Marie sits alone. She looks at the photographs. She doesn't move.

CUT TO:

LOCATION — INT — HOSPITAL — CONSULTING ROOM — DAY

A small consulting room. A desk, two chairs, a box of tissues. A window with a blind half-drawn. A poster about hand hygiene. The room is clean and warm and has no personality at all.

ANISE sits in one of the chairs. She is still in her coat. Her handbag is on her lap. She has been waiting.

The door opens. MR BHATT — a consultant, fifties, calm, practised — comes in. He closes the door. He sits.

BHATT
Thank you for waiting. I'm sorry to keep you.

ANISE
That's alright.

He opens a folder. He reads. He doesn't look up for a moment.

BHATT
I've reviewed the scan. The ultrasound. And the bloods.

He looks up.

BHATT
I have a clear diagnosis.

Silence. Anise doesn't move.

BHATT
Before I go on — would you like a support person? Is there anyone you'd like me to call. A nurse. Your husband.

ANISE
No.

BHATT
It's not unusual to want someone here.

ANISE
I know. I'd rather hear it myself first. Please just tell me. I need to know. Today. I'd prefer knowing.

Bhatt nods. He puts the folder down. He folds his hands.

BHATT
It's cancer. Of the ovary. The scan shows a mass, and the bloods

support it. It's significant. It will need treatment. Surgery, most likely, and then chemotherapy. I can't tell you the full picture today. I'll need more tests. But the diagnosis is pretty clear.

Silence. Anise looks at him. She doesn't cry. She doesn't look away.

ANISE
Is it terminal?

BHATT
I can't answer that today. I don't have the staging yet. I'd be guessing.

ANISE
Guess.

BHATT
I won't. But it will need aggressive treatment. I'd rather give you the truth when I have it.

Anise nods slowly. She looks at the tissues. She doesn't take one.

ANISE
What happens now.

BHATT
I'll book you in for further scans. This week. I'll refer you to the surgical team. They'll see you within a fortnight. I'll write to your GP. And I'll give you a number you can call — the specialist nurses. They're very good. You can call them any time. Even if it's just to ask a question you think is stupid.

ANISE
I don't think any questions are stupid.

BHATT
No. Neither do I. I said it because most people do.

She almost smiles. Almost.

ANISE
Can I go to work.

BHATT
Today? Yes. This week? Yes. After that — let's see. You'll need to tell your employer at some point. You don't have to do it today.

ANISE
I'm a teacher.

BHATT
Then you'll want to tell them before the surgery. But not today.

Silence. Anise picks up her handbag. She puts it back down. She hasn't moved to leave.

ANISE
I'll — I'll tell my husband tonight.

BHATT
Would you like me to call him. Or have someone call him.

ANISE
No. I'll do it.

BHATT
Alright.

He writes something. He tears the page off. He puts it on the desk.

BHATT
This is the number for the specialist nurses. And this — is my secretary. If you think of something you didn't ask, call her. She'll get a message to me. It's not an imposition.

Anise takes the page. She folds it. She puts it in her handbag.

ANISE
Thank you.

BHATT
I'm sorry it's not better news.

ANISE
You didn't make this situation…

BHATT
No. But I'm the one telling you. And I'm sorry.

She stands. He stands. She holds out her hand. He shakes it. She holds it a moment longer than she needs to.

ANISE
Thank you. For telling me straight.

She goes. The door closes. Bhatt sits down. He opens the folder. He looks at it. He closes it. He sits for a moment.

CUT TO:

LOCATION — EXT — HOSPITAL CAR PARK — DAY

The car park. Ordinary. A trolley in a bay. A distant tannoy. Someone's car door, somewhere.

ANISE walks to her car. She gets her keys out of her handbag. She stands by the door. She presses the fob. Nothing happens — wrong car, or wrong button. She tries again.

Her hand isn't steady. The keys slip. They fall. They hit the tarmac.

She looks at them. She reaches down. Her hand stops before it gets there.

She slides down the car door and huddles against it, her coat pulled around her, and cries.

Nobody sees. The car park is ordinary. A trolley. A voice on the tannoy. A car starting somewhere.

She stays there.

CUT TO:

LOCATION — INT — HAMISH'S HOUSE — KITCHEN — EVENING

The kitchen from D6. The calendar. The photographs on the fridge. The pot on the stove. The radio on, low.

HAMISH is at the table. His bag is down. He's eating something she left out for him. ANISE is at the counter, not eating. She has a cup of tea she isn't drinking.

HAMISH
The Ame girl is still missing - and the mother keeps calling for updates.

ANISE
Is there an update?

HAMISH
No. The search is — it's a process now. Forty more posters. Nobody's seen her. Nobody's heard from her.

ANISE
Mm.

HAMISH
The fraud has gone to the prosecutors. It's straightforward. It'll go through.

ANISE
That's good.

HAMISH
It's something.

He eats. She watches him. She's been watching him since he came in.

HAMISH
How was your day.

ANISE
Hamish.

He looks up. Her voice is different. Not loud. Just different.

HAMISH
What.

She puts the cup down. She doesn't come to the table. She stays at the counter.

ANISE
The test. The one I had today.

I saw a consultant today. After they did a scan. He had the results.

It's cancer. Of the ovary. They need to do more tests. Surgery, probably. Then treatment.

Silence. Hamish doesn't move. He's looking at her. He's not looking at the table or the food or anything else. He's looking at her.

HAMISH
I - I thought you were just tired, but this is so much more…

ANISE
I didn’t think it would be this.

HAMISH
I should have been there

ANISE
No, you didn’t know.

Silence. She doesn't say it as an accusation. It isn't one.

ANISE
You didn't know. I didn't tell you. It wasn't meant to be a big thing.

Hamish stands up. He doesn't go to her. He stands by the table, his hands on the back of the chair. His knuckles are pale.

HAMISH
Right. Right. Okay. What do we do. What did he say. The consultant. What did he say we do.

His voice catches on the second "what did he say." He stops. He clears his throat. He carries on.

ANISE
More tests. This week. Then the surgical team will contact me within a fortnight.

HAMISH
Right. I'll take time off. I'll tell them tomorrow. I'll —

ANISE
Hamish.

HAMISH
I'll take some leave. I've got leave. I'll —

ANISE
Wait till we know the stage.

He stops.

HAMISH
What.

ANISE
We don't know the stage yet. We don't know what we're dealing with. He wouldn't guess.

Silence. He looks at her. She's calm. She's the calm one.

HAMISH
You're telling me you've got cancer and you want me to wait.

ANISE
I'm telling you I've got cancer and I want us to know what we're dealing with before we start making decisions. Including yours.

He doesn't answer. He sits down. He puts his hands flat on the table.

HAMISH
Including mine.

ANISE
Yes.

HAMISH
What do you need.

ANISE
Right now?

HAMISH
Yes.

ANISE
I need you to finish your dinner.

He looks at her. She looks at him. She's not joking. She's not being brave for the sake of it. She's being practical, because that's what she is.

HAMISH
Anise.

ANISE
I mean it. I've had a long day. You've had a long day. Eat your dinner. Then we'll talk about the rest.

He picks up his fork. He doesn't eat. He holds it. She picks up her tea. She drinks it. It's cold. She doesn't seem to notice.

They sit in the kitchen. The radio plays. The calendar is on the wall. The photographs are on the fridge.

CUT TO:

LOCATION — INT — CHEN'S OFFICE — NIGHT

The office, after hours. The corridor light through the frosted panel is off. One lamp on the desk. The mug — cold, untouched. The plant. The chair by the window, empty.

CHEN sits at the desk. The book is open in front of her. A pen in her hand. She has been here a while.

She reads. We see the page.

READINESS is not a technique. It is a way of meeting what arises.

She underlines it. Doesn't stop.

Recognise with calm. Notice the strong emotion without being taken by it.

The pen moves under the words. She pauses at the end of the line. Reads it again.

Endure without acting. The reaction will pass. It always passes.

She stops. The pen rests on the page. She looks at the words for a moment longer than she needs to.

Then she turns the page.

Discern what path to take — to benefit you, not the reaction.

She underlines benefit you. Then not the reaction. The pen is steady. Her face doesn't change.

She writes in the margin. Small, clinical, her shorthand. We see it:

Reaction before thought. Same as Patient.

She looks at what she's written. She doesn't cross it out. She doesn't