

I MELT WITH YOU

By

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EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - GRADUATION CEREMONY - DAY

TITLE: THE PAST

Abstractly: manicured green lawn lined with row upon row of folding chairs occupied by capped and gowned graduates, various viewpoints and perspectives, fresh faces, bright eyes, smiles. Hope and expectation in bright June sunlight. A public address system issues the final echoing words of an impassioned commencement speech.

VOICE

...and every person's fight with death is over before it begins. What makes the struggle worthwhile, therefore, cannot lie in the outcome, but in the dignity in which the fight is waged.

Voice swallowed by a vortex of thundering applause. Hovering dreamlike images flicker - proud parents, caps launched skyward, bodies scattering, clustered groups, a collage of camera flash and nostalgia.

FOUR MALE GRADUATES edge into semi-focus: one taller, one wider, one darker, one narrower. They amble, shuffle and preen.

We don't engage them as they come to a top step, arms over shoulders and around waists, until they become one unit, one shape.

Comrades, chums, buds, mates. Best Friends Forever.

Pointed in various freezes and poses by unseen photographers, they shift and reassemble.

With the final flash of white we see PURE WHITE, forming into a A HUGE MOUND OF WHITE POWDER

RAPID FIRE IMAGES UNDERSCORE THE TIME: needle drops, vinyl, loud music blasts, Walkman, Ray-Bans, razor blade chops lines high speed, mouths suck alcohol, bands we love - Undertones, X, Buzzcocks, Ramones, English Beat

FROM ABOVE

Four male shapes huddle around a glass table, A LARGE SHEET OF PAPER in the center. CUT FROM ONE HAND TO ANOTHER WRITING WORDS: *promise... 25 years ... what this feels ... to forget ...to FAIL*

FROM BELOW

Faces bend toward the glass, toward us, rolled bill in nostril, gleam in eye, fast slow fast, focus of vision, intention, desire, animated. We feel it in our gut.

CONTINUED:

Then from four corners of the screen, limbs, hands, reaching out, toward each other, stacking on each other in some communal mask, descending and blocking our view until the screen goes BLACK

TITLE: THE PRESENT

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE, EXAMINATION ROOM - NYC - DAY

A DOCTOR, handsome but drawn, clean shaven, crisp white doctor's jacket.

TITLE: JONATHAN, 44.

Going through the motions as he treats a WEALTHY FEMALE PATIENT in her late 50's. She sits on the examination table, deftly texting on her blackberry as she answers without looking up.

JONATHAN

So it's your hands, nonspecific, but very uncomfortable.

PATIENT

Yes.

JONATHAN

You need something for the pain.

PATIENT

I need something for the pain.

JONATHAN

Yes.

Jonathan nods, writes out a prescription: Oxycontin. She stops texting, takes cash out of her Fendi bag, lays it on the examination table.

She takes the prescription, leaves without saying goodbye. Jonathan removes a pill bottle from his jacket, takes one out, dry swallows it.

His eye is caught by his medical degree on the wall; it seems to mock him.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK CAROUSEL - LATE AFTERNOON

Establishing. End of the ride. Jonathan's six-year-old son MILES rides a colorful carousel horse while Jonathan waits and watches. The doctor we met in the office is manifestly different than Jonathan here. He is lighter, almost happier now.

CONTINUED:

Miles climbs off the horse, makes eye contact. Smiles as he runs toward him. Jonathan bends down to greet Miles, lifts him.

JONATHAN

First time by yourself! Daddy's so proud of you.

Jonathan turns to leave the carousel area. Miles looks at his father's face, touches it as they walk.

MILES

I wasn't scared.

JONATHAN

I could see that.

They walk a few steps until they hear woman's voice call out -

JANE

Miles?

They look up, see JANE, Jonathan's ex-wife, Miles' mother. Jonathan's face falls. One look profiles Jane: Upper East Side money. Miles squirms free of Jonathan, bolts toward her without a word.

When Miles is directly between his mother and father he stops, looks back, waves at his father, then hurries toward his mother. Jonathan and Jane make eye contact.

Ten years of marriage in three seconds of uneasy silence.

Miles and his mother leave. Jonathan watches them go. His eyes go dead as he stands utterly still and watches them go.

EXT. MANSION - ATLANTA - SAME TIME - DAY

Establishing Southern suburban bliss.

INT. MANSION - BATHROOM

Bathroom is LARGE. Modern. A PLASMA TV in connecting bedroom blares business news.

INSIDE THE SHOWER

A MAN leans against the marbled wall, listening. A little overweight. He looks stressed, and so engaged with the news he swears under his breath on certain bits of information.

TITLE: RON, 44

Ron's wife AMANDA calls out from the bedroom.

CONTINUED:

AMANDA (O.S.)
Darling?

His transformation from stressed to cheery is uncanny.

RON
Hi baby!

She turns the business news down.

AMANDA (O.S.)
(warm)
My handsome man, Tiffany wants to know if
she can stay over at Andrea's tonight.

RON
And I am being consulted why?

AMANDA (O.S.)
You're leaving for a week and I thought
she should stay home and we could all go
to dinner at that new fusion place. But
then I thought, if we were alone...
(she giggles mischievously)

RON
I'll see her in the morning before I
leave.

Amanda turns the business news back up loud and distress
returns to Ron's face

EXT. MANSION - ATLANTA - NEXT DAY - MID DAY

Ron walks out, overnight bag in hand, heads to his new Audi
in the driveway. Ron's daughter, TIFFANY (16), rushes out as
he reaches his car.

TIFFANY
Daddy!

Ron stops, smiles at her as she runs up and hugs him.

RON
Bye baby doll.

TIFFANY
Promise me we'll do something together
when you get back?

RON
Have I ever let you down on a promise?

She purrs "no" and kisses his cheek. He loves her.

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - BOSTON

YOUNG TEENS file out loudly. A classic public school mix of all races. The TEACHER erases the chalkboard.

TITLE: RICHARD, 44

Richard, masculine, chiseled, turns toward the students, yells over the din.

RICHARD

Enjoy your week of freedom and remember
that every time you crack open Pride and
Prejudice I have impeded upon it.
(beat)
I am resolutely not sorry.

A couple of amused looks from the students tells us they like Richard. One kid, back of the class, waits for others to leave. JAVIER. Richard makes eye contact with him.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Dr. J, step into my office.

Javier walks toward the front of the class as the last students file out. He holds some papers.

MOMENTS LATER

Richard sits on the edge of his desk, Javier sits in the front row at a desk. Richard holds Javier's paper.

JAVIER

Yeah but teach, I worked my ass off on
this.

Richard reads off it. Then looks at Javier.

RICHARD

The problem is, you're not there. You
don't exist, I don't see you. You're
writing, but you're...
(searching)
You're hiding.

Javier stands, bummed, reaches out for the paper. Richard looks around, then speaks in a hushed tone.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Javier, if you're worried about the
semester grade, don't be. I know you need
to hit a certain GPA for the high schools
and I'll take care of it because you
really try, you work hard.

CONTINUED:

RICHARD (cont'd)
But you told me you wanted to be a
writer. And yet you fail to listen to my
advice.

Javier looks in Richard's eyes, absorbs the words.

RICHARD (cont'd)
If you desire people to feel *anything*,
you have to be willing to expose
yourself.

Richard looks to see if Javier is processing this. A small smile.

He nods and turns to leave. Richard watches him go, moves to the door and locks it. He goes to his desk, reaches under, pulls out his briefcase snaps it open.

He removes out a pint of vodka and takes a huge pull off it.

EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT- DAY

Richard walks to his car. An old Pontiac.

INT. PONTIAC- DAY

Richard opens the glove compartment, takes out a bindle of paper, unfolds it: cocaine. He taps some out on his hand, snorts it, exhales loudly.

He removes his cell phone, dials. And as it rings...

INT. APARTMENT - CHICAGO - DAY- SAME TIME

Large loft apartment. The person who lives here has good taste and money. We hear a RING and then:

VOICE ON MACHINE
Timothy? This, my friend, is your friend,
Richard. We will be celebrating your
birthday on this little holiday, yes?
See? See? I did not forget you.

A man walks into the shot, shirtless. All American, athletic, light hair. Looks at his body.

He places an envelope in the center of his kitchen table, moves across the large open space toward the answering machine next to his bed, presses a button on the machine.

We see old photos spread out on his bed.

TITLE: TIM, 44

CONTINUED:

A large, old wrinkled sheet of paper covered in writing lays on his bed next to the photos. He picks it up and studies it, we see it from behind.

Fragments of writing are visible...and four different scrawled signatures. The same words we have seen in the past.

Tim deletes the message, then carefully rolls up the sheet of paper, walks out of the shot.

BLACK

DAY 1

EXT. OCEAN - DUSK

An aerial shot glides over the sea to the coastline.

EXT. BEACH HOUSE

Large. Isolated. Illuminated by the TWILIGHT. Rented *Dodge Neon* pulls into the driveway next to an OLD red Porsche.

Tim gets out of the car, stares at the house. Hears music blasting inside. He grabs his bag, walks to the front door.

INT. BEACH HOUSE - DUSK

Tim steps in. Sees the fire burning in the large fireplace. He moves to the stereo, turns it down.

TIM

Hello?

Richard appears. He and Tim stare at each other a moment. Old friends.

RICHARD

First thing he does is turn my music down. Nothing ever changes.

A familiar tone, joshing language established over the years. Richard moves to him, they embrace, happy to see each other. Richard releases, looks at Tim's face and body.

RICHARD (cont'd)

You don't age. What is the secret? Let's sell it and get rich.

Richard gestures to lines of coke on the coffee table.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Yes? For old times? It's cold and forsaken here.

CONTINUED:

Tim smiles.

TIM

Maybe a drink. To start anyway.
(beat)
Love the car by the way. Very you.

RICHARD

I bought it from some guy on the way from
the airport. Saw the for sale sign and
boom, impulse buy.

Richard moves to the coffee table, bends toward the mirror...

RICHARD (cont'd)

I intend to destroy it within the next
five days.

...and sniffs a line of coke as Tim watches.

TIM

Some things never change Richard.

Richard flashes a million dollar smile. For all his bravado,
charm is his currency.

Then, Richard sees something in Tim, some change, a dimming
of the lights in his eyes.

RICHARD

What is it? The big four five? You don't
have to worry. It's all the same. And you
don't age anyway.

The gentle joshing bounces off the pain. Richard's eye is
caught by a necklace on Tim's neck - simple but tasteful
pendant with initials: J.A.

TIM

Jill's. I've been wearing it again. Five
years ago this month.

Richard doesn't flinch, looks right at his friend.

RICHARD

Jesus. I Can't believe it's been that
long. Unfucking real. I'm so sorry.

Tim nods.

TIM

Every time I see you, without fail, you
say it, and I always believe you. And you
never try to tell me to forget.

CONTINUED:

Richard gives Tim a deep real hug. He comes out of it, relieved at the respite of smiling.

RICHARD

But per usual, I will be the reminder
that this week is about forgetting about
all that, just for a moment.

Like a magician pulling a rabbit from a hat, he shoves the mirror under Tim's nose, raises his eyebrows ala Belushi in Animal House. Tim can't help but laugh.

EXT. BEACH HOUSE - HOUR LATER - EARLY EVENING

Headlights down a NARROW ROAD. A battered taxi slows near the entrance of the driveway...

INT. TAXI - SAME

As it rolls to a stop. A LOCAL drives. Ron in back, staring out the taxi window toward the house.

TAXI DRIVER

This it?

RON

Must be.

INT. BEACH HOUSE - KITCHEN - SECONDS LATER

Richard's iPhone beeps. He looks at it. A text message: *when love, love will tear us apart, again.* He smiles.

RICHARD

(calls out to Tim)
Ron's here...

EXT. BEACH HOUSE - NIGHT - LOOKING IN

We see Ron, Richard and Tim greeting each other, old friends reconnecting.

INT. BEACH HOUSE - KITCHEN - TWO HOURS LATER - NIGHT

Ron, DRINK IN HAND, walks into the kitchen, laptop open, a picture of his daughter on the screen. He hands it to Tim.

RON

This is her.

TIM

So pretty. She's all grown up, Ron.

CONTINUED:

RON
Crazy right?

Tim passes the laptop to Richard. He studies her image.

RICHARD
She getting cock yet?

Tim looks at Richard, closes his eyes in disgust.

RON
I pray for your soul.

Richard looks at Ron, smiles.

RICHARD
Let me ask you this Ronaldo: when your daughter's hot 16 year old friends come over, do you sometimes wonder what it would be like to fuck them in the ass until they're cross-eyed?

Ron's reluctance to answer instantly gives Richard his opening...

RICHARD (cont'd)
See? See? I told you!

Laughter.

RON
Shut the fuck up and pass me the blow.

Richard hugs his friend Ron.

RICHARD
I merely say what others think and fear saying.

Tim passes him a CD cover with a mound of cocaine on it. The Doorbell rings. They hold a beat.

TIM
And then there were four...

INT. BEACH HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jonathan the doctor walks in, greeted by his old college friends. They've had a few.

TIM
Jonathan!

CONTINUED:

RON
The doctor is in!

Jonathan shakes his briefcase.

JONATHAN
He most certainly is.

RICHARD
How much you bring?

JONATHAN
Enough to treat the illnesses at hand.
Now make me a drink while I urinate and
get settled.

INT. JONATHAN'S ROOM - MINUTE LATER

Jonathan places prescription bottles on a dresser - Dilaudid, Oxycontin, Adderall, Fentanyl, Librium, Ketamine. He speaks a fragment from the Hippocratic oath to himself as he does...

JONATHAN
Whatever houses I may visit, I will come
for the benefit of the sick, remaining
free of injustice and all mischief...

EXT. BEACH HOUSE - THREE A.M.

Moon and stars in the sky. Silence surrounds this remote house. We hear laughter and music inside.

INT. BEACH HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME

Ron, Richard, Jonathan and Tim sit around the fire. A solid blissed out buzz, perfect mix of alcohol, coke, trust, time and freedom. Enough drugs to last, no responsibilities. Chatter is fast, they know each other's rhythm like a band that's played together many times.

RON
...no no no, it's a food aversion.

JONATHAN
Tons of women get it during pregnancy.
Certain foods make them sick, even the
smell.

Richard snorts a line off a CD cover, passes it to Jonathan.

TIM
Are there any particular foods that-

CONTINUED:

RICHARD

(interrupts)

You know what my aversion is? Talking about this shit. I see you guys once a year and we're talking about what?

JONATHAN

It's random. One theory is that it's the woman's system protecting the fetus from that which may be harmful to it.

Richard sighs loudly with boredom. Jonathan does a line, passes it to Tim.

RON

So when Amanda was pregnant with Tiffany, she started, you know, getting really nauseated. And guess what it was?

RICHARD

Oh God, do tell, I'm on the edge my fucking seat.

Ron looks at his friends.

RON

It was me.

Richard, Tim and Jonathan look at him, not understanding.

RON (cont'd)

Yeah. My scent. The way I smell.

Richard suddenly explodes with laughter. Tim and Jonathan follow suit. Ron shakes his head...

RON (cont'd)

(over their laughter)

I had to sleep in another room the first four months of the pregnancy! Or else she'd get nauseated!

The guys laugh harder.

RON (cont'd)

Upside was I spanked it to porn way more than usual.

Laughter.

JONATHAN

I think women have an aversion to me even when they're not pregnant.

CONTINUED:

RICHARD

Who can blame them?

RON

Well, as a doctor, you have an advantage.
You can knock them out with drugs and
take what belongs to you.

TIM

Oh my God.

This sparks something in Richard.

RICHARD

Tell them Jonathan. Tell them what you
told me about the twenty-year-old
patient.

Ron was joking. And now this. Jonathan looks down at the
floor. He looks up at his friends, not proud.

TIM

I don't think I can stay here for this.

JONATHAN

It was a one time thing, I swear it.

Jonathan looks at Richard, pissed he opened this can of
worms. But he opens up to his friends.

JONATHAN (cont'd)

A few years ago, a young patient came in
near the end of the day. She was very
pretty, to say the least, and...
(it's hard, but he presses on)
I used a little drug cocktail that
allowed me to...

He trails off.

RICHARD

Tell them what you did. After you sent
the receptionist home.

JONATHAN

I did things that...I basically lost
control...when I think back it just makes
me...

Jonathan looks down...his shoulders shudder...he cannot seem
to go on or face his friends...because...it's too terrible...
or:

CONTINUED:

He looks up, face distorted by the laughter he can no longer contain. Richard howls with laughter...Ron and Tim know they've been had. And they love it...

Hysterical laughter. Jonathan slaps Richard five.

RICHARD

Ally oop!

JONATHAN

Slam dunk!

(through laughter)

But I have to say, I'm saddened my "friends" don't even know what I do for a living.

(gasping, laughing)

I'm an MD for Christ sake, not an anesthesiologist!

He reaches into his pocket, pulls out a prescription bottle, opens it, and shakes pills high into the air...

INT. SAME - LIVING ROOM - HOUR LATER

Talking, doing lines, drinking. Music in B.G.

TIM

It was that girl, Emily. She was in the house next to us.

RICHARD

Emily, right, but wasn't it that guy Brooke Tuller?

RON

It wasn't Brooke, it was Mike Bevans.

JONATHAN

It doesn't matter who it was. Unless you want to remind them.

TIM

On Facebook.

JONATHAN

Yes. Post it.

Laughter.

RICHARD

Hi Mike! It's me, Rich, from college! Remember when Emily Sullivan shit on your back when you were passed out? How's the wife and kids?!

CONTINUED:

RON

Didn't we used to call it "dick-facing?"

TIM

But Emily had good reason, because Mike had non-consensual sex with her a few hours before when *she* was passed out.

JONATHAN

Double dick face.

RON

I fucked Emily. Did you guys fuck her?

RICHARD

Guilty as charged, your honor.

JONATHAN

I think she gave me crabs.

TIM

I fucked her boyfriend, Jeff Snyder.

Laughter.

RICHARD

That is so fucking great Jonathan! Because I gave Emily the crabs. So I basically gave *you* the crabs.

JONATHAN

Fuck you.

RICHARD

And I fucking knew I had them when I banged her!

Laughter.

RON

You know how you get rid of the crabs? It's a very old American Indian remedy.

They wait.

RON (cont'd)

You shave one testicle, then, with a good butane torch lighter, you light the other one on fire. Then, as the little fuckers race away from the burning ball you stab them with an ice pic as they run across the shaved one!

CONTINUED:

Laughter. Ron mimes furiously stabbing his balls. Tim tries to change the direction...

TIM

Is it possible to have a conversation that's a little less puerile?

RICHARD

Oh God, that's what I fucking hate!

TIM

What?

RICHARD

We can no longer do and say the things that make us fucking feel good.

JONATHAN

Saying and doing stupid things makes you feel good?

RICHARD

You know what I mean.

Richard rolls a joint and sprinkles coke in it.

RON

"Cock" doesn't make me laugh, but schlong does.

JONATHAN

When men pass forty they can no longer be honest about what makes them laugh. If you are, you are frowned upon.

RON

And if you're a father, you lose cred if you display immaturity.

RICHARD

Time doesn't just age you, it steals your right to laughter, which is fucking happiness. Which is a fucking crime.

TIM

Men are afraid. They think all other guys will think less of them if they loosen up, and so they don't.

JONATHAN

What is the replacement for happiness?

RON

You guys are so fucking pathetic.

CONTINUED:

Richard stands up...

RICHARD

But you aren't Ron, because you don't
need to participate in a conversation
that might be illuminating because you're
such a powerful man.

...and leaves the room. Jonathan raises the CD cover to his
face and snorts a line.

JONATHAN

I think I just found the happiness
replacement.

TIM

Pass the happiness.

Tim snorts a line. Ron checks his Blackberry. Jonathan
watches him.

JONATHAN

You should throw that on the fire.

Ron is about to answer but he's distracted by:

RICHARD (O.S.)

Happy birthday to you...

Richard emerges from the hallway, holding a cake with a
twelve inch house candle stuck in it at an angle. The others
join in as Richard sets it down.

RICHARD / JONATHAN / RON

Happy birthday to you. Happy birthday
dear Timothy, happy birthday to you.

Tim stares at it. It's a *Little Mermaid* Birthday Cake. Ron
and Jonathan laugh.

RICHARD

It was either that or one with a fire
truck.

Tim smiles at that.

RON

Aren't you going to blow it out?

Tim looks at his friends. Absurd as the cake is, he's
touched.

TIM

I guess I can die now.

CONTINUED:

He leans forward, blows the candle out. His friends cheer. Richard moves to the stereo, plays a song.

RICHARD

Come on motherfuckers!

He cranks "Out of Control" by U2 so loud the house literally shakes. The guys jump up - they know the words and the beat and the guitar hero moments and the 80's dance moves and the dance becomes a reckless awesome spastic ceremonial act invoking the past.

The music keeps pumping but the camera slows, and slows, and slows, until the guys are almost not moving at all.

THEN WORDS. WE HEAR A VOICE--- objective, observational, anthropological.

THE VOICE

Was it a sham or was it a ritual? At one time or another, they decided to keep it going. At first, they looked forward to it. It was a reminder of hellion days gone by, unabashed abuse and reigning freedom. But, as responsibilities grew, it became the excuse, the escape, a chance to become young again, to time travel, to hide and run back to that safe place where all mistakes were erased, where the poor choices hadn't been made yet. It reminded them of their original friendship, it was like they could all reach out and feel what it had meant, if only for fleeting moments. It went on this way for years, the ritual, the trip to Jamaica, the year in Vegas, the New York series as it was called. Always an excuse to run and remember. The music, the copious drugs, the feeling of invincibility, it was always the same. The belief they were forever twenty-one and their whole life lay ahead of them, full of promise.

DAY 2

EXT. BEACH HOUSE - BACK DECK - SUNRISE

Beyond the deck only sand and the ocean. A beautiful crimson sunrise on the horizon. Ron and Jonathan on lounge chairs wrapped in blankets. Quiet.

Ron stares straight ahead with bloodshot eyes.

CONTINUED:

JONATHAN

How much were you exposed?

RON

It depends on how much you're leveraged. The ones with the most exposure are the ones who got hurt. I was overexposed to the point where I can't accurately predict the outcome.

JONATHAN

Everybody got killed over the last two years.

Ron looks hard at the side of Jonathan's face, as if he is trying to see inside of him, evaluating whether or not to elaborate. He decides on this:

RON

There are some people...who are not very happy with me right now.

Jonathan looks at him as Ron stares back out at the ocean.

EXT. VILLAGE DINER - NOON

From the outside. We see the four guys inside.

INT. VILLAGE DINER - SAME

Off-season, off-hour, Muzak and ultra-bright fluorescent light. A few tables with LOCALS. Ron, Tim, Richard and Jonathan occupy a booth, rough and weary.

Ron eats a cheeseburger, sweats. Others haven't touched their food. Tim stares at a carved wood whale adorning the wall. Jonathan tries to balance a salt shaker on its side.

Richard taps coke onto the screen of his iPhone. He takes a straw off the table, snorts.

RICHARD

iSnort.

A mother, father, son and daughter walk in, sit in a booth nearby. Jonathan watches them through sad bloodshot eyes. Richard sees Jonathan watching them.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Don't feel bad, divorce is the rule, the happy family unit is the dying exception.

Richard looks at his comrades, measuring their state of mind.

CONTINUED:

RICHARD
Psychedelic furs.

RON
President Gas.

TIM
Madness.

RICHARD
Baggy trousers.

RON
Adam and the Ants.

JONATHAN/RICHARD
(unison)
Stand and deliver.

RICHARD
That was mine! English Beat.

JONATHAN
Fuck that!

TIM
Jeanette.

Richard passes the joint to Jonathan.

RON
Depeche Mode.

RICHARD
Just can't get enough.

JONATHAN
The Cure.

RICHARD
Boys don't cry.

JONATHAN
X.

RICHARD
Adult books. And I win because I now have
fifteen fucking points.

Richard raises his hands to the sky, almost crashes, grips
the handle bars.

They ride a moment in silence...Ron slows, turns back...

CONTINUED:

JONATHAN

Ron?

RON

Gotta make a call.

RICHARD

Use your cell.

Ron doesn't answer.

JONATHAN

I'm going to head back too.

Jonathan turns around. Richard and Tim coast along a bit in silence. Richard looks at Tim.

RICHARD

Go for a ride?

The sound of a racing engine takes us to...

EXT. BACK ROAD - RICHARD'S PORCHE - RACING - AFTERNOON

Speeding along a long straight road, engine screaming at max RPM.

INT. PORCHE - SAME

Richard drives, pupils so dilated his eyes look black. Tim is in the passenger seat, holding a rolled up bill stuck in an open bag of cocaine, waiting. Music blasts.

RICHARD

Now!

Tim pushes the bill into the powder, positions other end just inside Richard's right nostril. Richard accelerates and sniffs hard and we go to-

POV - RICHARD - LOOKING OUT

A rise in the road, a natural jump, right in front of them...

EXT. BACK ROAD - THE PORCHE

Takes flight, Tim counts to himself...*one one-thousand, two one thousand, three one thousand*...the Porsche slams down against the pavement.

INT. PORCHE - SAME

They yell over the music to hear each other.

CONTINUED:

RICHARD
Was that longer?

TIM
I think so.

Richard takes a bottle of booze between his legs, drinks.

INT. BEACH HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Ron stands stares at the TV in the living room - CNBC Business News. He holds a drink in one hand and TV remote in the other. Expression is tight.

Front door opens behind him. Jonathan walks in holding two bags with booze from the local liquor store. He sees Ron, the TV.

JONATHAN
Jesus man, give it a rest.

Ron looks nervous.

RON
Huh? Yeah.
(beat, thinks)
Actually, I need to do an hour's worth of work in town.

He clicks the TV off.

EXT. PORSCHE - SAME TIME

Downshifting on the narrow beach road, slowing and spinning a 180 on a dirt shoulder, tearing off in the other direction back toward the jump.

INT. PORCHE - SAME

Tim sniffs from the baggy. Music still blasting. Tim looks at Richard as he races toward the jump...

TIM
I'm going to miss you.

Richard doesn't hear it. He mashes accelerator to the floor.

RICHARD
Ready?

Tim is ready. Porsche picks up speed. Tim repositions the straw in the baggy of coke for Richard.

CONTINUED:

RICHARD (cont'd)

Now Timmy!

Tim guides the straw to Richard's nose, and just as he snorts they get air again and we go to...

EXT. BEACH - JUMP CUT - THE PORCHE - TEN MINUTES LATER

...as the Porsche slams down against thick white sand.

The car revs loudly down toward the shoreline and accelerates when it reaches the hard packed sand along the water.

INT. PORCHE - SAME

Tim cranks *Viva Las Vegas* by the Dead Kennedys as they bend forward into the speed, into the moment, into their shared past and present.

EXT. BEACH - WIDE SHOT OF THE PORSCHE

Racing down the shoreline, sending a half parenthesis-shaped splash high into the air behind it...

INT. PORCHE - SAME

As Richard veers off the shore toward a small dune, races the car over it, and it lands with a SAD THUD IN THICK WHITE SAND on the other side.

Richard and Tim look At each other. And burst out laughing.

EXT. VILLAGE - MAIN STREET - SAME TIME

Ron walks through town, seems to be looking for something. He looks nervous. He stops a WOMAN on the sidewalk.

RON

Excuse me, can you tell me if there's a
phone booth around here?

His blackberry rings in his hands. He looks, sees the screen, doesn't answer. She looks at his blackberry, puzzled, can smell the alcohol on him.

WOMAN

There's one outside the bakery around the
corner.

She watches as he walks away down the sidewalk...

EXT. BAKERY - PHONE BOOTH - MINUTES LATER

Ron. Inside the phone booth. Looks like a caged animal. Heated conversation at first, then he just listens. Then he simply drops the phone. Stands there a few beats. He opens the door and walks out.

Stay with him as he walks. Seems to be shaking something off. He mumbles to himself. His Blackberry rings: Amanda. He clicks "ignore" and then shuts it down. He continues walking, rounds a corner, suddenly stops and stares.

POV RON: Captain Bob's Deep Sea Fishing.

EXT. BEACH - LATE AFTERNOON - HALF HOUR LATER

In the distance we see the Porsche with two figures standing next to it.

CLOSER - SAME

Tim and Richard lean against the car. Tires are buried deep in the sand. We can see they've tried to gain traction by sticking driftwood under the tires, but no go.

Richard's iPhone beeps, he looks at the screen: *I will save you because God wants nothing to do with you.* He looks up at Tim.

RICHARD
Help is on the way.

INT. CAPTAIN BOB'S DEEP SEA FISHING - SAME TIME

CAPTAIN BOB is so salty and seaworthy with his faded fisherman's cap, white mutton chops and steely blue eyes he looks straight out of Melville.

He stares skeptically at Ron, knows he's not sober.

CAPTAIN BOB
...four guys, six hours...that's four hundred dollars. Need a \$150 deposit now. Got rod reels and bait. We leave at four-forty-five a.m. If you're late, I go back to bed and keep the one-fifty.

Ron gives him a credit card. Bob walks in back. Ron looks around at the bait and tackle, pictures on the wall of friends and fisherman with their catch.

CAPTAIN BOB (O.S.) (cont'd)
Card's no good. Least that's what they're telling me.

CONTINUED:

Ron grunts under his breath, reaches into his wallet, pulls out cash.

RON
I got you right here.

Captain Bob emerges from the rear of the store, hands Ron the card, Ron gives him cash.

CAPTAIN BOB
You might want to get some sleep tonight.

RON
Yeah of course. See you tomorrow.

He turns to leave.

EXT. BEACH - ONE HOUR LATER - DUSK

Sun is setting, turning red-orange. Tim and Richard are standing at water's edge, fifty feet from the Porsche.

Tim squats down and grabs a fist full of sand. Richard looks down at him.

TIM
This is the best I've felt all year.
Being here with you guys.

He stands, holds the sand in his hands. Richard looks at him.

RICHARD
Yes indeed.

TIM
I know it's because I can't feel
anything. The drugs...

Richard wasn't expecting that.

TIM (cont'd)
Still, I can't get this one image of Jill
out of my mind, of her...

Tim trails off. Richard waits for him to continue...

RICHARD
Yeah Timmy?

Tim doesn't go on. He squeezes his hand closed and watches the sand drop from between his fingers.

A BLASTING HORN MAKES THEM TURN: A TOW TRUCK RACES DOWN THE BEACH TOWARD THEM.

CONTINUED:

Jonathan hangs off the side like a fireman in a Fourth of July parade, cigarette in mouth, reflective sunglasses over his eyes, long scarf around his neck trailing in the wind. In his free hand he holds pitcher of Margaritas and glasses.

His grin is insane, beautiful. Tim and Richard look at him, then each other, and smile.

EXT. BEACH HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

We are outside, moving: RON is under a flood light on the side of the house, talking on his Blackberry, pleading, gesturing.

We move past him AROUND THE HOUSE AND THRU THE KITCHEN WINDOW we see TIM rinsing a glass under the faucet.

We KEEP GOING, PAUSE OUTSIDE A BATHROOM WINDOW. We see JONATHAN taking off his clothes.

WE CONTINUE MOVING ALONGSIDE THE HOUSE TO A BEDROOM WINDOW AND MOVE INSIDE TO:

INT. RICHARD'S ROOM

A large room, two single beds, ocean themed bric-a-brac adorning walls. Richard lays on his bed, drink in hand. A string attached to a locked attic door catches his eye.

INT. KITCHEN - SAME TIME

Tim watches Ron from the kitchen window. Ron is still on his cell, panicky. Tim overhears snippets: "they were not CDS plays" "straightforward push back based on defaults" "bullshit bullshit bullshit"

EXT. HOUSE - RON

We are right with him. We see his face, strangely demonic from stress and the shadows of the flood light.

RON

...a fucking government subpoena You are
fucking kidding me.

Ron listens. Says a barely audible "yeah" three times and then clicks off. He rolls his neck as if trying to twist the stress out. Takes a swig from the cocktail in his hand.

INT. KITCHEN - TIM

Pours two shots of Tequila. Methodically cuts two wedges of lime.

EXT. BACK DECK - MINUTE LATER

Tim walks out of the sliding glass door holding a tray with wedges of lime, tequila shots, salt.

TIM
Need a drink?

Ron shakes his nearly full cocktail, shakes his head. Takes a deep breath. Tim sets the tray down on the railing.

RON
I'm good now. Sorry for yelling, fucking incompetencies in my office. Stunning.

Tim nods. A strained silence. Tim sips his shot, catches the panic and fear in Ron's eyes for a FLASH but Ron masks it quick. Ron drains his cocktail in one long ferocious pull, takes the shot from the tray that Tim offered.

RON (cont'd)
Gracias.

Then he knocks back the Tequila.

RON (cont'd)
That's more like it.

Tim reaches into his pocket, holds out an old Polaroid to Ron - the four guys in college.

TIM
Recognize any one here?

Ron's studies it. He bursts out laughing in a forced weird laugh, trying too hard.

RON
Jesus, who the fuck are those people?
What's with that hair?

Tim laughs, drains his shot. Ron glances back at the photo, loses himself in it for a beat.

RON (cont'd)
So fucking long ago. I don't recognize that person.

A quiet moment, then...

TIM
Do you ever get scared?

CONTINUED:

RON
Why the fuck would I get scared?

Tim bristles.

TIM
Nothing specific I guess.
(beat)
Are you saying you're never scared?

Ron laughs.

RON
When my daughter came home early from
school and almost caught me jerking off
to porn. That scared me.

Tim sits on the railing of the deck, eyes averting Ron's.

RON (cont'd)
I make you sick, don't I Tim?

TIM
I don't really feel that way.

INT. HOUSE - RICHARD'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Richard stands beneath the attic door on a chair, holds a
small sledge hammer. He swings and breaks the lock open.

He almost loses his balance, regains his equilibrium, jumps
up and hoists himself up into the attic.

EXT. BACK DECK - SAME

Tim watches Ron, who absentmindedly looks at his Blackberry
screen.

RON
I'm not sure what you are asking me.

Tim thinks.

TIM
I guess I'm asking you if your life
turned out the way you thought it would.

RON
But you're asking me that cause you're
asking yourself, right?

Tim doesn't answer.

CONTINUED:

RON (cont'd)

Can't you just have a good time? For god's sake, I don't think about that stuff. I think about the present, what I gotta do today. Nothing else matters. That dreamy philosophy shit ain't for me.

TIM

Very hunter and gatherer of you.

RON

That's why I love you, Tim. You were always a little more evolved than me. Maybe being part girl can do that for you, help you develop that sensitivity.

Tim's eyes are pained. That was very below the belt.

TIM

It's interesting how people answer questions when they don't answer questions.

INT. ATTIC - SAME TIME

Richard pulls a string which snaps on a dim light. The room is empty, covered in a thick layer of dust. A few mouse traps dot the dusty floor.

He turns, sees a large storage trunk in a corner. He moves to it, opens it, sees paints and brushes. There is a single painting, at the bottom, brittle with age. Richard squats, takes it out.

It's a troubling child's painting: Earth engulfed in fire. Signed and titled in a child's hand: *"This is the World!" By Bobby, 9 1/2.*

Close on Richard's face as he stares. He stands, walks to the attic entrance, lets the painting drop from his fingers into his room below.

EXT. BACK DECK - SAME

Tim and Ron are staring at each other.

RON

Do you know what I think? I think I don't want to think, and that's why I came here. And you came here for another reason.

CONTINUED:

TIM

I came here to be with the people who
mean something to me.

Ron shuts down the conversation with this...

RON

There ya go. Now, shouldn't we go inside
and spend some time with them?

...and walks inside to the kitchen.

INT. BEACH HOUSE - BATHROOM - SAME TIME

Dark, save candles throwing shadows around the room and
flickering in the reflection of the bath water. Jonathan lays
in a large bathtub, glass of vodka on his belly.

Music plays softly on a boom box. Richard enters quietly,
takes in the scene, the music, silently kneels down next to
the tub. Jonathan looks at him.

RICHARD

Open your mouth and close your eyes.

Jonathan does. Richard reaches in his pocket, then drops a
pill on Jonathan's tongue.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Guess.

Jonathan feels the shape of the pill on his tongue.

JONATHAN

Dilaudid, a morphine derivative.

(beat)

I had a patient who offered me a large
sum of money for a prescription. Changed
the landscape of my clientele. She had
many rich friends.

Jonathan opens his bloodshot eyes, looks in Richard's.

RICHARD

(rhetorical)

And this became your practice. Rather
than the one you imagined you would have.

Jonathan is silent, then:

JONATHAN

I remember, in college, right after we
met, I remember saying, 'you can write
about people, and I can save lives.'

CONTINUED:

Richard taps the surface of the water every few seconds, creating ripples on which the candlelight rolls and shimmers.

JONATHAN (cont'd)

I used to go with my father on house calls. One time, when I was ten, my father was in the next room with a man who had bone cancer. I was in the living room with the man's two daughters and his wife, and the man was screaming in pain.
(beat)

They were looking at me like I had some answer, like my father was going to save him. I wanted to tell them what my father told me before we got there, that he was going to die. Soon the man stopped screaming. My father probably shot four hundred milligrams of morphine into him. When my father walked out of the room, they looked at him like he was some sort of savior. And I guess I did too.

Very slowly Jonathan sinks into the water and disappears under the shimmering surface.

DISSOLVE THROUGH TO:

DAY 3

EXT. THE SURFACE OF THE OCEAN - 5:30 AM

ANGLE TO REVEAL: a fishing boat slowly rising and falling on a gently rolling sea. Night's end is punctuated by the first glint of red-gold sunrise.

EXT. CAPTAIN BOB'S FISHING BOAT - CLOSER

Classic 37' foot wood boat. Deck with four bolted down chairs, an enclosed cabin with small table and food prep counter. Captain Bob sits with Tim and Jonathan on the deck.

LATER CABIN - SAME

Ron inside talking to Richard. We cannot hear them.

ON THE FRONT DECK

Jonathan sleeps. Tim gets out of his chair. Looks toward the sunrise, takes it in.

CAPTAIN BOB

Nice isn't it?

CONTINUED:

TIM

God yes.

Quiet now. Except sounds of a boat creaking on the ocean, mild early morning sea breeze, Ron and Richard's murmuring voices in the cabin.

CAPTAIN BOB

Lotta boats use sonar to track fish, for a guaranteed catch. But I don't.

TIM

We're along for the ride more than anything.

Captain Bob looks at Jonathan, who has fallen asleep.

CAPTAIN BOB

I can see that...

Tim's eyes are drawn to something on the coast appearing in the dawn light. Sheer white 200 foot cliffs which drop straight down onto the rocks below. Captain Bob follows Tim's gaze, looks at him and smiles.

TIM

So Beautiful.

CAPTAIN BOB

Little Dover. Named after the cliffs of Dover.

INT. CABIN - THREE HOURS LATER - MORNING

Sun rising in the sky. Ron finishes a large line of coke off the cabin table. Richard covers him so Captain Bob cannot see.

RON

First blow since last year. Remember Vegas?

RICHARD

Last year was Hawaii, the year before was Vegas.

RON

Right, right.

Ron sniffs his line. The morning sun shines in Ron and Richard's bloodshot eyes. Ron removes a pill from his pocket, swallows it. Richard dumps out more coke from a baggy.

CONTINUED:

RICHARD

Cover me.

(as Ron moves between him and Captain Bob)

I'm a rich 45 year old ad man hiding drugs and from a guy named Captain Bob. Fuck ME.

Richard snorts loud, straightens up, holds a finger to his nose.

RICHARD (cont'd)

I could buy this boat yet here I am hiding like a fucking twelve year old.

RON

Makes you feel young. Isn't that the point?

Ron puts his hand to his chest.

RON (cont'd)

Beating like crazy.

Richard smiles. The devilish one.

RICHARD

Means you're alive.

EXT. MAIN DECK - SAME

Tim and Captain Bob. Jonathan in a deep sleep. Captain Bob stands next to a fishing rod, which ticks slowly as the line draws out. Tim sits on a deck chair.

CAPTAIN BOB

So it's reunion, huh?

TIM

We went to college together. Jonathan and Richard have known each other since grade school.

CAPTAIN BOB

Nice to catch up.

Tim doesn't respond. Waves slap against the hull of the boat.

CAPTAIN BOB (cont'd)

I left school when I was fourteen and the sea kept me moving, so I never did have any reunions. The ones I remember are with my wife after long fishing trips back when I did commercial work.

CONTINUED:

We see a trace of dread on Tim's face. Is this guy going to talk his ear off?

CAPTAIN BOB (cont'd)
She died 11 years ago. Cancer. I spent most days just drifting out here, trying to understand.
(he adjusts a fishing line)
Suddenly I noticed so many miserable people arguing with each other, husbands and wives treating each other like animals.

Tim listens, engaged, no longer worried about being held captive.

CAPTAIN BOB (cont'd)
I stopped feeling sorry for myself and felt sorry for them. I realized I was lucky to have felt something that looked or smelled or resembled real love. A lot of folks never taste that.

Tim stands, moves to the railing, looks out at the ocean.

TIM
I tasted it. And it made every day...
(searches for the word)
anointed. Nothing mattered when we were together, and when we were apart, I felt him like I felt my own breath.

Captain Bob looks at him, relating Tim's love for a man to the love he had for his wife. It may be the first time he has been directly exposed to the concept, but he accepts it.

CAPTAIN BOB
And?

TIM
Johan died five years ago. In an accident.

Captain Bob moves from the rod to the railing near Tim. They stare out to sea.

CAPTAIN BOB
You believe in heaven?

Tim eyes the waves swirling below him. Shakes his head slowly.

TIM
I don't. Do you believe in hell?

CONTINUED:

CAPTAIN BOB

I'm 68 years old. I just appreciate every day. It's not hard to understand. The less days you have the more you appreciate them.

TIM

That is the biggest cliché I've ever heard, but I'm sure you mean it.

Captain Bob is not exactly sure how to take this. They both go silent.

EXT. OCEAN - LATER - AFTERNOON

The boat drifts alone in the sea.

INT. FRONT DECK - SAME

Ron and Richard are outside now, side by side on the small deck at the front of the boat. Ron pulls a bottle of booze from his jacket, takes a drink. Richard looks at him.

RICHARD

You know I didn't mean that, about your daughter's friends.

Ron looks at him, a bit surprised.

RON

Wow. Goin' soft on me.

Richard smiles, absolved.

RICHARD

How's Amanda these days?

Ron looks toward the sunrise, shakes his head.

RON

I sometimes find it hard to believe I chose so well. I mean, she is just...
(beat, under his breath)
I don't know why I have done the things that I've done.

Richard turns to him.

RICHARD

I need a little clarity on that.

Ron doesn't answer, turns it into a joke as a way to evade.

CONTINUED:

RON
(laughs)
I think I do too.

They are quiet as they look at the water around them. We hear the dull hum of the boat engine as Captain Bob navigates to another spot.

RON (cont'd)
You ever gonna write another book?

Beat.

RICHARD
Yes. Definitely. I'm just waiting for something, something to inspire me.

Ron takes another slug of booze. Then he takes a long breath, looks at Richard.

RON
I'm in deep trouble Richard. Deep, over my head drowning trouble.

Richard stares in Ron's eyes. But Richard doesn't say anything or ask why. He looks away, out at the water.

EXT. OCEAN - SUNSET

In the distance, the boat chugs home slowly, making its way to shore.

EXT. WHARF DOCKSIDE - SUNSET

The guys stumble off, sunburned and drugged, not the ordinary tourists seen round here. Captain Bob watches them with a mixture of curiosity and sadness as they meander up the dock.

INT. RESTAURANT - BAR - VILLAGE - NIGHT

Seafood restaurant in town. Mixed bag of people. Richard drinks at the bar when the beautiful young hostess, RANDI on her name tag, approaches.

RANDI
Did you have the large order to go?

RICHARD
How many orders to go do you have?

RANDI
One.

CONTINUED:

RICHARD

It's me.

Richard looks her over-

RANDI

Would you like to pay now?

-and sees how beautiful she is.

RICHARD

Would you like to come home with my order?

She laughs innocently. She's pretty when she does.

RANDI

I'm working. And you should work on your lines.

RICHARD

If I work on my lines will you consider my offer?

She smiles.

RANDI

No.

Richard takes out his wallet, removes a credit card, hands it over. She leaves. The strapping young BARTENDER (24) glares at Richard.

RICHARD

That's a fairly possessive expression on your face. She your girlfriend?

BARTENDER

No.

RICHARD

Then why are you looking at me like that?

Bartender stares at Richard with a contemptuous smile, leans over the bar to get closer.

BARTENDER

You're pathetic and drunk. And she'd never go out with an old man like you.

Richard knocks back his drink, takes a hundred dollar bill out of his wallet and lays it down.

CONTINUED:

RICHARD

Thank you. The world needs more people
like you. Keep it.

Bartender is not sure how to respond. Richard spins wobbly
off the bar stool, moves to the podium near front door. Five
large bags of food are being brought out. Randi has his check
ready. A subtle flirtation between them as he signs.

RANDI

Looks like you're feeding an army.

RICHARD

Leave with me. Walk out without looking
back.

RANDI

You're really high aren't you?

He signs his credit card slip. Grabs a business card and
writes his cell number on it.

RICHARD

I'm in town for three days. Me and my
friends. We are harmless and fun.
(beat)
If you plan on tossing that card instead
of calling me, wait till I'm ten minutes
away so I don't feel it. I'm sensitive
that way.

He grabs his take-away and leaves. Randi's eyes follow him
out the door.

INT. BEACH HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

They've moved the dining room table into center of the living
room. A lot of food still on the table, music on, muted TV,
fire in fireplace. Richard has not touched his food.

Ron picks at food, glances at his phone, seems nervous. Every
now and then it seems like he is about to get up, but
doesn't. Or maybe he's trying to jump out of his own skin.

Jonathan looks at all the food on the table.

JONATHAN

What a waste.

Nobody responds. The words hang there until they become about
something other than the food.

CONTINUED:

They are snapped out of it by Richard's RINGING cell. He tries to locate his phone in his chair, spills cocaine all over his lap in the process.

RICHARD

Hello.

(beat, listens)

Really? Fantastic. See you then.

Richard clicks off, looks up at the guys.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Our dates will be here any minute.

They look at him, no idea what he's talking about.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Wait and see what uncle Richard has in store.

INT. BEACH HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MIDNIGHT

They've tidied up the place. Fire in the fireplace, candles burning. Music plays. The guys are hanging outside the back door on the deck.

Front doorbell rings. Richard moves inside, answers the door. His smile fades when he sees past Randi to "her friends": FOUR GUYS in their early 20's and a dark eyed girl with pale skin and jet black hair.

RICHARD

Oh.Hey...come on in. Welcome.

Jonathan, Ron and Tim appear in the living room to say hello.

Randi introduces intellectual RYAN, nerdy ETHAN, effeminate COLE, a cool exotic looking girl RAVEN and JONAH "my boyfriend."

Richard's face tightens when Randi introduces Jonah. Randi reaches in her purse, pulls out a plastic bag with large pink capsules inside.

RANDI

You guys know what an MX Missile is?

Richard looks at Ron, Tim and Jonathan. They don't.

Randi looks at her friends.

RANDI (CONT'D) (cont'd)

(mischievously)

Virgins...

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT - HALF HOUR LATER

Jonathan and Ethan. Music in B.G. Ethan holds a capsule in one hand and a tiny baggie of shrooms in the other.

ETHAN

Shrooms and x, your garden variety MX missile.

Jonathan takes the capsule, pops it in his mouth, knocks it back with his drink. He holds out his hand, Ethan opens the shrooms for him, pours them in his hand. He knocks them back.

ETHAN (cont'd)

It should hit you in half an hour. It's better when you're sober, with an empty stomach and no other drugs.

Jonathan reaches into his pocket. Pulls out a few pills, holds them out as an offering to Ethan. Ethan declines. Jonathan knocks them all back and washes them back with booze.

ETHAN (cont'd)

Holy shit man.

He looks at Ethan, shrugs.

JONATHAN

I'm on vacation.

ETHAN

If you were in town long enough, you guys could try a candyflip.

Jonathan doesn't track.

ETHAN (cont'd)

It's X and LSD.

Off Jonathan's reaction-

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - HALF HOUR LATER

Cole and Tim sit on the couch. Raven is by herself behind them, swaying to the music.

COLE

It took my dad awhile to get used to the fact that I'm gay. Now he just wants me to be careful.

Tim nods.

CONTINUED:

COLE (cont'd)
But I'm an only child, so my mom's all
like 'but how am I going to ever be a
grandma?!'

They laugh.

INT. RICHARD'S ROOM - NIGHT - HALF HOUR LATER

Richard bursts in with Jonah, whips a briefcase off a dresser, snaps it open, moves folders and magazines out of the way, pulls out a hardcover book: *Reel Around The Fountain*, by Richard Rieger. He hands it to Jonah.

JONAH
You wrote it?

Richard nods. Jonah opens it, reads the opening out loud.

JONAH (cont'd)
'Just as you can read any person you know
in the same way you can read books, in my
twelve years I learned to read my mother.
On that winter afternoon when I arrived
home from school, and saw her face, I
knew the news was not good.'

The words sound so sweet to Richard.

JONAH (cont'd)
What's it about?

RICHARD
My mother's reaction to my father's
death.

Jonah looks back at the book. Then at Richard, impressed.

EXT. BACK DECK - NIGHT - HALF HOUR LATER

Jonathan and Ethan smoke pot. Music from house in B.G.

ETHAN
...my Dad is the town doctor here. Unless
someone needs a specialist, then they go
to Boston. And his dad was the town
doctor. It was an unspoken thing, that
I'd go to med school. I like it though.
Are you an MD?

Jonathan takes a beat before he answers.

CONTINUED:

JONATHAN

I have some "real" patients, but then I have some who come to me for other kinds of help.

Ethan doesn't follow.

JONATHAN(cont'd)

A lot of my patients...they come to me for...a certain brand of medical care they otherwise wouldn't have access to.

Ethan is even more confused. He hits off the joint.

JONATHAN(cont'd)

I provide them with prescriptions for pain killers, when in fact they really don't need them.

Ethan coughs out a cloud of pot smoke. He says the next line instinctively and without judgement, more to the sky than Jonathan.

ETHAN

Isn't that spiritually filthy?

INT. LIVING ROOM - HALF HOUR LATER

Ron and Ryan are front of the fireplace talking. Ryan hands a CD cover with coke on it to Ron.

RYAN

...and this rich guy Greenberg comes to town and he's building this ugly twenty-five thousand foot mansion right on the ocean in front of my mom's house.

Ron snorts a line.

RYAN (cont'd)

My mom's tried to stop him legally but he just crushes her with his money. The fucker is actually putting in a helicopter pad.

RON

Hey, if the guy can live like a king, why the fuck not?

RYAN

Why is total excess equated with living like a king? Why do people need all that shit?

CONTINUED:

RON
(as though it is self-evident)
Because the shit is there.

Ryan shakes his head.

RYAN
That's crazy. You actually believe that?

RON
I don't believe that, I know that.

RYAN
Well, you can't know something if it's a choice.

RON
Is that some college bullshit you learned from your philosophy professor?

This throws Ryan.

RYAN
I'm just saying, people don't need certain things, even though they might think they do.

Ron's transformation from light to dark is instant.

RON
(quiet, vicious)
How the fuck would you have any idea what people need?

Ron looks in Ryan's eyes, squeezes the glass in his own hand, like he's trying to crush it. He does. Blood flows. He doesn't look down, he keeps his eyes locked on Ryan's.

RON (cont'd)
Talk to me when the naivete wears off.

Ron gets up, walks away. Ryan follows with his eyes.

INT. TIM'S ROOM - HALF HOUR LATER

Raven, Cole and Tim are on Tim's bed, touching, exploring each other. All of this is in almost total darkness.

COLE
I am so high. This feels sooooo good.

Close on Tim. Something happening in his eyes. The mood, the room, the vitality of Raven and Cole, it's slipping away from him. Cole reaches down to unzip Tim's pants. Tim stops him.

CONTINUED:

TIM

I can't.

Tim shifts, extracts himself from their embrace, sits on the edge of the bed. Raven sits next to him, naked. Her long black hair shines in the dim light, pale skin looks ghostly.

She stares at Tim, leans in close, gently licks his lips.

RAVEN

You feel it?

She puts his hand between her legs. Says this softly.

RAVEN (cont'd)

You want this?

Tim looks away. She gently turns his head towards hers, looks him in the eye. She is loving, sexual, free. Tim is uncomfortable as he takes in her features.

TIM

You look like my sister. Jill.

Raven giggles playfully.

RAVEN

Not into incest?

She says it lightly, she means nothing at all by it. Tim has to hide how horrible the words make him feel.

RAVEN (cont'd)

You should ask her to come over so I can judge for myself. I like girls too.

Tim starts to feel his insides pulling out. Cole and Raven are too high to see it. Tim Closes his eyes.

TIM

It's impossible.

(beat)

She's dead.

Three bodies in the dark. All we hear is the waves outside the window and the din of the distant party.

Cole stops moving for a beat. Then he lays his head on Tim's shoulder, strokes him, comforts him. Raven takes his hands.

COLE

How did she die?

CONTINUED:

This is sacred, private. Tim's closed eyes open, tears fall. He speaks numbly.

TIM

I killed her. Her and my boyfriend. I killed them in my car. Five years ago. I was drunk. I lived and they died.

Cole looks like he has stopped breathing. But Raven is cool, druggy and profound, the witchy savant. She takes his face into her hands, stares into his eyes, accepts it. She knows pain and love.

RAVEN

This life, this earth, it is hell, this place we live. This is a state. A stop on the way. True Nirvana only happens when we die. They were lucky. Death is something to attain.

Tim lets this pour through his mind and body. Cole holds him, tighter, and fiercer. Raven says this with clarity and calm.

RAVEN (cont'd)

Do you see them alive when you close your eyes to go to sleep?

Tim relents, opens up, lets Cole kiss him. Raven rubs his skin, she feels exactly how it feels to him, and where he needs her touch.

RAVEN(cont'd)

(softly)
You will see them again. And they will forgive you.

Raven puts her hand on Tim's beating heart, whispers to him.

RAVEN (cont'd)

Let me be her.

Cole hears this, leans into Tim's ear.

COLE

And me, him.

Role playing. Trauma. Hands grips hair. Nails dig into flesh. Skin is almost pierced with teeth. Lips meet in pleasure and pain. Tim cries silently through it. Says this over and over, barely audible.

TIM

I want to see them, let me see them...

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT - HALF HOUR LATER

Richard, Jonah and Randi. Richard pours a large glass of vodka. Richard is so drunk now it's hard for him to stand straight.

RICHARD

What kind of fiction do you write?

He holds out the bottle to them, refill? They both decline.

JONAH

I just write stories. What I'm thinking.
Ideas.

RANDI

He's great.

RICHARD

So you submit them, like quarterlies and
crap like that?

Randi and Jonah look at each other and smile.

JONAH

My last one ran in The New Yorker.

RANDI

We were all so proud.

Richard looks at Jonah, mock impressed.

RICHARD

(with an edge)
And there will be another story. And then
some heat. Then you'll write the novel.
And then fucking what?

Jonah is not sure what to make of this. Randi looks at Richard. Then Jonah. Then Richard again.

RANDI

I don't understand. Is there something
wrong with that?

JONAH

You published a book. I'd love to be able
to do that.

RICHARD

You remind me of someone.
(drunkenly waves his drink as he speaks,
it splashes on the floor)

CONTINUED:

RICHARD (cont'd)

You think it's just...it's just going to happen. And it will, it will. But it won't be anything like you dreamed it would.

Jonah stares at him. Then...

JONAH

Who do I remind you of?

Richard is too drunk to answer, thumbs himself in the chest with the hand holding the drink.

RANDI

You? I don't think so.

Richard seems confused by this, it seems to penetrate the inebriation.

RICHARD

I was like that, all excited about this! And that! And it was all gonna be...so fuck-ing rosy...so fucking...

He trails off...

RANDI

Jonah's not like that, he doesn't think everything is going to be a certain way. He just loves to write.

JONAH

You don't have to speak for me-

RANDI

And you have all this disillusionment b.s. because it's easier than being honest. And you think he's like you, you think he'll be like you when he's older. Probably because it makes you feel better.

Jonah tries to quiet her.

JONAH

Randi...

(diverting, holds out glass to Richard)

Okay, I'll have some more.

Richard goes pale, pained, embarrassed by what he knows they see. He looks down, mumbles softly...

CONTINUED:

RICHARD
I still love it.
(beat)
I still do.

Jonah and Randi look at him, and then each other, silently communicating it is time to leave.

EXT. BEACH HOUSE - SUNRISE

The rises over the ocean. Randi and her friends get into the car and back out of the driveway.

ANGLE ON

The front window of the house. We see Richard's drawn face staring out with sad bloodshot eyes.

DAY 4

INT. BEACH HOUSE - JONATHAN'S ROOM - HALF HOUR LATER - 530 A.M.

Jonathan's eyes reflect the wear and tear. He finishes dialing his cell, drops it, picks it up.

JONATHAN
Jane?

INT. JONATHAN'S EX-WIFE'S MANHATTAN APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jane is in bed, still half asleep. Speaks in hushed tones so as not to wake the MAN next to her.

JANE
Do you have any idea what time it is,
Jonathan?

JONATHAN
It's...

JANE
-Five thirty in the morning. The kids are
sleeping.

JONATHAN
I miss them, I just thought-

JANE
And you know Daniel works late.

Daniel. The new husband. He stirs next to her in bed.

CONTINUED:

JONATHAN

Oh right, so he can control the world's oil markets. I'm still wondering how those guys make so much money when the rest of the country is going broke.

Jonathan winces, know he shouldn't have said that.

JANE

Are you drunk?

JONATHAN

Course not.

JANE

My God Jonathan. You get together with your old friends and you can't even *pretend* to be grown-ups.

Jonathan goes blank...

JANE (cont'd)

Aren't you supposed to be a doctor?

(beat)

The kids are fine. Call back when you're sober and the kids are awake.

She hangs up. He lets his cell drop from his hand. Takes a prescription bottle from his bedside table, opens it, takes a pill out and dry swallows it, glances at the label afterward: Ketamine.

JONATHAN

Good choice, doctor.

INT. BEACH HOUSE - KITCHEN - SAME TIME

Richard watches Tim clean. Methodically. The house is a wreck. Tim is oblivious to him and zombie focused on his cleaning.

RICHARD

I think I'm gonna follow Ron and Jonathan's lead and crash.

TIM

I'm going to go on a cleaning frenzy.

RICHARD

Got a wild hair, huh?

Tim smiles the most beautiful smile at Richard.

CONTINUED:

TIM

I am going to make this place look
completely different.

INT. BEACH HOUSE - TWO HOURS LATER - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Immaculate. Like the party never happened.

Quiet. Only distant surf through the glass.

Tim walks through the spotless kitchen, cracks open windows
throughout the house to let in fresh air.

He walks down the hallway to Richard's room.

Richard is passed out on the bed. Tim stares, sees Richard's
jacket crumpled on the floor, moves to it, hangs it neatly
across the back of a chair. He stares at Richard's face.

He walks out into the hallway, quietly closes Richard's door
behind him.

He walks into his room. He zips open his bag, reaches into
it, pulls out a rolled up piece of paper. Opens it and reads
it.

We see fragments of writing on it and remember it from his
bed at the beginning.

Tim turns, catches his reflection in a bureau mirror.

He stares, expression even.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. BEACH HOUSE - JONATHAN'S ROOM - TWO HOURS LATER

A CLOCK READS 7:33

Close on Jonathan's face, on his closed eyes. We hear a
strange distant sonic hiss. It sounds otherworldly, Ketamine
altered, like time itself is making a sound.

He opens his eyes, listens. Pipes, maybe. Or a shower.

He can hear it now. He listens a beat, then covers his head
with a pillow, falls back into a Ketamine slumber.

JONATHAN'S ROOM - HOUR LATER

Jonathan wakes again. To the same sound. He listens a moment.

INT. HALLWAY - A MINUTE LATER

Jonathan walks out of his room, loses his balance, uses the wall to steady himself.

He arrives at the bathroom door. Listens. He turns the handle. It's open.

INT. BATHROOM

As he walks inside. He cannot see for the thick steam.

JONATHAN

Hello?

There's no answer. Steam pours out. Jonathan can't be sure, but something is coming into view inside the shower.

Something hovering inside of it.

Jonathan stops cold. Stares. HE SUDDENLY LUNGES FORWARD AND THROWS THE SLIDING GLASS SHOWER DOOR OPEN.

A BODY.

TIM.

Hanging from a rope that's tied to a pipe that juts out from the wall in the shower.

Jonathan tries to lift him, to take the pressure off his neck, to get him down, to get him safe.

The hot water burns down on him, he SCREAMS through the anguish and hot water and Ketamine...

JONATHAN (cont'd)

Holy shit!! Rich! Rich! Fucking help me!

Jonathan loses his balance in the water, falls against the shower door, pops it off it's rails. It crashes against the toilet and THE GLASS SHATTERS.

SECONDS LATER

Richard bursts in, freezes, dives toward the water faucets, winds them off, grabs Tim by the legs, raises him.

Jonathan lifts the rope off the pipe, walks on the broken glass, into the hallway, helps Richard lay Tim on the floor.

CONTINUED:

Jonathan kneels next to him, begins to administer CPR, hard, we hear Tim's sternum crack...after twenty seconds he does something strange: he sits back, slides against a wall, and just stares.

RICHARD

What the fuck are you doing!?

Jonathan looks at Richard.

JONATHAN

He's dead.

Seconds pass. The faucet drips. Life goes on elsewhere in the world, and the world revolves around the sun.

Ron appears in the doorway. Looks at them. The rope around Tim's neck. SEES IT ALL. Ron is speechless.

Richard sees something laying across the sink. A rolled up sheet of paper. He stands, moves to it.

Jonathan climbs to his feet as Ron steps inside.

Richard does something as the paper comes into view: he stops. Like the thought that flashed through his mind was so violating it had physical impact.

He steps toward the sink, unrolls it. We recognize it from Tim's apartment: the paper that was on his bed. Richard reads in silence.

Richard laughs. A strange laugh. A laugh laced with confusion. Jonathan and Ron look at each other.

Richard leaves it, walks out of the steamy room, a little crazed. WE MOVE WITH HIM DOWN THE HALLWAY AND STAY ON HIS FACE.

He stops walking, stares at us. He is utterly stunned.

INT. LIVING ROOM - ONE HOUR LATER - NOON

Ron paces the room.

Jonathan stares out the front window of the house.

Richard sits on the couch with the paper laid out on the coffee table, studies it like it's a part of himself he thought he'd lost forever.

Nobody says a word. They are searching for a way in.

CONTINUED:

We see the PAPER AND NOTE FULL ON.

The paper is yellowed and crinkled with age. The words are in a faded dark marker.

EACH LINE LOOKS WAS WRITTEN BY A DIFFERENT HAND.

..... *we promise to our blood, we never forget this*

25 years from now

....if WE CAnt remEMber what this feels like, then we have forgotten

THIS...who we said we'd become , a PROMISE TO YOU FRIENDS.

See THIS life i want to live and the man i want to/will be

To forget it.... is to FAIL AND TO know for all of us, it will ENd ...as one.

The names are signed in blood, long dried and gone brown.

rich tim JR Ron

Richard stares at it. He blurts out something incongruous, something that instantly gets Jonathan and Ron's attention.

RICHARD

Motherfucker.He beat me to the punch.

Ron stops pacing, stares at Richard, disbelieving.

Jonathan turns from the window.

RICHARD(cont'd)

I remember.

Jonathan tries to think where Richard is going.

JONATHAN

Help me here, I'm lost.

Richard touches the note with his fingers...

RICHARD

Everything. Senior year, the room upstairs with the green couch and Joy Division posters all over the walls. Like yesterday.

They search to remember. Jonathan sways in stillness near the front window. Ron sits down, dazed, stares at Richard.

CONTINUED:

JONATHAN

Wait, that's right. It was Timmy's idea...he said something like 'are we gonna remember this moment, or have friend's like this...'

Richard takes over, through the drugs and emotion he remembers like it was yesterday...

RICHARD

...'are we ever going to feel like this again, this alive and possible and free again? We said, the future is unknown but let's remember and promise each other...we would be high on life, not x or blow, we would help each other become what we *wanted to become*...we could hold that feeling forever...our lives would be great if we just held on to that, not become someone or something else, something we couldn't recognize.
(beat)
I'll never forget that. And yet I did. I fucking forgot it.

JONATHAN

We all did.

RICHARD

Tim didn't.

There is a long silence, a processing.

The dead body of their best friend is down the hall. Ron is imploding. He needs a drink. He needs to flee.

RON

Yeah, but we said a lot of things when we're young.

Richard stares at Ron.

RICHARD

So your word is no good? This means nothing?

Ron looks at the note on the table, reads it again, looks back at Richard. The truth of the situation descends on him, envelop him.

He stands, begins pacing again.

RON

We have to call the police. Right?

CONTINUED:

Ron appeals to Jonathan. To say something. Jonathan shrugs.

JONATHAN

And say what?... 'hello officer. We signed this pact when we were in college and our friend is dead. Can you come pick up a dead body?'

Jonathan moves away from the window, unsteady. He uses the wall for balance.

RON

Who fucking gives a shit?

RICHARD

Timmy obviously did. And so do I.

Ron sweats, heart and mind racing. Jonathan grinds his teeth.

RON

This is insane. We're high, we're fucking high as shit!

RICHARD

Which is exactly why we need to think this through.

Ron tries to convince himself this is not happening.

RON

We'll come down, sleep. Yeah, sleep it off. We just need it to be the next day. It'll be all right. We'll figure it out.

JONATHAN

I can't come down.

Ron stops pacing, something has just occurred to him.

Ron

Wait wait wait...I'm confused. Are we talking about...not calling the cops or...

The question hangs in the air. Then we hear two voices, one inside, one out. One thinks it, one says it.

JONATHAN/RICHARD

All our names are on the note.

Ron looks between them. This line of thinking is not possible. He knows them and *this cannot be happening*.

Richard looks back at the note, touches the words...

CONTINUED:

RON
(explodes, LOUD)
What that shit fucking scrawl signified
means nothing! I am not the fucking same
fool who wrote my name on that, AND
NEITHER ARE YOU!!! Things change!!

Silence, then...

JONATHAN
You are certainly not the same person
Ron.

RON
What the fuck does that mean?

Jonathan raises his eyes, lights a cigarette.

RICHARD
So our bond means nothing to you, the
promise, all that was for nothing? Your
dead friend?

JONATHAN
It means we think about it.

RON
(intense)
It means I am not the same person. None
of us are.

The camera slows, and the men collapse. We all slow down.
TIME STOPS.

We see Richard stare at the note.

We see Ron SCREAM (silently).

*We see Jonathan exhale cigarette smoke. And the VOICE,
objective and soothing, curious..*

THE VOICE
Could they pinpoint the exact moment in
time they went from who they were, to who
they had become? Was it at that moment
that their bonds became falsified? And a
more burdensome question seem to present
itself: it wasn't whether or not their
annual meeting was a sham or a ritual,
but whether or not the countless days and
nights and minutes and hours that they
were apart was the sham and the ritual.

RESUME SCENE

CONTINUED:

Jonathan exhales smoke, looks at Ron.

JONATHAN

You are not the same person, the same
friend now? Fuck you Ron.

Ron backhands a vase off a table and it shatters against a wall. He sees a saucer with a pile of coke on it in front of Richard. He grabs it, does a line, drops it on the kitchen table. He rubs his face with both hands, turns to them.

RON

I'm a father. I am a fucking father!

JONATHAN

And?

RON

(to Jonathan)

You are.

Richard, invective in hand, slams a huge slug of booze.

RICHARD

It is all the result of measuring little
results against high expectations. He
sees them once every two weeks and they
call their stepfather "dad".

(beat)

You write your name in blood and what
does it mean? Your blood means hooey. Go
home Ron?

Try go to jail. Go home to your parents,
your wife who thinks you're a God and
explain how badly you dissapointed,
failed, fucked up. And how bad did you
fuck up, Ron? You greedy cocksucker.

Ron stares at them. He calmly reaches into his pocket,
removes his Blackberry, dials, listens...

RON

Can I have the number for the local
police department?

In one swift moment Richard lunges and snatches the phone
from Ron's hand and hangs up.

RICHARD

What the fuck are you doing?

Ron, as we saw with his wife, has the ability to shift from
one mood to another in a flash, and here ultra calm.

CONTINUED:

RON

Someone. Committed suicide. The police must be called, a report must be made.

RICHARD

So your word is no good? No discussions?

Jonathan is holding the note,trembling now.

Clearly not altogether,not unususual considering.

JONATHAN

It is who we are, but if when we wrote it,we are not that now----

RON

---let me get this straight. I am supposed to follow through on my twenty-five year old idealistic bullshit I do not remember ? Are you serious Richard? This is not how it works, this is not relevant to now. Tim is dead.

Richard holds up his hand, gestures with each word.

RICHARD

Exactly. And. You. Signed. It.

With glazed eyes of chemical sadness, Jonathan looks at Ron.

JONATHAN

Our brains are wired wrong, minds are unsound and not thinking correctly. *Anything can happen.* We are not rational now, Ron. We are whistling in the dark. We are considering options.

We return to this very unreal real world. Haywire.

RICHARD

Timmy died for his reasons. Guilt, I know he could never forgive himself. But he did it.

RON

He was weak.

Richard moves menacingly towards Ron.

RICHARD

(a vicious hiss)
It was his life. His choice. You know what? You've never followed through on anything. Even then.

CONTINUED:

RICHARD (cont'd)

You know what we called you behind your back? Rat Ron, 'cause you were a fucking rodent. Selling us tickets to concerts that you got for free. Trying to fuck Jonathan's girlfriend. Rat fucking Ron, always playing the big man, the guy with the cash. Tell me RAT RON, is that why you're in so much trouble? You dirty fat fuck!

Ron's face goes red with rage. He reaches for his Blackberry but Richard jumps up and backs away into the kitchen.

RON

Give me my fucking phone.

Richard scoots behind the kitchen table, uses it as a barrier.

RICHARD

It's not just your decision to make.

RON

If you hated me so much back then why were we friends?

RICHARD

Maybe so I didn't feel as bad about myself because you were worse.

RON

Fuck you Richard.

Richard moves around the table. He sees the saucer of blow on the table. He licks his fingertips and dips them in.

He stops moving around the table, waits for Ron. When Ron is right in front of him Richard raises his white-tipped coke covered fingertips to Ron's face.

RICHARD

You are a man of numbers, right Ronny?

Ron doesn't answer.

RICHARD (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Let me lay it out for you. I say you have two choices. One: die here. Two: die in prison. Because I have a feeling that whatever shit your in, it is so deep you are going to drown in it.

RON is sweating.

CONTINUED:

RON
(quietly)
This is insane.
(loud)
This IS INSANE.

JONATHAN (O.S.)
I think you should leave Ron.

The turn to Jonathan.

JONATHAN (cont'd)
I think it's best.

RICHARD
Yeah, go home Ron. LEAVE.

Ron takes a deep breath. Then another. Jonathan approaches the table, leans over the saucer, snorts with a rolled up bill. He is so high it is difficult to make it work.

Ron takes a deep breath, thinks.

RON
I am packing up my shit. And I am going home. Let's just agree that I left before any of this happened.

Richard and Jonathan look at him and nod.

THEN

Ron suddenly explodes with rage, grabs a chair from the table, lifts it, and smashes it back down on the ground as he lets out a guttural animal scream.

He marches down the hallway to his room, swearing and smashing shit as he walks.

Jonathan is tweaked. He looks up at Richard. Shivering. Dazed.

JONATHAN
We have to do something about Timmy.

EXT. BEACH HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER

Ron fumbles with the keys to Tim's rental car as he tries to unlock the door. He sweats. He finally unlocks it, tosses his bags in the back seat, gets behind the wheel, backs out of the driveway, drives off.

We follow FAST behind Ron, tail Ron, and then we are

INT. RENTAL CAR - RON - HARD CUTS

Ron's eyes, his sweat, hands on wheel, rear view mirror, radio LOUD, forehead and chest sweating, fist gripping the wheel, radio business news

SLAMMED OFF. ALMOST DOESN'T SEE: stoplight!

Blackberry in lap. THE SCREEN: *YOU HAVE 41 MISSED CALLS, office office amanda office amanda office office amanda -Voices/// "office office office office office" ANOTHER STOPLIGHT -- the car next to him, the boy in the window mouths the words "OFFICE OFFICE OFFICE OFFICE" business news*

MADNESS

FROM THE RADIO - it will not go off - a prison of Ron's own design. HE DRIVES, EYES SAUCERS, SCARED, HEART POUNDING FROM INSIDE IS HEAD *"less favorable than anticipated... mortgage market collapse... chinese equities treasury...debt auction hedge fund credit...dispute in gold markets...annual sales drop twelve percent...third straight quarter."*

HE BURSTS OUT OF THE FRONT SEAT OF THE CAR...gasps...and gasps...breathing in and out in and out, heart pounding, he grabs his knees and breathes for dear life...he looks up...he is here...

THE AIRPORT... the small local airport...THE WAY OUT...

Ron is going home.

INT. BEACH HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHTFALL

Music plays. Jonathan makes a drink in the kitchen. His left hand is wrapped with gauze and tape, we see blood soaking through. He walks us into the

LIVING ROOM

Where Richard stands, surrounded by the contents of Tim's travel bags and wallet. Everything from boxer shorts to socks to toothbrush and comb to books to business cards. Laid out on the floor.

It looks like ART. Jonathan looks at it all.

RICHARD

Did you see what I brought down for him?

Richard gestures. Jonathan's eyes find the large storage trunk from the attic where he found the boy's painting.

CONTINUED:

JONATHAN

Good Richard. Very good.

He looks at Tim's belongings spread over the floor. He nods.

Richard squats, picks up one of Tim's shirts, holds it to his face, and inhales. Then he looks at Jonathan.

RICHARD

I'm glad Ron left. His wife and his God
will help him through whatever he's
gotten into.

EXT. BEACH HOUSE - BAYSIDE - ONE HOUR LATER - NIGHT

Forty feet from water's edge: Jonathan and Richard.
Illuminated by the flickering flames of a single torch.

CLOSER

They stand over a 9x4 foot mound of fresh sand. They can hear
the ocean but not the person walking silently up behind them.

RON

It feels more like a dream, or an apparition, when he takes
his place next to them and stares into the flames.

They do not acknowledge Ron, nor does he want them to.

We haltingly move toward them as they stare into the fire.
THE IMAGE SLOWS as their faces become part of the glowing
fire, a hallucinatory melding of element and human form, a
painting of orange anguish, reflection and crazed light...

THE VOICE

When you are young, imagining forty or
fifty years old is as abstract as science
fiction. You are sitting there and you
are twenty-one years old and you are
invincible. It is all ahead of you. You
are a horse with blinders, you only see
ahead as you whip yourself into a frenzy
of forward. At some point, something
turns those blinders inward. A death
here, a failed relationship there. You
creep past thirty and patterns emerge,
comforting and killing at the same time.
Experience and wisdom get blown away by
tragedy or the inexplicable. The hand of
Fate taps on the shoulders of those
around you and you pray and pray that you
are immune.

CONTINUED:

STILL SLOW MOTION: sand slides, water flows, eyes stare.

THE VOICE

Your thirties fade. You're the prime of definition as man, worker, careerist, actor in your own movie, creator, lover, in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a God. You conquer and forge on, a string of victories that will never end and then you hit it but at first you don't know what it is. It could be the death of a parent or the end of a marriage or the birth of a flawed child, and your forties arrive and you try to feel a sense of lightness and freedom, but it's work, like the marriage and the job and the friendships and the kids and the health issues and nostalgia that suffocates you when the old song comes on, when the picture falls from the photo album, when the scent of something takes you back to when it wasn't so hard, when all the self-help books in the world cannot possibly save you. And you hate it when you admit that someone else's life is better than yours, even when yours is good.

Jonathan, Richard and Ron slowly retreat. We move in toward the flames.

THE VOICE (cont'd)

Is it good? You wouldn't know because you are climbing, and as you climb you are scared, higher and wiser, happier but fatter, richer, lonelier, depraved, stubborn, loaded and still poorer or richer. Then you'll see the number 5-0 and the end is in view. You are formally officially absolutely admittedly closer to the end. You panic, dragged down by the feeling that you have not fulfilled the promise others predicted for you, the you promised and prayed for. You have no idea but know *things will change*, I promise. Just another promise broken. Lyrics to *your* song. All of them real.

FADE OUT.

DAY 5

INT. DINER - TRURO - NEXT DAY - NOON

Jonathan, Ron and Richard at a booth. Unshaven. Pale. Black circles under their eyes. Middle of lunch. Captain Bob walks past on his way out, sees them...

CAPTAIN BOB

Hello.

Three sets of eyes turn toward him - bleary, paranoid, numb.

RICHARD

It's Captain Bob.

JONATHAN

How are you?

Ron smiles drunkenly. He's too wasted to speak.

CAPTAIN BOB

I'm fine. Where's your buddy Tim?

They hesitate way too long.

RICHARD

He...something back in Chicago...he had to get back...

Captain Bob looks at them, puzzled.

CAPTAIN BOB

He told me he was staying for eight days or something. Must have been disappointed to leave.

Awkward beat. Captain Bob cuts through.

CAPTAIN BOB (cont'd)

Oh hell, don't tell me he went home sour 'cause he didn't catch any fish?

This breaks the ice.

RON

(slurry)
That's probably it.

RICHARD

He was so mad he ran home.

JONATHAN

And he told us he had some important business.

CONTINUED:

He looks them over. His sharp eyes take in everything...

CAPTAIN BOB
Well, take care boys.

...and ambles out of there.

INT. DINER - TRURO, CAPE COD - TEN MINUTES LATER

Lunch over. Ron has the 1,000 yard stare as they wait for the check.

Something grabs Jonathan's dulled attention. An OLD MAN (60-65) alone in a booth. The man is in trouble, face going white, neck going slack, eyes closing...

JONATHAN VAULTS OUT OF HIS SEAT and runs to the man's table.

Startled faces in the diner turn toward Jonathan in shock.

JONATHAN
(to anyone, loud)
Someone call local emergency!!

Seeing this guy with crazed bloodshot eyes and days of growth on his face screaming in this small town diner frightens people - everyone's so stunned they don't answer.

JONATHAN (cont'd)
Now!

The old man collapses in his booth...

Jonathan is wasted but rising to the occasion. He yanks the table in front of the old man out of the way, gently lowers him onto the floor.

MANAGER holding a phone screams from the cash register...

MANAGER
I got it, I got emergency!

Jonathan looks at the man's chest... it's completely still...

JONATHAN
Okay now...

Jonathan rips open the man's shirt front, opens his mouth and sticks his fingers in his throat to see if he's choking. Air passage is all clear. He places two fingers on side of the old mans' throat to feel his carotid.

JONATHAN (cont'd)
Fuck...

CONTINUED:

People hovering now...to help...Richard and Ron right there.

JONATHAN (cont'd)
Get something to raise his legs up!

Ron tears a cushion from a booth and slides it under the old man's feet.

JONATHAN (cont'd)
(screaming toward manager)
How long till paramedics are here!?

MANAGER
On their way...

JONATHAN
How *LONG*!?

MANAGER
Eight minutes...

JONATHAN
Okay...okay...shit.

Jonathan tilts the old man's head back, pinches his nostrils, begins giving him mouth to mouth. In. Out. In. Out. In. Out.

The diner goes quiet. Everyone waits. Faces stare. Jonathan breathes into the man's body, stops, looks at the man's chest...

JONATHAN (cont'd)
Come on...

...leans down and tries again. Again and again and again...

INT. DINER - ENTRANCE - THIRTY MINUTES LATER - DAY

Aftermath of the drama. Hushed voices. Garbling chirp of an ambulance radio in B.G.

Jonathan sits on the edge of a bench near the front door, spent. Richard sits next to him.

The Old Man is on a gurney. A LOCAL WOMAN walks next to him as paramedics wheel him out.

He's alive.

Richard looks around to make sure nobody is watching.

He nudges Jonathan, indicates the coke he has in a folded piece of paper. Jonathan holds out the back of his hand and Richard dumps a bunch out for him.

CONTINUED:

At the very moment Jonathan snorts, the Local Woman walks in, sees what is happening. She hesitates.

LOCAL WOMAN

You...you saved my father's life. Thank you.

It is silent for a moment. He knows he's busted. She has gratitude and repulsion doing battle in her brain. Jonathan wipes his nose with the back of his hand, says this like he just remembered it:

JONATHAN

...I'm a doctor...

Local Woman puts her hand on his shoulder, looks in his eyes. Then she leaves.

INT. CAPTAIN BOB'S DEEP SEA FISHING - MORNING

Captain Bob stands with OFFICER SHEILA BOYDE, 37, CHIEF OF POLICE, near the front window of his shop. Boyde is attractive with lively eyes. There's a small town familiarity between Boyde and Bob and a little father daughter thing as well.

They drink from take-out coffee cups. Captain Bob looks in his.

CAPTAIN BOB

Good stuff.

OFFICER BOYDE

It's from that new place.

CAPTAIN BOB

How long you give 'em?

OFFICER BOYDE

That corner does seem to be cursed.

Relaxing silence as they look out at Main Street.

CAPTAIN BOB

You seen those guys around here? Guys renting the Atherton Place?

OFFICER BOYDE

Huh uh.

CONTINUED:

CAPTAIN BOB

They rented the boat, they're here having a good time, you know how guys are when they're away from their lives and wives whatever.

OFFICER BOYDE

Actually I don't suppose I do.

They smile.

CAPTAIN BOB

Anyway, one of them, Tim, nice guy, I bumped into all of them at the diner and he's gone already. I thought it was strange because he told me he was gonna be here longer.

Captain Bob looks out his window toward main street.

CAPTAIN BOB (cont'd)

The way they acted when I asked them is what's so odd.

(brushing it off)

Ahh hell...I'm sure it's nothing.

OFFICER BOYDE

Sometimes I think we invent things to think about because it's so damn quiet around here.

EXT. BEACH HOUSE - SUNSET

Officer Boyde pulls her squad car behind the red Porsche. Walks to door, knocks. Knocks again, harder. Ron's face briefly appears in the window, then the door opens.

Ron answers, surprised to see a cop standing here. He acts casual, the confident business guy, stays behind the screen.

RON

Hi.

OFFICER BOYDE

I'm sorry to bother you.

Boyde pauses, tries to figure out how to proceed, wings it.

OFFICER BOYDE (cont'd)

The Athertons sometimes have me pass by, to check in. And I was in the neighborhood.

CONTINUED:

RON
(dismissive)
Great.

OFFICER BOYDE
There's the four of you here?

RON
One guy left. Who's counting?

OFFICER BOYDE
Oh, nobody, it's just that-

RON
He had to get back to Chicago. Business.

Boyde looks at Ron a long beat.

OFFICER BOYDE
Ah well, there you go.

She looks back at the cars in the driveway, the Porsche and the rental.

OFFICER BOYDE (cont'd)
I've seen that Porsche somewhere.

RON
My buddy bought it from a local. The other one is mine, the rental. Something wrong?

Boyde shakes her head. Looks in Ron's rheumy eyes.

OFFICER BOYDE
No no.

She waits. A long beat. Like she doesn't know how to extract herself. Ron doesn't want to shut the door on her. But he does. Slowly. Gently. Firmly.

He walks across the room, steps on the CD's scattered on the floor, picks up a dinner plate and sniffs large line of coke off it. He moves to the mantle, takes a bottle of percocet, shakes out some pills and chews them.

We walk with Ron out the back sliding glass door to

EXT. BEACH HOUSE - BACK DECK

Ron sees his two friends near water's edge. He stares at them.

Ron looks....

INT. BEACH HOUSE - NIGHT

Richard and Jonathan sit at the coffee table in front of the fire. A glass framed map of Cape Cod covered in chopped up pills on the table.

Jonathan and Richard are giggling. As wasted as we've seen them. Their giggles subside. Jonathan's head bows forward and his eyelids close.

RICHARD
(loud)
Hey!!!

Jonathan snaps awake. Richard shakes his head.

RICHARD (cont'd)
You're a mess.

Jonathan looks at him, sluggishly begins mashing up pills against the map of Cape Cod with a knife. Richard takes half a teaspoon of cocaine from a baggy and dumps it on the pills.

RICHARD (cont'd)
You need it.

Jonathan nods, smiles a crooked wasted smile, takes a prescription bottle from his pocket and dumps pills onto the glass.

JONATHAN
I'll see you...and raise you.

Richard looks at the pills with interest.

RICHARD
What is it?

Jonathan begins mashing them up with the rest of the drugs.

JONATHAN
Agenerase. Tim's. An AIDS drug.

Richard picks up one of the pills, examines it.

JONATHAN (cont'd)
Won't do anything but...I thought it
would be a nice gesture.

Jonathan cuts, chops, mashes and mixes the Agenerase with the rest of the drugs, makes a large line and snorts it. Pupils rush and roll. He grimaces and jerks both hands to his nose.

CONTINUED:

RICHARD

Ahhhh...razors pain you, rivers are damp.
Acids Stain you, and drugs cause
cramp....guns aren't lawful, nooses give,
Gas smells awful. You might as well live.

Jonathan recovers enough to focus in Richard.

JONATHAN

That's good Richard...

RICHARD

Dorothy Parker...she knew something or
two.

Richard snorts his line.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Oh fuck.

As he recovers.

JONATHAN

How long's Ron been sleeping?

Richard manages to get this out.

RICHARD

Hours.

JONATHAN

He should try some of this...
(sing-song)
a spoonful of sugar makes the medicine go
down, medicine go down...

Richard stands, unsteadily weaves through the living room.

IN RON'S ROOM

Ron sits on the side of his bed. Awake. Staring at the floor.
Richard walks in, pauses when he sees Ron.

RICHARD

Hey.

Ron doesn't look up.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Ronaldo...we have something...you gotta
try it...

Ron looks up. His face is smeared with tears.

CONTINUED:

RICHARD (cont'd)

What?

Ron turns away. He is silent for a moment.

RON

Fuck it.

Richard stares at him.

RON (cont'd)

I'm so scared, Richard.

RICHARD

About the cop?

Ron shakes his head "no."

RICHARD (cont'd)

Timmy?

He shakes his head "no" again. Richard moves into the room, sits on the bed next to Ron.

RICHARD (cont'd)

The money thing you're involved in.

Beat.

RON

About what we're doing. Here.

Richard swallows, gags a little on the post nasal drip of the line he just did. He clears his throat.

They are quiet a long time. Ron swallows bitterly.

RICHARD

I'm scared too but there is nowhere else to turn. We're not to listen to the enemy's lies any longer.

Ron accepts this.

RON

I've never been a man of my word. I've cheated clients, I've cheated on Amanda.
(beat)
You said you were scared. But you don't act like it.

RICHARD

Key word is 'act.'
(beat)

CONTINUED:

RICHARD (cont'd)
I read something a long time ago that
made me think about the note we all
wrote. 'Cowardice masquerades as courage
in motivating people to not do it.'

Ron turns to him.

RON
Do it for me.

RICHARD
(strong)
Fuck you, Ron.

RON
Please.

RICHARD
No.

RON
I can't do it.

RICHARD
Don't.

RON
I have to.

RICHARD
You don't. Just go home. Face it.

Ron takes a deep breath. Exhales.

RON
I have tried and tried to see myself
going home, and facing it. I want to.
(beat)
You don't know. We are destitute. Amanda
will never...

They sit there. It's a long moment. The longest we can
handle.

Richard doesn't look at Ron when he says.

RICHARD
Lie down. On the bed.

Ron does. Puts his hands at his sides. Richard stands, looks
down at Ron.

RICHARD (cont'd)
Are you sure?

CONTINUED:

Ron nods. Tears rolling.

RON
Remember how we met?

Richard crawls on the bed, straddles Ron.

RON (cont'd)
I thought you were the biggest asshole.
But cool.

Richard looks at him. Ron speaks gently.

RON (cont'd)
And I felt sorry for you. This dark guy
with a dead dad.

Richard picks up a pillow from beside Ron's head.

RON (cont'd)
You were the most interesting guy in the
dorm. You turned me on to *Holiday In*
Cambodia. Remember?

Richard holds the pillow to his own chest. He nods. Tears
well in his eyes.

RON (cont'd)
And I turned you on to The Pretenders.

RICHARD
Stop now.

RON
You remember that?

Richard nods.

RICHARD
Stop talking now.

RON
(softly)
You arrived like a day, and passed like a
cloud, I made a wish, I said it out loud,
out loud in a crowd, everybody heard,
"twas the talk of the town."
(beat)
You loved that song.

Richard cries. Their eyes are locked. He slowly brings the
pillow down over Ron's face.

CONTINUED:

Richard applies pressure. Ron's hands stay limp at his sides. We hear groans from beneath the pillow.

Ron's hands raise, try to fight off Richard. His fingernails dig into Richards forearms and draw blood.

Richard uses every ounce of strength he has.

Finally, Ron's body goes limp. Richard looks down at Ron's hands as they fall away from his forearms.

He slowly crawls off Ron, leaves the pillow over his face.

Richard sits on the bed next to Ron. Then he rests his head on Ron's chest. He stays there a moment. His voice is a soft cracked whisper when he tries to sing more of the Pretenders song, *"it's not my place, to know what you feel, I'd like to know, but why should i?"*

Richard stands, walks out and appears

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Jonathan looks up with glazed eyes at Richard.

JONATHAN

He awake?

Richard slowly shakes his head "no."

Jonathan and Richard stare at each other for a long beat.

EXT. BEACH HOUSE - BAYSIDE - NIGHT

Jonathan and Richard stand by a fresh mound of sand next to Tim's grave. Jonathan tries to light one of the torches but it won't light. He walks to the house, picks up a can of charcoal lighter fluid, returns and drenches the torch.

Richard ignites it with a match. A huge ball of fire forces them back. The camera slowly pushes through the fire and RICHARD puts his arm around JONATHAN.

Leans in so close and whispers with light flickering.

RICHARD

He has better things in store, beyond anything you could think or ask. The dying is a sheer kindness to the black soul. Not a light. But a step by shallow step, welcome our menace and shadow. Listen to me, the beginning of the end is quiet and velvet. This is the perfect failure.

CONTINUED:

And the two friends lean on each other, knowing.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BEACH HOUSE- DAWN

Jonathan sitting in front of the smoldering fire, still awake. Holding the note, looking at it, passes it to Jonathan who looks at it, speaks very slowly.

JONATHAN

See the life I want to live and the man I
want to be?

All we hear is the waves. His hand. The eyes. Fire. He reaches in with the note, puts it into the flames and lets it burn slowly into his hand until it simply disappears.

DAY 6

INT. OFFICER BOYDE'S HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Red.

BOYDE puts finishing touches on two bowls of pasta on the kitchen counter. She carries them to the small dining room table and sets them down for her son, SEAN, 12. He looks at the pasta. She sits.

SEAN

At Jared's house they pray before dinner.

OFFICER BOYDE

That's nice. I think many people do that.

SEAN

Should we?

OFFICER BOYDE

Do you want to? It's a nice way of
showing appreciation, I suppose.

He doesn't answer this. He takes a drink of milk.

SEAN

Did God create the big bang because he
had a bomb?

She looks at him.

CONTINUED:

OFFICER BOYDE

What do you know about the big bang?

SEAN

I read something.

OFFICER BOYDE

Then you probably know more than I do.
But I think the big bang theory and God
are from two schools of thought. So the
answer would be no.

He looks at her. His mind drifts elsewhere...

INT. THE SAND BAR - MIDNIGHT

Local bar. Loaded with locals. Juke Box plays. Jonathan and
Richard watch TWO LOCAL GUYS (30) play pool.

They wait to play the winner. Richard holds a large glass of
beer. It slips from his fingers and explodes on the floor.
Player #1 looks up from his shot.

PLAYER #1

Can't handle your beer, huh faggot?

Player #1 goes back to his shot, buries it. Richard sees a
six inch wide cigarette-burned wood shelf running the length
of the wall beneath the sign-up chalkboard. There are two
beers on it. Richard casually walks over and drains one.

PLAYER #2

Hey. Hey!

Then he drains the other one.

PLAYER #1

Those were our beers, asshole.

RICHARD

You made unnecessary commentary regarding
my misfortune as well as a gay slur. So I
drank your beers. We're even.

PLAYER #2

Who the fuck are you?

RICHARD

How could that possibly matter?

JONATHAN

(warning)

Richard...

CONTINUED:

PLAYER #2

You're gonna buy us two beers. Or buy yourself a taxi to the hospital.

RICHARD

I'm not buying you anything, and my friend here is a physician so I can get treatment right here if I require it.

PLAYER #2

You just barked up the wrong tree asshole because I'm your worst fucking nightmare.

RICHARD

You need new material my friend. The "worst fucking nightmare" phrase has been overused, and "barked up the wrong tree?" You're joking, right? Here, I'll give you one: I fucked your girlfriend so hard in the ass she cried.

(beat)

For more.

(beat)

Oh, wait, that's probably been used before, by all the guys who fucked your cock sucking whore girlfriend in the ass.

The local rushes round the table toward Richard. Richard stands, slowly closes his eyes...waits for the pain...wanting it...the local clenches his fists, winds up...deep in Richard's mind we hear him whisper...

RICHARD (cont'd)

Punish me for what I have done...

BOOM...time stops.

Jonathan watches Richard's head slam against the floor...sees it bounce...the crowd gathers...another fight in a bar with a history...on the surface no different from the rest.

DAY 7

INT. BEACH HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING - 7:00 AM

Richard is passed out on the floor over a flattened stack of CD covers and discs. Loud music plays.

The right side of Richard's face is bruised and red. There is a knock on front door. It becomes harder and louder. Richard doesn't stir.

JONATHAN

CONTINUED:

Appears in the living room, dazed and drugged. Sees Richard on the floor. Goes to door, opens it enough to see who it is.

Officer Boyde. Jonathan tries to conjure some semblance of sobriety.

JONATHAN
(over loud music)
Yes.

Boyde looks at him through the screen door.

OFFICER BOYDE
May I have a word with you?

Jonathan cannot hear.

JONATHAN
(re: music)
Let me turn it off.

Jonathan closes the door, walks across the living room, takes framed map of Cape Cod with it's pile of drugs off the table into the kitchen, slides it on top the refrigerator.

He moves to stereo, switches it off. The quiet reveals Ron's cell phone ringing over and over.

EXT. BEACH HOUSE - TWO MINUTES LATER - MORNING

Jonathan and Boyde stand on the porch.

OFFICER BOYDE
...I met your friend Ron when I came the first time. That's his car there, right?

JONATHAN
The rental?

OFFICER BOYDE
Yeah.

Jonathan nods, irresolutely.

OFFICER BOYDE (cont'd)
Where is he?

Beat.

JONATHAN
Sleeping.

CONTINUED:

OFFICER BOYDE

Didn't join you guys in your little bar brawl?

Jonathan looks at Boyde guiltily.

OFFICER BOYDE (cont'd)

I know you guys are here to have a good time. The guy at the bar, it's not the first time he's been in a bar fight. Just do me a favor and stay clear of that place.

JONATHAN

Absolutely. Duly noted.

Beat.

OFFICER BOYDE

I'm not raising much of a stink because you're the guy who saved Eddie Iverson's life. You're the doctor, right?

Jonathan nods. Ron's cell phone rings again and again inside the house.

OFFICER BOYDE (cont'd)

You wanna get that?

JONATHAN

It's okay.

OFFICER BOYDE

Eddy's a friend of the family. His daughter Emily really appreciates what you did.

Jonathan nods.

OFFICER BOYDE (cont'd)

Your friend okay? Bartender said he was hit pretty bad.

JONATHAN

He's fine, he's okay.

OFFICER BOYDE

I guess you would know.

Boyde nods, turns to leave, stops and looks at Jonathan. The shape he's in.

OFFICER BOYDE (cont'd)

You really should take it easy.

INT. BEACH HOUSE

Jonathan closes the door and moves to the window, peeks out.

He sees Boyde pause by Tim's rental, look at the plates. She moves away and gets into her squad car.

Jonathan goes over to Richard, passed out on the floor... nudges him awake with his foot. He opens his eyes, looks up at Jonathan.

JONATHAN

That cop was here again.

He stares up at Jonathan blankly, then closes his eyes again and goes back to sleep.

INT. POLICE STATION - BOYDE'S OFFICE - HALF HOUR LATER - MORNING

Boyde on the phone. Doodling on her desk pad.

OFFICER BOYDE

Rented in Boston?

She listens, frustrated.

OFFICER BOYDE (cont'd)

I'm going to need more than that.

(beat)

I want the name of the person who rented it.

(she listens)

It's officer Sheila Boyde. Truro Police department.

(she waits)

Tim Arthurs.

She leans back in her chair.

OFFICER BOYDE (cont'd)

Timothy Allen Arthurs. From Chicago.

Boyde hangs up, troubled. Writes Timothy Allen Arthurs on her desk pad, mind working. She dials again. Waits.

OFFICER BOYDE (cont'd)

The name's Timothy Allen Arthurs. All I have is Chicago, no address.

(beat)

Thank you.

Boyde writes the number down. Dials. Ringing, then:

CONTINUED:

TIM (V.O.)

Hi it's Tim... leave a message.

OFFICER BOYDE

Hello Mr. Arthurs, this is the Truro police department...Officer Boyde. It's important that you make contact as soon as possible. The number here is 508-626-3289. Thank you.

EXT. BEACH HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - LATE MORNING

Boyde pulls in again. She knows he's been lied to about the car rental but has no idea why.

She exits his squad car, moves to door, knocks. Waits. Knocks again.

INT. BEACH HOUSE - BATHROOM - SAME

Richard looks out from a small window.

RICHARD

(quiet)

Jesus. Can't you find something fucking better to do?

He turns to the sink, splashes his face. Runs his fingers through his hair.

He reaches into his pocket, pulls out a folded piece of paper, opens it, snorts a huge pile of cocaine. He looks back in the mirror, wipes his nose.

RICHARD (cont'd)

(quiet)

Be calm...

INT. BEACH HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Richard has pulled on a baseball cap and sunglasses, and achieved some semblance of clarity. He answers, squints through screen at Boyde.

OFFICER BOYDE

Hey there.

RICHARD

I thought you came by already.

OFFICER BOYDE

There's another matter.

CONTINUED:

She's distracted by the plum colored bruise on the right side of his face.

OFFICER BOYDE (cont'd)
Did your friend have a good look at that?

RICHARD
Yes. Can we possibly do this later?

OFFICER BOYDE
There's a problem. Your friend Ron. He told me the rental in the driveway was his. I checked it out and it belongs to Tim Arthurs.

Richard STEPS OUTSIDE, closes the door behind him.

RICHARD
Yeah, it's Tim's rental. We're returning it for him.

She sees the impact of the blow Richard took to the face.

RICHARD (cont'd)
It looks worse than it feels.

She looks out toward Tim's rental.

OFFICER BOYDE
Ron told me it was his car. May I speak to him?

Richard hides a sudden urge to vomit, recovers.

RICHARD
He had to...go to Boston...to see an old friend. Left early this morning. I don't know why he said it was his rental.

Boyde takes out her notepad and writes something.

RICHARD (cont'd)
Why are you doing this?

She takes a deep breath.

OFFICER BOYDE
This is a small town. People talk. And I just want to be able to tell them that it's simply some old friends having a good time. But I have to say, it doesn't exactly seem like that.

CONTINUED:

RICHARD
Fair enough.

OFFICER BOYDE
What's Ron's last name?

RICHARD
Adamson.

OFFICER BOYDE
Where's he from?

RICHARD
Atlanta.

Boyde jots it down.

OFFICER BOYDE
Would you mind if I looked around?

Richard would, but...

RICHARD
Not a lot to do around here, huh?

A tight smile from Boyde.

OFFICER BOYDE
I just want to look around back. I used
to come here before this house was built.
Camp on the beach with my friends.

Boyde plus backyard equals Richard nervous. Boyde walks
across the front yard, around the side of the house to the
back. Richard follows closely....and sees

JONATHAN

Before Boyde does. He's smoothing the area around Tim and
Ron's graves...

RICHARD
Excuse me?

She turns back to Richard.

RICHARD (cont'd)
You said "before this house was built."

She nods. Jonathan works behind her. Richard's eyes dart...

RICHARD (cont'd)
When was that?

CONTINUED:

OFFICER BOYDE
In the late seventies, I think.

RICHARD
Did you know a boy named Bobby who lived here?

She looks into his eyes.

OFFICER BOYDE
I'm not sure. Why?

Jonathan is no longer behind her. Richard relaxes.

RICHARD
I found a picture...it doesn't matter now.

She turns. We follow around the house to

THE BACK DECK

SHE SEES torches in the ground and some ashes in the sand.
Richard sees her seeing it.

RICHARD (cont'd)
We had a little bonfire...

RICHARD'S POV

Trying to see what remnants are visible in the ash. Jonathan has done a good job.

Boyde turns her attention to the shoreline. Richard silently exhales, relieved.

OFFICER BOYDE
We used to camp right out there.

Richard stares out to the ocean, the sunlight feels like daggers in his wasted eyes.

The sliding glass door opens. Jonathan calls out from there.

JONATHAN
Everything okay?

She turns, looks at him. In the presence of Jonathan and Richard, Boyde feels uncomfortable, a stranger in her own town.

OFFICER BOYDE
I'm just trying to get a few things clear in my head.

CONTINUED:

RICHARD
Gosh I know that feeling.

That seems to lighten the moment, at least enough so Boyde feels free to leave.

OFFICER BOYDE
I have to get back.

RICHARD
Okay, just let us know if we can help with anything.

They watch her as she walks away without saying goodbye.

INT. POLICE STATION - BOYDE'S OFFICE - LATE MORNING

Boyde punches numbers on the phone.

INTERCUTTING

INT. RON'S HOUSE - CHICAGO - KITCHEN - SAME

Ron's wife Amanda answers the phone. She is an attractive woman in her mid-forties.

AMANDA
Hello?

OFFICER BOYDE
Hello is this the Adamson residence?

AMANDA
Yes.

OFFICER BOYDE
This is Officer Boyde. From the Truro Police department.

AMANDA
Yes...what has happened?

OFFICER BOYDE
It's...nothing.. I just wanted to know if you'd heard from Ron, your--

AMANDA
Why?

OFFICER BOYDE
Well, he...he's with some friends up here-

CONTINUED:

AMANDA

Yes, yes, I am aware of that.

OFFICER BOYDE

You know what...this is...well, please
forgive me for bothering you...

AMANDA

Please don't hang up. I keep calling Ron
but there's no answer and now...
He's with his friends Tim and Richard and
Jonno...and I don't have their numbers.

Boyde suddenly realizes she has poured gas on the fire, tries
to back peddle...

OFFICER BOYDE

It's...a mistake. I'm sure Ron is fine.
And I don't know otherwise. I apologize.

Boyde winces, gently hangs up the phone.

INT. BEACH HOUSE - KITCHEN - MINUTE LATER - LATE MORNING

Jonathan sits at the kitchen table taking inventory of their
drugs.

JONATHAN

We're running out.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Richard sprays nasal decongestant into his nostril. Ron's
Blackberry rings on the mantle. Richard picks it up, sees
"amanda."

Richard clears his throat, answers.

RICHARD

(sober, serious, bright)

Hello?

(listening)

No it's Richard. Hi Amanda. I know, that
cop's been snooping around here, too. We
have no idea why.

(listening)

No, Ron and Tim went out for a drive to
look at lighthouses. Tim wanted to take
some photographs. No no, everything's
fine.

(compassionately)

CONTINUED:

RICHARD (cont'd)

I don't know why Ron hasn't been answering, maybe because we've been so busy fishing and riding bikes and hiking and all that. We've kind of banished our cell phones but I'll have him call you.

(beat)

Good to talk to you, too, Amanda. Take care.

Richard clicks off. He looks at Jonathan. Then he tosses the Blackberry into the fireplace.

INT. TRURO POLICE STATION - TWO MINUTES LATER - LATE MORNING

Boyde at her desk. Phone rings.

OFFICER BOYDE

Officer Boyde.

INTERCUTTING

AMANDA

Are you the officer who just called me?

Ron's wife. She stares out the window at her large backyard.

OFFICER BOYDE

Again, my apologies. I didn't mean to worry you.

AMANDA

You asked me if I'd heard from Ron and I just did and he's fine.

OFFICER BOYDE

(surprised)

You spoke with him?

AMANDA

His friend Richard told me he's fine.

OFFICER BOYDE

Did he say where he is?

AMANDA

Have my husband and his friends done anything wrong? It almost seems like you're interrogating them. We're good people, I can assure you.

Now Boyde is completely frustrated.

OFFICER BOYDE

Listen...this was all a mistake. I'm very sorry to have bothered you.

CONTINUED:

Boyde hangs up.

INT. MONTANOS RESTAURANT - TRURO VILLAGE - JUST AFTER NOON

Quiet. Before the lunch rush. Jonathan and Richard sit next to a window overlooking the bay. Sunlight reflecting off the water illuminates their wan faces and glassy eyes. Richard's bruise has turned a dark shade of purple.

JONATHAN

Precursors to suicide are called
prodromal clues...the prognostics of
melancholy, the sign of things to come.
I saw them in Timmy a long time ago, even
before Johan died.

Bottle of wine on table, bowl of mussels between them.
Richard holds an empty mussel shell-

RICHARD

My dad taught me how to do this.

-and uses it as a utensil to deftly extract a mussel from
another shell in the bowl.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Try it.

Jonathan does. Richard drinks wine from the bottle.

JONATHAN

You'll draw attention. Don't.

RICHARD

He died of a brain aneurysm five days
after showing me how to do this, that's
why I'll never eat mussels any other way.
He was working, flying for United. The
copilot had to bring it down alone. This
was before they computerized jets. I was
ten so it makes it about a year before I
met you.

(beat)

Tell me doc, what exactly is an aneurysm?

JONATHAN

A bulge in the blood vessel caused by an
absence of a muscular layer in the
vessel. Over time the vessel stretches
and thins, creating an opportunity for
the bulge to rupture and bleed into the
brain.

Richard nods.

CONTINUED:

RICHARD

My mother said he would have been angry
at himself for letting the crew down.

(beat)

I had to start fifth grade three days
later. I remember wondering if your dad
dying was a good enough excuse to get out
of the first day of school. Because I
just wanted to stay in my room.
But I never asked my mom. She was too
upset. I just went like everyone else.

INT. MONTANOS RESTAURANT - TRURO VILLAGE - AFTERNOON

Lunch over. Jonathan tears three prescriptions off a pad and
passes them to Richard. Jonathan's hands are shaking.

JONATHAN

If they ask, say you've had a knee
operation. But they won't ask.

A beautiful WAITRESS appears with the check.

RICHARD

You want to join us?

WAITRESS

Are you apart?

Jonathan and Richard smile.

RICHARD

What's your name?

She indicates her name tag: Megan

RICHARD (cont'd)

(embarrassed)

...right...

Richard smiles through bleary eyes. He looks down at the
check. Pulls out three hundred dollar bills, lays them down.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Keep the change.

MEGAN

(startled)

Are you sure?

Richard nods.

MEGAN (cont'd)

Thank you.

CONTINUED:

She smiles and leaves. Richard looks at Jonathan. He looks white.

RICHARD

You okay...

Jonathan puts a hand over his mouth...stands, looks around... he can't hold it in...he vomits into the ice bucket. Or tries to. He wipes his face with a napkin...

RICHARD (cont'd)

Megan just earned that tip.

INT. TRURO CHEMIST - TRURO VILLAGE - MAIN STREET - AFTERNOON

Richard at the pharmacists' counter. An ASIAN WOMAN takes his prescriptions, hands them over a higher counter to a sixty-something grey haired PHARMACIST.

He reads them, glances over bifocals at Richard, proceeds to fill them. Richard examines a counter display of key chains as he waits. He takes one off - A DUCK - and presses the button on it. It quacks. He puts it on the counter, turns his attention to another rack stocked with refrigerator magnets with life affirmation quotes like *"he who limps is still walking"* and *"do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do"* and *"today is the first day of the rest of your life."*

Richard begins scooping them all off the racks and loading them onto the counter.

A WOMAN waiting in line behind him watches, a little fearful.

EXT. TRURO CHEMISTS - TRURO - MAIN STREET - MINUTES LATER

Richard emerges, holding a large plastic bag by the handle. He reaches in the bag and grabs a magnet and attaches it to a car he passes. Then another one. He attaches them to newspaper machines, window sills, street signs, anything metal he can find.

He sees the Porsche across the street. Reaches in the bag, pulls out the prescription bottles and the duck, tosses everything else in a trash bin.

INT. PORCHE - TRURO BACK ROAD - MOVING - LATE AFTERNOON

Jonathan in passenger seat, prescription bottles on his lap. Gazing out the window at the woods flashing past.

Richard pulls something out of his coat pocket. The DUCK key chain. Hands it to Jonathan.

CONTINUED:

RICHARD

My gift to you. Press the button.

Jonathan does. A sharp "quack" issues from the chip inside the duck. He smiles and looks closely at the duck.

JONATHAN

A comment on my career path?

RICHARD

He's quick ladies and gentlemen.

Jonathan looks at a prescription bottle, reads: Oxycontin.

JONATHAN

Oxycontin slows brain activity, stops you from thinking and cuts off pain signals. Like intercepting a bill you don't want to pay before it arrives at your house. You can see how people get addicted. One in six doctors are addicted to painkillers.

He looks at another bottle: Ketanest.

JONATHAN (cont'd)

Ketamine. Can't believe they had it in stock. Ketamine was developed as a safer anesthetic alternative to PCP.

Jonathan takes a marijuana pipe from his pocket, taps some Ketamine powder into the pipe, searches for a lighter as he talks...

JONATHAN (cont'd)

It was found to significantly improve treatment-resistant depression within hours of injection. It's also been used in the treatment of drug and alcohol addiction. At medium to high doses the hallucinatory effects are far more intense.

Richard stares out the window, not listening, teetering at the edge of reality.

RICHARD

I remembered but Timmy fucking did it.
(beat)
I wanted to be the first, he stole my thunder. I wanted to be the reason. It's my life. He is the Jesus. Timmy is the Jesus...

CONTINUED:

Jonathan takes a large hit from the pipe, holds his breath, passes it over to Richard.

JONATHAN

Here...

He lights the pipe for Richard. Richard takes a hit, holds it long as he can. After he exhales he unleashes a mad SCREAM.

He leans back. He drives as he closes his eyes. Speaks slowly and calmly.

RICHARD

There's always the sun.

Jonathan watches his friend drive blindly.

RICHARD'S POV - THRU THE WINDSHIELD

Eyes wide now. A sandy road forks off the paved back road. Richard jerks the wheel at the last moment and the Porsche slam bangs up the bumpy hill.

INT. PORSCHE

The open Oxycontin bottle flies off Jonathan's lap and tablets scurry like bleached fleas over the floor. The Porsche bumps and grinds up the choppy sandy road...

RICHARD

Ladies and gentlemen, the captain has...

(boom!)

turned on the fasten seat belt sign.

Please return to your...

(slam!)

...seats and keep your seat belts fastened...

(His best John Lydon...)

THIS-IS-NOT-A-LOVE SONG!!

Richard climbs up the steep sandy beach road, sea grass and shrubs scraping against the car on both sides.

Suddenly Richard's face fills with surprise and wonder and we go to-

RICHARD'S POV - THRU WINDSHIELD

-as the nose of the Porsche levels with the horizon line, revealing the white-capped gun-metal grey Atlantic stretching majestically out forever.

JONATHAN

Looks up from pill gathering.

JONATHAN
(of the view)
Whoa...

EXT. PORSCHE - MOVING SLOWLY - FIVE PM

Stopping near the edge of a sheer two-hundred foot drop. It's the top of the cliff that Captain Bob told Tim about: Little Dover.

They get out. Breathtaking view, ocean breeze strong, overcast sky.

Richard walks to the edge, looks over the vertigo-inducing 200 foot cliff. Waves crash and explode against jagged rocks below.

EXT. CLIFF - TEN MINUTES LATER

Jonathan sits on the front of the Porsche. Richard bounces around and rants wildly in the grips of a rush.

RICHARD
(wired, fast)
...and when I went home two years ago when my mom died to clean out the house I found all these letters my dad wrote to her from every place he'd flown to, these really romantic letters from around the world and I thought...that was cool of him, I didn't know they had this love and passion for each other, and it occurred to me that I never felt that for anyone. I remember when he'd come home...always in his captain's uniform, he never said it but he loved wearing that thing and my mother would make me memorize things for his returns, like "*a wise old bird sat on an oak, the more he saw, the less he spoke, the less he spoke the more he heard, I want to be like that wise old bird.*" He loved that. Fucker died before I got a chance to hate him, before I got to that age when you start realizing your parents are fallible or whatever...I wish he wouldn't have done that...
(tries to remember where he was)
...anyway I found this old box and when I went through it are you hot?

CONTINUED:

RICHARD (cont'd)

I'm fucking boiling...

(rips off his coat)

...you remember in college when Ron and Tim and you and I went to that concert flying on X, I think they called it MDMA or the Love Drug back then and you got it from some pre-med guy at Berkeley, I think those guys were fucking making it out there, but the concert was, I saw the line-up on the ticket I found at my Mom's house and it was Modern English, The Cure and Aztec Camera. But we were so HIGH on that shit! Remember?! We couldn't even like fucking speak. And Modern English was singing that song

(sings)

"I'll stop the world and melt with you."

(resuming)

I remember I was surrounded by this weird invisible cottony softness, these strange silky Godlike rays of light...and it was coming from you guys, from your eyes, and I was so fucking happy. And it wasn't this forced happiness...it was...fuck man it was...i realized it was like so pure, like love, all these dreams that felt real, that they could happen.

(can't find the words)

I lived on that image for days, it was like it was burned into my brain, like I was still high from the drug, and you guys, and I never forgot it...

(long beat)

I've never been that happy since...

Richard trails off. The wind rises against them.

Jonathan watches as Richard walks to the edge of the cliff and stares at the Atlantic.

Jonathan looks at Richard's back.

Looks down at how close Richard's feet are to the edge of the cliff.

Jonathan EXPLODES toward Richard, lays a fierce tackle on him at chest-height.

They fly over the cliff. And disappear.

We hear ocean pounding the rocks below. We creep toward the edge and we are in mid-flight with

CUT TO:

ANIMATED RICHARD AND JONATHAN

In a CARTOON LANDSCAPE. They drop fast, feet first, toward jagged rocks below, paralysed with cartoon fear, the speed of their death fall accompanied by a DOPPLERING TRAIN WHISTLE.

But then Jonathan holds out the hem of his shirt, which has the wind-catching effect of a parachute.

JONATHAN

Hey Richard! Look!

Richard does it as well.

JONATHAN / RICHARD

We can fly!!!

They drift down softly, dreamily, blissed out looks on their cartoon faces. Their voices are upbeat, cheery.

RICHARD

This is so awesome!

JONATHAN

Hey Rich, maybe things will turn out okay after all!

RICHARD

You know what Jonno? I'm gonna join a health club and clean out my body, hang out at starbucks and rejoin society!

And as they float...

JONATHAN

I'm going come to terms with the fact that my wife shattered my heart and that I barely have a relationship with my kids. Then I'm going to meet a nice Jewish girl, get an apartment on the upper East Side, straighten out my medical practice and join a Synagogue!

RICHARD

You can do it Jon! You just can! And I'm gonna sit down and write that second novel I always said I'd write!

JONATHAN

Great! A best-seller!

RICHARD

Hey, it's never too late for redemption!
(beat)

CONTINUED:

RICHARD (cont'd)
Maybe that's what I'll write about! Heck
Jonno, maybe that will be the title!

JONATHAN
"Never too late for redemption?!" I love
it!!!!

Richard and Jonathan float gently toward an animated flat
rock on the shore. Richard looks down.

RICHARD
Look, we're going to land nice and soft!

JONATHAN
This is so incredible!

RICHARD
The happy ending we all wish for is going
to come true!

Distant high pitched whistling. Approaching fast...

JONATHAN
Everybody loves a happy ending!

Jonathan and Richard gently touch down on the rock, huge
smiles pasted on their faces...

RICHARD
To new beginnings!

JONATHAN
Things are going to get better after all!

They raise their hands in preparation for a "high five."

RICHARD
Let's live out our very own fairy tales!

They slap five. Whistling grows LOUDER. Something from the
sky. Jonathan and Richard look up.

Their happy animated smiles transform to stunned dread.

A huge flat rock like that of a Roadrunner cartoon falls with
blazing speed, SQUASHES them with a HUGE BLOODY CARTOON
SPLAT!

BACK TO REALITY

Jonathan leans against the Porsche, wasted grin on his face.
Richard turns toward him.

RICHARD
Let's get out of here.

INT. RICHARD'S PORSCHE - MOVING - LATER - NIGHTFALL

Jonathan drives. Richard fidgets with the volume, looks in the glove compartment, picks at his clothes, rolls the window up and down. Jonathan looks at him like a mother looks at a hyperactive child.

JONATHAN

Have an Oxycontin for crying out loud!

INT. PORSCHE - THRU WINDSHIELD - MINUTES LATER

Beach House comes into view. And Boyde's squad car next to Tim's rented car. Boyde stands near it, waiting. Both Richard and Jonathan tighten.

RICHARD

Oh shit. Oh fucking shit. We're done.

Jonathan pulls behind Tim's rental. He and Richard get out.

EXT. BEACH HOUSE - DRIVEWAY

Boyde is calm. Jonathan is trying to smile. Richard is wired.

OFFICER BOYDE

Hey guys. Ron with you?

JONATHAN

Ron?

OFFICER BOYDE

I spoke to his wife. She said he was with Tim. One of you told her that.

Richard thinks fast.

RICHARD

He went to Boston, I told you, and I told you Tim had to go back to Chicago.

(beat)

And I told his wife they went off together so she wouldn't know he left alone. Which is what he asked me to do. Is that okay?

OFFICER BOYDE

If he left, and both of your cars are here, how did he leave?

RICHARD

His friend came and picked him up. Is there some law around here that says you can't come and go as you please?

CONTINUED:

Jonathan looks at Richard...*relax*. Boyde looks at them both skeptically. Then she turns to leave.

JONATHAN
Hey, Officer.

Boyde turns back.

JONATHAN (cont'd)
We don't want to be any trouble here.

Boyde stares at them a moment.

OFFICER BOYDE
I called your friend Tim in Atlanta. He hasn't called back. You guys heard from him?

RICHARD
Nope.

Boyde, unsatisfied, walks off and gets in her car...

INT. BEACH HOUSE - JONATHAN'S ROOM - LATE MORNING

Jonathan, shirt soaked in sweat, shaking a little, tries to muster sobriety as he dials his cell.

DAY 8

JONATHAN
Jane?

INTERCUTTING - JANE - IN HER MANHATTAN APARTMENT - SAME

JANE
Hi Jonathan. I'll get the kids.

JONATHAN
Thanks Jane.

Jane calls out to "Miles" and "Anna." BEAUTIFUL CHILDREN decked out in wonderful clothes come to the phone. ANNA (8) takes it first. MILES (5) waits his turn, does all he can to distract his sister.

ANNA
Hello?

JONATHAN
Anna. How are you honey? It's daddy.

CONTINUED:

ANNA
We're going to the ballet tonight!

JONATHAN
Oh that's excellent. Where?

ANNA
Carnegie Hall.

Miles tugs on Anna's pigtail. She angrily kicks at him.

JONATHAN
Beautiful. That will be nice.
(beat)
I sure miss you Anna.

ANNA
We're seeing Swan Lake.

JONATHAN
That's a good one.

Miles does it again.

ANNA
Stop it Miles!

JONATHAN
Well I just wanted to hear your voice
honey. I love you.

ANNA
Okay.
(to Miles)
I said stop it!
(to Jonathan)
Bye...

JONATHAN
Bye bye Anna...

Anna drops the phone on the floor. Instead of handing it to Miles. To fuck with him.

ANNA
You are SO annoying.

She walks off. Miles picks up the phone. Listens.

JONATHAN
Miles?

MILES
Hi.

CONTINUED:

JONATHAN
Miles my man.

MILES
Hi.

JONATHAN
How are you?

MILES
Good.
(now excited)
Daddy took me in a helicopter yesterday,
we flew to East Hampton and back because
he had to meet someone for lunch.

Jonathan's face falls.

MILES (cont'd)
I was a only a little scared.

Beat.

JONATHAN
Miles. I'm your Daddy. Daniel is your
stepfather.

MILES
We could see the whole city.

JONATHAN
Do you know that?

Jonathan's eyes are welling up.

MILES
What?

JONATHAN
Daniel is your step-father, Miles. I'm
your father.

Jane crosses through the room in the b.g., slips into a coat.

JANE
Say goodbye Miles. We have to go.

MILES
Oh.

JONATHAN
Promise me you won't forget that. Okay
Miles? Please.

CONTINUED:

MILES

I have to go. Mom said.

JONATHAN

Okay Miles. I love you.

Miles hangs up. Jonathan slumps on the edge of the bed, cell phone in his hands.

He stands, he's unsteady. He moves toward door, sees a full length mirror attached to it. We see him look at himself. His face tightens, like he wants to cry, but he is too numb, and this causes him more pain.

He asks of the mirror, in a whisper..."where did you go?"

We swing around and we see that Jonathan has no reflection.

INT. JONATHAN'S ROOM - THIRTY MINUTES LATER - LATE MORNING

Jonathan lies back on the bed, belt wrapped tightly around his upper arm and a needle stuck in his arm. His eyes are just closing.

JONATHAN POV - THE CEILING

Slowly transforming into a projection screen for the home movie playing in his opiated mind.

A movie with Jonathan, Miles and Anna. We hear the ocean. It is years earlier, on a beach at water's edge in the sun. Images are dream-like. A game of TAG. Jonathan deftly but barely escaping the touch of both of Miles and Anna.

They LAUGH HYSTERICALLY because they can't quite touch him. Until he slips...and his children are suddenly upon him. Their voices sound distant, and say the same thing over and over and the sound of it fills Jonathan with joy.

Instead of *"we love you more than anything in the whole wide world,"* they've abbreviated it, we can tell they've said it before, we understand it's family shorthand: *"we love you in the whole wide world. We love you in the whole wide world..."*

They say it again and again as they roll around and wrestle in the sand at water's edge with their father, overcome by glee, by joy, as a small wave slaps the shore and washes over them...

And then the screen in Jonathan's mind bleeds to BLACK.

INT. JONATHAN'S ROOM - DOORWAY - NOON

Richard stares through bloodshot eyes at Jonathan. Jonathan is half-way on the bed and half off.

He turns away, rests his forehead against the door frame.

RICHARD

I came to tell you I cannot do this.

He stays there a long moment.

Until he leans back and viciously head butts the door frame.

A long beat.

He walks to Jonathan, gently lifts his feet off the floor and up onto the bed. He removes the syringe and belt from his arm. He stares at his slack white face.

RICHARD (cont'd)

There you go buddy.

Richard stares at Jonathan. Then Richard lies down next to Jonathan's body, puts his arm around it, and closes his eyes.

The sound of a DIGGING SHOVEL brings us to...

EXT. BEACH HOUSE - BAY SIDE - LATE AFTERNOON

Rain falls. Richard digs in a hole next to Tim and Ron's graves. Sweating and breathing hard as the rain soaks him.

This is the everything. The dream we see and deny, the darkness coming to all of us that lives within us, the day we pretend will never come. Richard is the ultimate loneliness.

EXT. BEACH HOUSE - BAY SIDE - LATER - DUSK

Dark and grey out. Richard stands next to where he has buried Jonathan. His voice is unsteady, halting...

RICHARD

...each day demands we create our whole world over, disguising the constant horror in a coat of many-colored fictions; we mask our past in the green of Eden, pretend future's shining fruit can sprout from the navel of this present waste. In faith we shall board our imagined ship and sail among sacred islands of the mad till death shatters the fabulous stars and makes us real.

CONTINUED:

Richard stares down at the three mounds of sand...

FADE OUT:

TITLE: NIGHT

INT. BEACH HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHTFALL

Deafening music. Richard chews a variety of pills like candy, washing them down with beer. Deafening music on stereo. Richard is painting. His movements are unnaturally jerky. What started as a copy of the little kid Bobby's painting - which is taped to the wall - has grown into a huge twisted allegorical mural all the way across two walls of the living room. It is of himself, of his life and his end...the four mounds of sand, the end image of the car (before we see it)... the caption of the mural is *best friends forever* and there are other smaller texts weaved into the mural...*"more sinning than sinned against"* and *"stick to your word"* and *"Ian + Sylvia"* and *"the last autonomous act"* and *"criminal & victim are the same"* and *"if this is cowardice what is courage?"*

RICHARD V.O.

We are lost and we are liars, we fill the hole. Lick it, suck it, smoke it, snort it, fuck it, eat it, kill it, push it down and it's still there. We are the stroke, the follow through. This is it. This is the everything, the beginning middle and end. There is nothing but the next step...

Richard is completely deranged...he has entered a different zone of thought and space and time...

INT. TRURO POLICE STATION - HOUR LATER - EARLY EVENING

Boyde speaks with another OFFICER, (STEVENS, 50, Male).

OFFICER BOYDE

Well, I want to get in there, but I think I'll need a warrant.

STEVENS

Is it drugs?

OFFICER BOYDE

Yes. And it'd gotten out of control. It's not recreational now.

STEVENS

Go to Judge Bendis and say you think they're dealing.

CONTINUED:

OFFICER BOYDE
From a rental house?

The phone rings. Boyde picks it up.

OFFICER BOYDE (cont'd)
Truro Police department.

INTERCUTTING

INT. TIM'S APARTMENT - SAME

A MAN stands in Tim's apartment, a cell phone pressed to his ear. He is at the kitchen table. He has opened the envelope that Tim left. The papers are spread over the table.

The man is in total shock.

A MAN
(voice quivering)
I need to speak to whoever is in charge.

INT. TRURO POLICE STATION - SAME

Sheila Boyde listens. By degrees we see her expression digest and go dark as she tries to comprehend what this man is telling her. Stevens watches.

She hangs up and bolts away from her desk.

STEVENS
What?

OFFICER BOYDE
Just hold the fort.

INT. BEACH HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER -
NIGHT

Richard's bloodstream coursing with a volatile mixture of chemicals and alcohol. He is talking quietly to himself on the living room floor as he stares at his mural while listening to "Kyoko's House" By Philip Glass full blast.

He holds his knees close to his chest and rocks. His rocking appears to be a way to not become ill, or stay on some line of thought in his mind, or hold back some terrible pain being born inside of him.

The little boy's painting is on the floor by his feet, as are Richard's shoes and a bottle of wine. He looks between the painting and the mural.

CONTINUED:

Beams of car headlights from outside wash across the mural, pause, and extinguish.

Beat.

Hard banging on the door gets his wasted attention. He turns toward it. He tries to say something but nothing comes out.

The door opens. He turns, sees Boyde there. She walks in. She stops cold at the site of the mural. Stares.

RICHARD
Do you like it?

It is like she cannot take her eyes off it. Or speak. She scans the room. Sees the drugs.

RICHARD (cont'd)
(re: drugs)
Have some.

With the music blasting, and mural, she can FEEL the atmosphere in here, the darkness and vanished presences.

OFFICER BOYDE
I need to know where your friends are.

Richard starts putting on one of his shoes.

RICHARD
You don't indulge on duty?

She moves to stereo, turns off the music. Pure silence for a beat. The silence has it's own hellish feel.

Boyde stares at Richard.

OFFICER BOYDE
Where are your friends?

Richard takes a large slug from the wine bottle. Holds it up for Boyde.

OFFICER BOYDE (cont'd)
No thanks.

Richard puts the bottle down, looks at the little boy's painting, picks it up, holds it up to her.

RICHARD
Can this keep me alive all by itself?

Boyd is shocked by his state. He slurs this but we understand...

CONTINUED:

RICHARD (cont'd)

My friends. I love them. But after awhile, do you know them? When they get sucked down into their lives, you don't. Do you feel time racing? I feel it. How would we really know if it was moving faster now?

(beat)

I loved them. I thought about them when I was weak but it only made me feel weaker. Because you can't have the past back. No no no... and they reminded me of the past. So I rejected them...every time we were together none of us were present. Wasted. Always wasted. Maybe this... (what has happened here) ...was our way of saying we remembered what we used to feel.

He starts putting on his other shoe.

RICHARD (cont'd)

You wanna know where my friends are? They're dead. They're in the back. Buried beneath the sand.

When the words hit Boyde it's like something in her deflects them, or pushes them away.

The unspeakable truth.

She looks at him.

RICHARD (cont'd)

I'm surprised you didn't notice before. What kind of cop are you anyway? I mean you walked out there. Remember?

Boyde's face changes...by degrees her expression grows darker...

RICHARD (cont'd)

Here's one: Jimmy Swaggart calls up Billy Graham and says, "Billy, can prostitutes be saved?" And Billy says, with religious fire in his voice, "Jimmy...every single one of us can be saved." And Jimmy says to Billy, "good, then save me one for Saturday night."

Richard laughs to himself. Boyde looks between Richard and the back door.

CONTINUED:

RICHARD (cont'd)
I'm going to make you now a light for the
whole world. I swear to you that I am not
lying.

EXT. BEACH HOUSE - BACK PATIO - NIGHT

Boyde steps outside. Smoldering embers on Jonathan's grave.
She walks toward it, tentatively.

Spread over all three graves, she sees charred remnants of
wallets, credit cards and clothes, cash, toothbrushes,
shoes...and the outline of three man-sized graves.

BOYDE'S FACE

Undergoes lethal transformation. Disbelief. Fear. Nausea.

Realization.

She buckles, puts her hands on her knees, there is not enough
air...

Boyde suddenly HEARS a MOTOR REVVING, pivots, sees headlights
beaming through the front windows of the house to the back.

Boyde runs to the back door-

INT. BEACH HOUSE - NIGHT

-as Boyde bursts inside, bolts through the living room to the
front door.

EXT. BEACH HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Boyde sees the Porsche tearing out of driveway, jumps into
her squad car, races after Richard's car...

INT. SQUAD CAR - MOVING - BOYDE POV

Tail lights of the Porsche in the distance. She guns her
engine to keep up. Her eyes are moist...

EXT. TRURO BACK ROADS - NIGHT

Boyde's squad car races after Richard's Porsche...

INT. RICHARD'S PORSCHE - MOVING FAST

Richard, wine bottle stuck between his knees.

EXT. TRURO BACK ROADS

Boyde's squad car gaining on the Porsche...

INT. SQUAD CAR - BOYDE'S FACE

OFFICER BOYDE
Please stop...

INT. PORCHE - SAME

Richard is looking for something outside the windshield...

INT. SQUAD CAR - BOYDE'S POV

The Porsche disappears around a corner. Boyde accelerates and slides...almost loses control of her car...

INT. PORSCHE - SAME

Richard sees something up ahead...

EXT. THE TWO CARS

Racing. One behind the other. The Porsche suddenly whips off the main road onto a sandy bumpy path...

INT. SQUAD CAR - BOYDE

Eyes terrified as she tries to handle the unexpected turn-off.

EXT. THE PORSCHE

Blasting up the sandy road, slamming over bumps, scraping against trees. In spite of the night, we recognize this place...

INT. PORSCHE - SAME

Richard's eyes are wide and burning with intent...

INT. SQUAD CAR - BOYDE

Tries to control the steering wheel as he SLAMS into a pothole with a THUMP!

EXT. SANDY ROAD - THE TWO CARS

Bouncing and slamming and banging up the road...

INT. SQUAD CAR

She grips the wheel, stays behind him...

OFFICER BOYDE
Come on...

INT. PORSCHE - SAME

Richard's face. Intense. Focused. Scared.

The nose of the car climbs toward the horizon line. Beyond that all there is only the starry night sky.

Richard skids to a stop. Twenty feet from the edge of the cliff.

Where he and Jonathan were before. Little Dover.

INT. SQUAD CAR - BOYDE

SLAMS on her breaks, comes to a stop next to Richard's car. On the driver's side.

Boyde's heart is racing. Boyde knows this place very well. She rolls down her passenger side window.

Richard looks over at Boyde. They stare at each other.

Richard rolls down his window, takes a large pull off the wine bottle.

Richard looks out of the windshield. At the partial moon in the night sky illuminating the ocean. Up at the stars.

Then he looks at Boyde.

RICHARD

It's...so...fucking...beautiful.

Boyde does not take her eyes off Richard. Richard looks back at the cliff.

RICHARD (cont'd)

(softly)

And I am so goddamn scared.

Richard stares out the windshield. His eyes are welling up. He fights this urge.

OFFICER BOYDE

Why don't you turn the car off?

Richard looks at Boyde. It takes beat to answer.

RICHARD

I'd miss my friends too much.

(beat)

And a deal's a deal.

Richard turns off his headlights.

CONTINUED:

He looks over at Boyde.

RICHARD (cont'd)
So I don't...so I don't have to see.

Richard revs the Porsche's engine.

OFFICER BOYDE
Don't!

Boyde suddenly jumps out of her car, runs around and stands in front of the Porsche...

Richard revs the engine even louder...

Their eyes lock...

The engine SCREAMS...

Richard slams it into gear...

Boyde DIVES OUT OF THE WAY at the very last second...

The car races toward the edge of the cliff...

And sails into the night sky...

And drops out of sight...

The sound of the motor dies away...

A LOUD CRASH of metal and glass shattering against rocks.

And silence. Except for the sound of waves crashing below.

Boyde gets to her feet. Stares toward the cliff.

She hesitates, then walks to the edge.

She stops. She doesn't look down.

She stares straight out to the sea.

Then, slowly, she turns her eyes toward the stars.

TITLE: THE BEGINNING

DISSOLVE TO - THE GRADUATION CEREMONY - SLOW MOTION

We are at the beginning, in 1984, moving behind the silhouette of the four guys, around the back to the beginning.

CONTINUED:

Richard, Ron, Jonathan and Richard come into focus, laughing in their graduation gowns amid the celebration.

They look into one another's smiling eyes.

They throw their arms around each other in a joyous group embrace, inadvertently lose their balance and tumble over folding chairs to the ground, laughing, stumbling, falling all the way to...

THE END