

# CRASH & BURN

"Pilot"

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TEASER

INT. ND ROOM - DAY - (AUGUST 1999)

CLOSE ON: A CURSOR blinking on a blank computer screen, an iMac circa 1998.

**CHYRON: "August, 1999: After."**

An UNSEEN person (Typist) begins to write. As the keystrokes start, Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake plays, building in volume...

ON SCREEN

To most of you it was just another school shooting. Or attempted school shooting.

THE MUSIC ABRUPTLY STOPS ALONG WITH THE TYPING. It has a slyly comical effect, like Typist has lost the flow.

The above text is selected and deleted. As the following words appear the music begins once again...

ON SCREEN (CONT'D)

I'm grateful I was able to stop it.  
I shudder to think how many people would have died that day if I hadn't seen--

SILENCE again. The last three words are deleted. Music over--

ON SCREEN (CONT'D)

If *she* hadn't seen--

SILENCE again. Nothing but the blinking cursor. Then -- RETURN RETURN. Typist skips a few lines as the music starts again, building in volume over--

ON SCREEN (CONT'D)

What did she see?????

As the question marks appear one after another and the music builds in volume and intensity louder than before, we're--

INT. ND INSTITUTIONAL SETTING - DAY - (MAY 1999)

The film is treated to indicate we're in a different time.

TIGHT ON: the back of a TEENAGE GIRL as she dances ballet to the Tchaikovsky music.

**CHYRON: "3 Months Earlier: Day Shit Went Down."**

*The Girl's dancing is effortless, fluid, accomplished.*

*INT. SCHOOL - HALLWAY - INTERCUT*

*SWISH SWISH. We're CLOSE ON a KEY CHAIN reading: "Like what you see? Call 1-800-YOU-WISH." It swings back and forth, as if suspended in mid-air, making the SWISH SWISH sound.*

*INT. ND INSTITUTIONAL SETTING - INTERCUT - DAY*

*Back to Tchaikovsky. The Girl, whose face we still don't see, does a pirouette then...*

*DRIP. A drop of blood hits the floor--*

*INT. SCHOOL - HALLWAY - INTERCUT*

*SWISH SWISH. We're back on the KEY CHAIN. Only now we see it's attached to-- a BLUE BACKPACK WITH ORANGE TRIM. We're following the BACKPACK WEARER, too tight to see a face. The backpack is taken off the shoulder, then unzipped. Inside-- a COMPACT SEMI-AUTOMATIC RIFLE.*

*INT. SCHOOL - HALLWAY - INTERCUT - DAY*

*Frantic energy as we're TIGHT ON-- A 17-YEAR-OLD BOY whose face we don't see, bolting down the hallway.*

*SCREAMS can be heard in the b.g. Back to--*

*INT. ND INSTITUTIONAL SETTING - INTERCUT - DAY*

*Tchaikovsky. The Girl does another pirouette, then... shlump! She drops to the floor, dead weight.*

*INT. SCHOOL - CAFETERIA - INTERCUT - DAY*

*MORE SCREAMS, this time some phrases: "Get down!" and "He's got a gun!" REVEAL-- THE GUNMAN, standing in the entrance to the cafeteria. BUT WE STILL DON'T SEE HIS FACE.*

*We FEEL and HEAR but don't get a good look at the high school kids in the room SCREAMING because we're suddenly--*

*CHAOTIC, HANDHELD, and CLOSE ON-- BULLETS spraying into the wall and ceiling--*

*INT. ND INSTITUTIONAL SETTING - INTERCUT - DAY*

*BANG BANG BANG. Someone's outside the room KNOCKING hard on the door, trying the knob but it's locked--*

*MALE VOICE (O.S.)  
Help! We need help in here!*

*We move low to the floor, following a trail of blood to--*

*The Girl's face and HER EYES, staring right at us. Almost through us. Though the Girl is only 19 years old, these eyes have a depth and world-weariness beyond their years. As her eyelids flutter we--*

CUT TO:

MAIN TITLES.

END TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. NEWMAN HOUSE - DAY - (AUGUST 1999)

**NOTE: Film style matches that of August 1999, seen earlier.**

CLOSE ON-- A PAIR OF EYES which slowly open.

DEBBIE NEWMAN (O.S.)

Steve?

REVEAL-- STEVE NEWMAN (17, average build, good-looking), lying in bed. He smiles.

STEVE

(a la Ferris Bueller)

Hi, Mommy.

REVERSE TO REVEAL-- his mother, DEBBIE NEWMAN (40's, put-together, wears a WHITE TENNIS SKIRT and SHIRT.)

DEBBIE NEWMAN

(rolls her eyes)

Oh, Steve. Your father's here.

Steve pulls himself up.

STEVE

What? What time is it?

DEBBIE NEWMAN

Almost eleven. Steve, you weren't drinking last night, were you?

STEVE

Why, mother. I would never.

DEBBIE NEWMAN

(shakes her head)

Better not keep him waiting.

She kisses him on the forehead, leaves. Steve fishes a bottle of RITALIN from his bedside table.

STEVE

Good morning, friends.

As he pops a pill--

PRE-LAP DIALOGUE:

NURSE (O.S.)

Time for therapy.

INT. PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - LIBRARY - MORNING

JAVIER RODRIGO LOPEZ (a.k.a JR, 17). Broad-shouldered and though once well-built, his muscles are starting to atrophy. He sits at a desk in front of a computer, looks up at--

A NURSE (Argentinian, thick accent, sense of humor but no bullshit, 50's) holding a paper cup.

JR  
(bright smile)  
Good morning!

NURSE  
(suspicious)  
Mm. And what are you doing this fine morning, Mr. Lopez?

JR  
I'm working on a website that dispenses talk therapy. You just talk at the screen and every two minutes it says, "Mm-hm."

NURSE  
(smiles)  
Great. All you have to do is make it dispense meds and I can retire.

She rattles the paper cup.

EXT. KOVACIC HOUSE - DAY

A beautiful, green backyard skirted by trees. DEVON KOVACIC (17, small but wiry, wearing loose pajamas) engages in some karate moves with the air. He's focused, intense but not very good. Every movement is labored.

INT. KOVACIC HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Devon sits in front of a bowl of cereal and a NEWSPAPER on the table. He's holding a GUITAR, plays a quick riff. He's good. He puts down the guitar, takes a bite of cereal as he notices a HEADLINE:

**"High School Hero In Negotiations for Book Deal." A PHOTO of Steve Newman from his high school yearbook is next to the headline.**

Off Devon, stopping mid-bite--

JR (O.S.)  
Morning.

INT. PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - DAY

Nurse leads JR down the hall. They walk past other patients, doctors, nurses. JR says hello to all of them.

JR  
Morning, good morning.

One hollow-eyes patient glares at JR, who smiles back at him.

JR (CONT'D)  
Howdie, Henry.

NURSE  
I'll say this for you, Mr. Lopez.  
Most people spend years getting  
used to this place. You seem to  
actually like it here.

JR  
Beats real life.

NURSE  
You've perhaps explained what I've  
been doing here for the past 22  
years.  
(she laughs)  
That's depressing.

JR heads into an office.

INT. AIDEN GREEN PUBLISHING - RECEPTION - DAY

Steve and JACOB NEWMAN (40's, clean cut, business suit) walk up to a receptionist's desk. Behind the desk is a LOGO for fictional book publisher: AIDEN GREEN PUBLISHING.

JACOB NEWMAN  
Amy Singh, please.

Receptionist nods then types. Jacob burns off nervous energy--

JACOB NEWMAN (CONT'D)  
(to Receptionist)  
You know my son here is going to  
write a book. He's still in high  
school.

Receptionist just smiles.

STEVE  
(re: Jacob)  
And he just acts like he is.

Jacob laughs. But maybe Steve meant it to have some edge.

AMY SINGH (O.S.)

Well, if it isn't the Newman men.

They turn to see AMY SINGH (28, Indian-American, slight accent, whip-smart, no-nonsense.) She shakes hands with Jacob and Steve.

JACOB

(effusive)

A pleasure to see you again, Ms. Singh. I know Steve's very excited. He's got lots of ideas to talk about. Right Steve?

STEVE

So many.

JACOB

Right. Your office, again?

AMY SINGH

Mr. Newman, would you mind if I talked to Steve alone for a little while this time?

Jacob's slightly taken aback--

JACOB

No. Of course. Go ahead.

Amy gives Jacob a tight smile. He glances briefly at Steve before moving off, reluctant to leave him alone with her.

INT. AIDEN GREEN PUBLISHING - AMY'S OFFICE - DAY

Steve looks out the window at a view of Manhattan, twenty stories up. Amy enters, closes the door.

STEVE

You're not gonna molest me, are you?

He smiles at her, thinking he's being funny. She glares at him, suppressing anger, opens the door again.

AMY SINGH

Get out.

STEVE

What? Oh, it was just a joke--

She gets in his face, a frightening but thrilling intensity in her eyes. Though she's a good bit shorter than him it makes him back up a little, toward the WINDOW, a precipitous view of the street below.

AMY SINGH

Who do you think I am? Hm? Some silly high school girl you can manipulate with whatever charm you suppose you possess? Let me enlighten you: I am your paycheck. So either show me some respect or you can go back out there and tell Daddy you screwed this up before it even began. Is that clear?

Steve swallows his pride, for now.

STEVE

Yeah. Sorry.

Amy softens.

AMY SINGH

Sometimes I forget how young you are. You've probably never had a job in your entire life.

STEVE

I delivered pizzas last Spring.

AMY SINGH

Take a seat.

He does. Amy sits on the edge of her desk.

AMY SINGH (CONT'D)

I asked to speak to you alone because if you're going to write this book with me, I need to know you and I can communicate directly.

STEVE

Okay.

Amy pulls a DOCUMENT off her desk.

AMY SINGH

These first ten pages you sent me. Frankly, they're shit.

STEVE

(irked)

Well, that's a little rude.

AMY SINGH

No. It's true. And accepting the truth about the quality of your work is a big part of what it means to be a professional.

(then)

Do you know why the pages are bad?

STEVE

No?

AMY SINGH

Because they don't sound like you. Those other stories you wrote for school were honest. They made me feel like I knew what it was like to be a teenage boy. That's why I believed there could be a book here, from the point of view of a shooter and his friends--

STEVE

(defensive)

We weren't friends.

AMY SINGH

No?

She's a little glad to get a rise out of him.

STEVE

No. A lot of people say that but it's not true. I mean, we were friends. Sort of. In a way. I mean... it's complicated.

AMY SINGH

(smiles)

Well. Hopefully it was complicated enough to fill two hundred and fifty pages. Do you see what I mean?

STEVE

I guess.

AMY SINGH

Good. So here's what I'd like to do. Talk.

STEVE

Talk?

AMY SINGH

Tell me how it all began.

(leans in)

I want to know why and how you became friends with these boys. The truth. Your truth. Do you think you're up to that, Mr. Hero?

Off Steve--

INT. PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

JR sits looking at -- his therapist, TODD (40's, 5 feet tall, with a giant bottom. He is shaped like a garden gnome.)

TODD

I said hello.

Todd sits on an ergonomically correct chair with no arms that rocks. JR observes all of this, as it is as weird and interesting to him as it is to us. Todd's demeanor is gentle but tough.

JR

I'm sorry, I was thinking about this website I'm working on. The user interface on top is okay, but the underlying architecture is bottom heavy.

He's clearly referring to Todd's physique. Todd smiles.

TODD

Are you ready to talk about the events of 5/19?

JR

What's to say that wasn't in the papers?

TODD

(moving on)

Did you know that Steve Newman is going to write a book about it?

Off JR, the news hitting him hard--

PRE-LAP DIALOGUE:

STEVE (V.O.)

Welcome to Westchester County, New York.

**EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY - (1994)**

NOTE: The Film will have a slightly different look from both the "After" and "Day Of" timelines.

A tree-lined, idyllic suburban street.

**CHYRON: Before Shit Got Fucked.**

STEVE (V.O.)

20 miles from The Big City but  
worlds apart.

CLOSE ON: the face of Steve (12, wiry). His expression is intense, almost pained.

STEVE (V.O.)

Unless you're partying or hooking  
up or vandalizing something it's so  
friggin' boring you wanna blow your  
head off.

REVEAL-- Steve is riding his BMX BIKE as fast as he can. He swerves between kids playing stickball on the street, yelling, having a great time.

He stops his bike short. Looks back behind him. All the kids are gone. The street is quiet, lonely.

He suddenly hears CLASSICAL MUSIC coming from a house down the street. Curious, he rides toward it.

**EXT. LOPEZ HOUSE - STREET - DAY**

Music gets louder as Steve sits on his bike in front of the Lopez front yard. The music appears to come from the other side of a wooden fence. He gets off his bike, sneaks up to the fence.

**EXT. LOPEZ HOUSE - FENCE - DAY**

Steve looks for a crack in the fence. Finding none, he lifts his head over the fence just enough to see--

ROXANNE LOPEZ (the girl from the TEASER, now only 14) dancing beautifully on a SURFACE made from cut open cardboard boxes on her lawn. A BOOMBOX playing the music.

Intrigued, entranced, Steve's feeling a pubescent hormonal stir rising up in him.

Roxanne suddenly stops dancing, shuts off the music. She speaks in perfect, unaccented English.

ROXANNE

*What?*

Panicked, Steve ducks below the fence.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

I saw you, idiot. What the *fuck* are you looking at?

We're WITH STEVE, crouched below the fence, as he exhales.

STEVE

Shit.

He slowly stands.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Hey.

ROXANNE

Well?

STEVE

(confused)

What?

ROXANNE

What. The *fuck*. Are you looking at?

STEVE

I-- I wasn't. Sorry.

He turns to leave.

ROXANNE

Well, don't *go*, idiot.

He stops. She walks to the gate in the fence, opens it under--

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

You're the new neighbor, right? At the corner of Hillcrest? What's wrong with you, are you a loner or something?

STEVE

No, I'm not a loner! What do you mean?

Roxanne walks up to him, opens a gate in the fence.

ROXANNE

I've seen you around, riding your bike, looking all mad or something.

STEVE

I'm not mad!

ROXANNE

Sorry. Depressed.

STEVE

Wait. You were watching me?

ROXANNE

What? Don't be retarded. C'mon.

STEVE

What?

She grabs him by the arm.

STEVE (CONT'D)

C'mon!

EXT. LOPEZ HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - DAY

Roxanne pulls Steve by the arm towards her front door.

STEVE

Wait! What are you doing?

He yanks his arm free.

ROXANNE

What does it look like I'm doing, genius? I'm taking you into my house.

STEVE

I don't wanna go to your house!

ROXANNE

Why not? You don't like me?

STEVE

What? I don't even know you.

ROXANNE

So come inside and we can get to know each other.

(flirty)

Ever had a chicharrone?

Steve has know idea what that is but he's terrified.

STEVE

I gotta go.

He turns and goes.

ROXANNE

Seriously? Oh, come on! Hey! Hey!

STEVE

(turning back)

What?!

Shot from behind her so we can't see what Steve sees, Roxanne lifts her shirt, flashing him a boob. Steve is stunned.

ROXANNE

Come in and maybe I'll show the other one. It's bigger.

INT. LOPEZ HOUSE - DAY

Roxanne and Steve appear in the entryway of the house, which is strewn with stuff. Board games, children's bicycles, clothes. This family isn't exactly hoarders, but they are major consumers. There's a lot of activity in here, too, as--

MARIA (4) rides her tricycle, screaming in delight. No adults in sight, Roxanne runs this household.

Roxanne grabs Maria by the back of the collar.

ROXANNE

(in Spanish)

Maria, you know you're not supposed to ride that in here. Walk it!

Maria obeys, getting off the bike and pushing it. We get the sense Roxanne's the one in charge of this household.

STEVE

What's that smell?

ROXANNE

Chicharrones.

Roxanne heads toward the family room. Steve hesitates, shy.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

Let's go!

She leads Steve into--

INT. LOPEZ HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Roxanne and Steve enter to see--

JR LOPEZ (12), sitting Indian-style on the rug, three feet away from a GIANT TV SCREEN. JR is pudgy, with curly black hair. He's playing MORTAL KOMBAT II on a Sega Genesis.

JR's posture and concentration suggest a zen master.

ROXANNE

(to JR)

Did you even brush your teeth, yet?

(then)

And what are you doing?

A few feet behind JR sits NELSON LOPEZ (9), Roxanne and JR's kid brother. He sits Indian-style, like his big brother's mini-me, silently watching JR play.

SMACK! Roxanne shuts the TV off.

JR

What the hell?!

ROXANNE

I found you a friend. Finally. Now go outside and play.

Roxanne turns to leave.

STEVE

Where are you going?

ROXANNE

To my dance class.

EXT. LOPEZ BACK YARD - A LITTLE LATER - DAY

Steve and JR sit on a couple of logs. Steve kicks the ground with his toe. An awkward beat. Nothing to say.

JR

You have Sega Genesis?

STEVE

No.

JR

Atari?

STEVE

No.

JR

Why not?

STEVE

I dunno.

Awkward beat.

JR

Where did you move from?

STEVE

Groton.

JR

What do you mean, we're in Groton?

STEVE

Like North Groton. Near town. Near the historical Square House.

JR looks at him, puzzled. Steve has the uncomfortable feeling JR is looking through him.

JR

That makes no sense. Why did you move only like two miles away?

STEVE

I don't know, my Dad wanted a bigger house. Not that it's that much bigger. It's got more land I guess. But it's on a hill. Which is okay for sledding but sucks for football. Whatever.

JR

We moved, too. From Colombia.

STEVE

(confused)

The college?

JR

What? No, the country. It's in South America. At first I was sad. But now I love it here.

This has an effect on Steve--

STEVE

Really?

JR

Yeah, taxes are way lower. And the music's way better. Take Mariah.

Steve barely contains his disdain--

STEVE

Mariah Carey?

JR

(shrugs)

She has a really positive for young people. I once won a singing contest on WPLJ with *Dreamlover*. They wanted to offer me a recording contract but I wasn't into it.

Steve looks at him, skeptical.

JR (CONT'D)

Do you like my sister?

STEVE

(embarrassed)

What? No!

JR

That's okay. She can be a bitch sometimes but she's pretty cool.

Steve realizes he misinterpreted what JR meant--

STEVE

Oh. Yeah. She seems cool. Pretty cool.

Another awkward beat. The one subject Steve is always glad to discuss is his big sister--

STEVE (CONT'D)

I have a sister, too. Her name's Erin. She's on an outdoor program in New Hampshire right now. But she's coming home next week. She's gonna take a year off before college and live here at home.

JR looks at him intensely. It makes Steve self-conscious. Now Steve feels like the weird one.

JR

Cool.

Another awkward beat.

JR (CONT'D)  
You like fireworks?

EXT. LOPEZ HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY

BOOM! An explosion blows a crater into the dirt in a back corner of the yard behind a WOOD PILE. Green ARMY MEN go flying. JR and Steve laugh, exhilarated.

STEVE  
Holy fuck!

JR  
That was a good one!

Steve picks up an army man. It's half melted.

STEVE  
Check it out! Its head is melted to its ass!

As Steve continues to look for pieces of army men--

JR  
That's nothing. You ever see a pineapple?

STEVE  
No, what's that?

JR  
It's way bigger than an M80. It's equivalent to an eighth a stick of dynamite. I lit one off once and it broke a water pipe three feet under the ground.

Steve eyes get wide. A combination of fear and excitement. But also skepticism--

STEVE  
Isn't that dangerous?

JR  
Not if you know what you're doing.

STEVE  
Where do you get this stuff?

JR  
My Dad. He brings it back from Colombia. It's legal there.

(MORE)

JR (CONT'D)

But it doesn't matter anyway cause he's got diplomatic immunity.

STEVE

What does he do?

JR

He works for the State Department. I can't really talk about it, but he's a spy.

STEVE

What? Your Dad is not a spy!

JR gives him a reptilian stare.

JR

I wouldn't say that to his face.

Steve tries to give JR a hard time--

STEVE

Oh, yeah, why's that? Does he have a license to kill? Does he have a girlfriend named Octopussy? Does--

JR lunges at Steve.

JR

Shut up!

He knocks Steve onto the ground. Steve is passive for a moment, and then he suddenly and violently THROWS JR OFF him onto the ground. Steve jumps on him, and is about to throw a punch when--

JR (CONT'D)

No! Stop! Please!

Steve, seeing the pathetic look on JR's face, stops himself. He gets off of JR, starts walking away.

JR (CONT'D)

And don't come back!

STEVE

I won't!

Steve walks past-- a WHITE CADILLAC in the driveway.

TRANSITION TO:

**EXT. LOPEZ HOUSE - DAY - (MAY 1999)**

**CHYRON: Day Shit Went Down.**

The WHITE CADILLAC. The passenger-side door opens. The BLUE BACKPACK FROM THE TEASER is tossed inside.

NELSON (O.S.)

What are you doing?

REVEAL-- It's JR who's just put the backpack in back of the car. He looks at-- Nelson (now 14), standing nearby.

JR

I'm tired of the shit people say  
about us. I'm gonna make them wish  
we never came here.

(then)

Go back inside.

(Nelson doesn't move)

Go!

Nelson rushes back inside the house. As JR gets in the car--

CUT TO BLACK.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

**INT. NEWMAN HOUSE - STEVE'S BEDROOM - DAY - (1994)**

CLOSE ON-- a TV screen. Static and squiggly lines.

STEVE (O.S.)

Come on.

REVEAL-- Steve, anxious, staring at the TV. SEX SOUNDS emanate from the TV. And then-- through the squiggles, you can just barely make out a naked woman.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Yes, come on.

KNOCK KNOCK.

DEBBIE NEWMAN

Steve?

Steve quickly shuts off the TV as his mother enters.

STEVE

Hey.

DEBBIE NEWMAN

(friendly, innocent)

What are you doing?

STEVE

Nothing.

She sits on his bed.

DEBBIE NEWMAN

So, did I notice your bike in front of the house down the street the other day? The Lopez's I think is their name?

STEVE

Maybe.

DEBBIE NEWMAN

They have a boy your age, don't they?

STEVE

I guess.

DEBBIE NEWMAN  
(hopeful)  
Well, did you make a friend?

STEVE  
No.

DEBBIE NEWMAN  
Oh.

She exhales, giving up.

DEBBIE NEWMAN (CONT'D)  
Well, I'm going to my exercise  
class now. Do you want to come?

STEVE  
Why would I want to come to your  
exercise class?

DEBBIE NEWMAN  
(getting flustered)  
I don't know, it's something to do!  
It's in the shopping center.  
There's lots of stores and things  
there.

Steve considers that a beat.

STEVE  
Next to the dance studio?

EXT. SHOPPING CENTER - DANCE STUDIO - DAY

Steve tries to get a good look through the window. Is he  
looking for Roxanne or just watching the dancers?

DEVON (O.S.)  
Steve?

Steve quickly turns, feeling caught, to see-- DEVON KOVACIC  
(12, small, wiry; talks tough but wouldn't hurt a fly). Devon  
wears a KARATE GI (white robe) and a BACKPACK.

STEVE  
Devon. Hey.

DEVON  
You takin' the ballroom class? My  
Mom wanted me to do that. I think  
it's pretty gay myself.  
(MORE)

DEVON (CONT'D)

I mean, no offense if you are, but if I'm gonna move my legs I'd rather be kickin' the shit outta somethin'.

Devon laughs nervously. This is a trait of his. Steve has never known what to make of Devon.

DEVON (CONT'D)

So what's up? How's your summer goin'?

STEVE

It's okay.

DEVON

Yeah? Mine sucks. My brother Max moved into his own place so I gotta call him every time I need a six pack. Or someone to drink it with.

(laughs)

Hey, don't you live near Midvale Elementary? I always remember you walking home for lunch. Thought that was pretty bad-ass.

STEVE

Yeah, not anymore. We moved. We live in South Groton now.

DEVON

Oh. Why'd you move?

STEVE

Tax reasons.

(clumsy transition)

Oh, shoot, I gotta go meet my Mom now.

DEVON

Oh. Cool. Well. Maybe I'll see you around?

STEVE

Yeah. See ya.

DEVON

See ya.

Steve hurries off we pick up--

ROXANNE, exiting the DANCE STUDIO. She wears her workout clothes and a DANCE BAG over her shoulder.

She watches Steve walk away. Then she fishes around in her bag for a cigarette. She pulls out--

A KEY CHAIN: "Like what you see? Call 1-800-YOU-WISH" attached to a key ring. Same chain we saw in the Teaser. She tosses the ring back in her bag as she pulls out a cigarette and walks towards Devon.

ROXANNE

You know that kid?

Devon looks at her, thrown.

DEVON

Steve? We went to elementary school together.

Roxanne holds up an unlit cigarette.

ROXANNE

You got a light?

DEVON

Hold on, lemme check.

Devon checks his backpack.

ROXANNE

I was kidding. Don't worry about it.

Devon fishes a MATCHBOOK.

DEVON

Here you go, let me light that for ya.

ROXANNE

You smoke? What are you, eleven?

DEVON

I'm twelve. But I don't smoke. I'm like a boy scout. Always prepared.

He laughs. She's amused by him.

DEVON (CONT'D)

I'm Devon, by the way. Devon Kovacic.

As he puts out his hand to shake hers, oddly formal--

ROXANNE

Are you fuckin' serious? Do you have a handkerchief too in case I have to step in a puddle?

DEVON

Oh, right. Like in the cartoons. You know I never got the handkerchief thing. Who'd wanna put a dirty snot rag in their pocket? It's like carryin' around a used condom or somethin'.

He laughs. She's amused by his odd combination of tough-guy talk and gentlemanly behavior.

A SHY GIRL in dance workout clothes comes up to Roxanne.

SHY GIRL

Excuse me, Roxanne? I just wanna say I think you're amazing. I love the way you incorporate a Latin feel in your dancing.

Roxanne looks up to see-- LAUGHTER coming from a group of girls (all white) outside the dance studio. Some of them are staring at Roxanne. One of the girls does an exaggerated, overly sexualized hip-moving dance move, obviously mocking Roxanne.

ROXANNE

Fuck off.

Shy Girl is stunned, hurries off. Devon's confused.

DEVON

Jeez, I don't think she meant nothin' by it.

ROXANNE

What do you know about dance.

DEVON

Nothin'. I just think she was tryin' to compliment you, that's all.

Roxanne sizes him up, then--

ROXANNE

Wanna come over to my house sometime?

DEVON

What? Sure!

BEEP BEEP! A CAR ROARS to a stop at the curb right in front of them. But not just any car. It's--

A YELLOW LAMBORGHINI DIABLO VT. The window rolls down. Devon's brother, MAX (17, cool as ice), is in the driver's seat. He takes a look at Roxanne, lower his sunglasses.

MAX

(to Roxanne)

Hello there.

DEVON

That's my ride.

Roxanne looks at the car, stunned.

ROXANNE

Seriously?

DEVON

So, where do you live? When can I come over?

But Roxanne looks at Max, seems spooked by him.

ROXANNE

I'll see you around.

DEVON

Wait!

But she walks away.

EXT. SHOPPING CENTER/INT. LAMBORGHINI - DAY

The passenger-side door opens. It's a scissor door that rotates up vertically. Devon hops in.

MAX

Who's the lady?

DEVON

No one. I'd like to lick her puss, though. She's pretty good-lookin'.

Devon laughs. Max is amused.

MAX

Lick her puss. Have your balls even dropped yet?

DEVON

I don't know. Why don't I sit on  
your face and you can find out.

With surgical precision, Max pinches Devon's neck.

DEVON (CONT'D)

Ow, ow. Okay! I'm sorry!  
(Max stops)  
Pussy. Kidding!

Devon laughs. As he buckles in--

DEVON (CONT'D)

(re: car, matter of fact)  
So where'd you get this one?

Max smiles, adjusting the mirror.

MAX

C'mon, Dev. You know I can't tell  
you that.

DEVON

Yeah, yeah, Mr. Secretive.

MAX

I think she likes you. She's  
lookin' this way.

Max puts the car in drive. As they SCREECH away, Devon turns  
back, watches Roxanne through the window.

EXT. NEWMAN HOUSE - LATER

Establishing--

INT. NEWMAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

A RINGING PHONE. Steve, excited, runs and grabs the phone--

STEVE (ON PHONE)

Erin?

ERIN (ON PHONE)

Hey, lil Stevie.

Steve tries to hide his elation at talking to his big sis. He  
takes the phone up the stairs for privacy.

STEVE (ON PHONE)

Hey.

ERIN (ON PHONE)  
I'm on the phone!

INTERCUT AS NECESSARY:

INT. BAR - PAYPHONE - DAY

Steve's sister, ERIN (18, attractive) stands at the payphone. Her friends are drinking and getting rowdy in the b.g.

ERIN (ON PHONE)  
So how's the new house?

STEVE (ON PHONE)  
(matter of fact)  
I liked the old house.

ERIN  
(snaps)  
I didn't.

Steve reacts, taken aback.

STEVE  
What do you mean?

Erin doesn't want to get into it, whatever it is.

ERIN  
Nothing. It's just, it's been nice to be away from that place. You'll see.

She takes a swig of her drink.

STEVE  
Well, there's nothing here but trees. And the kids are freaks. There're some decent tennis courts nearby at least. Maybe we can play when you come home next week?

A GIRL tries to pull Erin away.

GIRL (O.S.)  
Jello shots!

ERIN  
(to Girl)  
Just give me a second! Jeez!

ERIN (CONT'D)

(to Steve, sympathetic)

So listen, my schedule changed around a bit. It looks like I'm gonna stay up here an extra few months.

STEVE

What? Why?

ERIN

It's just until Thanksgiving. I'll see you then for sure. Maybe it'll still be warm enough to play tennis?

Steve is devastated.

ERIN (CONT'D)

Steve?

STEVE

Yeah. Sure.

ERIN

I'm sorry, kid. I really wanted to see you before then.

But Steve's eyes are welling with tears. More CALLS from the other kids in the b.g.

STEVE

I should go.

ERIN

Okay. I'll talk to you soon, kid, alright? Hang in there.

On Steve, sad--

STEVE (V.O.)

It's not like I was heart-broken or anything. She was just my sister. On the other hand I was gonna miss her cool parties.

Steve looks at-- A FRAMED PHOTO on the wall of Erin (17) and her two best friends, ELIZABETH (17, sexy) and CATHY (17, cute). It's as if Steve is using a sexual fantasy as a way to make himself feel less sad about his sister not coming home.

CUE MUSIC from the film *A Clockwork Orange*. Off Steve--

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. FORMER NEWMAN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - (FLASHBACK)

CLOSE ON -- STEVE (12). He sits on a couch, looking right at us. A devious smile on his face reminiscent of the opening shot of Malcolm MacDowell in *A Clockwork Orange*. We pull back, in SLO-MO, REVEALING:

Steve is holding a glass of what appears to be CHOCOLATE MILK. His friend, NATE (12) is passed out next to him. We're in a memory of Steve's, at a party his sister is having. Teenagers all around, drunk. Steve's smile gets wider and wider as Erin's friends toy with him--

REVERSE ANGLE, STEVE'S POV-- Elizabeth, sexy smile, moving towards us. She approaches, raises -- a PLASTIC FLOWER LEI over our head--

INT. NEWMAN HOUSE - DAY - (1994)

Steve, eyes still closed, smiles at the memory--

INT. FORMER NEWMAN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - (FLASHBACK)

STILL IN SLO-MO: Steve is now on the floor, flower lei around his neck, while Elizabeth and Kathy take turns kissing his naked belly.

STEVE (V.O.)

I know they were a little old for me, but the truth is when I started to think about my sister's friends, I got turned on.

INT. NEWMAN HOUSE - DAY - (1994)

Coming out of the memory, Steve looks down at his crotch. A tent forming there with his boner. He looks at it like he's not quite sure what to do with it.

EXT. LOPEZ HOUSE - DAY

Steve rides his bike. MUSIC comes from the yard.

STEVE (V.O.)

I was dying to see Roxanne again. But I knew I had to play it cool.

He rides his bike back and forth in front of the house. Not at all cool. Suddenly-- Roxanne pops out in front of him.

ROXANNE  
Looking for me?

Steve stops his bike short.

STEVE  
Shit!

ROXANNE  
Come over. JR got a new video game.

STEVE  
What? I don't wanna see him!

Roxanne sizes him up.

ROXANNE  
Okay, look, I don't what happened  
with you two the other day but just  
give him another chance.

Steve doesn't know how to respond to that.

STEVE  
Is your Dad a spy?

ROXANNE  
What? No! Who told you-- nevermind.

Roxanne tries a different tack. She moves close to him, runs  
two fingers along his handlebars...

ROXANNE (CONT'D)  
If you come, maybe I'll show you  
more than boobs.

Steve watches her fingers move along the handlebars, then  
down the crossbar of his bike...

ROXANNE (CONT'D)  
Maybe you could show me something.

Steve is terrified. As Roxanne's fingers approach the crotch  
of his pants--

STEVE  
I have to go.

Steve rides away. She yells after him--

ROXANNE  
Pussy!

After a dozen yards or so Steve stops when he hears a SCREAM.  
He turns back--

Roxanne kneels down next to Nelson, who's skinned his elbow,  
crying. Neither Roxanne nor Nelson sees Steve watching.

Roxanne lovingly kisses Nelson's elbow, gives him a hug,  
soothes him, as he stops crying. Off Steve, watching this  
tender interaction--

TRANSITION TO:

*INT. ND ROOM - DAY - (MAY 1999)*

*CLOSE ON-- STEVE'S FACE.*

**CHYRON: Day Shit Went Down.**

*A pained look in his wet, pleading eyes. He's hugging  
Roxanne. They're sitting together on a bed somewhere.*

*He kisses Roxanne's neck.*

*ROXANNE*

*Steve.*

*He keeps kissing her. She wears an expression of ecstasy or  
pain, hard to tell which.*

*ROXANNE (CONT'D)*

*If he ever finds out...*

*He keeps kissing her, with increased passion.*

*ROXANNE (CONT'D)*

*Ow, get off me!*

*She pushes him away. Off Steve, a wild look in his eye, like  
he's afraid of himself--*

CUT TO BLACK.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

**INT. AIDEN GREEN PUBLISHING - AMY'S OFFICE - DAY - (1999)**

On Steve, still lost in the memory of Roxanne.

AMY SINGH (O.S.)  
Steve? Steve?

He looks up at her.

STEVE  
Sorry, I was thinking of something  
I had to do.

AMY SINGH  
I said this is good. Perhaps a bit  
stilted in places, but it's feeling  
a lot more honest than the pages  
you sent me. Do you understand the  
difference?

It's unclear if he does or he's just playing dumb--

STEVE  
Yeah?

She decides that's good enough for her--

AMY SINGH  
Shall we continue then?

STEVE  
Can I use the bathroom first?

AMY SINGH  
Down the hall to the left.

Steve grabs a pad of paper.

STEVE  
In case I get any ideas.

AMY SINGH  
Do you need this, too?

She holds up a pen.

STEVE  
Oh. Yeah.

He grabs the pen.

INT. AIDEN GREEN PUBLISHING - BATHROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON-- the BOTTLE of RITALIN. A pill sits on the pad of paper atop the toilet. Steve SMASHES up the pill with the corner of his cell phone. His phone RINGS--

STEVE

Shit.

Steve's caught between answering the phone and using it to crush the Ritalin. Caller id says: KAREN.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Sorry, gotta call you back, Karen.

Steve finished crushes the pill then... sniff! Snorts it.

INT. PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - CAFETERIA - DAY

JR's finishing eating. CARA (15, spunky) sits down next to him with her meal. A MALE TECH (30's) is watching her, waiting for her to eat.

JR

What's with him?

CARA

He follows me before and after every meal to make sure I eat and don't puke it up. Asshole.

She makes a big show of eating a carrot to the Tech.

The Tech gives her some space, leaves the room.

JR

Really? Would you puke it up if he wasn't watching?

CARA

Oh, hell, yeah.

She smiles.

JR

Fair enough.

CARA

So now you know my issues. What're you in here for?

JR

You really wanna know?

CARA

Yeah.

JR hesitates, then--

JR

(straight)

I tried to assassinate the  
President.

He breaks into a smile. She laughs.

INT. J. CREW STORE - DAY

Devon at his job. He wears khakis and a NAME TAG, folds shirts VERY CAREFULLY. A co-worker ROBIN (19, a bit goth, blue streak in her hair) has come up behind him.

ROBIN (O.S.)

You're doing it wrong!

Devon turns, feeling caught.

DEVON

I am? Ha ha.

ROBIN

Dude, I know I've only been here  
for a week but I can tell you have  
got to relax.

DEVON

Well, you shouldn't sneak up on  
people like that. It's creepy.

He laughs.

ROBIN

So, I heard this rumor about you.

Devon's immediately defensive.

DEVON

Yeah, what rumor?

Robin draws it out dramatically, looking around the room conspiratorially--

ROBIN

I heard... that you... are into  
music.

DEVON  
(relieved)  
Yeah, I guess so.

He goes back to folding.

ROBIN  
Wow. You're a really great  
conversationalist.

DEVON  
Sorry, I'm just tryin' to get these  
done--

ROBIN  
(ignoring him)  
So, I got these tickets to see this  
band tonight at this club in New  
Rochelle. Wanna come?

DEVON  
Really? I don't know, I'm not too  
into the crowded bar scene. Too  
many people you have to talk to.

Devon laughs.

ROBIN  
Yeah, people generally suck, don't  
they?

Devon smiles. He likes her.

DEVON  
Fuck it. It'll probably be too loud  
to talk to anyone anyway, right?

ROBIN  
Great. We can head there after work  
together.

She turns to go--

ROBIN (CONT'D)  
Ugh, customers are always leaving  
their shit behind.

Robin picks up an empty paper COFFEE CUP with the name NANCY.

ROBIN (CONT'D)  
You suck, Nancy.

Robin notices a NEWSPAPER under the table near Devon. She  
points to it.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Pass that to me?

Devon reaches down, picks up the paper and looks at it. The story of Steve's book deal on the top. As we're on Devon's face we see his twelve-year-old voice:

DEVON (V.O.)

Is Steve there?

TRANSITION TO:

EXT. NEWMAN HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON/EVENING - (1994)

Debbie holds the phone out to Steve--

DEBBIE NEWMAN

It's for you.

Steve grabs the phone, sits down on the stairs.

STEVE (ON PHONE)

Hello?

DEVON (ON PHONE)

Hey, Man. It's Devon. Good runnin' into you yesterday. Did you end up signin' up for that dance class?

The conversation is stilted, awkward, like Devon's asking him out on a first date.

STEVE

Uh... no.

DEVON

Cool. So listen, you wanna come over to my house today?

STEVE

(beat)

Um. Why?

DEVON

I don't know. Just to hang out. I gotta pool. We could go swimming. Or you know, put on some boxing gloves and beat the crap out of each other.

Devon laughs. Steve doesn't really know how to react.

STEVE

Where do you live?

DEVON

On Walpole St. Near Halstead.

STEVE

(beat)

That's kinda far.

DEVON

Yeah, I know. But I figured you could maybe get a ride or somethin'?

STEVE

(beat)

Um. Hold on.

(yells)

Mom?

DEBBIE

(beat)

Yes, honey?

STEVE

(yells)

Could you give me a ride to Devon's?

DEBBIE

(beat)

Now? Where is it?

STEVE

(yells)

Near town?

DEBBIE NEWMAN

(beat)

I have my gardening class.

STEVE

(beat, still to Debbie)

Maybe I'll ride my bike?

DEBBIE NEWMAN

(beat)

That's kind of far.

STEVE

(beat)

Yeah.

DEBBIE NEWMAN

(beat)

What are you gonna do there?

STEVE

(beat)

He's got a pool.

DEBBIE NEWMAN

(beat)

Okay.

STEVE

(to Devon)

Um. I think I can do it.

DEVON

Cool. So I'll see ya soon?

STEVE

(beat)

I guess.

DEVON

Cool. See ya.

STEVE

(beat)

See ya.

EXT. ROUTE 1 (BUSY STREET) - DAY

HOOONK! Steve sweats his ass off, riding on the side of the busy road, scared shitless by a car behind him--

STEVE

Shit!

EXT. KOVACIC HOUSE - DAY

Steve rides up Devon's driveway, exhausted, then collapses on the lawn. Devon appears, wearing a bathing suit, MASK AND SNORKEL on his head.

DEVON

Steve? You okay?

INT. KOVACIC HOUSE - DAY

Devon and Steve enter the mud room, Devon closes the door--

DEVON

Good. I don't think she's up, yet.

STEVE

Your Mom? It's 2 PM.

DEVON

Yeah, she's got issues.

Devon laughs. He leads Steve down a hallway toward the basement door.

MRS. KOVACIC (O.S.)

Dev? Is that you?

DEVON

*Fuck.*

Steve steps into her eyeline to look at MRS. KOVACIC (40's), who's sitting in the kitchen in a ROBE.

DEVON (CONT'D)

No, don't do that!

But it's too late. She can see him.

MRS. KOVACIC

Who's that?

Devon talks to her as if to a child. But it's all a kind of game between them. We get the sense that the dynamic between them is loving. Devon steps into her eyeline.

DEVON

(weary)

This is Steve, Mom.

MRS. KOVACIC

(smiles, warm)

Steve Newman.

STEVE

Yeah.

MRS. KOVACIC

Your sister was in my son, Max's, class, right? Erin? She's a smart kid. A little neurotic but that's okay, it's a sign of emotional intelligence.

Steve breaks into a smile. He's not used to being talked to by an adult like this. He likes it.

STEVE

Yeah, I guess.

MRS. KOVACIC

She must be going to college soon.

STEVE

Dartmouth.

MRS. KOVACIC

Dartmouth! And I thought she was a smart kid!

Steve smiles, getting the joke.

DEVON

Okay, that's enough. Gotta go now, Mom.

Devon opens the door to the basement.

MRS. KOVACIC

Why? I'm just getting to know him! What's so great about the basement, anyway? All you're gonna do is smoke and look at porno mags, am I right?

She knows she's being funny. Steve is shocked and amused by her honesty, though. He laughs.

MRS. KOVACIC (CONT'D)

You seem like a bright kid. Don't you think there's more to life than that, Steve?

DEVON

Okay, Mom. Don't be a cunt.

Devon laughs. Steve is shocked he used that word. Mrs. Kovacic is nonplussed.

MRS. KOVACIC

See what I have to put up with?

Off Steve, amused--

INT. BASEMENT STAIRS/INT. BASEMENT - (1994) - MOMENTS LATER

The boys come down the stairs, enter.

DEVON

Welcome to the basement.

As Steve looks around we now get a better view of what's in here. And what's in here is an adolescent boy's wet dream. If you ignore all the clothes strewn everywhere. There's a large screen TV. A mini-fridge. Weapons of various sorts lying around and pinned up on walls, mostly of the martial arts variety: NUNCHUKS, Chinese throwing stars, police batons, knives, etc.

Devon picks up the nunchucks, casually swings them around.

STEVE

What are those?

DEVON

Nunchucks. It's a traditional Japanese martial arts weapon. Here.

Devon does a demonstration that is practiced but labored. It's unintentionally funny.

STEVE

Cool.

DEVON

Wanna try?

STEVE

That's okay.

Steve notices-- a BOTTLE OF JAMESON.

STEVE (CONT'D)

What's this?  
(reads label)  
Whiskey, huh?

DEVON

It's my brother's. You party?

STEVE

Party?

DEVON

Drink?

STEVE

Yeah, I party a little.

DEVON

Yeah? What have you tried?

STEVE

You know, I like beer, wine, wine coolers, Scotch-whiskey, pretty much all cocktails and libations.

Devon nods. Steve sees-- A B.B. GUN PISTOL on a table.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Is that real?

DEVO

Real? It's a real BB Gun. Go ahead, pick it up.

Steve picks it up, entranced by it. Feeling the weight of it.

DEVON

We've got two others. I've played war with Max and his friend, Sal, sometimes. It's really fun. But you need three people.

Devon picks up a VIDEOCASSETTE.

DEVON (CONT'D)

(matter of fact)

You ever seen a porno?

Steve, feeling uncomfortable, puts down the gun.

STEVE

Can I use your bathroom?

DEVON

Through the door, to the left. You want lotion?

STEVE

(confused)

For what?

DEVON

(confused)

I don't know.

INT. KOVACIC HOUSE - BASEMENT BATHROOM - DAY

The bathroom is a total mess. It's kind of disgusting, in sharp contrast to the neat cleanliness of the house upstairs. On STEVE's face, thinking as he pees--

STEVE (V.O.)  
Somethin' about this kid was  
creeping me out. I mean, he seemed  
like a decent guy and all, but I  
thought he might be kind of pervy.  
His Mom was pretty cool, though.

Steve's anxiety lessen as he remembers--

STEVE (V.O.)  
And he had all these awesome  
posters...

STEVE POV-- a POSTER on the wall of Pamela Anderson in her  
red, high-crotched Baywatch bathing suit. Steve has an idea.

STEVE (V.O.)  
Maybe there was a way to smooth  
things out with JR so I could see  
Roxanne again...

INT. KOVACIC HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY

Steve re-enters the room.

STEVE  
I think I might know a third to  
play war.

EXT. LOPEZ BACKYARD - DAY

Steve, JR and Devon all in a line. They are dressed in LONG  
SWEAT SHIRTS and PANTS, knee pads on the outside. Ski  
goggles. Steve even wears a BLACK SKI MASK over his face.  
They look ridiculous.

JR  
Do we really need all this shit? I  
feel like a friggin' idiot.

DEVON  
And I'm exhausted from ridin' all  
the way over here. But you don't  
see me complainin', do you?  
(laughs)

Steve looks up at Roxanne's window, hoping to see her.

DEVON (CONT'D)

You can take those off, by the way.  
But fully pumped these things go  
through most light clothes and can  
still break the skin.

Steve snaps back from looking at Roxanne's window--

STEVE

Wait, what?

NELSON

Can I play?

Nelson has appeared out of nowhere.

JR

No. We only have three guns. Go  
back inside.

Nelson dutifully turns and goes.

STEVE

Where did he come from?

JR

My mother's vagina.

Steve turns to look at JR. JR glares back at him.

JR (CONT'D)

Why?

The two boys hold eye contact a beat. Residual tension from  
their fight. Devon breaks the silence--

DEVON

Uh... Ready, war!

Devon suddenly runs for cover, laughing. Steve runs away in  
another direction. JR stands frozen.

JR

(panicky)

Wait, hold on! Don't shoot! I have  
to find cover!

STEVE

(yelling back)

So go, dickface!

But then JR realizes he's got a clear shot at Steve, running  
away. He aims and fires.

WITH STEVE, as he gets shot in the back.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
Ow! Shit! Motherfucker!

JR laughs. Steve turns around and aims at JR.

JR  
Oh, shit.

JR drops to the ground, starts crawling away. Steve, now hiding behind a WOOD PILE, aims and fires a few times but can't get a clear shot off. JR manages to crawl behind a WHEELBARROW, which he knocks over and uses as a shield.

JR (CONT'D)  
Ha! Missed me!  
(laughs, then--)  
Ow! Fuck!

He's shot in the side by Devon, on his flank. Devon laughs.

JR (CONT'D)  
Bastard!

### MONTAGE TO MUSIC

The boys are having a blast. We see them get shot and laugh, shoot the others and laugh, it doesn't matter. Getting shot is just as fun as shooting, even if it sometimes hurts a little. SLO-MO, CLOSE UPS of the EXPRESSIONS OF TOTAL JOY, ABANDON, THRILL.

END MONTAGE

Silence. We're with Steve, doing a military crawl on the edge of the yard, along a fence. He's sneaking up on JR, who's hiding behind a tree but doesn't see Steve.

STEVE  
(to himself)  
I got you, you sonofabitch.

Steve takes aim, has JR in his sights, is just about to fire when-- RUFF RUFF RUFF! The neighbor's TERRIER, on the other side of the fence, barks its head off, scaring the shit out of Steve, making him leap into the air and run away from the fence.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
What the fuck?!

JR sees this and starts laughing his ass off. As does Devon.

STEVE (CONT'D)

What's wrong with that thing?!

The dog keeps barking.

DEVON

It's gonna bring the neighbors out.  
We better call it. I think Steve  
won but next time I won't go easy  
on yous.

Devon laughs.

JR

I got a better idea.

JR aims the gun at the barking dog.

DEVON

Whoa!

STEVE

Jesus! What are you doing?!

JR

Putting it out of its misery. The  
thing's like a hundred years old.  
All it does is bark.

PING. JR shoots. The BB lands in the dirt near the dog. He purposely missed. JR smiles.

STEVE

What the fuck?!

DEVON

Okay, JR, ha ha. We know you'd  
never shoot a dog. Just give me the  
gun.

JR

(ignoring him)

That was only two pumps. I don't  
even think it would penetrate the  
fur.

But JR starts pumping the gun several times.

JR (CONT'D)

On the other hand. If you pump it  
to the max, say, nine or ten  
times... I mean, don't tell me  
you're not curious.

JR takes aim.

STEVE

Jesus, put the fucking gun down you psycho!

He doesn't. Rising tension.

JR

You want me to put the gun down?

STEVE

Yes!

JR

You, too?

DEVON

Yes!

JR

(still aiming)

Okay. I'll put it down. If he apologizes.

Devon looks at Steve.

STEVE

Apologizes? For what?!

JR

For attacking me the other day.

STEVE

What?! You attacked me!

DEVON

Wait, what are you talking about?

JR

(calm)

He knows. I'll count to three then I'll shoot. One...

STEVE

Are you kidding me?!

DEVON

Okay, let's calm down. Let's just talk about this. Okay? What happened? What did Steve do?

JR

He talked shit about my Dad.

STEVE

That's bullshit! You're Dad's not a spy, you psycho! Your sister told me!

JR

Two...

DEVON

Steve, just friggin' apologize!

STEVE

Jesus, okay! Okay! I'm sorry!

But JR doesn't put the gun down.

JR

For what?

STEVE

For saying your Dad wasn't a spy!

JR

And for calling me a liar.

Steve hesitates, having difficulty swallowing his pride.

JR (CONT'D)

Two and a half...

DEVON

Just do it!

STEVE

Okay! Sorry for calling you a liar!

One more beat of tension, then puts the gun down.

JR

I accept your apology.

Relief. But Steve can't resist--

STEVE

Even if you are one.

JR suddenly picks up the gun again, aims at the dog. But Steve rushes at him, tackling him to the ground. JR looks up at Steve, smiles. He points the gun in the air, pulls the trigger. Nothing. It wasn't loaded.

STEVE (CONT'D)

There is something seriously wrong with you.

Steve gets up.

DEVON

C'mon, man, he was just fuckin' around. I told you he wasn't really gonna shoot the thing.

Steve gives JR one last look. JR just smiles at him.

STEVE (V.O.)

That was it.

**INT. AIDEN GREEN PUBLISHING - AMY'S OFFICE - DAY - (1999)**

Steve still sits across from Amy.

STEVE

I never thought I'd see either of them again.

AMY SINGH

I could understand why. Except you did see them again.

STEVE

(antsy)

Look, I'm kind of tired. We've been here for a while. Do you think we could, like, reschedule this or something?

AMY SINGH

We could, but I need to give my boss an answer.

STEVE

Oh come on, like if we reschedule for tomorrow it's too late? You came to me.

She's tweaked by this, but carries on--

AMY SINGH

You wanna know what I really think, Steve?

(he shrugs)

AMY SINGH (CONT'D)

It doesn't matter if we reschedule because we'll just end up at the same place. The question you need to ask yourself: Can you write this or not?

(MORE)

AMY SINGH (CONT'D)

Which is another way of asking the real question: are you man enough to be honest with yourself about your life?

She's touched a nerve. Then a dark smile forms.

STEVE

You know what I think? I think you could use a good. Fuck.

She smiles. Then-- she gets up from behind her desk.

AMY SINGH

Oh, really?

She walks right up close to him, eyefucking him. Rising tension. Then-- she sits on his lap, breasts in his face.

AMY SINGH (CONT'D)

And lemme guess. Are you the one who's gonna give it to me?

He's breathing heavily, nervous now. She grabs his crotch.

AMY SINGH (O.S.) (CONT'D)

What do you think?

REVEAL-- Amy, sitting at her desk. Steve at his chair. And now we know: it was just Steve's fantasy.

STEVE

Look, I can't do this. Okay? I can't be honest!

AMY SINGH

Why not?

STEVE

All the shit I did the last five years? My father would turn me over to the cops and send me to juvie!

AMY SINGH

(a realization)

So that's what this about.

(then)

I guess you have a choice then.

Amy goes back to her paperwork. Off Steve--

CUT TO BLACK.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. AIDEN GREEN PUBLISHING - WAITING AREA - DAY - (1999)

Steve enters in a bit of a daze, not sure how he's gonna handle this. Jacob sits working on a laptop.

JACOB

(upbeat)

Hey, how'd it go? Do we have a deal?

STEVE

(lies)

She, um, wants to talk more before she decides. Said we should call back tomorrow to set up another meeting.

JACOB

(skeptical)

What? That's what she said?

STEVE

Ask her if you want.

Steve walks away, Jacob looks at Amy, through the window of her door. She's on the phone, gives a quick nod and smile to Jacob, then turns away to her phone call. Everything seems normal. Jacob doesn't call his bluff.

INT. PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - COMMON AREA - EVENING - (1999)

JR (17) sits alone, writing in a journal. Cara appears. He closes the journal.

CARA

Plotting your next assassination?

JR

Maybe.

CARA

Oh, come on, why are you like that?

JR

Like what?

CARA

Every time we're about to have a real conversation you get all weird and distant.

He just looks at her. Cara notices a TECH coming up to her.

CARA (CONT'D)

Ugh, I gotta go take my meds.

She starts to walk away.

JR

Fine.

CARA

What?

JR

Wanna sit with me at dinner?

CARA

Ooh, a date. Don't forget to bring me flowers.

INT. JACOB'S CAR/EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

It's raining. Jacob puts on the wipers. Steve is next to him.

STEVE

You need new wiper blades. You can't see anything.

JACOB

(smiles)

It's a little blurry but I like the challenge. Keeps me alert.

Steve rolls his eyes.

JACOB (CONT'D)

So you're not gonna give me any more details about the meeting?

STEVE

Sure. She didn't like your pages.

JACOB

What?

(smug smile)

No!

Jacob looks at Steve.

STEVE

That's what she said. Thought they were pretty boring, actually.

JACOB

Okay, first of all, they weren't my pages. I just gave you some suggestions.

STEVE

You told me exactly what to write.

JACOB

(irked)

No, I guided you. I've written dozens of scientific papers. I know good writing.

STEVE

Okay, Dad.

A long beat. Jacob seethes.

JACOB

Anyway, if she hated the pages so much what were you talking about? You were in there over an hour.

STEVE

I told her my version. She liked that.

Jacob looks over at Steve, confused.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Watch out!

HOOONK! A car in front swerves to avoid them.

JACOB

Jesus, relax!

STEVE

You almost hit him!

JACOB

No, I did not! I was totally under control-- you know what?

Jacob pulls over to the shoulder, turns to Steve.

JACOB (CONT'D)

You have got to calm down with that temper of yours. I'm just trying to figure out how the meeting went. I'm trying to help you.

STEVE

Help me?

JACOB

Yes! You know this can help get you into a decent college.

Steve looks at his Dad.

JACOB (CONT'D)

What?

STEVE

You don't want me to write this book, Dad.

(off Jacob)

She told me I have to be honest. About everything.

JACOB

(confused)

So?

Steve looks at him, incredulous.

STEVE

Calder?

Steve is obviously referring to something in their past. Jacob is confused. Or playing dumb. Hard to tell.

JACOB

That has nothing to do with this.

Steve looks at Jacob, maybe a little unsure himself exactly why it's relevant. Nevertheless, his father's denial makes him angry.

STEVE

You know what? I'm gonna take the train home.

Steve opens the door, starts to get out.

JACOB

What? What are you doing? Steve!

Slam! Steve slams the door behind him. He walks away, pissed. Kicks a telephone pole. It hurts.

STEVE

Fuck!

EXT. TRAIN STATION PLATFORM - EVENING

DING! Dripping wet, Steve dashes for the open doors of the train, barely making it inside--

INT. TRAIN - EVENING

In the train, Steve sits, soaking, amped up. He's just about the only one in the car. He pops a Ritalin, takes out his phone. Listens to VOICEMAILS--

DIFFERENT VOICES (V.O.)

Hey, Dude. How's it--

(delete)

Steve, it's Karen. Just wanted to check in, see how the editor meeting--

(delete)

Hellooo, it's me, Kim. What are you doing tonight?

Steve smiles, that's what he was looking for. He texts on his PHONE to KIM: "Come over 2nite. My Mom's out." He quickly takes out his RITALIN BOTTLE. But before he can take a pill he notices--

A FAMILY enter the car. Parents and a TWELVE-YEAR-OLD BOY.

BEGIN INTERCUT SEQUENCE.

Musically, a steady, unsettling beat underscores the following scene and carries us through nearly to the end of the pilot...

Off Steve, looking at the family--

INT. J. CREW STORE - DAY - INTERCUT - (1999)

Devon finishes folding some clothes as quickly as he can. He looks up, sees--

On the wall are a hooks holding BLUE BACKPACKS, identical to the one that held the gun in the Teaser.

It gives him pause. Then he notices-- Robin, folding clothes nearby. He goes to her--

DEVON

Hey, Robin, I'm almost done. So do you wanna drive, or would you like a ride in my awesome '93 Sentra?

He laughs. Robin seems bothered by something.

ROBIN

Can I ask you something?

(then)

Is it true that you're the one who got the guns?

DEVON

(gut punched, dark)

Who told you that?

She starts to speak when the Manager calls from the register--

MANAGER

Robin, could you help me out here?

DEVON

(intense)

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

Robin moves away. Off Devon, devastated--

INT. PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - CAFETERIA - EVENING - INTERCUT - (1999)

JR (17) and Cara sit together eating, talking.

JR

See, eating's not that bad, right?

CARA

Ugh. Food is disgusting.

She takes a bite of a mini carrot. He smiles.

JR

Wish I had your problem. I was always the fat kid.

CARA

Really? No.

JR

Yeah.

She's finally getting somewhere with him.

JR (CONT'D)

I was a sick kid. Spent a lot of time in the hospital. Then when I got out--

He looks up. Cara's frozen.

JR (CONT'D)  
Cara? Cara?!

She's choking.

JR (CONT'D)  
Jesus, hello? Hello, Tech?! A  
little help?!

But there's no one in sight. She's getting blue.

JR (CONT'D)  
Shit, fuck!

INT. TRAIN - EVENING

ON STEVE, looking at the family, he remembers--

**INT. NEWMAN HOUSE - DINNER TABLE - NIGHT - INTERCUT (1994)**

Steve, Jacob and Debbie eat dinner. Steve's head is down in his plate. Jacob is tense. Steve and Debbie are on eggshells.

JACOB  
So I heard you hung out with some  
kids today. Some boy from  
elementary school and a kid down  
the street?

DEBBIE  
The Lopez's. You know the mother  
was a famous singer back in  
Colombia. Isn't that interesting?

They both look at her. Then--

JACOB  
Well?

STEVE  
(shrugs)  
Not really.

Something about Steve's tone puts Jacob over the edge--  
CLANK! Jacob drops his knife on his plate.

JACOB  
Enough! You live here now. You need  
to accept that and make some  
goddamn friends!

Steve looks at Jacob, incredulous.

STEVE  
What the hell?!

Jacob glares at Steve. Frightened, Steve looks down at his food. Debbie's a bit shaken.

DEBBIE NEWMAN  
You want some more potatoes,  
sweetie?

STEVE  
No.

Steve has lost his appetite. ON STEVE--

JACOB  
So, did you talk to the contractor  
about the bathroom today?

INT. J. CREW STORE - BACK ROOM - EVENING - INTERCUT (1999)

Devon, alone now, gathering his things to go. He stares at the NEWSPAPER article about Steve, anger rising...

INT. PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - CAFETERIA - EVENING - INTERCUT

JR with a choking Cara. Still no Techs available.

JR  
Help!

He looks down-- Cara's really blue now.

JR (CONT'D)  
Fuck.

JR has to do this himself. He grabs Cara from behind. Does the heimlich. Nothing. Building tension. He does it again. And again. Finally-- The carrot comes flying out. She's fine. He saved her. She looks at him, spent. Smiles a little.

CARA  
Holy shit.

He smiles, relieved.

CARA (CONT'D)  
Now will you tell me?

The honesty and vulnerability in her eyes makes him feel comfortable enough to reveal something of himself.

JR

I shouldn't even be here. I'm only here because someone lied about what I did.

(then)

Steve Newman is the biggest liar I've ever met.

INT. J. CREW STORE - BACK ROOM - DAY - INTERCUT

Devon folds some clothes as quickly as he can, trying to finish his work. His phone rings.

DEVON (INTO PHONE)

Hello?

FEMALE VOICE (OVER PHONE)

Is this Devon Kovacic?

DEVON

Yeah, who's this?

FEMALE VOICE

I'm calling from the Westchester Gannett newspaper. I was wondering if you were aware that Steve Newman is in negotiations to write--

DEVON

Yeah, I'm aware and it's bullshit!

FEMALE VOICE

Sorry? What's bullshit? Would you care to comment further?

Devon's suddenly nervous--

DEVON

Don't print that! And never call me again!

He punches a SHIRT. He looks up, noticing -- an EMPLOYEE staring him. Embarrassed, he goes back to work.

INT. NEWMAN HOUSE - DINNER TABLE - NIGHT - INTERCUT (1994)

Steve, Jacob and Debbie. Steve's silent, not eating.

JACOB  
...and not one of the executives  
says a word. Can you believe that?

DEBBIE  
So annoying.

STEVE  
May I be excused?

Debbie looks at Jacob, who nods reluctantly.

DEBBIE  
Of course, Dear.

Steve gets up, his hands visibly SHAKING with anger. He heads to the sink, but his hands are shaking so much he drops his plate on the tile floor. SMASH!

It's enough to make Jacob snap. He bolts out of his seat--

JACOB  
Enough!

Jacob comes at Steve like a bull.

STEVE  
It was an accident!

JACOB  
You and your goddamn accidents!

STEVE  
(confused)  
What?

JACOB  
Why do you think we moved?!

DEBBIE NEWMAN  
Jacob, don't!

Steve's still confused. Jacob grabs Steve's shirt roughly.

JACOB  
Calder, dammit!

Steve looks at his father, scared, shocked. Jacob catches himself, surprised by his own anger. He lets go of Steve.

JACOB (CONT'D)  
Go to your room!

Steve, terrified, bolts up the stairs.

EXT. J. CREW PARKING LOT - EVENING - (1999)

Devon tosses a backpack in the car.

ROBIN

Devon! Wait!

She's run up to him.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Hold on, I'm sorry, you're right. I don't know what I'm talking about. I don't even know you. I just heard this rumor and... sometimes I just can't keep my mouth shut.

DEVON

Don't worry about it, it's all cool.

ROBIN

You sure?

DEVON

It doesn't matter what people say. What matters is it's in the past. And it's up to me to keep it there. See ya tomorrow.

He gives her a smile, gets in his car.

INT. NEWMAN HOUSE - STEVE'S BEDROOM - INTERCUT (1994)

Steve frantically opens drawers, throws clothes into a backpack. He's going to run away. He opens a WINDOW, climbs out on his roof.

EXT. NEWMAN HOUSE - STEVE'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Steve hops down off the roof.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - MINUTES LATER

Steve walks down the street with his backpack on his shoulders. As he passes the Lopez yard--

DEVON (O.S.)

Steve.

Steve sees Devon, holding a bottle of WHISKEY.

DEVON (CONT'D)

Check out what my brother scored  
me. Only cost me two nights of  
chores. Ha ha. Wanna join us?

JR comes out of the shadows. Steve looks at JR. A beat of  
consideration, then--

STEVE

Hell yeah.

Steve follows the boys into the yard. He looks up, sees--

Roxanne, in her bedroom window. She looks down at him. Seems  
to hold eye contact with him a moment. But it's unclear if  
she actually sees him.

BACK TO:

**INT. TRAIN - EVENING - INTERCUT (1999)**

Steve comes out of his memory. He looks at the Ritalin bottle  
in his hand. PHONE in the other hand. After a beat of  
thought, he chooses-- the PHONE. He makes a call.

STEVE (INTO PHONE)

Amy, it's Steve Newman. Listen, I  
thought about it and I decided... I  
wanna do this book... yeah, talk to  
you tomorrow.

Steve hangs up. A smile spreads across his face. A release.  
For the first time he's actually stood up to his father.

**THE DRIVING MUSIC ENDS with--**

EXT. NEWMAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER - INTERCUT

DING DONG! Source 90's grunge-pop music plays.

STEVE

Be right there, Kim!

Steve finishes making a couple of SCREWDRIVERS. He suddenly  
remembers something--

STEVE (CONT'D)

Shit.

He takes out his wallet and finds a CONDOM. Satisfied, he  
puts it back, grabs a drink, and walks to the door.

ON STEVE as he opens the door, holding out the drink--

STEVE (CONT'D)

Hello--

But excitement gives way to fear. Because it's not Kim.

**It's Devon. And he's holding a gun to Steve's head.**

DEVON

You need to face what you did.

OFF STEVE--

**INT. SCHOOL - CAFETERIA - DAY - INTERCUT (MAY 1999)**

**[NOTE: As we saw before.]**

*FRANTIC ENERGY AS WE'RE TIGHT ON-- A 17-YEAR-OLD BOY whose face we don't see, bolting down the hallway.*

**[NOTE: The following we haven't seen before.]**

*A COP appears at the end of the hallway, ten yards behind the runner. The cop spots the runner, holds up his gun--*

COP

Hey! Stop!

But the runner does not stop. He only briefly looks back, REVEALING-- it's Steve. As he disappears around a corner, the first chords of Nirvana's *Smells Like Teen Spirit* play.

BACK TO:

**INT. NEWMAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT - INTERCUT (AUGUST 1999)**

On Steve, gun to his head--

STEVE (V.O.)

My name is Steve Newman. And I'm a hero.

As the HARD-CRASHING DRUM BEATS KICK IN AT 2X VOLUME--

CUT TO BLACK.

ROLL CREDITS OVER SONG.

END OF PILOT