

THE WACKNESS

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"Can it be that it was all so simple then?"

--Wu Tang Clan

INT DR. SQUIRES' OFFICE - DAY

A wood-paneled Park Avenue doctor's office. Fancy framed stuff on the walls.

LUKE SHAPIRO, 17, clad in Girbaud jeans, visor and pocket t, sits across from DR. JEFFREY SQUIRES, 40, who wears a v-neck sweater and khaki pants.

Silence passes between them as they sit awkwardly. Then:

LUKE
I don't get to lie on the couch or
nothin'?

DR. SQUIRES
Would you like to lie on the couch?

LUKE
Is that a trick question?

DR. SQUIRES
Why would you think that?

LUKE
No reason.
(beat)
I'll stay right here.

DR. SQUIRES
So, what's on your mind, Luke?

LUKE
Nothing.

DR. SQUIRES
Well--

LUKE
I mean, I guess I can make
something up.

DR. SQUIRES
Fine. Make something up, then.

LUKE
OK. Let's see. I'm having trouble
-- getting laid.

DR. SQUIRES
Common problem. How old are you
again, Luke?

LUKE
Old enough to be getting laid. And
getting older every day.

DR. SQUIRES
Have you ever gotten laid?

LUKE
Two years ago I fucked Katie Randall in Battery Park, but she had drunk two 40's and the cops came and broke us up before we, before I, busted--

DR. SQUIRES
So she was drunk?

LUKE
She weighs, like, sixty pounds and she drank 2 40 ounce bottles of Crazy Horse. You do the math.

DR. SQUIRES
Crazy Horse?

LUKE
Look, Dr. Squires--

DR. SQUIRES
Call me Jeff.

LUKE
Look, Jeff -- Dr. Squires -- how much do you need?

DR. SQUIRES
You're the one who needs this.

LUKE
How much?

DR. SQUIRES
A quarter.

Luke digs into his backpack, pulls out some bags of weed:

LUKE
I can give you two eighths. It's the same--

DR. SQUIRES
I can do the math, Luke.

Luke holds on to two baggies, puts the rest back.

LUKE
Here you go.

DR. SQUIRES
That entitles you to another--
(checks his watch)

LUKE
Forty-eight minutes.

DR. SQUIRES
Forty-eight minutes. If you leave
now, you're getting ripped off.

A beat. A skeptical glance from Luke. Then,

LUKE
I'm not really feeling all this
feeling shit today, Dr. Squires.
Maybe some other time.

He puts his backpack on, turns to leave.

DR. SQUIRES
If you want to talk, Luke, you know
where to find me.

LUKE
And if you wanna smoke...

Dr. Squires looks at him, nods.

LUKE
Tell Stephanie I say whassup. And
tell her she owes me.

DR. SQUIRES
(pulls out a bong)
Uh-huh.

LUKE
You ever feel kind of like a fuck-
up, you know, buying weed from the
same guy who deals to your
daughter?

Dr. Squires takes a big bong hit, exhales into a paper towel
roll.

DR. SQUIRES
Stepdaughter.

LUKE
Stepdaughter. Exactly. Later, Mr.
Squires.

Luke lets the door close behind him, but before it does:

DR. SQUIRES
I'm a doctor, Luke!

LUKE
(to himself)
Dr. Squires.

Luke examines the people in the waiting room, waiting. He shakes his head. Suckers.

And *Tribe Called Quest's* "Check the Rhyme" drops on the soundtrack.

EXT CENTRAL PARK SOUTH DAY

Luke rolls up one pantleg, and hops on a bike, puffing away at a cigarette. As he moves through the flaring sun, voiceover:

LUKE (V.O.)
Once upon a time -- 1994 to be
exact -- on an island called
Manhattan, lived a kid named me...

Now, illustrations our hero, riding his bike through Manhattan. The pictures feel classic, like Eloise at the Plaza.

LUKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Luke Shapiro. Aside from the fact that I sell weed, there's nothing much remarkable about me. And even the drug thing's just a cry for help, really.
(beat)
My name is Luke Shapiro. I am a drug dealer. Hear my cry.

INT SUBWAY DAY

Luke sits on the subway, holding his bike, bobbing his head in his headphones.

LUKE (V.O.)
But there's so much more to me than just dealing weed. I am a true life person, with likes and dislikes. For instance, I like summer. I like the summer stench that I smell in the subway. I like alliteration (I learned that shit in Latin class).
(MORE)

LUKE (V.O.) (cont'd)
 I like seeing the sweaty girls on
 the train in short skirts and
 sometimes I like seeing their
 panties, when I can see 'em.

Luke stares at a BORIQUA sitting across from him. She crosses her legs, he leans forward to get a glimpse. She crosses them back.

LUKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 I like fly ladies. I like tank
 tops. I like short skirts. I like
 my impure thoughts.

A thought bubble floats out of Luke's head.

LUKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Do you know what I would do to
 them? Well, first I'd roll them a
 big blunt, and they would be very
 impressed with my blunt-rolling
 skills which are, in a word, mad
 impressive. And then I'd put on
 some music--

Luke pulls his headphones out of his Walkman. Music fills the subway car.

ANGLE ON the subway car in its entirety. It is filled with FLY LADIES, all dressed in the same white tank top and short skirt. In the center, tables covered with fancy tablecloths, meticulously interspersed with glasses of red wine. Luke gets up and begins walking through the subway, avoiding the tables, addressing the audience:

LUKE (CONT'D)
 And they'd start to move their
 heads. And then their long fucking
 legs. And now, they leap up from
 their seats cuz they're filled with
 a sensation--a seriously sinful
 sexual sensation that makes them
 drip inside and all they're
 thinking is Shapiro, Shapiro,
 Shapiro.

The female-filled subway car leaps to its feet in jubilation. Girls dancing with each other, to rap music, mouthing "Shapiro," holding their hands between their legs, riding subway poles, etc.

Then, a DING:

SUBWAY CONDUCTOR
 Watch the closing doors.

BACK TO REALITY.

The subway car, moments later. Typical subway crowd. Doors slide open. Teeming masses in suits pile in. 42nd Street. Luke just stares ahead, looks at a couple men in suits.

INT LUKE'S HOUSE DUSK

Luke walks his bike through the front door, leans it against the wall. The apartment is small, well-decorated, messy.

MOM and DAD yell at each other, animatedly, in the living room. Luke walks right between them, headphones still on.

LUKE (V.O.)

Mr. And Mrs. Shapiro are my parents. I guess they were in love once, but I can't quite figure out how. Thing is, one-on-one, I like them just fine. It's cool to say you don't like your folks, but I really don't mind 'em. What I do mind is them yelling at each other 24/7. That I fucking mind a lot.

Luke enters his room, closes the door, gives it the finger. He takes off his shirt, splashes some Nautica cologne on his neck, and puts a new shirt on.

LUKE (V.O.)

My pops works. He doesn't make much money these days, but he's a workaholic just the same. I hardly see the guy, which is all right by me.

(beat)

My moms once told me this story about their wedding that might help illustrate my father's unwavering devotion to his job--

INT WEDDING CHAPEL DAY

A BLUSHING BRIDE stands in front of a RABBI:

RABBI

--And do you, Andrew Shapiro III take Danielle Friedman to be your lawfully wedded wife?

Next to the bride, on a flower-covered podium, sits a TELEPHONE SPEAKERBOX.

TELEPHONE SPEAKERBOX
Yeah, hold one sec.
(beat)
I do.

A sentimental sigh from the crowd, and the chapel rises to their feet. The Bride wipes tears away.

INT LUKE'S BATHROOM DAY

Luke opens a mini-fridge, pulls out a big brick of weed. He weighs some out, puts it in a little baggie.

LUKE
Dad's a true businessman, an entrepreneur and shit. which sucks cuz he has to wear a suit, but which is cool for him, I guess, because he feels successful. He mostly stays out of my business, my dad does. I think he might even know I'm dealing, but he never tried to bother me about it much.
(beat)
I mean, it's the 90's. Dealing weed isn't exactly a capital offense.

INT KITCHEN - DAY

Luke opens the fridge. It's bare. He begins snacking on the few items that are there: celery, pie, etc.

MOM (O.S.)
I can make you a sandwich.

Luke turns, sees his mother:

LUKE
Cool.

LUKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
My mom is cool too. I talk to her sometimes about, you know, the issues facing the American teenager and whatnot.

INT. LUKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Luke sits in his room, meticulously weighing out portions of marijuana on a digital scale. He places them into baggies.

Next to the weed, the yearbook, open to a picture of Luke and JUSTIN, taken several years ago. Both of them wear sports uniforms, backwards, like KRISS KROSS.

LUKE (V.O.)
I have exactly no friends, unless
you count Justin, who is my best
friend by default.

Luke's pager vibrates. He checks it:

LUKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
You'll see how sad that is in just
a second.

EXT. DOWNTOWN STREET - NIGHT

Luke, wearing headphones, is on the lookout while JUSTIN, 17, skinny, shaved head, in Triple Fat Goose and hooded sweatshirt, catches a tag on a wall:

LUKE
I still don't understand why you're
tagging your own block.

JUSTIN
Cuz I want everybody to know it's
mine.

LUKE
Yo, I think you just drew over that
kid Kato's tag. He's in the
Decepticons.

JUSTIN
Fuck Kato. That herb's like 12
years old.
(beat)
I gotta bounce, Shapiro.

LUKE
Where you going?

JUSTIN
Party.

LUKE
Cool. Can I go with you?

Justin thinks for a moment. Then:

JUSTIN
No.

LUKE
I understand.

JUSTIN
See you tomorrow, Shapiro. I'm
Swayze.

LUKE
Peace.

And Justin's gone.

And Luke steps up to the wall, brandishes a marker. He is writing next to Justin's tag, when:

KATO (O.S.)
Shapiro!

Luke turns around, sees KATO, 15, a small Asian kid wrapped in a sea of North Face. Behind him, his BOYS, all similarly young and small.

LUKE
Kato. Hey.

KATO
Sup? You got beef?

LUKE
No, Kato. No beef. No beef whatsoever. I'm practically a vegetarian.

Kato steps forward. Quickly, Luke turns, starts to RUN.

But before he can, they're on top of him--pummeling him with a flurry of Timberland boots and prepubescent fists.

LUKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
If you're ever in a position to take a beating like this, the best thing to do is curl up in a ball and cover your head. You'd be surprised how little this kind of shit hurts. Just collapse into the fetal position. Make them really want to hurt you.

(beat)
That's pretty much my philosophy on life in general.

Luke takes a swift boot in the stomach, sucks wind.

LUKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 But tomorrow, my life changes.
 Tomorrow is the first day of my
 first summer as a high school
 graduate.

(beat)

Tomorrow I become a man. And then
 I go to my safety school. And then
 I get older. And then I die.

INT LUKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Luke watches *The Robin Byrd Show*. On TV, a girl dances in front of a neon heart. He holds a beer to his swollen eye. A trickle of blood drips from his lip.

He puts his hand down his pants

On TV, the stripper slides off her panties and reveals,
 A COCK.

Luke spits out his beer, flips the TV off.

BLACK.

LUKE (V.O.)
 Only thing is, being a man--
 Now that's some complicated shit.

TITLE CARD: **THE WACKNESS**

EXT. DOWNTOWN STREET - DAY

Graduation day. Luke, clad in CAP and GOWN, deals to UNION, a 16-year-old with white-girl dreads:

LUKE
 You're lucky it's so much weight.
 I never would have shown otherwise.
 (beat)
 Two hundred.

UNION
 Cool.

She pulls some money, hands it over. Luke slides the bills into his pocket. He eyes Union up and down, steals himself:

LUKE
 Listen, Union, now that I'm
 graduating--

UNION

Oh my God! You're graduating!
That's so amazing. I'm totally
jealous.

Luke looks down at his outfit:

LUKE

Uh, right.
(beat)
So, like, now that I'm graduating--
you think maybe we could, you know,
chill? Maybe go see a movie or
smoke out and play video games or
listen to Phish or, like, whatever
you do?

Union looks at him sadly:

UNION

(lying)
Yeah. Sure. I have your number...

LUKE

That's cool. I mean, I was just
asking.

UNION

Yeah. Totally.

They look at each other for an awkward beat. Then:

LUKE

OK. I should run, I guess. Peace,
Union.

UNION

Peace, Luke.

Luke hops on his bike. As, once again, the beat drops.

And Union calls after him:

UNION (CONT'D)

Congratulations again!

Pomp and Circumstance mixes with Tribe...

EXT. GRADUATION - CONTINUOUS

The graduation ceremony is in full swing. A HEADMASTER reads
names at a lectern.

In the crowd, MR. AND MRS. SHAPIRO, Luke's parents, late 40's, nervous. Their son is nowhere to be seen. As Luke's classmates approach the stage to receive their diplomas we

INTERCUT with:

Luke delivering weed, in his graduation gown, to people across Manhattan. All of them, the graduates and the potheads, framed in portraiture, their faces mixed and matched.

As the Headmaster intones name upon name. Until we arrive at--

EXT. LAGUSTUS POMONA HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Luke, sweaty. He rides his bike up to an ornate brick building. He pulls out a chain, ties the bike to a lamppost, and hauls ass up the stairs.

EXT. GRADUATION - CONTINUOUS

The Headmaster continues to read names: Preston, Rothchild, Samuels...

Luke's Mom looks up, anxious.

HEADMASTER
Shapiro.

Luke's nowhere to be seen. His parents sweat.

HEADMASTER (CONT'D)
Shapiro?

Suddenly, Luke BURSTS onto the stage. His parents breathe a sigh of relief.

Luke trips, falls into the Headmaster, who hands him a diploma.

Luke walks downstage, opens it proudly.

But there's nothing inside.

EXT. LAGUSTUS POMONA HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

The Shapiro family stands frozen. A perfect picture. Through a gritted smile, Luke speaks:

LUKE
Noticed there was no diploma...

DAD
 I just owe the school a little
 money, Lucas. Let's not let it ruin
 a magical day.

Luke shoots his dad a look, as a flashbulb POPS.

And Luke walks off, grabs an hors d'oeuvre. In the background, "It's So Hard to Say Goodbye to Yesterday".

Dr. Squires approaches, just as a couple TEENAGE GIRLS walk by. He follows them with his eyes:

DR. SQUIRES
 It's enough to make you want to be
 a fetus again, isn't it?

LUKE
 Gross.

DR. SQUIRES
 (deadpan)
 Oh, great. Here's my wife.

Here's MRS. SQUIRES, in her early 40s. She looks like it takes every ounce of her energy to maintain her frigid beauty. She puts her arm through Dr. Squires'. He kisses her cheek.

LUKE
 And here's your daughter.

DR. SQUIRES
 Stepdaughter.

STEPHANIE, 17. She's beautiful, in a party dress, smoking a cigarette and, somehow, walking in SLOW MOTION. Luke stares at her, worshipful.

Then:

LUKE'S DAD (O.S.)
 Lucas? Aren't you going to
 introduce us?

Luke looks at his Mom and Dad:

LUKE
 Right. Mom, Dad. This is
 Stephanie and Stephanie's mom and
 Mister Doctor Squires.

DR. SQUIRES
 Jeff.
 (beat)
 (MORE)

DR. SQUIRES (cont'd)
Congratulations, Shapiros. You
must be so proud.

LUKE
You must be so prouder, sir. Your
little flower graduated Come
Loudly, no?

Stephanie looks down, shakes her head.

MRS. SHAPIRO
How lovely! You just missed Cum
Laude, didn't you, dear?

LUKE
I was busy with my after-school
activities, ma.

STEPHANIE
Yes, Mrs. Shapiro, your son has
many extra-curricular activities.

MR. SHAPIRO
What are those, Luke?
(sarcastic)
The yearbook staff seems to have
neglected to note your
achievements.

LUKE
Ask Steph's pops.

STEPHANIE
Steppops.

Mr. Shapiro laughs nervously. No clue.

INT LUKE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Luke, in suit and tie, sits around a table with his parents
and two OLDER PEOPLE. The OLD MAN holds up a glass:

OLD MAN
Congratulations, Luke. To your
future.

They toast.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)
So--what's next for you, Luke?

LUKE
I start college in the fall.

OLD MAN
And then?

LUKE
(not understanding)
And...then?

OLD WOMAN
Your career, Luke. What are you
going to do?

LUKE
From what I can see, it doesn't
really make much difference. They
all seem kind of the same.

DAD
Nothing could be further from the
truth, Luke.

LUKE
You're right, dad.
(to Old Man)
I'm thinking about getting into
music.

MOM
This is the first I've heard of
that.
(to Older Couple)
Luke's very good at math.

DAD
Exceptional.

LUKE
Yes. Yes I am.
(beat, to Older Couple)
I'm thinking about becoming a
mathematician.

The Older Couple nod. Luke's dad looks at him, confused.

LUKE (CONT'D)
I mean, a banker...

The older man furrows his brow.

LUKE (CONT'D)
A fireman.

They're now completely confused.

LUKE (CONT'D)
A beekeeper.

INT LUKE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Luke does the dishes. His mom enters:

MOM

Good form tonight, Lucas. A true
wise-ass till the end.

LUKE

Whatever.

MOM

Those people are fabulously
wealthy. You know that, don't you?

LUKE

I don't care.

MOM

Well, you should.

INT SOHO APARTMENT - NIGHT

The entryway of a Soho apartment building. Luke stands up straight, smooths out his hoodie, rings the doorbell. Before its chime has even finished, the door swings open.

On the other side, Justin, a cigarette dangling from his mouth. Behind him, the commotion of a party.

LUKE

You paged me?

Justin looks from side to side:

JUSTIN

Get in here.

INT BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Justin waits anxiously as Luke sifts through his backpack, pulling out a couple different-sized bags of weed:

LUKE

I didn't know there was a party
tonight.

JUSTIN

It's a graduation party.

LUKE

I just graduated.

JUSTIN

Yeah. I know.

LUKE

So, can I grab a beer or something?

Justin looks at him for a beat:

JUSTIN

Naw, man. They can't see you here.

LUKE

Why not?

JUSTIN

Cuz you weren't invited.

LUKE

But I'm your friend. You invited
me.

Justin looks through his wallet:

JUSTIN

I don't have inviting privileges.
I'm lucky to be here myself.

(beat)

Hey, can you spot me \$30?

Luke shakes his head:

LUKE

Just take it.

JUSTIN

Good lookin' out. This should last
us 'til the first Amsterdam
weekend.

LUKE

You're going to Amsterdam?

JUSTIN

Yeah, man. I told you, Rollo and I
are going to Europe to try to bang
American art history students.

LUKE

You never told me that.

JUSTIN

Yes I did.

LUKE

And you're gonna take it on the
plane?

JUSTIN
I'll put it in my shoe. They never
check that shit.

Luke's pager vibrates. He checks it:

LUKE
Can I at least use the phone?

JUSTIN
Come on, man. No offense, but if
anyone sees me here with you, I'm
never gonna get laid--

LUKE
Uh-huh.

JUSTIN
I really appreciate it.

LUKE
No problem.
(beat)
Well, have a nice summer, I guess.

Luke starts to exit:

JUSTIN
Wait. I'll check if its clear.

Justin opens the door, exits.

Leaving Luke, just standing there. He stares at himself in
the mirror.

The door opens. Stephanie on the other side:

STEPHANIE
Oh. Shapiro. Sorry.

LUKE
No. It's cool.
(beat)
Hey.

STEPHANIE
Hey.
(beat)
What are you doing here?

LUKE
Just...waiting...I guess. Hiding,
maybe?

STEPHANIE
From what?

LUKE
I'm not sure.

Stephanie pulls out a pill and an ATM card, starts to cut up a line:

STEPHANIE
Ritalin?

LUKE
I'm cool.

Stephanie snorts.

STEPHANIE
You got a cigarette?

Luke hands her a pack of cigarettes. She pulls one out, lights it, offers the pack back to him.

Luke shakes his head.

LUKE
Quit.

STEPHANIE
You quit?

LUKE
Think so. I just quit.

Steph shrugs.

LUKE (CONT'D)
You feel different?

STEPHANIE
Nope.

LUKE
Me neither.

STEPHANIE
We have our whole lives to feel
different, Shapiro.

Steph checks herself in the mirror, pulling her shirt tight, pushing her tits out, smoking away:

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
What'cha doin' after tonight?

LUKE
You know what I'm doing. I'm going
to hippie school.

STEPHANIE
I mean for the summer.

LUKE
Chillin. Making money.
(beat)
Why? You wanna go steady?

STEPHANIE
Yeah. Sure.

Silence. Then:

LUKE
What are you doing? For the
summer?

STEPHANIE
I'm interning for one of daddy's
patients.

LUKE
Who is he?

STEPHANIE
That's confidential. But he runs
Miramax.

LUKE
That's awesome. Congratulations.
(beat)
So I guess we'll both be here all
summer, huh? All alone.

STEPHANIE
Yeah, but we'll never hang out.

LUKE
Oh.

They look at each other. Awkward silence:

STEPHANIE
You know, now that you're at the
party, you may as well stay--

JUSTIN (O.S.)
Don't go putting thoughts in his
head.

Justin appears in the doorway.

STEPHANIE
Come on, Justin. It's fine.

Luke looks at Justin with pleading eyes.

EXT. NEW YORK ROOF - NIGHT

A big banner reads, CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 1994. Music blares, and everyone dances close. Everyone, that is, except Luke. He's perched on the water tower, high above.

He lights a roman candle, fires it off the roof.

And, through the smoke, the crowd MORPHS:

Into a Bacchanalian spectacle: the Garden of Earthly Delights. Young, nude, and fucking. All of them.

Luke looks at them, rubs his eyes.

BACK TO REALITY.

Luke's POV:

His classmates dancing, talking, drinking, smoking. He scans the crowd. As we pass each individual, we see Luke's impression of their conversation, in SUBTITLES at the bottom of our screen.

Rollo, laughing, to a girl: "*Shapiro's never gonna get laid.*"

Justin: "*I can't believe he actually stayed.*"

It continues like this, as we pass over various teenagers, until we reach Stephanie. She looks up.

And Luke, locking eyes with her. All his lust focused into one bittersweet gaze.

Luke: "*I love you.*"

And Steph stands there for a moment, looks at him. A subtitle begins to form beneath her, until

Rollo approaches, obliterating the half-formed words, replacing them with his own:

"Yo--let's fuck."

EXT. ROOF - DAWN

Luke sits on the roof, smoking a joint. Next to him, a couple kids grope at each other. And over there, a kid throws up.

Beneath, the City that Never Sleeps does just that.

Luke tosses the joint over the side, pushes himself up.

INT APARTMENT - DAWN

Luke walks out into the hallway, rings for the elevator.

The door opens,

And there's Justin, getting his dick sucked by a TEENAGE GIRL.

LUKE
I'll take the stairs.

Right before the doors close:

JUSTIN (O.S.)
Have a good summer, Shapiro!

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - NIGHT

Luke catches a tag on a building, walks on.

INT ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Luke rides in an elevator. He looks at himself in the display panel.

INT LUKE'S HOUSE NIGHT

Luke quietly enters. He walks past his pops, who lies, illuminated by the light of the TV, asleep in his suit. Luke turns the TV off.

INT PARENTS' ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Moms is asleep on the bed, also in her clothes, watching the same TV program. Luke turns the light, and the TV, off.

INT LUKE'S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

The next morning--well, the next afternoon.

NY1 on the TV: all New York news, all the time. In the bottom of the screen, a display. The time, 1:59, the temperature, 92 degrees.

Luke lies in bed, eyes open. His alarm goes off. He looks at the clock: 2:00 PM.

INT LUKE'S LIVING ROOM DAY

Luke wipes his eyes, enters the living room, where

His DAD, in a suit, is on the phone, speaking with some urgency:

DAD

I don't have it. No, I didn't say I won't have it, I said I don't have it right now. I'll have it soon, though. How soon? I can't answer that.

(whispers)

You want me to beg, I'll beg. Please bear with me. I have a family. Please. Yes. That seems reasonable. Very reasonable. Thank you...

Luke walks past him into the

KITCHEN

He pours himself a glass of orange juice. In the background, the phone call continues.

His mom enters. She looks like she hasn't slept:

MOM

You're not going to eat breakfast?

LUKE

I'm not hungry.

MOM

You have to eat something, honey. You'll waste away.

Luke downs the OJ quickly, looks at his mom:

LUKE

I gotta run.

He walks to the front door. From the other room:

MOM

Where are you going?

LUKE

Someone's gotta work around here.

INT BASEMENT - DAY

Luke lifts several barrels of flavored ice into a vendor's cart emblazoned with the words: DELICIOSO COCO HELADO.

Finally, one last CONTAINER. He opens it:

It's filled with bags of WEED.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Luke rolls the Italian Ice cart past the Merry-Go-Round.

There's a boombox attached to it. Music blares.

MONTAGE:

At the bottom of our screen, the temperature and time, a la NY1.

Luke DEALS to various customers in Central Park, scooping bags of weed from his cart.

He sells to hippies in the meadow, kids uptown, older folks by the zoo. At each location, the temperature and time change on our display, until we reach...

INT. DR. SQUIRES' OFFICE - DAY

Luke sits across from Dr. Squires. Silence. Then:

LUKE

Dr. Squires, can you, like,
prescribe medicine and shit?

DR. SQUIRES

Of course, Luke.

LUKE

Cuz some people--psychiatrists--

DR. SQUIRES

Psychologists.

LUKE

I've been researching it. They
can't.

DR. SQUIRES

Well, I can, Luke. Why do you ask?

LUKE
It's for me.

DR. SQUIRES
No shit.

LUKE
Well, I think, recently, that I'm depressed.

DR. SQUIRES
Recently?

LUKE
For the last 3 years or so.
(beat)
I don't sleep good. And, I think--
I think too much.

DR. SQUIRES
You ever hear the saying the unexamined life is not worth living?

LUKE
Yeah. Maybe the examined one isn't either.

DR. SQUIRES
Don't talk like that.
(beat)
Does this have anything to do with Kurt Cobain?

LUKE
The point is, who says it all has to be so sad like that, you know?

DR. SQUIRES
Is something going on, Luke...at home?

LUKE
Of course something's going on at home. This is what you get paid for?

DR. SQUIRES
Perhaps you'd be better off seeing a psychic, Luke.

LUKE
I don't really want to talk about it.

DR. SQUIRES

Men do the things they need to do
to become the men they want to be.
Do you understand?

LUKE

Sure.

DR. SQUIRES

That includes asking for help.
(beat)

Lucas, do you know what I would
give to be you again? Not you,
specifically, but me at your age?
It doesn't get any better.

LUKE

Please tell me that's not true.

DR. SQUIRES

You're fucking living, Luke. It's
a great thing, living. Get your
heart broken. Find yourself face
down in the gutter. Get your pulse
up. Make a true mess of yourself,
son!

LUKE

That what you tell all your
patients?

DR. SQUIRES

You're not depressed, Luke. You're
sad. There's a difference.

Luke looks at him:

LUKE

And what about you?

DR. SQUIRES

What about me?

LUKE

Are you depressed or sad?

Dr. Squires holds the lighter to his bong:

DR. SQUIRES

I'm both.

He inhales...

INT DR. SQUIRES' HOUSE - EVENING

...Exhales. Smoke fills Dr. Squires' meticulous Fifth Avenue home as he pulls pulls at a joint, watching TV. On the screen, Rudy Giuliani holds a press conference:

DR. SQUIRES
This guy's going to ruin the city.

His wife enters, getting undressed. She's gotten her shirt off, revealing a black lace bra beneath.

MRS. SQUIRES
He's cleaning up the city.

DR. SQUIRES
Yeah, well--I like it dirty.

MRS. SQUIRES
Stop smoking grass, please.

DR. SQUIRES
The kids call it weed.

MRS. SQUIRES
Well, you're not a kid. So stop smoking it or I'll call Mayor Giuliani and he'll drag you downtown.

Dr. Squires looks around:

DR. SQUIRES
Couldn't be much worse than this place.

INT LUKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Luke puts a Nintendo game in the system, presses Power.

It doesn't work.

He removes the game, blows on it, inserts it again.

"The Legend of Zelda" appears on the screen.

Luke moves around, stabbing monsters.

EXT. DR. SQUIRES APARTMENT - NIGHT

Bob Seger blares. Dr. Squires sips a cocktail, looks from his terrace onto Central Park.

Now, the music cuts off.

Dr. Squires turns, sees his wife, in her nightgown:

DR. SQUIRES
I was listening to that.

MRS. SQUIRES
Do you have any of those pills
left?

DR. SQUIRES
I just finished them.
(beat)
You OK? What do you need?

MRS. SQUIRES
I'd like some of those pills.

DR. SQUIRES
Yeah, they're good.
(beat)
Shouldn't take too many, though.

MRS. SQUIRES
Right. Brush your teeth before you
come to bed, please.

DR. SQUIRES
Sure.

Dr. Squires walks back over to the stereo, turns the music up.

INT LUKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Luke lies on his bed, his pants around his ankles, Strech Armstrong on the radio, Zelda on pause on the TV--and Stephanie's yearbook page open next to him.

It's got pictures of Stephanie as a kid, and then a big one of her as the fully blossomed teenage girl she has become. With tits and stuff.

The camera pans across the page, past yearbook quotes:

"It's only life after all." Indigo Girls

As we pass each quote, a couple bars from the quoted song play. Then,

"But now all we have is memories..." Mary J. Blige

And now, pan over to the B&W shot of Stephanie herself. She's at the beach, wearing a tank top. Luke looks at it, intently:

Suddenly, it fills with color. The ocean begins moving behind her. And then, so does Stephanie. She slides one strap off her shoulder.

STEPHANIE
(smiling)
What do you want from me, Luke?

Luke's hand moves down...

LUKE'S POV: his own feet, his hand, stroking. And, at the foot of the bed, the beach, the sea -- and Stephanie.

LUKE
I, uh, I don't know...

STEPHANIE
You can tell me. After all, I'm
just in your head. Be honest...
(beat)
Do you want to do dirty things to
me?

LUKE
I mean, no...not really...not
especially dirty. Just
kinda...normal dirty.

Stephanie lies down, her back on the sand...

STEPHANIE
Do you want to fuck me?
(beat)
On the beach? In the sun?

Luke starts stroking faster.

LUKE
(smiling)
May-be.

STEPHANIE
Touch my shoulder. It's warm.
Slide your hand between my thighs.
Come to the sun, Luke. Come.
Come.

The flaring, vibrant sun. Luke's on the beach. He stares right into it. Stephanie on top of him, riding. Luke, about to climax--

Just then, a knock:

DAD (O.S.)
Lucas.

Luke sits up quickly, zips up, walks over the door, unlocks several locks.

He opens the door:

LUKE
Yeah.

DAD
Please turn off the air conditioner. The electric bill is through the roof.

LUKE
But it's 90 degrees out.

DAD
Just do it, Luke.

INT BATHROOM - NIGHT

Dr. Squires looks in the mirror, rubs his eyes.

He brushes his teeth, opens the bathroom cabinet:

A cornucopia of pharmaceuticals. He grabs a pill bottle, examines it:

LITHIUM. He pops one.

INT. LUKE'S ROOM - DAY

Luke, eyes open in the morning light, his face coated with sweat. His feet are in his mini-fridge, which has been moved to the bottom of his bed. He stirs.

INT LUKE'S LIVING ROOM DAY

Luke wipes his eyes, enters the living room, where His parents are yelling at each other:

MOM
How am I supposed to live? How am I supposed to function?

DAD
You're not.

When Mom notices Luke she storms towards him:

MOM

Your father lost all our money. We have to move to--I don't know, somewhere poor.

DAD

Your mother and I are getting a divorce.

MOM

Don't you dare tell him that. That's not even true. That's not true, honey.

DAD

Yes it is. Your mother is a raving lunatic. She's only with me for my money. And I don't have any money now.

Luke notices his Dad's face is all scratched up.

LUKE

What's wrong with your face?

(to Mom)

What's wrong with his face?

Mom looks down.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Did you fucking scratch him?

MOM

He hit me.

DAD

I did not, you lying bitch, but I will now.

Luke turns to Dad:

LUKE

You guys are acting like you're fucking twelve years old.

MOM

Stop cursing.

LUKE

Fuck off!

Luke goes into his room.

INT LUKE'S ROOM DAY

Luke, on his phone, stressed:

LUKE
Well, can he see me today? It's
kind of important...
(beat)
OK. Thanks.

He hangs up, reaches under his bed, pulls out--

A BOX. Luke opens it. It is filled with stacks of twenties. Luke starts counting some out.

INT LIVING ROOM - DAY

Mom watches TV, sullen, by herself. Luke approaches her, holds out a couple bills:

LUKE
For dinner.

She looks up at him, touched:

MOM
I can't take that from you.

Luke drops it on the floor, walks out.

MOM (CONT'D)
I love you, honey.

And the door slams.

INT DR. SQUIRES OFFICE - DAY

Luke lies on the couch now.

DR. SQUIRES
How are things at home, Luke?

LUKE
Home is a terrible place.

DR. SQUIRES
And why is that?

LUKE
Whatever, it's boring.

DR. SQUIRES
What's boring?

LUKE
To bitch about your parents. It's played out.

DR. SQUIRES
Fair enough--

LUKE
They just--they act like kids, you know?

DR. SQUIRES
My wife and I are the same way. We act like kids all the time.

LUKE
Why do you think that is?

DR. SQUIRES
Life.

(beat)
It has a funny way of turning you into the one thing you don't want to be.

LUKE
Very wise.
(beat)
Dr. Squires, my life sucks. I have no friends in New York--or anywhere, for that matter. I have no girlfriend. I have no girl who will even look at me, other than my mom. And my parents fight all the time. Basically, I'm just trying to get to college before I put a bullet through my brain.

(beat)
So can't you just give me some happy pills and we'll call it a day?

DR. SQUIRES
I'm sorry, Luke. I can't do that.

LUKE
Well then, how do you suggest I deal?

DR. SQUIRES
I suggest you talk about it. With a friend.

LUKE

Like I said, I don't have any friends.

DR. SQUIRES

You have me.

(beat)

Now let's see that sack.

Luke looks at him, horrified:

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)

The weed sack. Jesus.

EXT. DR. SQUIRES OFFICE - DUSK

Luke exits Dr. Squires office, walks over to his ice cart, begins to unlock it. Just then, from O.S.:

STEPHANIE

Shapiro!

Luke looks, sees Stephanie coming home. She's walking a WEST HIGHLAND TERRIER.

LUKE

Steph. Hi. Who's the little guy?

STEPHANIE

This is Jesus Christ. From my stepdad's first marriage.

(beat)

What are you doing here?

Luke covers:

LUKE

Uh, your stepdad paged me.

STEPHANIE

That guy smokes more weed than I do.

LUKE

You like him?

STEPHANIE

Dr. Squires? Not really. He gives me a ton of money, though. But you should hear about some of the fucked up people who come into that guy's office.

LUKE

He tells you that shit?

STEPHANIE

Sure.

LUKE

He's not supposed to tell you that.
There's confidentiality.

STEPHANIE

Well, he does. Like this one guy
he sees is a chronic masturbator.

LUKE

Uh-huh.

STEPHANIE

The guy masturbates seven times a
day. And even when he's drained his
nuts, he just lies in bed with his
hands in his pants. He got fired
from work because of it. And one
time, he started jerking off in Dr.
Squires' office.

LUKE

No way.

STEPHANIE

I don't think my mom likes him much
either.

LUKE

The masturbator?

STEPHANIE

Dr. Squires.

Now, Jesus Christ lifts his leg, goes on Luke's cart:

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ! No!

LUKE

It's ok.

STEPHANIE

(re: cart)

What is this thing?

LUKE

Summer job.

She looks at him, curious.

LUKE (CONT'D)

My cover. For my parents.

He opens the top, Steph looks inside.

STEPHANIE
(genuine)
Cool.
(beat)
Hey, take my number, Shapiro. Call
me some time.

LUKE
Call you?

STEPHANIE
Yeah.

LUKE
You mean, like, for weed?

STEPHANIE
To hang out. There's no one else
around. And it gets lonely in the
city with no one to talk to.

She gives Luke her phone number, and she walks away.

LUKE
OK. So, I'll call you...

But he's talking to himself.

INT. LUKE'S HOUSE - DAY

Luke enters his house. It's filled with cardboard boxes. His dad is sifting through one:

LUKE
What is this?

DAD
Walkmen. From Singapore. I got a
guy who wants six thousand of
these.

LUKE
That's good.

DAD
Good? It's great. Do you know how
much money I stand to make?

Luke picks up a Walkman, starts playing with it.

LUKE
They don't rewind.

DAD

No?

LUKE

I mean, there's no rewind button.
Just fast forward.

DAD

So you fast forward and flip the
tape. It's the same as rewinding.

Luke tries that. The Walkman jams.

LUKE

This one seems broken.

DAD

Shit.

Luke's Dad examines the Walkman.

LUKE

Most people use CDs now anyway.

Luke enters his room, as his dad fumbles with the Walkman.

INT ELEVATOR - DAY

Elevator doors swing open, reveal two large BLACK MEN. With UZIs. They stand in front of what looks like an empty gallery space, brightly lit with wood floors.

They look at Luke with piercing red eyes.

LUKE

Jesus, guys. A little dramatic,
don't you think?

The men are unfazed. Then, from OS:

PERCY (O.S.)

Is that you, Luke?

LUKE

It's me.

From behind the two large men, PERCY, a skinny black man in sunglasses, an oversized Phillies Blunt t-shirt, and baggy jeans, emerges:

PERCY

Mr. Luke. How you livin', boy?

LUKE

Barely.

They give each other a pound.

LUKE (CONT'D)
What's with the heavy artillery?

PERCY
Dis fucking Giuliani, man. You
can't be too careful.

LUKE
You're gonna shoot Giuliani?

Percy puts his finger to his lips, smiles:

PERCY
Don't tell nobody.

INT 27TH STREET DRUG HEADQUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

Percy stands behind a large bar in an empty room. Luke sits at the bar, drinking Coke from a straw. Percy grabs a remote, points it toward the stereo, turns it up, til it's so loud they both have to yell:

LUKE
What is this?

PERCY
Dis be the new shit, man. Biggy
Smalls.

LUKE
It's dope.

PERCY
Dis cat is gonna change the world,
man.

Percy begins pulling giant bricks of weed from behind the bar, laying them on the counter:

PERCY (CONT'D)
So, today we got for your smoking
pleasure: the bubble gum, the
northern lights, and, of course,
the purple haze.

Luke stares off into the distance.

PERCY (CONT'D)
Everything OK, man?

LUKE
Parental trouble.

PERCY
What about dem?

LUKE
They're dicks.

PERCY
I tell you, man. You're a kid, and you look at your parents, at the older generation, and how dem act, and you think, I'm never...I am NEVER...going to do the shit they do. Then you grow up and do the exact shit they do.

LUKE
Not me.

PERCY
Yes you. You'll see. Some day you gwana come in here wearing a suit and you gwana be the exact same ting your dad be right now.

(beat)
You gwana be married to some girl like your moms and you gwana fight with her all de time. And den dats when Ima give you dis here ganja to make it all better.

Percy laughs.

LUKE
Thanks, Percy.

PERCY
Now, how much you need?

Luke hesitates:

LUKE
I need a little more this month, Perc. Can you spot me? I'll pay you back once I unload it.

PERCY
How much more?

LUKE
Another 5 zs.

PERCY
Hooo-boy. You got big aspirations, Luke.

LUKE

Not really. Just a lot of debt.

PERCY

You got da weight of da world on ya shoulders, boy.

LUKE

Just this once, Percy. Please. I'm good for it.

PERCY

Just this once, den. But you know what happens if you fuck me, Luke?

LUKE

What?

PERCY

You get fucked, Luke.

Luke looks at him, nervous.

LUKE

Thanks, Percy.

Luke takes the weed from him, puts it in his backpack.

PERCY

OK, soldier. You be careful out there. Dat Giuliani got dem police looking at everything and everybody. Even white boys like you.

Luke walks away.

LUKE

I'm always careful, Percy.

PERCY

I know. Dat why I like you.

(beat)

Luke!

Luke turns around, Percy hands him a tape.

PERCY (CONT'D)

It's called "Ready to Die".

EXT. HELL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Luke exits Percy's den, looks across the street -- a sign: "SHO-WORLD. TIMES SQUARE'S LAST ALL NUDE PEEP SHOW."

INT BOOTH - NIGHT

Luke inserts a quarter into a slot, and a window slides up, revealing:

3 OBESE HISPANIC WOMEN. They sit on little stools, eating McDonalds. Naked except for thongs.

One of them walks over to Luke.

OBESE HISPANIC WOMAN
You wanna pay me?

LUKE
For what?

She sticks her tits through the window.

OBESE HISPANIC WOMAN
Five dollars to touch.

Luke fumbles through his pocket for a five, hands it over. He begins to fondle her sweaty breasts. He wipes the sweat off on his pants. She moves closer, until her breasts take up the entirety of the window. He plays with her faceless nipples...

DR. SQUIRES (O.S.)
What about women, Luke?

INT. DR. SQUIRES OFFICE - DAY

Luke lies on the couch now:

LUKE
They don't like me.

DR. SQUIRES
Lucas, back when I went to school, drug dealers had no problem getting girls. In fact, that's why I always wanted to be one.

Luke sits up, looks at the doctor:

LUKE
Dr. Squires, were you popular in high school?

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)
Well, I wouldn't say popular, no. I wasn't one of the cool kids if that's what you're asking. I played baseball; I was a debater...

LUKE

Did you ever want to kill yourself?

DR. SQUIRES

Not until much later.

LUKE

Then you must have been popular.
I'm not.

DR. SQUIRES

Surely there's someone in your
school, Luke...something?

Luke looks at him:

LUKE

Well, there is this one girl.

DR. SQUIRES

That's fantastic, Luke. Who is
she? Does Stephanie know her?

LUKE

Naw. She, uh, goes to school
downtown.

FLASH: Luke, masturbating to Stephanie's yearbook photo,
covers Dr. Squires' face with his hand.

DR. SQUIRES

So what's the problem?

LUKE

I'm not sure she's so into me.

DR. SQUIRES

I can't imagine why, Luke.

LUKE

Thank you.

DR. SQUIRES

Make her like you, Luke. That's
what I did with my wife.

LUKE

How's you do that?

DR. SQUIRES

Feign disinterest. Not lack of
interest, but disinterest. Be a
neutral party.

(MORE)

DR. SQUIRES (cont'd)
Then, when you are least
threatening to her, grab her and
stick your tongue so far down her
throat that she starts to gag from
pleasure.

LUKE
Can I grab her tits too?

DR. SQUIRES
Baby steps, Luke.

LUKE
Right.

DR. SQUIRES
Pursue her, Luke. You're the
perfect age for it. You haven't
yet been systematically numbed to
the allure of romance. You still
have your youthful--.

LUKE
OK. I got it.

DR. SQUIRES
Young men need sex, Luke. All men,
actually.
(beat)
I can get you a hooker, if you'd
like.

LUKE
I was this close to respecting you.

The doctor takes a bong hit, exhales.

DR. SQUIRES
Big mistake, Luke.
(beat)
Call your girl.

Luke nods, opens the door. Dr. Squires calls after him:

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)
You don't need medication. You
just need to get laid!

Luke shrugs, turns around, and walks out, as the RECEPTIONIST smirks.

INT. LUKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Luke sits on his bed, restless. He pulls out the piece of paper--

With Steph's number on it. He looks at it.

EXT. BALCONY - NIGHT

Dr. Squires sips a cocktail, looks down over Central Park. Beneath, a couple, walking through the park on a beautiful summer's night.

Dr Squires calmly throws a water balloon at them.

It splatters. They run.

Now, he picks up a phone book. He's about to drop it when, The phone rings. Dr. Squires runs to it.

INT. LUKE'S BEDROOM

Luke sits, alone on the phone:

DR. SQUIRES (O.S.)
Hello?

Luke deepens his voice:

LUKE
Oh. Hello? I'm looking for, um--

DR. SQUIRES
Luke?

A long pause.

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)
Luke, is that you?

LUKE
Dr. Squires?

DR. SQUIRES
It's OK, Luke. I know why you're calling.

LUKE
You do?

DR. SQUIRES
The beaver hunt.

Silence.

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)
The pussy quest.
(beat)
I can help, Luke. Let's grab a drink. I've got just the place.

A pause. A long one. Luke thinks. Then:

LUKE
OK.

INT DOWNTOWN BAR - NIGHT

A dive bar, dotted with a few drunks. Luke and Dr. Squires sit at the bar. Luke drinks a beer, Dr. Squires a whiskey.

LUKE
It's dead in here.

DR. SQUIRES
Strange. This place used to be packed.
(beat)
The city's not the same anymore, Luke. It really used to be something down here. The girls, the drugs, the music--the fucking music. Speaking of which...

Dr. Squires gets up, goes to the jukebox. "In the Flesh" by Blondie plays.

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)
What kind of music do you listen to, Luke?

LUKE
Tribe Called Quest. Pharcyde. De La Soul.

DR. SQUIRES
That's rap music, right? I don't know that stuff.

LUKE
I'll make you a mixtape.

DR. SQUIRES
I'd like that.
(beat)
Maybe I'll make you one too.

LUKE
What kind of music do you like?

DR. SQUIRES
 I like old stuff. Bob Seger.
 Bruce Springsteen. Some classical:
 Brahms, Hayden.

LUKE
 Word. Hayden's dope.

DR. SQUIRES
 You're serious?

LUKE
 No, Dr. Squires.

DR. SQUIRES
 Hey, Luke. Why couldn't Mozart
 find his teacher?

LUKE
 Why?

DR. SQUIRES
 Because he was Hayden.

LUKE
 That's not funny. Buy me another
 drink, please.

DR. SQUIRES
 (to bartender)
 Another Bud, right here.

Luke and Dr. Squires sit there, in silence, for a moment.
 Then:

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)
 Lucas, I hate my wife.

LUKE
 I hate my parents.

DR. SQUIRES
 I need to get laid.

LUKE
 We both need to get laid.

DR. SQUIRES
 Luke, I've never cheated on my wife
 before. Ever. But I want to now.
 It is my mission. You have no idea
 how much I want to. And not just
 because I want my face buried in
 the stinking soaked panties of some
 delectable young nubile.
 (beat)

(MORE)

DR. SQUIRES (cont'd)
 Sometimes it's right to do the
 wrong thing, and right now is one
 of those times.
 (beat)
 But we gotta fix ourselves first.

LUKE
 You need fixin?

DR. SQUIRES
 Lucas, I need a whole lotta fixin.

Luke looks at him.

Suddenly, a group of LOUD TEENAGERS enters, all really drunk.
 Luke looks over:

LUKE
 Union?

UNION
 Oh my God--Luke!

Union approaches. She hugs Luke.

UNION (CONT'D)
 I can't believe you're here. It's
 been totally forever.
 (beat)
 We dropped in to look at all the
 weird old people. Oh my God! Wait
 one second!

Union runs off. Dr. Squires looks after her with wide eyes:

LUKE
 (to Dr. Squires)
 Don't even think about it.

DR. SQUIRES
 This is the mystery girl?

LUKE
 Naw. But that don't mean she's
 fair game.

Union returns with a tall, dorky looking blonde kid. He
 stumbles to the bar.

UNION
 Luke--this is Gruden. My date to
 the Midsummer Night Cancer Ball.
 It's for charity.

Luke gives Gruden a pound. Union whispers to Luke:

UNION (CONT'D)
He's from Rotterdam. He's a joke.

Luke nods.

LUKE
Sup.

DR. SQUIRES
Gruden, I'm Hayden.

UNION
Like the classical guy?

DR. SQUIRES
Yes--I was named after him. Mother said my soul represented the metaphysical embodiment of his most sublime chord.

UNION
That's so awesome. Do you like the Grateful Dead?

DR. SQUIRES
Followed them for four years after college.

Union is smitten. Gruden throws up.

The bartender arrives:

BARTENDER
Hey! You kids are too young to be in here.

DR. SQUIRES
Come on. They're all 18.

The bartender looks at him.

BARTENDER
The drinking age is 21.

Dr. Squires is skeptical. Luke confirms this with a nod.

EXT. DOWNTOWN STREET - NIGHT

Luke and Dr. Squires lead a parade of formally attired teenagers down the street:

DR. SQUIRES
Since when is the drinking age 21?

LUKE
Since forever.

DR. SQUIRES
Fucking Giuliani.
(turns around, addresses
the crew)
Where are we going?

RANDOM TEENAGER
Up there, on the left. Ring Number
6.

EXT. APARTMENT ROOF - NIGHT

On the roof of a beautiful loft, kids drink, smoke,
freestyle, etc. Gangstarr on the radio.

In the corner, Dr. Squires talks to a couple KIDS, who roll a blunt:

DR. SQUIRES
So this is called a what?

KID 1
A blunt.

DR. SQUIRES
A blunt. I like that.

INT BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Luke, alone, stands in the corner. He sips a beer, awkward.
Squires approaches:

DR. SQUIRES
What are you doing?

LUKE
Hanging out.

DR. SQUIRES
Well get out there and make
something happen.

LUKE
These girls--they don't really get
me.

DR. SQUIRES
What's to get?
(beat)
Talk to one of them, Lucas. That's
a good first step.
(MORE)

DR. SQUIRES (cont'd)
Then you can get acquainted with
them, you know, vaginally.

INT LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Luke, stoned, wanders around a party. People are hooking up everywhere. Luke ambles on, muttering to himself:

LUKE
Dr. Squires?

Luke peeks into a bedroom, sees two young SILHOUETTES against the wall, having sex.

LUKE (CONT'D)
Dr. Squires?

SILHOUETTE
Wrong room, gaywad!

Luke continues to wander.

He walks through the hallway, looks from side to side. Then, he hears something:

Moaning. From within the closet.

Luke turns, swings the door open to find,

Dr. Squires and Union, going at it. Union is in her bra. Dr Squires has half of his shirt off.

LUKE
We're going.

EXT. SOHO STREET - DAWN

Dr. Squires and Luke walk:

DR. SQUIRES
Luke, remember when I said I'd
never cheated on my wife before?

LUKE
Yeah.

DR. SQUIRES
Total lie.

LUKE
So, you gonna tell her?

DR. SQUIRES
Wasn't planning on it.
(beat)
(MORE)

DR. SQUIRES (cont'd)
Besides, she's taken so many Xanax,
I'd be surprised if she sees
daylight today.

LUKE
You fuck this girl?

DR. SQUIRES
Second base.

LUKE
And what happened to getting fixed
first?

DR. SQUIRES
Sometimes getting laid is getting
fixed, you know? Except for dogs.
(beat)
Break out that blunt.

Luke pulls out a joint:

LUKE
This is a joint.

DR. SQUIRES
I know that.

EXT. TIMES SQUARE - MORNING

Dr Squires pisses against a wall.

DR. SQUIRES
This city is a disaster, Luke.
It's not like it used to be. It's
plastic. It's one big fucking
Happy Meal.

LUKE
Some people like Happy Meals.

DR. SQUIRES
Some people like the Yankees too,
Luke. It doesn't mean they're
right.

He zips up.

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)
Look around you, Luke...
(beat)
Is this what you want for your
mind? For your life? You want it
to become like this city? Sweep
all those nasty things under the
rug? Make everything OK?

They walk on, past a homeless person. Dr. Squires offers him a hit of weed. He declines.

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)
He puts the homeless people in prison, you know that? These people are sick, mentally. And they're being put in jail. What do you think about that?

LUKE
Doesn't seem right--

DR. SQUIRES
No. No it doesn't. And that's why I don't want you on medication, Luke.

(beat)
You may as well go open up a Starbucks in your brain. Do you follow me?

LUKE
Uh...

DR. SQUIRES
Don't jump at the quick fix. This whole fucking city wants a quick fix...

LUKE
Uh-huh.

DR. SQUIRES
Embrace your pain. Make it a part of you. You don't want to be like them. I don't want you to be like them.

LUKE
So you've never taken that stuff?

DR. SQUIRES
Jesus, Luke. I'm on all of it. But I don't want you to be like me either.

Luke looks at him. They continue to walk.

DR. SQUIRES
You know, sex is a drug too, Luke. More powerful than any synthetic pharmaceutical.

LUKE

Is that why you go around trying to
fuck little girls?

Dr. Squires stops, looks at him:

DR. SQUIRES

No. I did *that* because you were
too much of a pussy to do it
yourself.

Luke ignores him, starts tagging a wall. Dr. Squires looks on, curious:

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)

What are you doing, Luke?

LUKE

Taggin' this wall.

DR. SQUIRES

Tagging? What is that? Some sort of
teenage ritual?

LUKE

I'm just kinda putting my stamp on
the wall. So people know I was
here.

DR. SQUIRES

That's illegal, isn't it?

LUKE

Yeah.

Dr. Squires reaches out his hand:

DR. SQUIRES

May I?

LUKE

I guess. Just be careful.

And Dr. Squires grabs Luke's sharpie. He walks over to the wall, neatly writes:

DR. JEFFREY SQUIRES, M.D.

Luke looks at it, smiles:

LUKE (CONT'D)

Excellent penmanship.

Then:

POLICE OFFICER (O.S.)
Hey! You two! Stop right there!

Luke looks at Dr. Squires. Dr. Squires looks at Luke, and...

DR. SQUIRES
It's a good thing I'm wearing
these.

Dr. Squires drops to one knee, pumps up his Reebok pumps:

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)
Forrest Gump, Luke. Forrest Gump.

LUKE
What are you talking about?

DR. SQUIRES
Running.

Dr. Squires takes off.

POLICE OFFICER
Stop!

The cops haul ass after Squires. Luke just watches him.

He doesn't get far.

INT. COP VAN - DAWN

Luke, Dr. Squires, and an assorted menagerie of New York's Illest ride in the back of a patrol van. Dr. Squires hollers to the front:

DR. SQUIRES
Who put you up to this, boys?
Giuliani? You guys got some kind
of quota to fill? Used to be, you
could lick a sheet of acid, hold up
a bank, and fuck a whore in Times
Square without you fellas batting
an eyelash. Now, one blunt and
we're thrown in the paddy wagon?
This whole city is fucked. We give
you CHARACTER!

HOMELESS GUY
Man, shut the hell up.

DR. SQUIRES
Come on, now, brother. Join the
revolution!
(beat)
What are you in here for?

HOMELESS GUY
I stabbed my wife in the pussy.

DR. SQUIRES
Oh. Well--

LUKE
Hey, maybe we should just keep this
on the DL?

DR. SQUIRES
The DL?

LUKE
Quiet.

INT THE TOMBS - NIGHT

Dr. Squires stands in the corner, taking it all in. Luke looks at him, furious:

LUKE
What you got to smile about?

DR. SQUIRES
This is fun.

LUKE
Yeah. Real fun.

DR. SQUIRES
At least I'm not stuck in that
iceblock of a bed with my so-called
wife--I'm fucking living. I should
be so lucky to get the gas chamber.

LUKE
I wouldn't get your hopes up. I
don't think misdemeanor possession's
gonna merit the death penalty.

DR. SQUIRES
Fucking Giuliani.

Suddenly, at the bars:

COP
Squires, Shapiro. You made bail!

INT TOMBS - MORNING

Luke and Dr. Squires exit the cell to find,
STEPHANIE, waiting for them, holding up a set of car keys.

STEPHANIE
Hi, stepdaddy.

DR. SQUIRES
Hi, precious.

LUKE
Hey, Steph.

STEPHANIE
Hey Shapiro. Thanks for getting my
stepfather thrown in prison. You're
quite an influence.

LUKE
But--

DR. SQUIRES
It was my fault.

STEPHANIE
I know.
(beat)
What'cha doing now, Shapiro?

Dr. Squires looks at her:

DR. SQUIRES
Shapiro's busy.

LUKE
No I'm not.

DR. SQUIRES
Yes you are.

Steph looks at both of them, funny.

STEPHANIE
Dr. Squires -- how about you take
the car back to the garage and I
won't tell my mom about this whole
little arrest thing?

Dr. Squires looks at her, furrows his brow.

DR. SQUIRES
Don't touch my daughter, Luke.

LUKE
Stepdaughter.

STEPHANIE
Stepdaughter.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Steph catches a tag on a park bench, as Luke passes her a spliff:

STEPHANIE
So what's the deal with you and my stepdad? Are you guys, like, gay together?

LUKE
We're friends, I guess.

STEPHANIE
Weird.

LUKE
Not really. He's very immature.

STEPHANIE
Yeah, he and my mom fight about that all the time.

LUKE
I know.
(beat)
We got more in common than you think, Steph.

STEPHANIE
Your parents too?

LUKE
Yeah.

EXT. UPTOWN POND - DUSK

Luke and Stephanie sit over the water. Luke stares at it, intently.

STEPHANIE
What you trying to do?

LUKE
Find my reflection.

STEPHANIE
It's not in there.

LUKE
No shit. This water's mad dirty.

STEPHANIE

So, why did we never hang out in
high school?

LUKE

Cuz I was a loser, I guess. Not a
loser, really. I was the most
popular of the unpopular--

STEPHANIE

Or the most unpopular of the
popular.

LUKE

Right. Either way. You're out of
my league.

STEPHANIE

So I'm slumming now?

LUKE

You could say that.
(beat)
Want a beer?

STEPHANIE

Sure.

Luke gets up, grabs a beer from his cart, opens it with the bottle opener on the side. Now, Biggie plays: "Everyday Struggle."

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

Very handy.
(beat)
Hey, who is this?

LUKE

Notorious B.I.G. Just came out.
Real dope.

STEPHANIE

You should make me a mix some time.

LUKE

Definitely.

Wanna smoke?

STEPHANIE

OK.

The sun goes down, and they smoke, catching each other's eyes, glancing away. Biggie fades out on Luke's stereo...

LUKE

It's kind of nice. With no one
else around.

Stephanie stares at him, smiling:

STEPHANIE

It is, isn't it?

And Luke kisses her. And music swells,
Until she pushes him away. And the music stops.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

LUKE

Nothing.
(beat)
Did it feel good?

STEPHANIE

Let's try again.

They do. And music swells. Longer now. They part. It stops.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

Weird.

LUKE

Did it feel good?

Steph smiles, kisses him, full on. Music swells. For real,
this time.

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - LATER

Luke leaves Steph's building, pushes his cart down the
street. Now, he steps away from it.

And, as music continues on the soundtrack, he DANCES down the
street.

The panels beneath him glow with his every step. Like in
Michael Jackson's "Billie Jean" video.

INT. STEPHANIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Stephanie enters her house. She hears yelling.

In the background:

MRS. SQUIRES

This is the kind of example you want to set for Stephanie? Smoking pot all the time like a goddamn child? That's not what I want for her. Or me.

DR. SQUIRES

You're drunk.

MRS. SQUIRES

So are you.

DR. SQUIRES

You're more drunk.

MRS. SQUIRES

I can't talk to you about this anymore. It's all a big fucking joke and I can't talk to you about anything anymore...

Stephanie enters her room, closes the door quietly.

INT LUKE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Luke enters the house, stoned out of his mind. His mom is up, in the kitchen.

MOM

Can I make you something to eat, honey?

LUKE

Absolutely.

(beat)

I mean, yeah. What do we have?

MOM

Some fruit. Some leftover stuffing. Some bagels.

LUKE

That's fine.

MOM

What?

LUKE

Just put some stuffing on a bagel, please.

(beat)

With some fruit on top.

His mom looks at him, furrows her brow:

MOM
Sure.

Mom enters the kitchen, starts to cook. From the other room:

MOM (O.S.) (CONT'D)
So, how was your night?

Luke walks over to the TV, turns it on. "Taxi". The theme song plays:

LUKE
I think I'm in love.

She rushes back in.

MOM
That's wonderful! Who's the lucky girl?

LUKE
Stephanie Squires.

MOM
Her family's very wealthy, Luke.

LUKE
I know.

MOM
Well, that's good.

LUKE
It's not like we're getting married, mom.

MOM
You never know. This is around the time when I met your father--

His mom reenters the kitchen. Luke winces.

LUKE
Right.

INT DR. SQUIRES HOUSE - NIGHT

Stephanie eats ice cream on the couch, smokes a cigarette, watches "Three's Company."

DR. SQUIRES
You're up late.

STEPHANIE
Couldn't sleep.

DR. SQUIRES
You have a nice day with Luke?

STEPHANIE
What do you mean?

DR. SQUIRES
Nothing.
(beat)
Do you like him?

STEPHANIE
I don't know. What do you care?

DR. SQUIRES
Do you like like him?

STEPHANIE
Maybe. Yeah.

Dr. Squires face drops.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
Look, I'm not really in the mood
for a father-daughter moment, Dr.
Squires.

DR. SQUIRES
Well, can I watch TV with you?

STEPHANIE
What about your wife?

DR. SQUIRES
She took a valium and passed out.

STEPHANIE
Sounds about right.
(beat)
Grab a seat.

Dr. Squires sits next to her. His DOG jumps onto his lap.

DR. SQUIRES
So, fill me in.

STEPHANIE
Well, there's been a big
misunderstanding, and Mr. Ferley
thinks Jack's gay.

Dr. Squires lights a bowl:

DR. SQUIRES
I think I've seen this one.

INT LUKE'S HOUSE - MORNING

Luke exits his bedroom. His dad's in a suit, in the kitchen.

DAD
Morning, Luke.
(beat)
You're up early.

LUKE
Couldn't sleep.
(beat)
It's mad hot.

Luke notices his dad looking at a piece of paper.

LUKE (CONT'D)
What's that?

DAD
Nothing.

Luke snatches it. An eviction notice.

LUKE
We're getting evicted?

Luke's Dad stops pouring his juice.

DAD
Keep your voice down. I'll take
care of it. I've got a big deal
coming through. It's no problem.

He snatches the notice from Luke's hand.

LUKE
Where would we go?

DAD
I don't know. Downtown, maybe?
Jersey? Not everyone has to live
on the Upper East Side.

LUKE
Well, I can't live in Jersey.

DAD
Look, I messed up. But I'm trying
to fix it.

LUKE
Well, fix it.

DAD
All I can do is try.

LUKE
Be a man, dad. Fix it.

DAD
What should I do, Luke? Deal pot?

LUKE
I don't think you'd be very good at
that.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Luke moves through the park, dealing with newfound intensity.

MONTAGE:

Portraits of Luke's various clients, across New York City.
Luke deals to them, in rapid-fire, making that paper.

INT. DR. SQUIRES' OFFICE - DAY

A dishevelled Dr. Squires, lost, pretends to listen to a patient.

EXT. PROMENADE - NIGHT

Luke and Stephanie smoke a joint on the Promenade. The city glows in the distance.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Luke moves though the park, selling ices, dealing weed. The portraits fly by now,

Mixed and matched with Dr. Squires' patients. All of them intermingled, pulsing to the beat...

INT. LUKE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Luke presses stop on his boombox, scribbles his tag on a label, slaps it on a tape.

INT. DR. SQUIRES' OFFICE - DAY

Luke sits across from Dr. Squires, who seems vaguely uninterested:

LUKE

So, I've been dealing a lot more--

Dr. Squires pulls out a bong, takes a hit.

DR. SQUIRES

Uh-huh.

LUKE

I'm trying to help my folks a little, you know. I just feel a lot of pressure--

DR. SQUIRES

You're totally wrong for each other.

LUKE

Huh?

DR. SQUIRES

I want you to stop seeing Stephanie. She is not for you.

LUKE

What's so bad about me?

DR. SQUIRES

She'll break your heart, Luke. She's just bored.

This hurts.

LUKE

That's not true.

DR. SQUIRES

Fine. Ignore my advice. I'm trying to help you, Shapiro. What? You think she's hot? You want to fuck her? The next thing you know, you've wasted your entire life on a girl you have nothing in common with, Luke.

LUKE

I was just following your advice, Dr. Squires. Living? You know?

(beat)

Wait--who said anything about my entire life?

DR. SQUIRES

This is it, Luke. This is your life. The choices you make.

(MORE)

DR. SQUIRES (cont'd)
And I guess you've chosen to be a
hoodlum drug dealer who latches
onto the only girl who will pay
attention to him, simply because
he's scared of being alone.

LUKE
What about you?

DR. SQUIRES
What about me?

LUKE
Telling me not to take medication.
Your "you don't want me to be like
Times Square" fucking metaphor.
You said so, you're on half that
shit yourself. You're a hypocrite.
(beat)

Why are you even hanging out with
me anyway? Don't you have friends
your own age? Don't you feel like
a fucking weird old idiot, just,
like, trying to relive your high
school years cuz you fucked them up
the first time?

(beat)
Maybe that's it. Maybe you're
jealous...

DR. SQUIRES
Don't, Luke--

LUKE
You want to be me, right? With
your daughter...

Dr. Squires looks at him, eyes steel:

DR. SQUIRES
Stepdaughter.
(beat)
I believe our time is up.

Luke looks at him, focused.

LUKE
I guess so.

DR. SQUIRES
This was a short one, so I'll just
charge you a dime bag.

Luke pulls some weed out of his pocket--and a mixtape:

LUKE
I made this for you.

Dr. Squires looks at it.

LUKE (CONT'D)
It's a mixtape.

Luke walks out as Dr. Squires studies the tape.

INT. LUKE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Luke enters his house. There's his dad, watching TV, surrounded still by boxes of Walkmen:

TV ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
...The New York Mets Dwight Gooden
was admitted to the Betty Ford
clinic today for cocaine
addiction...

DAD
(re: TV)
What a mess.

LUKE
You fix it?

DAD
Please, Luke. Don't talk to me
about this right now.

LUKE
(re: boxes)
What happened with the walkmen? I
thought you had someone who wanted--

DAD
What do you want from me, Luke? I
have no idea what the hell I'm
doing. Is that what you want to
hear?

LUKE
I want you to make me feel better.

DAD
I want someone to make me feel
better too, Luke. I really do.

LUKE
Listen, dad. I have some money.

DAD
That's very sweet, Luke--

LUKE
Real money.

Now, his mom enters:

MOM
What are you guys talking about?
DAD LUKE
Nothing. Nothing.

EXT. DR. SQUIRES APARTMENT - NIGHT

Luke's mixtape blares from Dr. Squires' stereo.

Dr. Squires sits on the ledge of his balcony, looks down. He wobbles, as he takes a swig.

Now, he holds up a water balloon, tosses it.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Luke and Stephanie push Luke's cart down a path in the park.

STEPHANIE
Hey, I'm not going to get arrested,
am I?

LUKE
Just act calm, and follow my lead,
everything will be fine.
(beat)
Relax. Here, let's listen to some
music.

Luke switches on a little boombox affixed to the cart handle. Out pumps "Juicy" by Biggie.

Stephanie smiles. Luke looks down the path:

LUKE (CONT'D)
That's her.

They approach a woman, dressed in cutoff sweatshirt and black jeans, sort of almost pretty, 42. This is ELEANOR.

ELEANOR
Thank God.

LUKE
Hey.

ELEANOR
Who's this?

LUKE

This is my friend, Stephanie.
Stephanie, this is Eleanor.

STEPHANIE

Nice to meet you.

ELEANOR

She's hot.

Luke nods, embarrassed.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

Sorry to move the location, I've just been hearing all these nightmare stories about fucking Giuliani. And I had to do it today, cuz I have a guy coming into town tomorrow and we have nothing to talk about unless we're stoned but he fucks like...well...he's a nice guy. Actually, he's a fucking asshole, but here we are.

Stephanie smiles.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

Let me ask you something about guys, Luke. Why are they all so fucked up? Am I intimidating? Am I intimidating because I play an instrument?

LUKE

No.

(beat)

You play an instrument?

ELEANOR

Yes, Luke. I'm a musician. God, you don't know anything about me.

LUKE

I mean, I don't really need to...know anything about you.

ELEANOR

I was in a band, Luke: Emergency Breakthrough. We were big in the 80's. Well, we were big in 1982. I play keyboard and I fucked Ronnie Wood.

LUKE

The football player?

ELEANOR

No, Luke. He's in the Rolling Stones. Jesus, you know nothing about music.

LUKE

Sure I do.

ELEANOR

Hip hop is not music, Luke. It is noise.

(beat)

Please tell me I don't look as old as I sound...

(to Steph)

What about you, darling? You got any insight into guys? Why am I asking? Of course you don't. You picked a real handful with this one.

LUKE

We're not exactly...

STEPHANIE

Yes we are.

(beat)

He's the love of my life.

She takes hold Luke's hand.

ELEANOR

Yeah. You guys have real good chemistry. How's the sex?

LUKE

You know, Eleanor, you can really just tell me how much you want and leave it at that.

ELEANOR

Fifty of the bubble gum, please.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Luke pushes his cart through the park--with Steph:

STEPHANIE

He OD'd when I was 6. At least, that's the story they tell me. He was this very handsome, like, famous photographer, and my mom was a model.

(beat)

I have very good genes.

LUKE
You miss him?

STEPHANIE
I didn't know him well enough to
miss him. But I'm definitely
missing something.

They walk on, in silence:

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
I think when I get to college, I'm
gonna change my name to Mary J.
Squires.

LUKE
That's cool. I like that.

INT STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The door opens. Luke looks from side to side.

LUKE
He's not here is he?

STEPHANIE
I told you already. There's no
way. He's got patients til 6.
(she looks around)
Ready? Run.

They run into Stephanie's room.

INT STEPHANIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Luke and Steph make out, under the covers, when:

DR. SQUIRES (O.S.)
Steph?

They both recoil, look at each other in horror. Luke nods
with his head: talk to him.

Luke crawls under the covers, hides:

STEPHANIE
Yeah?

The door opens.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
You're home early.

DR. SQUIRES
My last patient cancelled.
Actually, he killed himself
yesterday. Is someone here?

STEPHANIE
Just me.

Meanwhile, Stephanie grabs Luke's hand, puts it between her legs.

DR. SQUIRES
Why are you in bed?

STEPHANIE
(smiling wide)
I feel like shit.

DR. SQUIRES
I heard laughing.

STEPHANIE
Answering machine.

He sits down.

DR. SQUIRES
Do you want some soup?

STEPHANIE
Not right now, thanks. I think I'm
going to stay in bed. For a while.

Dr. Squires sits in the chair, quietly, for a beat.
Stephanie looks at him, smiles, nods.

DR. SQUIRES
Well, feel better.

STEPHANIE
Thanks.

And he gets up, exits.

The door closes, and Steph pulls the covers back over her,
looks at Luke.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
Close one.

LUKE
I gotta get out of here, Steph. If
he catches me--

INT DR. SQUIRES HOUSE - LATER

Dr. Squires, naked, in the lotus position.

As Luke sneaks by.

Just as Luke gets to the front door,

His PAGER starts going off.

Squires looks around, curious.

Luke grabs it, quick, turns it off,

DR. SQUIRES (O.S.)
Shapiro?

Luke turns to the doctor who stands, naked.

LUKE
(sheepish)
Look, Dr. Squires, I think maybe
you should get used to this...

DR. SQUIRES
Get used to it?

LUKE
I mean, it doesn't really affect
you...

DR. SQUIRES
I want you out of my house.

LUKE
You know, maybe you should take
care of your own shit before you
start worrying about my...shit.

DR. SQUIRES
I'm getting my gun.

LUKE
You don't have a gun.

DR. SQUIRES
My wife does.

Dr. Squires walks away, quickly, but not before shooting a look at Stephanie, who stands in her doorway:

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)
Sick, huh?

And Luke bails.

INT. DR. SQUIRES' BATHROOM - NIGHT

Dr. Squires looks in his bathroom cabinet. In the bedroom, his wife's asleep in all her clothes, on the bed.

He looks at the lithium,
Grabs the bottle, opens it,
Dumps the pills down the toilet.

INT. DR. SQUIRES' BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dr. Squires enters his bedroom. His wife watches television. On it, an idyllic beach: Goodness Gracious, Barbados.

DR. SQUIRES
I'm a mess.

MRS. SQUIRES
I know.

DR. SQUIRES
You used to help me when I got like
this.

MRS. SQUIRES
We used to do a lot of things.

They watch TV, quiet. Couples splash around on the sand.

DR. SQUIRES
Looks like fun.

His wife turns to him:

MRS. SQUIRES
We went there on our honeymoon.

DR. SQUIRES
Right.

Silence:

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)
Wanna go back?

MRS. SQUIRES
Sure.

INT. NEW YORK APARTMENT - DAY

Luke sits across from a couple WHITE HOODLUMS. They snort ritalin. Looks like they've been here for days. Hip hop blasts:

LUKE
Y'all sure you don't want some more? I can make you a deal this time...I'm trying to unload a little extra...

HOODLUM 1
What is this, Crazy Eddie's? I told you, just an eighth.
(to Hoodlum 2)
Such a cute kid.

HOODLUM 2
Shapiro, when you going to college?

LUKE
I don't know, like a month or so...

HOODLUM 1
Fuck college. I'd stay here if I was you. You got a good business going...

LUKE
Yeah.

HOODLUM 2
Take it from me, Shapiro. College is wiggity wiggity wack.

Luke gets a page.

HOODLUM 1
Except the pussy.

HOODLUM 2
Yeah, the pussy's good.

LUKE
Yo, can I use your phone?

HOODLUM 1
Yeah. Please. Use my phone to coordinate a drug deal.
(beat)
Pay phone. On the corner.

EXT. NY STREET - DAY

Luke spots a pay phone.

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Stephanie watches *The Box* in her bra and panties, smokes a cigarette.

STEPHANIE

Yo.

LUKE

What the fuck is it?

STEPHANIE

What do you mean? Nothing.

LUKE

You paged me 911.

STEPHANIE

Oh. Just wanted to see what you were doing this weekend...

LUKE

Shit. Steph, don't page me 911 unless it's an emergency. I thought someone died.

STEPHANIE

Come on.

LUKE

Serious.

STEPHANIE

OK. My bad. Anyway, what are you doing this weekend?

LUKE

Nothing.

STEPHANIE

Good. My folks are going to Barbados, which means my house in Fire Island is open. I was wondering if you wanted to join me out there for some beachcombing.

LUKE

Like, a date?

STEPHANIE
Like a honeymoon.

LUKE
I do.

STEPHANIE
You know what people do on a
honeymoon. Don't you, Luke?

LUKE
(smiling)
I think so.

STEPHANIE
I'll meet you at Penn Station
tomorrow at 3. Bring weed.

Luke hangs up, ecstatic.

INT. DR. SQUIRES' HOUSE - DAY

Dr. Squires, in sunglasses and Hawaiian shirt, stands in front of the mirror. De La Soul blares as he raps to himself.

INT. LUKE'S BATHROOM - DAY

De La Soul continues as Luke sprays some Nautica cologne on his armpits. He sings along in the mirror.

INT. DELI - DAY

Luke walks up to the counter, hands a pair of MAGNUM CONDOMS to the CLERK. Behind him a BIG BLACK MAN:

CLERK
These are magnums...

LUKE
Uh-huh.

CLERK
You know what that means?

LUKE
Word.

The Big Black Man smirks.

LUKE (CONT'D)
Actually, what does it mean?

INT PENN STATION - DAY

Luke stands under the big arrivals/departures board. Stephanie approaches, wearing a sundress. She looks beautiful.

LUKE

Wow. You look beautiful.

STEPHANIE

I know!

EXT. OCEAN BEACH ROAD - NIGHT

Luke and Steph walk past a crew of Long Island drunks, duffel bags in tow.

EXT. FIRE ISLAND FERRY - DUSK

The sun sets over the Atlantic. Luke and Steph, on the top of the ferry. She's chilly. He gives her his sweatshirt.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

Luke and Steph drop their bags, drop their clothes, and run into the ocean.

LUKE

It's mad warm.

STEPHANIE

Global warming.

Steph swims closer to him, touches him. He shudders:

LUKE

Fuck, dude. Don't do that shit...

STEPHANIE

What?

LUKE

I'm scared of Jawses.

STEPHANIE

There are no Jawses here.

LUKE

You sure?

STEPHANIE
Positive.

And they swim in the warm black sea.

EXT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

They enter Stephanie's beach house. It's sparse, wooden, filled with shells, an old TV, an old stereo.

STEPHANIE
Want some wine?

LUKE
Got anything stronger?

Stephanie looks through the cabinets.

STEPHANIE
Let's see--whiskey?

LUKE
Hmm. I'll try it, I guess.
Anything to mix it with?

STEPHANIE
There's some juice boxes...

LUKE
Good.
(beat)
Hey, I made this for you.

Luke pulls a mixtape from his bag, drops the tape into an old silver boombox.

Stephanie beams:

"Roni" by Bobby Brown plays.

INT STEPHANIE'S KITCHEN - LATER

Stephanie squeezes the remainder of a Hawaiian Punch juice box into a glass of whiskey. She grabs her glass of wine and walks outside to the

HOT TUB

Where Luke sits, drunk, stoned, dazed. He looks up, smiling:

LUKE
This whiskey is a lot of drunk.

STEPHANIE

No shit.

LUKE

So, listen, let me ask you
something...

STEPHANIE

Uh-oh.

LUKE

Um, what's going on here?

STEPHANIE

What do you mean?

(beat)

Is this, like, a girlie
conversation?

LUKE

Maybe. Sorry. I mean, I've just
never really been in this situation
before.

STEPHANIE

What situation?

LUKE

Hanging out with a girl who likes
me...

(beat)

Who I like...

Stephanie watches him, gets in the water.

LUKE (CONT'D)

I guess I'm just wondering...what
happens...when everyone comes back.

STEPHANIE

Like, do I turn into a pumpkin?

LUKE

Basically, yeah.

STEPHANIE

I don't know. But it doesn't
matter.

LUKE

Why not?

STEPHANIE

Cuz how could anything possibly
matter right now?

(beat)

(MORE)

STEPHANIE (cont'd)
Shapiro--you just -- you think
about things in this shitty way,
you know? I'm lucky--I'm not like
you. I look at the dopeness, and
you--you look at the wackness.

LUKE
I do?

STEPHANIE
You do. When all you have to do is
look at me.

LUKE
Word.

STEPHANIE
And kiss me.

And he does.

INT STEPHANIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Luke and Steph make out in their bathing suits.

STEPHANIE
Take these off.

Stephanie slides Luke's bathing suit around his ankles. He's so scared now.

She flips him on his back, gets on top.

LUKE
Condom--?

STEPHANIE
That's what the pill's for,
Shapiro.

LUKE
O...K...

He's inside her now. Stephanie moves up and down, quickly:

STEPHANIE
Um, you're not hard.

LUKE
Fuck. No? Man.
(beat)
I'm really drunk, I think.

Now, the tape stops.

LUKE (CONT'D)
I gotta flip the tape.

STEPHANIE
Nuh-uh. We're having sex.

LUKE
But....my drunk. I mean, my dick.

STEPHANIE
I'll make coffee.

INT STEPHANIE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

The mix continues now: Outkast, "Crumblin' Erb". Luke sits at the counter. Luke sips his coffee.

LUKE
I never drank coffee before.

STEPHANIE
I drink it all the time. It's like ritalin.

LUKE
Hey, Steph...Not to be, like, a bitch or nothin', but, um...

STEPHANIE
What is it?

LUKE
I've kinda never had sex before.

STEPHANIE
You're a virgin?

LUKE
Nah. I've just never officially had sex.

STEPHANIE
Right.
(beat)
I thought you fucked Katie.

LUKE
I was, like, real faded and I never really--it was more like third base...

STEPHANIE
She thinks you fucked her.

LUKE

Well, OK, but, listen, that's why
I'm nervous and, like, maybe that's
why--the thing with my dick...

STEPHANIE

Don't worry, Shapiro. I've done it
like 100 times. I'll teach you.
You will be my student of sex.

LUKE

OK. I'm down.

STEPHANIE

You sober yet?

Luke looks down at his crotch:

LUKE

Probably.

STEPHANIE

Then it's time for our first
lesson.

INT STEPHANIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Luke lies on top of Stephanie.

STEPHANIE

OK. Now put it in.

Luke moves.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

Ow. Ow. Slowly. Slower.

(beat)

OK. That's good. Now move in and--

Suddenly, Luke shudders, convulses.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

No fucking way.

LUKE

Um...

STEPHANIE

You came?

LUKE

Uhhhh...

STEPHANIE

You fucking came.

EXT. BEACH - DAWN

Luke sits on the beach, sullen, as the sun rises. Stephanie plays around in the water, on her back, looking up at the horizon and the faint sliver of orange that streaks above it.

Luke looks at her, mouths to himself:

LUKE
I love you.
(beat)
Stephanie, I love you.
(beat)
I love you, Steph.
(beat)
I got mad love for you, shorty.

Luke shakes his head, closes his eyes. Stephanie dives into a wave.

INT BARBADOS HOTEL ROOM - DAWN

Dr. Squires sits on the bed, across from his wife. The TV is on. The sun is rising. A bottle of champagne passes between them.

DR. SQUIRES
I haven't stayed up all night in 10 years.

MRS. SQUIRES
Yes we did.

DR. SQUIRES
We did?

MRS. SQUIRES
We did. New Year's Eve, 4 years ago. Remember we found that coke that you hid from the 80's? And we did it and then we made love on the balcony covered in these giant blankets and we woke up Steph and you told her we were out there trying to save a sick pigeon?

DR. SQUIRES
I do remember that.

Dr. Squires laughs, sighs:

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)
What happened to us, Kristen?

MRS. SQUIRES
You're kidding, right?

DR. SQUIRES
Yeah. I'm kidding.

He takes another sip of champagne.

EXT. OUTDOOR SHOWER - DAY

Luke showers in the sun. Next to him, a deer eats some grass.

Now, Stephanie enters, a towel wrapped around her. Luke looks at her, smiles, nervous. He puts some shampoo in his hair.

Stephanie drops her towel, steps behind Luke, starts to rub the shampoo in. Luke turns around. Stephanie kisses him.

She reaches down, slides him inside her. He shudders, moves closer, pushes her back against the wooden shower door.

An animated deer joins the first, real-life one, eating grass. Now another. An animated songbird lands on the showerhead, chirps.

And Luke and Stephanie fuck. And it's good. Really good.

INT BARBADOS HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Porn on Spectravision. And Dr. Squires fucks his wife. She sits on his lap; they both face the TV screen. Behind it, a mirror. Alternate focus between the mirror and the TV.

EXT. OUTDOOR SHOWER - DAY

Stephanie slumps into Luke, her head on his shoulder. She smiles wide. They stand like that, for a while. The shower continues to hit them, sprinkled with sunlight. Then:

LUKE
I love you.

Stephanie backs up, looks at him:

STEPHANIE
Whoa, dude.

INT JFK - NIGHT

Dr. Squires and his wife wait for their bags.

INT LONG ISLAND RAILROAD - NIGHT

Stephanie and Luke sit on the train, not talking. He listens to his headphones; she reads *The Source*. Awkward.

INT TAXI - NIGHT

Dr. Squires and his wife ride back to New York in a cab. The city glows in the distance.

He reaches for her hand; she takes his.

INT PENN STATION - NIGHT

This is goodbye. Stephanie and Luke look at each other.

LUKE

So....um...

STEPHANIE

I'll call you this week.

LUKE

This week? When?

STEPHANIE

Some time during the week.

(beat)

I'm going to be really busy. At work.

LUKE

The world needs copies, huh?

STEPHANIE

Something like that.

LUKE

Well--cool.

STEPHANIE

Bye.

LUKE

Peace.

They hug.

LUKE (CONT'D)
Ow. Sunburn.

STEPHANIE
Right. Bye.

And she's gone.

INT DR. SQUIRES' BATHROOM - NIGHT

Dr. Squires, in boxers and oversized t-shirt, pisses.

He flushes, enters the --

BEDROOM

His wife is lying in bed, smiling tenderly. Dr. Squires hands her a pill. She takes it, nods thank you. He sits at the foot of the bed.

DR. SQUIRES
I want a divorce.

MRS. SQUIRES
Me too.

Beat.

STEPHANIE (O.S.)
Hey.

They look over. Stephanie stands in the doorway. She hasn't heard any of this.

MRS. SQUIRES
Hey, darling. How was your weekend?

STEPHANIE
Uneventful.

DR. SQUIRES
You got a nice tan there, Steph.

STEPHANIE
Uh-huh.
(beat)
I just wanted to say hi. I'm going to sleep.

MRS. SQUIRES
Goodnight, sweetheart.

DR. SQUIRES
We love you.

Mrs. Squires shoots a glance at her soon-to-be ex-husband.

INT. LUKE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Luke opens the front door to his house, enters. He drops his duffel bag in the hall. It's quiet.

LUKE
Dad? Mom?

Luke walks into the living room. Nothing.

LUKE (CONT'D)
Mom?

He enters his parents' room. Nothing. Now, from the bathroom, he hears muffled cries:

LUKE (CONT'D)
Mom.

MOM
I'm fine, honey. It's OK.

Luke opens the door a crack. His mom is sitting at the sink, crying.

MOM (CONT'D)
Leave, Luke.

LUKE
Mom. Mom. It's gonna be fine.

MOM
I can't be poor, Luke. I don't
know how to do it.

She breaks down now. Luke sits next to his mother. She points to a pill bottle on the counter:

MOM (CONT'D)
Hand me that.

Luke grabs the bottle. Valium. He fills a cup with water. Gives it to her. She pops it.

LUKE
Mom. What happened? What did he
do?

MOM
He risked everything. Over and over again.
(beat)
I'm sorry. This isn't fair to you.

LUKE
It's cool. I can take it.

MOM
You can. I know that.
(beat)
I just wanted it to be easy for you. And it's always so...fucking...hard.

LUKE
What?

MOM
Everything.

LUKE
It's gonna be fine, mom. I talked to dad. He said so.

MOM
OK, sweetie. OK.

INT LUKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Luke opens his refrigerator. It's filled with weed. More weed than he could possibly unload himself.

He puts his face in the pillow, and starts to cry.

On his dresser, his pager vibrates. Over and over again.

EXT. PAY PHONE - DAY

Luke dials. On the other end, Stephanie's machine:

STEPHANIE (O.S.)
Hey. It's Steph. Leave a message.

LUKE
Yo. Steph. Hey. It's me, Luke. I know you said you'd call me this week, and it's a week from when you said that...so, well, I guess there's still time in the week, really.
(beat)
(MORE)

LUKE (cont'd)
Technically, there's still a few hours left. I hope you're aware of that... (beat) Listen, are you not calling me back cuz I said I love you? Cuz that's stupid. I mean, I didn't mean it really. And even if I did, I'm going to college in three weeks so it's not like it matters. You know what? Fuck it. I meant it. I do love you. I'm not scared to say it. I fucking love you and if that scares you, well...then fuck you. You know what? Fuck off. You're a bitch. Goodbye.

INT. DR. SQUIRES' OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Squires sits in his office, stoned. He stares at his degrees, tries to crush them with his forefinger and thumb. Then, a knock:

DR. SQUIRES
Come in...

Luke opens the door:

LUKE
Hey.

DR. SQUIRES
Shapiro?

Luke stands there, sullen:

LUKE
She got bored.

DR. SQUIRES
With all due respect to my stepdaughter, Luke--fuck her. Fuck 'em all.
(beat)
It's like Biggie says, "bitches I like 'em brainless..."

LUKE
"Guns I like 'em stainless steel."
(beat)
Couldn't save your marriage, huh?

DR. SQUIRES
Turns out it's not worth saving.

Silence. They stare at each other.

LUKE

Dr. Squires, remember when you told me that shit about men doing the things they needed to do to become the men they need to become...or something?

DR. SQUIRES

No.

LUKE

Well, I need your help.

DR. SQUIRES

What is it, Luke?

LUKE

Do you know anyone who could maybe use some weed? I have a little extra weight to unload this month.

Dr. Squires thinks:

DR. SQUIRES

We could probably work something out.

He smiles, and Biggie drops on the soundtrack.

EXT. DOWNTOWN STREET - DAY

Luke and Dr. Squires roll down the street. They look different now. Almost...badass.

LUKE

If we're gonna do this, Dr. Squires, we're gonna do it right. You gotta be a little more careful.

DR. SQUIRES

Don't worry, Luke. I'm not going back to prison.

LUKE

Good. Let's establish a few ground rules. Number 1: We use pagers. Someone pages us, and we call them back from a payphone. We never use home phones for this type of stuff. Never.

FLASH: Luke talks on a payphone, catches a tag on it.

DR. SQUIRES

That's great, Luke. I already have a pager for my medical practice.

LUKE

Number 2: We sell weed by the gram, by the eighth, and by the ounce. Gram's the highest profit margin but it's also the most potent. That's why we try to encourage people to buy the grams...

INT. APARTMENT ON W 83RD STREET - DAY

Luke and Dr. Squires sit across from an OLDER MAN:

LUKE

Look, Principal Edwards, I can give you 2 grams for \$125. Anything less than that, I don't make a profit.

PRINCIPAL EDWARDS

You always were very good at math, Luke.

Intercut LUKE AND SQUIRES' DRUG DEALS with a SUBWAY MAP, illustrating their location across Manhattan.

LUKE

Number 3: you make half of all sales on any clients you refer...

DR. SQUIRES

Oh, don't worry about that, Luke.

LUKE

What do you mean?

DR. SQUIRES

I don't need the money.

LUKE

Wait...so why are you doing this?

DR. SQUIRES

You know, for fun.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DUSK

Luke and Dr. Squires push Luke's ice cart across the city, licking ices as they go. Biggie blasts from the boombox.

DR. SQUIRES

It's been a long time since a form
of musical expression was so raw,
so real. It's like therapy, really.
But doper.
(beat)

There he is.

And they approach a BEARDED MAN.

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)

Oliver! How's the golf game?

BEARDED MAN

Not bad, doc. Not bad.

DR. SQUIRES

And your mother?

BEARDED MAN

Still projecting.

DR. SQUIRES

I'm sorry to hear that. Call my
office to make an appointment.

(beat)

Now, how much marijuana can I get
you?

BEARDED MAN

An eighth.

EXT. LUKE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Luke and Dr. Squires play video games, smoke weed, rap along
to Biggie. Friends.

INT. LUKE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Luke counts his money, pleased.

DR. SQUIRES (V.O.)

Exactly how much money are we
trying to make here?

LUKE (V.O.)

As much as possible...

DR. SQUIRES (V.O.)

And what's all this for, Luke? If
you don't mind my asking.

INT. LUKE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

LUKE (V.O.)
College.

Luke looks at his DAD and MOM, who are in bed, sleeping head-to-toe.

INT ELEANOR'S APARTMENT - DAY

Luke and Dr. Squires finish carrying the cart up the stairs. They're exhausted.

DR. SQUIRES
I didn't know it was a fifth-floor walkup. Who the fuck lives in a fifth floor walkup?

LUKE
Please, Dr. Squires. Behave. This is my connect.
(beat)
And she's single.

Eleanor opens the door.

ELEANOR
Hi, Luke!

Dr. Squires looks at her, smitten.

DR. SQUIRES
Hello.

Eleanor smiles:

ELEANOR
Hi.

A beat, as they take each other in:

ELEANOR (CONT'D)
Come on in.

INT ELEANOR'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Luke and Dr. Squires enter.

ELEANOR
I'm Eleanor.

DR. SQUIRES
I'm, uh, Hayden.

LUKE
You don't have to use an alias with
her, Squires.

DR. SQUIRES
Oh. Well then, I'm Jeff.

ELEANOR
And I'm still Eleanor.

They stare at each other, smile.

LUKE
So...how much you want?

ELEANOR
A quarter. I'm going to New
Hampshire to meet that guy. The
fucker. So, I'm...you know...just,
packing and stuff and then I was
thinking...I need some grass! I
almost forgot! So, that's how this
happened.

LUKE
So, a quarter, then?

DR. SQUIRES
He doesn't appreciate you.

ELEANOR
How'd you guess?

DR. SQUIRES
He couldn't possibly.

ELEANOR
That's a compliment, right?

Dr. Squires nods.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)
Let me find my purse.

She searches the house frantically.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)
Here it is!
(beat)
And here's...this.

She hands Luke a CD.

LUKE

Thanks.

(beat)

Greatest Hits?

ELEANOR

It's really only 3 songs and a lot
of remixes. It's actually kind of
more like one song.

Dr. Squires looks at the CD.

DR. SQUIRES

You were in Emergency Breakthrough?

ELEANOR

I was.

DR. SQUIRES

No shit! I loved your music.

ELEANOR

No shit!

(beat)

See, Luke? I'm not just making
this stuff up.

(to Dr. Squires)

I'm trying to educate him. Show
him there's a whole world beyond
rap music.

DR. SQUIRES

You should listen to this woman,
Luke. She's as smart and talented
as she is beautiful.

ELEANOR

Awww.

(to Luke)

He's crazy, right?

LUKE

A total lunatic.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

Luke and Dr. Squires, in the elevator:

DR. SQUIRES

Nice girl. That Eleanor.

LUKE

Yeah.

DR. SQUIRES
Thanks for letting me come with
you, Luke. I feel this is a big
step in our relationship.

LUKE
No problem. Just don't be yourself.

INT. PERCY'S HOUSE - DAY

Two large BLACK MEN. Carrying UZIs. They stand, stoic.

Elevator door swing open, as Luke walks out confidently.
Behind him, Dr. Squires freaked out. Luke turns to him:

LUKE
It's OK.

Dr. Squires nods, takes a step forward, looks at the UZIs,
the men who carry them.

DR. SQUIRES
Uh-huh.

PERCY (O.S.)
Who the fuck are you?

Dr. Squires looks up, sees Percy.

DR. SQUIRES
Who the fuck are you?

Luke interjects, quickly:

LUKE
He's with me, Percy. He's cool.

DR. SQUIRES
I'm cool, Percy.

PERCY
Ima be the judge of that.

Dr. Squires stands right in front of one of the UZI GUYS,
staring at him intently.

UZI GUY
Stop that.

DR. SQUIRES
Sorry.

Percy eyes him skeptically.

INT. PERCY'S ROOM - DAY

Dr. Squires and Percy, smoking a SPLIFF, stoned out of their minds. Percy's holding a GLOCK. Nas blares. Luke sits, bored.

DR. SQUIRES

The drowning represents your inability to get a handle on your life, what you're doing, perhaps your business. And the girl--well, I don't know. When in doubt, I usually go with your mother.

PERCY

Me mum. Dat make a lot more sense now.

LUKE

Listen, guys...I hate to interrupt, but--Percy, I need more.

PERCY

Luke needs more. How much more Luke need?

LUKE

Another 10 zs.

PERCY

How you gwana unload an extra 10 ounces dis week, boy?

LUKE

I've expanded my client roster.

PERCY

You sure riskin' a lot, boy.

Percy cocks his gun, dramatically, points it to Luke, who shudders a bit:

DR. SQUIRES

Hey, easy. He's just a kid.

Percy drops the gun, looks at Squires, stoic:

PERCY

He ain't no kid...
(to Luke)
Ain't dat right, Luke? You a man, boy.

INT DR. SQUIRES CAR - LATER

Dr. Squires and Luke, in the car. Luke counts his money:

LUKE

11 grand, plus another 10 zs to
unload, at a grand a z... It's a
start.

DR. SQUIRES

You know, it's funny, Luke--you and
me, we have the same job-- but
you're giving people the real shit.
I just give them chemicals. I
prescribe lies.

(beat)

I want to do this, Luke.

LUKE

Do what?

DR. SQUIRES

What you do? I can do it, Luke.
You'll need someone to follow in
your footsteps. When you're gone.

Luke sees his house.

LUKE

What is wrong with you, Dr.
Squires? You've been acting really
weird--

DR. SQUIRES

I'm fine, Luke. Totally fine. I'm
just--unfulfilled.

LUKE

Well, this isn't for you.

DR. SQUIRES

But it's for you?

Dr. Squires stops the car. Luke just looks at him.

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - DAY

The camera moves through the city, past people, faces,
streets and signs. All the while, in the middle of our frame

THE MIDDLE FINGER, held up high.

It moves past everyone, everything. Cool kids downtown,
hoodlums uptown, old people, young people, babies and dogs.

Until the finger stops, at a pay phone, picks up the receiver...

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Luke, on the phone again:

LUKE

Hey, Steph...so, I guess you're ignoring me, huh? That's a shame, cuz it'd be nice to hang out or whatever before I go to school. The school year is rapidly approaching, as you know and, well, I miss you. Call me back.

INT. DR. SQUIRES' HOUSE - DAY

Dr. Squires looks at his wife, who stands at the front door, bags packed:

DR. SQUIRES

I love you.

MRS. SQUIRES

No you don't.

DR. SQUIRES

Don't leave me here. Don't leave me all alone. Please.

MRS. SQUIRES

It's for the best, Jeffrey.

From the other room, Stephanie watches, as her mother approaches her, caresses her face tenderly:

MRS. SQUIRES (CONT'D)

I will be back in just a few weeks, sweetheart. Then we'll deal with the separation.

STEPHANIE

OK.

MRS. SQUIRES

Goodbye, Jeff.

And Dr. Squires watches her walk away.

INT STEPHANIE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Stephanie, teary-eyed, replays Luke's message on the machine.

LUKE (V.O.)
...I miss you. Call me back.

Then, her phone rings again. She picks up, quickly:

STEPHANIE
Shapiro?

JUSTIN (O.S.)
Huh?

STEPHANIE
Justin?

EXT. BROOKLYN PROMENADE - DAY

Justin, in triple fat goose and hoodie, on the phone. Behind him, Rollo catches a tag on a park bench:

JUSTIN
Why you callin' me Shapiro?

STEPHANIE
No reason.
(beat)
Hey, how was Florence?

JUSTIN
Seville.

STEPHANIE
Right. How was it?

JUSTIN
Crazy, yo. Mad crazy. I'll tell
you all about it. We're gonna hit
this club downtown tonight. Wanna
come?

She doesn't skip a beat:

STEPHANIE
Totally.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Luke rolls his Ice Cart through Central Park, sullen.

EXT. LUKE'S BUILDING - DAY

Luke approaches his apartment building. Something's wrong.
There's a truck there, a moving truck.

His mother's on the curb, smoking a cigarette. His father is talking to the movers:

DAD
Easy with that! That was my
father's.

Luke goes up to his mom, frantic:

LUKE
What happened?

MOM
What do you think?

He runs up to his dad:

LUKE
Dad. Wait! I have money. I have
money.
(to the movers)
Put that down! I have the money.

DAD
Luke. Stop.

LUKE
Would you please listen to me, dad?
I have twenty six thousand dollars.
That should be more than enough.

DAD
(sadly)
Oh, Luke.

LUKE
What?

DAD
It's not enough, Luke. Not even
close.

Luke looks at him, angry.

LUKE
You fucking promised...

Luke's dad looks at him, with disdain:

DAD
Grow up, Luke.

Luke turns red with anger. He lifts his fist. His father looks at him.

DAD (CONT'D)
Not like that.
(beat, to mover)
Easy with the silver!

Luke drops his fist. He sits on the curb next to his mom, looks at her. At her cigarette.

LUKE
You got another?

MOM
You smoke?

LUKE
Everything.

INT. DR. SQUIRES' HOUSE - DAY

Dr. Squires moves through his decimated apartment with a SHARPIE. Several items already have his TAG on them.

He starts writing on the couch. When Stephanie enters:

STEPHANIE
What are you doing?

DR. SQUIRES
Marking my territory.

A beat:

STEPHANIE
Need any help?

INT. CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT

Luke walks through the darkness of Central Park, barely holding it together. He walks by Tavern on the Green, sees tourists dining in their suits.

Twinkling lights swirl around them. Luke looks at them, from their steaks to their cufflinks...

Luke takes his pager off his belt, clips it to the handle of his ice cart.

He rolls the cart up to a SLEEPING HOMELESS PERSON.

And walks away.

As the pager starts to vibrate.

EXT. 42ND STREET - NIGHT

Dr. Squires walks through Times Square. He approaches Show-World, the peep show Luke attended before. He walks to the door, sees a sign:

CLOSED BY ORDER OF THE MAYOR

DR. SQUIRES
Fucking Giuliani.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAWN

Morning comes to New York.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Luke sleeps on a HOTEL COT. His parents on the bed next to him. He turns over, opens his eyes.

LUKE'S POV

His parents, sleeping, next to each other, quiet. Peaceful.

Now, his dad, almost subconsciously, turns and spoons his mom. He nuzzles her. She makes a little noise, pulls him close.

Luke smiles quietly, closes his eyes.

As the theme to "Legend of Zelda" rises on the soundtrack.

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

Luke hops on his bike, rides with a newfound sense of control. He's on a quest.

EXT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - DAY

He rides his bike up to Steph's awning, hops off it.

INT. STEPHANIE'S FRONT DOOR - DAY

Luke rings Steph's doorbell. She opens the door:

STEPHANIE
Shapiro?

LUKE

Look, Steph, I know the summer's almost over, but I think we can make this work.

STEPHANIE

Luke...

LUKE

Hear me out. People do the long-distance thing. And it's not like we're going to school so far from each other, you know? I mean, it's like a 4 hour train ride. We could alternate weekends--

From inside:

JUSTIN (O.S.)

Is that Shapiro?

LUKE

Is that Justin?

Now, behind Stephanie, Justin, shirtless, just waking up:

JUSTIN

Yo, do you have any weed?

LUKE

No.

JUSTIN

OK.

Justin turns around, reenters the house. Luke looks at Steph, angry.

STEPHANIE

Luke...

LUKE

Where's Squires?

STEPHANIE

He just left for Fire Island.

LUKE

With your mom?

STEPHANIE

She's in rehab.

LUKE

Peace.

He walks to the elevator.

STEPHANIE
Wait.

Luke turns around. She didn't expect him to. So she says:

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
It's for the best, Luke.

LUKE
Right. Everything's always for the best.

The elevator comes. And Luke is gone.

INT. FIRE ISLAND HOUSE - DAY

"Lithium" by Nirvana plays. Jesus Christ (Dr. Squires' dog), wanders through the house, which is a complete mess.

Attached to his collar, a note: "MY OWNER HAS KILLED HIMSELF. PLEASE TAKE CARE OF ME."

A noose hangs from the rafters. Pills and other assorted drugs are strewn across the house.

Dr. Squires snorts a line off the kitchen counter.

Then, a KNOCK. Who could that be?

He walks to the front door, opens it.

There's Luke.

DR. SQUIRES
Luke. How are you?

LUKE
Shitty.

DR. SQUIRES
Yeah. Dark times.

LUKE
We got evicted.

DR. SQUIRES
You're homeless now?

LUKE
I guess so.

Dr. Squires looks from side to side:

DR. SQUIRES
Don't let the mayor see you.

Dr. Squires grabs Luke, pulls him inside.

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)
I apologize for the mess. I wasn't
expecting company...

LUKE
You've been doing all these drugs?

DR. SQUIRES
It's an experiment. An experience.
Life. Salvation. Drugs.
(beat)
Go ahead.

LUKE
I haven't done most of this before,
Jeff.

DR. SQUIRES
Come now, Lucas. Be a pal. Do it.

MONTAGE:

Luke and Dr. Squires ingest lines of coke. They take pills, eat sandwiches, drink wine, smoke pot, play Trivial Pursuit, grill a salmon, take more pills, and

EXT. BEACH - SUNSET

Sit on the beach.

SPLIT SCREEN: Dr. Squires and Luke, next to each other. We watch them from behind, the ocean in front of them. Yet the ocean looks different to each one. To Squires it is vivid, pulsing. To Luke, it is almost black and white.

DR. SQUIRES
The ocean. This is all I need.
Forget the city. The city is
wrong. I just want to wrap myself
in the ocean.

LUKE
I cannot speak.

DR. SQUIRES
That's the spirit, Luke.
(beat, to the ocean)
Hit me with it! Fucking hit me!
You don't think I can take it?
(MORE)

DR. SQUIRES (cont'd)
I can take everything you throw at
me, fucking sea.

Dr. Squires drops eyedrops in each eye, looks at Luke:

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)
Liquid acid.

A HOT GIRL walks by, walking a dog:

LUKE
I want to...vagina.

DR. SQUIRES
You said it.
(beat)
I should have known as soon as she
told me she didn't like dogs.
There's certain people you just
can't trust. You know, Luke?

Squires looks at Luke, whose face is shown in NEGATIVE. Luke turns to him, in slow motion:

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)
Stop being so negative.

He starts cracking up, then regains composure:

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)
Luke, listen to me. I may not
always be here for you, so I have
to get all this out, OK?
(beat)
Never trust anyone who doesn't
smoke pot. Or listen to Bob Dylan.
Do you hear me? Never trust anyone
who doesn't like the beach, Luke.
And never, ever, trust anyone who
says they don't like dogs. If you
meet someone who doesn't like dogs,
alert the authorities immediately.
And sure as shit don't marry them.

LUKE
OK. OK.

Dr. Squires looks out at the ocean.

DR. SQUIRES
Nothing's OK, Luke. None of it is
going to be OK. Everything is
going to be terrible.
(beat)
I tried to kill myself twice today,
Luke.

Luke looks at him.

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)
Once with pills -- turns out I have
a very high tolerance for those.
And once by hanging...
(beat)
Hanging is very hard, Luke. I
should have lost some weight.
(beat)
Oh well.

LUKE
Dr. Squires, what are you talking
about?

DR. SQUIRES
I don't know, Luke. I just--

He shakes his head.

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)
I'm done.

Dr. Squires looks at him, distraught:

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)
I'm pathetic.

And Dr. Squires starts to cry.

LUKE
I am too. We all are.

DR. SQUIRES
My wife left me. I've lost my
daughter. And my patients. And--
I've just made a mess of
everything.

LUKE
No...

DR. SQUIRES
Yes. This is last call, Luke. And
I'm glad you're here to see me off.

Dr. Squires stands.

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)
Don't worry. I'll go to heaven. I'm
wearing my aquasox.

LUKE
Where are you going?

DR. SQUIRES
In there.
(beat)
I'm ready to die, Luke.

He walks to the ocean. Luke gets up too.

LUKE
Stop fucking around, Jeff.

DR. SQUIRES
I'm a weird old guy. You said it
yourself.

Dr. Squires enters the water. Luke stands at the shore.

LUKE.
I didn't mean it, Dr. Squires.
You're my friend. Actually, you're
my best friend. So come back. Do
it for me.

DR. SQUIRES
You're not worth it, Shapiro.

He keeps walking:

LUKE
So that was all bullshit, huh? All
that stuff about embracing your
pain, making it a part of you?

But the doctor keeps walking. Luke walks in after him, yelling.

LUKE (CONT'D)
You can't do this! You can't just
give up. Life is fucking hard and
it's filled with pain and awful,
awful things but we take it and we
get through it! We don't give up!
Because we have friends...we help
each other!

Luke's in the water now, waves crashing over him. Dr. Squires is nowhere to be seen.

EXT. BEACH - SOON AFTER

Luke, spent, exhausted, wet and crying, stumbles onto the shore. He turns back to the ocean, looks at it. Tears stream down his face. Jesus Christ yips at the water.

DR. SQUIRES (O.S.)
Luke...

He turns around. There's Dr. Squires, sitting on a towel, stoic. Jesus Christ runs to him. Now, Luke approaches, sits down next to Squires, breathless.

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)
That was really fucking cheesy,
what you just said.

LUKE
(smiling)
The world has a enough assholes,
Dr. Squires. Don't be another one.

DR. SQUIRES
Now you sound like me.

He smiles.

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)
Let's go to the city. Fill my
prescriptions.

LUKE
Sounds good.

INT DR. SQUIRES HOUSE - LATER

Dr. Squires sits, freshly showered, in a robe.

Luke hands over a bag full of pill bottles:

DR. SQUIRES
Thank you, Luke.

LUKE
How you feeling?

He shakes his head.

LUKE (CONT'D)
Don't do that again, please. You
scared me.

DR. SQUIRES
I'm sorry.

LUKE
Look, Dr. Squires...I have to get
back. To my folks.

DR. SQUIRES
Where are you living these days,
Luke?

LUKE

We're moving in with my
grandparents. In New Jersey.

DR. SQUIRES

I'm sorry to hear that.

LUKE

Yeah, well. I'm sorry to live it.

Dr. Squires smiles.

DR. SQUIRES

I'm sorry about Stephanie too.

Luke looks down. He can't talk about this.

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)

She would have been a lucky girl.

Luke looks at him, nods sadly.

DR. SQUIRES (CONT'D)

Good luck in school. Try and fuck
a black girl -- I never got the
chance to do that in college.

Luke smiles.

LUKE

Baby steps.

(beat)

You'll be ok.

DR. SQUIRES

I can't answer that.

LUKE

It wasn't a question.

(beat)

Peace, doc.

DR. SQUIRES

Peace out, Luke.

INT DR. SQUIRES HOUSE - DAY

Luke walks out, rings for the elevator.

STEPHANIE (O.S.)

Luke.

He turns, sees Steph.

LUKE

Hi.

STEPHANIE

Look, Luke, I'm sorry. It's --

LUKE

Do me a favor, Steph -- don't say
nothin', OK? Just stand there
until I leave. Let me look at you.
(beat)

I want to remember this. I've never
done it before.

STEPHANIE

Done what?

LUKE

Had my heart broken.

And they stare at each other, like that, for a moment, eyes
locked. And the elevator door DINGS.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Thanks, Steph. Take care of
yourself.

He steps into the elevator.

STEPHANIE

You too, Shapiro.

She stands there, not knowing what to do -- or say -- next,

As the elevator door closes.

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - DAY

Luke steps out onto the sun-soaked New York Street. He puts a
tape in his walkman: DR. SQUIRES' MIX. He puts his
headphones on.

Luke presses play: "*Stephanie Says*" by the Velvet
Underground. And he steps on, into the sun, narrowly
avoiding,

A WATER BALLOON that drops from above, splattering to pieces.

EXT. NEW JERSEY HOME - DAY

A single-story home in New Jersey. Quiet, suburban.

INT BEDROOM - DAY

Music continues, as Luke sits in a room, packing. He looks at his diploma: blank. He folds it, puts in a suitcase.

His Mom appears in the doorway:

MOM
Time for lunch, sweetie.

INT . DINING ROOM - DAY

Luke sits at lunch, across from his MOM and DAD. Two OLDER PEOPLE are with them as well, Luke's GRANDMA and GRANDPA:

DAD
Mom, you know I don't like meatloaf.

GRANDMA
In your house, you can set the menu.
(beat)
Oh, I'm sorry--you don't have a house, Mr. Bigshot! Meatloaf's what we're eating.

GRANDPA
You love your mother's meatloaf.

Dad shakes his head. Mom smiles. And then,
Grabs her husband's hand. He squeezes hers.

GRANDPA (CONT'D)
Can I have some more Dr. Pepper,
Evelyn?

She comes over, pours some in his glass. He holds it up:

GRANDPA (CONT'D)
To your success, Luke.
(beat)
To the college man.

Mom and Dad raise a glass. They all toast.

GRANDMA
Have you given any more thought to what you're going to be? As far as a profession goes?

DAD
Mom, he's got time--

GRANDMA
I'm just asking.

LUKE
I was sort of thinking about
becoming a shrink.

Mom and Dad look at each other, impressed.

GRANDPA
It's a very interesting field,
psychology...

LUKE
I figure I'm an expert cuz everyone
around me is so fucking crazy, you
know?

Now they shudder.

GRANDPA
You said it, mister.
(beat)
Andy, the Mets are on, aren't they?
Turn the TV towards me.

DAD
Sure, dad.

Now, music swells again:

MONTAGE

--Luke sits on an Amtrak train, looks out the window.

--A quaint home in Jersey. Luke's mother lies asleep. The TV on. We pan away, to the living room, where

--Luke's father lies asleep. Watching the same show.

--Percy is taken into the Tombs, escorted by New York City cops.

--Stephanie and Justin eat dinner at Tavern on the Green.

EXT. PROMENADE - DUSK

Dr. Squires sits on the Promenade, stares at the skyline. Alone. The World Trade Center glows golden by twilight. He looks down at his hand: a pill. He pops it in his mouth, sips a 40 to wash it down.

Now, his pager starts to vibrate. He looks at the number.

EXT. PAYPHONE - DUSK

Dr. Squires on a payphone. He calls:

DR. SQUIRES
Someone paged me from this number?

INT. ELEANOR'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

ELEANOR
Hi, Jeffrey. Um, this is Eleanor.
Listen, I'm sorry to bother you,
but Luke gave me your number. He
said I should page you. I hope
it's OK.

DR. SQUIRES
It's OK. Yes.

ELEANOR
So, listen, what are you doing
tonight?

DR. SQUIRES
(smiling)
No plans.

EXT. NEW HAVEN TRAIN PLATFORM - NIGHT

Luke stands on the platform as the train switches from diesel to electric. It's cold. He can see his breath. He walks to the end of the platform, checks to see if the coast is clear, And lights up a joint. He pulls at it, looks into the fluorescent night, The cold industrial gray that is Connecticut. He draws another hit. Lou Reed wails on the headphones. A conductor makes an announcement.

Final boarding call.

Luke flicks his joint, right at the camera. As we go

BLACK.