

Stay
by
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EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE -- NIGHT

A wrecked Ford Mustang burns in the middle of the bridge. All Manhattan-bound traffic is backed up behind the burning car. Brooklyn-bound traffic has slowed to a crawl as the drivers rubberneck. Horns blast relentlessly.

Flames consume the backseat of the Mustang. Smoke spills out the windows. The radio still plays, however: The Band's "I Shall be Released."

One of the Mustang's front tires has blown out. Scraps of black rubber litter the accident scene.

As the camera pulls in, we see HENRY LETHAM, twenty, sitting in front of the ruined car. His eyes are closed. He ignores the honking and the rubbernecks staring at him.

He looks sick-- pale, skinny, disheveled-- but he has a presence, a magnetism that compels you to look at him. He wears army pants and a black long-sleeve tee-shirt and wears nothing else throughout the movie.

Finally Henry opens his eyes. After a moment he stands and walks away from the burning car, never turning around, heading for the illuminated towers of Manhattan.

Somewhere a BABY is HOWLING.

INT. MORNINGSIDES HEIGHTS APARTMENT -- MORNING

Tuesday.

The baby's HOWL continues, faintly, in the background.

DR. SAM FOSTER (40), wakes up in bed, disoriented, sunlight shining on the disheveled sheets.

For several seconds Sam looks about the apartment, confused, as if he's never seen the place before.

EXT. 116TH AND BROADWAY -- MORNING

Sam bicycloses up Broadway, expertly navigating the traffic, gliding past city buses, yellow cabs, and police cruisers.

He checks his watch and pedals faster.

Sam's hair is beginning to gray. He smiles readily but there is a brooding quality about him, in his dark eyes, that suggests he has seen things most of us have not.

EXT. COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY -- MORNING

The bells are tolling.

STUDENTS hurry toward their classes. Two SKATEBOARDERS practice their kick flips while jumping the curb. A NIGERIAN MAN sells counterfeit Rolex watches and Gucci wallets.

Sam bikes through the campus gates. He jumps off the bike and chains it to a public bike rack, moving quickly.

LILA CULPEPPER (27) approaches him. Her Carhartt jacket is smeared with paint, her fingertips are flecked with paint, her jaw is smudged with canary yellow paint.

She never wears short sleeves. She wears no makeup, her hair is chopped short, and her fingernails are chewed. Lila makes no special effort to look good, but she looks good anyway.

Sam, unaware of her presence, stands quickly and turns, colliding with Lila, knocking her styrofoam cup of coffee to the sidewalk.

Lila and Sam look down at the spilled coffee. She looks up at him, eyes narrowed. She shoves him.

LILA

Watch where you're going, you old klutz.

SAM

Sorry, sorry--

LILA

Pervert.

She grabs the back of his head, pulls him closer, and kisses him on the lips.

LILA (CONT'D)

You're late. I've been waiting here twenty minutes.

SAM

Slept right through the alarm clock. That baby kept me up all night.

Sam stoops to pick up the empty cup, stands straight, crumples the cup, tosses it into a garbage can ten feet away. Perfect follow through, perfect shot. Sam's a baller.

LILA

What baby?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM

I don't know. Did our neighbors have a kid?

LILA

Our neighbors are ninety years old.

SAM

Yeah, well, they seem pretty frisky.

He tries to wipe the yellow paint from her jaw but it's not coming off.

SAM (CONT'D)

You've got to aim the paint at the canvas.

LILA

I like it messy.

SAM

Yeah?

She fixes the collar of his jacket as Sam checks his watch.

SAM (CONT'D)

I got to go, baby.

LILA

You owe me a cup of coffee.

EXT. TURNER HALL -- MORNING

Sam hurries inside the sleek glass-and-steel building.

INT. TURNER HALL -- MORNING

Sam gets out of the elevator and waves to TONI, the receptionist sitting behind the desk. Toni's chatting on the phone. A sign on the wall behind her reads COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES.

TONI

(on phone)

I told him I got no time for married men.

(beat)

It don't matter how cute he is, honey, man's got a wife. Wait a second-- I know, I know, just wait a second.

She covers the mouthpiece and smiles at Sam.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM

Hey, Toni.

TONI

Hey, Sam. One of Beth's patients is waiting in your office. Henry Letham.

SAM

Thanks.

INT. SAM'S COLUMBIA OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

Henry stands at the window of the bookshelf-lined office, looking out at the blue sky. He looks as if he hasn't slept in days.

HENRY

We'll have hail this afternoon.

SAM

You think? Looks pretty sunny to me.

Henry wheels around, startled to hear Sam's voice. He was clearly expecting somebody else.

HENRY

Who are you?

SAM

Dr. Foster. You must be Henry.

Sam offers his hand and Henry examines it for a moment before shaking.

HENRY

Where's Dr. Levy?

SAM

Didn't she get in touch with you? I'm sorry. Dr. Levy's away for a while. I'm covering for her.

Sam goes behind the desk to sit and gestures for Henry to sit in one of the facing chairs. Henry does not sit.

HENRY

Away where?

SAM

She's not feeling well right now. She should be back in a few weeks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENRY

So you're the substitute shrink?

Sam smiles.

SAM

I guess you could call me that.

Sam pulls a manila folder from his knapsack. Henry sits on the edge of a facing chair. He looks ready to bolt.

HENRY

This is Dr. Levy's office.

SAM

We share it. I'm only here a few hours a week.

Henry holds a piece of string which he coils tightly around his index finger, then uncoils, then coils again.

HENRY

You treat depressed investment bankers and paranoid housewives all week, then do your pro bono work up here?

SAM

Other way around. The bankers are paranoid and the housewives are depressed.

(beat)

So you're a Junior at the College, is that right? Majoring in Fine Art?

HENRY

Dr. Levy passed me off to you? You get all the hard cases?

SAM

Does it make you uncomfortable that I'm filling in for her?

Henry thinks about it, coiling the string tightly.

HENRY

She was trying to help me.

SAM

I'll try to help you, too.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HENRY

Is she afraid of me? Is that why she's gone?

SAM

Should she be afraid of you?

Henry ignores the question. He's agitated, tapping the carpeted floor with his feet, rubbing his forearms, playing with his length of string.

SAM (CONT'D)

I read your file--

HENRY

May I read your file?

Sam smiles and leans back in his chair. Far from being deterred by Henry's attitude, he's intrigued. He likes challenges.

SAM

Tell me why you're here.

HENRY

You said you read the file.

SAM

You torched your car. Why?

HENRY

I told Dr. Levy.

SAM

Why don't you tell me?

HENRY

I'm sick of talking about it.

SAM

Henry.

Henry looks at Sam. For the first time Henry maintains eye contact.

SAM (CONT'D)

Do you want me to help you?

For a moment Henry is silent. When he speaks, his tone is devoid of hostility. For a few seconds he drops the mask.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HENRY

Yes.

SAM

We get fifty minutes. You want me to help you, you got to talk to me. Okay?

Henry, chewing his lip, nods.

SAM (CONT'D)

Why'd you burn your car?

HENRY

(helpless)

I don't know.

SAM

What do you mean, you don't know?

HENRY

I don't remember.

SAM

Were you drinking?

HENRY

I opened my eyes and I was sitting in the car and it was on fire.

Henry is quiet for a moment, remembering.

SAM

Is this something you do, set fires?

HENRY

No. It's not like I'm a pyromaniac. I didn't burn flies when I was a kid.

(beat)

Maybe a couple times I did. Is that bad?

SAM

For the flies it is.

Henry is silent for a moment. He coils the string so tightly around his finger that the tip turns bright red.

Sam points at Henry's finger.

SAM (CONT'D)

You're cutting off the circulation.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

HENRY

I never meant to hurt anyone.

SAM

Are we still talking about flies?

Henry shakes his head, staring at his bloodless finger.

SAM (CONT'D)

Who did you hurt?

Abruptly, Henry stands, knocking over his chair in the process. He bends down to pick it up.

HENRY

Sorry. I better go.

SAM

Sit down, Henry. We've still got time.

HENRY

No, I don't--

Henry looks out the window.

HENRY (CONT'D)

I got to get home before the hail starts.

Sam watches him leave and then stares out the window. The sky is bright blue.

EXT. CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE -- AFTERNOON

The sky is still blue on a beautiful autumn afternoon. Sam sits on a park bench in the garden behind the massive cathedral, while Lila sits on the grass.

ROOFERS atop latticework scaffolding repair the fire-damaged cathedral. GLAZIERS replace panels of stained-glass.

A cluster of STUDENTS sit nearby, cramming for an upcoming physics test, poring over their textbooks and quizzing each other.

Sam studies a file. Lila sketches on a pad, looking at him from time to time, analyzing his face. He checks his watch.

SAM

I should go in a minute.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LILA

My father says hi, by the way. I think he likes you better than any of my old boyfriends.

SAM

Your father's a good judge of character.

LILA

He is a good judge of character. He's very protective of me. He still thinks I'm twelve years old.

SAM

Does he know we have sex?

LILA

Of course. I send him the videotapes. He says you don't spend enough time on foreplay.

Sam raises his eyebrows.

SAM

Noted.

(beat)

I've got to head back to Turner. Four more students this afternoon.

LILA

I read something interesting today. A Spanish proverb.

SAM

Yeah?

LILA

"A man should marry a woman half his age plus seven."

SAM

Actually--

LILA

And guess what? I'm twenty-seven; you're forty. We're mathematically perfect for each other.

SAM

Actually, I think it was Plato who said that first.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LILA
Either way, the next birthday ruins
everything.

She finishes the sketch with a last flourish of her pencil.

LILA (CONT'D)
Done.

SAM
Let me see.

She hands him the sketch.

INSERT SKETCH

Lila's good. Even here, with quick strokes of the pencil,
Sam's face is clearly portrayed. In the drawing, he stares
down at the viewer with a look of deep concern.

SAM (CONT'D)
Am I really that good looking?

LILA
Nope.

Sam stands, reaches down and pulls Lila upright, his hands on
her wrists. He feels something and looks at her wrists.
Whatever he sees is not revealed by the camera.

For a moment both of them are quiet. Lila pushes down her
sleeves.

LILA (CONT'D)
Still there.

Sam nods, not looking into Lila's eyes. It's an awkward
moment.

SAM
Sometimes I forget.

LILA
They're from another life, baby.

She kisses him. In the middle of the kiss a loud CRACK
startles both of them.

LILA (CONT'D)
What was that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

For a few seconds nothing happens. And then another CRACK, and then another, rapid fire now, grape-size chunks of ice falling from the sky and shattering on the paved walkways.

SAM

Hail.

INT. CAR -- NIGHT

DRIVER'S POV

We see the road through the driver's eyes. We're somewhere in Brooklyn, driving fast through a string of green lights.

Everything is very, very quiet.

We turn to the right. A GREEN-EYED WOMAN (20) sits in the passenger seat. She says something, but we can't hear a word. She smiles. She looks very happy.

INT. SUBWAY CAR -- AFTERNOON

Henry, eyes closed, sits on a car that shudders and rattles its way through the underground.

He opens his eyes. He ignores the other SUBWAY RIDERS sitting and standing around him.

He concentrates on the experience of riding the subway: the thrill of the speed, the passage from dark tunnels to bright stations, the pleasure of the giant machine.

He pulls a cigarette from a pack and lights it, watching the smoke plume above his head.

Next to Henry sleeps a long-haired TEENAGE BOY wearing a Walkman; from the headphones we hear "I Shall be Released."

Various subway riders glare at Henry and wave away the smoke, obviously annoyed that he's polluting their airspace.

A YOUNG WOMAN who wears her blonde hair in dreadlocks sits across the car, watching Henry.

YOUNG WOMAN

I know you. Psych 221? Professor
Matthewson? You did a presentation on
psychosis and Tristan Réveur, right?

Henry stares at her as if she's speaking an alien language. A BUSINESSMAN standing between them shakes his head at Henry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUSINESSMAN

No smoking on the train.

Henry stares at the businessman. He's not angry, just mystified, his reverie disturbed by strange interlopers.

HENRY

What?

BUSINESSMAN

(pointing)

Look at the sign, fella. No smoking on the train.

Henry looks at the sign.

BUSINESSMAN (CONT'D)

Capeesh? Put it out.

HENRY

Capeesh? Are you in the Mafia?

The businessman leans closer, his face inches from Henry's.

BUSINESSMAN

Put out the fucking cigarette.

Henry stabs out his cigarette on his wrist. He does not flinch and seems almost disappointed by the lack of pain. We now see that his skin is mottled with old burns.

The businessman reels backward. The dreadlocked Columbia student's mouth drops open. The people sitting next to Henry stand and move away.

BUSINESSMAN (CONT'D)

You ought to be locked up.

INT. SAM'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Bookshelves overflowing with books dominate the space. The one luxurious feature is a working fireplace where a well-built little fire now burns.

Lila's in bed, examining student portfolios. Piles of bad drawings are scattered around her. Sam, lying beside her, speaks on the phone to an answering machine.

SAM

Hey, Beth, it's Sam. I hope you're getting some rest... Listen, I met with your patient Henry Letham today.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM (CONT'D)

Really want to talk to you about him.
Give me a call, okay? I want to hear your
voice.

He hangs up and stares into the fire.

SAM (CONT'D)

You don't think it's a little odd,
predicting a hailstorm like that?

LILA

(not really paying attention)
So he watches the Weather Channel.

SAM

I looked in the newspaper. There was
nothing about hail today.

LILA

How's Beth Levy?

SAM

I don't know. She hasn't returned any of
my calls.

LILA

Hm.

SAM

What does "hm" mean?

LILA

She always kind of liked you, didn't she?

Sam jabs Lila in the ribs with his finger.

SAM

What are you, jealous? Beth's one of my
oldest friends.

LILA

She's your oldest friend, that's supposed
to make me unjealous?

SAM

Unjealous?

Lila squints at a drawing, tilts it sideways, upside down.

LILA

Somehow I can't picture Frida Kahlo
grading freshman art portfolios.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LILA (CONT'D)

I'm not really a teacher, you know? I'm just faking it.

SAM

Your students love you.

LILA

My students love me because I give them all A's.

She stares at the student drawing again.

LILA (CONT'D)

What the fuck do I know? This kid could be the next Rothko.

She stares at the drawing for a moment before tossing all the portfolios on the floor, grabbing Sam, pulling him onto the bed and straddling him, knees on either side of his chest.

LILA (CONT'D)

No more phone calls tonight.

SAM

No?

LILA

I want you right here.

SAM

I'm not going anywhere.

LILA

Me neither.

SAM

You promise?

The tone has shifted, subtly, from lighthearted to serious.

LILA

I'm not leaving. I promise.

INT. SAM'S DOWNTOWN OFFICE -- MORNING

Wednesday

Sam's private practice boasts a more refined office than his shared quarters at the University. Lila's art decorates the walls. One painting depicts a peacock standing in the garden of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. Another shows a young couple with blurred faces walking down Broadway.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The door is open. Sam sits behind his desk. Sunlight pours in through the window. Sam rolls a diamond ring over the desktop. The diamond shines in the sun. A KNOCK on the door.

Sam, startled, looks up to see Henry standing in the doorway.

SAM

Hey! Henry.

Sam, a little flustered, puts the ring in a desk drawer and stands. Henry looks around the office. He steps closer to one of the paintings, a detailed rendering of an adolescent boy kissing an adolescent girl.

SAM (CONT'D)

What are you doing down here?

HENRY

Who did this?

SAM

My girlfriend, actually.

Henry turns to stare at Sam.

HENRY

Your girlfriend?

SAM

I have a girlfriend, believe it or not.

HENRY

(looking at the painting)
She's good.

SAM

I wasn't expecting to see you today. I've got someone coming in, but we can talk till he shows up.

Henry sits in the chair facing Sam and Sam retakes his seat.

SAM (CONT'D)

So. Have you considered a career in meteorology?

Henry stares at the chewed-down stubs of his fingernails.

SAM (CONT'D)

The weatherman said something about hail?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HENRY

I can't listen to the weatherman anymore.
I don't understand a word he says.

SAM

You don't understand the weatherman?

HENRY

Do you?

SAM

Sure. He says rain, I bring an umbrella.

Henry stares at Sam for a moment, trying to gauge the psychiatrist. He seems to come to a decision.

HENRY

I don't know what's real anymore.

SAM

Go on.

(off Henry's non-response)

Give me something, Henry. I'm good at what I do.

HENRY

The voices never stop.

SAM

Voices?

HENRY

In my head. They never stop.

SAM

What would you say if I asked you to write them down?

HENRY

Write what down?

SAM

What the voices are saying. Write down the exact words when you hear them. Okay? Henry?

HENRY

What?

SAM

Write down what the voices are saying.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Henry grabs a pen and paper from the desk and begins writing.

SAM (CONT'D)
They're talking to you now?

Henry continues writing furiously. When he finishes he stares at his own jagged cursive.

SAM (CONT'D)
Can I see?

Henry hands the pad over. Sam studies the jagged scrawl.

INSERT NOTEPAD

The penmanship is indecipherable.

SAM (CONT'D)
You got to work on your handwriting.
Could you read it to me?

Sam hands the pad back to Henry.

HENRY
(reading)
"Write down what the voices are saying...
They're talking to you now?"

SAM
That wasn't a hallucination. That was me talking.

HENRY
Show me how to tell the difference.

Henry is sincere and Sam hesitates before responding.

SAM
Keep reading.

HENRY
"I didn't move him... you're not supposed to move them... Henry, come on. Come on. I need you, baby, come on... Just stay with me, Henry..."

SAM
You're hearing this voice now?

HENRY
Voices.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

A KNOCK on the half-open door. Sam turns to look at a dapper young INVESTMENT BANKER (30) leaning into the office.

INVESTMENT BANKER
Sorry to interrupt, but--

He taps his watch.

SAM
Sorry, Frederick. Just give me a minute.

INVESTMENT BANKER
I've got a conference call at eleven.

SAM
Just one minute, okay?

Frederick sighs loudly but closes the door. Henry stands.

HENRY
It's all right. I got to go.

Sam notices the fresh burn on Henry's arm. He stands, goes around the desk, gently takes Henry's arm and inspects it.

SAM
What's this from?

HENRY
I burned myself.

Sam looks closer. He notices the burn scars that constellate Henry's forearms.

SAM
Why do you have cigarette burns on your arms?

Absently, Henry looks at his forearms.

HENRY
I'm practicing.

SAM
Practicing for what?

HENRY
For Hell.

Sam sits on the edge of his desk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

SAM

You think you're going to Hell?

Henry nods.

SAM (CONT'D)

Why?

HENRY

Because of what I did.

SAM

What did you do?

Henry stands.

HENRY

It's too late, Doctor.

SAM

Why is it too late?

HENRY

Because I'm going to kill myself.

Sam studies Henry for a moment before replying.

SAM

Tell me how seriously I should take that comment.

Henry makes a gun with his fingers and points it at his head.

HENRY

Saturday at midnight.

SAM

Everything just changed, Henry. You need to know that. You talk about suicide, I'm required to take certain actions.

Henry shrugs and opens the office door. Sam stands and approaches him.

SAM (CONT'D)

Henry--

Henry looks into the waiting room and then back at Sam.

HENRY

You're busy. We can talk about it next time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

SAM

There is a next time?

HENRY

We have three days. That's a lifetime for a fly.

INT. SAM'S WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Henry nods at Frederick, walks through the waiting room and out the door. Sam watches him go.

Frederick clears his throat. When Sam looks at him, Frederick taps his watch again.

INT. COLUMBIA PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL -- DAY

Sam stands by the wall index of the Mental Health Ward which lists the names and room numbers of the doctors. He runs his finger down the list until he comes to *Schlegel*.

A MOTHER (45) walks beside her DAUGHTER (20), who shuffles down the hallway with the blank face of the deeply medicated. The girl's face is gouged with crescent-shaped scars. She's been clawing herself.

Sam and the mother exchange looks as they pass. Sam watches their slow progress.

INT. MENTAL HEALTH WARD -- DAY

Sam walks down the corridor of the Mental Health Ward. He knocks on an office door marked: Mobile Crisis Unit. No answer. As he's about to knock again he hears a commotion at the end of the hallway.

Two strapping PARAMEDICS are wrestling a fiercely agitated middle-aged woman, DAISY, toward one of the rooms. She appears to be homeless, wearing layer upon layer of filthy clothing, her hair matted, her skin dirty and bruised.

Standing beside the paramedics, DOCTOR SCHLEGEL, a gaunt man with a sparse goatee, tries to calm the woman.

DR. SCHLEGEL

Come on, Daisy. Take it easy.

DAISY

I AM NOT A MONSTER! I AM NOT A MONSTER,
GODDAMN YOU!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. SCHLEGEL

Shh. Nobody's calling you a monster,
Daisy. Come on, now.

Sam hurries toward the disturbance. Daisy falls to the floor and the paramedics, unable to force her into the room, try to hold her still as she thrashes in their arms.

Dr. Schlegel has prepared a hypodermic and now crouches, waiting for an opportunity to stick Daisy. Veins are hard to find in her fat arms.

DAISY

I AM NOT A MONSTER!

DR. SCHLEGEL

I know it, Daisy, I know it.
(to paramedics; quietly)
I can't find a vein. We need to get her
in restraints.

DAISY

(beginning to sob)
I am not a monster! I don't deserve this.

Schlegel speaks to Daisy with a calming, affectionate tone, soothing her with his sympathy and patience.

DR. SCHLEGEL

If you'd remember to take your pills, we
wouldn't have to go through this.

Though Daisy's lips still tremble her agitation begins to seep away. She no longer struggles with the paramedics.

DAISY

I'm not a monster. I'm lovable.

DR. SCHLEGEL

I know you are.

DAISY

I'm lovable.

The paramedics lead Daisy peacefully into the bedroom. Dr. Schlegel sees Sam for the first time and smiles, a little embarrassed.

DR. SCHLEGEL

Hey, Sammy. The glamorous world of
psychiatry, huh?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

They shake hands.

SAM
You handled that well.

Daisy bursts through the doorway, screaming, grabbing Sam's jacket. The paramedics clutch at her arms but she has the strength of a berserker.

DAISY
He's just a kid!

DR. SCHLEGEL
Hey, come on, Daisy, come on.

The paramedics drag her back to the room as she resists.

DAISY
He's just a kid!

The paramedics force her into the room. Sam and Schlegel watch through the wire-reinforced glass panel on the door as the paramedics strap Daisy to the bed.

SAM
Jesus.

DR. SCHLEGEL
Sorry about that. You okay?

SAM
Yeah, I'm just-- I'm used to neurotic stock brokers.

DR. SCHLEGEL
The neurotic stock brokers pay better.
What brings you to Club Meds?

Sam, still a little shaken up from his encounter with Daisy, takes a deep breath.

SAM
I wanted to check the protocol on involuntary committal. I've got a student threatening to kill himself.

DR. SCHLEGEL
Christ, tell him to take a number.
(shrugging)
The rules are pretty straightforward. If he says he's gonna hurt himself or someone else, we can take him in.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DR. SCHLEGEL (CONT'D)

But we can only hold him here for forty-eight hours.

SAM

Forty-eight hours? What can we do in forty-eight hours?

DR. SCHLEGEL

Hold his hand, feed him some Klonopin. If we catch him in the actual attempt, that's different. He's broken the law. But just based on a threat? Without a court order, we can't keep him for long.

SAM

He wants to do it Saturday. If we take him in now he'll be out by then.

DR. SCHLEGEL

Organized kid. He's got it all scheduled?

SAM

That's what he told me. Saturday, midnight.

DR. SCHLEGEL

We could pick him up Friday, hold him through the weekend.

(shaking his head)

As you just saw, it's not a real fun process. If there's any way to avoid it... What do you have him on?

SAM

He won't take any pills.

INT. SAM'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Sam sits on the edge of the bed, tossing the diamond ring from hand to hand. Finally he secrets it in the back of his bedside table's drawer and walks to the bathroom.

INT. SAM'S BATHROOM

Sam opens the medicine cabinet and grabs a prescription bottle. He opens the bottle and pours the pills onto the ledge of the sink. He counts the pills.

We hear the sound of the apartment door OPENING and CLOSING.

LILA (O.S.)

Where's my man?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sam quickly scoops the pills back into the bottle and replaces the bottle in the medicine cabinet.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Lila's unpacking several bags of groceries and shoving the perishables into the refrigerator. Sam kisses her.

LILA

Mm. You know what I've been craving all day?

She pulls a bottle of George Dickel from the bag.

LILA (CONT'D)

Tennessee whiskey.

Sam raises his eyebrows.

LILA (CONT'D)

How about building a fire and getting drunk with your girlfriend?

Lila punches him in the arm.

LILA (CONT'D)

Come on. You're the Eagle Scout.

Sam helps her unload the groceries.

SAM

Never made Eagle Scout. Troop Master caught me drinking MD 20/20 in my tent with Lydia Eumanian.

LILA

Lydia Eumanian?

SAM

The horniest thirteen-year-old in New Jersey.

Lila unscrews the bottle cap and pours two glasses of whiskey. She hands one to Sam.

LILA

Only because I'm not from Jersey.

She and Sam clink glasses.

LILA (CONT'D)

To Lydia Eumanian.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM
Lydia Eumanian.

They drink.

LILA
Long may she run.
(beat)
You okay, baby? Looking a little tense.

SAM
It's... no, it's nothing.

LILA
So tell me about nothing.

SAM
I'm just tired. Let me make one call and
I'll start the fire.

Lila finishes unpacking. Sam picks up the phone and dials a number. He waits for a moment and then shakes his head.

SAM (CONT'D)
Beth, it's Sam again. I hope you're
getting some rest... Everyone's been
asking about you. Give me a call, okay? I
want to talk to you about Henry Letham,
and just see how you're feeling. Okay,
bye.

LILA
What's wrong with her?

SAM
Hm?

LILA
You sound like you're talking to one of
your patients. Is she sick?

SAM
She's just exhausted.

She follows him into the bedroom.

INT. SAM'S BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

LILA
She's *exhausted*? We live in New York
City, everyone's exhausted. What is that,
a code word?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He begins laying down the kindling in the fireplace. She pulls off her boots.

SAM

Yeah, I guess it is.

LILA

She had a breakdown or something?

SAM

She's having a bad time.

LILA

You didn't take on all her patients, did you?

SAM

No, no, we divvied them up.

LILA

Just the kid with the hail?

SAM

The kid with the hail, yeah.

LILA

What's wrong with him?

SAM

(smiling)

You heard of doctor-patient privilege?

LILA

Nope. What's wrong with him?

Sam, clearly uncomfortable with the conversation, busies himself stacking logs.

SAM

He's confused.

LILA

Confused? Is that like exhausted?

SAM

I don't want to get into it. Okay?

LILA

You told me about the lawyer who thought her cat was talking to her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SAM
Well, I shouldn't have.

LILA
Why won't you tell me?

Lila watches Sam, who pretends to be immersed in his fire-building duties.

LILA (CONT'D)
He wants to kill himself.

Sam finally looks up at her.

LILA (CONT'D)
That's it, isn't it? That's why you won't talk about it.

SAM
He has the right to confidential counseling--

LILA
Don't, Sam.

Sam takes a deep breath.

SAM
He wants to kill himself. Saturday at midnight. Like it's a date he's made.

LILA
Why Saturday? What's so special about midnight Saturday?

SAM
I didn't have time to ask.

Lila slides closer to Sam and runs her hands down his arm.

LILA
We can talk about it, baby. It doesn't scare me.

SAM
It scares me.

LILA
I know it does. But you've got to trust me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SAM

I do.

Sam's voice lacks conviction. He has trouble meeting Lila's eyes.

EXT. TWELFTH STREET -- MORNING

Thursday

The sky is overcast and metallic.

Sam walks out of his building's front door. He stops to watch PIANO MOVERS at work. Using ropes and pulleys, they hoist a Bechstein baby grand toward the open windows of a fourth-floor apartment.

PIANO MOVER 1 acts as the foreman, issuing commands.

PIANO MOVER 1

Easy, easy.

A small BOY, accompanied by his MOTHER, runs down the street holding a black balloon. He trips and falls and the balloon begins to float away.

BOY

(yelling at escaping balloon)

Wait! Wait!

The piano movers hear the boy's cries and see the balloon. Piano Mover 1 tries to capture the escaping balloon; he runs after it and leaps... but can't quite reach it.

Everyone watches the black balloon drift skyward.

PIANO MOVER 1

Sorry, kid. It's gone to balloon heaven.

Sam smiles and walks away.

INT. LECTURE HALL -- SCHERMERHORN HALL -- DAY

We're in the dark. Nothing is visible save for SLIDES of great paintings projected on a screen. Ortiz's "Doña Juana la Loca", Goya's "The Third of May", and the Crucifixion of Velazquez. An amplified voice comments on this last slide.

PROFESSOR

Of the great Spanish painters, Velazquez had the weakest imagination and the strongest eye.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)
(pointing with a laser pointer)
Nobody does better nails than Velazquez,
or better blood.

The lights come up. Dozens of COLUMBIA STUDENTS sit in a lecture hall. Some take notes, some check email, some doze.

Henry sits in the back row, staring at the screen. No one else sits in his row. He stands and walks out of the hall before the professor dismisses the class.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)
Mid-term's on Monday. If you still can't tell Manet from Monet, remember the last day to drop the course is tomorrow.
Goodbye and good luck.

EXT. HALLWAY -- SCHERMERHORN HALL -- CONTINUOUS

Henry pushes open the lecture hall's double doors. Sam is waiting for him.

SAM (O.S.)
Henry.

Henry does not seem suprised to see Sam.

SAM (CONT'D)
(holding up a printed form)
Got your schedule. After what you told me, I wasn't sure you'd be coming to class.

HENRY
(smiling)
Where else would I go?

SAM
You have a minute?

Henry shrugs.

Henry and Sam walk down a hallway lined with student art.

INSERT several of these paintings, a macabre exhibit of the tasteless and talentless. Blotchy abstracts, flaming pink sunsets, Central Park pointillism, fat-nippled nudes.

SAM (CONT'D)
Any of these yours?

HENRY
No. I'm actually decent.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Henry inspects one particularly awful painting of a puppy.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Tristan Réveur used to say that bad art is more tragically beautiful than good art, because bad art documents human failure.

SAM

Who's Tristan Réveur?

HENRY

(reciting as if from memory)

Born April 29, 1899. Died April 29, 1920. Painter and founding member of the Dada school. Brief career as a performance artist.

They reach the end of the hallway and exit the building.

EXT. CAMPUS - MOMENTS LATER

Sam and Henry walk down a path cutting through the green.

SAM

My Dad coached the high school basketball team. Had me practicing free throws when I was four years old. Up until I was twenty, all I thought about were girls and basketball. And then, sophomore year of college, middle of practice one day, I realized I didn't want to play anymore. I was done. I walked off the court and that was it.

Henry turns to examine an attractive, plaid-skirted COED passing by. She smiles at Henry.

HENRY

That's a fascinating story, Doctor. And I'm sure it's relevant to my life in some ambiguous way but--

SAM

The point is, we change. The way you look at the world today is not the way you'll look at the world in ten years.

HENRY

I don't have ten years.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM

You have them if you want them.

(beat)

Why Saturday?

HENRY

It's my twenty-first birthday.

SAM

I think the tradition is to go out and get drunk.

HENRY

Tristan Rêveur started a different tradition.

SAM

What did he do?

HENRY

He died.

A TOUR GROUP passes them on the path, a dozen prospective FRESHMEN with their PARENTS, led by a chipper STUDENT GUIDE.

STUDENT GUIDE

On the left you'll see the Low Memorial Library, the only building on campus to appear in the New York City Register of Historic Places...

Sam and Henry loop around the tour group.

SAM

What about your parents? What do they think about this?

HENRY

(mystified)

Probably nothing.

SAM

Don't you think they care?

Henry looks at Sam as if the doctor were speaking gibberish.

HENRY

Um, no?

SAM

Do they live around here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HENRY

They're over in Mahlus Gardens.

SAM

Mahlus Gardens? Where's that?

HENRY

It's a cemetery in New Jersey. I thought you read my file.

SAM

(startled)

I did. It didn't mention anything about that.

HENRY

It's a little out of date, then.

They walk through the campus gates, onto 116th Street. The shift between placid campus and mechanized city is abrupt.

SAM

Any other family?

Henry shakes his head.

SAM (CONT'D)

Girlfriend?

HENRY

Not really.

SAM

What does not really mean?

Henry hesitates. He seems reluctant to continue this conversational thread but finally does.

HENRY

There's a waitress at this diner I used to go to. On Canal Street.

SAM

Tell me about her.

HENRY

I don't know. She'd keep filling my coffee cup. She'd say, "Is everything okay?" I know waitresses are always asking that, but... I guess she doesn't qualify as a girlfriend.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SAM

Well, no, but it's a start. Did you ever get her name?

HENRY

Athena.

They stop on the corner of 116th and Broadway and wait for the light to change.

SAM

Athena? All right, that's something.

HENRY

No, it's not. She was in my life for a few minutes and now she's gone.

SAM

She's not gone. She's somewhere else.

HENRY

There is no somewhere else.

SAM

You think I disappear when you're not watching?

There is a long silence as Henry watches Sam. Sam's smile slowly fades from his lips.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK ZOO -- AFTERNOON

MONTAGE:

Henry watches a lone silverback GORILLA who sits on a large rock, staring back at Henry.

Henry sits in the last row of the bleachers overlooking the seal pool. The front rows are filled with screaming CHILDREN.

On an island in the middle of the pool, TRAINERS toss fish to the SEALS as rewards for various tricks: clapping their flippers, jumping through hoops, kissing each other, balancing balls on their noses.

INT. POLAR BEAR TANK -- AFTERNOON

We see a blurred Henry through the window of a polar bear tank. The BEAR is swimming laps, never pausing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

It's an oddly graceful animal, bulky but elegant, flipping at each end of the pool to kick off the wall (one wall being the window that Henry stands behind).

EXT. POLAR BEAR TANK -- AFTERNOON

Henry seems mesmerized by the bear's endless swim. A well-dressed ENGLISHMAN and ENGLISHWOMAN approach and watch the bear perform its laps.

ENGLISHMAN

He's not going to make it.

Somewhere nearby a BABY is howling. Henry looks around but there is no baby in sight.

ENGLISHWOMAN

I can't watch.

Henry stares at the strange couple. The husband puts his arm around his wife and leads her away. Henry watches them go.

The unseen baby continues to howl.

INT. ART STUDIO -- AFTERNOON

The University maintains this large communal studio for its graduate students and professors. Natural light pours in from the lead-glass skylights. Several PAINTERS work their canvasses in far corners of the room.

Lila stands in front of her half-finished canvas, a bandana holding back her hair. Her finished paintings, wrapped in protective plastic, lean against the wall.

The painting shows the Brooklyn Bridge on a starry night, though the stars are brighter than New York stars. While the scene is reminiscent of an urban Van Gogh, Lila's style is utterly her own.

Lila scrutinizes her work-in-progress. She holds a paintbrush in one hand; the other hand absently taps the head of a small bronze replica of Rodin's *Le Penseur* sitting on a worktable.

SAM (O.S.)

So what's he thinking?

Lila looks away from her painting and sees Sam staring at the statue. She smiles and studies the Thinker for a moment.

SAM (CONT'D)

I think therefore I am?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LILA

It's not thinking anything. It's a statue.

SAM

You're kind of literal minded, you know that?

She grins and rubs her nose with the back of her hand.

LILA

You get me a sandwich?

He takes off his knapsack, unzips it, pulls out a foil-wrapped Italian sub and hands it to Lila. They kiss.

SAM

Italian sub, the works.

LILA

Thank you.

SAM

I like the bridge.

Lila shakes her head and looks at the canvas.

LILA

I put Carolina stars in a New York sky.

SAM

Yeah. But I like it.

LILA

You talked with your student today?

SAM

Just for a few minutes.

LILA

He still wants to do it?

Sam is visibly discomfited by the topic.

SAM

I don't feel right talking about it.

LILA

Talking about it with me, you mean?

Sam looks around the studio, at the other painters working.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SAM

I don't want to do this right now.

LILA

So when do you want to do it?

Sam looks at her directly.

SAM

You stopped taking your pills.

Lila opens her mouth to protest and then closes it again.

SAM (CONT'D)

I've been counting. You haven't taken one in weeks.

LILA

I don't want them anymore.

SAM

That's a decision we should--

LILA

I can't paint on meds. I can't.

SAM

It makes me nervous. Okay? I'm not happy you did this in secret.

LILA

I'm not happy that you're counting my pills. We have to trust each other.

Sam notices another painter looking in their direction. Sam stares at the man until he looks away.

LILA (CONT'D)

Look at me.

Sam turns to look into her eyes. She pushes up the sleeves of her shirt and holds her hands, palm up, in front of his face.

Three long, narrow scars carve up each wrist.

Sam shakes his head and looks away.

LILA (CONT'D)

Look at me.

Sam takes a deep breath and looks at her scarred wrists. The sight of them visibly pains him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

LILA (CONT'D)

I can't make them disappear.

Sam nods.

LILA (CONT'D)

I wish I could.

Sam takes hold of her hands, lifts them to his mouth, and kisses her scars. Lila closes her eyes and rests her head against Sam's shoulder. For a long moment they are silent.

LILA (CONT'D)

I made you a promise. I'm here to stay.

Sam kisses her. When they release, Lila notices a fleck of red paint on Sam's chin.

LILA (CONT'D)

Come here a second--

She scratches the paint off his chin.

SAM

(checking his watch)

I should run, I've got a three o'clock.
I'll see you back home.

He kisses her again and begins walking away. Lila sees that he's left his knapsack lying on the floor.

LILA

Henry!

Sam turns and stares at her. Lila points at the knapsack.

LILA (CONT'D)

Forgetting something?

Sam walks back to her, staring at her the whole time.

LILA (CONT'D)

What's the matter?

SAM

What did you just call me?

LILA

(confused)

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

SAM
You just called me Henry.

LILA
Baby, I think I know your name by now.

SAM
But you called me Henry.

Lila holds up her hands.

LILA
Hey, don't shoot.

SAM
No, it's just--

LILA
I know who you are, Sam. I promise.

SAM
Okay. Okay.

He grabs his knapsack, kisses her again, and walks away. She watches him go.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

We're back in the DRIVER'S POV again, speeding along the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway. The Brooklyn Bridge looms in the distance, Gothic arches majestically lit.

We look at the green-eyed woman. She's speaking to someone in the backseat. Her mouth moves but everything is silent.

We turn to the road again. The bridge is waiting for us.

INT. SAM'S COLUMBIA OFFICE -- MORNING

Friday

Sam and DR. LEON PATTERSON, a middle-aged blind man wearing dark glasses, face each other over a chessboard.

A small radio plays Billie Holiday. Sam moves his queen.

SAM
Queen to g4.

LEON
Billy Holiday. I remember her singing at the Five Spot, years ago.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM

I wish I could have heard her.

LEON

I wish I could have seen her.

Sam contemplates his next move.

SAM

Have you spoken to Beth recently?

LEON

She hasn't returned my calls.

SAM

Maybe tomorrow we could stop by her apartment, see what's going on.

(beat)

I'm having a hard time with one of her patients. Art student who claims he's going to kill himself Saturday night.

LEON

Henry Letham.

SAM

You know him?

LEON

Beth told me about him. He's been planning this for some time. But he's still meeting with you-- he's looking for help.

SAM

You've been department head forever, Leon. You must have dealt with hundreds of suicidal students. Help me out here.

LEON

Knight to c3. Check.

Sam moves Leon's knight for him and studies the chess board.

SAM

That's not helping.

LEON

Do you remember the dream of the burning boy that Freud refers to?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SAM

Vaguely.

LEON

Vaguely meaning no?

SAM

Right.

LEON

He describes a man whose child is dying. The father sits by the boy's bed, night after night, mopping the sweat from the boy's forehead, bringing him water to drink. All for nothing. After the child dies, they give him a wake, set up a circle of candles around his body. The father is exhausted. He goes to sleep in the next room. And he dreams that his boy stands beside him, holding his arm and whispering, "Father, can't you see I'm burning?" When the man wakes he runs into the next room and sees a candle has fallen on the shroud and set the dead boy on fire.

SAM

He smelled smoke and his unconscious realized a fire had started.

LEON

But what interested Freud is the way the father's unconscious dealt with that knowledge. Some part of him knew that a fire had started, but rather than waking immediately he created a dream-version of his child, to act as a messenger.

SAM

He wanted his boy alive again. The fire could wait a moment, he wanted his boy with him. What made you think of it?

Leon taps his cane on the floor in time with the beat.

LEON

I never stop thinking about it. I heard that story when I was a young man and I still can't get it out of my mind. Our imagination always tries to protect us.

(long beat)

You have a visitor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Sam, meditating on the story, now looks up to see Henry enter the doorway.

From Henry's vantage point, only the back of Leon's head is visible.

SAM

Henry!

HENRY

I can come back later--

SAM

No, no, come in. Do you know Doctor Patterson?

Leon stands. When Henry sees Leon's face, his entire body stiffens. For a moment he doesn't seem to be breathing.

LEON

Good to meet you.

Leon extends his hand in Henry's direction. Henry jerks back, terrified. He can't take his eyes off the old man's face. He opens his mouth but no words come out.

SAM

What's the matter? Henry?

HENRY

(to Leon, in a dazed whisper)
What are you doing here?

Leon is confused, unsure whether he's being spoken to or not. He withdraws his extended hand.

LEON

Playing chess.

HENRY

Don't do this to me. Please don't do this.

Henry has retreated as far as he can from Leon, his back pressed against the book shelves on Sam's office wall.

HENRY (CONT'D)

I never meant to hurt you. You have to believe me. Please believe me.

Leon, with the composure of a seasoned therapist, nods.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

LEON

You haven't hurt me, I assure you.

Henry stares at the older man in silence for a moment.

HENRY

I watched you die.

The comment disturbs Leon, but he quickly regains his composure.

LEON

We'll finish the game later, Sam?

Leon exits, tapping the floor before him with his cane.

SAM

(to Henry)

Are you all right? Here, take a seat.

Henry remains standing. He watches Leon leave.

HENRY

Why did he come back?

SAM

Leon's an old friend of mine. Do you know him?

HENRY

Is he mad at me?

SAM

No, of course not. Why would he be?

Henry's still looking through the open door, deeply distraught, speaking as if to himself.

HENRY

He used to get so mad at me, for little things, just little things, and now... he must hate me.

SAM

He doesn't hate you. He doesn't even know you. Why don't you sit for a minute?

HENRY

He knows me.

SAM

Henry--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

Henry finally turns toward Sam.

HENRY
He's my father. He knows me.

Sam stares at Henry for a moment and then sits.

SAM
Listen to me for a second, okay? I've
been friends with Leon Patterson for a
long time. He has no children.

HENRY
You think I don't recognize my own
father?

SAM
You told me your father was dead.

HENRY
He is dead. He died and we buried him and
that was him sitting here.

SAM
Think about it for a minute. The man you
just saw is alive and well.

Henry rubs his palm over his burned forearm.

HENRY
I saw the blood. I saw him die.

Henry is becoming more and more distraught.

HENRY (CONT'D)
It was all my fault. I did it.

Sam sees an opening, a chance to understand.

SAM
You hurt someone, Henry? It can't be
Leon, you just saw him. Who did you hurt?
Your father?

Henry closes his eyes.

SAM (CONT'D)
Is that why you're thinking about
suicide? Is that it? You need to punish
yourself? What happened?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

HENRY

I don't remember.

SAM

You don't want to remember. But you have to. Whatever it is you've done, you have to face it.

Henry doesn't say anything for a while. He rubs his scarred forearms. Finally, gesturing at the office around them and out the window, to the blue sky and everything beyond:

HENRY

Everything you believe is a lie.

SAM

Okay. Then tell me the truth.

HENRY

Your troubles will cease and fortune will smile upon you.

Sam stares at the student, perplexed.

SAM

Where did that come from?

Henry sweeps the chessboard off the desk. All the pieces tumble to the floor. One of the white pawns rolls toward the wall.

Henry rushes out the office door. Sam, stunned for a moment by the sudden violence, finally stands.

SAM (CONT'D)

Henry!

Sam hurries after Henry. In his haste he stumbles on one of the fallen pawns. He steps around the board and jogs out of the office.

INT. TURNER HALL -- CONTINUOUS

Sam dashes to the end of the corridor. Toni sits at her desk, speaking on the phone.

TONI

(on phone)

It's very simple. Man gives you a toaster oven for your birthday, man's telling you he wants some toast. There's no romance in that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Henry's not in sight, but the stairway door is slowly closing. Toni covers the mouthpiece and looks at Sam questioningly.

He runs to the stairway door and opens it.

INT. STAIRCASE -- CONTINUOUS

No one's in view but Sam runs down the stairs anyway, three at a time. He stops after two flights. Henry's gone.

EXT. CORNING DORMITORY -- LATER

Sam and a CUSTODIAN (50) stand by the entrance. A specially-marked Mobile Crisis Unit ambulance pulls up. Dr. Schlegel steps out, followed by the two burly paramedics from before.

Four LONG-HAIRED STUDENTS playing hacky-sack stop kicking the sack around and watch Schlegel and the paramedics.

Sam eyes the paramedics with evident apprehension. Schlegel shakes Sam's hand.

DR. SCHLEGEL
You ready for this?

SAM
Go easy on him.

All five men enter the building.

INT. DORMITORY HALLWAY

Sam knocks on the door to room 303. There is no answer.

SAM
Henry? It's Dr. Foster. You in there?

Sam looks at Schlegel, who shrugs. Sam nods to the custodian.

The custodian flips through the keys on his massive key ring. The other men wait in silence.

CUSTODIAN
Here we go.

He slips the master key into the lock and opens the door.

INT. HENRY'S DORM ROOM

The room is very dark. The custodian walks over to a window and pulls the shade up. Weak sunlight streams in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUSTODIAN

Jesus.

The room is small and almost empty: there is a bare mattress in one corner and a chair by the window.

A phone and answering machine are on the chair.

Every inch of the white walls and ceiling is covered with what looks like an intricate geometric pattern in black.

PARAMEDIC #1

What the fuck?

Sam steps closer to the wall. On closer inspection, the pattern is actually minuscule handwriting, an endless loop of black ink.

The phrase FORGIVE ME repeated again and again and again.

The paramedics exchange glances. Dr. Schlegel studies the handwriting carefully. Something on the floor catches his eye and he stoops to pick it up.

DR. SCHLEGEL

Trouble.

Dr. Schlegel hands a small box to Sam.

INSERT EMPTY BOX OF .38 CALIBER CARTRIDGES

Sam walks over to the answering machine.

INSERT PHONE MACHINE

The number 1 is flashing in the LED display.

Sam looks at Dr. Schlegel, who nods. Sam pushes play.

For a moment there is nothing but static. In the background we hear a murmur of voices and distant sirens. After a few seconds of this a female voice:

FEMALE VOICE

Stop bleeding, baby. Okay? You've got to
stop bleeding now... Stay Henry stay...
stay... stay...

EXT. DORMITORY -- LATER

Sam and Dr. Schlegel stand alone on the steps while the paramedics wait in front of the ambulance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Schlegel lights a cigarette and watches the COLLEGE GIRLS stroll by.

DR. SCHLEGEL

Jesus. I wasted my college years in the fucking library.

SAM

Now what?

DR. SCHLEGEL

Not much we can do at this point. We don't have the manpower for a stakeout or anything like that. I'll notify the police but they won't do anything.

SAM

Why not?

DR. SCHLEGEL

Because they've got more important things to do than look for depressed college students.

SAM

Then I'll find him.

DR. SCHLEGEL

If you spot him, give me a call and we'll pick him up for you. But do me a favor, Sammy?

SAM

What's that?

DR. SCHLEGEL

Kid hears voices and carries a gun. Watch your back.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

DRIVER'S POV

We're on the ramp leading up to the Brooklyn Bridge. The Gothic towers, massive and imposing, rise above us. It's late, traffic is light, and we're moving fast.

EXT. CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE -- DUSK

Henry studies the Peace Fountain, which features Saint Michael decapitating Satan. Somewhere nearby a baby is HOWLING. Henry looks around but no babies are in sight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Henry walks over to the fenced-off garden behind the Peace Fountain. The one PEACOCK in Manhattan lives in this garden. Henry watches it strut about, fanning its feathers.

BOY (O.S.)
Mommy, is that man going to die?

Henry wheels about. The small BOY we last saw holding a black balloon stands a few yards away, holding his MOTHER'S hand.

He has a new black balloon.

Both mother and child stare at Henry. Finally the mother tugs her son away, but the child continues to stare over his shoulder at Henry.

The unseen baby has never stopped howling.

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Sam sits at the kitchen table. The documents from Henry's folder are spread out before him: transcripts, application materials, etc. An untouched plate of Chinese food sits in front of him.

Sam studies a passport photograph of Henry then continues to sift through the material. Lila's in the kitchenette, putting away the take-out containers and washing the dishes.

A loud SIREN is sounding just outside their apartment. Sam and Lila have to speak loudly.

SAM
(examining a memo)
He refused to take the mandatory swim test.

LILA
Maybe he's afraid of water.

She walks to the window and stares down to the street.

LILA (CONT'D)
Is the city on fire?

We never see what's down there but the revolving lights pass across her face.

SAM
Citations for Studio Art. Apparently he's a talented painter.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM (CONT'D)

Listen to this: "Henry Letham has a fertile, powerful imagination. If he maintains his concentration he will create new worlds with his art."

LILA

Who wrote that, Jim O'Shea?

Sam checks the evaluation form.

SAM

Professor O'Shea, yeah. How'd you know?

LILA

'Cause Jim wants to fuck every cute boy in his class.

Lila goes to the table and sits. The SIREN finally fades.

SAM

You ever hear of an artist named Tristan Réveur?

LILA

Of course.

SAM

Do you like his paintings?

LILA

I've never seen them. Nobody has. He burned them all before he killed himself.

SAM

He killed himself?

LILA

When he was eighteen he told everyone he would live three more years and then go to New York and kill himself. And that's exactly what he did. Left a one-line note: *Un suicide élégant est l'oeuvre d'art finale*. "An elegant suicide is the ultimate work of art."

SAM

Jesus. He's Henry's favorite artist.

LILA

Of course he is.

Lila stares at the mess of papers in front of Sam, at his untouched food. She watches Sam read.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LILA (CONT'D)

Let me talk to him.

SAM

Talk to him? First I have to find him.

LILA

He'll find you.

(beat)

He knows you can help him. That's why he keeps coming to you.

SAM

Even if he does... I can't let you talk to him. I'd be violating every rule--

LILA

Then violate them.

(beat)

You have something, Sam. People trust you. This kid trusts you. But you've never stood where he's standing now. And he knows that.

SAM

I treat people every day who have conditions I've never--

LILA

The day I did it I took two razor blades to the bathtub. You know why?

She waits for a reply. Sam shakes his head.

LILA (CONT'D)

Because I knew once I started to bleed I'd get weak, and I didn't want to drop one blade and leave myself half done.

Sam closes his eyes for a moment. Even the memory of that day is difficult to face.

LILA (CONT'D)

You can't imagine that, can you? You can't even imagine hating your life so much you'd bring a back-up razor.

SAM

(almost a whisper)

So what do I tell him?

Lila leans forward until her eyes are inches from Sam's.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

LILA

Tell him life is a battle. It's war all the time, the world is a mess, babies die every minute. But this is it. This is the world we got, and we only get it once.

(beat)

There's too much beauty to quit. Tell him that. Tell him there's too much goddamn beauty.

Sam stares at Lila for a long time. Finally she pushes his plate closer to him.

LILA (CONT'D)

Eat something.

SAM

I'm not hungry.

LILA

Eat your fortune cookie.

SAM

It's yours.

Lila cracks open the cookie and pulls out the fortune.

LILA

"Your troubles will cease and fortune will smile upon you."

Sam slowly looks up at her. He looks like a man who's just seen his own tombstone.

LILA (CONT'D)

And not a moment too soon, that's all I can say.

(noticing Sam's expression)

What's the matter, baby? Sam?

EXT. TWELFTH STREET -- NIGHT

Sam hustles out of his apartment building. He raises his hand to hail a taxi but the taxi hurtles by without stopping. For the first time since we've known him, Sam looks frightened.

He jogs toward Seventh Avenue. The city seems to loom above him, a host of dark and forbidding towers.

EXT. BETH LEVY'S BUILDING . . NIGHT

Sam gets out of a taxi cab.

INT. VESTIBULE -- NIGHT

Sam presses the buzzer for Beth's apartment. He waits a moment. No answer. He presses the buzzer again.

We hear a CLICK as if someone has picked up the intercom, but no voice comes through, only the crackle of static.

SAM

Beth?

Nothing but static.

SAM (CONT'D)

Beth? It's Sam. You there?

Finally the buzzer sounds and the vestibule door unlocks.

INT. HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Sam stands outside an apartment door. He rings the doorbell. The door opens, still chained. It's dark inside the apartment and we can't see anything.

SAM

Hey. It's me.

After another long pause we finally hear the chain slide free and then the shuffle of footsteps away from the door.

Sam hesitates before pushing the door open and stepping inside.

INT. BETH'S APARTMENT -- CONTINUOUS

The apartment is dark, lit only by the light from the hallway and whatever streetlights seep in below the curtains.

SAM

Are you okay? Did you get my messages?

We can barely make out Beth's form, just a dark amorphous mass shuffling through the shadows.

SAM (CONT'D)

Let me turn on some lights, okay?

Sam runs his hands over the walls and finally finds a light switch. A couple of shaded lamps come to life.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM (CONT'D)

I know Leon's been trying to get through to you, and Toni...

Sam walks around the living room, pulling up the window shades and opening windows. The room is musty, mildewed.

SAM (CONT'D)

Get some air in here.

DR. BETH LEVY (40) sits on the floor, her back against a sofa. Dirty-haired and overweight, Beth looks bad. She obviously hasn't showered in days, or changed her clothes.

Sam looks around the disheveled apartment.

SAM (CONT'D)

I should have come earlier.

Beth is not paying any attention to him. Sam sits down a few feet away from her. A bottle of whiskey sits on a tea service on an ottoman. Beth pours whiskey into a tea cup and takes a slug. Bottles of prescription medicine lie on the floor. Some of the bottles are open, pills spilled out on the carpet.

SAM (CONT'D)

Beth? You gonna talk to me?

When Beth speaks her voice is strangely flat and emotionless.

BETH

What do you want to talk about?

SAM

How are you feeling?

BETH

What do you really want to talk about?

SAM

I'm worried about you. And I want to know more about Henry Letham.

BETH

Of course you do. He's why you're here.

SAM

So talk to me.

She begins crawling toward him on her hands and knees.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BETH

I don't want to talk about Henry Letham.
I want to kiss you. Let's play a kissing
game. Okay?

Sam holds up his hands.

SAM

Beth...

BETH

What difference does it make?

SAM

What are you doing?

She stops abruptly and sinks back on her haunches.

BETH

No, you're loyal, aren't you? Loyal Sam,
loyal dog. What's her name? Lila? You
should have left her in the bathtub. You
should have let her bleed. She had the
right idea all along.

Sam, stunned, stares at Beth in disbelief.

SAM

What are you saying?

BETH

Highly inappropriate, isn't it, fucking
your patient. Your pretty little patient.
You know the rules.

Sam picks up one of the bottles of pills.

SAM

You're on Vicodin?

BETH

I'm on everything I could get.

SAM

(gesturing to whiskey bottle)
You can't drink while you're taking
Vicodin.

Beth raises her tea cup in a mock toast.

BETH

Apparently you can.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

She downs the bourbon and pours herself another.

BETH (CONT'D)
I'm not brave like your Lila. Blades
scare me.

Sam stands, scoops up the whiskey bottle and bottles of
pills, dumps them on a table away from Beth's reach.

SAM
You need to take a shower.

BETH
Bathe the corpse? I guess we won't really
be corpses. What will we be? Not even
memories. Nothing. We were nothing.

Beth is drifting off, her eyelids getting heavier and
heavier. Sam walks over, reaches down and helps her stand.

SAM
What happened to you, Beth?

Beth laughs. It is not a pleasant sound.

BETH
Nothing happened to me. I came home one
day and Nothing was waiting for me,
Nothing with a smile on its face. Nothing
told me the truth.

Sam guides her toward the bathroom. Beth's steps are
sluggish, her diction increasingly slurred.

SAM
You know Henry's planning to kill himself
this weekend?

BETH
No more Mondays, anyway. That's the good
news. I never liked Mondays.

Sam opens the bathroom door and guides her inside.

INT. BETH'S BATHROOM -- CONTINUOUS

SAM
I need you to take a shower. Okay? Can
you handle that?

BETH
I want to sleep.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM

I can't let you do that. You've got too much crap in your system.

BETH

Please let me sleep.

SAM

I'm going to make some coffee. Are you okay to shower?

BETH

He's watching us.

Sam looks around the empty bathroom.

SAM

Who's watching us?

BETH

Henry.

SAM

We're alone.

BETH

He's watching.

SAM

Do you still talk to him? Do you know where he is?

BETH

Ask the mother.

SAM

His mother? His mother's dead.

BETH

Is she?

(beat)

Ask her anyway.

INT. BETH'S BEDROOM -- LATER

Sam has managed to get Beth into bed. She sits, back propped against the pillows, hair still wet from the shower, sipping from a mug of coffee.

Sam sits at the foot of the bed, looking through papers from Henry's folder.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He dials a number on his CELL PHONE.

SAM

Hello? Yes, I'm sorry to bother you at this hour. My name is Dr. Sam Foster, I'm a psychiatrist at Columbia University. Yes. I'm calling about a student named Henry Letham.

Sam listens.

SAM (CONT'D)

He is? He...

Sam looks at Beth, who watches him, a strange smile on her face.

SAM (CONT'D)

Mrs. Letham, I'm sorry, this is very strange. He told me you had passed... Hello? Hello?

Sam stares at the cell phone. He dials the number again and listens. Nobody answers.

BETH

You have no idea what's going on, do you?

Sam turns to look at Beth. She is calmer now, but her eyes are still bloodshot and wild.

EXT. GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE -- NIGHT

A Town Car glides over the Hudson, beneath the lighted suspension cables.

INT. TOWN CAR

Sam, in the backseat, looks out the window at the black river stretching north.

The DRIVER takes his profession seriously, both hands on the wheel, eyes on the road. A red CROWN deodorizer is perched atop the dashboard.

EXT. SUBURBAN ROAD -- NIGHT

The Town Car drives down dark New Jersey back roads.

EXT. LETHAM HOUSE -- NIGHT

The Town Car pulls up to an old Colonial house. No lights are on inside. The house is set back on a vast, overgrown lawn. A brick path leads from the sidewalk to the front door.

INT. TOWN CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Sam checks the address on the form in Henry's folder. He looks up, sees 9625 on the mailbox.

SAM

This is it. I won't be long.

EXT. LETHAM HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Sam gets out of the car and walks toward the house. The lawn hasn't been mowed in months. Weeds spill out from the untended flower beds.

Sam rings the doorbell. No answer. He rings again.

MRS. LETHAM (O.S.)

I've been waiting for you.

Sam spins around. MRS. LETHAM sits in the darkness on a porch swing. She wears a silk kerchief around her head, the kind that chemotherapy patients sometimes wear.

SAM

Mrs. Letham? I'm Dr. Sam Foster. I called before? Sorry to bother you at this hour, but it's an emergency.

MRS. LETHAM

I thought you'd never come.

She stands and approaches Sam. She has a limp. She looks weary, with dark circles below her brilliant blue eyes and wisps of gray hair straying out from under the kerchief.

SAM

I would have called earlier. I didn't know you were here.

MRS. LETHAM

I guess it's easy to forget me, all alone out here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM

Your son's not well. That's what I'm here about. I'm trying to find him. He's... he's threatened suicide.

Mrs. Letham laughs but the laugh turns into a cough. She limps to the front door.

MRS. LETHAM

You came to see Olive, didn't you? Not me.

Sam frowns.

SAM

Olive?

MRS. LETHAM

I know you did.

She opens the door, flicks on a light and leads him inside.

INT. LETHAM FOYER -- CONTINUOUS

The house is immaculate. The windows are spotless; the chandelier by the staircase glitters; the hardwood floor is polished and gleaming.

But there is no furniture to be seen anywhere. Sam and Mrs. Letham's footsteps echo in the empty house.

A black Neapolitan MASTIFF pads into the room and stares at the newcomer. The dog is massive, at least 160 pounds, slobber-jawed, its black eyes tiny in its huge head.

SAM

(under his breath)
Jesus.

MRS. LETHAM

Here she is. She's been lonely. Me and Olive keep each other company. It feels like we've been alone in this house for a thousand years.

SAM

Hey, Olive. How you doing, girl?

The mastiff stares at him impassively.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MRS. LETHAM

She doesn't remember you anymore, you've been away so long.

(beat)

Are you hungry?

SAM

No thank you, I ate. Do you know how to contact your son? Any friends or relatives he might have gone to see?

MRS. LETHAM

Let me fix you something to eat. I have some leftovers in the fridge.

Mrs. Letham limps into the kitchen and Sam is forced to follow her. Olive watches Sam but doesn't move.

INT. LETHAM KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

The kitchen shines like the rest of the house. Someone has spent hours scrubbing every surface until it gleams.

Mrs. Letham opens the refrigerator and looks through it.

The refrigerator is empty.

MRS. LETHAM

Most days I don't say a single word. I'm silent so long sometimes I forget how to speak. It's so quiet here.

SAM

Mrs. Letham, we have an emergency.

Suddenly, Mrs. Letham seems close to tears. She closes the refrigerator and looks at Sam.

MRS. LETHAM

Do you hate me? You must hate me. Is that why you did it?

SAM

I don't hate you at all. I'm here because your son needs help.

Mrs. Letham smiles and takes Sam's hand.

MRS. LETHAM

I knew you'd come, eventually. It was so quiet without you, so lonely.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. LETHAM (CONT'D)

But now you've come back and you're never going to leave.

Sam is quiet for a moment, searching Mrs. Letham's face.

SAM

Who do you think I am, Mrs. Letham?

MRS. LETHAM

Don't play games. Not anymore.

SAM

Who am I?

MRS. LETHAM

You think I don't know you, Henry? You think I don't recognize my only son?

Mrs. Letham wraps her arms around Sam and squeezes him.

MRS. LETHAM (CONT'D)

Oh Lord, I missed you. I missed you so much. I know you didn't mean to hurt us.

Sam nods. He speaks very quietly, very carefully. They are still locked in an embrace.

SAM

Mom?

MRS. LETHAM

Yes, baby?

SAM

How did I hurt you?

MRS. LETHAM

It doesn't matter anymore. I could never stay angry at you.

SAM

Where do I go on Saturdays?

Mrs. Letham releases Sam.

MRS. LETHAM

When you were a boy you used to go to the Central Park Zoo. Remember? You loved watching the polar bear swim.

Mrs. Letham stares at the blank face of the refrigerator.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MRS. LETHAM (CONT'D)

You could stand there for hours, watching that bear.

SAM

But I'm older now. I'm going to be twenty-one tomorrow. Where do you think I'll go for my birthday?

MRS. LETHAM

Who knows? You don't tell me anything these days. When you were little you told me all your secrets. I guess you tell Athena your secrets now.

SAM

Athena? Do you remember where Athena--

Sam abruptly stops talking, seeing what we now see. Blood trickles down the side of Mrs. Letham's face, leaking from underneath her kerchief.

A large drop of the blood falls and splatters on the white-tiled floor.

Mrs. Letham sees the blood and grabs a sponge from the sink. She drops to her knees and begins violently scrubbing at the spot on the floor.

MRS. LETHAM

Look at the mess I'm making.

The blood is beginning to pour down her face. She scrubs ferociously but more and more blood spatters on the tiles.

MRS. LETHAM (CONT'D)

Just have to clean this up...

Sam kneels beside her.

SAM

Let me look at your head.

When he reaches for her kerchief she shrinks away from him.

MRS. LETHAM

You don't want to see.

SAM

Mrs. Letham--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MRS. LETHAM

You didn't mean to hurt anyone. I know
you didn't.

Olive pads into the room. She sees the blood puddling on the
tiles. She sees Mrs. Letham cowering, fearfully, from Sam.
Olive growls, low pitched and ominous. Sam eyes the dog
warily but Mrs. Letham's bleeding is worsening.

SAM

I need to look at your head, Mrs. Letham.
That's a serious wound.

MRS. LETHAM

Don't look, darling. Don't look at me.

Sam reaches toward her head again. Olive leaps upon Henry,
knocking him to the floor, biting viciously at his face. Sam
desperately holds the mastiff off, the slobbering jaws inches
from his jugular.

MRS. LETHAM (CONT'D)

Olive! Off!

Upon her command the mastiff immediately disengages and
retreats. Sam bleeds from the hands and arms.

Mrs. Letham pats Olive's head and coos at the dog.

MRS. LETHAM (CONT'D)

That's a good girl, that's a good girl.
You want mommy to fix you some supper?

Mrs. Letham leads Olive into a small pantry off the kitchen.
She putters around through the bare cupboards.

MRS. LETHAM (CONT'D)

(muttering)

...find you something nice to eat...

Sam scrambles to his feet, bloodied and disoriented. He
hurries out of the house.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM-- EARLY MORNING

Saturday

Sam sits while an INTERN finishes sewing up the gash on his
forearm.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

INTERN

The Percoset will make you a little drowsy, so--

SAM

I know.

SHERIFF KENNELLY knocks on the open door and peeks in.

SHERIFF

Dr. Foster? Could I have a word with you?

The intern drops the needle into the biohazard waste receptacle and exits the room.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

You got bit up pretty good. Got your rabies shot already?

SAM

Yes.

Sheriff Kennelly pages through a notebook.

SHERIFF

I'm Sheriff Kennelly. I know you already spoke with Deputy Carlyle, but I just wanted to confirm a few things. You said the assault took place at 9625 Rickover Street?

SAM

That's right.

SHERIFF

Home belonging to the Letham family.

SAM

Right, her dog attacked me. She's-- Mrs. Letham-- she needs help. She has a severe head wound. She should be in a hospital.

SHERIFF

I went to high school with Maureen Letham.

SAM

Maybe you know her son, Henry? He's a patient of mine at Columbia University.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SHERIFF

Sure, I remember Henry. Pale, skinny kid.
Always painting.

SAM

That's him.

SHERIFF

Kind of gave me the creeps. What's
strange, Doctor, what I'm trying to
figure out, is who you were speaking with
over at 9625 Rickover Street.

SAM

I'm sorry, I thought we already
established that. Maureen Letham.

SHERIFF

She told you her name is Maureen Letham?

Sam is puzzled by the sheriff's line of questioning.

SAM

Yes. We talked about her son. She's not
entirely coherent. She needs medical
attention.

SHERIFF

Why did you want to talk to this woman at
one in the morning?

Sam is increasingly exasperated by the conversation.

SAM

I'm treating her son. It's an emergency
situation.

(beat)

Look, sheriff, that woman needs help.
She's lost a lot of blood--

SHERIFF

I told you I went to school with Maureen
Letham. I also went to her funeral. She's
been dead for months.

Sam stares at the sheriff, dumbfounded.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Car wreck. Her and her husband. As far as
I know, that house is empty still. The
family's trying to sell it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SAM

I was talking to Maureen Letham an hour ago.

SHERIFF

Well, it's probably just someone's confused. How long they keeping you here?

SAM

I've got to head back to the city.
Listen, 9625 Rickover Street: I was there. Henry's mother was there.

The sheriff stares at Sam. Finally he nods and stuffs his notebook into his jacket pocket.

SHERIFF

All right, Dr. Foster, we'll be in touch.
I've got your number.

The sheriff turns to leave. When he's halfway down the corridor, Sam calls out to him.

SAM

Sheriff?

SHERIFF

Yep?

SAM

Maureen Letham. Did she have brown eyes?

SHERIFF

No sir. Bluest eyes in town.

EXT. WEST 44TH STREET -- NIGHT

Henry walks down one of the few blocks near Times Square that still looks like the old Times Square: erotic bookshops, peep shows, adult theaters.

TOURISTS carrying shopping bags and cameras walk past. A young HIPSTER COUPLE passes by, his long, striped scarf looped twice around his neck, her low-slung jeans baring the bones of her narrow hips.

Henry follows them for half a block. The girl catches Henry staring at them and Henry looks away.

Everyone else on the street is dressed for the cold night, but Henry still wears the same T-shirt he's had on all day.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He shivers in the wind and pulls his arms inside his shirt for warmth. He stares at the neon lights and PAN-ETHNIC PEDESTRIANS with something like longing.

INSERT NEON SIGNS:

Live Girls!!! Adult Entertainment \$\$\$ Checks Cashed \$\$\$

Henry looks up at the marquee of a porn movie theater. The theater lobby looks warm and inviting.

INT. PORNO THEATER -- NIGHT

He walks down the aisle and finds a seat in the front row. We hear the soundtrack: the usual moans and gasps over the usual cheesy music.

CLOSE ON HENRY

We watch Henry's face bathe in the flickering light from the screen. He looks weary. His hair lies flat and wet across his scalp. Now, below the synthesized music and the grunting we hear a low and distant thump.

The thump slowly gets louder-- it's a heartbeat. Louder and louder until all other sound is masked.

Finally we see the screen. A still photograph of a FETUS curled up within its mother's womb, silently swimming in the amniotic fluid-- a shot from an ultrasound.

We pull back to see the other viewers in the theater. Many of them are asleep, street people escaping the cold.

Those still awake stare at the screen as if nothing strange were happening. A grizzled old VETERAN in an army jacket. Two TEENS from the suburbs, wearing their varsity jackets. An OBESE MAN, peering through coke-bottle lenses.

And we go back to Henry, who silently watches the screen.

Back on screen, a montage of a life in the form of still photographs. Some are out of focus, one or two are blurred on top by intruding fingers, many are off-center.

SNAPSHOTS: A hospital nurse presents the baby boy to his mother. The boy rattles the bars of his crib. The boy takes one of his first steps.

Henry watches in wonder.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

In each new image the boy is slightly older. Sledding down a snowy hill. Blowing out candles on a cake. The stills whirl across the screen, the blur of a lifetime.

Henry turns to look at the projector, lighting the screen with its story.

On screen: A four-year-old boy practices his free throws with an undersized ball. The boy sings in an elementary school musical. Down by the shore, the boy throws a tennis ball for Olive (the mastiff looks exactly like she did when we first saw her). Kissing a girl for the first time (judging from his closed eyes and hesitant pucker). Raising his arms in triumph, along with the rest of his varsity team, after sinking the game-winning basket. Drinking beer with friends.

A few of these snapshots look familiar to us-- they mirror Lila's paintings in Sam's office.

Henry watches his life flash before his eyes.

On screen: the boy smoking a cigarette (and now, if we haven't before, we recognize that it's a younger Henry on screen). Arriving for his first day of freshman year at Columbia. Shooting pool with friends in a smoky bar. Throwing bread crumbs to the peacock outside the Cathedral.

Sitting in the bleachers cheering for the New York Yankees. Walking down Broadway with the GREEN-EYED WOMAN, whom we recognize from the driver's POV sequences. Sitting on the hood of a Ford Mustang with the green-eyed woman.

Standing on the lawn of 9625 Rickover Street with Mrs. Letham and Leon Patterson, their arms across his shoulders, everyone smiling.

The rapid-fire barrage of images stops here, with the photo of Mrs. Letham and Leon Patterson still on the screen.

Henry bolts up from his seat and runs from the theater.

After a few seconds, two words appear on the bottom of the screen, a subtitle.

FORGIVE ME.

The subtitle does not fade away. The men in the theater stare at the screen. Nobody says a word.

EXT. TWELFTH STREET -- DAWN

The sky is overcast and metallic.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sam parks his car down the block from his building and walks toward home. Halfway there he sees piano movers at work across the street.

They are the same piano movers we saw before, and they seem to be hauling the same piano into the same apartment.

PIANO MOVER 1

Easy, easy.

Sam stops in his tracks. He has been here before.

A small boy, accompanied by his mother, runs down the street holding a black balloon. He trips and falls and the balloon begins to float away.

BOY

Wait! Wait!

The workmen hear the boy's cries and see the balloon. Piano Mover 1 makes a valiant effort to capture the escaping balloon: he runs after it and leaps... but he can't quite reach it.

Sam stares at the rising balloon in disbelief.

PIANO MOVER 1

Sorry, kid. It's gone to balloon heaven.

Everything but Sam is the same: the cars in the street, the kid's crestfallen expression, the black balloon disappearing into the gray sky.

Sam runs across the street and confronts Piano Mover 1.

SAM

You were here on Thursday. You were moving this piano on Thursday, too.

The man is engaged in the difficult business of hoisting a piano into a fourth-floor apartment and doesn't have time for this kind of banter.

He looks briefly at Sam and then back to the Bechstein.

PIANO MOVER 1

Can I help you with something, pal?

SAM

That kid with the balloon, the exact same thing happened on Thursday.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PIANO MOVER 1

We're a little busy here. Why don't you
go bother someone else?

Sam watches the workmen on the fourth floor ease the piano
into position.

INT. HALLWAY -- MORNING

Sam inserts his key into the door of his apartment. Before he
can even turn the bolt, Lila has opened the door.

LILA

Christ, baby, where you been?

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT -- MORNING

Sam staggers in the front door, exhausted. Lila now sees that
Sam is bandaged and battered.

LILA

What happened to you?

Sam shakes his head. How can he possibly explain what has
happened to him? He limps toward the bedroom. Lila follows.

INT. SAM'S BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

LILA

I was calling people all over the city
looking for you. I was about to call the
police.

Sam checks the clock: 8:12 a.m. He begins to undress, pulling
off his sweater. She inspects his arm.

LILA (CONT'D)

What *happened*, Sam?

Sam sits on the edge of the bed, considering the question.

SAM

I don't know.

LILA

I've been up all night. You've got to
talk to me.

Sam, dazed, shakes his head helplessly.

LILA (CONT'D)

What happened to your arm?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM
Dog bite.

LILA
Dog bite?

SAM
I already got my shots. And the
painkillers...

LILA
What dog? Where?

Sam lies down on the bed, his clothes half-removed. He's too exhausted to have a real conversation, too bewildered by the events of the last few hours, too numbed from the Percoset.

SAM
I'm seeing things that don't make any sense. I'm meeting people that are supposed to be dead. Beth Levy's had a nervous breakdown and this kid I'm treating knows what's going to happen before it happens. The kid's mother thinks I'm her son. I saw the same boy lose the same black balloon on the same block twice. Nothing makes sense.

LILA
Baby, you're scaring me.

SAM
Nothing makes sense...

LILA
You need to sleep.

SAM
No, I got to find the kid... running out of time...

LILA
Sleep a few hours. You're worn out.

Lila leans over him and kisses his lips.

SAM
Just a little bit... close my eyes for a little bit...

Sam is out.

SAM'S FIRST DREAM

The screen goes black. And then bright white. The white gradually resolves and we see that we're staring into the glare of a small flashlight.

The flashlight disappears and Sam's face replaces it, Sam's face looming large, staring directly into the camera.

SAM

Can you hear me, Henry? Henry? I'm a doctor, I'm going to help you. Can you hear me?

END OF SAM'S FIRST DREAM

Sam opens his eyes. He's lying on his bed, still half-clothed. He looks at the clock. 3 p.m. He sits straight up. He's running out of time.

A post-it note is stuck to the telephone.

CALL ME as soon as you wake up! I love you. Lila.

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT -- AFTERNOON

Sam prepares to leave, after having showered and changed clothes. He looks at himself in the foyer mirror. His eyes are haunted.

He unlocks the three deadbolts on the front door, unfastens the chain, and opens the door.

INT. HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

As Sam prepares to exit his apartment he freezes.

Henry lies on the welcome mat outside the apartment door, curled up and sleeping. He looks as if he's spent the past few days on the street. His hair is matted, his clothes filthy, lips dry and cracked.

Sam stumbles backward.

SAM

Jesus Christ.

Henry opens his eyes. He seems disoriented, unsure where he is. When he sees Sam he wearily stands.

SAM (CONT'D)

How did you get in here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Henry brushes the dirt from his clothes.

SAM (CONT'D)

I've been looking all over for you. I met
your mother last night.

Henry stares at Sam, stunned.

HENRY

You met my mother?

SAM

You told me she was dead.

HENRY

I thought-- she's okay?

Sam is starting to lose his temper now. Days of confusion and
stress are beginning to wear him down.

SAM

Everyone seems to think your mother's
dead, but I was standing in her kitchen
talking to her.

HENRY

So she's all right? She's gonna be okay?

SAM

I don't know. I don't know if she's sick,
or she got hurt somehow--

HENRY

Is she mad at me?

SAM

The dog seems pretty fucking mad.

HENRY

The dog?

Sam holds up his bandaged forearm.

SAM

Olive.

HENRY

Olive? We put her to sleep when I was
twelve. She had a tumor in her liver.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SAM

Olive's not dead. She is very much not dead.

HENRY

She was a good girl.

Sam grabs Henry and presses him against the hallway wall. Henry's back hits the elevator button.

SAM

Quit playing with me. I want to know what's going on. How do you know the future?

HENRY

I make it up.

SAM

Ever since I met you impossible things have been happening. I'm trying to help you but I need some fucking answers.

(beat)

What happened to your parents?

Henry shakes his head.

SAM (CONT'D)

There are things you've got to tell me. If you just wanted to kill yourself, you'd have already done it. So why don't you? Why do you keep coming to me?

HENRY

Because you're the only one who can help me.

Sam releases Henry and takes a step back.

SAM

Then answer my questions.

Henry rubs his damaged forearms and nods.

SAM (CONT'D)

Start with an easy one. Why do you keep burning your arms?

Henry looks down at the cigarette burns marking his forearms.

HENRY

I want to see if I'll feel any pain.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

The elevator doors open.

HENRY (CONT'D)
I have to go.

He steps into the elevator. Sam follows him.

SAM
You're coming with me. I want you to meet
a friend of mine.

The doors close.

INT. ELEVATOR

SAM
You think you're the only one with the
darkness in you? You think you're alone?

The door opens onto the seventh floor. A MUSLIM WOMAN in full veil looks into the elevator. Sam and Henry do not seem like good company. The woman decides not to get in.

Everyone is silent until the doors slide shut again.

Sam looks up at the floor indicator lights. Henry looks up as well. 3...2...1.

INT. LOBBY -- CONTINUOUS

They exit the elevator in the empty lobby and stand in front of a mirrored wall.

SAM
Listen to me. I've seen people go through
what you're going through. And I've seen
them come out the other side. I helped
them. And if you work with me, I can help
you.

HENRY
The way you helped your girlfriend?

Sam stares at Henry, baffled.

SAM
How do you know about that?

HENRY
I've seen her scars.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM

You... when?

HENRY

I've seen her working at the college studios. I've seen her wrists.

(beat)

You saved her?

SAM

She saved herself.

HENRY

But you helped?

Sam hesitates, reluctant to divulge private stories. But he has Henry intrigued and he doesn't want to lose the momentum.

SAM

A few years ago. She was a graduate student. I was treating her. She left me a message one night. She didn't sound right. I tried calling back but nobody answered. I knew something was wrong. I knew it from the second I heard her voice. I went to her building, buzzed her, no answer. I woke up the super. The man was not happy, threatened to call the police, but he finally let me in and opened her apartment door.

Sam pauses, reviewing the scene in his mind's eye.

SAM (CONT'D)

Sometimes a suicide is an attempt for attention-- someone will take a few sleeping pills or scratch their arms with a steak knife. Lila's wasn't. She put three four-inch vertical slits in each wrist, slashed both sets of radial and ulnar arteries. By the time I got to her she'd lost six pints of blood. I dragged her out of the bathtub, put tourniquets on her arms and called an ambulance. They got there in six minutes. Lila still sends the paramedics Christmas cards every year.

Sam has Henry's complete attention.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SAM (CONT'D)

I visited her every day. And by the time she got out I knew that I couldn't be her therapist anymore.

HENRY

Aren't you afraid she'll do it again?

SAM

I trust her.

HENRY

Why?

Sam thinks about it for a moment and then shrugs.

SAM

The thing about faith-- there is no why. I have faith in her.

Henry nods. The defenses he's maintained over the past week are down. He looks very young. He stands quietly and watches Sam.

SAM (CONT'D)

Life is a battle, Henry. Terrible things happen to good people. Babies starve to death every minute. But this is it. This is the world we got, and as far as we know, we only get it once.

(beat)

There's too much beauty to quit. There's too much goddamn beauty.

For a moment Henry seems to sway to Sam's thinking. For a few seconds he seems to be reconsidering his destiny.

HENRY

I believe everything you've told me, Doctor. But it's too late.

He starts to leave but Sam grabs him by the arm.

SAM

I can't let you go. I'm taking you to the hospital.

Sam begins leading Henry out the door.

HENRY

Get your hands off me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SAM
I can't do that.

Henry pulls a revolver from his waistband. He presses the muzzle against Sam's neck.

HENRY
I think you have to.

SAM
Let me help you, Henry. Let me try.

Henry says nothing but Sam sees the look in his eyes and releases his arm.

HENRY
You want to know what happened to my
parents? I killed them. I killed my
mother, I killed my father.
(beat)
I'm going to Hell.

SAM
I don't believe in Hell.

HENRY
I do, Dr. Foster. And I think we're
already there.

Henry walks out the building's front door.

Sam takes a deep breath. He stares at his reflection in the mirrored wall.

After another moment he steels himself and walks out the door.

EXT. TWELFTH STREET -- CONTINUOUS

SAM
Henry--

But Henry is nowhere in sight. Sam looks around, trying to spot him, but he's gone.

Two HAITIAN NANNIES push WHITE BABIES in strollers down the sidewalk.

A taxi waits at a red light. Sam runs over to it and climbs into the backseat.

INT. TAXI -- CONTINUOUS

SAM
Canal Street. A diner.

The CABBIE, a middle-aged Filipino wearing a Mets cap, turns and raises his eyebrows at Sam.

CABBIE
Which diner? There's maybe twenty--

Sam hands the cabbie two twenties.

SAM
Just keep the meter running.

EXT. CANAL STREET DINER -- AFTERNOON

Sam jumps out of the taxi and hurries into the diner.

INT. CANAL STREET DINER -- CONTINUOUS

Sam approaches WAITRESS 1.

SAM
Is there an Athena working here?

WAITRESS 1
Yeah. Athena!

Sam raises his eyebrows, amazed that the search was so easy.

A bull-necked BUTCH COOK wearing a dirty apron, her grey hair shaved to the scalp, a buxom mermaid tattooed on her thick forearm, pushes open the kitchen door, cleaver in her hand.

BUTCH COOK
Yeah, what?

SAM
Athena?

BUTCH COOK
What do you want?

SAM
Are you a waitress?

BUTCH COOK
Do I look like a goddamn waitress? I'm the cook.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM

Right, my mistake. I'm very sorry.

MONTAGE

Sam and the cabbie work their way east on Canal Street, stopping at every diner but finding no green-eyed Athena. It's getting darker and darker and time is running out.

The wind picks up and rain starts to fall.

EXT. DINER -- NIGHT

Sam ends up at a rundown old diner on the corner of Canal and Allen. The cabbie drives off. This is the last diner.

INT. DINER

Sam seats himself at the counter. Next to him a heavysset BALD ENGLISHMAN works on a crossword puzzle. Outside it's pouring.

SAM

Is there a waitress here named Athena?

WAITRESS 2

Athena? Nah, never heard of her.

SAM

All right. Could I just get a cup of coffee, please?

Sam reaches into his blazer pocket for his wallet and feels something else. He pulls out the engagement ring and turns it in the light, watching the diamond sparkle.

WAITRESS 3 (O.S.)

You planning on proposing to Athena?

Sam looks up. Waitress 3 apparently overheard his previous conversation. He pockets the ring.

SAM

No, I'm-- do you know her? We're talking about the same Athena? Green eyes?

WAITRESS 3

You a cop?

SAM

No, no, nothing like that. More like a matchmaker.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WAITRESS 3

She doesn't work here anymore. But she's
in my acting class.

SAM

She is? Could you--

WAITRESS 3

What are you, a stalker?

SAM

No, honestly, look...

He pulls out his wallet, removes a photo I.D., and shows it
to her.

SAM (CONT'D)

See, I'm a psychiatrist.

WAITRESS 3

(examining I.D.)

You're a psychiatrist, huh? So you can
give Valium prescriptions?

SAM

I could give them to a patient of mine
who needed them, yes.

WAITRESS 3

Okay. Good luck finding Athena.

She walks away. Sam stares at her back and then up at the
clock on the wall, which reads 7:30. Sam looks at Waitress 3
and takes a deep breath.

INT. ACTOR'S STUDIO -- NIGHT

A cramped stage in front of several rows of seats. ATHENA
(the green-eyed woman from the DRIVER'S POV sequences and the
LIFE MONTAGE) and DEVON, a young man with bleached hair,
stand on stage, rehearsing.

Sam enters through a door in back.

DEVON

Prison, my lord?

ATHENA

Denmark's a prison.

Sam sits in the back row and watches. His hair is wet from
the rain.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEVON

Then is the world one.

ATHENA

A goodly one; in which there are many
confines, wards, and dungeons, Denmark
being one o'th'worst.

DEVON

We think not so, my lord.

ATHENA

Why, then 'tis none to you. For there is
nothing either good or bad but thinking
makes it so. To me it is a prison.

DEVON

Prison, my lord?

Athena grins and shakes her head.

ATHENA

Denmark's a prison. We already had this
conversation.

DEVON

Oh, crap. Um...

ATHENA

(prompting)

Why, then your ambition--

DEVON

Why, then your ambition makes it one.
'Tis too narrow for your mind.

ATHENA

O God, I could be bounded in a nutshell
and count myself a king of infinite
space, were it not that I have bad
dreams.

(normal speaking voice)

That's my favorite line in the whole
play.

DEVON

Good line. I better get home and rest the
pipes. I've got a solo in choir tomorrow
morning.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ATHENA

Thanks for reading with me. You're a good Rosencrantz.

DEVON

You're a good Hamlet.

Devon grabs his satchel from the side of the stage and walks out. Sam stands and walks down to the stage, where Athena is packing up her things.

SAM

I always pictured Hamlet as a man.

ATHENA

That's a bit narrow-minded of you, isn't it? This is the lesbian Hamlet. All the parts are played by women.

SAM

Oh. That's... new.

ATHENA

I'm joking. I'm Ophelia. I just get so sick of playing her. Sad Ophelia. Things get tough and she jumps in the drink. Hamlet hogs all the good lines.

SAM

Yeah, he's notorious for that.

ATHENA

We've met before, haven't we?

SAM

I don't think so.

He offers his hand and they shake.

SAM (CONT'D)

Sam Foster.

ATHENA

Athena. Are you joining the class? It's good. Kenny's a bit of a dictator, but you get used to him.

Athena pulls on her sweater.

SAM

No. I've been looking for you, actually.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ATHENA

That's flattering. Please tell me you're a casting director.

SAM

A psychiatrist, unfortunately. I... I have a patient who likes you very much.

Athena smiles, but clearly she's not thrilled by this conversation.

ATHENA

This is an unusual way of getting a date. What's his name?

SAM

Henry Letham.

ATHENA

(shaking her head)
Never heard of him.

SAM

I was hoping you might know where to find him. He mentioned you once. He has a crush on you. You served him coffee in a diner, you were nice to him. The way he tells it, you were the one good thing that ever happened to him.

ATHENA

Henry. Is he very pale? Very thin and very pale? His arms are scarred?

SAM

That's the one.

ATHENA

He always ate pecan pie with his coffee. I remember that. But we never spoke outside the diner. Except...

SAM

What? Tell me.

ATHENA

I feel stupid saying this stuff to a psychiatrist. You'll think I'm insane. But I had the strangest feeling about him. I mean, he's this ragged-looking guy, probably hasn't bathed in months, but something about him...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

ATHENA (CONT'D)

I'd seen him before, somewhere. I'd known him. What's wrong with him?

Sam hesitates for a moment.

SAM

He's going to kill himself.

Athena opens her mouth to speak, closes it, then opens it again.

ATHENA

Why?

SAM

He thinks he did something terrible. And this is the only way he can make up for it. That's my guess, anyway.

ATHENA

I wish there was something I could do. Actually, this probably won't help, but I did run into him one night at A. Smith's.

SAM

A. Smith's?

ATHENA

The art bookstore. He was sitting in the back, reading. I don't know, maybe he hangs out there.

SAM

Where is it?

ATHENA

Nearby. Come on, I'll show you.

She leads Sam out the side door.

INT. STAIRCASE -- CONTINUOUS

A very dark, narrow staircase littered with beer bottles, old flyers, and candy wrappers, lit only by a red Exit light. Somewhere nearby a BABY is howling.

Rainwater drips in from a broken window, puddling on the landing below Sam and Athena.

ATHENA

I know, it's gross.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She leads him down the stairs. Sam looks around, mystified as to the source of the baby's howling. He doesn't see that the stairs below him are slick with rain.

When he looks forward again Athena is nowhere in sight.

SAM

Athena?

The staircase seems even darker than before. Athena is gone.

SAM (CONT'D)

Athena?

He begins jogging down but slips on a wet step and falls backwards, sliding a full flight of stairs, banging his head.

For a moment everything is dark.

SAM'S SECOND DREAM

Sam's face suddenly fills the screen. He is staring directly into the camera.

SAM

Come on, kid, you need to stay conscious.
Come on, come on, stay with me.

END OF SAM'S SECOND DREAM

Sam opens his eyes. He's lying on his back on a landing of the staircase. He stands, unsteadily. He pats his blazer pocket and realizes it's empty.

Panicked, he looks through all his pockets. The RING is gone. He bends down and tries to find the ring, but there is no light to see anything.

He looks up. The only light comes from upstairs, beneath the side door into the actor's studio.

Sam climbs up the stairs, opens the door and lets the light from the studio shine into the staircase.

ATHENA (O.S.)

Why, then 'tis none to you.

INT. ACTOR'S STUDIO -- CONTINUOUS

Sam frowns and leans into the studio. He cannot believe what he sees. On stage, Athena and Devon perform the same duologue as last time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ATHENA

For there is nothing either good or bad
but thinking makes it so. To me it is a
prison.

DEVON

Prison, my lord?

Athena grins and shakes her head.

ATHENA

Denmark's a prison. We already had this
conversation.

Sam legs go weak. He shakes his head back and forth.

DEVON

Oh, crap. Um...

SAM

No.

ATHENA

(prompting)

Why, then your ambition--

DEVON

Why, then your ambition makes it one.
'Tis too narrow for your mind.

ATHENA

O God, I could be bounded in a nutshell
and count myself a king of infinite
space, were it not that I have bad
dreams.

(normal speaking voice)

That's my favorite line in the whole
play.

Sam bolts, letting the side door close behind him.

INT. STAIRCASE -- CONTINUOUS

As Sam runs down the stairs, the camera lingers on the steps.
Just before the door slams shut, blocking the light, we see
the glimmer of a DIAMOND RING perched on a dusty step.

INT. LEON'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Leon sits in his living room beside an expensive-looking
array of stereo equipment. Shelf after shelf is stacked with
vinyl LPs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

"Paper Moon" plays on the turntable.

*Say it's only a paper moon sailing over a cardboard sea,
But it wouldn't be make-believe if you believed in me.*

Small plastic strips, encoded with Braille, are pasted to the top corners of each LP. Leon is reordering his collection.

We linger on the vintage albums, their cover art, a library of 20th Century American music: Scott Joplin, Jelly Roll Morton, Jo Stafford, Billie Holiday, etc.

Outside the closed windows, the storm continues, rain pelting the glass, lightning illuminating the sky. But inside all we hear is Ella Fitzgerald:

*Yes, it's only a canvas sky hanging over a muslin tree,
But it wouldn't be make-believe if you believed in me.*

Only as we pull back from Leon and his beloved albums do we see that he's not alone.

Henry stands by a far window, silent, watching the blind man.

*Without your love it's a honky-tonk parade,
Without your love it's a melody played in a penny arcade.
It's a Barnum & Bailey world, just as phony as it can be,
But it wouldn't be make-believe if you believed in me.*

For a long time Henry watches Leon stacking LPs. The old man has no idea anyone else is near.

HENRY

Are you lonely here?

Leon grabs his cane and stands up.

LEON

(panicked)

Who's that? Who's there?

Leon trembles and thrusts at the air with his cane.

HENRY

Why isn't Mom with you?

LEON

I'll call the police!

Leon stumbles toward a coffee table where a phone waits.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HENRY
It's me, Dad. It's Henry.

LEON
What are you doing here?

HENRY
I wanted to see you one more time.

Now that Leon knows who he's dealing with, he seems a little calmer. He regains some of the poise of an experienced psychiatrist, though he's still badly shaken.

LEON
I need you to leave now, Henry. You can't sneak into people's homes.

HENRY
I don't want to go, Dad.

LEON
We can speak about this on Monday.

HENRY
What's going to happen to us? Do you know?

LEON
Henry--

HENRY
I don't want to die.

LEON
You don't have to die.

HENRY
I didn't mean to hurt you or Mom. I'm so sorry. Will you tell her I'm sorry?

LEON
You've got the wrong man. I told you that before.

HENRY
Look at me, Dad.

He walks closer. Leon hears him coming and raises his cane in fear. Henry grabs the cane and pulls the older man closer.

HENRY (CONT'D)
It's okay. It's okay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

He removes Leon's dark glasses. Leon's eyes swim in their sockets: useless, blind eyes.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Look at me, Dad. Please look at me.

CLOSE on Leon's eyes. They seem to stabilize, the pupils dilating, beginning to focus, to work.

Leon looks directly at Henry now. He reaches out and touches the young man's face.

Leon cannot speak. He looks at his own hands, the lines creasing his palms. He looks out the window. A bolt of lightning brightens the night sky and Leon moans.

LEON

Lightning.

HENRY

Remember when we found all the dead sparrows in the yard? They were sitting in the tree when it got hit by lightning?

Leon turns back to the boy. Leon's face is transfixed with wonder; everything he sees is a miracle. He touches Henry's cheek again.

LEON

What are you?

HENRY

I'm your son.

LEON

No--

Henry embraces the older man, buries his face in the psychiatrist's shoulder.

HENRY

Is this my punishment? You won't recognize me?

LEON

I never had a--

HENRY

Please, please, Dad. Forgive me.

LEON

For what?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

HENRY
For killing you both.

Leon pushes out of the embrace and takes a half step backward.

LEON
I'm alive.

Henry shakes his head sadly.

LEON (CONT'D)
What are you? Are you a god?

HENRY
A god?

LEON
You perform miracles...

HENRY
Miracles? It's in my head, Dad. It's all in my head.

Leon opens his mouth to speak but no words come out.

HENRY (CONT'D)
I used to have those nightmares when I was a kid. Remember? And you'd come into my room and sit with me until I fell asleep again.

LEON
Henry--

HENRY
But this one-- I can't get out of it. I try-- I try to wake up, but I can't. I'm trapped here.

LEON
Who are you?

Henry kisses Leon's forehead.

HENRY
Tell Mom I'm sorry.

He turns and leaves. Leon stares after him.

LEON
Who are you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

Henry opens the apartment door and closes it behind him.

Leon looks at the closed door for a moment and then out the window, where lightning strikes more and more frequently.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

DRIVER'S POV

We're cruising across the Brooklyn Bridge. The driver's hands (a man's hands) are on the steering wheel.

INSERT DASHBOARD CLOCK -- The digital clock reads 11:59.

We turn to the right and see Athena (the green-eyed woman) sleeping in the passenger seat. The driver's eyes (and the CAMERA) return to the road.

Suddenly, and with no warning, everything changes.

The car shakes and lurches to the right. We see the hands on the wheel desperately trying to control the car, but it's impossible.

Through the windshield we see the road spinning away from us, and then the steel guardrail coming at us far too fast.

INT. THE WHITE HORSE TAVERN -- NIGHT

A sprawling old bar in the West Village. Henry, soaking wet from the rain, pushes open the door and enters. The barroom is nearly empty. He approaches the bar.

The BARTENDER is a heavily-muscled bruiser paging through a bodybuilding magazine.

BARTENDER

You got I.D.?

Henry takes his driver's license out of his wallet and the bartender inspects it. The clock on the wall reads 9:05.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

Happy birthday, kid. First one's on the house.

HENRY

A shot of Jack with a Bud back.

BARTENDER

An All-American drinker, that's what I like to see. Coming right up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENRY

Isn't this where Dylan Thomas had his
last drink?

The bartender nods to a PORTRAIT of the dead poet hanging
behind the bar.

BARTENDER

(serving the shot and beer)
Yep. He lined up eighteen shots, downed
them all, and said, "There, I think
that's a record." Then he dropped dead.

Henry raises his shot glass to the portrait. He gulps it down
and pounds the glass onto the bar.

HENRY

Eighteen more for the record.

EXT. EIGHTH AVENUE -- NIGHT

Sam, shell shocked, walks slowly down the block. He looks
into the face of every person he passes. The rain continues
to fall.

SAM'S POV

Every shade of humanity is represented in the quickly passing
faces. The beautiful and the ugly, rich and poor, thin and
fat, the happy and the agitated and the expressionless.

Each face briefly comes into focus before leaving the frame.

Sam stops in front of a storefront. A. SMITH'S is written in
gold script on the glass.

Sam tries to open the door. It's locked. He bangs on the
glass. A bespectacled CLERK (25) comes to the door.

CLERK

(through the glass)
We're closed!

Sam keeps banging on the glass. The clerk talks very slowly,
as if to a man who speaks no English.

CLERK (CONT'D)

Hey! We... Are... Closed!

Sam keeps banging the glass. The clerk hears someone within
the store calling and turns to answer. He shakes his head and
opens the door.

INT. A. SMITH'S -- NIGHT

Sam steps inside. The irritated clerk relocks the door.

CLERK
(mock politeness)
Can I help you find something?

SAM
Henry Letham.

CLERK
A book by Henry Letham or on Henry
Letham?

SAM
No, he's... I thought he might be here. I
heard he comes here sometimes.

The clerk indicates the empty aisles with a sweep of his
hand.

CLERK
Mm, *nobody's* here, man. Store's closed.

Sam turns and looks at the clerk.

SAM
How about you don't fuck with me right
now?

Sam's eyes don't look right. The clerk, about to wise off,
decides against it. He calls over to SMITTY (50), the rumpled
shop owner, sitting on the far side of the store, behind the
checkout counter, running through the day's receipts.

CLERK
Smitty, you know a guy named Henry
Letham?

SMITTY
Sure.
(he looks at Sam)
Something happen to him?

Sam walks to the checkout counter.

SAM
I need to find him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As he gets closer Sam stops suddenly. Hanging behind the counter is a large painting of the Brooklyn Bridge, the night sky festooned with large stars.

The painting looks exactly like a completed version of the canvas Lila was working on.

SMITTY

I keep telling the kid to get some sun.
It's not healthy spending all your time
in bookstores.

(laughing)

Look at me.

Sam stares at the painting, unable to speak. Smitty sees him looking, turns to glance at the painting, looks back at Sam.

SMITTY (CONT'D)

Yeah, that's his. He didn't have any
money for the books he wanted, so he gave
me this. I think I got a pretty good
deal.

(beat)

Kid's got talent, huh?

Sam nods.

SMITTY (CONT'D)

You a collector?

SAM

What books did he get?

SMITTY

Huh?

SAM

You said he traded the painting for
books.

SMITTY

Tristan Rêveur. What else? The kid is
obsessed with Rêveur.

Sam looks at Smitty at the mention of Tristan Rêveur.

SAM

You have any more Tristan Rêveur books?

SMITTY

Nah, he bought me out. It was all second-
hand, out-of-print stuff.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Sam turns to leave.

SMITTY (CONT'D)
So what do you think? Is he gonna make it?

SAM
What?

Smitty indicates the painting.

SMITTY
You think he's got what it takes?

Sam stares at the painting and nods.

INT. WHITE HORSE TAVERN -- NIGHT

Henry is drunk. A row of empty shot glasses is lined up before him. The clock reads 10:43. The Band's "I Shall be Released" plays over the stereo system.

HENRY
Could you change the station? They never quit playing this song.

The bartender raises his eyebrows.

BARTENDER
First time I heard it in years.

He changes the station.

HENRY
Where is everybody?

BARTENDER
I guess the rain scared people away.

HENRY
It's my birthday. I want some company.

Just as Henry stands a crew of soaked TOURISTS stumble into the bar. They speak German. HAUSER, their leader, a tall blonde man with mutton-chop sideburns and a bead necklace, approaches the bartender.

HAUSER
Is this the place of death of Dylan Thomas?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BARTENDER

Yep.

HAUSER

Ah!

He turns to his friends and announces the news in German. They all say Ah! and nod happily. Arm in arm they recite Dylan Thomas, as Henry nods to the bartender and walks out.

GERMANS

And death shall have no dominion.
Dead men naked they shall be one
With the man in the wind and the west
moon...

EXT. HUDSON STREET -- CONTINUOUS

Henry steps out into the rain. PEDESTRIANS hustle by, some of them battling their collapsing umbrellas. Henry walks.

EXT. GROVE STREET -- NIGHT

Henry walks down the twisting Village street. Rain patters off the cobblestones.

Glancing to his right, Henry looks through the plate-glass window of a dance studio. He stops walking and stares.

INT. ROSE & ZELDA'S DANCE STUDIO -- CONTINUOUS

Athena's stands inside the dance studio, a large room with a parquet floor and mirrored wall. She has no partner.

Eight pairs of DANCERS glide across the floor as music pours from the speakers bolted to the walls. A debonair DANCE INSTRUCTOR (60), hair slicked back like Fred Astaire, glides from couple to couple, adjusting grips and giving pointers.

EXT. ROSE & ZELDA'S DANCE STUDIO

Wet and bedraggled, Henry stands outside the studio, looking in through the plate glass window. Drops of rain roll down the glass. Nobody notices him. He watches the happy couples dance in the buttery light, warm and dry and together.

INT. ROSE & ZELDA'S DANCE STUDIO

DANCE INSTRUCTOR

Give me the honor, Athena.

Athena grins nervously and offers her hand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ATHENA

It takes me a few minutes to warm up.

DANCE INSTRUCTOR

Shh. Shh. You're going to be fine.

The instructor leads her with graceful expertise.

EXT. ROSE & ZELDA'S DANCE STUDIO

Henry watches Athena dance. She's beautiful. Ignoring the rain, he watches her for a long time before leaving. No one sees him go. The instructor spins Athena and she laughs.

EXT. EIGHTH AVENUE -- NIGHT

Sam is making a call from a phone booth. He ignores the rain.

INT. ART STUDIO -- CONTINUOUS

Lila works alone in the cavernous studio, preparing several canvases for framing. Plastic sheathes are draped over the canvases to protect them. Her cell phone rings.

LILA

Hello?

INTERCUT BETWEEN PHONE BOOTH AND STUDIO

SAM

It's me.

LILA

Jesus, Sam. Where are you?

Sam tries to answer but then simply shakes his head.

SAM

Are you at home?

LILA

In the studio. Are you okay? Sam? I've been sick to my stomach all day. Tell me what's wrong.

SAM

I can't right now. I can't. Listen, Tristan Réveur. He killed himself on his twenty-first birthday, right?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LILA

What does that have to-- oh, God, it's that kid's twenty-first birthday today?

SAM

How did he kill himself?

LILA

He shot himself on the Brooklyn Bridge. He thought the Bridge was the best art work of the 19th Century.

Sam closes his eyes and bows his head for a moment.

LILA (CONT'D)

Hello?

SAM

Listen to me. Lila?

LILA

I'm listening.

SAM

I want you to know something. *I trust* you. You hear me? I trust you more than anyone in the world.

Lila closes her eyes and exhales.

LILA

Thank you.

SAM

If something happens tonight-- you know I love you. It's the one thing I know is real.

LILA

No, wait! Wait. What's going on, Sam?

SAM

I don't know. I really don't. But it doesn't look good, baby.

LILA

Don't hang up! Please don't hang up!

SAM

I have to go. No matter what happens, you're going to be fine. You're strong, Lila. You're strong.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LILA

Don't go. Please don't go.

SAM

I love you.

He hangs up the phone.

INT. ART STUDIO

Lila looks at the cell phone. She rests it on a work table. She shivers and rubs her arms for warmth. She stares at the sheathed canvas on the easel.

She walks over to the canvas and pulls off the plastic. It's the Brooklyn Bridge painting, the same one we saw her working on before, the same one we saw in A. Smith's.

She stares at the painted Brooklyn Bridge before she notices-- on the bottom right corner of the canvas is a familiar jagged signature: *Henry Letham*.

Lila looks at the signature in disbelief. She turns to the other canvases, leaning against the wall. She starts yanking off the plastic sheathes.

Each canvas-- a man and woman sitting on the hood of a Ford Mustang, a boy on the beach throwing a ball for his dog, young men playing pool in a smoky pool hall-- bears the *Henry Letham* signature.

Each canvas matches one of the stills from the porn theater slide show.

Lila, increasingly distraught, finally sits down on the floor in front of the paintings. She stares at her work, at the strange signature, and rocks back and forth.

EXT. EIGHTH AVENUE -- NIGHT

Sam's on the phone, waiting impatiently for an answer. He's clearly gotten a machine.

SAM

Schlegel, it's Sam, it's urgent. Our boy's heading for the Brooklyn Bridge. He's got a gun. I already called the police. We're running out of time--

Someone taps on the side of the phone booth, behind Sam. Sam waves the person away but there's another tap. Impatiently, Sam turns around.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Leon stands there, smiling in the rain, no longer wearing dark glasses, looking directly into Sam's eyes.

Sam stares at Leon for a moment before speaking.

SAM (CONT'D)

Leon?

LEON

I always thought you had brown eyes.

SAM

You can see me?

LEON

I can see everything. For the first time,
I can see everything.

Sam cannot speak for a moment. He hangs up the phone.

SAM

How?

LEON

Henry. It's all because of Henry.

Sam shakes his head in stunned disbelief.

SAM

What's happening to us?

LEON

The Buddhists had it right the whole
time. Everything is illusion.

Leon gazes with wonder at everything: the headlights, the neon, the pedestrians.

SAM

What time is it?

Leon presses a button on a black faceless watch he wears. A synthesized voice speaks.

VOICE

Eleven thirty three.

Sam runs to the curb and tries to hail a taxi. All of them are occupied.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LEON

Saturday night in the rain. You'll never find a cab.

SAM

Jesus...

Sam sees the subway station on the corner (we're on Eighth Avenue and Fourteenth Street). He starts running toward it.

Leon walks west on Fourteenth Street. He is the only person on the sidewalk. As he walks away from us, we see for the first time that his feet are bare.

In the middle of the block, the streetlight above him flickers and dies. The succeeding streetlights, lined up parallel on opposite sides of the avenue, progressively flicker and die.

Leon disappears into the darkness.

INT. CAR -- NIGHT

DRIVER'S POV

We watch a terrible accident from the driver's perspective, through the windshield: the steel guardrails rush toward us and it's too late to swerve.

The collision is utterly, eerily silent.

The CAMERA'S motion follows the head of the driver, slamming forward and then back, a terrible confusion as the car begins to roll, the windshield shattered.

In all this chaos we are thrown from the car, but it's impossible to get any sense of our bearings before the screen goes black.

EXT. SEVENTH AVENUE -- NIGHT

The silence continues into this scene. Save for the one line of dialogue and the baby howling, the entire scene is MOS. No ambient noise, no traffic noise, no street chatter.

Henry, soaked by the rain, stands outside a clothes boutique, well lit to attract passers-by. He stares through the plate glass window at the immaculately-attired mannequins.

A sign posted inside the window reads: EVERYTHING MUST GO.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOY (O.S.)

Mommy, is that man going to die?

Henry, startled, turns and sees the same boy and mother we've encountered several times before. The mother pulls her son closer. They stare at Henry.

The boy holds a black balloon.

Henry looks down. Blood is dripping from his shirtsleeves, down his arms, off his fingertips, splattering on the sidewalk, mixing with the rainwater. He stares at his palms.

Somewhere nearby a BABY is howling.

When Henry looks up again everything on the crowded street has stopped. The cars and trucks and buses have stopped, the people on the sidewalk have stopped.

Everyone stares at Henry. Riders on the city bus lean out the window and stare at him. Bicycle messengers stare at him. A woman walking her dog stares at him, and so does the dog. The newspaper vendor stares at him. People sitting in a restaurant look at him through the window.

Henry closes his eyes. The puddle of blood by his feet grows larger and larger.

INT. SUBWAY CAR -- NIGHT

Sam's riding on the 6 (he took the L to the 6). He's alone in the car, except for a MUSLIM WOMAN in full veil. Is she the same woman he saw in his building earlier in the day?

She resolutely keeps her gaze on the floor.

The express train passes by on the inside track. Sam watches it pass. Each fluorescent-lit car is empty. Except the last one. Henry stands in the last car. His eyes meet Sam's.

Henry waves goodbye as his train plunges into the tunnel ahead.

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE SUBWAY STATION -- NIGHT

Sam runs up the stairs of the station and begins sprinting east. The streets are slick with rain.

EXT. SOUTH STREET -- NIGHT

Sam runs.

EXT. EAST RIVER -- NIGHT

The lights from the Brooklyn Bridge's suspension cables are reflected in the dark waters of the East River.

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE -- NIGHT

Sam finally reaches the great bridge. He runs up the walkway.

Henry stands alone on the walkway beneath one of the two stone arches that rise above the bridge. The Manhattan-bound traffic rumbles by below him. He ignores the rain.

Henry stares at the giant clockface atop a building in Brooklyn. The clock reads 11:57.

SAM

Henry!

Henry turns and sees Sam running toward him. We now see that Henry holds the revolver in his right hand. The headlights of passing cars flicker over both men's faces.

SAM (CONT'D)

(speaking rapidly)

I found your waitress tonight. I found Athena.

Henry smiles sadly at the mention of her name.

HENRY

She's gonna be okay. She's not hurt.

SAM

You haven't hurt anyone yet.

HENRY

I hurt people. I have. I've done something terrible.

SAM

Just put the gun down. Okay? Let me help you.

HENRY

I want the fear to go away.

(beat)

Something's waiting for me on the other side. I don't know what it is. But I have to face it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM

One of the first times I met you, you said you didn't know what was real anymore. Okay, well I thought I did but I was wrong. I don't know what's real, either.

HENRY

You're real, Dr. Foster. You tried to save me. You were just too late.

SAM

Pulling that trigger won't help. You've got questions, okay, so do I, but pulling the trigger won't give you an answer.

HENRY

I've got to wake up.

SAM

You are awake.

Henry shakes his head and smiles sadly at Sam.

HENRY

I'm dreaming you.

Sam, desperate to keep the conversation moving, plays along with Henry.

SAM

Listen. Listen to me. If you're wrong--

HENRY

I'm not wrong.

SAM

Okay. What if you're right? What if it is your dream? Look around. Look around!

Henry takes his eyes off Sam and looks around. The cars race by, headlights streaming. Below the bridge the East River flows. Behind them are the towers of Manhattan.

Everything shimmers in the rainfall. The skyline looks both majestic and fragile.

SAM (CONT'D)

If this is a dream the whole world is inside it. Your mother's here, Athena's here, I'm here, everyone.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SAM (CONT'D)

You kill yourself, you're killing all of us.

(beat)

Stay here. Stay with us.

HENRY

It hurts too much.

The moment he says these words everything goes quiet. Every car on the bridge has stopped and every driver and passenger stares at Henry.

The rain stops. The stars, normally invisible above the city, now crowd the sky, brighter and more numerous than we've ever seen them.

Then the stars begin to fall, all the stars rain from the sky, leaving burning trails in their wake, the entire sky crisscrossed with the scars.

An apocalyptic howl, the most terrifying noise imaginable, seems to erupt from everywhere and nowhere. The bridge shudders and sways.

Henry places the muzzle of the gun against his temple.

SAM

Please don't. Please--

CLOSE on Henry.

HENRY

And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.

He pulls the trigger.

FADE TO WHITE

Very bright. People in the theater should be shielding their eyes.

As we fade in we see that the bright light is actually a small flashlight, shining directly into the camera.

SAM

He's still alive.

The camera pulls back to show Henry lying on his back on the road, blood streaming from his head. Sam is crouched beside him, holding one of his wrists. In his other hand, Sam holds a small flashlight, which he shines in Henry's eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

The camera pulls back farther. This is the Brooklyn Bridge but this is not the scene we just left. A Ford Mustang has just been in a terrible collision.

Flames consume the backseat. Smoke spills out the windows. The radio still plays: The Band's "I Shall be Released."

One of the Mustang's front tires has blown out. Scraps of black rubber litter the accident scene.

ATHENA is kneeling next to Henry, shaking her head, eyes vacant with shock.

Henry's arms are burned and lacerated from the accident.

Beth Levy stands behind Sam, staring down at Henry with great worry.

BETH

I was the first one here... I didn't move him. I know you're not supposed to move them.

Other cars have stopped short of the Mustang. All Manhattan-bound traffic has come to a halt. From the distance, we hear the blaring of horns.

ATHENA

(in shock)

He's okay, right? He's going to be okay?

Sam looks into her eyes.

SAM

Are you hurt? I'm a doctor.

ATHENA

Please help him. Please help him.

Sam leans closer to the injured man, so that his face is hovering right above Henry's.

Henry's eyes are open. He appears able to see, but he's losing a tremendous amount of blood. It puddles below him on the asphalt, deep red in the bridge's incandescent lights.

BETH

It happened right in front of me. Right in front of me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

ATHENA
(starting to lose it)
Help him. Help him. Help him.

SAM
(to Beth)
You have a cell phone?

Beth nods.

SAM (CONT'D)
Call for an ambulance.

He begins to unbutton his shirt. Lila gets out of a stopped car and hurries over, pulling off her sweater.

LILA
Here, let me.

She bundles the sweater and presses it against the deep, unseen gash on Henry's head to staunch the bleeding.

LILA (CONT'D)
I'm a nurse.

Sam looks at her and nods. They've clearly never met. He grabs Henry's wrist and checks his pulse against his watch.

SAM
We have to keep tabs on his pulse. If it stops, we'll need to do CPR.

ATHENA
Stop bleeding, baby. Okay? You've got to stop bleeding now. Stop bleeding!

Athena's hysteria is not helping Sam and Lila's efforts. An older man we recognize as the DANCE INSTRUCTOR hurries over. He makes eye contact with Sam and nods. He helps Athena to her feet, wraps his arm around her and leads her away.

DANCE INSTRUCTOR
Shh. Shh. You're going to be fine.

Sam pinches Henry's nostrils and blows into his mouth to make sure the airways are clear.

SAM
(to Lila)
He's breathing. Hold that tight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

Sam goes to check the other two casualties. The first, an old man, lies halfway out of one of the rear windows. Sam checks his pulse. Nothing.

WE PULL IN for a closer look at the old man. It's LEON. Blood leaks from his nostrils and mouth. His DEAD EYES are glazed like the eyes of a fish on ice. Sam closes his eyelids.

On the other side of the car lies MRS. LETHAM. Blood streams down her face from a massive head wound. Sam checks her pulse as well, but it's obvious she's dead.

Sam hurries back to Henry and crouches beside him. Athena, huddled in the dance instructor's grip, watches Sam fearfully.

ATHENA

His mom and dad? Are they okay?

SAM

They're gone.

Athena buries her face in the dance instructor's chest.

CLOSE ON HENRY'S EYES. We can tell that he has registered this news.

For a moment the frames projected on screen slow from their 24-per-second clip and then melt away entirely. The white screen is replaced by a shot we've seen before: Henry walking from the burning Mustang.

The vision disappears as quickly as it appeared, and we're back at the accident scene, watching Sam trying desperately to save Henry.

In the backseat of one of the stopped cars, a BABY, strapped into its baby seat, HOWLS and howls.

A crowd has gathered around the accident scene. From the nearest cars come the drivers and their passengers, circling around Henry.

The strange thing is that we recognize all of them.

The Englishman and his wife. Sheriff Kennelly (not in uniform). A white woman with dreadlocks. The businessman who wanted Henry to quit smoking. Toni. The investment banker.

Dr. Schlegel has his arm around Daisy, who trembles and seems to be on the verge of tears.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

ENGLISHMAN

He's not going to make it.

ENGLISHWOMAN

I can't watch anymore.

The Englishman wraps his arm around his wife's shoulders and leads her away.

Henry's eyes are still open but he appears to be fading fast. He is trying to speak and his face contorts with the effort. Lila bends closer to hear him.

SAM

What did he say?

The blood from Henry's head wound has seeped through the sweater and onto Lila's hand. Lila looks up at Sam.

LILA

"Forgive me."

SAM

It wasn't your fault, Henry. I was driving right behind you. Your front tire blew out.

LILA

You hear that, Henry? It wasn't anybody's fault.

CLOSE ON HENRY'S EYES. Again, it appears that he understands the message. The words have a calming effect; his face is no longer contorted.

SAM

We need an ambulance!

Sam stands up and looks out over the backed-up traffic. We PULL BACK and see that the bridge is jammed with rush hour commuters. There is no ambulance coming.

Sam crouches down again and peers into Henry's eyes.

SAM (CONT'D)

Come on, kid, you need to stay conscious.
Come on, come on, wake up!

Henry grabs Lila's hand. He is dying but this last strength is phenomenal. Sam stares at Lila's wrist.

CLOSE ON LILA'S WRIST

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

Thin, vertical SCARS mark her wrist. Henry stares at the scars for a moment before looking into Lila's eyes.

For a long moment they stare at each other. Whatever is communicated is communicated without words. Henry releases her. Lila pulls down her sleeves to cover the scars.

SAM (CONT'D)

Just stay with me, Henry.

HENRY

You're real. You're real.

LILA

I'm losing the pulse, Doctor.

Sam begins CPR. His face is right next to Lila's, and Henry stares up at both of them. He smiles weakly.

SAM

Stay with me, Henry.

Athena runs to Henry's side and kneels down beside him.

ATHENA

Stay, Henry, stay. Stay. Stay. Stay.

CLOSE ON HENRY'S FACE

The camera shows what Henry sees.

HENRY'S POV of the crowd of faces gathered around him. At first they are clear, each face cleanly delineated. But they begin to blur and merge together.

The camera PANS UP, past the blur of faces. We see the great Gothic arches of the bridge from this angle-- the perspective of a man lying flat on his back.

We have seen this view before, in Henry's painting.

The camera continues to PAN UP, past the glittering towers of Manhattan, up and up into the nighttime sky.

Now the screen is BLACK, but we continue to hear Athena's words.

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

Stay. Stay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (9)

The screen is black for ten seconds. And we think it's going to stay black, except now we notice pin-pricks of light piercing the darkness.

The stars are back in the sky, but these are the usual pale New York stars, not the hallucinatory fires that scarred the air with their fall.

CUT TO:

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE -- LATER

Two ambulances have arrived, as well as several police cars.

The PARAMEDICS (not the same ones we've seen before) load three dead bodies onto stretchers, while the POLICE OFFICERS mark the scene and begin questioning people in the crowd.

A FEMALE OFFICER sits with a stunned Athena on the trunk of a squad car.

A TOW TRUCK OPERATOR begins attaching the hooks and chains to the ruined Mustang. One lane of westbound traffic has already resumed moving.

A CLEANUP CREW hoses the blood off the roadway and begins clearing away the debris. The RUBBERNECKERS in the passing cars stare out their windows at the carnage.

Sam and Lila, grim-faced and exhausted from their ordeal, stand beside one of the ambulances.

SAM

Too much bleeding. Too much.

LILA

You did everything you could, Doctor.
There was never a chance.

Sam says nothing. Lila touches him on the shoulder, briefly, and walks away.

She's getting farther and farther away. Soon she'll be gone.

Sam finally looks up.

SAM

Hey.

Lila turns.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM (CONT'D)
Thanks for helping.

Lila smiles sadly.

LILA
I wish we could have done more.
She starts to walk away again.

SAM
You want to grab a cup of coffee
somewhere?

Lila turns again and looks at him.

SAM (CONT'D)
I won't be able to sleep tonight.
Lila hesitates for a second and then nods.

LILA
I'd like that.

Sam begins walking toward her and then stops.

He notices something lying on the asphalt, something
glittering amid the debris of the wreck, the broken glass and
twisted metal. He kneels and picks it up.

Lila, curious as to what he's found, walks over to him.

LILA (CONT'D)
What is it?

Sam, on one knee, shows her the diamond ring. It glitters in
the lights of the bridge.