POLITE PEOPLE
by
Daniel Bang
FADE IN:

INT. SAM’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A party takes place. YOUNG PEOPLE in their 20s and 30s socialize. MUSIC plays from a stereo. ELI POLITE, 28, stands by himself in a corner with a drink in his hand, smiling shyly as people pass by him. He’s a decent-looking guy and clean-shaven. He looks across the room at a NERVOUS GUY by himself.

Eli walks over to the Nervous Guy.

ELI
Hi. I’m Eli.

The Guy sticks his hand out.

NERVOUS GUY
Evan.

They shake hands.

ELI
Are you a friend of Sam’s?

EVAN
Yeah.

ELI
Me too.

EVAN
Cool.

ELI
(pause)
I’m not good at these things.

EVAN
What?

ELI
I said, I’m not good at these things. These parties.

EVAN
Oh, okay.

Silence as they just stand there watching people socialize.
Eli browses through books on a bookshelf by himself. A very drunk woman with long brunette hair, AMY HAYES, 26, pokes Eli's back.

AMY
(smilng)
Hi.

ELI
Um, hi.

She sticks her hand out.

AMY
I'm Amy.

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Eli and Amy sit next to each other on a bed. Amy still has a glass in her hand.

AMY
...yeah, I thought you were cute.

ELI
Really?

AMY
Yeah.

She pets his smooth, clean-shaven face gently. He seems deeply touched by this.

AMY (CONT'D)
See. Cute.... Can I lie on you?

ELI
Okay.

She rests her head on his lap then intertwines her fingers with his. He can't help but smile a little.

AMY
This is nice, huh?

ELI
Yeah... No one's ever touched me like this. I feel so peaceful. (beat)
I'm sorry. That was an awkward thing to say. I apologize.
She laughs a little then stops. After a short beat, Eli looks embarrassed. He has an erection.

ELI (CONT’D)
I... I’m sorry. I’m so sorry.

AMY
It’s poking my head.

ELI
I’m so sorry. Let me adjust it.

She laughs, then accidentally DROPS her glass on the floor, causing it to SHATTER everywhere.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - DAY

A decent-looking two bedroom apartment. A short-haired Amy carries boxes and tapes them up while Eli follows her around. Eli’s phone RINGS in the background.

ELI
Why are you doing this? Is it something I did?

She stops and looks at Eli, annoyed.

AMY
I told you. I decided to go black.

She continues with the boxes.

ELI
Black? Please don’t fuck with me. What does that mean?

She doesn’t respond. The answering machine PLAYS quietly in the background while they continue to fight.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
(over machine)
Hey, Eli. It’s me, Charlie. I just wanted to make sure you’re coming to the wedding.
(beat)
Can you believe it? Your brother’s getting married! Fuck, huh! Well, I hope you can make it. I’d love to meet that girlfriend of yours.
(MORE)
CHARLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
You guys getting married soon? It’s about the right time, right? Well, I really hope you can make it. Talk to you later, bro.

ELI
Aren’t you going to answer me?

AMY
No.

She grabs a baseball mitt, almost putting it in a box when:

ELI
What are you doing? My brothers gave me that.

AMY
You don’t even play baseball.

ELI
You don’t either.

AMY
Eli. I’m bored. I’m almost thirty, and I... I can’t linger around with you any longer. I need change.

After looking Eli straight in the eyes, she puts the mitt in the box. Eli just watches her passively as some tears fall down his cheek.

AMY (CONT’D)
Are you crying?

Eli ignores her as he walks out, slamming the door.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Eli sits against the wall, covering his face with his hands. A YOUNG GIRL, 10, sits next to Eli, crying. He notices her after awhile. She looks at him.

YOUNG GIRL
Did your boyfriend break up with you too?

INT. RACHEL’S ROOM - NIGHT

A very pink room. Pink walls, pink bed, pink dolls. The Young Girl, Rachel, sits on her bed against her headboard. Eli sits on the bed. He looks like he’s been crying a lot.
ELI
You’re still young. You’ll be fine.
Okay, Rachel?

She nods. He pats her knee comfortingly, then gets up to leave.

RACHEL
Hey.

Eli turns around.

RACHEL (CONT’D)
Thanks. I’m sure you’ll be fine too.

She smiles at him. Eli does the best he can to return a smile, but it looks melancholic.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - ELI’S ROOM - NIGHT

It’s dark. Eli lies wide awake in bed. He looks like he hasn’t showered in ages and he has a slight beard.

He turns the light on to reveal a messy room and a messy bed with broken mementos of Amy: torn pictures, ripped clothes, a broken mug, and other broken “couple items.”

He reaches under the bed, coming up with Amy’s underwear. He puts it up to his nose and inhales. After a brief moment, he quickly pulls it away, disgusted with himself.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Eli sits at his desk, staring aimlessly at a marked up manuscript. He sets it aside and rests his head on the desk, defeated. His phone RINGS once, but it goes straight to answering machine.

SAM (V.O.)
(over machine)
Hey, buddy. It’s Sam. What’s going on? Why don’t you return my calls? You on vacation or something?... Pick up, Eli. How’s the book coming along?... I’m coming over, okay?

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Eli opens the door. SAM MURRAY, mid 20s, enters holding a brown bag and a container. He half-smiles at Eli.
They sit in the living room. Silence. Sam fidgets nervously. Eli stares at the table. After a moment, Sam notices his container.

SAM
Oh. Hey, I got you soup.

Sam hands the container to Eli.

ELI
I don’t like soup.

SAM
I thought you did... You sure?

ELI
Yes, I’m sure. I don’t like soup.

SAM
Oh... Um, can I eat it then?

MOMENTS LATER: They talk while Sam eats the soup.

SAM (CONT’D)
Fuck her. She’s a good girl, but fuck her, man. Break ups are hard, but look at the positives. You’re a free man now. You can do whatever you want.

ELI
She’s the only girl I’ve ever been with.

SAM
So?

No response.

SAM (CONT’D)
The best thing for you now is to keep yourself occupied.

(beat)
How’s my manuscript coming along?

ELI
I’m still working on it.

SAM
Okay, cool. It’s just these publishing bastards have a deadline, you know? They’re on my nuts with this shit.
ELI
I’ll finish it when I finish it.

SAM
Yeah, well, when is that going to be?

No response.

SAM (CONT’D)
I picked you because you’ve done some good shit for me. It’s like you know how to articulate what I’m trying to say. But this is my job, Eli. I need you to do this for me, or I’m going to have to find someone else.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - LATER THAT NIGHT

Eli and Sam play poker at a table. Sam collects the chips in the pot and hands the deck of cards to Eli. Eli handles them nervously. Sam watches Eli trying to shuffle the cards, but it’s awkward and ineffective.

SAM
You okay there?

ELI
Uh, yeah.

Eli tries again, but once again, it’s awkward. Sam takes the cards and shuffles while Eli just looks at the table, embarrassed.

MOMENTS LATER: They sit on the couch, watching TV. Sam yawns then checks a message on his cell.

SAM
I probably should get going now.

He gets up.

ELI
Yeah? The episode’s almost over.

SAM
Yeah, sorry. I’d love to stay, but I can’t. I’m meeting up with Bob at some bar.

ELI
Oh. Okay.
SAM
Yeah.
(beat)
Um, did you want to come?

ELI
Oh, no, no. I probably should get some rest.

SAM
Yeah, you’ll probably need it for my book, eh?
(chuckling)
Okay man, I’ll see you later. Here, I got you something.

Sam tosses Eli the brown paper bag.

ELI
What is this?

SAM
A gift. It’ll make you feel better.

He leaves. Eli takes out a tin container from the bag. He opens it and pulls out a bag of weed and a pipe.

He walks to the poker table and tries to shuffle the cards, but fails, clumsily. Suddenly, he flips out. First, he tries to rip the whole deck, but he fails. Then he just tosses the deck, causing the cards to scatter all over the floor.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - DAY

The cards are still scattered about. Eli paces around as he glares at his phone. After a moment, he picks it up and dials. It DIALS a few times, then:

AMY (V.O.)
(over phone)
Hello?

Eli attempts to say something but coughs at the same time, making him sound odd.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. AMY’S FRIEND’S APARTMENT - DAY

Amy sits on a couch with a cellphone to her ear. She looks confused.
AMY
Who is--

Eli hangs up. He stands there, petrified and humiliated. After a moment, he slams the phone to the ground, muttering curses under his breath.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - DAY
Eli, thick bearded, sits on a couch, watching TV.

EXT. DETECTIVE’S OFFICE - NIGHT
On TV SCREEN: An old black and white film noir with a DETECTIVE and his DAME. They stand outside the Detective’s office. She puts a cigarette in her mouth. He lights it as she stares intently into his eyes.

DAME
I just want things to be new again, Jack. I want to be a baby.

DETECTIVE
You’ll always be my baby, baby.

He snatches the cigarette away from her mouth and kisses her.

Channel SWITCHES.

EXT. CEMETARY - DAY
On TV SCREEN: SMOKING MAN coughs violently. A graveyard is shown accompanied by DRAMATIC MUSIC.

TITLE CARD ON COMMERCIAL: Smoking kills.

INT. LIQUOR STORE - DAY
An ordinary, small liquor store. Eli is with the CLERK.

ELI
Pack of cigarettes please.

CLERK
What brand you want?

ELI
What do you mean?
CLERK
What brand do you want?

ELI
I don’t know. I don’t smoke.

The Clerk eyes Eli suspiciously.

CLERK
I’m going to have to see some I.D.

INT. ELI’S CAR – DAY

Eli opens the pack of cigarettes. He takes one out and examines it by smelling the cigarette. He lights it, inhales, then coughs. He looks it over once more.

EXT. PARK – DAY

A spacious park filled with people having fun. Eli watches them from a bench while he smokes a cigarette.

From a distance, Eli sees a LITTLE GIRL flying a kite. He’s fixated.

Something breaks his concentration. He looks down and sees a big wolf-looking DOG panting at him.

ELI
Hi.

The Dog turns his head sideways like he’s confused. It jumps on the bench and sits next to Eli. They stare at each other for a moment before it sits on Eli’s lap. The Dog jumps off and runs away. Eli looks down to see a wet puddle on his crotch.

EXT. PARK PARKING LOT – DAY

Eli walks toward his car, covering his crotch unsuccessfully. Teenagers pass by and giggle.

At Eli’s car, Eli takes one last look at the park and sees the flying kite soaring in the air.

INT. BURGER JOINT RESTAURANT – NIGHT

It’s busy and loud. Eli walks to the HOSTESS.
HOSTESS
Hi. How many in your party?

ELI
Um, one.

HOSTESS
I’m sorry. It’s a little loud in here. What did you say?

ELI
Um, one.

HOSTESS
What?

ELI
One!

A moment of silence.

HOSTESS
Oh. Um, okay. What’s your name?

INT. RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER
Eli sits uncomfortably between two loud sociable families. The Hostess calls out:

HOSTESS

Eli gets up nervously. The families watch him.

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER
Eli sits alone in a corner. The tables around him are crowded with people. At a table next to him, an ANNOYING BOY glares at him, smiling. Eli smiles back, nervously. The Annoying Boy taps his ANNOYING SISTER. They both glare at Eli, causing him to get up and leave.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - NIGHT
Eli sits at his dining table with the phone to his ear. He looks around his messy apartment.
ELI
(into phone)
Yes, one large mushroom pizza...
Okay, thank you.

BEEP of Eli’s call waiting. He CLICKS to the other line.

ELI (CONT’D)
Hello?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. HOSPITAL – NIGHT

ADAM POLITE, 30s, paces around in the halls with his
cellphone to his ear.

ADAM
(into cell)
Finally. Why don’t you ever answer
your phone? We left you like a
hundred messages.

ELI
What’s wrong?

ADAM
And you don’t even answer your
door.

ELI
Adam. What’s wrong?

Adam stops pacing. Silence.

ELI (CONT’D)
Adam?

INT. ELI’S CAR – NIGHT

Eli parks his car and peers out the front passenger seat
window.

EXT. HOSPITAL – NIGHT

Eli’s older brothers, Adam and CHARLIE, early 30s, stand on
the sidewalk looking at Eli.

Eli exits his car and walks toward his Brothers. They force
smiles and share an awkward hug.
CHARLIE
Nice beard.

ADAM
It’s nice to finally see you again.

Silence.

ADAM (CONT’D)
I guess we should get going now.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT
The brothers pass by a gift shop. Eli stops and looks at it. The brothers see this and stop.

ADAM
Eli?

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - NIGHT
Eli sits between Adam and Charlie with a stuffed bear in his arms. He stares blankly forward while Adam and Charlie look at the stuffed bear then at him.

ADAM
Why’d you buy that?

ELI
I don’t know. It’s weird visiting without anything to give.

CHARLIE
Why didn’t you just buy him flowers?

Eli attempts to say something, but gives up. A moment of silence. Adam laughs a little as he says:

ADAM
Hey Eli. Remember that time you pushed Dad down the stairs?

Eli looks uncomfortable.

ELI
I don’t think that was me.

ADAM
It was you, I remember. Why’d you do it? Why’d you push Dad down the stairs?
ELI

I--

CHARLIE
I remember why he did it. Eli started yelling after Mom threw away his doll collection. Remember, he started running around the house?

ADAM
Oh, right, and then Dad got in his way. Princess Eli. He was so wild.

Adam and Charlie laugh and tap Eli annoyingly.

ELI
Stop it.

They don’t.

ELI (CONT’D)
Stop touching me.

They stop, then start again.

ELI (CONT’D)
Stop it!

They stop.

CHARLIE
We’re just messing with you.

ELI
Yeah, just like when you told Mom having dolls means I’m gay, huh?

ADAM
It’s not our fault Mom believed us.

ELI
Those were my only toys.

CHARLIE
Well, now I’m sorry. I had no idea you liked them so much.

ELI
Whatever. When can we go in?

CHARLIE
When the nurse calls us.
Silence.

ADAM
Oh, and remember that time Eli hit Dad with a baseball bat?

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

The brothers walk fast, stopping at a door to a room.

ADAM
Ready?

Eli and Charlie nod.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

GRADY POLITE, 60s, lies in bed. He is unconscious and has bandages on his wrists. The brothers stand facing Grady. The stuffed bear lies on Grady’s bed.

ADAM
Let’s go outside. I can’t look at him like this.

They don’t move. They just stare in disbelief.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

The brothers stand outside in the hallway. DR. BUJALSKI, 40s, walks to them.

DR. BUJALSKI
Boys?

The brothers look at him.

DR. BUJALSKI (CONT’D)
I’m not quite sure how to tell you guys this, but your Father... He... His wounds, they were self-inflicted.

CHARLIE
We’re aware of that.

DR. BUJALSKI
Oh.

ELI
What do we do with him?
DR. BUJALSKI
Well, we have a variety of options. We have a mental rehabilitation center, he could see a psychiatrist, there’s group therapy. Several options.

ADAM
What do you suggest?

DR. BUJALSKI
I can’t say. I don’t know your Father.

The brothers glance at each other with uncertainty.

DR. BUJALSKI (CONT’D)
Oh. This was in your Father’s pocket.

Dr. Bujalski takes out a note from his pocket and hands it to Adam before taking off. The brothers study it.

CHARLIE
What is it?

ADAM
It’s his suicide letter.

ELI
What’s it say?

ADAM
I don’t think we should read this. Maybe he could tell us in person.

INT. HOSPITAL - CAFETERIA - NIGHT

Eli walks to the brothers’ table, carrying three cups of coffee. He sits and sets a cup by each of them while Charlie reads the letter. Adam takes a sip of his coffee, unsatisfied by the taste.

ADAM
You forgot to put sugar in it.

ELI
You didn’t tell me. Do you want me to go get you some?

ADAM
Forget it. Just remember next time.
He sets it aside while Eli looks down at his own coffee, disheartened.

ELI
Why are you reading his letter?

CHARLIE
So we know how to help him.

Charlie puts down the letter.

CHARLIE (CONT’D)
I had no idea he was so lonely.

ELI
Does it mention anything about us?

ADAM
Barely.

CHARLIE
(reading)
“I’m sorry Adam, Charlie, and Eli for doing this. It’s not you. It’s me.” That’s it.

ADAM
What should we do with him?

CHARLIE
I don’t think Dad should reside in a mental hospital. I think he just needs love. I mean, it’s right here in the letter.

Eli gets up.

ADAM
Where you going?

ELI
I need some fresh air.

ADAM
Why?

ELI
I don’t know. It’s hot in here.

ADAM
Stop being so dramatic. Sit back down.
ELI
Why does everything I do or say
have to be “so dramatic?”

Adam tries to say something, but fails. Eli walks away.

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT
Eli smokes as he watches the sky. Charlie approaches him.

CHARLIE
What’s wrong?

ELI
Nothing.

CHARLIE
You really hate us, don’t you?

Eli ignores him.

CHARLIE (CONT’D)
When did you start smoking?

ELI
I just started.

CHARLIE
You should quit. Mom--

ELI
I don’t even know why I’m here. It’s not like he’s dead.

CHARLIE
Look at it this way. We’re all that’s left for Dad. He has no one. No friends, no--

ELI
He’s got Bill.

CHARLIE
Bill’s a dog, and he died.

ELI
Bill died?

Charlie sighs.
I know he wasn’t the ideal Father to us, but he’s still our Dad. Remember that.

Charlie puts his hand on Eli’s shoulder, then walks back inside. Eli continues to smoke a moment longer, then walks back, kicking the air with frustration.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT

The brothers whisper as they walk. Dr. Bujalski approaches them.

CHARLIE
What are we going to do?

ADAM
One of us should take him.

CHARLIE
Which one of us?

They meet Dr. Bujalski.

DR. BUJALSKI
Have you guys made a decision?

ADAM
We’re taking him.

DR. BUJALSKI
Mr. Polite, look we--

CHARLIE
We’re taking him. We’re all he’s got. We’re not having him stay in some hospital. He’s our Father for Christ’s sakes.

DR. BUJALSKI
Look, Mr.--

CHARLIE
I know you don’t know us that well, but we’re good people. We’d get an award. We know we can do this.

DR. BUJALSKI
I--

CHARLIE
We’re taking him. That’s that.
DR. BUJALSKI
Look, I--

CHARLIE
That’s that!

Dr. Bujalski sighs.

DR. BUJALSKI
It’s against our policies, but fine, I’ll let you guys take him.

CHARLIE
Thank you.

DR. BUJALSKI
But, make sure you watch him constantly. Never leave him alone, keep him away from anything that may harm him: knives, razors, anything. And remember, never ever leave him alone.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT
Grady is asleep. The brothers talk, away from the bed.

CHARLIE
Who’s going to take him?

ADAM
I will.

CHARLIE
No, you can’t. You have a baby on the way. It’s not the right situation for Dad or you.
(beat)
I’ll take him. I can postpone the wedding.

ADAM
You already sent out the invitations. It’ll be too complicated. I’ll take him. Don’t worry.

CHARLIE
Well, no, you can’t. You and Claire will have to take care of the baby all the time, and I don’t think Dad will be too happy with the baby crying all night long.
Adam and Charlie ponder this to themselves. Eli looks at Grady. He’s fixated.

**ADAM**
Well, then, what are we going to do?

Adam and Charlie don’t seem to hear Eli.

**CHARLIE**
I don’t know. I guess he’ll have to go to a hospital.

**ELI**
Maybe I can take him.

**ADAM**
We’ll talk to the doctor about it.

**CHARLIE**
Know of any hospitals?

**ELI**
I’ll take him.

**ADAM**
Not now, Eli.
(to Charlie)
The doctor will probably suggest places.

**CHARLIE**
Alright. Well, then I’ll--

**ELI**
What the fuck!

Adam and Charlie look at Eli, surprised.

**ELI (CONT’D)**
Why do you guys always ignore me?
I’m sick of it!
(beat)
I’ll take him.

**CHARLIE**
You?

**ADAM**
Are you even capable of taking care of yourself?

**ELI**
Yes!
ADAM
What about someone else?

ELI
Yes. Jesus Christ, Adam. Let me do this. You guys are busy. I don’t have a lot going on. I’ll take him.

Adam thinks for a moment, then walks close to Eli.

ADAM
This is very serious.

ELI
I know.

ADAM
No, you can’t do it. I don’t want you hurting Dad again.

ELI
What’s wrong with you? That was like twenty years ago and they were by accident!

ADAM
Charlie, what do you think?

CHARLIE
I don’t think he should do it.

ELI
Then what was all that “he’s still our Dad” talk for?

Charlie doesn’t say anything.

ELI (CONT’D)
I’m also his son. I can do it. I know I can.

ADAM
How do we know that?

ELI
You trust me.

ADAM
How can we do that? You’re never around. We live in the same God damn city and you never visit us. Even when we try to come by, you make up some excuse.

(MORE)
ADAM (CONT’D)
This is the first time we’ve seen you since Mom’s funeral.

ELI
(pause)
Come on. He’s my Dad. I won’t mess up.

CHARLIE
(to Adam)
Can I talk to you outside?

ADAM
All right. We’ll be right back, Eli.

Adam and Charlie walk out. Eli walks and looks around the room as he slowly makes his way to Grady. Eli looks at Grady’s bandaged wrists then touches them gently. They twitch a little.

Adam and Charlie walk in. Eli gets up, startled. Eli walks toward them.

ADAM (CONT’D)
Fine, you can take him.

Eli nods.

CHARLIE
Eli, you sure you can do this?

ELI
Yes. How bad can it be?

Grady wakes up with the stuffed bear lying on top of him.

GRADY
Why is there a bear on me?

The brothers walk toward Grady.

CHARLIE
Dad!

GRADY
Charlie?

Grady looks at his sons.

GRADY (CONT’D)
Adam. Eli. What are you guys doing here?
ADAM
You tried to kill yourself.

Grady doesn’t say anything. He just looks away.

CHARLIE
How are you doing?

No response.

ADAM
Dad, Eli’s taking you with him. He’s going to take care of you.

Grady looks at Eli.

GRADY
Eli?

ADAM
Yeah.

A pause. Grady sounds a little scared.

GRADY
Wh... why?

ADAM
Because we didn’t want you in a psychiatric facility. It’s either him or that.

GRADY
But, why Eli?

ELI
I got you that bear.

Grady looks at the bear, then at all of his sons towering over him.

INT. POLITE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Darkness except for light coming from the TV. A WOMAN SHOUTING and a DOG BARKING come from the TV. Eli sleeps on the couch. He stirs a bit on the couch before waking up. He sees Charlie sleeping on the floor with an old home video on.
INT. POLITE HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

On TV SCREEN: YOUNG ELI, 8, stands timidly and dejectedly by a broken vase on the floor. MRS. POLITE, mid 30s, screams from downstairs. A DOG BARKS in the background.

MRS. POLITE (O.S.)
God, you’re worse than a dog, Eli!
A dog! At least dogs are loyal and reliable, but you, you, God, I can’t even speak!

CLANKING DISHES are heard from downstairs. YOUNG ADAM, 12, exits a room and walks over to Young Eli.

YOUNG ADAM
God, you’re so stupid, Eli. Why are you so clumsy?

Young Adam hits the back of Young Eli’s head, then looks into the camera.

YOUNG ADAM (CONT’D)
Are you recording this?

YOUNG CHARLIE (O.S.)
(laughing)
Yeah, I’m going to show it to my friends.

YOUNG ELI
(quietly)
Stop it.

YOUNG ADAM
What?

YOUNG ELI
Stop it.

INT. POLITE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Eli gets up, turns the TV off, then puts a blanket over Charlie.

EXT. POLITE HOUSE - DAY

Eli puts a luggage bag in the trunk, then walks over to Adam who stands by the car.
ADAM
Here. Take this. I put our numbers in it.

Adam hands him a cell phone.

ELI
I have a phone.

ADAM
Well, now you have a cell phone.

ELI
I don’t need one.

ADAM
Eli, take it for Christ’s sakes. You can’t just have a house phone. What if something were to happen to Dad when you guys go out?

ELI
We’ll be in public. Someone will call help for us.

ADAM
Don’t be so difficult. Just take it. Think of it as an early birthday present, okay?

ELI
Fine.

He takes it.

ADAM
Hey.
(beat)
Do a good job.

INT. ELI’S CAR – MOVING – DAY

Eli drives with Grady on the passenger seat. It’s silent. Eli looks over at Grady.

ELI
What’s wrong?

GRADY
What?
ELI
I thought you grunted.
(beat)
Did you grunt?

GRADY
No.

ELI
Oh.

Silence.

ELI (CONT’D)
Hungry?

GRADY
No, I’m okay.
(beat)
Do you want to eat?

ELI
I’m fine.

A beat.

GRADY
This is a comfortable seat. Is it leather?

ELI
No.
(beat)
Do you like leather?

GRADY
It’s an okay fabric.

ELI
Yeah... But, I don’t like how leather gets really hot in the summer.

GRADY
Yeah. Or really cold during the winter.

Silence.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - DAY

Eli opens the door. Grady enters and looks around the apartment. They both just stand there, not sure what to do.
I, um, I have to check on something. You can sit on the couch if you want.

Grady walks over to the couch and sits while Eli goes to his room. Grady feels the couch material then starts to sob.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - ELI’S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Eli paces around his room, finally sitting on his bed with his head buried in his hands. After a moment, he takes a deep breath and heads out.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Eli comes back out and sees Grady crying.

ELI

Dad?

No response.

ELI (CONT’D)

Dad? Are you okay?

No response. Just crying.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - ELI’S ROOM - DAY

Eli is on the phone.

ELI

(into phone)

Hey.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. SAM’S APARTMENT - DAY

Sam sits at his desk reading, *Gertruda* by Sam Murray, while talking on his cell.

SAM

(into cell)

Eli! Where have you been, man?

How’s my book coming along?
ELI
I can’t talk about that right now. This may sound a little odd, but what do you do when somebody cries?

SAM
What do you mean?

ELI
How do you make it stop, or I don’t know, cheer the person up?

INT. ICE CREAM STORE – DAY

A simple, friendly-looking store. Eli and Grady sit at a table. They look serious and awkward together. They eat their ice creams silently.

ELI
How’s your ice cream? Is it cheering you up?

GRADY
It’s okay.

ELI
Do you want some more?

GRADY
No, I’m fine.

Silence. Eli eats more of his ice cream, but stops and massages his temples.

GRADY (CONT’D)
You okay?

Eli stops.

ELI
Yeah. Just an ice cream headache.

GRADY
You used to get those a lot.

ELI
No. That was Adam.

GRADY
Oh.

Silence.
GRADY (CONT’D)
Um, I have to use the restroom.

Grady gets up.

ELI
Wait.

Grady stops and looks at Eli, confused.

INT. ICE CREAM STORE - BATHROOM - DAY
Grady pees in a urinal while Eli watches from behind uncomfortably.

ELI
Sorry. It’s just, you know, I...
I’m not supposed to leave you alone.

A MAN opens the door. Eli and Grady look at the Man. The Man looks at them as he slowly closes the door and exits. Grady sighs.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY
As Eli and Grady walk to Eli’s car, they pass a YOUNG FATHER, 30s, and his YOUNG SON, 6, smiling and holding hands. Eli and Grady see this, then continue to walk uncomfortably.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - NIGHT
Eli and Grady walk in the house. Eli looks at Grady.

ELI
I’ll see you in the morning.

Eli walks away, then stops.

ELI (CONT’D)
Don't do anything to yourself.

Eli walks to his room and shuts the door. Grady looks around.

GRADY
Where do I sleep?

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - ELI’S ROOM - MORNING
Eli sleeps. His cell VIBRATES. He answers.
ELI
(into cell)
Hello?

Charlie sounds like he’s struggling with something.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
(over cell)
Hey... it’s Charlie.

ELI
Hey.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
How are things with Dad?

ELI
He’s fine. Are you okay?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. CHARLIE’S HOUSE – NIGHT

Charlie’s face is sweaty and it bobs around. He looks like he’s having sex.

CHARLIE
That’s... good.

ELI
What?

CHARLIE
Yeah. Listen, I... I, um, got you help.

ELI
I told you, I don’t need a shrink.

CHARLIE
Huh? Oh, no. Someone to help... with Dad.

ELI
Why? I’m doing fine.

CHARLIE
She’s a friend of Jane’s and she just got laid off. So, I figured I could help her out.

ELI
What can she do?
A FEMALE MOANS sexually.

Eli sits up.

Charlie is having sex with his fiance, JANE.

ELI (CONT’D)
Charlie?

CHARLIE
I got to go, buddy. See ya!

Eli puts the cell down. His cordless phone RINGS.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT – DAY

Grady lies awkwardly on the couch with his legs extended over the side. It looks like it hurts. Eli walks in and curiously observes Grady’s sleeping position.

ELI
Dad?

No response. Eli walks over to Grady and nudges him. He slowly wakes up.

GRADY
What? What is it?

ELI
You know, there’s another room.

Eli motions to the other room. Grady looks.

ELI (CONT’D)
I have to go out now.

GRADY
Okay.

Beat.

ELI
You have to come with me.

GRADY
Why?

ELI
You’re not supposed to be alone.

Eli starts for the door. Grady looks over at the other room again, muttering quietly to himself:
GRADY
Not supposed to be alone, huh?

INT. SMALL RESTAURANT - DAY
Eli, Grady, and Sam eat at a table. Sam poorly impersonates Marlon Brando.

SAM
“You don't understand! I coulda had class. I coulda been a contender. I could've been somebody.” Tough shit, huh?

Grady stops eating and looks at Sam, dumbfounded.

ELI
What are you doing?

SAM
It’s my Brando.

GRADY
Marlon Brando?

SAM
Yeah. It’s pretty good, huh?

GRADY
No. Not at all.

SAM
Well, you’re the first to think that. So, what are you here? Visiting?

GRADY
Yeah. I guess. Eli didn’t tell you anything?

SAM
Nope. He doesn’t really tell me anything.

Grady looks at Eli. Sam’s gaze falls on Grady’s bandaged wrists under his long sleeve shirt.

SAM (CONT’D)
What happened to your wrists?

Eli shakes his head.
SAM (CONT’D)
What’s wrong?

Grady looks at his wrists.

GRADY
I... um, I cut them.

SAM
Shaving accident?

Eli looks away. He can’t take it.

INT. SMALL RESTAURANT - LATER

Eli and Grady are about to walk out when Sam grabs a hold of Eli’s arm.

SAM
Hey. Can I talk to you in private?

ELI
I can’t leave him alone.

SAM
We’re in a public place. He’s not going to do anything. Right, Grady?

GRADY
(to Eli)
Just talk to him.

ELI
Fine. We’ll talk in viewing distance, okay?

SAM
That’s fine.

They walk a couple feet away from Grady.

ELI
What is it?

SAM
What do you mean, what is it? Why aren’t you editing my book? I don’t want to be a dick, but come on. Seriously. You asked me for this job and now, you’re taking care of your Dad? I’m sorry about what’s happened to him, but you’re not being responsible.
ELI
Sam, I’m editing it.

SAM
Yeah? Then where is it?
(beat)
Look, I’ve been talking to Matt about editing my book.

ELI
You’ve been talking to other people?

SAM
Yeah. I need to get this thing done. Now, what’s it going to be, Eli? Are you going to do this for me or am I going to have to get someone else?

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - ELI’S ROOM - NIGHT
Eli lies in bed, reading the manuscript.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - OTHER ROOM - NIGHT
Grady lies bored and restless in bed. He switches the lamp on by the bed.

He digs through his luggage bag, pulling out the stuffed bear. He sets it aside by his bag when he notices the wall. It’s plastered and scratched up.

He looks through the nightstand drawers and takes out a scratched up yo-yo. He studies it.

Grady tries to successfully use the yo-yo, but fails each time. It just drops and never comes back up. Giving up, he sits back on the bed looking awfully miserable.

EXT. ELI’S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY
Eli and Grady step out. Eli carries the manuscript. LITTLE KIDS play baseball with a wiffle ball. The PITCHER throws the ball. The BATTER swings. Grady flinches and stumbles, almost falling before Eli catches him.

ELI
What’s wrong?
GRADY
It scared me.

ELI
What did?

GRADY
I don’t know. The swing.

ELI
Why?

GRADY
It reminded me of that time you hit me with a baseball bat.

Eli looks away guiltily as JORDAN GALLAGHER, a girl in her 20s, approaches them, carrying a container. She wears sandals.

JORDAN
Excuse me. Are you guys, Eli and Grady Polite?

Eli and Grady look at Jordan.

ELI
Yeah. Do I know you?

JORDAN
No. Um, Charlie sent me?

ELI
Oh, hi. Nice to meet you. This is Grady.

Grady waves.

JORDAN
Hi. I’m Jordan.

ELI
Like the basketball player.

JORDAN
What?

ELI
Michael Jordan.

JORDAN
Oh. Yeah. Right, like the basketball player.
Awkward beat.

ELI
Yeah, I’m sorry. I didn’t know when you were showing up. Charlie never told me.

JORDAN
Are you guys going somewhere?

ELI
We’re getting some breakfast.

JORDAN
Mind if I tag along?

ELI
(to Grady)
Do you mind?

GRADY
No.

ELI
Okay. Sure. What’s in the container?

Jordan looks at the container.

JORDAN
Oh, it’s just--

Jordan accidently drops it on the floor. Some cookies fall out. Eli and Jordan bend down to get them.

JORDAN (CONT’D)
It’s okay. I got it.

ELI
No, I got it.

JORDAN
It’s fine. Really.

Eli accidently steps on Jordan’s foot while picking up the cookies causing her foot to bleed.

JORDAN (CONT’D)
Ah! Shit!

The Little Kids laugh and point.

Jordan rubs her foot while Grady looks away, embarrassed.
ELI
Oh my God. I’m sorry.

Jordan groans in pain.

ELI (CONT’D)
What do I do?

JORDAN
Can I have a bandage or something?

Eli runs toward the apartment, but stops and runs back.

ELI
I don’t have bandages.

JORDAN
Well, get me something!

INT. DINER - DAY

Eli sits across from Grady and Jordan at a booth, reading the manuscript. Jordan’s foot is covered with a taped on towel; it’s ridiculously bulky. She reads and covers her face with the menu. Eli sets the manuscript aside.

ELI
How’s your foot?

JORDAN
Morose.

Jordan puts down her menu.

JORDAN (CONT’D)
Look, I’d love to stay mad at you, but unfortunately, given that this is now my job, I can’t. So let’s just drop it, okay?

ELI
Okay.

JORDAN
So, if you have any other questions, please ask away.

ELI
Um, okay. How long have you been a nurse?

JORDAN
I’m not a nurse.
ELI
I thought Charlie said you were helping my Dad.

JORDAN
That doesn’t make me a nurse.

ELI
Sorry. What was your job before this?

JORDAN
I worked at an art gallery. They weren’t doing too well, so they fired me.

ELI
I’m sorry.

JORDAN
Yeah, well, bad things happens. But I applied for this art fellowship so hopefully something good will happen. You just got to keep on trying, right?

ELI
Right.

Jordan turns her attention to Grady while Eli continues with the manuscript.

JORDAN
Hey, Grady. I think me and you should get to know each other since we’re going to be seeing each other a lot. What’s your favorite movie?

GRADY
I don’t have one.

JORDAN
Okay, what do you like to do?

GRADY
Um, read?

JORDAN
Oh, yeah? Who’s your favorite author?

GRADY
I don’t know. Hemingway?
ELI
You like Hemingway?

GRADY
Yeah.

ELI
Me too. I love The Old Man and the Sea.

GRADY
Yeah. That’s a good one.

Awkward silence.

ELI
Yup.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - DAY

Eli, Grady, and Jordan walk in. Jordan carries a grocery bag. Grady walks to the bathroom.

ELI
Where are you going?

Grady stops.

GRADY
I have to pee. Are you going to watch me?

ELI
No.

Grady enters the bathroom. Eli takes the bag from Jordan.

ELI (CONT’D)
I’ll take this.

He walks to the kitchen and puts the grocery items in the fridge. She follows.

JORDAN
You guys aren’t very close, huh?

ELI
Why do you say that?

JORDAN
I’m not stupid, Eli.
ELI
Were you close with your Dad?

JORDAN
When he was alive, yeah.

ELI
Oh. I’m sorry.

JORDAN
Yeah, well, bad things happen.
(beat)
Look, I’m sorry about your Dad. If you ever need someone to talk to, I’m here.

ELI
Thanks.

JORDAN
Charlie told me this story about you when you guys were kids. He said you hit your Dad with a baseball bat.

ELI
That was a long time ago.

JORDAN
Wow. And now you’re taking care of him.

ELI
Yeah. That was a long time ago.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - DAY

Grady naps on the couch with the TV on. Eli reads and marks up Sam’s manuscript at his desk.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - ELI’S ROOM - DAY

Jordan is on her knees, dusting a shelf with a duster. She turns her head around and sees herself in a stand up mirror. After a moment, she stops and starts to cry a little. She proceeds to clean after wiping her tears.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Eli and Jordan are by the door. Grady still sleeps. Eli gives Jordan a key.
ELI
Okay, here’s your key.

JORDAN
Thanks.

ELI
So, you live by Charlie?

JORDAN
Yup. How come I never see you at any of his parties?

ELI
I don’t go up there that often.

JORDAN
Oh... Well, I guess I should get going now. Tell Grady I said bye.

ELI
Okay.

She leaves. Eli closes the door and looks at Grady.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The TV is on. It’s dark except for the light from the TV. Eli walks out of his room and sees that no one watches it. His eyes widen.

He sees light coming from the partially closed bathroom door. He quickly opens it and sees Grady with shaving cream on his face.

ELI
Why are you shaving so late?

GRADY
I always shave at night.

Eli spots a razor blade on the counter.

ELI
Why’s that there?

GRADY
I was shaving.

ELI
You can’t be going off in the middle of the night like that.

(MORE)
I can’t have you sleeping alone.
The doctor said.

GRADY
Where will I sleep then?

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - ELI’S ROOM - NIGHT
Eli and Grady sleep next to each other in bed. Grady farts.
Eli’s eyes open widely. He sniffs then looks over at Grady,
disgusted.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - ELI’S ROOM - MORNING
Grady looks at Eli wearing a surgical mask over his mouth and
nose. Eli wakes up after a moment and looks at Grady.

ELI
Morning.

GRADY
Don’t you have to go to work?

ELI
I work from home.

GRADY
What do you do?

ELI
I’m a book editor. Sam’s one of my
clients.

GRADY
Oh.
(beat)
Why are you wearing a mask?

Eli, realizing he has the mask on, quickly snatches it off.

INT. BOOK STORE - DAY
People shop, but it’s quiet. Eli checks out various albums in
a row of music CDs. He glances down the row to find Grady
browsing through CDs, uninterested.

At the movies section, Grady looks through the “Special
Interests” section. He looks through them, listlessly, until
he stops at one with the title, Beautiful Sights. The cover
has a very beautiful landscape sight on it.
He passes it, but glances back at it. He wants it, but is too shy to ask for it.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT – BATHROOM – DAY
Jordan lies on her knees and scrubs the dirty tile floor.

INT. ELI’S CAR – MOVING – DUSK
Eli drives. Grady sits passenger. They both stare off impassively.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT – ELI’S ROOM – NIGHT
Eli’s lamp is on. Eli sits up in bed and marks up Sam’s manuscript. Grady tries to sleep by facing the other way, but is unable to. He turns toward Eli.

    GRADY
    Can you turn the light off? I can’t sleep.

    ELI
    I’m editing this.

    GRADY
    You can’t do it later?

    ELI
    No.

    GRADY
    Okay.

He turns back around and tries to sleep. Eli watches him for a moment before turning his lamp off. He tries to edit the manuscript with his cell phone light.

    GRADY (CONT’D)
    Sorry.

    ELI
    It’s okay.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT – BATHROOM – DAY
Eli finishes brushing his teeth. He exits.
INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - DAY

Eli comes out of the bathroom and sees Grady sweating, groaning, and doubling over in pain. Eli rushes over to him.

ELI
Dad! What’s wrong?

GRADY
(struggling to speak)
I feel like shit. My insides.

ELI
I’ll take you to the hospital.

Eli tries his best to hold Grady up, but fails.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Eli’s car stops at the front of the hospital.

INT. ELI’S CAR - DAY

Eli sees a MEDIC outside. Eli rolls down the window.

ELI
Hey!

The Medic walks over.

ELI (CONT’D)
My dad’s feeling a bit sick and he’s heavy. Can you help?

INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

Eli sits down in a chair reading a magazine. His cell VIBRATES.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Eli’s on his cell.

ELI
(into cell)
We’re at the hospital.

INTERCUT WITH:
EXT. ELI’S APARTMENT BUILDING – DAY

Jordan leans on her car while on her cell.

JORDAN
(into cell)
What happened?

ELI
I don’t know. He was sweating a lot and he couldn’t walk straight.

JORDAN
Oh my God. Should I go to the hospital?

ELI
No. We’ll be back soon.

JORDAN
Okay.

They hang up.

A couple feet away from Eli, CINDY, mid 20s, a skinny, pretty girl, takes out a cigarette. Eli watches her, fixated by her beauty, but looks away out of shyness. After a moment, he musters up confidence and asks:

ELI
Need a light?

CINDY
Um, yeah. Sure.

Eli walks toward her.

CINDY (CONT’D)
Hi. I’m Cindy.

Cindy sticks her hand out for a handshake.

ELI
I’m Eli.

He shakes it. Eli takes out his lighter. She cranes her head toward Eli, expecting him to light it. He tries repeatedly, but fails each time.

ELI (CONT’D)
Must be out of fluid.

CINDY
Let me try.
She gets it on the first try.

**CINDY (CONT’D)**
I don’t think it’s out of fluid.

Eli puts his lighter away, embarrassed.

**CINDY (CONT’D)**
So, what brings you here?

**ELI**
My Dad. He looked like he was in pain.

**CINDY**
Oh. That’s cool.

Eli looks at her, confused.

**CINDY (CONT’D)**
Sorry. I don’t know why I said that.

Silence.

**ELI**
So, you like smoking?

**CINDY**
Um, yeah.

**ELI**
Yeah, I like it too.

**CINDY**
Do you want a cigarette?

**ELI**
Um, yeah. If it’s okay with you.

She hands him a cigarette. Eli tries to light it, but fails. He smiles nervously at her. She lights it for him.

**ELI (CONT’D)**
Thanks. I usually could get it to light. I don’t know why I can’t right now.

She just smiles. Awkward silence. Grady comes out of the hospital. Eli flinches, not realizing he came out.

**ELI (CONT’D)**
Hey.
GRADY
You smoke?

ELI
Yeah.

GRADY
It killed your Mother.

Awkward. Eli drops his cigarette and crushes it. Grady walks away toward the car. Eli just stands there, utterly embarrassed to do anything. Cindy looks around, not sure what to make of the situation.

INT. JORDAN’S CAR – DAY

Jordan sits in the back, drawing a picture on a pad in a very mundane manner.

INT. ELI’S CAR – MOVING – DAY

Eli drives. Grady looks out the window in the seat next to him. It’s quiet for a moment, then:

GRADY
I have kidney stones.

ELI
Jesus Christ. Does it hurt?

GRADY
Yeah. It hurts so much that I want to kill myself.

ELI
Hey. Don’t say that.
(beat)
Think happy thoughts. Try to be happy.

Eli glances at a depressed Grady who continues to look out the window. Eli turns the RADIO ON.

VOICE ON RADIO (V.O.)
...other news, a music teacher from San Pedro, California kills wife and kids--

Eli quickly turns the radio off.
EXT. ELI’S APARTMENT BUILDING – DAY

Eli and Grady walk toward the building. Jordan runs after them, calling out:

JORDAN
Hey! Wait up.

Eli and Grady turn around.

EXT. BEACH – DAY

A nearly empty section at the beach. Large rocks, boulders lie across the shoreline. Eli, Grady, and Jordan walk along the shore, eating cones of ice cream.

ELI
What are we doing here?

JORDAN
I thought this would be a nice change of setting after going to the hospital. Plus, don’t you ever just go out for a walk on the beach?

ELI
No. I don’t mean to be rude, but how long are we going to be out here? I have to get some work done.

Jordan glances at the large cluster of rocks facing the ocean. She hands her ice cream to Eli, ignoring his question.

JORDAN
Hold this.

Jordan jogs toward the rocks.

ELI
Where you going?

She stops and points to the rocks. She continues. Eli and Grady watch her walking along the rocks, stopping when she reaches the edge. She watches the ocean with her arms stretching out -- a look of serenity on her face.

Eli and Grady walk closer to the rocks. Eli eats both ice creams.

ELI (CONT’D)
What do you think she’s doing?
GRADY
Looks like she’s watching the ocean. Why don’t you ask her?

Eli calls out to Jordan.

ELI
Hey! Jordan!

Jordan looks at them and shouts back:

JORDAN
What?!

ELI
What are you doing up there?

JORDAN
I’m watching the ocean. Come up here, so we don’t have to shout.

ELI
Okay!

Beat.

JORDAN
Are you eating my ice cream?

MOMENTS LATER: Eli walks on the rocks, getting closer to Jordan’s position. He looks nervous and a little scared. Grady trails behind him.

ELI
Is this safe?

JORDAN
Yeah.

ELI
These rocks won’t roll away or anything?

JORDAN
Nope.

Eli and Grady reach Jordan. They stand beside her.

JORDAN (CONT’D)
(smiling)
Good job, boys.

ELI
Why are you up here?
JORDAN
I know it’s cheesy, but, you know how people have their “happy places”?

ELI
I guess.

JORDAN
This is mine.

ELI
Why this place?

No response.

ELI (CONT’D)
Jordan?

A look of sadness on Jordan’s face.

JORDAN
Look at it. It’s beautiful.

Eli and Grady look out at the ocean. It is beautiful.

JORDAN (CONT’D)
And I lost my virginity here.

Eli’s attention is back on Jordan.

ELI
What?

JORDAN
Well, not on this rock, but on one just like it.
(beat)
I just turned 21 and this guy took me and... it was just perfect. The view, the breeze, everything. It was just the best night of my life. That’s why I find myself climbing these rocks. To relive the moment.

All of a sudden, Jordan looks really hurt and frustrated. She’s on the verge of crying.

JORDAN (CONT’D)
I mean, fuck. What the fuck am I doing with my life? I wanted to be a photographer, an artist, something meaningful.
(MORE)
This thing I’m doing, it’s not worth the years I’ve spent in school. I like you guys, but this isn’t what I envisioned myself doing.

Jordan cries. Grady hesitates then walks over and gingerly pats her back. After a beat, she turns around and puts her arms around Grady, holding him tightly. Eli watches them, touched by their genuine embrace.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Eli works on the manuscript at his desk.

At the kitchen, Jordan washes dishes. Grady sits at the dining table, reading a newspaper. He looks at her, then puts down his paper, and walks over to her.

GRADY
Do you need help?

JORDAN
Sure.

She glances at his bandaged wrists when he lifts his sleeves up. They proceed to clean the dishes together.

JORDAN (CONT’D)
You’re pretty good at this.

GRADY
Am I?

JORDAN
Yeah. I’ve never seen such an adept plate wiper before.

They share a little laugh.

GRADY
I guess I picked up a few things from my maid.

Another laugh.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - LATER

Eli works at his desk. Grady and Jordan walk toward Eli.
JORDAN
Hey, Eli. Grady and I are going to go fishing. Do you want to come?

ELI
This late?

JORDAN
Yeah.

ELI
No, I should really work on this.

JORDAN
All right. Well, see you later.

ELI
Okay. Not too late.

JORDAN
I’ll bring him back before his bed time. Don’t worry.

They head off.

GRADY
Um, bye, Eli.

ELI
Bye.

Eli watches them leave before he reluctantly works on the manuscript again.

EXT. PIER PARKING LOT - NIGHT
Jordan opens the trunk of her car, revealing fishing poles and a box of bait.

JORDAN
Can you help me with these?

Grady grabs the poles.

GRADY
Did you plan this?

JORDAN
(smiling)
You caught me. Come on. We’ll have fun.
EXT. PIER - NIGHT

A nice night out as people fish around the pier. Grady and Jordan sit close to each other and fish by the railing.

JORDAN
This is pretty cool, huh?

GRADY
Yeah.
(beat)
How do you know Charlie?

JORDAN
I met him through Jane, like I think three years ago? She was my roommate and one day, she brought home Charlie from a party, and now, they’re getting married.
(beat)
We’ve known each other since we were little girls.

GRADY
Oh, yeah?

JORDAN
Yeah, it’s so funny, you know. We’d have these sleep overs and talk about all these guys we’d want to marry. Like she had this Tom Selleck poster taped just above her headboard, and...
(trailing off)
She’s getting married now. She was my best friend and now, now she’s my boss. How fucked up is that? I’m really blabbering, aren’t I? I’m sorry. I usually don’t. Honestly.

GRADY
No, I like it. It balances us out.

They share a moment. She smiles. He looks away nervously.

JORDAN
I’m not really catching anything.

GRADY
Let me see your pole.

She reels in and hands her pole to Grady. Grady examines the bait.
GRADY (CONT’D)
Here’s your problem. You’re using the wrong hook and bait.

He opens the box and exchanges the hook and bait for more proper ones. She watches obediently.

GRADY (CONT’D)
You’re going to want to use a smaller hook so it’ll fit in the fish’s mouth. You see?

JORDAN
Yeah.

GRADY
You don’t fish much do you?

JORDAN
(laughing)
Not at all.

He coughs and massages his side.

JORDAN (CONT’D)
Is it the kidney stones?

GRADY
I think.

JORDAN
Okay, let’s get you home.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - ELI’S ROOM - NIGHT

Eli wakes up in bed. He hears Grady COUGHING and MOANING outside.

EXT. ELI’S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Eli is next to the closed bathroom door.

ELI
Dad?

Grady coughs and moans. He struggles to speak.

GRADY (O.S.)
Yeah?

ELI
What’s the matter?
GRADY (O.S.)
It’s the God damn stones...

ELI
Aren’t you taking pills for it?

GRADY (O.S.)
I forgot to get them.

ELI
You forgot them? Should we go to the hospital?

GRADY (O.S.)
No!... ah... ah... fuck!

ELI
Dad! Open up!

After a moment, the door opens. Grady is on all fours, sweating and crying.

GRADY
You don’t know how much this hurts.

Eli kneels to be on the same level as Grady.

GRADY (CONT’D)
You don’t happen to have any booze, do you?

ELI
No.
(beat)
I might have something that may help.

Grady looks up at Eli.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

It’s quiet. Grady sits on the couch. Eli sits down next to him, holding a tin container. He opens it to reveal a bag of marijuana and a pipe. Grady looks at Eli, concerned. Eli catches this.

ELI
Sam gave it to me. I don’t do... this.

Eli packs the pipe and hands it to Grady.
GRADY
I can’t. It doesn’t seem right.

ELI
Sam says it makes you feel better.

GRADY
Eli, I can’t do this with you. I--

Grady wrings with pain.

GRADY (CONT’D)
Forget it. Light it.

Eli lights it after a few tries. Grady inhales and coughs a little.

ELI
Feeling better?

GRADY
No. I don’t feel anything.

ELI
Hm... Maybe I should give you more.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - LATER

Eli and Grady sit on the couch. They look relaxed and peaceful. Grady laughs strangely with a high pitch.

ELI
What’s so funny?
    (beat)
    Oh wait, I get it.

Eli laughs like a hyena.

GRADY
I feel... fluffy and delicious. I feel like eating myself.

Eli giggles.

ELI
Man, I’d love to fly a kite right now. I just want to run real fast and just see that thing fly. God, I’m imagining it right now. It’s so beautiful, so fucking beautiful. Do you see it?
GRADY
I see it. I see it.

Grady chuckles, then after a long, quiet beat:

ELI
I’m not stupid.

Eli smiles melancholically.

ELI (CONT’D)
I mean, I can do things well. I’m pretty good at things, like I can teach people, you know. I may not be able to shuffle cards, but I can do other things. But I just don’t say anything because what if it’s not right.

GRADY
What are you talking about?

Eli just smiles.

GRADY (CONT’D)
(pause)
Your Mother wasn’t very good at shuffling cards either.

ELI
(uninterested)
Yeah? I didn’t know that about her.

GRADY
She was a hell of a poker player though. When we were in college, we’d have these weekly poker games and she was always winning every other week. She was good.
(beat)
You know why I married her? Adam. I got her pregnant. Don’t get pregnant, Eli. It messes up your whole life.

They look at each other for a long moment until it gets awkward.

ELI
I’m going to put some music on.

Eli gets up and turns the stereo on. LIGHT, MELLOW music plays.
ELI (CONT’D)
You like this?

GRADY
It’s nice.

Eli smiles. He lies on the floor by the couch as he stares at the ceiling.

ELI
Hey. Mind if I lie here for awhile?

GRADY
It’s your floor.

ELI
Thanks.

(beat)
So... um, why’d you try to kill yourself?

Grady, nervously picks at the arm of the couch while looking around, trying to figure out what to say.

ELI (CONT’D)
Never mind. I’m sorry.

GRADY
No. It’s alright. It’s okay.

A silence.

GRADY (CONT’D)
Do you still play the flute?

ELI
No. Adam kept making fun of me because he said it looked like I was putting my mouth on a... well, you know.

Grady chuckles a little. They’re both getting tired.

GRADY
Hey Eli?... Eli?

ELI
Yeah?

GRADY
Don’t ever listen to what you know is wrong, but think is right.
ELI
What?

GRADY
Okay?

ELI
Okay.

Eli nods. They look exhausted.

ELI (CONT’D)
I feel good.

GRADY
Me too.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - DAY

Grady sleeps, sitting up, while Eli sleeps lying down with his face intimately close to Grady’s crotch. Eli wakes up, his eyes shooting wide open after realizing where he is. He quickly moves away from Grady and sits up. He sees Jordan in the kitchen, washing dishes.

He walks to her.

ELI
Hey.

Jordan looks at Eli trying to conceal a smile.

JORDAN
Hey.

ELI
I’m going to take my Dad to get his pills. Are you fine here?

JORDAN
Yeah. What did you guys do last night?

ELI
Nothing.

JORDAN
Then why were you guys sleeping on the couch together?

ELI
I... what? No, we weren’t.
JORDAN
I just saw you guys. What happened?

ELI
Nothing. I’m not supposed to leave him alone, remember?

JORDAN
Yeah, but why were you guys together on the couch?

Eli sighs.

ELI
Fine. I... I smoked him out.

She stops.

JORDAN
You smoked him out?

ELI
Yeah. I don’t know what else to call it.

She just looks at him.

ELI (CONT’D)
He was in pain.

She chuckles.

JORDAN
Wow. That’s just, wow. Beautiful bonding.

ELI
Yeah. Well, maybe it was.

JORDAN
Oh. Was it now? I’d love to hear about this.

She sits at the table.

ELI
What are you sitting for?

JORDAN
I want to hear about this.

ELI
You’re serious?
JORDAN
Yes! Sit down.

Eli sits down across from her. He looks down at the table, thinking. A long moment of silence.

JORDAN (CONT’D)
You don’t have to talk about it with me.

He looks at her. Another silence.

ELI
I don’t know. I feel pretty good today.

She smiles courageously at him.

INT. PHARMACY - DAY

A small pharmacy. Eli and Grady sit by each other, waiting to be called. Eli writes in his notebook. Grady holds his side as he grimaces a little.

GRADY
What are you writing?

Eli stops.

ELI
Oh, it’s nothing. Just a short story.

GRADY
Don’t you have to work on Sam’s book?

ELI
Yeah... I just need a break from it. If I keep going at it, then I’ll start to ruin it. It just happens.

GRADY
Oh. I’ve read one of your stories before.

Eli looks kind of excited.

ELI
Really? Which one?
GRADY
I think it was called “The Uncomfortable Family.”

Eli’s excitement diminishes. He looks embarrassed.

ELI
Oh. Well, it’s just, you know, a story.

GRADY
Yeah. I know. Why aren’t you a writer?

ELI
I am.

GRADY
I mean, professionally. I remember you wanted to be one.

Eli thinks.

ELI
I don’t know. I never liked people reading my work. It’s like people expect me to act like how I write, but it’s all just fiction.

GRADY
Like “The Uncomfortable Family,” right?

ELI
Um, yeah.

GRADY
I’m sorry for asking all these questions.

ELI
It’s fine. Really.

GRADY
Why’d you do decide to become an editor?

ELI
I don’t know. I guess after a couple of friends from school asked me to edit their pieces, it grew on me. I don’t know. I liked working with them. I kind of liked the idea of improving their work.
The Pharmacist calls over the PA.

PHARMACIST (ON P.A.)
Grady Polite. Grady Polite.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT – ELI’S ROOM – DAY

Jordan wipes the dust off the nightstand, accidently pushing a book off. She gets down to pick it up when she notices something under the bed. She reaches for it and sees that it’s a framed picture of Eli and Amy. She examines it for a moment then puts it aside.

MOMENTS LATER: She sits on the bed with her cell to her ear.

JORDAN
(into cell)
No, it’s just that I was cleaning and I found this picture on the floor. I was just wondering if it was dropped by accident or if it was left there purposely.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
(over cell)
Yeah, they’ve been going out for years. Pretty gal. I don’t know how Eli got so lucky.

They chuckle.

CHARLIE (V.O.) (CONT’D)
Say, how’s it going over there?

MOMENTS LATER: She picks the picture up and sets it on the nightstand.

EXT. PHARMACY – DAY

Eli and Grady walk back to the car. On the way:

ELI
Hey, wait a minute.

They stop.

ELI (CONT’D)
Do you maybe want to do something or something?

GRADY
With Jordan?
ELI
No. Just the two of us.

GRADY
Um, what do you have in mind?

EXT. PARK - DAY

Eli and Grady sit on a bench that faces a basketball court. They watch the Young Father and the Young Son having a good time playing basketball.

EXT. PARK - MOMENTS LATER

The Young Father and the Young Son walk away from the court, laughing and smiling. Eli and Grady stare at a basketball lying on the middle of the court.

EXT. PARK - LATER

Eli and Grady are on the basketball court. Grady dribbles the ball awkwardly. He smiles coyly at Eli to hide his desire not to play. Eli watches for a moment, then:

ELI
Okay, um, I’m going to defend you.

He awkwardly defends Grady with his arms waving up and down. Grady looks at him, concerned and confused.

GRADY
All right. I’m shooting.

He shoots, but Eli blocks him viciously causing the ball to fly back and Grady to fall on his ass. Eli just stands there looking down at Grady, shocked at what he just did.

EXT. ELI’S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Eli and Grady walk toward the building. Grady tries to hide his limp. A furious Sam approaches them from his car.

SAM
Hey! Eli!

Eli and Grady turn around toward Sam.

SAM (CONT’D)
What the fuck, man. Where were you?
ELI
I was out.

SAM
Does that mean you’re done?

ELI
No, but I--

SAM
You’re supposed to be done with it by now. Stop being so irresponsible.

ELI
I’m almost done.

SAM
Yeah? Well, I gave you plenty of chances to be done. Not almost.

ELI
Look, Sam. I--

SAM
I don’t want to hear it. This is your last chance. I don’t want to lose our friendship over this. Don’t make this weird, Eli. Don’t make it weird.

Sam walks back to his car. Eli stares off, humiliated. Grady watches him.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Eli and Grady walk in with Grady trying to hide his limp. Jordan sleeps on the couch with rubber gloves on her hands. She sits up when Eli closes the door.

JORDAN
Hey. I made macaroni and...

Jordan watches Grady limp to the bathroom.

JORDAN (CONT’D)
What’s wrong with his leg?

ELI
We played basketball.

JORDAN
You played basketball?
ELI
Yes.

JORDAN
Why?

ELI
I thought it would be fun.

She sees something is bothering Eli.

JORDAN
What’s wrong?

ELI
Nothing’s wrong. I’m sorry, but I have to do some work. Is that okay with you?

JORDAN
Yeah. Of course. It’s your apartment. I’ll just get my things.

She gets up and puts the gloves away in the kitchen. He walks to his desk.

JORDAN (CONT’D)
Oh. Some guy named Sam kept calling.

ELI
I know. I talked to him.

He sets the manuscript in front of him and works. She heads off.

JORDAN
Do you need anything?

ELI
No. I just need to work on this. Thanks.

JORDAN
Okay. See you.

She picks up her bag on the couch, then looks at Eli buried in the manuscript before leaving.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT – BATHROOM – NIGHT

Grady walks in and turns the light on. He looks at his tired, sad-looking face in the mirror.
He tries smiling, but it looks strange to him. Pain strikes his side as he massages it. He takes his pain reliever medication.

Naked, he hops into the shower. He closes his eyes, enjoying the feel of the hot water drizzling over him. He stops and looks at his bandaged wrists. He grazes them lightly.

INT. JORDAN’S APARTMENT ENTRANCEWAY - NIGHT

Jordan looks through her mail by the mailboxes. She stops at a letter. She opens it excitedly yet nervously. As she reads more and more of the letter, she looks more and more defeated. She looks as if she’s about to cry.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Eli works on the manuscript at his desk. Grady sits on the couch watching TV, holding his side and grimacing in pain. He walks over to Eli.

    GRADY
    Hey, Eli.

    ELI
    Yeah?

    GRADY
    I’m not really sure how to ask you this, but the pills aren’t working too well right now.

    ELI
    What do you want?

    GRADY
    Um, do you have some more, um, marijuana?

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - LATER

Grady sits on the couch watching a sitcom. He constantly chuckles quietly to himself. A tired and annoyed Eli looks wearily at the manuscript, trying to concentrate. He reaches for his can of soda before accidently spilling it on his pants. He sighs, frustrated with himself.
INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - ELI’S ROOM - NIGHT

Eli turns the light on. He walks toward the closet before noticing the framed picture on the nightstand. He picks it up and looks at it, visibly distraught.

He tosses it aside on the floor and opens his closet for a pair of pants, only to pick up the frame again and with rage sweeping in, almost slams it on the floor before he stops and controls himself.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - OTHER ROOM - NIGHT

Eli looks through the empty nightstand drawer. He closes it and looks around the room, searching for something. He finds it next to Grady’s bag -- the yo-yo. He picks it up and attempts to throw it at the plastered wall before looking at the bear by Grady’s bag. Instead, he pounds on the bed, defeated.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - LATER

Eli is back at his desk working on the manuscript. Grady now sleeps with the TV on. After a brief moment, Eli stops working and stretches. He glances at Grady sleeping, then at the TV -- a commercial featuring party girls getting naked. He’s fixated.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - ELI’S ROOM - NIGHT

Eli walks in. He turns his lamp on his nightstand, on. He picks up the framed picture on the floor and sits on the bed. He sets it on the nightstand as he masturbates angrily to it.

Grady walks in, first looking at Eli, then at the framed picture. Eli freezes, then quickly tries to remove his hand from his pants. Grady leaves.

ELI
Fuck me. Fuck me.

He gets up, but his pants fall. He picks them up and zips up.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Grady paces around quietly saying to himself:

GRADY
Fuck me. Fuck me. Knock you idiot.
A KNOCK. Grady looks at Eli’s door. He opens it. Eli stands there, humiliated. He attempts to say something, but decides against it making the situation extremely awkward until finally:

ELI
I’m... sorry?

GRADY
Yeah. It’s, um, it’s okay.

More awkward silence.

GRADY (CONT’D)
It’s natural.

Eli looks like he’s about to cry as he sweats profusely.

GRADY (CONT’D)
Eli, it’s okay. Really.

ELI
I have to go to the bathroom.

Grady nods. Eli walks shamefully to the bathroom.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - ELI’S ROOM - NIGHT

Grady walks in. He picks up the framed picture and looks at it.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Eli paces around brushing his teeth. He stops.

ELI
Fuck!

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - ELI’S ROOM - NIGHT

Eli walks in to find Grady already in bed, awake.

ELI
Hey.

GRADY
Hey.

He gets in bed. They both stare at the ceiling at first, but then Eli turns away from Grady. Eli switches the lamp off. After a moment of silence:
GRADY (CONT’D)
Good night, Eli.

ELI
Okay.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT – ELI’S ROOM – LATER
Grady sleeps. Eli lies restless in bed. After a moment, he gets up and leaves quietly.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT – NIGHT
Eli is at his desk with a packed pipe. He lights it, inhales – he’s relaxed. He begins work on the manuscript.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT – ELI’S ROOM – MORNING
Grady wakes up, looking at the empty space next to him.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT – MORNING
Grady walks out to find Eli at his desk, asleep on the last page of Sam’s manuscript. He also notices the pipe.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT – MOMENTS LATER
Grady cooks in the kitchen. Eli wakes up and walks over. Grady turns around to put the food on plates, but instead looks at Eli.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT – LATER
Eli and Grady sit, eating quietly at the dining table.

ELI
I have to go to Sam’s after. Is that okay?

GRADY
Yeah. You finished the book?

ELI
Yeah.

Grady stops eating.
GRADY
Congratulations.

ELI
Thanks.
(a long beat)
Look, about last night. I’m really--

GRADY
Don’t mention it. It happened. It’s over now.

Eli continues eating, quietly.

GRADY (CONT’D)
I do it too.

Eli stops.

ELI
What?

GRADY
I mast... I masturbate.

ELI
Oh. Um--

GRADY
I used to do it after work. To relax myself.

ELI
That’s... can we not talk about this?

GRADY
I was just trying to tell you, it’s okay.

ELI
Okay. Thanks.

GRADY
(pause)
When can I go home?

ELI
I don’t know.

GRADY
When will you?
ELI
I... I don’t know.

LATER: The door opens. It’s Jordan. She walks to the kitchen and sees Eli putting the plates in the sink.

JORDAN
Hey.

Grady now watches TV. She puts her stuff down on a chair and takes cleaning supplies out from a cupboard.

ELI
Did you put something on my nightstand?

JORDAN
What, the picture? It fell. Why?

ELI
What makes you think it fell?

She looks at Eli.

JORDAN
That wasn’t supposed to be there?

Eli just looks at her.

JORDAN (CONT’D)
Well, I was cleaning and I found it on the floor. So, I called Charlie and he said you had a girlfriend. I figured it just fell.

ELI
She was my girlfriend.

JORDAN
I’m sorry, Eli. Charlie said.

ELI
Charlie says a lot of things.

JORDAN
It’s not my fault you don’t tell Charlie important things like that.

ELI
I don’t do it because he’d probably ridicule me.

JORDAN
Why would he do that?
ELI
Because that’s just how he is.
(beat)
I have to go now.

He gets up and walks over to Grady.

ELI (CONT’D)
Are you coming with me?

GRADY
No. I think I’ll stay here with Jordan.

ELI
All right. I’ll see you later.

INT. SAM’S APARTMENT - DAY

An apartment similar to Eli’s. It’s messier but bigger. Eli and Sam sit by a coffee table. Sam skims through pages of the new, edited manuscript. Eli waits nervously.

SAM
(while reading)
Wow, Eli. This is really great, man.

Sam puts down the manuscript. He’s touched.

SAM (CONT’D)
I mean it, Eli. Thanks a lot.

ELI
Yeah. No problem.

SAM
See, my pushing really helped you pull through.

Sam stands up.

SAM (CONT’D)
Give me a hug.

Eli stands up hesitantly. Sam hugs Eli while Eli grimaces.

SAM (CONT’D)
So, I was thinking maybe we could celebrate tonight. Yeah? How about it?

Sam walks to the kitchen.
SAM (CONT’D)
I’ll invite some people over and
gather up all the guys from school.
It’ll be a sweet, little reunion.

Sam digs through his refrigerator.

ELI
No, I don’t think I’m going to go.

He returns with two bottles of beer. He hands one to Eli, studying Eli’s expression.

SAM
What’s wrong?

ELI
Amy’s going to be there.

SAM
I won’t invite her then.

ELI
What if someone else does?

SAM
No one will. Look, you didn’t fuck up. Come and have some fun.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT – DAY

Grady sits watching TV. Jordan wipes the coffee table by him. She stops.

JORDAN
Grady?

GRADY
Hm.

JORDAN
Why didn’t you go with Eli?

GRADY
I can’t stand watching Eli be humiliated by his friend anymore.

JORDAN
If his friend’s humiliating him, why don’t you talk to Eli about it?

(MORE)
Tell him that it’ll be okay and that he doesn’t have to do something he doesn’t want to. Why don’t you tell him that?

GRADY
I... Why... Are you mad at me?

JORDAN
I’m not mad. I just don’t— Why doesn’t he visit you? Why doesn’t he visit his brothers?

GRADY
How am I supposed to know?

She takes the remote from Grady’s hand and turns the TV off. She takes his hand and gently pulls him up.

JORDAN
Come on. You can’t stay here and watch TV all day.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

The door closes. A post-it note on the door says, “Recreational activities. – Jordan and Grady.”

EXT. PARK ON HILL - DAY

A park on top of a hill overlooks the city. Grady and Jordan stand at the edge of the hill, gazing at the busy city. Jordan takes a picture of it with her camera. A box of beer lies by Jordan’s feet.

JORDAN
It’s nice, huh?

GRADY
Yeah.

He chuckles.

GRADY (CONT’D)
You never notice how beautiful the city is until you actually see it up high.

She smiles.
JORDAN
Hey, I’ll take a picture of you.
Stand there and face me.

She walks away and points the camera at Grady and the city. Grady turns around.

GRADY
Like this?

JORDAN
That’s it. Smile.

Grady tries to smile, but it looks forced. She smiles at Grady’s attempt.

JORDAN (CONT’D)
Why didn’t the frog cry at night?

GRADY
What?

JORDAN
It’s a joke. Why didn’t the frog cry at night?

GRADY
I don’t know. Why?

JORDAN
Because it croaked.

Grady chuckles. She takes the picture.

GRADY
That’s not funny.

She smiles and walks over to Grady.

JORDAN
I just needed you to give me an authentic smile.

She shows him the picture on her camera. He likes how it looks.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - DAY

Eli walks in, looking around the empty apartment. He turns around, takes the post it off, and reads it. He looks around once again at his empty apartment, not sure what to do.
INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - DAY

Eli knocks on the door to an apartment room. A YOUNG MAN, 20s, answers.

ELI
Hi. Um, is Rachel there?

Young Man looks at Eli suspiciously.

YOUNG MAN
She’s at school.

ELI
Oh, okay.

Eli is about to walk away, but stops when:

YOUNG MAN
How do you know my sister?

ELI
Oh, her boyfriend broke up with her, so I was helping her out.

A brief awkward silence.

YOUNG MAN
What?!

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - DAY

Eli finishes a letter at his desk. He looks it over quickly then crumples it up and tosses it.

EXT. PARK ON HILL - DAY

Grady and Jordan sit next to each other on the swings facing the city while drinking cans of beer.

JORDAN
How were you guys before all this?

Grady looks back at the city, taking time before he answers.

GRADY
We didn’t really... No.
(long beat as he thinks)
It’s hard. Having kids. I was young, maybe around your age and I already had three of them.
He looks at Jordan closely.

GRADY (CONT’D)
I just sort of gave up after a while, you know. I was so tired with a wife, job, and... Eli was so young, and I just gave up. What a bastard I am, huh?

JORDAN
No. Not at all. I mean, I think we’re all bastards at some point in our lives. Look at me, I don’t even have a real job. I graduated near the top of my class, and I have nothing to show for it.

He smiles. A real smile.

GRADY
Where’d you go?

JORDAN
Berkeley.

GRADY
Trying to show off?

JORDAN
(laughing)
Yeah.

She looks at the city. She’s deep in thought and serious.

JORDAN (CONT’D)
I didn’t win the fellowship. They listed the top thirty finalists and I wasn’t even listed. Not even in the top thirty.
(beat)
I thought maybe I could have at least been a quarter-finalist and gain some recognition, but I got nothing.

She cries.

JORDAN (CONT’D)
I’m sick of people believing in me. It just ends up with me disappointing everyone.
GRADY
Hey. You’re not disappointing anyone. You’re a good girl, Jordan.
(beat)
You know, I really appreciate this. You taking me out like this. No one ever really took the time to take me out.

She looks at him.

GRADY (CONT’D)
You may not have gotten that fellowship, but come on, you’ve done a lot for me. Okay?

She nods. He hesitates a little before putting his arm around her.

GRADY (CONT’D)
We’re just a couple of, I don’t know, people.

They turn and look at the city one last time.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT – HALLWAY – NIGHT

On Eli’s way out, he runs into Grady and Jordan.

JORDAN
Hey, Eli. Where you going?

ELI
Um, Sam’s place. He’s throwing a party for the book. Where were you guys?

JORDAN
The park.

ELI
Oh. Cool.
(beat)
Yeah, well, I should get going.

Eli doesn’t go though. He just stands around.

ELI (CONT’D)
Um, so, I don’t know, do you guys want to come?

JORDAN
Yeah.
GRADY
Okay.

INT. SAM’S APARTMENT – NIGHT

A party takes place. People in their 20s and 30s socialize. MUSIC plays from a stereo. Eli, Grady, and Jordan enter. Grady looks around and sees that he’s the only old one. It makes him look slightly disappointed.

MOMENTS LATER: Grady sits with a group. They all listen to a hip-looking guy named SEAN, mid 20s, speak.

SEAN
It’s just, you know, too many of these fake people act like they know about these bands when they don’t know a thing. Like, they’ll have a shirt of some band but they’ll only know like three songs by them.
(to Grady)
Have you heard of Milo Corps?

GRADY
Um, no.

SEAN
The Sha Shas?

GRADY
No.

SEAN
All right, well, these bands are like hardcore underground, you know. They...

Eli drinks and watches Grady for a while, then finds Sam getting a drink in the kitchen. Eli walks up to him.

ELI
Hey.

SAM
Oh, hey, what’s up? Having fun?

ELI
Yeah. Hey, about all that stuff about the editing--
SAM
It’s all cool, man. I forgive you.
Go out there and mingle. Have some
fun!

He gives Eli a friendly punch on the shoulder then walks
away. Eli watches him, obviously annoyed.

Jordan and MATT, 20s, talk near a corner. They both have
drinks in her hands. Matt is tipsy.

MATT
You’re an artist too? What kind?

JORDAN
Mostly painting.

MATT
That’s cool. I’m an editor. I’m
really good at it, I believe
because people say I am. So, I must
be.

Jordan nods, uninterested. He scans her from head to toe. He
starts chuckling.

MATT (CONT’D)
I think you’re really cute.

JORDAN
Oh. Thanks.

MATT
(pause)
May I... may I edit you?

MOMENTS LATER: Grady sits on a couch in the living room. He
drinks from his cup. Jordan sits by him. They look at each
other, eyes wide open -- never have they met such strange
people.

Eli, with a drink in his hand, looks through Sam’s shelf of
books. SOMEONE taps his back. Eli turns. It’s Amy. He looks
deeply hurt and nauseous.

AMY
I thought that was you.

ELI
What are you doing here?

Amy looks around at the crowded apartment.
AMY
Um, same reason why everyone else is here.
(beat)
Congratulations, Eli.

She hugs him awkwardly. A brief moment of silence as they think about what to say.

AMY (CONT’D)
We met here, didn’t we? At one of these parties?

ELI
Yup.

AMY
(pause)
So, how are you doing?

ELI
I’m okay. You?

AMY
Yeah, me too. It’s nice seeing everyone again.

He nods. Awkward silence as Eli drinks more of his drink. She looks down at her own.

AMY (CONT’D)
I’m going to get a refill. I’ll see you later.

She walks away. He tries not to watch her, but he fails.

INT. SAM’S APARTMENT - LATER

The music is LOUDER and the room is darker. People dance. Eli dances a little, bobbing his head while drinking. He stares at Grady and Jordan happily dancing together. Eli looks away and sees THREE BIG GUYS dancing intimately with and around Amy. He downs his drink and walks away.

INT. SAM’S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Eli finishes peeing and FLUSHES the toilet. He looks at himself in the mirror, obviously very drunk.

ELI
Just go out there... have fun, fun, fun.
He smiles a little to himself, then frowns right away.

INT. SAM’S APARTMENT – NIGHT

People still dance. A CUTE WOMAN presses her backside against Eli’s crotch. He succumbs to her advances and dances with her. After a moment, he finds Amy excusing herself from the Guys she was dancing with. She leaves. Eli dances for a little while longer, looking at the door before completely stopping.

EXT. SAM’S APARTMENT – NIGHT

Eli looks around for Amy. He sees her across the street.

ELI
Hey!

She turns around. Eli waves to her, then runs across the street.

ELI (CONT’D)
Where you going?

AMY
I forgot my phone in my car.

ELI
Okay, cool. I’m going to follow you. Is that cool?

AMY
Um, yeah. Okay.

They walk toward her car.

ELI
So, like, who were those guys touching you and stuff in there?

AMY
I don’t know them. We were just dancing.

ELI
Oh. Cool. Remember we used to dance together?

AMY
Um, yeah.
ELI
I liked that. It was nice knowing someone wanted to touch me.

She looks at Eli, slightly amused yet disgusted.

ELI (CONT’D)
Hey, I’m taking care of my Dad now. He tried to kill himself, but now, I’m taking care of him so he doesn’t kill himself again.
(laughing)
Shit. I mean, try to kill himself again. Right?

AMY
Right. Well, I’m glad you’re helping him.

ELI
Yeah?

AMY
Yeah.

They reach her car. She starts to unlock it, but stops after Eli presses her against the car and makes out with her. She pushes him away after a moment.

AMY (CONT’D)
What the hell, Eli?!

ELI
What’s wrong?

AMY
I can’t do this.

ELI
Why not? You did it to me when we first met.

AMY
That was different. I was drunk then.

ELI
You’re not drunk now?

AMY
No.
(long beat) Eli. I’m seeing someone.
ELI
What, those guys you were dancing with?

AMY
No. You don’t know him.

ELI
You’re lying.

AMY
No. I’m not.

Eli starts to cry. Amy stands there, not sure what to do.

ELI
I’m so stupid. I’m sorry, Amy. I’m so sorry. I’m so... fuck!

Eli punches the window of Amy’s car hard, but it doesn’t break.

AMY
Eli!

He moans as he sits on the sidewalk, sobbing and massaging his fist.

ELI
Can’t even break a fucking window.

AMY
It’s okay, Eli... It’s a strong window.
(beat)
Let’s go back... Eli?

She touches his shoulder, but he dismisses it. After a moment, her cell RINGS from her car. She opens the passenger door and answers it.

AMY (CONT’D)
(into cell)
Hello?... Hey... No, I’m outside with... a friend. Why, are you here?... Okay, I’ll be there in a few... Yeah, I love you too.

She puts her cell away and bends down to Eli’s level.

AMY (CONT’D)
Eli, I have to go now. Let’s go back, okay?
No response.

AMY (CONT’D)
Come on, Eli.

From a distance, across the street, Jordan watches them cautiously.

AMY (CONT’D)
Eli?... Say something.

After a moment, she gives up and walks away across the street. She passes Jordan on her way back to Sam’s place.

Jordan crosses the street and towers over Eli.

JORDAN
Why are you sitting on the pavement?

He doesn’t respond. She sits down on the pavement and faces Eli.

ELI
I’m not clumsy.

JORDAN
I know you’re not.

She studies him.

ELI
I made this letter card thing for you because I thought maybe you’d like it, but I threw it away because maybe you wouldn’t, you know.

She looks at him, concerned.

ELI (CONT’D)
I remember writing a poem for my Mom’s birthday because I thought it’d be a nice gift. But she didn’t like it. She said it was insulting. It had no substance. And then I threw it away and she yelled at me for doing that. But you’re so nice and I really wanted to do something for you.

JORDAN
Why are you telling me all this?
I don’t know. I feel like it. I know you won’t make fun of me.

He looks away, ashamed. Seeing this, she puts her arm around Eli and gently pulls him in close to her.

Thanks, Eli.
(beat)
What about your Dad?

What about him?

Where was he when your Mom said that to you?

He was there but he wasn’t mean.

What did he do?

Nothing. He watched.

She looks at his bruised fist.

A calmer Eli sits on the couch by Grady and Jordan. Grady and Jordan’s attention are on Sean, sitting on another chair facing them. He holds an acoustic guitar.

So, what you want to do is...

Sean continues to talk, but no words are heard. Eli gazes across the room at Amy talking intimately with her BOYFRIEND by a corner. She grazes his chest. They kiss lightly, then start making out. Anger and sadness linger on Eli’s face. He’s defeated.

Jordan drives, Grady sits on the passenger seat, and Eli sits in the back, staring hopelessly out the window.
EXT. ELI’S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Eli, Grady, and Jordan stand by the car.

JORDAN
I’ll see you guys tomorrow.

GRADY
Yeah.

She hugs and kisses Grady on the cheek. She takes a good look at Eli.

JORDAN
See you tomorrow, Eli.

She hugs him and kisses him on the cheek.

JORDAN (CONT’D)
Bye.

She leaves.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Eli walks in to the other room. Grady watches at first, not sure what to do, then follows.

In the other room, there is a loud BANG on the plastered wall. Grady turns the light on to find Eli angrily crying and swinging the yo-yo against the wall.

GRADY
Eli! Stop!

Grady tries to hold down Eli, causing them to both struggle as they try to achieve their respective objectives. The yo-yo flings around uncontrollably as it hits Grady hard on the side of his head. They both stop. Eli’s eyes are wide. Grady massages his head, then after a moment collapses on the floor.

ELI
Fuck.

Eli kneels by Grady. He sees Grady’s eyes staring at him. A long moment of silence.

GRADY
You hit me again.

ELI
It was an accident.
GRADY
Why do you always throw these tantrums?

No response.

GRADY (CONT’D)
You’re not going to answer me?

ELI
I don’t know.

GRADY
You’re going to have a God damn nervous break down if you keep this up. Give me the yo-yo.

Eli hands the yo-yo to Grady.

GRADY (CONT’D)
Help me up.

Eli pulls Grady up. Grady sits on the bed and massages his head while Eli stands uncomfortably. Grady notices Eli’s bruised hand.

GRADY (CONT’D)
Why is your hand bruised?

No response.

GRADY (CONT’D)
Answer me.

ELI
I punched a window.

GRADY
A window? What the hell’s the matter with you? Is it Sam?

Eli just looks at Grady, hopeless.

GRADY (CONT’D)
Sit down.

Eli sits by Grady. Grady holds out the yo-yo.

GRADY (CONT’D)
You can’t keep doing things like this. I’m serious.

(MORE)
GRADY (CONT’D)
What are you going to do when one
day this thing doesn’t help you any
more?

Eli doesn’t say anything. He just sort of shrugs his
shoulders.

GRADY (CONT’D)
I don’t want you to do something
like I did. You can’t keep holding
everything in and exploding all of
a sudden.

ELI
What am I supposed to do then?

They sit there for a long time in silence.

GRADY
Did you know your Mom cheated on
me?

Eli shakes his head, no.

GRADY (CONT’D)
She cheated on me with... my best
friend. Really my only friend.

(beat)
I found these letters and... I saw
them kissing once. But the worst
part of it wasn’t even the affair.

No.

(beat)
I found out the guy, he’s some big
shot millionaire business man now
and he started up some world-wide
charity to help underprivileged
kids. It’s just how... how does
someone do something so bad yet do
something so good like that?

ELI
Fuck her, you know. Fuck her. I
know that much.

GRADY
Yeah. I should’ve broke it off.
Maybe we’d all be better.

(beat)
You’re just going to have to learn
to talk to people. Some people
actually care... I care.
Eli starts to cry softly. Grady sticks his hand out. Eli shakes it.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - ELI’S ROOM - LATER
Eli and Grady lie in bed with the lights on.

ELI
You don’t have to sleep with me.

GRADY
I’ll sleep here tonight.
(beat)
Thanks.

Eli turns the lamp off.

INT. JORDAN’S CAR - MOVING - DAY
Jordan drives with Grady next to her, and Eli in the back. Eli stares out the window.

INT. MALL - DAY
A busy mall. Eli, Grady, and Jordan walk around, looking at stores.

GRADY
I remember he liked magic a lot as a child. He used to run around naked with this blue wand, yelling, “Slay the princess! Slay the princess!” Never knew what it meant.

Jordan laughs.

ELI
I was the princess.

GRADY
Oh.

INT. ANOTHER PART OF THE MALL - LATER
They walk and carry gift bags while watching stores closing down. Eli looks off at something. He’s fixated. Jordan sees what Eli sees.
JORDAN
Oh my God. A carousel.

At the center of the mall is a carousel. KIDS ride it while PARENTS watch. MUSIC that defines happiness plays from the carousel speakers.

ELI
They look so happy.

JORDAN
Do you want to go on it?

ELI
Oh, no. No.

JORDAN
Come on. When’s the last time you’ve been on?

ELI
I’ve never been on one.

JORDAN
Well, it’s never too late.

ELI
I think I’m a little too old to be riding a carousel.

JORDAN
There’s no age limit on it.

ELI
That’s not what I meant.

The HAPPY MUSIC stops. The ride’s over. Jordan takes Eli’s hand.

JORDAN
Come on. I’ll go with you.

ELI
I don’t know.

GRADY
Go, Eli. You’ll have fun. Trust me.

ELI
Aren’t you going to ride too?

GRADY
Maybe I will next time. I’ll watch you.

Grady grimaces a little and grabs at his side. He watches Eli and Jordan with a gleam in his eye. A smiling MOTHER approaches Grady.

    MOTHER
    Which ones yours?

    GRADY
    Huh?

    MOTHER
    Which kid is yours?

    GRADY
    The one with the beard.

    MOTHER
    Oh. He’s... very tall.

Eli starts to look more relaxed and content as he continues to ride on the carousel.

EXT. ELI’S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

They are by Eli’s car, saying their good-byes. Eli and Grady carry gift bags.

    JORDAN
    Thanks for tonight. I had a great time.

She hugs them both.

    JORDAN (CONT’D)
    See you at the rehearsal.

She walks away toward her car.

    ELI

Grady looks at Eli. She turns around. He doesn’t say anything.

    JORDAN
    Yeah?
ELI
(hesitating)
I don’t know. Do you maybe want to come up and hang out for a bit?

JORDAN
I should really get going. Got to get up for the wedding rehearsal.

ELI
Come on. It’s just a rehearsal.
Hey, I rode the carousel.

She looks at him, amused.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - NIGHT
Eli and Grady sit on the couch while Jordan sits comfortably on the floor. On the coffee table, are empty glasses of wine and a bottle of wine.

GRADY
I think I’m going to bed now.

He pats Eli’s leg.

GRADY (CONT’D)
Good night, Eli.

He bends down to hug Jordan.

GRADY (CONT’D)
Night, Jordan.

JORDAN
Good night.

He walks away.

JORDAN (CONT’D)
You let him go on his own.

ELI
Yeah. I guess I did.

A beat. Eli drinks some more of his wine.

JORDAN
How are you doing?

ELI
I’m alright.
She studies him.

JORDAN
You bottle up a lot in, don’t you?

ELI
I’m working on breaking the bottle... That was stupid.

She smiles. He sits down beside her on the floor using the couch as his backrest.

ELI (CONT’D)
What happened with you and that guy on the rock?

JORDAN
Um, well, we were together for like seven years. He proposed, and then I just realized this wasn’t the guy for me.

ELI
How did you know?

JORDAN
I just knew. I felt it.

MOMENTS LATER: They sit on the floor, tired.

ELI
You’re so good at it.

JORDAN
At what?

ELI
Talking to people.

JORDAN
Am I?

ELI
Yeah. You are. I mean, I saw my Dad hugging you and it was so... genuine. I wish I could do that.

JORDAN
What, hug?

ELI
No, I mean--

She opens her arms.
JORDAN
Come on.

After a moment, he hugs her. Tighter and tighter. He closes his eyes, enjoying every moment of it. They stop.

JORDAN (CONT’D)
I’m really glad I met you guys. I don’t feel so bad when I’m with you two.

They smile and chuckle quietly. Their eyes close.

JORDAN (CONT’D)
What’s so funny?

ELI
I don’t know. You’re laughing too.

She rests her head against Eli’s shoulder. They fall asleep.

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT – MORNING

Eli sleeps on the floor with Jordan. Jordan opens her eyes and checks her phone.

JORDAN
Shit.

She gets up, causing Eli to wake up.

ELI
Hey.

JORDAN
We’re going to be late. Wake Grady up. I’ll see you there.

She heads for the door.

ELI
Hey. Wait a minute.

She turns around. Eli walks over to her. He looks at her for a long moment not sure what to do next.

ELI (CONT’D)
Um, thanks.

He hesitates before hugging her. She smiles at him.

JORDAN
Okay. Go wake your Dad up.
She leaves.

INT. ELI’S CAR - MOVING - DAY

Eli drives. Grady sits next to him. They drive on a nearly empty highway with only a few cars.

    GRADY
    Are we lost?

    ELI
    I don’t think so.

MOMENTS LATER: Eli looks around at the road.

    GRADY
    Eli?

    ELI
    I think we’re lost.

Grady looks out his own window, annoyed.

    GRADY
    Here, give me your phone. I’ll call Jordan.

Eli digs through his pockets, failing to pull out a cellphone. Grady starts to sweat quite a bit.

    ELI
    I forgot it.

    GRADY
    What?

Grady sweats even more and starts to cough as he looks sicker by the second.

    ELI
    What’s wrong? The kidney stones?

No response.

    ELI (CONT’D)
    Shit.

EXT. SIDE OF HIGHWAY - DAY

Eli’s car pulls to the side. Eli quickly steps out of the car and rushes to Grady’s side. He opens the door.
ELI
Where are your pills?

GRADY
(struggling)
Already took them.

ELI
Let me try to find some help.

He tries to leave, but Grady grabs at his arm, lowering Eli to his level. Eli sees Grady’s terrified face, crying.

GRADY
Help me.

A beat.

ELI
Let’s see if you can pee it out.

Eli tries to pick Grady up, but struggles.

ELI (CONT’D)
Here, I’ll give you a piggy back ride. Get on.

Grady tries, but he also struggles.

GRADY
This is stupid.

ELI
You can do it. Just wrap your legs around me.

Grady wraps his legs around Eli.

MOMENTS LATER: Eli carries Grady far away from the car, so cars passing by are not able to see. Eli sets Grady on his feet and puts an arm around him for support.

ELI (CONT’D)
We’re alone now. We’re all alone now. We’re okay. I’m going to take your pants off so you can pee, okay?

GRADY
I don’t need help.

ELI
Dad, please. It’ll be easier.
Grady grunts. Using one arm to support Grady, Eli awkwardly uses his other to unzip and lower Grady’s pants.

ELI (CONT’D)
All right, whenever you’re ready.

GRADY
I can’t. I’m nervous.

ELI
Relax. We’re friends.

Grady bites his lips as he continues to struggle.

ELI (CONT’D)
Come on, Dad.
(thinking)
I masturbate. You masturbate. We all masturbate.

Eli catches Grady eyeing him. A long moment of silence as Eli really looks at Grady.

ELI (CONT’D)
I have to talk to people, right?
Well, okay. Fine. I wanted to take care of you because I was lonely, but I don’t know. I just saw you lying there in bed and I remembered you being so friendly and considerate. You never yelled at me. But I... I wish you stood up for me when I was a kid. I wish you didn’t just look at me and watch it happen.

Eli waits for Grady to pee.

ELI (CONT’D)
Come on. You can do it.

Grady finally PEES out the stones. He screams at the top of his lungs. Eli smiles a little.

GRADY
(panting)
Can I pull my pants back up now?

Eli lets go of Grady as he puts his pants back up. Grady sighs relief.
They walk back toward the car in silence. After a moment, Grady pats Eli’s back, then he puts his arm around him like buddies do.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. BURGER JOINT RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The same restaurant Eli went to by himself. The Hostess calls out:

HOSTESS

A clean-shaven Eli, Grady, Jordan, Adam, and his very pregnant wife, CLAIRE stand with their wedding clothes on. They walk up to the Hostess.

ELI
Hi, I’m Eli.

INT. BURGER JOINT RESTAURANT - LATER

They sit at a table, eating and talking. Adam taps Eli.

ELI
What’s up?

ADAM
You think Dad’s ready to go home now?

ELI
I think so.

Adam pats Eli’s back.

ADAM
Good job, Eli. He really looks like he’s doing better. I shouldn’t have doubted you.

Eli hesitates before saying:

ELI
I was thinking about going to a show next weekend, and I got an extra ticket. Maybe you want to come with me?
ADAM
It’s not a musical is it?

ELI
Yeah. It is a musical.

Adam looks at a confident Eli.

ADAM
Oh. Um, yeah. Sure. Thanks.

They continue eating. Eli looks across the table at Jordan talking to Claire and Grady. He just smiles.

INT. JORDAN’S APARTMENT – NIGHT

A small, cozy apartment. Posters of paintings hang on the wall, an easel sits at a corner, and a couple of canvas lie against a wall. Jordan sits on her couch reading a catalog. Someone KNOCKS on her door.

She opens it. It’s Eli.

ELI
Hi.

JORDAN
How’d you know where I live?

ELI
I asked Charlie. What are you doing?

JORDAN
Not much. Do you want to come in?

MOMENTS LATER: They sit on the couch watching a movie. Eli notices the catalog. He picks it up. He looks at it. It’s a community college catalog.

JORDAN (CONT’D)
I’m taking nursing classes. I feel like I did a pretty job with your Dad.

ELI
What about the painting?

JORDAN
I’m still doing it, but I figure I’ll support myself by helping old folks while I try to sell some paintings.
He sets the catalog down and continues to watch the movie.

   ELI
   I’ve been meaning to ask you, but
   is your foot healed?

She looks at him then laughs.

   JORDAN
   What?!

Eli laughs too.

LATER: Eli and Jordan are by the door saying their good-byes.

   JORDAN (CONT’D)
   Thanks for coming.

   ELI
   Yeah.

A quiet moment as Eli looks at her, then kisses her.

   ELI (CONT’D)
   See you later.

She watches him leave down the hall.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Kids play in an open field in the park. A clean-shaven Eli is out there. He’s the only one who’s not a kid. With a kite in his hand, Eli runs quickly but it barely lifts up the ground. He tries repeatedly but it fails each time.

EXT. PARK - LATER

Grady sits on a bench reading a paper. Eli walks and sits by him.

   GRADY
   Where’s the kite?

   ELI
   I gave it some kid. It wasn’t working.

Grady looks across the field.

   GRADY
   That kid?
Eli looks across the field.

A SHORT KID runs around with Eli’s kite flying in the air.

ELI
How the... whatever, I don’t need it.

Eli looks at the paper Grady reads, then their eyes meet.

GRADY
This is about me, isn’t it?

ELI
Well, I mean, it’s a, it’s a story, you know, and... yeah, it’s about you.

GRADY
It’s good. It’s honest. I like it.

Eli is touched. He looks down to hide his embarrassment.

GRADY (CONT’D)
Taking the writer’s path again?

ELI
Yeah. I’d like to do both.

GRADY
Good for you, Eli.

A brief pause.

ELI
Are you going home soon?

GRADY
I think I’ll stay around to see my grand kid, then maybe I’ll travel or something. Maybe find a girl.

They smile. Grady pulls his sleeves up, removing the bandages. His wrists are scarred.

ELI
Does it hurt?

Grady touches them, nodding his head, no.

GRADY
Maybe I should write a memoir. This would be a good chapter. You could edit it.
A moment of silence as they watch people playing at the park.

EXT. PARK - A LITTLE LATER

Eli and Grady walk. They pass the Young Father and his Young Son, holding hands and smiling. Eli and Grady watch them.

They continue walking. Eli attempts to grab Grady’s hand, awkwardly. Grady lets go and looks at him, strangely.

GRADY
What are you doing?

ELI
I saw the Dad and the... they were holding hands.

GRADY
Don’t do that.

They continue walking in silence. After a moment, Grady takes Eli’s hand. Eli looks at him.

GRADY (CONT’D)
Shut up.

They continue.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END