

CLEAN SLATE

EXT. BROOKLYN - ESTABLISHING SHOT - NIGHT

RAIN. An OLD CAR pulls up on an empty street. The street has brownstone on one side, and a MENTAL FACILITY on the other. The wet pavement reflects the dulling neon sign displaying: BROOKLYN REHABILITATION CENTER. The area reeks of dinginess. SEEDY FIGURES are scattered along the sidewalk. As the car stops across the street from the rehab center, they all seem to notice. The car's hazard lights turn on. One figure standing under the rehab center's canopy separates from the rest. MIKEY(33), gaunt, five o'clock shadow, and sunken eyes; meanders over to the passenger's side. Mikey has seen better days.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

The driver, ROB(40), caring, with a constant "sad furrow" to his brow. Perhaps he should have been a cop, but he's turned in the badge for a pocket protector and a few extra donuts. The car is nothing special; old and practical, Rob's style.

Rob hollers to Mikey.

ROB
Come on, get outta the rain.

Mikey opens the passenger door and hops into the car, immediately rubbing his arms and legs to warm them. He slams the door behind him.

MIKEY
Cold as fuck in here.

ROB
(Sincere)
Look at that, you're a minute early.

Rob points to the car's clock.

INSERT - 12:59

ROB (CONT'D)
Let it never be said that druggies
are *always* late...
(beat)
It's good to see you Mikey.

MIKEY
Yup.

Rob goes for a hug, but it's a little awkward. Rob's seatbelt holds him back, and Mikey makes no attempt to lean in.

Rob eventually wraps his arm around Mikey and kisses him on the forehead in a brotherly way.

MIKEY (CONT'D)
I'm gonna smoke.

Mikey takes out a loose and partially bent cigarette. The car lurches forward.

ROB
Mikey, can you open the window or somethin'?

Mikey rolls his eyes and barely cracks the window open as he lights the cigarette.

MIKEY
You're killin' me.

ROB
(distracted)
Can I pull-over up here?

Rob finds a quiet place to park.

ROB (CONT'D)
I wanna catch-up, you know? Where am I taking you by the way?

MIKEY
Ma's place, I guess. She's still kickin' right?

ROB
She's as spunky as ever, Mikey.
(sigh)
She loves you. We still do Sunday dinners. To be honest she won't shut-up about you. She's really worried, it's tearing her up.

MIKEY
"It's tearing her up", or "I'm tearing her up".

ROB
You know what I mean, Mikey. The situation. It's just a little fucked up right now. She can't stand it, and I can't stand seeing her like that.
(long beat)
Well, how was it in there? What was it, 3 months?

MIKEY
90 days.

ROB
(expectantly)
Okay...

MIKEY
(sigh)
What do you wanna know? It was a
hell-hole. The food was straight
outta 7/11. The showers were cold.
The staff were assholes.
(rummaging through coat
pockets)
Here.

Mikey hands Rob his discharge papers.

MIKEY (CONT'D)
Apparently I'm cured.

Rob reads the crumpled up paper.

INSERT: Discharge time: 11:03pm

ROB
(distracted)
So... Did you learn anythin'?

MIKEY
I learned how long I can live off
cigarettes and Gatorade.

ROB
(disappointed)
That's it, Mikey?

MIKEY
(passionate)
You know somethin'? Remember
Frankie? The guy who got me into
this mess?

ROB
You mean, the guy you did heroin
with...

MIKEY
(ignoring)
-Apparently his parents got him
into a rehab in fuckin' Malibu.
(MORE)

MIKEY (CONT'D)

The rat-fuck should owe me,
probably sippin' kombucha with some
Cali whores-

ROB

(Annoyed)

-Y'know Ma spent a lot of fuckin'
money to get you here. We've all
sacrificed a lot-

MIKEY

-Yeah. And you. Picking me up in
the fuckin' bucket instead of the
good car.

ROB

The Benz? That's my wife's car-

MIKEY

-That you paid for! Don't you get
it?

ROB

(sarcastic)

Sorry, I didn't know vomiting and
shitting yourself in your sleep was
suddenly red carpet worthy.

MIKEY

Ma told you about that?

ROB

Mikey, you were almost fuckin'
dead. You don't speak to us in
months, she visits you on a whim,
and finds you like that? Yeah, I
was the first person she called.
The *only* person.

MIKEY

Rob to the rescue, then. I see.

ROB

Why don't you take no
responsibility for yourself? Mikey,
Ma can't sleep anymore 'cause of
you. The wife and I have been
bustin' our asses to help out.

MIKEY

(mocking)

Ooh, sorry I didn't take the safe
route like you and marry the first
bimbo I fucked.

(MORE)

MIKEY (CONT'D)

You're so chicken shit. I'm sorry, but you've lived such a privileged life, and now that I'm trying to cash-in on some of that privilege, I get shit on. When am I gonna get *mine* Rob? I deserve better than you fucks.

(Laughs)

How has it been working for your wife's dad anyway? His dick taste like her too?

Rob has a look of disappointment and disgust. He looks around for any kind of solace.

MIKEY (CONT'D)

I seriously just called you a bitch to your face, and you won't do shit.

ROB

Mikey, please...

MIKEY

Unbelievable. Can we go?

ROB

(sincere)

I'm sorry Mikey. I tried so hard to be the *nice* older brother, but I haven't been the *good* older brother. I know you **used** today. Your discharge was almost two hours ago.

(chuckles)

Y'know I wasn't even gonna bring it up, because *that's* how chicken shit I am.

MIKEY

Why do you even fuckin' care?

ROB

Why do I care? 'Cuz all my life I felt like it was my job to protect you. Instead, I failed you.

(reminiscing)

Remember that time you threw rocks at those older kids on bikes? You looked like such a sad little puppy when they surrounded you and started kicking you. I feel like I denied you of something that day. I jumped in and beat one guy's ass...

(MORE)

ROB (CONT'D)
then I got my ass beat. I saved you
from the beating, but I failed you.
I'm still failing you Mikey. I keep
protecting you from these life
lessons... And guess what? I'll
take the ass beatings, I don't
care. *Ma*. Ma still thinks you'll
get through this, but I know
better... It's not... It's not *just*
me getting hurt anymore.

Mikey moves in his seat, it looks like it might be getting
through to him.

MIKEY
Well, time to start being a good
brother.

Mikey pulls out a SUNGLASSES CASE.

MIKEY (CONT'D)
I need you to hold my shit for me
while I stay with Ma. She's gonna
go through my stuff, y'know?

Rob's constant "sad furrow" is now disdain. He looks away
from Mikey and starts the car.

MIKEY (CONT'D)
(sarcastic)
Thrilling story, though. I liked
the part where you got your ass
beat.

Mikey holds out the sunglasses case.

ROB
Leave it under the seat.

The car drives in silence as Mikey leans forward to store the
sunglasses case.

ROB (CONT'D)
I know it won't matter, but
seatbelt, Mikey.

MIKEY
(pointing directions)
Take Coney down, make a right on
Caton. I'm gonna take a nap.

ROB
I think I'll take Church instead.

Mikey scoffs. Silence as the car drives through the empty streets. The car makes the turn, and soon the car is lit up with orange and white blinking lights. Rob knows exactly where to go, but he's hesitant for some reason. Rob turns to Mikey.

ROB (CONT'D)
Dead end. What now?

MIKEY
Construction. Why did we take Church, didn't you drive here? I don't give a fuck, just wake me up before we get there. I need to practice being *normal* for Ma.

ROB
Yup.

Rob no longer recognizes the person next to him. Mikey wriggles to get comfortable in the seat. Rob looks forward towards a large DUMP TRUCK with huge chunks of broken concrete. He stares at the truck and takes a deep breath.

The car jerks forward, accelerating quickly. Mikey sits up and **screams** as the old car slams into the construction vehicle.

CUT TO BLACK.

Fade in on Rob waking up from the CRASH. Loud beeps and blinking lights fill the air as a confused CONSTRUCTION CREW gathers around the WRECKAGE. No airbags deployed, no real safety features. Rob looks up with a bloody nose and sees Mikey's partially defenestrated lifeless body. Rob rests his head on the steering wheel.

ROB (CONT'D)
Sorry again, Mikey.

FADE OUT.