

WORLD'S GREATEST DAD

by

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THE END

MUSIC: A large climactic sting is heard.

Once the sting finishes, the camera slowly zooms out revealing that 'THE END' is typed on a white piece of paper that is in the tray of a printer. Above the words 'THE END' are the last couple paragraphs of a manuscript. As we zoom out further we see the printer as it hums and starts to print out the rest of a novel.

INT. LANCE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Staring at the printer is LANCE. LANCE is middle-aged, out-of-shape, and half-asleep. He is in his pajama bottoms and t-shirt.

LANCE (V.O.)  
My name is Lance, Lance Clayton.

LANCE looks at his reflection in a mirror.

LANCE (V.O.)  
My biggest fear in life is that I  
am going to end up all alone. I am  
a writer.

ANGLE ON: LANCE'S P.O.V. as the camera pans around on the large stack of unpublished manuscripts cluttering his desk.

LANCE (V.O.)  
I am a writer, but so far nothing I  
have written has ever been  
published.

INT. AWARD SHOW/FANTASY - NIGHT

LANCE, still in his t-shirt and pajama bottoms is standing on stage at a podium in front of a large black-tied AUDIENCE. The AUDIENCE is standing up applauding him wildly.

SLOWLY MOTION CLOSE UPS: of adoring cheering fans.

LANCE (V.O.)  
I have always dreamed of being a  
famous author, of creating an  
important work.

The AUDIENCE sits down. LANCE starts making a thank-you speech. He has the AUDIENCE'S rapt attention. We hear his voice over.



Who wants to be a successful,  
wealthy, highly praised corpse?

LANCE tosses the fifteenth and last addressed envelope onto the pile.

LANCE (V.O.)  
This is my fifth novel. I have  
promised myself that if this one is  
rejected, I will give it all up.

INT. LANCE'S APARTMENT - THE NEXT MORNING

LANCE is in the tiny apartments kitchen area. Half asleep, and dressed in rumpled dress shirt and tie. LANCE pours himself a cup of coffee. The coffee mug reads, "WORLD'S GREATEST DAD".

LANCE heads down the hall. The camera stops on a terrible school photo of LANCE'S nerdy son KYLE as LANCE passes by. KYLE is fifteen and awkward looking.

LANCE knocks on KYLE'S door.

LANCE  
Kyle, let's go.

No answer. After a beat, LANCE opens the door and peeks in.

INT. KYLE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

LANCE'S P.O.V. as he spots hard-core porn playing on KYLE'S computer. LANCE looks around the room and first notices a belt tied around the closet's doorknob. The stretched out belt is around KYLE'S neck. KYLE is on his knees, his body is motionless. KYLE'S face is blue, his eyes are bugged out. KYLE'S pants are down to his knees and his hands are over his crotch.

LANCE drops and shatters his coffee cup. He runs over to KYLE and tries to lift him up. KYLE snaps out of his masturbatory state and scrambles to pull up his pants.

KYLE  
Dad! You fag! What are you doing?

LANCE  
I thought you were dead!

KYLE  
I was coming.  
(pause)  
Jesus, why don't you knock?

LANCE  
I, aaa...

LANCE is speechless.

INT. KYLE'S BEDROOM - A LITTLE LATER

LANCE is on his knees, wiping up the coffee with some paper towels. KYLE watches his DAD.

CLOSE UP: on the broken WORLD'S GREATEST DAD mug.

KYLE  
Hurry up Dad, we're gonna be late.

KYLE steps over LANCE and exits. LANCE bristles.

EXT. STREET - MORNING

LANCE and KYLE drive down a suburban street.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

LANCE and KYLE are silent.

LANCE  
(after a beat)  
What you were doing is dangerous.

KYLE  
Whacking off?

LANCE  
(pause)  
We all have needs.

KYLE  
Needs? What are you talking about?

LANCE  
Masturbation, it's normal.

KYLE  
Talking about it with your Dad is  
not normal. Shit.

KYLE puts his feet on the dashboard.

LANCE  
Don't do that.

KYLE  
Why?

LANCE  
Because your feet are dirty.

KYLE does not remove his feet.

LANCE  
(sternly)  
Because I said so.

Kyle slowly takes his feet down. LANCE turns on the CD player. MICHAEL BUBLE comes on singing, 'I've Got the World on a String.'

KYLE  
Turn this off. I hate it.

LANCE  
I have other music besides Michael Buble. What do you wanna hear? I have rock, jazz, metal, folk...

KYLE  
I hate all music.

LANCE  
Oh.

LANCE turns off the music.

EXT. SCHOOL - A LITTLE LATER

LANCE and KYLE drive up to school.

KYLE  
Let me out here.

LANCE  
Let me park.

KYLE  
Lance, I look like a dill weed walking in with you. It's bad for my rep.

LANCE  
Please don't call me Lance.

KYLE  
It's your name isn't it, Lance?

LANCE gives up and pulls over. KYLE gets out and streams into the school with other arriving HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS.

EXT. SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

LANCE drives his car around to the back parking lot and parks.

INT. SCHOOL OFFICE - A LITTLE LATER

LANCE enters the busy office, removes the manuscript envelopes from his backpack and secretively tosses them into a large bin that reads; OUTGOING MAIL. LANCE turns around. Standing behind watching him is the school's principal, PRINCIPAL BISHOP.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Good morning, Lance.

LANCE  
(slightly nervous)  
Morning, Principal Bishop.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
What was that?

LANCE  
Some personal mail.  
(beat)  
I used my own postage.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Oh. Good. May I speak with you for a moment?

PRINCIPAL BISHOP signals to LANCE.

LANCE  
Sure.

LANCE follows PRINCIPAL BISHOP to a less busy area.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Your poetry course. It's not very popular.

LANCE

I know, but the kids who do take it get a lot out of it.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP

I'm sorry, but if your class enrollment doesn't improve by next semester we're going to have to drop it. We're only budgeted for one English elective and Mike Liss' creative writing course is quite the hit. I'm just giving you a heads up.

LANCE

Thanks.

A bummed LANCE exits.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

The hallway is busy with STUDENTS getting ready for their day. KYLE stands in front of his locker and opens it. ANDREW, a boy even nerdier than KYLE approaches him.

ANDREW

Hi, Kyle.

KYLE

What's up fag?

LANCE enters at the other end of the hall. The school is populated with typical teenagers; GOTHS, BOOKWORMS, JOCKS, HIPPIES, etc. As LANCE makes his way down the hall, the STUDENTS hardly notice him. LANCE says hello to a few STUDENTS. The STUDENTS barely get out of his way.

BACK ON: KYLE and ANDREW in mid-conversation.

KYLE

Fucking pussy is virgin shit. The first time I'm with a bitch I go right for the brown eye.

ANDREW

What?

KYLE

I fuck'em in the ass.

ANDREW  
No, I got that part, but you never  
got laid.

KYLE  
Fuck you.

ANDREW  
Kyle, I'm always with you. I'd  
know.

KYLE  
You're not always with me.

ANDREW  
Yes, I am.

KYLE  
No you're not.

DAVID and PETER, two football players, come down the hall.  
DAVID slaps KYLE in the back of the head as he passes by.

DAVID  
Loser.

PETER gives KYLE a wedgie as he passes. A nearby group of  
GIRLS giggle.

KYLE  
(muttering, quietly)  
Fuckin' jocks, I should kick their  
asses.

ANDREW  
Let it go Kyle, they're not worth  
it.

The GIRLS turn away, trying to hide their giggles.

KYLE  
(too soft for the girls to  
hear)  
Fuckin' whores.

BACK ON: LANCE as he struggles to make his way down the hall.  
Coming from the other direction is MIKE LISS. MIKE is a good  
looking, athletic, younger teacher. The STUDENTS part as MIKE  
walks down the hall and are excited to see him. MIKE slaps a  
few of the STUDENTS high five as he passes down the hall.  
MIKE is greeted with, smiling nods, waves and a few, 'Hey,  
Mr. L.' and 'What's up Mr. Liss?'.

LANCE watches the warm reception that MIKE gets.

MIKE and LANCE pass each other. MIKE is all smiles.

MIKE  
Lancelot. What's up?

LANCE  
Good morning Mike. Not much.

As LANCE passes by KYLE he smiles and waves at his son. KYLE ignores his DAD and turns his back.

Hurt, LANCE keeps moving and exits down the hallway.

INT. CLAIRE'S CLASSROOM - MOMENTS LATER

CLAIRE, a cute teacher ten years younger than LANCE, stands at her desk removing her planner from her back pack. LANCE enters and joins her. They smile at each other.

LANCE  
Hello, Miss Reed.

CLAIRE  
Hello, Mr. Clayton.

CLAIRE and LANCE look left to right to see if they are alone, they kiss.

CLAIRE  
Aaa my favorite.

LANCE  
I thought teachers weren't suppose to have favorites?

CLAIRE  
Favorite students.

LANCE and CLAIRE check again to see if anyone is coming and kiss again.

LANCE  
I'm a lucky guy. How does a load like me get a dame like you?

CLAIRE  
Don't insult my taste. I'm the lucky guy.

LANCE removes a manuscript envelope from his backpack and hands it to CLAIRE. \*

CLAIRE  
(excited)  
You finished?!

LANCE  
Yep, and I want you to be the first to read it. \*

CLAIRE tucks the manuscript into her backpack. \*

CLAIRE  
I'm honored. \*

LANCE  
How about I take you out for dinner tonight, some place fancy?

CLAIRE  
How about you come over for something hot and spicy?

LANCE  
Is that a double entendre?

CLAIRE  
No, I was going to make you my chile.

LANCE  
Oh.

CLAIRE  
And then bang you.

LANCE  
Both sound great.

LANCE and CLAIRE check again to see if the coast is clear. They lean into to kiss. Just then they hear STUDENTS entering and stop just before they kiss. LANCE and CLAIRE change to a more somber tone.

LANCE  
(covering)  
Have an extremely professional day Miss Reed.

CLAIRE

Right back at cha', Mr. Clayton.  
Have an extremely professional day.

LANCE exits smiling.

INT. HALLWAY - LATER THAT MORNING

KYLE and ANDREW exit a class along with other STUDENTS. As they walk down the crowded hall KYLE takes out some sheets of photos.

KYLE

(secretly)

Take a look at these.

KYLE hands ANDREW the photo sheets. ANDREW looks and is disgusted.

ANDREW

What is that?

ANDREW turns and looks at the photos from different angles.

ANDREW

Eww. Is that a woman being crapped  
on?

KYLE

Yeah, It's German schiezer porn. I  
downloaded it. Fuckin' hot right,  
yo?

ANDREW

No. What the fuck is wrong with  
you, yo?

KYLE

You wouldn't say that if we were in  
Europe. Europeans are so much more  
broad minded than fucked upped  
Americans. This shit is huge in  
Germany.

ANDREW

Well we're not in Europe, and I  
don't like that stuff.

KYLE

You're a fag.

ANDREW  
No dude, it's gross.

KYLE  
I'd do it. To someone.

ANDREW  
(disgusted)  
Aww.

JENNIFER, a cute student, is coming in the opposite direction. The BOYS go shy.

KYLE  
Hey, Jennifer.

ANDREW  
Uh, hi.

JENNIFER  
Hey.

JENNIFER passes them. KYLE turns back to JENNIFER and mumbles under his breath as if to her.

KYLE  
C'mon baby, that pussy's not gonna  
eat itself.

Thinking that he is hilarious, KYLE smiles and turns back, for a reaction from ANDREW. Instead KYLE is violently shoved by DAN, a good looking large boy who overheard KYLE'S remark. KYLE'S books, papers and schiezer porn go flying.

DAN  
What the fuck did you say?

KYLE  
(sheepishly)  
Nothing.

The passing STUDENTS and JENNIFER stop to watch the exchange.

DAN  
You're a fucking pig.

KYLE slaps DAN. DAN punches the shit out of KYLE. KYLE fights back like a pansy. The STUDENTS watching laugh and squeal. Nervous, ANDREW sneaks off down the hall. DAN pounds away at KYLE. GINGER, a BOOKWORM and HEATHER, a GOTH CHICK enjoy KYLE getting his ass kicked.

KYLE  
Get off me you dumb jock.

DAN  
What are you talking about? I don't  
even play sports.

MIKE LISS rushes over and pulls DAN off of KYLE.

MIKE  
Knock it off!

KYLE mutters to the enraged DAN.

KYLE  
Bitch.

DAN breaks free and punches KYLE in the face again. MIKE  
restrains DAN.

KYLE  
(pathetic)  
Can't you control that animal?

MIKE  
(to KYLE)  
Pick up your stuff, tough guy.

KYLE picks up his books and papers and nervously hides the  
porn photos. MIKE leads DAN and KYLE away. The STUDENTS  
disperse.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

KYLE, JENNIFER and DAN sit on different sides of the office.  
PRINCIPAL BISHOP is at his desk. LANCE stands by the door.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Kyle, what did you say to Jennifer?

KYLE  
Nothing.

Silence.

DAN  
'That pussy is not gonna eat it's  
self.'

KYLE  
(to Principal Bishop)  
Did you hear that?

(to DAN)  
Shut up you pervert.

DAN  
Be quiet.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Kyle, is that what you said?

KYLE  
No.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Jennifer, what did you hear Kyle  
say?

JENNIFER  
(pause)  
I didn't hear him say anything.

KYLE  
See.

DAN  
I heard him say it, I'm not crazy.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
(to DAN)  
What's your relationship with  
Jennifer?

DAN  
She's my friend. I was just walking  
by.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Oh.  
(to Jennifer)  
What's your relationship with Kyle?

JENNIFER  
I've never seen him before.

KYLE  
I'm in your English, Biology and  
Social Studies classes.

JENNIFER  
Really?

KYLE  
(shitty)  
Yeah.

KYLE exhales and shakes his head.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP

Kyle and Dan, you have two weeks of lunch detention. Another incident like this and both of you will be suspended. Dan and Jennifer get back to class. Kyle I need to speak with you and your father.

JENNIFER and DAN exit.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP

Kyle, don't you feel embarrassed for your father?

KYLE

Yes, everyday.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP

Right now you're on academic probation and your grades show no signs of improvement. I'm being accused of favoritism already for giving you so many chances. If you don't straighten up I will be forced to expel you. Do you understand?

KYLE

Yes, Mr. Bishop.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP

Now get out of here. No more trouble.

KYLE and LANCE start to leave.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP

Lance?

LANCE

(to KYLE)

Wait for me outside.

KYLE exits, closing the door behind him.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP

Lance, this isn't easy for me.

LANCE

What?

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
What's Kyle like at home? Is he acting normal?

LANCE  
(lying)  
Yes.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
You know as well as I do that sometimes it takes a long time for these things to surface.

LANCE  
What things?

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
I think Kyle's poor grades and acting out are signs of a serious development problem. He belongs in a special needs school. Where he would get extra attention and care.

LANCE  
What?

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
It's nothing to be ashamed of.

LANCE  
Kyle's not slow, he's just being a pain. Give him a chance.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
I have given him many chances.

LANCE looks down, crushed.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Alright, but he better start improving quickly. And no more disrupting the other students.

LANCE  
I agree, thank-you-thank-you, sir.

LANCE exits.

INT. RECEPTION AREA - CONTINUOUS

LANCE heads out of the principal's office, looking for KYLE. KYLE is gone. LANCE gets pissed.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

KYLE is booking down the busy hall. LANCE catches up to him. They argue down the hallway.

LANCE  
You're grounded.

KYLE  
I'll run away.

LANCE  
Do you want to stay with your  
Mother?

KYLE  
And her boy-toy Todd? You know Mom  
can't be bothered.

LANCE thinks about this. KYLE is right.

LANCE  
No more computer.

This stops KYLE in his tracks.

KYLE  
Dad.

LANCE  
After the fight? And this morning?  
Jesus Christ, Kyle, what have I  
done to deserve all this?

KYLE  
(defiant)  
I didn't ask to be born.

LANCE  
Me neither.

The bell rings. KYLE and LANCE stare at each other for a beat and then head off in opposite directions.

INT. TEACHERS BREAK ROOM - DAY

MIKE sits at a table with an open magazine in front of him. CLAIRE and MORGAN, a young female gym teacher, stand behind him reading over MIKE'S shoulders. MORGAN points out a line in the magazine. LANCE enters with his lunch.

MORGAN  
Read this part.

CLAIRE reads and both her and MORGAN burst out laughing.

CLAIRE  
(to MIKE)  
Oh my God you-are-so-funny!

LANCE  
What's that?

CLAIRE holds up the magazine. MIKE tries to tug it away from her.

MIKE  
This is embarrassing.

CLAIRE  
Mike wrote a article in the New Yorker.

MORGAN  
An homage to the halcyon days of student corporal punishments.

CLAIRE  
It's hysterical.

MIKE  
No it's not.

CLAIRE  
No it's really good.

MORGAN  
It made me laugh and I'm a lesbian.

CLAIRE and MIKE laugh. MORGAN picks up her dirty food tray and exits.

CLAIRE  
It's hard getting in the New Yorker.

LANCE  
It's unbelievable.

MIKE  
It is? This is the first thing I submitted.

LANCE  
(faking it)  
Wow. That's great. Good for you.

MIKE  
Thanks. Sorry about your boy, bad times.

LANCE  
Yeah.

MIKE  
I know. Raising a son is so hard. Don't get me wrong, my Cody is the best thing that ever happened to me but man, can he be a handful.

CLAIRE  
How old is he?

MIKE  
Two going on twenty.

CLAIRE  
I love little boys.

MIKE  
Then you'd love him. The ladies go crazy for him, I'm not kidding. I was at the park with him and had to take a call, I turned my back for a minute and he was surrounded in the sandbox with women. Little girls, adult ladies. One little girl was crying because she wanted to take him home. The kid's a player.

CLAIRE  
I wonder where he gets that from?

MIKE  
I have no idea.

MIKE and CLAIRE share a small laugh.

LANCE  
How's he taking the separation?

MIKE  
Real well.

CLAIRE  
I didn't know you were separated.

MIKE  
Yeah, it's been tough. His mother  
and I were suppose to make a baby  
together, we just weren't suppose  
to live together.

CLAIRE  
That's so sad.

MIKE  
Yeah. Thanks.

LANCE  
How often do you see him?

MIKE  
Every other weekend. He makes me  
laugh all the time. God, they're  
not kidding when they say raising a  
child is the toughest job you'll  
ever love.

CLAIRE  
You sound like a great dad.

MIKE  
Well, I try my best.

LANCE holds his tongue, and forces a smile.

INT. LANCE'S APARTMENT - THAT EVENING

LANCE enters the apartment. ANDREW sits by himself, playing a  
video game on LANCE'S computer, eating a bowl of cereal.

LANCE  
(puzzled)  
Hello, Andrew.

ANDREW doesn't look up from his game.

ANDREW  
Hello, Mr.Clayton.

ANDREW takes a spoonful of cereal, and drips some milk on the keyboard. LANCE, starts to say something, but doesn't. LANCE heads to KYLE'S room instead.

INT. KYLE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

KYLE is watching porn. LANCE enters. KYLE shields the screen from his father with his body.

LANCE  
I told you no computer.

KYLE  
Hi, dad.

LANCE walks over to see what is on the screen. KYLE hits a key, the computer goes to his screen-saver.

LANCE  
I catch you on the computer again,  
I'm taking it away.

KYLE  
Okay, okay.

LANCE  
(mad, hushed)  
And what is Andrew doing here?

KYLE  
Don't upset him, he has asthma.

LANCE  
(still mad, hushed)  
Then he shouldn't be having milk.

KYLE  
What?

LANCE  
Tell him to go home. You're  
grounded.

KYLE  
(over dramatic)  
He can't go home. You never listen  
to me! I told you Andrew doesn't  
have a Father and that his Mother  
is an alcoholic.

LANCE  
(still mad, hushed)  
I told you, you're grounded, that means no friends over.

KYLE  
Send him home. I don't care. You don't care about anyone but yourself.

ANDREW enters. LANCE and KYLE look at him.

ANDREW  
Kyle?

KYLE  
Yeah?

ANDREW  
Do you wanna do some homework?

LANCE can't say anything.

INT. KYLE'S ROOM - LATER

KYLE is laying on his bed writing. ANDREW is on the floor reading a school book. LANCE tries to read what KYLE has written. KYLE covers it up.

LANCE  
Kyle, let me see. I just want to help.  
(reading)  
The Louisiana Purchase. The Louisiana Purchase was a purchase of Louisiana.  
(stops reading)  
Seriously, Kyle? Go on the web and look it up. But don't copy. I want you to have a bibliography of the source materials.

KYLE  
I can't. I can't use my computer.

LANCE  
You can use it for homework.

INT. KYLE'S ROOM - LATER

KYLE is typing on his computer. ANDREW is sprawled out across KYLE'S bed doing a writing assignment. LANCE enters with a cooked, frozen pizza on a plate and some napkins.

LANCE  
Here you go boys.

LANCE offers some to ANDREW. ANDREW takes a slice and a napkin.

ANDREW  
Thanks Mr. Clayton.

ANDREW bites in and burns his mouth. ANDREW blows in and out quickly to cool his mouth down.

ANDREW  
Woo, woo, ow.

LANCE offers the pizza to KYLE. KYLE doesn't say thank-you.

LANCE  
Okay, let me read what you got.  
(reading over Kyle's  
shoulder)  
Farmers relied on good soil, worker  
animals, sunshine and perspiration.  
(stops reading)  
Do you mean sweat?

KYLE  
No, perspiration, when it rains.

LANCE  
(thinks about it)  
Precipitation.

KYLE  
(back peddling)  
No, I meant sweat.

LANCE  
(I guess it makes sense)  
Oh, yeah, well.

INT. CLAIRE'S BATHROOM - SAME TIME

CLAIRE is in a towel curling her hair. She answers her phone. This scene is split between...

INT. LANCE'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - LATER

LANCE is on the phone.

LANCE

Hey.

CLAIRE

Hi.

LANCE

I'm finishing up Kyle's homework  
and then I'll be over to eat your  
chile.

(whispers)

And that is a double entendre.

CLAIRE

I should of called you earlier. I  
didn't get to the store so I didn't  
make chile.

LANCE

That's okay. I'll take you out to  
eat.

CLAIRE

I don't think that that's a good  
idea. We really shouldn't go out  
where students might see us.

LANCE

Why not?

CLAIRE

Because I already hear enough jokes  
from the horny seniors being their  
anatomy teacher.

LANCE

How about I bring over some take  
out?

CLAIRE

Would you hate me if we did this  
tomorrow night instead? I'm not  
feeling that great and it's already  
kinda late.

LANCE  
(disappointed)  
No, sure tomorrow night would be great.

CLAIRE  
Are you sure you're not mad at me?

LANCE  
No, positive, not at all.

CLAIRE  
Okay, then good night sugar.

LANCE  
(whispers)  
Good night honey.

CLAIRE  
See you tomorrow maple syrup.

LANCE  
See you tomorrow  
(can't come up with  
anything)  
...a, cream corn?

CLAIRE  
That doesn't even make sense.

LANCE  
I know. My riff gun jammed. I got nothing.

CLAIRE laughs.

LANCE  
Good night popsicle.

INT. KYLE'S ROOM - LATER

ANDREW struggles to do chin-ups on a chin-up bar hung across KYLE'S closet door. KYLE is watching ANDREW.

KYLE  
You're gonna give yourself a hernia.

LANCE comes in a little bummed, grabs the last slice of pizza and starts eating.

LANCE  
Alright, lets see how you did.

LANCE reads KYLE'S report over KYLE'S shoulder.

LANCE  
Not bad, Kyle, not bad.

ANDREW gives up and joins LANCE and KYLE.

ANDREW  
(supportive)  
See, Kyle?

ANDREW wiggles his arms around.

LANCE  
What are you doing?

ANDREW  
Cool down.

LANCE  
Yeah.  
(beat)  
Uh, Andrew, what time do you have  
to be home?

ANDREW  
It doesn't matter.

LANCE  
Hey guys, it's only 9:30. How 'bout  
we go down to the video store and  
rent a movie before it closes?

LANCE puts his hand on KYLE'S shoulder. KYLE jerks his  
shoulder away.

KYLE  
I hate watching movies.

LANCE  
You used to like watching movies  
when you were a kid.

KYLE  
I only watched them cause you  
wanted me too. I think movies are  
for artfags.

LANCE is hurt, he looks at ANDREW who is expressionless.

LANCE  
Well then, what would you like to do?

KYLE  
Can me and Andrew play Doom on my computer?

LANCE caves in.

LANCE  
Sure.

KYLE and ANDREW start to play on the computer.

LANCE exits.

ANDREW  
I like your Dad.

KYLE  
My Dad? He's a fuckin' idiot. \*

TEACHER'S LOUNGE - THE NEXT DAY \*

LANCE is pouring himself a cup of coffee. TEACHERS mill about behind him. CLAIRE enters and approaches LANCE. \*

CLAIRE  
Hello Mr. Clayton. \*

LANCE  
Hello Miss Reed. \*

CLAIRE  
How'd you sleep? \*

LANCE  
Like a baby. \*

CLAIRE  
That's good. \*

LANCE  
Not really. All night I cried and wet the bed. \*

CLAIRE  
Not cool. \*

LANCE  
Did you get a chance to read my  
book?

CLAIRE  
I'm sorry-you know I'm not much of  
a reader. That's why I teach art.

LANCE is let down.

CLAIRE  
Hey?

LANCE  
Yeah?

CLAIRE  
Can you help me with something?

LANCE  
(what the hell)  
Sure.

26a

26a

INT. GYMNASIUM - A LITTLE LATER

The GYM is empty. LANCE is pushing a large piece of modern  
art on a dolly. CLAIRE is walking along steadying it.

LANCE  
This is an interesting piece.

CLAIRE cups LANCE'S ass.

CLAIRE  
You're an interesting piece.

CLAIRE kisses LANCE and pulls him under the bleachers. The  
art piece rocks and settles.

ANGLE ON: UNDER BLEACHERS

LANCE and CLAIRE kiss. After a beat they stop.

CLAIRE  
(looking around)  
This is just like high school,  
right?

LANCE  
I didn't have any girlfriends in  
high school.

\*  
\*  
\*

CLAIRE plants another one on him.

\*

CLAIRE  
Those girls were idiots. I would of  
been your girlfriend.

\*  
\*  
\*

CLAIRE kisses LANCE some more.

\*

INT. LANCE'S CLASSROOM - THE NEXT DAY

LANCE is at his desk listening to JASON, a lumpy black student reading a poem at the front of the class of eight other STUDENTS. GINGER the BOOKWORM is one of the kids.

JASON  
My hands are tied, my body bruised  
you got me with nothing to win,  
nothing left to lose.

LANCE cuts JASON off.

LANCE  
Jason you didn't write that. That's  
a U2 song.  
(hums to himself)  
Nothing to win, nothing left to  
lose with or...  
(figures out which song  
and then to the class)  
"With or without you". Sit down  
Jason. I don't know why you guys  
are here if you don't even want to  
try. This class is a chance for you  
say something. Something personal.

GINGER  
I wrote something that was kind of  
personal.

LANCE  
Great, go on.

GINGER walks to the front of the class and reads from her notebook.

GINGER

It was raining yesterday afternoon. Water dripping off the lilac bushes my mother loves. And as I sat and watched the blood pour out from between my legs and felt the pain of motherhood myself I wondered if it would have been a boy or a girl?

The last line snaps LANCE to attention. Did he hear it right?

LANCE

(at a loss for words)  
Thank you. That was aa, very powerful.

GINGER

Thanks.

GINGER sits down.

LANCE

Are you alright?

GINGER

(matter of factually)  
Yeah. It was something that happened along time ago.

LANCE

Oh. Well if you ever need someone to talk to you'll let me know, right?

GINGER turns to her classmates and rolls her eyes as if LANCE is crazy.

GINGER

Sure. You're on the top of my list.

The KIDS laugh. The BELL RINGS. LANCE is as confused as ever as the KIDS file out.

EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

STUDENTS and FACULTY are getting in their cars, leaving for the day.

LANCE, standing by his car spots CLAIRE and MIKE a ways away, standing next to MIKE'S car. CLAIRE and MIKE are laughing and carrying on. LANCE watches as CLAIRE makes a point and holds onto MIKE'S arm briefly.

After a beat CLAIRE and MIKE notice LANCE. They wave to LANCE, he waves back. MIKE and CLAIRE say good-bye to each other. MIKE gets in his car and drives off. CLAIRE heads over to LANCE.

CLAIRE  
Hello, lamb chop.

LANCE  
(down)  
Hello, honey dew melon.

CLAIRE  
What's wrong?

LANCE  
Nothing.

CLAIRE  
Something's bothering you.

LANCE  
Do you like Mike?

CLAIRE  
What are you talking about?

CLAIRE turns away from LANCE and seethes to herself. LANCE feels bad.

LANCE  
Don't get mad. We never talked  
about not seeing anyone else.

Pissed CLAIRE looks at LANCE. She says nothing.

LANCE  
I'm really sorry I said that.

CLAIRE heads off to her car.

LANCE  
Are we still on for dinner?

CLAIRE looks back and shakes her head 'no' as she gets in her car.

I/E LANCE'S CAR - A LITTLE LATER

LANCE drives and calls CLAIRE. He gets her message.

LANCE

Listen I'm so sorry. I'm a jerk.  
I'm insecure. It's just that I  
can't believe someone like you  
would like someone like me. I don't  
deserve you. Please accept my  
apology. Lets still go to dinner.  
You don't even have to talk to me.  
I'll feed you. I'm a jerk.

LANCE hangs up.

EXT. LANCE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

LANCE, still in his school attire, is checking his mail. LANCE unlocks his mailbox and pulls out a big wad of mail. He opens and reads two rejection notices. In the pile are two large envelopes containing some of his returned manuscripts. Depressed and heartbroken LANCE heads to his apartment.

INT. LANCE'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

LANCE walks in and places the rejected manuscripts and letters on a large pile of similar envelopes. LANCE sits down and stares at the pile. LANCE answers his phone. The following scene is split between LANCE'S place and...

INT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

CLAIRE

You still hungry jerk?

LANCE

I'm really sorry.

CLAIRE

Yeah you're a real shitbird. Don't let it happen again.

LANCE

(cheering up)

I am a jerk. It won't happen again.

CLAIRE

How bout you coming over for dinner?

LANCE

Sounds great.

CLAIRE  
I'll call you in a little while.

LANCE  
I am really sorry.

CLAIRE  
You ought to be.

LANCE hangs up and is a little happier.

INT. KYLE'S ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

KYLE is lying in bed under the covers. Next to him is an open school book. KYLE is looking through his windows blinds, rubbing his crotch.

ANGLE ON: KYLE'S P.O.V. of BONNIE, an elderly neighbor, in her bedroom window changing for bed. BONNIE takes off her top and is in her bra.

KYLE'S bedroom door opens. KYLE jumps and grabs his school book. LANCE enters KYLE'S room.

LANCE  
(suspicious)  
What cha' doin'?

KYLE doesn't look up.

KYLE  
What does it look like I am doing?  
I'm doing homework.

LANCE looks through the blinds, where KYLE was. He sees BONNIE changing. LANCE closes the blinds all the way. LANCE looks at KYLE.

KYLE  
What?

LANCE  
Nothing.  
(beat)  
Need any help?

KYLE  
No.

LANCE

Listen, uh, I'm going on a date tonight so if you want me to make you something to eat let me know.

KYLE looks up.

KYLE

A date? With who?

LANCE, stops and turns back around.

LANCE

Well, no one is suppose to know because it might cause problems at school, but Claire.

KYLE looks puzzled.

LANCE

Miss Reed.

KYLE

Really? The Tilf.

LANCE

What?

KYLE

All the kids call her a Tilf.  
Teacher I'd Like to  
(mouths, quietly)  
Fuck.

LANCE

Nice mouth.

KYLE

I'm just telling you what the kids call her.

LANCE

What do you think of her?

KYLE

She's got a hot body, and her helmet is okay...

LANCE

Not about her looks. God, Kyle how'd you'd become such a pervert? They're other things to a woman.

What do you think of her  
personality?

KYLE

I think she's stuck up and she's a  
phoney.

LANCE leans up against KYLE'S desk. KYLE'S monitor pops on  
behind LANCE displaying a slide show of absurd (but R-rated)  
porn. KYLE'S face goes white.

LANCE

What?  
(noticing the porn)  
Dear God, Kyle!

KYLE

What?

KYLE

I haven't been on the web except  
for homework since you told me not  
to, honest.

LANCE unplugs the computer and monitor.

KYLE

What are you doing?

LANCE picks up the monitor and starts to carry it away.

LANCE

You're using this only in the  
kitchen where I can watch you.

KYLE grabs the monitor. They have a tug-a-war with it.

KYLE

Stop it asshole.

They drop the monitor, it smashes.

KYLE

You dumb shit.

LANCE raises his hand to strike KYLE, but stops.

KYLE

Go ahead and hit me, I'll call the  
cops.

INT. APARTMENT - A LITTLE LATER

ANGLE ON: The broken monitor, sticking out of the trash.

LANCE on the couch, sullen. KYLE comes out.

KYLE  
I'm going to Andrew's to do my  
homework.

LANCE  
(beaten)  
Use my computer.

KYLE  
I forgot one of my books.

LANCE has nothing to say, he just shrugs. KYLE exits.

After a beat LANCE takes out his phone and dials. We hear  
CLAIRE'S outgoing message.

CLAIRE (O.S.)  
Hey, this is Claire, leave me a  
message.

LANCE  
Hey, doll, I didn't hear from you  
and was wondering if you still  
wanted me to come over? Give me a  
call.

LANCE hangs up the phone, and turns on the TV.

INT. LANCE'S KITCHEN - LATER

LANCE is looking in the refrigerator, he looks at his watch  
and then the wall clock. LANCE closes the refrigerator door  
and picks up the phone. LANCE dials the phone. This scene is  
split between...

I/E. CLAIRE'S CAR - NIGHT

CLAIRE is on the phone driving.

LANCE  
Hey.

CLAIRE  
Hi.

LANCE

Are we still on for some vittles?

CLAIRE

I'm sorry I didn't call you sooner. My mother is having a nervous break down. Her dog got burned by a hair dryer.

LANCE

Your Mother's dog uses a hair dryer?

CLAIRE

No, she does on the dog. She's fucking bananas.

LANCE

Sounds it.

CLAIRE

Sorry about tonight. You're not mad are you?

LANCE

(hiding hurt)

Naw.

CLAIRE

Let's get together tomorrow. We'll have breakfast and then make a whole day of it. If that's alright with you?

LANCE

Sounds delightful.

CLAIRE

Good night, cupcakes.

LANCE

Good night, watermelon sherbert.

LANCE opens the refrigerator, stares for a beat then shuts the door. LANCE looks up at a high cupboard. He drags a chair over climbs up to the cupboard and opens it. LANCE reaches way back into the shelf and pulls out a small tin container. He opens it. It is his pot stash. LANCE sniffs the container.

EXT. LANCE'S PORCH - NIGHT

LANCE sits on his porch finishing up rolling a joint. Sitting in the dark on a near by porch is BONNIE. BONNIE is wearing a hose under her nose connected to an oxygen tank. LANCE is unaware that BONNIE is watching him as he lights up. LANCE takes a few hits.

BONNIE  
(coughing)  
Your weed smells like shit.

LANCE is startled.

LANCE  
I'm so sorry.

BONNIE  
That's okay.

LANCE  
(after a beat)  
Do you want some?

BONNIE  
No thanks, I can barely breathe.

LANCE tries to wave the smoke away from her.

LANCE  
Sorry.

BONNIE  
Now if you had some pot brownies I  
might take you up on it.

LANCE gives this a little stoned laugh.

LANCE  
Really?

BONNIE  
Sure. I use to get wrecked with  
Kerouac. I'm sure his Benzedrine  
was a lot stronger than your grass.  
I was the one who told him to write  
On the Road on that giant scroll  
cause he was a speed freak afraid  
of paper cuts. How's your writing  
going?

LANCE  
A lot of rejections.

BONNIE  
That only means it's good. People are idiots. They only eat and consume crap. Don't give up. You're going to write something important one day. I can tell.

LANCE  
Thanks.

LANCE takes another hit and fans the smoke away from BONNIE. After a beat LANCE gets uncomfortable.

LANCE  
Bonnie?

BONNIE  
Yeah?

LANCE  
I need to ask you something.

BONNIE  
What?

LANCE  
At night, when you change? Could you close your bedroom blinds.

BONNIE  
Why?

LANCE  
Aaa, it's Kyle. I think he might be watching you.

BONNIE  
What?

LANCE  
Yeah, I think Kyle is watching you change.

BONNIE  
(a long beat, then ala  
Dr.Loomis in Halloween)  
The boy is evil.

LANCE  
What?

BONNIE  
(continuing the  
impression)  
Pure evil.

LANCE  
Is that 'Halloween'?

BONNIE  
(impression)  
Kyle Clayton is pure evil.

LANCE  
(also impersonating  
Dr.Loomis)  
Pure evil.

LANCE laughs.

LANCE  
I love that movie.

BONNIE  
Me, too.

LANCE'S cell phone vibrates. He takes it out, there's a text message. The message reads: 'Hey, Cupcake, Can't do tomorrow. Sorry. Something came up. I'll call you.'

LANCE is visibly let down.

BONNIE  
Bad news? The kids in jail?

LANCE  
No.

BONNIE  
Yeah, that would be good news.  
What's wrong?

LANCE  
It's this woman I'm seeing. I think she likes me, but then something comes up. I don't know, it's always something.

BONNIE  
Where does Kyle's Mom live?

LANCE  
Here.

BONNIE

Why doesn't he ever stay with her?

LANCE

They fight all the time, so he lives with me.

BONNIE

How 'bout you and his Mom?

LANCE

We don't get along either.

BONNIE

How'd you end up together?

LANCE

We shared a common interest. She hated me as much as I do.

BONNIE laughs.

BONNIE

You miss her?

LANCE

Naw, when I was with her I felt invisible. One night I come home from work, we have dinner and we're going to bed and she says, 'What's your problem, what's wrong with you? Why are you moping?' And I say, 'It's my birthday.'

BONNIE

Wow.

LANCE

Yeah, nice huh? I have history of being with women who don't treat me right.

BONNIE

Jeez, I don't know why? You sure seem like you have a tremendous amount of healthy self-esteem. Listen, that might not be the case with this new girl. People are flaky. She might really have a lot going on.

LANCE

What about you? You ever take the plunge?

BONNIE

Are you hitting on me?

LANCE

Yes.

LANCE and BONNIE laugh.

BONNIE

I loved this guy Carl once. Handsome man, loved to screw, but he was too jealous. Drove me nuts asking me where I had been and with who. I wasn't up to anything but it made me crazy. I would tell him it was none of his damn business and that he needed to trust me more. Also, a giant pig. A mechanic, wiped his big greasy hands on my good towels. I thought I deserved to be treated better. I wanted him to change. We fought, till we broke up. Seemed important then. Now, I would kill to have someone ask me where I have been or who I was with, or to ruin my brand new towels. Finding the perfect mate is a myth. They tell you not to put up with any crap, not to settle for less, but that doesn't make any sense at all because we're all flawed. If someone is willing to put up with your shit, you're pretty lucky. It's important to bend. You gotta accept people the way they are. Don't be like me. I was too busy looking for the perfect guy. It's a mighty big and lonely world out there and ending up alone like me sucks shit.

LANCE mulls this over.

INT. KYLE'S BEDROOM - A LITTLE LATER

KYLE lays in bed staring out the blinds.

ANGLE ON: KYLE'S POV of BONNIE in her bedroom window. BONNIE faces the window and suddenly grabs her breasts, defiantly shaking them. She then shuts her blinds.

KYLE is confused. LANCE enters. Once again, KYLE jumps.

KYLE  
Jesus Dad, you almost made me crap.

LANCE  
What ya doin'?

KYLE  
Nothin'.

LANCE comes over and sits on his bed.

LANCE  
Did you get your homework done?

KYLE  
(all shitty)  
Yes.  
(sniffs)  
What is that smell?

LANCE  
(covering)  
Must be a skunk outside.

KYLE  
Yeah.

LANCE  
Kyle, let's do something together tomorrow.

KYLE  
Why, because you feel bad?

LANCE  
Yeah. I mean no. I mean, let's do something fun.

KYLE  
Like build a rocket?

LANCE  
Sure, if that's what you wanna do.

KYLE  
That's retarded.

LANCE  
What do you like to do?

KYLE  
Nothing.

LANCE  
Don't you feel passionate about anything?

KYLE  
No.

LANCE  
Music, movies, books?

KYLE  
No, I'm not queer like you.

LANCE  
Sports, politics?

KYLE  
Nope.

LANCE  
You must like something.

KYLE  
I like looking at vaginas.

LANCE  
How bout we do something, non-vagina related?

KYLE  
Let's go to the mall.

LANCE  
Great, and then maybe a movie?

KYLE  
Okay, but at the mall.

LANCE  
Okay.

KYLE  
And we can look at a new computer?

LANCE  
No. I meant hang.

KYLE

Please Dad? We don't have to buy one. How bout we just look at computers then I'll go to a movie with you.

LANCE

Okay, but you're not getting a new computer.

KYLE

Alright. Sounds fun.

INT. MALL FOOD COURT - DAY

LANCE and KYLE sit in the busy food court. KYLE is tearing open his brand new monitor. LANCE is eating fast food.

KYLE

This isn't really the biggest screen.

LANCE

Jesus Kyle, seriously?

KYLE

What are you, on your period? I was just sayin'.

Defeated, LANCE stares off in the distance. After a beat, he sees CLAIRE strolling with MIKE. LANCE'S heart drops. KYLE looks to see what his father is looking at.

KYLE

Hey, look. It's Mike, with Miss Reed.

LANCE

Yeah, I see it.

KYLE

Told you she was a whore.

LANCE

Shut the fuck up.

KYLE

Nice mouth. Don't get mad at me cause she's out porking another dude. I wouldn't let my bitch treat me that way.

LANCE  
You don't have a bitch.

KYLE  
How would you know?

LANCE is exasperated. ANDREW approaches the table.

ANDREW  
Hi, Kyle, Mr. Clayton.

KYLE  
Hey.

LANCE  
Hello Andrew.

ANDREW notices the new monitor.

ANDREW  
Wow. So, he got it for you. Rad.

KYLE  
Yeah, but it's not the big one.

LANCE is lost in thought watching MIKE and CLAIRE, laughing and carrying on.

KYLE  
Dad, can Andrew and I go home and hook up my new monitor?

LANCE  
What about going with me to the movies?

KYLE  
C'mon Dad. Let's go out to dinner tonight.

LANCE  
(defeated)  
Alright.

KYLE  
(excited to Andrew)  
Yeah, alright! Come on Andrew.

ANDREW  
What are you going to do Mr. Clayton?

LANCE looks back at MIKE and CLAIRE.

LANCE  
I guess I'll go to the movies by  
myself.

FADE OUT.

EXT. MOVIE THEATER - DAY

LANCE exits the movie house, walking down the sidewalk alone.  
Depressed, LANCE kicks a stone along the sidewalk.

LANCE'S phone rings and he answers it.

The following scene is split between LANCE and...

INT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

CLAIRE is on her phone.

CLAIRE  
(friendly)  
Hey, it's me. What are you doing?

LANCE  
Nothing. What are you doing?

CLAIRE  
Nothing.  
(sensing something)  
You're not mad at me are you?

LANCE  
Naw. What did you do today?

CLAIRE  
I was with Mike. He was having a  
breakdown about his divorce. He had  
to go to a wedding and it depressed  
him, so I went with him to the mall  
and helped him pick out a suit to  
wear.

LANCE  
Yeah, I saw you two there.

CLAIRE  
Why didn't you say hi?

LANCE  
I don't know. It seemed weird.

CLAIRE

Does it bother you that I have male friends?

LANCE

No. It's just that you keep our relationship secret, but then you go out with him in public.

CLAIRE

That's because Mike and I are just friends. Would it make you feel better if we went out in public?

Silence.

CLAIRE

Okay, what are you doing tonight? Let's go out, someplace fancy, someplace the world can see us. How 'bout Outback Steak House? Anyone who is anybody will be there. We can have the Aussietizers...

LANCE

I was thinking some place nicer.

CLAIRE

Nicer than Outback? Is there such a place?

LANCE

It'll be hard, but it's out there. No wait-I can't, I promised Kyle I'd take him out.

CLAIRE

Let me take both of you out. My treat.

LANCE

Really? Okay, but my treat, the kid eats a lot.

They laugh.

INT. LANCE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

LANCE enters, in a good mood.

LANCE  
(calling out)  
Kyle?

KYLE  
(in the other room)  
I'm in here.

As LANCE heads for KYLE'S room, he notices the framed school photo of KYLE is laying face down. LANCE puts it up right.

LANCE  
Kyle, why do you always tip over  
this photo?

KYLE  
(in other room)  
Cause I hate it! I look inbred.

LANCE  
I think you look handsome.

INT. KYLE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

KYLE has his new monitor on the desk. The screen is off.  
LANCE enters.

KYLE  
Dad this is a piece of shit. We  
have to take it back.

LANCE  
Have you checked all the cables?

KYLE  
I'm not a tard.

LANCE  
We're going to dinner tonight with  
Claire.

KYLE  
No way.

LANCE  
Yes, Kyle, we are.

KYLE  
Dad that's the worst thing that  
could ever happen times five. I  
thought she was seeing Mr.Liss.

LANCE

They're just friends, she was helping him out. Why am I explaining this to you?

KYLE

It's bad enough being seen with your dad who is a teacher, but being seen with two teachers is aids.

LANCE

Kyle I've had it with you. You're going. I bought you a computer today.

KYLE

That doesn't work.

LANCE

Get dressed. Put on something nice and if you don't act right I'll kill you.

EXT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

LANCE and KYLE pull up outside CLAIRE'S house.

INT. LANCE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

KYLE is in the back seat wearing his version of, 'something nice'. KYLE is busy text messaging. LANCE is behind the wheel, dressed up. CLAIRE gets in the car. CLAIRE is wearing a cute short skirt.

CLAIRE

Boy, you fellas look nice.

LANCE

Right back at cha'

KYLE

(barely looking up from  
texting)  
Hello, Miss Reed.

CLAIRE

That sounds weird. Kyle how 'bout when we're not in school, you call me Claire?

KYLE  
You want me to call you Miss  
Claire?

CLAIRE  
No, just Claire.

KYLE  
Gotcha', Claire.

LANCE  
Where to?

CLAIRE  
How about Stan's?

KYLE  
No.

LANCE  
Why not?

KYLE  
Every time I eat at Stan's I get  
bad diarrhea.

LANCE  
Kyle.

CLAIRE  
It's alright, I like diarrhea.

LANCE and CLAIRE laugh as LANCE pulls out. KYLE rolls his  
eyes.

LANCE  
Let's just drive and see what we  
find.  
(to Claire)  
Do you like *having* diarrhea or  
hearing about *other peoples*  
diarrhea?

CLAIRE  
Both.

LANCE and CLAIRE laugh some more.

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER

LANCE, CLAIRE and KYLE are eating in a nice family  
restaurant. KYLE is still texting on his phone.

CLAIRE  
What do you like to do Kyle?

KYLE  
Nothing.

CLAIRE  
Nothing? You must like to do something.

KYLE  
Nope.

LANCE  
He got a new monitor for his computer today.

CLAIRE  
What do you do on the computer?  
What sites do you like?

LANCE  
(before Kyle can answer)  
Mostly games.  
(pissed, to Kyle)  
Who are you texting?

KYLE  
Andrew.

LANCE  
Why don't you give it a break while we eat?

KYLE  
It's important.

LANCE  
Put it away.

KYLE sighs and puts his phone in his pants pocket.

CLAIRE  
Do you have a girlfriend?

KYLE  
I don't like to talk about my personal affairs.  
(after a beat)  
How serious are you and my dad?

CLAIRE gives LANCE a look.

CLAIRE  
I think your father is real swell. \*

KYLE  
So, you guys doin' it?

LANCE shoots KYLE a look. CLAIRE looks at LANCE and then answers KYLE.

CLAIRE  
Yes, all the time.

LANCE  
(to Claire)  
Want to rent a movie later?

CLAIRE  
As long as it's not horror. I don't like horror.

LANCE  
Really?

CLAIRE  
Why, do you?

LANCE  
Yeah.

KYLE knocks his spoon under the table "accidentally". KYLE goes to retrieve the spoon.

CLAIRE  
Do you like musicals?

While KYLE is under the table he sees up CLAIRE'S dress. KYLE bangs his head on the bottom of the table at the sight of her panties. KYLE comes back up.

LANCE  
Bob Fosse is one of my favorite directors. Sweet Charity, All that Jazz...

CLAIRE  
Cabaret?

LANCE  
I love Lenny and Star 80.

CLAIRE  
I only like the musicals.

As LANCE and CLAIRE continue to talk film, KYLE secretly pulls his phone out and snaps photos up CLAIRE'S skirt.

LANCE  
What about Willy Wonka?

CLAIRE  
Which one?

KYLE nods and smiles as he checks the photos to himself and snaps away under the table.

LANCE  
Gene Wilder.

CLAIRE  
I like Johnny Depp but I like Gene Wilder In Young...

LANCE  
(pronouncing it like in  
the movie)  
Frankensteen!

CLAIRE  
(pronouncing it like in  
the movie)  
Frankensteen!

LANCE and CLAIRE laugh away. CLAIRE puts her hand on LANCE'S.

MORGAN walks up with a man, DAN SPENCER (40's).

MORGAN  
(suspiciously)  
Hey everybody what's up?

Startled, KYLE snaps his phone shut. CLAIRE quickly retracts her hand.

CLAIRE  
(guilty)  
Nothing. Just hanging out.

KYLE  
(guilty)  
Yeah nothing. Just hanging out.

CLAIRE  
(reason DAN)  
What's up with you?

MORGAN  
Nothing. Really. Nothing.

MORGAN and DAN turn to exit. DAN turns back and whispers to the table.

DAN SPENCER  
(winking)  
Yet.

LANCE and CLAIRE give a little laugh.

FADE OUT.

EXT. LANCE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

LANCE, CLAIRE and KYLE pull up outside of the apartment building.

INT. LANCE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

LANCE turns off the car. LANCE and KYLE exit the car. CLAIRE stays in the car.

LANCE  
(to CLAIRE)  
I'll be right back.

CLAIRE  
Good night, Kyle.

KYLE  
Good night, Miss Reed.

EXT. LANCE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

LANCE and KYLE walk to the building.

KYLE  
You gonna go hit that?

LANCE  
(worried CLAIRE can hear)  
Please be quiet.

KYLE  
If you don't nail her you're an idiot. I'd do her, if she would shut up.

LANCE  
Kyle stop it.

KYLE  
What? You're not going to try to bang her?

Don't act like you don't think bout pussy all the time, too. That's why you're dropping me off first.

LANCE

I just want to say good night to her alone.

KYLE

With your cock.

LANCE

Kyle would you just for once be nice?

KYLE

(rolls eyes)

Lame.

KYLE gets to the door.

LANCE

I'm going to be right back.

KYLE

Why, have trouble lasting?

LANCE heads to the car.

KYLE

Have fun. Don't do anything I wouldn't do.

EXT. CLAIRE'S PORCH - LATER- NIGHT

LANCE and CLAIRE are making out.

LANCE

That was fun.

CLAIRE

The kiss? Come inside, I'll show you fun.

LANCE

Not tonight.

CLAIRE

Wow, are you shooting me down?

LANCE

No, I'd love to stay, but I told Kyle I'd be right home.

CLAIRE  
Kyle doesn't like me.

LANCE  
He likes you a lot.

CLAIRE  
No.

LANCE  
He just said so when I walked him  
in.

CLAIRE  
(skeptical)  
He did?

LANCE  
Yeah, told me I was a lucky guy.

CLAIRE  
No, I'm the lucky guy.

They kiss some more. Then LANCE breaks apart.

LANCE  
I got to go.

CLAIRE  
He's almost an adult.

CLAIRE kisses LANCE some more.

CLAIRE  
(pouting)  
Stay. You're not nice. How are you  
going to drive with that boner?

LANCE  
There is a stick shift joke here  
right now, but I can't find it.

LANCE kisses her.

LANCE  
Sleep well.

LANCE walks away.

CLAIRE  
Hey!

LANCE turns around. CLAIRE is mooning LANCE in her thong.

LANCE  
(laughs)  
That's sweet.

CLAIRE laughs. LANCE continues down the path.

LANCE  
(shouting back)  
I'll call you tomorrow.

CLAIRE  
Boo! Boo! You're mean!

LANCE  
Good night sweet-pea!

CLAIRE  
Good night cream cheese.

CLAIRE starts to head into the house.

INT. LANCE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

LANCE enters. The apartment is quiet. LANCE looks around for KYLE.

LANCE  
(quietly)  
Hello?

LANCE heads over to KYLE'S closed door. He knocks softly.

LANCE  
Kyle?

LANCE opens the door.

INT. KYLE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

LANCE spots KYLE in the same position with a belt around his neck. LANCE quickly steps back into the hallway.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

LANCE  
Jesus, Kyle! I told you to stop  
doing that.

After a beat, LANCE knocks on the door.

LANCE  
Come on. Get it together.

LANCE listens, silence, something is wrong. Slowly LANCE enters the room.

INT. KYLE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

LANCE stares at KYLE'S motionless body.

LANCE  
Kyle?

KYLE is dead.

LANCE walks over to KYLE'S body. It hits him. LANCE drops to his knees and wails.

FADE OUT.

INT. KYLE'S ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

Still on the floor and in a state of shock, LANCE looks at KYLE and around the room. After a beat he takes out his cell phone and dials 911. He looks at the phone, than at KYLE. He does not hit send. LANCE folds up the phone and puts it away.

MONTAGE: MOTT THE HOOPLE'S, 'ALL THE YOUNG DUDES' plays.

LANCE finds KYLE'S phone open on the floor in front of KYLE. On the phone screen is one of the photos up CLAIRE'S skirt. LANCE reacts and deletes it. Another one pops up. LANCE deletes more of the photos of CLAIRE.

LANCE takes a tissue and wipes up in front of KYLE and tosses the tissues out. LANCE puts away the box of tissues and lotion by KYLE.

LANCE undoes the belt from the door knob. KYLE drops to the ground. LANCE struggles and lifts up KYLE pulling up his pants on and zipping up his fly.

LANCE sets KYLE down on the floor and stares at him, then surveys the room. LANCE heads over to the computer.

LANCE tries to turn on the computer, no luck. Then Lance plugs in the monitor's cord. The screen lights up.

FADE OUT.

INT. KYLE'S ROOM A LITTLE LATER

LANCE finishes up writing KYLE's 'suicide note' on the computer. He rereads it and prints it up. LANCE deletes the note.

LANCE lifts up KYLE, with the belt still around KYLE'S neck and tosses the other end of the belt over the chin up bar and hoists KYLE up. LANCE ties off the belt, hanging KYLE. LANCE stares at his handy-work and shakes his head.

LANCE takes the suicide note from the printer, folds it up and puts it in KYLE'S pocket. LANCE kisses his sons cheek and then takes out his phone, dials 911 and pushes send. His voice breaks as he speaks.

LANCE  
Hello?

911 OPERATOR (O.S.)  
Hello, 911 emergency....

FADE OUT.

TITLE: ONE MONTH LATER

EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - MORNING

STUDENTS stream into the school. LANCE sits in his car zoning out, staring at KYLE'S dirty shoe prints on the dashboard.

SONG ENDS

PRINCIPAL BISHOP appears in the car window.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Welcome back Lance.

LANCE  
Hi.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Are you OK?

LANCE  
Yeah.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
If you need more time off take it.  
Nobody here would fault you for  
that.

LANCE  
Naw, I'm fine. Thanks.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Let me know if you need anything.

LANCE  
Thanks.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP heads into the school. LANCE sits in his car staring.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - A LITTLE LATER

The hall is noisy and active. Busy STUDENTS prepare for their day. A solemn LANCE enters. As the STUDENTS notice him, they stop talking, some turn away. A few smile at LANCE as he passes, he smiles and nods back.

MIKE comes up.

MIKE  
Hey, C-dawg, good to have you back.

LANCE  
Thanks, Mike.

MIKE gives LANCE a slap on the back and exits.

LANCE approaches ANDREW. Once again the STUDENTS grow silent when they see LANCE.

LANCE  
Hi Andrew.

ANDREW  
Hello Mr. Clayton.

LANCE  
How you doing?

ANDREW  
Fine...okay. Mr. Clayton?

LANCE  
Yeah?

ANDREW  
I'm really sorry.

LANCE  
Thanks.

ANDREW  
And I'm sorry about my Mom.

LANCE  
Why?

ANDREW  
Cause she threw up in your planter  
at that thing at your house after  
the funeral.

LANCE  
I was wondering who puked.

ANDREW  
She drinks too much.

LANCE  
I know Andrew. Don't worry about  
it. It meant a lot that you came.

ANDREW  
Thanks Mr. Clayton.  
(beat)  
Mr. Clayton, something doesn't make  
sense to me.

LANCE  
What, Andrew?

ANDREW  
Did Kyle seem that bummed out to  
you?

LANCE  
What do you mean?

ANDREW  
To kill himself. He just didn't  
seem that sad.

LANCE  
(searching)  
Andrew, Kyle was a very complex  
guy.

ANDREW  
Yeah.

INT. PRINCIPAL BISHOP'S OFFICE - DAY

PRINCIPAL BISHOP sits at his desk. MR. MOLINA (50's), sits in the room too. LANCE enters.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Lance, this is Mr. MOLINA.

LANCE  
Hello.

MR. MOLINA  
Hello Lance, it's nice to meet you.  
I'm very sorry about your loss.

LANCE  
Thank-you.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Mr. MOLINA is a therapist. We brought him in because we were afraid Kyle's death may trigger other suicides. He's a grief councilor.

LANCE  
Oh.

MR. MOLINA  
Lance, I have a question to ask you about Kyle and I need you to be honest.

LANCE  
(worried)  
What?

MR. MOLINA  
Did...did Kyle have any friends?

LANCE  
Why?

MR. MOLINA  
Because no one has come in to talk to me. I shouldn't say no one, a couple of kids with typical age appropriate depression and eating disorders and a few trying to get out of class, but none of them have come to me to talk about Kyle.

LANCE

Oh.

MR. MOLINA

Who were his friends?

LANCE

Aa, Andrew.

MR. MOLINA

Andrew?

LANCE

Andrew Troutmen.

MR. MOLINA

Who else?

LANCE

Kyle was a bit of a lone wolf.

MR. MOLINA

I'll have to ask Andrew to come in  
and see me.

LANCE

Yeah.

MR. MOLINA

And Lance, that goes for you too.  
If you need to talk, or get some  
thing off your chest, stop by,  
okay?

LANCE

Yes I will, thanks.

LANCE exits.

INT. HALLWAY - OUTSIDE OF MIKE'S CLASSROOM - LATER

LANCE walks down the hall. He peeks inside MIKE'S class. It is full of animated STUDENTS. MIKE is full of energy as he teaches. LANCE sees the KIDS who dropped out of his class having the time of their lives in the packed classroom. Even more depressed LANCE exits.

INT. LANCE'S CLASSROOM - DAY

There are only three STUDENTS in LANCE'S class JASON and two other BOYS. LANCE is depressed.

JASON walks to the front of the class with his poem.

JASON  
 (reading, angry)  
 Negro? I may be young but I am not  
 your boy. I won't pick your cotton  
 or pick up your dishes.

JASON busts a few hip-hop moves.

JASON  
 I sing and I dance but I do it with  
 the dignity of my ancestors. I am  
 not your monkey. Thank you.

LANCE is uncomfortable.

INT. LANCE'S CLASS ROOM - DAY

LANCE is erasing the board. CLAIRE enters and gives him a hug.

CLAIRE  
 Hey.

LANCE  
 Hey.

CLAIRE  
 How are you?

LANCE  
 Good.

CLAIRE  
 Good.  
 (beat)  
 I want to apologize that I haven't  
 been there for you more.

LANCE  
 That's okay.

CLAIRE  
 It's just that I don't do death  
 well.

LANCE  
 Don't worry about it. I've been a  
 zombie lately any ways.

CLAIRE gives Lance a hug.

CLAIRE  
I'm really sorry, please don't be mad.

LANCE  
It's okay.

CLAIRE  
Let's do something soon. Alright?

LANCE  
Alright.

CLAIRE  
(exiting)  
Cheer up Pumpkin. I like you.

LANCE  
Thanks.

LANCE sits, alone.

INT. LANCE'S APARTMENT - DUSK

LANCE stands in KYLE'S bedroom door, looking in. After a beat he takes out his phone and calls CLAIRE. The following scene is split between LANCE'S apartment and...

INT. BOWLING ALLEY - SAME TIME

MIKE is bowling with a league while CLAIRE sits drinking a beer.

LANCE  
Hey, sweet tarts.

CLAIRE  
Hey.

LANCE  
What are you doing?

CLAIRE  
I'm watching Mike bowl.

LANCE  
Oh.

CLAIRE  
You okay?

LANCE

Yeah.

CLAIRE

(yelling at a pin still  
standing)

Fall over you prick!

(to Lance)

Are you sure?

LANCE

Positive. Call me back when you're  
not busy.

CLAIRE

(yelling)

Oh! Robbed - you were robbed!

Someone call the cops!

(to Lance)

Alright, honey I hope you feel  
better.

(more yelling)

Come on!

CLAIRE hangs up.

LANCE sits in his apartment alone.

INT. LANCE'S APARTMENT - A LITTLE LATER

LANCE is standing on the chair looking into his tin of pot.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - A LITTLE LATER

LANCE knocks on BONNIE'S door. She answers it, the door is  
chained, she peeks out. She is wearing her oxygen tube. LANCE  
is holding a tray of brownies.

BONNIE

Oh, hi.

LANCE

Hey, I made you something.

BONNIE

What?

LANCE holds up the tray.

LANCE

Brownies.

BONNIE

Oh.

(getting it)

Oh. I'll come over and get them.

LANCE

How bout I come in and we eat them together?

BONNIE

No.

LANCE

Why?

BONNIE

I can't right now.

LANCE

Bonnie, I really need to talk to someone.

BONNIE

I don't let people in my apartment.

LANCE

My apartment is kind of sad right now.

LANCE looks desperate.

BONNIE

If I let you in please don't say anything.

LANCE

Okay.

BONNIE unlocks her door.

INT. BONNIE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

LANCE enters. BONNIE'S place is filled with stacks of waist high newspapers, filled with paths. She is a hoarder.

BONNIE

Please don't say anything to anyone. I don't want to get kicked out.

LANCE

I won't.

BONNIE

I know it's a fire hazard and I know it's not normal. But it gives me comfort. It's not rational, but I feel that if I throw any of them out, something terrible will happen.

LANCE

That's okay, Bonnie. I understand.

INT. BONNIE'S APARTMENT

LANCE is sitting on the couch. BONNIE is next to him in a chair. Some of the brownies are gone and they are stoned. LANCE is chewing with crumbs around his mouth. BONNIE'S small dog MABEL watches them.

BONNIE

Have some milk.

LANCE takes a sip of milk. His eyes start to well up.

BONNIE

What's wrong, honey?

LANCE

I know my son was a jerk. But I miss him.

BONNIE

I bet you do. It'll get better.

LANCE

It doesn't feel like it will.

BONNIE reaches over and takes his hand.

LANCE

Thanks.

BONNIE

I forgot to tell you, they're having a Halloween marathon coming up. Showing all of them back to back. Do you wanna come over and watch them?

LANCE

That sounds great. It's a date.

BONNIE  
Bring more brownies.

They smile.

EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - MORNING

LANCE is getting out of his car. PRINCIPAL BISHOP runs up to LANCE.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
I'm glad I caught you.

LANCE  
What's up?

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
You know that while we respect individual privacy we also respect freedom of speech and expression here at school?

LANCE  
Yeah.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Well, one of the kids on the paper went online and found the police report on Kyle's death and published Kyle's suicide note. I just found out about it. I thought you should know. It's all over campus.

LANCE  
Oh.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Are you going to be alright?

LANCE  
Sure.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
I'm really sorry about this. It's that God damn first amendment.

EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - A LITTLE LATER

As LANCE heads into school he passes a circle of sitting GIRLS who are reading the paper.

Some are puffy eyed from crying. He stops and looks, after a beat he continues heading in.

LANCE notices HEATHER (the GOTH CHICK) sitting on the steps reading the paper.

As LANCE walks by HEATHER the CAMERA pushes in on her as she reads the suicide note.

KYLE (V.O.)

To all those I hate, I don't know  
why I'm writing this. You never  
cared about what I thought or felt  
while I was alive.

SUPER IMPOSED above her as she reads is her FANTASY of KYLE. KYLE is pierced, dressed in goth gear.

KYLE

(to the camera)

Besides, you are all too shallow  
to comprehend the pain I feel.

KYLE, without emotion burns a cigarette into his arm.

HEATHER looks up, making eye contact with LANCE. LANCE nods to her and then heads in feeling rotten.

INT. SCHOOL HALL WAY - CONTINUOUS

STUDENTS are reading the paper up and down the hall.

LANCE passes by GINGER (the BOOKWORM).

SUPER IMPOSED above GINGER is a FANTASY of KYLE dressed as a nerdy BOOKWORM too.

KYLE

(to camera)

You treated me like I was  
invisible. But can I blame you? My  
flaws were not even interesting.

In GINGERS fantasy, STUDENTS pass by KYLE knocking his books to the floor without noticing. As he meekly gathers them up GINGER enters the FANTASY and helps him.

ANGLE ON: DAVID and PETER (the two football jocks) in jerseys, reading the letter. DAVID is leaning over PETER'S shoulder.

Above PETER appears a FANTASY of KYLE in a business suit on a football field.

KYLE  
 (into camera)  
 I know that any kind of success is  
 already out of my reach.

In the FANTASY KYLE starts to run after a pass. KYLE bobbles the ball as he continues to address the CAMERA.

KYLE  
 The likelihood of me achieving  
 anything is nonexistent.

KYLE catches the ball, is tackled, drops the ball and is piled on by four LARGE FOOTBALL PLAYERS.

Back on PETER and DAVID reading.

KYLE (V.O.)  
 I have always been misunderstood.

A FANTASY appears over DAVID as he leans on PETER.

KYLE  
 I am tired of hiding my feelings.

DAVID, not in his football gear, appears in the FANTASY and starts making out with KYLE.

ANGLE ON: ANDREW reading the paper.

KYLE (V.O.)  
 Don't mourn me. In committing  
 suicide I am merely changing my own  
 expiration date.

FANTASY appears above ANDREW. KYLE is all in black, wearing a beret and a goatee.

KYLE  
 I am a insignificant molecule  
 bouncing around in a meaningless  
 Godless universe.

ANDREW makes a skeptical face.

ANGLE ON: MIKE reading the letter. Above him his KYLE FANTASY appears. MIKE is at bat at the softball game. KYLE is standing right next to MIKE.

KYLE  
 No matter what I do I will never be  
 enough.

FANTASY: MIKE hits the ball. A home run, he looks to the stands, no one cheers. In fact the PEOPLE in the stands turn their heads.

KYLE

Not enough to get a smile from a stranger,

FANTASY: MIKE spots CLAIRE in the stands, she is on the phone not watching.

KYLE

let alone the opposite sex. I already don't exist.

FANTASY:KYLE hugs MIKE.

INT. CLAIRE'S CLASS ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CLAIRE is at her desk reading the suicide note. Above CLAIRE her FANTASY of KYLE appears. LANCE, CLAIRE, and KYLE are at dinner. CLAIRE and LANCE are carrying on. KYLE stares infatuated with CLAIRE. CLAIRE is unaware of KYLE'S pining.

KYLE

(to Claire)

Maybe that is why I'm attracted to women who don't treat me right. I am done with women who lead me on time and time again, who get away with murder with a smile and have lives not burdened with repercussions because they are attractive.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

ANGLE ON: JENNIFER and DAN reading the paper. Above JENNIFER appears KYLE looking into the CAMERA as she passes him in the hall, not acknowledging him.

KYLE

Who like me as a friend but are so shallow that they are attracted to Neanderthal athletes.

JENNIFER'S FANTASY: Now JENNIFER is flirting with DAN, KYLE is gone. KYLE enters. DAN and JENNIFER make out right next to KYLE.

KYLE

I am tired of living in a world  
where bullies win and your  
happiness is determined by if you  
received good genes.

INT. MR. MOLINA'S OFFICE - DAY

MR. MOLINA is reading the paper. Above MR. MOLINA appears a  
FANTASY.

KYLE

(to camera)

You never got me, you never would.  
In my fifteen years I can't  
remember fifteen good days.

FANTASY: KYLE hugs MR. MOLINA.

INT. PRINCIPAL OFFICE - DAY

PRINCIPAL BISHOP is reading the paper at his desk. Above him  
is his FANTASY of him shoving KYLE in a helmet, on to a short  
bus.

KYLE

(into camera)

And I know most of you think I'm an  
idiot, if you even think of me at  
all.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

As the STUDENTS read the paper up and down the hall, some  
sitting, some standing at their lockers, in groups and by  
themselves. KYLE'S 'ghost' walks down the hall.

KYLE

I know that you all felt better  
putting me down,

MONTAGE OF: CLOSE UPS of all the readers; i.e., STUDENTS,  
PRINCIPAL BISHOP, DAN, JENNIFER, CLAIRE, MIKE, GINGER,  
HEATHER, etc. Looking up from the paper and feeling guilty.

KYLE

But know that no matter how much  
you hated me, you could never have  
hated me as much as I hated myself.

ANGLE ON: LANCE at the end of the hall reading the paper. KYLE'S 'ghost' walks up next to him and reads over his shoulder.

KYLE

Which brings me to you, Dad.

CLOSE UP: of LANCE. Above LANCE appears his FANTASY, LANCE is hanging KYLE from the chin up bar 'dead' KYLE talks to the CAMERA.

KYLE

Don't blame yourself-you tried hard  
and were the best Dad a kid could  
want. I blame me doing this on a  
defect in me. In my soul. I love  
you. I'm sorry. Kyle

The FANTASY disappears. LANCE looks down the hallway. He is looking at the kids reading the paper. Some are looking at him. LANCE builds up his courage and slowly heads down the hall. One by one STUDENTS come up to him, crying, giving him hugs. He gets to the end of the hall and is stuck in the middle of a group hug. LANCE wants to die, and politely squeezes his way out.

INT. LANCE'S CLASSROOM - LATER

STUDENTS are exiting the classroom. LANCE is busy at his desk. DAVID enters and heads up to LANCE'S desk.

DAVID

Excuse me, Mr. Clayton? Can I talk  
with you?

LANCE

Sure, David.

DAVID gets super close to LANCE so none of the exiting STUDENTS can hear him.

DAVID

Kyle's suicide note affected me a  
lot.

LANCE

It did seem to affect a lot of the  
students.

DAVID

I'm not happy Mr. Clayton. I'm  
living a lie. I'm gay.

Kyle's note has given me the strength to come out.

LANCE  
Are you sure you wanna do that David?

DAVID  
I'm misunderstood too. I just want to be happy.

LANCE  
(perplexed)  
Good for you, David. I think that's wonderful.

DAVID  
Thanks Mr. C..

DAVID slaps LANCE on the back and heads out.

INT. LANCE'S CLASSROOM - A LITTLE LATER

LANCE is still at his desk. He looks up from his work and JENNIFER and DAN are standing in front of him holding hands. No one else is in the classroom.

JENNIFER  
Mr. Clayton, can we talk to you?

LANCE  
Of course.

JENNIFER  
It's about Kyle.

DAN  
His note.

LANCE  
Oh.

JENNIFER  
He wasn't talking about us was he?

LANCE  
No, I don't think so.

JENNIFER  
Because I'm nice to everyone.

LANCE  
That's great Jennifer.

DAN

And I might be a Neanderthal, but I'm not a jock! I hate sports.

LANCE

Kids, really, I don't think he was talking about you.

DAN

I'm sorry for beating him up, sir.

LANCE

Thanks, Dan.

DAN

I'm not going to do that anymore.

LANCE

That's good Dan.

JENNIFER

I don't think I led him on.

LANCE

Listen how long have you two been a couple?

DAN

We just started going out.

JENNIFER

That's right-he couldn't be talking about us. My boyfriend before you was a wimp.

LANCE

See?

JENNIFER

Thanks, Mr. Clayton.

DAN

Yeah, thanks Mr. Clayton, that's a big relief.

JENNIFER and DAN start to exit.

DAN

Do you still have that poetry class?

JENNIFER  
Yeah, we were thinking about  
joining it if that would be okay.

LANCE  
That would be great.

DAN/JENNIFER  
Bye!

JENNIFER and DAN exit excited. LANCE is slightly dumbstruck.

INT. LANCE'S CLASSROOM - LATER

LANCE'S poetry class is packed with STUDENTS. LANCE has their full attention.

LANCE  
Thank you all for coming. Your  
enthusiasm means a lot to me. Who  
here has any experience in writing  
poems?

HEATHER and some other STUDENTS raise their hands.

HEATHER  
Can I ask you a question?

LANCE  
Sure.

HEATHER  
What was Kyle's favorite band?

LANCE  
(searching)  
He liked Michael Buble.

The CLASS is confused.

LANCE  
And aaa, he liked Nirvana, Morrissey  
Bauhaus...

The CLASSROOM reacts like this is some heavy shit.

GINGER  
(writing it down)  
What was the third one?

LANCE  
Bauhaus.

GINGER  
How does one spell that?

LANCE  
B,A,U,H,A,U,S.

METAL KID  
Any metal?

LANCE  
A little Ozzie.

METAL KID  
I knew it.

LANCE  
You know what else he was a fan of?  
Kyle really liked Edgar Allen Poe.

The class is enthralled.

INT. MIKE'S CLASS - SAME TIME

There is only a couple of STUDENTS in his classroom. Confused MIKE checks his watch and looks out into the hall.

INT. LANCE'S CLASSROOM - A LITTLE LATER

HEATHER is in the front of the room reading her poem. She is wearing a pin of KYLE. MIKE peeks in from the hall.

HEATHER  
Milky white skin and hair so brown  
I wish I had know how bad you hurt  
I could have held you while you  
cried. You were too sweet to stay  
in this harsh world but I will  
always keep you close to my heart  
my angel in cargo pants.

The CLASS applauds. MIKE leaves bummed.

INT. HALL WAY OUTSIDE OF MR.RODRIGUEZ'S ROOM - LATER

HEATHER, GINGER, PETER and five other STUDENTS wait in line to get into see MR.RODRIGUEZ. As LANCE walks by the STUDENTS in line enthusiastically stop and greet him. As a STUDENT exits the office and another one goes in MR. MOLINA sees LANCE and gives him a friendly nod as the door opens and closes..

DOWN the hall CLAIRE observes LANCE'S new found popularity with the STUDENTS as they greet, crowd and high five him.

INT. TEACHER'S BREAK ROOM - LATER

MIKE and CLAIRE are looking at the story and photo of KYLE in the school paper.

CLAIRE  
He was such a sweet kid.

LANCE enters, CLAIRE attempts to hide the paper.

LANCE  
(to Claire)  
That's okay.

MIKE  
As a father I don't know what I would do if Cody did something like this. My heart really goes out to you Lance.

LANCE  
Thanks.

CLAIRE  
It's so sad, I didn't know he was such a good writer.

MIKE  
A chip off of the ol' block.

LANCE  
I guess you could say that.

CLAIRE  
Did he write anything else?

LANCE looks at CLAIRE, then he looks at MIKE. Then back to CLAIRE.

LANCE  
Uh,...yes.

CLAIRE  
I know it's really personal, but do you think I could I read it?

LANCE  
Only if you come over to the apartment.

(covering)  
I don't want it floating around.

CLAIRE  
Sure, how bout tonight?

LANCE  
Okay.

MIKE bums. CLAIRE pulls MIKE away, so they can have a private conversation.

MIKE  
But tonight's my play-off game.

CLAIRE pouts, sticking out her bottom lip.

MIKE  
(caving in)  
Alright, not the lip. You know I can't take the lip.

CLAIRE  
Thanks Mike.

CLAIRE gives MIKE a peck on the cheek and runs back to LANCE.

CLAIRE  
(to Lance )  
What time?

LANCE  
I'm going to need some time, I haven't really been cleaning.

CLAIRE  
I understand.

LANCE  
Thanks. Make it about eight.

CLAIRE takes off. LANCE gives a little smile at the not-too-happy MIKE.

INT. KYLE'S ROOM - THAT NIGHT

LANCE sits at KYLE'S computer, trying to think of something to write. Suddenly he is inspired and types for a while and then...

LANCE  
No, no, no...

LANCE hits delete. He looks at his watch and panics. Then LANCE gets inspired again and types furiously. DING DONG The doorbell rings just as he is finishing up.

LANCE  
(calling out)  
Coming!

LANCE hits print and then shuts down the computer.

INT. LANCE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

LANCE races to the door and lets in CLAIRE.

LANCE  
Hi.

CLAIRE  
Hi.

They kiss.

LANCE  
Something to drink? Wine? Diet?

CLAIRE  
Diet wine? For alcoholics with  
eating disorders?

LANCE  
Yes.

CLAIRE  
I'll have the regular wine.

LANCE opens and pours CLAIRE and himself wine. He hands her a glass.

CLAIRE  
I was thinking if this is a bad  
idea...

LANCE  
No, no, no. I just found something  
he had written and I think you need  
to see it.

LANCE races to KYLE'S room and comes back with the sheet that was just printed. They sit down on the couch. LANCE clears his throat.

LANCE

(reading)

"I went out with my dad and Claire. I'm so happy for him, but at the same time seeing them together only proves that I'll never be happy. I know I'll never find a woman like her-so pretty, so perfect. She seems to complete him. She seems to get him. I don't believe there is a Claire for me.

LANCE looks up to see if she is buying it. She is.

LANCE

Not even a pale imitation. She truly seems one of a kind. I hope they make it. I hope they last. I hope I'm leaving my dad in good hands. No one could ever get me, I don't even get myself."

CLAIRE'S eyes well-up. She lunges for LANCE kissing him all over his face.

CLAIRE

I can't believe someone could feel that way about me. He did like me. He really did.

LANCE

I told you he did.

CLAIRE

I thought you were lying to make me feel better.

LANCE

(looking her in the eyes)

I would never do that.

CLAIRE kisses him some more, they start to have sex.

FADE OUT.

INT. LANCE'S BEDROOM - NEXT DAY - MORNING

LANCE and CLAIRE are laying in bed half dressed. The alarm goes off. It's still dark out. CLAIRE gets up and starts to get dressed.

LANCE  
Stay a little longer.

CLAIRE  
I got to go home and get new  
clothes on before I go to school.

LANCE  
Wear mine.

CLAIRE  
You're sweet.

CLAIRE kisses him on the forehead.

CLAIRE  
I'll see ya in about...

CLAIRE checks her watch.

CLAIRE  
Fifty-five minutes.

CLAIRE kisses him again.

CLAIRE  
Thanks for sharing that note. I  
know that must have been tough for  
you.

LANCE checks out her ass as CLAIRE pulls on her pants.

LANCE  
I think Kyle would have wanted me  
to.

CLAIRE  
Bye, noodle nose.

LANCE  
Bye, spaghetti pants.

CLAIRE exits. LANCE rolls over disgusted with himself and  
lets out a sigh.

LANCE  
I'm the one who is pure evil.

CLAIRE pops her head back in.

CLAIRE  
What?



HEATHER  
Michael Buble Live?

LANCE  
It was his favorite.

She clutches it to her chest and heads in.

HEATHER  
Thank-you, Mr. Clayton.

INT. SCHOOL HALL WAY - MORNING

LANCE walks down the hall the STUDENTS say hello and are excited to see him. LANCE spots GINGER wearing a t-shirt of KYLE over her blouse made from the school photo that he hated. KYLE'S photo hangs in open lockers. LANCE sees the shirt and is disturbed. ANDREW is at his locker staring at the t-shirt also. LANCE and ANDREW make eye contact. PETER in his football jersey pops in. ANDREW flinches because PETER usually hits him. The beating doesn't come.

PETER  
Hey Mr.C. I don't know if Kyle ever told you but he and I were bros and I'm going to win the game for him tonight in his honor.

ANDREW is behind PETER making a shocked face.

LANCE  
That's great.

PETER holds his knuckles up to be banged. Uncomfortably LANCE reciprocates.

INT. LANCE'S CLASS ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

LANCE is unpacking his backpack. ANDREW comes to the door.

ANDREW  
It doesn't seem right does it?

LANCE  
What Andrew?

ANDREW walks in.

ANDREW  
How everyone is acting. Like they liked Kyle.

LANCE  
No, it doesn't.

ANDREW  
You know what else is weird? Kyle's  
suicide note.

LANCE  
How come?

ANDREW  
That stuff about being an  
insignificant molecule bouncing  
around in a meaningless Godless  
universe? Don't take this the wrong  
way, but Kyle was ah...

LANCE  
What?

ANDREW  
Kinda dumb.

LANCE  
Well, maybe Kyle played dumb so he  
wouldn't be picked on.

ANDREW  
Yeah. Maybe.

Suddenly there is a loud commotion out in the hall, GIRLS' screams are heard. LANCE jumps up and runs out of the room.

INT. HALLWAY - OUTSIDE OF LANCE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A circle of STUDENTS cheer, scream and laugh as HEATHER and GINGER roll around on the floor scratching, slapping and beating the shit out of each other. They are both clutching the MICHAEL BUBLE CD.

GINGER  
It's mine!

HEATHER  
You didn't even like Kyle!

GINGER  
You didn't like him! Shut up whore!

GINGER upper cuts HEATHER. The CD flies out of their hands. They scramble across the floor for the CD as if it was a gun. PRINCIPAL BISHOP grabs the CD.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
 (reading the cover)  
 Michael Buble? Get up girls. Come  
 with me.

LANCE feels bad as he watches the GIRLS and PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
 head off.

INT. MR.MOLINA'S OFFICE - A LITTLE LATER

\*

LANCE is sitting across from MR.MOLINA who is at his desk.

\*

LANCE  
 I need to talk to someone.

MR. MOLINA  
 That's what I'm here for.

LANCE  
 What I say in here is confidential?

MR. MOLINA  
 Yes, of course.

LANCE  
 I feel terrible.

MR. MOLINA  
 Suicide leaves many victims.

LANCE  
 No, I'm bad. Really bad.

MR. MOLINA  
 I know what's going on.

LANCE  
 You do?

MR. MOLINA  
 You feel guilty.

LANCE  
 (unsure)  
 Yes.....

MR. MOLINA  
 Kyle's death, the note, the way  
 people have been treating you...

LANCE is thinking, 'does he know?'

MR. MOLINA

You have to understand that suicide is a very angry act. You must remember the part where Kyle wrote, 'don't blame yourself Dad.'

LANCE

But what if Kyle really didn't feel that way?

MR. MOLINA

But he did. I know this is hard for you - you're in denial. It's one of Dr. Kubla Ross's seven stages of loss. But you must remember that he wasn't in a "normal" state of mind. People take their own lives for many different reasons, some people are just prone to it. No matter how much love and support they get it isn't going to change the end result. Don't beat yourself up. Kyle may have been suffering from a chemical imbalance. I'm sorry if the note being published has caused you distress, but in many ways it has been a very positive thing. The students are finally opening up to me-it has become the break through that was needed. Many kids won't suffer because they're reaching out now for the first time. Suicide is a permanent solution to temporary problems and because of that note, we might not lose more kids needlessly. Keep your chin up knowing that Kyle may have not died in vain.

LANCE gets up more confused than when he came in.

MR. MOLINA

Would you like some Valium?

LANCE

(thinks about it)

Aaa, no.

INT. TEACHERS LOUNGE - DAY

CLAIRE is eating lunch. Near by is MORGAN. The room is filled with other FACULTY having their lunch.

LANCE comes in with his lunch and joins her across the table. LANCE is feeling low and works up his courage.

LANCE  
Claire, I need to talk. About last night.

CLAIRE  
I need to talk about last night too. I know you have wanted more from me. I know you would like to be more serious, like a relationship. But last night...

LANCE  
Yeah?

CLAIRE  
...something changed for me. I want a relationship also.

CLAIRE reaches across the table and holds his hand. MORGAN raises and eyebrow.

CLAIRE  
I'm sorry if I yanked you around so much in the past.

CLAIRE kisses LANCE openly. Two TEACHERS open their wallets and peel off cash into MORGAN'S open palm. MIKE walks up with his lunch, sees CLAIRE and LANCE kissing and walks away. CLAIRE looks at MIKE walking away. LANCE is feeling weird, CLAIRE kisses him again.

EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

LANCE is sitting in his car in a zombie-like state. There is a tap on the window. It's GINGER. LANCE grabs a CD and gives her it. She takes off, clutching it to her chest.

EXT. LANCE'S APARTMENT - DAY

LANCE checks his mail.

BONNIE shouts down from the stairwell above him. She is wearing her oxygen tank.

BONNIE  
Can you check my mail?

LANCE  
Sure.

BONNIE tosses him down her keys.

BONNIE  
Are we still on for the Halloween  
marathon?

LANCE  
Of course.  
(reason, empty mailbox)  
Nothing.

BONNIE  
Good, no bills.

LANCE opens a rejection letter and becomes dejected. BONNIE watches.

BONNIE  
Another rejection?

LANCE  
Yeah.

BONNIE  
Don't let it bother you. You'll be  
huge after your dead.

LANCE  
Thanks.

LANCE thinks about this and gets an idea. He rushes in.

INT. LANCE'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

LANCE fires up his computer and starts to makes some coffee.

MONTAGE OF: LANCE WRITING

LANCE pounds away at the computer, swilling coffee, pacing, napping in his chair, eating, smoking pot as the SUN goes down and up three times. As the SUN comes up the last time, LANCE is asleep on the keyboard as the printer spits out his latest manuscript.

INT. MR.RODRIGUEZ'S OFFICE - DAY

Looking like a mess LANCE bursts in with the manuscript.

MR. MOLINA  
Are you okay Lance?

LANCE

Yes, why?

MR. MOLINA

You don't look so good.

LANCE

I had a rough weekend. I did a lot of soul searching and I thought about what you said about Kyle's note and the effect it had on the kids.

(holds up the manuscript)

This is Kyle's journal. I want to give it to you. To read. I was thinking if you read it and thought there was any value in other kids reading it, I would publish it and hand it out. I think it might do the kids a world of good.

MR. MOLINA

That's very courageous of you Lance, but it might send the wrong message.

LANCE

Read it. If you don't think it would help, I won't pursue it.

INT. LANCE'S CLASS ROOM - END OF THE DAY

MR. MOLINA shows up in LANCE'S door way, expressionless.

MR. MOLINA

Lance.

LANCE

Mr. MOLINA, come in.

MR. MOLINA

Lance, I read Kyle's journal and I think...

LANCE

What?

MR. MOLINA

This is very powerful stuff. I think not only should kids read it, but it should be mandatory.

MR. MOLINA hands LANCE back the manuscript.

MR. MOLINA

In fact, I'd like to kick in and help pay for printing it up.

LANCE

Really? Thank-you.

MR. MOLINA

Thank you. Who knows how many young people this book may help. Would you mind if I wrote the foreword?

LANCE

I'd be honored.

LANCE smiles nervously at MR. MOLINA.

INT. LANCE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CLAIRE and LANCE are laying on top of the bed. CLAIRE is welling up as she reads the last page of the manuscript.

CLAIRE

It's so sad.

LANCE puts his arm around her.

LANCE

Yeah.

CLAIRE

Such a strong powerful writer, so tortured.

LANCE nods.

CLAIRE

What are you going to call it?

LANCE

I've been thinking-there's that part where he's rallying against phonies and bullies but discovers that in himself he has those very same traits, the traits he disdains in others. Then he writes, 'I am what I hate'. I was thinking that, that would be a great title.

CLAIRE  
What?

LANCE  
'I am what I hate.'

CLAIRE  
Oh.  
(beat)  
Really?

LANCE  
Yeah.

CLAIRE  
I don't like it at all.

LANCE  
Oh.

CLAIRE  
What about 'You don't know me.'?

LANCE liked his title better.

LANCE  
Umm.

CLAIRE  
I am what I hate doesn't make sense  
as a title.

LANCE is hurt.

CLAIRE  
Give me a kiss.

CLAIRE grabs LANCE, kissing his face. They start to make out,  
rolling around on the bed.

MONTAGE

MUSIC: THE TUBES, "WHITE PUNKS ON DOPE".

INT. MR. MOLINA OFFICE - DAY

ANGLE ON: The camera shoots down on a shiny thin paper back  
book. It's cover reads; 'YOU DON'T KNOW ME' - The Journal of  
a Teenaged Suicide. By Kyle Clayton With a Foreword By Dr.  
Tony Molina, Phd.

CAMERA WIDENS to reveal it is one of the many stacked on MR. MOLINA'S desk.

MR. MOLINA smiles and takes a book from the pile and hands it to a STUDENT. The STUDENT thanks him and leaves.

INT. SCHOOL HALL WAY - DAY

ANGLE ON: 'YOU DON'T KNOW ME' tucked under many different STUDENTS arms as they walk down the corridor.

INT. MR. MOLINA OFFICE - DAY

MR. MOLINA handing the book out to more STUDENTS.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

KIDS sit around reading and discussing the book.

INT. MR. MOLINA OFFICE - DAY

MR. MOLINA is not in his office. The pile of books is much smaller. MIKE enters looks around suspiciously and takes one.

INT. JENNIFER'S CAR - DAY

JENNIFER reads the book aloud to DAN. DAN becomes so emotional he starts to cry and punch the car's interior. She comforts him.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

PRINCIPAL BISHOP reads the book at his desk, deep in thought with his hand over his mouth.

INT. GIRL'S BATHROOM/STALL

HEATHER sits on the toilet and carves 'KYLE' into her thigh with a pen knife.

INT. ART CLASS - DAY

GINGER is cutting out KYLE'S picture and putting it in a locket.

INT. MR. MOLINA OFFICE - DAY

ANDREW sheepishly walks in and asks for the book. The pile is almost gone now and MR. MOLINA hands him one and smiles.

INT. BOYS LOCKER ROOM - DAY

ANGLE ON: The BOOK next to a vial of steroids.

PETER in his football uniform has his ass cheek exposed and is about to shoot himself up. PETER looks at the book and then the syringe. PETER breaks down and tosses away the vial and syringe.

INT. TATTOO SHOP

JASON is getting a tattoo of KYLE on his arm. The tattoo matches the photo of KYLE that is on book.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

CLOSE UP OF the BOOK cover which is on PRINCIPAL BISHOP'S desk.

END MONTAGE and MUSIC

MIKE and PRINCIPAL BISHOP are in the office. LANCE enters, wondering what's going on.

LANCE  
Hello, Principal Bishop.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Call me Mark.

LANCE  
Mark.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Lance, you know Mike.

LANCE  
Yes. Hi.

MIKE  
Hey.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Lance, do you golf?

LANCE  
What?

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Do you golf?

LANCE  
Not really. I mean not really well.

MIKE and PRINCIPAL BISHOP laugh.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Great.

LANCE  
What?

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
We want to take you golfing.

LANCE looks at MIKE, who is smiling.

MIKE  
What do ya' say?

LANCE  
Sure.

They all laugh and smile.

INT. LANCE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

LANCE and CLAIRE lay in bed in sleep attire.

CLAIRE  
Everybody loves the book.

LANCE  
Yes, they do.

CLAIRE  
You did the right thing.

CLAIRE climbs on top of LANCE and whispers in his ear.

CLAIRE  
(softly)  
Fuck me hard.

LANCE is a little baffled, but starts in. They tear at each others clothes. CLAIRE rolls over to her stomach.

CLAIRE  
From behind.

LANCE enters her.

CLAIRE  
Pull my hair.

LANCE does, reluctantly at first, but as she enjoys it he pulls harder and harder.

CLAIRE grabs LANCE'S hand and puts it around her throat.

CLAIRE  
Choke me.

LANCE does. LANCE spots a belt on the floor and gets freaked out. LANCE lets go of her throat and pulls out. LANCE holds his head.

CLAIRE  
What happened?

CLAIRE spots the belt.

CLAIRE  
Oh, no. I'm so sorry. I forgot. I'm terrible.

LANCE  
No, no.

LANCE puts his arm around her.

CLAIRE  
I'm such an asshole.

LANCE  
It was just a mistake.

CLAIRE  
I'm going to go.

CLAIRE gets up and starts to get dressed.

LANCE  
You were going to stay over.

CLAIRE  
No, I really should go. I feel  
really bad.

CLAIRE exits. LANCE sits in bed, feeling bad.

INT. BONNIE'S APARTMENT

BONNIE picks up her phone...

LANCE  
Bonnie, how are you?

BONNIE  
Great. Are you ready for our  
marathon today?

LANCE  
That's the thing, Bonnie, something  
came up, kind of an emergency. I  
can't make it.

BONNIE  
(let down)  
Oh.

LANCE  
I'm so sorry. How about a rain  
check?

BONNIE  
Sure, I hope everything is okay?

CUT TO:

EXT. GOLF COURSE OR DRIVING RANGE - SAME TIME

LANCE is standing off away from MIKE and PRINCIPAL BISHOP.  
They are all dressed in loud golf attire.

LANCE  
Yeah, it's a small emergency.

BONNIE  
Oh, okay.

LANCE  
Sorry, bye.

BONNIE  
Bye.

Feeling guilty LANCE hangs up the phone.

MIKE  
Everything okay there pal?

LANCE  
Yeah.

LANCE, MIKE and PRINCIPAL BISHOP stroll down fairway.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
You know what line blows me away is when Kyle wrote, 'America is one of the finest countries anyone ever stole.'

MIKE  
That was brilliant. He reminds me of my Cody.

MIKE hustles ahead.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Lance, I have a confession to make.

LANCE is concerned.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Mike and I lured you out here under false pretenses. Mike and myself, on behalf of the school board, want to know if it's all right with you- because Kyle was such a great writer-if we rename the library the Kyle Clayton Memorial Library?

LANCE  
But you wanted to put him in the special needs class.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
I feel really bad about that. He wasn't slow-obviously he was brilliant. He was just bored. We had him all wrong. I hope to God that our mistake didn't have anything to do with what happened.

LANCE  
No. I'm pretty sure it didn't.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Thanks. That helps a lot. I just  
really feel that we may of dropped  
the ball and it would make us feel  
a lot better if we could do this.

LANCE  
(reluctant)  
Umm...

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
This memorial will be an  
inspiration to other students and  
help keep Kyle's memory alive.

LANCE  
Okay sure, sir. Uh, Mark.

Teary-eyed, PRINCIPAL BISHOP hugs LANCE.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
Thanks.

MIKE catches up.

MIKE  
It's going to be a tasteful  
dedication.

EXT. GOLF COURSE - LATER

MIKE tries to sink a putt. The ball circles the hole but  
doesn't go in.

MIKE  
Oh! Just like my prom night-all lip  
but nothing went in the hole.

MIKE and BISHOP laugh. LANCE is uncomfortable and gives a  
forced laugh.

LANCE'S phone rings. He answers it.

LANCE  
Hello?  
(beat)  
Golfing.  
(beat)  
Seriously?

MIKE

First rule of golf, nubie. Don't answer it.

LANCE

(excited)

Are you kidding me?

(beat)

You're kidding me.

(beat)

No, no-that would be fine. Thanks, thanks, thanks.

LANCE hangs up the phone and stands there in a state of shock.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP

What?

LANCE

That was MOLINA. He sent the book into the Dr. Larry Show and they want to fly me out to LA to be on it.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP

What's Dr. Larry?

MIKE

It's like Dr. Phil but he has hair and is more edgy.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP

Oh. You said yes, right?

LANCE nods 'yes'.

MIKE

Congrats, Clayter! We're famous!

PRINCIPAL BISHOP

Do our boy Kyle proud!

MIKE and PRINCIPAL BISHOP cheer, jumping around. GOLFERS trying to tee up stare at them pissed. PRINCIPAL BISHOP hushes MIKE, while giggling.

EXT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - LATER

LANCE knocks on CLAIRE'S door, still in his golf clothes, she answers in her pajama's.

CLAIRE  
(checking out his golf  
clothes)  
What are you wearing? Did you lose  
a bet?

LANCE  
I've been golfing with Mike and  
Mark.

CLAIRE  
Mark?

LANCE  
Principal Bishop.

CLAIRE  
Really? And Mike?

LANCE  
Yeah, but listen I have some news.

CLAIRE  
Can it wait? I wanted to call you.  
I'm really sorry about the other  
night. I wasn't thinking.

LANCE  
(cutting her off)  
Do you like L.A.?

CLAIRE  
I'm embarrassed to admit this, but  
I've never been.

LANCE  
Good.

CLAIRE  
Why?

LANCE  
Cause, I'll be your first.

CLAIRE  
Trust me, you're way too late for  
that. What are you talking about?

LANCE  
MOLINA sent the Dr. Larry show the  
book and they want me to go on! And  
I want to bring you!

CLAIRE screams and jumps on to LANCE, wrapping her legs around him. They fall over and laugh on the ground.

INT. LANCE'S BEDROOM - DAY

LANCE is packing for his trip. He hears a knock on his front door. He goes to answer it.

INT. LANCE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

LANCE answers the door. ANDREW is standing there.

ANDREW

Are you busy Mr. Clayton?

LANCE

No, Andrew, I'm just packing for my trip.

ANDREW

Yeah, that TV show.

LANCE

Yeah, Dr. Larry. Come in.

ANDREW enters, he looks troubled.

LANCE

What's up Andrew?

ANDREW

I feel bad. Everybody likes Kyle now, but they didn't like him when he was alive.

LANCE

You liked him. Maybe people just didn't know him then.

ANDREW

I wish I knew he was that depressed.

LANCE

Yeah. Me too.

ANDREW

You know what's strange about the book? He never talks about sex.

LANCE

Yeah, that is strange.

ANDREW

I was his best friend. The book is so smart and sad. He never talked with me like that. I wish he did. Maybe he wouldn't have done what he did.

LANCE

Don't blame yourself. One thing I know is that he liked you a lot.

ANDREW

Then why didn't he talk to me?

LANCE

I don't know.

ANDREW

It just doesn't make sense. I never heard him say things like, 'the repercussion of our acts' or stuff about, 'questioning the existence of universal higher being.'

LANCE

I don't know what to tell you Andrew. I told you before, maybe he was just super smart and didn't want anyone to know because he was afraid of being treated differently.

ANDREW

But, that doesn't make sense. He was already treated like a freak. If he was that smart he would have loved to rub their noses in it.

LANCE

(pissed)

Jesus Andrew, give it a break. My God, no wonder your mother drinks and your father ran away.

ANDREW tears up and runs for the door.

ANDREW

Well, Kyle said that you're a stupid fuckin' idiot!

Have a good time on your TV show.  
Kyle is still dead!

LANCE

Andrew!

ANDREW exits. LANCE gets to the door and looks around, but ANDREW is gone. LANCE feels like an asshole.

LANCE

(to himself)

Fuck.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HOTEL - NIGHT

Limos and cars pull in and out of this fancy establishment.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

LANCE is dressed and ready for the show, sitting on the edge of the bed waiting for CLAIRE. LANCE is a nervous wreck. CLAIRE is in a towel, applying her make-up calmly.

LANCE

I'm so nervous. I really think you should hurry up.

CLAIRE

I think you should keep your pants on.

LANCE

I think you should put your pants on.

CLAIRE

I'm not going to wear pants.

LANCE

I'm terrified.

CLAIRE

You should be.

CLAIRE ducks away into the bathroom.

LANCE

Thanks.

LANCE paces nervously.

CLAIRE  
I'm using backwards psychology.

LANCE  
It's not working. I have to pee  
again.

There is a knock on the door. LANCE answers it. It is a LIMO  
DRIVER.

LANCE  
Hi.

LIMO DRIVER  
Are you Mr. Clayton?

LANCE  
Yes.

LIMO DRIVER  
I'm your driver. The show called  
and said we should leave.

LANCE  
Thanks.

LANCE closes the door.

LANCE  
Honey, that was the driver. They  
said we should be on our way.

CLAIRE comes out in a pretty dress.

LANCE  
Hubba, hubba. Let's go.

CLAIRE stops to check her reflection in the mirror. She turns  
to look at her butt.

CLAIRE  
Do you think this makes my ass look  
big?

LANCE  
No, you look great.

CLAIRE  
My ass looks huge.

LANCE heads for the bathroom, CLAIRE cuts him off.

CLAIRE  
I'm changing again.

She enters the bathroom and closes the door.

LANCE  
Come on doll. I'm supposed to meet  
with the producer to go over what  
I'm going to say.

CLAIRE comes out in another outfit.

CLAIRE  
What do you think?

LANCE  
(beaten)  
It looks great.

CLAIRE checks her reflection again.

CLAIRE  
Nope.

CLAIRE heads back to change again. LANCE, frustrated, sits  
down on the bed.

FADE OUT.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

CLAIRE comes out of the bathroom in the first dress she had  
on. LANCE is laying on the bed.

CLAIRE  
Okay, let's go.

The CAMERA PANS over to reveal the LIMO DRIVER sitting on the  
bed too.

LIMO DRIVER  
You look pretty.

CLAIRE  
Thank-you. You're sweet.

LIMO DRIVER  
(to LANCE)  
Don't be nervous you'll be great.

LANCE  
 (shell-shocked)  
 Thanks.

They all head out.

INT. TALK SHOW BACKSTAGE - LATER

LANCE and CLAIRE are being checked through security. Two SECURITY OFFICERS check their ID'S. The hallway is a buzz with PEOPLE as the show is about to start. MR. MOLINA rushes up to LANCE and CLAIRE with the shows segment producer JERRY KLEIN. JERRY reaches his hand out to LANCE.

JERRY  
 (hurried)  
 Hello, Lance, we spoke on the phone  
 I'm Jerry Klein.  
 (to the security officers)  
 Let them in.  
 (back to Lance)  
 Follow me.

LANCE, CLAIRE and MR. MOLINA chase after the panicked JERRY.

JERRY  
 (to Lance)  
 Was there traffic?

LANCE looks at CLAIRE.

LANCE  
 Yes.  
 (beat)  
 This is my girlfriend, Claire.

JERRY  
 Hi, Claire. We don't have time to  
 go over notes in your dressing room  
 so we'll do them while you're  
 getting your make-up.

INT. MAKE UP ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

LANCE sits in the make up chair being made up by a MAKE-UP WOMAN. CLAIRE, MR.RODRIGUEZ and JERRY are behind LANCE. JERRY is finishing up his run down, looking on a sheet of paper.

JERRY

So, those are all the questions that he might ask. Do you have any questions?

LANCE

No.

JERRY

Great. Oh, and Lance-when you talk about your son, if you start to cry or well-up go with it. Don't be ashamed. And if you do cry, keep your head up so we can see your face. Don't bury your chin. And don't be nervous!

JERRY takes off. A well dressed man, BERT GREEN enters.

BERT

Hi, Lance?

LANCE

Yes?

BERT shakes LANCE'S hand.

BERT

I hate to bug you right now but my name is Bert Green and I'm with the Uni-talent Agency.

He hands LANCE his card.

BERT

Your son's memoir is so moving and so strong. My heart goes out to you.

LANCE

Thank-you.

BERT

I don't know if you have been talking to publishers but I really think this could be the biggest posthumous autobiography since the diary of Anne Frank.

LANCE

Oh.

CLAIRE

Oh my God!

MR. RODRIGUEZ and CLAIRE jump around.

BERT

Well, I'll get out of your hair,  
but give me a call and we'll talk  
if that interests you. Nice to meet  
you.

CLAIRE gives LANCE a kiss.

CLAIRE

Now I'm nervous!

INT. SOUND STAGE - MOMENTS LATER

DR. LARRY is taped in front of a live studio audience. The AUDIENCE applauds as the music swells. DR. LARRY sits on one of the sets comfortable chairs. DR. LARRY is an earnest television shrink. DR. LARRY looks right into the television camera as he introduces LANCE.

DR. LARRY

My guest today is Mr. Lance  
Clayton. Lance's fifteen year old  
son Kyle tragically took his own  
life. But from this terrible story  
rose one of hope. Here he is to  
share this powerful story-Mr. Lance  
Clayton.

The studio AUDIENCE applauds. LANCE walks out on to the set and takes a seat opposite DR. LARRY

DR. LARRY

Thanks for joining us today. It  
takes a lot of courage.

LANCE

Thanks.

DR. LARRY

Now Lance-is it alright that I call  
you Lance?

LANCE

Yes.

(beat)

Yes.

DR. LARRY  
Is there something wrong?

LANCE  
What do you want me to call you?

The AUDIENCE gives a tiny laugh.

DR. LARRY  
Larry is fine.

LANCE  
Thanks, I'm nervous.

DR. LARRY  
It's okay, you're doing great. As a parent the most terrible thing in the world is to lose a child.

LANCE  
Yes.

DR. LARRY  
What kind of boy was Kyle?

LANCE is speechless. The truth?

LANCE saddens and tilts his head down, but then after a beat he looks up right into the camera's lens. A single tear rolls down LANCE'S face. DR. LARRY hands LANCE a tissue.

DR. LARRY  
This is tough, isn't it?

LANCE  
Yes. He was sweet. Quiet.

DR. LARRY  
But underneath, a lot was brewing?

LANCE  
The tragedy is that it was only after his death that I found out how sad he was. And profound.

DR. LARRY  
Which leads us to this.

DR. LARRY holds up a copy of 'You Don't Know Me'.

DR. LARRY  
You don't know me. It's very well written.

LANCE

Thank-you.

(catching himself)

Kyle was a very great writer. After his death I found it and brought it to our school counselor who thought that if we published it, it might help other troubled teens.

DR. LARRY

I just crack it open anywhere and I am blown away.

DR. LARRY cracks open the book and reads from it.

DR. LARRY

(reading)

Is it more important to me to be a good person, or to be *thought of* as a good person? I'm so sick of living a life in fear of being found out for the phony I am. A life where I don't trust anyone's intentions including my own.

(to Lance)

Heady stuff. What do you think he meant?

LANCE

I don't know.

DR. LARRY

Hard to believe he was just fifteen.

LANCE

Yeah, he was an old soul.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP: on a television screen later in the DR. LARRY, LANCE interview.

LANCE

I'm not going to pretend to know what goes on in the mind of a teenager.

All I am saying is that Kyle made a mistake, and if you're feeling that depressed, reach out to someone and remember that suicide is a permanent solution to temporary problems.

DR. LARRY  
Words to live by. You want my job?

LANCE  
No, no, no.

The AUDIENCE laughs. DR. LARRY holds up the book.

DR. LARRY  
Once again the book is 'You Don't Know Me', and my guest has been Lance Clayton.

THEME MUSIC swells.

The CAMERA pulls back to reveal...

INT. HOTEL - NIGHT

LANCE in bed watching the show. CLAIRE jumps around clapping.

CLAIRE  
You were sooo good!

LANCE  
Thanks, doll.

CLAIRE dives into bed and gives him a peck on the cheek.

CLAIRE  
And I'm so glad you used my title.

CLAIRE keeps kissing LANCE. She rolls over and pours them more champagne. They toast and kiss some more. The phone rings LANCE reaches over and hits the speaker.

BERT  
Hello, Lance? Bert Green.

LANCE  
Oh, hi.

BERT  
You were great on Dr. Larry.

LANCE

Thanks.

BERT

Do you have time to meet tomorrow?  
I have a number of publishers  
interested in meeting you.

CLAIRE gets more excited but stifles it by hitting LANCE.

LANCE

Really? Actually we have to go  
back. Tomorrow they're dedicating  
the school's library in Kyle's  
honor.

BERT

How about some other time, but  
soon? This book has a lot of heat.

CLAIRE nods 'yes'.

LANCE

Sure that would be great.

BERT

I'll keep in touch.

LANCE

Great.

LANCE hangs up. CLAIRE attacks him. They roll around laughing  
and giggling.

INT. LANCE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

LANCE is in on the couch. He hears sex noises coming from  
KYLE'S room. Confused, he gets up and walks over to the door.  
LANCE is troubled-he listen again. The noises continue. LANCE  
opens the door. On KYLE'S computer is footage of CLAIRE being  
fucked. A hand is around her neck. The CAMERA widens,  
revealing that it's LANCE'S hand. LANCE is fucking her from  
behind.

CLAIRE

(on the computer)  
Choke me.

KYLE (O.S.)

Fuck that dirty bitch!

LANCE, on the computer, just as before, can't. LANCE lets go of CLAIRE'S neck.

LANCE turns away from the computer to see KYLE, with his belt around his neck tied to the door, masturbating.

On the computer LANCE and CLAIRE stop having sex, again.

KYLE stops masturbating.

KYLE  
You're such an idiot you don't even  
know how to fuck!

LANCE looks back at the screen. Now KYLE is fucking CLAIRE. CLAIRE moans in ecstasy.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: LANCE'S face as he snaps awake.

LANCE is in bed, CLAIRE is up watching TV. LANCE looks at CLAIRE. CLAIRE looks at LANCE.

CLAIRE  
(all cute)  
What cha doin'?

LANCE  
Nothing.

CLOSE UP: on LANCE'S distraught face.

INT. LANCE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

LANCE walks in and sets his luggage down. He is a total mess. He looks like his life is over. Slowly he walks through it. He looks into KYLE'S empty room.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

LANCE knocks on BONNIE'S door. She opens it. BONNIE is in her night gown hooked up to her oxygen tank.

BONNIE  
What's wrong? You look like crap  
pie.

LANCE enters.

INT. BONNIE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

BONNIE wheels her oxygen tank over to the dining room table. She gestures to LANCE to sit down.

BONNIE  
Sit down.

LANCE  
Bonnie, I'm having a nervous break down. They're dedicating the library to Kyle and I can't do it. I'm a fraud.

BONNIE  
What?

LANCE  
I did a terrible thing Bonnie.

BONNIE  
What?

LANCE  
Kyle didn't kill himself.

BONNIE  
Yes he did.

LANCE  
No, he didn't. He choked to death during autoeroticasphixiation.

BONNIE  
What?

LANCE  
He died choking himself with a belt while he beat off.

BONNIE  
Oh my God.

LANCE  
I didn't want people to find out, so I made it look like he hung himself. I wrote the suicide note. Then I wrote the journal. I don't know why. I have to tell the truth.

BONNIE  
You can't tell the truth.

LANCE

I have to.

BONNIE

It's the worst thing you could do.  
You lied to all those people on Dr.  
Larry. They could sue you.

LANCE

I lied to Dr. Larry. I'm going to  
jail.

BONNIE

No you're not. Listen, you have to  
keep this to yourself. Nothing bad  
has happened. Your kid was an  
asshole, now people like him. The  
only by-product of this is that you  
may have helped some messed up  
kids. If you tell the truth, you're  
going to ruin all that. And what  
about that girl? If you tell the  
truth you may lose her. Lance, you  
have to keep it to yourself. Now  
you're a hero-you go shooting off  
your mouth and you're going to end  
up all alone. Like me. Keep it to  
yourself. It's the right thing to  
do. You'll make it through this and  
sooner or later it'll just be a  
memory, a funny private story.  
You're gonna be all right.

Still in shock, LANCE gets up and gets he and BONNIE a beer.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

The lot is full. Everyone is already in the library. LANCE  
pulls up by himself and heads in. BERT GREEN runs up with the  
BUSINESS MEN.

BERT

Lance I'm glad I caught you! I told  
you the book was on fire.

BERT introduces LANCE to the MEN. They shake hands and  
exchange 'hellos'.

BERT

This is Bill Tobin from Simon and Simon and Carl Klienman from Howard Publishing and George Kenny from Kauffman Press they all love the book and want to meet with you! We won't bother you now but you'll get a chance to speak with each of them after the dedication.

LANCE

Thanks. This is amazing.

INT. SCHOOL LIBRARY - DAY

The entire STUDENT population and FACULTY are crammed into the library. A small stage is built. LANCE enters and takes it all in. All eyes go to him. A lot of KYLE t-shirts. A HIPPIE kid wears a shirt with KYLE'S face and a dove and a peace sign.

CLAIRE rushes up and plants a kiss on LANCE and takes his hand.

CLAIRE

I'm so proud of you, lamb chop.

LANCE

Thanks.

On stage with PRINCIPAL BISHOP, is MICHAEL BUBLE with a PIANIST. Behind them is a big poster size version of KYLE'S crappy school photo.

HEATHER rushes up to LANCE.

HEATHER

(excited)

We wrote Michael Buble and he came.

MICHAEL BUBLE

I'd like to dedicate this song to Kyle's memory.

The PIANIST plays and MICHAEL BUBLE sings The CURE'S 'BOY'S DON'T CRY'.

LANCE shakes hands with many of the STUDENTS and FACULTY as he makes his way to the stage.

PETER (one of the football jocks from earlier) grabs LANCE by the arm.

PETER

(crying)

Mr. Clayton, I want you to know that I've always felt not enough. My Dad rides me all the time, calls me a loser. I was thinking about killing myself until Kyle's note and book came out. It saved my life. I know he is looking down on you so proud.

LANCE and PETER hug.

The MICHAEL BUBLE finishes the song. PRINCIPAL BISHOP walks up to the microphone.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP

Thank-you Michael Buble. Welcome students, faculty and guests. Today we celebrate Kyle. Kyle has shown us so many things. How fleeting the time we spend on this earth really is. Kyle did not die in vain-through his book, and through our hearts he will live on. Today we dedicate this library in his spirit-a tribute to his deep intelligence and the profound impact he made on all of us in the short time we were fortunate enough to know him. Now, to accept this honor on his behalf, I give you his father, Mr. Lance Clayton.

The CROWD goes nuts. LANCE walks to the microphone and takes in all of their faces.

LANCE'S P.O.V. SLOW MOTION CLOSE UPS: of the entire STUDENT BODY and FACULTY along with BERT GREEN, the PUBLISHERS, and MICHAEL BUBLE as they stand and applaud. Many are welling up. PETER is sobbing. These shots are stylistically reminiscent of LANCE'S opening award show fantasy. LANCE looks around, taking it all in.

The CROWD stops applauding and finally sits down.

LANCE

(after a long beat)

You didn't like my son, but it's okay. I didn't like him either. I loved him - he was my son, but he was also a douchebag. And he wasn't very smart.

He died accidentally while  
 masturbating. He didn't kill  
 himself - I made it look like a  
 suicide and wrote his suicide note.  
 Also, I wrote his journal. Thank-  
 you.

The entire room is in shock. They all stare silently as LANCE  
 climbs off of the platform. No one claps.

CLAIRE walks up to LANCE. After a beat she slaps him across  
 the face and storms off.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP approaches LANCE and whispers in LANCE'S  
 ear.

PRINCIPAL BISHOP  
 You're an asshole.

LANCE  
 Yep.

LANCE walks through the CROWD. The CROWD parts and silently  
 stares at him.

MUSIC: PETE YORN'S 'FOR NANCY' begins.

A SLOW MOTION MONTAGE of DAN, JENNIFER, HEATHER, GINGER,  
 MR.RODRIGUEZ, ANDREW, PETER, DAVID, PRINCIPAL BISHOP, BERT  
 GREEN and the PUBLISHERS shocked faces.

LANCE (V.O.)  
 I used to think the worst thing in  
 life that could happen to you is to  
 end up all alone. It's not. The  
 worst thing in life is ending up  
*with* people who make you feel all  
 alone.

MIKE has his arm around CLAIRE consoling her. MIKE and CLAIRE  
 make angry eye contact with LANCE. LANCE smiles back at them.

LANCE continues to smile, almost marching as he picks up his  
 pace through the shocked CROWD. (This is where the song  
 becomes very upbeat)

INT. SCHOOL HALL WAY - CONTINUOUS

LANCE bursts out through the library's door and runs down the  
 hall. He gets to the end of the hall, looks left to right and  
 then decides which way to run.

INT. POOL - CONTINUOUS

LANCE bursts into the pool. It is empty. He marches up the diving board, slowly walks down the board then turns around. After a moment he turns and runs down the board, doing a cannon ball, fully clothed, into the water.

ANGLE ON: Slow motion as LANCE hits the water.

UNDERWATER we see LANCE smiling and laughing.

LANCE breaks the surface, takes in a deep breath and smiles.

SONG ENDS

EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

All the cars are gone except LANCE'S. Dripping wet, LANCE opens his car door.

ANGLE ON: The puddle forming at LANCE'S feet.

ANDREW walks up. He looks at LANCE. LANCE looks at him.

ANDREW

I knew you wrote the book.

(beat)

I liked it. You're a good writer. I think you should keep writing.

LANCE

Thanks Andrew.

ANDREW starts to walk away.

LANCE

(calling out)

Andrew. What are you doing?

ANDREW

Nothing.

LANCE

Wanna watch a movie?

ANDREW

I'd like that very much Mr. Clayton.

ANDREW smiles.

INT. LANCE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

ANDREW, BONNIE, MABEL the dog and LANCE sit around on the couch facing the TV. There is a tray of brownies on the coffee table in front of them. BONNIE and LANCE are eating a brownie each. LANCE picks up the remote.

LANCE  
Should we start?

BONNIE/ANDREW  
Yeah.

LANCE hits play. HALLOWEEN starts. ANDREW reaches for a brownie. LANCE and BONNIE quickly look at each other, shrug, and don't stop him. ANDREW grabs one and bites in.

ANDREW  
These taste funny.

BONNIE  
You get used to it.

LANCE and BONNIE giggle.

CLOSE UP: On BONNIE, ANDREW, MABEL, and LANCE as they smile and settle into the movie.

ANGLE ON: 'THE END' typed on a white piece of paper that is sitting in the tray of the printer.

MUSIC: The KINKS song, 'Better Things' starts to play.

FADE TO BLACK.