UNTITLED

The Pilot

by

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EXT. ABOVE MULHOLLAND DRIVE - DAY

HELIICOPTERS circle and hover. The telltale sign of something gone horribly wrong.

BELOW: a MANGLED MAYBACH in a canyon. Smoke billows out of it. RESCUERS scramble to it from AMBULANCES and FIRE TRUCKS.

AUDIO MAYHEM: A DEAFENING CACOPHONY of HELICOPTERS, SIRENS, and the OVERLAPPING JUMBLE of LA’s excitable TV BROADCASTERS:

OVERLAPPING TV BROADCASTERS
That’s the car of billionaire Ron
Balthus you’re looking at ... local
real estate tycoon ... colorful
fixture in LA’s social scene ...

CUT BETWEEN RESCUE FOOTAGE and NEWS CLIPS of RON BALTHUS (50, best looks money can buy): with Arnold, Geffen, Elton; on yachts, at parties, in black tie, boozey.

A STRETCHER with a BODY on it, hoisted up into a HELICOPTER.

EYEWITNESS AT THE SCENE
I saw them take him out. Dude
looked dead to me ...

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - O.R. - DAY

ABSOLUTE SILENCE - broken only by the pings and beeps of the respirator and monitors. The opposite of outside.

A NURSE, ANESTHESIOLOGIST, SURGICAL TECH, ASSISTANT SURGEON, all with eyes glued to THE CHIEF SURGEON -- MICHAEL HALSTEAD -- operating through a microscope. Focused. Intense.

ON A SCREEN: INSIDE BALTHUS’S HEAD. Microdissectors lift and separate TISSUE and NERVES ... revealing a FRACTURE in the cribiform plate (BONE). SPINAL FLUID pours through it.

MICHAEL
There.

EXT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - DAY

The FRENZY has moved here. CUT between VANS, REPORTERS, CAMERAS swarming the building, and MORE NEWS FOOTAGE.

OVERLAPPING TV BROADCASTERS
Brought to this surgical center ...
presumably in the care of renowned
neurosurgeon Michael Halstead ...
IMAGES of MICHAEL with recognizable pro athletes

OVERLAPPING TV BROADCASTERS (CONT' D)
Interestingly, Halstead and Balthus, known to be friends ...

Then a SHOT of Balthus and Michael, on the floor of the Laker’s game. Two men who have never lost. At anything.

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - O.R. - DAY

ON THE MONITOR: the force of the leaking fluid pushes the OPTIC NERVE onto the sharp edge of the fracture. The microdissectors lift the nerve off the sharp edge of bone.

MICHAEL
Where’s my patch?

The SURGICAL TECH is removing the PATCH TISSUE from its STERILE WRAPPING as fast as he can. Not fast enough.

MICHAEL (CONT’ D)
That’s his optic nerve. Where’s my patch?

ON THE MONITOR: the leaking fluid pulls the optic nerve off the microdissector again -- onto the sharp edge of bone.

ON MICHAEL as he again uses the microdissector to lift it to safety. Incredibly delicate and dangerous.

MICHAEL (CONT’ D)
That fluid keeps leaking, he dies. The nerve gets cut, he goes blind. Where’s my patch?

The Tech hands him the patch tissue. Michael takes it with a second microdissector.

ON BALTHUS’S EXPOSED, OPEN HEAD: the instruments going in.

ON THE MONITOR: The second microdissector enters frame, holding the patch tissue.

Michael sets the patch into the fracture. Presses it in place. The fluid stops leaking. The optic nerve settles into place. No more movement. It’s over.

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - OUTSIDE THE O.R. - DAY

Michael comes out of the O.R. He’s the only one out here. He takes off his mask. He takes a deep breath -- exhausted.

His CHIEF NURSE comes out, obviously impressed.
CHIEF NURSE
Doctor, that was an honor to--

MICHAEL
Fire the tech.

He heads down the hall, alone.

INT. DREAMSCAPE - DAY

Drifting through blurred gray shapes ... a RED BOUNCY BALL with a SMILEY FACE floats eerily into frame and it BOUNCES up, past the shapes (now readable as CAR BUMPERS) into open space ... where it is met by a CHILLING SCREECH OF TIRES.

INT. MICHAEL’S BEL AIR HOUSE - NIGHT

Michael bolts awake, unnerved. He moves the wine glass and Percocet on his nightstand to see the time: 4:12. Sits up.

EXT. BEL AIR HILLS - NIGHT

Moon above. City lights below. Michael pounds up and down the hills in a fast-paced pre-dawn run.

EXT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - MORNING

A Lamborghini Murcielago rumbles into Michael’s reserved spot in the cool, jacaranda-shaded parking lot.

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - RITA’S AREA - DAY

Michael’s assistant, RITA (50’s; don’t cross her) doesn’t look up from her computer when she hears Michael coming.

RITA
I need signatures.

MICHAEL
How’s Balthus?

RITA
Stable and a pain in the ass.

He heads into his office. She follows with a PILE OF PAPERS.

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - MICHAEL’S OFFICE - DAY

Huge. Swanky. On three walls: tons of SPORTS MEMORABILIA, all SIGNED WITH THANKS. On the fourth: a TROPHY CASE full of SAILING TROPHIES. PHOTOS of Michael on his own sleek boat.
RITA
You’ve got an 8AM staff meeting, then the two back-to-back gliomas.

Michael opens the closet for his lab coat. Rita blocks his way with the papers and a pen. He signs where she points.

RITA (CONT’D)
Madeline needs fifteen minutes --

MICHAEL
Put her in at lunch --

RITA
Can’t. You’ll be in Agoura, doing a consult with Lacey Sandreski.

He knows the name. He’s done signing. She hands him a file.

RITA (CONT’D)
Her father wouldn’t say why. Just that they need to see you asap.

He opens the file. Clippings. An SI COVER of a pony-tailed teenager kissing the Wimbledon Trophy: “AMAZING LACE!”

MICHAEL
She’s perky.

She hands him his lab coat. He heads out. Rita follows.

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - RITA’S AREA - DAY

He heads down the hall, checking his BlackBerry. Rita follows. OTHER DOCTORS are heading the same direction.

RITA
One more thing. It’s my birthday.

MICHAEL
Again?

RITA
Once a year, like everyone else. Len’s taking me to Spago. I’m leaving at six.

MICHAEL
Spago’s overrated.

Michael sees STEVE LIONETTI, (professional psychiatrist, amateur triathlete) entering the Conference Room.
MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Oh, hey -- recurring dreams.

STEVE
Yeah?

MICHAEL
I’m having one. The same thing every god damn night, this red ball. What do red balls mean?

STEVE
Seriously? You’re handing me that?

MADELINE RESNICK -- late 30’s, dark and stylish (not in a medical jacket), heads for the Conference Room too.

MADELINE
I need fifteen minutes.

RITA
I told him.

They head into the conference room, leaving Rita in the hall.

RITA (CONT'D)
“Happy Birthday, Rita.” “Why, thank you, Michael.”

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - RECOVERY AREA - DAY
CLOSE ON A SCREEN: Michael, giving a press conference.

MICHAEL (ON THE SCREEN)
He’s up, he’s talking. It’ll take longer for the arm and shoulder to heal than the cranial fracture.

RON BALTHUS, in SILK PAJAMAS, is watching it on his iPad. An arm and shoulder are in a cast, a BANDAGE at his hairline. His assistant RANDY (30’s), is making coffee in a French press. Michael enters.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Making yourself at home, huh?
Morning, Randy.

RANDY
Good morning, Dr. Halstead.

RON
Your sheets are dreadful. Where have you been? I’ve been calling for you for hours.
MICHAEL
Believe it or not, Ronny, you are not my only patient. Look at me.

RON
For what I’m paying, I should own you for the day.

MICHAEL
(checking Ron’s eyes)
You’re confusing me with one of your hookers. Any flashes of light in the eyes?

RON
No.

MICHAEL
Salty taste in your mouth? Fluid in the back of your nose?

RON
No and no. When can I go home?

MICHAEL
That depends. What are you going to do when you get there?

RANDY
What can he do?

MICHAEL
Nothing. No driving, no drinking, no drugs, no sex, no work. Nothing.

RANDY
For how long?

MICHAEL
Two weeks.

RON
Jesus Christ.

MICHAEL
Listen. You were minutes away from losing your life, seconds from losing your sight. I know you like to think you’re the cat with nine lives -- but you’re not. You get one. And if you knock that patch loose before the bone is healed, you’ll lose it. Plain and simple. Got it?
Balthus looks at him, scared a little straight.

Randy
We’ve got it.

EXT. 405 FREEWAY – DAY

From above: Michael’s Lamborgini weaves through the traffic.

Michael (O.C.)
I didn’t get to read the file.
Give me the bullet points.

EXT. VALLEY STREETS – DAY

Michael’s car winds around leafy streets.

Rita (O.S.)
She’s 19. Ranked number one. So far this year, she’s won the French, Australian and Wimbledon.

He turns into a GATED COMMUNITY, hands his ID to a GUARD.

Rita (O.S.) (CONT’D)
If she takes the US Open, which starts next week, she’ll be the youngest woman to win a calendar-year Grand Slam.

The Guard hands back the license, waves Michael through.

EXT. SANDRESKI ESTATE – TENNIS COURT – DAY

10 STARBUCKS CUPS are lined up along the service line. Lacey SANDRESKI, adorable, ponytailed, delivers a blistering serve from the other side. The first cup goes flying into the air.

Rita (O.C.)
She also earns more in endorsements than anyone else on the tour.

Michael
People like perky.

Lacey’s Terminator-fit father, Milt (42, sunglasses, Nike cap) watches, arms crossed, as Lacey crushes cup after cup.

EXT. SANDRESKI ESTATE – DAY

Milt opens the door and smiles, doing an almost-convincing impression of an easy-going guy.
MILT
Dr. Halstead, a pleasure, Milt Sandreski. Come on in.

INT. THE SANDRESKI ESTATE - KITCHEN - DAY

ON A COMPUTER SCREEN: images of a CT SCAN with a CLOUDY AREA.

IN THE B.G.: the SOUND of GROUND STROKES being hit in a steady rhythm, with simultaneous HIGH-PITCHED GRUNTS.

MICHAEL (O.C.)
When was the accident?

WIDEN to see the windows look out on a TENNIS COURT, where Lacey is slugging it out. Around the room: mock-ups for Nike posters of Lacey. Nike outfit prototypes. Shoe boxes.

Michael is checking the CT images on the laptop of ARNOLD LOBELL (MD, a older than Michael, less well-dressed). Milt and JILL SANDRESKI (40’s blonde, skittish) are there too.

JILL
Yesterday. I was driving --

MILT
Jill was driving, Lacey was in the passenger seat, some numb-nuts in front of them slams on the brakes --

MICHAEL
And Lacey hit her forehead?

JILL
She might have, I couldn’t tell --

MILT
She wasn’t paying attention.

MICHAEL
What did Lacey say?

DR. LOBELL
She said no, but I’ve been her doctor since she was 11. She wouldn’t admit it if she had. I ran a CT, to rule out concussion.

MICHAEL
Which you have. But --

Michael scans the images again, enlarging the shady area.
MILT
Lobell says it might be an aneurysm. What do you think?

MICHAEL
I agree. It might be.

MILT
But you can't tell?

MICHAEL
Not without running a CTA.

JILL
I'm sorry, I think I know what an aneurysm is, but can you --

MILT
What's a CTA?

Michael does an instant calculation on whom to answer first.

MICHAEL
(to Milt)
More images, with a contrast agent.
(then, to Jill)
An aneurysm is when the wall of an artery expands out like a balloon.

JILL
And the danger with that is --

MILT
How long's it take? We're training.

MICHAEL
45 minutes. I'll work around your schedule. I can meet you any time.
(Jill)
The bulge weakens the wall, which makes it vulnerable to rupture.

JILL
You mean -- like a stroke, or --

MILT
Jillian. We're trying to work something out here.

The barely-perceptible smackdown shuts Jill up. Michael takes out a card. Writes on it.
MICHAEL
Rita’s my secretary. Tell her what
works for you, and that’s what
we’ll do. This my cell.
(hands it over)
Tell Lacey I look forward to
meeting her.

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - NIGHT

Late. Michael is working at his desk. Quiet. Then he HEARS
a BOUNCING NOISE out in the hallway, and sees, out of the
corner of his eye: something RED fly by the door. Strange.

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - RITA’S AREA - NIGHT

Michael comes out of his office, a little tentatively --

MICHAEL
Hello?

No one. Just Rita’s SILVER BIRTHDAY BALLOONS, waving back
and forth, as if by a breeze. Very, very strange.

ITALIAN VOICE (O.S.)
Buona sera, Giorgio Baldi.

EXT. PCH - NIGHT

Michael’s Lamborgini shoots through the McClure tunnel.

MICHAEL (O.S.)
Hi, it’s Michael Halstead. I’ll be
there in ten minutes, can you have
that thing I get ready for me?

INT. GIORGIO BALDI - NIGHT

Michael grabs his dinner, gives the Hostess a kiss that hints
at past intimacy. Greets a few diners, then heads out.

EXT. GIORGIO BALDI - NIGHT

Michael heads to his car -- then stops short. Thunderstruck.

Walking his way is ANNA LINDBERG: confident, wildly
attractive, despite the lack of fuss she spends on her
appearance. Or maybe because of it.

She breezes toward the restaurant, until she sees him. She
stops too. They both stare. Then erupt in awkward laughter.

MICHAEL
What the Hell are you doing here?
ANNA
I live here.

MICHAEL
Hang on -- you move to my city, and you don’t even tell me?

ANNA
Your city? Michael, four million people live here.

MICHAEL
I can’t get over this -- what are you doing, you meeting someone?

ANNA
I’m getting take-out.

MICHAEL
Go grab your food and follow me in your car. We’ll eat together.
(sees her mulling)
Don’t think, just go.

She capitulates and heads in. Michael watches her go.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
My my my ...

EXT. MICHAEL’S SAILBOAT - NIGHT

It’s a sleek vessel. Top-of-the-line. Michael and Anna are on the deck, eating dinner. He’s opened a bottle of wine.

MICHAEL
When I left Alaska, I figured you’d spend your whole life up there in that dismal Inuit clinic.

ANNA
It wasn’t dismal --

MICHAEL
But no, you’re here, in Gomorrah, eating at 5-star restaurants.

ANNA
Is that place fancy? I didn’t know. I had a coupon.

MICHAEL
Of course you did. God.
ANNA
Anyway -- I got recruited by a clinic down here -- Para Todos, have you heard of it?

MICHAEL
No, but it sounds very commie.

ANNA
It’s like the Inuit place, minus the snow. That cold was pretty relentless.

MICHAEL
No kidding. Why do you think I left?

ANNA
(amused)
Not because of the cold, Michael.

MICHAEL
No?

ANNA
Hon. You left because you didn’t want to be married. Possibly not to anyone. Definitely not to me.

He meets her eyes for a beat, then pours himself more wine.

MICHAEL
So you got here, when?

ANNA
About eight years ago.

MICHAEL
Christ, Anna, eight years you’re living in the same city, and you can’t pick up the phone?

ANNA
To say what?

MICHAEL
I don’t know. Hello? How are you?

ANNA
I knew how you were. Brilliant, successful, rich, famous.
MICHAEL
How do you manage to make all those things sound like character flaws?

She smiles, enjoying teasing him. Takes a sip of her wine.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
For what it’s worth, when I got back, I realized I didn’t want to not be married to you either.

ANNA
So what’d you do? Marry someone else?

A beat. Trying to stay light:

MICHAEL
I did not. You?

ANNA
No. I try not to fail at things more than once.
   (then, wrapping up:)
Moral of the story: don’t drag an ambitious surgeon to a dingy clinic with one crappy O.R. thinking love will be enough to keep him there. It won’t.

MICHAEL
There were things I wanted to do that were never gonna happen up there.

ANNA
So you came home and did them. And here you are. The man you always wanted to be. The top dog.

MICHAEL
See, there you go, making it sound like something shameful. Yes, I’m successful. Yes, I’m very, very good at what I do. Those are not things I need to apologize for.

He sees her smirking, enjoying having gotten under his skin --

ANNA
“... very, very good ...”

He fights a smile. This is a familiar dynamic.
MICHAEL
Hey, I bring you here, I open a very nice Chateaunef-de-Pape, and this is your thanks -- teasing me --

ANNA
Muscle memory. Some things you can’t unlearn.

She smiles warmly at him in the soft light. He takes her in.

MICHAEL
You’re even more beautiful than you were a decade ago. You know that?

She laughs a little, knowingly.

ANNA
And you are just as predictable.

She closes up her take-out container, stands.

MICHAEL
Where are you going? Don’t leave.

ANNA
It’s great to see you, Michael, but I’m not going to sleep with you.

MICHAEL
Why not?

ANNA
How many women have you seduced on this boat?

He doesn’t answer. She kisses him on the cheek, lovingly.

ANNA (CONT’D)
Thank you for the wine. And the company. I’m happy you’re happy.

She jumps onto the dock, saunters up the slip, into the dark.

MICHAEL
Who said I was happy?

EXT. DREAMSCAPE - DAY

The same indistinct gray shapes ... the RED BOUNCY BALL with a SMILEY FACE floats into frame ... FOLLOW IT as before, but this time it’s interrupted by A RINGING PHONE.
EXT. MICHAEL’S SAILBOAT - NIGHT

Michael wakes up in a sleeping bag, on the deck. He digs his ringing phone out of his pocket: 3:22. He answers.

MICHAEL
This is Dr. Halstead.

RECORDED VOICE (OVER PHONE)
THIS IS A COLLECT CALL FROM THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF’S STATION.

INT. LOS ANGELES SHERIFF’S STATION - NIGHT

Michael is waiting, pissed off, in a room full of PEOPLE who are much more used to arrests than he is. Not his crowd.

A BUZZ as a door opens and an OFFICER escorts MILO CANTONI out: 17, droopy skinny jeans, hoodie. Milo waves ironically.

INT. MICHAEL’S LAMBORGHINI - NIGHT

Michael (irritated as hell) drives Milo up the 101.

MILO
It’s total police abuse. All I do is meet some kid at the skate park. And he says, hey, we’re rolling to our neighborhood, you want to come?

MICHAEL
So you follow a gang kid to his neighborhood, at night? Christ, Milo, what are you thinking?

MILO
Oh, I don’t know, that I’m not prejudiced about where people live? And then the cops come in like the Gestapo: “On the ground!” Nazis.

MICHAEL
It’s a gang sweep, and you’re lucky it’s all that happened to you.

MILO
What are you, on their payroll?

MICHAEL
If you didn’t want my opinion, you should’ve called your mother.

MILO
I needed a ride. Her car’s busted.
MICHAEL
Again?

INT. DIDI’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Shabby, minus the chic. Lots of crystals and candles. DIDI
HALSTEAD (37, huge heart, unfocused, overwhelmed), in
pajamas. She and Michael watch Milo scuff to his bedroom.

MICHAEL
You and I had a curfew growing up.
Remember?

He takes out his wallet, starts counting out money.

DIDI
He’s got forty pounds on me. What
am I supposed to do, handcuff him
to the radiator?
(see the money)
What’s that?

MICHAEL
He said your car’s messed up.

DIDI
I didn’t ask you to fix it.

MICHAEL
How much do you need?

DIDI
(after a beat)
Nine hundred.

He hands it to her. She takes it.

DIDI (CONT’D)
Thank you, Michael.

MICHAEL
You’re welcome, Didi.
(Starts to leave, then:)
Oh, hey -- guess who I had dinner
with tonight.

DIDI
Obama?

MICHAEL
Anna.

DIDI
Lindberg?
MICHAEL
Yup.

DIDI
No way. How is she?

MICHAEL
She’s great. Beautiful, funny.

DIDI
Remarried?

MICHAEL
Nope.

DIDI
Interesting. You know -- the only time you weren’t a jerk was when you were with her.

MICHAEL
Nice. Thanks.
(leaving for real now)
Work it out with your son. He’s going off the rails.

EXT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - PARKING LOT - PRE-DAWN

A big, black Cadillac Escalade parks next to the Lamborghini.

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - RECEPTION - PRE-DAWN

Michael is waiting when Milt, Jill and Lacey show up. Lacey shakes Michael’s hand and gives him the million-dollar smile.

LACEY
Dr. Halstead, I’m Lacey Sandreski.

MICHAEL
Nice to meet you. Come on back.

Michael leads Lacey in. Milt starts follow.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Just Lacey. Radiation.

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - CT ROOM - PRE-DAWN

Lacey is lying on the CT scan table. ELENA, the RADIOLOGY TECH preps her arm for the IV. Michael is standing nearby.

MICHAEL
You cold? Need anything?
LACEY
Nope, totally fine.

She flashes her PR smile while Elena inserts the IV port.

MICHAEL
Lacey? Do me a favor, will you?
Don’t smile so much.

LACEY
I beg your pardon?

He sits in a chair, so he can talk to her at eye level.

MICHAEL
Here’s what nobody knows about you:
You’re not perky at all. You can be -- and why not, there’s good money there -- but that’s who you pretend to be, not who you are.

She doesn’t deny it. A steeliness appears in her eyes.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
Here, in my office, no pretending. Bullshit takes energy. And to do what you’re trying to do -- what no woman has done before -- you’re going to need every ounce of energy your body can muster. So save it. Do not waste it on me.

Michael takes the solution from Elena. Connects it to Lacey’s IV port himself.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
People have no idea what it takes. They want to turn on SportsCenter and see greatness there, day after day -- but they don’t want to know what that costs. In time. In energy. In will. The human toll. I know the cost. I know that being the best isn’t part of your life. It’s instead of it. (starts the drip) And that -- is fine -- with me.

INT. MICHAEL’S OFFICE – DAY

Michael working at his computer. Rita is cleaning his lunch dishes from his desk. As she picks them up and heads out:
MICHAEL
Hey -- there’s a clinic, in East L.A., I think, called Para Todos.
Get them on the line, okay?

She continues out. Michael leans back in his chair, ruminating -- remembering ... The phone BEEPS. Michael picks it up. It’s RINGING. Then a WOMAN picks up.

PARA TODOS PERSON (OVER PHONE)
Para Todos.

MICHAEL
Dr. Anna Lindberg, please.

PARA TODOS PERSON (OVER PHONE)
May I ask who’s calling?

MICHAEL
This is Dr. Michael Halstead.

A pause. Then:

PARA TODOS PERSON (OVER PHONE)
I’m sorry to tell you this, Dr. Halstead, but Dr. Lindberg passed away two weeks ago.

END OF TEASER
ACT ONE

INT. HALSTEAD SURGICAL CENTER - MICHAEL’S OFFICE - DAY

Michael is at his desk, phone in hand, trying to digest what he just heard. Baffled. He doesn’t notice CTA RESULTS pop up on his screen.

RITA (O.S.)
That’s Lacey Sandreski’s CTA.

He doesn’t even look. His mind is reeling. Rita comes in.

RITA (CONT'D)
Want me to get them on the line?

He looks at the screen. The images focus him. He clicks through them. Doesn’t like what he sees.

MICHAEL
No.

He gets up. She hands him his keys and laptop. He heads out, then stops, turns to her. Confusion swimming in his head.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Look up a doctor for me. Anna Lindberg. Would be local. L.A.

INT. SANDRESKI ESTATE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

ON MICHAEL’S LAPTOP, where Lacey’s CTA shows an ANEURYSM.

MICHAEL
It’s 18 millimeters, in your middle cerebral artery distribution.
(to Lacey)
Have you been having any vision problems lately? Eye pain?

LACEY
Nope.

MICHAEL
Headaches?

MILT
She said no.

Actually she didn’t, but Michael isn’t going to take Milt on.
MICHAEL
Okay. You have two options. One: we bring you in today, I coil the aneurysm, and we’re done. No way this thing will ever harm you. The downside: no tennis for 3 months.

Lacey scoffs -- what?

MILT
Option two?

MICHAEL
We do it after the Open. It is a risk, a small one: an asymptomatic aneurysm has a 1.3 percent chance of rupture per year.

JILL
What if you’re in that 1.3 percent?

MICHAEL
25 percent survival rate, mostly depending on how quickly you’re treated. So obviously, if you get any symptoms of a leak: headache, eye pain, vision impairment -- you would call me immediately.

Jill inhales, to ask another question, but Lacey is quicker.

LACEY
Tell you what. I’ll go to New York and make history. Afterwards, we can all celebrate by having you cut my head open. How’s that sound?

Milt clamps his hands on Lacey’s shoulders, rubs them hard.

MILT
Sounds like a plan.

INT. HALSTEAD SURGICAL CENTER – RITA’S DESK – DAY
Michael swoops back through, scrolling the BlackBerry.

RITA
Balthus went home with a nurse.

MICHAEL
Good.
RITA
Madeline still needs fifteen minutes.

MICHAEL
Right.

RITA
Here’s what I got on that doctor.

She hands him some PRINT-OUTS. He stops, looks at them.

The first one: An L.A. TIMES OBITUARY: ANNA LINDBERG, BROUGHT MEDICINE TO HARD-HIT BOYLE HEIGHTS. With a picture of Anna.

Michael stares at it, frozen.

RITA (CONT'D)
Oh, and your sister’s in there.

MICHAEL
What?

INT. HALSTEAD SURGICAL CENTER - MICHAEL’S OFFICE - DAY

Michael enters, holding the print-out. Didi is there, relaxing on his sofa in her Whole Foods uniform: slacks, logo shirt, name tag. Her Whole Foods apron is on the sofa beside her.

DIDI
I just need a couple minutes.

He goes behind his desk, kicks his computer to life.

DIDI (CONT'D)
I’ve been thinking about what you said, about Milo --

MICHAEL
Good.

DIDI
I know this woman, she’s a family therapist -- she said she’d work with us for free.

MICHAEL
I’m sure Milo will love that.

DIDI
And she said the sessions would probably go better if the primary male in his life was there, too.
Michael looks up at her. Sees where this is going.

MICHAEL
Didi, there is no way I am going to therapy with you and your messed-up son. No.

DIDI
Come on, Michael, please?

MICHAEL
No. He’s not my problem. He’s your problem. You deal with it.

He goes back to work.

DIDI
You’re a jerk.

She grabs her bag off the desk, intending to huff out. But then she spots the OBITUARY on his desk. Picks it up.

DIDI (CONT'D)
What is this?

He sees, tries to grab it from her -- but not fast enough.

MICHAEL
Nothing.

She reads the headline. Tears spring to her eyes (as they do, often and easily).

DIDI
Oh my God. Anna.

Michael snatches the print-out from her.

MICHAEL
You need to leave.

DIDI
But wait -- I don’t get it. You said you had dinner with her.

MICHAEL
I didn’t have dinner with anyone.

DIDI
You just told me, just last night --
MICHAEL
(how he’s worked it out)
Last night, I took a Percocet for
my shoulder, plus wine --

DIDI
Wait, hang on --

MICHAEL
And then your idiot son wakes me
out of a dream I’m having about my
ex-wife --

DIDI
That was not a dream you were
talking about --

MICHAEL
-- such a vivid dream that I --
mistakenly -- thought it was real.

DIDI
Michael, you said you saw her. You
talked to her.

MICHAEL
No -- you’re -- no.

He’s never been so inarticulate. He sits down to work. Didi
stares at him -- then realizes:

DIDI
Maybe her spirit came to you.

MICHAEL
Rita!

DIDI
People do that when they die. You
read about it all the time. It’s
called ... oh, what’s it called?
It’s called something.

Rita pops her head in the door.

MICHAEL
My sister needs to stack some
produce. Help her find the door.

Didi makes her own way out.

DIDI
This is a cosmic gift, Michael.
He grabs a SIGNED LUC ROBATAILLE HOCKEY STICK and uses it to shut the door in her face.

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - MICHAEL’S OFFICE - NIGHT

Michael is talking on speakerphone, massaging his shoulder.

MICHAEL
You’re taking it easy? None of your bear parties?

BALTHUS (ON SPEAKERPHONE)
Darling, I’m the dullest man in LA.

A KNOCK. He looks: Madeline is there. He waves her in.

MICHAEL
Good. Let’s keep it that way.

Michael shuts the call off. Madeline enters.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
You need fifteen minutes.

MADELINE
I got the bids for upgrading our Physical Therapy facility.

MICHAEL
And?

MADELINE
Bottom line, we can’t afford it.

MICHAEL
What do we do, take out a loan?

MADELINE
We could. But I’d rather wait till we can pay for it outright. Why take on debt if we don’t need to?

MICHAEL
Because I want to be able to say, not only are we the best surgical center, we’re also the best rehab facility. And I want to say it now.

She moves toward him.

MADELINE
Your impatience is very alluring.
She straddles him in the chair. He runs a hand up her back.

MICHAEL
What do we do? Put off deciding?

MADELINE
At least a few minutes.

She kisses him. He starts undoing her blouse.

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - MICHAEL’S OFFICE - LATER

Michael’s in his chair, in post-coital relaxation. Pants back on, shirt undone, holding Madeline’s blouse. He’s peering into his bathroom, where she’s tidying up.

MICHAEL
We need better sheets in post-op.

MADELINE
Done.

She comes out, fully dressed except for her shirt. She goes to take it from him. Slips it on. Buttons it up.

MICHAEL
You in a rush?

MADELINE
My mother’s in town.

She bends down and kisses him.

MICHAEL
Hang on, I’ll walk you out.

EXT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - NIGHT

Michael watches Madeline drive away. Heads back inside.

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - MICHAEL’S OFFICE - NIGHT

Michael wanders back into his office ... then leaps out of his skin when he sees ANNA, in the chair he was just in.

ANNA
Sorry. Did I scare you?

Michael takes a step back.

ANNA (CONT’D)
Don’t freak out. Okay?
Then he notices, at her feet: THE RED BOUNCY BALL WITH THE SMILEY FACE FROM HIS RECURRING DREAM.

MICHAEL
What -- the --

ANNA
(explaining carefully)
Two weeks ago, I went for a run. It was dusk. Some kids were playing. Their ball bounced into the street.

MICHAEL
Stop.

ANNA
I tried to get it for them. I thought I looked, but I guess --

MICHAEL
I mean it. Stop. Talking.

ANNA
I didn’t see the car at all. My head hit the pavement. It all happened really fast. I don’t remember if it was painful.

(the ball)
The ball came with me. Why, I have no idea.

He looks again at the ball from his dreams, shakes his head, wanting no part of this. Backs out of the room.

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - RITA’S DESK - NIGHT

Michael leans against Rita’s desk, hyperventilating. After some forced deep breaths, he looks back into his office. The door is blocking his view of the chair. He kicks it open so he can see in. Anna’s still there, standing now.

ANNA
I won’t hurt you, Michael. I don’t even think I can.

He doesn’t go in. So she takes a step toward him.

ANNA (CONT’D)
I know, it’s weird. That’s why I didn’t tell you last night. Are you okay?

A weird panicky laugh comes out of him. No, he’s not okay.
ANNA (CONT'D)
I need your help. Are you
listening? Can you pay attention?

He’s not answering, but not leaving. Good enough for her.

ANNA (CONT'D)
People counted on me. I was
stupid, I didn’t anticipate this --
I did everything myself, I didn’t
train anyone. I’m sure the staff
is completely derailed. Are you
with me?

He’s still staring. So he’s not not with her.

ANNA (CONT'D)
If they can get into my computer
files, they’ll be able to figure it
out. I need you to go down there
and unlock them. My password is
the same as it’s always been. You
remember it?
(a beat)
MYMIKE. M-Y. M-I-K-E.

At that, tears inexplicably spring to his eyes. She sees.
Can’t handle the deep well of regret and sadness right now.

ANNA (CONT'D)
Don’t. Please.
(them)
I didn’t have a family. I didn’t
have kids. I didn’t have hobbies.
I had this. Do this for me.

And then, the whole thing overwhelms his system -- he doubles
over and vomits into the trash can.

When he’s done heaving, he stands. She’s gone.

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - ELEVATOR BANK - NIGHT

A CUSTODIAN is mopping. Michael comes out, looking around.

MICHAEL
Where’d she go?

CUSTODIAN
Who?

The guy clearly hasn’t seen anyone.
INT. MICHAEL’S OFFICE – NIGHT/DAY

ON THE COMPUTER, as Michael scans resources for “hallucinations”: MEDICAL JOURNALS, WEBMD, JAMA ...
Michael’s hands shake on the keyboard and scrawl notes on a pad: “BLEEDING BR. TUMOR ... SCHIZOPH. ... SUBDURAL HEM. ... INFECTION?? ... WITHDRAWAL?? ... RX SIDE FX??”

RITA (O.S.)
Michael?

MORNING. Michael is at his desk, in last night’s clothes, unstrung. Rita is in his doorway, staring at him.

RITA (CONT'D)
Dr. Sujishi wants you in on his 8AM consult.
(Michael doesn’t move)
That’s in 20 minutes. You might want to --

She points at his clothes. Right. Michael gets up.

MICHAEL
Book me for an MRI this morning.

RITA
Why? Is something wrong?

MICHAEL
It’s my own god damn machine, Rita, if I want to use it, I don’t need your permission.

He goes into his bathroom, starts the shower.

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER – MICHAEL’S BATHROOM – DAY

Post-shower, towel around his waist. Michael looks hard in the mirror. Trying to get a grip. Then he steps out into:

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER – MICHAEL’S OFFICE – DAY

There’s Didi again, this time with ANTON LITTLE CREEK: 30’s, 100% Anglo, in full Traditional Healer, poncho-moccasin garb.

MICHAEL
Jesus Christ!

DIDI
Michael, remember Anton Little Creek? We dated a few years ago?

Anton steps forward, hand out to shake.
ANTON

Peace.

Michael stares -- you’ve got to be kidding me -- and tightens the towel around his waist.

DIDI

Anton’s a shaman. I told him about the Anna thing, and he immediately knew what it was all about.

ANTON

Yeah, attachments like the one Didi described aren’t at all unusual.

MICHAEL

Get out.

ANTON

For whatever reason, the person feels safer holding onto someone in this world than moving on to the next.

MICHAEL

Out.

ANTON

I can extract her if you want. It’s not a big deal.

MICHAEL

Why is he still talking? Rita!

DIDI

Okay, he’s getting mad.

(to Michael)

Don’t worry, we’re leaving.

She pushes Anton out the door.

INT. HALSTEAD NEURO SURGICAL CENTER - MRI ROOM - DAY

ON ELENA, a nervous wreck, looking at Michael’s legs sticking out of the MRI machine.

ELENA

A reminder, Doctor, not to move or -

MICHAEL (O.C.)

I know how the machine works.

ELENA

Yes, doctor.
She leaves the room.

IN THE MACHINE:

Michael is on his back, head in the immobilizer. The CLICKING NOISES start. Michael closes his eyes during the test. CLICK CLICK CLICK CLICK. When it finally stops:

ANNA (O.C.)
You didn’t go.

Michael’s eyes pop open. He can’t move his head, but he can move his eyes enough to see Anna lying beside him, propped on an elbow. Angry.

ANNA (CONT’D)
I ask you to do one simple thing.
The one thing that matters to me --

He detaches the immobilizing device. Turns to look at Anna.

MICHAEL
Go -- away --

IN THE ROOM, the DOOR opens, and Elena rushes in (she can only see one set of legs coming out of the machine).

ELENA
Dr. Halstead? Are you all right?

IN THE MACHINE, Michael has his wits about him enough to realize how this looks. Calls to Elena:

MICHAEL
I’m fine!

ELENA (O.C.)
Um -- would you like to wait in there while I check the images?

Anna is giving Michael a hard, unforgiving glare.

ANNA
You were the one person I thought I could count on.

Shit. Michael can’t believe he’s saying it, but:

MICHAEL
(to Elena)
No. Get me out.
INT. MICHAEL’S LAMBORGHINI – DAY

Michael, driving through East L.A., simmering.

MICHAEL
(to himself)
What the hell are you doing ...

EXT. PARA TODOS FAMILY CLINIC – DAY

A renovated storefront on a shitty block in the Very-Other part of town. There are 10 PEOPLE out in front -- all ages, mostly Latino, low- or no-income. Speaking Spanish.

Michael pulls up, gets out, locks his car, heads inside...

INT. PARA TODOS FAMILY CLINIC – MAIN ROOM – DAY

... and steps into another world. The floors are dirty; the trash hasn’t been dumped; and the clinic is PACKED WITH PATIENTS. There are few chairs, so the sickest are on the floor. The rest are standing, in a swarm of illness.

Michael stands at the door, staring. In disbelief.

END OF ACT ONE
ACT TWO

INT. PARA TODOS FAMILY CLINIC - MAIN ROOM - DAY

Michael takes it in. Then he sees the MAIN DESK, where an overwhelmed volunteer, TAVO, is fielding a million questions. More Spanish. Michael makes his way over. Still not 100 percent sure what he’s doing here. He addresses Tavo.

MICHAEL
(how to put this?)
Hey. Um ... I think I might need to get on your computers.

TAVO
Finally, man. I called you guys days ago. I thought Geek Squad was supposed to be fast. It’s in here.

What? Tavo heads back to the office. Michael follows.

INT. PARA TODOS FAMILY CLINIC - BACK ROOM - DAY

Michael follows Tavo in. Tavo points to the computer.

TAVO
There you go.

Michael sits at it. It’s open to the ACCOUNTS page. There’s only one: ANNA L. And a space for PASSWORD.

TAVO (CONT’D)
We just lost our director. Totally sucked. Plus she ran everything here -- booked docs, got funding, paid bills -- everything. We’ve been trying to keep it going, but without her ... (hopeless)
I don’t know, I figured if I could maybe get at her files ...

ON MICHAEL’S HANDS, as he types: M-Y-M-I-K ... E.

ON THE COMPUTER, as the page opens. So it really is real.

MICHAEL
Oh ... Christ.

TAVO
What? No luck?
(then, seeing it worked)
Oh, no, man, we’re good! You got it! Geek Squad to the rescue.
Michael stands. Tavo sits in the chair and starts typing.

INT. PARA TODOS FAMILY CLINIC - MAIN ROOM - DAY

Michael comes into the room and stops -- trying to process.

Nearby, a scared mother, INES (30’s, panicky, surrounded by FIVE KIDS), is talking to AUTUMN (late 20’s, tough as jerky, clipboard in her hand and COUNTY ID around her neck).

INES
Please, you need to see my son --

She’s holding one of the kids close to her -- ERNESTO, 7, in a soccer uniform. He looks exhausted and disoriented.

AUTUMN
Ma’am, I’m just a social worker. There are no doctors here today.

Ines gets more distressed at that news. Overwhelmed.

AUTUMN (CONT'D)
Don’t panic. Just tell me what happened, and I’ll help you figure out what to do.

INES
He was playing soccer, he was fine, then he was on the ground, and he start to shake, and his eyes went -- (rolled back) -- like this --

Autumn, competent but out of her depth, checks her clipboard.

AUTUMN
Okay, what I’m gonna do is find you the nearest emergency room.

ON MICHAEL, hearing all this. It’s not the right call. He ponders leaving it, but can’t quite. Steps over.

MICHAEL
Don’t send her to an E.R. The kid had a seizure. He needs a CT. An E.R.’s gonna make her wait ten hours, then won’t end up doing it because you don’t have insurance. (to Ines) Go to an imaging center and ask for a CT Scan. C.T.

There. Done. He heads back toward the door.
INES
(bewildered, to Autumn)
What is the imaging center?

Fuck if Autumn knows. She follows Michael.

AUTUMN
Whoa. Hang on. Who are you?

MICHAEL
I’m a neurosurgeon, I don’t work here.

AUTUMN
So where’s an imaging center?

MICHAEL
I don’t know. Google it.

AUTUMN
What place do you use?

MICHAEL
That wouldn’t work. I’m sure there’s one closer. Look it up.

AUTUMN
Why wouldn’t yours work?

MICHAEL
Because.

AUTUMN
“Because”? What are you, twelve?

Told you she was tough. Michael looks from Autumn (calling him out) to Ines (terrified).

AUTUMN (CONT’D)
Man, I’ve got 100 sick people here. I’m asking for help with one.

Capitulation is clearly the path of least resistance here.

MICHAEL
Fine. Come by. I’ll run the test.

He hands Ines his card. She looks at it.

INES
Excuse me, which bus goes to here?

Oh, for Christ’s sake.
INT. MICHAEL’S LAMBORGHINI - DAY

Ines is in the passenger seat, with Ernesto in her lap. The other kids are in back, laughing, giddy. Best field trip of their lives. Michael is at the wheel, furious.

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - WAITING ROOM - DAY

PATIENTS waiting: some fancy older people; a very tall, expensively-dressed PRO BASKETBALL PLAYER, with TRAINER.

Michael enters, with Ines and the five rambunctious kids. He pauses to say hi to the Basketball Player (he clearly knows him), then ushers Ines and the kids into the offices.

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - RITA’S DESK - DAY

Michael gets to Rita’s desk just ahead of the brood.

    RITA
    You missed three patients, I’ve had
    more people yell at me in --

Then she spots the pack of kids. She looks at Michael: ??????

    MICHAEL
    (points to Ernesto)
    Needs a CT. The rest, hide
    somewhere.

He heads into his office, but Ines follows him in, taking full advantage of the first doctor she’s seen in years.

    INES
    Doctor --

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - MICHAEL’S OFFICE - DAY

Michael picks up the phone to dial, but Ines is in his face.

    INES
    The little one, my niece, she has a
    nose it’s running, did you see?

    MICHAEL
    Get her some tissues.

He dials his phone. But Ines isn’t finished.

    INES
    And my other son, the big boy,
    Robert, his says his feet tingle --
MICHAEL
Try shoes that fit. Rita!

INES
Also my nephew, he goes like this -
(squints)
-- at the TV all the time.

MICHAEL
I’m not an optometrist. Rita!

Rita pops in, takes Ines by the arm and escorts her out.

EXT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - RECEPTION - LATER

Rita guides Ines and the five kids out of the office, into reception. The kids all have SURGICAL HATS on.

RITA
Okay, we’ll call with the results.

They leave. Rita sees Jill Sandreski standing at the desk.

RITA (CONT’D)
Hi. Can I help you?

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - MICHAEL’S OFFICE - DAY

Jill, now in Michael’s office, with him.

JILL
I want you to make her do the surgery.

Unused to asserting herself, she’s almost apologetic.

MICHAEL
Lacey’s an adult, Jill. I can’t make her do anything.

JILL
But she respects you. If you tell her she has to do it --

MICHAEL
She doesn’t.

JILL
(icing up)
Fine. If you won’t insist on it, I’ll find a doctor who will.
MICHAEL
That’s fine. But I’d bet my last dime there isn’t a doctor out there who can make her change her mind. She wants this too much.

JILL
She doesn’t want it. Her father does. He’s brainwashed her into thinking this is her dream when it’s not. It’s his.

MICHAEL
I don’t think that’s the case.

JILL
You don’t know. You just met her.

MICHAEL
I know athletes. The ones doing it for someone else win the school tournament. Maybe get their picture in the local paper. That’s it. To do what Lacey’s done -- to put yourself through that level of pain and sacrifice -- the only way you do that is if you can’t not.

Jill sees she’s not going to get what she wants. Gets teary.

JILL
You said it yourself. That thing could kill her. She could lose her life before it’s even started.

MICHAEL
I’d say Lacey’s living a very full -

JILL
She’s not living life, she’s living tennis. She doesn’t have friends, she’s never had a sleep-over or kissed a boy. She’s hit a ball over a net. That’s it.

She starts to crumble. Years of unexpressed disappointment.

MICHAEL
This feels like a conversation you should be having with Milt.

JILL
You don’t talk with Milt. You listen. You pretend to listen.

(MORE)
You close your ears and your eyes
and pray to God that he doesn’t
destroy her completely.

More tears. Michael doesn’t comfort her.

I thought you would help me.

I’m sorry.

No, you’re not.

She leaves. A beat. Then Rita comes in, eyebrows raised --
she heard -- and hands him a computer disk.

Your MRI.

Michael, looking at the MRI on his computer, massaging his
shoulder. He pulls the Percocet out of his pocket. But he
pauses before taking one -- reconsidering.

Then he feels HANDS ON HIS SHOULDERS. He spins around -- but
it’s only Madeline.

Jumpy.

She starts massaging his shoulder.

Guess who I heard from today.

Who?

Balthus’s foundation director.
Ron’s feeling grateful. Wants to
give us half a million dollars.

No kidding.

Nope. There’s your rehab facility.

She abandons the shoulder and starts unbuttoning his shirt.
MADELINE (CONT'D)
Good things come to those who operate on billionaires.

She has a couple of buttons undone. But the way he’s feeling, there is no way. He closes a hand around her hands, stopping her. From her reaction: this never happens.

She stands there a moment. Then takes her arms off of him.

MADELINE (CONT'D)
All right then.

She steps away. Bruised.

MICHAEL
Rain check -- okay?

Whatever. Madeline heads out of his office, miffed.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Madeline, hang on --

But she leaves. Excellent.

INT. MICHAEL’S LAMBORGHINI - NIGHT
Michael, driving up Stone Canyon, heading home, exhausted.

ANNA
How’d it go?

She’s there, in his passenger seat. He jumps, swerves --

MICHAEL
Jesus Christ!

-- then regains control and stares at her beside him -- ????

ANNA
Did you open the files?

MICHAEL
You can’t -- we can’t just -- chat.

ANNA
Why not?

MICHAEL
Because I don’t know what you are. A hallucination, okay, but from what? Not a brain tumor, my MRI is clear. Maybe schizophrenia, but --
ANNA
You know you’re not schizophrenic.
Watch the road.

MICHAEL
Then what? What are you?

ANNA
I told you.

He looks at her -- just starting to let himself accept this.

MICHAEL
So that’s -- it’s -- you’re --

She nods, shrugs. He continues to look at her -- in shock.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
So -- so, what? How does it --
what does it --

ANNA
I don’t know. I’m not in control
of things -- where I am, when.
Watch the road --
(he does)
I’m with you -- then I don’t know
where I am -- then I’m with you
again --

He looks at her, unable to process all this --

MICHAEL
Anna -- I’m a doctor. People trust
me, they put their lives in my
hands, I can’t be --

ANNA
Michael, watch out!

He looks up. HEADLIGHTS are coming at him. He yanks the
wheel -- bouncing off the road -- and swipes a TREE, hard
enough to stop the car and explode the air bag into his face.

END OF ACT TWO
ACT THREE

EXT. STONE CANYON DRIVE - DAY

Michael is standing by his car, ribs aching, looking at the mangled grill. His AIRBAG is inflated. He walks over to the passenger side. No air bag. Just an empty seat.

INT. DIDI’S APARTMENT DOORWAY - NIGHT

Didi opens the door to find Michael there.

    DIDI
    Michael. Hi.

She lets him in.

INT. DIDI’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dinner’s on the table. Didi is the only one there. She watches, curious, as Michael goes to her fridge, grabs himself a beer.

    DIDI
    How are you?

He nods, good, as he opens the beer and takes a slug. Then he leans against her counter, and, trying to sound off-hand:

    MICHAEL
    So -- that Anton guy. Is he a total flake, or what?

There’s a FLUSH somewhere.

    DIDI
    I don’t know. Ask him yourself.

The BATHROOM DOOR OPENS. Anton comes out. Not what Michael had in mind. Anton brightens when he sees Michael.

    ANTON
    Brother Mike. What’s going down?

He grabs one of the dinner plates and eats, standing up.

    MICHAEL
    Nothing. I just -- dropped by.

    ANTON
    Visitor came back, huh?

    DIDI
    Oh my God, she did?
Okay -- really not how Michael wanted this to play out. He doesn’t answer. Anton reads his silence as a yes.

ANTON
Yeah, that’s what they do. They get in, and they do not like to get out. You’re like her own personal Roach Motel.

MICHAEL
That’s a ... lovely image. Thanks.

Anton plops on the sofa, still eating while he consults.

ANTON
Do you just feel her, or can you see her too?

Milo scuffs in, iPod on, goes to the fridge. He can’t hear, but it makes Michael more self-conscious. He doesn’t answer.

DIDI
He sees her.

ANTON
Huh. So she’s really dug in. What do you feel physically? Any pain?

MICHAEL
A shoulder thing, but that’s from surgery.

ANTON
Worse lately?

MICHAEL
Yes. But --

Anton’s eyes search the space above Michael’s shoulders.

ANTON
Yeah, so that’s how she got in.

MICHAEL
Through my shoulder?

ANTON
No, the shoulder’s just a symptom. The problem is the tear in your energetic body --

Anton gets up, waves his hand above Michael’s sore shoulder --
ANTON (CONT'D)
Right around here.

DIDI
He can see it. Isn’t that cool?

Michael pulls away. From where he’s scooping ice cream, Milo sees the dance between the men. He takes off his headphones.

ANTON
Like I said, I can extract her if you want.

MILO
Extract who?

Enough. Michael’s had it.

MICHAEL
Nothing. I gotta go.

Michael chucks the beer bottle (which he’s drained) into Didi’s trash. He opens the door and heads out. To his back:

ANTON
Just come by my place whenever. I’m always around.

EXT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - EARLY MORNING

The Lamborghini is parked. HEAR loud, repetitive GRUNTING.

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - REHAB CENTER - DAY

Michael is in workout clothes, gutting it out on a machine, lifting as much weight as he can manage. Rita comes in.

RITA
There you are. Balthus was rushed to the Cedars ER this morning.

Michael stops lifting. Sits up. Alert.

MICHAEL
Why?

RITA
When Randy got to work, Balthus was hung over and groggy --

MICHAEL
God damn it. Call his primary-care guy, Neil Desai.
Rita dials on her phone.

RITA
We got the results back on the boy.
The CT is clear. Blood sugar is normal, but sodium was at 116.
(into phone)
Dr. Michael Halsted for Dr. Desai.

MICHAEL
Call the mom. Tell her he’s fine, just an electrolyte imbalance, and she should have salty snacks and Gatorade at his the games.

She hands the phone to Michael. Michael takes it.

NEIL DESAI (OVER PHONE)
Mike, hi -- calling about Balthus?

MICHAEL
Yeah, what’s up?

NEIL DESAI
Not good. When they brought him in, he was lethargic, pulse was 100, temperature 101, stiff neck --

Michael grimaces. Shit. Takes a beat. Then:

MICHAEL
Thanks. Keep me posted.

He hangs up. Shit. Hands Rita’s her phone, avoiding her eyes. His own phone rings. Saved by the bell. He answers.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
This is Dr. Halstead.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. LACEY SANDRESKI’S PRIVATE PLANE - DAY

Jill Sandreski is on her phone, panicked. Milt is trying to take it from her. Lacey is in a seat, eyes closed, in pain. Her hands are shielding her eyes from the light.

JILL
Dr. Halstead, it’s Jill Sandreski.

MILT
Jill -- hang up the phone.

He reaches for it. She SLAPS his hand away, hard.
JILL
She has a headache, a really bad headache.

MILT
It’s nothing, she gets one every time she flies.

MICHAEL
Where are you?

JILL
In the plane. We took off 45 minutes ago.

MICHAEL
Turn around. Come back.

JILL
(fears confirmed)
Oh my God -- okay. Okay.
(to Milt)
Tell him we have to go back.

MILT
We’re not going back. She’s fine.

MICHAEL
Tell the pilot to fly as fast as he can and land at Santa Monica.

Jill talks to the FLIGHT ATTENDANT.

JILL
We need to go back, fast. He has to land at Santa Monica.

MICHAEL
Tell him to tell the tower he has a medical emergency on board.

JILL
Okay. Okay.

Milt gets between Jill and the Flight Attendant.

MILT
God damn it, we are not turning around. We are going to New York.

LACEY
Turn around.
Her voice sounds strange. Childlike. Her eyes are closed. There are tears on her cheeks. Milt freezes, freaked.

JILL
Oh my God. TURN AROUND! TURN THE PLANE AROUND!

The Flight Attendant runs up to the cockpit.

Phone line still open, Jill kneels in front of Lacey.

JILL (CONT'D)
It’s okay, baby, we’re going back.

Lacey keeps her eyes closed, trying to control the headache.

LACEY
Tell him I wasn’t asymptomatic.

JILL
What?

LACEY
I lied. I was having eye trouble. (silent tears)
I just wanted to win.

The PLANE BANKS as they turn around.

MICHAEL
I got that. Don’t let her move. Keep her head elevated. I’ll meet you at the airport.

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - HALLWAYS - DAY

Michael, hurrying through the halls. Rita right behind him.

MICHAEL
Send an ICU ambulance to Santa Monica Airport.

Rita starts dialing. He heads into:

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - RECEPTION - DAY

When he gets there, Ines and Robert and Ernesto are there, with a HUGE BASKET of homemade goods.

INES
Doctor! This is for you.

Rita takes it from her.
RITA
(into her phone)
Dr. Halstead needs an ICU ambulance
at Santa Monica Airport, stat.

MICHAEL
Call downstairs. I need an amp of
Mannitol, and 10 mg of Decadron.

Rita dials again. He heads toward:

INT. HALSTEAD SURGICAL CENTER - MICHAEL’S OFFICE - DAY

Michael comes in, grabs his keys and wallet, and heads back out (still in his workout clothes).

INT. HALSTEAD SURGICAL CENTER - RECEPTION - DAY

When he comes out, Rita is there with Ines, the kids, and the gift basket, talking on her phone, holding the elevator.

RITA
... an amp of Mannitol and 10 mg.
of Decadron.

INES
Doctor, I want to thank you for all
you do for my family.

Michael steps onto the elevator.

MICHAEL
Also some Labetalol. I’ll grab it
on my way out.

RITA
(into phone)
Also some Labetalol. He’ll be
right down.

As the elevator doors start to close, he notices Robert, in NEW SNEAKERS, wincing. Michael wants to ignore it -- but can’t quite. He sticks his foot in the door, stopping it.

MICHAEL
Hey. Your feet still hurt?

Robert nods. Michael kneels, waves him over.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
What else? Any other pain?

Robert goes to him. As Michael taps his Achilles:
ROBERT
My back.

MICHAEL
Show me where.

Robert points to his lower back/buttocks area.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Anything else? Bed-wetting? You been peeing in your bed at night?

Robert nods again, embarrassed. Michael turns to Rita ...

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Lumbar MRI, and a gadolinium-enhanced study of the conus.

He takes his foot out of the elevator, and the doors close.

INES
What --?

Rita comes up with the bedside manner Michael lacks.

RITA
Dr. Halstead would like to give your other boy a couple of tests, too ...

EXT. SANTA MONICA AIRPORT - JETWAY - DAY

The ROAR OF AN APPROACHING JET. LACEY’S PLANE, in descent.

ON THE JETWAY: AN AMBULANCE is waiting. TWO EMT’s are on hand with a stretcher. Michael is checking to make sure his meds are all in order. As soon as the plane touches down, everything moves with military-like precision and speed.

* The jet door, flying open.
* The IV, going into Lacey’s arm.
* Lacey’s body, lifted onto a stretcher.
* The AMBULANCE, screaming through the Santa Monica streets.
* In the O.R, the surgical team, waiting. Tense and silent. The doors fly open and the stretcher is wheeled in. Michael enters right behind, scrubbed.
* FROM OUTSIDE THE O.R., as the doors slowly close:
Then the doors close and there’s TOTAL SILENCE.

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - WAITING ROOM - DAY

Jill, on the couch, barely breathing. Milt, staring into the fish tank. HEAR the BUBBLES of the filter, CONTINUING OVER:

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - O.R. - DAY

ON THE COMPUTER SCREEN: FOUR FLUOROSCOPIC IMAGE of LACEY’S BRAIN, each a different angle and magnification. The bleed is visible, spilling into the surrounding brain tissue.

As the BUBBLING continues, see the ENDOVASCULAR COIL moves into the frame, heading for the bleed through a blood vessel.

ON MICHAEL, deep in unwavering concentration as he negotiates the coil toward the aneurysm.

ON THE SCREEN: the coil reaches the aneurysm. Goes past it. Backs up. Goes past it again. Backs up again. Then, as it passes the aneurysm a third time, it catches. The end slips into the aneurysm. The rest of the metal coil follows, knotting up inside the bleeding aneurysm. Filling it, like a cork. Cutting off the blood flow out of the vein.

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - MICHAEL’S OFFICE - NIGHT

Michael, from above, lying on the floor. Drained. Eyes closed.

ANNA
You weren’t kidding. You are very, very good.

He looks. She’s lying beside him.

MICHAEL
Do you ever knock?

Before he can answer, there’s a KNOCK. His door opens and Rita comes in, papers in hand. Michael sits up --

RITA
I’ve got the other boy’s test results. You want to see them?

Michael looks from her to Anna -- but Rita doesn’t seem to see her.
MICHAEL
Um ...

RITA
(checks her notes)
Tumor of the distal spinal cord at the conus. Do you want to remove it, or do you want Oscar to?

Michael stands. Anna stays on the floor. As Rita moves around the room -- putting things away, cleaning up -- she miraculously manages to just miss Anna with every pass.

ANNA
You do it.

Michael looks Rita. Rita isn’t hearing her, either.

MICHAEL
Um ...

RITA
You or Oscar?

MICHAEL
Oscar.

ANNA
Why?

RITA
I’ll call the mom and fill her in.

ANNA
She’s not going to want to hear that from a secretary, Michael. Call her yourself.

RITA
You know she doesn’t have insurance, right?

ANNA
Oh, please.

MICHAEL
I ... figured.

RITA
So who’s covering it?

ANNA
You are.
Beat.

MICHAEL
We are.

Rita stops cleaning. Looks at Michael, suspicious.

RITA
Are those your children, Michael?

MICHAEL
What? No.

RITA
Just trying to figure out why we’re suddenly running the place like a free clinic.

She takes the trash she’s gathered and leaves.

RITA (CONT’D)
Open or closed?

MICHAEL
Closed.

She shuts the door behind her. Michael bends over, collapsing under the stress of this double-reality.

ANNA
I don’t like her.

MICHAEL
Yeah? Well, my life would fall apart without her, so --

ANNA
If that’s true, there’s something wrong with your life.

MICHAEL
Anna. Don’t start.

Anna stands, ramping up. She’s saying it nicely, but still.

ANNA
Seriously -- if you can’t make your own phone calls -- can’t meet your own human obligations --

MICHAEL
No. No no, you’re not doing this --
ANNA
-- you’re probably off-base in some very fundamental --

MICHAEL
Stop.  Stop.
(she does)
I can’t do this, Anna. I can’t --

ANNA
What?

A beat. He looks at her. Realizing:

MICHAEL
I can’t.

He grabs his keys, and leaves.

INT. MICHAEL’S LAMBORGHINI – NIGHT

Michael, now behind the wheel of his car. He turns to look at the Venice bungalow he’s parked in front of.

INT. ANTON’S BUNGALOW – NIGHT

The door is opened by Anton, bare-chested, in Thai farmer pants, eating Ramen noodles.

ANTON
Mikey Mike! Hey! Come on in.

END OF ACT THREE
ACT FOUR

INT. ANTON’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Anton has laid out a circle of STONES around his NAVAJO RUG. Michael watches, highly skeptical, as Anton gathers his tools: rattle, spirit water, crystal ...

ANTON
Go ahead and lie down.

Michael lies down -- reluctantly. Anton raises his arms and shakes his rattle (festooned with eagle feathers) to the sky.

ANTON (CONT'D)
To the Winds of the East, Father Eagle, come to us --
      (Michael chuckles)
Hey, man, you sterilize your way, I sterilize mine.
      (arms back up, rattle)
-- come to us from the land of the rising sun, teach us to fly wing-to-wing with the Great Spirit. AH-HO!

Michael startles at the yell.

INT. ANTON’S APARTMENT - LATER

Anton kneels at Michael’s shoulders and takes Michael’s head in his hands, feeling it with his fingertips.

MICHAEL
Do you have to do that with my head?

ANTON
Brother, I don’t have to do any of this, but if you want her gone ...

MICHAEL
Fine.

ANTON
Okay. So I want you to close your eyes and feel her.

Michael closes his eyes.

EXT. DREAMSCAPE - SAME TIME

The same dreamscape from Michael’s recurring dream. Blurred shapes moving too fast and too slow at the same time.
ANTON (O.S.)

Her whole deal. Her looks, her smell.

In the deep distance, ANNA starts to emerge. She’s far away, but walking toward us, red ball under her arm...

ANTON (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Well, hello, there.

Then just like that, she disappears.

INT. ANTON’S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

Michael’s eyes pop open: how the hell did Anton know? Anton is still holding his head, eyes closed.

ANTON

Don’t freak out. Keep breathing.

Michael closes his eyes again. Takes a deep breath.

EXT. DREAMSCAPE - SAME TIME

She reappears, coming at us, with that same confident strut.

INT. ANTON’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Anton puts a rock in Michael’s hand, then picks up a pendulum with a crystal on the end.

ANTON

Now take all your feelings about her, and blow them into that rock.

MICHAEL

What?

ANTON


Oh-kay. Michael blows hard on the rock. Anton takes it from him, then moves the pendulum over Michael’s various chakras.

INT. DREAMSCAPE - SAME TIME

Anna, closer now. Looking intrigued -- curious about why she’s been summoned -- and a little suspicious.

And MICHAEL appears in the dreamscape too. We’re looking over his shoulder at Anna approaching. She sees him.
ANNA
Michael?
(looks around)
What are we doing?

INT. ANTON’S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

Anton sets the rock on a chakra. Shakes the rattle over it.

ANTON
So now you wanna thank her for being in this life with you. For whatever she brought to you, or helped you with. Express that gratitude. Then let her know you’ll be okay without her.

EXT. DREAMSCAPE - SAME TIME

Anna’s still looking at him sideways -- what’s going on here? Michael takes her hand. Tries to do what Anton tells him:

MICHAEL
Anna. I want to thank you for being in my life --

He sounds like a bad greeting card. She cracks up.

ANNA
What is that, what are you doing -- an Oprah Winfrey impression?

INT. ANTON’S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

Michael opens his eyes, looks at Anton.

MICHAEL
I don’t think this is working.

ANTON
Stick with it.

Fine. Closes his eyes again.

INT. DREAMSCAPE - SAME TIME

Anna is bouncing the ball, bored.

ANNA
Cut to the chase, hon, what are we doing here?
(he doesn’t answer)
Hello? Michael?
MICHAEL
We’re sending you away.

She stops bouncing the ball. Looks at him. A beat.

ANNA
I don’t want to go.

MICHAEL
Anna --

Her fear starts to break through her tough exterior.

ANNA
No. You can’t. I’m not ready.

MICHAEL
Anna --

ANNA
There are things I didn’t finish --
all these doors I left open --

She reaches out, takes his hands, almost begging.

MICHAEL
Anna, come on --

ANNA
I need you to help me close them.
There’s no one else I can ask --
Michael, please -- please --

He shakes her off of him.

MICHAEL
I can’t have you in my life!

ANNA
(arguing now)
Why not? Why not?

MICHAEL
You don’t fit. My life -- who I am
-- I can’t be crazy --

ANNA
You’re not crazy --

MICHAEL
You’re not real. I don’t even know
what you are --
ANNA
So? Why can’t I be the one thing in life you don’t understand?

He laughs.

ANNA (CONT’D)
What?

MICHAEL
Anna. You have always been the one thing in life I don’t understand.

Something in the way he says it -- the beginning of resignation -- tells her he’s weakening.

ANNA
If I go, we never see each other again. Is that what you want?

MICHAEL
(resolve crumbling)
That’s not the point.

ANNA
Then what is?

She looks at him with an intimacy he feels nowhere else in his life. He tries to come up with an answer. But can’t.

INT. ANTON’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Michael sits bolt up, surprising Anton, knocking him back.

ANTON
What happened? What are we doing?

MICHAEL
Nothing. I’m good. She’s gone.

He stands, goes to get his watch.

ANTON
She’s not gone.

MICHAEL
Yeah, she left.

He puts on his watch, grabs his wallet.

ANTON
Friend, what I do? It’s just like you, taking out a tumor.

(MORE)
You know when it’s out, and you know when it’s still there.

Michael laughs.

MICHAEL
What you do -- friend -- is nothing like what I do. Thanks for ... (whatever it was)

Good night.

He leaves.

EXT. MICHAEL’S SAILBOAT - NIGHT

Michael, lying on the deck in his sleeping bag, eyes closed. A BREEZE picks up, ruffling the burgee at the top of the mast. Michael feels the wind, opens his eyes. Quietly:

MICHAEL
You there?

No answer.

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - PRE-OP/RECOVERY - DAY

Lacey, lying in bed, staring out the window. Michael knocks, enters. She swings her head toward him. Blank eyes.

MICHAEL
How are you feeling?

Lacey can’t answer. Shrugs.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
Physically?

LACEY
Fine.

Headache?

LACEY
Gone.

Good.

He sits on her bed.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
There’s next year.
LACEY
No. I’ll be 20. Steffi was 19 and 3 months. It’s over.
(then)
How long till I can play again?

MICHAEL
Three months completely off. Six before you can play full-on.

That hits her like a fist in the gut.

LACEY
What am I supposed to do? Pick up a hobby? Go on vacation?

MICHAEL
Yup, and you’ll hate it, because nothing can come close to how you feel when you play.

Then he hears what he’s saying. Realizes there’s a small part of him -- a new part -- that doesn’t 100% agree.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
Or, I don’t know, maybe not. Maybe something will happen that makes it okay. You never know. Life’s full of surprises.

ACROSS THE HALL, Ines, sitting with Robert, sees Michael giving Lacey his attention. Then Jill walks by the door.

IN LACEY’S ROOM,
Jill enters, arms laden with magazines, snacks, beverages. Embarrassingly excited to have this time with Lacey.

JILL
I got everything on the magazine shelf. What should we start with?

Lacey looks up at Michael. He nods -- I get it -- then stands, to leave them alone together.

IN ROBERT’S ROOM,
Ines sees Michael leave Lacey’s room. She goes into the hall to meet him.

INES
Dr. Halstead, can you tell me when you do the surgery on Robert?
MICHAEL
I’m not doing it. Dr. Sujishi is.

INES
But -- you are the best. That’s what everybody say.

MICHAEL
Dr. Sujishi is excellent as well. You have nothing to worry about.

INES
If he was your son, who would you want for the surgery?

His phone buzzes.

MICHAEL
Me. But he’s not my son, he’s yours, so Dr. Sujishi will do it. (walks away, answering the phone)
This is Dr. Halstead.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. CEDARS SINAI I.C.U. - DAY

Randy is calling from the hallway. Doing a damn good job of keeping it together.

RANDY
Dr. Halstead, it’s Randy, Mr. Balthus’s assistant. I didn’t know if they were keeping you informed --

MICHAEL
Pretty much. Yes.

RANDY
So you know they confirmed spinal meningitis --

Yeah, Michael figured.

RANDY (CONT'D)
They tell me it’s very bad. They just -- um -- they said they aren’t sure he’ll make it through the day.

MICHAEL
I see.
RANDY
I know you’re busy. But if you could come by, I’m sure he’d like that.

MICHAEL
Right. I’ll try.

Hang up. Michael clamps his eyes shut -- struggling. Not a man who enjoys struggling. He opens his eyes. Spots Ines. Without pausing to question what he’s doing, he goes to her.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
I’ll do it.

INES
Excuse me?

MICHAEL
Your boy’s surgery. I’ll do it.

Ines is instantly grateful -- a flood of relief.

INES
Oh, doctor, thank you so much. Thank you thank you thank you.

She hugs him. He lets it happen.

EXT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - PARKING LOT - DUSK

Michael, in scrubs, on a bench outside, stewing. Rita comes out with a file, searching. Spots him.

RITA
There you are. I need to microchip you. You didn’t sign the surgical report.

She hands him the file. He takes it, signs.

RITA (CONT’D)
Sounds like it went well.

MICHAEL
Yup, came out clean. Most likely benign. He’ll be fine.

RITA
No wonder you look so pleased.

She takes back the file and pen. Heads inside.
RITA (CONT'D)
Luckily, I have a feeling there’s a gift basket coming to cheer you up.

Michael hangs his head in his hands, hating himself. He hears footsteps. It’s Anna. She stops in front of him.

ANNA
Ah, the age-old dilemma. Doing the right thing for the wrong reason -- is it still virtuous? What matters more? The intention or the act?

There are people around (GARDENER, PARKING LOT ATTENDANT), so he doesn’t respond.

ANNA (CONT'D)
You operated on the boy to get out of visiting your dying friend. And I’m sure you did a very good job.
(sits beside him)
I used to think it was strange, how uncomfortable you were with death. Then I realized -- you like to believe you know everything and can fix anything. Death proves you wrong.
(then)
Go see him. It won’t be easy. But it won’t be as hard as avoiding it.
(then)
I’ll go with you if you want.

INT. CEDARS SINAI I.C.U. - NIGHT

The elevator opens. Michael steps out, followed by Anna. They head down the hall, find the room -- then Michael stops:

INSIDE THE ROOM, Randy is packing the special sheets, the French Press, the lamp. The bed is empty. Randy sees Michael in the hall. Randy is devastated.

EXT. CEDARS SINAI PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Michael’s Lamborghini, in the parking lot.

INT. MICHAEL’S LAMBORGHINI - NIGHT

Michael in the car, staring ahead. Anna is next to him. After a quiet moment, he SLAMS HIS HAND ON THE STEERING wheel repeatedly. Furious. Anna doesn’t say anything.

Once his impotent rage dies down, he slumps in his seat, head back, eyes closed. Finally:
MICHAEL
What’s it like?

ANNA
Dying?

Yes. She thinks about how to describe it.

ANNA (CONT'D)
In the moment, it’s like knowing absolutely everything, and absolutely nothing, all at once. Everything and nothing, rushing through you like a torrent. (then, less sure) But then, that part’s over -- and there you are, and ... (beat) I don’t know. I don’t know.

She falters. Then, the best analogy she has:

ANNA (CONT'D)
You know -- when we were together, I’d go out in the world and see other married couples -- walking around hand-in-hand, protecting each other -- and I’d think, Wow, I’m not doing this right. (then:) That’s how I feel now. Like whatever this is, I’m not doing it right. (beat) Nobody gives you a manual. There’s no concierge. Who knows, maybe one will show up and say, right this way, Ma’am, your table is ready, but until they do ...

She looks at him. He sees how lost and confused she is.

MICHAEL
-- you’ll stick with me.

INT. HALSTEAD NEUROSURGICAL CENTER - RECOVERY AREA - NIGHT

Lacey is in bed, alone. She glances into Robert’s room. Robert and COUSINS are piled on the bed, playing a PSP. Having a grand old time. Ines is there. She looks out into the hall -- sees Lacey watching. She puts some cake on a paper plate and brings it to Lacey.
INES
Tres leches. It’s very good.

LACEY
Thank you.
(takes a bite)
It’s delicious.

INES
The kids are watching Spiderman.
You want to come, watch with them?

Lacey’s first instinct is to say no. But then -- why not?

LACEY
Okay.

She gets up. Ines takes her arm and supports her as she walks over to the party room.

INES
I am Ines.

LACEY
(without any PR falseness)
I’m Lacey.

INT. DIDI’S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Michael goes to Didi’s door, holding Didi’s Whole Foods apron (which she left in his office). Knocks. Milo opens. The TV is on in the background.

MICHAEL
Hey. Is your Mom here?

MILO
No.

MICHAEL
Oh. Well, this is hers. Give it to her, okay?

He hands Milo the apron, planning to leave. Then he sees the TV. Milo. An opportunity. He pauses. Then:

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
Is that the Lakers?

EXT. DIDI’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

THROUGH THE WINDOW: Michael and Milo are watching TV together. Milo says something.
Michael laughs -- hard and genuine. Milo smiles to himself, obviously pleased that he cracked up his hotshit uncle.

EXT. SANTA MONICA BAY – DAY
A beautiful day. Michael’s boat on the water, under sail.

EXT. MICHAEL’S SAILBOAT – DAY
Michael, at the helm, sailing it himself.

MICHAEL
So listen, I’ve been thinking ...

And now we see Anna, lying on the deck. She props up on a shoulder, shades her eyes, so she can see him.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
We’re gonna need some ground rules.

ANNA
Like what?

MICHAEL
Like, no bossing me around. I’m in charge, I do what I want. And: no meddling with my real life -- my work, my social life, my sex life -- all off limits. Also: no trying to change me into the man you wish I were. It didn’t work before, and it won’t work now. Agreed?

She smiles a little knowingly. Salutes him.

ANNA
Aye-aye, Captain.

MICHAEL
That lacked sincerity.

ANNA
You’re very mistrustful, Michael.

She lowers herself back down on the deck. Closes her eyes again.

ANNA (CONT’D)
We’ll have to work on that.

END OF ACT FOUR