

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

**BIRDMAN**  
OR  
**(THE UNEXPECTED VIRTUE OF IGNORANCE)**

**BEST ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY**

*Written by*  
*Alejandro G. Iñárritu*  
*Nicolás Giacobone*  
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1 BLACK 1

We hear a clock ticking.

FADE IN:

1 INT. RIGGAN'S DRESSING ROOM - THEATER - DAY 1

Close on the brilliant colors of a middle eastern rug, the center of what seems to be a makeshift "meditation" space.

We slowly tilt up to discover the back of Riggan Thomson (55). He is in the proper 'Lotus' position, dressed only in tight white briefs and he appears to be meditating deeply. And if all this seems a little odd, it becomes all the more so when you notice that he is levitating almost two feet above the floor. His breath is calm and measured... in and out... in and out.

MAN (V.O.)  
How did we end up here?  
(Beat.)  
This place is a fucking dump.

We begin to slowly move toward Riggan's back while his measure breathing continues. We see a clock on the wall, ticking.

MAN (V.O.)  
Smells like balls.

A slight twitch in Riggan's neck.

MAN (V.O.)  
We don't belong in this shithole.

A Skype call shatters the silence. Close on his back, we follow Riggan as he walks over to the computer and answers the call.

On the computer screen appears Sam (21), in a pair of Levi's and a Led Zeppelin T-shirt. She has simple and striking good looks, with an edge in her voice and behind her eyes. She stands in a Korean Deli among the flowers, talking to Riggan through her iPhone.

1A 1A

The Korean Store owner (50) stands in the background screaming at her the whole time.

RIGGAN  
Sam, I can't--

(CONTINUED)

SAM  
Dad? What kind of--  
(Turning to Korean.)  
SHUT UP!!!  
(Back to screen.)  
What kind of flowers did you say you  
wanted?

RIGGAN  
Alchemillas. Or something soothing that  
smells nice. Listen I can't--

SAM  
It all smells like fucking *Kimchi!*

RIGGAN  
Then whatever looks nice. Anything but  
roses. *No roses.*

KOREAN  
*Flowers don't need you touch! They need you  
buy!!!*

SAM  
(Close into the screen.)  
I hate this job.

And the Skype call is over. Riggan closes the laptop and leans forward trying to regain his calm. His reflection appears in the mirror, and for the first time we see his face. He has a dark goatee and his hair looks strangely abundant. There is a piece of paper on the mirror with the handwritten phrase "A thing is a thing, not what it is said of that thing."

ANNIE ON SPEAKERS  
Riggan, they're starting scene  
five. We need you on stage.

RIGGAN  
Shit...

Riggan throws on a sweater and stumbles into his slacks. He hurries out...

2 INT. HALLWAYS - THEATER - CONTINUOUS 2

...through the narrow corridors of the theater. There is a lot of activity as various workers and stage hands appear and disappear carrying equipment and scenery. As Riggan descends the stairs, a Stage Hand passes by in the opposite direction.

STAGE HAND  
Mr. Thomson.

(CONTINUED)

RIGGAN  
Steve.

STAGE HAND  
It's Daniel.

RIGGAN  
(Already passed.)  
Okay.

Riggan continues on until he arrives backstage. He runs into Jake (42) his producer and friend.

JAKE  
How's it going, buddy.

RIGGAN  
Great. It'd be even better if I could get Ralph to stop acting like he's in an educational video for syphilis...

The camera moves off of them and onto...

3 INT. STAGE - THEATER - CONTINUOUS 3

...the stage. Suddenly we are in the midst of an Americana style kitchen.

Around the kitchen table sit Lesley (35), plain and no nonsense, her simple hairstyle and makeup can't hide how attractive she is. Laura (35), dark, exotic, the kind of woman who makes every person she meets feel like she's seducing them. And Ralph (40), slightly handsome, slightly balding, slightly invisible.

A half empty bottle of gin on the table, they drink from highball glasses as they chat...

LESLEY  
He loved me.

RALPH  
Yeah. He loved her so much he tried to kill her.

LAURA  
He tried to kill you?

LESLEY  
No. (A beat.) Okay, well, he did beat me up one night. He dragged me around the living room by my ankles, yelling "I love you, I love  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LESLEY (CONT'D)  
you, *bitch*." What do you do with a  
love like that?

RALPH  
*How is that--* That is not love and you know  
it. Why do you insist on calling it--

LESLEY  
You can say what you want, but I know what  
it was.

RALPH  
What about you, Nick? Does that sound like  
love to you?

Riggan arrives at the table and sits.

RIGGAN  
Sorry I'm late.  
(Beat. In character.)  
I'm the wrong person to ask. I didn't  
know the man. I've only heard his name  
mentioned in passing. You'd have to  
know the particulars. But I think what  
you're saying is that love is absolute.

RALPH  
Yeah. The kind of love I'm talking about  
is... The kind of love I'm talking about,  
you don't try and kill people.

LESLEY  
(Sadly.)  
It was love, Mel. To Eddie, it was. I don't  
care what anybody says. He was ready to die  
for it.

RALPH  
Ask her what he did after she left him.

LESLEY  
He shot himself in the mouth. But he  
screwed that up, too. Poor Ed.

RALPH  
Poor Ed, my ass. The guy was dangerous.

LAURA  
How'd he screw it up if he shot himself in  
the mouth?

RALPH  
(By the numbers.)  
He used to carry this twenty-two. We lived  
like fugitives those days. I never knew--

(CONTINUED)



RIGGAN  
(Breaking character to direct.  
Exasperated.)

Okay. Fugitives are on the run, Ralph. How many times do I have to-- *Fugitives are scared*. Give me more of that.

Ralph nods. He takes a breath and dives in once again...

RALPH  
(The same but louder.)  
We lived like fugitives those days...

Extremely frustrated, Riggan stares out into the auditorium. From his POV we see Jake who is now sitting in the third row. His head buried in his hands, tortured by Ralph's performance. Riggan turns back to Ralph.

RALPH (CONT'D)  
...I never knew if he was going to come out of the bushes or from behind a car and just start shooting.

Riggan watches Ralph act and sees his whole production headed down the drain. Ralph is just that bad.

RALPH (CONT'D)  
The man was crazy. He was capable of anything.

The actors all wait for a cue from Riggan, who is now staring up into the lights above the stage. Laura finally picks up Riggan's cue.

LAURA  
Christ. What a nightmare...

RALPH  
He used to call me at the hospital and say...  
(Over the top.)  
*"Son of a bitch. Your days are numbered."*

Silence. Ralph looks over to Riggan.

RALPH (CONT'D)  
Too much? Little bit? I just wanted to give you a range, so you could--

And with that a light comes barreling down from it's perch and crashes into Ralph's head, making him hit the floor like a rag doll. Silence.

LAURA  
*Holy shit.*

(CONTINUED)

Lesley and Annie (35), the Stage Manager, run over to Ralph who is out cold. Not knowing what to do, they stare at him.

LESLEY  
Is he breathing?

Jake runs toward the stage.

JAKE  
Someone call 911!

Riggan slowly backs away from the chaos.

LAURA  
Is that blood coming out of his ear?

JAKE  
(To Riggan.)  
Where are you going?

LESLEY  
Okay, he's breathing. What did he have for lunch?

LAURA  
Did anyone call for help?

ANNIE  
(Clapping.)  
Wake up! Wake up!

Two crew members try to help Ralph.

CREW MEMBER  
Grab his legs. I got the top.

JAKE  
Don't move him! Wait for the ambulance.  
(Calling out.)  
For the love of God! I could get a black audience in this theater faster than a doctor!

Riggan heads off the stage, and Jake chases after him. We follow them as...

4 INT. HALLWAY - THEATER - CONTINUOUS

4

...they walk through the corridor.

JAKE  
Where are you going? We'll have the understudy ready to rehearse in five--

(CONTINUED)

RIGGAN  
Forget the understudy. We have to postpone  
the preview.

JAKE  
What are you-- It's a full house. We would  
have to refund all the--

RIGGAN  
Then do it.

A crew member passes in the opposite direction.

CREW MEMBER  
How's Ralph?

RIGGAN  
He'll be fine.

JAKE  
Wait. Wait. *Fuck*. Wait.

RIGGAN  
*Listen to me*. It was going to be a  
disaster. That guy's the worst actor I've  
ever seen. The blood coming out of his ear  
was the most honest thing he's done so far.

JAKE  
He's not *that* bad.

Riggan stops in his tracks and stares at Jake.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Okay, he's *fucking horrible*. But--

Riggan starts walking again.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
You have the press in your dressing  
room in a few hours. How are we--

RIGGAN  
I'll make something up.

Two Technicians hurry up in the opposite direction.

RIGGAN (CONT'D)  
Jake. This happened for a reason. It wasn't  
an accident.

JAKE  
What do you mean?

(CONTINUED)

RIGGAN  
I-- (A beat.) I made it happen.

JAKE  
Oh. Okay.  
(Beat.)  
Are you drunk?

RIGGAN  
Find me an actor. A good actor.  
Philip Seymour Hoffman...

JAKE  
He's doing the third Hunger Games.

RIGGAN  
Michael Fassbender?

JAKE  
Doing the prequel to the X-Men  
prequel.

They arrive at Riggan's dressing room.

RIGGAN  
What's his name? Jeremy Renner...

JAKE  
Who?

RIGGAN  
The... the Hurt Locker guy.

JAKE  
Yeah. He's an Avenger.

RIGGAN  
(With disgust.)  
Fuck. They put him in a cape, too?  
(A beat.) Look, I don't care. Find  
me someone.

Riggan enters...

5 INT. RIGGAN'S DRESSING ROOM - THEATER - CONTINUOUS 5

...his dressing room and tries to shut the door. Jake, still in  
the corridor, stops it with his foot.

JAKE  
(Sticking his head in.)  
Ralph'll sue us. He'll sue us. And he's got  
a case.

(CONTINUED)

Riggan releases the door.

RIGGAN  
Then make him go away.

JAKE  
How do you suggest I do that?

RIGGAN  
You're my lawyer, my producer and my oldest friend. We are going to make this work. Now just get out there and do what you were born to do.

JAKE  
What's that?

RIGGAN  
I have no idea. But I have faith. Now go away from me.

JAKE  
Do you think we should--

Riggan slams the door shut on Jake. A beat. On a television, a segment of E! News. A busty blond, with an exaggerated smile, hosts.

BLOND WOMAN  
...and when we come back, an exclusive interview with Robert Downey Jr., who tells us about the billion-dollar Iron Man franchise. The talented actor invited us onto the set of Iron Man 3...

Riggan slams the tv off, his mind racing. He sits on a chair.

MAN (V.O.)  
That clown doesn't have half your talent and he's making a fortune in that Tin Man get up.

Riggan stares into the mirror, in the reflection he catches sight of a poster from a movie called "Birdman 3". The superhero, Birdman (a younger Riggan in a bird costume), wings widely spread, stares directly back at him. A hand written note on the top of the poster reads: "Thomson, break a wing! From the boys at Local 1." Riggan tries to calm himself with a mantra...

RIGGAN  
*"Breathing in, I embrace my anger.  
Breathing out, I smile to it."*

(CONTINUED)

BIRDMAN (V.O.)  
Embrace it. Kiss it. Turn it around and  
fuck it in the--

A knock on the door behind him.

RIGGAN  
Not now!

Laura opens the door and sticks her head in.

LAURA  
Can I come in?

RIGGAN  
No.

LAURA  
Okay. Two words. Shia La Beouf.

RIGGAN  
That's three words.

LAURA  
It's two.

RIGGAN  
Get out.

LAURA  
I love you.

She closes the door. Riggan tries to calm himself down, but  
Laura opens the door again.

LAURA (CONT'D)  
I take it we're not going to dinner  
anymore?

RIGGAN  
I don't have an actor.

LAURA  
I don't have a life.

RIGGAN  
Laura...

LAURA  
Fine. Whatever.  
(Goes to leave but stops.)  
You remember at Joan's when you  
asked me to come do a Broadway play  
with you? You said it would be  
fun...

(CONTINUED)

RIGGAN  
Go away.

LAURA  
So far? No fun.

Riggan closes the door and looks at the Birdman poster.

BIRDMAN (V.O.)  
Fun? You know what would be fun? Getting  
the fuck out of here before we humiliate  
ourselves. That would be fun.

Riggan looks at himself in the mirror and begins to pull at his hair. As it comes off his head, we discover it was a wig. He turns away from the mirror, trying desperately to stay calm. Something catches his eye: a vase of roses on the end of the table. A card in them says, "They didn't have the whatever you wanted - Sam". Enraged, Riggan focuses on the vase. It begins to shift. Then, with a surge of anger, without ever touching it, he sends it crashing against the wall on the other side of the room.

The camera pans over the roses scattered across the floor. It hovers over the carpet and around the perimeter of the room, until it finally settles on Riggan, now dressed in a casual blazer.

A5

A5

It is later the same day. He is sitting on the sofa and on three chairs in front of him are three journalists:

Gabriel, a geeky theatre journalist, wearing thick glasses and a thin tie. Clara, a reporter from an entertainment blog. And Han, a polite, obese Japanese journalist, who sits next to his translator, another Japanese guy.

GABRIEL  
Why does somebody go from playing the lead  
in a comic book franchise to adapting  
Raymond Carver for the stage?

Riggan tries to remain calm.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)  
I mean, as you're probably aware, Barthes  
said, "The cultural work done in the past  
by gods and epic sagas is now done by  
laundry detergent commercials and comic  
strip characters." It's a big leap you've  
taken...

Riggan shifts nervously.

(CONTINUED)

RIGGAN

Well... Absolutely. As you said... that Barthes said... Birdman, like Icarus...

CLARA

Hang on. Who's this Barthes guy? Which Birdman was he in?

GABRIEL

Roland Barthes was a French philosopher, who--

CLARA

Oh. Okay. Sure. Now, is it true you've been injecting yourself with semen from baby pigs?

RIGGAN

*What?*

CLARA

As a method of facial rejuvenation.

RIGGAN

Who told you that?

CLARA

It was tweeted by... (checks her notes) @prostatewhispers.

RIGGAN

It's a lie.

CLARA

I know. But did you do it?

RIGGAN

No!

GABRIEL

Are you afraid at all that people will say you're doing this play to battle the impression that you're a washed-up super hero?

RIGGAN

No. I'm not. And that's exactly why 20 years ago I refused to do Birdman 4.

HAN

*Birdman 4??? You do Birdman 4???*

Jake opens the door and the camera pans to him.

(CONTINUED)



JAKE  
Okay. That's enough for today.  
Thank you for coming. We're  
expecting some great pieces from  
you...

Riggan stares at the Birdman poster.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Publicity guys are trying to get  
you a Times feature.

Riggan stands up and pulls the Birdman poster off of the  
wall.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
So, How'd it-- Whoa. If I were you  
I wouldn't do that.

RIGGAN  
I don't want to look at it anymore.

JAKE  
That was a present from the crew.  
Don't fuck with those guys, they're  
union.

RIGGAN  
I don't care.

Riggan leaves the poster on the floor, facing the wall, and  
walks to the window. He opens it. We can hear distant drums  
coming from the street.

JAKE  
So... How'd it go?

RIGGAN  
Great.

JAKE  
(Worried.)  
Did they ask about Ralph?

RIGGAN  
Nope.

JAKE  
Good. He did it, you know? The  
motherfucker threatened to sue us.  
Didn't even wait to get out of the  
hospital.

RIGGAN  
And, what did you say?

(CONTINUED)

JAKE  
What'd I say? I said, "You motherfucker. You're threatening me? ME? I swear to god, you fuck, I so much as get a letter from a lawyer, the press'll get the pictures we got off your computer."

RIGGAN  
What pictures?

JAKE  
The guy has a thing for nuns... in diapers. What do you care? You shouldn't have any knowledge about it anyway. The important thing is that I made him go away.

RIGGAN  
Right. That's great.

JAKE  
Yeah, it's fantastic. One problem. *We don't have an actor.* And if we cancel the first preview the press will smell the blood. We can't afford to lose any more money. *At all.*

RIGGAN  
What do you want me to do?

JAKE  
We pay an understudy, let's use the understudy.

RIGGAN  
No.

JAKE  
*No?* Riggan, listen to me. Our dream actor is not going to knock on that door and say: "Hey fellas, when do we start?"

B5

There is a knock at the door. Leslie peeks in.

LESLIE  
Can I talk to you for a second?

RIGGAN  
Yeah. What's up?

B5

(CONTINUED)

LESLIE  
Did you find another actor?

RIGGAN  
No.

LESLIE  
Okay. Well... Mike's available.

RIGGAN  
He is?

JAKE  
Mike who?

RIGGAN  
I thought he was doing--

LESLIE  
He was. He quit. Or got fired.

JAKE  
Mike who?

RIGGAN  
Which one? Quit or fired?

LESLIE  
With Mike it's usually both.

JAKE  
Mike Fucking Who?

LESLIE  
Shiner.

JAKE  
Yes!

RIGGAN  
Jake...

JAKE  
Yes! How do you know Mike Shiner?

LESLIE  
We share a vagina.

RIGGAN  
You think he'd want to do it?

LESLIE  
Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

JAKE  
How do you know?

LESLIE  
Because he said he'd want to do it.

JAKE  
*Yes!*

RIGGAN  
Jake. Hang on a minute.

JAKE  
(to Riggan)  
Ask me if he sells tickets.

RIGGAN  
Does he sell tickets?

JAKE  
A *shitload* of tickets. Now ask me if the critics like him?

RIGGAN  
Do they like him?

JAKE  
They want to spooge on him.

RIGGAN  
(Indicating Lesley.)  
Hey.

JAKE  
Leslie...

LESLIE  
Right on his face.

JAKE  
Everything for a reason, right?

RIGGAN  
You think he'll be able to come tonight?

LESLEY  
I can call him and find out.

Riggan gives Jake a look.

JAKE  
I'll call his agent.

Jake charges out of the room. The camera follows him into...

6 INT. HALLWAY - THEATER - CONTINUOUS 6  
...the hallway and as Jake makes a left turn, Annie enters from the right.

JAKE  
Annie, turn the work lights on and get me a fresh copy of the script. We're gonna have a "put in" tonight.

ANNIE  
Who?

JAKE  
You'll find out...

Jake disappears down the hall and we follow Annie through the theater and onto...

7 INT. STAGE - THEATER - EVENING 7  
...the stage, where she turns some of the stage work lights on. We pan along the stage until we find Riggan, wearing the same clothes as before, scanning the empty auditorium.

MIKE (O.S.)  
Intimidating. Isn't it?

Riggan sees Mike Shiner (39) coming down the aisle, slovenly dressed with mussed hair and intense eyes.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
Do you have any idea who walked these boards before you?  
(Beat.)  
Geraldine Page, Marlon Brando, Helen Hayes, Jason Robards... And now you. Riggan Thomson.

Riggan, trying to hide the intimidation.

RIGGAN  
Thanks for coming on such short notice, Mike. I appreciate it.

MIKE  
Hey. This is what we do.  
(Indicates a script.)  
So, you wrote this adaptation?

RIGGAN  
I did.

(CONTINUED)

MIKE  
And you're directing the adaptation and  
starring...

RIGGAN  
I am.

MIKE  
Ambitious.

RIGGAN  
Thank you.

A sly smile from Mike. He leaps onto the stage.

MIKE  
Why don't we do a bit of it?

RIGGAN  
Hey, I wasn't expecting you to--

MIKE  
First preview is tomorrow, right?

RIGGAN  
Yeah, but you can go on with the script  
until you feel comfortable--

MIKE  
Let's just do some of it.

Riggan tries to hide his excitement. He grabs the script from a  
nearby table and walks it over to Mike.

RIGGAN  
Take a look at page twenty--

MIKE  
Yeah. I don't need that.

RIGGAN  
What?

MIKE  
I don't need the script. Just give me a  
cue.

RIGGAN  
What are you talking about?

MIKE  
Feed me a line.

RIGGAN  
I don't-- What?

(CONTINUED)

MIKE  
*Feed. Me. A line.*

Riggan drops the script and begins the scene.

RIGGAN  
"I'm the wrong person to ask. I didn't know the man. I've only heard his name mentioned in passing. I wouldn't know. You'd have to know the particulars. But I think what you're saying is that love is absolute."

Mike stares at Riggan, hyper-focused.

MIKE  
(Ruminating.)  
Am I saying that love is absolute?  
(He transforms.)  
*"Yeah. The kind of love I'm talking about is. The kind of love I'm talking about you--"*  
(An intense pause.)  
*Well, you don't try to kill people.*

Riggan is transfixed, and almost immediately intimidated.

RIGGAN  
How do you know the lines?

MIKE  
I have a thing, a whatever, a *gift*.  
(A beat.) Come on, I helped Lesley get off book. Hey, give me that cue again.

RIGGAN  
"I'm the wrong person to ask. I didn't know the man. I've only heard his name mentioned in passing. I wouldn't know. You'd have to know the particulars. But I think what you're saying is--"

MIKE  
Okay, can I-- Do you mind if I--

RIGGAN  
No, go ahead.

MIKE  
Follow me. He says, *"I'm the wrong person to ask."* What's his intention? Is he fed up with the topic? Deflecting? Guilt about his wife maybe? Then four sentences all say the same thing... "I didn't even know the man."  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MIKE (CONT'D)

"I've only heard his name mentioned in passing." "I wouldn't know." "You'd have to know the particulars." First of all, *particulars*? What are you, my grandmother? But the point is, YOU DON'T KNOW THE GUY, WE FUCKING GET IT. Make it one line. "I didn't even know the guy." Right? ...

RIGGAN

You pretty much know my lines too, huh?

MIKE

Can we-- Are we doing something here? Come on let's go. Cut it down, give it to me again.

RIGGAN

"I'm the wrong person to ask--"

MIKE

Oh, right, sorry, you see? "I'm the wrong person to ask?" That's another fuck you. "Don't put me on the spot. Don't make me self conscious about my marriage when my wife is sitting right here..." See? Give it to me. Give me a good fuck you. Come on...

RIGGAN

Okay, let me--

MIKE

Come on. Give it to me right now. Fuck me. Right now. Right here. Let's do it.

RIGGAN

Okay, yeah...

MIKE

*DO IT!*

RIGGAN

(Jumps in w/out thinking.)

"Hey. I'm the wrong person to ask, okay? I didn't even know the guy. So what's your point?"

MIKE

"What's my point?"

RIGGAN

"*What's your point?* What are you saying? Spit it out. You're saying, what? That love is an absolute?"

(CONTINUED)



MIKE  
(Exploding.)  
"Yeah! *Alright?* The kind of love I'm  
talking about *is* absolute. The kind of love  
I'm talking about you--  
(A painful memory.)  
Well, you don't try to kill people.

Riggan stands silently, his heart pounding.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
So what do you think, boss? Do I have a  
job?

Riggan calls over to the wings.

RIGGAN  
What do you think?

Mike turns to see Sam, who has been there for a bit.

SAM  
Larry needs to see him for a fitting.

MIKE  
I'm gonna take that as a yes.  
(Walking to Sam.)  
And you are...?

RIGGAN  
That's my daughter, Sam.

MIKE  
Right. Yeah. I can see it around the... (A  
beat) She doesn't look anything like you.  
(To Sam.)  
And your job is...?

RIGGAN  
She's my assistant.

MIKE  
Your *assistant*...  
(To Sam.)  
And can you speak?

SAM  
Yup. I can even 'sit', 'stay' or 'roll  
over' if you have any treats.

RIGGAN  
Welcome aboard, Mike.

(CONTINUED)

MIKE  
(Mock saluting.)  
Thank you, Captain.

We follow Mike and Sam off as they...

8 INT. HALLWAY - THEATER - CONTINUOUS 8

...advance through the hallways.

MIKE  
I'm Mike Shiner, by the way.

SAM  
I know who you are.  
(Reluctantly honest.)  
I saw you in 'Hothouse' at the Geffen. It  
was... great.

MIKE  
That ass is great.

She turns her head toward him with a disgusted expression.

SAM  
Dude. Seriously?

Moving by her, into a dressing room.

MIKE  
This is the theatre, honey. Don't be so  
self-conscious.

She follows him into the room where we see...

9 INT. COSTUME DEPARTMENT - THEATER - CONTINUOUS 9

...Larry stressing out while he works on a costume. He turns  
to see Mike standing there. Sam stands against the wall,  
focused on her cell phone.

LARRY  
Oh, thank the Lord and pass the  
biscuits! I finally have an actor to  
dress. Hello, Mr. Shiner.

MIKE  
How're you doing, Larry?

LARRY  
Better, now that you're here. Take off your  
clothes.

(CONTINUED)

Mike takes off his shirt and hands it to Sam. She doesn't budge, and it hits the floor. He begins to unbutton his pants...

MIKE  
You gonna stand there?

SAM  
(Glancing at her cell.)  
This is the theatre, honey. Don't be so self-conscious.

Larry searches for a few costume pieces.

LARRY  
Okay. I'm gonna have to start from scratch, with less than twenty-four hours... Let's see if these--

He turns to see a completely naked Mike.

LARRY (CONT'D)  
Holy-- What is happening? Where are your underpants?

MIKE  
At home, under the bed, I think.

Sam glances at Mike for a second, then returns to her phone. Larry begins to help Mike into some pants which, given the situation, is very awkward.

LARRY  
Okay. Everything is too small.

SAM  
Yeah, you're not kidding.

Lesley enters the room immediately coming face to face with a naked Mike. She doesn't notice Sam who is partially hidden by a clothes rack. She just goes about trying a costume shirt.

LESLEY  
Oh, that's nice...  
(To Larry.)  
Forgive him, Larry. Mike's like my five year old son. Neither one of them has clean underwear...

LARRY  
Or pubic hair, I imagine.  
(Folding the pants.)  
Okay, well, I can take out the suit but we're going to need some new pants and shirts.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LARRY (CONT'D)  
(Looking back.)  
And underwear...

Mike just stands there naked, staring at his penis in the mirror.

LESLEY  
(To Larry.)  
This is too small.  
(To Mike.)  
What the hell are you doing?

MIKE  
Waiting for Larry to finish.

LARRY  
I'm finished.

Larry disappears deeper into the costume room.

MIKE  
Okay, well, then I'm just standing here with my balls out.

LESLEY  
Get dressed. Riggan's daughter is hanging around, and I don't need her to walk in here and--

MIKE  
Leslie...

LESLEY  
No, Mike. You haven't seen her. She's always hanging around, just-- I don't-- *Watching* everyone. It's creepy. It's--

MIKE  
Les...

LESLEY  
I don't know if the drugs fried her brain or what, but I don't need her running to her father saying you showed her your junk.

MIKE  
Okay, then we should probably get her out of here.

Lesley's expression goes blank.

LESLEY  
Oh, God. Really?

(CONTINUED)

MIKE  
Hey, Sammy...

SAM  
It's Sam.

LESLEY  
*Fuck.*

Sam steps forward.

LESLEY (CONT'D)  
(To Sam.)  
I didn't mean--

SAM  
(Totally relaxed.)  
It's cool. He's a handful, huh?

They both look back at Mike.

LESLEY  
Almost.

Sam smiles at her and exits. Lesley wheels on Mike.

LESLEY (CONT'D)  
Jesus... How is it you always manage to find  
a new way to humiliate me?

MIKE  
To be fair, you make it really easy.

LESLEY  
What the hell was she doing here?

MIKE  
She brought me.

LESLEY  
And stayed???

MIKE  
I know, right? She's a little--

LESLEY  
Look at me, Mike. This is Broadway. I'm  
here. *Finally.* And I'm begging you, if you  
love me, please, do me a favor... *don't*  
*fuck it up.*

MIKE  
(Gently.)  
Come here.

(CONTINUED)

Lesley moves toward Mike. He cups her face in his hands tenderly. They are face to face.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
Play with my balls...

She twists his nipples hard and walks out.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
I won't fuck it up... Probably!

Larry reappears holding some clothes. We follow him out...

10 INT. HALLWAY - THEATER - CONTINUOUS 10

...through the hallway. He walks by Jake and Riggan who are mid conversation. We stay with them.

RIGGAN (O.S.)  
I don't care, sign it.

JAKE (O.S.)  
Listen to me.

RIGGAN (O.S.)  
*No you listen to me--*

JAKE (O.S.)  
I can't afford to listen to you...

LARRY  
I'm gonna need to go shopping again.

JAKE  
Fucking sew something, you old fuck!

RIGGAN  
I don't care. Give him what he wants.

JAKE  
His agent is asking for almost four times what we were paying--

RIGGAN  
Then go into the reserve.

JAKE  
The reserve is gone. You spent it on the fog. And those fake trees...

(CONTINUED)

RIGGAN  
It's a dream sequence, it--

JAKE  
And three union midgets that dance  
around like--

RIGGAN  
You're not supposed to call them  
midgets--

JAKE  
The reserve is gone!

RIGGAN  
Listen to me, you didn't see what I  
just saw. But you will, at the preview  
tomorrow. Look, get the contract done.  
I'll get the money.

Riggan begins marching toward the stage.

JAKE  
(Calling after him.)  
When???

Laura comes down some stairs and chases Riggan.

LAURA  
(Incredulous.)  
Hey, is it true? Shiner?

RIGGAN  
He's in.

LAURA  
Holy shit! When can I meet him?

RIGGAN  
He's in a fitting with Larry.

Lesley comes down the hallway.

LESLEY  
I'm going to Starbucks. You guys  
want anything?

RIGGAN  
I'm fine. How's Mike?

LESLEY  
Did you talk to your daughter?

RIGGAN  
No.

(CONTINUED)

LESLEY  
He's great.

LAURA  
(To Lesley. Matter-of-factly.)  
Honey, your tits look like fucking  
*anjou pears* in that top!

LESLEY  
(Uncomfortable.)  
Okay, well I'm gonna-- Thank you.

She walks away.

LAURA  
And that ass. Like two eggs in a hanky!

A10

A10

Riggan walks, Laura follows him.

LAURA  
Okay, I was going to tell you this over  
dinner, but everything-- I have some news  
too.

RIGGAN  
Good or bad? Cause right now--

A technician walks by.

LAURA  
(Whispering.)  
I missed my last two periods.  
(Beat.)  
I think it's happening this time.

Riggan stops. Silent. A beat.

LAURA (CONT'D)  
Is that good or bad?  
(He stares at her.)  
Riggan...?

RIGGAN  
It's good. It's great.

She smiles, her eyes filled with emotion. Riggan smiles back,  
and nods absently.

LAURA  
Say something else...

(CONTINUED)



RIGGAN  
(Joking.)  
You're pretty sure it's mine?

LAURA  
(Unamused but plays along)  
Well, let's see. There's you. Jake. That  
masseuse wore a condom so... Yes, it's  
yours... idiot.

She puts her head on Riggan's chest. We see his mind racing.  
Laura is moved, and confused.

LAURA (CONT'D)  
Are you excited?

RIGGAN  
Yeah.

LAURA  
Me too.

Laura moves slightly away from him and suddenly slaps him across  
the face. Riggan looks at her, confused.

RIGGAN  
What--?

LAURA  
You're not funny.

She kisses him intensely on the lips and briefly places his  
hand on her belly, then moves it up to her breasts. After a  
moment, she backs away.

LAURA (CONT'D)  
First preview tomorrow. Here we go!

Laura turns and walks away. Riggan continues down the  
corridor. He passes by a Security Guard in front of a small  
TV. The camera becomes Riggan's POV and advances until...

11 INT. BACKSTAGE - THEATER - EVENING

11

...we go through the stage door. We scan the backstage area to  
see the stagehands ready to do their jobs. We can feel the  
electricity of a first preview.

On stage part of the kitchen set from before is visible. Annie  
stands at her podium, calling the cues for the show.

ANNIE  
(Into her headset.)  
Cue 34 and 35. Go.

(CONTINUED)

She turns and looks directly into the camera.

                  ANNIE (CONT'D)  
Places.

                  RIGGAN (O.S.)  
Okay.

Riggan walks on screen wearing his costume, carrying a bucket of ice and a bottle of gin. He goes to the opposite side of the stage and takes his place in the wings. He peeks out at the audience who seem to be watching with interest.

Then we pan to the stage to find Mike, Lesley and Laura performing the scene we saw at the beginning, around the table. Mike looks comfortable, sipping at his drink. A half empty bottle of gin on the table.

                  MIKE  
The maniac shot himself right in front of us. I rode with him in the ambulance to the hospital.

                  LESLEY  
I'll never get that image out of my head. Right before he did it, his eyes-- they were so sad... lonely.

                  LAURA  
Did you have to treat him?

                  MIKE  
I didn't have to. But I did.  
(Pouring another drink.)  
He was in bad shape. His head swelled up to like twice the size of a normal head. I'd never seen anything like it. And I swear to God, I hope I never do again.

Riggan stands near Annie.

                  RIGGAN  
He's good.

                  ANNIE  
He's incredible. I think he's drinking real gin.

Riggan looks out at Mike, who is refilling his glass.

                  RIGGAN  
What?

(CONTINUED)

A stagehand gives Riggan a bottle. Riggan watches and waits for his cue.

MIKE

Ask Nick what real love is. He'll agree with me. You watch.

LESLEY

Why don't we just head to the restaurant?

LAURA

Don't get him started, Mel. You haven't seen how he's been lately. He's been depressed. I'm worried about him. He's been--

She gently pushes Riggan and we follow him on stage...

12 INT. STAGE - THEATER - CONTINUOUS

12

...where Mike goes to refill his glass with the last of the real gin. Riggan snatches the bottle out of his hands and gulps the rest, straight from the bottle.

RIGGAN

Been what? (Beat.) I'll tell you what real love is. This happened a few months ago.

(Drops bottle on table)

And it ought to make us ashamed when we talk like we know what we're talking about when we talk about love.

LAURA

Nick, for God's sake. Are you getting drunk?

RIGGAN

(Pointed at Mike.)

I don't have to be drunk to say what I think.

MIKE

Nobody's drunk. We're just having a few drinks.

LESLEY

You've had more than a few.

RIGGAN

What are you, counting?

(CONTINUED)

LAURA

Don't you talk to her like that.  
Don't talk like a drunk if you're  
not--

RIGGAN

(Exploding.)

*Shut up. For once in your life.*

Will you do me a favor and shut up  
for a minute?

(Beat.)

Like I was saying... There's this  
old couple, had a car wreck out on  
the interstate. Some drunk kid  
plowed his dad's pick up into their  
camper.

We begin to hear the underscoring of violins.

RIGGAN (CONT'D)

Fucking teenager. By the time I got  
to the hospital, the kid was dead.  
He was off in a corner laid out on  
a gurney. We took the old couple up  
to the O.R.. They were a mess. We  
worked like hell on them for most  
of the night...

Over the speech, Mike reaches for the new bottle that Riggan  
placed on stage. He refills his glass.

RIGGAN (CONT'D)

When we were done, we wrapped them in full  
body casts. The husband was depressed.  
Even when I told him his wife was gonna  
pull through, he was still depressed. So,  
I got up to his mouth hole and asked him,  
and he told me it was because he couldn't  
see her through the eye holes. Can you  
imagine? I'm telling you, the man's heart  
was breaking because he couldn't turn his  
goddamn head and see his goddamn wife.

Riggan is doing a good job. Lesley and Laura are genuinely  
moved. Mike notices. He sips his drink.

RIGGAN (CONT'D)

I mean... It was killing him. Killing him  
that he--

MIKE

I'm tired of this shit.

They all look at Mike. In silence.

(CONTINUED)

MIKE (CONT'D)  
(to Riggan)  
What the fuck is this? Water?

He hurls the glass against the wall. Some laughter from the audience. Riggan stares at him, confused. He presses on.

RIGGAN  
It was killing the old bastard...

MIKE  
Did you just give me water?

RIGGAN  
Come on, Mike.

MIKE  
Come on what?

RIGGAN  
Take it easy. You're drunk.

MIKE  
*Of course I'm drunk!* I'm supposed to be drunk! This is Carver, man! The guy lost a piece of liver every time he wrote a page! If I'm supposed to drink gin then bring me fuckin gin! I mean, you fucked the time period! You took all the good lines for yourself! At least let me--

The audience is now hysterical. Dozens of cell phones pointing at the stage. Mike walks toward the apron, facing the audience.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
Oh, okay. *Seriously?* You people are pathetic. Put the cell phones down and join the real world! Will somebody please just live in the real world?!!

He crosses to the refrigerator.

LAURA  
Where's he going?

LESLEY  
(Firmly.)  
Mike, cut it out.

Mike rummages through the fridge.

(CONTINUED)

MIKE  
Look at this. It's all fake.  
(Tossing items out of the  
fridge.)  
The milk is fake. The butter is fake.

Riggan storms off the stage.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
(To Riggan.)  
Your performance is fake.  
(He finds some fried  
chicken.)  
Hey! There's chicken. Real chicken. The  
only thing real up here is the chicken.  
So I'm gonna stick with the chicken.

The audience laughs harder.

MIKE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Hey, this is good bird, man!

Riggan charges through the chaos backstage running into a  
panicked Annie.

RIGGAN  
Get Mike out of here.

ANNIE  
How do you want me to do that?

Riggan keeps walking up to...

13 INT. HALLWAY - THEATER - CONTINUOUS

13

...the hallway. Jake chases him.

RIGGAN  
I want him gone.

JAKE  
No.

RIGGAN  
What?

JAKE  
We can't do that.

RIGGAN  
What are you-- Of course we can do that.  
It's our show.

(CONTINUED)

JAKE  
Riggan, listen to me--

Riggan comes to a halt and faces Jake.

RIGGAN  
No. You listen to me. Get him the fuck out of my play. Did you see him out there?

JAKE  
*It was a preview!* Nobody gives a shit about previews. Nothing matters until that old bat from the New York Times is sitting in that audience on opening night.

RIGGAN  
We're getting rid of him. I'm not going to stand up on that stage and--

JAKE  
*Shut up!* Just shut up for once and listen to me. As soon as we announced he was taking over, the advance *doubled*. We can't afford to lose a preview. We can't afford to lose money. We can't afford to lose Mike. This is about being respected, validated, remember? That's what you told me. That's how you got me into this shit. Now, you're the director. Get him under control.  
(A beat. As a friend.)  
These are not the nineties anymore.

Jake storms away. Riggan heads toward his dressing room. Out of nowhere, Mike barrels into him, pinning him against a wall.

RIGGAN  
(Startled.)  
Holy Fuck!

Mike presses up against Riggan, breathing down his neck. After a painful silence...

MIKE  
(Like he's possessed.)  
You were good...

RIGGAN  
Meet me in front of the theater in 10 minutes.

Mike chuckles and slaps Riggan gently on the face before he disappears into his dressing room. Riggan begins walking again. We follow him into...

14 INT. RIGGAN'S DRESSING ROOM - THEATER - CONTINUOUS 14

...his dressing room. He goes into the bathroom and quickly washes his face.

SYLVIA (O.S.)  
What the hell was going on up there?

We pan over to see his ex-wife Sylvia (43), standing in one corner, staring at Riggan. She is elegant and simply beautiful.

RIGGAN  
I didn't know you were here tonight.

SYLVIA  
That guy's an asshole, huh?

Riggan dries his hands with a towel and comes out of the bathroom.

RIGGAN  
What are you doing here?

SYLVIA  
Sam and I are going to grab a bite after she's finished with--

RIGGAN  
No, I mean *here*. Now.

SYLVIA  
Well. I know how much this means to you, so--

RIGGAN  
I appreciate that.

A beat.

SYLVIA  
So, how's it going?

RIGGAN  
The play?

SYLVIA  
No, you and Sam.

RIGGAN  
It's good. (A beat.) It's the same.

SYLVIA  
Do you talk to her?

(CONTINUED)



RIGGAN

We talk. We-- I don't know, it's been crazy around here.

SYLVIA

You understand where her head is at right now.

RIGGAN

Of course.

SYLVIA

She's trying to stay away from everything and everyone that got her into rehab in the first place, but...

RIGGAN

...I know, Sylvia...

SYLVIA

...But that's all she had. So she's--

RIGGAN

I really do get it.

SYLVIA

I know you're caught up in all this stuff, but--

RIGGAN

Stuff...

SYLVIA

You know what I mean.

(Beat.)

Riggan... You don't have to be a great father right now, you just have to *be* one.

RIGGAN

Yeah.

Suddenly, Laura opens the door and sticks her head in.

LAURA

(Noticing Sylvia.)

Oh, sorry.

She closes the door. Awkward silence.

SYLVIA

So how is *that* going? Is she and Sam--?

RIGGAN

I don't wanna talk about it.

(CONTINUED)

He goes to a small fridge, takes out a beer and closes it.

SYLVIA  
You're drinking?

RIGGAN  
I'm having a beer.

SYLVIA  
Okay...

He sits and sips in silence for a moment. Then he begins to take out the wig.

RIGGAN  
So, what's going on with you?

SYLVIA  
Me? Nothing. Everything's the same I guess.  
I'm going back to teaching.

RIGGAN  
I'm thinking about refinancing the Malibu house.

SYLVIA  
Wh-- I'm sorry?

RIGGAN  
I'm thinking about--

SYLVIA  
No, I heard you. I just need a second to--  
(A beat.) That's gonna be Sam's house. Why would you-- (A beat.) What? For this play?

RIGGAN  
(Honest and vulnerable.)  
I need the money.

SYLVIA  
Do you have any idea how crazy that sounds?

RIGGAN  
What do you want me to say? My health lasted longer than the money... Go figure that out.

Riggan seems pensive and lost.

SYLVIA  
Riggan...  
(Beat.)  
What's going on?... Look at me.

(CONTINUED)

Riggan gently looks up to Sylvia.

RIGGAN  
I have a chance to do something right. And I  
have to take it. I have to.

SYLVIA  
It's funny. I was sitting here waiting  
for you, and all of a sudden I couldn't  
remember why we broke up.

Silence. Then, as if he hasn't heard what she said.

RIGGAN  
The last time I flew here from LA, George  
Clooney was sitting two seats in front of  
me. With those cuff links, and that...  
*chin*. We ended up flying through this  
really bad storm. The plane started to  
rattle and shake, and everyone on board  
was crying... and *praying*. And I just sat  
there-- Sat there thinking that when Sam  
opened that paper it was going to be  
Clooney's face on the front page. Not  
mine. (A beat.) Did you know that Farrah  
Fawcett died on the same day as Michael  
Jackson?

She smiles sadly. She kisses him on the head and goes to the  
door.

RIGGAN (CONT'D)  
Why did we break up?

SYLVIA  
(Looks him in the eye.)  
You threw a kitchen knife at me...

Riggan is smacked by that memory. His eyes on the floor.

SYLVIA (CONT'D)  
...and one hour later you were  
telling me how much you loved me.  
(Beat.)  
Just because I didn't like that  
ridiculous comedy you did with Goldie  
Hawn didn't mean I did not love you.  
But that's what you always do. You  
confuse love with admiration.

She smiles sadly. He looks at her. As Sylvia opens the door,  
she turns back to Riggan...

(CONTINUED)

SYLVIA (CONT'D)  
It's your house, so do what you want with  
it. Just make sure you're there for our  
daughter.

RIGGAN  
I will.

SYLVIA  
You're not Farrah Fawcett, Riggan.

She exits. Painful silence... until...

BIRDMAN (V.O.)  
We should have done that reality show they  
offered us. "The Thomsons." That would've  
been good. Crazy, druggy, wise ass daughter.  
Milfy wife with the perky tits. People would  
have watched that.

RIGGAN  
(To the poster.)  
Shut up.

Riggan stands up and grabs his jacket. He opens the door and  
goes out to...

15 INT. HALLWAY - THEATER - CONTINUOUS

15

...the hallway.

BIRDMAN (V.O.)  
Where are we goin'?

RIGGAN  
(Almost whispering.)  
Leave me alone.

Riggan walks between crew members. Annie interrupts him.

ANNIE  
The sun bed is here.

RIGGAN  
What does that mean?

ANNIE  
It means there's a sun bed *out there*  
being delivered to *in here*.

RIGGAN  
Who ordered a sun bed?

(CONTINUED)

ANNIE

Mike. He says it's for his character. Carver's red necks, "people of the land". Part of his process and that shit.

Riggan cannot deal with this right now. He continues walking until he arrives at a metal door that takes him out to...

16 EXT. AN ALLEY WAY - OUTSIDE THE THEATER - CONTINUOUS 16

...an alley way. Riggan walks toward the street. There is a man playing drums. Riggan finds Mike leaning against a parked car, dazed and looking up at the marquis...

RIGGAN

Let's go. Walk.

Riggan begins to walk, Mike follows.

MIKE

Where are we going?

RIGGAN

To get you some coffee. Have I done anything to disrespect you?

MIKE

Not yet.

RIGGAN

I have a lot riding on this play.

MIKE

*Is that right?*

RIGGAN

People know who I am, and--

MIKE

Bullshit.

RIGGAN

Mike--

MIKE

*Bullshit.* People don't know you. They know the guy in the bird suit. They know the guy who tells those quaint, slightly vomitous stories on Letterman.

RIGGAN

Well, I'm sorry for being popular, but that--

(CONTINUED)

MIKE

(With irony.)  
*Popular? POPULAR?...* Oh God, popularity is just the slutty little cousin of prestige.

RIGGAN

Okay, I don't even know what that--

MIKE

My *reputation* is riding on this play. And that's... That is...

RIGGAN

A lot?

MIKE

A lot. Exactly. Fuck you. Yes. This doesn't work out for you, you get to go home to your studio pals and jump right back into that cultural genocide you guys are perpetrating. "There's a douchbag born every minute". That was P.T. Barnum's premise when he got rich inventing the circus. And you and your pals know nothing's changed, and whatever toxic shit you make people are still gonna pay to see it. But, after you're gone, I'll still be here. I'll still be making my living on the stage. Baring my soul. Wrestling with emotions, complex emotions.

RIGGAN

Right. Is that what tonight was about then? (Mocking him.) Wrestling with "complex emotions"?

MIKE

Tonight was about making it alive. About making it *bleed*. This isn't the Warner Brothers lot, Riggan. This is the city, and this is how we do things.

Mike turns and opens the front door of The Rum House.

RIGGAN

Where are you going?

MIKE

They have coffee in here.

He walks into the restaurant. Riggan backtracks and we follow him into...

17 INT. RUM HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

17

...The Rum House. Mike stands at the bar, the bartender already pouring two whiskeys.

MIKE  
(To bartender.)  
Thanks, Tommy.

Tommy nods and walks away.

RIGGAN  
(Getting back on point.)  
*People were laughing in our faces.*

MIKE  
(Handing Riggan a drink.)  
Tonight they were laughing, tomorrow they'll be... be.. *tweeting* about us. Fuck 'em. *Who cares???* These are the people who pay half price to watch us rehearse. *Stop fucking caring!*

RIGGAN  
We're doing Raymond Carver. This play is a drama. This play is--

MIKE  
*You don't know what this play is.* These are previews. This is where we find out what the play is.

Mike points to an Older Woman sitting at the bar. She sips a martini and scribbles in a notebook with a sour expression.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
You see that woman over there? The one that looks like she just licked a homeless guy's ass? Nothing matters until she writes five hundred words about us in the New York Times.

RIGGAN  
That's...

MIKE  
Tabitha Dickinson. Yes. And, believe it or not, the only thing that matters in theater is whether she likes us or not. She does, we run. She doesn't, we're fucked.

RIGGAN  
(Preoccupied.)  
She does look like she licked a homeless guy's ass.

(CONTINUED)

MIKE

Do me a favor, don't get your panties in a twist over a preview, alright? And don't tell me how to do my job. Cause, this is my town. And, to be honest, nobody gives a shit about you around here.

LADY (O.S.)

You're Riggan Thompson, right?

Two fat tourists in "Mamma Mia" t-shirts, with a seven year old kid, approach the table.

HUSBAND

(Timidly.)

We're sorry to interrupt...

LADY

Would you mind terribly if we got a picture?

RIGGAN

Of course. It's no trouble at all.

The Lady shoves her camera into Mike's hands.

LADY

(To Mike.)

Would you mind?

Mike gets up with a blank expression and takes the camera. The Lady pushes the kid into the booth next to Riggan.

LADY (CONT'D)

(Ordering Mike.)

The button right on top there.

KID

Who is this guy?

LADY

(To his son.)

Come on, Billy. He used to be like Batman.

She yanks the kid closer and they squeeze up against Riggan. Mike takes the photo and holds the camera to the lady.

LADY (CONT'D)

(To Mike)

I think you screwed that one up. Take another one.

Mike takes another picture.

(CONTINUED)



LADY (CONT'D)

(To Riggan.)  
God bless you, darlin'. You're very sweet.  
And handsome!

She kisses Riggan hard on the mouth. Then gets up, giddy, and takes her son by the hand. As the couple leaves, husband shoves a five dollar bill into Mike's hands.

HUSBAND

We really appreciate it.

An agitated Mike takes a sip of whiskey.

MIKE

Are we good here? Cause I'm gonna go.

RIGGAN

See you tomorrow.

Mike places the dollar under one of the shot glasses and begins to walk away, but then stops and turns curiously.

MIKE

Why Raymond Carver? You never told me.

Riggan looks at Mike for a second, than reaches for his wallet and produces an old cocktail napkin with some writing on it. He slides it to Mike.

RIGGAN

A long time ago, I did a play back in high school in Michigan. He was in the audience. He sent this backstage after.

MIKE

*"Thank you for an honest performance. Ray Carver."* What is this?

Riggan looks vulnerable. He is trying to make Mike understand the importance of the napkin, to build a bridge between them.

RIGGAN

And that's when I knew I was going to be an actor.

Mike can't stop himself from smiling.

RIGGAN (CONT'D)

Why is that funny?

MIKE

He wrote it on a cocktail napkin.

(CONTINUED)

RIGGAN  
So...

Mike slides the napkin back to Riggan.

MIKE  
He was drunk.

A17

A17

He walks away and we follow him as he passes by the bar next to Tabitha Dickinson, the Critic.

TABITHA  
You headed to Hollywood, Mike?

Mike stops.

MIKE  
Hollywood's headed here, Tabby.

TABITHA  
(A devilish smile.)  
Good luck with that.

Mike looks directly into her eyes.

MIKE  
*"A man becomes a critic when he can not be an  
artist, in the same way that a man becomes an  
informer when he cannot be a soldier."  
Flaubert, right?*

He flashes his own devilish smile. She stares back. If she weren't so much older than him, you'd swear there was sexual electricity between them.

TABITHA  
He's a Hollywood clown in a Lycra bird suit.

MIKE  
Yeah. And at 8 o'clock tomorrow, he's gonna get on stage and risk everything. What're you gonna be doing?

A standoff.

TABITHA  
Don't you ever worry that I'll give you a bad review?

(CONTINUED)

MIKE

Oh, I'm sure you will. If I ever give a bad performance.

(Beat.)

Ms. Dickinson.

TABITHA

Mr. Shiner.

Mike smiles and waves over to an obviously nervous Riggan. He goes toward the exit, but we stay with Tabitha, scribbling on her notebook. Suddenly she raises her eyes and, with a dark expression, looks at Riggan who is passing by.

We follow Riggan toward the exit. Through the window we see him leave the restaurant. Then we pan to a wooden wall, and this wall takes us to...

19 INT. HALLWAY - THEATER - LATER 19

...the theater hallway. Riggan walks through the quiet corridor, until he arrives at...

20 INT. GREEN ROOM - THEATER - CONTINUOUS 20

...the Green Room. Sam sits listlessly, drawing some lines across a roll of toilet paper.

RIGGAN

What're you still doing here?

SAM

(Continues scribbling.)

Nothing. I'm-- Nothing. Your costumes are hanging in your room.

RIGGAN

Great...

SAM

I got the coconut water you wanted. If you want me to get--

RIGGAN

Hey.

SAM

What?

RIGGAN

I'm not sure if I said thank you.

(CONTINUED)

SAM  
For what?

RIGGAN  
All of it. You've been doing a good job.  
And I've been...

SAM  
Yeah.

RIGGAN  
So, I just wanted to say that--  
(He stops abruptly.)  
What is that?

SAM  
What...?

RIGGAN  
That smell.

SAM  
I don't--

RIGGAN  
Look at me.

SAM  
What are you--

RIGGAN  
*Look at me.*

She does. He examines her eyes, then immediately rises, scouring the room.

SAM  
Dad...

RIGGAN  
(Continuing to search.)  
You have to be shitting me... Where is it?

SAM  
Could we not do this?

Riggan pulls a jar of peanut butter from the trash.

RIGGAN  
What is this?

SAM  
That is chunky peanut butter that happens,  
by the way, to have Omega--

(CONTINUED)

Riggan pulls a stubbed joint out of the jar.

RIGGAN  
*This.*

SAM  
Oh. That's pot.

RIGGAN  
*Sam.*

SAM  
Alright, just relax.

RIGGAN  
Relax? What the hell are you doing?

SAM  
Protecting myself from cataracts?

RIGGAN  
You can't do this to me!

SAM  
To you?

RIGGAN  
SHUT UP! You know what I'm talking about.

SAM  
Yeah. You're talking about you. What else is new?

RIGGAN  
Don't try to--

SAM  
What? Make it about me? I wouldn't dream of it.

RIGGAN  
Listen to me. I'm trying to do something that's important...

SAM  
*This is not important.*

RIGGAN  
It's important to me! Alright? Maybe not to you, or your cynical playmates whose sole ambition is to end up going viral and who, by the way, will only be remembered as the generation that finally stopped talking to one another. But to me... To me... This is-- God. This is my career, this is my chance  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RIGGAN (CONT'D)

to do some work that actually means something.

SAM

*Means something to who?* You had a career before the third comic book movie, before people began to forget who was inside the bird costume. You're doing a play based on a book that was written 60 years ago, for a thousand rich, old white people whose only real concern is gonna be where they go to have their cake and coffee when it's over. *Nobody gives a shit but you.* And let's face it, Dad, it's not for the sake of art. It's because you just want to feel relevant again. Well, there's a whole world out there where people fight to be relevant every day. And you act like it doesn't even exist! Things are happening in a place that you willfully ignore, a place that has already forgotten you. I mean who are you? You hate bloggers. You make fun of twitter. You don't even have a Facebook page. You're the one who doesn't exist. You're doing this because you're scared to death, like the rest of us, that you don't matter. And you know what? You're right. You don't. It's *not* important. You're not important. Get used to it.

Silence. Riggan seems devastated, and Sam can see that.

Sam (CONT'D)

Dad...

She looks at him sympathetically, but not knowing what to say... exits.

After a moment Riggan gets up and heads for the trash can. He digs out the roach, grabs some matches and lights it. Music begins to sound. He inhales deeply and holds the smoke for a few seconds and finally exhales. He coughs, tosses away the joint and heads out of the kitchen. We follow him...

21 INT. HALLWAY - THEATRE - CONTINUOUS

21

...as he slowly walks until he disappears into the darkness of the corridor. We keep moving forward until we end up...

A21 INT. BACKSTAGE - THEATRE - EVENING

A21

...backstage. We are in the middle of the second preview. The music continues, it belongs to the play.

Laura is by herself on stage performing the end of a scene. She stands in the middle of a surrealistic forest set, at dusk. There is fog, and trees. A strong, artificial wind blows through Laura's hair. Desolate music.

LAURA

(To the audience as soliloquy.)

In the days before Nick's depression really started to eat away at him, he had no idea I was pregnant. And I never intended on telling him. I guess we make choices in life, and we choose to live with them. Or not. I didn't want that baby...

Three dancers on stage pass by in front of Laura. We follow the dancers backstage where we find Mike and Lesley wearing pajamas.

LAURA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

...Not because I didn't love Nick. And not because I didn't love the-- The idea of it. But because I just wasn't ready to love myself. There's a certain distance to it all now. A wistful distance. Underscored by a gentle breeze and the sound of the birds... laughing at the whimsy of it all.

A stage hand helps Mike and Lesley into a double bed. The camera slips under the covers with them and stays there.

MIKE

(Whispering.)

Hey, Les...

LESLEY

(Whispering.)  
What?

MIKE

I'm hard.

LESLEY

No, you're not. It's just that sometimes you don't consider other people's feelings.

MIKE

No. I'm hard. Feel.

(CONTINUED)

LESLEY  
Oh, you gotta be kidding.

The stage begins to revolve as we hear...

22 INT. STAGE - THEATER - CONTINUOUS 22

...music through the transition. It remains dark.

MIKE  
Let's really do this. Let's fuck.

LESLEY  
Are you crazy? No.

Mike rolls on top of Lesley.

LESLEY (CONT'D)  
Cut it out...

Mike continues to maneuver himself.

LESLEY (CONT'D)  
I'm serious, Mike. Stop!

MIKE  
I'm Mel. Not Mike. Mel.

A knock on a door.

RIGGAN (O.S.)  
Terri! Terri!

A furious Lesley tries to reposition herself under Mike.

RIGGAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Terri! I know you're in there!

The knocking gets louder.

RIGGAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Terri???

Mike, lost in his libido, has begun to have sex with Lesley. The camera comes out from under the covers and pans to Riggan who stumbles into what is now the Motel Room set. He wears a mustache and a long wig, that makes him look like a wild man. He holds a gun in his right hand. A neon "Motel" sign is illuminated. A clever effect of falling rain is visible behind the set, accompanied by the appropriate sound effect. Riggan is wet because of the "rain".

Lesley uses Riggan's entrance to escape from Mike.

(CONTINUED)



LESLEY

Ed!

Mike hops out of bed, unaware of the very noticeable erection protruding underneath his pajama bottoms.

Some laughter from the audience.

LESLEY (CONT'D)

What are you doing here?

Lesley doesn't understand the audience response, until she notices the erection herself.

RIGGAN

(To Lesley.)

Why? I need you to tell me why. I lived for you. I worshipped you...

MIKE

Listen Ed, I know this is hard but--

More laughter. Riggan is disturbed, but he continues...

RIGGAN

(to Mike)

Fuck you. Shut up. *Fuck you.*

He shoves Mike violently to the floor.

LESLEY

Eddie! Please!

Riggan points the gun at Mike's head.

RIGGAN

*What's wrong with me?* Why do I end up having to beg people to love me?

LESLEY

Ed. Eddie. Please... Give me the gun.

She begins to cry. Her performance is beautiful.

LESLEY (CONT'D)

Just look at me. I was drowning. I was not capable of-- You deserve to be loved. You do.

RIGGAN

I just wanted to be what you wanted.

(Beat.)

Now I spend every fucking minute praying to be someone else. Someone I'm not. Anyone...

(CONTINUED)

MIKE  
Put down the gun, Ed. She just doesn't love  
you anymore.

The audience is silent.

RIGGAN  
(A sad smile.)  
You don't, do you?

LESLEY  
(With sympathy.)  
No...

RIGGAN  
And you never will...

LESLEY  
I'm sorry.

RIGGAN  
(A revelation.)  
I don't exist. I'm not even here. I don't  
exist. None of this matters.

Riggan points the gun at Lesley. Then at Mike. Finally, he puts  
the gun to his own head and pulls the trigger. PUM! And with the  
explosion, a fake blood mechanism splatters brains onto the  
stage. Riggan drops to the floor.

A blackout. The audience applauds politely. The curtain falls.  
We follow Riggan off stage and into...

23 INT. BACKSTAGE - THEATER - CONTINUOUS 23

...the wings, where Annie immediately helps him remove the  
bloody and wet wig with the propeller mechanism. Laura waits  
next to them for their bows. Meanwhile, a stage hand crosses  
behind them, and we follow him as he goes on stage to...

24 INT. STAGE - THEATER - CONTINUOUS 24

...reposition some scenery for the curtain call. The camera  
carries us to the other side of the stage, where Mike and Lesley  
are in a heated exchange...

MIKE  
Just, keep your voice down...

LESLEY  
(Furious.)  
You have to be shitting me. You can't get it  
up in six months...  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LESLEY (CONT'D)

(She starts hitting him.)  
...and now you try to fuck me in front of  
eight hundred strangers???

MIKE

What do you want from me? I have to *feel it*.  
You know that. I told you that from the--

LESLEY

Oh, *fuck you*...

Music begins and the curtain rises. The audience applauds as  
Lesley and Mike stride onto the stage and take their bows,  
smiles plastered on their faces.

MIKE

...I was in the moment...

LESLEY

I told you to stop. You fucking *animal*.

MIKE

But... You were incredible.

LESLEY

What is wrong with you?

Lesley starts back for the wings, and Mike follows her. In the  
background we see Riggan and Laura enter from the other side to  
take their bows.

MIKE

Listen I'm sorry, alright, I--

LESLEY

I want your shit out of the apartment.

They go back on stage and join Riggan and Laura for the company  
bow.

MIKE

Can we--

LESLEY

No we can't. Maybe up here you're Mr. Truth,  
Mike. But in the real world, where it counts,  
you're a fraud. How's that for truth? You...  
*dick*.

Lesley storms off, leaving Mike and a confused Riggan on stage.  
Laura chases her off and straight into...

25 INT. HALLWAY - THEATER - CONTINUOUS

25

...the hallway.

LAURA  
What's going on?

LESLEY  
He's an asshole.

LAURA  
What did he do now?

LESLEY  
Oh, nothing. He just tried to fuck me in front of a full house.

LAURA  
Oh, my God...

LESLEY  
*Right?*

LAURA  
That's kind of hot.

She follows Lesley into...

26 INT. LESLEY AND LAURA'S DRESSING ROOM - THEATER - CONTINUOUS

...the dressing room and closes the door. Lesley proceeds to smash everything on her dressing table. Then she looks in the mirror holding a hairbrush.

LESLEY  
Why don't I have any self-respect?

LAURA  
You're an actress, honey.

Lesley begins to cry. Laura hugs her.

LESLEY  
I'm pathetic. You know, I've dreamt of being a Broadway actress since I was a little kid. And now I'm here. And I'm not a Broadway actress. I'm still just a little kid. And I keep waiting for someone to tell me I made it.

LAURA  
(Hiding how moved she is.)  
Hey. You made it.

(CONTINUED)

LESLEY  
I did?

LAURA  
Sadly, it was with Mike Shiner, on a fake  
motel bed, in front of--

LESLEY  
(A little laugh.)  
Shut. Up.

Riggan steps into the doorway and sees Laura hugging Lesley.

RIGGAN  
Is she okay?

LAURA  
She's gonna be fine.

Riggan enters gingerly and walks up to Lesley.

RIGGAN  
None of this is your fault.  
(Into her eyes.)  
You're beautiful. And talented. And I'm  
lucky to have you. Okay?

LESLEY  
Okay.

RIGGAN  
Okay.

Riggan leaves the room. Laura leans on the makeup table.

LESLEY  
That was very sweet.

LAURA  
Yeah.

Laura is suddenly teary.

LESLEY  
What's wrong?

A beat.

LAURA  
(Smiling.)  
Nothing. Two years, he's never said  
anything like that to me.

(CONTINUED)

LESLEY  
(Into her eyes.)  
Hey. You're smart. And beautiful. And  
talented. And I'm lucky to have you. Okay?

LAURA  
We're gross.

LESLEY  
We are.

Laura smiles and caresses Lesley's hand. They look at each other. Then Laura leans forward, close to Lesley's face...

LESLEY (CONT'D)  
(Nervous.)  
What are you doing?

LAURA  
Nothing.

Laura kisses Lesley tenderly on the lips. Lesley seems confused. A few seconds of silence. Then...

LESLEY  
Do it again.

Laura kisses her again. A knock at the door. They separate. Mike opens the door holding the prop gun.

MIKE  
(To Lesley.)  
Can we talk about this like two--

Lesley hurls the hair brush at his head.

LESLEY  
*FUCK YOU!!!*

MIKE  
Okay, well, you're not ready.

Mike points the prop gun at her, pretends to fire and...

MIKE (CONT'D)  
That was hot.

He exits the room. We follow him...

27 INT. HALLWAY - THEATER - CONTINUOUS

27

...down the hallway up to Riggan's dressing room. Riggan sits at his table, picking the brains out of his hair.

(CONTINUED)

MIKE

(Holding the gun.)  
Your gun is ridiculous. It looks like a plastic toy. And it still has the red plug in the barrel.

(Shows the plug.)  
You look like a seven year old when you're holding it. I'm not threatened by it at all.

He tosses the gun onto Riggan's table.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Have some self respect and get a new one.  
(Takes a step then turns.)  
That was a fun crowd, huh?

We follow Mike to...

28 INT. STAIRS - THEATER - CONTINUOUS 28  
...the stairs. He climbs them as he lights a cigarette. He goes through a metal door that takes him out onto...

29 EXT. ROOFTOP - THEATER - CONTINUOUS 29  
...a rooftop. The Marquis' of the other theaters glowing with the street lamps, a classic Broadway view.

Mike is surprised to find Sam sitting on the cornice of the building, a good fifty feet above 45th street. He goes next to her, looking down at the street.

MIKE

I don't think it's high enough.

Sam turns to him, uncomfortable by his presence.

SAM

Me neither.

MIKE

So, what are you doing up here?

SAM

(Hesitant.)  
Adrenaline. Just came out of rehab. Closest I get to a drug.

MIKE

You were in rehab?

(CONTINUED)

SAM  
(Distant.)  
Yeah.

MIKE  
Cool.

SAM  
It wasn't all Dr. Drew or anything, but  
that dude from American Pie was there.

A VOICE  
(From the street below.)  
*Juuump!*

SAM  
(Calling down.)  
*Eat me!*

A VOICE  
*Okay. Jump on my face!*

SAM  
(To Mike.)  
I love this city.

MIKE  
Yeah.

SAM  
(Casually.)  
Why do you act like a dick all the time? Do  
you just do it to antagonize people?

MIKE  
Maybe...

Sam turns and faces Mike.

SAM  
You really don't give a shit if people like  
you or not...

MIKE  
Not really.

SAM  
(More comfortable.)  
God, that's cool.

MIKE  
Is it...?

Mike leans on the railing, looking down at the street. For a  
moment, he is somewhere else...

(CONTINUED)



SAM  
Hey.  
(Mike doesn't respond. She pushes  
him.)  
Hey...

MIKE  
What?

SAM  
Let's play a game.

MIKE  
A game?

SAM  
Yeah.

MIKE  
What are you, *eight*?

SAM  
What are you, *seventy-eight*? Truth or  
dare...?

MIKE  
You gotta be--

SAM  
*Truth or dare?*

He looks at her, intrigued.

MIKE  
Truth.

SAM  
The first time we met, you made a comment about  
my ass. Why'd you do it?

MIKE  
Because you have a great ass, and I noticed  
it. So, I said it.  
(A beat.)  
Truth or dare?

SAM  
Dare.

MIKE  
Really...

SAM  
Uh-huh.

(CONTINUED)

A moment of tension.

MIKE  
(Looking at the street.)  
There's a bald guy about to walk by down  
there. Spit on his head.

SAM  
No!

MIKE  
You said dare.

SAM  
Truth.

MIKE  
Too late.

She stares into Mike's eyes, knowing she's being tested. She  
leans over the railing and spits down toward the street.

SAM  
Happy?

MAN (O.C.)  
(From the street)  
Fuck you!

Sam laughs. Mike smiles at her carefree laugh. It could be the  
first time we've seen a genuine smile from him.

SAM  
Truth or dare?

MIKE  
Truth.

SAM  
You're boring.

MIKE  
Truth.

She stares him down.

SAM  
(Nervous, pretending.)  
Do you want to fool around with me?

A pause.

MIKE  
No.

(CONTINUED)

SAM  
(Taken aback.)  
Really? Why not?

MIKE  
That's a second question.

SAM  
It's a second part.

A pause.

MIKE  
I'd be afraid I couldn't get it up.

Impressed with his honesty.

SAM  
That didn't seem to be a problem for you on stage.

MIKE  
Nothing's a problem for me on stage.

SAM  
I wanna ask another question...

MIKE  
You just asked--

SAM  
One more.

MIKE  
Go 'head.

SAM  
If you weren't afraid. What would you want to do to me?

He carefully considers it, then moves his face close to hers.

MIKE  
I would want to pull the eyes out of your head...

SAM  
...That's sweet...

MIKE  
...And stick them in my skull, and then look out at this street and see it the way I saw it when I was your age.

(CONTINUED)

Mike turns and stares out at the street once more. Sam stares at the mystery that is Mike.

SAM  
G'night, Mike.

She walks away and into the building, never looking back.

A29 A29  
Mike stares out into the night. We move to his POV. The street. Night turns to day. Pedestrians begin to walk below.

B29 B29  
We crawl down the wall until we arrive at Riggan's dressing room window. We push in to find...

30 INT. RIGGAN'S DRESSING ROOM - THEATER - DAY 30  
...Riggan sitting with his feet on the window frame, staring at a manila envelope in his hands that reads... "R, MALIBU REFINANCE DOCS. SIGN AND SEND ASAP. J." Riggan sighs and props the letter up against the mirror.

With a soft knock, Laura enters. She stands in the doorway with an odd expression on her face.

RIGGAN  
What now?

Laura lays the Arts section of the New York Times down in front of Riggan.

LAURA  
Don't kill the messenger.

Riggan picks up the paper. His expression immediately changes. Laura watches him sympathetically.

LAURA (CONT'D)  
He's an asshole.

Now we see the cover of the Arts section. There is a picture of Mike lounging on a black sofa, his bare feet on a table as he sips a glass of wine. The title of the article reads... "CARVING OUT HIS PLACE IN THEATER HISTORY. *Shiner says Raymond Carver is the reason he became an actor.*" Riggan involuntarily squeezes the paper as he reads on, filling with rage.

BIRDMAN (V.O.)  
He's fooling you.

(CONTINUED)

RIGGAN  
Shut up.

LAURA  
(Confused.)  
I didn't say anything.

RIGGAN  
Fuck. This is it?  
(He passes a few pages.)  
This can't be it.

LAURA  
Page twelve.

Riggan searches desperately for page twelve. When he gets there, he finds a huge ad of the new Toyota Camry that almost fills the entire page, and down in the left corner a tiny press release with the title:

"From Birdman to Carver: An aging Action Hero Grasps for His Youth."

RIGGAN  
(Reading.)  
"Riggan Thompson, better known as the face of the Birdman films, tries not to lay an egg on Broadway..."  
(Flipping pages.)  
Where's the rest of it?

LAURA  
There is no rest of it.

RIGGAN  
They didn't use the photo I sent them.

LAURA  
What photo?

RIGGAN  
The one you liked. The one you said  
I look like a young Jack Nicholson.

LAURA  
(She lights a candle.)  
Don't worry about it. Someone'll be using  
that to pick up dog shit tomorrow.

RIGGAN  
How can you be so calm about this?

LAURA  
What are my other choices?

(CONTINUED)

RIGGAN  
Aren't you scared at all?

LAURA  
About what?

RIGGAN  
About being humiliated out there.

LAURA  
It won't be the first time I've been  
humiliated.

RIGGAN  
I bet it won't.

Laura looks at him with fire in her eyes.

LAURA  
You're an asshole.

She charges to the door and is about to leave when she turns  
back to Riggan...

LAURA (CONT'D)  
By the way... I'm not pregnant. So there's  
one thing you don't have to worry about.

She leaves, slamming the door behind her.

Riggan remains still. Mike seems to be smirking at him right  
through the cover of the Arts section...

BIRDMAN (V.O.)  
That pretentious, little, theater fuck is  
stealing your thunder.

Riggan charges out of the room and into...

31 INT. HALLWAY - THEATER - CONTINUOUS 31  
...the hallway. He walks to Mike's dressing room, finds the  
door half opened and enters...

32 INT. MIKE'S DRESSING ROOM - THEATER - CONTINUOUS 32  
...discovering Mike lying in a sun bed. His arm is sticking  
out of it, holding on to a copy of Borges's 'Labyrinths'.  
Riggan yanks the sun bed open. Mike is asleep, wearing tiny  
sun goggles. Riggan slams the lid down on him.

(CONTINUED)

MIKE  
What the fuck is going on!

RIGGAN  
Get up!

MIKE  
Back away.

RIGGAN  
Get up.

Riggan slaps Mike on the arm.

MIKE  
Ow, fuck that hurts!

RIGGAN  
So, Carver is the reason you became an actor?

MIKE  
What?

RIGGAN  
*This is my play!* I did the work. I raised the money. I arrange the press.

MIKE  
They called me for an interview. I said-- I don't know, I said the first thing that came to mind. *Jesus, we got the cover of the Arts section!*

RIGGAN  
You said the first-- *Fuck the Arts section.* The first thing that came to mind? Right. Cause that's you. Mr. Natural. Mr. Fuck the scene, just stare at my massive hard-on. Because that's the truth of the moment.

MIKE  
You think it looked massive?

RIGGAN  
Shut up. *Shut the fuck up.* You don't get hard on my stage unless I tell you to.

MIKE  
*Your stage?* This stage belonged to a lot of great actor's, pal. But you are not one of them.

Mike storms out of the room. Riggan follows him into...

33 INT. HALLWAY - THEATER - CONTINUOUS

33

...the hallway. He slaps Mike on his sun burned back.

RIGGAN

So, you wrote your own lines?

He slaps him again.

MIKE

Ow. Fuck. Yes I did.

RIGGAN

You changed a few words, and mumbled a little, you self absorbed prick.

MIKE

Look who's talking...

RIGGAN

Let me tell you something, you spiteful nobody piece of shit.

MIKE

Nobody? My hard-on has already fifty thousand views on youtube.

RIGGAN

Fifty thousand views? A cat playing with a dildo has more than that.

MIKE

I don't care.

RIGGAN

Yes you do.

(Beat.)

Everybody says: "Mike is so honest". (Smacks him.) "So truthful". (Smacks him again.)

MIKE

(Like a child.)

Ouch. Fuuuuuck. Cut the shit!

Riggan corners Mike against the wall.

RIGGAN

You said in the interview that your father was a drunk, like Carver. Is that true Mike? Is it really true?

Riggan stares intensely into Mike's eyes. Mike looks away.

(CONTINUED)



RIGGAN (CONT'D)

Because my father was. My father was a *mean* fucking drunk. Beat the shit out of us. But we were okay with the beatings. You know why? Because at least when he was beating us, he wasn't thinking about taking us out to his tool shed...

Mike's expression changes.

RIGGAN (CONT'D)

That sonofabitch would smile and say, "Do you want to kneel down and unbuckle my belt? Or do you want me to take it off and use it?" I learned how to make myself numb. But my sister-- (Holding back tears.) My little sister...

Riggan can't go on. Mike is horrified.

MIKE

Jesus, Riggan. I'm really sorry. I didn't-- That's fucking horrible...

RIGGAN

(Crazy smile.) Yeah. It's also not true. See? (Cracking up.) I can pretend too, you little dick!

Riggan shoves Mike violently.

RIGGAN (CONT'D)

Don't fuck with me, Mike.

MIKE

You're crazy...

RIGGAN

You have no idea what I'm capable of. You understand me?

Riggan pulls the paper out of his back pocket.

RIGGAN (CONT'D)

Working with Riggan Thomson is like waltzing with a monkey?

He smacks Mike in the head with the paper and begins to jump in front of him, ready to fight.

RIGGAN (CONT'D)

Let's go. Put your hands up.

(CONTINUED)

MIKE  
(Tauntingly.)  
Don't you want to go put on your tights and  
your--

Riggan punches him on the face. Mike needs a few seconds to understand what has just happened. Then they begin to wrestle in the hallway. Mike breaks free from the headlock.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
What are you gonna do? You gonna get rid of  
me? Huh? What do you think my friend  
Tabitha is going to write in the Times  
after you get rid of me?

Riggan stares at Mike, paralyzed by the truth. Finally, he turns and marches to his dressing room, and we follow him...

34 INT. RIGGAN'S DRESSING ROOM - THEATER - CONTINUOUS 34

...Riggan slams the door shut and paces in a rage. He glares at a make-up box on the table and, points his finger at it, and sends it flying across the room.

BIRDMAN (V.O.)  
You are lame, Riggan. Rolling around  
with that third rate actor in an 800  
seat shithole like this.

RIGGAN  
(Whispering.)  
Breathing in, I feel my rage. Breathing  
out, I embrace my mental formations.

BIRDMAN (V.O.)  
You're going to let that poncey theater  
fuck threaten you?

Riggan continues breathing deeply with his eyes tightly closed. He smiles a tiny artificial smile.

RIGGAN  
(Whispering.)  
Breathing in, I am calm. Breathing out,  
I ignore my mental formations. This is a  
mental formation. This is a mental form--

BIRDMAN (V.O.)  
Stop that shit. I am not a mental  
formation. I am "you", asshole.

Riggan looks down at the poster on the floor.

(CONTINUED)

RIGGAN  
(Whispering.)  
Leave me alone.

BIRDMAN (V.O.)  
You were a movie star, remember?  
Pretentious, but happy...

Riggan opens his eyes, slowly. A sad expression on his face.

RIGGAN  
I was not happy.

BIRDMAN  
...Ignorant but charming. Now you are a  
tiny bitter cocksucker.

RIGGAN  
Shut up! Stop whining! I was miserable!

BIRDMAN (V.O.)  
Yeah. But fake miserable. Hollywood  
miserable.

Riggan points his fingers at a lamp and sends it flying.

BIRDMAN (V.O.)  
What are you trying to prove? Huh? That  
you're an artist? You're not.

RIGGAN  
Fuck you!

Riggan points his fingers at a chair and sends it flying.

BIRDMAN (V.O.)  
Fuck you, coward! And fuck those critics  
that made you quit. Our franchise  
grossed billions worldwi--

RIGGAN  
And billions of flies eat shit everyday!  
So what? Does that make it good? (Beat.)  
And I don't know if you've noticed, but  
that was 1992! Look at me! (He takes off  
his shirt.) This is what's left!  
(Grabbing his neck.) This! (Grabbing his  
chest.) This! (Totally exploding.) I'm  
*fucking disappearing!* I'm the answer to a  
fucking trivial pursuit question.

Riggan sits down, exhausted.

(CONTINUED)

RIGGAN (CONT'D)

What part of that don't you get? You're fucking dead.

BIRDMAN (V.O.)

*We are not dead. We're--*

RIGGAN

Stop saying 'we'! There is no 'we'. I am not you. *I'm Riggan fucking Thomson.*

BIRDMAN (V.O.)

No. You're Birdman. Because without me, all that's left is "you". A sad, selfish, mediocre actor, grasping--

Riggan points his finger and sends the poster flying, spearing it on a coat rack, piercing Birdman right through the heart. Finally, silence. Until...

BIRDMAN (V.O.)

What the hell did you do that for? I liked that poster.

A confused Riggan looks over to the wall, where the lamp on the floor is creating a shadow of his figure. Only in the shadow, it appears as if Riggan is wearing the Birdman costume. Stunned, Riggan slowly lifts one arm and in the shadow we see a wing.

BIRDMAN (V.O.)

It's always 'we' brother.

The television turns on by itself, playing an episode of the original Birdman cartoon. Riggan points his fingers at the tv and sends it hurling at the shadow. Then he proceeds to destroy everything in his room with his telekinetic powers.

We slowly pan to see that, behind Riggan, Jake stands on the other side of the half-opened door. We push in on Jake, watching in shock. The camera turns and becomes Jake's POV...

35 INT. HALLWAY - THEATER - CONTINUOUS

35

...and now, from his view, we see Riggan yelling at the shadow.

RIGGAN

Fuck you! Fuck you!

He picks up a chair and throws it down. He then picks up the newspaper from the floor and tossing it all around. And now we understand that he is not using telepathy. He has been using only his hands. Completely mad. As Riggan turns to pick up something else, he spots Jake on the other side of the door. He immediately calms himself and walks over.

(CONTINUED)

RIGGAN (CONT'D)  
What's up?

JAKE  
Um... Well. Two hours to curtain. Why don't you rest a little bit?

RIGGAN  
Yeah. Sure.

JAKE  
Last preview, buddy. We're almost there.

RIGGAN  
Okay.

JAKE  
How ya doin'?

RIGGAN  
Good. Great.

JAKE  
Good. That's good.  
(A beat.)  
The, uh, money came through. I just have to transfer it to the account.

RIGGAN  
Oh, that's terrific...

JAKE  
Okay. Well, I'm gonna do that.  
(He stares at Riggan who seems about to collapse.)  
You know I'm proud of you, right? This took balls. And you did it.

Riggan nods. An exhausted sadness in his eyes.

RIGGAN  
I can't do this anymore, Jake.

JAKE  
What?

RIGGAN  
I think I'm gonna cancel the preview. I'm exhausted.

JAKE  
It's a joke, right? (He forces a laugh.) Good one, Riggan.

(CONTINUED)

RIGGAN

I'm starting to believe that this is not for me. The applause is... lukewarm. I think they're laughing at me.

JAKE

What are you--? Listen. There's a three block line of people waiting to see you. We are sold out. It's a full house.

RIGGAN

Really?

JAKE

Yes. And the French ambassador is coming. And the prince of Saudi Arabia, with one of his wives. And... I wasn't going to tell you this, but-- Martin Scorsese. He's casting for his new film. But don't tell anyone, okay? This is between you and me.

RIGGAN

Okay. I'll be ready.

Riggan smiles. He has forgotten about his existential doubts. A worried Jake closes the door. He walks a few steps and finds Laura and Lesley. They've been listening to his conversation with Riggan.

LESLEY

How is he?

JAKE

He'll be okay.

LESLEY

Poor creature.

LAURA

Is it true? Scorsese?

JAKE

Yes. And the new Pope too.  
(Beat.)

They both understand.

LAURA

You're an asshole, Jake.

JAKE

I'm the one keeping this boat afloat.

(CONTINUED)

LESLEY

So there is no line of people out there?

JAKE

I don't know. Now go and get ready.  
That's your job.

(He begins to walk.)

I'll better invest in a taco truck, or  
a strip joint near the airport.

Laura leaves. We follow Lesley up to Riggan's dressing room. She knocks on the door. Nothing. Silence. She half-opens the door and, from behind her, we see Riggan examining his right hand. He has blood falling from the palm to the wrist.

LESLEY

Are you okay?

RIGGAN

(Smiles.)

Yeah, I-- This is nothing. Shaving.

He cleans his hand against his trousers.

LESLEY

I just want to say I'm sorry.

RIGGAN

For what?

LESLEY

I knew what Mike was capable of,  
and I brought him in, anyway.

RIGGAN

You did good.

Lesley nods. A beat.

LESLEY

Tomorrow's my first opening night  
on Broadway.

RIGGAN

Mine too.

LESLEY

And I want you to know that,  
whatever happens, I'll always be  
grateful to you for that.

RIGGAN

Me too. It's going to be great. Full  
house.

(CONTINUED)

She looks at him with tender eyes. Then we follow her along the corridor until she passes by Mike's dressing room. Mike half-opens the door and sees Lesley walking by. He has a black eye. He waits for Lesley to be completely gone, and then he comes out of his dressing room and we follow him up the stairs to...

38 EXT. ROOFTOP - THEATER - DUSK

38

...the rooftop. He finds Sam standing on the cornice, looking at the street.

MIKE

For fuck's sake, just jump already.

Sam stares out, a smile creeping over her face.

SAM

How did you know I'd be up here?

MIKE

I didn't. I was just hoping.

Silence. Mike walks up next to her and stares out as well.

SAM

Where's Lesley?

MIKE

Moving on.

SAM

Smart girl...

MIKE

I appreciate that.

A beat.

SAM

Ready for the last preview?  
(Noticing his black eye.)  
Who did that to you?

Mike smiles. No answer.

SAM (CONT'D)

Could have been anybody, I guess.  
(After a beat.)  
I'm sort of hoping it was Lesley.

He barely says no, smiling, and lights a cigarette. She understands.

(CONTINUED)



SAM (CONT'D)  
Oh, don't tell me...

Silence.

MIKE  
What's the worst thing he ever did to  
you?

Sam is surprised by the question. She thinks for a moment.

SAM  
He was never around, so...

MIKE  
That was--?

SAM  
No. That was-- Who gives a shit. It  
was the way he tried to make up for  
it by constantly trying to convince  
me I was special. (A beat.) What  
about you?

MIKE  
My dad?

SAM  
Yeah.

MIKE  
He pretended I was his son.

She stares him down. Silence.

SAM  
So, what happens now?

MIKE  
I have no idea...

SAM  
Yeah...

A beat.

MIKE  
He was right, though.

SAM  
About what?

MIKE  
About your being special. You're hanging  
around here trying to make yourself  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MIKE (CONT'D)  
invisible behind that fragile little fuck  
up routine. But you can't. You're  
anything but invisible. You're big. And  
you're sort of this really great mess, a  
candle burning at both ends, and no  
amount of booze or pills is gonna hide  
that.

Sam tosses Mike's cigarette over the balcony, and kisses him.  
He leans into the kiss.

MAN'S VOICE  
(From below.)  
*Jesus Fuck!*

She suddenly pulls away.

SAM  
It's a good thing you're an actor and not a  
writer cause that little speech was just  
like, Oprah... Hallmark... R. Kelly bad.

She kisses him lightly one more time and then walks away. When  
she gets to the door she stops and leans on the frame.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Truth or dare?

MIKE  
Truth.

SAM  
No.

MIKE  
Truth.

SAM  
No. Truth or dare?

The slightest smile as she exits through the door, and after a  
short pause, Mike follows...

39 INT. HALLWAYS - THEATRE - CONTINUOUS

39

...along a darkened hallway. They reach a tiny wooden door and  
Sam leads the way through it.

MIKE  
Do you have any idea where you're going?

SAM  
Absolutely not.

(CONTINUED)

She continues on until she gets to...

40 INT. ABOVE STAGE - THEATER - CONTINUOUS 40  
...the "grid" above stage where the lights are located. We can see, below us, the empty seats of the auditorium and the kitchen set.

MIKE  
What now...?

Mike reaches up to kiss her. She stops him.

SAM  
How do you do it?

MIKE  
What?

SAM  
How do you go out there and pretend to be someone else in front of all those people?

MIKE  
I don't pretend. Not out there. Just about every place else, but never out there.

SAM  
Good to know.

They stare at one another...

MIKE  
What are we doing here?

SAM  
What do you mean?

MIKE  
I mean, what are we doing here?

She moves in.

SAM  
Adrenaline...

They kiss. The camera begins to drift down toward the stage...

RIGGAN (O.S.)  
Fucking teenager.

As the camera continues down from the grid, we discover an auditorium full of people staring at the actors on stage.

(CONTINUED)

RIGGAN (O.S) (CONT'D)

By the time I got to the hospital, the kid was dead. He was off in a corner laid out on a gurney. We took the old couple up to the O.R.. They were a mess. We worked like hell on them for most of the night...

We pan along the auditorium back to the stage to find Riggan, Mike, Lesley and Laura in the kitchen.

RIGGAN (CONT'D)

When we were done, we wrapped them in full body casts. The husband was depressed. Even when I told him his wife was gonna pull through, he was still depressed. So, I got up to his mouth hole and asked him, and he told me it was because he couldn't see her through the eye holes. Can you imagine? I'm telling you, the man's heart was breaking because he couldn't turn his goddamn head and see his goddamn wife.

LESLEY

(In genuine tears.)  
That's terrible. (Beat.) Perfect.  
And terrible.

She is crushed. Laura holds Lesley, trying to control her own emotion.

RIGGAN

(Taking this in.)  
Yeah. So I guess what we have to ask ourselves is... What do we talk about when we talk about love?

The lights go to a blackout and the audience applauds as some scene change music plays. As we follow Riggan off stage, the lights are turned on again, but now they have an orange mood. Lesley is the only one on stage, doing a monologue.

LESLEY

Mel and I have been together five years, been married for four. But it was Ed who taught me something no one else could... He taught me what it felt like to really feel loved. And the terrible thing is that if something happened to Mel or myself, if something happened to either one of us tomorrow, I think the other one would grieve for a while, you know, but then would go  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LESLEY (CONT'D)  
out and love again, have someone else soon enough. All this-- All of this love we're talking about... it would just be a memory. Maybe not even a memory. Am I wrong? I mean, I don't know anything. And I'm the first one to admit it.

A Dresser waits in the wings to help Riggan with his change.

DRESSER  
That was amazing!

Riggan looks proud. Things are finally going well. He undresses to his underwear and puts on a robe and his moccasins, as the stage begins to revolve. Laura, in costume, walks up beside him. Over the following dialogue, the kitchen gives way to the extravagant garden set we saw before.

LAURA  
(A bit distant.)  
It's actually going well.

RIGGAN  
Yeah. (A beat.) Hey. I think we have to talk.

LAURA  
(Sad smile.)  
No. We don't.

Riggan nods.

RIGGAN  
Right. (Beat.) We will eventually, though, 'cause that's the only way I get to say I'm sorry. I really am.

Silence.

LAURA  
We could've made good parents.

RIGGAN  
Horrible. We would've been just--

LAURA  
Awful. Would have raised, like...

RIGGAN  
...a serial killer...

LAURA  
...or Justin Bieber.  
(She smiles at him.)  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LAURA (CONT'D)  
I'm not really the housewife type anyway. I thought I could be a mom. My body seems to disagree.

The lights come up and Laura walks onto the stage.

LAURA (CONT'D)  
~~(Back to him.)  
You were right. This was fun.~~

Riggan watches her go, but something else grabs his attention. We pan across the stage to see Sam and Mike on the other side. They talk and laugh. Sam kisses Mike softly. Mike playfully grabs her ass.

We pan back to Riggan. His expression morphs from broken-hearted to rage. He marches over to a stage hand.

RIGGAN  
You have a cigarette?

The stage hand holds out a pack, Riggan takes one.

STAGE HAND  
You need a light?

Riggan snatches the lighter and storms out through the hallway, and out the back door of the theater to...

41 EXT. AN ALLEY WAY - OUTSIDE THE THEATER - CONTINUOUS 41

...the alley. Down at the end, we can see the tourists making their way about the streets. Riggan lights the cigarette and leans back against the stage door trying to calm himself.

RIGGAN  
Breathing in, I calm myself. Breathing out,  
I ease myself.

But this is New York City. A fluorescent light buzzes above his head. Taxis honk their horns. The sound of pedestrians yelling at one another. All fueling his agitation.

Riggan checks his watch. He pulls one last drag from the cigarette before he tosses it, and turns to head back in, only to realize the door has locked. He tries to pull it open to no avail. He begins to knock loudly on the door. There is no response. He knocks louder. Nothing.

He is turning to walk away when he realizes that his robe is caught in the door. He checks his watch again and now is beginning to panic. He tries to tear at the robe but the terry cloth is too strong for him to rip. Frantically, he looks around for an answer. No answer. No time. He pulls the robe off of him

(CONTINUED)

and, wearing only his underwear and moccasins, he charges down the alley way toward...

42 EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

42

...the street. Now, rushing down the block in his underwear. A tourist spots him.

TOURIST  
Hey, aren't you...?

RIGGAN  
I'm sorry. I can't really--

TOURIST  
Riggan Thompson! Holy Shit! Let me get an autograph.

Riggan marches on as a few more people begin to notice. The Tourist runs in front of him, forcing him to stop.

TOURIST (CONT'D)  
Come on, man. Don't be a dick. Let me have an autograph.

The man produces a pen and a magazine from his pocket. More people begin to gather...

MAN ON STREET  
Birdman!

Seeing no other way out, Riggan signs the autograph.

TOURIST  
Dude! You fuckin' rock!

Directly in front of him stand a lady and her two kids.

LADY  
Can we take one picture?

RIGGAN  
Are you kidding me?

KID #1  
Why is he naked?

LADY  
One picture...

KID #2  
I can see his weenie.

(CONTINUED)

Riggan tries to get past them, but a crowd has formed. A swarm of cell phones begin to glow like fireflies.

LADY  
(To her kids.)  
Get next to him!

RIGGAN  
Give me a fucking break, lady.

The kids run up next to him. Even more people crowding around. Riggan puts up his middle finger, just as the Lady takes the shot. He shoves the kids aside and moves on.

WOMAN ON STREET  
He looks so old in person.

MAN ON STREET  
(From across the street.)  
*You suck!*

RIGGAN  
*Fuck you!*

Riggan pushes through the crowd to get to the lobby. The people begin to chant. Dozens of cell phones recording him.

CROWD  
*Bird-man! Bird-man! Bird-man!*

Riggan pushes his way through to the lobby doors...

43 INT. LOBBY - THEATER - CONTINUOUS

43

...to be stopped by the vision of Ralph in a wheelchair. His head wrapped in a bandage. A man in a suit next to him.

RIGGAN  
Jesus Christ! What're you doing here?

RALPH  
Waiting for Jake. This is Mr. Roth, my attorney.

Riggan continues walking toward the auditorium. Ralph and Mr. Roth follow him.

MR. ROTH  
We're pursuing financial remuneration for the injuries Mr. Pinkus suffered while rehearsing your--

RIGGAN  
I have a play to do.

(CONTINUED)



RALPH  
I'm going to ruin you!

Riggan storms toward the auditorium, but is stopped by an old Usher.

OLD USHER  
I'm sorry sir, you're going to have--

Riggan shoves the old lady aside and enters...

44 INT. AUDITORIUM - THEATER - CONTINUOUS

44

...the theater. Riggan stands in the back among the audience. He sees the "rain" falling on the stage. The "Motel" sign is lit. Mike and Lesley are in bed, for the motel scene, waiting for the knock on the door. With nothing else to do, Riggan yells his line from the back of the auditorium...

RIGGAN  
Knock knock knock! Terri! Terri!

The audience turns to see Riggan standing in his underwear. They begin to murmur and laugh and point at him.

Riggan marches down the aisle. He looks haggard and covered with perspiration.

Lesley and Mike, confused, come out of bed.

LESLEY  
Ed! What are you doing here?

RIGGAN  
Why? I need you to tell me why. I lived for you-- I worshipped you...

MIKE  
Listen Ed, I know this is hard but--

RIGGAN  
Fuck you. Shut up. *Fuck you.*

Giggles from the audience. Riggan turns threateningly and points to an audience member on the aisle who is giggling at him.

RIGGAN (CONT'D)  
Shut up!

The guy stops smiling. The audience goes silent. Riggan arrives at the apron of the stage. Annie from the wings slides the gun towards him. Riggan grabs it and points it at Mike.

(CONTINUED)

LESLEY  
Eddie! Please!

Riggan climbs onto the stage. Exhausted. He goes to Mike and, with a last effort, pushes him lamely.

RIGGAN  
*What's wrong with me?* Why do I end up having to beg people to love me?

LESLEY  
Ed. Eddie. Please... Give me the gun.

We pan to the wings where Jake is staring in disbelief. His cellphone begins to vibrate, and he answers.

JAKE  
Yeah. (A beat.) What?... No no no no no no no. Wait there. I'm coming out in--

He walks toward the hallway and we follow him...

45 INT. HALLWAY - THEATER - CONTINUOUS 45

...through the corridor.

JAKE  
No. Wait. Wait for me. I'll be there in a second. (Beat.) What is that, a threat? (Beat.) What wheelchair? (Beat.) Wait. Don't hang up. Mr. Roth, we can discuss-- Hello?... Hello?...

He goes out one of the exits and we are left with the silence of the empty hallway. After a few seconds, the sound of the gunshot from the scene echoes through the theater. The audience applauds. The camera starts to move forward. A few seconds later Riggan takes over the POV with his bloody long wig and the fake gun. We follow up to...

46 INT. RIGGAN'S DRESSING ROOM - THEATER - CONTINUOUS 46

...his dressing room. He puts on a robe. He walks to his refrigerator without acknowledging Sam who is sitting on the couch, scribbling her dashes on the toilet paper once again. Riggan takes out a plastic container of bologna and a jar of mustard. He sits in front of his dressing table, peels open the bologna and opens the jar of mustard. Slice by slice, he dips the bologna in the mustard and shoves it into his mouth.

SAM  
Dad...?

(CONTINUED)

RIGGAN  
(Looking up.)  
Hey. How ya doin'?

SAM  
Are you okay?

RIGGAN  
Why?

SAM  
I don't know. You seem--

RIGGAN  
(Eating.)  
I'm good. This is good.  
(Holding out a piece.)  
You want some?

SAM  
I'm good.

RIGGAN  
Great. Great.

He continues to eat. She tries to fill the odd silence.

SAM  
So. Opening night, tomorrow.

RIGGAN  
Yeah.

SAM  
That's exciting, huh?

RIGGAN  
Yeah. Well... I don't know. The previews  
have been a train wreck. We haven't been  
able to get through a performance  
without a raging fire... or a raging  
hard-on. I'm not really sleeping, you  
know, at all. And I'm pretty much broke.  
Oh, and also, this play feels like a  
miniature, deformed version of myself  
that keeps following me around, hitting  
me in the balls with a tiny hammer.

(Beat.)  
Sorry, what was your question?

SAM  
(Looking through phone.)  
Never mind... Tonight wasn't bad. It was  
weird. But that's sort of cool. People  
seemed to like it.

(CONTINUED)

Silence. Riggan notices the toilet paper.

RIGGAN  
What are you doing? Some homework?

SAM  
No. I don't-- When I was in rehab, they made us do this.

RIGGAN  
Really...

SAM  
Yeah. These dashes, represent the six billion years the planet has existed. Each dash represents 100 years.

She unravels the roll and we see that there are thousands of black marks running along the toilet paper. She takes the last two panels and tears them off.

SAM (CONT'D)  
And this... (Hands them to him.) ...is supposed to represent the entire time us humans have been here. One hundred and fifty thousand years. That's it.  
(Beat.)  
I guess they were trying to remind us that that's what all our egos and self-obsession are worth.

Riggan stares at the paper, and then at Sam.

RIGGAN  
(Casually.)  
I was a shitty father, wasn't I?

SAM  
No. You were a-- (She stops herself.)  
You were fine.

He stops chewing and stares out.

RIGGAN  
*Fine...* You're right. I am just "fine". Adorably mediocre.

He smiles to her sadly, and then he wipes the mustard from his face with the piece of toilet paper.

SAM  
Dad!

RIGGAN  
What?

(CONTINUED)

Sam looks at the ruined toilet paper in his hands.

RIGGAN (CONT'D)  
Oh... Shit. I'm sorry.

SAM  
(Smiling.)  
It's okay. You just destroyed the entire  
human race in one blow.

Riggan looks at her with the saddest of expressions.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Dad. (She hesitates.) Do you know  
you're becoming a trending topic?

RIGGAN  
Really? What does that mean?

Sam searches for something on her iPhone and then hands it to Riggan. Riggan looks at the phone and sees a hand-held video of himself in the streets in his underwear.

SAM  
350,000 views in less than an hour.  
Believe it or not, this is power.

Riggan looks at more footage, seemingly confused. After a moment, the phone vibrates and the video is interrupted by a text message, which reads "Truth or Dare?"

RIGGAN  
It's for you.

She grabs the phone and looks at the screen. Then at her father. Riggan is staring at her. She looks down.

RIGGAN (CONT'D)  
Go ahead...

SAM  
(Hesitant.)  
Are you...?

RIGGAN  
Go.

A sympathetic smile. An understanding. Sam exits.

Riggan stares into the mirror absently. His eyes locked on his reflection trying to find himself in the image. Then he spots a vase with dying roses, the same roses he flung to the ground previously.

(CONTINUED)

He gets up and goes into the bathroom. He pulls off the long wig and the mustache. He washes his face. Then he opens a small bottle and uses the liquid to scrub his goatee. The dark dye begins to run out, leaving only white hair. For the first time we see that Riggan has a white beard.

He puts on new clothes and comes out of the bathroom. He grabs a beige raincoat and heads out of the dressing room and into...

47 INT. HALLWAY - THEATER - CONTINUOUS

47

...the hallway. As he passes by Mike's door he can hear Sam and Mike. They're trying to be as quiet as possible, but we can hear them flirting and laughing.

He pauses for a moment but continues on. After a few seconds, his phone vibrates. He looks at it. A text from Jake reads: "Have you seen this??? Awesome!!!" He clicks the attachment and sees the, now infamous, video of his underwear escapade in the street. We zoom in until the image fills the screen, when we finally pull away, we discover that...

48 INT. RUM HOUSE - LATER

48

...Riggan's video is being played now in a television in the bar. We see the MTV logo on the bottom of the screen and a video caption that reads: "Birdman goes viral, 930.000 views and counting". The camera pans to find Riggan sitting at the bar, drunk. He is one of the few customers. He polishes off his drink.

RIGGAN

Let me have another one.

BARTENDER

You got it.

The bartender pours another whiskey for Riggan. A waiter steps up to the bar. The bartender points to a martini.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

(To the waiter.)

That's going over to Ms. Dickinson.

Riggan's head tilts at the mention of the name. He looks over to see Tabitha sitting at a table, scratching in her notebook.

RIGGAN

(Hands the waiter a bill.)

I got it. She's a friend of mine.

(CONTINUED)

The waiter pockets the money and gives Riggan the drink. He walks it over to Tabitha and places it down in front of her. Not looking up, she pulls the drink closer and takes a sip.

Riggan sits down across from her. She looks up and immediately recognizes him. He takes out the Carver cocktail napkin and pushes it in front of her. She looks at him, and then down to the napkin. She reads it in silence.

RIGGAN (CONT'D)

(Re: The napkin.)

That was twenty years before I put on that damned costume.

A pause. Then she pushes the napkin back toward him.

TABITHA

I don't care.

RIGGAN

I'm just saying, when you come tomorrow night, I want you--

TABITHA

It doesn't matter.

RIGGAN

What are you--

TABITHA

I'm going to destroy your play.

RIGGAN

You haven't even seen it. I don't-- Did I do something to offend you?

TABITHA

As a matter of fact you did. You took up space in a theater which otherwise might have been used on something worthwhile.

RIGGAN

But you don't even know if it's--

TABITHA

That's true. I haven't read a word of it, or even seen a preview, but after the opening tomorrow I'm going to turn in the worst review anybody has ever read. And I'm going to close your play. Would you like to know why? Because I hate you. And everyone you represent. Entitled. Spoiled. Selfish. Children. Blissfully untrained, unversed and unprepared to even attempt real art. Handing each other awards for cartoons and

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TABITHA (CONT'D)  
pornography. Measuring your worth in  
weekends. Well, this is the theater, and  
you don't get to come in here and pretend  
you can write, direct and act in your own  
propaganda piece without going through me  
first. So, break a leg.

Tabitha goes back to her writing. Riggan sits for a moment.

RIGGAN  
What has to happen in someone's life,  
for them to end up becoming a critic?

She looks up at him.

RIGGAN (CONT'D)  
Whatcha writin'? You reviewin' a play? Was  
it good? Bad? Did you even see it? Lemme  
read.

He snatches the notebook from her.

TABITHA  
I will call the police.

RIGGAN  
No you won't. Let's read your review!  
(He scans the notebook.)  
"Callow". A label. "Lackluster". Label.  
"Marginalia". Sounds like you need  
penicillin to clear that up. None the  
less... label.  
(Looks to Tabitha.)  
All labels. You're a lazy fucker  
aren't you?  
(Looks one last time at  
the notebook.)  
Epistemological vertigo?

Tabitha wants to reach for the notebook, but her pride won't  
let her. Riggan takes a flower from a vase at the center of the  
table.

RIGGAN (CONT'D)  
You know what this is? You don't, do  
you? You can't even see it if you don't  
label it. You mistake those sounds in  
your head for true knowledge.

TABITHA  
Are you finished?

RIGGAN  
(Wrinkling one of the pages.)  
Nothin' about intention, structure,  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



RIGGAN (CONT'D)  
technique. Just crappy opinions backed up by crappy comparisons. You're incapable of writing more than a couple of paragraphs, and you risk nothing of yourself.

(He tears out the page and tosses the notebook.)

Well, I'm an actor and this play has cost me everything. So you can take your cowardly, malicious, shittily written reviews and shove them up your... (Showing her the wrinkled page.) ...wrinkly, tight ass.

Riggan wears a proud smile. And suddenly, Tabitha begins to smile with him.

TABITHA  
You think you're an actor?  
(Calls to the waiter.)  
Eddie!

Eddie the waiter approaches the table.

WAITER  
Yeah, Mrs. Dickinson?

TABITHA  
Give us some Shakespeare.

WAITER  
No problem. Got anything in mind?

Tabitha looks over at Riggan picking the perfect verse.

TABITHA  
The Scottish Play. Act five...

WAITER  
*Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,  
Creeps in this petty pace from day to  
day, To the last syllable of recorded  
time; And all our yesterdays have lighted  
fools. The way to dusty death...*

He is brilliant. The monologue is perfectly played and powerful. Riggan being mercilessly reminded of his mediocrity... by Eddie the waiter.

WAITER (CONT'D)  
*...Out, out, brief candle! Life's but a  
walking shadow, a poor player, That  
struts and frets his hour upon the  
stage, And then is heard no more. It is  
(MORE)*

(CONTINUED)

WAITER (CONT'D)  
*a tale told by an idiot, full of sound  
and fury... Signifying nothing.*

A few drunks clap at the beautiful performance. Then, a powerful  
silence rings out for a moment, until...

TABITHA  
Thank you, Eddie.

WAITER  
You got it.

TABITHA  
(To Riggan. A derisive laugh.)  
You're no actor. You're a celebrity.  
Let's be clear on that.

Tabitha rises from her seat and grabs her things.

TABITHA (CONT'D)  
I'm going to kill your play.

She walks away. Riggan sits numb. After a moment, he reaches  
over and gulps down Tabitha's entire martini, gin pouring out  
the sides of his mouth. Unaware, he slams the empty martini  
glass on top of the Carver napkin and gets up. We follow him  
out onto...

49 EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS 49

...the street, where he walks through the theater district.  
Tired. Drunk. Empty. Neon lights all around him. A crazy, old  
homeless man passes by in the opposite direction shouting  
furiously. Riggan keeps walking until he arrives at a bench,  
with a tree behind. Everything is quiet. Riggan sits on the  
bench, lost. We begin to tilt up, slowly, toward a tall tree.  
We move closer into the branches and the green leaves.  
Silence.

A49 A49

Night turns into day. The sounds of the city disappear and  
birds begin to sing. The branches now caressed by golden shafts  
of morning sun. Finally, we tilt down slowly and find...

50 EXT. STREET - DAY. 50

...Riggan still sleeping on the bench. He looks like a bum. His  
raincoat is dirty and wet.

(CONTINUED)

BIRDMAN (V.O.)  
God. You look like shit, brother. You  
get that mongoloid look when you're hung  
over, don't you?

Riggan opens an eye. He scratches his hair.

BIRDMAN (V.O.)  
Let's go. Get up. It's a beautiful day.

Riggan sits up slowly. He is really hung over.

BIRDMAN (V.O.)  
Stand up! Forget about the times. Everyone  
else has. So you're not a great actor...  
*Who cares?!!* You're much more than that.  
Fuck! You tower over all these theater  
douchebags. You're a movie star! A Global  
force! Don't you get it?

Riggan stands up and begins to stumble forward. We pan around  
to find Birdman (a stronger Riggan wearing a cool Birdman  
outfit), following behind him.

BIRDMAN  
You spent your whole life building a  
reputation and a bank account, and now  
they're both blown. So what? Fuck it. We  
make a come back. Something huge. Take what  
belongs to us. Take back the spotlight.  
Magazine covers and billboards. Happy meals  
with Birdman dolls. Remember that? That's  
who you are. That's who we are!

Riggan just marches on. People and cars pass by, but nobody  
notices Birdman. Riggan tries to ignore him.

BIRDMAN (CONT'D)  
C'mon, buddy. Tell me we're going back  
to the big leagues. Let's do this.  
Shave off that pathetic goatee, and put  
the mask back on! Batman my balls.  
We'll start a new franchise. *Birdman:  
Phoenix Rising*. Trust me! A billion  
world wide. Swear to God.

A50

A50

Riggan keeps walking. Birdman, insistent, chases, until  
suddenly he begins to flutter off the ground.

BIRDMAN  
Do you hear me? You can do anything! You're  
an icon!

(CONTINUED)

Desperate, Birdman flies a bit higher around him.

BIRDMAN (CONT'D)  
You're bigger than life. You save people  
from their boring, miserable lives...

The camera pans to the street in front of them. People carry  
out their everyday routines. There is a deli, a souvenir shop,  
a small bank...

BIRDMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
...You make them jump, laugh, cry,  
shit their pants... All you have to do  
is snap your fingers and...

B50

B50

Riggan snaps his fingers, once, twice, and the bank suddenly  
explodes. The sound is so loud that it seems to belong to  
another movie. The earth shakes. People run. Dust all over.  
Fire. An unsteady camera pans back to Birdman.

BIRDMAN  
(Excited.)  
That's what I'm talking about! That is  
cool! Explosive! Big, fast, loud!  
(He turns directly to the camera  
and talks about the audience.)  
Look at them. They love that shit!  
They starve for blood and action,  
not this artsy-fartsy-philosophical  
bullshit!

C50

C50

We hear a loud roar, and the camera pans to discover a huge  
alien about to crash a cab against the asphalt. Birdman uses his  
powerful blow to send the alien flying away.

BIRDMAN  
And when you shout "whoaaa!"...  
(Riggan shouts "Whoaaa!")  
...it explodes in the eardrum of  
millions. Your power is unlimited.

Riggan slows down his pace, as he starts to listen.

BIRDMAN (CONT'D)  
You glimmered on 3000 screens, over 5  
continents, in 47 countries at the  
same time. You are ubiquitous. You're  
a God! You can do it again. You can  
soar above all of them.

D50

D50

Riggan suddenly begins to levitate.

BIRDMAN  
There you go, you mother fucker! See?  
Gravity doesn't even apply to you.

The camera flies up with Riggan as he floats above the street. There is something magical in his ascension, gently impelled by the breeze. A beautiful backlight makes his body glow. Birdman flutters around him.

BIRDMAN (CONT'D)  
Listen to me. We gotta go back! We have to do this. We have to end it on our terms. With a grand gesture.

A strange light suddenly palpitates in Riggan's eyes. Something makes sense in what Birdman is telling him.

The camera becomes Riggan's POV. He looks down to see the people on the street, watching him in awe.

BIRDMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
We'll go back. We'll show them how much they're going to miss us. Flames. Icarus. Sacrifice...

We tilt up again to Riggan's face. He has a plan.

BIRDMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Let's go back one more time and show them what we're capable of. You can do it. You're Birdman. Do you hear me? You're...

A GUY'S VOICE (O.S.)  
Birdman!

E50

E50

And as the camera pulls away, we discover Birdman is gone and Riggan is standing on the ledge of a tall building. The camera tilts down and we see that more people have gathered around, and more cars has stopped, and they all point at Riggan, worried about the situation.

A guy wearing shorts, a Bob Marley t-shirt and a robe opens his window, one floor below Riggan, and looks up at him.

GUY  
Dude, what are you doing?

Riggan looks down at the people on the street far below.

(CONTINUED)

GUY (CONT'D)  
You okay, buddy? Do you want me to  
call someone?

We pan to a lady on her balcony filming Riggan with her phone.

LADY  
Is this for real, or you're shooting a  
film?

RIGGAN  
A film.

The lady looks around but sees nothing.

LADY  
Oh, you people are full of shit.

She goes into her apartment.

GUY  
I'm calling 911.

The guy goes inside his apartment.

RIGGAN  
One more time...

Now, from the door of the rooftop, a good neighbor calmly  
approaches Riggan.

GOOD NEIGHBOR  
Hi, sir. Can I help you? You should be  
careful.

RIGGAN  
Sorry. Can't talk. I'm late.  
(Murmuring.)  
Music.

Some underscoring music begins to sound. The neighbor is now  
close to him and helps Riggan step down from the edge on to the  
floor of the rooftop.

GOOD NEIGHBOR  
Are you alright? Do you want me to  
call someone? Do you know where to go?

Riggan closes his eyes for a moment as the camera moves slowly  
toward him. He opens his eyes. The music begins to swell. Riggan  
stands up straight and proud, and in a voice that sounds like  
Birdman...

RIGGAN  
*Yes. I know where to go.*

(CONTINUED)

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He turns and begins to run on the rooftop. The music is rousing. As he runs, he holds out his arms, spreading them wide. The camera runs behind him, until suddenly...

F50

F50

Riggan jumps, and the camera jumps after him. He rapidly falls toward the street, toward the asphalt. But in his face there is no fear. No. He spreads his arms again and...

G50

G50

He takes flight, soaring high over Manhattan. The music becomes epic. There is something beautiful about this broken man flying like a superhero. We fly next to him, and we can see below the spectacular sight that is Manhattan, until...

51

EXT. THEATER - CONTINUOUS

51

...he finally lands on 45th street and calmly approaches the theater. An Usher acknowledges him with a look of surprise.

USHER

Mr. Thomson. I think you forgot to--

RIGGAN

Stop the music.

The music stops.

USHER

I beg your pardon?

Riggan enters the theater.

The confused Usher watches him go by, as he points to the street. We pan to see a taxi driver coming out of his car, running like a mad man toward us.

We stay with the Usher and the taxi driver as they argue. They take it inside the lobby, but we remain out front.

A51

A51

Day turns to night, igniting the lights of the marquee, which reflect off of the lobby doors. We hear wild applause coming from inside the theater. Seconds later, the doors of the theater open and the audience files out for intermission.

(CONTINUED)

MAN  
(Tweeting on his phone.)  
It's really good.

WOMAN  
I know. I can't believe it...

We begin to move up, outside the theater. We see the marquee of the play that reads, "What We Talk When We Talk About Love". Above the title, in smaller print, "Riggan Thomson and Mike Shiner". Below on a banner, "Opening Night".

We keep climbing until we arrive at Riggan's dressing room window. We push in to find...

52 INT. RIGGAN'S DRESSING ROOM - THEATER - EVENING 52

... that the room is full of roses and cards. Riggan lies on the sofa, hugging a cushion. He is wearing the long wig and mustache for the motel scene.

Sylvia appears in the doorway.

SYLVIA  
Wow, that is just NASCAR hot.

He smiles at her.

SYLVIA (CONT'D)  
I just wanted to come say hello. It's going great out there. You're so good. I mean it. You're-- I really mean it.

RIGGAN  
Come here. Sit next to me.

ANNIE ON SPEAKERS  
This is your five minutes.

SYLVIA  
Do you need to--?

RIGGAN  
I'm fine. Sit.

She does.

SYLVIA  
Look at all these roses.

SYLVIA (CONT'D) RIGGAN  
You hate roses... I hate roses...

She laughs. He watches her, something odd in his expression.

(CONTINUED)



SYLVIA (CONT'D)

Are you okay? You seem-- I don't know, you seem abnormally calm.

RIGGAN

I am calm. I'm great. I spent most of the day observing how beautifully this pile of dirty clothes was lit by the warm afternoon sun. (A tiny smile.) So beautiful.

Sylvia, teasing him, closes her eyes and imitates Riggan's meditation posture.

SYLVIA

(Mocking him.)

Oh yes. God is those purplish light dots I see between my eyes and my eyelids.

RIGGAN

You know? I have this voice that talks to me and tells me the truth. It's comforting, and scary.

A beat.

SYLVIA

I'm going to pretend I didn't hear you say that.

RIGGAN

Okay.

SYLVIA

(Changing the subject.)

You wouldn't believe the crowd outside. They said, some people paid up to 500 dollars a ticket.

He sits down.

RIGGAN

You wanna hear something funny?

SYLVIA

Sure.

RIGGAN

Do you remember our last anniversary party?

SYLVIA

Seriously? You're going to ruin a nice moment with that?

(CONTINUED)

RIGGAN  
Do you remember the party?

SYLVIA  
The party where you fucked Janet Rossbach  
in our bed? Yeah, it rings a bell.

RIGGAN  
Yeah, well. Let's skip over that part  
for a minute.

SYLVIA  
Gladly.

RIGGAN  
After you threw the guests out of the  
house, and the furniture out of the  
window. You locked yourself in the  
bathroom.

SYLVIA  
I remember. Why are we--

RIGGAN  
I drove down to Malibu. I sat on the beach  
for a while. Just... staring out at the  
ocean.

SYLVIA  
Riggan...

RIGGAN  
Until I walked straight into the water  
and tried to drown myself.

Silence. Sylvia stares at Riggan, surprised.

RIGGAN (CONT'D)  
I was in up to my chest when I felt the  
first one. On my back, like somebody was  
holding a frying pan against me. And then  
my chest, and my legs. The water was full  
of jellyfish. I fought my way out of the  
water, and I started rolling around the  
sand like a maniac... crying.

Sylvia doesn't know how to react.

SYLVIA  
You said it was a sunburn.

RIGGAN  
(Smiling.)  
And you believed me.

(CONTINUED)

SYLVIA  
To be honest, I didn't give a shit.

RIGGAN  
I love you. And I love Sam.

SYLVIA  
I know.

Silence. They stare at each other.

RIGGAN  
I never should have video taped Sam's birth. First of all because you and Sam both look like shit in that video. But mostly because I missed the moment. I should have just been there with the two of you. Present in my own life. So I'd have it. But, I don't. I don't have any of it.

SYLVIA  
You have Sam.

RIGGAN  
No, I don't.

SYLVIA  
Listen, she's just--

RIGGAN  
No, I understand. She needed a father and she got one shamefully successful youtube video. Pretty pathetic.

SYLVIA  
(Putting a finger on  
Riggan's lips.)  
Shhh... There are more pathetic things than that. That mustache, for example.

She kisses him.

ANNIE ON SPEAKERS  
Places for act two. Places.

SYLVIA  
Riggan...

RIGGAN  
You should get back to your seat. You don't want to miss what's next.

Sylvia lingers for a moment, and not knowing what to say, she exits. Riggan opens a drawer and takes out a black case. He

(CONTINUED)

gently opens the lid. Inside a revolver. He takes some bullets out of a box and one by one loads them into the chamber as he does his vocal exercises into the mirror.

RIGGAN (CONT'D)  
Twenty little leopards laughed at two lofty lions. Twenty little leopards laughed at two lofty lions. Twenty little leopards... *laughed*.

He stares at the dressing room door, and with his telekinetic powers he opens it. He snaps the cylinder into the gun and exits out into...

53 INT. HALLWAY - THEATER - CONTINUOUS 53

...the hallway. He paces deliberately, gun in hand.

A technician goes by in the opposite direction.

TECHNICIAN  
Break a leg, Mr. Thomson.

Riggan ignores him and continues through to the...

54 INT. BACKSTAGE - THEATER - CONTINUOUS 54

...backstage area. Annie immediately hustles over to him holding up the brain mechanism. He walks right by her.

RIGGAN  
(Brushing her off.)  
I don't need it.

Annie doesn't seem to understand. She stays there, holding the device. Riggan takes his place outside the motel door. We pan toward the audience. The auditorium is full. The audience in complete silence.

Riggan knocks firmly on the door. Silence again. Then...

RIGGAN (CONT'D)  
Terri! Terri!  
(Beat.)  
I know you're in there!

He barges through the door and onto...

55 INT. STAGE - THEATER - CONTINUOUS

55

...the stage. The motel room as we saw it before. Mike and Lesley jump out of the bed.

LESLEY

Ed! What are you doing here?

RIGGAN

(Almost whispering.)

Why? I need you to tell me why. I lived for you-- I worshipped you...

MIKE

Listen Ed, I know this is hard but--

Riggan raises one hand to silence Mike. Mike looks at him, confused. His eyes narrow on the gun. There is no red plug.

Dead silence. An eerie electricity in the theater.

RIGGAN

*What's wrong with me?* Why do I end up having to beg people to love me?

LESLEY

Ed. Eddie. Please... Give me the gun.

She begins to cry.

LESLEY (CONT'D)

Just look at me. I was drowning. I was not capable of-- You deserve to be loved. You do.

RIGGAN

I just wanted to be what you wanted.

(Beat.)

Now I spend every fucking minute praying to be someone else. Someone I'm not. Anyone...

MIKE

Put down the gun, Ed. She just doesn't love you anymore.

RIGGAN

(To Lesley.)

You don't, do you?

LESLEY

(With sympathy.)

No...

(CONTINUED)

RIGGAN  
And you never will...

LESLEY  
I'm sorry.

For the first time, Riggan turns to face the audience. He smiles the most beautiful insane smile.

RIGGAN  
I don't exist. I'm not even here. I don't exist. None of this matters.

Then he raises a trembling arm, and with his eyes full of tears, he aims the gun at Mike.

RIGGAN (CONT'D)  
Pum.

But he doesn't shoot. Then he turns and aims at Tabitha Dickinson who is sitting on the second row.

RIGGAN (CONT'D)  
Pum.

Again, no shot. Slowly, Riggan raises the gun toward his own head, suddenly a frightening explosion. Blood sprays. Riggan falls. We stay with the shell-shocked audience. A moment of tension, of uncertainty, until...

MAN  
Bravo!

The audience, one by one, jump to their feet, applauding wildly. The sole exception is Tabitha, who remains seated, a dazed expression on her face. We stay with the audience a few seconds longer.

FADE TO BLACK.

The sounds slowly vanish. After a moment of silence...

BIRDMAN (V.O.)  
You won't be hearing from him anymore.

MAN (V.O.)  
Is he...?

BIRDMAN (V.O.)  
He's gone.

INT. WAITING ROOM - HOSPITAL - DAWN

One of the old Birdman films is playing on a small television screen that hangs on a corner. The scene ends and a Morning Show host appears. Behind him a picture of Riggan and a caption that reads: "Nation in shock." A shot of a candle vigil in Central park.

HOST

What do we talk about when we talk about Riggan Thomson? When we come back, more on the actor who two nights ago shot himself during the opening performance of his new Broadway play...

We pan away from the TV to see that the waiting room is filled with newsmen waiting for something to happen. There is almost no room to breath.

We pan to see Jake emerging from an elevator, carrying a newspaper under his arm. He walks through the dense mass of newsmen with a serious expression on his face. We follow him into...

INT. ROOM - HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS

...a room. Jake peers in. Riggan lies on a bed, the bandages on his nose cover most of his face. Sylvia is looking out the window.

JAKE

Is he...?

SYLVIA

He's awake.

Jake enters the room.

JAKE

(Serious.)

I thought I lost you, buddy. Thank god you're a horrible shot! What the hell happened? I was watching you up on that stage, and all of a sudden you get that goofy look in your eye, and you were just like--

He starts to laugh.

SYLVIA

What the hell are you laughing about? He tried to-- What is wrong with you?

(CONTINUED)

JAKE  
I'm happy, okay? He's alive. My  
best friend is alive. And he is the  
man of the hour!

Jake holds the New York Times up in the air.

RIGGAN  
What is that?

JAKE  
You did it.

SYLVIA  
(Coming to them.)  
You have to be shitting me... She  
wrote a review?

Jake unfolds the newspaper and we see the headline of the  
review: "The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance".

JAKE  
(To Sylvia.)  
Read it.

He hands her the newspaper. She begins to read to herself.

SYLVIA  
I don't believe this...

JAKE  
Read it out loud!

SAM  
*"Thompson has unwittingly given  
birth to a new form that can only  
be described as supra-realism.  
Blood was spilled both literally  
and metaphorically by artist and  
audience alike. Red blood. The  
blood that has been sorely missing  
from the veins of the American  
theatre..."*  
(Beat. To a smiling Jake.)  
You're happy about this?

She hands it to Riggan.

JAKE  
Happy? I'm *fucking euphoric*. This  
is the-- This is the kind of review  
that turns someone into a living  
legend.

(CONTINUED)



SYLVIA

He tried to-- *He shot the nose off his face!*

JAKE

He's got a new nose! And if he doesn't like that one, we'll get him another one. We can use Meg Ryan's guy. Who gives a shit? Turn on the tv. There are people praying for him all over the country. They're lighting candles in Central Park. He did it. (To Riggan) You did it! The play's gonna run forever. It's gonna open in London, in Paris... The studios will call us again. We'll get book offers.

SYLVIA

How do you know all that? You can see the future?

JAKE

(Euphoric.)  
Yes.

She slaps him in the face.

SYLVIA

Did you see *that* coming? You're so full of shit, Jake.

Jake needs a few seconds to recover. Then he looks at Riggan who just sits there, in silence.

JAKE

Why aren't you saying anything?  
This is what you wanted wasn't it?  
(Riggan gazes at the review.)  
Riggan, this is what you wanted.

RIGGAN

It's what I wanted.

JAKE

Okay, listen. You're gonna get hit with a "brandishing a weapon" charge. If anybody talks to you, it was an accident and we're doing an internal invest--

A newsman comes into the room and takes a quick picture.

(CONTINUED)

JAKE (CONT'D)  
(Chasing him out.)  
*This is a hospital you motherfucker!*

Jake rushes to the door, shoving the newsman and a few other paparazzi out the door. Security guards. Chaos. Finally silence. Sylvia steps up and looks Riggan in the eye.

SYLVIA  
Is that what it was? An accident?

Riggan just stares at her. His calm, sad eyes peeking through the bandages. After a moment his gaze moves over her shoulder. Sylvia turns and we discover Sam standing in the doorway holding a bouquet of flowers. A bit of awkward silence, and Sylvia decides to leave them alone.

She kisses Sam on the head and exits. Sam walks the flowers to Riggan at the bed. She lays them on his chest.

SAM  
Alchemillas.

The hint of a smile on Riggan's face.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Are you actually smiling?  
(She smiles.)  
What's so funny?

RIGGAN  
I can't smell them.

A moment until the smiles turn to gentle laughter. She takes out her cell phone and snaps a picture of him.

RIGGAN (CONT'D)  
What are you doing?

SAM  
I'm posting this picture on your  
Twitter page.

RIGGAN  
Very funny...

SAM  
Set it up today.

RIGGAN  
You're joking.

SAM  
I'm not.

(CONTINUED)

RIGGAN  
Let me see the picture.

SAM  
Absolutely not. You look hideous.

RIGGAN  
Thanks a lot.

SAM  
I'm just kidding. No, I'm not. You look hideous.  
(Working on phone.)  
You already have 80 thousand followers. In less than a day. And I'm about to scare the shit out of them.

RIGGAN  
Let me see.

SAM  
No. Done.

A moment between them. Sam picks up the flowers and kisses him tenderly on the head. Riggan is pleasantly surprised by that kiss.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Now, I'm going to find something to put these flowers in.

She heads out of the room. Riggan lies there for a moment, tranquil. After a moment he reaches up and touches his bandages. Finally, he climbs out of the bed. We follow him into...

INT. BATHROOM - ROOM - HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS

...the bathroom. He stands before the mirror. He stares at his reflection for a few seconds, and slowly begins to remove the bandages. We can see that Riggan's nose has been reconstructed. It is a crooked, incomplete nose, like the one Javier Bardem has.

RIGGAN  
I do look hideous.

In the reflection, Riggan sees Birdman sitting on the toilet. They look at each other, but say nothing. Riggan puts the bandages back on and we follow him out to...

INT. ROOM - HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS

...the room. He looks around, but Sam is gone. He ambles over to the window, his ass hanging out of the back of his hospital robe. He opens the window and feels the sun and the breeze on his swollen face. We just hear the sounds of the people standing down in the parking lot. Media trucks. Fans. We stay with Riggan, who seems to be thinking about something. He sees a flock of birds dancing in the sky. Then he grabs the side of the window with one hand and begins to step up onto the sill.

The camera pans away from him to a table that has some photos propped on it: One of he and Sam when she was a child. One with Sylvia and Sam. A copy of Carver's "What we talk About When We Talk About Love" laying on the surface.

The camera continues to pan until it comes to the door. Sam enters with a small vase. She looks around...

SAM

Dad?

She goes to the bathroom and peers in... nothing.

SAM (CONT'D)

Dad...?

She spots the opened window and registers the sounds from outside. Tentatively she walks toward the window. She gets there, summons her courage and looks down. Nothing. Slowly, confused, she tilts her head up and looks up into the sky. A smile, filled with pride, begin to wash over her face.

SMASH TO BLACK \*



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