

**12 AND HOLDING**

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**FADE IN:**

**EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - MORNING**

TWIN BOYS, RUDY AND JACOB CARGES (12), ride their bikes through a suburban neighborhood.

Rudy, the more athletic of the two, rides at a breakneck pace. Jacob rides slowly due to a HOCKEY MASK that he wears over his face. It's making it difficult for him to see. The boys turn down a DIRT PATH and ride deep into some WOODS.

**INT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS**

Rudy and Jacob ride to the edge of a CLEARING and stop. Across from the clearing is a large OAK TREE, which has a TREE HOUSE perched high up in it's branches. The boys cautiously look around and whisper.

**JACOB**

You see `em?

**RUDY**

No. But that doesn't mean they're not here.

After a beat, Rudy gets off his bike and starts walking towards the tree house. Jacob stays behind, eyeing their safety.

**RUDY (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

Jacob, come on. It's cool.

Suddenly, a ROCK comes careening from off screen. It hits Jacob in the head and knocks him to the ground.

Rudy darts for the oak tree as a hail storm of rock and

debris come flying at him.

his  
As Jacob rises, a stream of blood pours down the front of  
mask. He quickly runs for the tree.

TWO BOYS, JEFF AND KENNY (14), trailer park, punks come  
running out of the woods, rocks in hand.

are  
Rudy and Jacob climb the tree, using makeshift RUNGS that  
nailed into the trunk. In the floor of the tree house is a  
DOOR. Rudy removes a KEY from a chain around his neck and  
unlocks it. He climbs inside and pulls Jacob in after him.

2.

**INT. TREE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

Jacob looks back and sees Jeff and Kenny, running over. Rudy  
crosses to the door with a BUCKET of liquid.

**JACOB**

What the hell is that?

**RUDY**

Piss.

Rudy dumps the piss onto Jeff and Kenny.

**EXT. TREE HOUSE - SAME TIME**

Now drenched with piss, Jeff and Kenny jump from the tree,  
screaming. They try to shake the urine off.

Kenny spits the taste out of his mouth and angrily calls up  
to the boys.

**KENNY**

You and your deformed brother are  
dead!

**INT. TREE HOUSE - SAME TIME**

Jacob rips the hockey mask off. (A large STRAWBERRY  
BIRTHMARK covers the right side of his face.) He's insulted.

**RUDY**

(calling to Kenny)  
Anytime you're ready, dickhead.

**EXT. TREE HOUSE - SAME TIME**

Jeff and Kenny walk off.

**KENNY**

They're fucking dead!

Jeff runs off screen and throws up.

**INT. FISHER HOME - KITCHEN - MORNING**

LEONARD FISHER (12), severely obese, sits at the dinner table, eating pancakes.

His FATHER, PATRICK (35) and TWO YOUNGER SISTERS, HALEY (8) and SARA (6) are seated with him. They are all overweight.

**(CONTINUED)**

3.

**CONTINUED:**

LEONARD'S MOTHER, GRACE (35), the largest of them all, crosses to the table, sits and starts eating.

JUMP CUTS show the progression of their meal. From globs of syrup being placed over pancakes to the mass consumption of omelets and sausage. Caught up with eating, nobody speaks.

**EST. EXT. CHUNG RESIDENCE - MORNING**

A modern, upper-class home with a large, well tended yard.

**YACCO (O.S.)**

The check is supposed to be here on the first of the month... She's your daughter, you asshole!

**INT. CHUNG HOME - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

YACCO CHUANG (35), Asian-American, sexy, uptight, psychiatrist, paces the hallway on the phone.

HER DAUGHTER, MALEE (12) with long, black, braided hair and thick rimmed glasses, peeks her head out of the bathroom.

**MALEE**

Mom, I need help.

**YACCO (INTO PHONE)**

(ignoring her)

Any parent is "parent of the year"  
next to you, you selfish prick.

Yacco walks off. Deflated, Malee reenters the bathroom.

**INT. CHUNG HOME - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Malee is wrapped in a towel and holding a TAMPON. Confused, she grabs the TAMPON BOX and reads the directions. Malee's confusion quickly turns to disgust.

**EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD ENTRANCE - LATER**

Leonard sits upon a large rock with the words, LINDSAY ACRES inscribed on the center of it. He eats POPCORN. Hanging off the top right hand corner of the rock is a banner, which reads, 5th ANNUAL 4TH OF JULY PICNIC. ALL INVITED.

Malee rides her bike up to Leonard. She HONKS her BIKE HORN at every pedestrian in her path.

**MALEE**

Move it, people. Outta my way!

(CONTINUED)

4.

**CONTINUED:**

She comes to a screeching halt an inch in front of Leonard.

**LEONARD**

(mouthful)

You're late.

**MALEE**

Yeah well, I began menstruating  
this morning, and I had some  
difficulty inserting the tampon.

(off his disgusted look)

What? It's a natural process. You  
know, I could conceive, carry and  
birth a child right now.

**LEONARD**

Big deal. You won't.

**MALEE**

But I could. That's what matters.

**LEONARD**

The twins said, they'd meet us at the spot.

Leonard gets on his bike.

**MALEE**

Wanna race?

**LEONARD**

Nah, I'm good.

**INT. TREE HOUSE - LATER**

Jacob wipes at his head wound, frightened.

**JACOB**

Maybe I should have mom look at it.

**RUDY**

If you didn't have that damn mask on, you'd have seen it coming. Our birthday comes once a year, and you ask for a hockey mask. You don't even play.

**JACOB**

Jason from "Friday the 13th" wears one. He's bad ass.

**(CONTINUED)**

5.

**CONTINUED:**

**RUDY**

Exactly. Jason wouldn't run home 'cause of a little blood. He'd get back up, decapitate his victim and move on.

Jacob looks out the makeshift window in the wall.

**JACOB**

You think Jeff and Kenny will come back?

**RUDY**

I dropped piss on their heads. I'd say the odds are pretty good.

**MALEE (O.S.)**

You did what?

Rudy and Jacob turn to find Malee and Leonard, entering the tree house.

**RUDY**

Jeff and Kenny were here. I dumped the piss I've been saving on their heads.

**LEONARD**

Why were you saving piss?

**RUDY**

Just incase. Pretty smart, huh?

**JACOB**

No, it's stupid cause now they're gonna come back here and kick all our asses.

**RUDY**

Don't be such a pussy.

**LEONARD**

Yeah, I could probably take them both myself.

**RUDY**

What are you gonna do, Leonard, eat them?

**JACOB**

All I'm saying is, who cares if they tear it down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

**RUDY**

This is OUR place. We've been coming here since we were seven.

**JACOB**

Nothing lasts forever.

**RUDY**

You're such a butt-munch.

Rudy pushes Jacob. Jacob pushes back. The two start fighting.

**MALEE**

You guys, it's your birthday. Could you try and get along?

Off the boy's fighting -

**INT. YACCO'S OFFICE - LATER THAT AFTERNOON**

Yacco sits across from DEBBIE POOLE (42), housewife, conservatively dressed.

**DEBBIE**

I don't think therapy is helping.

**YACCO**

Why do you say that? Are you still "cutting"?

Embarrassed, Maggie lifts up her shirt sleeve. We see that her arm is covered with cuts. Dried blood is everywhere. Yacco is horrified by the sight.

YACCO (cont'd)

Oh, Debbie.

**DEBBIE**

It feels much better than it looks. Really.

Suddenly, Malee bursts into her mother's office.

**MALEE**

Ma, I... Oops.

**YACCO**

Malee, out. Now.

**MALEE**

I'm sorry.

**(CONTINUED)**

7.

**CONTINUED:**

Malee quickly exits the office.

**YACCO**

Excuse me for a moment.

**INT. YACCO'S OFFICE - RECEPTION AREA - CONTINUOUS**

Yacco enters the reception area. She is obviously  
angry.

**YACCO**

I told you a 100 times to knock.

**MALEE**

I said, I was sorry.

**YACCO**

Why aren't you with the boys?

**MALEE**

Rudy and Jacob went for pizza with  
their parents.

Yacco crosses to a desk and removes a FLUTE from a drawer.

**YACCO**

I found this in the backseat of my  
car this morning. Do you know how  
much flutes cost? Go outside, sit  
on the front steps and practice.

**MALEE**

But, mom.

**YACCO**

Now!

Angered, Malee grabs the flute and exits.

**EXT. FRONT OF YACCO'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

beat, Malee drops on the stoop like a ton of bricks. After a she reluctantly begins playing her flute. A few pedestrians stop to listen.

**MALEE**

Keep it moving. This ain't a show.

**INT. TWIN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Rudy and Jacob stare into the camera with big grins.

**(CONTINUED)**

**8.**

**CONTINUED:**

**RUDY/JACOB**

Cheese!

**VFX: CAMERA FLASH**

The boys relax their poses as ASHLEY and JIM CARGES (30's), enter the shot. Ashley puts her camera down on the table and picks up a large PRESENT.

**JIM**

Okay, you got your small gifts this morning. Now for the big ones.

**ASHLEY**

This one is Rudy's.

Rudy rips into the present, revealing a SONY PLAY STATION.

**RUDY**

Sony play station! Oh my God! Oh my God! Yes! Too cool!

**JIM**

Since neither of you wanted a party this year, we were able to splurge.

Ashley removes an ENVELOPE from her purse. She hands it to Jacob. His enthusiasm suddenly turns to worry.

**JACOB**

What is it?

**ASHLEY**

Only one way to find out.

Jacob removes a colorful PAMPHLET from the envelope.

**JIM**

Go ahead, read it.

**JACOB**

"Plastic Surgery. Isn't it about time?"

(horrified)

I don't get it.

**ASHLEY**

Your father and I are going to pay to have your birthmark removed.

**JIM**

Isn't that great.

(CONTINUED)

9.

CONTINUED: (2)

**JACOB**

You got me surgery for my birthday?

**JIM**

Not just one. A series of them.

**RUDY**

(overcompensating)

Cool.

**JACOB**

It's not "cool". It totally sucks!

Jacob drops the envelope, walks from the room.

**JIM**

Jacob?

**INT. TWIN'S HOUSE - BOY'S BEDROOM - LATER**

Rudy enters the darkened room and crosses over to Jacob, who has his face planted in his pillow. Jacob has been crying.

**RUDY**

Don't sweat it. You can borrow my play station anytime you want.

**JACOB**

This isn't about the play station. It's about this thing on my face. Everybody hates it.

**RUDY**

I don't.

**JACOB**

Who cares what you think? You're the reason for all of this. Perfect you with your perfect skin. There to show the world what I'm supposed to look like.

(beat)

You know, sometimes I just wish I wasn't your twin.

**RUDY**

Screw you! Know what, I take it back, you can't use my play station.

Rudy exits the room, slamming the door after him.

**10.**

**EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - NEXT DAY**

It's your typical fourth of July block party. Families crowd the streets with BBQ GRILLS, cotton candy and beer. Children ride their bicycles, which are adorned with streamers, balloons and noise makers.

Off to the side, Malee and Jacob sit, eating SNOW CONES.

**EXT. STREET - SAME TIME**

Jim Carges tends to some burgers on his grill. GABE

ARTUNION

(40), real estate agent, approaches.

**GABE**

30 acres.

**JIM**

I already told you, Gabe, I'm not selling that land. Not 30 acres not five.

**GABE**

I'm willing to pay top dollar.

**JIM**

I'm not gonna let you tear down those woods, so you can stack twenty houses right on top of each other.

**GABE**

I'm gonna write down a number.

**JIM**

No! My kids... hell, your kids play in those woods all the time. You can't put a price on that.

Gabe writes down a number and hands it to Jim.

**GABE**

I believe I can.

Jim looks at the figure and his eyes go wide.

**EXT. STREET - LATER**

A line of PICNIC TABLES surround nearby GRILLS. Leonard's family minus Leonard sit, eating as if there's no tomorrow.

**(CONTINUED)**

11.

**CONTINUED:**

**SOCCER MOM # 1 (O.S.)**

Look at them. So unhealthy.

ON TWO SOCCER MOMS, watching Leonard's family eat.

SOCCER MOM # 1 (cont'd)

You know, Grace can barely walk because of her weight.

**SOCCER MOM # 2**

Where do you think she finds  
clothes big enough to fit?

The two woman walk off. As they disperse, we see LEONARD,  
standing behind them. He has heard every word.

Hurt, Leonard looks down at his own plate, which overflows  
with food. He feels embarrassed and disgusted.

Patrick rises and crosses over to the buffet table.

**PATRICK**

Good eating, huh son?

Patrick grabs the ladle and begins to fill up his plate.

**LEONARD**

Maybe you shouldn't have seconds,  
Dad, you know?

**PATRICK**

Who are you, Richard Simmons?  
C'mon, enjoy the day.

He walks off with his food. Leonard looks down at the food,  
shrugs, then helps himself to a heaping portion.

**EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE STREET - DUSK**

RUDY straddles his bike while watching a group of 8-year-  
olds, having a water balloon fight. Jealous, he  
reminiscences to a time when he was one of those kids.

**KENNY**

(o.s. )

Me and Jeff are gonna pay that tree  
house of yours a little visit  
tonight.

Rudy spins around to find Kenny, standing at his side.

(CONTINUED)

12.

CONTINUED:

KENNY (cont'd)

When we're through, it'll be a pile of scrap.

**RUDY**

Why don't you take your smelly ass back to the trailer park?

**KENNY**

Free country, asshole.

**RUDY**

You got nothing better to do than pick on us all the time?

**KENNY**

I did until yesterday.

**RUDY**

I thought you liked "golden showers". Oh no, that was your mother.

him. Kenny pushes Rudy to the ground and then jumps on top of

Rudy struggles to get free, but he's overpowered. A crowd of kids surround them, chanting, "FIGHT, FIGHT".

lip. Jeff hocks a phlegm wad onto Rudy's face. Rudy screams as the stream of saliva, drips across his nose and onto his

**NEIGHBORHOOD FATHER (O.S.)**

What's going on over there?

Kenny looks up and sees a neighborhood parent coming over.

**KENNY**

I'll finish this tonight!

slowly Kenny pushes Rudy down once more and runs off. Rudy rises, wiping the saliva from his face.

**EXT. VACANT LOT - LATER THAT NIGHT**

The entire neighborhood has descended upon a VACANT LOT. They are awaiting the annual, fireworks display.

We FIND Leonard, Jacob and Malee sitting on a large rock, which gives them a birds eye view of the crowd.

Rudy runs over to the rock and climbs up top.

(CONTINUED)

13.

CONTINUED:

**RUDY**

Kenny showed up. He said, Jeff and him are gonna tear the treehouse down tonight. We gotta sneak out and stop them.

**JACOB**

Mom and Dad would kill us.

**RUDY**

We can't let him tear it down.

**JACOB**

It's just a treehouse.

**RUDY**

No, it's not! You know what, you suck. I'm going. Leonard, you in?

**JACOB**

You don't have to go if you don't want to.

**RUDY**

Don't listen to him. He's a pussy.

Leonard looks between Jacob and Malee.

**LEONARD**

I'll go.

**RUDY**

Finally, someone with balls.

Malee  
Insulted, Jacob slides off the rock and walks away.  
follows.

RUDY (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Let them go.

The fireworks display begins. As they turn to watch  
it...

**INT. TWIN'S HOME - BOY'S BEDROOM - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT**

We SCAN the room and come to a set of BUNK BEDS.

**SFX: ELECTRIC WATCH ALARM**

A body in the top bunk sits up and turns on a small bed light. Reveal, it's RUDY. Rudy grabs his watch from the post and silences the alarm. Jacob sits up in bed.

**(CONTINUED)**

14.

**CONTINUED:**

**JACOB**

Rudy.

**RUDY**

Unless you're coming with me, I  
don't want to hear it.

Jacob lies back in bed, silent. Rudy jumps off the top bunk, gets dressed and grabs a BASEBALL BAT. Before leaving, Rudy looks back at Jacob and shakes his head, disappointed.

**RUDY (cont'd)**

You know, you can't be a pussy all  
your life.

**JACOB**

What?

**RUDY**

Jeff and Kenny pick on you all the  
time, and you don't do shit.

**JACOB**

It's my problem.

**RUDY**

No, it's mine too. Cause we're  
brothers. That's what brothers do.

They fight for each other, kill for each other, die for each other.

**JACOB**

I don't feel that way.

**RUDY**

Cause you're a pussy. So stay home, keep your head under the blankets. I'm gonna fight.

With that, Rudy disappears out the window.

**FADE TO BLACK:**

DARKNESS... SFX: CREAKING DOOR. A FLASHLIGHT illuminates the location. We are...

**INT. TREEHOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT**

Leonard and Rudy enter with the help of a flashlight.

Leonard reaches inside his backpack and removes a number of SNACK CAKES from his backpack.

**(CONTINUED)**

**15.**

**CONTINUED:**

**LEONARD**

(re: snack cakes)  
Some provisions.

**RUDY**

We're only gonna be here a couple of hours.

**LEONARD**

When two o'clock rolls around, you'll be begging for one of these.

Rudy shakes his head, removes his BAT from his backpack.

**LEONARD (cont'd)**

(re: baseball bat)  
I didn't bring my glove.

**RUDY**

Moron, the bat is for Jeff and

Kenny. You know, to scare them a little.

He swings it hard.

RUDY (cont'd)  
Maybe it's best if we don't talk.  
Just listen. Listen for them, and don't fall asleep.

**LEONARD**  
I'm wide awake. I could stay up all night.

**EST. EXT. WOODS - LATER THAT NIGHT**

The treehouse is illuminated by the full moon, which rests  
in the sky above. The thunderous sound of a million crickets fills the air.

**INT. TREEHOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

Both boys lie asleep. A mosquito flies in through the window and buzzes past Leonard's ear. He haphazardly swipes at it in his sleep, wakes himself up.

**LEONARD**  
Oh, shit.

Rudy jumps awake.

(CONTINUED)

16.

**CONTINUED:**

**RUDY**  
What... What is it? They here?

**LEONARD**  
No.

Leonard rises, picks up his bag and opens the TRAP DOOR in the floor. He is about to exit.

**RUDY**

Where you going?

**LEONARD**

They're not gonna show up, I'm  
goin' home. It's three o'clock-

Suddenly, a FLAMING COCKTAIL comes flying through the  
window.  
It hits Rudy in the head, explodes and engulfs him in  
flames.

**EXT. TREEHOUSE - SAME TIME**

Jeff and Kenny stand a few yards away from the treehouse.  
Both laugh at the sight of the flames inside.

**KENNY**

Now yours. And aim for the window.

Jeff lights his COCKTAIL. It misses the window and smashes  
into the side of the tree house.

**KENNY (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

Ha ha, you suck.

Jeff and Kenny hear Leonard and Rudy screaming from inside.

**JEFF**

You hear that?

**INT. TREEHOUSE - SAME TIME**

Rudy, now covered in flames, rolls on the floor, screaming.

**RUDY**

Put it out! Put it out!

Leonard struggles to put out the flames with his backpack,  
but it's of no use. He spins around and finds the wall  
behind him, engulfed with flames. He screams, terrified.

**EXT. TREEHOUSE - SAME TIME**

Jeff and Kenny are frantic.

**(CONTINUED)**

17.

**CONTINUED:**

**JEFF**

They're in there! They're in there!

Jeff turns around and runs back home through the woods.

**INT. TREEHOUSE - SAME TIME**

Leonard backs away from Rudy. Unfortunately, he doesn't realize that the door in the floor is open.

**EXT. TREEHOUSE - SAME TIME**

We watch over Kenny's shoulder as Leonard falls from the treehouse, smacks his head on the tree trunk and comes to a crash upon some rocks. Kenny runs over and finds Leonard unconscious.

**KENNY**

Wake up! Wake up, kid!

Off the treehouse, which is now a towering inferno -

**INT. TWIN'S HOUSE - PARENT'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME**

Ashley jumps up from a deep sleep. There is terror on her face. She rushes over to her DESK and turns on the LAMP. Ken is awakened by her.

**JIM**

Ashley? What is it?

**ASHLEY**

I forgot to deposit your paycheck last week.

**JIM**

But I already wrote some checks.

**ASHLEY**

I know. With the cookout and everything, I forgot. I'll deposit it tomorrow. The holiday should buy us an extra day.

**JIM**

Write yourself a note so you don't forget again.

**ASHLEY**

I just did.

(CONTINUED)

18.

**CONTINUED:**

Ashley turns off the desk lamp and returns to bed.

ASHLEY (cont'd)  
Goodnite.

**FADE TO BLACK:**

**SFX OVER BLACK : TELEPHONE RINGING**

**FADE IN:**

**EXT. GRAVEYARD - WEEKS LATER - AFTERNOON**

ON JIM and ASHLEY, watching Rudy's casket as it is lowered into the ground. The once spirited, couple now looks tired and pained. They are accompanied by a number of mourners.

**PRIEST**

Rest in piece, Rudolph Eugene  
Carges. May God hold you in the  
palm of his hand.

Jacob stands beside his parents. Tears stream from his eyes, across his birthmark and off his chin. So stricken with grief, Jacob barely has the energy to wipe the tears away.

We continue on through the crowd and find Malee. Embarrassed by the tears, she brings a black veil down over her face.

**INT. YACCO'S OFFICE - LATER THAT DAY**

Malee enters, still wearing the veil. She crosses to the couch and sits beside A PATIENT, GUS MAITLAND (30), long haired, hippy-type with a moustache and beard. Gus eyes Malee, intrigued.

**GUS**

Friend or family?

**MALEE**

Huh?

**GUS**

The person who died.

**MALEE**

Friend.

**GUS**

I'm sorry. You'll like Dr. Chung.  
This is only my second session, but  
she's good.

(CONTINUED)

19.

**CONTINUED:**

**MALEE**

I'm not a patient. I'm her  
daughter.

Malee lifts her veil and looks at Gus.

**GUS**

Oh. I can see the resemblance.

**MALEE**

Are you trying to make me sick?

Gus shoots Malee a look just as Yacco exits her office.

**YACCO**

Mr. Maitland?

Gus rises and enters the office.

**YACCO (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

I'll be with you in a second.

Yacco crosses to Malee and sits beside her.

**YACCO (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

So, how was it?

**MALEE**

It was a funeral, Mom. How do you  
think it was?

**YACCO**

I'm sorry I couldn't make it. Let

Rudy's parents know I'm available  
if they need to talk. I won't  
charge for the sessions.

Malee looks to Yacco, stunned by her comment.

YACCO (CONT'D) (cont'd)  
You know, it's okay to cry.

**MALEE**

I know it's okay to cry. I don't  
need you to tell me, it's okay to  
cry. If I want to cry, I'll cry.

**YACCO**

Okay.

Yacco re-enters her office.           A beat.

**(CONTINUED)**

20.

**CONTINUED: (2)**

Malee starts to cry.

**EXT. JACOB'S HOME - LATER THAT AFTERNOON**

Cars fill the driveway and line the street in front of  
Jacob's house.

**INT. TWIN'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME**

Mourners stand in small groups, engaged in hushed  
conversations. Jim sits in his recliner, crying.

**INT. TWIN'S HOME - KITCHEN - SAME TIME**

A number of MOTHERS watch as Ashley obsessively prepares a  
platter of deviled eggs. Concerned, one of them crosses over  
to her.

**MOTHER**

Ashley, there's more than enough  
food here.

**ASHLEY**

No, Rudy loved my deviled eggs.

It's right that I make them.  
Where's the paprika?

Ashley opens up her cupboards in search of the paprika.

ASHLEY (CONT'D) (cont'd)  
Jesus, you put something down, and  
it disappears.

Now angry, Ashley starts throwing objects out of the  
cupboards, haphazardly.

**MOTHER # 1**

Ashley.

Ashley slams her cupboard doors shut. She looks around and  
spots the GARBAGE PAIL across the kitchen.

**ASHLEY**

Maybe I threw it out.

Ashley crosses to the garbage. She lifts it upside down and  
dumps the trash all over the floor. Ashley gets on her knees  
and starts searching.

The other women look to each other, uncomfortable.

Mother #

1 kneels down beside her.

**(CONTINUED)**

21.

**CONTINUED:**

**MOTHER # 1**

Ashley.

Ashley ignores her. Mother # 1 grabs Ashley's hands and  
looks her in the eye.

**ASHLEY**

It's okay.

Ashley stops cold. The grief and heartache hit once  
again.

ASHLEY (CONT'D) (cont'd)  
Not my baby! Please God not my son!

The mothers collectively drop to the floor and surround Ashley in an attempt to comfort her. They give no care to the pile of garbage they now sit in.

**INT. LEONARD'S HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER THAT DAY**

Leonard lies in a bed, staring out the window. There is a BANDAGE wrapped around his forehead. Patrick sits beside him in a chair.

Grace enters, carrying bags of MCDONALD'S food with her.

**GRACE**

This hospital is a nightmare. The elevator is never there when you need it.

Patrick crosses over to the food and grabs his lunch.

**PATRICK**

Where are the girls?

**GRACE**

Haley took Sara up to the maternity ward.

Grace crosses over to Leonard.

**GRACE (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

How are you feeling?

**LEONARD**

My head hurts.

**GRACE**

You're lucky you didn't get killed.

**(CONTINUED)**

**22.**

**CONTINUED:**

**LEONARD**

I told you, I'm sorry.

**GRACE**

You try being awakened at four

o'clock in the morning by the police saying, they have your son, he's unconscious and on his way to the hospital. I've never been so scared in my life. And poor Rudy.

Leonard starts crying.

GRACE (cont'd)

What?

**LEONARD**

My best friend is dead!

Grace hands Leonard a double cheeseburger.

**GRACE**

Eat this. It'll make you feel better.

**LEONARD**

I'm not hungry. Besides, I can't taste anything anyway.

**GRACE**

Hospital food is always bland. This has flavor.

**LEONARD**

No, it's because of my condition. I can't taste or smell anything anymore.

**GRACE**

What are you saying, condition? What condition?

**LEONARD**

(shrugs)  
My condition.

**INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER**

Patrick and Grace sit across from the DOCTOR (50's).

**(CONTINUED)**

**CONTINUED :**

**DOCTOR**

Leonard has a condition. It's called Anosmia.

**GRACE**

Oh my God! Is it serious?

**DOCTOR**

No. Anosmia is when a person loses their sense of smell. It's not uncommon in patients who suffer serious head injuries. Unfortunately, it's also affecting his ability to taste. Again, not uncommon.

**PATRICK**

Is it permanent?

**DOCTOR**

Depends on the patient.

**GRACE**

What do we do? He can't eat.

**DOCTOR**

He can eat. He just can't taste what he's eating.

**PATRICK**

What she means is, he won't eat.

**DOCTOR**

Leonard's association with food is no longer about taste. It's about texture. While we may be partial to sweet or salty foods, Leonard will become partial to crunchy or smooth ones. Once he settles on a texture he likes, his appetite will increase.

**GRACE**

I can't believe this is happening.

**DOCTOR**

Considering what Leonard could have suffered, he's lucky. Besides, he is severely overweight. A loss of appetite may be a benefit.

Grace and Patrick shoot him a look of death.

24.

**INT. LEONARD'S HOSPITAL ROOM - SAME TIME**

Leonard lies in bed, staring out the window. A NURSE (40) enters and crosses over to his bedside table.

**NURSE**

How'd we do?

The nurse sees that Leonard has barely touched his food.

**NURSE (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

You have to eat something. It may not be gourmet, but you don't look that finicky.

**LEONARD**

This stuff feels like shit in my mouth.

**NURSE**

It's macaroni and cheese.

**LEONARD**

It feels gross. Like there's a film on my tongue.

The nurse grabs the tray of food. She removes an untouched apple and places it in Leonard's hand.

**LEONARD (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

I don't like apples.

**NURSE**

So, you can't taste it, right? Maybe you'll like the crunch.

The nurse exits. Leonard eyes the apple in his hand. A beat. He reluctantly takes a bite. The apple makes a loud CRUNCH. Leonard starts chewing. After a few seconds, a smile comes to his face. He likes it.

**INT. JACOB'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME**

Jacob lies in bed, holding Rudy's old baseball GLOVE. He brings the glove to his nose, and a flood of old memories

come back to him.

Jacob rises, crosses over to the closet and removes a metal LOCK BOX. He selects 666 for the combination and the box opens. Jacob removes the contents; baseball cards, some firecrackers, a few ticket stubs and a PHOTOGRAPH of he and Rudy at age 5. He can't help but smile.

25.

**INT. JACOB'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME**

Gabe Artunian crosses over to Jim.

**GABE**

I'm leaving, Jim. Again, so sorry.

As Gabe turns to leave.

**JIM**

Gabe, are you still interested in buying the land? Because I accept your offer.

**GABE**

This is hardly the time to talk business.

**JIM**

Buy the woods, Gabe, please. Tear them down and build. Build houses, condos, a 7-11, I don't care. I just don't want to recognize it ever again.

Off Gabe's look -

**SFX OVER SHOT: BUZZING CHAIN SAW**

**SMASH CUT TO:**

**EXT. WOODS - THREE WEEKS LATER -AFTERNOON**

TIGHT ON a CHAIN SAW chopping down a tree.

WIDEN to REVEAL a CONSTRUCTION CREW, tearing down the last

of

the woods. Rows and rows of STUMPS make it look like a graveyard for trees.

**MALEE (O.S.)**

It's gone!            It's all gone!

We FIND Malee and Jacob, straddling their bikes a few feet away from the site. Leonard is beside them on a scooter. He has a band-aid on his forehead.

**MALEE (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

If Rudy was alive, he'd be freaking out right now.

Leonard shoots Malee a look.        She silences herself.

**(CONTINUED)**

**26.**

**CONTINUED:**

**LEONARD**

You holding up alright, Jacob?

Jacob shrugs.

**LEONARD (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

I'm sorry. I wish I could have done something.

**JACOB**

Jeff and Kenny were the ones that started the fire. It was their fault. Or maybe mine. I should of been there.

**MALEE**

You wouldn't have been able to do anything. And it could have been you who died.

**JACOB**

I wish it was. You know the last thing Rudy said to me? He said, I can't be a pussy all my life. He was right, I am. And Rudy might be dead because of it.

**MALEE**

Don't say that.  
(beat)

Why don't you talk to your parents about this?

**JACOB**

They can't help me.

**MALEE**

Give them time. It'll get better.

**JACOB**

What if it doesn't? My dad hasn't gone back to work yet. What if he loses his job. We could lose our house. I could be homeless.

**MALEE**

Then you'll stay with me.

**LEONARD**

Or me.

(CONTINUED)

27.

CONTINUED: (2)

**JACOB**

We're best friends. We...

Suddenly, something catches Malee's attention off screen. It's GUS, standing beside a BULLDOZER.

**MALEE**

Oh my God.

**JACOB**

What?

**MALEE**

That guy. I like know him. He's one of my mother's patients.

**LEONARD**

So?

**MALEE**

I've never seen a patient of hers actually out and about.

(beat)  
Should we go over and say "hi"?

**JACOB**

I just want to get out of here.

Leonard and Jacob start heading off.

Malee stays for a beat, eyeing Gus as he removes his T-shirt and exposes his rock abs. She is obviously turned on.

**LEONARD**

You coming, Malee?

**INT. LEONARD'S HOME - KITCHEN - LATER THAT AFTERNOON**

Leonard enters to find Grace, placing a casserole dish on  
the table. The table is filled with a cornucopia of food.

**LEONARD**

Are we having company?

**GRACE**

No, this is all for you. Your favorites; fried chicken, spaghetti, pizza, french fries, and chocolate cheesecake for dessert. I made everything extra spicy, so you can taste it.

**(CONTINUED)**

**28.**

**CONTINUED:**

**LEONARD**

Ma, it doesn't matter how spicy the food is.

**GRACE**

So you're not even gonna try it?

**LEONARD**

I'm sure it's delicious.

**GRACE**

Forget it. Don't eat.

Grace puts the plate of food into the sink.

GRACE (cont'd)  
You can't just eat apples all the  
time.

LEONARD  
Why not?

GRACE  
(beat, searching)  
It's unhealthy.

Off Leonard's confusion -

**SFX OVER SHOT: SCHOOL BELL**

**EXT. JEFFERSON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL - DAYS LATER - MORNING**

Students make their way inside for the first day of school.  
There is a sign out front, which reads: WELCOME BACK.

**INT. CLASSROOM - SAME TIME**

A TEACHER walks along the line of desks, showing students  
their assigned seats.

TEACHER  
Tommy Wallace.

Tommy takes his seat.

TEACHER (CONT'D) (cont'd)  
Jacob Carges.

Jacob takes his seat.

TEACHER (CONT'D) (cont'd)  
Rudy Carges.

**(CONTINUED)**

**29.**

**CONTINUED:**

Jacob along with his classmates are shocked to discover that  
Rudy's name hasn't been removed from the attendance sheet.

The teacher is unaware of the mistake.

TEACHER (CONT'D) (cont'd)  
Rudy Carges. Hello?

Tommy looks to Jacob. Since Rudy's not saying  
anything, he will.

**TOMMY**  
He's not in this class anymore.

**TEACHER**  
How do you know?

**JACOB**  
Cause he's dead.

**TEACHER**  
I realize being new at this school  
puts me at a disadvantage, but  
joking about a fellow classmate's  
death is anything but funny, Mr....

The teacher checks her attendance sheet.

TEACHER (cont'd)  
...Carges. Wait, are you...

**JACOB**  
I'm his brother. Was. And I'm not  
joking. He's dead.

The teacher looks around at the other students, realizing  
Jacob is telling the truth.

**TEACHER**  
I'm so sorry. Wow, this is  
awkward. Would you like the seat  
left empty?

**JACOB**  
Why?

**TEACHER**  
In memory.

Off Jacob's look -

**INT. SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - LATER THAT DAY**

COACH GILMORE (55), overweight, gym teacher, dressed in a jogging suit, snaps gum while addressing his students.

The class of boys stand up against the wall. Leonard is amongst them. His gym uniform barely fits.

**COACH**

Alright, ladies, welcome to gym.  
We will be starting things off this  
year with the United States  
Standardized Fitness Test.

The entire class groans.

**COACH (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

I'm sure you all remember it from  
last year. I will be testing you  
in a number of physical fitness  
areas.

As coach speaks, Leonard looks as if he's going to throw up.

**SMASH CUT TO:**

**ON CHIN UP BAR - MOMENTS LATER**

A STUDENT performs chin ups with great ease.

**COACH (V.O.)**

The state's requirement for upper  
body strength is ten chin ups.

hops The student finishes his run with a count of twelve. He  
off the bar and crosses over to his classmates.

**COACH (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

Leonard, you're up.

Leonard crosses to the chin-up bar, grabs a hold of it and begins struggling to lift himself up. Unfortunately, he can only manage 1/8th of an inch. Leonard drops off the bar, exhausted.

**COACH (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

What are you doing, let's go!

**LEONARD**

That was as far as I could pull

myself up.

**(CONTINUED)**

31.

**CONTINUED:**

A few students laugh. Coach shakes his head,  
disgusted.

**SMASH CUT**

**TO:**

**ON A STUDENT DOING SITUPS - LATER**

Coach stands over the boy, timing him with a stop watch.

**COACH**

Ten seconds. You need forty to  
pass.

The student increases his speed.

COACH (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Time. 42. Good job.

The student rises off the mat and walks over to the other  
boys. Leonard enters frame and drops on the mat like a ton  
of bricks.

COACH (CONT'D) (cont'd)

(rolling his eyes)

Go!

Leonard struggles to lift himself up but, he can't do it.

COACH (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Come on, son, fight it.

Leonard's face turns red. He clenches his teeth.  
Unfortunately, due to the pressure he is exerting, he blows

a

loud fart. The gym erupts with laughter.

**EXT. SCHOOL GROUNDS - TRACK - LATER**

The coach and his students stand at the beginning of the  
track, waiting for Leonard to finish his laps.

Leonard slowly walks over. He is soaking wet and  
breathing heavy.

**COACH**

23 minutes.

**LEONARD**

Not bad.

**COACH**

The goal was 8.

The class can't help but laugh.

**(CONTINUED)**

32.

**CONTINUED:**

**COACH (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

Hit the showers.

The class walks off.

**COACH (cont'd)**

Not you Leonard.

Leonard turns back and crosses over to the coach.

**COACH (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

Center. That's the position you'll  
be playing in two years.

**LEONARD**

Football?

**COACH**

You don't like football?

**LEONARD**

I love it. It's just I'll never  
make the weight requirement. Pop  
Warner league wouldn't let me play  
for five years because of it.

**COACH**

There's no weight requirement in

high school ball, son.

The coach bends down and rifles through his GYM BAG. He removes 2 books and hands them to Leonard.

COACH (CONT'D) (cont'd)  
These are your new bibles.

**LEONARD**  
Books?

**COACH**  
One is on nutrition, the other exercise. You do what they say, and you can play for me once you get to high school.

**LEONARD**  
Thanks.

Leonard begins walking back to the gym. After a few steps, he stops and turns back.

**(CONTINUED)**

33.

**CONTINUED: (2)**

LEONARD (CONT'D) (cont'd)  
Coach, why are you doing this for me?

**COACH**  
Because I've never seen a child so out of shape in my life.

**INT. SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - LATER THAT DAY**

The school BAND is on stage and playing a particularly horrendous rendition of the STAR SPANGLED BANNER. We FIND MALEE in the flute section, playing her heart out.

The CONDUCTOR, MR. FARMER (40) overly energetic and dorky, waves his baton, silencing the band.

**MR FARMER**  
(annoyed)

Did anyone practice over the summer?

The band sits silent.

**MR. FARMER**

Great. Well, we still have a fall recital coming up. If anyone would like to perform a solo, sign up on the sheet outside my office. Class dismissed.

Off Malee, weighing the decision in her mind.

**INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER**

SIGN Malee stands outside Mr. Farmer's office, staring at the UP SHEET on his door. After a beat, she lifts her pen to sign her name. Before she writes it, she stops, quickly turns around and walks away.

After a beat, Malee returns to the sign up sheet and starts writing her name. Halfway through, she stops, scratches out her name and walks off.

We remain on the sign up sheet. After a few seconds, Malee's hand enters the shot and writes in her name.

**INT. JACOB'S HOME - DEN - EVENING**

Jacob enters to find Jim and Ashley fighting.

(CONTINUED)

34.

CONTINUED:

**ASHLEY**

No, they're wrong. Call them back.

**JIM**

Ashley, I talked to the lawyer. He wouldn't lie.

**JACOB**

What's going on?

**ASHLEY**

This is all your fault.

**JIM**

Me?

**ASHLEY**

If we had gone to the hearings like I said, this wouldn't be happening.

**JIM**

We agreed it would be too painful.

**ASHLEY**

You agreed.

**JACOB**

Mom, what happened?

Ashley turns to Jacob as if realizing his presence for the first time.

**ASHLEY**

Tell him. Tell your son.

**JIM**

The boys who killed Rudy cut a deal. They got a year in juvenile hall and five years probation.

**ASHLEY**

A year. That's what your brother's life is worth. A damn year!

**JIM**

Ashley, calm down!

**ASHLEY**

How can you be so unaffected by this! How? Our son was murdered!

(CONTINUED)

35.

CONTINUED: (2)

**JIM**

(measured)

It was an accident, and the boys  
are juveniles.

**ASHLEY**

So that makes it okay?

Ashley storms out of the room. Jacob looks to his father,  
unnerved by the sight of his mother so upset.

Jim just turns and walks into the living room.

**FADE TO BLACK:**

**SFX OVER BLACK: ALARM CLOCK**

**FADE IN:**

**INT. LEONARD'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING**

Leonard awakens and silences the alarm. He sits up in bed  
for a moment and comes to his senses.

**EXT. LEONARD'S HOME - MOMENTS LATER**

Dressed in a sweat suit and sneakers, Leonard sprints down  
the driveway and to the street. His sweat suit is so tight,  
Leonard looks like a stuffed sausage.

With each step he takes, Leonard breathing becomes heavier  
and heavier. Sweat forms on his forehead and drips down his  
face.

Within seconds, Leonard's pace tapers off. He struggles to  
continue but is so out of shape, stopping is inevitable.

Leonard leans over, gasping for air. He looks back and  
realizes that he only ran about one hundred yards. In fact,  
his house is still in view.

Leonard turns around and starts walking back home. After  
a few steps, he stops and throws up.

**EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAYS LATER - AFTERNOON**

Gus stands inside of a shallow ditch, digging out the roots  
of an old tree.

**MALEE (O.S.)**

Don't I know you?

(CONTINUED)

36.

**CONTINUED:**

Gus turns and sees Malee behind him, holding a PICNIC BASKET.

**GUS**

Dr. Chung's daughter.

**MALEE**

You remembered. We were never introduced. My name is Malee.

**GUS**

Gus.

They shake hands.

**GUS (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

What are you doing here?

**MALEE**

I was in the mood for a picnic. I thought this would be a nice place to have one.

Gus looks around, confused. This location is anything but picnic friendly. Bulldozers plough through the scene, blasting exhaust into the air. Men scream at each other.

**WORKER (O.S.)**

Asshole, move your fucking truck!

**MALEE**

Would you like to join me? There's plenty of food.

**GUS**

I don't go to lunch for another ten minutes.

**MALEE**

I'll wait. Meet me by the cement mixer when you're ready.

Malee walks off. Gus watches as she makes her way through

the construction site.

**EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - ANOTHER AREA - TEN MINUTES LATER**

food  
Gus and Malee sit on a checkered blanket, eating Chinese  
with chopsticks. A large CEMENT MIXER stands behind them.

(CONTINUED)

37.

**CONTINUED:**

**GUS**

The last time I saw you, you had just come from a funeral. How are you doing?

**MALEE**

Okay. Death is like so weird. I mean, it's sad, but I also feel like I've been given this sign. A sign which is telling me, life is short, so you gotta do what makes you happy. You gotta take chances. You gotta get crazy.

**GUS**

What are you doing to "get crazy"?

**MALEE**

I play the flute.

**GUS**

(laughs)  
Yeah, that's totally nuts.

**MALEE**

No, not that. See, every year my school has this recital. I've always been too scared to play a solo in front of people, but this year I've decided to do it.

**GUS**

Good for you. When is it?

**MALEE**

Why do you care?

**GUS**

Cause I'm gonna go.

**MALEE**

What? You can't go! Nobody goes to these things. I don't even think my mom is going.

**GUS**

You gotta have somebody rooting for ya. Besides, I like music, and I owe you for bringing me lunch.

**(CONTINUED)**

**38.**

**CONTINUED: (2)**

**MALEE**

(laughs, embarrassed)  
Okay. Tuesday at 8:30 in the junior high school auditorium.

**GUS**

I'll be there.

**MALEE**

(vulnerable)  
Don't say it if you don't mean it.

**GUS**

I'll be there. Front row.

Malee smiles. She's got a major crush on Gus now.

**CUT TO:**

TIGHT ON TV: VIDEO GAME - HALO. Two soldiers fire at each other with supersonic weapons. One soldier is particularly annihilated. GAME OVER appears.

**INT. CARGES LIVING ROOM. DAY**

REVEAL Jacob and Leonard in front of the TV. Malee off to  
the

side, reading a book.

**LEONARD**

I can't believe how much you suck  
at this game.

Jacob throws his remote down.

**LEONARD (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

You wanna play again?

**JACOB**

No.

The boys sit in silence for a beat.

**LEONARD**

You wanna shoot some hoops?

**JACOB**

No.

(beat)

The sentencing thing totally upset  
my mom. She was up half the night,  
crying.

**(CONTINUED)**

39.

**CONTINUED:**

Malee closes her book, looks over at Leonard.

**LEONARD**

I can't believe it either. A year  
ain't shit! Rudy is dead forever.

**JACOB**

I want them dead. I want to kill  
them. I could handle a year in  
Juvy hall.

**MALEE**

Whoa, what those guys did was an  
accident. If you were to kill  
them, it's premeditated. You'd get  
20 years to life at least.

**JACOB**

So I'm just supposed to sit here and take it? Be like you guys.

**LEONARD**

What is that supposed to mean?

**JACOB**

You seem to have gone on with life pretty easily. Don't you miss him? Don't you care?

**MALEE**

It's not that we don't care. It's just...

**JACOB**

Life goes on.

**MALEE**

It does. You have to deal with it. If you don't, it could like eat you alive forever. 90 percent of people's problems is due to their inability to get over the past.

**LEONARD**

How do you know?

**MALEE**

My mom tells that to all her patients. I've eavesdropped on some of her therapy sessions.

(CONTINUED)

40.

CONTINUED: (2)

**LEONARD**

That's awesome. Can I listen in sometime?

**MALEE**

No. Anyway, she says, if a person wants closure, they gotta deal with their problems head on. Go see these guys and let them know how

you feel.

**JACOB**

I don't think my parents would be up for that.

**MALEE**

Go alone. Juvy hall is only like forty minutes from here. Take the bus.

Off Jacob, thinking-

**INT. JACOB'S PARENT'S BEDROOM - LATER THAT AFTERNOON**

The bedroom door slowly opens. Jacob peeks his head inside the darkened room and quietly enters. He tip toes over to his parent's bed. Ashley lies asleep, wrapped up in a bundle of blankets.

Jacob crosses to her night stand and opens the top drawer. He removes her purse, unzips it and steals some cash, which totals around 60 dollars.

**INT. CARGES LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Jim sits in his chair, staring off into space. Jacob enters and crosses to the front door.

**JACOB**

Bye, Dad.

**EXT. BUS STATION - MOMENTS LATER**

With the help of the BUS DRIVER, Jacob loads his bike into the luggage compartment underneath the bus. Then he hands the driver a ticket and boards.

Jacob takes a seat up front. After a few moments, the driver boards, starts the engine and drives off.

41.

**INT. JUVINILE HALL - CONVERSATION BOOTH - LATER**

Jacob and Kenny sit, staring at each other through a plate of glass. Kenny picks up the ONE WAY PHONE. Jacob does also.

**JACOB**

Where's Jeff?

**KENNY**

He's sick. I think he...

**JACOB**

(interrupting)

I hate you. You know that? You  
bastard.

**KENNY**

Rudy knew we were going to be  
there. He never should have come.  
You want the truth, all this  
happened cause of you.

**JACOB**

Me?

**KENNY**

Yeah, you deformed retard! The  
only reason we started picking on  
you guys in the first place was  
because of that thing on your face.

**JACOB**

Every night, I lie in bed and plan  
your murder.

**KENNY**

I'm shaking.

**JACOB**

First I'm going to take a kitchen  
knife and chop off your fingers  
then your nose then your tongue.  
Then I'm gonna poke out your eyes  
with the end of a broomstick.  
Well, not really poke them out, but  
I'm gonna push them back into your  
brain. Then I'm gonna take  
scissors and cut off your ears.  
When they find you, it's gonna be  
like putting a jigsaw puzzle back  
together.

**(CONTINUED)**

**CONTINUED:**

**KENNY**

If you kill me, you come here.

**JACOB**

So? What do I have to look forward to? You've already destroyed my life.

**KENNY**

What happened was an accident.

**JACOB**

There are no accidents. You're gonna pay for what you did. And it's gonna hurt like hell.

**INT. LEONARD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Leonard sits, reading through nutritional manuals.

We see that he is writing things down on a piece of paper. The words written are: Sugar, corn syrup, salt, gum.

**INT. LEONARD'S HOME - HALLWAY/KITCHEN - LATER**

Grace walks through the hallway half asleep. She enters the kitchen and finds Leonard, sitting on the floor, surrounded by boxes of food. All of the kitchen cupboards are open and packages line the counter tops.

**GRACE**

What the hell is this?

**LEONARD**

I'm reading the list of ingredients in our foods.

**GRACE**

Why?

**LEONARD**

Research. Do you know the damage these chemicals can do to the human body?

**GRACE**

Leonard, put everything back.

**LEONARD**

This is serious. You can't keep buying this crap. Don't you care that you're ingesting garbage?

(CONTINUED)

43.

**CONTINUED:**

**GRACE**

Just put everything back and go to sleep.

Off Leonard's look -

**EXT. STREET - NEXT DAY - AFTERNOON**

Malee is riding her bike on the sidewalk when she sees Gus, exit his car and enter her mother's office.

**INT. STAIRWELL/HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER**

Malee runs up a flight of stairs. She gets off at the second floor and enters an open, unoccupied office.

**INT. UNOCCUPIED OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

Malee runs over to the heating grate and puts her ear to it.

**YACCO (FROM BELOW)**

How was your week?

**GUS (FROM BELOW)**

Same. Still can't sleep. When I do, nightmares.

**INT. YACCO'S OFFICE - SAME TIME**

Yacco and Gus sit across from each other.

**YACCO**

Post traumatic stress is very common in your line of work. Many fire fighters go through this.

**GUS**

Yeah. But why now? I haven't fought fires in ten years.

**YACCO**

Sometimes we experience something so horrific, our memory blocks it out. That way we won't have to relive the pain. It's called repression. Our bodies are not so forgiving, however. Inside, we feel the effects of trauma even when we don't know why.

**GUS**

What does that mean?

**(CONTINUED)**

**44.**

**CONTINUED:**

**YACCO**

Something stirred your unconscious. If we find out what that was, we can begin the healing process.

Gus looks to her, confused.

**YACCO (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

You told me last week, the nightmares started about the time you moved here. Let's look at that. Why did you move here?

**GUS**

A friend was making good money with construction. He got an offer to build that extension off Lindsay Acres. He suggested I come into town and work for a while.

**INT. UPSTAIRS OFFICE - SAME TIME**

Malee is on the edge of her seat, listening. We see that she has written the following words in her notebook: **GUS - NIGHTMARES - FIRE.**

**YACCO (FROM BELOW)**

Are there any other reoccurring elements in your dreams. Perhaps, a face or...

**INT. YACCO'S OFFICE - SAME TIME**

**GUS**

"Light my Fire" is always playing.

**YACCO**

What?

**GUS**

Light my fire. The Doors song.

(singing)

"Da da something... wallow in the mire... Da, da... we couldn't get much higher. Come on baby light my fire.

Yacco stares at Gus. He is suddenly self conscious.

**YACCO**

Interesting.

45.

**INT. UPSTAIRS OFFICE - SAME TIME**

Malee circles the words "Light My Fire" again and again and again.

**INT. JACOB'S HOME - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAYS LATER - EVENING**

SFX: CLANGING POTS AND PANS, coming from downstairs.

Jacob exits his room and goes to inspect the noise.

**INT. JACOB'S HOME - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER**

Jim stands on a chair, cleaning out the kitchen cupboards.

Pots and pans line the counter tops, dishes cover the table and non perishable foods are spread out across the floor.

Jacob enters and is taken aback by the sight of Jim standing on a chair and wearing an APRON and RUBBER GLOVES.

**JACOB**

Dad?

**JIM**

Jacob.

**JACOB**

You okay?

**JIM**

Fantastic.

Jim rips the rubber gloves off with his teeth.

JIM (CONT'D) (cont'd)

You know, for the past few weeks, I sat in this house. I couldn't move. Everything reminded me of Rudy. Then from out of nowhere I had a revelation. I am alive! Your mother is alive! I became overcome with joy because I realized how lucky we are to still have you.

**JACOB**

Me?

**JIM**

Jacob. I love you.

**(CONTINUED)**

**46.**

**CONTINUED:**

Jim grabs Jacob and hugs him tightly. Jacob pulls away, unsettled and bit frightened.

JIM (CONT'D) (cont'd)

(half crazed)

I went to work today. For the first time in weeks. It was as if I had just gotten out of college! I was fearless! I went after accounts I had avoided for years because I thought they were out of my league. I spoke to presidents, vice presidents, business managers, sales reps. I was amazing. I was magic. But when I came home to share the news with your mother, I discovered her asleep. When I looked around the house, I realized that her "office", for lack of a

better word, was also piled up.  
So, I took to the house. I have  
made it my duty to clean this place  
from top to bottom. Even if it  
takes me all night, I don't care.  
Jacob?

**JACOB**

(frightened)  
Yeah?

**JIM**

Will you join me? Join me in this  
celebration of life. A symbolic  
gesture of cleaning out the old and  
bringing in the new.

**JACOB**

Do I have to?

**JIM**

(thrown for a loop)  
No, you don't have to.

**JACOB**

Good night, Dad.

Off Jim's look -

**EXT. JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - DAYS LATER - NIGHT**

Parents and students file inside. A large SIGN above the  
door reads, JEFFERSON JUNIOR HIGH FALL RECITAL.

47.

**INT. SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS**

A packed audience listens to A GIRL (12), standing center  
stage and singing "The Rose". She is not nearly as good as  
she thinks she is, but she sings full throttle.

along We FIND Malee, sitting in the flute section and playing  
with the rest of the orchestra. She looks to the front row,  
but Gus is no where to be found.

The girl finishes her song, and the crowd politely applauds.

Mr. Farmer crosses to the microphone.

**MR. FARMER**

I'm sure Bette Midler would be most impressed with that rendition.

The crowd laughs. Mr. Farmer didn't mean for it to be a joke.

**MR. FARMER (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

Anyway, our next soloist is Malee Chung. She will play the theme from "Love Story" on the flute.

The crowd applauds as Malee rises and crosses to the microphone.

**MALEE**

Thank you, Mr. Farmer.

Malee spots Gus, walking down the aisle. He scurries into the front row and sits. Malee lights up.

**MALEE (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

There's actually been a change. I'm not going to play the theme from "Love Story". Um... this is a song...

Mr. Farmer, waves to Malee from off stage. Malee looks at him. Mr. Farmer mouths something to her.

**MALEE (INTO MICROPHONE) (CONT'D)**

(to Mr. Farmer)  
What? I can't hear you?

Mr. Farmer throws up his hands.

**(CONTINUED)**

**48.**

**CONTINUED:**

MALEE (CONT'D) (cont'd)  
Anyway. This is a song by The Doors.  
Doors.

The

At the mention of The Doors, Gus' smile instantly fades.  
coincidence is just too great.

Malee starts to play "Light My Fire". She is good. Mr. Farmer and the audience seem pleased by her euphonious performance. Even Gus is won over. He appears entranced by the music.

**INT. SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - LATER THAT NIGHT**

The recital is over. Most of the audience has filed out. A few remain, offering their congratulations to the musicians.

Malee stands with Leonard.

**MALEE**

Where's Jacob?

**LEONARD**

Couldn't make it. He...

**GUS (O.S.)**

Malee.

Malee spots Gus, heading towards her.

**MALEE**

Oh my God! He's coming over.

**LEONARD**

Who?

**MALEE**

Shut up! Leave now.

Malee pushes Leonard behind her just as Gus approaches.

**GUS**

You were awesome.

**MALEE**

Really? Be honest. I'd rather you tell me I sucked than lie.

**GUS**

You were great.

Leonard peeks around Malee's back.

(CONTINUED)

49.

CONTINUED:

**MALEE**

Excuse me for a second.

Malee turns around and pinches Leonard.

**LEONARD**

Ow, ow, ow alright. I'm going.

Leonard walks off. Malee turns back around with a big smile on her face. She plays coy.

**MALEE**

So you really enjoyed it?

**GUS**

Yeah. Good song. What made you pick it?

**MALEE**

(covering)

Oh, uh... my mother was humming it all last week. Big Doors fan.

**GUS**

Really? Is she here?

**MALEE**

No.

**GUS**

She missed out.

**MALEE**

You're so sweet.

**GUS**

Yeah well, I have to go, but thanks again. I had a great time.

Gus gives Malee an innocent kiss on the cheek and then walks off. Malee melts. She stands frozen, clutching onto her flute in ecstasy.

**EXT. STREET - MORNING**

With fire and determination, Leonard jogs. Unfortunately, he

is quickly winded by the run. He bends over, gasping.

SUPERIMPOSE SHOT OVER SHOT: Leonard appears, running past his old, weaker self. Stronger, he makes a few more yards and then is forced to stop.

**(CONTINUED)**

50.

**CONTINUED:**

He leans over for air, and we SUPERIMPOSE another SHOT OVER SHOT of Leonard, weeks later, running past his weaker self. (This series of shots repeats a few more times, illustrating the progression of time and weight loss.)

**INT. LEONARD'S HOME - STAIRCASE/KITCHEN - DAY**

Leonard runs up and down the stairs, sweating like crazy.

Grace appears, watching him around the corner. She shakes her head and then returns to the kitchen.

**GRACE**

That boy is going to bring the entire house down.

**PATRICK**

Let him be. He's looking good. I'm proud of him.

**GRACE**

(to the girls)

Girls, have you decided what you're going to go as for Halloween?

**SARA**

Either a witch or a princess.

**GRACE**

That's nice. Haley?

**HALEY**

I'm going to go as a marble.

**GRACE**

What do you mean, a marble?

**HALEY**

You know, like a bag of marbles,  
but just one marble.

**INT. JUVY HALL - CONVERSATION BOOTHS - LATE AFTERNOON**

Jacob and Jeff sit across from each other on the phone. Jeff has two black eyes and a fat lip. He is crying profusely. Jacob doesn't appear at all sympathetic.

**JEFF**

I'm really sorry, man. I...

**(CONTINUED)**

**51.**

**CONTINUED:**

**JACOB**

You just think about what I said.  
Get out of my sight. And send  
Kenny in on your way out.

Jeff rises and walks to a door, leading to the jail. A moment later, Kenny enters, looking pissed off. He sits across from Jacob and picks up the phone.

**KENNY**

What did you say to him?

**JACOB**

I thought you'd both like to know  
that Halloween was Rudy's favorite  
holiday.

Jacob picks up some pictures and presses them against the glass.

**JACOB (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

These are pictures from every  
single Halloween since we were  
five. You see how happy he was?

**KENNY**

Stop it.

**JACOB**

After we'd go trick or treating,

we'd sit in our room and swap the candy we hated. Rudy loved Snickers, I Almond Joys.

**KENNY**

Almond Joy sucks.

**JACOB**

What sucks is that I'll never get to sit in my room and swap candy with my brother ever again. Thanks to you.

**KENNY**

Why are you doing this?

**JACOB**

To remind you.

(CONTINUED)

52.

CONTINUED: (2)

**KENNY**

How could we forget? You been coming here for months to "remind us".

**JACOB**

No one is forcing you to talk to me.

**KENNY**

Anything to get out of my cell.

**JACOB**

Is your cell small?

**KENNY**

Yes.

**JACOB**

So is a coffin.

**KENNY**

You're not the only one who wishes he was still alive. I'd do

anything to bring him back, but I can't. It's not easy being in here. Hell, you saw Jeff.

**JACOB**

What happened to him?

**KENNY**

He pissed off the wrong guy off. Jeff is totally fucked right now.

**JACOB**

Good.

**KENNY**

Don't come back here ever again.

**JACOB**

Free country. I'll come if I want.

**KENNY**

Don't expect me to show up.

Kenny slams down the phone and exits. Jacob smiles, having shaken him.

53.

**INT. LEONARD'S HOME - FRONT DOOR - THAT NIGHT**

Grace hands out candy to a few trick or treaters at her door.

**GRACE**

Be careful now. Have a good night.

**INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**

Grace crosses to the kitchen table where Pat is doing a crossword puzzle.

**GRACE**

Kids keep coming later every year.

SFX: FRONT DOOR, opening and closing.

Haley and Sara storm into the kitchen in tears. Haley is dressed as a MARBLE, and Sara is dressed as a WITCH.

**HALEY**

I hate him! I hate him!

**GRACE**

Who? What happened?

**HALEY**

Leonard! He threw away all our Halloween candy.

**GRACE/PATRICK**

What?

**SARA**

He grabbed our bags and just threw them down a gutter.

Leonard enters. Haley and Sara run out of the kitchen.

**PATRICK**

What the hell is going on? Why did you throw away their candy?

**LEONARD**

Because their sugar intake is completely unhealthy. Besides, Halloween is supposed to be a celebration of evil. How did candy get wrapped into it?

(CONTINUED)

54 .

CONTINUED :

**GRACE**

I am going to ask you this once, and I want a straight answer. Are you in a cult?

**PATRICK**

Grace!

**GRACE**

This is what happens when kids join cults. The first thing they change is their diets.

**LEONARD**

I'm not in a cult. This is all information you can find in books.

**GRACE**

The issue here is that you have stolen one of the most exciting nights of the year from your sisters.

**PATRICK**

If anybody had done this to you when you were a child, we never would have heard the end of it.

**LEONARD**

I wish somebody had done it to me. I wish either one of you had given a shit about my weight.

Leonard storms out of the kitchen. Patrick and Grace are speechless.

**INT. LEONARD'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Leonard lies on the floor, doing sit-ups. He can actually do a few now. Patrick bursts into the room.

**PATRICK**

I do not care for your language.

**LEONARD**

I'm only trying to help you guys.

Leonard stops exercising.

**LEONARD (cont'd)**

You're fat dad. Mom is fat. Us kids are fat.

**(CONTINUED)**

55.

**CONTINUED:**

**PATRICK**

What's your point?

**LEONARD**

Dad, you and mom are going to die young if you keep eating as poorly as you do.

**PATRICK**

What is this obsession you have with weight?

**LEONARD**

The coach for Jefferson High is also my gym teacher. He told me that if I got into shape, I could start as center for the Freshman team when I get to high school.

**PATRICK**

Center is a great position. Toughest guy on the field. A good center can make or break a team.

**LEONARD**

I know. That's why I'm trying so hard to get into shape. You guys should to. At the rate you're going, you won't make it to your 60's.

**PATRICK**

Look, Leonard. Your mom, to her, a tasty meal is just a way of showing she cares.

**LEONARD**

She doesn't! Tonight she served spaghetti and meatballs from a can. The amount of sodium alone can wreck havoc on a person's blood pressure. Not to mention...

**PATRICK**

Leonard, people just don't drop dead from eating meatballs.

Off Leonard's look -

**EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAYS LATER - AFTERNOON**

Malee hands Gus her bag of Halloween Candy.

(CONTINUED)

56.

CONTINUED:

**GUS**

I can't take your Halloween candy.

**MALEE**

You'll be doing me a favor.  
Chocolate gives you zits. Besides,  
if I want to keep this firm ass as  
an adult, I gotta develop good  
eating habits now.

**GUS**

(uncomfortable)  
Maybe just a snickers.

Gus opens a snickers bar and starts eating.

**MALEE**

So work is good?

**GUS**

To be honest, I can't wait till  
this job is finished. This place  
is creepy. You know, a boy died  
here like right before we started  
working.

**MALEE**

Rudy. His name was Rudy.

**GUS**

You knew him?

**MALEE**

He was one of my best friends.  
Remember that funeral I went to?

**GUS**

That was him?

**MALEE**

I thought you knew. Two boys threw  
a flaming cocktail at him. Can you  
imagine killing someone like that?  
How evil can you get?

Gus eyes Malee, completely unsettled.

**INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT**

fumbles Obviously drunk, Gus stumbles to his front door. He  
for his keys and enters.

57.

**INT. GUS'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - LATER**

Gus lies in bed with a bottle of whiskey in one hand and a GUN in the other. Distraught and at the point of tears, Gus opens the chamber and loads the gun with a single bullet.

Then he spins the chamber and locks it. Gus puts the gun to his head and fires. NOTHING. He throws the gun across the room, grabs the bottle of whiskey and drinks it till it's gone.

**INT. JACOB'S HOME - KITCHEN - NEXT MORNING**

Ashley stands with a big smile on her face.

**ASHLEY**

Jeff Laskey is dead.

Jim and Jacob look up, stunned.

**JIM**

What?

**ASHLEY**

He committed suicide in his jail cell last night. Sally Yngve called just now to tell me.

Jim and Jacob sit, stunned. Their shock turns to intrigue as Ashley, appearing unaffected by the news, crosses to the kitchen table, opens a nearby box of donuts and begins eating. She is smiling.

**JACOB**

Why are you smiling? A boy died.

**ASHLEY**

No, a monster that murdered my son died. Justice is served; end of story.

Ashley crosses to the kitchen sink. She rolls up her sleeves and begins cleaning. Jim crosses over to her and they kiss as if nothing happened. Jacob is baffled by their behavior.

**INT. JUVY HALL - COMMUNICATION BOOTH - LATER THAT NIGHT**

Jacob and Kenny are on the phone together. Kenny looks gaunt and tired. Jeff's death has obviously affected him.

(CONTINUED)

58.

CONTINUED:

**KENNY**

He used his bed sheet, waited until lights out and then jumped.

**JACOB**

That's terrible.

**KENNY**

His cell mate let him hang there the entire night.

**JACOB**

I'm sorry, Kenny.

**KENNY**

Like you even give a shit. I bet when you heard, you started dancing.

**JACOB**

No.

**KENNY**

I knew he wouldn't make it. It's my fault too. Jeff wasn't a saint when I met him, but he sure as hell wasn't headed here.

(tearing up)

That fucking asshole!

Kenny drops the phone and begins crying in his arms. Jacob watches through the glass, touched by Kenny's reaction.

**MUSIC OVER SHOT: UPBEAT CHRISTMAS MUSIC**

**INT. JACOB'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - CHRISTMAS MORNING**

Jacob sits on the floor, surrounded by boxes and wrapping paper. Santa has obviously been good to him.

Jim sits on the couch, drifting in and out of sleep.

Ashley, dressed in her finest Christmas sweater, peruses the fireplace mantel and all of the decorations that line it. She is a drastically different woman than the last time we saw her. She looks upbeat and pretty.

**JACOB**

An IPOD! Sweet!

Ashley looks at Jacob and smiles. He has just unwrapped  
an  
**IPOD.**

**(CONTINUED)**

59.

**CONTINUED:**

**ASHLEY**

You like it?

**JACOB**

I love it. You guys went crazy  
this year.

Ashley smiles at her son. It's a bittersweet moment for her.

**JIM**

I'm going to shower.

**ASHLEY**

Jim, Jacob still has one more  
present.

**JIM**

I thought we were going to wait.

**JACOB**

No, do it now! Now!

hold Ashley crosses to the couch and sits beside Jim. They  
each others hands.

**ASHLEY**

After serious debate, your father  
and I have decided... to adopt A  
**BABY!**

**JACOB**

What?

**JIM**

We're gonna adopt a baby.  
Hopefully a boy.

Off Jacob's shock -

**INT. LEONARD'S HOME - DINING ROOM - DAY**

eating Leonard's extended family sits at the kitchen table,  
overweight Christmas dinner. His extended family is just as  
too as his immediate. Leonard barely touches his own plate,  
disgusted to eat. He rises.

**LEONARD**

May I be excused?

The entire family stops eating and turns to him.

**(CONTINUED)**

60.

**CONTINUED:**

**GRACE**

No!

eating. Leonard sits back down. His family quickly resumes

**INT. MALEE'S HOME - DEN - EVENING**

Malee does her homework, Yacoo flips through a fashion

magazine.

**MALEE**

Why do I have to do this? It's  
Christmas break.

**YACCO**

You'll be one step ahead in  
January.

**MALEE**

Just because you're an atheist, I  
don't get to celebrate the  
holidays.

Yacco shoots Malee the look of death.

**MALEE (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

Don't you find it hard not  
believing in anything?

**YACCO**

Malee.

**MALEE**

I'm going for a bike ride.

**YACCO**

There's a foot of snow outside.

**MALEE**

The streets are ploughed. Besides,  
I like looking at all the lights.

**YACCO**

Be home in an hour. Be careful.

**EXT. 7-11 PARKING LOT - LATER THAT NIGHT**

Malee flips through a TELEPHONE BOOK. She comes to Gus'  
name  
and rips out the page.

61.

**INT. GUS' APARTMENT BUILDING - OUTSIDE HIS DOOR - LATER**

Malee knocks on Gus' door, but he doesn't answer. Then Malee  
spots a WELCOME MAT. She kicks it aside and discovers a

SPARE KEY underneath.

**INT. GUS'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS**

Malee cautiously enters, shutting the door behind her. A beat. She allows the excitement to settle in. It's your typical bachelor pad. Stray beer bottles decorate every shelf and end table. Dirty clothes drape across an old couch. Malee continues on to the kitchen.

**INT. GUS' APARTMENT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**

Malee finds the kitchen more of a mess than the living room. Pots, pans and stacks of TV dinners line the counter top.

**INT. GUS'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Malee enters and stops cold at the sight of the bed. Its unmade and the sheets and blankets are entangled in a ball. Aroused, Malee sits on the bed and then lies back in

ecstasy.

**EXT. FRONT OF GUS' APARTMENT BUILDING - SAME TIME**

Gus drives up, parks along the sidewalk, and gets out.

**INT. GUS'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - SAME TIME**

Malee goes through a photo album. We see pictures of Gus, dressed in a firefighter's uniform. He appears much younger and clean cut.

As Malee returns the album to the night stand, she notices an open drawer and peeks inside.

**INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - STAIRWELL - SAME TIME**

Gus lazily makes his way upstairs.

**INT. GUS'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - SAME TIME**

Malee holds Gus' gun. Complete with sound effects, she pretends to shoot a beer bottle off the dresser.

Malee laughs and then jumps across the bed like a Charlie's Angel.

62.

**INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - GUS'S FRONT DOOR - SAME TIME**

Gus fumbles for his keys.

**INT. GUS'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - SAME TIME**

Malee stands in front of the mirror, posing.

**MALEE**

Freeze! That's right.

Malee laughs in spite of herself. In the process, she unknowingly cocks the trigger. Malee places the gun to her forehead and pretends to shoot herself.

TIGHT ON TRIGGER, a hair away from firing -

**SFX: BAM!**

**INT. GUS' APARTMENT - FRONT DOOR - SAME TIME**

The loud bang we heard was the front door slamming shut.

Gus

opens it and inspects the door frame.

**INT. GUS' APARTMENT - KITCHEN/BEDROOM - SECONDS LATER**

Gus removes a beer from the fridge. We follow him into his bedroom. He stops cold as if feeling the presence of some one else there, but Malee is nowhere to be found.

Gus begins getting undressed. We follow his shirt to the floor and SEE Malee, hiding underneath his bed.

**SFX: FOOTSTEPS, DOOR OPENING, SHOWER RUNNING**

Malee looks out from underneath the bed. She watches as the now naked Gus enters the shower stall in the bathroom.

As the water falls upon Gus, Malee rises from underneath the bed and crosses over to him.

**INT. GUS' APARTMENT - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS**

From over Gus's shoulder, we see Malee approaching. An inch away from Gus, Malee reaches out her hand to touch him. Suddenly, Gus breaks down and starts crying.

Unsettled, Malee slowly retreats out of the bathroom.

**INT. JACOB'S HOME - BEDROOM - NEXT DAY**

Malee, Leonard and Jacob sit, playing LIFE, the board game.

(CONTINUED)

63.

CONTINUED:

**LEONARD**

Don't worry, white male infants are the hardest to come by. 60 minutes did a whole story on it.

**MALEE**

Since when do you watch 60 minutes?

**LEONARD**

Since I was in the hospital. They said, any adoption agency worth its salt has at least a three year waiting list. By the time your parents get a kid, you'll be in college. You think they'll want to start over again with that baby shit?

**JACOB**

No, but it's like they're trying to replace Rudy.

**LEONARD**

It doesn't matter cause it's not gonna happen.

Malee has been silent this entire time. Seeing a moment, she speaks up.

**MALEE**

I'm thirsty.  
(to Leonard)  
Can you get us some drinks?

**LEONARD**

Why me?

**MALEE**

Because it's the gentlemanly thing to do.

**JACOB**

I'll get the drinks.

**MALEE**

I'll go with you.

**LEONARD**

Why are you all of a sudden going to get the drinks?

(CONTINUED)

64.

CONTINUED: (2)

**MALEE**

(bitchy)

Because you've upset me, and I don't want to see you right now.

Leonard looks to Jacob.

**LEONARD**

Fine, I'll get the drinks.

Leonard exits. Malee turns to Jacob.

**MALEE**

I need a favor. It's big. I need you to hide something for me.

**JACOB**

Hide what?

Malee reaches into her back pack.

**MALEE**

Promise, you won't freak.

**JACOB**

I won't.

Malee removes Gus' gun.

JACOB (cont'd)

Holy shit!

**MALEE**

You said, you wouldn't freak!

**JACOB**

That's a gun.

**MALEE**

I know.

**JACOB**

Where'd you get it?

**MALEE**

I can't tell you. I just need you to hide it for a while. When all is cool, I'll come for it.

**JACOB**

Why can't you keep it?

**(CONTINUED)**

65.

**CONTINUED: (3)**

**MALEE**

My mother is a total snoop. She goes through my stuff like all the time.

(beat)

Please, Jacob. Somebody's life might depend on it.

Jacob crosses to his closet, removes his metal LOCK BOX and opens it. Jacob takes the gun and places it inside.

**JACOB**

Is it loaded?

**MALEE**

No, but I do have some bullets.

Malee reaches into her backpack and removes the bullets. Jacob takes them out and puts them in the lock box.

**MALEE (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

Sure your parents won't find it?

**JACOB**

Nobody has the combination, but me. Besides, I could be building a bomb in here, and they wouldn't even

know.

Off Jacob, locking the box up.

**FADE TO BLACK:**

**FADE IN:**

**EXT. STREET - MONTHS LATER - MORNING**

ON TWO FEET, running. We REVEAL that it's LEONARD. His once skin tight sweat suit, hangs off of him. More than just skinny, Leonard is in perfect shape. He runs fast, carefully avoiding puddles of melting snow. (Spring is fast on the horizon.)

**INT. JUVY HALL - CONVERSATION BOOTH - NEXT DAY**

Jacob and Kenny talk via one way phone. Their demeanor has changed since last we saw them. No longer fraught with contempt and acrimony, they speak like two old friends.

**JACOB**

I sent in some comics for ya. The X-men one is pretty sweet.

**(CONTINUED)**

**66.**

**CONTINUED:**

**KENNY**

That last batch was awesome.

Jacob checks his watch.

**JACOB**

I better get going, I don't want to miss my bus.

**KENNY**

Before you go, I got some news. Apparently, the parole board feels I've been a model prisoner, so they're giving me early release.

**JACOB**

What? How can they do that?

**KENNY**

I don't know. They just did.  
You're pissed, aren't you? I knew  
you would be.

(off Jacob's silence)  
It was an accident, Jacob.

**JACOB**

So you're getting out. Gonna head  
back to school, or...

**KENNY**

Fuck school. I'm going to live  
with my Dad in New Mexico. He's  
working on a ranch out there.

**JACOB**

You can't leave the state. That  
violates your probation. You'll  
have to...

**KENNY**

My dad won't tell anyone. No one  
will even care I'm out there.

**JACOB**

Your mom will.

**KENNY**

Jacob, in the entire time I've been  
locked up, you were the only one  
who came to see me. Trust me, she  
won't care.

67.

**INT. MALEE'S HOME - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON**

Malee fans out a fist full of twenty dollar bills.

**MALEE**

200 dollars! Dad sent me 200  
dollars!

Yacco, smiling, gets ready for work.

MALEE (CONT'D) (cont'd)  
I have to call him.

**YACCO**

No!  
(covering)  
Your father... went out. He's not  
home right now.

Malee eyes her mother, suspicious.

**MALEE**  
You're acting weird. What's going  
on?

**YACCO**  
Nothing.

**MALEE**  
Well, do you want to come with me  
to the mall and spend it?

**YACCO**  
I'd prefer it if you'd put that  
money in the bank.  
(off Malee's look)  
Fine, spend it. You'll have to do  
it alone though. I have a patient  
this afternoon. Have a good day.

Yacco exits the kitchen. Malee looks at her cash and  
smiles.

**INT. LEONARD'S HOME - KITCHEN - SAME TIME**

Leonard, Patrick and Grace sit at the kitchen table.

**PATRICK**  
Here's the deal. You know how my  
company flies me to Florida every  
April?

**(CONTINUED)**

**68.**

**CONTINUED:**

**LEONARD**  
You and I have been going since I  
was eight. It's the guy's week  
off.

**PATRICK**

This year, I'm taking the girls.  
Just the girls. You're staying  
home.

**LEONARD**

Why can't we all go?

**GRACE**

I'm not staying here all alone.  
Besides, you said it yourself,  
you've been going for years. Give  
your sisters a chance.

Leonard eyes his mother with hatred.

**LEONARD**

Whatever.  
(beat)  
I need money.

**PATRICK**

What for?

**LEONARD**

Clothes. Nothing I have fits  
anymore.

**GRACE**

Your father and I aren't rich. You  
can't get a new wardrobe anytime  
you want.

**LEONARD**

What am I supposed to do, go to  
school naked?

**GRACE**

Wear a belt.

**PATRICK**

I'll give him some cash, he can get  
some clothes.

**GRACE**

No. He's gonna gain all his weight  
back in a few months.

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

69.

**CONTINUED: (2)**

GRACE (cont'd)

Then what, we have to buy him new clothes all over again?

Obviously hurt, Leonard storms out of the kitchen.

**PATRICK**

Grace.

**GRACE**

What? It's true.

Grace exits the kitchen.

**JACOB (O.S.)**

I thought you hated going to Florida?

**EXT. JACOB'S FRONT LAWN - LATER**

Leonard and Jacob play catch with a football.

**LEONARD**

When I was fat. Now I don't have to wear a T-shirt when I go swimming. Who knows, maybe I could even get lucky.

**JACOB**

You're still ugly, though.

Leonard punches Jacob's arm in fun.

**LEONARD**

I don't understand what my mother's problem is. It's like the thinner I get, the more she hates me.

**JACOB**

She's probably jealous. Maybe you should put her on that diet.

**LEONARD**

Anytime I mention it, my mother goes crazy.

**JACOB**

If you really want her to drop a few tons, put her in jail. Kenny's

lost about 30 pounds since he's been incarcerated, and he was already thin.

(CONTINUED)

70.

CONTINUED:

LEONARD

Really?

JACOB

Yeah. Jail is the perfect weight loss program. You take a fat tub, throw them in a room and force them to eat right and exercise. Don't let them out till they do.

Off Leonard, thinking-

INT. MALEE'S HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Yacco enters Malee's room.

YACCO

Malee, dinner!

Yacco notices a number of department store bags strewn everywhere.

YACCO (cont'd)

Malee?

(noticing something)

Oh my God!

REVEAL MALEE, standing across the room. She is no longer the gawky, adolescent girl. Rather, she has been transformed into a beautiful young woman. Her glasses have been replaced by contacts, and her braided pig tails by a quaff of chin length curls.

YACCO (CONT'D) (cont'd)

What did you do?

MALEE

I got a new look. You know, for

Spring. What do you think?

Malee spins around, giving Yacco the full picture.

**YACCO**

You look...

**MALEE**

Beautiful?

**YACCO**

Different. What happened to your glasses?

**(CONTINUED)**

71.

**CONTINUED:**

**MALEE**

Contacts. It took me like forty five minutes to get them in, but beauty is pain.

**YACCO**

Honey, in the future, I'd like to know if you're going to radically change your appearance. Clean your stuff up and come down for dinner.

Yacco exits. Malee looks in the mirror, deflated.

**EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - AFTERNOON**

Gus watches a CEMENT TRUCK, dumping cement into a foundation.

Once the cement is poured, the truck pulls forward. Malee is revealed, standing there and holding a picnic basket.

Gus sees the new and improved Malee for the first time.

His

jaw drops.

**GUS**

Malee? My God, you look...

**MALEE**

Different?

**GUS**

Beautiful. You look beautiful.

Off Malee's smile -

**EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - ANOTHER AREA - LATER**

Gus and Malee eat their lunch.

**MALEE**

I felt like I needed a change, you know?

**GUS**

I bet you're driving the boys at school wild.

**MALEE**

Boys my age are so immature. I'm more attracted to older gentlemen.

Malee smiles at Gus. He knows where this is going, and he's suddenly nervous.

**(CONTINUED)**

**72.**

**CONTINUED:**

**GUS**

You don't want somebody that much older than you. An age difference can cause problems.

**MALEE**

What kind of problems?

**GUS**

A lot of times when a couple has an age difference, they wind up splitting up because they want different things.

**MALEE**

You mean sex.

**GUS**

No.

Gus catches a look of relief on Malee's face.

GUS (cont'd)

I mean, yeah. You may be 13, but a boy even three years older than you is probably more "experienced". Boys can be impatient about that sort of thing.

**MALEE**

Are you impatient?

**GUS**

No, but when I was a kid.

**MALEE**

Why don't you have a girlfriend?

**GUS**

I did, but it didn't work out.

**MALEE**

How old was she?

**GUS**

About my age.

**MALEE**

See that, age wasn't an issue, yet you still wanted different things. I don't think it's about age.

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

73.

**CONTINUED: (2)**

MALEE (cont'd)

I think when two people connect, they connect for other reasons. And since soulmates are eternal, they have no age.

Gus is stumped.

**EXT. LEONARD'S DRIVEWAY - NEXT DAY**

Leonard watches Patrick and his sisters drive off in a

**TAXICAB.**

**LEONARD**

(calling after them)  
Have a good flight!

The taxicab disappears down the street.

As Leonard turns back around, he sees Grace, staring at him from the window. They lock eyes for a moment and then Grace disappears into the dark recesses of the home.

**INT. LEONARD'S HOME - BASEMENT - NIGHT**

Leonard descends the staircase and begins looking around at the setting. Boxes of junk clutter the floor along with old furniture and bicycles.

He crosses to the basement door, which leads out to the backyard. As Leonard unlocks and opens the door, a mass of cobwebs stretch across the frame like elastic bands. Leonard grabs a nearby broom and starts wiping away the cobwebs.

**INT. JACOB'S HOME - BEDROOM - DAYS LATER**

Jacob sits at his desk, reading the PLASTIC SURGERY PAMPHLET his parents had given him for his birthday last year.

The bedroom door opens and Ashley sticks her head in.

**ASHLEY**

We're home.

**JACOB**

Hi.

**ASHLEY**

Could you come downstairs for a minute. We have a surprise for you.

74.

**INT. JACOB'S HOME - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER**

Jacob stands in front of KEITH GARDNER (10), African American, sweet faced and dressed in a shirt and tie. He

has

luggage with him.

Ashley and Jim stand behind the boys, beaming.

**JIM**

This is Keith Gardner. You're new brother. Keith our son, Jacob.

Keith extends his hand.

**KEITH**

It's nice to meet you.

**INT. JACOB'S HOME - BEDROOM - LATER**

Jacob leads Keith inside.

**JACOB**

You get top bunk.

**KEITH**

I'm kind of afraid of heights.

**JACOB**

Sucks to be you.

Keith lets Jacob's attitude pass.

**JACOB (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

No offence, but I never thought my future brother would be a... well, a "brother".

**KEITH**

I never thought my future brother would have a KOOL AID stain, smeared across his face.

**JACOB**

Fuck you, it's a birthmark!

**KEITH**

We're getting off on the wrong foot.

**(CONTINUED)**

**CONTINUED:**

**JACOB**

When my parents said they were taking in an orphan, I pictured a baby. So what happened, your parents die or something?

**KEITH**

I was given up at birth.

**JACOB**

You gonna try and find your mother when you're 18?

**KEITH**

As far as I'm concerned, the fact she had me was enough. I don't need to show up one day and disrupt her life.

**JACOB**

Oh, but it's okay to just show up one day and disrupt mine?

Off Keith's hurt look -

**INT. LIBRARY - LATER**

Malee stands at the card catalogue, flipping through the "S" section. She comes to cards with the word SEX in the title.

**INT. MALEE'S HOME - BEDROOM - EARLY EVENING**

Malee enters her room, locks the door behind her and empties her bag of SEX books on the bed. The first one she peruses is the "KARMA SUTRA". At first glance, Malee's eyes go wide in shock. She grabs her backpack and removes a number of index cards. Malee starts taking notes.

**INT. JUVY HALL - COMMUNICATION BOOTHS - NEXT DAY**

Jacob is on the one way phone with Kenny.

**JACOB**

He's not some baby. He's like 10.

**KENNY**

You're blaming me for this?

**JACOB**

No. But can you believe it?

(CONTINUED)

76.

CONTINUED:

**KENNY**

Maybe this is the only way they can get over Rudy's death.

**JACOB**

He's a person not a fucking vase.

**KENNY**

I know.

**JACOB**

I gotta get out of there. I can't live in that house for one more day. I want to go with you to New Mexico.

**KENNY**

No way. You've never even been out on the road.

**JACOB**

So.

**KENNY**

It's not easy. After first night falls, you'll be pissing yourself.

**JACOB**

No, I won't.

**KENNY**

You don't need me to run away from home.

**JACOB**

That's not what this is about.

**KENNY**

Yes, it is.

(beat)

And you want to come with ME of all people. Are you forgetting, I was the one who killed Rudy!

**JACOB**

That was an accident.

Kenny appears stunned. Jacob has never accepted that truth.

**(CONTINUED)**

**77.**

**CONTINUED: (2)**

JACOB (CONT'D) (cont'd)  
I'll be helpful. I can get  
everything we'll need together. As  
soon as you're released, we can go.

Kenny appears to be weighing the decision.

JACOB (CONT'D) (cont'd)  
Please.

**KENNY**

If this is what you want. Alright.

**INT. MALEE'S HOME - KITCHEN - SAME TIME**

Yacco is on the phone with her ex-husband.

**YACCO (INTO PHONE)**

... I'm not asking for much. Just  
call her from time to time...  
Because she needs to know her  
father cares... Call collect.

Malee enters the kitchen.

**MALEE**

Is that Dad? Can I talk to him?

**YACCO**

Take some responsibility for  
yourself and grow... Hello?...

Yacco slams the phone down.

YACCO (CONT'D) (cont'd)  
He hung up.

**MALEE**

Well, what do you expect? All you ever do is yell at him.

**YACCO**

Malee, you don't understand.

**MALEE**

He's my Dad! I'm sorry if it bothers you, but I love him. You keep this up then one day, when I'm old enough, I'll leave here and go and stay with him.

Malee runs out of the room, leaving a disappointed Yacco.

78.

**INT. LEONARD'S HOME - BASEMENT - NIGHT**

Leonard hammers a piece of wood over the basement door,  
which  
is now entirely boarded up.

REVEAL the basement. Now clean. Boxes, furniture and trash are piled neatly in a corner. Only a mattress remains on the floor in the center of the room.

Leonard grabs a grocery bag and crosses to a bathroom at the opposite end of the basement.

**INT. LEONARD'S HOME - BASEMENT BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Leonard turns on the light, revealing a shower, toilet and sink. He removes toiletries from the grocery bag and places them inside.

**INT. LEONARD'S HOME - DEN - SAME TIME**

Grace watches FAMILY FEUD while eating cake.

**LEONARD (O.S.)**

(screaming)

Help! Oh God, Ma! Help!

Grace drops her fork.

**GRACE**

Leonard?

Grace jumps up and runs out of the room.

**INT. LEONARD'S HOME - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

Grace opens the door to the staircase, which leads to the basement.

**GRACE**

(screaming)

Leonard, what's wrong?

**LEONARD (O.S.)**

It's on top of me. I can't get up!  
Oh, there's so much blood!

**GRACE**

I'm calling 9-1-1!

**LEONARD (O.S.)**

Get it off me first! I'm bleeding.

**(CONTINUED)**

**79.**

**CONTINUED:**

**GRACE**

If I go downstairs, I won't be able  
to make it back up. Let me call  
9-1-1 first, okay?

Leonard doesn't answer her.

GRACE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Leonard?

Silence.

GRACE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Oh, Jesus!

Grace begins walking downstairs. Due to her size, she has  
difficultly maneuvering through the tight space. Her  
inability to see her feet isn't helping matters.

Grace makes it downstairs, but Leonard is nowhere in sight.

GRACE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Leonard?

Suddenly, Leonard bursts through the bathroom door with a hammer in hand. He runs past Grace and up the stairs.

GRACE (CONT'D) (cont'd)  
What the hell?

Half way up the stairs, Leonard stops and pries two of the steps off the stair case with his hammer. This creates a GAP, making it virtually impossible for Grace to ascend.

GRACE (CONT'D) (cont'd)  
What are you doing? I can't climb  
up now!

Leonard runs upstairs and slams the door after him.

GRACE (CONT'D) (cont'd)  
Leonard! Leonard!

**EXT. GUS' APARTMENT BUILDING - SAME TIME**

Malee watches as Gus enters his car and drives off.

**INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - SECONDS LATER**

Malee crosses to Gus' door with a GROCERY BAG in hand. She kicks the welcome mat aside, picks up the spare key and enters.

80.

**INT. GUS' APARTMENT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**

Malee enters and removes a pair of rubber gloves, a bottle  
of ammonia and trash bags. She starts cleaning.

**INT. LEONARD'S HOME - BASEMENT - LATER THAT DAY**

Leonard descends the staircase, holding a tray of food.

Grace instantly rises.

**LEONARD**  
I hope someone is hungry.

**GRACE**  
Get me out of here now!

**LEONARD**

No joke, Ma. For the next two weeks while Dad and the girls are away, you will be kept down here. I'll provide you with nutritious meals and plenty of water. You, mother, will learn what it means to be healthy.

**GRACE**

That's what this is about, food?

**LEONARD**

I'm trying to save your life, mom. Trying to give you a life. Cause I love you.

**GRACE**

My life is fine. I don't need you to "save me".

Leonard looks at his mother, sympathetic.

**LEONARD**

You don't even realize how sick you are. It's a problem when an otherwise healthy woman can't drag her ass up a flight of stairs because she's so obese. You're staying down here.

Leonard turns and crosses back to the staircase.

**LEONARD (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

Oh, and no cigarettes either.

81.

**INT. GUS' APARTMENT - KITCHEN - EVENING**

The kitchen is now spotless. Malee removes TWO TV DINNERS from the oven. She crosses over to the kitchen table and places the food onto plates.

The table is set to the nines. A small candle burns in the center. Once the table is set and the food served, Malee takes a step back and smiles.

**INT. GUS' APARTMENT - BATHROOM - LATER**

Malee strips off her clothes and puts on a long, silk robe.

**EXT. GUS' APARTMENT BUILDING - SAME TIME**

Gus drives up, gets out of his car and enters the building.

**INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER**

Gus approaches his door. As he takes out his key, he notices that the welcome mat has been pushed off to the side. Gus lifts the mat up and sees that his spare key is gone.

**INT. GUS'S APARTMENT - FRONT ENTRANCE/ KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**

Gus enters. He knows someone else is in there.

**GUS**

Hello?

We follow him into the kitchen and FIND MALEE, standing beside the table and dressed only in her robe.

GUS (CONT'D) (cont'd)

What the hell is this?

**MALEE**

I made dinner, my love. And I have a surprise.

**GUS**

You've been in my apartment before, haven't you?

Malee drops her robe, revealing her naked body. Gus quickly looks away.

GUS (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Malee, put your clothes on now!

(CONTINUED)

82.

**CONTINUED:**

**MALEE**

Don't you like my body?

Malee starts walking towards him.

**GUS**

Malee, stop.

**MALEE**

It's okay because I love you.

puts Gus doesn't answer. Malee is right behind him now. She  
her head on his back.

**MALEE (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

Touch me.

Gus slowly turns around and looks at Malee for a long, pregnant beat. It's a tense moment, and we are unsure of what he's going to do. Then Gus moves past her and crosses to the living room.

**MALEE (cont'd)**

Where are you going?

**GUS**

To go call your mother.

Gus exits. Malee stands the fool.

**MALEE**

But we're soulmates.

Now embarrassed and crushed, she starts to cry.

**EXT. GUS'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT NIGHT**

Malee, now wrapped in a large overcoat, is led by Yacco out of the building and over to her car.

**INT. YACCO'S CAR - CONTINUOUS**

Yacco and Malee sit in silence. After a beat.

**YACCO**

I don't know what to say to you.

**INT. JACOB'S HOME - BEDROOM - AFTERNOON**

Jacob shoves clothes into his backpack.

Keith enters with Rudy's baseball glove on his hand.

(CONTINUED)

83.

CONTINUED:

**KEITH**

Wanna play some catch?

Jacob notices the glove. He rushes over to Keith, yanks it off his hand and pushes Keith to the ground.

**JACOB**

Where the hell did you get this?

**KEITH**

The closet. Ow, what's wrong?

Keith struggles to get free, but Jacob is too strong.

**KEITH (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

You're hurting me.

**JACOB**

Did I say you could play with the glove? Did I?

**KEITH**

No, I just...

**JACOB**

Everything, and I mean, EVERYTHING in this room is mine. You are not allowed to touch a thing, especially the glove.

**KEITH**

Okay, okay.

Jacob gets off of Keith and crosses to his closet. He pulls out the lock box, unlocks it and removes the gun. He points it at Keith.

**JACOB**

If you tell my parents what I said, I'll kill you. I'll shoot you in the fucking face, I swear it!

Keith nods, petrified. Jacob puts the gun back in the lock

box, throws it in the closet and storms out of the room.

**INT. JACOB'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER**

Ashley sits at the kitchen table, looking at a picture of Rudy and Jacob when they were infants. Her eyes are filled, but she's not crying.

(CONTINUED)

84.

**CONTINUED:**

Jacob enters and crosses to the fridge. He spots Ashley  
and is taken aback by her state.

**JACOB**

(cold)

What's wrong now?

**ASHLEY**

I was looking at a picture of you  
and Rudy when you were born. God,  
I miss him.

**JACOB**

But you have Keith now

Ashley is struck by Jacob's comment.

**ASHLEY**

What the hell does that mean?

**JACOB**

You have Keith. Two boys again.  
Everything is fine.

**ASHLEY**

We didn't adopt Keith to replace  
Rudy.

**JACOB**

Didn't you?

**ASHLEY**

For your information, your father

and I discussed adopting for years.

**JACOB**

(not buying it)

Right. Maybe if it was me who died, you wouldn't need another kid to get over it.

**ASHLEY**

How can you say that? I never wanted either of my children to die.

**JACOB**

But one of us did. If you had to choose which one, I bet you wish it was me.

(CONTINUED)

85.

CONTINUED: (2)

**ASHLEY**

I know you think we favored Rudy...

**JACOB**

You did! Admit it.

**ASHLEY**

I admit he was easier to raise, but we didn't love him more. Jacob, listen to me. You came with a different set of challenges.

**JACOB**

My birthmark.

**ASHLEY**

It's not easy being different...

**JACOB**

(screams)

I'm not different!! You always made me feel like something was wrong. There's nothing wrong with me.

**ASHLEY**

I know...

**JACOB**

No, you don't! It's like you don't know how to deal with me. You never did.

**ASHLEY**

I'm sorry if that is how you feel. You do the best you can as a parent. You don't always know what's right. But you're my son. I'd do anything for you. I'd fight for you, I'd kill for you, I'd die for you.

**JACOB**

Rudy used to say that exact same thing.

**ASHLEY**

It's true. And as unchristian as it sounds, I still want the boy that killed Rudy dead. Someday, when you grow up, you'll understand what I mean. Someday.

86.

**INT. LEONARD'S HOME - BASEMENT - SAME TIME**

**SFX: TOILET FLUSHING**

Grace exits the bathroom and begins walking around the basement, looking for a way out. She crosses to the boarded up door and tries to pull the boards off. Unsuccessful, she returns to the bed and sits.

After a beat, Grace spots the tray of food, which is still untouched. Angry and disgusted, she takes it and throws it at the wall.

**CUT TO:**

**LATER THAT NIGHT -**

Grace paces nervously while blabbering to herself.

**GRACE**

When Pat calls, and I don't answer,  
he'll know something is wrong.  
He'll know. I'll be fine.

**CUT TO:**

**LATER THAT NIGHT -**

Grace nervously rocks back and forth. Sweat covers her body.  
She glances at the tray of food, which rests on the floor.

**CUT TO:**

**LATER THAT NIGHT -**

Grace stands at the base of the stairwell, screaming.

**GRACE**

Open this door now! Let me out,  
God damn it! Leonard!

**CUT TO:**

**LATER THAT NIGHT -**

Grace is crying. She catches sight of the meal that she  
threw on the floor.

After a beat, Grace crawls over to it and starts shoving it  
down her throat. She doesn't seem bothered by the fact that  
her dinner is covered with dirt.

87.

**INT. YACCO'S OFFICE - RECEPTION AREA - NEXT DAY - AFTERNOON**

Yacco exits her office to find Gus waiting for his session.  
They speak not a word. He rises and enters the office. She  
follows, shutting the door behind her.

**INT. YACCO'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

Gus and Yacco sit in their respective seats.

**YACCO**

Before we begin, I want to  
apologize. I should have known  
what was going on with Malee.

**GUS**

It's my fault. I knew she had a crush on me. I guess, I felt bad for her. She's a very unhappy girl.

Yacco looks down, embarrassed.

GUS (CONT'D) (cont'd)  
If it's any consolation, the whole thing was very "therapeutic" for me.

(off Yacco's look)  
Sorry. That was a very selfish thing to say.

**YACCO**

This is your therapy. Not mine. Why was it therapeutic?

**GUS**

I slept last night. I can't remember the last time I slept so deep or so sound. I don't remember dreaming or anything.

**YACCO**

Why do you think that is?

**GUS**

One of the last fires I ever fought was a brownstone, beautiful. The place was burned from roof to basement. Whole family was wiped out. When I was upstairs, inspecting, I found a girl. She couldn't have been more than 12.

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

**88.**

**CONTINUED:**

GUS (cont'd)  
The whole right side of her face was burnt off, but her eyes were open. She was alive. The pain must have been excruciating. She was begging for me to... kill her.

**YACCO**

What did you do?

**GUS**

Exactly what she wanted. I placed my hand over her mouth and what was left of her nose, and I... I killed her. I told myself it was the right thing to do, but I've never been sure.

**YACCO**

What does this have to do with Malee?

**GUS**

When I saw her last night, she had the same look on her face as that girl. She just wanted me to take away her pain.

Yacco sits, pondering all of this.

**GUS (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

Doctor?

**YACCO**

Would you mind if we... cut out early today? No charge.

**GUS**

I understand.

Gus rises and exits.

Yacco sits alone and starts crying.

**INT. LEONARD'S HOME - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER**

Leonard is at the kitchen sink, arranging a fruit salad.

SUDDENLY, he hears the sound of water boiling over from the stove. Leonard quickly turns the gas low, extinguishing the flame. He removes the pot from the burner, grabs a strainer and removes poached EGG WHITES from the water.

**(CONTINUED)**

89.

**CONTINUED:**

Leonard grabs a dish towel and begins wiping the water off the stove. Preoccupied, he doesn't realize that when he wipes the oven knob dry, he turns the gas on high. (Since the overflowing water, extinguished the pilot light, he is unaware that gas is now being emitted from the burner.)

In

his condition, HE WON'T BE ABLE TO SMELL IT.

Leonard grabs the plates of food and exits the kitchen.

**SFX: GAS LEAKING**

**INT. LEONARD'S HOME - BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER**

Leonard places the food by Grace's bed. She is sleeping.

**INT. LEONARD'S HOME - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER**

Leonard sits on the couch, watching TV. Suddenly, he starts coughing, hard. The fit subsides and Leonard resumes watching TV, thinking nothing of it.

**INT. MALEE'S HOME - KITCHEN - EVENING**

**SFX: TELEPHONE**

Malee enters the kitchen and answers the phone.

**MALEE (INTO PHONE)**

Hello?... Daddy!... No, she's not home... Can I ask you something? Can I visit you for a while?... A week... But I can fly alone... No, I understand... Yeah... I love y... Hello?...

Malee hangs up the phone. Tears swell in her eyes. She places her head in her arms and start bawling.

**YACCO (O.S.)**

Honey?

Malee looks to find Yacco standing behind her.

**MALEE**

(through her tears)  
Why does he hate me?

Yacco walks to Malee and hugs her tight. It's a long, overdue hug.

90.

**INT. LEONARD'S HOME - BASEMENT - LATER THAT DAY**

Grace awakens from her nap. Suddenly, she sniffs at the air.

Grace rises and crosses over to the foot of the basement stairs. She sees that the upstairs door is wide open.

**GRACE**

Leonard!

Silence.

GRACE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Leonard, I smell gas!

**INT. LEONARD'S HOME - DEN - SAME TIME**

Leonard is slumped over, unconscious.

**INT. LEONARD'S HOME - BASEMENT - SAME TIME**

Grace coughs hard.

**GRACE**

Leonard, don't you smell that...?

(sotto)

Oh God, he can't. Leonard!

Leonard, the gas is on!

Grace grabs a hold of the railing and starts climbing the stairs. After a few steps, she stops to rest, wheezing.

With the help of the railing, Grace pulls herself up to the GAP in the staircase. In one forceful exertion, she propels her body up and forward. The railing instantly becomes separated from the wall. Grace lands in a heap.

Luckily, the top half of her body made it to the other side. With all of her might, Grace pulls herself up to the landing.

**INT. LEONARD'S HOME - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**

stove Exhausted and wheezing, Grace drags herself over to the  
and shuts the gas off. She looks around for Leonard and sees  
him in the living room, slumped over and unconscious.

**GRACE**

No!

Grace frantically shuffles over to the living room.

**(CONTINUED)**

91.

**CONTINUED:**

GRACE (CONT'D) (cont'd)  
Leonard, wake up! Leonard!

**INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT**

nurse Leonard slowly comes to in a hospital bed. The same  
from earlier is by his side.

**NURSE**

It's alive!

**LEONARD**

What happened?

**NURSE**

Gas leak.

**LEONARD**

My mom, she's...

**NURSE**

She's fine. They've taken her into surgery. She blew out her knees somehow. We're trying to get your father on the phone right now.

**LEONARD**

I...

**NURSE**

Shh. You need your rest.

Everything is fine now.

**EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY**

Jacob straddles his bike, watching a crew spread cement over the foundation of a house. Jacob appears lost in thought. He looks at a picture of Rudy and himself together.

Jacob touches his face in the photograph. He traces his finger along the outline of his birthmark.

**KENNY (O.S.)**

Tonight, we ride.

**EXT. TRAILER PARK - BESIDE KENNY'S TRAILER - DUSK**

Jacob and Kenny share a cigarette.

**KENNY**

We got sleeping bags, a tent,  
canteens and a lantern.

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

92.

**CONTINUED:**

**KENNY (cont'd)**

I heard it's supposed to rain, so  
I'll bring ponchos.

**JACOB**

(half hearted)

Cool.

Kenny eyes Jacob.

**KENNY**

You're acting weird. You gonna  
chicken out?

**JACOB**

No.

**KENNY**

You better not. I already packed  
twice the amount of shit. I can't  
carry it all alone.

**JACOB**

I'll be there.

**KENNY**

Good. I'm telling you, man. It's gonna be great.

**JACOB**

I guess.

**KENNY**

Come on. You can't be a pussy all your life.

**JACOB**

(beat, hauntingly)

I know.

**KENNY**

I'll see you tonight. Don't be late.

Kenny rides off. Jacob watches him go. He has a lifeless, almost calculating look in his eyes.

**INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT**

Grace lies in a hospital bed, watching TV. Leonard enters, dressed in a hospital gown. Grace turns to him, smiling.

**GRACE**

Leonard!

(CONTINUED)

93.

**CONTINUED:**

**LEONARD**

I'm sorry, mom. I didn't mean to leave the gas on. It was an accident. And everything that happened, I... I just thought that maybe, I could help you.

**GRACE**

Leonard, my mother died at 52. We had to cremate her body because they didn't make a coffin big enough for her to fit in. Even if

they had, no one could have carried it.

(tearing up)

I loved her so much. I don't want that to happen to me.

**LEONARD**

It doesn't have to.

**GRACE**

Even if I can manage the food... Can you honestly see me, running a marathon?

**LEONARD**

You don't have to run a marathon. You just have to run to the end of the block. It's not so hard as you think it is.

**GRACE**

I'll try.

Leonard leans over and kisses his mother's forehead.

**GRACE (cont'd)**

I spoke to your father. He and the girls caught a flight. They should be here by morning.

**LEONARD**

Did you tell him what happened?

**GRACE**

I told him there was a gas leak.

**LEONARD**

I meant...

(CONTINUED)

94.

CONTINUED: (2)

**GRACE**

I know what you meant. I didn't tell him. I don't think I will.

Leonard smiles.

**INT. JACOB'S HOME - BEDROOM - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT**

Jacob lies awake, staring out the window. A heavy wind blows.

**SFX: WATCH ALARM**

Jacob sits up and silences his watch alarm.

Keith awakens as well, but remains silent. He watches as Jacob grabs a bag and exits the house through the window.

Once he's gone, Keith gets off the top bunk, crosses to the window and watches as Jacob runs off.

Immediately, Keith crosses to the closet. He removes the lock box and begins trying combinations to open it.

**EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - SHORT TIME LATER**

A heavy rain begins to fall as Jacob rides up. He sees Kenny, standing inside of a partially, constructed house.

**KENNY**

You're late.

**JACOB**

I'm here.

Kenny throws Jacob a PONCHO.

**KENNY**

Put this on.

Jacob removes his backpack and puts on the poncho. Then he opens his backpack and removes his HOCKEY MASK. (The same mask he was wearing at the beginning of the movie.)

**KENNY (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

What the fuck is that?

**JACOB**

If people see me riding around in the middle of the night, we're screwed. You didn't bring a disguise?

(CONTINUED)

95.

**CONTINUED:**

**KENNY**

Who gives a shit what I'm up to.

The boys start riding off in opposite directions.

**KENNY (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

The main road is this way.

**JACOB**

Yeah, but if we cut through the construction site, we'll hit the railroad tracks. It's faster and no one will bother us.

**KENNY**

Good point.

deep  
Kenny files in behind Jacob, and the boys make their way into the construction site. Thunder and lightning crash.

**INT. JACOB'S HOME - BEDROOM - SAME TIME**

Keith has forgone opening the lock box via a combination and now tries to pry the top open with a SCREWDRIVER. He works frantically, fearing Jacob's return.

**EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - SAME TIME**

Jacob and Henry make their way to the edge of the construction site. Suddenly, Jacob stops in his tracks.

**KENNY**

What's wrong?

Jacob lifts the hockey mask.

**JACOB**

I can't do this.

**KENNY**

What?!

Jacob begins rummaging through his backpack.

**INT. JACOB'S HOME - BEDROOM - SAME TIME**

Keith pries the box open. It's EMPTY. No gun or  
bullets.

96.

**EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - SAME TIME**

**KENNY**

Son of a bitch! I knew it. I knew  
you'd chicken...

Jacob rises, holding the gun. He points it at Kenny.

**KENNY (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

What the fuck?

Jacob shakes, frightened and reluctant to do what he  
believes he has to do.

**JACOB**

I can't let you leave, Kenny. You  
have to pay for what you did.

**KENNY**

Whoa, whoa hold on. Alright, I...  
I won't go. I'll stay here. I'll  
do my probation.

Jacob cocks the gun. Tears stream down his checks.

**JACOB**

You killed him. I gotta do this...  
for my family. It's the only way.

**KENNY**

Jacob, I told ya, it... it was an  
accident. I swear. Please, don't.  
This isn't you.

**JACOB**

I know. But I can't be a pussy all  
my life.

Jacob fires. Kenny is hit in the head. He drops to the  
ground instantly.

The force of the gun, knocks Jacob to the ground. As he falls, the hockey mask comes down over his face.

Jacob sits for a beat, staring at Kenny's lifeless body. Lightning flashes, illuminating his blue eyes through the hockey mask.

**EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - SHORT TIME LATER**

digging  
Jacob is inside one of the UNPAVED house foundations,  
a hole. He cries, struggling to finish what he has done.

**(CONTINUED)**

97.

**CONTINUED:**

Once a hole is dug, Jacob throws Kenny's body inside and starts covering it up with dirt.

**INT. JACOB'S HOME - BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT**

watching.  
Jacob climbs through his window, soaking wet. He crosses to his closet and begins to change. Keith lies in bed,

Jacob removes the gun from his pocket and places it back inside the lock box. His hands shake violently. As he puts the box back inside the closet. He finds Rudy's glove. He smells the leather and smiles.

places  
Jacob takes the glove and crosses over to his bed. He  
the glove beside Keith.

**KEITH**

I thought I wasn't supposed to touch this.

**JACOB**

You're awake.

**KEITH**

Yeah.

**JACOB**

It's yours. Just don't leave it outside. If it gets wet, the

leather will crack.

**KEITH**

I'll take good care of it. I know  
this was Rudy's.

Jacob lies down on his bed.

**KEITH (cont'd)**

Why do you have a gun?

**JACOB**

Just a b-b gun. I returned it to a  
friend of mine.

(beat)

I'm sorry for being such an asshole  
to ya.

**KEITH**

Does this mean we're brothers now?

**(CONTINUED)**

98.

**CONTINUED:**

**JACOB**

(beat, torn apart)

Yeah. We're brothers.

Keith lies back in bed, smiling. Jacob rolls over, still  
unnerved by what he is done. He'll never be the same, and he  
knows it.

**EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY**

Gus loads cinder blocks into a wheel barrow.

**MALEE (O.S.)**

Gus?

Gus spins around, and finds Malee, standing there.

**MALEE (CONT'D) (cont'd)**

Before you freak out, I want to  
tell you, I'm sorry. And to give  
you this.

Malee opens her backpack and removes Gus' GUN. Gus  
snatches it from her.

**GUS**

Malee?

**MALEE**

Don't be mad. I was just worried about you. Now I'm out of your life forever. Goodbye. Thanks for not pressing any charges.

Malee walks off. Gus holds the gun in awe.

**EXT. STREET - BESIDE THE CONSTRUCTION SITE - SAME TIME**

TIGHT ON JACOB, staring at the construction site. We ZOOM OUT and find him, straddling his bike.

Malee appears, walking over.

**MALEE**

Quite a storm last night.

They stand for a moment, watching the builders.

MALEE (cont'd)

Did you hear about Leonard?

Jacob nods, YES.

**(CONTINUED)**

99.

**CONTINUED:**

MALEE (cont'd)

Only him. I was gonna go and visit him at the hospital. You want to come?

Jacob doesn't answer. He is preoccupied with watching a TRUCK pour cement into the foundation where Kenny is buried.

It's a bittersweet moment. While relieved by the fact that his crime will be hidden, the guilt overwhelms him.

MALEE (cont'd)  
Earth to Jacob. You coming?

**JACOB**  
Huh? Oh, yeah.

Jacob turns his bike around, and the two ride off together.

**MALEE**  
You know, your birthday's coming up. Any hints as to what you might like?

**JACOB**  
Whatever you get me will be fine.

**MALEE**  
(annoyed)  
Right.

Malee eyes Jacob, sensing that something is wrong.

MALEE (CONT'D) (cont'd)  
Are you okay?

**JACOB**  
(lying)  
Never better.

BACK ON the foundation. Gus enters frame and begins spreading cement over Kenny's grave.

**FADE TO BLACK:**

**THE END**