

MEMOIRS

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It's very late. It's quiet. Just the sounds of The City

LINDA SANTANA CRAIG, an attractive Hispanic woman in her thirties, waits at the ELEVATED STATION for the F train.

Linda looks great. She's dressed festively but tastefully. Next to her is her eleven year old DAUGHTER, ALICIA. She is twirling about the platform, still jazzed from the birthday party they attended in The City.

Alicia wears a black dress with a pink cardigan and has a pink handbag. We notice a CHARM BRACELET with four-leaf clovers on her right wrist.

The mother and daughter wait alone at one end of the station platform.

TWO TEENAGE BOYS wait at the other end. They speak soft, SLURRED SPANISH to each other.

Linda gives the boys a glance and evaluates. She watches them as Alicia spits a wad of gum into her mom's open hand.

The Boys approach. Linda tenses. At the last second the boys make a hard left turn and disappear down the stairwell. It's quiet again. Linda relaxes, smiles at her daughter. The F TRAIN is rounding the final bend into the station.

Their focus is on this train. It's getting closer, louder.

And so they don't see, don't hear the Boys coming back up the stairwell behind them.

Not until the boys have the mother and daughter boxed in and the one who can hardly grow a mustache is showing them his gun.

Linda puts her arm around her daughter. Alicia looks terrified.

The train roars INTO THE STATION as Linda quickly hands over her purse, her watch. She hands over her engagement ring and her wedding band.

One of the boys yanks Alicia's little purse away from her.

The other boy fumbles the wedding band. The ring CLANGS to the ground and rolls to a stop a few feet away.

We hear MEN'S VOICES echoing up the stairwell.

Now *the Boys* are boxed in. And starting to panic.

-- THE TRAIN DOORS SLIDE OPEN --.

The Boys see their way out and step into the last empty rail car, leaving the mother and daughter alone on the platform.

Through the window on the train, Linda stares at the boy holding her daughter's purse, her face hardening into a MASK OF CONTEMPT.

The boy clocks it. Who does she think she is?

-- THE TRAIN DOORS BEGIN TO CLOSE --

When a HAND WITH TATTOOED KNUCKLES reaches out and stops the car doors from closing.

A forearm and gun extend out of that last subway car ... There's a muzzle flash... a distant POP... a cloud of smoke ... a mist of blood... and Linda's body collapses on itself.

Alicia's face, shock, terror and blood.

2

EXT. SMITH STREET STATION -- LATER THAT NIGHT -- M.O.S

2

A WORKING CRIME SCENE, lots of uniforms and light, a white sheet draped over Linda's body where it fell.

BLUE AND RED LIGHT dances against the stairwell wall where a man is taking the stairs two at a time. Late thirties, big, plain clothes, he is SERGEANT JAMES CRAIG. When he reaches the platform, he stops.

Craig kneels before the white sheet. Peels it back. We stay on him. We don't see what he sees. We just see how he sees it. Then he turns...

THE WEDDING BAND. It's been tagged and numbered as evidence. Craig picks it right out of the chalk outline and slips it into his pocket.

Alicia, wrapped in a blanket, standing next to a round police MATRON. The Matron is tenderly trying to clean Alicia's face. Alicia locks eyes with Craig and stumbles towards him, her legs not quite working.

Craig saves her from the stumble and envelops her, lifting her as the blanket falls to the ground.

Alicia makes little gasping noises. Trying to speak but can't.

Craig walking back now, carrying his entire world. He reaches the stairwell and suddenly falls to one knee. Alicia gasps.

The closest UNIFORM puts a hand on his arm. A moment. Composure. A deep breath. Then as quickly as he went down, he's back up.

Craig looks back now, taking it all in. Is it real? Sees all the cops looking at him, then begins down the stairs.

WE DRIFT UP above the station until we find ourselves with a clear view of the southern tip of Manhattan, where the TWIN TOWERS STAND TALL.

3

INT. LOWER EAST SIDE RAILROAD FLAT -- BEDROOM -- MORNING

3

SUBTITLE: "**Eight Years Later**"

Tiny kitchen, clutter, a MESSENGER BIKE hanging from hooks on the wall, a lot of books. There is a PHONE RINGING under the bed.

TYLER ROTH, early twenties, handsome, looking haggard. He is sitting on the floor, shirtless, bed head, wrapped in a blanket. A GUITAR is on his lap. Tyler has propped some well worn, hand written pages of MUSIC against a box of off-brand laundry detergent and is squinting at the notes, frustration etched in his face.

A forgettable BLONDE lies sleeping on the bed.

Tyler, not a born musician, is trying to teach himself one of the PHRASES OF MUSIC in front of him. He is completely lost in the moment, with DEEP GROOVES in his fingers. By the ASHTRAY next to him, we can tell he's been at this a couple of hours.

The Blonde in the bed re: the ringing phone...

BLONDE
(out of it)
Hello?

Tyler gropes around the floor with one hand until he finds the phone, simultaneously glancing at the digital clock. His eyes widen in alarm.

TYLER
Yeah...
(listens)
Of course. I'm on my way. I
know...I know...I know...I know.

Tyler climbs out of his blanket and yanks on a pair of dark suit pants. Before he pulls on his white undershirt we observe a TATTOO that simply says "**Michael**" over his heart.

He searches through a beat-up chest of drawers, seeking a reasonably clean button down shirt...

TYLER V/O

Gandhi said that whatever you do in
life will be insignificant but it
is very important that you do it...

...And scrubs at a mysterious stain on the shoulder of an expensive but worn to hell suit jacket with a dishwasher brush.

TYLER V/O

...I tend to agree with the first
part.

4

EXT. GREEN WOOD CEMETERY --BROOKLYN -- LATER

4

A cluster of MOURNERS stand before a tombstone in the distance. They are not in funeral dress, as this is not a funeral. It's a memorial.

A beat up GYPSY CAB with a WEST INDIAN DRIVER pulls to a stop. From the trees and the sky we know its LATE SPRING/EARLY SUMMER. A gorgeous day.

Tyler gets out of the cab, holding the rim of his empty coffee cup in his teeth. He sorts a rumpled wad of singles and hands some to the driver, who screeches into reverse. Time is money.

Tyler crushes the coffee cup flat and slips it in his jacket pocket then lights up a smoke. He takes one long drag then extinguishes it and slips the butt into his pocket. He begins towards the mourners.

His mother... DIANE HOFFMAN, a beauty. Past burdens etched in the lines on her face. Dressed tastefully in expensive bohemian. She smiles like someone who's been crying but doesn't want anyone to know she has.

TYLER

(sweetly)

Hello, your majesty. How are you?

DIANE

I'm fine... you look good...

He kisses his mother's hand and he's moving to greet his stepfather...

LES HOFFMAN, Unruly curls streaked in gray, tweed jacket and tie. They exchange a firm handshake and muttered hellos.

The weight of Tyler's gaze falls to CAROLINE ROTH, his diminutive bespectacled, eleven year old sister. She's holding a little paper bag.

She flashes him a look. He kneels besides her and whispers...

TYLER

Thanks for organizing everybody.

Caroline makes a face. Turns her nose away from him.

CAROLINE

You smell like Listerine and beer.

He snorts and kisses her cheek.

Caroline reaches into her bag and takes out a handful of smooth white stones, on which she has painted the names: "Mom" "Tyler" "Les", "Dad", "Caroline". She begins to arrange them in a little circle on the grave.

Tyler's father...

CHARLES ROTH, late fifties, breathes power, precisely dressed, two hundred dollar haircut. A predator.

CHARLES

(aside, to Tyler)

You couldn't wear a tie?

Tyler holds his father's eye.

TYLER

Could have.

Beat.

Charles adjusts his own collar like it's an explosive.

POV: The Tombstone. The four adult family members stand side-by-side. They look like strangers on the subway as Caroline sits on the ground, arranging the stones.

The family sits together in a booth. Tyler rolls a Bic lighter over his knuckles. Caroline draws a funny portrait of Tyler on her napkin. He is smoking nine cigarettes at once. Diane gives the menu a ridiculous amount of attention. Les is eyeing the Cheesecake. Charles subtly aligns his silverware.

DIANE

...This is nice... I think it's nice that we still do this...

CAROLINE

(gently)

Mom.

DIANE

I forgot. I'm trying to purge "nice" from my vocabulary. Michael would like that we still do this.

Tyler takes out a cigarette. Lights it. Without saying a word his mother takes it and snubs it out in an empty water glass.

DIANE

(to Caroline)

Did you tell Tyler what your art teacher said about your portrait?

Caroline, as bemused as an eleven year old can be, looks at her mother, then at her brother. She adopts a very motherly tone.

CAROLINE

Tyler, did I tell you what my art teacher said about my portrait?

TYLER

Why no, Caroline. What did your art teacher say about your portrait?

DIANE

(smiling)

You two. I quit.

She flickers a glance at her ex husband and squeezes Les' hand.

CAROLINE

...She was very impressed. She said I captured a moment like a young James Whistler.

The WAITRESS brings platefuls of extravagant cheesecake to the table. Les dives in. Charles is having toast. He sips a glass of water and takes a surreptitious glance at his Patek Phillippe.

TYLER

Young Whistler... good... 'cause Whistler really fell off late in his career. He's the Michael Jackson of European art history.

DIANE

She suggested your sister take Pratt's Summer Art Intensive and that's hugely prestigious.

Caroline looks a bit sheepish, Tyler high fives Caroline.

Diane, again, flickers a glance at Charles.

CAROLINE

I would be the youngest one, ever, practically...

CHARLES

Tyler, would you please pass the butter?

Beat.

DIANE

Caroline was speaking.

TYLER

(to Charles)

Are you really this clueless? Are you really dismissing her like this?

Diane touches Caroline's hair.

CHARLES

Caroline is perfectly capable of speaking up if she is feeling dismissed. Caroline, are you feeling dismissed?

CAROLINE

I'm okay.

CHARLES

(solicitous, to Caroline)

I didn't mean to change the subject.

TYLER

What was the subject?

CHARLES
Excuse me?

TYLER
The subject we were discussing.
What was it?

Beat.

CHARLES
Now's not the time for your heroics
Tyler

TYLER
No. It's the perfect time.

Charles makes a minute adjustment to his collar.

Father and son lock eyes until...

TYLER
(whispering, to Caroline)
Do you need me to take you
anywhere?

Caroline shakes her head.

CAROLINE
I'll stay with mom.

Diane glares at her ex-husband.

Tyler rises and kisses his sister's forehead.

TYLER
Then I'll see you after school.

CAROLINE
Kay.

He exits as Caroline sips her lemonade, avoiding everybody's eyes.

6

INT. SUBWAY CAR -- JUST AFTER

6

Tyler standing although there are a few seats available. The car window strobes behind him. He takes off his jacket and button down and ties them both around his waist.

7

INT. WALL STREET COFFEE SHOP -- AFTER

7

Tyler in his pants and white tee shirt looks completely out of place amidst all the business types.

He sits in the last booth facing the street. His tattered JOURNAL lies open in front of him, a BINDER CLIP holds his page as he works quietly crafting an entry.

The HOSTESS, tired, in her 60's, slides a piece of baklava on the table as she shuffles past.

HOSTESS

Eat something.

Tyler gives her a huge grin.

TYLER

Yes, ma'am.

8

EXT. 4TH STREET -- JUST AFTER

8

Tyler and his roommate, AIDAN BREWER, 22, energetic, inappropriate, walking west towards N.Y.U. Young people in easy, summery dress. Tyler smokes. Aidan doesn't. Aidan remembers something, smirks.

AIDAN

I sold your girlfriend a toothbrush.

TYLER

You sold my who? ...What?

AIDAN

That voluptuous, delightfully oblivious little blonde you left in your bed this morning... I sold her a toothbrush. Got three bucks.

TYLER

...Congratulations?

AIDAN

Are in order, yes. Because that sale inspired our newest business venture: "The S.L.U.T."

TYLER

I was unaware we had a previous business venture.

AIDAN

The 'Single Lady's Universal Tote'.
It's the one-night-stand travel
pack for women. We throw in some
make-up, toiletries, cell phone
charger, cab numbers. Retail it at
\$19.95, maybe do an infomercial.

TYLER

And you think women would buy this?
With money?

AIDAN

Hey one-night-stands happen... It's
a part of life... like stubbing
your toe. Sometimes you misjudge a
corner and bend back your pinky
toe, other times you wake up in a
freshman dorm wearing a field
hockey tee shirt wondering why your
balls smell like cinnamon...

TYLER

(nodding sagely)
Of course. Yes.

AIDAN

Don't underestimate the novelty
gift market. Think about it...
instead of giving that token slutty
friend a ten-inch purple dildo for
her birthday, you hook her up with
"The SLUT." Everyone has a laugh
and the implication that she'll
probably use it someday remains.
What do you say? Are you down?

TYLER

I'm down with getting you on some
sort of medication.

AIDAN

OK...fine...be cynical...just
remember at some point in history
two people had a conversation just
like this about the light bulb. One
of them went on to fame and fortune
and the other one probably went to
work at Mickey D's or something.

TYLER

Or Denny's. Denny's was big in the
19th century.

9 **EXT. COBBLE HILL -- MORNING**

9

A TINTED TOWN CAR stops in-front of a funky corner brownstone where Caroline waits in a plaid jumper on the front steps. THE DRIVER opens the back door of the car.

10 **INT. TOWN CAR. (DRIVING) -- LATER**

10

Caroline in the cavernous backseat alone. Her pink knapsack her only company.

The Town Car stops at a crosswalk for a GROUP OF CHILDREN in jeans and tee-shirts on their way to a local Public School. Caroline sees them through the tinted glass. They couldn't see her even if they wanted to.

 PROFESSOR (O.S.)
 It's an unfortunate reality but a
 reality nonetheless ...

11 **INT. LECTURE HALL -- NYU --DAY**

11

TYLER sits in the back of the room. Their PROFESSOR addresses the few students paying attention.

 PROFESSOR
 ...in the wake of terrorist attacks
 these insurance company actuaries
 are provided a unique opportunity
 to raise premiums and profits to
 protect against events that will
 likely never occur again...

One girl, a focused brunette with beautiful eyes, takes notes relentlessly. She is present, absorbing the material. She raises her hand.

 GIRL
 Isn't that also an ethical
 question?

Tyler shoots her a glance. He takes in her lovely face, her casual dress, and the CHARM BRACELET with its four leaf clovers. WE REALIZE this is Alicia "Ally" Craig, now 19.

Tyler grimaces at the question and its implications of hope.

12 **EXT. CENTRAL PARK -- AFTERNOON**

12

At the Alice in Wonderland statue where KIDS climb all over the faded bronze mushroom caps and characters.

The statue is warm, the bronze absorbing the late spring sun. Tyler is perched on the Mad Hatter, his face turned towards the sun while Caroline hides with the dormouse.

Tyler lights a cigarette. AN UPTIGHT MOMMY glares at him.

UPTIGHT MOMMY

Why don't we make this a non-smoking statue?

CAROLINE

(emerging)

Yeah, Tyler . Why don't we make this a non-smoking statue?

He makes a face.

CAROLINE

You promised you'd quit...

TYLER

I know.

CAROLINE

You're gonna get emphysema and then you're gonna have to drag an oxygen tank with you everywhere...

TYLER

You think that would be the worst part about having emphysema?

CAROLINE

Everywhere you go, Tyler. Even the bathroom.

Tyler takes a final drag. Tosses it on the ground.

CAROLINE

Why do you think Dad doesn't wanna...like, listen to me?

TYLER

Dad loves you.

Caroline gives him a look.

CAROLINE

So? You can love someone and not want to spend any time with them.

Caroline is climbing around Alice. Her hands on Alice's hair.

TYLER

You've got that right.

CAROLINE

Mom loves Aunt Sara. But at Christmas, last year, she wouldn't let Les leave them in a room together 'cause she said there would be a "yule tide homicide."

TYLER

That's because Aunt Sara drinks... You don't drink, right?

CAROLINE

Duh.

TYLER

So why would anyone wanna avoid you?

Caroline shrugs, not convinced. A silent moment passes.

CAROLINE

Michael used to drink.

TYLER

Yeah. He did. But Michael was 21. All 21 year olds drink because it's new and exciting. Aunt Sara drinks because she wishes she was 21.

A shared smile.

CAROLINE

You're 21.

Tyler's smile fades.

13

INT. THE STRAND BOOKSTORE -- DAY

13

Tyler on a rolling ladder, shuffling books around. Aidan on the floor, eating two pieces of pizza, folded down the middle, at the same time.

AIDAN

What about Atlantic City for your birthday this year? Get a suite. Couple of ladies. You could call Toothbrush Girl, what do you think?

TYLER

I think I'd rather be sodomized.

AIDAN
Hey, it's your day.

He gestures to the shelves.

AIDAN
What's the point? How do you know
where anything is in this place,
anyway? There's like...

AIDAN/TYLER
"Eight Miles of Books!"

TYLER
I don't expect you to appreciate
this, but the schematic for this
particular shelf is authors who
were sleeping together...

AIDAN
No shit?

TYLER
And ended up dead or in prison.

Beat.

AIDAN
This is why chicks dig you.

Tyler laughs.

AIDAN
Seriously. They like this freaky
poetic crap. I ran into Megan
yesterday. She's bartending at Don
Hill's tonight. She wants us to
stop by. She practically begged me.

TYLER
Eh.

Aidan, visibly frustrated with Tyler's reluctance, grabs the
rolling ladder and pushes Tyler into the Romance novels.

TYLER
Hey!

AIDAN
Hey nothing. You've been a ghost
the past couple weeks. You never
wanna go out. I'm feeling
unappreciated here.

(MORE)

AIDAN (cont'd)
 I can't deal with this brooding
 introvert shit anymore man. I'm
 ready to set up an intervention.

A silent moment passes.

TYLER
 You realize interventions typically
 discourage binge drinking?

AIDAN
 One drink. Come out for one drink.

TYLER
 When's the last time you had one
 drink?

14

INT. DON HILL'S -- THAT NIGHT

14

A hip venue on Greenwich Street. DeeJay. Music pumping.
 Aidan and Tyler make their way through the crowd to a
 congested bar where the CUTE BARTENDER is swamped.

AIDAN
 Hey, Megan!

She ignores him.

AIDAN
 You look great! Can I get two
 Heinekens?

MEGAN
 Do. Not. Speak.

Tyler snorts with laughter.

AIDAN
 (genuine)
 Is she mad at me or something?

TYLER
 No no. Girls are like that when
 they're way into you.

AIDAN
 Oh.

Two nubile young GIRLS approach Aidan. Tap his shoulder.

GIRL #1
 Excuse me?

Aidan flashes a winning smile.

AIDAN
Well, hello...

GIRL #1
Could you take a picture for us?

She holds out her camera. Aidan hesitates, then smiles.

AIDAN
My pleasure...

The girls pose. Aidan takes the camera. Turns it around. Extends it. Smiles. And promptly SNAPS A PICTURE OF HIMSELF. He casually returns the camera to the confused young woman.

Megan returns and practically flings the beers at Aidan.

AIDAN
Thanks. You've met my roommate...

MEGAN
I hope you die.

Tyler laughs his ass off.

TYLER
She's all over you. Cheers.

They clink bottles.

15

EXT. GREENWICH STREET -- LATE NIGHT

15

Tyler and Aidan stand with the girls from Aidan's photo opportunity. All are thoroughly intoxicated. There is a knot of CLUB GOERS halfway down the block, drinking and having a fine time.

AIDAN
I love this street. I love this city. Where are you guys from, again?

AIDAN'S GIRL
Miami.

AIDAN
Miami. Miami, Barcelona, Rio. New York is it, man. God broke the mold when he made this city.

TYLER

You ever actually been to any of those places?

AIDAN

What's your point?

There's a gust of wind. Aidan's girl shivers. She's wearing a tiny dress.

AIDAN'S GIRL

What are we doing? I'm freezing.

AIDAN

Shoulda worn a jacket. Like me.

O/S WE HEAR: a beer bottle crashing on the ground, and from far away a ghostly, plaintive girl's voice disappearing into the night...

VOICE O/S

Michael...Mi-i-chael!

Tyler turns towards the sound. It's as if he's trying to spot a train in the distance. His hand goes to his pocket and fishes out his pack of cigarettes.

AIDAN'S GIRL

(to Aidan)

Asshole.

She walks away, looking back at her friend, annoyed.

AIDAN'S GIRL

Are you coming?

Tyler's Girl looks at Tyler, who is still preoccupied.

TYLER'S GIRL

(to her friend)

Hold on, Lauren.

The girls step away. Tyler's Girl appears to be trying to convince her friend to stay. Aidan watches them, hopefully.

Tyler isn't watching them. He's watching two cool looking MUSICIANS, crossing the street with the LIGHT, carrying SOUND EQUIPMENT.

A quartet of NEANDERTHALS pulls up at the light in front of them in a car, aggressive music playing. The Neanderthal at the wheel has the brilliant idea to rev his engine and lurch the car forward, startling the musicians, toying with them.

MUSICIAN #1 glares, but gives no further response, he just wants to get across the street. The Neanderthal revs and lurches again.

MUSICIAN #2 slams his hand on the hood of the car.

MUSICIAN#2
What's your problem?

NEANDERTHAL DRIVER
My problem? Keep your hands off my car, asshole.

MUSICIAN#2
Blow it out your ass, Guido.

MUSICIAN#1
Go back to Long Island.

The car's four doors open, and the Neanderthals lope to the front of the car. The driver is holding a mini baseball bat at his side.

NEANDERTHAL DRIVER
I'm from Queens, faggot

A Neanderthal shoves one of the musicians, and the driver starts wailing on the other with the bat. Tyler watches as the Neanderthals overpower them. The altercation has turned into a full on assault. The Musicians are getting stomped into the pavement.

TYLER'S GIRL
So we were thinking we could go...

Tyler walks right past the girl without even looking at her.

AIDAN
(under his breath)
God damn it.

Aidan runs off after Tyler.

Tyler jumps fully into the thick of it, swinging, grabbing the beefiest Neanderthal in a choke hold and pounding the guy's face. He fights like a pit bull. Not feeling, not stopping.

Aidan gets punched in the face. Tyler elbows the nose of the guy who punched Aidan and it spurts blood. Then someone hits Tyler in the gut, and he doubles over and takes a knee to the chin. The musicians get back to their feet and fight back. It's a brawl.

Aidan's girl is screaming for the cops. Tyler's girl, following the instincts of the inebriated, has teetered near enough to the brawl to imperil herself.

A Neanderthal swings at Aidan and misses, grazing the girl. She jerks away in her high heels and crashes to the pavement, splitting her lip on impact. Tyler head butts the guy.

16

EXT. SIDE STREET -- LATER

16

An AMBULANCE and TWO E.M.T.'S are on site.

THE COMBATANTS from the brawl are lined up on the curb.

SERGEANT JAMES CRAIG, a little older and heavier than when we first met him at the train station, is standing with the Girl, who is a mess. Her nose bloody, her dress torn.

Craig shields the Girl with his body, listening carefully to her and her friend as the two girls GESTURE ANGRILY at the Neanderthals. Craig's eyes flicker in the same direction.

Craig's PARTNER, LEO, AFRICAN AMERICAN, a few years younger, is on the radio to Dispatch.

Craig snaps his fingers at one of the E.M.T.'s and receives a blanket, which he carefully wraps around the girl. Then, to his partner, indicating Tyler and Aidan...

CRAIG

Cut those two loose.

Leo puts down the handset and uncuffs the guys.

LEO

(quiet)

Take a walk.

Tyler takes a beat, looking at the lineup. Aidan, rubbing his wrists, gestures "Let's go". Tyler looks at the bloodied Girl and...

Craig, going through the pockets of Neanderthal #1.

CRAIG

Anything in here that's going to stab me, Einstein?

Craig finds a packet, or a vial.

CRAIG

Nice. You like to get high and hit women?

Aidan gives Tyler's elbow a gentle tug. Tyler's caught up in the action.

NEANDERTHAL#1

I don't even know the bitch.

Rage flickers across Craig's face.

Craig moves down the line to one of the musicians, going through their pockets.

CRAIG

How about you two?

Tyler, compelled, drawing closer to the action.

MUSICIAN#1

It wasn't us, man!

NEANDERTHAL#1

That cocksucker kicked my car!

CRAIG

Shut up, genius.

MUSICIAN#1

(to Neanderthal)

Eat shit, pencil dick.

CRAIG

Alright. That's it. Everybody goes downtown.

Tyler steps forward, interrupting...

TYLER

It wasn't them.

Aidan, who has been edging away, jerks around to his friend.

AIDAN

(sotto)

Tyler...

LEO

(quietly, to the guys)

Take a walk, I said.

TYLER

Hey!

Craig, big angry Irish cop, turns to Tyler.

TYLER

They didn't do anything. They didn't start this. Those assholes did. Why do these guys have to go downtown?

CRAIG

What are you still doing here?

TYLER

This is bullshit. It was those gorillas who started this.

Craig moves slowly toward Tyler and starts going through Tyler's pockets, roughly. He finds his wallet. Starts rifling through.

CRAIG

Well, Mr. Roth. What makes you think I give a shit?

TYLER

You're a police officer. You're supposed to.

What the hell? Craig looks from the guy he was frisking to Tyler's girl, wrapped in a blanket. She spits blood. He turns a bit to Tyler.

CRAIG

It's a great relief to me, Mr. Roth, to know that you're on top of the situation. Now go the fuck home.

He turns back to work.

Tyler looks briefly at Aidan. Aidan looks desperate "Please! Let's get out of here!"

Tyler TOUCHES CRAIG'S ELBOW.

Aidan's jaw drops. Leo takes several silent steps in. Craig looks at his own elbow then looks at Tyler. The kid must be out of his mind.

TYLER

How about you do your job?

SLAM. Craig takes Tyler's legs out, driving his face into the pavement, a GASH opens above Tyler's LEFT EYE. Tyler lies there dazed and disoriented as Craig, with one knee on Tyler's neck, crushes his face into the ground. He slaps the cuffs on.

17

INT. PEARL STREET LOCKUP -- AFTER

17

Who knows what time it is. A lovely ASSORTMENT OF PERPETRATORS, Tyler and the musicians are in lockup. Everybody looks like shit. Tyler sits on a bench in the holding cell, looking quite relaxed.

The lock up door slides open and Aidan is returned to the perch. The ESCORTING OFFICER shouts across the din to Tyler.

ESCORTING OFFICER
You can have your call now.

TYLER
I'm good.

The door slides shut behind Aidan.

AIDAN
You're good? Thank God you're good.

Beat.

AIDAN
What are you trying to do? What did you want from that cop guy?

TYLER
That was a messed up situation. Those guys...

He cups his hands to make a megaphone...

TYLER
...Are pussies!

From Off Screen a chorus of:

NEANDERTHAL#1 O/S
Faggot!

NEANDERTHAL#2 O/S
Candy-ass faggot!

NEANDERTHAL#3 O/S
Fag!

TYLER
There was no justice in that situation.

AIDAN
No justice. Okay, Green Hornet ...
Lantern ... Asshole.
(MORE)

AIDAN (cont'd)

You may not be actually matriculating in school, you may be having a nice time by yourself lurking in the stacks of your book store, but I actually plan on graduating, and having a career and a wife and a girlfriend and a divorce and a mid-life stalking episode and erectile dysfunction, and I will thank you to keep your complexes and nihilistic bullshit...

TYLER

Did you just say "nihilistic"?

AIDAN

Yeah. I got it off a cereal box.

Tyler smiles.

The Escorting Officer returns with a white male LAWYER wearing a two thousand dollar suit.

ESCORTING OFFICER

Roth, Brewer.

Tyler glares at Aidan.

AIDAN

Yeah, I called your dad's office. Sue me.

18

INT. FAR ROCKAWAY - CRAIG FAMILY HOME - KITCHEN -- MORNING 18

Ally, with a cup of coffee, is on the house phone.

ALLY

So when would that be available?...No, that's sooner than I'd thought. And is there any kind of deposit?... Okay.

Craig comes in through the kitchen door, takes off his jacket and starts washing his hands at the sink.

ALLY

I'll call you back. Thanks.

Ally hangs up. Makes a quick appraisal of her dad. He has a little blood on his cuff. He splashes his face with water.

On automatic pilot, Ally flips on the toaster, pours some hot coffee into a Sesame Street Mug, pours in a measured dose of brown sugar from the dispenser, then flips open a bottle of Aspirin and deposits two of the tablets into the mug.

She packs up her back pack with school stuff as Craig gulps his coffee.

ALLY

What did you tell me you were going to do when things got tight?

The toaster dings. She extracts an English muffin and squeezes honey from a bottle shaped like a bear.

CRAIG

Breathe.

ALLY

Did you?

CRAIG

I did. I'm breathing right now. Who was that?

ALLY

The lady from student housing. We talked about it. Remember?

Beat.

CRAIG

Sure.

Ally grabs her sweatshirt.

ALLY

Mrs. Lippman is going to drive me.

CRAIG

I'll drive you.

She flounces out the door, holding her own cup of coffee and the English Muffin. Craig dries his hands, grabs his jacket and a set of keys from the counter.

19

EXT. DRIVEWAY.

19

Outside their red-brick row house at the end of a block of red-brick row houses.

Ally has her mug on the roof of the car and is searching through her bag.

Craig comes around the driver's side and slides Ally her keys across the roof. She drops them in her bag.

ALLY

Mrs. Lippman said she'd do it.

Craig is in the driver's seat, waiting. Ally grabs her coffee mug and gets into the passenger seat. She hands him his English muffin, which he holds in his mouth as he starts the car.

She flips down the visor and checks her very light eye makeup.

ALLY

You're exhausted. When you have a stroke I'm going to abandon you on a park bench.

They start to back out.

ALLY

This drive is too long.

20

INT. EXECUTIVE FLOOR -- RECEPTION -- DAY

20

Tyler and his messed up face on his feet in the waiting area. English Club chairs, green baize on the walls. A RECEPTIONIST types away across the room. Tyler takes out a cigarette. Lights it. Draws the ire of...

THE RECEPTIONIST

You know you can't smoke in here.

Tyler looks down at a heavy crystal ash tray on the coffee table in front of him. It's clearly never been used.

TYLER

So what's with the ash tray?

THE RECEPTIONIST

It completes the room.

Tyler takes a long drag, grinding out the ember on the pristine surface. He smiles a charming smile at the aggravated woman.

TYLER

Tease.

JANINE O/S

Tyler...

JANINE, Charles' long time assistant, late forties, kind eyes, watches Tyler from the hallway.

JANINE
He's ready for you.

21

INT. EXECUTIVE FLOOR -- HALLWAY -- AFTER

21

Tyler follows Janine down the corridor. She looks him up and down, doesn't like what she sees.

JANINE
You're too skinny. And you smell like french fries and cigarettes.

TYLER
Nice to see you too.

JANINE
You want me to lie?

Tyler smiles, he likes that she doesn't lie. Janine scrolls through a Palm Pilot as she walks. They approach the double doors to Charles' office.

JANINE
Try not to give him a heart attack.

TYLER
Okay.

Tyler bangs through the doors. Janine grimaces.

22

INT. CAVERNOUS EXECUTIVE OFFICE -- LATER

22

A row of floor-to-ceiling windows blocked by vertical blinds. Sunlight glows behind them. There's a lot of leather, brass and rich wood, breathing power. There's a flat screen computer, but no personal effects anywhere.

Charles sits at his massive desk. As Tyler enters, Charles registers his injuries. A flicker of something over Charles' face. Tyler stands.

TYLER
I came to see how much it costs, because I'm giving you the money back.

CHARLES
How much what costs?

TYLER
That lawyer.

Beat.

CHARLES
Ah. That lawyer, Tyler, costs 450
dollars an hour.

In spite of himself...

TYLER
Christ.

CHARLES
Tell me about it.

TYLER
I wanted to make sure you
understood it wasn't me who called
you.

CHARLES
I understand. You could do worse
than have a father who bails you
out of jail

TYLER
I don't want to be bailed out of
anything.

Charles looks at his son.

TYLER
I'll get an invoice from Janine.

Tyler leaves, slamming the door behind him.

23 **INT. HALLWAY.**

23

Tyler stops, catching himself, realizing the emptiness of the
gesture. He looks up and sees Janine looking at him.

24 **INT. WALL STREET COFFEE SHOP -- AFTER.**

24

Tyler in the same booth, surrounded by a commotion of
businessmen and women. He's writing in his Journal, his foot
tapping fast. We see the very act of writing eases him,
loosening his strangled grip on the pen, slowing down the
manic rhythm of his foot.

EXT. PRIVATE SCHOOL. JUST AFTER.

It's just after three, Caroline emerges from school in a CLUSTER OF 6TH GRADE GIRLS. One of them dips her head towards Caroline's ear, as if to share a secret. Whatever she says makes Caroline's face crumble, almost to tears, and the girls snicker.

Tyler hops from his perch on a parked car. His bike leans on a fire hydrant.

TYLER
(to Caroline)
Hey.

He looks at the girls, sizing them up, and flicks his cigarette to the sidewalk, cool as hell. The girls have a group swoon.

He takes Caroline by the elbow...

TYLER
Excuse us, we're due in surgery.

He gets his bike and leads her down the block, towards Fifth Avenue.

CAROLINE
What happened to your face?

TYLER
Horrible threshing accident.

CAROLINE
You're so retarded.

TYLER
Don't mock the afflicted. Here,
I brought you something.

He hands her the book of Myths.

TYLER
This was my favorite book ever.
Michael had it and he hit me over
the head with it until I read it.
Its about all these God and
Goddesses who spend all of their
time being jealous and petty and
otherwise acting like human beings.
The illustrations are amazing.

Caroline opens the book carefully and has a peek. She smiles.

CAROLINE

Ooh. These are cool. Thanks! Where are we meeting mom?

TYLER

Guggenheim. What's up with those girls?

CAROLINE

I just...they think I'm weird. Sometimes I sort of space out.

TYLER

When you're drawing?

CAROLINE

Yeah. Other times too. Mademoiselle Fleischman had to snap her fingers at me a lot today. And everybody laughed and they all think I'm a freak of nature.

Caroline takes a brief glance over her shoulder, towards the school.

TYLER

Je m'appelle "Freak of Nature."

Caroline smirks.

TYLER

Mon dieu, mon soeurette! Je m'appelle "Freak of Nature". Sacre Bleu. French Toast.

CAROLINE

What are you going to tell mom about your face?

TYLER

I finally found something I'm good at?

Aidan appears to have cornered a PROFESSOR on her way in or out of the building. The woman looks tired, annoyed, like she just wants to go. Aidan talks fast, even faster than usual.

AIDAN

...I know by every numerical measurement I didn't pass but what I was hoping was that maybe you give me a grade on my *trying* to pass. My commitment to effort. My commitment to commitment...Since the semester is nearly at it's terminus.

Craig's car rolls to a stop just in front of the flags. Ally gives him a kiss on the cheek. She gets out, and walks up the stairs, right past Aidan.

AIDAN

(distracted)

I mean... uh... life's only about what we put into it. It's about people. And what they put into it. And I'm -- ah, screw it.

Aidan runs off leaving the befuddled professor on the steps.

27

INT. RAILROAD FLAT-- LIVING ROOM -- DAY

27

Tyler, again with the guitar. Aidan enters, excited.

AIDAN

He's got a daughter.

TYLER

Who?

AIDAN

The cop... The cop who busted your face all up. He's got a daughter. And she's hot! I smell revenge!

TYLER

Revenge. What do you want me to do, kidnap her?

AIDAN

You introduce yourself...go on a few dates...be your charming, gentlemanly self... And then, flip the script.

TYLER

What does that mean?

AIDAN

Screw her brains out and make her call you daddy. Steal her underwear and sell it on ebay. Put her in Clown Shoes, take lewd photos and post them on her high school's home page. I don't know. Be creative.

TYLER

You should be incarcerated on general principle.

AIDAN

Hey. What happened to you was very emasculating. Tell me you don't want to get that asshole and I'll drop it.

TYLER

I don't want to get that asshole.

AIDAN

Just meet her.

TYLER

I don't want to meet her.

AIDAN

She's cute.

TYLER

I don't care.

AIDAN

You're meeting her.

TYLER

I'm not meeting her.

28

INT. COFFEE SHOP. WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK.- DAY

28

A Student Hangout. The place is bustling. Numerous NYU STUDENTS move, sit, eat, lounge. Aidan scans the crowd. Tyler stands beside him looking far less enthusiastic.

TYLER

This is one of those moments I'm already regretting.

AIDAN

She was here yesterday.

TYLER

What am I supposed to say to this girl? "Hey doll face, your dad trampled all over my civil liberties, wanna make out?"

AIDAN

Well don't call her doll face.

Ally enters. She wears a big sweatshirt. Aidan spots her.

AIDAN

There. The brunette.

Tyler watches her settle into a couch with a big cup of coffee.

TYLER

I know her. I mean, I don't know her, but, I've seen her. She's in my global politics class.

AIDAN

There you go! Something to open with. Now get over there.

Tyler sighs, begins toward Ally.

AIDAN

Shazam!

Tyler glares. Aidan gives a big thumbs up.

TYLER

Excuse me?

Ally briefly looks up from her book.

TYLER

My name's Tyler Roth. I was wondering if I could bother you for a minute?

He gives her a charming smile.

ALLY

You're already bothering me.

Beat. The smile usually works.

TYLER

Um, I'm doing kind of a sociological experiment...I was hoping you could help me out.

Ally looks at him, a little wearily, holding her place in the book.

ALLY

What are you, kidding me?

Tyler is genuinely taken aback.

TYLER

No, I... may I ask your name?

ALLY

Anonymous. It's Greek. It means "you don't have a shot".

A surprised laugh escapes from Tyler.

TYLER

Okay, Anonymous, do you see the guy across the room, pretending to read a text book, looking in this general direction?

Aidan holds a MATH TEXTBOOK at an awkward angle to mask his obvious interest in Ally and Tyler's conversation.

ALLY

Subtle.

TYLER

I have this theory that an objective third-party, having no prior contact, would be able to determine how much of an asshole he is just by looking at him.

ALLY

Ah.

TYLER

He's my roommate. And I've witnessed so many glaring examples of assaholic behavior that I'm biased as a subject, but I'm convinced that he has an aura, that people can actually perceive. So, just take a good long look. And tell me what you think?

She looks at Aidan, briefly, who shifts to avoid her gaze. Then she takes a peek at Tyler's profile.

ALLY

Who else do you plan on asking?

TYLER

No one here. The parameters called only to sample attractive women in their early twenties.

ALLY

I'm nineteen.

TYLER

In their late teens.

(beat)

Well, look, you typically get something for participating in these things and I've run out of those big foam fingers, so I was thinking maybe I could take you out some night?

She looks at him.

TYLER

Or you could just go out with me on the off chance we'd have an interesting conversation.

ALLY

I don't date sociology majors... they're a rowdy bunch.

TYLER

Indeed they are. Lucky for you, I'm undecided.

ALLY

About what?

TYLER

Everything.

Tyler smiles. Ally tries to hide a smile. She closes her book and extends her hand.

ALLY

I'm Ally.

Caroline in art class amongst a sea of green plaid. The girls work in relative silence, drawing, painting.

THE ART TEACHER walks amongst them looking over their shoulders, sees a lot of amateur art work, then she comes upon Caroline and stops. The teacher finds herself captivated by ...

A COMIC PORTRAIT of Diane and Les kissing in the doorway of their brownstone. Diane has a bit of a manic smile and Les is half her size.

Caroline notices her teacher staring. She doesn't like it and shifts to block her view. The teacher gently eases her back. Smiles softly.

Caroline smiles back as her teacher moves across the room. Caroline has just put her pencil back to paper when...

The BITCHY GIRLS we've seen before start whispering and smirking. One of them mouths...

CHUBBY GIRL

Kiss ass freak.

Caroline's smile shrinks away and she goes back to work.

30

INT. CRAIG FAMILY HOME ALLY'S BEDROOM-- NEXT EVENING

30

Ally in sweat pants, an ancient tee-shirt, her hair in a Scrunchie, eating Mallomars from the bag and reading.

Craig yells from the bottom of the stairs. He carries a bag from a video store.

CRAIG

Don't be mad...

ALLY

Dad, we've seen freaking Erin Brockovich twice already. You always cry.

CRAIG O/S

I do not.

ALLY

It's embarrassing.

Her cell phone rings.

ALLY

Hello?

31

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE. RAILROAD FLAT.

31

TYLER
Hey. It's Tyler.

INTERCUT:

Ally winces.

ALLY
Hi.

TYLER
You're going to stand me up. I can
feel it in my bones. I'll be
devastated.

ALLY
No... I...I was just...

TYLER
You were just sitting around in
your pajamas watching T.V.

ALLY
No. I'm not watching T.V. I'm
just...getting dressed.

She wipes her hands on her sweats, smearing them with
chocolate.

ALLY
And I'm going to meet you at the
place at..what time again?

TYLER
Eight.

ALLY
Right...yes. Eight...okay.

She hangs up.

ALLY
Shit.

She whips the Scrunchie out of her hair and heads for the
bathroom.

32

INT.CRAIG HOUSE. KITCHEN.

32

Ally comes down the stairs, putting on her earrings.

Craig looks at Ally, confused.

ALLY
I'm going out.

CRAIG
I can see that.

ALLY
Well, you're a trained
investigator.

She is moving quickly, grabbing her bag, her wallet. Craig tosses her keys.

CRAIG
Who are you going with?

ALLY
A boy from school.

Beat.

CRAIG
Okay.

ALLY
I wasn't asking for permission.

CRAIG
(sharply)
I know.
(more gently)
Have a good time. Here's cab fare.

He peels off a couple of twenties.

ALLY
Thanks.

CRAIG
Should I wait up?

ALLY
Dad.

Craig puts his hands in the air in surrender.

A hole in the wall Lower East Side Thai restaurant. Tyler and Ally sit together perusing menus. A WAITER approaches.

ALLY
(to the waiter)
What desserts do you have?

WAITER
Dessert special fried bananas a la
mode.

ALLY
Great, I'll have that. A glass of
skim milk. Then the mussels,
please.

Tyler and the Waiter share a look.

TYLER
Pad Thai and a Sapporo. Thanks.

The Waiter takes the menus.

ALLY
I have my dessert first.

TYLER
Is this a political statement? A
medical condition?

ALLY
I just don't see the point in
waiting for something I know I want
and am going to have. What if I die
eating my mussels?

TYLER
Is that probable?

ALLY
It's possible. If an embolism burst
or an asteroid hit the restaurant,
I'd die without having eaten the
thing I wanted most.

TYLER
But the odds are, I mean...

ALLY
Fine. I'll tell you what, you
guarantee me. Swear to me on your
eternal soul that I'll make it
through my entrée. And I'll wait.

Tyler goes to answer. Ally holds up a hand.

ALLY

Before you answer, keep in mind, if I die, you'll have to live the rest of your life knowing that you not only lied to me, but denied me my last indulgence. My last wish. Are you prepared to shoulder that kind of responsibility to prove a point?

Tyler thinks about it. Smiles.

ALLY

Don't worry. I'll share.

34

EXT. LEMONGRASS GRILL-- NIGHT

34

Tyler and Ally exit out onto the street. Tyler immediately takes out his cigarettes, his lighter, then he notices... Ally looking at him disappointed.

ALLY

Really?

Tyler takes the cue puts the packet and lighter away. A beat.

ALLY

I had a nice time.

TYLER

You had a nice time or you're having a nice time?

Ally considers.

TYLER

Because if you're having one, why rush to end it?

35

EXT. STREET FESTIVAL (A LA SAN GENNARO) -- GREENWICH VILLAGE³⁵⁻
AFTER

They approach a CARNIVAL GAME, one those ubiquitous basketball tosses. THE ATTENDANT badgers passersby to test their luck. GIANT STUFFED ANIMALS hang all around it.

Tyler pays the Attendant, gets the basketballs. Tosses one, two, the third, then nothing. Game over.

TYLER

Did I tell you I'm Caucasian?

ALLY
Apparently.

Tyler pays again, wipes out again. Game over. Tyler pays again. Loses again. He's visibly frustrated now.

ALLY
Can't we just stroll while I feed you ice cream with fireworks in the background?

TYLER
No. If I stop, he wins.

ALLY
Who, the attendant?

TYLER
No, the frigging Giant Panda.

Tyler hands the ATTENDANT another dollar.

36

EXT. SIDEWALK -- LATER

36

Ally carries a GIANT PANDA under her arm. Tyler walking beside her with a self-satisfied smile.

ALLY
I don't know what you're smiling about.

TYLER
I won.

ALLY
Paying off the attendant is not winning... It's cheating.

TYLER
I just paid a premium to cut out the middle man. That's innovation. That's free market enterprising. That's what made America great.

ALLY
Aha. By the way, what happened to your eye?

Tyler touches the bandage.

TYLER
Oh, it's nothing, just a bar fight.

ALLY

How butch.

TYLER

I know. I'm practically a pirate.

ALLY

Okay, Captain Morgan...

TYLER

(laughing)

You've got some serious timing.

ALL

It's getting late.

TYLER

I'll walk you to the train.

ALLY

I'll take a cab.

37

EXT. SIDEWALK -- JUST AFTER

37

Tyler is just hailing her a taxi. He stands there holding the door open.

ALLY

Thanks.

Beat.

Tyler leans in to kiss her. Ally turns away.

ALLY

Not tonight. Not never... just...
not tonight.

CAB DRIVER

We goin' or what?

ALLY

Hey! Turn on the meter.

Tyler respectfully leans back.

TYLER

So dessert before dinner for fear
of death by rogue asteroid... yes.
Kissing guy you're obviously
attracted to before driving off
into the unknown New York night...
no.

Ally considers.

She gives him a quick but tender kiss.

ALLY
You're really weird.

She gets in the cab.

ALLY
(to the driver)
I'm going to Queens and I don't
wanna hear about it.

Off she goes in the taxi. Tyler watches her go.

38 **EXT. PRIVATE SCHOOL. THE LAST DAY OF SCHOOL.**

38

Caroline exiting with the crowd. One of the Bitchy girls
shoulder checks her from behind as she passes. Tyler, waiting
on his perch, catches it, walks up to her.

TYLER
Happy end of sixth grade!

CAROLINE
Finally.

39 **EXT. CENTRAL PARK -- ALICE IN WONDERLAND STATUE -- AFTERNOON**39

CHILDREN climbing all over the bronze statue. Caroline among
them. She sits on a mushroom cap, letting her legs dangle.
Tyler watches her from their usual bench, his bike leaning
next to him.

CAROLINE
They have me in this art program
summer thing at Pratt...

TYLER
I heard.

CAROLINE
It's very prestigious due to my
artistic greatness.

TYLER
Don't pretend. I know you're proud.
You should be.

Caroline allows herself a tiny grin.

CAROLINE
There's, like, a thing...

TYLER
A thing?

CAROLINE
(sheepish)
A show where you show what you've
done and stuff. Will you come?

TYLER
Let me check my book. Abso-freaking-
lutely. I'm camping out. I'm
sleeping there the night before.

Caroline is secretly thrilled.

CAROLINE
You're so retarded. Mom's been
hyperventilating with joy.

TYLER
Good. I'm sure Les was...

TYLER/CAROLINE
"Really supportive"!

CAROLINE
Your school's over, right?

TYLER
Yes, it's over. Did Mom and Les
get the beach house again?

CAROLINE
Yup. What are we going to do for
your birthday?

TYLER
Nothing.

CAROLINE
Can we have a party?

TYLER
No.

CAROLINE
A little one? At Mom's? With Aidan.
I'll make Mom behave. No crying.

TYLER
Like that's possible.

Caroline smiles.

40

INT. RAILROAD FLAT-- NIGHT -- DEEPER INTO SUMMER

40

Ally explores Tyler's living room with a tumbler of wine. It's in a state of medium disarray. He clocks her looking.

TYLER

I know. But we have coasters.

ALLY

I don't do coasters till the third date.

She looks over his posters, pictures, etc. Tyler scans a stack of CDs, he selects Radiohead's KID A, puts it in. The hypnotic first track fills the room.

Ally comes across a FRAMED PHOTO of a band on stage. The lead guitarist looks like Tyler with long hair.

ALLY

Is that you?

TYLER

That's Michael. My brother.

ALLY

He looks like you... or you look like him. Does he play around here?

TYLER

Not any more.

Ally notices the old guitar in the corner.

ALLY

Do you play?

TYLER

It depends who you ask.

ALLY

If I asked anybody?

TYLER

They'd say no. I try but it turns out you need talent.

ALLY

So what talents do you actually have?

TYLER

Falconry. I come from a long line of falconers.

ALLY

There's a lot of money in that.

Tyler smiles. He's actually a hair nervous.

TYLER

Well there is one thing...

Tyler walks to the kitchen counter where a cleaned and polished COVERED CAKE STAND sits.

ALLY

What's that?

TYLER

Our appetizer.

Tyler lifts off the cover to reveal a GERMAN CHOCOLATE CAKE. He's written a message in the icing: "*In Case Of Ast*-- and then a piece has been crudely cut out. Ally's surprised.

TYLER

It used to say "In Case Of Asteroid" but I took a shower and Aidan got high.

41

INT. KITCHEN -- LATER THAT NIGHT

41

Ally and Tyler stand in front of a sink full of dirty dishes, up to their elbows in soapy water.

ALLY

So what kind of grade did you end up with from Vogelstein?

TYLER

I don't actually get grades.

Beat.

TYLER

I'm not technically enrolled. I worked out an auditing thing.

ALLY

Oh. And The Strand is not a significant career choice.

TYLER
I like the books.

He indicates the dishes.

TYLER
You don't have to help me, you know.

ALLY
At the rate you're going, dish washing is going to be your life's vocation. I can say I knew you when.

He flicks a bit of water on her shirt. Ally takes a beat.

ALLY
This is the playful, you get me all wet part? Right?

TYLER
(horsing around)
You make it sound so cheap.

Ally's not having it.

ALLY
It is cheap. I've seen this scene a hundred times.

Tyler's a little confused.

TYLER
I'm sorry. I didn't...

ALLY
You know what never happens in this scene, Tyler-who-doesn't-really-go-to-school? Tyler-who-doesn't-really-care-about-his-job?

Tyler blinks helplessly.

ALLY
This.

An entire enormous pot of pasta water up ended on the host. Bits of spaghetti cling to him, tiny tomatoes and zucchini on his shoulders like little barnacles. He sputters and gasps and blinks.

ALLY
No, that usually never happens.

She calmly goes back to washing dishes.

Beat.

Spaghetti guy stares at her.

She gives it right back to him, 100% New York City.

Beat.

In one move Tyler slings Ally over his shoulder. She grunts, unglamorously.

42

INT. BATHROOM -- SECONDS LATER

42

Tyler bursts through the bathroom door. Ally over his shoulder. Never one to waste a moment, she uses the opportunity to check out what's in his wallet. He turns on the shower. She has his drivers licence.

TYLER

Apologize.

ALLY

Never. Your middle name is Keats?
Your parents are pretentious as
hell.

Tyler turns on the shower and tosses Ally into the water. She dances to avoid the stream. Ally grabs the portable shower head and turns it at him.

Tyler jumps into the tub to avoid the spray. They wrestle for the shower head.

TYLER

Apologize.

ALLY

I'd rather eat monkeys.

This cracks Tyler up. He stops struggling for the shower and gasps a little with laughter, putting up his hands in surrender. Ally stands there, holding the shower head, giggling.

They lock eyes for a moment. The air is charged.

Ally spritzes him in the face.

TYLER

I surrender! Oh my God, you're
relentless.

He slides down the wall until he's sitting in the tub, Ally follows.

ALLY
Victory at all costs.

43

INT. BATH TUB -- LATER

43

Tyler and Ally lie side-by-side, drenched. Their feet hang over the edge of the tub. Tyler reaches into his pocket and removes a dripping cigarette packet. He squeezes out water.

TYLER
Now... I'm furious.

He tosses them in a waste basket.

ALLY
You should quit anyway.

TYLER
Really? Why? Are cigarettes like bad for you or something?

Ally playfully slaps him. She notices the tip of Tyler's TATTOO peeking out of his undershirt.

ALLY
Is that a tattoo? Let me see.

TYLER
It's not really...

ALLY
Please. It's very bad ass. All that ritualistic scarring.

Tyler peels the soaked garment off his back as Ally offers polite applause. Michael's name becomes clear. Ally takes a long look. She sees Tyler's not smiling anymore. She gets it.

ALLY
I'm sorry... I didn't... I didn't realize.

She looks at him. Asking with out asking.

TYLER
He killed himself.

Beat.

ALLY

When?

TYLER

When he was 21. He had just started working for my father.

Ally is gently picking spaghetti and tomatoes off Tyler.

ALLY

I thought he was a musician.

TYLER

He was. But he wasn't making a living doing music and my father's a very compelling guy.

ALLY

Mine too.

Ally looks away for a moment. Tucks a curl behind her ear.

Then they look at each other. Ally opens her mouth to speak.

Aidan bursts in. He's drunk, loud, wearing an Irish Flag like a cape. He carries a bottle of whiskey and a can of Guinness.

AIDAN

Damn, you're not naked.

TYLER

You're not Irish.

AIDAN

T, What happened in the kitchen? It looks like somebody's water broke.

(notices Ally)

Hi.

TYLER

Ally, Aidan... Aidan, Ally.

Aidan takes Ally's hand. Kisses it.

AIDAN

Don't feel bad that you're more attracted to me than you are to him it happens to all of them.

Ally looks at Aidan closely, trying to figure out where she knows him from, it dawns on her.

ALLY

Oh! You're the assaholic!

AIDAN

Well, I--
 (realizes what she said)
 Wait. What?

Tyler and Ally laugh. Aidan's too drunk to care.

AIDAN

Alright, you two. Up. Dressed.
 Let's go. "Around The World" party
 on the third floor... a lot of ugly
 but a lot more alcohol. Let's go.

ALLY

I can't, I would, I'd love to, but
 I've gotta get home, my dad's
 waiting up.

AIDAN

Ally. Ally. Listen to me, young
 lady. One drink. From any country.
 I'll even put France on the table.
 One drink. Your choice. And we're
 gone.

ALLY

(to Tyler)
 One drink?

TYLER

(to Aidan)
One drink?

AIDAN

(innocent shrug)
 One drink.

44

INT. BATHROOM -- LATER

44

Ally VOMITS in their toilet. Tyler holds her hair back. Aidan
 appears in the doorway still wearing that flag.

AIDAN

Hey, how we doin'?

Ally tries to speak, all we hear is a series of groans. Then
 she dry heaves again. Tyler shoots Aidan a look.

AIDAN

What? What do you want me to say?
 That I'm sorry? You want me to say
 I'm sorry?

(MORE)

AIDAN (cont'd)
 You want me to apologize for
 showing a nice girl a good time? Is
 that it?

Tyler just looks at him. Aidan considers.

AIDAN
 I'm sorry.

ALLY
 Tyler...

Tyler kneels down. Ally pushes her purse at him, she looks like she's about to pass out.

ALLY
 I, need, you... to call... my dad.

Tyler and Aidan share a look. Aidan shrugs.

TYLER
 Oh. OK. Sure.

Tyler pulls out her cellphone - the battery is dead.

TYLER
 Your phone's dead. Just tell me the
 number and I'll call him...

Tyler turns around to find Ally passed out on the floor. He tries to gently nudge her awake.

TYLER
 Ally? Ally?

SERGEANT CRAIG (O.S.)
 I know Ally's a good kid, Leo.

45

INT. CRAIG FAMILY HOME -- ALLY'S BEDROOM -- LATE NIGHT

45

The bedside clock reads 3:47. Craig is on the phone while searching through Ally's desk drawers. For anything. He finds a note book with a red cover and starts flipping through it.

CRAIG
 ...She was supposed to be back.
 She's not back ... call Ted
 Proferes ... and what's his face in
 the 9th...and call me back. Just do
 it, Leo!

Craig hangs up the phone.

Beat.

He picks it up again and starts dialing, still flipping through the notebook.

46 **INT. TYLER'S BEDROOM -- NEXT MORNING**

46

Ally wakes up alone in Tyler's bed, hung over, confused, trying to put the pieces together, then she sees the clock. And a wave of panic washes over her as she jumps out of bed.

ALLY

...oh God oh God oh God oh God...

47 **INT. LIVING ROOM -- LATER**

47

Tyler sleeps on the couch using Aidan's Irish Flag as a blanket. Ally comes in pulling on her shoes. Tyler stirs in time to see her run out the door.

48 **INT. CRAIG FAMILY HOME -- LATER**

48

Craig sits at the table, dialing someone, anyone. Ally enters, drops her keys on the counter. Her father doesn't look at her as she pours herself a coffee.

ALLY

...I'm sorry. I fell asleep...

Craig squeezes honey into his coffee, practically strangling the Bear. Not looking at her.

Ally notices the red notebook on the kitchen table next to the phone.

CRAIG

You turned your phone off.

ALLY

I forgot to charge it.

It dawns on her...

ALLY

That's mine. From my desk.

Craig says nothing. Just stirs his coffee. Ally is furious.

ALLY

How could you?

CRAIG

You were gone all night. I was trying to get some information.

ALLY

How could you go through my stuff like I'm a suspect?

CRAIG

Then stop acting like one.

ALLY

What is the matter with you, Dad? You have no respect for me and the way I'm feeling, my privacy. We talked about this! You're totally paranoid...

CRAIG

You watch your mouth!

ALLY

You don't do anything. You don't go anywhere except work. You have no life.

CRAIG

My life is right here! In this house. The same place as yours. But you're spitting all over it.

ALLY

Jesus Christ, Dad! I went on a date!

CRAIG

I smell alcohol...

Right back at him.

ALLY

So do I.

Beat.

ALLY

Dad...

CRAIG

THIS IS MY HOUSE!

ALLY

YOU WANNA BURY ME IN IT?

CRACK! He hits her, hard, open hand, from across the width of his body. Ally is knocked off balance and hits her head on the cabinets.

CRAIG

Ally!

His face is contorted with panic and shame.

Ally's disoriented. Her ears are ringing. Her lip is split. A knot is starting to form where she hit her head.

She straightens herself up and stares at her dad like she has no idea who he is.

Beat.

Craig tries to envelop her. With a guttural snarl she pushes him away, getting a little bit of blood on his shirt. She scrambles up the stairs.

49

EXT. RAILROAD FLAT-- ROOFTOP -- DAY

49

Sunshine beats down on a little make-shift rooftop hideaway, a few old beach chairs, a stereo, a weight bench. Aidan works out with an old set of dumb bells. Tyler sits on a beach chair, trying again with the guitar.

AIDAN

...So? She just left? No good bye?

Tyler nods, strumming like he's wearing boxing gloves. Aidan finishes up a set.

AIDAN

Maybe she heard you play the guitar.

TYLER

You were the one dumping Jello shots down her throat. You almost killed her.

Aidan lies down to do the bench press... there's a lot of weight on the bar.

AIDAN

There are sins of omission and sins of commission, my friend. I've dealt with mine and I've forgiven myself... you should do the same.

Aidan lifts. It's too heavy and falls to his chest. Tyler forgoes his spotting duty, lets him struggle. Aidan strains.

AIDAN
 ...little help, T... little help,
 little help, *lotta help*... TYLER?!

Tyler blows three perfect smoke rings. Finally he puts down the guitar and helps get the bar up. Aidan panting, rubbing his chest.

AIDAN
 What the hell was that?

TYLER
 Penance. I have to get to work.

50

INT. RAILROAD FLAT-- LIVING ROOM -- DAY

50

Tyler and Aidan come into their apartment, Aidan still rubbing his chest. Ally is standing there in the middle of the living area. A packed bag at her feet, her face a mess.

ALLY
 I didn't know where else to go.

51

INT. LIVING ROOM -- SUNSET

51

Aidan sits on the couch still in his gym clothes drinking a protein shake out of a blender. Tyler comes out of his bedroom gently closing the door behind him.

AIDAN
 How's she doin'?

TYLER
 She's pretty shaken up.

Tyler takes a seat beside him. Takes out a cigarette.

TYLER
 We've really got to fix that dead bolt.

AIDAN
 My bad. Sorry.

TYLER
 Don't be. You think she'll sleep?

AIDAN
 You realize if she had had the
 S.L.U.T

If looks could kill...

AIDAN
 Too soon?

A silent moment passes.

TYLER
 I told her she could stay here...
 Are you alright with that?

AIDAN
 As long as she needs.

52

INT. LIVING ROOM -- LATER THAT NIGHT

52

Tyler has just finished making up the ratty sofa as a bed. Ally appears from the bedroom, framed by the open door. She has slept in one of Tyler's button down shirts.

TYLER
 You're up.

Beat.

TYLER
 Can I get you anything?

She nods.

TYLER
 I'll be out here if you need me.

Beat.

Ally takes off the shirt and lets it fall.

She stands there.

53

INT. TYLER'S BEDROOM -- LATER

53

We interrupt Ally and Tyler in the throes of passion. Tyler sits on the edge of the bed. Ally is on top. She kisses his neck. Suddenly, Tyler throws her to the bed. He takes control. Ally's momentarily taken aback, but doesn't stop him. There's noticeable aggression to their love-making.

JANINE
 (shrugs)
 Old habits. You're not writing
 anything bad about me, are you?

TYLER
 Not today.

JANINE
 I gotta run. Early meetings.

Janine turns to go, remembers something, turns back.

JANINE
 I probably won't see you before
 Saturday so...happy birthday.

Tyler nods, tries to smile. Janine glances back as she goes.

JANINE
 I'll be sure to tell your father
 that you said hello.

Tyler nods sheepishly.

57

INT. RAILROAD FLAT -- LIVING ROOM -- LATER

57

Tyler returns with breakfast. From Aidan's room, a pathetic
 croak...

AIDAN O/S
 Bialy.

Tyler tosses him a Bialy like he's tossing fish to a seal.

Ally lies on the couch. Curled in a blanket. A cup of hot tea
 in hand. She sips it. It stings her lip a little.

TYLER
 Hey...

ALLY
 Hey...

Tyler sits. She shifts and curls next to him.

ALLY
 Where did you go?

TYLER
 Downtown.

ALLY

Why?

Tyler pulls his JOURNAL from his pocket. Hands it to her.

TYLER

There's a coffee shop. I brought you a Bialy.

ALLY

New York is full of coffee shops.

TYLER

This one was our place... Michael's and mine. We had breakfast there all the time ... Maybe not as many times as I think we did. But enough times. Anyway we ate there that morning. It was the last place I saw him.

ALLY

Oh. So you go there to write? To him?

TYLER

Maybe. Sometimes. I don't know. But I guess I wanted to tell him about you.

Ally is moved, you can see it in her eyes, but she chooses not to overdo it. She flips through the journal. She hands it back to him. Then out of nowhere.

ALLY

My mom was murdered eight years ago. The same year your brother died.

Tyler is stunned.

ALLY

You don't need to say anything, I know you're sorry. Everyone's always sorry, you know?

He does.

ALLY

It's just, I need you to know that, my dad, he's not an evil guy.

(MORE)

ALLY (cont'd)

I don't want you to think that because I'm here he's some kind of belligerent psychotic, he's not...I don't know, it's just recently, he seems really...

She looks at Tyler's face. His eyes are so patient.

Ally tears up.

ALLY

Wounded? Our house is like the recovery room, or the critical care unit or something.

Tyler strokes her hair.

ALLY

I don't feel like that, though. I feel like I'm getting stronger and like I'm leaving him behind to swim in it all by himself.

She is weeping. Tyler pulls her to him doing the best he can. Holding her and kissing her hair.

58

INT. SIXTH PRECINCT -- 2 DAYS LATER.

58

Sergeant Craig standing with a ROOKIE OFFICER, berating.

CRAIG

Tell me something, Matthews, do you like paperwork?

MATTHEWS

No, sir.

Craig is working up a head of steam.

CRAIG

Me neither. Nobody likes paperwork. But paperwork keeps our ship afloat. Paperwork makes it possible for me to keep track of all the scumbags. But I can't do that if newbies like you are incapable of remembering standard filing...

Leo interrupts.

LEO

Jim...

Craig snaps his head around.

CRAIG
...What?

Leo gestures to speak privately.

LEO
Ally called Sharon.

CRAIG
What?

LEO
She said to tell you, she's with friends, and she's fine.

CRAIG
What friends?

LES
She didn't say.

CRAIG
That's all?

His partner nods. Craig looks away.

LEO
I'm sorry, Jim. Listen, why don't you come over this weekend? We'll get the grill going. Sharon wants to see you. We can have some people, nice people...You can circulate a little...

CRAIG
No.

LEO
Jim...

CRAIG
Leo, no. Stop.

Craig goes back to his desk. Leo looks after him.

Aidan sits in the living room, trying to assemble an IKEA television stand. A joint smolders in the ashtray. The BUZZER rings.

Aidan goes to answer it.

AIDAN
Hello?

DIANE
Aidan, it's Diane.

He blinks.

AIDAN
Oh, hey Diane.

He throws down the keys, then yells towards the roof...

AIDAN
T! It's your mom.

With Diane's knock the door swings open.

AIDAN
Hey Diane.

He gives her a kiss on the cheek.

DIANE
You really have to fix that door.
I'm so sorry to just show up. I
called but your phone was busy.

Aidan looks and realizes that the phone is indeed off the hook, as just the handset, wrapped in duct tape, is visible on top of the sofa.

AIDAN
No problem. Come on in.

Tyler and Ally enter the apartment through the fire escape

TYLER
Hey mom.

DIANE
Hey. I'm so sorry honey. I tried to
call but...

TYLER.
It's okay. Mom, this is Ally. Ally,
this is my mom, Diane.

ALLY
Hi. Nice to meet you.

Diane is thrilled. She has a huge mom grin.

DIANE
 Ally. It's lovely to met you. Just
 lovely.

Diane is pumping Ally's hand like she's drilling for oil.

TYLER
 Sit down, Mom. Can I get you
 something?

She navigates the IKEA carnage and sits on the sofa, the
 joint smoldering in the ashtray in front of her. Aidan ever
 the gent, removes the ashtray to the window ledge.

DIANE
 Yes. Aidan, would you bring back
 that spliff, please?

Beat.

AIDAN
 Uh..okay.

Tyler looks completely befuddled. Aidan passes Diane the
 joint. She takes a deep hit.

DIANE
 Thank you.

AIDAN
 How's work, Diane?

DIANE
 Well ...
 (BIG exhale)
 I just found housing for a family
 that had been in shelters for three
 weeks. So that's good. On the other
 hand, I have six other families.

The women measure each other.

DIANE
 But Tyler, I wanted to talk to you.

ALLY
 Come on, Aidan.

AIDAN
 What?

ALLY
 Nice to meet you, Diane.

She starts to drag Aidan out the window, back up the fire escape, but he makes a brief detour.

AIDAN

Don't freaking bogart that joint,
Diane.

DIANE

Sorry.

She hands it back to him and Aidan and Ally climb away. Tyler sits next to his mom and lights a cigarette.

DIANE

Well, first, your sister is all excited about your birthday at the house. I wish you'd told me.

TYLER

I wish she'd told me. It was a unilateral Caroline decision. Will you make sausage and peppers?

DIANE

Of course. Tyler, Your father is driving me crazy. I shouldn't even be discussing this with you. I can't get him to say he'll come to your sister's exhibit. Her art exhibit. He says he's in the middle of an IPO.

Tyler rubs his eyes.

DIANE

Les says I shouldn't broker. I should let them be on whatever road they're on.

Beat.

TYLER

I'll get him there.

DIANE

She cares about this, even though she's pretending she doesn't.

TYLER

I'll get him there, mom.

DIANE

You will?

TYLER

Yes.

She looks relieved.

DIANE

Thank you. Thank you.

She kisses his cheek, and rises to go. He takes her to the door.

DIANE

Why don't you bring that lovely girl to your birthday?

TYLER

(a warning)

Diane...

DIANE

Sorry. Sorry. I love you, darling, but this place reeks of marijuana.

She goes, shutting the door behind her.

60

EXT. ROOFTOP -- AFTER.

60

Aidan and Ally on the roof, they've arranged themselves in the deck chairs.

ALLY

That was weird. I assume most moms don't smoke weed in front of their son's...um

AIDAN

Piece of ass?

ALLY

You know, you're a poet.

AIDAN

Hey. I know one thing. I know that in the time I've lived with Tyler, he has never introduced a girl ... woman...female...to his mom before.

ALLY

It's not like he had a choice. She ambushed us.

AIDAN

Yeah, but he would've shoved you in a closet or something. Or literally pretended you were a hallucination.

ALLY

Ha ha.

AIDAN

I mean it. It's the first time. Ever.

ALLY

Did it ever occur to you that that's kind of weird?

AIDAN

No.

Ally throws up her hands.

61 **INT. BATHROOM. AFTER.**

61

Tyler, having pulled the decrepit house phone into the bathroom, is leaning against the sink, girding himself to call Charles. He looks in the mirror and makes a face.

62 **INT. CHARLES' OFFICE . JUST AFTER**

62

Janine pokes her head into Charles' office. Charles is swamped with work and surrounded by UNDERLINGS.

JANINE

Charles, it's your son.

Charles is surprised.

CHARLES

What?

JANINE

On the phone.

CHARLES

Okay.

He punches a button.

CHARLES

Tyler, you're on speakerphone.

63

IN. BATHROOM. AFTER.

63

TYLER

It's about Caroline's show. Are you planning on attending?

CHARLES O/S

What? There are people here. You'll have to speak up.

Tyler holds the phone away from his face and screams at it, silently.

TYLER

Caroline's show.

CHARLES O/S

What about it?

TYLER

(ready to kill him)
You are coming, right?

CHARLES O/S

Fine. Yes. I'm coming. We'll go to dinner first. Alright?...

(to Janine)

Janine?

TYLER

Dinner? That's not...

CHARLES

I'll make a reservation and have Janine call you.

He hangs up. Tyler stares at the phone a sec, then hits his head, once, against the bathroom door.

64

INT. DIANE'S HOUSE -- DINING ROOM -- NIGHT -- A WEEK LATER 64

Tyler is sitting at the table in the darkened room with Ally standing behind him with her hands over his eyes.

Caroline enters from the kitchen carrying Tyler's BIRTHDAY CAKE. She has obviously decorated it herself. She has drawn (as best as she could, given the medium) the characters from the ALICE statue in frosting.

It reads "A VERY MERRY UNBIRTHDAY TO YOU", and has "22" in numerical candles and "+ 1 TO UNGROW ON" written next to that.

She's singing. Aidan, Ally, Diane are all singing.

There's a flash from a camera off screen. It's Les.

Caroline puts the cake down in front of her brother and Ally takes her hands away just as they finish the song.

Tyler's face in the candlelight as he sees Caroline's efforts. He takes a huge breath...

CAROLINE

Make a wish.

He looks at her and blows out the candles. Everybody applauds, Diane longer than anyone else. Her eyes are shining.

CUT TO:

65

INT. DINING ROOM --LATER

65

The cake totally devoured. Les is obsessively eating frosting.

Caroline is trying to teach Aidan how to waltz in the living room. He is...

CAROLINE

Retarded. Tyler?

Tyler rises from the sofa and takes over as Caroline's partner. She puts her feet on top of his feet and they waltz.

TYLER/CAROLINE

"One, two. three. One, two, three"

Ally and Diane are washing dishes in silence.

Beat.

ALLY

You're the second member of this family I've washed dishes with.

Beat.

DIANE

He was doing it to impress you.
He's never washed a dish in his
life.

66

INT. CAROLINE'S ROOM.

66

Caroline at her desk, sketching. Her door is ajar. Ally enters, mouth agape as she lays eyes on Caroline's collection of artwork on the walls.

ALLY

Wow.

Caroline's working on a PORTRAIT OF TYLER ON A PARK BENCH, cigarette dangling from his bottom lip. A perfect rendering of a fleeting moment.

ALLY

May I?

Caroline shrugs. Ally looks over Caroline's shoulder.

ALLY

That's exactly him. It's like the cigarette is the last Coca Cola in the desert.

Caroline smiles.

ALLY

I can't believe he smokes in front of you.

CAROLINE

Don't worry, I'm not that impressionable.

Ally smiles. Caroline goes back to work. Ally looks around at all the portraits papering her walls. It stirs a memory.

ALLY

You know when I was younger, we didn't have air conditioning in the house, so during the summer my mom and I would go to museums to cool down... she loved them all but The Met was always her favorite.

CAROLINE

Mine too. The Met is one of my favorite places in the world.

ALLY

So... I heard you've got an art exhibit coming up.

CAROLINE
 (skeptical)
 You wanna come?

ALLY
 Was it that obvious? But only if
 you're OK with it. I don't want to
 impose and I'll completely
 understand if you don't want some
 random girl there.

Caroline considers this.

CAROLINE
 You're not random... you're Tyler's
 girlfriend.

Ally has never heard anyone say it so plainly. She seems a
 bit perplexed, then grins. It's okay with her.

67 **INT. RAILROAD FLAT-- LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT OF CAROLINE'S SHOW**67

Tyler wearing the suit we met him in, it's been dry-cleaned.

Ally emerges from the bathroom, looking gorgeous in a vintage
 black cocktail dress and carrying a pink wrap.

ALLY
 You like?

TYLER
 Let's just skip dinner and I'll
 tell you how great you look in like
 eighteen different languages.

ALLY
 You just want to skip dinner. I got
 you a tie.

She hands him a simple blue tie that matches his eyes.

Beat.

TYLER
 I was going to make a joke about
 how I'm not prepared for the
 commitment of exchanging
 accessories and how neck wear
 especially is a slippery slope, but
 I should probably shut up and say
 thank you.

ALLY
You're learning.

Tyler puts on his tie in the mirror. He scowls.

68

INT. FOUR SEASONS RESTAURANT -- AFTER.

68

Tyler and Ally sip cocktails at the nicest table in the place. There's an empty seat. Tyler's eyes flicker towards the door. Twice. He touches his tie.

TYLER
Have you ever been here?

Ally tries to lighten his mood.

ALLY
(joking)
Yeah. Every Tuesday with my pop.

This goes right past Tyler whose eyes flicker towards the door again.

TYLER
He's allowed to stand me up. But
he's not allowed to stand you up.
Or my sister.

Tyler finishes his drink, signals a WAITER who glides to the table.

TYLER
I'll have a whiskey.

CHARLES
Get me one too...

Like a stealth bomber. At least this moment rescued the men from actually having to greet each other.

WAITER
Yes. For the lady?

ALLY
I'm fine, thank you.

The waiter goes.

TYLER
This is Alicia Craig. Ally, my
father, Charles Roth.

Charles gives a courtly nod and takes her hand.

CHARLES

A pleasure.

69

INT. RESTAURANT -- LATER

69

An empty wine bottle. Charles cuts into a one-hundred dollar steak.

CHARLES

You're going to be a social worker?

ALLY

Yes. But with an area of focused responsibility. It's easier to find a job that way.

CHARLES

What will your area be?

ALLY

Criminal Justice.

CHARLES

Tough area.

ALLY

When I was little I wanted to play first base for the Mets. I don't think it's any harder than that.

CHARLES

The Mets, huh.

ALLY

(arching an eyebrow)
I'm from Rockaway.

TYLER

Dad's a Yankee fan. It has something to do with the payroll.

CHARLES

It has to do with significant ball playing. You were a Yankees fan when you were little. You were Lou Piniella for Halloween.

TYLER

Blind familial allegiance. I didn't know what overpriced, overfed, fat bastards they were.

CHARLES
(serious as a heart attack)
Who's fat? What Yankee is fat? Tell
me.

TYLER
(right back at him)
It's a metaphor...

Charles adjusts his tie and goes back to his steak.

TYLER
Roger Clemens.

Charles looks at his son. Puts his fork down.

Silence at the table.

Back to the steak.

Beat.

ALLY
Shane Spencer.

Charles looks up, taken aback.

ALLY
Nick Johnson.

Tyler tries to get a word in.

CHARLES
(his mouth full of steak)
He's big boned!

Charles and Ally burst out laughing. Tyler rolls his eyes

--TIME CUT

Dessert. Ally is working on an enormous profiterole. Tyler,
another whiskey.

CHARLES
How long has your dad been a cop?

ALLY
Twenty-two years.

His cell phone lights up. Charles gently puts his hand on
hers.

CHARLES
 Would you excuse me please... I'm
 so sorry.

ALLY
 It's OK.

Charles gets up from the table. Tyler, not able to help himself, shoots him a glance. Ally clocks it.

ALLY
 It's just a call. He held out 'til
 dessert.

Charles returns.

CHARLES
 I'm sorry...And your mother?

ALLY
 She passed away when I was eleven.

CHARLES
 Ah.

ALLY
 She was murdered. I was there.

Charles and Tyler are stunned to silence.

ALLY
 (to Tyler)
 I never told you that part.

TYLER
 Why are you saying this now?

ALLY
 I don't know.

The men look at her. She's a hero.

CHARLES
 And, here you are.

ALLY
 Yup. Here I am.

There is an empty Lean Cuisine box, and two empty Beer Cans on the counter.

Craig stands by the microwave as it counts down...4,3,2,1. BEEP. He removes an Eggplant Parmigiana and slides it carefully on to a waiting plate.

He takes it, along with a fresh beer, to the living room. He sits heavily on the sofa and hits a remote, unpasing ERIN BROCKOVICH.

71

EXT. IN FRONT OF THE FOUR SEASONS-- LATER

71

Tyler and Ally wait in front of the restaurant as Charles takes another call. A TOWN CAR and DRIVER wait as well.

ALLY

I think he's lovely.

Tyler puts his head in his hands.

TYLER

God.

Charles returns. His face blank.

TYLER

Don't say it.

CHARLES

I have to go to the office.

TYLER

You have somewhere else to be, Dad.

Charles adjusts his tie. Tyler loosens his.

Ally is unsure where to look.

CHARLES

The exhibit runs til nine. You guys take the car. I'll meet you.

TYLER

I don't believe you.

CHARLES

That's all there is, Tyler.

TYLER

It's not good enough.

CHARLES

I don't have to justify anything to you. Take the car. I'll get a cab. I'll meet you.

He steps into the street to hail a cab.

Tyler watches his dad get into a taxi, then holds the car door for Ally.

72

INT. CAROLINE'S ART EXHIBIT-- PRATT AUDITORIUM -- LATER

72

Amateur artwork and picked over catering. The rest of the exhibitors are high school age, even a college freshman or two. They mill with their friends and families. Animated.

Ally and Aidan stand before a COLLECTION OF FAMILIAR PORTRAITS (Charles reading the paper at breakfast, Les and Diane kissing, Tyler on the park bench).

Caroline sits on a catering table, Tyler next to her. She looks miserable, he looks furious. Diane bustles over with a plate of cupcakes and a big stupid grin.

DIANE

I brought you every flavor.

Caroline looks once at her mom then...

CAROLINE

(to Tyler)

I'm ready to go home now.

Tyler nods, takes her hand. Calls to...

TYLER

Ally...?

Les, eating a cupcake, and Ally, stand under a portrait of Charles. Ally picks up her purse. Diane standing there with her cupcakes.

73

INT. RAILROAD FLAT. RIGHT AFTER

73

Tyler, visibly agitated, is letting Ally in the front door to the apartment. He grabs his bike off the wall.

ALLY

Where are you going?

TYLER

I have something I've got to do.

ALLY

Now?

Ally reaches for his elbow. He yanks his arm away.

TYLER

Are you capable of taking care of yourself for an hour? Do you need me here every minute, or what?

He slams out.

Ally looks like she's been slapped.

74

INT. CHARLES' OFFICE -- RIGHT AFTER

74

Charles in a meeting with several SUBORDINATES. Everyone is in late night disarray. They are obviously on their way to pulling an all-nighter. The door to the office flies open. Tyler barges in. Janine trailing.

JANINE

Tyler? Tyler? You can't just...

CHARLES

It's fine Janine.

There is space between the two men. Tyler extends a rolled up piece of paper to his father.

TYLER

She drew you a picture.

CHARLES

Put it on the table.

Beat.

Tyler holds on to the portrait.

TYLER

You have a daughter who sincerely believes you don't like her.

CHARLES

If I have any questions about what my daughter may believe, I'll let you know.

Tyler gestures with the portrait

TYLER

Don't you at least want to know her? She's telling you something, Dad. She's communicating. Why aren't you riveted? Why isn't this the most important thing? At least for one night of your life?

CHARLES
I've heard this song before, Tyler.

SUBORDINATE#1
We can come back...

The subordinates rise.

CHARLES
It's fine, Khaleel.

They sit.

There is still distance between the two men.

Beat.

CHARLES
Who is this display for?

TYLER
You, Mr. Roth.

Beat.

CHARLES
She knows I will take care of her.

TYLER
And...?

The subordinates rise again.

SUBORDINATE#1
We really can come back another...

CHARLES
Sit the fuck down.

They sit.

CHARLES
And that I love her. I love her.
Good God, you toss that word around
like currency. You have no idea
what it means.

TYLER
Maybe not. Maybe Caroline doesn't
either. Where would she have
learned it?

CHARLES

I have provided her world. And yours.

TYLER

That does not mean you're allowed to shatter it whenever there's something better to do.

CHARLES

Who the hell do you think you're talking to? You pedaled down here on your bike for Christ's sake. You have to take care of nothing. You are responsible for no one. You're a kid. You think you're the first one to lose anything? Do you think that there is anything you feel that I haven't already felt?

TYLER

You didn't find him. I found him. And you're so tragically blind, the rest of your children are going to hang themselves on your watch.

Charles goes, snarling, for his son, and Tyler is more than willing.

Janine and one of the Subordinates get between them.

JANINE

Stop! Stop!

The men are pulled apart. Tyler is white and trembling with rage. Charles' face is completely dark and closed.

JANINE

Get out of here Tyler.

Tyler runs for the door. Stumbling over furniture, Caroline's portrait crushed under his feet.

75

INT. RAILROAD FLAT -- RIGHT AFTER.

75

Ally, still in her dress, trying to excavate an ice tray frozen in the ancient freezer. There's got to be six inches of frost in there. She starts stabbing it with a wooden spoon. As she hears the door, she turns and puts on her most blistering attitude like an overcoat. As Tyler walks into the light-- his face white with anger, practically crying-- her eyes widen...

ALLY

Oh my God.

She runs to him, he falls into her. He's a mess. He won't let her see his face. She pushes at his hair, trying to see and understand. He kisses her, so she won't see. Tyler is completely lost in the storm and Alicia Santana Craig is going to get him through.

ALLY

Okay.

She yanks his head up.

ALLY

It's okay.

They kiss. She brings his hands up into her hair, around her face. They kiss. He kisses her like he's starved for her.

CUT TO:

76 **TYLER'S BEDROOM -- LATER** 76

Tyler and Ally, wrapped around each other, both deeply asleep.

77 **INT. CRAIG FAMILY HOME -- CRAIG'S OFFICE -- AFTERNOON** 77

Craig, home from work. He hits the button on the answering machine. There's just one message.

ALLY O/S

(on the machine)

Dad, it's me. I've been invited...I'm going away to the beach for Labor Day...They're nice people. If there's any problem I'll call. Or they will. Okay...Bye.

As he takes off his jacket, Craig hits rewind and plays the message again...

ALLY O/S

(on the machine)

Dad, it's me...

78 **INT. DIANE'S MONTAUK BEACH HOUSE -- NIGHT -- SUMMER'S END** 78

Raucous laughter. Caroline, Tyler, Les, Ally and Aidan are in the living room playing charades.

Everyone is a little sunburnt, the adults are a little drunk. Ally is wrapped up in Tyler, Caroline is on her mom's lap on the floor, Les next to them, lying on his stomach. Aidan is up and God only knows what he's doing

LES
(totally flabbergasted)
I genuinely have no idea...are you
having a seizure?

CAROLINE
Time.

AIDAN
Berlin Alexanderplatz!

More raucous laughter.

AIDAN
You people are culturally bankrupt.

TYLER
Whose was that anyway?

CAROLINE
Mine.

Whoops of laughter heretofore unheard in Montauk.

DIANE
Okay, you. Bed.

LES.
Me? Yeah, baby.

CAROLINE
Gross. Gross. Gross me out the
door.

She rises and flees into the kitchen. Les rolls over and ends up with his head in Diane's lap. He looks at her for a moment.

LES
You're just the prettiest girl.

Diane beams at him.

Tyler smiles at his mom and Les, then at Ally. Diane takes a deep look at her son. Her eyes shining.

AIDAN
Holy crap. What's with all the
smiling?

Caroline travels through the living room with a popsicle. She is headed for her bedroom.

CAROLINE
A child could do Berlin
Alexanderplatz, you spaz.

Les snorts with laughter. Diane rises, dumping him to the floor.

LES
Hey!

DIANE
I want five minutes with my child
before she ceases to be a child and
decides I'm ruining her life.

On her way out, Diane pauses and gently pushes one of Ally's stray curls behind her ear. Smiles down at her.

DIANE
Aren't you a treasure.

Ally stares up at Diane for a beat, her eyes shining.

79

INT. AMTRACK -- PASSENGER CAR (MOVING) -- DAY

79

Tanned and rejuvenated, Ally, Tyler, and Aidan sit together on the train back to the city.

Ally and Tyler kiss. Aidan watches them.

AIDAN
I want a girlfriend.

TYLER
What?

AIDAN
Dinners out, movies. Regular sex.
That could be all right. For like,
a summer.

ALLY
You're such a romantic.

AIDAN
And I've had all the races.

ALLY
Excuse me?

AIDAN
I've had all the races. I've been
with girls from every...race.

Ally laughs.

TYLER
That is the stupidest thing you've
ever said, including that time with
the bong in the emergency room.

ALLY
White girl.

AIDAN
Please. Like falling off a log. As
a matter of fact...

ALLY
Shut up. Black girl.

AIDAN
But of course.

ALLY
Asian.

AIDAN
Twice.

ALLY
Latina.

AIDAN
Oui!

ALLY
A Latin girl actually slept with
you? What's her name? She's out of
the club.

Tyler is laughing. Ally thinks for a moment.

ALLY
Eskimo.

Aidan gives a satisfied smile.

TYLER/ALLY
No way!

AIDAN
Monica Ipellie. She works at the
Public Library on 96th street.

ALLY
You slept with an Eskimo?

TYLER
You went to the library?

The car doors open and a MAN ushers his family through. It's Craig's partner Leo, in plain clothes.

AIDAN
Inuit. In-u-it, Ally. Try not to show your ignorance.

ALLY
I don't believe you.

AIDAN
Fine. Nice girl. While we were doing it, I couldn't get this little, like, song out of my head...

He begins to bob his head to a rhythm.

AIDAN
"Inuit, bum buh bum, I'm banging an Inuit, bum buh bum buh bum..."

Ally and Tyler collapse in laughter as Craig's Partner passes. He notices Ally immediately. She doesn't see him. He takes a long look at Tyler as he follows his wife and kids into the next car.

ALLY
Prove it. Ten bucks.

The train makes a stop at Patchogue. Leo and family disembark.

AIDAN
You wanna go to the library?

ALLY
The minute we get off this train.

AIDAN
Fine.

ALLY
Tyler, are you coming?

TYLER
I'll skip this particular bloodbath, thank you.

Tyler, his bag on his shoulder, returning home, fishing in his pocket for his keys.

He sings the Inuit song to himself...

TYLER

bum buh bum bum buh bum buh bum...

His front door is unlocked.

Tyler freezes. Takes a beat. Scans the room, silently dropping his bag. He reaches behind him for the aluminium bat against the door. Wielding it, he takes two steps into the apartment.

Craig, in plain clothes, sitting on Tyler's bed, amidst the carnage of Tyler's stuff. He has been rifling through everything. The guitar is propped haphazardly against the wall.

Craig looks up. The men lock eyes.

Craig's eyes go to the bat.

Tyler leans it slowly against the wall.

Beat.

CRAIG

Where is she?

TYLER

What are you doing in my house?

Craig's eyes flash.

CRAIG

Where's my daughter?

TYLER

She's not here now. She's at the library.

Craig's face says it: "Bullshit".

CRAIG

Does she know?

Cops never ask a question they don't know the answer to.

TYLER

No.

CRAIG

I didn't think so. I figured you'd probably leave that up to me when you're done with her.

Craig's face, like his wife's so many years ago, is pure contempt. With his body at this angle, Tyler can now see his gun.

TYLER

I'm not going anywhere.

CRAIG

That's true, Tyler Roth, son of Charles and Diane. Brother of Caroline and Michael, deceased, suicide by hanging. You're kinda lost, aren't you? Taking a little vacation in coach before finding your way back to first class?

TYLER

I'm the one she came to when you used her face as a punching bag.

Craig closes the distance.

From Tyler's P.O.V he looks like a freight train.

In a flash, he gets Tyler in a choke hold, flips him on his back on the bed and puts his hands around Tyler's throat.

Silence, except for exertion.

Tyler's hands are on Craig's wrists. He is holding Craig's eye. His face is starting to turn colors.

Beat.

Beat.

TYLER

She needs you.

It travels between the two men. Craig grappling with it, although he still has his hands at Tyler's throat.

Craig drops his hands, pushes himself off Tyler

Tyler rolls to one side, coughing and gagging.

Craig leans against the wall for support.

He is trying, before our eyes, to pull the shards of himself together. His gun visible at his waistband.

Tyler's coughing, his face still red, his eyes travel briefly to the bat, then to Craig.

Craig closes his eyes, very briefly, then rises. Not looking at Tyler.

Beat.

Looking at Tyler.

Beat.

Craig goes to the front door.

CRAIG
Get a fucking dead bolt.

Slam. And then he's gone. The door bounces in its frame. And then it's just Tyler trying to remember how to breathe.

81

INT. RAILROAD FLAT-- LATER.

81

Tyler smoking, standing at the window, waiting for Ally. He sees her walking up to the front door. He grinds his cigarette out. Ally is running up the stairs

ALLY O/S
Tyler Keats Roth!

She arrives at the door.

ALLY
He banged an Inuit!
She's really nice. And smart. I
don't get it.

Beat.

ALLY
What's going on?

TYLER
Your dad was here.

ALLY
(panicking)
What?

TYLER
When I got home.

Beat.

ALLY
I hate him!

She lunges for the phone. Tyler stops her hand.

TYLER
There's more.

She looks like she's starting to panic.

TYLER
He knows me. Before I met you. He
arrested me and Aidan. He gave me
that gash over my eye.

ALLY
I don't understand.

TYLER
I mouthed off to him. He ...
responded. Then Aidan saw you guys
together at school.

She isn't quite getting it.

TYLER
Aidan suggested...I...introduced
myself to you.

She's got it.

Beat.

TYLER
Ally...

ALLY
I'm going to be sick.

She bolts from the chair to the sink and dry heaves. Tyler
reaches out to comfort her.

TYLER
Hey.

She reels around and cracks him across the face. Not like a
chick. Like her dad.

The sound hangs in the air.

Ally goes to the bedroom and starts throwing her stuff in her
bag. Tyler follows her.

TYLER

Don't do that. What are you doing?

ALLY

Do you realize what you've done?

TYLER

Yeah.

He doesn't.

ALLY

Did you think I would never find out? I mean, think about it. I had to find out eventually. You set it up that way.

TYLER

But it doesn't mean anything. I didn't mean to hurt you,

ALLY

No. That's exactly what you meant to do.

She pushes past him and out the door.

82

INT. TYLER'S APARTMENT BUILDING -- STAIRWELL --

82

Ally heads down. Aidan heads up. He smiles wide.

AIDAN

Hey.

Ally pushes past him.

ALLY

Prick.

83

INT. RAILROAD FLAT-- LATER THAT NIGHT

83

Tyler sitting on the ratty couch. Aidan eats old Chinese food from the container. He offers some to Tyler. They sit in silence. Tyler swelling. Aidan eating.

AIDAN

You had to tell her eventually...

This is no comfort.

AIDAN

Glass half full... you just saved
yourself an awkward Thanksgiving.

Sincere now.

AIDAN

She'll be back, T.

Tyler heads into his bedroom and shuts the door.

84

INT. CRAIG FAMILY HOME -- KITCHEN -- NIGHT

84

Sergeant Craig working on a sink full of dirty dishes. He scrubs at a filthy pan with a piece of steel wool. He's manic but there's not a beer can in sight.

ALLY O/S

You know you're not supposed to use
that on non-stick pans...

Craig turns, finds her there in the doorway, bag at her feet.

ALLY

It takes off the teflon.

They stare at each other for a moment.

ALLY

You should let it soak.

SERGEANT CRAIG

Okay.

They look at each other. Craig tries a smile. Ally's cool with him. Moving towards him, past him.

ALLY

I'm going upstairs.

85

EXT. EAST SIDE MANHATTAN APARTMENT BUILDING -- EVENING

85

Caroline and Diane walk up to the DOORMAN. Caroline carries a gift, a sleeping bag. Diane smiles at her daughter.

CAROLINE

Stop smiling. You look insane.

Diane can't help it try as she might.

DIANE

I'm sorry, honey. I just... it's nice. Like an end of the summer send off.

Caroline rolls her eyes.

DIANE

Have fun.

Caroline goes into the lobby. Diane heads back to her car.

86 **INT. EAST SIDE APARTMENT-- FOYER**

86

Caroline gives her gift to THE BIRTHDAY GIRL who smiles. She follows her into the next room where the other PARTY GUESTS watch a movie. They all turn and look at Caroline.

Caroline smiles sheepishly. Some of the MEAN GIRLS are there, One of them gives her a perfunctory smile.

87 **INT. LANDMARK SUNSHINE MOVIE THEATER -- HOUSTON STREET -- NIGHT.**

87

Jackie Chan's foot slamming through a wall.

Tyler and Aidan are watching RUSH HOUR 2.

Aidan slurps from a super mega sized soda, laughing, enjoying himself. He turns to his friend. Tyler sits, completely drained, looking like the loneliest guy on the planet.

Aidan gives him a nudge. Tyler looks at the screen for a sec and half smiles, then slips away again. Aidan is genuinely concerned.

88 **INT. EAST SIDE APARTMNT-- KITCHEN -- NEXT MORNING**

88

The party girl's MOM is in a bathrobe. She looks horrified, she has one hand covering her mouth and is whispering into a cell phone. Caroline is on the kitchen phone. Her long hair has been CUT TO PIECES while she slept. She is crying.

CAROLINE

(into the phone)

Mom?

89 **INT. CRAIG FAMILY HOME -- LATER THAT MORNING**

89

Ally and her father cook breakfast together. There's a knock.

90

EXT. DOORSTEP.

90

Aidan paces nervously. Craig appears in an apron. Aidan smiles.

AIDAN

Hi.

Beat.

AIDAN

Is this the, uh, that is, does, uh, Alicia Craig. Does she live here?

Craig nods.

AIDAN

Oh great. I'm...

CRAIG

You think I don't remember you?

AIDAN

No, sir.

ALLY

Who is it Dad?

Ally sees Aidan. She touches her father's forearm.

ALLY

It's OK...

Craig steps back into the house. Six inches.

ALLY

Really.

He backs into the hall. Aidan and Ally are alone.

ALLY

What do you want?

AIDAN

Look, I'm a prick.

ALLY

And...

Craig popping back like an eel from a wreck. He's got the mangled Honey Bear.

ALLY

Dad...

He goes again. Pfft. Aidan's visibly relieved.

AIDAN
Tyler's not.

She starts to close the door.

AIDAN
Wait. Shit. This isn't really my
thing.

ALLY
He lied to me.

AIDAN
He's in love with you.

ALLY
He'd like to think he is.

Aidan doesn't get it.

AIDAN
I don't know what that means...I've
seen him look at one other girl the
way he looks at you. She's a lot
shorter and shares his DNA.

Ally looks away.

AIDAN
You don't have to forgive him
today... just forgive him.

Craig reappears from the deep.

CRAIG
Thanks for stopping by.

Father and daughter go back into the house.

Aidan exhales.

Diane is on the house phone, preparing a tray of tea and
cinnamon toast for Caroline as she talks.

DIANE

Are you telling me, Ms. Spencer,
that you intend to let those girls
stay in your school?...Of course
they're all sticking to the same
story and that story is a load of
crap!...

She slams a cabinet closed as Les picks up the tray and WE
TRACK HIM down the hall to CAROLINE'S ROOM. Les is speaking
on his cell phone.

LES

(sotto, into the phone)
She's pretty traumatized. I wanted
to pull some names together in case
we all decide she should talk to
someone...

92

INT. CAROLINE'S BEDROOM.

92

Caroline and Tyler are lying on Caroline's bed. Her head is
nestled on his shoulder. She looks even tinier than usual.
Tyler is reading to her, softly, from The Book of Greek
Myths, his other hand stroking her butchered hair.

She looks pale, wasted. Her eyes are sunken and she's
fighting sleep. A losing battle, she's exhausted. Her lids
finally shutter to the sound of her brother's voice.

Les, at the door, places the tray on Caroline's desk...

LES

(on the phone)
There's no witnesses and it didn't
happen on school property. The
school won't do anything. They'll
probably get away with it...

Tyler's eyes, registering anger and shock, jump from the page
as he hears this.

93

INT. FOYER.

93

Diane opening the front door for Aidan and Ally. Aidan wraps
his arms around Diane and gives her a hug. Ally hangs back a
bit, unsure, then embraces Diane.

Tyler emerges from the hallway.

TYLER
 (to Diane)
 She's asleep.

He sees Aidan and Ally. Stops short.

94

EXT. FRONT STEPS -- LATER

94

Tyler alone on the top stair, taking long pulls from a cigarette. Ally comes out the front door, softly closes it behind her.

TYLER
 Last one ever. I swear.

ALLY
 I don't care.

Beat.

TYLER
 I know you're not here for me but,
 thank you for being here.

A silent moment passes.

TYLER
 For what it's worth, I think you're
 amazing.

ALLY
 It's not worth much. You made
 everything between us a lie.

TYLER
 I'm sorry.

ALLY
 Okay. Now what? I'm supposed to
 just forgive you?

A BMW 7 Series speeds around the corner. Stops in front of the house. Charles gets out of the car, sees his son.

CHARLES
 How is she?

TYLER
 She's sleeping.

Diane emerges from the house. Charles strides quickly towards her.

95

INT. BEDROOM -- LATER

95

Caroline asleep in her bed. Charles stands in the doorway watching her sleep, we get the feeling he hasn't seen her asleep in some time. Diane appears at his side.

CHARLES

How long do you think she'll sleep?

DIANE

I think she'll be out for a while.
Would you like to wait?

CHARLES

Thank you. I can't. I'll call her
later.

DIANE

I'll tell her.

Diane looks at Charles. He's still watching his daughter.

96

INT. PRIVATE SCHOOL -- CLASSROOM -- MORNING

96

Caroline's TEACHER prepares her lesson plan. She starts to write the date on the board when The door opens. Caroline and Tyler enter. The entire class is watching. It's dead quiet.

Caroline puts her trembling hands in her pockets.

Tyler looks at a few of the girls. They look back, unconcerned, almost amused. Tyler walks his sister to her desk.

TYLER

(to Caroline, whispering)
You okay?

Caroline nods, although her eyes are brimming. As she slips out of her jacket, the contents of her pockets clatter noisily to the floor. Tyler immediately bends to help her.

MEAN GIRL

Have you done something different
with your hair? I love it!

SNICKERING LAUGHTER. Caroline looks like a deer in headlights.

TEACHER

Okay, okay. Enough.

CHARLES

I have unleashed a raging shitstorm of epic proportions on the board of trustees of that pissant school that will not abate until those girls seek enrollment elsewhere. I give them a week.

Beat.

CHARLES

I know you think I'm a prick, but I have my uses.

Guess so.

CHARLES

Can you come by the office to talk to the lawyers?

Beat. Tyler deciding.

Tyler nods.

Charles appraises his son.

CHARLES

Try not to vandalize any more schools in the meantime.

Charles walks ahead, pulling out his cell phone.

Tyler calls after him.

TYLER

Thank you for bailing me out.

Charles, without turning around,

CHARLES

No problem.

101 **EXT. NYU -- FRONT STEPS -- BEAUTIFUL SEPTEMBER MORNING** 101

Tyler leaning against the bike rack, waiting. He sees Ally running up the steps and watches her as she blends into the crowd.

102 **EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK -- JUST AFTER.** 102

No mimes, just dealers. Ally with a girlfriend, walking towards the East Side. Tyler catches up to her.

Shakes the friend's hand. After a beat, Ally agrees to walk with him. He reaches for her hand. She pulls it away, but walks next to him.

103

EXT. CENTRAL PARK -- ALICE STATUE -- JUST AFTER.

103

Tyler has convinced Ally to come uptown and meet Caroline with him.

Tyler and Caroline climb all over the Alice, while Ally watches from a bench.

As befitting a seventh grader, Caroline turns her face to the sun and arranges herself to take advantage of the early September tanning possibilities.

Tyler walks over to Ally's bench, sits next to her.

Beat.

ALLY
Using the little sister is dirty
pool.

TYLER
(carefully)
Is it working?

Beat.

ALLY
Maybe.

Tyler has a smile the size of New York City.

Ally smiles back.

DISSOLVE TO:

104

INT. TYLER'S BEDROOM -- THE NEXT MORNING

104

Bright sun pouring through the window. Ally lying asleep.

Tyler is up and dressed now, he grabs his journal off his desk, kneels beside Ally. He is bathed in the pool of light streaming in.

TYLER
(nuzzling)
Hey...Hey.

ALLY

Hmmm.

TYLER

I'll be back in an hour. I have to stop by my dad's office.

ALLY

(sleepily)

Do you want french toast or pancakes for breakfast?

TYLER

Whichever tastes better a la mode.

Ally smiles.

ALLY

Say hi to your dad for me.

Tyler watches her lying there.

TYLER

If I said I love you... what would you say?

ALLY

(laughing)

I love you.

TYLER

I love you too.

Tyler kisses her. Then heads out into the...

105 **INT. LIVING ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER**

105

Aidan passed out on the couch still wearing the clothes he went out in the night before. Tyler watches him sleep.

AIDAN

(without opening his eyes)

French toast.

Tyler smiles as he takes his journal and exits.

106 **EXT. HOFFMAN FAMILY HOME -- PORCH -- MORNING**

106

Charles waiting on the doorstep, his Town Car waiting on the curb. Diane answers the door expecting to find Caroline's driver, she's confused to find...

DIANE
Charles?

CHARLES
Good morning Diane.

DIANE
What are you doing here?

CHARLES
Tyler's coming by the office, but I
thought I'd ride to school with
Caroline first.

Diane is speechless. This is a first.

DIANE
Um...OK...sure...yeah...great.
She's not ready though, she's going
to need at least twenty minutes.

Charles hates waiting.

CHARLES
(adjusting his tie)
All right.

107 **EXT. SIDEWALK -- LATER**

107

Tyler chaining up his bike. His cellphone rings. He checks
it. Knows what it's regarding before he answers.

TYLER
Are you canceling all together or
are you just running late?

108 **INT. CHARLES' TOWN CAR-- MORNING**

108

Charles and Caroline in the back seat. She's on one side,
with her pink back pack, he's on the other.

CHARLES
(on the phone)
Are you already on your way?

INTERCUT:

109 **EXT. OPEN PLAZA.**

109

Tyler rounding a corner.

TYLER
I'm already here.

CHARLES
I'm taking Caroline to school.

He looks at his daughter. She looks back at him, then looks out the window.

Tyler considers.

TYLER
Take your time. I'll just wait in your office.

CHARLES
It may be a while.

TYLER
That's okay.

Tyler hangs up and joins the herds of suits heading down the street.

110 **INT. ELEVATOR -- LATER** 110

Tyler riding in a handsome marble and oak elevator with a half-dozen EXECUTIVE types. Tyler steps on and presses the number 92. The doors close.

111 **INT. EXECUTIVE FLOOR -- RECEPTION -- LATER** 111

Tyler walks, approaches the Receptionist from the ashtray incident. He smiles pleasantly. She doesn't.

TYLER
Janine in?

THE RECEPTIONIST
(cold)
She went for coffee.

TYLER
She getting me any? Just kidding.

Tyler heads down the hall. The Receptionist rolls her eyes.

112 **INT. CHARLES ROTH'S OFFICE -- LATER** 112

Tyler steps into his father's empty office. It's dark, quiet. He opens the blinds. Sunlight fills the room.

Tyler walks around the office. Picking things up, putting them back.

Tyler sits at his father's desk in his executive chair. He leans back. Puts his feet up and his hands behind his head.

Tyler notices the COMPUTER. He turns on the monitor and puts his hand on the mouse - but doesn't move it. His hand just stops and stays perfectly still. Tyler stares at the monitor where his dad's SCREEN SAVER is scrolling through PHOTOS...

These photos are all of his FAMILY... "Michael's first Christmas, Tyler's eighth birthday, Diane in the hospital with Caroline in a pink blanket, Charles and his kids build a sand castle at the shore"... they just keep going.

Tyler finds himself watching a slide show of his life.

113 **EXT. PRIVATE SCHOOL -- LATER** 113

That line of luxury cars dropping their daughters off. Charles' Town car rolls to a stop. Caroline gives him a kiss on the cheek. It registers, sort of. She gets out. Charles watches her all the way into the school.

His DRIVER sees him watching Caroline in the rear view mirror.

Charles gives the Driver a look "you're waiting for an invite?"

The Driver peels out.

114 **INT. TYLER'S APARTMENT -- KITCHEN -- LATER** 114

Ally has made a mess making french toast. Aidan is yakking on his phone.

115 **INT. TOWN CAR -- LATER** 115

Charles in traffic. All around him DRIVERS curse, honk, hate each other. Charles rides, not letting it bug him.

116 **INT. PRIVATE SCHOOL -- CLASSROOM -- LATER** 116

Caroline drawing at her desk as her Teacher comes in and gets ready to start the day.

117 **INT. CHARLES ROTH'S OFFICE -- LATER**

117

Tyler is still watching the screen saver when Janine enters.

JANINE
Good Morning, Mister Roth.

TYLER
Did you know about this?

Janine walks around the desk in time to see a photo of Tyler and Michael naked in the tub pop up. She smiles.

JANINE
Who do you think scanned all the pictures?

Tyler smiles. Janine smiles, Then a photo of Michael comes up. Those smiles fade. Silence.

JANINE
How old would he be?

TYLER
Twenty-nine last May.

Tyler stands and looks out one of the floor-to-ceiling windows separated by columns. He stares out at mid town and a perfect blue sky. Janine looks befuddled.

JANINE
It's really been that long? I could've sworn it was...

TYLER
May 18, 1993.

A silent moment passes. Janine reflecting.

JANINE
I should be able to remember that.
I'm sorry.

Tyler looks at her, his face easy...

TYLER
It's okay.

118 **INT. PRIVATE SCHOOL -- CLASSROOM -- LATER**

118

Caroline's Teacher writes the date on the board as Caroline sits quietly doodling. The teacher looks her way.

TEACHER
Caroline? Hello?

WIDE SHOT of the blackboard. It's unmistakable:

SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

119 **EXT. CHARLES ROTH'S OFFICE -- LATER**

119

We're now looking at Tyler from just outside Charles' office window and we're PULLING BACK...

Until we see Tyler framed in the window surrounded by eerily familiar grey metal siding...

Until we see can barely see Tyler and the base of a giant white antenna...

Until we can no longer see Tyler as he's disappeared into the composite of the building and we've pulled back far enough to reveal that Tyler is standing in a window on the...

92nd Floor of The North Tower of the World Trade Center.

A moment of still perfect silence. The Towers. The blue sky.

Then we hear the faint sound of AA Flight 11's ENGINES as it closes in on the North Tower.

CUT TO BLACK.

Silence. Darkness. We wait in it.

TYLER V/O
Whatever you do in life will be
insignificant but it is very
important that you do it because...

120 **EXT. LOWER MANHATTAN -- THAT MORNING**

120

Charles Roth steps out of his car. His gaze fixed skyward. All around him the other DRIVERS mimic his behavior.

TYLER V/O
It's a good bet...

121 **EXT. DIANE'S BROWNSTONE STOOP-- LATER**

121

Diane sweeping cigarette butts off the stoop.

TYLER V/O
Nobody else will...

Diane joins a group of ONLOOKERS staring up from a street corner in Brooklyn where *the black smoke* stains the blue sky. One of them has a radio to his ear.

TYLER V/O

Michael...

Diane staring at it.

TYLER V/O

Someone's been trying to tell me something.

122 **EXT. WORLD TRADE CENTER /OR OUTSIDE THE PRECINCT?--** 122

Craig, through a LONG LENS standing by his car with the door open. He is, crystal clear, barking orders, while waves of blue and slashes of orange float around him.

TYLER V/O

Maybe it's you...

123 **EXT. TYLER'S APARTMENT-- ROOF --LATER** 123

Aidan and Ally absolutely frantic on the roof. Holding hands. Craning to see. Ash begins to float down on them. It gets caught in Ally's hair.

TYLER V/O

This girl! Ally! Her life, even the nightmare parts seeped into me and I swear to God I can hear you better.

124 **INT. PRIVATE SCHOOL -- HALLWAY -- LATER** 124

A door flies open. Caroline runs out into the empty hall, to the exit.

TYLER V/O

What's that about? I've always been the worst listener.

125 **EXT. LOWER MANHATTAN -- STREETS** 125

THE PAPER, so much of it, all of it singed, smoke-stained, falling like snow flakes coating the streets and the sidewalks. Amongst the memos and faxes that will now never be sent and never received we find...

TYLER'S JOURNAL.

TYLER V/O
Someone comes into your life...

126 **EXT. CEMETERY -- A GREY MORNING** 126

A light rain falls. Two TOMBSTONES stand side-by-side.

MICHAEL ROTH
May 20, 1969
May 18, 1993

TYLER ROTH
June 17, 1978
September 11, 2001

Charles, Caroline, Diane and Les approach the tombstones. A family mourning. Diane slips her hand through Charles' elbow. The gesture seems quite natural, easy.

DISSOLVE TO:

127 **INT. NYU DORM-- DAY** 127

We find Ally, with a ROOMMATE, putting up lively, Indian Print curtains in their NYU dorm.

128 **EXT. LINCOLN CENTER. WHERE:** 128

Caroline literally dragging Charles into the ROSE BUILDING AT LINCOLN CENTER, while he yells into his cell phone.

TYLER V/O
And half of you says "Danger! Stay
in your cave! You're nowhere near
ready!"

Caroline has come to the end of her rope with her dad. She grabs his phone and throws it into the fountain, spins on her heel and marches into the auditorium. Charles is completely thunderstruck.

TYLER V/O
And the other half -- and this is
the part I think is you --

He is torn between his phone and his daughter for a sec, chooses Caroline and takes off after her...

...then comes running out by himself to rescue his phone.

129 **INT. JAPANESE RESTAURANT -- DINNER** 129

Craig is wearing a jacket and tie. He's on a date with a pretty WOMAN. In his confusion over the menu, he knocks over a glass of water.

 TYLER V/O
 Says "Go get her! Immediately! Make
 her yours forever!"

130 **INT. DIANE'S OFFICE-- DAY** 130

A chaotic place, filled with folk who need help. Diane at a desk, organizing families.

 TYLER V/O
 I'm working on the forever part.

131 **INT. NYU --** 131

Aidan actually awake in class. He has a tattoo on his forearm. "Tyler".

 TYLER V/O
 I'm going to have to step up my
 game. But I'm glad I listened.

132 **EXT. SMITH STREET STATION -- BROOKLYN -- NIGHT** 132

Ally, we find her as we first found her mother, silhouetted against the Lower Manhattan skyline where two beams of purple light reach up forever where the Towers once stood.

 TYLER V/O
 I love you.

Her train pulls into the station. Ally boards with a few other commuters. She takes a seat by herself across from...

A MOM and A TODDLER, a little girl. The baby is squirming impossibly, the mom looks exhausted.

Ally watches them, remembers him, as the faintest hint of a smile crosses her lips the subway lights flicker and we...

CUT TO BLACK.

 TYLER V/O
 Don't be a stranger.