

**12 and holding**  
by  
**Anthony S. Cipriano**

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**Director: Michael Cuesta**  
**Contact: 212 343 0069**  
**516 909 4787**

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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 its 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.

As Jacob rises, a stream of blood pours down the front of his 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.

Rudy and Jacob climb the tree, using makeshift RUNGS that are 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.

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)

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)

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)

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)

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

Malee drops on the stoop like a ton of bricks. After a beat, 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)



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?"

(horri fi ed)

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)

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.

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)

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)

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.

Kenny pushes Rudy to the ground and then jumps on top of him. Rudy struggles to get free, but he's overpowered. A crowd of kids surround them, chanting, "FIGHT, FIGHT".

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

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!

Kenny pushes Rudy down once more and runs off. Rudy slowly 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)

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.

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

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)

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)



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)

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)

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 to 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)

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)

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)

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)

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).

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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.



## 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.

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)

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)

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)

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)

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.

The student finishes his run with a count of twelve. He hops 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)

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)



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)

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

Malee stands outside Mr. Farmer's office, staring at the SIGN  
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)

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)

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)

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

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

(CONTINUED)

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)

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)

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)



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.

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)

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)

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.

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)

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.

## 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.

We FIND Malee, sitting in the flute section and playing along 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)



CONTINUED:

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

At the mention of The Doors, Gus' smile instantly fades. The 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)

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)

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)

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)

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.

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)

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)

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

Ma lee hands Gus her bag of Halloween Candy.

(CONTINUED)



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

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

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)

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)

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!

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

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

LEONARD  
May I be excused?

The entire family stops eating and turns to him

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE

No!

Leonard sits back down. His family quickly resumes eating.

INT. MALEE'S HOME - DEN - EVENING

Malee does her homework, Yacco 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.

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.

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)

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)



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)

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)

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.

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)

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)

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)

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)

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)



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)

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 TAXI CAB.

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.

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)

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)

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.

## 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)

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 difficulty 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.



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.

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)

CONTINUED:

MALEE  
Don't you like my body?

Malee starts walking towards him

GUS  
Malee, stop.

MALEE  
It's okay because I love you.

Gus doesn't answer. Malee is right behind him now. She puts 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)

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)

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)

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.

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.

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)



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)

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.

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

Exhausted and wheezing, Grace drags herself over to the stove 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)

CONTINUED:

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

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Leonard slowly comes to in a hospital bed. The same nurse 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)

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)

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)

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)

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.

Kenny files in behind Jacob, and the boys make their way deep 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.



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

Jacob is inside one of the UNPAVED house foundations, digging  
 a hole. He cries, struggling to finish what he has done.

(CONTINUED)

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

Jacob climbs through his window, soaking wet. He crosses to his closet and begins to change. Keith lies in bed, watching.

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.

Jacob takes the glove and crosses over to his bed. He places 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)

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)

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