Script by James Belarde

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM – DAY

An elderly patient, mid-90s, sits reclining in the room bed. He has thin white hair that barely covers his head, but otherwise looks sturdy and healthy, like a man 30 years younger than his age. This is EDDIE and despite the various tubes of blood, saline and blood pressure monitors, he looks comfortable, hands resting behind his head.

In a chair at the foot of the bed is JAMES. A medical student, he’s a little uncomfortable and nervous. His white coat is too big, his tie is too big and he looks almost like he took them from a real adult to play doctor. Mickey in the sorcerer’s apprentice comes to mind. He’s looking over a list.

   JAMES
   I think I got all your medications down. So now, um...sorry I just forgot what I was going to ask for a second.

He drops his gaze from the patient and looks like he’s struggling to remember. It’s not hard, he’s just too nervous about missing things. Eddie notices and is encouraging.

   EDDIE
   It’s okay take your time. You’re doing great.

   JAMES
   Oh yeah, do you have any allergies to any medications?

   EDDIE
   Just penicillin. I remember it made me nauseous once long ago.

   JAMES
   Okay, I’ll just make a note of that real quick.

James picks up his pen and scribbles something. When he puts it back down, he accidentally drops it to the floor. Clumsy too. Everything is bad.

We follow his head as he shoots down to pick it up. He grabs the pen but pauses for a moment as he closes his eyes and sighs to himself. It’s just a conversation like he has all the time. Why does it feel different with the patient? He sits back up ready for the next mistake.

(CONTINUED)
JAMES (CONT’D)
Sorry, I’m really clumsy today. Those are all the questions I had about medications. Would you mind telling me about your family?

EDDIE
Not at all! What would you like to know?

JAMES
Uh, let’s start with do you have any siblings?

EDDIE
I sure do. I have three younger sisters.
(beat)
No wait. I don’t.

Eddie brings his hands from behind his head and sets them at his side. He lets his read rest against the pillow, eyes closed, clearly holding back emotion. James looks concerned. Is something wrong? He’s unsure how to react.

After about 10 seconds, Eddie opens his watering eyes. His voice sounds a little weaker as he speaks again, as if he’s softened it to talk about something sacred.

EDDIE (CONT’D)
Just two now. My sister passed away just a few months ago. She was 82: the youngest. My baby sister.

SPLITSCREEN. C.U. ON BOTH THEIR FACES – CONTINUOUS

Eddie’s eyes still watering, remembering the baby sister. Something in James’s eyes now touched, preoccupied. We slow zoom into both eyes. As we do, Eddie’s screen transitions to black-and-white. Now:

SPLITSCREEN. MONTAGE OF BOTH LIVES:

–James, now 12, stands with his two younger brothers around the hospital bed of their newborn sister./Eddie stands with his two sisters at the wake of their recently deceased sister.

JAMES
(excited whispering)
My baby sister.

EDDIE
(solemn whispering)
My baby sister.

(CONTINUED)
-James watches his sister grow up dancing. She does a string of acrobatic back-tucks and ages a year with each turn./Eddie walks in a park with his aged youngest sister. She uses a walker. Each time she picks it up and sets it down, she gets a year younger, standing a little straighter each time and walking steadier until the walker is no longer necessary.

-James helping his dancer sister, now 16, recover from a knee surgery./Eddie helping his sister, early 60s, recover from a hip replacement.

-Scenes start coming faster. James’s sister keeps getting older: graduation, dance career, marriage, children, grandchildren. Slowly getting weaker and more frail./Eddie’s sister experiences the same life story but in reverse, becoming younger, stronger, more healthy with each event experienced backwards.

-James, an old man, at the bedside of his now 80 year old sister, greatly ill in bed at home. They’re watching her favorite dances together as her eyes droop sleepily./Eddie, now a young boy, next to his toddler sister in bed. He reads her a bedtime story as her eyes droop sleepily.

-Finally, James stands with his younger brothers, all very old men, at the wake of their sister./Eddie stands with his sisters at the 1930s crib of their newborn sister.

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\begin{align*}
\text{JAMES} & \quad \text{EDDIE} \\
\text{solemn whispering} & \quad \text{excited whispering} \\
\text{My baby sister.} & \quad \text{My baby sister.}
\end{align*}
\]

END OF MONTAGE

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOS

Zoom out of James’s eyes to return to present. Eddie’s eyes still watering and James, though not crying, looks similarly touched. He also strangely seems more relaxed.

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\begin{align*}
\text{JAMES} \\
\text{I’m so sorry to hear that.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{EDDIE} \\
\text{She was wonderful. She was always my little sister.}
\end{align*}
\]

(CONTINUED)
JAMES
They never stop being the baby, do they?

EDDIE
No they don’t. I loved her very much.

JAMES
I can tell that you did. I have a younger sister too and I can only imagine. I’m so sorry for your loss.

EDDIE
It’s okay. We had a good life together.

A short beat while Eddie collects himself. He never gets to all out crying, but he still takes a moment to settle himself. When he does, he puts one hand back behind his head and relaxes. Again outgoing, if only a little more somber for a few minutes.

James looks more comfortable. He sits up straight and more confident. This is just a conversation, with another person just like him.

EDDIE
(smiling)
Okay. What’s next?

JAMES
Could you tell me a little bit about your support system? Who do you live with?

As they continue talking inaudibly:

SLOW FADE TO BLACK