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The 9th Life of Louis Drax

By Max Minghella

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Everyone said that one day
I was going to have an accident.
An accident to end all accidents.
One day, you might look up
and see a kid falling from the sky.
That kid would be me.
I'm Louis Drax,
the amazing accident-prone boy.
My first accident was being born.
It happened like Julius Caesar.
They stab the lady with the knife
till her belly pops,
and then they yank you out,
all covered in blood.
It's okay, you're doing great.
Looks like the baby's breech.
We're going to have to do a C-section.
Even if you live to 100 years old,
you don't get over something like that.
The second accident, I was 16 weeks old.
My mom still has the X-rays.
My cute little baby ribs
all broken and smashed.
I've been bitten by spiders,
stung by bees,
and 85% electrocuted.
That hardly happens to anyone,
but it happened to me.
I've gotten food poisoning
a bunch of times.
Salmonella and tetanus and botulism
and meningitis are just
some of the things I've had.
Last winter, I screamed so hard
I stopped breathing
for nine and a half minutes.
On my ninth birthday,
we went for a picnic,
Mom and Dad and me and we were all happy,
like... like we might
love each other again.
Like there wasn't
going to be a monster without a face,

like I wasn't going to have
the accident to end all accidents.
My mom says I'm an angel.
You know, Louis,
they say cats have nine lives.
Their souls cling to their bodies
and won't let go.
If you were a cat, you'd have used up
eight of your lives by now.
One for each year.
Please don't use up any more.
Everything feels cold.
Am I dead?
This is your ninth life, young sir.
Together, we'll solve the mystery,
the strange mystery
of the amazing accident-prone boy.
We need about a 20 foot radius...
Two hitchhikers found the victim's
mother by the roadside, called it in.
I gotta tell you, Dalton, it's going to be
hard to salvage anything in this weather.
Footprints are being washed away.
We'll keep trying
but we're not getting much.
- Any word on the father?
- Not yet.
We've deployed a search team
and sent out a statewide APB.
Go, go, go!
- What about the boy?
- That's what the chopper's for.
We're bringing him up now.
Over here!
- Keep him straight!
- Right!
Bring him up!
I've been here almost two hours!
Can't I get something for the pain?
- Sir, please calm down!
- Move, move, move!
We need help over here!
They've warmed him up, still no vitals!
Pupils fixed and dilated.

- I'm sorry.
- Discontinue the CPR.
- I don't want to leave him!
- It's all right, ma'am.
I don't want to leave him!
- Please, I want to go to him!
- No carotid pulse.
I don't want to be away from him.
- Time of death is 19:55.
- I want to go to him! Louis!
I used to sleepwalk as a child.
The first time
I was four or five years old
and my mother found me under the bed,
and she asked me what I was looking for.
And I said, "It."
Now I was to search
for this unidentifiable "It"
in my sleep,
on later occasions: in the backyard,
or the neighbor's yard,
or the nudist beach
not far from my childhood home.
But my experiences
as a child never left me,
however blurred the memories became.
I still yearned for that lost dimension.
You see, I believe that the brain
is more than the sum of its parts.
And that all of us, no matter how damaged,
can make connections.
Move, move, move!
Drax coming through!
Please alert trauma surgeon!
Go, go, go!
Blood pressure 90 over 16.
Ninety-five on oxygen.
Thank you.
Transfer.
Cardiovascularly stable.
Making an effort to breathe.
Dr. Pascal? Sorry to interrupt.
There's a phone call for you,
I think it's urgent.

Excuse me.

The patient's name is Louis Drax,
nine years old.

He was cold when EMS brought him in.
They were prepping him for postmortem
when he regained consciousness.

What was the cause of his injury?

He fell off one of the cliffs
at Land's End into freezing water.

We ran a CT post-surgery,
probably broke every bone in his body.

He was dead for two hours.

I've never seen anything like it.

I made a mistake.

Drowning and hypothermia
can resemble death in pediatric cases.

It's rare, but it happens.

Don't be hard on yourself.

What's his condition?

We had to remove his spleen.

One of the splintered ribs
is threatening his left lung,
and the skull fractures...

It's bad.

But he's alive.

He's in a coma.

But he's alive.

Mrs. Drax?

Yes?

I'm Dr. Pascal,

I'm a specialist in pediatric coma.

I'll be looking after Louis
once he's finished

his treatment with Dr. Janek.

You know, I, uh, I must congratulate you.

Congratulate?

Know, we're not supposed to use the word,
"miracle" in the medical profession,
but this might call for an exception.

Well, you don't know my son.

That's very true.

However, I look forward to changing that.

Would I be able to see him now?

Sure.

Ever since he was born,
I've always been able to communicate,
know what the other one
was thinking, like twins.
My god, it sounds stupid
and superstitious, but...
if you knew Louis, if you knew everything
he's been through...
He's not like other children,
I think my son's an angel.
It's not easy being the mother
of a troubled boy.
Always full of worry.
Gotta protect him, gotta protect him.
It's my fault, you see?
Sons aren't supposed
to make their mothers cry.
- That's why I have to see Fat Perez.
- Oh, Louis.
Who is Fat Perez, young sir?
Fat Perez is a fat mind-reader,
but he isn't good at mind-reading.
He's old, probably 40,
and he has a big fat face, like a baby.
Hello, I'm Dr. Perez. You must be Louis.
It's nice to meet you. Mrs. Drax.
- Pleased to meet you.
- How are you today?
- Come on in.
- Um... I should probably let you know
that Louis had
a bit of an accident in the elevator.
What do you talk about?
We talk about anything I want.
Hamsters, Hitler,
Harry Potter, Botox, bats.
I know a lot about bats.
Louis, come on in here.
And he can't tell anyone,
because it's just between us.
Your elevator makes me urinate.
You have mild claustrophobia.
Totally normal.
You know, that elevator's tiny.

You're way too big for it.
Not as big as you.
Grownups are always laughing
at things that aren't funny.
- Squeak, squeak.
- You read any good books lately,
you wanna tell me about?
I read the Bible.
How'd you like it?
I liked the part with the snake.
Mr. Snake. What's he doing?
What's up with him,
tell me about the snake.
Adam is so stupid.
He deserves to be punished.
- What'd he do?
- How many dollars does this cost?
Ah, that's more of a question for...
for your mom and dad, right?
I'm asking you. How many?
- Why are you so interested?
- I'd like to sit in a chair all day
and say, "Tell me more,"
and make zillions of dollars.
I'd like that. Looks like an easy life.
So you're telling me that you think that
being a grownup is an easy life?
You looking forward to that?
You looking forward to growing up?
Stupid question.
Why is that a stupid question?
Because I'm never going to grow up.
Why not?
Welcome to the coma bay, Louis.
We're gonna look after you here.
Okay, darling?
One, two three.
I'm intrigued as to the genesis
of his condition,
this accident that he had.
Dalton hasn't briefed you?
- Who's he?
- She.
Inspector working the case.

Nobody from the police has contacted me,
but I suppose they'd have no reason to.
Well, didn't you see
the news this morning?
It wasn't an accident. He was pushed.
Pushed? Who pushed him?
- Here's the results on two.
- Okay. He's fit to go.
- His father.
- Louis' father?
- Mmhm.
- Where is he now?
On the run. It's a manhunt.
All very dramatic.
They'll be posting an officer at reception
as a precautionary measure,
better safe than sorry.
I feel badly for the mother.
I don't think she has many people.
Yeah, no worries.
You can call me Allan
or Dr. Pascal if you like.
Most people call me Pascal.
You're in a coma, Louis.
It's like sleeping, just deeper.
You know, I have quite a few theories
about the state you're in.
I think that some people
don't want to wake up.
They feel they can't come back
until they feel safe.
You can feel safe here, Louis.
What happened to your arm there,
Louis Drax?
It was an accident.
An accident? What kind of accident?
I was digging a grave, and I slipped.
A grave? For who?
A grave for a human,
a big fat one with chubby cheeks.
You've been having a lot of accidents.
Well, I'm accident-prone. So what?
Sometimes the accidents are big,
and sometimes they're small.

So I guess the big ones are the ones
where you end up in the hospital, right?
That's not all bad.
Hospitals can be kind of fun.
Well, I don't like the pain.
I hate that part.
But the recovery is okay.
Jell-O.
Ice cream.
Nice ladies bringing you more Jell-O.
Yeah, and then they make a fuss over you,
and then you don't have to go to school.
Hmm, you ever find yourself
actually being relieved
when you get to the hospital 'cause you...
'cause you feel safe?
You think I do it on purpose, don't you?
I didn't say that. Why would I say that?
I read your book yesterday.
Subject changer.
It wasn't that bad, actually.
I liked the part where you
hypnotized the Sikh.
Do you hypnotize a lot of your patients?
- Mmm, some of them.
- But not me?
Don't think so. I don't know.
Haven't decided yet.
Not sure it would help.
Because I'm a Whacko Boy?
Because you're a special boy.
Am I a typical disturbed child?
The concern is that Peter Drax
might reappear.
Is there a member of staff
on duty here at all times?
Yes, two.
And we have a strict
registration process for any visitors.
Are we not safe?
Just keep an eye out.
But you don't know where he is.
I didn't say that.
Is there anything you can

tell us about the boy,
anything that might be helpful
from a medical point of view?
Louis was a bit disturbed.
He had been seeing a therapist,
a Dr. Michael...
Perez.
Um, disruptive at school,
no friends, doesn't fit in.
The other kids called him "Whacko Boy".
Now, looking through his records, there's
a recurring theme of physical trauma.
It's difficult to get
to the bottom of that one.
His therapist thinks that he may have been
self-harming for attention.
But the admissions go back to infancy.
I noted this also.
So there's a history
of violence from the father.
What's the chances that this boy
is going to wake up?
Well, based on his most recent EEG,
I have diagnosed
a persistent vegetative state.
Which means?
It means not good.
I spoke to Dr. Janek this morning
about your awareness accretion theory.
He said that your methods are radical,
that you believe in your patients
when others don't.
Well I don't know
how radical my methods are.
I just believe that Louis
can still sense things.
Though he may appear to be far away,
he's still with us in some way.
Do you think that the brain
is the same as the soul?
I mean, if Louis' brain is damaged,
is he still Louis?
He's still Louis.
We just need to find a way through to him,

track him down, coax him out.
You think he's hiding?
I didn't say that.
You said, "coax."
Seeing and thinking are the same thing
when your eyes are closed,
like a dream, but you choose what happens.
You remember bright lights
and grown-ups yelling,
and everything feels cold inside.
So you think of the sun...
how warm it feels...
Bring back my Bonnie to me, to me...
Clouds...
and the moon...
and the cold...
water...
monsters...
and "squeak, squeak" and "hubba hubba"...
and happiness...
and sadness...
and men have no honor...
and death.
Your mouth tastes of blood...
And you're high up like a balloon.
I'm sitting by your bed right now.
She's talking to you
like you're a baby again.
When I squeeze your hand like this,
maybe you can feel it.
And she would do anything for you
because she's so glad
the danger didn't kill you.
Keep telling me your story.
This thing happened one day.
My dad took me to Sea World.
We stayed in San Diego
for the whole weekend
so that we could give Mom a rest
because we were both men, and sometimes,
men can be too much of a good thing
and give you a headache.
Good afternoon, everyone,
and welcome to Sea World.

My name is Jennifer,
and I'm back up here on the rocks.
Which means, hey,
we're pretty much ready to go!
Louis, come on, buddy.
How about you? You guys excited...
Hey, Louis, come on,
it's starting, come on.
Thanks.
You're going to miss the dolphin show,
come on.
Up first...
Peter.
- Hey. Wow.
- When we were there,
my dad ran into someone he knew.
He looked like he was going
to vomit in his mouth.
What a surprise, hi.
But he just kissed her
on the cheek instead.
This must be Louis.
- Who are you?
- I'm Caitlin.
Uh, this is my husband, Alex.
Alex, this is Peter and Louis.
Ah. So you're the famous Peter.
How come your children are Chinese?
- Louis. That's not polite.
- It's fine.
They were born in China.
Do you know about adoption?
I'm sure you do.
Well, Mei and Lola came into
our lives two years ago,
and then right after,
we had a lovely surprise
when Jerome came along.
Like a bolt from the blue.
My name is Jennifer,
and on behalf of myself...
- Nice to see you.
- Yeah, yeah, no, um, good to see you.
Let's have a big round

of applause for our dolphins!
Seafood special, shrimp supreme,
two orders of fries, and a beer.

- Thanks, man.

- Thank you, sir.

All right, buddy.

Who was that lady at the park?

Um, just someone

I used to... used to know.

We used to be... friends.

Good friends, actually.

- Hey, Lou-Lou...

- Did you use to sex her?

Well...

we used to be married.

Married?

Yes.

A long time ago.

Oh.

Hey.

It's okay to be angry with me.

You had the right to know.

No. Why should I be angry?

You're married to Mom now.

You wouldn't have made me otherwise.

You'd have made two Chinese children
and a baby with a big stupid face
like Fat Perez.

Maybe.

I don't know what I would have made,
but you know, I think it's best
that we don't tell Mom
about meeting Caitlin.

You want me to lie?

No, I don't want you to...

I don't want you to lie.

Just...

you know, not tell the whole truth.

Your mom can be... very fragile.

Yeah?

Is that my favorite boy?

- Yes.

- Come here!

Mmm.

Oh, I needed that. Look at you. New shirt?

- Uh-huh.

- Uh-huh?

How was it? Come on. Did you have fun?

It was okay. We went to this restaurant.

- That was meant to be Hawaii.

- You did?

And we went on Journey to Atlantis
three times.

- Wow.

- And we met this lady
named Caitlin who used
to be married to Dad.

Oh.

Dad didn't want me to tell you,
but I don't see why you shouldn't know
because she has another family now,
two Chinese girls who are adopted
and a baby that isn't.

Lou-Lou, why don't you go up
to your room and watch some TV?

No.

Louis, do what you're told.

Go.

- Don't touch me.

- Oh, my god.

Jesus Christ!

- Shut up! Just shut up!

- Stop yelling at me!

Hey, hey, just shut up
for a second and listen to me!

Oh... oh, my god, I don't know
what I'm doing here anymore!

So why did you tell your mom
about what happened at Sea World?

Why not?

My parents don't love each other,
not the way that the lady and her husband
with the Chinese children do.

Maybe they hate each other.

Maybe all they want to do is get divorced.

They can't, can they?

They can't because of me.

Why is that?

They don't think I know, but I do.
Know what?
That my dad isn't my real dad.
He's just playing,
"Pretend You're His Dad."
Oh. H... how about your mom?
She's my real mom.
Uh-huh.
Well... who do you think your real dad is?
I don't have one.
Come on, everybody's got a dad.
Not me.
If you could choose anybody in the world
to be your dad, anybody.
- Anyone?
- Anybody, dead or alive.
You.
Me?
Just kidding.
Mom says you can come back now.
Didn't know I needed permission.
Are you the strongest man alive?
Not even close.
Is that why you stopped fighting?
I stopped because your mother asked me to.
And then I became a dad.
The strongest dad in the world!
Oh, man! Oh, oh, oh, ow!
Something's burning.
Finally, some people
I actually want to see.
You look wonderful.
- Nice to see you too.
- Excuse me. I'll be one minute.
- Hello.
- Hi, you look stunning.
- Thank you. You too.
- How are you.
- Hey.
- Hi.
- Is that for me?
- Looking for this?
Why don't you open it, okay?
And you, come with me.

Bring a present, get a hug.
Hey, take Alex,
out of the water okay? It's too cold.
Here, have this.
You invited Mrs. Drax?
I thought it could do her some good,
get her out of the house,
out of the hospital.
She's getting eaten alive out there.
I expect she's used to it by now.
Tammy, Tammy, don't run!
Men always behave like fools
around pretty girls.
How are things with you?
- Hi.
- Hi.
You caught me hunting for snacks.
- The food isn't very good.
- No.
Thanks.
I, uh...
I saw you earlier,
but you seemed, uh, occupied.
I thought maybe
you were trying to avoid me.
No. I'm... I'm happy Janek invited you.
I think he's taking pity on me.
- H... how are you coping?
- Is that your wife who you're with?
Yeah, it is.
She's very pretty.
That's nice.
- I'm coping as well as I can.
- Yeah.
- You, uh, disappeared.
- Hey, um...
I was just on my way to the restroom,
and I bumped into, uh, Mrs. Drax.
We were commiserating
over Janek's cooking.
I, uh, don't believe
we've been introduced.
Sorry. I'm so stupid. Um,
Sophie, this is Natalie Drax.

Natalie, this is my wife, Sophie.
Natalie's Louis' mother,
the new patient I was telling you about.
Of course.
Um, I heard about what happened.
I'm so sorry for everything
you've been through.
- Well, your husband's been very helpful.
- I'm sure.
Mrs. Drax brought a hamster in.
I brought Louis a friend
to keep him company.
Well, technically,
we're not allowed animals on the ward.
He's just a baby. He won't harm anyone.
And Louis loves him.
Okay.
I'll make an exception this one time.
This one time.
You're taking him
home with you when you leave.
Thank you.
Do you want to go for a walk?
It's such a beautiful day outside.
I was thinking of getting some air.
Uh...
Okay, short walk.
Let Louis and his old friend
get reacquainted.
Come here, Rasputin.
Time's up.
Abra... kadabra.
I've been thinking
about those poor hamsters.
Why... why they gotta die?
You're not very clever
for a doctor, Fatty.
Don't you know about the rules?
The rules?
Yes, there are laws,
and you go to prison if you break them.
But there are secret rules, too.
But what does that
have to do with the hamsters?

One of the secret rules
is about pet keeping.
If you own a small creature
and he lives for longer
than a small rodent's lifespan...
that's two years...
then you're allowed
to kill him if you want to
because you're his owner.
Does the, um, the secret rule have a name?
Yes, "The Right of Disposal".
"The Right of Disposal".
You're allowed to do it
with poison or weed killer,
if you have any. Or you can just drop
something heavy on him
like a medical encyclopedia
or Harry Potter
and the Order of the Phoenix.
So... where did you learn
about the secret rule?
Let's talk about your dad.
I don't like what you're insinuating!
Yes, it was my idea to bring Lou-Lou here!
Peter did nothing wrong!
Nobody is saying... Mrs. Drax?
Let's go, Lou-Lou.
What took you so long?
You won't be seeing Dr. Perez anymore.
What did I do wrong? What did he say?
Why were you so angry, young sir?
He said that whatever I tell him
will never leave the room,
because it's a secret between him and me.
But he lied. He did tell her.
He's a liar like all men are,
and he plays the same games they play,
like, "Pretend You Don't Hate Him."
Why don't you like men?
Because they did bad things to my mom.
I was looking through Louis' files,
and... I noticed that you ended
his sessions with Dr. Perez
shortly before the incident.

Perez was always very suspicious of Peter.
At the time, I thought he was trying
to turn me against my husband.
Now I'm not so sure.
Do you have family close by?
My parents have passed away.
Friends? People you can talk to?
I have a sister,
but we're not really in touch.
I know it's a sensitive subject,
but I'm a good listener.
You're always asking questions.
That's true. I do ask a lot of questions.
You know, it might help
to talk to someone about what happened.
It was Louis' ninth birthday.
My birthday, too, actually.
That's another thing we have in common.
Peter drove up from San Diego.
He's been staying there with his mother
since we separated.
I planned a picnic.
It was all very perfect.
We drove to the canyon.
And then we got into this argument.
Stupid argument.
What was the argument about?
Peter was upset
that I'd ended Louis' therapy.
I didn't want to tell him the real reason.
He became...
aggressive.
He hit you?
Louis got really scared, so he ran away.
Take your time.
Peter went after him, but...
he was so close to the edge.
Louis!
I can still see Louis' face
before he went over.
He wasn't screaming. He wasn't crying.
He just had this look...
of disappointment.
Has he been violent before? To Louis?

Or you?

You know, I met Peter when I was 18.

He's the only man I've ever been with.

It's hard to know what to expect
when you have nothing to compare it to.

You deserve better than that.

How do you know?

I just know.

What was that for?

Louis?

Louis, can you hear me? Louis!

Can you hear me, Louis?

Louis? Louis? Are you there?

Can you hear me?

- Louis?

- He's trying to say something.

My dad... my dad...

- Louis, honey, honey, Mommy's here.

- Natalie. Natalie!

He's still recovering. You could hurt him.

Louis? Louis, it's Dr. Pascal.

You're in the hospital, okay? Louis?

Louis?

Hey, bud.

What you reading? Ah, Cousteau.

The Living Sea again. You still like it?

I got to talk to you
about something, okay?

I have to go away... for a... for a while.

Where are you going?

Not far.

San Diego...

to stay with Grandma.

Hey, you'll be able to call me.

It's only going to be for a little while.

- Is it something I did?

- No.

Is it because I told Mom about Sea World?

No, no, that's not it, I promise.

You didn't do anything wrong.

It's just I'm making your mom...

very sad right now,

and I need to give her some space.

You know how it is, kiddo.

Too much of a good thing.
You did so well today, Louis.
Wherever you are,
you're closer than I thought.
Stay close.
Your mother loves you very much,
and she's waiting
here for you, we all are.
I brought you a present.
I thought that we could read it together.
I hear it's one of your favorites.
"It was the hushed hour
before sunrise in December."
Hello?
Macy?
You look tired.
I haven't been sleeping.
- Stress?
- Nightmares. Bad.
I haven't had them since I was a kid.
How are things with Sophie?
Hanging by a string.
You and every husband.
I don't think she loves me anymore.
Why should she?
You don't love her anymore.
- People saw you.
- What are you talking about?
In the garden. Don't look so surprised.
It's a public place.
You were hardly invisible.
- Who knows?
- Everyone.
She's endured a lot
even before Louis' accident.
Forgive me for feeling some compassion.
Oh, well, if it's compassion,
then my mistake.
You're being annoying.
For god's sake, answer that damn thing.
Hey.
Hi.
I think he's been here.
No, I think he's been to the house.

What's going on? Is he still here?

Come in.

It was in the mailbox.

At first I thought it might be Louis,
but then I realized that was impossible.

Do you think it was Peter?

Nobody else would know those things.

It has to be him.

What did the police say?

Natalie?

You were my first call.

"Dear mom...

Dr. Pascal would like to sex you.

You should stay away from men in general.

Example, Dr. Pascal.

I'm warning you, Mom,
the danger will come,
and bad things will happen.

I love you, Louis. X-O-X-O-X."

It's very strange. You see this?

The pivots, and the curvature
and the weak indentations.

The author penned this letter
with their non-dominant hand.

Perhaps it was a feeble attempt
to conceal authorship.

Thank you.

Mr. Navarra will compare the letter
to the writing samples
we're collecting from your husband's home.

You'll be the first to know
when we have something.

You have somewhere to stay,
somewhere safe?

We have a room at the hospital she can use
until there's a better option.

- I don't want to impose.

- No, it's no problem at all.

It's not safe for you
to be at home right now.

He may try to contact you, so if he calls
or someone calls and hangs up,
or doesn't leave their number,
you let me know.

- Okay.
- Okay, thank you.
Doc, I'd like to
talk you alone for a moment.
One second.
Are you fucking her?
What?
No. Why?
Good. Keep it that way.
At least until Peter Drax shows up.
It's for your own safety.
Sir, would you come with me, please?
We use this room for overnight visitors
and, um, overworked doctors.
As you can see, it's nothing fancy,
but you will be safe here.
It's perfect.
Now I can always be close to Louis.
I should get home.
It's late.
And you're married?
We didn't talk about that.
I don't know how
to thank you for everything.
You don't have to. I'll see you tomorrow.
Good night, Doctor.
Twenty years private practice was plenty.
One more hour in that chair,
my head was going to explode.
Well, you know, I appreciate you seeing me
on such short notice.
Oh, no, not at all. You know, Louis,
he's a wonderful little man.
I was very sad to hear what happened.
Come on in.
There have been a series
of unusual occurrences
following Louis' admission.
- No, thank you.
- Sit down.
I don't know how much I can help.
There were cops here
the other day asking questions.
I told them the same thing.

I only worked with him for two,
three months.

Do you have any theories
on Louis' history of...

- Tragedy?

- Sure.

You know, for a long time,
I thought that he was causing
the accidents himself,
you know, looking for attention,
but the pieces... didn't always fit.

You know?

After his mother terminated the treatment,
Louis sent me a personal letter.

In the spirit of collegial inquiry,
I'd be happy to...

give you a peek if you...

thought it would help.

It was filled with hamster droppings.

Very Louis Drax.

"You are a big fat liar, Dr. Perez.

You said nothing would leave the room,
and that wasn't true, so you suck.

I hope you catch a gross disease.

Best regards, Louis Drax."

Mind taking a look at this?

Natalie found it in her mailbox yesterday.

"Dr. Pascal would like to sex you."

Mm, definitely his voice.

No doubt about it.

- You're sure?

- Oh, yeah.

He had a very particular way of speaking.

He's in a coma.

So it can't be him.

Well, somebody that knows
him very well, though.

Like you.

Or perhaps Mrs. Drax...

Oh! Natalie, as you call her.

- Or Louis' father.

- Someone like that, yeah.

Could be.

What can you tell me about him?

Nothing you don't already know.
Fighter, liked to drink.
They had their problems,
and Louis had all these
theories about their marriage.
He was very smart that way.
Children, they always know
so much more than we think.
What you think Dad got me for my birthday?
I hope he got me another Rasputin.
I don't know. How would I know?
It's him! He's here.
There's my boy. Oh!
Put me down, you big bully.
It's good to see you.
You want your present?
Bet you can't guess what it is.
It's a dynasty.
Who's ready for a picnic?
How about four, six, and nine?
Four and six is ten...
So Louis' two-week break is coming up.
I think he should spend the first week
down in San Diego with me,
is that all right?
All right, this one's gonna be hard.
- Are you ready?
- Uh-huh.
Three, seven...
five, one.
Well, I don't feel comfortable
with him going down there alone.
He won't be going down there alone.
I'll pick him up, and plus,
my mother will be there with us.
- Right.
- Divide ten by five is two.
Subtract one and... too easy.
Are you lost?
No.
I'm not lost.
I love birthdays.
I think you passed
that sign ten minutes ago.

Louis, you want to help your father out?

- Mhm.

- Hey, bud, I don't need any help.

I know where I'm going. I promise.

Let him help you, Peter.

He's great with directions.

- Give him the map.

- Okay.

Here you go, buddy.

Thank you.

Dr. Perez? Candy? Peeing my pants?

This is not a map. This is my brain.

- Evening, Dr. Pascal.

- Everything okay?

Mm.

Sophie, wh... what are you doing here?

You're hardly at home anymore.

So I figured I'd bring your mail.

It looked important.

W... why'd you open this?

It's addressed to me.

Sophie.

Don't do that.

So there's no way Louis
could've written the letters?

It's impossible.

But he sat up and spoke, right?

Why not possible?

The seizure was a fluke,
a muscle spasm maybe,
a brief return to apparent consciousness.

If you're waiting for him to wake up
and give you a statement,

I wouldn't hold your breath.

You think Drax is stalking her?

How is she coping?

She's distraught.

- You think she's headed for a breakdown?

- No.

I mean, she's in a vulnerable state.

Yeah, but is she, like,
breakdown material?

I can't see how she can stand
this kind of pressure

much longer, if that's what you mean.
I'd like to hear
what you know about Louis' fall,
the version Natalie told you.
Uh, why?
I thought that since
you had a certain... friendship with her,
that you might
have some insight that would help us.
I don't think I do.
Did you know that Peter Drax
isn't Louis' biological father?
I did.
So if she told you that,
she probably also told you
that she put Louis up
for adoption when he was just a baby.
I... I didn't know that.
But I'm not surprised she didn't tell me.
That's pretty private, don't you think?
Of course it's private.
Oh, one more thing.
Peter Drax's mother is coming to town
so we can ask her some questions
about the letter.
She asked to see Louis.
I don't have any reason to stop her.
I'll be sure to let reception know.
A little word of advice, you might want
to keep her away from your girlfriend.
From what I hear,
they're not the best of friends.
I'll keep that in mind.
I was looking for you.
Do you have a second?
I want to talk to you about something.
Macy said I could use the showers.
It's not about that.
Come in.
Do you want to sit down?
No.
I have to thank you again.
Everyone here has been so supportive.
One of the guys

at the front desk even said
he could get a TV in here for me.
Why didn't you tell me
that Peter isn't Louis' father?
I know it's probably none of my business,
but you volunteered to me that Peter
was the only man you'd ever been with,
and I don't know,
why tell such a specific lie?
Can you give me a moment
to put myself together?
Sure.
Would you mind turning around?
Of course.
Okay.
Who's the father?
His name was Joe.
Joseph. We only spent one night together.
It's not exactly my favorite subject.
- It might help to tell me.
- It won't.
- Well, if other people know...
- Other people don't know,
and there's a good reason
for that, trust me.
But... as Louis' doctor, as your friend...
The nature of Louis' conception
isn't something I'd wish on any woman.
Natalie, I am so sorry.
The birth was terrible.
It nearly killed us both.
But I don't regret any of it.
If it weren't for what happened,
Louis would have never have been born.
It was brave of you to keep him.
Who told you about that?
Inspector Dalton.
She came to the ward today.
What else did she tell you?
Nothing.
She just... she wanted to meet Louis,
put a face to the name.
I'm sorry.
I just feel like my life

is at the mercy of predators.
Including me?
Do you kiss the mothers
of all your patients?
I'm sorry if I made you feel that way
because that is the last thing
that I meant to be.
Maybe I'm being unfair.
I've just had a tough time
with men, that's all.
We're not all bad.
Not... completely.
It took him two months
to open up to Perez.
...I'm the person who
had to take him every...
Louis! He was comfortable.
And what else?
And I had to talk to Perez...
All right, well, I'm the one...
- ...every single weekend.
- Hey, hey.
I'm the one who gets to decide
whether or not he has to see him anymore.
He's just now starting all over again.
- I don't understand what the point...
- He's starting all over again.
- You're not even here anymore.
- Stop.
Is everybody sad?
No, no, no, no one's sad.
It's gonna be a happy day.
Come on, we're celebrating.
Here.
I packed all your favorite things.
- Want some of these?
- Yeah.
- I know you like these.
- Thanks.
Before I met your father,
it was just you and me.
I never told you that.
Maybe you figured it out.
Sometimes I think you figured it all out.

I nearly lost you that night.
I nearly lost you so many times.
But that was the first time.
I called this man I hardly knew.
We met when you were just
a tiny, little baby.
Hey.
He came, and he comforted me,
and he stayed with me while we waited
to see if you would die.
He held my hand all night.
Mr. and Mrs. Foster.
The doctor made a mistake.
He thought Peter was your father.
He thought we were married.
A year later, we were.
It was difficult for Daddy's first wife.
But he didn't love her.
It was me he loved.
But he scares me now, Lou-Lou.
I can feel him.
It's like he's here somewhere.
Why is she telling me these stories?
All this stupid blah,
blah, blah in my ear.
I can feel him getting closer and closer,
trying to take you back.
Always whispering,
like she's going to break.
You don't have to listen.
She won't know.
She knows everything.
No, young sir.
Children think that about Moms and Dads,
but it isn't true.
We're going to the dark place,
the darkest place on Earth.
People will say that I've stolen you,
but that's not how it is.
You know that, don't you?
I don't think anyone will notice if I go.
Are you coming with me?
It's time for you to see something.
Where is it?

It's deep in a cave.
Will I ever be able to come back?
That depends how brave you are.
Dr. Davis, telephone please.
Dr. Davis, telephone please.
You couldn't have had us write something
slightly less ominous?
I'm afraid you're going
to spook the staff.
"Bad things will happen."
It's the only sentence
that appears in both letters.
Oh.
Dr. Pascal, I think you need
to come with me.
- What's happening?
- It's Mrs. Drax.
I'm his mother,
and I didn't approve any of this.
- Please, let go of me!
- Ow!
What's going on?
Now, look. I barely touched you.
She attacked me.
Who are you?
I'm Violet Drax. I'm Louis' grandmother.
I was told you'd be expecting me.
Okay, why don't we talk in my office?
You okay?
Why don't you go back
to the room, take a moment?
Mrs. Drax. I'm Dr. Pascal.
Come with me.
I'm not insensitive to how difficult
a time this must be for you,
but I must tell you that your behavior
today is unacceptable
in a coma ward or any ward,
for that matter.
Have a seat.
Ever since Peter disappeared,
she's been trying to stop me
from seeing Louis.
Have you heard from him?

No, of course not. Nobody has.
It's not like him.
But given what happened...
My son would never hurt Louis.
That's absurd.
Are you even listening?
He loves that boy more than himself.
That's the only reason
he stayed with her so long.
Did you know that Peter
was happily married?
Caitlin was a good woman, loving, kind.
And then that bitch came along
with her tricks and her lies...
Mrs. Drax, that's enough.
She lied to my son, to me, to Louis.
She's lying to you.
Did she tell you her mother's sick?
Or was it her father?
Did she tell you she was an abused child?
I don't want to hear any more of this.
Did she tell you she was raped?
That she's a natural blonde?
Uh, you could knock, Inspector.
Mrs. Drax, I'm sorry,
but I need a moment of your time.
Uh, we were actually
in the middle of something.
It's important.
Be my guest.
Do you know what happened?
They found a body at Land's End.
They think it might be Peter Drax.
It looks too steep to climb down.
We're not going to climb.
We're going to jump.
It won't hurt us.
I fell from this cliff before, and I died.
You can do anything.
And there'll be no pain.
I'll go first.
Hello!
Come down!
It's fine!

One...

two...

three.

They found your father, Louis.

He's passed away.

Maybe you knew that already.

I'm really sorry.

I think you're trying

to tell me something.

I'm listening.

Talk to me again, okay?

Well, this is definitely

a good place to hide.

I can't see a thing, and it's cold.

Do you get visitors?

Just you.

This is the place I told you about,

where I wrote down the name

of my wife and baby.

You have to help me find it.

How do I know where to look?

It's written on the wall.

Giant tubeworms...

- You hear that?

- It's Pascal.

He's reading to me

about monster tubeworms.

They're gross to look at

because one end's a butt

and the other's a mouth.

Do you know any good stories?

- The Little Prince.

- Blah, blah, blah. Too babyish.

I've read this book too many times.

Okay. Once upon a time.

Bats. I want something with bats.

Yes.

Once upon a time...

there were three bats...

one male and two female.

One of the female bats

was always laughing,

and the other female bat

was always crying.

And the male bat
had to choose between them.
- To mate with?
- Yes!
Yes.
You see...
he was in love with the laughing bat.
But he felt sorry for the crying bat.
She seemed to need him more.
He thought if he loved her enough,
he could stop her from crying.
Why was she crying?
Because it made people
feel sorry... for her.
And she liked that feeling
more than she liked jokes or love.
What happened to you?
I was happy
because I had a baby bat.
And that bat was the most amazing bat
in the entire world.
And I... loved him more
than the whole house.
More than the whole street?
More than all the fish in the sea.
But the baby bat had problems
and made everyone sad.
No!
No!
He was perfect and smart...
and strange...
and brilliant...
and kind...
and so loved.
And I was proud of of him
every single day.
I don't want you to die, Dad.
I know... darling boy.
I know.
The body is badly decomposed and bloated.
The coroner has given us a dental ID.
It seems he fell
from the cliff into the ravine
and was swept into the cave.

He suffered several breakages
and fractures.

There were large quantities of sea matter
clogged in the intestine,
which indicates he survived the fall.

He didn't die on impact?

Most likely pneumonia.

You have a ballpark idea how long
he was in the cave before he died?

One week. Maybe two.

It's Navarra.

Peter Drax did not write the letters.

No shit.

W... what time is it, Macy?

You scared me.

You were sleeping so deeply.

Um, it's, uh... 6:00.

I'm sorry, I should've woken you earlier.

But I didn't dare.

Was I snoring?

- No, you were sleepwalking.

- What?

You were sitting next to Louis,
and then you got up and came over here.

And you just sat here for a while,
and then you took out

your prescription pad

and wrote out a prescription,

and then you crumpled it up

and threw it in the trash.

Then you got up...

And you walked back to your chair

and went back to sleep.

I'm sorry if I scared you.

I'm sorry I didn't wake you.

- That prescription, can I see it?

- Sure.

I had a peek. I hope you don't mind.

You're going to laugh

when you see this, Dr. Pascal.

You wrote total nonsense.

Wait, wait, can you rewind?

Sure. Say when.

Okay, stop, stop.

You see? I'm holding
the pen in my left hand.
So what?
I'm right-handed.
May I see what you wrote?
Yeah, they match.
Okay, let's say for a second
that what you're suggesting is true.
Louis is controlling
your body from a comatose state,
an idea I'm sure you'll agree
is as far-fetched as they come.
How would a nine-year-old boy
know what poison to prescribe
and not only that, the exact right dosage?
That seems like knowledge
belonging to a pharmacist.
- Or a doctor.
- But by all accounts,
the boy is incredibly
bright and well-read.
This is not a sophisticated prescription.
Insulin, chloroform?
And this is not the work
of a medical professional.
Maybe he's trying to tell us something.
That he wants his mother dead?
Do you want his mother dead, Dr. Pascal?
Of course not!
You have a history of sleepwalking, Doc.
This behavior, while bizarre,
is explainable, and frankly,
it doesn't matter
why you wrote the letters.
You didn't know Peter and Louis Drax
before the incident.
You are not a suspect. You are...
eccentric, perhaps, but not a suspect.
Then why does this feel
like an interrogation?
Peter Drax's body was found in a cave
500 yards from where Louis was rescued.
So?
That doesn't seem

like a coincidence to you?
That the two bodies
were found in the same place?
Did Louis ever express
any anger toward Natalie?
Did you never suspect that she might
be involved in the accident?
What are you getting at?
Don't you think it's strange that Louis
would have me write that prescription?
Strange?
To who? What part? How strange?
Doctor, those letters
are coming out of your head
through your frustrations, fears,
repressed thoughts, feelings...
desires.
I'm sure you're right.
No, Louis probably
has nothing to do with this.
But what if you're wrong.
What if Louis is reaching out?
As his doctor,
it's my responsibility to help him.
If you're up for it, I'd like to...
I'd like to try something.
But I need you to be careful
because you are...
yourself exhibiting symptoms
that I'm familiar with.
And we wouldn't want the doctor
to end up being committed,
- now would we?
- No.
You comfortable?
Yeah.
Just want you to relax.
Follow my instructions.
Okay.
Would you raise your left hand?
No swinging clock?
Not for you.
Turn your palm towards your face.
Now I want you to focus on your palm.

Find a spot.
Notice the details
of that spot, the lines.
Now shift your focus
to the tip of your nose.
And back to the spot on your hand.
Close your eyes.
And lower your hand.
Fill your mind with a white screen.
And we're going to ask
your unconscious mind
to create a signal for "yes."
"Yes." Something simple.
A color... a logo.
And now a signal for "no,"
again, something simple.
Anything you'd like.
Only you will see it, nobody else.
We're creating a simple way
to have a conversation
between the conscious
and unconscious parts of your mind.
You will listen only
to the sound of my voice,
and from now on, you will answer only
with these signals, yes or no,
do you understand?
Is your name Allan Pascal?
Are you a woman?
Imagine yourself on a beach.
It's a sunny day.
Crowded with people. Children are playing.
A warm breeze is blowing off the ocean.
You can feel it on your face
along with the sun.
Waves are crashing in the distance.
And now you're on an empty beach.
If there is still someone with you...
on the beach...
I want you to raise your left hand.
Approach this person.
And when you're close,
you can lower your hand.
I'm now gonna ask to speak

to someone else.
And when I do, only they will answer,
not you, do you understand?
Louis?
Is that you?
It's me, Dr. Perez.
Can you hear me, Louis?
- Come on, it's time to get out...
- Louis?
Are you there?
Will you talk to me?
Would you like to tell me what happened?
What happened that day?
Rasputin came with us on a picnic,
but Mom said he had to stay in his cage.
Picnic?
What did you eat?
Food, duh.
Has your brain shrunk to the size of pea?
What kind of food?
Of course you would ask that, fatty.
Mmm, you want a list?
I bet it makes you hungry.
Sure. Give me a list.
We had bread and pepperoni and cheese
and beer for them and apple juice for me.
Mom wanted me to slow down
because she thought I'd get a stomachache.
She's always scared that I'm going to puke
or swallow a screw by accident.
That can happen.
I once ate a Phillips head by accident.
You ask her.
She'll tell you. I'm not a liar.
I know you're not a liar, Louis.
Tell me more.
About food? You want more food?
About anything.
There was birthday cake.
Chocolate. And you had to make a wish.
Mom wished that I'd be hers forever
and nothing bad would happen to me.
And your wish?
That my dad was my real dad

so he'd stay with us.

Did you tell them your wish,
or did you keep it to yourself?

Blah, blah, blah.

What does that mean?

It means blah, blah, blah.

Does that mean you kept it to yourself?

It means that I was going to say it,
but I didn't because Mom and Dad
started arguing about the candy.

Me first.

- What?

- Peter, I made these for Louis.

Louis, can I have one?

Can he have one?

No, you can't because...

I made these for Louis.

- Here.

- Stop it.

- What is your problem?

- Pack your things, come on.

- You always do this.

- Look at this, yet again.

- You know what? You're drunk.

- Oh, my god.

- Come on.

- Are we driving back with Dad?

Of course you're driving back...

We're not going home with you, okay?

- You're drunk.

- I'm not drunk...

Yeah, you're drunk,

and you're not allowed to drive like this.

What's wrong with these candies?

- Peter, give them back!

- What, I can't have one?

Did you put something in these?

- Stop it!

- Did you put something in...

What are you doing? Give it back!

Fine, fine.

All right, eat one. Eat one! Eat one!

- No, what? Stop!

- Stop!

What happened next?

I ran away, and she ran after me,
and he ran after her.

- Louis!

- Louis! Louis!

Louis, wait, Louis.

- Hey, buddy, wait.

- Stay away from us, Peter!

She dragged me to the edge.

It's okay, come here. You're too close!

Step back from the edge.

It's allowed, you know.

- You're too close, come here.

- What's allowed?

The right of disposal.

- Louis, come here. Let go!

- Louis! No, Louis!

Dad doesn't know the rules.

He didn't understand.

No! Wait in the car!

Why do you want to hurt him?

You need some serious help.

She gave him this huge push,
and he wobbled like a cartoon.

You can guess the rest.

He fell.

It could've been an accident.

I know a lot about accidents.

But... was it an accident, Louis?

Was it really an accident?

Maybe it was.

Maybe it wasn't.

Then what happened?

I did what she wanted, like I always do.

Louis.

Come to me.

What did you do, Louis?

I walked backwards.

She didn't have to help me this time.

I counted the steps.

Come with me.

It was only five steps.

It was easy.

One...

two...

three...

four...

five.

And then I thought there might be a six,
but there wasn't a six.

Instead of a six, I fell into the water.

- And I died.

Code blue on three!

Dr. Pascal, wake up.

Code blue in coma bay!

Repeat:

Hundred. Are you charging?

Get clear.

Come on.

- No pulse.

- Okay, 150.

Clear.

Clear.

Again.

Clear.

Yeah, we got him.

Okay.

Pascal made the mistake that all men make.

He thought that because Mommy

is so beautiful,

then she must be good.

But she's not good.

That's why she

has to live in a hospital now,

just like me, and now she has to tell

Fat Perez all of her secrets.

We, uh, we put her in a private room,

but she's responding very,

very well to the treatment.

Misses Louis tremendously.

Did you ever conclude on her diagnosis?

Munchausen syndrome by proxy.

Induced illness

is the correct terminology.

The victim abuses another,

usually a child,

in exchange for, you know,

love, attention.
When Louis was small,
she had actually injured him herself.
As he grew older,
he learned what she wanted,
you know, responded to her needs
in exchange for love.
She just had to be there, right?
He'd have an accident, and she'd save him.
And every time,
it would strengthen the bond between them.
She loved him, she hated him.
Couldn't live with him,
couldn't live without him.
Pascal has to live
with the choice he made.
Just like I did.
Live with the consequences.
There are always consequences.
Things work out in a funny way sometimes.
Not funny "ha ha." Funny unexpected.
"The island of Ceylon
disappeared under our horizon
during the course of the day, January..."
You shouldn't think, oh, poor Louis Drax,
because it doesn't suck too badly.
True story.
"Where on Earth
was Captain Nemo leading us?
And again, the ternal sea is not the road
to get us back to Europe.
'Who ever said we were
going back to Europe?'
'What do you think
we're trying to do then?'"
All my life, I've been waiting for this.
Nine years. Nine is my lucky number.
This is my ninth life,
and my ninth life is my best one.
Lots of stuff sucked before.
It's not easy being a disturbed child
or accident-prone.
Mom and Dad hating each other sucked,
and school sucked,

and being called, Whacko Boy, sucked.
Being in a coma doesn't suck, though.
You don't have to worry
that Mom is fragile,
and I don't have to miss my dad
more than the whole universe
because he's always going to be here
if I need to talk to him.
You don't have to stay.
You can wake up and live if you want to.
Do you want to?
I don't know.
It depends how curious you are
about what comes next.
Think about the world, Louis.
Think about all of its magic,
all the possibility.
But what's the point
of going back if you're not there?
I'm always with you.
Always.
Right here.
Right here.
Even if you can't
see me or hold my hand...
you can always talk to me.
I love you, kiddo.
All right.
Don't leave me. Please stay.
I don't want you to go.
I'm sorry, kiddo.
I love you so much.
I love you more than the whole house.
I love you more than the whole house,
more than the whole street,
more than all the fish in the sea.
Everything will be okay, young sir.
I promise.
You're the strongest man in the world.
I was hiding underneath the sea
Oh, I was looking out for me
To be a better man
Oh, 'cause the music
was so much louder then

To be a better man
To be a better man
Oh 'cause the music was so much louder
So much louder
So much louder
Was just me
The fish and the sea
Was just me
The fish and the sea
Was just me
The fish and the sea
'Cause I was born a noise machine
Wait I still, I was born again
The music was louder then
The music was louder then
'Cause I was so happy then under
Under the sea
Under the sea
I was so much happier then
Under the sea
Under the sea