

"Ceciliation"
Pilot Presentation

by
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"CECILIAATION"

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. BEDROOM - CECILIA'S FLAT - DAY 1

Simple furniture, no pictures on the wall, a TV on a chest of drawers. Two bodies entwined on a queen-sized bed. A comforter covers everything except two heads poking out the top. A man and a woman are in deep sleep.

Beside the bed, a boy, 3, is hard at work disassembling an alarm clock. Pieces on the floor and on his lap. He's cute as a button, with a bowl-shaped hair cut. With a screwdriver, he's halfway through prying apart the clock. A spring jumps loose and hits the woman's face. She jerks awake.

Groggy, she raises her head and sees the boy on the floor.

CECILIA

Adriel... what're you doing?

Adriel doesn't look up but continues to work the screwdriver.

ADRIEL

Playing with clock.

CECILIA

(realising)

Oh Adriel! Did you spoil Mummy's alarm clock?

She gets out of bed, steps on a broken bit.

CECILIA

Ow!

She hops about, clutching the injured foot. Adriel laughs as she falls on her butt.

CECILIA

Adriel! Why did you do that?

Adriel turns weepy. Cecilia softens and sweeps him up for a cuddle.

CECILIA

Sorry baby... sorry. Mummy didn't mean to shout at you.

She moves over to the dresser and picks up her watch to check the time.

CECILIA

8.30! Oh no! Adriel! You made Mummy
late!

(to man on bed)

Siong! Wake up! I'm late!

Siong doesn't react. Cecilia dumps Adriel on the bed and dashes into the attached bathroom. Adriel, stunned, starts bawling. Siong still doesn't stir. Cecilia pops her head out of the bathroom.

CECILIA

Siong! Get up and help me with the
kids! Don't you have to go to work
too?

Door slams and the sound of running water is heard. Adriel continues bawling. Siong raises his head. Blurry-eyed, he looks around, sees Adriel crying and promptly throws the comforter over himself.

INT. DINING ROOM - CECILIA'S FLAT - DAY 1

Cecilia bursts out of the bedroom dressed for work and carrying Adriel--who's still bawling--like a sack of potatoes. At the table sits Adrian, 5, dressed for kindergarten. He's being fed cereal by Nora, the maid.

NORA

Morning, ma'am.

CECILIA

Morning, Nora. You made coffee?

Nora points to a mug on the table as Cecilia hands Adriel off to her. Nora puts Adriel in a chair and tries to feed him.

ADRIAN

Mummy... can you help me with my
spelling?

CECILIA

We did that last night.

ADRIAN

But the test is today. Please
Mummy, please, please.

Cecilia picks up a peanut butter sandwich and bites into it.

CECILIA

(chewing)

Okay... Square.

ADRIAN
S-Q-U-A-R-E.

CECILIA
(taking a bite)
Very good. Circle.

ADRIAN
C-I-C-L-E.

CECILIA
Perfect. Sorry, Mummy has to go to
work. Quick, give me a big huggie.

Adrian lights up and throws his arms out. He knocks the bowl of cereal right into Cecilia as she stoops to hug him.

CECILIA
Argh! Adrian!

She runs back to the bedroom. Adrian cups both hands over his mouth as Nora begins mopping up the floor with a cloth.

CECILIA (O.S.)
Siong! Get up and help!

Cecilia emerges clutching a white tee shirt, jacket and handbag. The blouse she's wearing is soaked.

CECILIA
I'm sorry boys. Daddy and Nora will
take care of you. Mummy is so late
for work. I'll see you all tonight!

She runs for the door.

EXT. ROAD - DAY 1

An emerald Honda Civic weaves dangerously in and out of morning traffic and brakes hard when the traffic lights turn red.

INT. CECILIA'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Cecilia wastes no time in pouring out her handbag on the passenger seat. From the mess, she picks out her lipstick and starts applying it with the help of the rear view mirror.

Suddenly, cars are honking at her and she smudges her lipstick, dropping it in the process.

CECILIA

Ah! My face! Stop honking you crazy drivers!

She realises the light has turned green. She stomps on the accelerator and zooms off.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CECILIA'S FLAT - DAY 1

Siong still on the bed, crawls to the get the cordless phone from the bedside table and dials. When the other party picks up--

SIONG

Hi... it's me. Are we on for today? ... Great. Only thing is I can't pick you up. Cecilia's started her new job so she took the car... so 1 p.m. Spinelli's... Wear what?

ADRIEL

(reaching for phone)
Daddy... want to talk to Mummy.

SIONG

Hang on a second... Adriel, this isn't Mummy.

ADRIEL

Want to talk to Mummy.

SIONG

I know you do... but this isn't Mummy.

ADRIEL

Then who?

SIONG

Er... This is the... repair man... the air-con repair man.

Adriel looks deeply disappointed and about to cry.

SIONG

(into phone)
Hey... I'll meet you at one. Gotta go, bye.

As he hangs up, Adriel bursts into tears again.

EXT. URA OPEN AIR CAR PARK - DAY 1

Cecilia's Civic screeches into the car park and fortunately, she finds a lot and backs in.

INT. CECILIA'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

She glances about, making sure no one is around. Then she rips off her milk-stained blouse and pulls on the tee shirt. When her head pops out the top, She sees two teenaged boys walking past, eyes glued on her, sniggering.

CECILIA

Not a peep show! Move along!

She ducks down to put on her jacket. Pulling a tissue from the pack on the passenger seat, she wipes up her smudged lipstick, then hunts for the lipstick. She extracts it from under her skirt and discovers it's mashed. Cecilia looks ready to cry.

She scoops everything back into her handbag and gets out.

EXT. URA OPEN AIR CAR PARK - CONTINUOUS

Cecilia locks and sprints toward a four-storey building at the end of the car park. It's large and fairly new and made with donated money. We can see the lipstick stain on the back of her skirt.

INT. RECEPTION - FAMILY SERVICE CENTRE - DAY

The reception counter is manned by Wendy, 19, who looks like she's longing to be somewhere else. She's flipping through a magazine when Cecilia bursts in. Wendy eyes her as Cecilia straightens her clothes and hair.

CECILIA

Hi! Morning. Need to see the director, Mr Tai.

WENDY

He's not in yet. If you need a counsellor I can--

CECILIA

--Oops. Not a patient here. Let me start again. I'm Cecilia Chung. I'm the new head of counselling. The director's expecting me.

Wendy eyes Cecilia suspiciously. Cecilia checks herself and to her horror realises her tee shirt has Madonna's face emblazoned on it. She tugs her jacket close.

CECILIA

Spilt milk. Long story. Can I see the director now?

WENDY

He's not in yet. But you can meet Mei Yi first. She'll want to meet you.

CECILIA

Who's Mei Yi?

WENDY

(enjoying this)
You'll find out.

INT. MEI YI'S OFFICE - FSC - DAY 1

The office is stern and clinical. Mei Yi, large and fierce-looking, stands impassively as Wendy does the introductions.

WENDY

This is Leong Mei Yi. She was going to be head of Counselling but now she's not.

MEI YI

(irritated)
Thank you Wendy... you can go back to the reception. I'm sure you've work to do.

WENDY

No, I'm quite free at the moment.

Mei Yi gives her the evil eye.

WENDY

(gets the cue)
Think I hear the phone ringing...
(leaves)

MEI YI

So... you're Cecilia Chung.

CECILIA

And you're Mei Yi. Glad we got that cleared up.

MEI YI

What Wendy said was true. I wanted your position, I don't deny it. I think I deserve it. I am after all, a very qualified counsellor.

She indicates a wall covered with diplomas.

CECILIA

That's impressive. When I have my nervous breakdown, I'll be sure to get your help.

(as Mei Yi glares)

Okay... humour didn't work.

(more to herself)

Coffee would be so great right now.

MEI YI

I just want you to understand something. Mr Tai may be the boss around here, but as he is sadly absent a lot of the time, it has fallen on me to run this place. Without me, this FSC would be in ruins.

(pauses dramatically)

CECILIA

Right... I get your drift. Was there anything else?

MEI YI

(really irritated now)

Don't think that as my boss, you can bypass or run me over.

CECILIA

(under her breath)

No, that would require a car...

INT. MEI YI'S OFFICE - FSC - DAY 1

Back in the office, back to reality.

MEI YI

What did you say?

Cecilia shakes her head to clear the reverie as a knock is heard on the door. An elderly man pokes his head in.

MR TAI

Ah, Cecilia. Wendy said you were here. Good morning, Mei Yi.

MEI YI
Nothing good about it.

Mr Tai ignores this and takes Cecilia by the arm.

MR TAI
Come, let me show you your office.

CECILIA
Nice meeting you Mei Yi. We'll
catch up again and I'll explain the
meaning of the word "boss".

Mei Yi just glares as they leave.

INT. CORRIDOR - FSC - CONTINUOUS

Mr Tai walks Cecilia to her office.

MR TAI
Why don't I convene a staff
meeting after lunch and you can
meet the rest of your colleagues.

CECILIA
A great idea. Thanks, Mr Tai.

He seems distracted by Cecilia's Madonna shirt.

CECILIA
Um, spilt milk. Long story... Next
time I'll grab a better shirt.

MR TAI
I think Madonna is such a bad
influence... Terrible music and
such low moral values.

CECILIA
Cute-looking husband though.
(as Mr Tai frowns)
Right. Madonna. Evil. Won't happen
again.

He opens an office door for her.

MR TAI
When I interviewed you for this
position, I thought you were right
for this place. Please don't make
me change my mind.

CECILIA

I'll do my best to make you feel
you made the right decision. I
think you made the right decision
by the way...

She smiles but Mr Tai isn't amused.

CECILIA

Er, so I'll see you after lunch.

She hurries into the office and shuts the door. Mr Tai
ponders a moment before walking off.

INT. CECILIA'S OFFICE - FSC - DAY 1

Leaning against the closed door, Cecilia heaves a sigh of
relief and looks around. Bare room with desk, chair and a
sofa facing a wall.

She kicks off her shoes, slips off her jacket and sits on the
chair dropping her head to the desk.

CECILIA

This must be the worst morning of
my life...

(checks wristwatch)

And oh look, it's only 10 a.m.

GAVIN (O.S.)

Look on the bright side...

Cecilia jumps up and shrieks. A man's head has popped up over
the back of the sofa. Now he gets up, waving his arms to
placate her.

GAVIN

Geez, you're loud. Don't freak out.
I'm a counsellor here.

CECILIA

You scared the life out of me.
What're you doing here?

GAVIN

I slept over. This office has a
sofa. It belongs to the new head of
counselling and oh boy... I'm
thinking you're her.

CECILIA

Good guess. No bonus points.

GAVIN

I'm Gavin Lee. It's a pleasure to meet you.

(shakes her hand)

CECILIA

Tell me why you're sleeping in the office.

GAVIN

I want to say 'cos I'm dedicated to my job and I work really hard but truth is I went clubbing and decided going home and coming back here would rob me of two precious hours of sleep.

CECILIA

At least you're honest. I like honest. I always tell my kids: you can be stupid, you can be poor, but just as long as you're honest, it's okay.

GAVIN

I'm not too sure about the stupid part, especially in Singapore.

(as Cecilia glares)

Moving right along and changing subject, are you a big Madonna fan?

CECILIA

(crosses arms over shirt)

My husband's the fan. I just needed something clean to wear.

GAVIN

Good. Don't really like her. Her 'Like a Virgin' phase did nothing for me. I'm more partial to Destiny's Child actually. And Tanya Chua... I'm going to marry her.

CECILIA

Tanya Chua's your fiancée?

GAVIN

She will be... when I meet her... Someday...

(beat)

As you can see, I've some delusion issues I need to work through with my counsellor.

Cecilia smiles despite herself.

GAVIN

Well, okay... I guess I better
leave so you can admire your new
office. I personally recommend the
sofa. Very comfy.

He leaves, shutting the door behind him. Cecilia takes a good
look at her office and sighs.

CECILIA

I'll trade the sofa for a coffee.

FADE OUT.

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. CECILIA'S OFFICE - FSC - DAY 1

Piles of files on the desk. Cecilia's leafing through one with a steaming cup of coffee. Wendy blows in like a breeze.

CECILIA

Sure, don't knock, I wasn't busy anyway.

WENDY

Your eleven o'clock is here.

CECILIA

Ooh. Time personally delivered to me. I like the concept.

(off Wendy's blank stare)

My eleven o'clock? I wasn't aware I had appointments today. I'm just catching up on case files.

WENDY

Mei Yi said you should start right away and kindly gave you a few of her cases.

CECILIA

Mei Yi said? If you haven't noticed, I'm the one who decides who gets which case.

WENDY

Well decide quickly then. Mei Yi is seeing a patient right now, so is Gavin. That leaves--

(pretends to think)

--ooh! just you.

A beat as they exchange glares.

CECILIA

Show her in.

WENDY

Serena, please come in.

A teenaged girl enters. Dressed in black jeans and black tee, long hair loose, she's more phantom than human.

WENDY

All yours.

Serena stands at the doorway.

CECILIA
(getting up)
Come in... come in. Close the door.
Have a seat.

The sofa has been rearranged along a wall. Serena perches on the edge.

SERENA
You're new.

CECILIA
And you're perceptive. Let me try
to find your file from this mess I
call a desk.

She starts rifling through the piles as Serena fidgets and chews her nails.

SERENA
I don't have much time... I got to
go to school soon.

CECILIA
Which school do you attend?

SERENA
Where do you think? The
neighbourhood school. Do I look
like a Raffles girl?

Cecilia shoots her a look. Serena resumes chewing a nail. Cecilia takes the other end of the sofa.

CECILIA
Tell you what... forget your file.
You just go right ahead and start
telling me something about
yourself.

Serena eyes her like a trapped animal and Cecilia makes sure she's as far away as possible at the other end of the sofa.

SERENA
I'm Serena Lim... I've been coming
here for awhile now...

CECILIA
Good... go on. You're making an
excellent start.

SERENA
My sister is getting married this
Friday.

CECILIA

That's great.

(off Serena's horrified
face)

Or maybe not. It depends on how you
look at it...

SERENA

I'm supposed to be the bridesmaid
but I'd rather kill myself first
before I'll be her bridesmaid.

(beat)

If I gas myself in the kitchen
oven, would that distort my face or
should I breathe carbon monoxide
from a car? I read somewhere that
it can give colour to your cheeks,
maybe make me look pretty.

Cecilia is dumbfounded.

INT. SPINELLI'S - DAY 1

Siong hurries in, adjusting his tie. Mid-morning crowd--
couples, executives with computers, women sharing cake. A
woman, dressed like an executive, waves him over. She's
pretty and looks sporty. Siong pulls up a seat at her table.

JOSIE

You sure took your time.

SIONG

Adriel pooped in his diaper and he
didn't want the maid to change him.

JOSIE

I'm so glad I didn't shake your
hand. I can't quite picture you as
a doting father.

SIONG

It's a case of Mummy-isn't-here-so-
let's-target-the-second-class
parent.

JOSIE

That's what you get when you spend
all your waking hours hacking away
at the computer.

SIONG

You mean used to hack away.

JOSIE

That's right. Now all you do is
hang out with me.

She sips her latte as Siong takes her fork and helps himself
to her carrot cake.

JOSIE

Have you told her yet?

Siong shakes his head as he wolfs down the cake. Josie yanks
the plate from him.

JOSIE

When are you going to tell her?

SIONG

Soon.

(off her look)

It's not that simple. So many
things have changed. Cece's just
started a new job, we just got a
maid, Adriel is adjusting to her...
I don't want to rock the boat if
you know what I mean.

JOSIE

If you don't tell her and tell her
soon, she's going to find out on
her own... What'll happen then?

He reaches for her coffee but she clamps a hand over the mug.

JOSIE

You have to tell her.

(beat)

If you don't I will.

SIONG

Josie! You won't dare.

JOSIE

Don't dare me. You know I'd do it.

SIONG

Okay, fine. I'll tell her.

JOSIE

When?

SIONG

Tonight. Is tonight okay with you?

JOSIE

Yes.

She releases her grip on the mug and Siong sips from it gratefully.

INT. PANTRY AREA - FSC - DAY 1

Cecilia is making coffee. She puts a huge scoop of powder into her mug. Behind her, Gavin arrives and stops to watch as she scoops in another big spoonful of coffee powder.

GAVIN

Whoa... go easy on that stuff. You know what that does to you?

CECILIA

You don't want to talk to me unless my blood caffeine level is over the legal limit.

GAVIN

Tough morning?

CECILIA

You are so asking for an earful. Do you know a patient by the name of Serena Lim?

GAVIN

Suicide Suzie.

CECILIA

She has a nickname? Why Suzie?

GAVIN

Rhymes better with suicide.

CECILIA

Why does she even have a nickname?

GAVIN

Every month, she comes up with a new way to kill herself. I wasn't making any progress so Mei Yi took over. Not that I wanted her to but she did.

CECILIA

Mei Yi's handed the case to me. I feel like doing a Martin Scripps on her right about now.

GAVIN

Get in line... So what did Serena come up with this time?

GAVIN(CONT'D)

Scuba diving with an empty tank?
Crossing the ECP blindfolded?

CECILIA

It was a toss up between oven gas
and car fumes.

Gavin chuckles as he opens the small fridge to pour himself a glass of water.

CECILIA

Not funny at all. I think she
happens to be very serious this
time.

MEI YI (O.S.)

She's always serious. Why do you
think we keep making her come back?

Cecilia turns to see Mei Yi coming in.

MEI YI

I'm surprised you fell for her
routine. She's probably back at her
void deck smoking and laughing at
how she fooled the new head of
counselling.

Mei Yi waves Cecilia out of the way and starts preparing a cup of tea.

CECILIA

It's classic attention-seeking I
know, but this time there are new
circumstances. Her sister's getting
married.

MEI YI

Exactly where did you get your
degree from?

CECILIA

Listen here Mei Yi... We can have
different opinions on a patient but
there is absolutely no need to be
snippy about it.

MEI YI

Everyone thinks Serena's about to
kill herself. She's been
threatening for a year already and
nothing has happened. If you want
to impress us, please put in more
effort.

She punctuates her statement by tossing her tea bag into the trash bin and stalks off with her mug.

CECILIA
I think she doesn't like me.

GAVIN
Gee... what tipped you off?

CECILIA
That woman has a serious attitude problem.

GAVIN
Maybe you just bring out the evil in her.

CECILIA
Thanks, I do try.
(sips her coffee)
If only this day would end. You know how time slows when you're having a bad day? I'm like Keanu doing his Matrix moves right now.

GAVIN
The staff meeting will probably feel like a hundred years long.

CECILIA
When does that start?

GAVIN
(checks watch)
Oh, right about... now.

CECILIA
The fun never ends.

She takes a huge gulp of coffee.

INT. SOCIAL LOUNGE - FSC - DAY 1

An assortment of mismatched lounge furniture fills the room. People of different ages sit around expectantly. Mr Tai sits in a corner.

Cecilia stands facing them with her coffee mug.

CECILIA
Hi all... Very happy to be here. I guess you know I'm Cecilia Chung, new head of counselling.

A loud cough from Mei Yi which Cecilia ignores.

CECILIA

I've five years experience at NUS doing clinical studies, another five as a counsellor with a medical group and now I'm here... I have two sons... and a husband of course. He's very new economy... works for a dotcom and I'm very happy to be here or did I say that already?

A mobile phone starts ringing. The staff start patting themselves, checking pockets and handbags. Cecilia realises it's her own mobile. She pulls it from her handbag.

CECILIA

Sorry folks, just give me a second.
(into phone)
Hello?

INT. LIVING ROOM - CECILIA'S FLAT - CONTINUOUS

Adrian is sobbing on the line. He's in his kindergarten uniform and socks, his bag and shoes at his feet.

ADRIAN

How do you spell circle?

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION:

CECILIA

What?

ADRIAN

How do you spell circle?

CECILIA

Spell circle?

ADRIAN

Mummy you spell circle!

CECILIA

Okay! Circle... C-I-C-L-E.

She notices everyone in the room shaking their heads in sync. Then it dawns on her...

CECILIA

Oh no! I spelt it wrong! I left out the C! No, an R! I'm so sorry Adrian. It just slipped my mind!

ADRIAN

Last time I got all my spelling correct and I got a prize! Now I can't! I hate you!

He slams the phone down.

In the FSC, Cecilia is left looking stupid with her mobile phone against her ear. The only sound is Mei Yi chuckling.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CECILIA'S FLAT - NIGHT 1

Cecilia is lying on the sofa, feet up, still in her Madonna tee shirt. She's gazing blankly at TV Innovations on TV. A large unopened Lego set is on the floor.

The main door opens and Siong walks in. He's surprised to see Cecilia up and hesitates, trying to decide to approach her or not. Then he sees the Lego set.

SIONG

Hi. What's with the Lego set?

CECILIA

I spelt circle wrong.

SIONG

Excuse me?

CECILIA

Adrian had a spelling test today and I taught him that circle was spelt C-I-C-L-E and of course that was wrong and I ruined his perfect score and he can't get the perfect score prize anymore.

SIONG

(toes the Lego box)

And you were trying to make up? You should know better than to bribe him.

CECILIA

Don't lecture me. I'm a trained counsellor and I know bribing when I see it...

(points to Lego)

And this is... This is bribing. But it didn't work. He won't even talk to me. He wanted Nora to bathe him. He never lets her bathe him.

Siong falls on the sofa beside her.

SIONG

He'll get over it. Kids always do.

CECILIA

He didn't accept a hundred-dollar
Lego set. His perfect score prize
is a Ladybird book. Somehow I doubt
if he's ever going to get over it.

She leans in for a nuzzle then pulls back abruptly.

CECILIA

You've been drinking.

SIONG

A little, that's all.

CECILIA

What's the occasion? You got new
freebies for your website users?

SIONG

Huh?

CECILIA

Perfume. I can smell it on you. Is
that a new promotion?

She leans close for another sniff but Siong stands up
abruptly.

SIONG

I need a shower. See you in the
bedroom.

Cecilia is terribly hurt and puzzled as she watches him go.

EXT. PARK - DAY 2

Cecilia sits on a park bench looking forlornly at a bag of
paus on her lap. From a distance, Gavin approaches. He's
munching on a burger and bobbing to music on his ear
phones. He walks completely past Cecilia before grinding to
a halt. He steps backwards to where she is. She doesn't
notice him at first but her eyes soon travel up to his
face. Gavin plugs out one ear bud.

Gavin

(re: paus)

Staring doesn't make the calories
go away.

CECILIA

Wit... I like that in a man.

GAVIN

(sits)

There's nothing worse than a soggy
pau...

(beat)

No wait... I take that back. Cold
fries are really yucky too... But
let's not discuss my problems...
Let's hear what's bugging you.

CECILIA

I'm just sitting here thinking
about the state of the world. What
makes you think I've problems?

GAVIN

Oh I don't know... You're sitting
under the hot noon day sun...
you're not eating those incredibly
good-looking paus... and if your
face was any longer, you'd be
sweeping the ground with your chin.

CECILIA

Wow, you're pretty sharp. Have you
ever considered counselling as a
career option? You seem to have a
knack for it.

GAVIN

Wit... I like that in a woman.

Cecilia smiles despite herself.

GAVIN

C'mon... try me. The only way to
know if I'm a good counsellor is to
watch me in action.

Cecilia eyes Gavin for a moment as she decides whether or not
to share. Then...

CECILIA

Hypothetical question: what does it
mean when you smell a woman's
perfume on a man?

GAVIN

A woman's perfume...? Is this a
trick question?

CECILIA

(getting up)

Forget I asked. It's a dumb
question.

She walks off. Gavin hurries after her.

GAVIN

Either the said hypothetical man
is using it himself or he was
standing too close to a
hypothetical woman wearing too
much perfume.

Cecilia glances at him. She is grateful he's just answering
the question and not asking any.

CECILIA

Second hypothetical question: if a
wife suspects her husband of
cheating on her... what's the best
course of action for her to take?

GAVIN

I would suggest to this
hypothetical wife that she needs to
get more hypothetical evidence.

CECILIA

(stops walking)

What further proof do you need?
Don't you think spending all hours
away from home and then coming back
reeking of a lady's perfume is
proof enough?

GAVIN

No, Jessica Fletcher... You need
Hotel 81 receipts, movie ticket
stubs to afternoon shows, new
numbers in his mobile phone address
book.

(beat)

All hypothetically speaking of
course...

Cecilia is silent. Gavin realises all this is for real.

GAVIN

Look... just poke around little.
Don't let your imagination go wild.

CECILIA

I'm giving you seven out of ten for
that advice.

GAVIN

Only seven? It was at least 7.5.
Gimme another question. I can do
better.

CECILIA

No... I think two a day should suffice. We should be heading back to the office.

(starts to walk off)

GAVIN

Hey...!

CECILIA

Yeah?

Gavin is about to say something but changes his mind.

GAVIN

You're going to eat those paus?

CECILIA

I thought you didn't like cold paus.

GAVIN

You know what they say... Two free cold paus in the hand is worth four in the steamer.

Cecilia tosses the bag to him. Gavin catches it neatly as Cecilia walks on. He stares after her, then at the paus in his hand.

FADE OUT.

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. LIVING ROOM - CECILIA'S FLAT - NIGHT 2

Cecilia steps into the flat with plastic bags of groceries.

CECILIA

Boys! I'm home! Nora, can you help
me with the groceries!

From a bedroom, Adriel zooms over to her.

ADRIEL

Mummy!

Cecilia gives him a big hug.

CECILIA

How's my baby boy. Mummy missed you
today.

ADRIEL

Kor Kor make big spaceship with
Lego.

CECILIA

Really? That's great. Where's your
Kor Kor?

She looks up and sees Adrian standing close by. In one hand
he's got a huge Lego spaceship.

CECILIA

Hi Adrian. Wow, that looks
beautiful. Is that the new Lego
set?

ADRIAN

Yes.

In his other hand is an exercise book which he hands over to
Cecilia.

CECILIA

Your spelling book? Oh Adrian, I am
so so sorry about that.

(flips through book)

I know how hard you've work to keep
a perfect score and now with that
circle mistake you--

(double checks book)

--still have a perfect score?

Cecilia sees that "cicle" has been marked right and Adrian got 5/5 for the test.

ADRIAN
(gleeful)
Teacher Joanne marked me correct! I got it correct!

CECILIA
Er... yeah... hmm...

ADRIAN
It's okay right, Mummy? You taught me wrong but Teacher Joanne marked it correct.

CECILIA
Adrian... I know I taught you the wrong spelling... but a mistake is a mistake and you can't cheat like that.

ADRIAN
But Mummy... I didn't cheat. You taught me wrong. It's not fair.

CECILIA
I know it's not, but you can't have this full mark. You spelt circle wrong. I taught you the wrong spelling that's true, but I've also taught you to be honest.

ADRIAN
But it's not my fault! Not fair!

He smashes the Lego spaceship to the floor. Pieces fly everywhere.

CECILIA
Adrian! That is so rude! How dare you!

She grabs him and paddles his butt. He bursts into tears. Adriel starts to bawl too. A royal mess.

CECILIA
You go to your room and think about what you've done!

Adrian, still howling, scuttles off. Cecilia begins to cry.

INT. BEDROOM - CECILIA'S FLAT - NIGHT 2

Cecilia is sitting in bed with Adrian's spelling book. She stares at the misspelling of circle for awhile, then grabs an eraser and rubs it off. Imitating Adrian's handwriting, she writes in C-I-R-C-L-E.

Siong enters when she's done. She hides the book.

CECILIA
Hi... late night again.

SIONG
(not looking at her)
Yeah.

CECILIA
You know you shouldn't push
yourself so hard. You need rest.
And I need you. The boys need you
too.

SIONG
(undresses)
Look... I'm sorry if I haven't been
home much. Just a lot of things
happening.

CECILIA
I'm just worried about you that's
all. You know what happened with
Adrian today?

SIONG
Hang on. I need to take a shower
first.

He drops his jeans before going into the bathroom and closing the door.

Hurt, Cecilia stares at him, but only for a beat. When her eye catches his jeans she dives for them. She empties his pockets: hanky, loose change, sweet wrapper, wallet, mobile phone. She eyes the sweet wrapper suspiciously for a beat then rifles through his wallet.

Notes, credit cards, receipts. She checks through these but nothing out of the ordinary. She stuffs everything back into the wallet.

The mobile phone catches her eye. Picking it up, she fiddles with it and dials the last called number. After half a dozen rings, it gets answered.

FEMALE VOICE (ON PHONE)
Hi, Siong? What's up?

Cecilia cuts the call in a hurry. She starts trembling with grief and rage.

INT. CECILIA'S OFFICE - FSC - DAY 3

Cecilia is typing up case notes at her computer when Wendy barges in.

CECILIA
Knocking is such a virtue. You should try it some time.

WENDY
(holding up a pile of files)
I got you the files on Serena Lim. You made my clothes all dusty. You know how many files she has? That girl is psycho.

Wendy dumps them on the desk.

CECILIA
I'd appreciate if you don't go calling our patients psycho. If anything, I would call her brave... Brave enough to admit she needs help and actually come forward.

WENDY
She definitely needs help. Do you see the way she dresses? And the way she looks at me... so creepy.

CECILIA
Wendy... you're being very rude.

WENDY
I can be anyway I want. You're not my boss. I didn't have to get the files for you if I didn't want to.

CECILIA
And I thank you for the trouble you took. It was a big sacrifice to tear yourself away from the latest Cleo. Can I just ask you something before you go?

WENDY
(suspicious)
What?

Cecilia rounds her desk and sits on the edge to be closer to Wendy.

CECILIA
If ever you need any help or need
someone to talk to, I'm here for
you. I mean that.

WENDY
What're you talking about? I don't
need help.

CECILIA
Maybe, maybe not. Can I just ask
what your father does for a living?

WENDY
Why do you ask me that?

CECILIA
I suppose he's not home a lot is
he? I ask because I've met many
girls like you and I want to help.
Your mother works long hours, am I
right?

WENDY
You're cracked!
(heads for door)

CECILIA
Wait!

Wendy hesitates at the door, glaring at Cecilia.

CECILIA
Wendy... I'm serious and very
sincere. If you need to talk, I'm
here for you.

Wendy slams the door as she leaves. Cecilia merely shakes her head sadly.

EXT. CORRIDOR - HDB BLOCK - DAY 3

Cecilia walks along, eyes scanning the unit numbers against her Palm V. She stops abruptly at a door, checks the number, then rings the doorbell. An elderly woman, Mrs Lim, opens the door.

MRS LIM

Yes?

CECILIA

Mrs Lim? My name is Cecilia Chung.
(gives name card)
I'm from the FSC... I'm Serena's
counsellor.

MRS LIM

Another one? Are you new?

CECILIA

Yes, I am. I'm trying to help
Serena.

MRS LIM

Aiyah... You can't help Serena.
You're wasting your time.

CECILIA

Actually, I wanted to speak to you
too.

MRS LIM

Me? What for?

CECILIA

I feel it's good to get to know the
family... see the environment that
Serena is living in. It'll help me
understand her better.

MRS LIM

(doubtful)

I'm very busy. I've so many last
minute things to do for my eldest
daughter's wedding.

CECILIA

Sharon right? Serena talked a lot
about her.

MRS LIM

What did she say?

CECILIA

I can't reveal that... but I do
want to share how I feel about
Serena.

Mrs Lim eyes Cecilia a moment before unlocking the gate.

CECILIA

Thank you.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SERENA'S FLAT - CONTINUOUS

On the sofa is an evening gown that Mrs Lim is working on. Photos adorn the walls, mostly of a prettier version of Serena--it's Sharon, the elder sister.

CECILIA

You're sewing the evening gown?

MRS LIM

Yes... I want Sharon to look like a princess.

CECILIA

It looks beautiful. You must be very excited.

MRS LIM

Of course. She's marrying a doctor... Sharon always studied hard and worked hard and now she's marrying someone good. I'm very happy.

CECILIA

I'm happy for you.

MRS LIM

Not like Serena. I don't know what to do with her. If I'm strict with her... she runs away... If I give in... she keeps taking my money... I don't understand how I can have one daughter who's an angel and another who's rotten to the core.

CECILIA

I understand how you feel... And I want to help. Would you mind if I looked at Serena's room?

MRS LIM

Be my guest... Hope you don't mind the smell.

Cecilia heads towards the door that Mrs Lim indicates...

INT. SERENA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

There are rock band posters on the dark blue walls, a messy bed and a pile of clothes on the floor. At the small desk in the corner, Cecilia picks up a photo frame--one of Serena with Sharon. Sharon is in a graduate's gown and mortarboard.

Her hair and the diploma in her hands have been cut out with a pen knife.

Cecilia fingers the holes thoughtfully.

SERENA (O.S.)
What's going on?

Cecilia and Mrs Lim turn around to see Serena at the door, blazing with anger.

SERENA
Are you spying on me?

CECILIA
No... I...

SERENA
How could you?!

She bolts.

CECILIA
Serena wait!

Cecilia gives chase.

EXT. CORRIDOR - HDB BLOCK - CONTINUOUS

Serena takes off down the corridor, Cecilia behind her.

CECILIA
Serena wait! Let me explain!

As Serena hits the stairs, Cecilia catches up and grabs her arm.

SERENA
Let go of me!

CECILIA
Not until you listen to me.

Serena attempts to bite Cecilia but Cecilia fends her off without losing her grip.

CECILIA
I came to look for you... You weren't home.

SERENA
So you decided to check out my room?

CECILIA

Let me explain.

They fall to the ground. Cecilia sits on Serena to prevent her escape.

CECILIA

I wanted to find out more about you and meet your family.

SERENA

Why do you care?

CECILIA

I met your mother. Boy, if I had a mother like that, I'd kill myself too.

Serena is shocked.

CECILIA

All right... that wasn't funny. But seriously, meeting her... I understand better how you feel.

SERENA

How do I feel?

CECILIA

Inferior. Your mother picks on you, makes you feel stupid, compares you to perfect Sharon and it just drives you mad.

SERENA

I don't care.

CECILIA

You do care. I know you do. And I care. And I'm telling you your mother is wrong. You're not stupid or worthless.

Serena pushes Cecilia away and gets up to brush herself off.

SERENA

My mother says I'm dumb. My father says I'm lazy. My teachers all say I got no hope. Who are you? You don't even know me.

CECILIA

I know many girls just like you.
Ten years of hearing you're
worthless and stupid and you
begin to believe it. But nobody
can tell you how smart or dumb
you are. That's your job.

Serena regards Cecilia for a moment.

SERENA

Get off me.

Cecilia does. They both get up and dust themselves off.

CECILIA

I just want you to know that I'm on
your side. I'm not here to make you
conform or to get you to love your
mother or to improve your school
grades. I'm here only to help you.
I'm on your side. Remember that.

Serena eyes her, not knowing whether to believe her or not.

INT. SHOPHOUSE - CLUB STREET - DAY 3

A office with empty desks. Nothing on them, no chairs, not
even light fixtures on the ceiling. A cleaning lady sweeps up
scraps of papers without interest.

Cecilia walks in and instantly, her jaw drops. A beat. The
cleaning lady notices her.

CLEANING LADY

You looking for Mr Heng? He's not
here yet.

CECILIA

What happened to Quicksapes.com?

CLEANING LADY

Who?

CECILIA

Quicksapes.com. The dotcom
company? The online travel portal?
(off cleaning lady's blank
look)
The guys who wore tee shirts and
shorts all day... computers
everywhere and a big palm tree that
look liked it was running away?

She indicates the dusty outline of a palm tree by the main door--the sign has obviously been ripped off.

CLEANING LADY

Oh... that palm tree office.

(laughs)

They close shop.

CECILIA

When...?

CLEANING LADY

Aiyah... about two weeks ago.

Cecilia leans against a nearby desk for support.

CLEANING LADY

You want to buy the desk? Mr Heng is selling them \$50 each. Those people still owe him three months' rent. Too much.

Cecilia feels faint.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CECILIA'S FLAT - NIGHT 3

Cecilia is pretending to read a Reader's Digest but is preoccupied. Suddenly, she flings the magazine across the room.

The bedroom door opens then.

SIONG

Hi... sorry I'm late again.

CECILIA

(jumps up from bed)

Where've you been? Do you know what time it is? Oh wait... you have a watch. Of course you know what time it is. You just chose to ignore it to torture your wife!

SIONG

You know I work late!

CECILIA

Liar! Your dotcom closed down. Another crash and burn. Why didn't you tell me?

SIONG

(stunned)

How did you...?

CECILIA

I went to your office... It was closed! What happened?

Siong sits on the edge of the bed.

SIONG

Burn rate was too high... Not enough traffic... not enough revenue...

CECILIA

You lost your job two weeks ago and all that time you didn't tell me? Why?

SIONG

I don't know! I didn't want you to react like this.

CECILIA

I'm reacting like this because you didn't tell me!

SIONG

I hate that look you get... like what you have right now.

CECILIA

Why does everyone say that? I have no look!

SIONG

You do... And it's saying that you're disappointed with me. It just kills me when you look at me that way... that's why I didn't wanna tell you.

He turns away. Cecilia is speechless for a beat.

CECILIA

So you think I'm disappointed in you... and your solution is to run off with another woman?

SIONG

(spins around)
What other woman?

CECILIA

Stop lying to me. I know about her. I smelt her perfume on you...

CECILIA(CONT'D)

and the other night I re-dialed
your last call and this woman came
on the line... Your secret lover
right?

A beat, then Siong bursts in guffaws and rolls off the bed.
Hitting the floor, he continues laughing.

CECILIA

What's so funny! This is not funny,
Siong! Get up.

(yanks at his shirt but
stops short)

Wait a second... You're all dressed
up. With a tie too. You never dress
this way for work.

SIONG

(sobers up)

Cece... that was Josie you heard on
the phone. That was her perfume you
smelt too.

CECILIA

Josie? Your colleague Josie?
Engineer Josie?

SIONG

Ex-colleague to be exact.

CECILIA

Josie? Josie who's-coming-over-for-
dinner-next-week Josie?

SIONG

The very same.

She sits next to him, back against the bed, absorbing all
this. She studies him a moment. He looks sheepish.

CECILIA

The shirt and tie. An explanation
please.

SIONG

Job interview.

CECILIA

And?

SIONG

No word yet. They were only looking
for two engineers so the chances
are slim.

(Cecilia slaps him)

Ow! What was that for!

CECILIA
For not telling me all this
earlier!
(slaps him again)

SIONG
Ow! Again?!

CECILIA
That was for thinking I was
disappointed in you! How could you
think that? I love you, you big
dumb idiot. I married you. I could
never be disappointed with you.
(rubs his face)

SIONG
You mean that?

CECILIA
Don't you ever lie to me again.

SIONG
No ma'am.

CECILIA
And don't you ever stay out late
without calling me again.

SIONG
No, ma'am.

CECILIA
What am I going to do with you?

SIONG
For a start... Get off my hand?

She realises her knee was on his hand. She rubs it for him.

CECILIA
Poor baby.

SIONG
I'm sorry I lied to you. I should
never have behaved so stupidly. I--

She silences him with a smothering kiss.

FADE OUT.

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. HAWKER CENTRE - DAY 4

Cecilia is slurping a bowl of laksa. Behind her, Wendy approaches with a plate of chicken rice. She hesitates upon seeing Cecilia, then goes to the table.

WENDY

Hi.

CECILIA

(slurping laksa)

Oh... hi.

WENDY

Can I join you?

CECILIA

Plenty of room at this table.

Wendy sits down and eats her chicken rice slowly. Cecilia notices and waits for her to speak. Finally...

WENDY

You know... the other day... in your office... when you asked about my father...

CECILIA

Yes?

WENDY

He left us when we were twelve.

Cecilia goes into counsellor mode, waits for more.

WENDY

I didn't see him for a year after that... Mum said he died.

(beat)

But then he showed up out of nowhere... and he still shows up once in a long while but only to ask for money.

CECILIA

It must be hard on you and your mum.

WENDY

My sister too... He keeps asking for money... My mum hardly earns enough... but Mr Tai was kind enough to give me a job.

(beat)

How did you know about my father?

CECILIA

I didn't. Not really. But I've talked to many girls who behave just like you and all of them lack a father's influence.

WENDY

So you mean I can blame my father for my behaviour?

CECILIA

(smiles)

Not entirely... but it helps explain some things.

WENDY

One whole year I've worked at the FSC... and you're the first one to ask me about my father. Everyone else just thinks I'm rude.

CECILIA

(grins)

You are rude... but now we know why.

Wendy smiles despite herself. Cecilia's mobile phone rings and she fishes it from her handbag.

CECILIA

Hi, Cecilia here. Mrs Lim? Wait... clam down... I can't hear you... what? Okay... I'll be right there. Yes, I'm coming now. About fifteen minutes. Okay, bye.

(hangs up)

WENDY

What was that?

CECILIA

Serena. Tonight's her sister's wedding and she did something crazy. I gotta go help her.

INT. CORRIDOR - HOTEL - DAY 4

An agitated police corporal stands by the lift doors as they open to reveal Cecilia.

CPL CHEONG
Cecilia Chung?

CECILIA
Yes, that's me.

CPL CHEONG
Come with me. This way.

He leads the way down the corridor. They near an open suite door where another police constable is standing guard. Mrs Lim steps out and sees Cecilia.

MRS LIM
You're here! You better come and help!

She ushers Cecilia into the suite.

INT. SUITE - HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Sharon, in wedding makeup, is in an armchair sobbing as she clutches a wedding gown.

CECILIA
What happened?

SHARON
(hold up shredded gown)
She cut up my gown! She's insane!

CECILIA
Serena did this?

MRS LIM
Yes Serena! I think she's gone mad!

CECILIA
Where is she now?

MRS LIM
Bathroom! She wants to kill herself! You better save her... Because I want to strangle her!

CECILIA

I think you need to sit down,
take deep breaths and think happy
thoughts.

Cecilia heads to the bathroom and Mrs Lim follows.

CECILIA

I said sit!

Mrs Lim drops into a chair instantly.

INT. BATHROOM - HOTEL SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Serena, fully dressed, sits in a tub spilling over with water. The tap is still running and the floor is completely soaked. When Cecilia enters, she stiffens and holds an electric curling iron just above the water surface.

SERENA

Don't come any closer or I'll do
it!

CECILIA

Sweetie... have you never used a
curling iron before? You're holding
it all wrong. You want to hold it
the other way so you can curl
outwards.

(demonstrates)

SERENA

You're crazy!

CECILIA

This from a girl sitting in a tub
full of water with her clothes
on.

SERENA

Get out of here!

Cecilia takes a step forward.

SERENA

Not another step! Or I'll do it!

The two PCs appear at the bathroom door.

PC CHEONG

Ma'am... you better back off.

CECILIA

No you back off. I just need a few minutes with her. Back off!

The PCs exchange look then back off slightly. Cecilia continues to creep closer to Serena.

SERENA

I said stop it! I'm really going to do it!

In one swift motion, Cecilia hops into the tub. A tidal wave splashes over, soaking the floor.

SERENA

(holding up the curling iron)

What're you doing?!

CECILIA

I want to talk to you, that's all! I don't want you to kill yourself while I'm talking.

SERENA

(re: curling iron)

I'm really going to stick this in!

CECILIA

You'll be killing me too. Do you really want that?

(as Serena hesitates)

Five minutes... that's all I'm asking. After that, I'll get out. Okay?

Serena nods but keeps watching Cecilia carefully.

SERENA

No sudden moves.

CECILIA

That's exactly what I told my husband on our first date...

(beat)

I saw the dress. I must say you've good technique. The slashes were very straight and even.

SERENA

Everyone was oohing and aahing at Sharon. My auntie asked how come I'm not as pretty as her.

SERENA(CONT'D)

She said no wonder I have no
boyfriend. I wanted to kill her!

CECILIA

Your family isn't easy to live
with. Your mum can drive anyone
nuts. But you know... what you're
about to do will only prove her
right. You want your mum to be
right about you?

Serena glares at Cecilia.

CECILIA

I know how you feel. I really do.
It's like you're invisible and
everyone only sees Sharon. Sharon
is smarter, Sharon is prettier,
Sharon is loved by everyone and I'm
just like a shadow... that's how
you feel right?

Serena doesn't reply but it's clear Cecilia's words have hit
home.

CECILIA

So killing yourself just seems like
such a good idea. If nobody wants
me, I might as well be dead.
Problem solved.

(beat)

But won't it be so much more fun if
you could prove them all wrong?
Your mum, your sister and that
stupid auntie of yours... what's
her name?

SERENA

Vivian.

CECILIA

Right. Stupid Auntie Vivian. Won't
it be so much better if you could
show them that you're just as
smart, pretty and capable as anyone
they know?

SERENA

But I'm not smart! I'm not pretty!
And I'm not capable of anything!

CECILIA

Who says you're not smart. Your
mum? We know she's got something
against you. Your school results?
That's nothing.

CECILIA(CONT'D)

Look at Anthony Robbins. The man was a janitor and now he's a millionaire!

SERENA

Who's Anthony Robbins?

CECILIA

My point is... only you can decide who you are. Not Sharon, not your mum, not Vivian, not even me. Only Serena Lim decides who she's going to be.

Serena mulls over Cecilia's words.

CECILIA

If you don't want to stay with your family anymore, I can arrange for you to stay at a school hostel. Get your mum out of your hair.

SERENA

Really...? You can do that?

CECILIA

Anything to give you time to think and be yourself. Of course there're a few rules to follow and your mum must okay the idea which I'll make her do. Would you like that?

(Serena nods)

We can work out the details when we're dry.

A beat as Serena looks at Cecilia then at the curling iron in her hand. Ever so slowly, she offers it to Cecilia who takes it out of her hand.

SERENA

I'm wet.

CECILIA

Perceptive. Now get out of the tub.

Serena does so. Cecilia rises and steps out too. Except she TRIPS AND FALLS.

Serena shrieks as Cecilia hits the floor. But there's no electricity, no shock. Cecilia holds up the curling iron. Its plug was yanked loose during the fall. Cecilia and Serena look relieved. The two PCs appear at the door.

CPL CHEONG

Are you okay?

CECILIA

(ignoring him)

Next time... Just go for hair
rebonding okay...? Ow...

INT. RECEPTION AREA - FSC - NIGHT 4

A wet and dishevelled Cecilia walks in. She stops short when she sees Mr Tai, Gavin and Mei Yi gathered around Wendy at the reception counter where they are watching a small TV set.

CECILIA

Please don't tell me that was me
on the news.

WENDY

You made the FSC famous!

CECILIA

Aw man... And I look like such a
soggy duck!

MR TAI

(approaching)

I never expected you to take such
unorthodox methods! You put
yourself at risk!

CECILIA

Well you see, I wasn't thinking
straight... There was water,
there was an electrical appliance-

MR TAI

--Well done.

(shakes her hand)

I was right in hiring you. Well
done. Well done.

CECILIA

(surprised)

Thanks... You keep saying that
and I'll feel like a steak.

GAVIN

You've set the standard... raised
the bar... or as they say, spoil
market.

CECILIA

Next week, I want everyone
dressed in swimming gear during
business hours.

(as Mr Tai reacts)

I'm kidding!

Mei Yi rounds the reception counter and approaches Cecilia,
who stiffens. But all Mei Yi does is offer her a towel.

CECILIA

(taking it)

Thanks.

Mei Yi barely nods and stalks off.

MR TAI

You better get changed and go
home.

CECILIA

Thanks, Mr Tai.

He gives a wave and walks off.

WENDY

I'm going to call all my friends
and tell them I know someone
famous!

She picks up the phone and dials with a vengeance. Gavin
watches as Cecilia tries to dry her hair and face. She
notices him staring.

CECILIA

You're staring.

GAVIN

I'm just amused... The great Mei
Yi handing you a towel.

CECILIA

Yeah... I'm going to frame it and
hang it on my wall to annoy her.

GAVIN

I'll bring the hammer and nails.

They share a smile.

CECILIA

Hey... You know the other day...
my hypothetical problem...

GAVIN

Yeah?

CECILIA

Well... let's just say your advice was pretty shaky.

GAVIN

It was?

CECILIA

Yeah... What you should've said was the silly woman should trust her husband.

GAVIN

Oh. So then... everything's okay?

CECILIA

Well... Hypothetically speaking, yes.

GAVIN

(smiles)

I shall make a note of that.

CECILIA

Hey... thanks.

He smiles wider.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CECILIA'S FLAT - NIGHT 4

Cecilia comes in exhausted. She throws her handbag and keys on the table and spies Siong and Adrian asleep on the sofa. She kisses Siong on the forehead. He stirs.

SIONG

(smiles)

Hey, you're back. You were on the news.

CECILIA

Didn't I look terrible? They didn't give me a chance to look halfway decent. When we came down those cameras were everywhere and-

Siong shuts her up with a passionate kiss. Cecilia's smiling broadly when they part.

CECILIA

You two waited up for me?

SIONG

We tried to.
(nudges Adrian)
Adrian.

CECILIA

No, don't wake him.

SIONG

He has something important to tell
you.
(nudges Adrian)
Adrian, wake up. Mummy's home.

Adrian stirs and his face lights up when he sees Cecilia.

ADRIAN

Mummy!
(bear hugs her)
You were so brave Mummy.

CECILIA

Thank you... Daddy says you've
something important to tell me.

Adrian nods. He pulls out his spelling book, flips through it and shows Cecilia a page. It's the infamous test. The score has been corrected to 4/5 and "cicle" is now marked incorrect.

CECILIA

I don't understand... I added an R.

ADRIAN

I know... but I changed it back and
showed Teacher Joanne.

CECILIA

You did?

ADRIAN

I want Mummy to be happy. You
always say... can be stupid can be
poor but as long as you're honest,
it's okay.

CECILIA

I'm beginning to rethink the stupid
part... but come here.
(hugs him hard)
Mummy is so proud of you.

ADRIAN

I'm proud of you too, Mummy. You
were so brave.

CECILIA

No, you were braver when you went
back to your teacher. That was true
courage.

Adrian has the biggest grin and Cecilia hugs him again.
Siong looks on with pride.

SIONG

Mother and son reconciled. Cecilia
style.

(yawns)

A Ceciliation.

Cecilia just grins at him over Adrian's shoulder.

FADE OUT.