

Shock.

By Ian Kennedy.

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Major Characters

Anthony Burden (48) - *Businessman*

Hard pressed at work for many years running his own business with Stuart, Anthony has secretly passed the running of the company accounts over to his wife Cheryl. Though Anthony has been tearing his hair out over Cheryl's continued high spending while the company has been in trouble, the idea that Cheryl could be stealing from the company is unthinkable to him. He has prevented Stuart from accessing the accounts, so as to conceal his own inability to manage his responsibilities himself. This has now led Stuart to call in his lawyers, while Anthony is also under intense pressure from his bank.

Cheryl Burden (45) – *Wife of Anthony*

Cheryl has been an often demanding wife for Anthony, who has had to keep promising her the wealthy lifestyle she expects throughout their married lives. Increasingly deluded in her belief that Anthony has the money she seeks and has been keeping it from her, Cheryl has come to believe she has a right to whatever she can take from him – and managing the company accounts has given her the chance to do so. But she's covered her tracks well, until now.

Debbie Burden (22) – *Daughter of Anthony and Cheryl*

Caring and attentive to her parents, Debbie has recently graduated and started work in the area. As the only daughter, she's used to playing the peacemaker in her parents' often strained marriage. She adamantly believes that Stuart's accusations against her father are pure lies.

Stuart Truman (49) – *Anthony's business partner and old friend*

Stuart has often been a close friend of Anthony and his family in the past, but has become increasingly hostile to Anthony since the company's finances have come under intense strain. Coming to believe that Anthony has been defrauding the company, Stuart has been rebuffed in his efforts to see the accounts and has now called in his lawyers to investigate. They've already made some findings which make Stuart all the more convinced Anthony is guilty. He plays up to Cheryl and Debbie's newfound contempt for him with a wry sense of humour, fully expecting to be vindicated.

Minor Characters:

- **Jill Bennett (42)** – *Hospital Receptionist*. Professional and level-headed in often difficult circumstances, Jill can be a little inflexible and bureaucratic, to the exasperation of patients and their families – though she doesn't lack compassion and acts kindly when she can.
- **Anji Chapman (27)** – *Hospital Receptionist*.
- **Mr. Keefe (53)** – *Patient*. Gruff, bad tempered and hiding the truth behind the accident which has injured his head.
- **Dr. Aiz Karim (35)** & **Dr. Kim Fossett (42)** – *Casualty Doctors*. Experienced and level-headed.
- **Nurse Mina Shastri (26)** – *Casualty Nurse*. Compassionate and good company, Mina has a winning smile that can charm even the most difficult patients.
- Two **Security Guards**, two **Police Officers** and various **Paramedics**.

Synopsis

Businessman Anthony Burden has been struggling to get his ailing company's finances under control, with threats from his business partner and troubles with his bank over irregularities in the accounts – and a phone call we witness at the outset suggests he might even be being blackmailed or in trouble with a loan shark. He makes a discovery that horrifies him in the accounts and halts the call, as his state deteriorates into a heart attack. He is fortunate to have his daughter Debbie on hand.

While Anthony is being attended in hospital, his wife Cheryl and business partner Stuart arrive and argue outside – Cheryl blames Stuart for bringing Anthony to this state, while Stuart jibes that Anthony's faking it to buy time now Stuart's lawyers are on his back. After a stressful ordeal Cheryl gets the chance to see Anthony – but the sight of her causes him to relapse, to everyone's surprise.

Stuart realises that Anthony's state is genuinely serious, and while he and Debbie try to come to terms with what is happening, Cheryl pulls away to make an important phone call. Debbie overhears her trying to reinstate something by the call, but before Debbie can persuade Cheryl to return and answer the doctors' questions, Cheryl hurries away promising to come back quickly.

While Cheryl ransacks Anthony's study to find the document she needs, Stuart and Debbie piece it all together. They realise that Cheryl, not Anthony, has actually been managing the company accounts and has been siphoning off exorbitant sums to support a lavish lifestyle; discovering this must be what has caused Anthony's heart attack. Stuart remembers that Anthony had always promised his demanding wife a better life, and wonders if she decided to simply take it when she realised he couldn't give it to her. Stuart bitterly regrets his accusations toward Anthony, and his earlier mocking of Anthony's condition.

Before anyone can react and stop her, Cheryl rushes back to Anthony's bedside and tries to force him to sign to reinstate the life assurance policy he has cancelled (among his attempts to control spending). Anthony's heart stops as Cheryl is dragged away kicking and screaming – she accuses Anthony of doing all this to spite her. Debbie and Stuart cannot begin to understand what she has done.

Cheryl is held in a room by hospital security guards pending the arrival of the police. Debbie tries to talk to her mother and is left distraught by Cheryl's attitude and lack of compassion. But as the police arrive, news arrives that Anthony is going to be all right, much to the relief of Debbie and Stuart. They are reunited with Anthony, who can forgive Stuart now he knows what was really happening. They vow to look after each other in the wake of what has happened.

**SC 1. INT. BURDEN HOUSEHOLD, DOWNSTAIRS STUDY. DAY.
16:30 ON A WEEKDAY.**

ANTHONY BURDEN, DEBBIE BURDEN

[ANTHONY BURDEN (48) IS IN AN IMPORTANT BUSINESS CALL AT HIS DESK (TO HIS BANK, ONE-WAY), AND IS LOOKING INCREASINGLY UNWELL. HE HAS HIS ONLINE BANKING ON HIS COMPUTER SCREEN]

ANTHONY:

(DESPERATELY) No, you don't understand, all I need is a little more time and I can get to the bottom of – (WE'VE GONE OVER THIS. LARGE SUMS OF MONEY ARE STILL -) You know I've always paid up, all these years, I've always kept up with payments, given you no trouble, I can't believe you're doing this to me! (LOOSENS COLLAR, GETTING VERY HOT) This'll destroy the business, you can't take that from me! You've got to give me time... (IT'S BEEN GOING ON FOR LONG ENOUGH, SIR.) I've done everything I can. All right my wife wouldn't let me remortgage the house but everything else, everything! Taken out loans, applied for support, cancelled subscriptions, my pension, and all my bills for everything, simply everything! Even my life assurance for God's sake! Just to make these payments – look I've got it all on screen here –

[SCROLLS DOWN THE SCREEN. SUDDENLY NOTICES SOMETHING IN THE ACCOUNT HE HADN'T SEEN BEFORE – MONEY LEAVING THE ACCOUNT TO HIS WIFE'S BANK ACCOUNT, THOUGH WE DON'T SEE THIS – AND HALTS, STUNNED.]

[KEY IN THE FRONT DOOR. DEBBIE (OOV, 22) ENTERS THE HOUSE]

DEBBIE:

(CALLS, OOV) Anyone home? They've let me off early so thought I'd call in...!

[DEBBIE TAKES OFF HER COAT OOV, HEADING FOR THE KITCHEN TO PUT THE KETTLE ON]

ANTHONY:

(TO TELEPHONE, GETTING BREATHLESS.) I... I'm sorry... I'm going to have to call you back... I'm sorry...

[HANGS UP, HIS HAND TREMBLING. STARES AT THE SCREEN, TAKING IN THE IMPLICATIONS. HE BREATHES INCREASINGLY RAPIDLY AND GASPS FOR AIR, HIS EYES ROLLING. HE IS HAVING A HEART ATTACK. HE COLLAPSES TO THE FLOOR. DEBBIE HEARS AND HURRIES IN]

DEBBIE:

(SHOCKED) Dad-!

[ADMINISTERS HASTY FIRST AID – LOOSENS HIS COLLAR FURTHER, TRIES TO THINK WHAT ELSE TO DO]

DEBBIE:

Just try and stay calm! You're having a heart attack! Try to breathe slowly! I'll... call an ambulance!

[PICKS UP PHONE AND DIALS 999]

[LIFTS ANTHONY INTO A HALF-SITTING, HALF-LYING POSITION ON HER LEGS, FOLLOWING HER KNOWLEDGE OF FIRST AID. ANTHONY'S PANIC.]

DEBBIE:

(TO PHONE. WHAT SERVICE PLEASE?) Ambulance! Right now! (JUST A MOMENT - - HELLO AMBULANCE) Hello? Hello! Help, my dad's having a heart attack, you've got to get someone here right away! (TO ANTHONY) Hang on in there Dad! We'll get someone to you!

[ANTHONY BEGINS TO SLIP OUT OF CONSCIOUSNESS]

CUT TO:

SC 2. EXT. CITY CENTRE HIGH STREET. DAY. 16:40

CHERYL BURDEN, DEBBIE (OOV, ON PHONE LINE)

[**CHERYL BURDEN (45)** IS SHOPPING, CARRYING OVERFULL BAGS FROM MAJOR DEPARTMENT STORES AND A DESIGNER HANDBAG. SHE IS SMARTLY DRESSED AND IN EXPENSIVE MAKEUP. HER MOBILE PHONE RINGS TO HER ANNOYANCE, AND SHE HAS TO JUGGLE BAGS WITH DIFFICULTY TO GET TO HER PHONE AND ANSWER IT. DEBBIE IS RINGING HER]

CHERYL:

I'm all tied up with shopping right now Debbie can you –

DEBBIE:

Mum, Dad's had a heart attack!

[CHERYL DROPS THE BAGS IN SHOCK]

CHERYL:

What!

DEBBIE:

The ambulance is just taking him away. I'm going to the hospital with him. I was just getting in when it started, if I hadn't been here...

CHERYL:

But is he all right!

DEBBIE:

Mum he's had a heart attack!

CHERYL:

Have the doctors said anything!

CUT TO:

**SC 3. EXT. STREET OUTSIDE THE BURDEN HOUSEHOLD. DAY.
1641.**

DEBBIE, CHERYL, (PARAMEDICS)

[CONTINUOUS]

[DEBBIE IS BESIDE THE AMBULANCE TALKING TO
CHERYL ON HER MOBILE, AS ANTHONY ON A TROLLEY
BED IS BEING PUT ONTO IT BY TWO PARAMEDICS]

DEBBIE:

They've got to get him to hospital right away, I'm going with them.

CHERYL:

(OOV, ON THE LINE) Which hospital? Where?

DEBBIE:

Burnt Cross.

CHERYL:

I'll be right there. You just hang on in there honey, keep talking to him and I'll be right there.

DEBBIE:

OK Mum. Thanks.

[DEBBIE HANGS UP. DEBBIE'S CONCERN FOR ANTHONY.]

[SHE GETS INTO THE AMBULANCE WITH HIM]

CUT TO:

SC 4. EXT. CITY CENTRE HIGH STREET. DAY. 1641.

CHERYL

[CONTINUOUS]

[CHERYL HANGS UP BUT KEEPS HER PHONE IN HAND NOW. SHE GRABS HER BAGS AND HURRIES AWAY, BUT HER PHONE RINGS AGAIN. SHE BREATHLESSLY ANSWERS STRAIGHT AWAY, STILL WALKING THIS TIME]

CHERYL:

Yes!

CUT TO:

SC 5. INT. STUART’S OFFICE. DAY. 16:42.

STUART TRUMAN, CHERYL (OOV ON PHONE LINE)

[CONTINUOUS]

[**STUART TRUMAN (49)** IS LOUNGING BACK IN HIS OFFICE SEAT, WITH HIS FEET UP ON THE DESK, LOOKING QUITE ARROGANT. THE CALL IS ON A SPEAKER PHONE AND WHEN HE HEARS CHERYL HE GIVES IT HIS ATTENTION, CLICKING A BUTTON ON IT TO SPEAK, WHILE ALSO TYPING INTO HIS COMPUTER WITH ONE HAND. KNOWS HE IS HATED AND PLAYS UP TO IT.]

STUART:

(SMUGLY) Ah Cheryl – glad you’ve finished your little call, it’s Stuart. Wondered if you could pass a message onto your evasive husband for me, about our business...? Doesn’t seem to want to speak to me, can’t for the life of me think why...

CHERYL:

(OOV ON PHONE, IN CONTEMPT) Stuart he’s had a heart attack.

STUART:

(CHUCKLES) You’re joking!

CHERYL:

(FURIOUSLY) Do I *sound* like I’m joking!

[STUART RAISES AN EYEBROW AND STOPS TYPING, ONLY SLIGHTLY OUT OF HIS STRIDE]

STUART:

Well I never... So, ah, what’s happened, how is he?

CHERYL:

He’s at Burnt Cross Hospital. They’re taking him there now. That’s all I know.

STUART:

(WRY) I’d better get over there...

CHERYL:

(COLDLY) I'm not sure he'd want you there Stuart, given how things have been with you two lately!

STUART:

That's exactly why I ought to be there... make sure he's really all right.

CHERYL:

You're not taking this seriously at all are you! He's been your business partner and your friend for thirty years!

STUART:

Of course I'm taking it seriously. Whatever our problems he's still my friend and I want to be there to know he's all right.

CHERYL:

You leave business out of it Stuart. I'm warning you.

STUART:

Loud and clear. D'you need a lift?

CHERYL:

No, my car's with me in town.

STUART:

Shopping? With things the way they are?

CHERYL:

You mind your own business, for God's sake Stuart.

STUART:

See you there.

[STUART PRESSES A BUTTON TO HANG UP. STUART'S CURIOSITY.]

CUT TO:

SC 6. EXT. CITY CENTRE HIGH STREET. DAY. 16:42.

CHERYL

[CONTINUOUS.]

[CHERYL FUMES AND HANGS UP HER END OF THE CALL ON HER MOBILE, ANGRILY SHOVING THE PHONE INTO HER HANDBAG.]

CHERYL:

(ANGRY, OF STUART) You'll be the death of us all.

CUT TO:

**SC 7. EXT. HOSPITAL, OUTSIDE THE MAIN ENTRANCE TO
ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY RECEPTION. DAY. 17:00**

DEBBIE, CHERYL, STUART

[DEBBIE WAITS ANXIOUSLY FOR FURTHER NEWS AS
HER MOTHER ARRIVES ON FOOT FROM THE HOSPITAL
CAR PARK. THEY EMBRACE]

DEBBIE:

(DEEPLY RELIEVED TO HAVE SOME SUPPORT AT LAST) Oh Mum...

CHERYL:

Debbie... how is he!

DEBBIE:

Stable, for now, that's what they said – they've got him on a drip and a heart monitor. Mum it was terrible...

CHERYL:

Is he going to be all right!

DEBBIE:

I don't know, I know they're all doing the best they can but I wish they would tell me more...

CHERYL:

(FRANTIC) Why aren't you in there!

DEBBIE:

They wanted all non-medical staff out of the way. I came out here to wait for you. They'll tell us when we can go in again. Please Mum, you've got to calm down, panicking's not going to help anything.

CHERYL:

Have you rung his parents and John yet!

DEBBIE:

No. Until we know how he is, I thought it'd just be more to worry about. We don't need a crowd here.

CHERYL:

(BITTER) I'm afraid Stuart's on his way.

DEBBIE:

Him! The man that's caused all this, with all these months of horrid lies about Dad! Why did you tell him!

CHERYL:

He rang right after you did, I thought it was you with more news... I was in shock, how could I not tell him!

DEBBIE:

Dad can't see Stuart, not in this state! It's Stuart that's brought him to this, you know. It sounded like a business call Dad was making just before this happened, a bad one – bet it was Stuart trying to wring every last penny out of him.

[UNSEEN BY THEM, STUART IS APPROACHING FROM A DISTANCE, STILL WITH AN ARROGANT SWAGGER.]

CHERYL:

Look we can't make a scene. If Stuart knows what's good for him he'll leave business out of it.

DEBBIE:

You're right. Oh but it makes me so mad! The things he's put Dad through. And he doesn't care.

[CHERYL SEES STUART APPROACHING.]

CHERYL:

That's him coming. I can't face him, I'm going to see Anthony.

[MAKES TO GO INTO THE HOSPITAL BUT DEBBIE HOLDS HER BACK.]

DEBBIE:

We can't yet. You can't leave me to face Stuart on my own.

CHERYL:

I've got to see him! He could be dying in there!

DEBBIE:

Please Mum... they're doing all they can.

[STUART ARRIVES, PUTTING ON A CLEARLY
INSINCERE TONE OF CONDOLENCE]

STUART:

Cheryl! Debbie! Sorry to have to meet you under these circumstances...

DEBBIE:

(UNDER HER BREATH) Under any circumstances...

[STUART KISSES THEM BOTH ON THE CHEEK. THEY
RECEIVE IT UNWILLINGLY.]

CHERYL:

(THROUGH GRITTED TEETH) Hello Stuart.

[DEBBIE IS SILENT]

STUART:

So what's he said he's got then?

DEBBIE:

(HOSTILE) He was having a heart attack. I'd just dropped in when it started.

STUART:

Good timing! Very fortuitous. So nothing too serious?

CHERYL:

Stuart he's had a heart attack!

STUART:

He's all right though isn't he?

DEBBIE:

We don't know.

STUART:

Interesting it should happen just when I've called in the lawyers. Buys him a couple of weeks' grace before the inevitable.

CHERYL:

(FURIOUS) If I hear another word of that from you today *you'll* be the one in surgery. You're the reason this has happened, I can't believe the way you've

treated him. Thirty five years you were his friend – I can't believe we misjudged you for so long.

STUART:

(FIRMLY) Maybe it's *him* you've been misjudging all this time. He's always handled the accounts. He's been hiding over a hundred and thirty thousand pounds that should have been there, God knows what he's been doing with it. He's brought all this on himself. If you knew the things my lawyers are finding in those accounts...

DEBBIE:

(DEFIANT, JUMPS IN) Well, Mum knows those accounts as well as anyone! You can't fool us about what's in them!

STUART:

(TO CHERYL, SURPRISED) You do?

CHERYL:

(UNCOMFORTABLY) Well, yes – I have seen those accounts. And Anthony's done nothing wrong, there's nothing unfair been coming out of them. He's always been overcautious with money, never reckless! Against my advice he's been stripping down *everything* since things have been tight, far more than he needed to – I mean, I found out today he's even cancelled his life assurance! Beggars belief... especially now...

DEBBIE:

(TRIUMPHANT) See, your threats are no good here! How can you be so heartless, harassing your friend with your lies, even now you've given him a heart attack! You're a heartless, cynical, opportunist... (BASTARD) – wear a man down so you can fleece him for all he's got.

STUART:

(CHANGES TACK. TO CHERYL) So your weekly high street shopping sprees still have his blessing do they? That figures...

CHERYL:

We can't let your lies stop us living our lives.

STUART:

And what fortunate, wealthy lives they are... I wish I could live like you do Cheryl, the travelling and the shopping and the health spas... but I've never seen money like that, not out of our business. How does Anthony manage it!

DEBBIE:

That is so low and despicable. My dad could be dying through there! I can't believe your nerve.

[CHERYL TURNS IN DISGUST TO LEAVE]

CHERYL:

I'm going to see him.

[STUART ALSO MAKES TO GO, WITH A SPRING IN HIS STEP]

STUART:

Ah yes, let's go perk him up shall we? Have him out of here in no time.

[CHERYL TURNS BACK TO STOP HIM]

CHERYL:

You're not going anywhere.

DEBBIE:

You go in Mum. I'll wait here with Stuart.

STUART:

Suit yourselves. He can't delay the inevitable forever.

CHERYL:

I'll call the police if you go near that ward! I'm warning you!

STUART:

And I'll call them to get him out of there if it turns out he's faking it. Deal?

[CHERYL SHAKES HER HEAD IN DISBELIEF AND WALKS AWAY. STUART MOVES TO TALK TO DEBBIE AND SHE TURNS HER BACK BEFORE HE CAN START.]

STUART:

Hmm – suit yourselves. We'll get to the bottom of this sooner or later.

CUT TO:

SC 8. INT. HOSPITAL ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY RECEPTION.
DAY. 17:10

CHERYL, RECEPTIONISTS JILL BENNETT & ANJI CHAPMAN, MR KEEFE.

[THE WAITING ROOM, ADJACENT ACCIDENT & EMERGENCY RECEPTION AND ITS TWO RECEPTIONISTS ARE BUSY. CHERYL WALKS INTO THE HOSPITAL AND STRAIGHT TOWARD THE WARD. A RECEPTIONIST **JILL BENNETT (42)** CALLS OUT TO STOP HER.]

JILL:

Madam! You can't go through there!

CHERYL:

(ON EDGE) I'm Mrs. Burden! My husband could be dying in there! I'm not going to stand around so –

JILL:

You'll need to speak to us here first. Can I ask you to wait until we've dealt with these people here?

CHERYL:

(EXASPERATED) If anything happens to him while I'm waiting here-!

[**MR. KEEFE (53)**, A MALE PATIENT WITH A BANDAGED HEAD WHO IS BY THE DESK, TURNS TO CHERYL, AS CHERYL IRRITABLY ENTERS THE RECEPTION AREA AND WAITS IMPATIENTLY TO BE SPOKEN TO.]

KEEFE:

(TO CHERYL) Hey I'm going, no skin off my nose, she can have you for all it means to me.

JILL:

(TO KEEFE, PUTTING A FORM BEFORE HIM) Now if you're going to discharge yourself early against the doctor's orders –

KEEFE:

Monitoring, it's all just an excuse to keep me in so the doctor can take his time and have a cuppa, I don't need it!

JILL:

Well, the doctors think it's in your best interest sir. But if you insist on leaving, first you'll have to sign this disclaimer here, waiving responsibility if they haven't had time to pick up on everything that's wrong with you.

KEEFE:

I fell, all right, happens all the time. Course I'll sign your bloody form, I'm right as rain.

CHERYL:

(URGENTLY) Excuse me!

JILL:

(TO CHERYL) If you can just wait a moment madam... (TO KEEFE) We know it's more serious than a knock on the head sir, and if you're not going to help us treat you –

CHERYL:

(ABRUPTLY) He said he's fine!

JILL:

The doctors don't think he's fine and we'd much prefer it if he could stay here overnight.

KEEFE:

You must be joking, overnight cos of a bump on the 'ead, you want us all to walk round with crash helmets on all the bloody while!

JILL:

It's for your own good sir. But if you don't want further treatment we'll have to accept your signature.

KEEFE:

All right I've read it, whole lot of fuss over nothing, where do I sign?

CHERYL:

(DESPERATELY) Excuse me! My husband's having a heart attack through there! When am I going to see him!

JILL:

(TO KEEFE) Just by the crosses sir, there and there. (TO CHERYL)

Madam as I understand it Mr. Burden can't receive visitors yet but as soon as Mr. Keefe here has formally discharged himself I can find out for you.

[KEEFE SIGNS THE FORM.]

CHERYL:

(TO KEEFE) Please hurry!

KEEFE:

Done! There you are woman.

[KEEFE PUSHES FORM BACK TO RECEPTIONIST
AND BEGINS TO LEAVE.]

JILL:

Just a moment sir I have to check it...

[JILL LOOKS OVER THE DOCUMENT.]

CHERYL:

(EXPLODES) Oh for goodness sake!

JILL:

Thank you sir. You're free to go.

[KEEFE LEAVES THE HOSPITAL.]

KEEFE:

(TO CHERYL) Bout bloody time. Yer welcome to 'er.

JILL:

(TO CHERYL) Madam. You want to know about your husband, Mr. Burden...

CHERYL:

I have to see him.

JILL:

(NOT WANTING TO DISCUSS IT WITH THE DOCTORS IN CHERYL'S PRESENCE) Well, I'll just go round now and see what the doctor says. Can you wait here for me?

CHERYL:

But how long is this going to take! It's very important!

JILL:

I'll be as quick as I can madam. Obviously Mr. Burden has been in a critical condition and so far we've needed to keep him in a contained environment.

CHERYL:

You've got to hurry.

JILL:

I'll do the best I can, madam. (TO SECOND RECEPTIONIST ANJI CHAPMAN (27)) Just going through to see Mr. Burden's progress, Anji.

ANJI:

(STILL DEALING WITH ANOTHER PATIENT) OK Jill.

[JILL GOES THROUGH TO THE WARD. CHERYL IS LEFT WAITING, ON TENTERHOOKS.]

CUT TO:

SC 9. EXT. HOSPITAL, OUTSIDE THE A&E ENTRANCE. DAY.
17:15.

DEBBIE, STUART

[DEBBIE AND STUART ARE STILL WAITING OUTSIDE THE HOSPITAL BUILDING, WITH DEBBIE CONTINUING HER HOSTILE SILENCE TOWARD STUART. STUART TRIES TO RESTART CONVERSATION.]

STUART:

She's a strong-minded woman, your mother. I've often wondered how she stuck it with Anthony.

DEBBIE:

No wonder. You'd never understand.

STUART:

Maybe not. But maybe that's why I'm interested.

DEBBIE:

(ABRUPTLY) Why have you come here, Stuart? Why don't you just leave?

STUART:

I'm here to make sure the old boy's really as bad as you say. If he is, then of course he has my full sympathies, and as a gesture of goodwill I'll hold off the investigations till he's well enough to help us properly, and naturally I'll do all I can to help him have a speedy and full recovery. But let's just say I remain to be convinced.

DEBBIE:

You're just a shark in the water, you are. Circling cos you've smelled blood.

STUART:

(WE SEE A MORE REGRETFUL SIDE TO HIM) What's happened to us, Debbie. Remember how we used to run and play together when you were a kid? How can you believe I'm such a monster?

DEBBIE:

It's you that changed, you tell me.

STUART:

Don't put so much stock in your convictions, Debbie. I'm the wronged party here – you'll see.

DEBBIE:

I can't believe you can be so cynical, so... manipulative, at a moment like this!

STUART:

(SIGHS AND CHANGES TONE AGAIN. COLDER) Tell me Debbie – just how well does your mother know those accounts? All the ins and outs?

DEBBIE:

Better than you think. You won't get away with this, you won't pull the wool over her eyes. Just cos Dad's ill doesn't mean she won't be able to stop you.

STUART:

(THREATENINGLY) Well Debbie, she'd better know those accounts very, very well. Because I've found out just what has come out, and when, and where, and how. When he's better your father is looking at a long, long spell in prison. And coming out of this heart attack, Debbie? If it's for real? (MORE SLOWLY) Some people *never* recover from a blow like that.

[LETS IT SINK IN. DEBBIE'S FEAR AND UNCERTAINTY.]

CUT TO:

SC 10. INT. HOSPITAL RECEPTION. DAY. 17:17.

CHERYL, ANJI, YOUNG MALE PATIENT AND HIS MOTHER

[CHERYL IS PACING ABOUT NEAR THE RECEPTION DESK, DISTURBING THE PEACE AROUND HER. THE SECOND RECEPTIONIST IS DEALING WITH A YOUNG BOY AND HIS MOTHER]

ANJI:

(TO BOY) Now you watch yourself on those playgrounds from now on, eh!

CHERYL:

(TO ANJI INTERRUPTING) How long is she going to be!

ANJI:

It's clearly a sensitive situation, Mrs. Burden. The doctors have to decide what will be best for your husband's health at this point.

CHERYL:

I can't believe this...

[CHERYL'S TORMENT.]

CUT TO:

**SC 11. INT. WARD CORRIDOR NEAR ANTHONY’S BED. DAY.
17:18.**

DR. KARIM, DR. FOSSETT, JILL

[**DR. AIZ KARIM (35) AND DR. KIM FOSSETT (42) ARE DISCUSSING ANTHONY’S CONDITION WITH RECEPTIONIST JILL, AROUND A CORNER OUT OF EARSHOT OF ANTHONY’S BED.**]

JILL:

She is desperate to see him, Aiz, she’s clearly very anxious for him. She might be a case herself if she can’t see him soon!

DR. KARIM:

Well, I think it would do him good now to see a friendly face. He’s well enough to take it, don’t you think Kim?

DR. FOSSETT:

I think so. He’s quite stable, fairly alert... this could have been a lot worse if his daughter hadn’t been there, considering his blood pressure. But now, maybe this’ll be just what he needs, to know he’s on the road to recovery. But we need to be careful about exciting him further.

DR. KARIM:

Maybe she can help us understand what triggered the attack, he’s very reluctant to talk about it.

JILL:

All right, well if Mina can come with me to escort Mrs. Burden through, I’ll send her in.

DR. FOSSETT:

All right.

DR. KARIM:

I’ll let him know and send Mina round to reception.

[**JILL LEAVES AND DR. KARIM WALKS AROUND TO ANTHONY’S BED. DR. FOSSETT ALSO MOVES ON**]

CUT TO:

SC 12. INT. HOSPITAL WARD, ANTHONY’S BED. DAY. 17:19.

ANTHONY, MINA

[ANTHONY IS STILL BEING CAREFULLY MONITORED, CONNECTED TO AN ECG MACHINE AND AN INTRAVENOUS DRIP, BUT LOOKING STEADY AND SHARING A LIGHT JOKE WITH HIS NURSE **MINA SHASTRI (26, ATTRACTIVE)**, WHO IS CHECKING HIS TEMPERATURE.]

MINA:

(TO ANTHONY) Well you’ll have to watch out for that from now on won’t you!

ANTHONY:

(CHUCKLES)

DR. KARIM:

Good news Mr. Burden! Mina, can you come to reception for me?

MINA:

Of course.

[MINA LEAVES]

ANTHONY:

What is it?

DR. KARIM:

Well – we thought now you’re on the road to recovery, we should help you settle in a bit. Mina will be back in a moment with a nice surprise.

ANTHONY:

Oh, she’s the kind of girl who’s full of surprises I’m sure!

[DR KARIM LAUGHS POLITELY WITH ANTHONY]

CUT TO:

SC 13. INT. HOSPITAL RECEPTION. DAY. 17:20.

CHERYL, JILL, MINA

[CHERYL IS STILL ANXIOUSLY WAITING AT THE RECEPTION DESK. JILL RE-ENTERS FROM THE WARD AND CHERYL IMMEDIATELY ADDRESSES HER.]

CHERYL:

Can I see him!

JILL:

(GLADLY) Mr. Burden's been through quite an ordeal, but he's stable and conscious now. The doctors are happy for you to see him.

CHERYL:

(VERY RELIEVED) Oh thank goodness! I thought I'd never see him again, that it was all too late. Thank you, thank you.

JILL:

My pleasure. Just be careful not to excite him, Mrs. Burden – he's still in a very sensitive state. But the doctors thought your presence might help to calm him.

CHERYL:

Well seeing him will calm me, that's for sure.

[MINA ENTERS FROM THE WARD]

JILL:

(TO MINA) Ah Mina, could you take Mrs. Burden here to her husband?

MINA:

(TO JILL) Of course. (MORE CLEARLY TO CHERYL) Mrs. Burden?

CHERYL:

Yes! Yes, that's me!

MINA:

(TO CHERYL) Would you like to come this way?

CHERYL:

Oh most definitely.

[MINA LEADS CHERYL INTO THE WARD.]

SC 14. INT. HOSPITAL WARD. DAY. 17:21.

MINA, CHERYL

[MINA AND CHERYL HEAD TOWARDS ANTHONY’S BED.]

MINA:

He’s through here, Mrs. Burden. Now you know not to get him excited, don’t you. Mr. Burden’s coming through a very traumatic experience.

CHERYL:

Oh yes, of course.

CUT TO:

SC 15. INT. HOSPITAL WARD, ANTHONY’S BED. DAY. 1727

ANTHONY, DR. KARIM, MINA, CHERYL

[ANTHONY LIES IN BED AS DR. KARIM FINISHES CHECKING HIS CARDIOGRAPH.]

DR. KARIM:

Ah – here she is.

[MINA LEADS CHERYL IN.]

MINA:

Mrs. Burden for you, Anthony.

CHERYL:

(BURSTS) Oh Anthony thank the Lord, I thought I’d lost you, lost everything, you can’t know what it’s been like –

[UPON SIGHT OF CHERYL, ANTHONY UNEXPECTEDLY BEGINS HYPERVENTILATING. HIS HEART READING JUMPS OUT OF CONTROL – HE IS GOING INTO SHOCK. HIS EYES ARE FIXED UPON CHERYL IN HORROR. DR. KARIM REACTS QUICKLY]

DR. KARIM:

Nurse! Call Doctor Fossett immediately!

[MINA HURRIES OFF TO FIND DR. FOSSETT. DR. KARIM PULLS AN OXYGEN MASK ON ANTHONY. CHERYL IS DISORIENTATED AND STUNNED – WE WATCH HER BEWILDERMENT AS THE DOCTORS GO TO WORK.]

MINA:

(CALLS, OOV) Doctor Fossett!

DR. KARIM:

(TO ANTHONY) Take deep breaths Mr. Burden – try to relax... (TO CHERYL) Madam, we need you to leave this area immediately.

CHERYL:

But – but –

[MINA ARRIVES WITH DR. FOSSETT, WHO IMMEDIATELY GOES TO HELP DR. KARIM. KARIM GIVES ANTHONY AN INJECTION VIA THE INTRAVENOUS DRIP]

DR. KARIM:

Be ready with the defibrillator – administering epinephrine –

[DR. FOSSETT PREPARES ANTHONY AND THE MACHINE FOR DEFIBRILLATION]

DR. FOSSETT:

(URGENTLY) Mina, can you escort Mrs. Burden from the ward please?

MINA:

(TO CHERYL) Please come with me madam.

[MINA USHERS CHERYL AWAY BUT CHERYL RESISTS.]

CHERYL:

But I have to talk to him!

MINA:

(FIRMLY) Madam he's in no state for it. You have to come with me now.

[RELUCTANTLY, CHERYL IS LED AWAY.]

CHERYL:

(CALLS BACK FEARFULLY) I'll come back Anthony!

[ANTHONY'S HORROR AND ABJECT FEAR.]

CUT TO:

SC 16. EXT. OUTSIDE THE HOSPITAL. DAY. 17:23.

CHERYL, DEBBIE, STUART

[STUNNED, CHERYL STUMBLES OUT TO FIND
DEBBIE AND STUART.]

DEBBIE:

Mum! Mum, what's wrong!

CHERYL:

(DOESN'T LOOK AT THEM, STILL FIXATED UPON WHAT SHE'S
SEEN) He relapsed, while I was there! I saw it happen!

STUART:

(BELIEVING HER NOW, TOTAL CHANGE OF ATTITUDE) Good God, is
he all right?

CHERYL:

He... he...

DEBBIE:

Mum what happened! What's happening to him!

CHERYL:

They... they're having to... it's bad, really bad...

DEBBIE:

Oh my God...

STUART:

(STUNNED) Cheryl, I am so so sorry... if I'd thought for one second that he
was... I'm so sorry.

[DEBBIE GASPS AND EMBRACES HER MOTHER
WHO DOESN'T RESPOND]

DEBBIE:

(EMOTIONAL) What are we going to do Mum! What's going to happen!

CHERYL:

I... I have to make some calls.

[CHERYL PULLS AWAY FROM THE EMBRACE AND WALKS AWAY TO MAKE A CALL ON HER MOBILE.]

DEBBIE:

(BEWILDERED) Mum! Where are you going!

STUART:

(PULLS HIMSELF TOGETHER, ACTING DECISIVELY) Come on Debbie. Let's find out what's happening.

[STUART TAKES A STUNNED DEBBIE'S ARM AND LEADS HER INSIDE. DEBBIE WATCHES HER MOTHER BEGINNING TO SPEAK INTO THE PHONE AS SHE IS LED.]

CUT TO:

SC 17. EXT. NEARBY, OUTSIDE THE HOSPITAL. DAY. 17:26.

CHERYL

[CHERYL IS IN THE MIDDLE OF A FRAUGHT PHONE CALL ON HER MOBILE PHONE (ONE-WAY TO ANTHONY'S FORMER LIFE ASSURERS), OBLIVIOUS TO THE COMING AND GOING OF AMBULANCES AND OTHER EMERGENCIES UNFOLDING ALL AROUND HER.]

CHERYL:

No you don't understand – he never meant to cancel it, it's all a mistake... We need it back immediately... (HE'LL HAVE TO DISCUSS IT WITH US PERSONALLY.) Well he's not in a state to do that right now, can't I do it for him! (NO MADAM, HE WOULD HAVE TO DO THAT, AND IT'LL HAVE TO BE A NEW POLICY.) ...Do you know how important this is! – Put me through to your manager, I'm not talking to some call centre girl, get me someone qualified. (I'M FULLY TRAINED, MADAM, AND THAT'S OUR POLICY.) I don't care, this is a life or death situation. (WELL, I'LL PUT YOU THROUGH TO OUR MANAGER, BUT HE'LL SAY THE SAME. PLEASE HOLD THE LINE MRS. BURDEN...) Yes, thank you! About time...

CUT TO:

SC 18. INT. HOSPITAL RECEPTION. DAY. 17:26.

STUART, DEBBIE, JILL

[A CONCERNED STUART AND DEBBIE REACH THE RECEPTION, STUART STILL LEADING DEBBIE BY THE ARM. DEBBIE IS REELING UNDER THE STRAIN OF THE SITUATION.]

STUART:

(TO RECEPTIONISTS, LOUDLY) We're with Anthony Burden, what's happening!

JILL:

Mr. Burden's gone into shock sir. The doctors are working on him now. I'll bring you news as quickly as we can.

STUART:

Can we see him!

JILL:

No, he needs to be kept in isolation for now. We'll tell you as soon as anything changes.

STUART:

Not even his daughter!

JILL:

No-one sir. Why don't you take a seat in the waiting area so we can call for you as soon as there's news.

STUART:

(TO HIMSELF) My God Anthony... you poor man, what have you done to yourself.

JILL:

Is Mrs. Burden with you? The doctors want to talk to her, as quickly as possible.

STUART:

Something you can't talk to us about!

JILL:

They have some questions for her.

STUART:

What sort of questions? If it's about medical history or anything Debbie will know –

JILL:

Sir, it was seeing his wife that made Mr. Burden relapse. We need to know why.

STUART:

(SURPRISED, TURNS TO DEBBIE) Debbie – you have to get your mother, she won't listen to me. I'll wait here. Quickly Debbie, Anthony's life could depend on it.

DEBBIE:

(STRUGGLING TO FOCUS) I – yes – I'll find her.

[DEBBIE LEAVES.]

CUT TO:

SC 19. EXT. OUTSIDE THE HOSPITAL. DAY. 17:27.

DEBBIE, PARAMEDICS, CHERYL

[DEBBIE GETS OUTSIDE AND LOOKS AROUND TO FIND HER MOTHER – BUT INEXPLICABLY, CHERYL IS NOWHERE TO BE SEEN AMONG THE AMBULANCES COMING AND GOING. A PANICKED DEBBIE RUNS AROUND CALLING TO THE AMBULANCE PARAMEDICS AND ANYONE ELSE NEARBY TO HELP HER.]

DEBBIE:

Mum! Mum! – Have you seen her! Have you seen her!

PARAMEDIC 1:

Who?

DEBBIE:

My mother!

PARAMEDIC 1:

We've only just got here...

[DEBBIE RUNS ON]

DEBBIE:

Has anyone seen my mother!

[NO REPLY. DEBBIE RUNS ROUND A CORNER, BUT STILL NO SIGN. HER GROWING PANIC. SHE RETURNS TO THE AMBULANCES]

DEBBIE:

Someone must have seen her!

PARAMEDIC 2:

(POINTING TOWARD CAR PARK) Could that be her?

[DEBBIE LOOKS TO FIND CHERYL STILL ON THE PHONE SOME DISTANCE AWAY AND DRIFTING FURTHER AWAY FROM THE HOSPITAL, NEARING A GRASSY VERGE ON THE WAY TO THE HOSPITAL CAR PARK.]

DEBBIE:
(YELLS) Mum!

CUT TO:

SC 20. HOSPITAL, BETWEEN ACCIDENT & EMERGENCY AND VISITOR CAR PARK. 17:28.

CHERYL, DEBBIE

[CONTINUOUS]

[CHERYL IS DRIFTING AWAY FROM THE ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY UNIT TOWARDS HER CAR, DEEPLY PREOCCUPIED WITH THE CONTINUING MOBILE PHONE CALL.]

[DEBBIE IS RUNNING OVER CALLING TO HER MOTHER]

CHERYL:

So you mean unless he reinstates it himself there's no way we can be covered! – Well then – he'll find a way! He knows how important this is!

DEBBIE:

(ARRIVING)

Mum!

CHERYL:

We'll make it work, somehow! You'll see!

[CHERYL HANGS UP AND STRIDES TOWARD HER CAR.]

DEBBIE:

(STRUGGLES TO GET HER ATTENTION) Mum – Mum they've managed to get him stable, but they're very concerned. They want to talk to you.

CHERYL:

(BUSTLES ON) Stable for how long! We're running out of time.

DEBBIE:

Mum don't talk like that! Please we've got to support him now or he'll never get through this. Come back inside, the doctors need to talk to you.

CHERYL:

There's no time Debbie, I've got to go.

[CHERYL HURRIES OFF, UNLOCKING HER CAR BY REMOTE]

DEBBIE:

Go! What do you mean!

[DEBBIE TRIES TO FOLLOW CHERYL]

DEBBIE:

Mum we need you here!

[CHERYL LEAVES A BEWILDERED DEBBIE BEHIND, GETTING IN THE CAR AND STARTING THE ENGINE]

CHERYL:

I'll be back right away, don't you worry about that!

DEBBIE:

(IN DISBELIEF) But *Mum*...!

[CHERYL PULLS AWAY RAPIDLY.]

[IT'S ALL TOO MUCH FOR DEBBIE AS SHE WATCHES CHERYL DISAPPEAR – SHE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.]

CUT TO:

SC 21. INT. HOSPITAL RECEPTION. DAY. 17:34.

DEBBIE, STUART, JILL, ANJI

[AFTER A FEW MINUTES STUMBLING SLOWLY BACK, DEBBIE DRAGS HERSELF INTO THE RECEPTION, SEEMINGLY ON THE POINT OF COLLAPSING. STUART, SAT IN THE WAITING AREA, SEES HER IMMEDIATELY AND RUSHES OVER, CATCHING HER.]

STUART:

Debbie! Debbie are you all right!

DEBBIE:

(TEARFUL) Stuart what's happening... what's going on!

STUART:

I wish I knew, Debbie, I wish I did.

DEBBIE:

Is... there any news.

[DEBBIE BEGINS TO CRY]

STUART:

No. Look, you must come and sit down. It's gonna be all right, I promise. (TO RECEPTIONISTS) Is there somewhere quiet we can go?

JILL:

(TO ANJI) Isn't one of the nurse's rooms free?

ANJI:

(TO JILL) Yes – why don't you take them through?

JILL:

(TO STUART AND DEBBIE) Come with me.

[JILL COMES FROM BEHIND THE DESK AND LEADS STUART AND DEBBIE TO AN EMPTY NURSE'S ROOM, BESIDE THE ENTRANCE TO THE WARD ANTHONY IS ON. STUART GUIDES A SHAKY DEBBIE.]

SC 22. INT. HOSPITAL, NURSE'S ROOM. DAY. 17:35.

JILL, STUART, DEBBIE

[JILL LEADS STUART AND DEBBIE IN. STUART SITS DEBBIE DOWN ON THE PATIENTS' BED, STAYING CLOSE TO HER WHILE SHE IS EMOTIONAL.]

JILL:

Is there anything we can get you?

STUART:

(LOOKING AROUND) I'll sort us some water, looks like there's some cups. It's alright, we'll call you if we need you. Can you leave the door open?

JILL:

Sure.

[JILL LEAVES, LEAVING THE DOOR OPEN. STUART FINDS A CUP AND POURS DEBBIE SOME WATER FROM A TAP. HE HANDS IT TO HER BEFORE SITTING DOWN]

STUART:

Here.

[DEBBIE SIPS IT. SHE IS BEGINNING TO CALM DOWN THOUGH STILL FRAGILE. SILENCE]

STUART:

You asked me what's going on. What do you think's going on?

DEBBIE:

(HOARSE) You tell me. You're the one who's been acting like you know everything.

STUART:

Well I don't right now. Something's not right about all this. And your mother knows what it is.

DEBBIE:

Look. It'll all come out in the end. Why can't we just sit here and wait for news.

STUART:

(CONCENTRATING) Because it was seeing her that made your dad relapse. Whatever it was that gave him the heart attack, seeing your mother brought it all back. (BEAT) How can that be? The woman he's been married to for twenty five years?

DEBBIE:

(VERY DRAINED) I don't know, Stuart, I don't know.

STUART:

What he's been keeping from her... or her from him... Why didn't she come back in with you? They need to speak with her –

DEBBIE:

She said she had to go, alright, she needed to go.

STUART:

Where can she possibly need to go at a time like this!

DEBBIE:

Look, she'd been on the phone, something important.

STUART:

What was she talking about?

DEBBIE:

(IRRITABLY) Something about reinstating something urgently, I don't know Stuart! Can't you just leave it.

STUART:

(THINKS) Reinstating... Anthony's life assurance maybe?

DEBBIE:

(SNAPS) Life assurance, Christian faith, Season ticket!! ...Honestly, Stuart...!

STUART:

Cheryl said he'd suspended his life assurance, one of his desperate measures to cut costs and keep the company alive. She said she couldn't believe it.

[WHILE STUART CONTINUES, WE SEE A SEQUENCE AT ANTHONY AND CHERYL'S HOUSE.]

CUT TO:

SC 23. EXT. OUTSIDE THE BURDENS' HOUSE. DAY. 17:36.

CHERYL, STUART (OOV VOICEOVER)

[CONTINUOUS]

[RAPIDLY EDITED SEQUENCE. CHERYL ARRIVES AT THE HOUSE IN HER CAR AND RUNS INSIDE, AS STUART (OOV, VOICEOVER FROM HOSPITAL) CONTINUES TO REALISE WHAT'S HAPPENING. FOCUS ON THE EXPENSIVE HOUSE AND CAR.]

STUART: (VOICEOVER)

She prevented Anthony from re-mortgaging the house, or from selling any of their assets...

[CHERYL ENTERS THE HOUSE.]

CUT TO:

SC 24. INT. BURDEN HOUSEHOLD, STUDY. DAY. 17:36.

CHERYL, STUART (OOV, VOICEOVER)

[CONTINUOUS]

[CHERYL RUSHES THROUGH AND BEGINS RIFLING THROUGH ANTHONY'S FILES AND PAPERS FOR WHAT SHE IS LOOKING FOR, DESPERATION AND A DISTURBING INTENSITY ON HER FACE.]

STUART: (OOV, VOICEOVER)

(SLOWLY PIECING IT TOGETHER)

She's carried on spending, throughout the troubles with the bank, hasn't she, I know it was driving Anthony crazy. Clothes, cosmetics, furniture... a new car, redecorating the home... there was even a holiday in Barbados...

CUT TO:

SC 25. INT. HOSPITAL, NURSE'S ROOM. DAY. 17:36

DEBBIE, STUART

[FOCUS ON DEBBIE'S INTENSE DENIAL AND INTERRUPTION.]

DEBBIE:

(HOTLY) She won that holiday! She told us so.

STUART:

(SADLY) Debbie, I've tracked all the transactions. I know.

DEBBIE:

What are you trying to say, Stuart! Go on! You can't resist, can you!

STUART:

Cheryl did a lot more than just keep an eye on the accounts, didn't she. Anthony let her manage them.

DEBBIE:

(BURSTS) He was so snowed under with work! You never let the pressure drop off him for a moment! Mum promised she would look after them... how could he not trust her, what else could he do?

STUART:

(SHAKY, REMORSEFUL) I think I've made a terrible mistake... I'm so sorry Debbie. It wasn't Anthony who was taking the money, all that time. It was Cheryl.

DEBBIE:

(CRYING) I don't believe you, I won't believe you!

CUT TO:

SC 26. INT. BURDEN HOUSEHOLD, STUDY. DAY. 17:36.

CHERYL, STUART (OOV, VOICEOVER)

[AS STUART CONTINUES, WE SEE CHERYL BECOME ELATED WHEN SHE FINDS THE DOCUMENT SHE HAS BEEN SEARCHING FOR.]

STUART:

(OOV, VOICEOVER. FEELING GUILTY) He's been in denial, all this time... and now he's found out, it's destroyed him.

CHERYL:

(INTENSE) There it is, Anthony! You tried to keep this from me – but just try to stop me now!

CUT TO:

SC 27. INT. HOSPITAL, NURSE’S ROOM. DAY. 17:37.

DEBBIE, STUART

[AS BEFORE.]

DEBBIE:

But why would she *do* that! When she knows what it’s been doing to him!

[DEBBIE’S INNER CONFLICT.]

STUART:

Because he’s never given her what he promised her, all those years ago – what he had to keep promising her, so she wouldn’t leave him...

[STUART’S EYES ARE DANCING. IN HIS INTENSITY IT IS AS IF THE SEQUENCE THAT FOLLOWS IS IN HIS IMAGINATION, RATHER THAN LITERAL.]

CUT TO:

**SC 28. EXT. OUTSIDE THE BURDEN HOUSEHOLD, INSIDE
CHERYL'S CAR. DAY. 17:38.**

**CHERYL, STUART (OOV, VOICEOVER), DEBBIE (OOV,
VOICEOVER)**

[CONTINUOUS]

[AS STUART AND DEBBIE CONTINUE TO SPEAK, WE
FOLLOW A MORE RAPIDLY EDITED SEQUENCE
INVOLVING CHERYL.]

[CHERYL GETS BACK INTO THE CAR. FOCUS UPON HER
WEALTHY APPEARANCE, EXPENSIVE MATERIAL GOODS
AND CAR – AND SEE HER TOUCHING AND COVETING
THEM, RELIEVED THAT SHE'S NOT GOING TO LOSE
THEM.]

STUART:

(OOV, VOICEOVER) The money to buy and do whatever she wanted. He's worked himself to death to try to get her what she demanded... and when she realised he wouldn't, or couldn't, give that standard of living to her, she decided to take it for herself.

[CAR STARTS AND CHERYL ROARS AWAY.]

DEBBIE:

(OOV, VOICEOVER, FAINTLY) Stop.

[CHERYL SPEEDS HER WAY TO THE HOSPITAL
ENTRANCE.]

STUART:

(OOV, VOICEOVER) The life she always demanded of him, and had to do without for twenty years.

[ON ARRIVAL, CHERYL TAKES THE AMBULANCES'
ENTRANCE TO THE HOSPITAL.]

CUT TO:

SC 29. INT. HOSPITAL, NURSE'S ROOM. DAY. 17:38.

DEBBIE, STUART, JILL, CHERYL, ANJI (OOV)

[CONTINUOUS]

[AS BEFORE.]

DEBBIE:

(YELLS) Just stop it Stuart! Stop it!

[STUART STOPS. BEAT. HE SITS DOWN NEXT TO DEBBIE WITH A HEAVY SIGH. IN THE BACKGROUND WE FAINTLY HEAR A SCREECH OF TYRES OUTSIDE. A FEW MOMENTS LATER THE RECEPTIONIST JILL RE-ENTERS, RESPONDING TO DEBBIE'S CRY.]

JILL:

Is everything all right?

DEBBIE:

Is there any news. Please.

[AS JILL SPEAKS CHERYL STRIDES QUICKLY ACROSS THE DOORWAY IN THE BACKGROUND BEHIND JILL, HEADING INTO THE WARD WITH THE PAPERS SHE'S FOUND. WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO FULLY RECOGNISE HER.]

JILL:

He's stable, for now, but he's not ready for any visitors. They're trying to keep things as steady as possible until he's better, to keep him calm. They've considered putting him under sedation.

[RECOGNISING CHERYL AFTER A MOMENT'S REALISATION, STUART JUMPS TO HIS FEET. DEBBIE IS NOT LOOKING.]

STUART:

God was that her!

[WE HEAR CHERYL FORCE HER WAY INTO THE WARD PAST DOCTORS COMING OUT.]

ANJI:

(OFF, CALLS TO CHERYL) You can't go in there!

STUART:

(URGENTLY) Debbie, come quickly!

[STUART HALF DRAGS DEBBIE WITH HIM AS HE AND
JILL GIVE CHASE TO CHERYL.]

JILL:

(TO ANJI AT RECEPTION) Call security!

CUT TO:

SC 30. INT. HOSPITAL WARD, ANTHONY’S BED. DAY. 17:39

**CHERYL, ANTHONY, DR. KARIM, MINA, STUART, DEBBIE, JILL,
SECURITY GUARDS 1 & 2**

[CHERYL RUNS TO ANTHONY’S BEDSIDE WHERE SHE THRUSTS A DOCUMENT AND A PEN UPON ANTHONY WITH AN INTENSE DESPERATION. ANTHONY IS EXHAUSTED AND SEEING CHERYL TERRIFIES HIM, MAKING HIM IMMEDIATELY BREATHLESS. DOCTOR KARIM IS QUICKLY ON THE SCENE.]

CHERYL:

Anthony! You’ve got to sign this, right now! Or you’ll never get the life assurance back and we’ll lose everything! Come on!

[ANTHONY RELAPSES. DOCTOR KARIM ATTEMPTS TO RESTRAIN HER AND SHE THROWS HIM OFF.]

DR. KARIM:

Mrs. Burden! You’ll kill him if you do this!

CHERYL:

(TO ANTHONY) Now, Anthony! Or I’ll lose everything! Everything you worked for!

[SHE FORCES THE PEN INTO HIS HAND. STUART AND MINA ARRIVE FOLLOWED BY DEBBIE AND JILL. STUART GRABS CHERYL AND WITH HELP DRAGS HER BACK, AND SHE STRUGGLES ALL THE WAY WITH SURPRISING FORCE. DOCTOR KARIM RUSHES TO GIVE ANTHONY EMERGENCY TREATMENT AS BEFORE.]

[ANTHONY DROPS THE PEN.]

CHERYL:

(FURIOUSLY) Is that what you want, Anthony! Is that what you’ve always wanted! For me to die penniless and alone, because you weren’t man enough to keep all your promises! All your lies!

STUART:

Stop it Cheryl! You’re killing him!

[ANTHONY’S HEART STOPS.]

DR. KARIM:

Nurse-!

[TWO HOSPITAL SECURITY GUARDS ARRIVE QUICKLY TO RESTRAIN CHERYL AND PULL HER AWAY. MINA RUSHES TO THE BEDSIDE AND SHE AND THE DOCTOR DESPERATELY TRY TO REVIVE ANTHONY WITH THE DEFIBRILLATOR. CHERYL IS BABBLING AS THE THROG PULLS HER AWAY]

CHERYL:

(SCREAMS) Anthony-!! How can you do this to me! All your life you’ve promised me! All these years you’ve kept me waiting! How can you be so selfish, to deny me like this...!

[DEBBIE’S REACTION. SLOW DISSOLVE INTO NEXT SCENE.]

DISSOLVE TO:

SC 31. INT. HOSPITAL, SECURED ROOM. RECEPTION. 1755

CHERYL, SECURITY GUARDS 1 & 2

[STILL, THOUGHTFUL SCENE. THROUGH A WINDOW IN THE DOOR WE SEE CHERYL SAT IN A SIDE ROOM, TWITCHING IN FURY, ATTENDED BY A SECURITY GUARD WITH ANOTHER OUTSIDE THE DOOR PENDING THE ARRIVAL OF THE POLICE.]

CUT TO:

SC 32. INT. OUTSIDE THE SECURED ROOM, IN VIEW OF THE HOSPITAL RECEPTION. DAY. 17:57.

DEBBIE, STUART, SECURITY GUARD 1

[DEBBIE AND STUART DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH THEMSELVES. DEBBIE IS NUMB. RECOGNISING THIS, STUART EMBRACES HER. SHE DOESN'T RESPOND.]

DEBBIE:

I need to talk to her.

STUART:

Debbie. (DON'T DO IT.)

DEBBIE:

I have to.

[PULLS BACK FROM HIM.]

DEBBIE:

(TO SECURITY GUARD 1) Let me in please. She's my mother and I need to talk to her.

SECURITY GUARD 1:

(HAS TO THINK ABOUT IT) Watch yourself in there.

DEBBIE:

She's my mother, she's not some maniac.

[SECURITY GUARD 1 LETS DEBBIE GO IN.]

CUT TO:

SC 33. INT. HOSPITAL, SECURED ROOM. DAY. 17:58.

DEBBIE, CHERYL, SECURITY GUARD 2

[DEBBIE STEPS INSIDE. THE SECURITY GUARD INSIDE SHIFTS HIS POSITION. CHERYL DOESN'T SEEM TO NOTICE DEBBIE, INTENT UPON HER PREDICAMENT.]

DEBBIE:

Hello Mum.

[DEBBIE SITS DOWN IN FRONT OF HER MOTHER.]

DEBBIE:

(WITH DIFFICULTY) Why did you do it. I... I need to understand Mum... I know you and Dad have always had your troubles, but... I can't believe you could do this to him. I just can't.

CHERYL:

(ROCKING BACK AND FORTH) He's done this to himself to spite me. All he's ever done.

DEBBIE:

Why did you take all that money! How could you think you would get away with it!

CHERYL:

(STILL NOT LOOKING AT DEBBIE) Anthony always hid the money from me, he always lied. He owed that money to me. Replacing it was his problem, I wasn't going to let him take *my* things away because he'd lost it.

DEBBIE:

Mum he never lied! He did everything he could for you! The business never made as much as he hoped, but you never wanted for anything! How could you turn on him like this!

CHERYL:

He made me a promise and he lied.

DEBBIE:

And this? Was this what he deserved?

CHERYL:

I can't believe how far he's gone to deny me my right. Even now. To go this far!
I can't believe he'd do this just to spite me.

DEBBIE:

(IN TEARS) He could be dead right now. And it's all your fault.

CUT TO:

SC 34. INT. HOSPITAL, OUTSIDE THE SECURED ROOM. DAY.
17:59.

DEBBIE, STUART, MINA

[DEBBIE RETURNS FROM THE ROOM WITH HER MOTHER. STUART HAS BEEN WAITING FOR HER AND TOUCHES HER ARM. DEBBIE IS STRONGER NOW.]

STUART:

Are you all right?

DEBBIE:

I'll be OK. How is he.

STUART:

No news.

[TWO ARMED POLICE OFFICERS ARRIVE AND GO TO RECEPTION, WHERE JILL AND ANJI FILL THEM IN.]

STUART:

Look. The police are here.

DEBBIE:

(VOICE BREAKING) For my mother.

[STUART MOVES TO COMFORT HER, BUT SHE PULLS HERSELF TOGETHER AND INDICATES SHE'LL BE ALL RIGHT. THE TWO POLICE OFFICERS NOD TO THEM AND SECURITY GUARD 1 ALLOWS THEM INTO THE ROOM WITH CHERYL. DEBBIE AND STUART WATCH THEM GO IN AND THE DOOR CLOSE. DEBBIE SIGHS.]

DEBBIE:

I can't believe she did it. But she did it. That's all that matters.

[MINA ENTERS THE RECEPTION AREA FROM THE WARD, AND COMES STRAIGHT TO DEBBIE AND STUART. THEY STIFFEN IN APPREHENSION OF MINA'S NEWS.]

MINA:

Miss Burden?

DEBBIE:

Yes.

MINA:

Your father's going to be all right.

DEBBIE:

(OVERWHELMED) Oh thank God!

MINA:

That is, if these traumas are finally over.

DEBBIE:

I hope so. I really do.

STUART:

Will he be able to make a full recovery?

MINA:

If he takes it very easy, and takes the doctor's advice, he can go on living a healthy, active life. But he'll need to be very careful for a while.

STUART:

We'll take care of him. Whatever it takes.

DEBBIE:

(SQUEEZES STUART'S HAND) Thank you Stuart. (TO MINA) Can we see him?

MINA:

If you can promise there's no more shocks around the corner, and keep him calm and steady.

STUART:

Perhaps I should stay here Debbie. I feel terrible, how I've treated him all this time. I wouldn't wonder if he can't bear to look at me.

DEBBIE:

No. It's alright. He'll understand. Come on. You've put it right today.

STUART:

(DEEPLY TOUCHED) Thank you Debbie. That means such a lot.

DEBBIE:

Come on, let's settle his nerves.

[WITH A SMILE, MINA LEADS THEM INTO THE
WARD.]

CUT TO:

SC 35. INT. HOSPITAL WARD, APPROACHING ANTHONY’S BED.
DAY. 18:00

MINA, DEBBIE, STUART, ANTHONY

[MINA LEADS DEBBIE AND STUART TOWARDS ANTHONY’S BED, AND STOPS WHEN IT’S IN SIGHT AND INDICATES THEM TO GO ON, WATCHING FROM A DISTANCE.]

[IN LONG SHOT WE SEE ANTHONY WEARY, BUT ALERT, AND HIS JOY AND RELIEF AS HE RECOGNISES DEBBIE COMING OVER. FATHER AND DAUGHTER SHARE A TENDER EMBRACE, REUNITED.]

[STUART HANGS BACK A LITTLE MORE, UNCOMFORTABLE, BUT WHEN ANTHONY NOTICES HE GESTURES STUART TO COME FORWARD. HE HAS FORGIVEN STUART. STUART TAKES THE HAND ANTHONY OFFERS AND CLASPS IT GRATEFULLY. A NEW BEGINNING FOR THEM ALL. MINA SMILES AND TURNS AWAY.]

END OF PROGRAMME.

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