

(short sample version - first 25 pages)

JUST BEFORE DAWN

by John Selby & B Budd Smith

What would happen if a medical doctor in Ojai loves his daughter, who's dying of cancer, so intensely that he slips into an altered state and heals her - and then can't stop himself from healing others too.

This groundbreaking Ojai tale blasts the film medium into raw mystic realms where science and spirit become entangled in a deep family drama that rushes toward a jolting but ultimately uplifting climax.

Enjoy the ride.

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Draft #7

831-345-8191

FADE IN:

EXT. SECLUDED OJAI MEADOW - DAY

The whole Ojai valley can be seen down to the west. It's a perfect springtime morning.

There's a cozy but expensive Spanish-style home nestled in the East End of the valley in the Topa Topa foothills. The house sits on acreage, with a pool, barn, corral and several horses - plus a landscaped meadow.

In the meadow two large side-by-side archery targets stand side by side in front of a low wall of straw bales. Suddenly male voices speak up -

KENNY (V.O.)
So - to the heart.

ARTHUR (V.O.)
Oh, who knows ...

A middle-aged but still young-looking man, Dr. KENNY BANKS (handsome, healthy, with strong eyes and vulnerable smile) stands next to his psychiatrist friend ARTHUR BIGGS (36, rotund, balding, brilliant).

They're alone together in the open meadow - archery bows taut, arrows aimed toward the two targets. There's a moment of extreme tension as the two men hold breaths, then begin exhaling in unison -

They release their arrows at the exact same moment. With violent impact, the arrows converge and sink deep - into the same bulls-eye target.

Intermixed with this classic archery image, we see an extremely brief shot of an arrow plunging deep into a man's chest - then we're back to the benign twin-arrow image.

Stunned, Kenny and Arthur look at each other intently.

ARTHUR
Jeez, you went for mine ...

KENNY
But - I didn't -

Arthur shakes his head, confused - then looks at his watch.

ARTHUR
Damn, late - catch ya for lunch?

EXT. CHICKEN COOP BESIDE BARN - DAY

An old hound-dog, KIERDO, stands outside the chicken coop - he barks playfully at the hens inside their secure nests.

We HEAR Arthur's car driving off.

As Kierdo turns away in frustration, he comes face to face with a wild COYOTE - eyes bright, maybe wanting to play.

Kierdo whines nervously at the coyote, barks a half-friendly challenge.

KENNY (V.O.)
Kierdo, Kierdo!

The coyote turns and trots off into the oak trees. Kierdo watches him disappear, then bolts for the main house - running with difficulty caused by hip dysplasia.

EXT. PATH TO HOUSE [CONTINUOUS]

Kierdo runs up a wide dirt path under live oaks and sycamores, past a large well-tended vegetable garden -

Our camera POV pulls back a bit - and we realize we're watching this through twin orbs of high-power binoculars.

EXT. HOUSE GARDENS [CONTINUOUS]

Kenny is standing quietly in casual slacks and a sports shirt, looking down over the misty Ojai valley. We watch him through binoculars as Kierdo comes running up to him.

Kenny gives the aging dog a big loving bear-hug - but notices the pain Kierdo feels from his hip disease.

KENNY
(compassionately)
Kierdo, that hip looks hopeless
without a miracle of some sort.

We HEAR the sound of a woman and a man talking in hushed, serious, foreign-accented voices:

WOMAN (V.O.)
So - that is him?

MAN (V.O.)
All seven dimensions congruent.

Another woman's voice (anxious, American - that of the doctor's wife Jenna) grabs Kenny's attention.

JENNA (V.O.)
Kenny, did you see anything - is it
still out there?

As Kenny turns and looks, we shift from dual-binocular screen to NORMAL SCREEN.

EXT. LARGE BACK PORCH [CONTINUOUS]

JENNA BANKS (40's, small solid body, pressurized emotions) is standing in her bathrobe on an nicely-overgrown porch.

KENNY (V.O.)
(supportive)
Nothing out here but old Kierdo. Must
have been another of those vivid
dreams of yours.

Jenna doesn't respond - she just stands there, not quite focusing on him, her eyes looking here and there nervously.

KENNY
(concerned)
Hey, you okay?

JENNA
Of course I'm okay. I'm only bothered
by that coyote.

KENNY
If you see it again phone me, I'll be
at the office till noon, then out
visiting Uncle Jack - see how that
foot's doing.

Jenna nods vaguely, goes inside the house.

Kenny hesitates, expression uncertain - then turns and walks over toward a well-preserved '56 convertible Chevy parked next to a black new BMW and an old Ford pickup.

INT. BANKS HOME [CONTINUOUS]

Jenna enters an expansive but cozy living room. Glancing out the window, she HEARS Kenny driving away.

She finds her cell phone on the coffee table and phones.

JENNA
(breathless)
Reverend Bairhardt - it's me ... yes,
I realize, but please, I don't know
... what is - I need to see you.

INT. KENNY'S CHEVY - DAY

The convertible top moves back and away, revealing brilliant blue sky and white clouds.

EXT. CREEK ROAD [CONTINUOUS]

Kenny roars down his long private driveway. As he comes to the county road his expression becomes more peaceful, he's enjoying the fresh springtime air.

He heads downhill alongside a shady fast-running stream, and turns on some music - an old '60s tune, maybe *'What A Day For A Daydream'*. His expression becomes blissful and he whistles along with the music.

As Kenny passes out of sight - a CAR comes along behind him, being discrete but following him.

EXT. COUNTY ROAD INTO OJAI [CONTINUOUS]

Kenny drives along orange and lemon groves - it's near Easter, everything's in bloom. He waves to a local farmer.

EXT. OJAI MAIN STREET [CONTINUOUS]

Kenny comes to Ojai's old-fashioned Spanish Arcade. Several LOCAL PEOPLE shout friendly greetings to him - everybody seems to know and like him.

He passes the Ojai Presbyterian Church and looks up at the stained-glass crucifixion scene - we see the sudden repeat flash of an arrow piercing the chest of a man -

Kenny hangs a left, drives on into the *Banks Medical Building* that's comfortably half-hidden by overgrown trees.

INT. DOCTOR'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

Several PATIENTS are talking, reading, gazing out at gardens and a fishpond. The office stereo is playing '60s music.

Receptionist BETTY HASSEL (late-60's, friendly but in charge) sits at her post talking to a tall striking dark-haired woman (MADRINA - 30's, vague accent, mysterious).

Kenny comes in whistling a smooth lick with the lead guitar on the waiting-room stereo - pauses to greet a couple of the patients, joking amiably.

He turns - and finds himself face to face with the young dark-haired woman. Dressed stylishly but with no make-up, Madrina has unaffected natural grace and beauty.

Kenny becomes bashful in her presence, his breathing freezes. The woman extends her hand formally. She's not smiling - her eyes take in the doctor quizzically. Then she speaks with a resonant, slightly-foreign accent.

MADRINA

(surprised)

So - you are Doctor Banks?

KENNY

That's right.

MADRINA

(slightly anxious)

My name is Madrina. Please forgive me, I am somehow surprised to find you so, well - so different. I must speak with you please - in private.

KENNY

Have you done the preliminaries?

MADRINA

Yes, of course.

Kenny regains his composure, smiles.

KENNY

So, Madrina. I'm sure everything's going to be just fine.

She inhales sharply, her eyes brightening as a sensual smile spreads across her lips.

MADRINA

(almost whispering)

Thank you - thank you.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BACK EAST, PRINCETON CAMPUS - DAY

A wet March snow is falling as SHANNON BANKS (daughter of Kenny and Jenna, 20, with startlingly brilliant eyes, naturally-deep expression but somewhat emaciated body) emerges from the castled depths of Princeton University.

She walks with determination through the snow.

EXT. PRINCETON, NASSAU STREET [CONTINUOUS]

Crossing Nassau Street into town, Shannon falters, her strength nearly gone but her expression positive.

A friend comes walking by, looks concerned.

FRIEND

Hey Shanny, how you feeling today?

SHANNON

(feigning health)

Fine thanks.

EXT. PRINCETON SIDE STREET [CONTINUOUS]

Walking along the mostly-deserted snowy street, Shannon comes face to face with a very old, mysterious-looking MAN who's standing quietly alert - as if waiting for her.

Shannon reacts, somewhat frightened by the man's presence. She almost speaks - then walks past the old man.

The old man's ancient face shows his inner excitement. He follows Shannon through the snow. She glances back nervously, sees him following - hurries her pace.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KENNY'S PRIVATE OFFICE - DAY

Kenny is staring vaguely out a picture window at beautiful gardens. His body convulses slightly - he raises his hands to his chest.

A light rap of knuckles on his door makes him jerk. In walks Betty, bringing the ceremonial cup of morning coffee.

She puts Madrina's folder down on the desk, and speaks with a fairly strong, judgmental Scottish accent.

BETTY

She says she has no insurance, is paying in cash. Some street address in Italy - vague complaint of recurrent abdominal pain. My guess is she's Egyptian. The last name, Magdalen - or is it the Israelites who end their names that way? Oh - before I forget - Roger Maddox is back in hospital. Probably won't make it out this time. He'll be the very last of your father's old buddies.

Kenny frowns.

KENNY

What - you think Dad could have helped him?

BETTY

(cautious)

There never was any way of knowing, beforehand. Besides, old age gets us all, regardless.

She takes a couple steps toward the door, then turns.

BETTY (cont'd)

(still bothered)

That lady - spooky eyes. And the way she took your hand and held it for so long. Have you two, well, met before?

KENNY

What? No.

BETTY

Kenny, what is it, are you alright?

KENNY

(trying to joke)

Of course I'm alright - I'm the doctor, remember?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LARGE MEETING ROOM, PRINCETON - DAY

At a simple non-esoteric gathering, 20 wide-awake folk have their attention focused on a middle-aged long-haired leader named RALPH BERRINGER. A seemingly-atonal Peruvian flute is playing softly, sounding spooky to unaccustomed ears.

RALPH

Let me perhaps put this another way.
Each and every one of us here
represents eternity's crazy
impassioned love affair with
chronological time. Spirit did
somehow individually embody its
quantum presence quite miraculously
within three-dimensional human form.

Shannon comes in, quietly unnoticed, sits down in the back. Her face shows she's in pain - but also able to tune in to what's happening in the room as the teacher continues spontaneously talking.

RALPH (cont'd)

The basic eternal truth for me that's
present right now is this - we'll
never comprehend the deeper mysteries
of human incarnation until we realize
right in the center of all our seven
chakras that Mother God and Father
God - they are profoundly organically
in love! And which is the neutron and
which the proton? And from whence
cometh the attractive force that
holds them close together, but also
holds them forever apart?

Ralph now notices Shannon. His expression shifts, he gives her a slight nod of concerned recognition, smiles softly to her - then goes on talking to the group.

RALPH (cont'd)

The dynamic energy of human sexuality
and celestially playful creation that
motivates our entire being from first
to last breath - this charge is
nothing less than the primal raw
expression of Holy Spirit by whatever
name, manifesting right here right
now. (beat) So let's look inward -
focus on the energy, the quantum
power of love, the eternal spiral. Do
you feel it coursing through you with
every breath that you welcome in and
every breath that flows like the tide
out ... and all those black holes and
white holes holding such perfect
motionless silence in between ...
breathe on!

He falls silent and looks around the room, then holds Shannon's steady gaze, smiles to her warmly.

RALPH (cont'd)
Shannon - we're pleased you could
come today.

Just then the old man (LAZANTHO) enters, nods to Ralph.

Ralph's reaction to the old man is shock, then confusion -
then an excited delighted nervousness.

LAZANTHO
(calmly to Ralph)
Don't let me disturb your flow.

RALPH
(voice low, tremulous)
Welcome, Lazantho! (beat - then to
the group) My friends, most of the
deep understandings I am bringing
through anew to you have come to me
through this man who is suddenly,
after so many years, here in our
presence again.

Shannon glances at the old man as Ralph continues talking.

RALPH (V.O.)
Enough words - let's close our eyes,
focus on the breath, the heartbeat.
Let's set aside all traditional forms
of understanding and just relax right
here, right now, into the infinite
atmospheric ocean of spiritual
presence, gracefully indwelling ...

All eyes are now closed - except for Lazantho's, which are
fixed again upon Shannon. She opens her eyes and sees the
old man looking right at her.

He rises, nods for Shannon to follow - leads her outside.

EXT. PRINCETON STREET [CONTINUOUS]

Uncertain but not timid, Shannon walks alongside the old man
silently through the snow. There's no one else in sight.

He pauses, eyes Shannon again - then smiles strangely,
seeming to recognize her. He's spooky but not menacing.

LAZANTHO
So - you are Shannon.

SHANNON
My friends call me Shanny.

LAZANTHO

This moment, the snow lightly falling, fluttering to the ground, to rise again, no doubt. Who said that? But what is this - you appear ill.

SHANNON

(matter-of-fact)

Stomach cancer. Ralph's helped me - but he doesn't work miracles, not in my case at least.

LAZANTHO

(beat) You must tell me - do you see yourself dying?

SHANNON

(becoming emotional)

I keep expecting to get better, deep inside I feel ... but still, in my body I keep getting worse.

LAZANTHO

Your yourself being ill - so strange. This means you should - ah. I know someone you can go to who can help you - if this is truly what you want.

Shannon doesn't answer - she begins trembling. Lazantho takes out a pad and pen, writes something - hands her the note. She reads what he wrote - then looks up, surprised.

SHANNON

But this street address - are you playing with me? It's in Ojai - that's my home town.

LAZANTHO

Yes - and I shall perhaps join you later. Meanwhile, praises that you have been found - and my blessings, such that they are, upon you. Go now.

SHANNON

How strange. Deja vu. Is this really happening or are you just another of my weird dreams?

LAZANTHO

I now give you the energy to go catch a plane very soon - promise me.

Lazantho turns and walks away. Shannon stares after him, then looks down at the piece of paper -

INT. HALLWAY OF KENNY'S OFFICE - DAY

Kenny emerges from his office - sees his nurse RUTH with the tall mystery woman, Madrina, standing on the scales.

KENNY
(formally)
When you're ready.

He walks past them into one of the patient rooms.

INT. PATIENT ROOM [CONTINUOUS]

Closing the door behind him, Kenny exhales loudly. The room has impressionist watercolor scenes of Ojai on the walls.

The door opens - Ruth walks in, hands Kenny a clipboard with the woman's vital statistics.

RUTH
Everything normal - that we can see.

Ruth exits and Madrina comes walking into the privacy of the examination room. She closes the door behind her. They stand staring fixedly at each other.

MADRINA
I am sorry if I disturb you.

KENNY
Disturb me - of course not, why should you disturb me? Have a seat - I understand you have stomach pain.

Madrina settles into a comfortable chair.

MADRINA
Yes, I have had pains on and off, right here.

She places a hand lightly over her left abdomen.

MADRINA (cont'd)
I am hoping perhaps, that you can help me to heal.

KENNY
I'll do my best.

MADRINA
(suddenly intimate)
I must say to you, what a great relief it is to finally find you.

KENNY

I've been right here, fifteen years
and counting.

MADRINA

(confused)

No, I mean - oh, this is so
difficult. Perhaps I should
not have come at all.

KENNY

If you have pain, it's important to
have it checked out.

MADRINA

Yes, well ...

KENNY

So when did you first feel the pain?

MADRINA

Months ago I noticed something inside
me - it has not become better. I need
the right person, someone like you,
to touch me - to heal me.

KENNY

(defensively)

Hold on now - doctors aren't healers.
We're here to do what we can, but
it's of course your own body that
does the healing.

She stares at him blankly, as if what he's said doesn't
quite make sense to her. He turns away a moment, clears his
throat - then faces her again.

KENNY (cont'd)

Tell me, where are you from, I mean
originally?

MADRINA

Oh, my father, he was a mix of
American Indian and Irish. My mother
was Hawaiian and Chinese.

KENNY

Ah. Quite the genes. So then, about
your pain.

MADRINA

Yes - perhaps you can feel, tell me
what it is.

KENNY

Well - alright. Loosen your clothes
in that region, lie down there on
your back, we'll see what it is
that's bothering you.

He half-watches her unbutton her vest, open her blouse,
unbutton her slacks and then lie down on the examination
table. She glances nervously at him, then closes her eyes,
inhales, stretches involuntarily.

When Kenny makes contact with her skin, she inhales sharply.

KENNY (cont'd)

(professional but kind)

It's okay, you can relax.

She's now staring at him with wide-open expectation.

KENNY (cont'd)

Are you worried that I'll hurt you?

MADRINA

No, please continue - I want to feel
you, you're - I mean I want you to
feel ... continue, please.

She closes her eyes and he presses his fingers into her
abdomen, lightly at first, feeling for tell-tale hardness.
Not finding any, he presses deeper, exhales slowly,
concentrating upon the sensations coming to his fingertips.

Suddenly she sits bolt upright, gasping for air.

MADRINA (cont'd)

No! This is - I am sorry. There is
nothing at all wrong with me.

She reaches out and takes his hand in both of hers.

MADRINA (cont'd)

(whispering seriously)

I only required to feel your touch.
Now I know. But this is all wrong.
Please, forgive me.

She stands up and begins buttoning her slacks, firing a
sudden look at him watching her.

KENNY

Sorry, but I'm not any kind of New
Age healer if that's what you're
looking for.

MADRINA

But you do have the healer's touch.

KENNY

(defensive)

Sorry - for me there's no mystic force in the universe that intrudes upon the medical model.

Madrina stares at him, looking both hurt and confused.

MADRINA

Oh. I see.

KENNY

So is there actually nothing wrong with you?

MADRINA

I came here only because, you see, events led me to you but it felt essential to meet you in person.

KENNY

There's plenty of so-called psychic energy healers around this valley if that's what you're looking for.

MADRINA

I am only interested in an actual doctor such as yourself, who has recently come into possession of certain powers which lie quite, well - beyond the medical.

KENNY

(cold)

Well you were misinformed in my case.

MADRINA

But your touch, I did feel - I must ask you, I must know. Have you felt any unusual energies entering your body during these last two weeks?

KENNY

Please, I don't know what it is you're up to but this is a doctor's office. I have a number of genuinely ill people waiting out there needing serious medical attention.

MADRINA

I see. So excuse me - perhaps I do have the wrong person after all. I am sorry to have disturbed your day.

KENNY

(softening)

You don't disturb me, I like you, very much. But I'm just a doctor.

MADRINA

Yes, well - carry on, doctor.

She turns and walks out - Kenny stares after her.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OJAI BACK STREET - DAY

With Jenna Banks at the wheel, a BMW comes driving fast past the Ojai Presbyterian Church, turns onto a side drive and goes around to the back of a large old two-story house, She parks where she won't be seen from the street.

INT. HOUSE [CONTINUOUS]

Reverend WILLIAM BAIRHARDT, minister of the Ojai Presbyterian Church (recently widowed, early 50's) is standing where he can look out his study window at the BMW.

WILLIAM

(to himself)

Oh God, what am I to do with her?

He goes back to his desk, tries to remain calm. A Bible and Concordance are open on the desk - he's working on his Palm Sunday sermon.

Jenna comes bursting into the office.

WILLIAM (cont'd)

(professionally)

Ah, there you are.

She comes into his arms without hesitation - and bursts out crying.

WILLIAM (cont'd)

(honest compassion)

There there - you're trembling. What's happened?

Jenna pulls herself somewhat together.

JENNA

I'm not sure. I woke up early this morning, walked downstairs, out into the back yard - and there was a coyote standing there staring right back at me -

WILLIAM

A coyote?

JENNA

William, she said something to me.

WILLIAM

(upset at this)

What?

JENNA

Yes - somehow I heard her.

WILLIAM

Well. What did you hear it say?

JENNA

(crying again)

Oh Billie, I'm so scared - this was the opposite feeling than before - completely different, perhaps even evil. Tell me what it means!

WILLIAM

What exactly did the dog say?

JENNA

I told you it was a coyote. She spoke to me in such a low, soft voice, welcoming me. And I must tell you this, I must - her voice, it was almost like - my Shanny's.

This makes the pastor especially upset.

WILLIAM

Jennifer, now tell me - what exactly did the coyote say to you?

JENNA

(beat) Oh - it's going foggy now - it's gone, I forget.

WILLIAM

But you must remember!

JENNA
Please, don't shout at me.

William stares down at his Bible, confused and upset.

JENNA (cont'd)
(whispering)
William, there was more - when the coyote turned and trotted off, I had this tremendous yearning to follow. Oh God, I'm so afraid that Shannon's loss of faith, that it will happen the same way to me. Please, pray with me - for her.

He takes her hand - they kneel together.

WILLIAM
Dear Christ Almighty, be with us now.
Bring us understanding. Bring us
clarity, bring us peace of mind ...

We HEAR quite contrary music rise up on the soundtrack -

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OJAI COUNTRY CLUB DRIVE - DAY

Kenny comes cruising in his Chevy along the private road to the Ojai Valley Country Club, listening to some rock tune.

His expression is serious as he pulls up to the main entrance, cuts the engine, hesitantly allows a valet to take his car as he walks inside.

We see the car that was following him earlier pull up and park in the lot. Two Asian people, a man and a woman, follow Kenny discretely into the Country Club.

INT. COUNTRY CLUB RESTAURANT [CONTINUOUS]

Arthur is sitting alone at a prime-view table. He's a natural sexual dynamo in spite of his unusual looks and intellectual flair - he has two women making eyes at him. As Kenny walks into the big room, Arthur waves him over.

ARTHUR
Hey, what's that look?

Kenny sits down across from him, gazes at the lush golf greens and hazy coastal mountains. Reaching for the gin tonic in front of him, he notices his hand slightly shaking.

Arthur - an accomplished psychiatrist - remains silent a moment, watching his friend closely.

ARTHUR (cont'd)
You appear slightly ephemeral.

KENNY
(bothered)
Ephemeral?

ARTHUR
Did Jen see another of her angels?

KENNY
Coyote this time, she says it talked to her.

ARTHUR
You know you're going to have to act. If she won't come see me, she's got to get help somewhere or she's going to go over the edge and be gone.

KENNY
She's got the minister - they both see her visions as mystic, not crazy.

ARTHUR
Damn it Kenny! Reality is reality. When people lose their grip on reality it's our professional responsibility to do something about it. Coyotes don't talk. If they're talking to her like the angels did, then she needs serious help.

KENNY
It all started when Shanny came home from Princeton last summer totally rejecting Christianity. I just hope it'll all get resolved without psychiatric intervention.

ARTHUR
Well dream on. (beat) But there's also something else today, yes?

KENNY
Well - this woman came to my office, supposedly with stomach pain - a strange witchy woman, dark beauty - knocked me completely off-kilter.

ARTHUR

Sexually?

KENNY

Not quite. Wanted me to touch her,
mistook me for some psychic healer.

ARTHUR

(aping New Age jargon)

But of course we are all healers! We
have only to open our hearts and
souls to the infinite holy energetics
beyond the dull illusion of science,
and amazing healing powers will come
flooding in - of this I am absolutely
certain. I mean look at your own
father - I still can't comprehend all
those local myths that grew up around
that man.

Kenny eyes him.

KENNY

Hey, no joking about my dad - totally
off-limits.

ARTHUR

Sorry - but he still makes me wonder.
How'd he do all that stuff - using
hypnosis?

KENNY

You and me, we were just kids when he
died. We'll never know the truth.

ARTHUR

Dead with a heart attack at forty-
two. Like I always say, if you can't
heal yourself, you ain't no healer.

KENNY

Funny - I've known you since we were
kids and still I don't know what you
really believe.

ARTHUR

(honestly)

That's because none of us knows what
we believe deep down unless pushed to
some extreme where we have to stand
up and act - but you know full well
that the whole psychic healing
routine has been debunked.

KENNY

Well if it was true we'd both be out of a job.

ARTHUR

Believing in psychic powers of any kind is a clear sign of mental illness that needs serious treatment.

They fall silent a moment - Kenny drifting off somewhere.

ARTHUR (cont'd)

Tell me more about this woman who wanted you to touch her and heal her. I see you're upset - or fascinated. Are you going to pursue her further, find out exactly how and where she likes to be touched?

KENNY

Pursue? Of course not.

A grin turns Arthur's lips playfully sensual.

ARTHUR

In that case perhaps you might slip me her phone number.

Kenny laughs at that.

ARTHUR (cont'd)

I'm serious. When a remarkable woman crosses our path we must leap into action.

KENNY

(serious now)

I'm telling you, she seemed slightly, well - unreal.

ARTHUR

The best ones often are. On another front, are you free tomorrow?

KENNY

Uhm - early hospital duty, then done for the day.

ARTHUR

Perfect. Come sailing, meet my new girl. Her mother by the way, just like your dad, was supposedly a healer.

KENNY

Enough about healers. Ah, there's the waiter, I'm starved.

As the waiter lights a candle on the table , we HEAR the sound of someone humming a simple tune - a quiet spontaneous female voice.

INT. CABIN UP MATILIJA CANYON - DAY

Madrina, dressed simply now, is standing in front of an easel, alone in a rustic two-room cabin.

On the easel is a radiant abstract chalk portrait - of Kenny but much older and darker, perhaps Tibetan-looking.

Madrina suddenly stops humming as she stares at the drawing, then adds a few finishing touches.

Her cell phone rings -

MADRINA

Hello?

We see Lazantho in a room - it's snowing outside.

LAZANTHO

Greetings cherished one - I bring news.

MADRINA

Me also - it is possible that I have found him!

Lazantho reacts, surprised.

LAZANTHO

No, this is not possible. I myself have been guided - and just today I have met her. Yes, she is a woman! And I have sent her to you. Imagine though - she herself is deathly ill.

Madrina cocks her head in bewilderment.

MADRINA

Are you certain, you have definitely found the one?

LAZANTHO

Yes - without question.

She turns to stare at Kenny's portrait.

MADRINA

But Grandpa - I have found the one as well! Can there be - two?

LAZANTHO

(confused)

No - this is not my understanding.

MADRINA

We must not let past searches influence the present, this is not Krishnamurti - we must advance carefully so as to avoid, well -

LAZANTHO

Yes, of course. Await a call from a young woman named Shannon, and I of course shall appear in Ojai at an appropriate time. In the flow.

MADRINA

Yes. In the flow.

Madrina stares at her abstract portrait of Kenny - and it slowly morphs into his real-life face ...

.....

contact steinerbirgitta@gmail.com for full screenplay