

THE MEYEROWITZ STORIES

(New and Selected)

Written by  
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TITLE:

DANNY

TEXT:

Danny Meyerowitz was trying to park.

The sound of car HORNS.

INT. DANNY'S SUBARU OUTBACK. DAY

Danny Meyerowitz, mid-40's, is backing up on the Bowery. He wears a soft brown leather jacket and shorts. Eliza, his 18 year old daughter, is flipping channels on the radio.

ELIZA

I'm really thinking about being vegetarian again.

DANNY

Eliza--

ELIZA

Do you realize, eating meat is worse than driving an SUV for a year.

DANNY

Eliza, am I fitting?

A car honks.

DANNY

I'm parking asshole!  
(twisting the wheel)  
I can't believe that's true.

ELIZA

It's true, Dad. I'll send you the Podcast.

DANNY

I don't think I'm fitting.

ELIZA

I'm telling you. It's a big thing we can do for the environment.

DANNY

Let's look it up. But not while I'm pulling THIS maneuver.

He turns the wheel dramatically. There's a scraping sound followed by a thud.



DANNY

We've been around. I'm going to try further East.

(an idea)

There should be an App for parking. Is there an App for parking?

ELIZA

They're working on it.

(re: the street they're on)

This is all No Parking.

DANNY

How did I do this wrong?

ELIZA

It's OK, Dad. Why don't we just garage it?

DANNY

Do you know how much it is to garage it around here? If we garage it, you can't go to college. That's why.

ELIZA

(smiling)

I'll pay half.

DANNY

I'm not taking your money.

(sighs)

What's the matter with me? I'm usually very good at this.

ELIZA

It's OK--

DANNY

I'm an extremely good parker. I have a real eye for it.

ELIZA

I know.

DANNY

Now, I'm over-thinking it. I'm getting gun-shy.

Sweating, he wrestles with his jacket trying to take it off. He drives while doing this.

ELIZA

Dad, wait until we're stopped.

DANNY

I'm hot, it's interfering with my mobility--

ELIZA

Let me help you then.

She leans over and helps him take it off.

DANNY  
 (looking in the rear-view  
 mirror)  
 Are these the same people that  
 were behind us?

ELIZA  
 I don't know.

DANNY  
 (re: his jacket)  
 Keep it right-side up, my  
 wallet's in there.

He turns the song down.

DANNY  
 The song was distracting.

ELIZA  
 It's too good!

DANNY  
 (half smiling)  
 It is too good.

They stop at a light. Danny gazes outside.

DANNY  
 (musing)  
 There's so much construction in  
 Manhattan. They're just endlessly  
 building. I used to go dancing  
 around here. At Danceteria. Me  
 and your uncle Matthew. Now, it's  
 all banks.

ELIZA  
 You guys went dancing together?

DANNY  
 We went together, we didn't dance  
 together. For a short time in the  
 80's we hung out. I had moves,  
 I'm telling you. Is this a museum  
 now? Everything's glass.

ELIZA  
 Do you like the photographer, Cindy  
 Sherman? Marcus and me went to the  
 Cindy Sherman show at MOMA last  
 week.

They start moving.

DANNY  
(pointedly)  
Yes, I like Cindy Sherman.

ELIZA  
(confused)  
What?

DANNY  
I told you about Cindy Sherman  
like two years ago.

ELIZA  
(shrugs)  
I don't remember.

DANNY  
I did! And you had NO interest.

ELIZA  
I don't know.

DANNY  
When Marcus tells you, suddenly  
you listen. I'm telling you, I've  
got good recommendations. I mean,  
I have a few years on you.

He hits the brakes. HORNS!

DANNY  
Is this a spot? What do these  
signs say?

ELIZA  
Um, I'm trying to see.

Another car honks behind them.

DANNY  
Quick, Eliza...  
ELIZA  
I find parking signs  
confusing. What's today?

Blaring honking. Danny swerves back into traffic.

DANNY  
This asshole is riding my tail.

ELIZA  
I think it was a good space.

DANNY  
Can I back up?

ELIZA  
(looking over her shoulder)  
I don't think so.

Horns!

DANNY  
Shit! He's on my tail. I've got  
to go around.

ELIZA  
We should just garage it.

DANNY  
Son. Of. A. Bitch!

ELIZA  
Stop yelling in the car! He can't  
hear you. Only I can hear you.

DANNY  
(looking in the rearview)  
This is just Nobody Can Fucking  
Drive Day.  
(horns!)  
SHUT THE FUCK--

EXT./INT. TOWNHOUSE, LOWER MANHATTAN. DAY

The door opens with a light creak.

DANNY  
(softly)  
Yoo-hoo. Hello?

Danny carries a duffel bag, holds a suitcase and walks with a slight limp. Eliza follows behind him.

DANNY  
(to Eliza, concerned)  
The outer door was ajar. And the  
button on the foyer door was  
pressed and unlocked.

ELIZA  
Something smells weird.

A big poodle leaps up on Danny and Eliza. Eliza screams.

ELIZA  
Oh wow! Hello!

HAROLD (O.S.)  
Down Bruno! Bruno, down!

DANNY  
Whose dog is this?

HAROLD  
Bruno!

Harold Meyerowitz, 70's, is bearded, wearing a green polo shirt with a knit tie and a knee-high work coat. He also has a red bruise on the side of his face.

ELIZA  
(to the dog)  
Where did you come from?

HAROLD  
Maureen and I bought him from a very elegant apricot poodle farm near the country house.

ELIZA  
Hi Bruno! Oh, you're crazy, aren't you?

DANNY  
(while hugging his Dad)  
Dad, the outer door was left open.  
(demonstrating)  
And someone pressed the button in on the foyer door--

HAROLD  
Maureen is always doing something.  
(shouting)  
Maureen!

DANNY  
I'm telling you, you got to be careful. It's crazy to leave the doors open. This isn't the country.

HAROLD  
(to the leaping dog)  
Bruno!  
(to the air)  
Maureen!  
(to Danny and Eliza)  
This house isn't very big, but she never seems to be able to hear me.  
(again)  
Maureen!

MAUREEN (O.S.)  
What?

HAROLD  
Did you leave the front door open?





HAROLD  
 Maureen won't even walk that path anymore. She was mauled by a buck.

DANNY  
 A buck? In the Berkshires?

HAROLD  
 A male deer.

DANNY  
 Really?

HAROLD  
 Maybe it was a big dog or a small boy. In her indomitable way she survived with just a nasty raspberry on her knee, but her wallet was gone.

He takes Eliza's hand and leads her further inside. They pass the living room where the TV is on the baseball game.

HAROLD  
 The Mets just relinquished the lead.

DANNY  
 Shit, it was tied when we were in the car.

HAROLD  
 Collins shouldn't have left Syndergaard in. He was clearly tiring.

\*

Jean, 50's, rises from the couch, watching the game. She's Danny's older sister.

JEAN  
 I could tell Dad wanted to say Hi to you guys by himself.

DANNY  
 (startles)  
 Hey. When'd you get here?

HAROLD (O.S.)  
 Your sister is here.

Her hair is graying and she doesn't dye it. She wears a blazer with an abstract pin on the lapel and big hanging earrings and glasses. She dresses how she probably dressed twenty-five years ago.

JEAN  
 Couple hours ago. Thanks for  
 showing up late.

DANNY  
 Sorry, we were--

JEAN  
 I made cookies but I stepped  
 in dog shit.

She hugs Eliza and Danny.

JEAN  
 I like your jacket.

ELIZA  
 Thanks. I like your pin.

JEAN  
 Are you excited for college  
 tomorrow?

ELIZA  
 I really can't wait.

JEAN  
 Dad keeps saying he wishes he  
 hadn't retired now so that you  
 could take his class. If that's  
 even allowed at Bard.

ELIZA  
 I couldn't make sculpture,  
 that's too intimidating.

DANNY  
 She's very excited which I'm  
 trying not to take  
 personally. I'm bad with  
 transitions.

JEAN  
 You don't leave the house. There  
 are no transitions.  
 (whispers to Danny)  
 Maureen's plastered.

HAROLD  
 (yelling up the stairs)  
 Maureen, every one is here! Come  
 down!  
 (to the group)  
 She's making shark.

ELIZA  
 I don't think I've ever had  
 shark.

HAROLD  
 Maureen's a real gourmand.

JEAN  
 (meeting Eliza's eyes)  
 Well, you're in for a treat.

HAROLD  
 (loud whisper to Danny)  
 Maureen's been sober for six  
 weeks.

DANNY  
 Oh, OK.

HAROLD  
 I tell her, I don't like you when  
 you drink. She becomes a  
 different person.  
 (to Eliza)  
 I made her a deal, I told her, if  
 you stop drinking, we'll get a  
 dog.

INT. DINING ROOM

CLOSE: A bowl of bouillabaisse. All the clam and mussel  
 shells are still closed shut. A fork picks through the  
 uncooked slab of shark.

HAROLD (O.S.)  
 This is very handsome shellfish,  
 Maureen.

Eliza makes a face.

MAUREEN  
 The Dad says you're going to study  
 film at college.

The family sits around a wooden table. Maureen, 50's,  
 looks plastered. She wears an Indian patterned caftan and  
 a big bulky necklace she probably got at a craft fair.

ELIZA  
 Yeah.

MAUREEN  
 That seems to be what everybody is  
 doing these days. I think the Dad  
 hoped you'd follow in his  
 footsteps and take sculpture--

HAROLD  
 No, I think it's good she's doing  
 her own thing. Since Clarence had  
 his stroke and I retired, the art  
 department at Bard has really  
 suffered.

DANNY

She's quite a good editor.

Danny is trying to pry open a clam shell. Eliza moves the food around on her plate. Harold eats quickly and messily.

HAROLD

So, now we have a sculptor and a filmmaker in the family.

ELIZA

(re: Danny)

And a musician.

HAROLD

And an accountant which sounds uninteresting, but Matthew's in fact the only one in the family who's figured out how to make money. Sign of the times.

He laughs at his own remark.

HAROLD

I would have thought we'd have had more artists in this family.

ELIZA

What about Dad?

Eliza looks over to Danny, who listens closely, perhaps waiting to be mentioned himself.

DANNY

(finally)

I'm artistic.

HAROLD

Matthew showed interest in fine art and Danny had musical talent. But Matthew was also talented musically and a wonderful mimic.

He looks at Jean and hesitates.

HAROLD

Jean, you showed interest in photography.

JEAN

At Montessori, yeah. In my office at Xerox, I'm known as the resident auteur. I make funny movies for my co-worker's birthdays.

ELIZA  
They're really good.

Danny finally breaks open his clam shell. He meets eyes with Eliza. She slowly shakes her head at him: Don't do it. He drops the shell back into the bowl, nodding, OK.

MAUREEN  
We have no idea what Jean does at Xerox.

JEAN  
I'm a facilities manager for special--

MAUREEN  
When was the last job you had, Danny?

ELIZA  
(helping out her Dad)  
Those piano lessons--

DANNY  
Well...except for the piano lessons--

ELIZA  
--and there was a gig at Beefsteak Charlies.

DANNY  
I haven't really worked in a...since Eliza was born...

HAROLD  
Danny was a house-husband. But now with the separation, he's going to have to get a job. You can't take alimony, that's not right.

MAUREEN  
What will you do for money?

DANNY  
Well, we just sold the apartment and we'll split that.  
(reassuringly placing his hand on Eliza's back)  
Karen...Karen is getting an apartment in Ditmas and I'm...I'll be staying here for a little, of course, while I figure it out. Thank you, again.

He looks to his Dad for some acknowledgement. He gets none.

MAUREEN

While you're staying here, would you please go through all the boxes upstairs and take whatever papers and posters you want from your childhood.

HAROLD

(to Eliza)  
Maureen is taking a fancy trip to Easter Island on Monday with a group.

MAUREEN

And when I'm back, we're going to start throwing things away.

DANNY

We don't really have anything here.

JEAN

We lived in Queens with our mother.

DANNY

Yeah, it's mostly Matthew's stuff, but OK.

HAROLD

(excitedly)  
Matthew's coming out from the coast in a few weeks. He corresponded with me about meeting for lunch.

Danny looks up, surprised.

DANNY

Matt is?

Danny absentmindedly puts some shark in his mouth and then takes it right back out.

MAUREEN

He has some wealthy clients who are coming here on Sunday to look at the Dad's work.

DANNY

Matt does?

HAROLD

Apparently they're both admirers of mine.

MAUREEN

We never hear from him and then suddenly...poof!

HAROLD  
That's not true, he and I  
correspond quite frequently.

ELIZA  
He texts with me.

They all look at Eliza. Danny frowns.

DANNY  
You guys text? About what?

ELIZA  
(shrugs)  
I don't know. Things.  
Life.

DANNY  
Maybe I'll try to see him  
when he's here.

HAROLD  
He's only here for a day to see a  
client and he wants to see me  
during that time. Eliza, have  
more shark. Maureen, give my  
granddaughter more shark!

Maureen heaps more shark on Eliza's plate.

MAUREEN  
You kids don't eat.

Jean starts clearing. Maureen and Danny help her. Eliza  
remains with her grandfather, pretending to eat her shark.  
We MOVE between the adjacent kitchen and the dining room.

JEAN  
It's amazing how much Matthew's  
clients make when you think about  
what a teacher or nurse earns--

HAROLD  
I think I would have had greater  
success if I had been more  
fashionable.

MAUREEN  
Well, you were always out of step  
with the times.

HAROLD  
That's true, I was a vanguard.  
L.J. Shapiro said that about me.

Jean reenters from the kitchen bringing out coffee cups.



JEAN

You know L.J.'s having a retrospective at MOMA.

HAROLD

(didn't know)

Is he? L.J. was always very political. He's not untalented, but he's a very skillful operator.

MAUREEN (O.S.)

You didn't play the game.

HAROLD

You know L.J. and I showed together at Paula Cooper in the late 60's. And believe it or not, I was the headliner.

Danny, still distracted by discussion of Matthew says to Jean:

DANNY

Do you think I should e-mail Matt about his visit?

JEAN

Why not?

DANNY

I don't want to be presumptuous.

JEAN

He's your brother, Dan.

DANNY

(shrugs)

Half.

Maureen reenters.

MAUREEN

Isn't that when the Whitney bought a piece of yours?

HAROLD

Yes. They were going to buy more work too, but Bernie, my dealer at the time didn't like the deal. I probably shouldn't have listened to him.

DANNY  
(continuing to Jean)  
I don't know, he didn't respond  
the last time I reached out.

Harold pries open another clam and eats it. Eliza makes a  
disgusted face to herself.

JEAN  
When I called and wrote the  
Whitney about it, they couldn't  
find it.

HAROLD  
It's there.

JEAN  
They can't find it.

HAROLD  
Jean, damnit, they have the work!

JEAN  
(chastised)  
OK, OK...

Jean takes Eliza's full plate, rescuing her from eating  
anything more, and says in her ear:

JEAN  
It's lost.

INT. HALLWAY

We hear family conversation from the other room. Danny  
turns the knob on the bathroom door. It opens and Maureen  
immediately comes out, wearing rose tinted glasses, but  
where you can see her eyes.

DANNY  
Oh...sorry.

Maureen mumbles something. Danny enters.

INT. BATHROOM

Danny flushes. A strange rattling sound. He lifts up the  
back of the toilet. Inside, bouncing around the chain, are  
several small, pint-size liquor bottles.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Danny and Eliza sit at an upright piano. Danny plays the  
top keys, Eliza the bottom.

DANNY  
This is a Meyerowitz/Meyerowitz  
composition.

ELIZA  
We wrote it when I was nine.

CUT TO: CLOSE on a book of Harold's work.

HAROLD (O.S.)  
The work looks stunning all  
together like this. Danny, you  
made this?

Harold sits with Jean on a old corduroy couch. They eat  
cookies Jean made. Harold hands the book to Maureen.

MAUREEN  
(reading)  
Harold Meyerowitz: A  
Retrospective.

DANNY  
Jean and I did it, yes.

JEAN  
You send in the pictures and they  
make it for you.

DANNY  
(from the piano)  
Oh, Dad, Jean and I spoke with a  
woman at the museum at Bard--

Danny looks at Jean who nods for him to continue.

HAROLD  
Is that Hilma Federman?

DANNY  
Hilma, yes. And there's some  
interest at Bard in doing a show--

MAUREEN  
That's the least they can do for  
you after all those years you've  
given them.

Maureen randomly clears a plate and leaves the room.

DANNY  
I think with Eliza going this fall  
and your history there as a  
teacher, we have a good shot--

HAROLD

Danny, make sure Hilma sees the book. A retrospective at this point would be a real feather in my cap. And I think bring attention to the new work.

Jean looks at Danny, who stops playing.

DANNY

Well, the thing is Dad...it would be part of a group show.

JEAN

Bard Faculty.

HAROLD

A group show? No. That's essentially an insult. I think Hilma's angry because I voted against her chairmanship. Tell Hilma, No.

DANNY

Hilma hasn't offered it yet.

HAROLD

Well, when she does, tell her, No.

Danny continues playing. Eliza and Danny finish the song.

JEAN

That sounded great. You've gotten good, Eliza.

ELIZA

(putting her head on  
Danny's shoulder)  
I had a good teacher.

EXT. HAROLD'S HOUSE, BLEECKER STREET. NIGHT

Eliza waits with Danny outside the house.

DANNY

Is shark bad or was that bad shark?

ELIZA

Dad, it was raw! The rice was hard, the shell fish was closed.

Danny removes a piece of trash that's blown up on the walk. He walks uneasily over to a trash can and chucks it.

ELIZA

Dad, your limp is worse.

DANNY

It's always worse after I've been sitting. I need to stretch it.

ELIZA

Please see someone about it.

DANNY

I have an appointment with an acupuncturist on Tuesday.

ELIZA

Someone real please.

He looks at her. Tears run down her face. He hugs her.

DANNY

I'm telling you, you're going to meet a lot of wonderful, interesting new people. Or I imagine you will as I didn't make it more than a month at college because I liked drugs so much.

ELIZA

I'm going to miss you and Mom.

DANNY

I know. We'll miss you too.

ELIZA

I still haven't wrapped my mind around it. You not being together.

DANNY

We wouldn't have made it this long if it weren't for you.

ELIZA

(wiping her face)

That's a lot of responsibility.

DANNY

You know what I mean. We don't get along when it's just us. I'm sorry I don't get to drive you, but your mom won that one.

ELIZA

It's OK. She's a good driver.

DANNY

Remind her when you're going up tomorrow, the Taconic is a speed trap. There are cops everywhere.

ELIZA

I will.

DANNY

And I'll be up there whenever you're ready for me.

ELIZA

Will you be OK here?

DANNY

Yeah, it'll be nice to spend time with Dad while Maureen's away. You know I didn't get a lot of time with him growing up. After he left my mom and married Julia, and they had Matt...we didn't see so much of him. It's an opportunity to get closer now.

ELIZA

It's nice you and Jean are getting him this show.

DANNY

I know it's just a college show, but I think it could really put him back on the map. The work is good and deserves more exposure.

A car has pulled up at the corner. A bearded guy, 18, behind the wheel.

DANNY

Hey Marcus!

MARCUS

Hey, Danny.

DANNY

You're a truly wonderful girl.

ELIZA

You've been a great Dad.

DANNY

Well, I think I still am.

ELIZA

I didn't mean it that way.

Danny hugs Eliza. He's crying now too. She releases and runs toward the car.

DANNY

Text when you get to--

INT. HAROLD'S STUDIO. MORNING

A pile of old, outdated computers. Movie stills and lobby cards on the walls from European movies. A few family photographs and pictures from art shows. Paint cans, old welding materials, planks of wood, screws and various tools.

Harold shows a couple, Brian and James, 40's, both sharply dressed, his work. Maureen and Danny hover nearby.

BRIAN

This one is interesting.

MAUREEN

I think it's a masterpiece.

HAROLD

It's intended as a sort of sequel to Gilded Halfwing.

JAMES

That's the squiggly one outside Lincoln Center?

MAUREEN

Yes, Gilded Halfwing.

HAROLD

That's probably my most well known work, it has a young man's energy, but I like to think the later work is richer and more interesting.

JAMES

When Matthew told me that was yours, I was like, I walk by that all the time. We're on Central Park West now, but have been looking for the right place downtown.

James wanders into an adjacent bathroom.

MAUREEN

Show them the wood structures.

HAROLD

Yes, I've been working in wood recently. Danny, give me a hand.

Danny indicates a stacked metal structure tucked in the back.

DANNY

How about this one with the red?  
I always loved this one.

HAROLD

No, not that one. That's a minor work of mine.

Danny and Harold lug a couple of pieces into the center of the room. Brian wanders to the window and looks outside.

BRIAN

How's the noise in this area?

DANNY

It gets very loud. All the tourists.

MAUREEN

Only on weekends.

James tests the water on the tap and the toilet flush. Danny pokes his head around the corner finding James inspecting the fixtures.

DANNY

The art's over here.

JAMES

Yes, great.

He hurries back to find Harold with five new pieces.

HAROLD

It's largely intuitive really and in its way, a return to the old masters. I think I'm doing the best work of my life right now. But that's just one man's opinion.

INT. KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM

Maureen prepares lunch. Harold watches the game on TV.



MAUREEN

I found Brian very attractive.  
He's baby-faced but sinewy like an  
old lover of mine, Willem Dafoe.  
James has very firm calves.

HAROLD

They were very enthusiastic about  
the work.

Danny enters from the other room. He looks annoyed.

DANNY

Are they interested in the house  
or the art?

HAROLD

(considered)  
I think, the art.

MAUREEN

(walking past him)  
Both.

DANNY

What do you mean, both?

Harold watches the TV. Maureen walks into the kitchen.  
Danny follows her.

INT. KITCHEN

DANNY

Maureen, what do you mean, both?

MAUREEN

Per Matthew, they're interested in  
purchasing all of the work, some of  
the furniture, as well as the  
house.

DANNY

(alarmed)  
The house? What...what did you  
tell him?

MAUREEN

That we're open to exploring  
it.

HAROLD (O.S.)

(re: the game)  
The Mets are staging a  
comeback. They've got first  
and third with no one out.

DANNY

(suddenly agitated)  
You're thinking of selling the  
house? Why?

MAUREEN

It's very expensive to keep this place up. And we're spending more time at the country house now.

DANNY

But the country's yours.

MAUREEN

Well, I had it before we were married, but it's ours. Everything is ours now.

INT. LIVING ROOM

She heads toward the living room. Danny limps after her. Harold jerks back and forth with the movement of the game.

DANNY

(concerned)

You're selling ALL of the art? Why? Dad...I think...do you want to sell?

HAROLD

Oh come on! Cabrera just grounded into a double play.

DANNY

Matt set this up?

HAROLD

(distracted by the game)

I told him it was a family discussion.

DANNY

I think it is! I don't think you should sell AT ALL. I'm telling you.

HAROLD

I didn't expect you to get so upset about it.

DANNY

I am. I am upset about it!

MAUREEN

Why do you care?

DANNY

(suddenly emotional)  
I don't know. We've lived here  
for years.

HAROLD

You haven't. This is where  
Matthew grew up. You lived in  
Queens with your mother.

DANNY

I lived here for a year when I was  
sixteen.

(hesitates)

Your studio is here... They want  
ALL the art work? I mean, Dad,  
with a show here or there, your  
work might become valuable.

HAROLD

That is true.

DANNY

I say, No!

He hits his hand down on a table for emphasis.

HAROLD

Everyone in the family will be  
consulted before we sell anything.

DANNY

Matthew isn't here, you know.  
Matthew isn't in the house NOW.  
(wiping his eyes)  
It's a Meyerowitz tradition, this  
house.

MAUREEN

(hurt)

I guess I wouldn't know about  
that.

Maureen storms out of the room. We hear a door slam.

DANNY

I didn't mean it like that.

HAROLD

She gets sensitive about these  
things. She feels like an  
outsider and she doesn't have kids  
of her own.

(MORE)

HAROLD (CONT'D)  
I tell her, technically you're  
their step-mother.

MONTAGE:

EXT. TOWNHOUSE. LOWER MANHATTAN. DAY

Harold and Danny say goodbye to Maureen as she gets in a car service to the airport. She looks happy to go.

MAUREEN  
Take care of the Dad.

DANNY (V.O.)  
God damn it!

INT. HAROLD'S STUDIO

Danny has just missed a shot in their pool game. Harold lines his shot up with intensity.

DANNY  
Ah, the old Babooshka. I remember  
I spent months of allowance on  
that pool cue for your birthday.

Harold misses his shot.

HAROLD  
Son of a bitch!

He smashes the cue against the table shattering it in half.

INT. KITCHEN

Harold cooks blueberry pancakes. Danny sits at the breakfast table.

DANNY  
The famous blueberry pancakes.

Harold does a little dance and adds a flourish as he serves Danny.

EXT. THE BOWERY

Danny and Harold walk Bruno.

HAROLD  
The Mets need a middle inning  
reliever...

DANNY (V.O.)  
What do we have here?

INT. HAROLD'S STUDIO

A wall-shelf of VHS cassettes layered length-wise. Danny inspects them. Most have been taped from TV.

DANNY  
(pulling out a cassette)  
Yes, all on one tape: Videodrome,  
Beverly Hills Cop -- spelled  
wrong -- and Legal Eagles.

CUT TO: The two of them watching Legal Eagles on VHS. A piece of commercial comes up for a second then a rainbow wave and the movie returns.

HAROLD  
Daryl Hannah, while not only  
incredibly sexy, was quite a deft  
comedienne.

INT. KITCHEN

Danny looks under the sink for a fresh garbage bag and finds small liquor bottles stashed behind the bin.

HAROLD (O.S.)  
Does Jean talk to you ever about  
boyfriends or anything?

Harold enters. He hesitates upon seeing the liquor bottles.

HAROLD  
Maureen dresses them as dolls for  
kids at the hospital.

INT. HAROLD'S STUDY

Stacks of empty Con Ed envelopes with clear plastic windows. Art and film books on an old couch. Harold, Danny and Jean huddle around Harold's computer.

DANNY  
Eliza's first movie. OK, she sent  
a link. Dad, what's your  
password?

HAROLD  
Try Matthew.

Jean and Danny meet eyes.

CLOSE ON THE SCREEN: Eliza's movie entitled PAGINA MAN.

It's about a girl wanting to get laid before leaving for college, played by Eliza. She's partially nude in one scene. Gets fucked from behind in another. Pisses in a urinal in another.

ELIZA IN THE MOVIE  
(wearing a cape and mask)  
I've got a vagina and a penis.  
Call me Pagina Man!

It does have a sense of humor, though and style. But before it's over: Danny hits the space bar, pausing it.

DANNY  
I'm going to watch this first,  
alone, I think.

JEAN  
Wow. That was a hard R.

HAROLD  
It's handsomely shot and shows  
poise, but it's unremittingly  
vulgar.

END MONTAGE

HAROLD (V.O.)  
Oh, come on! He missed the tag.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Harold and Danny watch the Mets game.

DANNY  
You can see he was safe.

Harold switches off the TV in frustration.

DANNY	HAROLD
Dad!	I can see this. The Mets don't want it.

The phone rings. Harold picks up the old cordless. Danny turns the game back on.

HAROLD  
Hello?...Hello?...Who?...L.J.!...  
(brightening)  
Hey, hey!

DANNY  
They're pinch hitting for deGrom.

HAROLD  
 (to Danny)  
 Shhh...  
 (to L.J. on the phone)  
 What's that?

He pantomimes for Danny to turn the game down. Danny does. Harold angrily motions to do it further.

HAROLD  
 He was a talented kid when he took my class, sure...Yeah, I'd think he'd be an able assistant...OK... Oh, you know, doing the work...Bard has come to me about a show... What's the news there?...Oh, I didn't know, how are you doing?

Danny texts Eliza: Yo.

CLOSE ON THE PHONE: It goes through blue and Delivered. The dots come up as if something is being written back. Danny brightens.

HAROLD  
 Maureen says they're fete-ing you at MOMA...You and Tim Burton!...Right, Matisse and Picasso too, sure...

Danny waits.

CLOSE ON THE PHONE: The dots disappear. Nothing.

Danny, discouraged, puts his phone away.

HAROLD  
 Let's get a lunch one of these days, you still in the West Village?... Brooklyn?...Or to your opening?... I'm coming if you invite me...Next Friday...Yes, I think I can come. Although I've boycotted MOMA since they've started doing these theme park shows...OK, I'll see you there.

He hangs up. Instantly back to the game.

HAROLD  
 That was a strike! Turn it up.

DANNY

Was that L.J.? I always liked  
L.J..

HAROLD

He says he had a prostate surgery,  
I didn't know about.

DANNY

And I really like his work.

HAROLD

The early, experimental work is  
terrific. You know, he and I  
showed together at Paula Cooper  
back in the late 60's.

DANNY

Uh huh. I love the 80's stuff.  
Those bears.

HAROLD

You liked the bears? Hmm. I  
guess the bears. You know, back  
then, I was the headliner.

DANNY

I'd like to come if that's all  
right. It would be a real treat  
for me.

HAROLD

I think it's filled up. L.J. is  
getting me in special.

DANNY

OK.

HAROLD

I'll see about getting you a  
ticket. You might have to pay.

DANNY

OK, whatever.

INT. KITCHEN

Danny gets up and leaves the room. We FOLLOW him into the kitchen. He's trying to suppress his anger and hurt. He opens the fridge and takes out a carton of orange juice and pours himself a glass. He drinks and spits it across the kitchen floor.



DANNY

Oh God!

Harold comes in.

DANNY

Your orange juice is expired which I just realized is possible.

HAROLD

Do you have black tie?

DANNY

(can't hide his pleasure)  
I have a herring-bone blazer and slacks with a hummus stain on the fly?

HAROLD

I think we might have an extra belonging to Maureen's late ex-husband.

INT. MOMA LOBBY. DAY

They enter the lobby, both in outdated -- and in the case of Danny, ill-fitted -- tuxedos. Ahead: a spirited crowd mingles around the exhibit. A few people in suits, otherwise everyone is dressed pretty casually.

DANNY

Dad, no one is in tuxes.

HAROLD

I think I see a couple of people.

DANNY

I don't see ANYBODY.

Harold and Danny reach a table where two young, opaque pretty women consult iPads.

DANNY

We're Harold Meyerowitz.

GALLERY GIRL

(checks her iPad)  
OK, you're on the list for the public viewing which starts in forty-five minutes. Right now, this is a private viewing.

HAROLD  
 (under his breath to  
 Danny)  
 Tell her it's a mistake. L.J. put  
 me on the private list.

DANNY  
 OK.

HAROLD  
 Tell her this is bullshit.

DANNY  
 Dad--  
 (to the woman)  
 We're old friends with L.J..

GALLERY GIRL  
 Sorry, I can't let you in. Right  
 now it's a private event.

HAROLD  
 Tell her to tell L.J. we're--

DANNY  
 Dad, she can hear everything  
 you're saying. Let's just wait  
 for forty-five minutes--

HAROLD  
 I'm going to go home.

DANNY  
 Come on, Dad--

Harold pulls away from Danny and hurries toward the  
 revolving doors. Danny sighs.

DANNY  
 My father is Harold Meyerowitz, he  
 was a contemporary of L.J.'s.  
 Also a sculptor.

The Gallery Girl shrugs.

DANNY  
 Big night, huh?

L.J. (O.S.)  
 Danny?!

L.J., late 60's, excitedly approaches from behind. He's in  
 a white tank top with a tailored blazer over it and suit  
 pants. A scarf tied around his ankle.

Blue tinted glasses on his head. He walks over with Glenn Twitchell, 60's, in a suit, the MOMA curator.

L.J.  
(to the Gallery Girl)  
This guy giving you trouble?

She laughs heartily.

L.J.  
(hugging Danny)  
Danny, you were so damned young  
the last time I saw you.

DANNY  
Yeah, last time I saw you was at  
those Chinatown dinners you guys  
would throw. Those were great, I  
was living with Dad that year.

Glenn excuses himself and goes inside, greeted by guests.

L.J.  
It was you and Matthew. Always  
playing music. Your Dad was with  
Julia, I was with Maya. Before  
the divorces!

DANNY  
Well, before his second divorce,  
he'd already divorced my mom, but  
yeah, those were fun dinners.

L.J.  
(confused by the tuxedo)  
Are you going somewhere after  
this?

DANNY  
(muttering)  
Dad said it was black tie.

L.J.  
You know, Loretta's here.

DANNY  
(brightening)  
She is?

L.J.  
Yeah, she's floating around this  
rat-fuck somewhere.

DANNY  
 (looking around the room)  
 Oh...I'll look for her.

L.J.  
 There's the old man. One of my  
 favorite artists.

Danny looks around: Harold is now walking back toward them.  
 Harold smiles broadly.

HAROLD  
 Your hair's darker every time I  
 see you.

Harold and L.J. embrace. L.J. holds him warmly.

L.J.  
 (re: the tuxes)  
 Look at you. You guys are so  
 cute.  
 (taking Harold's arm)  
 Come have a drink. We're having  
 Zubrowka. I just reread The  
 Razor's Edge -- it's Larry  
 Durrell's drink.

HAROLD  
 I find Maugham to be skillful  
 without being an artist, but I'll  
 sip a red wine, if you have.

L.J.  
 It's the Museum of Modern Art.  
 Dammit, they have everything.

Harold follows L.J. into the party. Danny starts to follow  
 but they're quickly swallowed up by the crowds.

DANNY  
 (to himself)  
 OK.

INT. MOMA RECEPTION AREA

Danny, again, assesses the very non-tuxedo crowd, and  
 attempts to wander the premises as unself-consciously as  
 possible. He nervously hums an indecipherable tune.

Amongst the sculptures, and old high 8 video of a young  
 girl (Loretta) on monitors, he sees a woman, 40's, in a  
 simple, elegant dress.

DANNY  
Loretta?

LORETTA  
Danny? Holy shit.

They hug and kiss on the cheek. She has a genuinely open, and warm quality.

LORETTA  
(re: the kiss)  
You got my hair.

DANNY  
I did!

LORETTA  
I didn't know you were coming.

DANNY  
I came with my Dad.

LORETTA  
(frowns, re: the tux)  
Are you going somewhere after this?

DANNY  
(here we go again)  
No...no...

LORETTA  
Why are you so dressed up?

DANNY  
I don't know.  
(so annoyed at Dad)  
I don't fucking know!  
(laughs)  
I don't know.

LORETTA  
How is your Dad?

DANNY  
He's with your dad now which makes him happy. L.J.'s good for him, he knows how to have fun. His wife, you know, Maureen--

LORETTA  
I think I met her once at a Dia show--

DANNY  
She's in Easter Island so I'm staying with him now--

LORETTA  
Oh, that's nice of you.

DANNY

This is her dead ex-husband's tux.  
She drinks and I worry he's  
lonely.

LORETTA

Yeah, that's hard, that stuff.  
You know my mom struggled with a  
prescription thing for a while  
when we were kids. But she's  
great now, married again...and you  
saw Dad... yeah...life. Blah!  
(grabs his arms and  
shakes him  
affectionately)  
Danny Meyerowitz!

DANNY

(blushing)  
I'm telling ya.

Loretta undoes his badly knotted tie so it hangs open.

LORETTA

Wow, this was tied like a tennis  
shoe. There: More Sinatra.

DANNY

Yeah. Dad's my Sammy.

Loretta laughs.

INT. MOMA GALLERY ROOM

Harold has a red wine now. L.J. drinks his Zubrowka and is  
approached throughout by well-wishers.

HAROLD

The work looks good. I don't know  
that the presentation is helping.

L.J.

You think? Yeah, I think some of  
the bears are not well served.

HAROLD

In a sense, the work is more  
intimate than the space. But,  
hey, you're on a streak.

L.J.

(good naturedly)  
Don't say that! Streaks end.

Sigourney Weaver says Hi to L.J..

L.J.  
Sigourney Weaver, this is Harold  
Meyerowitz.

SIGOURNEY  
Hi, I'm Sigourney.

HAROLD  
I'm Harold.

SIGOURNEY  
(to L.J.)  
The work is beautiful. It's  
startling. Congratulations.

She moves on. L.J. turns back to Harold.

L.J.  
How are you, old man? How's  
Maureen?

HAROLD  
Bard has approached me about a  
show.

L.J.  
Are you still teaching there?

HAROLD  
I'm retired, but my grand-daughter  
just started as a freshman. She's  
making movies.

L.J.  
That's what they're all doing now.  
I say, don't teach 'em what we do,  
there's no damn money in that.

HAROLD  
Well, you seem to have found a  
way.

Glenn Twitchell, the curator, approaches, his back to  
Harold.

GLENN  
I hope it's OK, I invited  
Sigourney to the dinner  
afterwards.

L.J.  
Of course. I've known  
Sigourney for twenty years.  
Glenn, you remember--

GLENN  
I hear a rave tomorrow from  
Michael and Twitter has been  
almost entirely glowing.

L.J.  
Good, good.

GLENN  
We're going to have a good  
day.

Harold sips his wine and smiles along, although he's not  
part of the conversation.

L.J.  
Glenn Twitchell, Harold  
Meyerowitz. Harold, Glenn's the  
curator here now.

GLENN  
Nice to meet you.

HAROLD  
(starts to correct him)  
We've actually... Nice to  
meet you.

GLENN  
(realizing)  
Wait, Harold Meyerowitz? Shit, of  
course. We've met --

HAROLD  
In the 70's --

GLENN  
It's been a long time. What  
have you been doing?  
Forgive me, I don't know.  
Are you making art? Are you  
in the City?

More people approach Glenn.

GLENN  
Excuse me.

L.J. gives Harold's shoulder a squeeze. Harold says oddly  
over the din:

HAROLD  
How good are we?

L.J.  
(mis-hearing)  
How am I? I'm exhausted. This  
show took it out of me physically  
and emotionally...hold on a  
second, old man.

He's mobbed by more guests. Harold sinks back.



INT. MOMA RECEPTION AREA

CUT TO: The old high 8 video work on a monitor. A young girl with frizzy hair runs down an Upper West Side street. It's cut in a fragmentary, stuttering way.

DANNY

I remember you like that.

LORETTA

Yeah, I used to have mixed feelings about being part of Dad's art, but now I kind of love it. You know, he dedicated the catalogue to me.

DANNY

It's definitely a cool thing. This whole thing is really cool. It's special for me, I don't go out like this generally.

LORETTA

How's your family and everything?

DANNY

Well...Karen and I are splitting up. Split up.

LORETTA

Oh shit, sorry. I'm doing the same thing.

DANNY

(pleased)  
Really!

LORETTA

Yeah, but it's good. He...he's a good guy but can't get out of his own way. But my girls are handling it so great. How are you doing?

DANNY

Oh, fine. You know, Karen and I stayed together until Eliza went to school, but also I just didn't want to do what my Dad did, you know? Failed marriages and...you ever worry we're doing the same thing as them?

LORETTA

Oh, but we're so different, Dan.

DANNY

You think?

LORETTA

So different. We were raised like animals. We were feral! My worry is that we're too different. We're too close to our kids, don't you think? Parents shouldn't be best friends with their kids. I mean, I don't think my girls will ever move out!

Danny laughs.

DANNY

Yeah, I secretly hoped that about Eliza, but unfortunately she seems pretty healthy in that area.

Loretta laughs. Danny smiles broadly, pleased she's so engaged. Suddenly:

HAROLD (O.S.)

I want to go.

Danny startles. Harold is right behind him.

DANNY

Dad--

LORETTA

Harold!  
(identifying herself)  
Loretta!

Loretta hugs him and kisses him warmly on the cheek.

HAROLD

Oh, Loretta. Hi. I didn't recognize you at first.  
(to Danny)  
I'm going.

GUEST

(re: the video)  
There's that little girl I keep seeing running down 79th Street!

Loretta is swarmed by more well-wishers.

HAROLD  
 (to Danny)  
 I want to go.

DANNY  
 (trying to keep it light)  
 Just a few more minutes, roomie?

HAROLD  
 I'm leaving.

Harold hurries toward the EXIT. Danny looks at Loretta, who is distracted by the bigger group--

Danny gazes toward the EXIT where his father is wrestling open one of the big glass doors. Danny hesitates.

DANNY  
 Um, Loretta--

She doesn't hear him. He politely waits for a moment.

DANNY  
 Loretta!

She smiles at him, still talking to the group.

DANNY  
 (strangely pantomiming  
 leaving)  
 I have to go!

LORETTA  
 Oh, no. You sure? You guys  
 aren't staying for the dinner?

DANNY  
 I don't think we were invited to--

LORETTA  
 (to her friends)  
 Excuse me for a second.

She touches Danny's arm, her face open and welcoming.

DANNY  
 Yeah, I better... He's old.

LORETTA  
 (to Danny)  
 OK. Well...

DANNY  
 Great to see you.

LORETTA

So great.

She kisses him on the cheek.

DANNY

I got your hair again.

LORETTA

OK, bye Danny.

DANNY

Bye.

Danny hesitates. She turns back to her group. Danny knows he's blown it. He hurries after his father.

EXT. MOMA/5TH AVENUE. NIGHT

Danny is hit by a blast of cold air. His father is gone. He looks around to see:

Harold running toward 5th Avenue.

Danny takes off after his father, but with his limp and the jump Harold has already gotten, he's quite a bit behind.

DANNY

Dad!

Danny turns onto 5th Avenue. Harold is crossing the street. Danny hurries, dodging traffic. Horns.

DANNY

Dad!

Finally Danny catches up to him, out of breath.

DANNY

(out of breath)

Dad! Did you hear me?

Harold doesn't answer. Danny holds his hip.

DANNY

Shit.

They slowly walk together in silence. Then Harold lets it rip:

HAROLD

Ultimately L.J. is a popular but minor artist. There's a superficial bravura, but there's no unconscious, no discovery.

(MORE)

HAROLD (CONT'D)

I know you like the bears but it's a reshuffling of obnoxious cliches, like listening to music played slightly off-key.

DANNY

I didn't get to see it.

HAROLD

And the video work is embarrassing -  
- I've never forgiven L.J. for using Loretta in those pieces. You don't do that to a child. And it's a disturbing commentary on the culture that truly ordinary work, made mostly by his assistants, gets reverent reviews by critics who ought to know better. He's a talented, pretentious enigma.

Silence as they continue to walk past the bright lights of 5th Avenue stores and office buildings.

DANNY

It was nice to see Loretta.

HAROLD

(brightening)

She was very happy to see me. She gave me quite a kiss.

DANNY

I did well, I was pretty funny, I think. I didn't get her number or anything. Maybe I can get L.J.'s e-mail from you--

HAROLD

I don't feel comfortable giving it out. Maybe there's a work one.

DANNY

OK.

HAROLD

I met Sigourney Weaver who was very friendly. She said, "Hi, I'm Sigourney." I said, "Hi, I'm Harold."

Danny waits, but there isn't more. He looks for a cab.

HAROLD  
Have you thought about getting a  
job?

Danny shrugs.

HAROLD  
You've essentially never worked in  
your life.

Danny nods.

HAROLD  
I think you'd feel better about  
yourself.

Danny nods.

HAROLD  
Do you ever think about playing  
music again?

Danny shrugs.

HAROLD  
Maureen will be back next Thursday  
and you should think about where  
you're going to live. I mean, you  
can stay a while longer, but--

INT. HAROLD'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT

A clock reads: 9:40. Danny, still in his tux, walks by the piano and plays the opening chords of Van Halen's Jump.

He eats a sandwich and makes up the living room couch with a sheet and pillow. Harold appears in the doorway. He holds up black Vuarnet sunglasses.

HAROLD  
Maureen wanted me to remind you to  
go through the boxes and things  
upstairs because we're going to  
start throwing things away. You  
might want these sunglasses.

DANNY  
Those are Matthew's.

HAROLD  
I'm letting him know too.

CUT TO: Sitting on the made-up couch Danny dials his phone.

ELIZA'S VOICE  
 Hell-- Hello?  
 (laughter)  
 Sorry...hello?

DANNY  
 Yo, how are you doing?

ELIZA'S VOICE  
 (laughing)  
 Sorry, Elvis is making me laugh.

DANNY  
 Who...who's Elvis?

ELIZA'S VOICE  
 What? Sorry. Joaquin's roommate.

DANNY  
 Oh, OK. Who's Joaquin?

ELIZA'S VOICE  
 He's a friend. What's up Dad?

DANNY  
 Well, I'm at Harold's. We went to  
 L.J. Shapiro's opening at MOMA.

ELIZA'S VOICE  
 Was it fun?

DANNY  
 Yeah, for a little while.

ELIZA'S VOICE  
 You having fun with Grampa?

DANNY  
 I might go stay at Jean's in  
 Rochester for a while. I'll be  
 closer to you, but don't worry!

ELIZA'S VOICE  
 Ha. OK. We're going to see this  
 band and then there's a party.  
 Can I call you tomorrow?

DANNY  
 Yeah...yeah. I'll be up early.

ELIZA'S VOICE  
 (hesitates)  
 What's wrong?

DANNY  
 Nothing.

ELIZA'S VOICE  
I can hear it in your voice.      Nothing.      DANNY

ELIZA'S VOICE  
Tell me. Hold on, I'm going to  
step outside so we can talk.

DANNY  
No, no, go to the concert. I  
promise I'm fine.

ELIZA'S VOICE  
You promise?

DANNY  
Yes!

ELIZA'S VOICE  
OK, I'm going to keep my phone on  
in case you want to call. OK?

DANNY      ELIZA'S VOICE  
There's no need. Don't      Otherwise, let's talk in the  
worry.      morning.

DANNY  
OK. Have fun.

ELIZA'S VOICE  
But call if you need to.

DANNY  
I won't.

ELIZA'S VOICE  
Bye Dad!

DANNY  
Bye.

EXT. TOWNHOUSE. DAY

Danny lugs two big bags into the trunk of his Subaru. He tucks them amongst boxes, a rug, a lamp.

EXT. TOWNHOUSE. DANNY'S SUBARU

The front and back seats are also piled with bags and boxes. He starts the car. He fiddles with the satellite radio. Finds "Alligator Woman" by Cameo.

DANNY  
Ooh. Nice.



He turns it up and sings along. He starts backing up and pulling into traffic.

DANNY

Don't fake me out, out/Oh, you  
make me shout/Alligator woman, you-

-

He's greeted by a serenade of HORNS!

DANNY

(erupting)

Go fuck yourself! Go fuck  
yourself! GO FUCK YOURS---!!!!!!

BLACK

TITLE:

MATTHEW

TEXT:

Matthew had just arrived on the red-eye from LA.

INT. RANDY'S APARTMENT

The BLAST of JACKHAMMERS.

CUT TO: An apartment wall comes crashing down. The white plaster and dust billows and clouds the room.

As it settles we reveal Matthew Meyerowitz, mid-40's, crouched and holding his ears, his face still clenched in anticipation of the explosion. He wears a suit and tie.

The man next to him, Randy, 30, is dressed in a white V-neck and white karate pants with white wrestling sneakers.

RANDY

Is that OK?! Is that OK?! Is  
that OK that that just happened?!

MATT

It's OK!  
(to a workman)  
Right?

The guy says nothing.

RANDY

I don't know. I'm scared, Matt.

Randy walks through the rooms, Matthew following him.  
Workmen swirl around them, under them, above them.

RANDY

These guys are six months behind.

Matt hands him a piece of paper.

MATT

That's why I'm here. I put  
together a document that  
anticipates where you'll be at the  
end of the year vis a vis the  
overages.

RANDY

(takes the sheet)

Oh, for Christ. Really? Have we  
already spent this much?

MATT

That's the first page...

RANDY

(turns it around)

Suck a dick. Oh God. Really?

Another crashing sound. Matt looks around.

MATT

The change orders are adding up.  
We didn't budget for the salt  
water pool.

RANDY

(smiling)

But we're getting a salt water  
pool. In New York City, Matty.  
Every time I think of that pool, I  
do a Snoopy dance.

He does a Snoopy dance.

MATT

Below you'll see I made a list of  
things I think you should consider  
cutting back on.

Randy looks at the list.

RANDY

(jumping up and down)

No! The steam room makes me so  
happy.

MATT  
(consulting the sheet)  
You realize you have a steam room  
and a sauna?

Randy nods innocently.

MATT  
We have to make some decisions.  
(wiping plaster dust off  
his shoulder)  
It's too late to take out the  
sauna, but the Italian marble --  
the wine vault alone is a hundred  
grand.

RANDY  
You look tired.

Matt's phone rings.

MATT  
I can't sleep on the red-eye.

RANDY  
Let's get you a coffee.

Matt checks his phone. Dad.

RANDY  
I'm glad you're here, Matt.

MATT  
I'm not leaving until we've  
figured this out--

Matt doesn't answer his phone and they step into a shell of  
a room that's sealed off with plastic. More workmen.  
Hammering. Plaster dust drifts down on them.

RANDY  
(marveling)  
There are different people here  
every day.

The coffee machine sits alone atop a folding table. Randy  
pours the beans into the grinder and presses the button.

RANDY  
(shouting over the  
grinding)  
How's your kid?

MATT

Good. I'm in a fight with my wife right now, but...

(re: the sheet)

Randy, I don't want to sound alarmist, but you're not going to be able to sustain your lifestyle, if things continue like this.

Randy frowns like a child.

MATT

And you're not going on tour any time soon --

Randy hands Matt a coffee. Matt sips the coffee and smiles.

RANDY

Right?

MATT

It's nice.

RANDY

It's my own espresso bean. SEE, I'm doing everything I can to make a buck. The coffee will pay for the pool!

MATT

That might be too much pressure to put on the coffee--

Matt's phone rings again. He looks at it.

MATT

Here's what we're going to do. We're going to get you the pool.

RANDY

Yes!

MATT

But not this year. We're going to rent out the bottom floor which is zoned commercial anyway and we'll get a tenant for the second floor.

RANDY

But can't I afford--

MATT

The income from the rentals will cover the real estate taxes and you'll live on the top two floors in the meantime. Everything else you can have.

MATT  
Let me just...  
(answering)  
Hello?

RANDY  
Coffee makes me so happy.

A saw screams loudly in the other room. Matt plugs one ear with his finger and goes to the window.

EXT. WILLIAMSBURG RESTAURANT. INTERCUT

Harold stands outside a restaurant. He wears a camel colored blazer with a black turtleneck and baggy slacks. A denim flat cap on his head. He holds a poster roll and some envelopes and folders under his arm. He still has a slight bruise on the side of his face from his fall. They're jack-hammering in the street next to him.

HAROLD  
They won't seat me without you!

MATT  
Where are you?!

HAROLD  
I'm standing outside the place.

MATT  
You're forty-five minutes early.

HAROLD  
There are many available tables.  
The guy was a real jerk.

MATT  
We have a reservation, did you say  
my name?

HAROLD  
I said my name.

MATT  
Well, let me finish up here and  
we'll figure it out.

HAROLD  
How long are you going to be?

MATT  
I'll be there at one when we said  
we'd meet.

HAROLD

Well, hurry up. Parking was easier than I anticipated.

MATT

I'll see you soon!

Matt hangs up. Randy is talking to a guy with an open notebook. He turns to Matt and says decisively.

RANDY

We won't do the pool now.

MATT

I think that's the right decision.

Matt puts his hand on Randy's shoulder.

RANDY

(re: the phone)  
Everything OK?

MATT

Totally. Lunch with my father.

RANDY

Say no more!

MATT

No, now it's easy. When I was younger, I was so invested in his grievances, his anger at the world. They were mine too. Now, that I live three thousand miles away and have a good therapist, my own kid, a thriving business, I don't even get angry at him anymore. It's even just funny now...

(suddenly having trouble clearing his throat)

You know what's awesome about middle age, you now know more than your parents. You can guide the--

(coughing a bit now)

I'm sorry, I don't know why I'm suddenly, I think it's all this plaster dust and this coffee--

RANDY

(nods)

You need something?

MATT RANDY

Like what? Let's see--

Randy fishes into his pants-pocket and retrieves two loose different sized pills. He picks some additional lint out of his palm.

RANDY

--one brings you up and the other brings you down, but I'm not totally certain which is which.

MATT

You have a guess?

RANDY

I haven't worn these pants in a while.

He hands them to Matt. Matt puts it in his breast pocket.

RANDY

Thanks, Matt. I don't have anyone in my life like you.

EXT. WILLIAMSBURG RESTAURANT

Matthew hurries over to his Dad who has remained outside the restaurant. The street noise continues.

HAROLD

There's my son.

MATT

Hey.

They hug awkwardly. Harold hands Matt the poster roll and envelopes and papers and the Vuarnet sunglasses. Matt frowns.

HAROLD

These are yours. They were in the upstairs room. Maureen is throwing things out, I wanted you to have them.

MATT

(not thrilled to be carrying them)

Thanks. The Vuarnets are Danny's.

HAROLD

He said they were yours.

MATT  
No. You can throw them out.

HAROLD  
They're quite fancy.  
(hesitates)  
Maybe Maureen will use them.

He puts them in his jacket pocket.

MATT  
What happened to your face?

HAROLD  
We got a new dog, did I tell you?

MATT  
Maybe?

HAROLD  
Bruno...my charge, we call him Bruno. Named for the idiot in Werner Herzog's Stroczek.

MATT  
I've never seen it.

HAROLD  
Really? I own the cassette at home if you want to come over.

MATT  
So, what happened?

HAROLD  
He lunged for a deranged hare taking me in the process.  
(beat, sly smile)  
You should see the other dog.

MATT  
Are you all right?

HAROLD  
I'm fine. It wasn't his fault.

MATT  
Shall we go in?

HAROLD  
I'm not eating here.

MATT  
Because they wouldn't seat you?

HAROLD  
The guy was very obnoxious.

MATT  
Let me talk to him--



HAROLD  
No, let's go somewhere else.

MATT  
I only have an hour and a half.

HAROLD  
This is my protest. Like McEnroe.

Harold starts walking away. Matt hesitates.

MATT  
OK, let me think...

A man, 30's, Gabe, is trying to get Matt's attention from a table inside the restaurant. Matthew indicates for him to follow them.

Matthew and Harold walk. There seems to be construction everywhere they go. They pass wild-posting of ads for L.J. Shapiro's retrospective at MOMA.

HAROLD  
Not too far, because at three I have to put money in the meter.

Gabe, sprinting, catches up to them.

HAROLD  
This man is treading right on my heels.

MATT  
No, Dad, he's with me. This is Gabe, he works at my firm in New York.

Gabe joins them on the sidewalk.

GABE  
Nice to meet you, Mr. Meyerowitz.

Gabe reaches out to shake Harold's hand, but Harold doesn't take it.

MATT  
I thought Gabe could join us for part of lunch. His specialty is in estate planning--

HAROLD  
I have an accountant.

MATT

Barry Sukenick doesn't work on this scale, Dad.

GABE

I've had a chance to review some of the documents--

MATT

And as we move toward selling the house, I think it might be a good time to get some affairs in order.

HAROLD

If we sell the house, it will be my decision.

MATT

Well, Brian and James, who you met--

HAROLD

They were a very charming, interracial homosexual couple. And smart about the work. They were familiar with Gilded Halfwing.

MATT

Yes, James says they liked the work very much and they love the house. And they've made us an offer.

HAROLD

For the work too?

GABE

For the work, the house, some of the furniture...

INT. RESTAURANT #2

They enter the new restaurant.

MATT

(to the hostess)  
Hi, three, please.

HOSTESS

If you'll follow me--

They follow her to the table.

HAROLD

(pointedly to Matt)  
You know, your brother doesn't want to sell.

GABE

Brother?

They all sit.

MATT

Half-brother. We have a different mother.

(to Dad)

That's a real shame for him, then. Danny stands the most to benefit. He doesn't work.

HAROLD

He and Karen have separated.

MATT

(surprised)

Really?

HAROLD

I took him in, but now he's with Jean in Rochester.

MATT

Shit.

HAROLD

Apparently his mother moved to Florida, which I didn't know. Did you know that?

MATT

No.

HAROLD

She's also still angry at me apparently. You know, your brother and sister have helped organize a show for me up at Bard.

MATT

A retrospective?

HAROLD

A retrospective of the faculty, yes.

MATT

Like a group show?

HAROLD

There are other artists, yes, but I've been promised a very prominent place in the gallery.

MATT

(politely)

Sounds good. Congratulations.

Gabe gets out some papers from his briefcase.

GABE

You purchased the property in 1973 for 60 thousand dollars. But since, you've borrowed against the house a couple of times, the net proceeds have diminished--

HAROLD

Danny thinks after this show, my work could appreciate considerably in value and that we should wait.

MATT

(annoyed)

You just told me Danny doesn't want to sell at all. Dad, whatever happens at Bard, you can't afford the real estate taxes--

GABE

You're paying two grand a month in utilities. Even things you wouldn't think, the housekeeper...

MATT

Gabe--

HAROLD

(sternly to Gabe)  
Mercedes has been with us for years. And although I deplore her politics, I'm not letting her go.

GABE

I'm just giving examples--

HAROLD

(re: Gabe)  
Am I paying for him?

MATT

No, he's doing this as a favor to me. Gabe's specialty is not my specialty. I'm in personal wealth.

HAROLD

Something I wouldn't know about.

MATT

Gabe would only get paid when we sell.

HAROLD

I'm not giving Gabe anything. Absolutely not. And I'm not having this conversation with him. This is a private family matter.

GABE

OK. I understand.

HAROLD  
Normally a conspiracy is mounted  
by people close to you. I don't  
even know this asshole.

Harold stands up and walks toward the door.

MATT  
(to the waiter)  
We'll get a check.

GABE  
We didn't order anything.

MATT  
(sighs, to Gabe)  
Sorry.

Matt rises. He hands Gabe the poster roll and papers.

MATT  
Can you take this to the office  
for me?

GABE  
To file?

MATT  
No, it's some middle school term  
papers and a Risky Business  
poster.

INT. NEW FANCY RESTAURANT

Matt and Harold are stuffing bread into their mouths while they consult their menus. They sit at a table for four at the end of a crowded banquette.

HAROLD  
I wanted to punch Gabe in the  
nose.

MATT  
The owner of this place is a  
client, that's why we could get a  
table so last minute.

Matt continues, looking to impress his Dad even just a little.

MATT  
That's why they gave us this  
bigger table...  
(MORE)

MATT (CONT'D)  
I imagine they'll send us some  
complimentary stuff too...

Harold struggles with a small aspirin container.

MATT  
Is that Baby Aspirin?

HAROLD MATT  
Adult aspirin bothers my stomach. Are you OK?

HAROLD  
I've had some headaches. It's  
fine.

Harold chews the two aspirin.

MATT  
Have you gone to the doctor?

HAROLD  
It's not necessary.

Matt lays two phones out in front of him. One Blackberry,  
one iPhone.

HAROLD  
You're so important you need two  
phones.

MATT  
I saw L.J. has a show on at MOMA,  
I thought I'd check it out.

HAROLD  
(proudly)  
I was at the opening. I met  
Sigourney Weaver.

MATT  
How is L.J.?

HAROLD  
We chatted. She said to me,  
"My name is Sigourney." I  
said, "My name is Harold."

MATT  
Uh huh.

HAROLD  
L.J. says he's going to try  
to come to the show at Bard.

MATT  
(politely)  
That's great.

HAROLD

I'm sure L.J. would like to see you there.

MATT

(vaguely)

If I'm in town...

HAROLD

I think I'm going to show the bronze sphere. It's an early piece I made when you used to sit on the floor and watch me work. You remember that?

MATT

You've told me this before, and I don't remember it.

HAROLD

You would hand me tools and make suggestions as if you too were the artist.

MATT

Well, I wasn't.

HAROLD

It was originally untitled, but I'm going to call it "Matthew."

MATT

(changing the subject)

I'd like to see Eliza too. She sent me her movie which I thought was really good. Did you like it?

HAROLD

At that time I thought you might be interested in sculpture. Or maybe an actor or a comic. You were a very talented mimic.

MATT

I do the voices of a lot of my co-workers which cracks people up at the firm.

(doing a voice)

"I'm going to run downstairs for an esmoke." You don't know Ezra, but that's a pretty good imitation.

HAROLD

You were also very musical like Danny.

MATT

But Danny could really play.

HAROLD

He was chubby as a kid but surprisingly dexterous. No, that's true, Danny was quite gifted. I don't know why he didn't pursue it. I know he raised a child, but in this day and age, it's possible to do both.

MATT

There are so many other things that factor in, don't you think?

HAROLD

I suppose that's true, he had a difficult mother.

MATT

And poor Jean, I feel like she just opted out of...life. Has Jean ever had a boyfriend?

MATT

Or girlfriend?

HAROLD

Apparently her office-movies show real ability.

HAROLD

I thought you'd do something artistic.

MATT

I work with artists. I understand the temperament.

HAROLD

Maybe Eliza will be my heir in that department. Although she seems more commercially minded. And potentially a lesbian.

MATT

Really? I didn't get that.

(clears his throat)

You know, I think I mentioned to you, I left the company I was with and me and a couple of other people started our own firm.



HAROLD

Maureen is talking to a friend who works at the Times about getting someone to come up and review the show. In recent years, I've been essentially ignored by the Times and I think this might put me back on the map.

MATT

It was scary, and a big change, but things have settled and we're doing really well. A lot of our old clients came with us. I think we're a great alternative to some of the bigger firms.

MATT

(showing Harold an image on his phone)  
This is our logo.

Harold unfolds his collapsible drugstore glasses and puts them on.

HAROLD

Fifty-five dollars for a steak.

MATT

They're known for their meat here.

HAROLD

(reading the menu)  
And thirty-five dollars for a salmon. Do you get the salmon to blow you for that price?  
(Matt smiles politely)  
Do you want to split a salmon?

MATT

I'm going to get my own steak. I didn't eat on the plane.

HAROLD

A whole portion is going to be too much food for me.

MATT

Then eat what you can.

HAROLD

I'm just going to have a starter.

MATT

(pause)  
I'm paying.

The waiter comes.

WAITER  
Have you guys dined with us  
before? Do you have any  
questions?

HAROLD  
We have answers.

Matt takes out the pill from his pocket. He nibbles off a  
corner and tucks the rest away.

HAROLD  
I'm going to have the salad--

WAITER  
The little gem, OK.

HAROLD  
(hesitates)  
--to start and then the  
steak.

WAITER  
The six ounce or the twelve?

HAROLD  
Twelve. And...  
(turning to Matt)  
Maybe a spinach for the table.  
The potatoes sound good.

MATT  
Sure.

HAROLD  
Shall we get a wine?

MATT  
Live it up.

HAROLD  
And maybe this Brunello.

MATT  
I'll have the steak. And the  
market salad. And we don't have a  
ton of time so if you can bring  
everything at once...

The waiter leaves.

HAROLD  
How's my grandson who I never get  
to see?

MATT  
Here.

He shows a photo on his phone to Harold.

HAROLD  
He's quite handsome. His hair is  
so blonde.

MATT  
No, that's his friend, Sebastian.

HAROLD  
Oh, he's the one with his hand in  
his trousers.

MATT HAROLD  
He was tucking in his shirt. He looks like the child in  
Kubrick's The Shining.

MATT  
That's the sweater, I think.

HAROLD  
Handsome boy. Has the Meyerowitz  
eyes. Does he like the Knicks? I  
suppose he'll be a Laker fan since  
you're essentially an Angeleno at  
this point.

MATT HAROLD  
Yeah, but New York isn't I've never forgiven Kobe for  
what it was. My artist what he did.  
clients are all moving out  
west now.

MATT  
It's hard to have a relationship  
AND a child.

MATT  
I imagine you've felt that too.

HAROLD  
No, not really. I didn't find  
that difficult.

MATT  
Dad, you've been married FOUR  
times.

HAROLD  
Three. The first was annulled.

MATT  
I married her because of Tony,  
but...

(MORE)

MATT (CONT'D)

I don't know, I think about what it would mean to leave, but...even contemplating it makes me feel guilty.

HAROLD

Guilt is not a useful emotion. It blocks feeling. My advice is to go to work. Start a new project.

MATT

I work every day, Dad. I go to an office.

HAROLD

Well, I haven't met his mother so I can't advise you in that department.

MATT

You could have met her if you'd come to our wedding.

HAROLD

You did it in LA.

MATT

There are planes.

HAROLD

I always felt you should have invited your brother and sister.

MATT

They're half. I don't talk to them or know them really...

HAROLD

You and your brother were quite close as kids. I remember you dressing like him.

MATT

He lived with us for one year until you kicked him out.

HAROLD

I didn't kick him out. He needed to go back with his mom and Jean. Your mom felt we didn't have enough space.

MATT

Well, anyway, I didn't invite a lot of people, but everyone I invited, including Mom, came except for you.

HAROLD

Well, if you break up what does it matter anyway?

A fashionable European man and woman are eating at a smaller table next to Harold and Matt, in the same banquette. The European man, while in conversation, puts his glasses case on the Meyerowitz table.

HAROLD

It's so brazen.

MATT

What?

HAROLD

This jerk placed his glasses on our table.

MATT

I don't think he realizes.

HAROLD

No, he knows exactly what he's doing.

MATT

Dad, in terms of your estate, I don't want you to make mistakes that can be avoided.

HAROLD

Then they will be my mistakes.

They're served their wine.

HAROLD

Before she dried out, Maureen drank half my wine cellar so I haven't had any good wine in a while. But she's been sober now for six weeks.

MATT

Is she still going to AA?

HAROLD

She's doing it her own way.  
Maureen is made uncomfortable by AA  
which I can understand. It's quite  
infantilizing giving away your  
control like that.

MATT

I think that's the idea.

HAROLD

I tell Maureen, I don't like you  
when you drink. You become a  
different person, I say.  
(exasperated)  
Do we look like we need two  
ketchups?

MATT

What are you talking about?

HAROLD

This son of a bitch just put his  
ketchup on our table too.

The ketchup bottle is now next to the glasses case at the  
end of their table.

HAROLD

Before you know it, he'll be  
sitting in my lap.

The man balls up his napkin and puts it next to the ketchup  
and glasses case on their table.

HAROLD

I want to punch this guy in the  
nose.

MATT

It's fine Dad, we have the bigger  
table. Just let it go.

The man now places his wine glass on their table. Harold  
reaches over and takes a sip from the glass and puts it  
back. Matt looks horrified.

MATT

Dad, what the fuck--

The Man doesn't notice, however. He and his date are  
finishing up and preparing to leave.

MATT  
Please don't do that again.

HAROLD  
It's my protest.

MATT  
You better hope he doesn't have a cold.

The European man grabs his jacket from the shared banquette bench as Harold and leaves with his date.

MATT  
They're gone. Can you relax now?  
I'd like to relax now?

HAROLD  
So brazen.

MATT  
(changing the subject)  
I think the Knicks might be interesting this year--

HAROLD  
Wait a minute. Where's my jacket?

MATT  
Right next to you.

HAROLD  
This isn't my jacket.  
(he looks around)  
That son of a bitch took my jacket.

MATT  
What do you mean?

HAROLD  
He has my jacket, Matthew.

Outside the window, the European man and his date are talking. Their steaks are brought to the table.

MATT  
He's still outside-- I'll get it back.

HAROLD  
Shit, it's three o'clock. I have to put money in the meter.

MATT  
Forget it.

HAROLD  
(sternly)  
I'm not getting a ticket, Matthew.

MATT

Fuck it, I'm going to grab the  
guy, you get the check and settle  
up?

HAROLD

I thought you were paying. I  
wouldn't have ordered that wine  
otherwise.

MATT

Well, what do you want me to do?

HAROLD

Where's our waiter?  
(loudly to the waiter)  
Excuse me! Excuse me!

People look over at them.

MATT

Dad--

HAROLD

Can we get a bill?!

Matt is given the check and he instantly hands over his  
credit card.

HAROLD

(standing)  
You're not going to look at the  
bill? Make sure that it all adds  
up.

MATT

We don't have time Dad, he's  
getting away.

HAROLD

We never got the spinach. Or any  
of the free stuff you suggested  
they might give us--

EXT. STREET NEAR FANCY RESTAURANT

Matthew is running after the couple who is about a half  
block ahead. Matt keeps stopping and waiting for his  
father to partially catch up, pointing in the direction  
he's going, and then running ahead again.

MATT

Excuse me!



EUROPEAN MAN  
(immediately  
confrontational)  
What?

MATT  
Sorry. There was a mix-up back  
there. You seem to have taken my  
Dad's jacket.

EUROPEAN MAN  
What?

MATT  
You have his jacket. We have  
yours.  
(looking over his  
shoulder at Harold in  
the distance)  
It's on its way.

CUT TO: Harold is moving as quickly as possible. He stops to catch his breath. He watches his son up ahead talking heatedly with the European couple.

He puts his hand into the jacket pocket and retrieves a small piece of white paper. He stares at it.

CUT TO: The European man removes his right glove with his teeth and feels the material of his jacket with his bare hand.

EUROPEAN MAN  
This is my jacket, man.

MATT  
I think it isn't. Just wait until  
he gets here.

EUROPEAN MAN  
I know what jacket I took.

He and the woman start to walk away.

MATT  
(forcefully)  
I understand that, but you took  
the wrong one!

EUROPEAN MAN  
You're crazy, man.

Matt is now furious.

MATT

Listen, just wait a second, OK?  
Jesus, what does it cost you?  
Where you got to be?

EUROPEAN MAN

So crazy, man.

The couple walks briskly ahead. Harold is approaching Matt.

HAROLD

Where's he going?

Matt, turning it on now, catches up to the man and touches his shoulder.

MATT

Hey! Turn around!

The European Man turns around violently, his fist clenched.

EUROPEAN MAN

You want to get hit, man.

MATT

What's your problem? Can't you  
see, you took my father's jacket.  
He has yours. What's the fucking  
problem?!

Matt looks back at his father who is staring at the small piece of paper.

MATT

Dad give him his jacket. Dad?  
What's that?

HAROLD

It's a ticket stub to something  
called Fault In Our Stars.

EUROPEAN MAN

I don't know that.

MATT

Of course you do. It has kids  
dying of cancer. It was a big  
hit.

HAROLD

(suddenly)  
I've seen it.

MATT  
(incredulous)  
When did you see Fault In Our Stars?

HAROLD  
In the country at the Triplex. It was quite affecting actually. Those kids are tremendously winning.

Matt and the European man stare at Harold.

HAROLD  
Tell the man I want my jacket back.

MATT  
(to the man)  
Listen, give my father his jacket back and stop being such--

A look of realization passes across his face. He stops and turns around to his Dad.

MATT  
Dad, how would this guy have your ticket stub to Fault In Our Stars in his jacket?

HAROLD  
I guess that wouldn't make sense. Maybe this is my jacket.

EXT. STREET NEAR FANCY RESTAURANT. HAROLD'S CAR.

Harold approaches the car, smiling.

HAROLD  
No ticket. A stroke of luck.

Matt trails behind, exhausted and still worked up.

MATT  
That guy was a real asshole.

HAROLD  
He was. And we never really had our lunch.

MATT  
Fucking tourist. I should have said something more cutting.

(MORE)

MATT (CONT'D)

I let him get away with being a prick.

(annoyed at himself)

That's going to eat at me.

HAROLD

Are you sure you don't want to come to the house? Maureen was going to make pigeon.

MATT

I have to go, Dad.

HAROLD

Where are you going?

Matt hesitates, he doesn't want to have to say.

MATT

I'm going over to Mom's, actually.

HAROLD

Oh...maybe I'll go with you.

MATT

I don't know if that's--

INT. MATT'S MOM'S APARTMENT

We're in the midst of a conversation between Julia (early 70's and Matt's Mom), Harold and Matt. The place is warmly furnished with books on shelves, old rugs, photos of family.

JULIA

--and that was the summer on Martha's Vineyard with L.J. and Maya and Paul and Lori.

HAROLD

We were staying at the Knapp house, the one with that peculiar blind dog.

JULIA

And Matthew, you were making up all of those card games, do you remember? And there was one in particular where I asked if it was based on luck and you said it was based on "hope."

Harold gives Matthew a warm squeeze on the neck. Matthew smiles too.

JULIA

You "hope" you get a good card. And that's what we would say all summer. "It's based on hope."

HAROLD

I was commissioned to make Gilded Halfwing that summer. L.J. was very jealous, I had already sold a piece to the Whitney.

MATT

Where do they keep that piece?

HAROLD

(defensive)

It's not lost. They catalog these things.

MATT

I didn't say it was.

JULIA

Harold, did you see?

She points to a framed sketch on the wall. Harold goes over to it.

HAROLD

You still have one of the sketches-

-

JULIA

Yes.

HAROLD

--of Gilded Halfwing. It looks good here.

JULIA

Yeah, Cody really admires it. He says it gives him ideas.

HAROLD

I thought Cody was a gym teacher.

JULIA

He taught Spanish at PS 182 and coached the soccer team. Matthew, Cody's sons are coming for dinner. I'm making a meatloaf.

MATT

OK, good. I'm starving.

HAROLD

I told Matthew, this seems like an elaborate ruse just to get his parents back together.

Julia laughs.

MATT

You didn't tell me that.

Matt's phone is ringing. He checks it.

MATT  
This is Tony on Face Time, do you  
mind if I--

JULIA  
Harold, do you want a coffee or  
tea or anything?

MATT  
He has to go--

HAROLD  
Tea would be nice. I can't  
have coffee after four. And  
if you have a Triscuit or  
something. I'm also  
starving.

Matt steps away, somewhat hesitantly, as he doesn't like  
the idea of leaving his Dad alone with his Mom. He answers  
the phone holding it out to see his son on the other end.

MATT  
Hi, sweetheart.

TONY  
I'm playing a game for a minute,  
it's called All The Animals Are  
Dead.

MATT  
Can you move the phone up so I can  
see-- The other way...

TONY  
That's down.

MATT  
Down then, honey.

Matt watches his father and mother talking. Julia serves  
Harold tea.

JULIA  
Sorry, I'm in the middle of  
cooking for a big clan tonight.

HAROLD  
Is this my Buddenbrooks?

JULIA  
What?

Harold removes a book from the shelf

HAROLD  
I think this is my copy of  
Buddenbrooks.

Harold looks back at the shelf for other books that may have been his. Matt, distracted by his parents, frowns.

TONY

Would you rather a beard made from paper or a beard made from a tree?

MATT

What's a beard from a tree?

TONY

A beard made from a tree is like beard that is like a tree.

MATT

(to Tony)  
Like the leaves on a tree?

TONY

Yeah. But like a beard.

MATT

I guess a beard made from a tree?

TONY

Me too.

(new one)

Would you rather die from old age or kill yourself?

Matt watches his Dad sloppily blow his nose into a handkerchief.

MATT

(almost to himself)  
Old age, I guess.

TONY

Me too.

VICTORIA

Did you give him regular milk?

MATT

(startles)  
Victoria, I didn't know you were there.

VICTORIA

Of course I'm here, he doesn't know how to use the phone himself.

TONY

Yes, I do!

VICTORIA

He has red all over his cheeks and chin, he said Daddy gave me regular milk.

MATT  
He likes it better--

VICTORIA  
He can't have dairy.

MATT  
We don't know that for a fact--

TONY  
I'm going to press the button now.

MATT  
OK, I love you, baby.

VICTORIA  
Yes, we do know that--

TONY  
I'm pressing the--

And they've hung up.

Harold pages through the edition of Buddenbrooks. Julia is cooking at the stove in the background.

JULIA (O.S.)  
We were very thorough when we divided the books. That I remember.

MATT  
(approaching his father)  
Me too. Put it back, Dad.

He kind of half places it back.

HAROLD  
I've been looking for this edition.

MATT  
You've lived without it now for thirty years, I think you'll manage.

JULIA  
(walking back into the living room)  
You can take it, Harold, if you want. I've mostly stopped reading fiction.

MATT  
Dad, I'll walk you to your car.

HAROLD  
I can stay a bit longer.

Julia embraces Harold.



JULIA

It was so nice to see you again. I think the last time was Matt's graduation. You know, I've always wanted to say, and I've thought about writing or calling, but I just never did it... I have huge regrets about how I was with Danny and Jean. I was a kid too, in many ways, and they were so angry at me. I took your lead, frankly, and we were starting over -- we had Matthew! -- and we didn't want to look back, which was understandable, but...I wish I'd been more nurturing of them, more generous, more mothering, really. I think they've suffered in part because of that and I feel terrible. Anyway, I just wanted to say that.

EXT. MATT'S MOM'S APARTMENT. COBBLE HILL. NIGHT

Matt walks briskly, a step or two ahead of his father.

HAROLD

It's called flirting when you're young, I'm not sure what it's called when you're over seventy.

MATT

(pointing up ahead)  
You're just up here--

HAROLD

She still has my drawing on her wall next to the gym teacher's doodle.

MATT

Cody's a good guy.

HAROLD

Your mother's more comfortable ultimately being with men who are half-smart, men she can dominate. I was much too formidable. After our separation, and before Cody, she was with a homosexual and before that a man who had no foot.

They stop at the car.

HAROLD

Her fraudulent claims about not reading fiction I find offensive.

(MORE)

HAROLD (CONT'D)

She's masquerading as a populist so as not to threaten Cody, but it's a clever yet bogus subterfuge. It's a shame your mother, who knows better, has succumbed to this fashionable anti-art movement. This is why we have a Republican congress.

Matt sees that Harold carries the copy of Buddenbrooks. He frowns.

HAROLD

She said I could have it. It was mine originally.

MATT

(annoyed)

You have your keys?

HAROLD

She was clearly very happy to see me. When it ended we weren't on speaking terms, but now you see that big hug she insisted on giving me.

(pause)

You know, Maureen always says your mother was the love of my life.

MATT

You taking the bridge or the tunnel?

HAROLD

I thought you were leaving tomorrow? That's why I drove all the way into Brooklyn.

MATT

I'm staying a few days.

(coughs)

I was around all this plaster dust earlier...

HAROLD

We have lots of room. Maureen is keen on seeing you as well. You know, she's your step-mother as much as Cody is your step-father.

MATT

I told Mom I'd stay here.

HAROLD

Maybe you split half the time there and half with us?

MATT  
 (snapping)  
 I'm not splitting the time like I  
 did at fifteen.

HAROLD  
 It was very important to me, after  
 our separation, that I see you  
 half the time. I wanted to make  
 it up after Danny and Jean.

MATT  
 (with growing anger)  
 Then make it up to them.

HAROLD  
 I made a real effort with  
 you. Danny and Jean, I  
 could have done better, but  
 I don't see anything  
 significant I could have  
 done better with you.

MATT  
 Really? Nothing? You feel  
 like that all was great?

HAROLD  
 Come on, Matthew.

MATT  
 Danny definitely got shit, and  
 Jean didn't EVEN get shit. But I  
 got your focus and that fucked me  
 up in a whole other way.

HAROLD  
 Matthew, we never see each other,  
 let's not fight.

MATT  
 (furiously)  
 I keep thinking I know how to  
 handle you now, but then I see you  
 and I get suckered into your shit  
 all over again. Your career, your  
 jacket! And when I try to actually  
 help you like today, you WON'T  
 LISTEN.

Harold opens the car door and hesitates.

HAROLD  
 I don't know how I could be such a  
 bad father, look how successful  
 you are.

MATT  
 Right--

HAROLD  
 I could never be the  
 businessman you are.

MATT  
OK--

HAROLD  
I've said to Maureen, I don't know who Matthew takes after. I certainly didn't know how to make money.

Matt shouts across the vehicle.

MATT  
That's right, I don't take after you. None of us do. You had to be the only artist in the family. And it doesn't matter that I make money because you don't respect what I do!

Harold climbs in the car.

HAROLD  
What do you need my respect for, the world respects you because you make money.

MATT  
(throws up his hands)  
Ugh, I want to punch YOU in the nose!

Matt runs around to the driver's side.

HAROLD  
I know you think you can treat me this way because of your money.

MATT  
It doesn't matter how much money I make, you make me feel like a big piece of shit because YOU DON'T CARE ABOUT IT!

Harold starts the car.

MATT  
But you also actually DO! You're privately obsessed with it. You know that I BEAT you! I BEAT YOU!

The car pulls away.

MATT  
What the fuck am I talking about? I'm so angry at myself for getting sucked into THIS!  
(MORE)

MATT (CONT'D)  
(wailing, his head in his  
hands)  
I've wasted so much money on ther--

TITLE:

The Opening

TEXT:

In her twelve years as a neurosurgeon Dr. Malini Soni had never seen such a dramatic shove.

INT. NURSE'S STATION, PITTSFIELD HOSPITAL. DAY

The sucking and periodic beeping sounds of a hospital.

DR. SONI (V.O.)  
It's quite startling.

CUT TO: CLOSE on a CAT SCAN

DR. SONI (O.S.)  
A collection of fluids on the left side of the head was shoving the brain clear to the right.

A finger enters the frame, pointing.

DR. SONI (O.S.)  
His brain experienced so much pressure and irritation, that he was in an almost comatose state before we operated.

Dr. Soni, an Indian woman in her 40's, and Pam, 30's, a nurse hover above a computer screen at a terminal.

DR. SONI  
There was still some bleeding in the left frontal lobe, but no tissue was lost. The head trauma clogged up the spinal fluid absorption pathways which slows speech, causes lethargy, headaches.

Dr. Soni straightens up and heads for the door. Pam follows her into the --

DR. SONI  
 (shakes her head)  
 Honestly, this should have been  
 taken care of immediately after  
 the trauma.

PAM  
 Did you notice, his wife was  
 heavily perfumed, but I think I  
 smelled alcohol on her breath.

DR. SONI  
 Yes, I'm worried about her as  
 well.

They both stop at a hospital room doorway.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Danny and Jean sit in adjacent chairs. Danny, slumped, in  
 his soft leather jacket and shorts stares into space. He  
 has a brown grocery bag of clothes in his lap. Jean reads  
 a book. They both look exhausted.

Harold lies unconscious in bed, an oxygen mask on his face  
 and a drain protruding from a shaved portion of his head.

PAM  
 Oh, I didn't realize anyone was  
 here.

The siblings startle and both stand immediately. Danny's  
 bag slipping from his lap and hitting the floor, the  
 clothes spilling out.

DANNY  
 Shit! Sorry.

He starts collecting his underwear and socks.

JEAN	DANNY
Sleeping.	Not doing much...sleeping.

Pam checks his blood pressure and oxygen readings.

PAM  
 Good. You're family?

DANNY	JEAN
Yes, we got here once we heard --	Maureen only told us he was in the hospital this morning.

They look at one another, surprised they're both talking at once.

DANNY  
Via text. We drove from  
Rochester.

JEAN  
We wanted to talk to a  
doctor.

DANNY  
We haven't been able to get  
any information.

PAM  
I'm Pam. This is Dr. Soni.

JEAN  
Jean.

DANNY  
Danny.

JEAN  
Dr. Soni, can you tell us what's  
going on with our Dad?

DR. SONI  
When your mother is here we can go  
over everything.

DANNY  
She's our step-mother.

JEAN  
We both have another mother.

JEAN  
She would have been seven when she  
had me.

DR. SONI  
Well, when your step-mother comes  
back--

JEAN  
We can't find her.

DANNY  
Her voice-mail is full.

JEAN  
Why can't you tell us right now?

DR. SONI  
This is awkward.

DANNY  
What?

DR. SONI  
Um...I don't want to get involved  
in family dynamics, but she told  
me not to talk to anyone else.

DANNY

Well, that's not right, obviously.  
We're his kids.

JEAN

You can talk to us.

DR. SONI

No, that's what I'm saying: since  
she's the next of kin, I legally  
cannot talk to you. I'm very  
sorry.

They both stare back at her, desperate.

DANNY

He has an opening on Monday.

JEAN

(oddly)

This is our first real hospital.

DR. SONI

Talk to your step-mother...

EXT. PITTSFIELD BAR. DAY

Maureen furtively exits the local bar, wearing her rose  
tinted glasses, and heads briskly down the main street.

DANNY (O.S.)

Why did you tell the doctor not to  
talk to us?

She spots Danny and Jean out of the corner of her eye and  
picks up the pace.

JEAN

Maureen!

Danny and Jean run to catch up. Danny, limping worse than  
before.

MAUREEN

(re: his limp)

Are you moving that way on  
purpose?

DANNY

What? No? It's always worse  
after I've been sitting.

MAUREEN

I thought you were mocking me.





MAUREEN  
 (getting into the car)  
 Jean, you were wearing that same  
 sweater that last time I saw you.

JEAN  
 (baffled)  
 Was I?

Maureen starts the car, the siblings stand outside.

DANNY  
 (emotional)  
 Maureen, we've been sitting in  
 that room with him and he's  
 attached to those machines and  
 there's a drain in his head and  
 he's unconscious and we don't know  
 where you are or what's going on?  
 (snapping)  
 TALK TO THE DOC--

EXT. PITTSFIELD HOSPITAL PARKING LOT. SUNRISE

In the dawn light, a rental car pulls up. Matt climbs out  
 of the back holding a leather overnight bag. He wears his  
 suit, ruffled from the flight, with a T-shirt.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Matt sits across from his father who sleeps. Pam comes in.

PAM  
 Oh, hi.

Matt smiles tiredly.

MATT  
 Hey.

PAM  
 He's still sleeping? I'm  
 Pam, the nurse.

MATT  
 I'm Matt, the son.

PAM  
 Oh, I met your brother and sister.

MATT  
 Half brother and sister, yeah. Is  
 he OK?

PAM

Dr. Soni spoke with your step-mother and then with your siblings -- half-siblings -- and it's all been cleared up and she can talk to you freely now.

MATT

Oh...OK. How's he doing?

PAM

Your father was brought to us the night before last, but because he was taking baby aspirin, which thins the blood, Dr. Soni had to wait until the morning to operate.

MATT

What happened?

PAM

He had a chronic subdural hematoma, which in his case meant there had been steady bleeding in his head for some time.

MATT

How did he get this?

PAM

Something like this generally comes from a fall or if he hit his head--

MATT

He fell about four months ago. Bruno pulled him onto a path.

PAM

Honestly, I'm surprised he had such a delayed response. He must have a real tolerance for discomfort.

MATT

Will he be OK?

PAM

Well, because he waited so long, there was quite a bit of irritation in the frontal lobes and now that the pressure is off the brain, it causes severe agitation.

(MORE)

PAM (CONT'D)  
The frontal lobes are language.  
(pause)  
But it's potentially a hundred  
percent recoverable.

Harold opens his eyes and looks up at Matt.

PAM  
(backing out the door)  
I'll leave you guys.

MATT  
Thanks, Pam.

Harold smiles brightly, almost innocently. Matt smiles  
back, awkwardly.

MATT  
(to his Dad)  
Do you know my name?

HAROLD  
Of course, it's Matthew.

Matt, encouraged, holds up his phone.

MATT  
What is this?

HAROLD  
Blackberry.

MATT  
(smiles)  
Yes.

HAROLD  
This is...

MATT  
What, Dad?

HAROLD  
This... You...

MATT  
It's OK, we don't have to talk.

HAROLD  
I can say it.  
(slowly but clearly)  
You're here. Is...what I wanted.

Matt hesitates.

MATT  
How...how are you feeling?

HAROLD  
I'm happy...you're here.

MATT  
Yeah... I took a red-eye when I heard.

HAROLD  
That makes me happy.

MATT  
(wiping his face)  
Thank you, Dad. I'm sorry...we...  
I'm sorry this happened.

Harold takes Matt's hand.

HAROLD  
When is my...?  
(he makes a face having  
difficulty with the  
word)

MATT  
Your opening? It's on Monday.

HAROLD  
Is that today?

MATT  
No, today is Wednesday.

HAROLD  
Will...it happen?

MATT  
It will happen, Dad. I don't know  
if you'll be able to go.

HAROLD  
Will you?

MATT  
Sure. I'll go.

HAROLD  
You speak for me.

MATT  
I can say something, yes.

HAROLD  
It's yours...

Harold smiles and closes his eyes. The first light from outside now arriving through the window.

HAROLD  
We made it together.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY

Matt approaches Pam.

MATT  
I have a meeting in the City which  
I really need to go to.

PAM  
OK. MATT  
That's OK, right?

PAM  
Um...sure.

MATT  
I mean, he's OK, right? I'm not  
abandoning him?

PAM MATT  
I can't really answer that I just have this client  
for-- meeting.

PAM  
I understand.

MATT  
He's OK, right?

PAM  
(warmly)  
I think so. Yes.

MATT  
You have my number. Call me if  
anything changes.

TONY (V.O.)  
Where you are?

EXT. GAS STATION

Matt pumps gas and talks to Tony on Face Time. It's a chilly morning and he didn't put a coat on when he got out of the car.

MATT  
I'm in Pittsfield. It's in  
Massachusetts.

TONY'S VOICE  
Is that like New York?

MATT  
Well, it's a different state.

TONY'S VOICE  
It's sunny here. What's it there?

MATT  
It looks like rain.

TONY'S VOICE  
You can't fight the weather. You  
can fight knights.

MATT  
Yeah.

TONY'S VOICE  
And ninjas. You know who is good  
at playing ninjas? Jim.

MATT  
Who's Jim?

TONY'S VOICE  
He's a handyman.

MATT  
I've never heard of Jim.

TONY'S VOICE  
You used to live here but you  
don't anymore. If you did, you'd  
know Jim.

MATT  
Do you see a lot of Jim?

TONY'S VOICE  
He comes on weekends. Is this a  
weekend?

MATT  
In three days it's a weekend.

TONY'S VOICE  
Three days! That's three weeks.

MATT

No, sweetheart, it's three days.  
Does...does Jim stay over?

TONY'S VOICE

No, Jim doesn't sleep. He stays  
up all night with Mommy eating  
dinner and leaves in the morning.

MATT

(addled)

Hold on...I'm getting another  
call.

TONY'S VOICE

Raise your hand if ninjas are your  
favorite thing.

Matt raises his hand.

MATT

Just a second, sweetheart.

TONY'S VOICE

I'm pressing the button.

MATT

No, wait... Just hold on.

Matt clicks over.

MATT

Hello?...This is he...Shit...I'm  
coming...

INT. HOSPITAL ELEVATOR/HALLWAY

The elevator doors open. Matt comes running out. We MOVE  
with him down the hallway until he reaches--

INT. HAROLD'S HOSPITAL ROOM

Matt enters. Danny and Jean are talking over each other.

JEAN

Danny, stop, it doesn't  
help!

DANNY

Maybe if he hears it--

JEAN

(to Harold)

Do you know who this is?





DANNY  
 (surprised)  
 You were here?  
 (and then)  
 Where were you?

MALE NURSE  
 Sometimes it can take a little  
 while to come back from these  
 surgeries.

MATT  
 (upset)  
 No, he was already BACK!

MALE NURSE  
 (confused)  
 I'm sorry, who are you? Who is  
 everybody?  
 (laughs)  
 I just got here.

DANNY  
 We're his kids.

MATT  
 Where's Pam?

MALE NURSE  
 I wasn't here, so I don't know.

MATT  
 I WAS! That's what I'm telling  
 you. Where's Pam?

DANNY  
 (hurt)  
 Why didn't you call? Where did  
 you go?

MATT  
 I was heading back to the  
 City for a meeting, but I  
 turned around when Pam  
 called--

MALE NURSE  
 Sometimes tiredness can  
 cause this. And his blood  
 pressure is quite high.

MATT  
 This isn't tiredness! Something  
 is WRONG. Can't we find Pam?!

MALE NURSE  
 (offended)  
 No, I'm the charge nurse.

DANNY  
 (to Matt)  
 You were here. Why didn't  
 you call us?

MATT  
 (sharply to Danny)  
 Because it never occurred to me!  
 OK?

JEAN  
 Where's Dr. Soni?

MALE NURSE  
 She's on her rounds.

MATT  
 Something is happening to my  
 father! I want Pam!

MALE NURSE  
 (sharply)  
 Ok, you're going to have to stop  
 shouting.

DANNY  
 We're sorry, he's just emotional.

JEAN  
 It's our Dad.

MATT  
 I'm not emotional, Danny, I  
 want Pam.

MALE NURSE  
 Right now, we're waiting for a  
 neurologist to read his EEG for  
 brainwave activity.

MATT  
 When will that happen?

MALE NURSE  
 I don't know. It's being read in  
 India.

DANNY  
 Oh, because of... Why?

MALE NURSE  
 (angrily)  
 In the meantime, I'm going to give  
 him Lotensin for his high blood  
 pressure. I'll be right back.

He leaves. Matt turns to Danny and Jean.

MATT  
 He's giving him Lotensin. What did  
 he get before for his blood  
 pressure?



DANNY  
(yells)  
It's OK!

Pause.

JEAN  
It's nice to see you, Matt.

DR. SONI (V.O.)  
The lost speech could be because  
of frequent or partial seizures.

INT. HOSPITAL CONFERENCE ROOM

Dr. Soni addresses the three siblings who listen attentively, scribbling in pads in their laps.

DR. SONI  
An up and down is common but this  
is more of a down than expected.  
If it was his heart, we'd shock him  
out of it, but you can't shock the  
brain in these cases so we need to  
quiet the brain.

The three siblings turn the pages in their books almost in unison but not quite.

DR. SONI  
We're putting him in a barbiturate  
coma with a combination of Propofol  
and Pentobarbital or Phenobarbital.  
Probably Pento. I want to be  
aggressive.

JEAN  
Will he be OK?

DR. SONI  
Think of it like shutting down a  
computer and then restarting. Or  
if you're a luddite like me, like  
a grain of sand becoming a pearl.

Jean laughs politely. Danny and Matt look at her strangely.

MATT  
Will he be OK?

DR. SONI  
Well, it's not what we'd hope at  
this stage.

(MORE)



DANNY (CONT'D)  
It's not, right Dr. Soni? It's  
not like that.

DR. SONI  
Well, technically, yes, it's that.

DANNY MATT  
You can't do that to us. First Pam, now you?

DANNY  
Can we get Pam back at least?

DR. SONI  
I'm not in charge of the nurse  
assignments.  
(aside to a passing man)  
Hi, Doctor Liu.

DANNY  
It doesn't feel fair, Dr. Soni,  
that you can just live your life  
normally while our Dad is lying  
here.

DR. SONI  
(hesitates)  
Maybe it isn't.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY

Matt and Danny end up next to each another, walking down  
the hall. Danny hums an indecipherable tune.

DANNY  
Dad said you started your own  
company?

MATT DANNY  
Yeah, a couple of other guys (trying to engage)  
and me decided to-- So, how does that work? Do  
you just tell your boss,  
like--?

MATT  
Well, I was one of the partners so  
I didn't technically have a boss--

DANNY  
Right, no...so you got a better  
offer--

MATT

No, there was no offer, that's what was so scary, we were creating our own opportunity--

DANNY

Because you wanted something smaller--

MATT

Bigger. Many of the firm's clients came with us--

DANNY

Which was surprising--

They reach an elevator. Matt hits the button.

MATT

No, we expected it. We can't legally ask the clients to come with us, but we trusted--

DANNY

But they don't have much choice--

MATT

It's totally their choice--

DANNY

No, I know, because you have their money--

MATT

Well, their money is with the firm. But their money is in investments or a bank--

The elevator arrives. They get on.

INT. ELEVATOR

DANNY

I understand. My buddy, Ptolemy, he lives across the street, or lived across the street from where I lived--

MATT

Dad told me about your...Karen, I'm sorry. I've also--





MATT  
(to Danny)  
Are you limping?

Jean rises from a bench where she's been waiting for them.

JEAN  
Yes!

DANNY  
It's always stiff after I've been sitting.

MATT  
You should see the other dog.

DANNY  
What?

MATT  
Nothing.

DANNY  
I borrowed an old cane of Maureen's dead ex-husband, but it's not really necessary. I keep it in the car.  
(pause)  
I'm telling ya.

MONTAGE:

EXT. MAUREEN'S HOUSE. DAY

Danny and Jean help Matt move his stuff inside. Matt carries a bulky printer/scanner.

MATT  
It's tax season.

INT. MAUREEN'S HOUSE. DINING ROOM

Maureen serves the siblings a strange looking bird. Matt digs in and chews for a long time. Jean and Danny share a smile.

EXT. MAUREEN'S HOUSE. PATH AROUND THE HOUSE

The three siblings walk Bruno.

MATT  
The Knicks need a point guard--

I/E. MAUREEN'S HOUSE. BACK PORCH

Matthew, Danny and Jean are playing cards.

DANNY  
(suddenly)  
Would you fuck Pam?

Matt's considers this.

JEAN  
I would. Just kidding.

MATT  
Jean, are you seeing anyone?

Danny looks at Matt, surprised.

JEAN  
No.

INT. MAUREEN'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. LATER NIGHT

Matt adds up figures on a calculator with lightening speed. Danny, eats a huge sandwich. Jean flips through a photo album.

JEAN  
You were both such middle-aged men  
in the making.

INT. HOSPITAL GIFT SHOP. DAY

The siblings stare at the various nick-knacks.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Nighttime in the hospital room. Harold is comatose, intubated and hooked up to machines doing everything for him. He still has a drain in his head and feeding tube in his stomach.

Danny is lying between two chairs, asleep. He dips slowly between the divide in chairs. A hand gently rustles his shoulder. He looks up. It's Jean. He nods, rises, gathers his things.

DANNY  
(sleepily, but attentive)  
The night nurse today is named Rich. He's OK, but doesn't really know anything. Dad's blood pressure was 178 so they gave him Lopressor. It's down to 154 now.  
(MORE)



JEAN

What about his brain? Do we have an EEG?

DOCTOR GONZALEZ

This is a different unit, we're in the ICU, so I don't have those answers as of yet.

MATT

So, now we're in the right unit to treat his sepsis, but the wrong unit to treat his head?

DOCTOR GONZALEZ

(nods)

They have a call in to a neurologist. People rarely come in on weekends.

MATT

Do people not generally get sick on weekends?

DOCTOR GONZALEZ

We're working on getting you those answers.

The doctor hands Matthew a pamphlet. He looks at it and shows it to Danny.

DOCTOR GONZALEZ

This is a helpful summary of the conversations you might want to have, things you might want to think about.

DANNY

(reading)

An end of life conversation?

DOCTOR GONZALEZ

It helps you prepare. In case.

EXT. TRAIN STATION

Eliza meets the three siblings outside on the platform.

INT. HOSPITAL OFFICE

The siblings, Eliza and Maureen sit for an end of life conversation, taking notes. A group of doctors talk to them from across a large table.

DOCTOR

These are things we suggest you  
say to your father before it's too  
late: "I love you." "I forgive  
you." "Forgive me." "Thank you."  
"Goodbye."

INT. ICU HOSPITAL ROOM

Eliza unpacks a blue-tooth speaker and a phone from her  
backpack and sets it up to play music for her grandfather.  
Danny places Harold's catalogue under the speaker as a  
base.

She plays a loud Nick Cave song.

ELIZA

He told me he liked this when I  
played it once.

Eliza sobs at her grandfather's bedside. Danny, Matt and  
Jean regard this. They've been so caught in the hospital  
struggle they haven't had much time to be emotional.

TONY (O.S.)

I want to say bye now.

INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA

Eliza and Matthew are at a table looking at Matthew's  
phone.

MATT

We just got on the phone!

TONY (O.S.)

I'm going to press the button.

ELIZA

Hi Tony, you remember me? We've  
never actually met--

MATT

This is Eliza, your cousin?

TONY (O.S.)

I'm pressing the butt--

MATT

Wait... Shit!

Eliza laughs. Danny limps over with an unripe banana and a  
yogurt on his tray.

DANNY

(sitting)

I'm oddly growing fond of this cafeteria, like I'd almost come here just anyway to eat. How's your boy?

MATT

She fucking gets in his head. He's always hanging up on me now.

DANNY

Call him back.

MATT

I don't want to call him back, it makes me feel bad.

DANNY

He's five years old. They hate phones. Eliza, when you were that age you'd never talk on the phone.

MATT

She makes it too difficult. I don't know, sometimes I think maybe I sit this kid out and start another family and then he finds me when he's twenty-one. Let him come to me.

Danny gets up to grab napkins from another table.

DANNY

He's not a girl you're trying to trick into dating you.

ELIZA

Dad, your limp is worse.

DANNY

It's always stiff after I've been sitting.

ELIZA

I was looking on-line, it could be your hip.

DANNY

It's my back.

MATT

We should get you checked out.

DANNY  
I don't have time to see a doctor  
now.

MATT  
We're already AT a doctor.

Eliza laughs. Danny sits back down.

DANNY  
I know what it is, OK?

MATT  
What is it?

DANNY  
It's...I...I mean I  
basically KNOW.

ELIZA  
Dad, you got to deal with  
it.

MATT  
Yeah, Dan, I mean, look at Dad.  
He ignored his thing and--

DANNY  
Just let me eat my fucking banana,  
OK?!

Matt and Eliza share a quick smile.

DANNY  
And call your son!

Matt hesitates and slowly gets up to make the call.

EXT. MAUREEN'S DRIVEWAY. LATE DAY

Maureen pulls into the gravel nodding hello to Matt who stretches before a run.

MATT  
Hi, Maureen.

She drives past Matt. Matt continues to loosen up as we watch her car slowly veer onto the grass and roll down into a tree. Matt turns when he hears the soft impact.

INT. MAUREEN'S HOUSE. KITCHEN

It's filled with dusty appliances, yogurt containers full of tacks and coins, faded photos and outdated menus crookedly affixed with random refrigerator magnets. Matt finds a musty water pitcher with an old filter and fills it.



MAUREEN

It's a shame the Dad is going to miss the opening tomorrow. He was really looking forward to it.

MATT

Dad asked me to say something. I was going to ask Danny and Jean too.

He removes some mismatched bowls from a cabinet, looking for glasses. A Popov vodka bottle is stashed in the back. He turns around. Maureen quickly averts her eyes. Matt hesitates and takes the bottle.

MAUREEN

He never would have expected you to have shown up. We were trying to figure it out, have you ever even been to this house before?

MATT

No...

He pours her and him a glass of vodka. She hesitates, but takes it. She holds a frozen pack of peas to the bruise on her face.

MAUREEN

The Dad always hoped for a visit but I guess you always had a lot to do in the City when you came to town. And us not being A-list parents and all. Danny and Jean, of course, are here all the time, but that's less exciting for the Dad.

Matt drinks his vodka.

MATT

I reached out to some of his old friends who are going to come visit.

MAUREEN

(rising)

I hope they understand they'll be looking at a sleeping man. Hello Andy Warhol!

MATT

I explained that. In so many words.

MAUREEN

I spoke to the neurologist, Dr. Diebert, who seems very knowledgeable, but has no upper lip to speak of, and if Harold survives the infection, they have no idea what person will be there when he wakes up. Maybe he'll be Brad Pitt. Or Neruda. Or Joe the Plumber.

(with real feeling, but dramatically)

I just want him to be Harold.

MATT

(changing the subject)

Have you looked over the documents I sent you?

Maureen rises and retrieves an envelope from a drawer.

MAUREEN

Yes and given where we are with the Dad...and the Manhattan house is more than we need right now, I've taken your counsel, and I think selling the house and art to James and Brian is the right thing to do. I signed the places you marked for me.

She hands the manila envelope to Matthew.

MATT

Then it's done.

MAUREEN

Some of those pieces are quite large, how will they be displayed?

MATT

(abashed)

Well, you know, James's family owns a series of retirement communities around the country and they're going to donate the art to these facilities as a write-off.

MAUREEN

(hesitates)

Oh...OK. I can't believe Danny is happy about that and Jean...well, who knows what Jean feels about anything.

MATT

(trying to rationalize)  
Well, with Dad's illness...I  
thought I'd wait until after the  
show to tell them anything...I  
don't know, there's been so much  
going on...

MAUREEN

Really they have no power anyway.  
I don't know what happened to them  
as children -- Harold says he  
tried his best -- but they're  
really such disappointments.

MATT

(sadly)  
Nobody took care of them.

Maureen nods.

MAUREEN

I say that as a disappointment  
myself. I was neglected too  
during my childhood. It's funny,  
I was never interested in having  
kids. Maybe once. No, not even  
once.

(drinks)

You're very good at getting the  
most for your clients.

MATT

It's what I do.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT. MORNING

Danny, Matt, and Jean climb out of Danny's Subaru.

MATT

Eliza texted, she came early to be  
with Dad.

DANNY

She texted you?

JEAN

The curator is meeting us at  
Bard at one. So, let's get  
Eliza, say our good-byes to  
Dad and get on the road.

A car door slams. They look: An old, frail man, 80's, is  
being lifted by his burly, muscular male nurse from the  
passenger seat.

MATT  
Oh good. Paul came.

DANNY  
Paul Epstein? I always liked  
Paul. Man, he's gotten older.

MATT  
I'm glad Dad still has friends.  
(heading in the old man's  
direction)  
I'm going to say, Hi.

DANNY  
(over his shoulder)  
Jean, you remember Paul and Lori?

DANNY  
Jean?

CUT TO:

TITLE:

(Jean's Story)

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT

Jean wanders around the cement columns as she talks.

JEAN  
I wrote a short story about this  
once, but I never finished it and  
it wasn't very good. You remember  
that summer I visited Dad on  
Martha's Vineyard? Dad never  
invited me or Danny--

DANNY (O.S.)  
Never.

JEAN  
--to the summer places but--

JEAN  
--that summer I was a camp  
counselor at French Woods in  
Vermont--

DANNY (O.S.)  
Was that the one with Alisa  
Lirtzman?

JEAN  
No, that was Thoreau. I was only  
at this one for one summer-- And I  
had two days off, and I called him  
and he couldn't say, No. He must  
have gotten permission from your  
mother-- It wasn't as convenient  
as I had thought.

(MORE)

JEAN (CONT'D)

I had to take two buses and a ferry. When I arrived nobody met me. I hitchhiked to the other side of the island. When I got to the house it was already night and the adults were all going out for dinner. Dad and your Mom and L.J. and Maya and Paul and Lori. Julia said something about me having my bags in the way. They were happy to have a baby-sitter, so they left me with the kids. You were there, Matthew, and Loretta and some other kids I didn't know. We watched Three's Company on TV. The next day, Dad played tennis and worked in his studio. I went down to the beach with the kids. I got to swim in the ocean which was really special for me. I loved that. Later, I showered in the outdoor shower with my suit on. And I realized someone was watching me. It was Paul. He smiled at me, almost politely and then he lowered his tight bathing suit, took out his penis and started stroking it.

Oh God.

MATT

DANNY  
Paul did?!

JEAN

I watched him until he finished. Then he walked away.

DANNY

Did you tell anyone?

JEAN

I told Dad that night and he asked if Paul had touched me and I said, No. He thought we should probably just leave it then, they were going back to the City soon anyway. But that if Paul did it again, he'd punch him in the nose. The next day when I was leaving, I looked around for Dad to say goodbye, but he was playing tennis. I thought about telling your Mom, Matthew, but I was afraid she'd get angry at me. I remember crying on my way to the ferry.

Matt and Danny look stunned.

MATT

Jean, can I ask you a question?  
Why do you always show up for Dad?  
Why are you always HERE?

JEAN

(shrugs and says matter-  
of-factly)  
Because I'm a decent person. Even  
though he never took care of  
us...it's what you do. Besides, I  
like hanging out with you guys.

Matt and Danny awkwardly try to hug her. She wriggles  
away.

JEAN

I'm going to smoke.

INT. ICU HALLWAY

Paul, aided heavily by his burly nurse, shuffles toward  
Harold's room.

DANNY (O.S.)

Do we kick the shit out of him?

MATT (O.S.)

He's eighty. We'd kill him.

Danny and Matt watch from a distance.

DANNY

That's true. Or hurt him very  
badly.

MATT

And neither of us can take that  
nurse.

DANNY

That's for sure.  
(starting toward the  
room)  
I'm going to spit on him.

MATT

(holding him back)  
No, I know what to do.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT

Matthew grabs a wooden branch, walks over, and smashes it over Paul's car. It breaks in two.

MATT  
Oww! But good too!  
(grabbing a rock)  
You got to try this.

Danny comes forward, brandishing his metal cane and smashes the roof with it. Danny looks at it, bent.

DANNY  
Shit, this is Maureen's dead ex-husband's cane.

Matt chucks the rock, cracking the windshield. They smash the car repeatedly. They're loving it.

DANNY  
I've never done anything like this!

MATT  
Me neither!

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY

They run inside, high on adrenaline.

MATT  
What's that blood? Who's bleeding?

They stop and check themselves.

DANNY  
I don't see it.

MATT  
Your hand?

DANNY  
Oh, yeah. And your face.

MATT  
(wipes blood from his chin)  
Yeah.

DANNY  
(thrusts his now bent aluminum cane in the air)  
Yeah!

MATT  
That felt great.

DANNY  
I don't know why we don't do that  
more.

MATT  
(suddenly)  
Pam!

Pam is talking to another nurse in the hallway. She startles then smiles somewhat uneasily as they both rush toward her bursting with enthusiasm. They both hug her.

MATT	DANNY
Last night his blood	And an extra dose of
pressure was at 173 but they	Lopressor--
gave him Hydrolozene--	

MATT  
And got it down to 155.

PAM  
Oh good.

DANNY	MATT
That sounds OK? He's also	It's in our notes.
on Kepra and Morphine and...	

DANNY  
Eliza's got the notes. Did you  
meet Eliza? She's my daughter.  
(lowering his voice)  
He has sepsis, Pam.

PAM  
Oh, no.

MATT  
And that's after the coma.

PAM  
Oh... I'm sorry.

DANNY  
Drug induced! Phenobarbital.

MATT  
Pento actually--

DANNY  
I thought it was Phenobarbital--



MATT

What does it matter, we don't know  
what either of them are anyway?

PAM

(nodding)

OK. I'll make sure to look in on  
him...

MATT

It's so good to see you. Please  
come back to our unit.

PAM

Are you bleeding?

INT. ICU HOSPITAL ROOM

The brothers poke their heads in.

DANNY

Umm, Eliza, we need to go.

ELIZA

(looking up)

Um...

DANNY

What?

Paul is sobbing at Harold's bedside. The burly nurse  
gently rubbing his back. Matt and Danny hesitate. Danny  
indicates for Eliza to follow. She rises.

ELIZA

(crying)

Bye Grandpa. I'll be back in two  
weekends. I love you. I forgive  
you. Forgive me--

DANNY

Come on!

BURLY NURSE

(to Paul)

We should be getting on too.

DANNY

No!

MATT

No, could you stay here for  
at least ten or fifteen  
minutes more, you think?

Paul looks up. He stares at Danny and Matt strangely.

PAUL  
Is that Harold's brothers?

MATT  
We're his sons. Danny and  
Matthew.

PAUL  
You look just like him.

BURLY NURSE  
Are you bleeding?

INT. ICU HALLWAY

The brothers run. Eliza behind them.

MATT  
Let's go tell Jean!

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT

Danny, who holds his bloody hand, and Matt stand excitedly  
in front of Jean. They're both sweating.

DANNY  
Smashed it.

JEAN  
What?

MATT  
(points across the lot)  
Look!

ELIZA  
(aside to Matt)  
He has dementia.

MATT  
What?

DANNY  
(to Jean)  
We thought you'd be happy.

JEAN  
Why would I be happy about this?  
You smashed a sick old man's car.  
(re: Danny's hand)  
Let's get you a bandage.

DANNY  
(jumping up and down)  
I don't want a bandage. I want to  
let it bleed. Let's go to Bard!

MATT  
He has dementia?

ELIZA  
(nods)  
Yeah.

MATT  
He has dementia.

DANNY  
Well, he didn't have dementia when  
he molested Jean.

JEAN  
He didn't molest me.

DANNY  
(losing steam)  
But let's not minimize it, Jean.  
What he did was shitty and  
damaging and I don't know...that  
same asshole is in there  
somewhere... Right? Beneath the  
dementia.

JEAN  
I'm glad you guys feel better.  
Unfortunately I'm still fucked up.

DANNY  
Do you want to take a swing?

JEAN  
I could smash every car in this  
parking lot and burn the hospital  
down and it wouldn't un-fuck me  
up.  
(silence)  
You guys will never understand  
what it's like to be me in this  
family.  
(opening her door)  
Let's go to Bard.

INT. BARD GALLERY. DAY

A mix of faculty, students, artists and out-of-towners  
mingle amongst the work. Eliza gathers with her friends  
and Jean.

And older woman, Hilma Federman, says to another teacher.

HILMA

He voted against my chairmanship,  
but I always liked him.

From across the room an attractive woman, 30's, talking  
with a group, smiles at Matt.

Matt, in his suit with a tie, smiles back. He stands in  
front of Harold's bronze sculpture which is prominently  
displayed.

DANNY (O.S.)

This toast is really stressing me  
out.

Danny appears and hands Matt a champagne. Danny wears his  
leather jacket over a shirt and tie and khakis with a  
hummus stain on the fly. Jean passes by on her way to the  
bar.

DANNY

Jean, you sure you don't want to  
say anything?

JEAN

Fuck no.

Matt fishes into his pocket and produces the two pills.

MATT

I've had these for a while but I  
think they're still good. Want  
one?

DANNY

What will it do to me?

MATT

It will either bring you up or  
down. Hopefully down, I guess?

DANNY

(inspecting it)  
Someone took a bite already?

MATT

That was me. I had a crumb when I  
last saw Dad.

DANNY

Oh, OK.  
(pause)  
What did it do to you then?



WOMAN (CONT'D)

He was a great teacher, he found a way to make everything sound interesting.

MATT

(not what he expected)

Oh...

WOMAN

I met my husband, Gary, in his class.

MATT

Oh...

WOMAN

It was important to us to be here when we heard he was sick. He spoke about you a lot, he was very proud of you.

(looks at Danny)

I didn't realize he had two sons.

MATT

And a daughter.

L.J. (O.S.)

Is that Matt and Danny!

L.J. embraces Matt and Danny simultaneously. He's very open and emotional while he talks.

L.J.

I was in Madrid when I heard. I'm so damned heartbroken to hear about the old man.

MATT

Yeah.

DANNY

Thanks, L.J.

L.J.

How's he doing? Where is he? I'm coming to visit.

DANNY

(releasing L.J.)

He's kind of in a coma in Pittsfield right now.

L.J.

(tears running down his face)

I don't give a shit. Let's go tonight.

MATT  
 (breaking the hug)  
 And he has sepsis.

L.J.  
 It's the fucking hospital that  
 will kill you. We got to get him  
 out of there.

DANNY  
 He'd love if you came even if  
 he'll have no idea.

MATT  
 We'll take pictures.

L.J.  
 (squeezing them tighter)  
 We'll take pictures.

DANNY  
 (eagerly looks around)  
 Where's Loretta?

L.J.  
 Her son got chicken-pox and she had  
 to stay in town! She was very  
 disappointed.

DANNY  
 (disappointed)  
 That's too bad.

MATT  
 I never got chicken pox.

L.J.  
 You should call her, Dan. I know  
 she'd like to see you.

DANNY  
 (resolute)  
 I'm going to.

L.J.  
 You'd like her boyfriend too.  
 He's a good man. A screenwriter.

EXT. BARD GALLERY. DAY

Matt pursues Danny outside.

MATT  
 Don't beat yourself up.

DANNY

I should never have left that opening at MOMA. It was just...Dad... I felt obligated.

MATT

You thought you were doing the right thing...

DANNY

You would've stayed.

MATT

I probably would've, yeah. But I would have felt bad about it. But it's a good lesson: Dad can take care of himself. You have to take care of yourself.

DANNY

No, he can't, Matt. That's why he's where he is now.

(beating himself up)

I should've been able to tell something was wrong. I just thought he was getting old...

MATT

Shit, I yelled at him. The guy was suffering and I screamed at him on the street. There's no catharsis in shouting at an old person who's dying.

DANNY

Do you think he's going to die?

ELIZA (O.S.)

Dad, I want you to meet someone, this is Robin.

Eliza and Robin, the blonde boy, stand by the door with drinks. Robin smokes. Danny approaches, Matt behind him.

DANNY

(shaking hands)

Nice to meet you.

ROBIN

(trying to sound adult)

You too. Eliza speaks very highly of you.



DANNY

Oh...OK.

(to Eliza)

You speak highly of me?

ELIZA

You know what he means.

Eliza cracks open a beer.

DANNY

Eliza, you've had two wines  
already, don't have a beer too.

ELIZA

I can handle it.

DANNY

Eliza, it's not good to mix wine  
and beer. You'll feel cruddy  
tomorrow. I'm telling you.

ELIZA

I've done it before, Dad.

MATT

Maybe she's right, maybe she has a  
constitution that can handle the  
grape and the grain.

DANNY

Please, just...stay out of this.

ELIZA

Matt's right, I have the fortitude  
for it.

DANNY

I'm telling you, you're going to  
feel like crap.

Eliza takes a swallow. Danny grabs the beer from her, and  
chucks it. Robin looks scared.

ELIZA

What the fuck, man?!

She storms back inside the gallery. Robin trailing behind.

MATT

What does it matter if she drinks  
wine and beer?

DANNY  
Stop interfering with my  
parenting, Matt.

MATT  
She's eighteen. What "parenting"  
do you need to do here? She's  
just a person now.

DANNY  
This is something I do and I'm  
quite good at it, OK? She and I  
have a very good relationship when  
you're not around. So, stop...  
ganging up on me.

Matt reaches out and takes Danny's shoulder.

MATT  
(trying to diffuse)  
I'm sorry. You know, I've enjoyed  
hanging out recently.

DANNY  
Yeah? Me too. You know, I've  
wanted to apologize for a long  
time.

MATT  
For what?

DANNY  
I'm pissed at myself because when  
Dad kicked me out of the house and  
I moved back with my mom, you  
really made an effort to hang out  
and I kind of blew you off. And I  
feel like I fucked that up. I  
think it's really my fault that  
we're not close.

Danny hugs Matt strangely.

DANNY  
It was hard for me to be around  
Dad and your mom at that time too.  
They were so critical of me and I  
was just FAILING.

MATT  
(trying to end it)  
We should go back in, give our  
toasts.

DANNY  
(oddly)  
Are you disappointed in me?

MATT  
What? No, no.

They both wander, moving, circling -- there's restless pent up energy that's slowly being released by both of them.

DANNY  
I know Dad is. But I felt like you maybe also were critical of me for quitting piano and--

MATT  
No, no, no. You were my big brother, I looked up to you.

DANNY  
I quit because it was my protest. OK?

MATT  
OK. Like McEnroe.

DANNY  
And also...because it was like...it was like walking barefoot through broken glass to get to a milkshake. I loved the milkshake but, you know, my feet were...bleeding.

MATT  
I can understand that.

DANNY  
Can you? Cause my feeling about you is you can't. It's not your fault but like Dad, you make me feel really bad about myself.

MATT  
I'm sorry.

DANNY  
I said it's not your fault.

MATT  
(leaning back toward the gallery building)  
Let's go in.

DANNY

Can I ask you something?

MATT

(uh-oh)

What?

DANNY

A few years ago, when Karen and I had you over to our house when you were in town and I never heard from you afterwards. Maybe you didn't like the food or Karen or I insulted you in some way. Karen maybe had too much grappa--

MATT

No! That was nice. I went back to LA, I don't know.

DANNY

Were you bored? Most people seem to find us interesting enough, we've had no complaints.

MATT

It's nothing like that. It's just...life...it's not more than that.

DANNY

Well, even in life, you can make an effort. Write an e-mail from one of your phones. But, I guess you're fine making no effort with family. You say you have guilt, but...

MATT

(angry)

I'm here now. I'm in fucking Rhinebeck. I was just in Pittsfield. I've been HERE.

DANNY

(emotional)

It shouldn't come to that! And if Dad survives, you'll go back to LA and I'm going to be taking care of him for a very long time.

MATT

We'll all help out.

DANNY

No...we won't ALL. It'll be me.  
And Jean. And mainly me.

MATT

I'll come more often.

DANNY

That's what you said when you ate  
dinner with Karen and me.  
(walking away)  
You've made your priorities clear.

MATT

You know what: I'm tired of  
apologizing for doing well.

DANNY

Ptolemy asked me why you never  
talk Dad's work up to your wealthy  
clients. He says you could be  
really helpful, that it's all  
perception. You know, he's a good  
artist and there's no reason he  
isn't as well known as L.J.!

MATT

Maybe it's not my responsibility  
to help Dad. Maybe THAT.

DANNY

No, it's what you DO.

MATT

And ALSO maybe he's not so great.  
Maybe he's undiscovered for a  
reason. Maybe THAT! The truth is  
we DON'T KNOW, Danny. We were  
brainwashed.

DANNY

Why are you so angry at him  
anyway. He loves everything you  
do.

MATT

Does he? He doesn't tell me that.

DANNY

He tells ME. I should be angry at  
him. I should hate him for  
treating me and Jean like second  
class citizens.

MATT

Then why don't you?! You SHOULD.

He holds Danny's shoulder again, and says more tenderly.

MATT

Listen, you and Jean are going to get some money. We got a great deal on the house and all of the art and I'm giving my share to both of you. It doesn't make up for everything but you guys really deserve this.

Danny slips from Matt's grasp, angry.

DANNY

Dad said this was a family discussion! Wait...did this...did this happen already?

MATT

Yes. It's done.

DANNY

He told me we'd decide together. And you do this when he can't say anything... He told me, Matt. You weren't there.

MATT

If we didn't do something, we'd be spending the next few years throwing his work in dumpsters. This way we get something for it.

DANNY

I don't care about money. That house, that work MEANS something to me.

MATT

You should embrace this. I should be the one who cares. I grew up there. That's MY house. I SHOULD care.

DANNY

Then why don't you?

MATT

Because...I don't know... You're probably right, I should care. Maybe I do... Maybe I do...

(hesitates)

(MORE)

MATT (CONT'D)

But this makes sense, they're going to donate the art as a tax write-off. James's family owns a series of retirement communities around the country--

DANNY

How could you do this to him? Who could even dream up such a plan?!

MATT

Me! It's what I do for a living.

Danny shoves Matt. Matt shoves him back.

DANNY

Ptolemy said you guys make yourselves indispensable to vulnerable rich people.

MATT

Why don't you tell me more about my business? Danny, I really want YOU or DAD or FUCKING Ptolemy to tell ME about what I do every day for a living.

Matt pushes Danny. Danny kicks him in the leg.

MATT

Oww! You kicked me in the shin.

And now they're scuffling awkwardly.

MATT

(blurting out)

I WAS disappointed in you for quitting piano.

Danny swings wildly at him.

MATT

What the fuck is wrong with you? I know it's hard, it's hard for all of us. GET IT TOGETHER!

DANNY

(now, just shouting  
insults)

And you're doing with Tony just what Dad did with me and Jean.

Matt slaps Danny hard across the face then slips on the grass and lands on his ass. Danny tackles him and they topple onto the lawn hitting each other awkwardly.

People emerge from the gallery. College kids surround them.

COLLEGE KID #1  
Hey, he's beating up an old guy.

COLLEGE KID #2  
No, they're both old.

COLLEGE KID #1  
(shouting at the  
brothers)  
What's wrong with you two?

They're rolling on the grass. Eliza and Jean try to stop them but can't get close with the flailing arms and legs.

L.J. comes running out and lifts them both up and holds them apart in headlocks.

L.J.  
Goddamn it, Meyerowitzes.

Both are covered in dirt and grass and blood. Danny clutches the side of his leg.

DANNY  
My hip.

He collapses on the ground.

MATT (V.O.)  
We want to thank Bard for making  
this show happen.

INT. BARD GALLERY

Matt, bloody, his suit torn, and still picking grass out of his hair addresses the crowd. He consults note cards and talks smoothly and professionally despite his appearance.

MATT  
And thank many of you for making  
the trip. My Dad, and I'm sure  
every artist involved in this  
show, would be really pleased.

Jean indicates for him to address the bleeding coming from his nose. Matt wipes it on his arm.



MATT

My father was a teacher here for thirty-three years so this is particularly special for him. And this piece is special for me as it's called Matthew. My father tells a story of how this piece came to be. How I would sit on the hardwood floor of his studio, getting nails in my ass, and hand him tools and make suggestions and he would let me help or let me THINK I was helping and when it was done he said we had made it together. Even though I don't remember this time, he does. But I remember that feeling. Of being very proud. Of wanting to be an artist like my dad. Of being included -- he was interested in me, he...loved me...

(he wipes tears from his face)

I'm sorry, I don't know why I'm... I've been angry at him for so much of my adult life. I guess I was trying to outrun him. But I didn't -- I'm still that boy helping my Dad. And he loved me. Even if it wasn't how I wanted him to love me, he loved me. And I've given away his life's work--it's gone...

(to Danny and Jean)

I'm sorry. And if Dad doesn't make it, he and I aren't OK. We never got to be OK...

Danny is there beside him now, holding Matt in his arms. Matt continues to cry like a baby.

MATT

(to the audience, trying to sound intelligible, but just crying)

Danny, do you want to say a few words...

DANNY

Yes, thank you, Matthew.

He holds out the mike for Danny to take. Danny flinches, anticipating a punch.

MATT

No, I'm giving this to you...

DANNY

Oh, I see, OK.

Danny takes the mike. Eliza and Jean help Matt to a bench. Now, Danny, also bloody, clothes torn, looks petrified. He hums an indecipherable tune. He leans on the back of a chair for support.

DANNY

You'll have to bear with me as I'm not a good public speaker and also I've never done it. It's something I've gone to great pains to avoid. When I used to perform music in front of an audience it was just too excruciating. The reward was just not worth the self-hatred. Not to mention, unlike my brother, Matthew, I find this particular piece painful because it was during a time I wasn't really speaking to my Dad. He had left my mother and Jean and me, gotten remarried to Matt's mom whom we did not like. Again, unlike Matt, I was NOT included in the art-making process, it wasn't MINE too... This piece is NOT called Danny. In fact, there are NO Danny's.

JEAN (O.S.)

Or Jeans!

DANNY

(nods)

For me, it's a symbol of what I will NEVER be able to do. A club I will NEVER be admitted to. But Dad and I have gotten to spend more time together as adults and that's been good, I think we have gotten closer. We've certainly watched a lot of Mets games. Some of you know, my Dad is in a hospital in Pittsfield and we don't know how it's all going to go. Our doctor's in China and the only really good nurse got reassigned to a different floor. Maybe I need to believe my Dad was a genius because I don't want his life to be worthless.

(MORE)

DANNY (CONT'D)

If he's not a great artist, that means he was just a prick. I think he's good, though. I think he deserved more attention than he got. I think that's true. Matt?

Matt, eyes bloodshot, face splotchy, shrugs.

DANNY

I wish he'd had more success because it would have made his life easier. Even if that kind of thing doesn't ultimately mean much. I don't know, L.J.?

L.J.

(shrugs)

I don't know either. If I did, I'd tell you.

DANNY

Also, I'm really proud of my daughter, Eliza, who is a freshman here and a really talented filmmaker.

Eliza's friends WHOOP. Eliza smiles, embarrassed.

DANNY

Thank you.  
(awkwardly)  
Peace.

Danny drops the mike like a rapper.

BLACK

TITLE:

EARLY AND LATE MEYEROWITZ

TEXT:

Eliza liked kissing Robin the best, more than Marcus even.

EXT. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM. STAIRS. DAY

CLOSE: Eliza and Robin making out sloppily.

Eliza, her hair very short now, and Robin smoke on the steps of the Met.

Eliza and Robin are playing a game, trying to walk a thin sliver of curb while the other tries to push them over.

INT. LENOX HILL HOSPITAL ROOM

Eliza peeks around the corner. Robin behind her.

ELIZA  
How are you feeling?

DANNY (O.S.)  
Hey, honey.

She moves over to Danny's bedside and hugs him.

DANNY  
Hi, Robin.

ROBIN  
Hey.

Robin hugs him too, surprising Danny. Jean stands and hugs Eliza. A card game on a tray-table is mid-play.

JEAN  
I love your hair.

ELIZA  
Thanks! Robin cut it.

JEAN  
I wish I had the guts to do it.

ELIZA Do it! Robin will do it now. JEAN You think?

ROBIN  
I've got scissors in my bag.

Eliza grabs a chair. Jean sits down.

ELIZA  
How's the hip?

DANNY  
I'm bionic now. That's a reference for Jean only.

ELIZA  
I know what bionic is.

ROBIN  
I don't.

ELIZA  
 It's a show.  
 (smiles, to her dad)  
 You taught me well.

JEAN  
 We don't like the nurse today--

DANNY  
 She's not nice.

JEAN  
 Kathy is more conservative with  
 the pain medication.

DANNY  
 And we can't find the doctor.

JEAN  
 You know how it is.

ELIZA  
 I do.

JEAN  
 But spirits are high.

INT. LENOX HILL HOSPITAL ROOM

CUT TO: LAP TOP SCREEN

Eliza's NEW MOVIE. She's nude hitch-hiking.

She's having sex with a creature in a field, and she has a  
 mustache. Jean appears holding hands with a rabbit.

DANNY (O.S.)  
 Jean! That's you with the rabbit.

JEAN (O.S.)  
 Shh, you're going to miss it.

Danny watches the computer which rests on his lap in bed.  
 Jean (her hair short now!), Eliza and Robin look over his  
 shoulder.

DANNY  
 Jean! You were so good.

ELIZA  
 She's got real chops!

JEAN  
 I was well edited.

DANNY

It's wonderful, honey. I don't know that I've seen a sex scene shot quite like that before.

ELIZA

I used deliberately very harsh, direct light. I wanted to appear very unattractive.

DANNY

Well, that's difficult.

ELIZA

(smiles)  
You know what I mean.

DANNY

Wonderful mise-en-scene.

JEAN

For my Jeopardy parody I did at my office, we just had to use the overhead fluorescents.

DANNY

Yours had wonderful mise-en-scene as well, Jean.

JEAN

Thanks.

DANNY

And this is the best yet, Eliza.

ELIZA

Thanks, Dad. I've made eight more since then.

JEAN

I'm in five of them!

DIP FADE

FADE IN:

OMITTED

I/E. MAUREEN'S HOUSE, PITTSFIELD. DAY

Matt gets out of his rental car carrying bags of Chinese food. Bruno barks. Maureen greets him. She wears round clear glasses.

MAUREEN

(to the dog)

Bruno--

(to Matt)

Did you change your scent?

MATT I don't have a scent--  
 MAUREEN Maybe a new shampoo?

MATT  
 (mussing his hair)  
 I don't think--

MAUREEN  
 The Dad is being very stubborn. I  
 can't get him to do any of his  
 exercises. Bruno!

MATT  
 How's he doing?

MAUREEN  
 The earliest appointment we can  
 get with the neurologist is next  
 month... It's a lot for me to do  
 by myself here.

She enters the house through the kitchen. Matt follows.

MAUREEN  
 Fortunately we have a little more  
 money from the sale. James sent  
 photos of the sculptures at one of  
 the retirement homes in Arizona.  
 They look quite stunning.  
 (pause)

I have to say I was very surprised  
 that you tried to stop the deal  
 after you went through all that  
 trouble setting it up...

MATT  
 I just thought...I changed my  
 mind.

MAUREEN  
 Well, it was my decision as I'm  
 the next of kin. It's too late  
 now.

She retrieves the black Vuarnet sunglasses from a pile of  
 odds and ends and hands them to Matt.

MAUREEN  
 I found these in the Dad's things.  
 I think they're yours.

MATT  
 They're Danny's.

He puts them in his jacket pocket. Maureen enters the dining room. There are papers strewn across the table.

MAUREEN

I just have to finish these insurance forms which seem to be written in a foreign language--

MATT

Maureen, why didn't you ask me, someone at my company will do that.

She looks up, tears falling from her eyes.

MAUREEN

(emotionally)

I don't like to ask for help.

MATT

(softly)

Let me do it, OK?

He steps forward about to place his hand on her shoulder, but she quickly recovers and heads for the door.

MAUREEN

But it's a big day, it's the Dad's first meal off of the feeding tube.

INT. MAUREEN'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM

Matt follows into the living room. Harold is watching TV.

MAUREEN

He's watching TCM.

Matt hesitates. His Dad looks older and wears a knit cap. There's a weariness and frailty he carries now.

MATT

Hey, Dad.

HAROLD

Hi.

MATT

What are you watching?

HAROLD

I don't know.

Matt sits down next to him and they watch.



HAROLD

In these 30's movies the men wore tuxedos all the time. Things have gotten much more casual.

MATT

Maybe they dressed up because they lived shorter lives back then. They wanted to celebrate life.

LATER

INT. MAUREEN'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM

Matt and Maureen sit beside Harold who lies in a bed made from the pull-out couch. Bruno sleeps on the floor. They eat take-out Chinese food. Harold eats quickly, his bites large.

MAUREEN

We spent three hours today at Goodwill. The Dad had a funny joke.

HAROLD

What was that? Oh.

MAUREEN

I'll set you up again: We spent three hours today at Goodwill.

HAROLD

Which pretty much destroyed mine.

MATT

Ha. That's good, Dad.

HAROLD

Thank you.

MATT

You should see the other dog.

Harold has no reaction.

MAUREEN

That's true, the Dad got very impatient. And as we were handing over the boxes, I saw that I had accidentally included my good wok. And I hesitated. But I thought, I haven't made Chinese food in ten years.

(MORE)

MAUREEN (CONT'D)  
I won't make Chinese food  
again...but you have your idea of  
yourself and you want to hold onto  
that.

Harold erupts with a guttural cough.

MATT  
Dad, are you OK?

HAROLD  
(spitting food back on  
his plate)  
Yes.

MATT  
Take it easy.

MAUREEN  
We just got you out of the  
hospital, we don't want you to go  
back.

HAROLD  
It was very unpleasant in the  
hospital.

MATT  
Uh huh.

HAROLD  
You know, I was there for a couple  
of months.

MATT  
I know.

HAROLD  
Maureen has been my savior.

MAUREEN  
Harold, you're getting brown sauce  
all over the sheets.

Harold wipes at the sheet.

MAUREEN  
You're just rubbing it in.

Maureen sighs and gathers the plates.

MAUREEN  
Matt can you help the Dad get  
ready for his nap?

MATT

Sure. I'm going to try to come visit more. It's hard, because Tony starts kindergarten this year, and I want to be around for that, but... I'll try to be here more.

HAROLD

L.J. is coming for lunch in a couple of weeks, you should come for that.

Maureen heads into the other room.

HAROLD

He left me a very effusive message about my show. And someone wrote a rave on my Google. It was quite inspired of you to set that up.

MATT

Jean and Danny organized it, Dad.

HAROLD

Is that right? But you made the sale.

MATT

Yeah, that was me. But, I bought a piece back from Brian and James at a significant mark up, I might add. It's the piece from the show, "Matthew" because...

"Matthew" and we did it together.

(formal but from the heart)

Thank you for letting me be part of your process. It had a big effect on me, Dad. Your confidence was contagious. I think it's why I'm able to do what I do now.

HAROLD

I remember I made "Matthew" in 1966, the year the Whitney bought my piece.

CLOSE on Matthew.

MATT

It couldn't have been 1966.

HAROLD  
It was, I didn't work in bronze  
after that.

MATT  
I wasn't born yet.

HAROLD  
(the impact of this lost  
on him)  
Oh...that's right, isn't it, then  
it couldn't have been you watching  
me, could it. Maybe it was your  
brother.

Matthew hesitates.

HAROLD  
I guess I wanted it to be you.

MATT  
You should have called it "Danny."

HAROLD  
You're right. I should have. I'm  
going to sleep now. Can you close  
that shade?

MATT  
OK.

Matt rises and pulls the shade.

HAROLD (O.S.)  
It's OK if you want to sit here  
longer while I fall asleep.

MATT  
Sure.

Matt comes around to his father's bedside. His dad removes his hat and balls himself up in his sleeping position like an infant.

MATT  
I love you Dad.

HAROLD  
Love you.

Matt tucks the covers up to his neck, leans down and kisses his Dad on the forehead. He sees, hidden in his father's hair, the scar from the surgery.

INT. LENOX HILL HOSPITAL ROOM. MORNING

Danny opens his eyes. The room is empty except for Matthew who sits by his bed. He wears his trifocals and looks over various financial documents.

DANNY  
Hey, my broth-a.

MATT  
My broth-a.

DANNY  
Thanks for paying for this. The private room is...it's not necessary.

MATT  
I can get work done this way.

DANNY  
How is Dad?

MATT  
I don't know, still Dad. But I was sitting there and I just kept having this thought. This is my Dad. This is my...Dad. This is the same guy as all the other times. And that thought which has made me so angry also made me love him.

DANNY  
I said goodbye to him so many times in my head, it's strange, in a way, I wasn't prepared for him to survive.

MATT  
Well, now we'll know what to do the next time. The three of us had a real rhythm going...

DANNY  
I just don't want to have to speak publicly again. You know, sometimes I wish Dad had done one horrible, unforgivable thing. Something specific I could be angry about. But it isn't one thing. It's tiny things every day. It's drip, drip, drip...

MATT  
I'm sorry... I couldn't stop the house and the art from being sold. In the end, Maureen was determined.

DANNY  
(shrugs)  
I'm over it.

MATT  
I'm not.

Matt rises and removes the Vuarnet sunglasses from his coat.

MATT  
I think these are your Vuarnets.

DANNY  
(takes them)  
I thought they were yours.

MATT  
(hesitates)  
Maybe they were mine.

DANNY  
No, I think you're right, they're mine.

MATT  
(reaching for them)  
I'm remembering now owning them.

DANNY  
(pulling them away)  
They look like a pair I probably had.

Danny puts them on. Matt regards him.

MATT  
You can have them anyway.

DANNY  
Can you help me walk? The nurse is supposed to be here to do it, but I get antsy.

Matt helps Danny climb out of the bed.

MATT  
I loved Eliza's new movie.

DANNY  
It's good, right.

MATT  
You've done a great job with her.

DANNY  
Thanks. You know, I'm glad she  
likes you so much...

Danny holds Matt's arm as he slowly walks.

MATT  
Hey, when you get out, do you want  
to come to LA?

DANNY  
Oh...hmm...I love Los Angeles. I  
haven't been there, but I love it.

MATT  
You could stay with me, see what  
you think. You know, the weather  
is nice, I could get you a ticket  
and in a couple of weeks--

DANNY  
I don't know, I think I should  
stay and help Maureen with Dad. I  
have sympathy for her but I don't  
trust her.

MATT  
Well, if you change your mind...

They continue into the hospital hallway.

INT. LENOX HILL HOSPITAL HALLWAY

MATT  
I was going to stay here longer,  
but I think I should leave tonight  
and get back to Tony because...I  
want to be a Dad like you.

DANNY  
Yeah, go be with your boy.  
(pause)  
Thanks for...you know, taking care  
of me.

MATT  
(shrugs, smiles)  
It's what you do.

DIP FADE

FADE IN:

INT. MAUREEN'S KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM, PITTSFIELD. DAY

Harold sits, partially slumped, at the breakfast table.

HAROLD  
Maureen went into town for  
groceries a few hours ago...

Danny places a plate of blueberry pancakes in front of him.  
He walks with a cane.

DANNY  
The famous blueberry pancakes.

Danny does the flourish.

HAROLD  
I don't know what she could be  
doing...

DANNY  
How's her drinking?

HAROLD  
I've made her a deal, I said, we'd  
put in a pool if she stopped  
drinking.

DANNY  
(unsure)  
Uh huh.

HAROLD  
You know, since the Bard show,  
Matthew has personally invested in  
a a piece of mine.

DANNY  
You should have seen Matt, Dad,  
when you were sick. He was there  
the whole time, he really whipped  
us into shape.

Harold gets up and walks into the living room. They pass a  
male nurse's aide who is cleaning up.

HAROLD  
I think you and Jean should look  
into getting me a solo show. That  
would really put me back on the  
map.



DANNY

You know, we were all there the whole time.

Harold sits on the couch and presses the remote.

HAROLD

(ignoring him)

Every time I turn on TCM, it's Meet Me in Saint Louis. What's on the premium channels?

DANNY

It was rough there for a minute, we thought we might lose you.

HAROLD

There's something called Sex Tape on Starz. Do you know anything about that?

DANNY

(giving up)

Not really.

HAROLD

Shall we give it a try?

He places down the remote and settles in.

HAROLD

Maureen is leaving for Cuba on Monday. I thought you could stay with me while she's away.

DANNY

You know, Matt invited me to LA.

HAROLD

I'm still recovering. I really could use the help.

DANNY

Have you ever been to LA?

HAROLD

You're still recovering too. And, you know, we've got the premium channels now. We get the Knicks.

DANNY

I know. I lived here while you were in the hospital.

(MORE)

DANNY (CONT'D)  
 (helps with a pillow)  
 You'll have a nurse with you--

HAROLD  
 You know, I really need you to stay with me. I'm asking you to do this, please. You know I don't like asking for things. I need you, Danny.

DANNY  
 (hesitates)  
 OK.

HAROLD  
 I think there are still some of Jean's cookies in the kitchen if you take a look--

Danny goes into the kitchen. The male nurse's aide is doing dishes. Danny nods at him.

HAROLD (O.S.)  
 I'll take you to lunch one day this week at Babalouies which is the best pizza in the Berkshires. Maybe the best pizza period.

DANNY  
 OK, thanks.

He picks up the plate of cookies--

HAROLD (O.S.)  
 Pick a day. Except for next Saturday, L.J. is coming up for lunch, so you'll need to find something to do, but you can go to a movie or, I think there's bowling.

Danny throws the plate of cookies onto the ground, startling everybody including himself.

DANNY (to the nurse's aide) Sorry.  
 HAROLD Danny! What are you doing?

Danny stands in the doorway.

DANNY  
 Sorry, Dad, I didn't think that would be so loud.

HAROLD

See if you can rescue some of the cookies from the porcelain.

DANNY

I'm leaving now, Dad. I'm going to drive back to the city--  
 (again to the aide)  
 You'll be here, right?

NURSE'S AIDE

Yes.

DANNY

I'll clean this up, don't worry.  
 (back to his Dad)  
 And then I'm going to LA to see Matthew.  
 (and to himself)  
 "I love you." "I forgive you."  
 "Forgive me." "Thank you." "Goodbye."

DIP FADE

The sound of HORNS and CONSTRUCTION.

FADE IN:

OMITTED

INT. TOWN CAR. DAY

Danny grabs a handful of complimentary gum from a tray and puts it in his pocket.

DANNY

The flight leaves at 4:30, you think we'll be OK?

DRIVER

Yes, traffic looks fine. And you're business class, so check-in is quicker.

DANNY

I've never flown business class. I've never done business. My brother had miles.

He removes the Vuarnet sunglasses from his pocket and puts them on. He gazes out the window.

Loretta, in a sweater and jeans, walks briskly down the street, holding herself against the cold.

DANNY  
 (suddenly)  
 Can you stop the car!

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET

Loretta continues walking.

DANNY (O.S.)  
 Loretta!

Loretta's mouth widens into a big smile. Danny emerges from the town car wearing his big Vuarnet sunglasses and holding a cane.

LORETTA  
 Danny!  
 (they hug)  
 I'm consulting for a client around the corner and I just ran out for a tea without my coat! What are you doing in Stuy Town?

DANNY  
 Just going for a ride with my chauffeur. No, I'm kidding... Um, I'm on my way out to the coast.

LORETTA The coast?	DANNY (embarrassed) Los Angeles.
-----------------------	--

LORETTA  
 Los Angeles, really?

DANNY  
 Yeah, thus the town car. Matthew got it for me. I usually take the A train.  
 (removing the glasses and indicating the car)  
 This is not representative of where I am in my life.

Loretta laughs and touches his arm affectionately.

DANNY  
 I'm going to stay with Matthew for a while...

LORETTA  
 Oh, that sounds nice, get out of this weather.

DANNY

Yeah...I don't know. I like weather.

LORETTA

I know, me too, I don't know why I said that.

(pause)

What's this cane?

DANNY

Oh...it's this affectation, I'm trying...NO, no...new hip.

LORETTA

Oh wow, Dan. Are you OK?

DANNY

Yeah...better. I did my best to ignore it, but the hip won out.

LORETTA

(realizing)

Oh my God, how's your Dad?

DANNY

He's OK. He's out of the hospital.

LORETTA

That's great. My Dad was worried.

DANNY

Yeah...he's better...health-wise, otherwise...the same.

LORETTA

Sometimes they're just the same, aren't they?

DANNY

Yeah. He's still waiting for his life to begin.

LORETTA

Oh no, but he's done so well, don't you think?

DANNY

(honestly)

I don't know, has he?

LORETTA

He has. He taught for all those years at Bard -- I used to love hearing him talk about art, he made good work, his kids are great... It's a shame he can't feel that way.

CLOSE on Danny.

DANNY

(realizes)

Yeah.

(suddenly)

There's so much I believed without knowing I believed it.

They both smile silently.

LORETTA

I guess it doesn't matter if your parents are alive or dead, we're still trying to change the ending, aren't we? But you look different, Dan. I can't put my finger on it. And it's not just the limo.

DANNY

L.J. mentioned you were seeing a screenwriter--

LORETTA

Oh yeah...that didn't take. You know, after my divorce, I don't know what I'm doing. I'm single now.

DANNY

(abruptly)

I won't be leaving New York for good. I'll be back.

LORETTA

That's what everyone says when they go to LA and then it's twenty years later.

DANNY

See you in twenty years.

LORETTA

Ha.

DANNY

No, I have to come back for  
Eliza's freshman film festival  
anyway in a month.

LORETTA

Can I come?

DANNY

Yeah, it's at Bard.

LORETTA

I'd love to come.

DANNY

It's, uh, not un-pornographic, I'm  
warning you.

LORETTA

I'm in the art-world, I've seen it  
all.

DANNY

She's really talented, I think.  
You know, I think she's got  
something...

LORETTA

I'm sure she does. It's a  
talented family.

DANNY

I'm telling ya.

LORETTA

Well, that's something to look  
forward to, isn't it?

I/E. WHITNEY MUSEUM. DAY

Eliza and Robin shove one another playfully and make their  
way inside.

INT. WHITNEY MUSEUM. DEEP STORAGE

An art handler, holding a slip of paper, leads Eliza and  
Robin down a long, cramped, crowded hall of painting and  
sculpture packed away and stored on various levels. We  
pass by many labels, with many famous names.

They arrive at a crate. A faded label on the side. Eliza  
kneels down to see:

CLOSE: Harold Meyerowitz: Abstraction #7, 1966

ELIZA  
This is him.

                  ROBIN (O.S.)  
That's so cool.

Eliza nods.

FADE TO BLACK.