

STILL LIFE

Pilot Script

By

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TEASER

A rich AQUAMARINE, thick like fluid, appears to ripple slightly from a breeze.

The VOICE OVER of an upbeat, down-to-earth YOUNG MAN begins...

YOUNG MAN (V.O.)

I can see things differently now. I see with music; I see in strokes of color; I see at different speeds. I see life like it's a work of art. -

Then a TAXI CAB bursts through the fluid - beautifully, almost like the stop-motion explosive bloom of a flower.

YOUNG MAN (CONT'D)

- But most of all, I see things I never saw before.

(beat)

Man, do I ever.

EXT. STREET - PALO ALTO, CA -- EVENING

The taxi-cab winds its way through this bucolic neighborhood south of San Francisco.

Inside, MAX MORGAN (21) watches the scenery roll by. Max is a beautiful concert of darkness and light. He's dangerous and vulnerable, jaded and innocent, confused and certain. He's incredible looking, incredible to watch.

The cab pulls to the curb outside a Victorian style house.

EXT. MORGAN HOUSE -- EVENING

Max digs out some dollars and gets out. He carries a stuffed back pack, a battered skateboard and a well used camera.

YOUNG MAN (V.O.)

I'd been gone a year, but in some ways I'd never left. Of course, in one way I'd never be back.

Max pauses at the front door to take it all in. Something's going on. This is not your average home-coming. He leans his board against the wall and opens the door.

INT. HOUSE -- EVENING

Max enters. It's not an empty house. Someone's playing the PIANO. In the KITCHEN adults are having a conversation.

Max heads upstairs where a GIRL IS SINGING. She has a beautiful voice - but it's odd hearing it alone, without music.

Max stops at a BEDROOM and sees his 19 year old sister EMILY lying on her bed listening to music thru her I-Pod. She doesn't see Max and he doesn't try to get her attention before he moves on down the hall.

INT. EMILY'S ROOM -- EVENING

We stay with Emily. She has a haunting beauty about her.

YOUNG MAN (V.O.)

My sister, Emily. She's had a hard year. A lost year really. She's missed me. Missed the connection we had. She needs connection, otherwise she just drifts. Sometimes into places she doesn't need to be.

INT. HALLWAY -- DAY

Max pauses outside a bathroom door. Inside the bathroom we can hear WATER RUNNING. He KNOCKS.

MAX

Daisy...? You in there, Bad Girl?

No answer. He turns and enters another room.

INT. MAX'S ROOM -- EVENING

Max enters the room he grew up in and puts down his stuff.

He sits. Exhales some fatigue.

INT. KITCHEN -- EVENING

We find a woman, CHARLOTTE MORGAN, in her 40's, passionate, youthful and stunning - standing at a kitchen table cluttered with documents. She has that air about her - like American royalty - but that's not her thing. She has a cause.

She's with TWO ADULTS having a lively debate under the VOICE OVER.

YOUNG MAN (V.O.)

Mom wanted to make changes. She'd started the year fighting for gun control, or bullet control. Any kind of control. It was one of those things where you start out trying to fix something and discover how many other things are broken.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY -- EVENING

And then we meet DAISY. She pops out of the bathroom with a towel around her head. She's the youngest. 16. She is part Amelie and part Lolita. A beauty.

She sees something and can't believe her eyes:

DAISY

Max?

In his room, Max swivels his chair and smiles a little.

MAX

Hi Daisy.

DAISY

Hi Max.

Daisy leaps into his arms and hugs him like crazy. She could cry she's so happy.

YOUNG MAN (V.O.)

My baby sister Daisy and I still talk all the time. This started when I went to college when she was 11. She thinks I hear her no matter where I am.

Then:

DAISY

(to Max)

Do Mom and Dad know you're back...?

INT. EMILY'S ROOM -- DAY

Emily's still singing when Max and Daisy enter. She stops suddenly when she sees him.

EMILY

...Where the hell you been?

INT. HOUSE -- EVENING

Downstairs someone is still playing piano. Night is falling.

Charlotte is showing her colleagues to the door.

ADULT MALE 1

You'd have to jump right in first thing tomorrow.

ADULT WOMAN 1

We've already spoken to your father. You'd need him. This is a little out of our league.

CHARLOTTE

You guys, I haven't even made a decision, ok? Now go home.

As they head down the front steps outside, Charlotte sees Max's skateboard and the blood drains from her face. She turns and there is Max. At the stairs with his sisters.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Where is he?

MAX

I'm doing okay Mom, thanks for asking.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

We now see the source of the Piano. It's being played by their father, BEN MORGAN (40s). He is completely absorbed in his playing, oblivious to the world. He's still a young man, handsome and vibrant. Cool. An evolved man's man.

YOUNG MAN (V.O.)

My Dad, Ben Morgan, is like no one I've ever met. Mom fell in love with him when she saw him in the museum looking at a painting. It was the way he looked at it that got her. He looked at her the same way. Like she was a masterpiece.

Behind Ben his family files in. We move in tight on Max, now holding his back-pack.

YOUNG MAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And that's me. No, not the handsome, brooding guy with the back-pack. That's my brother Max.

Instinctively, Ben stops playing. He turns to face his family...

YOUNG MAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I'm in the back-pack.

...Max unzips his back-pack and takes out an URN and places it on the mantle.

YOUNG MAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

My name is Jake Morgan. Tomorrow is the one year anniversary of my death.

Jake Morgan is the voice of this show. We will see the world through his eyes, and so the visual quality of the show at times will indeed look like a work of art.

END OF TEASER

ACT TWO

Again, a rich AQUAMARINE, thick like fluid, appears to ripple slightly from a breeze. Jake's voice...

JAKE (V.O.)

In college I was pre-law. I'd picked out an engagement ring for Maggie even though we'd decided to wait until graduation to get married.

Then we realize it's not fluid at all, but fabric. A shirt. Part of a uniform being buttoned. A name tag: MORGAN. A badge. A gun. A POLICEMAN.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Maggie was going to open a gallery. I was going to go to law school, then maybe into politics or environmental law. We were gonna wait on having kids. We had a dog. He'd run with me on the mountain bike trails.

We're in a DRESSING ROOM at a POLICE PRECINCT.

And we see a handsome face: a sureness about it, one that wins us over instantly. But young, almost too young to be a cop. This is JAKE MORGAN (22).

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The day things changed was 9/11/2001. I think everyone changed that day. Me, I decided to become a cop. Like my dad.

Jake looks at himself in a mirror. He looks perfect.

Jake is nudged on the shoulder. He turns to his father, Ben. Plain clothed. A detective. Full of pride for his son.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Dad didn't have to say anything. I could see it in his eyes. He was the only one in the family who didn't think I was making a terrible mistake.

Ben and Jake tap fists. A gesture of good luck.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

It was my first day on the job.

And we--

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. ALLEY WAY -- DAY

Jake sprinting, gun drawn, towards a blind corner. He stops there, back against the wall. His PARTNER behind him.

The alley forks in two directions here. Jake goes one way. The Partner the other.

We stay with Jake. He comes to a dead end. No one there.

He turns. He hears a flutter over his pounding chest. A pigeon? No, it's MONEY, cash, spinning down from above like pieces of confetti.

Jake looks up, blinded by the bright blue sky. He raises his gun to an unseen target somewhere in the blown out twist of pipes and fire escapes.

JAKE

Don't move.

Pause. Then, BANG! Jake ducks way too late. But he's lucky. The bullet missed him. It feels surreal. Then there's THE GUY'S VOICE.

THE GUY

Shit, shit! I didn't-- The thing just went off. I didn't--

He's 30' up on a fire ladder. A punk-ass kid with a gun. Panicked. Tweaky. A bad combination.

JAKE

Put down the gun!

THE GUY

That was an accident!

Jake shields his eyes to try and get a bead on The Guy. His gun arcing back and forth, scanning for the target.

JAKE

Put it down!

THE GUY

Don't shoot me! This wasn't my idea.

JAKE

Put down your gun!

Jake zeroes in on him.

THE GUY

Don't point that thing at me! Don't do that!

And BANG. The gun fires.

The world SMASHES TO WHITE.

THE GUY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Hey, no! Hey-hey, no! NO!

His voice GROWS DISTANT.

A beat. Then a telephone begins to RING.

JAKE (V.O.)
The first familiar voice I heard was
Mom's.

CHARLOTTE (O.S.)
Aren't you going to get that?

JAKE (V.O.)
— And then I realized I could see.

EXT. PATIO - MORGAN HOUSE -- DAY

Charlotte has a bemused smile on her face. She's at an easel, where she's painting. The image of her isn't quite frozen, just moving super-slow. A beautiful spirit.

CHARLOTTE (O.S.)
Daisy?

Daisy looks up from a magazine. Her image is almost frozen too. A face with many lessons still to learn.

Then the images snap into real time.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)
Are you going to answer the phone?

DAISY
I don't want to talk to what's his
name.

CHARLOTTE
Who is what's his name?

DAISY
The guy with the limp.

CHARLOTTE
Who's the guy with the limp?

DAISY
What's his name.

Charlotte smiles and takes the cordless phone from Daisy.

CHARLOTTE

(bemused)

Daisy.

(then, into phone)

Hello...? Hey, honey!... Ben...?

And here she gets the news of the death of her son. Her legs begin to give. She sits down on the ground. The phone drops into her lap.

Daisy knows in an instant. Daughter of a cop. Sister now, too.

DAISY

Mom...?

CHARLOTTE

...Jake's dead.

Two horrible words. Daisy's head teeters on her neck, as though it would fall off if she moved.

We PRELAP--

A GUY'S VOICE (O.S.)

You guys ready!?

SEVERAL EXCITED VOICES AD-LIB "Yeahs" and "Yes's."

A GUY'S VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Emily...?

CUT TO:

EXT. DOCK ON A LAKE -- DAY

We're close on a pair of lips, flushed red by cold weather. The lower lip is bent by her teeth as she thinks. The image slows way down, almost to a stop.

JAKE (V.O.)

Emily was away at college in New York. Freshman year. She never went back after winter break. We were best friends.

Then the mouth explodes into a smile. We pull back to reveal Emily standing on a dock in her underwear, freezing her ass off.

EMILY

I'm ready. Let's GO!!!!

Emily starts to run down the dock along with her FRIENDS stripped to their undies. They all take flight and splash down into the water. They swim as fast as they can to the nearby SHORE and sprint for their towels.

Exhilarated, frozen.

Emily's still smiling as she reaches for her BACK-PACK to get her ringing CELL PHONE. She checks the caller ID, then answers:

EMILY (CONT'D)

Yes Mom, I'm studying really hard...

Beat. Her face changes, as abruptly as a slide show, from one person to another. Emily before and after The News.

INT. DARKROOM -- DAY

As a wet piece of photograph paper is moved from one chemical bath to another an IMAGE of Max begins to develop. An enigmatic smile on his face.

JAKE (V.O.)

In 10th grade Max tested in the 90th percentile in the state of California. He never finished high school. Never said why. Max rarely said why he did anything.

There's someone behind Max in the photo, a blurred out guy. The tongs poke at the blur. For a second it looks like it might be becoming Jake.

And suddenly light invades the room and the image disappears.

The real MAX looks up from the blank paper. Pissed. You don't just come barging into a darkroom...

It's Daisy, with Charlotte behind her.

INT. PRECINCT -- DAY

Two burnt-out candles, one the number "1" the other a "9" stand in an uneaten cake. The inscription: "19 and counting. Congrats, Ben."

JAKE (V.O.)

The timing could not have been worse. It was a special day. I'd chosen to start my career on the same day my Dad did 19 years before. So every year we'd share an anniversary.

Someone moves the cake away. Around the room, COPS and DETECTIVES stand or sit in stunned, respectful silence.

We move across a cluttered desk, a name placard: "Detective Morgan." And onto Ben.

A hand is placed on his shoulder. An attractive woman. His partner. ANNA.

ANNA

Let me take you home, Ben.

EXT. MORGAN HOUSE -- DAY

Ben and Charlotte exit the front door and head for a LIMO that idles out front. They are dressed for a funeral.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORGAN HOUSE -- DAY

Daisy and Emily look at Max, who's dressed in a suit.

EMILY

Limousine's here, Max.

MAX

I'm gonna take my own car.

DAISY

Can I ride with you?

MAX

I kinda want to be alone, Daze.

EMILY

Want us to get the--

Her eyes flit to an URN on the mantel.

MAX

I'll bring it.

Emily loops her arm through Daisy's and the sister's exit. Max sits silently.

JAKE (V.O.)

I'm not a ghost. You can't see me or touch me or hear me. I don't have a form but I know where I am when I'm there.

After a moment, Max stands and walks over to look out the window where--

--OUTSIDE, the limo pulls away from the house.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I can't smell, which surprised me at first. And I don't need to breathe, but I still like fresh air.

Max turns and heads UPSTAIRS.

INT. MAX'S ROOM -- DAY

Max enters. Already out of his jacket and tie. Undressing.

JAKE (V.O.)

And my heart still works. It still feels. I think that's why I chose to keep watching my world.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY

A distorted reflection on metal indicates a person's approach. It's Max, approaching the urn. He's changed into regular clothes. He's holding a stuffed back pack.

JAKE (V.O.)

I could've moved on, but I feel like the people I love still need me. And really, I still need them.

Max takes the urn and unzips his pack. It's stuffed with clothes, shoes, a camera. Stuff. Max tries, but the urn won't fit. He debates, then swaps a packed pair of sneakers for an urn full of ashes.

EXT. MORGAN HOUSE -- DAY

Max exits and heads for the street, where now a TAXI waits. Max gets in and the cab pulls away.

JAKE (V.O.)

My ashes never made it to my funeral. Neither did Max. He disappeared with the urn without saying a word. It was vintage Max, but no one saw it coming.

Gradually, WHITE BLEEDS INTO THE IMAGE until WHITE IS ALL WE SEE. We're in the CLOUDS.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But today - the day before the anniversary of my death - he was bringing the urn home.

The sound of an AIRPLANE begins to fade in...

INT. AIRPLANE - ONE YEAR LATER - DAY

Max looks out the window at the CLOUDS. His hair is longer. His look more dangerous, but somehow still vulnerable.

JAKE (V.O.)

I went with him, of course - and stayed with everyone back home. But I can't be two places at once, so even what I see isn't always the whole story.

A VOICE FROM THE COCKPIT...

VOICE (V.O.)
Our flight time to San Francisco
today will be 11 hours...

EXT. CEMETERY -- DAY

We move up a path, past headstones on either side.

JAKE (V.O.)
I never really got a good look at
the guy that killed me until later.

Into the frame walks a young man, EDDIE MARBLE-(21), a sober-
looking, suburban white kid. It's The Guy from the teaser.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
His name is Eddie Marble. He'd never
fired a gun before that day and now
he's awaiting trial for my murder.
He's about my age, has a family, a
girl friend, a dog. My high school
football team beat his three years
in a row.

Eddie stops at a headstone. He looks hollow. Ruined.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
He's visited my grave a lot the last
year. I don't know if it makes him
feel better. I don't think he
deserves to feel better.

We see he's standing at JAKE'S HEADSTONE.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
He can still go home and touch the
girl he loves. I can't forgive him
for taking that from me.

INT. ART GALLERY - SAN FRANCISCO -- DAY

MAGGIE JONES (22), beautiful, kind, smart, works here in
this hip gallery. Right now, she's overseeing the
installation of some canvases by Brian Wills.

MAGGIE
I think it can go a little higher,
Dino. Just a little, like that.

DINO and another ASSISTANT adjust the painting.

JAKE (V.O.)
This is Maggie. I danced with her
in the rain at a wedding and I've
loved her ever since. She's the
hardest person for me to see because
I miss her so much.

Maggie lowers onto her knees next to her DOG.

MAGGIE

How does that look to you, Barn Dog?

Barn Dog's brow lifts at the sound of his name.

EXT. STREET/INT. CAR - PALO ALTO, CA -- DAY

Ben rides with his partner, Anna. She's an attractive, tough and caring person. Though on the job, they are both dressed casually.

BEN

You can drop me here. I can hop the bus.

ANNA

What, am I boring you? I'll drop you home. It's five minutes.

Ben nods OK. Beat.

ANNA (CONT'D)

So you coming in tomorrow?

BEN

Why wouldn't I?

ANNA

Thought you might like to take the day off. Take a you day.

BEN

A you day?

ANNA

A you day. Do something special. For yourself. Maybe go see a game. 20 years on the force, Ben. Most people would find that significant.

BEN

I get the significance.

ANNA

I just mean, I don't know, it's something to be proud of in spite of--

BEN

I'll be at work.

Ben looks at her, realizes she was trying to lift his spirits. Beat.

BEN (CONT'D)

Go see a game, huh? What, the Warriors? That's something special?

ANNA

Nobody's fooled Ben. We know you love them. And if they win it would be something special, right?

BEN

I like that they always lose. It's one thing I know I can count on. My luck I show up and they go on a winning streak.

She smiles and he does a little too. Beat.

ANNA

- You'll get through tomorrow, Ben. I know you.

INT. CAR - OUTSIDE THE MORGAN'S HOUSE -- DAY

Daisy and JOE (17) make out in his cramped Mini-Cooper. It's not exactly ideal, but it seems fine with him. But then she stops him.

DAISY

Joe, come on.

JOE

What?

DAISY

Come on. We're in a sardine can. And we're parked right outside my house. Couldn't we just like - try - and make my first time a little romantic? Maybe light a candle?

Joe flops back into his seat.

JOE

Light a candle? You said you wanted to avoid clichés.

DAISY

I changed my mind. I want like two or three clichés included in this.

Daisy manages to re-fasten her bra just as Ben is dropped off by Anna outside the house.

Daisy smiles innocently and waves hi to her Daddy.

Ben gives her a parental nod, but shoots a glare in Joe's direction.

JOE

I get the feeling your Dad doesn't like me very much.

DAISY

He doesn't like you. At all. He knows what you're all about.

Daisy waves as Anna drives away.

JOE

Oh yeah, what am I all about?

DAISY

(scoffs)

Psh. Dude, please. You're all about saving it until marriage, right?

(beat, then)

Oh, Mailman.

Sure enough, the MAILMAN is approaching. Daisy hops out of the car and meets him at the mail box.

ON JOE

JAKE (V.O.)

Joe Hipps. 11th grade. Wide receiver on the football team. Daisy's big crush. Nice enough guy, but I have my doubts. Put it this way, I'm glad he drives a sardine can and he parked right outside the house.

Daisy hops back into the car. She has a letter.

JOE

(re: the letter)

Who's it from? Boyfriend?

DAISY

You're the boyfriend, geek. It's from my brother.

JOE

He writes? I thought no one had heard from him in a year.

DAISY

Not Max. It's from Jake. He wrote me letters from college. I re-send them to myself.

Joe looks at her like she's nuts. She just smiles and shrugs.

INT. CLASSROOM -- DAY

Emily is on the verge of nodding off during a lecture when she gets a tap on the shoulder. There's a note for her.

She opens it: "I need to talk to you."

She looks back a few rows to the person that wrote it - her boyfriend RYAN. He looks serious. Whatever.

EXT. CAMPUS -- DAY

Emily walks with Ryan. A year has added a haunting, deeper beauty to her.

EMILY

Since when do you need to write me notes before we talk?

RYAN

Probably since it got really hard to get you to talk to me.

Emily doesn't talk back.

RYAN (CONT'D)

You're doing it right now.

She looks at him.

EMILY

What do you want me to say?

RYAN

I don't know. I don't know what you're thinking anymore. I don't know what music you like. I don't know why you fall asleep in class.

EMILY

I work late.

They walk a few steps in silence.

RYAN

Thanks, but that's not enough for me to hang my hat on. Do you even care about this relationship, Emily?

EMILY

Yes. Ryan look, I appreciate that you've stuck with me this year. I know it hasn't been easy. But if you're waiting for the girl you knew in high school to come back again--

RYAN

I know. Fine. But it's like we have no-- Spark. We don't connect anymore.

(pause)

Look, this is hard for me, but-- I think we should-- Maybe we just need a break. I need a break.

She looks at him. It's not easy news to swallow, yet not really surprising either.

EMILY

For how long?

RYAN

I don't know.

Emily knows. It's over.

INT. KITCHEN -- EVENING

Someone is playing PIANO. In here though, we find Charlotte. Not the free spirit we glimpsed a year ago. Sobered now, stronger. She's reading a newspaper and her jaw begins to drop.

JAKE (V.O.)

Mom's first love, before Dad, before any of us, was politics. It's in her blood. Her family. She's American royalty.

With her are the MAN and the WOMAN we glimpsed in the teaser. His name is DAVE; hers is THERESA. Both Charlotte's age.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

When she fell in love with a cop, everyone thought it was a phase. It wasn't.

Now we see the headline of the paper. Something about the Mayor being embroiled in a sex scandal.

CHARLOTTE

It's just unbelievable. How could this guy be so stupid? He's running for Mayor, for God's sake.

THERESA

He's a man.

DAVE

And she's 16. A lethal combo.

Then the back door opens and Daisy enters.

CHARLOTTE

Hey Daze.

DAISY

Hey. Hey everyone. How was your blind date, Theresa?

THERESA

Don't ask. He ordered beef tongue.

CHARLOTTE

You had a blind date with a guy who ordered beef tongue and you don't tell me? What, we're not friends anymore?

Theresa smiles. Good friends.

DAISY

When are we dinnering, Mom?

CHARLOTTE

I'll order something in. An hour.

Daisy nods and heads out of the kitchen, towards the stairs.

DAISY

I'll be in the tub. See y'all.

And she's out of the room.

DAVE

How old is Daisy now, 16?

CHARLOTTE

Watch it, Dave.

They smile for a moment then are back to business.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

So. There goes our candidate, right? I mean, he won't run now. He won't win.

DAVE

Actually that's why I came to see you, Charlotte. Theresa thought it would be better to talk about this face to face.

She looks at them, the pieces coming together.

CHARLOTTE

No...

THERESA

We were thinking, yeah.

CHARLOTTE

You still want me to endorse him
after all this?

THERESA

No Charlotte. We want you to run.
For Mayor.

Charlotte pauses for a beat. The possibility of those words
sinking in. Then:

CHARLOTTE

(calling out)
Ben honey, do you know any other
songs...?

In the other room, the PIANO STOPS for a moment. Then
CHOPSTIX begins.

Charlotte smiles. Then CHOPSTIX stops and the OLD SONG
resumes. Charlotte rolls her eyes.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

The man is obsessed with this song.
(beat)
Me run for Mayor?

DAVE

The thought has to have crossed your
mind.

CHARLOTTE

It-- Yes, it's come up over the
years. You have to understand, with
Ben-- We decided when we got married
that we did not want the world of
politics to be a part of our family.

THERESA

So much has changed, though. He
might feel differently now. I know
you do.

CHARLOTTE

Well.

THERESA

Charlotte, after everything you've
lost, I think this could really help
you two. It would give you something
to talk about again. Something to
fight about. You guys used to have
the most passionate fights. I was
so jealous.

Theresa smiles. Charlotte too, sadly though - a memory of
something lost barging in.

DAVE

Look it's not too late to get back in. Think about it. You were born a Foster. That name still carries a lot of weight in this town.

THERESA

This election needs new blood with a great old blood line. That's you. You could make a difference.

CHARLOTTE

This is something-- I'd have to talk to Ben before we could even consider this.

DAVE

Of course, yeah. Here's the rub, though. You'd have to announce your candidacy tomorrow. It's the deadline for filing.

CHARLOTTE

Tomorrow?

THERESA

Yeah. I know it's--

CHARLOTTE

No. I can't do it tomorrow.

THERESA

Charlotte, the reason we're where we are right now is because of what happened a year ago. This is for Jake.

DAVE

Talk to Ben.

Off Charlotte's look--

INT. DAISY'S ROOM -- EVENING

Daisy slips into a robe as she readies for her bath. Step 2 involves getting the cigarettes out of the sock drawer. For a moment she hesitates.

DAISY

Jake? If you're there, don't worry. I know what I'm doing.

She turns.

JAKE (V.O.)

I know what you're doing, too, Daze. I used to do the same thing.

INT. BATHROOM -- EVENING

Daisy locks herself in the bathroom and runs the bath water.

JAKE (V.O.)
Open the window and climb out on the
roof for a quick puff. Never thought
of you as a smoker though, Daze.

Sure enough, Daisy opens the window. But instead of climbing
out on the landing, Joe climbs into the bathroom.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
What the--!

Daisy and Joe start to kiss. The tie on her robe falls loose.
Daisy opens the pack of cigarettes and pulls out a condom.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Um, okay. I've seen more than enough.
Lights out.

CLICK. The room goes black.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
They ask you in heaven if you have
any regrets. Yeah. I wish I'd nailed
that window shut.

EXT. MORGAN HOUSE -- EVENING

The porch light turns on. The front door opens and Charlotte
shows out Theresa and Dave.

THERESA
You'd have to jump right in first
thing tomorrow.

DAVE
I've already spoken to your father.
You'd need him. This is a little
out of our league.

CHARLOTTE
You guys, I haven't even made a
decision, ok? Now go home.

The colleagues head down the front steps. Charlotte turns
to head back into the house and sees Max's skate board. The
blood drains from her face.

When she looks up. There he is. At the front door with his
sisters.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)
Where is he?

MAX

I'm doing okay Mom, thanks for asking.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORGAN HOUSE -- NIGHT

The Morgan family where we left them in the Teaser. They could be a still-life painting, but the images move slightly.

The room is loaded with tension. Finally:

MAX

Hey Dad.

BEN

Missed you at the service, Max.

(a long beat)

Missed Jake at the service.

MAX

Yeah.

Ben stands from the piano and approaches Max. He could be furious; hard to tell. He locks eyes with Max - who shifts his weight uncomfortably.

MAX (CONT'D)

I think I can explain.

BEN

No. I don't think you can.

Ben moves past his son and out of the living room. We stay on Max, a ball of emotion buried under a hardened exterior.

We hear the FRONT DOOR open and close.

EXT. MORGAN HOUSE -- NIGHT

A beautiful night. Windy. A city in the distance glowing and blinking like a living thing.

We find Ben, walking. Clearly there's a horrible weight on him. Max catches up, falls in stride.

MAX

If I could I'd just like to talk to you. I think it would help. It would help me.

Ben doesn't respond.

MAX (CONT'D)

Look, I know you're not exactly happy to see me.

BEN

Happy to see you? I've been wondering if I'd ever see you again. I've been wondering if one day you'd turn up dead. How 'bout a phone call? An E-mail? Something. You know what you've put this family through?

MAX

That's why I came back. I was hoping to find some way to make things right again.

BEN

Right again? When were things right with you? Remind me, Max.

MAX

I guess I don't ever remember feeling like things were right. I always felt like Jake was right and I was wrong.

BEN

In this case, you're absolutely right. You were wrong. We never got to bury your brother, Max. We didn't get that closure.

MAX

It should have been me. I should have died.

BEN

Don't talk nonsense.

MAX

Jake was perfect, right? He was the golden child. I just came along to balance the scale.

Ben gets in Max's face, cornering him at a parked car.

BEN

You know, the black sheep of the family routine played itself out a long time ago. One day for your sake, I hope you grow up and stop feeling sorry for yourself.

(beat)

You could have been anything you wanted, Max. Anything.

MAX

Yeah, I know. So much potential...

Max backs away, still looking at his father.

MAX (CONT'D)

I was doing you a favor by leaving, you know. I didn't want you have to look at me everyday and be reminded that the good son died.

Max turns and breaks into a run. But then he stops and turns back. Calling out to Ben:

MAX (CONT'D)

But he wasn't perfect, Dad. He could be a real son-of-a-bitch. We all have that in common.

Max turns again. Walks away this time.

JAKE (V.O.)

When I was alive, I thought I knew my family. It's taken this to realize I'm only beginning to know who they all are.

Max breaks into a jog. Then runs. Not to get away. Just to be away. Distance.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And we all still have a long way to go.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. GALLERY -- NIGHT

The place is closed, but Maggie is going over some work at the front desk. There's a loneliness to her; like she has no reason to leave, nowhere to go. She's lit by light from the street and then a shadow crosses over her.

There's a KNOCK at the front window. It's Max. She can't believe he's there.

MAGGIE

Oh my God!

She's shocked, rattled. She get's up and moves closer.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Oh my God, it's really you. Where have you-- How are you?

MAX

How 'bout you let me in and I tell you.

Maggie futzes with the locks and lets him in. Max has his back-pack. There's a moment where neither knows what to do. Then they hug and separate awkwardly.

MAGGIE

Max Morgan.

MAX

Maggie Jones.

MAGGIE

I can't tell you how many times I've looked up and thought I saw you. Hoped I saw you.

He just looks at her. Can't tell what he's thinking.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Are you ok?

MAX

I'm alright. You?

Maggie nods and shrugs at the same time.

MAX (CONT'D)

You smell the same.

MAGGIE

I hope that's a good thing.

He nods.

MAX

It's you.

Pause. She's uncomfortable. Why, we don't know.

MAX (CONT'D)

It's funny what you remember about a person.

MAGGIE

Where have you been, Max? Everyone's been freaked out.

Max nods. Maggie shifts. Her eyes land on his back-pack.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Is it in there? The urn?

MAX

It's back at the house now.

MAGGIE

You've been home then?

Max nods. She looks at the back pack again.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

(knowing)

I'm guessing you need a place to stay tonight.

INT. DINING ROOM -- NIGHT

Chinese take-out containers. Daisy, Emily, Ben and Charlotte eat quietly. Finally:

DAISY

What are we gonna do with the ashes?

CHARLOTTE

I don't think we've decided - you know, whether to bury him or keep the urn here at the house.

EMILY

We can't keep him here at the house.

CHARLOTTE

Why not?

EMILY

It's morbid. We should bury him and move on.

DAISY

Stop calling that urn "him."

(MORE)

DAISY (CONT'D)

That's not him. It's a symbol of him. But all sorts of things are symbols of him.

BEN

Daisy, let's not drum this up again.

DAISY

Jake's still here, you guys. All around. And I know he'd like it if we did something cool with the ashes.

EMILY

Such as?

DAISY

I don't know. I'll ask him.

BEN

Okay, enough.

DAISY

No. Not enough. We haven't done nearly enough. Come on, tomorrow is-- We should celebrate him - not like "whoo-hoo, he's been dead a year" - but celebrate his life. Jake loved to celebrate life. This whole family did.

CHARLOTTE

Daisy we're all coping in different ways.

DAISY

Fine. That's fine. But don't you get it? We should do it together. As a family.

There's a pause. Daisy hanging there for a response.

EMILY

I gotta get ready for work.

Emily stands and exits. Daisy looks to her parents.

CHARLOTTE

It's a really nice thought, Daisy.

DAISY

...But?

Nothing. In frustration, Daisy throws down her napkin and leaves the table.

Ben and Charlotte alone there.

BEN

What was the big news of your day?

Charlotte looks at him, wanting to say something about the Mayoral campaign, but can't find a way to start.

CHARLOTTE

No big news today. You?

Ben shakes his head.

JAKE (V.O.)

There will never be anyone Mom loves more than Dad, and sometimes that makes it hard for her to tell him what's in her heart.

INT. DAISY'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Daisy sits at her desk, turning the UNOPENED letter she got in the mail today from Jake. Then she opens a pen and begins to write...

DAISY (V.O.)

Dear Jake, I thought it would be interesting to recap the day. You probably knew before me--

Daisy stops writing and looks up into the mirror. Beat. Her letter writing resumes out loud.

DAISY (CONT'D)

You probably knew before me that Em and her dude are over. And Max came home, then left again. The urn with your ashes is in the other room. What should we do with them, Jake? How should we celebrate? Oh! I ALMOST lost my virginity to Joe Hipps today. Or did you already know that?

JAKE (V.O.)

Almost? No, I didn't know that.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM -- EARLIER THAT DAY

We see what Jake didn't want to watch earlier - Daisy and Joe behaving like two teens intent on experiencing the act of coitus...

...But then there's a KNOCK on the door. And then Max's voice.

MAX (O.S.)

Daisy? You in there, Bad Girl...?

Daisy reacts. Holy shit. Max?

CUT BACK TO:

INT. DAISY'S ROOM -- DAY

Daisy sighs, then continues...

DAISY

So we had Maxus Interruptus. Minor set back. Don't freak out, Jake. I'm so sure about Joe. He's the one.

There's a sound and Daisy whips around to find Emily standing in the room, looking outrageously good in clothes for work.

EMILY

- Joe Hipps?

Emily raises a dubious eye-brow.

DAISY

What? You don't even know him.

EMILY

I know lots of him. Lemme borrow some perfume.

DAISY

No. Get your own.

Daisy watches in disbelief as Emily just looks at her coolly and helps herself.

DAISY (CONT'D)

You're the one making the mad cash at work.

EMILY

I'm saving up to move out.

Emily heads out of the room.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Say hey to Jake, for me.

Emily shuts the door.

DAISY

Anyway, that's all for now. I love you Jake.

Daisy switches off the light and the room goes DARK.

DAISY (CONT'D)

P.S. The bitch says hey.

INT. BEN AND CHARLOTTE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Ben turns out the light and settles into bed next to Charlotte. In the dark now...

CHARLOTTE

I had an interesting meeting today.
About the Mayoral campaign?

(beat)

Ben?

BEN

I'm listening.

CHARLOTTE

You heard about the 16 year old?

BEN

Oh yeah. Couldn't miss it.

Charlotte bites the bullet.

CHARLOTTE

They want me to step in and run.
For Mayor.

His silence here says a lot.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

I told them I'd have to talk to you.

(after a pause)

That's what this is supposed to be.
Us talking about it... Ben?

BEN

Do what you need to do, Charlotte.
I'm fine. Either way.

CHARLOTTE

You wouldn't feel-- I don't know.
Betrayed?

BEN

Betrayed? No.

CHARLOTTE

Well, I know how you feel about that
whole world.

BEN

It's nothing I can't handle.

CHARLOTTE

Dad would be involved.

BEN
I figured there had to be one
drawback.

CHARLOTTE
And I'd need you. We'd need to be--
together.

Pause.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)
I feel like-- This is how I move
on.

BEN
Okay.

They both shift, settling into a position for sleep. Then:

CHARLOTTE
Ben?

BEN
Hmmm?

CHARLOTTE
It starts tomorrow.

BEN
Mm.

CHARLOTTE
Could you handle a press conference?

INT. MARLOWE'S -- NIGHT

This is a PRIVATE CLUB. It has its own rules. Very discreet,
well heeled PATRONS feast on oysters and caviar and drink
champagne from crystal flutes.

Some GIRLS give GUYS lap-dances on Louis XIV furniture. One
such person is CLAIRE, doing her thing for a man named MR.
JANNERO. Claire is so hot, so seductive, she could talk a
cow into eating meat.

JAKE (V.O.)
People need connection, otherwise
they just drift. Sometimes into
places like this. It's called
Marlowe's.

Then Emily arrives table side with a platter of oysters.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I'm the only one who knows Emily
works here.

(MORE)

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
It's not a place you have Mom and
Dad down to for a family discount.

EMILY
A dozen Fanny Bays, Mr. Jannero.

Claire turns her back onto Jannero and mouths a quiet "Hi"
to Emily. Emily returns the greeting with a nod.

EMILY (CONT'D)
Would you like me to lemon them for
you?

JANNERO
Actually, I'd much prefer it if you'd
join Claire and me for a dance.

Emily looks at Claire who rolls her eyes. It's the first
time they've not been looking at Emily since she got here.

EMILY
You know I'm not interactive, Mr.
Jannero. I just expedite the oysters.
Lemon then?

INT. MARLOWE'S -- NIGHT

Off to the side of the action, Emily writes up an order and
sends it into be prepped. Then Claire is behind her. In
addition to her hot-ness there's an energy. A sense of fun.

CLAIRE
Hey. I'm Claire.

EMILY
I remember your name.

CLAIRE
I'm new.

EMILY
I hear.

CLAIRE
What do you hear?

EMILY
I heard Claire is the new girl's
name.

CLAIRE
I hear things, too. I hear Maryland
is a beautiful state.

EMILY
Have you been?

CLAIRE

Where, Maryland? No. I hear things.
I hear rats can tread water for 3
days.

Emily gives her a look.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Sorry, just trying to break the ice.

EMILY

No, I know. I'm sorry. I'm not
having a great day.

CLAIRE

Boy trouble?

EMILY

Some. My boyfriend dumped me today.
But I knew that was coming.

CLAIRE

So it's not only boy trouble.

Emily shakes her head no.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

What then? Family stuff?

Emily nods.

EMILY

Family stuff.

CLAIRE

Well, if you ever need someone to
talk to, like I said, I hear things.
I listen well.

(beat, turning)

Your oysters are ready to expedite.
I'm gonna go get - what did you call
it? - interactive.

Emily watches Claire head away, then turns to the oysters.

EXT. BALCONY - MAGGIE'S LOFT -- NIGHT

Maggie looks out over the Bay. Max steps out. Beat.

MAGGIE

Barn Dog was happy to see you.

He doesn't respond to that.

She looks at him.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
Where do we start, Max?

MAX
I'm sorry you lost someone you love.

MAGGIE
I know you are.
(a pause)
My life's so quiet now.

A tender moment between them.

Max reaches his hand out and delicately touches her cheek. It's like the contact creates a charge between them. A connection. It pulls him forward but he hesitates for an instant before kissing her.

And after some uncertainty, she's right there in it with him. Big time.

Finally Maggie steps back, breathless, then steps back in for another heavy kiss and then steps back again.

They both just stand there breathing.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
Jesus, Max. Jesus.

Jake clears his throat. Not to get our attention. To get the lump out of it.

JAKE (V.O.)
Max and Maggie-- I should have said--
Before I danced with her in the rain,
they were--

When he next speak, his voice has an angry edge to it we haven't heard.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
But she chose to be with me. If I
could, my fist would remind Max of
that.

She looks away. Then back.

MAGGIE
I'm so sorry. It was the worst thing
I ever did. And it wasn't even a
mistake; that's what's so crazy. I
loved you so much. But you, you
scared me to--

She halts suddenly.

MAX

What? Go on.

MAGGIE

Loving you scared me to death. But with Jake-- I was never scared. He was so solid, so-- He made me feel so safe.

MAX

I hated him for it.

MAGGIE

I know. He knew. He loved you, Max. Hurting you broke his heart. It was broken the day he died.

That pierces whatever hardness Max has around him. She looks at him. Steps in and kisses his cheek this time.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Good-night, Max.

She turns and heads inside.

We stay on Max, his face a concert of emotions.

JAKE (V.O.)

Sometimes the things you hoped would never happen, happen anyway. And sometimes the things you wished you'd said, get said anyway. Sometimes both in one night.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. OWEN FOSTER'S OFFICE -- DAY

A giant place with 15' ceilings, crystal chandeliers and polished mahogany trim. Turn of the century elegance.

OWEN FOSTER, like his daughter Charlotte, has that look: American Royalty. Silver hair combed back, hand-tailored suit, smooth, perfect skin.

The image of him looking out at the city, scarcely moving, deep in thought.

JAKE (V.O.)

Owen Foster. My grandfather. We call him "Pops" which I think was always too casual a name for his liking.

Behind Owen, Charlotte and Ben sit in deep chairs. She looks amazing, alive. A stark contrast to Ben, dressed in his casual Cali-gear, but looking anything but casual. He hates it here.

A SERVER is unfurling a silver tray of coffee and muffins.

CHARLOTTE

Decaf for me, Nathan. I'm already bouncing off the walls.

NATHAN

Of course, Mrs. Morgan.
(to Ben)
And for you, sir?

BEN

Nothing for me, thanks.

Owen turns to them.

OWEN

Ben. I need a favor. I need you to put on a suit.

BEN

I knew this was a mistake.

It's a joke. Charlotte gets it.

OWEN

We'll need you to wear it today at the press conference. I was thinking of maybe going casual with you - but no, this is about selling a dream. That's what we're doing. We're selling the dream of American Royalty.

BEN

I needed to be here in person to hear that?

OWEN

We all need to be on the same page. We're weeks behind the other candidates. If Charlotte has any shot at winning, we have to come out of the gates at full tilt. Nothing can be overlooked. That goes for the whole family. Everyone needs to be on their best behavior. There's - going to be a spotlight on this family again. But this time, God willing, it will be for something positive.

BEN

I question the timing of the press conference. I mean, a year to the day?

OWEN

It's a very sad day. A terrible day to remember. But we're standing again. Moving forward. That's what this is. This is a big day, too.

Charlotte looks at Ben, puts a hand on his leg.

CHARLOTTE

If it's too awkward--

BEN

No. I understand.

CHARLOTTE

It's a big day.

He looks at her.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

I'm doing something positive.

He was hoping to hear something else, but he puts his hand over hers and squeezes. Then stands.

BEN

Alright then. I'll put on a suit. I'll need a tie probably, too, huh Pops?

Owen hates being called Pops - especially by Ben.

BEN (CONT'D)

I'll see you at the press conference.

Ben turns and heads for the door.

INT. LOBBY -- DAY

We move with Ben to the elevator, which opens before he gets there. A handsome, blue-blooded man, COLE (early 40s, looks 32) strides off and spots Ben. A meaningless smile spreads and a hand extends.

COLE
Big day, Benjamin. Congratulations.

BEN
Good morning, Cole.

COLE
You know Owen asked me to work on Charlotte's campaign.

BEN
I know now.

Ben grabs the elevator before it closes and gets on.

COLE
Big day.

BEN
It is.

Cole heads into the office, leaving the door open behind him. On the elevator Ben hears:

CHARLOTTE (O.S.)
Cole Franklin. There you are.

And he sees Cole and Charlotte embrace. And the elevator doors close.

INT. MAGGIE'S LOFT -- DAY

Max folds up the futon he slept on. Maggie enters from a bedroom, dressed for work. She's a little on edge.

MAGGIE
Did you sleep?

MAX
I konked.

MAGGIE
What are your plans?

Max shrugs. Maggie sits next to him. Steals herself.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
Max. Last night--

MAX

We kissed. You better not be about to say it was a mistake.

MAGGIE

I don't know what it was. But-- You need to find somewhere else to sleep. You can't stay here.

It takes him by surprise. Not in a good way.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

There's just too much here. Too much between us. The 3 of us.

MAX

We're two people, Maggie.

MAGGIE

There's still three.

(beat)

And I'm feeling scared again.

She looks at him like she feels that way.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Please, Max. Find somewhere to stay. Tonight.

EXT. STREET/INT. CAR, MOVING -- DAY

Ben drives with Anna.

ANNA

I feel like doing something crazy.

He looks at her.

ANNA (CONT'D)

I feel like buying you lunch.

BEN

Hold on, my hidden microphone was turned off. You want to buy me lunch? On your salary?

ANNA

Come on. It's a big day. 20 years in this line of work deserves a free meal.

EXT. DINER - TO ESTABLISH -- DAY

Ben and Anna head for the entrance.

INT. DINER -- DAY

Ben enters with Anna behind him. A familiar place. They AD-
LIB greetings to the STAFF. Ben rounds the corner and then
he sees something he had no idea he'd see:

A surprise gathering. For him. Not a hootenanny. Just his
PEOPLE from work there to shake his hand, congratulate him
on 20 years of service.

And he doesn't have to say it because it's clear from his
expression: this means a lot to him.

EXT. PLAYING FIELD -- DAY

The HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM practices.

In the stands, STUDENTS watch and gossip and some even do
homework. Daisy is here, with some FRIENDS, but her mind is
elsewhere.

She stands and walks to the top row from where she can see
out to the ocean. She takes the JAKE'S LETTER from the
envelope and begins to read.

DOWN ON THE FIELD, the Team runs its last wind sprint.

We pick up Joe Hipps, #19. As he catches his breath, his
eyes fondle the phenomena known as CHEERLEADERS. One of
them calls out to him.

CHEERLEADER

Hey 19.

He looks at her.

CHEERLEADER (CONT'D)

I had fun the other night.

(beat)

And I know you did.

Joe gives her a smile and a SHHH. He indicates Daisy.

CHEERLEADER (CONT'D)

Don't worry. I won't tell.

JAKE (V.O.)

Cheerleaders man, what would life be
like without them? And Joe Hippses.
Dogs. Why do I have to see it? Why
can't Daisy?

We move with Joe up towards where Daisy is still looking out
at the ocean.

Daisy looks up from the letter and out at the ocean.

DAISY

I miss you too.

She turns when Joe says to her:

JOE

Hey girl. How 'bout a bath tonight?

Daisy blushes.

EXT. MORGAN HOUSE -- DAY

A PODIUM is being assembled on the deck by a small crew.
Microphones wired up.

Max passes, looking curiously, and enters the house.

INT. KITCHEN -- DAY

Emily is dressed again for work. Max enters, puts down his
back pack and unzips it.

EMILY

What the hell, Max? What are you up
to, you freak?

MAX

What's going on outside?

EMILY

Press conference. Mom's running for
Mayor.

MAX

What?

Emily just looks at him matter-of-factly. Max considers.

MAX (CONT'D)

(meaning it)
I hope she wins.

EMILY

Why, so we get to live our lives
under a microscope?

MAX

Maybe it's what she needs, you know?
To do.

(beat)

You dress like that for a press
conference?

EMILY

I have work.

MAX
Dressed like that? Where do you
work?

EMILY
Max, where have you been? Where did
you go?

From his back pack Max gets out a weathered, thick Manila envelope.

MAX
Is Dad here?

Emily nods and points a finger upstairs.

INT. BEN AND CHARLOTTE'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Ben ties his tie. He looks incredible in a suit. He steps back from a mirror and sees Max in the reflection. Max has the envelope under his arm. He seems tentative, insecure.

MAX
I didn't come to fight.

BEN
Good.

MAX
I wanted to show you something.

BEN
What?

Max hesitates and at that moment there's a KNOCK on the bedroom door. It's Cole, the man from Owen's office.

COLE
Need you downstairs, Ben.

BEN
You got it. One sec.
(to Max)
What is it?

But Max's nerve is gone.

MAX
You're busy.

BEN
What is it, Max?

MAX
It can wait. It's, it's not
important. Press conference.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORGAN HOUSE -- DAY

Charlotte paces, rehearsing her speech off a piece of paper in a whisper (AD-LIB). She's clearly nervous. She flubs. Sighs. Starts again; flubs again. Her arms slap to her sides in frustration.

She turns. Ben is there. Just looking at her, aware of her insecurity. But he looks confident. Solid. Supporting.

She steps to him and bends her head onto his shoulder. His hand smoothes the back of her head, neck. She exhales tension. Feels better already.

BEN

You're going to do great.

EXT. MORGAN HOUSE -- DAY

PRESS and NEWS TEAMS have gathered outside the house along with a group of SUPPORTERS.

Charlotte stands at the microphones. She's flanked by Ben on one side and her new team, Owen and Cole, on the other.

CHARLOTTE

...and it is very much my hope that your new Mayor will be named Charlotte Foster Morgan.

Those assembled APPLAUD. Cole steps to the microphone.

COLE

We have time for a few questions.

REPORTER # 1

Charlotte, what will be your stand on gun control?

CHARLOTTE

Well, I have no intention to amend the Constitution. But I'd feel better if you couldn't buy guns in the same stores children shop for toys.

REPORTER # 2

We've seen you weather the past year. How has it been for your family?

CHARLOTTE

Honestly, very hard as you might imagine. Very trying. As a family we-- have had to pull together.

REPORTER # 3

Speaking of your family. How will you celebrate?

CHARLOTTE

It's a little early for that. I haven't won anything yet.

REPORTER # 3

I'm talking about Ben's anniversary. 20 years on the police force.

There's a flash in Charlotte's eyes. She'd completely forgotten. She looks at Ben, doing a better acting job than she is. Ben smiles. Leans into the microphones.

BEN

We're breaking out the donuts and coffee. Sparing no expense.

People chuckle and Charlotte smiles too; but beyond it is a terrible feeling. How could she have forgotten?

INT. BATHROOM - MORGAN HOUSE -- EVENING

Daisy enters from the hall. She's got her pack of cigarettes. She turns on the tub. Goes to the window to slide it open...

But it won't open. It's stuck shut. That's odd.

Joe appears outside the window.

DAISY

It's stuck.

JOE

What?

DAISY

It's stuck.

JOE

What?

DAISY

Dude, shut up. Help me.

They both try. It won't budge.

JOE

What about the back door?

DAISY

Good idea. Say hi to my folks on your way in to have sex with their daughter.

She tries it once more. Won't move an inch. Daisy steps back, giving up.

EXT. APARTMENT -- NIGHT

A place we haven't seen. Basic. At a window, we see SOMEONE MOVE THE CURTAIN inside.

CLOSER

We see it's Eddie Marble - the guy who shot Jake. He's looking out at something. Scared, freaked, his new life.

JAKE (V.O.)

Eddie gets death threats. He's scared to leave the house. Scared of what'll happen to him in prison. Scared what his girlfriend might do while he's gone. We have that in common, too. Me and my killer. We could've been friends. That would've been better for both of us.

Then his look shifts to the street where--

--THE LIGHTS OF A POLICE SQUAD CAR FLICK ON.

The spotlight jerks through the dark to find--

--Max. Sitting on a bench across the street from Eddie's apartment.

INT. MARLOWE'S BOUTIQUE -- NIGHT

Hedonism continues to be defined by the good people here. Emily delivers a dish of Caviar on ice, toast points.

She turns. Sees Claire. Somehow more outrageous looking than before. They exchange a greeting. Emily approaches.

EXT. MARLOWE'S ROOF GARDEN -- NIGHT

A beautiful, lush garden. Sparkling lights. Patrons out for a smoke. A look at the view.

Emily with Claire. They've been here for a bit.

CLAIRE

Did they catch the guy?

EMILY

(nodding)

He was just sitting there next to Jake when Jake's partner found him. Just sitting there like a stunned ape with a gun in his lap.

CLAIRE

Oh my God. I don't know how-- How do you deal?

Emily shrugs.

EMILY

Not very well. I miss him so much. He was like my link, you know. My link to everyone else. Without it I just-- But I don't want to be this way forever. I refuse to be. I want to be me again.

CLAIRE

That's something. You have hope. That's not nothing.

Emily nods. Encouraged by the word hope.

EMILY

You know what's weird? I can hear him.

CLAIRE

What do you mean?

EMILY

Well, not like him talking. I hear him-- It's a long story.

CLAIRE

Tell it to me.

EMILY

Okay.

(a deep breath)

For awhile after he died, I stayed away at college. And one night somewhere, off campus I guess, they were demolishing a building. I could hear the avalanche of bricks and concrete and the tinkling of the breaking glass. And, it sounded-- beautiful. From a distance.

She clears her throat.

EMILY (CONT'D)

After awhile it started to feel like it was coming from inside my own body. I could hear a building being demolished in my body; and all I could think was -- and I can't explain this -- all I could think was that it was Jake. Jake was making that sound in my body. And it made me feel like he was with me.

Claire is locked on her.

EMILY (CONT'D)

I hear that sound every time I think of him. Sometimes just a pop - like the way a light-bulb breaks. That's Jake now.

She looks at Claire, then away, feeling vulnerable now.

EMILY (CONT'D)

I've never told anyone that.

She looks back at Claire - who has this look on her face.

EMILY (CONT'D)

I know, weird, right? Did I freak you out?

The answer is: Claire leans over and kisses her. A real kiss. Emily is a little freaked out, certainly surprised anyway and she pulls back.

CLAIRE

I'm sorry. I've never-- Ever heard anything so-- I'm sorry.

Beat. Then Emily leans in and they kiss again. More intensely this time. Even as we can see in Emily's face a total confusion, hesitation. She's unable to end it until finally:

EMILY

Wait, wait.

CLAIRE

What?

EMILY

(beat)

Just-- Wait.

Her eyes flash across the patio--

What the fuck just happened? Will it happen again?

She turns and hurries away. Needs to be away from here. And off her look of total brain chaos--

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. BATHROOM - MORGAN HOUSE -- NIGHT

Daisy brushes her teeth then slows and then stops. She's looking over at the window. Curious. She goes over and slides it open. No sweat. No one comes in. She was just checking and the finding mystifies her.

And a strange feeling rushes through her, like maybe - truly - Jake had a hand in this. It's chilling and thrilling and almost too hard to believe.

Then:

EMILY

Hey.

Daisy is startled. Emily is out on the roof.

DAISY

What are you doing?

EMILY

Sitting.

DAISY

I thought you were at work. Are you okay?

Emily looks at Daisy.

EMILY

Do you really believe he's still here?

DAISY

Who? Joe?

EMILY

Jake.

Daisy considers without whimsy.

DAISY

...Yes. I do.

EMILY

How?

DAISY

I don't know. I just believe. It's not even like a choice.

EMILY

It's a gift.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

We're close on the TV. News coverage of Charlotte's press conference.

REPORTER # 3

(on TV)

Speaking of your family, how will you celebrate?

CHARLOTTE

(on TV)

It's a little early for that. I haven't won anything yet.

REPORTER # 3

(on TV)

I'm talking about Ben's anniversary. 20 years on the police force.

BEN

(on TV)

We're breaking out the donuts and coffee. Sparing no expense.

Ben is watching. He doesn't see Charlotte behind him.

CHARLOTTE

Turn it off Ben.

He looks back at her.

BEN

I want to see the game highlights.

CHARLOTTE

Please.

He turns it off.

She sits across from him.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Ben.

BEN

Forget it, Charl.

CHARLOTTE

I don't know what to say. I don't. I'm so sorry I forgot. I just got so wrapped up-- I feel terrible. I wish there was something else I could say.

BEN

I understand.

Beat. Charlotte shifts.

CHARLOTTE

So, after the press conference, I ran out and tried to go get you tickets to tonight's game but-- they were playing some horrible team. I thought the Warriors might win and I knew that would be a nightmare so--

He smiles a little. Beat. Then she takes two tickets from her pocket and hands them to Ben.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

So I got you these instead. Next week, but in honor of today.

Ben looks at them.

BEN

Lakers.

CHARLOTTE

The Lakers are still good, right?

BEN

Let's hope.

He smiles. He looks at the tickets.

BEN (CONT'D)

I'll need a date.

They kiss. Then just hold each other.

CHARLOTTE

Congratulations, Ben.

BEN

And you. You'll be a great Mayor.

Then the PHONE RINGS. Ben and Charlotte don't let it break their moment.

BEN (CONT'D)

I might even vote for you.

CHARLOTTE

You better.

(beat)

Ben?

He looks at her.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Thank you for today. Your support.

Ben smiles.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)
Let's not let go, okay?

He hugs her again as the MACHINE answers. We hear:

VOICE (O.S.)
Detective Morgan, Officer Ruiz
calling. We have your son Max down
at the 4th precinct...

INT. DAISY'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Daisy enters ready for bed. Tank top, boxers. She shuts her door and gives a smile of recognition.

DAISY
- Yo.

There is Joe Higgs. Behind the door. They come together and kiss. He moves onto her neck, pulling a tank top strap from her shoulder.

They make it onto her bed. He's on top of her. Moving fast. Too fast. Then:

DAISY (CONT'D)
Joe, wait. Joe.

He pauses.

JOE
What?

DAISY
Just slow down, okay?

They kiss again. He's still in high gear. But we can see it in her eyes: something isn't right.

DAISY (CONT'D)
Joe... Joe.

JOE
Damn. What?

DAISY
Why are you being so--

JOE
I want to do this.

DAISY
Yeah. Obviously.

JOE

Don't you?

DAISY

Yeah, but-- Joe, I love you.

She's never told him. He volleys.

JOE

I love you, too.

He's never told her this lie. Never had to. But she believes it and she melts. Then:

DAISY

I'm just feeling like this isn't right. Like there's a reason it hasn't happened yet. Maybe they were signs.

JOE

Don't start with any of that cosmic shit, Daisy. Are we gonna do this, yes or no?

DAISY

Yes.

He smiles before kissing her again. Then:

DAISY (CONT'D)

Just not now.

JOE

Jesus, Daisy. Now or never.

DAISY

What?

JOE

I'm tired of playing games with you.

DAISY

This isn't a game, Joe.

JOE

Now or never.

She exhales a realization.

DAISY

Are you saying you're breaking up with me if I don't have sex with you right now?

Joe just looks at her. That's it in a nutshell.

DAISY (CONT'D)

Then... Never.

She slides to the side of him and sits up, pulling her shirt back the way it's supposed to be worn.

JOE

Daisy, come on.

DAISY

You can go now.

Joe gets off the bed. Pissed.

JOE

You're a freak, you know that?

DAISY

- Whatever asshole.

Joe straightens his clothes.

JOE

I mean it. You're crazy. Sending yourself your brother's letters, talking to him, seeing signs. All that crap. It's a joke.

She's hurt. But she's strong too.

DAISY

Do me a favor. Don't let my parents see you on your way out.

JOE

Don't worry. This isn't the first bedroom I've snuck in and out of. Not even the first one this week.

And he's out the door.

Daisy alone there on the bed. Dodged a bullet but her heart still broken. It takes one long beat, but then it happens. She starts to cry. Not just about tonight.

She buries her face in her pillow and discovers something under it.

Max's battered Manila envelope.

Daisy opens it. Curious. She pulls out a thick STACK OF PHOTOGRAPHS and begins to leaf through them.

She sits up. Her face brightened by what she's seeing.

DAISY

Oh my God, Jake.

Then she lowers the stack. Thinking.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT -- NIGHT

We find Max, just sitting there. He looks up when Ben enters. Ben jerks his head, indicating for Max to follow. Max stands.

EXT. POLICE PRECINCT -- NIGHT

When Max exits, Ben grabs him by the shirt and slams him against the building. Up in his face.

BEN

Listen to me. You stay away from that kid.

MAX

I was just curious.

BEN

Here's all you need to know. He's out on bail waiting on a murder trial. I don't want you or anyone else to compromise this situation.

MAX

I wasn't doing anything to him.

BEN

I don't care. Who knows what he might do. You stay away from him. Do you hear me?!

Ben's grip tightens. Max is clearly intimidated.

MAX

Yes. Okay.

BEN

Your mother. Is running for Mayor. More perfect timing, Max. You know how this will look in tomorrow's paper? Have some decency or get the hell out of here. For your mother's sake. She doesn't deserve your crap.

Ben jerks him once more, then lets go.

INT. ENTRY FOYER - MORGAN HOUSE -- NIGHT

The last tone of the doorbell FADES as Charlotte opens the front door - only as far as the chain lock allows.

It's Claire, the girl from Marlowe's.

CHARLOTTE

Yes?

CLAIRE
I'm sorry to bother you so late. I
have Emily's purse.

CHARLOTTE
Her purse?

CLAIRE
She left it at Marlowe's.

CHARLOTTE
Marlowe's? Who is Marlowe?

CLAIRE
The place we work.

CHARLOTTE
Did something happen to her? Is she
okay?

Then:

EMILY (O.S.)
I'm fine.

Emily is behind Charlotte. On the stair case.

EMILY (CONT'D)
What's going on? What are you doing
here?

CLAIRE
You left without your purse. I
thought you might--

EMILY
Okay, thank you.

Emily takes it from her. Claire also has a market bag with
her - which she hands to Emily.

CLAIRE
And I brought you those.

Emily looks in the bag.

EMILY
Light bulbs.

CLAIRE
To break when you feel like it.

EMILY
...thank you.

Emily is uncomfortable. Her Mom right there. Claire can
sense it. She tries to ease the situation.

CLAIRE

Hi. I'm Claire.

EMILY

Sorry, yeah. Claire this is my Mom.
Charlotte. We know each other from
work.

CHARLOTTE

Marlowe's.

Emily knows her secret is out. Her eyes give Claire a look.

CLAIRE

I'm sorry. I know it's late. I
should go.

Claire backs away, turns and leaves.

Charlotte shuts the door and looks at Emily.

CHARLOTTE

Marlowe's? Downtown?

Emily sort of nods.

EMILY

I don't strip. Or dance.

CHARLOTTE

I don't care, Emily. You're quitting
that job tomorrow.

EMILY

Why? I'm not the one running for
Mayor.

CHARLOTTE

That has nothing to do with it. I
don't want you working in a place
like that.

EMILY

Since when do you care?

CHARLOTTE

When haven't I cared?

EMILY

Come on, Mom. If you cared, you'd
know where I work. You'd know what
was going on around here.

Emily turns and heads up the stairs.

CHARLOTTE

You quit that job or I tell your father.

Emily keeps going, then turns back.

EMILY

Oh. Daisy's gone.

INT. ART GALLERY - SAN FRANCISCO -- NIGHT

Daisy is with Maggie. The walls of her gallery have been adorned with the pictures from Max's envelope. Hundreds of them, but we don't see them up close yet.

They step back and admire their installation.

DAISY

Let's call everyone.

INT. ART GALLERY - SAN FRANCISCO -- NIGHT

It's dark now. Outside, Ben, Charlotte and Emily approach. Maggie opens the front door and the Morgans enter.

All greet Maggie with long hugs. They haven't seen each other in months. AD-LIBS to that effect.

Daisy is there too.

DAISY

I know it's after midnight and the anniversary passed, but I don't think Jake minds a belated ceremony. And so--

She turns on the lights. Only now do they see that the walls are covered with photographs.

DAISY (CONT'D)

I don't really know how you should begin. There's no order, I don't think. I guess just-- look.

MUSIC begins over a MONTAGE of the photographic images. The first is of--

BEN

Paris. He and Jake were in Paris.

Yep. Max and Jake's urn in front of the Eiffel Tower.

Another is the urn outside Notre Dame. One on Pont Neuf. At the Louvre. Photos from all over the city. Day, night, dawn, parouse. Beautiful, whimsical, humorous compositions.

They reflect a rare, inspired, off-beat talent.

We see the expressions on the faces of the family. At first a wash of melancholy, maybe misty eyes; but gradually the spirit of the pictures wins them over. Soon they're smiling, chuckling, sharing them together.

Ben, perhaps, the most moved of them all. Not hiding it. His arms around Charlotte's stomach, his chin on her shoulder, their faces brilliant with emotion as they take it all in.

It's the first time we've seen them all happy. Enjoying something together. And they notice it too.

And then, Max is there. All eyes turn to him."

MAX

Jake always said he wanted to spend a year in Paris. So. We did.

Max shifts his weight uncertainly. But on Ben and Charlotte there is a look of understanding, finally, setting in.

MAX (CONT'D)

But to tell you the truth we were both ready to come home.

(beat)

I was.

CHARLOTTE

You should have said something.

Max nods.

MAX

I'm sorry. I really am.

Charlotte approaches Max and gives him a hug.

CHARLOTTE

Max you have so much-- You have so much, Max.

They separate.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

We're ready for you to come home too.

Max looks at Ben. A beat. There's a different look in Ben's eyes for the first time.

It takes a beat for Max to recognize it. Then:

BEN

Your photographs-- They blow me away.

Max smiles a little. But it's a beam. He looks at Maggie, acknowledging her hand in this with a nod. Daisy, Emily.

Then back to Ben.

MAX

(to Ben)

How were the coffee and donuts?

BEN

Wasn't in the mood.

MAX

Congratulations anyway.

Max reaches out and shakes Ben's hand.

MAX (CONT'D)

20 years. It's pretty amazing.

The handshake turns into a hug. Not a big one, but it's a start.

EXT. ART GALLERY - SAN FRANCISCO -- NIGHT

Outside looking in, the family in there framed by the window looks like a painting by Edward Hopper.

JAKE (V.O.)

It's been a year that I've waited.
For this. To see my family being a
family again. But I know it could
all change in a heartbeat, so I'm
going to enjoy it while it lasts.

Their voices are muted but they are talking still. Sounds
of a family being a family. Some laughs, some jeers.
Something of a celebration going on.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

They say the mark of a true
masterpiece is that you can look at
it for hours, days, years, and it
forever continues to reveal itself.
That's how I feel about my family.
It's a masterpiece in the making.
And I can't stop watching.

And this is where we leave them.

THE END.