

FAMINE MEN

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FADE IN:

INT. LIVINGSTON'S SUPERMARKET -- DAY

A massive two-floor place decked out for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Chatter and buzzing as manic CROWDS push carts through aisles.

ISAAC (V.O.)

Butter's two for four bucks...
Cooked colossal shrimp for eleven
ninety eight a pound... ice cream
two for five bucks... Grated cheese
four ninety nine for an eight ounce.
Mashed potatoes--

A YOUNG MAN steers a cart into an aisle and CRASHES HEAD ON into a OLDER GUY, who falls into a two-liter soda bottle display.

The older guy jumps to his feet and drills the younger guy in the jaw. A WOMAN behind the deli counter notices.

OLDER GUY

What the fuck's a matter with you?!
I'ma fuckin' kick your ass!

WOMAN

Jimmy?!

A SECURITY GUARD (Jimmy) dashes toward the scene. The older guy's kicking the young man, who remains motionless.

The young man beneath the feet is ISAAC TAUB, twenty-two, mildly handsome, eyes quiet even as he's getting the shit kicked out of him.

ISAAC'S P.O.V.: IN SLOW-MO:

The feet of the older guy come crashing down on his solar plexus. Jimmy runs into the frame and tackles the older guy. Some onlookers stop and observe Isaac as he sits up.

Most everyone continues shopping, pushing their carts around him. The wheels skid along the white tile floor, leaving a black streak.

To the right of him, the older guy's getting restrained by Jimmy and a POLICE OFFICER. They drag the older guy away screaming.

The woman from the deli comes into frame and extends a hand to Isaac. She's pretty, petite, early forties. He takes her hand.

WOMAN

You alright?

ISAAC

(getting to his feet)

Thanks, Jeanine.

JEANINE

Assholes like that don't surprise me on Black Friday, but I didn't think I'd see that shit here.

ISAAC

Well, we saw it.

(rubs his jaw; looks at crowd)

They're not even phased.

The police officer returns.

JEANINE (V.O.)

You didn't press charges?

INT. LIVINGSTON'S DELI BACKROOM, LATER -- DAY

Isaac sits holding a piece of raw meet against his jaw.

ISAAC

No point...

JEANINE

It's your jaw.

(beat)

How's your dad?

Isaac shifts in his seat.

JEANINE (CONT'D)

It's been like six months?

ISAAC

Yeah. You gonna go out with him, Jeanine?

JEANINE

I told him no the last time. And two more times before that.

ISAAC

Someone needs to get him outta the house.

JEANINE

I'm seeing someone already. Tell him that for me?

ISAAC

I'm sure he'll be back here soon enough.

Isaac gets his groceries and crosses over to Jeanine. He hands her the raw meat and leaves. She throws the meat in a plastic trash-can.

INT. DIAMOND DINER -- DAY

Isaac sits at the counter and rolls a toothpick between his fingers. A YOUNG WAITRESS makes coffee on the other side.

ISAAC

(to Waitress)

Excuse me. I ordered a dozen donuts about twenty minutes ago.

The waitress keeps her back to him.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Hello?

Still nothing. Isaac waits a beat before reaching over and gently touching her shoulder. She spins around with fierce eyes.

WAITRESS

(utter calm)

Don't ever touch me again or I will fucking stick a knife through your chest.

This is ADELE GERIK: twenty-two, hunched shoulders, pony-tail; otherwise a calm face. Isaac almost falls over.

ISAAC

I'm sorry.

ADELE

I didn't take your order--

ISAAC

Right, but--

ADELE

--and if you're asking me to inquire about your donuts I'm sorry to say that this shithole doesn't pay me enough.

She smiles. Isaac tries to smile back.

ISAAC
You look like you're just finishing
your shift?

ADELE
Bingo. Had to work til we closed
yesterday at three too.

She turns away. Isaac turns and starts to walk away.

ADELE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Hey, you?!

Isaac slowly turns around. Adele slides a box of donuts
down the bar.

ADELE (CONT'D)
Margie had to take a call so she
asked me to give these to you.

Isaac flips open the top and observes the array of donuts.

ADELE (CONT'D)
Yeah, should be all there. Six
Boston Cremes, three bearclaws,
three chocolate glazed.
(looks at Isaac's
stomach)
You don't look like you eat this
everyday.

ISAAC
(picks up a donut and
holds it close to
his face)
Not for me...

EXT. DIAMOND DINER PARKING LOT, LATER -- DAY

Isaac balances the box of donuts in one hand and tries
unlocking his car door with the other. He drops the box and
easily half the donuts fall out.

He leans down to pick them up. Adele leans down next to
him.

ADELE
They must not like you...

Isaac looks on, embarrassed.

ISAAC
What's to say I didn't drop these on purpose?

ADELE
Well, you look kind of klutzy.

Isaac puts his hand on her wrist. She leaves it there.

ISAAC
You're off the clock. You don't have to serve me now.

ADELE
I didn't have to serve you then.

ISAAC
I'd love the freedom to pick and choose what parts of my job I do.

ADELE
What do you do?

ISAAC
Right now? Go on interviews for the past six months.

ADELE
Try to avoid jobs that require you not to drop things.

Isaac puts the last donut in the box. They get to their feet.

ISAAC
You working tonight?

ADELE
Unfortunately.

ISAAC
Maybe I'll see you here.

ADELE
I don't understand why you'd go here willingly, but whatever.

ISAAC
Better not let your boss hear you talk like that.

ADELE
I don't care, but even if I did, like you said, I'm off the clock.

Isaac smiles and rubs his ribs.

INT. GARAGE -- NIGHT

Isaac moves around the cluttered, car-less garage. PILES OF TRASH adorn the walls. Several big shelves stand in front of the garage door, rendering it virtually unusable. A side door serves as the primary entrance.

Isaac runs his hands over scattered, broken golf clubs. Baseball gloves. Lunch pails. Fast-food cups.

He heaves a cup against the far wall and kicks a gas can. The GAS CAN TIPS over and SPILLS.

Isaac puts it back upright and tries to leave. The door is jammed. He snarls and charges at the door--once, twice, three times before it finally opens.

EXT. TAUB BACKYARD -- CONTINUOUS

Isaac rubs his shoulder as he exits the garage and proceeds up the incline in his backyard toward his house. He goes inside.

INT. TAUB KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Isaac walks through the kitchen. He stops and stares over the table, on which is plate after plate of Thanksgiving leftovers prepared for the night's meal. His face is listless.

INT. TAUB LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Isaac enters the room. A PORNO PLAYS on the TV. A TOILET FLUSHES. Isaac looks in the direction of the sound.

Seconds later, Isaac's father, SAMUEL "BIG SAMMY" TAUB, forty-seven, enters the bathroom doorframe, maneuvering his 250 pounds through the threshold.

Most of Sam's weight's in his gut. His legs are short and strong. His shoulders broad. His rough face looks like it could have been handsome once.

Sam's FEET SHUFFLE as he heads toward his chair. Sam stops midway to his chair and looks at the porno. Isaac looks at the porno and the two men look at each other. Awkward.

Isaac moves into the bathroom.

INT. TAUB BATHROOM -- NIGHT

A scale reads 195 between two feet. Isaac looks down at the number.

INT. TAUB KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Isaac sits at the table. Sam stands over the stove. He holds a large ELECTRIC KNIFE over the remnants of their Thanksgiving turkey. Sam CARVES the bird. Isaac studies him.

INT. TAUB KITCHEN, LATER -- NIGHT

Midway into the meal. Isaac hasn't eaten anything. Sam is continuing to chew, throwing a glance at Isaac every other beat. Isaac watches Sam eat.

SAM

You're not gonna eat?

ISAAC

Not tonight.

Sam looks bothered. Isaac takes a roll and butters it. Puts it on his plate and doesn't pick it up.

No response from Sam.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

The side door in the garage giving you trouble?

SAM

Sometimes jams from the inside.

ISAAC

Wanna get that fixed soon?

SAM

Soon.

Isaac looks down at his plate.

ISAAC

You go to the doctor today?

Sam stops eating.

SAM

Yeah.

ISAAC

What'd he say?

SAM
Don't worry about it. I'm fine.

Isaac stares at Sam, who continues eating.

ISAAC
Saw Jeanine today...

Sam COUGHS.

SAM
How's she doing?

ISAAC
Asked about you.

Sam sips his wine.

SAM
Thoughtful...

ISAAC
Yeah.
(beat)
How's work going?

No response from Sam.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
I'll stop by in a coupla days...

At this moment, Isaac tips over Sam's wine glass. Isaac leaps up and fetches paper towels.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
(as he cleans)
I'm heading out tonight.

Sam continues to eat.

SAM
Where's that?

ISAAC
A coupla bars, maybe. Keith's gotta go back in a few days. Sorta a going away thing.

Isaac dabs the wine on the floor. Sam stares.

SAM
I think you got it all, no?

ISAAC

Oh--

He gets back to his feet and sits again.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

I was saying how I might stop over
at the high school the next coupla
days.

SAM

Pass the potatoes.

Isaac looks at the food strewn over the table. Finds the
potatoes. Waits.

SAM (CONT'D)

What?

Isaac looks at Sam. Nods and passes the potatoes. Sam
dishes them out and starts right in.

SAM (CONT'D)

What day?

ISAAC

What?

SAM

When'rye coming in?

ISAAC

Oh, oh I dunno. I'll let you know
though when I do.

Isaac gets up. Pats Sam on the shoulders and leaves. Sam's
left shoveling food in his mouth.

INT. TAUB BATHROOM, LATER -- NIGHT

Isaac showers. He sits down in the tub and lets the water
fall on him.

EXT. GARAGE, LATER -- NIGHT

Isaac's P.O.V.: Sam's 1984 Ford pick-up lights illuminate
the garage through the open side door. We follow Isaac
inside.

CUT TO:

INT. GARAGE -- NIGHT

Sam holds a busted tennis racket up to his nose. Isaac enters. Shuts the door behind him.

ISAAC

A little cold out here, isn't it?

Sam mumbles and continues moving around. Groups together some lawn chairs.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

I saw the food still out in the kitchen. You want me to put it away?

SAM

No, I'll be in in a minute.

Isaac sits on a crate.

ISAAC

Been meaning to ask you how your exercises were going and all that?

SAM

I move.

ISAAC

Yeah, I know that. I meant, well, you know, I just haven't seen you doing them and wanted to keep up.

Sam looks at Isaac.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Why isn't it getting better?

No response from Sam, who's now grouping together baseball gloves.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

I mean, are you telling me everything I need to know? We were gonna start walking in the mornings. I was thinking maybe we can do that soon. What do you think?

Sam drops a baseball glove.

SAM

(dismissive)

Yeah, yeah I guess we could.

ISAAC

Actually, I'm not so sure it's that easy. Four years you've been saying this.

Isaac does not look at Sam but straight ahead. Sam drops another ball glove.

SAM

Isaac, why don't you just worry about yourself, huh?

Isaac gets to his feet.

ISAAC

That isn't easy either.

SAM

No, it's not, but-just don't get in my way here!

ISAAC

You still haven't told me what you're doing out here. I mean, what has to be done now, at this exact moment, that can't be done later?

SAM

Aren't you going out?

ISAAC

It can wait.

SAM

Well then will you please just get the hell outta here?!

ISAAC

Doesn't it bother you that you're dying?

Sam stops in his tracks. Isaac senses his weakness. Tries to capitalize.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

I mean, you're gonna die a lot sooner 'cause of the way you live, you selfish bastard! Fuck-fuck-fuckin' cholesterol's what?! TWO TWENTY FIVE!!!!? Too stubborn to see a doctor. Do you wanna have another heart attack?! In this god-damned garage?!

Sam crowds Isaac.

SAM

I get up and live my life with
absolutely no regrets. Do you
understand me?

ISAAC

No! No. I don't.

Sam sits across the garage from Isaac. Isaac approaches Sam. Places both hands on his shoulders and looks him dead in the eye.

Sam fidgets, but Isaac holds firm. The two men sway in an awkward motion as the following dialogue is delivered:

ISAAC (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Take this for what it's worth. I
haven't eaten anything since
yesterday and I'm not gonna eat 'til
you keep a fucking promise and start
to improve. Your call.

Isaac gets to his feet and heads to the door. Looks over his shoulder.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Good night.

Isaac heads to the door. Tries to open it but it jams. Isaac charges through the door and falls to his knees in the snow.

INT. BODY LANGUAGE -- NIGHT

A stripclub. SCANTILY-CLAD WOMEN bearing their souls to BLARING MUSIC. Smoke and mirrors and small circular tables and large chairs occupied by lonely MEN and A FEW WOMEN.

Isaac sits at a table with KEITH PITTMAN, twenty-three, tall and lean, who clutches his beer as he talks to the GRUFFY MANAGER.

Isaac stares at an OLDER WOMAN dancing and becomes entranced. Watches her hips sway amid the smoke IN SLOW-MO.

Another YOUNG WOMAN takes Isaac by the hand and leads him down a dark pathway. Keith points and cheers. He drops his beer.

INT. MIRACLE ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

The woman leads Isaac into the room. She kisses him. Puts her hands on his waist and pushes him back onto a couch. Gets on his lap and dances over him.

Isaac looks dizzy, but he tries to come off as Joe Cool.

ISAAC
You're good at this.

WOMAN
(as she dances)
I try to be, baby.

ISAAC
What's your name?

WOMAN
Why do you wanna know my name, baby?

ISAAC
I dunno...

WOMAN
You don't wanna know my name.

ISAAC
Okay--

Keeping his eyes open, Isaac tries to look beyond her. For whatever reason, his face is uncomfortable, but he takes the dance like a stoic.

INT. TAUB BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Sam shaves in front of the mirror. He wears a t-shirt that reads "FAT PEOPLE ARE HARDER TO KIDNAP".

INT. TAUB BATHROOM, LATER -- NIGHT

A shaven Sam combs his hair. His eyes resolute.

INT. SAM'S TRUCK, DRIVING -- NIGHT

Light snow outside. Sam drives. Sam's decked out in his Sunday best.

INT. BATHROOM STALL, BODY LANGUAGE -- NIGHT

Isaac falls through the door and gets to his knees. He gets sick.

INT. LIVINGSTON'S SUPERMARKET -- NIGHT

Sam pushes a cart along the aisle. He rolls his shoulders every couple of seconds. Looks over at Jeanine behind the deli.

He approaches her. Takes a ticket from the machine on the counter. Jeanine doesn't look at him. Sam CLEARS HIS THROAT. Then she looks up and moves in his direction.

SAM

How you doing, Jeanine?

JEANINE

What'll ya have tonight, Sammy?

SAM

You know me too well.

Sam looks utterly foolish here, a manchild out of his element. As genuinely open as he is to her, there is no reciprocity.

Sam bends down and looks in the case. His eyes convey that he doesn't give a damn about the meats.

SAM (CONT'D)

(laughs)

I-I just don't know tonight, ya know? You've got some good things here.

JEANINE

Special on the turkey breast. Two forty nine a pound.

Sam stands straight again.

SAM

Tempting. Tempting. Alright, well, yeah, okay, two pounds of that then. That'll be fine.

Jeanine takes the meat and moves to the slicer.

SAM (CONT'D)

So did you have any trouble getting up here in the snow?

JEANINE

What was that?

SAM

The snow? Your shift started when the snow was coming down hard. You must have called in later, no?

JEANINE

Nah, I was here since this morning.

SAM

Oh? You get off soon?

Jeanine stops slicing and faces Sam.

JEANINE

Sammy?

SAM

Yeah, Jeanine?

JEANINE

(approaching Sam; a hint of apprehension)

Did you really come here to talk turkey or snow or whatever? Or are you looking to ask me out again?

SAM

I just didn't see you for a while, that's all...

(trails off)

No, I came here for the meat. Absolutely. I was here last week but didn't get anything 'cause I was still stocked--

JEANINE

(overriding)

Did you have a good Thanksgiving?

SAM

You bet.

JEANINE

Saw Isaac this morning. He holding up?

SAM

Huh?

JEANINE

I guess he didn't tell you. Big crowds here this morning. He had a little scuffle with someone.

SAM
Oh. He win?

JEANINE
I dunno, Sam, Didn't really get a
good look.

SAM
Oh.

JEANINE
Sam?

No response from Sam.

JEANINE (CONT'D)
Sam!

SAM
(back)
Yeah? Yeah, Jeanine?

JEANINE
(looks deep in Sam's
eye)
Don't ask me out anymore, Sam.
Don't want me anyway.

She's never had to be this blunt with him and it shows. She
returns to the slicer.

SAM
(befuddled)
Okay.
(beat)
Those things will cut your hand off
if you're not careful.

She stops short of the slicer and faces him again.

JEANINE
Sam?

SAM
Yeah, Jeanine?

JEANINE
I like your tie.

She smiles. Sam laughs. Jeanine turns and slices the meat.
Sam stops laughing as we hold on his now defeat-ridden face
for a pain-racking beat.

INT. ADELE'S CAR -- NIGHT

Adele's parked outside The Diamond Diner. She stares at it in disgust. The HEATER is BLASTING AIR. She's smokes a joint.

EXT. DUNKIN' DONUTS -- NIGHT

Sam's TRUCK IDLES in the parking lot.

INT. SAM'S TRUCK -- CONTINUOUS

Sam downs donuts and coffee. His face reveals a perverse pleasure with each bite.

INT. ISAAC'S CAR, DRIVING -- NIGHT

Isaac drives, Keith sits shotgun and sips from a beer bottle.

KEITH

Did you like Shoshona?

ISAAC

I didn't get her name. And I'm still pissed you wanted to hit the strip club before the bar. Who the fuck does that?!

KEITH

People who want to see as much ass as possible.

ISAAC

I know you're holding court tonight but--there's a place I wanna go to next.

KEITH

Where?

Isaac doesn't respond. He looks out over the road. The CAR SKIDS. Keith curses. Isaac regains control of the wheel.

INT. SAM'S TRUCK, DRIVING -- NIGHT

Sam drives. He pulls over.

EXT. FRONT YARD, HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Sam exits the car and moves toward several containers of garbage cans.

He picks up a broomstick with a chipped handle. Without pomp Sam throws it in the back of his truck and drives off.

INT. DIAMOND DINER -- NIGHT

Keith and Isaac in a booth. Keith eats a crock of French Onion soup. Isaac drinks a glass of water.

KEITH
This soup's the shit, Isaac. Best
part's the cheese.

Isaac's P.O.V.: Adele waits tables in a nearby section. She catches him ogling at her and grins.

Keith twirls the cheese on his spoon before taking a bite. He grimaces slightly before reaching for his beer bottle, which tips over.

Keith begins CHOKING, unable to speak. It takes a beat for Isaac to see Keith isn't playing.

Isaac leaps out of his part of the booth.

ISAAC
HELP!

Adele runs into frame and performs the Heimlich Maneuver on Keith. It works. Isaac stares on stupidly.

A SMATTERING OF APPLAUSE as Adele releases Keith, who falls back into his part of the booth.

ADELE
(to Keith)
Helps to cut that stuff up. Margie--
get me a glass of water.

Adele looks over at Isaac, who stares on impressed.

ADELE (CONT'D)
(to Isaac)
You don't know how to do that?

ISAAC
Nope.

ADELE
Well I hope you took notes.
(MORE)

Adele touches Keith's shoulder as MARGIE brings the water.

ADELE (CONT'D)
Thanks, Margie.
(hands glass to Keith)
Sip that.

Keith does.

ADELE (CONT'D)
(to Isaac)
Gonna sit back down?

ISAAC
Sure.

He sits.

ADELE
Anything else you guys need?

KEITH
Fuck me.

ADELE
How about I slap you?

ISAAC
(almost
apologetically)
He's drunk.

ADELE
Makes no difference to me.
(whispers)
I'm stoned.

Isaac nods. Adele strokes his face.

ISAAC (V.O.)
So what do you do?

EXT. DIAMOND DINER PARKING LOT, LATER -- NIGHT

Snow glistens all around the place. Isaac and Keith hug.
Isaac helps Keith into a cab.

INT. DIAMOND DINER, LATER -- NIGHT

Past dinner hour. Adele's shift is over. They have a booth
in the corner. Adele eats a plate of steamed broccoli.

ADELE
Nursing student.

ISAAC
(off broccoli)
Is that a more medically-sound way
to deal with the munchies?

INT. ISAAC'S CAR, IDLING, LATER -- NIGHT

The conversation from the diner continues over the action of
this scene:

Adele attempts to place her hand on Isaac's lap and rub. He
lets her for a moment and starts to return the favor before
removing their hands. They share a deep kiss.

ADELE
I like broccoli. You haven't eaten
anything tonight. I have some weed
in my car if you want it.

ISAAC
Why do you want to be a nurse?

ADELE
I get to work in more areas of
medicine. No red tape.

ISAAC
Bullshit answer.

ADELE
Okay, fair enough. It's because, at
my core, I'm good with people.

ISAAC
Fair enough.

ADELE
And you know what?

ISAAC
What?

ADELE
Your friend's gonna be fucked up in
twenty years.

ISAAC
He's fucked up now. Can't you tell?

BACK TO THEM IN THE BOOTH AT THE DINER

Adele starts to chuckle. Isaac reaches for her hand and
strokes it. Their eyes meet.

INT. GARAGE, SAME -- NIGHT

Sam lies on his back, his stomach rising in the air like a crescent moon. His steaming breath attests to the cold.

He reaches for the broomstick handle from earlier. Holds it up to his face. Kisses it. Breaks down.

EXT. GERIK HOUSE, LATER -- NIGHT

Isaac's car pulls in front of the curb and stops.

INT. ISAAC'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Isaac looks straight ahead. Adele slumps in her seat.

ADELE

It's too late.

ISAAC

What's that?

ADELE

You know I've never -- I think I'm shrinking.

ISAAC

Shrinking?

ADELE

Uh-huh. Either that or the universe is expanding. It plagued Alvy Singer, you know--

ISAAC

--Who?

ADELE

Notta Woody fan, I see--

Isaac scratches his head at the reference.

ISAAC

Um. What you were saying before? Shrinking works better for me.

ADELE

Yeah. Me too.
(looks Isaac dead
seriously in the
eyes)
Why?

ISAAC
(taken aback)
Dunno. You sure your car's okay
back at the diner, right?

ADELE
Yeah, yeah, I'll get it tomorrow.
It's fine. Lemme ask you something.
Do you feel like you're suffocating
a lot? Does that happen to you?

ISAAC
Sometimes.

ADELE
Sometimes?! 'Cause I've been here
too damn long for my own good and I
have to force myself every day to
take it easy, you know? No crazy
shit. Too many assholes live here.

She looks out her window, as if someone's following them.

ISAAC
Too true. Too true.

ADELE
The diner's just crawling-just
crawling with them. Middle-aged
guys who hate themselves. Do all
men hate themselves?

ISAAC
Only when we factor women into the
mix.

ADELE
Bullshit. My dad's an old guy. An
old man, you know, to us, like fifty
two. He's gonna marry a girl four
years older than me. He's not
marrying this bitch because he hates
himself. Do you have a girlfriend?

ISAAC
No.

ADELE
Good.

Adele starts to cry.

ADELE (CONT'D)
Do you cry?

ISAAC

Not much, no.

ADELE

My mind's not working well tonight.

ISAAC

Yeah? Think you can diagnose yourself?

ADELE

Don't want to. Everything's making sense. Please call me. Promise me you'll call me.

ISAAC

Yeah, I promise. Absolutely.

ADELE

Good. Hug me.

Isaac looks at her before slowly moving in. They hug. Strange, then warm. She leaves. Walks inside without turning back.

Isaac watches her enter. He rubs his eyes and drives off.

INT. ISAAC'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Awake, Isaac subsides in bed. He gets up and turns on his computer.

Dark but for the glow of the screen. He googles "male hunger strikers."

IMAGES OF EMACIATED MEN

flicker across Isaac's monitor. Ribs. Names like "Bobby Sands."

A list reads "Essential nutrients for maintenance of the human body."

ISAAC'S EYES

stare on transfixed. He looks at a crucifix on his wall.

EXT. TAUB HOUSE, LATER -- NIGHT

Isaac stands on front porch, overlooking the snow-covered lawn. His breath dances in the air.

INT. TAUB KITCHEN -- DAY

Sam stands over the stove and prepares an omelet. The SIZZLING of the PAN permeates the room.

INT. TAUB KITCHEN, LATER -- DAY

Sam sits at the kitchen table. He is eating the omelet.

Isaac enters and sits next to him. Sam's eyes don't move from his plate.

The PHONE RINGS. Sam gets to his feet. Picks it up.

SAM

(into phone)

Yeah? What about?... Well... What does she do? That's nice. Well, come on! What do you think?! Yeah, thanks but no thanks. I'll see you there, though, no? Don't bring her. Yeah. Earl, damn it. Don't --

As Sam talks, we see Isaac stare after him. Isaac looks back at the plate Sam left on the table.

Isaac picks up the plate and scrapes the rest of the omelet in the trash. Leaves. Sam watches him go.

MALE VOICE (V.O.)

Are you crazy?

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE -- DAY

Isaac is being examined by his doctor, RICHARD PATRA--middle-aged, balding.

ISAAC

No. You've seen him, Dr. Patra. You know how bad it is.

DR. PATRA

But jeopardizing your own health, Isaac?

ISAAC

(beat)

I think I can get through to him.

DR. PATRA

You're gonna want liquids.

ISAAC

Okay.

DR. PATRA
Vitamin B compounds.

ISAAC
Yeah.

DR. PATRA
Centrum vitamins and sugar water.
Protein and electrolytes.
(checks chart)
Gotta keep your thiamine up...
(beat; looks at Isaac)
You understand I am in no way
advocating this approach. There's
therapy. Counseling.

ISAAC
That would require him to know how
to speak his emotions.

DR. PATRA
He's not your mother.

ISAAC
That he ain't.

Dr. Patra puts his hand on Isaac's shoulder.

DR. PATRA
Keep me posted...

INT. ISAAC'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Packs of vitamins and water bottles are stacked on Isaac's desk. Isaac downs four centrum vitamins.

INT. TAUB KITCHEN, LATER -- DAY

THE WHITE REFRIGERATOR

sits majestically at the head of the room.

Isaac crosses the room and retrieves a red marker from the counter. He makes a tally mark on the fridge.

INT. JANITOR'S OFFICE, HIGH SCHOOL -- DAY

Sam sits at one of three desks. At the others sit EARL DANO, forty-six, a small balding misanthrope, and his son CRAIG DANO, twenty-eight, large and boyish with greasy hair.

Earl's dynamic personality and thick South Jersey accent is more than evident whenever he speaks.

Sam sips from a large container of coffee and flips through a newspaper.

EARL
Big Sammy, you clean out the auditorium?

Sam doesn't look up.

EARL (CONT'D)
Sammy?!

Earl reaches across and taps Sam's knee.

SAM
(mind elsewhere)
Yeah. For the assembly at one.

EARL
Good.
(beat)
Man, you missed it last night. Joey-Bag-o-Doughnuts got that chick's number who was kicking our asses at pool. Woulda lost two-hundred bucks if he didn't sweet talk her out of it.

CRAIG
I was off my game last night.

EARL
You're off your game every night.

SAM
(shakes his head no)
Joey-Bag-o-Doughnuts is a stud anyway.

EARL
My ass, he's a stud! I'm happy he did it an all. But he got lucky.

CRAIG
(laughs; to Sam)
They were fucking in his car.

SAM
That's real good luck.

EARL
(pissed; to Craig)
Keep it to yourself.
(MORE)

EARL (CONT'D)
(to Sam)
You're missing out.

SAM
Wouldn't say I'm missing out, Earl.

Sam grins.

EARL
Jeanine?

SAM
She's a doll.

CRAIG
You're too stiff.

EARL
(to Craig; seriously)
Hey -- Shut up.

Craig looks at the ground. Smiles embarrassingly.

SAM
Not stiff. Cautious maybe, I dunno.

Sam spills his coffee in his lap.

SAM (CONT'D)
Shit!

He gets to his feet and grabs a nearby towel. Sops up the stain on his lap.

ISAAC (O.S.)
You should get some club soda.

Perched in the doorway, Isaac walks in. Stares at Sam. Sam stares back. During the stare:

CRAIG (O.S.)
Yo, Isaac.

Isaac turns away from Sam and approaches Craig. They shake hands.

ISAAC
What's up, man--

CRAIG
Same shit, man. You went here.

ISAAC

Don't I know it.

(turns to Earl)

How're you doin', Earl?

EARL

I got no sleep last night.

ISAAC

What else is new? You working on givin' Craig a brother?

CRAIG

Hope not.

Sam sits again and struggles to catch his breath.

EARL

(to Isaac)

I was sidelinin' last night at Chickie's but I could guarantee that your father here--this friggin' titan among us mere mortals--woulda scored with this lady not that much older than you. And what happens instead?

(a bit apprehensive;
talks more to Sam
than Isaac here)

He sits in the garage playing with his legos while friggin' doughnut-hole Joe with his pigeon-sized brain's able to swoon her over the pool table by buyin' her and her chicken-ass friends Red Bulls or some shit all night.

CRAIG

Cosmopolitans.

ISAAC

Yeah? Joey-Bag-o-Doughnuts? That fifty five year-old drunk who tries to hit on girls half his age? It's freakin' pathetic! I saw him once just pass out on the floor during karaoke. Didn't even finish the song--just went splat. Right, Dad?

Their eyes meet. Sam glares. Then nods.

EARL

(to Sam)

See? Your own son knows how much action you're passing up.

(to Isaac)

Well, Peckerhead. To what do we owe the honor?

ISAAC

(to Sam)

You didn't tell them I was stopping in?

EARL

(to Sam)

You losing brain cells, man?

SAM

Think so.

EARL

(rises)

Well if I'd a-known about your comin' I'd be glad to stay but right now I've gotta go to the cafeteria. Holiday teacher basketball game.

ISAAC

(to Earl)

Before you go, you still have that scale tucked away in here?

EARL

Yeah. Back in the cabinet there.

Isaac walks back to the cabinet and removes an old mechanical scale. Props it upright and removes his shoes. Weighs himself.

ISAAC

This thing accurate?

CRAIG

Should be.

Isaac looks over at Sam, who's returned to flipping through the paper.

ISAAC

That's what the scale at home said I weighed.

(laughs; to Sam)

Looks like I'm losing.

EARL

You're a damn toothpick as it is.

Isaac dismisses Earl with his hand. Isaac puts on his shoes and leaves the office.

EARL (CONT'D)

(to Sam)

He's as strange as you, Sammy.

Earl leaves. Sam folds up the paper and takes another swig of coffee. Shares an awkward stare with Craig.

INT. ISAAC'S CAR, DRIVING -- DAY

Isaac works the radio as he drives.

KEITH (V.O.)

You gonna get some ass for me?

INT. KEITH'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Posters of nearly-naked women and sports teams on the walls. Keith packs. Isaac leans against the door.

ISAAC

Oh, of course, you horny prick.

KEITH

Thatta boy.

ISAAC

You're coming back in June. Fuck Iraq. You're coming back in June. And I'll be here. We're gonna hit the beach. We just gotta fight some wars first.

KEITH (O.S.)

The fuck you sayin'? Look, man, you want my war you can have it.

Isaac looks up.

EXT. GERIK HOUSE -- DAY

Adele opens the door to see Isaac on the porch.

ADELE

This is better than a call.

ISAAC

Mind if I come in?

Adele hesitates for a moment before slowly motioning for him to come inside.

INT. GERIK KITCHEN -- DAY

Adele and Isaac enter and sit across from each other at the kitchen table. Awkward tension between them. Adele stands and walks to the fridge.

ADELE

Dad and Sheila are out. You hungry or something? We've got cupcakes here, I think. Pretzels, maybe. I dunno.

ISAAC

No thanks. I'm good.

Isaac gets up and looks around the room. Goes to a window and looks out of it.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Last night was... nice.

ADELE

Was it?

ISAAC

(faces her)

I thought it was.

ADELE SLAMS the FRIDGE shut. GLASSES RATTLE. Isaac startles. She approaches him.

ADELE

I'm glad you came by but I really don't think there's much to do here.

ISAAC

Do you wanna go somewhere?

Adele smiles.

INT. "EXHILARAMA" -- DAY

The place is a large-scale arcade inside a shopping mall. Isaac and Adele are on an enclosed trampoline.

IN SLOW-MO: Adele play-DDTs Isaac repeatedly. He lets her. They drop and roll around together. She keeps laughing.

INT. MALL, LATER -- DAY

Packed with Christmas SHOPPERS and festooned with decorations. Isaac and Adele walk side by side in the middle of all the hysteria. They hold hands.

ADELE
That made me dizzy.

ISAAC
Then this can't be helping.

Adele grips Isaac's hand. She bumps into an OLD WOMAN and apologizes. Bumps into a MIDDLE-AGED MAN.

ADELE
(screams after him)
What the hell, huh? Could you
please watch it?!

The man startles and moves on.

INT. MALL, LATER -- DAY

Adele sits on Santa's lap. Isaac laughs on in the distance.

INT. MALL, LATER -- DAY

Isaac and Adele sit under a large artificial Christmas tree in front of the Santa Claus exhibit.

ISAAC
You love Santa almost as much as
steamed broccoli.

ADELE
Santa's a man who never lets you
down. 'Cause rational people know
from the offset that he's not real.

ISAAC
You're talking circles around me. I
didn't really get much sleep last
night.

ADELE
It happens.

They play with each other's hands as they talk.

ADELE (CONT'D)
The human brain doesn't fully
develop until age twenty-six.

ISAAC
Hope that's true. I'd love some
more time to fuck up and not be
blamed for it.

ADELE
Our generation isn't fucking up,
though.
(laughs)
They're fucking, but not fucking up.

Isaac pushes his hand in on his stomach and closes his eyes.
Adele looks out at the madding crowd.

ADELE (CONT'D)
This place is insane.

ISAAC
I'm feeling pretty dizzy.

ADELE
I was dropping you left and right.

ISAAC
Only 'cause I was letting you.

ADELE
You weren't letting me.

ISAAC
A couple of times I wasn't, yeah.
You like me?

ADELE
I'm here, aren't I?
(looks off)
These people are maniacs. Look at
their eyes.

ISAAC
They're driven.

ADELE
(scoffs)
That's an understatement.

ISAAC
What am I supposed to say?

ADELE
Get angry at them!
(MORE)

ADELE (CONT'D)

They're not gonna hesitate running you over to get some piece of shit toy for half price so their kids can break it Christmas morning and say how much it sucks. Some guy got stampeded yesterday morning for a fuckin' plasma-TV, Isaac. A TV!

ISAAC

I get angry.

ADELE

At what?

ISAAC

Forget it.

ADELE

What do you get angry at?

ISAAC

Maybe I don't get angry.

ADELE

Thought as much. You wanna head out?

Isaac looks out at the hysteria and nods. Adele gets to her feet and helps Isaac get to his. They continue through the crowd again, joined at the hip. Hands clutched.

INT. TAUB KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Isaac puts a second tally mark on the fridge. He walks away. TWO MORE MARKS APPEAR--two more days have passed.

INT. TAUB BATHROOM -- DAY

Isaac, with his shirt off, studies himself in the bathroom mirror. He stretches the muscles in his mouth. In his face. His JAWBONE CRACKS.

The RADIO PLAYS the tune, "I'VE SEEN ALL GOOD PEOPLE." The MUSIC plays throughout the scene.

Isaac hasn't slept for days and it shows. Rings surround his eyes. He GRITS his TEETH. Massages his stubble.

Isaac splashes water on his face. Hits himself in the chest and grimaces. Loses his balance and grabs the sink. Rests his head against the mirror.

Sam walks in. His shirt is off. Isaac doesn't move his head from the mirror. Sam stands next to Isaac in front of the mirror, juxtaposing their reflections.

Isaac turns his head in Sam's direction without removing it from the mirror.

Without warning, Isaac moves over to the bathroom scale by the toilet.

Isaac attaches a little chalkboard to the wall above the scale. Weighs himself, then writes the number on the chalkboard: 187. He leaves.

INT. TAUB KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Isaac sits at the kitchen table. A blanket is draped over his shoulders. He notices a collection of broken plant pots without the plants in them. Sam's treasures.

Isaac gets to his feet and approaches the pots. He picks them up and heaves them out the back door. A RESOUNDING CRASH is HEARD. Isaac returns to the table just as Sam enters the kitchen.

A brief stare between them. Sam turns to the fridge. Ignoring the tally marks, he opens it and takes out bread.

Isaac approaches Sam. Isaac opens a nearby drawer and takes out the red marker. He adds another tally mark.

Sam looks briefly at Isaac but proceeds to make a sandwich. Isaac looks on.

INT. TAUB KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Isaac puts a seventh tally mark on the fridge. Sits down on the floor in front of it. Runs his finger across his chapped lips. Places the exposed veins of his left wrist over the lips and tries, pathetically, to perform a mock suicide.

He takes out some Chap Stick and applies it to his lips. Then kisses his wrist.

INT. ISAAC'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Furious, Isaac rips off his bedding. A far corner in one of the sheets is stuck.

In a burst of agitation Isaac leaps onto the mattress and tugs the corner off. He does it so fast part of the SHEET RIPS.

INT. TAUB KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Draped in blankets, Isaac sits on pillows on the floor in front of the fridge. He stares straight ahead. He looks very sleep deprived.

INT. GERIK BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Adele leads Isaac inside. She turns on the light. They look in the mirror. Their reflections show her stroking his jawline.

ISAAC

What'd you want to show me?

Adele points to the bathmat.

ADELE

This.

She sits on it and drags him down alongside her.

ISAAC

It's a bathmat.

ADELE

You're good tonight.

ISAAC

Why thank you.

ADELE

Honestly, don't get all freaked when I tell you this.

ISAAC

Tell me what?

ADELE

I was conceived on this.

Isaac laughs and squirms.

ISAAC

Get outta here. You're kidding me?

ADELE

I'm totally and completely serious!

ISAAC

It's definitely unique.

(MORE)

Adele grips Isaac in a headlock. She feels his stomach. His chest. She stands up and gets into the bathtub.

Unhinges the nozzle and turns on the shower. Sprays Isaac.

He wrestles the nozzle away from her and turns off the water. Pulls her back with him on the bathmat.

He grabs towels from a nearby shelf. Wraps a big towel around him and Adele. He COUGHS a little, SPUTTERS. He chills and fidgets. They lie and look at the ceiling.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

This bathmat's seen a lot of action.

ADELE

It's like it's the launching pad into my life.

ISAAC

I try not to spend a lot of time in my bathroom.

ADELE

They're sorta meant to be get in, get out, ya know? Mine's just more significant than that.

ISAAC

I think mine might be, too.

Adele removes a joint from her pocket and lights up. They watch the smoke encircle atop their heads.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

I'm already high on your eyes...

ADELE

Ha!

Isaac gets to his feet and moves to the sink.

ISAAC

I hate that shit. Cigarettes too.
(laughs)
Better brush my teeth before you kiss me again. Maybe you can use broccoli stalks.

Isaac loses his balance. Grabs hold of the sink. Clutches his stomach. Hides a grimace.

ADELE

You alright?

Isaac squares his footing and looks into the mirror.

ISAAC
Just slipped.

He laughs.

INT. TAUB LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Isaac, wearing a stocking cap, is sprawled out on the couch. His eyes are closed. Sam enters and looks at him. Approaches Isaac but stops short. Isaac opens his eyes.

SAM
Why're you wearing a hat in here?

ISAAC
It's cold.

Sam walks over to the heater by the window and puts his hand over it.

SAM
Heater's on. What, you can't feel the heat or something?

ISAAC
The hat's doing a better job of keeping my head warm.

SAM
You're not getting a headache or anything with that on?

ISAAC
I've had a headache for the past five days.

Silence.

SAM
That's your own damn fault.

Isaac looks Sam in the eye before subsiding on the couch, turning his back to him.

Sam sighs and moves to his chair. He sits. Picks up the remote and turns on the TV.

As the TV PLAYS, Sam studies Isaac's back. Looks at the hat on his head.

Isaac curls up and hides under blankets. He turns around again and catches Sam looking at him.

ISAAC

What?

SAM

I can feel the heat fine in here.

ISAAC

That's good.

SAM

Yeah.

Sam gets to his feet.

SAM (CONT'D)

I'm going out to Chickie's with Earl and Craig tonight. They want me to meet at their place and ride with them.

ISAAC

Is today Tuesday or Wednesday?

SAM

It's Monday.

ISAAC

Don't get too trashed. You want me to come?

SAM

No. Not really.

Isaac sits upright.

ISAAC

Mind passing me the remote?

Sam lobs it over. Isaac drops it.

SAM

You're a grown man.

ISAAC

Was that a question?

SAM

I thought you were a grown man.

ISAAC

I'm not looking to go tomorrow, ya know.

SAM
(not listening)
You could act like one.

Isaac lies back down on the couch.

ISAAC
I think I'm gonna take a nap.

He turns his back to Sam, who leaves. Once Sam is gone, Isaac checks back over his shoulder to make sure.

He rolls off the couch and in a crawling position rests his head on the floor.

We follow Isaac as he crawls from the living room into the:

INT. TAUB KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

He makes his way to the counter and uses it to climb up to his feet. Opens a drawer and takes out the red marker.

Moves to fridge and counts ten tally marks already there. He begins to make the eleventh but stops. Puts the marker back in the drawer. Leaves.

INT. HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

We follow Isaac as he moves down the hallway. He loses his balance and reaches out to either wall of the hallway to regain composure.

Once his footing is squared, he rubs his temples. He turns into the door for the:

INT. TAUB BATHROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Isaac approaches the scale. Steps on it but quickly hops off before his weight registers.

He looks at the bathmat on the floor. Sits on the bathmat and rubs his hands over it. Lies on his back. His face reveals the hell he's feeling.

INT. CHICKIE'S -- NIGHT

A seedy bar. Grime and several strands of Christmas lights on the walls.

Earl badly sings "Hotel California" at a karaoke station. He is drunk. Sam and Craig sit at the bar. Craig who SEES something O.S.

CRAIG

I fucked her last week--

Sam looks at Craig's P.O.V. to show a pretty WOMAN of twenty-six, though her eyes are much older. Sam nods. He holds up his bottle. They toast.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

After we stopped, she told me she had a kid that DYFS took away a year ago.

(laughs)

I don't like kids--

Earl approaches and grabs Sam's shoulders from behind. Sam startles. Craig glares before taking a swig of his beer.

INT. CHICKIE'S, LATER -- NIGHT

Sam, Earl, and Craig play pool in the far corner. This feels routine. Easily still drunk, Earl sways.

EARL

Big Sammy Taub.

SAM

Another beer?

EARL

Night's almost over.

SAM

You gonna sing more karaoke?

CRAIG

Hope not.

Earl shoots Craig a stare.

EARL

You wish I'd sing more.
(to Sam; points O.S.)
Look at her.

TWO WOMEN, early to mid thirties, are huddled together smoking at the bar. They're eyeing a big screen TV.

SAM

(off women)
I'm just not feeling too good right now about that.

EARL

Four years, Sammy.

SAM
Fourteen ball. Side.

Sam misses the shot.

EARL
You weren't even looking at the
ball.

SAM
That's 'cause I'm drunk. After this
game.

EARL
Feel like we're back in high school.

SAM
We never left.

EARL
Do it now. Just get it the hell
over with.

SAM
Fuckin' fourteen ball.

Sam drops the cue and we follow him to the women. He stops
midway. Looks back at Earl and Craig.

Sam walks past the women. Earl sighs. Glares at Craig, who
stumbles back into the pool table.

INT. BATHROOM STALL, CHICKIE'S -- NIGHT

Sam bursts in and gets sick.

INT. BATHROOM, CHICKIE'S, LATER -- NIGHT

Sam splashes water on his face. Looks at his face in the
mirror. SMASHES the MIRROR with his fist.

INT. TAUB DINING ROOM -- NIGHT

Isaac quickly crawls out from under the dining room table,
his face draped in a shawl. He's out of breath. Looks
paranoid.

We follow him as he moves on his hands and knees into the:

INT. TAUB LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

He approaches the couch. Tries to climb it but falls over.
Gets into the fetal position and rocks back and forth. Hits
the floor.

INT. TAUB KITCHEN, LATER -- NIGHT

Isaac sits at the kitchen table. He dangles a toothpick in-between his fingers. He lays his head on the table. Spreads his arms out over it as if to hug it.

He HEARS a KEY UNLOCK the front door and VOICES EMERGE. Isaac lifts his head up in the direction of the sounds.

EARL (O.S.)

--And she was like, "LICK MY TOES,
BITCH!!!! LICK MY TOES!!!!

(laughs hysterically)

So I got up and left. Foot fetishes
are for fuckin' child molesters.

CRAIG (O.S.)

How come I never see any of these
girls?

ANGLE ON

EARL

'Cause you're too busy being a
pussy.

CRAIG

You wish you scored half as much as
me.

EARL

Yah well remember who taught your
ass how to play the game--

Sam pulls his keys out of the lock. Rests his head on the door for a beat.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Isaac gets up and moves to the door by the fridge that separates the kitchen and the living room. He peaks his head through.

INT. TAUB LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Earl and Craig sit on the couch. Sam SEES Isaac peering in the doorway. Sam looks on as Isaac startles and adds the eleventh tally mark to the fridge.

INT. ISAAC'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Isaac falls through the door. Grabs his cell-phone and dials.

ISAAC

Hi...

(wipes a tear but
doesn't cry)

No, it's just... Meet me tomorrow.

Can you meet me tomorrow?

EXT. BEACH -- NIGHT

Adele sits next to Isaac on the snowy shore. He positions his stocking cap before putting his head on her shoulder. They watch the sunless sky.

INT. TAUB LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Isaac and Adele enter. Adele GASPS and looks around the place. Moves over to a pile of wire clothes hangers on a chair.

ISAAC

My dad hoards all this crap.

ADELE

I like it.

ISAAC

No. No, you don't.

ADELE

You're right. You should fuckin'
burn all this shit to the ground--

ISAAC

At least now you're being honest
with me.

ADELE

Nah. Trust me, you've seen my
place. This is no worse.

ISAAC

You want a drink?

ADELE

You have iced-tea?

ISAAC

Think so.

(MORE)

Isaac moves into the kitchen. Adele walks over to a record player on a dusty bookshelf. Blows dust off of it.

Isaac returns behind her. Puts his hands on her waist. Adele startles.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

No iced-tea.

ADELE

What's he do?

ISAAC

Who?

ADELE

Your dad?

ISAAC

He was a contractor until a couple years ago. Now he's a janitor at the high school.

ANGLE ON

ADELE

What happened? Who the hell would willingly work as a janitor?

ISAAC (O.S.)

He liked working for himself and everything but--

(beat)

--he had a heart attack and the doctor said he needed to ease up some.

ADELE

And being a janitor is easy?

ISAAC

I guess for him, yes.

Adele approaches Isaac and touches his elbow. She walks around the room again, not looking at him.

ADELE

He like being a janitor?

ISAAC

No. I don't think he does, no.

(MORE)

Isaac speaks like a man who has been thinking about this for a long while.

Adele sits on the couch and motions for Isaac to join her. He does. They look at each other.

He puts his arm around her. They look straight ahead. She puts her head on his shoulder. Isaac closes his eyes.

Orgasmic bliss seems to cover his face.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Don't take your head off. Please--
It feels perfect. I need to feel
perfect.

ADELE

You wanna dance?

ISAAC

I'm a little dizzy.

Adele closes her eyes as if thinking on what was just said.

ADELE

I'll lead.

ISAAC

We just sat down!

She gets to her feet and leads him up. He CRACKS his BACK and cringes. She rubs it.

She walks to a pile of records and thumbs through them. Pulls out ELLA FITZGERALD'S 1973 NEWPORT JAZZ FESTIVAL LIVE AT CARNEGIE HALL.

She removes the record from a jacket closed with a piece of masking tape, thinking nothing of it. She puts on the record.

The CRACKLING MUSIC to "SOME OTHER SPRING" BEGINS. Slowly they begin to dance. Adele feels around Isaac's waist and back.

Adele pulls away slightly from Isaac and kisses his cheek. Then pulls him in tighter. She stops dancing.

ADELE

Let's sit down.

ISAAC

You wanna sit down?

ADELE

I think I wanna sit down.

She walks to the record player and turns off the record. Goes back to Isaac and leads him to the couch. Again they sit looking straight ahead.

ADELE (CONT'D)

You're getting thin--

ISAAC

What?

ADELE

You don't look the same and you feel different.

ISAAC

I feel different?

ADELE

Yes, you feel different.

ISAAC

Feel like in touch?

ADELE

What other way is there? I can't see inside your head. Yes, feel like in touch. You feel, I dunno -- lighter.

ISAAC

Sorry to bust your bubble but I've pretty much always been this weight since I stopped growing.

ADELE

(calmly)

No. No, bullshit. No. I just felt you. Literally. You feel light.

ISAAC

How much lighter do I feel?

Isaac puts his hand on her shoulder. She acts like it's not even there.

ADELE

You tell me.

ISAAC

I would if I thought I was getting lighter.

Adele sighs. The front door opens. Sam stands momentarily in the doorway of the living room. Comes in and begins to rearrange things around the room. Doesn't acknowledge their presence until:

SAM

Isaac, you wanna help me with this?

ISAAC
This is Adele.

SAM
(without looking at
her)
Yeah, how are you--
(to Isaac)
You wanna give me a hand?

ISAAC
What's going on?

SAM
I'm getting a Christmas tree
tomorrow and want to make some room.

ADELE
I'll help.

SAM
(to Adele; snappy)
Grab that table over there.

Sam points to the table in front of the couch. Isaac stares on incredulously before springing up and taking the table before Adele does.

Sam walks over to the record player and takes off the record.

SAM (CONT'D)
What happened here?

ADELE
I love Ella Fitzgerald. Big jazz
fan.

SAM
I woulda loved to play it if you
asked me.

ADELE
Sorry. Didn't know it was yours.

SAM
Got this at a flea market for
fifteen bucks.

ADELE
That's a steal.

SAM

And I didn't want to play it. It's not right to go through someone else's personal property and open it and play with it and fuck it up.

Sam BREAKS the record in quarters and drops the pieces to the floor.

Isaac, holding the table over his head, nearly drops it in shock.

Adele staggers around the middle of the room and takes a knee. Stands up again and regains her balance. Works her way back to the couch and sits.

Isaac still holds the table over his head. Sam walks to Isaac and takes the table from him.

SAM (CONT'D)

Put it here...

Sam puts the table next to the door leading into the kitchen. He looks at Isaac and nods. Enters the kitchen.

Adele lies on the couch. Grabs a pillow and puts it over her face. Isaac moves to her. Tries to take the pillow off of her face.

Adele gets to her feet and throws the pillow at him. She leaves through the front door. He follows.

EXT. TAUB HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Adele walks to her car. She opens the driver's side door and gets in. She looks pissed. Isaac reaches the car.

ISAAC

Yo--

She shuts the door on his knee. He falls over.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

FUCK!

She puts the keys in the ignition and STARTS the ENGINE. The door remains open. She looks straight ahead and slumps over the steering wheel, causing an inadvertent HONK.

Adele begins to sob gently. She's still slumped over the wheel. Isaac looks up at her from the ground.

Adele runs her hand over her eyes and dries the tears. She turns off the car. Gets out and extends a hand to Isaac.

She helps him up.

INT. TAUB KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Isaac sits at the kitchen table. Bites his hands. Sam enters. The men look listlessly at each other. Turning his back to Isaac, Sam heads to the fridge and opens the door.

Isaac starts to TAP LIGHTLY on the table with his fingertips.

Sam keeps the door open but doesn't grab anything.

Isaac changes to DRUMMING LOUDLY with his hands. The THUDDING NOISE CRESCENDOS: FASTER... LOUDER... FASTER... LOUDER... FASTER... LOUDER...

Sam looks straight ahead into the fridge at nothing in particular. He sighs.

Sam looks over his shoulder and SEES the fire in Isaac's eyes. Closes the door and leaves the room. Isaac stops drumming. Hits the table with a closed fist.

Isaac grabs his wrist and writhes in pain. His face contorts with excruciation.

INT. JANITOR'S OFFICE, HIGH SCHOOL -- DAY

Sam sits at his desk. Looks over at the mechanical scale still out from Isaac's last visit. Gets up and puts it back in the closet. Returns to his desk. Sits.

He looks at a picture of Isaac as a child in the corner of his desk. Sam slumps over in his chair. Puts his elbows on the desk.

He takes a swig of coffee and notices his cup's empty. He gets to his feet again and meets Adele in the doorway. He sits again.

ADELE

Hi.

Sam mumbles.

ADELE (CONT'D)

I wanted to apologize about the other day.

SAM

About what?

ADELE

The record.

Adele approaches Sam. He tenses.

SAM

(almost a whisper)

I can get that repackaged...

ADELE

What?

Sam forces himself to talk clearly.

SAM

It was the principle of the thing.

Adele laughs. Sam does not look amused. He looks bothered.

SAM (CONT'D)

What're ya laughing at?

ADELE

You're a funny guy.

SAM

What?

ADELE

You know? Saying "principle" in a high school but not talking about the--

(trails off)

--it's that whole homophone thing.

She winks at him.

SAM

(mildly uncomfortable)

Isaac told you I work here?

ADELE

Yeah, he did. I'll only be a minute.

As if detecting Sam's uneasiness, she comes closer. Sam pushes his chair more toward his desk. His stomach hangs over the edge. He tries to hide a grimace.

Adele motions to Earl's empty chair. Sam nods.

ADELE (CONT'D)

I never went to high school here.

SAM
(defensively)
It's a good school. Good people.

ADELE
I bet. Did Isaac go here?

SAM
Freshman year he did, yeah.

ADELE
Do you like it here?

SAM
What?

ADELE
I just wanted to know if you liked
it here. Not many people like where
they work. It's not a requirement,
you know? I work over at the
Diamond Diner. Doesn't mean I'll
talk good about it.

SAM
I bet you wouldn't talk bad about it
when you're on the clock, though.

ADELE
Yeah, well, ya know, fuck my boss.

Sam looks at her in the eyes for the first time. She has
been staring at him.

ADELE (CONT'D)
I could go for a smoke.

SAM
You smoke?

ADELE
Yeah.

SAM
Isaac hates smoke.

ADELE
He puts up with it when he's with
me.

(beat)
He has no choice.
(MORE)

Sam fidgets in his chair. Adele looks through her purse.

ADELE (CONT'D)

(laughs)

I left them in the car.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL -- DAY

A bleak day. Adele and Sam stand against the wall of the building facing the faculty parking lot. They're each smoking.

ADELE

I like Isaac. I do. I could see myself with him.

Sam startles.

ADELE (CONT'D)

I don't think you like me but I don't care. Personally, I can't stand my own father. And between you and me I didn't come here to apologize about anything. I might love Ella Fitzgerald and "Some Other Spring" but I don't give a shit about your record.

Sam looks over at her. Adele looks impressed with herself.

ADELE (CONT'D)

He'd tell me if he were sick or anything like that, right? Like significantly ill?

Sam looks down at the ground.

SAM

(dryly)

I don't see why not, if he really likes you.

ADELE

(won't give him the satisfaction)

Yeah. 'Cause I've noticed he's getting thinner. It looks like he's getting thinner, anyway. He keeps losing his balance. His eyes are kinda red -- You don't notice these things?

Sam doesn't answer right away.

SAM

He knows what to do if he's sick.

ADELE

Do you think he's sick?

SAM

Why don't you ask him?

ADELE

I did.

SAM

What did he say?

ADELE

He said he didn't feel sick.

SAM

So there you go.

Adele takes a long drag of her cigarette. Scans Sam up and down and nods.

ADELE

(with cigarette still
in her mouth)

You know if he gets sodium or takes
vitamins?

Sam's dam of tolerance erupts.

SAM

(irate)

You're so concerned about his health
with a cigarette hanging outta your
mouth?! He says he's not sick, he's
not sick, right?! I don't know what
you want! I don't know what he
wants! I'm not the right person to
ask all these questions to 'cause I
just don't God-damned know!

Sam is panting. He chokes on some smoke. Adele looks at him. Throws down her cigarette and steps on it. She strokes Sam's face. He looks away but lets her.

ADELE

(tears start)

You're a sad man. I've gotta go.

Sam watches her walk across the parking lot, get in her car, and drive off.

INT. TAUB LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Isaac lies on the floor. Sam enters and takes a seat.
Isaac notices.

SAM
What are you doing?

ISAAC
It looks nice down here, looking up.

SAM
Ah.

ISAAC
You should try it.

SAM
No.

ISAAC
You sure?

SAM
Yeah.

ISAAC
(under breath)
Too much activity tonight.

SAM
What?

ISAAC
Don't worry about it.

SAM
Earl and I are going to visit a
friend of ours up north this
weekend. He just bought a diner.

ISAAC
Interesting--

SAM
Wanna come?

ISAAC
You want me to come?

SAM
Craig'll be there.

ISAAC
But you want me to come?

SAM
What else are you gonna do here?

ISAAC
I can think of alot of things.

SAM
Well then don't go.

ISAAC
I didn't say I didn't wanna go.

SAM
Well just make up your mind sometime
this week, huh? I'm getting the
tree now if you want to come.

ISAAC
Yeah.

Sam sighs. Gets up and leaves. Isaac gets to his feet.

EXT. CHRISTMAS TREE FARM -- NIGHT

The well-lighted farm has trees prepared over a series of plateaus. Woods border the area at a far-off distance. Many people walk on the lower levels.

Isaac follows big Sam as they scale the lowest plateau. As they continue to ascend, the trees appear more spread out.

EXT. HIGHER PLATEAU, CHRISTMAS TREE FARM, LATER -- NIGHT

Utter silence except for Sam's and Isaac's BREATHING, which has become very conspicuous.

The trees are separated by vast, snowy expanses. Isaac and Sam are the only ones up this high. Isaac stops and looks over the lower levels of trees and people.

Isaac HEARS Sam's escalating BREATHING PATTERN and looks ahead to SEE Sam continuing to grind along.

Though struggling, Sam's face reveals how driven he is. He looks over his shoulder to Isaac without stopping.

SAM
(out of breath)
Up there--

Sam points to a sole wide tree ten yards ahead. At this moment, Sam falls to his knees. He curses. Tries to no avail to get to his feet.

The excessively amplified SOUND of ISAAC RUNNING up to Sam. Isaac grabs Sam's hand. The son tries to pull up the father. Can't.

Both men's GRUNTS AND GROANS ECHO in the otherwise serene night air. Isaac swears.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM -- NIGHT

Sam sits at the foot of an examining bed. The YOUNG EMERGENCY ROOM DOCTOR checks Sam's vitals.

ER DOC

All right, Mr. Taub. You say you're on diuretics and alpha-blockers... We got your diastolic down, but you had some excess calcium enter the muscle cells around the heart...

Isaac nods. Sam looks at the floor.

ER DOC (CONT'D)

Your son tells me you were trying to be a mountain man tonight. Probably not the best thing given your history...

SAM

Am I gonna be free to go tonight? I feel fine.

ER DOC

(startled)

Uh. Nothing now left to accomplish tonight. But your son tells me you put off your cholesterol medication. I highly recommend you resume that as soon as possible.

ISAAC

(to ER Doc)

And you recommend you stay off his feet for a while?

ER DOC

A day or two wouldn't hurt.

(to Sam)

Mr. Taub, you'd certainly be wise to make some intelligent moves soon. Take care.

The ER DOC exits.

SAM
We're getting that tree.
(starts out; turns
back to Isaac)
And I'm still gong this weekend.

Isaac looks around the hospital in disbelief.

EXT. SAM'S TRUCK, DRIVING, LATER -- NIGHT

The tree is crammed in the back.

INT. SAM'S TRUCK, DRIVING -- CONTINUOUS

Sam drives. Sitting up front, Isaac rubs his temples and shivers. Sam looks at him.

INT. TAUB KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Isaac puts the thirteenth tally mark on the fridge.

INT. TAUB KITCHEN, LATER -- NIGHT

Isaac, covered in his blanket, rolls around the floor. He bites his hands. Hears something. Rolls back in front of the fridge and closes his eyes.

Sam enters. Steps over Isaac and opens the fridge. Isaac springs up and nearly knocks Sam over. Isaac leaves.

INT. TAUB BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Isaac falls onto the bathmat and tries to meditate.

EXT. GERIK HOUSE -- NIGHT

Adele and Isaac lie on the hood of her car.

ISAAC
I've gotta go away this weekend.

Adele rolls off the hood. Heads toward the house.

ADELE
It's too cold out here.

ISAAC
I like the cold.

She stops. Turns back to him.

ADELE
I got fired.

ISAAC
How'd that happen?

ADELE
A customer called me something. I
didn't like it. I threw a drink on
him.

ISAAC
I'm sorry.

ADELE
(hits hood)
SHIT! Don't apologize!

ISAAC
What the hell's the matter with
you?!

ADELE
I saw your dad the other day.

ISAAC
What?

ADELE
Yeah. I wanted to apologize about
the other night.

ISAAC
What did he say?

ADELE
You two are a lot alike.

ISAAC
(quietly)
Don't say that.

ADELE
No, it's true.

ISAAC
You're just throwing all this shit
at me out of nowhere.

ADELE
What?
(MORE)

ADELE (CONT'D)

If you're not gonna let me know more about who you are then you're just like any other douchebag whose sole intent, it seems, is to use me and leave. I'm just as mad at myself 'cause look at me!

ISAAC

(sits back on the hood)

I'm still here and I don't know why.

Isaac rolls off the hood. They look at each other. She takes snow from the roof of the car. Makes a snowball and throws it at Isaac.

EXT. DANO HOUSE -- DAY

Isaac leans up against Sam's truck in the driveway. He blows into his hands to keep warm. Craig piles bags into the back of Earl's car as Sam and Earl look under the hood.

INT. EARL'S CAR, DRIVING -- DAY

Craig sits shotgun, Earl drives. In the back, Isaac is almost smothered by Sam. They've never been this close and it shows in their eyes.

EARL

(to Isaac)

You drink?

ISAAC

No--

EARL

You've never drunk before?

ISAAC

People tell me I need to sometimes.

EARL

That's it. We've gotta get you drunk.

ISAAC

Yah? Why you say that?

EARL

Makes things easier.

SAM

Drive, Earl.

Earl eyes Sam through the rearview.

EARL
Stopping off at a bar tonight before
we get to the hotel.

ISAAC
Before?

EARL
You're going in. Knew this guy
twenty-five years.

Sam CRACKS his KNUCKLES.

EXT. KALUHA BELL -- NIGHT

Gone to seed, the bar is draped in eerie moonlight. Earl's car pulls in.

INT. EARL'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Craig's asleep. Earl looks confused at the sight of the building. His lips silently read "Kaluha Bell". He quickly shakes his head no.

Isaac's chin is in his chest. Sam looks out his window.

EARL (O.S.)
Here we go. Sammy. Yo, Sammy. You
awake?

CRAIG (O.S.)
Woke me up. Damn.

EARL (O.S.)
Ask me if I care?

INT. KALUHA BELL -- NIGHT

Classy but dated. A mirror runs along the wall behind the bar counter. Sam and Earl sit in the corner of the bar. Earl's chatting with the bartender, TOMMY.

A widened threshold separates the bar from a little PARTY ROOM, in which a live ROCK BAND PLAYS onstage overlooking PARTIERS dancing on a miniature dance floor.

The only lights on in this room are disco lights.

Isaac and Craig shoot pool in the bar room. Isaac looks over at Sam every couple of seconds. Sam doesn't look back.

CRAIG (O.S.)
Six striped. Corner.

Craig makes the shot. They continue to play as they talk.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
I'm seriously kicking your ass.

ISAAC
I was never really good at this
anyway.

CRAIG
I know.

ISAAC
Then why am I explaining it to you?

CRAIG
'Cause I keep on reminding you how
much you suck.

ISAAC
Good point.

CRAIG
Ten striped. Side.

Craig looks in the party room. He SEES a GIRL, early twenties, moving seductively on the dance floor. He misses the shot.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
Son of a bitch.

Craig returns his focus to the girl. Nudges Isaac, who looks at her.

Isaac looks at Sam, who's been looking his way. Isaac startles. Then stands firm.

Isaac drops his cue. Starts to move toward the girl. Sam notices and returns to his beer.

The band MUSIC BECOMES DEAFENING as Isaac leaves the bar and enters the:

INT. PARTY ROOM, KALUHA BELL -- CONTINUOUS

We follow Isaac as he tries to glide along the dance floor like Tony Manero. But his balance is very shaky. He's in a state far beyond reason.

Isaac reaches the girl. He begins dancing by her and purposely bumps into her. She looks at him, checks him top to bottom.

Thinking it was a mistake, she moves away and starts to dance again. Isaac follows.

Craig now moves through the crowd in the party room. Looks at Isaac from a distance, concerned.

Again Isaac reaches the girl. Again he bumps into her.

GIRL

Would you fuckin' watch where you're goin'?!

ISAAC

I wanna dance with you.

He moves in. Touches her face. Tries to kiss her. She pushes him away. Curses at him. He falls. Isaac sits on the dance floor. Everything is a distortion.

A COUPLE of GUYS crowd Isaac. Craig reaches him and stares them down. Craig picks up Isaac and pushes him back toward the bar room.

INT. BATHROOM, KALUHA BELL -- NIGHT

Craig pushes Isaac through the door.

CRAIG

DAMN!!!!

A YOUNG GUY not much older than Isaac bolts through a bathroom stall door and scampers out of the room. Isaac ignores him, looking at himself in the dirty mirror.

ISAAC

I fucked up I fucked up I fucked up
I fucked up I fucked up I fucked up
I--

CRAIG

Yo yo yo yo yo. Look at me.
Fuckin' look at me, man!

Isaac hits the mirror. Turns around and faces Craig.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

You breathing?!

ISAAC
 (panting)
 I'm breathing... breathing... I'm
 fuckin' breathing--

CRAIG
 Ok ok ok. Then shut up! Why did you
 do that?! You can't just fuckin'
 grab a girl and have your way with
 her like that--

ISAAC
 She just looked so good and--

Isaac sits on the floor in front of a sink.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
 Why do they do that? WHY DO THEY
 FUCKIN' DO THAT?! They they they
 just put it all out there and expect
 nothing's gonna happen?! And what
 they show's always gonna be
 different from how they feel. They
 can't suck dicks 'cause they're too
 busy sucking out souls.

Isaac starts to cry.

CRAIG
 (calmly)
 Get the fuck up--

Isaac doesn't move.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
 You're sitting in piss, Isaac, get
 the fuck up--
 (beat)
 GET THE FUCK UP!

The DOOR HINGES SQUEAL as the door swings open. Craig flies
 over to the door and holds it shut.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
 (screaming at door)
 Yo, get the fuck out!

VOICE (O.S.)
 Bitch, what the fu--

CRAIG
 --I'll tear your ass up if you don't
 step away from this door right now,
 motherfucker!
 (MORE)

Craig opens the door and looks out.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
(screaming outside)
That's right, bitch, keep walking--

He closes the door and comes back inside. Isaac is still on the floor. Isaac has stopped crying.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
You're still on the floor--
(beat)
--You're seriously fucked up.

ISAAC
I shouldn't have done that, no?

CRAIG
You don't have to prove to me that you've got balls. I wasn't trying to get you to do that shit.

ISAAC
I know.
(tears start again)
Look, can you just gimme a minute here, please?

Craig startles. Isaac motions with his hand for Craig to leave.

CRAIG
I'll be outside. Clean up.

Craig leaves. Isaac remains a broken figure sitting on the dirty bathroom floor.

INT. KALUHA BELL, LATER -- NIGHT

Earl sits next to Sam. Their slumped posture and many beer bottles surrounding them indicate that it is several hours later.

Both men show signs of intoxication, though Sam is far more reserved.

EARL
Thank goodness that band stopped playing.

SAM
Yeah.

EARL

Hey, Tommy!

The bartender approaches.

TOMMY

Wa?

EARL

Who was that band who was playing?

TOMMY

The Rabid Squirrels.

EARL

The what?!

TOMMY

The Rabid Squirrels.

EARL

I heard ya, I heard ya. What in the hell, man?! This is a classy joint, what in the hell are you putting 'Rabid Squirrels' in it for? Makes no God-damned sense.

TOMMY

First time I've seen you in ten years and you get wasted before we can even have a decent conversation?

EARL

I need to be wasted if we're gonna make talking about rabid squirrels a decent conversation.

TOMMY

Yeah, well fuck you and your sense of decency. Haven't seen you in ten years and I get no cards or letters for the last five. It's like you vanished.

EARL

I did.

TOMMY

Keep drinking and maybe you'll find yourself.

(MORE)

Sam stands and eyes Tommy. Tommy eyes Sam but returns focus to Earl as he walks toward the other end of the bar.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

Me? I lost my woman and I decided fuck it, I'm gonna change this place. And it was that simple.

EARL

(yells after him)

Oh, fuck that! This place was classy!

(turns to Sam)

This place was classy... I-I ever take you here?

Sam doesn't answer.

EARL (CONT'D)

Shit.

He looks over at an attractive MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN two stools down.

EARL (CONT'D)

(to Woman)

What's your name?

WOMAN

What?

EARL

You gotta name?

WOMAN

Paula.

EARL

Whatta ya drinkin'?

PAULA

You gonna buy me a drink?

EARL

Depends. Whatta ya drinkin'?

PAULA

Don't worry about it.

EARL

Yo, Tommy!

TOMMY

Yo.

EARL
Get Paula here another one of
whatever she's having.

TOMMY
(to Paula)
Don't let this dope bother you.

Paula laughs. Sam notices.

PAULA
Nah, he's okay.

EARL
No I'm not okay.
(points to Sam)
Wanna meet my friend?

PAULA
Who's that?

EARL
(to Sam; pats Sam's
shoulders)
Big Sammy Taub! Say hi to Patti.
Oh, wait, did I say 'Patti'? Paula!
Paula!

PAULA
(to Sam)
How're you?

Sam gets to his feet and without saying a word, leaves.
Earl and Paula stare on.

PAULA (CONT'D)
What I say?

INT. BATHROOM, KALUHA BELL -- NIGHT

Isaac opens the door to come across his father attempting to enter. For a moment they lock stares on either side of the threshold. Then they move in.

Isaac is unable to pass at the same time as Sam. Isaac moves back into the bathroom to let Sam enter. When Sam does, Isaac bolts out of the room.

INT. PARTY ROOM, KALUHA BELL -- NIGHT

The disco lights are still on. Craig stands by the now empty stage where the band was playing. The room is not nearly as full.

Isaac approaches. Sits on the stage next to where Craig is standing.

ISAAC

How I was acting back there, that's not gonna happen anymore.

CRAIG

Better the hell not.

ISAAC

So you don't have to tell anyone about it, you know?

CRAIG

I've got my own life, brother.

ISAAC

Good.

(beat)

I've got a girl. I think I've got a girl.

CRAIG

You think you've got a girl?

ISAAC

I think I'm in love.

CRAIG

With the girl?

ISAAC

Think so.

CRAIG

What's her name?

ISAAC

Adele.

CRAIG

Interesting name.

ISAAC

She's insane.

CRAIG

So were you tonight. A good match.

ISAAC

You gotta a girl?

CRAIG
You shittin' me?

ISAAC
No, no -- Please.

CRAIG
Alright, alright. There's this woman I'm meetin' over at the Feather Nest Inn. She's fuckin' forty-five and her body's as hard as a rock. Two kids. A soccer mom. Divorced, seeing some douchebag--

Craig laughs. Isaac smiles.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
She leaves me these messages on my voicemail, man. She called me once and fuckin' had an orgasm for ten minutes! I ever show you that?
(impressed)
Fuckin' ten minutes... I saved that shit for three months.

ISAAC
Damn--

CRAIG
I mean, there are a few others here and there, but--

ISAAC
--How the fuck many?

CRAIG
--whatever it is I get more action than my pops, that's for sure.

ISAAC
I bet.

ANGLE ON

Earl at the bar, deflated.

CRAIG (O.S.)
'Cause he's too much of a chicken shit to see anyone. Fuckin' still blames himself. I'm getting some for the both of us, though--
(MORE)

Craig takes out a pack of cigarettes. Removes one, lights up and takes a drag. His eyes are transfixed on Earl.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
--He doesn't care but I'm getting
enough for the both of us.

The Girl from the dance floor appears in the widened
threshold. She takes a few steps toward the stage and
glares at Isaac.

GIRL
Lucky I don't have my boyfriend kick
your ass.

CRAIG
(to Girl)
Get the fuck outta here.

GIRL
Kiss my ass, Piney.

She heads out the opposite side of the party room. Craig
looks on before glancing back at Isaac as if to imply, "Your
ass did get off lucky".

As if reading Craig's stare Isaac's face flushes with
discomfort.

ISAAC
Fuck, let's go back in the bar, huh?

INT. KALUHA BELL, LATER -- NIGHT

Isaac and Craig are playing pool. Craig's winning. Isaac
struggles to hold his own. His faltering balance makes him
look pathetic. Craig observes with concern.

Again they continue to play as they talk.

CRAIG
You sure you good on your feet?

ISAAC
Never better.

CRAIG
Why're you getting so thin?

ISAAC
What?

CRAIG
You've missed every shot tonight.
Every fucking one.
(MORE)

CRAIG (CONT'D)

Your eyes are bloodshot, you're so God-damned frazzled. And I didn't see it before but you're looking too thin.

ISAAC

Nothing's the matter.

CRAIG

Nine. Side.

Craig makes the shot. Earl approaches, staggering. Grabs a cue from the rack on the wall. Takes a shot at the cue ball and hits a scratch.

Sam is sitting on a different barstool than earlier. Isaac watches Sam look listlessly into his beer bottle. Sam looks up and the men lock stares.

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

(to Earl)

How many?

No response from Earl.

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

How many?!

EARL

Seven.

CRAIG

Gimme the keys.

Still holding the cue, Earl stumbles over to Isaac, breaking his stare with Sam. Earl puts his other arm around Isaac.

EARL

(to Isaac)

Your father is the biggest fuckin' coward I've ever seen.

Craig rushes over. Guides Earl away. Earl heads back to the pool table.

CRAIG

(to Isaac)

He doesn't mean that--

Isaac looks at Earl with fire in his eyes. Earl takes flippant shots with the cue as he talks.

EARL
 There was a fine lady sitting over
 next to us tonight. Foooooxxxxxy.
 Beautiful woman.

Sam joins them. He runs his hand along the pool table.

EARL (CONT'D)
 This place has gone to hell.

Earl approaches Isaac again. Puts his arm around him and
 looks at Sam.

EARL (CONT'D)
 You've gone to hell--

Sam doesn't respond. Just looks down at the pool table.

EARL (CONT'D)
 --And won't let me in.

CRAIG
 Shit.

EARL
 At least then I wouldn't be alone.
 But maybe we're all supposed to be
 in a hell of our own. But you don't
 have to go to hell yet, Sam--

CRAIG
 Shut up, dad. Just shut the fuck up--

Earl ignores Craig as he continues.

EARL
 There isn't a woman alive who hasn't
 fucked someone before. I'm serious!
 (screams out)
 Any guy in this bar or in the world
 who thinks there's a woman out there
 all innocent and pure is fooling
 himself!
 (looks at Sam)
 Is that why you're holding out?
 Making hell for yourself?

Sam approaches Isaac and takes his cue. Heads back to the
 table and starts to shoot. Isaac pushes away from Earl, who
 loses his balance and almost falls.

EARL (CONT'D)
 (to Isaac)
 You seeing anyone?
 (MORE)

Isaac looks at Craig, who looks at the floor.

EARL (CONT'D)

I'll take that as a no. Why aren't you seeing anyone? 'Cause your father's setting you a bad example.

ISAAC

Who're you seeing?

Earl doesn't respond. Looks over at Sam, who's stopped shooting and is twisting his cue into the floor. Sam holds the cue ball in his other hand. Earl starts to approach Sam.

EARL

(to Sam)

You're not makin' me feel so good.

CRAIG

(to Earl; impassioned
and quietly)

You're a fuckin' drunk son of a bitch.

Earl looks back at Craig. A panged expression forms on Earl's face. Earl turns back toward Sam, this time more resolute. Reaching him, Earl puts his hands on Sam's shoulders.

EARL

(desperately)

Been tryna get you laid for four years, Sam. And you-you're just lettin' yourself go. You dying inside? That it? You must be dying inside 'cause you've looked dead to me for a long time.

As if driven by some magnetic force, Isaac moves close to Earl and Sam and squats down.

ISAAC

Could you lay off him, Earl? Huh?

Sam looks away from Earl and down to Isaac. Sam pushes Earl away. Sam squeezes the cue ball. Hands it off to Earl with force. Looks down at Isaac again and snarls. Sam drops the cue. It hits Isaac in the head. Sam ignores it.

We follow Sam as he walks through the widened threshold and into the:

INT. PARTY ROOM, KALUHA BELL -- CONTINUOUS

Regular lights are now on in place of the disco lights.

We continue to follow Sam as he stalks around the room. No women are in sight. Flustered, he heads back into the:

INT. KALUHA BELL -- CONTINUOUS

Sam takes a seat at the bar and turns his back to Isaac, Earl, and Craig. They stare on in silence.

At this moment two GIRLS and a GUY in their early twenties emerge on Sam's right. They order drinks from Tommy and wait.

Sam looks over at one of the girls, a tall brunette. Focuses his eyes on her mid-section, up to her breasts. His arm extends in her direction and his hand glides up her back.

The Girl SCREAMS and in hysterics slaps Sam across the face.

GIRL 2

Get the fuck away from me!!

GUY

Hey what the hell, man?!

The Guy punches Sam in the stomach. Sam lets himself get hit.

GUY (CONT'D)

Come on, old man, you wanna touch me too?!

Isaac and Craig fly over and try to shield Sam from the blows. Craig pushes Isaac aside. Craig tackles the guy and delivers a whirlwind of punches to his face. Tommy grabs a baseball bat and tries to break it up.

TOMMY

(bat cocked in his hands)

Come on here! Break it up, damn it!
All your asses are gonna get arrested!

ANGLE ON

Earl, still by the pool table.

EARL

This whole place has gone to hell...

INT. EARL'S CAR, DRIVING -- NIGHT

Earl is passed out up front. Craig drives. In the back, Isaac looks over at Sam with piercingly sharp eyes. Sam just stares ahead.

EXT. RODEWAY HOTEL -- NIGHT

A cheap roadside place in the night. Earl's car is one of two in the parking lot.

INT. HOTEL ROOM, RODEWAY HOTEL -- NIGHT

Small and stained. Two king-sized beds propped up against the wall. Isaac's sprawled out on one. He buries his face in a pillow.

INT. SHOWER, HOTEL BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Barely able to sit in the tub, Sam soaks his head. Steam rises from his shoulders and clouds his face.

INT. HOTEL BATHROOM, RODEWAY HOTEL -- NIGHT

Sam stands shirtless in front of the mirror. Can't bring himself to look at his reflection. His bleary eyes reveal disgust.

Isaac enters. Sam turns away from the mirror. Turns away from Isaac. Isaac stares into Sam's back. Isaac tries to speak but can't find the words as Sam inches out of the room.

INT. HOTEL ROOM, RODEWAY HOTEL -- NIGHT

Standing, Isaac watches Sam sleep in the other bed. Isaac falls back into his own and gets under the covers. Sits up and rocks back and forth.

Isaac looks straight ahead and rubs his temples. Throws an occasional stare in Sam's direction.

Isaac gets to his feet and removes a sheet from his bed. He walks with the sheet to the bathroom.

INT. HOTEL BATHROOM, RODEWAY HOTEL -- CONTINUOUS

Isaac connects the sheet to the shower curtain rail and wraps the other end around his neck.

He tries several times to hang himself. The first time appears to be in earnest but all others get less intense.

INT. TWEEDY'S DINER -- DAY

Craig and Isaac sit across from Earl and Sam in a booth.
Silence until:

EARL
This place looks better than Tommy's
did last night.

A middle-aged WOMAN dressed in a red waitress uniform
approaches. Her nametag reads "WANDA".

WANDA
(raspy voice)
Welcome to Tweedy's. What'll it be? *

ISAAC
You've been doing this long?

WANDA
Too long.

ISAAC
What's your name?

Wanda's taken aback but quickly recovers.

WANDA
My name is Wanda.

ISAAC
How're ya doin', Wanda?

Earl shoots Isaac a glare. Isaac notices. Turns back to
Wanda.

WANDA
Oh, I'm fine. Thanks for asking.

ISAAC
My girlfriend was a waitress. She
got fired.

Sam looks over at Isaac.

WANDA
Yeah? Sorry to hear that.

ISAAC
Don't be. She's not sorry.

EARL
I'll take a ham and cheese omelet.

Wanda breaks her stare with Isaac and looks over to Earl.
Takes out a notepad and scribbles.

WANDA
Okay, one ham and cheese. You want
hashbrowns with that?

ISAAC
You don't have to serve guys like
us, Wanda.

AN AWKWARD BEAT.

CRAIG
Come on, Isaac. Cut it out.

EARL
(to Isaac)
Shut up, huh?

Sam looks at Earl.

SAM
(to Wanda)
Is Tweedy back there?

WANDA
He's tied up on the phone right now.
I can come back if you want more
time?

ISAAC
You don't have to worry about me,
Wanda. I'm not ordering.

Looks at Sam straight in the eyes.

SAM
(eyes still on Isaac)
Wanda, I'll have a western omelet.
Rye toast and sausage links on the
side. And coffee and cream with
that.

Father and son locked in a stare.

INT. TWEEDY'S, LATER -- DAY

Isaac watches Sam eat. Earl watches Isaac.

EARL
How come you're not eating anything?

ISAAC
Not hungry.

EARL
How could you not be hungry? You haven't eaten anything all weekend.

ISAAC
(dryly)
You could tell that?

EARL
What do you mean?

CRAIG
(to Earl)
You were pretty out of it.

EARL
(to Craig)
I can hold my liquor, if that's what you're saying.
(to Isaac)
Come on, have some of this.

Earl slides a plate of toast across the table in Isaac's direction. Isaac slides it back.

EARL (CONT'D)
Come on. You look like shit.

Earl picks up a piece of the toast and holds it across the table in front of Isaac's face. Isaac takes it. Looks at Sam. Sam tries not to look at him. Isaac puts the toast pack on Earl's plate. Looks at Sam again.

EARL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Something seriously the matter with the two of you. You're both as stubborn as hell. Tweedy!

A tall man in non-waiter garb (TWEEDY) approaches.

TWEEDY
Man oh man, Earl and Sammy.

Earl gets to his feet. Sam breaks his stare with Isaac and follows suit. The three men shake hands.

SAM
Tweedy, your people make a good western. I'm impressed.

Earl, Sam, and Tweedy depart, leaving Craig and Isaac alone in the booth. After a moment Craig gets to his feet and leaves the booth.

EXT. GAS STATION -- NIGHT

Earl's car's getting gassed. Sam and Earl lean up against the car. Earl blows into his hands.

EARL
Sam--

SAM
What?

EARL
I wanna apologize for the way I've been acting.

SAM
(overriding)
Fuck it.

Earl nods. Looks at Craig in the car.

EARL
(shocked)
I don't know my son.

SAM
What?

EARL
Craig. I don't know him. I never knew him.

SAM
What the hell are you talking about?

EARL
We never grew up, Big Sammy. Craig took after me too much but your boy got out. Don't suck him back into this.

SAM
He can leave whenever he wants.

EARL
I'm not a good father. Never have been.

SAM
Too damn hard on yourself.

EARL
He's taking after you.

SAM
Isaac?

EARL
Hell yeah. Never saw it until you
and Judy split. Confused the hell
outta me when he decided to stay
with you.

SAM
Where's the fuckin' attendant?

EARL
You listening to me?

SAM
No.

EARL
That's your problem.

SAM
I've got a lot of problems.

EARL
You don't try to stop any of them.

SAM
(approaches Earl)
Don't put your shit on me. You've
been putting it on me too damn long.

EARL
(not looking at Sam)
Christ, I don't know who in the hell
my son is.

Sam stops moving.

CUT TO:

INT. EARL'S CAR, SAME -- NIGHT

Isaac is sprawled out in the back. He stretches his arms.
Extends his legs. Closes his eyes.

Craig sits shotgun working the RADIO.

CRAIG
Who's your girlfriend?

ISAAC
What?

CRAIG
I was just remembering what you said
this morning at breakfast.

ISAAC
I didn't eat breakfast.

CRAIG
I know.

ISAAC
Fill me in.

CRAIG
You told the waitress that you had a
girlfriend that was a waitress.

ISAAC
Shit. I did?

CRAIG
What? You don't remember?

ISAAC
Yeah, I remember.

CRAIG
So, is that her?

ISAAC
Who?

CRAIG
The one you don't know if you're in
love with? Ad, Adella-what was it?

ISAAC
Yeah, that's her.

CRAIG
So what's that mean?

ISAAC
I've got a headache.

CRAIG
(irate)
Fuck your headache.

Sam enters the back. Isaac sits upright and scoots over.
Earl enters the driver's seat.

Craig shoots Isaac a glare through the rearview. Isaac sees it and startles.

EXT. DANO HOUSE -- NIGHT

Earl's car pulls in. The men depart. Isaac moves to Sam's truck. Earl and Craig slowly move towards their door. Sam goes about throwing bags in his truck.

CUT TO:

INT. SAM'S TRUCK, DRIVING -- NIGHT

Sam drives, Isaac sits shotgun. Sam rubs his eyes. Isaac notices.

ISAAC

I didn't know you were lonely.

SAM

I'm not lonely.

Isaac turns on the RADIO and sighs.

SCENE FADES.

INT. TAUB KITCHEN -- DAY

Sitting on the floor, Isaac puts the eighteenth tally mark on the fridge. He gets to his feet.

CUT TO:

INT. TAUB BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Sam stands in front of the mirror. Isaac enters. He weighs himself. Writes "GUESS" on the chalkboard on the wall above the scale. Sam walks by and looks at it. Leaves.

Isaac moves to the bathmat. Sits on the bathmat and rubs his temples.

Gets to his feet and TRASHES the BATHROOM. Retreats back to the bathmat.

INT. NJ TRANSIT BUS, DRIVING -- DAY

Isaac sits with his eyes closed. Slowly opens them. Pushing his forehead against the glass of the large window, he resembles Ratso Rizzo.

INT. APARTMENT COMPLEX HALLWAY -- DAY

Isaac approaches an apartment door. KNOCKS. A WOMAN GASPS from behind him. Isaac turns and faces his mother, JUDY TAUB, forty-five. She looks at him in shock.

Holds her hand to her mouth. He looks at the floor.

She approaches him and looks at his frame up close. Takes off his stocking cap. Hugs him. Feels his sides.

Judy strokes his face. He lets her. She cries. He starts to cry but holds it in.

They slowly break apart. Judy gets her keys and unlocks the door. He follows her inside.

INT. JUDY'S APARTMENT -- CONTINUOUS

Spacious and modern. A large artificial Christmas tree stands half-decorated at the far end of the room. Isaac follows Judy in and looks around.

JUDY

Let me take your coat?

Isaac fumbles to take off his coat. He hands it to Judy, who puts it on the kitchen table.

JUDY (CONT'D)

(coming back)

Please, have a seat.

Isaac moves over to the couch and sits. Judy sits in a nearby chair.

JUDY (CONT'D)

(starts to rise)

Do you want a drink?

ISAAC

(sputtering)

No-no thanks.

Judy sits again.

JUDY

You look so different.

ISAAC

I do?

JUDY

You're so-you're so thin.

ISAAC
Yeah, I think I slimmed down a
little.

AWKWARD BEAT.

JUDY
I don't know what to say here,
Isaac.

ISAAC
Four years is a long time.

JUDY
Yes it is.

ISAAC
This place looks nice.

JUDY
You should have come up.

ISAAC
You would have let me?

JUDY
(incredulous laugh)
Of course I would have let you! I-

ISAAC
(overriding)
And Dad too?

Judy stops and looks over at Isaac.

JUDY
That's different, Isaac. You know
that's different.

ISAAC
Graduation was nice. Thanks for
calling that night.

JUDY
I wish I could have gone.

ISAAC
(testy)
Well Dad was there too, so I can
understand.

JUDY
(quietly)
That's not fair.

ISAAC
Forget graduation. It's done.

Judy nods.

JUDY
Did you come here for something?

ISAAC
I needed-I needed to talk to you
about Dad.

JUDY
What about?

ISAAC
He needs help.

JUDY
Help?

ISAAC
He's not well.

JUDY
I'm sorry to hear that.

ISAAC
He's let himself go.

JUDY
It was just a matter of time.

ISAAC
Please. Don't say that.

Judy absorbs Isaac's last words and shakes her head no.
Gets up and stands behind the chair. Regains herself.

JUDY
What is it?

ISAAC
Like I said, he's let himself go.
His stomach--it's just not good.
But it's more than that.

JUDY
More?

ISAAC
Did he ever love you?

JUDY

(ashen)
What?

ISAAC

I need to know from you, 'cause I'll never be able to get it outta him. Just-just please--don't twist this around or anything. Did he ever give you genuine love?

Judy considers this.

JUDY

Once.

ISAAC

He needs help.

JUDY

It sounds like it.

ISAAC

I need you to talk to him.

JUDY

I can't do that.

Isaac gets to his feet and approaches Judy.

ISAAC

What do you mean you can't do that?

JUDY

Does he want to see me?

ISAAC

(more desperate)
I don't know. I just-he's just not slowing down.

JUDY

There are plenty of people who can help.

ISAAC

I don't think there are.

JUDY

I don't think I can.

Isaac moves closer.

ISAAC

Please.

(tears start; barely
a whisper)

I don't know where else to go here.

Isaac repeats this as he grabs Judy's shoulders. She cries as she holds back his wiry frame.

JUDY

Isaac, sit down!

Isaac moves away and sits back on the couch. He wipes his tears dry again. After a while Judy sits next to him. They both look straight ahead.

JUDY (CONT'D)

(quietly)

I've moved on, Isaac. I have. You bridge the past and now. You're always welcome in my life. And I hope you have a place for me, too. But your father doesn't have a place with me now. He doesn't. I can't go back to what he was to me. I'm not there anymore, Isaac. I just can't go back. Not now.

Isaac stands. Judy reaches for his hand.

JUDY (CONT'D)

Wait, please. Stay. I'll make you something.

She gets up and starts for the kitchen. Isaac heads toward the door.

ISAAC

Is there anything you want me to tell him, at least?

Judy closes her eyes.

JUDY

He's his own man, Isaac.

Isaac shakes his head no. Leaves. Judy sits on the couch. She looks heartbroken.

INT. GARAGE -- NIGHT

Sam lies on his back. His quick breaths resemble vapors in the air. He closes his eyes.

INT. NJ TRANSIT BUS, DRIVING -- NIGHT

Isaac stares into the darkness ahead. He has a PANIC ATTACK. None of the OTHER PASSENGERS notice.

INT. COLLEGE LECTURE HALL -- NIGHT

Departing amid CLASSMATES, Adele comes across Isaac in one of the wings.

ADELE

Hi.

Isaac approaches. He wraps his arms around her and draws her in. They embrace. Isaac buries his face into her shoulder.

INT. ADELE'S CAR, DRIVING -- NIGHT

Adele drives. Isaac hunches over in the front seat.

INT. TAUB LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Isaac and Adele enter. We follow them as they proceed into the:

INT. TAUB KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

He leads her to the fridge. She looks at the red tally marks. He collapses. She gets to her knees next to him.

She sits him up. Rocks him back and forth on the floor in front of the fridge. They talk in near whispers as she cradles him.

ADELE

Why are you like this?

ISAAC

I'm not eating.

ADELE

At all?

ISAAC

I told my dad I wouldn't eat until he started to lose weight.

ADELE

(irate)

Are you stupid?!

Adele regains herself.

ISAAC
I don't know what I am.

ADELE
He hasn't lost weight?

Isaac shakes his head no. She kisses his head. Looks around and gets to her feet.

ADELE (CONT'D)
Where's your iodized salt?

ISAAC
What?

Adele rips through cabinets until she retrieves a glass. She kicks open the lazy Susan and grunts before pulling out a small container of iodized salt.

She removes the top of the container and pours in about two grams worth. She moves to the sink and fills the glass with cold water before shoving it in his face.

ADELE
Drink.

Isaac sips the water and his eyes jolt open. BANGS the BACK OF his HEAD against the fridge. Adele looks on.

ISAAC
You're good at this--

Without warning, she moves out of the room. We follow her as she stalks around the house--the HALLWAY, LIVING ROOM, DINING ROOM, back through the KITCHEN, and out the back door.

INT. GARAGE, SAME -- NIGHT

Sam still lies on his back. His eyes open. He slowly gets to his feet.

Sam moves to the shattered plant pots we recognize as the ones Isaac threw away earlier. Picks up a piece.

Adele charges in. Runs up to Sam. Repeatedly slaps him in the face. Throws her hands around the big man's vest and shakes his torso.

ADELE
YOU'RE FUCKIN' KILLING HIM!!!!

Sam tries to hold her at bay.

SAM
He's killing himself!

Isaac enters and runs up to them. Throws himself in the middle.

ISAAC
Stop! Fuck! Stop!

He pushes Adele away but she grabs his hands. Drags him out of there. Sam looks on as they leave.

INT. ADELE'S CAR, DRIVING -- NIGHT

Adele drives, Isaac sits shotgun. He's about to blow.

ISAAC
What the hell was that?! Are you fuckin' insane?! You are, you're insane. That was my father you just kicked the shit out of. Turn the fuck back!

Adele pulls over. Looks at Isaac.

ADELE
If you don't like what I did, get out. Go home.

Isaac looks straight ahead. Closes his eyes.

ADELE (CONT'D)
GO!

Isaac HITS the DASHBOARD. Sinks in his seat.

Adele resumes to drive.

INT. ADELE'S CAR, DRIVING -- NIGHT

She pulls up to a hospital.

ISAAC
I can't go in.

She looks at him.

INT. GERIK HOUSE -- NIGHT

Isaac and Adele walk up a staircase. His arm is draped over her shoulder as she guides him up.

ISAAC
Your parents?

ADELE

Sheila's NOT my mother, and they're
away for the week.

INT. ADELE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

A light is turned on. Isaac and Adele enter. She walks
with him to the bed. He sits, then lies on the bed.

She leaves the room. Isaac's eyes take in a small Christmas
tree sitting on a table in the far corner by a window.

INT. GERIK BATHROOM -- CONTINUOUS

THE BATHROOM MIRROR CABINET

Closes and Adele's reflection scans a BOTTLE of Centrum
vitamins.

She opens the bottle and removes four vitamins. Puts the
bottle aside. She picks up a glass and fills it with water
from the sink.

She leaves, vitamins and glass in hand. We follow her back
through the HALLWAY as she reenters:

INT. ADELE'S BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

She turns off the light. Slowly gets in the bed with Isaac.
Hands the vitamins to him.

ADELE

Take these.

Isaac takes the Centrum.

ISAAC

I've been taking these consistently.

ADELE

Yeah, well, it doesn't guarantee
your fucking heart won't give out.

They both lie atop the covers with their eyes open.

ADELE (CONT'D)

How many days?

ISAAC

Eighteen.

ADELE

Christ, Isaac.

INT. ADELE'S BEDROOM, LATER -- DAY

Adele slowly awakens. Isaac has been sitting on the foot of the bed, watching her sleep. She sits up and rubs her eyes.

INT. ADELE'S CAR, DRIVING -- DAY

Adele drives, Isaac sits shotgun. She looks over at him. He squints in the sunlight and puts down the visor.

INT. WAITING ROOM, DOCTOR PATRA'S OFFICE -- DAY

Isaac and Adele sit next to each other. They look straight ahead as TWO KIDS play in the middle of the room.

INT. DOCTOR PATRA'S OFFICE -- DAY

Isaac sits on the examination table.

DR. PATRA

I was afraid this would happen.

ISAAC

What?

DR. PATRA

You kept to the regimen we discussed?

ISAAC

Yeah.

DR. PATRA

This has made some significant complications to your mitral valve prolapse.

ADELE

(to Dr. Patra)

I can't believe you let him do it.

DR. PATRA

A doctor can only advise, Ms. Gerik. Patients make the choice.

ADELE

Stupid choices.

INT. ADELE'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Isaac and Adele sit at the foot of her bed. She rubs his shoulders. His face contorts. He gets up and moves to the Christmas tree. Isaac crouches below the tree.

INT. LIVINGSTON SUPERMARKET -- DAY

Sam pushes a cart past Jeanine at the deli. They lock eyes. She looks away. He continues to look in her direction for a moment before moving on.

INT. SAM'S TRUCK, DRIVING -- DAY

Sam drives. SEES something O.S. Pulls off the road.

EXT. FRONT YARD, HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Sam exits his truck and approaches a pile of garbage by the curb. Rummages through and picks up a tinker toy, battered and broken.

A stalker MAN of fifty comes out the front door and heads toward Sam.

MAN

What're you doing?

Sam is very taken aback doesn't quite regain himself before responding.

SAM

I was driving along and I saw this and-and I wanted to take it 'cause it looks like you're throwing it away.

MAN

You can't have it.

SAM

I'm sorry?

MAN

I said you can't have it.

SAM

Oh.

MAN

Put it down.

Sam doesn't respond.

MAN (CONT'D)

Pal, I don't wanna call the police, but don't fuckin' tempt me.

Sam looks over at the man.

SAM

No.

MAN

I don't want you here. Put it down
and leave.

SAM

Damn--

With great pain in his expression Sam puts the item back in
the garbage pile.

SAM (CONT'D)

Yeah.

MAN

Ya gotta get out of here now.

SAM

Leaving. Leaving.

Sam gets back in his truck like a beaten man and drives off.

INT. GARAGE -- DAY

Sam eats from a box of a dozen donuts. One donut after the
other. His face is listless.

INT. GARAGE, LATER -- DAY

Sam throws items around the garage in a panic. Pulls out a
model train. Sits and holds the train to his face. Closes
his eyes. Throws the train on the ground. It BREAKS.

INT. GARAGE, LATER -- DAY

Sam holds the gas can under his nose and INHALES deeply.

INT. ISAAC'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Sam sits at Isaac's computer. A phone held tightly to his
ear. He's at an ESCORT WEBSITE. He keyboards in
information. A CREDIT CARD lay nearby.

INT. TAUB LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Sam rolls around on the couch. Looks at a clock on the far
wall. The clock reads 9:00 AM. Sam sighs. For a moment he
puts a couch cushion over his face.

He then takes off the cushion and puts it over his stomach.
Hits himself hard in the stomach over the cushion. Winded,
he gets to his feet.

INT. ADELE'S BEDROOM -- DAY

The TV flickers on Adele, who's sprawled out in bed asleep. Isaac sits listlessly in a nearby chair. He gets up and heads out the door, looking at her before he leaves.

INT. CAFETERIA, HIGH SCHOOL -- DAY

Sam wipes down and stacks tables. The broken model train from earlier has been repaired and sits next to his coffee cup on a table.

Sam moves to the table with his coffee cup and the train on it and sits. Puts his head on the table.

Isaac enters the room, sees Sam, and sits next to him. Sam puts his head up. Looks at Isaac. Sam quickly gets to his feet and resumes working.

ISAAC

She likes me.

Sam doesn't respond.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

She hurt you?

Sam glares at him.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

I don't know what to say.

SAM

I don't either.

ISAAC

I'm sorry that had to happen.

SAM

It didn't have to happen.

ISAAC

She thinks it had to happen.

SAM

Fuck her.

ISAAC

What?

SAM

I need to work here.

ISAAC
Do I look weak to you?

SAM
Would you get up? I've gotta wipe
that.

Isaac stands.

ISAAC
I like her.

Sam doesn't respond.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
I love her.

SAM
(irate)
WHAT THE HELL DO YOU WANT ME TO DO?!
THROW YOU A PARTY?!

Isaac startles. Then laughs.

ISAAC
Why the hell did I come here?

SAM
I don't know.

ISAAC
Ya know something? I hope you know
what it feels like to have someone
do something like that for you.
'Cause you're missing out.

SAM
I don't like her.

Isaac starts to walk out. Stops and turns around. Clutches
his side.

ISAAC
I don't care.

Sam wipes down and stacks the table where he and Isaac were
sitting.

INT. ADELE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Isaac enters. Adele awakens. Looks up at him.

ADELE
Where'd you go?

ISAAC
He was working tonight.

Adele rubs her eyes.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
He's not sorry.

ADELE
What?

ISAAC
Nothing.

ADELE
He's not sorry...
(gets it; angrily)
So this-so this is gonna keep going,
huh?!

Isaac lowers himself beside her.

ISAAC
I can't remember the last time I
talked to the man. I mean, talked.
Past all the little bullshit things.
He's got another side to him. A
good side. People don't get it?
Fuck them. I don't want their
approval of him.

Isaac's hand begins to shake. He balls it into a fist.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
(louder)
I don't give a rat's ass what anyone
thinks of him but me, ya know? And
I don't give a shit 'bout me either.
Me, I can handle this. I'm in
control. He's lost his grip! If it
takes me crossing that line to bring
him back then fine, let's do it.
Fuck.

Isaac takes Adele by the hand. He speaks like a desperate
preacher.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
He wasn't always this way, so don't
expect my to sit idly by and watch
him go to the hell he's making for
himself 'cause he can get out of it.
(MORE)

ISAAC (CONT'D)
Even if he doesn't know it yet he
can get out of it. And I want him
there to see that.

He releases his grip. Tears start in his eyes. He turns
his back to her in the bed.

ADELE
This can't go on.

ISAAC
I don't want it to go on. I don't
want--
(fades off)

ADELE
Then stop! Please stop.

ISAAC
(to himself)
He's not Superman anymore, but was
he ever?

He turns around. Strokes Adele's face.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
I'm not going anywhere.

ADELE
(tears start; barely
a whisper)
Fuck you.

Adele gets to her feet and heads out of the room. Isaac
looks on before smelling her pillow.

INT. TAUB BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Shirtless and disgusted, Sam stands in front of the mirror.
The DOORBELL RINGS. He puts on a shirt and heads into the:

INT. TAUB LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Sam approaches the front door. Lowers himself against it.
Holds his hand over his mouth. Slowly gets to his feet and
opens the door.

A young WOMAN of thirty, short with mousy tan hair, enters.
She is dressed in an open overcoat and business attire.

Standing on either side of the door, they look at each
other. She starts to walk in and Sam startles.

INT. TAUB LIVING ROOM, LATER -- NIGHT

The woman sits next to Sam on the couch. They both look straight ahead. She touches his leg. Kisses him on the face. On the lips. He starts to kiss back but moves away and gets to his feet.

SAM

Do you want something to drink?

WOMAN

No.

SAM

Oh.

He moves back to the couch and sits next to her again.

WOMAN

Do you smoke?

SAM

Yeah.

WOMAN

Mind if I smoke in here?

SAM

No.

WOMAN

Good. Thanks.

She takes out a pack of Parliaments and a lighter. Pulls out a cigarette and lights up.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

You married?

SAM

No.

WOMAN

Divorced?

SAM

No.

(nervous laugh)

Wait. Yes.

WOMAN

How long?

SAM
None of your business.

WOMAN
You're not gonna fuck me?

SAM
I don't know.

WOMAN
You paid.

SAM
I don't care about that.

WOMAN
What do you care about?

Sam looks over at her.

SAM
I think I made a mistake.

WOMAN
What?

SAM
I don't think I'm ready for this.

She laughs.

WOMAN
You're not ready for this?

SAM
I don't think I'm ready for this.

WOMAN
No one is.

SAM
You don't know that.

WOMAN
Oh, I don't know that?

SAM
No, you don't know that.

WOMAN
You can't get it up?
(MORE)

She rubs his leg again, close to the crouch. He glares, but lets her. A second later he gets to his feet again.

Walks to the other side of the room.

WOMAN (CONT'D)
What? I like big guys.

SAM
You like fat wallets.

WOMAN
Hey, fuck you!

SAM
Get out.

The woman gets to her feet and grabs her coat.

WOMAN
You have kids?

Sam doesn't respond.

WOMAN (CONT'D)
Kids. Do you have kids?

Again, no response from Sam.

WOMAN (CONT'D)
(laughs)
You have kids. This how you became
a daddy?

Sam charges toward her.

SAM
(irate)
GET THE FUCK OUT OF MY HOUSE!!!!

He pushes her toward the front door. She tries to stand her ground. Slaps him. He picks her up and throws her out the door. Locks it.

He stumbles toward the couch. Collapses on it. Has a PANIC ATTACK.

INT. SAM'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Sam trips coming through the door. Gets to his feet and approaches the bed. Removes the bedding.

INT. TAUB KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Sam sits propped up against the fridge. A blanket is draped over his shoulders. He looks at the red tally marks. Runs his hand over them.

He opens the fridge and takes out a piece of chicken. Holds it in front of his face. Starts to eat it slowly. Then quickly.

INT. SHOWER

Her eyes closed, Adele soaks her head. For the first time, her shoulders broaden. She opens her eyes.

INT. GERIK KITCHEN -- DAY

Adele pours a bowl of cereal. Leaves it dry.

INT. ADELE'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Adele enters with the bowl of cereal. Isaac lies in bed, asleep. She taps his face. He awakens.

ISAAC

Hi.

Adele doesn't respond.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

What?

Adele holds the bowl of cereal in front of him.

ADELE

Just have a piece.

She takes a piece and holds it to his mouth. He turns his head away and gets to his feet.

ADELE (CONT'D)

Lemme try this...

She puts a piece halfway into her mouth. Sits on the bed.

ADELE (CONT'D)

Kiss me.

Isaac slowly sits next to her on the bed and kisses her on the cheek. She eats the piece in her mouth. Stands and dumps the dry cereal on Isaac's head. He fumes.

ADELE (CONT'D)

(incredulously)

You love me?

Isaac gets to his feet and starts to clean up the cereal.

ADELE (CONT'D)

Selfish fuck.

(MORE)

Isaac glares.

ADELE (CONT'D)

(quietly)

I don't know if I love you yet. Ya know why? 'Cause I haven't fuckin' met YOU yet! And I'm just as much to blame. Really, I am. But fuck, at least I'm trying to build something here.

ISAAC

You gonna keep me locked up 'til you make up your mind?

ADELE

I never locked the door.

ISAAC

I need air.

Isaac walks to the door. Stumbles through it. Looking on, Adele tries not to follow him. Adele lowers herself into bed.

INT. GERIK BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Adele sits on the bathmat. A pile of joints sits in front of her. She cuts each in half. She flushes the remnants down the toilet. When it's done, she gets to her feet and leaves.

EXT. BEACH -- NIGHT

Light snow falls. The WAVES CRASH and slither upshore. Isaac lies on his back, close to the water. Snow has fallen on his head and face. His mouth is closed.

He gazes up at the sky. Takes out a lighter and lights it in front of his face. Covers the flame from the snow with the hand.

He studies the flame. Puts it out and puts the lighter away.

He mumbles something and closes his eyes. Sticks out his tongue. Snow lands on it. Manna from heaven.

His eyes look like he's just stuck his finger in a socket.

He gets to his feet and walks to the edge of the water. Falls to his knees. Looks out ahead of him.

An ENGINE ROARS behind him. Carlights shine on Isaac's back. The ENGINE SHUTS OFF. A CAR DOOR OPENS and CLOSES.

Isaac's face registers hearing each sound. He doesn't turn around.

Adele trudges through the snowy sand and arrives where Isaac is kneeling. They both look out over the water.

He faces her. Reaches his hand to her shoulder. She looks at him. She brushes snow out of his face. He holds her hand to his neck. Kisses her hand and closes his eyes.

He whispers something in her ear. She moves in and kisses him full on the lips. He kisses back. Their bodies merge. She falls into him.

INT. GERIK KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Isaac watches from the doorway as Adele removes a PLATE of meatloaf from the fridge.

INT. ADELE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Isaac and Adele sit on the floor beneath the little Christmas tree in the corner. The lights on the tree are the only ones on in the room.

The plate of meatloaf and a glass of iced water sit in front of them. Isaac holds a fork in front of his face. Adele's hands are on his, controlling the fork.

She guides a piece into his mouth. He chews. Then she spots him as he drinks the water. They repeat the process.

INT. ADELE'S BEDROOM, LATER -- NIGHT

Isaac and Adele in her bed, post-coital. She looks at him sleeping. Wakes him up. They share a stare.

ADELE

I don't feel like I'm suffocating anymore.

ISAAC

That a "thank you"?

ADELE

How long have I known you.

ISAAC

Three weeks. Our whole lives. Same difference.

ADELE
You're already looking better...
(strokes his face)
Color in your cheeks.

She takes a glass of water off the nightstand and hands it to him.

ADELE (CONT'D)
Have some more.

Isaac sips. Sits up in the bed next to her.

ADELE (CONT'D)
I still think you're insane.

Isaac squirms.

ADELE (CONT'D)
I've never heard of anyone do what
you did. But it's not something to
be proud of.

ISAAC
I'm gonna have to talk to him.

ADELE
You'd better. 'Cause whether it's
been three weeks or our whole lives
I like having you around.

Isaac smiles. Adele gets out of bed and goes to the window.

ADELE (CONT'D)
I think I'm gonna like this...

ISAAC
Not suffocating?

ADELE
(still looking out
the window)
We earned this--

Isaac COUGHS. Gets out of bed. Continues coughing as he gets dressed. Heads towards her.

ISAAC
Lemme do this...
(kiss her)
I'll see you tomorrow.

He turns around and heads for the door.

ADELE

And it was a "thank you".

Isaac turns around, smiles and leaves.

INT. TAUB KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Sam has taped the fridge shut. He sits propped up in front of the fridge. He struggles to stay awake.

Sam lies on the floor and closes his eyes. Opens them a short while later to find Isaac standing in the doorway.

The men look at each other. Isaac startles before walking towards the fridge. He sits down next to Sam. Sam sits up. Embarrassment washes over his face. Then it becomes rigid.

ISAAC

I'm not gonna back off.

SAM

Your girlfriend know you're here?

ISAAC

Don't worry about it.

SAM

I'm not worrying.

ISAAC

You're a hypocrite.

Sam glares at Isaac.

SAM

I'm not a hypocrite.

ISAAC

So you're just sleeping down here so you won't have to walk all the way from the bedroom whenever you wanna eat something?

Sam gets to his feet.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Lemme tell you something. I ate tonight.

Sam doesn't respond.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Did you enjoy seeing me suffer?

SAM
You call me a hypocrite?

ISAAC
I'm not a hypocrite.

Sam walks to the sink and washes his hands. Opens a cabinet drawer and removes scissors. Walks to the fridge, reaches over Isaac's shoulders and cuts the tape.

Isaac gets to his feet as Sam opens the door to the fridge. Sam displays its contents.

SAM
I bought all this.

Sam SLAMS the DOOR. GLASSES SHAKE when met with the REVERBERATING SOUND.

SAM (CONT'D)
And I'll eat it whenever the hell I want!

Sam crowds Isaac.

SAM (CONT'D)
SO GET OFF MY FUCKING CASE!!!!

Isaac pushes Sam. Not expecting this, the big man startles and falls back. Isaac stands over him, gripping Sam's shirt collar.

ISAAC
(seething)
You selfish fuck! You don't know what you got! You don't know what you'd leave me with! I can't watch this anymore! So God-damned pathetic!

Sam hits Isaac in the chest. Isaac falls back, winded, and COLLAPSES into the KITCHEN TABLE and CHAIRS.

Both men get to their feet. Sam stumbles out of the room. Isaac follows him through the HALLWAY and into the:

INT. TAUB BATHROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Sam puts the scale in the center of the floor. With one foot he STOMPS repeatedly on the scale until its pieces break apart and are strewn all over the room.

ISAAC

Now I know why Mom's done with
you...

Sam shoots Isaac a glare before jumping on the remnants of the scale with both feet in a defining blow. Sam picks up the remains and hands them to Isaac.

Sam turns back into the bathroom. Stops. Tears off the shower curtain halfway. At wits' end, he starts to bawl. Sits on the edge of the tub. Isaac looks on.

SAM

I called a hooker the other night.

Isaac doesn't respond.

SAM (CONT'D)

First time in my life I ever called
a hooker.

Looks at Isaac.

SAM (CONT'D)

Didn't I raise you well?

Isaac nods listlessly.

SAM (CONT'D)

Then why'd I call a hooker?

Isaac can't find the words.

SAM (CONT'D)

I kicked her out.

Isaac slowly heads to the tub. Sits next to Sam. Sam turns away from him.

SAM (CONT'D)

(sobbing)

Just understand something. I cannot
change. I am who the fuck I am!
And it doesn't get better for
anybody else. You included. It's
done. All of it's done. I've
accepted that.

(holds back sobbing;
irate)

AND YOU NEED TO STOP LIVING IN THIS
FANTASY WORLD WHERE YOU-YOU THINK
YOU'RE GONNA CHANGE ME!!!! If I
wanted change, I'd change. I don't
want change.

(MORE)

Sam gets to his feet and hovers over Isaac.

SAM (CONT'D)
 (almost whining)
 Why can't you understand that, huh?

Isaac's eyes explode open. He leaps to his feet. Stands face-to-face with the big man.

ISAAC
 It's not just about you! That's
 what I'm tryna say! You die, I die!

Sam cowers. Moving in, Isaac tries to break him down.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
 You don't have to call hookers. You
 don't-you don't have to be alone.
 I've found someone. Me, I've found
 someone. You can too. You don't
 have to drive yourself into the
 ground!

Sam chokes and tries to leave.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
 Fuck no.

Isaac gets in his way. Seething, the son tries to embrace the father. Sam pushes Isaac into the:

INT. HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Though considerably outmatched, Isaac continues to put himself in Sam's path. Isaac's arms are stretched out each time.

Sam charges through him like a rabid bull. But Isaac keeps throwing himself back in Sam's way as they enter the:

INT. TAUB LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

At that moment, SAM SENDS ISAAC FLYING INTO THE CHRISTMAS TREE. Isaac slowly rolls around on the floor. The son gets to his feet like a dazed prizefighter trying to beat the count.

Sam stands motionless. Isaac grimaces and clutches his side. He meanders around the room for a long moment, Sam's eyes focused on his every movement.

Without warning, Isaac starts to throw anything at Sam that he can get his hands on. Books come off shelves. Couch cushions are heaved.

ISAAC
(bellowing to himself
as he throws)
Ya think you have no love in your
life?! You're too damn blind and
stupid! Missing the whole fuckin'
point!

Out of breath, Isaac charges Sam and throws up his shirt.
His frame is still wiry and bones are visible.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
(hits himself in the
stomach)
THIS IS LOVE! THIS IS LOVE! THIS
IS LOVE! THIS IS LOVE!

Crowding Sam, Isaac repeats the phrase, punching himself
hard in the stomach each time he says it. Sam edges back
and can't keep his eyes off the floor.

Isaac looks around the room. His face registers a new
thought. He breaks away from Sam and heads into the:

INT. TAUB KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Isaac stumbles in. Looks at all of the items. The junk.
Sam's treasures. Sam enters the doorway. They lock stares
before Isaac runs out the back door.

EXT. TAUB BACKYARD -- CONTINUOUS

We follow Isaac as he runs toward the garage. He swings
open the door.

INT. GARAGE -- CONTINUOUS

Isaac throws some items around the garage. Kicks others.
Comes across the gas can. Picks it up.

INT. TAUB KITCHEN, SAME -- NIGHT

Sam closes his eyes. He moves to the kitchen table and
sits. There is great pain in his expression as he seems to
be willing himself not to leave the room.

INT. GARAGE -- CONTINUOUS

Isaac douses the garage in gasoline. He grabs a matchbook
from a nearby table.

INT. TAUB KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Sam sitting at the kitchen table. His breaths are heavy.

INT. GARAGE -- SAME

Isaac lights the match and throws it against a far wall. A FIRE starts and spreads quickly. Isaac moves to the door and tries to open it but it won't budge.

INT. TAUB KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Sam gives up and runs as fast as he can out the back door.

INT. GARAGE -- CONTINUOUS

Isaac charging and throwing his body against the door. Smoke blankets him and he gets to the ground.

INT. ADELE'S BEDROOM -- SAME

Adele lying in bed, trying to read. She puts the book down. Smiles. She's never had it this good and it shows.

EXT. TAUB BACK YARD -- SAME

We follow Sam's back as he chugs through the snow towards the garage.

Feet away, he stops for a BEAT and observes the smoke and flames in front of him. He approaches a window and looks inside. He runs to the door and CRASHES through it like a bull.

INT. GARAGE -- CONTINUOUS

Inside, Sam crawls through the smoke and moves objects at of his way, looking for Isaac. He spots him. Rolls over and picks him up. Charges out the garage door.

EXT. GARAGE -- CONTINUOUS

Sam moves away from the fire through the snow, Isaac draped over his shoulder. He lays him down when they get about twenty feet away, near the house.

Sam looks down at Isaac, who by now is a charred version of his former self. Isaac coughs and writhes. His eyes open, but barely.

The men look at each other. Something soulful is being communicated. Isaac nods. Closes his eyes.

SAM

Isaac?!

Sam checks Isaac's chest and tries to perform CPR. It works. Isaac coughs in a flurry.

Sam gets to his feet and heads toward the house. But he stumbles over. He clutches his chest. Rolls over on his back.

SAM'S P.O.V.: The stars echo in the calm night sky. The FIRE CRACKLES in the distance.

Sam jolts to his knees and crawls to Isaac. Grabs his hand and lies back down next to him. Closes his eyes. Dies.

HOLD on Isaac and Sam for an extended beat as the FIRE CRACKLES.

SUPERIMPOSE: SUMMER

EXT. EARL'S CAR, DRIVING -- DAY

Earl drives, Craig in the passenger seat.

EXT. TAUB BACKYARD -- DAY

Earl and Craig work the grill. Isaac, his skin still somewhat discolored though appearing at his normal weight, sits on the back porch.

He overlooks the hill and a new garden where the garage once stood. Adele exits from the kitchen and sits next to Isaac. She hands him a hot-dog.

They kiss and he takes a bite before walking towards the garden. She follows at a distance as we:

FADE TO BLACK.