

## *Loyalty's Shadow*

When Len Learson, the fiery founder of Lear Pharma, demands a public declaration of love from his three daughters to determine the company's future, he ignites a chain of betrayal that threatens to destroy both his family and the town that depends on them. As ruthless power plays unfold inside Belvidere's largest employer, the ethical daughter he cast aside becomes the only one capable of saving the company—and countless lives—from a dangerous new drug, buried data, and a conspiracy that turns violently personal.

*Loyalty's Shadow* is a contemporary drama inspired by *King Lear*—a story of corporate empire, addiction, ambition, and the fragile bonds between parent and child.

### CHARACTER LIST

- **LEN LEARSON** – Founder and CEO (Chief Executive Officer) of Lear Pharma. Proud, volatile, sharp but slipping.
- **RAE (REAGAN) LEARSON** – Eldest daughter. A sleek, polished executive. Lear Pharma's Head of Strategy.
- **GWEN (GWENDOLYN) LEARSON** – Middle daughter. Head of Public Relations and Government Affairs. Charming and lethal.
- **DELIA (CORDELIA) LEARSON** – Youngest daughter. A pharmacist and scientist. Ethical, direct, quietly stubborn.
- **KEN DELVECCHIO** – COO (Chief Operating Officer) of Lear Pharma. Loyal to Len, bluntly honest.
- **GLORIA COSTA** – CFO (Chief Financial Officer) of Lear Pharma. Smart, cautious, a numbers person used to cleaning up messes.
- **EDDIE COSTA** – Gloria's son. Compliance officer. Empathetic, decent to a fault.
- **NATE COSTA** – Gloria's older, estranged stepson. Ambitious, resentful. Works in Business Development.
- **FRANKIE** – Maintenance supervisor at Lear Pharma: wry, funny, streetwise.
- **ALAN** – Rae's husband. A lawyer. Quiet, thoughtful, morally uneasy.
- **CONNOR** – Gwen's husband. Political operative. Aggressive, tactical.
- **FRANÇOIS DUVAL** – Representative of a French-based ethical pharma company interested in partnering with Delia.

- **BERNIE GOLD** – Local investor, long-time family friend. Nervous about risk.

## **SCENE 1 – LEAR PHARMA CONFERENCE ROOM**

A sleek conference room looking out over the Delaware River industrial strip. A banner: **“HEALING TOMORROW: LEAR PHARMA STRATEGIC ANNOUNCEMENT.”**

LEN at the head of the table. RAE, GWEN, DELIA, KEN, GLORIA, EDDIE, NATE, ALAN, CONNOR, BERNIE seated or standing nearby. FRANKIE is topping off water pitchers.

**LEN**

All right, all right — sit, stand, whatever you people do. We’re not saving the world today; we’re just rearranging the deck chairs.

*(Light chuckles. Some nervous.)*

**LEN (cont.)**

Fifty years. I turned a little pill-press in a Belvidere garage into Lear Pharma. We’ve kept people alive, or at least... we’ve kept the stock price alive. (grins) But I’m tired. Tired of regulators. Tired of shareholders. Tired of lawyers—

**ALAN**

I’m right here, Len.

**LEN**

Especially you, Alan. (All laugh-beat) I’m stepping back. Not walking away — I’m not dead yet — but it’s time to pass the keys to the next generation.

RAE and GWEN exchange a look — excited, predatory. DELIA watches, wary.

**KEN**

Len, we’ve discussed a transition plan—

**LEN**

Ken, don’t talk about it — watch it. I built this as a family company. It stays family.

**KEN**

Wait a minute Len. I’ve been with you a long time—

**LEN**

My daughters, Ken. My three brilliant... terrifying... daughters. Today, I decide who takes what. Who leads. Who inherits Belvidere.

**FRANKIE**

Should I bring in the crown, or we just gonna mime it this year?

**LEN**

Shut up, Frankie.

**FRANKIE**

Shutting up, boss.

**LEN**

This is simple. I want to hear — in your own words — how much you love me. How much you love this company. Convince me. The one who loves me most gets the biggest slice.

Silence. Everyone reacts.

**DELIA**

Dad, come on—

**LEN**

You want the lab? The patents? The whole riverfront? Fine. Show me your heart. Rae. You first.

**RAE** (*rises smoothly*)

Dad. Len. You're the reason any of us are here. You built this place out of nothing. I learned everything from watching you. When I was twelve, and we almost lost the plant over that supply chain thing? You didn't flinch. You taught me that loyalty matters more than any contract.

I love you. I love this company. There is nothing I wouldn't do to protect Lear Pharma. Belvidere wouldn't exist without you — and it won't exist without me.

**LEN**

Mmm. Nicely rehearsed. Gwen.

**GWEN** (*stands, warm, teary on command*)

Dad, I watched you miss birthdays, holidays, my high school play, because you were saving this company. Saving jobs. Saving lives. I love you for that. You gave your life to this. I want to take what you made and fight for it in Trenton, in D.C., wherever. I'll get grants, approvals, tax breaks. I'll do what needs doing, because you taught me that good intentions mean nothing without power.

She squeezes his shoulder.

**GWEN (cont.)**

I love you more than anything, Dad. I will not let your legacy die.

**LEN**

Mm. Good. Very good. (turns to DELIA) Delia. My youngest. My stubborn one. Your turn.

**DELIA** (*stays seated*)

No.

Beat.

**LEN**

No?

**DELIA**

I love you. You're my father. You don't need a speech to prove that.  
And I won't compete with my sisters for your approval like it's a marketing pitch.

If you want to know how much I love you, look at the years I spent in that lab instead of running off to Big Pharma. Look at all the fights we've had about drug pricing and safety — I stayed, because I love you, and because I believe Lear can be better than it is.

**LEN**

So you... won't say you love me.

**DELIA**

I just did. Honestly. Not like a campaign ad.

**LEN**

You won't flatter me?

**DELIA**

I won't lie to you.

A tense silence.

**KEN**

Len, she's the one who's always—

**LEN**

Quiet.

(to DELIA) You think you're better than them? Too pure to play my "game"? This is my company. My rules.

**DELIA**

Then give them everything. But don't ask me to pretend.

**LEN** (*voice rising. He's out of control*)

Fine. No pretending. You don't love me enough to say it, you don't love this company enough to lead it! Rae. Gwen. Between you two, we split Lear Pharma. So say I.

(Shock. RAE and GWEN try to hide their satisfaction.)

**DELIA**

Dad—

**LEN**

You? You get nothing. Not a share. Not a seat on the board. You can keep your lab coat... wherever you find work.

**DELIA**

You're disowning me? Over a speech?

**LEN**

Over disrespect.

**LEN**

(to DELIA) You want honesty? Here it is: from this moment, you're no daughter of mine.

A stunned stillness.

**KEN**

Len, that's madness. Delia's the only one watching the science more than the stock price.

**LEN**

You calling me mad, Ken?

**KEN**

I'm calling you blind. I've worked beside you forty years, I've watched your temper ruin deals, but this—

If you cut Delia out, you cut out the conscience of this place.

**LEN**

And what are you, my conscience's intern? Shut your face Ken. Shut it now....or you'll be mowing your lawn at home tomorrow.

**KEN**

I'm sorry Delia.

He exits.

**LEN**

Rae. Gwen. Step forward.

(They do.)

**LEN (cont.)**

Rae, you get manufacturing and R&D — Belvidere plant, patents, the labs.

Gwen, you get sales, PR, government relations, and the new expansion wing.

You both keep me on as Chair Emeritus. Symbolic. I like symbols. I like my face in the lobby.

**GWEN**

Of course, Dad.

**RAE**

Naturally.

**LEN**

You'll share power. Equally. Like adults. That's what you are.

RAE and GWEN nod.

**DELIA**

You're handing them the keys when you can't even see who they are anymore.

**LEN**

Get out, Delia.

**DELIA**

Fine. But one day, you'll regret what you did today.

She exits.

**FRANKIE**

Want me to take her badge, or do we pretend the security system is your heart?

**LEN**

Frankie.

**FRANKIE**

Right. Shutting up again.

Lights fade.

## **SCENE 2 – DELIA'S SMALL APARTMENT, LATER THAT NIGHT**

A modest Belvidere apartment. Boxes half-packed. DELIA is at a laptop, frustrated. KNOCK. She opens the door to KEN.

**DELIA**

Ken, are you sure you want to be seen with me? I'm not the most popular gal in town right now.

**KEN**

Hurricane Lear's heading north. I'd rather face snow.

Mind if I sit?

**DELIA**

Please.

They sit.

**KEN**

He's never been... gentle. But he's always had some sense beneath the yelling. Today felt different.

**DELIA**

He looked at me and saw a disloyal employee, not his kid.

**KEN**

He's scared. Aging is terrifying. Power slipping out of your hands... it makes people do stupid things.

**DELIA**

Scared or not, he just gave Rae and Gwen everything. Do you trust them?

**KEN**

Do I have to answer that?

**DELIA**

I already know.

Beat.

**KEN**

What will you do?

**DELIA**

François still wants to talk. Maybe I take my research to his company. Start something cleaner, smaller, away from the river and the politics.

**KEN**

Leave Belvidere?

**DELIA**

Do you think I should stay?

**KEN**

I think... you need distance. But I also think your father will need you sooner than he imagines.

**DELIA**

He made it pretty clear he doesn't want me.

**KEN**

He doesn't know what he wants. That's the problem.

He stands.

**KEN (cont.)**

I'm still on your side, kid. Always

They hug.

Lights shift.

### **SCENE 3 – LEAR PHARMA EXECUTIVE OFFICE – A FEW WEEKS LATER**

RAE's new office. Sleek, cold. RAE, GWEN, GLORIA, NATE. A whiteboard with projections and words like "AGGRESSIVE GROWTH."

GWEN

We can't keep paying out what Dad's been paying. We've got shareholders impatient for the new painkiller rollout.

GLORIA

We already walk a thin line with the FDA. The clinical data is... complicated.

NATE

"Complicated" is another word for "fixable." We control the narrative. We highlight the good numbers. Bury the outliers.

GLORIA

We can't bury anything. That's how people go to prison.

RAE

Nobody's talking jail, Gloria. Relax.

GLORIA

I'm the one whose signature is on the filings. I'm finding it hard to relax.

GWEN

Look, the trials show faster pain relief, right?

GLORIA

Yes. And higher dependency risk.

NATE

Which means repeat customers. Sorry, is that too honest?

GWEN

We have an obligation to shareholders and the town. Belvidere lives off this plant. If we don't grow, we shrink. If we shrink, we lay people off. Which is more "ethical"? Keeping jobs or wringing our hands?

GLORIA

You're not asking an ethical question. You're asking if we can get away with it.

RAE

We can. Dad did, for years. He just yelled louder than the regulators. We'll be... more surgical.

NATE

Speaking of surgical, what about Delia's old team? The ones who flagged concerns?

RAE

We restructure the lab. Make "efficiencies." Anyone too loud finds themselves consulting somewhere else.

GLORIA

This is exactly what Delia warned you about.

GWEN

Delia is gone. By Dad's decree. (Beat) Look, Gloria...The more you quote Delia, the less I trust where your loyalty lies.

GLORIA

My loyalty is to the numbers not landing us in handcuffs.

NATE

Maybe you need to rethink that loyalty.

They stare each other down.

RAE

Enough. Here's the plan: we fast-track the painkiller. Gwen, you manage the messaging. Nate, you coordinate with distributors. Mom—sorry, Gloria—

GLORIA

I'm not your mother, Rae. I just kept your father from bankrupting you.

RAE

Then, *Corporate Money Lady*, find a way to make the books sing without anyone hearing the tune.

Lights dim as they go back to work.

**SCENE 4 – LEN’S HOUSE – LATE NIGHT**

LEN’s living room. TV on mute, piles of old reports. Frank Sinatra croons faintly from a radio. LEN sits in his chair, restless. FRANKIE enters with a small tool bag.

FRANKIE

Hey Boss. Got a call something was leaking. Turned out it was just your prostate, but I brought the wrench anyway.

LEN

Funny, Frankie. Hysterical! (He turns down the volume on the radio) Can you please fix the radiator?

He checks a radiator in the corner.

LEN

How’s the plant?

FRANKIE

Shinier. Colder. Less yelling, more emails. Rae and Gwen walk around like it’s their coronation every Monday.

LEN

They doing what I asked?

FRANKIE

Depends on what you asked. If you asked them to keep the place human? No. If you asked them to make numbers go up? They’re learning....Oh, and everyone’s scared.

LEN

Scared of my daughters?

FRANKIE

They were always scared of you, so this is just nostalgia with better make-up.

LEN

Anyone heard from Delia?

FRANKIE

She’s not exactly sending postcards. Ken says she’s talking with some French outfit. Maybe she’ll move to Paris. Eat small portions and judge people.

LEN

Ungrateful. I give her a lab and she throws it away.

FRANKIE

You took it from her, boss.

LEN

She refused me. In front of everyone.

FRANKIE

You asked her to compete in a love contest. Might as well have asked her to sing selections from *Oklahoma* with a gag in her mouth.

LEN

You taking her side?

FRANKIE

I'm taking the side of the guy who used to know better than this. You're softer than you think, Len. You hide it under a factory full of Prozac, but it's there.

(LEN rubs his head, suddenly tired.)

LEN

I... I'm forgetting things lately. Meetings. Names. My own train of thought just... derails. I've questioned the worth of my life. Maybe I needed them to tell me. To remind me I matter.

FRANKIE

If you needed to hear it, you should've just asked....without the game show.

LEN

You think I was wrong?

FRANKIE

I think you were human. Which is sometimes worse than being wrong. But yeah, you blew it.

LEN stares at him, then chuckles weakly.

LEN

You're a terrible employee.

FRANKIE

Been practicing.

Lights begin to dim.

LEN

Frankie... stay on at the plant, will you? Keep an eye.

FRANKIE

On Rae and Gwen?

LEN

On... everything. And tell me what I don't want to hear. You're good at that.

FRANKIE

Sure. But you gotta promise to actually listen.

LEN doesn't answer. He turns up the volume on the radio:

*Announcer: New Jersey health officials say opioid addiction remains a critical concern statewide, with overdose numbers driven largely by fentanyl-laced drugs. Police and first responders report rising emergency calls, especially in rural and shore communities. The state continues expanding recovery programs and access to naloxone, which is now available free at many pharmacies. Residents are urged to seek help early through New Jersey's 24-hour addiction hotline.*

Blackout.

ACT TWO

SCENE 5 – COUNTRY ROAD NEAR THE DELAWARE RIVER – A STORMY EVENING

Wind and rain. A metal guardrail. Maybe a hint of Route 46 signage. LEN stumbles in with no coat, drenched, muttering. FRANKIE follows, holding an umbrella uselessly in the wind.

LEN

They locked me out. My own building. A security guard I've known twenty years asking for my badge.

FRANKIE

You did throw the badge at his head last week.

LEN

It's my name on the wall! Leonard James Learson. "Founder." Rae said, "Dad, maybe it's best if you don't come in unscheduled. You confuse people."

FRANKIE

You do have a talent for confusion.

Thunder.

LEN

Who's in charge now, huh? My girls. My smart, sharp girls. They smile at me and then have meetings I'm not allowed in.

FRANKIE

That's called "retirement." Most people go fishing.

LEN

They're changing things. Cutting corners. Ken told me. Gloria won't return my calls. Nate

slithers around like a lobbyist in a snakeskin tie. I can feel it. Something's rotten in my own house.

He screams into the storm.

LEN (cont.)

You hear that, Belvidere? It's me! The man who gave you health insurance and overtime and terrible coffee! I broke myself on this town and now — Now my own daughters think I'm... a mascot.

FRANKIE

You gave them the keys, boss.

LEN

I gave them a future. Now they're spending it like lottery money.

He grips the guardrail.

LEN (cont.)

Maybe Delia was right. Maybe I am blind. I can't see what's—  
(he squints) Is that... Gloria's car?

Headlights sweep across. SCREECH of brakes, a crash sound from offstage.

FRANKIE

Look out!

FRANKIE and LEN react.

Frankie pulls him out of harms way into the night.

Lights shift.

#### SCENE 6 – HOSPITAL ROOM – SHORTLY AFTER

A hospital bed. GLORIA lies bandaged, especially around her eyes. Machines beep softly. EDDIE sits by her, holding her hand. NATE stands tense near the door.

EDDIE

Mom. I'm here. It's Eddie.

GLORIA

I can hear you. I can't see you. (laughs bitterly) They tell me that's permanent. "Optic nerve damage." Such a neat little phrase.

EDDIE

We're lucky you're alive.

GLORIA

Am I alive? The truck came out of nowhere. No skid marks, they said. No attempt to brake.

She turns her bandaged face toward NATE.

GLORIA (cont.)

Funny thing — the night before, I told Rae and Gwen I was going to the board. About the falsified trial data. About the slush account. Next night, my brakes “fail” on Route 46.

NATE

You can't possibly think—

GLORIA

You always wanted a bigger piece of the company, Nate. You think I didn't see you whispering in Rae's ear? In Gwen's? Did you help them do this to me?

NATE

I would never— Mom, come on, that's insane.

GLORIA

I may be blind, but I'm not stupid.

EDDIE

Enough. The doctors said you need rest.

LEN and FRANKIE slip in quietly.

LEN

Gloria...

GLORIA

Well, my old friend. Look who the storm blew in.

LEN

They said... you might not want visitors.

GLORIA

You were never good at listening.

Beat.

LEN

I'm sorry. For... everything. For letting this get so far.

GLORIA

You didn't let it. You pushed. You taught them how to bend rules. They just learned how to snap them.

LEN

I was trying to protect what we built.

GLORIA

You handed it to the sharks and acted surprised when they butchered. (sighs) But I'm tired of blaming you. Rae and Gwen made their own choices.

EDDIE

Mom, let me go to the State Attorney. I'll bring the numbers. The records.

NATE

You do that and we all go down. You, me, Mom—

EDDIE

Mom didn't do this.

GLORIA

I signed things I shouldn't have. I rationalized. "Jobs, town, payroll." I'm not innocent. But there's a difference between being complicit and driving someone off the road.

LEN

Gloria, what should I do? I'll do whatever you say.

GLORIA

That's new.

LEN

I'm serious. Tell me how to fix it.

GLORIA

You can't fix everything you break, Len. But you can stop making it worse. Find Delia. Tell her the truth. Give her what's left of your power, while you still recognize your own signature. Eddie, you keep copies — of everything. If I go down, I want it to be for telling the truth, not helping a cover-up.

EDDIE

I will.

NATE

You're going to destroy the company. (Exits in a huff)

GLORIA

The company's already destroying itself. We're just pulling the fire alarm.

Lights dim.

SCENE 7 – SMALL CAFÉ IN BELVIDERE – DAY

DELIA meets FRANÇOIS with a laptop and folders. KEN is at another table, pretending not to hover. Rain taps the windows.

FRANÇOIS

We can fund a smaller facility here. Cleaner manufacturing, transparent pricing, partnerships with local clinics—

DELIA

I like “transparent” and “local.” But this town already has one pharma godfather. My last name is still Learson.

FRANÇOIS

Names can change... or acquire new meanings.

LEN bursts in, slightly out of breath, FRANKIE behind him.

LEN

Delia.

Everyone freezes.

DELIA

Dad?

LEN

I needed to... (to FRANÇOIS) Who are you?

FRANÇOIS

François Duval. We spoke once at a conference in Trenton. You yelled at my panel.

LEN

Believe me, if I yell at you, it doesn't mean you're special. I yell at everyone. (to DELIA) I spoke to Gloria... about the drug trials...about everything.

DELIA

And you came here to... what? Defend them?

LEN

I came to say... I'm... wrong.

Silence.

FRANKIE

Now...I'll bet that's a phrase you never thought you'd hear out of him.

LEN

I thought I could divide my love and keep the power. I thought if Rae and Gwen told me how much they adored me, it meant I wasn't... fading. I cut you out for being honest. Now the company is tearing itself apart, and I can't even read the spreadsheets without Gloria telling me what they mean. I'm scared, Delia. Not of dying. Of disappearing before I'm dead. Of becoming a photo on the lobby wall no one looks at.

DELIA

You already are that, Dad.

He flinches.

DELIA (cont.)

But I didn't want it like this.

LEN

Help me make it right. Take my shares. My voting power. Use it to stop them before they hurt more people.

DELIA

You disowned me in front of everyone.

LEN

Then own me now. Say you're my boss. I'll sign whatever you put in front of me. Ken will—

KEN (from his table)

I'll have the forms ready in 10 minutes.

FRANÇOIS watches, impressed.

DELIA

It's not that simple. If I step in alone, Rae and Gwen will fight. They have lawyers. Lobbyists. Politicians. We need evidence. Whistleblowers. A plan.

FRANKIE

Gloria and Eddie are ready to talk. Nate's on a bus to Amarillo.

DELIA

And what about you, Dad? Are you ready to testify that your own company cooked the books and fabricated the lab results ?

LEN

It wouldn't be the first time I confessed sins in a room full of strangers. (half-smile) Usually it was investor calls. But, yes. If that's what it takes.

DELIA studies him.

DELIA

François, if I do this — if I take over, clean house, maybe gut the company and rebuild it — will your firm back us? Not as a trophy acquisition. As a true partner.

FRANÇOIS

If you put ethics into your bylaws, not your brochures... yes. We will back you.

DELIA

Ken?

KEN

My loyalty's still where it always was: with what this company could be, not what it is. You lead, I'll follow.

DELIA exhales.

DELIA

All right. Then here's the plan. We go to the board. And if they won't listen, we go to the state.

LEN

You'll stand against your sisters?

DELIA

I'll stand for the people who have been hurt by this company. If that happens to be against my sisters, that's their choice, not mine.

Lights fade.

#### SCENE 8 – LEAR PHARMA BOARDROOM – DAY

Similar to Scene 1, but the banner is gone. Tension in the air. RAE, GWEN, ALAN, CONNOR,, several silent BOARD MEMBERS. GLORIA (with dark glasses) is wheeled in by EDDIE. LEN, DELIA, KEN, FRANKIE, FRANÇOIS also present.

RAE

This is highly irregular.

DELIA

So is attempted manslaughter, but here we are.

GWEN

If you're accusing us of something, I suggest you get a good lawyer first.

ALAN  
Gwen—

GWEN  
Don't "Gwen" me, Alan. We're in a board meeting.

LEN  
No. This is a reckoning.

He stands — shaky, but determined.

LEN (cont.)  
I, Leonard James Learson, am transferring my controlling shares, effective immediately, to Delia Learson. I'm resigning as Chair Emeritus. As soon as I sign these, I'm just... old. He signs a set of documents KEN lays in front of him. Gasps around the room.

RAE  
Dad, you can't do this. You're not of sound mind.

LEN  
That's fair. But I was when I gave you the company, and nobody stopped me then.

GWEN  
We'll challenge this in court.

DELIA  
You can. But while you're drafting motions, here's what the rest of us will be doing.

She nods to EDDIE, who connects a laptop to a screen. Trial data, emails, and accounting spreadsheets appear — projected for all.

EDDIE  
These are internal emails confirming that negative trial outcomes for the painkiller were labeled as "statistical anomalies" and excluded. Here are spreadsheets showing off-the-book payments to certain distributors, contingent on pushing higher doses.

And here's the call log from the night before my mother's "accident" — multiple calls between Nate, Connor, and a driver whose truck just happened to be on Route 46 at the right time.

CONNOR stiffens.

CONNOR  
You can't prove anything.

GLORIA  
You're right. We may not be able to prove intent. But we can prove negligence...fraud... concealment.

NATE

You're blowing this out of proportion.

FRANKIE

You tried to blow Gloria out of existence. Proportion's not really your specialty.

RAE

Delia, think. If this goes public, Lear Pharma is finished. Hundreds lose their jobs.

DELIA

Or we save lives by pulling a dangerous drug before it hits the market. We can't keep sacrificing patients to paycheck fear.

GWEN

That's very noble coming from someone with a French safety net.

FRANÇOIS

Our support is contingent on cleaning house. We won't inherit your sins.

LEN

Rae. Gwen. I raised you to be strong. Maybe I forgot to raise you to be kind. That's on me. But you're adults. You knew what you were doing. You chose the shortcut every time.

RAE

We did what you did.

LEN

No. You did worse. Because you had my example and still didn't learn.

Beat. RAE falters.

GWEN

We can still contain this. Issue a statement. Blame the driver. Maybe another VP—

ALAN

Stop. Just... stop.

Everyone turns to ALAN.

ALAN (cont.)

I'm a lawyer, Gwen. I've defended companies that lied, spun, and settled. But this? Engineering a crash? Cooking the numbers on a drug that could hook half the state?

He shakes his head.

ALAN (cont.)

I won't be part of it. If Delia takes this to the state, I'll testify for her.

GWEN

You'd turn on your own wife?

ALAN

I'd stand up to the part of her I don't recognize anymore.

A long silence.

DELIA

Here's my proposal. We self-report. We cooperate with investigators. We pull the drug, open our books, accept whatever penalties come.

We restructure — smaller, transparent, focused on generics and non-addictive treatments. We keep what jobs we can keep honestly.

I lead that effort. With Dad's shares, I have the authority. With François's backing, we have a chance.

RAE

And us?

DELIA

You step back. No operational control. You cooperate with the investigation. You may still face charges; I can't stop that.

But I won't seek revenge. Just accountability.

GWEN

You expect us to trust you?

DELIA

No. I expect you to realize you're out of moves.

RAE considers. GWEN seethes.

RAE

If I refuse?

EDDIE

Then I hit "Send" on this packet to the State Attorney, the FDA, and three journalists who still care about this town.

He hovers over the laptop.

Beat.

RAE

...Do it your way. Maybe you're the only one who ever actually believed the slogan. "Lear Pharma: Healing Tomorrow."

FRANKIE

Worst slogan ever!

GWEN

You're all cowards. Hiding behind her halo.

She looks at DELIA.

GWEN (cont.)

You want the company? Take it. See how clean your hands stay.

She storms out. CONNOR and NATE follow, furious.

DELIA exhales, shaken.

DELIA

Okay. Then...

(to the board) First motion: we vote to self-report, hire external auditors, and suspend all rollout plans for the painkiller. Effective immediately.

Hands rise slowly, then more confidently.

LEN watches, eyes moist.

LEN

That's my girl.

Lights fade.

## SCENE 9 – RIVERFRONT OUTSIDE THE PLANT – SOME MONTHS LATER

A calmer day. The plant behind them looks less imposing — maybe new signage, "LEAR HEALTH." Trucks smaller, fewer.

DELIA stands with LEN, who leans on a cane. FRANKIE is nearby, taking a break, sipping coffee. Workers pass in the background.

LEN

So now we're... what? A humble little pill factory?

DELIA

We're a regulated, audited, very boring company that makes affordable generics and invests in non-addictive pain management. We lost money. We won a little dignity.

LEN

The town's still standing.

FRANKIE

And all the employees landed on their feet.

LEN

Rae?

DELIA

Pleading, cooperating, learning. Maybe. She sends emails. I answer some.

LEN

Gwen?

DELIA

No word. Her choice.

LEN

I miss them. Even the worst parts.

DELIA

You always will.

He looks at the river.

LEN

Do you... forgive me?

DELIA

For what? For being human? No. (smiles softly) But I'm done letting your worst day define my whole life. We're past that.

He nods, swallowing emotion.

LEN

You turned my mess into something... not beautiful, but... decent. I couldn't have imagined that.

FRANKIE

That's because your imagination was too busy picturing profit margins.

They laugh.

DELIA

Come on. Board meeting in twenty. Try not to insult anyone's mother this time.

LEN

No promises.

They start to walk back toward the plant. LEN pauses, looking at the building.

LEN (softly)

Lear Pharma. No... Lear Health. Maybe I finally named it right.

He offers DELIA his arm. She takes it. They enter.

Lights dim, leaving only the sound of the river and a distant, softer factory hum.

Blackout.