

EXT. HOLLYWOOD MOVIE PREMIERE - RED CARPET - NIGHT

A LIMO pulls up, FANS CHEER, PAPARAZZI FLASH photos.

SOPHIE Marsden, flawless ingénue superstar, steps out, glides down the red carpet through the swarm.

PAPARAZZI #1

Sophie, Sophie! Over here!

PAPARAZZI #2

What are you wearing?

PAPARAZZI #3

When are you coming back for that "Dancing With the Stars" rematch?

PAPARAZZI #4

How does it feel to be US Weekly's "Shallowest Person in America?"

Sophie flinches, then plasters on a smile, does a "Dancing-With-the-Stars"-esque spin, and keeps walking.

INT. TALENT AGENCY -BOARDROOM - DAY

Sophie sits in the hot seat with her AGENT, PUBLICIST, and MANAGER circling her like vultures.

PUBLICIST

It's fixable. We just have to make her likeable. And not just to thirteen-year-old boys.

SOPHIE

Ouch.

PUBLICIST

To Jane Q. Middle-Class Housewife, who loves family, wants a role model for the kids, goes to church --

SOPHIE

When did we arrive in 1950?

AGENT

Who do you think pays ten bucks a pop to go see your --

AGENT (cont.)  
(reading from US Weekly)  
"fluffy romantic comedies."

SOPHIE  
You said that's where the money is.

Agent tosses a script on the table.

AGENT  
This is what you're doing next. A friend at Fox is doing me a favor letting you do this role.

SOPHIE  
Letting me? But I thought I was the most sought-after --

AGENT  
Eye-candy, not actress. And eye-candy fades fast in this town. This is an Oscar role, a Doctor-Without-Borders chick. There's a dying kid in it; the housewives'll eat it up.  
(hands her tickets)  
You leave for Africa tomorrow.

SOPHIE  
Do I really have to do this?

MANAGER  
Do you want to save your career?

SOPHIE  
But no one really reads this trash.

PUBLICIST  
Read 'em or not, they all see the covers. We live in a sound-byte world, Sophie. For all our careers, we need yours to say something good.

INT. SOPHIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

In bed, Sophie reads the script, SIGHS, tosses it on the bed. She grabs the remote, flips on the TV.

ON THE TV: A PHOTO of her --it's a celebrity gossip show.

HOST (ON TV)

Sophie Marsden was voted number one shallowest person in America! Like we needed a vote. And while Sophie got her nails did, Bradgelina --

PHOTO CHANGES: To Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie in Syria.

HOST (ON TV)

--visited Iraqi refugees in Syria as Goodwill Ambassadors for the U.N. Hey, Sophie, maybe next time they'll take you! You could teach some of those starving children your bootylicious moves. Maybe how to find that perfect lip gloss.

CHANNEL FLIP: A romantic comedy.

CHANNEL FLIP: An infomercial.

ANNOUNCER (ON TV)

For three easy payments of only nineteen-ninety-five --

CHANNEL FLIP, FLIP, FLIP: A TELEVANGELIST gets revved up.

TELEVANGELIST (ON TV)

Jesus wants to bless you! Friends, Jesus is your buddy, your pal! He wants you to be happy!

SOPHIE

And for three easy payments of only nineteen-ninety-five...

Sophie clicks off the TV, frustrated and confused.

EXT. DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO - LANDING STRIP - DAY

Sophie exits the plane, struggles with carrying her own huge bags. Her Prada heels immediately sink in the mud.

SOPHIE

Ew, ew, ew, ew, ew!

MARK (early 20s), the uber-enthusiastic Doctors Without Borders (MSF) Intern, jogs up to meet her, all smiles.

MARK

(Congo accent throughout)  
Welcome to The Democratic Republic  
of Congo! I'm Mark, and --

SOPHIE

Oh, thank you.

Sophie drops her bags, tips him. He just looks at the bags.

SOPHIE

When we get to the hotel, I'm going  
to need a shower and a massage. Do  
they have shiatsu here?

MARK

Your agency told us you were doing  
research for your movie.

SOPHIE

Yes. And usually they put me up in  
the nicest hotel around.

MARK

There isn't a hotel around.

SOPHIE

So where am I going to sleep?

MARK

Where we all sleep. At the clinic.

Sophie fishes her cell phone out of her Birkin bag.

SOPHIE

Ooo-kay. Excuse me, I'm just going  
to make a quick call.

MARK

Your cell phone won't --

Sophie sees she has no service, screams in frustration.

MARK

Okay, so. The clinic?

Sophie stomps past him to the Jeep.

Mark smiles in amusement, grabs her bags, and follows.

INT./EXT. MSF JEEP/JUNGLE ROAD - DAY

Mark speeds along, hitting every bump in the dirt road.

MARK

Eastern Congo is one of M.S.F.'s top ten crisis areas in the world. The ongoing civil war has displaced hundreds of thousands of people from their homes --to live with family, in refugee camps, or even in the jungle. Are you sure you're okay?

Sophie looks sick as she tries to keep her hair from blowing everywhere. She only nods, for fear of puking.

MARK

(chipperly)

We have the typical malnutrition and diarrhea and malaria cases, but also, a lot of our patients were caught in gunfire or shot by the rebels or have severe burns from getting stuck in a house that the rebels were burning down. But don't worry. We're usually safe, as long as we don't go out after dusk.

Sophie gives him a weak smile.

INT. MSF CLINIC - DAY

Mark leads Sophie through row upon row upon row of cots with patients, mostly children, in various conditions.

Mark chatters on, but Sophie doesn't hear, only sees:

A TEENAGED BOY with his arm in a splint slowly eats something unrecognizable to her.

A WOMAN openly breastfeeds her ONE-YEAR-OLD as a BLACK MALE DOCTOR examines the child.

A TEENAGED GIRL washes the wounds of her YOUNGER BROTHER.

The rows of cots go on and on, for what seems like forever.

They stop where a young Asian female, DR. CHO (pretty, but makeup-less and in dirty scrubs, she's a stark contrast to Sophie) examines a gaunt-but-bloated TEN-YEAR-OLD BOY.

DR. CHO  
(in French; subtitled)  
You're looking a lot better, honey.

MARK  
Dr. Cho. This is -

Dr. Cho's upheld hand silences him; she focuses on the boy.

DR. CHO  
(in French; subtitled)  
In just a couple of weeks, I bet  
you'll be beating Mark at soccer.  
But to do that, you need to keep  
eating these five times a day.

She hands him the same unrecognizable food.

SOPHIE  
What is that?

MARK  
They call it Plumpy Nuts. It's a  
fortified, enriched peanut butter.

SOPHIE  
What's wrong with him?

MARK  
Malnutrition.

SOPHIE  
That's all?

MARK  
Twenty-four-thousand people die of  
hunger every day. But that's down  
from thirty-five ten years ago.

Dr. Cho gives the boy "five," goes to the next patient.

MARK  
Dr. Cho! Sophie Marsden is here.

Dr. Cho looks her up and down with disdain.

DR. CHO  
Find her a pair of scrubs that fit,  
and then she can come watch.

Dr. Cho resumes her work. Mark leads Sophie on, gushing:

MARK

She's amazing, isn't she?

SOPHIE

Oh, yeah, fantastic.

MARK

I've never met a woman with a bigger heart for people.

Sophie is shocked: "That's what impresses you in a woman?"

INT. MSF CLINIC - LATER

Sophie, in too-big scrubs, hair up fashionably, makeup flawless, finds Dr. Cho, who changes a child's dressing.

SOPHIE

Okay, I'm ready to shadow you.

DR. CHO

Great. Take this.

She holds out the used bandage; Sophie's face pinches up.

DR. CHO

You've got gloves.

Sophie pulls gloves from her pocket, puts them on, very gingerly takes the bandage.

SOPHIE

What do I do with it?

Dr. Cho points to a sack she has clipped to her waist.

SOPHIE

You carry this around with you?

DR. CHO

It wastes too much time to walk to the garbage. We've got over two hundred patients a day, and two hundred more we have to turn away.

(in French; subtitled)

All done, sweetheart.

As they move to the next one...

SOPHIE

So, what made you want to work with  
Doctors without Borders?

DR. CHO

Ms. Marsden -

SOPHIE

Oh, call me Sophie.

DR. CHO

I think you'll find you learn more  
by watching than talking.

Sophie nods. Dr. Cho moves on to the next child.

MONTAGE: EXHAUSTING, NEVER-ENDING WORK, DAY AFTER DAY

INT. MSF CLINIC - DAY

Dr. Cho listens to a child breathe. Sophie watches.

Dr. Cho starts an I.V. Sophie watches.

Dr. Cho performs minor surgery. Sophie watches.

INT. MSF CLINIC - STAFF QUARTERS - NIGHT

The internationally mixed staff, minus Dr. Cho, plays  
poker. The guys teach Sophie. She's loving the attention.  
Dr. Cho lays on her cot, alone, eyes closed.

INT. MSF CLINIC - DAY

Dr. Cho wraps a BOY'S dressing. Sophie watches. The Boy  
looks up at Sophie. She winks at him. He smiles.

Dr. Cho listens to a GIRL breathe. Sophie, in a simple  
ponytail and light makeup, makes faces at her. The Girl  
LAUGHS. Dr. Cho smiles.

Dr. Cho administers medicine to a CHILD. Sophie covers the  
SLEEPING CHILD in the next cot with a blanket.

Sophie, hair up messily, no makeup, passes out Plumpy Nuts  
to CHILDREN, giving them "five" and smiling.

FLASHES IN FAST-MOTION: Child after child after child.

INT. MSF CLINIC - NIGHT

Dr. Cho comforts a MOTHER whose DYING BOY lies still on the cot. Sophie watches --exhausted, makeup-less, even dirty.

DR. CHO

(in French; subtitled)

The time is near.

They bow their heads together. Dr. Cho WHISPERS a prayer. The mother CRIES. After the prayer, she hugs Dr. Cho.

MOTHER

(in French; subtitled)

Thank you. Thank you so much.

Dr. Cho CRIES, hugs back. Sophie watches. Dr. Cho looks up.

DR. CHO

We save hundreds, thousands a year.  
But there are some... sometimes all  
you can do is pray.

INT. MSF CLINIC - STAFF QUARTERS - NIGHT

Sophie and Mark sit on a cot, away from the poker game.

SOPHIE

How do you do it?

MARK

Let me show you what I do when I  
don't know what else to do.

EXT. MSF CLINIC - NIGHT

They walk outside. The STARS are absolutely incredible.

SOPHIE

(gasping)

This is so beautiful. You never see  
stars like this in L.A.

MARK

This sky makes me just stand in awe  
of the One who made all of it.  
Looking at this, I know that Someone  
is in control. And there's a reason.

Sophie wraps her jacket tighter and looks at the sky:

Through her misty eyes, the stars seem to DANCE.

INT. MSF CLINIC - DAY

Dr. Cho and Sophie arrive at the cot of the Dying Boy. His Mother cradles him like a baby and SINGS:

MOTHER

(in French; not subtitled)

Jesus loves me, this I know...

SOPHIE

That sounds familiar. What is it?

DR. CHO

Jesus loves me.

SOPHIE

(shocked)

What?

DR. CHO

Eighty percent of D. R. Congo are Christians. Going back three, four generations to the missionaries.

They silently decide to move on and come back later.

SOPHIE

How can she believe that Jesus really loves them, when He is letting her son suffer so much?

DR. CHO

In a world where death and suffering are a way of life, love is not defined by saving them from pain --

Sophie looks back:

The Mother rubs her Son's back, kisses his head.

DR. CHO (O.S.)

--but comforting them through it.

SOPHIE

(shocked again)

Are you a Christian?

DR. CHO

Since about a month after I got here. I came here to save them. Turns out, they saved me.

EXT. STAFF QUARTERS - NIGHT

Sophie and Mark lay on the ground, look up at the sky.

SOPHIE

You really believe in God?

MARK

Yeah.

SOPHIE

And that He's in control? Even of all of this?

MARK

I even believe that He is good.

SOPHIE

I've never met Christians like this before.

MARK

Our pastor always tells us to pray for the church in America. That many there have forgotten who God is and who they are in relation to Him. That they've lost the fear of God and misunderstood blessing. That many false prophets have made Jesus into a product to be sold.

Sophie connects with that one.

MARK

I am thankful I was born here. In America, you have everything. You don't need Jesus anymore.

Sophie looks up into the night sky, searching for answers.

INT. MOVIE SET - "MEDICAL TENT" - TWILIGHT

Sophie is the doctor now, in the movie. The surgery is intense --a BOY is "dying," his "MOTHER" by his side.

Sophie finishes sewing him up, takes off her gloves, turns to the Mother.

SOPHIE

I've done everything I can. Now all we can do is pray.

The mother hugs Sophie and whispers "thank you." Sophie cries softly --a beautiful moment.

DIRECTOR (O.S.)

Cut! Beautiful!

The Director comes up, sets his hand on her shoulder.

DIRECTOR

Sophie, I don't know how you got that emotion, but that was an Oscar moment. You've reached a whole new level of star, babe!

SOPHIE

(obviously emotional)

Can I take five?

DIRECTOR

Yeah, yeah. Everybody take five!

EXT. CONGO, AFRICA - OUTSIDE THE SET - TWILIGHT

Sophie walks past craft services, away from the techies and the cameras --as quickly into nature as she can.

She looks across the gorgeous horizon as twilight fades and the STARS begin to TWINKLE.

SOPHIE

(whispering)

I know You made the stars. Can You make something really good out of me? More than just an act?

As Sophie's eyes glisten, the STARS once again DANCE.

FADE OUT.