

SOUL

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A BAD MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND PLAYS THE DISNEY LOGO THEME.

ONCE IT ENDS...

JOE (O.S.)

Alright! Let's try something else.
Uh...from the top. Ready? One, two,
three...

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND ROOM.

JOE GARDNER, a passionate, well-dressed middle-aged man,
conducts an off-key middle school band. It's painfully bad.

JOE

One, two, three, four! Stay on the
beat! Two, three four--that's a C
Sharp, horns!

A TROMBONIST loses his trombone end, which lands on the floor
with a CLANK.

A TRUMPETER uses his horn to vacuum up M&Ms from the floor.

CALEB, a saxophonist, pretends to play while actually on his
iPHONE.

JOE

Two, three, I see you, Caleb!

Startled, Caleb tosses the phone into a neighboring student's
sax.

JOE

(to another student)
Rachel, now you!

But Rachel lies across a few chairs.

RACHEL

Forgot my sax, Mr. G.

JOE

Okay, she forgot her sax! Aaand now--
- aaaaall you, Connie. Go for it!

Joe then motions to CONNIE, a Chinese American girl holding a
trombone. She's his last hope.

Connie plays her solo, strong and passionate. Joe smiles.

But some of the other kids start giggling, and Connie's
confidence (and playing) suddenly wilts.

CALEB
Way to go!

Joe taps his music stand.

JOE
Hang on, hang on. What are y'all
laughing at?

The kids quiet down.

JOE
So Connie got lost in it. That's a
good thing!

Connie stews in her seat, embarrassed, as Joe addresses the class.

JOE
Look, I remember one time... my dad
took me to this jazz club, and
that's the last place that I wanted
to be.

Joe walks to the piano and starts playing while he explains:

JOE
But then I see this guy. And he's
playing these chords with fourths
on it and then, with the minor.
Whooo! Then he adds the inner
voices, and it's like he's... it's
like he's singing. And I swear, the
next thing I know... it's like he
he floats off the stage. That guy
was lost in the music. He was *in*
it, and he took the rest of us with
him.

Joe finishes with a beautiful, dreamy flourish. The class is captivated with his music.

JOE
And I wanted to learn how to talk
like that. That's when I knew. I
was born to play.
(beat)
Connie knows what I mean. Right,
Connie?

CONNIE
I'm twelve.

A KNOCK on the classroom door interrupts.

JOE
I'll be right back. Practice your
scales.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Joe pops into the hall to speak with PRINCIPAL ARROYO as bad
scales emanate from the classroom behind him.

PRINCIPAL ARROYO
Sorry to interrupt, Mr. Gardner.

JOE
Heh heh, you're doing my ears a
favor.

A STUDENT exits the class doorway behind Joe:

CALEB
Hey!

JOE
Not you, though. You're good.

When the student leaves:

JOE
(whispering)
He's not.

The Principal CHUCKLES.

JOE
What can I do for you, Principal
Arroyo?

PRINCIPAL ARROYO
I wanted to deliver the good news
personally!

She hands Joe a letter:

PRINCIPAL ARROYO
No more part-time for you. You're
now our full-time band teacher! Job
security. Medical insurance.
Pension.

JOE
Wow. That's...great.

PRINCIPAL ARROYO
Welcome to the M.S. 70 family, Joe.
Permanently.

JOE
Thanks.

Joe forces a smile.

He reenters the classroom and sadly looks at the wall,
covered with photos of jazz greats.

INT. LIBBA'S TAILOR SHOP.

A busy tailor shop bustling with activity. LIBBA, Joe's
mother, hems a dress on a CUSTOMER.

Libba's assistants, MELBA and LULU, work away at sewing
machines.

Joe is folding his laundry, poorly.

LIBBA
After all these years, my prayers
have been answered! A full-time
job!

LULU
Wonderful, wonderful!

MELBA
Workin' man, comin' through!

JOE
Yeah. But mom I...

Joe rolls each piece of clothing and places it in the basket.

LIBBA
You're going to tell them yes,
right?

JOE
Don't worry Mom, I got a plan.

LIBBA
You always got a plan.

She begins poking the customer with pins as she talks.

CUSTOMER
Ow!

LIBBA
Maybe you need to have a backup
plan too...

CUSTOMER

Ow-ow!

LIBBA

...for when your plan falls through.

MELBA

A back up plan never hurt.

LULU

Mmmhmm.

JOE

Hm.

LIBBA

Joey. We didn't struggle giving you an education so you could be a middle-aged man washing your underwear in my shop.

Libba holds up an pair embarrassing underwear from Joe's laundry basket.

MELBA

Mm, Mmm, Mmm.

LULU

(at sight of underwear)
walkin' around with a hole in his pants... *

Lulu grabs the undies and checks them out, shaking her head.

JOE

Yeah, but-

Joe snatches the underwear and throws them back into his basket.

LIBBA

With this job, you'll be able to put that dead-end gigging behind you. And Lord knows, we need more teachers in this world. And just think, playing music will finally be your real career!

Joe can see this is a losing battle.

LIBBA

So, you're going to tell them yes, right?

Joe is about to protest...

CUSTOMER
(pleading)
Please, say yes.

...but instead closes his mouth.

JOE
Yeah. Definitely.

LIBBA
Good.

BZZZ! Joe's phone rings. He fishes it out and answers.

JOE
Hello?

CURLEY (O.S.)
How you been, Mr. G? Uh, It's
Curley. Lamont, Lamont Baker.

Joe turns away from Libba as she tends to the customer.

JOE
Hey! Curley! Hey, good to hear your
voice, man. Uh listen, you can call
me Joe now, Curley. I'm not your
teacher anymore.

CURLEY (O.S.)
Okay Mr. Gardner. Hey, look, I'm
the new drummer in the Dorothea
Williams Quartet and we're kicking
off our tour with a show at The
Half Note tonight.

JOE
Dorothea Williams?! Are you kidding
me? Congratulations, man! Wow, I
would die a happy man if I could
perform with Dorothea Williams.

CURLEY (O.S.)
Well, this could be your lucky day!

EXT. NEW YORK STREET. DAY.

Joe SPRINTS DOWN THE STREET, weaving between NEW YORKERS. He comes up to a brick building -- the renowned HALF NOTE jazz club.

INT. HALF NOTE -- ENTRY HALL.

Joe catches his breath as he walks down the stairs. Photos of jazz greats line the wall. He gazes at them, taking off his hat in reverence.

Deep in the club we hear a jazz band WARMING UP.

CURLEY BAKER, a burley drummer in his 20s, meets Joe.

CURLEY
Woo, there he is!

JOE
Hey, Curley.

CURLEY
Leon skipping town really put us in a bind, man.

JOE
I'll bet.

CURLEY
I'm glad you made it. My boy Bishop said he sat in on with you on a set last year in Brooklyn. Said you were great.

JOE
Well... you know, for a coffee shop.

They enter the small club -- a low-lit New York treasure filled with mood and history.

Warming up on stage with her sax is DOROTHEA WILLIAMS, the regal, no-nonsense leader of the Dorothea Williams Quartet.

Joe looks on in amazement as she plays. It's effortless and tight. They respectfully wait for an opening.

CURLEY
Hey Dorothea, this is the cat I was telling you about. My old middle school band teacher, Mr. Gardner!

JOE
Call me Joe, Dorothea. I mean, um... Ms. Williams. It's a pleasure. Wow. This is amazing.

She's not impressed.

CURLEY

Joe is Ray Gardner's son.

Still not impressed.

DOROTHEA

So we're down to middle school band teachers now.

Joe doesn't know what to say. Finally, Dorothea rises from her chair.

DOROTHEA (CONT'D)

Get on up here, Teach. We ain't got all day.

Joe barely sits down at the piano when Dorothea starts playing.

The bassist, MIHO AKAGI, and drummer (Curley) join without missing a beat.

JOE

(confused)

What...what are we playing--?

Dorothea doesn't answer.

Joe misses a few beats but jumps into the music, trying to keep up and figure out where the music is going.

He finally eases into the tune when Dorothea stops playing and points to him -- a signal for Joe to solo. She looks off stage and listens.

Joe takes a deep breath, closes his eyes, and concentrates on the keys.

The music flows into an incredible solo. The room slips away as Joe goes into the zone, a place we'll come to know as the Astral Plane.

He finally comes out of his trance, and looks up to see the band has stopped playing. Everyone is staring at him.

JOE

Uh, sorry. I zoned out a little back there. Heh.

Joe thinks he's doomed. Dorothea just stares. Finally:

DOROTHEA

Joe Gardner, where have you been?

JOE
I've been uh...teaching...middle
school band, but on weekends I--

DOROTHEA
You got a suit?

JOE
I...!

DOROTHEA
Get a suit, Teach. A good suit.
Back here tonight. First show's at
9. Soundcheck's at 7. We'll see how
you do.

She walks offstage.

EXT. THE HALF NOTE.

Joe explodes out of the club.

JOE
YES! WHOO HOO!
(at the sky)
You see that, Dad! That's what I'm
talking about!

A MAN passes by with a stroller. Joe runs up to him, pointing
up at the Half Note marquee.

JOE
Look up, look up! You know what
that's gonna say? Joe Gardner! HA
HA!

Joe dances around him and heads down the street.

CUT TO:

Joe turns the corner, still on his cell phone:

JOE
You're never gonna believe what
just happened! I did it. I got the
gig! Yes!

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - CONTINUOUS.

Joe is on his phone, spreading the good news, oblivious to
the city around him.

JOE
I know! I know! Dorothea Williams!
Can you believe it!?

CUT TO:

CONSTRUCTION SITE.

Joe walks right under a huge pallet of bricks as it's lifted into the air. A bunch of bricks fall, just missing him.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER
Hey, pal! You're gonna get hurt!

But Joe doesn't hear her.

CUT TO:

BUSY INTERSECTION.

Joe absently steps into traffic.

JOE
Just don't tell my mom about this,
okay?

A huge bus misses him by inches. He doesn't notice.

CUT TO:

OUTSIDE VARIOUS STOREFRONTS.

Still oblivious, Joe walks through a sidewalk littered with split banana peels, then through a pile of overturned nails. Amazingly, he avoids disaster while on his phone:

JOE
Forget class. I'm in a different
class. I'm in a Dorothea Williams
class buddy. You know what I'm
saying?

CUT TO:

STREET CORNER.

Joe turns a corner, phone still to his ear. He nearly runs into an old man with an ANGRY DOG. The dog lunges at Joe, BARKING:

JOE
Whoa, whoa, sorry!

Joe turns on his heel to avoid the dog. He starts walking into the middle of the street. A motorcycle narrowly misses him. **WHEW!** That was close. Confident he missed death, he takes a step forward... and falls right into a manhole.

JOE
AAHHHHH!

EXT. LIMBO -- SLIDEWALK.

OOF! Joe lands with a **THUD** on a moving slidewalk, akin to those in airports.

He's now a LUMINOUS SOUL.

Joe looks into the darkness, then notices his hands and feet are different, glowing.

JOE
What the--?

He looks around, confused.

JOE
Hello? Hello!

He looks to where the slidewalk is headed: A **GIANT WHITE LIGHT** in the near distance -- **THE GREAT BEYOND!**

JOE
What the--?

He turns and walks the other way.

But the sliding walkway counteracts Joe, causing him to walk in place. He looks behind him.

The Great Beyond is still there.

Joe **GASPS**, turns and runs.

JOE
Hey, hey, hey! Hello!

In the distance he sees three figures standing on the slidewalk. Joe runs to them.

JOE
Hello!

GEREL
Oh, what's your name, honey?

JOE

I'm Joe. Joe Gardner. Look, I'm not supposed to be here!

The others look at each other.

GEREL

Ah, it must have been sudden for you.

(approaching Joe)

You see Joe, I'm 106 years old. Been waiting a long time for this.

JOE

For what?

She points ahead.

GEREL

The Great Beyond.

JOE

The Great Beyond!? As in, as in beyond... *life!*?

AMIR

Yeah.

JOE

That's DEATH right there!

MIALI

(subtitled)

This beats my dream about the walrus.

GEREL

Exciting, isn't it!?

JOE

No! No, no, no! Listen, I have a gig tonight! I can't die now!

AMIR

Well, I really don't think you have a lot to say about this.

JOE

Yes! Yes, I do. I'm not dying the VERY day I got my shot. I'm due! Heck, I'm OVER-due! Nah ah. I'm outta here.

Joe walks away from them.

GEREL

I don't think you're supposed to go
that way.

But Joe keeps walking, against the sidewalk's flow.

JOE

(to himself)

This can't happen. I'm NOT dying
today. Not when my life just
started!

He turns to see where the three other souls went.

The sidewalk climbs up into the distance, into the white maw
of the Great Beyond. The trio of souls ascend into it, then
disappear with a crackle -- FLZZZT!

Joe freaks:

JOE

What was that! Wait!

He bolts, running desperately against the sidewalk's flow.

JOE

I'm not finished! I GOTTA GET BACK!
I DON'T WANNA DIE!!! I'M NOT DONE!
I'M NOT DONE!

He comes to another soul, WINSTON, strangely disinterested.

JOE

RUN!!! WHY AREN'T YOU RUNNING??

WINSTON

Idonknow...

JOE

What is wrong with you people?!

WINSTON

(shrugs)

Idonknow...

Joe keeps running. He passes another soul, JANG-MI:

JANG-MI

(in Korean)

Where are my pants?

Joe runs into a crowd of souls. Some are blissfully aware and
unaware, some freaking out in their own way, and in other
languages.

JOE
I'M NOT DONE!

Panicked, Joe tries PUSHING through them.

JOE
Ahh!! Oh my goodness, oh my
goodness. Sorry! Sorry! Excuse me!
Help! I'm not done! I gotta get
back!

Finally, Joe jumps onto their heads and runs. But the Great Beyond grows even closer. Finally he tries launching himself off the sidewalk completely. But he SMACKS against a cellophane-like barrier.

Just in front, souls are being zapped into the Great Beyond by the handfuls. It's nearly his turn!

Joe CLAWS at the barrier, screaming, desperate!

Finally he RIPS through it and falls...

EXT. THE GREAT BEFORE.

A portal opens, dropping Joe in what appears to be tall grass. He watches as the portal closes above him.

He slowly gets up and looks around another world. Beautiful buildings, Elysian fields and glowing crowds of strange, fuzzy beings -- NEW SOULS.

A rambunctious group of them are gathered around a COUNSELOR, a taller, ethereal being that looks vaguely human.

The Counselor spots Joe. He quickly ducks down.

But too late.

One of the new souls finds him and pokes his face, laughing. Joe pushes it away, but other new souls arrive, surrounding him. One BITES him.

JOE
Ow!

The Counselor, JERRY, appears as the new souls toss Joe into the air happily.

COUNSELOR JERRY
Now, now, everyone let's give the
Mentor some room.
(MORE)

COUNSELOR JERRY (CONT'D)
(to Joe)
Sorry -- new souls.

But the souls continue to crowd Joe. One pulls at his mouth.

COUNSELOR JERRY
37, that's enough. Hey everyone,
look here! Quiet coyote! Shh! Quiet
coyote!

Like a kindergarten teacher, Counselor Jerry holds up two fingers. Immediately the other souls mimic her and quiet down.

JOE
Who are you?

COUNSELOR JERRY A
I am the coming together of all
quantized fields of the universe,
appearing in a form your feeble
human brain can comprehend.

JOE
Wha?

COUNSELOR JERRY A
You can call me Jerry.

JOE
Jerry. Okay. Hey, is this heaven?

COUNSELOR JERRY A
Ha ha, no!

JOE
(cautious)
Is it... H-E-double hockey sticks?

A new soul pops up over Joe's shoulder.

NEW SOUL
Hell!

NEW SOULS
Hell! Hell! Hell!

COUNSELOR JERRY A
Shhh. Quiet coyote!
(to Joe)
It's easy to get turned around.
This isn't the Great Beyond. It's
the Great Before!

JOE
The Great Before?

COUNSELOR JERRY A
Oh, we call it the You Seminar now.
Rebranding.

Joe takes in the odd surroundings, filled with playful new souls.

JOE
Does this mean I'm... dead?

COUNSELOR JERRY A
Not yet. Your body's in a holding
pattern. It's complicated. I'll get
you back to your group.

Jerry mutates into a bizarre, four-legged bus. The Counselor scoops up Joe with a giant hand, setting him in a chair on top.

COUNSELOR JERRY A
Come on, little souls! Get on up
here!

The Counselor gathers the other souls and carries them through the strange campus. The impressionable new souls are still infatuated with Joe even as he tries to process his surroundings.

COUNSELOR JERRY A
Welcome to the You Seminar! You are
in for a treat!

EXT. LIMBO -- ABOVE THE SLIDEWALK.

Meanwhile, a pair of Counselors are watching the deceased souls pour from the slidewalk into The Great Beyond.

While one Counselor is another Jerry, the other is shorter, angrier, and holds a huge ABACUS. The Counselor uses it with lightening precision to count every soul that enters the white light. This is TERRY, the accountant.

Suddenly, Terry stops counting.

TERRY
Hmm. That's weird.

COUNSELOR JERRY E
What is it?

TERRY
The count's off.

COUNSELOR JERRY E
Excuse me?

TERRY
There's a soul missing. The count's
OFF.

COUNSELOR JERRY E
Huh.

EXT. THE YOU SEMINAR.

Jerry (in bus form) continues to walk Joe and the new souls
across campus.

COUNSELOR JERRY A
Okay, first stop is the Excitable
Pavilion. You four. In you go!

The new souls zoom into a glistening Personality Pavilion.
They emerge from the other side, now excited.

NEW SOULS
Woohooo!

COUNSELOR JERRY A
You five, you'll be aloof. And you
two, why not.

The new souls enter another pavilion, emerging aloof.

JOE
W-wait a minute. This is where
personalities come from?

COUNSELOR JERRY A
Of course! Do you think people are
just born with them?

JOE
So uh... how do they get to Earth
then?

COUNSELOR JERRY A
Well, they use the Earth Portal.

Jerry points. In the distance Joe sees a large, circular hole
in the ground. Through it, Earth beckons!

At the portal's edge new souls jump to Earth.

COUNSELOR JERRY A
Once they get a complete
personality of course...

But Joe is gone.

COUNSELOR JERRY A
Hello? Hello?

ELSEWHERE -- Joe sprints towards the portal. All around him
new souls jump to Earth below as Mentors cheer them on.

MENTORS
Congratulations! You're going to
have a great life!

Joe JUMPS! He free-falls along with several new souls toward
the beautiful globe below, LAUGHING and CHEERING at the
thrill ride.

But as the new souls continue down towards the Earth and
disappear, Joe bounces off a weird, invisible barrier. He
careens through space and is delivered right back to the You
Seminar.

Joe tries to jump again. And again! Frustrated, he grabs a
new soul and jumps with them, hoping to sneak into Earth
behind it. But Joe is again spit back into the You Seminar.

Finally, he just stares down at the Earth, frustrated.

Counselor Jerry finds him.

COUNSELOR JERRY A
You sure get lost a lot!

EXT. MENTOR ORIENTATION TABLE.

Jerry brings Joe to where a group of older souls like him are
gathered around a table, looking for their pre-printed name
tag. These are MENTORS.

Another Counselor Jerry gives instructions:

COUNSELOR JERRY D
All righty, mentors. Just find your
name here...

The Counselor ushering Joe steps forward.

COUNSELOR JERRY A
Hello Jerry! Got a lost mentor for
you.

COUNSELOR JERRY D
Thanks, Jerry.

JOE
Uh look, I'm not sure I'm supposed
to be here.

COUNSELOR JERRY A
I understand. Mentoring isn't for
everyone. You're more than welcome
to opt out.

The Counselor opens a portal straight to The Great Beyond!

JOE
Ah! Actually, on second thought,
you know, the mentoring sounds like
fun.

Joe quickly grabs any name tag from the table and follows the
group.

COUNSELOR JERRY A
I'm glad to hear it. Jerry will
take it from here.

COUNSELOR JERRY D
Thanks, Jerry.
(to Joe)
Head right on over there to Jerry.

The Counselor points to *another* Jerry, this one in the form
of a large theater.

COUNSELOR JERRY F
Thank you, Jerry.

JOE
Is *everyone* here named Jerry?

The first Counselor watches Joe leave.

COUNSELOR JERRY A
Good luck!

Terry the Accountant appears out of a portal.

TERRY
Jerry, we've got a problem!

COUNSELOR JERRY A
Oh hello there, Terry.

TERRY
The count's off!

COUNSELOR JERRY A
(chuckling)
I seriously doubt that. The count
hasn't been off in centuries.

Terry produces the large abacus, using it to make her point:

TERRY
151,000 souls go into the Great
Beyond every day. That's 105.2
souls per minute, Jerry. 1.75 souls
per second. And I count every
single one of 'em.

COUNSELOR JERRY A
Yep. I'm aware.

TERRY
It's my job to keep track of this
stuff, Jerry. I'm the accountant.

COUNSELOR JERRY A
And we all think you're doing a
wonderful job, don't we everyone?

The other Counselors somewhat agree.

TERRY
I'm always counting. I'm counting
right now. You blinked five times
since I started talking.
(the Counselor blinks)
Six.

COUNSELOR JERRY A
Right! Since accounting is your
job, why don't you figure out the
problem.

TERRY
Maybe I will.

COUNSELOR JERRY A
Wonderful!

The Counselor vanishes. Terry angrily stalks off to:

INT. THE HALL OF RECORDS.

Terry arrives in the Hall of Records. She's greeted by another Jerry.

COUNSELOR JERRY
Hello again, Terry!

TERRY
Don't play dumb with me.

IN A LARGE FILE ROOM --

Terry opens the first file cabinet, cracks her fingers and gets ready.

TERRY
Okay. Here we go. "A."

Terry flips through the files, her fingers almost moving too fast for the eye to see. At this rate, it seems like it won't take her very long.

However, an epic PULL OUT reveals that the file cabinets stretch on endlessly, vanishing into the horizon. This is going to take a while.

INT. MENTOR ORIENTATION THEATER.

Joe steps into the theater as an instructional video begins. Other Mentors watch from stadium seats.

ON THE SCREEN --

In a scratchy, well-worn corporate video, a Counselor explains:

COUNSELOR JERRY C
Hello there, Mentors! I'm Jerry, a Counselor here at the You Seminar. You don't remember it, but you've been here before! But don't worry, forgetting the trauma of childbirth is one of the great gifts of the universe.

Joe finds a seat and watches:

COUNSELOR JERRY C
Here at the You Seminar, all new souls are given unique and individual personalities.

NEW SOULS testify to the camera, while holding up their Personality Profiles - a badge filled with circular icons identifying which Personality Pavilions they've visited.

On each badge one circle is still empty.

NEW SOUL 1

I'm an agreeable skeptic who's cautious yet flamboyant.

NEW SOUL 2

I'm an irritable wall flower who's dangerously curious.

NEW SOUL 3

I'm a manipulative megalomaniac who's intensely opportunistic.

COUNSELOR JERRY

Oh ho! This one might be a handful! But that's Earth's problem.

Joe takes this all in.

COUNSELOR JERRY

You'll notice these souls are all missing something.

The Counselor points to the last empty circle on a soul's unfinished badge.

COUNSELOR JERRY

What goes in this spot? Well, these souls need their **Spark**. And that's where YOU come in!

CUT TO:

THE HALL OF EVERYTHING.

The video continues by showcasing an immense space filled with everything on Earth.

COUNSELOR JERRY (O.S.)

Maybe you will find their Spark in the Hall of Everything, where literally anything on Earth could inspire!

We see a NEW SOUL shoot an arrow from a bow and become inspired. Their last box fills in with their Spark and the badge turns into an Earth Pass.

CUT TO:

THE HALL OF YOU.

A MENTOR ushers a NEW SOUL around a museum featuring moments from the mentor's extraordinary life.

COUNSELOR JERRY (O.S.)
Or perhaps you'll prefer the "Hall of You," featuring a selection of moments from your own inspiring life!

The new soul's badge becomes an Earth Pass.

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE THEATER:

Joe's eyes go wide as he gets an idea.

COUNSELOR JERRY
And just what is this Spark? Well as mentors, you've already learned that...

But Joe isn't listening. Instead, he imagines his plan:

CUT TO:

JOE'S DAYDREAM.

In the HALL OF EVERYTHING, Joe plays a lively tune on a piano for a new soul. In no time, the soul is inspired and its badge turns into an Earth Pass! Joe smiles, not surprised.

Without a thought, Joe YANKS the Earth Pass away, tosses the new soul into the piano, and jumps straight to Earth.

BACK IN NEW YORK, he lands back in his stricken body. It jolts back to life. Joe launches out of the manhole, runs straight to his performance with Dorothea Williams, and receives the applause of the entire city.

BACK IN THE THEATER:

As the video ends, Joe smiles assuredly.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
I know you're all excited to get to work, so good luck finding the Spark!

JOE
(to himself)
Find the Spark!

The lights come on. Another Counselor steps onto the stage.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
Wow, that was informative. Now it's
time for my favorite part of the
program: matching you Mentors with
your Soul Mates!

A group of giggling NEW SOULS make their way towards the
stage as the Counselor looks into the audience of Mentors.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
Our first Mentor is Maria Martinez!
Maria, come on down!

Polite applause as MARIA steps on stage.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
Maria was a rare disease specialist
from the University of Mexico.

ON THE SCREEN --

In a DOCTOR'S OFFICE -- The human form of DR. mARIA mARTINEZ
successfully treats a PATIENT.

PATIENT
I'm cured!

The other Mentors APPLAUD, impressed.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
She'll be matched with, one of my
favorites, soul number 108 billion,
210 million, 121 thousand, four
hundred and 15.

The adorable and cute NEW SOUL steps on stage. The new soul
and Maria embrace, giggle, and walk off hand in hand.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
Congratulations! Off you go! Our
next mentor is Bjorn T. Börgensson!

Immediate APPLAUSE. Everyone looks at Joe. He's confused,
until he reads his name tag: Dr. Börgensson. Joe rushes up on
stage.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
Dr. Börgensson is a world renown
child psychologist who was recently
awarded a Nobel Prize!

ON THE SCREEN --

In a PYSCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE, GRETA, a troubled teenager, looks
at a Rorschach blot held up by a very different looking DR.
BÖRGENSSON.

GRETA
I see pain, death, destruction!

DR. BÖRGENSSON
Hmmm. How about now?

He flips it the other way.

GRETA
A pretty butterfly.

The audience of Mentors are extremely impressed. Joe forces a
smile.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
Dr. Börgensson will be matched with
soul number...22!

A spotlight shines on an empty spot.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
(annoyed)
Oh we're gonna get into this now.
Excuse me.

Impossibly, the Counselor descends into the floor, into
another dimension. As Joe watches the empty stage he hears:

COUNSELOR JERRY B (O.S.)
22, you come out of this dimension
right now!

22 (O.S.)
How many times do I have to tell
you, I don't wanna go to Earth!

COUNSELOR JERRY B (O.S.)
Stop fighting this, 22. You will go
to Earth and have a life!

22 (O.S.)
Make me!

OFF-SCREEN we hear the sounds of RUNNING and GRABBING.
Something BREAKS.

Finally, Jerry's upper half emerges from the other dimension,
wrestling with a soul who doesn't want to come out.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
22 has been at the You Seminar for
quite some time and has had such
notable mentors as Gandhi, Abraham
Lincoln and Mother Theresa.

Finally, Jerry yanks 22 out of the dimension. 22 struggles in
the Counselor's arms like a wildcat.

22
HA HA! I made her cry!

COUNSELOR JERRY B
Ignore that.

22
Put me down! Hey! Quit it!

COUNSELOR JERRY B
We're TRULY glad to have you here,
Dr. Börgensson. It is an honor
having you prepare 22 for Earth.

The Counselor struggles to hold 22 who melts in his arms like
a belligerent toddler. 22 glares at Joe:

22
I'm gonna make you wish you'd never
died.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
Most people wish that, 22.

The Counselor "drapes" 22 over Joe. Before he can protest,
the Counselor opens a portal and quickly pushes them out.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
Off you go! Bye! Bye!

INT. THE HALL OF YOU.

Joe tosses 22 off.

JOE
Where are we?

Joe gawks at the room they are now in -- it's the Hall of Dr. Börgensson!

The museum-like displays are filled with pop-up moments of Dr. Börgensson's illustrious life. Glass-encased exhibits hold artifacts and awards while holograms recreating his greatest successes play on an endless loop.

22

Okay, look I'm sure your life was a-mayzing and you did a-mayzing things but here's what we're gonna do. We're gonna stand in here in silence for a little bit, then we go back out, you say you tried, I go back to not-living my non-life and you go to the Great Beyond.

JOE

No, look-

22

Talk all you want, Bjorn. It's not gonna work, anyway. I've had thousands of mentors who failed and now hate me.

CUT TO:

A SERIES OF FLASHBACKS:

In THE YOU SEMINAR, 22 drives the soul of MOTHER TERESA crazy:

SOUL MOTHER TERESA

I have compassion for every soul.
Except you. I don't like you.

CUT TO:

In the HALL OF EVERYTHING, COPERNICUS is furious at 22:

SOUL COPERNICUS

The world doesn't revolve around
YOU, 22!

CUT TO:

MUHAMMAD ALI has also had it with 22:

SOUL MUHAMMAD ALI
You are the greatest... pain in the
BUTT!

CUT TO:

In the HALL OF EVERYTHING, the disembodied head of MARIE
ANTIONETTE yells at 22:

SOUL MARIE ANTOINETTE
Nobody can help you! NOBODY!

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE HALL OF DR. BÖRGENSSON -- 22 continues, to Joe:

22

Thanks but no thanks, Doc. I
already know everything about
Earth, and it's not worth the
trouble.

JOE

Come on, don't you want to fill out
your pass?

22

Ehh, you know, I'm comfortable up
here. I have my routine. I float in
mist, I do my Sudoku puzzles, and
then, like, once a week, they make
me come to one of these You
Seminars. It's not great but I know
what to expect.

JOE

Look kid. Can I just be honest with
you? I'm not Bjorn Borgenstein or
whatever his name is. I'm not even
a mentor.

22

Not a mentor? Ah, ha ha! Reverse
psychology! You really are a good
shrink doctor. Carl Jung already
tried that.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK:

At THE YOU SEMINAR, CARL JUNG fights with 22:

SOUL CARL JUNG
Stop talking! My unconscious mind
hates you!

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE HALL OF DR. BÖRGENSSON --

JOE
Is there any way to show a
different life in this place?

A look of suspicion comes over 22's face. 22 brings up a control panel from the ground, takes Joe's hand, and places it flat onto a scanner.

All around them, the Dr. Börgensson exhibits vanish.

After a flourish of light and sound, 22 and Joe find themselves standing in THE HALL OF JOE. It dawns on 22:

22
Wait, you're really not Bjorn
Börgensson?

Joe looks around at the space. Dr. Börgensson's awards, citations, and victorious moments have all been replaced with elements of Joe's life.

JOE
It's... *my life!*

The museum displays are comprised of much less inspiring, more underwhelming exhibits.

22
...umm excuse me. What's going on
here?

22 points to a display of Binaca Breath Spray and a bottle of cheap Drakkar Noir cologne.

22
Binaca breath spray? Cheap cologne?

JOE
Man, who curated this exhibit?

22
Heh. YOU did.

22 walks over to a PHOTO of a TEENAGE JOE, awkwardly standing behind a keyboard, next to a much hipper THREE-MAN HIP HOP GROUP.

22
Hahahahahahah!

Joe is mortified.

JOE
Oh my goodness, it's Cedric's rap
group. Noooo!

Joe pulls 22 away.

JOE
No, don't look at that stuff, let's
look over here!

Joe leads 22 to a HOLOGRAM -- a YOUNG JOE is being dragged
into the HALF NOTE JAZZ CLUB by his dad, RAY GARDNER.

YOUNG JOE
Dad, I don't wanna go! I don't like
jazz!

RAY
Black improvisational music. It's
one of our great contributions to
American culture. At least give it
a chance, Joey!

Joe and 22 watch as Ray brings Young Joe into the club, where
a PIANIST is jamming with his BAND. Young Joe locks in on the
pianist as Joe explains to 22:

JOE
This is where it all started. This
is the moment where I fell in love
with jazz.

We see Young Joe enthralled by the pianist's playing.

JOE
Listen to that! See the tune is
just the starting point, y'get me?
The music is just an excuse to
bring out the YOU.

Joe leads 22 through more of his life.

JOE
THAT's why I became a jazz
musician!

But they walk up to a HOLOGRAM of Joe auditioning for an
unimpressed CLUB OWNER.

CLUB OWNER 1
It's not what we're looking for.

Confused, Joe walks away as 22 trails him.

JOE
Wait. That's not how I remember it
going down. I mean I...

But they come across more rejection holograms from other CLUB OWNERS:

CLUB OWNER 2
Come back when you have something.

CLUB OWNER 3
Sorry, Joe.

CLUB OWNER 4
We're looking for something
different.

They keep walking through Joe's life, past holograms of Joe teaching middle school kids, sitting alone in a diner, waiting for a subway.

A pathetic monument depicts him washing clothes at the laundromat. Joe is stunned.

JOE
My life was meaningless.

Finally, they come to a hologram of Joe in a hospital bed, unconscious after the fall. This is the current state of his body -- still alive, but soulless. It's a sad end to what appears to be a depressing life.

But as Joe regards this, he becomes determined:

JOE
No. No no no! I will not accept
this!
(to 22)
Kid, give me that badge. I'm going
back to my body.

22
Oh yeah. Sure. Here.

22 removes the badge and hands it to Joe. But it vanishes and returns onto 22.

The soul removes it again and tosses it into the distance. Again, it returns.

22 shreds it into pieces, even lights it on fire. But it always materializes back onto the soul.

22

Unless it becomes an Earth Pass,
I'm stuck with it.

JOE

Well what if I help you turn that
into an Earth Pass? Will you give
it to me then?

22

Wait! I've never thought of that!
I'd get to skip life. So yes! But
we've gotta get this thing to
change first, and I've never been
able to get it to change.

JOE

Come on! I know all about Sparks,
because mine is piano!

22 follows Joe through the Hall. They find what he's looking for: a HOLOGRAM of Joe's playing piano for Dorothea Williams -
- the moment that was supposed to change his life.

Joe looks at 22's badge, assured it will work. But still no Spark, the circle remains empty.

JOE

Really? Nothing at all?

22

Meh. It's just... music. I don't
like music sounds. It feels like a
little too much.

JOE

Well I am not going out like this.
Where's that Hall of Everything?

EXT. THE YOU SEMINAR.

The HALL OF EVERYTHING looms in the distance. Joe and 22 walk toward it, passing the Earth Portal. Joe leans to Earth:

JOE

I'll be right back.

22

Don't get ahead of yourself, pal.

JOE

By the way, why do you sound like a middle aged white lady?

22

I don't. This is all an illusion.

JOE

Huh?

22

This whole place is a hypothetical.

22's voice changes:

OLD MAN

I could sound like THIS if I wanted to...

YOUNG GIRL

Or sound like THIS instead.

22

I could even sound like YOU.

22 changes into an exact replica of Joe:

22

(in Joe's voice)

Life is so unfair! I don't wanna die! Somebody call the wahhhhhh-
mbulance! Wahhhhh!

22 switches back:

22

I just use this voice because it annoys people.

JOE

It's very effective.

A ball of new souls rolls past and smacks into a pavilion, which tips over and CRASHES on top of them.

22

Don't worry, they're fine. You can't crush a soul here. That's what life on Earth is for.

Joe shoots her a look.

JOE

Mm hm. Very witty.

INT. HALL OF EVERYTHING

The Hall is gigantic. Everything on Earth is in here!

22

Ok. Here we are. This is the Hall
of Everything.

Amazed, Joe looks around at all of the activity.

New souls are everywhere trying out different tasks from
fishing to soccer to photography to basketball. We see some
badges turn into Earth Passes.

A SOCCER BALL rolls up to Joe's feet. He kicks it, and it
flies over to a new soul standing next to its Mentor. The
ball hits it's head and the new soul's badge changes to an
Earth Pass.

22

So where do you wanna start?

Joe looks around the enormous room, filled with literally
everything on Earth.

He grabs 22 and pulls the soul towards a French bakery.

JOE

Come on!

INT. FRENCH BAKERY.

Joe and 22 tour the aisles, loaded with every sort of
delicious, baked item imaginable.

JOE

Croissants, cakes!

Joe pulls out a steamy slice of pizza.

JOE

Baking could be your Spark!

22

Yeah! But um, I don't get it.

JOE

Just smell it!

22

Can't. And neither can you.

JOE

Wha--?

Joe sniffs it, gets nothing.

JOE

(confused)

You're right, I can't smell--

Joe eats the pizza, but it comes out his bottom end, still fully formed.

JOE

We can't taste, either!?

22

All that stuff is in your body.

22 eats a whole slice of pizza. It comes out the other end, still perfect.

JOE

No smell, no taste.

22

Or touch.

22 slaps him.

22

See?

22 slaps him a second time. And a third. And a fourth, etc. Finally, Joe stops it.

JOE

Okay, I get it! Moving on.

INT. HALL OF INTERESTS -- FIRE FIGHTING AREA.

22 tries putting out a burning building as a fire fighter.

JOE

Isn't this exciting?

22

(entranced)

The fire is so pretty. I kinda wanna let it spread--

Joe quickly cancels the idea:

JOE
Nope!

INT. HALL OF INTERESTS -- ART STUDIO.

22 tries painting a portrait of Joe, but gives up:

22
Hands are hard!

INT. HALL OF INTERESTS -- LIBRARY.

22 and Joe walk through the stacks.

JOE
How 'bout a librarian? They're cool!

22
Yes, amazing! Who wouldn't like working in a thankless job you're always in danger of losing due to budget cuts? Though I do like the idea of randomly shushing people.

JOE
Look, obviously this isn't--

22
Shhhh!! Oh yeah, that's good.

CUT TO:

IN A LABORATORY --

22 tries to be a scientist. The experiment explodes but 22 shrugs, uninterested.

22
Meh.

CUT TO:

IN A GYMNASIUM --

22 tries being an Olympic gymnast, completing an impressive dismount off the beam. But no Spark:

22
Meh.

CUT TO:

IN THE OVAL OFFICE --

As President, 22 signs a bill into law. But is still unimpressed:

22
Meh.

CUT TO:

IN THE AIR-AND-SPACE DEPARTMENT --

An massive rocket lifts off with 22 and Joe inside, filling the Hall with smoke. But yet again:

22 (O.S.)
Meh.

JOE (O.S.)
Ughh!!

EXT. THE YOU SEMINAR -- OUTSIDE THE HALL OF EVERYTHING.

22 and Joe leave the Hall. Joe is more annoyed than ever. 22 is simply bored.

JOE
Well, I think that's... everything.

22
Sorry.

JOE
You told me you'd try!

22
I did! I'm telling the truth. If there's one thing I'm not, it's a liar. Unlike Abraham Lincoln...

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK -- to 22 talking to her mentor, ABRAHAM LINCOLN:

22
You're really okay being on a penny?

LINCOLN
Of course! It's an honor.

22
Okay, but... they put Andrew Jackson on the twenty.

Lincoln angrily explodes, throwing his hat on the ground:

LINCOLN
JACKSON?!

CUT TO:

BACK TO SCENE:

22
What can I say, Joe? Earth is boring.

JOE
Well what else can we do then? Because we're running out of time!

22
You know time's really not a thing here.

COUNSELOR JERRY B (O.S.)
Time's up!

A Counselor appears.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
Nice try, Bjorn. But no need to feel bad. 22 can be a bit of a challenge.

Jerry pats 22 on the head.

22
Even though I can't feel it please don't touch me.

Ignoring 22, the Counselor opens a portal to the Great Beyond for Joe:

COUNSELOR JERRY B
So let's get you to the Great
Beyond.

22
Umm, wait! We forgot to try...uh
breakdancer! Yeah, I think that's
gonna be my thing. Popping and
locking. Windmills. Settling my
disputes with dance. Can we have
one more minute to go back and try
breakdancing? Please, Jerry? You
look really good today, Jerry.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
Oh, ok. I've never seen 22 this
enthused. Good for you, Dr.
Börgennson!

22 waits for the Counselor to disappear before saying:

22
Run!

22 takes off! Joe follows. She runs to an opened cardboard
box.

22
In here!

INT. CLUBHOUSE.

They emerge inside 22's secret clubhouse, filled with a
collection of random items from Earth. Joe looks around in
amazement at all the stuff.

Against one wall are thousands of name tags -- all former
Mentors of 22.

22 opens a cabinet under a bathroom sink, revealing a
mysterious shaft.

22
Here it is!

JOE
Where does it lead?

22
Hey, you ask too many questions.
How 'bout you zip it for a minute,
m'kay?

JOE

And we're going there why?

22

Because I know a guy there. A guy who can help. A guy like YOU.

JOE

Like me? As in, *alive*?

22 nods.

JOE

Wait. Are you actually helping me?

22

Joe. I have been here for who knows how long, and I've never seen anything that's made me want to live. And then you come along. Your life is sad and pathetic. And you're working so hard to get back to it. Why? I mean this I gotta see!

JOE

Okay, let's go.

They crawl inside the shaft.

EXT. ASTRAL PLANE.

Joe and 22 step onto the Astral Plane. Joe looks around at the bizarre, amazing landscape.

The glitter-like dust below their feet rises and lowers gently, like waves on an ocean.

Suspended above them are countless SOULS engrossed in tasks like playing an instrument, writing, swimming, etc. All are in the zone.

Joe is in awe.

JOE

What IS this place?

22

You know how when you humans are really into something and it feels like you're in another place? Feels like you're in the zone, right?

JOE

Yeah.

22

Well, THIS is the zone! It's the space between the physical and spiritual.

Joe gets closer to a soul -- a MUSICIAN deep in the music.

JOE

Wait a minute! I was here! Today during my audition! This must be where musicians come when they get into a flow.

22

Not just musicians. Watch this.

22 picks up some astral dust, packs it into a snowball, and chunks it at an ACTRESS performing Shakespeare, hitting her square in the face.

The soul "wakes up."

SMASH CUT TO:

IN A THEATER -- the same ACTRESS, playing Juliet, orates from a balcony.

JULIET

Ay me! O' Romeo, Romeo, where for art thou...

She suddenly "wakes up" from the zone, confused:

JULIET

Line!

CUT TO:

IN A TATTOO PARLOR -- an ARTIST is working on a CLIENT when 22 also "wakes" her from the zone. This causes a unfortunate SCRATCH across the client's back with the tattoo needle:

TATTOO ARTIST

Oops.

CUT TO:

BACK ON THE ASTRAL PLANE:

22 stands near a NEW YORK KNICKS BASKETBALL PLAYER in the zone, dribbling in for the dunk.

22

Check this out. I've been messing
with this team for decades.

22 throws another snowball, hitting the player just as he
sails through the air.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. BASKETBALL ARENA.

The KNICKS PLAYER "wakes up" in mid-dunk. The ball slams onto
the rim as he crumbles to the hardwood. The crowd BOOS.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

And the Knicks lose ANOTHER one!

BACK TO SCENE:

JOE

Alright, alright. Where's this guy
you know? I gotta get back to my
gig.

22

Okay, okay. He's usually down here.

In the distance they see STRANGE, MONSTROUS BEASTS mumbling
unintelligibly. These are LOST SOULS.

JOE

What is that!?

22

SHHH!

But too late. One CREATURE spots Joe and 22 and runs at them.

JOE

Ahhh!

22

Run!

The creature is nearly on them when suddenly a long LASSO
twirls around the beast, bringing it to the ground.

Joe and 22 stand frozen, unsure what to make of this.

DING DING! They see the rope is attached to a massive GALLEY
SHIP with TYE-DIED SAILS blaring Bob Dylan music. It "sails"
towards them through the astral dust.

An anchor is flung over the side, nearly hitting them.

Aboard the ship a long-haired, eccentric captain looks down at them. This is MOONWIND. A gangplank is dropped. He bounds down it to greet them:

MOONWIND

Ah! Ahoy there fellow Astral
Travelers! Good to see you again,
22!

22

Moonwind! How are ya?

MOONWIND

On the brink of madness, thanks for
asking!

22

Hey, got a request for ya.

22 nudges Joe forward.

JOE

Uh yeah. I'm trying to get back to
my body. Can you help me?

MOONWIND

That's what we do! We are the
Mystics Without Borders, devoted to
helping the Lost Souls of Earth
find their way! I'm Moonwind
Stardancer at your service.

He introduces his MYSTIC CREW, now coming down the gangplank:

MOONWIND

That's Windstar Dreamermoon,
Dancerstar Windmoon, and that's
Dreamerwind Dreamerdreamer.

JOE

These weirdos are going to help me
get back?

22

Just wait.

Dancerstar unwraps the now calm Lost Soul from the net.

DANCERSTAR

Let's get this lost soul back home.

The Mystics seat the Lost Soul down and begin dancing and chanting around it. The Lost Soul continues to MUMBLE in incoherently.

MOONWIND

Poor fellow. Some people just can't let go of their own anxieties and obsessions, leaving them lost and disconnected from life. And this is the result.

(beat)

Looks like another Hedge Fund Manager.

As the Mystics continue the ceremony, the monstrous Lost Soul transforms into the soul of a HEDGE FUND MANAGER. The mumbling turns out to be:

HEDGE FUND MANAGER

Make a trade... Make a trade...

He looks around as if woken from a nightmare.

DANCERSTAR

Now to reconnect to your body on Earth.

Dreamerwind takes a walking stick and draws a circle in the dust. The dust falls away, revealing a portal to a trading floor. Through it they see the Hedge Fund Manager's human form surrounded by computers, working a soulless job.

The soul recognizes himself:

HEDGE FUND MANAGER

Whoa! That's me. Thank you!

The soul jumps through it, landing straight back into his body.

INT. HEDGE FUND MANAGERS'S CORNER OFFICE.

The Hedge Fund Manager, surrounded by screens dripping with numbers and graphs, "wakes up."

HEDGE FUND MANAGER

What am I doing with my life!?

Suddenly, he THROWS the screens off his desk and stands up.

HEDGE FUND MANAGER

I'm alive! I'm alive! Free yourselves! HA HA! It's BEAUTIFUL!

He happily runs out of the office, knocking away the screens and flipping over the desks of his (former) COLLEAGUES.

CUT TO:

BACK TO SCENE:

Seeing this excites Joe:

JOE
He got back just like that!?

Joe grabs the walking stick from Dreamerwind and draws another circle.

JOE
So this is all I have to do to get
back to my body?

But instead of his human body, the Great Beyond appears!

JOE
AAAHHH!

MOONWIND
Ahh! Egads, man!

Moonwind quickly cover up the hole.

MOONWIND
Joe! Are you...dead!?

JOE
No! No, no. Well, not yet. Can you
help me get back?

MOONWIND
We've never connected an untethered
soul back to its body before. But
perhaps if we travel to a thin
spot... Yes! All aboard!

He leads them up the gangplank.

MOONWIND
Anchors away!

EXT. ASTRAL PLANE.

The ship sails through the sands. Moonwind is at the wheel, as 22 and Joe look on.

The other Mystics enjoy tea-time on the main deck.

JOE

So, if your souls are here, where
are your bodies?

MOONWIND

Well, on Earth of course!

WINDSTAR

My body is in a trance in Palawan.

DANCERSTAR

I'm playing the saraswati veena in
Tibet.

DREAMERWIND

I'm a shamanic healer meditating in
Berkeley, California.

JOE

(to Moonwind)

Mmhmm. Lemme guess, you're
drumming, chanting, and meditating?

MOONWIND

Yes... something like that.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK STREET CORNER.

Moonwind's human body expertly spins a "HOT DEALS" sign on a
street corner.

BACK TO SCENE:

MOONWIND

I'm in New York City, on the corner
of 14th and 7th.

JOE

Oh, that's just up from Tony Tony
Tonios!

MOONWIND

Yes precisely!

JOE

(to 22)

And what about you? I thought you
hated Earth.

22

I'm not stuck with a body, so I can go whereeeever I want. I'm a *No-body*. Get it?

MOONWIND

We Mystics meet in this glorious landscape every Tuesday.

They sail past high mountains, deep valleys, and HERDS OF LOST SOULS. Joe looks down at them.

JOE

So many of them. Sad.

MOONWIND

Lost Souls are not that different from those in the zone.

Moonwind points at the souls floating above them.

JOE

What?

We see a floating SOUL WITH A METAL DETECTOR, obsessed in the hunt.

METAL DETECTOR SOUL

(muttering)

Gottafindit, gottafindit, gottafindit, gottafindit...

MOONWIND

The zone is enjoyable, but when that joy becomes an obsession, one become disconnected from life.

They watch as the soul becomes ENCASED IN ASTRAL DUST, transforming into a Lost Soul. It's muttering becomes garbled and scary.

MOONWIND

For a time I was a Lost Soul myself.

JOE

Really?

MOONWIND

(nods)

Tetris.

EXT. ASTRAL PLANE -- THIN SPOT.

The ship sails into a sunken spot on the Astral Plane and drops anchor.

MOONWIND

There you are! We'll have you back
in no time.

Everyone walks down the gangplank onto the astral sand.

MOONWIND

Now, since you don't have a
connection to your body, you will
have to tune back into your
physical surroundings.

Moonwind uses the walking stick to draw a large circle in the dust. Dreamerwind hands 22 a tambourine and they start playing various instruments as Moonwind kneels down next to Joe.

MOONWIND

Close your eyes. Breathe into your
crown chakra.

Joe tries to focus, but can't concentrate with the bad music.

JOE

Do we really need all this?

MOONWIND

Yes!

JOE

Do you have a piano on board? I
could focus with that!

MOONWIND

No pianos, Joe! You must focus!

(beat)

Imagine silence...

(beat)

SHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH....

Joe rolls his eyes and gives in.

MOONWIND

Now concentrate on where your body
is. Listen for cues.

Joe concentrates. The dust in the circle swirls away,
revealing an overhead panorama of New York.

MOONWIND

That's it! You're doing it!

Joe peeks. The overhead view begins to fall away. Moonwind quickly covers Joe's eyes:

MOONWIND

No peeking! Maintain your meditative state or you'll break the connection. Now, see if you can smell and feel where your body is!

Joe focuses again. We hear the BEEPING OF A HEART MONITOR.

JOE

I hear...a heart monitor. I can smell... hand sanitizer!

MOONWIND

Yes! Yes! Good!

JOE

I think I can feel my feet!
(beat)
Hmm. I feel fur...?

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL -- JOE'S ROOM.

Joe's body lies in bed. His toes wiggle. His hand is on a THERAPY CAT as a THERAPY CAT LADY and NURSE talk nearby.

THERAPY CAT LADY

Did you find a next of kin?

JOE'S BODY

(semi-conscious)
I... feel... fur...

NURSE

Did you hear that!?

THERAPY CAT LADY

Oh! The therapy cat is working!

CUT TO:

BACK TO THE ASTRAL PLANE:

Joe is getting impatient:

JOE
Am I close? When can I jump in?

Joe opens his eyes.

JOE
Look! There I am!

CUT TO:

IN THE HOSPITAL --

Joe's body mumbles:

JOE
(semi-conscious)
There... I... am...

NURSE
His heart rate is increasing. I'll
get the doctor.

CAT LADY
Mr. Mittens, you stay right there!

CUT TO:

BACK ON THE ASTRAL PLANE:

Joe is on his feet!

JOE
What are we waiting for!?

But the portal begins to drop away.

MOONWIND
No! No! Joe! Don't rush this! It's
not the right time!

JOE
No! It's my time!

Moonwind tries to stop Joe, but Joe runs forward. In his haste he plows into 22, knocking them both into the hole.

22
Wait! Not me!

JOE
AHHHH!

22 and Joe disappear through the portal as astral dust swirls back up, covering it. Moonwind and the others stare at the thin spot.

Then Moonwind turns and walks away, whistling.

INT. HOSPITAL -- JOE'S ROOM.

POV from Joe, as he opens his eyes and looks around the hospital room.

JOE
I did it. I'm back. I'm back! HA
HA!

But he looks to see his own body in front of him, lying in the hospital bed.

He looks at his hands. They are cat paws.

JOE
What the--? No! No! No! NO! I'm in the cat? Wait a minute! If I'm in here, then, then who...

Joe's body wakes up, sounding like 22:

22
uhhh..oh..wha...

JOE
You're in my body! No no no!

22
You're in the cat!?

JOE
That's MY body!

22
I'm in a body!! NOOO!

JOE
Why are you in my body?!

22
Blech! It's disgusting!

JOE
I don't wanna be in a cat! I hate cats! That Moonwind guy messed this up!

A DOCTOR, the Nurse and the Therapy Cat Lady enter. JoeCat turns to the Doctor, pleading with her:

JOE
Doc, you gotta help me! That's my
body but I'm trapped--!

CUT TO:

But as the Doctor, Nurse and the Cat Lady watch, they only hear the cat YOWLING at them:

CAT
Meow! MEOW! MEOW!

CUT TO:

BACK TO JOE'S POV as he realizes:

JOE
Oh no! They can't understand me!
They think you're me! You gotta
try.

22
Uh, Ms. Doctor, we have a problem.
I'm an unborn soul and I wanna stay
at the You Seminar!

But the Doctor hears Joe's voice.

DOCTOR
(confused, to the nurse)
Yes, well that drug doesn't seem to
be working at all

22
No, you don't understand, I'm not
Mr. Gardner--

JOE
SHHH! They're going to think you're
nuts! I mean... that I'm nuts! Ugh.
How did this happen!?

22
I fell into your body because it
doesn't have a soul!

JOE
Then why am I in a cat?

22
I don't know!

CUT TO:

ON THE SLIDEWALK -- the CAT'S SOUL rides the escalator toward the Great Beyond, alongside an assortment of other animals.

CAT
Meow?

CUT TO:

BACK TO SCENE:

The Doctor comes close to 22:

DOCTOR
Is there anyone we can call, Mr. Gardner? A next of kin or friend?

JOE
Tell her no!

22
Uh... no!

DOCTOR
Can you tell me what day it is?

22
It's the worst day of my life! I don't want to be here! I hate Earth!

DOCTOR
Tell you what, we're going to keep you here for observation. Just for a bit. Perhaps our therapy cat can go to his next appointment--

The Doctor starts to pick up Joe. But he HISSSES at her. The Doctor pulls back.

DOCTOR
Okay! Okay!

JOE
(to 22)
You gotta talk to her!

22
Umm... Ms. Doctor, this body's soul is in this cat--

JOE
Stop talking!

22
So naturally he wants to stay
close.

DOCTOR
Uhhh, keep the cat. Just get some
rest. A lot of it, okay?

As the leave, the Therapy Cat Lady says:

CAT LADY
I'll come get Mr. Mittens in ten
minutes.

22 and Joe are now alone.

JOE
Ten minutes! We gotta get outta
here!

22
No way! I am NOT moving! I can't
believe I'm in a body! On this
hellish planet! I have bendy
meatsticks! I can feel myself
feeling myself. AH!

Joe SLAPS 22's face with his paws.

JOE
Hey! Focus! Listen to me! We gotta
get out of here before they take me
away!

22
Take you away? You're gonna leave
me!?

JOE
No way. That's my body you're in!
Do you think you can walk?

22
I don't know! I failed Body Test
Drive like 436 times.

JOE
But will you try?

22 finally nods.

JOE

Okay. Gotta find Moonwind. He can fix this.

Joe gets up on his feet, looks down at the floor. It seems like a long way down.

JOE (CONT'D)

I'm a cat. I can make this.

He jumps, belly-flopping on the linoleum.

INT. HOSPITAL -- HALLWAY.

Joe peeks out from the door and down the hall. The coast is clear. He stumbles into the hall, struggling to control his new cat body.

JOE

Okay come on. You're doing great. Keep going. Keep going.

22 staggers after him, doing even worse in Joe's body. The two fumble and lurch, banging into everything.

JOE

Come on! They'll be back any minute!

They finally turn a corner. Joe sees the elevator. But the Doctor approaches, looking at a file, unaware. Before she sees them, Joe pushes 22 into another room.

JOE

(whispers)

In here!

The Doctor passes by outside, oblivious.

They rush out and head towards the elevator.

JOE

Now push the down button.

22 tries, but lacks fine motor control, pressing everything but the elevator call button.

JOE

Careful! Those fingers are my livelihood!

Frustrated, Joe jumps into her arms and pushes the elevator button. The doors open.

JOE
Now get in.

The rush in.

INT. HOSPITAL -- ELEVATOR.

The two collapse in the elevator. 22 inspects Joe's glasses, causing a bright spot on the floor. Joe can't stop his cat instincts and tries to pounce on it. He catches himself and sits back down.

JOE
Okay. What'd Moonwind say? Corner
of 14th and 7th?

22
Yeah, that's Chelsea. Near Jackson
Square Park.

JOE
Exactly. Wait. How do you know all
that?

22
It's all in this stupid brain of
yours.

JOE
Hey! Stay out of there!

22
Oh, relax, there's not much here.
Jazz, jazz, jazz, more jazz. Oh and
someone named Lisa. Who's that?

JOE
Never mind!

EXT. HOSPITAL -- LOBBY.

22 holds Joe as they emerge from the elevator and into the lobby. They walk toward the frosted glass EXIT doors.

22 stands in front of the doors. They can hear the MUFFLED SOUNDS of the busy city behind them. 22 tries to gather courage.

22
I ummm... This is all happening too
fast. Let's just take a minute and--

JOE
Come on, let's go! They could be
here any second!

The doors open and 22 steps out into:

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS. DAY.

The CACOPHONY of New York is overwhelming to 22 -- a barrage of sight and sound. 22 freezes in fear, but is swept up in a passing CROWD OF PEOPLE.

22
Ahh!

JOE
Don't worry, it's okay. Just keep
walking.

But it's too much -- A JACKHAMMER! A POLICE WHISTLE! A FIRE TRUCK!

22 panics and freezes.

JOE
No no! Don't stop! What are you
doing!? This is New York City! You
don't stop in the middle of the
street. Go GO GO!!!

Insistent, Joe inadvertently SCRATCHES 22.

22
AAHHHHHH!

22 drops Joe and runs across the street! Joe rushes after her, nearly getting hit by traffic. But 22 is gone.

JOE
Oh no. 22! 22!

He runs up and down the block, panicking.

JOE
22!!! Oh no! Oh no! 22! 22!

EXT. NEW YORK -- DOOR STOOP. DAY.

Joe finally finds 22 hiding in the corner of a sub-level stoop.

JOE

22! I didn't know I had claws,
okay? Look, I'm sorry, but come on,
let's go.

But 22 is overwhelmed.

22

Mm mm. No way. I am staying right
here until your stupid body dies!
Which will happen any minute now,
because your stomach is
earthquaking.

Joe is confused for a beat, then understands. He gets an
idea.

INT. PIZZERIA.

Steaming slices of pizza sit under heat lamps. A cat paw
grabs one.

EXT. NEW YORK -- SIDEWALK. DAY.

Joe carries the slice. He passes a RAT walking in the
opposite direction, also carrying its own slice of pizza.
They both stop, regard one another, shrug, then continue on.

EXT. NEW YORK -- DOOR STOOP. DAY.

22 watches Joe approach with the slice.

22

This place is worse than I thought.
It's loud and bright and--
(sniff sniff)
What is that in my nose?

JOE

That's *smell*.

22's eyes widen slightly.

JOE

And if you think that's good, just
imagine what it tastes like.

He walks forward to give it to 22.

JOE

Go on.

22 takes the pizza and bites, eyes widening instantly.

WE ZIP INSIDE JOE'S BODY -- to see 22, as a soul, careen joyfully around inside Joe:

22
It's soooooo good!!!! Ahhhhhh!!!!

CUT TO:

BACK OUTSIDE:

22
It's not... horrible.

JOE
Good! You can eat on the way, let's go.

But 22 chows down, completely enthralled by pizza.

JOE
Or you just take a few minutes. Sure.

22 finishes, licking her fingers.

22
Strange. I don't feel so angry anymore.

JOE
That's great. Ready to find Moonwind?

22
Maybe.

EXT. NEW YORK STREET

Calmer, 22 now gnaws on a gyro, making slow progress. Joe Cat rides impatiently on her shoulders.

22
I'm telling you, Joe, it's pronounced Yee-row!

JOE
Yeah, but in New York, we call 'em Gyros. It's Greek.

22
Nah, I got in a fight with
Archimedes about this. He said it's-

SMASH CUT TO:

FLASHBACK -- AT THE YOU SEMINAR, 22 and ARCHIMEDES argue:

ARCHIMEDES
Yee-row.

22
YO-YO?

ARCHIMEDES
YEE-row.

22
YO-LO?

ARCHIMEDES
Yee-ROW!

22
Sergio?

ARCHIMEDES
YEE-ROW!

CUT TO:

BACK TO SCENE:

22
(reminiscing)
I miss that guy.

They come to an intersection.

JOE
This is 14th and 7th.

Across the street, they spot Moonwind twirling his sign,
headphones in his ears, eyes closed and in the zone.

JOE
That's gotta be him.

22 drops her gyro and bolts across traffic to Moonwind. She
grabs him.

22
Moonwind! You gotta help me!

CUT TO:

EXT. ASTRAL PLANE -- MOONWIND'S SHIP.

Soul-Moonwind is sailing his ship when he's suddenly YANKED from deck and pulled back down to Earth.

MOONWIND
Whoaaa!

CUT TO:

BACK TO SCENE:

Moonwind's eyes open as he "wakes up" from the zone. He looks at 22.

MOONWIND
Joe! You made it into your body!

22
No, he didn't!

JOE
THAT is my body!

JoeCat points to 22. Moonwind can understand him.

MOONWIND
You're in a cat?! That's marvelous!

MARGE (O.S.)
Hey Moonwimp!

Behind them an angry STORE OWNER emerges from the store.

MARGE
That sign won't spin by itself,
hear me?

MOONWIND
But Marge! Look! I put this man's
soul in a cat!

MARGE
Who cares?
(to 22)
And you. We only have room for one
weirdo here, so scram!

The Store Owner goes back inside. Moonwind picks up his sign.

MOONWIND
(grumbles to himself)
No one understands my art...

Moonwind gets back to spinning as Joe gestures:

JOE
Moonwind, listen! I gotta get out
of HERE and back in THERE!

MOONWIND
Oh! Well we'll have to perform an
old fashioned astral transmigration
displacement.

JOE
A what?

MOONWIND
It's simply a way to get your souls
back where they belong! And it's a
glorious ritual indeed, full of
chanting, dancing, and best of all,
bongos!

JOE
I need to be at The Half Note by 7,
so this needs to happen right now!

MOONWIND
Woah woah woah. Not so fast! You
must wait for another thin spot to
open between Earth and the Astral
Plane. And that won't occur until
Orcus moves into the House of
Gemini!

JOE
When is that?

MOONWIND
Well, the government calls it 6:30.
Look, I'll meet you at The Half
Note.

JOE
6:30? You're serious?

MOONWIND
I'll even gather all of the
necessary provisions--

The angry Store Owner suddenly comes at them.

MARGE

I said get out of here! Go!

Scared, 22 runs off with Joe on her shoulders.

22

AAHHHH!

MOONWIND

See you at The Half Note at 6:30!
I'll take care of everything!

MARGE

And stay away!

INT. HALL OF RECORDS.

Terry the Accountant continues to rifle through the endless file drawers.

TERRY

(muttering to herself)

Sure are a lot of Garcias in here.

Terry slams shut a drawer and looks into the distance, at the millions of files still to go.

TERRY

You're out there somewhere, little soul. And I'm going to find you.

EXT. NEW YORK STREET -- LATER

22 turns the corner, nibbling on another slice. Joe still on her shoulders.

JOE

All right, this is the last snack!
I can barely fit into my pants as it is. 6:30 is cutting it close.
Too close. We gotta get back to my place and get you cleaned up and ready to go.

Joe instinctively tries cleaning himself, but catches himself:

JOE

BLECK! Ugh. We gotta hail a cab.
Hold your hand out. Hold it *up* and
out.

22 tries hailing a cab. But they speed by, not stopping.

JOE

This would be hard even if I wasn't
wearing a hospital gown.

A cab finally stops a few yards away, about to let out
passengers.

JOE

Go! Go go go! Just run to that one!

22 hobbles over to the cab door just as it opens. They
suddenly come face to face with Dorothea Williams, the cab's
departing passenger.

JOE

AHH!

Curley and Miho get out on the other side and GASP at 22.
Dorothea looks over 22, in stained hospital gown and gnawing
on a slice without a care.

DOROTHEA

Is that...Teach!?

22

(mouth full)

No, it's pepperoni.

Horrified, Joe **SHOVES** 22 inside the cab, pushing 22's head
down. The cab takes off.

Dorothea, Curley and Miho watch the cab drive off. Dorothea
turns to Curley, angry.

EXT. QUEENS SIDEWALK. DAY.

22 and Joe come out of the cab, walking up to an apartment
building Queens.

JOE

Ugh! Dorothea Williams saw me! What
am I going to do!? She's gonna
think I'm crazy!

(MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)

Maybe you should call her up and
tell her that we're not crazy!

22

I've only been a person for an hour
and even I know that's a bad idea.

They walk into the building.

INT. JOE'S APARTMENT.

22 and Joe step inside his small apartment. Floor-to-ceiling
shelves against a wall are lined with vinyl, surrounding an
upright piano. Next to it, an upright bass. Classic jazz
posters hang on other walls.

JOE

I just gotta get back in my body
and really bring it tonight.

22 smells the body's armpit, then forearm.

22

How come this part is stinky, but
this part smells fine?

Joe points to a laundry pile.

JOE

Never mind, just put those pants
on! Sheesh, I can't believe I've
been walking round in this city
with no pants on.

22

I don't even want to be here,
remember!?

Joe walks into a sunbeam.

JOE

I don't want you here, either.

(yawn)

I just want to get back in my...

(yawn)

body and get back to...

(yawn)

the club.

He flops down and starts purring.

22

What's the matter with you?

JOE
(sleepy)
I... don't know. It's the sun...
It's just so...

Joe's cell phone in 22's hospital gown pocket RINGS. Joe bolts up!

22
Your clothes are rumbling again.

22 pulls out Joe's phone. Joe sees it's Curley.

JOE
Curley!

Joe tries to grab it but can't. Instead he fumbles the phone all over the floor, like a cat with a toy.

Finally, the phone goes silent.

JOE
Augh!

Joe sees a "voicemail" pop up. He pushes play.

CURLEY (O.S.)
Hey, Mr. G. It's Curley. Um... I hope you're doing okay. Dorothea freaked out when she saw you. And she called this other guy, Robert. He's got the gig now. I'm sorry.

JOE
No no no!

CURLEY (O.S.)
Look. Honestly, your class was the only reason I went to school at all. Like, I owe you a lot. So...

Joe stares nervously at the phone as Curley finishes:

CURLEY (O.S.)
Here's the plan. Clean yourself up, put on a killer suit, and get to the club early. I'm going to try to talk to her.

Joe gasps, spirits lifting.

CURLEY (O.S.)
Just make sure you show up looking like a million bucks, alright?
(MORE)

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

I hope I see you, man. Alright,
Peace.

JOE

Ohhh! I can get the gig back! 22, I
need your help! I have a suit. I'm
gonna need you to try it on. And
then I can line up my hair a little
bit and I can--

22

No no no. Nope. Nope. Nope. Nope.
No way! No way, no how.

JOE

22!

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK!

22 and Joe freeze, staring at the front door.

CONNIE (O.S.)

Mr. Gardner?

JOE

Bah! It's Connie. She's here for
her lesson.

22

What do I do!?

CONNIE (O.S.)

I can hear you!

JOE

Just tell her you can't do it
today.

22 goes to the door, talking through it:

22

Hi, Connie. Sorry, but Joe can't do
it today. I mean me... me can't do
it today.

JOE

Good. Now, let's go check out that
suit--

CONNIE (O.S.)

I came to tell you that I quit!

22
(mildly intrigued)
Quit?

JOE
Ugh. We don't have time for this.
The suit is in the closet...

CONNIE (O.S.)
Band is a stupid waste of time!

22
(more intrigued)
This kid is talking sense.

22 opens the door.

JOE
What are you doing!?

INT. JOE'S APARTMENT -- HALLWAY.

22 and Joe peek out behind the chained apartment door.

Outside is Connie, the trombonist from Joe's middle school band class. She holds out her trombone to 22, angry.

CONNIE
Here, I quit! I think jazz is
pointless!

22
Oh yeah, jazz is definitely
pointless.

JOE
Hey!

CONNIE
In fact, *all* of school is a waste
of time.

22
Of course. Like my mentor George
Orwell used to say: state sponsored
education is like the rattling of a
stick inside a swill bucket.

Connie's eyes go wide:

CONNIE
Yeah!

22

The ruling class's core curriculum stifles dissent. It's the oldest trick in the book.

JOE

What are you talking about!? She doesn't care about any of that--!

CONNIE

I've been saying that since the third grade!

JOE

Ugh.

22

You know, you seem really smart. What is your position on pizza?

CONNIE

Uh... I like it?

22

Me. TOO!

22 unchains the door and swings it open, tossing Joe off her shoulder.

JOE

What are you doing?

22

I'd rather hang with Connie.

22 shuts the door, leaving Joe alone in the apartment.

JOE

What! Come back here!

Connie and 22 watch Joe's paws reach for them from under the apartment door.

JOE (O.S.)

You open this--!

But from Connie's POV, we hear Joe YOWLING.

CONNIE

Um, I think your cat wants to get out.

22

Ugh, he thinks he knows everything.

CUT TO:

INSIDE JOE'S APARTMENT.

Joe looks under the door, frantic, YELLING at 22:

JOE

22! Don't you walk away from me!
Come here right now! I'm gonna
scratch up the sofa!
(catching himself)
Wait a minute, that's my sofa.

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE STAIRWAY.

22 and Connie sit on the stairs.

22

You really got things figured out,
Connie.

CONNIE

I'd better give this back. It
belongs to the school.

22

Sure.

Connie passes 22 her trombone. 22 quickly takes it. But as 22 talks Connie looks as if she's just given up her dog.

22

You know, I really am glad there's
someone else who sees how
ridiculous this place is. You're
right to quit, I learned about
quitting just-

But Connie starts to have second thoughts. She takes back the trombone case, opens it and pulls out the trombone:

CONNIE

(interrupting)

Uh, you know what Mr. G? I was
practicing this one thing yesterday
and... maybe you can listen to it
and tell me to quit after, okay?

Connie starts playing.

22

Uh, okay.

22 listens politely, not expecting much. But Connie is good. 22 becomes inspired while watching Connie get lost in the music.

CUT TO:

INSIDE JOE'S APARTMENT.

Joe keeps trying and failing to get the door open.

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE STAIRWAY.

Connie finishes her solo. 22 is awestruck.

22

Wow. You really love this!

CONNIE

Yeah. So maybe I'd better stick with it?

22

Yeah!

INSIDE JOE'S APARTMENT.

Panicked, Joe has nearly given up when he hears:

CONNIE (O.S.)

Bye, Mr. G. See you next week!

He looks under the door to see Connie walk away. Joe jumps on the doorknob, determined, hanging there desperately:

JOE

22!

The door swings open, tossing him off. 22 walks in, trying to figure something out:

22

So, Connie came here to quit, but then she didn't?

JOE
22, forget about that, listen--

22
I need to know this, Joe. Why
didn't she quit?

JOE
Because she loves to play. She
might say she hates everything, but
trombone is her thing. She's good
at it. Maybe trombone is her Spark,
I don't know.

22 ponders this.

JOE
Please. If I'm going to get this
gig back, I need your help.

Beat.

22
Okay.

JOE
(surprised)
Really?

22
I'll help you. But I... wanna try a
few things. Some of it's not as
boring as it is at the You Seminar.
If Connie can find something she
loves here, maybe I can too.

JOE
Great!

22
So...what do we do first?!

CUT TO:

Joe paces outside the bathroom as 22 takes a shower:

22 (O.S.)
WOEOWEOWEOEWOWEEE! This water
hurts!

JOE
(calling through the
door)
(MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)

It's okay. You just have to turn
the other nob.

22 (O.S.)

Oh okay, that's better.

JOE

And I wouldn't be mad if you put a
little lotion on me when you're
done.

22 (O.S.)

I washed your butt for you.

CUT TO:

IN THE BATHROOM.

22 spits toothpaste into the sink:

22

BLECK! Spicy! Spicy!

CUT TO:

IN THE LIVING ROOM.

As Joe tends to his suit jacket, 22 tries to put on socks but
FALLS.

EXT. THE YOU SEMINAR.

A pair of Counselors is directing a flock of new souls into
several Pavilions.

COUNSELOR JERRY A

You five will be insecure. And you
twelve will be self-absorbed.

COUNSELOR JERRY B

We really should stop sending so
many through that pavilion--

TERRY (O.S.)

Found him!

They runs up with file.

TERRY

See that, everybody? Who figured
out why the count's off? That's
right, Terry did! It's Terrytime!

COUNSELOR JERRY A
Wow. Nice work!

COUNSELOR JERRY B
Well, who is it?

Terry flips through the file:

TERRY
Right. Joe Gardner is his name. It looks like he's back down on Earth.

COUNSELOR JERRY A
That's not good.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
That's the mentor we set up with 22.

TERRY
All right, all right. Easy on the hysterics. Terry's got this under control. I'll handle it.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
How?

Terry opens a portal down to Earth.

TERRY
I'll go down there and get him. Set the count right, lickety-split.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
Okay, whoa, are you sure that's a good idea?

TERRY
Look, you all are the ones who beefed it. I'm trying to un-beef it.

COUNSELOR JERRY A
But you cannot be seen.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
By ANYone!

TERRY
Don't worry. I'll make sure no one else sees me. I'll move among the shadows, like a ninja.

COUNSELOR JERRY A
Please, just do it quickly and
quietly.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
And also quickly. And quietly as
well.

Terry salutes, then jumps down towards Earth.

The Counselors look down after Terry.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
This won't be a disaster, that's
for sure.

INT. JOE'S APARTMENT.

Joe admires 22, now wearing his ill-fitting brown suit.

JOE
Mmm. Trusty old brown suit. Still a
perfect fit!

22
It's a little tight in the back-
here part.

22 points to the rear.

JOE
It'll loosen. Sit down.

22 sits on the floor.

Joe pushes over a tall stack of records in front of 22, to
use as a stool. He picks up electric clippers.

22
I'll do it.

JOE
You couldn't call an elevator,
remember? No way. I just need to
line me up. Now be still.

Joe turns on the clippers. His entire cat body vibrates
unsteadily. He shakes as he reaches the clipper forward to
22's hairline. 22 looks at him, leery.

22
Ahhhh... it's like a little tiny
chainsaw!

JOE
Don't move!

22
I'm not moving! You're moving!

Joe loses his footing on the stack of records. They shoot out from under him. The clippers sail out of his paws and take a big, long divot of hair out of 22's scalp.

They hit the floor across the room, shattering.

Joe looks at the reverse-mohawk on 22's scalp, horrified:

JOE
AAHHHHH! OH NO!

22
Don't worry. I'm okay.

JOE
No, no, no! My HAIR! MY HAIR IS NOT OKAY! THIS IS A DISASTER! We gotta fix this! Right now!

22
Okay! How?

JOE
We gotta go see Dez!

22
Great. Who's Dez?

INT. BARBER SHOP.

Inside the neighborhood barber shop, hair gently falls to the ground as the loud buzzing sound of multiple hair clippers fills the shop. BARBERS are cutting and trimming the hair of MEN and BOYS while razzing each other:

BARBER
How'd you get that big peanut head?

CUSTOMER
Man shut up. You know I'm sensitive about that. I lost my hair at an early age.

EXT. BARBER SHOP. DAY.

Joe and 22 peer through the window. The hair disaster is hidden under a hat.

JOE

Dez is that guy in the back. He can fix this. Talk about having a Spark! This guy was born to be a barber.

22

But I can't pass for you in front of all your friends!

JOE

Dez is the only one I that talk to. We usually talk about jazz, but this time just sit there, get the cut and get out.

INT. BARBER SHOP.

22 carries Joe into the shop. The customers and barbers all give a synchronized silent "nod," then go back to their conversations.

Joe's barber, DEZ, is about to take on a CUSTOMER.

DEZ

Hey, Joe! What're you doing here on a weekday? You didn't call for an appointment, man. It's gonna be a while.

JOE

(to 22)

Aw, I was afraid of this. Go ahead and sit down.

22 looks for a seat. Unthinking, she takes off her hat, revealing the AWFUL CLIPPER DISASTER.

Everyone reacts:

CUSTOMERS/BARBERS

Daaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaang!

DEZ

OhmyLAWD!!

Dez pushes away his customer:

DEZ

You gotta wait, son. This is an emergency!

CUSTOMER

What?! That ain't cool, Dez!

DEZ

You could always let Harold cut your hair. His chair's wide open.

HAROLD, another barber, looks up from the newspaper he's reading while sitting in his empty barber chair. Through his bottle-thick EYEGLASSES, he silently blinks and smiles, too eager for a customer.

CUSTOMER

Nah. I can wait.

The customer takes a seat in the waiting area.

DEZ

Joe, get your butt in this chair. NOW.

22 sits, still holding Joe. PAUL, the customer next to Dez, scowls at Joe. They have a history.

DEZ

Should I even ask you how this happened?

22

The cat did it.

JOE

(to 22)

Stop sounding insane.

22

I mean, I was distracted getting ready to play with Dorothea Williams tonight.

DEZ

Dorothea Williams?! That's big time, Joe! Congratulations!

PAUL

Joe ain't getting no gig, Dez. You know he's Mr. Close-But-No-Cigar.

JOE

Psh. This guy.

DEZ

Joe, ignore him. Now, let's fix you up.

DEZ

You keeping that cat on your lap?

22

Is it okay that I do that?

Dez throws an apron around 22 and Joe. Joe quickly pushes out of it, staying on 22's lap.

DEZ

Suit yourself. You're the boss.

22

I am?

DEZ

When you're in this chair, yeah, you are.

22

So... can I have one of those?

22 points to a jar full of lollipops.

DEZ

Uhhh, Sure, Joe.

Dez hands one to her. She quickly unwraps it and pops it into her mouth, smiling.

22

Cool. I like being in the chair.

Everyone stares at 22. Joecat chides her.

JOE

Hey, get your head in the game!

Dez fires up his hair clippers, startling 22.

22

Ah! Little chainsaw!

JOE

You need to settle down! If you keep this--

But FROM DEZ'S POV -- he sees a car YOWLING at Joe. He puts a hand on 22's shoulder:

DEZ

Look, I can deal with some freaky stuff, but if this cat don't chill, we're gonna have to put it outside.

22

(smug)

Well, what's it gonna be, kitty?

JOE

Meow.

Dez regards 22's reverse mohawk and gets to work.

DEZ

Sometimes change is good. You have been rocking that same style for a while.

22

Well Dez, for hundreds of years, I've had no style at all.

PAUL

You can say that again!

The others start LAUGHING. 22 looks around, misreading it.

22

But then my life changed.

DEZ

Oh yeah? What happened?

22

I was existing as a theoretical construct in a hypothetical way-station between life and death.

FEMALE BARBER

I heard that.

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER.

22 is relaxed now, happily sucking on the lolly as Dez finishes.

Everyone in the store has pulled up a chair, now listening intently to 22's story.

22

And by the time I got to mentor number 266, I was seriously asking what is all the fuss about. Like is all this living really worth dying for? You know what I mean?

CUSTOMERS

Word. Mhmmm.

DEZ

I never knew you had such an interesting education, Joe. I just thought you went to music school.

22

And another thing... They say you're born to do something, but how do you figure out what that thing is? And what if you pick up the wrong thing. Or somebody else's thing, you know? Then you're stuck!

The others nod in agreement.

One of the customers motions to the lolly jar.

CUSTOMER

(whispers)

I'll take one of those.

DEZ

(chuckles)

I wouldn't call myself stuck but I never planned on cuttin' heads for a living.

22

Wait, but... you were born to be a barber. Weren't you?

DEZ

I wanted to be a veterinarian.

Joe looks at Dez, surprised by this.

22

So why didn't you do that?

DEZ

I was planning to. When I got out of the Navy. And then my daughter got sick, and...

(MORE)

DEZ (CONT'D)

barber school is a lot cheaper than
veterinarian school.

22

That's too bad. You're stuck as a
barber and now you're unhappy.

DEZ

Whoah, whoa, slow your roll there,
Joe. I'm happy as a clam, my man.
Not everyone can be Charles Drew
inventing blood transfusions.

22

...or me, playing piano with
Dorothea Williams. I know.

PAUL guffaws sarcastically.

PAUL

Haha. You are not all that. Anyone
could play in a band if they wanted
to.

JOE

(to 22)

Don't pay Paul any mind. People
like him just bring other people
down so they can make themselves
feel better.

22

Oh, I get it. He's just criticizing
me to cover up the pain of his own
failed dreams.

The others ERUPT with a collective "DANG!" Everyone in the
shop LAUGHS at 22's inadvertent, razor-sharp comeback.

Humbled, Paul sniffs on his way out:

PAUL

You cut deep, Joe...

22

I wonder why sitting in this chair
makes me want to tell you things,
Dez.

DEZ

That's the magic of the chair.
That's why I love this job. I get
to meet interesting folks like you.
Make them happy...

Dez picks up a small hand mirror and shows 22 his work.

DEZ
And make them handsome.

22 looks at the excellent cut in the mirror and smiles. Joe is impressed.

22
Wow! Am I crazy or do I look younger?

DEZ
I may not have invented blood transfusions, but I am most definitely saving lives.

EXT. BARBER SHOP. DAY.

Dez shows 22 and Joe out.

DEZ
I don't know about this crazy cat guy thing man, but it is nice to finally talk to you about something other than jazz, Joe.

22
Huh. How come we, uh, never talked about your life before?

DEZ
You never asked. But I'm glad you did this time.

The other customers call out:

CUSTOMERS
Looking good, brother. Have a great show!

Dez heads back inside. 22 pulls out a handful of lollipops, showing them proudly to Joe.

22
I grabbed a couple road lollies.

22 pops one into her mouth and walks off. Joe follows, impressed with how 22 handled it all.

INT. HOSPITAL -- JOE'S ROOM.

Inside Joe's former hospital room, a HEART MONITOR beeps, suddenly FLATLINES -- then becomes Terry.

Terry leaps from the monitor and looks around the room for clues.

Terry examines Joe's empty hospital bed, ducking out of sight just as a DOCTOR enters the room.

EXT. NEW YORK -- DOOR STOOP. DAY.

Terry moves, snake-like, up to the sunken alcove where 22 had been hiding earlier. Terry examines the spot where 22 had been sitting.

INT. JOE'S APARTMENT.

Terry slithers among Joe's things, over his album collection and onto his piano, searching.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD BODEGA. DAY.

Paul comes out of the small grocery store near the barber shop. He opens a bag of chips, still stung by 22's insult:

PAUL
(muttering to himself)
You know, Julia Child didn't
succeed till she was 49.

22 and Joe approach. 22 holds out a lolly as a peace offering:

22
Hey, Paul! Here, have a lollipop.

PAUL
Oh. Thanks, man.

ACROSS THE STREET -- Terry spots 22 as she comes out of a crosswalk light.

TERRY
There you are!

Terry jumps down and snakes around the corner. The accountant draws a portal in the ground, like a lion trap.

As 22 finishes making amends with Paul, Terry readies the trap:

TERRY
Come to Terry!

A body falls into the trap. Terry follows, jumping in.

TERRY
Gotcha!

INT. LIMBO.

Surrounded by the eerie darkness of Limbo, Terry let's "Joe" have it:

TERRY
Thought you could cheat the universe?! Well you thought wrong! I'm the Accountant, and I'm here to bring you in!

Terry PULLS THE SOUL FROM THE BODY. But it's not Joe.

It's Paul!

TERRY
Oh ooh! You're not Joe Gardner.
HaHa! My mistake.

Paul is petrified.

TERRY
We'll just get you back into your meat suit.

Terry shoves Paul's soul back into his body and tosses him back up.

EXT. NEW YORK STREET CORNER. DAY.

Paul emerges through the portal, back onto the street. He's shivering, clutching his bag of chips, horrified. Terry tries to make things right:

TERRY
There ya go. No harm, no foul.

But Paul is trembling and stammering.

TERRY
Oh, boy.

Terry puts an arm around him.

TERRY

Look, fella. I'm thinking there's no reason we can't keep this little incident between us, eh? Mistakes happen. And uh, it's not your time. Unless you keep eating those processed foods, am I right? Ha!

Terry vanishes. Paul looks around fearfully. Suddenly, Terry's stern face appears in his bag of chips.

TERRY

But seriously, stay away from those processed foods.

Paul SCREAMS and throws the bag, running away.

EXT. NEW YORK -- SIDEWALK. DAY.

22 and Joe keep walking. 22 happily sucks on a lollipop as they talk.

JOE

You know what, you did all right back there. How did you know how to deal with Paul?

22

I didn't. I just let out the ME. Hey, like you said about jazz! I was jazzing!

JOE

First of all, "jazzing" is not a word. And second, music and life operate by very different rules.

22 looks at a flyer on a pole, about to pull off one of the contact slips.

22

It says take one!

JOE

Don't--

But 22 takes more than one.

JOE

Or do. Okay fine.

22 jogs back over like a little kid, reading it.

22

Man with a Van. I got a few in case we need a lot of vans.

Joe rolls his eyes.

JOE

Uh huh. Now let's get back to the plan. We go the Half Note and wait there for Moonwind. It's around 4PM now...

But he see 22 LAUGHING, playing with the reflection in a window.

JOE

You know what, you are really getting good at using those legs. Why don't you try running?

22's hands run along a metal fence, making music.

22

Hey! I made a song! I'm jazzing!

JOE

Okay, enough of the jazzing and everything like that. We need to get somewhere. Now I suggest that-

But 22 stops over a subway grate. The blast of air from below whooshes up.

22

Woohoo! Ha ha!

JOE

What are you doing?

22

That tickles!

22 lies on her stomach on the grate, letting the wind ruffle the suit.

22

Hooooohohohohohoo!

22's hat blows off and flies down the street.

22

Whoops. I got it.

22 runs over to the hat, bends over to pick it up. But stops, unable to bend out any more.

JOE
Would you hurry up!

22
Okay.

22 forces it. RIIIIIP!

22
(smiling)
You were right! These pants are loosening!

But PEDESTRIANS behind 22 look at the pants IN SHOCK.

A BIKE MESSENGER LAUGHS.

Joe SCREAMS:

JOE
AAAAAAHHHH!

He runs over and looks at 22's rear, his polka dot underwear hangs out. Joe tries to cover it up.

JOE
Oh no no no, don't let people see your butt!

22
It's *your* butt.

JOE
It doesn't matter whose butt! Take off the jacket! Tie it around your waist! Quick! Cover the butt!

22 does.

JOE
Oh! What are we gonna do!? Can't find a tailor this late!

A thought hits him. A bad thought:

JOE
(dread)
Oh no. We're gonna have to go to mom's.

22

Okay!

JOE

No, you don't understand! Mom doesn't know about this gig. And she's not gonna like it.

22

Okay.

JOE

But we don't have any other choice!

22

Okay.

JOE

She's the only one that can fix this!

22

Okay!

JOE

Stop saying okay! We gotta catch the subway across town. Come on.

22

Oook-
(stops herself)
Got it.

INT. SUBWAY STATION PLATFORM.

22 eats a bagel while carrying Joe down onto a subway station platform.

JOE

My mom doesn't know about the gig, and I want to keep it that way, okay?

22

Right, because she thinks you're a failure.

JOE

What?!

22

I didn't say that! YOU did. Up here.

22 points to Joe's head.

JOE

Look, my mom has her own definition of what success is and being a professional musician isn't it.

Joe jumps to the ground and starts pacing, thinking this through.

JOE

(muttering to self)

So lemme see... I need the suit fixed for a school band recital. Ugh, I'm not looking forward to this. But there's no reason she needs to know.

Meanwhile, 22 notices a BUSKER playing his guitar and SINGING, guitar case open to receive loose change. Intrigued, 22 approaches.

Joe still stews:

JOE

All the times I've been so close to getting to my dreams... something always gets in the way. You know what I mean?

Joe spots 22, drawn to the music. He walks over.

22

He's good. I've heard music before. But I've never felt like this inside.

JOE

Of course you love music now. Because you're ME. Let's go. Let's go!

22 clocks this as the train arrives. It makes sense, yet doesn't feel right.

JOE

Let's go!

22 watches a PASSERBY toss change into the busker's guitar case. Inspired, 22 breaks her bagel in half and drops it in, too. As 22 walks away, the busker looks at the bagel, slightly annoyed.

Joe and 22 walk onto the train.

INT. SUBWAY TRAIN.

Joe finds a seat and sits, like a person -- on his butt, cat-feet outstretched. He folds his paws across his cat-chest and settles in for the ride like any New Yorker.

A NEW YORKER next to him looks at this, decides to scoot over, not wanting any part of this weirdness.

22 remains standing as the doors close. The car is nearly full. The train starts moving. 22 stumbles.

22
Whoah! AHH!

As the train moves, 22 has fun "surfing" it like a wave.

22
Woahahaho! Ha ha!

22 bumps into a COMMUTER.

COMMUTER
Hey! Take it easy, eh?

22
I'm sorry!

22 quickly sits next to Joe, feeling self-conscious.

JOE
Don't worry about it. It's the subway. It does that to some people.

22
Does what?

JOE
It wears you down. It stinks. It's hot. It's crowded. Every day the same thing, day in and day out.
(to self)
But once I get on that stage tonight, all my troubles are going to be fixed. You're gonna see a brand new Joe Gardner.

Joe hears a SLURPING sound. He turns to see 22 listening to him, but now drinking a Big Gulp from a straw.

JOE
Where'd you get that?

22

Under the seat. Can you believe it?
Still half full!

Joe SLAPS it out of her hands.

EXT. LIBBA'S CUSTOM TAILORING. DAY.

22 and Joe walk up to his mom's tailoring shop.

JOE

Alright, remember, I need the suit
fixed for a band recital. Got it?

22 nods. They enter.

INT. LIBBA'S CUSTOM TAILORING.

Melba and Lulu are busy behind sewing machines.

22 enters. Joe is on 22's shoulders.

MELBA AND LULU

Joey! I'm so proud of you! Baby
boy, we heard the news!

But from the back room they hear a pointed:

LIBBA (O.S.)

Ahem!

Melba and Lulu freeze.

JOE

Oh, crap. She knows!

Melba gestures, cautiously:

LULU

Your momma's in the back.

JOE

You gotta go in there.

22

No, I don't want to.

JOE

You have to! We need the suit
fixed!

22 gulps and starts walking. As they pass Melba:

MELBA

You forgetting something, Joey?

Melba holds out her cheek, waiting.

22

What?

JOE

Kiss her. I always kiss Melba when
I see her.

Melba leans her cheek out.

JOE

Just do it.

22 looks at Melba's cheek, then grabs her face and goes in,
kissing her right on the lips. The women GASP.

JOE

No, no, no! Not on the lips.

LULU

(in horror)

Joey! What has gotten into you,
boy?

22 quickly releases Melba.

MELBA

(catching her breath)

Let him finish!

LULU

Cougar! I knew it.

22 and Joe walk into the back room as Melba calls after them:

MELBA

I'll take another kiss when you get
back, Joey!

CUT TO:

LIBBA'S ALTERATIONS ROOM.

22 and Joe slowly step in. Libba is working on a dress.

She's not happy.

LIBBA
So much for being done chasing
after gigs, huh?

Libba spots the cat on 22's shoulder.

LIBBA
I hope that cat isn't supposed to
be some kind of peace offering.

CUT TO:

IN THE TAILOR SHOP.

Lulu and Melba press themselves against the door, trying to
hear what's going on.

CUT TO:

BACK TO SCENE:

Joe whispers in 22's ear, coaching:

JOE
Just say you rescued it.

22
(to Libba)
Um, no. It's mine. I rescued it.

LIBBA
Hm. Too bad you can't rescue your
career.

Joe sighs, not surprised.

JOE
Just ask her nicely if she can fix
my suit.

22
So, Mom... is there any way you can
fix this?

22 removes the jacket and reveals the large tear and polka-
dot underwear to Libba.

LIBBA
Whoah! I don't need to see that!

22

I know. Embarrassing right? So,
you'll fix it?

LIBBA

No.

JOE AND 22

What?

LIBBA

How long are you going to keep
doing this, Joey? You tell me
you're going to accept the full-
time position...

JOE

Here it comes.

LIBBA

Then instead I hear you've taken on
another gig.

JOE

Tell her that this one's different!

22

This one's different!

LIBBA

Does this "gig" have a pension?
Health insurance? No? Then it's the
same as the other ones. It's like
you can't even be truthful with me
anymore!

JOE

Fine, we'll get the suit off the
rack somewhere. My mom has never
understood what I'm trying to do
with my life.

22

(repeating, to Libba)

Fine, we'll get a suit off the rack
somewhere. My mom has never
understood what I'm trying to do
with my life.

JOE

22!

LIBBA

What did you just say!?

22
(to Joe)
Can I run away now, like you
usually do?

Mom stares, waiting for a response from Joe.

Joe considers his options.

JOE
No. Not this time. Repeat after me.

Joe whispers into 22's ear.

We SHIFT TO LIBBA'S POV -- to hear Joe talk to his mom in his
own voice:

JOE
Mom, I know we've had some rough
times. But you're right. I can't be
truthful with you. Because no
matter what I do, you disapprove.

LIBBA
Look, I know you love playing...

JOE
Then how come except for church,
you're happiest when I don't? I
finally land the gig of my life and
you're upset.

LIBBA
You didn't see how tough being a
musician was on your father. I
don't want to see you struggle like
that!

JOE
So Dad can pursue his dreams, and I
can't?

LIBBA
Your father had *me*. Most times this
shop was what paid the bills. So
when I'm gone, who's gonna pay
yours?

JOE
Music is all I think about. From
the moment I wake up in the morning
to the moment I fall asleep at
night.

LIBBA

You can't eat dreams for breakfast,
Joey.

JOE

Then I don't want to eat! This
isn't about my career, Mom. It's my
reason for living. And I know Dad
felt the same way.

Libba thinks about this.

JOE

And... I'm just afraid that if I
died today, that my life would've
amounted to nothing.

LIBBA

Joey...!

Libba looks into her son's eyes, moved and slightly scared.
She breaks down a little, but then finally smiles.

She goes to a drawer and pulls out a large garment box.

LIBBA

Let's make *this* work instead.

She opens it to reveal a tight, crisp BLUE SUIT.

We COME OUT OF LIBBA'S POV as:

Joe immediately recognizes the suit, stunned:

JOE

That's... my dad's suit.

LIBBA

(calls out)

Lulu! Melba! Bring your good
scissors in here. We got work to
do!

The eavesdropping Melba and Lulu almost tip over and fall
into the room as they try to cover their spying.

They get to work as Joe sits on a table, touched.

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER.

22 surveys the NEW SUIT in a full-length MIRROR while Libba, Melba and Lulu make adjustments.

Joe watches from the side, amazed.

22

Wow. This feels *really* nice!

Libba chuckles. Joe watches his mom lovingly make a few adjustments, admiring the way her son looks in the mirror.

LULU AND MELBA

You look marvelous! This fits perfectly! Just handsome! Mhmm.

LIBBA

That is one fine wool suit, if I do say so myself.

22 points to a pocket-square.

22

Can I try on that?

LIBBA

Of course you can.

She puts the handkerchief square against the suit's breast pocket.

22

Thank you... um... Mom.

LIBBA

Ray woulda been so proud of you, baby. Like I've always been.

Moved, Joe watches as Libba embraces 22; as Libba embraces *him*. He's awestruck at his mom's turn.

Libba pushes 22 toward the door.

LIBBA

You heard me, right? The suit is wool, not polyester.

22 picks up Joe.

LIBBA

So don't go putting that cat on your shoulders again!

22 drops Joe on the floor as they both say:

22 AND JOE
Yes, ma'am!

22 walks to the door as Joe looks back at his mom, lovingly:

JOE
Thanks, mom.

EXT. LIBBA'S TAILOR SHOP.

Joe catches up to 22, now looking sharp in the blue suit.

JOE
Wow, that was amazing! Know what
that felt like? That felt like
jazz!

22
Yeah! You were jazzing!

JOE
Ha ha! Okay, jazzing!

EXT. NEW YORK - SUBWAY STAIRS. DUSK.

Joe and 22 emerge from the subway station in another part of town, in the midst of conversation:

22
I'm telling you, Joe. You really
should call Lisa again.

JOE
I don't really have time for a
relationship right now, 22.

22
Oh, busy right now? Want to wait
until you die a second time? Cool,
cool.

JOE
Heh heh. I can't believe I'm
getting romantic advice from an
unborn soul.

22
I could think of worse.

They both laugh as they turn the corner. Ahead is the Half Note Jazz Club.

They run up to the club.

JOE

There it is! Ahh! We made it! This is going to work!

Joe admires 22 in his dad's suit.

JOE

Woah, I can't believe how good I look! The suit! The cut! Just look at me! Heehee! Boodie-be-da!

As he looks at himself against the Half Note marquee, he gets more excited:

JOE

Oh, just turn a little bit! Right there!

22

Like this?

22 tries a few poses in front of the Half Note, getting into it.

JOE

Angle the shoulders. Yeah!

22

Ha ha! Who's that? And from this side. Uh huh! Who's back here? Still me!

JOE

That's a winner!

22

Right?

They sit. Joe admires the jazz club as he thinks on his future:

JOE

(to himself)

This can't be happening now! The Half Note! Look at that lineup...

But as Joe talk, 22's attention drifts to the world around them:

A FATHER plays with his DAUGHTER.

TWO CLOSE FRIENDS at a cafe LAUGH together.

A soft breeze lifts some fallen leaves, dancing them across the sidewalk.

Sunlight falls across the buildings around them. 22 looks up to see propellor seeds fall from a tree above.

One falls into 22's hand.

22 stares at the seed. Something changes.

JOE (O.S.)

So, you ready?

22 comes out of it.

22

Huh?

JOE

To go home. Bet you're ready to get off this stinky rock, huh? What'd you think of Earth anyway?

22 considers this.

22

I... always said it was dumb. But... I mean... just look at what I found!

22 brings out a bunch of OBJECTS from the suit pocket -- a spool of thread, part of a bagel, a half-eaten lolly, etc.

22

Your mom sewed your suit from this cute spool. When I was nervous, Dez gave me this. A guy on the subway yelled at me. It was scary... but I kind of liked that too.

Joe regards 22, surprised.

22

The truth is I've always worried that maybe there's something wrong with me, you know? That I'm not good enough for living. But then you showed me about purpose, and passion and...

Excited, 22 looks out hopefully at the world.

22

Maybe sky watching can be my Spark.
Or walking! I'm really good at
walking!

JOE

Those really aren't purposes, 22.
That's just regular ol' living. But
when you get back to the You
Seminar, you can give it an honest
try.

22

But I've been at the You Seminar
for thousands of years! And I have
never felt this close!

MOONWIND (O.S.)

Joe!

They look to see Moonwind approaching, carrying an armload of
stuff, including his bongos.

MOONWIND (CONT'D)

(running up)

Who's ready to go home?

JOE

Moonwind!

MOONWIND

The stars are almost in alignment!
I'll have you back in your bodies
in no time.

22

No! I've gotta find it here. On
Earth. This is my only chance to
find my Spark.

JOE

22, you're only loving this stuff
because you're in MY BODY. You can
find your OWN thing to love when
you get back to the You Seminar.
Now come on, I need my body back.
Now!

22's face hardens.

22

No.

22 stands, defiant.

22
I'm in the chair!

22 runs!

JOE
22!

22
Leave me alone! I'm trying to find
my purpose!

Joe takes off after 22.

JOE
22, you come back here!

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET. DUSK.

Joe tries to keep up. 22 turns a corner and disappears down the subway stairs.

JOE
22!

But as Joe pursues, the THERAPY CAT LADY comes up from the same stairway, happy to see him.

She grabs Joe and tries forcing him into her cat carrier. But Joe goes feral on her, a spinning ball of fur and claws.

The Therapy Cat Lady SCREAMS and drops Joe. He speeds down into the subway station after 22.

The pass an advertisement against the subway station wall. Suddenly, the linear form of Terry appears in the ad's outlines.

TERRY
There they are.

Terry takes off after them.

INT. SUBWAY STATION.

Joe pursues 22 through the busy subway station.

JOE
You come back here right now!

They dodge COMMUTERS left and right until they finally come upon an empty hallway.

JOE
You stole my body!

22 runs towards the exit at the far end. Joe close behind. But suddenly they are surrounded by darkness and they both fall into Terry's portal trap.

EXT. LIMBO.

As 22 and Joe float through the inky darkness, their soul forms emerge out from their respective bodies.

As Joe's human body and the cat body float away, the souls of Joe and 22 float upwards, to another portal leading back into the You Seminar. Terry looks down on them, triumphant.

TERRY
It's your time to go, Joe Gardner.

Joe sees his body far below. He frantically swims toward it, making headway. He's almost able to get into his own body.

TERRY
Oh no you don't.

Terry stops him.

TERRY
Gotcha!

Though inches away, Joe is yanked away from his body and pulled toward the You Seminar.

JOE
No, no, no, no, no, no!

INT. THE YOU SEMINAR.

Joe lands in the grass of the You Seminar. Above him the Portal closes.

JOE
NO!

Furious, Joe storms over to 22.

JOE
I was gonna play with Dorothea Williams!

22

And I was about to find my Spark!

JOE

Find your Spark?!

22

You promised but you wouldn't even give me five minutes!

JOE

My life was finally going to change! I lost *everything* because of you!

TERRY

JOE!

Joe stops shouting.

TERRY

You cheated.

Joe looks defeated. Terry escorts them to a group of Counselors.

TERRY

Found him!

COUNSELORS

Joe Gardner? You're back! Terry, you found them! Didn't expect that one.

TERRY

(proudly)

No need to thank me!

COUNSELOR JERRY A

It's nice to have everything back in order. And...

The Counselor looks at 22's badge, stunned.

COUNSELOR JERRY A

22 got her pass?

22 looks down to see her Personality Profile has finally changed into an Earth Pass.

The other Counselors happily surround her.

COUNSELORS

Oh my goodness, this is amazing
Shut the fridge, 22 has got an
Earth Pass?! This is cray cray!
This is a great day! After all
these years!

22 can't believe it.

22

But... what filled in the last box?

Joe seethes, lashing out:

JOE

I'll tell you what filled it in...
I did! It was *my* Spark that changed
that badge!

(to Counselors)

She only got that because she was
living MY life! In MY body!

22 starts to protest, but Terry interrupts.

TERRY

Come on, Mr. Gardner.

Terry opens a portal to the Great Beyond.

But a Counselor leans to Joe:

COUNSELOR JERRY A

Joe, it's time for you to accompany
22 to the Earth Portal. Give you a
chance to say goodbye.

COUNSELOR JERRY B

Of course! It's standard procedure.

The Counselors gently usher Joe and 22 toward the Earth
Portal.

TERRY

Just hold on a minute! I get to set
the count right!

COUNSELOR JERRY B

Terry, you've done a super job!
We'll take it from here. You're
amazing.

TERRY

(flattered)

Well thank you.

Terry exits into the Portal.

TERRY
(proudly)
Terry time.

The Counselors encourage 22 and Joe to the Earth Portal.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
Go ahead you two.

EXT. THE YOU SEMINAR -- EARTH PORTAL.

Joe and 22 approach the edge of the Portal, both angry. 22 looks holds the Earth Pass.

22
You don't know. You can't be sure
why my pass changed.

JOE
Come on, 22. Think about it. You
hated music until you were in my
body. You hated everything until
you were me!

22 stews. Joe turns to walk away.

JOE
Hmph, I hope you enjoy it.

As Joe walks something hits him on the back of his head.

He sees 22's Earth Pass lying on the ground.

He locks eyes with 22, who stares angrily at him.

Joe picks up the pass and makes to throw it back at 22. But when he looks, the soul is gone. Joe looks around, confused.

COUNSELOR JERRY B (O.S.)
I have to ask...

Startled, Joe hides the Earth Pass behind his back.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
How the Dickens did you do it? Get
that Earth Pass to change?

JOE
Oh... uh. I just... let her walk a
mile in my shoes, you could say.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
Well, it worked.

JOE
Heh... yeah.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
You should probably get going to
the Great Beyond.

The Counselor turns to walk away. Joe stops him:

JOE
Hey, we never found out what 22's
purpose was.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
Excuse me?

JOE
You know, her Spark. Her purpose.
Was it music? Biology? Walking?

COUNSELOR JERRY B
We don't assign purposes. Where did
you get that idea?

JOE
Because I have piano. It's what I
was born to do. That's my Spark.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
A Spark isn't a soul's purpose.

The Counselor walks off, chuckling:

COUNSELOR JERRY B
Oh, you mentors and your passions!
Your purposes! Your meanings of
life! So basic.

Joe is confused.

JOE
No... No!

He walks to the edge of the Earth Portal, watching the other
new souls jump to Earth.

JOE
It is music. My Spark is music. I
know it is!

Determined, Joe jumps down into the portal to Earth.

INT. 22'S CLUBHOUSE

22 crawls inside her clubhouse, distraught.

22
(muttering)
I'm no good. I got no purpose.

She leaves under the sink, onto the Astral Plane.

22
No purpose... No purpose...

INT. SUBWAY STATION.

Joe comes to in his own body, a sea of anxious PASSERBYS staring down at him. He rubs his aching head, realizing he's back.

Mr. Mittens looks on, until the Therapy Cat Lady approaches. The cat runs into her arms.

Joe checks his watch and rushes out of the station.

INT. HALF NOTE.

Joe runs down the stairs, into the club. He runs into Curley, looking good in his own gig suit.

CURLEY
(surprised)
Mr. G?

JOE
Curley, I made it! I'm ready to go!

CURLEY
You're too late, man.

JOE
Let me talk to Dorothea.

CURLEY
No, no, no, man! She don't play that!

But Joe blows past Curley and into Dorothea's dressing room.

INT. HALF NOTE -- DRESSING ROOM.

DOROTHEA talks to Miho while finishing her makeup. Joe bursts in.

DOROTHEA
Who let this lunatic in here?

JOE
Listen, you've gotta give me another chance!

DOROTHEA
This is my band. I decide who plays.

JOE
And if you don't go with me, you'll be making the biggest mistake of your career.

Dorothea approaches him, unconvinced.

DOROTHEA
Oh yeah? Why's that?

Joe stands his ground as Curley listens from the doorway.

JOE
My only purpose on this planet is to play. It's what I was meant to do. And nothing's gonna stop me.

Dorothea is intrigued. She thinks for a moment, then--

DOROTHEA
Well aren't you an arrogant one. I guess you really are a jazz player.
(to Curley)
Tell Robert he's out. For now.
(to Joe)
Nice suit.

Dorothea exits, saying over her shoulder:

DOROTHEA
Nice suit.

Curley gives Joe a thumbs up and rushes off.

Joe looks in the mirror, relieved. As he straightens his tie, Joe notices a photograph of Duke Ellington straightening his tie. Joe smiles:

JOE
Get ready Joe Gardner. Your life is
about to start.

INT. HALF NOTE -- STAGE.

LATER -- The band kicks in. Joe doesn't miss a beat. He pounds on the keys as he and Dorothea solo joyously back and forth, in the flow. We see the quartet's tight performance in a series of TIME CUTS. The CROWD eggs them on wildly.

Then it ends. The lights come up. Joe is spent, breathing heavily, taking in the applause. He looks over at Dorothea. She smiles and leans in:

DOROTHEA
Welcome to the quartet, Teach!

The audience is on their feet APPLAUDING, including Libba, Melba and Lulu.

MELBA AND LULU
Woohoo!

LIBBA
That's my Joey!

Joe is elated.

EXT. HALF NOTE. NIGHT.

Curley, Miho and Joe come out of the club, excited and energized.

Libba, Lulu and Melba follow.

CURLEY
Nice work -- that was killer!

MIHO
(laughing)
I'm not going to cover that
bridge for you again!

JOE
Yeah, that was amazing! Ha ha!

Curley and Miho walk off.

CURLEY
Later, Mr. G!

Libba, Melba and Lulu congratulate Joe and hail a cab.

MELBA AND LULU
You did great! We love you!

LIBBA
I'm so proud of you Joey!

She hugs her son, then climbs into the cab.

LIBBA
Gotta get to bed. We old!

Joe waves as Dorothea exits the club.

DOROTHEA
You play a hundred shows, and one
of them is killer. You don't get
many like tonight.

JOE
Yeah!
(beat)
So, what happens next?

DOROTHEA
We come back tomorrow night and do
it all again.

Joe looks confused, slightly disheartened.

DOROTHEA
What's wrong, Teach?

JOE
It's just... I've been waiting on
this day for my entire life. I
thought I'd feel... different.

Dorothea studies him knowingly. Finally:

DOROTHEA
I heard this story about a fish. He
swims up to this older fish and
says "I'm trying to find this thing
they call the ocean." "The ocean?"
says the older fish, "That's what
you're in right now." "This?" says
the young fish, "This is water.
What I want is the ocean."

She hails a cab.

DOROTHEA
See you tomorrow.

Dorothea leaves.

Joe watches her go, alone and confused. The marquee behind him flicks off.

INT. SUBWAY.

Joe ponders Dorothea's words as he rides the train. It lurches. He bumps into someone.

COMMUTER

Hey man!

JOE

Sorry.

Joe looks into the train. SUBWAY RIDERS stand motionless, looking at their phones. He looks at his reflection in the window, feeling alone and empty.

INT. JOE'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

Joe closes the door behind him and stares at his all-too-familiar apartment.

Around him, nothing has changed. He walks into the empty silence.

He turns on a dim lamp and sits down at the piano.

A CRUNCH of stuff in his pocket gets his attention. He pulls out the things 22 "found": a pizza crust, a bagel, a lollipop, a spool of thread, and a helicopter seed.

He absently dumps it on an end-table and puts his head in his hand, mournfully fingering the piano keys.

Joe's eyes fall back onto 22's mementos. It triggers something in Joe.

JOE REMEMBERS:

OUTSIDE THE HALF NOTE, the helicopter seed twirls into his hand. But it is 22's memory.

BACK AT HIS PIANO, Joe is startled. He looks at the pizza crust.

JOE REMEMBERS:

AT THE DOOR STOOP, Joe thoroughly enjoys the pizza slice moments after leaving the hospital. Again, this is 22's memory.

BACK AT HIS PIANO, Joe scoops the objects and places them on the music ledge of the piano, studying them.

After a moment, he begins to play. Each item triggers other specific MEMORIES:

- The BAGEL falling to the Busker's guitar case.
- The LOLLIPOP segues into Dez's sharp haircut.
- The THREAD SPOOL reminds him of his mother, Libba, passing his dad's suit onto him.

Joe smiles as other MEMORIES start to flow, inspiring the music:

- Joe lies on the subway grate, feeling the wind beneath his back.
- Watching Connie go into the zone while playing her trombone.

Then deeper MEMORIES of Joe's life emerge:

- A younger Libba gives her toddler-aged son Joe a bath.
- His father, Ray, drops a needle onto a jazz record, while 10-year-old Joe watches. They enjoy the music together.
- A teenaged Joe pedals a bike through the park, feeling the freedom of summer.
- The morning light fills the streets of his Queens neighborhood.
- Teenaged Joe watches a Mets game from a rooftop with his parents. Fireworks explode against the city skyline.

The memories bring tears to Joe as he plays. More recent ones start to come:

- In a diner, Joe sits alone eating a piece of pie, deeply satisfied.
- Joe gives a young Curley his first pair of drumsticks, inspiring him with a Max Roach record.
- Joe plays his piano for his ill father. Ray smiles as he listens, lost in his son's music.

- Joe and his mother are alone at the beach, letting the water wash over their bare feet.

The memories overwhelm Joe as he continues to play. He smiles as tears fall. Slowly his perspective alters, lifting out of himself, out of the city, off the Earth, and into the cosmos.

Suddenly another memory comes, as just voices:

22 (O.S.)
Maybe sky watching could be my
Spark. Or walking! I'm really good
at walking.

JOE (O.S.)
Those aren't Sparks, 22. That's
just regular ol' living.

This snaps Joe back to Earth.

A disturbing thought takes hold. He picks up the helicopter seed, gazing at it as he thinks about 22.

Joe makes a decision, puts the seed in his pocket, closes his eyes, and begins playing again.

The room fades away as the music takes him into the zone.

EXT. THE ASTRAL PLANE.

Joe opens his eyes, now in the zone. He plays an astral piano in his soul form, floating above the plane. Other souls in the zone float on the horizon.

MOONWIND (O.S.)
Joe!?

Joe looks to see Moonwind aboard his ship, sailing toward him.

MOONWIND
Joe! Good heavens, man! What are
you doing in the zone!

JOE
Moonwind!

Joe jumps onto the deck.

JOE
I messed up. I need to find 22.

MOONWIND

I'm afraid she's become a Lost Soul.

JOE

What? How is that possible?!

MOONWIND

I'll explain on the way.

Moonwind speeds the ship across the Astral Plane.

MOONWIND

When neither of you returned to the Half Note, I suspected something had gone wrong.

CUT TO:

EXT. ASTRAL PLANE - FLASHBACK.

Moonwind steers the ship.

MOONWIND (V.O.)

I came back here, and that's when I spotted her.

Moonwind spots 22, now covered in astral dust -- DARK 22. He waves at 22. But the Lost Soul runs off.

CUT TO:

BACK TO SCENE:

Joe scans a field of Lost Souls with a telescope as Moonwind continues:

MOONWIND

Lost Souls are obsessed by something that disconnects them from life. And now that 22 has technically lived, she's become one of them.

Joe finds Dark 22 in the distance.

JOE

There she is!

MOONWIND

Good show!

Moonwind steers the ship and pursues.

JOE

22!

Dark 22 HISSES at Joe and rockets off.

MOONWIND

Ready the net!

JOE

I'm on it!

Joe cocks the harpoon net and FIRES. The net wraps around Dark 22 like a lasso. They try to reel 22 in.

But Dark 22 dives below the surface, forcing the bow of the ship straight down into the dust.

MOONWIND

Oh no! She's got us!

As the ship sinks, Joe jumps off.

JOE

Moonwind!

MOONWIND

(salutes)

A captain always goes down with the ship. It has been a pleasure serving with you--

Moonwind and the entire ship is pulled down, vanishing into the dust.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK -- 14TH & 7TH. DAY.

Moonwind is spinning his sign. He is suddenly jolted out of his trance.

CUT TO:

BACK TO SCENE:

Dark 22 pops up in the distance, HISSING at Joe. The soul runs off again.

JOE

22!

Joe chases 22.

JOE
Come back, 22! It's me, Joe!

Joe corners 22 between some astral rocks. 22 paces, animal-like, cornered and scared.

JOE
Easy, 22! Easy. I just came back to give you this.

Joe holds up the Earth Pass. But 22 panics, growing more monstrous.

JOE
Easy...

Suddenly, 22 dives back into the sink cabinet and scrambles through the shaft into the soul's clubhouse.

Joe rushes after her.

JOE
22, listen! Come back!

INT. MENTOR ORIENTATION THEATER.

On stage, a Counselor presents a trophy to Terry, who beams with pride.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
And for correcting our absent-minded mistakes and setting the count right, we are awarding you, Terry, this trophy.
(beat)
As you requested.

A few Counselors in the audience APPLAUD with varying levels of enthusiasm.

TERRY
I am happy to accept this very special award I requested, but that I absolutely deserve.

Suddenly, Dark 22 CRASHES THROUGH THE SCREEN and runs into the audience HISSING and SHRIEKING. Joe runs after 22 as everyone scatters.

The Counselor quickly takes back Terry's trophy.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
And I'll just take that back...

TERRY
Hey!

Angry, Terry pushes through the Counselors, stopping 22 before the soul can escape the theater.

TERRY
Oi, Noob! You're not where you belong!

But Dark 22 grows even more, towering above Terry. 22 pounces on the accountant, tying Terry's limbs into knots.

22 bolts out the door.

EXT. THE YOU SEMINAR.

Dark 22 runs through campus, Joe close behind. New Souls look up at the Lost Soul in wonder.

JOE
22, stop! I have something to tell you!

22 throws a New Soul at Joe. The New Soul LAUGHS as it bounces off Joe's face.

JOE
Ahh! Stop that! NO!

Joe is pelted by more New Souls before 22 runs off again.

Counselors keep the New Souls away from 22 while also trying to calm the Lost Soul down.

COUNSELORS
There, there, calm down. Don't worry, You have to stop running. Please.

22 ends up at the edge of the Earth Portal. The Lost Soul looks down, scared and trapped.

Dark 22 runs away from Joe and ends up trapped at the edge of the Earth Portal. She looks down, scared. She's trapped!

JOE
22, stop!

22 looks at Joe as he slowly approaches. He holds out the Earth Pass.

JOE

I was wrong! Please, will you listen? You ARE ready to live, 22!

22 seems to calm. But suddenly the Lost Soul's mouth opens. It leaps and CONSUMES JOE!

INT. DARK 22.

Joe opens his eyes. He's in total darkness. Black dust swirls around him. He hears CRYING in the distance.

He sees 22 weeping and muttering in the middle of the storm.

22

(murmuring)

Not good enough. Nope. No point. I just need to fill out that last box. I give up.

Joe goes towards her, but 22 runs away.

JOE

22!

Joe follows.

Suddenly a huge, dark version of 22's mentor, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, appears in front of Joe, blocking him. Lincoln appears to scold Joe, but in 22's voice:

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

You're dishonest! All you make are bad decisions! You are unwise, and you won't make it in the world!

Joe tries to get around Lincoln. Mentor MOTHER THERESA appears, blocking him again.

MOTHER THERESA

You're so selfish! No one would ever want to be around you!

Joe struggles forward but is suddenly surrounded by other mentors of 22 -- Copernicus, Carl Jung, Muhammad Ali, etc.

All bend down to Joe, reciting their negative opinions of 22:

22'S MENTORS

The world needs remarkable people,
and you're the least remarkable
soul I've ever met! The world is
better off without you in it!
You're a nitwit! Mentally unfit! An
imbecile! I cannot help you!

Joe breaks through the crowd, again finding 22 in the distance. He runs to her as she mutters to herself:

22

There's no point in anything I try.
Why couldn't I fill out that last
box? I'm not good. Nothing I do is
right. I'm a loser. I don't do
anything right. I'm not good enough
at all.

Joe nearly reaches 22, until --

A final figure blocks Joe's path: a massive version of JOE HIMSELF.

NIGHTMARE JOE

You will never find your spark.
There's no point. Those aren't
purposes, you IDIOT! That's just
regular ol' living. This is a waste
of time. You only got that badge
because you were in MY body. That's
why you ruin everything! Because
you. Have. No. Purpose!!

Nightmare Joe SPEWS BLACK DUST from his mouth. Joe tumbles away, the Earth Pass is knocked out of his hands. He desperately searches for it.

JOE

Ahhh! No no no no!

All seems lost, until Joe remembers -- the helicopter seed in his pocket. He pulls it out and walks forward, holding out the seed to his nightmare self.

NIGHTMARE JOE

There's no point. You'll never find
your Spark Because you. Have. No.
Purpose!!

Nightmare Joe looks at the seed, startled. He melts away, defeated.

Joe finally reaches 22. He puts the seed in her hand, closing her fingers around it, holding it there. 22 appears to calm.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. HALF NOTE. DAY.

Suddenly, 22 is back in Joe's body, sitting on the stoop and looking at the seed, scared.

Joe, back in the cat, looks up at her, smiling.

JOE
You ready?

22
Huh?

JOE
To come live!

22
I'm scared, Joe. I'm not good enough. And anyway I never got my Spark.

JOE
Yes you did.

Joe motions to the world around them.

JOE
Your Spark isn't your purpose. That last box fills in when you're ready to come live.

22 looks around, taking in the beautiful, simple moments on Earth.

JOE
And the thing is... you're pretty great at jazzing.

22 looks at Joe and smiles.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. THE YOU SEMINAR.

Dark 22 smiles at Joe. The black dust surrounding the Lost Soul melts away.

Joe finds the Earth Pass and places it on 22. 22 smiles, but then realizes:

22
But Joe... This mean you won't get
to--

JOE
It's okay. I already did. Now it's
your turn.

Joe motions to the Earth below.

22 steps closer to the edge, but gets cold feet and darts behind Joe.

JOE
I'll go with you.

22
You know you can't do that.

JOE
I know. But I'll go as far as I
can.

22 steps closer to the edge. Joe holds out his hand. 22 takes it and holds tight as they both jump.

INTO THE EARTH PORTAL.

Eyes shut tight, 22 clutches Joe's arm as they free-fall toward Earth.

JOE
Hey! Take a look!

22 slowly opens one eye, then both.

The Earth slowly gets bigger as they fall toward it. The view is spectacular.

22
Wow!

22 starts to enjoy the ride. The soul builds enough courage to let go of Joe's arm and hold his hand.

Hand-in-hand, 22 and Joe skydive to Earth, enjoying the ride.

22's Earth Pass starts to glow, slowly drawing the soul away from Joe.

22 looks at Joe reluctantly, unsure.

But Joe smiles back, as if to say "it'll be okay."

Then he gently lets go.

22 pulls away from Joe. He watches the soul fall the entire way, and then vanish.

Tears well in Joe's eyes. He is pulled away from Earth and back up as we:

FADE TO WHITE.

EXT. LIMBO -- SLIDEWALK.

Joe opens his eyes to find he is on the slidewalk, heading towards the Great Beyond.

He smiles, at peace. Ready. Until:

COUNSELOR JERRY A (O.S.)
Mr. Gardner?

Joe turns to see a Counselor on the slidewalk with him.

JOE
Yes?

COUNSELOR JERRY A
Do you have a moment?

Joe walks over to Jerry.

COUNSELOR JERRY A
I think I'm speaking for all the
Jerrys when I say... thank you.

JOE
For what?

COUNSELOR JERRY A
We're in the business of
inspiration, Joe, but it's not
often we find ourselves inspired.

JOE
Oh, really.

COUNSELOR JERRY A
So, we all decided to give you
another chance.

The Counselor opens a Portal. On the other side is Earth.

COUNSELOR JERRY A
Hopefully you will watch where you
walk from now on.

JOE
But what about Terry?

COUNSELOR JERRY A
We worked it out with Terry.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. LIMBO -- ABOVE THE SLIDEWALK.

Again, Terry is counting souls on the abacus. Suddenly, one
of the beads draws her attention.

TERRY
Hmmm. That's weird.

A Counselor comes running up:

COUNSELOR JERRY B
Hey Terry, what's that over there?
Look immediately!

TERRY
What? What are you talking about?

Terry looks the other way. The Counselor's arm stretches
behind Terry and slides the single bead on the abacus into
position, covering up the discrepancy.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
Oh, nothing. You were saying?

TERRY
Hmm.

COUNSELOR JERRY B
Were you even talking? I can't
remember.

Terry once again examines the abacus.

TERRY
Nevermind.

Terry goes back to counting.

BACK TO THE SLIDEWALK:

The Counselor motions to Earth as Joe hesitates.

COUNSELOR JERRY A

Well?

Joe considers as he looks to Earth, then smiles to the Counselor warmly:

JOE

Thanks.

COUNSELOR JERRY A

So what do you think you'll do? How are you going to spend your life?

He thinks for a moment.

JOE

I'm not sure...

He steps into the Portal.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. JOE'S APARTMENT. DAY

Joe's feet step out of his apartment building. He smiles as he looks around, taking in the glorious chaos of it all.

JOE (O.S.)

... but I do know I'm going to live every minute of it.

END.