

The Art House Audience

By

Austin Swain

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FADE IN:

White credits dissolve in and out on black screen. No sound.

FADE OUT: CREDITS

FADE IN:

A brown suitcase lays open on a bed. A hand first places a pair of tan slacks, a red striped button-up shirt, thick brown rimmed glasses, a worn copy of *A Clockwork Orange*, and a large brown full bent billiard pipe. The suitcase is then closed.

CUT TO:

INT. ROSS' BEDROOM - MORNING

Ross walks from his bed to a mirror and fixes his tie and hair. He then walks towards his bedrooms' door.

ROSS (19) is a tall, cool, and sarcastic.

CUT TO:

EXT. DRIVE WAY OF ROSS' HOUSE, SUBURBS - DAY

Ross hugs his MOTHER goodbye and gets into a teal beetle with his father.

CUT TO:

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Ross shakes his FATHER'S hand, grabs his things, and goes towards his train. Muffled goodbyes are heard from the hustle and bustle of the busy train station.

CUT TO:

INT. INSIDE TRAIN CARRIAGE - DAY

Ross looks around for his seat and places his suitcase in an overhead bin. He sits down, looks outside and checks out his surroundings. He looks awhile and Mathew catches his eye. He abruptly gets up and walks over to him.

ROSS

Hey Matty!

MATHEW (18) old male with a skinny build, commodore dark hair. A very talent piano player. He is foolish, a hopeless romantic, speaks with a nervous stutter, and very anxious about any situation.

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW

Ross!? I didn't see you there. How have you been?

ROSS

Good man, good. What about you? How was your summer? Did you work at all?

MATHEW

Well I swept hair for one of the barbers in town. You?

ROSS

I worked for my uncle's retail store. Quite the pompous crowd Matty-boy, I tell ya.

MATHEW

Good to hear Ross.

ROSS

So, how have you been? Have you seen any of the old gang since school first got out?

MATHEW

Nah, no-not at all, you know. I've been working a lot. But I did write a few letters to Ralph every once in a while though.

ROSS

Second semester you-you didn't really seem that you were in the best shape. How you doin' since, well you know...

MATHEW

(chuckles)

Ha-uh, well, you know. I'll need a bit more time to answer that one. I don't think a train car will suffice.

ROSS

Yeah that would be good. Sure.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHICAGO TRAIN STATION - DAY

Passengers leave the train in a hurry, Mathew and Ross get off the train at the same time while chatting.

ROSS  
Wanna split a cab? I'll call one.

MATHEW  
(struggles to pick up his  
luggage)  
Yeah sure, is that all you brought?

ROSS  
Yeah man, I came a week earlier  
with most of my stuff. Doesn't  
everybody do that?

Mathew looks down distraught and looks around at all his luggage.

MATHEW  
Yeah, uh, I guess I should have  
thought of that...

CUT TO:

INT. DINER - DAY

Mathew and Ross sit in a booth that is adjacent to the windows. A waitress is tending to them. Outside is a busy street corner.

ROSS  
(gestures)  
Yeah uh, I'll have a reuben with a  
side of fires please. And-and you  
know one of those vanilla shakes  
with a cherry on top yeah- and one  
of those straws with the...What are  
they called Matty? They're not ever  
being used any more you know-

Cut to Mathew looking, while scratching his brow, at Ross, then at the waitress, and then back at Ross while Ross rambles on about his order.

TIRED WAITRESS  
A pinstriped straw-?

ROSS  
Yeah, one of those and a coke  
please, now you mention it. I am  
thirsty.

(CONTINUED)

TIRED WAITRESS  
(stares at him for a second)  
And for you hunny?

MATHEW  
Oh, uh just a coke for me please.

TIRED WAITRESS  
Are you sure?

MATHEW  
(hesitates)  
And the day's soup please.

Waitress leaves with their menus and orders.

ROSS  
Okay, yeah so you know. Down to  
business.

MATHEW  
Yeah, well I... so let's just start  
from the beginning I guess...

CUT TO:

White letters on a black screen: "THE YEAR BEFORE."

EXT. STREET CORNER - MORNING

Mathew and Lloyd are on a busy street curb, both looking up at a tall skyscraper. Lloyd is wearing a grey suit and jacket, Mathew is wearing slacks, a cardigan, and a shirt with tie. Lloyd is smoking a tapered Liverpool pipe.

LLOYD (50's), average height and weight, always has a pipe in his mouth. Acts very empty around his sons.

LLOYD  
Don't fuck this up. You understand  
me?

MATHEW  
I'll uh try my best sir.

LLOYD  
Good. Grab your things from the car  
and get on your way. I'll be seeing  
you on holiday.

(CONTINUED)

Mathew grabs his things from the trunk of the car, shakes his father's hand. He watches his father get in the car and drive off. Mathew stares up at the skyscrapers and then back in the direction that his father drove. He grabs his bags and walks the other direction of the school.

CUT TO:

INT. CROWDED TRAIN STATION

Mathew nervously buys a train ticket to another city. He looks at his ticket while sitting in the station, the name of his train is called. Mathew grabs his bags and walks off screen.

CUT TO:

INT. BUSY DORM/APARTMENT FLOOR

Mathew walks by a war rally. Mathew looks at a piece of paper that entails his room number, he dodges running into other students, being very clumsy with his luggage. He reaches his door number and gives it a few knocks very hesitantly. The train ticket is seen in his hands. He shoves it into his pocket.

MATHEW

Hello? Anyone there?

RALPH (18) average build with black curly hair. Tortoise framed glasses lay on his nose.

RALPH

(somewhat muffled by being in another room)

Yeah, one minute

A toilet flushes, Ralph emerges from the bathroom of the apartment.

RALPH

Hi sorry, just breaking her in, you must be my roommate! Ralph Schaffner nice to meet you.

Throws out his hand, Mathew hesitates to take it.

RALPH

Don't worry I washed up.

MATHEW

(he shakes Ralph's hand)  
Mathew Stanton, a pleasure.

(CONTINUED)

RALPH

Very polite I see! I can tell I'm gonna like you, well come on in.

RALPH

Not bad eh? Course it is a tad on the small side, but hey? Who am I to complain, it beats living with the folks am I right?

MATHEW

Uh-yeah, I guess.

RALPH

And check out this view, it's definitely top dollar, you won't see guys on the big screen with this type of view!

RALPH

(shrugs)

-Course back home I could see the lake but...

MATHEW

Yeah it's nice. Very nice yeah.

RALPH

(chuckles, looks at Mathew)

Man of few words huh? No matter, I got enough for the both of us.

Ralph walks towards his desk and looks through several papers and things. Mathew is still looking out at the skyline of the city.

RALPH

So where ya from Mathew Stanton?

MATHEW

Oh-ah just outside the city.

RALPH

(chuckles)

Oh that's swell! I was worried I was gonna get some farm hands son who preached farmer tax and corn. Are you sure you don't have dinner at four and are in bed by seven?

MATHEW

No, no um my dad's an optometrist.

(CONTINUED)

RALPH

Well anyway, good! I'm from around here yeah, my dad owns the bank downtown. Now I know what you're thinking, it's fitting. A Jewish family owning a bank. But anyway, maybe you've heard of it, Schaffner & Associates?

Mathew shakes his head no. He looks back out at the skyline.

RALPH

(sniffs)

No huh? Well no worries no how, course the old man does want me to follow his footsteps and all you know- Is your dad like that?

MATHEW

No, seems like he wanted me to get out of his hair.

RALPH

(He is cut off by a knock at the door)

Well I'm sure-I'll get it old boy.

Ralph walks over to the door and opens it. In enters Ross and Leonard.

RALPH

Mathew Stanton, I'd like you to meet our neighbors-

ROSS

No need for an introduction Ralph.

LEONARD (19) tall, suave, black, and handsome. Aspiring saxophone player.

LEONARD

Yeah, who do ya make us for? Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis?

RALPH

How you guys find them amusing amazes me.

ROSS

Not this pretentious spiel again.

(CONTINUED)

LEONARD

Being a writer doesn't make you a master of all things comical Ralph. You're also the guy that smokes a pipe just when he's in the "writing mood."

RALPH

It helps me think! Jesus. Well I guess that segues us into school related shit. Oh mind my manners this is Mathew Stanton fellas.

Ross fells around for a pack of cigarettes in his shirt and coat pockets.

ROSS

Ross Fitzgerald, how goes it? Ralph d'you got any cigs on ya?

Ralph hands Ross a cigarette and he begins to smoke.

LEONARD

Leonard Evans, nice to make your acquaintance.

MATHEW

Pleasure.

RALPH

(rambling)

See this being the "great" school that it is, one would think everyone enjoys Chaplin, Hemingway, and Warhol.

ROSS

Who are we? The Academy?

RALPH

(overlapping)

Freud would have a field day with you.

ROSS

-Pompous is more suiting I'll say.

RALPH

Well Mathew, I'm here to write of course.

(CONTINUED)

LEONARD

I'm a bearable saxophonist one could say.

ROSS

And I'm going to be the next Humphrey Bogart.

RALPH

My ass you will be Fitz. Well don't be shy friend, what are you intending to study?

MATHEW

I-uh, I'm not really sure you know.

ROSS

(overlapping)

Come on man! You got yourself in here, you got to be good at something?

MATHEW

Well a pianist I suppose.

The group of boys look and nod at each other. Mathew seems to be taken a little aback and chuckles.

LEONARD

What's funny?

MATHEW

Well, back home you know, usually people laugh because they think I say "penis" rather than "pianist."

CUT TO:

EXT. CITYSCAPE - DAY

Many pedestrians walking the busy sidewalks while cars flash by.

INT. MATH CLASSROOM - DAY

A math professor stands at his desk while speaking to his class but the audience can't hear what he is saying.

INT. PHYSICS CLASSROOM - DAY

A very animated professor points to a board with equations on it and picks up a bust of Isaac Newton while rambling, the audience can't hear what he is saying.

INT. PIANO CLASSROOM - DAY

A lengthly and thin piano teacher sits with Mathew at a piano. Talking very intently while pointing around the room and back at the piano, Mathew nods as he speaks. The audience can't hear what he is saying.

INT. PROFESSOR NILES' CLASSROOM

Students murmur amongst themselves. Mathew walks in alone to his class. Here he sits with Ross and Leonard as Professor Niles enters the room from his office.

ROSS

Hey Mathew! Sit here with us man!

LEONARD

Long time no see.

MATHEW

Yeah yeah I know.

ROSS

(turns to both Mathew and Leonard)

You guys heard anything about this guy?

MATHEW

(shaking his head)

No, not a thing.

LEONARD

(gestures)

I don't know Fitz.

ROSS

I heard this guy got kicked out of some high class university out east for teaching the Communist Manifesto.

LEONARD

(laughs)

Ha. Where'd ya hear that shit?

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW

Yeah who told you that?

ROSS

Some girl in astronomy 101.

LEONARD

Why are you in astronomy 101?

ROSS

Beats taking Latin.

A group of girls walk by Ross and he smiles and checks them out. Niles enters the room from his office.

NILES (60-70's) average height and a little on the heavy side. Mess white hair.

NILES

Quite down now. Yes, yes thank you. Now let me have a look at the lot of you. Such a young bunch. Every year you all seem to get younger and younger. 'Course, I could just be getting older.

Niles looks around for a laugh but is empty handed.

NILES

Tough crowd you lot. Now then jokes aside, I'm your professor: Niles Parker, but you all already knew that. My goal for this year is to shovel down the great novels of American authors and make you regurgitate me their "motifs" and "themes."

He pauses again and looks at his class. They look at each other bewildered.

NILES

(chuckles)

Can a guy catch a break? I mean really? Don't just sit there like a house on the side of the road!

The class gives out a chuckle.

NILES

That's it! So this is American literature from the twentieth century. A course I might have you

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NILES (cont'd)  
know, I organized myself. My goal is not only to show you the books that have shaped the culture of American history but will open your perspectives to something else. Something more I hope. And that something else is what I want you to interpret. Of course, many of you may see me as some old, crazy asshole ranting about socialism and F. Scott Fitzgerald.

The class gives another collection of laughs.

ROSS  
(whispers to Mathew)  
This guy must be a beatnik on the side eh?

NILES  
Can one of you help me distribute these?

Rose quickly gets up and helps out pass books.

NILES  
Oh thank you very much miss...?

ROSE (19) brunette and cute.

ROSE  
Bartlet, Rose Bartlet.

ROSS  
(whispers to Mathew)  
Now look at that dame?

LEONARD  
(whispers to Mathew)  
You'll soon learn that Ross "tries" to be a womanizer.

MATHEW  
(whispers to Ross)  
Why's this?

ROSS  
(whispers to Mathew)  
I just like a good piece of ass, that's all.

Ross gives Mathew a smile and the pair look ahead at Niles.

(CONTINUED)

CUT TO:

INT: ART MUSEUM - DAY

Mathew, Ralph, Ross, and Leonard walk around and talk about art as music plays.

INT: MOVIE HOUSE - NIGHT

Mathew, Ralph, Ross, and Leonard walk out of the movie house playing, smoking, and joking around with each other.

INT: LIBRARY - DAY

Mathew, Ralph, Ross, and Leonard are all intently studying together.

CUT TO:

INT: RALPH AND MATHEW'S APARTMENT - LATE EVENING

Mathew is sitting on a sofa studying an arithmetic textbook on his lap while listening to his record player as Ralph, Ross, and Leonard enter.

RALPH

Hey look who it is.

LEONARD

Matty how long have you been at the books?

MATHEW

Only since three.

RALPH

Hey listen, us guys wanna go hit that new Mike Nichols film. You care to join us?

MATHEW

No, uh I can't. Sorry I gotta work tonight.

ROSS

Suit yourself man. Can we please get going we're going to be missing the news reel.

RALPH

(overlapping)

We'll be seeing you, will you be working late?

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW

No, no I should be home around eleven.

RALPH

Alright we'll be seeing you.

Ross, Ralph, and Leonard leave. Mathew looks at the door and puts down his book. He massages the back of his neck and sighs.

CUT TO:

INT: DINER - DUSK

Mathew scuffles in a dinner and throws on an apron.

MATHEW

Hello Mr. Wilson I uh...

MR. WILSON (60's) A very portly man, balding and always has a scowl on his face.

MR. WILSON

(overlapping)

You're late.

MATHEW

I know I...

MR. WILSON

(gestures)

Just get to it then.

Mathew grabs a bin and wash cloth to clean off tables. He clears a few tables until he notices Professor Niles sitting by himself in booth in the corner of the diner. Mathew approaches him.

MATHEW

Can I take anything for you sir?

Niles is reading a book and doesn't notice Mathew.

NILES

Oh yes here thank you lad.

Mathew takes a plate and pair of silverware from the table and Mathew leaves with the dirty dishes to the kitchen.

ERNEST (20) average height, a little on the skinny side.

(CONTINUED)

ERNEST

What's up Stanton you look glum?

MATHEW

I uh don't know. Just a long week I guess.

ERNEST

Ah I got ya. How is school going for you?

MATHEW

Well it's going.

ERNEST

(chuckles)

Hopefully that wit gets you get you out of this job right?

MATHEW

Yeah I um hope so. I got Mr. Wilson breathing down my neck though.

ERNEST

Don't worry about him, just do your job and keep to yourself and you should last just fine. This is just a temporary gig for all of us.

MATHEW

(sarcastically)

That's reassuring. You know whose table I just cleared?

ERNEST

Who?

MATHEW

My English professor.

ERNEST

Alright I guess?

MATHEW

Well you know it's funny, the guy didn't even recognize me.

ERNEST

Well I'm sure he has hundreds of students to worry about Stanton.

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW

Yeah I know, it's just...he looked so sad.

ERNEST

Probably the type of guy who reads and eats by himself and doesn't let people bother him. I'd get back to work before Wilson catches us chewing the fat.

MATHEW

Yeah uh right.

Ernest picks up a stack of clean plates and leaves. Mathew heads back into the diner to clear tables. The night goes on and Niles is one of the only patrons left. It's closing in on the end of Mathew's shift and he approaches Niles.

MATHEW

Anything else I can uh clear for you sir?

NILES

No, no thank you. But if you could get a waitress to get me a refill on coffee that would be appreciated.

MATHEW

Yes sir.

Mathew walks away but looks back hesitantly to say more.

MATHEW

What you reading there sir?

NILES

The Catcher in the Rye by a Mr. J.D. Salinger.

MATHEW

How is it?

NILES

Sad.

MATHEW

Oh I see. Well I'll get that waitress.

A waitress comes over and fills up Niles' cup and makes small talk with him. Mathew approaches him once more.

(CONTINUED)

NILES

Oh you again.

MATHEW

Hello um yeah I was wondering if you...

NILES

(overlapping)

You know I think you can clear my table now.

MATHEW

Oh yeah sure I can.

Mathew takes the remaining plates and cups from the table.

MATHEW

Holden's a brat, isn't he?

NILES

(gives him a curious look)

Well I agree, it's the usual, teenage angst and self-actualization. I like to think that Maslow would love this piece of work.

MATHEW

(nods)

I see uh, what kind of themes does this Salinger guy write about?

NILES

Odd for a bust boy to worry about themes in a book, eh?

MATHEW

Well I am taking a class that is American literature from the twentieth century.

NILES

No joking? I teach...do I know you?

MATHEW

Well uh no-well yeah actually. I'm in your class professor.

NILES

Oh mind my manners! What was your name again son?

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW  
Mathew Stanton sir.

NILES  
(gestures for Mathew to sit  
down)  
Please, please take a seat.

MATHEW  
Oh I still have fifteen minutes  
till my shift ends.

NILES  
It's fine, Tom your boss owes me.

Mathew hesitantly takes a seat.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITYSCAPE AND CITY PARK - LATE FALL - DAY

Pedestrians go on their way. Cars whiz by. Ralph and Leonard  
talk while walking towards their apartment.

INT. RALPH AND MATHEW'S APARTMENT - DAY

Mathew is reading on the apartment sofa as Ralph and Leonard  
walk in.

RALPH  
Hey Matty! Leonard go get Ross.

Leonard leaves for a second to get Ross.

MATHEW  
Hey what's up?

RALPH  
You know that Mike guy in my  
screenwriting class?

MATHEW  
Yeah uh what about 'em?

Leonard and Ross enter Mathew and Ralph's apartment.

RALPH  
Good you guys are here. So listen,  
my friend right, Mike Wallace? Is  
having soiree, a gala if you will.

(CONTINUED)

LEONARD

Who's all gonna be there?

ROSS

Yeah how many girls are we talking?

RALPH

I'm sure enough for you to gravel.

Ross throws an arm up in the air.

MATHEW

I don't know if I can you know,  
tonight.

ROSS

Oh come on Matty! You've been in  
college three months already and  
haven't gotten laid yet. Have you  
even been with a girl?

LEONARD

Jeez, take it easy on the guy Fitz.

ROSS

I'm just saying.

MATHEW

Well I went to prom with my second  
cousin? Does that count?

ROSS

(sighs)

Oh my god!

MATHEW

Well I don't know. No body I know  
will be there and I'll look like a  
fool.

RALPH

Don't worry Matty we can help you  
score tonight man.

ROSS

Hey Ralph do you got any grass for  
you know, before?

RALPH

Yeah I got a bit, wanna go  
splits-ville?

(CONTINUED)

ROSS  
Yeah, just let me grab my jacket.

RALPH  
Leonard you want in?

LEONARD  
No man you know I'm not into that.

Ralph prepares to roll the weed.

RALPH  
The irony being that you smoke too?

LEONARD  
Come on everyone does man. Don't  
bring this old argument up again.

RALPH  
Never mind you, you remind me of my  
dad. Mathew are you coming or not?

Ross enters while putting on his jacket.

ROSS  
Does he even have the rocks to do  
it?

MATHEW  
Yeah, I've smoked my dad's pipe a  
few times, can't be that different?  
Right?

RALPH  
I'll let you figure that out for  
yourself!

Ralph hands Mathew the joint and Mathew takes a few hits.

MATHEW  
(coughs)  
Well uh shall we?

ROSS  
That'a boy!

CUT TO:

EXT. CITYSCAPE - NIGHT

Mathew, Ralph, Ross, and Leonard come to an apartment while other party goers come and go.

INT. CROWDED HALLWAY - NIGHT

The group tries to maneuver around partygoers.

INT. SMOKE FILLED APARTMENT - NIGHT

The group enters the apartment with smokers, dancers, lovebirds, and rock music playing.

ROSS

Well I'll catch you guys later, I see that girl from Professor Parker's class and that dame is going to be mine.

LEONARD

Think whatever you want man, she's out of your league.

ROSS

Oh buzz off man!

A pretty girl walks by the group and waves to Ralph.

RALPH

(talks to pretty girl)  
Hey Matty grab us a few suds why don't you? Oh hey don't go far, I want to talk with you.

LEONARD

(sarcastic)  
Now that's the best idea you've had all night.

Mathew walks over to a beer keg.

RALPH

What's with you and the sassafras man? What's eatin' ya lately?

LEONARD

(defensive)  
What nothing? Just a long week is all. Jesus.

(CONTINUED)

RALPH  
I was just asking.

Mathew grabs a few cups and fills them with beer. Alina catches his eye. She is sipping her drink while being annoyed at a boy's attempts to flirt with her.

MATHEW  
Hey uh guys, who is that?

Mathew points over to Alina.

RALPH  
Beats me man? Why you interested?

A group of students walk by and say hello to Leonard.

LEONARD  
(says goodbye to group of students)  
Go and talk to her man! Have a good one.

MATHEW  
No I better not. She's probably here with somebody.

RALPH  
Don't be so timid. You don't know that!

LEONARD  
It wouldn't hurt to try.

MATHEW  
See I don't know if it's the Mary Jane or the alcohol talking, but damnit I just might do that.

LEONARD  
Already buzzed huh? You are new at his scene.

RALPH  
Well you work fast.

LEONARD  
Get on to it man!

MATHEW  
Well what do I say?

RALPH

Ask her if she's seen The Seventh Seal.

MATHEW

What?

LEONARD

The music's too loud for that man just go ask her to dance.

Mathew complies, and hesitantly walks over to Alina.

MATHEW

Uh hi, would you like to dance?

ALINA (19) average height, weight, and bust. Dark skinned, brown haired, blue-eyed, and beautiful.

ALINA

What? No I've had enough thank you.

MATHEW

What? No uh, would you like to dance?

ALINA

Oh, yeah sure!

Mathew and Alina dance for a few songs. Mathew tries to make small talk with her but he is terrified. A slow song plays. Mathew is even more terrified.

It gets late and the music is turned down and everyone is told to hit the road, Alina gives Mathew a kiss on the cheek and a small smile before leaving.

MATHEW

W-wait, you never told me your...

Alina is out of site.

MATHEW

...name.

CUT TO:

INT. RALPH AND MATHEW'S APARTMENT - DAY

Mathew is sleeping on the couch looking very tired, Ralph enters the living room.

RALPH  
Oh hey lover boy! Sleep well?

MATHEW  
(groggy)  
Uh-yeah, my head is on fire. I feel like a speed skater on grass.

RALPH  
Got your first real taste of college life eh? You must've drank too much.

MATHEW  
(chuckles)  
Yeah ha, but I didn't catch that girls name though.

RALPH  
Who? The blonde with the short skirt?

MATHEW  
No the cute one. Brown hair and blue eyes.

RALPH  
Ohh that one!

MATHEW  
Yeah do you know who she is?

RALPH  
Beats me, let's go find out.

Ralph throws on his coat and tosses Mathew's at him.

MATHEW  
How? Do you know somebody that knows her?

RALPH  
Yeah, Mike from last night, He'd probably know. Get off your ass let's go find your girl.

CUT TO:

INT. PARTY APARTMENT - DAY

Mathew and Ralph come up to Mike's apartment door and knock on it several times.

MIKE  
(groggy)  
'Hell do you want?

RALPH  
We gotta ask ya about a girl man.

MIKE  
You wake me up this early to find out about some girl?

MATHEW  
It's two o'clock in the afternoon?

The door opens.

MIKE  
Go on then.

RALPH  
So who was that girl Mat was dancin' with last night?

MATHEW  
(gestures)  
Uh yeah, you know, brown hair, blue eyes?

RALPH  
Yeah the one that probably was a butch lesbian.

Mathew elbows Ralph in the side.

MIKE  
Yeah yeah, I know who you're talking about. She's a friend of friend in my theater class.

MATHEW  
Well, you know, what's her name?

MIKE  
The hell if I know. Go ask Denise from trigonometry.

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW  
(annoyed)  
What do you know?

MIKE  
I heard she's Yugoslavian or  
something like that?

Mathew and Ralph leave.

MIKE  
(while Mathew and Ralph are  
leaving)  
Don't get involved with Reds man,  
she's probably one of 'em!

Mathew and Ralph look at each other.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK - DAY

Denise is sitting up in a tree, reading a book.

MATHEW  
How can she be a communist?

DENISE  
She shares her lunch. A lot.

Mathew gives Ralph a look.

CUT TO:

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Ralph and Mathew crowd around a busy student studying at a  
table in the library.

BUSY STUDENT  
(whispers)  
I heard her family is a group of  
KGB spies.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

A pompous sits nonchalantly at his desk as he talks to Ralph  
and Mathew.

(CONTINUED)

POMPOUS STUDENT

Well I heard she's related to the  
escaped tsar before the rest were  
murdered.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Mathew and Ralph follow behind and older student.

OLDER STUDENT

The accents a sham, she's clearly  
from Cleveland.

CUT TO:

INT. PARK - DAY

BUSY OLDER STUDENT

She's Russian no doubt. You can  
tell because her dad looks like he  
killed a man.

CUT TO:

INT. ART MUSEUM - LATE DAY

Mathew and Ralph browse the museum.

MATHEW

I don't know Ralphy, maybe I should  
just get over this one you know?

RALPH

Don't be such a piker!

MATHEW

I don't think that's the right  
term.

RALPH

You need to read more.

MATHEW

Why is t-this the last resort  
anyway?

RALPH

I'm all out of places to look!

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW

Well you know...well why would she even be at a art museum in the first place? Who is she, Freda Kahlo?

RALPH

(gestures)

Well it was dark at the party, you could have missed a huge brow...

MATHEW

Oh kiss off! Anyway, what do you think of all this?

RALPH

What the art?

MATHEW

No the floorboards.

RALPH

Well, I don't know, I've always been a movie guy I guess. But I've always appreciated art though.

MATHEW

If you could have any painting, what would you want?

RALPH

Warhol. Anything by Warhol I'd say. You?

MATHEW

I've always found a quiet beauty in Norman Rockwell's work.

RALPH

Why do you like him?

MATHEW

My mother loved Rockwell.

Mathew gives a sad look. They look around more. Finally Mathew spots Alina.

MATHEW

(nudging Ralph)

Hey look! Over there.

(CONTINUED)

RALPH

Well look here! Last resort ha!  
Told ya we'd find her man!

MATHEW

Well, now what?

RALPH

"Now what?" go on man, get over  
there and sweep her off her feet!

MATHEW

What should I talk about? The score  
of the sox game?

RALPH

Sox game wha-? No! Go introduce  
yourself and sweep her off her feet  
dammit!

MATHEW

No uh, I can't, no I can't.

RALPH

Come on Matty-boy! This one's  
yours. If it doesn't work out  
there's plenty of other women to  
have affairs with.

MATHEW

Affairs give me anxiety.

RALPH

(annoyed)

Oh just go!

Ralph nudges Mathew towards her direction.

MATHEW

(to himself)

Sweep her off her feet? Huh, God,  
what am I some sort of sexual  
deviant concierge? I'd rather  
inhale noxious gas.

MATHEW

Uh-ha-hi.

ALINA

Hello.

(CONTINUED)

BETTY

Hey there, who might you be?

MATHEW

I'm a-

ALINA

(overlapping)

He's from last night I think, could you excuse us for a moment Betty?

BETTY (19) average height and weight. Dark brown hair and complexion.

BETTY

If you need me I'll be over here flirting with the gift shop clerk.

Betty leaves.

MATHEW

So uh-that's a fine Picasso. What does it say to you?

ALINA

You have a fine eye for art. I see a dark, lonely man who has spent all his life searching for his purpose. When he finally found it, he wasn't happy with the answer. He tries to fix the outcome but can't, and now he lives in a dreary, cold abyss that is his truth, waiting for death to take him away. What does it say to you?

MATHEW

Well, uh-you know, it's blue.

Alina smiles at Mathew.

ALINA

How profound. So I presume we've already met?

MATHEW

Yeah last night at Mike's party.

ALINA

And it just so happens you bump into me here?

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW

Well, yeah.

ALINA

Well I'm Alina Zhana Dumanovsky,  
nice to meet you.

MATHEW

That's quite a mouth full ha.

Mathew looks for Alina to laugh, she just stares at him.

MATHEW

Well, uhm, I'm Mathew Artis  
Stanton, it's a pleasure to make  
your acquaintance.

ALINA

I agree.

Alina and Mathew walk around and browse more art.

ALINA

So what do you think of this one?

MATHEW

Well uh, you know, it has a very,  
uh- left wing, socialist,  
commentary to it. You know with the  
dark imagery that- uh, you know,  
brings out its undertones and the  
coloring just- ha you can stop me  
if you want, b-but I seem to be  
entertaining you.

ALINA

You're quite cute when you ramble  
on.

Mathew smiles at Alina.

MATHEW

Do you wanna, uh, do you wanna, you  
know, go grab a bite to eat?

ALINA

(laughs)

You move fast. Ha that sounds  
lovely Mathew Stanton.

Mathew looks back at Ralph and leaves with Alina.

CUT TO:

EXT. TREE LINED PARK - DAY

Mathew and Alina walk and talk in a tree lined park exchanging laughs.

INT. ART MUSEUM - DAY

Mathew and Alina browse a museum.

INT. RECORD STORE - DAY

Mathew and Alina browse records at a record store, exchanging rapport.

INT. ALINA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mathew and Alina are sitting on a couch talking to each other.

MATHEW

But yeah, you know, I uh really always liked how he portrays his main characters in his films you know?

ALINA

(laughs)

Ha yeah I feel the same! So tell me Mathew, did you date much in high school?

MATHEW

Well uh, I-I didn't really date much, 'course there were always girls I fancied here and there, but didn't really, well you know.

ALINA

So I'm the first huh?

MATHEW

(laughs)

Kinda yeah it looks that way!

ALINA

(laughs)

So tell me about your family. Are you close?

MATHEW

Well I told you about my older brother Michael?

(CONTINUED)

ALINA

No I don't think so.

MATHEW

Well uhm, he works downtown actually. But uhm, after he went to school we became real distant you know?

ALINA

No I wouldn't know.

MATHEW

Well what about you? You haven't told me much at all. I don't mean to pry.

ALINA

Well, I'm adopted.

MATHEW

Oh, I uh...

ALINA

(overlapping)

It's okay! I don't mind telling it.

MATHEW

Where were, well you know?

ALINA

I was born in the Ukraine, in a small village near the border of the Soviet Union.

MATHEW

How old where you? When you came over that is?

ALINA

I don't remember much, I came over when I was four.

MATHEW

Oh I see. What are your parents like?

ALINA

My adopted parents are a wealthy polish family from upstate New York. My father is a government official, and my mother is getting her doctrine in who knows what, it

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ALINA (cont'd)  
always seems to change! We have  
this big house with all these rooms  
and butlers and maids galore, but  
growing up it was just me. It got  
quiet lonely sometimes I guess.  
Well I degrees! What do your  
parents do?

MATHEW  
Well my father's an optometrist.

ALINA  
What about your mother? Does she  
work or state at home?

MATHEW  
Well uhm, my-my mother's dead.

ALINA  
Oh I didn't...

MATHEW  
(overlapping)  
I haven't really told anyone much  
about her yet.

ALINA  
What happened? When-

MATHEW  
(overlapping)  
You know I'm not one to talk about  
it. Just yet you know?

ALINA  
I understand.

MATHEW  
Well uh, well it's getting late I  
better-

ALINA  
(overlapping)  
Yeah it's getting close to ten.

Mathew and Alina get off the couch and walk to the door.  
There is an awkward silence between them.

MATHEW  
Well, I'll uh...

ALINA  
See you soon.

Mathew leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALINA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mathew walks with his hands in his pockets as he notices Ross in a diner with another girl. Mathew walks forward to maybe catch Ross' eye but see's Ross kiss the girl. Mathew nervously walks the other direction.

EXT. BUSY STREET CORNER - DAY

Mathew, Leonard, Ralph, and Ross walk to their favorite art museum.

RALPH  
(laughs)  
But really Fitz! How's that Rose gal been?

ROSS  
Well let's just say miss Rose Bartlet has been hard to persuade, if you know what I mean.

LEONARD  
(laughs)  
Ha, persuade to do what? Finish your paper for old man Niles?

ROSS  
Second base actually. We've been going steady for a week man.

MATHEW  
Not bad!

RALPH  
What about you Matty? You sealed the deal yet with this Alina gal? Speaking of which when are we meeting them again?

MATHEW  
Well I uh...

LEONARD  
Soon, we're going to be late it looks like.

(CONTINUED)

ROSS

Don't worry Matt, Ralph hasn't made it in a coon's age, he wants all the details he can get!

RALPH

Give a guy a break. I'm having a dry spell that's all okay? I need a smoke.

Ralph opens a pack of cigarettes and lights a cigarette.

MATHEW

Well I told them we'd be there at one. What time is it now-

As Mathew finished his sentence, four men in uniform walk by the boys and glare at them. One of the men in uniform gives a very mean look to Leonard and says something under his breath. The group looks at each other. For the remainder of their walk there they are quiet.

CUT TO:

INT. ART MUSEUM - DAY

Alina and Rose are chatting and giggling together as the boys arrive.

ROSE

I was worried you guys got lost.

ROSS

Hey girl, don't sweat it!

Ross gives Rose a kiss hello. Mathew gives Ross a look.

RALPH

Will you get a room?

ROSS

Will you go to hell?

MATHEW

Who decided in the first place to hang at an art museum on a Saturday?

ROSS

Ralph did!

(CONTINUED)

RALPH

Yeah, the Warhol exhibit is in town from New York and it is choice man.

MATHEW

Yeah I read about it in Time magazine or something like that.

ROSS

Who read's Time magazine? Who are you my dad?

ALINA

Oh will you quit it? So Ralph tell us about Warhol?

As the rest of the group get into a discussion, Mathew notices Leonard has been disheartened after they arrived to the museum.

MATHEW

Hey Leonard? What's eaten' ya?

LEONARD

Oh ah, nothing. It's nothing.

MATHEW

Are you sure? You haven't said anything since we got here.

LEONARD

Well it was those guys in uniform we saw. That's all.

MATHEW

Yeah well wh-what about 'em?

MATHEW

(looks at him)

What's on your mind?

LEONARD

It's just...It's just that I feel guilty man. You know not doing my part.

MATHEW

What? Why would you worry about that?

LEONARD

I don't know Matty, let's just get back to the gang.

(CONTINUED)

Mathew and Leonard catch up to the rest of the group.

ROSS  
I'm glad you ladies could join us.

ALINA  
What where you two talking about?

MATHEW  
Just-

LEONARD  
(overlapping)  
Just how much we both share a love  
for Picasso. I think he has a few  
pieces here actually.

RALPH  
Well as I was saying. I think  
Warhol has the greatest creative  
touch in the twentieth century.

ROSS  
Bull. You sound so pompous.

The gang exchange in a laugh.

RALPH  
No I mean it, I mean it! No one  
does it like him! Originality man!  
Distorted images with simplicity.  
His work defines the era we live  
in.

ROSS  
The guy's a fag.

The group walk by a piece of art that catches Leonard's  
eyes.

ROSE  
What's Leonard found?

ROSS  
Hey Evans, what ya lookin' at?

Leonard is silent.

RALPH  
Leonard? You okay man?

ROSS

I think he flew the coop.

LEONARD

Guys I think I'm going to drop out.

ROSS

Wh-what why? What's the matter?

LEONARD

So I can enlist.

RALPH

That's nonsense man. Is this a civil rights thing?

LEONARD

No, I really mean this. I'm going to enlist.

ROSS

Why would you wanna go over to some jungle and get shot at by some farmer man?

LEONARD

Because while we're here talking about pretentious artists, our guys are stopping the communists from getting control of the whole damn planet man!

ROSS

Where did this come from?

LEONARD

I've had this on my mind, I just didn't know when to act on it.

ALINA

I think this is a terrible idea.

LEONARD

What makes you say that?

ALINA

Well, guys are coming home in body bags, don't you read the papers? Those people don't want us there!

RALPH

Can we not-

(CONTINUED)

LEONARD

(overlapping)

Oh this is fitting, Matty's girl  
friend is defending the commies.  
That Mike guy was right Ralph.

Mathew is silent.

ALINA

I'm just saying-

LEONARD

(overlapping)

No listen here, every generation  
has an opportunity to make  
something of themselves. I've been  
through enough shit already in this  
day and age as it is. You guys  
don't get called "Coon" every time  
you walk down the damn street. Over  
there, they don't give a rats ass  
what color you are. As long as  
you're fighting on their side. I'm  
not going to sit aside and not take  
part in that. And this is just what  
I needed to know that over there is  
where I belong.

RALPH

So yeah the Picasso pieces you  
where talking about Matty boy?

ALINA

If you want to come home in a body  
bag with half of your limbs  
missing, be my guest.

MATHEW

Any-anyone want to catch some grub?

ROSS

Yeah, I uh think we should split  
Rose, we have that thing you know?

ROSE

Oh yeah the thing!

LEONARD

Don't wuss out. Guys don't leave!

ROSS

I'll catch you guys later after  
things cool down.

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW  
Alina we should get-

ALINA  
(overlapping)  
Going? A great idea.

Alina, Mathew, Rose, and Ross leave.

RALPH  
(to Leonard)  
So yeah, how about that Audrey  
Hepburn, huh?

CUT TO:

EXT. BUSY STREET CORNER - DAY

Mathew and Alina walk from the museum to Mathew's apartment talking about Alina and Leonard's fight at the museum.

ALINA  
Can you believe how insensate he  
is? I mean really.

MATHEW  
Alina I think-

ALINA  
I mean how moronic is he?

MATHEW  
(nodding, overlapping)  
L-lets just, you know let things  
calm down for him. Alright?

ALINA  
(rolls her eyes)  
Now you're defending him? Am I  
dating a cretin? Don't you read  
those newspaper clippings I give  
you? Don't you listen when we go to  
rallies?

MATHEW  
(overlapping)  
Can we drop this please? Jesus.

ALINA  
Fine, fine. Don't get so dramatic.

The couple continue to walk, Alina has her arms folded and Mathew is slouched and has his hands in his pockets. Suddenly Mathew stops and nudges Alina.

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW

Hey look.

Mathew points to a little boy handing a little girl a flower on a park bench.

ALINA

That's sweet.

Mathew and Alina look away from each other and smile when they catch each other's eyes.

MATHEW

Here.

Mathew takes Alina's hand and kisses her.

MATHEW

You know.

ALINA

What?

MATHEW

If I'm correct, that wasn't as painful as I thought it would be.

ALINA

(chuckles)

It seems so.

MATHEW

It could have been worse.

ALINA

And how's that?

MATHEW

You could have tried to sell me insurance.

CUT TO:

INT. NILE'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Mathew visits Niles in his office hours.

NILES

Oh Mathew! Come in, come in!

MATHEW

Excellent lecture today sir.

(CONTINUED)

NILES

(laughs)

Ha! Don't kiss my ass here my boy!  
I'm not on call.

MATHEW

V-very well. Oh, here's your Cat's  
Cradle back. I absolutely loved it.

NILES

I knew you would! So what do I owe  
the pleasure to this visit? This is  
the third time this week.

MATHEW

Well it's about my term paper sir-

NILES

Oh? What about it?

MATHEW

You marked my whole paper up?  
All-all I see is red blotched  
strokes everywhere.

NILES

Yes and?

MATHEW

Well I uh, want to know why I did  
so poorly on it, uhm sir.

NILES

Just because you see critiques  
doesn't mean you did poorly. I saw  
great originality in your work. You  
might think about becoming a writer  
you know. What do you want to do  
anyway?

MATHEW

Well I uh want to be a pianist.

NILES

(nodding heartily towards him)

Hmm, who's your favorite?

MATHEW

(looking at his paper)

I'm sorry what?

(CONTINUED)

NILES

Your favorite my boy.

MATHEW

Chopin.

NILES

Good man! I always was fond of Beethoven. I played a bit myself growing up you know, but I never kept at it. So is there anything else I can help you with?

MATHEW

Well um do you know-well do you suggest any other good books to read?

NILES

Oh I thought you'd never ask, here let me have a look.

Niles pokes around in his personal collection of books.

NILES

Ah, here we are! *A Farewell To Arms* by a Mr. Ernest Hemingway. I think you'll love this one, I think it's fitting for this day and age.

MATHEW

Oh I've heard of that one, it's my father's favorite.

NILES

A nice man, your father?

MATHEW

Well uh-

NILES

(overlapping)

You don't seem so sure to answer.

MATHEW

Well it's not that my father is a bad man it's just-it's just that he's lost a lot you know?

NILES

Lost what, my boy?

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW

My mother.

NILES

Oh, I'm sorry to hear that son,  
what happened if you don't mind me  
asking?

MATHEW

(hesitates)

She uh-she uh, she died of cancer,  
two years ago.

NILES

I see, how has your father treated  
you after this happened?

MATHEW

Well um-he shut himself in.

NILES

Do you have any other siblings? How  
are they reacting to this?

MATHEW

Yeah, an older brother. He was  
already out of the house when she  
passed. I-I was actually...

Mathew switches the subject, he notices a picture of a  
middle aged woman and a young man in uniform on Niles' desk.

MATHEW

You have a lovely wife.

Niles looks back at the picture.

NILES

Yes she is, thank you. It'll be  
forty-seven years this May.

MATHEW

Congratulations. Is that your son  
there?

NILES

Yes. That's Benjamin. He's in the  
army you know! He's just about your  
age.

Mathew gives him an odd look, noticing the picture looked  
out of date.

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW  
(pointing towards the picture  
of Niles' son)

But-

NILES  
But what my boy?

MATHEW  
Oh nothing.

NILES  
So, as we are jumping from topic to  
topic, do you 'got a girl? Or just  
window shopping?

MATHEW  
(chuckles)  
Ha, uhm yeah I have a steady.

NILES  
Good! Well I best be off to grade  
those term papers, you read that  
and tell me what you think.

MATHEW  
Alright sir. I shall see you  
Monday.

Niles gives Mathew a smile and retreats to his office.

CUT TO:

INT. MATHEW AND RALPH'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The group is having a small get together. Mathew arrives  
late from visiting Niles.

ROSS  
Well you're late!

MATHEW  
Sorry man! I missed the bus I  
usually take.

RALPH  
Ross do you got any grass?

ROSS  
Yeah I got a bit, Matty you want  
in?

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW

(speaking to Alina)

Yes please. So I thought that maybe you could you know, come and see my recital this Wednesday night?

ALINA

(speaking to Mathew)

I'll be there.

MATHEW

(speaking to Alina, gestures)

It'll be a great show. I-I promise.

ROSE

Ross must you always take part in that?

ROSS

Hey don't sweat, it's fine.

ALINA

I'll try some.

ROSS

I'm liken' this one Matty boy!

The group continues to chat and pass around the joint.

MATHEW

(offers the joint)

Leonard?

LEONARD

(shakes his head)

No man, I already told you. I'm not into that.

ROSS

Fitz come on man! Lighten up! Don't be such a candyass.

RALPH

Here I'll take another hit.

Ross passes the joint to Ralph and Ralph takes a few hits.

LEONARD

(pauses)

Guys I enlisted.

(CONTINUED)

RALPH  
Shit. I must be high.

ROSE  
(overlapping)  
What? Why?

ROSS  
(overlapping)  
Leonard you're jokin' aren't you?  
Don't pull my leg like that man.

LEONARD  
No, I'm serious.

ROSS  
You stupid son of a bitch. You know  
you're goin' to get yourself killed  
over there?

LEONARD  
(raises his voice slightly)  
Well it beats this shit man!

MATHEW  
Hey guys, don't flip your wig.

LEONARD  
(overlapping)  
Shut up Mat.

ALINA  
(overlapping)  
Can we all just calm down please?

LEONARD  
I can't deal with your guy's shit  
tonight. I need to get out of here.

The group protests Leonard leaving.

RALPH  
(overlapping)  
Well when do you go man?

LEONARD  
I leave for training in a week.  
You-you know, there's more to life  
then fuckin' smokin' weed and  
talking about art. I'd rather go  
over and fight then be a  
pretentious asshole. Good night.

(CONTINUED)

RALPH  
Will you sit down god dammit.

Ralph gets up and scruffs with Leonard. Leonard punches Ralph in the nose.

RALPH  
(covers bleeding nose)  
Son of a bitch!

Leonard leaves. Ralph's nose is still bleeding.

ALINA  
Well now what?

ROSS  
I gotta, I-I gotta go knock some sense into him.

Ross calls and chases after Leonard. Rose begins to cry and Alina consoles her.

ALINA  
It'll be okay, don't worry.

Alina motions for Mathew to go and follow Ross. Mathew leaves. Mathew runs out of the apartment to find Ross standing on the street corner as Leonard briskly walks away.

MATHEW  
Ross, is he-?

ROSS  
(overlapping)  
No he's gone man. Let's get back inside. We don't want to catch a cold.

Mathew and Ross walk back inside.

CUT TO:

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Mathew and everyone say goodbye to Leonard as he goes home before he goes to basic training. The audience watches as he gets on the bus and it drives off. Everyone but Ross and Mathew leave.

ROSS  
(starts lighting a cigarette)  
You know Matty boy, I've never had a best friend before.

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW

No kidding?

ROSS

(smoking a cigarette)

Yeah, I worry that will be the last time I have one. Well, what's been said has been said and what's done is done.

Ross leaves followed by Mathew who looks back as the bus leaves their site.

CUT TO:

INT. PERFORMING ARTS CENTER - EVENING

Mathew is sheepishly looking behind the curtains of the stage as he sees the seat for Alina is empty. It is his turn to perform.

CUT TO:

INT. PERFORMING ARTS CENTER - NIGHT

It's after the recital and Mathew is congratulated by fellow piano players for winning the recital. He is saddened by Alina not attending. Mathew leaves backstage alone.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUSY SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Mathew walks down the street after his recital and comes across Alina in a coffee shop surrounded by her friends. He notices she is being very friendly with one of her male friends. Mathew ponders to himself and does nothing. He continues walking.

CUT TO:

INT. MOVIE THEATER - DAY

Mathew and Alina are at a movie theater watching an artistic movie. Mathew notices that Alina is not having a good time. The film ends and the couple walk out together.

MATHEW

Is something on your mind? Did you not like it?

(CONTINUED)

ALINA

I thought it was fine.

MATHEW

What? Just fine how?

ALINA

I mean, what is he even trying to tell the audience anyway? It was just a sloppy film. He was just so cliché with his protagonist. Any fool could have done better.

MATHEW

Well I actually liked it.

ALINA

I can't believe you fell for this pretentious garbage.

MATHEW

I'm wrong for having an opinion? I mean it's just a movie Alina.

ALINA

Whatever Mathew, I don't want to talk about it, I have to go meet a friend. I'll see you later.

MATHEW

How come you didn't come to my recital? I mean you said weren't busy-

ALINA

I never said that.

MATHEW

Well you said you'd be there? That night was really important to me. I mean you could have just told me-

ALINA

(overlapping)

I just needed to be alone ok. God.

MATHEW

(pauses)

I think I'm in love you.

Alina walks forward a few steps, turns, gives Mathew a look and doesn't respond. Alina walks abruptly away from Mathew.

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW  
(confused)  
The hell?

CUT TO:

EXT. LIBRARY - DAY

Mathew heads to the library after his confrontation with Alina to clear his head. Here he runs into Niles who notices he is disheveled. Mathew walks through the library, occasionally picking up a book off a shelf and glancing at the cover and back. He notices Niles intently reading and writing at a desk by himself in the back of the library.

MATHEW  
(shouts)  
Hey! Professor!

Mathew is shushed by a group of patrons in the building. He walks over to Niles.

MATHEW  
Hello sir, how are you? What ya  
reading there?

NILES  
How is it that I always seem to be  
running into you, Stanton?

MATHEW  
Well, I-uh...

NILES  
Take a seat before you make a fool  
out of yourself son.

Mathew takes a seat adjacent from Niles.

MATHEW  
So, uhm- what you got there?

NILES  
Some very poor exam papers.

MATHEW  
Oh? How'd I do?

NILES  
Well.

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW

Well, well that's...

NILES

(overlapping)

Is there something I can be helping you with?

MATHEW

Well, it's my girlfriend sir and...

NILES

(overlapping, moves papers aside)

Well there goes me grading these papers.

MATHEW

(overlapping)

...my friends going to war. And I haven't heard high tail from my father since I got to this damn place.

NILES

Son did I ever tell you that I served in the Great War?

MATHEW

No sir, you hadn't.

NILES

Let's go for a walk.

Niles and Mathew get up and walk out the library together.

CUT TO:

EXT. TREE LINED PARK - EVENING

Niles tells Mathew of his time serving in WWI as they walk in a tree lined park.

NILES

I remember this one night, it was quiet for several days prior. Across our trench was the Prussian line. Both sides had been peppered by artillery shells for weeks. No one on either side wanted to make an advance it seemed. I remember being half awake as I noticed a

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NILES (cont'd)

flare light up the sky. I awoke with a jolt and peeked over the top. Wave after wave of Prussian soldiers stamped at us, their battle cry was blood curling. I-I was petrified. Our boys in the machine-gun nest soon opened fire. Round after round went off with no remorse. What I heard next was the most terrifying sound a man can come to hear. The groaning of the unlucky not killed in the spray. Pure agony. But our guns weren't enough as we were over run. I didn't shoot off a single round. All around me, young boys were dying as I sat with my rifle between my legs shaking, like a scared dog. I surrendered as soon as I saw a Prussian boy no older than I screaming and pointing his rifle at me. After that we where headed to a POW camp for the remainder of the war.

MATHEW

Why are you telling me this?

NILES

So you don't make the same mistake that I did.

MATHEW

An-and what's that?

NILES

To be a coward.

They keep walking.

NILES

Something else is eating at you my boy?

MATHEW

Yes.

NILES

Come, let's go pay Wilson's diner a visit.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Niles and Mathew meet at Wilson's diner and Mathew talks to Niles about his current state. They enter the diner and take a booth. They sit across one another.

NILES

What's on your mind son?

MATHEW

(sighs)

I mean- I find that- I've been so absorbed with my life I forget about the rest of the world.

It's quite for a few moments.

MATHEW

I was there, with her you know? When she died.

NILES

Your mother?

MATHEW

Yeah.

NILES

Go on son.

MATHEW

It was about six months after she found out. The doctors gave her three but- you know. We, we uhm, we were out at our towns fair the whole night and, it's funny actually, I was- I mean my brother was in town and we both won at the skeet shooting game they had you know? And um, we both got the choice of a s-stuffed animal or a goldfish. So we both got our mother a goldfish when we won, and I remember that making her so happy for some reason. It's the damndest thing. When we got home though, later that night, my mother asked for me to help her get a bowl out, so we could make a home for the fish. I remember leaving the room, and I-

(CONTINUED)

NILES

You alright Mathew?

MATHEW

I hear her collapse in the kitchen. So I drop the bowl and -I saw my mother's lifeless body, just laying there. Before anyone else. Waiting for her to get up. Shattered glass and water surrounded her. And-and I just remember just being so angry. And ha, the saddest thing is, I don't remember crying at her funeral. I haven't told any of my friends about that night.

NILES

Don't be angry at the world for taking your mother from you. Son I know how you feel. The anger you have at the world. Sometimes it makes us want to block things out.

MATHEW

Oh yeah?

NILES

You know the picture of my boy you pointed out?

MATHEW

Yes.

NILES

Ben died while attempting to throw out a grenade from his fox hole in Italy in the summer of 1943. Six men are alive today because of him. I remember the day the officer came to my door and broke the news to my wife and I. We weren't the same since. My wife Edith couldn't bare to live in a world were her son was taken away from her. She took her own life nine months after that. Imagine my surprise when I came home that day.

MATHEW

(overlapping)

I didn't-

(CONTINUED)

NILES

(overlapping)

Son what I'm getting at is this:  
everyone has their sadness. Don't  
let it get in the way of your life.  
You have to move forward my boy.

MATHEW

I know your right. But I don't want  
you to be.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mathew, Alina, Rose, Ross, and Ralph are all attending a party of one of their friends. Everyone in the group seems empty.

RALPH

Hey Ross did you see that article  
on Orson Welles' *Touch of Evil* that  
came out a few years back? I think  
you'd like it.

ROSS

Hum what? Oh that's nice Ralph.

RALPH

Don't be so vacuous.

ROSS

Vacuous?

RALPH

That's what I said.

ROSS

It's a fun word to say.

Mathew is listening while Alina takes to her two friends.

ALINA

And so I told my professor that the  
Restoration of Louis XVIII Bourbon  
was in 1814, not 1813.

MARY

What a fool.

LINDA

Yeah you told him Alina.

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW

(annoyed, overlapping)

So um, Alina are you going to come to my concert tomorrow? I-I can get you in free-

Alina continues to talking and giggle with her friends, ignoring Mathew.

MATHEW

There's a new Sydney Poitier film coming out I heard. Maybe you'd want to-

ALINA

(overlapping)

Ha, he's always so flashy when he plays. It's like I'm dating Liberace.

MATHEW

(distraught and annoyed)

Alright.

ALINA

Come on Mathew, don't be such a drag.

Her friends giggle.

MATHEW

You know Alina, you're not the girl you make yourself out to be. You're a pretentious little brat and-

ALINA

(overlapping, abruptly leaves)

Why don't you just screw off.

Mathew gives her a defeated look. The party continues until Alina abruptly leaves. Mathew chases after her. Ralph and Ross watch as they leave.

ROSS

I broke up with Rose the other day.

Ralph gives a double take after Ross finishes talking.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET CORNER - NIGHT

Mathew chases Alina after their fight at the party.

MATHEW

Hey, Alina wait. What was that all about?

ALINA

Drop it Mathew.

MATHEW

No, I won't drop it. You tell me buzz off in front of all your friends and you-you suspect me to pretend like everything's all peaches and cream?

ALINA

(overlapping)

I don't think that's the right expression.

MATHEW

(overlapping)

What gives?

ALINA

It's nothing, I'm just tired. That's all.

MATHEW

(gestures)

Well clearly, there's something the matter. Well go on!

ALINA

I'm not happy Mathew.

MATHEW

Not happy how? What do you mean-

ALINA

(overlapping)

With us.

MATHEW

Oh. When did this start?

ALINA

When you told me you loved me.

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW

What? Do you not love me back or something?

Alina turns away from Mathew.

MATHEW

I've been fed up with your indecencies, I mean, I take you out. I buy you shit, listen to your problems and for what? To be humiliated in front of your little pretentious drones you call friends? That's bull. But you know what? I grit my teeth and deal with it.

ALINA

Why?

MATHEW

'Cause I love you dammit.

ALINA

That's the thing Mat, I don't think I love you.

MATHEW

What? Sure you do, you've said it in bed plenty of times-

ALINA

(overlapping)

That's different.

MATHEW

Now how in the hell can that be different?

ALINA

It-it just is Mathew. I've had this on my mind for a while now.

MATHEW

You stole that line from Leonard.

Alina looks down and Mathew looks defeated with his hands on his hips. There are few moments of silence between them.

MATHEW

So what now?

(CONTINUED)

ALINA  
Just walk me home.

CUT TO:

INT. NILES' OFFICE - NIGHT

Mathew barges in on Niles grading papers.

NILES  
Long time no see eh?

Niles offers Mathew a chair and he plops into one adjacent of Niles.

MATHEW  
It's her again.

NILES  
What's happened this time?

MATHEW  
She decided she didn't love me.

NILES  
"Decided?" Do you really expect her to? It hasn't been that long my boy.

MATHEW  
It's been almost four months!

NILES  
(questioning, chuckles)  
You think it happens that quick?

MATHEW  
What do you mean by that?

NILES  
(gestures with his hands)  
Love is a process Mathew. It doesn't just happen.

MATHEW  
Well what am I supposed to do? Transfer schools?

NILES  
I don't know how to help you Mathew.

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW

Well who are you to lecture me anyway? You haven't loved anyone for twenty-some years.

NILES

Twenty-three, you're really close. Now calm down son.

MATHEW

No-no, you're- how can I calm down? I'm looking for your guidance you always seem to be handing out. Now what? Ran out of wisdom?

NILES

Son, I'm gonna have to ask you to leave.

MATHEW

You don't know anything about human emotion, do you?

NILES

(stares at Mathew)

I've lost the two loves of my life. You don't know what love is until you've lost it.

Mathew abruptly stands up.

MATHEW

I'm not gon-gonna sit here and get told off by some old bastard who lives his life in a fantasy.

NILES

(pauses, glares at Mathew)

What the hell do you mean by fantasy jack?

MATHEW

(gestures)

Your family is dead and you act like they're right down the hall, wake up and accept it. Or does this sound familiar to you?

Niles abruptly stands up.

NILES

You haven't dealt with loss the way I have you punk.

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW

Fuck you old man. My mother's dead.

NILES

Well at least my boy was a patriot. He died for his country. You, you're a coward. You're a spoiled brat who's fighting the system of his country and instead of for it.

Mathew gives a defeated look.

NILES

You can't barge in to my office pleading for help and attack the moment I try to help you. That's what the weak do. That's what cowards do. And that's exactly what you are.

Mathew looks up at Niles

MATHEW

Well-

NILES

(overlapping)

If you really loved her, you would do anything for her. Even if that meant not being together. Don't-don't say another word, just get the out of my office.

Mathew leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

Mathew is walking home from class when he runs into his brother MICHAEL. Mathew takes a double take at his brother, his brother gives a awkward wave from across the street.

CUT TO:

INT. DINER - DAY

Mathew and Michael catch up with coffee at the usual diner. It's very awkward between the two brothers who haven't seen each other for a long time.

MICHAEL (Late 20's) tall, handsome, commodore hairstyle, light brown hair.

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL

So how's school going?

MATHEW

Well uh you know, it's goin'. I mean I enjoy my classes and stuff.

MICHAEL

That's good.

MATHEW

So yeah how's work?

MICHAEL

Well uhm it's going well I think. I got a pay raise the other day.

MATHEW

Well that's good.

The brothers then sit in an awkward silence for a few moments drinking their coffees.

MICHAEL

So you got a steady?

MATHEW

(playing with the straw in his cup)

Well yeah but I don't know how much longer that's gonna last you know? How about you? All those girls I heard you swooned in high school.

MICHAEL

(chuckles)

Ha yeah, no I met a girl out of college. We've been together a few months.

MATHEW

What's her name?

MICHAEL

Anna, she's a lovely girl. I should arrange for you guys to meet!

MATHEW

Yeah that would be swell I think.

MICHAEL

So-how's dad been? Since, well you know.

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW

(sighs)

He's been hangin' in there. I mean as of that last time I saw him. He kinda shut me out once you left after mom died.

MICHAEL

Yeah, sorry about that. I just couldn't bear to see him like that. You know?

MATHEW

Yeah I guess. You kinda abandoned me you know.

Mathew and Michael sit in silence for a few more moments.

MICHAEL

Well it was great seeing you, but I best be heading off. You know, work and all that.

MATHEW

(overlapping)

Yeah-yeah let me just take care-

MICHAEL

(overlapping)

No let me get it.

MATHEW

Thanks, let me walk you out.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

Mathew shakes Michael's hand goodbye as music plays. Mathew following his brother as he disappears into a crowd of people then walks off.

CUT TO:

INT. NILE'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Mathew sits very awkwardly while in Nile's class. Nile's doesn't pay attention to him.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUSY STREET - DAY

Mathew briskly walks to Alina's apartment.

CUT TO:

INT. ALINA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Mathew and Alina talk about what transpired the last time they saw each other. Mathew knocks at the door.

ALINA  
(from behind the door)  
Who is it?

MATHEW  
It's me, Mat.

The door unlocks and Alina opens the door. The couple just stare at each other for a moment.

MATHEW  
May I come-

ALINA  
(overlapping)  
No.

An awkward moment of silence between them.

MATHEW  
Well uhm, so about what happened-

ALINA  
(overlapping)  
Mathew, I think we should break it off and here's an early Christmas gift.

MATHEW  
(confused)  
Wh-what's that?

ALINA  
It's a record? Don't worry its critically acclaimed.

Mathew takes the gift.

MATHEW  
Oh-well thank you I mean- no, you mean you want to break up?

(CONTINUED)

ALINA

Yes.

MATHEW

Oh, well I see.

ALINA

I think you'd better leave, I have to get ready to catch my train home.

MATHEW

(distracted)

Uh, okay.

ALINA

Well Merry Christmas!

Alina closes the door in his face. Mathew looks at the wrapped record.

MATHEW

Well fuck.

CUT TO:

INT. MATHEW AND RALPH'S APARTMENT - DAY

Mathew opens the package containing his present from Alina. It's The Beatles' *Revolver*. He preps the record and places the needle on the grooves. He sits adjacent to the record player for a few moments. Then lays on the floor staring at the ceiling while listening to it. He opens up a pack of cigarettes and smokes one.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN CAR - DAY

While music plays from the record, Mathew looks out the window of the train car while on his way home. He gets home and sees his dad smoking a pipe and leaning on the side of his car. Mathew grabs his bags and gets into the car. Lloyd and Mathew are silent while they drive home.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN CAR - DAY

Mathew sits by himself in the train car and stares out the window at the snow.

CUT TO:

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Lloyd is leaning on his car and smoking his pipe as Mathew gets out of the station. Lloyd doesn't look happy to see him. He gets into the car not helping Mathew with his luggage.

CUT TO:

INT. STANTON RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Mathew is looking out his porch window while his dad sits at the kitchen table reading his paper and smoking his pipe while Christmas music plays.

MATHEW  
Michael coming home?

LLOYD  
What's that?

MATHEW  
Is Michael coming home?

LLOYD  
No, he has to work.

Lloyd continues to read while Mathew looks back at his father then back out the window. Mathew comes and joins him at the table.

MATHEW  
So how's work?

LLOYD  
Fine.

MATHEW  
What you reading there?

LLOYD  
Sports.

MATHEW  
Oh?

(CONTINUED)

LLOYD

Yep.

MATHEW

Have you seen any good performances lately, my favorite recently was-

LLOYD

(overlapping)

You know, kids usually ask their parents for food and gas money. Not what their favorite concerto is.

MATHEW

(sighs)

Yep.

Another awkward pause between the two.

MATHEW

So what are we doing for dinner?

LLOYD

I don't know maybe-

He is cut off by a knock at the door.

LLOYD

Could you get that?

Mathew opens the door to reveal Michael and his girlfriend.

MICHAEL

Hey there little brother.

MATHEW

(laughs)

Ha I-I thought you had work?

MICHAEL

(overlapping)

Boss man let me leave early. How's school been?

LLOYD

Mathew who is it?

MATHEW

(overlapping)

Your eldest son! Fine just fine. Come in come in!

Lloyd gets very excited and hops up from his chair and rushes to the door to hug and greet his son.

(CONTINUED)

LLOYD  
My boy! Let me have a look at you.  
Work going well?

MICHAEL  
(chuckles)  
Ha yes, dad work is going well.

LLOYD  
Mind my manners, who might this  
lovely sight be?

MICHAEL  
Well dad and Mathew, this is Anna,  
my fiancé.

ANNA (Early 20's) beautiful, sandy-brown hair, average  
height and weight.

LLOYD  
You're fiancé? My boy! Going to be  
a married man!

Lloyd hugs and kisses the couple very excitedly.

LLOYD  
Well come in! Come in! Mathew grab  
us an extra chair from the cellar  
will you?

CUT TO:

INT. STANTON RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mathew, Lloyd, Michael, and Anna are all seated at the table  
talking and eating. Lloyd looks very happy.

LLOYD  
Well that's great news son, you  
earned that promotion.

MICHAEL  
Thanks dad, did you know about  
Mathew's little steady?

MATHEW  
(chuckles)  
Mike please!

LLOYD  
Oh I heard about her, quite the  
little charmer he told me. Mathew  
could you clear the table and get  
the coffee pot ready?

(CONTINUED)

Mathew gets up to clear the table and brings them into the kitchen. He gets three cups and fills them with coffee.

MATHEW  
(to himself)  
It's like I'm fucking working  
again.

He enters the dining room and gives the coffee to everyone at the table.

MATHEW  
Dad do you mind I go out for some  
air?

LLOYD  
If it suits you. So Anna tell me  
about-

Mathew leaves the kitchen and goes out the screen door to the porch. He leans on the railing and begins to smoke. He looks back through the glass door at his father and brother and how happy they look. Mathew finishes his cigarette and joins his family.

CUT TO:

INT. MATHEW AND RALPH'S APARTMENT - DAY

Mathew meets back up with Ralph in their apartment. He confesses about what happened between him and Alina.

MATHEW  
Then she gave me this record and  
then I left.

RALPH  
So what are you going to do now?

MATHEW  
I'm not quite sure you know.

RALPH  
What a bitch.

MATHEW  
Yeah-yeah I know. So has Ross got  
back yet?

RALPH  
Yeah he has, but I think he's been  
avoiding us. He hasn't really been  
himself lately.

(CONTINUED)

The friends are quite for a few moments as Mathew stares at the ground.

RALPH

Wanna go see what's playing at the movie house?

Mathew nods and the friends leave.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOVIE HOUSE - DAY

Ralph and Mathew browse the signs with movies listed on them and talk amongst themselves.

MATHEW

What about this one?

RALPH

Nah, I've already seen it. It's a lot like this one I saw last week.

MATHEW

You watch too many movies as is.

Rose comes down walking the street and says hello to them.

ROSE

Hey Ralph and Mathew! Fancy seeing you here?

RALPH

Hey Rose, how are you doing?

ROSE

Quite well thank you, and Mathew I see you're back!

MATHEW

Uh yeah, I needed some time out of the city.

ROSE

Well I hope you enjoyed your holiday. So what are you guys going to see?

RALPH

Well that's what we are trying to come to a consensus about.

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW

Where's Ross at Rose?

Ralph gives a wide-eyed look at Mathew and then at Rose, who doesn't seem fazed by the question.

ROSE

Ross and I are taking a break.

MATHEW

Oh, w-when did this happen?

ROSE

When I found him in bed with some slut from his acting class.

RALPH

Ouch.

MATHEW

Well uhm In Cold Blood came out, do you wanted to see that with us? Well if you're not busy?

ROSE

That sounds delightful actually. I love Truman Capote.

Mathew, Rose, and Ralph walk up to the ticket booth and enter the theater.

CUT TO:

INT. MOVIE HOUSE - DAY

Mathew, Ralph, and Rose intently watch In Cold Blood while eating popcorn.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Mathew, Ralph, and Rose walk laughing together in a tree lined park.

EXT. PIER - NIGHT

Mathew, Ralph, and Rose walk together talking intently while eating ice cream.

EXT. BUSY STREET - DAY

Mathew, Ralph, and Rose ride bikes together.

CUT TO:

EXT. WAR RALLY OUTSIDE GOVERNMENT BUILDING - DAY

Ralph, Mathew, and Rose are walking together as they stumble upon a rally against the war in Vietnam.

RALPH  
Yeah, but I mean-

MATHEW  
(overlapping)  
Wait check this out, another rally.

ROSE  
We best not get involved with this.

MATHEW  
I mean, it wouldn't hurt to poke  
around awhile.

Ralph and Rose agree and walk amongst the crowd with Mathew. They come up to a main funnel of students protesting including Ross.

RALPH  
Shit look! It's Fitz! Hey Fitz!

MATHEW  
Well this explains why we never see  
him anymore.

Ross turns his head to the direction of his name being called. He spots them and walks over to them.

ROSS  
Matt, Ralph, hello Rose. What are  
you doing here?

MATHEW  
Well we stumbled on your little  
social gathering here.

RALPH  
Yeah, since when did you care about  
the war so much?

(CONTINUED)

ROSS

Well-

ROSE

(overlapping)

I'm sorry, but I have to leave.  
I'll see you guys at the library  
tomorrow.

Rose promptly leaves while weaving through protesters.

RALPH

Fitz, we never see you anymore!  
What the hell man?

A protestor accidentally pumps into Mathew and apologizes.

MATHEW

(apologizes to protestor)

Excuse me sorry. Yeah well, what's  
going on with you guys?

ROSS

I'm sorry fellas, I haven't been so  
fair to you. But- you see, with  
Leonard leaving and all, it really  
got me thinking about this whole  
mess.

RALPH

Yeah so?

ROSS

Well the whole thing is so idiotic  
and I want to see my friend come  
home don't you? You guys remember  
that Operation Abolition in  
Berkeley last year? This is my  
chance to do something and I'm  
going to do it. Mathew you agree  
with me right? Having Alina around.

MATHEW

I don't see her anymore.

ROSS

Well, uhm, sorry I didn't catch the  
news.

They stand awkwardly silent.

(CONTINUED)

ROSS  
I'm sorry guys I got to go, but  
I'll see you around alright?

Ross leaves.

RALPH  
He's so full of shit. Twenty bucks  
says we don't see him anymore.

Ralph starts to walk away while Mathew takes a second to look back at Ross and then leaves with him. Ross stands up on a platform with a microphone in hand and starts rambling about his disgust for the war.

CUT TO:

INT. NILES' CLASSROOM - DAY

Mathew waits after class to apologize to Niles.

MATHEW  
Hello Professor.

NILES  
Mr. Stanton.

MATHEW  
Sir, I think I owe you an apology,  
see I was-

NILES  
(overlapping)  
Son, you don't need to apologize  
for anything. Funny thing about  
time: it heals your wounds for you.  
We both said some rude things that  
night, it'll be alright.

MATHEW  
But about your son-

NILES  
(overlapping)  
It was about time I came to face  
the truth about my son. About  
twenty years too late in fact.

Mathew gives him a smile of relief.

MATHEW  
Seen any good movies lately?

(CONTINUED)

NILES

No, reckon' I haven't. Any suggestions?

Mathew and Niles walk out of Niles' classroom together.

INT. PARTY IN APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mathew, Ralph, and Rose all come to a party together. The night is going pretty well until Alina shows up. Mathew notices she arrived. Mathew is with Ralph and Rose as they snack on party foods and smoke.

RALPH

Michelle Phillips man, a girl can't be more perfect than that.

ROSE

You wonder why you can't get a girlfriend, you set your standards too high.

RALPH

(laughs)

I'm a man of good taste Rose. I can't help myself.

MATHEW

Damn, she's here.

ROSE

Still upset about her huh?

RALPH

(eating)

Don't worry man you were too good for her anyway. A bitch, I always said.

Ross arrives as well, while holding hands with another girl.

RALPH

Oh look who decided to grace us with his presence.

MATHEW

That jerk.

Mathew notices how upset Rose looks as she spots Ross.

ROSE

He's with that whore who always organizes the rallies. How fitting?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ROSE (cont'd)  
They deserve each other. I'm sorry  
guys I have to go home. That damn  
flower child.

MATHEW  
Awh Rose come on-

Rose rushes out of the party while crying, Mathew chases  
after her. Mathew looks back at Ralph who continues to eat  
and shruggs.

CUT TO:

EXT. EMPTY STREET - NIGHT

MATHEW  
Hey Rose come on! Wait up!

ROSE  
Go away Mathew.

MATHEW  
Hey stop!

Mathew grabs Rose and turns her towards him, she is crying.  
He hugs her.

MATHEW  
Hey it's alright.

ROSE  
(sobbing)  
He's so stupid.

MATHEW  
I know.

ROSE  
(sobbing)  
All he's about is just sex.

MATHEW  
(making a face)  
I know.

ROSE  
I gave him a damn pipe for  
Christmas and he never said thank  
you. That ass.

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW

I remember you told me about your dad passing away last year, I never told you about my mother.

ROSE

That's right you didn't.

MATHEW

She passed away two years ago of cancer.

ROSE

Oh, I'm sorry to hear that.

Rose breaks the hug and wipes her face.

ROSE

If only he was more like you Mathew. You know, kind, consoling, and had great taste in movies.

MATHEW

(laughs)

Don't worry, it'll be alright.

ROSE

Thank you Mathew, I'm gonna go home now. Say sorry to Ralph for me please?

MATHEW

Sure thing.

Rose kisses Mathew on the cheek and walks away. Mathew looks at the ground then at Rose, looking like he's thinking. He runs down the street after Rose.

MATHEW

He Rose do you wanna go grab a bite to eat? See I know this great diner and-

ROSE

(overlapping)

I would love to.

MATHEW

It just so happens I'm a regular.

Mathew offers his arm and they continue walking.

CUT TO:

INT. RECORD STORE - DAY

Mathew and Rose browse records at a record store while holding hands.

EXT. TREE LINED PARK - DAY

Mathew and Rose walk and talk in a tree lined park exchanging laughs.

INT. MUSEUM - DAY

Mathew and Rose browse a museum together.

INT. MOVIE HOUSE - NIGHT

Mathew and Rose look bored during a foreign film, Mathew whispers into Roses and then begin to kiss with great fervor.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOVIE HOUSE - NIGHT

Mathew walks Rose home after their date.

MATHEW

I mean I was lost during the whole thing. Now I don't know about you but-

ROSE

(overlapping)

It was quiet convoluted.

Mathew and Rose continue to walk. Mathew has his hands in his pockets and is looking down at the ground.

MATHEW

You know I almost decided to leave?

ROSE

What do you mean?

MATHEW

I almost ran away.

ROSE

Really?

MATHEW

Yeah, I mean, I had my train ticket and everything but uh-I just

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW (cont'd)  
couldn't bring myself to do it you  
know?

ROSE  
What stopped you?

Mathew stops walking. Thinking of an answer.

MATHEW  
Something just told me to stay.

They continue to walk home.

CUT TO:

INT. RALPH AND MATHEW'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Rose, Ralph, and Mathew are at a party hosted by them,  
smoking and talking.

RALPH  
Yeah that piece came in last week I  
saw, I think one of my post-grad  
friends is doing their dissertation  
on it. I feel like all we do is go  
to parties now.

MATHEW  
You need a girlfriend Ralph.

RALPH  
(fixes his glasses and takes a  
drink)  
Yeah you're right.

MATHEW  
Who'd you invite anyway? You know  
I-I don't want so many people I  
have to take a census.

RALPH  
Who are you, Joe McCarthy?

The door bell rings and Mathew welcomes the first few party  
guests in. Mathew and Ralph have a enjoyable time as Rose  
and more guests arrive. Rose and Mathew stay around each  
other most of the party, watching the party go by. Alina  
arrives with a handsome fellow and begins to talk and flirt  
with him. Mathew is talking with Rose and notices Alina, he  
abruptly leaves her and walks over to Alina.

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW

Hello Alina. I don't recall  
inviting you.

IAN (19) tall, handsome, and strong looking. Resembles  
Mathew's brother Michael.

IAN

She's with me, I'm a friend of  
Ralph's.

Ian waves over to Ralph who waves back with a smile.

MATHEW

I didn't ask you guy. Where'd you  
pick up this shtick Alina?

ALINA

Ian, can you excuse us a moment?

Alina takes Mathew by the arm and moves away from Ian.

MATHEW

His ego is big enough to sink the  
Titanic.

ALINA

Will you please-

MATHEW

(overlapping)

I mean look at him, he's a  
candyass.

ALINA

Mathew you need to stop.

MATHEW

(laughs)

I need to stop? Ha you're still  
that sad, sallow, lonely little  
girl. I mean look who you're with?

ALINA

(angrily)

At least I'm not the one loafing in  
and out of his friends lives.

MATHEW

What's th-that supposed to mean?

(CONTINUED)

ALINA

Still stuttering huh? You're losing  
all your friends Mathew, you  
pompous ass. Ian, we're leaving.

Alina and Ian leave together. Mathew looks back at Rose who  
looks very unhappy, she has her arms crossed and is tapping  
her foot.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT LOBBY - DAY

Mathew and Rose fight about what happened with Alina at  
Mathew's party.

MATHEW

Well I'm sorry I-

ROSE

(overlapping)

Still have some feelings for her?  
God, men are all the same. You're  
just like Ross.

MATHEW

(overlapping)

Rose if you could please just  
listen-

ROSE

(overlapping, tries to light a  
cigarette)

No you listen, get your life  
straight Mat. I mean- clearly you  
can't figure out what you want.  
I-we're all sick of your shit.  
Dammit I need a smoke.

Rose leaves the lobby, Mathew stays behind with his hands on  
his hips, looking at the ground defeated.

EXT. DINER - DAY

Niles and Mathew meet one last time before school gets out.

MATHEW

And they set the date for this  
summer actually, in July I think.

NILES

That's exciting, send him my  
regards with you. So, final  
thoughts on the year?

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW

Well I think, I think it went well.

They are silent for a few moments, Mathew plays with the straw in his coffee.

NILES

So Rose is good?

MATHEW

Well actually I think I'm going to break it off I don't want a relationship this summer vacation you know?

NILES

Ah I see. Sorry son. I best be heading off soon.

MATHEW

Oh-I uh-it's okay! Let me walk you out.

NILES

Oh no! I can see myself out. A lot has happened to you over the year, anything you want to share with me before we depart ways?

MATHEW

Thank you. Having someone to talk to has been-has been, well you know.

NILES

And your father?

MATHEW

W-with my brother getting engaged and all, it's given him a break from-well you know. And we've really gotten a lot better I think. Thank you for everything, really.

NILES

You're welcome my boy. Well I'd best be off.

Niles gets his coat, hat, and umbrella and gets ready to leave.

(CONTINUED)

NILES

Oh, you never told me what happened to that Ross friend of yours?

MATHEW

Yeah, he got arrested for protesting and civil disobedience.

NILES

Ha, he always seemed like a scrappy bastard. Well I'm off, goodbye friend.

MATHEW

Professor, one last question? You never told me why you kept them alive. I mean, well...

NILES

Son I'll tell you why, you know how I was a prisoner in the Great War?

MATHEW

(nodding)

Uh-huh. How did you escape again?

NILES (VO)

That's a story for another day my boy. As I was saying, when our own artillery came bombarding all around us, with young boys screaming in fear, I promised to hold close the ones dear to me; to never let go of them. That they were my reason to keep going in this horrid yet beautiful world. I guess I must have gotten a tad carried away with that promise. Remember, be the Prussian, not the pansy. Goodbye Mr. Stanton.

As Niles is talking:

A) Mathew, Ralph, Ross, and Leonard walk out of the movie house playing, smoking, and joking around with each other.

B) Mathew, Ralph, and Rose intently watch *In Cold Blood* while eating popcorn.

C) Mathew and Alina slow dance, Alina laughs at something Mathew says.

D) Mathew and Michael are eating at the diner, talking and chuckling.

(CONTINUED)

Mathew gives Niles a wave goodbye. He contently looks at his coffee.

MATHEW  
(quietly to himself)  
Be the Prussian, not the pussy.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUSY STREET CORNER - DAY

Mathew holds Rose's hand while the other is in his pocket. Rose looks very sad. Mathew gives her a kiss on the cheek. Rose leaves and Mathew gives her a wave goodbye.

INT. MATHEW AND RALPH'S APARTMENT - DAY

Mathew is listening to records and reading.

RALPH  
I'm heading out man, I'll see you later.

MATHEW  
Be seeing you.

Ralph leaves. Mathew continues to read for a few moments until he hears a knock at the door.

MATHEW  
Always the keys he forgets, alright one sec I'm coming, Jesus.

Mathew opens the door to find out it's Alina.

MATHEW  
Uhm, can I help you?

ALINA  
I think I left my purse here from last night.

MATHEW  
Oh okay, just let me go find it.

ALINA  
(overlapping)  
If you don't mind, I think I could find it faster myself.

Mathew gestures for her to come in, she takes a few moments and finds her purse as he holds onto the door.

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW

So that it?

ALINA

Yeah it looks like it.

They are silently awkward for a few moments.

ALINA

Is that a new painting?

Alina points to a very obscure painting. Mathew looks around.

MATHEW

Yeah-yeah it is.

ALINA

I like it.

MATHEW

Thank you.

They are silent again.

ALINA

Well I best be-

MATHEW

(overlapping)

You didn't only come here for your purse did you?

ALINA

No.

MATHEW

Well? If it's about the other day I'm-

ALINA

(overlapping)

I love you.

MATHEW

What?

ALINA

I love you Mathew. I realized I never said it when we dated, so I thought now was an appropriate time.

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW  
(chuckles)  
Better now than later right?

ALINA  
Yeah, right.

They walk to the door.

ALINA  
Goodbye Mathew, enjoy your summer.

Alina kisses Mathew on the cheek and leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

Mathew shakes Ralph's hand then gives him a hug as Ralph leaves, Mathew picks up his bags and heads towards the train station.

MATHEW  
I'll be sure to write you this summer.

RALPH  
You best be! Hey you wouldn't mind if I asked Rose out would you? You guys aren't together anymore are you?

MATHEW  
(nervously)  
No, not anymore. By all means, go ahead.

RALPH  
Great, thanks Matty. Say, how does she feel about Jews?

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Mathew holds one bag under his arm while he reads his ticket to find out what terminal he is at. Rose comes to the station to say goodbye to him.

ROSE  
Leaving so soon?

(CONTINUED)

MATHEW

Rose-hey, uh-

ROSE

(overlapping)

I thought I'd say goodbye before the summer. So well, goodbye.

MATHEW

Yeah, uhm goodbye. And I think we should you know, break it off. If that al-already isn't apparent I mean-

ROSE

I never thanked you for what you did for me that night.

MATHEW

Well you know, don't worry about it.

ROSE

I love you Mathew Stanton.

MATHEW

Oh, I uh-

Mathew is interrupted by the name of his train being called.

MATHEW

That's me.

ROSE

(overlapping)

Well you have a train to catch!  
Bye!

Rose gives him a kiss on the mouth and leaves. Mathew stands a moment awestruck. He comes to, grabs his bags, and heads towards his train.

CUT TO:

INT. DINER - LATE EVENING

Mathew and Ross sit at a booth with a waitress tending to them. Outside is a busy street corner. Remnants of food and empty cups are on their table. The waitress comes with the check.

(CONTINUED)

ROSS

Wow, I missed a lot. Thanks I'll take that.

MATHEW

(gestures)

Yeah, yeah you did, but it's you know- I enjoyed working this summer and my brother's wedding was a great ceremony; and my father and I are actually planning a fishing trip this fall. So all's good you know.

ROSS

I'm sorry Matty boy. For abandoning you guys.

MATHEW

Have you heard back from Leonard?

ROSS

Not a word actually, I don't know what or where he is man.

MATHEW

Damn.

They are quiet a moment.

ROSS

You know, she's back in town.

MATHEW

Oh really? I didn't know.

ROSS

Here let me give you her address.

MATHEW

Oh please, I-

ROSS

(overlapping)

It's okay, I helped her move in last week and I want to give it to you.

MATHEW

But won't I look- that stuff makes me- well you know?

(CONTINUED)

ROSS  
Matty Stanton? Anxious with woman?  
I guess somethings never change.

MATHEW  
(chuckles)  
Ha- I'll think about it.

Ross writes an address on the back of a the check. He gets up, throws down the payment for the bill and shakes Mathew's hand goodbye.

ROSS  
I'll see you around Stanton.

MATHEW  
Yeah, see ya.

Ross nudges the paper towards Mathew across the table.

ROSS  
Mat, think about it.

Ross leaves, Mathew sits at the booth for a few more seconds. He nervously looks at the paper, and finally picks it up and reads it.

MATHEW  
Dammit.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET CORNER - EVENING

Mathew walks by a store and glances at it. He runs back and puts his hands against the window and looks at something in the store, he runs into it and buys it. Mathew then runs out with a wrapped package.

CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT - EVENING

Mathew looks at the address on the check then at the one on street, he then rushes into the building.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - EVENING

Mathew notices that the elevator is out, and to his dislike, has to climb four flights of stairs to reach his destination.

CUT TO:

INT. ROSE/ALINA'S APARTMENTS - EVENING

Mathew climbs the stairs to one of the rooms. Simultaneously, the audience sees both females in their apartments reading. A knock comes at the door of both of them. Rose steps up and opens hers, it's the mail man.

MAIL MAN

Delivery for you ma'am.

He hands her a package as she thanks him and looks down the hall before closing the door.

CUT TO:

INT. ALINA'S APARMENT - EVENING

Alina opens the door to find Mathew there. He opens the package that contains the record Revolver by The Beatles. Alina smiles, the camera shows Mathew giving a small smile.

DISSOLVES TO:

Black background credits popping on and off in white.