

# QUITTERS

Pilot  
"Step One: Honesty"

by

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. PLANE - DAY

A Twin Otter turbo-prop plane ascends through wispy clouds.

The door to the cabin is open, and the wind whips through the interior, cavernous and empty except for a lone SKYDIVER, wearing a jumpsuit, goggles and helmet.

All we can see of his face is a pair of haunted EYES.

The Skydiver steps to the open door and stares down at the earth, 13,000 feet below. He stands there for a long time. A really long time. Long enough that it seems he may have changed his mind.

And then, suddenly, he JUMPS out of the plane.

But instead of falling down towards the earth, a strange thing happens: HE FALLS UP.

It's as if gravity has reversed. The Skydiver is sucked up, away from the earth. Up through clouds. It's loud and violent. He tumbles and twists, unable to find equilibrium.

Then, abruptly as peaceful as it was violent, he slows to a float, having escaped the earth's atmosphere into space. He looks down at the tiny earth below, glowing gorgeous blue.

Looking around, he sees a fantastic spacescape: Saturn's shimmering green rings, Jupiter's warm eye... The Skydiver reaches out and playfully bats at a small piece of space debris; it pings off his glove in slow motion. This world is friendly, playful, welcoming.

But he keeps drifting up and away, further and deeper into space, getting smaller and smaller and smaller...

EMT #1 (O.C. PRELAP)  
I don't know if this asshole's  
gonna make it.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOUSE - NIGHT

An ambulance and police cars crowd the driveway of a mid-century modern house, lights flashing. ONLOOKERS peer through the gate; POLICE shoo them away.

A blonde WOMAN stands in the driveway in bare feet, crying.

Two EMTs lift a limp body from the driveway onto a gurney and load it into the ambulance, starting CPR.

EMT #1  
She said he was breathing but he  
sure ain't now.

A policewoman brings over a small handful of colorful balloons, tied in tiny knots.

POLICEWOMAN  
Black Tar.

EMT #2  
(to the other EMT)  
Point eight mils naloxone, IV.

EMT #1  
(looking at his arms)  
Take an hour to find a vein. I'll  
do it subcute.

The blonde woman approaches the policewoman.

BLONDE WOMAN  
Is he gonna be OK?

She sees the grim look the EMT shoots the policewoman and bursts into tears.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

TITLE: "48 HOURS EARLIER"

EXT. KODAK THEATER - NIGHT

The "MTV Music Awards" - banners, red carpet, news media and crowds of TEENAGERS.

INT. KODAK THEATER; BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

The show is underway, and it's madness backstage. Feels more like a party than a production.

FOLLOW a PRODUCTION ASSISTANT in a headset as she dodges and weaves through the crowds of MUSICIANS and their personal and professional HANGERS-ON.

STAGE MANAGER (O.C.)  
(in her headset)  
I need hands on Ezra Nash, now.

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT  
I'm on it.

The P.A. grabs the sleeve of the expensive suit being worn by RICK STRICKLAND, an agenty-type chatting up an ACTRESS.

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT (CONT'D)  
We need Ezra - he's next.

STRICKLAND  
(to the actress)  
Afterparty?

He breaks away and forges through the crowd, the P.A. right behind him.

STRICKLAND (CONT'D)  
How much time?

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT  
Four minutes.

Strickland spies SUEBEE NASH (50's, but doing everything surgically possible to hang on to 39), champagne in hand, buzzed and flirting with a tough-looking RAPPER.

STRICKLAND  
Where's your son?

SUEBEE  
(Southern charm)  
Rick, have you met Li'l P.  
(unsure)  
Li'l D? E?

RAPPER  
Li'l T.

STRICKLAND  
A pleasure, T, but I need to find my client.

SUEBEE  
He was just here...

INT. KODAK THEATER; BATHROOM STALL

EZRA NASH (20's), string-bean thin and rock-star handsome, hunched over a piece of folded tin foil, a lighter and a straw, smoking heroin. His girlfriend RAQUEL (20's), is in the stall with him, wired and ranting. (She's also the woman we just saw crying in bare feet in the driveway.)

RAQUEL  
Spin called you "the Cobain of our generation" - and they have the nerve to put you on with that Mickey Mouse Club reject? It's insulting. You should fire your fucking manager.

Ezra SLUGS the dregs of a bottle of Jack Daniels and staggers back against the stall door, dazed.

RAQUEL (CONT'D)  
Shit, you need to wake up. You want some coke?

STRICKLAND (O.C.)  
(entering the bathroom)  
Ezra, you in here?

RAQUEL  
He's coming!

Raquel shoves the drugs into her purse.

EXT. KODAK THEATER; BACKSTAGE

Strickland and Raquel walk Ezra towards the stage, but he's staggering, having trouble focusing.

EZRA  
(out of it)  
What's the hurry? Can I take a fucking piss?

STRICKLAND  
After. You can do whatever you want in the bathroom after.

SueBee hands Ezra a glass of champagne; he downs it like a shot.

SUEBEE  
Good luck sweetheart.

INT. EZRA'S P.O.V. - CONTINUOUS

The scene backstage, the way it looks to Ezra. Light smears. Voices slur. Everything is muted. The effect is quite pleasant. *[NOTE: Subjective drug experiences like this (and the opening skydiver scene) are a recurring visual feature of the series. They are always different (depending on the drug), highly visually stylized, and not always pleasant.]*

SueBee's cat-woman face comes MOONING in close to kiss him.

Ezra is steered towards the wings of the stage, where he's introduced to MAIZIE, a perky 15-year-old pop star.

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT  
Ezra, this is Maizie, she won Best New Female Artist last year - you'll be presenting together.

MAIZIE  
Oh my God, I'm so honored!

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT  
Thirty seconds - I'll cue you.

Their words are like muzak to Ezra. He hums along, looking around at the pretty colors.

A MAKEUP ARTIST buzzes around him, patting him with powder.

STAGE MANAGER (O.C.)  
(in her headset)  
Can you make him look awake at least?

MAKEUP ARTIST  
(through gritted teeth)  
Doing all I can, short of drawing eyeballs on his eyelids...

The Production Assistant pushes him out onto the stage with Maizie. Disoriented, Ezra looks back to see his mother, manager and girlfriend watching from the wings. His mother waves at him. Ezra looks confused.

EZRA  
I'm coming right back.

INT. KODAK THEATER; STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Back to reality - Ezra is standing off to one side of the presenters' podium, studying the side of it intently. Maizie is behind the podium, reading the teleprompter.

MAIZIE  
The Audience Award is special, because its the only one YOU get to vote for... Right Ezra?

She looks to Ezra, who doesn't read his line from the teleprompter...doesn't even seem to hear her. He hands her his champagne glass. She continues, nervous...

MAIZIE (CONT'D)  
I think, if he was going to say something, it would be like -

She freezes when she sees Ezra unzip his pants and pull out his penis.

He leans one hand on the podium and starts to PISS on the side of it, under the impression that it is a urinal. The audience is totally silent for a moment, then starts hooting.

The RIVER OF URINE runs down the stage and onto the row of attractive girls standing pressed up against the stage. Some scream. Some laugh. All whip out phones and start shooting.

The STAGE MANAGER runs out and pulls Ezra off stage.

EZRA  
 (slurry)  
 Can't a guy just take a piss  
 without someone bothering him?

He is too out of it to see all the horrified looks.

INT. DANIEL'S APARTMENT - PRE-DAWN

A small one-bedroom apartment, comfortable but well-worn,  
 with moving boxes scattered everywhere.

DANIEL (late 30s, scruffily handsome, the gravitas of an old  
 soul) is in bed, awake, staring up at the ceiling. SUNNY  
 (early 30's, pink stripes in her blonde hair, the smallest,  
 cutest one on her roller derby team) is asleep next to him.

The phone RINGS.

SUNNY  
 It's 4:30...

DANIEL  
 I got it.

He gets out of bed. Can't find the phone for the mess. Stubs  
 his toe on a box.

DANIEL (CONT'D)  
 Ow! You gonna put some of this away?

SUNNY  
 (open wound)  
 You gonna give me more space in your  
 closet? Why are you yelling at me?

DANIEL  
 Sunny...

SUNNY  
 I'm sleeping.

DANIEL  
 (finds the phone)  
 Hello?

He takes it into the other room, closing the door behind him.

DANIEL (CONT'D)  
 Tell them I'll be there in an hour.

He scribbles an address and hangs up. He takes a moment to  
 look around the living room - two households worth of stuff  
 in one small space. He heads to the bathroom to get ready.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOUSE - DAWN

Pink dawn blankets the Hollywood Hills.

Daniel pulls his beat-up Camry up to the gate of the same modern house we saw earlier and buzzes the intercom. Several paparazzi, parked outside the gates in their SUVs, perk up.

The gate rolls open and he pulls into the driveway, next to a Range Rover, Porsche and Lexus.

SueBee opens the front door. She's been up all night - but, ever the genteel southern woman, wouldn't be caught dead without fresh lipstick.

SUEBEE

We're so glad to see you. Come in.

She points a remote at the gate, but it seems jammed. She presses and presses the remote. Two large poodles DASH out the door and run manic circles in the driveway. One takes a dump. The paparazzi shoot.

SUEBEE (CONT'D)

Donatella! Jean-Claude! Come!

They don't. It's chaos. Finally, Daniel helps her herd the poodles inside and close the gate. As it shuts, SueBee raises manicured middle fingers to the paparazzi outside.

SUEBEE (CONT'D)

Fuck y'all!  
 (polite, to Daniel)  
 Pardon me.

INT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

SueBee shows Daniel inside, chattering nervously. Daniel surveys the scene with zen calm. Rick Strickland is murmuring into his phone in the kitchen. The poodles jump on Daniel; he ignores them and they eventually dash off.

SUEBEE

I'm almost done packing. Though I was hoping to run over to Nordstrom's when they open - they've got a sale on organic linens and these fantastic Turkish towels...

DANIEL

No need - we provide everything.

SUEBEE

I just want my Ezzie to be comfortable, that's all...

RICK  
 (ending his call)  
 Why don't we let this kind  
 gentleman do his job - we can  
 always bring the bags later.

SUEBEE  
 You're so right. Don't mind me, I  
 don't know what I'm doing.  
 (suddenly vulnerable)  
 What should I be doing?

DANIEL  
 (gentle)  
 Let's just get Ezra moving - the  
 rest will take care of itself.

SueBee absorbs that, then jumps back into frenetic action.

SUEBEE  
 Just give me a moment. Help  
 yourself to coffee!

She buzzes out of the room. Daniel pours himself a cup.

RICK  
 Otherwise you'd be here for hours,  
 trust me.  
 (shaking hands, warm)  
 Rick Strickland. Ezra's manager.  
 Obviously, we all just want what's  
 best for him, whatever it takes.

DANIEL  
 Obviously.

STRICKLAND  
 I know you guys are the best,  
 results-wise.

DANIEL  
 We have a good program.

STRICKLAND  
 Good, because I need him clean and  
 ready to go on tour in three weeks.

DANIEL  
 (shrugs)  
 We all need what we need.

Daniel has an almost eerie stillness, a lack of urgency that unnerves people, especially those in the middle of a crisis. Strickland's friendly-guy expression gets a little strained.

STRICKLAND

Of course, his health is the priority... But this is a sold out tour, and if it's at all possible to get him rehabbed - drug-wise and PR-wise - before it starts...

DANIEL

I'm not in the PR business, and the rest is mostly up to Ezra.

STRICKLAND

Don't worry, he's fully on board.

Strickland searches Daniel for a hint of play-along optimism, but all he gets is a faint smile.

DANIEL

More will be revealed.

SueBee and Raquel walk Ezra out of the bedroom. He's still semi-comatose. Daniel and SueBee carry/drag him out to the car. Raquel follows, all nervous energy.

RAQUEL

I'll visit you every day baby...

DANIEL

No visitors at first, but please come to the weekly family group - it actually meets this afternoon. You can say a quick hello afterwards.

SUEBEE

We'll be there.

Raquel gives noddled-out Ezra a passionate kiss goodbye. Daniel drives out with Ezra slumped in the passenger seat. The paparazzi follow.

INT. DANIEL'S CAR - DAY

EZRA

(groggy)  
You look familiar to me.

DANIEL

I don't think we've met.

EZRA

(after a long silence)  
Do I look familiar to you?

DANIEL

(laughs)  
A little, sure.

EZRA

So... I kinda fucked up. You gonna help me?

DANIEL

That's the idea.

EZRA

Cool. You a publicist or something?

Daniel realizes that Ezra has no idea what's happening.

DANIEL

Shit. Ezra - do you know where you're going?

EZRA

To hell?

(laughs)

No, man, I'll do whatever you want, interviews, apologize, whatever.

Daniel thinks a minute, deciding how to handle it. Ezra SNORES - asleep again.

EXT. PCH MALIBU - DAY

Daniel drives down PCH in Malibu; the paparazzi SUVs follow.

Daniel turns into a gated driveway, opens his window and swipes his keycard. Ezra wakes up and squints at the discreet sign next to the gate: *'New Tomorrow Recovery Center.'*

EZRA

Oh hell no...

Adrenalined out of his coma, Ezra jumps out and RUNS down PCH against morning rush hour traffic. Cars SWERVE and HONK. The paparazzi jump out and chase him, SHOUTING and SHOOTING.

Daniel doesn't move. Just stands there watching Ezra go.

Ezra dashes across the highway. A large truck is barreling straight for him, no room to stop, laying on its HORN.

DANIEL

Yeah, that's no good.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. PCH MALIBU - DAY

As the truck bears down, Ezra turns and dives into the sandy, shrubby weeds at the side of the highway; the truck WHOOSHES by, just missing him.

Ezra lays flat, arms shielding his head duck-and-cover style. Daniel walks down the shoulder of the road and through the photographers, who are swarming Ezra.

DANIEL

(to the paparazzi)

Can you give us a moment?

(they don't move)

Seriously, you got your money shot.

They back off and Daniel kneels next to Ezra. Traffic speeds by, several feet away. Ezra snuffles into his sleeve.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Let's start with the good news: you didn't get hit by a truck. Fantastic. The not so good is it's just a matter of time. Come with me, or don't - I don't really care. But if you do, I'll do everything I can to keep that truck from hitting you. Or your family. Or the unlucky folks who happen to be on the road the night you decide to drive loaded.

Ezra finally turns his head to Daniel.

EZRA

I don't drive.

DANIEL

It's a metaphor.

EZRA

I'm fine man, really.

DANIEL

OK then, all systems go. Keep it up.

EZRA

Whatever.

DANIEL

I'm not being sarcastic. If doing drugs works for you, do drugs. Drugs are fun.

A teenager in a passing car recognizes Ezra and hangs out the car window giving 'devil horns' with his hands.

PASSING TEEN  
EzRAAAAAAA!!!

Ezra gives halfhearted devil horns back.

DANIEL  
Drugs were great for me - until they weren't anymore. I've been sober almost six years, and I still miss them. But if I go back, I'll lose everything. Again.

EZRA  
I could stop if I wanted.

DANIEL  
Yeah...and the Pope shits rainbows. But maybe you're not done and that's fine. I work with people who want help, not people who need it.

Daniel stands up and walks back to his car. Ezra gets up, feels for and fails to find his phone. He pushes through the swarm of photographers to catch up to Daniel.

EZRA  
You're just gonna leave me here?  
Can you at least call me a car?

DANIEL  
(gets in his car)  
Might not be a bad idea to have pictures taken of you walking in those gates, regardless of what happens after that. Just saying.

Daniel swipes his card, drives through the gate. Ezra glances over his shoulder at the paparazzi, who are advancing - then jogs through the gate before it slides shut.

EZRA  
Now can you call me a car?

DANIEL  
(out the window, driving slowly)  
Sure. Takes them ages to get out here though - have a massage or something while you wait. I think the twenty-five grand is non-refundable anyway.

EZRA

A fucking massage?

DANIEL

Oh yeah - it's really plush. Too  
plush, if you ask me.

Daniel drives up the hill. Pissed, but without options, Ezra plods up the driveway after him.

EXT. NEW TOMORROW RECOVERY CENTER - DAY

Daniel parks his car and walks with Ezra up to the entrance.

He wasn't lying - this place is plush. Pool, tennis courts, croquet on the lawn. The only hint that this isn't a high-end resort is the fact that practically every guest is sucking on a cigarette as if their life depended on it.

A group of younger residents seems to recognize Ezra and huddle together, gossiping and staring.

A woman in a crisp lab coat greets them at the entry; the script on her breast pocket reads DR. SUMAR.

DR. SUMAR

Welcome, Ezra. Good to meet you.

DANIEL

This is Dr. Sumar - she'll sit down with you and do a drug history.

EZRA

Whoa, whoa, you were just talking about a massage.

DANIEL

I'll set that up for this afternoon - and you can leave whenever you want - but I suggest talking to Dr. Sumar first. She can give you drugs, good ones...

WHOOPS and WHISTLING come from the TV room next to the entry, where a group of male patients are cheering ANNABELLE (20), a sexy blonde standing on a table unbuttoning her shirt. A weird little DOG bounces around her, BARKING with excitement. The male patients wave candy bars at Annabelle.

ANNABELLE

Skittles gets you two buttons -  
I'll undo three for a Snickers...

DANIEL

Excuse me.

Daniel hurries in to stop the auction.

EZRA  
(mesmerized by Annabelle)  
I want a girl masseuse! No dudes!

DANIEL  
No problem.

INT. TV ROOM - CONTINUOUS

DANIEL  
Annabelle, no way.

The guys dissipate and Annabelle climbs down, buttoning her shirt and gathering the candy at her feet.

ANNABELLE  
I've had such a crazy sweet tooth.

DANIEL  
I know, but this is not cool.

ANNABELLE  
(pout flirting)  
Sorry, Danny...

DANIEL  
(turning to go)  
Boundaries, Annabelle.

ANNABELLE  
Hey, can I ask you something?

She picks up her dog; it can't weigh more than five pounds. It's got a lazy eye and a gnarly underbite.

ANNABELLE (CONT'D)  
Does Madonna Louise look fat? I put her on a diet, but I swear she keeps looking chubbier.

DANIEL  
She's not fat, but you might look into braces and glasses.

Annabelle opens a candy bar and takes a bite.

ANNABELLE  
(to the dog)  
No candy for you, fatty.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

As Daniel passes by Dr. Sumar's office, he pauses in the hall a moment to listen to her conversation with Ezra.

DR. SUMAR  
(off a checklist)  
Powder Cocaine? Crack?

EZRA  
Yup. Both.

DR. SUMAR  
Opiates - heroin, Oxycodone...?

EZRA  
Yup.

DR. SUMAR  
Benzodiazepines - Valium, Ativan?

EZRA  
Yup.

DR. SUMAR  
We'll do a complete history afterwards, but right now I only want to know whatever you've taken in the last 48 hours or so.

EZRA  
Yup. Keep going.

DR. SUMAR  
Marijuana?

EZRA  
No. Oh wait, yup.

Daniel keeps walking, passing the front desk where EILEEN holds down the fort with gravity and efficiency.

EILEEN  
Daniel. Staff meeting. Already started.

DANIEL  
Eileen. Must get coffee. Up since 4:30.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Daniel slips into the staff meeting with his coffee.

About eight people sit around the table - at one end presides PAUL (50's), the head of the program. Large in every way.

Seated to his right is Daniel's counterpart JANE (40's), the out-and-proud head of the women's unit. Her thick hair is cut in a handsome, David Cassidy circa 1975 shag. She's got a steady, controlled manner.

DANIEL

Sorry, I'm late, I had an intake -  
Ezra Nash.

FEMALE COUNSELOR

Oh, I saw that on TMZ this morning.  
He peed on his fans!

MALE COUNSELOR

Get out!

In front of Paul is a fancy fruit salad - as the scene plays,  
he plucks each grape from the salad, carefully inspects it,  
and puts it into a separate bowl.

PAUL

No gossip please.  
(a sly smile)  
Did they mention us, I hope?

DANIEL

He was blindsided, by the way, had  
no idea where he was going until we  
arrived - and he decided to play  
Frogger across PCH.

PAUL

Well, he's here and that's the  
important part.

DANIEL

And he may even stay - I think the  
sight of Annabelle taking her top  
off in the rec room may've helped  
convince him -  
(to Jane)  
Oh, still thinks her dog is fat.

JANE

(making a note)  
She wanted to get it liposuction.  
(singsong)  
Pro-jec-tion...

DANIEL

Also, my wing is totally full.

PAUL

It was special circumstances.

DANIEL

Special circumstances, like he's  
paying full freight?

PAUL

That's one factor, not the only one.

DANIEL  
 (pissed)  
 Paul -

Jane puts a hand gently on Daniel's, stopping him.

PAUL  
 (diplomatic, charming)  
 I hear your concerns about the workload, which is why you'll be pleased to know - the board approved the budget for two more counselors - one for mens side, one for women's...  
 (slides a stack of folders to Jane and Daniel)  
 Some initial candidates - I'd like to get interviews rolling this week.  
 (heading out)  
 Oh, one last thing: the county statistics came out yesterday. The good news is, we're still number one.  
 (the room cheers)  
 The bad news is, Las Encinas caught up - we're tied with a 13% one-year post-treatment sobriety rate. So congratulations - and work harder!

Paul takes his bowl of inspected grapes and leaves. The staff shuffles out. Daniel turns to Jane.

DANIEL  
 In what other job is 13% considered a success? Jesus.  
 (re: Paul's leftover fruit salad)  
 You want this? I'm starving.

She nods no - he eats a few bites. Jane hands him half the stack of candidate envelopes.

JANE  
 Lets talk later to see who we want to call for interviews.

DANIEL  
 If you think he's adding counselors without adding clients, you're crazy.  
 (Jane shrugs)  
 No one benefits if we're overbooked.

JANE  
 Oh, someone benefits.  
 (rubs her fingers together: "cash")  
 This is no non-profit, baby.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY - DAY

As Daniel walks down the hall, he's approached by MIKE (30's), one of the male counselors from the meeting.

MIKE

Hey, I got a problem.

DANIEL

Shoot.

MIKE

Mr. Conti, you know...

(insinuating)

...from Philadelphia? He accused the maids of stealing his watch. They didn't - I found it behind the dresser - but now they're scared of him so they just go in and do the minimum - and now he's complaining it's not clean enough.

DANIEL

He's just looking for an excuse to go AMA.

MIKE

I know, but they're ready to quit.

DANIEL

I'll take care of it.

Daniel turns a corner and walks past the front desk. Eileen hands him two message slips.

EILEEN

John Daley, and your wife.

DANIEL

Ex-wife.

EILEEN

Are the papers signed?

DANIEL

Life is messy, Eileen.

EILEEN

Then she's still your wife.

DANIEL

Will you write it up and put it in a memo to that creepy guy she's with? And tell my girlfriend too, in case she's gotten second thoughts about moving in.

INT. DANIEL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Daniel wedges himself into his tiny office, filled with stacks of paperwork, tosses the "John Daley" message aside and dials the phone.

DANIEL

Francie.

INT. ADVERTISING AGENCY - DAY

FRANCIE (30s) works at a computer in the art department of a slick advertising agency. She is tense, brusque.

FRANCIE

Did you switch your health insurance?

INTERCUT DANIEL/FRANCIE

DANIEL

Great to talk to you too.

FRANCIE

I have a deadline, Danny - I need to take you off my work policy, but first you have to make sure you switch your work coverage to primary or they can screw you.

DANIEL

Yeah, yeah, don't worry about it, I'll do it today.

Daniel reaches for a beat-up electric guitar leaning against the wall; he strums quietly as he talks (it's not plugged in).

FRANCIE

OK, I'm taking you off mine then.

DANIEL

You know you're dooming me to the world's worst HMO.

FRANCIE

You can't stay on mine forever.

DANIEL

I'm teasing, it'll be fine. Don't worry about me.

FRANCIE

It's a hard habit to break.

DANIEL  
 What evil corporation's image are  
 you burnishing today?

FRANCIE  
 Bye Danny.

DANIEL  
 Kiss Lily's head for me. I'll pick  
 her up on Saturday.

FRANCIE  
 This is the weekend we're taking  
 her to my mom's, remember?

Daniel stops strumming - puts the guitar aside.

DANIEL  
 "We're" taking her?

FRANCIE  
 Jeff's coming too. I e-mailed you.

DANIEL  
 No you didn't.

FRANCIE  
 I did. I'm looking at it right now -  
 sent it to your Hotmail account.

DANIEL  
 I never check that - you should've  
 used my work e-mail.

FRANCIE  
 It's not my fault you don't have a  
 life outside of work. Look, I'm  
 sorry, but you can make it up  
 another weekend. I have to go.

DANIEL  
 Francie, wait -

But she's gone. He hangs up, pauses to bury his feelings,  
 then opens the first application folder and starts reading.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY - DAY

Raquel and SueBee enter, looking uncertain.

SUEBEE  
 We're here for the family meeting?

EILEEN  
 What's the patient's name?

SUEBEE  
 (quietly)  
 Ezra Nash. Can I see him?

EILEEN  
 New patients don't have visiting  
 privileges the first week, but  
 you'll be allowed to join him for  
 lunch after your meeting. If you  
 can both sign in here.

RAQUEL  
 We have his things in the car.

EILEEN  
 I'll have someone bring those in  
 for you - they have to be searched  
 before Ezra gets them.

As SueBee signs them in, Raquel sees Annabelle - in a tank  
 top and boxer shorts - and her tiny dog crossing the lobby.

RAQUEL  
 (softly, to SueBee)  
 Isn't that...? From that show?

SUEBEE  
 I don't know, sweetheart, I'm too  
 vain to wear my glasses.

RAQUEL  
 I auditioned for that show...

SUEBEE  
 (to Eileen)  
 So now what do we do?

INT. EZRA'S ROOM - DAY

Daniel knocks and enters Ezra's room. It's like a nice hotel  
 room, but with a hospital bed - where Ezra is curled up.

DANIEL  
 You awake?

EZRA  
 I don't feel so good.

DANIEL  
 You can get meds to get you through  
 the next few days.

EZRA  
 I don't need rehab. I don't have a  
 problem. Being here is my problem.

DANIEL

You urinated on your fans last night. On live television.

Ezra is silent.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

If you're up for it, come to the group meeting after lunch.

EZRA

What happened to my massage?

DANIEL

If you feel well enough for a massage, you're well enough for a meeting.

EZRA

Then call me a car.

DANIEL

Meeting first.

INT. REC ROOM - DAY

The Family Meeting is underway - about twenty friends and family members (but no patients) sit in a circle. Jane guides the discussion. SueBee listens intently; Raquel fidgets.

A WELL-DRESSED MAN (40's) is upset.

WELL-DRESSED MAN

I'm the one who deals with the insurance when she wrecks her car - again; who feeds the kids, does the laundry when she stops at the bar after work; who leaves the office early because the neighbors find her asleep in their flowerbed. And you're saying I'm the one doing something wrong?

JANE

(calm)

All I'm saying is that these kind of enabling behaviors help perpetuate Karen's disease.

WELL-DRESSED MAN

My wife is a goddamn doctor and she doesn't even call it a disease.

JANE

It's a model we find useful here.

WELL-DRESSED MAN

Whatever you call it, I'm not the one with the problem. This is stupid.

He storms out of the room.

SueBee inches forward on her seat.

SUEBEE

Hello, excuse me? I thought this was going to be informational, to learn about Ezra's problem. I don't see how this can help him get well.

INT. EZRA'S ROOM - DAY

Daniel is still in with Ezra.

DANIEL

Your mom and Raquel are here for a family meeting; you can have lunch with them if you want.

EZRA

I don't want to see my mom. She tricked me.

DANIEL

Well come see Raquel, I'm sure she wants to see you.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

A fancy buffet, with chefs manning carving stations. PATIENTS filter in to join their FAMILIES for lunch. Lots of hugs. Lots of uncomfortable silences.

The Well-Dressed Man joins his wife, resident KAREN (40's) whose expensive haircut can't counter the fact that she looks like she hasn't gotten a good night's sleep in a month. They greet each other with a sterile, begrudging kiss.

SueBee and Raquel look around for Ezra. Finally, he shuffles in, escorted by Daniel.

RAQUEL

Baby!

Ezra kisses Raquel for a long time. Then, reluctantly gives his mother a hug. SueBee hangs onto him like he's returned from war.

EZRA

Hey, I'm not feeling that good, I'm gonna run to the bathroom.

He leaves. SueBee and Raquel look to Daniel, disappointed.

DANIEL  
He's adjusting. Please -

Daniel ushers them to the buffet line, where Annabelle is staring at the selection.

DANIEL (CONT'D)  
Eat something healthy, Annabelle.  
It'll help the sugar cravings.

ANNABELLE  
Ugh, its all fattening.

SUEBEE  
Oh, but look at that tiramisu!

She heads to the desserts. Daniel walks with Raquel through the line.

DANIEL  
I'd like to speak to you a moment.

RAQUEL  
Is Ez going to be OK? He's not a bad person, you know. It just freaks him out - performing, being famous. He always says he wishes he could make music without everyone looking at him all the time.

DANIEL  
Well, we can help him start to deal with that. But I actually wanted to talk about you.

RAQUEL  
Why?

DANIEL  
Have you considered getting treatment for yourself?

RAQUEL  
Me? I don't need it. I mean I do stuff, but not like Ezra...

DANIEL  
If not for you, then for him. He won't be able to have it around him at all. At all.

Uncomfortable, Raquel takes her tray over to a table. Daniel follows and sits with her.

RAQUEL  
I can't afford a place like this.

DANIEL  
We can recommend some more  
affordable programs - and maybe  
Ezra can help you with it?

RAQUEL  
I don't want to be away from him.

DANIEL  
It's not recommended that couples  
be in the same program.

RAQUEL  
Then forget it.

SueBee sits down with her tray.

SUEBEE  
Isn't Ez going to join us?

DANIEL  
I'll go check on him.

INT. EZRA'S ROOM - DAY

Daniel enters Ezra's room; he's curled up on the bed as he  
was before, facing away from the door.

DANIEL  
Don't you want to spend a little  
time with Raquel? You won't be able  
to see her for another week.

He shakes Ezra's shoulder.

DANIEL (CONT'D)  
Ezra...? Shit.

Ezra's DROOLING white foam; he's unconscious.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. PAUL'S OFFICE - DAY

Daniel, Paul and Dr. Sumar are in Paul's office; the walls are covered with autographed pictures of Paul with various celebrities. "Thanks for saving my life, Paul!" etc.

DR. SUMAR

He's comfortable, but I had to back off the sedatives, so he may get a little restless this evening.

PAUL

What was it, and where'd it come from?

DR. SUMAR

We're running bloodwork, but I'm guessing pain meds or benzos.

DANIEL

I'm sure it was the girlfriend. She arrived for family meeting just prior. Gave him a big hug.

HECTOR (25), a resident tech in scrubs, KNOCKS and enters. He's got the tattoos of a former gang member, and a big warm smile.

HECTOR

(holds up a prescription bottle)

Under the mattress. Valium, in his name.

He hands it over to Daniel.

DR. SUMAR

There you go.

DANIEL

There you go. Thanks Hector.

Hector and Dr. Sumar leave.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I spoke to her earlier about getting treatment for herself. She wants to be with Ezra. Said she'd only come here.

PAUL

I'll talk to Jane about it. We might be able to fit her in.

DANIEL  
I'm happy to look for a spot for  
her somewhere else.

PAUL  
It's...OK for them to both be here.

DANIEL  
It's a terrible idea and you know it.

PAUL  
What I know is we have different  
philosophies.

DANIEL  
Conventional wisdom -

PAUL  
I interpret conventional wisdom  
with some leniency. Flexibility.  
You are a little more orthodox.

DANIEL  
I just know what works.

PAUL  
I'll take your opinion into  
consideration.

Unhappy, Daniel turns to leave.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
Everything else OK, Daniel? You  
seem a little overloaded. This  
promotion working for you?

DANIEL  
All good. I like to stay busy.

PAUL  
Everything OK with Sunny?

DANIEL  
Sunny's fine. She's moving in.

PAUL  
That can be stressful.

DANIEL  
Nah, it's great.

Daniel SMILES and pops a couple of hard candies from the jar  
on Paul's desk into his mouth on his way out.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Daniel flushes all of Ezra's Valium down the toilet. He moves quickly, efficiently, without giving himself even a moment to think of doing anything else with them.

EXT. PATIO - DAY

A process meeting is about to start out on the patio, with a view of the ocean. About a dozen RESIDENTS take their seats, including several that will recur in future episodes:

-- Annabelle the young actress with the eating disorder and the chubby little dog. Speed.

-- Karen, the doctor we saw eating lunch with her husband and son. Alcohol and pain meds.

-- ELEANOR WELLS (60's) an old-school show-biz broad - a cross between Liza Minnelli and Elaine Stritch. She lives here full-time, when not on tour. Percoset.

-- EDDIE HERNANDEZ (30's), a pro-ball player, arms as big as most legs, hiding behind his hat brim. Cocaine. Steroids too, but he'll sooner admit to the coke.

KAREN

(to Eleanor)

Anesthesiology was like a candyshop -  
I never prescribed anything I hadn't  
tried myself first!

ELEANOR WELLS

Did you know Dr. Moore at Cedars?  
He was my favorite plastic surgeon -  
and a total hoot. Poor guy.

KAREN

(nods, sadly)

I used to work with a much higher  
blood alcohol level than that - and  
besides, that facelift turned out  
fine.

Counselor SAM sits down.

SAM

OK everyone, I want to start by  
congratulating Winnie and George,  
who are graduating this weekend.

GROUP

Congratulations Winnie and George!

GEORGE (50's, businessman) nods, restrained but moved. WINNIE (20's, trust fund girl), bursts into tears.

SAM

So this week I want to talk a little about relapse prevention. It gets a little harder out there in the world. Any of you ever heard the term 'HALT'?

ELEANOR WELLS

I know the "H" is for hungry!

She gets a laugh from the group.

SAM

Right - Hungry, Angry, Lonely, Tired. And any one of them can lead to a relapse. People think a relapse is a big jump off a cliff - it's not, it's a tiny nudge, and any one of these things can push you. More than one - watch out.

Daniel escorts Ezra, who shuffles along in a bathrobe, out to join the meeting. Sam nods to an empty seat next to Annabelle.

SAM (CONT'D)

As Daniel likes to say, sometimes it's the easy days that turn out to be the hardest. Right?

Daniel nods in agreement; he installs Ezra in his seat and goes inside. Ezra gets some stares of recognition.

SAM (CONT'D)

Can we all welcome Ezra?

GROUP

Hi Ezra.

Ezra picks up a droopy hand in greeting. He's not too awake.

ANNABELLE

(quiet, to Ezra)  
Let me know if you want a private tour.

Even in his haze, Ezra shoots her a crooked smile.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Daniel enters the room of FRANK CONTI (60's), meticulously dressed in a camelhair sport coat as he stands precariously on a chair and peers up at the ceiling light fixture.

DANIEL

Frank, aren't you supposed to be in group right now? They're starting.

Frank runs his finger along the fixture, shows Daniel the dust.

FRANK  
Filthy. I wouldn't let my dog lick  
this, and he eats his own ass.

DANIEL  
I hear you're having some trouble  
with the maids.

FRANK  
Unbefuckinlievable.

LENA, one of the maids, scurries out of the bathroom with her  
cleaning supplies and darts for the door.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
Ah, ah - come back here. This bed  
is not right.  
(showing her)  
I told you, if the sheet is like  
this, my feet freeze. Redo it.  
(turns to Daniel)  
Do you see what I mean? Fucking  
Spanish people invented lazy -

DANIEL  
(sharp)  
Frank -

FRANK  
I'm sorry, Hispano-Latino, whatever  
they call it now. Speedy Gonzales  
my ass...

DANIEL  
Lena, do me a favor, don't come back.

FRANK  
Now we're talkin'.

LENA  
I'm fired?

DANIEL  
No. But you should leave Mr.  
Conti's room alone. He has to earn  
back the privilege of maid service.

FRANK  
Excuse me? Do you know how much I  
am paying for you people to torture  
me in this shithole?

DANIEL

While you're in my care, what I say goes, and I say that making your own bed is part of your program.

Frank is apoplectic. He gets right up in Daniel's face, big, intimidating and scary.

FRANK

The people I know could make your life hell. I am the fountain beverage king of Philadelphia.

DANIEL

So, King - "Mr. King"? - you run a multimillion dollar organization... and you don't know how to make a bed?

FRANK

I pay people to make my bed! I will walk out of here right now.

DANIEL

If you go back to Philly and keep drinking like you were, you won't be running anything for long - fountain beverage or otherwise.

FRANK

That has never been proven in a court of law.

DANIEL

I'm just saying. If your adversaries sense a weakness, my guess is you'll be out of business.  
(finger across the throat)  
So we both know that you need to stay here til you get it together.

Daniel turns and leaves, walking out through a cluster of residents who have gathered to see the drama.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

If it was up to me, everyone would have to make their own beds. Bunch of entitled babies.  
(over his shoulder)  
Oh, and I believe Lena is Croatian.

Frank turns and sees a frightened Lena, frozen in the corner of his room.

FRANK

Just... Fuck you.

She runs out the door.

INT. HALL - CONTINUOUS

Daniel finally gets a moment alone and takes a deep breath, letting the facade of fearlessness drop for a second.

Paul and Jane come towards him.

PAUL

What's going on, we heard shouting.

DANIEL

Nothing.

PAUL

Good. So, Ezra's girlfriend Raquel will be joining us.

DANIEL

What?

PAUL

The manager is paying for it - thinks it's the best way to keep Ezra here.

Eleanor Wells glides down the hallway in a mumu and turban.

ELEANOR WELLS

Paul darling...

PAUL

Eleanor, you look stupendous.

ELEANOR WELLS

I am stupendous, love.

Daniel and Jane roll their eyes at Paul's obsequiousness. Paul and Eleanor exchange extravagant air kisses as she passes by.

DANIEL

(can't drop it)  
Why do you give me responsibility and then not listen to what I have to say?

PAUL

The girlfriend's not coming to your wing - it's Jane's side.

DANIEL

But it affects my patient.

Daniel's anger seems to worry Jane.

JANE

It'll be OK. We'll try to use the positives and avoid the negatives.

PAUL

She specifically asked for you to do her intake. And I thought it'd be a good idea while you're at the house to help her do a contraband sweep, make sure there's nothing for them to come back to. I said you'd be there at three.

DANIEL

(walking off)

I don't like doing it this way.

INT. DANIEL'S OFFICE - DAY

Daniel gets his coat and keys. As he's about to leave, he gets an idea. He CONNECTS his iPhone to his computer, pulls up the iTunes store and starts DOWNLOADING something.

INT. DANIEL'S CAR - DAY

Daniel hooks his iPhone up to his old car's cassette player and pulls up the album he downloaded - its Ezra Nash's.

Ezra's music plays as he drives. It rocks pretty hard, and his voice has a rawness, an urgency to it.

EZRA NASH (MUSIC)

*You can deflect the force of gravity,  
You can defy the laws of everything...  
You can defy the loss of everything...*

Daniel listens closely, like he's mining for gold.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOUSE - DAY

Daniel pulls his car up to the driveway gate of Ezra's house and rings the intercom. Raquel answers:

RAQUEL (O.S.)

The buzzer is broken. Hit 4-2-2-4.

He does, and the gate swings open.

INT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOUSE - DAY

Raquel is ready to go, with her suitcase by the door. Daniel walks past her, into the house.

DANIEL

We have to take care of a couple of things first.

INT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOUSE; VARIOUS - DAY

Daniel and Raquel walk around with a garbage bag, throwing out any alcohol or drugs from around the house.

-- They clear out the liquor cabinet.

-- They take a beautiful blown-glass BONG off the coffeetable.

-- They take a "drug box" from the closet and dump the contents - assorted baggies and pipes - in the trash.

-- Raquel takes the back off a guitar amp and pulls out more baggies, several syringes.

DANIEL

What else? Prescription?

Raquel opens a bedside table - lots of PRESCRIPTION BOTTLES. She hesitates.

RAQUEL

They're for my headaches.

DANIEL

Percocet?

Daniel tosses them in the trash.

RAQUEL

I really do get migraines.

DANIEL

The docs can give you something if you really need it.

RAQUEL

I know you think I gave Ezra drugs, but I didn't.

(Daniel keeps emptying the drawer)

You don't believe me.

DANIEL

Treatment won't work - for you, or for Ezra - if you don't get honest, real quick.

RAQUEL

I am honest.

Raquel sits down on the bed, fighting tears.

RAQUEL (CONT'D)

I can't go if you don't believe me.

Daniel sits next to her. Softens his tone.

DANIEL

Look, if you're ready to go, and I think you are, it's the best decision you'll ever make.

RAQUEL

What if...if it's not the same for us after...?

She crumples into herself and cries. Daniel can only put an arm around her shoulder and pass her a Kleenex.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOUSE - DAY

Daniel drops the TWO GARBAGE BAGS of liquor and drugs into the trash bins, then turns to help fit Raquel's many suitcases into the trunk of his car.

INT. NEW TOMORROW RECOVERY CENTER; LOBBY - DAY

Daniel and Raquel enter. She teeters in heels; he helps with her bags. Jane is waiting for them.

DANIEL

We have to go through your bags; Jane will show you to your room.

RAQUEL

Can I see Ez?

Daniel and Jane exchange looks. His says "I told you so" - hers says "Oh, why not?".

DANIEL

Quick hello - he's in 211.

Raquel runs off, excited.

JANE

Junkie love. So cute.

INT. EZRA'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Raquel pushes open the door to Ezra's room, breathless -

RAQUEL

Ez, I'm here -

She stops short. The room is empty.

RAQUEL (CONT'D)

Baby?

She hears someone in the bathroom and runs over to the door -

RAQUEL (CONT'D)

Baby!

She THROWS OPEN the bathroom door and sees Ezra - pants around his ankles - fucking Annabelle on the bathroom counter.

Raquel SCREAMS.

EZRA

Shit, baby, this isn't what it looks like...

RAQUEL

Is it an optical illusion?!

ANNABELLE

(glancing in the mirror)  
Does my ass look big to you?

RAQUEL

(recognizing her)  
You're...oh my God...

She SCREAMS again.

EXT. NEW TOMORROW RECOVERY CENTER - DAY

Raquel gets into a taxi with her bags - still crying. Daniel and Jane watch her go.

DANIEL

I'm not going to say anything.

JANE

Stop it, you just did.

INT. EZRA'S ROOM - DAY

Daniel enters Ezra's room, carrying the old electric GUITAR from his office. Ezra is curled up on the bed, but perks up when he sees the guitar.

EZRA

Les Paul Goldtop. What happened to it?

DANIEL

Been through some wars.

EZRA

You play?

DANIEL

A little. My brother was the real musician - this was his. Thought you might want to borrow it.

He hands the guitar to Ezra, who sits up and starts strumming, as instinctual to him as breathing.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

You kinda remind me of him.

(beat)

So listen, I'm glad you're feeling up to it, but there's no sex allowed between residents.

EZRA

(miserable)

It just happened, man, shit...

DANIEL

Any idea why?

EZRA

Why? Did you see that girl?

Daniel laughs.

DANIEL

Know why so many artists are addicts? Because it's your job to feel stuff, to dig around in it, and it isn't always comfortable. Addicts don't know how to be uncomfortable - so they grab the nearest thing to make it stop. Drugs are a way to cut down on what you feel. Fucking is another. So yeah, Annabelle's hot, but I don't think it was about that.

EZRA

Well try telling that to Raquel. And if she leaves me, what's the point?

DANIEL

You mean, why get clean? That's a conversation we can get into tomorrow.

EZRA

Think I'm gonna leave tomorrow.

Ezra starts playing louder, ending the conversation. Daniel sighs; he's got his work cut out for him.

INT. DANIEL'S OFFICE - DAY

Done for the day, Daniel grabs his bag and shuts the light. Just as he is about to close the door behind him, his desk phone RINGS. He goes back and grabs it.

DANIEL  
Sunny I'm leaving now - I'm sorry -

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. WILSHIRE BLVD. - DAY

Rick Strickland SHOUTS into his cell while driving like an asshole down Wilshire.

STRICKLAND  
I just heard from Raquel. She says your program is unprofessional and I should pull Ezra out immediately. What the hell is going on?

DANIEL  
There are some issues between them, but that has nothing to do with Ezra's treatment.

STRICKLAND  
She says he's unsupervised, that he's doing whatever he damn well pleases - is that what we're paying thousands of dollars a day for?

DANIEL  
That's not really -

STRICKLAND  
There is a multi-million dollar tour on the line here - can you ensure that he'll be able to go?

DANIEL  
I can't ensure anything, unfortunately.

STRICKLAND  
Then what's your goddamn professional opinion - what are the odds?

DANIEL  
It's too soon to say.

STRICKLAND  
I'll move Ezra elsewhere if you can't convince me that place isn't an overpriced pile of touchy-feely bullshit masquerading as science, and I -

Daniel hangs up the phone.

DANIEL  
Damn cell phones, always dropping calls.

His phone rings again, but Daniel ignores it and leaves, shutting the door behind him.

EXT. NEW TOMORROW RECOVERY CENTER; PARKING LOT - DUSK

Daniel walks across the parking lot to his car, then stops. There, in front of his feet, is a DEAD SQUIRREL. ANTS swarm the exposed skull, carrying away tiny scraps of flesh.

Something about it speaks to him and he just stands there and watches them work for a long time.

INT. DANIEL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Daniel straggles in with a bag of groceries.

Sunny is on the couch in sweats, in front of a muted television, a large PARROT perched on her arm.

DANIEL

Sorry I'm late - I got stuff for dinner.

He leans in to kiss her; the parrot SQUAWKS and FLAPS.

SUNNY

Don't scare Carlos. I ate already.

DANIEL

Wish you had told me. Well, maybe I'll just grab something to eat on the way to my meeting.

SUNNY

You have a meeting?

DANIEL

Yeah, it's Thursday. I always go on Thursday.

(Sunny SIGHS)

What?

SUNNY

Nothing.

Daniel starts putting groceries away.

SUNNY (CONT'D)

I thought I'd see more of you if we lived together, but I think I see you less.

Daniel comes over and sits next to her. Carlos FLAPS.

CARLOS THE PARROT  
 (à la the Ramones)  
 Hey! Ho! Let's Go!

DANIEL  
 That must've been cute the first  
 hundred times.

SUNNY  
 He only does it when he's upset. I  
 want you to spend some time with  
 Carlos so he bonds with you.

DANIEL  
 Sure, in my spare time.

Sunny puts him in his cage.

SUNNY  
 He thinks you don't like him.

DANIEL  
 How about I skip my meeting and  
 stay home with you. I'm beat  
 anyway, I've been up since 4:30.

Sunny snuggles up to him and UNMUTES the TV.

CARLOS THE PARROT  
 Hey! Ho! Let's Go!

INT. DANIEL'S APARTMENT; BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sunny is dead asleep. Daniel tosses and turns.

INT. DANIEL'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Daniel looks through the medicine cabinet. Locates a bottle  
 of Advil - empty.

On the floor is a moving box labelled "*Sunny - bathroom  
 stuff*" - he opens it up and rummages around.

He pulls out a bag filled with miscellaneous medicine cabinet  
 items - aspirin, bandaids, several prescription bottles. One  
 bottle catches his eye. He fishes it out of the bag and  
 stares at it for a long time: "*Tylenol with Codeine.*"

DANIEL  
 Jesus, Sunny...

He OPENS the childproof cap, hands trembling with anger,  
 pours the PILLS out into his palm and stares at them.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Daniel and Jane interviewing a fresh-faced college grad. Majored in sociology, never met an addict in her life.

SORORITY INTERVIEWEE

I know if I could just sit down and explain how they are ruining their lives, I could really make a difference!

Jane glances at Daniel: "next!"

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Interviewee #2 is a grown-up PIGPEN. Crazy hair, unexplained smudges all over his pants.

JANE

And how long have you been sober?

PIGPEN INTERVIEWEE

(uncomfortable)

You can ask that?

JANE

It may be the only job where it actually helps you to be a recovered addict.

PIGPEN INTERVIEWEE

How are you defining recovered, technically?

Next.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Interviewee #3 is a TIMID-LOOKING WOMAN.

DANIEL

Who's your favorite movie actor?

TIMID INTERVIEWEE

(uptalk)

...George Clooney?

DANIEL

Are you asking me?

TIMID INTERVIEWEE

What?

DANIEL

So George Clooney comes into rehab, and he's charming and says all the right things. And he asks if he can go to the set every day to work. What do you say?

TIMID INTERVIEWEE

...uh, well, I guess I'd talk to his doctors and see -

DANIEL

In my opinion, once you make an exception, its a slippery slope.

JANE

To be fair, this is a specialized clientele. I don't think it's too much to acknowledge they have these crazy lifestyles and try to accommodate that.

They get into it with each other, completely ignoring the Timid Interviewee, who sinks in her chair, uncomfortable. It's like watching mom and dad argue.

DANIEL

That's like giving in to a three year old - what they want is not in their best interests.

He turns to the interviewee.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

What do you think?

She looks terrified. Daniel shoots Jane a look: "next!"

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Interviewee #4 is LES. A handsome, likeable guy in his 40's with a conservative haircut.

LES

I can't believe I'd say this about a job that pays half as much as I made in insurance, but its the best job I could imagine. My life has purpose. I wouldn't say that meth was the best thing that could have happened to me - but in a way, it saved my life.

As he talks, Daniel likes what he hears, but is distracted by Les's clothes. The suit jacket seems a little soft in the shoulders.

The shirt cuffs peeking from the sleeves are oddly delicate. His gaze drifts down to Les's shoes. They are women's pumps. Les catches Daniel looking.

JANE

Thank's so much, Les, we'll hopefully be making a decision very soon.

LES

There's one more thing I wanted to say.

DANIEL

Yes?

LES

(direct, to Daniel)

If there's one thing I've learned in the program is that hiding a part of myself has bad consequences. So if that's a problem -

JANE

It's not a problem. Daniel?

DANIEL

Not a problem.

They shake hands with Les and he leaves. Daniel turns to Jane and smiles.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I like him a lot. I just don't think Paul will spring for a putting a urinal in the ladies room.

Jane SMACKS him. Eileen sticks her head in the room.

EILEEN

Daniel - John Daley on the phone for you.

DANIEL

I'm in the middle of interviews -

JANE

We're done. There was supposed to be another woman earlier, but she didn't show, so that's it.

INT. DANIEL'S OFFICE - DAY

As Daniel unlocks his office door, Annabelle wanders down the hall, distraught.

ANNABELLE

Have you seen Madonna Louise? I can't find her anywhere.

DANIEL

She couldn't have gone too far - her legs are only four inches long.

He ducks into his office and PICKS UP the holding call.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I know, I'm a bad sponsee.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. JOHN'S KITCHEN - DAY

JOHN

Not calling me back I can live with, but where were you last night?

JOHN (late 60's) organizes his extensive prescription pill regimen as he talks. A powerful voice in a frail, aging body.

DANIEL

Sorry, I needed to spend some time with Sunny, relationship shit...

JOHN

It happens. I'm just a little concerned because its the third or forth one recently. Are you making it up with other meetings?

DANIEL

John, I sit in meetings all day for work, there is no shortage of meetings in my life.

JOHN

That's work. This is for you. Big difference - you know that.

DANIEL

I know, It's just been crazy with work, and Sunny, and my kid...

JOHN

More will be revealed.

(beat)

Will you be at next Thursday's meeting? I'm bringing your cake.

Eileen sticks her head in Daniel's office.

EILEEN  
Paul's office. Now.

DANIEL  
(to both John and Eileen)  
I'll be there, I'll be there.

JOHN  
Good. Six years is no small thing.  
Take a minute and appreciate it.

DANIEL  
I will - when I have time. Gotta  
run, John, thanks.

Daniel hangs up.

EILEEN  
He is pissed.

INT. PAUL'S OFFICE - DAY

PAUL  
What did you say to Ezra Nash's  
manager last night?

DANIEL  
Nothing. He called me to scream  
because the girlfriend caught Ezra  
screwing Annabelle and ran crying  
back to the manager.

PAUL  
Why was Ezra screwing Annabelle?

DANIEL  
He had to. It's in the Rock Star  
Code.

There's a strange SQUEAKING sound from somewhere in the office.

PAUL  
Do you hear that?  
(Daniel SHRUGS)  
He said you told him you didn't  
know if Ezra would do well here.

DANIEL  
I told him I couldn't guarantee  
anything.

PAUL  
He said you hung up on him.

DANIEL  
I might have...prematurely hung up.

PAUL  
Come on. You're supposed to defuse  
this kind of situation, not  
escalate it.

DANIEL  
It'll blow over.

PAUL  
It won't. He'll be here any minute  
to pick Ezra up. Apparently, Ezra  
is more than happy to leave.

DANIEL  
You try to talk sense into the  
manager when he gets here, I'll go  
talk to Ezra.

Daniel leaves.

The SQUEAKING sound again. Paul moves the piles of paper  
around the messy floor, looking for the source.

PAUL  
What the hell is that?

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Daniel stands outside Ezra's room, thinking.

INT. EZRA'S ROOM - DAY

Ezra is packing his things back in his suitcase. He doesn't  
look well, pale, with a sheen of cold sweat. Daniel enters.

DANIEL  
I just want to know - what do you miss  
the most? What's calling to you?

EZRA  
(surprised)  
Uh...heroin.  
(beat)  
And crack.

DANIEL  
Yeah, but what about them? The shiver  
you get as your turn into your  
dealer's driveway? The hiss of the  
lighter heating the pipe? That ever-  
shrinking moment of perfection, when  
absolutely nothing else matters?

EZRA  
Sounds like you're the one that  
misses it.

DANIEL

Sure, that shit is deep in my reptilian brain. God knows it took more than just whipping my dick out on live television to make me stop. It probably will for you too. Good luck.

Daniel turns to leave. Ezra is confused.

EZRA

Well...wait.

A slight smile FLITS across Daniel's face before he turns back around.

EZRA (CONT'D)

What do you mean?

DANIEL

Most people don't end up in treatment until they lose everything, plus more. I wasn't the exception, and you probably won't be either. You may have to lose your career, health, relationship, house, money, friends - before you're ready. Hopefully you and the people you love will still be alive by the time you get there.

EZRA

(upset)

You are trying to convince me. I guess now you're going to share your story with me - if you ask me there is way too much sharing going on around here - and you're gonna tell me how much better your life is now that you're clean.

DANIEL

Actually, it's worse.

(off Ezra's look)

I live in a shitty one bedroom apartment, see my kid on alternate weekends, earn thirty-eight thousand dollars a year and pray that the weird smell coming from my car engine doesn't cost more than fifty bucks to fix.

Ezra avoids Daniel's eyes. Daniel keeps going.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

But I'll have six years next week. I'm not gonna lie - it was a bitch to get here and it's still not easy. I still miss drugs, oh yeah. But you know what else I miss?

(MORE)

DANIEL (CONT'D)

My daughter - everything from her birth to her first big-girl bike. *Ffft* - gone. I miss my house, my marriage, my career. Well, not the job so much, but the respect I got when people heard what I did, saw the expensive car I drove. I like this job, I really do, but I don't get that anymore.

(mostly addressing himself, now)

And along the way, I saw some bad shit. I did bad things, to myself and other people. People I loved. And I saw people die, but for some reason, I wasn't one of them.

Daniel stops talking, doesn't look up. He's lost in a dark place that he usually tries not to linger in for too long.

EZRA

Who?

(Daniel looks up,  
surprised)

Who died?

Daniel considers his answer. Telling Ezra more might be the more effective therapeutic choice, but he just can't somehow.

DANIEL

It's not important.

(snapping back into  
counsellor mode)

Am I trying to convince you to stay?  
Yeah, I guess I am. You're talented,  
Ezra. And you've been lucky too. I'd  
like to see you get out of the  
casino while you've still got  
something in your pocket.

The door OPENS and Rick Strickland enters, followed by Paul, who doesn't look happy.

STRICKLAND

Ezra, you ready?

Ezra hesitates. Paul searches Daniel's face, looking for a sign that Ezra will stay. Daniel shrugs with his eyes.

Ezra STANDS and zips his suitcase. He SHAKES Daniel's hand.

EZRA

Good luck, man.

DANIEL

You too.

Ezra grabs his suitcase and LEAVES with Rick.

DANIEL (CONT'D)  
Thought I had a shot. Sorry.

Paul LEAVES, clearly disappointed with Daniel, but Daniel's head is somewhere else. He picks up the guitar he lent Ezra - his brother's old guitar - and just holds it gently on his lap.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Paul heads back to his office. Jane joins him.

JANE  
So Eleanor's leaving for a European tour and wants to take my best tech with her as a sober companion. Can I offer him a raise so he won't take it?

PAUL  
Better yet - have Eleanor hire him through us - we'll give it a little markup, and then we get our tech back after the tour. Then it makes us money instead of costing us.

JANE  
You're a genius. Possibly an evil one.

Paul turns into the door of his office and stops.

PAUL  
Listen, do you hear it? It's louder.

Jane and Paul listen... the SQUEAKING again. Paul starts turning over piles of medical journals and papers, desperate to find the source of the sound. He opens an half-empty cardboard file box and stares, wide-eyed.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
Holy Mother of --

Jane comes over and looks inside the file box. There is Annabelle's dog, Madonna - and FOUR NEWBORN PUPPIES, scrabbling around and SQUEAKING, trying to nurse.

JANE  
-- dog.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Daniel walks past Frank Conti's room. He peeks in.

Frank is lying face up on his bed, napping. There are no sheets on the bed - its a BARE MATTRESS. Daniel shakes his head: what a stubborn bastard. He keeps walking.

INT. DANIEL'S OFFICE - DAY

Daniel sits at his desk, piles of work all around him. He stares, motionless, at something on his computer screen:

It's a PHOTO of Daniel and his YOUNGER BROTHER, both in their early twenties, energetic and in motion, playing a gig with their band. His brother is playing the Les Paul Goldtop guitar.

DANIEL  
(small)  
Goddamnit, Lucas. I'm sorry.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Daniel locks his office and walks past Paul's office.

DANIEL  
Paul, I'm going home early.

Jane, kneeling on the floor with the box of puppies, tilts it towards Daniel.

JANE  
Look - Madonna and children!

DANIEL  
I guess she was getting fat.

PAUL  
Don't feel bad about the Ezra thing. It's OK.

DANIEL  
It's not that, I just didn't get much sleep last night, I don't feel that well. I'm just...tired.

PAUL  
OK. Do I have your weekly report?

DANIEL  
Can I get it to you tomorrow?

JANE  
I can do it. Mindy's taking the kids to a Sparks game tonight - I'm in no rush to get home.

Annabelle ENTERS.

ANNABELLE  
You wanted to see me?  
(spying the puppies)  
Oh my God!

Annabelle smiles broadly, then abruptly BURSTS into tears. Jane puts an arm around her. Daniel raises a questioning eyebrow; Jane gives him an "I'll tell you later" look.

DANIEL

OK, thanks Jane. See you tomorrow.

JANE

(after he's gone)

He needs a good night's sleep.

PAUL

Ah, he's fine.

JANE

(to Annabelle)

Do you want to see them?

Annabelle shakes her head "yes, then "no", then grabs a big handful of candy from the jar on Paul's desk.

EXT. DANIEL'S APARTMENT - DAY

Daniel stands at the fridge, still in his work clothes. He pokes around, opens an old takeout container and promptly tosses it in the trash. Nothing to eat.

He wanders into the bedroom, changes into a t-shirt. He lies down across the unmade bed and closes his eyes.

The SOUND of the front door opening, and Sunny's voice chatting with someone jars him back.

Daniel goes out to see Sunny and a teenage GOTH GIRL setting their things down on the kitchen table.

SUNNY

What are you doing home? I've got a tutoring session. This is Lori.

The Goth Girl lifts a limp hand in greeting.

DANIEL

Can I talk to you?

Sunny and Daniel step into the bedroom.

SUNNY

(feeling his forehead)

What's wrong? I hope you're not getting that thing everyone's had.

DANIEL

I found Tylenol with Codeine in your things last night.

SUNNY

Why - what do you mean?

DANIEL

You can't bring that in this house.

SUNNY

It must have been from my wisdom  
tooth a couple of years ago. I  
didn't even know I still had it.  
Where is it, I'll get rid of it.

DANIEL

I flushed it. I need this to be a  
safe place.

SUNNY

It's safe. It was just an accident.

DANIEL

It doesn't matter what it was, it  
was here. Don't you get it? You  
don't get it. And you don't even  
say you're sorry.

SUNNY

I'm sorry! You know, I try really  
hard to accommodate your issues,  
but I never seem to get any credit.  
Honestly, I'm a little tired of it.

DANIEL

You're tired? I am goddamn tired.  
And I can't even take a nap if  
you're tutoring in the house -

SUNNY

We need the money. Why are you  
picking a fight?

DANIEL

I'm going out.

He grabs his jacket and leaves. Sunny is baffled.

EXT. DANIEL'S APARTMENT - DAY

Daniel pauses on the outdoor balcony, just outside his second-  
floor apartment. He looks uncomfortable, like he doesn't know  
where to be.

A flowerpot with a sickly marigold sits on the ledge. Daniel  
picks it up and holds it over the edge, thinking. After a  
long moment, dangling it precariously, he opens his hands -  
and it FALLS, SMASHING on the walkway below.

INT. JANE'S OFFICE - DAY

JANE

(seeing Annabelle out)

So we'll talk again tomorrow, OK?

Annabelle - still puffy-eyed, but no longer crying - nods, hugs Jane and leaves. Jane closes the door with a weary sigh - on the back of the door is a little mirror.

Jane picks up a pair of SCISSORS from her desk, stands in front of the mirror and casually starts CUTTING little pieces of her hair. It seems like an absent-minded, soothing habit, something she does a lot. She takes tiny snips from the bangs, from the sides. She musses it, but then, seemingly unsatisfied with her trims, RE-SITUATES her whole head of hair with a little twist, and we realize: it's a wig.

EXT. CHURCH - DUSK

Daniel sits in his car at the curb outside a church. He's LISTENING to Ezra's music.

It's getting dark, and it's easy to see the AA meeting going on inside: circle of folding chairs, coffee and pamphlets on the back table. Someone is receiving a cake with a single candle in it - traditional for their first year of sobriety.

Daniel doesn't go inside.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOUSE - NIGHT

Daniel stops his car on the street outside Ezra's Hollywood Hills house. He stares at the house for a while.

Suddenly, the front door OPENS and Raquel storms out, wheeling her luggage behind her. Ezra follows, carrying a bottle of Jack Daniels and SHOUTING at her.

Raquel throws her things into her car and SPEEDS out the gate and down the road.

Ezra, barefoot and drunk, fumbles with his keys. He puts the bottle of whiskey on the roof of the Range Rover while he gets in, then forgets it's there and ROARS off, following Raquel into the darkness. The bottle flies off and SMASHES in the driveway. The gate creaks closed.

And then it's silent again.

Daniel gets out of his car and approaches the gate. He punches the code into the keypad, and the gate swings open.

He goes to the garbage bins at the side of the house and turns one over. He sifts through the trash until he sees what he's looking for: the drugs he helped Raquel throw away when they went through the house together.

Quickly, expertly, he fixes a syringe of heroin using water from the garden hose and a crusty, dope-caked spoon. He ties off using his belt and scans his scarred veins for a spot.

EXT. MULHOLLAND DRIVE - NIGHT

A gorgeous view of the Valley lights. Smoke wisps twirl into the air.

We SEE the source of the smoke: Ezra has wrapped the front of his Range Rover around a telephone pole. He climbs out, PUKES, then starts walking down Mulholland back towards his house.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOUSE - NIGHT

Ezra keys himself in the gate and walks up the driveway. He sees the overturned garbage bin first and walks over to it.

EZRA

Dumbass raccoons...

He STOPS SHORT when he sees Daniel, out cold on the driveway.

EZRA (CONT'D)

Shit...

He stares for a long moment, taking it in: Daniel. Drugs.

Ezra starts to develop a pretty good freak-out...but he has his priorities; he picks up the syringe lying next to Daniel and SHOOTS the last dregs of it.

Slightly calmer now, he digs out his phone and dials.

EZRA (CONT'D)

Don't hang up on me baby, I need you! This is fucked up, this is way fucked up...

PUSH IN on Daniel's unconscious face.

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

The Skydiver with the haunted eyes from the opening sequence - who we now realize is Daniel, not Ezra - drifts through space... getting smaller and smaller and further away...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOUSE - NIGHT

Raquel stands in the driveway, barefoot and disheveled, watching the ambulance take Daniel away. (We are now caught up to the opening sequence.)

Over on the front steps of the house, Ezra is hunched over a cigarette, rocking and muttering to himself.

EZRA

I can't deal with this, I can not  
deal...

INT. AMBULANCE - NIGHT

The EMTs work on Daniel as the ambulance careens down the winding roads; they struggle to stay upright through the sharp curves and potholes.

EMT #1 fills a syringe with Naloxone - an opiate antagonist.

He quickly swabs Daniel's skin and prepares to inject it.

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

The Skydiver, far away and tiny.

Then suddenly, like a balloon that's suddenly lost its seal, he starts PLUMMETING BACK DOWN towards the earth...

INT. AMBULANCE - NIGHT

Daniel WAKES with a stifled shout. Disoriented and scared, he looks around, makes eye contact with EMT #1, who is still holding the empty Naloxone syringe in his hand.

EMT #1

Welcome back.

Waves of sadness and shame wash across Daniel's face. Realizing what has happened. What a dangerous door he's re-opened. What the consequences may be.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

The morning sun STREAMS in. Daniel stirs in the bed of a curtained-off emergency-room cubby. There is a faint BUZZING sound, but he's not awake enough to register what it is.

A hefty NURSE (50's) comes in and fusses with his IV fluids, monitors, etc. The BUZZING again.

NURSE

You awake, sweetheart? Want me to get that for you?

She rifles through the bag of his clothes, fishes his cell phone out of his jacket pocket and hands it to him. He squints at the caller ID display; it reads "Sunny".

DANIEL

Shit.

NURSE

Been ringing all morning.

DANIEL

(debates, then answers)

Hey baby....I know, I'm so sorry... yeah, I had a late night intake, and I was so tired I just decided to sleep at work...I know, I didn't mean to make you worry... I'm really sorry...OK....OK bye.

He hangs up. The Nurse raises her eyebrow at him.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I will. I'm just not up to it yet.

NURSE

Did I say something?

She wheels in a sorry-looking breakfast tray.

NURSE (CONT'D)

You got a plan for yourself?

DANIEL

A man, a plan, a canal. Panama.  
(off her look)  
Palindrome.

NURSE

You ready to stop this nonsense?

DANIEL

Yeah, I got a plan. I make those plans for a living.  
(beat)  
I'm a drug and alcohol counsellor.

NURSE

That's a good one. I take it you ain't been following your own advice.

Daniel is silent.

NURSE (CONT'D)

One day at a time, I guess.

An ADMINISTRATOR sticks her head through the curtain.

ADMINISTRATOR

Daniel Vogel?

DANIEL

Yes.

ADMINISTRATOR

I need to talk to you about your insurance.

INT. HOSPITAL - MOMENTS LATER

Daniel, in his clothes from the night before, EXITS the emergency room, tearing the ID bracelet from his wrist.

RECEPTIONIST

(alarmed)

Are you leaving?

DANIEL

Apparently, I am on the no-insurance-get-well-quick plan.

EXT. MALIBU SHOPPING MALL - DAY

BERNADETTE (40's) gets off a city bus, carrying a fresh blouse on a hanger. This is the face of someone who has seen some shit, and looks determined to not see it again. She starts walking down the Pacific Coast Highway.

EXT. BEACH RESTROOM - DAY

Bernadette SPLASHES water on her sweaty face in the public beach bathroom, smooths her hair. She's changed into her fresh blouse.

EXT. MALIBU BEACH - DAY

Bernadette stands outside the restroom for a moment, looking at the ocean. She SHUTS her eyes tight and talks to herself, quiet and intense.

BERNADETTE

Please Jesus, please Jesus, please Jesus, please...

After a moment, she opens her eyes and sees a pack of SURFER DUDES hoisting their boards and heading to the water. They are so blonde and young and energetic - everything she isn't. One waves at her; she waves back, taking it as a good omen.

She turns away from the ocean and starts walking across PCH, towards the entrance of the New Tomorrow Recovery Center.

EXT. NEW TOMORROW RECOVERY CENTER PARKING LOT - DAY

Bernadette walks through the parking lot. She passes Daniel, sitting in his car.

INT. DANIEL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Daniel is staring into his rearview mirror, trying to get his hair to look halfway normal, and talking quietly to himself.

DANIEL  
Paul, I had a setback... Paul, an  
unfortunate thing happened... SHIT!

He SMACKS the mirror away, tilting it into a crazy angle.

He takes several deep breaths, fixes the mirror, and gets out of the car.

INT. NEW TOMORROW RECOVERY CENTER; LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Daniel and Bernadette enter the lobby at the same time. He doesn't really notice her as he sails past Eileen's desk.

DANIEL  
(to Eileen)  
Is Paul in? I need to talk to him.

EILEEN  
He's here. He actually wanted to  
talk to you -

He heads down the hall. Eileen turns to Bernadette.

EILEEN (CONT'D)  
Can I help you?

INT. PAUL'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Daniel knock/enters Paul's office.

DANIEL  
Paul, I need to talk to you, it's  
important.

He STOPS SHORT when he sees who is in the office with Paul: Ezra, Raquel and Ezra's mother, SueBee. His face blanches.

PAUL  
Just who I wanted to see, come in.

Daniel takes a seat.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Ezra came in this morning with some surprising news. Go ahead, Ezra.

Daniel braces for the worst. Ezra meets his eyes and talks slowly.

EZRA

I want to come back. Raquel too.

PAUL

Isn't that good news?!

Paul and SueBee BEAM at Daniel.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I was just asking Ezra what made him change his mind.

Ezra doesn't answer, just holds Daniel's gaze.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Well, recovery works in mysterious ways. It doesn't matter why, it just matters that you're here.

SUEBEE

I'm just so proud of them.

She leans over and hugs Ezra, tucking something in his pocket.

EZRA

Mom...don't.

He pulls a baggie out of his pocket and gives it back to her.

SUEBEE

It's just to help you, sweetie. What you're doing isn't easy.

DANIEL

Can I see?

Ezra PLUCKS the bag back and hands it to Daniel. He takes a prescription bottle of the bag; it's Valium.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Did you bring this to him before?

SUEBEE

It's just a little something. I didn't want him to suffer.

RAQUEL

See, I told you it wasn't me!

PAUL

Daniel, can you take Ezra and Raquel down to check back in. SueBee, why don't you stay here, I want to talk a little about how you can help Ezra...

Daniel escorts Ezra and Raquel out.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Did you have something else you wanted to talk about?

DANIEL

Uh...no, its nothing.

INT. PATIO - DAY

DANIEL

Why don't you guys hang out here, have a smoke, and I'll go find out your room assignments.

Ezra and Raquel sit in patio chairs. Annabelle is on the lawn with the puppies. Raquel and Annabelle conspicuously ignore each other.

INT. JANE'S OFFICE - DAY

Daniel pokes his head in.

DANIEL

Ezra and Raquel are back - where do you want me to put her? Oh, hello.

Bernadette is sitting in Jane's office, across the desk from Jane.

JANE

Bernadette, this is Daniel, the head of our men's side.

(to Daniel)

Bernadette was supposed to interview yesterday, but her car broke down. Can you do it now?

DANIEL

(sitting)

Sure.

BERNADETTE

I was just telling Jane I've got ten years experience working in a public clinic in Inglewood.

DANIEL

Wow. Ten years in a clinic, and  
you're still going.

She looks him straight in the eye; nothing else is more  
important than this to her.

BERNADETTE

It's true that no matter how good  
you are at this job, no matter how  
hard you work, you still fail most  
of the time. And that gets to a  
person, for sure. But I just tell  
myself that failures, relapses,  
dropouts - anything short of death -  
it's all part of the process.

DANIEL

Absolutely.

BERNADETTE

And this is a sneaky bitch of a  
disease. I like to say it's the  
easy days can turn out to be the  
hardest.

DANIEL

("preach")

Yes.

BERNADETTE

But I am very good at what I do. This  
is the only thing I've ever been good  
at, other than doing drugs - and it's  
hard to give up something you're good  
at, as I'm sure you know.

(Daniel nods)

So I want to keep doing this work,  
its what I was put on this earth for,  
but I am damn tired of making no  
money.

JANE

(laughs)

Well, this is no place to get rich.

BERNADETTE

I make twenty-four thousand dollars  
a year.

JANE

We do pay more than that. Not much  
more, but it is more.

BERNADETTE

I have a son in community college who lives with me, and I also look after my nephew, his mother is MIA. I work fifty-five hours a week and I cannot afford to get my car out of the shop. I want this job.

DANIEL

When could you start?

Bernadette smiles for the first time.

INT. NEW TOMORROW RECOVERY CENTER; LOBBY - DAY

Daniel and Jane shake Bernadette's hand at the door.

BERNADETTE

Thank you. So much.

She leaves, still beaming. Daniel watches her walk away.

DANIEL

I like her.

JANE

I wish you'd let me check references before giving her an offer.

DANIEL

I just like her. Something tells me we need her more than she needs us.

JANE

So if we hire her on the women's side, are you gonna go with Les the crossdresser on the men's?

DANIEL

Yeah, sure. He was good.

JANE

Are you OK?

DANIEL

Why?

JANE

I don't know, you sure nothing's on your mind?

DANIEL

Nope.

He walks back inside. Jane doesn't seem convinced.

PRELAP: The simple, stark acoustic guitar of Johnny Cash singing "I See A Darkness":

JOHNNY CASH (MUSIC)  
*Many times we've been out drinking,  
 Many times we shared our thoughts...  
 But did you ever, ever notice, the  
 kind of thoughts I got?*

MUSIC continues over:

EXT. PCH - DAY

Bernadette walks back towards the bus stop, TEARS of relief streaming down her face.

JOHNNY CASH (MUSIC)  
*Well you know I have a love,  
 a love for everyone I know ...  
 And you know I have a drive  
 to live, I won't let go...*

INT. EZRA'S NEW ROOM - DAY

Ezra is shown to his new room. Left alone, he looks around. Self-pity washes over him and TEARS well up in his eyes. He takes it out on the desk chair, KICKING it around the room.

JOHNNY CASH (MUSIC)  
*But can you see it's opposition,  
 comes rising up sometimes --  
 And it's dreadful imposition,  
 comes blacking in my mind...*

INT. FRANK'S ROOM - DAY

Frank is trying to make his bed, and failing. Every time he straightens the sheet, it pulls free from the mattress. TEARS of frustration roll down his cheeks. He keeps trying.

EXT. PATIO - DAY

Annabelle walks past Raquel, who intentionally doesn't move her foot, and Annabelle TRIPS over it. They get in each others' faces: Annabelle SHOUTS, Raquel CRIES. Staff run over to separate them.

INT. MEETING ROOM - DAY

Daniel sits alone in a large meeting room, facing a big circle of empty chairs. No tears here - just a profound, inward-turned sadness.

JOHNNY CASH (MUSIC)  
*And then I see a darkness...  
 Oh no, I see a darkness...*  
 (MORE)

JOHNNY CASH (MUSIC) (CONT'D)

*Did you know how much I love you?  
And I hope that somehow you,  
can save me from this darkness...*

He's so in his head that he doesn't even notice when the room starts filling up. Finally, when most of the chairs have been filled in, he summons new energy and resolve.

DANIEL

Welcome to the ten o'clock step meeting. Today we're going to talk about the first step.

The group complains a little.

ELEANOR WELLS

Danny baby, we were up to four.

DANIEL

Well, we're going back to one. Who wants to read it? Step One.

CAMERA pulls back out the french doors and across the resort-like grounds. Daniel guides the meeting, animated and intense.

KAREN

(reading)

We admitted we were powerless over alcohol and drugs - that our lives had become unmanageable...

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW