

St. Vincent de Van Nuys

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The sex sounds made during...sex.

FADE IN:

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

A bedroom stuck in the 1970's. Felt wallpaper, cigarette smoke stains, thick dust. Pictures everywhere of a MAN (VINCENT) and a WOMAN (SANDY) in love. They couldn't look happier. Young, full of life.

On the bed, an African American woman, CHARISSE, rides on top of someone we'll soon meet. Charisse is lost in her 30s, rough, tattooed, too much makeup, and somewhere underneath it all...beautiful. Furthermore, she's pregnant. Who knows how long, she's so damn skinny.

Grinding away.

CHARISSE
You eat breakfast yet?

She's talking to VINCENT (mostly VIN.) Whom she's riding. He's the guy from the pictures, although now in his 60s/70s. Beat-to-hell, raw, irreverent. He gave up on life years ago.

VINCENT
(puffing a cigarette)
You didn't eat?

CHARISSE
I forgot.

VINCENT
How do you forget to eat?

CHARISSE
It happens.

Vincent returns his gaze to...the TV on top of his dresser. An old Abbott & Costello movie is playing. Charisse adjusts herself, then continues grinding on Vincent. Then...

VINCENT
You want go to breakfast?

INT. NAT'S DINER - LATER

A greasy spoon. Vincent and Charisse are in a booth eating breakfast. Charisse is scarfing down Huevos Rancheros, like she hasn't eaten in days.

VINCENT
You're gonna get gas like that.

CHARISSE

I don't get gas.

VINCENT

You will when you're my age. I look at a burrito, I fart.

CHARISSE

Can get a pill for that.

VINCENT

Bastards have a pill for everything. That's a fact, lady. Killing us all, ten milligrams at a time.

Vincent sifts through his pill pouch. Pulls out a dozen or so...the day's dose.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Where's the water? Didn't I ask for water?

CHARISSE

Ask 'em again.

VINCENT

Coming here twenty years, still can't get their shit together.

Calling off to a Mexican server (JESUS.)

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Jesus. Aqua. Pills.

Jesus smiles, nods.

CHARISSE

I ain't never takin' me that many pills.

VINCENT

Just crack and meth. That's a better plan.

CHARISSE

Fuck you, Vin. Stay off my shit.

She reaches across the table for his toast.

CHARISSE (CONT'D)

You wan' your toast.

Jesus returns with a glass of water. Lots of ice.

JESUS

Here you go, Mr. Vincent.

VINCENT

Can you put more ice in it? I want
to make sure I choke while I'm
swallowing my poison.

Jesus is confused.

CHARISSE

He don't wan' no ice.

JESUS

Oh. Si.

VINCENT

Yeah. Oh, si. Just like everyday
I come in here. Water no ice.

No one really knows what to say. They've heard it all
before. Daily.

JESUS

Uno momento, Mr. Vincent.

Jesus walks off, nonplussed.

VINCENT

Uno momento. That's all they say
around here.

Vin takes a pill, swallows.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

What did Jesus say to the Mexicans
before he left?

CHARISSE

Don' know.

VINCENT

Don't do anything till I get back.

Charisse doesn't laugh.

CHARISSE

Talking for Jesus ain't right.

VINCENT

Really. From you?

Vin takes another pill. Swallows.

EXT. A BANK - DAY - LATER

Standard bank. Vin's car's parked outside. A Dodge
Duster in decent shape.

INT. THE BANK - CONTINUOUS

Vin's sitting across from a mortgage counselor, TERRY. He's reviewing paperwork.

VINCENT
(pointing)
That one there. Says the line's
been frozen.

Terry shuffles.

TERRY
Uh-huh. Got it. Yes. Let's
see...so...with these reverse
mortgages you can only borrow a
percentage of the equity you have
in the house.

VINCENT
I own the damn thing outright. 40
years.

TERRY
Yes. Yes. Well...you did. But
now, since you've been getting
payments from us for the last...
(searches the papers)
eight years...you've reached the
cash out limit.

VINCENT
The house is worth-

TERRY
It was worth. Whatever it was
worth. And I'm sure you know
housing prices have fallen
dramatically since the financial
crisis. Right. Unless you've been
living under a rock.

His attempt at humor...not appreciated.

VINCENT
You do stand-up?

Okay.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
I'd say keep your day job. But you
suck at that too.

TERRY
I'm sorry, Mr. Canatella...

Vin stands.

VINCENT

This is my life here, pal. I need that money.

TERRY

There's really nothing we can do, sir. It is what it is.

VINCENT

Everybody's says that now. You know what it means, "You're fucked, so stay fucked."

He walks off.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Closing my accounts tomorrow. You don't get my business another day.

INT. VIN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Vin labors into the car. Charisse is waiting in the passenger seat. He hands her a few twenties.

VINCENT

I'm a little tight right now. So.

Charisse counts it.

CHARISSE

What's that?

VINCENT

What's what?

CHARISSE

This shit ain't lay-a-way. I ain't no JC Pennies.

VINCENT

You know I'm good for it, Charisse. I always pay you.

Charisse looks him over.

CHARISSE

I'm not making like I used to Vin. Only a few freaks like the belly, awlright.

She gets out of the car.

CHARISSE (CONT'D)

Gotta save for maternity leave, asshole.

She heads off down the sidewalk.

VINCENT
See you next week.

CHARISSE
Extra twenty when you do.

Charisse moves on, bag in hand, adjusting her junk. Vin drives off.

A few NEIGHBORHOOD MEN whistle at Charisse. She yells over to them.

CHARISSE (CONT'D)
I ain't a dog, bitch.

EXT. THE BUCK - NIGHT

The local dive bar. SMOKERS outside litter the sidewalk. The windows are painted with "Happy New Year" greetings.

INT. THE BUCK - CONTINUOUS

Old neon. Older PATRONS. Vin sits at the bar next to LINDA and GUS, a weathered married couple in their late 60s. They're dressed to the nines. The hanging TV set plays New Year's Eve coverage from around the country.

They're all fairly lit...although Vin's in a class by himself. Very thick tongued.

LINDA
You have a good Christmas, Vin?

VINCENT
(slurring)
Best Christmas I ever had. No people. No presents. No bullshit.

LINDA
Ah, you don't mean that, Mister.

VINCENT
What do you know what I mean, Linda? You a psychic now?

GUS
Ay, ease up there, Vinny. We're just talking.

VINCENT
That's all you two ever do. You should get a talk show. The "Linda and Gus Just Fucking Talking Talk Show."

Vin flags the bartender, ROGER.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Rog. Another Maker's.

Roger steps over.

ROGER
We got three hours till the ball
drops there, Vin. Why don't we
give it a break for a minute.

VINCENT
Give what a break?

ROGER
The liquor.

VINCENT
You're not gonna serve me?

ROGER
For a minute.

VINCENT
You know how much money I've spent
in this dump over the years?

Roger tries to keep it smooth.

ROGER
Don't be like that, Vin. I'm
watching out for you here.

VINCENT
Watching out for me?

Vin stands, wobbles. He's drunker than even he realized.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
You serve poison to people
everyday. So they can die while
they're alive. Now you're watching
out...is that right?

Gus stands, tries to help Vin.

GUS
Let me give you a ride home.

VINCENT
Don't touch me, Gus. Don't touch
me. I'll drive home drunk like
I've done every night while Roger
here's been watching out for me.

Vin pushes free, walks to the door.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Happy New Year.

He's out.

EXT. THE BUCK - CONTINUOUS

Vin stumbles out the front door, past the SMOKERS. On the way to his car, he runs into a LEGLESS HOMELESS GUY (in a wheelchair) holding up a cup, looking for some change.

HOMELESS GUY
Couple bucks for a Veteran?

VINCENT
I'm a veteran, pal. Go get a fucking job. This country doesn't give a shit. Legs or no legs.

With that he knocks the cup from the man's hand. Coins go flying.

HOMELESS GUY
Hey, man. What's that about?!?

Vin walks away. Gets in his car.

HOMELESS GUY (CONT'D)
The meek shall inherit the earth,
my friend!

The Homeless Man collects the coins. Screaming at Vin all the time.

HOMELESS GUY (CONT'D)
Not the assholes. Asshole!

Vin drives off, peeling out.

EXT. VIN'S HOUSE - LATER

The Dodge Duster whips into the driveway. Hits the picket fence on the neighbor's border. Crash. It topples. Hits his own mailbox on the other side. Crash. It flies onto the lawn.

Vin shuts the car off. Sits for a minute. Then steps out and swerves to the toppled mailbox. Gets on all fours, opens the door, gets the mail.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

A RED PRINTED FINAL NOTICE BILL lands on a coffee table amongst dozens of bills and unopened letters. The header reads: Sunnyside Residence for the Elderly.

Vin puts his feet up on the pile of bills, watching TV from his ancient plastic wrapped couch. Coverage of the Times Square New Year's Eve Celebration plays.

Vin's cat, FELIX THE CAT, jumps onto his lap. Starts to pur.

VINCENT

There you are. Where'd you go
tonight, ha? Screwing that little
Tabby on the corner...

He rubs the cat all over. His only love.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

I bet you're hungry, aren't you?

He takes Felix in his arms, shuffles to the kitchen.

THE KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

The kitchen is trashed: dishes to China, mold, stacks of mail a decade old. Vin opens a can of gourmet cat food. Dumps it in a bowl. Felix waits patiently on the counter...the food arrives. He eats like there's no tomorrow.

Vin needs another drink. He holds his tumbler to the ice maker in the fridge door. It grinds. No ice. He opens the freezer door and grabs a glob of ice cubes stuck together, puts them on the counter.

Grabs a hammer from the junk drawer.

BANG. BANG. He smashes the ice into pieces, chips fly.

BANG! He hits his finger.

VINCENT

UGHHHH. Shit. AHHHH.

Vin stumbles with the pain. His foot gets ever so close to an ice chip on the tile floor...

Slip. Flip. Smack.

Vin flies up in the air, lands on the floor. Crack! His head hits the tile hard. He's out. Or dead.

Felix looks at his owner. Goes back to eating. He's seen it all before.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

TV insert. The ball is dropping in Times Square. 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Happy New Year. PEOPLE hug, kiss, celebrate.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. VIN'S HOUSE - THE NEXT MORNING

MEN screaming in Spanish. We pan away from Vin's house, over towards the source of the racket.

In the neighbor's driveway, a moving truck is backing into the drive and ripping tree limbs along the way. Vin's tree limbs. A LATIN MOVER is screaming instructions to the LATIN DRIVER.

LATIN MOVER
Alto! Alto! You hit the tree,
man. Come on!

LATIN DRIVER
Meda, I can't see it!

He notices the roof: half ripped off, peeled like a sardine can.

LATIN MOVER
You broke the roof! Ay Dios mio!

They fight on.

INT. KITCHEN - VIN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Vin's where we left him: face down on the kitchen floor. A small pool of blood sits stagnant under his face.

Felix the Cat moseys over. Starts pawing at Vin's head. He rustles.

VINCENT
I just fed you, pal. Get lost.

He groans. Tries to hold himself up.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Help me up, would you?

Vin sees the blood.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Ah, piss.

He feels his face, and for the first time we see it...he looks like a prize fighter after the twelfth round. A gash above his eye is the origin of the blood. It probably needs stitches. He'll never get them.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Felix, call 911.

Vin sits up. Felix jumps in his lap.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Thanks.

The yelling outside hits Vin's universe.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Tell them to shut up out there.

Felix lies down.

Vin sits there for a second, collects himself.

EXT. VIN'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Vin walks outside, searching for the commotion. He shields the sun from his eyes. The fighting Movers are still at it.

VINCENT

Hey! Hey! What the problem? This is a neighborhood. People are sleeping.

The Movers stop. Stare.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

You comprende?!

Nothing.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Habla English?

LATIN MOVER

We speak English, senor.

VINCENT

What the hell are you doing here?

Vin looks up, notices the tree ripped.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

What the?!! That's my tree you assholes hit?!

There's a large tree limb sitting on Vin's car and across the fence (which he knocked down last night.)

VINCENT (CONT'D)

And my fence! My damn car!?!?

Silence.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Do you speak English!?!?

Just then a car pulls up, parks in front of the house. A WOMAN in her late thirties steps out. This is MAGGIE, Vin's new neighbor. She'd be prettier if she weren't always so worried.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

I'm calling the cops.

Vin heads inside.

MAGGIE
Excuse me...

He turns.

VINCENT
You're excused.

MAGGIE
I'm Maggie. I guess I'm your new neighbor.

Really.

VINCENT
So.

MAGGIE
Yes. We're moving in today.

VINCENT
I noticed that. These idiots with you?

MAGGIE
They're with the moving company.

Maggie walks to the fence, stands on her side. Looks around.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
Oh, boy.

VINCENT
Oh, shit...more like it. That fence is twenty years old. The car's forty. And the tree's older than me.

MAGGIE
I'm really sorry. I don't know what to...this is not the way to meet.

She turns to the Movers.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
Did you guys do this?

VINCENT
Of course, they did it. What are you stupid? Look at the scene.

Maggie doesn't take kindly to being called stupid.

MAGGIE
Excuse me. There's no need to be rude. Okay. I'm just moving in here. I hired this company. Okay. Accidents happen.

A LITTLE BOY comes up to Maggie's side. This is OLIVER. Twelve. Frail. Four eyes. Painfully awkward and very sensitive. He's one of those invisible types.

VINCENT

Accidents happen. What're you a fucking adjuster?

Maggie puts her arm around Oliver.

MAGGIE

Do you mind, mister?

Vin looks at Oliver. Absorbs him.

VINCENT

(a little calmer)

I'm going to sue the moving company first. I suggest you call them and put them on notice. Otherwise, I'll sue you along with them.

Vin walks off.

MAGGIE

I'll call right now.

VINCENT

I'm getting the police over here to file a report.

He hits the front door. Oliver looks up at his mom.

OLIVER

That's our new neighbor.

MAGGIE

Yep.

OLIVER

It's gonna be a long life.

INT. MAGGIE & OLIVER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Oliver's bedroom. The room has a bed in it, little else. The evening ritual is in progress: bedtime book time. Although...Oliver is the one reading: "The Giving Tree." Maggie's on a beanbag on the floor, nursing a Chardonnay.

OLIVER

(reading)

"I wish that I could give you something, but I have nothing left." I am just an old stump. "I don't need very much now," said the boy. "Just a quiet place to sit and rest.

(MORE)

OLIVER (CONT'D)

I am very tired." "Well," said the tree, straightening herself up as much as she could, "Well, an old stump is good for sitting and resting. Come, Boy, sit down. Sit down and rest." And the boy did. And the tree was happy.

Maggie drinks her wine.

MAGGIE

God, that's depressing.

OLIVER

No, it's not. The old tree was made to give. That's why it was created. So to be able to give everything and have nothing left is the best life the tree could ever have.

MAGGIE

What're you some kind of philosopher now?

OLIVER

Maybe.

Maggie gets up. Tucks Oliver into bed.

MAGGIE

Need you catch the bus tomorrow.

OLIVER

It's my first day.

MAGGIE

Mine too. Can't be late.

Maggie kisses him good night. Goes to turn the light off.

OLIVER

Where's the bus line?

MAGGIE

Get on the internet in the morning. You're good at that. Good night, love.

OLIVER

Night.

She turns the light off.

Oliver settles into the darkness.

EXT. CITY STREET - THE NEXT MORNING

Bus stop. Maggie's old Volvo sits in the bus lane. Oliver's outside the door, leaning in the window. He's dressed in an obvious Catholic School uniform.

MAGGIE
You have your key?

OLIVER
Yes.

MAGGIE
Map?

OLIVER
Yes.

MAGGIE
What time you get out?

OLIVER
2:45.

MAGGIE
Straight home, 'kay. Start your homework.

OLIVER
Okay.

A bus pulls up behind Maggie.

MAGGIE
This might be yours. See you tonight.

OLIVER
(searching his pockets)
Ma...I don't know...if...

MAGGIE
I'm in the bus lane, Oliver. Be good. Okay. I don't need another ticket.

Maggie pulls off.

OLIVER
I don't know if I have-

But Maggie's gone...

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Enough money for lunch.

Oliver backs away from the curb, as the bus pulls in.

INT. BUS - LATER

Riding the bus. Oliver's sandwiched between an OLD JEWISH LADY and a PIERCED HIPSTER. He's looking at a Mapquest print out.

INSERT - THE MAP: AN "X" MARKS THE SCHOOL'S LOCATION - ST. FRANCIS de SALES.

EXT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - LATER

PACKS OF STUDENTS mosey towards the campus. A classic brick and stone Catholic School.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

St. Francis de Sales Catholic School is just like any other middle school. Diverse. Modern. Noisy. Dozens of KIDS crowd the hallways, dig through lockers, socialize with FRIENDS.

Oliver can't open his locker. He tries the combination again...no dice. He looks around for help...no one makes eye contact.

The tardy bell chimes.

Oliver gives up, drags all his stuff with him. Rushes down the hallway.

INT. MR. CRESPI'S CLASSROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Religious Studies class. Mr. Crespi stands in front of THIRTY CHATTY PRETEENS. Crespi's in his late twenties, preppy and full of new teacher idealism. Oliver stands at his side, he could pass out.

MR. CRESPI

Settle down. I know it's hard to come back to school after three weeks of vaca...but your education must continue. Believe me, you need it.

The kids settle in.

MR. CRESPI (CONT'D)

This is Oliver. He's joining us mid-stream here at St. Francis. We're happy to have him. Aren't we...?

The CLASS speaks in unison, albeit bored and cynical.

ENTIRE CLASS

Welcome to St. Francis, Oliver.

MR. CRESPI
 Such genuine caring. Okay, Oliver,
 why don't you lead us in morning
 prayer?

Shit. Oliver is frozen. The class stares.

MR. CRESPI (CONT'D)
 Everyone does it sooner or later.

Oliver's turning red. He leans in to Mr. Crespi, whispers something in his ear.

OLIVER
 I think I'm Jewish.

MR. CRESPI
 Okay. That's good.
 (to the class)
 Oliver thinks he's Jewish.

A few KIDS speak out.

RANDOM KIDS
 (on top of each other)
 So am I. I'm Buddhist. There is
 no God.

Mr. Crespi raises his hands before it gets out of control.

MR. CRESPI
 I heard that last one. You get an
 automatic "F" for the course.

Laughs. These kids love Mr. Crespi.

MR. CRESPI (CONT'D)
 We celebrate all religions in this
 classroom. That's why we're
 called...

The kids complete:

ENTIRE CLASS
 (with fun sarcasm)
 Religions of the World, with Mr.
 Cary Crespi.

MR. CRESPI
 Bravo. Now, I happen to be
 Catholic, which is the very best
 religion in the world. Because we
 have the most rules. But some of
 us are Buddhist, Agnostic, Baptist,
 Presbyterian, Christian, and "I
 don't know." Which seems to be the
 fastest growing religion on the
 planet. So...now we have Oliver.
 (MORE)

MR. CRESPI (CONT'D)
 Who "thinks he's Jewish." Which is
 a new one for us as well. But...it
 doesn't preclude you from morning
 prayer duty. Bow your heads...

Heads down. Oliver has no idea where to begin. Crespi
 whispers to him:

MR. CRESPI (CONT'D)
 Say anything you want. Doesn't
 have to be special.

Oliver bows his head.

OLIVER
 Dear...

Silence.

MR. CRESPI
 (whisper)
 God...etc, etc.

OLIVER
 Dear God. Thank you.

More silence.

MR. CRESPI
 (whisper)
 Amen.

OLIVER
 Amen.

The class repeats.

ENTIRE CLASS
 Amen.

Oliver breathes. Mr. Crespi smiles at him.

MR. CRESPI
 You made it. Go grab your seat.

Oliver walks to his desk.

MR. CRESPI (CONT'D)
 Let's wipe the dust off that
 textbook, young ones. Chapter
 twelve. Catholic Saints.

Books shuffle. Pages turn. Oliver sits down. Beyond
 embarrassed.

EXT. SANTA ANITA RACE TRACK - DAY

Horse track. Shitty cars litter the lot.

TRACKSIDE - MOMENTS LATER

A TRUMPETER sounds the BUGLE CALL as JOCKEY'S on HORSES settle in their stalls. The gates open...and they're off.

Vin's sitting in "his" booth. Eating lunch. Drinking. He's always drinking.

VINCENT
Come on. Come on. Dig in.

The horses fly around the track.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Dig. One time. One damn time.

And just like that...Vincent's horse...loses.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Son of a bitch.

He crumples up his race form. Throws it on the floor. It lands at a MAN'S FEET.

MAN (O.S.)
No need to get pissy, Vin. You lose all the time. Should be comfortable by now.

Vincent looks up and sees...Zucko. His bookie. Dirty fingernails. Hairy eyeballs.

VINCENT
Yeah. Rough day.

Zucko sits. Takes a pull of Vin's Maker's.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
You mind?

ZUCKO
You owe me, Vin. I'm thirsty.

VINCENT
I don't have it right now, kid.
Got a little problem I'm working out.

ZUCKO
Me too. You.

VINCENT
Just need a little time, you know.

ZUCKO
You think our past history buys you some grace. It don't. I gotta deal with others. Right. So...how long?

VINCENT

A month.

ZUCKO

You're funny, Vin. I always loved your jokes. They kill me.

Zucko drinks the rest of Vin's Makers.

ZUCKO (CONT'D)

Split the difference. Ya got two weeks.

Zucko stands.

ZUCKO (CONT'D)

I hear "Lucky By Numbers" is the inside on the fifth. But you got bad luck, right. So...go the other way.

He leaves. Vin pushes his lunch aside. Appetite gone.

INT. RACETRACK - BAR - LATER

Vin's standing at the bar watching another race on the hanging TV set. Maker's Mark at his lips.

VINCENT

Mother of mercy. Come on. Run.
Run...

The HORSES round the home stretch.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - GYMNASIUM - DAY

Gym class. Rope climbing. Oliver's in mid-climb. Well...he's barely off the ground, beat-red and shaking from the straining. On the rope next to him, and damn near the top, ROBERT OZINSKI, the school bully, climbs like he's a baboon. As a-matter-of-fact, he looks like one.

KIDS all around scream, cheer, egg the racers on.

COACH MITCHELL stands over the competition, whistle in his mouth.

Ozinski grabs the flag at the top of the climb. Coach blows the whistle.

COACH MITCHELL

Alright. Good job, Ozinski.

Ozinski slides down the rope lighting fast. Coach taps Oliver on the shoulder. Yep, he's only that far off the ground.

COACH MITCHELL (CONT'D)
We're done.

Oliver's mortified. Kids run off towards the lockers.

COACH MITCHELL (CONT'D)
You can let go now.

He looks down. About a one foot drop.

OLIVER
Okay.

He drops to the mat.

COACH MITCHELL
Go get changed.

Oliver walks away, in the wrong direction.

COACH MITCHELL (CONT'D)
It's the other way. Those doors.

He stops, looks.

COACH MITCHELL (CONT'D)
(pointing)
Over there.

Oliver moves off.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Oliver enters the locker room. Most of the KIDS are fully dressed already, and leaving. Ozinski starts heckling the moment he sees Oliver.

OZINSKI
There's the strong man.

Laughs. One of Ozinski's buddies (BROOKLYN) chimes in.

BROOKLYN
"I think I'm Jewish."

More laughs. Oliver takes a seat in front of his locker.

OLIVER
My name is Oliver.

OZINSKI
(like a retard)
My name is Oliver.

Just then Coach walks in.

COACH MITCHELL
I'm not hearing what I think I'm
hearing. Am I?

Silence.

COACH MITCHELL (CONT'D)
We don't do that bully crap here.
This is a Catholic School,
knuckleheads. We're kind and
tolerant to everyone. Right?

Silence.

COACH MITCHELL (CONT'D)
Right?

ALL THE KIDS
Yes, Coach Mitchell.

COACH MITCHELL
Go on. Get to class.

Exodus.

COACH MITCHELL (CONT'D)
You alright?

Oliver nods.

COACH MITCHELL (CONT'D)
Double time it or you'll be late.

Oliver nods again. Coach walks off.

He opens his locker. It's empty. His pants,
uniform...everything's gone.

OLIVER
Shit.

EXT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - SIDEWALKS - LATER

School's out. KIDS everywhere: jumping in cars, riding
bikes, walking home.

It's easy to spot Oliver in the crowd, he's the only
student wearing short gym shorts, a tank top and
sneakers. And...it's damn cold.

As expected, STUDENTS comment, laugh, text, chide. It's
not been a good first day for Oliver.

He reaches the crosswalk. Looks up at the street sign,
it doesn't look vaguely familiar. He crosses anyway.

MONTAGE OF OLIVER WALKING - LOST

-- Oliver crosses a major Boulevard. Cars everywhere.

-- He stops in the middle of a block. Looks around. Then...turns around and goes back in the direction from whence he came.

-- Oliver walks in front of a row of houses. A DOG tears up and jumps on the picket fence, barking. Oliver runs off.

-- Oliver reads a street sign. Thinks. Walks on.

INT. VIN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Vin's driving through major traffic. He pulls up next to a bus load of PUBLIC SCHOOL KIDS. They stare at him. He stares back. The light turns green, the bus pulls off.

Then in tandem...the WHOLE WINDOW ROW OF KIDS flip him off. Damn kids. Vin lights a cigarette.

OLIVER WALKING - CONTINUOUS

Finally, Oliver recognizes his block. He runs towards what he thinks is his house...looks...that's it. He's home.

EXT. MAGGIE & OLIVER'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Oliver, at the front door, reaches into his pocket for the key. Damn. He's not wearing his pants. His key and phone were in the pockets of his stolen uniform.

He could cry. But he's not the type. He slumps down in resignation and sits on the cold concrete steps.

VIN'S DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Vin's car pulls in haphazardly. He runs over some of the toppled fence. Curses, with the windows up...so it sounds like Charlie Brown's parents.

Vin climbs out of the car. Walks to the fallen mailbox, lowers himself onto the lawn, pulls mail out until...

OLIVER

Sir?

Vin hears something. Stops, looks around. Confused.

VINCENT

Take me, God. Don't play with me.

Oliver steps forward, down the walk.

OLIVER
It's me, sir.

Vin squints. Finally sees the kid.

VINCENT
Yeah. What?

OLIVER
I was wondering if I could use your phone?

VINCENT
My phone?

OLIVER
Yes.

VINCENT
In my house?

OLIVER
Yes.

VINCENT
For what?

OLIVER
To call my mom. I'm locked out. I was in gym class and these kids took my pants and I had my-

Vin cuts him off.

VINCENT
I don't need the whole story.

Vin stares at the little shit. Pulls himself up off the lawn.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
One call.

Oliver can't hear him.

OLIVER
What's that, you said, sir?

Vin walks away.

VINCENT
(over his shoulder)
I said come and make your call.

Vin disappears into the house. Oliver walks across the lawn and through the demolished fence into Vin's yard.

INT. VIN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Oliver's on an old rotary phone in the kitchen. Vin's fixing a Maker's Mark in the background.

Ring. Ring. Ring. Voicemail.

OLIVER

Hi, Mom. I...ah...lost my key for the house. So, I'm at the old guy's next door.

Oliver turns to Vin.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Sir...what's your name?

VINCENT

Vincent.

OLIVER

Vincent.

(whispers)

The mean one...

The conversation trails...

VIN'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Vin's sitting in his La-Z-Boy, facing Oliver on the couch. Felix the Cat is sitting in Vin's lap, staring at Oliver. They don't get much company around here.

The silence lasts forever. And ever.

A little longer.

Then...

VINCENT

What's your name?

OLIVER

Oliver.

More silence.

VINCENT

Little cold for shorts, don't you think?

OLIVER

It's a long story, sir.

VINCENT

I'm sure it is.

Silence.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
I don't like "sir."

OLIVER
Sorry, sir.

Hmm. The phone rings.

THE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Vin picks up the phone.

VINCENT
Yes.

INT. MISSION HILLS HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS

The CAT scan lab. Maggie's in scrubs, whispering in the corner of the room. ANOTHER NURSE is manning the controls, as a PATIENT (seen through the glass) is slid into the tube.

MAGGIE
This is Maggie, Oliver's mom. Is this Vincent?

INTERCUT WITH VIN IN THE KITCHEN

VINCENT
Your kid's here.

MAGGIE
Yes. I just got his message. Is that all right?

VINCENT
Is what all right?

MAGGIE
That he stays there?

VINCENT
Stays here. Like what, stays here?

MAGGIE
I'm at work and...we got a few more cases. So, I don't get off for a couple of hours and I can't get him the key anyway. I'm in a little bit of a bind right now...

VINCENT
You want me to baby-sit?

MAGGIE
Well, he's hardly a baby. He won't bother you. He'll just do his homework.

Oliver walks into the kitchen.

OLIVER
Sir?

Vin holds up his hand, shushes Oliver.

VINCENT
What're you paying?

MAGGIE
Excuse me?

VINCENT
For baby-sitting. I'm not a
philanthropy.

MAGGIE
Ah. Okay...ten dollars an hour.

VINCENT
Twelve.

Maggie is amazed.

MAGGIE
Fine. Great. Can I talk to him?

Vin puts the phone down on the counter, walks off.

VINCENT
It's for you.

Oliver walks to the phone, picks it up.

OLIVER
Hi, ma...

VIN'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Oliver and Vin are sitting on the couch watching an old Abbott & Costello movie. Vin's smoking, drinking.

Felix the Cat is sitting in Oliver's lap. Vin's not thrilled.

VINCENT
He doesn't like many people.

OLIVER
I'm good with animals, sir.

VINCENT
Yeah. He doesn't usually like
people who say they're good with
animals either.

Oliver laughs at the movie. It's rare.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
You've never seen Abbott &
Costello?

OLIVER
No, sir. Are they old?

VINCENT
They're dead. That's the oldest
you can be.

OLIVER
Or the youngest. Time freezes when
you die.

Hmm.

VINCENT
Where'd you learn that?

OLIVER
A book.

A beat.

VINCENT
It's dinner time. You hungry or
something?

Oliver looks at Vin, studies his face.

OLIVER
A little, sir.

Vincent looks annoyed. He's the kind of guy that gets annoyed when someone wants something, even if he offered.

VINCENT
Figures.

KITCHEN - VIN'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Vin's scouring the kitchen, looking for something to feed the kid. All he finds is a can of Spam and a package of Saltines. He cracks the Spam open, dumps it on a dirty plate and circles it with the stale crackers.

VIN'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Vin's eating a Spam cracker sandwich. Watching the movie. Oliver's holding Felix the Cat in his lap...feeding him Spam. And eating a Spam cracker sandwich himself.

The doorbell rings.

VINCENT
Probably your mother.

OLIVER
Probably, sir.

Oliver doesn't move.

VINCENT
I guess I'll get that.

OLIVER
Thank you, sir.

Vin aches his way out of the recliner.

THE FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Vin peeks out the peep hole, then opens the door
for...Maggie.

MAGGIE
Hi. Vincent.

VINCENT
Yep.

He doesn't instinctively let her in.

MAGGIE
Thank you so much for watching
Oliver. I just started a new job
and...

VINCENT
I don't need the whole story.

MAGGIE
Ok. Right.

Maggie digs in her purse and pulls out some cash.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
Here...three hours. Twelve dollars
an hour-

VINCENT
Thirty six.

MAGGIE
Yes, I know.

She hands him two twenties.

VINCENT
I don't have change.

Of course he doesn't.

MAGGIE
That's...fine.

Vin looks at the money, puts it in his shirt's breast pocket.

VINCENT
Where's his father?

That's personal.

MAGGIE
Well. That's a long story...see...

VINCENT
Don't worry about it then.

A beat. We hear Oliver laughing in the background.
Maggie smiles.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
How come you don't have anyone to
watch him after school?

MAGGIE
We just moved in-

VINCENT
I was there.

MAGGIE
Right.

VINCENT
You gonna fix my fence? And the
tree?

MAGGIE
Yes. I just haven't had a minute
to get-

VINCENT
Just give me the cash and I'll
worry about it.

MAGGIE
Oh. Okay. How much?

VINCENT
I'll figure out something fair.

A beat.

MAGGIE
Let me know.

VINCENT
I can the watch the kid too. After
school for a few hours. Same
price.

Maggie is speechless.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
I'll do eleven bucks an hour if you supply the snacks. Little shit ate all my Spam.

INT. MAGGIE & OLIVER'S HOUSE - LATER

Maggie and Oliver sit at a tiny round table, off the kitchen. Oliver is chowing down on a frozen dinner.

MAGGIE
You ate at....ah....Vincent's house, no?

OLIVER
Can we buy some Spam, ma?

MAGGIE
Sure.

OLIVER
It's delicious.

MAGGIE
Remind me next time we're at the store.

OLIVER
Okay.

MAGGIE
You like him?

OLIVER
Who?

MAGGIE
Vincent.

OLIVER
He's interesting. In an old, grouchy sort of way.

MAGGIE
That he is. You know, he offered to watch you after school.

OLIVER
He did?

MAGGIE
Yep. I was thinking maybe that's not such a horrible idea. It's right next door. Would save me having to find a baby-sitter.

OLIVER
You'll be home though. Right.

MAGGIE

Late mostly, baby. We have to eat.
I have to work. Your
father's...not helpful. The new
school isn't free. Neither is
Spam.

Oliver eats, thinks.

OLIVER

I guess he's too old to be
dangerous and not too old to be too
dangerous either. If you know what
I mean.

MAGGIE

That's what I thought. We'll give
it a whirl. See what happens.
'Kay.

OLIVER

Sure.

Then...

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Ma, are we still Jewish?

INT. MR. CRESPI'S CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Crespi, teaching.

MR. CRESPI

What is a saint?

Hands go up. Never Oliver's. He's doodling.

MR. CRESPI (CONT'D)

Rachele.

A tiny ASIAN GIRL answers.

RACHELE

Individuals who display and act out
of exceptional holiness.

Damn.

MR. CRESPI

Okay. That's pretty perfect,
Rachele. Thank you. Who can name
a saint?

Hands.

MR. CRESPI (CONT'D)

Keesha.

KEESHA
St. Michael the Archangel.

MR. CRESPI
Great. He's a classic. Jeremiah?

A LATIN BOY answers.

JERMIAH
St. Jude.

MR. CRESPI
Good one. What's he known for?

JERMIAH
He has a hospital.

Laughs.

MR. CRESPI
He does. Okay...anyone know a
modern day saint? Bridgette?

A tall, athletic girl pipes up.

BRIDGETTE
Mother Theresa.

MR. CRESPI
Excellent. So...saints are human
beings we celebrate for their
dedication and commitment to other
human beings. For their
sacrifices. Their work to make
society better for those around
them and those that'll come after
them. I believe there are saints
all around us today. They might
never be recognized as such by a
religion, but they're every bit as
important to our society as the
saints that are in our textbook.

A KID calls out from the back.

ANOTHER KID
You're a saint, Mr. Crespi.

MR. CRESPI
Yes. I am. Thank you.

Crespi turns on the Smart Board. The title on the
presentation: "Saints Among Us."

MR. CRESPI (CONT'D)
Our semester project is thus aptly
named: "Saints Among Us." You're
going to research an actual
Catholic saint that inspires you.
(MORE)

MR. CRESPI (CONT'D)
St. Jude, St. Michael, Mother
Theresa, etc, etc...and compare
them to a person in your life,
someone you actually know, that you
feel portrays the qualities of this
saint...

Rachele raises her hand.

MR. CRESPI (CONT'D)
Rachele?

KEESHA
My father is like a saint.

MR. CRESPI
Ah...thank you...no family members.
That's too easy.

Oliver scratches out some doodling, a word: "Family."

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Oliver's walking home. He looks like an ant. Small, steady, undetectable. He turns the corner and heads down a residential street.

RESEIDENTIAL STREET - CONTINUOUS

As Oliver rounds the corner, he damn near runs into FOUR KIDS ON BIKES. It's Ozinski, Brooklyn and TWO OTHER JERKS.

OZINSKI
Hey...it's dip shit.

BROOKLYN
You live in this neighborhood?

Oliver doesn't talk.

OZINSKI
I got detention cause a you.
Asshole.

Ozinski runs his bike tire up unto Oliver's foot. Holds it down.

OLIVER
You got detention because you took
my pants.

OZINSKI
How do you know I took your pants?

He puts weight on the front tire, squeezing Oliver's foot.

OLIVER
Please...that hurts.

OZINSKI
That's what you get for being a
narc.

OLIVER
I have to get home.

BROOKLYN
You gonna cry?

Brooklyn runs his bike up on the other foot. Oliver falls down on his ass. The boys laugh, taunt Oliver on the ground.

Just then Vin's car pulls up to the curb in front of the scene.

VINCENT
What're you little shit heels
doing?

They back away from Oliver.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
That you Robert Ozinski?

OZINSKI
No, sir. My name's John.

VINCENT
Bullshit, you little prick. You're Reesa's kid. Reesa Ozinski. I recognize you from your fat Polish nose.

Vin gets out of the car.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Just like your prick father's nose.

Vin reaches under his seat and grabs a tire iron.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Apple doesn't fall too far from the rotten tree.

The kid's panic at the sight of the tire iron. They haul ass out of there, riding down the sidewalk.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Get out of here, you little pencil dicks! I'll call your mother when I get home!

Vin walks up to Oliver. Looks down at him. Checks his watch.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
You're a little early. I'll charge
your mother an extra hour.

Vin offers Oliver his hand. He accepts it, pulls up onto
his feet. Vin heads to the car. Oliver waits.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
You need a paper invitation?

Oliver joins him.

INT. VIN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Driving. A large basket of clean laundry sits between
them.

VINCENT
You got two choices in life. Fight
or run. I'm guessing you're not
fast.

OLIVER
Not particularly, sir.

VINCENT
When I was your age I could run a
half-an-hour in twenty minutes.

Oliver doesn't get it. Vin lights a cigarette.

OLIVER
I'm allergic, sir.

VINCENT
To what?

OLIVER
Cigarette smoke.

Vin rolls down his window, hangs his cigarette outside.
Keeps smoking.

VINCENT
Your father never taught you how to
take care of yourself.

OLIVER
No, sir. He's a pacifist.

VINCENT
This country wasn't founded by tree
huggers, kid. That's for sure.
You gotta stand up for yourself or
you get mowed down.

OLIVER
I'm small, sir. If you haven't
noticed.

VINCENT
So was Hitler.

OLIVER
That's not a great comparison.

VINCENT
Making a point, fellas. Small means nothing. It's what you got in here.

Vin points to his head.

OLIVER
Or here, sir.

Oliver points to his heart. Vin looks at the little fellas. This kid's interesting.

VINCENT
I don't like, sir. Told you that.

OLIVER
Sorry...Vincent.

They drive on.

EXT. SUNNYSIDE RESIDENCE FOR THE ELDERLY - DAY

An expensive, well-kept convalescent center. Vin's car pulls in and parks in a handicapped spot.

INT. SUNNYSIDE RESIDENCE FOR THE ELDERLY - CONTINUOUS

Vin and Oliver are walking down the hallway. Oliver's carrying the laundry basket.

VINCENT
Don't talk when we get in there.

OLIVER
Where are we going?

VINCENT
Practice not talking now.

Vin turns a corner.

PATIENT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A WOMAN lies in a bed, watching TV. This is Vin's wife. SANDY. She has advanced Alzheimer's. Vin and Oliver enter.

SANDY
There you are doctor.

VINCENT
Nope. It's me, Vincent.

Sandy looks at him, no idea.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Just dropping off the laundry.

Vin directs Oliver.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Put that stuff in the drawers over
there.

Oliver complies.

SANDY
Today's my birthday.

VINCENT
Okay. Well, happy birthday.

SANDY
They say I'm getting out of here
next week.

They don't.

VINCENT
That's great.

This would be sad for Vin...but it's been several years
now. Plus, he's thickly calloused.

SANDY
(re: Oliver)
Is that your grandson?

VINCENT
Nope. Just a kid.

Sandy looks him over. Changes like the wind.

SANDY
Can you tell them I don't like the
green beans when they put the bacon
bits chopped up in there with them.
It's too greasy for me.

VINCENT
You bet, Sandy.

NURSE'S STATION - LATER

Vin's talking with Sandy's nurse, ANA, a kind-eyed
Filipino lady in her forties. She hands him a bundle of
laundry.

ANA

You know, we can do the laundry here, Mr. Vincent. We have the service.

VINCENT

Gives me something to do.

Vin hands the laundry off to Oliver.

ANA

Who's your helper?

VINCENT

He's twelve bucks an hour.

OLIVER

It's Oliver actually.

ANA

Nice to meet you, Oliver. I'm Ana.

Vin heads off. Stops.

VINCENT

She doesn't like the green beans.

ANA

I'll make a note, Mr. Vincent.

Ana writes in a pad.

VINCENT

Broccoli's good. She always liked broccoli.

Vin walks off. Oliver catches up.

INT. VINCENT'S GARAGE - LATER

Oliver's standing in a fight stance across from Vin, who's wearing a bandana, holding a Maker's Mark in one hand while leaning against a hanging body bag.

Oliver punches the bag. It's like a butterfly kiss.

VINCENT

That's just going to get you beat up real bad.

OLIVER

I don't want to fight anyway.

VINCENT

No one wants to fight, kid. You think I wanted to go to war?

(MORE)

VINCENT (CONT'D)
You think an eighteen year old
wants to sit in a rice paddy while
bullets are screaming past his ears
on both sides?

OLIVER
When was that?

VINCENT
Vietnam.

OLIVER
You were there?

VINCENT
No, I'm imagining it.

Vincent steps back, thinks.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
All right. I'll teach you one
thing, it's probably the only hope
you got. If you do it right,
you'll break his nose with one
shot.

Oliver is rattled.

OLIVER
Break his nose.

VINCENT
Don't worry, you won't do it right.

EXT. MISSION HILLS HOSPITAL - NIGHT - LATER

Maggie's walking to her car after work. She's exhausted.
Just as she puts her key in the door...a MAN walks up.

MAN
Maggie?

She turns, clutches her purse.

MAGGIE
I have mace.

MAN
I have papers.

The man holds up an envelope. Moves closer.

MAN (CONT'D)
LA County Family court.

He hands the papers to Maggie. She hates taking them.

MAN (CONT'D)
As they say, "You've been served."

He walks off. Maggie leans against the car.

EXT. VIN'S HOUSE - LATER

It's late. Maggie knocks on Vin's door.

INT. VIN'S HOUSE - LATER

Vin's leading Maggie into the den.

VINCENT

He fell asleep an hour ago.

MAGGIE

I'm sorry, I got tied up at the hospital...

VINCENT

They tie up a lot people over there. Some against their will.

In the den, we find Oliver asleep on the couch. Felix the Cat is curled up on top of him.

MAGGIE

I'll pay you of course for the extra time.

VINCENT

I wasn't offering a rebate.

Maggie scoops up a sleeping Oliver.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

What you been crying about?

It's very obvious that Maggie's been bawling.

MAGGIE

It's a long story.

VINCENT

What's the one liner?

MAGGIE

Oliver's father wants custody.

Vin thinks.

VINCENT

There goes my job security.

Maggie smiles.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

That could've gone either way.

EXT. THE PINK CADILLAC - STRIP CLUB - THE NEXT DAY

Classic dumpy titty-bar in a rundown industrial strip.
Vin's sitting in his car in the parking lot. Waiting.

Charisse eventually comes rolling out a side door. Spots
Vin. Walks his way.

INT. VIN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Charisse hops in, pissed.

VINCENT
Who pissed in your Cheerios?

CHARISSE
Can't dance no more.

VINCENT
That a surprise?

CHARISSE
Screw you, Vin. I need the money.

VINCENT
The self-employed racket is a tough
road, I'll say that.

CHARISSE
I should sue 'em. It's...what's
that...discrimination. Against
pregnant women and shit.

VINCENT
I think you gotta case.

CHARISSE
This baby's costing me a lotta
jack.

VINCENT
Not as much as he's gonna cost ya.

CHARISSE
He's not a he.

VINCENT
It's a she?

CHARISSE
It better be. I don' want no boy.

VINCENT
You don't know?

CHARISSE
Know what?

VINCENT
The sex of the baby?

CHARISSE
How I know that, Vin? I'm some kinda psychic and shit.

INT. OBGYN'S EXAMINING ROOM - LATER

Charisse has her legs up in stirrups, as an ULTRASOUND TECH squirts gel on her belly in preparation for an ultrasound.

CHARISSE
That thing's cold.

ULTRASOUND TECH
Sorry. Forgot to tell you that.
It's cold. But just for a minute.

The Tech places the wand on Charisse's belly.

ULTRASOUND TECH (CONT'D)
I'm gonna move this around here and take some pictures of the baby.

CHARISSE
That thing takes pictures?

ULTRASOUND TECH
Well. Sort of.

CHARISSE
This is like Star Trek shit, man.

ULTRASOUND TECH
It's pretty cool. See...there...
right...there. That's the head.

Charisse looks at the monitor.

CHARISSE
That's a big head.

ULTRASOUND TECH
Biggest part at this age.

Adjusts the wand.

ULTRASOUND TECH (CONT'D)
And these are her little legs.

CHARISSE
Her?

ULTRASOUND TECH
Oh, it's a girl. You didn't know?
I'm sorry, did you not want to know?

Charisse could cry.

CHARISSE
Na. I wanna know.

INT. OBGYN'S LOBBY - LATER

Vin and Charisse are checking out with a MEDICAL RECEPTIONIST. Vin is digging through his wallet. He pulls out a tattered insurance card.

VINCENT
Here you go.

The receptionist takes the card. Inspects.

MEDICAL RECEPTIONIST
Is...she...on your insurance as..?

VINCENT
A dependant.

CHARISSE
I'm his dawter.

Really.

VINCENT
Adopted. Obviously.

MEDICAL RECEPTIONIST
Oh. Okay. I'll just need to collect your deductible.

Vin digs through his wallet.

VINCENT
What's that run?

MEDICAL RECEPTIONIST
(inspects the card)
Looks like twenty dollars.

Charisse puts her head on Vin's shoulder.

CHARISSE
Thanks, Poppy.

Vin forks over a twenty.

VINCENT
You owe me for the deductible.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - GYMNASIUM - CONTINUOUS

Dodge ball in progress. TWO TEAMS OF BOYS compete, throwing the ball as hard as they can at each other.

Coach Mitchell's on the opposite side of the gym, working on basketball drills with the GIRLS.

Ozinski and Brooklyn are mowing down their OPPONENTS one after another...until only Oliver remains. He's hard to hit, he's so tiny.

Ozinski has the ball.

OZINSKI

Get ready for a red ass, shit bag.

He runs. Throws. Oliver jumps. The ball bounces under him and hits the wall, heading back towards Ozinski.

Oliver runs for the ball, as fast as his fawn legs will take him. It's like slow motion.

At the half line...the ball is feet away from crossing back onto Ozinski's side. Oliver dives for it.

Thud. He lands hard on the gym floor, his face smacks the half line.

Ozinski grabs the ball. Smiles. Runs toward Oliver.

OZINSKI (CONT'D)

Say your prayers, you little pussy.

Ozinski winds up. Oliver stands, trying to get the hell out of there.

Ozinski's a few feet away. He hurls the ball at Oliver's mug...

Thwwapppppp. Right on the kisser. This is bad. Oliver's glasses fly off his head. He crashes to the floor in a heap. Both hands over his face.

Silence. You could hear a pin drop. KIDS gather around Oliver, concerned, curious, scared. He's not moving.

Even Ozinski looks worried. He walks over, closer to Oliver.

A whistle blows. Coach Mitchell runs across the gym towards the scene. He gets there just as Oliver lifts his head, uncovers his face. Blood everywhere.

Coach Mitchell pushes through the crowd. Ozinski backs up. Out of nowhere...Oliver screams, a guttural kind of attack call.

OLIVER

You mother fucking, ass-face, dick bag...

He has the wildest, animalistic look in his eyes...and he's running directly at Ozinski.

The entire class is frozen in disbelief...what the hell is he doing?

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Asshole, cock sucking, son-of-a-whore...

With his hand in some sort of death grip-blow, he hits Ozinski square in the nose...and up Driving his schnoz into his brain.

Splickkkk! Ozinski's nose explodes with blood. He falls flat backwards, passing out along the way.

Thud. Ozinski smacks down on the gym floor. Game over.

EXT. VIN'S HOUSE - LATER

Oliver runs up to the house, bangs on the front door.

Waits. Bangs again. Waits.

Finally...Charisse opens the door, wearing one of Vin's old robes.

CHARISSE
Yeah.

OLIVER
Who are you?

CHARISSE
Who are you?

OLIVER
I'm Oliver. Vin watches me after school.

CHARISSE
Why you gotta bang so many times?

OLIVER
He's hard of hearing.

Vin screams from within.

VINCENT
Let him in.

CHARISSE
Who you yelling at!?

Charisse opens the door wide for Oliver.

CHARISSE (CONT'D)
Always yelling at somebody.

INT. VIN'S HOUSE - THE DEN - LATER

Vin and Charisse are sitting on the couch. Oliver's standing in front of them, his eyeglasses are patched together with tape.

VINCENT
(a tinge of pride)
You broke his nose.

OLIVER
Yes, sir. I think so. There was
blood everywhere. You should have
seen it.

VINCENT
You must have hit it just right.
Let me see.

Oliver demonstrates: the hand position, the stance.

CHARISSE
You taught him that?

VINCENT
He needs to learn how to defend
himself. He's a runt.

Charisse stands, had enough.

CHARISSE
Where's my cash?

VINCENT
It's on the dresser.

CHARISSE
Last week?

VINCENT
It's all there.

Charisse walks off.

CHARISSE
You shouldn't be teaching nobody
nothing.

She's gone.

VINCENT
That went over like a fart in a
spacesuit.

OLIVER
Who is she?

VINCENT
A prostitute.

OLIVER

What's that?

Vin lights a cigarette.

VINCENT

One of the more honest ways to make
a living.

INT. SANTA ANITA RACE TRACK - DAY - LATER

Trackside. Oliver and Vin are sitting in Vin's booth
studying the race program.

OLIVER

What's 20 slash 1?

VINCENT

Those are the odds. Some bookie
outta Vegas thinks that horse has a
one in twenty chance of winning.

OLIVER

And what do you get if he does?

VINCENT

Twenty times your money.

OLIVER

That's a good deal.

VINCENT

Sure. In theory. You feeling
lucky?

OLIVER

I think so.

VINCENT

Go with the trifecta.

OLIVER

English, sir.

VINCENT

You pick three horses to finish 1-2-
3, in the order they're gonna come
in. High risk, high reward.

OLIVER

Sounds highly improbable.

VINCENT

If you're gonna gamble, you might
as well have the chance to win big.

Oliver scans the form, thinks. Then...

OLIVER
 Wishful Thinking. Sweeter Lady.
 Champagne Flute. One, two, three.

Vin pulls some cash from his wallet.

VINCENT
 Let's do it.

They're off to the betting window.

THE FINISH LINE - LATER

The HORSES fly across. One. Two. Three. We whip over to Vin and Oliver standing at the rail, screaming like school kids. They hit it! The trifecta. For the first time we see Vin's smile. It's the kind of smile that lights up a life.

INT. THE BUCK - NIGHT - LATER

Celebration dinner. Vin and Oliver are bellied up to the bar, eating a feast of bar food. Burgers, fries, mozzarella sticks, onion rings, Coke, a few Maker's Marks. Oliver's shaking a new bottle of ketchup, it's futile.

VINCENT
 Give me that.

Vin grabs a knife. Pokes it in the bottle's spout.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
 You gotta pop the cherry.

The ketchup starts to flow.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
 Flows with ease.

Oliver takes the ketchup.

OLIVER
 What's the cherry?

VINCENT
 Another day, squirt. Remind me.
 Or forget to remind me, even
 better.

Oliver slurps his Coke to the bottom.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
 You want another?

OLIVER
 Yes, please.

VINCENT
Go for it. We're living today.

Oliver calls out weakly to the bartender (Roger.)

OLIVER
Excuse me, sir.

VINCENT
You kids. All small talkers.
Can't text the damn bartender. Use
your voice. No arrogance, no
apology. Come on...

Oliver belts out.

OLIVER
Excuse me, sir.

Roger turns.

ROGER
Be right there.

VINCENT
Can't get nothing in this life
without being heard.

Vin digs in his pocket for a roll of Tums. Pops a few in
his mouth.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
I'm going take a pre-emptive Tums.

He hands two to Oliver.

OLIVER
What's it for?

VINCENT
This food's hard on the innards.

Oliver eats the Tums.

OLIVER
Tastes like chalk.

VINCENT
You get used to it.

OLIVER
You can get used to a lot of
distasteful things.

VINCENT
It happens.

Vin dabs out his cigarette.

EXT. THE BUCK - NIGHT - LATER

Vin and Oliver step out of the bar into the night. On the way to the car...they cross our Legless Homeless Guy, poking through a trash can.

Oliver stops. Digs in his pocket and pulls out the remainder of his winnings. Walks up to the Homeless Guy and holds out the money.

OLIVER
Here you go, sir.

The Homeless Guy takes the offering.

HOMELESS GUY
God bless you, little fella.

OLIVER
Thank you, sir. You have a good dinner tonight.

HOMELESS GUY
I will. You bet. A feast.

Oliver heads back to Vin. They walk to the car.

VINCENT
You gave him your whole stash.

OLIVER
I don't need it. I'm ten.
Everyone takes care of me.

At the car.

VINCENT
You could start saving for the future, you know. There's tomorrow.

OLIVER
There is no future really. There's only today.

Vin shakes his head at the kid.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
One of my mom's self help books.

VINCENT
Drop it off after school.

EXT. VIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT - LATER

Vin's car pulls into the driveway. The headlights illuminate a very pissed off Maggie, standing on Vin's lawn.

Vin and Oliver climb out of the car.

OLIVER

Hi, mom.

MAGGIE

(to Vin)

I don't appreciate you taking him anywhere in a car without asking me.

VINCENT

This is gonna be fun.

MAGGIE

Don't be a smart ass for once. I need to know where my son is at all times, okay?

VINCENT

We went to eat.

OLIVER

He's out of Spam.

VINCENT

Among other things.

MAGGIE

Get your homework done, Oliver. Go on.

OLIVER

Okay.

oliver slumps off.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Good night, Vin.

VINCENT

We'll see.

Oliver goes inside.

MAGGIE

He's fighting at school. You know about this?

VINCENT

He mentioned something like that.

MAGGIE

Great. He tells you. Not his mother.

VINCENT

If you haven't noticed...you're not home often.

(MORE)

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Kinda hard to have a conversation
with someone when they're not
there.

MAGGIE

I love it when people like you give
people like me advice. Especially
parenting advice.

VINCENT

I didn't sign on for hormones here,
deary. That'll cost you 15 bucks
an hour.

MAGGIE

You don't have kids. You don't
have anything to think about but
yourself.

Vin starts to walk away.

VINCENT

What do you know about me? Really?
Tell me. Please.

Vin stops. Maggie thinks.

MAGGIE

Okay. You're right. I don't know
a whole lot about you. Because you
don't want much known. So you act
like a prick and everyone stays
away.

VINCENT

If it ain't broken...

MAGGIE

It is broken. Look at it.

Vin goes into his house. Gets the last word in before he
closes the door.

VINCENT

I'm up to 40 hours this week. 41
starts time-and-a-half.

He's gone.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

Oliver's sitting on a bench outside the Principal's
office. Across from him, Ozinski's sitting with his
MOTHER (REESA.) Ozinski's nose is bandaged like a prize
fighter's.

REESA
(to Oliver)
You're a real tiny fella, aren't
ya.

OLIVER
Yes, ma'am.

REESA
You take Judo or something.

Ozinski is embarrassed.

OZINSKI
Ma.

REESA
Shut your face. You're not
supposed to talk for a month.

Ozinski slumps.

REESA (CONT'D)
I'm glad it was a little shit that
knocked the snot outta-ya. Now ya
got no excuses.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Maggie's sitting across from PRINCIPAL O'BRIEN, a puffy-faced official looking gent in his fifties. Maggie's reading a report.

MAGGIE
I can't even say these words.

PRINCIPAL O'BRIEN
They're...creative.

MAGGIE
That's one way to put it.

PRINCIPAL O'BRIEN
Adjusting to a new school is tough
on children at this age. At any
age. So, I don't want to minimize
that...but is there anything else
going on that we should be aware
of?

MAGGIE
I don't even know where to start.

PRINCIPAL O'BRIEN
How about his father?

MAGGIE
Oh. Well. Please. That'll take
up your whole day.
(MORE)

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

We're in the middle of a divorce. Oliver's father, ah...was sleeping with his assistant. And our accountant. And her assistant. And my hairdresser. While she was still cutting my hair. I have someone else now obviously. So....I....we're not on speaking terms of course. The hairdresser. Oliver's father too, of course. Now he's filed for custody of Oliver. Full custody. And he has a lot more money than me. You see. Plus he's a lawyer, so he's getting his end of the "work" done by a buddy. Who used to be my "buddy" as well. And so. I just took Oliver away as fast as I could and took this job at Mission Hills. I'm a CAT scan tech, so I see a lot of rough situations. Tumors. Cancer. Cysts. Clots. All that. And of course, I know what I see and I can't say anything to people, which is miserable, as you can imagine. But I'm not a doctor and that's not my end of the deal. So. People get into that machine with lots of fear. They're scared. So. And I work really late, trying to get our act together. Give Oliver a better education and a semi-normal life. And fight David and this custody shit. Excuse me. That's his name. My ex. Soon to be ex. Even. David. He never wanted kids anyway. He just doesn't want me to be happy or have anything. Oliver's adopted. Do you know that? How would you. I'm not able to have kids. Something about my Fallopian tubes being twisted. I think they were just recoiling from David's sperm.

Maggie reaches for a tissue.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Do you mind?

Principal O'Brien shakes his head "no." He has no words.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

I'm sure all of this has permeated into Oliver's little being. And he's acting out, as they say kids do in these situations. Right?

Principal O'Brien smiles. Maggie blows her nose.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - CLASSROOM

Detention room. Oliver's sitting in an empty classroom. Ozinski is sitting a few seats in front of him, facing him. Both boys have a one piece of paper and a pencil.

Quiet. Finally Ozinski breaks the silence.

OZINSKI

My real name's Robert. Ozinski is my last name. People call me Ozinski cause Crespi called me that last year. Now everyone calls me that.

Oliver stares at him, pensive.

OZINSKI (CONT'D)

I don't really like it. Ozinski. Just too many kids call me that now, so it's not like I can go 'round all day and tell 'em, "Hey, don't call me Ozinski, my name's Robert." Cause I would spend my whole life doin' that.

Oliver writes on his paper: "Doesn't like Ozinski. Prefers Robert."

OZINSKI (CONT'D)

Robert was my dad's name. So, I'm a junior. He's not around though. I don't really know him, cause he left when I was a baby.

Oliver writes. Looks up. Sees Ozinski for the first time really. Then...

OLIVER

My dad's not around either. He did some bad things to my mom and so we left and I haven't seen him in a while.

OZINSKI

No shit.

Oliver nods. Ozinski stares. He's thinking. It looks painful. He then digs into his backpack. Grabs something. Walks over to Oliver and puts...Oliver's house key and cell phone on the desk.

OZINSKI (CONT'D)

Your dad the one that taught ya how ta fight?

Oliver takes the phone, keys.

OLIVER

Nah. My baby sitter.

INT. SUNNYSIDE RESIDENCE FOR THE ELDERLY - DAY - LATER

Tacky office. Vin's sitting across from the rehab director, SHIRLEY JORSTIN, a tight-lipped, tough egg in her 50s.

SHIRLEY

There's plenty of affordable health care options, Mr. Canatella. Sunnyside's very exclusive. Not for everyone.

VINCENT

My Sally, she's gotta have the best. So, I'll just figure this thing out.

SHIRLEY

Of course. But, you're a few months behind here. So. We're not in the credit business, as you know.

VINCENT

I get that.

SHIRLEY

So...

VINCENT

So, what's that mean?

SHIRLEY

We'll transfer her wherever you decide to put her.

VINCENT

Put her. That's it. We're getting the boot?

SHIRLEY

That's not the best way to phrase what's happening.

VINCENT

We been here eight years. Just asking for a little grace.

SHIRLEY

This is the health care business, sir. I'm sorry. It is a business.

INT. SUNNYSIDE REHABILITATION FACILITY - LATER

Vin's in Sandy's room, putting clean laundry in her dresser drawers.

SANDY

Doctor, can you tell the nurse that I need a cold pillow. My pillow's too hot.

VINCENT

Yep. I'll tell her.

SANDY

She can even put it in the freezer for a few minutes to make it colder.

VINCENT

Okay. We'll do that.

Vin brings Sandy another pillow.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Why don't you use this one and let me have the other, so I can put it in the freezer.

Sandy looks at Vin. Studies his face. She remembers something...

SANDY

That's a good idea.

She takes his hand.

SANDY (CONT'D)

You always have good ideas, Vin.

Vin...she said Vin. He can't move.

VINCENT

Sandy.

A beat.

SANDY

Betty.

And just like that, she's gone.

SANDY (CONT'D)

It's not like it's hard to remember, doctor. I know you have a lot of patients.

Vin could die. It's just too much. He swaps pillows.

VINCENT

Let me get that pillow fixed up for you.

INT. NURSE'S STATION - MOMENTS LATER

Vin hands Ana the Nurse the pillow.

VINCENT

Maybe just keep one in the freezer
and rotate them out every so often.

ANA

Okay, Mr. Vincent. I'll leave a
note for the night nurse too.

Vin reaches into his pocket, pulls out some cash. A few
wrinkled twenties. He hands them to Ana.

ANA (CONT'D)

No. No, sir, Mr. Vincent. This is
my job. I take care of people.
Please.

VINCENT

You go way beyond doing your job,
Ana. You been an angel for my
Sally. So...please

He puts the money in her smock pocket.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Just please. For me. It's the
least I can do.

Ana's practically blushing.

ANA

Oh, goodness, Mr. Vincent. It's
really not necessary.

VINCENT

Neither is freezing the damn
pillow.

She laughs.

ANA

This is crazy idea.

Vin smiles.

VINCENT

Bat shit crazy.

They laugh. Vin never laughs.

ANA

Okay, Mr. Vincent. We don't make
habit now. Okay?

VINCENT

Deal. I'm shit broke anyway.

ANA

You are very funny, sir. Okay. I
put this in the freezer right now.

VINCENT

Thanks, Ana.

Ana walks off with the pillow, disappearing behind the station.

Vin looks at the cabinet on the wall behind the counter...full of meds. He looks over his shoulder.

INT. RACETRACK - CONTINUOUS

Betting window. Vin is placing a huge bet.

VINCENT

Lucky Lincoln. New Dime and
Sammy's Savior. One, two, three in
the third.

The ATTENDANT takes the cash.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

That's going to make me all better,
my friend.

Vin collects the ticket. Rubs it for good luck.

INT. RACETRACK - BAR

Vin's watching the race on the bar TV.

The race trumpet blows. The HORSES writhe in their stalls. The buzzer sounds. The gates fly open. And...they're off.

Vin can't watch, he closes his eyes. Takes a long drink of his Maker's. Puffs his cigarette. Listens.

The ANNOUNCER calls the race.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

And that's New Dime taking the
early lead on the rails, followed
by Pretty Patty and Lucky Lincoln.

Vin talks to himself.

VINCENT

Come on. Now. One time. One
time. I been faithful.

The Announcer keeps barking in the background. Vin keeps talking to himself.

EXT. RACETRACK - LATER

Vin's walking towards his car. He lost. It's in his gait.

INT. THE BUCK - LATER

Vin's slumped, ruined in his mind. Head down. Cigarette dangling from his lips. Gus and Linda are sitting on their regular stools, playing Kino.

GUS
Vin give me a number?

VINCENT
Five grand.

GUS
A Kino number.

VINCENT
You got five grand I can borrow,
Gus? I'll probably die before I
pay you back even.

GUS
You serious?

VINCENT
Dead serious.

GUS
If I had five grand, I wouldn't be
sitting here. Let me tell ya.
We'd be on that Carnival Cruise
ship somewhere.

LINDA
The Alaskan one, Gus. They say
that one's the prettiest.

GUS
Whatever one. Eating the damn
buffet. They say those buffets are
like something else. Endless crab
and lobster and salad bar.

LINDA
The drinks are gratis too.
Champagne in the morning with
orange juice. They gotta name for
it...

VINCENT
Mimosa.

LINDA
That's it.

Vin stands, throws some money on the bar.

VINCENT
(calls out to Roger)
Rog. Get these two some Mimosas on
me.

LINDA
(surprised in the least)
Oh. That's sweet of ya, Vin.

Vin walks off.

VINCENT
I hope you two get to that cruise
one day.

He leaves. Gus and Linda are in shock.

LINDA
That was real nice a him.

GUS
Sure was.

EXT. CITY STREET - LATER

Vin's car labors through traffic.

INT. VIN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Vin's reading the label on a bottle of prescription
medication.

INSERT: OxyContin. Warning, DO NOT TAKE THIS MEDICATION
WITH ALCOHOL.

Vin tosses the bottle in the passenger seat. It
hits...several bottles of prescription meds, stolen from
Sunnyside.

INT. LIQUOR STORE - LATER

Vin buys a bottle of Maker's Mark. Leaves.

EXT. VIN'S CAR - LATER

Vin's driving through a seedy part of town. Looking
around for...

STREET CORNER - CONTINUOUS

...Charisse...walking down the block. A Mercedes pulls up curbside. Charisse talks to a MAN in the car, then loads in.

INT. VIN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Vin looks sad. Maybe he finally knows he's all alone. He lights a cigarette and drives off.

EXT. VIN'S DRIVEWAY - LATER

He pulls into his driveway. Parks.

INT. VIN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Vin sits there. Looking at his house. His life. It's all shit. He grabs the vials of pills, stuffs them in his pockets. Grabs the bottle of booze, heads inside.

INT. VIN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Vin walks in. Shuts the door behind him. Turns when he hears...

ZUCKO

You must think I'm not a very serious person, Vinny.

How the hell did he get here?

VINCENT

You broke into my house?

ZUCKO

The back door was "ajar."

VINCENT

You have no right to be here. How the hell do you know where I live?

ZUCKO

I do homework on assholes that owe me money.

Another THUG walks into the room from the bedroom. This is ANTWAN. Big, dirty. He's carrying a jewelry box.

VINCENT

That's my wife's, you son-of-a-bitch.

Vin makes a move for the kitchen.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
I'm calling the police.

Zucko stands, pulls out a gun.

ZUCKO
Really. You think that's
realistic? We're just gonna sit
here and let you pick up a phone
and dial 911. Are you that old?
Or that stupid?

Vin turns to Antwan, yanks the jewelry box out of his hands.

VINCENT
Get the hell away from this. You
can't have it.

Antwan pushes Vin. He flies across the room. Hits the fireplace wall. Jewelry everywhere.

ZUCKO
You always have to take the hard
way, Vin. Why is that?

VINCENT
It's more interesting.

Vin rolls up his sleeves. Preparing to fight.

ZUCKO
It's more painful. Even I know
that.

Vin takes a step towards Antwan.

ANTWAN
This mother fucker's crazy.

ZUCKO
Don't kill him, just get close.

Vin takes another step. Stops. Something's wrong. He's wobbly. He grabs his head. Shakes it.

ZUCKO (CONT'D)
What are you doing, old man?

Vin is blurry eyed. He drops to his knees. Hard. His eyes roll back in his head. It looks like a seizure.

ANTWAN
He's dying, man.

Vin falls face first onto the floor. Thud.

BLACK OUT.

ZUCKO (V.O.)
(in the darkness)
Don't touch him.

EXT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - SIDEWALKS

Oliver's walking out of the school with Ozinski.

OZINSKI
I have a cousin that's Jewish. He
had a big shit party when he turned
13.

OLIVER
A barmitzah.

OZINSKI
Yeah. That's it. Biggest party I
ever seen.

OLIVER
It's a coming-of-age ceremony.
Supposedly a boy becomes a man at
that age.

Ozinski thinks long and hard. It hurts.

OZINSKI
Nah. My cousin ain't no man. He's
a little pussy. His wiener ain't
even shaved.

OLIVER
Circumcised.

They stop at Ozinski's bike, chained to a rack.

OZINSKI
Man, you know a lotta fancy words,
Oliver. You're like an Einstein.

Oliver smiles.

OLIVER
I read a lot.

OZINSKI
That's cool. I'll see ya tomorrow.

OLIVER
Yep. Bye, Robert.

Ozinski smiles. Oliver walks away. Then...

OZINSKI
Hey, how come ya don't have a bike?

EXT. CITY STREET - LATER

Oliver's riding on the back of Ozinski's bike. Scared for his life, but loving every minute of it.

EXT. RESEIDENTIAL STREET - LATER

Ozinski and Oliver arrive in front of Vin's house. Oliver jumps off the bike.

OZINSKI

Ya think I could meet the old bastard?

OLIVER

Sure. Just know that he's not real friendly at first. It takes him a long time to warm up.

Ozinski parks his bike.

INT. VIN'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Oliver keys in. Ozinski right on his tail. Something's not right, the house, the energy.

FELIX THE CAT

Meow. Meow.

Felix rushes up to Oliver, hides behind his legs.

OLIVER

What's going on, Felix?

Oliver walks into the room...and then he sees...Vin. Sprawled out on the floor, face first. Still.

INT. MISSION HILLS HOSPITAL - LATER

CAT Scan lab. Maggie and ANOTHER NURSE are strapping in...Vin. His eyes are open, but no one's home.

MAGGIE

Hi, Vincent. It's me Maggie.
Oliver's mom.

He looks blankly at her.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

We're going to put you in this machine here and run some tests, okay? It won't hurt a bit.

ANOTHER NURSE

He can't understand you, Maggie.

Maggie nods. Upset. Vincent grabs her hand. Holds it. He understands.

MAGGIE

Okay. There you are. This takes about thirty minutes, okay?

Vin says, "I understand" with his eyes.

CAT SCAN TECH ROOM - LATER

Maggie and Another Nurse monitor Vin's CAT Scan. A map of his brain stares at them from an LCD Monitor.

INSERT - VIN'S BRAIN MAP

There's a very clear obstruction in Vin's brain. It looks like a mini-explosion.

Maggie knows what this is. She leaves the room.

THE WAITING ROOM - LATER

Oliver's sitting in the waiting area. Amongst STRANGERS. Maggie walks in, worried, looking for her son. Finally she sees him...

MAGGIE

Oliver.

OLIVER

He okay, ma?

She puts her arms around him.

MAGGIE

You're such a brave little man.

OLIVER

We thought he was dead?

MAGGIE

Who's we?

OLIVER

Robert Ozinski and I.

MAGGIE

The bully kid?

OLIVER

He has a deep sense of respect for me since I broke his nose.

MAGGIE

I don't even know what you're doing anymore.

Maggie starts to get teary.

OLIVER
Ma. Stop feeling sorry for me.
And yourself. We're doing good.
You're working hard, every day and
we need the money. It's okay.

Holy shit. Maggie is speechless.

MAGGIE
You seeing a shrink on the side?

Maggie rubs Oliver's head.

OLIVER
I know you know what's going on.

She can't avoid it, he's a grown-up all of a sudden.

MAGGIE
I think he's had a stroke. You
know what that is?

OLIVER
I've seen some billboards. "Know
the signs of a stroke and call 911
immediately." But they never say
what the signs are so...not really
good advertising.

MAGGIE
It's a blockage in a brain artery.

Oliver knows this is serious.

OLIVER
That's not good.

Maggie puts her arm around him.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - DAY

Crespi's class. Oliver's standing in front of the
darkened classroom, presenting, using the Smart Board.

OLIVER
I chose Saint William of Rochester,
the patron saint of adopted
children.

Oliver clicks the Smart Board and a picture of Saint
William pops up on the screen.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
As a young man, William led a "wild and misspent youth." Which included gambling, womanizing, drinking and other things considered inappropriate...back then.

Mr. Crespi interrupts (from the back of the room.)

MR. CRESPI
Why did you chose Saint William of Rochester?

Throughout, Oliver clicks through slides on the Smart Board.

OLIVER
I admire how he changed his whole life when he found a baby on the church steps and took it in and raised it as his own. He named the baby David.

MR. CRESPI
Very touching, Oliver.

OLIVER
And then years later, he went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land with his son. And David went, I guess...crazy, and clubbed Saint William and cut his throat and then robbed the body.

The slides are stock footage pictures of a crime scene. Blood. Mayhem.

MR. CRESPI
Ouch. Okay. Didn't see that coming.

OLIVER
So he's a martyr actually. A saint martyr. But the beginning of the story is the part I'm most affected by.

MR. CRESPI
I would hope so.

The CLASS laughs.

MR. CRESPI (CONT'D)
Very interesting stuff, Oliver.
And your modern day saint?

OLIVER
I haven't picked one yet, sir.

MR. CRESPI
Our assembly's coming up. You
might want to dig in there.

OLIVER
The thing is...I don't really know
anyone that's...that...saintly.

MR. CRESPI
Many men and women have lived less
than angelic lives, before they
turned a corner and
became...whatever they became.
Like Saint William of Rochester,
right?

OLIVER
I guess so, sir.

MR. CRESPI
Don't look for what you think is a
perfect person. You won't find
one. Just chose someone who means
something for you. That's affected
your life in a positive way.

HALLWAY OUTSIDE CRESPI'S CLASS - LATER

We pull back from Oliver's picture to reveal the entire
wall plastered with pictures. Under each student's name
we see a picture of their patron saint next to a picture
of their real-life saint.

Above the collage, stenciled letters: "SAINTS AMONG US."

Oliver stands in front of the wall. Lost. Under his
name...only one picture: Saint William of Rochester.

EXT. VIN'S HOUSE - LATER

Oliver's walking home from school. He sees SOMEONE
sitting on Vin's steps. It's Charisse.

CHARISSE
Where's he at? His car's here.

OLIVER
He's in the hospital.

CHARISSE
Doin' what?

Oliver just stares at her.

INT. MISSION HILLS HOSPITAL - LATER

Oliver and Charisse are walking down a hallway of PATIENT rooms.

CHARISSE

I don't like the smell of hospitals, man. Gives me the willys.

OLIVER

It's disinfectant. You get used to it after a while.

CHARISSE

Why you act like you're forty and shit?

OLIVER

Don't know. I'm only ten and shit.

Oliver turns a corner.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

He's down here.

INT. VIN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Vin's lying in bed, wide-eyed. He looks pissed. Maggie and a SPEECH THERAPIST are trying to "therapize" Vin.

The stroke has caused Aphasia and language apraxia. It's a struggle for Vin to talk, and hard to understand.

The Speech Therapist holds up a flash card with the word "Dog" printed on it.

SPEECH THERAPIST

Try to sound it out.

Vin pretends to think, then holds up his middle finger.

SPEECH THERAPIST (CONT'D)

Not quite.

MAGGIE

(loudly, like he's deaf)
Still have your sense of humor,
Vin. That's something, ha?

Vin holds up the other middle finger. Double bird.
Oliver and Charisse walk in.

OLIVER

Hi, ma.

MAGGIE

Hi, love.

Maggie looks over Charisse, introduces herself.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
Hello. I'm Maggie. Oliver's mom.

CHARISSE
Charisse.

Maggie waits for more.

CHARISSE (CONT'D)
Just Charisse.

MAGGIE
Okay. Nice to meet you.

Oliver walks to Vin's bedside.

OLIVER
Hey, Vin. You look a lot better.

VINCENT
(slurred)
Getttt these dippppshitts outta
here.

Oliver's confused with Vin's slurred speech.

OLIVER
What's wrong with your mouth? You
sound like you're drunk or
something.

Maggie interrupts.

MAGGIE
Okay, Oli. Let's let Vin work with
his therapist.

SPEECH THERAPIST
Thank you. We'll be about an hour.

VINCENT
Fuccckkk you, annnnn hour.

SPEECH THERAPIST
Maybe less.

Maggie covers Oliver's ears. Guides him towards the
door.

MAGGIE
Let's go get a snack.

INT. HOSPITAL BREAK / SNACK ROOM - LATER

Maggie, Oliver and Charisse are sitting in the visitor's
lounge drinking coffee. Charisse is eating a candy bar.

MAGGIE

He may talk like that for a while.
That's what happens sometimes when
a person has a stroke.

OLIVER

He sounds...

CHARISSE

Retarded.

Out of anyone else's mouth that would be offensive.

CHARISSE (CONT'D)

Well, he ain't smart anyways. So
retarded ain't that far owf.

Charisse finishes her candy bar.

CHARISSE (CONT'D)

Anybody gotta dollar? I'm
starvin'. I didn't eat nothing
today.

Maggie digs in her purse.

MAGGIE

I do.

She opens her wallet. Pulls out a dollar.

CHARISSE

I think it takes a dollar fifty.

Maggie...gives her two bucks.

CHARISSE (CONT'D)

Cool.

She's off to the vending machines.

MAGGIE

(re: her belly)
Is that Vincent's...?

OLIVER

Baby?

MAGGIE

Yea.

OLIVER

Don't know. It's not polite to ask
a woman if she's pregnant. So, I
avoid the whole situation.

MAGGIE

Well. She's obviously
pregnant...so...

OLIVER
Vin's like 90 something. That
would be inappropriate.

Charisse returns with two chocolate bars. She offers one to Oliver.

CHARISSE
If you hit it just as it's dropping
the first one, you can get two to
come out.

Oliver takes it. Unwraps. The three of them sit awkwardly comfortable together.

EXT. VAN NUYS - DAY

Time passes. Spring is in the air.

-- Our Homeless Legless Guy is now wearing shorts.

-- The Buck. An ARTIST is painting the front window for St. Patty's Day.

-- Doctor's Office. Ozinski gets his nose bandage removed. His nose is completely crooked.

-- Vin's House. The lawn is out of control. A foot high. A MAILMAN bends down and puts mail in the toppled mailbox.

INT. VIN'S KITCHEN - ANOTHER DAY

Charisse is feeding Felix the Cat a can of Spam.

CHARISSE
Here you go, pussy.

Felix scarf's.

CHARISSE (CONT'D)
Don't eat too fast. I ain't comin'
back till tomorrow.

Charisse looks at the stacks of dishes, mold, dirt, grime, shit everywhere.

CHARISSE (CONT'D)
You're paying me, asshole.

Charisse rolls up her sleeves, turns the sink on. Starts to clean.

INT. VIN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - ANOTHER DAY

Vin's perched in a recliner. Oliver is sitting on his bed shuffling a stack of flash cards.

OLIVER

Try this one.

Oliver holds up a card. It reads: "I want fresh crab." Vin studies the card. Then:

VINCENT

I waannnnnt fressssh crap.

Oliver looks at the card. Damn Vin. They laugh.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - ANOTHER DAY

Crespi's class. Ozinski is presenting in front of the class. His voice is nasally, due to the "new" nose alignment.

OZINSKI

And for my real-life saint, I picked...

He clicks the Smart Board. A picture of Oliver pops up.

OZINSKI (CONT'D)

Oliver Bronstein. He's like one a them martyrs. Cause he was persecuted too, when he first got here. By me. Mostly, you know. And a few others, who I'm not gonna rat out. You know who you are.

Ozinski stares directly at a few FELLAS in class. Brooklyn sinks in his chair.

OZINSKI (CONT'D)

Anyways. He's my saint. Cause he forgave me for being such a dingleberry, when I was acting like an a-hole.

The CLASS laughs. Oliver is all smiles. He's a hundred feet tall. Crespi applauds the effort.

INT. VIN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - ANOTHER DAY

Oliver and Vin are working the flash cards when Maggie walks in carrying take-out. Vin and Oliver light up like Christmas trees.

Vin tosses his tray of hospital food in the trash.

IMAGES OVER MUSIC:

-- Charisse is vacuuming Vin's living room. It sounds like she's sucking up marbles. It's so damn dirty.

-- Vin is walking outside the hospital in his gown. He ducks into a nook and lights a cigarette.

-- At a grocery store, Maggie and Oliver are buying cat food. Lots.

-- Oliver wheels a piece of carryon luggage into Vin's room. He lays the luggage carefully on the bed and unzips. Felix the Cat pops out...runs right over to Vin on the recliner and jumps in his lap.

-- Vin's sitting in a wheelchair outside the hospital (in street clothes.) A NURSE stands behind him. Charisse pulls up in Vin's car. Honks. Vin stands up, walks to the car.

-- Driving. Charisse can barely steer the car over her about-to-pop belly. Vin lights a cigarette. Charisse snatches it out of his hand.

CHARISSE

What's wrong wit you?

She tosses it out the window.

INT. VIN'S HOUSE - LATER

Living room. The place is spotless. Vin's sitting on his couch, looking around. The place is foreign to him.

Charisse waddles in with a plate of food. A turkey sandwich with a side of carrots. Healthy. Vin inspects.

VINCENT

Weeeeeee outta Sppam?

CHARISSE

Yeah.

VINCENT

We gonnnnnna get some?

CHARISSE

When I get to the store, bitch.

Vin picks up the sandwich. Takes a damn bite. What choice does he have?

CHARISSE (CONT'D)

You paying me hourly now, pappi.

CHARISSE (CONT'D)

Whaaaattt for?

CHARISSE (CONT'D)
Whatcha mean, what for? I'm taking care of your ass. Cleaned this shithole top to bottom. And we obviously ain't bumping uglies no more. So don't be askin'. I'm too fat and you're too old.

Vin thinks. Shakes his head in agreement. The sandwich is pretty good.

CHARISSE (CONT'D)
Fifteen an hour, plus room and board.

Charisse walks out. Vin damn near chokes.

EXT. LA COUNTY FAMILY COURT - ANOTHER DAY

A gray stone court house. A gray day.

INT. COURT LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Maggie and Oliver are dressed in their Sunday best. Their attorney, RICHARD WALTERS, is briefing them.

RICHARD WALTERS, ESQ.
These proceedings are pretty straight forward. Just answer the Judge's questions, through me of course. I'll do all the talking.

MAGGIE
Good. I'm a wreck.

RICHARD WALTERS, ESQ.
Just be honest. Nine times out of ten the judge rules in favor of the mother. It's just how the system works.

Maggie puts her arm around Oliver.

INT. COURTROOM - CONTINUOUS

Family court in session. Maggie, Oliver and Richard Walters are on one side. On the other side: Oliver's father, DAVID BRONSTEIN, tall, dark and disconnected, sits next to his attorney BARRY BRILLSTERN.

JUDGE REYNOLDS presides, he's examining a file full of photos.

JUDGE REYNOLDS
(directed to Richard)
Who is Vincent Canatella?

Richard is stumped. He turns to Maggie.

RICHARD WALTERS, ESQ.
You know him?

MAGGIE
He's our next door neighbor. He
watches Oliver some times.

RICHARD WALTERS, ESQ.
Your honor, he's my client's
neighbor. He occasionally watches
Oliver. Some times.

JUDGE REYNOLDS
He's a baby sitter?

Again, Richard turns to Maggie.

MAGGIE
Yes. Of sorts. I pay him. And
Oliver goes there after school for
a few hours while I'm at work.

RICHARD WALTERS, ESQ.
(to Judge)
He's a baby sitter, your honor. Of
sorts. A paid position. May I ask
why this is relevant?

Judge Reynolds flips through more pictures.

JUDGE REYNOLDS
Is your client aware that Mr.
Canatella takes her son to a race
track and they gamble? He also
takes him to a local bar, The Buck?
And a strip club, The Pink
Cadillac?

Maggie is lost. She looks to Oliver.

OLIVER
We went to see the horses a few
times.

Maggie could die. She turns back to Richard.

MAGGIE
I...this...is news to me.

RICHARD WALTERS, ESQ.
My client is unaware of these
events...as am I. Which is a big
surprise, I must say, right now.

JUDGE REYNOLDS
I'll bet there are quite a few
surprises in this folder then.

Judge Reynolds holds up a pound of pictures. Maggie gasps.

MAGGIE

Oh, God.

JUDGE REYNOLDS

I'd say. Charisse Langers? Are you aware of her...occupation?

Richard turns to Maggie. Maggie turns to Oliver. Oliver whispers in Maggie's ear. She turns pale white. Maggie whispers in Richard's ear. He goes blank.

RICHARD WALTERS, ESQ.

Your honor, I need a few minutes to confer with my client.

EXT. VIN'S HOUSE - LATER

Maggie bangs on Vin's door. No answer. Vin's car is in the driveway. She walks around to the side of the house, lets herself in through the gate.

VIN'S BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Vin's wearing only underwear, watering the dirt pit that he calls a lawn. It hasn't seen water in a month. Maggie yells out to him.

MAGGIE

Vin!

She yells louder.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Vin!

He turns. Squirts her with the hose.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Ah. What the...!

Vin releases the handle.

VINCENT

I'm a littttle slower with the reaction time these days.

MAGGIE

You were never fast. Just stupid.

VINCENT

Oh. Gooodie.

MAGGIE

What kind of man takes a child
gambling, drinking, smoking?
Hanging out with prostitutes.

VINCENT

What kind of mother leaves her son
with a mannnnn like that?

Ouch.

MAGGIE

Fuck you, Vin.

VINCENT

Now we're talkinnnng.

MAGGIE

Fifty-fifty custody with his
asshole father now. I have you to
thank for that.

VINCENT

You have yourrrrrself to thank for
that. He needs someone besides
his deadbeat mother.

MAGGIE

You know just what to say to hurt
people. I hope that's been good
for you over the years.

VINCENT

Been finnnne.

MAGGIE

Don't talk to him again. Stay away
from him. Leave us alone. I'll
start looking for a new place to
live.

Maggie walks off. Vin squirts the hose, it hits Maggie's back.

VINCENT

Sorrrryy.

She storms off.

INT. VIN'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Vin sits at his counter. Looking at the biggest pile of bills and mail. He fishes through, tossing most aside. Eventually...the answering machine comes into view. The red light is blinking.

Vin hits play.

ANA (V.O.)
Hello, Mr. Vincent. This is Ana
from Sunnyside. I have some news
about your wife, Sandy, sir.

INT. VIN'S CAR - THE NEXT DAY

Charisse is driving. Vin riding. The answering machine plays under.

ANA (V.O.)
(another message)
Mr. Vincent, this is Ana again at Sunnyside, sir. I've left you a few messages now. I hope that you are okay...

INT. SUNNYSIDE RESIDENCE FOR THE ELDERLY - CONTINUOUS

Vin's walking down the hallway. The answering machine continues.

SHIRLEY (V.O.)
Mr. Canatella, this is Shirley Stafford over here at Sunnyside. Sir, I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but your wife is dead. And she's been dead for a few weeks now. And we haven't heard from you.

SHIRLEY'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Vin's sitting at Shirley's desk. Shirley enters with a box of personal items.

SHIRLEY
Okay, Mr. Canatella. Here we go.

Shirley sits. Puts the box on her desk.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
All her personal items are in there, sir.

Vin looks at the box.

VINCENT
Where is shhhee?

SHIRLEY
Who?

VINCENT
My wwwife.

SHIRLEY
She died, Mr. Canatella.

VINCENT
I know that. Where isss she?

SHIRLEY
(indicates the box)
She's in there, sir.

VINCENT
Where?

SHIRLEY
In the box. Her remains.

Vin is speechless. For once.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
She died a few weeks ago, Mr.
Canatella. We tried to contact you
several times. So there's that.
And when we didn't hear back from
you. Well. We just went ahead and
followed your death directives,
sir.

She pushes a signed paper towards, Vin.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
You did want her cremated. That's
what's on the signed directives
here.

Vin looks at the paper, then back at the box.

VINCENT
She's in that bbbox?

SHIRLEY
Her remains are, sir. Yes. In a
box inside that box. We can't
just keep a body lying around. I'm
sure you understand. That would be
inappropriate. And legally we just
can't do that, of course. You
could imagine the litigation
potential.

Vin stands. Takes the box.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
I'm sorry for your loss, Mr.
Canatella.

Vin stares at here, then walks away.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
There is the other matter of your
outstanding balance we should
discuss.

Vin keeps walking.

VINCENT
(over his back)
I'll maiilll it to you.

He's gone.

EXT. SUNNYSIDE RESIDENCE FOR THE ELDERLY - LATER

Vin's sitting on a bench with Ana the Nurse. The box
sits between them.

VINCENT
Did she sssay anything?

ANA
No, Mr. Vincent. Just sleeping.
Fell asleep. Went away.

VINCENT
You still freezinng her pillow.

ANA
Oh. No, sir. You are too much.

VINCENT
I'm tooooo little, that's the
problem.

She puts her hand on Vin's shoulder.

ANA
It was nice to work with your wife,
Mr. Vincent. She was good.

Vin nods. No tears. Repressed. Ana stands.

ANA (CONT'D)
You took good care of her. Now
take care of yourself.

She walks off. Vin sits, staring off at nothing. Lights
a cigarette.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - GYMNASIUM - ANOTHER DAY

Oliver and Ozinski are sitting against a wall. A dodge
ball game in progress in front of them.

OZINSKI

Being with your dad ain't so bad.
Least he's around. And wants to
see ya and stuff.

OLIVER

Yeah. My mom's the one who hates
it.

OZINSKI

That's her problem. These woman
gotta learn to let go.

Oliver is impressed with the rare deep thought.

OZINSKI (CONT'D)

I'm seeing a shrink.

OLIVER

That's cool.

OZINSKI

My Ma's makin' me. Thinks me
acting out all the time is due to
the fact that my father left us and
I got no positive male role model
in my life. So I do bad shit to
get attention.

OLIVER

What's the shrink say?

OZINSKI

He thinks my Ma is overbearing and
controlling and actually I'm acting
out to rebel against her.

OLIVER

That makes more sense.

OZINSKI

That's what I'm fucking thinkin'.

OLIVER

You talk to her about it.

OZINSKI

Hell no. She'd whop my ass. I
gotta hide behind that patient
privacy stuff.

A whistle blows. The dodge ball game is over. Next up.

OZINSKI (CONT'D)

Let's tag team these ass fags. You
go high, I'll shoot for the nuts.

Oliver and Ozinski run onto the court.

EXT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - SIDEWALKS

After school. KIDS everywhere. Oliver's walking out with Ozinski. A HORN honks. Maggie is sitting in her Volvo in parent pickup.

INT. MAGGIE'S VOLVO - LATER

Maggie's driving. Oliver's riding. And a strange Latin lady is sitting quietly in the backseat. This is AMELDA. Oliver's new nanny. Short, stout, useless.

MAGGIE

It's your father's idea of safer
child care.

OLIVER

Does she speak English?

MAGGIE

(to Amelda)

Poquito?

AMELDA

Si.

MAGGIE

Guess that's good enough.

AMELDA

Si.

MAGGIE

Yes. Si.

OLIVER

Everyday?

MAGGIE

And every other weekend when you go
to your dad's.

Oliver's not thrilled.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

That's the deal now. You get
shuffled back and forth between
your father and I.

OLIVER

He is my dad.

Maggie takes this in.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

I know he cheated on you...a bunch
of times. And that why we left.

MAGGIE

You know that?

OLIVER

It's a secret? You tell anybody who'll listen. Grandma, Aunt Judy, all the cousins...it's your Facebook status.

MAGGIE

I been meaning to change that

OLIVER

I think it's time.

Maggie considers this.

MAGGIE

I'll just say that I'm single.

OLIVER

Thank you. I guess.

EXT. VIN'S HOUSE - DAY

Backyard. Vin's sitting on a beach chair, staring at the box with Sandy in it, perched on the lawn table in front of him.

Oliver calls out.

OLIVER

Vin?

VINCENT

I'm nnnot here.

Oliver walks around the side of the house. Amelda's right behind him.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

You cann't be here.

OLIVER

Mom said I could say...goodbye.

Oliver just stands there. Not knowing what to say.

VINCENT

That mmmy replacement?

OLIVER

Yea. I guess so.

VINCENT

She lllegal?

Amelda chimes in.

AMELDA
Si.

VINCENT
Hate to havvvve to report your
mother to INS.

Amelda knows this term. She bulls up.

AMELDA
Mr. Oliver, vamanos.

She makes her way back from where she came.

OLIVER
What's in the box?

VINCENT
Mmmmmmy wife.

OLIVER
She...died?

VINCENT
No. Sssshe shrunk herself and now
she's living in there rent free.

OLIVER
Oh. I'm really sorry, Vin.

VINCENT
Never understood wwwwhy people
sssssay that.

OLIVER
They don't know what else to say.

VINCENT
Welllll, it's a shit saying. How
'bout, "What was she like?" "Do
you miss her?" "What're ya gonna
do now?"

OLIVER
You want me to ask your those
things?

VINCENT
Listennnn. Do yourself a favor,
kid, and get a life. Oookay. Stop
living mine. It hasn't been for
shit.

OLIVER
That's not true.

Vin lashes out.

VINCENT

The hell do you know about me? The hell does anyone know about anyone really? You act like I'm some kinda role model. Are you stupid? Look at me.

OLIVER

Why are you being so mean?

Oliver starts to tear.

VINCENT

Tttrue colors, kid. Go on. Get lost. I'm not your father. Go shadow him. And take the tears with ya.

Oliver runs off. Vin stares at the box.

VIN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Vin sitting on the bed. The box is next to him. He talks to it.

VINCENT

I loved you to the moon there,
Sandy.

He waits for a response. Then...

VINCENT (CONT'D)

You coulda waited ya know. I was tied up for a wwwhile. Woulda been nice to say goodbye.

Listens.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

So...what nnnnow?

As if he hears from her...

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Yeah? You sure?

Vin inspects the room: packed full of shit, memories, pictures. It hasn't been touched since she left.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Aaaalright. You're the boss.

Vin grabs a picture of himself and a FEW MARINES posing in Ho Chi Minh, while on tour in Vietnam. He studies it. Then throws it in a bag. He grabs another picture...then another. Throwing everything in site, all the memories, pictures, knickknacks into the bag. Purging.

EXT. VIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Vin drags two full trash bag loads of junk across the lawn. He dumps them into trash barrels.

INT. OLIVER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Oliver watches Vin from his bedroom window. He shuts the blinds and sits on his bed. Thinking.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - LIBRARY - DAY

Computer lab. Oliver, Ozinski and OTHER STUDENTS are working on computers, wearing headsets. Oliver digs in his backpack and pulls out Vin's Vietnam picture. The one Vin tossed in the trash.

He flips the picture over, reads the handwritten inscription: "la Drang, Vietnam, 1965. Sgt. Vincent Canatella."

Oliver pecks on his keyboard:

Insert - Google search bar typing: "Sgt. Vincent Canatella."

The search reveals several pages with headings: "War Hero," "Bronze Star," "Sgt. Canatella Rescues Two Officers," "The Battle of la Drang." Etc.

Oliver is beyond curious. He clicks on the first link and starts reading. A picture of a younger Vin pops up. He's a proud looking soldier.

Oliver hits Ozinski. He leans over and looks over his shoulder.

OZINSKI
(too loud)
That's the old fucker.

Oliver nods. Everyone and their mother heard that.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE CRESPI'S CLASS - LATER

The Saint Wall. Oliver's on Ozinski's shoulders stapling a picture to the wall.

He's picked a Real-Life Saint. It's Vin. And he's one fucked-up looking "saint." Eyes black, face distorted, clearly on drugs, lying in his hospital bed.

Ozinski lowers Oliver down. Oliver inspects Vin's picture perched next to Saint William of Rochester. Mr. Crespi walks up behind them.

MR. CRESPI
Good deal. You picked someone.

OLIVER
Yes, sir. He's my baby sitter.
Well, ex-baby sitter.

MR. CRESPI
Looks like saint material.

OLIVER
He's not. But he could be.

OZINSKI
He's a real shit neck, sir. Sorry,
sir.

MR. CRESPI
I'm actually becoming used to your
expletives, Ozinski.

OZINSKI
Mr. Crespi...my name's Robert.

OLIVER
He doesn't like Ozinski, sir.
Never has.

And with that the two boys walk off.

MONTAGE OF OLIVER RESEARCHING, VIN MOVING ON...

EXT. OLIVER'S HOUSE - DAY

Ozinski waits on his bike outside Oliver's house. Oliver comes running out, jumps on the back of the bike. Amelda waddles out after him, holding a jacket. She puts the jacket on Oliver.

And they take off.

STREETS - LATER

Oliver and Ozinski ride through traffic. Hauling ass.

EXT. THE BUCK - NIGHT

Ozinski's bike is parked in front of the bar.

INT. THE BUCK - NIGHT

Oliver and Ozinski are sitting at the bar drinking Shirley Temples. Oliver is interviewing Gus and Linda.

GUS

Oh heck, he won the Bronze Star in
in Vietnam. Pulled two officers
out of an ambush in la Drang. Only
a few got outta there.

LINDA

It's famous. He never told ya
about it?

OLIVER

No, ma'am.

Oliver takes notes.

LINDA

Such a stubborn ass, that Vin.

GUS

Hey now, Linda.

LINDA

I'm sorry, Gussy. He has his
moments.

INT. VIN'S HOUSE - ANOTHER DAY

Kitchen counter. Charisse serves Vin and herself a Spam
sandwich. She feels the baby kicking in her belly.

CHARISSE

Ah. Chill out, chicca.

She holds her stomach. Looks at Vin...

CHARISSE (CONT'D)

You wanna...?

Vin nods. Sure. Puts his hand on her belly. Feels a
kick.

VINCENT

Damn ninja iiin there.

EXT. STREET - ANOTHER DAY

Charisse is driving Vin.

INT. BABIES-R-US - LATER

The crib section. Vin and Charisse are looking at cribs.
Charisse checks prices. Expensive. Vin pulls out his
wallet. Checks how much he's got.

INT. VIN'S HOUSE - ANOTHER DAY

Spare bedroom. Vin is lying on the floor, assembling the crib in what's been converted into a baby room. Felix the Cat is lying on the installation instructions. Vin slides him aside. Puts on his glasses, reads the instructions.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - GYMNASIUM - ANOTHER DAY

The ropes. Oliver is in mid-climb. He's damn near the top. A CROWD OF CLASSMATES, lead by Ozinski, scream him on from the ground.

OZINSKI & CLASSMATES
Oliver! Oliver! Oliver! Oliver!

Coach Mitchell smiles, watching in anticipation.

Oliver strains, pulls, twists. And finally, he grabs the flag. The kids erupt in cheers. Then...

OLIVER
How do I get down?

EXT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - SIDEWALKS - DAY

Oliver is walking towards a new Jaguar parked in parent pickup. It's his dad, David.

Oliver hops into the car.

INT. FROZEN YOGURT SHOP - LATER

Oliver and David are sitting in the window eating frozen yogurt. David's trying to connect.

DAVID
So. How's things?

OLIVER
Good. Can't complain.

DAVID
School. Good?

OLIVER
Yep.

DAVID
Friends?

OLIVER
Dad. We don't have to small talk.
I'm not mad at you. Whatever
happened between you and ma, that's
grown-up business.

(MORE)

OLIVER (CONT'D)
I don't want to be in the middle.
We can just be us. Okay?

DAVID
You are...an alien.

David rubs his son's head.

DAVID (CONT'D)
So...where did you want to go?

EXT. SUNNYSIDE RESIDENCE FOR THE ELDERLY - ANOTHER DAY

Oliver is interviewing Nurse Ana. David's sitting on the lawn a few feet away.

ANA
Everyday he came to see her. Never missed one time. Most people just get forgotten here. Not Sandy.

OLIVER
How long was she here?

ANA
Oh. Close to eight years.

Oliver scribbles in his notebook.

EXT. MAGGIE & OLIVER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

David carries a sleeping Oliver into the house. Maggie holds the door open.

INT. OLIVER'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

David puts Oliver in bed. Maggie flips the light off.

EXT. MAGGIE & OLIVER'S HOUSE - LATER

Maggie and David stand by David's car. Awkwardness is all they know.

DAVID
I can pick him up after school on Friday.

MAGGIE
Sure.

DAVID
Okay, then.

MAGGIE
Yep.

David gets into the car. Maggie knocks on the passenger window.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
You know, this is okay. I'm okay with it. You're his father. An asshole. But still his father. So. I'll get over it. Just going to take some time.

DAVID
Good night.

MAGGIE
That's all you're going to say?

DAVID
I don't disagree with anything you said. So.

MAGGIE
Even the asshole part.

DAVID
Especially that part.

Maggie thinks.

MAGGIE
Alright. Good night.

DAVID
See ya.

David drives off.

INT. HOME DEPOT - ANOTHER DAY

Oliver and Ozinski are loading a cart full of fence building materials. Pickets, posts, nails, etc.

CHECK OUT COUNTER - MOMENTS LATER

Maggie pays for the supplies.

EXT. STREETS - LATER

Maggie's Volvo cruises down the road. Fencing supplies tied haphazardly to the roof.

INT. VIN'S HOUSE - LATER

Vin is peeking out the living room blinds...watching Oliver, Ozinski and Amelda fixing his fence.

VINCENT
Ttthat'll be straight.

He shuts the blinds.

EXT. VIN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Oliver, Ozinski and Amelda are working on the fence. Amelda's the "foreman," as she's the only one who knows what she's doing.

Charisse pulls up in Vin's car. Lumbers down the driveway with a bag of groceries.

CHARISSE
Vin know you're doing that?

OLIVER
He peeks through the blinds every few minutes.

CHARISSE
Ain't come out?

OLIVER
Nope.

CHARISSE
(disgusted)
Still playing the stroke card.

INT. NAT'S DINER - ANOTHER DAY

Oliver is interviewing Charisse. Amelda is eating, along for the ride. Charisse is holding a flier for Oliver's school assembly: "Saints Among Us."

CHARISSE
Man, why you want him to come to shit? He ain't been nothing but an asshole.

OLIVER
I think he's just misunderstood.
By himself mostly.

CHARISSE
Cause he's an asshole.

OLIVER
That's a possibility.

Charisse stares at Amelda.

CHARISSE
She better than having Vin watch you?

Oliver shrugs. Amelda keeps eating.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. OLIVER'S HOUSE - THE NEXT MORNING

Oliver's room is full of Vin's pictures. The memories rescued from the trash. Oliver's getting ready for school. Standing in front of a mirror, tying a Windsor Knot on his tie. Maggie calls from the kitchen.

MAGGIE (O.S.)
Oliver. Breakfast is ready.

Oliver furrows with confusion.

THE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Oliver walks in to find a full pancake breakfast. Bacon. Toast. The works. A big surprise in this household. Maggie's pouring OJ.

MAGGIE
Gotta have fuel for your big day.

Oliver is touched.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
I took the day off.

He hugs his mom.

OLIVER
Thanks, mom.

MAGGIE
I love you, Oli.

Somehow Maggie's become a mother.

OLIVER
Me too. You, that is.

INT. VIN'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Vin's sitting in his Lazy Boy, zoned out on Abbott & Costello. Charisse rushes into the room.

CHARISSE
I think my water busted.

VINCENT
The hhhell does that mean?

CHARISSE
This thing's coming out.

VINCENT

Ssshit.

Vin climbs out of his chair.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

The auditorium is packed to the gills with STUDENTS, TEACHERS, PARENTS and GUESTS. The curtain opens and Mr. Crespi's entire class walks out and takes seats behind the on-stage podium. Oliver and Ozinski sit next to each other. Friends for life.

A projection screen displays the banner, "Saints Among Us." The CROWD applauds.

INT. VIN'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Charisse is driving like a nut. Vin's white knuckled. He tries to light a cigarette. Charisse swipes it from his mouth, tosses it out the window.

CHARISSE

When you gonna grow up, man?

She shakes her head in disgust, then goes back to fake deep breathing.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

Mr. Crespi steps up to the podium and announces the next speaker.

MR. CRESPI

Our next speaker is Mr. Oliver Bronstein. He'll be presenting Saint William of Rochester and Mr. Vincent Canatella of Van Nuys.

The CROWD claps. Maggie hoots from her seat. She's sitting next to ex-husband David. They may end up civil.

Oliver walks up to the podium. Strong. Courageous. A different kid than the one who couldn't utter a word in front of his class. He clears his throat.

OLIVER

Saints are human beings we celebrate for their dedication and commitment to other human beings.
Mr. Cary Crespi, circa 2011...

Laughs.

EXT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - CONTINUOUS

Charisse whips the car into the school's lot. Pulls into a handicapped spot. Vin is suspect.

VINCENT

This isn't the hospital.

CHARISSE

Can't fool a genius.

Charisse tosses the flier in his lap.

CHARISSE (CONT'D)

Get your ass inside.

Charisse steps out of the car, moves on. Vin looks at the flier.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

Oliver's in mid-presentation. On the massive projection screen behind him, we see Vin's "Saint" portrait next to St. William of Rochester's.

OLIVER

For my modern day saint, I chose a man who shares many of the same qualities as St. William of Rochester: Mr. Vincent Canatella.

He continues...

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - CONTINUOUS

Outside the auditorium. Vincent stands in front of the marquee board, staring at the picture of himself next to St. William of Rochester.

He hears Oliver's voice within. Walks to the auditorium doors.

OLIVER (O.S.)

Mr. Canatella was born in Brooklyn, NY, in 1945, the son of first generation Italian immigrants.

Vin cracks the door open. Just as he's doing this a PRIEST comes up behind him and opens it the rest of the way.

FATHER

(whispers)

After you...

Vin defaults. Walks in first. He stands at the back of the auditorium. Oliver continues:

OLIVER

Growing up poor on the streets of Brooklyn, Vincent learned all the things a kid shouldn't need to know. Fighting, cursing and gambling.

The slide show shuffles images of VINCENT AS A BABY. Then a YOUNG BOY. Poor. Tough. Street. Pictures of a hard life. All the memories Vin had tossed in the trash.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

In 1965, as a member of United States Army's 5th Regiment, Vincent was among the 450 soldiers dropped into the la Drang Valley, and immediately ambushed by 2000 Vietcong troops.

A headshot of Vincent as a young Marine in Vietnam. Smoking a cigarette, proud, strong.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

There he heroically saved the lives of two officers pinned down by enemy fire and carried them to safety.

Newspaper clippings of Vin's heroics. A picture of Vin receiving the Bronze Star. In the back of the auditorium, Vin is frozen...seeing his life through the eyes of another.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

But I guess the best way I can tell you who Vincent Canatella is...is to tell you what he's done for me.

For the first time, Oliver sees Vin standing in back.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

When my mom and I first moved here, we knew no one. And Mr. Canatella took me in. When he didn't have to. And probably didn't want to.

Laughter.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

But he did it anyhow. That's what saints do.

A wedding picture of Vin and Sandy pops up on the screen.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

He took me to meet his wife of fifty years, Sandy. Vin's visited her at the old folks home everyday for the past eight years, even after she no longer recognized him.

Another picture of Vin and Sandy.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Because saints never give up.

A picture of VIN AS A FIGHTER, with boxing gloves on.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
He taught me how to fight. How to
stand my ground and be brave. How
to speak up and be bold.

Maggie is crying. David hands her a tissue.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Because saints fight for themselves
and others. They are heard.

Vin is glued, hearing what he means to others, is the
warmth that melts an iceberg.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Vin taught me how to gamble. Horse
racing, Keno. Which is a big
reason why I'm grounded till I'm
eighteen.

Laughs.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
But in that I learned how to take
risks and go for broke. Because
life waits for no one.

A picture of Vin's cat, Felix.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
This is Vin's cat, Felix, who eats
gourmet cat food. Vin eats Spam.

The CROWD loves it. Maggie, David and Charisse are
mesmerized, proud, inspired.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Because saints make sacrifices.
And finally...Mr. Canatella is
flawed. He's rough, drinks too
much, smokes and curses. He's got
a lot of anger, pain and I'm sure
some regrets.

Vin takes it in.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Because after all, saints are human
beings. Very human beings.

The picture of St. William next to Vincent replays on the
projection screen.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Courage, sacrifice, compassion and humanity. These are the markings of a saint. And what makes Mr. Vincent Canatella not so far removed from St. William of Rochester...

Vin's picture solos on the presentation.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

And with that I'd like to present my friend and baby sitter, Mr. Vincent Canatella for sainthood. And hereby proclaim him St. Vincent de Van Nuys.

The place is wild with applause.

Vin doesn't know what to do. People are looking around for him. Finally...he starts walking down the aisle.

Mr. Crespi helps Vin up the steps. And towards Oliver, who's holding the "Saint Medal."

Vin steps in front of Oliver. He leans over as Oliver puts the medal around his neck.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Thank you, sir.

VINCENT

Thanks, Oli.

And...without warning...Vin starts crying. Maybe for the first time in his life.

PEOPLE rise in their seats to applaud him.

Oliver hugs Vin.

INT. MISSION HILLS HOSPITAL - ANOTHER DAY

The break room. Oliver and Vin stand in front of a vending machine considering their options. Vin's wearing scrubs. His speech impediment is not so abstruse.

VINCENT

They got the same selection from when I was a kid.

OLIVER

Surely not. They'd be really rotten by now.

VINCENT

Nah. They're all jacked up on preservatives. Crap has a half life of plutonium.

Oliver digs in his pocket for change.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
I got it. I got it. What'cha want?

OLIVER
The hard pretzels.

VINCENT
Only thing I was looking at.

Vin puts coins in the slot.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Hit the buttons would ya. If I do it we'll end up with Twinkies.

Oliver keys in the selection.

OLIVER
If you hit it just right...you can...

Oliver hits the machine just as the bag of pretzels is about to drop.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
...get two for the price of one.

A second bag of pretzels drops down behind the first.

VINCENT
I'm impressed.

OLIVER
Yeah. Pretty cool.

Oliver grabs both bags, hands one to Vin.

VINCENT
That's stealing though.

Oliver thinks about it. A NURSE pops her head into the room.

NURSE
Mr. Canatella, it's about that time.

Vin rushes off.

VINCENT
I'm coming.

Oliver stands there, eating his pretzels. He digs into his pockets, grabs some change and slips it in the coin slot. He walks off.

INT. LABOR & DELIVERY ROOM - LATER

Charisse is in the final stages of giving birth. She's calm and focused. A DOCTOR between her legs calls out the final push. The BABY is crowning.

DOCTOR
One more time. Big breath. Big push.

CHARISSE
You said one more time last one more time.

DOCTOR
This time I mean it. You're almost there.

Charisse pushes. And...a BABY is born. The doctor does his thing, suctioning, inspecting.

CHARISSE
Let me see.

The doctor holds her up.

DOCTOR
Here she is.

The baby cries. A Nurse offers Vin a scissors to cut the umbilical cord.

NURSE
You want to do the honors?

VINCENT
I'm a little shaky. Let a professional handle that.

The Nurse cuts the cord.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
What is she? Black, white, in between.

CHARISSE
Get him outta here.

Vin defends himself.

VINCENT
What's wrong with asking?

CHARISSE
Get out of here.

Vin walks off. Mumbles.

VINCENT
All doped up. No sense 'a humor.

The doctor rests the baby on Charisse's bosom.

CHARISSE
Come here. My little princess.
Let mommy hold ya.

INT. VIN'S HOUSE - ANOTHER DAY

A "family" dinner. Charisse is serving a homemade meal of spaghetti and green beans. Fancy it's not.

Oliver and Ozinski sit on one side of the table. Maggie on the opposite side. The baby's in a bassinet, set within a high chair. And Vin is in the captain's seat.

VINCENT
(re: the food)
It's colorful. I'll say that.

CHARISSE
How 'bout you don't say nothing.

MAGGIE
I love green beans.

Oliver jumps in.

OLIVER
You do?

MAGGIE
Sure. Don't get 'em that often.

OZINSKI
My ma makes 'em out of the can.

VINCENT
That's why your brain is stilted.

Charisse sits. Vin starts to dig in.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Well. Beats Spam. By a hair.

Everyone just stares at him.

OLIVER
Don't you want to say something?

VINCENT
Like what?

OLIVER
A blessing or something.

Vin thinks.

VINCENT
Nope.

EXT. VIN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The camera floats past the "fixed" fence and up into the atmosphere above Van Nuys.

VINCENT (O.S.)
You waiting for an invitation?
This crap ain't good enough to eat
cold.

FADE TO BLACK.

The end.