

# HERE, NOW

pilot episode

"Eleven Eleven"

written by

Alan Ball

OVER BLACK:

We HEAR the steady rhythm of WAVES on a beach - SEAGULLS SQUAWK - a young woman LAUGHS - snippets of her WHISPERING  
FADE IN AND OUT -

MARI (O.S.)  
- tiezerk'y mi p'ak hamakarg -

More LAUGHTER. FADE IN:

EXT. BEACH - DAY - 1970 (FLASHBACK - 8MM).

HOME MOVIE FOOTAGE, JITTERY, FADED, OVEREXPOSED: MARI (25) stares at us, giggling and squinting. She's wearing a two piece bathing suit; her bronzed skin glistens with baby oil.

MARI  
- gumary energetikayi goyut'yan  
anp'vop'vokh -

Mari has dark hair, intelligent eyes, a wicked smile. She speaks, but her WHISPERS DO NOT SYNCH WITH PICTURE, as if she's been dubbed.

MARI (CONT'D)  
- energetik p'vop'vokhut'yunnery  
dzevavorel mshtapes -

She LAUGHS, then suddenly looks frightened. Now SHE SPEAKS DIRECTLY TO US and is PROPERLY SYNCHED, as if what she says is of dire importance:

MARI (CONT'D)  
RAMON. KHOSTATS'IR INDZ.

She claws at her cheek. Sharp fingernails GOUGE her skin, leaving FOUR PARALLEL BLOODY GASHES. She LAUGHS again, then -

INT. RAMON'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT.

**RAMON** BLACK-BISHOP (21), wakes abruptly, freaked out by his dream. Sits up, rubs his eyes. Ramon is Latino, scruffy and immensely appealing. We HEAR Ben Rector's "BRAND NEW" OVER -

EXT. PORTLAND STREETS - DAY.

DIFFERENT SHOTS OF RAMON BIKING, down streets, on sidewalks, among traffic. Enough for us to get a sense of Portland, Oregon.

EXT. SPIN LAUNDRY LOUNGE - DAY.

RAMON PULLS UP in front of the **SPIN LAUNDRY LOUNGE**, parks his bike in a RACK.

HENRY (O.S.)  
Who was she?

INT. SPIN LAUNDRY LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS - DAY.

"BRAND NEW" CONTINUES over the sound system in this COMBO LAUNDROMAT AND CAFE. Barista **HENRY BERGEN (20)** is behind the counter in BLACK PANTS, WHITE SHIRT and some sort of VEST with a NAME TAG. Beard, tattoos. Cocky, handsome, gravitates toward a simpler existence. Doesn't need much, appreciates what he has. He efficiently makes ESPRESSO DRINKS as Ramon recounts his dream.

RAMON  
No idea. She looked like she was from an old Mexican movie. But she wasn't speaking Spanish. I don't know what language it was. And she said my name. Then she tore her face open.

HENRY  
They say everybody in your dream is actually you.

RAMON  
Huh. So I have a secret desire to tear my own face open?

HENRY  
You tell me.

RAMON  
All I know is she wanted something from me. And she wanted it bad.

HENRY  
You are way deeper than I am. I just dream I'm at work with no pants.

RAMON  
Do you have a boner?

HENRY  
In the dream, or right now?

RAMON

Either.

HENRY

Sadly, no.

RAMON

Tease.

HENRY

You wouldn't know what to do with me if you had me.

RAMON

You're probably right.

RAMON'S HEAD SUDDENLY TURNS, AS IF MOVED BY AN OUTSIDE FORCE, and he sees -

RAMON'S POV: A DIGITAL CLOCK on the wall. It's **11:11**.

HENRY (O.S.)

Dude. You give up too easy.

RAMON

That was weird. It felt like somebody just took my head and moved it so I would see that clock.

Henry looks at the clock. **11:11** CHANGES to **11:12**.

RAMON (CONT'D)

Like it was completely involuntary. It did it on its own. It wanted me to see that clock.

HENRY

What wanted you to?

RAMON

Eleven eleven. Doesn't that mean something?

HENRY

It... sounds like it should, because of, you know, nine eleven. And seven eleven.

RAMON

Hold on, my pants are vibrating.

HENRY

Now who's a tease?

Ramon pulls a PHONE from his pants pocket, checks the screen, sighs. Answers.

RAMON

Hey, Mom.

Intercut with:

INT. HYBRID SUV - CONTINUOUS - DAY.

**AUDREY** BLACK (50s) drives, PHONE to her ear; Ramon's sister **KRISTEN** BLACK-BISHOP (15) in the passenger seat, texting on her own PHONE. Both Caucasian. Audrey is impeccably put together, steely, hyper-alert, and always just a little bit anxious. Kristen is awkward, self-conscious, maybe a little overweight, and actually quite pretty, but you will never convince her of that.

AUDREY

Honey, I need you to do me a big favor today -

KRISTEN

Put him on speaker.

AUDREY

I don't know how, it's a new phone, I need to get the I-T guy from the firm to -

KRISTEN

You don't know how to connect a Bluetooth device?

AUDREY

No, and that does not make me a terrible person.

KIRSTEN

This is why millenials are so angry.

RAMON

Helloooooooooooooooooooooo -

AUDREY

Ramon, on your way over tonight, I need you to stop by the dry cleaners and pick up Dad's grey silk blazer I want him to wear.

RAMON

Mom, seriously?

AUDREY

Of course, seriously. Why would I not be serious?

RAMON

You want me to bike four and a half miles with dry cleaning.

KRISTEN

Mom, at least put him on the phone speaker, you're going to get a ticket.

AUDREY

Honey, you know I am all for the urban bike movement, but at rush hour, with a dry cleaning bag flapping in the wind, are you insane? Take the MAX!

KRISTEN GRABS THE PHONE from Audrey, switches it to speakerphone.

KRISTEN

Ram, can you come early? Say like half an hour before things start?

RAMON

Uh...

KRISTEN

I really need to talk to you about something really important.

AUDREY

Why can't you talk about it in front of me?

KRISTEN

Because I am a person who is not you, with my own boundaries and everything? We actually exist.

(back to Ramon)

Can you do it? Please say yes.

RAMON

(sighs)

Okay -

KRISTEN

I love you!

And she switches off the phone.

AUDREY

What if I wasn't done with him?

KRISTEN

You were.

INT. LAUNDRY LOUNGE - SAME TIME - DAY.

Ramon pockets his phone.

RAMON

Where were we?

HENRY

We were flirting. Like we've been doing every day for a couple of weeks, since I started working here.

RAMON

Right.

They smile at each other for a bit.

HENRY

What are you doing tonight? I get off at five.

RAMON

(bummed)

My mom is throwing this big shindig for my dad's sixtieth birthday. I have to be there.

HENRY

Can I come?

RAMON

(really?)

That would be weird...

HENRY

Why?

OFF RAMON, smiling. He likes this guy.

INT. PARTY SUPPLY STORE - DAY.

Audrey loads up on BAMBOO PARTY PLATES and UTENSILS. KRISTEN appears wearing a HORSE HEAD MASK.

KRISTEN

I'm wearing this tonight.

AUDREY

Aren't you ironic.

KRISTEN

Clearly you have no idea what that word actually means.

(then)

We should all wear horse heads tonight, the whole family, and just act like it's totally normal, and when anybody asks why, we should just be like, what horse head?

She cracks up inside her mask.

AUDREY

(eyes her)

Are you high?

KRISTEN

Yes.

(off her look)

Mom. It's medicine. I have a prescription.

AUDREY

You're too young to have a prescription. Your brother has a prescription.

KRISTEN

They both do. And you should be glad I get high, because if I didn't, I would be bipolar. I'm not kidding.

AUDREY

Honey, your brain is not even fully formed yet -

KRISTEN

Did you smoke pot when you were my age?

AUDREY

I also did L-S-D in college, which can actually trigger psychosis in rare cases. Does that mean you should do it?



KRISTEN

Maybe.

AUDREY

And you know I regret smoking pot.  
I'm sure it had something to do  
with my compromised attention  
skills.

KRISTEN

Mom. You don't have A-D-D.

AUDREY

Let's leave any diagnosis to me,  
okay? I'm the professional.

KRISTEN

You just try to do more than a  
human can possibly do, so of course  
you're overwhelmed. But it's not a  
condition. Not everything is a  
condition.

(then)

You are, however, completely O-C-D.

INT. DUC'S OFFICE - DAY.

LYDIA (late 50s) sits, weeping.

LYDIA

It's too late now. Too late for any  
of it. Too late to have children. I  
mean, I could adopt, I know, but  
it's too late spiritually.

**DUC** (pronounced "Duke") BLACK-BISHOP (26, Vietnamese-American) sits across from her, listening. Duc is empathetic, smart and charismatic.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

It's too late to leave Carl, even  
if I knew for sure that's what I  
wanted to do.

They sit in STRAIGHT BACK CHAIRS, directly facing each other. It's more confrontational than traditional therapy setups. The office itself is stylish, minimalist, eclectic. It looks like something out of a magazine.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

Because it's much too late for me to find a man I might actually be compatible with, because even if such a man existed, he's already married and old and probably dead.

DUC

But you're alive, Lydia. And is this how you want to live? Mourning imaginary lives you will never have? Use logic. Can you change the past?

LYDIA

No.

DUC

Does the past exist? Here, now?

LYDIA

Uh, no?

DUC

What exists?

LYDIA

Right now?

DUC

Precisely.

LYDIA

Uhm...

DUC

Right now.

LYDIA

I'm thinking.

DUC

No. Right now. That's what exists. Right now is all that ever exists.

LYDIA

(skeptical)

My old therapist told me it was important to grieve, so I could move on.

DUC

When did she tell you this?

LYDIA

Well, I stopped seeing her almost  
three years ago -

DUC

And how has three years of grieving  
worked out for you?

A beat.

LYDIA

(fresh tears)

Three years I could have been -

DUC

Those three years are never coming  
back, Lydia. Never. No matter how  
much you cry.

(takes her hands in his)

What. Exists.

LYDIA

Right now.

DUC

(nods)

Right now.

She smiles through her tears, hoping he's right.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE DUC'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER - DAY.

Duc shows Lydia out, an intense-looking YOUNG MAN seated in  
the waiting room behind them, texting. Lydia hugs Duc; he  
hugs her back warmly.

LYDIA

If I needed an extra session this  
week -

DUC

I'll text you what's available.

She looks at him with deep gratitude, then heads toward the  
elevator. As DUC SHUTS THE DOOR -

DUC (CONT'D)

Ready, Brandon?

SLOW PUSH-IN on the DOOR, on which a PLACQUE is mounted.  
Simple, contemporary, elegant, it reads:

**DUC BLACK-BISHOP**  
**Life Coach**

ASHLEY (O.S.)  
Okay, what is wrong with this picture?

INT. WAREHOUSE - ASHLEY'S OFFICE - DAY.

ON A COMPUTER MONITOR: An ONLINE CLOTHING STORE WEBSITE. ROWS OF PICTURES OF T-SHIRTS worn by MALE MODELS; all pictures have been CROPPED JUST ABOVE THE MEN'S LIPS, so we don't really see their faces and they remain anonymous.

ASSISTANT STYLIST (O.S.)  
Uhm.

WIDER. **ASHLEY** SMITH (31, African-American) sits at her desk, stylishly casual. She's turned her computer monitor around so it can be seen by an ASSISTANT STYLIST (20s). RANDY (18), a male model in T-shirt, chinos and some sort of retro HAT, leans against the wall.

ASHLEY  
(points to screen)  
Men do not like to look other men they don't know in the eye. So on male models, everything above the mouth is cropped out. So the consumer doesn't feel inadequate.

ASSISTANT STYLIST  
Okay.

ASHLEY  
How much time did it take you to decide to put this hat on Randy? I bet you went through a lot of options. I understand you were in the accessories vault for over an hour.

ASSISTANT STYLIST  
Uhm.

ASHLEY  
Uhm?

ASSISTANT STYLIST  
(near tears)  
I'm a good stylist.

ASHLEY

You have potential. But you're slow, and you waste time. Like with this hat thing today.

ASSISTANT STYLIST

Well, if they're not supposed to wear hats, why are there so many of them in the accessories vault?

ASHLEY

(are you questioning me?)  
They were probably featured products at one point.

ASSISTANT STYLIST

Well, you would have to see the guy's face then, right? If it's the hat we're selling.

ASHLEY

Are we really having this conversation? Hats, gloves, belts, socks are shot solo. Not worn by models. Have you seen our website? And we're not selling the hat! We're selling the T-shirt!

The Assistant Stylist can't hold it back anymore and starts to cry full-on.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)

Okay, get out of here if you're going to do that. Get back to work.  
(off her inaction)  
I will fire you right now.

The Assistant Stylist scurries out; Ashley yells after her:

ASHLEY (CONT'D)

I have to get anywhere from twenty to two hundred usable shots out of each photo bay every. Single. Day. Think about that next time you're browsing through the accessories vault!

RANDY

You just destroyed that poor girl. She'll end up turning tricks behind a laundromat for meth money, trying to erase the pain of this day.

Ashley LAUGHS. Her PHONE RINGS.

ASHLEY

Let me know if she does anything else stupid. And help motivate her to be faster, if you can. I'm sure you can.

(checks screen, answers)

Duc.

INT. DUC'S OFFICE - SAME TIME - DAY.

Duc lies on the floor with his eyes shut, PHONE at his ear.

DUC

Hey, do you want to go for drinks before Dad's thing tonight?

Intercut with Ashley:

ASHLEY

God, yes.

DUC

Text me where, I'll meet you. Let's get fucked up tonight.

ASHLEY

You are on.

DUC

I have coke.

ASHLEY

Great, we'll be celebutards.

She clicks off the phone, in a better mood. Notices Randy is still there.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)

How old are you?

RANDY

Eighteen.

ASHLEY

Get out of my office.

He LAUGHS, leaves. Ashley smiles; she enjoys her life. Opens her desk drawer, pulls out a PRESCRIPTION BOTTLE, takes a PILL. We hear a MAN GRUNTING, a WOMAN MOANING -

INT. CHEAP HOTEL - DAY.

**GREG** BISHOP (60) fucks FAMIKO (20s), a young Japanese woman. Golden boy and athlete when he was younger, Greg's gone a little doughy; but he fucks her like a teenager.

INT. CHEAP HOTEL - LATER - DAY.

Famiko, still naked, lolls on the bed picking at ROOM SERVICE as Greg finishes dressing - jeans, sneakers, shirt & tie, blazer.

FAMIKO  
Happy birthday.

GREG  
You remembered.

FAMIKO  
I got you something.

She gets up, rummages through her PURSE, pulls out a small BOX, gives it to him. He opens it, pulls out -

GREG  
A cock ring?

FAMIKO  
It's a cock sling.  
(demonstrates)  
You put your cock and balls through here, and then this part presses up against your taint.

GREG  
What a thoughtful gift for a distinguished old fart like me.

FAMIKO  
Oh, please. You're better than twenty-year-old clients of mine.

GREG  
(startled)  
You have twenty-year-old clients?

FAMIKO  
I once had a client who was fourteen. His dad was Russian mafia I think, he bought me for his kid's fourteenth birthday. That kid was hung like a giraffe, and he had no clue what to do with it.

(MORE)

FAMIKO (CONT'D)  
(nuzzles him)  
Unlike you.

GREG  
I really should go -

He pulls out his WALLET, peels off BILLS, which he hands to her.

FAMIKO  
*Arigatou.*

GREG  
*Ariga-tou.*

She smiles, opens the door for him.

GREG (CONT'D)  
Same time next week?

FAMIKO  
Whenever you want.

He kisses her cheek, she smiles, he leaves, she shuts the door and counts the money, is pleased by what he gave her.

INT. PRIUS - LATER - DAY.

Greg drives, listening to NPR. Suddenly BURSTS INTO TEARS. He pulls over to the shoulder, stops the car. Holds onto the steering wheel, racked by heaving SOBS of genuine despair.

EXT. PRIUS/ROAD - CONTINUOUS - DAY.

FROM ABOVE, PULLING BACK: The Prius, alone on the road's shoulder. Greg's SOBS CONTINUE. WORKOUT MUSIC FADES UP -

INT. GYM - DAY.

WORKOUT MUSIC BLARES as we MOVE down A LINE OF ELLIPTICAL CROSS TRAINERS to FIND RAMON on one, legs pumping. He's in the zone. He glances down at:

HIS POV: The elliptical's DIGITAL DISPLAY. The TIME COUNTER increases by seconds -

**11:08 - 11:09 - 11:10 - 11:11 ...**

The TIME STOPS INCREASING.

IT STAYS STUCK ON **11:11.**



ON RAMON. Looks like he might laugh.

He presses buttons randomly, trying to get the time counter unstuck, but nothing works.

SLOW PUSH IN ON RAMONE, looking at:

SLOW PUSH IN ON **11:11**, unchanging.

RAMON

Get. Out.

He pushes buttons a few more times, finally stops, as he realizes this number is not going to change... and that's when -

The TIME COUNTER jumps to **11:23 - 11:24 - 11:25 -**

OFF RAMON. *Weird.*

INT. BLACK-BISHOP HOME - KRISTEN'S ROOM - DAY.

*CLOSE ON A COMPUTER SCREEN: JUMP CUTS as someone creates a new FACEBOOK PAGE. First name **ANGELA** - Sex **FEMALE** - Relationship status **SINGLE** - Interested in **MEN** -*

AUDREY (O.S.)

(from downstairs)

Kristen! I need you to come down here and help me!

*The FINISHED FACEBOOK PAGE shows us a beautiful COLLEGE-AGED GIRL with a perfect body in tiny running shorts and a sports bra. She smiles at us radiantly. She's fresh and innocent and hot, and she is not Kristen. She is*

**ANGELA MILTON**

ON KRISTEN, her face illuminated by the computer screen.

KRISTEN

(pleased)

I am perfect.

AUDREY (O.S.)

Kristen! Now!

KRISTEN

I would certainly fuck me.

She SHUTS HER LAPTOP and stands up.

INT. BLACK-BISHOP HOME - GREAT ROOM - DAY.

MOVING PAST FACES of CATERING WORKERS, FLORISTS, PARTY SETUP CREW, HOUSE CLEANERS - mostly Latino - listening to:

Audrey has assumed a place on the stair landing so that she's higher than all the workers below her.

AUDREY

(in Spanish, subtitled)

***You all need be out of here and in your cars by six o'clock, which only gives you eighty-five minutes, so let's hurry! Thank you.***

The house is tasteful, comfortable, rustic, eclectic, warm. PLANTS everywhere. All kinds of multicultural ART. Tons of BOOKS, lots of TEXTURES. Kristen comes down the stairs as the workers disperse.

KRISTEN

Are you making them leave because you don't want people to know the party is catered?

AUDREY

No. I just think it will be a warmer, more intimate party for Dad without zombies in vests lumbering around with canapés.

KRISTEN

You sure it's not because you want people to think you did all this yourself?

AUDREY

(stung)

You want to tell me what this ongoing hostility toward me is about?

KRISTEN

(LAUGHS)

That was wasn't even close to hostile.

AUDREY

Kristen. Honey. I promise I will understand anything you are going through. Because I've already been through it. Why not utilize my experience and wisdom?

(MORE)

AUDREY (CONT'D)

Most girls don't have that luxury.  
I know I didn't.

KRISTEN

You said you needed me. What for?

AUDREY

It's biologically determined, you know, this instinct to reject your family of origin -

KRISTEN

Oh dear God. Don't you ever stop talking?

AUDREY

What the fuck is wrong with you?

KRISTEN

Mom. I really think you should consider the benefits of medical marijuana.

AUDREY

I do not need a crutch, Kristen, And unlike practically everyone else alive today, I don't want one.

She hands Kristen a SHOPPING BAG, inside of which are several AROMATHERAPY CANDLES IN TINS.

AUDREY (CONT'D)

Put one of these in each bathroom, but do not light them yet.

KRISTEN

(examines candle)

Patchouli and Frankincense Organic Soy Candle. Ew. Flashback to the Red Moon party.

AUDREY

I can't believe you still haven't forgiven me for that.

KRISTEN

I will never forgive you for that.

AUDREY

For celebrating your first menstrual cycle in a maternal and sex-positive context instead of letting society shame you for it? Yeah, that's unforgivable.

KRISTEN

People at school heard about it.  
They taped maxi-pads to my locker.  
(on her way out)  
And that party wasn't even for me.  
It was for you and your old hippie  
friends so you could get drunk in  
the hot tub and grab each other's  
tits.

AUDREY

(temper flares)  
Don't knock it 'til you've tried  
it!

She closes her eyes and breathes, chastising herself for  
letting Kristen get to her.

EXT. PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY - DAY.

Establishing. We HEAR someone KNOCKING ON A DOOR.

INT. HALLWAY/GREG'S OFFICE - DAY.

ON A DOOR, as a GRAD STUDENT knocks. LETTERS ON THE OPAQUE  
GLASS read:

**H. Gregory Bishop PhD  
Chair, Philosophy Dept.**

INSIDE THE OFFICE: Cramped, but with high ceilings. Books  
everywhere. Greg sits behind his desk, swiping on an IPAD,  
focused and intense.

GREG

Yes?

The door opens and the Student pokes his head in.

GREG (CONT'D)

Michael, what's up?

MICHAEL

Hey Doc Bishop, do you have a  
minute?

GREG

Ah...

MICHAEL

(entering)

I'm really struggling with  
Phenomenology of Spirit. I can't  
even get out of the preface -

GREG

Michael? Can we schedule a time  
next week for this conversation?

MICHAEL

(embarrassed)

Oh! Of course!

GREG (CONT'D)

I'm working on something, it's time  
sensitive -

MICHAEL

Yeah! I'll schedule through Joan?

GREG

Excellent. Have a great weekend.

MICHAEL

You too!

And he's gone. Greg turns his attention back to his iPad.  
Resumes swiping, his eyes locked on the screen.

ON THE IPAD SCREEN: He's playing CANDY CRUSH with the sound  
turned down.

DUC (O.S.)

Our parents are kind of the  
Brangelina of Portland.

INT. BAR - DAY.

Ashley, Duc and Randy the male model are in a booth, Randy  
seated next to Ashley. He's still wearing the retro HAT and  
has a BEER; Ashley and Duc both have HARDER LIQUOR.

ASHLEY

Only older.

DUC

And not world famous.

ASHLEY

Or impossibly beautiful.

DUC  
Or richer than God.

ASHLEY  
But. They see themselves as being every bit as culturally significant, with their United Colors of Benetton family -

RANDY  
Their what?

ASHLEY  
Oh dear God. Really?

DUC  
Multi-racial family.

ASHLEY  
Our brother Ram is from Colombia.

RANDY  
That's cool.  
(off their looks)  
It's not?

DUC  
It could've been. If we weren't so aware we were advertisements for how hip and evolved our parents were.

ASHLEY  
How hip and evolved she was. He never cared as much.

RANDY  
Well, I still think it's cool.  
Somalia, Vietnam, Colombia...

ASHLEY  
We also have a little sister, who was born here. After years of infertility, our parents were suddenly fertile.

DUC  
Unless she's not our dad's.

ASHLEY  
She's painfully white. Like you.  
Where are you from?

RANDY

Wichita. First one in my family to ever leave Kansas.

DUC

You probably added fifteen years to your life by doing that.

(off his look)

Nothing against Kansas. But human beings are meant to move, to explore. Being stuck in one place too long is depressing. We need to be open to new stimuli, new energy.

RANDY

So how come you both are still here in Portland?

Ashley LAUGHS.

DUC

Well, I travel a lot. And I've built up a large practice of people whom I believe I am genuinely helping, I'm not going to abandon them. That would be unethical. But Ashley is just scared.

ASHLEY

Fuck you.

DUC

Don't be an angry black woman, Speedo.

ASHLEY

Don't be a ching chong Vietcong, Duck.

(to Randy)

Where am I going to go? L-A? I've shot there, I hated it. New York? Chicago? I can't do the winters. Where else is there?

DUC

Paris. London.

Ashley's PHONE BEEPS. She checks the caller ID, stands.

ASHLEY

I have to take this, sorry.

She walks away from the table. Duc smiles at Randy, Randy smiles back. Awkward.

DUC

I have to ask. What's it like to be you?

RANDY

It's okay.

DUC

Women must hit on you all the time.

RANDY

Uhm... yeah. It's pretty sweet, actually.

DUC

I can only imagine.

ASHLEY (O.S.)

Honey, I'm sorry -

EXT. BAR - CONTINUOUS - DAY.

Ashley paces, PHONE to her ear. Smokes a CIGARETTE.

ASHLEY

- but we're so jammed, I have two racks we haven't even started shooting -

Intercut with:

INT. ASHLEY & MALCOLM'S LOFT - SAME TIME - DAY.

The perfect urban loft, tasteful but not pretentious, maybe a little cold. Ashley's husband **MALCOLM SMITH** (35) cradles an angelic biracial TODDLER (HAYLEE, 3) in his arm, his free hand holds a PHONE, set on speaker. Malcolm is white, All-American, strong-jawed, decent and humble.

FRANK

No worries. I'm going to put her down until we leave for your dad's thing, so she can stay up late for the party.

ASHLEY (O.C.)

(on speaker)

- and that idiot assistant stylist I've been bitching to you about put us hours behind -

MALCOLM

Don't you think? She'll have a lot more fun that way.



ASHLEY

Aw. You're such a good dad. So you're okay with meeting me at my folks'?

MALCOLM

Oh, you're going to be that late.

ASHLEY

I'll make it up to you. I promise.

MALCOLM

We'll be fine. Try not to stress out.

ASHLEY

Love you.

MALCOLM

Yep.

Ashley disconnects the call. Marvels at how easy it's become to lie to him.

RANDY (O.S.)

I was thirteen.

INT. BAR - SAME TIME - CONTINUOUS - DAY.

Duc and Randy have put away another round.

RANDY

It was my American government teacher. Mrs. Brackett.

DUC

How old was she?

RANDY

Forty?

(off his look)

Oh, it wasn't a bad thing. At all. She was a total sex junkie. Taught me a lot.

DUC

Really. Like what?

(then)

You'll tell me if I'm getting too personal, right? I am just so fascinated by you.

RANDY

(smiles)

I don't mind getting personal. I like getting personal.

DUC

Oh, I'm not hitting on you. I'm asexual.

(off his blank look)

I have no interest in sex.

RANDY

Seriously? How could you - wow. Have you ever had sex?

DUC

Of course. It's just not for me.

This is something Randy cannot even comprehend. Ashley approaches, slides back into the booth.

ASHLEY

I hope you guys want another round, because I just ordered us one.

EXT. LAUNDRY LOUNGE - DAY.

Henry emerges from an employee's entrance to find Ramon waiting with his BIKE. He's dressed and groomed himself to look his very best.

HENRY

You look fucking adorable. For me?

RAMON

(it is)

No, it's for my dad's thing tonight.

Henry walks up to him, kisses him; Ramon is surprised but not averse. Henry breaks the kiss, smiles at him.

HENRY

Hi.

(then)

We can put your bike in the back of my truck.

As he leads Ramon toward a VINTAGE PICKUP TRUCK:

RAMON

I have a favor to ask of you.

HENRY

Already? This is not a good start.

RAMON

You know that dry cleaner on  
Division Street?

INT. DRY CLEANER - DAY.

A RIVER OF CLOTHES IN PLASTIC BAGS MOVES ALONG A TWO-LEVEL CONVEYOR. DRIFT DOWN to FIND RAMON at a counter, Henry just behind him. A CLERK waits for the conveyor to bring the right order to her.

RAMON

Thanks for doing this.

HENRY

Thank you for doing this.

He leans into Ramon, seductive. Ramon smiles, not complaining. Henry licks the back of his neck, making him LAUGH. The Clerk stops the flow of dry cleaning, retrieves a grey JACKET.

CLERK

That'll be eleven eleven.

A beat.

RAMON

You gotta be kidding me.

CLERK

Fifteen for the blazer, and your  
account has a three eighty nine  
credit for hanger recycling.

Ramon and Henry trade a look. Henry LAUGHS.

RAMON (O.S.)

"Many followers of New Age  
philosophies - "

INT. HENRY'S TRUCK - LATER - DAY.

Henry drives; Ramon reads from Wikipedia on his PHONE.  
"AWKWARD" by San Cisco on the STEREO.

RAMON

" - believe the number eleven  
eleven has mystical powers."

HENRY

Excellent.

RAMON

"Some say seeing eleven eleven on a clock is an auspicious sign. Others claim it signals a spirit presence."

They pull up in front of Henry's house.

HENRY

This is my house.

They look at each other and smile. "AWKWARD" CONTINUES over -

INT. HENRY'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER - DAY.

CLOSE ON RAMON AND HENRY in profile, kissing, Ramon leaning back against a wall. They're in no hurry, enjoying this.

RAMON

This is an auspicious sign.

HENRY

I'm your spirit presence.

WIDER: Ramon LAUGHS; Henry hoists him up against the wall as they have sex, naked.

INT. BLACK-BISHOP HOME - KRISTEN'S ROOM - DAY.

"AWKWARD" continues, on a Kristen's PHONE SPEAKER DOCK.

ON A COMPUTER SCREEN: *SCROLLING THROUGH PHOTOS - A cute, aggressively bearded HIPSTER with friends, drinking - on a snowboard - with a pit bull -*

Kristen sits at her computer, checking out the Hipster's FACEBOOK PROFILE:

*Interested in **WOMEN** -*

*Relationship status **SINGLE** -*

*Profession **SERIAL KILLER** -*

Kristen LAUGHS -

*The Hipster smiles at us from his profile picture - he's sexy and charming.*

EXT. PORTLAND STREETS/INT. PRIUS - DAY.

Greg drives, grips the wheel tightly. On the RADIO: The semi-annual PUBLIC RADIO PLEDGE DRIVE. Greg starts to hyperventilate. Closes his eyes and rigorously shakes his head, trying to circumvent a full blown panic attack - and not really succeeding. He suddenly SCREAMS, a scream of primal terror and rage.

HENRY (O.S.)  
I've been to Colombia before.

INT. HENRY'S APARTMENT - DAY.

Ramon and Henry in bed, post-sex. Henry's place is sparse, monk-like. Sara Hartman's "STRANGER IN A ROOM" from Bluetooth SPEAKERS. Ramon uses his PHONE to take a few pictures of Henry.

HENRY  
*Caño Cristales. Bahia Solano.*

RAMON  
That means nothing to me.

HENRY  
You don't have any memories of it?  
At all?

RAMON  
I was sixteen months old when they adopted me, so... I dream about it sometimes, but I think it's just some made-up version based on shit I've seen on TV.

HENRY  
Do you speak Spanish?

RAMON  
Oh, *si*. *Lo hablo muy bien*. My mom insisted on it.

HENRY  
(in Spanish, **subtitled**)  
***Did you not want to learn Spanish?***

RAMON  
(in Spanish, **subtitled**)  
***No, I wanted to learn German, because the German teacher at my school was very hot.***

HENRY

*Spanish is better. It's spoken more  
and it's a beautiful language...*

Henry's hand reaches under the sheet...

RAMON

*What are you doing?*

HENRY

*You speaking Spanish has made me  
very aroused.*

We HEAR A DOORBELL -

INT. BLACK-BISHOP HOME - STAIRS/GREAT ROOM - DAY.

THE FRONT DOOR OPENS TO REVEAL AUDREY, rollers in her hair, some sort of skin-revitalizing MOUSSE on her face. Her face lights up.

AUDREY

Well, hello! What is the best and  
smartest little girl in the world  
doing on my front porch?

Malcolm and Haylee stand on the porch. Audrey takes Haylee in her arms, practically ignores Malcolm as he follows her in.

AUDREY (CONT'D)

You sweet thing. *Mamacita* is going  
to just eat you up.

HAYLEE

No!

AUDREY

*Por favor?*

HAYLEE

No!

MALCOLM

I thought I'd come a little early,  
see if there's anything I can do to  
help.

AUDREY

There are tons of things you can  
do. Where's Ashley?

MALCOLM

She got held up at work.

ASHLEY (O.S.)  
They named me Subeedo.

INT./EXT. MERCEDES/BAR PARKING LOT - SAME TIME - DAY.

Ashley, Duc and Randy are in Ashley's parked MERCEDES outside the bar. Randy in the driver's seat, Ashley in the passenger seat, Duc in the back. ASHLEY SNORTS A LINE OF COCAINE off a MAKEUP MIRROR, hands it to Duc.

ASHLEY  
Some African name that nobody even knows what it means.

RANDY  
Sounds like Speedo.

ASHLEY  
Exactly. By middle school people were calling me the grape smuggler. Or sausage casing. Or chock fulla nuts. So on my eighteenth birthday, I had my name legally changed to the whitest name I could think of.

DUC  
I kept mine. I like it. It sounds kinda badass but it means "virtue."

Duc hands the mirror to Randy, who snorts a line.

ASHLEY  
(checks her watch)  
Shit, it's almost seven. We need to get going.  
(to Randy)  
You're not going to wreck my car, are you? I love my car.

DUC  
Do you even have a driver's license?

RANDY  
(cranks car)  
Of course I do.

WIDE: As the MERCEDES BACKS OUT AND PULLS OFF:

ASHLEY (O.S.)  
I've got Listerine in my purse if anybody wants some.

And the MERCEDES WIPES SCREEN -

INT. BLACK-BISHOP HOME - MASTER BATHROOM - DAY.

INSIDE THE SHOWER: Greg bathes, WEEPING audibly. We HEAR THE DOOR OPEN; and he becomes silent, although the tears still flow.

Audrey enters the bathroom. The face cream is gone and she's applied makeup, but her hair is still in rollers, which she takes out over the following:

AUDREY  
(checks herself in mirror)  
Ramon is still not here with your jacket.

GREG  
That's okay, I'll wear my black Hugo Boss -

AUDREY  
I much prefer your camel cashmere. It softens you. Not that you need much softening these days.  
(then)  
So I'm going to make a toast to you, thirty plus years together, the kids, blah blah blah, and then you'll make your speech.

INSIDE THE SHOWER: Greg shuts his eyes, miserable.

GREG  
Aw, sweetheart, I really don't feel up to it. Can't we just -

AUDREY  
Greg, you're turning sixty. It's a milestone, that needs to be marked. It needs ritual!

She exits, pulling the door shut behind her.

IN THE SHOWER: Greg sighs, dejected. Talks to his soap, as if it were a microphone.

GREG  
(humble)  
I've been blessed, by so much...  
(then)  
So why do I feel petrified all day?  
(MORE)



GREG (CONT'D)

Why is my heart trying to jump out of my chest when I wake up? Why do I wish I would go ahead and have a goddamned heart attack and die right now?

EXT. BLACK BISHOP HOME - NIGHT.

FOLLOW RAMON AND HENRY as they move slowly toward the front door. Ramon carries his dad's DRY-CLEANED JACKET; Henry wears what he's been wearing all day: WHITE SHIRT, BLACK PANTS, VEST.

RAMON

Just so you know... I've never brought a guy home before, even though my mom has been dying for me to ever since I came out.

HENRY

So... I'm going to seem like kind of a big deal.

RAMON

Sorry.

HENRY

Should I make a surprise proposal to you in front of everyone?

RAMON

(not amused)

No.

HENRY

I seriously have got to pee.

INT. BLACK BISHOP HOME - ENTRY/GREAT ROOM - NIGHT.

About a DOZEN GUESTS chat, drink, peruse the artfully arranged COLD BUFFET on the DINING ROOM TABLE, which has been extended to its full length. FOUR CARVED AFRICAN CANDLESTICKS are EVENLY PLACED down the table's center. The front door opens and RAMON AND HENRY ENTER. Malcolm spots them and approaches, carrying Haylee.

HAYLEE

*Tio Ramon!*

Ramon takes her from Malcolm, HANGS THE DRY-CLEANED JACKET on a COAT RACK in the foyer.

RAMON  
(takes her from Malcolm)  
Hey! I'm so excited you're here!  
(big kiss)  
Mwa.

HAYLEE  
Mwa!

MALCOLM  
You're her favorite, you know that.

RAMON  
Well, she's mine, so it all works  
out. Haylee, this is my friend  
Henry.

Haylee eyes him, suspicious.

RAMON (CONT'D)  
(to Henry)  
And this is my brother-in-law  
Malcolm.

Malcolm gives Henry a masculine handshake.

MALCOLM  
Pleasure to meet you, Henry.

HENRY  
Likewise. Uhm, where's the  
bathroom?

MALCOLM  
End of the hall. Just follow the  
smell of patchouli.

As Henry heads off, Kristen spills down the stairs and makes  
a beeline for Ramon.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)  
He's cute.

RAMON  
I barely know him.

MALCOLM  
Enjoy that while it lasts.

KRISTEN  
Ram! Where have you been? You have  
to come with me right now.

She snatches Haylee from him and thrusts her toward Malcolm, who takes her. She grabs Ramon by the arm; as she pulls him up the stairs -

KRISTEN (CONT'D)

You promised me you would be early.

RAMON

Uh, something came up.

EXT. BLACK-BISHOP HOME - NIGHT.

Ashley's MERCEDES PULLS UP TO THE CURB. We FOLLOW HER, DUC AND RANDY as they get out and walk toward the house:

ASHLEY

Okay, suck it up, boys. No one can see how inebriated we are. No one.

DUC

(LAUGHS)

Coming home wasted and having to act straight for Mom and Dad. It's like I'm back in high school.

RANDY

I am in high school.

Ashley stares at him, horrified, as if she just saw him for the first time.

ASHLEY

Randy, you are Duc's friend, okay? I picked you guys up on my way over. You and I just met.

RANDY

Why?

ASHLEY

Because I don't want my husband to think I am bringing an underage boy to the party.

RANDY

You're married?

(then)

Actually, that doesn't surprise me.

ASHLEY

What the fuck does that mean?

RANDY

It means you're beautiful and smart  
and hot. Of course you're married.

ASHLEY

Aw. You're either really sweet or a  
complete douchebag.

THEY REACH THE FRONT DOOR. Ashley opens it and we FOLLOW THEM  
INTO -

INT. BLACK-BISHOP HOME - FOYER/GREAT ROOM - CONTINUOUS - DAY.

About THIRTY GUESTS by now. They mill about, enjoying the  
food and drinks, chat. Ashley spots Malcolm holding Haylee,  
makes her way toward them, holds her hands out to embrace her  
daughter. Haylee sees her, does the same.

HAYLEE

Mommy!

ASHLEY

(takes her)

Hey baby. Don't you look nice!

(to Malcolm)

Daddy did a great job dressing you.

(kisses him)

Hi. Sorry I'm so late.

MALCOLM

No prob. You smell like Listerine.

ASHLEY

I had tuna for lunch, know how that  
stays with you? I may have overdone  
it.

ON DUC AND RANDY, watching.

RANDY

Wow. He looks like the President,  
in a movie.

DUC

Right? The All-American white hero.  
And Republican to boot. That's why  
she married him, to piss our mom  
off.

KRISTEN (O.S.)

He says he's a serial killer.

INT. BLACK-BISHOP HOME - KRISTEN'S ROOM - SAME TIME - DAY.

Kristen shows the hipster's FACEBOOK PROFILE to Ramon.

RAMON

Okay, you need to block this guy.

KRISTEN

Oh come on. What real serial killer would advertise it online? I'm sure it's just one online persona of many. It's like, performance.

RAMON

No. You need to block this guy.

KRISTEN

I'm never going to meet him! You think I want to see his face when the hideous beast that is me shows up instead of hot Angela Milton?

RAMON

Okay, first, you are so not hideous.

KRISTEN

Says the beautiful caramel-colored Colombian boy.

RAMON

You -

KRISTEN

It's okay. I've made my peace with being the pasty white chick of the family.

RAMON

Not listening. And you need to be really careful, Kristen, there are real psychos out there. I hooked up with one once.

KRISTEN

Really? Was it hot?

RAMON

Uhm, no. It was creepy. He made this face during sex that was terrifying. He looked completely insane.

KRISTEN

That's it? He made a weird face?

RAMON

It was more than weird. I could smell the crazy. Like he might go all Jeffrey Dahmer. I kind of put the brakes on hooking up for a while after that.

KRISTEN

How often do you hook up?

RAMON

How often do you?

KRISTEN

I'm fifteen, dumbass. Like never. Yet. And do not judge me. I'm not waiting for the perfect, you know, whatever. I just have not met anyone particularly interested. I mean interesting! Uh-oh. Was that a Freudian slip? Might I have just revealed my abysmally low self-esteem?

RAMON

You're unusually forthcoming tonight.

KRISTEN

I'm high. I'm always high.

RAMON

Is that a plea for help?

KRISTEN

Dear God no, I love it. Check out my new vaporizer.

She pulls a VAPORIZER PEN from a drawer.

RAMON

I got you this.

KRISTEN

Oh, right. Thank you!

She offers it to him; he partakes.

INT. BLACK-BISHOP HOME - DINING ROOM/GREAT ROOM - NIGHT.

Audrey makes her way through the crowd, checks the food table, adjusts something, adjusts something else. An academic-looking WOMAN approaches her.

WOMAN

Audrey, did you do all this yourself? I can't believe you.

AUDREY

Well. I had help.

WOMAN

Where did you find the time?

AUDREY

I made the time.

She spots Henry sampling food, heads toward him, alarmed.

AUDREY (CONT'D)

Do I know you?

HENRY

I don't think so. I'm Henry.

AUDREY

(sotto)

If you're catering staff, I made it explicitly clear to your employer -

HENRY

No, I'm here with Ramon. What is this I'm eating, it's amazing.

AUDREY

That's - I'm not sure what that is. Figs with goat cheese and something else. In what capacity?

(off his blank look)

Are you here with my son?

HENRY

Oh, you're Ramon's mom! Hey. I guess I'm his... date?

AUDREY

(thrilled)

Really?!

HENRY

Really.

AUDREY

(hugs him)

It is such a pleasure to meet you,  
Henry! Come, I want to learn  
everything about you...

As she drags him toward a sofa in the great room, we FIND  
ASHLEY AND HAYLEE off to the side. Haylee sits in her  
mother's lap.

HAYLEE

It was a dog.

ASHLEY

Oh, a dog! Did it have a name?

HAYLEE

No!

ASHLEY

Was he friendly?

HAYLEE

His tail went like this.

She wags her hand back and forth.

ASHLEY

That means he was happy to meet  
you. And who wouldn't be?  
(looks at her, then)  
Oh, you know who I need to take a  
picture of right now? Because she  
is so smart and adorable and so.  
Much. Fun?

HAYLEE

Me!

ASHLEY

You!

She pulls her PHONE from her purse, takes a selfie of her and  
Haylee. Ashley may be drunk and coked up, but she is a  
terrific mother.

ON DUC AND RANDY, watching THEM from across the room.

RANDY

Dude, your sister? I don't think  
she's going to fuck me tonight.

DUC

I'd be very surprised if she did.



RANDY

So why did she even bring me? She just likes playing with fire?

DUC

Ashley likes to play near fire. Without ever getting actually close enough to get burned.

RANDY

I mean, I get it. Her husband's hot. I would do him. Oh well.

(scopes the room for other prospects)

Everybody here is pretty old.

DUC

It's... a sixtieth birthday party.

RANDY

Aren't there any caterers?

People suddenly start CLAPPING as GREG DESCENDS THE STAIRS, wearing a BLACK HUGO BOSS BLAZER. He motions for everyone to stop the applause.

ON AUDREY, Henry still in her grip, spotting Greg's blazer. That's not the one she wanted him to wear.

GREG

Welcome everyone... uh, and thank you for being here tonight to celebrate this step forward toward my inevitable oblivion...

Some awkward LAUGHTER, but mostly silence. Greg LAUGHS, tries to lighten the moment.

GREG (CONT'D)

What do they say, sixty is the new fifty? Of course, they also said fifty was the new forty, forty was the new thirty, thirty was the new twenty. So I guess I'm about to be born any minute now...

He LAUGHS again, then -

His face crumples in despair for just a *microsecond* before -

He pulls it together and smiles. Most people missed it.

ON DUC, frowning. He saw it.

ON ASHLEY, frowning. So did she.

KRISTEN (O.S.)  
When was the last time you hooked  
up?

INT. BLACK-BISHOP HOME - KRISTEN'S ROOM - NIGHT.

Ramon and Kristen are both high, relaxed.

RAMON  
Uhm... a couple of hours ago?

KRISTEN  
What a slut! That's why you were so  
late? So getting dick is more  
important than your own sister.

RAMON  
Duh.

KRISTEN  
Who is he?

RAMON  
His name is Henry. He's here  
tonight, actually.  
(off her look)  
He kind of invited himself and I  
never said no.

KRISTEN  
So the sex was good. Well, fuck,  
introduce me to him.

RAMON  
Don't be weird, okay? I don't want  
to scare him off.

KRISTEN  
Oh, when am I ever weird?

She opens the door, grabs her HORSE HEAD as they head out.

INT. BLACK-BISHOP HOME - GREAT ROOM - NIGHT.

Greg, drink in hand, is conversing with guests when Ashley  
approaches with Haylee.

ASHLEY  
Happy birthday, Daddy.

GREG

Hey!

ASHLEY

You okay?

GREG

Yeah. I just, I hate - speaking to large groups of people, it's too much attention for me.

ASHLEY

You're one of the most respected philosophy academics in the country. You speak to large groups of people all the time.

GREG

Doesn't mean I can't hate it.

(to Haylee)

How's my angel?

He focuses on Haylee, effectively ending his conversation with Ashley, who decides not to push it right now.

ON RAMON AND KRISTEN coming down the stairs; Kristen wearing her HORSE HEAD.

KRISTEN

Have I ever told you just how much I love gay porn?

RAMON

Only all the time.

KRISTEN

All the girls at school get off on it. It's just so masculine.

Ramon spots Henry chatting with Audrey.

RAMON

(unnerved)

He's talking to Mom.

KRISTEN

That guy? Oh, Ram. He's uber-hot.

RAMON

I better rescue him before she unhinges her jaw and swallows him whole.

He heads off, but Kristen doesn't follow him. She wanders through the crowd, feeling secure in her mask.

KRISTEN

(to guest staring at her)  
I've been hideously disfigured,  
this mask is a necessity. Thanks  
for shaming me!

She spots Randy, leaning against a wall, scrolling on his PHONE.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)

Whoa.

She watches him for a few seconds before approaching him.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)

Hey.

He looks up, not at all fazed by her horse head mask.

RANDY

Hey.

KRISTEN

Or, perhaps I should say... Neigh.

She CRACKS UP inside her mask. It's such a dumb joke, Randy cannot help but LAUGH.

ON AUDREY AND HENRY, on a couch. Audrey holds one of his hands in both of hers. Stares into his eyes.

AUDREY

I'm so proud of Ramon for picking  
someone like you.

HENRY

Wow. Thank you? But you don't know  
me at all.

AUDREY

No, but I am a very good judge of  
people, and I get you. You and I  
are a lot alike.

HENRY

I'm not so sure.

Ramon approaches.

RAMON

Hey! So you met each other.

HENRY

We did.

RAMON

Okay, then.

(takes Henry by the arm)

My little sister wants to meet you.

AUDREY

Ramon, I just want you to know, you have my full, unconditional blessing.

RAMON

Uhm... well, of course I do. Not that I need it.

AUDREY

This one is a keeper.

HENRY

This one?

AUDREY

(indicating them both)

There's something very special about this.

RAMON

Yeah. We put our dicks in each other.

Henry tries not to LAUGH.

AUDREY

(cringes)

Was that really necessary?

RAMON

Mom. We're gay. We're not special. That's condescending and weird.

AUDREY

(stung)

Would you prefer a mother who disowned you? Or sat shiva for you?

RAMON

Sometimes.

AUDREY

I'm truly sorry, Henry, that Ramon finds it so important to denigrate me in front of you. You must be pretty important to him.

And she walks away, head held high.

HENRY

If we ever develop pet names for each other, I want mine to be "this one."

RAMON

Like, "Dinner's ready, this one?"

HENRY

Exactly. Like, "Surrender that ass, this one."

OFF THEIR LAUGHTER -

INT. BLACK-BISHOP HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT.

ON GREG, by the food table, chatting and LAUGHING with guests. He seems like he's really having a good time.

ON DUC, watching him. Audrey approaches.

DUC

Great party, mom.

AUDREY

Is it?

A beat.

AUDREY (CONT'D)

Aren't you even remotely interested why I might say that?

DUC

(considers)  
Remotely.

A beat. Audrey waits for him to ask her.

DUC (CONT'D)

Mom. You want to tell me how you're feeling, tell me. But you have to own it. It's not my job to dig it out of you.

AUDREY

Is this how you "coach" people in "life?" Passive-aggressively?

DUC

Yes, it is. And it's neither passive nor aggressive.

AUDREY

Celibately?

DUC

Well, that was aggressive. Hey, is Dad okay?

AUDREY

Seems to be.

They watch Greg for a moment. He's gregarious, energetic.

DUC

He seemed - something was a little weird - when he first came downstairs.

AUDREY

He's been very scattered lately. At first I thought it might be early onset dementia, but... it's not that he can't remember things. It's that he's completely preoccupied, completely lost in his thoughts. He's always been that way to some degree. He's been having a mid-life crisis since he turned thirty-five.

DUC

You don't have any idea what's preoccupying him?

AUDREY

I'm waiting for him tell me. He has to own his feelings.

Duc LAUGHS. Of all the kids, he gets along best with Audrey.

EXT. BLACK-BISHOP HOME - LATER - NIGHT.

MOVE SLOWLY past the back of the house. KRISTEN (STILL IN HORSE HEAD) AND RANDY EMERGE FROM THE KITCHEN, holding hands as they RUN DOWN THE BACK STAIRS. From what we can HEAR from inside, the party is in full swing.

INT. BLACK-BISHOP HOME - FOYER - NIGHT.

Audrey spots a COAT that's fallen off the coat rack and is crumpled on the floor. She retrieves it, hangs it back on the coat rack, discovers GREG'S GREY JACKET IN THE DRY-CLEANING BAG, left there by Ramon.

INT. BLACK-BISHOP HOME - GREAT ROOM - NIGHT.

The room is filled with the BUZZ of the HUNDRED OR SO GUESTS here. FOLLOW AUDREY as she moves between people, carrying the jacket, headed toward Greg, who's speaking to an academic-looking man.

AUDREY

Mind if I grab him for a bit?  
(as she leads Greg away)  
How are you doing?

GREG

I'm great. I'm drunk.

AUDREY

(takes his drink)  
Okay, only seltzer for the rest of  
the party.  
(holds jacket up)  
And that's not the jacket I wanted  
you to wear.

GREG

I know. It's the one I wanted to  
wear.

She looks at him sharply; he looks back at her, steady.

AUDREY

Wear whatever you want.

She walks away.

INT. BLACK-BISHOP HOME - POOLHOUSE - NIGHT.

Looks like it hasn't been used in a while. POOL CLEANING EQUIPMENT is draped over some of the FURNITURE. The DOOR OPENS, LIGHTS COME ON as Kristen and Randy enter; SHE'S STILL WEARING HER HORSE HEAD. SHE SHUTS THE DOOR AND LOCKS IT. Turns to Randy.

KRISTEN

You should probably know... I'm a  
virgin.



RANDY

Oh.

(then)

Okay, we'll need a towel -

As Kristen looks for one -

INT. BLACK-BISHOP HOME - STAIRS/GREAT ROOM - NIGHT.

Ashley, Duc, Ramon, Henry, Malcolm seated together. Malcolm holds a sleepy Haylee.

ASHLEY

Daddy looks happy.

DUC

Dad looks drunk.

RAMON

Come on. It's his birthday, he gets to be drunk.

ASHLEY

God knows, he was always drunk at mine.

DUC

Do you have siblings, Henry?

HENRY

Nope. Only child.

DUC

Lucky.

ASHLEY

Oh hush. You love it.

RAMON

(looks around)

Where is Kristen? She really wanted to meet you.

INT. BLACK-BISHOP HOME - POOLHOUSE - NIGHT.

Kristen lies on her back, pants-less, but STILL WEARING HER HORSE HEAD. Randy lies on top of her, his pants down around his ankles, his legs between hers.

RANDY

Let me know if I need to stop... or slow down...

KRISTEN

I will.

RANDY

Just breathe.

SLOW PUSH IN ON THE HORSE HEAD as Randy gently thrusts above her. We HEAR a sharp INTAKE OF BREATH from inside the mask.

AUDREY (O.S.)

Can I have everyone's attention?

INT. BLACK-BISHOP HOME - GREAT ROOM - NIGHT.

Audrey has assumed a place on the stair landing so that she's higher than everyone below her. As THE CROWD QUIETS DOWN...

AUDREY

We're here to celebrate the birth of my dear husband Greg, who I met when we were both at Columbia many, many centuries ago.

(holds for LAUGHTER)

I had never met a boy who was so comfortable around me. Some people say I can be a real... handful.

(holds for LAUGHTER)

But Greg wasn't intimidated. Or put off. He allowed me to be myself. In fact, he celebrated me. And he's done so every day of mine and our four children's lives, and we love him for it, as I'm sure you all do.

PEOPLE CLAP. Greg waves it off. The CLAPPING DIES DOWN. Greg stays where he is, looks up at Audrey, smiling.

ON AUDREY, smiling back. *Get up here, goddamnit.*

AUDREY (CONT'D)

Greg, my darling, the love of my life, wouldn't you like to say a few words?

ON GREG, smiling back at her. He really wouldn't. But guests SHOUT out "Yeah!" and "Greg!" then Audrey starts to CLAP, and EVERYONE ELSE JOINS HER. Greg gives in, takes her place on the stair landing.

GREG

Thank you, honey.

AUDREY

(sotto)

Please don't say anything  
depressing.

She smiles, steps back. Greg looks down at:

HIS POV: Everyone looks up at him, expectant.

He takes a very deep breath. Holds it in. Slowly lets it out.  
Very slowly. Someone COUGHS. Finally:

GREG

You know, I don't think anybody's  
life ever turns out the way they  
thought it would.

People nod, LAUGH. They've all been there.

GREG (CONT'D)

But that's the beauty of it. It  
surprises. Astounds. Things you  
never even knew existed become  
necessary, things you thought were  
vitally important are now  
irrelevant. Sometimes you feel like  
you're still a teenager, and other  
times your heart feels like a pair  
of invisible hands are wrapped  
around it, squeezing so tight you  
think it's going to stop beating,  
you almost wish it would...

People glance at each other, uncomfortable.

ON DUC, watching his father. Feeling incredibly sad.

GREG (CONT'D)

But it doesn't. It just keeps  
beating. And you just keep going.

OVER THE FOLLOWING, we FIND ASHLEY, then AUDREY, then  
RAMON... all wondering what's going on with Greg and where  
he's going with this...

GREG (CONT'D)

I'm a philosopher. I've spent my  
life thinking about what life  
means. Of course, I have no fucking  
idea.

Oh, good, a joke. People LAUGH, relax.

GREG (CONT'D)

I do know that whenever I look at my kid's faces, or I feel Audrey's body next to mine, when she finally decides to shut down for the night...

People LAUGH again. Seems like he's back on track.

GREG (CONT'D)

Whenever I see a student's face light up as they finally grasp an incomprehensible passage from, say, Kant. That moment of illumination, that moment of learning something, even if it's something we don't really need to know... especially if it's...

He stares off into space, silent. For a long time. People are confused, embarrassed, concerned.

AUDREY

Honey?

GREG

(abruptly)

In those moments, I know I'm part of something larger than me, something larger than I will ever be. Which, really, what isn't?

A silent crowd stares at him, unsure of themselves. He looks at them, reproachful.

GREG (CONT'D)

You really believe there's nothing bigger than us? That physics and chemistry are enough to explain everything you see, or taste, or feel...? Or dream? 'Cause I don't.

ON RAMON, listening, moved. Suddenly -

There is a deep, horrible SCREECHING, as if huge ancient metal plates are grinding against each other. Ramon jumps and CRIES OUT, startled by the NOISE, which CONTINUES.

RAMON

What the fuck is that?

The SCREECHING STOPS ABRUPTLY on the CUT TO:

WIDE: Everyone stares at Ramon blankly, as he reacts to A NOISE THAT ONLY HE CAN HEAR.

DUC  
What the fuck is what?

THE SCREECHING RETURNS on the CUT TO:

TIGHTER ON RAMON

RAMON  
That sound, that -

THEN RAMON'S HEAD SUDDENLY TURNS, AS IF MOVED BY AN OUTSIDE FORCE -

RAMON (CONT'D)  
Goddamnit! Not again!

- until he's looking at -

HIS POV: The dining room table, what's left of the party buffet and the FOUR, EQUIDISTANT, AFRICAN CARVED CANDLE HOLDERS, each holding a PILLAR CANDLE. The FLAMES OF THESE CANDLES ARE GROWING VERTICALLY, until they're each a COLUMN OF FIRE ABOUT THREE FEET HIGH:



ELEVEN ELEVEN.

RAMON  
(not liking this)  
What the fuck is this? What the fuck?

Everyone else is confused; no one else sees what he's reacting to.

HENRY  
(calm)  
What's happening, Ramon? Tell me.

RAMON  
The fire! It's fucking eleven eleven.

HENRY  
Tell me what you see.

RAMON  
What? You can't see the candles?

HENRY

Yeah, I can see the candles -

RAMON'S POV: The COLUMNS OF FIRE DETACH FROM THE CANDLES. FLOAT THROUGHOUT THE ROOM above everyone's head... then SPLIT INTO TWO PAIRS, each of which begins to ENTWINE AROUND EACH OTHER like the double helix of DNA.

RAMON

Now it's turning into D-N-A, two different D-N-A's -

A very concerned Audrey kneels by Ramon.

AUDREY

Ramon, did you take anything tonight?

RAMON

No. I mean, I got high, but - are you telling me you cannot see this?

HIS EYES FOLLOW THE FIRE COLUMNS as they float above his head, the DNA-LIKE STRANDS MELDING INTO TWO SINGLE STRANDS - which then INTERTWINE AROUND EACH OTHER -

AUDREY

The weed you smoked could have been laced with something. Who gave it to you? Was it Henry?

Henry ignores her, puts his arm around Ramon's shoulder, comforts him.

RAMON

It was Kristen.

Ramon watches the TWO INTERTWINED STRANDS ABOVE HIS HEAD MELD INTO ONE -

RAMON (CONT'D)

Now they're - it's all - it's all back to just one...

Ashley approaches Ramon, eager to console him -

ASHLEY

You're okay, Ram.

DUC

He's not okay, he's hallucinating.

And then abruptly, THE FIRE THAT ONLY RAMON CAN SEE GOES OUT. Ramon seems lost for a moment, then realizes everyone is staring at him.

RAMON  
(to Duc)  
I was hallucinating?  
(off Duc's nod)  
No one else saw the fire, what it  
did...?

People look at him, worried, apologetic. Greg, still on the stair landing, seems stricken. Ramon looks at Henry, frightened. Henry embraces him, comforts him.

ASHLEY  
What is that smell?

HENRY  
(looking at Ramon)  
His eyebrows. Are singed.

Shocked SILENCE. The FRONT DOOR OPENS and Kristen enters, STILL IN HER HORSE HEAD. No sign of Randy.

KRISTEN  
What's going on?

Ramon starts to cry in Henry's arms. Greg begins to weep as well. KRISTEN REMOVES HER HORSE HEAD.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)  
(worried)  
What's wrong with Ramon?

SMASH TO BLACK. After a moment:

AUDREY (O.S.)  
He's never exhibited any behavior  
that would lead us to believe he  
could have a serious mental  
disorder -

FADE IN:

EXT. MEDICAL BUILDING - DAY.

The STREET NUMBER, in BRONZE above GLASS FRONT DOORS:

AUDREY (O.S.)  
Quite the opposite, he's always  
been happy and outgoing.

INT. MEDICAL BUILDING - DAY.

ON A GLASS-ENCASED BUILDING DIRECTORY. Doctors listed in  
alphabetical order. FOCUS on one name:

**Joseph Yakoubian MD**  
**Psychiatry**  
**Suite 814**

AUDREY (O.S.)  
I am a very good judge of people.

INT. DR. YAKOUBIAN'S WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS - DAY.

WIDE: Ramon sits, stares at the floor. Scared.

AUDREY (O.S.)  
I was a therapist for almost twenty  
years before I became a lawyer -

INT. DR. YAKOUBIAN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS - DAY.

MOVING slowly past BOOKS in a bookcase: The Fractured Self.  
The Abyss of Madness. Reactive Attachment Disorder. PTSD:  
Wounded for Life. A library of fucked-up-ness.

AUDREY (O.S.)  
I treated lots of borderline  
personalities, narcissistic  
personality disorders, maybe -  
maybe - a sociopath. Maybe.

ON A FRAMED DIPLOMA ON THE WALL, conferring a DOCTOR OF  
MEDICINE DEGREE on Dr. Yakoubian from the UNIVERSITY OF  
PITTSBURGH SCHOOL OF MEDICINE.

AUDREY (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
But I've never really had  
experience with schizophrenia -

DR. YAKOUBIAN (O.S.)  
Let's not jump to conclusions.

Audrey and Greg sit in chairs facing **DR. JOSEPH YAKOUBIAN**  
(40s), highly intelligent, observant, soft-spoken and calm.





DR. YAKOUBIAN

There's no need. Understanding your dynamic will help me better understand Ramon.

A beat.

AUDREY

You're not saying anything we've done could cause our son to develop a psychosis, are you?

DR. YAKOUBIAN

I think it's too soon to make any definite judgement about anything.

GREG

You should probably know her brother is schizophrenic.

Dr. Yakoubian writes on his pad.

AUDREY

But Ramon is not our biological child!

DR. YAKOUBIAN

Yes, I'm aware of that.

A beat.

AUDREY

I know the longer one delays treatment, the worse it becomes.

DR. YAKOUBIAN

Ms. Black -

AUDREY

I was a therapist. And a very good one.

DR. YAKOUBIAN

Are you a doctor?

AUDREY

I'm an M-S-W.

Greg LAUGHS.

DR. YAKOUBIAN

I strongly encourage you to avoid any foregone conclusions.

(MORE)

DR. YAKOUBIAN (CONT'D)  
Psychosis and schizophrenia are words that get bandied about much more than they should, and they can be very confusing, especially to the patient. I hope you haven't been speaking this way in front of Ramon.

A beat. Greg looks at Audrey.

DR. YAKOUBIAN (CONT'D)  
Ah. So he's been scouring the internet, which will do nothing except fill him with fear and misinformation.

GREG  
She sent him links to websites!

AUDREY  
Greg, this is not couples counseling!  
(to Dr. Yakoubian)  
I wanted him to be educated. I wanted him to know what he might be up against!

GREG  
You wanted to control everything, because you want to control everything.

AUDREY  
I told you twenty years ago, we should have known more about his family's medical history -

GREG  
Of which there was no record, and we both decided that a child whose entire family had been murdered -

AUDREY  
You were the one who fought for it! In the end, I just gave up, like I always do -

GREG (CONT'D)  
- deserved a shot at a better life.

GREG (CONT'D)  
What? When have you ever given up?

DR. YAKOUBIAN  
That's enough.

He says this with a calm but firm authority, so firm that they both do exactly as they're told, staring back at him like children caught misbehaving.

DR. YAKOUBIAN (CONT'D)  
I think it's time for me to speak  
to Ramon.

INT. DR. YAKOUBIAN'S WAITING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER - DAY.

Ramon stands as the door to Dr. Yakoubian's office opens and Audrey, Greg and Dr. Yakoubian emerge. Dr. Yakoubian extends his hand, they shake.

DR. YAKOUBIAN  
Hello, Ramon. I'm Dr. Yakoubian,  
but call me Joe.

RAMON  
Okay.

DR. YAKOUBIAN  
Come on in.

As he leads Ramon into his office -

AUDREY  
We'll be right out here if you need  
us.

Dr. Yakoubian glances back at her just before HE SHUTS THE DOOR. Audrey and Greg stand there, lost. After a moment Greg sits, picks up a a MAGAZINE. Audrey remains standing; her shoulders sag, she covers her face with her hands and starts to cry. Greg looks up at her, but remains seated.

DR. YAKOUBIAN (O.S.)  
I can only imagine how frightened  
you must be.

INT. DR. YAKOUBIAN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS - DAY.

Ramon sits across from Dr. Yakoubian.

DR. YAKOUBIAN  
But I promise we're going to  
determine what caused you to see  
what you saw. And we are going to  
figure out how to treat it.  
Together.

RAMON

It wasn't a hallucination. I saw  
eleven eleven on a clock -

Dr. Yakoubian's brow furrows.

RAMON (CONT'D)

- which a friend of mine can  
corroborate, he was there, and  
also, he can corroborate the dry  
cleaning bill was eleven eleven.

A beat.

DR. YAKOUBIAN

It's possible seeing or hearing  
those numbers may have put the idea  
in your subconscious. Weren't you  
under the influence of marijuana at  
the time? Some cannabis strains can  
lead to... visual anomalies in  
certain people, which I know to be  
true, because I've experienced it -

But Ramon has gone silent, staring at -

HIS POV: On the floor behind Dr. Yakoubian is a FRAMED  
PHOTOGRAPH of a YOUNG WOMAN IN A TWO-PIECE BATHING SUIT,  
standing on a BEACH with a SIX-YEAR-OLD BOY.

The GLASS IS CRACKED, but we can tell the YOUNG WOMAN IN THE  
PHOTO IS THE SAME YOUNG WOMAN FROM RAMON'S DREAM IN THE VERY  
FIRST SCENE:

EXT. BEACH - DAY - 1970 (FLASHBACK - 8MM)

HOME MOVIE FOOTAGE, JITTERY, FADED AND OVEREXPOSED: MARI (25)  
stares at us.

MARI

RAMON. KHOSTATS'IR INDZ.

INT. DR. YAKOUBIAN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS - DAY.

ON RAMON. His eyes widen.

RAMON

Who is that woman? In the  
photograph, leaning against the  
wall.

Dr. Yakoubian glances at the photo, turns back to Ramon.

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DR. YAKOUBIAN  
My mother. Why?

SMASH TO BLACK.

**END CREDITS**