

JOY

A Comedy

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The THUNDERING of a great waterfall.

EXT. RAINFOREST WATERFALL - DAY

TRIBAL MUSIC and VOICES in a foreign language beckon to CHAD FLYNN (22, kinda handsome, kinda smart, in tribal make-up, looking like a native of the Amazon). As the voices grow more encouraging, Chad's ecstatic face turns inquisitive, then alarmed, then downright terrified.

CUE CANDY-LAND MUSIC: Music reminiscent of happy moments in childhood. Probably xylophone.

INT. HOSPITAL CRITICAL CARE WARD - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

A NURSE ushers a nervous YOUNG CHAD (8) and YOUNG JOY (6) in to see DOUG (their father - 30's) and MARGARET (mother - 30's) lying in beds next to each other.

Young Chad carries a small suitcase, wears too-big sunglasses, and a hooded sweatshirt for a cape. Young Joy wears mesh fairy wings, a fireman's helmet worn with the bill forward, and carries a stuffed T-rex. Young Chad gapes at the condition of his parents.

Doug smiles despite the bandages, traction, and gunshot wound. Margaret's head and shoulders are covered with bandages.

Margaret and Doug, chipper, try to out-chipper each other.

MARGARET AND DOUG (IN UNISON)

Hi, kids!

The children stand paralyzed at the door.

DOUG

Ha. Wow. Come and give your father a hug.

MARGARET

First give me a kiss.

Young Chad looks at his sister, they decide to stay put.

DOUG

Sorry about tonight, kiddo's.

MARGARET

Yeah. We realize that Mommy and Daddy should find a better way to resolve our little arguments.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOUG
But we have a solution-

MARGARET
That I'm sure the two of you will
love-

DOUG
We're getting a divorce!

Chad's eyes widen with alarm.

MARGARET
Isn't that great?

DOUG
No more fights and no more
problems, and we'll be much
happier!

MARGARET
What do you kiddo's think?

Chad purses his lips, trying to keep strong for Joy.

DOUG
We want you both to know... For
sure for sure... That this has
nothing to do with anything that
you two did. Okay?

MARGARET
Absolutely not. It's just that
sometimes when you marry a complete
bastard-

DOUG
Or a raving bitch-

MARGARET
Things don't work out no matter how
hard you try.

DOUG
Exactly.

Joy's lip quivers.

MARGARET
But even though we hate each other-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DOUG

We both still love you. We both
love you equal. That's why one of
you is going to live with me-

MARGARET

And the other with me-

Chad grabs Joy's hand.

DOUG

But don't worry. Please don't worry-

MARGARET

Because whoever comes with me-

DOUG

Will spend weekends and holidays
with me. And whoever lives with me-

MARGARET

Will spend weekends and holidays
with me.

The kids look at each other, scared. Chad steps forward.

YOUNG CHAD

Can't Joy and I live together?

MARGARET

I'm sorry honeybunch-

DOUG

- But that wouldn't be fair to
either of us...

MARGARET

You understand that I'm sure...

DOUG

So. Chadsworth. Do you want to live
with me?

MARGARET

Or me? I'm getting the house-

DOUG

But I make the money-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MARGARET

But he's going to have to give me
half of it until whoever comes with
me is eighteen.

YOUNG CHAD

The house burned down.

DOUG

When?

YOUNG CHAD

After you left.

The Parents stare. Joy sniffles.

MARGARET

Why don't you kids think about it?

The kids back up to the door.

DOUG

You're not taking my son.

MARGARET

Fine. I get Joy, a new house, and
three more years of child support.

It's settled. Chad turns from his parents to his sister. She
grabs her fairy wings and starts flapping them. They don't
take her anywhere.

TITLE CARD: JOY.

INT. RE-ASSIMILATION OFFICE - DAY

MS. FAKAD (40's, world-weary) sits at a cluttered desk,
smiling the smile of a bad airline steward. A map of the
world with colored thumbtacks hangs behind her.

MS. FAKAD

Welcome home. Chad Flinn. You've
done the world a great service,
staying with the people of-
(she can't pronounce it)
-a foreign land and teaching them a
better way of life and modern house
construction.

CHAD, dressed in khakis and a button-down, looks civilized
but for the bone necklace jingling on his neck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Over his shoulder hangs a leather tribal satchel, a small suitcase rests in his hand.

CHAD

They call themselves the People of the Forest.

MS. FAKAD

Remarkable.

(reading)

They will remember your kindness and knowledge for generations...

Ms. Fakad looks at a puppy calendar on the wall.

MS. FAKAD (CONT'D)

You're home a month early.

CHAD

It was time for me to leave.

She couldn't care less, and keeps up her bored reading.

MS. FAKAD

I'd like to address a few aspects of re-assimilation to look out for.

(flips the page)

Depression. Confusion. Heartburn.

Insecurity. Fear of personal safety. Too many people. Too much trash. Unnatural odors. Deep irreconcilable loss. These feelings are typical, and we urge you to pay them no mind, as you must recalibrate to life here. Home.

(the bad smile)

We try to make your re-adjustment as easy as possible...

She slides an envelope across the desk. Chad opens it to find a small stash of twenty dollar bills.

CHAD

This could feed the entire village.

Ms. Fakad removes a thumbtack from South America on the map. Chad drops the money in his satchel.

MS. FAKAD

Here, it'll buy you lunch. Isn't that remarkable?

She ushers him to a door labeled "WELCOME ROOM."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MS. FAKAD (CONT'D)
On behalf of the American
Missionaries of Modern Society I
thank you, Chad Flinn.

With that, she pushes open the door to reveal-

INT. WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

An empty room.

MS. FAKAD
You don't have anyone to pick you
up?

He smiles at Ms. Fakad. Her fake smile meets his.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - DAY

Chad steps through a door into the city-

IT IS VERY LOUD. Taxicabs and SUV's hoard the streets.
PEDESTRIANS hurry along on their commute. There are too many
people. There is too much trash.

Chad stands in the center of it all - in total shock. The
city sounds get LOUDER and LOUDER.

Chad, unable to take it, steps back into the door.

INT. RE-ASSIMILATION OFFICE BATHROOM - DAY

On the sink rests a white powder wrapped in a leaf. Putting a
drop of water on his finger, Chad mixes the moisture into the
powder, and applies the resulting paint onto his face, adding
a third stripe to each cheek.

CHAD
(chanting a ritual)
Yamanemka kamanemya, kamanemya,
yamanemka.

Nodding approval to himself in the mirror, he wraps up his
belongings, and faces the door.

CHAD (CONT'D)
Too many people. Too much trash.
Too much noise. All these feelings
are typical.

Chad steps forward.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - EVENING

Chad walks down the street, in tribal make-up. He's a bit hesitant, but the more he walks, the more confident his step. Nobody pays him any attention.

EXT. JOY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Chad BUZZES the buzzer again. Nothing.

CHAD
Goddamnit, Joy.

He buzzes. A HUGE BIKER GUY arrives behind him with a load of 2x4's.

HUGE BIKER GUY
Move. Please.

CHAD
Hey, um. My sister lives here, and I'm waiting for her to come home. Could you let me into the building?

The Huge Biker Guy sizes him up, noting the make-up on his face.

HUGE BIKER GUY
Okay, but any funny business and I'll dislocate your head.

Chad believes him.

CHAD
Deal.

INT. JOY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - LOBBY - LATER

Sitting on the suitcase, Chad looks around - impatient.

INT. JOY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - LATER

Chad steps up to Joy's door and KNOCKS. Nothing. Across the hall, stairs lead to the roof.

EXT. JOY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - ROOF - LATER

Tons of wood and nails and rope lay around. A colossal, unidentifiable, half-constructed WOODEN STRUCTURE occupies most of the roof.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

From up here, the city is beautiful. Chad stares for a moment, then pokes his head out over the edge and spies-

An open window into the apartment. Next to the fire escape.

CHAD
Goddamnit, Joy.

He creeps to the ladder, leaving his suitcase.

Humming to himself for fear, Chad shimmies his way down.

Reaching out his foot he opens a crack in the window. Precarious. Chad hums LOUDER.

INT. JOY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Chad wriggles the rest of the way in and slides to the floor. He gives a small "Ha" of triumph.

From the decor, Chad notes that his sister likes rock-climbing, Corey Haim circa 1986. On one wall is a map of the world.

Stepping to the map, Chad finds a stick figure labeled "Chad" waving "hello" drawn in the jungles of Brazil. Chad smiles. Tracing his finger up to Manhattan, he finds dozens and dozens of dorsal fins drawn around the island. A stick figure labeled "Joy" stands in the center of New York City. The figure's arm is ripped off by a shark that's jumping out of the water. Blood spews everywhere.

Chad's rolls his eyes.

Turning to the bed, Chad finds the stuffed T-rex.

CHAD
It's always a soap opera with her,
isn't it, Prince Rex?

Next to the toy an envelope is addressed: "To Whom It May Concern."

Grabbing it, Chad makes his way into the HALLWAY. From behind a door a SHOWER RUNS and "MATERIAL GIRL" plays off cheap speakers. Chad stops and listens for his sister.

CHAD (CONT'D)
Joy? It's Chad. I've been ringing
the doorbell for an hour!

No response. He looks at the letter.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAD (CONT'D)
Does this "To Whom it May Concern"
concern me?

No response.

CHAD (CONT'D)
I'm gonna eat your food!

IN THE LIVING ROOM: Chad scopes the place: lots of dumpster-dived furniture.

A big white curtain, splitting the living room in half, hangs partially open. On the other side is-

A workshop. Tubes and wires. Lots of sawdust and carpentry tools. A blowtorch. A cot. A Harley Davidson motorcycle. Yep. In the living room.

CHAD (CONT'D)
Nice motorcycle.

AT THE BATHROOM DOOR: The music stops. The shower stops.

IN THE KITCHENETTE: Chad grabs a carton of milk, and reads the letter:

JOY (V.O.)
To Whom it May Concern. I really
tried very hard to live. But, well-

SOUNDS OF WET FEET PADDING-

He turns around and sees THE HUGE BIKER rushing him in a wet towel. Chad drops the letter and pastes himself to the wall-

CHAD
What the hell!?!?

The Biker whacks Chad's head with a motorcycle boot, milk flies everywhere-

CHAD (CONT'D)
Ow!

Chad scrambles out of the kitchenette, and slips down the hall, Naked Crazy Biker Guy close behind him.

CHAD (CONT'D)
Whoareyouandwhatareyoudoing?

Chad thrusts out the window, but the biker grabs him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHAD (CONT'D)
Whoareyouandwhatareyou-

The biker follows with a cinder block fist. No contest.
Lights out for Chad.

CUE CANDY-LAND MUSIC:

INT. CHAD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

MUTED SOUNDS OF A DOMESTIC SPAT.

Young Chad's hands pack a small suitcase full of necessities:
underwear, T-shirts, a toothbrush.

Determined to take everything, Young Chad pauses at the
SCREAMING outside.

Cracking open his door, he watches his parents fight-

MARGARET SCREAMS in the living room holding a plate of
spaghetti and sausages, and throwing them at her husband-

DOUG SCREAMS back at her, picking up salad off the floor and
throwing it at Margaret-

Margaret throws the serving bowl, hits Doug. Doug throws the
wooden salad fork, hits Margaret.

Chad shuts the door and stomps back to the bed.

Chad contemplates a worn book: "The World on Your Allowance:
How to Live On Your Own Terms, And Your Own Budget!" Chad
adds it to the luggage.

YOUNG JOY (O.S.)
Want tea?

Young Joy wears her fairy wings and beat-up fireman's helmet.
She closes the door behind her.

CHAD
No thanks, Joy.

JOY
I'm not Joy. I'm Baby Ruth Shoe-
less Joel from the Alemol. I'm a
fire-woman. Who're you?

The fight outside escalates - CRASHING of plates.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Chad locks the buckles on his case, his anger receding in the presence of his sister.

CHAD

I'm the Incredible Hulk Han Solo
from the Alemolo.

JOY

Good to see you, Solo from the
Alemolo. Want tea before your long
journey?

Chad cracks a smile.

INT. JOY'S APARTMENT - DAY (PRESENT)

Chad's eyes snap open. Attempting to sit up, he finds his hands bound to the bed with motor tubing.

Chad scopes the room - no sign of NakedCrazyBikerGuy. Pulling against the tubes, Chad attempts a Houdini. No good.

The BIKER (STEVIE, 40's, 6'8" of unhealthy living), now in roadie clothes, steps into the hallway.

Chad drops his head and plays dead. Not hearing anything, he squints a peek-

Stevie stands right over him, coffee mug in hand.

STEVIE

You think I'm a liar?

Chad, frozen with fright, can't even blink.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

Do you think I'm a liar?

CHAD

No?

STEVIE

Last night, when I let you in the building, I said - and I quote:
"Any funny business and I dislocate your head." And, considering the evidence, it certainly looks like the appropriate course of action.

Chad tries to dodge Stevie's grasp.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAD

I'm Chad. Who are you?

STEVIE

Stevie. Nice to meet you.

Stevie's arms constrict around Chad's neck.

CHAD

I thought this was Joy Flinn's
apartment.

Stevie hesitates.

STEVIE

What's it to you?

CHAD

I'm her brother.

STEVIE

Joy doesn't have a brother.

Stevie constricts.

CHAD

You may be misinformed. I'm me.
Chad Flinn. I'm her older brother.

Chad's about to get his head dislocated.

CHAD (CONT'D)

We didn't hang out much! I've been
in the Amazon for two years!

STEVIE

Is that why all the make-up?

CHAD

Uh, yeah. But, it's not make-up.
It's Yamenemaka. It's supposed to
help you perform courageous acts.

STEVIE

Show me ID.

CHAD

It's in my medicine bag...

Chad nods his head towards the satchel on the floor. Stevie moves to sort through it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHAD (CONT'D)
You knocked me out and you didn't
look through my bag to find out who
I was?

STEVIE
Just because you're a trespasser
doesn't mean I have to be one.

Stevie finds the passport and compares Chad to his goofy picture.

CHAD
Look. Stevie. There's been some big
misunderstanding, and I'm sure it's
Joy's fault. Look - I was gonna
stay here. Until I get on my feet.

STEVIE
She never mentioned it.

CHAD
Well. I never talked to her about
it.

STEVIE
Then how do you know it's cool with
her?

CHAD
She's my sister.

STEVIE
I'm her roommate. What about my
feelings?

Stevie leaves the room.

CHAD
Um... How do you feel about me
staying here, Stevie?

Stevie comes back with coffee and the letter from last night.

STEVIE
Okay. I'm really sorry for knocking
you out. That is not my best
behavior. But, you scared the shit
out of me.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

STEVIE (CONT'D)

If we're going to be roommates, we have to establish some rules, and rule number one is going to be that if you don't scare me, I won't hit you. Okay?

CHAD

Okay.

Stevie pulls the tubes. SNAP. SNAP. Chad touches his head.

CHAD (CONT'D)

Ow.

STEVIE

I already said I was sorry.

CHAD

Okay.

STEVIE

You dropped this.

Chad takes the offered letter.

CHAD

You didn't read it?

STEVIE

It was in this room. This isn't my room.

CHAD

Where is Joy?

STEVIE

She never tells me where she's going.

CHAD

Goddamnit. Where's my suitcase?

Stevie shrugs.

INT. STAIRWELL - MOMENTS LATER

Letter in hand, Chad reads-

JOY (V.O.)

To Whom it May Concern. I really tried very hard to live. But, well, I can't anymore. People say that suicide is an act of violence.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOY (CONT'D)

I hope that you don't take it personally. I don't want to hurt anybody. Things are just too dumb. Well, here goes nothing:

Chad, still reading, pushes through the door onto the-

EXT. ROOF - CONTINUOUS

Where it's raining. Hard.

JOY (V.O.)

By the time you read this letter, I will be dead. Thank you for your concern. Yours in absence, Joy Flinn.

Chad reads again as the rain drips onto the note-

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

By the time you read this letter, I will be dead. Thank you for your concern. Yours in absence, Joy Flinn.

Chad looks up from the letter. His suitcase is soaked.

CHAD

Goddamnit, Joy. Why do you pull shit like this?

The rain runs the paint off Chad's face.

INT. JOY'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Unlocking the luggage, Chad finds it filled with water. Stevie looks on.

STEVIE

Going somewhere?

Chad throws his soaked clothes on the floor - SPLAT. SPLAT.

CHAD

I spent all night trying to get into her house and her scary roommate knocks me out and ties me up and she leaves a note that starts up all the same shit all over again? I'm gonna find her and I'm gonna kick her ass!

The telephone RINGS. The men share a glance. RING.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAD (CONT'D)
If it's my mom, don't let her know
I'm here.

Stevie looks at him.

STEVIE
You remind me of your sister.

CHAD
I appreciate the thought, because I
assume you get along with her, but
please never say anything like that
again.

Chad looks at the pile of wet clothes on the floor.

STEVIE
I'm not really that scary, am I?

Chad sizes up Stevie. Yes. He's very scary.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
This is super-girly, but, wanna
borrow some dry clothes or
something?

EXT. NEW YORK HOSPITAL - DAY

Chad steps through the revolving doors. Stevie's biker
clothes are way too big... But somehow Chad pulls it off -

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

He moves past a hallway full of WOUNDED PEOPLE -

INT. HOSPITAL - ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Pressing DOWN on the elevator. He smiles weakly to an OLD
LADY ON OXYGEN.

OLD LADY ON OXYGEN
You don't look too good.

CHAD
I'm going to see my Dad.

OLD LADY ON OXYGEN
I'm going to die.

CHAD
I'm sorry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLD LADY ON OXYGEN
(shrugging)
Fuck it.

The elevator door BINGS open.

INT. MORGUE - LATER

Chad steps in to find a whole bunch of drawers for dead bodies lining the wall. Two tables with dead people on them - one UNCOVERED FAT MAN, half-way dissected. Messy. And one very small, COVERED BODY.

Doug (50's, walks with a limp and a cane, wearing blood-covered scrubs) proceeds with the autopsy.

CHAD
Dad?

Doug jumps about three feet-

DOUG
Ha. Wow. I thought you were one of the patients! You shouldn't do that. Chad?

They stand, a little awkward. Then Doug crosses to Chad, offering his hand. He notices the bloody latex glove, takes it off, and offers it again. Chad accepts.

DOUG (CONT'D)
Good to see you, Chad.

CHAD
Good to see you, Dad.

DOUG
How was your vacation?

CHAD
It wasn't a vacation.

Doug keeps shaking Chad's hand.

DOUG
Were you making money?

Chad sees where this is going and holds his ground.

CHAD
It wasn't about the money. It was about helping people.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOUG

In my line of work I help people
every day and I make a lot! Ha.
Wow. Did you join some jungle
motorcycle gang?

CHAD

No. It's a... Pay no attention.

Chad tries to pull away from the handshake, but Doug gives no indication of easing up.

DOUG

Do you have a job?

CHAD

Dad. I just got back last night.

DOUG

I'm just a worried father. Everyone
who's alive uses money. You look
ill.

Chad looks to the dead bodies. Doug notices.

CHAD

There are very unnerving and
possibly unnatural odors in here.

DOUG

What, they don't have dead people
in the Amazon? Ha. Wow. Want to
help your old man finish this one
up?

Doug finally lets go of the handshake. Doug moves to the CADAVER. Starts poking. Chad turns a pastier shade of green.

CHAD

No. Thanks.

Doug shrugs, and finds something of interest near the cadaver's liver.

DOUG

(awkward)

So-

CHAD

(equally so)

So-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DOUG

So you remember Shelly? The one you hated? I broke up with her.

CHAD

No. Last girlfriend I met of yours was Samantha.

DOUG

Samantha? Ha. That was a long time ago. It didn't work out. I don't think that she really knew what love is... There wasn't any room in her life for anyone but her. Poor kids. Hated to leave them to that. And... I guess I'm still in love with your Mother. Not that that's stopping me. Ha.

CHAD

Mom still hates you.

DOUG

I've been comfortable with that since the day we got married... Ha. Wow.

CHAD

Dad? I've got bad news.

Doug freezes. Looks to his son.

DOUG

"We're fine here" bad news, or "long walk" bad news?

CHAD

"Cup of coffee" bad news.

DOUG

(grave)

Ha...

INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA - LATER

Doug finishes the letter-

DOUG

... Wow.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ILL DINERS glance over at the blood-splattered Doug, and lose interest in their tapioca. Doug and Chad sit together with their coffees and tapiocas.

CHAD

What do you think? Has she been pulling this crap the whole time I was gone?

DOUG

Since you've been gone? Ha. Wow. You know, she wasn't a happy child.

CHAD

Who was a happy child?

INT. DOUG'S HOUSE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The place is 100% crazy Christmas. Doug, a SMILING CO-ED next to him (both wearing snow-white clothes) hands Young Joy (probably 8, in Goth-black) another present. Next to Joy stands a pile - higher than she is - of Barbies, skis, golf clubs, socks. It's ridiculous. Joy, depressed, slowly rips the wrapping paper.

DOUG

Isn't this the best Christmas ever? How much do you wanna bet that the Christmas at Mom's house is nothing like this. Did you like the bike?

YOUNG JOY

Yeah.

DOUG

And the SCUBA gear?

YOUNG JOY

Yeah.

DOUG

Do you think your Mom will take you SCUBA diving?

YOUNG JOY

No.

DOUG

Ha!

Doug nods to the Co-ed, who smiles and nods back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Joy finishes opening the gift. It's a framed photograph of Doug and Chad. Joy starts to cry. Doug, concerned, puts her on his lap.

DOUG (CONT'D)
Do you feel bad?

JOY
Maybe.

DOUG
Why?

JOY
Dunno.

DOUG
Is it because you didn't get me a
Christmas present?

JOY
Maybe.

DOUG
Will you do me a favor? As my
present? It'll make us both feel
better.

JOY
Okay.

DOUG
The thing that you could get me
that would be greater than anything
else is... To tell your Mother that
today, here with me, you had the
best time of your life.

Joy looks at the photograph, and thumbs Chad's image.

JOY
Dad?

DOUG
Yeah, Sweet Bunches of Honey?

JOY
Do you ever wish you were dead?

Doug's smile cracks.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Doug, grave. Chad takes the letter.

CHAD
You never took me SCUBA diving.

DOUG
We need to do something. We need to
go to the police. We. Arrr.

He stands up, looks at the fluorescent, waves his arms,
pleading with the roof-

DOUG (CONT'D)
Mi familia! Mi familia! Mi hijasita
pobre!

He sits back down. Chad notices the ILL PATIENTS all around
them staring on with horror. Doug, lost in himself,
continues, standing back up-

DOUG (CONT'D)
Ich habe nicht aufviedersehen
gesprecht!

He sits back down.

CHAD
You're not actually taking this
seriously?

DOUG
Haven't you read this?

CHAD
Yeah, but, you know, this is Joy
we're talking about.

DOUG
I never said goodbye. I should
never have given up custody!
Damage. Damage.

CHAD
What are you talking about?

DOUG
A few months ago she told me she
never wanted to see me again:
obviously suicidal.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOUG (CONT'D)

But I was so busy moving out of
 Cathy's house I guess I didn't put
 the symptoms together!

Chad takes it in.

CHAD

Just because she didn't want to see
 you doesn't mean suicide.

DOUG

Maybe, if you want to, don't feel
 like you have to, but, maybe you
 should talk to your mother about
 this? I'll call the other morgues
 in the city and see if anyone found
 a Jane Doe.

CHAD

C'mon. Seriously, this is Joy.
 There's no reason to-

DOUG

Chadsworth.

Chad, guilty, nods acceptance of the plan, and gets up to
 leave.

DOUG (CONT'D)

Son?

Chad turns. Doug offers his handshake hand. Sighing, Chad
 takes it.

INT. MARGARET'S HALLWAY - DAY

The elevator BING'S open. Chad stands, looking at the door to
 his mother's apartment. Chad reaches to knock, then
 hesitates.

CHAD

C'mon. You missed your Mom, at the
 very least, your Mom.

KNOCK-KNOCK-KNOCK.

MARGARET (O.S.)

(singsongy)

Helloooo? Who is it???

Before Chad can answer, MARGARET opens the door. (Now in her
 50's, she's halfway through the crisis which is her life.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The left half of her face, where she was once burned, is badly scarred.) She's wearing lingerie. Obviously expecting someone else.

CHAD

Mom?

MARGARET

Chad?!?

She SHRIEKS and slams the door in his face.

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

Goddess Gracious! When did you get back?!? Why didn't you call?!? Oh, you don't need to call, you're welcome here anytime! Just a second, let me get some clothes on...

Her voice trails off... Chad's response finally hits in the form of a deep shudder.

CHAD

In the jungle, the kids see their parents naked all the time, so why the acid reflux?

MARGARET (O.S.)

Hello, Chad! Hellooooo!

The door opens again. Margaret, now robed, greets her first-born.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

I'm so sorry! I thought you were my spiritual advisor!

CHAD

Um. Okay.

Margaret hugs him. And takes a deep SMELL of him. Chad feels even weird.

MARGARET

Ahhh. You smell like the forest!

CHAD

Thanks.

MARGARET

Chad?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHAD

Yeah?

Margaret continues to hug Chad, and doesn't look like she's letting go.

MARGARET

Did you find yourself?

CHAD

What 'dya mean?

MARGARET

Did you become a pupil of the tribe's elders?

CHAD

We were friends.

MARGARET

That's very good. Did you participate in their ceremonies?

CHAD

Some.

MARGARET

Now, you can answer truthfully...

Margaret hugs tighter.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

Did you take peyote? As a part of their rituals? In their vision-quests?

CHAD

Mom? Peyote's a cactus. The Amazon is a jungle, not a desert.

Margaret hugs her son in pride.

MARGARET

Of course of course! So wise!

CHAD

I built houses, Mom. I didn't do drugs.

MARGARET

It sounds magnificent!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CHAD
Mom? Could you let me go now?

Chad steps back.

MARGARET
What, a mother can't be excited to
see her boy? After... some years?

CHAD
Mom, have you heard from Joy?

Margaret tries to remember.

INT. MARGARET'S APARTMENT - LATER

The place contains the bounty of the most obvious representations of global mysticism. Didgeridoo's and Tibetan singing bowls. Incense and rose petals. The Buddha, Krishna, and Jesus. Margaret, in an enormous wicker throne, reads Joy's suicide note.

Chad looks around the place. On the mantle are photographs of Margaret: In Tibet. In a drum circle. Meditating with some white guy dressed as a Zen monk.

Margaret makes some kind of CHORTLE. Tears in her eyes, she puts down the letter, closes her eyes, and takes a deep breath-

MARGARET
She takes it too far! She takes it
too far!

CHAD
It's not legitimate.

Margaret pays no attention.

MARGARET
If you want to, don't feel like you
have to, but maybe you should call
your father about this.

CHAD
I just came from his morgue.

MARGARET
Oh, you SAW him? First?

CHAD
Mom, don't start that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Deep pain fills her and it comes out as a SCREAM, but the pain changes, and she closes her eyes, and by the end of the breath, it's a HUM, like a meditation. Horrible and tranquil at the same time. Chad stares at her with confusion. When he feels it's safe, he interrupts her meditation-

CHAD (CONT'D)
When was the last time you saw Joy,
Mom?

Margaret, mostly calm, has a spasm of pain.

MARGARET
A few months ago. It was her
birthday, and I was giving her the
family heirloom...

INT. MARGARET'S APARTMENT - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Margaret holds a chestnut box in her hands, stroking it lovingly in front of Joy.

MARGARET
... Just like my mother gave to me
when I turned twenty-one.

Joy (late teens) looks bad. Disregard makes her look homeless - deep circles under her eyes and face shiny with sweat. Joy SPRAYS Chloraseptic in her mouth. Once. Twice. Three times.

MARGARET (CONT'D)
It was something that I always
loved, and she would even let me
play with it when I was a child.
Times were different then.

Placing the box on the coffee table, she opens the top, and reveals the Antique Civil War Service Revolver.

Margaret smiles at this bonding moment. Joy eyes the gun. She uses more Chloraseptic - 4 squirts. 5. 6.

Margaret's smile wavers. Joy sprays her face. 7. 8.

MARGARET (CONT'D)
What is that, Joy?

Joy sprays her arms. 9. 10. 11.

JOY
It's Chloraseptic. A topical
anesthetic.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARGARET
Anesthetic? Are you in pain?

Joy sprays her chest. 12. 13. 14.

MARGARET (CONT'D)
You know. They say that pain is
only in your mind.

JOY
Funny. I'm thinking of you.

Margaret blinks at her. Laughs it off.

MARGARET
Goddess Gracious, Joy. Don't be
silly. This is a bonding
experience. This weapon was given
to your great-great-great-
grandmother by her husband's
commanding officer.

(stroking the phallic
weapon)
She loved it, much like she loved
her husband before he was killed.
It's a symbol of unity and love in
the family.

Joy grabs the gun - tests its weight. She loads a bullet,
locks the magazine, and cocks the hammer, aiming it at
Margaret's head. Margaret's smile wavers.

JOY
The action's great.

Joy starts laughing. Margaret, hesitant, laughs. Joy sprays
more Chloraseptic. Her laughing stops abruptly. Margaret's
smile fades.

INT. MARGARET'S APARTMENT - DAY (PRESENT)

Chad, still by the window, can't believe what he's hearing-

CHAD
You gave her Nana's gun?

MARGARET
Of course I did. She was lonely.
Desperate. She was in pain.
Suicidal, even.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAD
And you gave her a gun!?!?

The phone RINGS.

MARGARET
Are you saying I was a bad
mother!?!?

Chad remains silent. RING.

MARGARET (CONT'D)
ARE YOU SAYING I WAS A BAD MOTHER!

RING.

MARGARET (CONT'D)
I've got to get this. It's my
spiritual advisor.
(On phone. Chipper.)
Hello Master-?
(ice)
Oh. Hello... Yes... He's here...
Well, we're kind of busy right
now... Fine. FINE! Here he is.
(to Chad)
It's your father.

Chad takes the phone.

CHAD
Dad?

DOUG (O.S.)
Wow. So I called around to the
different hospitals. There's a Jane
Doe. It might be Joy.

CHAD
I highly doubt it.

MARGARET
Tell him not to call here.

DOUG (O.S.)
- She was found a few days ago in
the river. It might be Joy. You
need to meet me.

CHAD
Are you sure?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DOUG (O.S.)
Chadsworth.

Guilt sets in on Chad.

MARGARET
Tell him not to call here.

CHAD
I'll be there in fifteen.

He hangs up.

MARGARET
Why didn't you tell him he was a
bad father?

CHAD
He thinks they found Joy's body.

Margaret lets out the SCREAM of fear that turns into the HUM. She disappears into a meditation. Chad shakes his head and finds his way out.

INT. MORGUE IN LESSER HOSPITAL - DAY

An ORDERLY looks over his shoulder as he pushes a table with a CADAVER.

Doug, limping on his cane, and Chad stop in front of the doors leading to the holding room. Scary. Chad looks at the double doors, then to the elevator.

CHAD
This isn't like when she pretended
to have bone-marrow cancer, is it?

DOUG
No. I don't think so, Chad.

Chad nods, and follows his father through the DOUBLE DOORS-

INT. HOLDING ROOM IN LESSER HOSPITAL - DAY

Where DR. STACY (Female, 40's, bloody scrubs, ADHD) stands over a COVERED CADAVER, greeting them-

DR. STACY
You shouldn't be here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOUG

I'm Dr. Douglas Flinn. This is my son, Chad. We're here to see the-

She pulls off her face mask, revealing a big smile, charming. Especially charming to Doug.

DR. STACY

It's such a pleasure to meet you Dr. Flinn, I'm Dr. Stacy Waters - a great admirer of your work. Last September? The No Known Cause that I sent you? You found out it was an H2O overdose?

DOUG

That was you? I'm impressed. I couldn't have done it without you - really great notes. Really great. And your penmanship-

DR. STACY

Oh, thank you. Well. It's not information unless you can read it - that's what I always say.

Chad sees the sparks starting to fly-

CHAD

Is that my sister?

He points to the covered body. Dr. Stacy's eyes widen at Doug, who nods solemnly.

The doctors ease into business mode. She compares information between clipboard and toe-tag.

DR. STACY

Please remember, gentlemen, that she was found in the East River two days ago and-

DOUG

-Although she's been on ice, she's probably still going to have some bloating and decomposition...

Chad stands away from the body. Nods. Doug lifts the sheet and immediately drops it again.

DOUG (CONT'D)

My god. She gained so much weight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Chad tries to catch up-

CHAD
Wait, what? It's... her?

Chad watches Doug cover his eyes with stoic grief. Dr. Stacy lends a supporting hand.

CHAD (CONT'D)
Oh, no. Oh no. Oh-no-oh-no.

Chad inches to the body. He looks pale. Then green. Doug looks up to him, and lifts the sheet for him.

DR. STACY
Is this your sister?

Chad's fear turns to confusion. Pulling back the sheet, he checks the body's genitalia.

CHAD
What are you doing? That's not my sister. It's not even female!

The two doctors follow his gaze "down there."

DR. STACY
I am so sorry.

DOUG
Considering the evidence, I understand the confusion. Ha. Wow.

CHAD
What the fuck kind of operation do you run here!??!

Dr. Stacy scours her clipboard-

DR. STACY
This client was brought in as a female- pulled out of the river- I don't understand-

Chad steps away and takes a deep breath. Doug, for some reason, starts LAUGHING. Big great guffaws.

DOUG
And I thought the orderlies at my hospital were jokers!

Dr. Stacy cracks a smile.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DR. STACY

Yeah. They're wicked. Union protection and everything.

Chad steps back, softly hyperventilating.

DR. STACY (CONT'D)

Dr. Flinn?

DOUG

Yes?

DR. STACY

I don't have any idea how much of my staff's work here is useless. It's possible that the whole case is erroneous - even cause of death. Would you honor me with your help? You could assist me, or, I could assist you... I enjoy both positions.

Doug falls in love. Chad, horrified, edges toward the door.

CHAD

Dad? We have to go.

Doug gives him a "hold on" gesture. Doug turns to Dr. Stacy.

DOUG

I would need to borrow some of your scrubs.

DR. STACY

Don't worry. I'll dress you. And I'll familiarize you with all our... Unique procedures.

DOUG

Ha. Wow. And as for who assists who, we could spend a little time doing one, and then do the other. Try and find what fits, uniquely, to us.

Dr. Stacy nods seductively. Doug turns to Chad.

DOUG (CONT'D)

Maybe I should stay here, son.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

CHAD

Dad. The People of the Forest. The family comes first. You know?

Doug puts his hand on Chad's shoulder.

DOUG

It's good to have you back, son. Home with your own family. But this poor man has loved ones who are looking for him too. I am professionally obligated to help them. Chad, would you go to the police?

CHAD

The police? Look. There's no reason to assume she-

DOUG

Do you love your sister?

CHAD

I. Um. Sure.

Doug pats him on the arm.

DOUG

Good.

(looking at Dr. Stacy)
I'll see what I can do from here.

Chad looks at them. The fluorescent lights. The filing cabinets of cadavers. The dead bodies on tables. The biohazard waste basket.

The double doors close as Chad steps into-

INT. MORGUE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Chad, hyperventilating, tries to talk himself down. A different OLD LADY ON OXYGEN (#2) strolls down the hall in her walker.

CHAD

Pay no attention to the confusion.
Pay no attention to the depression.
The insecurity is only in your
mind. Everyone feels the deep
irreconcilable loss...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The OLD LADY ON OXYGEN #2 kindly offers a hit off her tank. Chad takes it, and takes another.

CHAD (CONT'D)
(suddenly optimistic)
Look: You're hooooome. It's fiiiiine.
It would be great if this...
Unfortunate situation weren't here.
But you're good at two things:
building houses, and, um, baby-
sitting your sister. People will
always need houses, and your sister
will always need baby-sitting. It's
a blessing because, otherwise,
you'd be a waste of life.

OLD LADY ON OXYGEN #2
(smiling, remembering)
I was a waste of life, and now I'm
dying alone. You are the youth. You
are the future. Ta-ta now.

They smile at each other like good friends. She continues her stroll. As the oxygen fades, so does Chad's smile.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

The building looks trashy.

OFFICER WHITE (O.S.)
Is this erratic behavior for your
sister? Is she usually on time,
punctual-

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

OFFICER WHITE (Black, beautiful, 30's) sits at a cluttered desk, reads the suicide note, and sips her coffee. The cluttered desks of other COPS surround hers.

OFFICER WHITE
Does she often leave suicide notes?

CHAD
She usually disappears without
them.

OFFICER WHITE
So this is a special case.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAD

It's a particularly twisted cry for attention.

OFFICER WHITE

If she's leaving suicide notes maybe she deserves some attention.

CHAD

What are you implying? I've been in the Amazon!

OFFICER WHITE

Okay. I'm just saying that if she's passed-

CHAD

Look. Can you find her?

OFFICER WHITE

Okay. Listen. We don't like to post suicides. If it goes public, it encourages others to consider it a viable option.

From under the desk someone SNEEZES. Officer White immediately grabs a tissue and passes it under her desk.

Chad angles his head down to see, under the desk, TIESHA WHITE (8) blowing her nose, miserable and bored, huddling in a blanket.

OFFICER WHITE (CONT'D)

She's sick. No baby-sitter. Please don't mention it.

Chad grabs a coffee stirrer and a tissue.

OFFICER WHITE (CONT'D)

We'll file a missing persons report for you. Our local squad will investigate it for five days. They're swamped and under-paid. So be patient.

CHAD

For five days?

OFFICER WHITE

Then it'll go downtown. If you want to, you can help us by reading her address book or calendar.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2) OFFICER WHITE (CONT'D)

Call all the people she knows.
Check bank records, credit cards.
They might tell you she's
vacationing in Florida. That
happens. You're gonna want to read
her diary-

CHAD
Read her diary?

OFFICER WHITE
Don't stress it. Do you keep a
diary?

CHAD
No.

OFFICER WHITE
Then you wouldn't know that
everyone who keeps a diary secretly
wants it to be found, and hopes it
will become a best-seller. That's
the reason people write diaries. So
it's not really an invasion of
privacy.

CHAD
Officer White?

OFFICCCER WHITE
Yep?

CHAD
What do you think? You think she...
Passed?

OFFICCER WHITE
Mr. Flinn? You know her a lot
better than I do.

CHAD
Yeah. Kinda.

She drops a huge stack of papers on her desk. THUMP.

TIESHA
Hey!

OFFICER WHITE
Sorry baby. Shh.
(to Chad)
Fill these out and we'll start the
process. Next!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Tiesha SNEEZES again. Officer White passes Tiesha a tissue - and finds her playing happily with a doll made out of tissue paper and coffee stirrers. Officer White looks up for Chad, but he's gone.

INT. JOY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

(NOTE: THE FOLLOWING V.O. OF JOY HAPPENS OVER THE ACTION OF THE SCENE, AND SYNCs WITH THE JOURNAL AT THE END.)

JOY (V.O.)

Dear Diary, boy that was a stupid opening. Should I write in pencil to erase? No. That's for woosies. Goddamnit I just wrote woosies in this book that I spent like forty dollars on.

The mail, opened and read, lays scattered all around. Chad rummages through the rest of the room - leaving a mess.

Sorting through snapshots of PRINCE T-REX, Chad finds one of Joy with another YOUNG WOMAN (INGRID) - from High School. Chad drops the photograph in his satchel.

In the closet, Chad finds the chestnut box. Opening it, he finds the revolver.

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

Okay. Starting over: This journal is to keep a super secret permanent record of my secret thoughts and dreams. For posterity. So that one day, when this mortal coil fails, or I shake it off or whatever, my thoughts will have been immortalized.

Scanning the messy room, his eyes settle on the bedside drawer. He eases it open.

Lots of medications.

Puzzled, Chad reads some of the labels: VITAMIN C, CHLORASEPTIC, NICOTINE GUM: the contents of a drug-store stuffed into the drawer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

And then my granddaughters may one day find it, and cry with missing me, and publish it, and maybe it will become a best seller - a piece of widely-read literature to usher in a new epoch in these chronicles of the human species. That'd be cool...

Rummaging deeper, Chad finds a book. It's expensive. The cover reads: "JOY'S SECRET DIARY." He opens it to the first page.

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

Dear Great Granddaughters: Feel free to edit as you see fit. Strike out all the "Dear Diary" and "woosies" stuff. Keep "new epoch." You get the idea. Wow. I've filled this whole page already. That's enough for today.

Chad flips to the next page. Blank. And every page after that is blank.

In the back cover a scribbled note reads "OTCDAA - 142 W. 10th. 7 PM"

Chad sinks onto the bed, exhausted. He picks up T-Rex, cradles it, and closes his eyes.

CHAD

Think about the forest. Think about the forest. Think about the forest.

He thinks about the forest. Cringes.

CHAD (CONT'D)

Fine. Don't think about the forest. Think about the great explorers. Think about architecture. Think about...

CUE CANDY-LAND MUSIC:

INT. CHILDHOOD CHAD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Young Joy, in the fireman's hat, stands next to Young Chad - now wearing too-big sunglasses and a hooded sweatshirt draped like a cape.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Chad cracks his bedroom door open.

THE LIVING ROOM is a mess. Dinner splattered everywhere, broken glasses and plates. The parents continue to FIGHT AND SCREAM.

Margaret runs through the dining room-

MARGARET
QUIT FOLLOWING ME!

Doug chases after her-

DOUG
DON'T GO WHERE I'M GOING!

The parents disappear into the bedroom. Chad turns to Joy with a strategy.

YOUNG CHAD
We need to make it to the basement door ASAP!

YOUNG JOY
(saluting)
Rollo, pollo Commander Solo.

They drop to their bellies and slither out of the room. Joy goes first. Chad pulls his suitcase.

MARGARET backs out of the bedroom, aiming the antique civil war service REVOLVER.

MARGARET
I've got my Grandmother's gun! I double-dare you to follow me!

DOUG (O.S.)
Are you gonna take it there?

Margaret pulls the trigger! BLAM!

DOUG (O.S.) (CONT'D)
HA! Missed! Two can play at that game!

Joy stops. Chad stops. They watch their mother run into the living room.

A FLICKERING LIGHT erupts in the bedroom. Chad turns to see-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DOUG emerging to confront his wife. In his hands he holds an antique WWII flame thrower, its pilot light, a foot high, flicks hysterically.

Chad moves forward, bumping into Joy, who lays frozen on her belly - fascinated by her parents' mania.

YOUNG CHAD
(whispering to Joy)
Snap out of it, Corporal!

She doesn't. He tries to pull her, but she's mesmerized by the fire.

MARGARET
You use a coward's weapon! You take
it TOO FAR! TOO FAR!

DOUG
This was Dad's! Are you calling my
Dad a coward?!?

MARGARET
YOU TAKE IT TOO FAR!

DOUG
Gonna quit?

MARGARET
Too far!

DOUG
Gonna quit?

Margaret respond with a BLAM!

Doug dodges. He, in turn, pulls the trigger. WHOOSH! A stream of burning oil sprays into the living room.

Chad manages to stand up and drag Joy by her arms to the basement door. He squeezes her in, the door closing behind them.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Chad's eyes dart around the dining area. Taking a seat, opening Joy's Diary, he finds the photo of JOY and the GIRL in high school. He flips to the back page: OTCDA 7 PM.

INGRID (O.S.)
Chad? Chad Flinn?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Chad turns to find INGRID GROUSWITH (The girl from the photo. 20's, dramatic) smiling. Behind her hover GARY and ROB (20's, filmmakers) Gary has a video-camera and Rob has a microphone, they film everything that Ingrid does.

CHAD

Hi. Ingrid?

INGRID

Yeah! So good to see you! God it's been so long! Since I was in high school? How did you find me?

CHAD

I called your mom.

She gives him a hug. Gary moves in for a close-up of Chad.

Chad turns to Rob, who shakes his head violently and waves for him to continue with Ingrid.

INGRID

Pay no attention to them. They get pissed.

(stage whisper)

They're making a documentary of my life.

CHAD

... Wow. Why?

INGRID

Well, I'm an actress. And they're following me for a year to see how I do.

CHAD

How long has this been going on?

INGRID

Eleven months.

He looks to Gary, focused into the viewfinder. Rob stares intensely at him, adjusting the microphone.

CHAD

Have you been in anything so far?

INGRID

No. But I feel like something big is about to happen. Ohmygod! You're all grown up!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHAD

Thanks. Um. Listen. I know you were
good friends with Joy.

Ingrid's smile cracks.

INGRID

Yeah. In High School.

Chad, privacy invaded, looks to Gary and Rob.

CHAD

Can I talk to Ingrid alone?

Gary and Rob look pissed.

INGRID

Sorry. I signed a contract. They
have full access. Really you forget
about them after like a week.

CHAD

Um. Okay. Joy. I got this note from
her.

She reads the note. Gary and Rob lean in. Reading, Ingrid
gets emotional. Gary gets a full close-up.

INGRID

She killed herself? I'm sorry! I'm
sorry! It's all my fault!

CHAD

What?

Ingrid cries into her hands. Pulling herself together, she
looks up-

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The way Ingrid remembers it: Like a high school play. The set
is dark and dreary. More medieval dungeon than urban school.
Ingrid (too pretty) and Joy (too ugly) walk down the hall
(across the stage) to their next class.

INGRID (V.O.)

In high school, I protected her.

One BOY tries to cut Joy with a knife. Ingrid kung-fu's him.

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

Joy was a bit of an outcast.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A spotlight lands on Joy in the center, hundreds of hands point at her and there's UPROARIOUS LAUGHTER. Ingrid steps into the light and stands in front of Joy. Joy cowers behind her.

JOY

Thank you so much for being my friend, Ingrid. I would just KILL MYSELF if I didn't have you to confide in, study with, and plan how to survive the cold, cruel world of adulthood that we face when we finish here at Brankley High.

INGRID

B.F.F.

The two sit down and open their math books. Light comes up to reveal an American Model Home set. Ingrid looks out at the audience.

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

But. Alas. These were my formative years, and I had my own plan on surviving life after Brankley. I saw I needed to form into someone who was popular. Who was passionate. Who was rich. And then it came...

Ingrid leaves the study session, and despite Joy grabbing her hand and trying to pull her back, Ingrid can't help but mug before the audience.

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

Mr. Russel's production of DEATH OF A SALESMAN. Which I got cast in... And it changed everything about me. My whole life...

TEENAGERS dressed as the LOMAN FAMILY file onto the stage for curtain call. Ingrid joins them in a robe.

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

I played THE WOMAN. Even though I was on stage for about a minute - I have to say - it was a tour de force. And I was hooked...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The high school cast pushes Ingrid almost into the wings, but she's still rapt at the thrill of it. Ingrid stays on-stage bowing, even as all the other kids file back into the wings.

Joy, still upstage, still studying, looks up and stares at Ingrid.

INGRID (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Joy never really understood me
after I found my passion.

JOY
I don't really understand you now
that you've found your passion.

INGRID
(to Joy)
I have to focus on my career. As I
become more and more successful,
I'm going to have to leave people
behind, because they'll no longer
want me as friends, but want my
money and my fame and tell
embarrassing stories about me to
the tabloids. So: Joy. For the sake
of my future fame, we can't be
friends anymore.

Joy sighs, puts on a winter coat, as stage snow falls on her. Then the sound of THUNDER...

INGRID (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And so Joy fell into obscurity,
having no real friends... She was
lost, depressed, alone and
forgotten.

The lights fade on Joy into black. Ingrid is left alone on the stage.

INGRID (CONT'D)
That's probably why she killed
herself... And that's how I know
it's my fault. I was her only
friend.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY (PRESENT)

Chad blinks at Ingrid. Greg whips the camera to get his response. Chad tries to ignore it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

INGRID
(whispering)
She was always nice to me. Please
forgive me. Please. Please.

Chad, about to speak, thinks better. Ingrid looks dramatic.

ROB
Wow. You never really listen to how
screwed up people are until you
wear headphones.

GREG
(knowingly)
Yeah. We're going to make a hundred
million dollars.

ROB
Did you even hear what I just said?

Chad looks at them.

CHAD
Depression. Alienation. It's all
part of the adjustment.

The three of them think Chad's a weirdo.

INT. COPY SHOP - DAY

The HUM of the copier as it spits out page after page. Chad
examines a sample.

THE PHOTO OF JOY (Ingrid's image ripped off) is followed by:
"MISSING - JOY FLINN - PLEASE CALL..."

EXT. CHURCH - EVENING

Chad checks the address against Joy's journal, then tapes one
of the Missing posters to the doorway.

INT. CHURCH - EVENING

The place is deserted. Chad puts up another Missing poster.
Hearing people MUMBLING downstairs, he follows-

INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - EVENING

And finds a dozen or so STRESSED OUT PEOPLE hovering among
folding chairs. HOLLIS (50's. Flu-ridden) introduces himself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOLLIS
Are bou a frienb of Bill Doublebew?

CHAD
Um. No?

HOLLIS
I 'mb Hollis. No. Don 'b shake my
hamb. I 'mb bery sick.

CHAD
Hi. Hollis. I 'm... Um... Chad.

KATIE (40's, the encouraging leader) takes control of the group.

KATIE
Everyone please sit down, we're all
set to begin. Good to see a new
face.

The dozen of them glance at Chad and sit down. Chad smiles politely and waves.

HOLLIS
Bis is Chad. He 'b a briend of Bill
Boubleyewb.

EVERYONE
Hello Chad.

Suddenly, Chad realizes who "Bill W" is.

CHAD
This is a twelve-step program?

KATIE
Yes. You're in the right place.
Would you like to start today,
Chad?

CHAD
No thank you. I 'm um... I can 't
believe this is happening...

Everyone CHUCKLES.

KATIE
We know exactly how you feel.

Chad shrinks into his chair.

INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - NIGHT

Hollis discusses his hard time as snot drips down his face. A concerned man, TIM (30's), nods his head in mutual experience.

HOLLIS

- So ben I'd but on some muscle soothers, and that would make be debressed and so I would take a dozen No Doze, but that bould make me jumby, anb so I would take more Byquil... And on and on and on.

A big bubble of snot. Tim hands Hollis a tissue, which Hollis uses to dab the tears from his eyes, ignoring the snot. Chad's stomach turns.

HOLLIS (CONT'D)

And now... Being here bith you beautiful people. And being in OTCDA for sixteen years now... Imb my heart... I knowb bat the only thing I need to heal my flu... Is self brespect. And bu peopble taught bat to be. Bank you. Bank you.

Everyone claps. Chad looks to the EXIT sign. He's about to go when-

KATIE

Hollis. You, right now, are most certainly providing a role model for some of the newer folks here at Over-the-Counter Drug Addicts Anonymous.

Everyone turns to smile at Chad. Chad sinks lower into his chair.

TUNA (a short bald man, 40's, with a hairy neck) comes in holding one of the MISSING signs.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Tuna?

TUNA

Sorry I'm late. Have you seen these?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Tuna passes the sign among the circle. They confer quietly. Chad sits up.

TUNA (CONT'D)
It isn't just us that's been
missing her. Something might have
happened to Joy! I swear to my
higher power if I ever meet the
people who did this to her!

Chad decides to stay silent.

TUNA (CONT'D)
I feel responsible. Being her
sponsor and everything. Because
really, in many ways... She
became... My sponsor.

TIM
Do you think she went back? Hit the
drugstore?

The question blankets the group in silence. Chad is riveted.

TUNA
Even the strongest of us can
fumble. Like the last time. She was
really bad-

Chad leans in.

INT. PHARMACY - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Joy (in bad withdraw) sits on the floor of aisle 3 - surrounded by choice after choice of cold-relief and aspirin. She's crying, stuffing package after package into her shopping basket, when one fills, she fills another.

TUNA (V.O.)
She called me from a pay phone,
warning me where she was going.

She wipes the whole row of ibuprofen off the shelf. Most spills onto the floor. As her desperation turns to rage, she wipes off more and more shelves.

SAM, a bean-stalk employee (17), discovers her.

SAM
Lady, what are you doing? I just
finished itemizing-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOY
 You don't know what I go through!
 You don't know!

Joy falls to the floor amid the aspirin and B-12 supplements.

SAM
 Lady. Sometimes. When it's really
 bad, I like to do push-ups... Would
 you like to do push-ups?

Sam demonstrates push-ups. Joy, crying and snotty, starts
 doing push-ups. She gives up.

SAM (CONT'D)
 Sometimes girls don't have the
 upper body strength, and they need
 to assist themselves by putting
 their knees down. Like this.

Sam demonstrates the girl push-up. Joy tries a few. Below her
 head gleams a bottle of chewable vitamin C.

Giving in, she unwraps the plastic foil, pops open the top,
 removes the goddamn cotton ball, and pours the entire
 contents into her hand. As she moves to stuff them in her
 mouth-

TUNA (O.S.)
 JOY!!! WAIT!!! THINK ABOUT WHAT
 YOU'RE DOING!!!

Joy looks up to find Tuna, standing next to Sam, pleading to
 her reason.

JOY
 Tuna. I'm sorry. I. Just. Can't...
 Do it anymore.

TUNA
 Joy. If you put those vitamin C
 chewables in your mouth, you will
 be turning your back on the most
 difficult work you've ever done.
 You are a hero to all those Young
 Addicts of Limited Opportunity -
 and you'll be letting them down.

JOY
 They're just vitamin C chewables...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TUNA

Today it's chewables, tomorrow it's Thera-Flu, next month you'll find yourself surrounded by 60 empty bottles of Chloraseptic - feeling nothing.

JOY

I don't care, Tuna. I don't care. Life's just too hard to go on without the promise of the help of over the counter drugs...

TUNA

Joy. The easier life isn't the better life. Find the presence of God. Or whatever you believe to be your higher power. And give it up to him, her, or it. You cannot bear this burden alone. That's the step I had trouble with... That's the step... You taught me.

Joy finally nods, and slowly puts the tablets down.

INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - DAY (PRESENT)

The group is rapt at the story...

TUNA

And I think she really heard me. Like from over a canyon. Cause she dropped that vitamin C and let me walk her home.

TIM

I love that story.

CHAD

When was that?

The group looks at Chad.

TUNA

What?

CHAD

When did that happen?

He's aware that it's a weird question.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TUNA

Like three months ago? She got back on track. Came to all our meetings. Until a few weeks ago.

CHAD

What would set someone off like that?

People raise eyebrows. Chad, afraid of revealing too much, backpedals-

CHAD (CONT'D)

It's just that. If she was your mascot and all, I mean, I'm worried about her.

TUNA

Yeah. We're all worried about her. Maybe we can pray to our higher powers for her safety and supplement free health.

Everyone nods in agreement. Chad sinks back into his seat.

EXT. CHURCH - NIGHT

The meeting adjourned, the group files out and Chad awkwardly shakes hands and gives hugs goodbye.

KATIE

Some of us are gonna try to catch the three dollar Margarita special down at El Mucho's. What'dya say? We could probably slam five or six before it goes full price in a half hour...

CHAD

Are we allowed to drink?

KATIE

Sure. I mean, we're not alcoholics.

INT. EL MUCHO'S - NIGHT

Dozens of empty Margarita glasses clutter the table. Katie, passed out, looks content. Tuna sits against the wall, probably in a blackout. Tim slurps the last of his glass. Chad, drunk, can't keep from babbling-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAD

And then the village invited me to join the tribe. I was so touched. But when I was on the cliff, the last step of the ritual, wearing the traditional Yamenemaka paint. I choked. They wanted me in their TRIBE, man! Next thing I know I'm... back here.

Tim tries to focus on Chad.

TIM

You need therapy.

They both laugh. Tim gets drunkenly serious.

TIM (CONT'D)

I'm serious. You should see my therapist, Beth. She's great.

CHAD

I don't think so.

TIM

What, you don't believe me? She's great! Joy referred me.

Chad sobers instantly.

CHAD

Joy was in therapy?

TIM

Yeah. She went on and on about how great it was... So I tried it.

CHAD

Yeah. Maybe... I mean, I don't know what I'm saying.

TIM

That's why you should get therapy. Join the tribe. Dr. Beth Kling. Therapy really helps... Look at me!

Tim proposes a toast to himself, but Chad's already gone.

INT. JOY'S APARTMENT/KITCHENETTE - NIGHT

Chad, telephone book in hand, drunkenly weaves into the BEDROOM, Chad flips through the "Therapist" section.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAD
(turning pages)
Therapist. Therapist. Therapist.
Therapist. Therapist. Therapist.

SOUND: A THUMP.

CHAD
Stevie?

Nobody. Chad turns back to the book, having trouble focusing.

CHAD (CONT'D)
Therapist. Therapist. Therapist.
Holy shit. Therapist. Therapist.
Dr. Beth Kling.

He tears the page out of the book, trips over the Chestnut Box, falls flat on the floor, passed out.

CUE CANDY-LAND MUSIC

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Young Joy takes Young Chad's hand and leads him down the stairs (an old couch, broken ping-pong table, and refrigerator) to where she has a tea party set up with all her STUFFED ANIMALS.

Above them, they hear their parents: BLAM! BLAM! CLICK!

DOUG (O.S.)
Ha! No more ammo! What're you gonna
do? What're you gonna do!?!?

WHOOSH!

Joy and Chad play as the sounds continue.

YOUNG JOY
Please, honor guest of excellency,
take a seat here...

Chad drops his suitcase as Joy sits him on a towel.

YOUNG JOY (CONT'D)
My minions tell me that you just
crawled out of the desert, and are
thirsty.

From the ceiling they hear-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOUG (O.S.)
 Where'd you go? Margaret? Margaret!

FOOTSTEPS running. The children listen. Chad commits to play.

YOUNG CHAD
 Yes. Your minions are right. I've crawled through the great deserts of Titicaca, and it took me seven years, and I'm a little parched.

Joy instructs T-Rex-

YOUNG JOY
 Prince Rex, please show our guest the fine selection of tasty beverages.

T-Rex sits there-

YOUNG JOY (CONT'D)
 I'm sorry for my son's rude behavior. He's mad because I make him learn Portuguese.

Moving to the refrigerator, she grabs the handle. They're interrupted by sounds from upstairs-

DOUG (O.S.)
 Ha! Wow!

MARGARET (O.S.)
 YOU TAKE IT TOO FAR!!!

BLAM! BLAM! Suddenly, the basement door EXPLODES with a bullet hole.

DOUG (O.S.)
 Ow! You shot me! You shot me in the leg!

BLAM! WHOOSH! Chad freezes.

MARGARET (O.S.)
 AHH! MY PERM!! AHHHHHH!!!

DOUG (O.S.)
 STOP, DROP, AND ROLL!!!
 STOPDROPANDROLL!!!

A FIRE EXTINGUISHER. Silence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Chad turns back to Joy, who's still looking up at the door.

YOUNG CHAD
How are the Portuguese lessons
going?...

Joy loses the fantasy.

YOUNG JOY
I don't wanna play any more.

YOUNG CHAD
Joy? How's the Portuguese?

YOUNG JOY
This is dumb. This basement is
dumb. T-Rex is dumb!

YOUNG CHAD
Prince T-Rex can't speak Portuguese
because he's a dumb retard?

Joy gives in a bit.

YOUNG JOY
Yeah. He's retarded. Like
asparagus.
(full play)
I'm sorry, but you're parched! Look
at our fine selection of tasty
beverages!!!

She opens the fridge and holds up a can of tonic water. Chad
shakes his head. She selects a can of tomato juice, Chad
shakes his head.

YOUNG JOY (CONT'D)
Boy, mister, after seven years in
Titicaca, you sure are picky.

She holds up a Coke. Chad shakes his head.

Joy looks at what's left in the fridge, and her eyes widen as
she grabs the only thing left - a Miller Genuine Draft.

Chad smiles gleefully, Joy does the "We're gonna get so
busted and I love it" dance.

The CRACK of the can opening. Tiny hands pour the beer into
tiny teacups.

The children toast each other.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DOUG (O.S.)
Kids! Your Mother and I need to go
to the hospital real quick okay?
Chad? You're in charge!

The kids stare up at the door. They hear the parents LEAVING.

Chad and Joy drink the beer. Neither like it very much.

Chad glances at the basement door. Smoke creeps in from under the crack. Through the bullet hole Chad can see the ORANGE of FLAMES. Chad, realizing the danger, thinks fast-

YOUNG CHAD
Princess Shoeless Joel. Would you
and your minions kindly escort me
outside into the refreshing night?

Joy smiles at him quizzically. Chad looks to the door - more smoke.

YOUNG JOY
Why yes certainly kind Sir. Prince
T-Rex will show you his empire.

She stands, grabs Godzilla, and moves for the stairs.

YOUNG CHAD
Perhaps Rex will show us through
the window?

YOUNG JOY
You have studied our customs well,
Incredible Hulk Han Solo.

Climbing on the washing machine, Chad cracks open the window. He pulls Joy up and stuffs her through. He jumps down to the floor, grabs his suitcase, and looks back at the basement door.

Flames now consume everything in sight. Chad's wiggles out the window.

CUT TO BLACK:

SOUND: A huge THUMP.

INT. JOY'S BEDROOM - DAY (PRESENT)

Chad's eyes open. A THUMP.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A huge THUMP from the roof. Plaster dust falls from the ceiling.

CHAD

Jeez!

EXT. JOY'S APARTMENT BUILDING/ROOF - DAY

The COLOSSAL WOODEN STRUCTURE is even more impressive in the morning light. Ropes and pulleys. Chad stands wondering at what looks like a huge wooden bowl.

Gorilla-like GRUNTS come from the other side of the base. Chad makes his way around, concerned for his personal safety.

CHAD

Hello?

Stevie whips to his feet and swings the 2x4 in his hand, knocking Chad to the ground.

CHAD (CONT'D)

OW!!!

Stevie's ready to bash him again-

CHAD (CONT'D)

Wait! Wait! Wait!

Stevie blinks back the instinct to keep bashing.

STEVIE

Oh. Hey. Goddamnit, we have established some rules!

CHAD

Hello is standard parlance. Is there something special you'd like me to say?

STEVIE

Sorry. I've been spending the whole day dealing with water damage... I gotta get a tarp or something.

CHAD

What are you building?

STEVIE

Can't tell you. Don't want to jinx it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Stevie, close to the edge, looks out.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Hey, come here. I wanna show you something.

Chad follows Stevie. On the roof of a NEIGHBORING BUILDING is a POOL. A NAKED WOMAN sunbathes.

CHAD
Wow.

STEVIE
Drives me crazy.

Stevie goes back to work, Chad sits, stares off. City sounds. Honks, helicopters.

CHAD
Stevie? I think that maybe, I'm not sure, but I'm starting to suspect that Joy killed herself.

Stevie stops.

STEVIE
Don't say that. She wouldn't do that.

CHAD
I didn't think so either, but, I'm starting to think-

STEVIE
Chad. She had her shit together like nobody's business. She wouldn't have done that. She was inspiring-

INT. JOY'S APARTMENT - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Stevie seals two garbage bags together with ducked tape. He stands up and looks around. His portion of the room is covered in garbage bags, sealed together - effectively serving as one big zip lock bag.

STEVIE (V.O.)
I was in a dark, dark place, brother. It was black.

Stevie turns to the only other object in the bubble - his motorcycle. Stevie gets on the bike.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 I hated myself. I hated what I had
 become.

Stevie steps on the pedal and ROARS up the engine. And then he just sits there.

STEVIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 I sat there and I thought about all
 the horrible things I'd done in my
 life.

The exhaust pipe spews. The bubble starts to EXPAND as the fumes fill it up. Stevie starts to fall asleep.

STEVIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 I was a rabid dog. And someone
 needed to put me down. And I'm a
 big guy, so nobody would try. So it
 was up to me.

Stevie slumps down a little bit. Sound of a KEY IN THE DOOR.

AT THE FRONT DOOR- Joy (Dressed in styled professional clothes) sees the bubble.

JOY
 Stevie? I told you not to ride the
 motorbike in the apartment! Nice
 tent, though. Stevie? STEVIE?!?

Joy rips through the plastic, grabs Stevie, and drags him out of the bubble. She throws open the windows. She grabs Stevie's collapsed body and slaps him in the face.

JOY (CONT'D)
 Stevie! Wake up! Wake up!

Stevie, groggy, opens his eyes a bit-

JOY (CONT'D)
 I need you to tell me how to turn
 off the motorcycle!

STEVIE
 It's... A... Harley...

JOY
 Shut up and tell me how to turn it
 off!

Stevie smiles weakly at Joy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STEVIE (V.O.)
She was like... An angel.

EXT. JOY'S APARTMENT BUILDING/ROOF - DAY (PRESENT)

Chad is skeptical.

STEVIE
She made me tea. She gave me soup.
We talked about... Everything. She
saved me, man. She can't have
killed herself.

Stevie discovers Chad getting emotional and stops fiddling with the wood.

CHAD
It's been two weeks since you've
seen her?

STEVIE
Yeah. About that long.

CHAD
She was in a twelve step program.

STEVIE
Serious?

CHAD
And she was in therapy. And she
stopped talking to my parents. And she
hasn't used her credit card or
withdrawn any money from the bank
in two weeks and... Pretty much
everyone who's alive uses money. I
mean... She's my, she was my, she's
my goddamn sister.

Tears. They just come out. Simple.

CHAD (CONT'D)
Sorry.

STEVIE
Hey. It's all right to squeeze a
couple.

CHAD
Being here. Smacked in the face
again and again-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVIE

I'm sorry! I'm an edgy guy!

CHAD

No. The whole thing. You know? No Joy. Just the freak show that was her life...

STEVIE

Seriously. When you're away, and you come back, and nobody can relate. And nothing makes sense. Good or bad. I hate this town.

CHAD

In the forest nobody had much more of an agenda than eating breakfast and going to the swimming hole. The water. Everything in your body just melting in the sun and the sapphire crystal blue water.

STEVIE

Brother, sounds like paradise.

CHAD

Where were you before here?

STEVIE

Prison. Almost six months out.

Chad sobers.

CHAD

For... For what?

STEVIE

Manslaughter. Which means, brother, that it was an accident. And, anyway, I'm changed. I got out on good behavior.

CHAD

That's, um, awesome.

Stevie pats Chad on the back. Awkward, but kind.

STEVIE

Sapphire crystal blue. I'd like to see that.

They sit on the roof, small among all the wood and rope.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Officer White goes over the bank statements. Chad makes a doll for Tiesha.

OFFICER WHITE
Do you know why she would?

CHAD
I don't know. I don't think I know
who she is... I mean... Was... I
don't know. There's all this stuff
I didn't know about her.

Under the table Tiesha SNEEZES.

CHAD (CONT'D)
She's still feeling bad?

OFFICER WHITE
Yep. Fever of a hundred n' one.

Chad rummages through his satchel, pulling out some of Joy's over the counter drugs.

CHAD
Joy had all this medicine. I
thought maybe you could use some.
If you want...

OFFICER WHITE
You brought this for Tiesha?

CHAD
I. Um. I lived in this village
where everyone kind of looked out
for kids. They were everyone's
"little brother" or "little
sister." I mean, they were savages
and everything, but that part was
cool I guess... If we were there,
I'd get Tiesha some Pathaqua Root,
but it only grows in the Krubulublu
Valley. So I brought the Dimetapp.

OFFICER WHITE
You don't look so good.

CHAD
I'm hung-over, I can't find my
sister, I need therapy. So. You
know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Chad stands up. Tiesha looks after him - holding a new tissue-paper doll.

TIESHA
Mister! I'll be your little sister!

Chad and Officer White share a touched look. She covers-

OFFICER WHITE
Shh! You're gonna get Momma busted.
Here. Take some medicine.

Officer White grabs the bottle of Dimetapp, and finds Chad gone.

INT. BETH KLING'S PSYCHOANALYSIS/WAITING ROOM - DAY

Chad, poised on a chair, scopes the place. The SECRETARY smiles at him. He smiles.

His eyes land on a rack filled with PAMPHLETS displaying cartoon figures in various phases of distress. Reading the titles, Chad sees - FEELING LONELY?

Chad sighs and grabs the pamphlet. Next to it is another - FEELING DEPRESSED? He grabs that one. FEELING LOST? He grabs it. LIKE A SOCIAL ANOMALY? Yes.

FEELING SUICIDAL?

Chad stares for a long time at the SUICIDAL pamphlet. He grabs it. Tentatively, he opens it up.

DR. BETH (O.S.)
Chad?

Chad looks up to find DR. BETH (50's. God-complex) smiling at her new subject.

DR. BETH (CONT'D)
We're ready for you.
(to the Secretary)
Where should we put him?

SUSAN
Well, Mr. Peterson's in number
three, and Mr. Flinty is in number
seven...

BETH
We don't have to discuss the other
clients...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAD

You're seeing more than one patient?

BETH

What do you think I am, a Dentist?

(to the Secretary)

I'll see him in my office.

(to Chad)

Come on back...

Chad stuffs the pamphlets in his satchel and follows.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Beth leads Chad down the hall. SNORES are heard from behind one of the flimsy doors.

BETH

I respect your insistence on only giving your first name. But we're about to embark on a very special relationship. One of trust. Okay?

CHAD

Okay.

BETH

And for purposes of trust and legality, I'm going to need you to give me your last name.

CHAD

What if any of my relatives come to see you? Say I had a sister, or a brother, would you talk to them about me?

BETH

You have problems with family members? Rest assured, I don't see multiple clients of the same family. Policy.

CHAD

Chadsworth Stevie... Um. Stevens.

Beth smiles.

BETH

Chadsworth Stevens.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She opens a door to-

INT. DR. BETH'S PERSONAL OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Beth waves her arm.

BETH

Let the healing begin!

The room has an easy chair, a small desk, and a couch. Along the wall are various filing cabinets.

Chad sits on the couch. Beth fudges with a small boom-box and SOOTHING MUSIC ensues.

BETH (CONT'D)

So. I want you to lay down, close your eyes, and make yourself comfortable. Listen to my voice.

Chad lays down and closes his eyes.

BETH (CONT'D)

I practice deep hypnotherapy. If I can work with your subconscious mind, your conscious mind will follow its lead.

Chad's eyes snap open.

BETH (CONT'D)

Don't worry. I have a degree. You should trust me much like you would an expert on television. Relax. Breathe in deeply... And out easy wheezy. Breathe in deeply... And out easy wheezy...

Chad gives in.

INT. SEEING ROOM - LATER

Beth finishes the hypnotism.

BETH

3.2.1. You are now listening to me from a deep sleep. Please lift your right hand.

Chad, relaxed and happy, does.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BETH (CONT'D)
And your left leg.

He does.

BETH (CONT'D)
Great.

Beth gets up and leaves the room while Chad has his arm and leg still in the air.

Chad looks composed and relaxed, but his eyelids flick hysterically.

CUE CANDY-LAND MUSIC:

INT. NEW YORK SWISS ALPS RESTAURANT - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A WAITER (20's, Broadway bound, dressed in a SWISS FLAG costume) drops a large plate of cabbage in front of Margaret and a plate of sausages in front of a slightly younger Chad. The Waiter turns to leave when-

MARGARET
Excuse me? Could you please take
that animal away until after I
finish my meal?

The Waiter blinks at her. She turns to Chad, who unwraps a small gift.

MARGARET (CONT'D)
Your father should be here soon, so
I'll let you eat the disgustingness
with him if you don't mind.

CHAD
It's my last civilized meal for two
years, Mom.

MARGARET
There's nothing civilized about
your mother throwing up from the
smell. Trust me. I'm briefly
postponing your bad karma.

Chad, weary, nods to the waiter, who takes the plate away. Chad finishes with the gift. Its a portrait of Margaret meditating among ducks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARGARET (CONT'D)

It's how I want you to remember me.
 I'm going to start practicing with
 my new spiritual advisor soon. By
 the time you get back I may be a
 sage.

JOY (O.S.)

I can't believe it!

Joy stands in the doorway to the restaurant, yelling at Chad and Margaret. Chad, ashamed, turns to Margaret.

CHAD

You told Joy?

MARGARET

I don't think so.

Margaret munches on cabbage. Joy, trembling, steps to the table. Chad does his best to play it off.

CHAD

Joy. Have a seat.

JOY

No I will not have a seat! I will
 not sit with you!

(near tears)

I had all my stuff with me. I tried
 to get into the apartment. Our
 apartment. There was this big hairy
 greek guy moving in. Chad, your
 landlord told me. Your landlord.

Joy, deeply hurt, stares at Chad. Chad, evasive, stares at the table. Margaret looks past Joy and sees Doug outside with a WOMAN and her THREE SONS. Margaret stands and hugs Chad.

MARGARET

Goodbye Chadsworth. Learn from the
 Forest People. Practice Shamanistic
 integration. I suspect your power
 animal to be something quite
 clever. Like and badger. Or an ant.

(to Joy)

Are you coming with me or are you
 staying to see your Father?

Joy, blinking back tears, can't take her eyes off Chad. Margaret shrugs and leaves.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHAD

Joy. Listen. You're going to be fine. You're going to find your own place. Get a job. It'll work out.

Doug strolls in with his new girlfriend (Samantha, (40's) Vietnamese, and her three sons: Edgar - 15, angry, Martin - 12, angry, and Ritchie - 6, angry.)

DOUG

Ha. Wow. A little reunion, huh? Kids, I want you to meet my new love Samantha.

Samantha, overwhelmed, smiles and shakes Chad and Joy's hands. Chad awkwardly fakes niceness. Joy can't take her betrayed eyes off of Chad.

DOUG (CONT'D)

And this is Edgar. This is Martin. And this is Little Ritchie.

Chad is too concerned with ignoring Joy to be polite.

RITCHIE

Don't call me little Ritchie. You're not my fucking Dad, Doug!

EDGAR

You're not his fucking Dad, Doug!

Samantha hits each of them, hard, on the back of their heads.

SAMANTHA

(in Vietnamese)

Boys! Sit down!

DOUG

Ha. Wow.

Everyone sits down at the table. Chad sneaks a glance at Joy, who continues to stand in disbelief. Chad finds something interesting about his fork.

DOUG (CONT'D)

Everyone, this is my son Chad, and my daughter Joy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SAMANTHA

(heartfelt)

It's a very real happiness to meet
you. I want to be with your father
forever.

Martin throws the basket of bread onto the floor. Samantha slaps him, hard, on the back of his head. Joy pays no attention to any of it.

JOY

(to Chad)

We had a plan, Chad. Since we were
kids. We had a plan.

Chad looks from Joy to the violent occupants of the table, back to Joy.

CHAD

I can't stay here anymore, Joy.

This is not going how Doug had hoped.

DOUG

Samantha, boys: Chad's going away tomorrow. He's going to be in the Amazon for the next two years. It's very dangerous. Sometimes the volunteers never come back.

JOY

(to Chad)

You weren't even going to tell me.

Chad sits. Guilty. The waiter drops the sausages in front of him.

WAITER

Enjoy.

INT. BETH KLING'S OFFICE - DAY (PRESENT)

Chad's eyes crack open.

He looks at the clock: 11:33 am.

LATER: 11:47 am.

Tired, he drops his arm and leg. Looking around the room - The filing cabinets tempt him. Especially the one labeled "F".

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LATER: 11:53 am.

Chad slides off the couch and opens the cabinet. Flipping through he sees: FLINN, JOY. He grabs it.

He hears: FOOTSTEPS. He looks to the door-

Beth tiptoes in and finds Chad on the couch, arm and leg up in the air. She sits.

BETH

You can now let your leg and arm float down to the couch.

Chad does.

BETH (CONT'D)

I am now talking to Chad's subconscious mind. How have you been feeling lately?

CHAD

Bad. I want to find... Something.

BETH

What are you looking for?

CHAD

I'm looking for my sis- I don't know.

BETH

The subconscious mind knows everything. What are you looking for?

CHAD

... Joy.

Beth makes a note.

BETH

Well, time's up. I'm going to snap my finger and wake you. And when you wake up, even though you're not going to remember any of this... you're going to feel the best you've ever felt, like you had a very meaningful experience, and you will want to set up appointments to see me at least twice a week.

3.2.1.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BETH (CONT'D)

(she snaps)

Wake up.

Chad makes a show of waking up.

BETH (CONT'D)

I think that was very productive,
don't you?

Beth smiles. Chad tries to do the same.

EXT. STREET - DAY

As Chad rushes down the street, he pulls Joy's file out of his pants and opens it up.

The first page of the file is a title page: JOY - AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

As he grows increasingly absorbed, people make way for him.

JOY (V.O.)

March 16th. This is my first entry into the autobiography I'm writing for my shrink... Where to begin...

CUE CANDY-LAND MUSIC:

INT. E.R. - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Young Chad (glasses, sweater and suitcase) and Young Joy (helmet, wings and Godzilla) walk out of their parents' hospital room-

MARGARET

Fine. I get Joy, a new house, and three more years of child support.

Chad turns from his parents to his sister. Joy grabs her fairy wings and starts flapping them. They don't carry her anywhere.

JOY

The Ogres are trying to give us warts! Look out! Fly away! Come, prince Godzilla and kind Sir!

CHAD

Joy, it's not a game.

Joy stops flapping, takes his hand and pulls him down the hall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOY

Let's ask one of the doctor's if
they can sew our hands together!
Then we'll stick! I don't want to
never see you again!

Joy pulls him along - looking for a doctor. Chad stops.

CHAD

Joy.

Joy stops.

JOY

Let's run away!

CHAD

No.

JOY

We'll go together to the mountains.
On the other side of the world! The
bears will take us in!

CHAD

No.

Joy sits down and covers her eyes. Chad, helpless, looks around, and sees a coffee station.

Joy, crying, wipes her eyes and finds in front of her two TISSUE PAPER DOLLS. She smiles a bit. Looking around the hallway she finds Chad gone.

Peeking into the room, she finds her parents trying to swat each other over the aisle. Chad takes their arms, and separates them. He turns to Joy, and beckons her back into the room.

Joy shakes her head "No."

Doug and Margaret try swatting each other again. Chad stops them.

Joy looks down at Chad's suitcase. She looks at her family. She grabs the suitcase and runs.

EXT. STREET - DAY (PRESENT)

Chad flips the page.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOY (V.O.)

I think the first time they found
me in a campground in the
mountains.

EXT. A MOUNTAIN CAMPGROUND - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

RANGERS walking with flashlights come upon JOY sleeping
peacefully, they recognize her from a missing poster.

JOY (V.O.)

They'd bring me back, but I'd be
off again.

EXT. THE ARIZONA DESERT - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Young Joy stretches at the campfire, cooking bacon and eggs.
PARK RANGERS drive up, recognizing her from a milk carton.
She sighs.

JOY (V.O.)

It always pissed Chad off.

INT. A MILK FACTORY - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Young Chad hands a MISSING poster to a MILK MAN. The Milk Man
gives a carton of milk to Chad, on it is Joy's photo and the
caption: "HAVE YOU SEEN ME?"

Young Chad shakes the Milk Man's hand.

JOY (V.O.)

When I was around, I saw him when
my parents would swap us on
weekends and holidays.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Doug and Young Chad on one side of the sidewalk. Margaret and
Young Joy on the other. Chad and Joy go to switch places as
Doug and Margaret yell nonsense at each other.

JOY (V.O.)

As I got older, I found new ways of
running away...

EXT. STREET - DAY (PRESENT)

Chad flips another page.

INT. MARGARET'S APARTMENT - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Margaret, meditating to a Tibetan Singing Bowl, opens her eyes to find Joy (10) passed out among bottles of Tylenol, Flintstone's Vitamins, and Nyquil. Margaret rings the bowl, closes her eyes and continues her meditation.

JOY (V.O.)
It got really bad.

INT. DRUGSTORE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

An Older Joy pushes a shopping cart stuffed with over-the-counter drugs. She sees JONATHAN (30) testing out Trapper-Keeper's in the school-supplies aisle. She falls in love.

They walk out hand in hand, leaving the shopping cart.

JOY (V.O.)
When you fall in love, you just
want to stay with that person.

INT. JOY'S APARTMENT - DAY (FLASHBACK)

JONATHAN moves in. Joy helps.

JOY (V.O.)
For the first few months it was
more than I had ever dreamed.

INT. JOY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

JONATHAN and JOY make love under billowing curtains in the moonlight.

JOY (V.O.)
But soon you're everything you
never wanted to be all over again.

INT. JOY'S BEDROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Jonathan sick with the flu. Joy gives him Chloraseptic. She looks at the bottle, and stuffs it in her pocket.

JOY (V.O.)
I fell off the wagon. I guess I was
depressed. Mom gave me a gun.

INT. MARGARET'S APARTMENT - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A familiar scene. Joy with the Chloraseptic, Margaret handing her the gun.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOY (V.O.)

Jonathan. Poor guy. He taught third graders - he had no idea what he was getting into.

INT. JOY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Joy SCREAMS and throws plates of pasta at Jonathan. Joy runs into the bedroom as Jonathan SHOUTS after her. Joy flies back in with the revolver. Fires twice - BLAM! BLAM! The wall next to Jonathan EXPLODES with the impact.

Jonathan, shocked, looks from the wall to Joy. Joy, shocked, looks from Jonathan to the gun.

Jonathan picks up his coat and walks out the door.

JOY (V.O.)

He took a job in Atlanta. I got a roommate, kept up with the meetings, lied. I started trying to kill myself. In three weeks I will succeed.

Chad, terrified, flips a page.

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

Okay. This is really weird.

INT. BETH KLING'S OFFICE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Joy tries to resist the hypnotism. She stares at Dr. Beth out of the corner of her eye.

JOY (V.O.)

Last week I turned in a chapter to you, Dr. Beth, that said that I was going to kill myself in three weeks, and you didn't even read it. Okay. This is a test. In two weeks I'm going kill myself, destroying my body so my father will never be able to do the autopsy.

EXT. STREET - DAY (PRESENT)

Chad flips the page.

INT. BETH KLING'S OFFICE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The next week. Joy greets Dr. Beth, and waits for the intervention. None happens.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOY (V.O.)

Okay. Fine. Even You: A professional who I pay for to help me. Well. Next week. In the zoo. The southwest corner of the rainforest section. Goodbye.

EXT. STREET - DAY (PRESENT)

Chad flips the page. Nothing more. He searches the rest of the file. Nothing.

CHAD

Oh, God, no.

He runs.

EXT. ZOO - DAY

Chad runs through the Rainforest Exhibit, looking for any sign of Joy's passing. None.

He looks around. A ZOOKEEPER walks by.

CHAD

Which way is Southwest?

ZOOKEEPER

That way.

Chad follows the Zookeeper's finger and finds a small pool of dark water. Next to it a sign reads: "DON'T PET THE PIRANHA!"

Moving closer, he finds graffiti scratched into the paint under the sign. The scratches read:

"JOY'S LAST WORDS: FUCK YOU. TOO LATE."

Chad reads it again. Again.

CHAD

Joy!

He jumps into the pool. The water bubbles as the piranha frenzy.

ZOOKEEPER (O.S.)

Are you insane!?!?

The Zookeeper grabs his collar and pulls him out of the water. Chad, panting, looks at his borrowed motorcycle boots. They're shredded.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAD

My sister's in there! My sister's
in there!

ZOOKEEPER

Is she insane!?!?

CHAD

Drain the pool! Drain the pool!

ZOOKEEPER

Drain the pool! We got a jumper!

EXT. PIRANHA POOL - DAY

Water drains from the pool. Stranded fish gasp for oxygen.

Chad, the Zookeeper, the BOSS, and other EMPLOYEES stand in the now roped-off section.

As the water recedes, a skull emerges. Another. Another. Apparently, Joy's choice of suicide wasn't so uncommon. Chad stares, wild-eyed, helpless.

ZOOKEEPER

Nibbled to death. That's gotta
hurt.

THE BOSS

Can you tell which one is your
sister?

The water continues to drain, revealing bottle after bottle of Chloraseptic. At the sight of the Chloraseptic, all life drains from Chad's body. His eyes dull. He sinks to the ground.

The Zookeeper picks up a bottle.

ZOOKEEPER

Topical anesthetic. To numb the
nibbling.

Chad takes the bottle from the Zookeeper's hand. It's half full. Defeated, Chad unzips his jacket, exposes his chest, and squirts Chloraseptic onto it. Once. Twice. Three times.

Four. Five. Six. The bottle, now empty, squirts nothing. Chad, heart numb, keeps pumping the nozzle.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Chad, wandering, passes too many people. Too many cars. Overfilled trash cans. Too much neon. Deafening noise. Chad is numb to it all.

INT. COPY SHOP - DAY

The copier spits out page after page. Chad somberly sorts them together.

INT. MARGARET'S HALLWAY - DAY

Margaret opens her door.

CHAD

Mom?

MARGARET

Come in, come in. I want you to meet Master Shu.

INT. MARGARET'S APARTMENT - DAY

Chad, robot-like, follows Margaret into the living room-

IN THE LIVING ROOM - waits MASTER SHU (Zen Monk, 50's, white, shaved head, sideburns: a plumber in robes)

MARGARET

Master Shu, this is my son, Chad. Chad, Master Shu is the only Zen Master from Detroit, and my spiritual advisor.

Master Shu bows deeply. Chad kinda nods.

In the center of the room stands an enormous chest. It's contents - rich fabrics and curious treasures - spill all over the floor.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

Master Shu and I were just looking for clues.

CHAD

Clues?

MARGARET

Trying to find out what happened to your sister.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARGARET (CONT'D)

You probably wouldn't have assumed
 so - seeing as you think I'm a
 horrible mother. A monster!
 Destroyer of childhood innocence!

CHAD

What is all of this?

MARGARET

Mementos from yours and Joy's
 childhood. I bet you didn't even
 know I kept all this old stuff! A
 mother's love is never seen. Sit
 down. Relax. Your crappy mom made
 tea.

Chad sits, bewildered. Master Shu eyes him coldly.

CHAD

Mom, I-

MARGARET

Chad, why don't you ask Master Shu
 about Nirvana?

Margaret goes back to her clue-hunting.

CHAD

So. Nirvana.

As if to answer, Master Shu benevolently picks up the teapot
 and pours tea into a cup. He keeps pouring. It overflows.
 Chad, kinda freaked out, doesn't say anything.

Master Shu keeps pouring.

MASTER SHU

You may want to ask me why I'm
 pouring this tea so it overflows?

Margaret sits up for the lesson. Chad remains unimpressed.

CHAD

Because it's an ancient Detroit
 custom?

Master Shu gives him an icy glare.

MASTER SHU

And I would ask you: How do you
 know it's overflowing?

The tea drips all over the coffee table and onto the carpet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MASTER SHU (CONT'D)
That is nirvana.

Margaret looks as if everything suddenly became clear. Chad looks like he's losing his hearing.

Master Shu closes his eyes and starts a meditation. Chad squeezes his cranium with both hands and tries to breathe.

Margaret finds a Fireman's Helmet (clean and polished) and gives a YELP of nostalgia.

MARGARET
You remember this?

Chad picks it up.

CHAD
Yeah. Was this Joy's helmet? It looks brand new.

Margaret, rummaging, lets out another YELP. She hands him a small pillow.

MARGARET
Do you remember that?

Chad examines it. It's embroidered with "NUMBER 1 SON!"

CHAD
No. I don't remember that. Not at all.

MARGARET
It was your pillow! When you were little! It was your pillow!

Margaret moves on. Chad is losing his numbed patience.

CHAD
Mom, I need to tell you-

Margaret lets out a GASP of discovery. Moved, tearing, she reaches for something in the chest.

MARGARET
Oh, Chadsworth. Your favorite thing ever! Do you remember this?

She pulls out a stuffed doll of SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS. She lovingly passes it to Chad. Chad examines the doll - and finds a price tag.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CHAD

Mom? Why are you doing this?

MARGARET

What? You LOVED that doll as a baby!

CHAD

No I didn't. Spongebob didn't exist when I was a kid... You just bought all this stuff, didn't you?

MARGARET

Goddess Gracious! Don't be ridiculous! These are your childhood treasures!

Margaret gets frenzied. Chad gets more calm.

CHAD

Mom. My childhood treasures burned down with my childhood home.

Margaret looks frantic.

MARGARET

It's the thought that counts! It's the thought that counts, Chadsworth!

She fights the tears.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

What was I supposed to do?!? What am I supposed to do?!? What do I do now!?!?

Chad drops Sponge-bob and picks up his satchel-

CHAD

Mom? I want to invite you to a ceremony. For Joy.

He hands her one of the new copies.

MARGARET

(reading)

An Invitation to Release, a Tradition of the Amazon?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

CHAD

It's something I learned in the forest. I think it's appropriate. Please come.

MARGARET

Can't we wait to have a ceremony for her until we find out what happened? Until we find out what happened to my baby girl?

CHAD

Joy is dead, Mom. She's dead.

MARGARET

How can you say that? How can you-

Margaret breaks down. She has, after all, lost her child. Chad stares at her. Moved, he opens his arms to her, and moves to hold her.

Master Shu stands up and holds out his arms. Margaret pushes Chad back and moves into Master Shu's embrace.

Chad, standing alone, watches his mother share her grief with Master Shu.

INT. DOUG'S APARTMENT - DAY

Doug leads Chad into his apartment - a nice place, with cardboard boxes everywhere. Doug is in the middle of moving.

DOUG

Dr. Stacy! Dr. Stacy! Look who stopped in to help!

Dr. Stacy comes in with a box, adding to the pile in the living room, and gives Chad a hug.

DR. STACY

Chad!

CHAD

Um. Hi.

Doug puts his arm around Dr. Stacy.

DR. STACY

Your Dad is moving in with me. If he can get rid of some of his stuff.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAD

Wow.

DOUG

See? I told you he'd love the idea!

Ha. Wow. Kids only want the best
for their parents.

Doug and Dr. Stacy smile, and kiss. With tongue. Chad puts his head in his hands. Dr. Stacy goes back into the bedroom to keep packing.

DOUG (CONT'D)

Stacy's been really helping me, you know, deal with the situation. How are you holding up? You're acting a little weird.

DR. STACY (O.S.)

(from the bedroom)

Can I get a hand with this?

CHAD

Dad. I came to-

Doug jerks his head in the direction of the bedroom.

DOUG

Help her for me. My bum leg. It would mean a lot.

Chad drops his satchel and goes to help. Doug looks down at the satchel and sees the head of the INVITATION. He grabs it and pulls. The PAMPHLETS from Dr. Beth's office spill out. Doug reads the titles.

Dr. Stacy and Chad squeeze into the room - each carrying either end of a SEA KAYAK. Doug stuffs the papers back into Chad's satchel.

DR. STACY

This, for example. Do you need this?

DOUG

That's my sea kayak. I need it.

Dr. Stacy looks at it. She hates it, but loves him.

DR. STACY

I guess we could fit it behind the couch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Dr. Stacy goes back into the bedroom.

DOUG

Chad? Can we talk? "Sit down right now" kind of talk.

CHAD

My favorite.

Chad sits down on a plastic-wrapped foot rest.

DOUG

Ha. Wow. I've been thinking. You might be having a rough time. Being back after... years, finding your sister missing. It's probably got you a little down. A little confused. Maybe like a social anomaly? Maybe suicidal?

Doug reaches into one of the boxes.

CHAD

Did you go through my bag?

DOUG

I think now is an appropriate time to give you this.

From a box he pulls out the WWII Flamethrower. Chad slightly, instinctively recoils.

DOUG (CONT'D)

Your grandpa had this thing strapped to his back during the War. And when they asked him to give it back, he found that he couldn't. He couldn't leave it behind. He gave it to me, and I loved and cherished it. In many ways, this flamethrower defines the men in our family. Now that you're a man - following the family tradition-

CHAD

Just because a father gives something to his son doesn't make it a family tradition.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DOUG

It's a tradition. I know you always
loved this flame thrower-

CHAD

No, Dad, I really don't-

DOUG

Cause every kid wants a flame
thrower! Here. Take it. It'll make
you feel better. It feels good to
be armed. To know that, if you have
a problem that you can't resolve -
you can always burn it beyond
recognition.

Doug lays the weapon in Chad's lap. Dr. Stacy has been
hovering in the doorway-

DR. STACY

That was so beautiful, Doug.

Chad has had enough.

CHAD

You and Mom, man. The two of you. I
swear to God. You're a pair. You're
soul-mates.

DOUG

(comforting)

Chadsworth. I know that you took it
very hard when your Mom and I split
up... But, and listen to me now,
you really need to let go of any
hope of her and I ever getting back
together. I mean, come on now, it's
been 10 years.

Chad, trying to get himself together, tosses the flamethrower
over his shoulder, picks up his bags, and moves to the door-

CHAD

I came here to tell you that your
daughter's dead. Joy is dead. I'm
putting together a kind of service.

Dropping an invitation, he leaves.

INT. JOY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Chad opens the door, and struggles to fit through with his flamethrower.

A boot spins through the air and strikes him in the face. Chad is un-phased.

Stevie comes out of the kitchen with a cup of tea.

STEVIE

Oh, hey Chad.

Chad unloads the flamethrower.

CHAD

I've invited people over for a get together tomorrow. I'd like it if you could be there.

STEVIE

What's the occasion?

CHAD

It's a service. For Joy's passing.

Chad hands him an invitation. Stevie looks at it, then nods solemnly. Stevie notices the weapon.

STEVIE

Cool flamethrower

CHAD

It burns people to death. Stupid family stuff.

STEVIE

My father gave me the Harley.

CHAD

I'd much rather have a motorcycle.

STEVIE

It's not a motorcycle. It's a Harley. Brother, you don't understand. I hate that machine. It's the source, the reason, for some of the worst shit I ever did.

Chad looks around and realizes-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAD
Your Harley's gone.

STEVIE
Tomorrow's my six month anniversary
of being holed up in this
apartment. You know that thing on
the roof?

CHAD
Yeah.

STEVIE
It's done. I'm dedicating it to
your sister. My friend. Joy.

INT. STAIRWELL TO THE ROOF - NIGHT

Stevie leads Chad up the stairs.

STEVIE
When I came here, I wanted to talk.
Say something. But I didn't have
the words.

EXT. ROOF - NIGHT

They step onto the roof, still dominated by the tarp-covered
CONSTRUCTION.

STEVIE
So Joy told me to make something. I
can't draw. I can't paint. Plus. I
think it's stupid when people own
crap that's really expensive that
has no practical purpose. So, what
I did was... And you're the first
person to see it, Chad... What I
built was-

Stevie pulls down the tarp. Chad's eyes widen.

CHAD
Oh my God, Stevie. You built a-

The wooden construction has made significant progress since
it's first appearance. It is now, obviously, a very large-

CHAD (CONT'D)
Catapult.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVIE

Yeah..

CHAD

Stevie. You built a-

STEVIE

Catapult.

CHAD

On our roof. In Manhattan.

STEVIE

It's functional art.

Cradled in the enormous bowl of the war-machine sits Stevie's Harley.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

I call it: "My Potential to Chuck my Harley, which I've Sunk Twenty Five Years of Life Into, and Which I No Longer Need as a Crutch for my Personality."

Stevie, a changed man, stands at his full height. Chad stares in awe at the absurd magnificence of it.

CHAD

"My potential to chuck my Harley, which I've sunk twenty five years of life into, and which I no longer need..."

STEVIE

"As a crutch for my personality."

CHAD

"As a crutch for my personality." Wow. Stevie. It kind of... I don't have any words.

STEVIE

Thanks, Brother. They say if you can touch one person with your art... Well, they say it's good.

They stare at the marvel.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

You think? Would you mind? If I unveiled it at Joy's ceremony?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHAD

I think she would be honored.

STEVIE

Cool. Well, we should probably cover it up again. It's art, but, you know, it might be breaking my parole.

They move to cover it.

INT. JOY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Chad tries to sleep-

CHAD

Think about naked women. Think about terra-forming Mars. Think about... Think about...

CUE CANDY-LAND MUSIC:

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Young Chad strolls next to Margaret, who drops more tofu into her cart. Chad's eyes track the sugar cereal.

CHAD

Mom? Can I have coco-pebbles for dinner?

Margaret stops.

MARGARET

Goddess gracious, Chadsworth Flinn.
Your body is your temple.

Head down, Chad heels his mother down the isle. Margaret moves quickly. At the end of the isle, Margaret's cart CRASHES into another cart. The WOMAN (40's, barren, well-adjusted) laughs it off.

WOMAN

Excuse me.

MARGARET

Why don't you watch where you're going?

WOMAN

You were going so fast-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARGARET

Why don't you watch where you're
going!??!

Chad pokes his head out from behind Margaret. Peeking from
behind the Woman is his sister, Joy.

CHAD

Joy?

JOY

Hey Chad.

Margaret sees Joy.

MARGARET

JOY!?!?

The Woman looks terribly confused.

WOMAN

This is my daughter. You know her?

MARGARET

Of course I know her! She's my
daughter! This is Christmas
Vacation! She's supposed to be with
her father!

WOMAN

You're mistaken. This poor girl
doesn't have a family! I adopted
her two weeks ago!

MARGARET

You WHAT!?! Give her back!

WOMAN

Over my dead body!

MARGARET

If you wanna take it there!!!

Margaret tackles the woman to the ground. Chad and Joy watch
and, sharing a look, sigh.

JOY

There go my snacks.

In the Woman's shopping cart are sodas, chips, Twinkies, and
other treats.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHAD
Wow. Twinkies?

JOY
Yeah. Ceil, my mom, promised that I never have to eat vegan. She says it tastes like dirt.

CHAD
You put yourself up for adoption?

JOY
Just for Christmas. I just wanted one Christmas.

CHAD
Joy. Why do you screw everything up?

JOY
You should really think about adoption as an option. Maybe we can get put with the same family.

CHAD
We are in the same family, Joy.

The kids watch the wrestling women. Ceil knows she's losing.

CEIL
Please don't take my baby! Don't take my baby girl!

Margaret, with a wicked uppercut, knocks her out.

INT. JOY'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Chad's eyes open.

CHAD
Goddamnit, Joy.

EXT. JOY'S ROOF - NIGHT

The roof, now decorated with streamers and confetti.

People mill about quietly. The group consists of CHAD and STEVIE.

INGRID, lip quivering, is filmed by GREG and ROB.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIM, TUNA, HOLLIS and KATIE huddle together, passing a paper bag of liquor.

MARGARET and MASTER SHU stand together, eyeing DOUG and DR. STACY, who eye them back. Doug kisses Dr. Stacy for support and makes sure Margaret sees. Margaret does, and makes a show of grabbing Master Shu's butt.

Chad meets the stare of the crowd.

CHAD

Thank you all for coming. If you could all join me in a circle?

The crowd, uncertain, does.

CHAD (CONT'D)

When I got back from the Amazon last week, I started looking for my sister, Joy Flinn.

The OTCDAA people sober.

CHAD (CONT'D)

Some of you know that I've spent the last few years living with a native tribe in the Amazon. I taught the People of the Forest modern house construction. And they, in return, taught me things. One of which, I would like to teach to you. The Kamahanakamahana ritual.

Nobody has any idea what he's talking about.

CHAD (CONT'D)

When a member of the tribe leaves, they are missed, but the forest people love them, and want them to fly free. And they believe that the spirit gets weighed down by feelings of guilt and shame.

People look uncomfortable.

CHAD (CONT'D)

Basically what we do is: we express our bad feelings concerning Joy, as honestly as possible. Clearing the air so that Joy's spirit may fly free. Who wants to start?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Nobody moves. They check each other out. Master Shu steps forward.

MASTER SHU

Things are what they are. Then things are not what they are. Then things are what they are again.

Some in the circle nod at the Master's wisdom.

CHAD

Okay. Um. That's not really what I'm talking about. Anybody else?

Ingrid steps forward, Gary and Rob move with her.

INGRID

Joy? Now that you're a ghost and everything? Maybe you could use your powers for the forces of good and help me land an awesome role? In a movie? With Bendicio Del Toro? Or some other hot actor. Thank you.

CHAD

Ingrid. Why don't you talk about what you told me? That you felt guilty? That you know that withholding your friendship helped alienate Joy?

INGRID

I don't know what you're talking about.

Ingrid slips back into the circle. Hollis steps forward-

HOLLIS

Joy, you were our bascot! We loved you! But bay you serbe as a breminder of how impordant OTCDAA is in people's lives and bay your death remind us what happens when you fall off the wagon and lose self-brespect?!?

KATIE

(to Tuna)

I can't believe she told her brother about us. It's supposed to be anonymous.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Chad, falling apart, looks to Stevie, who stands, tortured.

DOUG

Joy. I know that I was a good father to you and set a good example. But I could only do so much. I only raised you half the time. And it is a huge burden of guilt that I have carried... I am so sorry that I didn't demand full custody of you. I blame myself for what happened. But mostly I know it's your mother's fault.

Dr. Stacy supports him in this difficult time.

MARGARET

Joy! I know you're here in the ether! My mortal eyes are blind to you but my immortal soul feels your presence and I'm sure Master Shu's does as well!

Master Shu nods solemnly. Chad's brow furrows deeper.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

And since I know that you and I are connected, I know that you believed me to be a great mother, and I have nothing to air... But, in respect for the customs of the Amazonians, I must say one thing I regret that had a direct consequence on your life and how you were raised... And I blame myself for it, and continue to blame myself every day... I should have killed your father!

Margaret rushes at Doug and Doug rushes back, wrestling each other to the ground. Other guests try to pull them off of each other, but the ferocity of the fight pulls them down.

WHOOOSH! Suddenly, everyone's illuminated orange. They turn to see-

Chad, shooting flames from the flamethrower into the sky, eyes ablaze.

CHAD

THIS IS WHY! THIS IS WHY!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

He shoots more flames. WHOOSH! Horrified, the people scatter. Gary and Rob record it all.

CHAD (CONT'D)

This is what I'm talking about!
This is why I ran from the forest!
This is why I didn't join the
tribe! To join the tribe is to join
this!

He turns to the sky.

CHAD (CONT'D)

Joy! I'm sorry for being a bad
brother! I'm sorry for thinking you
were a brat! I love you and I've
miss you so, so, so, so, so much!
But go! Be free!!!!

He shoots flames that spew high into the night sky. He points the weapon at Doug and Margaret.

STEVIE

Chad. You don't want to do that.

Chad looks to Stevie, who is really cool. Relaxing.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

You don't want to spend your life
building catapults.

Chad, frustrated, shoots one more WHOOSH into the air.

CHAD

AAARRRRUUUUUAHHHHHH!!!!

Chad, panting, finds the flamethrower in his hands. It sickens him. Dropping it to the ground, he sinks down next to it.

CHAD (CONT'D)

I can't believe you people. I can't
believe you.

The onlookers stare at him. Stevie helps him up. Chad meets the eyes of the horrified mourners.

POLICE SIRENS wail in the distance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

CHAD (CONT'D)
Sorry. Sorry if I scared you. It's
just that... Fire. Fire is a big
part of the ritual!

The group doesn't believe him.

STEVIE
Chad!

Chad looks up and sees where Stevie's pointing. The tarp
covering the catapult is ablaze.

Running to help Stevie, they pull most of the tarp down,
revealing the catapult. The onlookers can't believe what
they're seeing.

Chad and Stevie stamp out most of the flames. Stevie gives a
final pull on the tarp, but it snags on something. Chad looks
to where it's caught and sees it - pulling on the trigger!

Stevie heaves.

CHAD
No! Wait!!!

Stevie pulls harder. The tarp pulls the trigger lever.

The catapult throws the Harley into the air with incredible
force. Launching it towards the apartment building across the
street. The machine SLAMS into the wall - blowing open a huge
hole. Dust and debris fly everywhere.

Chad and the others stare in shock.

From the hole in the wall of the building, a BALD GUY in
boxer shorts and tube socks steps into what was his kitchen.

BALD GUY
That was my kitchen you asshole!

POLICE SIRENS wail from the street below.

STEVIE
Oh, man. This is not good behavior.

The street floods with POLICE.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
THIS IS NOT GOOD BEHAVIOR!!!

The SWAT team spews out of the van and into Joy's building.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

Master Shu starts a meditation. Hollis snorts nose-spray, and passes it to Tuna, who snorts it.

Stevie cranks the catapult and the arm of the machine descends into loaded position.

CHAD

Stevie, what are you doing? You're not going to catapult the cops!

STEVIE

I'm not gonna let them get me.

Stevie, incredibly, pushes the huge catapult to a new angle. He climbs up the structure, and plops himself in the bowl. Stevie realizes something that brings an easy smile.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

Hey. Chad. I got rid of the Harley.

With that, he throws his boot, hits the trigger lever, and goes sailing high into the air-

STEVIE (CONT'D)

CANNON-

And starts coming down-

STEVIE (CONT'D)

BAAAAAALLLLLLL!!!

Right into the NAKED WOMAN'S POOL. SPLASH!

Chad stares after him. The SWAT team pour onto the roof and tackle Chad. Their black uniforms pile onto him. One of them raises his billy-club, about to slam it into Chad's face when-

SWAT LEADER

Camera! Camera!

The SWAT GUY with the club looks up and sees Gary and Rob recording the event. The whole team suddenly turn from aggressive to helpful-

SWAT LEADER (CONT'D)

Okay, men! Let's give him some breathing room. Let me help you up there, Sir. Are you all right?

CHAD

Yeah. Yeah, I'm fine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

SWAT LEADER

We jumped on you as a precautionary measure. Some maniac's burning things with a flamethrower and attacking the city with siege weapons. Who's catapult is that?

CHAD

Stevie's.

The SWAT TEAM MEMBERS all cock their guns.

SWAT LEADER

Where is he?

Chad doesn't move, but some of the others point in the general direction of the building with the pool.

SWAT LEADER (CONT'D)

Go! Go! Go!

The team flies back down the stairs.

Chad sinks to the ground. Looking up, he watches as Ingrid, Gary and Rob slink down the stairs. The OTCDA members step up to Chad.

KATIE

If you ever have a bad year and turn to the bottle, or to gambling, or to drugs, or hit rock bottom eating chocolate-fucking-cake, and joining a group is the only way out, you better use a different name, because Chad Flinn will never be welcome.

Hollis blows his nose, and throws the used tissue on him. They file down the stairs.

Doug and Dr. Stacy move to the door.

DOUG

You know? Ha. I'm really happy we had this gathering. I really do feel better, getting all that off my chest. Wow. Maybe you could help me finish moving tomorrow? Squeeze that kayak behind the couch?

They disappear down the stairs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

Margaret and Master Shu move to the door. Margaret rummages through her large purse and finds the #1 Son pillow and puts it on his lap.

MARGARET

That's what you are. You're number one. Number one and only.

She has one of her emotional hiccups and ends the feeling with a meditative hum that carries her out the door.

MASTER SHU

The turtle must-

CHAD

Man, shut the fuck up.

Master Shu nods and follows Margaret.

Chad, alone on the roof, throws the pillow off the side of the building.

CHAD (CONT'D)

Think about... Think about... Joy.
Stay here. Think about Joy.

CUE CANDY-LAND MUSIC:

But we don't go anywhere. We watch him mourn his sister.

INT. JOY'S APARTMENT - MORNING

The small suitcase lays on the bed, filled with necessities: underwear, T-shirts, a toothbrush.

Chad, in khakis and a button down shirt, contemplates a worn book: "The World on Your Allowance: How to Live On Your Own Terms, And Your Own Budget!" Chad adds the book to the luggage. He buckles the buckles.

Suitcase in hand, Chad shuffles to the front door where there is a KNOCK.

CHAD

Who is it?

VOICE (O.S.)

Detective Terry. I'm here regarding the Joy Flinn case?

CHAD

She's dead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DETECTIVE TERRY (O.S.)
... Would you come to the precinct
for questions?

CHAD
... She's dead.

DETECTIVE TERRY (O.S.)
It would be helpful if you came
downtown.

Chad stares at the door, and grips his suitcase.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

DETECTIVE TERRY (50's. Not well liked) shuffles through his desk. Chad, across from him, realizes he's two desks away from Officer White. White gives a re-assuring nod to Chad. Tiesha's little face peeks out at him.

DETECTIVE TERRY
When was the last time you saw your
sister?

CHAD
Two years ago.

A COP with a report interrupts by handing the paper to Terry.

COP
Here's that 197 you wanted.

Terry looks over the report.

DETECTIVE TERRY
Excuse me for a second... Will you?

Terry moves over to Officer White's desk and picks up her phone. Dials. He looks back at Chad and holds up the "just a second" gesture. Officer White listens to everything Terry says and can't help but frown at Chad. Terry hangs up and comes back to his desk, leaving the paper.

DETECTIVE TERRY (CONT'D)
You can go home now. The case is
closed.

CHAD
I know. She's dead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DETECTIVE TERRY

Um... Actually, we found her. She's alive.

Chad doesn't believe it.

CHAD

What?

Terry nods.

CHAD (CONT'D)

Where is she?

DETECTIVE TERRY

... I can't tell you.

CHAD

What?

DETECTIVE TERRY

Look. I'm sorry... This is very awkward. I cannot disclose your sister's location without her consent.

CHAD

And she didn't give you her consent?

DETECTIVE TERRY

I'm sorry, Mr. Flinn. I cannot answer that question.

Chad nods and looks around. Too many people. Too much trash. Too much fluorescent light. He stands up and stumbles to Officer White's desk.

CHAD

Her address. It's written on that paper? The 197?

Officer White removes the report from her desk. She shakes her head.

OFFICER WHITE

I'm sorry, Chad. If I gave you this, I would lose my job. I have a sick kid.

TIESHA (O.S.)

I feel better now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

OFFICER WHITE
Shh, baby.

Chad nods at White and angles down to see Tiesha, who looks much better, holding the report. She slides it to him.

TIESHA
Thanks for the medicine, big brother.

Chad looks up to White, who jerks her head at the door. Chad, at a loss for words, smiles at his friend.

EXT. ATLANTA SUBURB - DAY

Chad, suitcase in one hand, T-Rex in the other, stops on the sidewalk and looks at a suburban house. It's average looking. Kept up, but not too kept up. He walks to the door. KNOCKS.

Joy opens the door. She catches her breath. Chad takes in his sister.

CHAD
Hey.

JOY
Hey.

They stare at each other.

JOY (CONT'D)
You're home a month early.

CHAD
Hey. Shit happens.

They stare.

JOY
How did you find-

CHAD
Four years in the deserts of Titicaca teach you a lot.

Chad hands her the stuffed animal.

JOY
Prince Rex.

JONATHAN (O.S.)
Who is it, Honey?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JONATHAN (30's. A kind man) enters the foyer and looks over Joy's shoulder.

JOY

This is my brother, Chad.

JONATHAN

Your brother? You never said you had a brother.

An awkward moment as the three stand.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

So. I'm your sister's fiance.
Jonathan.

CHAD

Hi. Congratulations.

JONATHAN

Joy? Should we invite him in?

JOY

I dunno. Chad, you wanna tasty beverage or something?

CHAD

A tasty beverage sounds pretty okay.

JOY

(casual)

Oh, but of course, you must be parched.

Joy and Chad crack the slightest of smiles. Jonathan has no idea what's going on. They move inside.

INT. JOY AND JONATHAN'S HOUSE - LATER

Joy finishes the tour of the house-

JOY

... And this is Jonathan's study. He's always grading the kid's tests and everything. Math. Writing.

JONATHAN

Sometimes I have them write little stories.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOY

Yeah. Sometimes I read them. Some are really funny.

JONATHAN

Some are sad.

JOY

Yeah... Some are kinda sad. More milk?

CHAD

Please.

Joy takes his glass and they all move into the-KITCHEN where Joy pours another glass of milk.

JONATHAN

Chad, you're going to stay for dinner, right? Joy makes a wicked spinach salad.

Chad looks quizzical.

CHAD

I don't know.

JOY

Actually the spinach is for tomorrow. Tonight we're having... red meat.

Chad blinks. Joy's hesitant.

JOY (CONT'D)

... And sugar cereals?

Chad smiles. Joy smiles.

CHAD

I'd definitely like to stay for dinner.

Jonathan has no idea.

INT. JOY AND JONATHAN'S/DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Dinner: Steak and Coco Pebbles. Joy and Chad act like everything is totally normal. Jonathan can't figure it out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAD
Please pass the pebbles.

Jonathan passes the cereal. Joy and Chad bust up LAUGHING.

Jonathan still doesn't get it, but their delight is contagious, and he can't help but join in.

INT. JOY AND JONATHAN'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - LATER

Chad washes dishes. The TV can be heard in the other room.

JOY (O.S.)
Babe? You need anything?

JONATHAN (O.S.)
No thanks.

Joy carries more plates to the counter. Chad makes room for them.

JOY
You know, you can just put them in the dishwasher if you want.

CHAD
It's not that much.

Joy watches him.

JOY
Chad. It's a real home for me, here, with him... It feels like home. Do you know what I mean?

Chad looks at Joy.

CHAD
Yeah. I've felt like that.

JOY
... Why did you-

CHAD
I found the letter.

Joy nods slowly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOY

I don't know. After a few months, maybe a couple years, I was planning on pulling a Lazarus. But I just didn't know how to-

CHAD

No. Please. You never ever, ever, ever have to explain anything.

Joy has no words.

CHAD (CONT'D)

I wanted to tell you that I'm sorry. For not telling you. That I was leaving. That was really shitty of me and I'm sorry.

She nods.

JOY

When you read that letter, you must've been so pissed.

CHAD

Yeah. I was pretty pissed.

Joy picks up a towel and starts drying the dishes. He washes, she dries.

JOY

Thanks for finding me.

CHAD

Thanks for being here to find.

They continue.

EXT. JOY AND JONATHAN'S FRONT PORCH - DAY

Chad, suitcase in hand, steps into the morning. Joy sees him off.

JOY

Listen. Maybe-

CHAD

Yeah?

JOY

Maybe we can spend a Christmas together?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Chad smiles.

CHAD

Maybe.

JOY

If I expect you, will you show up?

CHAD

I promise you that if you invite me, I will show up.

JOY

Then will you please come back for Christmas?

CHAD

I wouldn't miss it for the world.

Joy, overjoyed, smiles.

JOY

That's gonna be so fucking awesome.

Chad walks away. She stares after him.

EXT. THE FOREST WATER HOLE - DAY

Chad, in white ceremonial paint, leaves the silence of the forest and approaches the edge of the waterfall.

SOUNDS: Kids playing in water. A SPLASH. SCREAMS of delight.

Looking down over the crystal blue pool, Chad sees the KIDS playing, calling to someone in the forest beyond to pool.

From in the forest he hears-

A BIG BEAR OF A VOICE (O.S.)

CANNON-

And an enormous THWAP as the neck of a catapult shoots up over the trees, throwing a BIG BEAR OF A MAN high into the air towards the water-

The man gets to the same altitude as Chad, on top of the cliff. The BIG BEAR OF A MAN looks at Chad, recognizes him, and waves to him mid-air -

It's Stevie -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVIE
-BAAAAALLLLLLL!

SPLASH! The kids all scream with delight. Stevie's head pops out of the water-

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Chadsworth! Brother! Chadsworth!

The kids spot who Stevie's yelling at, wave and jump with glee, beckoning him into the pool. KID #1 runs into the forest.

KID #2
(in the native tongue)
Look, it's "Nice Guy Who Can't Build Houses For Shit!"

KID #3
(waving and jumping)
"Nice Guy Who Can't Build Houses For Shit!"

Chad, smiling, takes the perfect dive position.

Kid #1 comes back, flanked by other FOREST PEOPLE.

VILLAGE ELDER
(in the native tongue)
"Nice Guy Who Can't Build Houses For Shit!"

The village lines up along the rim of the water, waiting.

CHAD
(to himself)
You take it too far.

He jumps.

CHAD (CONT'D)
CANNONBAAAAALLLLL!!!!

SPLASH as Chad plunges deep into the water.

His head bobs to the surface. Stepping out of the pool, he stands before the Elder. The Elder looks into his eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

VILLAGE ELDER
(in the native tongue)
This is no longer "Nice Guy Who
Can't Build Houses For Shit" He is
now "Brother Who Carries Joy in His
Eyes!"

All of the villagers nod at the wisdom of their elder.

CHAD
(in the native tongue)
Sorry I freaked out and ran. I had
to work some stuff out.

VILLIAGE ELDER
(in the native tongue)
Don't worry. We cleared the air for
you. Welcome home, Brother.

Stevie, and the People of the Forest, welcome him - like
family.