

A LETTER FROM ROSEMARY KENNEDY

by

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OVER BLACK.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

I am a Kennedy. Rosemary Kennedy.

Her voice is sometimes slow, as though searching for the right word in the middle of a thought.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

It's September. Twenty-Six. 1941.

Sometimes too fast, a manic search for the right words.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

I am going to do my best, but I am not good at writing a lot. And your letter is the first of four or five, so this is going to be a lot. I have to finish them soon, but they have to be good. Especially dad's. His will have to be really good. I will need a lot of help for that one.

INT. SACRED HEART CONVENT SCHOOL - NIGHT

A twenty-three-year-old woman with chestnut brown hair, soft emerald eyes, and chubby cheeks sits behind a desk in an otherwise empty classroom. This is ROSEMARY KENNEDY.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

I am doing my best not to cry.
Kennedy's don't cry. I know I have made mistakes, but I do not want to leave.

The soft tattoo of her pen whisking across paper and the TICK of a clock over a chalkboard are the only audible sounds.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

I need your help.

BLACK.

LETTER FROM ROSEMARY KENNEDY TO SISTER MARGARET

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

Dear Sister, I think I have come very far, especially since meeting you. It was a long road. I was not like my brothers and sisters. There were problems. Since I was born.

QUICK SHOTS:

(Note: All of the letters will be told in montage, like flashes of memories.)

-- A three-story frame house sits in the middle of a suburban neighborhood lined by identical homes and old oak trees.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

Eunice told me later they think it was because Dr. Good was late, and the nurse did not know what to do with me. Most people do not know what to do with me, so I am not upset with her.

-- A woman SHRIEKS from the bedroom on the top floor.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

They did not know anything was wrong at first.

-- A tall, lean man of thirty years paces before a wooden staircase. Two maids stand at opposite walls.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

Not even dad.

-- He wears an impeccable blue suit and owlsh glasses upon his stern, worried visage. This is JOE KENNEDY.

-- THUNK. The nursemaid descends the staircase with the newborn infant. A wave of relief spreads over the room.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

I wish I remembered it so I could know. I am so bad at remembering things. It is my biggest problem.

-- Joe Kennedy gently receives the infant from the nursemaid, he cradles his firstborn daughter with a glowing smile.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

Mother said they were very excited for a daughter. They already had two sons. Joe Jr. was first:

-- A profile picture of a handsome man in a naval uniform with a square jaw, bearing a resemblance to his father.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

Then Jack.

-- A presidential portrait of John F. Kennedy. Known to his family as Jack, but who will later become JFK to America.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Then me. Their daughter. Rosemary.

-- A picture of Rosemary in her twenties in a white gown within Buckingham Palace.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
But I was not like my brothers. Or
my parents. Or most people.

-- A four-year-old Rosemary struggles with walking. She takes three wobbly steps forward, then falls to the carpet.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I was slow.

-- On a snow covered hill, Joe Jr. and Jack race their sleds down, the brothers laughing all the way to the bottom.

-- Jack looks up to see Rosemary at the crest of the hill, trying to figure out how to steer the sled without falling.

-- She immediately falls, and the sled crashes into a tree.

-- Her mother, ROSE, stands nearby, and watches her with a disappointed glare, then sends a maid to help.

ROSE KENNEDY is a petite woman of thirty-four-years with stern, birdlike features and a personality of unyielding ambition only equaled by her husband.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
They said I was a moron.

-- In a first grade classroom, thirty kids race to spell out the alphabet at their desk. They all finish in near perfect unison and drop their pencils. CLACK. CLACK. CLACK.

-- Rosemary looks down at her paper, where she is still trying to figure out what comes after the letter "E".

-- A shadow falls over her face, and Rosemary's big green eyes tilt up to find her TEACHER towering over her.

-- The eyes of every other student then slowly turn to stare, and Rosemary's face fills with embarrassment.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
They made me take a special test,
because I was so far behind.

-- Rosemary sits completely alone, working on a standardized test: various math, grammar, and logic problems.

-- TICK. TICK. Rosemary's not even close to finishing. She looks up to the clock, then to the teacher, who sits behind her desk with arms crossed and an exasperated expression.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
The test said I was a moron, and it
made dad very angry with me.

-- Joe and Rose sit in the classroom with the teacher, who has a chart with scores and corresponding labels:

ON THE BINET TEST CHART

-- Numbers align beside labels: "Moron", "Imbecile", "Idiot".

-- A red circle around "moron" next to Rosemary's score.

-- Joe buries his face in his hand, as Rose exhales a sigh.

-- Rosemary bites her bottom lip. Her eyes veering between her parents and the teacher. Confused by the results.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I tried so hard.

-- POP. The FLASH of a camera, as the young Joe Jr. and Jack are awarded gold medals.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
But I could never keep up.

-- Back in the Kennedy home, Rose gazes upon a blue ribbon that reads "1st Place. John Fitzgerald Kennedy".

-- And pins it amongst a wall filled with DOZENS of ribbons and awards in a trophy room dedicated to family achievements.

DOWNSTAIRS

-- Rosemary works in a bedroom converted into a classroom with a TUTOR.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I tried. I tried so hard though.

-- Rosemary copies down the numbers and letters, leaving problems blank that she doesn't understand.

-- Most of the problems are blank.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I remember dad wanted to send me
away back then.

-- Rosemary sneaks into her parents' enormous master bedroom with a paper that has a big red "B" across the top.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
But mom would not let him.

-- She suddenly overhears arguments coming from the connecting bathroom. Along with bits of the heated argument:

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I am not sure that is what will
happen now.

-- The words: "Something has to be done", "Rosemary is not-", and "I won't do it, Joe!"

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I prayed to God for help.

-- On the oak nightstand, two leaflets with the titles:

-- "Brookline Institute Literature" and "Massachusetts School for the Feeble-Minded".

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
And He sent my sister. He sent Eunice.

-- Another infant SCREAMS, as a nurse delivers the next child in the expanding Kennedy clan.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
My miracle.

-- A six-year-old Rosemary cradles her infant sister Eunice. She fills with pride. Her big green eyes wet with tears.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
So I am asking for help again. I do not
want dad to send me away somewhere
worse. I am very sorry for running
away, but I can't leave again.

-- As maids and servants bustle to and fro, Joe and Rose stare upon their Kennedy family of five as proud parents.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I need another miracle.

DISSOLVE TO:

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
And I hope it will be you.

INT. SACRED HEART CONVENT SCHOOL - NIGHT

Back to the opening shot. A twenty-three-year-old Rosemary alone in the empty classroom. She sighs, drops her pencil.

KNOCK. KNOCK.

She jumps in her seat, stands, pockets the letter, then nervously turns to answer the call at the door behind her.

BLACK.

INT. SACRED HEART CONVENT SCHOOL - SISTER MARGARET'S OFFICE -
MOMENTS LATER

A wrinkled hand lights and puffs a cigarette until a cloud of smoke hovers around her. The wrinkled hand waves away the smoke to reveal a nun in habit with blue eyes and thin lips.

SISTER MARGARET

May I offer you one, Mr. Kennedy?

A placard at the front of the sixty-five-year-old nun's desk similarly announces her name.

JOE

No, no thank you. Not with the vast data damning such vices, and which you may very well want to seek out for your own in the near future.

The nun tilts her head at the condescending remark uttered with the distinct Boston accent belonging to the now fifty-three-year-old Joe P. Kennedy. His hair thinner and demeanor colder than just seen in the flashbacks.

SISTER MARGARET

Yes, me and the Sisters of Sacred Heart Convent...just a house full of vices.

Joe smirks, turns away from the fireplace at the east wall, and sits in one of the two leather chairs across her desk.

SISTER MARGARET

Mr. Kennedy, before she arrives, I'd like to believe that we may be able to resolve this issue without raising our voices at Rosemary and making matters worse.

Sister Margaret lowers her cigarette to an ash tray upon the desk, self-consciousness after his remark.

JOE

Let's cut to the point. What is your strategy for solving this, Sister? This is the second time she has escaped, which means measures were not taken on your behalf the first time--measures we pay you a good deal of money to apply--and which has prompted my arrival to fix where you have failed.

A cold, awkward silence expands between the wealthy Kennedy patriarch and the elderly nun.

KNOCK. KNOCK. From the door behind them. Neither the nun nor Joe breaks eye contact. Then:

SISTER MARGARET

Come in.

Rosemary nervously stands at the door's threshold.

JOE

She said come in, Rosemary.

Rosemary steps inside, softly shuts the door. Nervous.

SISTER MARGARET

Rosemary, your father and I need to discuss with you--

Joe points a stern finger to the other leather chair, and Rosemary sits. Sister Margaret bites her tongue, then:

JOE

Rosemary, in simplest terms, if this happens again--

SISTER MARGARET

Mr. Kennedy, please!

Joe pauses at the admonishment, tempers his tone, nods.

SISTER MARGARET

Your family and I want to help you, Rosemary. But we cannot do that if you are running away every chance you get. I can certainly understand why a young girl would want to go out and socialize--and dance, meet boys, but you have to understand Rosemary--

JOE

That you are not like the others.
You are a Kennedy. You are
representing our hopes for the
future. Your mother's. Your
brother's. Your sister's--

ROSEMARY

And mine.

Rosemary finally tilts her gaze away from the floor toward her father, who simply shakes his head.

JOE

I did not come here for a debate. I
came here for a solution. And when
I return, we will have one.

He retrieves his bowler hat, stands, and moves for the door.

JOE

And I hope you will too, Sister.

His hand pauses on the doorknob, twists it open. He stands there, as though about to conclude with the last word...

WHAM, but just slams the door without saying goodbye.

A moment later, the sound of Rosemary's soft sobs capture the Sister's attention.

SISTER MARGARET

Rosemary, please, we are going to fix
this. He is a man with a lot on his mind.
Now, you running away isn't helping but--

Rosemary SPRINTS out the room, and a nun waiting outside catches her, calms her down, holding her tight.

Sister Margaret rubs her temples with a weary sigh.

She reaches down, reclaims her cigarette, and inhales a deep drag before letting the smoke waft around her.

Then looks to the fireplace where Joe just stood...

...and suddenly tosses the cigarette into the fire.

INT. WILLARD INTERCONTINENTAL WASHINGTON HOTEL - LATER

Alone in the sanctuary of his luxury hotel room, Joe lights up a cigar, inhales, and indulges in the thick smoke.

A chandelier above saturates the spacious room in soft yellow light. He sits on a plush mattress with wide windows on the wall behind him that offer a gorgeous view of Washington D.C.

He removes his trademark owlsh glasses and sets them atop the oak nightstand, where he then picks up the telephone.

Dials. RING. RING....RING. Finally, the other line answers.

ROSE (V.O.)
Hello, husband. Have you spoken
with her?

Joe speaks into the phone with a more vulnerable tone, one never to be heard in public:

JOE
Her and the chain-smoking nun both.

ROSE (V.O.)
And short of converting the convent into
a prison, what is Sister Margaret's
proposal to stop Rosemary from
gallivanting around our nation's capital?

JOE
Nothing of note. She is an incompetent.
(sighs)
I have some ideas that we shall
discuss tomorrow though.

A concentrated silence expands across the line.

ROSE (V.O.)
We are not sending our first-born
daughter away, Joe.

JOE
Nor will we risk this family's
future on the chance that she
becomes pregnant or says someth--

ROSE (V.O.)
Joe!

Her stern tone steadies his rising anger. Silence. Then:

ROSE (V.O.)
Have you seen Kick or Jack?

JOE
No. They need not know I'm here.

Joe's eyes are distracted by something on the night stand. He picks up a small square card and rolls it in his palm.

JOE

Though perhaps I'll stop in on
young Jack come to think of it.

ROSE

I'll call Eunice. She can...talk to
Rosemary. She knows what to say.

Joe's eyes remain locked on the card in hand.

JOE

I have an early meeting tomorrow,
Rose. I'll call again after.

ROSE (V.O.)

Goodnight, Joe. I love yo--

CLANG, Joe hangs up on his wife, exhales a sigh, and extinguishes his cigar in the nearby ash tray.

He looks at the card once more, studying the name:

ON THE CARD:

"DR. FREEMAN. PROFESSOR OF NEUROLOGY, GEORGE WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY."

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. SACRED HEART CONVENT SCHOOL - ROSEMARY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Rosemary sits at a desk in her dorm room, comprised of a wood desk and mattress, writing another letter.

A few framed pictures are on the desk, along with various textbooks, but otherwise the room reeks of cold sterility.

On the opposite side of the room is a setting of similar furnishings for her roommate.

KNOCK. KNOCK. Rosemary answers her bedroom door to find:

GLORIA

Should I be looking for a new roommate?

Rosemary quickly shuffles her friend GLORIA into the room and shuts the door behind her, shaking her head.

ROSEMARY

Quiet you. You're gonna get us both
kicked out of here.

Gloria plops herself upon Rosemary's bed and grins up beneath long blonde hair. She is of the same twenty-three years as Rosemary, though a sense of mischief radiates from her being.

GLORIA

They're not seriously gonna send you
away are they? For running away with
me once? Do they know I was with you?

Rosemary returns to her desk, rubs her head from a migraine.

ROSEMARY

No...but dad's not happy with me. If--

GLORIA

You think my dad is? Why do you
think he sent me here? No dads are
happy with their teenage daughters.

ROSEMARY

You're a normal troublemaker though.

Rosemary throws down her pencil, rubs her forehead.

ROSEMARY

I am not.

GLORIA

Well, little troublemaker, I think I
know someone who might cheer you up.

Rosemary's big green eyes widen with undisguised excitement.

GLORIA

A certain someone who wants to see
a certain troublemaker tonight...

Rosemary blushes a bright pink hue that she cannot hide.

GLORIA

Oh, there it is. She's blushin--

ROSEMARY

Gloria!

The two giggling schoolgirls suppress their laughter at the sound of a CREAK, CREAK that stops just outside the door.

Both worried they have been caught. But then:

CREAK, CREAK, the footsteps resume in the opposite direction.

GLORIA

You're not staying in. You're coming with me to see him. I've had enough of this moping from you.

Rosemary shakes her head, sets down her pencil.

ROSEMARY

If I get caught again, I'm cooked. And then you will have to find a new roommate.

GLORIA

Rosemary, you know I love you.

Gloria walks forward to stand over Rosemary's shoulder.

GLORIA

But you're not going to feel any better sitting here getting frustrated by homework. Let's go out. It'll be good for you.

ROSEMARY

This look like homework? I'm writing, Gloria.

Rosemary uncomfortably shifts from Gloria's stare. Relents.

ROSEMARY

I'm--I'm writing to everybody. My family. To make sure dad doesn't do anything...since he won't talk to me.

She then sheepishly turns to ask:

ROSEMARY

Would--would you mind looking 'em over when I'm done? For spelling and the right words.

Rosemary swallows a lump in her throat, holding back emotion.

ROSEMARY

So I don't look stupid.

Gloria tilts up Rosemary's chin to stare into her big eyes.

GLORIA

What's in it for me?

A slow grin creeps across Rosemary's cheeks.

ROSEMARY

I'll go again tomorrow night.

BAM, Gloria pounds the desk with a triumphant fist, as Rosemary shushes her between giggles.

A second later, Gloria kneels and looks over the current letter, already covered with various proofreading marks.

GLORIA

Who's the next recipient?
(off her confused look)
Who are you writing to now?

ROSEMARY

Mom.

Gloria returns Rosemary's pencil. She sets the sharpened end to the paper to finish writing.

ROSEMARY

She'll know what to do.

BLACK.

LETTER FROM ROSEMARY KENNEDY TO ROSE KENNEDY

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

Dear Mother, I have just met with dad.
I am worried, and I need your help.

-- The exterior of the new Kennedy Compound in Bronxville resembles something closer to a castle than a home:

A twenty-room Georgian brick house of red brick and white columns set across five acres of gorgeous landscape.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

You always know what to say. What to do.

-- The Kennedy clan has extended to eight children that now sit at the incredibly long dining room table.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

Even though I do not believe I am
the daughter that you ever wanted.

-- Joe sits at the head with Joe Jr., Jack (now teenagers) and his two daughters after Rosemary:

-- Kathleen "KICK" Kennedy. Nine-years-old and already bearing a strong resemblance to her mother along with the same pronounced jawline that marks her other siblings. And:

-- EUNICE Kennedy. Eight-years-old and already developing the gawky frame below an enormous smile that will define her.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
You have always been the help I needed.

-- Eunice sits next to the now-eleven-year-old Rosemary. The two having developed a close bond even at this early age.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
You and Eunice both.

-- Maids descend down upon the long table, serving plates of chicken and broccoli.

-- CLINK, a maid sets down Rosemary's plate, and while the other children are cutting up their food...

-- Rosemary's food has already been cut.

-- Her mother shares a tacit nod with the delivering maid.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
To help me keep up with the family.

-- THWACK, Rose whacks a tennis ball to Rosemary on the opposite side of the court in the Kennedy vacation home.

-- Rosemary swings and misses.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
To spend the time when no one else would.

-- THWACK, Rose whacks another ball to her daughter.

-- Rosemary runs, swings, and hits back nothing but air.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Hitting ball after ball after ball.

-- THWACK, THWACK, THWACK, Rose keeps hitting the tennis balls. The sun starting to set against the drab horizon.

-- Over fifty tennis balls line the back wall behind Rosemary's side. Only four or five on Rose's side.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Even when I got mad. Too mad.

-- Rosemary swings, THWACK, and hits the ball...

-- Only to hit the dividing net in the center.

-- WHAM, Rosemary THROWS her racket against the fenced wall.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

I knew it would be OK if you were there.

-- Three MAIDS suddenly rush the court to grab the thrown racket and try to comfort Rosemary.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

I feel silly when I remember how I acted.
How I still act. Who I was. Who I am.

-- But her frustration has evolved into a volcanic eruption.

-- Rosemary starts THROWING the tennis balls at the servants, tears streaming down her face, her voice hoarse with rage.

ROSE

Rosemary Kennedy!

-- Rosemary pauses with the ball mid-air.

ROSEMARY

(to the servants)
Get Eunice.

-- Rosemary drops to her knees. She crumples to the ground and buries her face into her lap.

ROSE

Rosemary.

-- Rose lowers herself to one knee, tilts up her daughter's chin to demand her daughter's big green eyes stare up at her.

ROSE

What don't Kennedy's do?

-- She wipes her daughter's tears, then wraps her in a hug.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

Even when you were tough on me.

-- The Kennedy children are lined up before a scale and chart pinned to the walls. One by one, they stand upon the scale.

-- Rosemary steps on the scale, her face fraught with nerves. She sucks in the slight potbelly around her stomach.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

I know it is because you wanted us
to be our best.

-- Rose leads her brood of eight children into a wood burnished pew in the front of the Church.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

And how God wanted us to be our best.

-- Each child kneels down the row like falling dominoes.

-- Until it reaches Rosemary. Eunice nudges her elbow.

-- Rosemary looks, then quickly kneels like her siblings.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

And that He would help if I needed it.

-- In a small classroom (Rosemary noticeably a bit older from being held back), stops in the midst of an exam, and folds her hands in prayer.

-- The teacher notices, shakes her head, but says nothing.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

But that I should always rely on myself.

-- Rosemary works with a tutor back at home in the room that has been converted into a private study for her.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

And the family.

-- A servant stands at attention besides the door, and the tutor leans beside Rosemary, talking very slowly.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

And I think that is what has got me
this far. So far.

-- Rose walks by, peeks her head in the door with a worried expression, then continues walking with a soft smile.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

Everything that you have taught me.

-- The Kennedy children all play a variety of activities on the front lawn. The boys toss a football back and forth.

-- Eunice and Kick play a game of badminton. Competitively.

-- The three much younger children are engrossed in games of dolls or puzzle blocks with maids across the field.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

And making me smile when I needed it.

-- Rose grabs her daughter's hand and escorts her down the street, away from the other siblings.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

All I ever want to do sometimes is run
home, have you walk me across the street...

-- At a neighbor's home, Rosemary falls to her knees.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

And play with the Blackburns' dogs.

-- She BURSTS out laughing. Absolute joy across her face. As:

-- Three Great Danes and two Doberman dogs rush to meet her.

-- Rosemary pets and rolls around with the five dogs, who sit
when she tells them to, and kisses the tops of their noses.

-- Rose waves to the neighbors across the street (the family
that owns the dogs), and they return her wave with a smile.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

I know I am disappointing.

-- At a birthday party for Rose, the mother speaks with a
maid in quiet whispers, which Rosemary pretends not to hear.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

And why I can't be around sometimes.

-- A maid drives away from the Kennedy home with Rosemary in
the passenger seat, she looks up and watches:

-- IN THE REAR-VIEW MIRROR:

-- Where a line of Rolls-Royces are parked in the driveway,
announcing those dignified members of Rose's birthday party.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

I know I upset people. Important people.

-- Cakes, balloons, and banners decorate the exterior, as
politicians and businessmen begin to enter the party.

-- The guests stop to shake hands with the Kennedy children,
who are lined up like little soldiers to greet the attendees.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

I used to get very angry. And think
it was not very fair.

-- Except Rosemary, who is being driven away.

-- Rosemary glances up to the maid driving her away.

-- BAM, and suddenly KICKS the steering wheel.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

But I know now that lots of things are not
fair. Life is not fair. God is not fair.

-- The maid immediately reclaims the wheel and corrects their
direction, then slams the brakes. ERK. Tires SCREECH.

-- Rosemary leaps out the passenger side, running fast as she
can back toward her home.

-- But the maid catches her. She wraps up the young and
confused Rosemary in her hands, almost wrestling with her.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

And now I just want to get better.

-- Rosemary bawls out her anger and inchoate rage, as the
maid rocks her back and forth, fighting tears of her own.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

But if I am going to get better, I
want to stay here. I wish you would
remind daddy of how far we've come.

-- Rose watches from the sidelines of the tennis court:

-- THWACK, Rosemary, now twenty, successfully strikes the
ball back to her sister Eunice.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

That with enough help, I will keep getting
better. Maybe enough to be normal.

-- Back to Rosemary's youth, where she works alone on her
studies, ten-years-old and confused as ever.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

But I need your help.

-- Rose slowly explains how to solve the homework problem to
Rosemary, who nods and nods, trying to understand.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

I need you to talk to dad. Or see
if Jack and Joe Jr. can help.

-- Joe Jr., Jack, Kick, and Eunice are working as a team in a
sailing competition against other families in a country club.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

I am writing to them, too.

-- BHHHHAM, an air horn deafens the air, as the Kennedy boat
crosses the finish line to rounds of cheer and applause.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I just want dad to like me like them.

-- The four siblings accept a gleaming gold trophy, as Joe and Rose clap with pride from the front row of the clubhouse.

-- Rosemary stands with the three younger children, watching her parents admire her other siblings with so much pride...

-- And her face sinks in defeat.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I love you, mom.

But she keeps clapping. Always proud of her family.

BLACK.

EXT. ST. ELIZABETH'S HOSPITAL - EARLY MORNING

Joe Kennedy stands as tall as an ant before the imposing and expansive building that is St. Elizabeth's hospital.

He glances down at the card in hand:

"DR. FREEMAN. PROFESSOR OF NEUROLOGY, GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY."

INT. ST. ELIZABETH'S HOSPITAL - MOMENTS LATER

Joe navigates his way down corridors of gray linoleum tiles and fluorescent lights that flood the sterile setting.

His shoes CLICK and CLACK upon the floor, as his eyes scan for the room number, which he finds, when he passes an open hospital room. Curiosity compels him forward, and he walks:

INTO THE HOSPITAL ROOM

To find a twenty-year-old girl sitting in a wheelchair. Her head shaved and wrapped with gauze. A scar across her scalp and a longer scar that runs down her eye. Lobotomized.

She stares back at Joe Kennedy with vacant, lifeless eyes.

And Joe notices that in her left hand, she grips:

A withered red rose.

Joe turns his attention to the pictures upon the walls:

Cross-sections of the human brain, scalpels, and drawings of what looks like an ice pick being inserted beneath an eyelid.

Joe shudders and grips his stomach. His gaze descends to meet the emotionless eyes of the patient.

Nearby, he notices an old Victrola record player. The needle gently wobbling atop the spinning disc.

Joe takes two steps to the left, dials a knob...

...and allows a soft jazz song to fill the void of silence.

Joe and the patient share a final glimpse of eye contact, then the Kennedy patriarch returns back out:

INTO THE HALLWAY

He KNOCKS on a door with a placard across foggy glass that reads: "DR. WALTER FREEMAN".

DR. FREEMAN (O.S.)

Come in.

Joe twists the brass doorknob. Then enters:

DR. FREEMAN'S OFFICE

DR. FREEMAN

Mr. Kennedy. It's an honor.

Joe shakes the hand of the esteemed physician before him:

A bald man at least a foot shorter with a salt and pepper goatee, round glasses, and a charcoal, three-piece suit.

JOE

I should say the same. Heard quite a lot about you, Mr. Freeman.

Freeman chortles, as Joe scans the surrounding office:

Framed degrees from Yale and UPenn Medical School, pictures of Freeman performing some surgery in a filled auditorium, a picture of Freeman standing before the Capitol.

FREEMAN

Doctor. Doctor Freeman, if you would...Good things I hope?

JOE

Some. Certainly...

He trails off with a small smirk that forces Freeman to finish the sentence for him.

FREEMAN

Some that you'd rather ask in private.

He vigorously rubs his palms together like an excited child.

FREEMAN

Do tell, and maybe it will be an honor by the time I'm done.

Joe returns the smile, removes his blue bowler hat.

JOE

The problem, Doctor Freeman, is that even in private I have my concerns about speaking openly, and as we both understand, when people hear things...good or that they wish to confront behind closed doors...they start to smell smoke.

Freeman grins another soft smile, closes his hands together.

FREEMAN

Mr. Kennedy, I'm a man whose job demands discretion, and these walls are reinforced to mute our conversation to anyone beyond the confines of this humble office.

JOE

But if these walls could talk--

FREEMAN

My profession--of giving my patients peace--relies on confidence in my work.

(then)

When I said I have heard things about you, Mr. Kennedy, I hope I don't have to spell out that I am very aware of the consequences in losing the confidence of one America's most prominent families.

Joe's narrow lips finally curl into a gentle smile. He crosses his legs, the discomfort in opening up about the subject visible throughout his lean body.

JOE

Well, Doctor Freeman, my daughter has a medical problem.

JOE

One that I have heard you have had success in curing. And we need a cure. Immediately.

FREEMAN

Every detail is needed, Mr. Kennedy.

Joe sighs, fixes a crease in his suit, that same wave of discomfort washing over him again.

JOE

My daughter is...slow, since she was a child: eating, crawling, talking, you name it. She was in back of the pack.

His voices verges on the edge of warbling. He pauses.

JOE

And while we've been able to...hide it, we've reached a breaking point.

Freeman signals with a gesture of "go on".

JOE

She's being schooled in a private convent not far from here. It mostly houses teenage delinquents, but we've paid good money for Rosemary's residency there.

(pauses)

While she's had previous bursts of outrage that her mother or sister could temper, she's found a new outlet for her disobedience in the form of escaping. Running away.

Freeman jots this detail down on his notepad, which elicits a worried face from Joe, and a frustrated one from Freeman.

FREEMAN

There is no middle ground in this arena, Mr. Kennedy, if you are hoping for me to succeed with my techniques to aid your daughter. You must trust me.

Joe nods, again swallows his nerves.

JOE

While I wouldn't feel the need to intervene in such a juvenile matter with my other children, Rosemary has the potential to bring down a certain appearance that my family has created over the years.

Freeman absorbs this information with a face of confusion.

JOE

If she were to meet a boy, if she were to stumble upon a reporter able to ascertain the true extent of her condition...stop. Stop writing.

Freeman lifts his pencil, stares at Joe. Waits for him.

JOE

I have high hopes for my children, Doctor. Hopes that necessitate a certain image portrayed to the American public. An image that Rosemary and her...condition...cannot reflect back.

Freeman nods in understanding, retrieves his pencil.

FREEMAN

When you say she is slow--

JOE

She can talk. She can walk. She can read and write for the most part. She can pass for normal enough.

Joe bites his lower lip in considering his next words.

JOE

But I cannot keep worrying about her as a ticking time bomb for this family's future. We have nine children. Eight of whom I will continue to shepherd in carrying forth my name into history.

(pauses)

But not Rosemary.

A cold silence momentarily expands. Freeman nods, sets down his pencil, and stares back at Joe with a smile.

FREEMAN

I suppose it is my turn then.

He folds his hands together and speaks with calm authority.

FREEMAN

The procedure, of which I am a leading expert, is at the forefront of curing such neurological deficiencies, and as such, necessitates fixing the root of the disorder.

Freeman taps the temple of his forehead.

FREEMAN

The brain.

Joe absorbs the information with a blank expression.

FREEMAN

I'm not promising to improve your daughter, Mr. Kennedy, but I am confident that I may be able to provide a cure for the problem that plagues you.

JOE

Through this...leucotomy?

Freeman nods with a small chuckle.

FREEMAN

The procedure was formerly known by that name, but my colleague and I are advocating for redefining it under a new and more accurate one.

Freeman allows the hum of silence to saturate the air.

FREEMAN

A lobotomy.

A quiet silence solidifies through the room like glass, as Joe digests, and seems to like, the operation's new name.

JOE

My assistant will be in touch with details about moving forth.

Joe rises from the chair to shake his hand.

JOE

It's been an honor, Doctor Freeman.

Freeman returns the handshake with a smile.

BACK IN THE HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Joe returns the blue bowler hat to his balding head, then proceeds back the way he entered, but first...

He stops before the door of the patient that caught his eye earlier. He stops and peers inside:

The woman in the wheelchair is gone.

And the rose previously resting in her hand has fallen to the floor at the threshold between the door and the hallway.

Joe bends to a knee and picks up the rose, admiring its crenulated red folds.

He pockets the rose within his suit and hurries out the room.

The soft crackles and pops of the phonograph player within the room suddenly transform into...

INT. THE TOMBS BAR - NIGHT

...the LOUD, FAST, and UPBEAT tune of a jazz song blaring out the speakers of another phonograph player within:

A crowded bar filled with semi-drunk Georgetown college kids. Cigarette smoke hovers over the room like a thick fog, especially near the row of vinyl booths that line the wall.

Eager kids with dollar bills in their fists swarm the bar, while at the crowded main stage couples dance to the relentless tune of the phonograph. Including:

ROSEMARY

Gloria! Gloria!

Her blonde-friend remains enraptured in a swing dance with a particular aggressive fellow, who leans in and kisses her.

Rosemary's eyes practically bulge out of her sockets. She slowly retreats toward the bar, where she bumps into...

ALAN

There's the little ballerina.

A tall, handsome fellow of twenty-five years and stark black hair named ALAN. A cigarette rests in his left hand, and he balances two drinks in his right. He speaks with a British accent and his brown eyes similarly bulge at the same sight.

ALAN

Tom and Gloria--

ROSEMARY
Really hitting it off!

Rosemary and Alan (and a few nearby bystanders) stare at the scandalous couple blatantly kissing on the dance floor.

ALAN
Shall we si--

ROSEMARY
Yeah! Let's sit.

AT THE BOOTH - SECONDS LATER

The two nearly dive into the booth. The bulb above glaring down on them. A nervous energy charges the air between them, SHOUTING to hear each other over the noise of the bar.

ROSEMARY
They dance like that in England?

ALAN
I'm afraid Tom's determined to take advantage of his remaining days in America until they kick us out.

ROSEMARY
And--and you?

ALAN
I'd prefer to return to our Queen without a criminal record.

ROSEMARY
I used to live in England, ya know.
(he leans in closer to hear)
I USED TO LIVE IN ENGLAND.

He swirls his drink and inhales another drag.

ALAN
You are just full of surprises,
aren't you, Miss Rosie Kent. When?

Rosemary chuckles at Alan's calling her by the alias.

ALAN
It's the accent, isn't--

ROSEMARY
No! I love accents! British esp--

ALAN
You're just giggly, hmm?

Rosemary clinks the ice cubes in her glass as explanation.

ALAN

Surprise me again before you get too giggly for your own good. Do you have any plans to go back?

ROSEMARY

T-to England?!

ALAN

'Cus I sure am gonna miss you.

Despite his laugh, Rosemary's face has shifted into a mask of sadness. Her voice now soft and vulnerable.

ROSEMARY

I-I dream about it all the time actually.

Detecting her suddenly sullen mood, Alan leans across the booth to try and recapture her stare.

ALAN

Maybe I can sneak you in my suitcase then.

But his accompanying chuckle goes unheard. Rosemary's big green eyes stare down at her glass as though in a trance.

ALAN

It was a setup for a bad joke, Rosie.

ROSEMARY

I don't want to go back now. I want to go back to before. T-to go back to the way it was. The way things were.

Her voice warbles; her attention completely fixated on some trauma now paralyzing her thoughts.

ROSEMARY

Before I fell...before that nightmare.

Alan leans back against the seat, baffled by whatever horribly memory has suddenly bubbled into her mind's eye.

ALAN

I'm--I'm sorry, Rosie. I'm not sure...

He notices her trembling hand that holds the glass, ice cubes gently CLINKING, then reaches across the table...

...and holds her hand.

She looks up. Her eyes wide with surprise.

ROSEMARY
Not in England or anywhere else.

Her eyes brighten with a soft smile. She squeezes his hand.

ROSEMARY
I want what's here.

She shifts her gaze from Alan to the rest of the bar:

ROSEMARY
Like everyone else.

-- In the booth at the opposite wall, two couples on a double date BURST out laughing; the girls on the right side of the booth wiping tears from some hysterical outburst.

-- At a wooden stool to the right, two very drunk young men are kneeling with their palms locked and elbows on the stool.

-- A crowd cheers on the men about to arm wrestle. Friends tossing money for bets at their feet. Chugging their drinks.

-- At the center of the dance floor, Gloria and Tom are sharing a kiss of passion. Eyes closed. Lips locked. Refusing to break away to accommodate the couples beside them.

BACK IN HER BOOTH

ROSEMARY
What everyone else has.

Alan squeezes her hand once more, and Rosemary's big green eyes flick up to his, returned to her reality.

ALAN
Now, that was some surprise.

Her hand jerks back to her lap and she diverts her stare to the floor, embarrassed by her confession.

ALAN
Though I would like to hear those giggles again. Can I buy another?

Unable to meet his gaze, Rosemary scoots toward the edge of the booth until her vision can peer completely away.

ROSEMARY
I should probably ask Gloria when--

But her eyes saucer in panic. She GASPS in looking toward:

THE FRONT DOOR

TWO POLICEMEN make their way inside, tipping their hat to the bartender not to worry, as their eyes scan the interior.

ALAN

Hmm. Can't seem to find Tom eithe--

ROSEMARY

SHH!

Rosemary DUCKS down, her chin nearly slams the table.

ALAN

Ros--

ROSEMARY

SHH!

She looks to the dance floor: no sign of Gloria.

ALAN

Did--what did I--?

ROSEMARY

No! It's OK! Stay here. We should sta--

ALAN

Well, I must confess that I could
use some water before--

ROSEMARY

Stay! Just stay! We've gotta find--

Gloria suddenly YANKS Rosemary's arm from the booth,
shielding her body from view.

ROSEMARY

I'll be in touch, Alan! See you soon!

ALAN

Wait. Rosie. Are you sur--

GLORIA

She's sure! We'll be back!

Confusion creeps across the young Brit's face, as the two
flee for the back exit. He swirls his ice, raises the glass
to himself, then tosses his head back and empties the drink.

INT. KENNEDY COMPOUND, BRONXVILLE - ROSE'S STUDY - MORNING

CLINK, CLINK, Rose Kennedy scoops one sugar cube and plops
the white square into her tea.

She sits behind a desk of lacquered wood in a room that radiates of royalty fit for the Kennedy matriarch.

Oriental rugs cover the floor, framed family photos hang upon the walls, along with landscape paintings that would not be out of place at the nearest museum.

She reaches for her reading glasses, sets them upon the bridge of her nose, and studies a notepad before her.

Rose mumbles a word written down to ensure the correct pronunciation, then picks up the phone at the desk's corner.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICES OF THE *WASHINGTON TIMES-HERALD* - SAME TIME

KICK

Hello? Mr. Ogelby? Yes, this is Kathleen Kennedy. I'm a reporter at the *Times-Herald* in D.C. I was hoping to confirm your coming in for an interview with Mr. Waldrop?

On a desk of disorganized papers, filing cards, and pens, Kathleen Kennedy jots down notes on the nearest pad of paper.

Kathleen "KICK" Kennedy is somewhat thinner than her sister Rosemary, closer in build to their petite mother Rose, but maintains that same pronounced jawline as her brothers.

Her desk sits in a pool of desks for reporters and secretaries with filing cabinets lining the wall behind her.

A glass conference room stands a few feet to her left, where overly caffeinated reporters argue about the latest headline.

Kick stops writing. Her eyes flit up to find the SECRETARY across from her waving an arm to grab Kick's attention.

Kick shrugs her shoulder in a "what" gesture.

The secretary mouths "your mother".

Kick rolls her eyes, nods, and "mm-hmms" the man on the current end of the phone, hurrying to shut him up:

KICK

Let's say tomorrow at six, then.
Perfect. He'll be expecting you.

CLICK. She hangs up, hurries to the other secretary's desk to answer the phone. The secretary walks away from her desk to offer privacy, giving her a thumbs up and a chuckle.

KICK
Hi, mother.

ROSE (V.O.)
Well hello, my little busy bee of a daughter. Do you have a moment?

KICK
Kind of in the middle of things but--

ROSE (V.O.)
I'll be quick then.

Kick rolls her eyes, when she suddenly notices a man approaching her desk with a devilish grin upon his face.

A snake tattoo decorates the part of his forearm visible beneath the rumpled suit that covers his wiry frame.

This is JOHN WHITE.

Kick curls a similar, devilish smile at his appearance.

ROSE (V.O.)
Has your father been in touch with you?

KICK
Huh? Dad? No. Why--

ROSE (V.O.)
He's seeing Jack...and attending to some other business.

KICK
He's in town?

ROSE (V.O.)
Kick, I need to ask you something private.
Do I have your undivided attention?

John plops upon the desk, twirls the phone cord to yank it away, but she flirtatiously pushes back, mouthing to "stop".

ROSE (V.O.)
I need you to use your resources at the paper to investigate a new medical procedure your father wishes to pursue.

John rolls his eyes, withdraws, and lights a cigarette.

KICK
For...Jack? Is Eunice still sick?

ROSE (V.O.)
For Rosemary.

A pregnant pause. Kick's face flushes with concern.

ROSE (V.O.)
This is a Kennedy matter, Kathleen.
Is that absolutely clear? You are
never to deploy her name.

CLICK, John removes a pen cap with his mouth, tears off a piece of paper, SLIKKT, then scribbles something on it.

Kick writes down the word her mother repeats on the phone.

Then her eyes veer over to read the note that asks:

"Dinner tonight? YES/NO"

She tries to suppress a smile but miserably fails.

KICK
(into phone)
OK, mom. Let you know. Be in touch.

CLICK. She slams down the phone, swivels to face John.

JOHN WHITE
What?

Off her stern look, he holds up a hand in surrender. Laughs.

JOHN WHITE
Alright, apologies. Grab a bite or not
though? I gotta make a reservation.

Kick looks at the word dictated by Rose a moment ago, then an idea enters her mind and manifests in the following scheme:

KICK
Waldrop needs me to research a
surgery for that series we're doing
on St. Elizabeth's Hospital.

John stands and leans over the desk with a smile.

JOHN WHITE
Well, guess which reporter was
assigned to cover it.

Kick smiles back and points a finger at him.

JOHN WHITE
Is that how I'm going to make this
dinner happen?

Kick pretends to let out a COUGH from John's cigarette smoke,
glances down at the paper with the name.

KICK
It's called a lobotomy.

John sucks down cigarette smoke, his mind searching for the
word, but he shrugs and shakes his head.

JOHN WHITE
Not ringing a bell, but I'll look into
it. Waldrop will be happy as ever with
the Ambassador's daughter. Now...

He stands and points the pen toward Kick's face.

JOHN WHITE
How 'bout that dinner?

A smirk curls her lips. She snatches the pen, finds John's
note written while she was on the phone...

"Dinner tonight? YES/NO"

...and circles the "YES" with an ever-expanding grin.

INT. KENNEDY COMPOUND, BRONXVILLE - ROSE'S STUDY - AFTERNOON

CLINK, CLINK. Rose drops three more sugar cubes into her tea,
glancing around like a child worried about being caught.

She sips the tea and closes her eyes. Signs of worry creeping
into a face of constant, (publicly) calm demeanor.

She exhales a long breath, then picks up the phone again.
Dials. Sips another glass of sugar-filled tea. RING. RING.

EXT. MANHATTANVILLE COLLEGE - CONTINUOUS

Large stone buildings that resemble a castle more than a
campus announce Manhattanville College over five acres of
green grass. Nuns patrol the courtyard of the spacious lot. A
strict silence hovering over the campus like a glass bubble.

RING...RING...RING...

INT. MANHATTANVILLE COLLEGE - EUNICE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...RING...RING...RI--A lanky hand snatches the phone.

EUNICE

What?

Eunice Kennedy sits in her small, private dorm room of Spartan furnishing. A twin-sized metal bed, dresser, and desk. A stack of tissues in hand.

The conversation cuts back and forth as needed.

ROSE

Good Lord Eunice, tell me that's not
how I raised you to answer the phone.

Eunice sits hunched over her desk, revealing a gawky frame and brusque manner so unlike the royal finesse that radiates from the other Kennedy women.

Instead, Eunice exudes a frenetic, nervous energy. Almost incapable of sitting still or pausing to think out her words.

EUNICE

Oh, hi, mother. Sorry, I'm--I've been
under the weather. I've been irritable.

She SNEEZES and COUGHS, wipes her nose clean. SNEEZES again.

Rose literally reels away from the phone in disgust.

ROSE

Again.

EUNICE

What?

ROSE

YOU ARE sick AGAIN.

EUNICE

Yeah.

ROSE

Did you just respond...yeah...to my
question?

EUNICE

Yes. I meant yes. I'm sick, mother!

She SNEEZES for a second time.

Rose pinches the bridge of her nose.

ROSE
I need to ask a favor, Eunice.

EUNICE
Yeah? Yes. Sorry. What? What is it?

A small hint of melancholy spills over Rose's voice.

ROSE
I need you to call your sister.

EUNICE
Kick?! What's that knucklehead--

ROSE
Eunice, if you would just wait--

EUNICE
I'm sorry, mother! I'm sick and got this Civil War essay due. It's quite fascinating, actually. I might pursue history I've decided. And then I've got that transfer application to Stanford. Which I guess is where I would be studying such history. Can you concentrate on just a specific time period? Like the Civil War or something? That reminds me, I need daddy to call--

ROSE
It's a favor for Rosemary.

The name causes a sudden silence to stifle the frenzy. Eunice's restless energy stills in concern.

EUNICE
What--oh, oh no. What's wrong?

ROSE
No. Eunice. Calm down. I just--

EUNICE
Should I fly out?! She's with Jack and Kick right? Dad out--

ROSE
Eunice! Good Lord. Settle!

The admonishment settles Eunice down, though she begins to restlessly tap her foot and bite her fingernails.

ROSE
I just need you to call her. She's
been...exceptionally difficult.

EUNICE
She's upset? Who's been talk--

ROSE
She's just a little lost, I think.

EUNICE
She talk to dad? Dad talk to her?

Rose opens her mouth to answer...but doesn't. Allowing the
silent pause to answer instead.

EUNICE
I'll call right away.

ROSE
If she doesn't start behaving, I'm
not sure what daddy--

EUNICE
DON'T SAY THAT, MOTHER. Please! You
know it upsets me! That talk--!

ROSE
Eunice Kennedy! You think I would
allow any harm or secrecy to
surround my first-born daughter?

Rose rears herself back from the sudden outburst. Waits for
the silence of her surrounding home to return.

ROSE
I just need you to talk some sense
into her as best you can.

A cry catches itself in Eunice's throat that she hides from
her mother with an all-too-fake cough.

EUNICE
She loves you, mother. And dad. It's
'cause she loves you so much that she
acts this way. When it's too hard.
Not being like the rest of us.

Rose cannot respond and allows the silence to answer again.

EUNICE
I'm gonna hang up, 'K? I'll call in
the morning and check on her.

Rose swallows a lump in her throat. Regains her voice.

ROSE
Talk tomorrow, Eunice.

CLICK. Rose hangs up the phone, wipes a tear threatening to spill down her cheek, then finishes the rest of her tea.

INT. SACRED HEART CONVENT SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - MORNING

BRRRNNG. A high-pitched bell marks the end of class.

A TEACHER tries settling down the restless congregation of all-female students hurrying to exit, two of which are:

Rosemary and Gloria, who are in the midst of a laugh, when on their way out the door, Rosemary is stopped...

Sister Margaret looms over the doorway.

SISTER MARGARET
Rosemary?

Rosemary and Gloria stand still as statues. Guilty.

ROSEMARY
...yes?

Gloria keeps her eyes trained on the floor, as Rosemary glances to and fro from making eye contact.

SISTER MARGARET
Your sister left a call, whenever
you have a moment. Eunice--

ROSEMARY
Eunice called?!

An enormous smile spreads across her face.

SISTER MARGARET
Follow me.
(to Gloria)
Alone.

DOWN THE HALLWAY - SECONDS LATER

The two saunter down the hallway, avoiding students and nuns exiting classes. Rosemary brimming with excitement.

ROSEMARY
She leave a message?

Sister Margaret keeps her eyes forward and does not respond.

ROSEMARY
Di-did she leave--

SISTER MARGARET
You can call her in a moment, Rosemary.

Rosemary nods from the subtle scolding in her voice.

And notices two NUNS following behind them.

IN SISTER MARGARET'S OFFICE - SECONDS LATER

CLICK. The Sister locks the door and points to the leather chair opposite her desk, where Rosemary sits.

Nervous apprehension creeps its way into her mood. Her eyes dart to the phone, to the desk, to the Sister's face.

ROSEMARY
So...can...can I call her?

SISTER MARGARET
You sure may, Rosemary.

She TAPS the phone at the desk's corner. TAP. TAP...TAP.

SISTER MARGARET
I want you to know I understand
your bond with your sister. What
she means to you, and that I am not
being unsympathetic, or cruel.
(sighs)
But that I also need you to
understand my position.

Sister Margaret leans forward across the desk.

SISTER MARGARET
I need you to tell me where you were
last night, who was with you, where
you went, and how you escaped.

She holds up a hand to silence the excuses flying out of Rosemary's mouth, which shrinks with instant guilt.

SISTER MARGARET
If you're honest with me, I can allow
you to call your sister back. But
you're putting me in a terrible bind--

ROSEMARY
No, no. Sister Margaret. Plea--

SISTER MARGARET

I have a former Ambassador preparing to take action on one of my students-- that student being you, Rosemary Kennedy--unless this school can correct your behavior.

ROSEMARY

I have to talk to Eunice!

SISTER MARGARET

Your sister is in Manhattanville College. New York. I highly doubt she knows where you were last night.

ROSEMARY

BUT I HAVE TO TALK--

A rage bubbles over Rosemary, choking her words and thoughts into a chaotic mess of emotion, which the Sister notices.

SISTER MARGARET

Rosemary. Calm--calm down--

ROSEMARY

I DON'T KNOW, OK! WE WERE HERE LAST NIGHT. WE WERE OUT. WE'RE HERE NOW! WHAT'S THE DIFF--

SISTER MARGARET

Rosemary. Settle down. Talk it out.

Rosemary leaps out of the chair, pacing the room, biting her nails and shaking her head, as though having a panic attack.

SISTER MARGARET

Just tell me--

ROSEMARY

I DON'T KNOW GODDAMMIT!

A sudden surge of anger erupts, and she lets out a GASP.

ROSEMARY

Sister, you can't! Please! You can't!

SISTER MARGARET

You cannot do this, Rosemary! I cannot have Joseph Kennedy's daughter wandering the streets of D.C.--

CLICK, Rosemary unlocks the door, RUNS out into the hallway, but the two nuns waiting outside grab her arms.

Rosemary crumbles and SCREAMS with a wrath previously unseen, as the nuns do their best to soothe her.

Sister Margaret buries her face in her hands, at a loss what to do with her most notable and troubled student.

The nuns drag Rosemary away from the door, her SCREAMS echoing across the halls, until...

CLICK. The two other nuns shut Sister Margaret's door closed, muffling Rosemary's screams.

Sister Margaret glances to her fireplace, then to her desk, bites her lower lip in unease. Then suddenly...

...finds and lights the nearest cigarette.

INT. SACRED HEART CONVENT SCHOOL - ROSEMARY'S ROOM - LATER

Back in Rosemary's room, the two nuns have seemingly managed to calm her down. A look of defeat draped over her like a blanket, as the nuns finally exit the room.

Gloria's side of the room remains empty, as Rosemary further descends into her severe mood swing of depression.

She collapses to her bed, sniffing. When her eyes catch...

The stack of papers on her desk: the letters.

A new mood of action seizes her being.

She leaps to her feet. Races to the desk. Picks up the nearest pen and begins writing with a feverish intensity.

BLACK.

LETTER FROM ROSEMARY KENNEDY TO EUNICE KENNEDY

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

They won't let me talk to you, Euny!

-- A group of neighborhood kids and the Kennedy children (Rosemary now around twelve years old) sit in a circle.

NEIGHBORHOOD BOY

Duck...duck...

-- The large circle of kids are in the midst of a game of duck, duck, goose on the front lawn of the Bronxville home.

-- Jack, Joe Jr., Kick, Eunice, Rosemary, and six other neighborhood kids.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
It's not fair! It never is.

-- PAT, PAT, the Neighborhood Boy taps the head of Jack, Joe Jr., then slows his feet to a crawl at Rosemary...

-- The young Rosemary can hardly contain her excitement.

-- But then he leaps forward to pick:

NEIGHBORHOOD BOY
Goose!

-- Kick, who leaps to her feet, begins to chase the boy.

-- Rosemary cannot disguise her crushing disappointment.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I can't ever do anything! No one
ever lets me!

-- Jack's turn. He taps the circle of heads. PAT, PAT...

JOE JR..
Goose!

-- And picks one of the neighborhood girls, chases her.

-- Rosemary grows bored, upset, and frustrated.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
No one ever wants me for anything.

-- Eunice's turn. Duck. Duck...

-- Rosemary sits with her hands against her cheek. Resigned.

EUNICE
Duck, duck...

-- Eunice slows her steps before the defeated Rosemary...

EUNICE
Goose!

-- Rosemary's big green eyes brighten to big green circles.

-- She leaps to her feet, chases her sister. Eunice is so much faster, but slows down, so Rosemary can--

-- TACKLE her to the grass. The two giggling, out of breath.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Always the only one that played
with me.

-- The Kennedy clan plays a competitive game of "hearts" on a rainy afternoon trapped within the compound.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
When we played cards.

-- Nine-year-old Eunice sits at the edge of the table, trying to teach twelve-year-old Rosemary the rules.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I'm not good at that stuff. I never
won. But they are my favorite memories.

-- Everyone at the table is growing impatient, as Eunice does her best to explain.

EUNICE
And that's worth thirteen 'cus it's
a spade. And that's shooting the
moon. Wait, here...

-- Eunice plays Rosemary's hand for her with a big grin.

EUNICE
You won, Rosemary!

JOE JR.
That's cheatin--

-- Kick SLAPS his arm, and he reluctantly plays along.

ROSEMARY
I-I won?

-- The other Kennedys all exchange a subtle glance of knowing, then cheer on their sister just the same.

-- Eunice grabs Rosemary's hand and lifts it up as though she just won a boxing match.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Or football.

-- It's the Kennedy boys vs. Kennedy girls on the acres of backyard grass for a game of summer football.

-- Rosemary stands on the sidelines, playing referee, while Joe Jr. and Jack take on Kick and Eunice.

JACK

Hike!

-- Joe Jr. runs a route, catches the ball, and charges to the finish line with Kick trailing behind him, out of breath.

JACK

That's a touchdown, Rosemary!

-- Rosemary looks down to the small scoreboard at her feet.

-- Then looks to Eunice, who holds up seven fingers.

-- Rosemary quickly bends down and flips over the number.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

Or school projects.

-- Eunice helps Rosemary build a model solar system with various fruits representing the planets.

EUNICE

And the apple. What's the apple, Rosemary?

ROSEMARY

Venus?

EUNICE

No, the peach is Venus. The apple is Mars. It's red, remember? Red like Mars.

ROSEMARY

Mars is the apple.

EUNICE

You're eating Pluto, Rosemary.

Rosemary quickly spits out a purple grape from her mouth.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

I never felt like I was a moron with you, Euny. Never felt different.

-- Eunice and Rosemary are walking home from school, schoolbooks close their chest, when:

SCHOOL BOY

Hey! Rosemary! Rosemary the retard!

-- THWACK, a paper bag SMACKS against Rosemary's head.

-- She falls against a fence, dazed and disoriented.

-- She picks away leaves and dirt, then her fingers slow in rising as horror as she feels and realizes...

-- Flecks of dog feces are dripping down her long brown hair.

-- Tears bubble up from her eyes. Her face burns pink.

SCHOOL BOY

Rosemary! That's dog shit you
retard! Don't touch it!

--Raw anger consumes Eunice. She lifts Rosemary to her feet.

EUNICE

Up we go. Up. Come on, Rosemary.

-- Eunice helps her walk away, shielding her from view.

EUNICE

Don't listen to tha--

-- THWACK, another paper bag filled with dirt and excrement impacts Eunice's head.

-- The school boy across the street SHOUTS and laughs.

SCHOOL BOY

Sorry, puny Euny. I was aiming for
the retar--

EUNICE

SHUT UP! SHUT UP!

-- Eunice's voice goes hoarse. Her face turns scarlet with rage. She shuffles herself and Rosemary toward the car, where the driver (a maid) helps them inside.

MAID

Get in! Get in, you two.

-- Rosemary leaps inside, while Eunice stands still before the car. Her eyes red-rimmed with tears. Her hair a mess.

-- Eunice looks across the street to the jeering bully, then looks down to a beer bottle shattered beside the curb.

-- She bends down, picks up the sharp glass, aims...

MAID

Eunice Kennedy! Don't you dar--!

-- THWACK, and throws it. Glass SHATTERS at the boy's feet.

EUNICE
F-F-FUCK Y-Y--

MAID
Eunice Kennedy!

The Maid nearly tackles the volatile Eunice, and throws her:
INTO THE CAR

Where Rosemary sits slumped against the window. Her face
filled with tears and humiliation.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I wish I could talk to you so much
it's making me sick.

Eunice saddles beside her, choking back her own emotions.
VROOM, the maid starts the car and accelerates away.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I sometimes think you are the only one
who cared, Eunice. Who understood.

-- Eunice grabs Rosemary's hand and squeezes it tight.

EUNICE
What don't Kennedys do, Rosemary?

-- Rosemary glances up from her face of dirt and tears, a
half-smile growing as she meets Eunice's big grin.

EUNICE
Kennedy's. Don't...

-- Eunice wipes her sister's tears with that same smile.

ROSEMARY
Cry.

-- Rosemary leans against her sister's shoulder, and Eunice
hugs her tight, wiping the dirt and tears from her face.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Whatever happens to me here...

-- Rosemary's hands fly up in the air: "Touchdown".

-- then bend down to fix the scoreboard.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I could not have got this far
without you, Euny.

-- Rosemary counts up the score in another family card game.
-- Then pauses, unable to calculate the math.
-- Eunice whispers the answer in her ear.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
You made everything feel OK.

-- PAT, PAT, PAT. Eunice dashes around the duck-duck-goose circle, slowing her steps to a crawl...

EUNICE
Goose!

-- ...and bops Rosemary atop the head.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
You made me feel loved.

-- Rosemary tackles Eunice to the grass.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I love you, Euny.

-- The sisters laugh until they are red in the face and out of breath, exhausted with joy.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I love you so much.

FADE TO BLACK.

Early morning street noise. Cars HONK. Tires SCREECH.

KNOCK. KNOCK. KNOCK.

Sheets RUFFLE. Two shadows pop up from a couch within a dark room, scrambling to be quiet and find their clothes.

One of the shadow outlines is of a YOUNG WOMAN. She dashes for a closet, slides it open, disappears inside.

JOE (O.S.)
Jack?

The remaining shadow--of a young man--finds a pair of pants, his belt buckle JINGLING, as he shimmies each leg inside.

KNOCK. KNOCK. KNOCK. Loud and angry. From behind the door.

The shadow sprints to the northern wall, draws a chain, CLICK, and unlocks the door to find:

JOE
...Are you just waking up?

JACK
Come in, pops. Come in. Sorry.

As light spills into the room, Joe Kennedy steps inside:

INT. JACK KENNEDY'S DORCHESTER HOUSE APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

A war between neat and messy rages within the Dorchester Complex overlooking the street of D.C.

The spacious setting is a mixture of home and apartment. CLICK, Joe switches on the light to a chandelier above.

JACK
Getting ready, dad. Give me one minute.

The red-rimmed (and hungover) eyes of the twenty-four-year-old John F. Kennedy--aka JACK--squint under the harsh light.

He wears pants and an unbuttoned shirt with the Navy insignia draped over his somewhat built body.

JOE
You confirmed breakfast last night.

As his father turns for the nearest chair, Joe kicks a bra peeking into view from under the couch back into hiding.

JACK
Yeah, I just figured, you know...

JOE
It's six in the morning, Jack.

Joe says this as though Jack has just spent the entire morning sleeping in past noon.

He shakes his head, moves to a chair before the closet. When:

A THUMP resounds from the wall. Jack gulps, and Joe stills.

JACK
We should get goin'. You're right.
The Naval Office'll want to meet
you if you'd like to come in and--

JOE
What in God's name?!

The heel of a woman's shoe nearly stabs into Joe's rear end.

He holds up the three inch heel with glaring eyes.

Jack's face sinks with guilt. He plops to the couch.

Joe glances to the heel, then to the closet behind him.

JACK

Inga...come on out.

More THUMPS from the closet, until Joe flings open the door:

INGA

You must be Mr. Kennedy!

A beautiful blonde woman emerges from the closet. She's dressed in a white dress shirt with a black skirt, her right hand extended, and face flushed red from embarrassment.

JOE

Joseph P. Kennedy. And you--

INGA

Well, pleasure to meet you, I was just leaving.

JOE

You'll have to try the front door, rather than the closet.

Inga LAUGHS in an all-too-awkward manner.

INGA

Well, an honor to meet you. Jack, I'll be in touch.

JOE

You forgot your--

SLAM, the embarrassed woman slams the door behind her without another word. An awkward silence follows in her wake.

JOE

She'll be back for this.

He tosses the high heel shoe to the similarly shamed Jack.

JACK

Dad--

JOE

Save it.

Joe returns to the chair across from the couch. Inhales a deep breath, his cold blue eyes behind the round glasses studying his son with a mixture of pride and concern.

JOE

How are your days progressing at the Naval Office, son?

Jack shrugs, buttoning his shirt.

JACK

It's basic at this point. Preparing us...
(shrugs his shoulders)
For whatever this country has ahead.

He ties his dress shoes, looks up to his father.

JACK

Why?

JOE

Your brother is about to receive his fighter pilot wings down there in Florida.

Joe rubs his eyes, repositions his glasses.

JOE

And you're hiding blondes in your closet.

A wave of shame drowns Jack's already tomato-red complexion.

JACK

Dad, I'm a Harvard Graduate. An author. Enrolled in the Navy. And for twenty-four, that ain't too shab--

JOE

And you...achieved all these on your own, did you?

Jack's air of sudden pride deflates in a swift swoop.

JOE

Jack, I'm in town to make another step in securing this family's future. But I do worry...

Joe's gaze remains locked upon the window view: a landscape of stone and gray skies that compose Washington D.C.

JOE

This family is only as strong as its weakest link.

He removes his gaze from the window and back toward his son.

JOE

I have high hopes for you. You and
your brother both.

(pauses)

But there is a lot at stake, Jack.
One misstep and decades of work for
Irish immigrants hoping to make an
impact on this country's future...

He waves his hand in an arc across the air.

JOE

Gone.

Jack keeps his gaze turned to the floor.

JOE

Just remember that everything I
have done in this life is for you
and the family.

Joe returns his bowler hat to this head, offers Jack a nod,
then moves for the door.

JACK

No breakfast then?

WHAM, Joe closes the door behind him.

Jack looks down to his feet and notices Inga's heel staring
back at him. He picks up the shoe with a half-hearted laugh.

...then grows overwhelmed with shame. THROWS the shoe--

-- BAM, and shatters a picture at the opposite wall.

He hurries across the floor, bends to pick up the shards of
scattered glass, and finds:

A KENNEDY FAMILY PORTRAIT

All eleven Kennedys with their arms locked in a connected
link upon the family front lawn. The men in tuxes and women
in dresses within the black and white picture.

Eunice, Jack, Rosemary, Jean, Joe Sr., Ted, Rose, Joe Jr.,
Pat, Bobby, and Kick. All eleven smiling toward the camera.

The Kennedy family of eleven united as one.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SACRED HEART CONVENT SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - MORNING

Rosemary sits bored behind a desk in a small classroom of thirty students, writing in her notebook. When--

KNOCK. KNOCK. Sister Margaret peeks her head into the door.

Rosemary glances up, and Sister Margaret points to her.

The eyes of every student follow Rosemary with suspicion and curiosity, as Rosemary slowly rises from her seat and out:

INTO THE HALLWAY

SISTER MARGARET

Well, you win.

Rosemary raises a confused brow at the Sister's soft smile.

SISTER MARGARET

She won't stop calling.

Sister Margaret turns down the hallway and signals for Rosemary to follow. A grin spreads across Rosemary's face.

IN SISTER MARGARET'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Sister Margaret has her phone against the ear, while Rosemary rocks in the leather chair with rising excitement.

SISTER MARGARET

Is she available?

(waits)

I have Rosemary.

Sister Margaret rises from her desk, hands the phone to Rosemary, then moves to exit the room to allow for privacy.

After hearing the door completely close, Rosemary literally gasps with excitement, then almost screams into the phone:

ROSEMARY

Eunice!

INT. MANHATTANVILLE COLLEGE - EUNICE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

EUNICE

There she is!

Eunice stands before her desk, pacing with the phone in hand. Tissues and cough drops littered about the small room. The two cut back and forth as needed.

EUNICE

Well what the heck happened?! I've been calling like a maniac looking for you.

ROSEMARY

They're mad at me, Eunice.
Everyone's mad me.

EUNICE

Join the club, Rosie. Mom's been on top of me about checking in on you.
Like I needed an excuse.

Rosemary bursts out laughing, and Eunice can't help it either. The enthusiasm and love between the two contagious.

EUNICE

So, what am I gonna report back?
What's goin' on with you, huh?
Dad's comin' to see you?

Rosemary nods, shuffles her feet, figuring out the words.

EUNICE

You want mom to move you somewhere else?

ROSEMARY

No. It's...it's just hard without you or mom here--

EUNICE

No boys there either, right--

ROSEMARY

Euny!

Eunice laughs from the other end of the phone, and the gut-busting giggle infects Rosemary.

EUNICE

Rosemary, they're not gonna actually do anything. You know that, right? You think mom's gonna let anything happen to her oldest daughter? We love you, you little goof.

ROSEMARY

I-I don't know, Euny. Dad's...real mad at me about running away.

She checks the door to make sure no one's listening.

ROSEMARY

I just--I wanted to meet someone. Like you, and Kick, and Jack, even Pat--and I don't want things to change again. I just want things to go back to normal--

EUNICE

Rosemary, you will and you know it. Any guy'd be lucky to have you. But you've gotta wait 'til the time's right. Be patient, as hard as it is. And don't get caught, you goof!

Rosemary blushes from the words.

EUNICE

'Specially if I'm not there to cover for you.

Rosemary twirls the phone chord with unease, as Eunice SNEEZES from her end in New York.

EUNICE

I'll talk to mom, maybe Jack can--

ROSEMARY

I was just writing to him. I'm writing to everyon--

EUNICE

He thinks he's Mr. Big Shot over there in the Navy.

ROSEMARY

I miss him, Euny. I miss you all so much I'm sick over it. I'm losing it.

A sudden mood of anxiety sweeps over her in one fell instant.

ROSEMARY

Everyone 'cept Gloria hates me, and I can't figure out these tests. I'm in the same classroom with these girls, who are all smart and normal. And they said if I still want to be a teacher, I'm gonna have to take even more tests and school--

EUNICE

Rosemary. Rosemary.

Eunice's tone halts Rosemary's wave of nerves.

EUNICE
It. Will Be. OK.

Rosemary nods and bites her lower lip.

ROSEMARY
Promise?

EUNICE
I promise, kiddo.

A big grin spreads across Rosemary's face from the words.

EUNICE
Go have fun, goof. Love ya.

ROSEMARY
Love you, Euny.

CLICK. The line goes dead. Rosemary slams down the phone and rushes back out into:

THE HALLWAY

Where Sister Margaret finishes a discussion with another nun, then sees Rosemary exiting her office. She walks over.

SISTER MARGARET
Have a nice chat with your sis--

Rosemary wraps her arms around the nun's waist in a big hug.

Sister Margaret reels back for a moment, taken off-guard, then laughs and hugs her back.

SISTER MARGARET
Just promise me you'll be good?

Rosemary nods. Joy radiating from her being after the call.

INT. SACRED HEART CONVENT SCHOOL - ROSEMARY'S ROOM - LATER

Rosemary returns to her room, where Gloria sits on her side of the dorm. Writing a paper for class.

GLORIA
That smile is blinding me.

Rosemary plops in the chair near her desk, unable to hide it.

ROSEMARY
Finally got to talk to Euny.

GLORIA

I know.

Rosemary scrunches her face in confusion.

GLORIA

They started asking me questions, too.

Rosemary stops writing, looks up and sighs with worry.

GLORIA

You're not the only one in trouble,
Miss Kennedy. I didn't say
anything, but they really...

Rosemary nods in worry, until Gloria starts to grin.

GLORIA

But I think you still want to see Alan--

ROSEMARY

Gloria! I-I don't.

Gloria giggles, as does Rosemary.

GLORIA

The boys do only have a couple of days
left though...then we can be done.

That first hint of mischievousness appears between them.

ROSEMARY

And the nuns have their Second
Saturday Meeting.

GLORIA

So the door'll be practically wide open...

A tense silence expands. Waiting to see who will break first.

ROSEMARY

What are you gonna wear?

And as the girls start preparing to sneak out, wild with
excitement for another adventure...

INT. WASHINGTON CONVENTION CENTER BALLROOM - EVENING

Chandeliers and candelabras hang from a ceiling that
illuminates a spacious ballroom in a mix of soft golds.

Navy servicemen dressed in pristine uniforms are waltzing around the dance floor with their dates, dressed in similarly gorgeous gowns, while those eating or drinking sit at long tables that form a rectangle around the center stage.

AT THE TABLE NEAR THE RIGHT WALL

Kick and her date, John White, are sitting bored and restless. The latter with a cigarette in hand.

JOHN WHITE

You ready to get out of here yet?

KICK

You haven't even met my brother.

JOHN WHITE

Prince Kennedy seems a little preoccupied with his princess.

Kick ELBOWS his ribs with a soft jab.

JOHN WHITE

After I meet him, we can go?

KICK

I suppose, if you're that anxious to get out of here.

A big grin suddenly spreads on Kick's face, and she waves to Jack and the Inga on the dance floor. (John also waves, though with visibly fake enthusiasm.)

KICK

What's with the itch to leave? There's a lot of bigwigs here. The type you love to harass.

JOHN WHITE

I got another round of proofing for that St. Elizabeth's report.

Kick's jaw drops with disbelief. He raises a brow.

KICK

You were gonna look up that surgery for me! For Waldrop?!

JOHN WHITE

Shit, I totall--

KICK

Language, John! This is a military--

JOHN WHITE
Alright! God--

KICK
Or His name in vain!

John bites his lower lip, inhales the last drag of his cigarette, extinguishes it.

JOHN WHITE
Kick, believe me anyway, that thing
you were asking about...

He exhales a puff of smoke, shakes his head with disgust.

KICK
The lobotomy?

JOHN WHITE
If you plan on keeping your dinner
in your stomach rather than the
dance floor, I don't think you want
to hear about it.

Kick again JABS his ribs.

JOHN WHITE
With the ribbing--!

KICK
I'm tired of your shit, John!
You've treated me like a child
because of my last name since I met
you, and I'm not gonna tolerate it.
I asked you for a favor, and I put
off doing it under the assumption
that you would help--

JOHN WHITE
Alright, alright. Take it easy.

The chain smoker withdraws another cigarette, ignites the tip, then inhales with a face of disgust in explaining:

JOHN WHITE
It's these two guys--Freeman and
Watts. Freeman's head of the
neurology department at George
Washington University. They've
dedicated this cause of theirs,
which they've rebranded as the
lobotomy, on mental patients.

John inhales another drag, then lets the smoke drift out.

JOHN WHITE

They think they can cure everything by going inside the brain. Literally.

Kick sips the champagne to steady her trembling hand.

JOHN WHITE

They basically take the patient in, and we're talking mental patients: unstable housewives, criminals, traumatic stress veterans...

Kick gulps, attempts to steel her face of distress.

KICK

An-and what does the surgery do?

JOHN WHITE

Well, basically, they drill a hole in the patient's head...then start slicing.

He pantomimes the gesture of cutting scissors.

KICK

Start cutting what?

JOHN WHITE

The brain. The front of it.

Kick pales and turns her gaze to the floor.

JOHN WHITE

So far, the results have been...not good, to say the least. Usually, they're reduced to an even worse state. I mean, they're just gone as a person...gone.

He emphatically waves his hand to make the point.

JOHN WHITE

It's still early, but I'm sure more investigations like ours might help--

KICK

Thank you, John.

Kick finishes the last of her skinny champagne glass, throwing back her head to drain the alcohol.

JACK (O.S.)

Really goin' to town with the free champagne there, Kick.

As the waltz finishes, and the surrounding crowd CLAPS in applause, Jack and Inga have walked forward to meet them.

Kick raises her empty champagne glass in applause.

KICK
Free and fantastic.

JOHN WHITE
You really know how to tangle there,
Jackie boy.

Jack scrunches his features in distaste for the nickname.

JACK
Mind if I steal my sister for this
next dance?

Kick laughs, accepts his hand, then walks around the table to join him on the floor.

As Jack and Kick move for the dance floor, John and Inga watch the two Kennedys begin their routine.

INGA
Mind if I steal one of those?

She points to his pack of cigarettes.

JOHN WHITE
It'll cost you a dance.

Inga blushes, and she accepts John's hand. The two Kennedy dates now moving to join their companions.

MOMENTS LATER

Jack and Kick enjoy a moment of sibling bonding during the soft, slow dance. A kind of peace only a Kennedy can share with another family member and not the outside world.

JACK
Who's the chain smoker with the tattoo?

Kick laughs, rests her chin against Jack's chest.

KICK
Star reporter at work.

JACK
Star date stealer, as well.

Kick glances up to find John White dancing with Inga.

KICK
She's quite smitten over you.

JACK
I don't know how long she'll last.
(off her look)
Dad came to see me and found her.
It was not our most pleasant
conversation.

Kick glances up with worry and confusion.

KICK
I got a call about his visit, too.

Jack stops dancing in worry, but Kick guides him to continue.

JACK
Is it Eunice? I thought it was the
flu or something--

Kick shakes her head. Bites her lower lip.

JACK
Pat? Jean? Bobby? Don't make me call--

KICK
Rosemary.

The name stills Jack's feet, but Kick keeps him moving. A
face of utter concern drowns his features.

KICK
She'll pull through. Don't worry.

She leans in closer to his chest.

KICK
Even if it means you have to show
up and dance with her again.

Jack emits a small chuckle at some old memory.

He lets his sister rest her head on his chest, as they
continue the slow, quiet dance around the room.

DISSOLVE TO:

LETTER FROM ROSEMARY KENNEDY TO JOHN F. "JACK" KENNEDY

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Dear Jack, I don't even know if you'll
get this or read this.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

I remember mom mentioned once that the
Navy reads your mail or something.

-- The nine Kennedy children (Rosemary now age fifteen) sit
in a circle around the tree on Christmas morning.

-- Rosemary has gained noticeable weight in her developing
teenage years. More rounded and plump.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

I am writing to say thank you.

-- Rosemary's presents include an array of new clothes,
ornate bibles, and a few pieces of jewelry.

ROSEMARY

This one's from Jack.

-- Joe sits in a leather chair near the fireplace like a
king. A genuine smile on Christmas morning with his family.
Jack sits in a chair beside him. Both in silk pajamas.

-- Rose sits across from him. Eunice and Kick beside her,
while the other Kennedy children sit in a semi-circle nearby.

ROSEMARY

Oh, Jack!

-- Rosemary unwraps the paper to unveil a tin box with the
label: "Ghirardelli Chocolate Company".

-- She leaps over to give Jack a hug.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

I know mom and dad did not understand,
when you went out of your way with me.

-- Alone in her room, Rosemary opens the box of chocolates
with special ceremony. Closes her eyes. Picks her favorite.

ROSE

One.

-- Rosemary's eyes drop with a look of devastation, knowing
that this moment was coming.

ROSE

As if you need a whole box of
chocolates to yourself.

-- Rose scoots forward and pinches Rosemary's gut.

ROSE

One.

-- Disgusted by having to police her child like this, Rose looks to the floor. Waiting for her.

-- Sadness sweeps over Rosemary's features. She sighs in annoyance. Eats the chocolate. Wipes her mouth.

-- Rose SNATCHES the box. Walks out the room. Gently shuts the door, muttering a "Merry Christmas" to the nearest maid.

-- A humiliated Rosemary buries her face in the pillow.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

But it meant more than I can tell you.

-- KNOCK. KNOCK. Two gentle taps from the door. ERK, the door slides open. Rosemary looks up:

-- Jack raises his index finger to his lips: "SHH", closes the door behind him, sneaks toward her bed.

-- Jack winks. Whispers something into her ear.

-- She leaps out of bed, jumps the other side of the room, looks into her closet, searches the top shelf...

-- and finds another box of chocolates.

-- She tackles Jack in another bear hug, jumping with joy.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

I always wanted to try harder with
mom and dad, because I knew you
would be there to help me.

-- At the long family dining room table, Joe sits at the head. Then Joe Jr. and Jack. Then Eunice and Kick. Then Rosemary, positioned beside the younger siblings.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

When dad used to quiz us after dinner...

-- A nightly ritual at the Kennedy household after dinner.

-- Joe holds up the front page of the newspaper and reads the headline aloud to the table:

JOE

'April 5. 1933. Under Executive Order
6102 of the President. All gold coin,
bullion, and certificates now owned
by them to a Federal Reserve Bank...'

-- The Kennedy Patriarch turns to his children at the table.

JOE
Explain this article to the table
in one sentence, Junior.

-- Joe Jr. gulps. Thinks about it. Declares to the family:

JOE JR.
It means President Roosevelt has
criminalized the possession of
monetary gold.

JOE
And why, Jack, would the President
do such an outlandish thing?

-- Jack thinks about it for a minute. Analyzing. Thinking.

JACK
President Roosevelt believes that
individuals or corporations hoarding
gold are stalling the economy.

-- Joe puffs on his pipe, nods in approval.

-- Each of the children are racking their brains for the next
question, considering the headline from every angle.

JOE
Kathleen, what might be some other
methods the President may employ to
improve our economic stagnation?

-- Kick sits still, glances to her empty plate, to her
siblings, all of whom are quiet and similarly unsure. Then:

--Rosemary pipes up from far down the table.

ROSEMARY
Maybe we could sell some of our
gold? If--if we have some? To help
the economy?

-- Joe's disapproving glare and utter disgust for the answer
makes Rosemary crumble inside.

JOE
Please don't be stupid, Rosemary.
Just once.

-- The air turns to glass from the cold remark. Rosemary
fights back tears but is quickly losing the battle.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

I realize now how brave it was,
when dad was picking on me, for you
to stand up for me.

-- Rosemary's face fills with defeat and disappointment.

JACK

She's right.

-- Jack's defense causes a wind of surprise to sweep through the room. Joe glances up to his son.

JACK

There's a ten thousand dollar fine
for hoarding, and the Federal Reserve
will exchange every ounce with a
twenty-dollar equivalent.

-- Joe rears his head back at Jack's defense, puffs his pipe in a stalemate, but Jack does not break eye contact.

JOE

Thank you, Jack. And thank you,
Rosemary, for your analysis and
contribution.

-- Though the condescension in his voice is clear as day, Rosemary beams with delight. She leans back in her chair, satisfied and overjoyed, glances to Jack.

-- He shoots her a wink from across the table.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

Everything you did to protect me,
when he and mom would get mad at me.

-- The siblings trail behind their parents in a bike race.

-- Rosemary struggles to keep up from the very back.

-- Jack notices, and while his father SCREAMS for them to hurry up, ERK, Jack brakes his bicycle to wait for Rosemary.

JOE (O.S.)

Jack! Let's go! Come on!

-- Jack ignores his father's remarks, waits for Rosemary to pedal her way up the ascending hill...

-- Her face flushed with sweat. Tired. Exhausted.

JACK

Come on, Rosie. Come on...

-- She finally makes her way up the hill.

-- Jack shoots her a wink, and the two pedal forward to catch up with the family.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I know you were probably embarrassed,
or mom put you up to it...

-- Rosemary at school, sixteen years old, in her private room within the all-girls school, and in tears. Spewing that volcanic rage.

-- Rose sits in the chair opposite, similarly upset.

ROSEMARY
Kick has a boyfriend! Eunice has a
boyfriend! This isn't fai--

ROSE
You're a Kenn--

ROSEMARY
And I hate it!

-- Rosemary picks up her pillow and THROWS it at her mom.

-- Rose stands in shock, not knowing what to do or say.

ROSE
Your father and I cannot allow some
boy to be coming in here--

ROSEMARY
Because you won't let me! You never
let me! I can't ever meet anyone!

-- Explosive tears burst from within her. Rosemary tries to catch her breath between the tears.

ROSEMARY
And I'm going to be alone! The only
one in my class...alone. AGAIN.

-- Rosemary sinks to the floor, buries her face in her knees.

-- Rose stares at the floor, unable to meet her daughter's devastated face, and releases a long sigh.

DISSOLVE TO:

-- The school dance. The gymnasium has transformed into a ballroom. The girls in dresses and their dates in tuxes. The nuns chaperoning with totalitarian authority.

-- Rosemary sits at a table by herself. Glum. The NUN chaperoning her equally despondent.

-- Rosemary looks out at the dance floor and sees the other students with dates, dancing to the classical music. Then:

JACK (O.S.)
Mind if I steal her for a dance, Sister?

-- Rosemary looks up in utter disbelief.

-- Jack stands before her in a regal tuxedo.

-- A few of the other girls swoon, pointing out the handsome young Kennedy to each other.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
But you always made me feel special.

-- Rosemary tries to hide her smile, but the overwhelming emotion causes a wide grin to spread from cheek to cheek.

-- The nun nods and nudges Rosemary to take Jack's hand. She follows her brother's lead to the dance floor.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
You made me feel like a person.

MOMENTS LATER

-- The song comes to its conclusion.

-- Rosemary blushes and smiles with radiating joy. She leans in and whispers to her brother's ear:

ROSEMARY
Thanks, Jack.

-- Jack reaches into his pocket to remove...

-- a small square of chocolate.

- Jack winks. Rosemary laughs and quickly pockets the chocolate. She closes her eyes to savor the moment.

-- Then leans into her brother's chest, and Jack hears a snuffle, then lifts up her chin to see Rosemary's tears.

JACK
You know what mom would say.

-- Rosemary wipes away the tear with her white gloved-hand.

JACK
Kennedy's don't cry.

-- Jack kisses her cheek, wipes the tear of joy, then continues the dance. Rosemary more happy and alive than ever.

-- As the soft serenade of the song trails into the night...

FADE TO BLACK.

...the music becomes replaced by a loud jazz song from:

INT. THE TOMBS BAR - NIGHT

Alan and Rosemary dance the night away. As the song finishes, the bar claps in wild applause.

AT THE BOOTH - MOMENTS LATER

Rosemary and Alan are exhausted, huffing and regaining breath from the routine. Gloria and her date in the booth behind.

ALAN
Shall I light one for you, as well?

Rosemary's very British date sets a cigarette upon his lips.

ROSEMARY
Mom and dad were really against me smoking. Are against me.

ALAN
It's one of my last nights in America and you're not going to share a smoke?

ROSEMARY
....I'm not supposed to.

ALAN
Are you supposed to be out at a bar?

Rosemary tries to hide her small smirk, as Alan lights then hands her a cigarette. She inhales, COUGHS, and COUGHS.

ALAN
English tobacco is more of an acquired taste, I suppose. Last of my stash, actually.

ROSEMARY
At least you'll be able to pick them up again soon. When do you have to leave?

A gentle sadness suddenly invades the mood.

ALAN

The cigarettes will be there.

He reaches forward and clasps her hand with the cigarette.

ALAN

But no Rosie Kent.

(grips her hand)

Who once visited London and then
decided not to go back.

Rosemary blushes, looks away, bites her lower lip, her thoughts suddenly lost a world of their own. The horrible recollection of a memory engulfing her eyes.

ROSEMARY

I-I have to go, Alan.

ALAN

Hmm?

ROSEMARY

I-I have to go, I'm so sorry.

ALAN

Is--did I say something? I was kidding!
And apologize for the cigarette.

Rosemary stands, grabs her coat, glances to Gloria that she needs to leave. Gloria catches her eye and nods in approval.

ALAN

Rosie, what's happened?

She nods, unable to verbally respond. He catches her arm, begs her to look at him in the eyes.

ALAN

You'll be in touch?

She stands still and unmoving, consumed with uncertainty.

ALAN

Please don't let this be goodbye.

Rosemary remains in place as though unwilling, a battle between her mind and body in visible conflict.

ALAN

I want what's here too.

His hand drifts down her forearm and clasps her hand.

ALAN

I thought--

ROSEMARY

I do too. I want--want it all more than anything.

ALAN

Then don't....why can't you stay?

Her eyes flit up past his head and stare upon the numerous rows of happy couples enjoying a night out:

-- A nervous couple on a first date occupies the first booth. Respectful. Polite. Reserved but with eager eyes.

-- Another couple leans across the booth to share a kiss.

-- Another couple wrap their arms around each other and lift their glasses to drink, laughing and happy.

ROSEMARY

Because I'm me.

She returns her vision back to Alan's eyes, then darts away without looking back, hurrying to catch up with Gloria.

Alan remains slumped in his seat, baffled, replaying the scene in his head to more confusion.

His eyes drift down to Rosemary's still lit cigarette...

...picks it up, inhales, then extinguishes the glowing tip.

EXT. SACRED HEART CONVENT SCHOOL - COURTYARD - NIGHT

Rosemary and Gloria race across the lawn outside the convent walls, keeping close to the shadows, until arriving:

AT AN ALCOVE IN THE WALL

Where a statue of Mary stands within a recession. Similar statues of Elizabeth and Mary Magdalen two recessions over.

The two sneak behind the statue, and Gloria lowers her hands, binding them together to create a stool for Rosemary to leap:

OVER THE WALL

Where she stumbles onto the grass.

She GRUNTS, brushes herself off, leans back over the wall, and grabs Gloria's hands to help her friend climb over.

ROSEMARY
Gloria, jump you--

Rosemary YANKS and pulls Gloria over; the two tumble into the grass in a fit of laughter, then recompose themselves...

...and sneak across the lawn. Keeping to the shadows.

The two reach the large double doors at the back of the convent. Gloria gently pulls back the brass doorknob.

ERK, hinges creak, and the two slip back:

INSIDE THE CONVENT

And tip-toe down the narrow, unlighted corridor. They pass each closed door with careful, quiet attention.

MOMENTS LATER

The two arrive before the door to their room. As quietly as possible, Gloria removes the key, inserts it into the lock.

INSIDE THEIR ROOM

Gloria slips inside, and Rosemary follows behind, locks the door with a CLICK. The two wallow in the quiet for a moment.

GLORIA
Alright, girlfriend. You ready to explain
what the hell happened with hi--

CLICK, the lamp across the room turns on.

Rosemary's eyes go wide. She lets out a gasp of shock.

ROSEMARY
Sis--sister?

Sister Margaret sits at Rosemary's desk, but her breath cuts short at the sight of the two men directly to her left:

DR. FREEMAN sits with a smile.

Standing beside him, his professional partner:

DR. JAMES WATTS. A thirty-seven-year-old man of diminutive height. With boyish features, round glasses, and small serious eyes that widen in study of the two girls before him.

GLORIA
It's my fault! I'm sorry. We can--

The Sister holds up a hand to halt their protests. Her face filled with dread and defeat.

The eyes of both girls are locked on the presence of the two unfamiliar men in the room.

SISTER MARGARET

You're not in trouble. And no one is upset with you, Rosemary. Rosemary!

She starts backpedaling, afraid.

SISTER MARGARET

Gloria dear, would you mind waiting in my office while we chat with Rosemary? Alone.

Gloria glances to Rosemary, whose face only exposes fear.

SISTER MARGARET

Please, Gloria. We need not make more trouble for me to have to call your parents again, correct?

Gloria's chin tilts down in a reluctant nod of agreement.

SISTER MARGARET

Thank you. It'll just be one moment.

Gloria turns. She grips the doorknob, reaches for Rosemary's hand, gently squeezes it in solidarity, then lets go...

...and walks out the door. CLICK. Locks it behind her.

A cold, dreaded silence expands over the room like mist.

SISTER MARGARET

These two men are doctors, Rosemary. This is Doctor Freeman and his partner, Doctor James Watts. Please introduce yourself.

DR. FREEMAN

Not necessary. We're quite familiar with you, Rosemary. But please, despite these circumstances, you need not be alarmed. We were just hoping to talk with you.

The shorter of the two doctors steps forward with a smile.

DR. JAMES WATTS

Please, take a seat.

He pushes forth the chair from the desk, which SCREECHES upon the tiles and causes Rosemary to shudder.

Nonetheless, she sits upon the chair. Ruffles her skirt.

DR. FREEMAN

We just thought it best to get acquainted at the earliest possible convenience.

(then)

Do you know what acquainted means, Rosemary?

As he speaks to her, Dr. Watts removes a white tablet from his coat pocket, reaches for a glass of water on the shelf...

...FSS, Dr. Watts drops the pill into the glass of water, watches the pale tablet dissolve, SHAKES the glass.

The unsettling smiles permanently fixed upon the two men causes a discomforting chill to settle over Rosemary's face.

ROSEMARY

My dad send you?

The two men exchange a glance, then chuckle.

DR. WATTS

You're more perceptive than he gives you credit for--

SISTER MARGARET

Please.

She casts the men an icy glare to get on with it.

Dr. Watts glances to the glass, gives another vigorous stir.

DR. FREEMAN

Very well. As you so astutely noted, we are here on behalf of your father. We're doctors, Rosemary.

DR. FREEMAN

And we think we've finally arrived at a solution to your...

(searches for the word)

Setbacks.

ROSEMARY

Set...backs?

DR. FREEMAN

Precisely. In academics and so forth.

Rosemary glances to Sister Margaret, but the principal's eyes remain glued to the floor. Like a guilty child.

ROSEMARY

You--you can make me smarter?

DR. FREEMAN

Something like that.

A small, insuppressible smile rises across Rosemary's face.

DR. WATTS

Well, we're hoping to, but we need to do some more tests. We were hoping you might spend the night and tomorrow afternoon with us, so we may monitor certain results.

(off Rosemary's face)

And then you can come back here. Right back here.

Rosemary can't believe what she's hearing.

ROSEMARY

...and I'll be smarter? Dad said so?

DR. FREEMAN

That's why we're here.

Sister Margaret looks nauseous. Hand over her mouth.

DR. WATTS

This medicine should help loosen your nerves, however. If you would.

He steps forward with the chalky glass of water in hand.

Rosemary accepts it. Stares at the two men with a smile. They loom over her with eager, predatory eyes.

ROSEMARY

So just--

Dr. Freeman raises the glass to her lips. Rosemary chugs the water; her face twists in sour disgust.

DR. FREEMAN

It's no chocolate shake, I'll admit, but--

Rosemary COUGHS and GAGS on the drink.

SISTER MARGARET

Are we finished here?

She stands, gripping her stomach, stern and impatient.

DR. WATTS

We are. We're parked just outside, and
the hospital is a two-mile drive or so.

Rosemary's eyes turn in discomfort.

DR. FREEMAN

Shall we need anything else, Sister--

SISTER MARGARET

No. We'll see you then, Rosemary.

Rosemary stands and grips Sister Margaret's arm--

ROSEMARY

Wait.

But she falters. Grips the doorknob. The doctors rush to
catch her. Smiling and reassuring.

DR. FREEMAN

Small side effect of drowsiness
with that medicine. Not to worry--

SISTER MARGARET

Rosemary, I-I tried--

Her voice chokes on the last word, and she stops herself,
takes a deep breath. Then opens the door.

Freeman and Watts grip Rosemary by each arm, then escort her:

OUT INTO THE HALLWAY

Where her best friend and roommate anxiously paces. Her eyes
saucer at the sight of these men dragging Rosemary away.

GLORIA

Rosemar--!

Sister Margaret grips Gloria's arm and YANKS her away.

Freeman and Watts remain nonplussed, maintaining their rictus-
like smiles, assisting Rosemary's drugged walk down the hall.

ROSEMARY

Bye, Gloria. Bye Sister Marg...

Her words trail off. Her eyes blinking. Her words slurred.

ROSEMARY

I really don't feel good.

She loses control of her legs. Falters. But the two doctors regrip and steady her balance.

Their smiles instantly disappear without Sister Margaret's presence. Dr. Watts leans in close to Rosemary's ear:

DR. WATTS

Rosemary, did you imbibe any alcohol earlier tonight? We need to know.

DR. WATTS

It's critical to know--do you feel--
(watches her for a moment)

Trash can! Trash can!

They nearly shove Rosemary to the nearby garbage can, FLING off the lid, and steady her face over it.

Rosemary RETCHES with a horrible, nauseating noise. Vomit spews down the receptacle. Her body trembling. GASPING.

Doors down the hallway begin to CREAK open at the noise.

DR. WATTS

Pull the car around.

Freeman does not argue and charges down and out the hallway. Watts slumps Rosemary up, but she stands and...

BAM, falls to the floor. Her head SLAMS against the tile.

DR. WATTS

Rosemary...

Rosemary remains still on the floor. Her breath raspy.

ROSEMARY

Is...Alan coming....to Englan...I
don't want him to see me.

Vomit dribbles out the corner of her mouth. Her eyes flutter and twitch. The calamity of noise and lights fading away.

ROSEMARY

To see me fall...

Her eyes flutter a few more times, fighting the overwhelming darkness...until the lids lose the battle.

And pass out.

BLACK.

RING. RING. RING.

INT. KENNEDY COMPOUND, BRONXVILLE - ROSE'S STUDY - MORNING

The gloved hand that belongs to Rose Kennedy answers the blaring phone upon the desk corner within her regal office.

ROSE
Good morning, Kathleen. How was the ball? Did our Jack look swell?

KICK (V.O.)
Handsome as ever, mother.

INT. KICK'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

Kick's medium-sized apartment is in the heart of D.C. The constant chorus of street noise clashes outside her window.

She sits on the couch against the south wall of the living room, coffee cup in one hand, morning toast in the other.

She shoulders the phone against her ear, her eyes upon a set of notes on the wood table before her.

The conversation moves back and forth as needed.

KICK
How was your evening?

ROSE (V.O.)
Uneventful. We're preparing for your father's return tomorrow morning.

KICK
Tomorrow?

ROSE
Tomorrow, my dear.

A long pause from the other end of the phone.

ROSE
Kathleen, you're not as bad as Eunice, but I can hear it in your voice. Or your lack thereof, I should say.

Kick bites her lower lip, worrying about how to word this.

KICK
It's about that...what you asked me to look into, mother.

KICK
For Rosemar--

ROSE
Yes?

Rose glances to the open door of her study on the left, verifying that no maid or servant is nearby or eavesdropping.

KICK
It's--it's not good, mother. It's nothing for our Rosemary.

ROSE
Your father said it might help with her issues. The anger--

KICK (V.O.)
No.

A powerful pause fills the unspoken void.

Rose pinches the bridge of her nose. The face of perpetual good-cheer crumbling in a tidal wave of emotion.

KICK (V.O.)
It is not for Rosemary. I need you to hear me, mother. Not. For--

ROSE
I heard you, Kathleen.

She pushes her mouth away from the phone to sigh.

ROSE
Do I want to ask you to explain in detail?

KICK (V.O.)
You do not.

Rose suddenly snaps out of it. Steels her emotions again.

ROSE
Thank you, Kick. That is good to hear. We will speak again soon.

CLANG, Rose slams down the phone. The knickknacks of glass CLINKING in tandem from the violent hang up.

Rose stands, moves to the door, quietly shuts, locks it, then returns to the chair.

She reaches for her cup of tea, sips, then suddenly--

--CRACK, Rose THROWS the tea cup against the floor.

Glass SHATTERS.

The woman of utmost composure crumbles in tears and anguish.

DISSOLVE TO:

BZZ...BZZ...BZZZ...BZZ..

INT. GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL - EARLY MORNING

Locks of brown hair fall from the right side of Rosemary's head to the cold floor below.

BZZ. BZZ. She winces, as the razor shaves away another patch of her chestnut brown locks, exposing pale skin.

ROSEMARY

It--it tickles.

She's dressed in a hospital gown and sits in a wheelchair.

DR. WATTS

Well, you'll be pleased to know
that this is the most painful part
of the procedure.

The grin across the doctor's face sets her at ease.

Her eyes scan the small room of sterile surroundings.

Nothing but cold steel and gray tiles. Except on the floor...

Where her luscious brown hair sits in a dirty, tangled clump.

Along with the single petal of a rose.

(This is the same hospital room from earlier, where Joe encountered the lobotomized woman before meeting Freeman.)

Her eyes remain locked on the splash of dark red amongst her brown hair and a shudder ripples down her features.

ROSEMARY

And that's gonna be it?

DR. WATTS

Well, we have our work to do. But you'll
be awake for it. It's that painless.
We'll give you another drink in a bit,
along with a small shot of novocaine.

DR. WATTS
Just to make sure you don't feel
anything.

ROSEMARY
I-I really don't like needles.

Dr. Watts turns off the razor with that same smirk.

DR. WATTS
Didn't like being cooped up in that
convent either.

Rosemary chuckles in an all-too-forced manner.

DR. WATTS
Well, I need to help Doctor Freeman
make sure we're all set up now, OK?
Probably be about half an hour or so.

Rosemary nods, an uneasy feeling manifesting on her face.

DR. WATTS
Toodle-oo then my dear.

Rosemary does not understand the expression.

Nonetheless, she waits until the doctor has exited the room,
gently shutting the door behind him with a CLICK.

Then pushes her wheelchair forward for the stack of papers
and pen at the nearest desk.

Her hand trembling, Rosemary removes the pen.

She rests her left hand against the left side of her head, a
habit when writing, when she feels the newly shaved section--

--and reels back in repulsion. She feels the exposed skin,
mottled with small razor bumps.

A nauseous look washes over her features. She grips her
stomach. Then the pen. Then starts to write.

The soft sound of pen scratching against paper turns into:

LETTER FROM ROSEMARY KENNEDY TO ALAN FRY

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Dear Alan, I am sure this will take
you by surprise.

-- The BLARING HORN of an ocean liner departing to sea.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
But you deserve to know the truth.
To know who I am.

-- Rosemary and Eunice (now twenty-one and eighteen) stand on the stern of the ocean liner, WAVING to an enthusiastic crowd of fans, photographers, and reporters.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I am Rosemary Kennedy.

-- From her view overlooking the receding Atlantic coast, Rosemary waves goodbye to their onlookers.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
My father is Joe Kennedy. The Ambassador
to your beautiful country of England. I
was with him during that time.

-- Eunice nudges Rosemary's elbow at a newspaper in her hand with the headline:

-- "Kennedys Set Sail for London!" Accompanied by a picture of the nine children standing with arms locked on the lawn.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
And I need to tell you about my time
there. About my nightmare.

DISSOLVE TO:

-- Rosemary and Eunice glance up to the sky of gathering storm clouds and CRACKLING thunder.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
The nightmare that started in London.

-- The sudden, morose mood transforms just as quickly when...

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
It started out more amazing than I
could have ever imagined.

-- TRUMPETS and HORNS announce their arrival upon the English coast. Rosemary and Eunice with big smiles on their faces.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I mean, we stayed in Buckingham
Palace, Alan!

-- Jaws agape, the two sisters stand before the six-story embassy residence that is their new home. The wide-double doors swing open, inviting them inside.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
 I usually forget numbers, but I
 remember they said there was twenty-
 seven bedrooms.

-- A ballroom of extraordinary carpets and exquisite French
 paintings. Sunlight sparkles across chandeliers draping from
 the ceiling within the luxurious room of royalty.

ROSEMARY/EUNICE
 Dad!

-- The remaining Kennedy clan greets the late arrivals. The
 entire family overjoyed with the idea that is their home.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
 I had never seen mom and dad so happy.

-- At a comically long dining room table, the Kennedys sit
 for breakfast. Servants and maids tending to every whim.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
 Or my brothers and sisters.

-- The Kennedy children are escorted through the rose garden.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
 And I got to be happy with them. I got
 to be a part of the family.

-- Rosemary's led within a classroom, where an assortment of
 teachers follow behind her like soldiers.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
 I was different and I was normal. I was a
 Kennedy and I was just another student.

-- Her big green eyes soak in the avant-garde Montessori
 classroom: filled with markers, blocks, cardboard paper.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
 And I was finally doing good, doing
 what I wanted to do. Helping other
 kids like me. Living like the rest
 of my family. Like other people.

-- Rosemary sits on the floor, guiding younger students with
 flash cards arranged in the Montessori teaching style.

-- A big grin of contentment across her face.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
 I guess I should explain...why I
 was afraid of telling you about me.

-- An English TEACHER praises Rosemary's work, and she radiates with a pride that she has never felt before.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
When I was little, I took a test that
said I was slow.

-- Rose praises Rosemary's report card, while Joe argues with someone on the phone. Jack patiently beside his father.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
It said I was a moron.

-- Jack shoots her a wink, and Rosemary bites her lip with joy at showing her report card from the new school.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
But I'm not. I'm just not as smart as
the rest of my family...or most people.

-- Within the majestic walls of Buckingham Palace, a guide offers history lessons toward the architectural style.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
But I try. And I get by.

-- Rosemary cannot keep up for the life of her. She glances to Eunice, Kick, Jack, Joe Jr., and even her four younger siblings similarly enraptured with the lesson.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Except they really didn't want me
to screw up this time. Not here.

-- Rosemary gulps, looks up to the incredibly high ceiling, feeling very small and overwhelmed within the grand palace.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Mom and dad had just learned about Queen
Elizabeth's grandfather: Lord Strathmore.

-- Joe and Rose stand before a portrait painting within one of the many monumental halls of Buckingham Palace, where a guide explains the peculiar-looking Lord before them.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
He was born wrong like me, too. Except
his was worse. A lot, lot worse.

-- Rose's features scrunch in disgust at the oddly-shaped head of Lord's portrait painting. She glances to Joe.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
 He was born with his head shaped
 like an egg and had little legs
 and hair over his whole body.

-- Joe studies the painting of the strange-looking Lord. His blue eyes filled with worry, disgust, and repulsion.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
 The King and Queen were so
 embarrassed that they hid him in
 the attic until he died.

-- Rose shudders, her eyes on Joe and the next painting, though her thoughts are clearly still occupied with the last painting and its story, where she keeps glancing back.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
 And mom didn't want them to think
 that I was like that. Even though I
 wasn't smart either.

-- A team of tailors measure Rosemary's waist, arms, bust.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
 I think I'm kind of funny looking,
 I'll admit.

-- Rosemary bites her lip with a nervous smile, staring back at her equally nervous reflection within the mirror.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
 But as you are aware, Alan, my head
 does not look like an egg and I am
 not covered in hair.

-- Rose carefully watches the tailors flocking her daughter and smiles up at Rosemary's reflection in the mirror.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
 She was worried, because it was
 mother's job to pick the American
 debutantes to present to Queen
 Elizabeth and King George.

-- Rosemary smiles back at her mother. Enjoying this fairy tale.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
 She picked Kick and me. (Kick is my
 sister Kathleen.)

-- Her mother smiles back. Hopeful and proud of her daughter.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

But this was different. Jack had been
the only boy to ever dance with me,
and I could not make mom or dad angry
and mess up in front of the Queen.

-- Rosemary balances one hand upon a brass bar, dressed in a
leotard, practicing a ballet exercise.

-- She bends toward the wooden floor, her left knee crooked,
foot behind, and back perfectly straight...

-- THUNK, Until she falls with a thunderous CRASH.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

So I practiced for hours.

-- A TEACHER instructs Rosemary how to curtsy.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

And hours.

-- Rosemary wears a curtain as an ersatz dress train and fake
flowers in place of the bouquet that will soon be in hand.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

And hours.

-- Rosemary walks down an imitation walkway toward the
TEACHER (pretending to be the Queen at her throne).

-- She gives a kick so that her foot does not catch her gown.

-- Then curtseys with a smile, dipping low...

-- THUNK. Until she falls. Tripping on the gown.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

And hours.

-- Rosemary bends for the low curtsey with a smile...

-- THUNK, and falls again.

-- The Teacher sighs and pinches the bridge of her nose.

TEACHER

Again.

-- Rosemary walks down the aisle, kicks her foot out, bends
down, holds the position. Balances. Finally...

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

Until I could do it.

-- She smiles. Stands back up. And walks left.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Again and again and again.

-- Rosemary and Kick in the midst of another practice. They kick out their foot, dip into the low curtsy, rise, move three sides to the left, perform the same routine...

-- Rosemary breaks into sweat from both the concentration of nerves and physical exhaustion.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
And again and again.

-- Rosemary kicks, curtsies, steps to the left, curtsies.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Until I knew I had it.

-- Rosemary kicks, cursties, steps to the left, curtsies.

-- Then finally stands and lets out a breath of relief.

- CLAP...CLAP...CLAP. The room of teachers, coaches, and other servants all clap in approval of her perfect form.

-- Rosemary smiles, wipes her forehead. Bites her lower lip.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
And then it was the big day.

DISSOLVE TO:

-- Rosemary and Kick enter the red-carpeted stairway of the palace. Retainers and guards line the walls, wearing scarlet coats and plumed helmets. The guards in stern Tudor uniforms.

-- The two Kennedy sisters wear elegant white gowns with white tulle trains and gossamer-thin net.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I'd never been so nervous in my life.

-- A feeling of utter seriousness saturates the setting. An atmosphere of military precision within this royal ritual.

-- Rosemary gulps in worry. The proceeds forward:

-- The sisters pass an anteroom and take their spots amongst several other debutantes. Lined in pairs for several rows.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
But I thought I could do it.

-- Rosemary and Kick stand in the anteroom like statues. Lily of the valley bouquets in hand.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
And then it was time.

-- Kick shoots Rosemary a wink of encouragement.

LORD CHAMBERLAIN (O.S.)
Miss Kathleen Kennedy.
(pauses)
Miss Rosemary Kennedy.

-- Rosemary inhales a final deep breath, then proceeds into:

-- The Throne Room.

-- A room whose interior resembles something closer to an oversized jewel. Striking reds, golds, and whites nearly blind the two sisters in the resplendence of royalty.

-- They proceed down the red carpet, passing the congregation of Lords and other observers dressed in regal attire, toward:

-- The golden chairs of the King and Queen. Just to the left:

-- Rose and Joe stand side-by-side. Joe in a black tailcoat and white tie. Rose in a beautiful white gown.

-- Rosemary feels the stares from the hundreds of eyes upon her but keeps her vision trained upon:

-- A little gold crown upon the red carpet--the mark to stop--just before the King in his field marshall's uniform.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
And then it happened.

-- Finally, the sisters arrive at their mark.

-- They kick to free their skirts, curtsy in the low style of their practice, retain the pose for a very long moment.

-- Then, upholding their smiles, they take three steps to the right, repeat the curtsy before the Queen.

-- A silence as thick as glass solidifies within the room.

-- Kick notices Rosemary's wobbling, but returns her gaze to the Queen. The two rise from the low curtsy, when:

-- Rosemary loses balance, trips over her skirt--

-- THUNK.

-- And falls.

-- The moment slows to a screeching halt.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Sometimes it feels like that moment
never stopped.

-- Rosemary looks up:

-- The Queen and King smile as though nothing has happened,
CLAPPING with the rest of the congregation.

-- Rose looks devastated but retains her smile.

-- Joe does not clap. His face fraught with embarrassment.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
And I saw dad's face.

-- Kick instantly reaches for Rosemary's hand, helps her
sister rise back to her feet, and step out of view.

-- Slight murmurs of disbelief rise in a steady tide behind
them, as the crowd continues to clap until their exit.

-- The sisters keep their eyes trained on the Royal couple,
though Rosemary's gaze remains locked upon:

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
That's when I saw it.

-- Joe, who refuses to clap, his face smarting with shame.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
That dad thought I was no different
than the strange-looking Lord in the
painting. Even with the Kennedy name,
I had failed him...I was not like
Kick. I was different.

-- Lord Chamberlain announces the next pair of debutantes to
curtsy before the Royal couple.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I was no better than the Lord with the
egg head and the hairy body that the
Royal Family kept hidden in the attic.

-- Upon reaching the darkened room off to the side, tears
swim down Rosemary's face from her failure.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
And he would never look at me the same.

-- Rosemary flees from the rest of the debutantes, and Kick immediately chases after her.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Then I had the nightmare. The one
that happens when I remember what
happened in England.

-- Rosemary lies alone in her royal bedroom that night,
weeping into her oversized pillow.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
When I lost my whole family. When I
lost everything...when I lost me.

FADE TO WHITE.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Joe Jr. leaves and never says goodbye.

-- Joe Jr. pilots a B-24 over the waters of Northern France.
He radios in a command, pushes a button.

-- A bomb drops from the aircraft. Then:

KA-BOOM.

-- Joe Jr.'s aircraft explodes from a premature detonation in
a burst of a thousand flames.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Jack goes blind on a hot day.

-- Jack waves from the Presidential motorcade to the cheering
crowd in Dallas. Jackie Kennedy in her pink suit beside him.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Then it gets dark. And cold.

-- Waving as they pass the grassy knoll, pass the Texas
School Book Depository...

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
And he never says goodbye.

BLAM.

-- Jack's head explodes from the blast of a bullet. His blood
and brain splattered against his wife's pink dress.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Kick falls. And I can't catch her hand.

-- VROOM, A short-haul airliner violently rises and falls against a turbulent thunderstorm.

-- In the plane, Kick and her husband grip each other's hands from the seats behind the cockpit. As the plane drops--

-- And swoops down toward the crag of a mountain.

-- She closes her eyes, prepared for death, as the ROAR and crash of the plane deafens her world into a silent abyss.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
And my little brothers. They start
screaming, crying in the dark. Alone as me.

BOOM.

-- Robert F. Kennedy falls to the floor of the Ambassador Hotel. Assassinated. Blood drips from his forehead and pools around his corpse. His wife, Ethel, SHRIEKING behind him.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Somewhere cold. Ugly. And cursed.

-- ERK, POP. Ted Kennedy steers his '67 Oldsmobile off a bridge and into dark, murky waters of Chappaquiddick Island.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
And dad, I hear him screaming. Alone.

-- Joe Kennedy, years and years later, having suffered a stroke. Confined to a wheelchair. His face paralyzed. Drool spilling out the corner his mouth.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
And they're all gone.

-- Rosemary sits alone and despondent at the long family dining room in Hyannis Port. Completely alone in the center of the table with not a single person there to be with her.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
We're all gone.

-- Rosemary rushes into the family living room on Christmas morning, an eager and childlike smile upon her face.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
And everything we loved is gone.

--But no one else is there. The house still and silent.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
And everything I hoped for is gone.

-- Rosemary and Alan lean across the booth at the bar and finally share a kiss.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
And it's all wrong.

-- Except Alan isn't there anymore. No one is. Rosemary once again completely alone inside the usually lively bar.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
And I can never be me.

-- Rosemary's locked completely alone within a small room of padded walls, no windows, and only a dim light.

-- She POUNDS against a steel door. A furious knock which does not emit an echo. Tears streaming down her face. She POUNDS and POUNDS against the door without response.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Because I'm what's wrong.

Exhausted, frustrated, and hopeless, she collapses to the floor. Curled in the fetal position. Crying. Alone.

FADE TO BLACK.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
And then I wake up. And remember
that's when everything changed. When
we left England and came back home.

-- Rosemary looks out the window of a Pan Am clipper, soaring across the Atlantic waters back to America.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Except it didn't feel like home anymore.

-- Trucks and boxes surround the Kennedy's Bronxville compound. The family packing for the move to leave.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
And dad sent me away.

-- From the back of a limousine, Rosemary watches with tears in her eyes as her childhood home recedes from view.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Not like in England, but another
school where I didn't belong. Where I
couldn't belong.

-- Rosemary and Sister Margaret meet for the first time, tentatively shaking hands.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Where I wasn't like everyone else. And
had to run away to be someone else.

-- Sister Margaret shows Rosemary her new dorm room, where Gloria turns to introduce herself.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
And then I met you.

-- At the bar, Gloria introduces Rosemary to Tom and Alan. She shares an especially long smile with the latter.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I know this is probably a lot, and
you may not believe me, but I had to
tell someone. I'd never told anyone.
Not even mom or Eunice know all this.

-- Joe Kennedy and Sister Margaret argue with Rosemary for running away in a replay of the scene from the beginning.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Except now they're going to make me
better. And I'm going to belong.
And I hope I can see you again.

-- Rosemary and Alan dance at the bar. Big smiles on both faces. The two like any other college couple.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
But I have one more letter to write
before I can get better and can see
you again. Until then, Alan.

FADE TO BLACK.

FLASHBACK - INT. THE WHITE HOUSE - OVAL OFFICE - MORNING

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
Mr. Ambassador.

Within the Oval Office, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt wheels from behind the Hoover desk to a small shelf lined with alcoholic drinks at the east wall. Joe walks forward to shake the President's hand.

JOE
Mr. President.

Roosevelt laughs, plops two ice cubes into a cocktail shaker, rattles the drink, then pours himself a small glass.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

I don't know if you saw this picture in the *Boston Post* from your landing...

Joe sits at the chair across the Hoover desk, as Roosevelt wheels back behind it with his drink.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

Quite touching.

The President hoists up a picture of Joe returning from England being greeted by his large family.

JOE

I was very happy to be back, Mr. President. Very happy to see my family again.

Roosevelt offers a soft smile, clasps his hands together.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

But not me.

Joe smirks, a sudden tension between the two.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

Because I don't know if you saw this other headline in the paper just after your landing...

Roosevelt finds the paper beneath a stack, hoists it up:

"KENNEDY ANGRY AT PRESIDENT". Then SMACKS the paper back upon the desk. Quoting it:

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

'The President is pushing us into the war...the administration has talked a lot and done very little.'

JOE

Mr. President, I am damn sore at the way I have been treated--

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

As what?! As a Roman Catholic Ambassador to London? As a clear confidant to the President of the United States?

JOE

As a damn fool, Mr. President. Trashing me in the press.

JOE
Corresponding with Churchill than
through me. That you had 'lost
confidence in your ambassador'--

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
That was taken out of context.

JOE
Context.

The word spits out of his mouth dripped with venom.

Both men ease their tone, take a deep breath.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
I am not here to engage in a debate
with you, Joe.

JOE
I was the one requested to meet here,
Mr. President...because I believe it is
you, who wants something from me.

President Roosevelt remains silent, refusing to answer. Then:

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
What I want is for you to make a speech
to the American public on the radio.

Roosevelt points to a radio near the shelf with the drinks.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
And urge for the President's re-election.

Joe reels back in disbelief, shakes his head.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
I am in the midst of a re-election
campaign, and you know very well how
important a speech of support from you
and your wife would mean.

JOE
I am very well aware--

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
And I promise that after the speech,
that those who tarnished your name
will be cleaned out of this White
House. That those who dared to insult
America's most esteemed Ambassador
will be swiftly dealt with.

JOE
...Is that all you've got?

Roosevelt laughs, sips his drink, swirls the ice cubes. He then picks up the *Boston Globe* paper with the Kennedy children swarming Joe's arrival on the tarmac.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
I stand in awe of your relationship
with your children, Mr. Kennedy.
For a man as busy as you are, it is
a rare achievement.

The President finishes his drink, folds his hand together, and looks Joe Kennedy straight in the eyes.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
And I for one, will do all I can to
help you, if your boys should ever
run for political office.

Roosevelt TAPS, TAPS his finger upon the faces of Joe Jr. and Jack within the picture.

Joe's face flushes with a much more cooperative color, then grins with an undisguisable smile, before he attempts to reapply his poker face as best he is able.

JOE
I will make the speech, Mr.
President. But I will pay for it
myself, show it to nobody in
advance, and say what I wish.

Roosevelt smiles with a sly smirk, holds up an index finger.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
It also goes without saying then, that
much more attention will be paid to
you and your family's public life.

Joe waits for further explanation. The President sighs.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
I am, of course, addressing those
rumors that these same papers love to
kick around: the blondes that sneak
into your vacation home, the unsavory
fellows linked to organized crime
that keep finding their way into
certain Kennedy circles...
(pauses)
Public appearance is the only
appearance America sees, Joe.

Roosevelt rolls forward so that his wheelchair peeks just out the corner of the desk...for Joe to realize and understand.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

And why I will be shaking your hand
from behind this desk, rather than
in front of it.

Roosevelt extends his hand to seal the agreement. Joe stands, looming over the President in acknowledgement.

JOE

We are in understanding, Mr.
President. I expect us both to
uphold our end of it going forth.

Joe grips the President's hand.

The President and Ambassador shake hands, refusing to break eye contact, nodding in agreement to the future.

FADE TO WHITE.

INT. JOE'S LIMOUSINE - MORNING

As the long limousine passes a parallel street to the White House, Joe shakes his head from the memory of the meeting and turns his attention away from the window to the driver.

JOE

Come again, Eddie?

The driver (EDDIE) looks into the rear-view mirror, repeats:

EDDIE

I said Mrs. Kennedy left word just after
you checked out. Would you like to call
her back before or after?

Joe glances to his gold watch, considers.

JOE

How long until we're there?

EDDIE

About half an hour.

Joe glances to his breast pocket, where he gazes upon the withered red rose secreted within it.

JOE

After.

The driver nods, returns his eyes to the road. Joe brushes the red rose and exhales a long, tired sigh.

BLACK.

DR. FREEMAN (V.O.)
Good morning, Rosemary.

INT. GEORGE WASHINGTON U. - OPERATING ROOM - LATE MORNING

Rosemary's eyes flutter between open and closed, her voice disoriented and confused.

ROSEMARY
Dad?

Harsh bright lights shine down from above, silhouetting the faces of Dr. Freeman and Watts, their mouths covered by surgeon masks. Rosemary then tilts her vision down to find:

She is in a hospital gown, lying on her back, her head on a sandbag acting as a pillow. Her arms strapped to the chair.

Two burr holes have been drilled into the sides of her head. Just below the temple and just above the eye, both about an inch thick in circumference.

She tries to wiggle her arm free, but the constraints paralyze any movement whatsoever. She GRUNTS.

DR. WATTS
Now, now, Rosemary. This will be over--

ROSEMARY
D-dad--

DR. WATTS
You'll be able to see him very soon.

ROSEMARY
I need you to send my letters to
Alan and Dad.

Her voice becomes riddled with sudden, extreme fear.

ROSEMARY
I-I don't feel good.

DR. WATTS
Rosemary, we need you to listen to us for
everything to go smoothly, OK?

Rosemary again blinks in a disoriented haze.

ROSEMARY
I-I don't feel good at all.

DR. WATTS
That's the novocaine, Rosemary. It's going to make sure you don't feel any worse throughout the procedure, OK?

Rosemary GULPS, confused, but nods.

ROSEMARY
I'm--I'm gonna feel better, righ--?

DR. FREEMAN
We need you to count backwards from ten, Rosemary. Can you do that?

Rosemary bites her bottom lip, thinks, then begins.

ROSEMARY
Ten...nine. Eight. Seven. Six.
Five. Four. Three. Two. One.

DR. FREEMAN
Excellent. We're going to need you to repeat that a few times throughout the operation, OK?

Rosemary tilts down her chin in a nod.

Freeman turns to Watts, offers a nod to proceed. Watts reaches behind him for the tray of tools:

The tubing of a hypodermic needle, a tool that resembles a blunt butter knife, a hemostat, a scalpel, and a sponge.

DR. FREEMAN
OK, Rosemary. If you could repeat that for me once more.

Watts passes the tubing and blunt knife to Freeman.

ROSEMARY
Ten. Nine. Eight...

Freeman inserts the tubing into the right side of Rosemary's skull through the burr hole, wedging the path clear.

ROSEMARY
Seven..Six...

Freeman removes the tubing, and Watts cleans errant drops of blood that drip out the wound with the sponge.

ROSEMARY
Five...Four...

Freeman finds the blunt knife, inserts the blade into the hole within her skull, wiggling the knife toward her brain.

ROSEMARY
Three. Two--

BAM.

Rosemary SHRIEKS, as Freeman JAMS the knife pass bits of bone blocking the way.

DR. FREEMAN
I am so sorry about that, Rosemary.
That should be the worst of it.
Keep counting though. Don't stop.

Rosemary WINCES in pain. Takes a deep breath.

ROSEMARY
One.

Freeman TWISTS the knife with a SLIIKT sound, scraping away at her brain's prefrontal lobe to perform the lobotomy.

DR. FREEMAN
Excellent, Rosemary! Excellent job.

Freeman slowly removes the blunt knife, and Watts soaks up blood that drips from the blade with the bloodied sponge.

DR. FREEMAN
We're going to have to do it once more, Rosemary.

Rosemary blinks and blinks and blinks. Her breathing erratic.

ROSEMARY
I'm...I don't...good. I feel dizzy. I can't--I can't see--

DR. FREEMAN
You're going to feel so much better in a few minutes, darling. You must trust me.

A tear slips out the corner of Rosemary's eye, slides down her cheek, and splashes upon the cold floor below.

DR. FREEMAN
Do you feel any pain now?

Rosemary doesn't respond. Remaining oddly silent. Continuing to blink and breathe in unnatural motions.

DR. FREEMAN
Alright, Rosemary. Count again.

Another long moment of tense quiet. Then:

ROSEMARY
Ten. Nine. Eight...

Freeman seizes the blunt knife, inserts the blade within the burr hole above her eyes, slowly wiggles it inside...

ROSEMARY
I need Eunice, p-please. Or mothe--

DR. FREEMAN
Count, Rosemary. Count!

ROSEMARY
Seven! Six...

BAM.

The knife SLAMS against bone.

Rosemary SCREAMS at the top of her lungs.

DR. FREEMAN
Almost there, Rosemary. Keep counting. Just a little bump.

Tears pour out Rosemary's eyes from the unbelievable pain.

ROSEMARY
Something...wrong--

DR. FREEMAN
COUNT!

ROSEMARY
S-Six. Five...

Freeman turns the handle of the knife in three fast motions. Cutting. Cutting. Cutting. SLIKT. SLIKT. SLIKT.

ROSEMARY
Four. Thre--

Rosemary SPITS in an involuntary motion. Bits of vomit and drool spurt from her mouth without control.

Watts immediately cleans these fluids with the sponge.

Rosemary's eyes, lips, and torso begin to quiver in similar neurological disfunction.

DR. FREEMAN
Rosemary?

ROSEMARY
...mom...plea--mm--

DR. FREEMAN
Rosemary, I need you to count one more time and we're done, OK?

Rosemary breathes, her eyes twitching. Tries as best she can:

ROSEMARY
Nine...f-f-f...four...

DR. FREEMAN
No, Rosemary. Remember? Ten, nine--

ROSEMARY
tired...

She can't complete the sentence. Her entire body disagreeing with her brain. Her system shutting down.

DR. FREEMAN
We're almost home, Rosemary.

No response. He and Watts exchange a look.

DR. FREEMAN
ROSEMARY! COUNT!

Watts again cleans the blood dripping from her forehead with the sponge, as Rosemary somehow begins again.

ROSEMARY
T--ten...n...n...

Freeman grips the blunt knife, wiggles it within her skull, pauses at that same stop.

ROSEMARY
Nnnnnn...sev--

She violently INHALES, her brain searching, her eyes wild. Freeman prepares himself, adjust the blade.

ROSEMARY
S--ss---s...ven--

BAM.

Rosemary SCREECHES and JERKS in wild abandon. Her voice uttering a primal cry like steel crashing against metal.

Even the doctors shudder from the painful noise. Then:

DR. FREEMAN
There we go. Come on, Rosemary. You
got it, seven...six...

Freeman turns the knife three final times.

SLIKT. SLIKT. SLIKT.

ROSEMARY
F--f---f...

Freeman slowly removes the knife, which drips with bits of blood, brain, and gore that Watts removes with the sponge.

ROSEMARY
F....ff.....f...

Her lips stop moving. Her eyes glazed over. Her body still.

DR. FREEMAN
Rosemary?

Nothing. Rosemary as still as a statue.

DR. FREEMAN
Rosemary, can you hear me?

Rosemary's eyes remain vacant and distant. Her body motionless. Though she breathes in mechanical function.

Freeman turns to Watts.

He nods.

The two doctors stand and switch off the overhead light.

The doctors drape a blanket over her body, and close her big, emerald green eyes frozen in an unblinking stare.

Rosemary remains still and unmoving.

Silent.

Gone.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. GEORGE WASHINGTON U. HOSPITAL - AFTERNOON

Joe Kennedy steps out the limousine, adjusts his bowler hat, and buttons his three-piece blue suit.

He stares ahead at the looming tower of glass and steel, inhales a confident breath, then steps forward.

INT. GEORGE WASHINGTON U. HOSPITAL - FREEMAN'S OFFICE -
MOMENTS LATER

KNOCK. KNOCK. KNOCK. Forced to wait, Joe suddenly stretches his fingers in a nervous motion. Anxious.

DR. FREEMAN
Mr. Kennedy. Come in.

The doctor retains an upbeat mood and invites him:

INSIDE HIS OFFICE

He points to the chair across from his desk, where Joe sits.

DR. FREEMAN
You're leaving D.C. tonight I under--

Joe swiftly raises a hand to stop the small talk.

JOE
I think you can understand that I
am anxious to hear about the
results of the operation performed
upon my first born daughter.

Freeman offers a smile, though the words have sent a visible wave of alarm across his features.

DR. FREEMAN
As--as you know, this is a new
procedure. Rosemary being one of
the very first in America to
receive this treatment.

Joe's deep blue eyes narrow in concern.

DR. FREEMAN
Consequently, there's not a
hundred percent rate of success. As--
-as I warned you.

Joe again holds up his hand, massages his forehead.

A very pregnant pauses fills the space between them.

JOE

Do I need to worry about Rosemary
escaping from wherever we put her?

Freeman figures how best to word this, then simply answers.

DR. FREEMAN

N-No.

JOE

Do I need to worry about her
speaking out again?

DR. FREEMAN

N-No. But--

JOE

Do I need to worry about her having
another violent mood swing? Manic
energy or volcanic anger?

Freeman exhales a long sigh, shakes his head. Understanding.

DR. FREEMAN

No.

JOE

Then it was a success.

The doctor considers the definition, but does not refute it.

DR. FREEMAN

I just want you to be aware of the
complications going forth.

Joe nods for him to continue.

DR. FREEMAN

Rosemary will need constant care for
the rest of her life. She's--she's...
her mind is somewhere closer to that
of a three-year-old at bes--

JOE

These are all issues that the money
can take care of...correct?

Disgust momentarily flits across Freeman's face before he
quickly discards it, then nods.

JOE

Let me see her.

OUTSIDE ROSEMARY'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Freeman KNOCKS on the door, waits for a NURSE to exit. She offers a passing nod to both, then Freeman opens the door:

INSIDE ROSEMARY'S ROOM

Within the small, isolated room without any furnishings, Joe softly shuts the door behind him.

And his face sinks in utter devastation.

Rosemary sits in a wheelchair, looking out a window, black silk sutures just below her partially shaved head.

JOE

Rosemary?

Drool slips down the edge of her mouth. Her big green eyes distant and vacant.

Joe kneels before the wheelchair of his lobotomized daughter, a blanket draped over her knees, and stares into her eyes.

JOE

Rosemary.

She does not respond. Her vision turned toward the window. Her entire existence now the shadow of a human being.

JOE

Rosemary, stop it now...

Involuntary tears blossom out the corners of her unblinking eyes, slide down her cheek, and splash upon his hand.

JOE

Kennedy's don't...

His voice breaks, and the Kennedy father lets out a guttural noise from somewhere deep within his soul.

Tears of his own escape out the edges of his dark blue eyes.

Joe stifles his sobs, wipes the tears beneath his glasses, and looks deep into his daughter's big green eyes.

JOE

Kennedys don't cry.

Rosemary remains still and unmoving, though she breathes and mumbles in mechanical function.

Joe removes the withered rose from his breast pocket, grabs Rosemary's hand, and wraps the rose within her palm.

Joe finally stands, wipes his last remaining tears, kisses the top of her head, and turns to leave the room.

His hand pauses before the doorknob, as Joe inhales another deep breath, steels his emotions, then turns for a last look:

Rosemary Kennedy is gone.

She drops the rose from her palm to the floor.

Joe turns the doorknob, walks out the room, and slams the door closed that will hide his daughter behind it.

Forever.

INT. GEORGE WASHINGTON U. HOSPITAL - FREEMAN'S OFFICE -
MOMENTS LATER

Joe and Freeman return to the latter's office.

DR. FREEMAN

Mr. Kennedy, I want to assure you--

JOE

Let me explain what will happen now.

Joe crosses his legs, flattens a wrinkle on his jacket.

JOE

I am going to pay you. A lot of money. You, your associate, that nurse that I just saw exit her room.

(then)

Rosemary's name--the Kennedy name in any capacity--shall be deleted from your records. This shall not be spoken of, and if you do, be assured that I will use every dollar at my disposal to silence you.

The two share an unspoken understanding in their eyes.

JOE

My assistant, Mr. Eddie Moore, will be in touch about transporting Rosemary to an institution in New York in the very near future.

Freeman absorbs the demand with a face of shock and awe.

JOE

Is there anything else then?

Freeman remains stunned by the suddenness of it all. Then:

DR. FREEMAN

She--she wanted me to give you
these letters. They're addressed to
you and a friend.

Freeman hands Joe two envelopes. The name "ALAN" on the front
of the first. The name "DAD" written across the second.

Joe studies the two envelopes, then picks up the one that
says "ALAN"...

DR. FREEMAN

She said her roommate would know
where to send tha--

...SHHRKT. And rips it in half. SHRRKT. Then again. SHHRKT.
Rips it again. Then again. Then again. Until nothing but
shreds of the letter remain.

He stares at the envelope with his name on it, then pockets
the letter within his jacket.

JOE

Is there a private telephone I may use?

Dumbfounded, Freeman nods. Gestures for him to follow.

INTO A STORAGE ROOM IN BACK

Medical devices and equipment are housed in little glass
cabinets. Boxes of various sorts stacked along the walls.

Joe finds the telephone affixed to the wall, inhales another
long breath for the difficult conversation ahead, then dials.

INT. KENNEDY COMPOUND, BRONXVILLE - ROSE'S STUDY - SAME TIME

BRNG. BRNG. Most of the knickknacks and personal mementos
within the room have been packed into nearby moving boxes.

Except for the phone, which Rose answers, as she continues
packing a few more small items into a box on the desk.

JOE (V.O.)

Afternoon, sweetheart. How's
packing coming along?

Rose reels back in shock at the affectation from her husband.

ROSE

Quite well, Joe. Thank you. Don't you have a flight to catch?

JOE (V.O.)

...Is the house closed yet?

ROSE

Still a few more things here and there. Nine children will do that, I suppose.

JOE (V.O.)

Fantastic. I'll meet you in Hyannis Port then.

ROSE

Don't want one last look at the old home? This is where we made our life, Joe. Where we raised our children.

A long pause from the other end of the phone.

JOE (V.O.)

We move forward into the future, Rose. Not looking back.

A sudden crack of concern breaks Rose's mood.

ROSE

Did--did you say goodbye to Jack and Kick?

JOE (V.O.)

No, not since I saw Jack earlier.

Rose closes her eyes, afraid to ask.

ROSE

...And Rosemary?

Another long, dreaded pause from the other end of the phone.

JOE (V.O.)

She's been taken care of.

Rose scrunches her features. Waits for further explanation.

ROSE

What--what does that mean, Jo--

JOE (V.O.)

I will take care of Rosemary going forward.

JOE (V.O.)
 She will be treated by the best
 doctors, with the best medicines
 available, but you need not ever
 worry about her again.

Tears slip out Rose's eyes. She catches her voice.

JOE (V.O.)
 You need not mention her in any
 letters, in any social settings, in any
 interviews, in any capacity of any
 public sort. She is taken care of.

Understanding everything in one horrible moment, Rose bites
 her lower lip, suppressing a horrible deep moan, but fails.

JOE (V.O.)
 We have eight other children on the
 verge of defining America's future.

Gasps, tears, and terrible groans bubble up from within her.

JOE (V.O.)
 Do you understand me, Rose?

She can only nod, unable to find her voice, mascara running
 down her cheeks from the wave of tears. Then:

JOE (V.O.)
 I'll see you soon.

CLICK. The line goes dead.

Rose drops the phone and crumbles to the chair.

She covers her mouth with her hand. Doing her best to choke
 back the roiling emotions rising to the surface.

She crumbles to the chair. Crying. Alone. Her life changed.
 Her daughter gone.

INT. JOE'S LIMOUSINE - LATER

Joe re-enters the long limousine, thanks his driver, then
 plops into his former position in the back seat.

The vehicle slowly accelerates, and Joe removes his hat.
 Allows himself to indulge in the private solitude.

Finally, he reaches into his suit and finds...

The envelope with "DAD" written across the front.

He turns it over, RIPS the seal, unfolds the pages, then begins to read:

LETTER FROM ROSEMARY KENNEDY TO JOE P. KENNEDY

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

Dear dad. I am about to go in for the operation. I know you are busy, but I hope you will read this before we see each other again.

-- The limousine rolls past the streets of Washington.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

I know I make you angry...Because I will never be like everyone else, or be the daughter you wanted.

-- From the Bronxville home, Rose picks up the phone and dials a number. Choking back more tears.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

Because you want the best.

-- From her dorm room in Manhattanville, Eunice hears the news from her mother over the telephone and breaks down.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

And that is not me.

-- She THROWS the telephone across the room, collapses to the floor, and buries her face in her hands.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

I always tried growing up. All I wanted was to be as good as you, or mom, or Joe Jr., or Jack, or Kick.

-- Kick receives the phone call from her office at work.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

Or anybody else.

-- She drops the phone, clutches her stomach. Pales.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

But now I will be.

-- From his balcony high above the city, Jack gazes at the stone grid of Washington D.C. beneath a drab, gray sky dressed in a pristine white Navy uniform.

-- He turns away from the view, towards the door, walks out, and SLAMS it behind him. Preparing for a new life ahead.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I have never had anyone else except my family. I have had people that were nice to me, but did not understand.

-- Gloria sits alone in the dorm room at her desk. Working on homework. She glances to her left...

-- All of Rosemary's furnishing and personal belongings are gone. Every trace of her being there removed.

DISSOLVE TO:

-- Outside Sister Margaret's office, Gloria slips an envelope with "SISTER MARGARET" across the front beneath the door.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Teachers who did their best. Tutors and maids who tried to make me better.

-- Sister Margaret sits alone in her private office, smoking a cigarette, wiping occasional tears, as she reads the first letter written by Rosemary.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
And I thought how different life would be. If God had just not made me like this. What it would be like to grow up normal. To be like everyone else.

-- Alan sits alone at the bar, in the same booth where he always sat with Rosemary, smoking a cigarette of his own.

-- He looks to the other booths: to the other happy couples, to the men ordering drinks, to the dates on the dance floor, to the other revelers enjoying their time together.

-- But the seat across from him is empty.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
But I know that would not be possible. Because of who I am.

-- Joe sits in an airplane about to take off, sitting in a window seat. Still reading the letter.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
But now things are going to change. And I'm not going to be held back by myself...by my broken brain.

-- The airplane soars above the skyline and into the clouds.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
After England, I had a nightmare of
everything that went wrong. Where I
lost my family. Where I lost myself.

-- Joe sits in another limousine, a dreary gray Massachusetts
sky in the background, reading the letter.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
But last night, everything that I have
always hoped would happen...I got to see.

FADE TO WHITE.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Joe Jr. comes back home and never
leaves again.

-- Joe Jr. drops the bombs from his aircraft and the plane
does not explode. Instead, he survives and flies away.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
Jack grows up to be everyone's
favorite. A King of America.

-- Jack waves to the onlookers in Dallas from the motorcade.

-- Waving as they pass the grassy knoll, pass the Texas
School Book Depository, drive under the freeway underpass...

-- Then emerge unharmed on the other side.

-- He turns and kisses Jackie's cheek.

--The First Lady blushes and smiles, happier than ever in
her pink wool suit. They wave back to America.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
And Kick becomes the princess she
was always meant to be.

-- As the airplane descends toward the mountain, Kick and her
husband clasp hands, as the plane suddenly veers up...

-- And misses the mountain, soaring into clear weather.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
And Eunice will be there. The one to
help. Like she always is.

-- At a Royal English Wedding, Kick kisses her prince.

-- Eunice and the entire Kennedy clan start to CLAP from the sidelines with big smiles on their faces. Rosemary clapping alongside them with perhaps the biggest smile of all.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

And then the little ones will grow up, and
try to do outdo us first four even more.

-- Robert F. Kennedy walks out of the Ambassador Hotel, grips his pregnant wife's hand, and waves back to his own collection of fans and supporters.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

And all of us will make you and mom
prouder than the last.

-- Ted Kennedy's car SWERVES off the bridge, almost going off the rails, until he corrects the wheel at the last second.

-- He and the passenger--a beautiful blonde woman--laugh at their near fatal accident, then drive forward.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

And you and mom will outlive us all.
And each of us will grow up to make
you and America proud.

-- Back in the present:

-- Joe's limousine stops at the end of the winding driveway outside the Kennedy Compound in Hyannis Port, Massachusetts.

-- The enormous, white clapboard house sits in ominous silhouette against the dreary gray landscape.

-- An American flag FLAPS against the vigorous wind just before the steps to the front door.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

Even me.

-- Rosemary fills out a test with rapid speed, finishing before anyone else in the class, drops her pen with a CLACK.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

Now, I'm going to do all those
things I couldn't.

-- Rosemary races past her siblings in a game of football.

-- She SLAMS down her cards in a game of hearts. The family SIGHS, as if this always happens.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

All those things I could dream but not be.

-- She and Alan lean across the booth to share a kiss.

-- Rosemary leans back and a tear runs down her cheek, her smile wider than ever, overwhelmed by happiness.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

Because now I can be me. And I'm going to be more than normal.

-- At a social gathering with her best friends, Rose introduces her daughter, Rosemary, with beaming pride.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

I'm going to be my best. And I want to share it with you. With those I love.

-- A spotlight shines down on Rosemary, as she dances with Alan, the two sharing their first dance at their wedding.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

With my family.

-- The entire Kennedy family watches Rosemary dance with her husband in the center of the room.

-- Joe and Rose's eyes are filled with pride and contentment.

-- Eunice and Jack shoot her a wink, and she shoots one back, her gaze peering over Alan's shoulder to her siblings.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

And I'm going to make my name proud.

-- Rosemary WHACKS a tennis ball back to Rose. Her mother misses, starts to laugh with her hands on her hips.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

I'm going to make you proud.

-- Rosemary graduates from school. A PRINCIPAL hands her a diploma and announces her name to the cheering onlookers.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)

Because I will not forget who I am.

-- Rosemary walks down the long hallway toward Queen Elizabeth and King George with Kick by her side.

-- She reaches the mark, curtsies, walks off.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I am your daughter.

-- Back in the present again:

-- Joe moves to enter the Kennedy Compound. But first--

-- He glances up at the American flag FLAPPING upon the brass pole beside the side of the home.

-- His face sours with guilt and disgust.

-- He enters the home.

-- And slams the door behind him.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I am a Kennedy.

-- Back in Rosemary's dream:

-- Joe CLAPS and cheers for his daughter, as does the entire Royal ballroom, standing for a wild ovation.

-- Rosemary smiles and bows. Her big green eyes and enormous smile full of life and happier than ever.

ROSEMARY (V.O.)
I am Rosemary Kennedy.

BLACK.

THE END