat.

BRUCE looks to EMILY and they both exchange a smile.

BRUCE

Glad you like it bro, now...

BRUCE takes his face and attempts his best Brando impersonation.

BRUCE

I'm going to make you an offer you can't refuse...what do you want to eat?

BRUCE jokingly grabs WILLIAM by the shoulders and shakes him as they all laugh and walk off towards the concession stand.

INT MOVIE THEATER

The three go and sit down, each with their food in front of them. EMILY surprisingly has the most food

and WILLIAM and BRUCE both give her an awkward look, as they just now realized how much more she got.

EMILY

What?

BRUCE

And I thought I was the one with a healthy appetite.

WILLIAM

You call that healthy?

EMILY

Look you two, just because I may be petite, doesn't mean I can't enjoy a good full meal.

WILLIAM

By that you mean a meal large enough to feed two people?

BRUCE

Must be that amazing metabolism women apparently brag about.

WILLIAM smirks and begins to say something, but stops as he looks to EMILY, and realizes that he better keep his mouth shut if he doesn't want a knuckle sandwich.

BRUCE

Thankfully you're between her and I...

Before he can say anything else, WILLIAM leans back and EMILY slugs BRUCE hard in the leg.

BRUCE

Owww! That hurt!

PATRON

Hey, you guys mind?

WILLIAM

Sorry sir, my friend here is just maladjusted.

BRUCE looks to WILLIAM and then to EMILY, who is giggling as the lights darken.

EMILY

You boys behave, the movie's starting.

The movie plays and the three watch. WILLIAM is completely enamored by the movie, smiling like a kid at Christmas. It's as if he had never been to the movies before. BRUCE is smiling and then looks as EMILY lifts up the arm rest between her and WILLIAM and snuggles against him. WILLIAM takes a moment

before putting his arm around her. Time passes and BRUCE looks and shakes a little as he looks at his watch. He gets up and leaves quickly, and WILLIAM looks up and begins to try to leave, but EMILY holds him and he looks to her with her eyes telling him not to leave. WILLIAM readjusts and relaxes with EMILY.

Time passes in the movie, with WILLIAM looking around to find BRUCE.

EXT CINEMA BISTRO SIDE

BRUCE is leaning against the wall, smoking a cigarette. He breathes deep and looks around, and begins to cough.

INT MOVIE THEATER

Screen shows Doc being shot and killed, with Marty watching himself shout, "NO, YOU BASTARDS!"

EXT CINEMA BISTRO SIDE

GUN SHOTS from the movie are heard as BRUCE begins to cough hard, throwing his cigarette away and grabs his chest, breathing deep and gaining control. He moves to head back inside.

INT MOVIE THEATER

WILLIAM and EMILY are sitting in the theater; EMILY is now asleep snuggled up against WILLIAM. On the screen Jennifer looks to Marty and asks him what's wrong. BRUCE walks in as WILLIAM turns to see him, with Marty saying, "Everything's great." WILLIAM smiles as BRUCE waves.

EXT CINEMA BISTRO

The three walk out to their cars. This time WILLIAM is supporting EMILY, who is very sleepy.

BRUCE

You see what I mean? She eats all of that food and she puts herself into a food coma.

WILLIAM

I think it's kind of cute.

EMILY

(Mumbling) You two...

BRUCE

What?

WILLIAM

Let's get her home. (To Emily) Did you take your own car?

BRUCE
No, Sarah dropped her off.

WILLIAM
What?!

BRUCE
What?

WILLIAM
She was here, and didn't have the time to say hello?

BRUCE
Look bro, I'm not her keeper. If you want to talk to her, then call her.

WILLIAM looks at his watch and sighs.

BRUCE
How about you call her tomorrow and see what's going on, ok?

WILLIAM shrugs again as he helps EMILY into the back of the car and he slides into the back as well. She lays her head on his lap as she falls asleep again and BRUCE drives off.

EXT EMILY AND SARAH'S APARTMENT LATE EVENING

BRUCE pulls up to the complex and waves as WILLIAM and EMILY begin to walk towards her door.

EMILY
Thank you.

WILLIAM
What for?

EMILY
For being such a gentleman.

WILLIAM
I should be thanking you for being the wonderful person you are, and for making tonight so great.

EMILY
You're sweet.

As they reach her door EMILY kisses WILLIAM on the cheek, which WILLIAM returns and EMILY slips inside. WILLIAM walks back to the car and gets in the passenger seat as they drive off.

INT BRUCE'S CAR LATE EVENING

BRUCE looks to WILLIAM, who seems even more dazed than usual.

BRUCE

So how was tonight?

WILLIAM

Fantastic.

BRUCE

I'm glad you enjoyed yourself.

WILLIAM

Thanks again.

BRUCE

Not a problem, we'll be sure to do it more often.

WILLIAM and BRUCE sit there each staring into different directions.

WILLIAM

Do you find it odd that I don't have a girlfriend?

BRUCE

What?

WILLIAM

I mean, I'm 22, and I don't have...I have never had a girlfriend.

BRUCE

What's bringing this up?

WILLIAM

Emily seemed different tonight.

BRUCE

After all of that food, I'm surprised she didn't puke everywhere.

WILLIAM

No, I mean *she* was different.

BRUCE

How do you mean?

WILLIAM

Well, she's sweet, she always is, but when she snuggled into me during the movie...my heart started racing and I didn't completely understand what was going on...

BRUCE

Do you mean you were...

WILLIAM

I'm being serious here!

BRUCE

Sorry.

WILLIAM

Then walking her to her door, she seemed like she would fall if I wasn't supporting her, and then she kissed me.

BRUCE

Really?

WILLIAM

Yeah. I mean, it was on the cheek like she usually does, but the kiss felt different.

BRUCE

How so?

WILLIAM

More...sincere...

BRUCE

I don't think I'm following...

WILLIAM

I think she's attracted to me.

BRUCE

Really now Will? I mean, doesn't she have a boyfriend?

WILLIAM

They broke up.

BRUCE

Ok, I don't keep tabs on everyone, updating their file daily.

WILLIAM

I mean, I've liked her for a while, and I haven't had the guts to tell her.

BRUCE

Why not?

WILLIAM

I'm afraid to hurt our friendship.

BRUCE

So let me get this straight, you've kicked cancer's ass twice, and you're afraid of a woman?

WILLIAM

I guess.

BRUCE

Look Will, I'm going to be honest with you. If she's your friend, then nothing you say should be able to hurt the friendship you share. I say you need to tell her before something happens and you regret it.

WILLIAM

I don't regret anything I have or haven't done.

BRUCE

You don't?

WILLIAM

Well...at least I don't think so...

BRUCE

So...where to?

WILLIAM

Not home yet.

BRUCE

Not home, then where?

WILLIAM

Just drive please, I'd like to get some sleep.

BRUCE

Wouldn't that idea be better served in your own bed?

WILLIAM

I suppose, but I find the car relaxing as of late, normally I could never sleep in a car, now it's as soothing as a mother rocking her baby to sleep.

BRUCE

Whatever works for you, ok?

WILLIAM

Sure.

WILLIAM begins to curl back up on the seat and closes his eyes.

INT HOSPITAL ROOM EARLY AFTERNOON

WILLIAM, age 12, is lying in his bed in the hospital room. He is incredibly overweight from medications,

and has a large IV pole with lots of bags of various drugs. The faint beeping and hums of various machines fill the void. FRANK and SALLY are both sitting in the room, asleep. WILLIAM rolls over, looking at the calendar.

WILLIAM

It's week four, twenty eight days since they put my brother's bone marrow into me. My treatment involved Total Body Irradiation and lethal doses of Chemotherapy. Now I lay here with so many drugs I can't even begin to remember what's what.

WILLIAM scans and looks at the various bags hooked up to him and rolls back over, groaning as he does so.

WILLIAM

They give me one drug to help one thing, which in turn makes me sicker, so they put me on another one and so on. This is just fantastic...

SALLY stirs and wakes up.

SALLY

You're awake.

WILLIAM

Yeah, I'm shivering, I feel so cold.

SALLY looks at WILLIAM, who is bundled up inside a blanket and comforter.

SALLY

You've got a fever. Let's see where you're at.

SALLY takes a thermometer to WILLIAM's mouth and they sit there and wait.

SALLY

How are you feeling?

WILLIAM mumbles something incoherent.

SALLY

Sorry, I always forget to not ask you things while you've got the thermometer in your mouth.

WILLIAM mumbles some more as the thermometer begins to beep.

WILLIAM

With the countless times you've taken it,
we should have figured some kind of code
to communicate.

SALLY

What, some kind of thermometer speak?

WILLIAM

Yeah, something like that...

SALLY

A hundred and three, but not as bad as you
were.

WILLIAM

How bad did I get?

SALLY

A hundred and six point nine.

WILLIAM

I guess that's why they call it the "Shake
and Bake" Drug.

SALLY

Yeah.

WILLIAM

I love you mom.

SALLY

I love you too sweetie.

SALLY kisses WILLIAM's forehead as he drifts back
asleep.

INT WILLIAM'S BEDROOM EARLY MORNING

WILLIAM is sleeping in his bed, shivering and snaps
awake after a few moments. He looks around, still
hearing the faint beeping sounds of the hospital room
echoing. He feels his head, which has some sweat on
it, then breathes slowly. He gets up and walks to the
bathroom and washes his face. He looks slightly pale
and takes some more water and gargles, and spits it
out. BRUCE walks in and looks at him.

BRUCE

How you feeling?

WILLIAM

(Very sarcastic) Like a fresh batch of
roses.

BRUCE

Wow, what side of whose bed did you wake
up on this morning?

WILLIAM

Sorry, rough night.

BRUCE

Really, I thought you had a pretty fantastic one.

WILLIAM

Don't get me wrong, last night was great, but sleeping was weird.

BRUCE

Another dream?

WILLIAM

Yeah, about four weeks or so into the transplant, when things started getting pretty bad.

BRUCE

How long were you in there?

WILLIAM

Two and a half, three months.

BRUCE

That long.

WILLIAM

Well, I was one of the first children to have that kind of transplant done. So they had a lot different things they were trying and some of them took longer than others.

BRUCE

And even with all that the cancer still came back...

WILLIAM

At the time it was what was necessary. I mean, it was, or I wasn't going to make it. I made the choice to go with the new treatment. And while it was a living hell for me, I am thankful and glad for what it did, and what it has done for other children who are fighting the same battle as I did.

BRUCE

I'm sorry if I said something offensive here...

WILLIAM

No, don't be sorry, you're confused, you asked a question, and I gave you an answer.

BRUCE

Okay...I think someone needs to drink their coffee.

WILLIAM

I *hate* coffee, remember?

BRUCE

Oh yeah...that's me who has to drink it.

BRUCE pulls up his mug and drinks from it.

BRUCE

Mmmm, good coffee.

WILLIAM

So that's what that smell is.

BRUCE

Yep, some of that Kona Blend your parents put in the freezer.

WILLIAM

Yeah, it ain't cheap either.

BRUCE

I know, that's why I only brewed a cup, didn't want to waste it.

WILLIAM

Good idea...Wait...They gave you coffee?

BRUCE

(Changing the subject) Any plans for the day?

WILLIAM

Other than writing? Probably not.

BRUCE

Alright, well, I have to go into work today. You call me if you need anything right?

WILLIAM

Yeah, I will.

BRUCE

Good, see ya later.

BRUCE exits and WILLIAM begins to brush his teeth as the door shuts to the apartment.

INT WILLIAM'S BEDROOM LATE AFTERNOON

WILLIAM sits at his desk writing in his journal again. The entry is entitled *FIRSTS*, and he begins to write

and draw several sketches of things. He draws a picture of a diving board.

EXT SWIMMING POOL LATE AFTERNOON

WILLIAM, age eight, is being coached on how to jump off the diving board. It appears as he fleshes out the details.

EXT ROPES COURSE LATE AFTERNOON

WILLIAM turns the page and draws a picture of a telephone pole. An image of him age 16 climbing a telephone pole in a harness appears as he draws out a zip line, which he slides down, screaming with glee.

INT WILLIAM'S BEDROOM LATE AFTERNOON

He grabs his head and feels the room spinning. As he gets up to try and reach the phone, he falls to the floor and blacks out completely.

EXT CAMP DANCE PAVILION EARLY EVENING

WILLIAM stands in the center of the dance floor by himself. He feels the void around him and huddles up to shiver. He hears various sounds of the hospital room and other sounds that scare him. Then they stop, complete silence falls for several moments. He looks up and sees RACHEL standing before him with the dress he first danced with her in. She now is 18, like in the picture, but he is still 22, though he is dressed in a nicer outfit than first seen. Her presence brings a comfort and warmth to him as she extends her hand and he takes it. As he takes her hand, they begin to dance an elaborate waltz, much more extravagant than WILLIAM ever seemed able to accomplish. The dance continues for several moments until she slowly begins to disappear, with him still dancing. The sound of a car crash can be heard as he stops and stares in horror as camera closes in on his eyes.

INT WILLIAM'S ROOM LATE EVENING

Camera is still close on his eyes as the sounds of BRUCE are heard calling him.

BRUCE

William, wake up. For God's sake please wake up.

WILLIAM snaps awake and sits up, grabbing his head.

BRUCE

Thank God.

WILLIAM

I feel like Muhammad Ali was taking shots at my head.

BRUCE

Well, hitting the floor like that I guess will do that to you. Let me help you up.

WILLIAM lets BRUCE help him to his feet and has him sit down on the edge of his bed.

BRUCE

What happened?

WILLIAM

I don't know, just had this amazingly weird headache, and the next thing I know, I was here.

BRUCE

Did you eat alright today?

WILLIAM

Yeah, had breakfast and lunch, I remember you calling and saying you were bringing home some Chinese food.

BRUCE

Good, at least your memory's intact. Can you walk?

WILLIAM

Yeah, and I'm starving, hope you got enough.

BRUCE

What, becoming like Emily are we?

WILLIAM

No, just really hungry, that's all.

BRUCE

Fair enough.

WILLIAM stops and stares at BRUCE.

BRUCE

What?

WILLIAM

You reek of smoke, more than usual.

BRUCE

What of it?

WILLIAM

I thought you were getting off it?

BRUCE

I'm working on it alright? Now let's eat.

BRUCE helps WILLIAM up and they walk out of the room.
Fade to black.

INT DINING ROOM LATE EVENING

BRUCE and WILLIAM sit at opposite ends of the table, each holding their stomachs. The boxes of Chinese food cover the table and several are turned over.

WILLIAM

Wow...I do not think I have ever eaten that much food...ever...

BRUCE

Me too, but you gotta enjoy life don't you?

WILLIAM

I suppose, but not to the point that you feel like a blimp...what exactly did we eat?

BRUCE

I think the real question is what didn't we eat?

BRUCE picks up one of the boxes and looks inside.

WILLIAM

What are you looking for, the Cracker Jack Prize?

BRUCE sets the box down and picks up another.

BRUCE

Nice one funny guy, I'm actually looking to see what remnants of the food we devoured exist.

WILLIAM

Any survivors?

Both WILLIAM and BRUCE pick up separate boxes and survey the damage.

BRUCE

Oddly enough none whatsoever.

WILLIAM

You would think that guys like us would have left some scrap, some noodle, something remaining?

BRUCE

No, we truly picked these boxes clean.

WILLIAM

Remind me never to eat that much again.

BRUCE

Remind me never to order that much Chinese food unless Emily's around.

WILLIAM

Be careful that she doesn't hear you say that, she'll kill you.

BRUCE

She wouldn't harm anyone, she's too nice.

WILLIAM

And what, nice people aren't allowed to have violent reactions?

BRUCE

Oddly enough, it's the nicest people who often have the most violent outbursts.

WILLIAM

You think that says something?

BRUCE

Yeah.

WILLIAM

What?

BRUCE

Don't piss you off.

BRUCE and WILLIAM both laugh heartedly. They laugh for some time and continue to laugh for what seems no real apparent reason. They eventually slow down and stop with the grins slowly dying away.

BRUCE

Well, I need to head back out for a while, you going to be ok?

WILLIAM

I should be fine, I'll probably fall into a food coma before long.

BRUCE

Just so you know, work at the security office is going to get crazier for a while.

WILLIAM

I know. That's the summer for you.

BRUCE

But call if you need anything.

WILLIAM

I will.

BRUCE gets up and leaves the table, WILLIAM gets up to move towards his bedroom, as the scene fades out.

INT WILLIAM'S BEDROOM LATE EVENING

WILLIAM sits at his desk, writing in his journal. He has a Coke can which he sips as he picks up his pen and goes back to work. The view changes to the date of his entry as he writes it all out.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

It would seem that my feelings for Emily have changed, they seem to grow brighter each time I see and spend time with her.

A montage of the following Images appear as WILLIAM writes.

EXT EMILY'S HOUSE EARLY EVENING

WILLIAM stands at her front door and EMILY opens the door and hugs him as he hands her roses.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

Things felt simpler, felt easier whenever I was with Emily. I haven't spoken with Sarah in what seems like ages.

WILLIAM turns a page and begins writing a new date, a month later.

A third and lighter image overlaps above the two, SARAH writing invitations for her wedding.

EXT CAFÉ EARLY AFTERNOON

WILLIAM and EMILY eat at a table, sharing their food and laughing with each other as they both do silly things with their food and to each other.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

Emily's a wonderful and beautiful woman...I wonder what Sarah is doing.

Journal page turns again and another month has passed.

EXT EMILY'S HOUSE LATE EVENING

WILLIAM embraces EMILY as they both appear to be chatting with grins on their faces. SARAH tries on her wedding dress.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

Emily makes my life seem more complete. Rachel continues to speak to me in my dreams...

Close Up Shot of EMILY and WILLIAM kissing gently. SARAH sits on her bed looking at a picture of WILLIAM, SARAH, EMILY, and BRUCE all in a big group picture.

INT WILLIAM'S ROOM LATE EVENING

WILLIAM turns the page once more and writes a little more, a month further.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

The Movie Theatre is our favorite spot now. We always seem to pay attention to each other more than the movie.

INT MOVIE THEATRE LATE EVENING

WILLIAM and EMILY sit in a dark theatre, with EMILY snuggled up against WILLIAM. They both look to each other and then kiss at some length.

INT WILLIAM'S ROOM LATE EVENING

WILLIAM turns the page, another month has passed. There are three journals on his desk now, where a few months ago there was only one.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

The doctors say I've got maybe a month or two to live, and that's just a guess. They've tried a few treatment options, but they only make things worse. The blackouts are unexplained, but they seem to be linked to my condition worsening. Bruce has been working non stop and still smokes, Emily and I are sort of dating and Sarah...Well, I honestly don't know much about Sarah any more. It's as if she's lost touch of her friends due to her wedding...The start of one life...the end of others...

Scene fades to black.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

There's something about these entries, I just can't finish some of them...Why is Rachel still in my mind?

INT DINING ROOM EARLY MORNING

Boxes of eaten Chinese food are strewn across the table, but now there are also pizza boxes and other trash items. WILLIAM walks in from the bedroom and sits down at the table with a sigh. He looks around groggily and begins to take in how trashy it looks.

He looks a great deal weaker than he was before. He sniffs a bit and checks himself.

WILLIAM

Man...I smell like I feel...

WILLIAM looks to the screen door to the patio and sees BRUCE smoking a cigarette. BRUCE realizes he is being watched and flicks the cigarette away quickly, sprays himself with some kind of air freshener/deodorant, and walks in.

BRUCE

How you feeling?

WILLIAM

Betrayed.

BRUCE

Really? Why's that?

WILLIAM

You know damn well what I am talking about.

BRUCE

Look Will, I don't have time for this, I need to be going, got less than five to get out that...

WILLIAM

Good, that's all I will need.

BRUCE

Need for what?

WILLIAM

We need to talk, you and I.

BRUCE

Yeah, but can't it wait until...

WILLIAM

No, it can't. So be quiet and listen.

BRUCE looks at his watch.

BRUCE

I'm all ears.

WILLIAM

Look Bruce, you are my best friend, you have done so much for me...

BRUCE

Look, if this is going to turn into another one of your sob sessions...

WILLIAM

(Enraged) SHUT UP AND LISTEN TO ME!

BRUCE looks completely stunned and has a seat.

WILLIAM

I have watched for the past four months, ever since my cancer came back. I have watched you smoke pack after pack each and every day. You stand there with that confidence of yours, that belief that you're all peachy, but face it, you're killing yourself. And while I am here dying from something I cannot control, you give in to that vice, even when I'm right there. I can't take it any more Bruce, watching you kill yourself is killing me even worse.

BRUCE

And you think it's easy for me to quit? I've been trying different methods for months, and I can't kick the habit. You want to argue about something, well then let me say something. I work, almost every day, I do everything I can to make sure that we are happy, especially you William, you. And while you thank me every single day, and I know you mean it, because you do, you're using yourself as the poster child to make me feel guilty. I have made the choice to smoke, because it calms my nerves. It helps me cut through all of the crap that I deal with on a daily basis, including this. I smoke so I don't snap and say something I'll regret. We all have our ways to maintain our sanity, and you're no different.

They both sit at odds with each other, obviously bothered by what the other has said.

BRUCE

Look, I need to go to work, and when I get home, we'll talk.

WILLIAM

I know what I need to do.

BRUCE

What?

WILLIAM

I know what I need to do to finish some of these entries.

WILLIAM pulls out his journal and shows BRUCE the picture of him and RACHEL.

BRUCE

What about it?

WILLIAM

It's been six years since she's been dead, and I never took the time to visit her grave.

BRUCE

What?

WILLIAM

When I was fifteen, I had this picture taken of her and me. We both left from Camp and went back home to our normal lives. I had her email, and emailed her several times over the year. I never got a single response. I figured, she was busy, she had things to do with her life, and so I didn't worry, I didn't let it get to me. Then the next year happened like normal. I went to Camp, but she wasn't there. I knew the lifeguards wouldn't show up until Monday, so I held onto her copy of the picture. When I went to archery that day, David and I were sitting there as I held the picture. He told me it was a great picture of her and I, and I told him how I intended to give it to her.

WILLIAM stops and clenches the journal.

BRUCE

What William?

WILLIAM

He told me...he told me that it was going to be impossible for me to do that...and that's when he told me about the accident.

BRUCE

Oh My God William..

WILLIAM

At first I thought he was joking, and then he laid it out to me.

BRUCE

Will...

WILLIAM

She wasn't even nineteen years old. She was driving down the street, with her younger sister. She went through the green light, and a drunk driver slammed into the driver's side of the car. She

was killed instantly and her sister died at the scene.

WILLIAM has been building up tears and eventually completely breaks down and cries, seeing the images vividly in his mind.

BRUCE

I'm...I'm sorry Will...I really don't know what else to say.

WILLIAM starts to get control back.

WILLIAM

And I realize I never told you what happened when I blacked out.

BRUCE

What?

WILLIAM

When I blacked out a few months ago, I dreamed that I was dancing with Rachel. It was beautiful, but then she vanished right before my eyes, and I heard a car slam into hers. And then you woke me up. At the time I didn't want to tell you, but now I've realized more than ever that I have to face the demons that are within me, and I need to face them head on, as the images are burned in my mind.

BRUCE

Let me call in to work, I should be able to...

WILLIAM

No, please don't do that now...

BRUCE

No, Will, we're going to do this today, and we're going to do it now.

WILLIAM

It's two hours away.

BRUCE

I don't care.

WILLIAM smiles and begins to walk off.

WILLIAM

Bruce?

BRUCE

Yeah?

WILLIAM

Thank you, for...everything.

BRUCE

You're welcome William.

WILLIAM smiles and walks off to the bed room. BRUCE sees this as an opportunity to try to calm his nerves and begins to step outside and pulls out his cigarette box. As he pulls one out, he stops and looks down at it. He stares deeply at it and then looks towards William's room. His hand shakes considerably as he closes his fist around the pack and throws it into the garbage.

EXT WILLIAM & BRUCE'S APARTMENT

WILLIAM is dressed in clothes that he would wear to a church service, while BRUCE is still in his work outfit. They each get into the car, WILLIAM taking more time than usual to do so, the lethargy truly showing through. BRUCE starts the car and they drive off into the early morning dawn.

INT BRUCE'S CAR

WILLIAM is sleeping in the car as usual, curled up in the seat and head against the window, BRUCE looks as he is driving, smiling that WILLIAM seems calm after all that has happened that morning.

BRUCE

(Softly) I hope you find what you're looking for here at the grave yard.

EXT TOWN ROAD LATE MORNING

BRUCE looks and sees the road sign saying there are in the town and BRUCE pulls up to a gas station, gets out and runs inside. A "Thanks" is heard as he leaves a few moments later and runs back to the car and drives off. WILLIAM slowly begins to stir.

BRUCE

We're almost there.

EXT GRAVEYARD LATE MORNING

BRUCE pulls up to the site and parks along one of the driveways. WILLIAM opens the door and swings his legs out, taking his time to stand up and begin walking. BRUCE gets out of the car and stares towards WILLIAM, though doesn't move towards him. He leans on the side of the car and watches intently. WILLIAM walks slowly, looking around for her grave. Even amidst all of this, he doesn't seem the least bit disturbed to be wandering in a graveyard by himself. He never once looks back for BRUCE, but continues on and finally stops. He looks down and sees the grave of RACHEL,

with her sister's right next to it. Coldplay's *The Scientist* begins to well up in the background.

*Come up to meet you, Tell you I'm sorry,
You don't know how lovely you are*

WILLIAM steps up to the grave and for the first time we've seen his front, we see a single rose in his hands.

*I had to find you, Tell you I need you,
Tell you I set you apart*

WILLIAM slowly kneels down holding the rose close to his chest.

*Tell me your secrets, And ask me your
questions, Aww let's go back to the start.*

WILLIAM puts the rose down onto the grave and slowly lets it fall.

*Runnin' in circles, Comin' up tails, Heads
on the science apart.*

BRUCE looks and notices WILLIAM on his knees and moves to the back of the car.

*Nobody said it was easy
It's such a shame for us to part.*

Tears begin to well up in WILLIAM's eye and they fall onto the rose.

*Nobody said it was easy
No one ever said it would be this hard
Aww take me back to the start*

WILLIAM closes his eyes and leans back some, the image melting away to WILLIAM kneeling in darkness.

*I was just guessin', At numbers and
figures, Pullin' the puzzles apart*

RACHEL's hand reaches forward and he rises, his condition instantly improved, no tears or any hint that he was at all sick

*Questions of science, Science and
progress, Do not speak as loud as my heart*

Their dance continues and WILLIAM seems even brighter and healthier in this world than before.

*Tell me you love me, Come back to haunt
me, Oh when I rush to the start*

BRUCE moves quickly in slow motion towards WILLIAM with the wheelchair, though it is obviously some distance is between them.

*Runnin' in circles, Chasin' our tails,
Comin' back as we are*

In both realities WILLIAM is still dancing, though in the world BRUCE sees, WILLIAM is dancing by himself.

*Nobody said it was easy
Aww It's such a shame for us to part*

WILLIAM sees RACHEL slowly beginning to fade away.

BRUCE closes in on WILLIAM but sees him begin to slow to a stop, and stops himself.

*Nobody said it was easy
No one ever said it would be so hard*

WILLIAM collapses to his knees again and stares in horror at her grave.

I'm goin' back to the start

The image of RACHEL and her sister driving in a car as a drunk driver in a large pick-up plows into the side, appears. The wreck is seen in various speeds and from different angles repeatedly

*Ahhooooooooooooooooooooo
Ahhooooooooooooooooooooo
Ahhooooooooooooooooooooo
Ahhooooooooooooooooooooo*

WILLIAM sobs heavily and falls completely forward onto the grave, with BRUCE moving towards him as the scene fades out.

EXT GRAVEYARD NOON

WILLIAM places the picture of RACHEL and him on the grave, with the rose on top.

BRUCE

Now she can have the picture you wanted to give her.

WILLIAM walks, eyes red from crying. BRUCE looks back to the grave and sees that the picture of RACHEL and WILLIAM is there under the rose. BRUCE helps WILLIAM into the car and he looks again to the picture and the camera zooms into the picture as the car starts and leaves, fading out to black.

INT WILLIAM BEDROOM LATE AFTERNOON

WILLIAM is sleeping, with BRUCE sitting on a chair across the room. He is reading one of WILLIAM's books, in a way keeping watch on WILLIAM. When WILLIAM finally begins to stir, BRUCE sets down the book and just sits there as WILLIAM looks to him.

WILLIAM

What happened?

BRUCE

Well, you collapsed at Rachel's grave. I got you back to the car and drove back here. You've been out for quite a while now.

WILLIAM

My head doesn't hurt thankfully, though my brain does.

BRUCE

Did you see anything while you were out there?

WILLIAM

What?

BRUCE

William you were dancing by yourself out there. Or at least that's what I saw, which is why I'm asking if by some chance you saw something yourself?

WILLIAM

Well, I saw Rachel, and she was the one dancing with me...and then...

BRUCE

Then what?

WILLIAM

She disappeared and the very vivid and violent image of her car crash appeared and struck me.

BRUCE

How much do you know about the crash?

WILLIAM

I read the newspaper article, with a picture in there, I guess my imagination likes to run wild and come up with what happened. When I was at her grave, it was as if I was right there when the accident happened.

BRUCE

Well, you're back home and safe now, so no need to worry about it.

WILLIAM

I guess you're right...I feel some kind of weight lifted off of me...You heading into work soon?

BRUCE

Yeah. By the way, the boss is going to be giving me some extra time off to help you. He's a nice guy.

WILLIAM

Eh...nice guy..

BRUCE

What?

WILLIAM

I dunno...just the idea of the nice guy..

BRUCE

No, tell me, I'm interested.

WILLIAM

I guess I'm mixing apples and bananas here, but explain to me this, why is it that a girl wants a nice guy, but yet, at the same time, if she thinks you're too nice, she won't date you.

BRUCE

What?

WILLIAM

Take your ex for example. She dated you for a while right? And then left you for what? That jerk of a guy who was her ex she dumped before she met you. Regardless of how good or wholesome of a person you are, it always seems that nice guys finish last, and the jerks are the ones who seem to win.

BRUCE

But what about the long run, eventually the girl will wise up and realize that she can't settle with a guy like that right?

WILLIAM

How many abusive marriages have you heard of, divorces, annulments. It's for that very reason that they don't wise up until they've made the stupid choice of getting into said deep relationship and then screwing it up because they thought that the person loved them.

BRUCE

And again, what does this have to do with my boss?

WILLIAM

Is he normally a nice guy? Or is he just giving you sympathy because he "feels" for you about my condition?

BRUCE

I think he's being sincere.

WILLIAM

That's just the thing, we "think" that things are right, when in reality, they're not. People are selfish creatures, I'll admit that I am too. Your boss is probably just going to use this as an excuse into getting you to do more work, or take notice that your job isn't as good as normal and then fire you because your emotions are affecting your work.

BRUCE

When did you become such a cynic?

WILLIAM

I'm always a bit cynical, sometimes more than others.

BRUCE

Well, what about the story of the Good Samaritan?

WILLIAM

Well, interesting how it's only that one short story and nothing about the effect a few weeks later. Eventually he's going to get tired and frustrated with the things that happen and change according to his circumstances and environment.

BRUCE

Well Mister Cynic of the day, I need to get to work. You know how to reach me if anything comes up right?

WILLIAM

Yeah, see you tonight.

BRUCE

You probably should call Emily or Sarah and see what they're up to.

WILLIAM

Maybe I'll do that after I wash up.

BRUCE

Good idea, take care of yourself.

WILLIAM

You too.

BRUCE walks out of the room as WILLIAM gets up, using the wall to help him move around the room and into the bathroom.

EXT BRUCE AND WILLIAM'S APARTMENT EVENING

The weather is dark and a heavy rain storm has hit. EMILY walks up the steps to the apartment, completely soaked and knocks on the door. She looks around and knocks again after no response.

INT BRUCE AND WILLIAM'S APARTMENT EVENING

WILLIAM sits on the couch and pushes himself up and moves to the door slowly and looks through the peep hole. He sees EMILY and unlocks and opens the door. They stand there for a moment and WILLIAM stares, as the wet clothes have fit to her body very tightly and her white shirt shows her bra some.

EMILY

Are you just going to stand there or let a rain-drenched girl inside?

WILLIAM stares for a second, blinks, smiles, and then steps and shows her inside. WILLIAM shuts the door. As EMILY moves inside he moves to the bathroom to grab a towel. As he returns she moves in close and kisses him in a deep embrace. WILLIAM returns the kiss and as they pull back and smile at each other as EMILY starts to dry off and they move to the couch and sit down.

EMILY

So how are you?

WILLIAM

As good as I can be, Bruce is working tonight because his boss is going to give him some time off to help me with things.

EMILY

That's good right?

WILLIAM

Good except for his continuing to smoke.

EMILY

I thought he quit?

WILLIAM

I thought so too.

EMILY rests her hand on WILLIAM's.

EMILY

Well, anything else going on?

WILLIAM

What do you mean?

EMILY

Nevermind.

WILLIAM

Do you still talk to Sarah?

EMILY

On occasion, she's been busy with work and the wedding.

WILLIAM

I've noticed. I have made several phone calls, and not a single message, like she didn't care.

EMILY

Don't say that.

WILLIAM

Why not, do you honestly think she cares about us right now? She's got her fiancé; she's got her ring, her wedding, her future to look forward to? What reason would she have to give a care about us?

EMILY

Because we're her friends. Didn't you get an invitation?

WILLIAM

Yeah, it's real nice.

EMILY

And you're going, right?

WILLIAM

I will try, if I'm still alive.

EMILY

Why are you being so cold?

WILLIAM

She's the one who's been so cold to me. The moment I opened up to her all those years ago and told her my feelings, she has never treated me the same. She said I was too dear of a friend to her to love me the way I wanted her to. She said that doing that would hurt our friendship, but I opening my mouth seemed to have been the first slash to it.

EMILY

I...didn't know that...

WILLIAM

I'm surprised she never told you, she tells you everything doesn't she?

EMILY

Not really, we used to talk all of the time, but we seem to be connected less and less.

WILLIAM

You can say that again. It's amazing how people tell you they will always be there for you, but when you're honest to them they move away. It's some line that we apparently as friends are supposed to waive, but yet that line grows stronger the more we talk to each other, and time moves on, feelings and emotions get mixed in and the line becomes as jagged as the relationship does.

EMILY

Do you still...?

WILLIAM

Have feelings for her? How can I? If I do, and try to interfere with her marriage, I would betray the idea that I set out to do with my friends, which is protect them and support them.

EMILY

But William, you can't carry the world on your shoulders, and sometimes we have to admit that we need support from others ourselves.

WILLIAM

I suppose.

EMILY leans closer to WILLIAM, which he doesn't seem really to react to it. She moves her lips as to say something, and then stops. WILLIAM looks to EMILY as she turns and smiles faintly, her eyes welling up slightly with tears.

WILLIAM

What's wrong Emily?

EMILY

(Wiping her eyes) Nothing.

WILLIAM

I know women better than that, and when they say "nothing" it definitely means something.

EMILY

Well...

WILLIAM

Emily, you can tell me anything, you can trust me.

EMILY

It's not that I don't trust you...

WILLIAM

Then what is it?

EMILY

I don't want to...hurt you any more than you already do...

WILLIAM

What are you talking about?

EMILY

William...the past few months between you and I...

WILLIAM

Have been fantastic, some of the best I've had in a long time.

EMILY

And we've grown closer to each other...

WILLIAM

Yeah, isn't it great?

EMILY

And...well yes...but what I'm trying to say is...

WILLIAM

What?

EMILY

William, I'm scared.

WILLIAM

Of what?

EMILY

Of us, of what will come of us.

WILLIAM

What?

EMILY

You see...I really, really have grown strongly attracted to you, and I've been afraid to tell you.

WILLIAM

Why?

EMILY

Because of how little time you had left when I finally grew past my first fear of knowing you more. When we first met I was shy, I had never had guys who were as nice as you are. Everything you have said to me has been sincere and true, but I've never known how to take it. I've never been good with compliments. And I've never been good at telling others how I feel...

WILLIAM

What does this have to do with...?

EMILY

Please let me finish...And during these past few months you have shown me even more what it means to truly be cared about and treated like a woman and a lady. And I have never been able to tell you what I wanted to tell you for so long...

WILLIAM

Emily, tell me...

EMILY

I...love you...

WILLIAM

How long?

EMILY

I don't know exactly how long, but I know when we saw Back to the Future I had felt something. But I was scared to tell you.

WILLIAM

But what are you scared about?

EMILY

That we can't last...I mean...soon you'll be...

EMILY bursts into tears as WILLIAM takes her and holds her close. She cries for several moments, WILLIAM fighting back tears himself. EMILY finally regains some composure.

EMILY

I don't want to lose you, I don't want these months to be for nothing...

WILLIAM

These months are only for nothing if we don't seize them.

EMILY looks deep into WILLIAM's eyes and smiles.

EMILY

William...

WILLIAM

Yes?

EMILY

I really do love you...

WILLIAM

I know, and I love you too.

WILLIAM leans in and kisses EMILY deeply. She wraps her arms around his neck and he wraps his arms around her back. They continue to kiss passionately and the scene slowly fades.

INT WILLIAM'S BEDROOM LATE EVENING

WILLIAM walks EMILY to his bed and rests her down. She takes off her shirt and sits in just her bra. WILLIAM kisses her neck as she leans back. EMILY wraps her arms around him and pulls off his shirt. She kisses him again as she pulls him towards the bed. Camera focuses on clock which reads 11:45 PM, which slowly blurs.

EXT GAS STATION LATE NIGHT

BRUCE stands outside the store, lighting up and taking a deep drag. He exhales into the night and then lets it linger for a moment before he goes again into one of his coughing fits. He finally gains some control, and drops the cigarette, running inside.

INT GAS STATION BATHROOM LATE NIGHT

BRUCE runs into the bathroom while coughing, covering his mouth and gets to the sink. He turns on the water and takes some, spitting. He looks up into the mirror and sees a weaker form than what he is. He splashes water on his face and as the image blurs and clears his visage returns to normal. He spits once more and turns off the faucet and steps back out.

INT GAS STATION SERVICE COUNTER LATE NIGHT

BRUCE points to the back wall, which the clerk thinks he is pointing to the cigarettes, but BRUCE shakes his head and points to Nicorette. The clerk hands it to him as he pays and walks out.

EXT GAS STATION LATE NIGHT

BRUCE steps back out and reaches for his pocket. He begins to pull out the pack as he looks at the trashcan. He then takes out a piece of Nicorette and begins to chew as he runs to the car in the hard rain. The red tail lights fade into the red lights of the clock display.

INT WILLIAM'S BEDROOM LATE NIGHT

The clock now reads 1:13 AM and both WILLIAM and EMILY lie in the bed. EMILY is on her side facing WILLIAM, her head resting on his chest, he lying on his back. He looks down at EMILY who is sleeping and smiling serenely. He strokes her hair gently and stares at the ceiling as she draws closer to him. The night seems to pass without much other events as WILLIAM looks down and closes his eyes as the room start to get brighter, the sound of the rain storm fading.

INT WILLIAM'S BEDROOM EARLY MORNING

WILLIAM opens his eyes and smiles as he looks down to EMILY, who slowly stirs. WILLIAM seems healthier than before.

WILLIAM

Good morning.

EMILY looks up and smiles, almost giggling.

EMILY

Morning handsome.

WILLIAM

How are you feeling?

EMILY

Great, you?

WILLIAM

Wonderful.

WILLIAM kisses EMILY gently and she hugs him tight. She then looks up and stares into his eyes.

WILLIAM

See something you like?

EMILY

(Giggling) Yes, very much so.

WILLIAM

This was the best night of my life.

EMILY

Mine too...sadly I have to be going.

WILLIAM

Where do you have to go?

EMILY

Back home, parents will be worried.

WILLIAM

You're twenty-one years old, do your parents just not trust you?

EMILY

They do...just very protective of me.

WILLIAM

Where did they think you were?

EMILY

At our apartment.

WILLIAM

What if they called her and you weren't there?

EMILY

They never call, they at least trust me that much.

WILLIAM

Bad for them, lucky for us.

EMILY

Indeed.

EMILY kisses WILLIAM once more and she slowly slides off the bed off camera and WILLIAM sits up.

WILLIAM

Thank you.

EMILY

For what?

WILLIAM

Everything I suppose.

EMILY

You're welcome hun, and thank you for being such a wonderful and perfect gentleman.

EMILY now fully clothed kisses WILLIAM and moves towards the door.

WILLIAM

Take care.

EMILY

You too, see you soon.

WILLIAM hears the front door shut as he smiles and falls back onto the bed as the scene fades out.

INT BRUCE AND WILLIAM'S APARTMENT LATE MORNING

BRUCE comes in through the front door, and moves to lock the door and then stops as he notices a damp towel laying across the couch. He ventures through the apartment and goes to WILLIAM's room.

INT WILLIAM'S ROOM LATE MORNING

BRUCE seeing WILLIAM sleeping without his shirt on, BRUCE scratches his head and moves towards him.

BRUCE

Hey Will.

WILLIAM stirs some.

BRUCE

Hey bro, wake up.

WILLIAM

(Groggy) What?

BRUCE

You're asleep without your shirt on, is everything ok?

WILLIAM

Yeah...did you just get in?

BRUCE

Yeah, longer night than I expected. Slept in the car at a party and awoke to the sound of a cop telling me No Loitering.

WILLIAM grins widely.

BRUCE

Why are you grinning like a Cheshire Cat?

WILLIAM

No reason.

BRUCE sits on the bed as WILLIAM sits up and asks for his shirt and puts it on after BRUCE hands it to him. WILLIAM sees the towel in BRUCE's hand.

BRUCE

(Holding the towel) What is this?

WILLIAM

Emily came over, and was drenched from the rain.

BRUCE

Yeah, some night huh?

WILLIAM

You can say that again. You smell different.

BRUCE

How so?

WILLIAM

I dunno, you smell of smoke...but is that mint I smell too?

BRUCE

Oh, must be the Nicorette.

WILLIAM

The what?

BRUCE

You know what Nicorette is...Now I want to know about this towel, and why you're glowing.

WILLIAM

What business is it of yours?

BRUCE

If you don't want to tell me, that's fine.

WILLIAM

We had an...exciting night...

WILLIAM leans back against the bed post and smiles. BRUCE takes a moment and finally realizes what WILLIAM means.

BRUCE

You didn't...

WILLIAM

Yes we...

BRUCE

Wow man...that's...

WILLIAM

Crazy, I know, but it was something that had been building between us for a while and well...

BRUCE

It culminated last night?

WILLIAM

In a sense, but in reality things have only begun.

BRUCE

Well, I guess some kind of congrats are in order.

WILLIAM

For me losing my virginity?

BRUCE

No, for having that powerful of a bond that you were able to share with her. Sex isn't just about the physical needs and urges we all have.

WILLIAM

I know, but often it is just that physical...

BRUCE

Yes, but at the same time it is so much deeper than just raw physical needs. It's an emotional need too.

WILLIAM

No offense, but I never expected to hear that coming from your mouth.

BRUCE

I suppose it's because I've got such an open minded person to live with.

WILLIAM smiles and gets up to walk out with BRUCE. WILLIAM's eyes roll back and he slumps over to the floor. BRUCE rushes to him and opens WILLIAM's eye lids.

BRUCE

Come on Will, snap out of it.

BRUCE seems to remember things told to him and he props WILLIAM's head up and checks his pulse and breathing. BRUCE sighs.

BRUCE

You're going to be alright bro, I'm here...I'm here...

BRUCE makes the attempt to lay WILLIAM down in his bed and make him as comfortable as possible, then moves out of the room. Camera blurs on WILLIAM's face.

INT HOSPITAL ROOM LATE AFTERNOON

WILLIAM, age 12, lies in his hospital bed, shaking violently. Doctors and techs surround him with his parents frantically trying to get through.

DOCTOR

Give me his blood pressure!

TECH 1

It's kind of hard with him shaking like this.

DOCTOR

It's a platelet reaction, his body's rejecting it.

SALLY

You were supposed to have checked to make sure they were filtered right!

TECH 1

We're working on it ma'am!

DOCTOR

Get them out of here!

FRANK

Over my dead body I'm leaving my son after what you've done to him!

DOCTOR

He needs epinephrine!

TECH 1 reaches back and pulls out a new syringe, opens it, and takes a few CC's from a vial.

TECH 1

Where's the IV?

DOCTOR has lifted WILLIAM's shirt and sees a port.

DOCTOR

Right here!

TECH 1 takes the needle and taps the syringe to ensure no bubbles are in and inserts into the port.

SALLY

Be careful, that goes straight to his heart!

TECH 1 not hearing shoves the epinephrine into the port as WILLIAM gasps for air, his chest expanding and the EKG begins to spike.

DOCTOR

Jesus Christ he's going into Cardiac Arrest! CRASH CART NOW!

TECH 1 runs to the wall and slams the Code Blue Button as the alarms sound. SALLY and FRANK frantically try to reach for WILLIAM as TECH 1 rushes back and helps DOCTOR fight them back trying to help WILLIAM. The noise continues to grow as the scene begins to fade out.

INT WILLIAM'S BEDROOM EARLY AFTERNOON

As the focus becomes clearer on WILLIAM, he is covered in sweat and thrashing in bed. BRUCE is doing what he can for WILLIAM, and places a cool rag on his head and slowly WILLIAM seems to regain control but sits up rapidly.

WILLIAM

(Gasping) No!

BRUCE

William it's me, you're ok!

WILLIAM

Oh God Bruce, I was reliving it all over again!

WILLIAM rubs his chest in discomfort and feels the several scars on there.

BRUCE

Was it when they had to cut you to find your port?

WILLIAM

No...it was the platelets reaction that the moron tech almost killed me with.

BRUCE

I'm sure he didn't do it...

WILLIAM

He should have known better! Don't they read the damn charts? Or do they just stick random needles and medicines into children and see what happens?

BRUCE

I'm sorry.

WILLIAM

Don't be, you weren't the one who almost killed me.

BRUCE

It must have been like hell there.

WILLIAM

It was hell.

Fade out.

INT BRUCE AND WILLIAM'S APARTMENT EARLY AFTERNOON

WILLIAM sits at the kitchen table, writing in his journal. BRUCE is cooking.

BRUCE

How are you feeling?

WILLIAM

Better than last week.

BRUCE

Where's Emily?

WILLIAM

She called earlier and told me she couldn't make it today. She's been coming by off and on while you're at work to keep my company.

BRUCE

That's good.

WILLIAM

How's the food coming?

BRUCE

Well, me not being Italian and trying to cook pasta is well...difficult.

BRUCE pulls out some of the noodles and continues to stir.

WILLIAM

Taste it, and when you think it's done, take a noodle and throw it against the cabinet. If it sticks, it's ready.

BRUCE takes a bite and seems to approve. He then takes the other half and throws it against the cabinet, and it sticks.

BRUCE

Eureka, it works! Where'd you learn that?

WILLIAM

One of the blessings of having Italian relatives, you learn a few tricks here and there.

BRUCE

And how does it work exactly?

WILLIAM

Something about the starch I think...

There is a knock at the door, WILLIAM moves to get up, but BRUCE gets to it first. SARAH is standing outside, staring at BRUCE.

SARAH

Hi.

BRUCE

Hi there Sarah, would you like to come in?

WILLIAM looks over weakly.

SARAH

Yes please.

BRUCE lets her in and SARAH moves to the center of the room next to the chair across from WILLIAM. BRUCE feels the tension and looks around.

BRUCE

I'm going to duck out and get the mail.
Be back in a little bit.

BRUCE quickly leaves and shuts the door. SARAH stands with her hands wrapping delicately around the chair. WILLIAM stares without expression. There is a long and awkward silence.

SARAH

I...

WILLIAM

(Annoyed) What?

SARAH

I came by to apologize, to check in on you.

WILLIAM

Wonderful timing you have, the doctors don't give me much longer. I had another blackout last week, wasn't very pleasant at all. Bruce has finally seemed to quit smoking, Emily is in love with a dead man, and you've got your wedding and have neglected to return a single phone call in over four months. Everything's just damn peachy.

SARAH

William...it's not that...

WILLIAM

Why are you here Sarah?

SARAH

I told you.

WILLIAM

Did you? It seems like you're not exactly here by your own volition.

SARAH

What do you mean?

WILLIAM

I know Bruce visited you, asked you to stop by. Funny how he's able to bring that out of you, but someone who's apparently a "dear friend" can't get the same courtesy.

SARAH

I'm here because I want to be here William.

WILLIAM

Well, you sure do have a knack for poor timing and communication skills.

SARAH

And you sure are being a complete jerk!

WILLIAM

Well, ain't that the pot calling the kettle black...

SARAH

William, I'm not trying to...

WILLIAM

Then what are you trying to do?

SARAH

I want you to know that while I have been gone and absent for so long, not a day has gone by that I haven't thought about you. And I've been too caught up in details to pick up the phone and call you back, to tell you why I haven't returned your calls. I've been wanting to tell you a few things and quite honestly I don't know how to.

WILLIAM

You see Sarah, this is the bullshit I am tired of dealing with. I know what I want in my life, what the hell do you want?

SARAH

To have the chance to finally talk to you, give you my side.

WILLIAM finally seems to have calmed down some.

WILLIAM

Sit down please.

SARAH sits down across from him and puts her hands in the middle of the table.

SARAH

William, I know you're going to say I've said this too much, but we're just friends...

WILLIAM

And what's different?

SARAH

Listen to me please. Even while I haven't been able to be the woman you've wanted me to be in your life, I still do love and care about you. Even if it's not the love you want.

WILLIAM

It would seem that you have an interesting way of showing it.

SARAH

I swear to you I never meant to neglect you or anyone.

WILLIAM

Whether or not you intended to, the actions still speak pretty loudly. I'm over you.

SARAH

William...

WILLIAM

Yes?

SARAH

How much longer do they think you have?

WILLIAM

In all fairness, I don't know. If what they said is true, I probably have a few weeks or less. Things will rapidly get worse, and eventually I won't be able to fight it any longer.

WILLIAM finally puts his hands on the table and SARAH wraps her hands around his.

WILLIAM

What is the real reason why you went away.

SARAH

I was scared.

WILLIAM

Scared of what?

SARAH

Losing you.

WILLIAM

And your reaction was to ignore me?

SARAH

It's easier to not be afraid when you get busy. I buried myself in the wedding so I wouldn't be scared.

SARAH squeezes his hands tight.

SARAH

I am so sorry William.

SARAH begins to fight back tears, as does WILLIAM.

WILLIAM

Me too Sarah.

SARAH gets up and moves to WILLIAM, embracing him tightly, which he returns. The two cry as the scene fades out.

INT WILLIAM'S BEDROOM LATE EVENING

WILLIAM is lying on his bed, his condition the worst it has been. EMILY, BRUCE, FRANK, and SALLY all are in the room.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

Over the next two weeks my body rapidly weakened. Every ounce of strength and stubborn resistance was finally spent, and only the bare minimum remained. My parents had been here since the first day my condition went South. I've been able to keep up some with the journal, though it grew harder each day.

SALLY holds WILLIAM's hand for a while and eventually breaks into tears and gets up to leave, FRANK close behind to comfort her. EMILY lays next to him, kissing his forehead and lips. BRUCE sits down next to EMILY and holds WILLIAM's hand.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

All they can do is wait for me to die.

SALLY and FRANK reenter and sit down next to WILLIAM.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

I wonder what will hurt them more, me dying or when I'm actually dead, though I don't want to think about it.

Scene fades out.

INT WILLIAM'S ROOM EARLY MORNING

WILLIAM is asleep. Only SALLY sits next to WILLIAM, holding and stroking his hand gently.

INT DINING ROOM EARLY MORNING

BRUCE and FRANK sit at the table, they both are drinking coffee.

FRANK

Thank you Bruce for all that you have done.

BRUCE

I'd do anything for my best friend.

FRANK

And I'm sure he thanks you every day for it.

BRUCE

He sure does.

FRANK

Have there been other things going on recently?

BRUCE

Like what?

FRANK

Has he said anything in particular?

BRUCE

Nothing that he hasn't told you I'm sure.

FRANK

He's been through more than he ever should.

BRUCE

Yes sir.

There is a knock at the door. BRUCE gets up to answer it, EMILY and SARAH stand outside. Behind them is DAVID, 21 years old and healthy. BRUCE welcomes EMILY and SARAH with their normal greeting. BRUCE shakes DAVID's hand.

BRUCE

Thank you so much for coming.

DAVID

I'm glad you found me; those memory books are good for something huh?

BRUCE

Yeah, they sure are. Come on in. Can I get you anything?

DAVID

Thanks, but nothing is needed. Where is he?

BRUCE

He's in his room down the hall.

DAVID

Then let's not waste any time.

Everyone moves down the hall towards WILLIAM's room.

INT WILLIAM'S ROOM EARLY MORNING

SALLY stands as the others enter the room. Quick greetings are exchanged as WILLIAM begins to stir. He looks up and sees DAVID.

WILLIAM

You've got to be...

DAVID quickly moves to him.

DAVID

Imagined? Nope, and the chicken dance still petrifies me.

WILLIAM

How did you...

BRUCE

I have my methods.

WILLIAM looks to BRUCE and smiles.

SALLY

How are you feeling?

WILLIAM

Calm.

WILLIAM sees EMILY and SARAH more clearly now.

WILLIAM

Happy, given the circumstances.

EMILY quickly moves past them and kisses WILLIAM on the lips gently. FRANK looks to BRUCE, who silently nods and FRANK seems to understand completely. SARAH

stares for a moment but moves in to kiss WILLIAM on his forehead.

EMILY

It's so good to see you William.

WILLIAM

It's even better for me to see everyone that I care about, in the same room.

SARAH

We wouldn't have it any other way.

FRANK

Is there anything we can do son?

WILLIAM

Not really dad...Thank you...

WILLIAM seems to get more groggy and incoherent.

DAVID

Hey, stay with us bro.

WILLIAM snaps back.

WILLIAM

I'm so tired...

SALLY

And just like in the hospital, you need to stay awake for a little longer.

WILLIAM's eyelids grow heavier, as the sounds of all in the room constantly are calling him to wake up as the camera loses focus and gets incredibly bright.

INT WILLIAM'S BEDROOM LATE MORNING

EMILY is holding up WILLIAM with her arms wrapped around him. She slowly kisses his lips. WILLIAM in his last ounce of strength returns the kiss and embraces EMILY. Time seems to slow as WILLIAM's hand begins to open and slide down from EMILY's back. SARAH and SALLY's eyes grow wider, FRANK, BRUCE and DAVID all stare in silence as EMILY pulls away from WILLIAM, still holding him. WILLIAM has a soft grin on his face, his eyes soft but opened. EMILY begins to sets him down gently, but SALLY breaks through and holds WILLIAM tightly to her. She rocks back and forth with him, sobbing loudly. FRANK moves and holds both SALLY and WILLIAM, as EMILY buries her face into BRUCE's chest, and he wraps his arms around her and holds her close. DAVID looks around and sees a picture of WILLIAM and EMILY kissing and smiles. The scene slowly fades to black as the sound of a violin begins to fill the scene.

INT FUNERAL PARLOR EARLY AFTERNOON

WILLIAM lays in a coffin with hands folded in his lap. His face is calm, there appears to be no fear in his body. Next to the coffin are pictures and the journals of WILLIAM, with several pages framed.

SALLY and FRANK move to the coffin and hold their hands on WILLIAM'S.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

Mom, Dad, you have been nothing but supportive of me throughout my life. You were the foundation for the morals that would guide me through my life. I don't know how I can ever thank you enough for the things you have done for me. I love you.

SALLY

My handsome boy.

FRANK

We love you son.

They both move away from the coffin as SARAH walks up.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

Sarah, I am sorry that the last time we really talked was in a fight. You had always been so kind to me all things considered. I thank you for being my friend, and I love you dearly. I wish you and your fiancé all of the best.

SARAH looks up and fights the tears in her eyes as she looks at her engagement ring. BRUCE moves up behind her and lays his hand on her shoulder. She turns around and hugs him tight. After several moments she finally lets go and moves away slowly toward WILLIAM's parents. BRUCE takes WILLIAM's hand.

INT WILLIAM'S BEDROOM EARLY MORNING

BRUCE

Hang in there bro.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

Bruce, you are a brother to me. You have stuck with me through some of the toughest times, and I don't know how I could ever repay you for it all. Please take care of my family for me, especially Emily. She will need it the most I feel. Love you brother.

INT FUNERAL PARLOR EARLY AFTERNOON

BRUCE

I should be thanking you...for so much...

EMILY approaches and BRUCE notices and silently says something, then moves away. EMILY moves to the coffin and finds it very hard to look, which BRUCE quickly moves in to comfort her.

INT WILLIAM'S BEDROOM EARLY MORNING

EMILY sits next to WILLIAM on his bed, holding him and stroking his hair.

EMILY

You're the one man who ever treated me the way I deserved. I will never forget what we have shared, the tenderness you have shown me. Thank you William, I love you.

WILLIAM'S eyes look to EMILY, though he seems too weak to smile.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

Emily, you have always been an angel to me. Your beauty is only surpassed by the beautiful heart that cares and loves so much. You showed me love that I never thought I would understand, and I thank you. I am sorry it took me so long to realize how deeply I love you, but I am thankful that we shared the times that we had. It was a chance we both took, and I'm so glad we took it.

INT FUNERAL PARLOR EARLY AFTERNOON

EMILY turns after crying into BRUCE's shoulder and leans into the coffin, kissing WILLIAM's forehead. EMILY moves away as DAVID moves up to the coffin.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

I remember the days at Camp, the simple joys we found in those summer days. They were the best days of our lives, we found nothing but happiness and acceptance from those present. We are a family that can never lose its bond.

DAVID

You always fought it William. You had such strength within you, and were sometimes too proud to admit you needed protection yourself. We lost a family member, but we will never forget.

DAVID backs away as the entire group gathers together, and for the first time we see that there are a large number of people there, all paying their respects and speaking to the family.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

You all are...too good to me...You all have stood by me when I have been at my weakest, and my strongest. You are the pillars on which my foundation rests.

The scene fades out to black with the sound of thunderclap and hard rain.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

Without you all...I would be nothing...

EXT CEMETERY LATE AFTERNOON.

It again is raining hard, as EMILY, SARAH, BRUCE, DAVID, FRANK, SALLY, and many others stand around WILLIAM's coffin. The PRIEST says a few words and makes the sign of the cross and steps away. BRUCE steps forward, EMILY beside him holding up an umbrella.

BRUCE

William kept a journal documenting his life. His doctor said it would be good therapy for him, and in reality it was. He never gave up on that journal, even when things seemed so wrong. He told me before he passed to look at the last entry in his journal and to read it at his funeral.

BRUCE pulls out one of WILLIAM's journals and opens to the last page.

BRUCE

In the last days of my life I have had to fight with every ounce of my being to hold on. I don't hold on for myself, but for my family and friends, who I love more than they can probably ever comprehend. Some may have wondered why I wrote as I did. I always felt that if no one knew the truth, knew the struggle I have endured, then others in the future may suffer as I have without some benefit of knowing that others can make it, that there is life after cancer. It took cancer to understand how precious life was, a lifetime to understand how precious my relationships were. I was given many second chances in my life, and each person has been a part of it somehow. I think the most powerful has been love, but also

understanding how much support I have had. You all have stood by me when I have been at my weakest, and my strongest. You are the pillars on which my foundation rests. Without you, I would be nothing. I wish you all the best, and I love you. William..

The entire crowd is silent.

BRUCE

I don't know if William understood, but he was just as much a pillar of strength for us, if not more. He has given us the foundations we needed to grow and survive. While William explains that he was given a second chance, he wasn't the only one.

BRUCE pulls out the cigarette pack he had from the gas station.

BRUCE

This was the last pack of cigarettes I ever bought. I saved it to show you that I am free. Here it is, I don't need it ever again. I want you to take it with you so that it is buried forever. You've given me a second chance.

BRUCE takes the cigarette pack and puts it on top of WILLIAM's coffin.

The rain continues hard as the song NO RAIN begins to build up as the cigarette pack is soaked and ruined by the rain as the scene fades to black.

[THE END]