

demolition.

by
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INT. BMW SPORTSTER (MIDTOWN) -- EVENING

We're skimming through evening traffic. The concrete jungle rushing past the windshield. Outside, it's cold, late winter fighting off spring. Inside, it's warm. Safe.

JULIA (O.S.)

Did you look at the refrigerator yet?

The CAMERA finds DAVIS MITCHELL (38) in the passenger seat. He's staring out the window. We STAY ON HIM THE ENTIRE SCENE.

DAVIS (oblivious)

Huh? Refrigerator?

JULIA (O.S.)

Yeah... the box in our kitchen that keeps things cold?

DAVIS

Yeah. No. What about it?

JULIA (O.S.)

It's leaking. It's been leaking for two weeks.

DAVIS (distant)

The refrigerator's leaking...

Davis is a man content with being content. Handsome in a way that makes life just a little bit easier.

JULIA (O.S.)

Please don't do that... that thing where you repeat part of what I say so I'll think you're paying attention.

DAVIS

I'm not doing anything. The refrigerator's leaking. I didn't notice.

JULIA (O.S.)

You don't notice anything, Davis. You're in you're own little Davis-world. You don't pay attention.

The city reflects in his vacant eyes. Cars passing, people passing, life passing. All a blur.

DAVIS

You think there's other worlds out there? Like planets with people or some other kind of life form?

JULIA (O.S.)

What?

DAVIS

What?

JULIA (O.S.)

The refrigerator.

He faces forward. Still not looking at her.

DAVIS

Oh, right. Just call the guy.

JULIA (O.S.)

What guy? There's no guy.

DAVIS

There's a guy for everything.

JULIA (O.S.)

Can't you fix it? My father gave you those tools.

DAVIS

I have tools?

JULIA (O.S.)

Yeah. From two Christmases ago.

DAVIS (almost impressed)

Huh. I have tools.

JULIA (O.S.)

Wait... three Christmases.

Davis sits quietly. His wife is waiting for an answer. She's always waiting for an answer.

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

Davis?

As he finally turns to offer his full attention, LOOKING DIRECTLY INTO THE CAMERA...

SMASH. The most horrible sound in the world. METAL COLLAPSING around human life. We're thrown into DARKNESS...

NO SOUND but the LIGHT THUMP of a HUMAN HEARTBEAT. It's perfect. A finely tuned instrument.

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET (CAR WRECK) -- EVENING

The next moments are FLASHES, in and out of DARKNESS, all beneath the steady lull of the beating heart...

-- Flashing lights, Scattered glass, Traffic piling up.

-- An ambulance. Davis sitting on the curb, dazed.

-- Paramedics racing against the clock. Precious seconds.

But the DARKNESS wins out. The HEARTBEAT COMES TO A STOP.

PHIL (over black) (V.O.)
Davis...

A steady voice.

PHIL (over black) (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Davis...

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING AREA. -- LATER

FADE IN ON Davis, fast asleep. His clothes are dirty, bloody.

PHIL (V.O.)
Davis.

Davis opens his eyes to find his father-in-law, PHIL EASTMAN, (late 60's), an imposing figure of authority and strength.

PHIL (CONT'D)
She's gone.

INT. OPERATING ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Davis stands in the EMPTY O.R.

He looks at the instruments -- the pumps, the tubes, the monitors. Everything is quiet. At rest.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- LATER

Davis wanders down the hall, a HOLLOW ECHO in each step. Fading behind him, a GRIEVING FAMILY.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING AREA. -- MOMENTS LATER

Davis finds himself in another waiting area. He stands there. Not sure what to do next. He looks left... A VENDING MACHINE. He JIGGLES the change in his pocket.

AT THE VENDING MACHINE. Davis drops coins in the slot. Presses a button...

A pack of PEANUT M&M's pushes forward with a MECHANICAL GROAN. Then, they stop... STUCK. The candy hangs there. Davis waits, expectant. But the machine is silent.

He TAPS the glass... no luck. He BANGS the side... nothing. The M&M's just hanging, staring back at him.

Davis walks to the RECEPTION DESK. A NURSE is watching with a saddened expression. She notices the BLOOD on his shirt.

DAVIS

That machine over there... my candy
got stuck.

NURSE

I noticed. It happens sometimes.

DAVIS

Do you have a key or something? Can
we open it up?

NURSE

I'm sorry, no. I don't have a key.

He digs in his empty pockets. Glances back at the machine.
Completely lost.

DAVIS

Can I get a refund then?

NURSE

I don't... I mean, the machine doesn't
belong to the hospital. It's a
vending company. I could ask, but...

Her voice trails off, lost in Davis's stare. She reaches
for her purse. Starts digging...

NURSE (CONT'D)

How much was it?

DAVIS

Wait... I don't want you to pay.
That's not the point.

NURSE

No, it's okay... I've got a ton of
change in here. I'm always trying to
get rid of it. Probably have like
ten dollars in change.

(then)

Here. Is this enough?

She holds out a handful of coins. Davis looks exhausted.

DAVIS

It's okay. Really.

He walks away. The nurse watches him go.

BACK TO THE VENDING MACHINE. The candy still hanging there.
Davis stares at it. He notices a sticker on the glass...

"SECOND GENERATION VENDING CO. For suggestions and
complaints, please write us at P.O. BOX 1334 Princeton Avenue,
Toms River, NJ 08753."

Davis reaches inside his jacket pocket.

INT. HOME/FOYER -- MORNING

Davis hangs his coat. He steps through the FOYER AREA and disappears OFF SCREEN. A moment later, he reappears. And TAKES OFF HIS SHOES. He steps forward again.

INT. HOME/ DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

Davis checks his VOICEMAIL on a speaker phone.

VOICEMAIL (female voice) (O.S.)
Davis, it's Mom and Dad...
(Dad's voice)
Son, we're on our way...
(Mom's voice)
We tried your cell phone, but...

BEEP... Davis ERASES it. Then, he looks at the phone. Pushes another button... "OUTGOING MESSAGE."

JULIA'S VOICE
Hi, you've reached Julia and Davis.
We can't come to the phone, so please
leave a message.

BEEP. Davis stands there for a moment. Then walks away.

INT. KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Davis opens the refrigerator door and grabs a carton of milk. As he's closing the door, he notices something...

A DRIP. He looks closer to see a small pool of water clinging to the ceiling of the fridge. It's LEAKING. He rubs the liquid in his fingers. Interesting.

INT. KITCHEN -- MOMENTS LATER

Davis sits at the kitchen table eating a bowl of cereal. The house settles quietly.

INT. MASTER BATH -- NIGHT

Davis in his boxer shorts, brushing his teeth thoroughly. He rinses and places his toothbrush in the porcelain holder. He looks at the OTHER TOOTHBRUSH.

He takes it out. Throws it in the garbage.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM -- NIGHT

A large bedroom. Flat screen TV. The glow of an infomercial on Davis's tired face. He lays on his side of the bed.

His eyes are half-mast, starting to close. On the TV, an ICON APPEARS... "SLEEP TIMER." It begins to count down...

10, 9, 8... eyes fading... 5, 4, 3... they close softly.
"GOOD NIGHT." The TV turns itself off.

INT. HOME/FOYER -- MORNING

The door opens. DAVIS'S PARENTS (late 60's), stand there with their luggage. They embrace him. He doesn't move.

INT. ANDERSON FUNERAL HOME -- DAY

Davis stands in a RECEIVING LINE. Shaking hands with a slew of UNFAMILIAR FACES. He looks down the line to Phil and his wife, MEG (60's). She's heavily sedated, leaning on Phil.

INT. LIMOUSINE -- DAY

Davis rides with his parents and in-laws. Nobody's talking. He looks out the tinted window to see the FUNERAL PROCESSION. A line of cars following with their HEADLIGHTS ON.

EXT. CEMETERY -- DAY

Davis watches calmly as the CASKET is lowered into the ground. Meg is weak with grief. Phil holds her tight.

INT. PHIL AND MEG'S BROWNSTONE -- DAY

A grand living room. Classic, elegant. Davis sits on a couch, a plate of food on his lap, squeezed between his parents. STRANGERS mull about, speaking in hushed tones.

INT. BATHROOM -- LATER

Davis is SOBBING in front of the mirror. It's overly dramatic... a man who has lost everything.

But instantly, he stops. He was FAKING IT. He regards his reflection. Then, tries again... really forcing it...

But it's still no good. He gives up. Tucks his hands in his jacket pockets, defeated. Something isn't right. Then, he discovers a PIECE OF PAPER in his pocket.

INT. PHIL'S STUDY -- NIGHT

Davis sits behind a dark, mahogany desk. The VENDING INFORMATION set out in front of him. He takes out a clean sheet of paper. A pen. And begins to write...

DAVIS (V.O.)
*Dear Second Generation Vending
Company, comma. This letter is in
regards to a poor vending experience
at St. Anthony's... no, wait...*

He erases something. Consults the vending info. Continues...

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

... In regards to vending machine No. 714, located in the Intensive Care Unit of St. Anthony's Hospital, period. I put three quarters in your machine and proceeded to push "B2," which should have given me the Peanut M&M's, period. Regrettably, it did not. I found this upsetting as I was very hungry, and also, my wife had died ten minutes earlier. I'm not saying that was your fault. We were in a car accident. Remarkably, I escaped without a scratch. I'm not trying to dramatize my claim. I just want to be thorough.

(beat)

Maybe I should start from the beginning.

Davis thinks for a moment. Then, puts pen to paper...

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

I get up every morning at six...

INT. MASTER BEDROOM -- MORNING (FLASHBACK)

Davis's eyes pop open and he ROLLS OUT OF BED. We HOLD ON a DIGITAL CLOCK that reads 5:59.

DAVIS (V.O.)

I work in the financial district, so it's important to get an early start.

The clock turns to 6:00. The ALARM SOUNDS.

INT. SHOWER -- MORNING (CONTINUED FLASHBACK)

We see his silhouette through the steamed glass door.

DAVIS (V.O.)

Not to imply it's more important than say, a baker or toll collector... those are fine jobs. Respectable jobs. I just meant that I commute.

INT. NJ TRANSIT TRAIN -- MORNING (CONTINUED FLASHBACK)

Davis sits on the train. The NEW YORK TIMES on his lap.

DAVIS (V.O.)

I catch the "7:15" out of Hazlet. It's pretty much the same crowd during the week.

An OLDER MAN in a YANKEES CAP is talking his ear off.

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

John works the ground crew at Yankee Stadium. The first time we met, he asked what I did and I told him...

(to John)

Retail mattresses.

John smiles... a new friend in the retail mattress business.

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

I don't know why. It just popped into my head. One time he offered me box seats in exchange for a deal on a California King, but I said I was a Sox fan. We stopped talking after that. I was glad because I hate baseball and couldn't stand his hot coffee breath.

THE CAMERA TILTS to a RED HANDLE above his head... "Pull handle in case of emergency."

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK -- MORNING (CONTINUED FLASHBACK)

Suits and ties passing in every direction. Davis shuffles along with his BRIEFCASE. A tired face in the tired crowd.

DAVIS (V.O.)

I never thought I'd be one of those people who carried a briefcase. It always reminds me of carrying a lunch box to school. Do they still make those?

EXT. CITY STREET CORNER -- MORNING

Davis stops at A STREET VENDOR. They make an exchange...

DAVIS (V.O.)

I usually grab a soy latte and bran muffin on the corner of 9th and Lex...

He takes a careful sip, continues down the block...

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

That leaves me just enough time to get to work and settle into my day...

INT. EASTMAN RITTER (BATHROOM) -- MORNING (FLASHBACK)

Davis hurries into a stall. WE HEAR his BELT hit the floor.

INT. EASTMAN, RITTER (HALLWAY) -- MORNING (FLASHBACK)

Davis walks the hall of this upscale office. Spacious and efficient. Everyone belongs.

DAVIS (V.O.)

Julia's father is a founding partner at the investment firm I work at. Nepotism in its truest form. They started grooming me when I was twenty-five. Grooming. I hate that word. Monkeys groom.

STOCK FOOTAGE OF MONKEYS GROOMING EACH OTHER AT THE ZOO.

INT. DAVIS'S OFFICE -- DAY (CONTINUED FLASHBACK)

On the phone, the Manhattan skyline at his back.

DAVIS (V.O.)

It's a small firm, but we handle quite a bit of money. I don't want to say how much because I think that would be inappropriate.

(beat)

Okay, it's around four hundred million.

EXT. THE GARDEN CAFE -- DAY (CONTINUED FLASHBACK)

We watch through a street-side window. A lunch meeting with DAVIS, PHIL AND TWO OTHER MEN. Jackets slung over the chairs.

DAVIS (V.O.)

Equity funds, retirement plans, stocks, bonds, you name it. But none of it is real. Nothing to hold in my hands.

The bill comes and Davis reaches for it. Phil quickly intercepts. But not in a generous way. It's a power thing.

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

Just numbers, computer codes being transferred electronically through the air. It's right in front of us.

We turn away from the window, to the busy mid-town traffic and see BILLIONS OF DIGITAL NUMBERS RACING THROUGH THE AIR.

INT. EASTMAN, RITTER / CONFERENCE ROOM -- DAY (FLASHBACK)

A long table, about 9 men and women. PHIL STANDS at the head, talking to a SPEAKER PHONE. Davis twists in his chair.

DAVIS (V.O.)

Philip Eastman. My father-in-law. Phil, Phil, Phil. I think the acronym is hysterical. I know Phil is spelled "P.H.", but it still makes me laugh in my head.

Davis smiles ever-so-slightly.

INT. FRATHOUSE -- NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

A college party. A YOUNGER DAVIS stumbles through with a red solo cup. He spots a GIRL through the crowd.

DAVIS (V.O.)
I met Julia at a party. A mutual friend said she thought I was hot.

They sit and talk. All we see of Julia is her LONG BROWN HAIR.

DAVIS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
We had sex that first night and I didn't talk to her again for three weeks. Then I saw her out with Kevin Timmons who was a really good-looking guy and that made me jealous. So I called her the next day.

INT. CHURCH -- DAY (FLASHBACK)

A wedding ceremony. Davis looks at Julia's veil-covered face. CLOSE ON Phil and Meg watching from the front pew.

DAVIS (V.O.)
I don't think Phil liked me much at first. I didn't come from money, I wasn't all that ambitious, and I puked on the ice sculpture at our engagement party.

Not the most excited look on Phil's face.

DAVIS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Also, he told me once... "I don't like you, Davis."

INT. COUNTRY CLUB -- EVENING (FLASHBACK)

The wedding reception. No expense spared. Davis dances with his new bride. A content smile.

DAVIS (V.O.)
Julia was a nice girl, a good person. She snorted when she laughed and cried every time they showed footage of the towers falling. Other than that, I didn't know a Goddamn thing about who she really was. We were strangers with the same address... which I suppose brings us into some new territory. I wasn't in love with my wife.

INT. PHIL'S STUDY -- PRESENT

Davis lifts his hand from the page. A realization. A weight lifted simply from writing it down. He goes back to it.

DAVIS (writing) (V.O.)
Perhaps you'll find this information irrelevant in your deliberation of my refund. But I think you deserve the whole truth. You can contact me at 732-270-8204.

(beat)
Sincerely, Davis Mitchell.

INT. EASTMAN, RITTER (HALLWAY) -- MONDAY MORNING

Davis walks the hall, an ENVELOPE IN HIS HAND. Colleagues slow to watch him pass.

DAVIS
Morning, morning...

INT. EASTMAN, RITTER / ASSISTANT'S DESK -- MOMENTS LATER

Davis reaches his assistant's desk. AMY (20's), looks up at him, a loss for words. He retrieves a stack of MESSAGES.

DAVIS
Morning, Amy. Is this everything?

AMY (re: messages)
Yeah. That's it.

DAVIS
Can you put this in outgoing mail,
please? It's very important.

He hands her the ENVELOPE and continues into his office.

AMY (quietly)
Okay.

INT. DAVIS'S OFFICE -- MORNING

Davis settles in behind his desk. Flips through the stack of messages. Amy taps on the door. Hesitant.

DAVIS
What's up?

AMY
I just, um... I wasn't expecting you today. They said you weren't...
(collecting herself)
I'm really sorry, Davis.

DAVIS (preoccupied)
Why?

She looks at him. Awkward.

DAVIS (thoughtful) (CONT'D)
Oh. Right. Thank you.
(then)
Could you get me the figures for the
Alderman portfolio? And also, get
Jim Geraghty on the phone to see if
we can push lunch to two. I've got
some catching up.

AMY
I canceled that.

DAVIS
Why?

AMY
Well, because... I didn't think...
(then)
I'll call him.

She retreats. Davis types at his computer.

INT. BATHROOM -- DAY

Davis enters the spacious bathroom. Three stalls. Three sinks. You could eat off the tile floor.

INT. BATHROOM STALL -- CONTINUOUS

He pushes the metal door. It CREAKS open. He steps inside, closes the door. It CREAKS again... catching his attention.

Davis SWINGS the door back and forth several times... it CREAKS consistently. He examines the HINGES, top and bottom.

DAVIS (interesting)
Huh.

INT. DAVIS'S OFFICE -- DAY

Davis steps back into his office. Phil is sitting behind Davis's desk, waiting in his overcoat. He needs a shave.

DAVIS (stopping, surprised)
Phil. Hey.

PHIL
They called the house. Told me you
were up here.

DAVIS
They did? Okay.

Davis sits in the guest chair.

PHIL
Is everything alright, Davis?

DAVIS
Yeah, fine. I mean, you know...
considering.

(then, switching gears)
I spoke with Clayton Rice this
morning. I think I talked him off
the ledge... with that whole thing.

Phil looks at him for a concerned beat.

PHIL
Why don't we grab a drink?

DAVIS
Actually, I'm kinda buried, Phil.

PHIL
Davis. Let's grab a drink.

INT. JASON'S BAR -- DAY

Davis and Phil sit at a small table. Dim lighting. A SERVER places drinks neatly in front of them.

PHIL
Ya know the drinks run about fifteen
bucks a pop here? I don't get it.

Nor does Davis. The men are quiet. Phil stirs his cocktail.

PHIL (CONT'D)
We haven't really talked. Not since
everything.
(then)
I loved Julia very much. A father's
love. It's different from a husband's
love. There's a bond you can't put
into words. I'll remember moments.
(reminiscent)
A little girl on her horse. Peeling
glue off her fingers after art class.
Sifting through trash for a lost
retainer.

Phil forces a tiny smile.

PHIL (CONT'D)

You're like me, Davis. You keep your emotions close to the vest. That's good. It's strong. All that crying and carrying on... it's not for us. But you have to be careful. Something like this can break a man.

As Phil continues, Davis LOOKS OUT OVER THE BAR...

PHIL (CONT'D)

Repairing the human heart is like repairing an automobile. You have to take everything apart. The anger, the love, the loss.

Davis notices the dark wood, the soft leather...

PHIL (CONT'D)

Examine everything and decide what's important. What'll make you stronger?

The lighting design, the attractive bartenders...

PHIL (CONT'D)

Then you can put it all back together. Do you understand what I'm saying?

DAVIS

It's the atmosphere.

PHIL

What?

DAVIS

That's why the drinks are so expensive. You're paying for the atmosphere. It just occurred to me.

He indicates the atmosphere around him.

DAVIS (CONT'D)

It's almost noir-ish.

Davis finds it amusing. Phil doesn't.

INT. CADILLAC SEDAN/ BACK SEAT -- LATER

Gliding along. Phil and Davis in the back. Tinted windows.

PHIL

Now, there's some other business that needs looking after. Julia's insurance policy.

DAVIS
Ah, right. Insurance.

PHIL
Everything was set up to go to her spouse, but seeing as you're quite comfortable... I've been generous with your salary, bonuses, incentives, what-have-you... I'd like to take the money and start a foundation in Julia's name.

DAVIS
Foundation. Interesting.

PHIL
A merit-based scholarship. Something we can award annually to one student who is most deserving.

DAVIS
How much are we talking about?

PHIL
It's significant.

A moment as Phil adjust the climate control.

PHIL (CONT'D)
One point seven.

Davis's expression doesn't falter.

PHIL (CONT'D)
Invested properly, we'd never have to touch the principal. Steven's setting up the whole thing.
(then, important)
This will be her legacy.

DAVIS (agreeing)
Legacy.

EXT. TRAIN STATION -- LATER

Davis on the platform, a face in the crowd. He's DAYDREAMING.

DAVIS
Legacy. Legacy. Legacy. Legacy.

A salty OLD MAN turns to him...

OLD MAN
What a stupid word. It sounds like a car.

DAVIS

I agree. Something with heated seats
and a navigation system.

They look up at a BILLBOARD towering high above. It shows a SLEEK AUTOMOBILE. *"Introducing the Acura Legacy... How do you want to be remembered?"*

OLD MAN

Stupid car-word.

INT. DAVIS'S HOUSE (OFFICE) -- NIGHT

Davis clicks on his DESK LAMP and sits down in his ROBE. He starts writing on a YELLOW LEGAL PAD...

DAVIS (V.O.)

*Dear Second Generation Vending, comma.
This is Davis Mitchell... again.
There have been some recent
developments in my claim for
reimbursement and I'd like to
represent myself as accurately as
possible. New paragraph.*

EXT. DAVIS'S DRIVEWAY -- NIGHT

Davis is in his SUV, waiting for the garage door to open. As he starts to pull forward, he STOPS SHORT...

DAVIS (V.O.)

*First, there was a strange package
blocking my garage...*

INT. GARAGE -- MOMENTS LATER

Davis stands next to his mother. Both looking at AN ENORMOUS BOX set just inside the garage entrance.

DAVIS

What is it?

MOTHER

I think it's a cappuccino machine.
One of those big ones.

DAVIS

I didn't order a cappuccino machine.

MOTHER

It was in Julia's name. It's big.

Davis looks at the box. Interesting.

DAVIS

Huh.

EXT. DRIVEWAY -- MORNING

Davis walks down the driveway. Suit, tie, briefcase.

DAVIS (V.O.)
Then, my dad was fertilizing the lawn... at seven in the morning.

Davis looks over to find his father spreading FERTILIZER.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Dad? What are you doing?

FATHER
It's the season, Davis. You have to do this early. Get the soil ready.

DAVIS
I have someone for that.

FATHER
I don't mind.

DAVIS
They come and do the whole block, Dad. I pay them. A lot.

FATHER
Oh.

His father stops. Chilled breath in front of his face. The neighborhood still asleep.

FATHER (CONT'D)
Do they know about gypsy moths?

DAVIS
Gypsy moths? I don't know, what about them?

FATHER
They'll destroy your trees. You should spray.

DAVIS
A moth?

FATHER
It starts out a caterpillar. They eat the leaves and lay eggs. Then, the trees die.

Davis looks at the TOWERING OAKS scattered about his yard.

DAVIS (very interesting)
And they're coming here? To this
neighborhood?

FATHER
They don't know for sure. You should
tell your guy to spray. Just in case.

They both stand there. Then, his dad starts spreading
fertilizer again. Davis lets him go.

DAVIS (V.O.)
And of course, the train incident...

INT. NJ TRANSIT TRAIN -- EVENING

Davis is on the train. He notices John in his Yankees cap.
He watches him for a moment, then makes a decision... goes
to SIT NEXT TO HIM.

John seems uncomfortable by the sudden proximity. Davis
finally engages...

DAVIS
I think there's something I should
tell you.

John looks at him. This sounds serious.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
I'm not in the mattress business.
I'm in finance.

John is nonreactive.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
I don't know why I said mattresses.
I guess I didn't think I'd see you
every day for the next ten years.
(then, venting)
And I'm not a Sox fan either. I
hate baseball altogether. I find it
excruciating to watch on television.
(off John's look)
You think I'm a dick.

JOHN
Yes.

The train LIGHTS FLICKER. They're quiet again, but a tension
has seemingly been lifted. John takes off his hat.

JOHN (CONT'D)
I don't work for the Yankees anymore.

He fixes the hair on his balding head. A little embarrassed.

JOHN (CONT'D)

They fired me two years ago after a drainage problem ruined the visitor's bullpen. Now I do security for Parade of Shoes in Midtown.

(then)

I never told my family. It's a bullshit job. My prick boss is thirty years younger than me. I wanna smash his prick face.

They sit together. Bonded in honesty. Then, like a bomb...

DAVIS

I didn't love my wife.

Once again, John is nonreactive.

DAVIS (CONT'D)

She's gone now and I don't even feel sad. I don't feel pain.

JOHN

What do you feel?

Davis thinks for a moment. Then, shakes his head. NOTHING. He faces forward, a moment of respect for this small but undeniable truth. HOLD ON DAVIS as his eyes glance upward...

DAVIS (V.O.)

I couldn't tell you why I did it. Maybe because I was finally being honest... and that's a scary, wonderful feeling that deserves an equally scary, wonderful action. Or maybe subconsciously, I had always wondered what would happen... and for a split second it felt like the perfect moment to find out. None-the-less, it was a legitimate emergency.

He rises from his seat and PULLS THE RED HANDLE. As the BREAKS LOCK UP and passengers are thrown forward. WE FREEZE ON DAVIS -- TUMBLING OVER THE WOMAN IN FRONT OF HIM.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (BACK OFFICE) -- NIGHT

Davis sits in a chair, flanked by TWO OFFICIAL AGENTS.

AGENT #1

So, that's when you pulled it?

DAVIS

That's right.

AGENT #2
And you realized that would stop the
train, correct?

DAVIS
Well, I wasn't positive. I mean, I
assumed it would. I was hoping.

The agents appear baffled. A UNIFORMED POLICEMAN steps in
and WHISPERS to one of them.

POLICEMAN (whispering to agent)
His parents are here. Apparently,
this guy's wife just died.

INT. RENTAL CAR -- LATER

CLOSE ON Davis riding in the back-seat, like a child. His
mother driving, dad in the passenger seat. Somber concern.

MOTHER
Davis, maybe you should come stay
with us for awhile, take it easy.
We have the extra room.

Davis looks around at the back-seat, enjoying the experience.

DAVIS
You guys remember when you used to
drive me to the ice-skating rink when
I was little and I would make you
drop me off in back 'cause I was too
embarrassed to be seen with my parents?

MOTHER (in mirror)
Yes, honey... it's okay. All kids
go through that phase.

DAVIS
I know. I was just thinking about
it. Riding in the back-seat and
everything. Most times I wouldn't
even go skating. We'd go smoke
cigarettes in the woods and make fun
of the fat girls in their little
figure skating outfits.

Davis smiles fondly. His parents share a silent exchange.

EXT. CITY STREET/ POST OFFICE BOX -- DAY

Davis drops a LETTER into a BLUE POST OFFICE MAILBOX.

INT. BUILDING LOBBY -- DAY

Davis hands a LETTER directly to a POSTMAN.

EXT. DAVIS'S DRIVEWAY -- DAY

He tosses a LETTER into his MAILBOX and raises the flag.

EXT. TRAIN PLATFORM -- MORNING

Davis waits for the 7:15. He sits inside one of the heated alcoves, writing on his YELLOW PAD.

The CAMERA SWEEPS down to the end of the bench to find a WOMAN WATCHING HIM. She's bundled beneath a heavy winter jacket, a wool cap pulled snug over her head. She stares at Davis with familiar eyes. Curious eyes. Like she wants to know everything.

Davis glances up in her direction... the woman redirects her gaze. A moment later... she looks over again.

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK -- MORNING

Davis navigates through morning foot traffic, a little more lively. He stops at his usual STREET VENDOR for his latte.

As he walks off, the CAMERA SETTLES on THE WOMAN bundled in the winter jacket, standing in the b.g. She watches him go.

INT. HOME/FOYER -- DAY

Davis sets his parents LUGGAGE down and helps his mother with her coat. She looks at him with a sadness.

DAVIS (reassuring)
Everything's fine. I'll be fine.

He grabs their bags. They follow him OUT THE DOOR...

FATHER (O.S.)
Remember to tell your guy to spray.

INT. NEWARK LIBERTY AIRPORT -- DAY

Davis sits just outside the ticketing area. DAYDREAMING. Beyond the window, the jet fuel haze left by a 747.

DAVIS (V.O.)
Dear Vending Company. My parents left for Florida this afternoon and I stayed at the airport an extra two hours watching people walk back and forth with their luggage in tow.

SUITCASES wheel past from every crowded angle.

DAVIS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I find I'm suddenly filled with... wait... overwhelmed by... a growing sense of cu-ri-osity. Period.

HUNDREDS of BAGS... THOUSANDS of BAGS...

DAVIS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*What are in these bags? I wanna
 know what these people can't do
 without for four days in Buffalo. I
 wanna go through every one of them
 and dump their shit in a huge pile.*

WE SEE a 25-FOOT PILE of clothes and other travel items in the middle of the terminal. A luggage landfill. Next to it, a NATIONAL GUARD OFFICER in full uniform.

DAVIS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*And the National Guard guy. I want
 to hold his gun.*

The officer walks over to Davis and hands him his M-16. Davis weighs it in his arms. An ALARM SOUNDS...

DAVIS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I want to protect my country.

A TERRORIST RUNS FULL STEAM THROUGH THE TERMINAL... FEDERAL AGENTS ON HIS HEELS. Davis lifts the weapon, takes aim...

And FIRES.

INT. SUV -- DAY

The truck route. Davis drives down the JERSEY TURNPIKE.

DAVIS (V.O.)
*I'm starting to notice things, Dearest
 Vending Company. Things I never saw
 before. Okay, maybe I saw them. I
 just wasn't paying attention.*

Davis looks out his window at the passing landscape...

DAVIS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*For some reason, everything has become
 a metaphor.*

A DEAD DEER, A BROKEN DOWN TRUCK, "LAST REST 20 MILES."

DAVIS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Metaphor, metaphor, metaphor.

A GIANT UPROOTED PINE TREE.

DAVIS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*Metaphor. I am the pine tree. No,
 wait... I am the storm that uprooted
 the pine tree. No, wait...
 (MORE)*

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

(even better)

*I am the gypsy moth that ate the leaves
and laid the eggs that killed the pine
tree. They forgot to spray for me.*

EXT. GARAGE -- NIGHT

Davis searches the SHELVES in his immaculate garage.

DAVIS (V.O.)

*There's something else, Vending Co.
Something I haven't been able to get
off my mind.*

He stops. He's found what he's looking for. HE REACHES...

DAVIS (CONT'D)

*I went and got my tools from three
Christmases ago because I couldn't
take it one second longer...*

INT. REFRIGERATOR -- MOMENTS LATER

The DOOR OPENS. Davis looks at the pool of water... DRIP.

DAVIS (V.O.)

*The Goddamn refrigerator was leaking.
I had to do something.*

INT. KITCHEN -- MOMENTS LATER

Davis opens his TOOLBOX and sifts through his shiny tools.

DAVIS (searching) (V.O.)

*Now, I wouldn't say I'm handy by any
means. Mechanically retarded would
be closer to the truth. But Phil
said it himself, "If you wanna fix
something, you gotta take it apart
and figure out what's important."
(finds the right tool)
So, I tore the fucker to pieces.*

In HYPER SPEED, Davis goes to work on the refrigerator. He empties the contents first, then begins to deconstruct it piece by piece until there's just a metal skeleton remaining.

FINISHED. Davis looks over the dismantled refrigerator with a look of UTTER SATISFACTION. Maybe not an understanding of how it works, but he can see how it's put together.

His cell PHONE RINGS. Davis looks at it, curious. Answers.

DAVIS (ON PHONE)

Hello?

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Is this Davis Mitchell?

DAVIS (cautious)
Yes. Who's this?

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
This is Karen Moreno. From Second
Generation Vending Company.
(then)
I'm with customer service.

Davis tightens.

DAVIS (on phone)
Is this regarding my complaint letter?

KAREN (O.S.)
You're complaint letters... yes.
There have been four. So far.

He looks on the table... LETTER #5. The smoking gun.

DAVIS (on phone)
Okay. And you're with the customer
service department?

KAREN (O.S.)
I am the customer service department.
It's just me.

DAVIS (on phone)
Do you usually make your customer
service calls at two in the morning?

KAREN (O.S.)
Not usually. No. Never.

DAVIS (interesting)
Huh.

Davis begins to pace. The remnants of an expensive
refrigerator at his feet.

DAVIS (on phone) (CONT'D)
I didn't think anyone actually read
those things. I mean, I was just
venting.

KAREN (O.S.)
They made me cry.

DAVIS (on phone)
What?

KAREN (O.S.)

Your letters made me cry. Mr. Mitchell, I've never read anything so honest in my life.

(confiding)

I took them home with me. They're in the nightstand next to my bed.

A long silence while Davis sorts this whole thing out.

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

This is embarrassing. I shouldn't have called.

DAVIS (on phone)

No, wait... it's okay.

(then)

Karen Moreno? That's your name?

KAREN (O.S.)

Yeah.

CUT TO:

SPLIT SCREEN: On one side, DAVIS is in his SUV, driving through the empty night. The OTHER SIDE is BLANK...

DAVIS (V.O.)

Moreno means "brown hair" in Spanish.
Did you know that?

KAREN (O.S.)

Yes, I did.

A SKETCH BEGINS TO TAKE FORM ON THE BLANK SCREEN... A NONDESCRIPT OUTLINE OF A WOMAN...

DAVIS (V.O.)

Do you have brown hair?

KAREN (O.S.)

Uh-huh.

LONG BROWN HAIR and BIG BROWN EYES fall into place...

DAVIS (V.O.)

And brown eyes?

KAREN (O.S.)

Sometimes they're hazel.

The brown eyes are ERASED and replaced with HAZEL.

DAVIS (V.O.)

Are you of Spanish decent?

KAREN (O.S.)
My grandmother was from Cuba. Why
do you...?

DAVIS (interrupting) (V.O.)
I'm painting a mental picture.

KAREN (embarrassed)
Oh-God-no, please, I don't...
(beat)
How does it look?

The narrow-waisted frame is replaced with a SEXY LATINA BODY.

DAVIS (V.O.)
I think we should meet. Where are
you?

An outline of NEW JERSEY forms around the woman.

We ZOOM IN on the COAST. The figure is standing in DUNEGRASS
in front of BREAKING WAVES. A blue, sunny day.

EXT. NEPTUNE DINER -- LATER

The SUV pulls into the lot of this greasy spoon. Plenty of
parking at this hour.

INT. NEPTUNE DINER -- MOMENTS LATER

Davis enters to bad fluorescent lighting and stale coffee.
A MINI JUKEBOX at every booth.

He sits at a booth by the window. The WAITRESS approaches.

DAVIS
Hi. Is Karen Moreno here yet?

WAITRESS
Who?

DAVIS
Karen Moreno? Brown hair, sometimes
hazel eyes... Hispanic like her name
suggests.

The waitress looks at him, deadpan.

INT. NEPTUNE DINER -- LATER

Davis has a half-eaten plate of pancakes in front of him.
Still alone. His phone RINGS...

DAVIS (answering)
Hello?

KAREN (O.S.)

Hi. It's me. It's Karen.

DAVIS (on phone)

Hi. Where are you?

KAREN (O.S.)

Well, I was there... in the diner.
I sat at a booth for a few minutes.
I even played a song on the little
baby jukebox. And then, I don't
know... I got sad. So, I left.

DAVIS (on phone)

Oh.

Davis is disappointed. He glances at the baby jukebox.

DAVIS (CONT'D)

What song did you play?

KAREN (O.S.)

It was, um, "Crazy On You." By Heart.

DAVIS (on phone)

A "Heart" song? That made you sad?

KAREN (O.S.)

Not so much the song... it just
reminded me of a this time when me
and Kelly Carlyle stole her mom's
car to go to 7-11 at three in the
morning. We were singing it at the
top of our lungs.

(then, exhaling)

How are your pancakes?

DAVIS

What?

Davis is caught off guard. He glances around the diner.

KAREN (O.S.)

Oh, right... when I got home I decided
I was being ridiculous. So I came back.
I'm in the parking lot.

He looks out the window. Searches the dark lot...

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

The piece of shit Toyota.

He sees the Toyota. A SILHOUETTE in the front seat with the
GLOWING EMBER of a cigarette.

DAVIS (on phone)
You're a smoker.

KAREN (exhaling) (O.S.)
It's cannibus. I have a prescription.

DAVIS (on phone)
Oh. O-kay.

KAREN (O.S.)
What's that?

DAVIS (on phone)
What's what?

KAREN (O.S.)
"O-kay?" What's that supposed to
mean?

DAVIS (on phone)
Nothing. It's "okay." It's one of
those words you use when you can't
think of anything else to say.

KAREN (O.S.)
It just felt like you were judging.

DAVIS (on phone)
This is a very strange conversation.
Do you think you could come inside?

The phone goes quiet. Davis looks out into the dark.

DAVIS (on phone) (CONT'D)
Hello?

KAREN (O.S.)
I'm sorry... it's just, I have this
nice image of you... sitting there,
eating pancakes in the window. I
don't want to ruin it.

DAVIS (on phone)
Okay, but my image of you is a shadowy
figure smoking pot in a parking lot.
To a "Heart" song.

KAREN (defensive) (O.S.)
It's cannibus. I have a prescription.

DAVIS (on phone)
O-kay.

KAREN
Whatever. Screw this...

The Toyota's headlights turn on and Karen PULLS OUT of the parking lot. Davis signals the waitress.

DAVIS
Check.

As Davis waits, Karen's car reappears. She's just circled the building. His PHONE RINGS. He answers...

KAREN (O.S.)
I'm sorry. This shit makes me
defensive. Could we start over?

DAVIS (on phone)
Sure. Are you coming in now?

More silence. She's thinking again.

KAREN (O.S.)
Ya know what? I think I ruined it. I
should just go. Yeah... I'm gonna go.
(decisive)
I'm going.

DAVIS (on phone)
Wait, Karen... I have another letter
for you.

She weighs this for a moment.

KAREN (O.S.)
Put it in the mail.

And she pulls away.

INT. EASTMAN, RITTER/CONFERENCE ROOM -- DAY

Davis sits at the table with 9 other suits. He's WRITING ON THE TABLE absentmindedly. STEVEN (30's) has the floor.

STEVEN
I definitely think it's doable, Phil.
If their second quarter earnings are
an indication of growth... even just
two or three net percent, then I
think it's a risk worth taking.

PHIL
Well done. Let's just make sure
those numbers are there before we
pull the trigger.

WE SEE what Davis is scribbling on the table... "MORENO."
Phil glares from across the table.

PHIL (CONT'D)
Davis, I see you're taking copious notes. Would you like some paper?

Davis stops. The group laughs cautiously.

DAVIS
Sorry.

PHIL
Is there something you'd like to contribute to the discussion?

Davis thinks. There is something...

DAVIS
Yes. Actually, it's more of a question.
(gathering)
Would any of you consider "Crazy on You" to be a sad song? That's assuming you're familiar with the Heart catalogue.

The room looks at him with quiet sympathy.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Interesting.

INT. BATHROOM -- LATER

Davis enters. He walks up to the SECOND STALL and pulls the door open... SQUEAK. He swings it back and forth, the door SQUEALING consistently. Just as he expected.

Davis takes off his jacket and lays his briefcase down, flips the latches. IT'S FILLED WITH HIS TOOLS.

SCREWDRIVERS, WRENCHES, A RATCHET SET, A HAMMER... Davis chooses a screw driver and sizes it up to a hinge. It doesn't fit. He tries another. Perfect. He starts unscrewing...

EXT. BATHROOM/ HALLWAY -- LATER

Steven walks the hall with a cocky stride. A FEMALE CO-WORKER PASSES, he checks out her ass. Arriving at the Men's Room...

INT. BATHROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Steven steps in and stops short. Davis stands in front of the DISMANTLED STALL wearing a look of accomplishment. The walls and door are on the floor. The toilet and tile wall exposed. Davis notices Steven. He's a bit shocked.

DAVIS
The door was squeaking.

INT. ELEVATOR -- MOMENTS LATER

Davis is headed down, a pleasant look on his face.

EXT. ELEVATOR/ LOBBY -- CONTINUOUS

Davis hops off the elevator... and COLLIDES WITH PHIL...

PHIL

What's going on, Davis? What's this nonsense about sad songs and scribbling on tables?

DAVIS

Sorry, Phil. I guess I've been a little preoccupied.

PHIL

I don't accept that. You need to focus now more than ever. Do you understand?

Davis nods. Phil lets it slide. He offers a FOLDER.

PHIL (CONT'D)

This is the foundation proposal. Just the nuts and bolts, but I need you to sign off before we move forward.

DAVIS

Yeah, sure. Where?

Davis takes a PEN out of his jacket pocket.

PHIL

Don't you think you should look at it first?

DAVIS

Yes. Of course.

He puts the pen back. Phil is looking at him. Davis tosses the folder in his briefcase. It RATTLES WITH TOOLS.

DAVIS (CONT'D)

She'll be safe in here. See ya Monday...

Phil watches Davis walk off. Heart's "Crazy on You" begins.

EXT. EASTMAN, RITTER BUILDING -- DAY

Davis exits through the REVOLVING DOORS. Heading inside at the same time is THE WOMAN in the winter coat.

DAVIS (V.O.)

*Dear Karen. Is it okay that I call
you Karen now that we've almost met?
I'll assume so.*

She comes right back out... and starts following him...

EXT. MANHATTAN SIDEWALK -- DAY

Davis passes a GIFT SHOP with items set out on display.

DAVIS (V.O.)

*Something's different, Karen. And I
think you might be responsible.*

Something catches his attention. He stops. Looks closer...

DAVIS (CONT'D)

*I'm getting these urges. Like this
afternoon... I had the urge to conduct
a social experiment and explore the
true nature of human curiosity.*

He picks out A PAIR OF HANDCUFFS.

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET/ CROSSWALK -- MOMENTS LATER

CLOSE ON Davis crossing the street. THE CAMERA TILTS DOWN to his briefcase... HANDCUFFED TO HIS WRIST.

DAVIS (V.O.)

*So, I handcuffed my briefcase to my
wrist and walked around Manhattan.*

We notice a YOUNG GIRL WHISPERING to her friend. It's definitely about the briefcase.

-- Davis passes a CAFE, a man lowers his newspaper to peek...

-- Davis watches the OLD MEN play chess in the park. One player is fixated on the case. His opponent gets impatient.

CHESS PLAYER

*Charlie, it's your move for Christ's
sake.*

-- Davis watches KIDS BREAK DANCE on the sidewalk with a CROWD OF ONLOOKERS. The WOMAN squeezes in next to him. She's staring. Davis feels her gaze and looks back. They share a LONG, SILENT MOMENT. As if they recognized each other.

Just as she's about to speak, a FAT GUY bumps Davis...

FAT GUY (to Davis)
Hey, buddy. What ah... what's in
the briefcase?

Davis looks at the case. Then, at the guy...

DAVIS (our secret)
My wife.

When Davis turns back... the woman is gone.

INT. DAVIS'S HOUSE (OFFICE) -- NIGHT

Davis is at his desk, writing on his yellow pad.

DAVIS (V.O.)
*I find that people are drawn to things
that hold an element of mystery.
Not exactly a ground breaking
conclusion, but it certainly explains
my actions of late.*
(beat)
I have to meet you, Karen.

EXT. SECOND GENERATION VENDING CO. (ESTABLISHING) -- DAY

A NONDESCRIPT WAREHOUSE in a nondescript part of town. In
stenciled black paint, "SECOND GENERATION VENDING CO."

INT. SECOND GENERATION VENDING CO. -- DAY

Davis enters through a GARAGE DOOR. BOXES of ASSORTED CANDY
stacked against the walls. A dozen VENDING MACHINES standing
by. A forklift cruises past A FEW WORKERS. Davis walks over...

DAVIS (to worker)
Excuse me. Who could I speak with
in customer service?

INT. SECOND GENERATION (HALLWAY) -- CONTINUOUS

Davis walks down the hall, approaching a DOOR with a sign,
"Customer Service." HAND WRITTEN beneath the sign is "Karen
Moreno." He arrives and carefully peeks around the corner...

It's EMPTY. Just a cramped little office. He enters and
takes inventory: An outdated computer. File drawers half
open. He focuses on a DEAD PLANT wilting on the desk.
Touches it as if it were his only connection to Karen.

DAVIS (O.S.)
Can I help you?

Standing in the doorway is CARL (40's), balding.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Yes, hi. I'm looking for Karen.

CARL (suspicious)
She's not here. Is there something
I can do for you?

DAVIS
Um. No. Not really.
(beat)
Are you expecting her back?

Carl takes pause.

CARL
Who are you?

DAVIS
I'm Davis. I have a customer service
issue.

CARL
Oh. Well, I'm Carl. This is my
company. What's the problem?

DAVIS
I really can't get into it, Carl.
There's way too much ground to cover.
But thanks for your concern.

Davis slips past and out the door. Carl looks dumbfounded.

INT. DAVIS'S SUV (DRIVEWAY) -- NIGHT

Davis sits in his truck. The engine off. We get the feeling he's been here for a long time. He's looking at something through the windshield...

A HUGE BOX. The CAPPUCCINO MACHINE. It's still sitting there just inside the garage, blocking the entrance.

Finally, Davis grabs his BRIEFCASE and opens the car door...

INT. GARAGE -- LATER

Davis rips away the final piece of cardboard. He steps back to examine the machine... all kinds of nobs, handles, spouts.

He opens his tool filled case and tosses the foundation proposal aside. Reveal his shiny tools. Choices, choices. He begins diligently unscrewing everything. QUICK SHOTS as he works his way around the coffee behemoth...

He removes the protective shell to find an intricate MAZE OF COMPONENTS. The heart of the beast.

As Davis studies the machine, we see that something's off. He isn't satisfied. He looks around the garage. Something grabs his eye. He walks OFF SCREEN. We wait for him...

Davis returns holding an ALUMINUM LOUISVILLE SLUGGER. He sizes up his opponent and TAKES A SWING. Pieces come snapping off... plastic breaking, metal bending. This feels good.

Davis swings AGAIN AND AGAIN. The destruction like a revelation. He raises the bat for ONE FINAL BLOW... When his CELL PHONE RINGS.

He answers...

DAVIS (on phone)
Hi, Karen.

KAREN (O.S.)
How did you know it was me?

DAVIS (on phone)
I programmed you into my phone.

KAREN (O.S.)
Oh. I'm not sure how I feel about that. Why are you out of breath?

DAVIS (on phone)
I just destroyed a cappuccino machine.

KAREN (O.S.)
Why?

DAVIS (on phone)
Because I didn't know what to do with it. I don't think I know what to do with *anything* anymore.

Karen doesn't respond to this. But we know she's intrigued.

KAREN (O.S.)
Your letters are killing me, Davis.
I'm in my bath tub trying to pull myself together.

DAVIS (on phone)
Are there candles?

KAREN (O.S.)
Why?

DAVIS (on phone)
Mental picture.

KAREN (O.S.)

Oh. Right. Yeah, there's two. But I'm not bathing or anything. Sometimes I just sit here. In my pajamas. It's nice. It's quiet. And I don't wanna wake up my son. Did I mention I have a son?

DAVIS (on phone)

No.

KAREN (O.S.)

He's thirteen and I'm thirty, so yes, that would mean I was only seventeen when I had him. Does that freak you out?

DAVIS (on phone)

No. Does it freak you out?

KAREN (O.S.)

He's got some sort of presentation tomorrow that he was working on all day. Something for History. Or maybe it was World Affairs. Shit, I can't remember. Shit.

DAVIS (on phone)

Karen, why are you telling me all this?

KAREN (calming)

I don't know. Maybe because I find your honesty extremely attractive and I wanna know what that's like.

(then)

Or maybe I'm just high. Shh... wait.

The phone goes quiet. Davis waits.

KAREN (a whisper) (CONT'D)

You shouldn't have come to my office, Davis. This is getting dangerous.

DAVIS (on phone)

Dangerous? I don't...

KAREN (O.S.)

Gotta-go... bye.

CLICK. She's gone. Davis stands there.

He grabs the bat. Raises it over the cappuccino machine. As he drops the ax, we... CUT TO BLACK.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Chris Moreno?

INT. 9TH GRADE WORLD AFFAIRS CLASS -- DAY

MRS. SHERMAN (40's) stands before her class.

MRS. SHERMAN
Chris Moreno... you're up.

MOLLY gathers up her PRESENTATION... a DIAGRAM of the American government by branches. She heads back to her seat.

MRS. SHERMAN (to girl)
Nicely done, Molly. Good job with
eye contact and citing your sources.

Sitting in back is CHRIS MORENO (13). He picks up his visual aide, a MOCK DESERT BATTLE GROUND complete with PLASTIC SOLDIERS and VEHICLE CONVOY, and makes his way forward. Chris carries himself with confidence despite his youth and frail demeanor. There's something dangerous about him.

He stands before his class. All eyes on Chris.

CHRIS (to class)
With the invasion of Iraq, we've seen
many young men and women heading off
to battle... putting their lives on
the line so the Iraqi people can enjoy
the liberties of freedom... and God-
willing, someday soon, our gas prices
will become more affordable.

A few chuckles. Mrs. Sherman raises her brow...

CHRIS (CONT'D)
I'd like to talk about a few of the
brave Americans who volunteered to
protect our great country.

He presents his model. Holds up one of the plastic soldiers.

CHRIS (holding soldier) (CONT'D)
This is PFC., Kevin Falk. Nineteen.
He joined the military because his
family was too poor to send him to
college and a Marine Corps. recruiter
sold him on the GI Bill.

(then)
On March 2nd, Falk lost both arms in
a fire-fight trying to secure Falluja.

Chris RIPS BOTH ARMS OFF THE ACTION FIGURE...

CHRIS (CONT'D)
He begins community college in the
fall. Needless to say, he won't be
participating in intermural sports.

More classroom stirring. Some disturbed. Some laughing.

MRS. SHERMAN
Chris, I don't think this is appropriate.

Chris picks up ANOTHER FIGURE...

CHRIS (holding soldier #2)
This is 1st Lieutenant Dan Doviak of the Army Reserve. Father of three. Decorated police officer.
(holds up a PHOTO)
Here he is with the little league team he coached back on Long Island. His son Brandon played first base, leading the league in RBI's.

Chris puts the figure back in the Hum-vee and moves it slowly down a dirt path, making CHILDISH SOUND EFFECTS...

CHRIS (pushing vehicle) (CONT'D)
On June 5th, during a routine patrol through Baghdad, Doviak's Hummer pulled over to assist a 15 year old girl who was laying in the road. To their surprise, she had 60 pounds of explosives strapped to her body...

Chris lights an M-20 that's tucked under the Hummer... BANG! KIDS SCREAM... Mrs. Sherman jumps to her feet...

CHRIS (CONT'D)
The Hummer was quickly engulfed in flames...

Chris grabs a can of HAIRSPRAY AND LIGHTER... WOOSH!!! A FIREBALL SMOTHERS THE HUMMER AND SOLDIERS...

MRS. SHERMAN
NO! FIRE EXTINGUISHER! NO!

The class leans back in their seats. Mrs. Sherman scrambles.

CHRIS
Iraqi citizens quickly gathered, chanting "Death to America" as Doviak and his unit were burned alive.

The model is now FULLY ABLAZE. Mrs. Sherman rushes in, DOUSES it with an EXTINGUISHER.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
Sorry. I forgot to cite my sources.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL OFFICE -- DAY

The WOMAN IN THE WINTER COAT walks in and goes to the desk.

KAREN (to secretary)
I'm Karen Moreno.

SECRETARY
Yes. Have a seat.

KAREN takes a seat, embarrassed and angry all at once. She pulls off her jacket and we finally get a good look at her. She looks disheveled, exhausted by her thirty years. A woman who's uncomfortable in her own skin.

TWO CHEERLEADERS sit across from her. Cute, chatty, carefree.

CHEERLEADER #1
You so went tanning.

CHEERLEADER #2
I did not.

CHEERLEADER #1
You're such a liar. Look at your stomach, slut.

CHEERLEADER #2
I laid out.

CHEERLEADER #1
It's April... you can't lay out.
It's like two degrees.

CHEERLEADER #2
It was like eighty on Saturday, bitch.

Karen envies their immaturity. The PRINCIPAL'S DOOR OPENS...

PRINCIPAL (from doorway)
Ms. Moreno. Nice to see you again.
Shall we?

INT. KAREN'S CAR -- LATER

Karen drives, her face tight, on the verge of tears. Her son is at her side, examining a MELTED ACTION FIGURE.

CHRIS
His face is totally melted off.
That's fuckin' crazy.

Karen has more anger than she knows what to do with.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

They should sell them like this... all fucked up with amputated limbs and melted faces and shit. It's more realistic, don't you think? They could even make one with post-war stress disorder... he just lays in bed all day or something.

(turns to Karen)

Oh yeah, I borrowed your hairspray.

CLOSE ON KAREN'S EYES. She's lost. Desperate.

INT. KAREN'S HOUSE/ KITCHEN -- NIGHT

ON THOSE SAME EYES. Karen is cooking a meal for one. She weighs each item on a scale before dishing it on her plate.

Karen sits and eats alone, wishing away another shitty day.

INT. SECOND GENERATION (CUSTOMER SERVICE OFFICE) -- DAY

AGAIN, ON THOSE EYES. Karen sits behind her cluttered customer service desk. The BUZZ of the florescent lights above. She looks at her DEAD PLANT. Touches one of the withered leaves. It crumbles to dust. Then, something changes...

Karen grabs her winter coat and hurries out...

INT. NJ TRANSIT TRAIN -- EVENING

Davis sits among the crowd of commuters. He looks over to see the woman in the winter coat... WE NOW KNOW HER AS KAREN.

She's sitting two rows over, pretending to read a MAGAZINE. She glances up and they make eye contact. Davis nods...

WE FREEZE ON THIS EXCHANGE.

CUT TO:

INT. KAREN'S HOUSE (BATHROOM) -- NIGHT

Karen is in her tub, smoking a joint, in pajamas. She tears open an envelope to find a LETTER ON YELLOW PAPER.

DAVIS (V.O.)

Dear Karen. I was on the train today and I met a woman.

Karen's eyes light up. She's actually in his letter now.

DAVIS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*There was something very familiar
about her. I couldn't figure it
out, so I went and sat next to her...*

BACK TO:

INT. NJ TRANSIT TRAIN -- NIGHT

Davis sits with Karen. Her heart pounding through her chest.

DAVIS
Hi.

KAREN
Hello.

DAVIS
Do we know each other?

KAREN
I don't, um... think so.

DAVIS
Huh. Cause' you seem really...

He can't put his finger on it. It's quiet again. Karen settles down. Feeling safe. Feeling anonymous.

KAREN
Tough day?

DAVIS
No, not really. My job isn't very difficult. The guys beneath me do most the heavy lifting while I'm at lunch. I just take credit for it.

FREEZE ON KAREN. Locked in by his honesty.

DAVIS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*She was quiet. But somehow, she got
me talking about my wife. I even
missed my stop I was talking so much.
Then, out of nowhere, she asked...*

MOTION BEGINS AGAIN.

KAREN
So why did you marry her?

Davis considers this. Maybe for the first time.

DAVIS
Because it was easy. Everything was laid out in front of me. I guess I'm just lazy.

She's still mesmerized when she realizes the train is stopped.

KAREN
Shit, this is me. Shit...

Karen gets up and hurries for the door.

KAREN (turning back)
It was nice to meet you.

DAVIS
Yeah. You too...

He watches her leave, something suddenly more familiar.

INTERCUT: KAREN IN BATHTUB READING LETTER/ DAVIS ON TRAIN

KAREN IN THE TUB: she's smiling, like she's gotten away with a crime. She turns the page over...

DAVIS (V.O.)
I wanted to ask her name, but she disappeared so quick. Fortunately, she left something on her seat...

ON THE TRAIN: Davis picks up a MAGAZINE where Karen was sitting.

DAVIS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
It was that Oprah magazine that Oprah always seems to be on the cover of.
(then)
And I think you know who it was addressed to, Karen.

KAREN IN THE TUB: She freezes.

DAVIS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I knew you were familiar. No more games. I'll see you soon.

She puts the letter down, in shock. Her mind racing. Then... THE DOORBELL RINGS. Karen panics, jumps out of the tub...

EXT. KAREN'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Davis stands on the doorstep of this two-story home in a modest neighborhood. Oddly enough, his suit is COVERED IN DIRT FROM HEAD TO TOE. He RINGS THE BELL again...

He waits patiently, and when the door opens... IT'S CARL.

CARL
You. What the hell are you doing here?

DAVIS

I'm looking for Karen. What are you doing here?

CARL

I live here. This is my house, asshole. What the fuck do you want?

DAVIS

I told you. I have a customer service issue, Carl. But you really don't need to curse at me.

KAREN (O.S.)

Davis, hi!

Karen steps out behind Carl.

CARL

You know this guy?

KAREN

Yes. I do. Yes.

(to Davis)

I'm sorry, Davis. I know I was totally supposed to call you.

(to Carl)

Davis works over at the Rec Center. They're having problems with a few machines. I was supposed to call.

CARL

It's ten o'clock, Karen. Why is he at *my* house?

KAREN (stern)

I'm sorry. Just give me a minute. I'll deal with it.

Carl looks at her. At Davis. Something's off.

KAREN (to Carl) (CONT'D)

It's fine. I'll be right in.

Carl reluctantly goes inside. Karen closes the door and looks at Davis. She can't quite believe what's happening.

DAVIS

I was in the neighborhood.

KAREN

You shouldn't be here, Davis. I live with someone.

(clarifying)

Carl. I live with Carl.

DAVIS

It's not fair. You know everything about me. The only thing I know about you is you're not very good with plants.

KAREN

And fish. I neglect plants and fish equally. What else do you wanna know? I buy my clothes at the mall, okay? I went to community college for eight days. I have a gym membership that I never use and a kid who scares the shit out of me. That's it. That's me. Sorry to disappoint you.

Davis is quiet. She changes her tone.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Look, I shouldn't have called you. I shouldn't have... started following you. That was wrong. I'm gonna recommend to management they give you a refund. So you should hear something soon.

DAVIS

Great.

Davis takes AN ENVELOPE out of his jacket.

DAVIS (CONT'D)

This is the last one. I wrote it in the car ten minutes ago.
(hands it to her)
You've got a good face, Karen. My mental picture was way off.

He starts to walk away. Karen is stunned.

KAREN

Davis?

He turns back.

KAREN (CONT'D)

What happened to your clothes?

DAVIS

It's all in the letter.

He keeps going. She wants to stop him. But doesn't.

INT. KAREN'S HOUSE/ KITCHEN -- LATER

Alone in the kitchen. She looks at the envelope. Like a bomb she's been asked to disarm. She weighs her options...

Then PEELS IT OPEN. She peeks in at the YELLOW PAPER...

DAVIS (V.O.)
Dear Karen. Fuck Phil.

CARL (O.S.)
Everything okay?

Karen CRUMPLES THE ENVELOPE...

KAREN
What? Yeah, it was my fault. Sorry.
I was supposed to...

She stuffs the LETTER IN THE TRASH.

KAREN (CONT'D)
... call him. We sorted it out.
What's time's your flight again?

CARL
Noon.

KAREN
Noon. Okay. Good. I'm going to bed.

She starts to walk out...

CARL (blurting)
Karen, I trust you.

She stops. But doesn't turn back.

CARL (CONT'D)
I just want you to know that.

KAREN
Good. You should. Good night.

She keeps going. Carl just stands there.

INT. AIRPORT (AMERICAN BANDSTAND RESTAURANT) -- DAY

Karen and Carl are at a little table, RECORDS and other ROCK MEMORABILIA on the walls. The terminal is crowded.

CARL
It should only take a few weeks for
me to get things up and running out
there. And then, ya know... I think
we should really consider moving.

KAREN

Yeah. Maybe...

CARL

You can go to tech school like we talked about... I can finally be more creative with my vending ideas. And Chris, I mean, he's struggling here...

Carl continues with his pitch, but Karen TUNES HIM OUT. She focuses on all the LUGGAGE wheeling through the terminal. HUNDREDS of bags. THOUSANDS of bags. And then...

A NATIONAL GUARDSMAN holding an M-16. Karen smiles slightly.

CARL (noticing her smile) (CONT'D)

Karen?

KAREN

Huh?

CARL

I asked if you thought about the marriage thing any more?

KAREN

Oh. No, not yet. But I plan to. Soon.

She continues eating. Carl senses her distance.

INT. KAREN'S KITCHEN -- DAY

Karen hurries into the kitchen and starts digging through the trash. She finds the envelope. Tears it open...

DAVIS (V.O.)

Fuck Phil. He called me into his office today...

INT. PHIL'S OFFICE -- YESTERDAY

Davis pokes his head inside. Phil sits behind his desk.

PHIL

Davis. Come in. Sit. Let's have a dialogue.

It's more of a suite than an office. Spacious and masculine. Davis slides into a soft leather chair.

PHIL (CONT'D)

Davis, did you advise Darren Woods to sink \$50,000 into some kind of amusement park?

DAVIS

It's not an amusement park, Phil.
Blackbeard's Cave is gonna have an
arcade, batting cages and go-carts.
And not those pussy go-carts you can
run faster than. These fuckers fly.

PHIL (unenthused)

Blackbeard's Cave...

Davis smiles. Phil disapproves, but he dismisses the subject.

PHIL (CONT'D)

Now I'm going to ask you another
question. And I'd like you to be
completely honest with your response.

DAVIS

Okay.

PHIL

Did you dismantle a stall in the
washroom near your office?

DAVIS

Yes, I did.

PHIL

Why?

DAVIS

That's a bit harder to answer.

PHIL

Try me.

Davis gathers his thoughts on the matter.

DAVIS

Well, Phil... the door was squeaking.
And it's probably been like that for
quite some time. I just never
noticed. Now I do. Now I notice
lots of things. And I wanna know
how those things work. I wanna know
how they're put together.

Phil is blank. Davis tries to clarify.

DAVIS (CONT'D)

Like that clock for example...

Davis points at a LARGE ANTIQUE CLOCK.

DAVIS (CONT'D)

Pure craftsmanship. Artistry.

PHIL (proud)
It's a German antique. 1862.

DAVIS
It probably keeps perfect time and I
bet it's worth a bundle.

PHIL
It belonged to my grandmother. It's
priceless.

DAVIS
I wanna smash it.

Phil is silenced.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
No offense to your grandmother, but
I see that clock and I wanna know
what it looks like on the inside. I
don't know why. It's just where I'm
at right now.

Phil calculates. Maybe offended? Confused? Finally...

PHIL
I understand.

DAVIS
You do?

Phil gets up, leans against the corner of his desk. Sleeves
rolled to his forearm...

PHIL
Julia was a big part of your life.
Now that part is empty and you need
to fill it with things... no matter
how silly they might seem. Don't
you think I feel the same way? Just
the other day, I was driving home...

DAVIS
I think I quit.

PHIL
What?

DAVIS
No, wait...
(considering)
It's okay. I'll stay.

It's worse than Phil thought.

PHIL

Don't fall apart on me here, Davis.
There's too much at stake.

(an order)

I want you to take some time off. A month. Two months. Whatever it takes. Just get your head straight.

(then)

Did you sign the proposal yet?

Davis raises an eyebrow.

INT. SUV -- DAY

Davis drives down the parkway. He loosens his tie.

DAVIS (V.O.)

Fuck him and the way he leans on the corner of his desk with his sleeves rolled up like he's about to dig a ditch. I don't need it anymore. From now on, it's me and my tools.

Davis looks affectionately at his briefcase.

EXT. SUV -- LATER

The SUV passes a sign... "EXIT 115."

DAVIS (V.O.)

I accidentally passed my exit so I figured I'd just keep driving. Maybe it wasn't an accident. Maybe there are no accidents. Maybe I'm being too philosophical. Anyway, I decided to come look for you.

He looks at the address on the OPRAH MAGAZINE.

INT./EXT. SUV (SUBURBAN STREETS) -- LATER

The SUV cruises around this blue-collar, Jersey suburb.

DAVIS (V.O.)

I'm not familiar with the area, so I started at the diner with the little jukeboxes and drove up and down all the streets for a two mile radius. That's a rough estimate.

QUICK CUTS... the SUV cruising down several streets. We see a man getting his mail... a woman pushing a stroller...

DAVIS (sing-song) (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Where are you, Karen Moreno?

EXT. SUV/ SUBURBAN STREET -- LATER

A SCHOOL BUS stops in front of Davis. He yields.

DAVIS (V.O.)

I don't remember the last time I stopped behind a school bus. I felt very responsible for doing so.

A group of KIDS with backpacks hop down and cross the street.

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

I wondered if any of these kids could be your son. One in particular grabbed my attention and I started following him home...

A YOUNG BOY walks down the sidewalk. The SUV creeps slowly behind him.

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

I quickly reconsidered because I'd rather not go to prison.

He speeds up and passes the kid...

INT. SUV -- LATER

Davis drives slowly, taking in the street signs. He pulls to the side of the road and looks out the window.

DAVIS (V.O.)

I was in a neighborhood where all the streets were named after precious metals when I saw it...

ANGLE ON: A DEMOLITION CREW OF THREE MEN TEARING A HOUSE APART PIECE BY PIECE AND THROWING IT INTO A LARGE DUMPSTER. RIPPING SHINGLES, SMASHING GLASS, SWINGING SLEDGEHAMMERS...

DAVIS (to himself) (CONT'D)

This changes everything.

EXT. DEMO HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

Davis walks past the dumpster in his expensive suit. JIMMY (30's), stops working. He's one hundred percent blue collar.

DAVIS

Hi.

JIMMY

Hey. You the insurance guy?

DAVIS

Insurance? No. Not me.

JIMMY
Saw the suit. So I figured...

DAVIS
No, I was just driving past and saw
you guys working. Looks like fun.

JIMMY
Yeah, right. Fun.

Jimmy laughs. Davis doesn't.

DAVIS
What exactly are you doing?

JIMMY
House burned. Gotta tear it down
before they rebuild.

DAVIS
You think I could help?

JIMMY (confused)
What? With this?

ON THE HOUSE. It's partially burned with a huge hole in the
side where the TWO MEN are carrying out slabs of sheetrock
and tossing them into the dumpster.

DAVIS
Yeah. Just tell me what to do. You
don't have to pay me. I just wanna
do what you guys are doing.

JIMMY
Don't bust my balls. You're the
insurance guy, right? Barry sent
you over to bust balls?

DAVIS
I don't even know who Barry is.
(then)
Here... I'll pay you. Fifty dollars.
Just let me help.

Davis reaches for his wallet. Offers the cash...

JIMMY
Whoa, hold on... what is this?

DAVIS
Please... take it. I'll work hard.

He forces the cash in Jimmy's hand. Jimmy finally takes it.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Where do I start?

INT. DEMO HOUSE/ BEDROOM -- LATER

Davis wears SAFETY GOGGLES in the middle of the empty bedroom. Jimmy hands him an AX-LIKE TOOL and steps back. Davis weighs it in his hands, then SWINGS AWAY... it sinks into the wall and a large piece of sheet-rock RIPS AWAY FROM THE FRAME.

Davis comes alive, the walls CRUMBLING AROUND HIM.

EXT. DEMO HOUSE -- LATER

Davis walks out of the house and throws STACKS OF DEBRIS in the dumpster. His clothes stained with dirt and soot.

ON THE SIDEWALK, the other guys observe. Smoke break.

OWEN

He's probably a crackhead.

JIMMY

Crackheads don't give people fifty dollars. They suck dick for twenty.

SEAN

We're splittin' that shit.

INT. BURKE'S ARMY NAVY -- DAY

Davis walks up to the COUNTER CLERK in his filthy suit.

DAVIS

Hi. Do you carry work overalls?

INT. BURKE'S ARMY NAVY/ BACK OF STORE -- MOMENTS LATER

Davis sizes up a WORK JUMPSUIT. He sees an ARMY HELMET... tries it on for size. Then, he notices...

A GAS MASK. He stretches it over his face. ANOTHER CUSTOMER notices him... jacket, tie and gas mask. Nice.

He scans the store for more toys. His gaze lands on a SIGN. He pulls off the mask, interested... "BULLET PROOF VESTS."

INT. DAVIS'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Davis sits on his bed watching TV and wearing his GAS MASK. The DOORBELL RINGS.

INT. DAVIS'S HOUSE/ FRONT DOOR -- MOMENTS LATER

Davis opens the door. It's Karen. She's SOAKING WET.

KAREN

Did you really do that? Did you
really drive around looking for me?

DAVIS
Yes. I did.

She's shivering. Dripping wet.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Is it raining?

KAREN
No.

(off his curious look)
I don't want to tell you.

DAVIS
I think you should.

KAREN
It's embarrassing.

DAVIS
Tell me.

She can't escape it. She holds up her RIPPED SKIRT...

KAREN
I closed the car door on my skirt
and your sprinklers turned on, which
shouldn't be a huge problem, but the
lock on the driver's side has been
getting stuck for about four years
and I haven't had a chance to fix
it... like most things in my life.
Do I smell grilled cheese?

DAVIS
You're high, aren't you?

KAREN
A little bit, yeah.

After a moment, Davis pushes the door open. Karen nervously steps in. As he's closing the door, Davis notices a STATION WAGON creeping past the house and down the block. Very odd.

INT. DAVIS'S KITCHEN -- LATER

Davis dishes GRILLED CHEESE onto a plate. Karen sits at the counter in an oversized SWEATSHIRT. She's focused on the DISMANTLED REFRIGERATOR.

KAREN
I feel like I'm in a book I just read.

DAVIS (re: fridge)
Don't worry, I bought groceries this morning.

He sits down across from her with his own sandwich. Karen glances at the kitchen table... A YELLOW PAD AND PEN.

KAREN

Is that..? I thought the last one
was the *last* one?

DAVIS

I couldn't help it. There's a lot
on my mind, Karen.

Karen tugs at her sleeves. Not sure how to be in this moment.

KAREN

You're bathroom is lovely. You're
whole house is. Just lovely.

DAVIS

I hate this house. I feel like I
don't belong here.

Karen is taken by his honesty. But her expression fades.

KAREN

Are you gonna disappoint me? Because
everyone disappoints me. I build
something up in my head and then it
all goes downhill. Can you promise
not to? Because that would suck.

DAVIS

Can I feel your face?

Not the answer she was expecting. But it'll do. She nods...

Davis reaches over the counter and puts his hand on her face. He covers her chin, her nose, her cheeks. She closes her eyes. Nobody has ever touched her like this.

He pulls his hand away and she opens her eyes.

KAREN

Would you like to come stay with me?

INT. KAREN'S HOUSE/ LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

The glow from a street lamp tumbles through the window. We can just make out a living area with a fireplace. Davis crosses to the mantle.

He examines a FISHBOWL with rocks at the bottom and a DEAD FISH floating on top. Karen steps up next to him.

DAVIS

Plants and fish.

KAREN

Yeah. I'm not much better with kids.

Suddenly, they're very close.

KAREN (hushed) (CONT'D)

I can't have sex with you. It's nothing personal. It's me. It would be dangerous.

DAVIS (hushed)

There's that word again. What's dangerous? Is Carl really out of town or did you chop him into little pieces and stuff him in your sock drawer?

KAREN (hushed)

That's ridiculous. I don't have a sock drawer.

DAVIS (hushed)

Then where do you keep your socks?

KAREN (hushed)

In the same drawer as my underwear.

He gives her a look.

KAREN (hushed) (CONT'D)

What?

DAVIS (hushed)

Nothing, I just think a woman's underwear is deserving of it's own space, don't you? My wife had an entire drawer dedicated to delicates... with lotions, scented soaps... if she had a vibrator, I'm sure that's where it would be.

KAREN

Let's go to bed.

INT. SPARE BEDROOM -- LATER

Davis and Karen lay in SEPARATE BEDS, FIVE FEET APART.

KAREN

This is all I can handle. Is that okay?

DAVIS

It's fine.

KAREN

Let's just fall asleep together.

DAVIS
Together?

KAREN
Together-apart.

Silence again. Karen's mind swimming.

KAREN (CONT'D)
Did you know that while sleeping a human ingests an average of seven spiders over the course of a lifetime.

DAVIS
Interesting. Who determines something like that?

KAREN
Research scientists.

DAVIS
Ah, the research scientist.

KAREN
The first time I heard that, I was fifteen and it completely scared the shit out of me. So, when I went to bed I would tape my mouth shut.

Davis finds this amusing.

KAREN (CONT'D)
Then I realized they could still crawl in through my nose and that scared me even more because it's a more direct route to the brain.

DAVIS
Ah, brain-eating spiders. Then what? You taped your nose shut?

KAREN
No, I lost my virginity to Adam Russo and he was all I could think about for three months.

This moment resonates.

KAREN (CONT'D)
There's something I wanna tell you.

Davis waits. It sounds important.

KAREN (CONT'D)
But I'm not going to. Not yet.
(MORE)

KAREN (CONT'D)

I just want to give you a heads-up.
There's something I'm going to tell
you that I've never told anyone.

DAVIS

Whenever you're ready.

She settles on this. Closes her eyes.

INT. KAREN'S HOUSE/ KITCHEN -- 6 AM

Early. Davis enters the kitchen dressed, ready to leave.
He opens the refrigerator and drinks from a carton of milk.

CHRIS (O.S.)

That's fuckin' disgusting.

Davis almost chokes. Chris is at the table.

DAVIS

You must be Chris.

CHRIS

Are you fucking my mom?

DAVIS

No, I'm not. We were just sleeping.

CHRIS

'Cause she's fuckin' crazy. And if
you haven't noticed, she's a fucking
pot-head. She calls it "cannibus"
because it makes her feel like less
of a fucking pot-head.

DAVIS

You like to say "fuck" a lot.

CHRIS

So?

DAVIS

So, you're not using it properly.

CHRIS

What the fuck does that mean?

DAVIS

That's what I mean. "Fuck" is a
great word, but you're overusing it.

(explaining)

Think of it like a bomb. You don't
have a lot, so you have to conserve.
If you say it too much, it loses its
value. It makes you sound stupid.

CHRIS
Fuck you.

DAVIS
Exactly. I feel nothing and you sound like an idiot.

Davis closes the fridge and starts out...

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Have a good one.

CHRIS
Who the ff...

But he's gone. WE HEAR the front door OPEN AND CLOSE.

EXT. DEMO HOUSE -- MORNING

Davis hands Jimmy and Sean CASH. He's wearing his new JUMPSUIT. He pulls his gloves on and walks inside, eager to get to work.

Only moments later, WE HEAR SOUNDS OF DESTRUCTION...

SEAN (to Jimmy)
Guy's a fuckin' animal.

INT. KAREN'S BEDROOM -- MORNING

Karen is in her UNDERWEAR... racing to get ready for work. She pulls on a pair of pants and goes into her drawer for a pair of socks. She stops. Stares into her sock drawer.

MOMENTS LATER...

Karen has her DELICATES piled against her chest. She pulls open Carl's drawer and dumps his shit on the floor. She fills the drawer with her underwear, a satisfied grin.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL LOCKER ROOM -- DAY

Chris is changing, sitting in front of his locker. He glances over at ANDREW WHITE (17), also changing, in his underwear. He's a good looking kid. Slender. Athletic.

Chris forces his eyes to his own locker. He pulls his shirt on, ties his shoe, trying not to look, but he can't help it...

He looks over again, and this time, ANDREW IS LOOKING BACK. They make eye contact, maybe for a second too long. Andrew starts to smile, but Chris doesn't let him... he shuts his locker and walks out.

INT. KAREN'S CAR/ SECOND GENERATION PARKING LOT -- DAY

Karen is trying to get out of her car, but the lock is STUCK. She SLAMS her shoulder against the door, but it's no use. She awkwardly climbs over the passenger's seat and out the door... BANGING her knee in the process.

INT. SECOND GENERATION VENDING CO. -- MOMENTS LATER

Karen limps through the warehouse. Off to a great start.

INT. DAVIS'S HOUSE -- DAY

The PHONE IS RINGING. Davis enters the DOWNSTAIRS FOYER, completely FILTHY. He tracks mud and dirt, disappearing down the hall. The ANSWERING MACHINE PICKS UP:

ANSWERING MACHINE (Davis's voice)
*Hi, you've reached Davis Mitchell.
 I'm unavailable at the moment, so
 please leave a message.*
 (then)
*Oh... if you're calling for Julia, I
 regret to inform you that she isn't
 with us anymore. Which makes her
 even more unavailable. BEEP.*

IN THE SHOWER. Davis watches the dirt swirl down the drain.

ANSWERING MESSAGE (Phil's voice)
*Hello, Davis. It's Phil. This is
 my third message. I am deeply
 concerned with your well being. I'm
 trying to reach out to you. Trying
 to help. But you refuse.*

IN THE BEDROOM. Davis throws some clothes into a bag.

ANSWERING MESSAGE (Phil's voice)
*We're moving forward with the
 scholarship. Julia would want you
 to be part of it. That's all. BEEP.*

EXT. DAVIS'S DRIVEWAY -- LATER

As Davis hurls the bag of clothes in his truck, he notices a STATION WAGON parked across the street. He watches, curious.

INT. CUSTOMER SERVICE OFFICE -- DAY

Karen is typing away. A CO-WORKER steps into her office.

CO-WORKER
 Line one's for you.

She picks up.

KAREN (into phone)
This is Karen, customer service.

DAVIS (O.S.)
Hello Karen, customer service.

Karen tries to mask her nervous excitement. Her co-worker lingers in the doorway.

KAREN (on phone)
What can I do for you today, Mr. Mitchell?

DAVIS (O.S.)
This might sound crazy, but I think there's a station wagon that's been stalking me the past couple days...

The co-worker finally exits. Karen lets herself smile.

SPLIT SCREEN: KAREN IN OFFICE/ DAVIS DRIVING

Davis drives through his neighborhood, on SPEAKER PHONE. In his mirror... THE STATION WAGON FOLLOWS AT A DISTANCE.

DAVIS (into speaker phone) (CONT'D)
Yes, this does raise a number of other concerns, including, "A," why would anyone be following me?

He steps on the gas...

DAVIS (into speaker phone) (CONT'D)
"B," could I possibly be in some kind of danger?

He takes a SHARP TURN, tires SQUEALING...

DAVIS (into speaker phone) (CONT'D)
And "C," who the fuck still drives a station wagon?

Davis looks in his mirror. The wagon is gone.

KAREN (into phone)
Well, if you disappear, I know where to begin the investigation.

EXT. SEASIDE BOARDWALK -- DAY

Karen and Davis walk down the boardwalk. The Atlantic Ocean shimmering at their side. Amusements retired for the season.

DAVIS

This is where you get your
prescription filled? An empty
boardwalk?

KAREN

He's not actually a doctor. He's a
friend. I used to work up here.

Davis gives her a look.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Okay, the prescription isn't actually
mine. I lied. Sorry.

INT. CAROUSEL BUILDING -- DAY

Karen and Davis walk next to the massive BOARDWALK RELIC...
PORCELAIN HORSES with POLES reaching to the ceiling. The
ride is shut down, but you can almost hear the ORGAN PLAYING,
the CHILDREN LAUGHING. A silent carnival.

Karen steps up onto the ride.

KAREN

Come on. It's in here.

Davis steps up. Karen leads him past the battered horses to
the middle of the ride... where they find a LITTLE DOOR...

INT. CAROUSEL -- CONTINUOUS

Davis follows Karen into the heart of the beast. A circular
room with all kinds of motors, wheels, and tools scattered
about. Davis looks at the ANTIQUE ORGAN. It's IN PIECES.

They continue past a CURTAIN to find an OLD MAN sitting on a
tiny bed. RAY stands up, walks over with a smile.

KAREN

Hi, Ray. This is my friend, Davis.

RAY

Hello, young man.

DAVIS

Hello.

KAREN

This is for you...

Karen hands Ray a box of SALT WATER TAFFY. Ray looks
inside... a HUNDRED DOLLAR BILL tucked under the candy.

RAY

My favorite kind.

He hands her a PRESCRIPTION BOTTLE. Looks at Davis.

RAY (CONT'D)

It's for my arthritis. But I don't use it. It makes me think too much. I'm seventy-nine years old. Too many memories.

EXT. CAROUSEL -- LATER

Ray walks with them. Passing the antiquated ride. We see now that a good part of it has been DISMANTLED.

RAY

It used to be so beautiful. But nobody wants carousels anymore. They want roller coasters that go upside down.

They stop. The carousel has been ROPED OFF at the far end.

DAVIS

You're tearing it down?

RAY (accepting)

Too many repairs. Too much money. Everything ends.

CLOSE ON THE DETAILS: Faded paint on the horses. The crumbling facade. It's time has come and gone.

DAVIS

Can I help? I'm great at taking things apart. I have lots of experience... and my own tools.

RAY

You're very strange.

EXT. FUNTOWN PIER -- LATER

Davis and Karen sit on the edge of this Jersey Shore pier, legs hanging over the freezing ocean. Karen smokes a joint.

DAVIS

Julia used to talk about moving out here. Somewhere you could wake up in the morning, look out the window and see nothing but ocean.

KAREN

You miss her.

DAVIS

I'm trying to.

They leave it at that. Karen takes a big puff.

KAREN
Do you ever feel like something's
about to happen?

DAVIS
Something good or bad?

KAREN
Just something.

DAVIS
I don't know. Maybe.

KAREN
I always do. It's right here... in
my stomach. Like something's just
about to happen.

She puts her hand on her stomach.

KAREN (CONT'D)
It started two years ago. Chris got
really sick with pneumonia. There
was this whole day in the hospital
when nobody knew anything. Everything
in his body was shutting down and
nobody could tell me why. I felt so
helpless.

Karen has her hand on her stomach. ON THAT FEELING.

KAREN (CONT'D)
It's like that tension during a storm,
ya know? When you see the lightning
and you're counting the seconds 'til
the thunder.
(then)
I'm always counting the seconds.

INT. KAREN'S SPARE BEDROOM -- 2 AM

Laying in separate beds. Both awake. Staring at the ceiling.

KAREN
What're you thinking about right
now? If you have to write it down
first, that's fine.

He searches, trying to find a way to explain...

DAVIS
I was thinking how much I'd like to
be shot into outer space, orbit the
earth once or twice and then burn up
during re-entry.

It's quiet. Karen gets up and PUSHES HER BED NEXT TO HIS. She lays next to him. Inches apart.

KAREN

I'm scared, Davis. I have a habit of trying to fix people when I'm the one who needs fixing.

DAVIS

Tell you what... if you fix me, I'll fix you back.

Karen is quiet, counting the seconds. Then, SHE ROLLS ON TOP OF HIM... STARTS KISSING HIM. He kisses her back. Karen needs him more than anything at this moment.

EXT. SPARE BEDROOM -- LATER

Karen is asleep with her back pressed tight against Davis. He lays awake. Those same unaffected eyes, wide open.

INT. BATHROOM -- LATER

Davis stands in his underwear, staring into the mirror. Something is very wrong. He begins to take DEEP BREATHS...

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Deep breath...

Davis BREATHEs IN DEEP. Exhales...

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Deep breath...

Davis BREATHEs IN DEEP. Exhales...

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE -- DAY

Davis sits up on a table with his shirt off. DR. BODKEY (60's), presses a stethoscope to his chest.

DR. BODKEY

Again and hold it...

Davis breathes in again, holds it...

DR. BODKEY (CONT'D)

And exhale. Good.

Bodkey sits down, scribbles on a chart.

DR. BODKEY (CONT'D)

Well, you have a heartbeat, so that's positive. What's the problem, Davis?

DAVIS

I'm not sure, Doc. I don't... I
can't really feel anything.

DR. BROADKEY

Do you feel sick? Maybe depressed?

DAVIS

No. Sick would be *something*.
Depressed is *something*. I'm just
kinda numb all over.

DR. BROADKEY (carefully)

After the accident, did they examine
you thoroughly? Neck, back...

DAVIS

Yeah. No. Nothing like that.

DR. BROADKEY

Because sometimes a blow to the
head...

DAVIS (certain)

That's not it.

Brodkey concedes.

DR. BROADKEY

What exactly is numb, Davis? Can
you point to it for me?

Davis thinks... he waves a hand over THE BULK OF HIS BODY.

DAVIS

It's this whole area right in here.

Brodkey nods with experience. Starting to get the picture.

DR. BROADKEY

How long have you felt like this?

DAVIS

I couldn't say for sure.
(counting in his head)
Maybe twenty years? Give or take.

The doctor lays his chart down. Prepares his prognosis.

DR. BROADKEY

I'm sorry to hear about your wife,
Davis. Loss is a strange thing...

As the doctor continues, Davis TUNES HIM OUT... he glances
at the CHARTS on the wall... detailed illustrations of the

skeletal system, the muscles, the brain, and finally... the HEART. The source of human life. He's mesmerized by it.

Suddenly, the paper heart BEGINS TO BEAT. This brings us to...

INT. OPERATING ROOM (DAYDREAM) -- DAY

BEEP, BEEP, BEEP... a heart monitor. Davis lays on the table, eyes closed. A SURGICAL TEAM hovers over him in WHITE MASKS.

SURGEON #1
Rib spreader.

He cranks the instrument forcefully in Davis's chest. Davis OPENS HIS EYES...

DAVIS
How's it going in there?

SURGEON #1
Coming along nicely. Why are you awake?

DAVIS
I told them no anesthesia. I wanna get the full experience.

SURGEON #1
Hey, it's your dime. Suction...

The SUCTION DEVICE. It SLURPS FLUID. ANOTHER SURGEON steps forward as the suction stops. He assesses the situation...

SURGEON #2 (confident)
Bone saw.

DAVIS
Bone saw? Is that really necessary?

SURGEON #2
It's essential.

They hand him his instrument.... like a chain saw with a long narrow blade. He starts it with a PULL CORD... WHAAAAAAAAAAA!!! He goes to work. Davis's body shakes, a powdery debris clouding the air. Then... it stops.

The team looks into the chest cavity. They start WHISPERING, SHAKING THEIR HEADS... looks grim.

DAVIS
Could you please stop whispering and tell me what the problem is? I promise I won't freak out.

SURGEON #1

Mr. Mitchell, it seems that a large part of your heart... is missing.

DAVIS

What? How could that happen?

SURGEON #2

Judging from the bite pattern, I'd say gypsy moths.

DAVIS

Fucking gypsy moths?

SURGEON #2

Well, it starts out a caterpillar...

DAVIS

Yeah, I know... how did they get in my chest?

SURGEON #1

It could be a number of things. Are you getting enough fiber?

DAVIS

I think so.

SURGEON #2

When you pick up heavy objects, do you lift with your back or your legs?

DAVIS

My, um... legs.

SURGEON #1

Hmm.. then it must be you don't give a shit about anything but yourself.

Surgeon #1 snaps his gloves off. There's the problem.

DAVIS

Okay. Fine. What do I do now?

SURGEON #1

That's not our area.

Surgeon #2 REMOVES DAVIS'S HEART AND HANDS IT TO HIM.

SURGEON #2

Your heart is in your hands.

The surgeons disappear. Davis holds his BEATING HEART... PART OF WHICH IS MISSING. A disturbing site to say the least.

DAVIS (V.O.)

Dear Karen. I keep thinking about my childhood. When I was sick and I would lay my head on my mother's lap. She'd run her fingers through my hair. She'd kiss my eyelids. And everything felt better. Do you think it's too late for that?

INT. KAREN'S KITCHEN -- MORNING

Chris and Davis sit across at the table. Staring at each other. Karen scrapes eggs on Chris's plate.

KAREN (trying too hard)
So, Chris... how's that math class?
I was trying a few problems in your book and it was like another language.

CHRIS

There's some guy eating breakfast in Carl's kitchen and you wanna know if I'm good at math? You're so transparent.

KAREN

Can you just... okay? Gimme a break.
It's my kitchen too.

Karen is embarrassed. Davis sits there patiently.

KAREN (explaining) (CONT'D)
Davis is a friend. We've been spending time together because that's what friends do. You spend time.

CHRIS

You're such a liar.

KAREN (snapping)
The man's wife just died, you shit.
Have some compassion.

Karen immediately regrets her comment. She scrapes eggs onto Davis's plate, then stands there awkwardly.

KAREN (CONT'D)
I have to get ready.

She escapes down the hall. Chris and Davis are left alone.

CHRIS
Your wife died?

Davis nods. Starts eating.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

How?

DAVIS

Massive trauma to the head. Can you pass the juice?

He passes the juice. Looks at Davis a bit differently.

CHRIS

I was thinking about what you said. About how I'm not using the F-word properly.

DAVIS

Oh, yeah. What'd you come up with?

CHRIS

I think you were right. I'm gonna try harder.

DAVIS

Good for you. The little things are important.

Davis pours himself some OJ.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL -- DAY

The MORNING BELL. Chris walks past a swarm of TEENAGERS, backpack over his shoulder. No one acknowledges him.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL/ CAFETERIA -- AFTERNOON

Chris is at the far end of the lunch table. Again, ALL ALONE.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELDS -- DAY

TRACK AND FIELD PRACTICE. Boys and girls in uniform, spread out all over the field.

IN THE STANDS... Chris is the only one in the bleachers, keyed in on the HIGH JUMPERS. ANDREW WHITE IS AMONG THEM.

Andrew takes his turn... a graceful stride before hurling himself over the bar. Effortless.

Chris holds his hand over his eye like a telescope... THROUGH THE TINY HOLE IN HIS FIST... it's just Andrew.

INT. DEMO HOUSE -- DAY

Davis SWINGS A SLEDGEHAMMER... CRUSHING A FIREPLACE with uncontrolled energy. But he starts to slow.

His energy fading. Finally, he stops.

He surveys the damage. The frame of the house exposed like a skeleton. Disappointment washes over. The drugs aren't working. As he drops the sledge and steps toward the door...

He SCREAMS OUT. He falls to the ground and holds his foot...

There's a BLOCK OF WOOD attached to the bottom by a THREE INCH NAIL. Jimmy and Owen rush into the room to find Davis writhing in pain...

JIMMY

Oh, shit. That don't look good.

Davis takes in the gruesome site for a moment, then WRENCHES THE NAIL from his foot, SCREAMING AGAIN... invigorated by this new sensation.

DAVIS

Goddamn that fucking hurt! Shit-Yeah!

Jimmy and Owen look at each other... this guy's crazy.

INT. KAREN'S HOUSE/ LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

ON THE COUCH. Davis has his foot propped up, wrapped in a bandage.

AT THE TABLE, Karen is engaged in the latest LETTER. We hear the end...

KAREN (quietly, to herself)

... And everything felt better. Do you think it's too late for that?

She looks over at Davis.

KAREN (to Davis) (CONT'D)

No... it's not too late.

EXT. COUCH FORT -- NIGHT

CUSHIONS make up the walls and roof of this adolescent COUCH FORT. A BLANKET draped over top. A DIM GLOW inside.

KAREN (O.S.)

I used to make these with my baby sitter when I was little.

The HISS of a joint being smoked...

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

She kissed me once when I was sleeping. I still remember how soft her lips were.

DAVIS (O.S.)

My baby sitter was six feet tall
with hairy arms and cankles.

KAREN (O.S.)

What are cankles?

DAVIS (O.S.)

It's when there's no separation
between your calf and your ankle.

INT. COUCH FORT -- CONTINUOUS

Karen and Davis share a laugh. A FLASHLIGHT set up between them. Karen holds the joint as the moment settles.

KAREN

When was the last time you really
cared about something?

He's blank. He shakes his head.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Think hard. It's there.

(then)

What about when you were a kid?
When you weren't allowed off the
block without permission. What was
the most important thing?

He searches his memory. Nothing's coming. Then, a flash...

DAVIS

Running fast.

(remembering)

Yeah. That's it. All the kids would
race on the blacktop at recess.
Even in the winter when it was
freezing. But I was always so slow...

FOOTAGE OF 2ND GRADE RECESS: A million eight year-olds
PLAYING, SCREAMING, FIGHTING. Winter jackets zipped tight.

We see TEN KIDS lined up, shoulder to shoulder. Snow drifting
to the blacktop. IN SLOW MOTION, they start RUNNING...

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

Just once, I wanted to come from
behind and blow everyone away...

It seems innocent, but there's an intensity on their faces.
Youth hanging in the balance. RUNNING AS FAST AS THEY CAN...

DAVIS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And everyone would cheer for me...
just like they did for Ben Carney
and Mike Barone, those speedy
motherfuckers.

THE FANFARE... boys and girls cheering on the front-runners
like they were running gods. The losers trail off in shame.

REAL TIME. Davis clings to a feeling he thought was dead.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
That's it. I wanted to run really
fast, Karen. More than anything.
(then)
I almost said break dancing.

They both smile. Davis suddenly seems relieved.

KAREN
Let's stay in here forever.

With that, the roof collapses.

INT. KAREN'S HOUSE (BATHROOM) -- DAY

Chris is writing on the mirror with LIPSTICK. A CIRCLE drawn
around his REFLECTION, and written above it... "FAG."

He stares into the mirror with discontent. He doesn't like
who's looking back. He reaches into his backpack and pulls
out a HANDGUN. He takes aim at his reflection...

SLOWLY SQUEEZING the trigger... the DOOR OPENS... it's Davis.

CHRIS
Jesus! Do you live here now or
something?

DAVIS
Sorry. I didn't know you were home.

Chris wipes off the mirror, hiding the gun behind his back.

DAVIS (noticing) (CONT'D)
What's that?

CHRIS
Nothing.

Davis just looks at him. Chris finally shows him the gun.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
Whatever... it's Carl's. I was just
holding it.

DAVIS
Can I see?

Chris hands it over. Davis weighs it in his hand.

CHRIS
You ever shoot a gun before?

DAVIS (aiming)
Just paintball. We had an office
tournament last year and some prick
from accounting shot me in the neck.

He lowers the gun.

DAVIS
Let's go try it out.

INT. SECOND GENERATION VENDING CO. (OFFICE) -- DAY

Karen types on her computer. WE SEE HER WORDS APPEAR...

KAREN (V.O.)
*Dear Davis. There's something I
need to tell you. If I don't do it
soon, I'm afraid I never will. I've
got that feeling again. Like
something's going to happen...*

The INTERCOM BEEPS...

MAN ON INTERCOM
Karen, line one.

She looks at the BLINKING BUTTON with anticipation. Answers.

KAREN (into phone)
Hello?
(then)
Hi, Carl. Yeah. I miss you, too.

Her excitement melts away. She looks at the MONITOR. DELETES the letter.

EXT. WOODED AREA -- DAY

Chris has his fingers in his ears while Davis POPS OFF A FEW ROUNDS. He's shooting at a DIRT MOUND. SHOTS ECHOING.

DAVIS
Your turn.

Chris takes the gun and faces the dirt mound. He holds it up... aims... squeezing the trigger...

BANG... the gun recoils, almost knocking him backwards. He fires a FEW MORE ROUNDS, excited by this new feeling of power.

CHRIS
Let's shoot something.

DAVIS
Like what?

CHRIS
I dunno. A deer or something.

DAVIS
I don't think there's any out here.

CHRIS
What about a squirrel? Let's kill a squirrel.

Davis looks around. A SMALL ANIMAL darts off into the brush.

DAVIS
Squirrels are very small and elusive.
I doubt you'd hit one.

He looks around for a target, thinking, thinking, then...

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Hold on a second...

He walks off...

EXT. WOODED AREA/ SUV -- MOMENTS LATER

We find Davis's truck parked on a dirt trail. He opens the back door, looks inside to find... the BULLET PROOF VEST.

EXT. WOODED AREA -- MOMENTS LATER

Davis is STRAPPING ON THE VEST. Chris helps him adjust it. He steps back to look at him.

DAVIS
How does it look?

CHRIS
Who gives a shit? Are you sure this thing is real?

DAVIS
Yeah, I mean... yeah. I mean...

Davis looks it over... not completely positive.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Just don't miss. But if you do, try
and hit my shoulder. Or maybe my
thigh.

Chris takes a few steps back... a few more... a couple more...

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Whoa, that's a little far, isn't it?

CHRIS
I don't know. I never did this
before.

Chris considers his range. He takes several steps forward.
He cocks the hammer back...

CHRIS (CONT'D)
Ready?

Davis stands up straight. Takes a deep breath. Set.

DAVIS
Yeah.

Chris raises the gun, takes aim... SQUEEZING ON THE TRIGGER...
SQUEEZING... THEN...

CHRIS
Do you want me to count down?

DAVIS
I don't care. It's up to you.

CHRIS
Okay... I'll surprise you.

DAVIS
Yeah. That's good. Surprise me.

Davis sets himself again. Chris raises the gun and takes
aim... SQUEEZING... THEN...

CHRIS
Safety's on.

He searches for the SAFETY SWITCH... meanwhile, the gun is
still aimed toward Davis, drifting up and down, left, right...

DAVIS
It's on the side there.

CHRIS
Where?

DAVIS
Right there... on the side... of the
gun.

Chris flips the switch... BANG! DAVIS IS HIT... KNOCKED
BACKWARD... Chris freezes.

Davis winces. Looks to see the SLUG imbedded in the vest.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Nice shot.

Chris holds the smoking gun. Getting some kind of rush.

CHRIS
What did it feel like?

DAVIS
It hurt. But not like I thought it
would. You'd think getting shot
would be excruciating. This was
more like...

CHRIS FIRES AGAIN... ANOTHER ONE IN THE CHEST. DAVIS HITS
THE GROUND COUGHING, GASPING FOR AIR. Chris stands over him.

CHRIS
Surprise.

Davis catches his breath.

DAVIS
You're one fucked up kid.

CHRIS
You're one fucked up adult.

Davis ponders this usage of "fuck."

DAVIS
Not bad. But I think you're trying
too hard.

INT. EASTMAN, RITTER (HALLWAY) -- DAY

Davis limps down the hallway, refreshed by his latest
experience. Colleagues stop and watch him pass.

EXT. DAVIS'S OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

Davis approaches his secretary. She's surprised to see him.

DAVIS
Hey, Amy. Have you seen Phil? I
think he's been looking for me.

AMY

Davis. Hi. Yeah, um... they're doing the interviews.

(off is non-reaction)
For the scholarship candidates.

INT. CONFERENCE 2 -- DAY

CLOSE ON TODD (17), jacket and tie. In the middle of a story.

TODD (confident)

It was the last lap and I was behind by at least a full length. And let me remind you that butterfly is not my stroke. I'm a freestyle swimmer by nature.

WE SEE Phil and Meg at the other end of the table. Steven sits close. All impressed by this young man's confidence.

TODD (CONT'D)

So, I blocked everything out and focused on my breathing. It was just me and the water. As one.

He pauses for dramatic affect.

MEG

So what happened?!

TODD

About two meters from the wall I...

A RAP ON THE DOOR. Davis pokes his head in...

DAVIS

Hey guys.

PHIL

Davis, we're in the middle of something.

DAVIS

You don't mind if I sit in, do you?

You can feel the air leave the room as Davis limps over to their side of the table. Steven slides down to make room.

STEVEN

You okay, pal? Looks like you're limping.

DAVIS

A nail went through my foot, Steve. It fucking hurt like hell. But I'm good.

Meg's face hardens. Davis makes himself comfortable. Todd shifts in his seat, his momentum is gone.

MEG

So, Todd... you were saying?

TODD

Oh, right... we, um... won.

MEG

Ahh. You won. Wonderful.

DAVIS

What did you win?

Todd doesn't know where to begin. Phil's anger is palpable.

PHIL

Swimming. He's a swimmer.

DAVIS

Ahh. I swim.

(beat)

Not competitively. I used to do laps at the "Y" every Monday and Friday. Then I started thinking about how many people must urinate in that pool on a daily basis. That ruined it for me.

(then)

But congratulations. And good luck with my wife's scholarship.

There's a clock on the wall. You can hear it TICK.

DAVIS (CONT'D)

Who's next?

Meg and Phil are beyond words. Davis isn't leaving.

This begins A MONTAGE OF THE SCHOLARSHIP CANDIDATES... LOOKING DIRECTLY INTO CAMERA.

YOUNG MAN

I have a 4.0 GPA. Advanced Placement History and Science. Debate team...

YOUNG ASIAN WOMAN

National Honor Society, Mathletics, I'm president of...

INTENSE YOUNG BLACK MAN

Student Council, Future business leaders of America...

COCKY YOUNG MAN (with a wink)

I got one answer wrong on my SAT's.

As Davis watches this confessional of academic excellence, his mind wanders, reading the kids for WHO THEY REALLY ARE...

YOUNG MAN

My parents are in pharmaceutical sales. They could afford to send me to school on the space station...

YOUNG ASIAN WOMAN

Helping people who are less fortunate looks really good on an application.

YOUNG BLACK MAN

I'm the black candidate. Keep your fingers crossed.

COCKY YOUNG MAN

My dad gave me a Lexus for my birthday. I fingered my best friend's sister in the back seat. Slut.

BACK TO DAVIS... realizing that these kids are all privileged and completely full of shit.

DAVIS

Legacy.

That was OUT LOUD. Phil has had enough.

INT. BATHROOM -- LATER

The stall has been fixed. Phil has Davis cornered.

PHIL

Where is this coming from? This selfishness. This disrespect. Do you think you're the only one who has ever lost someone close to you? I've felt more pain and helplessness in this life than you could ever fathom. But you don't see me acting the fool. Do you know why?

Davis doesn't have an answer.

PHIL (CONT'D)

Because I'm a man. And I won't let this fucked up world break me.

Phil is pleased with this speech. He stands strong. He reaches out to Davis. A peace offering.

PHIL (CONT'D)

There's still time, Davis. You can still be a part of this. We're having a dinner next week. It's important.

DAVIS

Is that when you'll decide which underprivileged candidate is worthy of a Julia Eastman-Mitchell Scholarship?

Phil tenses. A quiet anger.

PHIL

You will not disrespect her memory. If you choose to self destruct, fine. But I won't let you take her with you.

Phil holds out a FOLDER.

PHIL (CONT'D)

Sign it.

He forces it in Davis's hand and walks out of the bathroom.

Davis looks at the cover of the PROPOSAL... an artist's depiction of WOMAN ON A THOROUGHBRED HORSE... TREES, A SUNSET... very pleasant.

INT. SUV (PARKING GARAGE) -- LATER

The truck is off. Davis is flipping through the proposal. The CAMERA CAPTURES A SERIES OF WORDS AND NUMBERS...

SECTION 1A... ANNUAL PERCENTAGE RATE... OPERATING AGREEMENT... CLAUSE 3F... 7.45... 1.6.... Then, JULIA'S VOICE...

JULIA'S VOICE

Over a three year period, my principal earnings will quadruple. Wow, I've become quite an investment, Davis. I'm gaining interest by the minute.

DAVIS

Your father. He's concerned about your legacy.

JULIA'S VOICE

That's a stupid word. Percentage, decimal point...

DAVIS

I know. I said the same thing.

JULIA'S VOICE

Legacies are for *important* people who did *important* things. Dividend. M.L.K., J.F.K., F.D.R... pretty much anyone with recognizable initials.

DAVIS

You fostered those kittens once.
That was nice.

JULIA'S VOICE

Don't be an idiot. Take the money.
It's yours.

DAVIS

I don't want it. It won't make me
happy. I'm having a little crisis.

JULIA'S VOICE

You feel like something's missing?

DAVIS

Yes. I'm trying to take everything
apart, but...

JULIA'S VOICE

Did you take *us* apart yet?

This never occurred to him. He waits for more...

JULIA'S VOICE (CONT'D)

This conversation is too obvious.
Just sign me already...

INT. HOME DEPOT -- DAY

Davis and Chris walk down an aisle. Davis pushes a CART...
it's already filled with a number of demolition tools.

CHRIS

Why are you buying all this shit?
Don't they have tools for you?

DAVIS

I quit that job. New project. New
tools.

He grabs a few METAL PRY BARS... different shapes, sizes.
Throws them in the cart and keeps moving...

CHRIS

Davis, if I asked you a question,
you'd give me an straight answer
right? I mean, that's your thing...
you're honest about everything, right?

DAVIS

That is my thing.

CHRIS

Do you think I'm gay?

Davis slows down a little.

DAVIS

I don't know, Chris. Do you think you're gay?

CHRIS

I don't know. I think maybe. But I figured you would tell me.

Davis grabs a SLEDGE HAMMER... throws it in the cart.

DAVIS

Well, let's figure it out together. Do you like boys or girls?

Chris looks perplexed.

DAVIS (CONT'D)

Okay... let's take a step back. I'll simplify. Do you like girls?

CHRIS

I don't know. I mean, I think Jennifer Hymen is pretty. She flirts with me in gym and I can see the outline of her underwear through her sweat pants. But I'm not sure if I like her or I'm just fixating.

Davis stops.

DAVIS

You go to school with a girl named Jennifer Hymen? That's really her name?

CHRIS

Yeah.

DAVIS

That fuckin' blows.

(keeps moving)

Okay... what about boys? Is there a boy at school that you like? Do you find someone attractive?

Davis looks over the POWER TOOLS.

CHRIS

Maybe Andrew White. He's a Junior, but he has the same gym period too. We have to get changed together.

DAVIS

And do you watch him... when he's
getting changed?

CHRIS

No.

DAVIS

Then I don't think you're gay.

Davis throws a POWER DRILL in the cart.

CHRIS

But I'm trying not to look. I have
to tell myself not to.

DAVIS

Okay... that's normal though. You're
young. You're curious.

CHRIS

And sometimes I imagine his cock in
my mouth.

DAVIS

Oh. That's different.

Davis stops again. Sorts through this new information.

DAVIS (CONT'D)

Well, I think you're probably gay,
Chris. But it's also possible you
could be bisexual. Either way, you're
gonna get tortured. If I were you,
I'd pretend to like girls for a few
more years. Then move to a major city.
New York, San Francisco... maybe Los
Angeles if you prefer warmer weather.

Davis grabs a "SAWS ALL" off the shelf... it looks exactly
like the bone-saw from his daydream. Nice.

DAVIS (CONT'D)

Anything else?

INT. KAREN'S HOUSE (BATHROOM) -- NIGHT

Karen sits in the empty tub smoking a joint. All alone.
Several YELLOW LETTERS crumpled around her.

INT. DAVIS'S HOME -- DAY

Davis has his new tools laid out on his expensive wood floor.
Chris steps up next to him. Both wearing SAFETY GOGGLES.

DAVIS

Choose your weapon.

Chris eyes the instruments of destruction. He picks up MASSIVE SLEDGE HAMMER... barely able to lift it.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Don't be so ambitious. Try this...

He offers more suitable tool... Chris takes it. Davis reaches for his new "Saws All." He grasps it firmly.

CHRIS
What are we doing again?

DAVIS
We're taking my marriage apart.

CUT TO:

THE KITCHEN...

A LOUD, METAL GRIND... Davis is cutting into the COUNTER TOP, his whole body vibrating. Behind him, Chris swings a sledge with all his might, bashing the feeble CABINETS...

QUICK CUTS AROUND THE HOUSE...

-- The boys smash, cut and break everything in sight. TABLES, WINDOWS, CHANDELIERS... SHEET ROCK WALLS CRUMBLE.

EXT. DAVIS'S STREET -- DAY

Davis's NEIGHBOR gets his mail. He HEARS THE SOUNDS OF DESTRUCTION and looks over at the Mitchell house. A BOWLING BALL crashes through an upstairs window.

INT. BATHROOM -- DAY

Chris bashes a PORCELAIN TOILET with a SLEDGE HAMMER. WATER SPRAYS EVERYWHERE.

Davis comes in carrying a TELEVISION. Chris steps back... DAVIS HURLS IT THROUGH THE SHOWER DOOR... GLASS SHATTERS.

CHRIS
Fuckin' A.

Chris waits for F-word approval. But it rang a little false.

DAVIS
I admire your commitment. Keep at it.

EXT. DAVIS'S HOME/ FRONT PORCH -- EVENING

Davis and Chris sit on the steps. Each drinking a beer. A job well done. THEY SEE the STATION WAGON inching up the road. It slows to a stop in front of his house. Idling...

CHRIS (to Davis)
Who's that?

Davis has no idea. He stands up. Grabs a LOOSE BRICK and starts walking toward the street...

THE CAR STARTS TO PULL AWAY. We can see A MALE FIGURE in the front seat. DAVIS RUNS FOR IT... THE CAR ACCELERATES...

HE TOSSES THE BRICK THROUGH THE REAR WINDOW...

DAVIS
WHO THE FUCK DRIVES A STATION WAGON?!

The taillights fade down the block.

INT. KAREN'S KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Karen eats by herself at the kitchen table. Chris enters, covered in dirt. He goes to the refrigerator. She watches him, badly wanting to make a connection.

KAREN
So, you've been hanging out with
Davis, huh?

Chris doesn't acknowledge her. He vanishes down the hall.

INT. KAREN'S HOUSE/ LIVING ROOM -- LATER

Karen enters to find Chris on the couch FAST ASLEEP. The TV turned down low. She makes her way over and quietly sits next to him. After a moment, she eases him onto her lap and watches him sleep. She RUNS HER FINGERS THROUGH HIS HAIR...

KAREN (whispering)
I don't know how to talk to you.
I'm afraid to say the wrong thing.
Why don't you just tell me, okay?
Tell me what to say and I'll say it.
Tell me what to do. I don't want to
pretend anymore.

He's still asleep. She leans over and gently KISSES HIS EYELIDS. His body stirs and he rolls over, facing away from her. His EYES OPEN for just a brief moment... but long enough to know he was listening.

EXT. DAVIS'S DRIVEWAY -- DAY

Davis and Chris are walking down the driveway, covered in dirt. There's a FLATBED TRUCK ROLLING down the street. It gets closer. WE NOW SEE on the back of the truck...

CHRIS
Is that a bulldozer?

DAVIS
You can buy just about anything on
Ebay.
(then)
I hope it comes with a manual.

EXT. DAVIS'S STREET -- LATER

Davis DRIVES HIS NEW BULLDOZER down the street. A SMALL CROWD has gathered. Chris watches from the curb. He shifts gears... the rig BUCKS AND STALLS. QUIET.

Davis turns the key... the engine GRINDS. He turns it again... it ROARS TO LIFE.

The rig lurches forward, parents hold their children close. He turns onto his grass and stops. The ENGINE REVS, SMOKE BILLOWS...

Behind him, A MERCEDES SEDAN pulls up to the curb, the window powers down. It's PHIL AND MEG.

Then, Davis CHARGES. The bulldozer tramples his lawn and CRASHES THROUGH THE FRONT OF THE HOUSE... the PORCH COLLAPSES. CONCRETE SPLINTERS. The machine STALLS.

An eerie silence follows. Neighbors chatter with disbelief as Davis emerges from the dust. Phil and Meg now stand on the sidewalk, sickened by this sight. Chris keeps his distance.

DAVIS (walking over)
Phil. Meg. Did you wanna come in?

MEG
This was my daughters home. You had no right.

PHIL
This ends now. My attorneys will be in touch.

Phil pulls Meg away and helps her in the car. He turns back.

PHIL (CONT'D)
You're a disgrace, Davis. You've destroyed everything. How does that make you feel?

DAVIS
It doesn't.

Phil gets in, the car pulls away. Davis looks back at the shell of his home. That look of dissatisfaction creeps in.

INT. DAVIS'S HOME -- LATER

Davis stands in the middle of his house and surveys the utter destruction. It's completely torn down to the frame.

ROOM TO ROOM. Davis sifts through the debris. Something must be missing. Something still need smashing.

IN THE BEDROOM. He searching the remains of his marriage. Complete destruction. Nothing left to take apart. Except...

A DRESSER. Still intact. Davis grabs the SLEDGEHAMMER AND STARTS SWINGING. The antique wood splinters. JULIA'S CLOTHES spew everywhere. He keeps going till there's nothing left standing. Complete destruction.

He drops the sledge and sits down. Exhausted. Something catches his eye... AN ENVELOPE beneath her underwear drawer.

INT. DAVIS'S BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Davis sets the envelope down on the bed. The front is labeled, "Julia Eastman-Mitchell. June 5, 2001." Chris comes in behind him.

CHRIS
What's that?

Davis peels it open. Removes an OFFICIAL DOCUMENT. The cover reads "FRYMAN MEDICAL GROUP." Davis flips the page to find...

AN ULTRASOUND. He freezes.

ON the details. DATE: JUNE 5, 2001. PATIENT: JULIA EASTMAN-MITCHELL. Finally, the FETAL PICTURE. A black and white blur, very obscure. He looks closer. Even closer...

A TINY HEARTBEAT. Gentle, almost imperceptible. The shape of the fetus is suddenly clear.

INT. KAREN'S SPARE BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Davis and Karen lay next to each other. He's in his head.

KAREN
Carl comes home soon.

He doesn't respond. Karen slides closer. She starts kissing him. But there's no reaction. She stops.

KAREN (CONT'D)
It's not fair that you feel nothing
and I feel everything.

She turns her back to him.

EXT. STRIP MALL PARKING LOT -- MORNING

Karen comes out of the QUICK MART with a COFFEE AND BAGEL. She puts the coffee on her car, reaches for the handle. It's STUCK. Pulls HARDER. Still stuck. HER COFFEE SPILLS all over her new pantsuit.

KAREN SNAPS... starts KICKING THE CAR DOOR IN... really losing it. People stop to watch.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET -- DAY

Chris is walking home from school. His backpack over his shoulder. An OLD CAMARO pulls up next to him. Mint.

The window rolls down... it's ANDREW WHITE. Chris stops.

ANDREW

Wanna ride?

INT. ANDREW'S CAMARO -- MOMENTS LATER

The engine HUMS. Chris sits in the passenger's seat. Andrew drives, wearing his Track letter jacket.

ANDREW

You know anything about cars?

CHRIS

Not really.

ANDREW

This is a '69 Camaro. It's a classic. Probably worth more than your parents make a year.

Chris tries not to engage. Looking out the window.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

You going to Kirpatrick's party tonight? I hear they're getting some nasty stripper.

CHRIS

This is my street...

But Andrew keeps driving. He gives Chris a nod.

EXT. SKYVIEW PARK -- DAY

The Camaro pulls into the vacant parking lot. Empty basketball courts. Kids playing soccer in the distance.

INT. ANDREW'S CAMARO -- CONTINUOUS

Andrew turns off the engine. Chris keeps his distance.

ANDREW
Why are you so far away?

CHRIS
I don't know. I'm just sitting.

ANDREW
I've seen you watching me.

Chris won't look up.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
It's okay. You trust me, don't you?

Andrew puts his hand on Chris's neck. When he finally looks up, Andrew leans in to kiss him. Chris pulls away...

Andrew leans in again. This time, CHRIS LETS IT HAPPEN. He KISSES ANDREW BACK. Andrew puts his hand on Chris's thigh when ANOTHER CAR PULLS INTO THE LOT, MUSIC BLASTING...

ANDREW (noticing car) (CONT'D)
Oh, shit. Get out...

CHRIS
What?

ANDREW
Get the fuck out!

Chris hesitates... the car steers toward them...

ANDREW (CONT'D)
Get out of my fucking car, you faggot!

Andrew opens Chris's door and PUSHES HIM OUT... Chris hits the pavement just as the other car stops next to them...

EXT. CAMARO/ PARKING LOT -- CONTINUOUS

THREE GUYS (17) hop out just as Andrew jumps out past Chris.

ANDREW
Holy shit... this kid just tried to grab my cock!

TEEN #1
Yeah, right. Is that jizz on your lip, White?

ANDREW
Fuck you, Johnston.

They start taunting. Chris gets up...

ANDREW (CONT'D)

I was gonna give him a ride home. I
didn't know he was fucking homo.

CHRIS

Shut up! I am not!

TEEN #2

Oh my god, look... he's got a hard
on!

They tease Chris even more. Nowhere to run.

TEEN #3

Where did you find this kid? He's
so gay!

CHRIS

Stop saying that!

ANDREW

Go suck a dick, homo.

Chris is spinning... his rage gets the best of him... he tries to tackle Andrew. But Andrew PUNCHES HIM IN THE STOMACH... THROWS HIM TO THE GROUND.

The guys stand over him, LAUGHING, TAUNTING. Chris looks up. He only sees Andrew. He pulls himself to his feet, RUNS OFF...

INT. LINCOLN TUNNEL -- EVENING

Artificial lights streaming by. We're GLIDING ALONG.

DAVIS (O.S.)

Wrecking balls.

INT. SUV -- CONTINUOUS

Karen and Davis are both dressed up.

KAREN

What was that?

DAVIS

That's what I was thinking about.
Those huge metal balls that swing
from cranes. I figured you were
gonna ask, so...

(then)

I'd love to get my hands on one.

She looks at him for a beat.

KAREN (O.S.)
Why won't you tell me where we're
going?

DAVIS
I did. A get-together.

She fidgets nervously.

KAREN
Davis?

He looks over at her. Something on the tip of her tongue...

KAREN (CONT'D)
Never mind.

She puts her hand on her stomach. ON THAT FEELING.

INT. CHRIS'S BEDROOM -- LATER

Chris comes in and slams his bedroom door. He starts pacing, the weight of his teenage world crushing down. He sits down and hangs his head in his hands. He's in a dark place. Then, a decision. He reaches under the bed...

AND PULLS OUT THE GUN.

EXT. KAREN'S HOUSE/ DRIVEWAY -- LATER

Chris walks out the door and over to his mother's car. He gets in. The car starts and he pulls out of the driveway...

INT. PHIL AND MEG'S BROWNSTONE -- EVENING

Davis and Karen enter the grand living room to witness a catered affair. About THIRTY GUESTS mingling with champagne and plastic smiles. Several people notice Davis and the whispers begin. Karen still isn't sure what this is yet.

Meg and Phil walk over to them.

PHIL
Davis. I don't remember sending you
an invitation.

DAVIS
Maybe it got lost in the mail, Phil.
You wanted me to be a part of this,
right? You said it was important.

Phil glares at him. Karen is just realizing where she is. Trying not to panic. Other guests pretend not to watch.

MEG (staring at Karen)
Who's your date.

DAVIS
This is Karen. She's in customer service.

KAREN (ultra uncomfortable)
Hi.

INT. PHIL AND MEG'S BROWNSTONE/ HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

Karen pulls Davis aside. She's in panic mode.

KAREN
I hate you for this. I'm leaving.

DAVIS
Karen...

KAREN
What's *wrong* with you? Why would you do this?

DAVIS
Listen...

KAREN
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU!?

DAVIS
I DON'T KNOW!

That exchange was a little loud. The crowd hushes. Karen gets her bearings.

KAREN
I don't know how to help you, Davis. I'm broken too. If we're just using each other, fine. But lets be honest about it. Tell me what you want.

DAVIS
I want you to stay.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET -- NIGHT

Chris gets out of the car and walks toward a HOUSE PARTY at the end of the block. Kids are outside drinking and smoking. WE SEE ANDREW'S CAMARO parked in the driveway.

INT. HOUSE PARTY/ LIVING ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Chris walks through the front door to LOUD MUSIC and KEG STANDS. He's smaller than these kids. Definitely out of place. He drifts through the crowd. Anonymous.

EXT. HOUSE PARTY/ BACK YARD -- MOMENTS LATER

Chris wanders around with his hands in his pockets. He's searching, anger and fear in his eyes. He stops... WE SEE Andrew White, surrounded by a group of kids.

INT. BROWNSTONE/ BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Karen is DIGGING THROUGH HER PURSE. She pulls out a ONE-HITTER... but it's empty. She keeps searching. Finds an EMPTY BAGGIE... getting desperate. Counting the seconds.

EXT. BROWNSTONE/ BACKYARD -- EVENING

Karen comes outside to a handful of guests smoking cigarettes. She surveys the situation, but nobody fits the profile.

Then, she sees TODD... the cocky, young swimmer. He's SNEAKING BOURBON INTO HIS SODA.

INT. PHIL'S STUDY -- NIGHT

Phil is behind his desk smoking a cigar. Davis sits across from him. Steven in the b.g.

PHIL
I'm a good judge of character, Davis.
I always knew you were weak. But
tonight you've outdone yourself. I
want you and you're friend to leave.

Phil puffs on his cigar...

DAVIS
What's for dinner?

PHIL
Don't you be smug with me. I still
got enough in my gut to climb across
this table and kick your teeth in.

DAVIS
You were right, Phil. I've destroyed
everything. I wanna start putting
things back together. How much will
that cost?

Phil looks at him closely. Was that an offer? Davis doesn't flinch. Phil opens his drawer and finds the PROPOSAL. He slides it across the table...

Davis looks at the cover... A WOMAN ON A HORSE. TREES.
SETTING SUN. Very pleasant.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Do you have a pen?

EXT. HOUSE PARTY/ BACK YARD -- NIGHT

WE'RE WITH Andrew now as he fills his cup up at the keg. Chris steps up in front of him. He has his hand tucked in his SWEATSHIRT POCKET... waiting for Andrew to look up.

CLOSE ON CHRIS'S HAND... ON THE GUN.

Andrew finally looks up to find Chris staring at him. Andrew just stands there. They're eyes are locked. Neither making a move... Chris filled with confusion, fear. AND THEN...

Andrew walks away. Chris is frozen. He couldn't do it.

EXT. PHIL AND MEG'S BROWNSTONE -- NIGHT

Karen and Todd are tucked away beside the house. She's taking a HUGE HIT off a JOINT. The DIN of PARTY CHATTER in b.g.

TODD

Whoa, easy... that shit glows in the dark.

She COUGHS IT OUT. They stand there in the darkness. THUNDER RUMBLES. It's starting to drizzle.

TODD (CONT'D)

Hey, Carol?

KAREN

It's Karen.

TODD

Oh... sorry.

(then)

Karen, can I feel your tits.

She looks at him with disgust, but it's clear she's more disgusted with herself. She takes another massive hit...

INT. KAREN'S CAR/ RESIDENTIAL STREET-- NIGHT

Chris sits in the car with the gun in his hands. RAIN POUNDING ON THE ROOF. He's crying. Mad at himself. Mad at the world. This pain can't be real.

He looks out the windshield... and suddenly, he calms. Like someone just told him a secret... and everything is better. He STARTS THE CAR. PUTS IT IN GEAR.

SLAMS DOWN ON THE GAS...

CHRIS RACES DOWN THE STREET. WE SEE THE CAMARO PARKED IN THE DRIVEWAY. CHRIS GOES FASTER AND FASTER THROUGH THE DRIVING RAIN... THE GAUGE READING 40, 50, 60... HE YANKS THE WHEEL AND JUMPS THE CURB...

JUST AS HE'S ABOUT TO HIT THE CAMARO, THERE'S A FLASH...

WE WHITE OUT TO:

INT. PHIL AND MEG'S BROWNSTONE/ DINING ROOM -- LATER

No expense spared. A table has been set for thirty guests. Phil at the head, Meg at the foot. A WAIT STAFF stands by.

THUNDER RUMBLES OUTSIDE. We find Karen sitting alone with her hand on her stomach. She's really high. Davis walks in and sits down next to her.

DAVIS

I thought you left.

KAREN

No. I'm still here.

Todd sits at the other side of the table. He winks at Karen.

CLINK, CLINK, CLINK. The room quiets. Phil has the floor. Dark suit. Tie. In his element.

PHIL (addressing guests)

Julia's mother and I... and her husband, Davis... would like to thank you all for sharing this special evening with us.

Eyes on Davis... renewed respect.

PHIL (addressing guests) (CONT'D)

The last month has been difficult to say the least. But a night like tonight... surrounded by friends and family... it dulls the pain. And it fills my heart with pride to know we're making a difference.

Phil smiles fondly. He starts to move around the table.

PHIL (strolling) (CONT'D)

For those of you who were fortunate enough to be a part of Julia's life, you already know what a wonderful person she was. A beautiful soul.

ON KAREN... she's even more high. Staring at her plate.

PHIL (strolling) (CONT'D)

Meg and I will remember the moments.

(fond memories)

A little girl on her horse. Peeling glue off her fingers after art class.

(MORE)

PHIL (strolling) (CONT'D)
Sifting through the trash for a lost
retainer...

ON DAVIS... this speech sounds familiar.

PHIL (CONT'D)
And on her wedding night. Looking
so radiant in her mother's dress.

ON MEG... her eyes swimming. Phil has arrives behind her
and puts his hand on her shoulder. She touches it.

ON KAREN... she's noticing something... on the wall directly
behind Phil and Meg is a PORTRAIT OF THEMSELVES. It shows
Meg sitting at the table and Phil behind her with one hand
on her shoulder.

PHIL (CONT'D)
Julia brought out the best in people.
It was her gift. Now, through the
Julia Eastman-Mitchell Scholarship
Fund, that gift will be her legacy.

A few claps give way to APPLAUSE. Karen WHISPERS TO DAVIS.
He looks over at the portrait and the uncanny likeness to
the real thing. It's EXACTLY THE SAME... EVEN THE CLOTHES.

The applause is suddenly replaced with DAVIS'S LAUGHTER.
Everyone TURNS. Meg hardens. Karen covers her eyes.

Davis finally gets a handle on it. Phil stands his ground.

PHIL (CONT'D)
I'd like to introduce you to three
outstanding young adults... the
finalists for the first annual
scholarship. Please welcome...
(introducing)
Jennifer Morello.

JENNIFER stands... the guests APPLAUD.

PHIL (CONT'D)
Benjamin Howard.

BENJAMIN stands... continued APPLAUSE.

PHIL (CONT'D)
And Todd Koehler.

TODD stands at his seat and Davis LOSES IT AGAIN. The
applause subsides. DAVIS'S LAUGHTER FILLS THE ROOM.

MEG
That's enough!

The room goes silent. Karen hides her face.

MEG (to Davis) (CONT'D)
I want you to leave.

DAVIS
What?

MEG
You heard me. You don't belong here.

Meg stares down at him...

DAVIS
I disagree, Meg. I think I do belong here. I'm sending these brats to college.

MEG
Get out. And take your white trash girlfriend with you.

PHIL
Meg...

Karen looks at Meg. Hurt. Embarrassed. High.

DAVIS
You should be nicer. You should treat Karen with respect.

MEG
Or what? Are you threatening me?

DAVIS
Maybe I am. Maybe I'll stand up on the table and stomp all over this nice food. Maybe I'll swing from the chandelier and break your expensive dinner ware. I can do that. That's what I'm good at.
(then)
I own a bulldozer. I can destroy all of this.

MEG
Go ahead.

She calls his bluff. They stare each other down.

MEG (CONT'D)
You're nothing, Davis. You're a disappointment. Your marriage was fiction. Julia told me everything.

DAVIS
Did she tell you she was pregnant?

PHIL
Goddamn it!

Everyone is silent. Stunned.

DAVIS
Five years ago, Phil. She never told me. Why? What happened?

PHIL
You're a Goddamn liar.

DAVIS
I would've been a good father. A child might have changed things.

PHIL
Get out of my house!

DAVIS
Why didn't she tell me?

MEG
Because it wasn't yours.

This hits like a bomb. Karen looks at Davis painfully. The guests don't dare to move.

MEG (CONT'D)
She had a relationship with a man for two years. You never paid attention.
(then, a dagger)
I took her. For the procedure.

Phil looks crushed. Karen finally gets up and WALKS OUT. Davis is trying to put the pieces together.

DAVIS
Who was it? Is he here?

Everyone looks at each other. Meg shakes her head.

MEG
It doesn't matter. You don't matter.
Go home.

Davis has nothing left. He slowly makes his exit.

EXT. CITY STREET -- NIGHT

Karen walks through the rain, trying to get away as fast as possible. She flags a cab...

INT. CAB -- CONTINUOUS

The cab pulls away. Karen has her hand on her stomach...

KAREN
Port authority.

Then, her PHONE RINGS.

INT. PHIL AND MEG'S BROWNSTONE -- NIGHT

Davis walks toward the front door in a haze. He stops in front of a TABLE... PICTURES OF JULIA HAVE BEEN SET OUT...

PHOTO AFTER PHOTO. We're seeing her for the first time, and it seems Davis is too. Long brown hair. Warm eyes. This was someone's daughter. Someone's wife.

ANOTHER PICTURE... Davis picks it up to get a closer look. WE DON'T SEE IT, but for the first time, he's affected.

MEG
I hope it hurts.

Davis turns. Meg is in the hall.

DAVIS
It does.
(then)
I didn't love her, Meg. I'm sorry.

MEG
It's okay. She didn't love you either.

Meg walks out. Davis just stands there.

INT. LINCOLN TUNNEL -- NIGHT

Davis drives through the tunnel. Lights rushing past... as if the tunnel were moving and Davis was standing still.

INT. KAREN'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Davis comes through the front door. The house is dark.

DAVIS
Karen!

He disappears into the kitchen. Searching. When he walks back out, CARL IS THERE... with a handful of YELLOW LETTERS.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Carl. Hey. Is Karen home?

CARL (realizing)
You wrote these. Didn't you?

DAVIS
It's not what you think.

CARL (re: letters)
What is this shit? Some kind of
code? What the fuck is this!?

DAVIS
You wouldn't understand.

CARL
Are you fucking my fiance?

DAVIS
No.

CARL
Don't lie to me.

DAVIS
Okay, yes. Once. But she's not
your fiance yet. You're smothering
her, Carl.

WHACK. Carl punches Davis in the mouth. Davis stands there, stunned. Blood trickles from his lip.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
I deserved that. It's fine. I
completely...

WHACK. He hits Davis harder. Davis wobbles, but maintains his balance. He's actually getting off on this...

DAVIS (CONT'D)
SHIT! YES!

Carl grabs him and THROWS HIM OUT THE DOOR...

EXT. KAREN'S HOUSE/ FRONT LAWN -- CONTINUOUS

Carl goes with him, they hit the ground and start wrestling on the grass. Carl pins him down, punching him in the face. But Davis isn't even attempting to fight back.

CARL
Fight back, you son of a bitch!

DAVIS
NO!

Carl HITS HIM AGAIN...

DAVIS (CONT'D)
YES!

CARL
Fight back!

DAVIS
NO!

Carl raises his fist, ready to unload, a clear shot... but he can't do it. He rolls off of Davis and sits in the grass.

Davis lays still. Beat and bleeding.

DAVIS (barely audible) (CONT'D)
I just wanted a refund.

Carl is holding a TOOTH.

CARL
I think that's yours.

He puts the tooth on Davis's chest and gets up.

CARL (CONT'D)
Karen's at the hospital. Chris had an accident.

Carl goes inside. Davis is flat on his back, staring up at the night sky. It's perfectly clear.

CUT TO:

EXT. INDUSTRIAL DEMOLITION SITE -- DAYDREAM

We're in the midst of an industrial wasteland. Crumbled buildings, exposed steel, wind whipping... post apocalyptic.

Davis wanders about. He's lost. Beaten.

He looks up at A GIANT CRANE... and swinging from the crane is a WRECKING BALL. It climbs high into the sky... then, starts to come back down...

It sweeps through frame and PULVERIZES DAVIS.

CUT TO BLACK.

KAREN'S VOICE
Davis.

Her voice repeats softly in the darkness.

KAREN'S VOICE (CONT'D)
Davis.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING AREA -- EARLY MORNING

FADE IN on Davis, fast asleep. His clothes are dirty, bloody. He opens his eyes to find Karen standing in front of him.

DAVIS

How is he?

She sits. Her face is pale. Exhausted.

KAREN

He's in surgery. They're not saying much.

She looks like she might crumble at any moment. Down the hall WE SEE Carl pacing back and forth, keeping his distance.

DAVIS

Listen, Karen...

KAREN

I'm ready to tell you. That thing I've never told anyone. Okay?

She looks at him very seriously.

KAREN (CONT'D)

I'm gonna tell you, and then I want you to leave. Do you understand?

Davis looks back at her. She needs this badly. He nods.

KAREN (CONT'D)

It's when Chris was sick. He was getting worse and worse and the doctors didn't know why. They said I should prepare myself. I sat there all night watching him sleep. He was so still. So quiet. Like he wasn't alive. And I started thinking about that. What it would be like. To be new. To start over. Then, for a split second... not even long enough to be considered a moment... I wanted it to be true. I didn't want him to wake up.

She fights the tears. Like she's too ashamed.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Before that day, somewhere deep down, I think I hated him. After that day, I hated myself.

She looks at him. Hurting.

KAREN (CONT'D)
You lied. You said you'd fix me,
Davis. It's not fair.

DAVIS
What do you want, Karen?

KAREN
I wanna take it back.

And there it is. The truth. They both sit there. Broken.

DOCTOR (O.S.)
Ms. Moreno?

Karen looks up... the DOCTOR stands by the nurse's desk. She gets up and goes to him. Davis stays there and watches.

The doctor starts talking. We can't hear what he's saying, but Karen doesn't let him finish. She starts crying. The doctor leads her away. She's gone.

Davis stands up. Not quite sure where to go from here. He looks over to see a VENDING MACHINE against the wall.

He turns and walks off down the hall. FOOTSTEPS ECHO...

EXT. CEMETERY ROAD -- DAY

Davis drives down the winding cemetery road. Weathered headstones peeking out of the green grass. Its peaceful.

KAREN (V.O.)
*Dear Davis. I didn't see this coming.
I'm starting to wonder if things would
be different if I never met you. If
I never picked up the phone.*

He passes a group of MOURNERS.

KAREN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*I wonder if I ever would have been
able to forgive myself.*

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

Karen walks in to see her son laying completely still. Tubes and monitors everywhere. She stands over him, tears flooding her eyes. She reaches out and touches his hand. Her heart breaking.

KAREN (V.O.)
*I guess I'll never know. But I do
know this... I wouldn't change any
of it.*

Chris grasps her hand. His eyes open...

KAREN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*Because I don't have that feeling in
my stomach anymore. Now it's in my
heart.*

Chris squeezes her hand tight. Tears fall from Karen's eyes. They need each other more than anything.

KAREN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And I hope that's where it stays.

EXT. CEMETERY ROAD -- DAY

Davis pulls to the side of the road and parks. He notices a STATION WAGON in front of him. The rear window SHATTERED.

EXT. CEMETERY -- DAY

Davis walks through the cemetery, passing headstones and monuments. As he gets closer to Julia's grave, he notices a MAN (40's), already there. He seems distraught.

Davis takes in this sight for a moment before moving on to her grave. The man looks at Davis. Davis doesn't look back.

DAVIS
I know who you are. It's okay. I know everything. Except your name.

MICHAEL
It's Michael.

Michael's face tightens a bit.

DAVIS
That's a good name. I never really read the bible, but I know it's in there a bunch. How did you meet her, Michael?

Michael looks at him, choked up. Trying to explain...

DAVIS (CONT'D)
It's not important. I guess none of it is. Except, maybe...
(then)
Did you love her?

MICHAEL
I don't... I don't...

DAVIS
I think I did a long time ago.
(MORE)

DAVIS (CONT'D)

And then I forgot. I realize that now. But she deserved more.

(then)

I hope you loved her, Michael. That would make this whole thing easier.

MICHAEL (confused)

I don't know what you're talking about.

(then, choked up)

I was in the other car.

Michael can barely get it out. Davis doesn't understand.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I was driving the car that hit you. I killed her.

The pieces finally come together. Davis is taken aback.

MICHAEL (grasping) (CONT'D)

I've been trying to... I've been trying...

(finally)

I'm sorry. Please... I'm so sorry.

Michael REPEATS THIS OVER AND OVER through his tears... Davis puts his hand on Michael's shoulder.

INT. NEPTUNE DINER -- NIGHT

Davis sits alone in a booth... flipping through songs on the BABY JUKEBOX. He puts a quarter in... presses a button...

The WAITRESS stops at his booth.

DAVIS

Do you know if Karen Moreno is here yet?

She looks at him... this guy again? His CELL PHONE RINGS.

DAVIS (to waitress) (CONT'D)

Never mind.

He looks out the window. Answers...

DAVIS (into phone) (CONT'D)

You're watching me, aren't you?

KAREN (O.S.)

Yes.

DAVIS (into phone)
Did you see me pick my teeth with
the sugar packet?

KAREN (O.S.)
Uh-huh.

HEART'S "CRAZY ON YOU" begins over the diner speakers. Davis scans the dark lot, but he doesn't see her.

DAVIS
Where..?

KAREN (O.S.)
You know what this song does to me.
Why would you play this?

He realizes SHE'S INSIDE. He turns over his shoulder... she's at A BOOTH IN THE CORNER. He gets up and walks over.

AT KAREN'S TABLE. Davis sits down across from her.

DAVIS
Hi.

KAREN
Hi.

DAVIS
I got your letter. I could hear
your voice while I was reading it.

KAREN
Did it fit your mental picture?

She smiles. Davis smiles back. She takes a FOLDED PIECE OF PAPER out of her bag.

KAREN (CONT'D)
Chris wanted me to give you this. I
promised I wouldn't read it. So...

She slides it over. Davis fiddles with it for a moment, so much to say. Not sure how.

KAREN (CONT'D)
Carl forgave me. He says I'm gonna
have to earn his trust again. And
he wants me to see a therapist.

DAVIS
A therapist. Okay.

KAREN
He thinks I have to work on *me* before
I can work on *us*.

DAVIS
What do you think, Karen?

KAREN
I think he's probably right. But I left him anyway.

Davis didn't see that coming. Karen seems proud of her choice.

KAREN (CONT'D)
I have no idea what I'm gonna do. I don't know where I'm going or any of that. But for some reason, I'm not afraid. And I'm not alone.

(then, finally)
That's the truth.

DAVIS
Feels good, doesn't it?

She lets herself smile. They both realize this is the end.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
I almost forgot, I have something for you. Hang on...

He slides out and walks over to the booth he was just sitting at. Karen waits patiently.

He returns carrying a FISHBOWL WITH A PLANT INSIDE.

KAREN
It's a plant.

DAVIS
And a fish. Look...

There's a COLORFUL FISH inside, feeding off the leaves.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
They need each other. The water feeds the plant, and the plant feeds the fish. It's symbiotic.

KAREN
What do I have to do?

DAVIS
Nothing. Just put it by a window, Karen. And love it.

Karen is touched by the gesture. She stands up. A sudden resolve about her. Davis stands up with her. She leans over and kisses him firm on the lips. And they stay like that for a long time, almost making a scene.

And when they finally separate, they look into each other and say goodbye without the words.

Karen picks up her plant-fish and walks out the door. Never looking back.

Davis sits down. Picks up the PIECE OF PAPER... unfolds it.

CHRIS (V.O.)

Davis. There's something I think you should see. Be at this address on Saturday at 11 am. Trust me.

ON THE LETTER... there's an address... SINATRA PARK.

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

P.S.

Davis TURNS THE LETTER OVER...

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

Go fuck yourself.

Davis grins.

DAVIS

He nailed it.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

Karen puts the PLANT-FISH down by the window where it will get plenty of light. She looks at it... the water takes care of the plant, the plant takes care of the fish. Then, she turns and looks at Chris who is sitting up in his bed.

KAREN

Metaphor.

EXT. SINATRA PARK -- DAY

Davis arrives at the park... a WATERFRONT PAVILION overlooking the East River at Lower Manhattan. HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE are gathered. Waiting for something.

Davis moves through the crowd, searching for some indication of what he's here for. He approaches a WOMAN.

DAVIS

What's going on?

Before she can speak, a LOUDSPEAKER CUTS IN...

LOUDSPEAKER VOICE

Ten, nine, eight...

She hurries into the crowd... everyone has their sights set on Manhattan, COUNTING DOWN TOGETHER...

LOUDSPEAKER VOICE (CONT'D)
Six, five, four...

Davis moves closer... looks out at the city.

LOUDSPEAKER VOICE (CONT'D)
Three, two, one...

A LOUD CRACK.

DAVIS'S POV: A BUILDING IMPLODES on the opposite side of the river. It COLLAPSES slowly. In stages. Crumbling to the ground. Floor by floor. A pure display of destruction.

Davis watches IN AWE. ANOTHER CRACK...

The BUILDING NEXT TO IT IMPLODES, collapsing the same way. Then, A THIRD BUILDING... it tumbles to the ground behind a HUGE CLOUD OF DEBRIS.

It's over... an eerie SILENCE.

EVERYONE CHEERS. Except Davis. He's watching the cloud of dust push out over the water. Blank.

He sits. Suddenly overwhelmed by the destruction. Then, we realize... he's crying. And this time it's real.

The crowd continues to CHEER while Davis empties himself out. We lose sight of him in the celebration.

INT. JASON'S PUB -- EVENING

Davis sits at a table in the dimly lit pub. The FOUNDATION PROPOSAL is on the table in front of him.

Phil appears in his overcoat. He sits down. Nothing welcoming about his demeanor.

PHIL
You've got two minutes.

Davis settles into his seat. Chooses his words.

DAVIS
I can't remember her, Phil. Not the way I want to.
(then)
I keep grasping for something that makes sense... a memory, an image... something pure. But I'm not sure it's there. I'm not sure it's here...

He points to his head.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
I need your help.

PHIL
It's too late.

DAVIS
Maybe if we go back... if we start
from the beginning. Maybe I'll
remember something new.

Davis reaches inside his jacket pocket. He takes out THE PHOTOGRAPH FROM THE PARTY. Puts it on the table.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Tell me about this girl.

He pushes it in front of Phil. Phil doesn't want to look. He tries not to. But he can't help it...

It's Julia as a LITTLE GIRL. She has a birthday cake in front of her. A smile that lights up the room. As Phil takes the memory in, we can see past the tough exterior.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Tell me, Phil... what made her happy?

Phil tries to maintain, but his feelings for his daughter get the best of him. He holds the picture in his hand.

PHIL (searching)
She was, um... she was always...
(then)
Horses. She loved horses. Riding,
jumping... it was everything to her.

DAVIS
Then why did she stop?

PHIL
She fell. Not bad. Some bruises.
But after that, she was afraid.

DAVIS
Huh. Horses. I didn't know that.
(then)
Or maybe I did.

Davis has his new memory. But there's something unsettling.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Isn't that sad?

PHIL
What?

DAVIS
To go through life afraid of the
thing you love?

PHIL
It's tragic.

Davis's wheels are turning. He puts his hand on the proposal.

DAVIS (re: proposal)
This isn't a legacy, Phil. It's not
Julia... it's a bank account.

He looks at the cover... A WOMAN ON A HORSE, SUN MELTING THE SKY. Very pleasant. Back at Phil...

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Let's give her something real.

INT. NJ TRANSIT TRAIN -- NIGHT

Davis is squeezed between two passengers on the CROWDED TRAIN. It rumbles along through the dark.

He sees JOHN IS SITTING A FEW ROWS BACK... FAST ASLEEP. He's not wearing his Yankees cap. And there's a WOMAN NEXT TO HIM (60's). She reaches over and brushes the hair off of John's forehead. It's his wife.

Davis watches as she moves slightly closer to her husband. Then, he turns back around. And CLOSES HIS EYES...

The LIGHTS FLICKER OUT...

SUPER: TWO MONTHS LATER...

EXT. SEASIDE BOARDWALK -- DAY

We follow Davis down the boardwalk. The green ocean at his side, hands tucked into his jacket pockets. A few KIDS dart past him, headed toward the CAROUSEL...

As he gets closer, we see BALLOONS ESCAPING INTO THE SKY. Then, THE FAINT SOUND OF THE ANTIQUE ORGAN.

Davis turns the corner and enters...

INT. CAROUSEL -- CONTINUOUS

It's a PARTY. Young and old here to celebrate the resurrection of a boardwalk classic. The ride has been COMPLETELY RENOVATED.

The NEWLY RESTORED HORSES ride up and down like porcelain thoroughbreds... kids SCREAMING with excitement. The facade freshly painted GOLD, SILVER, RED. A return to glory.

Davis slips in behind the crowd and takes in this beautiful site. He catches a glimpse of Ray... sitting behind the control panel, a SMILE FROM EAR TO EAR. Davis can't help but smile.

Then, he looks off to the side... sitting on a bench are PHIL AND MEG. Phil is LOOKING DIRECTLY AT DAVIS, his eyes desperately holding back emotion.

Phil holds his gaze on Davis for a moment, then nods. It's subtle, but it says everything. He takes Meg's hand and looks back at the kids... riding the horses with pure joy.

Davis squeezes through the crowd and walks back out to the boardwalk. As he disappears around the corner, we're left on a newly painted MURAL that reads... "JULIA'S CAROUSEL."

And next to it is a GIANT WINDOW. BEHIND IT... NOTHING BUT THE ATLANTIC OCEAN.

EXT. SEASIDE BOARDWALK -- MOMENTS LATER

We're with Davis again. Walking among boardwalk amusements...

DAVIS (V.O.)

Dear Second Generation Vending. The last few months have been full of twists and turns. But I must say, I think I've pulled through nicely. So, I guess this is the part where I tell you what I've learned...

A long beat. Nothing coming to mind.

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

Okay, better yet... here's what I didn't learn. I didn't learn to love. And I didn't learn to be a better person. I certainly don't know how to share or embrace my inner strength.

Suddenly, kids start RUNNING PAST HIM. Five, six, seven... they're RACING, and it's serious.

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

I guess I just feel a little bit better.

As the last kid passes, something comes over Davis. He starts RUNNING...

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

I feel like myself...

FASTER AND FASTER... closing in on the nine year olds. He cuts straight through the middle of the pack, running AS FAST AS HE CAN. HE PULLS AHEAD OF THE CROWD...

DAVIS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Maybe for the first time ever.

And blows them all away.

EXT. DAVIS'S HOUSE -- DAY

Davis carries his LETTER out to the mailbox. His house is in utter ruin, roped off by POLICE TAPE behind him.

DAVIS (V.O.)
This is probably going to be my last letter. But then again... who knows what might happen tomorrow.

He arrives at the mailbox just as the MAIL TRUCK IS ARRIVING.

DAVIS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Warmest regards, Davis Mitchell.
Period.

He hands the MAILMAN the letter.

MAILMAN (noticing)
Doing some renovations?

DAVIS (looking back)
I'm thinking about it.

The mailman gives Davis a STACK OF MAIL and pulls away.

He starts back up the driveway, flipping through his mail. He stops on one letter. From Second Generation Vending Company. A moment of truth.

He tears it open. An OFFICIAL DOCUMENT... WE SEE THE WORDS...

"Dear Mr. Mitchell. We have reviewed your claim and concluded that you're entitled to a full refund. Sorry for the inconvenience. Sincerely, Richard Miller. Customer Service."

He looks in the envelope. There's a CHECK... for 75 CENTS.

CUT TO BLACK.