

Pseudonym

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"PSEUDONYM"

ACT I**SCENE I**

FADE IN:

MONTAGE - AROUND NEW YORK CITY

Lady Liberty looms over New York harbor, as cargo boats pass by on the open waters.

Inside of the New York Stock Exchange, brokers take the floor, ready for the start of another busy day.

Yellow taxi cabs drive on the congested streets, as they arrive at a stop light, and halt. A throng of pedestrians comes INTO VIEW, as tye steadily and swiftly cross.

The top of the Empire State Building towers over the city's skyline.

A street vendor hand a warm cup of coffee to a woman, who hands him a dollar, thanks him, and departs OUT OF VIEW.

A truck stands parked outside, as two men start to unload some of the ware from today's delivery.

END MONTAGE

INT. WILLS' APARTMENT - JEFFREY'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

JEFFREY WILLS sleeps serenely in his unlit bedroom. Suddenly, the bedroom light goes on and the VOICE of Jeffrey's mother, KATHY WILLS, emerges.

KATHY (O.S.)

(aloud)

Good morning sunshine, time to get up! You've gotta catch the train to Grandma's.

A groggy Jeffrey slowly rises from his bed, as he tiredly heads toward the bathroom, while Kathy puts the finishing touches on his packing.

INT. WILLS' APARTMENT - BATHROOM - MORNING

Jeffrey stands at the sink, as he takes his toothbrush, puts some toothpaste on it, and starts to practice good oral hygiene.

Enter a VOICE OVER of Jeffrey.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

That's me, Jeffrey Wills. Most people call me Jeff. That was my mom, Kathleen. She's raised me since the age of four, after she split with my father. We see each other from time to time, but he's mostly out of the picture. We've relied on each other since.

(beat)

I'm your typical neer-do-well teenager and recent high-school graduate. My future's up in the air right now, so I have a job bussing tables at a local greasy spoon. I'm going to visit my Grandma in Boston for Labor Day weekend. Little do I know that my life is about to change in ways I never imagined.

Jeff, now finished washing up, grabs his bags, and heads toward the front door, where Kathy awaits him.

KATHY

All set to go?

JEFFREY

Yup.

FADE OUT.

SCENE II

FADE IN:

EXT. LOCAL TRAIN STATION (NEW YORK CITY) - CORNER STEPS
BEHIND PLATFORM - EARLY MORNING

A young, aspiring journalist, LIONEL BENNETT, tentatively walks up the steps of the train station, carefully reviewing his most recent work.

LIONEL
(reads paper)
And if we are to progress
into...Hey, is that a double space?

Suddenly Lionel bumps into a HOMELESS MAN, and drops his paper on the ground.

LIONEL
I'm terribly sorry.

HOMELESS MAN
Hey, that's okay. Hey, my man, can
I ask you something?

LIONEL
Sure. But make it quick. I've got a
train to catch.

HOMELESS MAN
This won't take long, my friend.
Could you spare a buck? I really
need a cuppa coffee.

LIONEL
(digs into his pants
pocket, pulls out wallet
and looks in it)
I think I have a dollar in here
some...

Suddenly, the Homeless Man pulls out a knife, and slits Lionel's throat from ear to ear. Lionel falls to the ground and is dead. The Homeless Man looks down at Lionel's lifeless body, then leans over the body, takes out his wallet and places it in his coat. The Homeless Man then takes the body and places it underneath some loose boards under the subway's platform. He then dashes OUT OF VIEW.

LIONEL'S PAPER

Entitled " A WORLDLY PERSPECTIVE" by Lionel Bennet, lies listlessly on the ground. Suddenly, the wind picks up and blows off the front page of the paper, while the remainder stays on the ground. The wind again picks up, as the rest of the paper blows away.

EXT. FRONT LOCAL TRAIN STATION (NEW YORK CITY) - EARLY MORNING

KATHY'S CAR

Pulls up to the front of the train station. The passenger seat door opens, as Jeff, with bag in hand, emerges INTO VIEW, as he goes around the car to say goodbye to his mother.

JEFFREY

Well, here's my stop.

KATHY

Do you have your ticket?

JEFFREY

(presents ducat)

Affirmative.

KATHY

I packed some bread and put some cold cuts on ice in your bag. Tell Grandma their from me. Please handle with care.

JEFFREY

Will do.

KATHY

Tell your Grandma I said hi and have a good time.

Kathy smiles at Jeffrey, as he leans over to give her a goodbye kiss.

JEFFREY

(tender)

I love you, Mom.

KATHY

Love you too, baby.

EXT. LOCAL TRAIN STATION (NEW YORK CITY) - PLATFORM - EARLY MORNING

Jeffrey appears INTO VIEW, as he walks along the platform.

JEFFREY'S SHOE

Trots along the platform, as one of the shoelaces comes untied.

Jeffrey stoops down and re-ties his shoelace, when he soon notices something.

JEFF'S POV

LIONEL'S PAPER

Lies on the concrete of the platform.

BACK TO SCENE

A curious Jeff picks up the paper and starts to peruse it when the VOICE of the CONDUCTOR emerges.

CONDUCTOR (V.O.)
(over intercom; aloud)
Boarding from New York to Boston!

Jeff quickly lifts his head and turns, as he picks up the paper and departs OUT OF VIEW to board the train.

MONTAGE - JEFFREY'S TRAIN RIDE

Jeffrey finds his seat with the help of an attendant, as he gets comfortable.

Jeffrey's seat neighbor, a genial-looking old man, sits down next to Jeffrey, as the two amiably shake hands.

Jeffrey closely and quietly peruses the essay paper.

Jeffrey takes a respite from reading, as he gazes outside of the train's window, watching the quickly-elapsing scenery.

Jeffrey continues to read the essay paper, when he intuits something and looks up. The man sitting next to him has fallen asleep, with his head on Jeff's shoulder. He SNORES and saliva starts to trickle down his lips. A repulsed Jeff quickly moves away and the man leans over and HITS his head on the seat and awakens. Jeffrey looks on in feign concern at the man.

Jeffrey is finished reading the essay paper, as the train has reached the station in Boston.

END MONTAGE

FADE OUT.

SCENE III

FADE IN

EXT. LOCAL TRAIN STATION (BOSTON) - PLATFORM - LATE AFTERNOON

Passengers start to debark from the train, as Jeffery enters INTO VIEW, bag in hand, when he quickly spots someone.

JEFFREY'S POV

JEFFREY'S GRANDMOTHER

OLIVIA CANCEL, stands on the station platform, as she smiles warmly at Jeffrey.

BACK TO SCENE

A beaming Jeffrey approaches his Grandma, drops his bag, and enfolds her in a warm embrace.

JEFFREY
(tender)
Hey, Nana.

OLIVIA
(lovingly)
How are ya, Jeffrey baby?

The two release each other, as they start to walk out of the station.

OLIVIA
Are you hungry, Jeff?

JEFFREY
Let's just say if we were on a
deserted island, you'd be in
trouble.

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT (BOSTON) - LATE AFTERNOON

The apartment is empty, as the LOCKS on the front door begin to CLICK, as the door opens, with Olivia and Jeffrey appear INTO VIEW.

JEFFREY
 (looks around apartment)
 My goodness, your apartment always
 looks the same, Nana.

OLIVIA (O.S.)
 Oh dear, you know I've never needed
 too much around me.

Jeffrey takes a seat at the dining room table, as Olivia
 returns INTO VIEW, with a tray in tow.

OLIVIA
 (happily places down tray)
 I made your favorite, sweetie.

JEFFREY
 (looks happily at tray)
 Ah, Nan. You make the best grilled
 cheese sandwiches.

OLIVIA
 Your mother's are pretty good.

Jeffrey looks warily at his grandma, as she gives a slight
 grin.

JEFFREY
 (with mouth full)
 I never get tired of these.

OLIVIA
 Just you wait. I'm making chicken
 pot pie tomorrow.

JEFFREY
 You are too good.

Olivia places her hand on Jeffrey's, as small talk ceases.

OLIVIA
 Jeffy?

JEFFREY
 Yes, Nana?

OLIVIA
 How are you?

JEFFREY
 (with mouth full)
 Fine.

OLIVIA

No dear. What I meant to ask is,
how are things?

JEFFREY

Okay, I guess.

OLIVIA

Are you sure?

JEFFREY

Pretty much. I just wake up, go to
work, come home, eat dinner, and go
to sleep.

(beat)

I mean, I try to hang out with a
couple of my friends. But they're
all in college or working.

OLIVIA

That's what I mean, Jeffy. Have you
ever given any thought to your
future?

JEFFREY

Well, not really. I've never had a
definite plan or goal in mind.
Guess that makes me a loser, eh?

OLIVIA

(indignant)

Jeffery Alan Wills, don't you evah
say that about yourself. You are a
smart and talented young man. You
just haven't found your calling in
life.

JEFFREY

And what if I...

OLIVIA

(adamantly intervenes)

Never say can't, don't, or won't.
You might as well dig your own
grave.

(beat)

Look at me, Jeffrey. Every person
is, was, and will be put on this
earth by God for a purpose. What
that purpose is makes the journey
of life all the more special and
rewarding.

JEFFREY

But Nana, I don't think you
under...

OLIVIA

(intervenes)

Yes, I do understand. You're still
coping with your parents' divorce,
trying to determine your future,
and want to be able to handle it
all.

(beat)

You are one of scores of
adolescents trying to make their
way in this crazy world. And you
can and you will.

JEFFREY

How can you tell?

OLIVIA

(confident)

There's nothing to tell. I just
know.

(beat)

Did I ever tell you about Grandpa?

JEFFREY

(confounded)

What about Grandpa?

OLIVIA

(reflective)

God rest his soul, he was one of a
kind. After he graduated high
school, he went off to fight in
Korea. When he came home, he had
absolutely no direction. That was
until he saw an ad in the paper for
an electrician's aid.

(beat)

He took the job and soon rose
through the ranks. By his fourth
year, he was head electrician. He
worked all over: Fenway Park, the
public library, Fanuel Hall, even
the Boston Garden.

JEFFREY

Incredible.

OLIVIA

We met at a construction site. I was passing by on my way to the bakery, when he spotted me. We got to talking, and the rest is history.

JEFFREY

Did he like being an electrician?

OLIVIA

He loved it. The hours were long, but goodness, he always found the time for you mother and I.

(beat)

We did go on vacations to Florida and had a Carribean cruise, but he never had wander lust.

JEFFREY

But did he love his life?

OLIVIA

In every way. When he was on his death bed, he told me if he had the chance to do it all over, he wouldn't even have thought twice.

(beat)

He had a job he enjoyed, a family he loved, was a wonderful provider, and always did the right thing.

JEFFREY

I sure miss him a lot.

OLIVIA

And boy, did he love you. When you mother and father split, the first person he asked about was you.

(beat)

He always said you would be something special. And so do I.

JEFFREY

I sure hope so.

OLIVIA

You will, dear. But just remember that no matter where you go in life, who you meet, or what you achieve, always stay true.

JEFFREY

I will.

OLIVIA

All this chat has made me thirsty.
Whadya say we have some hot
chocolate?

JEFFREY

Sounds great.

Olivia and Jeffrey get up from the table and head OUT OF VIEW into the kitchen.

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT - GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jeffrey lays in bed, reading the essay paper, when there is a KNOCK on the bedroom DOOR. A startled Jeffrey vaults up and starts to flail about. He takes the essay paper and swiftly places it under a pillow.

JEFFREY

(frantic)

Just a minute!

The door opens, as Olivia gently enters.

JEFFREY

Nana.

OLIVIA

Just came by to say good night. How
are you?

JEFFREY

Okay. Listen I...

OLIVIA

(softly intervenes)

No, let me. Jeffy, I just wanna
apologize for how I came off
tonight.

(beat)

It's just that as your grandmother,
I want what's best for you, and
especially for you to believe in
yourself.

JEFFREY

I know, Nana. Whatever happens,
just know that you will always be
in my thoughts, words, and actions.

OLIVIA

Ditto, baby.

(beat)

Hey, I know this great diner on Sullivan Street. Pancakes like feathers. Whadya say?

JEFFREY

I'd like that.

OLIVIA

Word to the wise. The diner gets crowded early, so get some sleep.

(kisses him on cheek)

Sweet dreams, honey.

JEFFREY

(kisses her)

Good night, Nana.

Olivia smiles warmly at her grandson, and slowly egresses OUT OF VIEW from the bedroom. Jeffrey takes the essay paper out from underneath the pillow and stares pensively at it.

He then places it on the night stand next to his bed. Jeffrey then turns off the lamp on the night stand, as everything FADES TO BLACK.

FADE OUT.

SCENE IV

FADE IN

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT - GUEST BEDROOM - MORNING

CLOSEUP - JEFFREY'S SLEEPING FACE

As his eyes start to blink. Jeffrey soon rises from his slumber, as he grunts, stretches his arms, and rubs his eyes. He then looks over at the night stand.

The essay paper is missing.

An alarmed Jeffrey vaults out of bed and quickly exits from the bedroom.

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Olivia is serenely watering one of her plants, when she is interrupted by Jeffrey.

JEFFREY

(nervous)

Nana, nana. Where is it?

OLIVIA

(sarcastic)

Well, good morning to you, too.

(calmly)

Just take it easy. Where is what, honey?

JEFFREY

A paper. An essay paper. Did you see it?

OLIVIA

I sure did.

JEFFREY

(relieved)

Oh, thank God. Can I have it back?

OLIVIA

(waters plant)

Sorry, can't do that.

JEFFREY

(confounded)

What?

OLIVIA

I can't give it back to you, because I don't have it.

JEFFREY

Then who does?

OLIVIA

Harvard.

JEFFREY

Oh well, that's...

(nervous)

Harvard!

OLIVIA

That's right, Jeffy. While you were asleep, I found it on your night stand, took it, and drove down to Harvard.

(beat)

(MORE)

OLIVIA (cont'd)
I'm good friends with a secretary there, and she gave it to the Dean of Admissions. He wants to meet with you tomorrow morning.

JEFFREY
But...

OLIVIA
No buts. Just yours going to Harvard first thing tomorrow morning.
(beat)
Hey, you still on for breakfast?

JEFFREY
(uncertain)
I guess.

OLIVIA
Then let's roll.

Olivia grabs her grandson's arm and gently pulls him forward.

INT. LOCAL DINER (BOSTON) - CORNER BOOTH - MORNING

Olivia and Jeffrey are enjoying breakfast inside a bustling diner, as they start to converse.

OLIVIA
I'm so happy. Why didn't you tell me you were a writer?

JEFFREY
Well, Nan, it's just that...

OLIVIA
(softly intervenes)
You know, my neighbor's nephew is a mystery writer. He just signed a deal with Simon & Schuster for one hundred thousand. Food for thought.

Olivia takes a bite of her toast, while Jeffrey takes a sip of orange juice.

JEFFREY
Nan, do you really think I have a shot at getting into Harvard?

OLIVIA
I'll bet my life on it. The sound of that woman's voice told me everything I need to know.
(MORE)

OLIVIA (cont'd)

(beat)

I want you to do me a favor. When you go in there tomorrow, I want you to look them straight in the eye, answer every question as best you can, and ALWAYS say yes, I can.

JEFFREY

I will.

OLIVIA

I spoke to your mom. She is beside herself. Looks like you'll be stayin' a little longer, kid.

(beat)

And I couldn't be happier.

JEFFREY

Are you sure Mom is okay with this?

OLIVIA

Absolutely. You'll be getting a train ticket in the mail to go back to New York to get your stuff.

JEFFREY

Are you sure you're okay with this?

OLIVIA

I wouldn't want it any other way. I don't get to see you that much, so I cherish every chance I get.

Olivia smiles at her grandson, as the two share a quiet subtle moment.

OLIVIA

How about we finish breakfast and I take you around Hanover Street?

JEFFREY

I'd like that.

The two continue eating breakfast, as they talk amongst themselves.

FADE OUT.

SCENE V

FADE IN:

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT - GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jeffrey is lying in bed, as he stares pensively up at the ceiling. Suddenly, there is a KNOCK at the DOOR.

JEFFREY

Come in.

The door opens, as Olivia appears, with tea cup in hand.

JEFFREY

(slightly surprised)

Nan, what are you doing up?

OLIVIA

I was about to ask you the same thing.

JEFFREY

I'm having a little trouble sleeping.

OLIVIA

Same here.

(beat)

Does this have something to do with tomorrow?

JEFFREY

What if it is?

OLIVIA

I think I have just the thing.

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - LATE NIGHT

PLATE OF PECAN SANDIES

Rests idly on a table. A HAND comes INTO VIEW, and picks one up.

OLIVIA AND JEFFREY

Sit at the kitchen table, enjoying a late-night snack and making small talk.

JEFFREY

(with mouth full)

These are the best cookies I've ever tasted.

OLIVIA

Why, thank you. I got the recipe from a friend of mine. She owned a bakery in Brainbridge.

(beat)

I'd go to her bakery from time to time. She told me the only thing she ever wanted was to be a baker.

(takes a sip of her tea)

She had juvenile arthritis, and no one ever thought she'd realize her dream. Everyone but her. She ran that bakery for sixty years.

JEFFREY

What happened to her?

OLIVIA

She passed away a few years ago. The woman was as sweet as the goodies she baked. But, most importantly, she realized her dream.

(takes a sip of tea; beat)

And I know you'll do just fine tomorrow and so on.

(lifts her glass)

A toast, to a new and brilliant future.

Jeffrey lifts his glass, as he and Olivia CLICK their GLASSES.

MONTAGE - AROUND HARVARD

The famed ivy hangs on the brick, as the Harvard school shield and motto display prominently.

Students, dressed in their appropriate school attire, head toward their next class.

Harvard Square is rife with students, as they socialize and study amongst themselves.

END MONTAGE

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - ADMISSIONS OFFICE - RECEPTION AREA - MORNING

Jeffrey sits pensively in his chair, as he waits to be called in for his appointment. The VOICE of the RECEPTIONIST suddenly emerges.

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)
Mr. Wills, Dean Crawford will see you now.

An alert Jeffrey quickly vaults out of his seat and gathers himself, as he heads into the office, but not before the Receptionist calls out to him.

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)
Hey.

Jeffrey stops and turns to the Receptionist.

RECEPTIONIST
(kindly)
Best of luck in there.

The Receptionist smiles warmly at Jeffrey. Jeffrey reciprocates and enters OUT OF VIEW.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - DEAN CRAWFORD'S OFFICE - MORNING

Jeffrey sits pensively and alone in a chair in Dean Crawford's office.

OFFICE DOOR

Slowly begins to open, as DEAN THEODORE CRAWFORD enters his office, as he gently closes the door and approaches his desk. He looks seriously at Jeffrey.

JEFFREY

Looks alarmed but composed at Dean Crawford.

Dean Crawford breaks the ice.

DEAN CRAWFORD
(stern)
So, you're Jeffrey Wills?

JEFFREY
(coy)
Yes, Sir.

DEAN CRAWFORD

And from what I understand you submitted an application in hopes of being accepted as a student here?

JEFFREY

(coy)
Yes, sir.

DEAN CRAWFORD

(stern; snobbish)
Well, may I be the first to remind you that not just anyone can get into Harvard.

(beat)
We have proudly upheld a standard of educational excellence for over three hundred and fifty years.

Jeffrey nods nervously, as Dean Crawford continues

DEAN CRAWFORD

All of our faculty and students are strongly expected to continue that tradition now and in the future.

(beat)
We accept only the finest and freshest of young minds into our exclusive institution.

(beat)
So, I want you to pose this query to yourself as I ask you this: Do you feel that you are Harvard material?

Dean Crawford stops and looks intently at Jeffrey. Jeffrey leans up from his chair, looks straight at Dean Crawford and answers.

JEFFREY

(bold; confident)
Yes, I am.

DEAN CRAWFORD

(rises from his chair)
Well, it is quite refreshing to see your self-confidence.

(pulls out and presents essay paper)
I've read your essay paper. Word for word.

(MORE)

DEAN CRAWFORD (cont'd)
 And if your writing is any
 indication of your chances of being
 accepted to Harvard, let me be the
 first to tell you...

Jeffrey braces himself for Dean Crawford's ensuing words.

DEAN CRAWFORD
 (warmly extends his hand)
 Congratulations! You have just been
 accepted as a student to Harvard
 University.

Jeffrey, still taken aback by the news, takes a moment to
 register, then rises to shake Dean Crawford's hand.

JEFFREY
 Thank you very much, Dean Crawford.

DEAN CRAWFORD
 Please, call me Ted. I've come
 across some very fine works during
 my tenure here. But seldom have I
 seen a writer who has so
 articulately, truthfully, and
 concisely presented the current
 times of our society than you.

JEFFREY
 Thank you.

DEAN CRAWFORD
 I've also shown your paper to our
 Literature department. They are
 simply ecstatic.
 (beat)
 Not only do I see a scholarship but
 a future that sees endless
 possibilities.
 (extends his hand)
 Again, congratulations and the best
 of luck to you.

Jeffrey firmly shakes Dean Crawford's hand, as Jeffrey is
 officially a Harvard student.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT I

ACT IISCENE VI

FADE IN:

INT. GRANDMA'S APARTMENT - GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jeffrey is busy packing his bags, as he prepares to head back home. There is a KNOCK on the bedroom DOOR. Jeffrey ceases packing and goes to answer the door. It's Grandma.

JEFFREY

(slightly surprised)
Grandma, what are you doing up this late?

OLIVIA

Just wanted to see how the packing was going.

JEFFREY

Pretty good. I'm almost done.

OLIVIA

(wistful)
You know, the hardest part of having you here is seeing you go.

JEFFREY

(slightly embarrassed)
Nana, I'm coming back next week.

OLIVIA

Sorry. Just part of being a grandmother.
(beat)
My goodness. My own grandson going to Harvard.

JEFFREY

I'm just as shocked as you are.

OLIVIA

Why should you be? Haven't I told you that everyone finds their calling in life?
(beat)
And now you've found yours. Say, I know a great place where they have root beer floats that are out of this world.

JEFFREY

You've got yourself a date.

OLIVIA

(looks at clock on wall)

My, it's getting late. Why don't ya finish up tomorrow?

JEFFREY

I guess it can wait. Gotta be ready for the train.

OLIVIA

(concerned)

That's my boy. Are you alright, honey?

JEFFREY

(slightly worried)

Yeah. I'm just a little nervous. I mean last night I was on a road to nowhere, and now I'm on my way to Harvard.

(beat)

It's as alarming as it is wonderful.

OLIVIA

(comforting)

Oh, Jeff. Every new experience comes with first time jitters. But the best part is, we can all acclimate to it.

(beat)

And with you, I know that will be no problem at all.

JEFFREY

(slightly cheery)

You're the best picker-upper around, Nana.

OLIVIA

I'm your grandma, it's my job.

Olivia and Jeffrey share a broad smile, as they warmly embrace. Jeffrey then braces to tell his Grandma something.

JEFFREY

(looks straight at Olivia)

Nana, there's something I have to tell you.

OLIVIA
 (yawns tiredly)
 Oh, can it wait 'til tomorrow,
 Dear? I'm beat.

Olivia kisses Jeffrey good night and exits OUT OF VIEW from the bedroom, as a lingering Jeffrey watches her leave.

EXT. LOCAL TRAIN STATION (NEW YORK CITY) - PLATFORM - DAY

The train from Boston pulls into the station and stops. Debarking passengers enter INTO VIEW, as Jeffrey, with bags in hand, steps on the platform. He soon sees someone.

KATHY

Stands a few feet away, as she smiles warmly at her son.

Jeffrey smiles, as he buoyantly approaches his mother and embraces her.

INT. KATHY'S APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

Kathy and Jeffrey sit in the dining room, as they look over the Harvard acceptance slips.

KATHY
 I'm so proud of you. I don't think we've ever had an Ivy Leaguer in the family, much less a college graduate.

JEFFREY
 And the best thing is, I can stay at Nana's instead of dorming.

KATHY
 Did you speak to her about it?

JEFFREY
 Yes. She's thrilled. I've even offered to help out with the rent payments.

KATHY
 And?

JEFFREY
 She said it's out of the question.

KATHY
 How are your classes?

JEFFREY

(packs his things)
I haven't received my schedule yet.
Not too much math and science.
Thank God.

KATHY

(hands him some clothes)
I'm sure whatever they are, you'll
do great.

Jeffrey smiles faintly at his mother, as he continues packing.

JEFFREY

Have you heard from Dad?

KATHY

Not a word. I left a message at the
apartment and office.

Jeffrey, visibly disappointed, hangs his head, as his mother rapidly chimes in.

KATHY

I'm sure he'll call back to tell
you how proud he is.

(beat)

We all are

(beat)

How's the packing comin' along?

JEFFREY

Almost finished. Just have one more
draw and then a few thermals.

KATHY

Just do as much as you can and get
some sleep. We've got a busy day
tomorrow.

Kathy kisses Jeffrey on the forehead.

KATHY

Love ya, kid.

Kathy exits OUT OF VIEW, as Jeffrey hesitates, then goes back to packing.

FADE OUT.

SCENE VII

FADE IN:

MONTAGE - AROUND NEW YORK CITY

Kathy and Jeffrey walk around Times Square, as the massive advertisements loom over them.

Kathy and Jeffrey take in a matinee on Broadway, as they watch the actors perform.

At the Metropolitan Museum of Art, mother and son look at a piece of abstract art, as they awkwardly tilt their heads to get a better angle.

On a bench in Central Park, Kathy and Jeffrey sit and munch on some hot dogs.

END MONTAGE

EXT. SERENDIPITY'S ICE CREAM PARLOR - TABLE - LATE AFTERNOON

Mother and son enjoy hot fudge sundaes, as their day out is coming to a close. The two indulge and reflect.

KATHY

(takes a spoonful of ice
cream)

No matter how old I get, I always
look forward to having one of
these.

(witty)

I don't think you'll find ice cream
like this in Boston.

Kathy smiles at Jeffrey. Jeffrey looks pensively down at his sundae, as he slowly fiddles with his spoon.

KATHY (O.S.)

Jeffrey, honey?

Jeffrey, his attention redirected, looks up from his sundae at his mother.

JEFFREY

I'm sorry.

Kathy, slightly concerned, puts her hands on her son's, as she tries to see what's wrong.

KATHY
(concerned)
Is everything okay?

JEFFREY
(slightly worried)
Just thinkin' about tomorrow.

KATHY
(stern)
Dear, look at me.

Jeffrey looks straight at his mother.

KATHY
(reaffirming)
Jeffrey, I want you to do one thing
and one thing only for me. I want
you to go to Harvard and to do the
best you can. Nothing more, nothing
less.
(beat)
And remember that no matter what, I
am so proud to call you my son.

JEFFREY
Thanks, Mom.

Jeffrey slightly smiles, as he and his mom share a moment of
silence.

KATHY
I'm sorry, Jeffrey, but my sundae's
melting.

Jeffrey grins, as he and his mother start to laugh and
continue eating their ice cream.

INT. KATHY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The apartment is pitch-black, as the SOUND of the FRONT DOOR
UNLOCKING permeates through the apartment. A light comes on,
as Kathy and Jeffrey have just returned from a long and
memorable day.

JEFFREY
(plops down on the sofa)
Wow, what a day.

Kathy appears, as she settles down next to her son.

KATHY

Well, I just thought your last day here should be a memorable one.

JEFFREY

Thanks, Mom. I don't deserve you.

Jeffrey tenderly kisses his mother.

KATHY

Hey, why don't ya check the messages. Maybe Dad called.

JEFFREY

Oh, yeah.

Jeffrey quickly rises from the sofa, as he heads over to the phone to check the answering machine. He picks up the receiver and dials the number.

ANSWERING MACHINE VOICE (V.O.)

You have no new messages in your mailbox. Main menu...

Jeffrey looks despondently, as he slowly hangs up. He walks back to the sofa, as Kathy attempts to console him.

KATHY

(sensitive)

You okay?

(beat)

I'm sure he woulda called.

JEFFREY

(despondent; slightly choked up)

Yeah, so did I. I just don't understand.

KATHY

(warmly hugs Jeffrey)

I've tried to understand him all my life. Sometimes you just have to let go.

EXT. LOCAL TRAIN STATION (NEW YORK CITY) - PLATFORM - MORNING

Families and couples alike hug, kiss, and say their final farewells. Kathy and Jeffrey, luggage in tow, look fondly at each other.

KATHY

(wistful)

Never thought I'd have to do this.
I guess there's a first time for
everything.

JEFFREY

Mom, it'll be okay. I'll be with
Nana and I'll call often.

KATHY

(slightly choked up)

Sorry, hon. Just being a mom.

JEFFREY

It's okay. Do you want me to bring
you anything back? How about a pot
of baked beans and a Red Sox cap?

KATHY

I'll take the beans, but nix the
cap. Yankees, baby.

Jeffrey gives a slight grin, as he turns around towards the
train, then back to his mother.

JEFFREY

Looks like everyone's starting to
board. I better start to head off.

Jeffrey smiles at his mother, as they share one last moment
together.

JEFFREY

Well, I guess this means goodbye.

KATHY

Just remember to study hard, have
some fun, keep outta trouble, and
give 'em hell.

(beat)

Love ya, kid.

The two enfold in a warm embrace, as they look warmly at one
another, as Kathy gives her son a kiss.

Jeffrey takes his luggage, as he makes his way towards the
train. An attendant takes Jeffrey's bags and places them in
the train's side compartment. Jeffrey then hands his ticket
to the attendant, as they both board.

TRAIN

Starts to move slowly along the tracks, as the WHISTLE BLOWS, and it starts to WHIRR along the tracks.

KATHY

Still on the platform, slowly follows the train.

TRAIN WINDOW

As Jeffrey appears, as he looks, points to his eye, then his heart, then to Kathy, indicating "I Love You".

KATHY

Now still, smiles warmly, as she watches the train depart. She then wipes a tear away from her eye.

MONTAGE - JEFFREY'S TRAIN RIDE

Jeffrey placidly looks out the window, as he turns to his left, to his seat partner, an elderly lady. He smiles warmly at her.

The Train Attendant brings the trays with food to Jeffrey and his elderly companion. Jeffrey takes his container of salad dressing, and is about to pour, when the train hits a bump, and the dressing spills all over his shirt.

The elderly lady tries to open her juice box, but has trouble inserting the straw. Jeffrey gladly volunteers, as he inserts the straw, as juice splatters all over his face. He then calmly hands the juice box back to the elderly lady.

Jeffrey looks out the train window, when he hears a NOISE. Jeffrey slowly turns around to see the elderly woman fast asleep and SNORING LOUDLY.

Moments later, Jeffrey finds himself between a seat and an old lady, as the elderly woman has now fell asleep on Jeffrey's lap. Jeffrey then digs into his coat pocket, as he pulls out his IPOD. He puts in his earpieces and is about to power it on, when he looks at the back of the device.

BATTERY LIGHT

Flashes red, indicating no power.

Jeffrey despondently rolls his eyes.

TRAIN

Continues on its way through the night.

END MONTAGE

EXT. LOCAL TRAIN STATION (BOSTON) - PLATFORM - NIGHT

TRAIN

Pulls into the station and comes to a complete stop. Train doors open, as passengers disembark from the train. Jeffrey, with luggage in tow, looks around the station.

JEFFREY'S POV

OLIVIA

Stands on the far end of the platform.

BACK TO SCENE

Jeffrey grins, as he makes his way over to Olivia. The two warmly embrace.

JEFFREY
(kisses Olivia)
Hey there, stranger. Miss me?

OLIVIA
Do you have to ask?

INT. GRANDMA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

FRONT DOOR OF APARTMENT

Opens, as Olivia and Jeffrey enter. Grandma flicks on the light switch, as Jeffrey places down his bags.

JEFFREY
So sorry you had to stay up past
your bed time.

OLIVIA
Oh, pshaw. Not like I'm goin'
anywhere far.
(beat)
Besides, it's nice to have some
company for a change.
(pinches his cheek)
Especially when it's you.

Olivia leads Jeffrey to the guest bedroom.

INT. GRANDMA'S APARTMENT - GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Olivia and Jeffrey enter the guest bedroom, as Jeffrey places down his luggage, and gets settled.

JEFFREY

(tired)

I think I'll unpack tomorrow.
Please get some sleep, Nana. You
must be exhausted.

OLIVIA

I'll be fine. Jeff, before I
retire, can I talk to you?

JEFFREY

Sure, Nana.

Jeff and Olivia sit down on the bed, as Olivia starts to converse.

OLIVIA

(soft)

Jeff, I want you to look at me.

Jeffrey looks straight at his Grandmother.

OLIVIA

(soft)

Tomorrow will be the biggest day of
your life. But no matter what
happens, just know that I am so
proud of you.

Jeffrey hesitates then looks directly AT THE CAMERA, then turns back to Olivia.

OLIVIA

Just listen to what they have to
say, look them straight in the eye,
and be yourself.

JEFFREY

Thanks, Nana. I'll try and make you
proud.

OLIVIA

(looks tenderly at him)

I know you will, sweetie.
(kisses him on the cheek)

(MORE)

OLIVIA (cont'd)
Get some sleep. You've got to be
fresh and ready.

Olivia exits OUT OF VIEW from the bedroom, as the DOOR CLOSES behind her.

INT. GRANDMA'S APARTMENT - GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jeffrey lies wide-awake in bed, as he stares up at the ceiling. Jeffrey rises from he bed, and heads over to the bedroom window and peers out.

JEFFREY'S WINDOW POV

WIDE ANGLE - BOSTON CITY SKYLINE

As buildings are lit, cars travel to and fro, and the air is crisp and silent.

BACK TO SCENE

Jeff continues to stare pensively out at the skyline.

FADE OUT.

SCENT VIII

FADE IN:

EXT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - PARKING LOT - DAY

GRANDMA'S CAR

Pulls into an empty parking space. Olivia and Jeffrey, both dressed formally, exit the car, as they close the doors behind them.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - ADMINISTRATIONS OFFICE - DAY

Olivia and Jeffrey slowly enter through the office doors, as they approach the SECRETARY seated at the desk.

SECRETARY
Good morning, how can I help you?

JEFFREY
Yes. My name is Jeffrey Wills. I
have an appointment with the Dean
of Admissions.

The Secretary checks the schedule for Jeffrey's name.

SECRETARY

(semi-excited)

Oh yes, Mister Wills. Dean Cromwell has been talking about you all morning. I'll notify him that you're here. Please, have a seat.

JEFFREY

Thank you very much.

Jeffrey and Olivia return to their seats, as they wait for Jeffrey to be called in. Jeffrey looks around the office.

WALLS OF OFFICE

Covered with multitudes of honorary plaques and profiles of past alumni.

Jeffrey cowers in his chair, intimidated by all of the honors. He whispers over to Olivia.

JEFFREY

(slightly worried; sotto voce)

Nana, look at all these awards. They have everything but an Emmy.

OLIVIA

(comforting; sotto voce)

Relax, dear. It's not the walls you look at, but the classrooms.

CLOCK ON OFFICE WALL

Reads nine-thirty.

SEGUE TO:

CLOCK ON OFFICE WALL

Now reads a quarter to eleven.

Olivia and Jeffrey are both asleep in their chairs, when the Secretary beckons them.

SECRETARY (O.S.)

(aloud)

Mister Wills?

Both Jeffrey and Olivia awaken, as they swiftly rise from their seats, as Jeffrey swiftly preens himself. Olivia kisses Jeffrey on the cheek.

OLIVIA
Good luck, hon.

SECRETARY
Dean Cromwell will now see you.
Second door to the left.

JEFFREY
Thank you.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - DEAN CROMWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

Jeffrey sits uncomfortably in a chair across from Dean Cromwell's desk, as he looks in awe at all of the awards festooning the office walls.

OFFICE DOOR

Slowly opens, as DEAN DAVID CROMWELL enters, as he looks sternly at Jeffrey. Dean Cromwell SLAMS some PAPERS down on his desk, as he takes a seat.

DEAN CROMWELL
(stern)
So, you're the Jeffrey Wills?

JEFFREY
(sheepish)
Yes, Sir.

DEAN CROMWELL
From my comprehension, you are applying to Harvard for a degree in literature?

JEFFREY
(coy)
Yes, Sir.

DEAN CROMWELL
(stern)
Well, I happened to read your work from front to back, and I have just one thing to say...

Jeffrey sits patiently, as he anxiously awaits Dean Cromwell's response.

DEAN CROMWELL

(elated)

And I have never been subjected to such articulation and brilliance in all of my time at this institution.

JEFFREY

(modest)

Thank you, Dean Cromwell.

DEAN CROMWELL

An individual of your intellectual capacity comes along once every generation. And it would be my great honor if you chose Harvard.

JEFFREY

Well, Dean Cromwell, I am glad that you hold my work in such high regard.

Suddenly, there is a KNOCK on the OFFICE DOOR.

DEAN CROMWELL

(polite)

Excuse me.

(calls out)

Please, enter.

The office door opens, as PROFESSOR FRANK LIPSON, Professor of English Literature at Harvard, enters.

PROFESSOR LIPSON

(hands papers to Dean Cromwell)

Excuse me, David, but here are the mid-quarter reports you requested.

DEAN CROMWELL

(takes papers)

Thank you, Frank.

(introduces Jeffrey)

Frank, please allow me to introduce one of the newest applicants to Harvard, Jeffrey Wills.

PROFESSOR LIPSON

(elated; extends his hand)

Oh, my. So you are the Jeffrey Wills David's been beaming about?

(beat)

(MORE)

PROFESSOR LIPSON (cont'd)
 Frank Lipson, Professor of English
 Lit. I sincerely hope you choose
 Harvard and it would be my honor to
 have you in my class.

JEFFREY
 (shakes his hand)
 Thank you, Professor Lipson.

PROFESSOR LIPSON
 (heads toward door)
 It was a pleasure meeting you,
 Jeffrey. Good day.

Professor Lipson exits OUT OF VIEW, as the door closes behind
 him. Dean Cromwell sits back down, as he continues with
 Jeffrey.

DEAN CROMWELL
 Well, Jeffrey, before we get down
 to business, I always try and get
 to know potential students. Please,
 tell me about yourself.

JEFFREY
 (slightly flustered)
 Wow, where do I start? Well, I've
 lived in New York all of my life.
 I'm an only child. My parents
 divorced when I was ten. I
 currently live with my mother, and
 graduated high school two years
 ago.

DEAN CRAWFORD
 I'm sorry to hear of you parents'
 separation. It must have had a
 profound effect on you.

JEFFREY
 Yes, in its own way.

DEAN CROMWELL
 Yes, you happened to mention the
 irreparable impact of divorce on
 social, economic, and psychological
 aspects in society in your essay.

JEFFREY
 (in faux-comprehension)
 Oh, yes. I wanted it to appear that
 way.

DEAN CROMWELL

Yes, quite insightful, indeed. If I may ask, what books or authors inspired you in your formative years?

JEFFREY

Well, one of the frequent readings when I was younger were comic books.

DEAN CROMWELL

Oh... Though not an avid reader of them myself, I can certainly attest that they foster and develop the imagination and creative aspects of the mind. Any others?

JEFFREY

Well, there was that one book about that angry kid who runs away from home. I forget the name...

DEAN CROMWELL

Catcher In The Rye?

JEFFREY

Yes, that's the one.

DEAN CROMWELL

I am quite fond of Salinger myself.

JEFFREY

Who?

DEAN CROMWELL

J.D. Salinger. He wrote the novel.

JEFFREY

Oh, yeah.

DEAN CROMWELL

Please, Jeffrey. Tell me more about your life and writings.

Jeffrey continues to talk with Dean Cromwell.

INT. HAVARD UNIVERSITY - ADMISSIONS OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Olivia sits pensively in a chair, as she waits for Jeffrey.

OFFICE DOOR

Slowly opens, as Jeffrey appears, a solemn look on his face. He walks over to Olivia, as she hugs him.

OLIVIA
(curious; sotto voce)
How'd it go?

JEFFREY
(sotto voce; solemn)
I'll tell you in the car.

OLIVIA
(concerned; sotto voce)
Are you okay?

JEFFREY
(sotto voce)
I'll tell you in the car.

Olivia and Jeffrey say good bye and thank the Secretary before they depart.

EXT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - PARKING LOT - ESTABLISHING SHOT -
AFTERNOON

OLIVIA'S CAR

Remains parked in its space.

CUT TO:

INT. OLIVIA'S CAR - FRONT SEAT - AFTERNOON

Olivia and Jeffrey sit silent.

OLIVIA
Jeffrey, could you please tell me
how it went?

Jeffrey turns to Olivia, looks sullen at her, then responds.

JEFFREY
(exclaims)
I got in!!

Jeffrey enfolds Olivia in a warm embrace.

EXT. DIPPITY DOTTY'S ICE CREAM PARLOR - ESTABLISHING SHOT -
AFTERNOON

People enjoy ice cream on a warm August day.

CUT TO:

INT. DIPPITY DOTTY'S ICE CREAM PARLOR - AFTERNOON

A Waitress appears INTO VIEW, as she places down to banana splits on the table where Olivia and Jeffrey are sitting. Olivia kindly thanks the Waitress, who exits OUT OF VIEW. Olivia and Jeffrey dig in.

OLIVIA

This is the best banana split I've ever had. Thanks for treating, Harvard man.

JEFFREY

(embarrassed)
Nana.

OLIVIA

(takes a spoon of ice cream)
I see nothing but blue skies ahead for you. A full scholarship.

JEFFREY

I still can't believe it.

OLIVIA

Mom and Dad will be so proud.

JEFFREY

(somber)
At least mom.

OLIVIA

(consoling)
Jeff, I know your father hasn't always been there since the divorce. This could be the catalyst for the healing of your relationship.

(beat)
Just give it time.

JEFFREY

Thanks, Nana.

OLIVIA
So, when does your first semester
start?

JEFFREY
August twenty-ninth.

OLIVIA
Wow, that starts in less than a
week. Better take a bite out of the
Big Apple while you still can.

JEFFREY
Tell me about it. I'll sure miss
the taste of Grey Papaya hot dogs.

OLIVIA
Don't you worry. I'm a walking
Zagat's for the Boston area.

JEFFREY
Nana, thanks for coming with me
today.

OLIVIA
Any time, dear. That was actually
my first time ever at Cambridge.
Beautiful town.
(beat)
Whadya we enjoy these before they
melt?

Olivia and Jeffrey continue to converse, as they enjoy their
sweet treats.

FADE OUT.

SCENE IX

FADE IN:

EXT. SKYLINE (NEW YORK CITY) - ESTABLISHING SHOT - AFTERNOON

The scorching summer sun looms over Gotham.

CUT TO:

INT. KATHY'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

The apartment is still, as the FRONT DOOR slowly begins to UNLOCK. The door opens, as Kathy and a haggard Jeffrey enter. Jeffrey places his luggage on the floor and plops down on the living room sofa.

KATHY
Just kick back and unwind. I'll
make ya a sandwich.

Kathy exits OUT OF VIEW into the kitchen. Jeffrey lies inert on the sofa.

KATHY (O.S.)
(calls out)
Jeff, do ya want pickles with your
sandwich?

JEFFREY
(calls out)
Yes, please.

Jeffrey gives a big yawn, as Kathy appears INTO VIEW, tray of food in hands, as she places it down on the coffee table. Jeffrey rises, as he starts to dig in.

JEFFREY
(takes a bite of sandwich;
mouth half full)
You make the best pastrami
sandwich, Mom. What's your secret?

KATHY
Toast the bread on both sides, and
put the mustard on after two
minutes. You'll get the hang of
it... College man.

A moment of silence ensues, as Kathy looks at Jeffrey with a warm smile.

KATHY
(tender)
My only baby, going to college on a
full scholarship.
(slightly choked up)
I'm so proud.

JEFFREY
(a little composed;
embarrassed)
Oh, Mom.

Jeffrey looks momentarily at his mother.

JEFFREY

Did Dad call?

KATHY

No. But I did leave a message. I'm sure he'll call to congratulate you.

JEFFREY

I hope so. I haven't heard from him in months.

KATHY

He's been very busy lately. Give him time.

JEFFREY

I guess you're right.

KATHY

Boy, it's not gonna be the same without you here. Jeff.

JEFFREY

(puts his hand on her shoulders)

Well then, let's make these last days of summer memorable.

MONTAGE - KATHY AND JEFFREY

Kathy and Jeffrey walk through Times Square, as they look at the massive billboards and signs.

Kathy and Jeffrey walk out of Serendipity ice cream shop with two waffle cones, as they both indulge.

Kathy and Jeffrey browse the open-air markets of China Town, as they converse with the merchants.

Jeffrey purchases some hot dogs from a vendor in Central Park, as he hands one to his mother. The two find a bench and take in the scenery.

Inside of a Broadway theater, Kathy and Jeffrey take in a matinee, as they cheer wildly at the end.

At a nine-eleven memorial, Kathy and Jeffrey somberly place a rose behind an engraved stone and bow their heads in respect.

END MONTAGE

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - SIDE OF BRIDGE - MAGIC HOUR

Kathy and Jeffrey quietly watch the summer sun descend, as they start to converse.

KATHY

Ya know, I never get tired of watching this bridge. It's eternal.

Kathy looks at Jeffrey, who looks pensively at the bridge and sunset. Jeff comes to.

JEFFREY

(turns to Kathy)
I'm sorry, Mom. What was that?

KATHY

I was just talking about the Brooklyn Bridge.
(beat)
I know you have a lot on your mind right now.

JEFFREY

(laughs lightly)
Yeah, among other things. Ya know, Dad used to take me fishing here when I was a kid. I used to look up at all of the skyscrapers.
(beat)
I always wondered what it would be like to be at the very top of each building. Kind of like King Kong, without the tragic ending.
(beat)
Staring at the bottom and workin' your way up.

KATHY

(optimistic)
Well, judging by the way things are going, you'll reach the top in no time.

JEFFREY

I'm headin' into a whole new world, and just hope I can make the journey worthwhile.

Kathy smiles warmly at her son, as they continue to take in the view.

FADE OUT.

EXT. LOCAL TRAIN STATION (NEW YORK CITY) - PLATFORM -
AFTERNOON

Jeffrey, luggage in tow, stands with Kathy, as they are about to say good-bye.

JEFFREY

No matter where I am, you'll never
be far away. I mean it.

KATHY

Just do the best you can, and take
care of Grandma.

JEFFREY

I promise.

The VOICE of the CONDUCTOR emerges.

TRAIN CONDUCTOR (O.S.)

(aloud)

All aboard, train six-ninety to
Boston now departing.

JEFFREY

Well, looks like it's time for me
to board.

(beat)

Love ya, Mom.

Kathy and Jeffrey give each other a tremendous but tender embrace. Jeffrey hands his bags to the porter, and boards the train OUT OF VIEW.

INT. TRAIN - AISLE - AFTERNOON

Jeffrey walks through the aisle, as he searches for his seat. Jeffrey looks for his seat, when he notices someone.

OLD MAN

From Jeffrey's previous train ride, notices Jeffrey, and smiles and waves.

JEFFREY

Smiles nervously and waves back, as he quickly scurries OUT OF VIEW.

Jeffrey continues, as he finds his window seat, and settles in. He looks at the train window.

JEFFREY'S TRAIN WINDOW POV

KATHY

Stands on the train platform, as she blows a kiss to her son.

BACK TO SCENE

Jeffrey grabs the kiss and places it on his heart.

TRAIN ENGINE

Starts to SOUND, as the train begins to pull out of the station.

Kathy follows the train, as she gets one last glimpse of her son.

KATHY
(calls aloud)
Don't forget to write!

Kathy stops, as she watches the train leave. She gives a tender but proud smile.

INT. TRAIN - JEFFREY'S SEAT - LATE AFTERNOON

Jeffrey sits comfortably in his seat, as he looks out the train window. He intuits the presence of someone, and turns around.

JEFFREY'S POV

LITTLE OLD LADY

Slowly shuffles over to the vacant seat next to Jeffrey. She settles into her seat, as she smiles warmly at Jeffrey.

BACK TO SCENE

Jeff reciprocates with a warm smile, as he continues to look out the window. Suddenly, the SOUND of a FART emerges. Jeff rapidly turns his head.

LITTLE OLD LADY

Makes an expression of discomfort, as she looks back at Jeffrey and gives a smile.

JEFFREY

Holds back a face of disgust, as he forces a synthetic smile.

TRAIN

Continues to ride through the early evening.

EXT. LOCAL TRAIN STATION (BOSTON) - PLATFORM - EARLY EVENING

Jeffrey, with luggage in tow, looks around for Olivia. A VOICE calls out.

OLIVIA (O.S.)
(aloud)
Jeffrey, honey!

Jeffrey listens carefully to Olivia's voice and turns to its direction.

OLIVIA

Stands at the far end of the platform, as she waves at Jeffrey.

Jeffrey heads over to his grandmother, as he places down his bags, and the two embrace.

JEFFREY
(witty)
It's like deja vu all over again.

OLIVIA
(playfully hits him)
Oh, stop it you!

The two head out of the train station.

INT. GRANDMA'S APARTMENT - GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jeffrey gets settled in, as he unpacks his things, when there is a KNOCK on the DOOR.

JEFFREY
Come in.

The door opens, as Olivia appears, as she checks on her grandson.

OLIVIA
You okay, dear?

JEFFREY

Yes. Thanks for letting me stay
with you for the semester, Nana.

OLIVIA

My pleasure, hon. I know it can't
beat living on campus.

(beat)

But at least you don't have to
worry about somebody using your
toothbrush.

Jeffrey grins slightly, as there is a brief moment of
silence.

OLIVIA

So, excited about your first day of
college?

JEFFREY

(a little nervous)

Don't remind me. I hope I can get
through in one piece.

Jeffrey sits down on the bed, as Olivia settles down next to
him.

OLIVIA

(reassuring)

You'll do fine, babe. You didn't
get a scholarship for nothing. Just
go in and show 'em what you're made
of.

JEFFREY

I will.

Olivia gives Jeffrey a kiss on the cheek and gets up from the
bed.

OLIVIA

(gently pats him on
shoulder)

Get to bed, You've got school
tomorrow.

Olivia exits the bedroom OUT OF VIEW, as Jeffrey places his
clothes on the side of his bed, as he takes a moment of quiet
reflection. Jeffrey then heads to bed, as he turns of the
lamp on the night stand, as everything FADES TO BLACK.

FADE OUT.

SCENE X

FADE IN:

EXT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - FRONT GATES - MORNING

Jeffrey, in proper school attire, looks in awe of the looming front gates of Harvard. He tentatively enters through the gates.

Jeffrey walks around Harvard, as he takes in all of the diverse surroundings and students. He arrives at the orientation table, where he is greeted by a fellow alumnae, TRACY CAMPBELL.

TRACY
(amiably)
Welcome to Harvard. May I have your
name, please?

JEFFREY
Jeffrey Wills.

Tracy searches through the student files, and comes across Jeffrey's admission papers and schedule.

TRACY
(looks at papers and hands
them to Jeffrey)
Oh yes, Mister Wills. I've heard
quite a lot about you.
(hands him her business
card)
If there is anything I can do for
you, please do not hesitate to
contact me. Best of luck this
semester.

JEFFREY
Thanks so much.

Jeffrey continues to walk around campus, as he makes his way towards his first scheduled class. Jeffrey looks at his schedule, then checks the room number. He enters the classroom.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - CLASSROOM - DAY

Jeffrey slowly ambles around the vacant classroom, as he takes in the surroundings of all of the empty seats. Jeffrey continues to survey the classroom, when a VOICE suddenly beckons him.

PROFESSOR LIPSON (O.S.)
Surveying the scene of the crime, I
see?

Jeffrey quickly turns around, as he looks to see who it is. Professor Lipson stands by his desk, as he looks briefly at Jeffrey and then approaches him.

PROFESSOR LIPSON
(amiably extends his hand)
Hello, Jeffrey.

JEFFREY
(shakes his hand)
Hello, Professor Lipson. According
to my schedule, I have you this
period.

PROFESSOR LIPSON
Yes. I also teach French
Literature, which is fourth period.

JEFFREY
(checks his schedule)
Oh, yeah. I also have that class.

PROFESSOR LIPSON
I am quite eager to have you as a
pupil under my tutelage. Hopefully
your insight can help alter the way
our students look at the world.

JEFFREY
(modest)
I'll do the best I can, Professor.

PROFESSOR LIPSON
I am sure of that.
(looks and exclaims)
Oh, Anthony. How nice to see you.
Please come with me, Jeffrey.

Jeffrey follows Professor Lipson, as they encounter ANTHONY MCADAMS, Professor Lipson's assistant. Professor Lipson introduces Jeffrey.

PROFESSOR LIPSON
 Jeffrey, I'd like for you to meet
 my partner in crime, ANTHONY
 MCADAMS.

JEFFREY
 (warmly extends his hand)
 It's a pleasure to meet you, Mister
 McAdams.

Anthony keeps his hands at his side, deciding not to shake
 Jeffrey's hand.

ANTHONY
 Likewise. I had the opportunity to
 read some of your work. Impressive,
 but I've read better... Much
 better.

JEFFREY
 Well, I appreciate your opinion and
 criticism. Constructive or not.

ANTHONY
 I sincerely hope you will uphold
 the proud tradition of Harvard and
 its alumnae.

JEFFREY
 Well, I will do my very best.

ANTHONY
 (snide)
 Yes, I'm sure.

PROFESSOR LIPSON
 Well, what do you say we get ready
 for orientation?
 (looks at his watch)
 Students should be arriving in a
 couple of minutes. Come gentlemen,
 a new semester is on the horizon.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - ENGLISH CLASSROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A densely-populated classroom of students listen attentively
 to Professor Lipson, as he paces about the classroom and
 introduces himself.

PROFESSOR LIPSON
 And as you may expect, there are no
 shortcuts in the process of merit.
 (MORE)

PROFESSOR LIPSON (cont'd)

All of you will be expected to complete assignments in a prompt and acceptable manner.

(beat)

I perceive myself as a firm but fair instructor, and hope you will agree after a semester under my tutelage.

(beat)

Also remember that the dumbest question is one which is not asked. I welcome you to my class, and hope you will attain as much from this class as I will from teaching you.

Seated among the crowded class, Jeffrey takes his attention away from Professor Lipson and starts to talk to a young African-American student, BARRY WALKER, who is paying close attention to Professor Lipson.

JEFFREY

(witty; sotto voce)

I guess next they'll show us to our cells, huh?

Barry does not respond, as he continues to listen to Professor Lipson. Jeffrey, slightly taken aback, redirects his attention.

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT (BOSTON)- LATE AFTERNOON

An exhausted Barry enters through the door, as he throws down his books on the dining room table. He plops down on the living room sofa and lets out an audible sigh of relief. Olivia comes INTO VIEW, as she rubs his shoulders.

OLIVIA

So, how was your first day?

JEFFREY

(slightly exasperated)

Where do I start? This is the first time I've ever got homework on the first day of school.

OLIVIA

Well, it's not Harvard for nothing.

(beat)

I just made some lemonade. How about I get you a nice tall glass?

JEFFREY

That sounds great. Thanks, Nana.

Olivia exits OUT OF VIEW into the kitchen, as Jeffrey lolls about on the couch. He picks up one of his textbooks, and casually peruses through it.

JEFFREY
 (shakes his head in
 perplexity)
 Calculus. Good grief.

Olivia appears INTO VIEW, glass of lemonade in hand, as she places it on the living room table beside Jeffrey. Olivia then takes a seat beside her grandson.

OLIVIA
 So, how do you like your new
 classes?

JEFFREY
 (slightly concerned)
 Well, let's just say I certainly
 have my work cut out for me.

OLIVIA
 (reassuring)
 You'll be fine. Just do the best
 you can and if you don't know, ask.

JEFFREY
 I guess you're right. One day at a
 time.

OLIVIA
 That was a great tv show.

Olivia smiles at Jeffrey, who reciprocates.

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT - GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jeffrey is busily attending to his homework, when there is a KNOCK on the bedroom DOOR.

JEFFREY
 Come in.

The bedroom door opens, as Olivia enters, as she checks on Jeffrey.

OLIVIA
 Jeffrey, hon, it's getting late,
 and you've got school tomorrow.

JEFFREY

I know, Nana. I'm almost done with my work.

OLIVIA

I guess I can call you a college man.

(beat)

Have you made any new friends?

JEFFREY

Not yet. It's only the first day, so I'll give it some time.

OLIVIA

I'm sure you'll be just fine. Just remember people from Massachusetts are just like folks from New York.

(beat)

But with different accents.

Jeffrey gives Olivia a wry look, as she kisses him on the cheek and rises from the bed.

OLIVIA

(heads toward the bedroom door)

If you need anything, I'll be in my room, hon.

JEFFREY (O.S.)

Thanks, Nana.

Olivia exits OUT OF VIEW, as Jeffrey continues his homework.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - CORRIDOR - MORNING

Jeff is frantically dashing through the hallway, as he is late for his French Literature class. As he runs, Jeff's books slip out of his hands and hit the floor. Jeff stops and dips down to pick them up.

JEFFREY

(sotto voce)

Shit.

Jeffrey recovers and continues to class.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - ENGLISH CLASSROOM - AFTERNOON

Professor Lipson is giving his lecture to the class, his back turned to the blackboard.

Jeffrey furtively attempts to get to his desk without being seen. Anthony, seated in front, notices Jeffrey, and calls him out.

ANTHONY

(aloud)

Mister Wills, how nice of you to
join us!

Professor Lipson stops writing and turns around.

PROFESSOR LIPSON

Hello, Jeffrey.

Professor Lipson continues with his lecture, as he turns to the blackboard. Jeffrey abashedly takes a seat, but not before giving Anthony an icy glare. Anthony, unfettered, gives an even icier glare, as a wry smile fissures from his lips.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - CORRIDOR - AFTERNOON

Fifth period has ended, as students disperse in the hallway. Barry is headed to his next class, when he drops his books. Barry kneels down to pick them up, when Jeffrey comes INTO VIEW to assist him.

JEFFREY

Let me help you with that.

BARRY

(snappish)

Look, I got it, okay?

A slightly startled Jeffrey backs away, as Barry grabs his books, rises, and dashes down the hallway. A visibly upset Jeffrey stands and watches.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - SCHOOL CAFETERIA - DAY

Students, trays in hands, amble around the cafeteria. Jeffrey, among those students, waits in line, as he places food on his tray, when he notices someone.

ATTRACTIVE YOUNG WOMAN

Stands a few feet from Jeffrey on the lunch line, as she takes her tray and heads away.

Jeffrey, taken aback by her beauty, stares and stands in awe at her. Suddenly, a VOICE emerges.

STUDENT ON LUNCH LINE (O.S.)

(angrily)

Hey, buddy, you're holdin' up the
line!

Jeffrey comes to, as he sidles down the line, and looks for a place to sit. He carefully scans the cafeteria, and finds a table, as he walks over and settles in. His seat is strategically across from the table of where the attractive young girl is seated. Jeffrey starts to eat his lunch, while looking at the young girl.

ATTRACTIVE YOUNG WOMAN

Quietly eats her lunch, as she peruses a book.

Jeffrey continues to stare at the girl, while trying to subtly eat his lunch. He looks up from his tray.

LUNCH TABLE

Is now empty, as the young girl has left the cafeteria.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - ENGLISH CLASSROOM - EARLY AFTERNOON

Professor Lipson is busy lecturing his fifth-period class, Jeffrey is jotting down notes in his tablet, when he notices someone.

ATTRACTIVE YOUNG GIRL

From the cafeteria, is seated a few rows to the right of Jeffrey, as she takes in the lecture.

Jeffrey continues to stare, when a VOICE emerges.

ANTHONY (O.S.)

(aloud)

Mister Wills.

Jeffrey, startled, redirects his attention to both Anthony and Professor Lipson.

JEFFREY

Yes.

ANTHONY

(sarcastic)

Well, it appears that you know this material verbatim, seeing as your attention is clearly sidetracked.

(beat)

Would you care to answer the question just posed in chapter nine?

JEFFREY

(composed)

Yes. Could you please repeat the question?

ANTHONY

(sharp)

The question is in regards to Moliere.

JEFFREY

(hesitates and thinks)

Well, after reading chapter nine, I found that Moliere was attempting to illustrate the dichotomy and dangers of love.

PROFESSOR LIPSON

(elated)

Exactly the point I was attempting to explain. Well done, Jeffrey.

A small smile fissures from Jeffrey's lips, as Professor Lipson continues his lesson. Jeffrey pays close attention, but not before getting one last glimpse of the young girl.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - CORRIDOR - AFTERNOON

The hallway is now barren, as Jeffrey, on his free period, casually strolls through the halls. He suddenly catches a glimpse of someone.

JEFFREY'S POV

YOUNG WOMAN

Walks on the far opposite end of the corridor.

BACK TO SCENE

Jeffrey continues to look at her, when the girl catches a glimpse of Jeff. An alarmed Jeffrey quickly dashes down the hall and makes a right, as he hides behind a row of lockers.

JEFFREY

(breathes heavily; sotto
voce)

Whew, that was a close...

Before he can finish, Jeffrey is SLAMMED into a LOCKER. It is the young girl, who is none too pleased.

YOUNG GIRL

(angrily)

What's your deal?

JEFFREY

(slightly uncomfortable)

I beg your pardon?

YOUNG GIRL

(stern)

Don't fuck with me. You've been watching and following me, and it's creepin' me out.

JEFFREY

(composed)

I just think your kinda neat.

YOUNG GIRL

Thanks, but no thanks. Keep this up and I'll go to the Dean and have you expelled. Do I make myself clear?

JEFFREY

Crystal.

The Young Girl unhands Jeff, as she starts to walk away, but not before turning to Jeff one last time.

YOUNG GIRL

By the way, I'm Amanda.

Amanda walks away, as Jeffrey stands, humbled by the lockers.

FADE OUT.

SCENE XI

FADE IN:

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT (BOSTON) - NIGHT

Olivia sits on the living room sofa, enjoying a warm cup of tea and a novel, when Jeffrey enters INTO VIEW, as he heads towards the front door.

JEFFREY

I'm going out for some pizza, Nana.

Olivia rises from the sofa, as she approaches Jeffrey.

OLIVIA

Did you finish all of your homework, hon?

JEFFREY

Yup, I did most of it at school.
Can I get you anything?

OLIVIA

No thank you. Are you sure you'll be okay?

JEFFREY

Yeah. I'm just gonna take the train. Be back soon.

OLIVIA

(concerned)

Is everything alright, dear?

JEFFREY

I'm alright. Just need a little fresh air.. And some tomato sauce.

A smile fissures from Jeffrey's lips, as he kisses Olivia on the cheek and exits out the front door.

INT. SUBWAY STATION (BOSTON) - ESTABLISHING SHOT - NIGHT

SUBWAY TRAIN

Travels down the tracks.

CUT TO:

INT. SUBWAY TRAIN - CAR - NIGHT

A pensive Jeff sits, and looks out the train window.

EXT. GIUSSEPPE'S PIZZA PARLOR - ESTABLISHING SHOT - NIGHT

Diners eat al fresco, as they stand and sit at tables, and talk amongst themselves.

CUT TO:

INT. GIUSSEPPE'S PIZZA PARLOR - CORNER TABLE - NIGHT

Jeffrey sits alone at a corner table among the din of raucous teenagers, as he mixes the ice in his soda glass with his straw.

Barry enters INTO VIEW through the front door, as he heads to the counter to order. He takes a seat at a vacant table, as he waits for his food.

Meanwhile, at a table across from Barry, a group of teens, sinisterly watch Barry. One TEENAGE BOY stares intently at Barry, as he starts to make a spitball.

Barry completely oblivious, goes over to the counter and gets his food. He returns to the same table and starts to eat.

The Teenage Boy aims his straw at Barry and releases a spitball in Barry's direction. The spitball hits Barry on the side of his head. A livid Barry quickly rises from his table and dashes to the boys' table to confront them.

Jeffrey, watching from his table, quickly rises and arrives just in time to restrain Barry.

JEFFREY

(holds back Barry)

Bar, it's not worth it, man. Let it go!

GIUSSEPPE ARMATO, owner of the pizzeria, comes INTO VIEW to see what's the matter.

GIUSSEPPE

(yells loudly)

Alright, what the hell is going on here?!

Everyone falls silent, as Barry looks angrily at the boys. Jeffrey pulls some money from out of his pocket and hands it to Giusseppe.

JEFFREY
 (looks angrily at boys)
 Just leavin,'Sep.

Jeffrey and Barry exit the pizzeria.

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Barry walks angrily down the sidewalk in the crisp Boston evening, as a running Jeffrey follows after him.

JEFFREY
 (calls out loud)
 Barry, wait up!

Barry continues to walk, as Jeffrey catches up with him.

JEFFREY
 (concerned)
 Barry, are you okay, man?

BARRY
 (stern; sotto voce)
 I'm fine.

JEFFREY
 Are you sure, Bar?

BARRY
 (stern; sotto voce)
 Yeah. Nothing to worry about.

JEFFREY
 Man, what's your problem?!

BARRY
 (stops; turns and yells)
 You're my fuckin' problem!!
 (beat)
 You're my problem. Mister big shot,
 big man on campus, scholarship
 golden boy.

JEFFREY
 Look, I'm sorry if you feel that
 way about me. But if you were in
 the same situation...

BARRY
 (quickly interjects)
 That's just it.
 (MORE)

BARRY (cont'd)
I'm not in the same situation as
you. And so many others.

JEFFREY
I don't understand.

BARRY
And you never will.

JEFFREY
But I want to. I've been to
Beantown a couple of times because
my Nana lives here!
(beat)
But I'm starting entirely fresh, in
a whole new school in a whole new
town. I don't have many friends,
and you look like a pretty swell
guy.

A moment of silence ensues.

JEFFREY
But if you don't wanna be friends,
I'm sorry for hassling you. Have a
good night.

Jeffrey turns and starts to walk away, when the VOICE of
Barry emerges.

BARRY (O.S.)
(calls out)
Wait!

Jeffrey halts and turns around.

BARRY
What are you in the mood for?

JEFFREY
Anything. Burgers, Chinese, fried
chick...
(apologetic)
Shit, I'm so sorry.

BARRY
It's okay. I'll go for anything,
too.
(beat)
Except pizza.

A small smile fissure from Barry's lips, as Jeffrey reciprocates.

EXT. HI AND LO'S PAGODA RESTAURANT - ESTABLISHING SHOT - NIGHT

The neon sign for Hi and Lo's flashes in the night.

CUT TO:

INT. HI AND LO'S PAGODA RESTAURANT - CORNER TABLE - NIGHT

Jeffrey and Barry enjoy some chow mein, as they start to converse.

JEFFREY

I'm sorry for what happened to you back at Sepp's.

BARRY

It's okay. It's not the first time it's happened, and it sure as hell won't be the last.

JEFFREY

Some people just ain't living in the new century.

BARRY

Speaking of the century, I've heard great thing about that essay of yours. What's it about?

JEFFREY

Well, mainly our cultural evolutions, differences, problems, and how we can resolve them for the future.

BARRY

Sounds neat. Maybe I can read it sometime.

JEFFREY

Sure. It's nothing special.

Jeffrey and Barry turn their attention to the door, as a young black teenager, clad in "street clothes", enters, picks up his order, and exits.

Barry and Jeffrey watch the boy leave, as Barry looks upset. Jeffrey notices.

JEFFREY
(concerned)
You okay, Bar?

BARRY
(stern)
I'd like to say yes.

JEFFREY
Are you ticked at the guy?

BARRY
A little.

JEFFREY
How come? He's not hurting anyone.

BARRY
Sorry, Jeff, but this is something
you just can't understand.

JEFFREY
Well, I'd like to. Wanna talk about
it?

BARRY
Look at how he's dressed.

JEFFREY
What about it?

BARRY
Do you honestly think he can go to
a job interview dressed like that?

JEFFREY
You make a valid point. But what
about it?

BARRY
I don't follow.

JEFFREY
Is it really him?
(beat)
How do you know him by the way he
dresses?

BARRY
You're not seeing my point.

JEFFREY

Just like you're not seeing mine.
Wasn't it Doctor King who said,
judge not a man by the color of his
skin, but by the content of their
character?

BARRY

Yes, true, but...

JEFFREY

(quickly interjects)
But how can you think you know him
based on his outward appearance?

(beat)

For all you know, he could be the
next great doctor, lawyer,
accountant, poet, CEO...

(beat)

Or the next Fifty Cent.

BARRY

(upset)

Jeff, you may think you know, but
you...

JEFFREY

(interrupts)

And I may never know. But I know
that you are showing the same type
of prejudice like those guys at the
pizzeria.

BARRY

(livid)

How dare you...

JEFFREY

(sternly interjects)

Let me finish. You are displaying
extreme prejudice toward self-
expression.

(beat)

Every person has the liberty to
pursue their areas of occupation
and leisure, within the confines of
reason, ethics, and taste.

BARRY

Doctor King, Malcolm X, and all our
forefathers did not make the
sacrifices to see the present-day
act, walk, and talk like that.

JEFFREY

True. But if you want proof of the progress of African-Americans in the twenty-first century, all you have to do is look in the mirror.

(beat)

You are representing not just blacks, but all of America. And for that, you should feel damn proud.

BARRY

(calm)

You know, I'm starting to see what you're saying.

JEFFREY

You don't have to agree. Just listen.

(lifts his soda can)

How about a toast? To us, the future generation, in hope for a better and brighter tomorrow.

Barry lifts his soda can, as they toast, and continue with their meal.

FADE OUT.

SCENE XII

FADE IN:

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - CAFETERIA - DAY

The cafeteria is bustling, as students walk to and fro to their tables.

At a table in the far left corner of the cafeteria, Jeffrey and Barry sit, having their lunch and talking.

BARRY

Man, can you believe Lipson? He's making us do an eight-page report on a three page poem.

Jeffrey does not respond, as his attention seems diverted.

BARRY

(waves his hand in front of Jeff's face)

Hello? Earth to Jeff.

Jeffrey, his attention revived, comes to.

JEFFREY

Oh, I'm sorry Bar. What was that?

BARRY

I was talking about the eight-page report we have to do for French Lit.

JEFFREY

Oh, that. Yeah, we should be fine. Just gotta hit the books hard.

Jeffrey continues to look in another direction, as Barry now notices. He looks in Jeff's direction.

BOYS' POV

AMANDA

Sits with a classmate, as they talk and laugh with each other.

BACK TO SCENE

Barry starts to talk with Jeff about his object of affection.

BARRY

So, is she taken?

JEFFREY

(still focused on Amanda)
I don't know, I haven't asked.
(comes to)
Hey!

BARRY

Got ya. Why don't you ask her out?

JEFFREY

I don't know if she'd be interested. Plus, I'm not exactly on her good side right now.

BARRY

What do you mean?

JEFFREY

Well, we did have a memorable encounter.

BARRY
 (smiles)
 Oh, really? How'd it go?

JEFFREY
 Let's just say I got to meet a
 really nice locker.

BARRY
 That bad?

JEFFREY
 Affirmative.

BARRY
 Don't give up hope, man. Plenty of
 relationships start off rocky
 before reaching that next echelon.

JEFFREY
 Maybe you're right. I should just
 keep my distance and maybe she'll
 come around.

Suddenly, a globule of mash potatoes comes INTO VIEW and HITS
 Jeffrey on the side of the head.

JEFFREY
 (composed)
 And I think I'll start now.

Jeffrey remains seated, as the mashed potatoes continue to
 drip down his face, as a completely oblivious Amanda walks by
 Jeffrey, tray in hand, a wry smile on her face.

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT (BOSTON) - DINING ROOM - EARLY
 EVENING

Olivia and Jeffrey sit quietly, as they enjoy dinner.

OLIVIA
 (offers potatoes to
 Jeffrey)
 Would you like some potatoes, Jeff?

JEFFREY
 Thanks, but I'll pass.

OLIVIA
 So, how was school today?

JEFFREY
 Good.

OLIVIA
That's nice.

The silence continues, as Olivia notices Jeffrey.

OLIVIA
(concerned)
Jeff, are you okay, hon?

JEFFREY
(looks up from his plate)
Huh? Oh, yeah.

OLIVIA
Are you sure?

JEFFREY
Uh-huh. Why?

OLIVIA
Well, this is the first time I've
seen my pot roast last on your
plate for more than five minutes.

Jeffrey smiles wryly, as Olivia continues.

OLIVIA
C'mon, you can tell me. I'm your
Nana.

JEFFREY
Well, you see, there's this girl in
my classes, and I think I might
like her.

OLIVIA
Ah, a crush. Have you talked to
her?

JEFFREY
That's just it. Whenever I'm around
her, I just freeze up. Words
strangle me.

OLIVIA
That bad, huh? Words stranglin' an
English major? You've just been
bitten by the love bug.
(beat)
Does she like you?

JEFFREY

Not exactly. I think she completely ignores me altogether.

OLIVIA

Playing hard to get, I see. The good ones always do.

JEFFREY

I don't follow.

OLIVIA

This girl may treat you like pond scum now, but she may really have feelings for you.

JEFFREY

You think so?

OLIVIA

Did I ever tell you the story of how I met your Grandpa?

Jeffrey nods "no", as he starts to listen to Olivia.

OLIVIA

(waxes nostalgic)

I can remember it like yesterday. I was a shy, awkward girl, never really expecting much.

(beat)

The first time I saw him, he was the most arrogant guy around. All he obsessed over were his arm muscles. He used to call them tweedle-dee and tweedle dum.

Jeffrey listens carefully, as Olivia continues

OLIVIA

Then one rainy day, I was walking home from school and forgot my umbrella. He pulled up in his car and offered me a ride. I accepted. Before I left, he asked me out.

(beat)

And the rest they say, is history.

JEFFREY

Did you know that he was the one?

OLIVIA

Immediately. If I had the chance to do it over again, I would. That's how you know you've found your soul mate. Everyone does.

JEFFREY

But how do I talk to her?

OLIVIA

(strong)

That's where you're wrong. There is no perfect way to talk to someone of the opposite sex.

(beat)

Remember to be honest, polite, and most importantly, be you. Always.

JEFFREY

I'll give it a shot. Thanks, Nana.

OLIVIA

Anytime, hon. Whadya say we finish dinner and then have some ice cream? I just bought a gallon of butter pecan.

JEFFREY

Sounds good.

Olivia and Jeffrey smile at one another, then go back to eating.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - ENGLISH CLASSROOM - DAY

Professor Lipson is giving another of his lectures, as his students attentively take notes. Amanda is listening and recording, when she turns around from her seat.

AMANDA'S POV

JEFFREY

Sits in his seat, as he alertly listens to the lecture, as he pays no mind to Amanda.

BACK TO SCENE

Amanda looks aimlessly, as she turns her attention back to the lesson.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - SCHOOL CORRIDOR - DAY

Amanda walks down the hall to her next class, when she accidentally runs into Jeffrey and drops her books. Jeffrey stoops down to assist her.

JEFFREY

I'm sorry. Let me get that for you.

AMANDA

(coy)

Thanks.

JEFFREY

(coy)

Have a good day.

Jeffrey walks away, when Amanda speaks to him.

AMANDA (O.S.)

Hey.

Jeffrey stops and turns around to Amanda

AMANDA

What's with the act?

JEFFREY

What act?

AMANDA

First you can't take your eyes off of me. Now you act like I don't even exist.

JEFFREY

Well, seeing how uncomfortable I made you feel, I thought I should just leave you alone. I won't pester you any longer.

(beat)

If you want to know the truth, I really like you. I like you, but I just don't know how to tell you.

AMANDA

Oh.

JEFFREY

I just made the situation worse and made you uncomfortable, and for that I apologize. Have a good day.

Jeffrey turns to walk away, when Amanda calls out to him again.

AMANDA

Wait.

Jeffrey turns around again, and looks at Amanda.

AMANDA

You've been honest, to the point,
and sincere with me.
(one full beat)
That's all I ever wanted from you.

JEFFREY

Really?

AMANDA

Yes. What are you doing after your
next class?

JEFFREY

I don't know. Maybe grab a bite to
eat.

AMANDA

Would you like some company?

JEFFREY

Sure, I guess. Like on a date?

AMANDA

No. Let's just call it lunch for
now. How's four-thirty sound?

JEFFREY

Swell.

AMANDA

Okay, then. I'm in the mood for a
burger. How's Houlihan's sound?
It's on Beacon and Causway. That
okay for you?

JEFFREY

Yeah.

AMANDA

Then it's settled. Houlihan's at
four-thirty.
(beat; strong)
Don't be late.

Amanda walks away OUT OF VIEW, as Jeffrey stands alone in the corridor. Jeffrey processes what just transpired, as he does a fist pump in victory, runs down the hallway, and leaps in the air.

EXT. HOULIHAN'S RESTAURANT - ESTABLISHING SHOT - LATE AFTERNOON

Patrons have a smoke and make small talk in front of Houlihan's entrance.

CUT TO:

INT. HOULIHAN'S RESTAURANT - CORNER BOOTH - LATE AFTERNOON

Jeffrey sits alone in a booth, calmly stirring the straw in his iced tea, when a VOICE EMERGES.

AMANDA (O.S.)

Jeff!

Jeff looks up from his beverage, as Lois approaches the booth.

AMANDA

Jeff, I'm so sorry. Damn bus was late.

Amanda takes a seat next to Jeffrey and gets settled in.

JEFFREY

It's okay. Can I get you a beverage?

AMANDA

Please. Virgin pina colada.

JEFFREY

Sure.

Jeffrey motions to a Waitress, who appears INTO VIEW at their booth. Jeffrey places the beverage order with the Waitress, who exits OUT OF VIEW. Amanda starts to take off her jacket.

JEFFREY

(gently takes her coat)
Please, allow me.

AMANDA

Thank you.

Jeffrey hangs Amanda's coat on a nearby hanger, and takes a seat with her in the booth.

AMANDA

Tardiness is one of my pet peeves.
I guess I'm a lesson in hypocrisy.

JEFFREY

It's okay. I'm not exactly Mister
punctual myself.

Jeffrey and Lois start to browse their menus.

AMANDA

(carefully reads menu)
Hmmm... They've got some new
entrees. Cajun chicken, shrimp
pilaf, flank steak skewers.

The WAITRESS appears INTO VIEW with Amanda's drink, as she
places it down in front of her.

AMANDA

Thank you.

The Waitress introduces herself.

WAITRESS

Hello, my name is Gail, and I'll be
your waitress this afternoon. Are
you ready to order?

AMANDA

Yes. I'll have a double chili
burger, well done. But instead of
fries, could I have green beans?

WAITRESS

(writes down order)
Of course.
(turns to Jeffrey)
And what will you have?

JEFFREY

I'll have the double Swiss burger,
medium rare. With fries.

WAITRESS

(writes down order)
Okay. One double chili burger, well
done, with green beans, and one
double Swiss burger, medium rare,
with fries. Is there anything else
I can get for you?

JEFFREY

That should be all for now. Thank you.

WAITRESS

Okay. I'll be back with your order.

The Waitress exits OUT OF VIEW, as Amanda and Jeffrey start to converse.

JEFFREY

(takes a sip of his drink)
So, you had a rough trip over here?

AMANDA

(takes a sip of her drink)
Don't get me started. To make matters worse, I had some pierce-
ridden creep leering at me.
(apologetic)
I'm sorry. I'm putting all of this on you.

JEFFREY

It's okay. We all have our days.

AMANDA

So, what brings you to Harvard?

JEFFREY

Well, to be honest, before I came here, I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life. I wrote this essay on the current state of our world and the past and present challenges our people face.

(beat)

My Nana lives here, so on a weekend visit, she submitted my essay with an application, and here I am.

AMANDA

My goodness. That all seems kind of random.

JEFFREY

I know it sounds kind of peculiar, but I had to think about my future, and when the opportunity came along, I couldn't pass it up.

AMANDA

It's great to see you take initiative. People of our generation rarely possess that quality.

JEFFREY

So, what brought you to Harvard? If you don't mind me asking.

AMANDA

Well, originally Harvard wasn't my first choice. I wanted to go to Stanford. Anywhere to escape the brutal Vermont winter.

JEFFREY

(takes a sip of his drink)
Oh, you're from Vermont?

AMANDA

Yeah. Burlington. I love it, but I never thought I'd see anything but ski slopes and maple syrup.

(beat)

Stanford looked great, but distance and tuition deterred me. And I ultimately decided on Harvard.

The Waitress arrives INTO VIEW, tray in hand, with the food.

WAITRESS

(places down plate in front of Amanda)
Here's your chili burger.
(places down plate in front of Jeffrey)
And your double Swiss burger. Can I refill your beverage?

JEFFREY

(hands her his glass)
Yes, please.

WAITRESS

I'll be back with your beverage. Is there anything else I can get for you?

JEFFREY

We should be good for now. Thank
you.

The Waitress exits OUT OF VIEW, as Amanda and Jeffrey start
to eat.

JEFFREY

(looks hungrily at his
food)
This baby looks grand.
(takes a bite; mouth half
full)
Not bad. Nothing like a pastrami
sandwich at the Stage. Or a dirty
water frank.

AMANDA

(slightly astounded)
You're from New York?

JEFFREY

The one and only.

AMANDA

I could tell.

JEFFREY

How?

AMANDA

I could just sense it. You have
that aura about you.

JEFFREY

An aura?

AMANDA

You know, that...that... aura.

JEFFREY

(sarcastic)
How articulate.

AMANDA

You know what I mean.
(takes a bite of her
burger)
New Yorkers are like no one else in
the world.

JEFFREY
 (takes a bite of his
 burger; mouth half full)
 Is that good or bad?

AMANDA
 (hesitates; one full beat)
 Good.

JEFFREY
 That was a really nice side order
 you made. Green beans in lieu of
 fries.

AMANDA
 (spears and eats a green
 bean)
 I can't stand carbs.

Jeffrey, about to eat a fry, hesitates, and looks awkwardly
 at Amanda.

AMANDA
 Not to worry. I don't hate the
 people who eat them.

A relieved Jeffrey places a fry in his mouth.

AMANDA
 Believe it or not, I used to be a
 heifer back then.

JEFFREY
 (eats another fry)
 I find that hard to believe.

AMANDA
 I lost most of my baby fat before I
 entered high school. Guess there is
 such a thing as perfect timing.

The Waitress returns INTO VIEW with Jeffrey's beverage, as he
 kindly thanks her, as she exits OUT OF VIEW.

JEFFREY
 Well, I think you're lovely, no
 matter what a scale says.

AMANDA
 (slightly touched)
 Thank you.
 (beat; apologetic)
 (MORE)

AMANDA (cont'd)

Listen, I just want to say how sorry I am for the way I acted to you before.

JEFFREY

It's okay.

AMANDA

I have sort of a distrust towards men.

JEFFREY

I'm sorry to hear that.

AMANDA

Ever since I broke up with my last boyfriend from high school, I've been very leery.

JEFFREY

I hope you're alright.

AMANDA

Yeah. I cared about him a lot. I even took care of him after he got into a skiing accident.

JEFFREY

What happened? If you don't mind me asking?

AMANDA

I caught him with another girl. In the garage of his house. I paid him a surprise visit, and got one of my own.

JEFFREY

I'm sorry.

AMANDA

It's okay. I channeled all of my emotions into my school work and extra curricular activities.

(beat; strong)

And I don't intend to stop now.

JEFFREY

Well, I just want you to know I'm here, if you ever want to talk.

AMANDA

I appreciate that.

JEFFREY
 (raises his glass)
 Can I propose a toast? To a
 wonderful and pleasure-filled day,
 with many more to come.

AMANDA
 I'll drink to that.

Amanda and Jeffrey CLICK their GLASSES, as they continue to
 converse.

EXT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - WEST END DORM BUILDING -
 ESTABLISHING SHOT - NIGHT

Students have a smoke and make small talk in the crisp
 Cambridge air.

CUT TO:

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - WEST END DORM BUILDING - CORRIDOR -
 EARLY EVENING

Amanda and Jeffrey arrive at the front door of Amanda's dorm,
 as they prepare to say good night.

JEFFREY
 So, here it is.

AMANDA
 (coy)
 Yup.

JEFFREY
 I just want to say thank you for a
 wonderful time.

AMANDA
 Yeah, it was fun. Thanks for
 picking up the tab. You really
 didn't have to.

JEFFREY
 My pleasure.

AMANDA
 I hope Mia's okay.

JEFFREY
 Mia?

AMANDA

Mia's my roommate. Every Friday night she's usually passed out on the floor. Plus, she snores.

JEFFREY

Not exactly what you expected, huh?

AMANDA

It's okay. She's a lot of fun when she's sober.

JEFFREY

I hope I'm not being too forward, but do you think we can do this again sometime?

AMANDA

Of course. I'd like that very much.
(takes receipt from pocket)
Got a pen?

Jeffrey digs into his pants pocket and pulls out a pen.

JEFFREY

(hands pen to Amanda)
Here.

Amanda writes down her number and hands the pen and paper back to Jeffrey.

AMANDA

The first number is for my dorm, but the phone reception's been bad, so try my cell, right below it.

JEFFREY

Will do.

An awkward silence ensues, as Jeffrey and Amanda smile coyly at each other.

JEFFREY

Well, I guess this is good night.

AMANDA

Yeah.

Jeffrey lightly takes Amanda's hand and places a small kiss on it.

JEFFREY
Have a great night.

AMANDA
Thanks. You too.

Amanda starts to unlock the front door, as Jeffrey starts to depart down the corridor continuing to look at Amanda.

Completely oblivious, Jeffrey knocks over a nearby waste basket, as garbage spills onto the floor of the corridor. An embarrassed but composed Jeffrey picks up the litter and waste basket and puts it back into place.

INT. PUBLIC BUS - BACK SEAT - NIGHT

Jeffrey sits alone in the back seat, as he looks pensively out the bus window.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - FRONT STEPS - NIGHT

PUBLIC BUS

Pulls up and stops at the front of the apartment complex. The BUS then ZOOMS away OUT OF VIEW, as Jeffrey stands on the sidewalk, home at last. He ascends the front steps.

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT - FOYER - NIGHT

The pitch-black apartment rests still in the night, as the FRONT DOOR quietly OPENS, as Jeffrey appears INTO VIEW, slowly closing and locking the front door behind him.

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT - OLIVIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Olivia is sound asleep under the covers, as Jeffrey quietly appears INTO VIEW. He bends down and gives Olivia a light kiss on the forehead.

He slowly begins to exit the bedroom, as he nears the door, when a VOICE emerges.

OLIVIA (O.S.)
Tell me how it went at breakfast.

Jeffrey stops in his tracks, embarrassed, yet composed, and continues toward his bedroom.

FADE OUT.

SCENE XIII

FADE IN:

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - SCHOOL CORRIDOR - DAY

Jeffrey stands at his locker, getting books for his next class, as Barry appears INTO VIEW behind him.

BARRY
Jeff, my man, what is up? How was
your weekend?

Jeffrey gives Barry a five, as he closes his locker, and the two begin down the corridor.

JEFFREY
Pretty good. Went on a date.

BARRY
(in disbelief)
No! With who?

JEFFREY
(sotto voce)
Amanda.

BARRY
Did I hear correctly? Amanda?

JEFFREY
Yes, Amanda.

BARRY
Tell me you got that?

JEFFREY
What?

BARRY
Then you got that?

JEFFREY
I don't follow. What was there to
get?

BARRY
Oh, c'mon man, you're killin' me!
You know...
(breaks into dance)
Na-na-na-na. Mmmpphh mmmpphhh.

JEFFREY

(punches him in shoulder)
Hey, stop it. It was only our first date.

BARRY

You say that now. Soon you're gonna want to thump the bed post, test the car shocks, dip the pen in the pun.

JEFFREY

(uncomfortable)
Let's get to class.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - ENGLISH CLASSROOM - DAY

Professor Lipson is giving a lecture, as his students take note. In a far corner of the classroom, Jeffrey is seated, as he looks at Amanda, who is seated two rows away. Jeff tears a page from his notebook and starts to write on it.

He folds it up and passes it to the student next to him, and quietly directs him where to pass it. The student passes it to the student next to her, as it starts a chain reaction. Amanda receives the note, unfolds it and is about to read it, when a VOICE emerges.

ANTHONY (O.S.)

Excuse me, Miss Billings. Could you share your news with the rest of us?

A startled Amanda looks up from the note and directs her attention to the front of the classroom. Anthony looks sternly at her, as he interrupts Professor Lipson, who quickly chimes in.

PROFESSOR LIPSON

Anthony, is everything all right?

ANTHONY

(stern)
Well Professor Lipson, it seems as if some of our students are partaking in grade school activities.

PROFESSOR LIPSON

Amanda, would you care to share your news with us?

A worried Jeffrey looks on, as he carefully watches Amanda. Amanda hesitates, as she looks down at the note and starts to read it.

AMANDA

Could you please tell me if we were assigned chapters five through eight, or chapters eight through eleven? I want to make sure I read the proper assignment. Thanks. Jeffrey.

PROFESSOR LIPSON

(calm)

Well, Jeffrey, if you have any questions regarding assignments, please feel free to consult with me during non-class time.

(beat; looks at class)

If you don't mind, I would like to continue with the lesson. Now, in writing his penultimate work...

Anthony looks sternly up at the class.

JEFFREY

Looks expressionless at Anthony, then re-directs his attention to the lesson.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - DORMITORY CORRIDOR - EARLY AFTERNOON

Jeffrey, with a small bouquet in hand, walks down the corridor, as he reaches Amanda's dorm. He KNOCKS and waits, as it opens, Amanda appearing INTO VIEW.

AMANDA

(surprised)

Jeff, what are you doing here?

JEFFREY

(hands her bouquet)

Here. Just my way of saying thank you for saving my ass.

AMANDA

(smells bouquet)

They're lovely. Thanks.

JEFFREY

You were brilliant today.

AMANDA

No worries. Besides, New Yorkers aren't the only ones quick on their feet.

JEFFREY

All kidding aside, did you read what was really in the note?

AMANDA

I did. You would like to go out with me again.

JEFFREY

In a nutshell, yes.

AMANDA

Let me think about it. Can I tell you on Thursday.

Jeffrey looks slightly disappointed at Amanda, but retains his composure.

JEFFREY

(uncomfortable; fumbles)

Yes, of course. Please don't think I'm too pushy. I mean...

Before Jeff continues, Amanda calmly interjects.

AMANDA

Jeff, I'm fucking with you.

(laughs softly)

He-he.

JEFFREY

(relieved)

Oh, oh. Okay.

AMANDA

We'll talk. Thanks for the flowers.

JEFFREY

Sure.

Amanda gives a slight smile at Jeff, as she gently closes the door.

Jeffrey remains momentarily in front of the door, as he starts to walk away backwards, completely oblivious that he is about to walk into a waste basket. Jeff walks into the waste basket, as both he and the WASTE BASKET crash to the floor.

An embarrassed Jeff quickly regains himself, as he scoops the garbage back in the pail, dusts himself off, and departs.

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT - GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jeffrey has just finished up his homework, as he is about to go to bed, when he reaches into his wallet and pulls out a piece of paper.

INSERT SHOT

HOULIHAN'S RECEIPT

A curio from Jeffrey and Amanda's first date together.

BACK TO SCENE

Jeffrey looks fondly at the voucher, as he places it back in his wallet. Jeff grins widely, as he shakes his head and shuts off the lamp on the night stand, as everything FADES TO BLACK.

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT - GUEST BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Jeffrey is fast asleep, when the TELEPHONE RINGS. Jeff is slow to get up, as he scrambles to pick up the phone and starts to speak.

JEFFREY

(groggy)

Hello? Mom, what's up? Couldn't you have called a little later?

KATHY (V.O.)

(over the phone)

Jeff. I'm sorry to call you this early, but I've got great news...

Jeff starts to listen closely to his mother over the phone.

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MORNING

Olivia has just finished frying some bacon, as she places it on a paper-towel covered plate and places it on a table of a befuddled Jeff, who tries to eat his breakfast.

JEFFREY

I just don't understand it, Nana. Why me?

Olivia takes a seat beside her grandson at the table, as she starts to eat and explain.

OLIVIA

Jeff, you should feel honored that your work is being recognized so early. Most writers wait a lifetime to have their work published.

JEFFREY

I just don't feel all that comfortable with everyone hearing who I am, asking me questions, you know.

OLIVIA

(takes a sip of orange juice)

But hon, isn't that what every writer dreams of?

JEFFREY

Not every writer.

OLIVIA

Jeff, you're just getting started. Your first break hasn't even been printed, and already you're nervous.

(beat; reassuring)

You're beginning the start of what is the grandest journey of your life. And wherever it may lead you, just know that you have people who love and support you unconditionally.

(beat)

And that includes me. Always.

Olivia kisses Jeffrey on the forehead.

OLIVIA

Finish your breakfast, baby. Don't wanna be late.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - SCHOOL CAFETERIA - DAY

Jeffrey and Barry are seated, eating their lunch and conversing.

BARRY

Man, I'd give anything to be you right now. Good student, dating a fine girl, and now a possible book deal.

JEFFREY

It's not what it's cracked up to be, Bar. Plus, nothing's set in stone. I have to meet with Professor Lipson after last period today.

BARRY

What about Amanda?

JEFFREY

I haven't heard from her at all. Hope I didn't say or do anything.

BARRY

Not to worry. She's just playing hard to get. You know how it is with the ladies.

(rises from table)

Listen, I gotta go. Talk to you later.

Barry gives Jeffrey a five, as he departs OUT OF VIEW.
Jeffrey continues with his lunch.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - DISSERTATION ROOM - AFTERNOON

Jeffrey sits patiently and alone in a seat, as he awaits for Professor Lipson's arrival. Professor Lipson appears, Anthony at his side, as they greet Jeffrey.

PROFESSOR LIPSON

(extends his hand)

Good afternoon, Jeffrey.

JEFFREY

(shakes Professor Lipson's hand)

Hello, Professor Lipson.

ANTHONY

(coldly nods his head)

Jeffrey.

PROFESSOR LIPSON

Jeffrey, as I am sure you are aware, you have been called here this afternoon to discuss a very important manner.

(one full beat)

(MORE)

PROFESSOR LIPSON (cont'd)

It gives me esteemed privilege to inform you that your essay has been selected and highly sought after by several publishing companies. As you know, it is immensely rare for someone of your age to have your work recognized so promptly.

(beat; turns to Anthony)

Anthony, would you care to include anything?

ANTHONY

I must say that I am quite impressed by your sudden success and wish you a bright and prosperous future in your endeavors.

(extends his hand)

Congratulations.

Jeff, taken aback by Anthony's pleasantries, extends his hand and shakes with Anthony.

CLOSEUP - ANTHONY'S LEFT HAND

As it remains behind Anthony's back, as both the pointer and middle fingers are crossed.

JEFFREY

Thank you, Anthony.

PROFESSOR LIPSON

As you might know, with a potential deal with any publishing company, you will be placed on a promotional itinerary.

(beat)

In keeping with this schedule, I still expect you to satisfy all of your academic obligations. Email attachments, fax, snail mail, or any form of conveyance of your schoolwork is acceptable.

(one full beat)

I will also be printing out all of my future classes, subjects, and assignments. If you have any questions or concerns, I will also included a list of contacts of where I can be reached.

JEFFREY

Well Professor, I appreciate your graciousness, but I wouldn't want to be given any sort of preferential treatment over my classmates. Or for you to go out of your way to make such egregious concessions.

PROFESSOR LIPSON

Modest as well as brilliant. You are a breed nonpareil. It would be my honor and privilege.

(beat)

In all of my years as an educator, I have never felt so enthused about a student's endeavors then I have with yours.

JEFFREY

Well Professor, I am tremendously taken aback by all of this, but I vow to represent my classmates and Harvard with humility, respect, and grace.

PROFESSOR LIPSON

And I have not reasonable doubt that you will.

(extends his hand)

Once again, congratulations, Jeffrey, and may your journey be blessed and enlightening.

ANTHONY

(slow to respond)

Yes, congrats.

Anthony nods his head at Jeffrey, as she and Professor Lipson exit OUT OF VIEW.

Jeffrey takes a seat, as she tries to process everything he has been told. Suddenly, a VOICE emerges.

AMANDA (O.S.)

I heard everything.

Jeffrey quickly turns around.

AMANDA

Stands on the top flight of stairs, as she smiles and begins to descend towards Jeff.

AMANDA
(hugs Jeffrey)
Congratulations.

JEFFREY
Thanks.

AMANDA
Are you busy now?

JEFFREY
No. Why?

AMANDA
How about we grab some coffee? My
treat.

EXT. CUP OF JOE'S COFFEE SHOP - PATIO - AFTERNOON

Amanda and Jeffrey sit at an outside table, casually sipping
their drinks and conversing.

JEFFREY
(takes a sip of coffee)
This is pretty good java.

AMANDA
As a native New Yorker, I bet you
know a lot about coffee.

JEFFREY
To be honest with you, I don't
drink a lot of coffee.
(beat)
I wish I could say the same for my
dad, though. Fuhgeddaboutit. I
think his blood type is Folgers.

Amanda gives a slight smile, then turns serious.

AMANDA
Can I ask you something?

JEFFREY
Sure.

AMANDA
What do you really make of all
this?

JEFFREY

This may sound weird coming from a fellow writer, but I truly don't know how to put into words how this feels.

(beat)

I don't know what the future holds, but I am certain of one thing. I want you there with me every step of the way.

AMANDA

It would be my honor.

Silence ensues, as Amanda and Jeffrey look amorously at each other.

JEFFREY

(uncertain)

So, is this where we kiss?

AMANDA

I think so.

Amanda and Jeffrey lean toward each other and share a tender lip lock.

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Jeffrey lolls idly on the living room sofa, staring aimlessly up at the ceiling. Olivia comes INTO VIEW, as she looms over her grandson.

OLIVIA

Jeff, you okay, hon?

Jeffrey does not respond, as he continues to gaze up at the ceiling.

JEFFREY

(comes to)

Oh, I'm sorry, Nana. What's up?

OLIVIA

Well, I was wondering if everything's well. You didn't say a word at dinner.

JEFFREY

Yeah, everything's fine.

OLIVIA

Are you sure?

JEFFREY

Well, I've been given to pondering.
Nana, I think I'm in love.

OLIVIA

That's wonderful, dear. Does she
feel the same about you?

JEFFREY

I really think so. She's smart,
funny, warm, profound, and actually
sees me as more than a classmate.

(beat)

And she's felt this way even before
now.

OLIVIA

(commiserates)

My little grandson, in love and
successful. When it rains it pours.

(beat)

Just remember this, honey. The true
measure of a life partner is if
they will remain with you in the
bad times as they do in the good.
Sleep on that one tonight, dear.

Olivia tenderly kisses Jeffrey on the cheek, as she exits OUT
OF VIEW. Jeff lets out an exhale, as he continues to
ruminate.

FADE OUT.

SCENE XIV

FADE IN:

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT - GUEST BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Jeffrey sits peacefully in his bed, as he slowly turns and
starts to awake. Looming over him, as the sunlight from the
guest bedroom window luminesces, is Kathy.

Jeffrey slowly begins to rise, eyes half-closed, when he
notices his mother.

JEFFREY

(exclaims; jumps back)

Holy shit, Mom!!

Jeffrey, taken aback, hits his head on the bed post and falls over. Kathy checks on her son.

KATHY
Jeff, are you alright, baby?

Jeffrey recovers, as he gets back in bed.

JEFFREY
(rubs his hand)
Yeah. I'm okay.
(exclaims and hugs Kathy)
Mom, what are you doing here?

KATHY
(gently raps Jeff on
shoulder)
Before I begin, language. Well, I
had a day off from work and figured
I'd pay my son and mother a
surprise visit.

JEFFREY
But how will you get back home
tomorrow for work?

KATHY
Get dressed and I'll tell you at
breakfast.

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MORNING

Olivia has just finished cooking breakfast, as she scoops some scrambled eggs from the frying pan onto her daughter's plate. Mother and son start to converse.

KATHY
I received a call from your English
professor. He told me about your
essay and felt it was just too good
not to publish.

JEFFREY
I appreciate your enthusiasm, Mom.
But you have a life too. What about
your job?

KATHY
What about it?

JEFFREY
I mean, you do have to work, you
know.

KATHY
 (takes a fork full of
 food)
 I know. That's why I quit.

Jeffrey is taking a sip of milk, when he hears the news and spits out the milk.

JEFFREY
 (astounded; slightly
 nervous)
 You what?! Mom!

KATHY
 I quit my job to become your full-time manager. I will oversee every aspect of your career and ensure that you will never get swindled.

JEFFREY
 But you have no experience as a literary agent. Holy shit!

KATHY
 (jostles him in the
 shoulder; reprimanding)
 Language. Don't worry. I have everything organized and under control.

JEFFREY
 But what about New York?

KATHY
 What about it? I've already spoken to Evelyn and she'll take care of the apartment and mail while I'm away.
 (beat)
 Best part is, she's doing it for one-fifty a month. A bargain.

JEFFREY
 Mom, I honestly don't feel comfortable with this at all.

KATHY
 Well, tough, Jeff. I'm your mother and this is what it is.

Kathy gets up from the table and kisses her son on the forehead.

KATHY
 (hands him newspapers)
 By the way, I thought you missed
 The Big Apple, so I bought you The
News and The Post.

Kathy exits OUT OF VIEW from the kitchen, as Jeffrey begins to lightly peruse through the News. He comes to an article that peaks his interest.

INSERT SHOT - NEWSPAPER PAGE

Reads, in bold print, "YOUNG WRITER FOUND DEAD AT LOCAL TRAIN STATION".

BACK TO SCENE

Jeffrey, struck cold and motionless, looks wide-eyed at the article. Jeff realizes that this is the real author of the essay.

Jeffrey remains focused on the article, when a VOICE beckons.

OLIVIA (O.S.)
 Jeff? Jeff, honey?

Jeffrey redirects his attention.

JEFFREY
 Yeah?

OLIVIA
 Jeff, would you like some more
 bacon?

JEFFREY
 No, thanks.

OLIVIA
 (concerned)
 Jeff, are you okay, hon?

JEFFREY
 I'm fine. Just have to use the
 bathroom.

Olivia nods, as she starts to clean up. Jeffrey looks once more at the newspaper article, as he looks on in trepidation.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - WEST QUAD - AMANDA'S DORM ROOM -
EVENING

Amanda sits quietly on her bed, trying to complete her homework, when there is a KNOCK on the DOOR. Amanda, startled by the knocking, leaps up and loses a grip on her book. A VOICE emerges, as it is that of Dormitory Security Chief HEAHTER FELTON.

CHIEF FELTON (O.S.)

(aloud)

Miss Temple, this is Chief Felton,
Dorm Security. I want to speak to
you about your roommate.

AMANDA

(upset; sotto voce)

Ugh! Not you again.

(raises her voice)

An exasperated Amanda heads towards the front door, as the KNOCKING persists.

CHIEF FELTON (O.S.)

Miss Temple, please open the door.

AMANDA

(aloud)

Okay, I'm coming.

Amanda opens the door for Chief Felton, when she is met with a surprise.

JEFFREY

Stands at the front of the door, as he looks jokingly at Amanda.

JEFFREY

You should really consider getting
a new roomie. The cops are even
after her.

AMANDA

(jokingly punches him in
shoulder)

Come in, you wise guy.

Jeffrey follows Amanda into her dorm room. Jeff takes in the room, as he looks at the side of the room belonging to Amanda's roommate, Mia. Mia's side of the room is an utter pig sty. Jeff continues to stand, as Amanda settles in.

AMANDA

Please, make yourself at home.

Jeff discovers a nearby chair and nestles into it.

AMANDA

So, what brings you here this evening?

JEFFREY

Well, I just wanted to see how everything was with you.

AMANDA

Aside from the mountain of schoolwork, everything is well. Is that all?

JEFFREY

No. I just came here to tell you that as of today, my life will never be the same.

AMANDA

I'm sorry, but I don't follow.

JEFFREY

My mom is with us. She just arrived this morning. She quit her job in the city to manage my career.

AMANDA

That sounds pretty dicey.

JEFFREY

I know. But the primary reason I came here tonight was to ask you something.

AMANDA

Sure. What is it?

Jeffrey hesitates, as he gets up from his seat and goes over to Amanda. He pulls out a small jewelry box, and presents it to her.

JEFFREY

This is for you.

Amanda takes the box from Jeffrey and gently opens it.

RING

Rests idly and luminesces brightly from the box.

Amanda looks in awe at the ring and then up at Jeffrey.

AMANDA

My goodness, it's beautiful.

JEFFREY

I bought it from a jeweler on Hanover Street. It's the October birthstone.

AMANDA

(sheepish)

My birthday's in February.

JEFFREY

(upset)

Oh... I'm so sorry.

AMANDA

It's okay. I really like it. Now, there's something I have for you..

Amanda opens a draw to her night stand, and pulls out a small piece of paper.

AMANDA

(hands piece of paper to him)

Here. It's not much; just something I wrote.

JEFFREY

Can I read it now?

AMANDA

Of course.

Jeffrey unfurls the piece of paper and begins to read it. Jeffrey barely contains his emotions, as he finishes reading the letter and looks tenderly at Amanda.

JEFFREY

(touched)

This is beyond words.

AMANDA

I wrote every word. You're the first person I've had a relationship with in quite some time. I just wanted to let you know how I felt.

JEFFREY

That's part of what brought me here. Amanda, my life is about to take a very frenzied and varied course.

(beat)

Hell, I don't even know what to expect. But whatever happens, I want you to know that you will always be in my thoughts, words, and actions.

(one full beat)

I mean, you don't have to if you don't want to. I know you have a life too, and...

Before Jeffrey can finish, Amanda places both arms around him and interjects.

AMANDA

Jeff, shut up and kiss me.

Amanda and Jeffrey kiss ardently, then look tenderly at each other.

JEFFREY

I don't think anything can ruin this moment.

Suddenly, the SOUND of someone VOMITING can be heard in an adjacent room. It is Amanda's roommate, MIA.

MIA (O.S.)

(calls out)

Amanda, I did it again!

Amanda and Jeffrey look disgustedly at one another.

AMANDA

I'll get the Lysol, you get the paper towels.

JEFFREY

Right.

Amanda and Jeffrey depart to go and assist Mia.

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT - GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jeffrey lies reflectively on his bed, staring intently at the newspaper article. Suddenly, there is a KNOCK on the DOOR.

KATHY (O.S.)
(calls out from behind
door)
Jeff, it's Mom.

JEFFREY
(aloud)
Just a minute.

Jeffrey frantically rises from his bed, lifts up the mattress, and places the article underneath. He lies back down on the bed and replies.

JEFFREY
Okay.

The bedroom door opens, as Kathy enters to say good night to her son.

KATHY
Honey, it's getting late and you've got school, and your first publisher's meeting.

JEFFREY
I know. Just had a little trouble sleeping.

KATHY
Oh, honey. It's okay to feel nervous. But there'll be plenty of meetings. We don't have to go with the first offer.

JEFFREY
No, it's not that. I'm just a little taken aback by everything that's happening.
(beat)
Sometimes I wonder if I really deserve all of this.

KATHY
Oh dear, it's natural to feel a little overwhelmed.
(MORE)

KATHY (cont'd)
 But you've found your vocation in
 life, and wherever it takes you, I
 will always be proud of you, no
 matter what.

JEFFREY
 Thanks, Mom.

Jeffrey and Kathy look tenderly at one another.

JEFFREY
 Mom, can I tell you something?

KATHY
 Of course.

JEFFREY
 I don't know how to say this, but I
 have a...

KATHY
 (interjects)
 Girlfriend. I know.

Jeffrey looks astounded at his mother.

JEFFREY
 (astonished)
 How did you know?

KATHY
 Grandma told me. I want all the
 details on her during breakfast
 tomorrow.
 (beat)
 Just some words of wisdom. Never
 tell a woman anything private,
 because it will never stay that
 way.
 (kisses him on forehead)
 Good night, honey.

Kathy gets up and exits OUT OF VIEW from the bedroom. Jeffrey
 remains seated on his bed.

INT. MCLEAN PUBLISHING BUILDING - ESTABLISHING SHOT -
 AFTERNOON

People enter and exit the front doors of McLean Publishing.

CUT TO:

INT. MCLEAN PUBLISHING BUILDING - RECEPTION AREA - AFTERNOON

The reception area is subdued, as aspiring writers sit quietly but anxiously, awaiting their fate, carefully reviewing their manuscripts, and preparing.

Kathy and Jeffrey enter into the reception area, as they approach the front desk, where they are greeted by the RECEPTIONIST.

RECEPTIONIST

Hello. How may I help you?

KATHY

Hello. Yes, we have an appointment with Mister Caldwell for three forty-five.

RECEPTIONIST

(checks the schedule)

Let me see. Oh yes, Wills. Please, have a seat, and I will tell him you're here.

KATHY

Thank you.

Kathy and Jeffrey walk away from the desk and proceed to find two vacant corner seats. They settle in and start to converse.

KATHY

(sotto voce)

How do you feel?

JEFFREY

(sotto voce)

A little antsy.

KATHY

(sotto voce)

Don't worry. You'll be fine. Just let me do all of the talking.

JEFFREY

(sotto voce)

What?! I need to have some input, too.

KATHY

(sotto voce)

I know.

(MORE)

KATHY (cont'd)
 Just let me do most of the talking.
 You're just a kid, so he may try to
 hustle you.

JEFFREY
 (sotto voce)
 Hustle me?! Mom, this is a
 publishing company, not a pool
 hall.

KATHY
 (sotto voce)
 You know what I mean. We have to
 play hardball.
 (motions to Jeff; sotto
 voce)
 Come here.

Jeffrey leans in towards his mother.

KATHY
 (sotto voce)
 How's my breath smell?

JEFFREY
 (sotto voce)
 Fine. Why?

KATHY
 (sotto voce)
 I hear people in publishing do
 pretty well for themselves. I think
 we can both come out with something
 from this.

JEFFREY
 (sotto voce)
 Mom, are you nuts? That's
 unprofessional. Don't you dare come
 on to this guy!

KATHY
 (sotto voce)
 I can work a subtle angle.

The exchange continues, when the VOICE of the Receptionist
 interjects.

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)
 (aloud)
 Mister Wills, Mister Caldwell is
 ready to see you.

Kathy and Jeffrey rise from their seats and quickly head to the door, which leads them to Mister Caldwell's office.

INT. MCLEAN PUBLISHING BUILDING - CORRIDOR - AFTERNOON

Kathy and Jeffrey are now outside of Mister Caldwell's office, as they say a few words before entering.

KATHY

(sotto voce)

Okay, let's put everything behind us and try and put our best foot forward, alright?

JEFFREY

(sotto voce)

Agreed.

KATHY

(sotto voce)

Let's do this.

Kathy KNOCKS lightly on Mister Caldwell's office DOOR, as his VOICE beckons.

MISTER CALDWELL (O.S.)

(from behind office door)

Please, come in.

Kathy and Jeffrey both take a deep breath before entering. Kathy opens the door, as they both enter.

INT. MCLEAN PUBLISHING BUILDING - MISTER CALDWELL'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

KEVIN CALDWELL, one of McLean Publishing's top executives, sits at his desk, as he gets up and greets Kathy and Jeffrey.

MISTER CALDWELL

(extends his hand)

Hello, Jeffrey, Jeffrey's mom.

JEFFREY

(shakes his hand)

A pleasure, Mister Caldwell.

KATHY

(shakes his hand)

I'm Kathy. How are you?

MISTER CALDWELL

Please, have a seat.

Kathy and Jeffrey sit in two chairs in front of Mr. Caldwell's desk, as he sits back down in his chair. The meeting is now in session.

JEFFREY

Before we begin, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to meet with us today, Mister Caldwell.

MISTER CALDWELL

It's my pleasure, Jeffrey. And please, call me Kevin.

(beat)

So, Jeffrey, from what I've heard, you are quite the wordsmith?

JEFFREY

(modest)

Oh, they say that about everyone.

MISTER CALDWELL

(pulls out newspaper article)

Well, it's not often that a writer of your age makes the front page of The Boston Herald. After reading some of your essay, both myself and my colleagues at McLean are quite impressed.

JEFFREY

Thank you, Mister Caldwell.

MISTER CALDWELL

Part of the reason we made this appointment is to not only see if we'll publish your material, but to also gauge and learn about the person behind the pen.

(beat)

Here at McLean, we like to nourish our clients, as well as represent them. We want to find out as much as possible about our authors, their works, and respective goals.

JEFFREY

That sounds wonderful.

MISTER CALDWELL

Jeffrey, if I may ask, what makes you want to pursue a career as an author?

JEFFREY

Well, I do enjoy the process of putting my thoughts and emotions into words, also trying to entertain and enlighten the reader.

MISTER CALDWELL

Now that is something I can respect. You have the right mindset and approach, which is something we can elaborate upon.

(beat)

Now, is there a specific genre that you like to read or write about?

JEFFREY

Well, I've always liked comic books.

MISTER CALDWELL

Okay, there's a start. Science fiction.

(beat)

Here at McLean, we represent writers of all different genres: DIY, cooking, home and gardening, politics, mystery, sports, etc. Depending on what kind of genre you choose to specialize in, we can establish a loyal reader base or demographic, which can benefit us both.

JEFFREY

That sounds great.

During their conversation, Kathy has been silent but making blatant body movements, as Mister Caldwell notices.

MISTER CALDWELL

Miss Wills, is everything alright?

KATHY

Yes, fine. Why do you ask?

MISTER CALDWELL

Well, your body gestures and mien suggest that you wish to say something. Is there anything you would like to add?

KATHY

As a matter of fact, there is. I couldn't help but listen to your spiel about caring for your writers.

MISTER CALDWELL

Spiel?

KATHY

Yes, spiel. Or in layman's terms, bullshit.

MISTER CALDWELL

(raises his voice)

I beg your pardon?

KATHY

You see, Kevin. Can I call you Kevin?

Kevin nods sternly, as Kathy continues.

KATHY

My son has a little gift called diplomacy, which is fine. Personally, I think he gets it from his dad, but that's a whole other story.

Jeffrey attempts to halt his mother.

JEFFREY

Mom...

KATHY

Jeffrey, please. You see, being a Momager, I intend to do the very best to look out for my son's best interests.

(beat)

The publishing industry is full of sharks. And believe me, as a native New Yorker, I know a shark when I see one. Hell, our newborns even come with fins.

(beat)

(MORE)

KATHY (cont'd)

How can we be confident that you will not swindle and exploit my son?

JEFFREY

Mom, I think you've said enough.

MISTER CALDWELL

Miss Wills, I can assure you that we are not sharks here at McLean. And I can also assure you that a career as an author will as profitable as you may believe.

KATHY

And that's exactly what I expect someone like you to say. You're all the same. Just a tiny drop of blood, and you come swimming over.

JEFFREY

Mom, stop it!

MISTER CALDWELL

(upset)

I'm sorry, but I am going to ask you nicely to leave my office.

KATHY

Just show me where the door is, shark!

(beat)

And what kind of name is Kevin, anyhow? Kevin Costner, Kevin Bacon, Kevin McHale.

MISTER CALDWELL

(stern)

Wait a second. Go back to that last one.

KATHY

What? Kevin McHale? Yeah, he was on the Celtics. When they were good.

MISTER CALDWELL

Yes, that one. You can call me a lair, you can call me a shark, but don't ever talk bad about the Celts. I bleed green and white.

KATHY

Oh, that team that hasn't won a title since Reagan was in office?

MISTER CALDWELL

Unlike your crappy Knicks, you haven't won since Nixon was President!

KATHY

At least we've made it to the Finals.

MISTER CALDWELL

Yeah, in 1999!

KATHY

Yeah, I see that leprechaun has brought you real luck the last couple of years.

MISTER CALDWELL

Yeah. I see Dolan's worked wonders these last few years. Maybe you guys will finish fifth this year!

KATHY

Just you wait, pal. We'll meet up in the Playoffs this year, and when we win, we're gonna dance all ova the Boston Garden!

MISTER CALDWELL

FYI, we play in the Fleet Center now!

KATHY

I'm sorry. I didn't know you upgraded from that urinal.

MISTER CALDWELL

(livid)

That's it! Get out and don't evah come back!

KATHY

Oh, don't you worry. Remember, Knicks in '13. All the way, baby!

(motions to Jeffrey)

C'mon, Jeffrey. Let's fly this coop.

Kathy pulls Jeffrey by the arm, as he looks embarrassingly at Mister Caldwell, who sits angered but composed behind his desk.

EXT. MCLEAN PUBLISHING BUILDING - PARKING LOT - AFTERNOON

Kathy and Jeffrey walk to their car. Kathy starts to unlock the door, as Jeff converses.

JEFFREY

With all due respect Mom, what the hell just happened back there?

KATHY

Jeff, I could sense something with him the minute we stepped in his office.

JEFFREY

You can't judge a book by its cover. Pun intended.

KATHY

Jeffrey, a lot of business dealings are strongly influenced by data and words. But there is one thing that is often omitted...

Jeffrey looks perplexed at his mother, as she continues.

KATHY

Instinct. Instinct, gut feelings, following your heart. Everyone always fails to do so, and later end up regretting it.

(beat)

It applies to everything, not just business. Always remember this, Jeff, and put it into practice. Promise.

JEFFREY

I promise. Since we're on the topic of promises, promise me you'll take a chill pill before we go on interviews.

KATHY

Okay, I'll try to be more civil during interviews.

Jeffrey looks sternly at his mother, when she concedes.

KATHY

Okay, okay. I'll act better. C'mon, let's get home.

(MORE)

KATHY (cont'd)
 This wasn't the last publisher
 we'll be speaking to.

Jeffrey and Kathy enter the car, and start to drive off.

FADE OUT.

SCENE XV

FADE IN:

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT - GUEST BEDROOM - EVENING

Jeffrey is busy packing for the long trip ahead, when there is a KNOCK at the DOOR.

JEFFREY
 Come in.

The door opens, as Olivia slowly walks through.

OLIVIA
 Jeff, hon. Just wanted to see if
 you needed help packing.

JEFFREY
 Thanks, Nana, but I'm almost done.

OLIVIA
 Jeff, dear, how are you holdin' up?

JEFFREY
 Okay, I guess. Just trying to
 prepare myself for the long haul.

OLIVIA
 Oh dear, just take it a day at a
 time. I know your mom's been kinda
 excited.

Jeffrey looks quizzically at Olivia, who changes her words.

OLIVIA
 Well, really excited, but I'm sure
 she'll settle down. I want to give
 you something.

Olivia pulls out a brown paper bag, and hands it to Jeffrey.

OLIVIA

Here. These are some Reader's Digest booklets. They have some articles I'd think you'd enjoy.

JEFFREY

Thanks. I'll try and fit in some time between travel and school work.

OLIVIA

You have quite a road ahead of you. Just remember that I am always a phone call away.

JEFFREY

Thanks, Nana. It means a lot. Can I bring you home anything?

OLIVIA

How about a book deal?

JEFFREY

I was thinking more towards a snow globe, but I'll try.

Jeffrey smiles widely, as Olivia reciprocates.

OLIVIA

Why don't you finish packing and get to bed? You have an early flight tomorrow.

Olivia kisses Jeffrey on the forehead, as she gets up and heads toward the door.

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Everything is pitch black, and everyone is asleep. Suddenly, a figure emerges INTO VIEW. It is Jeffrey, who furtively walks to the front door and exits.

INT. AMANDA'S DORMITORY - LATE NIGHT

Amanda is sound asleep, when there is a KNOCK on the door. Amanda turns in bed, but remains sleeping. The KNOCKING persists, as a drowsy Amanda rises and heads to the door.

AMANDA

(groggy)
Who could it be at this hour?

Amanda opens the door, as Jeffrey stands in front.

AMANDA

(groggy)

Jeffrey, what are you doing here?

JEFFREY

(sotto voce)

Listen, I'm sorry to come by this late, but I really want to talk to you.

EXT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - HARVARD YARD - LATE NIGHT

Amanda and Jeffrey take a late-night promenade around campus, as they converse.

AMANDA

Wow, I didn't know your mom had it in her.

JEFFREY

Neither did I . I just hope she behaves from now on.

AMANDA

She's just excited. All moms are. Is there a reason why you came by so late to see me?

JEFFREY

Yes. I know our relationship has gotten more serious. But my primary concern is how my new schedule is going to affect our relationship.

Jeffrey and Amanda arrive at a campus bench and take a seat.

AMANDA

Jeff, I know things are going to be a little abnormal and hectic. But I am willing to make whatever concessions are requisite to make us stronger.

JEFFREY

I don't deserve you.

(beat)

No matter where I am in the country, I will make every effort to contact you. Phone, email, text message, you name it.

AMANDA

Don't worry. Just get adequate rest, be prepared, and keep your eye on the prize.

JEFFREY

I will.

Jeffrey and Amanda look tenderly at each other, and kiss.

INT. LOGAN AIRPORT (BOSTON) - BOARDING GATE - DAY

Kathy and Jeffrey, carry-on bags in tow, head towards their flight's gate, as they are about to board their flight to Seattle.

KATHY

Do you have everything? What about your plane ticket?

JEFFREY

Yes. Who has the window seat?

KATHY

You do. I wanna keep my lunch down.

INT. AIRPLANE - PLANE SEAT - DAY

Kathy and Jeffrey settle into their seats, as they wait for the flight to take off. They start to converse.

KATHY

I'm so relieved. I didn't think we'd make this flight.

Jeffrey remains silent, as a concerned Kathy notices.

KATHY

What's the matter?

JEFFREY

(sotto voce; complains)
Did we have to go to Seattle first?

KATHY

(sotto voce)
I'm sorry, but the flight to L.A. Would've been a red eye. Let's just make the best of it.

AIRPLANE

Starts to take off of the tarmac, and SOARS into the sky.

MONTAGE - PUBLISHING ROAD TRIP

In Seattle, Kathy and Jeffrey meet with a local publisher, who shakes his head no.

In a local Border's Books, Jeffrey and Kathy enjoy some Starbucks, while they browse for some other publishers in the area.

The Vancouver skyline looms large, as the Canadian Rockies lie in the background.

Another meeting, another letdown. Another publishing company declines Jeffrey and his work.

On a flight to Los Angeles, Jeffrey diligently works on on his homework, as Kathy prepares for the next publishing meetings.

In Los Angeles, Jeffrey and Kathy take a promenade along the Hollywood Walk of Fame, as they take in all of the sights.

Jeffrey and Kathy walk despondently to their flight in LAX, as their search for a publishing deal continues.

END MONTAGE

INT. HOTEL ROOM (CHICAGO) - NIGHT

An exhausted Jeffrey picks up the receiver of the hotel phone, and dials a number.

JEFFREY
(speaks into phone;
groggy)
Hello? Hey, Amanda.

INTERCUT TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - AMANDA'S DORMITORY - NIGHT

Amanda, her hair in a bun and in her nightgown, is seated on her bed, as she talks into her room's telephone, as she munches on popcorn.

AMANDA

Jeffrey. So great to hear from you!
No, this is not a bad time. Where
are you?

JEFFREY

(groggy)
Chicago.

AMANDA

Ooh, the Windy City. You sound
beat.

JEFFREY

(groggy)
Tell me about it. I have my first
meeting at seven thirty tomorrow.

AMANDA

How are you holding up?

JEFFREY

Okay, I guess. The travel can be
taxing.

AMANDA

I hear ya. I really miss our study
breaks and lunch together.

JEFFREY

So do I. Not to worry. My next
flight is to Miami, then I return
to the East coast.

AMANDA

I can't wait. You know summer's
around the corner. Maybe we can
spend it together.

JEFFREY

Sounds great. How are your classes
going?

AMANDA

They're okay. Sometimes the essays
can be difficult to elaborate upon.
But all in all, it's fine. How
about you?

JEFFREY

Yeah. I try to get most of it done
on the plane or bus.

(MORE)

JEFFREY (cont'd)
It's just a pain in the ass to fax
it to the university.

AMANDA
Jeff?

JEFFREY
Yeah?

AMANDA
I really miss you.

JEFFREY
Ditto. No one wants this to end
more than I do.
(beat)
When I get back, we're gonna have
the best summer you've ever known.

AMANDA
That good?

JEFFREY
I guarantee it.

AMANDA
Okay, Joe Willie. By the way,
thanks for the post cards.

JEFFREY
No problem. I'll tell you about
everywhere when I return.

AMANDA
Can't wait. Love you, Jeffy.

JEFFREY
Love you. Can I have a kiss over
the phone?

AMANDA
Of course.

Amanda makes a LIP-PUCKERING SOUND on the receiver.

JEFFREY
(mock-relieved)
Thanks. You made my night. Can't
wait to feel the real thing.

AMANDA
(coquettish)
Believe me. It will be worth the
wait. Good night, Jeff.

JEFFREY
 Good night, Amanda.

Jeffrey hangs up the phone, as he looks pensively outside of his hotel room window.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT II

ACT III

SCENE XVI

FADE IN:

EXT. FRONT OF LA GUARDIA AIRPORT (NEW YORK) - MORNING

Kathy and Jeffrey, luggage in tow, exit the airport, as they attempt to hail a taxi.

INT. KATHY'S APARTMENT (NEW YORK) - EARLY AFTERNOON

The front DOOR of the apartment OPENS slowly, as a haggard Kathy and Jeffrey enter. They drop their bags, as Jeffrey plops down on the living room sofa.

KATHY
 Don't get too comfy. We have an interview in an hour.

JEFFREY
 (rises from couch; upset)
 Are you kidding me? We just got in! I haven't seen this place in months.

KATHY
 Get ready. I planned it last night. We're very lucky to get this one.

JEFFREY
 Mom, please inform me when you plan any interviews.

KATHY
 I promise. Just get washed and I'll prepare your clothes.

(MORE)

KATHY (cont'd)
We'll make a quick stop at
Starbucks for some java.

INT. LOCAL PUBLISHING OFFICES (NEW YORK) - RECEPTION AREA -
DAY

Kathy and Jeffrey sit patiently but pensively, as they await
to be called in. They start to converse.

KATHY
(sotto voce)
How are you?

JEFFREY
(sotto voce)
A little tired. The coffee helped,
though.

KATHY
(sotto voce)
Anything else?

JEFFREY
(sotto voce)
What do you mean?

KATHY
(sotto voce)
I mean, are you nervous, confident,
prepared, scattered? Talk to me.

JEFFREY
Mom, I approach every interview the
way I approach a root canal. I know
it's inevitable, so I just do it
and try not to think about it.

KATHY
Sounds reasonable. I should try
that.

The VOICE of the RECEPTIONIST emerges.

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)
Mister Wills, they are ready to see
you now.

Kathy and Jeffrey rise from their seats and go towards the corridor leading to the Executive's office.

INT. LOCAL PUBLISHING OFFICES (NEW YORK) - EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE
- DAY

Kathy and Jeffrey sit pensively in chairs across from one of the Chief Executives of the publishing company, FRANK LORING, who sits calmly behind his desk. The conversation begins.

MISTER LORING

Well, I would like to start by introducing myself. My name is Frank Loring, and I am one the head Executives.

JEFFREY

(warmly shakes his hand)
Jeffrey Wills. It's a pleasure to meet you, Mister Loring.

KATHY

(warmly shakes his hand)
Hello, Mister Loring.

MISTER LORING

Please, call me Frank.
(looks at Jeffrey's resume)
Well Jeffrey, I did a quick glimpse of your resume and credentials, and I must say, I have some reservations.

JEFFREY

(worried but composed)
Oh...

MISTER LORING

You see, our publishing company usually does not take on new college graduates as clients. Or in your case, a current college student.

(one full beat)

However, I must say I am greatly impressed by your making the front page of *The Boston Herald*. The fact that your attending Harvard also serves in your favor.

JEFFREY

Mister Loring...

MISTER LORING

Please, call me Frank.

JEFFREY

Frank, I can assure you that despite my age, I take my schoolwork writing, and other endeavors very seriously. This work that I wrote...

(hesitates; one full beat)

This work that I wrote was based on my close observations of the world today and the people that reside it in. My mother and I have traveled extensively, in hopes of finding a publisher.

(one full beat)

I am back in my hometown, and as a native New Yorker, I know that the standards here are high and deep-rooted.

(one full beat)

I won't promise you success. But I will make this promise. If given the opportunity, I will do my best and approach each new project with ingenuity, enthusiasm, and integrity.

Mister Loring sits in silence, as he processes Jeffrey's words. He then comments.

MISTER LORING

What I just heard were the words of someone we can truly have as a client here at our company.

(extends his hand)

It will take some time, but we will try and create a book deal within the upcoming weeks.

Congratulations.

Jeffrey smiles faintly and shakes Mister Loring's hand, as his mother also shakes his hand, then gives her son a kiss.

EXT. LOCAL PUBLISHING OFFICES (NEW YORK) - DAY

An ecstatic Jeffrey and Kathy descend the steps, as they celebrate their new book deal.

INT. KATHY'S APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - EVENING

Kathy and Jeffrey enjoy some hot deli sandwiches, as they celebrate their new book deal with a quiet night in.

KATHY
How's your sandwich?

JEFFREY
(looks down at his sandwich)
Great. Nothing like pastrami from the Stage.

KATHY
Mister Loring called and said they'll be planning your schedule over the next few weeks. They'll keep us posted.

JEFFREY
Sounds good.

KATHY
You okay, Jeffrey?

JEFFREY
Yup.

KATHY
Baby, you can talk to me.

Jeffrey takes a moment, then looks up from his food.

JEFFREY
I just can't wrap my head around all of this. A book deal, a freakin' book deal.

KATHY
I know it's going to be a whole lot happening very swiftly.
(one full beat)
But I just want you to know how very proud I am of you. I think you should've joined the circus, cause you've done a balancing act like I've never seen.

JEFFREY
It's only just the beginning. I'm just hoping I can keep up with it all.

KATHY

Don't worry. Enjoy tonight, 'cause we're catching the first train out to Boston tomorrow. Back to school.

JEFFREY

Back to reality.

KATHY

Just take it one day at a time. Congratulations, hon. Your life will never be the same.

JEFFREY

But I always will.

KATHY

I know.

Kathy rises from the dinner table, as she digresses OUT OF VIEW into the kitchen. Jeff remains seated, as he takes a bite of his sandwich.

EXT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - ESTABLISHING SHOT - DAY

Students ascend/descend the front steps of Harvard.

CUT TO:

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - SCHOOL CORRIDOR - DAY

Jeffrey ambles slowly down the hallway in his first day back to school.

JEFFREY'S POV

RANDOM STUDENTS

Stand by their lockers in silence, as they look slightly in awe of Jeffrey.

BACK TO SCENE

Jeffrey stays silent, as he retains his composure and continues to his next class.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - CLASSROOM - DAY

Students sit at their desks, as they prepare for class. Professor Lipson enters into the classroom, as he places down his bag and papers and addresses the class.

PROFESSOR LIPSON

(aloud)

Good morning, class. Before we begin, I would like for all of you to congratulate one of our own. Jeffrey Wills has just signed a book deal in New York, all the while maintaining a stellar GPA.

(looks directly at Jeffrey)

Jeffrey, on behalf of myself and everyone at Harvard, we commend you on your success and a bright and prosperous future in literature.

EVERYONE in the classroom CLAPS in applause, as Jeffrey humbly acknowledges them with a wave.

ANTHONY

Reluctantly applauds, nary a smile on his face.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - SCHOOL CORRIDOR - DAY

Class has ended, as students begin to enter the hallway. Jeffrey appears INTO VIEW, as he swiftly heads to his locker. He arrives, as he unlocks his locker to get his books. He SLAMS his LOCKER shut, as he turns to go to his next class, when he is met with a smiling Amanda.

AMANDA

Hey there, author.

Jeffrey warmly enfolds Amanda in his embrace, as they kiss.

AMANDA

Congratulations. I got the news from Barry.

JEFFREY

Thanks. Man, are you a sight for sore eyes. I didn't see you in class today.

AMANDA
Believe it or not, I overslept.

JEFFREY
Wow, that's a first.

AMANDA
What can I say? I lost sleep
thinking about you.

JEFFREY
(jocular)
Right.

Jeffrey puts his arm around Amanda, as they walk down the
corridor.

INT. HOULIHAN'S RESTAURANT - CORNER BOOTH - AFTERNOON

Amanda and Jeffrey enjoy a late afternoon snack, as they
converse.

AMANDA
So, how were your travels?

JEFFREY
My gosh, where do I begin? I never
heard of frequent flyer miles. Now
I've got over a thousand.
(beat)
Did you get the postcards I sent
you?

AMANDA
Every single one. I placed them
above my bed post.

JEFFREY
(takes a bite of his
burger)
Man, this is one heckuva burger.
How's your food?

AMANDA
It's good. Can you believe finals
are right around the corner?

JEFFREY
(exasperated)
Don't remind me. I've gotta hit the
books even harder.

AMANDA
(concerned)
Are you sure you'll be okay?

JEFFREY
It should be okay. Maybe we can
study together?

AMANDA
Sounds great.

JEFFREY
Can I tell you something?

AMANDA
Of course.

JEFFREY
Will you still love me despite of
everything that's about to happen?

AMANDA
Always. No matter what fate has in
store, I know our love for each
other will persist.

JEFFREY
This will probably be my busiest
summer to date. No matter how busy
I am, you will always be with me.

AMANDA
(lifts her finger and
displays the ring)
And you with me.

Amanda smiles warmly.

AMANDA
I showed it to my mom when she came
to visit me. I've told her all
about you.

JEFFREY
(upset)
Your mom was here? Damn it!

AMANDA
What's the matter?

JEFFREY

I'm missing all the important stuff.

AMANDA

Don't worry. She'll be back.

JEFFREY

This is exactly what I mean.

AMANDA

Will you relax? The semester's not even over and already your fretting. Everything will be fine.

(beat)

Whadya say we split a piece of cheesecake?

A small smile fissures from Jeff's lips, as he concedes.

JEFFREY

Sure.

Amanda smiles back at Jeffrey, as she motions to the waitress.

FADE OUT.

SCENE XVII

FADE IN:

MONTAGE - LAST TWO WEEKS OF SCHOOL

Jeffrey and Barry study hard in the school library.

Jeffrey and Kathy review some paperwork, as they prepare for the summer ahead.

Amanda and Jeffrey carefully go over their homework, while painstakingly detailing material for finals.

An exhausted Jeffrey looks up from his book at his clock radio, and decides to call it a night. He enters into his grandmother's bedroom, as both Kathy and Olivia are sound asleep. Jeffrey goes to his mother, as he kisses her on the forehead. He then goes over to Olivia, and gives her a kiss on the forehead. Jeffrey heads over to the bedroom door, but turns around and looks and smiles before exiting.

It's the start of finals, as Jeffrey goes to one of his scheduled exams. He takes a seat in a vacant desk and places his materials in front of him. He then looks up from his book in front of him. Seated, a few rows in front, is Barry. Barry points and says "Good luck" in a whisper. Jeffrey reciprocates, as he prepares for his final.

In a local Starbucks, Jeffrey patiently waits for his order at the counter. The clerk arrives, cup holder in hand, with four double espressos. Jeffrey pays the clerk, gets his change, thanks the clerk, takes his beverages, and goes on his way.

In his room, Jeffrey is again burning the midnight oil, as he takes the final sip of the fourth espresso. He then reaches under his bed and pulls out a six-pack of Red Bull. Jeffrey pops open a can, makes a motion to the sky, takes a sip, and continues studying.

Jeffrey walks out of a classroom, as he has just completed his last final of the semester. Jeffrey arrives through the front door of the apartment, and collapses on the living room couch.

END MONTAGE

INT. HOULIHAN'S RESTAURANT - CORNER BOOTH - NIGHT

Amanda and Jeffrey enjoy a quiet dinner together, as summer is now underway. They start to converse.

JEFFREY

(lifts his glass)

A toast, to the end of the our
freshman year.

AMANDA

(raises her glass)

I'll drink to that.

Jeffrey and Amanda CLICK their GLASSES, as they each take a sip of their beverages.

AMANDA

I just want to tell you what a
great job you've done. I couldn't
have done what you did.

JEFFREY

Thank you. I couldn't have done it
without your support.

(MORE)

JEFFREY (cont'd)

(beat)

This is probably the first summer
I'm not looking forward to.

AMANDA

Just don't worry. You'll be fine.
And know that I love you always.

Amanda displays the ring to Jeffrey and smiles.

JEFFREY

Can I ask you something?

AMANDA

Shoot.

JEFFREY

I was wondering after all of this
has dissipated, if we could maybe
do some writing of our own
together. Poetry, spiritual lit.

(beat)

If you want to, of course.

AMANDA

I would be honored. We'll work on
it as soon as we both have time.

(beat)

Maybe if we're lucky, it'll make
the Times best seller list.

Amanda smiles, as Jeffrey reciprocates, as they both go back
to their meals.

EXT. LOCAL STREET (DOWNTOWN BOSTON) - NIGHT

Jeffrey's car pulls up INTO VIEW into a vacant parking space
and stops. Jeffrey and Amanda egress from the car, as they
make a stop in front of a house.

JEFFREY

So this is it, huh?

AMANDA

Yup.

(beat)

Believe it or not, it's Mia's
house.

JEFFREY

Really?

AMANDA

She was nice enough to let me stay with her and her folks for the summer. I head back to Vermont in August.

JEFFREY

Sounds cool.

An awkward moment of silence ensues.

AMANDA

Everything alright?

JEFFREY

I'm really gonna miss you. It's just not fair that we can't spend the summer together.

AMANDA

Will you relax? It will be okay. I'll think of you everyday. And yes, I will call.

(takes his hand)

Give me your hand.

Amanda pulls out a pen and starts to write on Jeff's hand. She finishes writing.

AMANDA

That's Mia's home phone. Call me whenever. I also wrote my e-mail address if you're ever in cyber space.

JEFFREY

Thanks. So, I guess this means good night. And good bye.

AMANDA

Just for now.

(beat)

I'll be seeing you in my dreams.

JEFFREY

Ditto.

Amanda gives Jeffrey a kiss on the lips, as she heads towards the front door OUT OF VIEW. Jeffrey stands stock still in front of the house, as he takes one last look.

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT (BOSTON) - BATHROOM - MORNING

Jeffrey is brushing his teeth, when there is a KNOCK on the bathroom DOOR.

JEFFREY
(calls aloud)
Yeah.

KATHY (O.S.)
(from behind door)
Jeff, you almost done in there?

JEFFREY
(calls aloud)
Yeah. Just brushin my teeth.

KATHY (O.S.)
(calls aloud; behind door)
Well, don't take too long. We have
a train to catch.

JEFFREY
I won't.
(beat; in a whisper)
Pain in the ass.

EXT. LOCAL TRAIN STATION (BOSTON) - PLATFORM - MORNING

Kathy, Jeffrey, and Olivia are at the station, as they prepare to say goodbye.

OLIVIA
I'm seeing this place a lot more
than I'd like to.

KATHY
Mom, don't worry. We'll call
everyday.

JEFFREY
Can I bring you back anything?

OLIVIA
Nah. Just have a safe trip and stay
out of trouble.

JEFFREY

I promise.

KATHY

I'm not sure when we'll be back.
The schedule's extensive and can
change at any time. I'll let you
know.

OLIVIA

No problem.

KATHY

I love you, Mom.

Kathy warmly enfolds her mother and gives her a kiss. Jeffrey follows, as he embraces Olivia.

JEFFREY

Love you, Nana.

OLIVIA

Love you too, hon.

KATHY

Looks like everyone is boarding.
Let's go. We'll call you when we
arrive, Mom.

OLIVIA (O.S.)

(aloud)

Don't forget now.

OLIVIA

(makes a fist; in a
whisper)

Or I'll give ya five of these.

MONTAGE - SUMMERTIME

In New York, Jeffrey and Kathy confer with Mister Loring, as they review Jeffrey's itinerary.

In Los Angeles, Kathy and Jeffrey arrive haggard at LAX, as they are set to attend the grand opening of a Walden Books.

Jeffrey smiles and cuts the ribbon for the book store, as PEOPLE APPLAUD and cameras flash.

Still in Los Angeles, Jeffrey and Kathy meet with a graphic design artist, as they review the presentation of the book cover. Jeffrey discusses his ideas with the artists, as Kathy carefully presides.

Jeffrey is sound asleep on the plane, as an equally tired Kathy watches him and pats him on the head. Next stop, Chicago.

Jeffrey kindly sits for an interview for a local morning talk show, as he patiently fields questions from one of the hosts.

Jeffrey and Kathy receive a special delivery at their hotel room. Jeffrey unravels the package to find his first novel, completed and ready for sale. Jeffrey and Kathy look admiringly at the book, then at each other, and embrace.

Jeffrey's book has just arrived in stores, as it has its own display at a local Barnes & Noble. Jeffrey is in the midst of his first book signing, as he happily indulges fans with autographs, handshakes, and pictures.

At O'Hare Airport, Jeffrey and Kathy tiredly await the next flight to New York, as they rest warily on some nearby seats.

In New York, Jeffrey arrives at another book signing to more applause and camera flashes.

At a special gathering for the United Nations, Jeffrey calmly gives a dissertation to a prominent and powerful audience. Jeffrey and Kathy later shake hands and speak with delegates and ambassadors.

On a rare off day, Kathy and Jeffrey sip lemonade, as they perch on a bench and take in the sights of Central Park.

Jeffrey and Kathy exit a taxi cab in front of Kennedy Airport, as the cabbie opens his trunk and lifts out their luggage. Kathy pays the cabbie and thanks him, as she and Jeffrey scurry to catch their flight.

END MONTAGE

INT. HOULIHAN'S RESTAURANT - CORNER BOOTH - LATE AFTERNOON

Amanda sits alone in her booth, as she stirs her soft drink with her straw. She looks up and exclaims.

 AMANDA
 (happily)
 Jeff!

JEFFREY

Stands in front of the booth, as he smiles faintly.

Amanda rises from her booth, as she embraces Jeffrey and kisses him. The two sit down. A Waiter arrives INTO VIEW, as Jeff gives him his drink order, as he exits OUT OF VIEW. They start to talk.

JEFFREY

I never knew there was a Houlihan's here.

AMANDA

Just a few minutes on the outskirts of town.

JEFFREY

There's a Houlihan's downtown in the city.

AMANDA

Oh.

JEFFREY

The food tastes like shit.

Jeffrey yawns, mouth agape, as Amanda looks on.

AMANDA

So, how was your flight?

JEFFREY

Okay. I got into town about two hours ago.

AMANDA

Then you should be resting. I'm so sorry.

JEFFREY

No worries. I got a cappuccino to drink.

AMANDA

So, tell me about your summer.

JEFFREY

Well. Book signing, meeting, plane ride, book signing, meeting, plane ride, more meetings, and more book signings. That's it in a nutshell.

Amanda nods in coy comprehension.

JEFFREY

How about you?

AMANDA

Well, we went up to Maine to visit my aunt, then we went to Philadelphia to see the Liberty Bell. We even had a barbecue on the Fourth of July.

JEFFREY

Sounds neat.

Jeffrey lets out another gaping yawn, as a concerned Amanda looks on.

AMANDA

(concerned)

Are you sure you're okay? You look exhausted.

JEFFREY

I'll be fine. Oh great, my 'cino's here.

The Waiter appears INTO VIEW with Jeffrey's cappuccino, as he places it down before him. Jeffrey thanks him, as he exits OUT OF VIEW. Jeffrey starts to pour some sugar into his cappuccino, as he and Amanda continue.

JEFFREY

So, did you get the postcards I sent?

AMANDA

Every one. I even made an album.

JEFFREY

Cool. I sent some to Barry. I'm seeing him tonight. We're just gonna hang.

AMANDA

Sounds great.

The Waiter appears INTO VIEW, as he brings a beer to Jeffrey. The Waiter indicates that it is from a table of fans across from Jeffrey and Amanda.

GROUP OF GUYS

Wave and smile at Jeffrey from their table.

Jeff looks back at the group and gives them a 'thank you' wave. Jeffrey then looks at the Waiter.

JEFFREY

A round of drinks for that table.
My treat.

Jeffrey pulls out his wallet, hands a few bills to the Waiter.

JEFFREY

Keep the change.

The Waiter thanks Jeffrey and exits OUT OF VIEW, as Jeff takes a look at the menu, while a stunned Amanda looks on.

AMANDA

What did you just do?

JEFFREY

I bought those guys a round of drinks.

AMANDA

You just gave the waiter fifty dollars.

JEFFREY

Yeah. So?

AMANDA

Jeffrey, I think you should be more discreet in how you spend your money.

JEFFREY

It'll be okay.
(tips his beer)
Hey, cheers to a great night out.

AMANDA

Since when do you drink?

JEFFREY

It's okay, Amanda.

AMANDA

But you're not even old enough.

JEFFREY

It's only one beer. No worries. I
love you.

Jeffrey kisses Amanda on the cheek, as Amanda gives a faux smile to Jeffrey.

EXT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT COMPLEX (BOSTON) - FRONT STEPS -
EVENING

Jeffrey stands in front of the steps of an apartment complex, as he waits patiently. A car pulls up INTO VIEW in front of the apartment complex, as it parks and comes to a stop. Barry exits out of the car, as he approaches Jeffrey.

BARRY

(extends his hand)
Long time, no see, my man!

Jeffrey slaps Barry five, as the two briefly embrace.

BARRY

You ready for tonight?

JEFFREY

As I'll ever be.

INT. BARRY'S CAR - FRONT SEAT - NIGHT

Barry vigilantly drives, as he speaks to Jeffrey.

BARRY

Man, you haven't lived until you've
been to Murray Clausen's back to
school bash. He has it every year
the last weekend of the summer.
It's a killer.

JEFFREY

Well, I'll get to see how
Beantown's finest boogie down.

INT. MURRAY CLAUSEN'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Barry and Jeffrey walk through the front door, as they are met amid a crowded house of young revelers, as they drink and dance to the BLARING MUSIC. The boys attempt to navigate their way through thongs of their peers. They then encounter MURRAY CLAUSEN.

MURRAY

Hey, fellas. Welcome. Murray Clausen. What's your name, major?

BARRY

Mur, it's Barry.

MURRAY

(shakes his head in mock embarrassment)

Shit, I'm sorry. Bar. The booze is taking over. How've you been?

BARRY

Good. Wish summer was still here.

MURRAY

I hear ya.

BARRY

Murray, I'd like you to meet my friend, Jeffrey.

MURRAY

(extends his hand)

Hey, author man. I finally get to meet the man. You must seeing more snatch than an OB/GYN.

JEFFREY

(modest)

Yes, among other things.

MURRAY

Sorry guys, but I gotta split. If you're hungry, there's some pizza, KFC, and finger foods in the kitchen.

(looks at Jeffrey)

Nice to meet you. Have fun fellas.

Murray exits OUT OF VIEW, as the guys make their way to the kitchen. Jeffrey takes a slice of pizza and digs in.

JEFFREY

You know that guy?

BARRY

Yeah. I've been to this party the last four years. Mur throws one helluva bash.

JEFFREY

I'm thirsty. I'm getting a drink.
Would you like something?

BARRY

I'm good, thanks. I think I've
found mine for tonight.

Barry looks intently away at Jeffrey, as Jeffrey looks in Barry's direction.

YOUNG ATTRACTIVE GIRL.

Talks with some of her peers in the other side of the room.

Barry looks back at Jeffrey.

BARRY

Be back in a minute.
(extends a fist.)
Holla at a player.

Jeffrey bangs Barry's fist, as Barry exits OUT OF VIEW. Jeffrey heads over to the bar, as he surveys the array of wines and liquors. He notices a bottle of gin, as he picks it up and reads the label. Jeffrey looks for and finds a clean cup, as he pours himself a cup. Jeffrey takes a light sip. He then puckers his lips and takes another sip, as it goes down easier. Jeffrey then pours himself another glass.

CLOCK ON WALL

Reads eight forty-five.

SEGUE TO:

CLOCK ON WALL

As it now reads ten-fifteen.

Barry is seated on the living room sofa, as he continues talking to the attractive girl.

BARRY

So, your family lives in Braintree?
Nice area. My friend Theo was
thinking about getting an apartment
there.

(beat)

(MORE)

BARRY (cont'd)
I'm feeling kinda parched. I'll be
back. Can I get you anything?

The young attractive girl nods her head "no", as Barry heads over to the bar. Barry is pouring himself a drink of beer from a keg, as he turns his attention to a corner of the room. He then notices something.

JEFFREY

With gin bottle in hand, lays unconscious on the floor.

Barry drops his beer, as he goes to check on Jeffrey.

BARRY
(shakes Jeffrey's
shoulder)
Jeff, Jeff. Wake up, man. Jeff,
Jeff!

Jeffrey, now roused, starts to come to, as he looks up at Barry and attempts to get up.

JEFFREY
(groggy)
Bar? Where the hell am I?

BARRY
We're at Murray's party. C'mon, I'm
takin' you home.

Jeffrey starts to gingerly get up, as Barry gently lifts him and gives him a shoulder of support. The two start to slowly make their way to the door, when Jeffrey hears the song, "IN THE CLUB" by Fifty Cent. He then stops.

JEFFREY
Wait a minute. I love this tune.

BARRY
I like Fifty too. But we have to...

Before Barry can finish, Jeffrey pulls away from him and makes his way to the dining room table, where he climbs up, dances and starts to warble.

JEFFREY
You can find me in the club, bottle
full of bub, baby I got what you
need..

Jeffrey starts to dance listlessly on the table, as he is met with a CHORUS of RAUCOUS CHEERS from party goers. He then loses his balance and proceeds to CRASH into a nearby chair.

Barry quickly rushes to his aid, as he slowly picks up Jeffrey and escorts him to the door.

BARRY
This party's officially over.

EXT. MURRAY CLAUSEN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Barry supports Jeffrey, as the two head to Barry's car. They are almost there, when TWO PARTY GOERS recognize Jeffrey.

PARTY GOER #1
Hey, it's you! You're that writer guy. What's up, man?

BARRY
Sorry, man, but my friend is a little beat and really needs to get home. Maybe another time.

Just then, Jeffrey intervenes, as he introduces himself.

JEFFREY
(groggy; extends his hand)
Hey, man. I'm Jeffrey.

PARTY GOER #1
(shakes his hand)
What's up, man? Hey, can you stay put for just a sec?

BARRY
(objects)
I'm sorry, but we really need to be getting...

JEFFREY
(groggily intervenes)
C'mon, Bar. Got a fan here. Of course we'll stick around.

PARTY GOER #1
(calls and motions to friend)
Mikey, get your camera and get ova here!

The other Party Goer enters INTO VIEW, camcorder in hand, as he starts to record Jeffrey.

PARTY GOER #2
 (handles camera and calls)
 Hey, buddy. Look right into the
 camera and speak.

CAMCORDER POV

Starts to focus on an unsteady Jeffrey. Jeffrey looks into
 the camera, as he comes to and starts to speak.

JEFFREY
 (looks directly to and
 points to camera)
 Is this thing on?

PARTY GOER #2 (O.S.)
 Yep. You're on camera, pal.

JEFFREY
 How ya doin? This is Jeff Wills.
 Starting Monday I will be a
 sophomore at fair Harvard. Major in
 English and French Lit.

Barry attempts to intervene.

BARRY
 Jeff, I think that's all for to...

JEFFREY
 (interjects)
 No, Bar. I'm gonna speak my peace.
 While I have this opportunity, I
 wanna rant. Are you still taping?

PARTY GOER #2 (O.S.)
 Still taping, my man..

JEFFREY
 Well, since you are, I've gotta a
 bone to pick with a brown-nosing,
 condescending, four-eyed cock
 sucker. Anthony. That's right, I
 said it. And I ain't sugarcoating a
 thing.

(beat)
 Ever since I arrive, you've wanted
 me out of the picture. But guess
 what? I'm here to stay, prick. And
 I'm challenging you. Mano y mano.
 Better yet.

(MORE)

JEFFREY (cont'd)
I'm gonna buy a shopping cart full
of Boston baked beans...

Barry attempts to intervene again.

BARRY
(interjects)
Jeff, enough man.

JEFFREY
Relax, Bar. I'm almost finished.
Where was I?

PARTY GOER #2 (O.S.)
Baked beans.

JEFFREY
Oh, yeah. I'm gonna buy all the
baked beans I can eat. And when I'm
done polishing off those bad boys,
I'm gonna find out where you live
and I'm gonna break into your
place.

(one full beat)
And while you're fast asleep, I'm
gonna take a mondo shit down your
throat. Just call it the real
Boston Massacre.

(one full beat)
The tank is full, and the wheels
are rollin', baby. Me and you, in a
battle of wills. You and the
Celtics, me and the Knicks. I'll
take my Rangers over those piss
poor Bruins. Come get me. And all
you guys who know Anthony will
probably be blabbing about this to
him. Knock yourself out. I'm
waiting. You name the time and
place. You know where to find me.
See ya Monday.

Jeffrey concludes his speech by giving the "fuck you" motion
and walks to Barry's car.

INT. BARRY'S CAR - FRONT SEAT - NIGHT

Barry drives and pays close attention to the road, as he
looks after an exhausted Jeffrey, seated beside him. They hit
a red light.

BARRY

Man, you have got to chill out.

JEFFREY

No worries, Bar. It's about time somebody put uber dick in his place. Are we almost there?

BARRY

Yeah, another five minutes. You sure you gonna be okay?

JEFFREY

I'll be fine. Just get me home.

BARRY

Where do I go?

JEFFREY

Make a right, then a left.

Barry heeds Jeffrey's directions, as he continues down the street. Barry arrives at the destination.

JEFFREY

(looks out window)

Great. We're here.

BARRY

(in thick Boston accent)

Wait a sec. I have to park the car.

JEFFREY

(cracks up laughing)

Oh, my God! You said it! I've been waiting to hear that one forever.

BARRY

Come on, chucko. I'll see you to the door.

Barry parks his car, and turns off the ignition.

EXT. OUTSIDE MIA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jeffrey and Barry head to the front door, when Barry realizes that this is not Jeffrey's house.

BARRY

Wait. This ain't your house. Let me take you home for real.

JEFFREY
I've troubled you enough, Bar. Have
a good night.

BARRY
(insists)
Jeff, man, c'mon...

JEFFREY
(yells angrily)
Barry, I'm fine! Now if you'll
excuse me.

Jeffrey looks testily at Barry, as an awkward silence ensues.

BARRY
Take it easy, Jeff.

Barry exits OUT OF VIEW to his car, as Jeffrey stands at the front door. He gives a LIGHT KNOCK on the DOOR, and waits for someone to answer. The front door opens, as Amanda appears.

AMANDA
(slightly surprised)
Jeff, my goodness. What are you
doing here?

JEFFREY
(tired)
I came to see you, babbbyyyy. Can I
come in?

AMANDA
Of course.

Amanda motions to Jeffrey, as he makes an unsteady entrance. He plops down on a nearby sofa, as Amanda sits down next to him.

JEFFREY
(tired)
So, what've you been doin'?

AMANDA
Just reading.

JEFFREY
(waves his hand in
disdain)
Pfff. We do that all year long. You
should be out with me, making the
rounds, doll face.

AMANDA

Jeff, have you been drinking?

JEFFREY

(puts finger to his lips)
Shhhhhh. Just a little. Don't let
anyone know. I'm not old enough.

(beat)

C'mon. Let's go out. The night is
young, and so are we. Where's Mia?

(calls aloud)

Hey, Mia!! Wanna go out?

AMANDA

(sternly; softly)

Jeff, will you keep your voice
down? She's visiting her
grandparents in Worcester.

JEFFREY

So, you have the place all to
yourself?

AMANDA

Well, yes.

JEFFREY

That's even better.

Jeffrey starts to sidle over to Amanda, as he gently takes
her hand, and whispers in her ear.

JEFFREY

(seductive; sotto voce)
You know, this is the ideal setting
for a romance novel.

AMANDA

I was thinking more like April in
Paris, but, to each his own.

Jeffrey starts to kiss Amanda on her neck, and then makes his
way to her cheek. Amanda intervenes.

AMANDA

(uncomfortably moves away)
Jeff, I'm really not alright with
this.

JEFFREY

C'mon, Amanda. Live a little. We
hardly ever see each other. Let's
make the most of it.

AMANDA

(rises from sofa)
 Jeff, I think it's time you left.
 Let me call you a cab.

Amanda heads toward the telephone, as she goes to pick up Jeffrey quickly and hardly places his hand on Amanda's, as she looks on in fright.

AMANDA

(slightly alarmed)
 Jeffrey, please. What do you want?

JEFFREY

Nothing. Just to spend some time
 with you. Now, where were we?

Jeffrey goes over to kiss Amanda, and he places Amanda down on the sofa and lays on top of her. Jeffrey starts to kiss her, as Amanda starts to shove in resistance.

AMANDA

(sotto voce)
 Jeffrey, please. I don't want to do
 this.

Despite Amanda's plea, Jeffrey continues, as he kisses and gropes Amanda and starts to undress her. Amanda attempts to resist.

AMANDA

Jeffrey, no. Jeffrey, stop...
 (one full beat; screams)
 Jeffrey, enough!!!

Amanda delivers an open-handed slap to Jeffrey's face, as she manages to escape his grasp and flees to the far end of the living room. Jeffrey rubs his face in discomfort, as he heads toward Amanda.

JEFFREY

Nothing. I just want to be with
 you. That's all.

AMANDA

(strong)
 Not when you're like this.

JEFFREY

Like what?

AMANDA

You're sad. Everyone but you knows
you have a problem.

JEFFREY

(moves toward Amanda)
Amanda, please. I just want to...

AMANDA

(sternly intervenes)
Hold it right there. Take another
step and I'm calling the cops.

JEFFREY

I see what this is. You just can't
handle it?

AMANDA

(perplexed)
Handle what?

JEFFREY

Me. My fame, fortune, success, the
reality that I'm actually somebody
in sea of nobodies. I could have
any girl, any time, anywhere go
down on me, but I chose you.

AMANDA

(sotto voce; livid)
How dare you?

JEFFREY

I'm probably the only writer who's
not getting any. Hold on. I see how
this works...

Jeffrey pulls his wallet out of his pants, opens it up, and
starts to toss dollar bills in Amanda's direction.

JEFFREY

C'mon, name your price. A hundred,
a buck and a quarter. How much for
a good hand job?

AMANDA

(screams)
Get out!!

An enraged Jeffrey grabs a nearby lamp, and tosses it at
Amanda. A startled Amanda SCREAMS and ducks, as the LAMP
CRASHES into the wall and BREAKS. Amanda slowly gets up and
looks at Jeffrey.

AMANDA

(shaking)

Your destiny will soon be the same
as that lamp's, and I refuse to
follow. Leave, now.

Jeffrey looks at Amanda before making his way towards the front door. Amanda watches as the door closes behind Jeffrey, as she looks once more at the lamp, tears streaming down her face.

EXT. MIA'S HOUSE - LATE NIGHT

A visibly downtrodden Jeffrey sits alone on the curb, his head hanging. His wild night catches up to him, as Jeffrey starts to vomit on the sidewalk. He takes a look at the puddle of vomit, and shakes his head.

JEFFREY

(yells loudly)

Fuck!!

INT. ANTHONY'S APARTMENT (BOSTON) - LATE NIGHT

COMPUTER SCREEN

Displays "SEARCH RESULTS FOR JEFFREY WILLS".

Anthony is burning the midnight oil, trying vigorously to dig up any dirt he can on Jeffrey.

ANTHONY

(talks to computer screen)

Gee, thanks. I'm looking for a guy
from New York, not from Wyoming.
Information super highway my ass.

Anthony takes a breather and massages his head, as he is in need of a breather.

ANTHONY

I can sure use some music.

(types; says phonetically)

Y-o-u-t-u-b-e dot com.

(reads monitor)

Let's see. New videos.

Suddenly, one attracts his notice.

ANTHONY

(reads monitor)

What's this? Anthony, I'm coming
for you?

Anthony clicks on the link, as Jeffrey's recent rant about him starts to stream.

JEFFREY (V.O.)
(from computer speaker)
Anthony...

Anthony looks on in mock amusement/shock, as she carefully listens to the rant.

FADE OUT.

SCENE XVIII

FADE IN:

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT - GUEST BEDROOM - MORNING

Under a heap of blankets and pillows, Jeffrey emerges INTO VIEW, as he painfully rubs his head, the effects of last night. He grabs his watch on the night stand and reads it. He is running late.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - SCHOOL CORRIDOR - MORNING

Jeffrey is at his locker, as he struggles to get the combination to open it. He finally gets it open, as he quickly moves aside, as a mountain of BAKED BEAN CANS comes CRASHING down. Jeffrey looks astounded at the cans, as he notices one can. He leans down and picks it up.

INSERT SHOT - BAKED BEAN CAN

Rests in Jeffrey's hand. Contains a note reading, "MAKE YOUR MOVE. A."

BACK TO SCENE

Jeffrey looks at the can, as he looks up to see if anyone is present in the corridor.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - ENGLISH CLASSROOM - DAY

Anthony stands in front of a class full of students, when he notices a tardy Jeffrey entering the classroom. Anthony quickly puts Jeffrey on the spot. Jeffrey is about to sit in an open seat, when he hears his name.

ANTHONY (O.S.)
(aloud)
Mister Wills. So wonderful to have
your presence.

Jeffrey turns to Anthony.

JEFFREY
Where is Professor Lipson?

ANTHONY
Well, if you made an effort to be
punctual, you would know that
Professor Lipson has taken a leave
of absence to attend to personal
matters. I will be interim
Professor until his return. Do you
have any further questions?

JEFFREY
No.

ANTHONY
Very well then. If you are
concerned about the curriculum,
please rest assured that Professor
Lipson's lesson plan will be
followed accordingly. Okay, please
open your books to page one-eighty-
nine.

Jeffrey opens his book, but looks over at the other side of
the classroom .

AMANDA

Sits at her seat, as she looks in her text book, completely
oblivious to anything/anyone.

Jeffrey turns around.

BARRY

Sits at his desk, as he looks at Anthony, ready to take
notes. He notices Jeffrey, as he looks coldly at him.

ANTHONY (O.S.)
 Can anyone explain what the
 eleventh chapter attempted to
 illustrate?

Jeffrey, still looking despondently at Barry, is called upon.

ANTHONY (O.S.)
 Mister, Wills?

Jeffrey, hearing his name, turns around.

JEFFREY
 (comes to)
 Yes.

ANTHONY
 Seeing as you've been so attentive,
 would you care to enlighten us?

JEFFREY
 Could you repeat the question?

ANTHONY
 Very well. What was the outline of
 chapter eleven attempting to
 illustrate?

JEFFREY
 (confounded)
 I don't know.

ANTHONY
 Right.

About forty-five minutes later, students are carefully reading and taking notes, when the class BELL RINGS. Students quickly rise from their seats and depart towards the door.

ANTHONY
 Read the next four chapters and be
 ready to explain them in detail.

Jeffrey, still gathering his things, heads towards the DOOR, when it suddenly SLAMS shut. Anthony stands at the door's side, as he looks sternly at Jeffrey.

Jeffrey looks sternly at Anthony and in silence, as no words are exchanged.

ANTHONY
 (presents piece of paper)
 The Dean of Admissions would like
 to see you. Immediately.

Jeffrey tentatively takes the piece of paper from Anthony, as he slowly makes his way out of the classroom.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - ADMISSIONS OFFICE - RECEPTION AREA - DAY

A visibly concerned Jeffrey is seated in the waiting room outside of the Dean's office, as he waits to be summoned. He then hears his name.

RECEPTIONIST) (O.S.)
 (calls aloud)
 Mister Wills. The Dean will see you
 now.

Jeffrey slowly rises from his seat, as he heads towards the Dean's office. He thanks the Receptionist and departs.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - OUTSIDE DEAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Jeffrey stands outside of the Dean's office door, as he takes a deep breath and then gives a light RAP on the OFFICE DOOR.

DEAN CRAWFORD (O.S.)
 (calls aloud; from inside
 office)
 Please, come in.

Jeffrey slowly opens the door, as he gingerly enters the office, as the door gently closes behind him.

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

A visibly upset Kathy sits on the living room sofa, as she awaits her son's arrival. The front door begins to UNLOCK, as Jeffrey enters INTO VIEW. Kathy rises and confronts him.

KATHY
 Where the hell have you been? I
 called you six times on your cell.

Jeffrey walks over to the kitchen, as his mother follows him.

JEFFREY

I had an early dismissal from school.

KATHY

I know. Dean Crawford called the apartment today. Suspended for a month for harassment of a faculty member.

JEFFREY

(pours himself some water)
I'll do my time. No worries.

Jeffrey heads back to the living room, as his mother follows.

KATHY

And explain to me that video. I saw it Jeff, and I wanna know what you did that night.

JEFFREY

(sits on sofa and takes a drink of water)
I went out with Bar, didn't know when to say when, and got some things off my chest.

KATHY

Drinking underage, acting out. Do you realize you can lose everything? Your education, your book deal. You are grounded. The only time you're going out is for book signings.

JEFFREY

Fine by me.

KATHY

Speaking of that, you have one tomorrow afternoon.

JEFFREY

(objects; rises from sofa)
No. Can't we reschedule?

KATHY

Out of the question. It's already been booked.

JEFFREY

Can't you tell them I'm sick or something?

KATHY

Absolutely not. You have an obligation to your fans who purchase your book.

JEFFREY

Mom, I've had a rough one today, and I don't want it to get any rougher. Can't we just put it off?

KATHY

No. As your agent, I make decisions that will benefit you, my client.

JEFFREY

(livid)

Well right now I need you to starting acting like my fucking mother!

KATHY

(SLAPS Jeffrey hard;
angrily)

Language. Get to sleep. We have a busy day ahead of us.

Kathy exits OUT OF VIEW from the living room, as a despondent Jeffrey feels his face and stands alone.

EXT. OUTSIDE BARRY'S HOUSE -- LATE AFTERNOON

Jeff is outside the front door of Barry's house, as he takes a deep breath and KNOCKS lightly on the FRONT DOOR. A short moment passes, as the door slowly begins to open, as Barry appears. He sees Jeffrey, and swiftly tries to shut the door, but not before Jeffrey halts him.

JEFFREY

Bar, Bar, Bar. I know I was outta line that night.

BARRY

You're damn right you were out of line. I don't know how you're still standing after the way you drank that night.

JEFFREY

Believe me, I paid the price. In more ways than you can know. Please accept my apology.

(extends his hand)

Friends?

Barry hesitates for a moment, then extends his hand, as he and Jeffrey shake and embrace.

BARRY

I'm sorry to hear what happened. Suspended for a month, eh?

JEFFREY

(commiserates)

Yeah. Listen, I just finished a book signing. We're having dinner at my house. Lasagna. Wanna come?

BARRY

Sounds goo. Are your parents okay with me coming over?

JEFFREY

Well, technically, I'm grounded and should be at home. But I had to stop by and apologize.

BARRY

Ever the insurgent. What time should I be there?

JEFFREY

Six-thirty okay?

BARRY

Sounds good. See you there.

JEFFREY

You got it. Bring your appetite.

BARRY

Will do.

Barry and Jeffrey give each other five, as Jeffrey heads over to his car and enters.

EXT. OUTSIDE BARRY'S HOUSE - HOURS LATER

Jeffrey's car pulls up INTO VIEW and comes to a stop.

INT. JEFFREY'S CAR - FRONT SEAT - NIGHT

Jeffrey has dropped off Barry, as he is set to exit, when the two converse.

BARRY
(rubs his stomach)
Man, I won't be able to eat for a week.

JEFFREY
Told ya. Better than Giuseppe's, eh?

BARRY
Man, you said it. Thanks for everything. Take it easy.

Barry is about to exit, when Jeffrey halts him.

JEFFREY
(intervenes)
Hey, Bar..

BARRY
(turns around)
Yeah?

JEFFREY
Was I really drunk that night?

BARRY
Shit-faced. You've been the talk of school. Everyone's seen the video.

JEFFREY
Was Murray okay with it?

BARRY
Oh, yeah. It brought attention to him and his parties. On the downside, his parents found out about his parties and grounded him. He'll be okay.
(beat)
Have you spoken to Amanda at all?

JEFFREY
(sober)
No. I'm not sure if she would even look at me after what I did.

BARRY

I'm no Doctor Ruth, but I do know that communication is key. Set aside time to go see her. Be gentle yet subtle, but most importantly, speak from your heart.

Jeffrey gives a slight smile and nods his head.

BARRY

I'm sorry, Jeff, but I really have to go. Got an essay to work on. Tell your grandma she makes the best lasagna in Mass. Great seeing ya.

Barry exits the car, and heads toward his house, as the passenger seat DOOR closes behind him.

BARRY (O.S.)

(aloud)

I'll call you.

Jeffrey waves to Barry, as he starts up his car.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - AMANDA'S DORM - NIGHT

Amanda lies at the foot of her bed, engrossed in her English text book and taking notes, when there is a KNOCK at the DOOR. Amanda rises from her bed and goes to answer it. As soon as Amanda opens, she sees Jeffrey and goes cold.

JEFFREY

(soft)

Hi.

AMANDA

(soft)

Hi.

JEFFREY

Is this a bad time?

AMANDA

No. Just finishing up some homework.

JEFFREY

Can I come in?

AMANDA
I prefer that you didn't, but
enter.

JEFFREY
Thank you.

Jeffrey gently makes his way into the dorm, as he goes to sit next to Amanda on her bed, when she intervenes.

AMANDA
Could you please sit on the chair?

Jeffrey obliges, as he heads towards the chair in the corner of the room and sits down.

Amanda and Jeffrey are about to speak, when Mia appears INTO VIEW from the bathroom.

MIA
Hey, Amanda, can I borrow your...
Oh.

Mia halts, as she quickly realizes the scenario.

AMANDA
(gently)
Mia, can Jeff and I have some time
alone, please?

MIA
Of course.
(grabs her Ipod and puts
on her shoes and coat)
I'll just go for a quick stroll.

Mia exits OUT OF VIEW, from the room, as Amanda and Jeffrey are now alone.

JEFFREY
(presents an envelope to
Amanda)
Here.

Amanda reaches over and takes the envelope from Jeff. As she opens it to reveal money inside.

AMANDA
(stern)
I thought I made it crystal clear.
I don't want your money.

JEFFREY

It's not for you. It's to replace the lamp I broke at Mia's house. I ballparked it. Hope that covers it.

AMANDA

Thanks. I'll give it to her when she returns.

An awkward silence ensues, as Jeffrey is the first to speak.

JEFFREY

I know we're not speaking to reach other. And I know what I did to you was inappropriate on so many levels.

(beat)

There's no denying or altering what I said or did that night, nor can I ever atone for it. All I can tell you is that I apologize from the deepest bowels of my heart and hope that you will forgive me.

Another awkward silence follows, as Amanda looks soberly at Jeffrey and speaks.

AMANDA

(stern)

I want you to make me a promise.

JEFFREY

Anything.

AMANDA

Promise me no more drinking, hangers on, and that we always tell each other the truth.

Jeffrey looks soberly at Amanda and considers her proposal, then speaks.

JEFFREY

(cries lightly)

I promise. With my heart and soul's honor.

Amanda and Jeffrey look at each other then rise and embrace.

AMANDA

So, Mister You Tube, what will you be doing on your time off?

JEFFREY

Well, I'm really supposed to be grounded.

(looks at his watch)

I should have been home about a half hour ago. Ah, what the hell, you're worth it.

Amanda rises from her bed and approaches Jeffrey, as they kiss tenderly, when they realize they are not alone. They unlock lips and turn.

AMANDA AND JEFFREY'S POV

MIA

Stands in the doorway, as she has just returned from her nightly jaunt.

MIA

(sheepish)

I guess this means I should go back out, huh?

Amanda and Jeffrey smile coyly at Mia.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT III

ACT IV

SCENE XVIV

FADE IN:

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT (BOSTON) - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Olivia is seated on the living room sofa, quietly knitting away, when the front door opens. Jeffrey has just returned from his first day of school since his suspension, and is happy as a clam. The door closes behind him, as he goes toward his grandmother.

JEFFREY

(warmly kisses Olivia)

Hello, Nana.

OLIVIA
Hello, dear. How was your first day
back?

JEFFREY
I have a lot of catching up to do,
but other than that, splendid.

OLIVIA
(hands Jeffrey his mail)
Jeffrey, you got some mail.

JEFFREY
(takes mail)
Thank you, Nana.
(peruses through mail)
Junk, junk, junk. Hey, what's this?

Jeffrey looks curiously at the last envelope, as he slowly opens it. He removes its contents and carefully reads it to himself. Olivia takes a sip of tea, as she watches Jeffrey.

JEFFREY
(loudly exclaims)
Holy shit!!

Olivia, shaken by the sudden outburst, spits out her tea. Jeffrey heads over to his grandmother.

JEFFREY
I'm sorry, Nana. This says I've
just been nominated for the
Pulitzer Prize.

OLIVIA
Congratulations, hon. I'll call
your mom.

Jeffrey looks in awe at the letter.

INSERT SHOT - CONFIRMATION LETTER

Rests in Jeffrey's hands.

SEGUE TO:

CONFIRMATION LETTER

As it remains in Jeffrey's hands.

BACK TO SCENE

Jeffrey and Kathy are seated on the living room sofa, as they both look fondly at the letter.

KATHY

You haven't let go of that letter since you got it. It's like your first born.

JEFFREY

(looks up from letter)
I just can't believe it. Actually being nominated for an award.

KATHY

Believe it. You've worked so hard, and now everything is coming full circle. If you'd like, I have even better news.

JEFFREY

Nothing could possibly top this.

KATHY

Wanna bet? Daddy called today. He wants to have dinner with you.

JEFFREY

(in disbelief)
No.

Kathy nods her head "yes", as an elated Jeffrey beams.

KATHY

I told him you'd meet him on the weekend, since that's when he's free. Gallagher's steak house. I've already made reservations.

(hands him train ticket)
Here's your train ticket. It leaves six sharp on Friday. Hope that's good.

Jeffrey looks soberly at his mother, as the two embrace.

KATHY

Congratulations, baby.
(unembraces; curious)
Can I ask you something?

JEFFREY

Yeah.

KATHY

How were you able to write something like that essay?

JEFFREY

Always write what you feel. There are a lot of wrongs in this world that have yet to be made right. If someone doesn't make them known, how will we ever know how to rid them from our precious earth.

KATHY

Well put. I've gotta get some shut eye. And so do you. Don't stay up too late, okay?

JEFFREY

I won't.

Kathy kisses Jeffrey on the forehead, as she exits OUT OF VIEW from the living room. Jeffrey remains, as he looks pensively at the letter.

INT. HOULIHAN'S RESTAURANT - CORNER TABLE - DAY

Amanda and Jeffrey enjoy a quiet afternoon bite to eat, as they discuss the latest happenings.

AMANDA

Congratulations. I'm so proud of you.

JEFFREY

Thank you.
(lifts his glass)
A toast, to the future, and whatever it may hold for us.

AMANDA

(lifts her glass)
I'll drink to that.

They touch glasses, as Jeff takes a sip of his beverage.

JEFFREY

Never thought Sierra Mist could ever taste so good.

AMANDA

I'm afraid to say this, but I've never seen you this happy before.

JEFFREY

I just never thought everything would bode so well. I'm in my second year of college, spending the weekend with my dad, and might win a prestigious award. But most of all, I'm back together with you.

AMANDA

I have to admit, I was missing you for a while.

JEFFREY

Now I'm back, and ready for anything.

AMANDA

You know, you've never talked about your father with me before.

JEFFREY

Well, my parents divorced when I was very young. It was very acrimonious. My dad's a stock broker, and is married to his job. We don't see each other very much, except on special occasions. He never forgets my birthday, though. That I can attest.

AMANDA

I'm sorry to hear that. Do you still have feelings for him?

JEFFREY

Oh, sure. Nothing will ever make me change how much I love him.

AMANDA

That's very loyal of you.

JEFFREY

I'm hoping he'll come to the awards banquet. I'm going to ask him this weekend. Speaking of that, what will you be wearing that night?

AMANDA

Oh, I couldn't go. I mean, that's something for...

JEFFREY

(softly interjects)

Please promise me you'll be there.
I'll rent you a dress. Heck, I'll
buy you a dress. You'll be the
belle of the ball. It would really
mean a lot to me if you were there.

AMANDA

(concedes)

Oh, alright. I'll make an
appearance.

JEFFREY

Thank you. We'll have a great time.
I promise. You'll even get to meet
my mom.

AMANDA

(worried)

Oh, my goodness.

JEFFREY

Relax. Her bark's worse than her
bite. Plus, I know she'll like you.

(beat)

You know, I've realized that life
truly is the best teacher of the
human condition. Thank you for
helping me understand.

AMANDA

I'm your girl. It's my job.

MONTAGE - AROUND NEW YORK CITY

It's gridlock traffic on the streets, as taxi cabs and cars
are bumper to bumper.

Times Square is aglow with advertisements and high-colored
graphics.

Pedestrians quickly cross the street, as they continue toward
their destination.

A hot dog vendor gathers his cart after another long day of
work.

END MONTAGE

INT. GALLAGHER'S STEAK HOUSE - CORNER TABLE - NIGHT

Jeffrey sits patiently at his table, awaiting the arrival of his father. A WAITER appears INTO VIEW, and checks on Jeffrey.

WAITER
Are you ready to order, Sir?

JEFFREY
No, I'm waiting for someone. Thank you.

The Waiter departs OUT OF VIEW, as Jeffrey continues to wait. He looks up from his seat, as his father, PETER WILLS, stands in front of the table.

PETER
Hello, Jeffrey.

Jeffrey, slightly astounded, rises from the table to greet his father.

JEFFREY
(goes to and embraces
Peter)
Dad. How are you?

PETER
I'm good.

Peter and Jeffrey disembrace and sit down at the table, as the Waiter re-appears.

WAITER
(hands them menus)
Good evening, gentleman. My name is Nate, and I'll be your waiter this evening. May I tell you our specials for the evening?

PETER
(peruses the menu)
Hmmm... I think I'll have the filet mignon with morels. Medium rare.

WAITER
Excellent choice.
(turns to Jeffrey)
And you, Sir?

JEFFREY

(peruses menu)

I think I'll go with the prime rib bone. Well done, please.

WAITER

(takes menus)

Alright, one filet mignon with morels, medium rare, and one prime rib bone, well done. May I get you a beverage?

PETER

Yes. A glass of red Merlot, aged ten years.

WAITER

(writes down drink order)

Alright, one glass red Merlot, ten years.

(turns to Jeffrey)

And for you, Sir?

JEFFREY

I'll take a Pepsi, please. With a twist of lemon.

WAITER

(writes down order)

Okay, one Pepsi, twist of lemon. Alright, I'll be back shortly with your drinks.

Peter and Jeffrey thank the Waiter, as he exits OUT OF VIEW. An awkward moment of silence follows, as Jeffrey breaks the ice.

JEFFREY

So, how's work been?

PETER

Ah, you know. Same old stuff, different day. The market never rests.

JEFFREY

Dina okay?

PETER

Yup, she's fine. Julie's been sick with the flu, though. She caught it really bad this time.

JEFFREY

There's a lot of that going around.

An awkward moment recurs, as Peter continues.

PETER

So, you're a writer? Never thought you'd be interested in that field.

JEFFREY

It's neat.

PETER

(recollects)

Do you know what you always wanted to be when you were little?

JEFFREY

(happily)

A fire fighter.

PETER

That's it. I remember you and that electronic fire truck. What was it called?

JEFFREY

Sonic siren.

PETER

Yup. Man, I could hear the sound of that thing in my sleep some nights.

JEFFREY

After a while I figured I didn't look good in the red suit.

The Waiter appears INTO VIEW, with their beverages, as he places them on the table.

WAITER

Your entrees will be ready in fifteen minutes.

PETER

Thank you.

The Waiter exits OUT OF VIEW, as Peter and Jeffrey continue.

PETER

My son, the author. Kinda surprised, since you never were a big reader.

JEFFREY

You'll be surprised by what effort
and interest can do.

PETER

Just as long as you're happy.

SAME - MOMENTS LATER

The Waiter appears INTO VIEW, tray in hands, with their
meals.

WAITER

(places down plates)
One filet mignon, and one prime rib
bone. Please watch the plates,
they're hot. Can I get you anything
else?

PETER

We're fine, thank you.

The Waiter departs OUT OF VIEW, as father and son prepare to
dine.

JEFFREY

(raises his glass)
A toast, to a wonderful evening.

PETER

(raises his glass)
Salud.

Peter and Jeffrey CLICK their GLASSES, as they dig in.

FILET MIGNON

Fresh and sizzling, topped with mushrooms and beef juice, and
surrounded by vegetables, sits in tact on its plate.

SEGUE TO:

EMPTY PLATE

As Peter has devoured everything but the plate.

Peter and Jeffrey, now fully nourished, share a laugh, as
they are again approached by the Waiter.

WAITER

Can I interest you in some dessert?

Jeffrey looks at his father, who waves "no".

JEFFREY

We'll just take the check, thank you.

WAITER

Of course.

EXT. DOWNTOWN SIDEWALK (NEW YORK CITY) - NIGHT

Peter and Jeffrey have now departed from Gallagher's, as they are ready to burn off a few calories. They start to amble.

PETER

Thanks again for dinner. It's been a while since I had a good steak.

JEFFREY

Dad, can I ask you something?

PETER

Of course.

Father and son both stop walking, as Jeffrey poses a question.

JEFFREY

Why did you divorce Mom?

PETER

(taken aback)

My goodness. Wasn't ready for this one. Jeff, there are certain things that someone your age has yet to understand.

(beat)

Reflecting on it, I have to say, that there were several factors that made everything unravel: my long hours at work, your mother's constant need for intimacy. But as I continue to look further back, I've come to learn that we just weren't meant to be together. Plain and simple.

JEFFREY

Did you ever try to make it work?

PETER

Believe me, we tried. Brief counseling, vacations, even house parties. They all ended up with either bitterness, blame, or fighting.

JEFFREY

But Daddy, everything can work now. I mean, I'm in college, I have a book deal, so we don't have to worry about money. I mean...

PETER

(softly interjects)
Jeff, Jeff, Jeff. I know what you're trying to say and I know where you're trying to go with this, but it can never be.

JEFFREY

(desperate)
But Dad, if you just spoke to Mom.

PETER

(calm)
Words cannot illustrate how proud I am to see you succeed in something you love to do. Jeff, you have to understand and accept the fact that your mother and I will never get back together. It is what it is.

A brief silence ensues between them, before Peter continues.

PETER

I am very happy with the life I have with Dina. We're both divorced and have children. Yet despite not being married, we live and fare well together.

JEFFREY

How do you know?

PETER

When both your heart and head tell you. Usually you can only trust one but not the other. Yet, there are instances where you have the best of both worlds. And in his case, I do.

Jeffrey looks at his father and nods in quiet comprehension.

PETER

Which leads me to what I've wanted to speak to you about. I'm sorry, Jeff, but I can't make it to your award ceremony.

JEFFREY

Is it because of Mom? The truth.

PETER

No.

JEFFREY

That's okay. We can schedule some time together, like tonight. A movie, a ball game, anything.

PETER

Jeff, I don't think you follow. I'm not just talking about the award ceremony.

JEFFREY

What?

PETER

Jeffrey, you're my son and I love you very much. But I can't be a part of your life. At least, not now. I will always stay in contact, and remember you on your birthday and holidays. I just can't be a part of your life.

JEFFREY

(a little choked up)
Did your head or heart tell you?

PETER

Both.

(beat)

I just want to say thank you for dinner, and to say how much I enjoyed this evening. Hope we can do it again.

Peter embraces his son, as they share a father-son moment. Peter kisses Jeffrey on the forehead before he departs.

PETER

Goodbye, Jeff.

Peter walks away OUT OF VIEW, as a still shaken Jeffrey stands idle.

INT. KATHY'S APARTMENT (NEW YORK) - JEFFREY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A despondent Jeffrey lies wide-awake in bed, as he stares blankly up at the ceiling, when his CELL PHONE starts RINGING. He slowly picks up.

JEFFREY
(speaks into phone)
Hello?

KATHY (V.O.)
(on other line)
Jeff, its' Grandma.

INT. LOCAL HOSPITAL (BOSTON) - HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

There is a LIGHT KNOCK on the hospital room DOOR, as Jeffrey enters INTO VIEW. He sees Kathy and gives her a hug and kiss.

JEFFREY
I took the first flight I could
get.
(turns to Olivia)
Nana, how are you?

OLIVIA

Lays peacefully in her hospital bed, hooked up to an iv and heart monitor.

OLIVIA
(softly)
Jeff, baby, how are you? I'm sorry
to trouble you like this.

JEFFREY
Don't apologize, Nana.
(turns to Kathy)
Mom, can we have a moment alone?

KATHY
Of course. I'll be in the cafeteria
getting some coffee.

Kathy departs OUT OF VIEW, as Olivia and Jeffrey share a moment together.

JEFFREY

Oh, Nana. Can I get you anything?

OLIVIA

(soft)

Oh, I'm fine, dear.

(beat)

Your big day is almost here.

JEFFREY

Yeah. Promise me you'll try and be there.

OLIVIA

I wouldn't miss it for the world,
and I'll do my best to make it.

(beat)

The doctor told me it's my heart. I
didn't believe him, because I
thought my heart was the best part
of my body.

JEFFREY

Always has been, always will be.

OLIVIA

(softly)

I don't think I've had the
opportunity to tell you this, but I
am so proud of everything you've
achieved.

JEFFREY

Thanks, Nana.

OLIVIA

(concerned)

Jeffrey, you look nervous. Is
something on your mind?

JEFFREY

I'm just a little worried about the
award ceremony. What I'm gonna
wear, what I'm going to say if I
win, all that other stuff.

(beat)

But that's the furthest thing from
my mind right now.

OLIVIA

(soft; reassuring)

Oh, honey, it's okay to have some
jitters. I want you to look at me.

Jeffrey looks Olivia straight in the face, as she starts to speak.

OLIVIA
I want you to promise me
something...

JEFFREY
Anything, Nana.

OLIVIA
I want you to promise that when you
go to that award ceremony, win or
lose, that you'll be humble, be
grateful, be you. That's all.

JEFFREY
I promise.

OLIVIA
I know you will.

A moment of silence ensues, as Jeffrey and Olivia smile. A
VOICE intervenes.

KATHY (O.S.)
Jeffrey?

Jeffrey turns around, as Kathy has arrived, cup of coffee in
hand.

KATHY
Jeff, why don't you get ready?
You've had a long day, and you've
got school tomorrow.

JEFFREY
Can't I stay a little longer.

OLIVIA
Jeff, honey, I'll be fine. You can
come by tomorrow.

KATHY
Wait in the lobby. I just have to
speak to the night nurse.

JEFFREY
(kisses Olivia)
I'll see you tomorrow. Love you.
(turns to Kathy)
I'll be downstairs.

INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT - GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jeffrey sits alone in his bedroom, in quiet reflection, when there is a KNOCK on the DOOR.

JEFFREY

Come in.

The door opens, as Kathy appears to check on her son.

KATHY

Jeff, it's getting late, and you have school tomorrow. Did you finish all of your homework?

JEFFREY

Most of it.

KATHY

I'm sure you'll catch up. Is everything okay?

JEFFREY

Yup.

KATHY

That doesn't sound like a good yup. How was dinner with Dad?

Jeffrey nods tacitly, as he makes no eye contact.

KATHY

I think it's safe to assume he's not coming to the ceremony.

Jeffrey again nods tacitly, as he starts to cry and embraces his mother.

KATHY

Take it easy, honey.

JEFFREY

(crying)
He doesn't want me in his life.

KATHY

And you don't need him in yours. We're gonna do just fine. I'm here.

(MORE)

KATHY (cont'd)
 Now I want you to get some rest. We
 have a busy day ahead of us.

Kathy and Jeffrey continue to embrace, as she consoles him.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT IV

ACT V

SCENE XX

FADE IN:

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - AMANDA'S DORM ROOM - DAY

Amanda is busily jotting down notes for a class assignment, when she takes a deep breath and rubs her head. She rests momentarily, when there is a KNOCK at the DOOR. Amanda lets out a huge SIGH, then gets up to answer it.

AMANDA
 Be right there.

Amanda unlocks the door, opens it, and is met with Jeffrey.

AMANDA
 (slightly surprised)
 Jeff.

JEFFREY
 Is this a bad time?

AMANDA
 No. I just took a break. Come in.

Jeffrey enters, as he looks around the bedroom.

JEFFREY
 It looks a lot more spacious in
 here. Did you remodel?

AMANDA
 I made a few re-arrangements.
 Nothing special. Have a seat.

Jeffrey sits in a chair across from Amanda's bed.

AMANDA
 (sits on bed)
 So, what's up?

JEFFREY

My dad's not coming to the ceremony.

AMANDA

Get out of here.

JEFFREY

We had dinner in the city this weekend.

AMANDA

I'm so sorry, Jeff.

JEFFREY

It's okay. Which is part of the reason why I'm here.

(presents envelope to
Amanda)

Here.

Amanda takes the envelope from Jeffrey and opens it up to reveal its contents.

JEFFREY

It's an invitation to the awards ceremony. Since my dad isn't coming, I thought of you.

AMANDA

What about Barry?

JEFFREY

He doesn't want to go.

AMANDA

What about your grandma?

JEFFREY

She's in the hospital. It doesn't look like she'll make it...

Amanda looks sadly at Jeffrey, as he continues.

JEFFREY

To the show, I mean.

Amanda nods in quiet comprehension.

AMANDA

Who else will be with you?

JEFFREY

Just my mom.

AMANDA

Have you told your mom about me?

JEFFREY

Yes. I actually recommended to her that we invite you. She seemed fine with it.

AMANDA

I don't know if I feel comfortable doing this.

JEFFREY

Amanda, I am not going to force you to come if you don't want to. It's just that the past week has been very difficult.

(one full beat)

My dad disowns me, my nana's really sick, and I still haven't a clue of what I will say for my acceptance speech.

(beat)

I don't want to pressure you, but it would mean the world to me if you were there.

A moment of silence ensues, as Amanda registers what Jeff has told her.

AMANDA

Yes. I'll be there.

JEFFREY

(rubs his head in relief)

Thank you.

(takes a box from out of his coat and hand it to Amanda)

I thought I would have to return this.

A puzzled Amanda takes the box, and opens it to reveal an exquisite blue sequin gown.

AMANDA

(astounded)

Oh my goodness, Jeffrey.

JEFFREY

I thought of you when I saw it.
Just hope it fits. I estimated
toward the size. All due respect,
of course.

AMANDA

I'll be like Cinderella.

JEFFREY

As if you weren't already.

AMANDA

Thank you.

Amanda beams, as she rises from her bed and gives Jeff a
kiss. Suddenly, Mia appears INTO VIEW.

MIA

(dismayed)

Oh, no. I really don't feel like
walking now.

Amanda and Jeffrey unlock lips, and look happily at each
other.

EXT. FRONT OF APARTMENT COMPLEX - EARLY MORNING

Kathy and Jeffrey, luggage in tow, are set to head to the
train station.

KATHY

Where's your girlfriend?

JEFFREY

She's going to meet us at the
station.

KATHY

(upset)

I can't believe you, Jeff. We
should all be together.

JEFFREY

Don't worry, Mom. She's going to be
there.

KATHY

If she's not there, she's no good
for you.

JEFFREY

Mom!

KATHY
Here's our taxi.

A taxi pulls up INTO VIEW, as Kathy and Jeffrey hop in.

EXT. LOCAL TRAIN STATION (BOSTON) - PLATFORM - MORNING

Kathy and Jeffrey wait for Amanda. Kathy voices her displeasure.

KATHY
I knew this was going to happen.

JEFFREY
Will you relax?

KATHY
Relax?! We have a train to board in ten minutes!

Suddenly, a VOICE emerges.

AMANDA (O.S.)
Jeff!

Kathy and Jeffrey turn around, as Amanda stands, bag in tow.

KATHY
(sarcastic)
So nice of you to show up.

AMANDA
(taken aback)
Oh, did I keep you? I just had to use the bathroom.

JEFFREY
It's fine, Amanda. Amanda, I would like for you to meet my mother...
(looks sternly at Kathy)
I think.

AMANDA
(extends her hand)
Hello.

KATHY
 (shakes her hand)
 Hello. C'mon, it's almost time to
 bard.

INT. KATHY'S APARTMENT (NEW YORK) - HOURS LATER

The front door slowly begins to open, as Kathy, Jeffrey, and Amanda enter, just returning from their train trip. They drop their bags.

JEFFREY
 Amanda, why don't you sit down and
 I'll get you something to drink?

AMANDA
 Thank you, Jeff.

Amanda settles on the living room sofa, as Jeff ventures into the kitchen.

INT. KATHY'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - LATE AFTERNOON

Jeffrey, now in the kitchen, takes two glasses from the cupboard, then goes to refrigerator and gets two cans of soda. He POPS the CANS and starts to pour.

Kathy appears INTO VIEW, as she goes to the sink to wash her hands.

KATHY
 Your girl is such a wonderful
 conversationalist. I liked how she
 just said "hello".

JEFFREY
 (sotto voce; stern)
 Mom, would you please stop? She's
 just shy on meeting you for the
 first time.

KATHY
 I can already tell she's no good
 for you.

JEFFREY
 Don't judge a book by its cover.
 Pun intended.

KATHY
 She'll sabotage you. And what's sad
 is that you fail to realize this.

AMANDA

Sits quietly on the living room sofa, listening but composed.

JEFFREY (O.S.)

(sotto voce)

Say it a little louder, why don't you?

KATHY

I just think you can do better.

JEFFREY

(sternly)

Now you listen and listen good. Amanda and I are happy together, and that's what matters. Keep this up and consider yourself gone as my manager.

KATHY

You wouldn't.

JEFFREY

(bold)

Oh, yes I would, Kat. I wonder how hard it would be for a Pulitzer Prize nominee to find an agent in New York City.

(beat)

This is my special night, and you're not going to spoil it. I want nothing but smiles and kind words from you here on in. Am I clear?

Kathy, slightly intimidated, nodes her head.

JEFFREY

By the way, there's some old Chinese in the fridge. I'll be inside.

INT. KATHY'S APARTMENT (NEW YORK) - LIVING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Jeffrey returns, drinks in hand, as he settles down next to Amanda.

JEFFREY
 (hands drink to Amanda)
 Here you are.

AMANDA
 (sotto voce; emotional)
 She doesn't like me, Jeff.

JEFFREY
 (sotto voce)
 Don't be silly. She's just looking
 out for me. Maternal instinct.
 (sotto voce; beat)
 Look at me. Just be yourself, and
 don't lie. My mother hates phonies.
 Can pick 'em out like that.
 (snaps fingers; sotto
 voce)
 Like putting blood in a shark tank.
 You'll be fine. Are you ready?

AMANDA
 (sotto voce)
 For what?

JEFFREY
 (sotto voce)
 I want to show you around town.

AMANDA
 (sotto voce)
 No way. We have to get ready for
 the ceremony. Are you nuts?

JEFFREY
 And I should be saying that to you
 for passing up a chance to see the
 Big Apple.

AMANDA
 What will your mom say?

JEFFREY
 Let me handle everything.

Jeffrey approaches his mother, who is seated at the table
 behind the living room, preparing for tonight.

JEFFREY
 Mom, I want to show Amanda around
 town.

Kathy looks up at Jeffrey, as a long silence ensues between them.

KATHY

(soft)

Fine. Just be home in time to shower and dress.

JEFFREY

(turns to Amanda)

I just have to get my lucky hat. Be right back.

Jeffrey exits OUT OF VIEW, as Kathy and Amanda are left alone.

KATHY

(soft)

Make sure he stays out of trouble.

AMANDA

I will.

A smile fissures from Kathy's lips, as Amanda reciprocates. Jeffrey re-appears, as she is set to leave.

JEFFREY

Okay, we're set. Mom, be back soon.
C'mon, Amanda.

Jeffrey and Amanda exit OUT OF VIEW, as the DOOR CLOSES behind them. Kathy, now alone, looks on commiserating.

EXT. SERENDIPITY'S ICE CREAM PARLOR - TERRACE AREA - LATE AFTERNOON

Jeffrey and Amanda sit in the terrace area of Serendipity, as they each enjoy a sundae.

AMANDA

(with mouth half full;
looks at sundae)

I've never had ice cream this good before. Or this expensive. Thanks for treating.

JEFFREY

No worries. Any day's a good day for ice cream.

AMANDA

Thanks for showing me around New York. Is there anything this place doesn't have?

JEFFREY

Unlikely. If it's been made, we have it. Just wait. We haven't been to Chinatown or the Statue of Liberty.

Jeff looks on despondently, as Amanda notices.

AMANDA

(concerned)

Are you okay, Jeff?

JEFFREY

Yeah. Just thinking about tonight.

AMANDA

(reassuring)

You'll do great. Did you prepare a speech?

JEFFREY

Yeah. I really want to get this over with. Can't wait to go back to Boston and see Nana.

AMANDA

I'm sure she's doing better. And is so proud of you.

Jeffrey nods silently, as he looks at Amanda

JEFFREY

Can I ask you something?

AMANDA

Shoot.

JEFFREY

If you had to choose between being ethical or being successful, which would you choose?

AMANDA

Wow, that's quite a poser. It's nearly impossible to both. Especially in this day and age.

(ruminates)

(MORE)

AMANDA (cont'd)
 But if I had to choose I would
 select being ethical.

Jeffrey nods silently, as Amanda continues.

AMANDA
 Why? Which one would you choose?

JEFFREY
 I haven't the slightest clue. I'll
 make my decision tonight.

AMANDA
 Speaking of tonight, what time is
 it?

JEFFREY
 (looks at his watch and
 exclaims)
 Oh, time to go.
 (looks at Amanda)
 You ready?

INT. KATHY'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Jeffrey, dressed dapperly in a suit, sits silently on the toilet, as he has a moment of inner reflection. He then pulls out the newspaper article on the murdered writer. Jeffrey soberly reads the article, when there is KNOCK on the bathroom DOOR. Jeffrey puts away the article in his pocket, then replies.

JEFFREY
 Come in.

The bathroom door opens, as Kathy appears, suit jacket in hand, as she checks on Jeffrey.

KATHY
 Jeff, honey, it's almost time to
 go.
 (hands him suit jacket)
 Here's your blazer.

JEFFREY
 Thanks.

KATHY
 Are you okay, honey?

JEFFREY
 Yeah. Just needed some time to
 think.

KATHY
Having some butterflies?

JEFFREY
They're fluttering like crazy.

KATHY
Just take it easy, hon. You
prepared your speech if you win,
and know that Amanda and I are here
with you.
(beat)
How about we go for some ice cream
later?

JEFFREY
Sounds good.

KATHY
Feel any better?

JEFFREY
Yeah.

KATHY
C'mon, kiddo. Your big night is
waiting.

Jeffrey and Kathy digress from the bathroom, as they head to
the living room, awaiting Amanda.

KATHY
Amanda's been in there an awful
long time. Should we check on her?

JEFFREY
I'm sure she's...

Kathy and Jeffrey turn.

AMANDA

Stands in the doorway, dressed elegantly in the gown that
Jeffrey gave her. She smiles warmly.

JEFFREY
(awed)
Fine.

Jeffrey stands, mouth agape, as Kathy notices and quickly
closes it.

KATHY
 Alright, kids. Let's go.

INT. LIMOUSINE - BACK SEAT - NIGHT

Kathy, Amanda, and Jeffrey are seated in the limousine, as they are headed to the awards show.

AMANDA
 (sotto voce)
 This is great. I've never been
 inside a limo before.

JEFFREY
 (sotto voce)
 Thanks for coming to the ceremony.

Amanda and Jeffrey look at each other tenderly, as they move in to kiss each other, when they hesitate and turn around.

KATHY

Seated across from them in the limo, looks at them in silence.

KATHY
 Well?

Amanda and Jeffrey shyly and slowly pull and move away from each other and bow their heads.

LIMOUSINE DOOR

Opens, as Amanda, Kathy, and Jeffrey exit, as they are met with a phalanx of CLAMORING photographers and reporters. They try to make their way down the red carpet, led inside by a team of security guards.

INT. BANQUET HALL - AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

An audience containing some of the greatest literary minds are is joined, as they prepare to include Jeffrey. Head of the Pulitzer panel, WALTER YOUNGMAN, approaches the dais, to the sound of esteemed APPLAUSE.

WALTER
 Thank you very much. From
 Shakespeare to Hemingway to Miller
 to Morrison, the pantheon of great
 literary minds is profound and
 prolific.

(beat)

(MORE)

WALTER (cont'd)

Tonight we will welcome such a mind to our storied and accomplished fraternity. Jeffrey Wills has given society a sharp but sensitive view of our culture, their positive and negative aspects, but most importantly, proposals on how to improve the future of our troubled and uncertain world.

(one full beat)

My sole aspiration is that several peers of his caliber will emerge to lend their voices for the altruism and ideal of earth.

(beat)

It is my distinct privilege to present this year's Pulitzer Prize to Jeffrey Wills.

JEFFREY

Rises from his seat and approaches the dais, as he is met with a STANDING OVATION. He ascends the dais and is greeted and congratulated by Mister Youngman. Jeffrey gently steps toward the podium, as the APPLAUSE abates. He stares briefly at the audience, then begins his acceptance speech.

JEFFREY

(turns to audience)

Thank you all so very much. I am uncertain if there is someone who said or wrote this, but it is a small adage I say to myself each day: We are uncertain of where the winds of fate will blow us toward. Just a few months ago, I was working as a stock boy at a local store. Months later, I stand here before all of you, my distinguished and esteemed peers. I am truly honored to have this award...

(hesitates and looks at audience; one full beat)

However, it is with great earnesty and regret, that I am unable to accept this award. For you see, I am not the author of the work for which I am being merited.

(shows newspaper article to audience)

(MORE)

JEFFREY (cont'd)

I believe that the true writer of this masterful work has been taken from us, and should be bestowed posthumously with this honor rather than myself.

(one full beat; voice cracking)

This past year has been indescribable in so many ways for both my family and I. Rescinded this award makes this all the more harder, yet all the more bearable. I would like to apologize to my family, friends, the entire faculty and student body at Harvard, and every loyal reader in the world. Thank you and God Bless.

Jeffrey dashes OUT OF VIEW from the dais, as EVERYONE in the audience gives a collective GASP and starts CHATTERING.

SAME - HOURS LATER

A relieved but lachrymose Jeffrey is seated alone, as the entire audience has left. Kathy appears INTO VIEW, as she looks at her son.

KATHY

(stern)

The limo's outside.

Jeffrey does not reply, as Kathy walks away OUT OF VIEW. Jeffrey slowly rises from his seat, as he takes one long last look at the auditorium.

FADE OUT.

SCENE XXI

FADE IN:

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - CORRIDOR - MONDAY MORNING

Jeffrey slowly enters through the front door and makes his way down the corridor.

JEFFREY'S SLOW MOTION POV

RANDOM STUDENTS

Look silently and derisively at Jeffrey.

BACK TO SCENE

Jeffrey tries to act oblivious, as he makes his way to the admissions office.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - ADMISSIONS OFFICE - MORNING

Jeffrey sits silently in a corner of the office, as he awaits to meet with Dean Crawford. A VOICE emerges of a SECRETARY.

SECRETARY (O.S.)

(aloud)

Mister Wills, Dean Crawford will see you now.

Jeffrey slowly rises from his seat, as he heads toward the Dean's office.

JEFFREY

Thank you.

The Secretary politely nods, as she watches Jeffrey go into the Dean's office. She then makes the sign of the cross for Jeffrey.

DEAN'S OFFICE DOOR

Moments later, slowly begins to open, as Jeffrey slowly exits, closing the door behind him.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - ENGLISH CLASSROOM - DAY

Professor Lipson is seated at his desk, carefully reviewing and grading papers, when a VOICE beckons.

JEFFREY (O.S.)

Professor Lipson, you wanted to see me?

Professor Lipson looks up from his desk.

JEFFREY

Stands at the bottom of the stairwell, just a few feet away from his desk.

PROFESSOR LIPSON

Yes, Jeffrey. This is my free period, and from what I understand, you have met with Dean Crawford?

JEFFREY

That is correct.

PROFESSOR LIPSON

Well Jeffrey, I just wanted to see you to let you know that I heard of your situation...

(one full beat; angrily)

And I am utterly insulted and appalled by your dishonesty and duplicity. I have never had a student under my tutelage who plagiarized the work of another, and was so brazen that they thought they could achieve the greatest success by not being unmasked, as an imposter like you.

A moment of silence ensues, as Professor Lipson continues.

PROFESSOR LIPSON

I hereby revoke all of your credits for all of the courses you have taken under my instruction and forever bar you or any of your relatives from participating in anything relevant to Harvard's literary department.

(beat)

I will personally see to it that you never step foot in this classroom or building ever again. Good day to you.

A silent Jeffrey looks composed but shaken at Professor Lipson, as he nods silently and makes his way up the stairs.

INT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - CORRIDOR - DAY

Jeff makes his way down the vacant corridor, when he is halted by a VOICE.

ANTHONY (O.S.)

(calls out)

Hey, Wills.

Jeffrey stops in his tracks, and ambivalently turns around

ANTHONY

Stands upright a few feet away in the corridor. He slowly makes his way over to Jeffrey.

ANTHONY

I knew it all along. As always, the truth unfolds and you exposed for the slimy, low-life New York snake that you are.

(beat)

This is one victory I will forever savor. Your Cinderella scam story is over, and now there's nothing left but a pumpkin.

(beat)

We have a saying here in Boston for people like you. March your way outta here.

Anthony smiles wryly at Jeffrey. A moment of silence ensues, when Jeffrey responds.

JEFFREY

(bold)

Well, we have a saying in New York for someone like you. Go fuck yourself.

Jeffrey walks away, as a visibly abased Anthony watches him leave.

EXT. FRONT OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY - DAY

Jeffrey is about to exit Harvard for the last time, when he is flanked by someone Barry stands by the gate.

JEFFREY

(slightly surprised)

Barry.

BARRY

You didn't think I'd let you go without saying good-bye?

JEFFREY

You're the only person here that's actually glad to see me. I just wanted to let you know...

BARRY

(softly interjects)

Jeff, I know about your expulsion. It's been the talk of school. That and the new soda machine.

A small smile fissures from Jeffrey's lips, as Barry continues.

BARRY

I just want to let you know that despite everything that's occurred, you have a friend in me.

JEFFREY

Thanks, Bar. I'll keep in touch. Maybe we'll even catch a game at Fenway. We'll root for the Yanks, of course.

BARRY

(playfully punches him)
Yeah, right.

JEFFREY

Well, it's been real. I've gotta get goin'. Take it easy, man.

BARRY

You too.

Jeffrey and Barry give each other five and then embrace.

EXT. FREEDOM TRAIL (BOSTON) - MAGIC HOUR

Jeffrey is seated alone on a bench, quietly watching the Charles River flow. A VOICE suddenly emerges.

AMANDA (O.S.)

Beautiful, isn't it?

Jeffrey redirects his attention over to the voice.

AMANDA

Stands in the dusk, a few feet away from Jeff.

JEFFREY

(astounded)
Amanda?

AMANDA

Hey, Jeff.

Amanda approaches Jeffrey, then turns her attention to the Charles River.

AMANDA

Isn't it just lovely?

JEFFREY

Yeah. It's like watching the Hudson
back home.

AMANDA

(looks at Jeffrey)
How are you?

JEFFREY

Could be better, could be worse.

AMANDA

I've been looking all over for you.

JEFFREY

Ditto. I didn't see you on campus
today.

AMANDA

I stayed in my dorm. Didn't feel
like going to class today.

JEFFREY

I'm not sure if you know, but...

AMANDA

(softly intervenes)
I know. Barry told me. I thought
you might be there, so I paid a
visit to his house.

JEFFREY

Sorry to drag you around. I've been
all over Boston. Fenway, Fanuel
Hall, the Common, Hanover Street.
I've been called everything but an
angel of God.

(beat)

I guess it's well-deserved.

PASSERBY (O.S.)

(yells loudly)
Fuckin faker!!

JEFFREY

(waves at passerby)
Yes, thanks.

AMANDA

How's your grandma?

JEFFREY

(choked up)

She's dead. She developed a staph infection the night of the ceremony. We're clearing out her apartment as we speak. The funeral's Thursday.

AMANDA

I'm so sorry.

JEFFREY

Thanks. You know that last Saturday was the only time I've ever seen my mom silenced. I guess we really do reap what we sow.

AMANDA

Jeff, part of the reason I'm here is to talk about us.

JEFFREY

I know it will be difficult, but we can make it work. We can. We will.

AMANDA

Jeff, we've experience everything together: success, failure, triumph, and despair. I've had the best time and want to truly thank you.

(beat)

What you did at the ceremony was as noble a deed as anyone could endeavor. However, it does not alter the fact that you deceived multitudes of people, including myself.

JEFFREY

Amanda, I've lost just about everything. I can deal with losing my scholarship, I can deal with losing my book deal. But I can't fathom the idea of not having you in my life.

AMANDA

(choked up)

Well, you'll have to now.

Amanda takes off the ring and hands it to Jeffrey. A visibly hurt Jeff takes the ring and looks at it.

AMANDA

You will always hold a special
place with me, but as for now, I
have to focus on my future. God
Bless you, and give you all the
best life has to offer.

Amanda kisses Jeffrey one final time and departs OUT OF VIEW. Jeffrey, still hurting, sits back down on the bench, as he attempts to compose himself. He then takes a DEEP BREATH and exhales, as he looks out toward the Charles River. Jeffrey then notices a newspaper laying on the bench next to him. He picks it up, unfurls it, and looks at the front page.

INSERT SHOT - FRONT PAGE OF NEWSPAPER

Reads "GHOST WRITER: HARVARD STUDENT ADMITS HE'S A FAKE

TIME SEGUE TO:

SUPERIMPOSITION - THREE YEARS LATER

EXT. TOP OF EMPIRE STATE BUILDING (NEW YORK) - LATE AFTERNOON

INSERT SHOT - FRONT PAGE OF NEW YORK TIMES

Reads, "NOVICE WRITER PENS EIGHT-YEAR, \$40 MILLION DEAL"

An electrician, FRANK LUCONE, reads the headline, as he speaks to his co-worker, BILL SHEEHY.

FRANK

(slaps newspaper in dismay
on his hand)

Can you believe it, Billy? Forty-
million just to write a book. I can
write a book.

BILL

What about Frankie?

FRANK

How to wine, dine, and bang a broad
every which way but loose!

(laughs loudly)

Ha-ha!!

BILL
 (sarcastic)
 Yeah, that'll make the best seller
 list for sure.
 (turns and speaks)
 Hey, Jeff, whadya think?

A man halts from his work, as he hears his name and turns around. It is Jeffrey, now an electrician, as he responds to Bill's query.

JEFFREY
 I'm sorry, Bill. Come again?

BILL
 The paper said some writer just
 inked a deal for forty mill. Guess
 we're in the wrong line of work,
 eh?

JEFFREY
 Well, the green doesn't hurt. But I
 wouldn't wanna be a writer. Seems
 like too much hassle.

FRANK
 (insolent)
 And would you know something about
 it?

Jeffrey hesitates for a moment, then continues.

JEFFREY
 Not really. But the way I look at
 it, as long as I'm well fed, in
 good health, and have a smile on my
 face, I'm richer than any many will
 ever be.

FRANK
 (sarcastic)
 Hey, a regular Solomon ova here!

Jeffrey grins slightly, as he starts in motion.

JEFFREY
 Okay, fellas. Whadya say we get
 back to work? Bill, where do I run
 the fiber optic cable?

BILL (O.S.)
(aloud)
On the left side of the building,
Jeff.

JEFFREY
You got it.

Jeffrey carries the cable, when he stops his work and goes toward the edge of the Empire State Building and looks out.

JEFFREY'S POV

NEW YORK SKYLINE

Looms large, as the sun glistens overhead.

BACK TO SCENE

Jeffrey continues to watch the skyline, as he beams a massive grin.

FADE OUT.

THE END

