

Half Nelson

by

Ryan Fleck & Anna Boden

OFFICIAL WHITE SCRIPT

HALF NELSON LLC  
225 West 13th Street  
New York, NY 10011  
212.989.1038x205  
212.989.3907 (fax)

May 31, 2005

OVER BLACK:

Obnoxious morning talk show CHATTER plays alongside a radio alarm clock BEEPING repeatedly.

INT. DAN'S APT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON DAN DUNNE (white, mid 30s), heavy bags under his glassy eyes. He stares off into another dimension.

A WIDER ANGLE reveals him sitting on the floor in his living room, back against the couch. A small, gray cat watches him from a few feet away, while the shock jock CHATTER and incessant BEEPING continue seeping in from another room.

INT. DAN'S APT. BEDROOM - DAY

The alarm clock reads six a.m. Dan smacks it off.

INT. DAN'S APT. BATHROOM - DAY

He opens the medicine cabinet, pops a few pills.

INT. DAN'S APT. KITCHEN - DAY

Pours food into the cat bowl.

INT. DAN'S APT. BEDROOM - DAY

He searches for something in yesterday's pants and coat pockets, but can't seem to find it. He stops to think, looks off.

INT. DAN'S APT. FRONT DOOR - DAY

He opens the door to find his keys dangling from the lock, pulls them out.

EXT. DAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Casually dressed, sporting dark sunglasses, Dan exits the modest, five-story building. He carries a thermos of coffee and a folder overflowing with papers.

EXT. STREET DAN'S CAR - DAY

Dan approaches his car to find a parking citation tucked under his windshield wiper.

A WIDER ANGLE reveals the driver's side tires up on the curb.

## EXT. STREET DRIVING MONTAGE - DAY

DOCUMENTARY-STYLE IMAGES of Dan driving his 1991 Civic hatchback through city streets on his way to work: HOMELESS pushing carts filled with cans, 40 OUNCE MEN drinking early in front of closed liquor stores, COMMUTERS waiting for the bus, and local SHOPOWNERS opening for business.

## EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

The Civic pulls into the lot next to a weed-ridden baseball field and netless basketball courts. Dan checks his hair in the rearview mirror, runs his fingers through it.

## INT. SCHOOL TEACHER'S LOUNGE - DAY

Several debates are in progress over the quality of the lounge's coffee. The TEACHERS discuss in little groups of two, their conversations overlapping each other.

JIMBO

(wood shop)

Why does it matter? It doesn't matter. So what?

ROSE

(English)

It's shit.

JIMBO

Let's have a vote. This is a democracy after all... Suzanne?

SUZANNE

(Spanish)

I'm trying to cut back; don't get me involved.

JIMBO

Which reminds me, I just went on the patch.

ROSE

That's great.

JIMBO

It's like magic. Three days. It's a start.

Dan wanders into the lounge unnoticed, puts his lunch in the fridge.

SUZANNE  
They got one of those for caffeine?

EARLE  
(math)  
Did you know there's a boycott on  
Folger's?

SUZANNE  
You're thinking of Columbian.

EARLE  
I thought it was all Columbian.

SUZANNE  
No, they pretty much grow coffee  
everywhere now.

ROSE  
Were you guys at the march this  
weekend?

Dan closes the fridge, makes a bee-line for the door, when...

JIMBO  
Hey, Dan, what do you think of the  
coffee in here?

Dan stops, addresses the room, coffee thermos in hand.

DAN  
Sorry?

JIMBO  
Nice hair.

The morning bell RINGS.

INT. SCHOOL STAIRWAY - DAY

Dan makes his way to class, as STUDENTS whiz by, SLAMMING lockers, and SCREAMING to friends down the hall. PRINCIPAL JOY HENDERSON (Black woman, 50s) steps alongside Dan, hands him a thick three-ring binder.

HENDERSON  
Check it out.

Dan tucks it under his arm.

DAN  
Okay.

HENDERSON

The workbooks for the new Civil Rights section. I listened to the tapes last night.

DAN

There's tapes.

HENDERSON

Narrated by Oprah. I know, I know. But the section on Rosa Parks is great. Take a look.

DAN

I will.

Dan stops, out of breath. Joy continues a few steps higher, turns back.

HENDERSON

--Don't let me down. Take a look at those workbooks. Really, Dan. They're new, they're alternative... They might even be hip.

Dan gives Henderson a skeptical look, as she continues up the staircase.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

Dan at his desk, in front of his eighth grade social studies class. He stares at the three-ring Oprah binder, unopened, on his desk, while his students SHRIEK and CLAMOR before him.

Dan takes a deep breath.

DAN

Okay...

ROODLY

Nice hair cut, Mr. Dunne.

Some kids LAUGH. Dan runs his hand through his hair.

DAN

Thanks, Roodly.

Dan writes on the board: "What is History? 1 - OPPOSITES."

DAN

Okay, folks. Let's switch it up a bit. History - what is it?

TERRANCE

Opposites?

DAN

Good... You can read the board.

Some kids LAUGH.

DAN

No, really. What is it?

STACY

Change.

DAN

Thank you. I'm glad to hear  
someone's been paying attention...  
History is the study of change over  
time. And change is caused like  
this...

Dan puts his palms together like he's about to pray, and  
moves them in one direction, then the other, slowly.

DAN

Right? Two things pushing against  
one another in opposite directions.  
Opposing forces. Opposites.  
Right? Like the Civil Rights  
movement - a battle between two  
opposing mentalities. In the  
South, the majority of people  
believed all men were NOT created  
equal, and the minority believed  
they were. But the minority fought  
hard to change people's minds until  
they became the majority.

Dan pauses, surveys the class. AUDREY (DREY), a bad-ass  
little b-girl with tight braided cornrows, looks at Dan with  
a quiet intensity. Some other students doodle in their  
notebooks or play with their hair.

DAN

Who can name some? I'll start...  
(starts to write on board)  
Day and night... It's day for a  
while, but night's always coming.  
Right? What else?

BERNARD

Big and little.

DAN  
Great. Write it down.

Bernard goes up to the board, as a student, TERRANCE, whispers to a girl next to him.

DAN  
What else?... Terrance?

Terrance looks up, caught, thinks fast.

TERRANCE  
Black and white?

DAN  
Great... Come on, guys. What else?

LENA  
Happy and sad.

STACY  
Me and you.

Some kids LAUGH.

DAN  
You and I, sure. We could also say  
teachers and students.

ISABEL REDDING (Latina, 30s) steps near the doorway in the hall, observes the class.

JAMAL  
Right and left.

DAN  
Good. And while we're at it, let's  
do right and wrong, too.

Isabel makes a slight RUSTLE in the doorway, and Dan looks over. They make eye contact and smile for a beat, then...

ROODLY  
(hand in the air)  
Mr. Dunne?

DAN  
Yes, Roodly.

ROODLY  
I was wondering if you could count  
me and Gina's bigfoot sister as  
opposites?

The class LAUGHS. Isabel smiles, continues down the hall.

JAMAL

Insult!

DAN

Gina? You gonna let him get away  
with that?

Gina thinks hard, flips through her notebook.

DAN

C'mon, you don't really have a  
bigfoot sister do you? Do you?

GINA

(finds what she wants)  
May 17th, 1954.

THE CLASS

Oooohhh...

ROODLY

Damn.

DAN

Nice one, Gina.

Dan goes to the board to write the date down.

DAN

Getting started early today... Got  
that, Roodly? May 17th, 1954.

Roodly writes the date in his notebook.

DAN

I expect some thought from you this  
time. Not just dates and facts,  
but consequences; what does it  
mean? Okay? Now back to this.  
Gina's sister - let's use her.  
(some kids LAUGH)  
Careful people...

INT. SCHOOL GYM BASKETBALL - DAY

The seventh-grade girls basketball team gathers around Dan  
for instructions. Drey sucks on a blow-pop off to the side.

DAN

Don't forget we're a team. Nothing  
gets done by one person alone.  
(MORE)



DAN (cont'd)  
Spread out. Find your open man to  
pass to. No more rainbow passes.

INT. SCHOOL GYM BASKETBALL - DAY

The team works hard, running, passing, shooting, huffing, and puffing. Stacy scores an easy layup.

DAN  
Why is nobody defending her? Why  
is she walking right up to the  
basket?

Dan turns to Drey on the sideline.

DAN  
Hey Drey? You ready to put that  
away and get in here or what?

DREY  
I ain't done yet coach.

Dan glares at her, then smiles.

After a beat, she smiles too, crunches on the blow-pop, pulls the stick out of her mouth, and runs onto the court.

INT. DAN'S APT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Dan comes through the door, sets his coat and bag on a chair, pats his cat on the head. He hits a button on the answering machine, then disappears into the kitchen. The machine BEEPS, a MAN'S VOICE says...

MAN'S VOICE  
(on machine)  
Hello, this is an urgent message  
for Mister Daniel Dunne. This is  
Taylor calling from Consolidated  
Credit. Please call me back as soon  
as possible. I can be reached at  
877-349--

BEEP. Dan emerges with a bottle of windex, hits the delete button before Taylor can finish. He heads back toward the kitchen, but stops in the doorway when...

WOMAN'S VOICE  
(on machine)  
Hi Dan, it's me... Rachel.

He turns around, listens.

WOMAN'S VOICE

...I'm in town for a while, you know, my mom... Anyway, I know it's been forever, but I'd really like to see you, I don't know. Please call. I'll be at my parents'... Okay, bye.

BEEP. Dan stands in the doorway for a beat, then disappears into the kitchen again.

Dan comes back to the living room with paper towels, sprays down the powder-smudged coffee table, wipes it clean. He plops down onto the couch, throws his head back. Hold.

After a beat, Dan checks his watch, then opens a cigar box on the table, takes out a baggie and a short plastic straw.

He leans forward, cracks his knuckles.

INT. BAR #1 - NIGHT

A dark, out-of-the-way place for drinking, dancing, and other extracurricular activities. Dan enters the bar, squeezes past DANCERS, finds a spot at the bar, and motions to the BARTENDER, who nods and pours.

Dan makes eye contact with a worn out brunette seated a few stools down the bar. She smiles, then points him out to her girlfriend seated next to her. They all smile hellos.

INT. BAR #1 - NIGHT

Music THUMPS, while Dan dances close to his new friends.

INT. BAR #1 - NIGHT

Dan and the girls huddle close together, sharing "big" ideas, though nobody is really listening.

VANESSA

That is so amazing. You're amazing.

DAN

Yeah.

VANESSA

I feel like--

DAN  
--I used to be so selfish, you  
know, just fucking it all up. When  
I was younger...

VANESSA  
What?

DAN  
The shit I put my parents  
through... You know? Just really  
self-indulgent.

SIMONE  
Right.

DAN  
I was a writer.

VANESSA  
I hate words.

DAN  
Fuck that. I mean everything  
that's worth saying, it's already--  
you know? It's been-- Am I right?

SIMONE  
Forget it.

DAN  
Why not make a difference doing  
something important? Real. No?

VANESSA  
Yeah.

SIMONE  
So you're a teacher.

DAN  
I'm a teacher.

He kisses Simone and when he's done he kisses Vanessa too.

DAN  
But that's bullshit too. I mean,  
who am I, right? To teach? C'mon.

VANESSA  
I wish I had you for history.

DAN

What am I supposed to teach these kids? Fucking Oprah! They gave me these--

SIMONE

Oprah's cool.

DAN

But if you help one student right? What do they say? Make a difference for one kid? I don't know.

VANESSA

You wanta dance?

Dan looks at her, then away. Vanessa shrugs and heads off to dance with Simone. Dan stares off, his high fading. Hold. He glances at his watch.

EXT. DAN'S CAR AT FRANK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dan's car pulls to a curb in front of a duplex, where a shiny black Lexus is parked in the driveway.

After a beat, Javier (Dominican, 17) emerges from the building, gets in Dan's car. They drive away.

EXT. DAN'S CAR - NIGHT

Javier removes his headphones.

DAN

(re: headphones)  
What's that?

JAVIER

New street shit. Check it out.

Javier reaches over, places the headphones over Dan's ears.

We can't hear, but Dan bumps his head to the music, while Javier smiles, does the same.

After a beat, Javier removes the headphones.

JAVIER

You like?

DAN

Yeah, not bad. Street shit, eh?

JAVIER  
(laughing, then)  
So what you need, Teach? Another  
eight?

DAN  
I only got thirty.

JAVIER  
Word?

DAN  
It's been a long week.

JAVIER  
Want that other thing?

Dan nods.

EXT. DAN'S CAR AT FRANK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Javier hops out of the car, and Dan drives away.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

Roodly stands in front of the class, looks directly at the  
lens/us.

ROODLY  
On May 17th, 1954, the Supreme  
Court ruled on the case of Brown v.  
Board of Education, making it  
illegal for states to segregate  
public schools.

Stock newsreel footage covering the decision, and subsequent  
years of integration efforts play over Roodly's voice-over.

ROODLY (V.O.)  
This decision was a major step  
forward in the struggle for racial  
justice, and helped start a fury of  
bold and heroic actions known as  
the civil rights movement.  
Unfortunately, the desired goals of  
the decision remain unfulfilled, as  
today, less than a third of Black  
students attend racially integrated  
schools.

Back to Roodly staring straight ahead. Hold.

## INT. CLASSROOM - GAME NIGHT

Dan at his desk, holding the phone to his ear, nodding. We hear basketball BOUNCING, sneaker SQUEAKING, and general CROWD noise from the nearby gym.

DAN

Mm-hm, mm-hm, mm-hm... I understand. Listen, I can't really discuss this right now... Yes, yes, right. How much did you say...? Mm-hm, mm-hm. Okay. I understand, yes, I think it's very important too. I've gotta go now. Let me call you back. There's a game. I'm gonna have to call you back... This week sometime. I don't know... Fine. I'll call you tomorrow then. Very good... Yes, I would like to clear this up too. Thank you, bye, sorry...

Dan hangs up, rubs his forehead.

## INT. SCHOOL GYM BASKETBALL - NIGHT

Dan CHEERS his team from the sidelines, as a series of highlights take us through the game's ups and downs... mostly downs.

Dan glances at the scoreboard, his team losing 24-11. His eyes shift over toward the stands, stopping on a WOMAN (white, 30s) standing near the exit.

He recognizes her.

She smiles.

He quickly averts his eyes back to the court, sits down on the bench a few feet away from Drey. She watches him while he anxiously glances at his watch, then back to the woman seated in the stands behind him.

## INT. SCHOOL GYM BASKETBALL - NIGHT

The referee BLOWS the final whistle, and the winning team celebrates on the court.

## INT. SCHOOL GYM BASKETBALL - NIGHT

Dan rubs his fingers over his forehead, eyes clenched shut, working out the tension. He takes a deep breath, looks up at the final score (42-19), then glances down at his watch.

He pounds his fist into his hand, then CLAPS for encouragement, patting players on the back.

DAN  
That's okay. Almost. Good work,  
girls. At least now we know what  
needs work.

Dan sees the woman advancing on him, and ducks away to the...

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY (OUTSIDE LOCKER ROOM) - NIGHT

Just outside the girls' locker room, players and PARENTS  
mingle with Dan, who seems anxious to get them out.

DAN  
(to a concerned parent)  
This week I think we'll practice a  
little zone defense, see if we can  
take better advantage of our  
quickness, run some picks, you  
know... but I like our chances  
against St. Joe's. If we can  
figure out a way to put the ball in  
the hoop, I think we can win...

The concerned parent nods in agreement, when Stacy emerges  
from the locker room.

DAN  
Nice work Stacey. Anyone left?

STACY  
That's it, Mister Dunne.

Dan waves goodbye, as Stacy's family brushes past the  
mysterious woman Dan has been avoiding, until now.

DAN  
Rachel? Hey. What're you doing  
here?

RACHEL  
I don't know. Wanted to check out  
some b-ball. I heard this was the  
place.

DAN  
Yeah, I know the team needs work,  
but we're dealing with it.

Rachel smiles, nods.

RACHEL  
How are you?

Dan shrugs, nods, uncomfortable.

DAN  
You know. Same old...

RACHEL  
It's nice to see you.

DAN  
You too. You look great.

RACHEL  
Gained some weight.

DAN  
It works. Healthy.

RACHEL  
Hey, you wanta grab some--

DAN  
--I've gotta go. Yeah. I've got this...

RACHEL  
Something to eat? Coffee?

DAN  
Coffee... No, I'm sorry, but tonight's just really crazy for me. But we should totally hang out. Definitely. You know, some other time.

RACHEL  
That would be nice.

Rachel turns around to go. Dan closes his eyes and brings his fingers up to his forehead.

DAN  
(calling after her)  
How's your mom?

Rachel stops.

RACHEL  
Did you get my messages?

Dan shakes his head, about to say something, but doesn't.



Rachel nods, shrugs, and continues down the hall.

EXT. SCHOOL CARPOOL AREA - NIGHT

Drey, alone on a bench, waiting for her ride. She fiddles with the strap on the back of her BROOKLYN DODGERS CAP, as Rachel passes by. Drey watches as she gets into her car. Through the passenger's side window, Drey can see Rachel lean her head against the steering wheel.

INT. SCHOOL GYM LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Dan passes quickly by the rows of lockers...

DAN  
Everybody out? I'm closing up!  
Last chance!

EXT. SCHOOL CARPOOL AREA - NIGHT

Drey sees a car approaching, perks up, but it continues on.

INT. SCHOOL GYM BATHROOM STALL - NIGHT

Dan sits on the toilet, handles an object just out of frame. We remain with him, as he lifts a small glass pipe to his lips, lights up, and gets high. Hold on his reaction to the high settling in, when...

...the sound of someone entering the locker room causes him to flinch and tilt his ear, listening to the approaching FOOTSTEPS.

He lifts his legs, to avoid being seen.

We hear the neighboring stall door open and close, and after a beat, pee trickles into the toilet, then FLUSHES.

Dan bites his lips to avoid making any noise, but hears...

...the stall door open, FOOTSTEPS come out and stop in front of his stall. He sees a small pair of sneakers facing him under the door.

Long pause. The toilet flushing fades to silence.

DREY'S VOICE (O.S.)  
Hello?

Dan stares at the door.

DREY'S VOICE (O.S.)  
Somebody in there?

After a beat, the door slowly glides open to reveal Drey standing before Dan.

They stare at each other for a long beat.

DREY  
What's goin' on?

DAN  
Nothin'... What are you doing here?

DREY  
I had to pee. What're you doing?

DAN  
What?

DREY  
Are you hiding?

DAN  
No.

Drey notices his clenched fist by his side.

DREY  
What's in your hand?

DAN  
What do you mean?

DREY  
You smell that?

DAN  
Smell what?

Drey looks Dan over.

DREY  
They got rules about teachers  
getting high in the girls locker  
room?

DAN  
What do you want, Drey? I mean  
what?

DREY  
I need a ride home. My father  
didn't show.

EXT. DAN'S CAR DRIVING - NIGHT

Silence. Only the HUM of the engine, as Drey stares out the side window, while Dan focuses on the road ahead.

EXT. DAN'S CAR AT DREY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The car pulls over to the curb, Drey jumps out.

DREY  
See you tomorrow?

She shuts the car door, and we sit with Dan for a beat before he drives off.

INT. DREY'S APT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

It's dark, until the door opens, and the outdoor street lamps send in a shaft of yellow light. Drey enters, flips the light switch to reveal a tidy living room. She turns on an off-screen television and we hear the chaotic CHATTER of professional wrestling ANNOUNCERS giving the melodramatic play-by-play of a match.

INT. DREY'S APT KITCHEN - NIGHT

Drey pulls a dinner plate (loaded with chicken, mashed potatoes, and greens) from the refrigerator, puts it in the oven, then sits down at the kitchen table. She calmly stares off, while the announcers continue their verbal assault in the other room.

INT. DAN'S APT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dan pours a glass of whiskey, stares at it, takes a sip.

EXT. DAN'S CAR AT SCHOOL - DAY

Dan sits in his car before school. He lifts his sunglasses, checks his bloodshot eyes in the mirror, leans back, and squirts eye-drops into his eyes.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

We follow Dan as he walks from his car into the school.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

The chalkboard reads, "Making changes work for you."

Dan's students huddle in small clusters around the room, supposedly working on group projects, however, no one seems to be working on anything, mostly goofing off.

Dan sits at his desk, leans back in his chair, struggling to keep his eyes open. He nearly nods off, but jerks up awake, glances around the room to see if anyone noticed. His eyes stop on Drey's empty seat.

DAN

Anyone seen Drey today?

TERRANCE

She was in science.

STACY

Yeah, but I think she was sick, or something. Maybe she went home.

Dan leans back in his chair, just as Drey enters the classroom, goes to her seat. Dan stares at her for a long beat. Drey leans over to Stacy, whispers something. They laugh.

DAN

Drey... You have a note?

DREY

Nope.

The bell RINGS.

DAN

Come here, Drey.

The other students get up to go. Drey approaches Dan's desk.

DAN

What's going on?

DREY

Hm?

DAN

You missed class. What am I supposed to do about this?

DREY  
I don't know. You the teacher,  
right?

DAN  
Want me to send you to Henderson's  
office?

DREY  
Is that what you want?

DAN  
No...

DREY  
Me neither.

Drey exits the classroom.

DAN  
(calling after)  
I expect you here on time tomorrow.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

We TRACK back with Drey down the hall. Dan exits his class in the background, walks off in the opposite direction. Drey turns around and watches him go. Her hard expression softens.

INT. SCHOOL GYM EQUIPMENT CLOSET - DAY

Dan steps inside the tiny closet surrounded by an assortment of balls, and P.E. supplies. He grabs one of the rubber kick balls, SLAMS it against the floor. As it bounces back up, it hits one of the shelves, causing it to collapse and send the other balls tumbling down around his head. When the commotion calms, he exits the closet.

EXT. SCHOOL GYM BASKETBALL - DAY

Drey practices her jump-shot, when she sees Dan approaching his car in the distance. She stops and watches, as he gets in the car, and sits, motionless, his head back. After a few beats, he stirs, and gazes straight ahead.

Drey watches, thoughtfully, transfixed by Dan's emotion.

He pulls himself together, starts the car, drives away. Drey looks after.

EXT. GOWANUS DINER - DAY

Through the front window, we see Drey eating french fries, staring at the traffic outside.

EXT. DREY'S BIKE STREET MONTAGE - DAY

Drey wanders through the city on her bike after school passing the elevated subway train, a vacant construction site, playground basketball courts.

INT. DREY'S APT. - NIGHT

Drey steps inside to find her mom, KAREN (30s), unpacking grocery bags in the kitchen. She's wearing an E.M.T. uniform.

KAREN  
Hey kid. Who's hungry?

Drey turns on the TV and plops herself on the couch.

KAREN  
How was school?

DREY  
Fine.

KAREN  
Some boy called. Who is Jamal?

DREY  
Some faggot-ass nigga.

KAREN  
Faggot ass what? Audrey please...  
What I tell you about that word?

DREY  
What? Faggot or nigga?

Karen stares hard at Drey.

KAREN  
So, smartass, how's Darryl's leg  
healing?

DREY  
I don't know.

KAREN  
You didn't go to the hospital?

DREY

No.

KAREN

Your father pick you up from  
practice last night?

DREY

Nope.

KAREN

No? Motherfucker. How'd you get  
home?

DREY

Mister Dunne.

KAREN

I'm tired of this. Something's  
gotta change around here, cause I  
don't know what.

DREY

It's cool, ma... You don't gotta  
worry about me...

Karen rolls her eyes.

KAREN

Look at you, Miss Twelve.

DREY

Thirteen. I'm thirteen now.

KAREN

You're all grown up. Is that it?  
You can take care of yourself?

DREY

Pretty much.

KAREN

Well, that's a relief. Guess I  
won't have to cook up these burgers  
then, huh?

DREY

Guess not.

Karen glares at Drey. After a beat, Drey smiles, joins her  
mom in the kitchen to help with dinner.

DREY

Hey mom... you know this dude Cesar Chavez once fasted for thirty-five days... That means he didn't eat for thirty-five days. Sump'n like Ghandi used to do.

Karen smiles, and they continue preparing dinner.

INT. DAN'S APT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Dan's telephone RINGS, waking Dan from a nap on his couch. He sits up as the telephone continues. He scans his messy apartment. The phone stops ringing. Hold.

He scrubs the kitchen counter, tosses trash into a garbage bag, puts loose CDs and records into their appropriate locations.

He does push-ups. And sit-ups.

He stares at the phone on the table, picks it up, dials. After a beat...

DAN

(into phone)

Hello... This is... Is Rachel there?

INT. DAN'S APT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

He pops two pills, closes the medicine cabinet, and stares at his reflection in the mirror.

DAN

Okay.

INT. DAN'S APT. BEDROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON alarm clock, which changes from 5:59 to 6:00. The alarm sounds with a morning news report of recent casualties in Iraq. Dan snaps awake, turns off the alarm.

INT. DAN'S APT. KITCHEN - DAY

From the waist down, we see Dan feed and pet his cat before leaving for work. Hold on the cat eating.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

Stacy stands in front of the class, looking directly at the lens/us.



STACY

On September 13, 1971, 1200 Attica state prison inmates seized control of the prison, and took hostages, to negotiate changes to their inhumane conditions.

VARIOUS STOCK NEWSREEL IMAGES of revolt and police assault play over Stacy's brief lecture.

STACY (V.O.)

Governor Nelson Rockefeller ordered a military assault on the prison, which killed 29 inmates and ten hostages, every one caused from police gunshots. An official commission later stated, "With the exception of Indian massacres in the late 19th Century, the police assault was the bloodiest one-day encounter between Americans since the Civil War."

Back to Stacy staring straight ahead. Hold.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Drey, Stacy, Roodly and Lena munch on junk food, braiding each other's hair.

STACY

He hella thirsty though.

LENA

Thirsty?

STACY

Yeah, he like, when we gonna kiss, or when we gonna do this? And I'm like, nigga no, because when we went out, I paid for the movie and for you to eat, and everything. So you can't be serious you that thirsty.

ROODLY

Why you go out with him then?

STACY

I don't really mess with him like that like that. But he aw'ite sometimes.

LENA

What about Mr. Wright and Ms.  
Redding? Now that's a cute couple.

Drey half listens, her attention occupied by several BLACK MEN hanging out near the shiny, black Lexus parked down the block.

STACY

They do make a cute couple and they  
don't because Ms. Redding is into  
fashion, and Mr. Wright is like  
into street stuff.

ROODLY

I thought they were married.

STACY/LENA

Married?

This catches Drey's ear.

DREY

Y'all think Mr. Dunne is married?

STACY

Mr. Dunne?

LENA

Naw, he's hella crazy. Spirals,  
changes an' shit.

STACY

Would you marry Mr. Dunne?

Drey shakes her head, no.

STACY

I'm sure there's somebody for  
everybody, but not Mr. Dunne.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

Students CHATTER in the background as Dan sits at his desk with a cup of coffee in front of him. He looks well-rested.

The bell RINGS.

As students straggle in, Dan checks his watch and looks to Drey's empty seat in the middle of the room. He looks back to the door, when Drey enters. Dan smiles and turns to the class.

DAN  
I feel good this morning. Who else  
feels good?

Some students GRUMBLE from various corners of the classroom.

DAN  
I need a volunteer... Who feels  
strong?

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

Dan leans over his desk, arm-wrestling with Terrance. His arm trembling, Terrance slowly begins to push Dan's arm downwards.

DAN  
(addressing the class)  
What happens here - two opposing  
forces - Terrance and myself - are  
pushing against each other. As  
long as one side is stronger -  
looks like Terrance - change is  
slow and consistent... but when the  
other side becomes stronger...

Putting forth a burst of effort, Dan slams Terrance's arm to the desk. Some kids LAUGH.

DAN  
...there is a turning point. You  
all right, T?

Terrance smiles, goes back to his desk in front of Drey. Dan turns around and circles the second step on the list written on the chalkboard: "2 - TURNING POINTS."

DAN  
Now these forces can be personal,  
as in this arm-wrestling match.  
Or, for instance, puberty causing  
Jamal's voice to change...

More kids LAUGH. Dan notices Principal Henderson standing in the doorway. She shoots him a serious look. Dan turns back to the class, makes eye contact with Drey.

DAN  
But turning points can also happen  
on a greater scale. A war for  
instance. Um... Why don't you take  
five minutes to write down two or  
three historical turning points  
that we've discussed in class.

Dan hesitantly walks over to Henderson, joins her in the...

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Dan shifts nervously.

DAN  
What's up?

Henderson looks at him a beat, shaking her head.

HENDERSON  
Have you even opened the Civil  
Rights binder I gave you?

Dan laughs, relieved.

DAN  
Yeah, the binder. It's, uh, got  
some great stuff. I'm just  
finishing up this section, and  
then... as soon as--

HENDERSON  
I want you on the Civil Rights  
section by next week.

DAN  
Sure. I'm just providing some  
general context before we really  
get into the specifics.

A small SHRIEK echoes from inside the class.

HENDERSON  
I think you better get back in  
there.

Dan nods, turns back into the...

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

The students quiet down as Dan sits at his desk. He looks at  
Drey, smiles.

EXT. DREY'S BIKE STREETS MONTAGE - DAY

Drey cruises around the neighborhood on her bike, listening  
to music on her headphones.

EXT. DREY'S BIKE AT FRANK'S HOUSE - DAY

She rolls near the shiny black Lexus she observed in an earlier scene. FRANK - the smooth, handsome, local drug dealer - washes the car in a tight white tank-top. He smiles to Drey. She stops, removes her headphones.

FRANK  
What's new?

DREY  
I don't know.

FRANK  
What? Come here, I can't hear you.

Drey walks her bike to the driveway. Frank notices the Dodgers cap hanging around her handle bars.

FRANK  
Nice cap.

DREY  
Thanks. It's Mike's.

FRANK  
Yeah, I know... Heard from him lately?

DREY  
He writes sometimes.

FRANK  
He all right?

DREY  
Yeah, I don't know, I guess.

FRANK  
Let me know if I can help, all right? I know people in there. I could make a call.

DREY  
Okay.

FRANK  
Okay?

DREY  
Yeah.

FRANK

All right.

They stare at each other. Nobody moves.

FRANK

You thirsty? Wanta come in?

DREY

My bike.

FRANK

Nobody's gonna fuck wit that.

INT. FRANK'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Frank leads Drey inside, through the well-kept living area where Javier plays Playstation on the sofa. He nods to Drey, as they continue into the...

INT. FRANK'S HOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

A WOMAN is kneeled over, putting dishes into a lower cabinet, her tight, ripped, cutoffs exposing a little more ass than intended.

FRANK

Tina.

TINA

Hey baby.

FRANK

You remember Mike's sister Drey, right?

TINA

Hey sweetie.

FRANK

(pointing to a seat at the dining table)

Sit down a minute... I'll fix you some juice.

Drey takes a seat while Frank grabs a peppermint candy from a dish in front of her. He pops it in his mouth and motions Tina into the other room with him.

We stay with Drey, as she sits uncomfortably, waiting. She looks around the room and notices several depression-era ETHNIC FIGURINES: a bug-eyed picanniny eating an enormous slice of watermelon, a fat-lipped mammy cookie jar, a dish of peppermint candies with a slit-eyed Fu-Man-Chu design.

She takes a blowpop out of her pocket, unwraps it, and puts it in her mouth.

After what feels like an eternity, she gets up, and wanders back into...

INT. FRANK'S HOUSE - DAY

...where Javier had been. The Playstation is still on, but the room is empty.

FRANK (O.S.)  
Guess which hand...

Drey turns around to find Frank standing with his hands behind his back. Drey points to the left, wherein Frank holds up a wad of cash. He hands it to her.

FRANK  
Lucky guess... How 'bout that juice?

DREY  
No thanks. I'm not really thirsty.

FRANK  
Well, don't be a stranger, kid.  
You know where to find me.

INT. DREY'S APT. - DAY

Karen, in her bathrobe, sips a steaming cup of coffee. She stares out the kitchen window, waiting to wake up, when...

...Drey comes through the front door. Karen watches as Drey opens a kitchen cabinet, pulls down a coffee can, and inserts Frank's cash inside. She reseals the can, puts it back on the shelf, and notices her mom at the table.

DREY  
Hey...

KAREN  
Hey... You saw Frank?

DREY  
Just ran into him.

Karen looks out the window. When Drey starts off for her room, Karen opens her mouth to talk, but can't find the words. She lowers her head in frustration. After a beat, she gets up, takes Frank's cash from the coffee can, and puts it in her purse.

She returns to the table, stares out the window, and sips her coffee.

INT. DAN'S APT - EVENING

Dan sits on the couch, sketching a drawing for his children's book. He puts down his pen, leans back.

INT. DAN'S APT. - EVENING

Dan lies on the couch, watching the opening credits to "Charles in Charge" on the TV. He turns it off.

EXT. DAN'S NEIGHBORHOOD - EVENING

Dan jogs in sweats, huffing and puffing, but making the effort.

INT. DAN'S APT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Dan, fresh out of the shower, wipes steam away from the mirror, examines his reflection.

DAN

Okay.

INT. SCHOOL GYM BASKETBALL - DAY

The team watches Dan, as he demonstrates defense with Lena.

DAN

You wanta shoot? Huh? Go head,  
you got it like that? Shoot.

Lena takes a shot, but Dan swats the ball away, then turns to the team.

DAN

See what I mean? This is defense.  
Defense wins games. If they can't  
score... they can't win.

Drey and several other players laugh. Dan pats Lena on the back.



EXT. SCHOOL CARPOOL AREA - EVENING

Dan comes out of the main entrance, glances over to see Drey seated on a nearby bench, waiting for her ride.

Startled to see her, he quickly steps back into the doorway, hides. He takes a breath, mulling something over in his mind, then...

...steps out to the street, heads for his car without looking in her direction.

EXT. SCHOOL CARPOOL AREA - EVENING

Drey notices Dan getting into his car. She stands up and looks down the street for her ride.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

QUIZ TIME. Students train their eyes on their papers, while Dan reads a newspaper at his desk.

In back of the class, Bernard leans forward, cheating from the kid in front. His eyes dart back and forth from the kid's paper to Dan, unaware. However, when Bernard glances back to Dan again, he's busted. They lock eyes. Bernard slouches back in his seat fearing what comes next, but...

...Dan merely redirects his eyes back to the newspaper.

After a beat, Bernard slowly eases forward again, but this time...

DAN (O.S.)

Bernard-

Bernard flinches back into quiz position, low to the desk, eyes on his paper.

DAN

Up here... and ten points off.

Bernard moves to a chair in front of the class.

DAN

Second chances are rare in life.  
You should take better advantage.

Dan looks at Drey, who is quietly working on her quiz.

INT. SCHOOL TEACHER'S LOUNGE - DAY

Jimbo reads the newspaper out loud, while Dan and Isabel eat their lunches at a table off to the side.

JIMBO

A man who was curious to know if  
a knife could penetrate his  
bulletproof vest was killed  
yesterday by a stab wound through  
the chest. Witnesses say the man,  
Jeff Turner (32) urged his brother,  
Scott Turner (35) to stab him as  
hard as he could, believing the  
vest would stop the knife... It  
didn't.

Jimbo looks up as if inviting further comments from the room.  
Isabel and Dan redirect their attention to each other.

ISABEL

So how's your opposites and things?

DAN

Not bad.

ISABEL

Where'd you come up with that  
stuff?

DAN

Dialectics. It's a hobby, I guess.  
Picked it up in college.

ISABEL

A little thick for eighth grade,  
no?

DAN

Maybe. But I think they're  
starting to get it.

ISABEL

That's good... I don't know how  
you get away with it, though. Joy  
is so textbook.

DAN

I dunno. She has to be, I guess,  
but I think, secretly, she prefers  
my curriculum.

ISABEL  
Whatever it takes... How's your  
book?

DAN  
Mmm... Don't ask.

ISABEL  
There's always summer.

DAN  
You want to do dinner again?

ISABEL  
Okay.

DAN  
Friday.

ISABEL  
Yeah.

DAN  
I'll make something nice.

They stare at each other for a beat, until Jimbo interrupts.

JIMBO  
Did you guys hear they found a  
crack vial in the locker room?

DAN  
What?

JIMBO  
Yeah.

DAN  
Do they know whose it was?

JIMBO  
Whose it was? I don't think so.  
But that's a good idea. Why don't  
we put it in the lost and found,  
see if anybody claims it? Better  
yet, we could post flyers with a  
picture....

Long awkward pause until Dan forces a LAUGH.

EXT. FRANK'S LEXUS RANDOM STREET - DAY

Drey rides her bike down the block after school, when Frank's  
black Lexus creeps up next to her.

FRANK  
Hey. You need a ride?

DREY  
I got my bike.

FRANK  
Throw it in the back, then.  
Burgers on me.

Drey checks down the block in both directions before getting in.

INT. GOWANUS DINER - DAY

An old-style take-out burger joint. Drey and Frank chow down at the counter.

FRANK  
How's your burger?

DREY  
(mouthful)  
S'good.

FRANK  
You wanta try my chicken?

DREY  
Do I have to give you a bite of mine?

FRANK  
(smiles)  
No.

He hands her his chicken sandwich; she takes a bite.

FRANK  
How's school?

DREY  
S'alright.

FRANK  
Sup with basketball?

DREY  
We gotta game tomorrow.

FRANK  
Yeah?

DREY  
Wanna come?

FRANK  
Your moms gonna be there?

DREY  
Workin'.

FRANK  
Pops?

She shakes her head, no.

FRANK  
Fuck it. I'll come check you out  
then. Somebody gotta represent.

Frank pops a few fries into his mouth.

FRANK  
Tina packed some sweets for Mike  
last night. Sent'm off today.

Drey takes a big bite of her burger.

FRANK  
He was a good friend. Still is.  
Funny guy. He ever show you the  
chicken walk?

DREY  
(smiles)  
What?

FRANK  
Chicken walk. I can't do it, but  
it's like...

Frank sticks his thumbs under his armpits, begins a  
ridiculous imitation of a chicken, then stops, laughs.

FRANK  
Crazy right?

DREY  
Yeah.

FRANK  
You know we worked together?

DREY  
Uh-huh.

FRANK  
You ever thought about working?

No answer. They sit eating for a beat.

FRANK  
I used to work at this place.

DREY  
For real?

FRANK  
One-fifty a week...

Drey looks at the COOK (a hunched over BLACK MAN in his sixties) flipping burgers behind the counter.

FRANK  
Two milkshakes!

EXT. PARK - DAY

Dan sits on a bench alone, sipping coffee from a Styrofoam cup. He is well-dressed and neatly shaven. He stares off, watching kids jumping around on the nearby playground.

Dan glances out to the street, where he sees Rachel approaching in the distance.

As Rachel gets closer, she smiles at Dan, who waves hello.

He stands up and greets her with a hug. Rachel sits, smiles.

DAN  
You look great.

RACHEL  
You too.

DAN  
Thanks for coming.

RACHEL  
Thanks for calling.

DAN  
I should have sooner.

RACHEL  
S'okay.

DAN  
How are you?

RACHEL

Okay. I was trying to go back to school, but... I guess I'm just taking some time off to be with my mom.

DAN

How is she?

RACHEL

Not good.

DAN

Sorry.

RACHEL

What about you?

DAN

I dunno. Same old.

RACHEL

Still rockin' out?

DAN

When the occasion calls.

Dan smiles. Rachel doesn't. They look at each other for an awkward beat.

DAN

So, school, huh? You doing some Save the Whales type shit?

RACHEL

Environmental policy. Yeah.

DAN

That's great. You'll be great with that, I think.

Rachel nods and smiles. She fidgets with a ring on her finger. Dan watches her for a beat. She looks up, notices him noticing her ring.

DAN

Speaking of rocks...

RACHEL

(embarrassed)

Uh... Yeah.

DAN

That's great. Congratulations.

RACHEL

Thanks.

DAN

Who's the lucky guy?

RACHEL

Someone I met in the program.

DAN

Well, that's just great. Gee whiz...

A ball falls into frame, followed by a six-year-old boy. It bounces on the ground near Dan's foot. He picks it up, hands it back to the kid.

Dan watches as the kid leaves frame. Rachel stares hard at Dan.

RACHEL

Some people actually do change, ya know?

DAN

Just not me.

RACHEL

Just not you.

DAN

I'm still an asshole.

RACHEL

You're not an asshole. Just a big baby.

DAN

A big asshole baby.

A beat. Rachel smiles. Dan reaches over and squeezes her hand. Hold.

EXT. PARK - LATER - DUSK

From across the park, we see Dan and Rachel hug goodbyes. Rachel walks away, while Dan stays behind, staring off in the other direction.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

Gina stands in front of the class, looks directly at the lens/us.



GINA

On November 9th, 1969, 78 American Indians occupied Alcatraz Island to focus attention on Indian Rights and to improve the quality of life on reservations.

STOCK NEWSREEL IMAGES of the event play over his V.O.

GINA (V.O.)

They offered to buy Alcatraz for glass beads and red cloth, the price paid Indians for Manhattan Island three hundred years earlier.

Back to Gina, glaring straight ahead.

INT. VISITOR'S ROOM JUVENILE HALL - DAY

Drey sits at one of several tables in the room. She looks around at the prisoners, wearing bright orange jumpsuits, and the visitors across from them. She sucks on a blow pop.

She stands up when she sees MIKE (17), a tall, thin black man with short hair, coming towards her. He's wearing an orange jumpsuit.

MIKE

Hey, hey!

Drey and him do some kind of complicated handshake that turns into a hug.

MIKE

This is a nice surprise, what's the occasion?

DREY

No occasion.

MIKE

Where's ma?

DREY

Workin'. Darryl's uncle was comin' to visit, so he took me along.

MIKE

How's Darryl's leg?

DREY

S'alright.

MIKE

It's great to see you... Got one of those for me?

Drey reaches into her jacket pocket and pulls out a bag of blow-pops. She pushes them across the table.

MIKE

Sweet... Looks like someone got into these already.

Drey shrugs. Mike smiles. He takes a red one out of the already opened bag and unwraps it.

MIKE

Frank sent me some a' them nasty peppermints he always eatin'. What is that? I threw them shits out, kid.

Drey smiles.

MIKE

So, how's the team?

He puts the red blow-pop in his mouth.

DREY

We suck.

MIKE

(laughs)

And mom. How's she doin'?

DREY

She aw'ite.

MIKE

Still workin' too hard?

DREY

Yup.

MIKE

But she okay for money, right?

DREY

Uh-huh.

MIKE

Frank still lookin' out?

DREY

Yeah.

MIKE

Good, good... He owes us.

Mike looks off.

DREY

How come you never told on him?

His attention snaps back to Drey.

MIKE

For what? Woulda just made things more complicated. Shit was fucked up then - I know you remember.

DREY

I guess.

MIKE

It's all in the past now though.  
I'll be out soon. You'll see. We got Russell Simmons on the case.  
We'll be alright...  
(looks off again)  
We'll be alright.

A prison bell RINGS.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

CLOSE on a TV featuring Mario Savio's 1964 FSM speech on the Berkeley campus.

SAVIO

(on the TV)

There is a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick at heart, that you can't take part; you can't even passively take part, and you've got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels, upon the levers, upon all the apparatus, and you've got to make it stop. And you've got to indicate to the people who run it, to the people who own it, that unless you're free, the machine will be prevented from working at all!

Dan shuts off the TV, flips on the lights, and turns to the class.

DAN  
Interesting, right? What's going  
on here? What's this machine  
thing?

JAMAL  
Like robots and stuff?

DAN  
Uh-huh... Maybe. But let's think  
about it more like a metaphor.  
What else could the machine  
represent? Something that might  
prevent people from being free...

A long pause.

DREY  
Prisons?

DAN  
Absolutely. Prisons. Good, Drey.  
Now, what else could be part of  
this machine?

GINA  
Like war?

DAN  
The war machine, the military. Yes.

TERRANCE  
Whitey!

DAN  
Whitey. The man. Yeah, that too.

LENA  
The school.

DAN  
Okay. The school. Excellent.

STACY  
Ain't you the machine then?

DAN  
Me? The machine?

Kids LAUGH.

STACY  
You white; you part of the school.

DAN

Yes! You're right. I am part of the machine. And so are you. We are all part of the machine. This is the thing... Remember opposites? Everything is made of its opposing force? We may be opposed to the machine, but we're also a part of it. I work for the government - the school - but I'm opposed to many of its policies. You guys hate school, but you come anyway... most of the time at least. Hey, remember Rage Against the Machine?

Dan's music reference is met with empty stares. He smiles.

DAN

Before your time, I guess... Okay, who made some changes this week?

ROODLY

I changed my underwear.

DAN

Good for you, Roodly.

TERRANCE

He still smells like booty though.

DAN

Oh boy, here we go... Roodly?

Roodly shuffles through his notes, finds something.

ROODLY

November 1st, 1977.

DAN

Got that?

Terrance writes down the date, nods.

DREY

What about you, Mr. Dunne? Make any changes lately?

Dan thinks about it.

DAN

My cat's litter box. I changed it. Might seem like a small thing, but really it's a turning point for me.

(MORE)

DAN (cont'd)  
I like to think that I'm getting my  
domestic life together. What about  
you?

Before Drey can answer, the bell RINGS. Dan smiles at Drey  
and twirls his finger around in a circle.

DAN  
Okay, the cycle continues... see  
you all tomorrow.

INT. SCHOOL GYM BASKETBALL - NIGHT

On the court Drey fights for position against an oversized  
DEFENDER. When she gets the ball, she leans in for a shot,  
but the defender hacks her on the arm causing her to miss  
badly. Drey glares at the REFEREE.

DAN  
C'mon, ref, what was that? You're  
killing us!

A voice calls out from the bleachers...

FRANK  
Shake it off Drey! Shake it off!

Dan looks back into the bleachers, sees...

...Frank and Tina in the last row. Frank is on his feet,  
while Tina munches on popcorn by his side.

Drey looks to Dan, notices him noticing Frank. Dan motions  
Drey out of the game and sends in another player.

Drey grabs some water and sits down on the bench. Dan looks  
back at Frank, then sits down next to Drey.

DAN  
You need a ride home later?

Drey shrugs.

DREY  
Alright.

MORE GAME HIGHLIGHTS present the larger, more physical team  
roughing up Dan's squad on the court.

After one particularly aggressive foul, Dan rises to his feet  
as Frank calls out from the bleachers...

FRANK  
Goddamn ref! Where's the foul!

Dan steps onto the court, gets in the ref's face...

DAN  
Are you kidding me? That is  
ridiculous! I want that player out  
of this game and locked up. This  
is bullshit!

REF  
You're gone, coach! I will not  
tolerate that language on my court!

The ref blows his WHISTLE, ejects Dan from the game.

DAN  
Oh, so it's language you don't  
tolerate!

Dan grabs the basketball from one of the players, launches it  
at the ref's legs, and exits the court.

EXT. DAN'S CAR GOING TO DREY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

QUIET. Dan drives Drey home after the game. Dan has one  
hand on the wheel and the other lying on a bag of ice beside  
him. They sit in silence for a long beat, until...

DREY  
(teasing)  
I think you're hand's changing  
colors... get more ice on it.

DAN  
You shoulda seen the wall.

DREY  
I'm telling you, Dunne, you shoulda  
knocked that nigga out.

DAN  
You can't just go attacking people  
every time you disagree with them.

DREY  
But it woulda felt good, though,  
right? Felt good to just get it  
out.

DAN  
They're are other ways of getting  
it out.

DREY  
Right... like you do.

DAN  
What's that? Hm? You think you  
know everything about me now, is  
that it? Well you don't. One  
thing does not make a man....

Drey studies Dan for a moment as he uncomfortably plays with  
the stick shift. She looks out the window. After a beat...

DREY  
One thing does not make a man?

Dan cracks a smile. Drey smiles back.

DREY  
You know I was just talkin' about  
your hand, right?

DAN  
Oh... yeah, me too.

DREY  
Okay. So, you all right?

DAN  
What? Yeah, yeah, I'm fine...

DREY  
Sure?

DAN  
Yeah... What?

DREY  
I don't know.

DAN  
What? You don't know?

DREY  
That ref. For a second, thought I  
was gonna have to come over, and  
back you up. Help you out.



DAN  
 Help me out? Help ME out?  
 (laughs)  
 Help me out.

Drey smiles. They sit in silence for a beat.

DAN  
 Who was that guy? Cheering for you  
 back there? You know him?

DREY  
 Not really... do you?

Hold on Dan. After a beat...

DAN  
 Do me a favor... that whole  
 punching the wall incident? Let's  
 keep that between us, alright?

Drey smiles.

EXT. DAN'S CAR AT DREY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dan's car pulls in front. Drey jumps out and walks away.

EXT. DAN'S CAR AT DREY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dan watches Drey go into her building, then shifts his attention down the block, where drug dealers are perched on the corner. He taps the steering wheel with his thumb for a beat before he pulls out down the street.

He passes the kids on the corner and puts his blinker on, about to turn left, but pauses and looks back in his rearview mirror.

DAN  
 (under his breath)  
 Shit.

INT. BAR #2 - NIGHT

Dan strolls down the bar, past 4-5 people, all drinking alone. He has a fresh bounce to his step. He sits a few stools away from a WOMAN (white, 40s).

He nods to the bartender and looks to the woman next to him.

DAN  
 I had a good day.

The bartender delivers a double shot of something. Dan toasts in her direction, downs the drink. She looks at him and smiles.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Dan speaks to the woman in mid-conversation.

DAN  
(fired up)  
Even after the Duelfer report, right, said there were no weapons, no WMD programs... nothing. 72% of his supporters continue to believe Iraq had actual WMDs. 75% think they were providing support to Al Qaeda. Of those, okay, the majority believed we should NOT have gone to war if those things weren't true... So what? What do we do? I'm just one person, what can I, how can I...? You wanta know? Hm? In a word... Education.

Dan snorts a line off the dresser.

DAN  
I used to be so fucked up. Just, out there, ya know? But I cleaned up. I mean, mostly... So I can deal now, right? Get by. I did the rehab thing when I was younger. It works for some people. My ex-- She's getting married now. Jesus, ya know? But, but that shit's just not for me... I mean... it's the kids who are really... they keep me focused. The thing that... I don't know...

Dan looks at the woman, who is flipping channels on the bed. He approaches her, takes her hand, and they dance slow and close.

DAN (V.O.)  
Number three - change moves in spirals, not circles.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

Dan at the board, chalk in hand.

DAN

Example - the sun comes up, the sun goes down. But every time this happens what do we have? A new day. It's never the same as the day before. We breathe in, we exhale, but after each breath, we're a little bit different from the last. This is dialectics...

ROODLY

Why we need to know this?

DAN

We are always changing. Always.

Drey looks on, curious and absorbed.

DAN

Whether we like it or not. What's important to know is that there are some changes we cannot control... and others we can.

The bell RINGS.

While the other kids stream out of class, Drey takes her time, allows the class to empty, approaches Dan's desk.

Dan removes his lunch items from a brown paper bag.

DREY

How come you're not eating with the other teachers?

DAN

I don't know. Felt like being alone, I guess.

DREY

I know what you mean.

DAN

You do?

Pause. Drey nods.

DREY

All right. I'll see you later, Mr. Dunne. Enjoy your lunch.

DAN

Thanks.

Drey heads out, but stops in the doorway.

DREY  
Oh yeah... can I get a ride home  
after practice?

DAN  
(almost too quickly)  
Okay.

Drey exits. Dan stares at the empty doorway.

DAN  
(mocking himself)  
"Okay..."

EXT. DAN'S CAR AT DREY'S HOUSE - DAY

Dan's car pulls in front of Drey's apartment building.

DREY  
Thanks, Mr. Dunne. I guess I'll  
see you Monday?

DAN  
Have a good weekend, Drey.

Dan waits in the car as Drey steps onto her porch.

EXT. DAN'S CAR AT DREY'S HOUSE - DAY

Drey takes her key out of her pocket and looks back to Dan,  
whose car is still idling in the street.

She slips her house key back into her pocket.

EXT. DAN'S CAR AND FRANK'S CAR AT DREY'S HOUSE - DAY

Dan messes with the car stereo when...

...the passenger door opens, and Drey peeks inside.

DAN  
What happened?

DREY  
I lost my key.

DAN  
You lost your key? That sucks.

DREY  
What do we do?

DAN  
Can you call your mom at work?

DREY  
She's an E.M.T. I could page her,  
I guess, but...

Dan looks down at his watch, scans the neighborhood, thinking, when he notices Frank's Black Lexus turning onto the street.

DAN  
Is there some place I can take you?

Drey shrugs.

DAN  
Get in.

As she sits down in the passenger's seat, Frank drives by and stops next to Dan's car.

Frank's window glides down. He gives a puzzled nod to Dan, who stares, tense.

FRANK  
Sup y'all? Want some candy?

Frank extends a bag of peppermint candies toward Dan, who declines.

FRANK  
Drey?

Drey leans over Dan's lap, sifts through the candies in the bag, as Dan awkwardly squirms out of her way.

DREY  
That's all you got?

FRANK  
Sorry... So, y'all chillin', or  
what?

DREY  
Yeah--

DAN  
She lost my key-- her key.

Frank gives him a sideways glance.

FRANK  
Okay... You need a place to hang  
till your mom--

DAN  
--Nah, we're cool.

FRANK  
(to Drey)  
You cool?

DREY  
Uh-huh.

FRANK  
Aw'ite then... See ya.

Frank's window glides back up, and he pulls away.

DAN  
You don't know him?

DREY  
Who? Frank?

DAN  
Frank? I thought you said you  
didn't know him... Who is Frank?

DREY  
Just a guy from the neighborhood.

DAN  
You know what he does? I mean, I'm  
not one to judge. We all do what  
we do to survive, but... Drey... I  
know I'm not exactly the best...  
whatever, but...

DREY  
I hear you, Coach.

DAN  
You have a choice.

DREY  
I know. You don't hafta worry  
about me...

INT. DAN'S APT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Dan and Drey enter. Dan sets his keys and briefcase on the  
table.

DAN  
Here it is... make yourself  
comfortable.

Dan disappears into the kitchen. Drey glances around the living room, noticing a stack of old records on the floor next to Dan's record player.

DREY  
You got them old things?

DAN (O.S.)  
What old things?

DREY  
Records?

DAN (O.S.)  
Yes, mp3 queen, I have them old  
things... take a look, there's some  
good stuff.

Drey observes old family photos and books on the bookshelf.

DREY  
Who is this?

Dan glances over.

DAN  
That's my brother. And those are  
my parents...

DREY  
They still live together?

DAN  
Yeah.

Drey turns to the bookshelf, noticing copies of books by Malcolm X, Eldridge Cleaver, W.E.B. DuBois.

DREY  
Why you got so many books about  
Black people?

DAN (O.S.)  
I have books about all kinds of  
people, Drey.

DREY  
Can I borrow one?

DAN (O.S.)  
Go for it.

Drey grabs "Soul on Ice," then notices a photo of Dan and Rachel on the bookshelf.

DREY  
Who's she?

DAN (O.S.)  
Who?

DREY  
The girl.

DAN (O.S.)  
Old friend.

DREY  
What happened to her?

DAN (O.S.)  
Mind your business.

DREY  
You put it up there.

Drey stares harder at the photo, begins to recognize Rachel.

DREY  
I've seen her... She was at the  
game that night.

INT. DAN'S APT. KITCHEN - DAY

For the first time, we see Dan in the kitchen. He pauses, stares off.

DAN  
That's right... She was.

Drey joins Dan at the counter.

DREY  
You need help in here?

DAN  
Don't you have homework, or  
something?

DREY  
It's Friday.



Dan stares at her for a beat, then...

DAN

Okay. I'm going to share something with you, but it's top secret information... All right... this is my great aunt's secret spaghetti recipe. Now you can help, but if anyone asks...

DREY

I was never here.

DAN

Good kid. Okay, here we go. First wash your hands.

DREY

You like to cook a lot?

DAN

Not a lot. Just special occasions, ya know.

DREY

You gotta lady comin' over tonight or what?

DAN

Uh... Yeah.

DREY

You must like her a lot.

Dan shrugs.

DREY

Does she like you?

DAN

I don't know. I'm not easy to like sometimes, you know?

DREY

That's true.

Dan smiles, hands her carrots.

DAN

Wash these.

Drey goes over to the sink.

DREY

What you need is some jokes. Women love jokes, trust me. Keep'm laughing and you'll be all right.

DAN

Okay. You know any good ones?

DREY

Aw'ite, check it out... What do you call cheese that's not yours?

DAN

What?

DREY

Nacho cheese.

Dan chuckles.

DREY

It's yours... If you need it.

DAN

Thanks.

Long pause. They chop vegetables. Drey looks at Dan.

DREY

Coach?

DAN

Yeah?

DREY

I gotta question for you.

DAN

Okay.

DREY

What's it like when you smoke that stuff?

Dan stops chopping, stares at Drey. Hold.

DAN

(after a beat)

When's your mom get home?

DREY

...Sorry...

DAN  
Why don't you call her? I'll be  
right back.

Dan disappears into his bedroom.

EXT. DAN'S CAR AT DREY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dan's car stops in front of her building.

DREY  
Hope you have a good date, Mr.  
Dunne.

DAN  
Okay, thanks for the joke.

We stay with Dan as Drey gets out of the car. He grips the steering wheel.

EXT. DAN'S CAR AT FRANK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dan's car pulls to a curb, sits, idling in front of Frank's driveway. Javier emerges from the duplex, gets in Dan's car. They make a brief exchange, and Javier gets out. Dan drives off.

INT. DAN'S APT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dan stands at the stove, stirring a pan of sauce, as Isabel sips her wine. She fiddles with a card from the open game of Taboo on the kitchen table.

DAN  
We, for example, we just throw  
things in the garbage, or, or put  
them in the recycling bin. Which  
gets carted off and dumped or  
reused, but we don't know how or  
where or whatever. But there, ya  
know, everyone needs to recycle and  
to reinvent shit to survive. Your  
refrigerator dies, you take the  
working parts and make them into a  
new fridge.

ISABEL  
Or, if you live in the countryside,  
you take the rotten crop, and feed  
the new crop with it.

DAN  
Exactly. But even in cities, where  
people may not be as connected to  
the cycle of the days, the seasons,  
whatever, folks are still so...  
connected to that process of...

ISABEL  
Reinvention.

DAN  
Yes.

Dan looks back to Isabel. He laughs, embarrassed.

ISABEL  
When were you there?

DAN  
I've never actually been. I mean,  
I'd love to go, but--

ISABEL  
Oh, I just thought... The way you  
talk about the culture.

DAN  
I watch a lot of PBS.

Isabel smiles. Dan leaves the pasta on the stove, sits  
across from her.

ISABEL  
Another round?

INT. DAN'S APT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dan and Isabel are in the midst of a frantic round of Taboo,  
with Isabel describing a word in broken English while Dan  
struggles to guess that word. Isabel gestures wildly,  
encouraging Dan to guess more, but he eventually gives up,  
goes to the stove, strains the pasta.

DAN  
So what was it?

ISABEL  
Marshmallow.

DAN  
Marshmallow? I wasn't even close.

INT. DREY'S APT - NIGHT

Drey sits on the couch watching TV, while Karen argues on the phone in the background.

KAREN

I'm tired of this... No, no, no, you listen to me. What I want-- what I need is for you to give a little support now and then. This isn't asking much. I'm not saying everyday. Just when she needs you. I mean today she got locked out, she didn't even know your number at work. How's your child not gonna know...

Drey gets up, wanders out of the room.

INT. DAN'S APT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Dan stands in front of the mirror, sniffs a few bumps of powder off the end of a pen cap. He wipes his nose, and we follow him out to...

INT. DAN'S APT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

...where Isabel is standing, waiting for his return, the two plates of spaghetti on the coffee table next to her. They stare at each other for a beat, before...

...they go at it, kissing, rubbing, breathing, intensely.

INT. DREY'S APT. MOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Drey turns on the light in her mom's bedroom, goes to the mirror. She stares at her reflection, then opens her mom's makeup kit, removing the lipstick first.

INT. DAN'S APT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Where he and Isabel continue having sex in various ECUs of lips, fingers, eyes, arms.

INT. DREY'S APT. MOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

We continue to hear Dan and Isabel over A SERIES OF ECUs of Drey combing out her cornrow braids, applying lipstick, eye shadow, etc.

INT. DAN'S APT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Dan finishes with Isabel on the couch.

Their breathing continues over...

INT. DREY'S APT. MOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

DREY Finished making herself up, she stares into the mirror for a long beat. Hold.

FADE OUT.

INT. DAN'S APT. KITCHEN - DAY

CLOSE on Isabel looking off-screen.

ISABEL  
Are you a communist?

Dan stands in the kitchen doorway, shirtless in his boxers.

DAN  
(half asleep)  
What?

Isabel sits at the kitchen table in Dan's bathrobe (loose and revealing around her chest), eating last night's spaghetti.

ISABEL  
I was looking through your books.  
Che in Africa?

DAN  
So...

ISABEL  
The Communist Manifesto?

DAN  
If I had Mein Kampf, would that  
make me a Nazi?

ISABEL  
(taking another bite)  
This is really good, no?

Dan goes to the fridge, pours himself a large glass of water.

DAN  
It's better warm.

ISABEL

You don't have Mein Kampf, but if you did, then I suppose I'd ask if you were a Nazi.

DAN

Maybe I'm hiding it.

ISABEL

Why would you hide it?

DAN

Because I don't want people asking if I'm a Nazi all the time.

ISABEL

Why not?

DAN

Because it's not cool to be a Nazi these days, or did they not teach you that in Peru, or wherever you're from.

ISABEL

Why would you ever want to be something that's not cool? Having to hide all the time? It doesn't sound very fun.

DAN

It's not.

Dan takes a huge gulp of water, stands and goes to...

INT. DAN'S APT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

...where he puts on a record, and flips on the computer.

Isabel follows him, stands in the doorway with his cat in her arms.

ISABEL

She's so sweet, this one... My ex-husband was a communist.

DAN

You were married?

ISABEL

You knew that.

DAN

I didn't know that.

ISABEL  
I told you. The photographer. He  
joined some rebels down in  
Colombia, or someplace.

DAN  
He joined rebels? Who joins  
rebels?

Isabel smiles, puts down the cat.

ISABEL  
So... what are you doing today?

DAN  
I don't know... thought maybe I  
would...

Dan gestures toward the computer. Hold on Isabel's  
uncomfortable reaction.

ISABEL  
Good. You're writing, that's  
great. I'll let you get to it,  
then.

DAN  
All right. I had a good time.

ISABEL  
Me too.

Isabel exits out of the room.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

Terrance stands in front of the class, stares directly at the  
lens/us...

TERRANCE  
On November 1st, 1977, Harvey Milk  
was elected to the San Francisco  
City Council. He was the first  
openly gay person ever elected to  
public office.

STOCK NEWSREEL FOOTAGE of Diane Feinstein announcing Milk and  
Mayor Moscone's assassinations play over the V.O.



TERRANCE (V.O.)

The following year he was assassinated by a fellow council member, Dan White, who claimed he shot Milk because he ate too much junk food that day. This would later become known as "the Twinkie defense."

Back to Terrance, who glances off camera, addresses someone off-screen...

TERRANCE

Is that for real?

INT. SCHOOL GYM DANCE - NIGHT

Dan and Isabel lean against a wall, drinking punch as a hip-hop jam shakes the floor and lights flicker over their faces. They occasionally glance at each other with subtle smiles.

A WIDE ANGLE reveals them to be in the school gymnasium during a dance, kids getting down all around. A few TEACHERS also partake in the festivities. Earle does his funky chicken as the others laugh.

INT. SCHOOL GYM DANCE - NIGHT

Drey sits with her friends while they watch and laugh at the boys, however, Drey isn't smiling.

STACY

(pointing out Jamal)

Damn he looks good. Watch him move.

Jamal turns loose a few new moves on the dance floor.

LENA

He alright, but you know who I'm lookin' at?

She cocks her finger like a gun toward Terrance on the floor.

ERIKA

Yeah, I see how you feel. Drey?  
Sup girl, where's your man  
at?

Not really paying attention, Drey turns to them, and shakes her head, not interested in playing the game. She directs her attention back to the wallflowers, Dan and Isabel, in back of the gym. She watches as Dan moves away from Isabel and towards the exit. Hold.

EXT. SCHOOL STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Dan emerges from a dark shadow, wipes his nose as he comes up the stairs.

INT. SCHOOL GYM DANCE - LATER

Dan dances by himself, a little out of control. He catches Drey spying him from across the gym, motions for her to come and dance. She pretends not to notice him, so...

...he dances over to her, circling around her like a crippled shark, until she smiles, wherein he takes her hand, leads her in a dance.

Kids take notice of Dan's aggressive behavior, pointing him out to their friends. Some of them laugh.

After a quick twirl, Dan and Drey make eye contact, which snaps him out of his high. He releases her hand, and walks away.

EXT. SCHOOL GYM DANCE - NIGHT

Kids filter out into the street after the dance. While saying his goodbyes, Dan sees Drey walk off towards a shiny black Lexus parked down the block.

DAN

Drey! Where you goin' kid?

DREY

Home.

DAN

C'mon, I'll give you a ride.

DREY

It's cool, coach, I gotta ride.

DAN

Yeah, well, I think you should come with me. Don't you think?

Frank pokes his head out of the Lexus window.

FRANK

Drey! Everything cool?

Some of the kids take notice as the tension builds.

DAN  
Everything's cool, thanks! We're good. Drey's going with me.

FRANK  
(gets out of car)  
Is that true, Dee? You stayin' wit Teach?

DREY  
Nah, man--

DAN  
Yeah, that's right. Thanks for the offer, but she's with me tonight. Thanks, dude.

Frank approaches.

FRANK  
Look, I'm sorry, I think there must be a misunderstanding here.  
(extends hand)  
I'm Frank.

The gesture frazzles Dan. He doesn't shake it. Isabel steps up behind him.

ISABEL  
Dan?

DAN  
Drey?

DREY  
Later coach.

Drey starts off with Frank, so Dan grabs her by the arm, pulls her away. She flinches.

ISABEL  
Dan! What are you doing?

DAN  
Drey, I'm sorry, Drey. You okay?

FRANK  
Yo, take it easy, man.

DAN  
You take it easy! I am taking it easy. I always take it easy.

FRANK  
Okay.

ISABEL  
Dan!

DREY  
It's okay, Coach. I'll be okay.

Drey heads off with Frank.

FRANK  
See you later?

DAN  
No you won't see me later. See me  
later? What is that?

ISABEL  
Calm down.

Dan watches Drey get into the car with Frank.

DAN  
Fuck!

ISABEL  
What's the matter with you?

DAN  
I'm sorry.

ISABEL  
Relax.

DAN  
I fucked up.

ISABEL  
Listen, calm down. What's going  
on?

Dan stares at her, then looks away.

INT. ISABEL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

They enter. Dan is still a little tense, glancing around her  
living room. Awkward.

ISABEL  
Want something to drink?

DAN

Um...

ISABEL

Wine, whiskey, water...

DAN

Whatever.

ISABEL

Okay...

Isabel disappears into the kitchen. Dan remains on his feet, shifting nervously, he glances around her apartment.

ISABEL (O.S.)

Do you smoke?

DAN

What?

She emerges from the kitchen.

ISABEL

I've got this joint--

DAN

Jesus.

ISABEL

--I don't know.

DAN

Oh, no, sorry, I don't...

ISABEL

What's wrong?

DAN

I don't know.

ISABEL

I just thought, you know--

DAN

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

ISABEL

...that things were a little...

DAN

Sure, no.

ISABEL  
You need to relax, Dan.

DAN  
No. You're right. You're right.

ISABEL  
What's going on with you tonight?  
You can tell me.

DAN  
No, I'm cool. Really... How bout  
some wine? I'll have some wine.  
Wine sounds fine, really...

Isabel watches Dan as he nervously shifts on his feet, biting his lip.

DAN  
I should go. I'm sorry.

ISABEL  
What's going on?

DAN  
I don't know.

ISABEL  
Is there something I--

DAN  
--No. I don't think so. There's  
just a lot on my mind.  
Distractions that make it  
impossible for me to be here  
now.

ISABEL  
So you'll be here now some other  
day.

DAN  
Yes. Good night. I'm sorry.

Pause. Dan leans in and they kiss for a beat, until he pulls away, and exits.

INT. BAR #3 - NIGHT

A PERFORMER on stage speaks into the mic.

PERFORMER

This song is called "half nelson"  
for those times when you're  
feelin'... kinda stuck.

Dan sits at the bar, hammered, but that doesn't stop him from ordering another drink.

A MAN recognizes Dan, approaches.

MR. DICKSON

Dunne, right?

Dan stares blankly at him.

MR. DICKSON

Lloyd Dickson. My daughter,  
Paula, went to Jefferson. Paula  
Dickson. You taught History,  
right?

DAN

Paula Dickson.

MR. DICKSON

You were always her favorite  
teacher... She's in her first  
semester at Georgetown. History  
major.

DAN

Paula Dickson.

Dan's glassy eyes can't seem to focus.

MR. DICKSON

Well... have a good night.

DAN

Wait...

After a long awkward pause, Mr. Dickson walks away, leaving Dan alone at the bar. He gets back to his drink.

INT. DAN'S APT. KITCHEN - DAY

Dan fills his thermos with coffee, fills the cat bowl. He glances into the living room, sees his cat on the floor, makes a smooching sound for it to come eat. It doesn't move.

Hold on Dan, watching the cat.

DAN

Hey girl.

More smooching sounds, but no movement from the cat.

Dan looks over next to the coffee table, where a small baggie lies on the floor near some cat puke. Dan exits the apartment.

INT. SCHOOL BATHROOM STALL - DAY

Dan sniffs more powder, steps out of the stall, and finds Jimbo, sleeves rolled, staring at his arm in the mirror.

JIMBO

Fucking patch. I got this rash you wouldn't believe.

DAN

Gotta run, Jim.

JIMBO

(as Dan exits)

Don't forget to wash your hands.

(too late)

Gross.

Jimbo gets back to his arm, grimaces.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

Dan at the chalkboard. He scribbles incomprehensible notes and diagrams while giving an intense lecture.

DAN

In Asia, the idea that everything is made from opposites - yin and yang - dates back to the i ching, about 3000 years ago. Taoism holds that change is the only constant. For some reason that idea died out in Western thought. Aristotle argued that things can't be black and white, good and bad-- they have to be either/or, not both//and. Perhaps the Christians thought of all of God's creations as being perfect, so to say that a tree is both strong and weak, crooked and straight, would be to suggest that God had created imperfection.

(MORE)



DAN (cont'd)  
I think that they did recognize,  
however, that there is good and bad  
in every person - we may be sinners  
but we can strive for good - just  
not in nature itself...

Dan stops, looks at the class. His attention fixates on Drey for a moment.

A bead of blood drips from Dan's nose. He wipes it away, examines his hand.

DAN  
Excuse me.

Dan steps outside the classroom. Drey watches him leave.

INT. SCHOOL TEACHER'S LOUNGE - DAY

Dan wanders into the lounge, where Jimbo is reading the newspaper.

JIMBO  
Broward County, Florida middle-  
schools mistakenly failed over  
sixty-five hundred students in  
June due to what it later called  
a computer error. A school official  
called the total count of students  
affected... an insignificant sum.

Dan takes a seat at the table across from Jimbo, stares into space.

JIMBO  
(folding paper)  
What goes, Danny boy? How's  
history?

DAN  
I can't do it anymore.

JIMBO  
I know the feeling.

DAN  
I think I'm losing it.

JIMBO  
Mmm-hm. Yep. Hang in there,  
it'll pass. Just remember you're  
the one in control, right?  
(MORE)

JIMBO (cont'd)  
 Things'll get better. If not,  
 there's always summer.

Jimbo laughs, but Dan remains serious.

JIMBO  
 Don't you have class right now?

Dan stares at Jimbo for a long beat, nods.

Hold on Jimbo's concerned expression.

EXT. FRANK'S CAR VARIOUS STREETS - DAY

Frank and Drey cruise the neighborhood, looking for somebody specific. They're each sucking on a blow-pop.

FRANK  
 Where'd he go? Is that him?

DREY  
 No no no... Next block - look,  
 look, look...

FRANK  
 Where?

DREY  
 Wait wait wait... There!

Frank SLAMS the brakes, throws the car in reverse.

The car SCREECHES to a halt near some KIDS hanging out on the corner. Drey jumps out, runs to one of the kids, CHARLES (14 and much bigger than her). He wears her Brooklyn cap and straddles her bike. Frank stands near the car, watching.

DREY  
 Yo, nigga, that's my bike.

CHARLES  
 What?

Charles notices Frank looming nearby.

DREY  
 I said that's my bike. What the  
 fuck you doin' with my bike?

CHARLES  
 (scared)  
 I didn't know it's yours.

DREY

You didn't know? How you didn't know it's mine? You always see me on that bike.

CHARLES

I didn't know. I'm sorry. I thought--

DREY

--What? You thought what?

CHARLES

Sorry.

DREY

Hella sorry, nigga. I should fuck you up.

Drey stares at him for long beat. Charles glances at Frank again, wherein...

...Drey swipes the cap off his head, causing him to flinch, and nearly stumble to the ground. He gets off the bike, hands it to Drey.

She puts the cap on her head and smiles, as she walks the bike back toward Frank.

Frank pops his trunk, helps Drey load the bike in.

FRANK

Thought you was gonna fuck'm up?

DREY

Didn't have to.

Frank taps her cap bill, and SLAMS the trunk closed, smiles.

INT. HALL OF SCIENCE - DAY

A SERIES OF DOCU-STYLE ANGLES follow the kids as they roam the many exhibits, labs, and interactive demonstrations.

EXT. HALL OF SCIENCE - PLAYGROUND - DAY

Dan sits at the bottom of a slide, spaces out. Drey approaches, sits on the slide next to his. They sit in silence, until...

DAN

Your hat's back.

DREY

Yeah... Did you know my brother?

DAN

I knew of him, but he wasn't in my classes.

DREY

Did you know him outside school?

Dan looks to her, shakes his head, no.

DAN

How come you never said anything?

DREY

About what?

Dan looks at her, and she understands.

DREY

For what? It woulda just made things more complicated... Anyway, it didn't feel right.

Dan nods, and they look out over the park.

EXT. DAN'S CAR AT FRANK'S HOUSE - DAY

Dan pulls his car to the curb, gets out, stalks toward a group of men hanging out near the black Lexus parked in a driveway. Frank is among them, sucking on a blow-pop.

Dan comes within 20 feet, stops.

DAN

Can we talk?

FRANK

Teach? Sup man? How's the team?

Frank steps over.

DAN

I hate to be this guy right now, but I need you to stay away from Drey.

FRANK

Excuse me?

DAN  
You heard me. Just do me this  
solid. Please.

FRANK  
Do you a solid?

DAN  
You know what I mean.

FRANK  
Yeah, right, like some after school  
special: "Stay away from the  
girl... she's too precious for  
these streets."

DAN  
I'm not kidding.

FRANK  
I know.

DAN  
So you understand?

FRANK  
Yeah. Yeah, I understand.

DAN  
Good.

Dan turns to go, but stops when...

FRANK  
What about you?

DAN  
What?

FRANK  
I understand you. You understand  
me?

DAN  
You got something to say to me?

FRANK  
Drey is my friend. Those guys  
there? Friends. I'm good to my  
friends... We could be friends  
too.

DAN

What is this, the fucking Romper Room? Are you listening to me?

FRANK

Why're you so upset?

DAN

You're not listening to me!

FRANK

I'm right here, baby. What's on your mind?

DAN

Do this thing. I'm talking about one good thing. Are you even capable of that?

Frank's FRIENDS begin to GRUMBLE. Frank removes the blow-pop from his mouth, spits red on the concrete.

FRANK

Once again, white makes right. Right?

Dan looks at Frank, then away towards the projects in the background. After a beat, he shrugs.

DAN

I don't know. I mean, what else can I do?

FRANK

You had to get it outta your system. I can respect that.

DAN

I'm sorry.

FRANK

No, listen... You want a drink, or sump'm? Come in, have a drink. Sit down, relax for a minute.

Frank drapes his arm around Dan's shoulder.

FRANK

Yo, Tina! Pour Teach a glass a water... or whatever he wants... You like candy?

INT. DREY'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Drey enters through the front door and sets down her backpack. She glances off screen and stops, startled upon seeing...

...Karen, staring out the window.

Drey quietly approaches Karen, who barely moves, off in another dimension. Drey looks to her, then out the window, trying to see what she sees. Hold.

EXT. DAN'S CAR VARIOUS STREETS - NIGHT

Eyes glassed over and dreamy, Dan drives through the streets.

EXT. DAN'S CAR ISABEL'S APT. - NIGHT

Parked on a residential street, Dan nods his head to muffled music seeping through the windows. He glances out at the building across the street.

INT. ISABEL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

ANGLE ON FRONT DOOR. Dark. KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK.

A light flicks on. KNOCK KNOCK.

Isabel, wearing pajamas, enters frame, looks through the peephole, and opens the door to reveal...

DAN  
(hand raised as if  
taking an oath)  
I am not now, nor have I ever  
been...

ISABEL  
Dan... Hey, what's going on?

He enters.

DAN  
I don't know. I was in your  
hood... thought maybe... Surprise!

ISABEL  
Yeah, it's a surprise, that's true.  
You okay?

DAN

Mmm... Yeah, yeah, I'm real good.  
How are you?

ISABEL

Good. A little tired. What is  
it... two thirty?

DAN

Yeah, I'm sorry, is that late?

ISABEL

Well...

DAN

It is. Shit! Um...

ISABEL

I mean, we do have class tomorrow.

DAN

Yeah, you're right. I didn't think  
of that. I'm really sorry about  
the other night...

Dan's attention drifts off.

ISABEL

Sure you're okay?

He thinks about the question.

DAN

Yeah.

They stare at each other in confusion, until...

...Dan slowly stalks toward her, kisses her on the mouth.

At first, if only for a second, she goes with it, but then  
tries to pull away, so he holds her tighter and kisses her  
harder.

ISABEL

Stoppit. Dan. Hold on. Wait.  
What's wrong?

He backs her up to the sofa, forces her down, continues  
kissing her on the mouth and neck.

Her struggle intensifies, pushing, squirming, even punching  
his back. She manages to scurry a few feet away, but he  
tackles her to the floor, rips her pajama top, exposing her  
chest.



He stops, looks at her, scared, beneath him. In this moment of hesitation, she SMACKS his face and scurries away to the bathroom, SLAMS the door.

After a beat, Dan approaches the bathroom door, his lip bleeding.

DAN

Boy, um... that was pretty awkward, right? I mean what was that, really? I don't know. Feel free to whatever, you know... I'll understand. No hard feelings. So... maybe I'll see you tomorrow? Or not. It's hard to say at this point... where I'll be... I am so fucked up, I don't even know what's... I hope you know that I really liked you. I had fun-- I mean not tonight I didn't, but other times with you... We had fun, right?

Dan rests his head against the door.

DAN

I'm sorry...

Dan exits the frame, and we hold on the bathroom door.

EXT. DAN'S CAR AT SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

Dan pulls his car into a spot, kills the ignition, and sits. He's got a band-aid on his lip.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

QUIZ TIME. Dan pretends to read the sports section at his desk, while the kids focus their attention down on their tests.

However, Bernard leans forward as he did earlier to cheat off Stacy in front of him.

Dan sees this, stands up, grabs Stacy's test, SLAMS it down on Bernard's desk, and returns to his sports section.

Roodly LAUGHS, wherein Dan shoots him a serious look that causes him to shut up quick. Before Dan can get his eyes back to his newspaper, he catches Drey looking at him.

DAN  
(to Drey)  
What?!

Drey looks back at her test.

EXT. DAN'S CAR AT SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

Dan sits in his car, munching on potato chips, when Drey taps on his window. Annoyed, he rolls down the window.

DAN  
What?

DREY  
How's things?

DAN  
What's it look like?

DREY  
I don't know. Just asking.

DAN  
What do you want?

DREY  
Nothing.

DAN  
Like, I mean, I'm not you're  
friend, Drey. I'm you're teacher.  
Do you see any other kids coming up  
to my car, trying to talk to me?  
Hello? Why don't you go play with  
kids your own age? I'm trying to  
be alone.

DREY  
Then be alone, then. Asshole.

Drey walks away, but Dan gets the last word...

DAN  
Bitch.

He rolls up the window, sits alone. He watches Drey for a beat, then punches the stirring wheel.

INT. SCHOOL TEACHER'S LOUNGE - DAY

Dan wanders in, goes to the coffee pot. The other teachers begin to whisper about him. The mood is deadly serious.

DAN  
(feeling the vibe)  
What's up people?

Several teachers glance away from Dan, but Jimbo approaches.

JIMBO  
Henderson's looking for you.

DAN  
Oh... Must be the new curriculum.  
She's been all over me about this.

JIMBO  
Yeah, that's probably it. But  
listen, Dan... If there's anything  
else going on, if you need any  
help, anything... you know we're  
here for you pal.

DAN  
I'm fine, Jim, thanks.

Dan exits the lounge with Jimbo looking after.

INT. SCHOOL HENDERSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Dan pokes his head inside the door.

DAN  
You wanted to see me Joy?

HENDERSON  
Dan. Close the door.

Dan steps inside, sits in the chair across from her desk.

HENDERSON  
Is there something going on that I  
should know about?

Dan lowers his head, thinks about the question. He rubs his fingers through his hair and takes a deep breath. Trying not to smile, he gives an awkward sigh and shrugs.

EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

Dan tries to balance a box of books on his thigh as he opens the back door of his car. The box tilts unsteadily, and a couple books fall on the pavement.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

Drey stares directly at the lens/us.

DREY

On September 11, 1973, the CIA helped overthrow and murder democratically elected Chilean president, Salvadore Allende.

STOCK FOOTAGE of the coup plays over her lecture.

DREY (V.O.)

The military coup, lead to mass disappearances, assassinations, and torture of thousands of Chilean civilians under the leadership of U.S.-backed dictator, Agosto Pinochet. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger said of Allende's 1970 election, quote: "These issues are much too important for the Chilean voters to decide for themselves."

EXT. DUNNE HOUSE FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

The door opens to reveal a WOMAN (early 60s). She smiles, SCREAMS.

WOMAN

DANNY!!

DAN

Hi mom.

WOMAN

What happened to your lip?

INT. DUNNE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dan helps his mom, JO, prepare dinner.

JO

It's so nice to see you, Danny.

Dan nods.

JO

You should really come see us more often. Why don't you stop by more often?

DAN

Yeah, I--

JO

--Oh, you don't have to answer that. Your mother just misses you, that's all. How's your class?

DAN

It's great. The kids are getting smarter every day... no thanks to me, I'm sure.

JO

Are you feeling well? You seem a little...

A car door SHUTS outside.

DAD (O.S.)

Goddamnit! Whose goddamn car is in my--? What the hell's going on around here?

Dad enters, smiling, goofing off. He wears a worn-out sports jacket with patches on the elbows, carries an old briefcase. Dan does his best to play along.

DAD

Jo... what I tell you about letting strangers in the house?

JO

He seemed like a nice boy.

DAD

You call that a nice boy? How bout it boy? You nice?

DAN

I'm not so nice.

Dad sees the butter knife in Dan's hand.

DAD

Oh, my god, he's got a knife!

Dad grabs a kitchen knife and chases Dan around the kitchen island.

JO

No running with knives, please!

Dan sets his knife down, too tired to play.

DAD  
What's the matter, kid? Tough day  
at the zoo?

Dan and Jo exchange subtle glances.

DAD  
How are you?

They hug hello.

DAN  
Not too bad.

JO  
He looks thin. Doesn't he look  
thin?

DAD  
You look thin.

DAN  
I am thin.

DAD  
He is thin.

JO  
He's not that thin.

DAD  
Looks that thin to me.

JO  
Your hair looks good, honey.

DAN  
What're you drinking?

DAD  
Why? What've you heard? A man's  
drink is his business, son. And  
in this country, you don't mess  
with a man's business. Right Jo?

She sticks a spoon of sauce in his face.

JO  
Taste this.

DAD  
Mmmm... She's right though, you  
look beat-- needs salt.

JO  
Salt my ass-- are you getting  
enough sleep, honey?

DAN  
I'm fine, mom. It's been a busy  
week.

DAD  
Nice to see you, kid.  
KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

INT. DUNNE FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

It swings open revealing Jeff (late 20s) and Cindy (mid 20s)  
at the doorstep.

DAN  
Jeffrey.

JEFF  
Daniel.

DAN  
I guess this is the part where we  
hug.

JEFF  
Ah, nobody wants to see that part.  
Let's get on with it.

DAN  
You're right. Who's your little  
friend?

JEFF  
Cindy, meet big brother, Dan.

CINDY  
Nice to meet you. Is your lip  
okay?

INT. DUNNE DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Dad enters with another bottle of wine, pours into Cindy's  
glass.

CINDY  
That's plenty, thanks.

Mom enters with the gravy.

JO  
Okay, I think that's it.

DAD

Let's eat!

JEFF

How's your novel?

CINDY

You're writing a novel?

DAN

It's actually a children's book...  
which I haven't started yet.

CINDY

I love children's books. What's it  
about?

DAN

Dialectics.

CINDY

Dialectics? What's that?

JEFF

Here we go.

DAN

It's a theory that attempts to  
explain how change works.

CINDY

Sounds interesting.

DAN

I think so.

DAD

How does change work, Dan?

Slow ZOOM in on Dan, as plates are passed in and out of  
frame.

DAN

Let's save that lecture for  
dessert.

JO (O.S.)

I heard you guys were at the march.

JEFF (O.S.)

Yeah, it was really great.



CINDY (O.S.)  
Like 200,000 people, right? Danny  
Glover was there.

JO (O.S.)  
Oh, I love him. What was that  
movie? Honey, remember that movie?  
With Danny Glover? What was that?

DAD (O.S.)  
Cindy, what is it you do again?

THE VOICES slowly FADE as Dan gets lost.

CINDY (O.S.)  
I'm currently unemployed.

DAD (O.S.)  
Nothing wrong with that. I  
accomplished more on unemployment  
than I did at any paying job.

JEFF (O.S.)  
Cindy plays in a band.

CINDY (O.S.)  
It's nothing serious.

JEFF (O.S.)  
She's awesome.

JO (O.S.)  
That's great. What do you play?

CINDY (O.S.)  
I sing. We have kind of like a  
new-agey, punk, big-band style I  
guess... If that makes any sense...

INT. FRANK'S APT - NIGHT

Tina stands behind Drey, braiding her hair tight against her  
scalp, while Frank looks on from across the table.

FRANK  
(in mid-story)  
She rolls right up on this kid.  
And he's no joke, he's a big dude,  
right? What's his name?

DREY  
Charles.

FRANK

"Charles, you sorry-ass nigga; get the fuck off my bike, before I knock yo fat-ass out."

TINA

You said that?

Drey smiles, nods.

FRANK

Kid was stressin', I'm tellin' you. Started apologizing, "I'm sorry, I didn't know, sorry."

TINA

Then what? You knock him out?

FRANK

(points to Drey, smiles)  
Tell her.

DREY

Didn't have to.

Frank cracks up.

FRANK

You heard that? Didn't have to. That's my girl right there... How many's that?

For the first time, we see what's on the table in front of Drey - a pile of plastic baggies next to a fist-sized mound of cocaine.

DREY

Ten?

FRANK

Do ten more.

INT. DUNNE DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The CLITTER-CLATTER of dishes overwhelms the conversation, so this sequence focuses primarily on little details: smiles, subtle glances, forks, reactions to stories...

Cindy takes a sip of wine, not realizing she just finished another glass. Not missing a beat, Dan pours her another, finishing off the bottle, and winks at Jeff. Jeff smiles.

Dad pops open another new bottle of wine.

CINDY  
You guys really live it up around here.

DAD  
Did you hear that folks? The rock star is impressed.

Cindy laughs.

DAD  
Hey Jeff, didn't you tell this girl that around here we always party like it's 1999?

JEFF  
Dad, could you be any more embarrassing?

DAD  
(to Cindy)  
Did you know I was in Nam? Check out this scar...

JO  
Ohmigod, Danny! You'll never believe what I found the other day.

She gets up, leaves the room.

INT. FRANK'S APT KITCHEN - NIGHT

Drey examines one of Frank's ethnic figurines. She reaches over, grabs a little sambo, looks it over.

DREY  
Why you got these scary things?

FRANK  
Found'm on the internet, some dude in Texas.

DREY  
I wouldn't want those around my house.

Frank chuckles. Drey sits down next to him at the table. She fiddles with the figurine, still in her hand.

DREY  
You ever sell to coach?

FRANK

Why?

DREY

Just wondering.

FRANK

Don't you think you and Teach, your relationship, is a little...

DREY

What?

FRANK

Inappropriate.

DREY

What do you mean?

FRANK

I mean he's your teacher.  
Sometimes you act like--

DREY

--He's my friend.

FRANK

He's a basehead, Drey. He doesn't have friends. If I was you, I would seriously look into transferring classes.

INT. DUNNE HOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jo removes the children's classic "Free to be... You and Me" from its sleeve. She puts the vinyl album on the player, drops the needle.

INT. DUNNE HOUSE - NIGHT

Jo rejoins the family at the table, as "It's All Right to Cry" echoes in from the other room.

JO

Do you remember this?

DAN

Jesus.

Dad leans back in his chair, stuffed.

CINDY

(drunk)

Be sure to save room for dialectics  
everyone.

JEFF

Don't get him started.

The family quiets down for a beat as "It's Alright To Cry"  
continues to play from the other room.

Jo takes the moment to start clearing off the table. Cindy  
and Jeff get up to help.

Dan and Dad sit alone at the table, both staring off,  
listening to the music.

Dad looks at Dan. After a beat, Dad stands up and walks into  
the other room, changes the music.

EXT. FRANK'S LEXUS VARIOUS STREETS - NIGHT

Frank at the wheel, Drey riding shotgun.

FRANK

You smoke weed?

DREY

Nah...

FRANK

Good. Keep your shit clear. You  
got to. You drink?

DREY

Nah...

FRANK

Well, don't worry about that too  
much. Nothin' wrong with a little  
drink now and then... Ya heard?

DREY

Yeah, I heard.

FRANK

What about sex?

DREY

What about it?

FRANK

You got a man?

DREY

Hell naw.

FRANK

Smart kid. Smarter than Mike...

INT. DUNNE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dad empties the last bottle drops of whiskey into his glass, opens the cabinet, pulls down a new bottle, and tops it off. He sips his glass alone, stares over to the...

INT. DUNNE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

...where Cindy puts on an old Tom Petty record, and sings along. Jo and Jeff join in while Dan looks on from the couch.

EXT. FRANK'S LEXUS VARIOUS STREETS - NIGHT

Frank turns up the car stereo. He and Drey bump there heads to the underground hip-hop jam BLASTING through the speakers. Hold.

INT. DUNNE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Dad sits down next to Dan on the couch.

DAD

(drunk)

Teach me something, Dan. Teach me some ebonics. That what they got you teaching in that zoo?

Dan doesn't respond. We get the feeling he knew this was coming sooner or later.

DAD

I'd like to know... how do you say... asshole in ebonics?

JO

Russ! What are you doing?

DAD

Nothin' ma. Havin' fun is all.

Dan attempts to stand, but Dad pulls him back down.

DAD

Hey... Why don't you visit more often? I miss you. You know that?

DAN  
I'll try.

DAD  
I'm sorry. One more thing... I'm  
an asshole, I'm sorry... I love  
you. You know that? You should  
know that.

DAN  
I know it.

DAD  
You know that right?

DAN  
Yeah.

DAD  
Good.

Dan gets up, and as he passes Cindy, she attempts to pour herself another glass of wine, but the bottle's empty.

EXT. FRANK'S LEXUS RANDOM STREET - NIGHT

Frank's car pulls to the curb in a residential neighborhood. Frank turns down the stereo, reaches under his seat, and comes up with a brown paper bag.

FRANK  
Apartment 3.

We stay with Frank, as Drey takes the bag, gets out, and goes to the house. Frank watches her closely, when his cell phone RINGS.

FRANK  
(into phone)  
Hello? Yeah, what's up? Okay...  
I could be over there in like  
twenty minutes... All good.

Frank looks to Drey, who enters the house.

FRANK  
Listen, I got a new kid working  
tonight, okay? So don't stress...  
Peace.

Frank clicks off his phone, stares out the window.

INT. DUNNE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jo and Dan.

JO

I bet you're great with those kids.  
I'm so proud of you, Dan.

DAN

Thanks, mom... They were the only  
thing keeping me sane.

JO

It's a good thing, to teach. We  
used to think we could change the  
world, you know, when we were  
young. Those days anything was  
possible. Revolution was in the  
air. But we were just kids... we  
had no idea...

DAN

You stopped a war.

JO

You think so? That's nice honey--  
we thought so. Now I'm not so  
sure. I think it had more to do  
with Dan Ellsberg than any of us.

DAN

One person alone really doesn't  
matter.

JO

I guess not... Do you hear from  
Rachel anymore?

DAN

Not really.

JO

I saw her at the pharmacy. Maybe  
it's her mom.

DAN

Maybe.

JO

She looked great. Maybe you should  
call her.



DAN  
I don't know. Maybe.

JO  
I know it wasn't easy for you. You  
had it harder than Jeff. I'm sorry  
that we weren't--

DAN  
--Mom... I'm okay. Don't worry.  
I'm fine now. That's all over.

JO  
Are you happy?

DAN  
Yeah... yeah.

JO  
Good. When you're happy, I'm  
happy.

DAN  
I'm happy.

JO  
It's so nice to see you and Jeff  
together. My boys.

Jo finishes off her glass of wine, stares out at Jeff and  
Cindy in the living room.

DAN  
Mom?

She doesn't hear, staring straight ahead, distant.

Dan watches her for a beat, then gets up and walks out of the  
room. Jo looks after him, about to call out, but stops  
herself.

EXT. FRANK'S LEXUS RANDOM STREET - NIGHT

Frank sees Drey emerge from the house, approach the car, and  
get inside.

FRANK  
How'd it go?

Drey shrugs, no sweat, hands Frank some cash. Frank peels  
off a couple bills, hands them to her.

FRANK  
Easy right? Beats flippin'  
burgers, I'll tell you that much.

INT. DUNNE GARAGE - NIGHT

Surrounded by darkness, a glowing red cherry CRACKLES as Dan gets high. When he exhales, a bottle KLINKS off-screen.

CINDY  
Your mom said there was more wine  
out here.

Dan stares at her for a long beat.

CINDY  
I found it.

Awkward pause.

DAN  
Do you like my brother, Cindy?

CINDY  
Yeah.

DAN  
Why?

CINDY  
He's nice. He's funny. I don't  
know...

DAN  
Does he tell you jokes?

CINDY  
Sometimes.

DAN  
Like what?

Cindy thinks for a beat, then...

CINDY  
Knock knock.

DAN  
Who's there?

CINDY  
The interrupting cow.

DAN  
The interrupting--

CINDY  
--Mooo.

They both smile. Hold.

EXT. FRANK'S LEXUS AT MOTOR INN MOTEL - NIGHT

Frank's Lexus rolls to a stop in front of the beat-up, single-story motel, that appears unchanged since 1960.

FRANK  
Room 109. Meet me at the corner  
when you're done. I'll take you  
home.

Drey nods and Frank pulls away.

EXT. MOTOR INN MOTEL - NIGHT

Muffled MUSIC and LAUGHTER seeps through the door. Drey KNOCKS, and after some brief commotion inside...

...the door cracks open, and shuts immediately.

Drey stares at it, then takes a step away, looks out to the street, unsure what to do. After another brief commotion inside the room, the door opens again, revealing a BLACK WOMAN in tank-top and underwear.

WOMAN IN MOTEL  
Come on, sweetie. Get inside. We  
won't bite.

Drey thinks it over, approaches.

INT. MOTOR INN MOTEL - NIGHT

Drey enters, scans the room. She notices a WHITE WOMAN taking digital photos of an OLDER MAN on the bed, while he channel surfs with the remote. Distorted music POUNDS out from an old stereo boom box.

Dan frantically kicks several beer cans under the beds, addresses the women...

DAN  
Hey, can you guys? Listen, put  
some clothes on. Ladies, we have  
company, I mean...

The white woman ignores him and snaps a photo.

Dan pathetically smiles at Drey, humiliated by the situation.

He wanders to the side table and sits, fidgeting with a plastic credit card, and clenching his jaw.

Drey approaches, sets a paper bag down in front of him.

The woman approaches Dan, laughing, grabs a pipe from the table, reaches into the bag and loads a rock into it.

DAN

Can you please put on some goddamn  
pants please?

The woman makes a face at him and lights up.

A long beat as Dan and Drey avoid looking at each other, occasional camera flashes pass over their faces. We hear only bits and pieces of conversation off screen, beneath the music, until...

DREY

You got the money?

Dan glances up to Drey, a slight smile.

He reaches into his pocket, puts a wad of cash on the table.

Drey counts the money, while Dan walks over to the window, and stares out.

Drey puts the cash in her pocket, heads for the door.

DAN

Drey?

She looks to him.

Dan tries to say something, but nothing comes out, so he just swirls his finger in the air.

Drey exits. Dan scans the room.

EXT. FRANK'S CAR AT MOTOR INN MOTEL - NIGHT

Frank watches Drey approach the car, looking a bit shell-shocked. She gets inside.

FRANK

Everything cool?

Drey looks at him, then away, nods.

Frank stares at her for a beat.

FRANK

Let's get you home.

Frank starts the car and the Lexus pulls away.

INT. DREY'S APT - MORNING

Drey asleep on the couch in street clothes, while an early morning talk show plays on TV.

The front door opens, and Karen enters, sporting her E.M.T. uniform. She sees Drey, turns off the TV, and kisses her on the forehead. Drey stirs.

KAREN

Hey sweetie...

Karen sits down on the couch. She leans back and closes her eyes, as Drey scootches her head onto Karen's lap.

INT. DREY'S APT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Drey and Karen at the table over a bowl of cereal. Drey stares down at her bowl.

KAREN

I don't think it's good for you,  
fallin' asleep in front of the TV  
all the time.

Drey nods.

KAREN

You feelin' blue today?

Drey shrugs, takes a bite of her soggy cereal.

KAREN

Any reason?

DREY

Naw. Just thinkin' about Mike, I  
guess.

KAREN

I miss your brother, too... We'll  
go visit him soon as I get some  
time off.

(shaking her head)

(MORE)

KAREN (cont'd)  
I can't believe they slapped me  
with another double tomorrow. Can  
you believe it? I can't get a  
goddamn break.

Finishing off her cereal, Karen brings her bowl to the sink.

KAREN  
So, what else is going on? I heard  
something about a new Civil Rights  
thing with Oprah?

After a prolonged silence, Karen looks back at Drey, who  
looks up from her cereal bowl. She's crying.

INT. DAN'S APT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

BEEP. On Dan's answering machine.

ISABEL'S VOICE  
It's Isabel... Look, I'm not sure  
what happened the other night. I  
didn't know what to do...

Isabel's voice continues over images of Dan's apartment:  
BEDROOM, BATHROOM, KITCHEN WITH HALF-EMPTY CAT-FOOD BOWL,  
DEAD CAT IN LIVING ROOM. Dan is nowhere to be found.

ISABEL'S VOICE  
I didn't want this to happen. I  
got to school, I asked around,  
everyone knows something is wrong.  
I'm worried. Please call me back.  
I'm sorry.

BEEP.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

Drey stares at the clock as a dork SUBSTITUTE TEACHER enters.

SUBSTITUTE  
Hey everybody. I'm going to be  
filling in for your teacher this  
week. My name is Mr. Light.

STACY  
Where's Mr. Dunne?

MR. LIGHT  
I'm sorry I don't know.

GINA  
When's he coming back?

MR. LIGHT

They don't tell me these things.  
But why don't you guys tell me...  
What have you been learning?

TERRANCE

Dialectics.

MR. LIGHT

Dia-lectics?

JAMAL

As applied to popular grassroots  
struggles in world history.

LENA

Opposing forces?

ROODLY

Do you even know who Hegel is?

BERNARD

Spirals and cycles and all that.

We hold on Drey as she stares at Bernard's finger swirling in  
the air. Something seems to click.

EXT. FRANK'S LEXUS AT SCHOOL - DAY

Drey unlocks her bike, but stops upon seeing Frank standing  
next to his car a few feet away. He nods to her.

FRANK

What's good, Drey?

DREY

Nothing. What's good with you?

FRANK

Need a ride?

DREY

I got my bike.

FRANK

Throw it in the trunk.

DREY

Nah, I gotta get home.

FRANK

I'll take you home then.

Drey hops on her bike.

DREY  
Not today.

FRANK  
Drey...

Pedaling away, she glances over her shoulder.

FRANK  
See ya 'round?

Drey rides off, Frank looking after.

EXT. MOTOR INN MOTEL - DAY

Drey cruises to a stop on the street outside the motel, stares down the driveway. She's sucking on a blow-pop.

EXT. MOTOR INN MOTEL - DAY

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK.

After a long beat, the door cracks open. Drey looks at the figure in the doorway step back and away. She stares at the small opening and slowly pushes the door open.

INT. MOTOR INN MOTEL - DAY

A total mess. Empty beer and liquor bottles on the floor, a blanket draped over the mirror, chairs overturned.

Dan on the bed, leans back against the headboard, wrapped in a white sheet. He looks worse than we've ever seen him, lips swollen, bloodshot eyes.

Drey watches him for a moment, a bit shocked by his appearance. She steps deeper into the room, sits on the edge of the other bed across from Dan.

DREY  
What happened to your friends?

DAN  
Gone. You missed a great party,  
Drey.

DREY  
Looks like it...

Dan gives an awkward laugh, lowers his head.



Drey reaches into her coat pocket, grabs a new blow-pop, and offers it to Dan.

DAN  
(taking the blow pop)  
Thank you.

He unwraps it, and puts it in his mouth.

They each suck on their respective blow-pops in silence, until...

DREY  
You ready to go?

INT. MOVING BUS - DAY

At the back of the bus, Dan leans against the window spacing out, while Drey stares straight ahead.

Long pause. The bus continues, engine HUMMING. Dan rubs his hand over Drey's head. She looks at him.

DREY  
February 18, 1990.

Dan thinks for a long beat, nods his head and smiles.

DAN  
Okay.

INT. DAN'S APT LIVING ROOM - DAY

Drey, holding a black garbage bag, winces as Dan sets his dead cat inside. She closes it up, hands the bag to Dan. He carries it outside.

DAN'S BATHROOM - DAY

Dan stands in front of the mirror, examining his reflection.

DAN'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Drey thumbs through a pile of vinyl records on the floor, when Dan returns, his face clean shaven, though a little uneven.

DREY  
I think you missed a spot.

He sits on the couch. Drey continues to finger through his albums, finds the "Free To Be..." album that played earlier at Dan's parents' house.

DAN  
Knock knock...

Drey smiles, looks over.

DREY  
Who's there?

DAN  
The interrupting cow.

DREY  
The interrupting cow who?

DAN  
(way too late)  
Moooo.

After a beat, she smiles.

DREY  
That was terrible.

Dan takes a deep breath.

DAN  
Sorry.

Drey's smile fades. She looks down at the album in her hands, removes it from the sleeve, and clumsily puts it on.

She joins Dan on the couch. They stare ahead, listening to the upbeat children's tune.

Dan is on the verge of tears...

HOLD.

CUT TO BLACK.