

DEAD LETTERS

Pilot

by

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"Dead Letters"

Pilot

ACT ONE

1 EXT. DENVER - PRESENT DAY (2013)- DAY

We see the sights of Denver - the mountains, the skyline, the lake in Washington Park...

2 EXT. DENVER SUBURB - DAY

We DRIVE down a pleasant local shopping area, passing boutiques, a U.S. Mail truck is parked nearby. A MAIL CARRIER steps out to deliver a box to a florist shop. WE PASS the truck and continue down the street, stopping at a Starbuck's. In front of the Starbuck's, on the corner, stands one of the last remaining U.S. Mailboxes in the area.

3 EXT. STARBUCK'S - DAY

Along the window, facing towards the street, is a ROW OF TWENTY-SOMETHINGS sitting at a long counter staring - not out the window - but at their laptops and iPads.

THE CAMERA PUSHES IN THROUGH THE WINDOW

We HEAR a MALE VOICE.

MALE VOICE (V.O.)

Look at them. Guzzling their pumpkin-flavored coffee, tapping away on their laptops...

4 INT. STARBUCK'S - DAY

The CAMERA PANS the Twenty-Somethings along the counter.

MALE VOICE (V.O.)

...Cruising Craigslist for a job that will pay them to sit on their fat modems in some other place and tap on someone else's computer to earn money for more pumpkin flavored coffee. It's the Great Circle of Life reduced to a laptop.

ANGLE ON: A PAIR OF WOMEN'S HOT BLACK HIGH HEEL SLINGS

One TOE taps impatiently. In front and behind, other pairs of shoes wait in line to give their orders at the front counter.

A bored BARISTA calls out an order.

STARBUCKS EMPLOYEE (O.S.)
 Vente vanilla mocha macchiato with
 a double shot of mocha.

ANGLE ON: THE "DELIVERY" COUNTER

A CUSTOMER steps forward to retrieve his coffee.

MALE VOICE (V.O.)
 You have to ask yourself why anyone
 would choose these bleak occupations
 over...

ANGLE ON THE LINE OF SHOES, THE HEELS AND PAIR OF MEN'S
 LOAFERS AHEAD OF THEM IN LINE.

PANNING UP we meet OLIVER O'TOOLE, 40's, good-looking in an
 intense sort of way, intelligent, unorthodox but kind.
 Dressed in slacks and jacket, Oliver appraises the jean and
 T-shirt set that sips coffee at tables around him.

OLIVER (V.O.)
...a calling.

Behind Oliver, we discover the owner of the high heels is
 SHANE, a confident, carelessly beautiful woman in her early
 thirties, wearing sunglasses and a cool leather jacket. She
 searches for something on her Smart Phone.

BARISTA
 Next!

Oliver steps up to order.

OLIVER
 I'd like a cup of coffee.

BARISTA
 Tall? Grande? Venti?

OLIVER
 I'm sorry, I'm not following...

BARISTA
 (sighs)
 Small, medium, or large?

OLIVER
 Medium. Medium coffee.

BARISTA
 Right. Which coffee?

OLIVER
 What do you recommend?

BARISTA

Everything's on the wall. It's up to you.

OLIVER

This is my first visit. Frankly, I wouldn't be here at all if my coffee machine hadn't been illegally appropriated after an unfortunate war of words with my superior. Well, I wouldn't call her my *superior*, let's say supervisor, a woman utterly lacking in....

A frustrated Shane interrupts.

SHANE

Excuse me, can I just give him my order while you're reminisci...?

OLIVER

....Excuse me?

SHANE

....I'll even pay for your coffee if you'll just let me go ahead of you.

Oliver turns to see Shane behind him.

OLIVER

Be my guest.

SHANE

I'm sorry. I'm just late and it's my first day at my new job.

OLIVER

At least you're employed...

SHANE

(to Barista)
Grande skinny vanilla latte.

OLIVER

...instead of sitting over there staring into cyberspace.

SHANE

(still ordering)
And he'll have a venti blonde Americano.

OLIVER

What's that?

SHANE

Black coffee. Most of those guys actually ARE employed. They're just working from home. Theoretically.

OLIVER

And someone pays them? Theoretically?

BARISTA

Grande skinny vanilla latte and a Venti Americano.

SHANE

(grabs her coffee)
Gotta go.
(she drops a ten on
the counter)
Keep the change.

She rushes off. Oliver watches her leave.

5 EXT. STREET - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Oliver strolls down the street carrying his cup of coffee. He walks like a man who enjoys being alive, appreciating the things around him: the blue sky, the flowers in the planters on the sidewalk, the mailbox ahead on the corner.

OLIVER (V.O.)

There it is, the last bastion of civility in a world of megabytes and downloads, a beacon of hope to those who still put their faith in the power of a piece of paper and a forty-six cent stamp.

A woman walks up to the mailbox. Oliver gallantly holds the shoot open for her. She smiles and drops her letter inside and walks off. He looks at the mailbox fondly as he sips his coffee.

OLIVER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Behind every envelope stand thousands of dedicated heroes who still fight the good fight through rain and snow and fiscal cliffs to deliver every note, every card, every letter. And I am one of them, the few, the proud, the postal. I work for you, whoever you are. Or, whoever...you were.

ANGLE ON THE MAILBOX

DISSOLVE TO:

6 EXT. DUPLEX APARTMENT - DAY

CLOSE ON two small hanging mailboxes marked with an A or B between a blue door and a brown door.

ANGLE ON THE STREET

A taxicab pulls up to the curb in front of the brick duplex in the middle class neighborhood.

ANGLE ON PASSENGER SEAT

KELLY, a beautiful young woman in her mid-twenties, looks at the blue door and smiles sadly.

KELLY'S POV

The house number above the blue door: 1020.

Kelly writes the address on a STAMPED PINK ENVELOPE.

KELLY

Okay, thanks. Just one more stop now before the station, please.

7 EXT. DENVER STREET CORNER - DAY

The impatient taxi DRIVER HONKS from the taxicab.

DRIVER

Lady, are you coming or not?

Kelly stands in front of a mailbox on a street corner. She holds the pink envelope in one hand and the open slot with the other hand, debating whether or not to mail the letter. She puts it in, takes it out, thinks it over.

DRIVER (CONT'D)

Decide already!

KELLY

I'm sorry, I just...

DRIVER

"When in doubt, don't." My mother always said that and she was no dummy.

That seems to make some sense to Kelly. She stuffs the letter in her pocket, walks back to the cab and gets in. They drive off.

8 EXT. UNION STATION - DAY - MINUTES LATER

The taxi pulls up to the curb. Our Taxi Driver, now somewhat kinder and gentler, gets out and retrieves Kelly's luggage as she exits the taxi. He gives her a genuine, sympathetic smile.

DRIVER

Here you go, kid.

KELLY

Thanks.

She starts to pay him. The Driver stops her.

DRIVER

No. You keep it.

KELLY

But...

DRIVER

Honest. I hear a lot of stories come outta that backseat, but yours is a doozie.

KELLY

I haven't told anybody. I can't believe I told you.

DRIVER

Hey, comes with the territory. I'm kinda like a therapist with six cylinders!

She laughs and reaches for her luggage.

DRIVER (CONT'D)

Don't worry, honey. You're doing the right thing. And mail that letter. Life is short.

Something he says resonates with her. She smiles as if recalling a memory.

KELLY

I know.
(hands him the envelope)
I'm so late. Could you....?

DRIVER

No problem. All part of the service. Take care of yourself, kid.

She smiles and walks into the station. The Taxi Driver turns back to the taxi about to close the trunk.

MALE TRAVELER (O.S.)

Taxi! Hey!

He stops and turns to see an arriving COUPLE approach with luggage.

MALE TRAVELER (CONT'D)

We're going to the Drake.

DRIVER

Get in. I've got that.

He reaches for the luggage, dropping the envelope into the side pocket of his jacket. Except he misses and, unbeknownst to him, **the PINK ENVELOPE falls onto the pavement.**

The driver drops the bags in the back, slams the trunk, gets in the car and drives away, revealing a kiosk where two election posters are plastered, one to re-elect Barack Obama and one for Mitt Romney. **We realize we are in 2012.** The CAMERA PANS BACK to THE PINK ENVELOPE. It lies on the pavement.

Seconds later, the WHEELS of a car drive over it and then we see the FEET of a MOTHER and a LITTLE BOY walk past it. The Boy turns around and we WIDEN to see him pick up the damaged envelope.

MOTHER

What are you doing? Hurry up!

LITTLE BOY

Somebody dropped this.

MOTHER

Give it to me. We'll mail it when we get to Aunt Dody's.

She takes it and slips it into her purse.

DISSOLVE TO:

9 EXT. RANCH HOUSE - DAY - THAT AFTERNOON

A taxi with a Texas license plate pulls up in front of a ranchhouse where AUNT DODY and her TWO PRE-SCHOOL AGED CHILDREN and a BARKING PUPPY are waiting to greet the Mother and Little Boy from Denver as they emerge from the taxi.

DODY

Welcome to Texas!

The Mother puts down her purse to embrace Dody, the puppy barks & children scream excitedly. They ad lib greetings.

MOTHER
Finally! What a trip!

The smallest child, a LITTLE GIRL all dressed in pink, toddles up to the purse on the ground and, unnoticed by anyone, retrieves the PINK ENVELOPE.

LITTLE GIRL
Pink! Pink!

She runs around the lawn and up to the porch.

10 INT. RANCH HOUSE BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The Little Girl enters her pink-decorated bedroom holding the PINK ENVELOPE. She opens the lid of a toy box filled with toys and dolls.

POV - from Toy Box interior.

LITTLE GIRL
Pink!

She SHUTS THE LID.

WE ARE IN BLACK.

CHYRON: "ELEVEN MONTHS LATER"

11 INT. RANCH HOUSE BEDROOM - ELEVEN MONTHS LATER

We HEAR the urgent sniffing and whining of a DOG. The lid opens up and peering at us is Aunt Dody and Ranger, the NOW-FULL-GROWN DOG.

AUNT DODY
What's in there, Ranger? Hmmm?
What do you smell in there?

Aunt Dody pulls out a dripping chocolate fudge bar. Aunt Dody groans.

AUNT DODY (CONT'D)
Ewww. What are we going to do
with that girl, Rang...

She stops, seeing something else in the box. She pulls out the PINK ENVELOPE, covered in melted chocolate.

AUNT DODY (CONT'D)
What on earth....?

She tries to wipe the chocolate off, but only manages to smear it worse. She sighs.

12 EXT. RANCH HOUSE - DAY - LATER

We see Aunt Dody at the sidewalk drive carrying the PINK ENVELOPE, but the name and address are incomprehensibly smudged. She inserts it into the mailbox and lifts the "outgoing" flag.

DISSOLVE TO:

13 INT. U.S. MAIL REGIONAL FACILITY - DENVER - PRESENT DAY

The PINK ENVELOPE makes its way down a conveyor belt.

We WIDEN to see we are in a huge, noisy warehouse of a room. Dozens of MAIL WORKERS sort letters and packages, bags of letters are dumped into boxes and sorted onto conveyor belts. We SEE the damaged PINK ENVELOPE, but this time it is re-directed to another conveyor. And another. And into a machine that stamps its envelopes with the words:

"DEAD LETTER"

The PINK ENVELOPE falls into a mail bin on rollers and it is immediately covered by hundreds of other dead letters that are dumped on top of it by an unseen MAIL WORKER.

The CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal an employee, NORMAN, (mid-thirties, intelligent but a fountain of only occasionally helpful information). Norman dumps more letters on top and pushes the bin past Oliver, who is sipping his Starbuck's coffee below a government-issued portrait of Barack Obama. Norman pushes the bin through a door that slams shut after him. The sign on the door reads:

"DEAD LETTER TERMINAL"

Somewhere behind that door, the PINK ENVELOPE with Kelly's letter lies hopelessly...dead.

ANGLE ON: OLIVER

He stands in the busy room with calm authority, the only one who refuses to wear a uniform. In his mind, he is a god in the pantheon of mail delivery. Oliver reads an OSHA flier on the employee bulletin board with disdain.

OLIVER

"There is no job so important that we can't do it safely."

(MORE)

OLIVER (CONT'D)

(to no one in
particular)

Patently false. "Safety First" is
the battle cry of the meek.

Oliver turns a passive eye to the parade of envelopes, boxes, and cards that stream towards his office. Something catches his eye and his entire demeanor changes. He urgently hits a switch, bringing everything to a halt as he grabs a slightly-mangled color postcard of the Eiffel Tower. Watching Oliver from a distance is RITA, a fortyish female with glasses who never learned to apply make-up with colors found in nature. Norman re-enters the floor and Rita exchanges a meaningful glance with him, indicating the reason for the hold-up on the line.

They watch expectantly as Oliver stares a moment at the photo, then slowly turns it over. He reads what is written on the other side and, as he has done so many times before, realizes it is not what he is looking for. He returns it sadly to the conveyor belt, hits a switch, and resumes supervision of his kingdom. Norman and Rita pretend they have seen nothing. Oliver carries on.

ANGLE ON:

ANOTHER AREA OF THE FLOOR

A large, overworked, no-nonsense supervisor ANDREA (60's) reads a file as a frustrated Shane argues with her as they walk towards Andrea's office. Shane is the same beautiful woman we met earlier. She argues with the attitude of a 21st century career woman whose computer skills are surpassed only by her belief in the power of the social network to solve the problems of the world.

SHANE

I told you, this is a mistake.
I'm supposed to be assigned to
Direct Line Operations as a
technical systems consultant.

ANDREA

Says here you're on DLO.

SHANE

Direct Line Operations. That's
what Washington is now calling
computer-managed delivery services.

ANDREA

Well, DLO is what we're still
calling the Dead Letter Office.

Shane follows Andrea into her glass cubicle office marked SUPERVISOR.

14 INT. ANDREA'S OFFICE - DAY

SHANE

Look, all you have to do is call the PG's office in Washington and...

ANDREA

Good idea. I'll call the Postmaster General right after I return that call from the Secretary of Defense.

SHANE

This is ridiculous. I don't belong here.

ANDREA

Oh, and....I do?
(thinks, then smiles
evilly)
I think I know what to do. Have a seat.

15 INT. MAIN SORTING FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

ANGLE ON OLIVER

Andrea approaches him and hands him Shane's file.

ANDREA

Oliver. I want you to train this girl. She's a computer something from Washington.

OLIVER

No.

ANDREA

We need updated computer support in your department.

OLIVER

Absolutely not.

Oliver enters through a door marked "DLO - No Unauthorized Personnel." Andrea follows him back into his office.

16 INT. DLO (DEAD LETTER INNER SANCTUM) - CONTINUOUS

Oliver, trailed by Andrea enter the DEAD LETTER OFFICE, a cramped, messy room with rubber stamps and stacks of books and bulletin boards with clippings, a tiny, ancient refrigerator from which Oliver extracts a bottle of chocolate

Yoo-Hoo. There are bins and bins of dead letters. Andrea steps over boxes labelled "Mid-Atlantic" "No Zip" "Bad Handwriting" etc.

ANDREA

This isn't a request, your Lordship.
And trust me, you *will* be sorry if
you can't get with the program
this time.

Oliver opens the Yoo-Hoo soda bottle and pours it into a wine glass and savors it.

OLIVER

Say what you will, I cannot teach
what cannot be taught to a brain
that has been programmed to reject
the subtleties of my craft.

ANDREA

I will fire you.

OLIVER

I have a Government Service Pay
Level higher than you can count.
I am untouchable.

ANDREA

I will take away your refrigerator.

OLIVER

You will *return* my Mr. Coffee.

ANDREA

Done.

OLIVER

Send her in.

17 INT. INNER SANCTUM - DAY - MINUTES LATER

Oliver sits at his desk. Norman stands nearby. In the b.g., Rita sorts letters with a strange, balletic abandon. There is a KNOCK on the door. Oliver nods and Norman opens it to reveal Shane standing there. They recognize each other.

OLIVER

It's you!

SHANE

It's Venti Americano. Incredible.

NORMAN

You know each other?

OLIVER
No. Just, theoretically.

SHANE
I'm Shane McInerney.

Oliver stares at her as if he doesn't understand.

SHANE (CONT'D)
Shane. Shane.

OLIVER
(reading file)
I can't work with someone named
Shane. Norman, tell her why.

NORMAN
Because...
(guessing)
Because at some point, you, Shane,
will walk away and Oliver will
need you to return...?

OLIVER
Very good, go on...

NORMAN
And Oliver will be forced to say...

RITA
(dramatically)
"Shane! Come back, Shane!"

OLIVER
At which point you will turn and
look at me with much the same
vacancy with which you stare at me
now, utterly unaware of the
unfortunate cinematic reference.
Therefore, I shall call
you...Sheryl.

Shane looks around this asylum and chooses discretion.

SHANE
Okay....Look, I'm only here
temporarily.

OLIVER
And how wise you are to recognize
such a great truth so early in
life.

SHANE
I mean, there's been a mistake.

OLIVER

(perusing the file)

A merry mix-up, perhaps. But a mistake? We shall see. Welcome to the Inner Sanctum.

(hands file to Rita)

Rita, file this in a safe place.

Rita takes it, scans it quickly page by page and tosses it onto a huge stack of unfiled papers. Shane stares.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Photographic memory. Total recall is a plus in this business.

18 INT. MAIN POSTAL FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Oliver is giving Shane a tour of his kingdom. Norman follows.

OLIVER

Every letter that passes through the United States Postal System symbolizes an act of faith. Faith that it will arrive at its destination on time and in good condition. Faith that what was written by the writer will remain private until read by the...

(he waits for Shane)

By the...

SHANE

Write-ee?

OLIVER

This is a sacred covenant that, if broken, signals what, Norman?

NORMAN

(recites)

"The breakdown of civilization and the beginning of anarchy."

OLIVER

This is why we attempt to ascertain the correct address using clues on the OUTSIDE of the envelope until we have NO OTHER CHOICE. And when that moment comes, we open the letter reverently and respectfully, much the way a medical student performs a first autopsy...

Oliver produces from a pocket an elegant letter-opener.

SHANE

My God...

OLIVER

And we read only as far as we must, gathering and gleaning clues as to the correct destination. It's a high-calling, Sheryl.

SHANE

Shane. Shane McInerney.

OLIVER

A grave responsibility, Ms. McInerney. One that cannot be dispatched merely by uploading and downloading and...
(distastefully)
..."Googling."

Andrea approaches carrying a clipboard.

ANDREA

McInerney! Guess what! There IS something in the system called Direct Line Operations.

SHANE

I know.

ANDREA

But it's not here, it's downtown.

SHANE

Great. I'm on my way.

ANDREA

Not so fast, missy. You gotta apply for reassignment and continue working at your current level during the six week waiting period before you're approved for transfer.

SHANE

Transfer. Is this a joke? Six weeks with these...these...

ANDREA

Sign here.

Shane sighs and takes a pen from Andrea. She reads the paper.

SHANE

Reason for transfer?

ANDREA
Paper allergy. Always works.

Shane sighs, signs the document, and hands it back to Andrea.

ANDREA (CONT'D)
(smiles evilly again)
Go with God.

Shane wants to die. Andrea waddles away.

OLIVER
Hard to believe she was once Miss
Special Delivery of 1967. Come
along.

He opens the door to the DLO Inner Sanctum and Shane sighs
and abandons all hope as she enters.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
I'm sorry to say, you won't be
working from home.

19 INT. INNER SANCTUM - CONTINUOUS

Rita is still there, sorting with that graceful yet super-
human skill.

SHANE
I guess as long as I'm here, you
might as well show me your hard
drive.

OLIVER
There's no need to be vulgar.

Shane opens her laptop. It is a small, sleek, amazing
machine.

NORMAN
Wow. I've never seen one like
that before.

SHANE
State of the art. Configured to
my specifications. You are looking
at a piece of classified hardware
with a 9750 processer, 1200 MBs of
RAM and a 72 GB hard drive with
NVIDIA graphics and a resolution
of 2200 by 1200 pixels.
(they stare at her)
Let's just say I have the capability
of a small army in the Caribbean.

Rita rolls the large bin of letters over to Oliver.

OLIVER

Ah. Let's get to the *real* work, shall we? Now, I believe that there are no coincidences, Ms. McInerney. Everything happens for a reason.

SHANE

You really believe that?

OLIVER

Well, take today, for example. Out of all the coffeeshops in all the towns in all the world...

SHANE

...you walked into mine.

OLIVER

Yes! Just as everything in the Dead Letter Office was originally intended for another place, and yet, for some Providential reason, they have been misdirected. Temporarily, of course. Not unlike...you.

Oliver taps the bulletin board of clippings behind Shane.

ECU: three newspaper clippings from other cities have been carefully cut out and preserved. "60 Year-Old Letter Arrives Just In Time" "Lost Letter Reunites Brothers" "Dead Letter Solves Mystery of Childhood Sweethearts." Shane turns back and looks at Oliver with new interest.

SHANE

You did that?

OLIVER

No. But it is a standard to which we aspire. Someday, we, too, shall join the pantheon of postal excellence. Now:

Oliver stares at the pile of letters, as if waiting for one to jump out at him. Rita stops her work to watch this ritual. Norman watches intently, crossing himself. Shane is completely bewildered. Finally, Oliver inhales, exhales, and solemnly reaches into the pile and pulls out...a Hallmark greeting card envelope hopelessly mangled.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

(reading address)

First name intact. Thomas P-E-R-something. Card has been ripped by...

(smells it)

Canine. Seattle postmark. Looks like a greeting card, tentative handwriting, no return, Billie Holiday commemorative...Not birthday, not sympathy...I'm guessing "thinking of you." Alright, we're going in.

Oliver is focused and serious as a surgeon. He takes his letter opener from his pocket and carefully opens the envelope and removes the card. He reads and smiles triumphantly.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

"Let's catch up"! Signed, "Pete". And Pete has written: "Saw this, thought of you. Dropped by 'Curios' yesterday, but you were on a break so..."

(he puts it down)

Norman...

NORMAN

I'm on it.

Norman is already pulling out the Seattle area yellow pages.

SHANE

(re: yellow pages)

You do know, of course, we are in the twenty-*first* century, right?

OLIVER

(to Norman)

Look under "antique stores." Possibly "gift shops"

(to Shane)

Computers do not share Norman's innate ability to think outside the box. I would even suggest that Norman is, in fact, *unaware* of the box.

NORMAN

(reading)

Curios Antiques! Proprietor Thomas Perkins! P-E-R!

SHANE

Impressive.

OLIVER
Child's play.

Shane picks up the card and starts to read. Oliver snatches it out of his hands.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Unh-unh-unh! We never, ever, ever
read past the point of necessity.
Rita!

He hands it to Rita, who drops it in a special post office forwarding envelope, seals it efficiently and drops it in the Outgoing Box with a flourish.

SHANE
That's it? Shoot, with the right
software, I could double your
efficiency in...

OLIVER
Efficiency. What an ugly word.
There is something more at work
here, Sheryl. In the beginning
was the word, and the word has its
own time and place. In short, we
do not find the letters that must
be found today. They find us.

He repeats the letter-retrieval ritual.

SHANE
But...

NORMAN
Shhh! It's happening!

Oliver pulls out the PINK ENVELOPE WE SAW AT THE BEGINNING.

SHANE
Maybe I should just find something
else to do while you guys...

But Oliver's not listening. He's staring at the envelope.
Norman senses a big one and waves Shane off.

OLIVER
(with quiet intensity)
Norman, get out your pencil.

INSERT: We see the smudged envelope is addressed to: Charlie
At The Bl... 102..(damaged), Den(damaged). The CAMERA notes
the 2013 postmark.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Addressed simply to Charlie.
Postmark is six weeks ago but bears
a forty-five cent Bicycle
Commemorative from 2012. Return
reads simply "Kelly of Washington
Park." Writer doesn't expect a
reply.

NORMAN

But it's postmarked from Texas.

RITA

There's no Washington Park in Texas.
It's gotta mean Washington Park
here in Denver. People ride
bicycles there all the time.

OLIVER

A *sentimental* stamp choice, then?
(feels something inside
the envelope)
And she has enclosed
something...something small and
round...Norman, a consult, please?

He hands the envelope to Norman, who carefully touches,
sniffs, and analyzes the envelope.

NORMAN

Handwriting indicates a female in
her twenties. Generally confident
but recently troubled, indicated
by bold figures tempered by
tentative strokes.

SHANE

You can tell all that by...

NORMAN

(continues)

Good quality, hand-cut linen,
Sherwood Stationery circa 1960.
Untraditional dye, most likely a
special color blend. This sort of
stuff was made to order back then
for the rich. The really rich.

Shane opens her laptop and powers up.

SHANE

Okay, I can run a list of the
wealthiest women on the East Coast
nineteen fifty eight to sixty five
(MORE)

SHANE (CONT'D)
and cross-reference it with Sherwood Stationery's special order records from...

RITA
But she's in her twenties. She's too young...

OLIVER
...But *sentimental*. Perhaps this is stationery she kept from her grandmother's desk. Then again, it may have come from an old box of stationery she bought at an antique store. Too many variables have left us no choice...

SHANE
I can run a list of local antique stores that specialize in...

Oliver slides his letter opener across the top and retrieves Kelly's letter.

SHANE (CONT'D)
Or, we could just do that.

OLIVER
(reading top line)
"September 27, 2012, Dear Charlie..." This letter is almost a year old. It just never made it into the system.

SHANE
Until six weeks ago?

NORMAN
A floater! We've got a floater!

He's very excited. He pulls up a chair to listen. Oliver notes the attached item. It is a flat gold blazer button taped to the letter.

OLIVER
(begins reading)
"Dear Charlie. I wanted to be sure you got your button back. And I wanted to explain about last night."

Oliver sighs.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Oh, dear. Another "I can explain everything" apologetic replete with the return of an article of clothing.

(to Shane)

Letters like this are usually accompanied by liberal references to Jello shots and tequila. Well, here we go.

Oliver reads quickly. He's heard this all before.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

"Dear Charlie, I wanted to be sure you got your button back. And I wanted to explain about last night.

Oliver stops. This letter is different.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Good heavens.

Oliver reaches over to his wine glass. It is empty. He does the unthinkable and takes a steadying swig straight from the soda bottle. Rita stops everything and freezes. Shane forgets her laptop and sits on a nearby table to listen. Norman's eyes widen.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

(reads on)

"Walking away and leaving you standing there in the park was the hardest thing I've ever done. Except to tell you what I'm going to say next. I had to leave because I couldn't let you watch me die....."

(a beat)

Norman, I think this is going to require another Yoo-Hoo.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

20 INT. INNER SANCTUM - DAY

Norman fetches Oliver another Yoo-Hoo as Oliver finishes off the one he currently has. Everyone else sits in rapt attention waiting to hear the rest of the letter. Oliver knocks back another Yoo-Hoo in a few gulps. As they watch:

SHANE

(whispers to Rita)
What is that stuff?

RITA

High fructose corn syrup, water,
whey, sugar, corn syrup solids,
cocoa, partially hydrogenated soy
bean oil, sodium caseinate, salt...

NORMAN

I once met the President of the
Yoo-Hoo Company on a bus trip to
Mexico.

Shane processes that. Oliver is sufficiently hydrated.

OLIVER

Now, where were we?

RITA

"I had to leave because I couldn't
let you watch me die."

OLIVER

Oh, yes.
(reads)
"The truth is, I'm sick."

DISSOLVE TO:

21 BEGIN FLASHBACK:

22 EXT. DENVER STREET - DAY - 2012

We are outside a very tall office building.

KELLY (V.O.)

"I'm really sick, Charlie, and for
the longest time, all I've been
thinking about is just trying to
stay alive."

Walking into the building at a rapid pace is CHARLIE, a good-looking twenty-something loaded up with a large donut box

and a carrier full of coffee. He is in his shirt sleeves, a tie, and business slacks. He enters the building.

The CAMERA PANS UP to the third floor and we see a beautiful young woman, KELLY, standing at the window looking out, pensive and conflicted. She carries a professional camera and she takes a photo through the window of something down on the sidewalk.

23 INT. OFFICE BUILDING - THIRD FLOOR - DAY - SAME TIME

Kelly exits a door from an office we do not see. Preoccupied, she presses the button for the elevator without checking to see if she's pressed UP or DOWN. She slips her camera into her backpack.

We HEAR a DING, the doors open and she steps in and stands next to Charlie and OTHER BUSINESS TYPES who are inside.

KELLY (V.O.)

"And then yesterday, I stepped into that elevator and there you were and you made me remember the difference between staying alive and being alive...."

24 INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Charlie smiles. Kelly hits the LOBBY button.

CHARLIE

(whispers)

Sorry, we're going up. Looks like all the way.

KELLY

(shrugs sadly)

Oh, well. Doesn't really matter.

CHARLIE

Nice ride, though. You get to stop at all the best floors.

She smiles. There is instant chemistry. The elevator stops and the doors open to reveal an impatient, self-important thirty-something CAMERON.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

(sotto to Kelly)

Well, not *all* the best floors.

Cameron strides in, forcing Kelly and Charlie and Others to the back. Charlie juggles his coffee and donuts.

CAMERON
Charlie, that you back there?

CHARLIE
Morning, Mr. Cameron.

CAMERON
You get my cinnamon cruller?

CHARLIE
Yessir.

CAMERON
And the Colombian supremo, not
that junk from Ecuador you got
yesterday?

The elevator stops and lets out a few more riders who give Charlie a sympathetic look as they depart. Cameron presses the CLOSE DOORS button relentlessly until the doors close and they continue up.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
You'll never make it in mergers
and acquisitions if you can't even
take a decent coffee order, pal.

CHARLIE
Colombian. Got it.

The elevator slows to the tenth floor and opens.

CAMERON
It better be up on the seventeenth
floor by the time I get there.
And don't screw up like you usually
do.

Another withering comment that makes Charlie cringe. Kelly watches with distaste. Cameron steps out and holds the door for one last zinger.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
I'm meeting that new VP gal today
and I hear she likes her donuts.
God, I bet she's a pig.

KELLY
Actually, I like bagels. But I
can buy them for myself, right,
Charlie?

She presses the Close Door button on a stunned and gulping Cameron. Kelly waves good-bye as the elevator doors close.

KELLY (CONT'D)

Oink-oink.

The doors close before Cameron can respond.

CHARLIE

You're the new vice-president?

KELLY

(laughs)

No. Do I look like a vice-president?

Charlie laughs.

CHARLIE

No, you look beau...well, you were great.

KELLY

I hope I don't get you in trouble. I just couldn't resist. You actually work for that jerk?

CHARLIE

Him and three more just like him.

KELLY

Sorry to hear that.

CHARLIE

Well, there's something to learn from everybody, even if it's what not to do.

KELLY

That's a great attitude.

CHARLIE

(shrugs)

What doesn't kill me makes me stronger, right? That and donuts, of course. You want one?

KELLY

Thanks, but I actually DO prefer bagels. I'm supposed to stay off sugar while I'm...

She stops herself. Fortunately, the elevator opens at Charlie's floor.

CHARLIE

Seventeen. That's me.

(MORE)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
 Hey, thanks again. Best laugh
 I've had all week. Maybe all month.
 Maybe...all year.

He sighs and steps out in front of a huge corporate door with the impressive title "MILLER, MILLER, MILLER AND SCHWARTZ". Kelly instinctively stops the door.

KELLY
 Hey, Charlie?

Charlie is more than happy to come back.

KELLY (CONT'D)
 You deserve better. Life is short,
 you know.

Charlie gives her a look.

CHARLIE
 I know, but the days are really
 long sometimes.

The doors begin to close.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
 Hey! What's your name?

KELLY
 Kelly!

Just as the doors close a BUSINESSWOMAN catches the door and steps in and presses the 45th floor button. Kelly smiles but the woman is too busy on her iPhone to notice.

25 INT. OFFICE BUILDING - 45TH FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

The doors open, the Woman walks out without a word, still texting on her phone. Kelly pushes the LOBBY button and waits for the doors to close.

26 INT. ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER

Kelly waits patiently and watches the numbers on the panel descend as she approaches the floor where Charlie got off - the seventeenth floor. She is surprised when it stops and the doors open to reveal Charlie, his tie now loosened, wearing a blazer with gold buttons, and a backpack slung over his shoulder.

CHARLIE
 Hey! Kelly!

He jumps inside with a new look of vitality on his face.

KELLY
Hi! Going down?

CHARLIE
All the way. I just quit.

Kelly reacts.

27 EXT. BUILDING - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

They exit together. Charlie throws his hands up in the air as if just released from prison.

CHARLIE
Free at last, free at last!

KELLY
Was it really that bad?

CHARLIE
It was so bad that I told myself this morning if a beautiful girl doesn't walk into this elevator today and rescue me, I'm riding all the way up to the top floor and jumping off. Donuts, coffee, and all.

Kelly deflects the compliment.

KELLY
Columbian coffee, I hope!

CHARLIE
"Yessir!"

KELLY
Well, congratulations. I hope you find another job that you like.

CHARLIE
That's tomorrow. But today, I'm taking you out for a bagel.

KELLY
Oh, I don't know...

CHARLIE
You gotta go to work, right?

KELLY
No, but...

CHARLIE

Then come on! You just saved a man's life. In some cultures that makes me responsible for you.

KELLY

Actually I think it's the other way around.

CHARLIE

Even better! How can you say "no" now?

KELLY

But I didn't save your life. It takes...it takes a lot more than that to save a life.

CHARLIE

Are you kidding? If it weren't for you, I'd be up there right now passing out crullers to Miller, Miller, Miller & Schwartz. Well, not Schwartz. He's glucose intolerant.

END FLASHBACK

28 INT. INNER SANCTUM - DAY - PRESENT (2013)

Shane, Norman, and Rita are listening raptly.

OLIVER

(reading)

"The truth is, Charlie. I don't know who saved whose life that day. You may have saved mine. I won't know for awhile. But I'll always cherish the day you quit Miller, Miller, Miller & Schwartz and..."

Oliver abruptly stops reading and closes the letter.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Well, there we go.

SHANE

Whaddya doing? Keep going.

OLIVER

No need. Miller, Miller, Miller & Schwartz. Rita?

RITA

(from memory)

Mergers and acquisitions. The Colorado Bank Building on 3424 Lincoln Street.

NORMAN

We send their Human Relations office a Form 407B requesting the names of terminations on September 26, 2012, with first name Charles or Charlie.

SHANE

(ignoring him)

What about Kelly? What's she dying of? Is she going to live?

OLIVER

To read any further than necessary would violate the prime directive.

SHANE

You gotta be kidding.

NORMAN

He's not kidding.

RITA

We don't kid. We're not kidders.

SHANE

What a hypocrite.

OLIVER

I beg your pardon?

SHANE

You know darn well it'll take weeks before some drone in HR pulls a bunch of old employment records to help out the U.S. Post Office. Meanwhile, Charlie is out there somewhere wondering why the girl of his dreams blew him off when they were so obviously falling in love.

OLIVER

There's nothing in here that indicates they were in love.

SHANE

Everything in that letter so far indicates they were in love. Or getting there. Right, Rita?

Rita swallows nervously.

RITA

I've never actually been in...
 (she glances at Norman)
 Well, I mean, not when the OTHER person was...in it. At the same time.

Norman is oblivious.

NORMAN

I read a book once on chemical changes in baboons suggesting that apes experience a certain emotional connection similar to human love.

Shane stares at him.

SHANE

Thank you. Maybe you could bring that in tomorrow.
 (to Oliver, her best con job)
 Look, if there's a chance that reading one more line could give us a truly solid chance to redirect that letter to poor Charlie, then don't we owe it to him? And to Kelly.
 (to Oliver)
 I mean "of all the elevators in all the towns in all the world..."

Her reference to Oliver's quotation resonates with him. They lock eyes and he stares at her a moment. Then:

OLIVER

"We?" "Us?" Why, Ms. McInerney, could it be that you've already taken our little enterprise into your heart? That's very touching. But the answer is no.

Oliver slides the letter into a pigeon-hole marked "PENDING" and turns away to other business. Shane waits a moment, and then surreptitiously SLIPS THE PINK ENVELOPE INTO HER ATTACHE CASE.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

29 INT. BAR - "THE MAILBOX" - THAT NIGHT - PRESENT (2013)

A tiny hole-in-the-wall joint where postal workers hang out. Oliver and Shane ENTER and walk to the bar. Nearby, Rita sways precariously over a jukebox, feeding it quarters.

SHANE

(to Oliver)

I've heard of cop bars and gay bars and Mafia bars. Never been to a postal bar.

OLIVER

Everyone needs a place to decompress with their peers. Actually, these people are not my peers, but they are clearly yours and I thought you might enjoy it here.

SHANE

You're a charmer.

RITA

(calling over)

Hey! You spell McInerney with an M-C, right?

SHANE

Uh, yeah.

RITA

Exxxcellent! I've got a surprise for youuuuuu!

Shane and Oliver sit at the bar. The BARTENDER approaches.

OLIVER

Rita is a connoisseur of the carefully-crafted daiquiri.

(to bartender)

Barkeep, a gin rickey, hold the rickey.

SHANE

I'd like a Yoo-Hoo on the rocks with a side car.

The Bartender stares at her. Oliver amused.

SHANE (CONT'D)

Sorry, just a little postal humor. Gibson, up, very dry, please.

A busty thirty-something ELEANOR with her postal uniform on but her shirt open too far approaches, her eye on Oliver.

ELEANOR

Hello, Oliver. Haven't seen you around for awhile.

OLIVER

Eleanor. How are things in Passports?

ELEANOR

Oh, you know. Everybody wants to get there tomorrow.

OLIVER

Ah.

Oliver doesn't pursue the conversation. Eleanor's eyes travel to Shane but Oliver doesn't introduce her. Finally:

ELEANOR

You're that new girl from Washington DC, huh?

OLIVER

The "girls" are over in the corner spilling beer on the billiard table. This lady and I have business to attend to. I'm sure you understand.

Dismissed, Eleanor moves on. Shane is surprised and looks at Oliver with a new interest.

SHANE

(teasing)

And I thought you didn't like me!

Oliver stares at her. Then, quite seriously:

OLIVER

I haven't decided yet.

SHANE

Then why did you invite me here?

Before he can answer, Norman enters and joins them.

NORMAN

Miller, Miller, Miller, & Schwartz were sued for fraud and went out of business six months ago.

OLIVER

So much for our only lead.

SHANE

Yeah. And it only took eight hours.

OLIVER

Do I detect irony?

Oliver and Shane begin a banter that is not just professional tension but perhaps a hint of a sexual tension to come.

SHANE

If I'd had that letter, I could've found this Charlie guy in thirty seconds.

OLIVER

This is not a race we run, Ms. McInerney. It is a journey.

SHANE

It's a job! You deliver one letter and the next day a hundred take its place. It's a losing battle, an exercise in futility. It may even be a good excuse to upgrade my search engine capacity. But it's not some woo-woo spiritual journey.

OLIVER

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

NORMAN

It's not Horatio, it's Sheryl, right?

SHANE

It's Shane!

OLIVER

It's Shakespeare, my little peasants. Now, you may lack a sense of destiny, but you have one character trait that, if carefully cultivated, could be helpful. And that is something I like to call...curiosity. You wanted to know why we're here?

He reaches into the outside pocket of Shane's attache case, removes the PINK ENVELOPE, and places it on the counter. Shane is mortified.

SHANE

I can explain. Actually, I can't.
But I haven't read it yet, so
technically...

NORMAN

(scandalized)

Unauthorized removal! Regulation
#PR34D! That's a gross violation.

OLIVER

Yes, it is. But in this case, a
convenient one.

He removes the letter from the envelope.

SHANE

I thought you never broke the rules.

OLIVER

Well, apparently we have you to do
that for us. I, however, must on
occasion bend the law in order to
fulfill the spirit of the law.
Nuts?

He offers her some from a bowl.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Norman. Go retrieve Rita. She
wouldn't want to miss this.

Norman leaves and walks over to the jukebox. Shane speaks
to Oliver with sincerity and quietly.

SHANE

Thank you.

OLIVER

For what?

SHANE

For outing me here instead of back
at the office in front of Andrea.
I could have been...

OLIVER

Terminated. Yes. Well, I try to
do as little in front of Andrea as
possible.

Oliver takes his drink and begins walking towards a corner
booth. Shane follows. Norman joins them with Rita.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Welcome, Rita.

They sit in the booth.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Now, where were we?

RITA
(recites)
"I'll always cherish the memory of
that day when you...."

OLIVER
"Miller, Miller..." Here we are:
"...when we met and tried so hard
not to fall in love...."

DISSOLVE TO:

30 BEGIN FLASHBACK - 2012

31 INT. GAYLORD BAGEL FACTORY - DAY

Charlie and Kelly stand at a cafe table, assembling their
bagels and lox.

CHARLIE
There's an art to the perfect bagel
and lox combo.

KELLY
I don't think I can eat raw salmon.

CHARLIE
Think of it as sushi with bread.
And onions, tomatoes, and cream
cheese, all the major food groups.
You eat one of these, you're good
for the day.

KELLY
(points)
And these?

CHARLIE
Ah! Capers! The key to the whole
enterprise. The "secret sauce" of
bagels and lox.

KELLY
They look like....fish eggs.

CHARLIE

Nope. Capers are flower buds.
Little salty flower things that
add just the perfect balance to
the cream cheese.

Kelly tries to put some one, but they roll off.

KELLY

Uh-oh.

CHARLIE

(building as he goes)
The secret is you sort of glue the
capers into the cheese so they
don't roll off. THEN the salmon,
the onion, and the tomato and....

He holds it out, she takes it and awkwardly takes a bite,
getting some cream cheese on her nose.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Hmm?

Kelly nods, sort of surprised that she likes it.

KELLY

Mmmm!

CHARLIE

You've got some....right
there...um..

He wipes the cream cheese off her nose.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Great nose, by the way. People
tell you that a lot, right? Your
boyfriend, probably....

Kelly doesn't say anything.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Forget that. Too much information
for a first date. This is a date,
right? Sort of?

KELLY

(hesitates, a beat,
then:)
I have a proposition.

CHARLIE

Yes. Whatever it is....yes.

32 EXT. GAYLORD'S BAGEL FACTORY - A FEW MINUTES LATER

They are finishing off their bagels, tossing the paper into a nearby trash. Charlie is reviewing their agreement.

CHARLIE

So, no last names.

KELLY

Right.

CHARLIE

No phone numbers, no addresses, no "I was born here and I went to school there, my boyfriend is a jerk, my girlfriend married my dentist...." No histories.

KELLY

We spend one day together, say whatever we want to say with no fear, no judgment, because we won't see each other again.

CHARLIE

See, that's the part I'm having trouble with.

KELLY

Think about it. One day when you don't have to worry if what you do or say will affect tomorrow. No phone numbers, no texting, no tweeting, no googling tomorrow. Just living right now, today.

CHARLIE

Is this part of your "life is short philosophy?" Are you writing a book and I'm one of your unsuspecting subjects? "Chapter 14 - Charlie Quits His Job...."

KELLY

Philosophy, yes. Book, no. Are you in or out?

33 INT. BAR - "THE MAILBOX" - NIGHT - PRESENT (2013)

The four are still sitting in the booth. Oliver stops reading. Shane types on her laptop. Rita and Norman are listening.

OLIVER

(ignoring them)

No texts, no emails, no tweets. A girl after my own heart.

(reading)

"I know I gave you a pretty crazy reason for..."

SHANE

Wait! I've got an idea. It's sort of wild, but...

OLIVER

Oh, happy day.

SHANE

In the letter, they spend the day together. They go to a park, right?

OLIVER

(re: envelope)

"Kelly, from Washington Park."

SHANE

I've got a proposition.

OLIVER

No. Whatever it is, no.

RITA

I think it's a great idea.

NORMAN

How do you know what it is?

She whispers to Norman.

RITA

Because I'm a woman.

SHANE

We're looking for clues in a love letter. But maybe not all the clues are going to be on the paper. Let's go to the park.

RITA

(winks at Norman)

Yeah. Why read about something when you can..experience it.

NORMAN

Some of us could use a walk and a little fresh air.

SHANE

Come on, Oliver, are you in or you out?

In the b.g., Eleanor shoots a corner pocket shot and the corner erupts with loud screams of victory. It's not pretty.

CUT TO:

34 EXT. WASHINGTON PARK - NIGHT - FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER

Oliver, Shane, Norman, and Rita stand in the park, near the bicycle racks. Rita has gotten a bit of a second wind.

RITA

Washington Park, two lakes, three playgrounds, six tennis courts, four miles of bike paths, and ducks. Lots of ducks.

SHANE

Now, isn't this better? Now we know what Kelly's talking about.

OLIVER

May I continue now?

SHANE

Read on, MacDuff.
(amused)
Shakespeare.

Oliver ignores the dig and continues.

OLIVER

(reading)
"I know I gave you a pretty crazy reason for only spending one day together, Charlie...."

DISSOLVE TO:

BEGIN FLASHBACK - 2012

35 EXT. WASHINGTON PARK - DAY - HALF AN HOUR LATER

Kelly and Charlie are in a beautiful park renting bikes from a machine. Kelly wears her backpack and straddles a bike, ready to ride. Joggers run by, people walk dogs, play Frisbee, etc. Kelly is taking pictures of everything.

KELLY (V.O.)

"The truth is, I only had one day to spend...."

Charlie swipes his credit card to release a second bike and puts the card in his wallet and his wallet in his back pocket. He gets on the bike, she puts her camera in her backpack and they push off.

KELLY (CONT'D)

But spending it with you made all the difference."

BEGIN MONTAGE

36 EXT. PARK - MOMENTS LATER

Kelly and Charlie ride along the bike path, past gardens, a playground, a fountain. Kelly takes photos, wobbles on her bikes, Charlie steadies it as she shoots.

37 EXT. PARK - CONTINUOUS

They have stopped by the lake, where ducks have gathered. Kelly takes a few photos as Charlie pulls something out of his backpack, starts tearing it apart, and tossing it to the ravenous ducks.

CHARLIE

Lunchtime, guys.
(hands some to Kelly)
Here.

KELLY

What's this?

CHARLIE

Cameron's cinnamon cruller. I was going to eat it as a last act of defiance, but now I like the thought of feeding it to wild ducks, one tiny piece at a time.

Kelly laughs.

KELLY

I'm glad to see you're not bitter.

CHARLIE

You know, I'm not, actually. Just think, that poor guy's still back there, merging and acquiring and I'm...well, I'm here with you.

They share a quiet look. A good time to kiss, but Kelly breaks the spell and tosses another crumb to the ducks. Charlie sees something in the distance.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

C'mon. I want to show you something.

38 EXT. PARK BRIDGE OVER A DITCH - MOMENTS LATER

Charlie and Kelly are standing on a bridge that spans a ditch.

CHARLIE

When I was in sixth grade, I walked to school and I crossed this bridge every day.

KELLY

Careful. No historical details.

CHARLIE

I know, I know. But see this ditch? All the other kids jumped the ditch on the way to school. They'd take a running start and fly right across and land over there.

KELLY

But you took the bridge.

CHARLIE

I tried to jump at first. I'd run right up to the edge but something always made me put on the brakes at the last second. God, it was embarrassing. They'd all be standing on the other side yelling "Jump, Charlie. You can do it!"

KELLY

But...?

CHARLIE

But I never did. After awhile, they stopped expecting me to even try and then it was too late to change their minds.

Kelly is quiet. Something he has said has resonated deeply.

KELLY

Maybe some things are just too late to fix.

Charlie senses he's hit a nerve and breaks the mood.

CHARLIE

Shoot, what do I know? It's *never* too late.

KELLY

(smiles)

Oh yeah? Then jump the ditch.

CHARLIE

What?

KELLY

Jump! Do it today. What are you waiting for?

CHARLIE

No way.

KELLY

(laughing)

Ditch your pride.

CHARLIE

"Ditch." Very clever. Okay, go over there and wait. But over to the side. Don't distract me.

KELLY

(amused)

Right.

CHARLIE

And no cameras!

KELLY

You may want a record of this someday.

CHARLIE

Someday? Aha! Now if there's a chance we have a "someday," THAT'S worth jumping for.

Kelly smiles and walks down the bridge and positions herself to the side, near a tree. Charlie walks a good distance away to give himself some running room.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Okay. I can do this.

ANGLE ON KELLY

She slips her camera out and stands partially covered from view, clicking photos.

CAMERA POV - A SERIES OF SHUTTER CLICKS

We see Charlie, a good distance away, turn around and prepare himself. He stretches. He takes a breath. He starts to run back towards the ditch.

He makes it! Click, Click, Click.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Yes!

Charlie does a victory dance and runs around a little. Suddenly something - some ONE - runs out from a stand of trees, smacks into him and knocks him down.

Kelly stops shooting and looks across.

KELLY'S POV - CHARLIE AND A JOGGER

It all happens very quickly. Charlie and the jogger are both on the ground. Charlie stands and helps the jogger up. Charlie seems very good-natured, laughing, dusting off the jogger, clearly apologizing, patting the guy on the back and sending him on his way. Kelly takes a couple more pictures of the encounter, and we see on her face a new sense of appreciation for Charlie.

Charlie walks back towards her, over the bridge.

KELLY

Ouch! Are you okay?

CHARLIE

Yeah. Pride goeth before a fall,
I guess.

KELLY

You lost a button.

CHARLIE

A small sacrifice for making the
jump of a lifetime.

KELLY

You were awfully nice to that guy,
considering he knocked you down.

CHARLIE

Well, why not? Life is short.

Kelly looks at him and he grins.

KELLY (V.O.)

I think that was the moment I
realized how much I wanted to live.
(MORE)

KELLY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 How much I needed to believe in a
 "someday" with you in it. Maybe
 that's how it feels to fall in
 love, Charlie. When you can't wait
 for tomorrow.

They retrieve their bikes and walk them for awhile. Charlie gets on his bike. Kelly does, too, and follows him.

39 EXT. PARK LAKE - DAY - LATER

They are riding their bikes along the lake and Kelly slows down, running out of energy. She works hard to hide it.

CHARLIE
 (calling back)
 There's a great fountain up here
 at the top.

KELLY
 Charlie, wait!

Charlie stops and rides back to her. Kelly parks her bike and sits on a nearby park bench.

KELLY (CONT'D)
 It's so pretty here. I just want
 to take a couple of pictures.

CHARLIE
 Go for it.

Charlie notices a newspaper left by someone on the bench. He picks it up and starts folding it into a boat.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
 So, are you a professional
 photographer?
 (she gives him a look)
 Ok, how about this:...why do you
 like to take pictures?

KELLY
 Lemme see...well, I know in some
 cultures people think taking a
 photograph of something is like
 stealing a piece of its soul. But
 for me, taking a picture of
 something or someone is a way to
I don't know...honor a soul.
 It's my way of saying "here you
 are, duck, here you are, sky, here
 you are, Charlie, and before you
 (MORE)

KELLY (CONT'D)
float away, I want to stop time
for just a moment to really see
you.

Charlie doesn't look up. He just stares at the newspaper
boat he holds in his hand.

KELLY (CONT'D)
What? What are you thinking?

CHARLIE
I'm reading this little article
here on the side about Rodger Piper,
age 61, a baker who won the lottery
last week. And I bet everybody
thinks he's the luckiest guy in
the world. And yesterday, I would
have thought so, too. But today,
I think the luckiest guy in the
world...is me.

He sets the boat adrift. Kelly takes a photo of the boat.
Charlie turns and looks at her and smiles. She smiles back
and takes a photo of him. Click.

END FLASHBACK

CUT TO:

40 EXT. SAME LAKE - PRESENT DAY - 2013

Kelly's POV of Charlie is now Shane's POV of Oliver, who
stands in the same place, gazing at a lake without a paper
boat.

ANGLE ON SHANE

She holds her hands up to frame what she sees.

SHANE
Click.

NORMAN
On the other side of this lake
there is an exact replica of Martha
Washington's garden at Mount Vernon,
Virginia. I'm a direct descendant
of George Washington's accountant.

OLIVER
I don't see the purpose in
continuing this field trip,
particularly without a permission
slip from your mother, Norman.

SHANE

Just a little longer, Oliver.
Please. Just read a little more.
There's got to be something in
that letter that can help us if we
put ourselves in Kelly and Charlie's
place.

Oliver sighs and mutters as he finds his place.

OLIVER

I will not jump over a ditch.

SHANE

Fine.

OLIVER

Tomorrow, everything goes back to
normal.

SHANE

If that's what you consider normal.

OLIVER

(reads)

"I wanted to tell you everything
right then, Charlie...."

DISSOLVE TO:

41 BEGIN FLASHBACK

42 EXT. PARK LAKE - 2012

As the boat floats off, we hear Kelly's voice continue:

KELLY (V.O.)

"...But I didn't want to break the
spell. I've always been good at
putting off the hard stuff..."

Kelly sits beside Charlie as they watch the boat float away.

KELLY (CONT'D)

I feel like we ought to do
something. Something to commemorate
this day. Something that makes a
difference.

CHARLIE

We could get married.

KELLY

Tempting. But I don't marry on
the first date.

CHARLIE

Good point. Let's see....

He sees something in the distance. It's a Red Cross Bloodmobile set up near a playground.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Got it! You saved my life today.
Let's save some more!

A shadow comes across Kelly's face.

KELLY

You want to give blood?

CHARLIE

Yeah! It's life-affirming, you get to lie down, they give you cookies, and it's free!

KELLY

I don't give blood
really...anymore...

CHARLIE

C'mon. They do it once a year here in the park and it makes you feel great.

KELLY

You won't jump a ditch but needles are no problem?

CHARLIE

I know. Go figure. I used to do it all the time in college. I think I've even got my old donor card here in my...

He reaches into his back pocket, but realizes it's not there.

KELLY

What's the matter?

CHARLIE

My wallet. I think I've...oh, man...

He realizes it's missing.

43 EXT. NEAR THE PARK BRIDGE - DAY - MINUTES LATER

They are walking their bikes slowly, retracing their steps, looking for his wallet.

KELLY

I can't believe you lost your wallet
and your job on the same day.

(leans down to pick
something up)

Found your button though.

CHARLIE

To be accurate, I *quit* my job, I
did lose the wallet, but I found
the girl of my dreams. I think it
all balances out. Except for the
part where I wake up tomorrow and
realize I lost the girl.

KELLY

Charlie, I'm sorry. It just...it
just has to be this way.

She takes his hand and puts the button in it.

KELLY (CONT'D)

Promise me you'll go home tonight
and you'll sew this button back on
your blazer and find yourself the
job of your dreams and meet somebody
wonderful and have lots of babies
and grandchildren and make dozens
of paper boats for them every time
you take them for walks in the
park and when you set them sailing,
you'll think of me.

Charlie looks at the button and gives it back to her.

CHARLIE

Or, you could come by tomorrow and
sew the button on yourself.

KELLY

(laughs)

Are you telling me you can't sew?

CHARLIE

I don't think I can do anything
without you now, Kelly.

They almost kiss. Kelly hesitates. Charlie smiles.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

One more thing. Just one more.

He takes her hand and walks her to the nearby swingset.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
If you sit in this one right here...

She does.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
And you swing really high....

He pushes her again and again...

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
And you look over the top of the trees right over there, you see a brick duplex with a blue door and a brown door?

KELLY
No...yes! A blue door and a chimney?

CHARLIE
Right.

She swings back to him and he stops her.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
That's where I live. The blue door.

KELLY
You're breaking the rule.

CHARLIE
You're breaking my heart. Come on, tell me that I'm going to open my door tomorrow morning and you'll be sitting on the steps.

KELLY
Charlie, please, I have to...

He pushes her higher. We FOLLOW KELLY up into the air. As the swing comes back down, it's now:

END FLASHBACK

44 EXT. PARK SWINGS - DAY - PRESENT TIME - 2013

SHANE IN THE SWING IS CAUGHT BY OLIVER

It's a surprisingly intimate moment. They speak awkwardly.

SHANE
...stop.

OLIVER

Did you see it?

SHANE

Did I...?

OLIVER

The blue door.

SHANE

Oh, right. Yes. That must be Charlie's place. But, maybe we should read just a little further. You know, just to be sure.

OLIVER

(flustered)

Right. Just to confirm. Let's see..."I can't forget the kiss on the swings..."

NORMAN

They kissed? Right here?

OLIVER

Apparently so, Norman. Now..."I can't forget..." Etcetera, etcetera. Here we are: "...and even though I promised I'd come back, I knew I couldn't. I keep imagining you there on the steps by the blue door, waiting for me. And I'm sorry I wasn't there.

NORMAN

How could she? She promised.

OLIVER

"...BUT I can explain. With all my talk about courage, you were the one who took all the big leaps yesterday and now it's my turn. So today I'm going to do what I have to do to get myself well. If it works, and if you still feel the same way about me, let's meet a year from today and we'll go on a second date. But if I'm not there waiting for you at the bridge at six o'clock, you'll know it's only because the jump I had to make was just too far. Whatever happens, Charlie, sew this button on and go out into the world.

(MORE)

OLIVER (CONT'D)

I know I made the rules, and I'm not going to break them now. But the best way to find me if you really need me someday is to just remember this: life is short, but it's beautiful. Love, Kelly...

Oliver finishes and the others are quiet. Finally:

SHANE

Oh, man. What's today?

RITA

The twenty-third. Oh, wow.

SHANE

And Charlie has no idea they're supposed to meet in four days.

OLIVER

Assuming she took the leap...and made it to the other side.

Oliver takes the button out of his pocket and stares at it.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

45 EXT. CHARLIE'S DUPLEX - NIGHT - LATER

The four of them stare at the blue door.

RITA

I don't see another house on this block with a blue door and a brown door and a chimney.

SHANE

So, who's going to knock?

OLIVER

There is no knocking. We don't knock.

NORMAN

We go back to the office and follow procedure before we get in trouble.

SHANE

Trouble? You think Andrea is cruising the park? Come on, we're standing right HERE! Let's just...

She snatches the letter from Oliver. He snatches it back.

OLIVER

And I thought you'd welcome the opportunity to show us what that fancy laptop of yours can do...

He walks off. She sighs and they all follow.

46 EXT. U.S. MAIL REGIONAL FACILITY - DENVER - NIGHT - LATER

A few mail trucks move in and out of the back receiving areas.

47 INT. INNER SANCTUM - NIGHT - SAME TIME

Shane types on her laptop as the others watch. She navigates the street views from her screen.

SHANE

Here's the street...Here's the blue door. There's the address and the last known occupant is....

She pulls a piece of paper off a printer as it prints out.

SHANE (CONT'D)

Charles - Charlie - Riggs.

Norman crosses himself and copies the address onto a form.

SHANE (CONT'D)

I guess we can't write "good luck"
on the back, huh?

Oliver is not amused. Norman affixes the form to the back of the letter and hands it to Oliver.

OLIVER

We re-address it and re-package it
with a form explaining why opening
the letter was necessary.

SHANE

You're actually going to mail this?

OLIVER

We've pushed the limits of protocol
enough already.

SHANE

But they've only got four days!

OLIVER

Are you questioning the efficiency
of this facility?

SHANE

Well, if the envelope fits....
Besides, don't you want to know
how it all turns out? Don't you
want to put it in his hands to
make sure they get together? What
if the letter ends up in huge pile
of other mail he doesn't read until
Saturday? What if it gets stuck
inside a Land's End catalogue?
What if by some incomprehensible
twist of fate it takes the U.S.Post
Office more than four days to
deliver a simple letter?

(getting emotional)

And then Kelly shows up and she
waits and waits and waits but he
never comes and she's just left
standing there on that bridge
wondering how could he just leave
her there when she said she loves
him so much...?

Oliver realizes this is personal to Shane. He speaks gently.

OLIVER

We are the United States Post Office. We cannot play God.

SHANE

We do that already. What if you'd pulled out a green envelope this morning instead of this pink one? It's all a crapshoot anyway.

OLIVER

When you have been in this business as long as I have, Ms. McInerney, you will discover that it is a Hand greater than mine that pulls out a dead letter and revives it.

SHANE

Great. So it's a *spiritual* crapshoot.

Norman hands the letter to Rita who ceremoniously stamps the letter with a large rubber stamp. They preside over this procedure with the solemnity of a funeral. Finally, Oliver slips the PINK ENVELOPE into its new post office sleeve. They follow him out of the Inner Sanctum.

OLIVER

We may never know the whole truth about a letter or what happens to it once it leaves us, but we are responsible for what little truth we can glean from it and to give it every chance to find its intended reader...

48 INT. U.S. MAIL REGIONAL FACILITY - NIGHT

It is quiet, with a skeleton CREW working in the b.g. Oliver stops in front of the SORTING MACHINE.

OLIVER

And tomorrow the truth will be delivered to Mr. Riggs, a year late...Or right on time.

He tosses the PINK ENVELOPE into the great, moving maw of sorters and rollers and it disappears into its future.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

But it's not up to us anymore.

Shane is clearly disappointed.

DISSOLVE TO:

49 EXT. ESTABLISHING POST OFFICE - DAY - THE NEXT DAY

50 INT. INNER SANCTUM - SAME TIME

Norman works industriously, Rita strangely sorts as usual. Shane gazes at the wall of sorting baskets, trying to figure something out. The CAMERA PANS across the baskets, each of which are labelled CANADA, EUROPE, SOUTH AMERICA, AFRICA, MIDDLE EAST, ASIA, ANTARCTICA, AUSTRALIA and finally and incongruously: PARIS. Shane frowns.

SHANE

Norman. Why does Paris get its own basket?

Norman freezes.

SHANE (CONT'D)

Norman?

NORMAN

Any correspondence from Paris must be separated and given to Oliver.

SHANE

Why?

RITA

Nobody knows. But every time a dead letter comes through with a Parisian postmark, you'd think he'd found gold, until...

SHANE

Until?

RITA

Until he gets that tragic look on his face that says..."No, this isn't it." Whatever "it" is.

NORMAN

I think it's a lottery ticket he mailed to himself.

RITA

From Paris? Nah, it's something else. Something...deep.

SHANE

Is Oliver...married?

Before Rita can answer, the door opens and Andrea enters carrying a mailbag. They immediately drop the subject.

ANDREA
Norman, where's Oliver?

NORMAN
On the floor.

ANDREA
I was just on the floor. He's not there.

NORMAN
Maybe he's on the floor...somewhere else?

ANDREA
Listen, you little pipsqueak. The time's they are a'changin' and you'd better decide who you work for around here.

NORMAN
(thinks hard)
The United States Government?

ANDREA
(disgusted)
I got a new bag from Kansas City DLO. Get 'em processed before the decade's over, will ya?
(to Shane)
By the way, that transfer you put in for? Gonna take *ten* weeks.

She drops the bag and exits.

NORMAN
Ten weeks?! That's enough time to re-organize the Graceland bins!

Shane is frustrated. She starts to pack up her laptop.

SHANE
I can't believe this.

RITA
(to cheer Shane up)
Hey, guess what! Remember what I told you last night? About a surprise?

SHANE
The last twenty four hours have been nothing but surprises. But go on.

RITA

Well, I KNEW I'd seen your name before. On a letter. A dead letter entered the system fourteen months ago, postmarked April 28, that's two days before your birthday.

SHANE

How do you know that?

RITA

I read your file, remember? So it's probably a birthday card.

SHANE

Where is it?

RITA

I mailed it to you.

SHANE

You what? I work here. You could've just handed it to me.

Oliver enters.

OLIVER

Standard procedure, Ms. McInerney.

SHANE

Procedure?! That's *my* birthday card from...who was it from?

RITA

Return address obscured.

SHANE

Then where did you mail it?

RITA

To here. Care of Dead Letters.

SHANE

You people are crazy.

OLIVER

A popular theory. Coffee?

SHANE

Your coffee is swill and this job is a dead-end.

OLIVER

The coffee, I grant you, could improve. But I take exception to your disparagement of this office.

SHANE

Ooohh! I disparaged the U.S. Postal System! Shocker! Wake up! Nobody writes letters anymore. You'll be out of a job in three years. I, however, am escaping right now.

She grabs her laptop and exits. Rita and Norman are stunned. Oliver looks at them and sighs.

51 EXT. STREET - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Shane is marching down the street. She is suddenly aware that a car is slowly following her. She stops and looks.

ANGLE ON OLIVER

He is at the wheel of a vintage Astin Martin. He stops. She keeps walking. He rolls down the window.

OLIVER

Can I offer you a ride to your next career?

SHANE

No.

OLIVER

A moment of your time, then.

SHANE

Nobody drives an Astin Martin except James Bond.

OLIVER

I will take that as a compliment.

SHANE

You're not changing my mind, Oliver. The US Post Office is a dinosaur, there's no future for me there and I should have stayed in DC and taken that Digital Analysis job at the IRS.

He stops the car, leaves it running in the street, and walks over to her. She stops and groans.

OLIVER

Maybe you're right; electronic thought has taken over the world. We can e-mail and text faster than we can think. People are hired and fired and destroyed electronically every minute. Abbreviated words fly about cyberspace like confetti. Even as we speak some future captain of industry is texting BTW OMG TTFN. That is our future. But a year ago, maybe five, or perhaps thirty years ago, someone wrote a letter with real words and more than two seconds of thought behind them. And we are living in THEIR future. Think about it, Ms. McInerney. There are thousands and thousands of letters back there, each one a voice from the past, waiting to be heard. And it will take a lifetime to accomplish that. But it will be worth it. And if you disagree, then why are you so upset that you don't have a birthday card you didn't even know existed five minutes ago?

She stares at him.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

There's something special about you, Ms. McInerney. I've seen it before. An instinct. A certain compassion for the lost soul behind the lost letter. It's what made you steal Kelly's letter to Charlie.

Shane hesitates. He's right, but he's hit a nerve.

SHANE

I don't care about Kelly and I couldn't care less about her and her letter. I quit.

She walks off, leaving him on the sidewalk.

OLIVER

Shane! Come back, Shane!
(realizing. He said
it)
....Oh, dear.

52 EXT. PARK SWINGS - DAY - LATER

Shane is sitting on the swings, deep in thought. She pushes off and tries to get high enough to see Charlie's house over the trees. She can't. She gives up, stands, and walks off in the direction of Charlie's place.

53 EXT. CHARLIE'S DUPLEX - MINUTES LATER

Shane walks around the corner and looks at the house with the blue and brown doors and then realizes that parked across the street is Oliver's car. He stands outside, leaning against it, waiting for her with two cups of Starbuck's in his hand. She sighs and walks over.

SHANE

Really?

OLIVER

I allowed fifteen minutes to walk to the park, factored in another ten for aimless wandering, which allowed me twenty five minutes to order your skinny vanilla latte and deliver it still hot by the time you showed up.

SHANE

And you think I'm that predictable.

OLIVER

I think you're that invested in your work. And an employee with that much commitment cannot be allowed to self-terminate. Or drink sub-standard swill, for that matter.

He hands her a cup. She leans against the car.

SHANE

Thanks.

OLIVER

My pleasure. Shouldn't be long, now. Mailman is right around the corner.

SHANE

Kind of exciting. I mean, in five minutes he could be opening up that letter and realizing he has a date on Friday with the love of his life.

OLIVER

Or, perhaps he has since met a waitress from Hooters and is expecting twins and taken up work as a grouter of bathroom tile.

SHANE

No chance. Not him. Not Charlie.

Oliver nods in the direction of an approaching MAILMAN.

ANGLE ON MAILMAN

He walks up the steps. He places some mail in Box A by the brown door, then turns to the blue door, hesitates, then finally places the pink envelope in Box B and walks away.

ANGLE ON SHANE AND OLIVER

SHANE (CONT'D)

(mesmerized)

There it is.

OLIVER

Once again, civilization prevails.

He opens the car door, preparing to drive off.

SHANE

Wait! We have to see him get...

She stops as a busty RED-HAIRED 40ish WOMAN in a tight skirt and heels steps out from the brown door to retrieve her mail. She notices the pink envelope and grabs that, too, and re-enters her house.

SHANE (CONT'D)

What is she doing?

Alarmed, Shane takes off across the street to the duplex.

OLIVER

Miss McIn...erney...

It's took late. Shane is walking up the steps and knocking on the brown door.

THE BROWN FRONT DOOR

The door opens and the Red-Haired Woman answers.

WOMAN

Hi.

SHANE

Hello. I...um...I'm from the United States Postal Service. I am a systems consultant for direct line operations.

(she flashes her ID)

I'm conducting a...mail investigation.

WOMAN

You wanna investigate my mail.

SHANE

I'm investigating the unauthorized co-mingling of correspondence between shared postal destinations.

WOMAN

I don't get it.

SHANE

You just removed an envelope from that mailbox.

WOMAN

So? You don't have to make a federal case out of it.

SHANE

Actually, mail theft *is* a federal case, ma'am.

WOMAN

I wasn't stealing it. I was sending it back. The guy's been gone for months and I don't think he's coming back.

She hands the letter to Shane. Shane looks at and blanches.

SHANE

I'm going to have to confiscate this.

WOMAN

Confiscate away, honey.

The Woman goes back inside and Shane walks numbly back to Oliver's car.

OLIVER

What are you doing with that letter. You can't just...

SHANE

Read it.

Oliver takes the letter and reads the words that the Red-Haired Woman scrawled across the front:

INSERT ENVELOPE:

"IN JAIL. RETURN TO SENDER."

Oliver sighs deeply and looks at Shane. She is devastated.

54 INT. INNER SANCTUM - DAY - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Shane is setting up her laptop.

NORMAN

What do you mean he's in jail?

SHANE

I mean his neighbor wrote return to sender on the envelope, which would have put a letter with no return address back into the system.

NORMAN

You intercepted the letter at the point of delivery?

SHANE

Yep.

NORMAN

(crosses himself)
Regulation 4D1278! Dear God in Heaven. And you allowed this?

OLIVER

Well, twenty-five minutes earlier she had tendered her resignation, so technically she had yet to be reinstated as a government servant.

SHANE

I mean it's sheer luck I was there at just the right time to intercept it.

OLIVER

Luck is the religion of the lazy.

Rita enters carrying a card and eating a sandwich.

RITA

Guess what? I found it. Stopped
it just in time. Your card.

She presents Shane with her overdue birthday card. Shane
stares at the handwriting and the postmark. They watch.

NORMAN

From your dad, right? Parents
write out full names and the
handwriting is male, late forties,
early fifties.

Shane stares at it, then puts it in her purse unopened.

NORMAN (CONT'D)

Aren't you going to open it?

SHANE

Later, maybe. I gotta find Charlie
first.

RITA

Charlie? Kelly's Charlie?

NORMAN

Charlie-in-jail-for-something
Charlie. I knew there was something
fishy about that guy.

SHANE

I'm Googling him now.

RITA

Charlie... In jail...

OLIVER

What?

RITA

I think I read something about...
Oh, no...

SHANE

What?

RITA

The baker. The guy who won the
lottery last year? He was murdered
by a guy named Charlie Riggs.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

55 INT. INNER SANCTUM DLO - CONTINUOUS

Rita's announcement has brought everything to a halt.

SHANE

What are you talking about?

RITA

I read an article about the baker in Park Hill who was going to give all his lottery money to the orphanage up in Loreto Heights where he grew up. They said he was a great guy, a real self-made man and he always gave cookies to the kids on Fridays after school, but then Charlie...

SHANE

Not Charlie...

RITA

...Somebody, some guy held up his bakery and the baker got shot and.....

They are silent.

SHANE

What else?

RITA

That's all I ever read. It was just too sad. I didn't want to read any more.

Shane turns back to her laptop.

SHANE

Well, I don't believe it. It couldn't be our Charlie.

OLIVER

He is not "our Charlie." And if it's true, then perhaps Kelly made the right decision to walk away that day.

SHANE

I can't believe you said that.

OLIVER

(gently)

I know how much you wanted to see those two find happ...

SHANE

Okay, here it is:

(reads)

"Denver police officers arrested Charles Riggs, age 27, that afternoon at his....

(sighs, defeated)

Washington Park duplex two hours after the shooting."

RITA

Oh, no. It *is* our Charlie.

ANGLE ON SHANE'S LAPTOP

We SEE a mug shot of a very sad Charlie.

NORMAN

He's not bad-looking.

SHANE

"Riggs was taken into custody and charged with homicide during the commission of an armed robbery. He has plead not guilty and remains incarcerated without bail in the Denver County Jail awaiting trial."

OLIVER

Well, there it is.

Shane types some more and pulls up a television news clip.

ANGLE ON SHANE'S LAPTOP

BEGIN VIDEO

We see a local newsperson interviewing a detective.

NEWSPERSON

"Detective Arthur Kimsey of the Denver Police Department said it was the shortest murder investigation in his twelve years on the force."

We SEE the DETECTIVE on screen with chryon underneath.

DETECTIVE

"We just went to his house and waited for him to come home!"

We SEE police escorting a handcuffed Charlie along a prep walk.

NEWSPERSON

"According to Detective Kimsey, Riggs was easily apprehended because the alleged gunman not only matched the description of the shooter by several witnesses, but in his haste to escape the scene, he dropped his wallet and identification, leaving them behind...."

END VIDEO

Shane stops the video and shakes sighs deeply.

NORMAN

Kelly never mentioned anything in the letter about him being clumsy.

OLIVER

Or homicidal.

SHANE

Hush!
(typing again)
When was this?

RITA

About a year ago. This month, I think....
(realizing)
Oh....wow!

SHANE

(reads, thrilled)
Oliver! It happened a year ago on the twenty-sixth.

OLIVER

(it dawns on him)
Aha! Oh, me of little faith!

NORMAN

What's going on?

SHANE

Norman! Don't you see? It *couldn't* have been Charlie!

(MORE)

SHANE (CONT'D)

He was with Kelly that day! All day! And remember? He *lost* his wallet! Whoever found his wallet was probably the same guy who shot the baker.

RITA

He's taller than I imagined.

NORMAN

I was in a jail once. I was visiting my cousin. He was doing ten days in Quartzite, Arizona for cow-tipping.

Shane is typing again, searching for something.

SHANE

Stop talking, Norman. And I mean that from the bottom of my heart.
(she sees something)
Oh, no....

Shane sits back as Oliver reads a headline she's pulled up.

OLIVER

"Riggs Faces Life in Lottery Winner Shooting." He goes to trial next week.

SHANE

What are we going to do?

OLIVER

We're going to re-address the letter and send it to Charlie care of the County Jail.

SHANE

That's it? But he needs our help.

OLIVER

Clearly, he needs *someone's* help. His lawyer, for example. The U.S. Postal System, however, is not in the business of defending murderers.

RITA

He's not a murderer.

SHANE

And if we know that, we have to do something about it.

OLIVER

The truth is, we know nothing beyond what is in this letter. In fact, we most likely know far less. Perhaps it's time to put that healthy sense of curiosity back to good use into your paying job before it gets us all arrested.

Shane points to what she's done on the laptop.

SHANE

Voila!

They look and suddenly they are looking at an unpleasantly vivid picture of JERRY POPOVICH, 30ish, fat, and wearing an obnoxious cowboy hat.

OLIVER

What is this?

SHANE

This is Jerry Popovich, Charlie's public defender. And this is his Facebook page.

Oliver looks at it. Rita starts passing out Yoo-Hoo bottles as they settle in to watch.

SHANE (CONT'D)

"Jerry Popovich, thirty-seven, status single...no surprise there. Likes: cooking, eating, barbecuing, loves anything from the Mile High Deli. Life's ambition - quit the law and buy a restaurant..."

OLIVER

"Proudest accomplishment this year: winning the hot dog eating contest at last July's bar association picnic"? Highly undignified for an officer of the court."

SHANE

(types)

Hold that thought! I can reconfigure a firewall and pull up the Clerk's calendar at the District Court...

NORMAN

How are you doing that?

SHANE

I told you, I can do anything with this baby except beam you up to the Enterprise.

(hits a final key)

Look at that. In the last twelve months, Popovich has only spent fourteen hours on Charlie's case.

RITA

He's doomed.

OLIVER

This is not a man committed to the pursuit of justice.

NORMAN

I could have told you that. Did you see the cowboy hat he's wearing? It's a low grade blend of felt and cardboard. They send it to you free when you order fifty pounds or more from the Montana Steak and Sausage Outlet.

SHANE

You still wanna do nothing, Oliver? You wanna leave it up to the crack legal mind of the hot dog champion?

OLIVER

That's an unfair snapshot of a man under considerable pressure. Enough regulations have been "reconfigured" today. I suggest we let Charlie's chips fall where they may.

SHANE

Who's playing God now? Look, the other day you said that we need to be responsible for what little truth we have. And the truth is, Charlie Riggs is innocent.

OLIVER

Possibly.

SHANE

We can prove it.

OLIVER

Possibly.

SHANE

Possibly, probably. It's our moral obligation to at least try.

OLIVER

What are you proposing?

SHANE

If we *send* the letter to Charlie, all he can do is hand it over to Jerry the idiot lawyer who's gonna lose it or spill ketchup on it. But if we deliver the letter in person, maybe there's something Charlie can tell us that we can do to help. He needs this letter, Oliver, he needs to keep that date with Kelly, and he needs help. I know, it's risky, but sometimes you just have to take the leap.

OLIVER

It's a compelling proposition....

SHANE

Think about it. My computer skills, Rita's memory, your talents as a postal detective, and Norman's... expertise in handwriting and special materials. We're talking the Delta Force here, Oliver.

A breathless Norman smiles proudly.

NORMAN

Like secret agents?

SHANE

(winks to Oliver)

We even have James Bond's car.

NORMAN

I applied to the CIA once.

RITA

No kidding? Me too! But they wouldn't let me in. I memorized all the license plates in the parking lot, though.

NORMAN

We'd have to have a name. All the good secret agent teams have names.

OLIVER

Hmmm...There's the problem of Andrea, of course. She'll want to know what we're up to.

SHANE

We're fact-gathering to ensure the delivery of letters that require very special handling.

OLIVER

She could take away my refrigerator.

RITA

He really hates that.

SHANE

We'll be flying under the radar. Think of it as a covert division of postal intelligence.

OLIVER

Postal intelligence...We certainly are that already, I suppose.

NORMAN

But we still need a name. Like the Mission Impossible Force. Or the Avengers. Or The Incredibles.

OLIVER

Alright, Norman. How about...The Post... The Postables. Would that make you happy?

NORMAN

(envisioning it all)
"The Postables. A License To Deliver!" I love it!

SHANE

Then it's official.
(lifts her Yoo-hoo)
To...The Postables!

They raise their Yoo-Hoos to their future.

ALL

The Postables.

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

56 INT. GENERAL MAIL ROOM - THE NEXT MORNING

Andrea walks through the mail room in her usual bad mood.

57 INT. INNER SANCTUM - DAY - SAME TIME

Oliver is going over a checklist as Shane is packing up her laptop. Norman is peeking through a crack in the door out to the main floor.

OLIVER

Alright, final checks. Laptop.

SHANE

Check.

OLIVER

Trenchcoat. Check.

NORMAN

Here she comes!

They take their places as the door opens. Andrea barrels in.

ANDREA'S POV

It appears that no one is in the room except Rita.

ANDREA

Where's Oliver?

RITA

Good morning, Andrea.

Andrea notices a shuffling behind some bags. She kicks them.

ANDREA

Norman!

He stands up, terrified.

ANDREA (CONT'D)

What in the name of Paul Revere
are you doing?

NORMAN

Sorting. Forwarding. The usual.

Oliver and Shane tiptoe out from behind the door and out of the office, unseen by Andrea.

ANDREA

Tell Oliver I want to see him in
my office pronto.

RITA

Pronto may be difficult.

ANDREA

What are you talking about?

RITA

Oliver went home. He got hold of
a bad piece of fish last night.

ANDREA

Then send that other one.

RITA

That could be a problem. Same
dinner. Same fish.

ANDREA

I want one of them at that meeting.
And nobody goes home sick unless I
send them home sick.

She stomps out.

RITA

You can breathe now, Norman.

58 EXT. COUNTY JAIL - DAY - LATER

Oliver and Shane get out of the Astin Martin. Oliver wears
a tie, a jacket, and his trenchcoat. He carries his
briefcase. Shane carries her own briefcase.

59 INT. COUNTY JAIL VISITATION LOBBY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Shane and Oliver enter. They walk to the WATCH COMMANDER at
the desk.

SHANE

We have an attorney client
consultation with prisoner Charles
Riggs.

WATCH COMMANDER

I.D.

Oliver and Shane provide their I.D. They watch nervously as
the Commander checks his computer. He frowns.

WATCH COMMANDER (CONT'D)

I don't see your names on today's list.

OLIVER

What list is that?

WATCH COMMANDER

Client Counsel Appointment Roster.

Shane pulls out her computer and starts typing furiously.

SHANE

The Client Counsel Appointment Roster? I swear I put our names on that yesterday.

WATCH COMMANDER

You would've had to do it last Thursday.

SHANE

Yes, Thursday. I put our names on there...Thursday. For today.

OLIVER

(buying Shane some time)

Thursday. That was a lovely day, wasn't it? Virtually cloudless.

SHANE

Do you mind checking again?

WATCH COMMANDER

He presses a few more buttons.

WATCH COMMANDER

Okay. There you are. But I don't show you as attorney-of-record.

OLIVER

You are referring, of course, to Jerry Popovich. A fine fellow, I've always been pleased with his work. Sadly, however, he inhaled one too many Mile High roast beef sandwiches last week and has been put on administrative leave until his stomach returns to its original dimensions.

WATCH COMMANDER

(chuckles)

Yeah, Jerry does like his subs.

He hands them two badges.

60 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - JAIL - MINUTES LATER

Oliver and Shane nervously await Charlie's arrival. Shane sets up her laptop as if ready to take notes.

The door opens and Charlie enters in handcuffs, accompanied by a GUARD who sits him on a chair and leaves the room but watches from a window. Charlie stares at them.

SHANE

Hi, Charlie.

CHARLIE

Do I know you?

OLIVER

No, Charlie, you do not know us.
But we are here to help you.

CHARLIE

(relieved)

Finally. You're from The Colorado
Legal Aid Association, right?

OLIVER

Actually, we're from the Post
Office.

DISSOLVE TO:

61 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - JAIL - MINUTES LATER

CHARLIE

(reads)

"Whatever happens, Charlie, sew
this button on and go out into the
world. I know I made the rules,
and I'm not going to break them
here. But the best way to find me
if you really need me someday is
to just remember this: life is
short, but it's beautiful. Love,
Kelly..."

Charlie wipes tears from his face.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

I knew something was wrong.

(MORE)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

She would've come forward and spoken up for me if she could've. But she's sick, I guess, huh?

OLIVER

It appears that way.

CHARLIE

Nobody would believe me. Not the police, not the District Attorney, not even my own lawyer. They all thought I made her up.

SHANE

Well, you've got proof now.

CHARLIE

Only proof that she loved me. I can't prove anything else about that day without her and the pictures she took.

SHANE

Did she take any pictures of you?

CHARLIE

I think so.

OLIVER

All you need is one that places you there. Perhaps one of you near the Bloodmobile that only comes to the park...

CHARLIE

Once a year! That'd be perfect.

SHANE

So, on Friday, you ask her! Or, I mean, I guess, *somebody* should...

CHARLIE

Look, I know it's a lot to ask, but...

SHANE

Of course we'll go. Friday, on the bridge, we'll meet her and we'll let you know as soon as we get the pictures.

CHARLIE

Just let me know that she's okay.

Shane and Oliver are touched. Charlie's a good guy.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

I wish I knew what was wrong with her.

OLIVER

We can make some discrete inquiries. Is there anything you can tell us about her that wasn't in the letter?

CHARLIE

Well, I remember thinking when she got on the elevator that she had these beautiful sad eyes.

SHANE

(gets an idea)

What floor was that? When she got on the elevator.

CHARLIE

Um...it was...the fourth floor.

SHANE

In the Colorado Bank Building?

Shane starts to frantically type.

CHARLIE

Yeah, why?

SHANE

Here it is. "Western States Advanced Research Systems, a state of the art medical research company specializing in the experimental treatment of blood-related disorders specifically... Hodgkins Disease."

CHARLIE

Oh, my God.

OLIVER

Check if anyone named Kelly participated in an experimental treatment there last year.

SHANE

I'm on it.

OLIVER

She's very thorough.

CHARLIE AND OLIVER WAIT PATIENTLY

SHANE

Medical records, always tough.

CHARLIE

I tried to find her on the internet here, too. I tried every version of "Kelly" I could think of. I tried Facebook and The Missed Connections on Craigslist.

SHANE

Okay. I'm in. September 26 last year they finalized their control list of forty patients with Stage 3B Hodgkins Lymphoma and started trials the next day...But they only use first names...Jack D. Jason M. Karl W, Kelly! Kelly S. Bingo. How old do you think Kelly is?

CHARLIE

Twenty two, twenty three maybe?

SHANE

(reads)

Kelly S. Date of birth....she's twenty two. We've got her. Now let's see how she's doing....

Shane types. Shakes her head. Tries something else.

CHARLIE

What's the matter?

SHANE

They ran the actual trials in Cheyenne and all the clinical records were sent up there. I can only get the double-blind results from August..Okay, here they...

Shane just stares at them and finally sits back in her chair.

CHARLIE

What? How's she doing?

Shane can't speak. Oliver reads the words on the screen.

OLIVER

"The 2012 clinical trial commencing September 27, 2012 failed to produce positive outcomes in... 100% of subjects. As of this date, no patients survived treatment."

CHARLIE
I don't..I..what does that mean?

OLIVER
Charlie, I think it means she's gone.

Charlie stares sadly at the blazer button in his hand.

62 INT. INNER SANCTUM - NIGHT - LATER

Oliver, Shane, Rita, and Norman sit silently, grieving.

NORMAN
What do we do now?

RITA
We can still...

OLIVER
No. We tried, and it's over.

SHANE
But we didn't try hard enough.
The pictures have to be out there somewhere. If we could just...

OLIVER
We did our best. But the truth is, we are only postal employees and we need to get back to doing what we know how to do and let poor Charlie grieve for Kelly.

SHANE
And fight for his life.

Andrea enters.

ANDREA
Gotten over the bad fish, I see.

OLIVER
Oh, Andrea, yes. We're feeling much better, aren't we, Ms. McInerney?

SHANE
Yeah. It's a miracle.

OLIVER
Forgive me for not keeping you in the loop, Andrea.

ANDREA

Oh, yeah. I really missed being in your loop. Too bad you weren't in mine. You missed the meeting.

OLIVER

And I deeply regret that. It won't happen again.

ANDREA

You're darn right it won't happen again 'cause there ain't gonna be another department meeting again. Ever.

OLIVER

I beg your pardon?

ANDREA

That's right. They're shutting the place down. This lousy branch has - what did they call it? - "lost its viability."

OLIVER

The Dead Letter Office is...dead?

ANDREA

This time next month, you'll all be selling stamps and sorting catalogues in Byers or Pueblo maybe. Meeker, if you're lucky!

(to Shane)

You wanted a transfer? Well, you're gonna get one, missy. How's THAT for being in the loop?

Andrea walks out and slams the door. They all stand in shock.

END OF ACT SIX

ACT SEVEN

63 INT. BAR - "THE MAILBOX" - THAT NIGHT

The gang sits together at the bar, silent and dejected.

RITA

This has been a very bad day.

NORMAN

I thought we were a pretty good team, holding down the fort.

RITA

(taking a risk)

You wanna dance?

Norman looks as if he's been invited to an electrocution.

OLIVER

Dance with the lady, Norman. You deserve a little diversion.

Norman and Rita walk away. Oliver watches them try to dance.

SHANE

He has a terrible crush on her, you know.

OLIVER

That's very insightful of you, considering she absolutely terrifies him.

SHANE

Love is funny.

OLIVER

Odd, perhaps. But funny? Rarely.

SHANE

What about you, Oliver? Are you married?

OLIVER

(uncomfortably)

Ah! Finally. Our drinks.

The Bartender delivers their drinks. Oliver lifts his.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

To...to...

SHANE

To the Dead Letter Office - the
last hope of the written word.

They toast with their glasses.

OLIVER

I made a pilgrimage to the National
Postal Museum two years ago. It
was glorious.

SHANE

Can't say I ever went.

OLIVER

I got lost in it.

SHANE

You went alone?

OLIVER

No. Sort of. I took my...wife. A
lovely person whose interests
extended far beyond the written
word to, shall we say, the somewhat
decadent. We were standing in
front of the Pony Express exhibit
and I turned around and she wasn't
there anymore. I looked for her
everywhere. I finally gave up and
went back to the Holiday Inn Express
and waited for her, but she never
came. I was about to call the
police when I noticed the little
red light blinking on the phone.
She'd left a message. She said
she was tired of being married to
a government official and she
figured since she was in Washington
DC that put her closer to Paris
than she'd ever been in Denver, so
she was getting on a plane and
moving to France.

SHANE

I'm so sorry. Did she come back?

OLIVER

Not yet. The last thing she said
in her message was "I'll send you
my forwarding address. Au revoir."
Actually, she pronounced it "Or
rivorre." I suppose her accent
has improved by now.

SHANE

And that's why you check every
dead letter from Paris.

OLIVER

I have to believe she mailed her
address to me and it just got lost
somehow. I mean, she was always
something of a coquette, but she
never broke a promise to me.

(sadly)

Except one, of course.

SHANE

Haven't you waited long enough?

OLIVER

I believe in keeping promises. I
am, after all, a gentleman.

SHANE

Yes, you certainly are.

A long beat. Then:

SHANE (CONT'D)

Oliver? Would you like to dance?

She smiles gently. He is touched.

CLOSE ON A coin being dropped in the slot of the jukebox. A
FEMALE HAND presses J12.

MUSIC IN: LA VIE EN ROSE -

The heartbreaking voice of Edif Piaf serenades Shane and
Oliver in French as they come together and dance slowly but,
of course, discretely. Norman and Rita dance in the b.g.

OLIVER

Interesting choice.

SHANE

Have you ever thought about just
going to Paris?

OLIVER

Without an invitation?

SHANE

Or, you could just tell me her
name, I could track her down in
ten seconds and you'd finally know.

OLIVER
I suppose I would.

SHANE
I bet that's it. Maybe you eschew
the electronic age...

OLIVER
Love that word. Eschew.

They dip. There is a moment when they freeze and we can
imagine with them what a kiss might be like. But not tonight.

SHANE
....You reject it all because if
you knew how to Google and Skype
and scan and whatever, you wouldn't
have an excuse anymore for not
facing the truth.

OLIVER
Don't psychoanalyze the Section
Leader, please. Besides, you're
one to talk.

SHANE
What do you mean?

OLIVER
Why haven't you opened that card
yet?

SHANE
How do you know I haven't?

OLIVER
Norman checks your purse every
day. You should open it. I'm
guessing birthday card with two
ten dollar bills in it from Dad.

SHANE
You are good. Yeah. He always
sent me twenty dollars for my
birthday.

OLIVER
Sent. Not... gave?

SHANE
He left us when I was ten. He'd
always promised to come to my
birthday, but all I'd ever get was
a card and some money.

OLIVER

So that's why getting Kelly and Charlie to keep that date meant so much to you.

SHANE

Yeah. Maybe so. I do know how it feels to wait for somebody who never comes.

OLIVER

I'm sorry to hear that. But if the letter from your dad is an olive branch, maybe he's sending you a message. Life is too short to lose the chance to...

SHANE

Life is short! Oliver, that's it! She was sending him a message!
(calls out)
Rita! Norman! Let's go!

Shane walks off the dance floor and everyone follows.

64 INT. INNER SANCTUM - NIGHT - LATER

The four of them gather around Shane's computer as she types.

SHANE

Okay, Rita, keep going.

RITA

(reciting)
"Charlie, sew this button on and go out into the world. I know I made the rules, and I'm not going to break them now."

Shane nods.

RITA (CONT'D)

"But the best way to find me if you really need me someday is to just remember this: life is short, but it's beautiful. Love, Kelly..."

SHANE

There's a reason she never wanted him to forget that. It was her way of breaking the rule. It was a way for him to find her.

OLIVER

She was sending him a message.

SHANE

(as she types)

Life is short, but it's beautiful.

They stare in shock at the screen. It is a blog called "Life Is Short But It's Beautiful." And the background photo is a shot of Charlie in mid-air, leaping across the ditch.

NORMAN

(reads aloud)

"Charlie, if you find this page, you must have really wanted to find me. And in case I don't make it to the bridge, I wanted you to have these pictures to remember the last best day of my life. Love, Kelly."

SHANE

There's Charlie by the lake. There's Charlie sailing the boat.

OLIVER

Where's Charlie and the Bloodmobile? They have to be in the same picture to establish time and place.

SHANE

We'll find it.

WE SEE A SERIES OF PHOTOS CHRONICLING CHARLIE'S JUMP ACROSS THE BRIDGE AND COLLISION WITH THE JOGGER. WITH EVERY DESCRIPTION WE HEAR, WE SEE A MATCHING PHOTO.

SHANE (CONT'D)

Look, there he is jumping the ditch, there he is landing on the other side, there he is running...

RITA

No, that's the jogger who ran into him. Or is that Charlie?

NORMAN

It's the jogger. He just sort of looks like Charlie.

RITA

Sort of? He looks a lot like Charlie. Same build, same hair..

OLIVER

Interesting. Charlie was knocked down by someone who looked a great deal like him...

SHANE

...Just before he lost his wallet.

END OF ACT SEVEN

ACT EIGHT

65 EXT. CITY HALL - ESTABLISHING - DAY

66 INT. LOBBY - DAY - THE NEXT MORNING

Rita stands by the elevators, looking around. She holds a bag. She looks across nervously to Shane.

RITA
(into phone)
Here he comes.

ANGLE ON NORMAN AND JERRY POPOVICH

Norman stands behind the large Jerry as they walk through security. Norman follows Jerry to the elevators. Rita steps up next to Jerry and presses the UP button. The three of them wait for the elevator to open. Some PEOPLE exit, but we see that Oliver is inside holding a folder. He stays there as Jerry, Rita, and Norman enter. Just as the doors close, A MAN attempts to catch the elevator, but Shane steps in front of him and flashes her Postal I.D. badge.

SHANE
I'm sorry, sir. This elevator has
been secured. Please take the
elevator to your left.

Shane steps inside and the doors close.

67 INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Jerry presses a the button for his floor but just as the elevator begins to move, Shane presses the STOP button and they lurch to a halt.

JERRY
What the hell is going on?

OLIVER
A moment of your time, Jerry.

JERRY
Who are you people?

OLIVER
Loyal Americans working for a top
secret agency dedicated to the
highest standards of mail delivery.
We have a matter of the utmost
importance to bring to your
attention.

JERRY

Let me outta here.

SHANE

(holds up bag)

I have a Double Double Mile High
Roast Beef special on sourdough
that says you wanna hear what we
have to say.

Jerry hesitates. Oliver pulls the photos from the folder.

OLIVER

You are the public defender for
Charles Riggs and this is the
evidence that proves he is innocent.
Photos taken in a park at the same
time the crime took place. Note
the Bloodmobile - a once a year
afternoon event. Please pay
particular attention to this photo
of a man who bears a remarkable
resemblance to Mr. Riggs. Please
note his hand suspiciously near
Mr. Rigg's back pocket. I submit
to you that he is stealing the
very wallet that the perpetrator
purposely dropped at the scene of
the crime to frame an innocent man
for the murder of the baker.

JERRY

That's ridiculous.

OLIVER

It does sound a bit far-fetched,
until I point out that the man
accosting Mr. Riggs and removing
his wallet is Eugene Moss, the
cousin and sole surviving relative
of the deceased.

RITA

Look him up. He's on the internet.

Jerry stares at the photo.

OLIVER

Follow the money, Mr. Popovich,
and I imagine you will find a murder
weapon and a man who has just
inherited the lottery millions
that his cousin had planned to
donate to an orphanage.

JERRY

Well, I'll give this some thought.

OLIVER

You will give this to the District Attorney on the seventh floor right now and get the charges against Mr. Riggs dropped immediately.

JERRY

Look pal, you can't tell me what to do.

SHANE

(reaches into bag)

Better hurry, Jerry. This offer ends when we get to the seventh floor and I eat your Mile High sub all by myself.

JERRY

Is that a threat?

OLIVER

No. But this is. Have you ever seen what happens to Montana Steaks when they've been delayed for additional postage.

Jerry sighs, presses the button and takes the sandwich.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Well done, sir.

68 EXT. DENVER JAIL - THE NEXT DAY

The Postables stand across the street by Oliver's car, watching the door to the jail.

RITA

So, this it? It's all over?

OLIVER

Before you know it, we'll be back at the DLO packing our proverbial bags. Our days of rule-breaking glory are over.

SHANE

Not for me.

OLIVER

No.

(MORE)

OLIVER (CONT'D)

I imagine you'll always be found
somewhere stepping across a line.
But before it's all over, I'd like
to know why: Why are you such a
revolutionary, Shane McInerney?

SHANE

Well, because you actually called
me by my correct name, I'm going
to tell you, Mr. O'Toole.

Shane pulls out the still-unopened "birthday" card.

SHANE (CONT'D)

I used to follow all the rules.
Drove the speed limit, parked at
least five feet from the fire
hydrant, never tore the tags off
furniture. So when the hospital
told me that visiting hours were
over one night, I said thank you,
I'll come back and see my dad
tomorrow. But when tomorrow came,
I didn't have anyone to come back
to. My dad had died overnight and
I never got to work things out
with him.

NORMAN

Why were you fighting?

Rita elbows him.

SHANE

I'd said something horrible to
him. He called and said he was
sick and wanted to spend my birthday
with me before he died. And I
told him he'd been gone so long
that he was dead to me already.

RITA

Ouch.

NORMAN

But...he was your dad. He knew he
hurt you. He must have known you
didn't mean it.

SHANE

He knew that I did.

(MORE)

SHANE (CONT'D)

So, maybe this is a birthday card with twenty dollars and a bunch of forgiveness in it. But if it isn't...I don't think I could bear it.

No one knows what to say. Oliver looks up in time to see Charlie walk out of jail.

ANGLE ON CHARLIE

He is walking out of the jail, putting on his blazer, wearing the same clothes he was arrested in a year ago. Charlie is instantly surrounded by a number of reporters and news cameras, eager to interview the innocent man.

REPORTER#1

Mr. Riggs! Mr. Riggs! How does it feel to be exonerated?

REPORTER#2

Who found the evidence?

REPORTER #1

What's the first thing you're going to do?

Charlie takes a deep breath and looks across the street. He sees our gang waiting for him by Oliver's car. He smiles.

69 EXT. WASHINGTON PARK - DAY - MINUTES LATER

The car pulls up and they get out near the bridge.

CHARLIE

I know it doesn't matter now, but I just figured, it's Friday and one of us should be here, you know?

OLIVER

Of course. Best wishes, Charlie.

RITA

I brought you a bagel and lox.

NORMAN

And cream cheese. And capers.

CHARLIE

(moved)

Thanks. Thanks for everything.

RITA

Come on, Norman, let's feed the ducks.

Norman shrugs and they walk off.

CHARLIE

(a beat)

Why did you all do this?

OLIVER

We each have our reasons. A daughter waiting for a father. A husband's wife who left him to see Paris and never returned. A loyal government worker and a young woman with a mind like a Wikipedia committed to their work and, perhaps someday, to each other. We are simple people with a simple faith in the goodness of the average American letter-writer. We do this for these, and for so many more reasons. But more than that, we did it for Kelly.

CHARLIE

U.S. Postal Service, huh?

OLIVER

An obscure division.

CHARLIE

Well, thank you.

OLIVER

Our pleasure, Mr. Riggs. We were just doing our job. Oh, one more thing...

Oliver reaches into his pocket. He hands Charlie the button. Charlie takes it and nods.

SHANE

(hands him something else)

And, here. Just a little something to remember us by. It's...a sewing kit.

Charlie smiles and nods. He turns and walks towards the bridge. Oliver and Shane walk towards Norman and Rita.

NORMAN

It's hard to believe this was our last assignment together.

SHANE

Norman, this was our first assignment together.

NORMAN

Yeah. I'm gonna miss us.

Rita smiles and tentatively puts her arm through Norman's. A WOMAN ON A BIKE rides past them. Shane glances up, then realizes something. She stops and turns around.

SHANE

Oh, my God....

ANGLE ON THE BRIDGE

Charlie leans over the bridge and stares sadly at the ditch. He sighs. He opens the sewing kit, pulls out a needle and prepares to sew on the button in his hand.

KELLY (O.S.)

Charlie?

He turns and is stunned to see Kelly standing by a bike.

CHARLIE

What...what are you doing here?

KELLY

Well, we had a date, right?

CHARLIE

Yeah, but...I mean, I tried to find you, I *did* find you, at the research center... but... you're... alive. My God, you're alive!

KELLY

I'm fine! You found me in Boston?

CHARLIE

Boston? No, here in Denver. The place on the fourth floor. But they said nobody survived the trials.

KELLY

Really? Wow. I never finished the trials. I only signed up because it was free and I was too afraid to go back home and ask my parents for help.

CHARLIE

I can't imagine you being afraid of anything.

KELLY

(smiles)

You don't know my parents. But that day, when you quit and then you jumped the ditch, I realized I had to do some scary things, too. So I dropped out of the program, and went home to Boston and I made up with my parents and they got me the greatest doctor in the world and here I am.

CHARLIE

You were in Boston all this time? So, you don't know...

KELLY

Know what?

CHARLIE

(smiles)

Doesn't matter. You ready for our second date?

KELLY

I'm here, aren't I? But look at that! You still haven't sewn that button on!

CHARLIE

I was waiting for you.

He holds out the button. She reaches for it. He takes her hand and pulls her to him and they kiss as if it's been forever.

ANGLE ON OLIVER, SHANE, RITA, & NORMAN

NORMAN

That's Kelly, right?

OLIVER

Yes, Norman, I believe it is.

RITA

(weeping)

I knew it. I just couldn't believe she was really gone...

NORMAN

But I don't understand. She's supposed to be...

OLIVER

You can't believe everything you read on the internet.

SHANE

That's right. "There are more things in heaven and earth, Norman, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

OLIVER AND SHANE

Shakespeare.

They share a private smile as the gang walks to the car.

OLIVER (V.O.)

I have seen it all, dead letters by the thousands, each one a tiny paper vessel laden with good news or ill, profit or loss, love or pain...

WE SEE CHARLIE & KELLY BY THE LAKE. CHARLIE SETS ANOTHER PAPER BOAT INTO THE LAKE AS KELLY SEWS ON THE BUTTON.

OLIVER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

...Tossed about on the rough seas of government protocol, a ship searching for its harbor. Each one bearing the power to change something and yet, each one a destiny postponed...until it comes to us.

70 INT. U.S. MAIL REGIONAL FACILITY - ONE WEEK LATER

Oliver walks confidently across the mail floor. He nods to a seething Andrea. He walks toward the Inner Sanctum door.

OLIVER (V.O.)

Aunt Tilly's missing will, the missing registration form of the class reunion, the odd ransom note, the first letter from college, the last letter from Iraq.

71 INT. INNER SANCTUM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE ON: Another load of DEAD LETTERS being dumped into a bin. The gang has clearly worked out a terrific system together.

Rita is pulling out letters variously addressed "Barack Obama, USA" "The Jerks at the IRS" etc. Norman alternately crosses himself and stamps them. He passes them to Shane, who works the laptop and forwards them.

NORMAN

Santa, the Pope... here's one for you.

Norman tosses a blue card to her. Shane scans it efficiently.

SHANE

No city. Just a zip. 145 Albino Treets? Should be Albion Street.

NORMAN

Obviously.

SHANE

(with newfound authority)

Sender is clearly dyslexic. Apply that same disturbed pattern sequence to your ZIP, reverse the first and fifth numerals, and you have... 90208 not 80209. Los Angeles!

Oliver enters. He walks purposefully to his desk and opens his attache case, removing a brown lunch bag and a bottle of Yoo-Hoo, which he places carefully in his beloved refrigerator.

NORMAN

'Morning, Oliver.

He walks to the time clock and finds his card on the wall.

OLIVER

Ladies and gentlemen, it is an excellent day.

He punctuates this with a decisive CLICK of his card in the time clock. He returns the card to its slot.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

There is little that lifts a man's spirits more than the knowledge that he has meaningful work.

NORMAN

Mickey Mouse...George Clooney... Her Royal Majesty Queen Sofia of Spain - toss that into Europe, will you?

Shane takes it and tosses it into a bin. Oliver retrieves a newspaper from his attache and cuts out a story from it.

Oliver pins his news clipping to his bulletin board.

THE CLIPPING: The headline reads: "POST OFFICE SOLVES MURDER OF BAKER, REUNITES COUPLE"

Oliver straightens it, sniffs, clears his throat, to call attention to the clipping. Shane and Norman stop and read the headline. Oliver points to a paragraph farther down.

RITA

(reading)

"District Attorney Edwards hailed the local post office branch at Alameda and Downing for 'superlative service and a highly efficient dead letter division.' The branch was originally slated for closure but will now be expanded to receive all misdirected letters from the Western and Mid-States region."

The door opens and Andrea enters, carrying a paper.

ANDREA

McInerney. I guess you rate now. That transfer you asked for came through early and you report to Direct Line Operations at the Terminal Annex in two hours. If you still want it.

Shane slowly takes the paper and stares at it.

SHANE

Thanks. I think...I think I need a cup of coffee. Good coffee.

She exits. The three remaining Postables turn to each other, devastated. Andrea's evil smile returns.

72 INT. STARBUCK'S - DAY - LATER

The Barista calls out an order.

BARISTA (O.S.)

Grande chai tea with foam.

ANGLE ON THE LINE OF SHOES WAITING TO ORDER AT THE COUNTER AND SHANE'S FAMILIAR BLACK SLINGS.

PANNING UP we see Shane. She stands in line, still holding Andrea's transfer notice in her hand.

After a moment, she remembers something and reaches into her purse and trades the paper for the still-unopened greeting card.

She takes a deep breath and opens it up. It *is* a birthday card. As she reads, she is visibly relieved and moved. And yes, there are two tens.

73 INT. INNER SANCTUM - DAY - A FEW MINUTES LATER

NORMAN

Maybe we could go find her.

OLIVER

Not on your tintype, Norman.

RITA

But Shane is out there somewhere,
deciding where to go.

OLIVER

Yes, she is. And who can understand
that better than we who believe
that everything lost must find its
way home in its own good time.

They fall silent and tend to their work. A pall has fallen over the room. Then, the door opens and Shane enters, carrying four cups of Starbuck's coffee.

SHANE

Come and get 'em while they're hot!
I got three skinny vanilla
lattes...and one Venti Americano.
We've got a lot of mail to get
through today.

OLIVER

That was very kind of you.

SHANE

Hey. I found an extra twenty.

They happily turn back to their work.

OLIVER (V.O.)

Yes, the thoughtfully-composed,
well-considered, addressed, stamped,
professionally postmarked, and
personally delivered letter is
still the gold-standard of human
intercourse. God is in His universe
and all is right with the world.

THE END