WISH I WAS HERE

Written by

Zach Braff & Adam Braff

1/23/13
FIRST DRAFT
The SOUND OF A MAN PANTING... FOOTSTEPS racing, TWIGS
SNAPPING underfoot... His breath is heavy to feed his pace.

INT. FOREST - MORNING

TIGHT on AIDAN BLOOM (35) as he sprints through the ethereal
morning fog of a BEAUTIFUL FOREST. He wears a FUTURISTIC
SPACE SUIT and HELMET and clutches a WARRIOR’S BROAD SWORD in
his fist. He squints his eyes as he looks back at SOMETHING
unseen and ominous that’s CHASING HIM.

Aidan hears a NOISE. He looks up to see A SMALL FLYING
ROBOTIC UNIT hovering alongside him. It beeps like R2D2 as if
to say “It’s gaining on us!”

AIDAN’S FRANTIC FACE; he’s sprinting with every ounce of
energy he has when...

    LITTLE BOY (O.S.)
    Dad, what’s your password?

ON AIDAN: Where the fuck did that come from? TUCKER BLOOM (6)
shirtless and carrying an electric drill and an ipad steps
out from behind a GIANT REDWOOD.

    TUCKER
    Dad! What’s your password?!

Aidan stops abruptly and stares at his son; confused.

INT. BLOOM HOUSE KITCHEN TABLE - MORNING

ON AIDAN’S FACE: the CAMERA PULLS BACK QUICKLY to reveal
Aidan at the head of his family’s chaotic morning breakfast
routine. The TV plays EARSPLITTING CARTOONS. Aidan’s wife
SARAH BLOOM (33) chops carrots for lunches in the background.

    TUCKER
    Dad!!???

    AIDAN
    I have no fucking idea!

    TUCKER
    Swear jar.

    AIDAN
    Fuck the swear jar.
SARAH
Aidan.

AIDAN
I’m sorry, but fuck the swear jar.

TUCKER
(singing)
You gotta fuck the swear jar...

SARAH
Tucker! Stop. The password is 1,2,3,4.
(to Aidan)
What are you doing?

AIDAN
The swear jar is full. Look at it.

We see an OVERFLOWING SWEAR JAR on top of the refrigerator.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
The swear jar is all the money we have to send you kids to college so you should be happy that I curse so that you and your sister can one day blow off class and pull bong hits in your dorm room.

TUCKER
What’s a bong?

AIDAN
It’s a type of vase.

TUCKER
What’s a vase?

AIDAN
A bong for flowers.

GRACE (12) enters. She is dressed in all black with long sleeves and a skirt that goes down to her ankles.

GRACE
I heard you, dad. Rabbi Perlman says cursing is for the weak minded.

AIDAN
Yeah well Rabbi Perlman’s breath makes God question why he even bothered creating the universe.
GRACE
If you can curse we all can curse.

AIDAN
Fine.

GRACE
Hairy balls.

SARAH
Gracie!

AIDAN
Wow! I did not see that coming. Way to dive in.

Tucker holds up the ipad to show a GORGEOUS FERRARI.

TUCKER
Dad, we need this car.

AIDAN
We’re not getting a Ferrari, but right now you can curse.

TUCKER
Fuck and tits.

AIDAN
Went for kind of a combo there, I like it.

TUCKER
This Ferrari is the coolest car in the whole universe.

AIDAN
It amazes me how clueless you people seem to be about our financial situation. Do you want me to sell the minivan?

TUCKER
Yes!

GRACE
Yes!

AIDAN (CONT’D)
Well I’m not going to. It has more beverage caddies than any other embarrassing car in its class.

TUCKER
That’s fucking bullshit!
SARAH
How is this helpful?

AIDAN
Who cares if they curse? It’s so stupid. I never understood what the big deal is.

SARAH
There is a societal agreement that children don’t curse.

AIDAN
Well I disagree with society’s agreement. And right now, at this particular moment; I don’t give a flying fuck if anyone in this house curses.

TUCKER

GRACE
Fuck everybody. Anuses!

Sarah can’t help but laugh. She’s too exhausted to care.

SARAH
Shit. Clock. School!

EXT. BLOOM HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Aidan bursts through the front door in a nice suit. Grace and Tucker are dressed in conservative private school uniforms. Sarah comes rushing out of the house...

SARAH
Tucker! Yalmulka. Tzitzit.

Sarah brings a Jewish “skullcap” and tzitzit (a knotted, fringe worn by religious Jewish men and boys) to the open mini-van door.

AIDAN
What is wrong with you, man?

TUCKER
I was thinking about that Ferrari.

AIDAN
Forget about the Ferrari. It’s time for you to start thinking about the plight of the Jews.

TUCKER
What does plight mean?
AIDAN
Ask the Rabbis, that’s what we’re paying them for.

SARAH
You have to talk to your father today, Aidan. He still hasn’t paid this semester’s tuition.

AIDAN
Uchh, I hate talking to him about money. When was it due?

SARAH
A month ago. They’re threatening to kick them out if they don’t get a check by the end of the week.

AIDAN
Ok. I’ll talk to him today.

Aidan backs the car out of the driveway.

SARAH
(calling out)
Avoid the rabbis if you see them!

AIDAN
(with a smile)
I always do!

They pull away.

INT. MINIVAN - MOMENTS LATER

An AMAZING SONG plays on the car stereo as Tucker struggles to redress his tzitzit under his shirt in the moving car.

AIDAN
You need help gearing up back there, Yentl?

TUCKER
Don’t call me Yentl.

GRACE
You can call me Yentl. I love that movie.

AIDAN
Unfortunately we know.
GRACE
(singing)
Papa can you hear me?

AIDAN
Please don’t do that.

She reaches for the stereo.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
If you change this song I will eat your fingers off.

GRACE
The boys get to do all the cool things to honor Hashem. I won’t get to do anything remotely cool until I buy my sheitel.

AIDAN
Sheitel? What’s that again?

GRACE
It’s a modesty wig. When I get married I’ll shave my head and wear a wig for the rest of my life. That way only my husband will find me pretty.

AIDAN
No offense, but that’s the weirdest tradition I’ve ever heard. And it wouldn’t even work on you. You’re so pretty, you’d look even prettier with a shaved head. It’ll defeat the whole purpose.

Grace can’t help but smile at that. Aidan sees something.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
You’ve got to be fucking kidding me.

GRACE
What?

He pulls the car over. A LARGE CONCRETE RETAINING WALL near their home has been covered with GRAFFITI. It appears to be a 1950’S ERA ROBOT.

TUCKER
Who did that?
AIDAN
A douchebag that’s who. And you know what? That’s gonna be there for years! The city’s bankrupt; they’re never gonna get around to covering that up.

GRACE
Dad, we’re gonna be late for morning prayers.

Aidan shakes his head and floors the minivan down the street.

INT. MINIVAN / EXT. YESHIVA - MOMENTS LATER

The minivan door flies open in front of a Yeshiva (a very religious Jewish private school). Conservative looking parents and their children intermingle with RABBIS in full regalia (black suits, hats, long curled sideburns.)

AIDAN
Wait Tucker, come back here...

Aidan leans into the back seat to tuck in Tucker’s shirt and make sure his tzitzit are hanging correctly.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
We don’t want you to get in trouble like last time. And stop chewing on those knots like you’re a Rottweiler; these things are expensive.

(then)
The drill.

Tucker pulls the electric drill from his backpack.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
Good. Now go be Jewish.

TUCKER
Why?

AIDAN
I’m not sure; ask the Rabbis.

The second the door closes Aidan digs into his ash tray to pull out a half-smoked joint. He lights it as he pulls away.

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK! Aidan whips his head to reveal RABBI ROSENBERG in full Orthodox regalia with the addition of a NEON ORANGE CROSSING GUARD VEST knocking on his window.
Aidan quickly stabs out the roach and rolls down the window.

RABBI ROSENERG
Shalom, Mr. Bloom.

AIDAN
Shalom, Rabbi Rosenberg.

RABBI ROSENERG
Mr. Bloom, Rabbi Twersky would like to see you in his office if you have a moment.

AIDAN
Oh, you know, today I really can’t. Today, believe it or not, a moment is not something I have. Even for a man as mighty and all-knowing as Rabbi Twersky. I’m gonna have to take a rain-check.

RABBI ROSENERG
Speaking of rain, as you know every year to celebrate the holiday of Tu Bishvat we ask the children to donate money to have a tree planted in Israel.

AIDAN
Yeah I heard about that. But when you think about it, how many trees do they really need over there, Rabbi? Besides, I gave like a forest at my Bar Mitzvah. Right now I need to focus on my own little holy-land over in Reseda. You know; times being what they are...

RABBI ROSENERG
Which is why, Mr. Bloom, we encourage the children to plant a seedling in their own backyard.

Rabbi Rosenberg leans down and pulls a completely DEAD EVERGREEN SEEDLING out of a cardboard box.

RABBI ROSENERG (CONT’D)
You never picked up your seedling, Mr. Bloom.

He hands it through the car window.
AIDAN
Wow, thank you. I’m gonna go do some CPR on this thing the second I have absolutely nothing to do.

RABBI ROSENBERG
Just try not to smoke it.

He gives Aidan a wry smile.

AIDAN
Funny. Clever. Have any of the other rabbis told you that you look very sexy in neon.

RABBI ROSENBERG
Talk to Rabbi Twersky about the tuition; don’t make it uncomfortable for the children.

(beat)
Times being what they are...

AIDAN
Right.

RABBI ROSENBERG
(big smile)
Baruch Hashem.

AIDAN
Yeah, bless God... bless everybody.

On Aidan’s face as he pulls away...

INT. MINIVAN - MOMENTS LATER

Aidan pulls the minivan over to the side of the road. He stares at something off-screen. He shakes his head.

AIDAN
(to himself)
There were three gunshots. There were three gunshots. One. Two. Three.

He speeds off. The camera pans 180 degrees to REVEAL he was staring at the GRAFFITI COVERED RETAINING WALL.

INT. HARDWARE STORE - DAY

Aidan, still in his suit, fills a shopping cart with painting supplies: a paint roller on a long pole, paint cans, etc.
AIDAN
(to himself)
We’ve heard that from you time and
time again over the many weeks that
we’ve been assembled here.

A CONTRACTOR passes and stares at Aidan talking to himself.

EXT. CONCRETE RETAINING WALL - LATER

INSERT: THE ROBOT’S FACE on the wall as a paint roller rolls
over his body erasing him forever into the grey nothingness
of municipal infrastructure.

WE POP BACK TO REVEAL: Aidan, stripped down to an undershirt,
but with his suit pants still on; painting over the graffiti.

AIDAN
And now you have the audacity to
insult everyone in this room by
saying they might not have been
gunshots?

Aidan takes a step back to admire his work. He turns to his
REFLECTION in the minivan window.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
(to himself in reflection)
What were they then, Mr. Ortega?

He raises his fingers in the shape of a gun at his reflection
and pulls his pointer finger trigger.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
BANG!

INT. CASTING AGENCY, WAITING ROOM - LATER

A WIDE SHOT reveals Aidan sitting amongst a room full of
AFRICAN AMERICAN MEN dressed in sharp suits.

CLOSE UP on one of the ACTORS.

AFRICAN AMERICAN ACTOR
(to himself)
BANG!

CLOSE UP on a SECOND ACTOR holding his finger gun sideways.

AFRICAN AMERICAN ACTOR 2
BANG!
CLOSE ON AIDAN. Through this speech WE PULL BACK TO REVEAL the SIX PRODUCERS behind a desk watching him.

AIDAN
(He does this well:)
Three bangs you said. Bang, bang, bang. This entire case is dependant on your testimony that on the night of January 7th, outside your food truck you heard three shots. Well now Mr. Ortega, you only have one shot. One shot to tell us who has threatened you with a retribution so terrifying that you’d be willing to change your entire testimony and let an assassin free to hunt down more little boys like Anthony Jackson. You’ve got a cross around your neck... I ask you, sir... How many “bangs” did Jesus hear?

REVEAL the bewildered expressions on the faces of the Producers. A few whisper to each other.

WE SEE A CLOSE-UP of Aidan’s nervous vulnerability through the MONITOR of the CAMCORDER FILMING his audition.

CASTING DIRECTOR
Aidan, that was very good as always. But we asked you to come in for the other role; Mr. Ortega.

AIDAN
Yeah, I know. And thank you for calling me in... but that role only has one line. And plus... Ortega is Hispanic. I mean don’t get me wrong, I could tan and really go for it; but I really feel like I got a solid handle on this prosecutor.

CASTING DIRECTOR
Aidan we’ve already decided to go Black with that role. You probably noticed that you were the only white person in the waiting room. And truthfully we’re only seeing those men out of courtesy. We just offered the role to Taye Diggs and he’s accepted.
AIDAN
Oh. Wow. I feel really stupid now.
I’m just trying to be as proactive as possible.

CASTING DIRECTOR
I understand. We’d still love you to read Mr. Ortega’s line...

AIDAN
Oh... yeah... sure. I mean I get it... If you’re going Black, you’re going Black. I can get Ortega tan, but certainly not Taye Diggs tan...
Unless I had those pills C. Thomas Howell ate in the movie “Soul Man”. Did you ever see that movie?

They stare at him. One PRODUCER puts his head in his hand.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
Well don’t. It’s totally racist. Or maybe it isn’t. I don’t know. Maybe I only think it’s racist cause I’m white and I feel guilty laughing. Ask Taye on set. I’m sure Taye’s seen it.

CASTING DIRECTOR
We’re ready when you are Aidan.

Aidan takes a deep breath. Shakes the stress out of his body.

AIDAN
(Bad Hispanic accent)
For the last time, I no longer think that what I heard were gunshots. Probably just a car backfiring.

CASTING DIRECTOR
Thank you, Aidan.

OFF AIDAN’s DEFEATED HALF SMILE...

INT. MINIVAN - DAY
Aidan blasts a GREAT SONG as he flies down the freeway. His face shows his misery.

AIDAN
Fuck!!!
INT. BLOOM HOUSE - AIDAN'S OFFICE - LATER

Aidan masturbates while standing to a PORN CLIP on his computer screen. His monitor hides the action.

GIRL IN PORNO (O.S.)
Yeah, you like that? Fuck me harder with that thick Black cock!

VOICE (O.S.)
Catch you at a bad time?

Aidan whips around in shock to reveal his father, SAUL BLOOM (75) he is eating peanuts out of a jar.

AIDAN
Dad, what the fuck?!

GIRL IN PORNO (O.S.)
Yeah, hit me with it. Hit me in the head with it.

Aidan scrambles to stop the VIDEO. Saul seems unfazed.

SAUL
You know Genesis tells us to never spill our seed.

AIDAN
Why would Phil Collins care if I masturbate?

SAUL
The book of the Bible, not the music group.

AIDAN
I’m equally uninterested in what either has to say.

SAUL
Trouble in the bedroom, Aidan? Men have man-needs. Those man-needs need to be met or you end up taking things into your own hands.

AIDAN
Dad, why haven’t you paid the yeshiva tuition? I’ve got aggro rabbis stalking me in crosswalks. It’s like an Orthodox Zombie movie.
SAUL
We need to talk. But can you please clean yourself up? I can’t talk to you with your pants at your ankles. I’ll meet you outside.

AIDAN
Fine.

Saul starts to leave, then turns back.

SAUL
You’re not going to return to masturbating are you?

AIDAN
No! Dad, get out!

SAUL
Ok. Cause I have to be at the hospital at five and I don’t wanna get stuck in traffic on the 101.

AIDAN
Dad, get out!

He does. Aidan shakes his head; incredulous. Then turns back to the monitor, thinks about it for a beat, then hits play and continues masturbating.

GIRL IN PORNO (O.S.)
It’s so much! It’s so much!

EXT. BLOOM HOUSE - DECK - LATER

Aidan dries his hands with a dish towel as he crosses to find his father standing at the precipice of a HALF-FINISHED DECK. The frame has been laid for something much larger, but the boards have only been installed on half of it. A GOLDEN RETRIEVER (KUGEL) takes a giant shit in the corner of the deck.

SAUL
Kugel, no.
(to Aidan)
Sorry, I know you can’t stand the dog; he’s usually so well trained.

AIDAN
If you trained that dog to shit everywhere but the lawn, then you’ve done an incredible job.
SAUL
Deck looks good.

AIDAN
Was that sarcasm or serious? I couldn’t tell.

SAUL
I guess it was half-sarcastic; for the half that isn’t finished.
(then)
And you better have that fence fixed before it falls on one of the kids.

AIDAN
Well as I’m sure you know quite well by now, Dad; we don’t have any money. Sarah’s working her ass off, I’m auditioning every chance I get, but I haven’t gotten a decent check since that dandruff commercial.

SAUL
And ironically you still have dandruff.

AIDAN
What is going on with the kids’ tuition? We had a deal; you said you’d cover it if you got to pick the school. You got your wish. they’re going to the Yeshiva; you get to have your brainwashed grandkids. But come on; you can’t make me hound you for these checks.

SAUL
The cancer’s back, Aidan.

AIDAN
Oh my God.

SAUL
I didn’t want you to worry you until I knew for sure...

AIDAN
But now you do.

SAUL
Now I do and it’s pretty bad.
AIDAN
How bad is pretty bad?

SAUL
It’s all over my lungs.

AIDAN
Oh my God.

SAUL
Funny how even you atheists call for Hashem when there’s nowhere else to turn.

AIDAN
Once again, I’m an agnostic not an atheist; I’ll believe it when I see it.

SAUL
Well you may just have a chance. I’ve decided to try an experimental drug trial. They’re trying this new protocol that’s shown some very promising results but I’m gonna have to pay out of pocket.

AIDAN
So...

SAUL
So I can’t afford the school anymore, Aidan. I’m down to my last savings and I’ve decided to spend it on this. So you win.

AIDAN
My father has cancer, my kids have to drop out of school and I don’t have a job. How am I winning?

SAUL
God works in mysterious ways.

AIDAN
This one’s particularly mysterious.

SAUL
Look I’m gonna be layed up for awhile. I’m gonna need you to watch Kugel.

Aidan has to sit down to catch his breath.
AIDAN
Okay, slow down. This is a lot of horrible news at once...
(then)
What do we do?

SAUL
What do you mean what do we do? We move forward. It’s the only direction God gave us...

OFF AIDAN’S SHOCKED FACE...

INT. DARK ROOM - DAY

CLOSE UP ON A TWITTER PAGE:
WE SEE that whomever is typing is going through names of famous celebrities and telling them to “FUCK OFF AND DIE” one by one. eg: @tomcruise FUCK OFF AND DIE, @mileycyrus FUCK OFF AND DIE, @davidhasselhoff FUCK OFF AND DIE

A LOUD KNOCK at the door. The CAMERA PULLS BACK FAST to reveal JONAH BLOOM (29) as he whips his head to the door. HE sits hunched over his computer in a tiny dark room.

AIDAN (O.S.)
Jonah!

JONAH
Go away!

AIDAN (O.S.)
Dude, I drove all the way out here open the fucking door.

JONAH
What’s the password?

AIDAN (O.S.)
Is it “My brother once caught me fucking a Winnie-the-Pooh stuffed animal.”?

JONAH
It was Eeyore and I was eight; fuck off.

AIDAN (O.S.)
Oh, I just remembered the password. It’s: “Your father’s dying and I need to talk to you.
(MORE)
So take a break from trolling the internet for two seconds and open the door, you lazy, miserable fuck.”

Jonah stands and opens the door as BRIGHT SUNLIGHT STREAMS into his room to reveal WE ARE:

15 EXT. AIRSTREAM TRAILER - MALIBU TRAILER PARK - CONTINUOUS 15

Jonah lives in a trailer park on a cliff in Malibu. The setting is 180 degrees different from his dark lair.

AIDAN
I knew that was it.
(an introduction)
Sunlight, Jonah. Jonah, sunlight.

JONAH
Is Dad really dying again or are you just crying wolf?

AIDAN
It’s all over his lungs, Jonah. The wolf is here.

They watch as Kugel takes a shit on a neighbors Astroturf.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
Kugel!

JONAH
No, don’t stop him. I can’t fucking stand that guy. We’ll call that a little thank you gift for doing crunches to Nicky Minaj at 6am.

AIDAN
Your can looks good.

JONAH
You know when you make fun of the trailer, you make fun of my inheritance from Mom. She wanted me to live how I choose. And be free to pursue the goals that I have.

AIDAN
Yeah. What are those goals again? Weren’t you gonna develop some iPhone app or something?
JONAH
Fuck apps; saturated market. I’m gonna start blogging. Get some of that ad revenue. Gonna call it: “Fucking Shit I Fucking Hate.”

AIDAN
Sounds like web-crack for the miserable. Look I don’t care if you sit in there all day searching the web for strangers to hate. But I have two major problems and one I think you might be able to help me with.

What?

AIDAN
Kugel.

JONAH
Fuck off.

AIDAN
I can’t watch this dog and take care of two kids and go to auditions, Jonah.

JONAH
Absolutely not.

AIDAN
Dude are you fucking kidding me? You’ve got a rally with me. This is your father we’re talking about.

JONAH
So when you get old and sick everyone’s just supposed to forget that you were an asshole?

AIDAN
Look, I know he’s not easy. He lost it a little when Mom died. We all did. It’s time to move on.

JONAH
What’s the other one?

AIDAN
What?
JONAH
You said there were two problems. I’ll help with the one that’s not that dog.

AIDAN
The other one’s that Dad’s gonna try an experimental treatment this time. He can’t afford the yeshiva for the kids anymore.

JONAH
Mazel Tov.

AIDAN
Well, they’re not going to Jefferson. It’s ranked one of the worst in the state.

JONAH
Just because you had it rough doesn’t mean they will.

AIDAN
I didn’t have it rough.

JONAH
Whatever you need to tell yourself. Sounds like you got your hands full, buddy. Live long and prosper.

AIDAN
Are you serious?

JONAH
I have to go back to work. Don’t you dare leave that dog.

He goes back inside. Aidan waits a beat then quietly ties the dog to a nearby shaded tree. He tosses out a neighbor’s plant, fills the pot with water and sets it beside Kugel.

SARAH (O.S.)
Can I say something that’s probably going to piss you off?

INT. VIDEO RENTAL STORE – DAY

Aidan, Sarah, Grace and Tucker stroll the aisles. They are the only ones in the store. The shelves are almost barren.

AIDAN
I can’t wait.
SARAH
You could home school them.

AIDAN
Are you out of your fucking mind?

SARAH
I thought we were discussing all options. You’re a stay-at-home-dad; is home schooling not one of our options?

AIDAN
What are we fucking Amish?

SARAH
Look online there’s a whole new movement out there. Parents are considering other options.

(then)
Think about how well you’d get to know the kids.

AIDAN
I know the kids just fine.

TUCKER
Dad, can we get this?

Aidan looks at it. It looks like soft-core porn.

AIDAN
There’s tits right on the cover of the box, man. Why would I rent this for you?

TUCKER
It’s about nurses.

AIDAN
I see that. Go look for some animated bullshit. Who’s that Hispanic chick you like who’s always up in everybody’s business?

SARAH
Dora. He hates Dora.

TUCKER
I hate Dora.

AIDAN
Well go find something that doesn’t have tits on the cover, man.

(MORE)
AIDAN (CONT'D)
Come on, you want me to get arrested?
(beat, to Sarah)
If you want me to give up acting you should just say it.

SARAH
I think you should give up acting.

AIDAN
I’m not giving up acting.

SARAH
We can’t afford private, you’re afraid of the public school...

AIDAN
I am not “afraid”! There was that bullying-related suicide at the school and I am a concerned parent. But if you’re fine with them killing themselves, let’s go check it out.

They have arrived at the counter. Aidan gives the YOUNG CLERK (21) the movies. The clerk is surprised to see them.

CLERK
What are you doing in here?

AIDAN
What are you talking about? We’ve been members here for 10 years.

CLERK
Oh... yeah, we’re closed down, man. Sorry, we’re just loading what’s left into boxes. Sorry I didn’t see you or I would have told you we’re out of business. Don’t you have Netflix?

SARAH
We can’t afford Netflix; my husband’s an actor.

CLERK
Oh, I feel you. As of tomorrow I’m outta work too. The fucking future, man... it’s kind of fucking us all. You can just take those though; nobody will care.

(MORE)
I don’t even think we’ve ever rented this one:
“Serving Your Man, the Hasidic Way.”

Aidan takes the DVD case out of the clerks hand and WINGS it frisbee style across the store.

AIDAN
No more Yeshiva. Tomorrow your mother and I are taking you on a tour of the public school.

INT. PUBLIC SCHOOL – DAY

Aidan, Sarah, Grace and Tucker enter to find a BIZARRELY GORGEOUS school. It’s perfect: clean, beautifully lit, the kids are out of a movie. Is it a dream?

A VERY HANDSOME STUDENT (14) comes towards them SINGING HIS HEART OUT to a DANCE TRACK.

HANDSOME STUDENT
(singing)
We’re breaking all of the rules! Oh yeah we’re breaking all of the rules...

SIX INCREDIBLY FIT DANCERS join behind him and dance in beautiful seductive unison.

HANDSOME STUDENT (CONT’D)
And we’ll do what ever it takes! To fight Tim's AIDS.

He stops singing abruptly and looks at the Blooms.

HANDSOME STUDENT (CONT’D)
Who the hell are you?

VOICE (O.S.)
And Cut!

WE REVEAL that the Blooms have wandered into a film shoot taking place at the school. WE NOW NOTICE: crew members, lights, cameras.

AIDAN
Oh, sorry. We’re looking for the... school.

An ASSISTANT DIRECTOR wearing a headset rushes over.
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
Sorry, Johnny. We’ll get these people out of here right away.

JOHNNY
You gotta lock this place up, man. I got an NA meeting in 15 minutes.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
Yes, our fault. Sorry.

JOHNNY
Stay in school, kids.

GRACE
We’re trying.

JOHNNY
Praise Jesus.

GRACE
We’re not allowed to.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
(to Aidan)
Hello. As you can see we’re filming here today. Can I help you with something?

AIDAN
You guys need any extra background help today? Maybe a young, well-liked teacher... I got a corduroy jacket with elbow patches in my car.

SARAH
Aidan!

AIDAN
(to AD)
Can you direct us to the principal’s office please?

18

INT. PRINCIPAL’S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

MRS. LUIS, AFRICAN AMERICAN (40’s) sits behind her desk.

MRS. LUIS
I wished you’d called ahead. We’ve switched to a four day school week.

(MORE)
MRS. LUIS (CONT'D)
Cause of budget cuts, we rent the school out on Fridays to film shoots.

SARAH
Oh my God, really?

MRS. LUIS
Yeah. Unfortunately a lot of schools are going the four day way. After music, arts, gym and air conditioning, what else are we gonna cut? Math?

SARAH
Mrs. Luis, we can no longer afford to send our kids to the religious private school they’ve been attending. And as I’m sure you can imagine we have some concerns about them adjusting to the public school way of doing things.

MRS. LUIS
Well I’m not gonna lie to you; this is a really tough time for Los Angeles public schools. The state’s virtually bankrupt. The government’s blaming the unions, the unions blame the government and in the meantime we’re pooling our own money for colored pencils.

(To Grace)
Sweetheart, how many kids are in your math class?

GRACE
Twelve. Twelve in almost all my classes except music. In music there’s only 7 of us.

MRS. LUIS
I just want you to manage your expectations. We’re not one of the magnet schools; here at Jefferson, Grace’s math class would have about 37 children in it. And as I mentioned... music has gone the way of SAT test prep: dead as air-conditioning.

Sarah looks to Aidan...
INT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - LATER

Aidan maddened; walking quickly toward the car - ahead of the rest of the family...

AIDAN
I’m not giving up my dream, Sarah!

SARAH
Well then what’s your plan, Dad?

AIDAN
Grace, what’s the Hebrew word for charity again?

GRACE
Tzedakah.

WE HEAR the sounds of an OLDER MAN LAUGHING HYSTERICALLY.

INT. RABBI’S OFFICE - DAY

Rabbi Rosenberg leads Aidan into this beautifully designed lair. The sound of LAUGHTER continues as Aidan is lead through a narrow passage lined with hundreds of dusty books and Judaic tokens. Shafts of light stream through floor to ceiling stained-glass windows.

They come around the corner to find the ancient RABBI TWERSKY belly laughing at a video he is watching on a laptop.

RABBI ROSENBERG
(in Hebrew)
Rabbi, this is Mr. Bloom.

RABBI TWERSKY
Mr. Bloom, Baruch Hashem. Please have a seat. Do you ever watch these Youtubes?

AIDAN
Uh... yeah, sure.

RABBI TWERSKY
This kitten will not allow his brother to sleep. No matter what. I could watch it over and over again. It’s the hardest I’ve laughed since the movie about the Greek Wedding.
RABBI ROSENBERG
(in Hebrew)
Fat Greek Wedding.

RABBI TWERSKY
Fat Girl With A Greek Wedding.

AIDAN
I’ll have to look that one up.

RABBI TWERSKY
Mr. Bloom, how can I help you today?

AIDAN
Well Rabbi, as you probably know, my father has been paying our tuition here at Hillel. Recently he has taken ill and it looks like he’s not going to be able to cover us anymore.

RABBI TWERSKY
I am deeply sorry to hear that. Your father is a lovely man. Please give him our best.

AIDAN
Thank you. I will.

RABBI TWERSKY
So you’re withdrawing the children from the school?

AIDAN
Well, no. I’d rather not...

RABBI TWERSKY
Well, they can’t go to school for free!

The two Rabbis share a hearty laugh...

AIDAN
We’d pay you back. It would just be for a year or so while we... you know, while my wife and I weather-out this wintery economic climate.

Rabbi Rosenberg says something to Twersky in Hebrew.

RABBI TWERSKY
Oh yes; you’re the actor.
AIDAN
Yes.

RABBI TWERSKY
And your wife provides for the family while you... act.

AIDAN
Yes.

RABBI TWERSKY
Well as both a Synagogue and Yeshiva, we exist for the community, Mr. Bloom. However, in order to do that, we must also remain a business. I’m sure you understand this.

AIDAN
All I’m asking for is a little...

Aidan looks down at a WORD written in his palm in Sharpie.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
Tzedakah.

Twersky and Rosenberg confer briefly in HEBREW.

RABBI TWERSKY
Mr. Bloom, if you want to buy a gallon of milk when you only have enough money for a glass of milk, you must first take that money from somewhere else. So maybe you decided that this week you will give up honey. You will go “honey-less” in order to afford a larger portion of milk.

AIDAN
I don’t even like honey, but go on.

RABBI TWERSKY
If I give you charity, I must take away funds from somewhere else in our limited budget to provide your two children with a free education. So how do I do that? Help me. Who, in this yeshiva, should go without honey so that the Blooms can have a gallon of free milk?
AIDAN
All right, look Rabbi; I’m not a religious man...

RABBI TWERSKY
You don’t say. Give me a moment to catch my breath.

AIDAN
But I just don’t understand how you can justify not helping out a family in need in your Jewish community. I mean... wouldn’t the God that you believe in say that you should help us?

RABBI TWERSKY
God works in mysterious ways.

AIDAN
Yeah, I keep hearing that. I feel like that’s what religious people say when they can’t figure out what their God is up to.

RABBI TWERSKY
Perhaps God is telling you to stop acting and to get a real job so you can properly provide for your family.

AIDAN
But what about my dream? Doesn’t God believe in my “pursuit of happiness”?

RABBI TWERSKY
No, that’s the Declaration of Independence. Thomas Jefferson cared about your happiness. God wants you to provide for your family, Mr. Bloom. God believes your family deserves both milk and honey.

Both Rabbis stare down at Aidan. He races out of the office.

INT. PRAYER ROOM – MOMENTS LATER

Aidan BURSTS into a room full of bobbing and bouncing children reciting Hebrew prayers (divided into BOYS and GIRL sections by a partition). Several Rabbis turn to look...
AIDAN
Oh, so sorry to interrupt. Shalom everybody...

The praying STOPS COLD as all eyes turn to Aidan.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
Hi, I’m Grace and Tucker’s dad. Grace, I need you to come with me please...

On GRACE, mortified as she closes her prayer book and follows Aidan to the other side of the partition to find Tucker chewing his tzit-tzits.

AIDAN (CONT’D)

RABBI
Is everything okay, Mr. Bloom?

AIDAN
Just fine.
(to the room)
Once again: sorry to interrupt. Shalom, mazel tov, sayonara.

He ushers them out.

INT. MINI-VAN - LATER

Aidan CRANKS an AMAZING SONG as he furiously drives.

GRACE
(through tears)
But I don’t want to leave school! I like it there. What about all my friends?!

AIDAN

TUCKER
Look, dad. The robot’s back.

Aidan looks where Tucker is pointing.

NEW GRAFFITI ON THE SAME WALL HE PAINTED. This time the ROBOT IS SCREAMING IN ANGER! He SLAMS on the brakes!
AIDAN
You’ve got to be fucking kidding me.

WE HEAR MACHINE GUN NOISES...

INT. BLOOM HOUSE - AIDAN’S OFFICE

TIGHT INSERT ON: AN INTERNET BROWSER PAGE where we see the words “CumDumpster.com” get highlighted and replaced with the words “Home Schooling”.

AIDAN
Turn that down, Tucker!

Tucker is playing CALL OF DUTY on the plasma TV in the living-room. He stands on the couch BLOWING PEOPLE AWAY on the screen. It is VERY LOUD. The place is littered with toys.

GRACE
He didn’t turn it down, dad.

AIDAN
Turn it down, Tucker!

TUCKER
I just gotta kill these guys.

AIDAN
Kill them more quietly.

GRACE
You’re not seriously thinking of home schooling us are you?

AIDAN
We’re sort of running out of options.

TUCKER
I want Dad to teach us.

GRACE
But he doesn’t know anything.

AIDAN
What? What are you talking about? I know a lot of things.
SAUL
You don’t know anything. It’s a horrible idea. What are you gonna teach them? How to act?

Aidan and the kids drive Saul to his treatment.

AIDAN
There’s plenty of web-sites and books, Dad. I’ll figure it out. It’s only till the end of this school year.

SAUL
Oy. You’re gonna stunt their growth! Why aren’t you sending them to public school?

AIDAN
Because Sarah and I just don’t feel that Jefferson is the kind of environment--

SAUL
Will you listen to yourself? You’re burdening them with your fears! Just because you got your ass beat down doesn’t mean they will.

TUCKER
You got beat up, Dad?

AIDAN
No.

SAUL
Oh, yes.

SAUL
Tell them the truth...
(to kids)
They picked on him. He was a whatyacallit... a nerd. With his UFO club and the scientific fiction movies. It was only a matter of time.

AIDAN
It was one fight.

SAUL
You marry a non-Jew, you provide your children with absolutely no sense of spirituality or faith in a higher power.

(MORE)
SAUL (CONT'D)
And now, for dessert, you spoon-feed them all your fears. What a mess, Aidan. Never make a decision based on fear, children. You must choose to be brave.
(to Aidan)
If you’re not going to raise them with the comfort of faith at least teach them that.
(then)
Tucker. What’s the capital of Missouri?

TUCKER
Cock-town.

SAUL
This is gonna be a disaster.

EXT. SNOW COVERED BEACH - FANTASY
AIDAN and JAX (the flying robotic unit) race along a barren snow-covered beach until they encounter a vertical cliff that’s impossible to climb. ON Aidan’s face in terror.

WIDEN TO REVEAL a SHADOWY CLOAKED FIGURE is gaining on them about 50 yards down the beach. He limps like a MAN IN PAIN.

Suddenly, JAX robotically unfolds two handles from either side of his unit and BEEPS at Aidan. Aidan, confused, quickly grabs hold of the handles as JAX RISES INTO THE AIR LIFTING AIDAN UP THE FACE OF THE CLIFF. Aidan exhales with elation. Saved for the moment... then from JAX’S speaker:

JAX
(a sexy woman’s voice)
Do you wanna spank this ass?

AIDAN
What???

INT. BLOOM HOUSE - AIDAN’S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS
Aidan snaps to in front of one of his porn sites. A PORN GIRL IN A VIDEO is the source of the question.

PORN GIRL
Do you wanna spank this ass?

Aidan quickly closes the porn window.
EXT. BLOOM HOUSE - LATER

Grace is riding her bike on the driveway when JESSE (12) rides up on his skateboard.

GRACE
Hi Jesse.

JESSE
Hi, Grace.

GRACE
How come you’re not in school?

JESSE
Bomb scare. How ‘bout you?

GRACE
We’re gonna be home-schooled.

JESSE
Are you Amish?

GRACE
No, we’re Jewish. We just can’t afford private school anymore.

JESSE
But I thought Jews ran Hollywood.

GRACE
I don’t know. Maybe we’re in the wrong tribe or something. It’s just till the end of the year. I’m going to Roosevelt for 6th grade.

NEW ANGLE ON Aidan hearing this conversation FROM HIS OFFICE. He rolls his chair to the window and takes in the sight of a hip, friendly kid (in shorts and a t-shirt) beside his daughter in her ankle length frock.

JESSE
Me too!

GRACE
Really?

JESSE
Yeah.

(then)
Hey, so at the end of the year my sister always has this big pool party. It’s usually pretty awesome... Do you want to come?
GRACE
No thanks.

JESSE
Why not? It’s fun.

GRACE
I don’t know how to swim. I don’t even have a bathing suit anymore.

JESSE
How come?

GRACE
God says that a woman should keep her body covered up.

Aidan frowns...

JESSE
Oh. Well, you don’t have to swim. I’ll hang with you. It’ll probably be mostly her friends anyways.

GRACE
I’m not sure.

JESSE
Okay. I guess you got a few months if you change your mind.

GRACE
Ok, I guess I’ll see you later.

Jesse skates off; Aidan comes out through the garage.

AIDAN
What’s wrong with you? Why did you push him away like that? He could be your first new friend!

GRACE
I don’t want him as my friend! I want to be with my old friends!

Tucker rides up on his bicycle.

AIDAN
Ok look you guys. I don’t like this anymore than you do, but for a little while, until we figure out some things, I’m gonna be teaching you here at home.
TUCKER
Are we gonna learn Hebrew?

AIDAN
Uh no.

TUCKER
Yes!

Tucker humps the air in celebration.

GRACE
Well, who is going to lead us in morning prayers.

AIDAN
Oh... uh. Guess what? You don’t have to pray anymore. God called. He said, “enough already, you’re welcome”.

GRACE
That’s not funny, Dad.

AIDAN
Okay. How can I put this? God... hasn’t given us any money to pay for “God School”. So God... is gonna have to have Grace and Tucker sit out praising him for a quick beat while we figure out how to live in the real world.

GRACE
So we’re just supposed to stay here... and you’re our teacher?

AIDAN
Exactly. It’s gonna be great.

OFF Aidan’s worried look...

Aidan and Sarah do their getting ready for bed rituals.

AIDAN
Any chance of us having sex tonight? I need to know if I should floss.
SARAH
I’m really not in the mood, babe.
I’m sorry.

AIDAN
I guess on the plus side, I don’t
have to floss.

SARAH
So you all ready for your first
day?

AIDAN
I guess. How hard could it be? I
know all the stuff they’re
learning. It’s not like they’re in
law-school or anything.

SARAH
Ok, just don’t let them boss you
around. You gotta make sure they
get a clear sense of when it’s
school time and when it’s playing
around time.

AIDAN
Sarah, I got this. I’m an actor.
I’m just gonna play the part of
teacher.

ON Sarah doing her best to look confident.

INT. BLOOM HOUSE, LIVINGROOM - DAY

The room has been cleaned up. Grace sits with perfect posture
awaiting her father’s lesson. Aidan wears the corduroy jacket
with elbow patches he mentioned earlier and has taped pieces
of white paper over the plasma TV to act as a makeshift
blackboard. Tucker is shirtless and sits upside down on his
head with a pixie-stick dangling from his lips.

AIDAN
Okay. We’ll start with attendance.
Grace?

GRACE
Here.

AIDAN
Tucker?

TUCKER
Cock and balls.
AIDAN
We’ll take that as a “here”. Ok. Now the computer program thingy frankly is a little confusing, so I’m gonna have to have your mother help me figure that out when she gets home. In the meantime, we’re gonna focus on what you’re doing in school. So, Grace; what are you working on in math these days?

GRACE
Geometry.

AIDAN
Great. Great. I’m gonna let you in on a little secret: you’re never gonna need that in real life.

GRACE
Then why do I have to learn it?

AIDAN
I have no idea. In case you wanna be a math teacher or something. Also there’s no “R” in the word colonel, but I’m getting ahead of myself.

GRACE
What about for the SAT’s?

AIDAN
Yeah, geometry’s probably on there, good thinking. So far my grade for you is A. Now let’s dive in.

He draws a triangle.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
Ok, what is this?

TUCKER
TRIANGLE!!!!!

AIDAN
Okay, good. No extra points for yelling, but correct.

TUCKER
Yay! Recess!!!!!
AIDAN
No, not recess yet. Can you please sit on your ass and not your head?

TUCKER
An ass is a donkey.

AIDAN
Yes. Currently I’m giving you an A in biology.

TUCKER
An ass has an ass.

AIDAN
These are facts.

GRACE
Dad, I’m in 6th grade. We’re working on things like supplementary and complementary angles, determining the areas of three dimensional shapes, circumferences...

AIDAN
Of course... I’m getting there. This one was for him.

TUCKER
Dad, I have to take a choom!

AIDAN
What’s a choom?

TUCKER
It’s how we say shit in school.

AIDAN
Swear jar.

TUCKER
I don’t have any money.

AIDAN
See that’s where the whole swear jar thing falls apart for me.

GRACE
It’s Hebrew for brown.
AIDAN
Oh. Got it. See; we’re all learning. You are free to leave the classroom for your brown. Enjoy.

Tucker runs out of the room.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
Ok, Grace. Is this triangle complimentary or supplementary?

GRACE
A triangle can’t be complimentary or supplementary. Only the angles that comprise it can be judged that way.

Grace stands and takes the sharpie out of Aidan’s hand and begins making perfect notations on the triangle on the “plasma blackboard” as she speaks. Aidan slowly sits down where she was sitting.

GRACE (CONT’D)
The triangle you drew, albeit poorly, is isosceles, meaning at least two of it’s sides are equal in length.

AIDAN
(totally lost)
Okay wait so then what’s the whole complimentary thing? They’re just lines; why are they so impressed with one another?

GRACE
Two angles are complimentary if they add up to 90 degrees. For example, what angle is complimentary to a 45 degree angle?

AIDAN
(now the student)
A 45 degree angle?

GRACE
Good. Now a supplementary angle...

We begin to notice that SOLDIERS have appeared behind the white pieces of paper on the plasma and are now shooting guns at the isosceles triangle.

GRACE (CONT’D)
Tucker!
Reveal Tucker has the XBOX REMOTE and is attacking the triangle with his “Call of Duty” troops.

TUCKER
I lied about having to choom, Dad.
I just wanted to kill the triangle.

AIDAN
Turn that off; we’re in the middle of a lesson!

TUCKER
I was pretending the triangle was Arab.

AIDAN
Oh my God. Who told you that? Not all Arabs are bad.

TUCKER
Levi Goldfarb said all Arabs want to kill Jews.

AIDAN
No they don’t.

TUCKER
Well how do we know which one’s are bad?

AIDAN
(flustered)
Well for starters there’s Al Qaeda...

GRACE
The Black weatherman?

AIDAN
No that’s Al Roker.

TUCKER
Oh no; Grace is the teacher?!

AIDAN
Yes.

TUCKER
Grace is so boring!

GRACE
No I’m not!

AIDAN
Ok, both of you stop.
TUCKER (CONT’D)
I want to be the teacher!

AIDAN
Ok, what do you want to teach us?

Tucker waves the drill...

TUCKER
How to laser things.

GRACE
That’s a drill, you big idiot!

TUCKER
I am not a big idiot! And you’re in love with Jesse.

GRACE
No I’m not!

TUCKER
Then why did you write his name all over your notebook!

AIDAN
Ok, guys! Break it up! Listen to the teacher!

TUCKER
Jesse’s gonna put his penis on you.

AIDAN
SHUT the fuck up!!!

TUCKER
GRACE
SWEAR JAR!
SWEAR JAR!

ON Aidan pulling his hair out.

30 INT. MINIVAN - LATER

CLASSICAL MUSIC PLAYS as Aidan drives Saul to his treatment.

SAUL
I don’t suppose you saw the Met Game last night?

AIDAN
You know I don’t watch baseball. Why do you always ask me that?
SAUL
My father and I talked baseball.

AIDAN
Well, I’m sorry. Was there good... bunting?

SAUL
Let’s just move on.

AIDAN
Fine. You okay if I pick you up after your treatment today? I’ve got an audition.

SAUL
This auditioning... When are you gonna give that up?

AIDAN
I don’t know, Dad. Not yet.

SAUL
But you can hardly call yourself head of the household. I know it’s 2012, but in my time a man would rather die than let his wife work her fingers to the bone while he clowns around.

AIDAN
Sarah loves her job, Dad. She’s living her dream. Don’t forget that. Everybody’s happy.

INT. SARAH’S WORKPLACE - DAY

Cubicle hell. We have no idea what they do here. But they do it in a windowless, grey, fluorescent-lit green-ness.

Sarah shares her cubicle with JERRY (31). She is typing on her computer. He stares at her.

JERRY
You know... sometimes, when I forget to wear underwear... I get these little half-boners.

She looks up from her screen but not at him.

JERRY (CONT’D)
It’s like a wannabee boner. An aspirational boner.

(MORE)
JERRY (CONT’D)
(a high pitched voice)
“One day, I’ll be a full boner... one day...”
(beat)
That was the half-boner talking. I was doing his voice.

SARAH
I figured that out, Jerry. Would you mind not talking? I’ve got a shit ton of work to do.

JERRY
Shit-ton, huh. That’s a lot of shit. You want a back massage?

SARAH
No thank you.

JERRY
Just the shoulders maybe? Something with a light touch? Almost a tickle?

SARAH
No.

JERRY
I keep oils in my car...

SARAH
(tight whisper)
Will you please shut the fuck up!? You are so fucking inappropriate. This isn’t a frat house, it’s a place of business.

JERRY
Ok, easy Jane Fonda. I’m just trying to have some fun at work.

SARAH
I don’t wanna know about your dick.

JERRY
Well he doesn’t want to know about you either.
(beat)
Now we’re ignoring you.
(beat)
Me and my penis are giving you the silent treatment.
(as penis)
“I wanna talk to her.”
(MORE)
OFF Sarah’s misery...

32 EXT. BLOOM HOUSE DECK - LATER

Tucker has built a fort on the unfinished side of the deck.

AIDAN
Alright Tucker, c’mon; time for school.

TUCKER
I’m building this. I don’t want to.

AIDAN
I don’t care what you want; you have to study something. You’re gonna have to get a job one day.

TUCKER
Uncle Jonah doesn’t have a job. He gets to play video games.

AIDAN
Yeah, well. You don’t wanna be like Uncle Jonah. He’s sad all the time. And he has to take medicine that’s supposed to make him happy but it doesn’t really seem to work. Don’t you think he might be happier if he did something with his life?

TUCKER
I’m gonna be a fort builder. Here, I drew this.

He slides out a CRAYON DRAWING he has made of an AMAZING TREE-HOUSE-STYLE FORT. (A kid’s dream.)

AIDAN
Wow, this is really cool. But to be a fort builder you gotta know math and how to read and stuff.

TUCKER
No I don’t. I just built this one.

Aidan has an idea.
AIDAN
Tucker how many pillows are in your fort?

TUCKER
One, two, three, four.

AIDAN
If I go get you another one, how many will you have in your fort now?

TUCKER
One, two, three, four, five.

On Aidan’s face... this is working. Suddenly SCREAMS from the house. Aidan runs inside, Tucker a step behind.

GRACE
Tucker, you asshole! Dad, look what he did to my dolls!

INT. GRACE’S BEDROOM – MOMENTS LATER

Aidan opens the door with Tucker and Grace next to him to reveal Tucker has created a bacchanal-like doll orgy using Grace’s JEWISH AMERICAN GIRL DOLLS.

GRACE
Dad! Look what he did to my Jewish American Dolls!

AIDAN
Oh my God.
(noticing)
Is that...

GRACE
Winona Ryder and Ruth Bader-Ginsberg!!

AIDAN
Tucker, who taught you this? What do you think those dolls are doing?

TUCKER
Wrestling like you and mommy.

AIDAN
What?!
TUCKER
You know how you and mommy sometimes naked wrestle late at night?

AIDAN
Uhhh... It’s been a long time since we naked wrestled, but yes?

TUCKER
Well one time you woke me so I watched to see who won.

AIDAN
Oh my God.

TUCKER
It was funny when you pretended to have a gun.

AIDAN
What?!

TUCKER
You yelled, “I’m gonna shoot!”

AIDAN
I need to sit down.

GRACE
I hate you so much you stupid baby!

Grace pushes Tucker.

TUCKER
I’m not a baby! I hate you too and you dress like an old lady!

Grace looks down at her dress and starts to cry. Tucker rushes over and starts kicking the dolls all over the room.

TIGHT SLOW MOTION SHOT OF DOLL FACES FLYING THROUGH THE AIR

GRACE
Dad! Stop him.

On Aidan frozen; he’s completely overwhelmed!

GRACE (CONT’D)
(through tears)
Dad!!

Aidan starts BANGING his fist against the wall. THE SOUND OF THE BANGING continues into...
Jonah opens his trailer door to reveal the source of the LOUD BANGING. There stands JANINE, a cute girl in her mid twenties. She wears a tank-top and what look like the bottom half of a stuffed animal costume: FURRY, PURPLE PANTS.

**JANINE**
Dude, I know you’re a hermit and everything, but if you don’t stop that fucking dog from barking I’m gonna roll your trailer off that cliff.

**JONAH**
Kugel, shut the fuck up.

Kugel quiets down.

**JONAH (CONT’D)**
Why are you wearing Muppet pants?

**JANINE**
They’re not Muppet pants. I’m working on my outfit for Comic Con.

**JONAH**
What are you going as, one of Elmo’s whores?

**JANINE**
Wow. You’re lucky that’s a little bit funny or I’d be offended. It’s a character I created myself.

**JONAH**
You’re a Furry?

**JANINE**
I hate that term, I’m a character designer of full size plush toys.

**JONAH**
So you’re a furry.

**JANINE**
I’m not into the kinky shit. I just like dressing up as someone else.

**JONAH**
Something else.
JANINE
Something else. Do you ever leave this trailer?

JONAH
Are you always so abrasive?

JANINE
Does your trailer always smell like the Burger King himself ate Grimace and then shit him out all over your living-room?

JONAH
Grimace is in Ronald McDonald’s posse. Originally introduced in November 1971 as “Evil Grimace”. You’re mixing up your fast food character lore.

JANINE
The fact that you know that has told me everything I need to know about you.

JONAH
So what are you like some angry “Joan of Arc” lesbian who hides out in teddy bear fur? I’ll bet you listen to Ani Difranco and have a barbed wire ankle tattoo.

JANINE
I have to get back to work, you smelly fuck. Just get out here and take care of this dog.

She takes off. Jonah steps out of the trailer and unlatches Kugel from his tree. The dog lavishes love upon him as he watches Janine walk off. Jonah is smitten by her.

EXT. BLOOM HOUSE, LIVINGROOM - CONTINUOUS

The SOUND OF CHAINSAWS as Aidan enters with a colorful girl’s outfit on a hanger.

AIDAN
What’s going on?

Reveal the kids are watching Scarface with their school books open on their laps.

Tucker immediately shuts off the TV and pretends to read...
Aidan pops out the movie...

AIDAN
I told you guys to stay out of my grown-up movies.

TUCKER
Look, Dad: Kenny gave me a candle.

Tucker holds up what looks like a long candle.

AIDAN
Great.

GRACE
(re; outfit)
What’s that?

AIDAN
It’s a cool new outfit I got you!

GRACE
I’m not wearing that. Why do you want me to look like I’m on the Disney Channel?

TUCKER
Where do we keep the matches?

AIDAN
Grace, honey. Your mom and I and just wanna make sure you’ll fit in with the other kids.

GRACE
I’m an Orthodox Jew. Is there something wrong with that?

TUCKER
(re: matches)
Oh, I remember.

He leaves the room.

AIDAN
No. I just want you to be prepared for the public school kids being a little... different.
GRACE
Jews have been denied access to their faith by warlords and tyrants for like millions of years! But I never thought it would happen in my own house!

Tucker returns with a LIT MATCH and lights the wick of the “candle”. Aidan finally notices it’s an M80 FIREWORK.

AIDAN
Where did you get that match? And that’s not a candle!!!

The FIREWORK explodes LOUDLY blowing Legos EVERYWHERE!

OFF Aidan; losing his mind...

INT. BLOOM HOUSE - EVENING

An exhausted Sarah closes the front door. She cannot fathom why the house is SO QUIET. She slowly crosses into the living-room to see...

INT. BLOOM HOUSE LIVINGROOM - CONTINUOUS

Aidan has duct-taped Grace and Aidan to two dining room chairs and sat them in front of the film “Stand and Deliver”. On the screen Edward James Olmos gives an impassioned lesson to a group of Hispanic high school kids.

EDWARD JAMES OLmos
You are the true dreamers. Dreams accomplish wonderful things.

INT. BLOOM HOUSE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Sarah finds Aidan drinking a beer and going over his lines for an audition.

SARAH
What’s going on?

AIDAN
They’re having a lesson.

SARAH
Aidan. Why are the children duct-taped to chairs?
AIDAN
I couldn’t get control of them. They wouldn’t listen. Tucker made a doll orgy, they asked about Al Qaeda... I panicked. Plus I have to work on this audition for tomorrow. I thought I’d give Edward James Olmos a try; he’s so good at it.

SARAH
Aidan, this isn’t gonna work. You can’t just show them movies and you certainly can’t force them into learning.

AIDAN
Well what’s your idea? Cause they’re fighting everything I try.

SARAH
I think we need to regroup. Why don’t we go to dinner?

AIDAN
That movie’s only half over; so far they’ve only stood. They’ve got another hour before they deliver.

SARAH
No you and me; alone. Call your brother.
(beat)
I’ll give him the Death Star.

AIDAN
Are you sure? We had Hanukkah covered.

SARAH
We need this.

OFF AIDAN’S LOOK. DOORBELL.

INT. BLOOM HOUSE - LATER

The door opens to reveal Jonah.

JONAH
Lego Death Star’s worth three hours of baby-sitting if and only if it’s in the box and said box is in mint condition.
SARAH
It is. It’s brand new.

JONAH
(noticing kids)
Am I allowed to keep them taped up like that?

SARAH
No.

Jonah flicks open a SWITCHBLADE.

JONAH
I’ll free them. You’ve got two hours.

EXT - SANTA MONICA BEACH - NIGHT

Aidan and Sarah sit on a bench by the Santa Monica Pier sharing a bottle of beer in a paper bag. The lights and SOUNDS of the ROLLER-COASTER echo in the distance.

SARAH
What’s the happiest you’ve ever seen me?

AIDAN
You?

SARAH
Yeah.

AIDAN
Surfing.

SARAH
What? That was like 10 years ago.

AIDAN
It’s the first thing that comes to mind. You were taking those lessons and I would sit on the beach reading. And I remember when you finally stood up after like hours of trying and wiping out. I couldn’t see your face, you know, cause you were so far out. But I could almost feel it... your elation.
SARAH
The happiest you’ve ever seen me
was a smile you never saw?

AIDAN
Yeah. Is that bad?

SARAH
No. I suppose it’s kind of
beautiful in a bizarre way.

AIDAN
What about me?

She thinks.

SARAH
You were doing some Shakespeare
thing outside at Northwestern.

AIDAN
It was *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*...

SARAH
Right. And there was no one there.
I mean like no one. It wasn’t even
a real show you were just like
doing it in the middle of the
soccer field. But I remember your
face.

(beat)
You didn’t care that no one was
watching or that you were dodging
frisbees in your little fairy
sprite outfit...

She laughs and smiles at the thought.

SARAH (CONT’D)
And you know what? It was fucking
thrilling to watch. You loved
words, you loved poetry.

(then)
But I remember it made me feel
kinda sad.

AIDAN
Why?

She looks off at the roller coasters on the pier.

SARAH
I want to support you. I really do
believe in you...
AIDAN
(pushing her)
Sarah, why did seeing me love Shakespeare make you sad?

SARAH
(a confession)
Cause I was terrified I’d never find that kind of passion for something. And the truth is... I haven’t.

A tear wells in her eye.

SARAH (CONT’D)
Aidan, I know you like to think we’re both out there pursuing our dreams, but we’re not. When I got this assignment, I thought I’d be working for the mayor, not the water department. I input data into spreadsheets... literally a robot should be doing my job, there’s just too much bureaucracy for anyone to notice.

AIDAN
You gotta give it some time, pretty soon you’ll be running that joint.

SARAH
I don’t wanna run the fucking water department.

AIDAN
Then what do you want to do?!

SARAH
I don’t know! But right now I’m on a fucking a treadmill, and if it stops, our kids don’t eat. And that’s all on me!

AIDAN
But you just said you supported my dream...

SARAH
When did this relationship become solely about supporting your dream?

AIDAN
So you’re not happy?
SARAH
All I’m saying is... I don’t think I can do this forever. Something has to change.

AIDAN
(taken aback)
Is that a threat?

SARAH
No, it’s a confession.

Aidan looks like he got punched in the stomach. They stare at each other. WE HEAR the SCREAMS of KIDS on the ROLLER-COASTER.

His CELL PHONE RINGS. He answers.

AIDAN
Hello...
(to Sarah)
It’s Dad!

INT. HOSPITAL - LATER
Aidan and Sarah walk hurriedly down Hallway. Aidan spot’s Saul’s internist, DR. BECKER coming out of a room...

AIDAN
Dr. Becker! What happened?

DR. BECKER
His body totally rejected the treatment.

AIDAN
It didn’t work?

DR. BECKER
It didn’t really even have a chance to work.

SARAH
So he’ll be right back where he started?

DR. BECKER
Not exactly. The treatment seems to have taken an unfortunate toll in your father’s case. It’s only served to weaken his immune system.
SARAH
Can we see him?

DR. BECKER
He’s sleeping, but he’s just up here in ICU.

Aidan and Sarah follow Dr. Becker into...

INT. HOSPITAL, ICU - CONTINUOUS

The doctor points to a bed with a grey, gaunt man hooked up to all manners of life sustaining apparatus. Aidan almost doesn’t recognize his father. When he does...

Aidan swallows hard, his eyes well. Sarah takes his arm.

AIDAN
He’s dying?

DR. BECKER
I’m not gonna sugarcoat it, Aidan. This treatment was a bit of a hail-mary pass. It’s not looking good. We have to monitor him and see if he pulls out. We’ll be moving him to his own room tomorrow.

INT. BLOOM HOUSE - LATER

Aidan opens the door to find Jonah; panicked.

JONAH
Okay, calm down.

AIDAN
What are you talking about? Why am I not calm?

JONAH
Before you freak out, I still get the Death Star...

SARAH
What happened, Jonah?

GRACE (O.S.)
This.

Reveal Grace has SHAVED HER HEAD to a short crew-cut.
SARAH

OH MY GOD!

AIDAN

What the fuck?!

GRACE (CONT’D)

I’m tired of you not listening to me! I wanna go back to the yeshiva and be with my friends! And I’m sick and tired of Tucker teasing me about Jesse. Now everyone will know who I am.

(to Aidan)

Why are you looking at me like that? You said I’d still be pretty even if I shaved my head!

SARAH

You did?

AIDAN

No! Completely out of context.

JONAH

I was innocently playing video games with the boy one. Yes he was teasing her, but I thought that was their normal banter. I was not expecting this.

SARAH

Aidan you need to say something. I can’t form words. I want to cry but it’s just hair. I shouldn’t cry, right?

AIDAN

Grace go to your room. Jonah, get the fuck out.

JONAH

What about the uh...

AIDAN

My child shaved her head while in your care. I’ll be keeping the Death Star.

JONAH

That’s bullshit, man.

AIDAN

Dad’s in the hospital. So whatever shit you have going on with him I think you need to clear it up fast.

JONAH

How long does he have?
AIDAN

They don’t know, but the fact that you have to ask that means you’re planning on procrastinating. This is real, Jonah. It’s not a joke. You need to wake up; life is happening.

Aidan slams the front door in his face.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NEXT DAY

Aidan is about to open the door to his father’s room when Rabbi Rosenberg approaches...

RABBI ROSENBERG

Nice to see you, Mr. Bloom. Sorry it’s under such dire circumstances. The Rabbi is in with him now.

AIDAN

Oh good, cause praying cancer away always seems to work.

RABBI ROSENBERG

(ignoring him)

I have something for you.

Rosenberg hands Aidan a PRE-ARRANGEMENT PACKET.

RABBI ROSENBERG (CONT’D)

I’m sorry to throw all of this at you now. But it does have to be dealt with sooner rather than later.

He reads the cover; So You’re Dying... On the cover: a smiling grey haired couple ride bikes off into the sunset.

The door opens and Rabbi Twerskey shuffles out. He says something in Hebrew to Rabbi Rosenberg who quickly moves to help the old rabbi shuffle onto a SEGWAY SCOOTER that’s leaned against the wall. Once aboard, Rabbi Twersky GLIDES OFF down the hallway corridor.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Aidan enters to find his father, tubes in his nose and arm. He appears to be staring off at nothing...
SAUL
Oh God. Oh, shit. Shit, shit, shit...

AIDAN
Jesus, Dad... are you okay?

Reveal Saul is watching a METS GAME on a wall mounted TV with the sound off...

SAUL
(gesturing to TV)
I’m fine, but this shortstop, Cedeno is a Nazi pig-fucker! You know how to work the volume on this thing?

Aidan doesn’t move...

SAUL (CONT’D)
Come over here... Don’t be fooled by all this. It’s all to cover their asses so nobody gets sued. I’m fine.

Aidan finds a chair at the bedside...

AIDAN
So, this experimental treatment...?

SAUL
They told me from the beginning it doesn’t work for everyone. I rolled the dice.

AIDAN
Did they give you any new information? Did they say...

SAUL
How long? Few months, maybe a year. But if I died every time he said I was gonna die I’d have more lives than Shirley Maclaine.

(re; TV)
Jesus? Did you see that pitch? If Collins doesn’t pull Ramirez out of the bullpen soon I’m gonna yank all these tubes and call it a day! If there’s one thing in life that’s certain, Aidan, it’s that the Mets will let you down.

ON Aidan stares at his father, who’s lost in the game.
INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Aidan emerges from the room. Rosenberg is still there.

RABBI ROSENBERG
Are you okay, Mr. Bloom? You look a little pale. Maybe you should sit down.

AIDAN
I think I might throw up.

RABBI ROSENBERG
Sit down.

Aidan does. Rosenberg joins him.

RABBI ROSENBERG (CONT’D)
Look, Aidan, if there’s anything we can do to support you; please don’t hesitate to let us know. I lost my father two years ago. It was the hardest thing I’ve ever gone through. It’s a very unsettling time. You’re entering a major transitional stage of your life.

AIDAN
I am?

RABBI ROSENBERG
Yes. Tell you what, I’ll avoid the Talmud for you... Sigmund Freud once said: “A boy becomes a man not at his bar-mitzvah, but at the death of his father.”

Aidan takes this in...

AIDAN
Thank you, Rabbi. Excuse me.

Rosenberg watches Aidan walk off.

EXT. HOSPITAL, PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Aidan almost makes it to his car, but suddenly stops and VOMITS beside it. He slumps down on the ground...
EXT. FROZEN FOREST - FANTASY

Aidan and JAX run through the trees of a FROZEN FOREST covered in ICE. In the distance they see a warm orange glow.

Gradually an OBJECT comes into view: A GLOWING BAR OF LIGHT.

As Aidan reaches down to touch it, the bar GLOWS BRIGHTER filling the frame as we burn into a WHITEOUT.

INT. AIDAN’S OFFICE - LATER - NIGHT

Aidan opens the pre-arrangement packet.


SARAH (O.S.)
You alright?

AIDAN
Yeah. Well, no I guess: all is not right. You struggle your whole life to have it all matter in some way and ultimately in comes down to one question in a stapled pamphlet: “How should we deal with your bones?”

SARAH
Maybe you shouldn’t be looking at that yet, babe.

AIDAN
He drives me crazy sometimes. But that man is such a part of who I am... Seeing him hooked up to all those machines... I never wanted to believe in God so badly. So many moments from our lives together... The happy times, the vacations with Mom, even the fights, good and bad... just life, you know, ups and downs... I just can’t believe one day I’ll never see him again.

Sarah gives him a kiss on the head.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
How are the kids?
SARAH
They’re okay... scared.
(then)
I always wanted to have a better handle on life’s mysteries by the time we had kids. So I could talk to them with some certainty.

AIDAN
Right? I mean fuck if I know what we’re supposed to be doing here.

SARAH
As parents? Or on Earth?

AIDAN
Both. I mean, listening to what you said tonight... and now this. I never would have imagined I’d feel so fucking lost at 35. There’s never any answers, just deeper questions.

SARAH
Maybe we learn these things when the time is right.

AIDAN
When a parent’s on his deathbed?

SARAH
Or when you need to teach them to your children.

Aidan reacts to this; has an idea.

51  INT. BEDROOMS – NEXT MORNING  51
A reinvigorated Aidan whips the covers off his sleeping kids.

AIDAN
Wake up!

TUCKER
What’s going on?

AIDAN
We’re going on a field trip!
INT. BLOOM HOUSE, KITCHEN - MORNING

Aidan pulls a few bills out of the SWEAR JAR. He slips a few of the bills into an envelope he leaves on the counter. He’s about to leave, but comes back and grabs the whole SWEAR JAR.

EXT. BLOOM HOUSE - LATER

Aidan CRANKS AN AMAZING SONG ON THE STEREO and backs the fully loaded mini-van out of the driveway and speeds off.

INT. BLOOM HOUSE, KITCHEN

Sarah stumbles in half-awake to find the envelope with “Swear-Jar cash” and a note that reads:

Took the kids camping for the night. Use this to get a massage. Love, your naked wrestling partner.

She smiles.

INT. MINIVAN - CONTINUOUS

GRACE
Is grandpa going to die?

AIDAN
It looks that way, honey.

TUCKER
Are we gonna put him in the backyard with Whiskers?

AIDAN
No, I don’t think we’re allowed to do that. We’ll have to ask Grandpa what he wants.

TUCKER
I think he’ll wanna be with Whiskers.

Grace and Tucker look out their windows...

EXT. JOSHUA TREE - CAMP GROUND - EVENING

Aidan leaps from the car and heads up a boulder strewn hillside; the kids look after him - confused...
GRACE
Shouldn’t we set up our camp?

AIDAN
Later, follow me.

EXT. ROCKY BLUFF - SUNSET
The kids scamper after Aidan as he scales the hillside.

TUCKER
Seriously. What are we doing way out here?

AIDAN
I just thought it would be good for us. Sometime’s it’s good to get out of your environment. Helps you get some perspective on things.

Atop a massive slab at the peak; the SUN IS SETTING.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
This is it... This is the spot.

GRACE
What is it?

AIDAN
This is the spot where I had the deepest, most sincere spiritual experience of my life. The last time I had an epiphany it was here.

TUCKER
What’s an aniffany?

AIDAN
An epiphany is when you realize something you really need to realize. Sometimes in life you can get kinda stuck. It’s like...

(a thought)
Do you remember when you spilled that rubber cement all over that book you liked and we couldn’t turn the pages cause they were all stuck together?

TUCKER
Yeah.
AIDAN
Well sometimes when you’re a grown-up, it’s kinda like that. You keep trying to flip the page to the next chapter... but it’s stuck. And you feel like you should have changed chapters by now but you can’t.

GRACE
Are you stuck because Grandpa’s dying?

AIDAN
Yes. That’s one of the reasons.

GRACE
And cause you haven’t worked since that dandruff commercial.

AIDAN
That’s in there too, thanks for reminding me.

TUCKER
Dad, do we go in the sky when we die?

AIDAN
I don’t know, buddy. What do you think?

TUCKER
I think those stars are people’s grandpas. And the moon is where God lives and he watches them to make sure they’re happy.

AIDAN
Wow. That’s beautiful. That was like a poem.

TUCKER
But it didn’t rhyme.

AIDAN
A poem doesn’t have to rhyme. Remember I told you I studied poetry in college?

GRACE
I thought you studied acting.
AIDAN
I did, but poetry’s what got me into acting. Your grandma loved poetry. She used to recite poems to me at my bedtime. And poetry can come in lots of different forms. Sometimes if you just say out loud whatever comes to your head it can be a poem.

TUCKER
And then God comes down from the moon to Earth to buy Reeses Pieces and his finger glows cause he wants to phone home.

AIDAN
Ok, now I think you’ve kind of veered off into the plot of “E.T.” But the first part was very nice. (beat)
Let’s make a fire.

EXT. ROCKY BLUFF - NIGHT
They sit around a fire toasting marshmallows.

TUCKER
Will Grandpa be able to see us when he dies?

AIDAN
Nobody knows what happens when you die, buddy. There’s as many opinions as there are people. (re; Grace)
And some of those people will tell you with absolute certainty they know what happens.

GRACE
But they’re wrong?

AIDAN
No. They’re lucky in a way. The rest of us... until we see an answer we believe, one that makes sense... we’re left with nothing.

TUCKER
But how can you have nothing? Can’t you see the stars?
AIDAN
I see them. You’re right. They’re so beautiful aren’t they?

TUCKER
Tell us a ghost story, Dad.

AIDAN
I don’t know any ghost stories. How about something Grandma used to say to me before I went to bed.

GRACE
Is it scary?

AIDAN
No.

(beat)
And indeed there will be time
For the yellow smoke that slides
along the street, Rubbing its back
upon the window-panes; There will
be time, there will be time To
prepare a face to meet the faces
that you meet;

A MONTAGE under Aidan’s VO: they toast marshmallows...

AIDAN (V.O.) (CONT’D)
There will be time to murder and create,

They laugh, they sing a song... Aidan hugs Grace wrapped in a blanket, close-ups on little hands...

AIDAN (V.O.) (CONT’D)
And time for all the works and days
of hands That lift and drop a
question on your plate;

DISSOLVE: Aidan appears to be acting out a scary story as the fire dances. His giant silhouette flits about the trees.

EXT. ROCKY BLUFF - LATER

Aidan sits in a camping chair by firelight. The kids are asleep behind him. He smokes a joint and stares down at the funeral questionnaire.
AIDAN (V.O.)
Time for you and time for me,
And time yet for a hundred
indecisions And for a hundred
visions and revisions Before the
taking of a toast and tea.

WE CRANE BACK WIDE TO REVEAL: AIDAN dressed as the FUTURISTIC
SPACE MAN watching over him from an adjacent cliff.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. ROCKY BLUFF - SUNRISE

Aidan and the kids wake up in sleeping bags.

AIDAN
Wake up sleepyheads. It’s a school
day.

GRACE
Did you get unstuck?

AIDAN
No. But I did have a really good
idea.

INT. WIG STORE - DAY

Aidan, Grace and a shirtless Tucker stand in front of an
endless display of every wig type that exists.

AIDAN
Pick any one you want.

GRACE
Any one?

AIDAN
The only rule is: it has to be
amazing...
    (off her look)
Like you.

A small smile on Grace. MUSIC CUE FOR GREAT SONG.
EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - LATER

The AWESOME MUSIC CUE continues as Aidan (carrying the SWEAR JAR), Tucker (shirtless and carrying a power drill and his blankey) and Grace (sporting a HOT PINK BOB WIG) come around the corner in SLOW MOTION. They look like such badasses even the freaks on Hollywood Boulevard can’t help but check them out.

INT. BLOOM HOUSE - LATER

Aidan and the kids return home loud and happy.

SARAH
Oh my God look at your hair.

TUCKER
I slept on a cliff!

SARAH
A cliff?

AIDAN
It was not a cliff. It was a raised area.

GRACE
It was a cliff and it was so amazing. Dad smoked cigarettes.

AIDAN
I did not smoke cigarettes.

GRACE
Dad smoked something.

AIDAN
It was cigarettes. I thought you were asleep.

GRACE
I wasn’t.

They run out. He surprises her with a passionate kiss.

AIDAN
Hey baby. I was thinking, maybe I’ve been going at this thing all wrong. I’ve been treating it like a punishment. That was actually really fun. Maybe this is a chance for me to spend some real quality time with these guys. (MORE)
AIDAN (CONT'D)
Really get to know them. I don’t know anything about my father. And I can teach them all kinds of things! Important things -- things I actually know something about!

SARAH
But don’t you have to follow some sort of curriculum?

AIDAN
Yeah, I’ll get to all that. But, these kids have been stuck inside this tiny Orthodox box. I wanna bust them out.

SARAH
Okay. But there’s some important things in that box... like math and reading. They have to be able to keep up with the other kids next year.

AIDAN
Keep up? Baby, when I’m done with these guys they’re gonna be way ahead of their peers. And for starters, we’re going swimming.

SARAH
Grace can’t swim.

AIDAN
Exactly.

ON Sarah; apprehensive...

EXT. MANSION - MORNING

A door opens to REVEAL a HISPANIC MAID.

AIDAN
Hello, are the Shulman’s home?

MAID
(broken English)
Nobody home.

AIDAN
Oh, that’s ok. We’re here to fix the drain at the bottom of the pool.
Tucker holds up his drill and pulls the trigger.

MAID
Pool no working?

AIDAN
Yeah, pool no working and I’m a friend of the Shulman’s and they asked me to fix it.

MAID
Oh... but I leaving.

AIDAN
That’s fine. I’ll close the gate on the way out.

She’s a bit flustered, but Aidan seizes on that and walks right past her into the house with the kids.

GRACE
(tight whisper)
Dad, this is so embarrassing.

AIDAN
Don’t worry. The Shulman’s are in St. Barts all summer. It’s their own fault for bragging.

EXT. MANSION BACKYARD POOL - MOMENTS LATER

Tucker plays in the shallow end. Grace stands on the diving board still wearing her pink bob wig. Aidan treads water in the deep end.

GRACE
I’m scared.

AIDAN
You just gotta dive in. I’m gonna be here when you land.

GRACE
But I don’t know anything about swimming.

AIDAN
I know. And today’s your first lesson. But first I want you to jump in this water.

GRACE
I’m scared.
AIDAN
I know. That’s exactly why you have to jump.

GRACE
If I die I’m gonna be so pissed at you.

AIDAN
Deal.

GRACE
[She says a quick prayer in Hebrew.]

She takes a deep breath and JUMPS!

UNDERWATER:

Grace and her beautiful pink hair PLUNGE into the turquoise water. We SEE ELATION on her face. This is her first time in the deep end. She surface into her Dad’s arms.

GRACE (CONT’D)
I DID IT!!!!

AIDAN
Yes you did.

GRACE
That was amazing! Can I do it again?

AIDAN
You can do it till the Shulman’s come home from St. Barts in the fall.

On her face: SO HAPPY. She hugs Aidan tightly. She loves her Dad. A GIANT SMILE ON HIS FACE.

INT. SARAH’S BOSS’ OFFICE – DAY

Sarah knocks on her boss ALAN’S (40’s) door.

ALAN
Hey pal come on in. I’m just watching this kitten video on Youtube. Check out this kitten.

(as kitten)
Nobody’s sleeping on my watch.

She crosses to him to look at his monitor.
SARAH
You’re a cat guy, huh?

ALAN
Who doesn’t love cats? I mean everybody loves cats, they made a musical about it for God’s sake. I forgot what it was called...

SARAH
I think it was just called, “Cats”.

ALAN
One ticket sold.

SARAH
Listen, can I talk to you about something?

ALAN
Sure, have a seat. What’s on your mind?

SARAH
It’s just... I’m having a little trouble getting used to my cubicle partner.

ALAN
Jerry?

SARAH
Yeah...

ALAN
But, he’s hilarious.

SARAH
It’s just that some of his comments are a little inappropriate and I know I’m relatively new here and I don’t wanna ruffle anyone’s... status quo. But I do think it’s time I told you that he’s making me feel uncomfortable.

ALAN
Did he try to touch you inappropriately?

SARAH
God no. No, it was more his words...
ALAN
What did he say?

SARAH
I’d really rather not say it.

ALAN
Sarah, I have to know what he said so I can suss this thing out.

SARAH
He said... well for starters he said that... when he doesn’t wear any underwear he gets little... “half-boners”...

Alan tries as hard as he can but bursts out LAUGHING.

ALAN
I’m so sorry, Sarah. But that is hilarious. You have to understand that when we’re jangling around down there anything can happen.

SARAH
He also made it talk to me.

ALAN
Who?

SARAH
His... half-boner.

ALAN
What did it sound like?

SARAH
I don’t know, it was kind of high pitched - almost like a ghost’s voice.

ALAN
(concerned)
Ok, but he didn’t do like a Black guy voice or anything did he? He didn’t do anything racial; like a Carl Weathers baritone kind of thing?

SARAH
No it was higher pitched. Like a mouse. Or... like I said a ghost.
ALAN
Like a ghost mouse.

SARAH
Sure.

ALAN
Look Sarah... we have fun here. And I know that this place isn’t always run according to the book. But I think you should loosen up a bit. Nobody’s trying to touch you, nobody’s giving their penis Black people voices or saying things like:

(bad Asian impression)
“Me love you long time.”
(back to normal voice)

Tell you what? I’m gonna move your cubicle. I’ll tell Jerry to bring it down a notch. But you gotta promise to smile a little more. A little more “Hakuna Matata”.

SARAH
I don’t know what that means.

ALAN
It means “No worries for the rest of your days.”

SARAH
No, I have two children, I know it’s from The Lion King; I just don’t understand how it applies to the water department.

ALAN
It means lighten up a little bit, Sarah. You have something everybody else wants.

SARAH
Remind me what that is...

ALAN
A job.

He smiles. She forces a smile and leaves.
Jonah is wearing a half-finished “Cosplay” outfit he is constructing of a badass Hero from one of his video games. Aidan watches as Grace carefully cuts some foam for the outfit. Tucker plays with the dog.

AIDAN
This should qualify as art class.

JONAH
(to Grace)
Just keep cutting along all the lines I drew. This is for the chest piece.

AIDAN
I never knew you were into playing dress-up.

JONAH
It’s hardly playing dress up, dude. It’s for Comic-Con. I looked online and no one’s ever nailed Commander Shepard from Mass Effect 3 like I’m about to. First prize is a thousand dollars, not to mention the chance for some congratulatory poon-tang from this super cute Furry I just met.

TUCKER
What’s poon-tang?

AIDAN
It’s what the astronauts drink.

TUCKER
Can I have some poon-tang?

JONAH
One day.

AIDAN
It’s only available in space.

(beat)
So you’ll meet us over at our house around 6:30 tonight and we’ll all go over to see Dad together. Right?

JONAH
I don’t know, Aidan. I gotta finish this, and to be totally blunt; I’m not a huge fan of Saul.

(MORE)
JONAH (CONT’D)
My tolerance for being told I was a disappointment every day of my life had an expiration date.

AIDAN
Do you know how many times a day he directly or indirectly insults me? You just have to block it out.

JONAH
I get it worse than you do, Aidan. Come on, you know that. You at least have a wife and a family. When he looks at me all he sees is failure. Mom believed in me; it was different when she was around. She made him a tiny bit nicer. But Dad... I’ve never given him anything he could brag about.

GRACE
I’m sure he brags about you.

JONAH
He’s never bragged about me a day in his life. And I don’t care anymore. He created me, and for that I owe him my life. But when he’s gone... I won’t miss him.

GRACE
Don’t you have any happy memories of him?

JONAH
The ’86 Mets. Watching USC football. Nothing to do with me.

AIDAN
You’re gonna regret this. I know you’re gonna regret this.

GRACE
Finished.

JONAH
Ok, let’s try it on.

Jonah straps on the foam chest piece that gives him RIPPED ABS. He stands with his hands on his hips like a Hero surveying the horizon.

JONAH (CONT’D)
What do you think?
TUCKER

It’s awesome.

GRACE

So cool.

JONAH (CONT’D)

Aidan?

AIDAN

We’ve both spent our whole lives wishing we could be something great. And now when we’re finally called upon to take on something that requires some real bravery; you run away. I think you’re about as heroic as the foam in that costume.

ONTJonah; that stung. Grace shoots Aidan a look.

AIDAN (CONT’D)

Come on, guys. Let’s go see grandpa.

INT. SAUL’S HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The family enters with balloons and gifts...

SARAH

Hi, Dad!

TUCKER

Grandpa!

Aidan registers his father’s irritated expression.

AIDAN

What’s wrong, Dad?

SAUL

What the hell happened to your hair?

AIDAN

It’s just temporary dye, Dad, relax. She was having fun.

SAUL

She looks like she works in the world’s oldest profession.

GRACE

What’s the world’s oldest profession?
AIDAN
Being an angel; first job there was.

GRACE
Oh. Grandpa I pray for you twice a day. Once in the morning--

SAUL
Pray? I’ve been praying all my life. Pray all you want. You still end up here.

AIDAN
Dad.

TUCKER
Grandpa, I bought you a fart buzzer.

SAUL
What’s a fart buzzer?

Tucker holds up a small sound effects toy.

TUCKER
It’s this thing. You press the different buttons and it makes different funny fart noises.

Tucker pushes the button. THE SOUND OF A LONG FART. The kids die with LAUGHTER.

GRANDPA
Well I see school is going well. Tucker do you know your times tables yet?

TUCKER
No. But I know this:

He presses a different button. This time a HIGH PITCHED FART. Everyone but Saul LAUGHS.

SAUL
Gotta learn those times tables.

AIDAN
He’s six, Dad.

GRACE
I know them, Grandpa.
SAUL
Good. Study hard and don’t become an actor.

SARAH
Maybe I should take the kids outside.

AIDAN
No, no, no...

SAUL
It’s fine when you’re playing around in college. But sooner or later you have to provide for your family. You’re gonna need those times tables.

SARAH
(biting)
Maybe Tucker will have a wife that loves him and supports him and will remind him the answer if he occasionally forgets...

AIDAN
Dad, Gracie and Tuck are here to see you. They came to cheer you up.

GRACE
Grandpa, I found these special sunglasses for you. Now you won’t have to squint when you head into the white light.
   (off his look)
So you can find grandma.

Saul’s eyes water. Grace hands him a pair of WELDERS GOGGLES. He puts them on and looks ridiculous. He hugs Grace tightly. ON Aidan watching...

INT. BLOOM HOUSE - DAY

Aidan stands in front of a dry erase board holding a yearbook picture of Jonah...

AIDAN
Today’s word of the day is “Douchebag”.

He writes “Douchebag” on the board.
AIDAN (CONT’D)
Now you never want to be a douchebag. Your Uncle Jonah is a douchebag. That guy spray painting that graffiti on that wall? That’s a supreme douchebag. Let’s talk about some others. Don’t ever cut a line; whether on your feet or in your car; line cutters are douchebags. If you absolutely have to wear a wireless bluetooth earpiece, take it out when you’re not on the phone. Leave it in and you’re a what?

70  EXT. SUPERMARKET PARKING LOT - DAY
Aidan and the kids with groceries watch someone steal a parking spot.

AIDAN
If you pass an open parking spot, don’t back up and try to grab it if someone’s behind you, you’ve lost that spot. That’s selfish.

71  EXT. OUTDOOR MALL - DAY
Aidan and the kids pass a group of Euro types in bedazzled t-shirts.

AIDAN
Bedazzled t-shirts are a no-no. I’m all for “to each their own”, but I have my limits. No rhinestones on t-shirts.

72  INT. MOVIE THEATER - DAY
Aidan and the kids observe someone talking during a movie.
AIDAN

There is no talking during a movie. The second the previews start, you have to shut-up or you’re captain of the S.S. Douchebag.

GRACE

Dad.

AIDAN

What?

GRACE

Now you’re the one talking.

AIDAN

Which leads me to another point. Don’t interrupt other people when they’re talking. Don’t assume you know what they’re gonna say.

Grace holds her finger to her lips “Shhhhhhh!”

INT. SAUL’S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - LATER

Grace looking through old photo albums when Aidan and Tucker enter from the back holding a box.

AIDAN

Okay. I got the favorite pillow and the jewelry box, you get the good slippers?

Aidan’s glance drifts to a PICTURE OF HIS DECEASED MOTHER on the wall. He contemplates it for beat, before grabbing it and tucking it under his arm.

GRACE (O.S.)

Dad! Why does Uncle Jonah never smile?

Aidan joins her staring at pictures in a photo album. In every shot, YOUNG JONAH looks melancholy.

AIDAN

Uncle Jonah was sad a lot when we were kids. Then Grandma died and he got even worse.

GRACE

I wish I knew how to make him happy.
AIDAN
Me too.

TUCKER
Ooh! When did Grandpa have that cool car!

Aidan recognizes the picture...

AIDAN
That is a 59 Cadillac. Look at those fins! That was Grandpa’s dream car...

(then)
This picture was taken at the dealership. He never could afford it...

Aidan and Tucker share a look...

INT. BLOOM HOUSE KITCHEN - MORNING
Aidan dials the phone.

AIDAN
(slightly effeminate)
Yes, hello. I’m calling from Mr. Sean “Puffy” Combs’ office and Mr. Puffy would like me to come by today and test out the new Ferrari California... I understand that you don’t normally test drive them, but Mr. Puffy will not get into a car unless I first drive it. I’m kind of like a food taster for a dictator... except with cars and... for Puffy.

Aidan points at Grace. She reads from a piece of paper.

GRACE
Marco, Puffy needs you in the Grotto!

He points to Tucker.

TUCKER
And bring some Cristal for the ho’s!

Sarah enters, dressed for work...
SARAH
(to Tucker)
Excuse me?

AIDAN
Okay, I have to go now. We’ll be
down in 20 minutes.

He hangs up. He hi-fives Grace and Tucker.

SARAH
What’s going on?

AIDAN

Aidan exits with the kids. Sarah looks concerned.

INT. BEVERLY HILLS FERRARI DEALERSHIP - LATER

Aidan, Grace and Tucker walk in dressed in their best
clothes. Tucker wears a top hat. They are approached by
ANTHONY, a well-dressed Italian man.

AIDAN
(slightly effeminate)
Hello. I’m Marco, I think we spoke
on the phone. These are Puffy’s
children.

Anthony takes in the look of Aidan and the kids.

ANTHONY
Sir, can I speak to you privately
for a minute.

Aidan steps over to Aidan out the earshot of the kids.

AIDAN
I know what you’re thinking. “Why
are Puffy’s kids white?” Well as
I’m sure you know Puffy is a
trailblazer and so many celebrities
were adopting Black children, guess
what he went and did? Exactly; he
went and snatched up these two
honkeys from Switzerland.

ANTHONY
Sir, I know what you’re trying to
do.
AIDAN
You do?

ANTHONY
We called Mr. Dirty Money’s office after you phoned us.

AIDAN
You did.

ANTHONY
Look, man... people try to talk their way into driving these cars all the time. And I never fall for it. But...

He looks over at Grace. We can see her shaved head since Tucker has pulled off her wig and put it on himself. She chases him between the priceless cars.

ANTHONY (CONT’D)
I can see that your daughter is ill. And I’m gonna make an exception.

AIDAN
(normal voice)
You are?

ANTHONY
She is sick isn’t she?

AIDAN
(beat, should he?)
So sick.

ANTHONY
(heartbroken)
What does she have?

AIDAN
Everything. Everything that a person can get, she currently has.

ANTHONY
Ok. Let’s go. But don’t tell anyone I did this.

INT. FERRARI - MOMENTS LATER
Aidan and Anthony sit up front. The kids are squeezed into the back.
AIDAN
Attendance. Grace?

GRACE
Here.

AIDAN
Tucker?

TUCKER
Here.

AIDAN
The important thing with shifting into first gear is to let the clutch out slowly. If you let it out whilst applying just the right amount of gas, it should go a little something like this.

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS FERRARI DEALERSHIP - CONTINUOUS
Aidan pops the clutch as the GORGEOUS CONVERTIBLE SQUEALS its tires and LAUNCHES onto Santa Monica Boulevard.

EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY - MOMENTS LATER
AMAZING MUSIC CUE as an AERIAL shot pulls us back from the KIDS elated faces to a beautiful view of the Malibu coast.

INT. SAUL’S HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING
Aidan enters with a box of Saul’s things and is surprised to find Saul talking to a handsome guy around Aidan’s age, HUGH.

SAUL
Aidan! Come in here. I’ve got someone I want you to meet. This is one of my old students from Princeton! Came to pay me a visit after all these years. Hugh Foster!

Aidan is taken aback by Saul’s verve. He shakes Hugh’s hand.

HUGH
Nice to meet you. Your dad was my favorite teacher. So funny.

AIDAN
Funny?
But Saul waves him down...

    SAUL
    (to Hugh)
    Tell this one what you do for a living.

    HUGH
    I was just made west coast sales manager for Apple.

    SAUL
    The computers!

Aidan smiles awkwardly...

    AIDAN
    Wow. Congratulations. That’s a big job.

    SAUL
    Huge. This guy, Aidan... He had a natural talent for business. All I had to do was stay outta his way.

    HUGH
    You were the one who always said we should find our passion, then hold on tight and never let go.

    AIDAN
    (sarcastic)
    Classic Saul...

Saul gives Aidan a look. Hugh senses the tension...

    HUGH
    Well I guess I should get going.

    SAUL
    Of course! You’re a busy man.
    (to Aidan)
    Did you see the arrangement he brought? It’s got iPods hanging from it like fruit. Get it? It’s an Apple tree!

    HUGH
    Get well, Saul.

Aidan watches as Hugh exits. Sets down the box.

    AIDAN
    I brought you the stuff you--
SAUL
Why the hell hasn’t your brother come to see me?

AIDAN
Good morning to you too.

SAUL
Didn’t you tell him I’m circling the drain over here?

AIDAN
He has a money making opportunity that he’s very excited about. A really good... chance to make some money. He wanted me to tell you that he’s really sorry, Dad.

SAUL
He’s probably cooking meth like the dad from “Malcolm in the Middle”. Do you know when he was six years old we thought something was wrong with him?

AIDAN
Please, Dad; I know the story.

SAUL
A psychologist at his school gave him this battery of tests. When they came out the psychologist goes, “He’s not disabled -- he’s a genius!”

Aidan smiles at the oft heard story...

SAUL (CONT’D)
I remember walking around, going about my business, thinking that I was the father of a genius. Do you have any idea how much pride I felt. (then)
Such high hopes. Now he snorts anti-depressants in a trailer park.

ON Aidan; saddened...

80
EXT. MATADOR BEACH - DAY
Aidan and Jonah share a joint and stare out at the Pacific. The kids chase the dog through shallow tide.
JONAH
I sit on this rock a lot. Solved most of the world’s problems a hundred times on this rock.

AIDAN
(with a smile)
Thanks for filling the rest of us in on the answers.

JONAH
Ah, I’m usually baked out of my face so they don’t make as much sense once I leave the rock.

They share a LAUGH. Pass the joint.

JONAH (CONT’D)
Do you ever feel like every year you get older, the months go by faster and faster?

AIDAN
You say that like it’s coming to an end or something.

JONAH
It’s not ending, but I do think I’ve missed the chance to be precocious at anything. It’s kind of hard to get excited about anything if you’ve been told your whole life you’re destined to fail.

AIDAN
God, you’re so stuck in the past. None of that shit matters at all. You’re crippling yourself with all the things you think you’re supposed to be. I wish you’d just let yourself be who you are.

JONAH
How are you giving up the past?! You’re still so consumed by being fucked-with in high school that you’re actually trying to teach your kids yourself!

AIDAN
I was not “fucked-with” that bad...
JONAH
Yes you were.
(beat)
They tormented you. I remember the
day you got beat up by like three
of them. What was his name? That
evil kid... Ronnie something...

AIDAN
Ronnie Buckman.

JONAH
Fucking Ronnie Buckman. I watched
the whole thing happen. And I
remember you sobbing in the
kitchen. And I’ll never forget mom
putting frozen meat on your black
eye. I thought it was gross. I
remember thinking “I hope we don’t
have to eat that now that it’s been
on Aidan’s bloody face.”
(beat)
I should have helped you beat up
those kids. But I never moved. We
were such pussies. That bothers me
most days.

AIDAN
But that was twenty years ago,
Jonah! You have to move on from the
past. What the fuck are you waiting
for? So your Dad was a dick. Find
me someone who doesn’t have pain...
(beat)
We’ll all be dead and gone one day,
and the only thing that will have
mattered is if we showed-up when it
was time. So be a man and show up!
It’s quite literally, now or never.

Aidan walks off.

A larger wave brings the tide high enough to almost touch
Jonah’s feet. He quickly moves away so the water doesn’t
touch him. THE SOUND OF THE TIDE OVERLAPS INTO:

Aidan in FULL SPACE SUIT AND HELMET walks through the eerily
desolate, green fluorescent-lit halls of his own high school.
He looks around, unsure why he’s here. JAX, the FLYING ROBOT
SIDEKICK, BEEPS for Aidan to follow him.
Around the corner Aidan sees a GRAINY PROJECTION of HIS YOUNGER SELF getting the shit kicked out of him by ANOTHER BOY. A DOZEN KIDS stand around cheering the bully on.

TIGHT ON AIDAN’S FACE through his HELMET. THE REFLECTION of the fight dances on the GLASS FACE MASK as AIDAN watches.

EXT. MATADOR - CONTINUOUS

Aidan snaps out of his fantasy. He has waded out waist-deep into the ocean. He looks back to the beach where his kids are building a sand castle. WE HEAR THE SOUND OF A YOUNG BOY SINGING A JEWISH PRAYER.

INT. TEMPLE SANCTUARY - DAY

REVEAL the SINGING is coming from a YOUNG BOY standing on the stage of the sanctuary. He is being tutored for his Bar Mitzvah by Rabbi Rosenberg. Aidan enters from the back. They make eye contact.

RABBI ROSENBERG
Avi, go practice in my office for a moment, I’ll be with you in a minute.

He leaves.

AIDAN
I’m not here to convert.

RABBI ROSENBERG
Good, cause I’ve already met my quota...

He smiles.

RABBI ROSENBERG (CONT’D)
Have a seat.

They sit in the front row of the sanctuary.

AIDAN
You know I was kosher until I was 13.

RABBI ROSENBERG
Really?

AIDAN
My father told me I was officially a man at my Bar Mitzvah.

(MORE)
AIDAN (CONT’D)
So I told him that as a man, I wanted to have a bacon double cheeseburger. I think I saw his mind explode.

They both smile.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
But to his credit, he let me eat whatever I wanted... outside of the house. I guess I impressed him with my logic.

RABBI ROSENBERG
What brings you to temple, Aidan.

AIDAN
When we were kids my brother and I used to pretend we were Space Men. We’d go out into the woods behind our house in Jersey and pretend it was some mystical planet and we were the only ones who could save everybody.

RABBI ROSENBERG
From what?

AIDAN
What?

RABBI ROSENBERG
What were you saving them from?

AIDAN
I don’t know... some scary shadowy figure. Anyway, I’ve been thinking about that a lot lately. Imagining those things again for the first time in 25 years.

RABBI ROSENBERG
What do you think it means?

AIDAN
I don’t know. I almost feel embarrassed to say this out loud... but do you think maybe... God is trying to tell me something; guide me in some way? And if you say he works in mysterious ways, I’m gonna run out that door.
RABBI ROSENBERG
(smiles)
Maybe your brain is tired of you not listening to it, so it’s begun to articulate things for you in a new way. You’re losing your father. You’re looking for something. You’re on a quest for some kind of connection to the universe...
(beat)
Do you feel any spiritual connection at all? To anything?

AIDAN
Space. The infinite. Looking up at the sky with my kids and trying to explain to them the infinity of the universe... How we’re these tiny little ants on this tiny little planet. I feel a spiritual power in that: infinity. Could that be God?

RABBI ROSENBERG
God can be whatever you want him to be. You’re getting tangled in semantics. Try not to get caught up in the God who wants you to be kosher and the God who wants you to study the Torah. Start with God as the infinite universe and imagine that that force may be trying desperately to guide you through the most challenging part of your life. Even if it has to appear to you in the form of a space man to get you to listen.

Aidan smiles.

AIDAN
Wow. You’re like the coolest Rabbi I’ve ever met. Where have you been hiding?

RABBI ROSENBERG
Aidan, it seems to me there are lots of things in your life that are right in front of you that you’ve been too busy to notice.

ON AIDAN: taking this in.
INT. SAUL’S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Sarah stands staring out the window. Saul awakes. He’s startled to see her.

SARAH
Did I scare you?

SAUL
I thought if I ever saw you here alone you’d be putting a pillow over my face.

She smiles.

SARAH
I’ve been watching the paramedics come and go for the last half-hour. It’s fascinating: every few minutes they race in at full speed, frantically pull a gurney out, race inside; doing everything they can possibly do to save someone’s life... and then a few minutes later they all come outside and smoke cigarettes.

SAUL
You never really think about death until you’re here... chemicals pumping into your veins while you watch “The View”. I’m unclear which one is killing me faster.

(beat)
Why are you here alone?

SARAH
Aidan’s teaching the kids how to parallel park. I thought I’d come say hi.

SAUL
Hi. Welcome to purgatory. Have a seat. Can I offer you some saline?

He holds out his IV. Sarah smiles.

SARAH
I’m glad to see you’re keeping your sense of humor.
SAUL
What else am I supposed to do?
Eventually when things get tragic
enough, they circle back to comedy.

She sits down on the chair beside his bed and unfurls his curling hand.

SARAH
Did I ever tell you that when I lost my sister you were the most helpful person to me?

SAUL
Really? I mean I’m glad if I was, but I don’t even remember what I said...

SARAH
You said something like, “Nothing in life will call upon you to be more brave than facing the fact that it ends. But on the other side of that heartbreak is wisdom.”

SAUL
I said that?

SARAH
Yes.

SAUL
(with a smile)
That was good advice. And now here I am; a shiva waiting to happen...

Sarah smiles.

SARAH
Well, the wisdom that came for me was that the things we leave unsaid will stay with us forever. I wanted so badly to tell my sister how much I loved her and how I always idolized her... but we never said those things; we weren’t like that... And then suddenly she was gone.

SAUL
Both my boys know how I feel.

SARAH
Are you sure about that, Saul?
Saul considers this, but...

SAUL
Achh! They don’t need me to make this more dramatic. They’d roll their eyes at me.

SARAH
I think you’d be surprised.

SAUL
So what is this? Did you come here to tell me I failed as a father?

SARAH
No. Not at all. One parent could never say that to another. I mean, I gotta be honest with you; I have no idea what I’m doing as a parent. I’m just DVR’ing Oprah and... kinda making it up as I go along.

(beat)
But what you did, was raise two incredible men, Saul. They don’t have quick answers or awards on their mantles, (in fact, neither one of them even has a mantle...)

(she smiles)
But they’re incredible men. And right now they need their father. They need to know he loves them... before it’s too late.

Saul frowns thoughtfully.

SARAH (CONT’D)
Barbara used to help you with the hard part of parenting.

SAUL
(his eyes well)
Yeah. She brought out the best in me.

SARAH
You need to bring out your best one last time, Saul. Aidan’s going to remember this time for the rest of his life. It’s going to shape him as a man.

Saul nods.
SAUL
You’re going to make a great matriarch someday.

SARAH
I already am a great matriarch, Saul.

She smiles and leans over to kiss his forehead. A SIREN is heard in the distance. She leaves. Saul stares out the window.

85
EXT. BLOOM HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Aidan stands with the kids in front of their dilapidated wooden fence.

AIDAN
Today we are going to Mr. Miyagi the shit out of this fence.

TUCKER
Who’s Mr. Miyagi?

AIDAN
Nevermind. I’m tired of staring at this broken fence. We’re gonna take it down.

GRACE
But Dad, shouldn’t we be studying something?

AIDAN
We are. You are witnessing the first ever wood-shop/poetry class. Tucker, here is your crowbar.

He hands Tucker a crowbar.

TUCKER
Awesome!

He hands Grace a book of poetry.

AIDAN
Grace you are going to recite this poem while Tucker and I attack these old boards.

GRACE
This is weird.
AIDAN
Think of it as a prayer you’re not expecting anyone to answer.

She stares at him.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
Just read.

He kneels down and helps Tucker crowbar off the first broken board. Grace reads from atop a nearby tree stump.

GRACE (V.O.)

Something there is that doesn’t love a wall. That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it, And spills the upper boulders in the sun;

INT. SARAH’S WORKPLACE - CONTINUOUS

Sarah at work still being tormented by Jerry over the wall of her new cubicle. Her eyes well.

GRACE (V.O.)
I let my neighbor know beyond the hill; And on a day we meet to walk the line And set the wall between us once again.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Saul stares at a PICTURE OF HIS WIFE AND A YOUNG JONAH AND AIDAN in a photo album as a nurse changes his IV drip.

GRACE (V.O.)
My apple trees will never get across And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him. He only says, “Good fences make good neighbors.”

EXT. COMIC CON - CONVENTION CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Jonah MARCHES IN FORMATION with similarly dressed characters from the video game Mass Effect 3. They look super badass.

GRACE (V.O.)

Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder If I could put a notion in his head: "Why do they make good neighbors? Isn't it Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.
Janine stands with a group of FELLOW FURRIES watching.

GRACE (V.O.)
Before I built a wall I'd ask to
know What I was walling in or
walling out, And to whom I was like
to give offence.

EXT. BLOOM HOUSE - LATER
Aidan and the kids have finished dismantling the fence. The FENCE BOARDS lie in a GIANT PILE. They relax and LAUGH together about something but THE ONLY SOUND WE HEAR IS GRACE’S VOICE OVER FINISHING THE POEM.

GRACE (V.O.)
He moves in darkness as it seems to
me, Not of woods only and the shade
of trees. He will not go behind his
father's saying, And he likes
having thought of it so well
He says again, "Good fences make
good neighbors.

EXT. MANSION, POOL DECK - LATER
Aidan and the Shulman’s Hispanic house-keeper, ESPERANZA (50’s) are sipping Margaritas in the Shulman’s hot tub. Grace does decent free-style laps in the pool behind.

Tucker yells to Esperanza from the diving board...

TUCKER
Has visto mi salto, Esperanza?

ESPERANZA
Si, Tucker! Ahora una bala de
cañón!

TUCKER
Aquí voy!

AIDAN
Wait, before you jump; what’s 2 times 2?

TUCKER
Eleven-teen.

AIDAN
Good enough for six; bombs away.
Tucker does a cannonball into the pool. Grace swims to the edge of the pool, breathing hard.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
Nice work, Gracie. Your stroke is really improving. You’re gonna wow everyone at Jesse’s party.

GRACE
Stop bringing that up; I’m not going. And even if I did go, I can’t wear a bathing suit in front of all those people. I’m not showing any skin!

AIDAN
Umm. Okay. Let’s see. You’re too small for mom’s wetsuit...

ESPERANZA
Maybe you get for her a “Burquini”.

GRACE
What’s a Burquini?

ESPERANZA
For religious womens, they have covered suit. Shop in Beverly Hills.

AIDAN
Where in Beverly Hills?

INT. BURQUINI STORE - DAY

Aidan (with swear jar under his arm), Esperanza (wearing a Les Miserables T-shirt), Grace and Tucker stand in an upscale clothing store for religious women. THREE MUSLIM WOMEN wearing religious HIJABS stare at them.

ESPERANZA
Buenos Dias. One small Burquini please... To go.

The religious women stare.

INT. CASTING AGENCY - WAITING ROOM

Aidan and ANOTHER ACTOR are dressed similarly and sit opposite one another. Aidan stares at the man as he practices the scene.
ACTOR
(to himself)
Let me lead the way, Captain. These Ractonians could be hiding anywhere.
(to Aidan)
I’m sorry to bother you, but do you know how to say that word? Is it “Ractonians”?

AIDAN
No idea. It’s made up.

ACTOR
Well I know it’s made up; they’re aliens. I just thought you may have seen this show.

AIDAN
No one’s seen this show it’s an insult to Sci-Fi.

ACTOR
Captain Kirk’s probably turning over in his grave.

AIDAN
Well technically Captain Kirk isn’t even born until 2233, but that’s irrelevant. Sorry, I’m a bit of an aficionado... And this dogshit is the reason the genre gets no respect.

The Actor LAUGHS.

ACTOR
How do we keep doing this, huh?

AIDAN
According to my father, forward is the only direction God gave us.
(tentative)
Can I give you one thought?

ACTOR
Uh.. Sure.

AIDAN
You’re the first one out of the ship. Now we don’t have the rest of the pages, but the guy’s got two lines in the whole first act and he wants to be first one off the ship?
ACTOR
  (getting it)
He’s gonna die.

AIDAN
Of course he’s gonna die! He’s about to get ass-raped by a half-dozen Ractonians. Amp up your fear. This is the scariest moment in “Private O’Brien’s” life. There’s nothing cavalier about it.

The ACTOR digests this.

ACTOR
Cool. Thank you.

AIDAN
Sure.

ACTOR
But why are you helping me?

AIDAN
I don’t know. I guess that’s stupid, right?

ACTOR
Careful, it might be kindness.

AIDAN
Oh God, I hope not. I’ll get devoured alive in this town.

They share a LAUGH.

INT. BLOOM HOUSE KITCHEN - LATER

Grace is helping Aidan unpack groceries. Aidan is energized.

AIDAN
I was over near Fairfax for an audition and I remembered this little kosher market. I mean, check out all this stuff...

GRACE
It’s all kosher?

AIDAN
Yeah. You gotta see this place, Grace. You’ll love it.

(MORE)
And also, you know what I was thinking on the way over here? All that wood from the fence we were just gonna throw away? We could finish the deck. Tucker, go grab that drawing you made of your dream fort.

EXT. BLOOM HOUSE, DECK - LATER

ANGLE ON THE UNFINISHED DECK as AIDAN’s arm LOWERS TUCKER’S FORT DRAWING INTO VIEW so it’s situated on the unfinished portion of the deck.

AIDAN
Should we try it?

TUCKER
YES!!!!

GRACE
Thank you, daddy.

Aidan smiles.

INT. HOSPITAL - LATER

Aidan enters. Saul is VISIBLY WEAKER.

AIDAN
Hi, Dad.

Aidan sits down next to the bed and holds his father’s hand.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
Your lips are so chapped. Have some ice.

Aidan puts an ice cube on Saul’s chapped lips.

SAUL
(soft and weak)
Remember when that ice cream truck would come around when you were little? You and Jonah would hear the music and light up and then the three of us would chase after him till he stopped; summertime in Jersey... fireflies everywhere.
AIDAN
(a smile)
I remember.

SAUL
What was it that I always used to get? I forgot the one I liked.

AIDAN
A Toasted Almond.

SAUL
A Toasted Almond. I’ll have one of those. That’s the last thing I wanna taste, Aidan. That’s how I’ll go out. It’ll remind me of summer. Summer and all those fireflies.

AIDAN
You got it.

SAUL
Wouldn’t it be great if your brother could be there too.

AIDAN
(teary)
That would be great.

SAUL
Promise me you’ll try to make that happen, Aidan. I need to see him. I wanna make amends.

AIDAN
I will. I do. I promise.

INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Aidan is pacing the hallway on his cell phone.

AIDAN
(into phone)
Where the fuck are you?

INT. JONAH’S HOTEL ROOM: INTERCUT

Jonah is having sex with Janine in her PURPLE FURRY costume. He is dressed in his Commander Shepard costume.

JONAH
Comic-Con.
AIDAN
Look man, I just thought you should
know that your father is probably
going to pass away any time now. I
had to pick out a casket.

Jonah pushes Janine off...

JONAH
Fuck.

AIDAN
Yeah. He says he’s sorry, Jonah. He
wants to make amends. He needs you
to forgive him.

Just then Grace and Tucker rounds a corner with rubber-glove
balloons. Grace approaches Aidan; listening in...

JONAH
We’ve been over this, Aidan.

AIDAN
Maybe you don’t really get this
until you have kids of your own,
but being a father is really hard,
Jonah. Some guys are naturally good
at it, some aren’t. Our Dad was a
little in over his head without
Mom. He sees that now. He wants to
apologize.

Jonah looks over to see Janine snorting a line of coke.

JONAH
Look I gotta go, Aidan. I got a
coked-up Furry on my hands and the
contest starts in fifteen minutes.

Grace reaches out for the phone...

GRACE
Let me talk to him.

AIDAN
Not now, honey--

Grace grabs the phone...

GRACE
(into phone)
Uncle Jonah...? Hi! It’s Grace! Did
Janine like the costume? Did she
give you some poon-tang?
JONAH
Uh... yeah.

GRACE
Ha! Awesome. You deserve all the poon-tang that’s coming your way.

JONAH
Thank you.

GRACE
Uncle Jonah, I’ve never asked you for anything, have I?

JONAH
No.

GRACE
I never complained when you forgot my birthday or Hannukah or when you got drunk and peed in my closet...

JONAH
Uhh... I got locked in there Grace, someone locked me in.

GRACE
I want you to come see grandpa. I know that you’re sad. But we’re sad too and we should all be together. I know you don’t believe in God... But at least maybe you can believe in family...

JONAH rolls over; scratches his belly...

INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - A BEAT LATER

Grace hands Aidan the phone.

GRACE
He hung up.

AIDAN
What?!

GRACE
Maybe we got disconnected. But it kinda felt like he hung up.

AIDAN
I’m sorry sweetie. Thank you, for trying.
He hugs her tightly.

INT. BLOOM HOUSE - LAUNDRY ROOM

Sarah is doing the laundry. Aidan, dirty from building the deck, comes up behind her and kisses her neck.

SARAH
Wow, I’m having Deja-Vu.

AIDAN
Ok, blip in the Matrix. Don’t panic. Last time did I do this?

Aidan does a bizarre dance move.

SARAH
Yes.

AIDAN
Did I do this?

He backs his butt up against her and shakes it like Shakira.

SARAH
(laughing)
Unfortunately, yes.

AIDAN
How about this?

He steps up close and kisses her passionately.

SARAH
Definitely not.

His hand goes up her shirt.

SARAH (CONT’D)
What are you doing?

AIDAN
I have man needs...

SARAH
Why don’t you just beat off like every other day?

AIDAN
Are you jealous of my hand?

SARAH
Where are the kids?
AIDAN
Building the deck.

SARAH
Aidan!

AIDAN
I hid the saw.

SARAH
Did you floss?

AIDAN
No, I’m a rugged man now. We don’t floss.

He lifts her onto the DRYER as they start to go at it.

SARAH
I missed you.

AIDAN
I missed you too. Should I go get your magic wand?

SARAH
(with a laugh)
No. Yours will be just fine.

They laugh and kiss.

INT. BLOOM HOUSE MASTER BEDROOM - LATER
Aidan and Sarah lie in bed post-coital.

SARAH
I have to tell you something. But I don’t want you to get crazy.

AIDAN
What?

SARAH
It’s all under control but I wanted to you be aware it was happening.

AIDAN
Sarah, what?

SARAH
You know that guy, Jerry, the chlorine analyst I work with?
AIDAN
Yeah. The one that always wears
sweatpants?

SARAH
Yeah... Well, he’s been acting...
inappropriately.

AIDAN
What kind of shit is he doing? Is he... touching you.

SARAH
No, no nothing like that. Just stuff like, you know... making his
dick talk.

A bolt of electricity runs up from Aidan feet...

AIDAN
I will fucking kill him.

SARAH
Calm down.

AIDAN
Have you told human resources?

SARAH
I talked to my boss, but he told me to sing Hakuna Matada.

AIDAN
Oh my God. This isn’t your dream job. It’s a fucking nightmare.

Aidan pulls anxiously at his hair, his mind racing...

AIDAN (CONT’D)
Where does he live?

SARAH
Aidan. You can’t do that--

AIDAN
Then I’ll come to your work. I will not allow anyone to disrespect you.

SARAH
I don’t need a man to come to my rescue. I can handle this.
AIDAN
But I want to kick his ass.
(desperate)
I need to...

SARAH
You can’t.

Aidan broils. KNOCK KNOCK. Grace enters in her black, ankle-length Burquini. They quickly cover up.

GRACE
How do I look?

SARAH
Wow! Fantastic!

GRACE
Why are you in bed?

SARAH
We’re napping.

GRACE
Why are you napping naked?

AIDAN
We wrestled. I won. Then we napped. Can you get out now?

Grace eyes them suspiciously.

GRACE
I need a ride.

MINIVAN/ EXT. JESSE’S HOUSE - LATER

The whole family aboard, Aidan pulls the minivan to the curb and Grace climbs out and marches up the lawn...

SARAH
Good luck, honey.

AIDAN
Holy shit. That’s brave.

SARAH
Do you think she’s gonna be alright?

AIDAN
That’s our little baby.
GRACE
Hey! Parents! Get lost! I’m okay.
I’ll call you later!

Aidan and Sarah drive off smiling with pride.

EXT. JESSE HOUSE, POOL DECK – LATER
Grace enters; and takes in the scene...

At the far side of the pool, FIVE 15 YEAR OLD GIRLS in bikinis DANCE a provocatively choreographed, routine to a blasting POP SONG. Some CHEAP FIREWORKS go off behind them.

LOUD JOCKS do CANNONBALLS and Jesse’s mom TARA (30’s), wobbles nearby with a frozen daiquiri in hand...

TARA
(to girls)
Pop the booty, baby! Pop that booty.

Finally Grace spots Jesse, under an umbrella with some other kids her age on the other side of the party.

JESSE
Grace, over here!

Grace begins making her way through the chaos when a group of predatory BULLIES spot her. They point and laugh before crossing over to block her way...

BULLY #1
What the fuck are you wearing?

BULLY #2
Are you going scuba diving?

Unnerved; Grace tries to push past them...

BULLY #3
She’s from another planet. She’s here to probe us.

GRACE
Please just let me pass...

BULLY #1
Nah. I think she has a skin condition.
(to Grace loudly)
Do you have a skin condition?!
GRACE
My father told me I’d meet people like you.

BULLY #1
What do you mean “people like us”?

Grace holds her head high...

GRACE
Douchebags.

Before they can react, Grace dives in. She pulls a few hard strokes and shoots to the far side of the pool. As she emerges, she is met by Jesse at the steps.

JESSE
Did those idiots say something to you?

GRACE
No. They were just asking where I got my suit.
(re; dancers)
What are those girls doing?

JESSE
That’s my sister and her friend’s routine for the talent show. They’re pretty good dancers aren’t they? My dad’s in charge of their pyro.

We see JESSE’S DAD continues to LIGHT FIREWORKS behind the dancing girls. Jesse notices her suit...

JESSE (CONT'D)
What are you wearing?

GRACE
(tense)
It’s called a Burquini.
(then)
Am I totally lame?

JESSE
Not to me. You look like a surfer chick.

Jesse smiles. Grace smiles back...
EXT. BLOOM HOUSE DECK FORT - DAY

Aidan and Tucker work on the deck/fort. Aidan’s cell RINGS...

AIDAN
Hello? (listening) Okay... put him on... Dad? You okay?(listening)
Oh...! Are you sure-- Okay, Dad. I’m on my way.

Aidan hangs up.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
Holy shit.

TUCKER
Who was it?

AIDAN
It was Grandpa. He wants me to bring him a... Toasted Almond.
(off their looks)
This is it...

Tucker gives his dad a hug.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
Thanks, pal.

EXT. SUPERMARKET - LATER

Aidan is at a walk-run with Tucker a few steps behind. He has a box of Toasted Almonds under one arm and the SWEAR JAR under the other as he approaches a Cashier.

Aidan hangs up. He’s just paid for ice cream bars WHEN...

TUCKER
Dad?

AIDAN
What?

TUCKER
I think I see a guy from mom’s work.

Aidan turns to see a Jerry hitting on a FEMALE EMPLOYEE.

AIDAN
I’m going to talk to him.
TUCKER
What about grandpa?

AIDAN
This will just take a second.

Aidan looks and sees his SPACE MAN SELF standing nearby. He gives Aidan a solemn nod of approval.

Aidan crosses over, Tucker follows just behind.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
Excuse me?

Jerry turns...

AIDAN (CONT’D)
Are you the Jerry with the talking dick?

JERRY
Who the fuck are you?

AIDAN
Aidan Bloom. Sarah’s husband.

JERRY
(startled)
Oh. Nice to meet you.

AIDAN
Man, I have been racking my brain trying to figure out the best way to handle this situation...

JERRY
Ok, calm down.

Aidan takes a step closer.

AIDAN
You know, this was supposed to be her dream job. It meant a lot to her. But what you don’t understand is how important it was to me. In my situation, to have a wife who is working her dream job; it was essential. It made the whole thing almost work. You fucked that for me, Jerry, understand?

A few shoppers turn to look...
AIDAN (CONT’D)
If you ever so much as exhale near my wife again I promise to dedicate a large portion of the rest of my life to making sure that we sue you for sexual harassment on a level so astronomical that Anita Hill will literally shit her pants and order a diet coke just so she can toast us in celebration.

(beat)
Do you understand me you retched piece of shit?

Jerry reels back and PUNCHES Aidan in the face HARD. Aidan falls to the ground. IN SLOW MOTION: the SWEAR JAR falls to the ground and shatters sending coins everywhere.

INT. DILAPIDATED SYNAGOGUE - FANTASY
Aidan and JAX rush down the endless aisle of an ancient RUN-DOWN SYNAGOGUE carrying the WHITE LIGHT. RABBI TWERSKEY covered in dust prays on the stage lit only by a shaft of light streaming through a broken window. He looks up when he sees them. THE SHADOWED FIGURE enters behind them.

Aidan turns and braces for a fight, but the figure COLLAPSES. Aidan, JAX and Rabbi Twerskey cross to him and pull back his cape to reveal it is Saul and he’s dying. Aidan is shocked to see it’s his father.

TUCKER (O.S.)
Dad!

INT. SUPERMARKET - CONTINUOUS
TUCKER
Dad?

Aidan comes to and looks up at his son; covering his eye in pain and disgrace.

AIDAN
Ow, fuck. That did not go as planned.

INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - LATER
Aidan runs in holding the Toasted Almond box on his eye; Tucker just behind. Sarah, Grace and Jesse and the Rabbis are there. Sarah spots him...
SARAH
Aidan! What happened to your eye?

AIDAN
I ran into Jerry at the supermarket.

SARAH
Oh my God.

Aidan moves past her and enters the room.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

A nurse adjusting an IV exits as Aidan enters. He crosses to the bedside. Saul turns to see him. He is very weak.

SAUL
What happened to your eye?

AIDAN
Don’t worry about it. Dad, I’m so sorry, but I don’t think Jonah is going to make it...

SAUL
Oh...

Saul thinks for a bit.

SAUL (CONT’D)
Thank you, Aidan.

AIDAN
For what?

SAUL
For doing your best to hold this family together... when I couldn’t.

Aidan smiles sadly. Saul notices his eye.

SAUL (CONT’D)
How’d ya earn the shiner?

AIDAN
Oh, I just got into it with this guy that’s been harassing Sarah at work.

SAUL
Jesus. You went after him, huh?
AIDAN
(realizing)
Well... yeah, I did.

SAUL
Takes guts. Good for you. You showed up.

AIDAN
How do you feel?

SAUL
I’m not afraid. Isn’t that funny. I thought I’d be afraid.

AIDAN
I think that’s the bravest thing I’ve ever heard.

SAUL
Really? You think I’m brave?

AIDAN
Yes.

SAUL
You promise.

AIDAN
(his eyes well)
I promise.

Aidan studies his father lovingly.

SAUL
Do you see that too, or is God very different than I imagined?

They turn to see Janine (still in her PINK FURRY outfit) standing in the doorway.

JANINE
Jonah! In here.

Jonah (still in his FULL COSPLAY UNIFORM) arrives out of breath.

AIDAN
Oh my God, you made it.

Jonah takes his helmet off and sits in the chair at Saul’s bedside.
SAUL
Jonah. You’re a warrior?

JONAH
I’m a pretend warrior.

Saul looks at his two boys standing side by side.

SAUL
(very weak)
So was I.

They watch his eyes begin to fall.

SAUL (CONT’D)
I’m so tired. Jonah... If there’s a next time... I’ll do better.

Aidan smiles as tears overflow is eyelids. Jonah cries too. Saul’s eyes slowly drift closed.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

WE CRANE IN as Jonah speaking at the podium. He still wears his Commander Shepard costume; a skullcap sits perched atop his helmet.

JONAH
I associated my father with all the things I wanted to be, but have never really found a way to become. Aidan and I used to pretend we were heroes. We were Superhero Space Men with swords that could save the day. Perhaps we set the bar a little high. Maybe we’re just regular people; the ones who get saved.

(he smiles through tears)
Anyway... Aidan recently asked me what my happiest memory of my father was. I told him I couldn’t think of one. But recently, after falling in love with that Furry back there... wave hi Janine.

Everybody turns to the back. Janine the Furry waves.

JONAH (CONT’D)
Anyway, I remembered how much my dad loved marching bands. He went to USC and I don’t think I ever saw him smile with more pride...

(MORE)
I never saw him more elated than when he listened to their marching band play the fight song. So, this is for you, Dad. As an atheist I doubt that you can hear this... but just in case, I told them to play extra loud.

On his cue, the entire USC marching band enters from the back of the chapel and begins playing the fight song at full volume. Drums. Horns. Aidan smiles. Jonah smiles.

We CRANE UP HIGH...

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BACKLOT - DAY

Aidan walks past lots of movie-making activity looking for the building that houses his audition.

VOICE (O.S.)

Hey!

Aidan turns. It’s the actor he helped out in the audition room. He is in a full space crew uniform and due to amazing special effects make-up, his head is gruesomely blown open.

AIDAN

Oh my God!

ACTOR

Dude, this is cause of you! I got that part.

AIDAN

Wow. They fucked you up.

ACTOR

You were so right; the second I got out of that ship there were fucking Ractonians everywhere, man. I got crushed!

AIDAN

That’s cool, man. Congrats. That make-up’s incredible.

ACTOR

What make-up? Just kidding. What’s your name by the way?

AIDAN

I’m Aidan.
ACTOR
I’m Craig. Thanks again for the tip. Have you ever thought about teaching? My guy Tim Scheffield at The Actor’s Studio just got a regular spot on “The Mentalist”.

AIDAN
Oh cool. Well, good for him.

ACTOR
They’re looking for someone to fill his spot over at the studio. You should give them a call. I told them about you.

Aidan considers this. MUSIC CUE FOR KILLER SONG.

EXT. BLOOM HOUSE - DECK
Aidan and the kids lead a blindfolded Sarah out the back door. She takes off the blindfold...

Aidan and the kids have finished the deck/fort. It looks exactly like Tucker’s drawing. Sarah is thrilled. The kids pull her over for a tour.

EXT. MIDDLE SCHOOL / EXT. CHARTER SCHOOL - LATER
The kids first day at new school. Grace sits at a desk next to Jesse. She tries hard to play it cool, but we notice a tiny smile creep across her face.

INT. ACTING CLASS
Aidan stands in front of a small acting class. An OLDER FEMALE ACTING TEACHER observes from the back.

AIDAN
Hey everybody. Um... I’m gonna be subbing for Tim today. He got a job on the Mentalist so he’s probably having his mind read as we speak.

The class chuckles.

AIDAN (CONT’D)
Anyway... that lovely lady in the back is here to make sure I don’t fuck up and ruin your careers.
INT. ALAN’S OFFICE – DAY

Jerry sits across from Alan and a DEFENSE ATTORNEY.

DEFENSE LAWYER
The Blooms are willing to drop both the sexual harassment and public-battery charges as long as you agree to... this.

He slides Jerry a document.

DEFENSE LAWYER (CONT’D)
It’s technically community service but the stipulations are fairly unusual...

JERRY
What the hell is this?

ALAN
Apparently there’s a concrete retaining wall in their neighborhood that keeps getting tagged with graffiti.

EXT. CONCRETE RETAINING WALL – DAY

We see the wall with a FRESH ANGRY ROBOT TAG. And then a PAINT ROLLER ON A POLE rolls in, covering it once again. WE PULL BACK TO REVEAL Jerry in an ORANGE VEST on the other end of the pole looking miserable.

DEFENSE LAWYER (V.O.)
They want you to paint it over the first Sunday of every month.

JERRY
For how long?

DEFENSE LAWYER (V.O.)
Until the wall falls down or you die. Whichever comes first.
(beat)
Ooh, also... you’re fired.

Aidan’s minivan passes behind him; Aidan TOOTS the horn. Jerry turns,
TUCKER
You missed a spot, ass-head.

OFF JERRY’S MISERY, THE SONG BUILDS AGAIN...

116 EXT. MALIBU BEACH - SUNRISE
Jonah throws a tennis ball for Kugel on the beach. Janine collects seashells. A CLOSE-UP of Jonah’s feet as he allows the tide to wash over his toes.

117 INT. BLOOM BATHROOM - FLASHBACK
Grace in the mirror the moment before she chose to shave her head. We see her take a breath of courage and then we watch her shave her head.

THE HAIR AS IT FALLS IN SLOW MOTION THROUGH THE AIR

118 EXT. BEACH - FLASHBACK
A younger Aidan lies on the beach holding a book, yet watching Sarah in the distance as she catches her very first wave. He smiles but he can’t see her face... But we do:

TIGHT ON SARAH’S ELATED FACE
as she stands up for the first time on a wave. Empowered.

119 EXT. WOODS - DAY
Tucker at the top of a hill in the woods holding a BRANCH like a RIFLE.

TUCKER
CHARGE!!!!

From over the hill come A DOZEN YESHIVA BOYS (his old buddies) dressed in full orthodox regalia charging right behind him to face an unknown enemy.

120 EXT. NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY - FLASHBACK
A COLLEGIATE SARAH smiles at something OFF CAMERA and we PAN to REVEAL COLLEGIATE AIDAN and a group of fellow THESPIANS performing A Midsummer Night’s Dream on the soccer field. No one but Sarah is paying them much attention.
121 EXT. AIDAN’S CHILDHOOD STREET - FLASHBACK

It’s 1982 as we watch a YOUNGER SAUL and AIDAN and JONAH as CHILDREN chase after an ICE CREAM TRUCK in SLOW MOTION. FIREFLIES FLY AROUND THEM AS THEY RUN. Elation on their faces.

DISSOLVE TO:

122 EXT. SMALL OUTDOOR THEATER - SUNSET

WE SEE SPACE SUIT Costumes and we wonder for a moment if we’re back in Aidan’s fantasies. The CAMERA REVEALS:

Aidan is directing a summer outdoor production of A Midsummer Night’s Dream. The production design is straight out of Aidan’s futuristic fantasies. WHITE GLOWING GLOBES like the one in his fantasy dangle from giant trees on the set.

Sarah, Tucker and Grace have a picnic as they watch. FAINTLY in the background we hear the actor playing PUCK delivering his final lines:

PUCK (O.S.)
If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended,
That you have but slumber’d here
While these visions did appear.
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding, but a dream

The last thing we see is a close up on Aidan’s face. He lips subtly say the lines along with Puck as his eyes dance around taking it how unbelievable perfect his life has become.

HARD CUT TO BLACK.