

Walking The Silver Lining

by

Johnny Diaz

FADE IN:

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

NOAH KELLER(27) is sitting on a toilet in his underwear. He is a lean, muscular man with dark hair and a grainy beard.

Noah's wrists are DEEPLY CUT. The SILVER STRAIGHT RAZOR sits in a puddle of blood. Noah watches the blood run down his arms and trickle down off his fingers. His eyes water.

NOAH (V.O.)

We have this concept of life and death that seems so-

(beat)

black and white. But it was between those black and white absolutes, at this skinny silver medium, that we found each other. It was a place which neither force of nature existed and we were free to live our stolen life together.

Noah closes his eyes and tilts his head back.

NOAH (V.O. CONTD.)

So we tiptoed our way along that winding path for half a year, struggling for balance as the path grew narrower until finally-

FADE TO BLACK

NOAH (V.O. CONTD.)

I fell off.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

SUPER: "Six monthes earlier"

Noah wakes before sunrise. He turns his alarm off. He gets out of bed and gets dressed.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - DAY

Noah runs up the TRAIL and takes a turn into the forest. Noah arrives at a GIANT BOULDER overlooking a lake. He steps forward into a SMALL INDENT in the BOULDER and peers out at the lake.

Noah closes his eyes and stands idle for a few minutes before heading back down the mountain.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Noah places the DISC into the DVD player then falls on the couch with a bottle of WHISKEY. The VIDEO starts with him dressed in a lumberjack costume, standing in his kitchen.

The camera focuses in on him as he poses.

FEMALE CAMERAMAN (O.S.)
 Oh my God, you look exactly like
 the Brawny Man, babe!

Noah speaks in unison with himself on the VIDEO.

NOAH
 Alright! I hope Jeremy is able to
 pull off a convincing Mr. Clean.

FEMALE CAMERAMAN (O.S.)
 What did Jeremy want to go as?

NOAH
 He wanted us to go as Lord of the
 Rings characters. I was gonna be
 Aragon, he was gonna be that dwarf
 with the axe and-

FEMALE CAMERAMAN (O.S.)
 Gimli?

NOAH
 Yeah. And Max was probably gonna
 be Legolas but I think he would
 make a convincing Gollum. He's too
 short for an elf and Jeremy, well
 he makes an excellent dwarf without
 the makeup.

FEMALE CAMERAMAN (O.S.)
 What is Max dressed up as anyway?

NOAH
 He's a scrubbing bubble from the
 toilet bowl cleaner. It was funny,
 after we finished his costume, he
 started spinning in place and
 actually began cleaning the floor!

Noah takes a big swig of whiskey.

FEMALE CAMERAMAN (O.S.)
 Oh Max you silly man.
 (beat)
 Well at least I got the brawny man.
 You actually look pretty sexy in
 that flannel and beard.

NOAH
 Yeah. Could you imagine what sex
 would look like with a scrubbing
 bubble?

FEMALE CAMERAMAN (O.S.)
 Oh, so dirty...yet so clean!

Noah finishes the whiskey and passes out.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Noah wakes up, grabbing his head. He checks his phone and sees a message from JEREMY. He calls him.

JEREMY (O.S.)
Hey, good morning. Are you just waking up?

NOAH
(rubbing face)
No.

JEREMY (O.S.)
Yeah, alright. Listen, I was just in the neighborhood and thought I'd stop by.

NOAH
Um-

A KNOCK interrupts his sentence.

JEREMY (O.S.)
Too late.

Noah flips the phone shut and opens the door.

JEREMY (CONTD)
Hey Noah.

Noah follows Jeremy back to the living room where the two sit. Jeremy Keller(31) is a short, stocky man with a thick beard, short brown hair and glasses.

NOAH
How long have you been in the neighborhood?

JEREMY
Not long. I called you earlier but I guess you were-

Jeremy spots the WHISKEY BOTTLE beneath the table and the running DVD player. He scolds.

JEREMY (CONTD)
Passed out.

Noah grabs the BOTTLE and dumps it in the garbage can.

NOAH
I-

JEREMY
You've been watching her videos again, haven't you?
(MORE)

JEREMY (cont'd)

(beat)

Natalie's dead, Noah. She's been gone for a month already and you can't keep doing this shit to yourself.

(beat)

The girls miss you, bro.

NOAH

I know. I'm sorry I haven't come to see you guys as often as I'd like but they just gave me vacation time and-

JEREMY

They gave you vacation time?

NOAH

Yeah. Two weeks. Paid.

JEREMY

Well that's good. So what are you doing tonight? You wanna come over for dinner and prove to the girls you aren't dead?

NOAH

Sure.

JEREMY

Alright. So be over at around six. Denise is makin' lasagna.

NOAH

Yeah, I'll be there.

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The Keller family sits at a long, wood table. MAYA(6) sits beside her younger sister CECILE(5). Maya is a skinny tomboy with cornflower colored hair like Denise. Cecile is slightly chubbier than Maya with darker hair.

DENISE(31) sits by Noah. She is a thick woman with dark hair and striking resemblance to Cecile.

Noah stares off into space.

MAYA

Noah? Noah?!

NOAH

Hm?

MAYA

You're coming to my game tomorrow, right?

NOAH
What time?

MAYA
It starts at two o'clock.

NOAH
I'll be there.

JEREMY
How many goals did you score last
game anyway?

MAYA
Three.

JEREMY
Three? Wow!

Jeremy looks over at Noah who stares down at his plate.

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Denise leads the girls down the hall. Jeremy and Noah are
left on the sofa.

JEREMY
So are you really going to make it
to Maya's game or were you just-

NOAH
I'm going. I don't have anything
else planned.

A long pause follows before Denise reenters the room. As
she sits down, Noah stands up.

NOAH
Thanks for dinner.

DENISE
Yeah.

Noah hugs them both and leaves the house. Jeremy locks the
door behind him.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Noah finishes a mug of beer and sets it down on the bartop.
The tavern is empty except for a few scattered patrons.

ANTHONY, the bartender and friend of Noah and Jeremy, walks
over to Noah at the end of the bar. Anthony is a tall,
skinny man with pale, tattooed skin slick, black hair.

ANTHONY
Another?

NOAH

Another.

Anthony takes and fills the mug.

ANTHONY

So. How's Jeremy doin' these days?
Don't see him too often anymore.

NOAH

He's doin' good. Busy being a good
dad. His daughter has a soccer
game tomorrow actually.

(takes drink)

I always knew he'd make a good dad.

Anthony looks at his watch.

ANTHONY

Last call!

A few patrons order another drink while the rest exit. Noah
remains at the edge of the bar, huddled over his mug.

NOAH

Hey Anthony. Are you
superstitious?

ANTHONY

I would say so. There is
definitely shit in this world that
has me wondering.

Noah runs his finger along the edge of the mug. He stares
down at the black lager in the mug.

NOAH

Do you ever think that maybe...if
someone wasn't ready to die, they
would just-

(beat)

Stay?

ANTHONY

What, like a ghost?

NOAH

(long beat)

Nevermind.

Anthony leans on his elbow, over the bar toward Noah.

ANTHONY

Does this have anything to do with
Natalie?

NOAH

(to beer mug)

No.

Noah finishes his beer, pays his bill and stumbles away.

ANTHONY

You alright to drive, Noah?

NOAH

I'm fine.

Noah gathers himself and leaves the bar.

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jeremy and Denise lie in bed. Both are unable to sleep.

DENISE

Jeremy?

JEREMY

Yeah?

DENISE

De you think Noah will be okay?
He's only gotten worse since the
funeral and tonight he hardly said
a word.

EXT. BAR - CONTINUOUS

Noah stumbles across the parking lot to his car.

JEREMY (V.O.)

I know. I'm really worried about
him too. He's just been so damned
distant and his house-

INT. NOAH'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Noah starts his car and pulls out of the parking lot.

JEREMY (V.O.)

It feels really cold and...I can't
put my finger on it but it's more
than the fact that Natalie's gone.

DENISE (V.O.)

What do you mean?

Noah drives smoothly through town until spotting the BRIDGE
half a mile down the road.

JEREMY (V.O.)

His house just feels eerie and sad.
(beat)
I don't know but now that he's got
all this free time on his hands-

Noah HAMMERS his foot down on the gas pedal.

DENISE (V.O.)
 You don't think he'll ever get
 better. I can see it in his face
 and in yours.

Noah comes up to the start of the BRIDGE.

JEREMY (V.O.)
 Yeah I know. He's been watching
 some of Natalie's old videos again.
 I found an empty whiskey bottle by
 the couch and his DVD player and TV
 were still on.

Noah JERKS the steering wheel and ramps off the BRIDGE.

JEREMY (V.O. CONTD.)
 Maybe I should take him hiking in
 the morning. Just the two of us.

DENISE (V.O.)
 I think he'd love that. I'll take
 the girls to the game, you two
 could meet us there.

JEREMY (V.O.)
 Alright. Good night babe.

DENISE (V.O.)
 Good night.

The car COLLIDES into the river.

FADE TO BLACK

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)
 Noah...Open your eyes.

FADE IN:

INT. DARK BEDROOM - NIGHT

Noah awakes naked in a bed, covered by a white sheet. The room is empty except for a WHITE DOUBLE DOOR outlined in SHINING SILVER. There is a BALCONY where a giant, SILVER MOON shines. Laying naked beside him is NATALIE.

Natalie has olive colored skin with long, wavy brown hair and a curvy figure. There is a vibrant tattoo of a RED PHOENIX on her right ribs with it's long tail feathers winding down across her side to her hip.

NOAH
 Natalie?

NATALIE
 Noah.

Before Noah can move, Natalie stops him.

NATALIE (CONTD)

Don't move.

NOAH

Am I dead?

NATALIE

No.

A long pause follows as Noah looks at Natalie; her face, her hair, her body. He cautiously inches closer to her.

NOAH

Natalie. I'm sorry for-

NATALIE

Don't talk. Just know that I'm not gone, Noah. I never left. But now-

(beat)

You have to go to sleep.

NOAH

Sleep?

NATALIE

You have to.

NOAH

What will happen to you? How do I find you again?

NATALIE

I'll find you.

Noah slowly shuts his eyes as the MOON shines brightly.

NATALIE (O.S.)

Noah...don't forget me.

INT. AMBULANCE TRUCK - NIGHT

A paramedic waves a light across Noah's eyes.

NOAH

Natalie...

Noah loses consciousness.

INT. HOSPITAL - ROOM - DAY

Noah awakes and finds himself in a hospital bed. Noah pats the bandage on his head and leans back, shutting his eyes.

INT. HOSPITAL - THIRD FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Jeremy walks down the hall carrying a BAG and enters-

INT. HOSPITAL - ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jeremy finds Noah in the second bed, near the window. The patient in the first bed seems to be incapacitated.

Noah peers out the window as Jeremy approaches, dropping the BAG beside the bed.

JEREMY

Hey. How you feeling?

NOAH

I'm alright. Have a bit of a headache but that seems to be it. How was the game?

JEREMY

Good. Maya scored a goal. They wanted to come but I told them no.

(beat as Jeremy steps closer)

Are you fuckin' stupid?! What the fuck were you thinkin'?!

Noah's eyes dart away, hesitating.

NOAH

I-I don't know, guess I wasn't. I...just needed a drink.

Jeremy sighs. Noah fixes his eyes on him.

NOAH (CONTD)

Look, I know I fucked up so can we please skip the big brother bullshit? For once?

JEREMY

I don't think so, Noah. You know you scared the shit out of Denise and the girls. And then I had to tell mom about-

NOAH

Oh God, mom knows?

JEREMY

Damn right she knows. She wants me to call her back as soon as I talk to you.

(beat)

You know what...

Jeremy pulls out his cell phone and dials a number.

JEREMY (CONTD)

Why don't you tell her yourself how much of a fuckin' idiot you were.

NOAH

Jeremy-

JEREMY (CONTD)

It's ringing.

Noah jiggles the phone in Noah's face. Noah snatches the phone away and brings it to his ear.

NOAH

(into phone)

Ma...No, it's Noah...yeah, I'm alright...I don't know, I wasn't thinking. I was...I know...no you don't...fine.

(to Jeremy)

Here.

Jeremy takes the phone.

JEREMY

(into phone)

Ma...yeah I'll take care of him...all it was was a bump on the head. His car is actually a lot worse than he is. Okay...love you.

Jeremy hangs up and shoves the phone in his pocket.

JEREMY (CONTD)

So tell me what happened, Noah.

NOAH

I drank, drove and crashed. I don't know what else-

JEREMY

Don't bullshit me Noah. Tell me what really happened.

Noah turns to the window. Jeremy exhales impatiently.

JEREMY (CONTD)

If you can't-

NOAH

I wanted to die. I wanted to be back with her again, Jeremy.

(beat)

I've been thinking about it for a while. And when I was in the car-

(back to Jeremy)

If I could at least make it look like an accident...

JEREMY

What, we wouldn't feel as bad about it? About you?

Noah clenches his fist.

NOAH

You don't think I felt like
shit?..FEEL like shit for what I
did? Well I do but something
happened.

JEREMY

What happened?

NOAH

When I hit the water and everything
went black, that's when I saw her.

(beat)

Natalie. I saw her as clearly as
I'm looking at you.

JEREMY

Natalie?

NOAH

She spoke to me. Said she never
left and that she'll find me again.

Jeremy grabs a chair and drags it to Noah's bed.

JEREMY

Noah, listen to me.

(sits in chair)

Natalie is dead. She's gone and
these thoughts, these dreams are
going to drive you nuts. You
almost died last night because of
it. Just let her go.

Noah turns back toward the window.

NOAH

I guess you're right.

JEREMY

I AM right, Noah.

(beat)

The doctors say that you're pretty
much good to go. I brought a
change of clothes so whenever
you're ready, I'll be in the lobby.

NOAH

Jeremy.

Noah grabs Jeremy's arm as he is about to leave.

JEREMY

Yeah?

NOAH

Promise me you won't tell anyone
about-

JEREMY

If you promise me that you won't
try anything this stupid again.

Noah nods slightly. Jeremy leaves the room.

INT. JEREMY'S CAR - DAY

Jeremy and Noah stop outside Noah's home. Noah scratches
the BANDAGE on his head as he reaches for the door handle.

JEREMY

So what are you going to do about a
car?

Noah stops and turns.

NOAH

I'm not sure.
(beat)
I'll figure it out tomorrow.

JEREMY

Alright.

Noah exits the vehicle and walks to his front door as Jeremy
drives off. Noah unlocks the door and enters-

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Noah sits on his couch, opens his cell phone and scrolls
through his contacts before stopping on ADRIAN's number. He
presses the call button and waits.

ADRIAN (O.S)

Hello?

NOAH

Adrian. It's Noah.

ADRIAN (O.S)

Noah! What's goin' down, man?

NOAH

Are you home.

ADRIAN (O.S)

Yes sir.

NOAH

Do you mind if I stop by?

ADRIAN (O.S)

(coughing)

Sure, come on over.

Noah hangs up his phone.

INT. ADRIAN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Adrian sits on his couch, smoking MARIJUANA from his pipe. He is a filthy, heavy man with long, dirty blonde hair and blue eyes. He hears a KNOCK and answers the door.

ADRIAN

What's up, Noah. Damn, what happened to you?

Noah follows Adrian to the couch. Adrian offers Noah the pipe. Noah takes a hit then hands the pipe back.

ADRIAN (CONTD)

So what brings you here.

NOAH

What do you think?

ADRIAN

The usual?

NOAH

Not exactly. I need something with a little more kick.

ADRIAN

(sparking up the pipe)

What did you have in mind?

NOAH

Do you have any heroin?

Adrian raises his eyebrows as he releases the smoke.

ADRIAN

Heroin? What sparked this sudden jump in the destructive drug heirarchy?

NOAH

An idea which needs an answer.

ADRIAN

You know Noah, curiosity killed the cat. And so will heroin.

NOAH

Look Adrian, I can either get it from you or from someone else. Which would you prefer?

ADRIAN

Well-

(MORE)

ADRIAN (cont'd)

(beat)

I don't have any heroin but I do
have some DMT. Amazing trip
without the nasty side effects.

NOAH

Fine.

Adrian leaves the living room and comes back moments later with a baggie of DMT. Noah smokes the DMT and waits patiently. He slowly shuts his eyes and leans back.

INT. BAR - MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Noah wakes up sitting on a TOILET SEAT in a stall. He opens the door and sees his REFLECTION in the mirror.

He looks considerably younger and clean-cut. His grainy, dirty beard is gone and his hair is shorter and combed upright. Noah is also more muscular and massive than before. He steps forward, leaning over the sink.

A MAN walks in and sees Noah EXAMINING his face. Noah notices and passes him by as he exits the restroom into-

INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS

Noah wanders through the bar, scanning the crowd. He spots Jeremy and MAX at the bar. Noah joins them.

Max is a short, skinny man with effeminate features and wavy blonde hair.

Jeremy is also much younger and thinner. His hairline isn't as far back and his beard has been shaven clean.

JEREMY

You alright Noah? Look like you
saw a ghost.

NOAH

Yeah I'm fine. Just-
(beat)
I'm good.

MAX

No you're not.
(to Anthony)
Three shots of Wild Turkey.
(mouths silently)
on Noah's tab.

Anthony fills three SHOT glasses and lines them on the bar.

ANTHONY

Three shots of Wild Turkey.
(loudly to Max)
ON NOAH'S TAB!

Jeremy shakes his head. The three toast and down the shots.

JEREMY
(clearing his throat)
Mmmm, smooth.

MAX
Ah, that'll put hair on your chest.

Max glances towards the bar entrance.

MAX (CONTD)
Speaking of hairy chests...

The three women approach the small group at the bar. Noah looks over his shoulder and spots BEATRICE, a tall, skinny woman being followed by two other women.

Noah turns away towards the guys and orders another drink.

MAX (CONTD)
Beatrice!

The girls meet the boys at the bar. Max holds his arms out for Beatrice but she declines with a disgusted glare.

MAX (CONTD)
So how's that guy you're dating?
You know, the one suffering from
that gum disease known as
GIN-GA-VITUS?!

BEATRICE
Not nearly as bad as that girl you
fucked. You know, the one
suffering from that venereal
disease known as GON-NO-RRHEA.

Jeremy nearly chokes on his drink as Max smiles and nods.

MAX
(scratching his crotch)
She's alright.

Denise turns to Jeremy.

DENISE
Hey baby. Sorry we took so long.

JEREMY
It's alright. So what do you want?

DENISE
Oh, no drinks for me.

MAX
What? Why?

DENISE
Jeremy. I'm pregnant!

JEREMY
WHAT?!

Denise nods. Jeremy grins and hugs her.

MAX
Wow. Announcing that you're pregnant at a bar. That's very-
(Beatrice smacks his arm)
Well that's just great news, Denise! Whoo!

Noah smiles as he gives Denise a big hug.

NOAH
Congradulations sister.

DENISE
Oh. Noah, Max, this is Natalie, Beatrice's stepsister. Natalie, this is Noah and Max.

Max grabs her hand and shakes.

MAX
Beatrice's sister? Holy fuck, that can't be easy. Shot?

BEATRICE
You're such a dick. Natalie, don't pay any attention to Max.

MAX
That whole gonorrhhea thing is a joke by the way. You know Beatrice, she's a real, ha ha-
(brings drink to mouth)
Miserable bitch.

NATALIE
Well it's nice to meet you guys.
(to Noah)
I love your shirt.

NOAH
Oh. I'm a big Queens of the Stone Age fan. I think they're pretty amazing.

NATALIE
What's your favorite song?

NOAH
Everyone loves No One Knows but right now I gotta say In My Head

NATALIE
...Or Something?

NOAH
(smiling)
Or Something.

Max looks back and forth between the two of them as they stare at one another and smile. Max sighs.

MAX
(under his breath)
Annnnnndddd another goes to McBuff
the fuckin' vag whisperer.
(beat)
Hey Beatrice-

BEATRICE
No.

The group talks on as Noah and Natalie find themselves outside the circle. Natalie looks around the bar.

NATALIE
The first night we met.
(at Noah)
I took one look at you and liked
you immediately.

NOAH
What?

NATALIE
Told you I'd find you.

Noah's eyes widen. Natalie smiles.

NATALIE (CONTD)
I'm glad you remember this night so
clearly. So do I.

NOAH
I don't know what...I-

NATALIE
Just relax.

Natalie leads Noah to an empty table away from the noise.

NATALIE (CONTD)
I remember when-

NOAH
So what is this? A memory? A
dream?

NATALIE

Both. I'm alive in these memories,
our memories. From the time we met
to our last night together.

(beat)

Every night I told you but every
morning, you would always forget.

NOAH

I remember that night in the dark
room with the silver-lined doors.
And the balcony.

(beat)

What was that place? I don't
remember ever seeing it.

Natalie doesn't answer. She holds Noah's hand. Noah
glances around the bar. No one seems to even acknowledge
them, including their friends. He retracts his hand.

NOAH (CONTD)

So what are you really?

NATALIE

You don't believe me, do you Noah?

NOAH

I don't know. It all feels so real
but it's-

NATALIE

I know there are a lot questions
you have right now but let's just
enjoy where we are or...

Natalie eyes the FRONT DOOR of the bar. She takes Noah's
hand as she stands.

NATALIE (CONTD)

Let's go.

Natalie leads Noah out of the bar by his hand. Everyone,
including the group are FROZEN in place. The two leave the
bar and out into-

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - NIGHT

Noah is shocked to see the GREAT BOULDER in front of him.
He turns around to see that the BAR he was just in has
disappeared. He notices that his clothes are different.

NATALIE

Do you remember this night?

NOAH

Our first date?

NATALIE

We snuck away from the camp and you led me through the forest to the boulder.

Natalie walks over to the BOULDER. Noah slowly follows as the two stand on the INDENT.

NOAH

I remember. This was an attempt at being romantic...AND to save us from Max's stupid stories.

NATALIE

(chuckle)

Oh God, Max's horror stories...the horror!

Noah and Natalie sit at the edge of the BOULDER, feet bouncing off the rock. The LAKE is absolutely STILL.

NOAH

I just visited this boulder a few days ago. I guess I remembered it differently six years ago.

NATALIE

(to the lake)

The lake looks so still.

NOAH

Yeah. Like one huge mirror.
(looks up)
Or maybe a parallel universe!

Noah picks up a pebble and flicks it into the lake. The RIPPLES spread out from the entry point, gliding across the water to the SHORE.

NOAH

About the dark room. Was that just a dream or something different?

NATALIE

(long beat)

The dare.

NOAH

The dare?

NATALIE

Yes! The dare! You didn't forget about the dare, did you?

Noah's confused look turns to a smirk.

NOAH

The dare!

(MORE)

NOAH (cont'd)
 (stands up)
 Not only will I dive into this lake
 from fifty plus feet-
 (beat as he begins to
 strip)
 But I will do a double front flip.

NATALIE
 Impressive! Can't wait to see it.

NOAH
 See it? Why don't we make it a
 DOUBLE dare!

A pause as Natalie peers down at the LAKE. She shoots back
 at Noah with a grin and stands up.

NATALIE
 You know what?!
 (beat as she removes her
 shoes)
 I see your two front flips and
 raise you a third flip!

NOAH
 Oh really?! Well three it is.

The two smile as Natalie strips. The two stand on the
 BOULDER in their underwear.

NATALIE (CONTD)
 Do you remember what happened after
 you jumped?

NOAH
 Yeah. You took my clothes and ran
 back through the woods.

NATALIE
 But you did do two flips and the
 dive.

NOAH
 I was absolutely terrified. I
 never did a flip into a dive, let
 alone three off a cliff.
 (beat)
 It was my attempt at being brave.

NATALIE
 I was scared too.

NOAH
 Of what?

NATALIE

Of watching you jump off a cliff.
It's a scary height but you seemed
so sure of yourself.

(beat as she looks over
the cliff)

Can't wait to see you do it again.

NOAH

Just don't run away with my pants.

Natalie smiles. Noah gazes over the edge of the rock. He exhales as he takes a few steps back.

NATALIE

Oh and Noah.

NOAH

Yeah?

NATALIE

Don't forget.

Noah sprints towards the BOULDER and leaps off, torquing his body forward. He closes his eyes as his body completes THREE FLIPS. Noah straightens his body and holds his breath before CUTTING into the lake. DARKNESS soon envelops him.

ADRIAN (O.S)

Noah? Noah!

Noah opens his eyes and finds himself in-

INT. ADRIAN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Adrian is bent over Noah as Noah rubs his face. He looks around at the apartment and straightens up in his seat, wide-eyed.

ADRIAN

You alright, man? You started tripping pretty bad.

NOAH

I was just...I'm fine.

Noah pats himself then looks intently at Adrian.

NOAH (CONTD)

I remember. I remember!

ADRIAN

You remember?

NOAH

Yeah! I remember! It was a dream...and a memory...but I remember!

ADRIAN

What the hell are you talkin'
about, Noah. What do you remember?

NOAH

I remember I was at the bar. I
was...and she...

(beat)

Adrian, how much for half a gram?

ADRIAN

Of the DMT?

NOAH

Yeah.

ADRIAN

I usually sell it for about eighty
but I'll give it to ya for sixty?

Noah pulls out his wallet and hands Adrian sixty dollars.
Adrian takes the money and leaves the room. He returns with
the BAGGIE of DMT and hands it to Noah.

NOAH

Thanks. I'm gonna take off.

ADRIAN

You want a ride?

NOAH

No, I'm alright. I think I'll just
take a walk. Isn't that far.

ADRIAN

Alright man. Don't go overboard
with that shit. Things can go
really bad really fast.

Noah shows himself out.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Noah tosses and turns in his bed. Restless, he sits up and
looks at his alarm clock. Suddenly, a LIGHT BREEZE enters
his bedroom window.

The BREEZE sweeps across his bed, lifting the SHEET up and
dragging it off the bed. Noah lies back down in his bed,
facing Natalie's side of the bed.

NOAH

(whispering)

Is that you, Natalie?

The LIGHT BREEZE whips around the room before returning the
SHEET to the bed, then dying down.

NOAH (CONTD)

I didn't forget.

Noah closes his eyes and goes to sleep.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Noah wakes up and glances over at the EMPTY SIDE of the bed.

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jeremy waits by the opened front door while the Maya and Cecile run through the house.

JEREMY

Come on girls! Your mom and I'll
leave you here and go to the movies
by ourselves!

Denise joins Jeremy at the door followed shortly by the girls. Jeremy pulls out his phone as they exit to-

EXT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

DENISE

Who are you calling?

JEREMY

Noah. Gonna see if he wants to go.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Noah sits on his couch, smoking the DMT. His phone VIBRATES on the living room table but he ignores it.

INT. JEREMY'S CAR - DAY

Jeremy starts the car as he waits for an answer. When he gets Noah's voicemail, Jeremy hangs up the phone.

DENISE

Do you wanna stop by his house?

Jeremy shakes his head and pulls out of the driveway.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Noah relaxes on his couch, watching more of Natalie's VIDEOS. He exhales the smoke and sets the PIPE on the table. Noah settles across the sofa and closes his eyes.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Noah opens his eyes and finds himself behind the wheel of his old CADILLAC. He looks over and finds Natalie snuggled beside him in a coat, wrapped under his arm.

The CADILLAC flies down the highway with the top down (broken), wind THRASHING over their heads. Natalie looks

over at Noah who squeezes her tighter.

NATALIE
You remembered.

NOAH
I did.
(beat)
Our second date?

NATALIE
The trip to the beach. I
remembered there being a few cars
on this highway.

NOAH
I didn't.
(beat)
Or maybe I don't want to.

They drive down the highway silently until arriving at-

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

Noah and Natalie walk along the shore. The beach is vacant with several small BONFIRES lining the beach like torches. The line of BONFIRES seems endless as they track down into the distance where they flicker on the horizon.

NOAH
I remember there being people on
the beach. Don't remember there
being this many bonfires.

NATALIE
I did.
(beat)
Or maybe I want to.

Natalie grabs Noah's hand. The two walk down the beach, lifting their hands above the BONFIRES.

NOAH
How do you know so much about all
this.

NATALIE
WE actually know a lot about this.
Well I remember, you always forgot.

NOAH
I take it that we have some control
over all this.
(beat)
So if I REMEMBER fireworks going
off-

A bright yellow FIRECRACKER exploded in the sky, raining down over the ocean. Noah smirks.

NOAH (CONTD)

Does this mean we can fly?

NATALIE

I'm sure you could-

(beat)

But going overboard might shatter the memory and the dream. One time, when we were driving, you drove off the pier and turned the car into a submarine.

(beat)

We didn't make it ten seconds before the ocean collapsed around us and you woke up.

NOAH

Sounds like something I'd do.

Noah wraps his arm around Natalie as the two come up on-

EXT. BEACH - SANDBAR - NIGHT

Noah and Natalie stand at the tip of the SANDBAR and gaze out at the BLACK OCEAN.

NATALIE

Do you remember the story about the man lost over the ocean and his wife on the cliff, calling out for him to follow her voice?

NOAH

The one the surfer told at one of the bonfires? Yeah, I remember.

NATALIE

Do you think he found his way back?

Noah turns to Natalie and cracks a smile.

NOAH

I'd like to think so.

The couple head back down the beach and relax on-

EXT. NOAH'S CAR - NIGHT

Noah and Natalie lie on the windshield of the CADILLAC, staring up at the night sky. He grabs a THIN, GREEN BLANKET and wraps it around their bodies. A faint, green LIGHT rushes across the sky.

NATALIE

Noah.

NOAH

I know. It isn't overboard, just-
(MORE)

NOAH (cont'd)
(beat)
We never got to see the Northern
Lights.

NATALIE
I know.

A long pause as the two watch the LIGHT shine and dance
across the black sky.

NOAH
(to the sky)
There's no way for me to stay here,
is there? I mean, with you.

Natalie remains silent.

NOAH (CONTD)
Natalie?

NATALIE
You can't. You're alive and I'm...
(long beat as she turns
to Noah)

NOAH
(to Natalie)
So I'd have to-

NATALIE
Don't say it, Noah. Don't even
think it.
(beat)
You have to wake up now.

NOAH
What? No.

NATALIE
You have to.

NOAH
Why?! Why don't you want me to
stay?!

NATALIE
Noah, you can't stay here and
neither can I. The most we can
have are these dreams.

A low rumble erupts from the horizon across the ocean,
interrupting their argument.

NOAH
What was that?

Natalie pulls herself close to Noah.

NATALIE
(whispering)
You have to wake up.

Natalie kisses Noah before he wakes up in-

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Noah clenches his head and sits up. He grabs his phone as sees that he has a missed call. Noah calls back but receives no answer. Noah sighs heavily.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Noah sits at the edge of the bar, deep in thought while the rest of the bar is packed with noisy patrons. Noah drinks his beer as Anthony approaches.

ANTHONY
You doin' alright?

NOAH
Yeah. Just wanted to be alone.

ANTHONY
Alone?

NOAH
...among strangers...and
drunk...outside my house.

ANTHONY
Well then, you've come to the right
place.

Anthony smirks and leaves Noah to his drinking. Noah finishes his beer then waves at Adrian for another.

EXT. BAR - NIGHT

Noah searches his phone for a number. Jeremy's name shows on the screen but after a moment, he scrolls back to Adrian's number. The phone rings.

NOAH
Adrian...it's Noah...nothing much.
Listen, can I get a
ride?..Barnet's...thanks. See you
soon.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Noah finishes another beer. He gets a text from Adrian that says he is outside. He closes out his tab with Anthony.

ANTHONY
You got a ride?

NOAH
Yeah. Adrian.

ANTHONY
Alright. Take care man.

Noah waves good bye then heads for the door.

INT. BAR - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Noah spots Adrian's beat-up car at the side of the bar. There is a YOUNG WOMAN sitting in the passenger seat. She is Native American with straight, black hair. Noah heads for the passenger side and climbs into-

INT. ADRIAN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Adrian pulls out of the parking lot and drives down the street. Noah leans his head against the car window.

NOAH
Thanks for the ride.

ADRIAN
No problem.

NOAH
So what were you up to?

ADRIAN
Just hanging with some friends.
This is Lana by the way.

NOAH
Nice to meet you.

LANA
Hi.

Noah watches the street lights zoom by.

NOAH
You wouldn't happen to have any more DMT I could buy from you do you?

ADRIAN
Why would you wait 'til I was at your fuckin' house to ask?

NOAH
I...don't know. Do you?

ADRIAN
Forty bucks.

NOAH
Put it on my tab.

ADRIAN

Put it on your tab? This aint the fuckin' bar, Noah.

NOAH

I'll stop by your house tomorrow with the money. Just give me the fuckin' dope.

The car finally reaches-

EXT. NOAH'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Adrian digs into his pocket and hands Noah the drugs.

ADRIAN

Well there you go, champ. See ya tomorrow.

Noah steps out of the car. He waves Adrian off and enters-

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Noah stumbles through his house. He finds his PIPE and grabs it as he heads to-

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Noah collapses on the bed. He turns the bedside lamp on and focuses on preparing the PIPE. He smokes the entire baggie of DMT and lies back on the bed. Noah shuts his eyes.

INT. NATALIE'S CAR - NIGHT

Noah is in the passenger seat of Natalie's sedan. Both are dressed formally with Noah wearing a black suit and she a violet, strapless dress.

NOAH

The masquerade?

NATALIE

Yeah.

Noah flips down the visor and looks into the mirror. He sees that he is a bit older than in the previous dreams but still young. Natalie herself looks aged but still vibrant.

NOAH

I hated slow dancing. I barely danced at my senior prom.

NATALIE

I know. I could tell by your shaking leg that you were a little nervous. Even after three years, you're still self-conscious around me. It's adorable.

NOAH

Yeah. I was just glad I could wear a mask through the whole thing. I'm glad we didn't choose the beaver masks.

NATALIE

I thought they looked cute.

Noah and Natalie reach-

EXT. DANCE HALL - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Noah and Natalie grab their deer and buck MASKS and put them on. Natalie rotates in place, modeling her look as Noah nods in approval. The couple walks into-

INT. DANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

The main hall is decorated in a forest theme. They look at other couples dressed in rabbit, mouse, and eagle masks. The couple walks onto the DANCE FLOOR.

NATALIE

You're not nearly as bad as you believe you are.

NOAH

I know. One of my super powers. The ability to-

Noah dips Natalie.

NOAH (CONTD)

Woo you with my dance moves.

He pulls Natalie back up as she lets out a chuckle.

NATALIE

Cheater.

NOAH

I know.

Noah peers around the room and spots Max getting yelled at by Beatrice. The two hold their raccoon masks in hand as they draw attention with their argument.

NATALIE

Uh-oh. The raccoons are having problems again.

NOAH

Yeah, I guess it wasn't just rabies that Max gave her.

Natalie gives Noah a hard smack.

NATALIE

That's my sister, jerk!

The MUSIC slows down and the lights dim. Noah and Natalie slow down until Noah looks up and sees that they are-

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - NIGHT

The couple stand atop the BOULDER, inside the INDENT.

NOAH

About the last time we
were...together.

NATALIE

I'm sorry. I don't want you to
think I'm pushing you away, I'm
just afraid of what will happen if
you stay for too long.

NOAH

What do you think will happen?

NATALIE

The dream will collapse and we'll
lose everything you've remembered.

(beat)

What we have, Noah...is against
nature. We've found a way over the
barrier separating life and death
and walk the line where neither can
exist. But it can't last forever.

(beat)

NOAH

What happens at the end?

NATALIE

I don't know. Maybe then we can be
together.

(beat)

Or maybe we'll never see each other
again.

Noah twirls Natalie then brings her back.

NOAH

I love you, Natalie. Even if all
we have are six years of memories
to spend, I'll relive them all.

Noah sees Natalie's eyes water beneath the mask before she rests her head on his shoulder. Noah holds her tight.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Noah and Natalie lie facing one another.

NOAH

Can you tell me about the dark room? You said that's where you wait?

NATALIE

The dark room is a temporary medium between life and death. I'm there because I refused to leave which is why you're there.

(beat)

When you sleep and dream, I can sleep and live for a while through you. When you wake, I wake in the dark room. It's from that room that all this is possible.

NOAH

And the doors?

NATALIE

I don't know. I don't know if they're the way to heaven, hell, or somewhere else. All I know is that in the end, they'll open.

Noah looks over his shoulder and stares at his own door.

NOAH

Is it time to wake up?

NATALIE

Not yet.

The two close their eyes and fall asleep.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Noah wakes up and is shocked to see Natalie sleeping beside him. Her hair is longer than last night. Noah gets dressed and walks to-

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Noah sees that he has a beard again with shorter hair. Noah stares for a moment before washing up and-

EXT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Noah wanders outside and into-

INT. NOAH'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Noah finds an incomplete STATUE in the center of his workshop. The figures of a man and a woman could be made out. Noah smiles as he grabs his TOOLS and begins to work on the STATUE.

Montage of Noah tirelessly working away on the STATUE.

NATALIE (O.S.)

I love watching you work.

Noah turns around to see Natalie in one of his shirts. Noah reveals a completed STATUE of their MASQUERADE dance.

NOAH

Do you remember what happens next.

Natalie smiles as Noah approaches her, his hand closed. He kneels down on one knee and takes Natalie's hand.

NOAH (CONTD)

I tell you that I love you and that
I want to spend the rest of my life
with you.

(places the ring on her
finger)

Do YOU remember what happens next?

Natalie bends down and kisses Noah before he guides her finger through the ring. Noah looks up into her eyes.

NOAH (CONTD)

It's time for me to go isn't it?

Natalie holds Noah's head to her stomach, wrapping her arms around his scalp.

NOAH (CONTD)

The years fly by so fast the second
time around.

Noah tightly shuts his eyes.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Noah slowly opens his eyes. He looks over his shoulder to the empty side of his bed. Noah turns back and gets up.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Noah cooks himself breakfast while the TV blares in the living room. His phone rings. Noah sees Jeremy's number and answers the phone call.

NOAH

Hey Jeremy.

JEREMY

Noah. Haven't heard from you in a
while. What's going on?

NOAH

Just...

Noah rubs his eyes and sighs.

JEREMY

Just what? What have you been up to these past few days?

(long beat)

Well I just wanted to call and check up on you.

NOAH

Thanks.

JEREMY

What the hell is the matter with you, Noah. Do you care about anyone but yourself?!

NOAH

What?

JEREMY

You heard me! All you've been doing for over a month is mope around, feeling sorry for yourself. At what point do you pick yourself up and move on?

(beat)

Natalie's dead! I've played this sympathetic brother bullshit for long enough. I'm tired-

Noah hangs up the phone and slams it on the table. Noah picks up his phone and heads for the door.

NOAH

Fuckin' asshole.

EXT. ADRIAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Noah knocks on the door repeatedly until Adrian finally cracks open the door.

ADRIAN

Noah, what tha fuck-

NOAH

I need some more.

ADRIAN

Dude-

Noah pushes the door open and walks by him into-

INT. ADRIAN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

He sits on the couch. The living room is a mess with beer bottles scattered throughout the apartment.

ADRIAN

(sarcastically)

Won't you come in?

NOAH
I need some more.

ADRIAN
I don't have anymore. I sold the
last of it to Lana last night.

NOAH
Well-
(beat)
What else do you have?

Adrian looks at Noah with a bewildered expression.

ADRIAN
You still owe me for last night.

NOAH
I know. I have the money.

ADRIAN
Um, I've got some pretty good kush-

NOAH
No. Something stronger.

ADRIAN
A buddy of mine brought some
heroin. I'm not sure if it's-

NOAH
It'll work.

Adrian walks down the hall and returns with a small TIN.
Adrian preps a shot as Noah wraps the TOURNIQUETTE around
his arm. Adrian shoots Noah up with the HEROIN.

INT. JEREMY'S CAR - DAY

Jeremy dials Noah's number again but receives no answer.

JEREMY
God damn it, Noah.

He arrives at-

EXT. NOAH'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Jeremy knocks on his front door and waits. He opens the
door and-

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jeremy searches Noah's house.

JEREMY
Noah?! Noah! Listen, I'm sorry
for what I said. Can we talk?

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Jeremy finds Noah's PIPE on the dresser. Jeremy calls Noah's number again but gets no answer. He calls Denise.

JEREMY

Noah's gone. And he's been smoking something other than weed.

DENISE (O.S)

What?! Jeremy, find him!

JEREMY

I will. I'll call you when I do.

INT. JEREMY'S CAR - DAY

Jeremy hangs up, cursing as he dials another number. He drives down the street as he waits for an answer.

ANTHONY (O.S)

Hello?

JEREMY

Anthony. It's Jeremy.

ANTHONY (O.S)

Jeremy! What's up man?

JEREMY

Not much. Is Noah there with you by any chance?

ANTHONY (O.S)

No, he isn't.

JEREMY

Damn. Do you know where he might be? He's not answering my calls.

ANTHONY (O.S)

Uh-

(beat)

Last time I saw him, he was getting a ride home from Adrian last night.

JEREMY

Adrian?

ANTHONY (O.S)

Yup.

JEREMY

Thanks.

ANTHONY (O.S)

No problem.

Jeremy hangs up the phone.

INT. NOAH'S WORKSHOP - DAY

Noah works on a BABY'S CRIB while Natalie paints one of the wooden ornaments. The two look older as Natalie is visibly pregnant. Noah glances up at Natalie as she colors the PHOENIX a bright red.

Noah brushes off his finished work and looks at his REFLECTION in the window. Noah's hair has gotten longer and he is thinner than before. He frowns.

NOAH

I thought the years flew by fast
the second time around.

(beat)

It's just as fast as the first.

Natalie strokes the brush across the PHOENIX before setting it down beside her.

NOAH (CONTD)

I don't want to do this anymore.

NATALIE

What do you mean?

Noah remains silent. Natalie walks over and sits on Noah's thigh. She places his hands on her stomach.

NATALIE

He's kicking. Can you feel it?

He nods as a tear rolls down his cheek.

NATALIE

(wiping the tear)

Don't cry Noah.

CUT TO:

EXT. ADRIAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jeremy pounds on Adrian's door. Adrian cracks open the door before Jeremy bursts through, breaking the chain lock.

ADRIAN

Wha tha fuck?!

JEREMY

Noah!

Jeremy finds Noah laid out across the sofa, eyes half closed. Jeremy sees the PURPLE SPOT on Noah's forearm. Jeremy slaps Noah repeatedly.

JEREMY

Noah! Wake up! Noah!

INT. NOAH'S WORKSHOP - DAY

Noah and Natalie are disrupted by a low rumble from outside the workshop.

NOAH
What's happening?

NATALIE
You're waking up. It's okay.

Natalie kisses Noah goodbye as Noah suddenly falls asleep.

INT. ADRIAN'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

Jeremy lays Noah in the tub and SPRAYS him with cold water. Noah's remains motionless as Jeremy shakes him VIOLENTLY.

JEREMY
NOAH!!! Wake up!

Noah's eyes suddenly SHOOT open.

JEREMY (CONTD)
Are you okay?

Noah tumbles out of the tub as Adrian watches from behind Jeremy. Jeremy turns around and PUNCHES Adrian in the face. Adrian falls to the ground as Jeremy PUMMELS him with his fists. Adrian curls up under the barrage of hits.

JEREMY
If you come near my brother again,
I'll fuckin' kill you!!!

Noah staggers to his feet but tumbles back down. Jeremy turns around and catches Noah as he trips forward.

NOAH
Jeremy...Adrian-

JEREMY
Come on.

Jeremy leads Noah to-

INT. ADRIAN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

NOAH
Wait...Adrian-

JEREMY
No, Noah! Let's go.

Jeremy CARRIES Noah to the front door. Lana and the few others watch as they exit.

INT. JEREMY'S CAR - DAY

Jeremy drives erratically as Noah is laid out across the back seat, soaked and shivering.

NOAH
(groaning)
Natalie.

JEREMY
Is that who all this was for?
Natalie?

NOAH
I...I saw-

JEREMY
I don't wanna hear it right now,
Noah. You're willing to throw your
fuckin' life away and for what?

NOAH
I'm...I-

JEREMY
Shut up.
(long beat)

Jeremy steadies himself and pulls over. He looks over his shoulder at Noah. Jeremy exhales and squeezes next to him.

JEREMY (CONTD)
Listen, I'm not going to let you
fall apart like this.

NOAH
I'm sorry, Jeremy. I...I don't
know...

JEREMY
I'm sorry too, Noah. I never had
to go through-
(beat)
What you had to go through. I can
never understand but I can help you
through it. I love you, Noah.
Denise and the girls love you.
We're still here with you Noah.

NOAH
Thanks...I-

JEREMY
Let's get you home.

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jeremy and Denise sit on the sofa. Jeremy is hunched over his knees, hands holding his chin as Denise rubs his back.

DENISE

So how bad is he?

JEREMY

He said Natalie's name when I dragged him out. It's worse than we thought.

(beat)

We should keep him here for a while. At least until he gets back to work.

DENISE

And the girls? How do we know they'll be safe around him? I love Noah but if it's as bad as you describe, I'm not sure-

JEREMY

I know but trust me, the more he's here and not at home by himself, the better off he'll be.

(long beat)

Look Denise, you and the girls are my first priority so if you don't want him here, I'll take him home.

Before she can answer, Jeremy and Denise hear the DOOR open in the hallway. They see Noah walking towards them. He sits on the couch, still groggy and sick from the drugs.

JEREMY

How are you feeling?

NOAH

Terrible.

(beat)

I'm sorry for-

JEREMY

Don't apologize.

NOAH

Well...I better get home.

DENISE

Wait, Noah.

(beat as Noah sits back down)

Jeremy and I think that you should stay here for a little while.

NOAH

Why?

JEREMY

Do you remember what happened?

NOAH
Bits and pieces.

Jeremy whispers to Denise afterwhich Denise heads for the kitchen. Noah rubs his eyes.

JEREMY
You've gotten worse, Noah. It used to be just booze and weed and we could look the other way but this...It's gonna kill you.

NOAH
Thanks for the concern but I'm fine and I'll be fine.

JEREMY
Listen, I know that I haven't been the best brother in the world ever since Natalie died-

NOAH
I don't need you to-

JEREMY
BUT...when I saw you in that tub, I felt responsible for what happened.
(beat)
I don't know, maybe I didn't listen or didn't try to understand-

Noah stands up. Jeremy follows.

NOAH
Listen Jeremy, you don't need to feel bad for what happened. You didn't do anything wrong. So thanks but I'm gonna go.

Noah walks towards the front door. Denise watches Noah from the kitchen as he reaches the door.

JEREMY
Is this what you want, Noah? For me to end up like you, carrying around that same weight, unable to drop it. Because that's what you're doing.

Noah glares at Jeremy before slamming shut the FRONT DOOR behind himself. Denise follows Noah out to-

EXT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Noah storms across the lawn before Denise catches up to him.

DENISE
Noah! Wait.

Noah ignores Denise and continues forward. Denise YANKS Noah's arm, swinging him around to her.

DENISE (CONTD)

Why do you think this is all about you? Have you even thought about how your actions have affected the rest of us, especially Jeremy? I mean, did it ever occur to you that maybe Jeremy isn't just doing this for you.

(beat)

Jeremy loves you. He wants to be part of your life and wants the same from you. Since the crash, he's been worried sick about you.

Noah glances down at the sidewalk and swallows hard. Denise screutinizes his reaction, detecting the guilt on his face.

DENISE (CONTD)

And today he found you high on heroin...he has no peace of mind. Taking no comfort in knowing that you're out there alone.

(beat)

Listen, I'm not going to make you stay with us but you should think about staying for his sake so that he can finally catch a brake.

A few moments pass before Noah nods in agreement.

NOAH

Can I get a ride home so that I can grab some clothes?

DENISE

Of course.

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY

The family enjoys fast food at the dining table. Noah remains distant and quiet. The tension within the room is noticed even by the kids as they chew their food.

DENISE

Don't slurp your juice, Cecile.

Another long silence follows.

DENISE (CONTD)

So Noah is going to be staying with us for a while.

MAYA

Really?! How long?

NOAH
About a week.

CECILE
Does that mean that we don't have
to go to daycare in the morning.

JEREMY
Well-

NOAH
Nope.

MAYA
Yay! Can you help me with my
soccer?

NOAH
Sure kiddo.

Noah gives Maya a smirk as the family continues eating.

NOAH (CONTD)
So have you guys got everything you
need for school?

JEREMY
We're taking them shopping this
weekend.

NOAH
I'll take them.

DENISE
Noah, you don't have to-

NOAH
I know but I want to. If it's
alright with you guys.

Denise gives Jeremy an apprehensive look. Jeremy gives a
slight nod.

DENISE
Um, sure. Jeremy, you can drop me
off and Noah can take my car?

JEREMY
That works. So then...

The Keller family continues their meal.

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Noah sighs as he rolls around in the bed, cold and
shivering. He looks at the clock in his phone and sees that
it is just after two. He slips out of the room.

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Noah stands motionless in the shower, INHALING the steam before mumbling incoherently. He stares down at the drain, letting the water spray his scalp.

Noah shuts off the shower and dries off. At the mirror, he rubs shaving cream across his face. Noah flips open his SILVER STRAIGHT RAZOR and begins shaving.

INT. STORE - DAY

Noah walks with Maya and Cecile down the school supplies aisle. Noah is dressed in a long-sleeve shirt. He follows the girls with a CART of various school items and clothing.

NOAH

You guys don't need any books?

CECILE

Nope.

MAYA

No.

NOAH

Alright. Well I guess-

CECILE

Look Noah.

(pointing to book)

It's Noah!

Noah looks down at the BOOK entitled "Noah's Ark". The cover has a cartoonish depiction of an old man braving a turbulent ocean, accompanied by a number of zoo animals.

MAYA

What is it about?

NOAH

You don't know?

Noah rolls his eyes as he grabs the book.

NOAH (CONTD)

What are they teaching you in school?

CECILE

Math. So what's it about?

Noah squints crudely at Cecile's remark before dropping the book down into the cart.

NOAH

You'll see.

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - MAYA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Maya crawls into her bed, shuffling herself around beneath the covers until she is comfortable. Noah, accompanying her to her room, places the book on her bedside table. Before he could turn to leave, Maya stops him.

MAYA

So did God drown everyone in the world?

NOAH

(turning back around)

That's what happened. Everyone turned rotten except for Noah and his family so God decided to cut Noah a break.

MAYA

Hmmm.

NOAH

It wasn't that great of a story, was it?

(beat as he sits on a chair)

I remembered the story being a lot...better when I was a kid.

MAYA

Like how?

NOAH

Well when your grandma told me and Jeremy about Noah's Ark, his ark didn't have regular animals like dogs or lions. It held centaurs and gargoyles and-

MAYA

Unicorns?

NOAH

Yeah. She said that his ark is still lost somewhere out at sea with all those griffins and-

MAYA

Pegasus?!

NOAH

You know about Pegasus but not Noah's Ark?

Maya smiles as Noah shakes his head and prepares to leave.

MAYA

Noah?

NOAH

Yeah?

MAYA

Do you think you could build an ark
if God told you that he was gonna
make it rain?

Noah scratches his head.

NOAH

I'd give it a try.
(beat as Noah stretches
upward, out of his seat)
Go to sleep.

MAYA

Noah?

NOAH

(impatiently)

Yes?

MAYA

Are you sick.

Noah looks at Maya with a preplexed expression on his face.

NOAH

Why?

Maya points to the PURPLE SPOT on Noah's forearm. The SPOT
had begun to fade but is still visible. Noah rubs his arm.

NOAH (CONTD)

I used to be.
(beat)
But I'm better now.

MAYA

Was it a shot? I got a shot
before. It hurt. I hate needles.

Noah smiles as he kisses Maya's forehead.

NOAH

Good night.

Noah shuts off the lights and quietly shuts the door.

INT. COFFEE HOUSE - DAY

Noah sits at a table with a cup of coffee and a sketch pad.
He has a very rough drawing of the ARK and the animals along
the RAILINGS. The Coffee House is busy but quiet aside from
the machines behind the front counter. Noah sips his coffee
as a YOUNG WOMAN enters the building.

The WOMAN is a tall, slender woman with her blonde hair tied up. Noah doesn't notice her as she passes him by and orders her coffee. Minutes later she receives her coffee, thanks the employee and, seeing that all the tables are occupied, sits by Noah; he still doesn't notice her.

The WOMAN takes out a book and starts reading, glancing up when she hears Noah's pencil SCRATCH the pad. SHE catches sight of the image forming on the pad.

WOMAN
I like your drawing.

NOAH
(to the pad)
It's just a doodle. Well...

WOMAN
Something more?

Noah darts a look from his pad to the WOMAN then back down to the drawing. He continues SCRIBBLING on the pad.

NOAH
Kinda. An idea that I had to let
out. Well...

WOMAN
Still something more?

The WOMAN tilts her head and leans towards Noah. Noah rotates the pad of paper to show the illustration.

WOMAN
Wow.

NOAH
I know. It's a little rough. I
was thinking of building it in a
tree. It-

WOMAN
A little rough? This is supposed
to go in a tree? And children are
supposed to play in this?

Noah squints scornfully at the WOMAN as she examines his work. He TAPS his fingers on the table as she marks the drawing with his pencil.

NOAH
If you saw the tree, you'd know
that-

WOMAN
You'd be charged with involuntary
manslaughter.

Noah pauses as she continues to examine the sketch.

NOAH

I'm an experienced carpenter so I think I know what stronge trees and lumber can handle.

WOMAN

And I'm a civil engineer, top of my class.

NOAH

A student?

WOMAN

Yeah.

NOAH

So you AREN'T a civil engineer.

A pause as the WOMAN looks at Noah and smiles.

WOMAN

Touche carpenter.

NOAH

So do you have a name or-

WOMAN

Alyssa. A pleasure to meet you.

NOAH

Noah. Wish I could say the same.

ALYSSA

(smiling)

So who's the death trap for?

NOAH

You aren't the shy type are you?

ALYSSA

Not really. I just have a knack for correcting architecture. Oh, and if that was just a clever way of calling me a bitch then message received.

Noah can't help but smile at Alyssa's confidence and demeanor. Her attitude, much like her posture, is so upright that Noah appears somewhat overwhelmed.

NOAH

So is that what you do? Go around and ruin people's days? Tell kids they're adopted? That kind of stuff?

ALYSSA

Too far.

(MORE)

ALYSSA (cont'd)

(beat)

You looked like you could take some blunt, constructive criticism but APARENTLY-

NOAH

Aparently, you're wrong in assuming that the bow of the ark is too heavy.

ALYSSA

What?

Noah spins around the pad and SCRATCHES out the mark she made, shaking his head.

NOAH

It's a strong tree. The front of the ark will be suspended but the stern will not. The heavy bow of the ark where a majority of the animals are will be counterbalanced by the beams and the support branches of the tree.

(beat)

Top of your class?

Alyssa glares at Noah before smiling.

ALYSSA

Like I said, involuntary manslaughter.

NOAH

Well it's still just a doodle so no one's in danger yet.

They both take a drink of their coffee.

ALYSSA (CONTD)

So who is the tree house for?

NOAH

My nieces. I read them the story and they seemed to love it so I thought that I could build them their own ark.

ALYSSA

Just in case?

NOAH

(smiling)

Just in case.

A pause follows as the Noah adds to the sketch.

ALYSSA

Cliche line but...do you come here often?

NOAH

My first time actually.

ALYSSA

Really? I've lived here for five years and have been to almost every coffee shop except this one.

NOAH

I've been here twenty-seven years and this is the third coffee shop I've been to.

ALYSSA

What happened to the other two?

NOAH

The first one was turned into a burger joint and the second was shut down for health code violations.

ALYSSA

Wow.

NOAH

It's strange...their coffee was always really good. I guess their secret ingredient shoulda remained a secret.

Alyssa smirks before taking a sip.

NOAH (CONTD)

So five years, huh? Where were you before then?

ALYSSA

Denver. I needed a change of scene so went from cold and snowy to cold and rainy.

NOAH

Makes sense.

(sips coffee)

Six years. Does that mean you're in your...final year?

ALYSSA

Yup. Five years of exams and studying all coming to a head.

NOAH

Wow. Congrats. So are you into any sports or-

ALYSSA

Gymnastics, believe it or not.
I've been doing it since I was
seven.

NOAH

That's cool. Some of those
routines look really scary.

ALYSSA

It's one of those things that looks
waaayyy scarier than it really is.
(beat as she sips coffee)
So do you specialize in tree houses
or-

NOAH

Free standing houses mostly. I'm
on vacation right now so I thought
starting a little side project
would be cool.

ALYSSA

Well if the great flood comes, I'll
know who to call.

NOAH

Yeah, I think we can squeeze you in
with the hippos and elephants.

ALYSSA

I'd prefer the giraffes.

Alyssa grabs the SKETCH and scribbles more numbers on the
drawing. She slides the pad back to Noah

ALYSSA (CONTD)

Well it was nice talking with you.

NOAH

You too.

Alyssa smiles as she leaves the table and exits the cafe.
Noah smirks as he continues his sketch. Upon resuming his
sketch, he sees a message near the base of the ark which
reads, "342-8891 (girl staying with the giraffes.)"

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The Keller family plays Uno on the living room floor. Noah
grins as he twirls a card down on the stack.

NOAH

Kaboom.

CECILE

(putting down a card)

Uno!

MAYA

So who is "the girl staying with the giraffes?"

NOAH

What?

MAYA

It was on the sketch I found. Are you building the ark?!

JEREMY

What ark? And who's this girl?

NOAH

The ark is just a drawing I did for fun. And the girl is someone I met at the coffee shop.

DENISE

(comically)

Your GIRLFRIEND?!

Maya and Cecile snicker. Noah raises his eyebrow.

NOAH

If she plays her cards right.
Speaking of playing cards right.
(beat as he throws down a card)

Uno.

JEREMY

So what's she like? Funny?
Blonde?

NOAH

She's funny.
(beat)
And blonde.
(beat)
And a gymnast.

Jeremy coughs on his drink. Denise gives him a stern look.

JEREMY

Wow. A gymnast.
(clearing his throat)
Your turn babe.

Denise leans forward to play her card. Jeremy leans behind her, facing Noah. Noah looks at Jeremy's childish face as he nods comically with two thumbs up. Noah shakes his head.

JEREMY (CONTD)

That's very interesting. So does that mean she goes to school?

NOAH
Yup. Civil engineering...geek.

DENISE
He means that in a good way.

NOAH
Oh, sorry.
(to Maya and Cecile)
Geeks are great. They draw up
ideas for buildings while dumb
people like me build them.

CECILE
Are you gonna go back to school
ever?

NOAH
Someday hopefully. Maybe all three
of us can go to college together.

CECILE
You're gonna be old!

NOAH
I know. Really old.

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Noah lies in bed, a slight smile on his face. A BREEZE
creeps into his room, sending a SHIVER up his spine. Noah
SHUTS the window before laying back down and falling asleep.

INT. COFFEE HOUSE - DAY

Noah orders a cup of tea. He glances across the coffee shop
as he waits. The clerk hands him the tea. Noah sits at a
small table near the window.

Moments later Alyssa walks in carrying a heavy shoulder bag.
She orders her coffee and turns to see Noah sitting near the
window, reading a BOOK. Alyssa approaches Noah.

ALYSSA
Hi.

NOAH
Hello.

ALYSSA
So uh...I didn't mean to come off
as a creeper yesterday. It's just
rare to find someone sketching an
ARK. I had to find out.

NOAH
(smiling)
Were you disappointed?

ALYSSA

I gave you my number, didn't I?

Noah smiles. Alyssa sits down at the table.

NOAH

Do you often leave your number on the sketches you critique?

ALYSSA

It depends.

NOAH

On what?

ALYSSA

How good the work is.

NOAH

So I guess I did pretty good in spite of all the marks.

ALYSSA

F plus on design, A plus for creativity. That averages out to about a C plus which I curved to a B minus because I'm nice.

NOAH

An F plus? That's a first.

The clerk calls out Alyssa's order. She gets up and gets her cup of coffee while Noah takes a sip of his tea. Alyssa sits back down as the two resume their conversation.

NOAH (CONTD)

So has school started?

ALYSSA

Not for another two weeks. Just trying to get back into the habit of being caffeine fueled.

NOAH

Falling back into relapse?

ALYSSA

Every year. Hopefully this is the last but who knows.

(beat)

I don't mean to be forward again but-

NOAH

So do you have anything planned after that cup of coffee?

Alyssa tilts her head and smirks.

ALYSSA
No plans.

NOAH
Well-

WOMAN (O.S.)
Alyssa!

A woman of Alyssa's age walks towards the table. She's asian with short, straight black hair and a lean physique similar to Alyssa's.

ALYSSA
Hi Vanessa. How was home.

VANESSA
Fuckin' boring. That place keeps reminding me why I moved away.
(to Noah)
Who's your friend?

ALYSSA
Oh, this is Noah.

NOAH
Hello Vanessa, nice to meet you.

Noah stands and extends his hand. Vanessa shakes his hand. As Noah sits, Vanessa darts a look over at Alyssa.

VANESSA
Nice to meet you.

As Noah sits, Vanessa sizes him up. She darts a look over toward Alyssa, smiling as she raises her eyebrows.

VANESSA (CONTD.)
(to Alyssa)
So I just got back and Carl is having a barbeque at his house this afternoon. We should catch up.

ALYSSA
Um...

NOAH
Well I better get going. It was nice meeting you Vanessa. Alyssa, always a pleasure running into you.

Noah grabs cup and heads for the door. Alyssa follows him with her eyes. Vanessa sighs.

VANESSA
Do I NEED to say anything here?

EXT. COFFEE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Noah starts down the sidewalk before Alyssa stops him.

ALYSSA

Hey. So I still don't have anything planned.

Alyssa throws the cup in the nearby trash can.

NOAH

Aren't you going to Carl's barbeque to catch up? I mean, it's fine-

ALYSSA

I hate Carl and Vanessa never shuts the hell up. I'll be eternally grateful if you saved me from that mess.

NOAH

Wow. So do you know ANYONE you would consider a friend?

ALYSSA

Yeah. Carl and Vanessa.

Noah laughs and throws his half-filled cup of tea away.

NOAH

I can't wait to hear what you think of me.

ALYSSA

Neither can I. So what did you want to do?

NOAH

Uh...movie?

ALYSSA

I like it.

NOAH

The thing is, I walked here so-

ALYSSA

No problem. Let's go.

Noah follows Alyssa to-

EXT. COFFEE HOUSE - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Alyssa drives a blue, late 90's sedan. They both climb in-

INT. ALYSSA'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Alyssa turns the key to the ignition and starts up the car. The RADIO blares from the speakers as she puts the car into

reverse. Noah grins.

ALYSSA

What?

NOAH

Nothing. Just thought I was the only one in town who loves WHAM.

ALYSSA

Yeah, well THINK AGAIN!

Alyssa tunes the radio. The radio lands on Drake as she pulls out of the parking lot.

NOAH

Now I can't be the only one-

ALYSSA

No. Just the only one in the car.

She slides in a CD and a blare of guitars and drums explode from the speakers.

ALYSSA (CONTD)

I'm not the only one right?

NOAH

What? About the Foo Fighters?

Yeah, you are.

Alyssa grimaces until Noah turns up the volume.

INT. MOVIE THEATRE - DAY

Noah and Alyssa watch a terrible vampire romance movie. The theatre is completely EMPTY except for the pair.

ALYSSA

I don't get how she's in love with him after just looking at him.

NOAH

It's the power of lust. It's way better than the Notebook.

ALYSSA

You didn't like the Notebook?

NOAH

No. My idea of love seems to be a little different from typical love stories.

ALYSSA

So what's your definition?

NOAH

The couple from Everybody Loves Raymond.

ALYSSA

Ray and Debra?

NOAH

No. The grandparents. Frank and Marie?

ALYSSA

Really?!

NOAH

Yeah. It's easy to find someone you like, harder to find someone you really like. But to find someone you can constantly argue with and humiliate yet still end up in the same bed-

(beat as Noah sips his
soda and winks)

That's love.

ALYSSA

That does make a lot of sense. You ever had that kind of relationship before? Heckling one another until the tension was too much, then tackling them onto the bed?

Noah turns back to the screen. Alyssa's phone vibrates. She flips it open and reads the text message.

ALYSSA (CONTD)

(sighing)

Fuckin' Carl.

NOAH

The barbeque?

ALYSSA

Yeah. It looks like Vanessa has already started spreading the news.

Alyssa hands the phone over to Noah. Noah sees a picture of an eye with a white teardrop. Beneath the image, written in bubble text is the phrase, "Swallow or it's going in your eye." Along with the picture, Carl texted, "Only if u love em, lol. Y dont u bring him round? We love to meet him."

NOAH

So he's THAT guy. Every group has one.

ALYSSA

Tip of the iceberg. Carl is always sending me nasty shit like that. He sent the pic a few weeks ago of some woman with the pez dispenser in her vag. Luckily I grabbed my phone before my mom did.

Noah chuckles as he takes a sip of his soda.

ALYSSA (CONTD)

Vanessa is the same way. I'll spare you the details but take my word for it...she's a skank.

NOAH

Duly noted, but no need to spare.

Alyssa gives Noah a disgusted look. She tosses a handful of candy into her mouth. Noah shrugs as they watch the couple on screen confess their love to one another and have sex.

ALYSSA

And...statutory rape.

INT. ALYSSA'S CAR - NIGHT

Alyssa and Noah drive down the street. The RADIO is tuned to soft indie music as they enjoy the ride.

ALYSSA

So where do you live?

NOAH

Um-

ALYSSA

Did you forget?

NOAH

No. 1634 North Hellens street.
Sorry, I'm staying with my brother for a while.

ALYSSA

You don't have a place of your own.

NOAH

I do. There are just some
(beat)
Complications with my house-

ALYSSA

Fumigation? Renovation?

NOAH

No.

ALYSSA

Haunted?

NOAH

No. I'm just spending the remainder of my vacation at my brother's house.

ALYSSA

Oh. Well that's cool.

Minutes later, Noah and Alyssa stop outside Jeremy's house.

ALYSSA (CONTD)

Well this was fun.

NOAH

Yeah, it was. Tell Vanessa I'm sorry for stealing her teammate away for the day.

ALYSSA

Teammate?

NOAH

I assumed that she was a fellow gymnast.

ALYSSA

How'd you figure?

NOAH

Lucky guess.

ALYSSA

It was her ass wasn't it?

Noah scratches his head. Alyssa smirks.

ALYSSA (CONTD)

Well, she'll get over it.

NOAH

So I'll give you a call later.

ALYSSA

And I'll answer. I don't have yours so send me a text soon.

Noah exits the vehicle.

ALYSSA (CONTD)

I think you're funny and creative.

Noah leans through the window.

NOAH

Liar.

ALYSSA

Never. What about me?

Noah pulls out his phone and PUNCHES the keys. Alyssa's phone vibrates. She pulls out her phone and reads the text.

ALYSSA

"You're bearable."

Alyssa shoots a scornful look at Noah as he smirks. She smiles and flips him off as she drives away. Noah grins all the way to the front door.

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jeremy is settled on the living room sofa, enjoying Saturday morning cartoons with Maya and Cecile who sit on the floor. Jeremy and the girls are still in their pajamas, hair a mess. The door bell rings and Jeremy gets up to answer.

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Jeremy opens the door to Noah.

NOAH

Thought I'd surprise you at home
for once.

(examines Jeremy)

Guess I picked the wrong day.

JEREMY

Shut up.

Jeremy turns and Noah follows him back into-

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The brothers settle on the couch. Maya and Denise are unphased by Noah's arrival.

JEREMY

So how was the concert last night?

NOAH

It was fun. People lost it when
Explosions in the Sky took the
stage.

JEREMY

Nice. So how's Alyssa doing? And
when do we get to meet her?

NOAH

She's doin' alright. Last weekend
before school starts up for her.
That's actually one of the reasons
I came by. We're going to a club
tonight and wondered if you and
Denise wanted to go.

DENISE (O.S)

Where are we going?

Denise walks into the living room, appearance just as disheveled as Noah and Jeremy.

JEREMY

We're goin' clubbin', babe. And we finally get to meet Noah's gymnast.

DENISE

Oooo, we finally get to meet the gymnast slash engineer you've been hiding from us.

NOAH

Yes. I've come by to extend the invitation and to say hi to my nieces but they seem-
(louder towards the girls)
too be busy so I'll leave them a note!

The girls pry themselves away and hug Noah.

JEREMY

We can make it, right babe?

DENISE

I suppose so.

INT. DANCE CLUB - NIGHT

The club is POUNDING as Noah, Jeremy and Denise make their way through the crowd in search for Alyssa. Jeremy and Denise seem a little overwhelmed by the intense atmosphere.

Alyssa is by the bar with Vanessa, a tall, blonde man and thin WOMAN. Alyssa is dressed in a tight, electric blue dress. She spots him in the crowd and waves.

ALYSSA

Noah!

Alyssa walks over to Noah and gives him a kiss.

NOAH

Alyssa, this is my brother Jeremy and his wife Denise.

JEREMY

Hello.

DENISE

Hi.

ALYSSA

Nice to meet you guys.

Alyssa brings them back to her friends at the bar.

ALYSSA (CONTD)
Guys, this is Noah, Jeremy and Denise. And this is Vanessa, Carl and Michelle.

The group shake hands and introduce themselves.

CARL
So glad to finally meet you, man. Alyssa won't shut up about you.

NOAH
Yeah, well I'm sure these two-
(pointing at Jeremy and Denise)
Would say the same about her.

Carl gives Noah a stern look before gulping down the remainder of his drink and ordering another.

MICHELLE
So what do you do, Noah?

NOAH
I'm a carpenter.

CARL
Like Jesus?

Carl TEETERS a bit as he cracks a smile.

NOAH
Kinda. Except for the savior part.

CARL
I figured. Play any sports, Noah?

NOAH
Not since high school.

CARL
Too bad. You're a big boy, I'm sure MY team coulda used a guy like you. You know, for practice. Second string...maybe third.

NOAH
Didn't play football. Played soccer actually.

Carl smirks mockingly, taking a drink from his mug.

ALYSSA
So-

CARL

Soccer! That's uh...cool. Our
WOMEN'S team is pretty good.

(to Michelle)

And I love those cute short shorts
you ladies wear.

(takes a drink and turns
back to Noah)

So not into contact sports, are ya
Noah?

NOAH

No, not really into man-on-man act-

(fake cough)

excuse me, contact sports like you
are, I guess. Now those tight
spandex you guys wear-

(to Michelle)

I'm sure they make the women's
soccer team jealous. For minimum
restriction and resistance, right?

Alyssa senses the dislike from Carl and grabs Noah's hand.

ALYSSA

Let's dance, Noah.

INT. DANCE CLUB - DANCE FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Noah and Alyssa SHAKE their hips with the beat. At the bar,
Michelle and Vanessa chat with Jeremy and Denise as Carl
glares at Noah and Alyssa.

INT. ALYSSA'S CAR - NIGHT

Alyssa and Noah cruise down the street. Noah can't help but
stare at Alyssa through most of the trip.

ALYSSA

You broke it down, tonight!

NOAH

Oh go on.

ALYSSA

I'm serious, babe. You were
sizz-el-ing! Like Patrick Swayze.

NOAH

That's how I live. Dancin' dirty.

(beat)

So Carl.

ALYSSA

Sorry about him, he's a fuckin'
asshole. It was Vanessa who
invited him by the way, not me.

NOAH
So what's his deal?

ALYSSA
He asked me out two years ago but I
told him no and we've stayed
friends since then. I mean he
acted okay around the other losers
I dated but I guess he feels a
little threatened by you.
(beat)
So horror flick at your house?

A pause as Noah turns toward the window.

NOAH
Um-

ALYSSA
Or...not.

NOAH
Horror flick, my house, let's go.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Noah unlocks the door and the two enter his home. Noah
places the movie into the player and turns on the TV.

Alyssa settles into the couch, analyzing the home as she
waits. The COLDNESS of the room gives her chills.

NOAH
I don't have the heat on but I can
get you a blanket or something.

ALYSSA
That would be great.

Noah leaves the living room and-

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Noah searches the closet. He spots the THIN, GREEN BLANKET
from the top shelf. Noah reaches for it then STOPS. He
SHIVERS for a moment.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alyssa waits patiently as Noah returns with a brown blanket.

NOAH
Here you go.

He throws the blanket over Alyssa's legs and torso.

ALYSSA
Thanks.

Noah starts the movie then sits by Alyssa. She lifts the blanket over him and rests her legs on his lap.

LATER

A SCREAM jolts Alyssa. She laughs and adjust her legs across Noah. Noah cradles her with his arm.

ALYSSA

That scared the shit outta me.

NOAH

I swear, people have to learn how to open doors. It'll save your life one day.

ALYSSA

And start cars.

Alyssa chuckles as they watch the movie. Noah guides her hand holding the box of candy to his mouth and shakes a few pieces out. The box blocks Alyssa's vision.

ALYSSA

I can't see!

The movie's MUSIC SCORE increases it's tempo. Noah shields her eyes with his other hand.

NOAH

Trust me, you don't wanna see.

ALYSSA

Move!

Alyssa wrestles to free herself. SCREAMS and the sound of a REVVING CHAINSAW fill the room.

NOAH

Don't look! Oh God it's awful!

ALYSSA

You're such a dick!

The movie ends and the credits begin to roll.

NOAH

Wow. That was brutal.

Alyssa SMACKS Noah on the chest. The tussle again. Noah pins Alyssa down on the sofa. They smile before kissing.

The passion moves from the living room to-

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Noah and Natalie undress one another and have sex.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Noah wakes up and sees Alyssa still asleep. He stretches and gets out of bed.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Noah searches the cabinets for food but the cabinets are empty with the exception of a few expired items.

NOAH

Crap.

Noah calls Jeremy. After a few rings, Jeremy answers.

JEREMY (O.S.)

Hey!

NOAH

Good morning. What are you guys doing for breakfast?

JEREMY (O.S.)

I don't know. Denise and the kids are still asleep.

NOAH

You were too, huh.

JEREMY (O.S.)

No, no-

Jeremy yawns into the phone. Noah shakes his head.

NOAH

You wanna go out for breakfast? My treat?

JEREMY (O.S.)

How VERY thoughtful of you!

(beat)

Yeah, I'll pass the message. So what happened with you and Alyssa? I know she gave you a ride last night so-

(beat)

Did you give HER a ride?!

NOAH

(smiling)

Alyssa and I will meet you at Bernie's in an hour.

JEREMY

My baby brother! Just look at you go! Ha ha, see ya then.

Noah hangs up the phone without answering him. Alyssa walks into the kitchen dressed in Noah's button-up shirt.

ALYSSA

No food?

NOAH

No food. We're all going out for breakfast in an hour.

ALYSSA

"We're all?"

NOAH

Me, you, Jeremy, Denise, and my two nieces.

ALYSSA

Yeah, that sounds great. Gotta do some facial reconstruction first.

Alyssa hovers her hand over her face in a circular motion.

NOAH

Stop it. Well I'm gonna hit the showers and-

ALYSSA

Just you?

A pause before the two scurry down the hall.

INT. DINER - DAY

Jeremy, Denise and the kids sit at the table. Maya and Cecile work away on the coloring sheets as Noah and Alyssa arrive. Jeremy and Denise greet the couple as they sit.

DENISE

Alyssa, that's Maya and Cecile. Girls, this is Alyssa.

JEREMY

(to Maya and Cecile)
...the gymnast.

ALYSSA

Hi Maya and Cecile.

MAYA AND CECILE

Hi Alyssa.

ALYSSA

So Noah told me about the ark.

Maya's drops her crayons down and looks at Alyssa.

MAYA

Noah said he was gonna build an ark but he hasn't started yet.

ALYSSA

No?

(to Noah)

What's going on, Noah?

NOAH

Well Alyssa, I'm working really hard on it and I have no doubt that it will be finished soon.

The family enjoys their breakfast and talk about the ark.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

SUPER: FOUR MONTHS LATER

Noah wakes up and stretches. He quietly gets dressed for work and-

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Noah washes up and-

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Noah prepares a pot of coffee as makes himself a bowl of hot cereal. Noah SHIVERS as he eats. FROST lightly coats the windows and ground outside. Alyssa joins him.

NOAH

I can never keep from waking you up, can I?

ALYSSA

Never. I can sense your departure.

Alyssa kisses Noah and pours a cup of coffee.

NOAH

So...the last official day of the semester?

ALYSSA

Yup! Two exams and it's finished, thank God! By the way-
(beat as she sips coffee)
I called my parents and told them we aren't visiting them this Christmas.

NOAH

What? What happened?

ALYSSA

I figured since we already spent Thanksgiving in Denver with my parents, we'd spend Christmas and New Years here with your family.

NOAH
How'd they take the news?

ALYSSA
They said you ruined their
Christmas.

Noah bobs his head and frowns.

ALYSSA
Awww! I was just kidding! They're
fine with it.

Noah smirks and looks around at the bland house.

NOAH
Well if we're staying here you
might wanna brighten up this place
and make it more...Christmas-y.

Alyssa examines the house.

ALYSSA
You're right. It's like the Grinch
robbed this place.

NOAH
Yeah. Well good luck today, babe.

Noah gives her another kiss before he leaves the house.

EXT. NOAH'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Alyssa arrives at the house. She carries a box of lights and decorations. The outside of the house is lined with lights though hardly as much as the surrounding homes.

Alyssa shuts the door and carries the box of ornaments to the door. She unlocks the door and proceeds into-

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alyssa walks in with a box and DECORATES the living. She glances at the room but appears dissatisfied.

INT. NOAH'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Alyssa looks around the workshop. She UNCOVERS a few UNFINISHED WORKS and covers them. She then UNCOVERS the DANCING DEER STATUE. She looks at it and marvels.

ALYSSA
Wow, Noah.

EXT. NOAH'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Noah returns home late, dropped off by a coworker. He waves him off as he walks through the thin layer of snow to the front door. The STORM begins to pick up as he enters-

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Noah finds Alyssa watching TV in the brightly lit living room. Red and green glow from the CHRISTMAS TREE, reflected off the SHINY ornaments. Noah hangs his coat on the rack.

NOAH
Wow. Nice job, hun.

ALYSSA
It's a christmas miracle!

NOAH
You must have done pretty well on those exams.

ALYSSA
Aced 'em for sure.

Noah peers around at the decoration then his face drops.

NOAH
(toward statue)
What is that doing inside?

ALYSSA
What?

NOAH
That.

Noah points at the STATUE. The STATUE is wrapped in christmas lights, extending off the horns of the buck.

ALYSSA
I know you don't want anybody in your shop but I needed something to pull the room together.
(looking at statue)
I love this statue, Noah. I can't believe you actually made it.

NOAH
I don't want it in the house.

Alyssa is startled by Noah's reaction. He walks to the STATUE, unwinding the christmas lights.

ALYSSA
Wait.

Alyssa walks to Noah, steadying his hands.

ALYSSA (CONTD)
Is that one of...Natalie's statues?

Noah turns to her and nods. Alyssa hugs him.

ALYSSA

I thought you got rid of most of those statues?

NOAH

I did. It's just-
(beat)
I couldn't throw this one out.

ALYSSA

I'm sorry.

NOAH

It's not your fault. You didn't know.

Alyssa frowns. Noah smiles and rubs her cheek with his thumb. He hoists the STATUE up against his chest.

NOAH

(grunting)
Get the door.

Alyssa maneuvers around Noah and opens the door. Noah carries the STATUE to-

EXT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Noah hobbles across the deck with the STATUE. Alyssa closes the door behind her and helps Noah.

NOAH (CONTD)

It's really cold, babe, go back in the house. I've got it.

ALYSSA

Are you sure?

NOAH

Yeah.

Alyssa walks back up the deck and enters the house while Noah carries the STATUE back into-

INT. NOAH'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Noah sets the STATUE down in corner. He suddenly clenches his head in agony as a powerful GUST OF WIND sweeps through the workshop, slamming the door against the wall.

Noah recovers, throws the TARP over the STATUE and leaves.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Noah and Alyssa lie in bed, Alyssa resting her head on his shoulder. The STORM blows furiously outside their window. Noah wraps his arm around Alyssa's back, rubbing her shoulder with his thumb.

ALYSSA
Tell me about her.

Noah remains silent.

ALYSSA (CONTD)
I know it's a sensitive area but I
would really like to know more
about her. Was she the artistic
type like you?

Alyssa waits patiently, caressing Noah's chest. Noah
breathes deeply.

NOAH
She was a shy girl, a year older
than me with long, brown hair and
hazel eyes. She was so quiet
around everyon...except me.
(beat)
We dated for a year before we moved
in together. For four years we we
played husband and wife before I
finally woke up and realized that I
loved her too much to wait any
longer and proposed.

Long pause.

ALYSSA
What happened then?

NOAH
We were married for a year when-

Noah's thumb stops.

NOAH (CONTD)
I'm tired. Can we go to sleep?

Alyssa kisses him. Noah turns away and shuts his eyes.

INT. DARK BEDROOM - NIGHT

Noah rolls around in the bed, unable to sleep.

NATALIE (O.S.)
Can't sleep?

Noah's eyes open. He rolls over on his side and faces a
pregnant Natalie facing him. Noah sees the SILVER MOON much
LOWER on the horizon.

NATALIE (CONTD)
I've missed you.

Noah looks toward the doors.

NATALIE (CONTD)
You've been with her.

NOAH
I-

NATALIE
It's okay, I'm not mad. Just sad.

NOAH
Sad?

NATALIE
You're moving on, Noah. Moving on
with someone new and we're-
(gently rubbing belly)
Left here.

NOAH
You aren't real, Natalie. You're
dead-
(emotional beat)
And so is our son.

NATALIE
No he isn't, Noah. He's right
here.

Natalie guides Noah's hand down to her stomach. Noah FEELS
a kick. Noah begins to cry.

NATALIE (CONTD)
We aren't gone, Noah. I love you.

NOAH
I can't. I can't.

NATALIE
Come back.

Noah's eyelids close and he suddenly falls asleep. Natalie
holds his head and strokes his hair.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Noah JOLTS awake and sits up in the bed, waking Alyssa. He
looks over at her before clenching his head.

ALYSSA
What's wrong?

Noah breathes heavily before stepping out of bed and into-

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Noah wets his face and stares down into the DRAIN. Noah
SLAMS his fists against the counter and CRANKS his head up
to see himself in the mirror.

NOAH
 (whispering)
 She isn't real. She isn't real.
 (sobbing)
 She isn't real. She isn't real.
 (teeth clenched)
 She isn't real.

Noah wipes his face and reenters-

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Noah gets back into bed and tries to sleep. Alyssa looks puzzled by Noah and wraps her arm around Noah's body.

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Maya and Cecile TEAR open their PRESENTS. Everyone is all smiles except for Noah who is quiet and distant.

Jeremy takes notice in Noah's changed attitude as Noah leaves for the restroom.

JEREMY
 Hey Alyssa, can I talk to you
 outside for a minute?

ALYSSA
 Sure Jeremy.

The two leave the living room while the girls play with their new gifts.

EXT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

The two stand in the backyard, near the BIG TREE. The TREE is surrounded by "TOP SECRET" signs and covered from base to upper branches in tarps.

JEREMY
 Is everything alright with you and
 Noah.

ALYSSA
 Honestly, no. Things haven't been
 going so well lately.

JEREMY
 Is it work? School?

ALYSSA
 I don't know. Things started about
 a week ago when he saw this statue-

JEREMY
 What statue?

ALYSSA
 The one of the dancing deer.

Pause.

JEREMY

And then what?

ALYSSA

I asked him about Natalie. I wanted to know more about her. The way he talked about her...the sound of his voice. It's making me worried.

JEREMY

How much has he told you about her?

ALYSSA

Not too much. A little over the months and then last night.

JEREMY

Listen. You have to keep this between us.

Jeremy looks back at the house and then continues.

JEREMY (CONTD)

After the accident, Noah was a wreck. He drank a lot, smoked a lot and tortured himself with their old videos.

(beat)

One day he got loaded at a bar and drove off a bridge, almost drowning.

ALYSSA

Oh my God.

JEREMY

They wrote it off as a DUI but I think that he was fit to drive.

ALYSSA

Are you saying he tried to kill himself?

Jeremy stares down at the ground.

JEREMY

He told me he didn't but I could tell he was lying. But then he talked about how he saw her.

ALYSSA

Natalie?

Jeremy nods. Alyssa covers her mouth.

JEREMY

After he was released, he started smoking some really heavy shit. He told me that Natalie wasn't dead, that she was still alive in him.

(beat)

Then about a week before meeting you, I found him at his friends house, nearly overdosed.

(beat)

He shot up some heroin so I dragged him out of there and back here. He cleaned up and then met you.

Alyssa looks back at the house, worried.

JEREMY (CONTD)

I'm trusting you with this, Alyssa. You have helped him through a really rough time in his life but by the sounds of it, it might be starting up again. Please don't give up on him.

Alyssa looks at Jeremy intently.

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Noah dials a number and waits for a response. He looks out the window and sees Alyssa and Jeremy talking.

INT. BEATRICE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Beatrice watches her son HENRY(6) unwrap his presents with her husband Max. Her phone RINGS and she answers it.

NOAH (O.S.)

Beatrice?

BEATRICE

Oh, hi Noah. Merry Christmas.

Max looks over at Beatrice.

NOAH (O.S.)

Merry Christmas. How are you?

BEATRICE

I'm doing fine. Max and Henry are trying to figure out this toy. It's really entertaining. You want to talk to Max?

NOAH (O.S.)

No, um. Listen, I need your help.

BEATRICE

Help? With what?

Noah exhales heavily into the phone.

NOAH (O.S.)
It's Natalie.

A pause. Beatrice leaves the room and enters-

INT. BEATRICE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

NOAH (CONTD O.S.)
Beatrice?

BEATRICE
What do you mean it's Natalie. I thought it was over?

NOAH (O.S.)
I thought so too but now it's happening again. I keep seeing her in my dreams and it won't stop.

BEATRICE
Listen Noah, they're just your-

NOAH
I don't need some over-the-phone psychiatry! I'm sorry but I really do need your help, Beatrice. Can you make it?

BEATRICE (O.S.)
I'm not sure, Noah.

NOAH
I really need your help, Beatrice.

BEATRICE (O.S.)
(beat)
I'll see if I can make it up there this weekend. No promises.

NOAH
Thank you.

Beatrice hangs up as Noah flips his phone closed. Noah sighs heavily and exits the bathroom to-

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Noah sees Alyssa sitting with Jeremy and Denise, all of whom look at Noah with worry. He proceeds cautiously to the sofa and sits on the sofa by Alyssa.

JEREMY
Hey girls, why don't you take your toys outside.

The girls head for the backyard. All three turn to Noah.

NOAH
 I'm gonna take a walk.
 (to Alyssa)
 I'll be back in a bit.

Alyssa nods. Noah stares at her for a moment then grabs his coat. Jeremy and Denise look over at Alyssa as she stands.

EXT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Noah cuts across the lawn. He hears the door open then shut shut behind him. Alyssa grabs ahold of his arm.

ALYSSA
 You know, you still haven't given
 me my present.

NOAH
 You'll have to wait 'til tonight.

ALYSSA
 I like where this is headed. I
 think I got you the same thing as a
 matter of fact.

The couple strolls down the sidewalk, fingers interlocking.

NOAH
 I called an old friend. I think
 she can help with all this.

ALYSSA
 All of what?

Noah stares at her. Alyssa looks down at the sidewalk.

NOAH
 She's a therapist.
 (beat)
 I'm really sorry for all of this.
 I shouldn't have-

ALYSSA
 All I want is for you to be all
 right, Noah. I care about you a
 lot and I won't leave you now.

Noah kisses Alyssa before they continue down the street.

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The Keller family sit on the sofa once again, without the girls around. Noah leans forward, toward Jeremy.

NOAH
 So that's the plan. I called
 Beatrice this morning and hopefully
 she'll be here this weekend.

Jeremy rubs his beard, unsure of Noah's approach.

JEREMY

What if it gets worse?

NOAH

It's better than sitting around.
And I can't just stop thinking
about her.

Alyssa turns away. Denise rubs her back.

NOAH (CONTD)

Okay. Were gonna get going.

The couple stands up, says their good-byes and departs the house. Denise turns toward Jeremy.

DENISE

I don't like this, Jeremy. What if
he does end up like before?

JEREMY

He's got Alyssa. She really cares
about him and that's exactly what
he needs right now.

INT. ALYSSA'S CAR - DAY

Alyssa and Noah drive home in silence. Alyssa focuses entirely on the road. Noah plays with his coat button.

NOAH

I can't help but feel sorry for all
this. I wish I could just...

ALYSSA

Don't apologise, Noah. You have
nothing to apologise for.

The car falls back into silence. Noah stares at Alyssa as her eyes water. Noah reads her face

NOAH

How much did Jeremy tell you?

ALYSSA

Tell me about what?

Noah looks out the passenger window. Alyssa glares at him then darts back to the road. She quickly wipes her eyes.

NOAH

I'm not going to blame you.

ALYSSA

Blame me for what, Noah? What are
you talking about?

NOAH

For leaving.

ALYSSA

What?! I'm not going to fuckin'
leave you so can we just drop this
shit?! Jesus Christ!

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

The couple lies in bed, quiet but neither is asleep. Noah
stares off into the DARKNESS of the doorway. Alyssa rolls
over to face Noah.

ALYSSA

I'm sorry about earlier in the car.
I shouldn't have yelled at you.

NOAH

It's fine. I know this is a lot to
handle. The drugs, the-

ALYSSA

It isn't that.

Alyssa breathes deeply and pulls herself up to Noah

ALYSSA (CONTD)

I'm afraid that you will always
love her more than you could ever
love me.

NOAH

You're real, she isn't.

ALYSSA

Is that all? You love me more than
her because I'm alive and she
isn't?

Noah holds Alyssa tight against his chest.

NOAH

After Natalie died, I hated myself.
I was responsible for her death in
spite of what everyone around me
believed and said.

(beat)

When I first saw her at the bottom
of that river, it was the first
time that the guilt and hate was
lifted off me and I could finally
breathe. I couldn't stop after
that. I had to keep Natalie with
me for as long as I possibly could
because when I wasn't with her, I
was drowning again, being crushed
by the weight of an entire ocean.

Noah squeezes Alyssa tighter.

NOAH (CONTD)

With Natalie or her illusion came this sense of obligation. I HAD to be with her because I...maybe owed myself to her. We were robbed of a lifetime together and so we had to settle for our six years of memories.

(beat)

I knew what was waiting at the end but I kept going until Jeremy helped me see what I was doing to myself. And then I met you-

(interlocks fingers)

And started living again. For four months I haven't felt that crushing guilt. For four months I've been the happiest I've ever been and I won't let it go.

The two kiss passionately before making love.

INT. DARK BEDROOM - NIGHT

Noah blinks awake and finds himself in the dark room. He sees Natalie standing naked at the BALCONY, her belly still big. Noah gets out of bed and walks to her with the SHEET.

Noah wraps her in the SHEET as the two stare out at the vast night sky lit by the MOON and millions of radiating stars. Below the BALCONY is a cliff leading down to a beach.

NOAH

I can't-

NATALIE

Shhh-

(quiets Noah with her finger)

Remember the story about the man lost in the ocean and his wife calling out to him? Every day, every night, standing on that cliff and calling out his name.

NOAH

Did he ever make it back.

Natalie turned around to face Noah.

NATALIE

I don't know. She's still calling.

NOAH

Why am I here? I wasn't dying.

(beat)

Am I dead?

NATALIE

No.

(beat)

But maybe you're closer than you think.

Noah gives Natalie a cold look.

NOAH

We have to stop. I love Alyssa.

NATALIE

Do you want me to leave?

(beat)

Soon we'll be gone, Noah.

Natalie rests her hand on her STOMACH.

NATALIE (CONTD)

Soon this moon will set and you'll be lost over the ocean. I love you Noah but our time is running out.

Noah and Natalie gaze out at the BLACK OCEAN.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Beatrice, a tall, skinny woman with brown hair and eyes sits on a couch near Noah. She wears glasses and is dressed in a black turtle neck sweater and grey pants. Alyssa sits by Noah, tightly grasping his hand.

NOAH

I've thrown the tapes away along with most of the statues.

BEATRICE

Most?

Noah looks down. Alyssa rubs his arm.

ALYSSA

It's still in the shed. It's the only one left.

BEATRICE

Well Noah, we know that Natalie is simply a manifestation of your guilt. You can't get over her because you don't want to.

Beatrice adjusts her glasses before taking his hand.

BEATRICE (CONTD.)

I would like to try a procedure if that's okay with you, Noah.

Noah nods. Beatrice walks him through the steps of HYPNOSIS. She counts down from three to one as he closes

his eyes and-

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Noah awakes to find himself in his house with the furniture rearranged. It is dark and rainy outside and he is alone.

BEATRICE (V.O.)

Where are you Noah?

NOAH

I'm in my house. It's raining. I remember this.

Suddenly, Natalie walks into the living room crying.

NATALIE

Why?! Why don't you want to try again?! Noah, this is tearing us apart and it'll keep tearing us apart! Is that what you want?!

BEATRICE (V.O.)

What's happening Noah?

NOAH

Natalie. I'm not ready. I can't go through this again! Not again!

Natalie POUNDS her fist against Noah's chest.

NATALIE

You'll never be ready! We're going to watch the years fly by waiting for you to be ready!

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Beatrice tries to break through to Noah. Alyssa holds Noah's hand tight, listening to his one-sided argument as he screams at the air.

BEATRICE

Noah, Noah listen to my voice.

NOAH

I saw him, Natalie! I saw him die, right there!

(crying)

I held his body and I can't stand to go through that again.

Beatrice interjects as Noah gasps for a breath.

BEATRICE

Noah, listen-

NOAH

I can't! We can never be like
Jeremy and Denise, Natalie! No
matter how much we want it!
We...we're...

BEATRICE

Noah!

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The storm drastically increases it's intensity as Noah and Natalie argue. Tears stream from Natalie's face as she pushes Noah and continues beating him with her fists.

NATALIE

We're falling apart, Noah! Don't
you see? For the past four months
I've watched us fall apart into a
miserable couple with nothing left.

NOAH

Natalie.

NATALIE

If we try again and have our baby,
things will get better.

Natalie holds Noah's face to hers. Their foreheads push against one another as they kiss. Noah looks into her eyes.

NOAH

I can't right now. I need time.

Natalie glares into Noah's eyes. The STORM dies down.

NATALIE

(whispering)
You'll never be ready.
(pushes Noah away)
You'll never be ready!

Natalie runs out of the house. Noah chases after her but is blocked at the doorway by some invisible FORCEFIELD.

BEATRICE (V.O.)

Noah, when I count down from three,
open your eyes.

Noah beats on the FORCEFIELD ferociously.

NOAH

Natalie! I'm sorry!

Noah watches Natalie start up the car.

BEATRICE (V.O.)

Three...

Natalie backs out of the drive way.

BEATRICE (V.O.)

Two...

Natalie flies down the road, disappearing behind the RAIN.

NOAH

I'm sorry! Natalie, come back!

BEATRICE (V.O.)

One...

Immediately following Beatrice's word, Noah hears a LOUD crash in the distance, CUTTING through the rain.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Noah kicks back on the sofa, crying hysterically.

NOAH

Oh God, what did I do?!

BEATRICE

You remember?!

ALYSSA

Noah.

Alyssa wraps her arms around Noah's body. Noah buries his face into his hands and sobs.

INT. AIRPORT - BOARDING GATES - NIGHT

Beatrice is escorted by Denise to the GATE. The two stand at the large window overlooking the runway.

BEATRICE

He hasn't said a word all day?

DENISE

That's what Alyssa says.

BEATRICE

(sigh)

I feel that I may have done a lot more damage than good.

Denise hugs Beatrice.

DENISE

He'll be fine.

BEATRICE

You didn't see him.

(beat)

Noah has been dealing with the trama of that night since she died and now-

The INTERCOM announces boarding for Beatrice's flight. Denise releases Beatrice as she glances toward the GATE then back at Denise. Denise cracks a smile.

DENISE

Don't let it be another six months
before your next visit.

Beatrice smiles as she picks up her bags and walks away.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alyssa and Noah lie in bed. Noah stares BLANKLY at the ceiling while Alyssa stares at him.

ALYSSA

Remember what you told me that
night? About not feeling the guilt
anymore?

Long pause.

ALYSSA (CONTD)

I feel guilty. I feel guilty for
buying myself that expensive but
gorgeous coat. I feel guilty for
ruining Vanessa's surprise birthday
party. I feel guilty for bringing
that statue into the house. But I
feel okay about it all because I've
got you at the end of the day.

(beat)

I know you feel guilty about
Natalie and everything that it
brought but you still have me Noah.

Alyssa looks up to Noah. He smiles, kisses her forehead then turns away. Alyssa kisses his neck.

ALYSSA (CONTD)

I love you Noah.

LATER

The alarm reads "2:27". Noah lies motionless on the bed, eyes RED and inert. A soft BREEZE kicks up against the window. Noah eases his head towards the window and swallows. He slips out of bed quietly and sneaks into-

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Noah eases the door shut and locks it. He flips the light on and STARES at himself in the MIRROR for a moment before taking his SILVER STRAIGHT RAZOR and sitting on the toilet.

The steel flashes LIGHT around the room as he examines the BLADE. Noah DRAGS the edge across each forearm then drops the blade and his hands to his sides.

He slowly closes his eyes and wakes to find himself-

INT. DARK BEDROOM - DAY

Noah awakes in the bed. He sees Natalie at the BALCONY. Noah walks to her, wrapping himself in the SHEET and sees that the moon is gone. It's morning and DAWN approaches.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alyssa awakes suddenly and finds that Noah isn't beside her. She gets out of bed and sees the beam of LIGHT coming from the bathroom door. Alyssa knocks on the door.

ALYSSA

Noah?

She knocks again but no answer. Her face turns to worry.

ALYSSA (CONTD)

Noah, open the door.

(beat)

Noah?! Noah, answer me!

Alyssa tries to wrestle the door open.

ALYSSA (CONTD)

Noah, open the door!

(kicking door)

Noah!

INT. DARK BEDROOM - DAY

Noah and Natalie stand on the BALCONY, looking at the waves CRASH against the cliffside. The sky slowly brightens.

NATALIE

The sun should be rising soon.

NOAH

I missed you.

NATALIE

You wont be missing me anymore.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Alyssa BANGS against the door until the door FLIES open. Alyssa spots Noah sitting motionless on the toilet seat with POOLS of BLOOD beneath his feet. Alyssa sprints back to-

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alyssa grabs her phone, dials 911 and frantically explains the situation as she runs back to-

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

After yelling the address, she TOSSES the phone aside and grabs Noah, pulling him off the toilet and onto the floor.

ALYSSA

Noah, wake up. Wake up, Noah!

INT. DARK BEDROOM - DAY

Noah and Natalie wait for the SUNRISE together until Alyssa's voice breaks through the DARK BLUE SKY.

ALYSSA (V.O.)

Noah please! Wake up!

Noah glances upward.

NOAH

Alyssa?

NATALIE

(pointing at the horizon)

Noah, look.

Noah looks across the ocean. A GOLDEN SUN rises, shining brightly over the ocean. The RAYS strike the DOORS. The DOORS open to reveal a WHITE LIGHT.

BOY'S VOICE

Dad?

Noah stares into the LIGHT, spotting a vague figure within. Natalie takes Noah's hand and guides him to the LIGHT.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alyssa holds Noah's arms up to her chest as she cries. She continues to call out to him.

ALYSSA

Noah, you have to come back! Don't go! Please don't go!

INT. DARK BEDROOM - DAY

Noah stops at the DOORWAY. He looks at Natalie then retracts his hand. Tears form in Natalie's eyes.

NATALIE

You love her that much?

Noah nods. Natalie embraces him tightly.

NATALIE (CONTD)

Then go back to her.

NOAH

Thank you.

Natalie leads Noah to the EDGE of the BALCONY. Noah smiles and gives Natalie one last kiss before DIVING off the BALCONY RAILING and hitting the water. He wakes to-

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Noah wakes up in Alyssa's arms and strokes her face with his BLOODY palm. She laughs dryly as he looks at her.

NOAH

I'm here.

Noah reaches and grasps onto Alyssa, his arms SHAKING.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

SUBTITLE: THREE WEEKS LATER

Noah sits on his couch. Beatrice sits in the chair beside the couch. The two are alone in the house.

NOAH

Thanks again for making all these trips up here. I know it's a real pain in the ass.

BEATRICE

It's fine, Noah. As long as you are healthy and well.

(beat)

So how have you been this week?

NOAH

I've been good. I'm still working, things have gotten a lot better.

BEATRICE

Yeah?

NOAH

Yeah. I haven't dreamed of her at all since that night.

BEATRICE

That's great.

(beat)

I know we've discussed her over and over again but let's talk about Natalie.

NOAH

Okay.

BEATRICE

Who was she?

NOAH

She was someone I made up after she died. I couldn't forgive myself for letting her go so I tortured myself with these...dreams.

BEATRICE

Go on.

NOAH

She was never real and I was able to get over her by finally forgiving myself.

BEATRICE

Have you been going to group?

NOAH

Yeah, every wednesday night. I found that it helps to talk with people that have been through it or have thought of doing it.

BEATRICE

That's good. So how are you and Alyssa doing?

NOAH

We're doing great. Sometimes I can't believe how lucky I am to have her in my life.

BEATRICE

How are Jeremy and the family?

NOAH

They've been good. I'm almost finished with the ark actually. Maya and Cecile have been itching to tear down those tarps.

EXT. CEMETARY - DAY

Noah walks through the CEMETARY with a bouquet of WHITE LILLIES.

BEATRICE (V.O.)

Well you seem to have come a long way, Noah.

NOAH (V.O.)

Yeah. I think I've finally learned to let go.

BEATRICE (V.O.)

Lastly...do you believe that Natalie's death was accidental?

Noah reaches Natalie's GRAVE and stands at the HEADSTONE with the flowers.

NOAH (V.O.)

Yes I do.

NOAH

Hi Natalie. I know I'm long overdue for a visit but I came just to thank you for everything.

(beat)

Know that I've always got you in my heart and I won't forget what we had.

(places flowers on grave)

I'll see you.

Noah walks away as a gentle BREEZE pushes against his back.

EXT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Noah stands atop the BIG TREE while the girls wait impatiently on the patio with Jeremy, Denise and Alyssa.

NOAH

Drum roll please!

The family DRUMS on the wooden railing as Noah pulls the ROPE and unveils the ARK. Maya and Cecile look in shock and disbelief at the ARK in the TREE. Noah jumps down from the ARK and hugs the girls as they run towards the TREE.

MAYA

It's amazing!

NOAH

You like it?!

CECILE

Yeah!

Noah steps aside as the girls climb the ladder up to the ARK. The ARK is lined with the animals from Maya's STORY. Noah steps back and admires his work as do the rest of the family as they applaud the masterpiece.

JEREMY

Holy crap, Noah!

DENISE

We might live in the Ark.

Noah hugs Alyssa as they look at the girls up in the ARK.

ALYSSA

Amazing structural integrity, babe.

NOAH
Well I'm glad I have your stamp of approval.

ALYSSA
Stamp?

NOAH
"A"?

ALYSSA
Mmmm... "A+"

Noah grins as the two kiss.

NOAH
Oh and look.
(pointing at whale)
I even put Jeremy in the ark.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - CONTINUOUS

The trees sways with the gusts of WIND coursing through the forest. On the boulder in the distance, a LONE PAIR stand where the INDENT is located.

JEREMY (V.O.)
That's real funny. So Alyssa told me that you got rid of all your statues. Is that true?

NOAH (V.O.)
Yeah. They were taking up too much room, decided to get rid of 'em for some new projects.

The LONE PAIR reveals itself as the DEER STATUE, settled into the BOULDER INDENT.

JEREMY (V.O.)
Very cool.

CECILE (V.O.)
Look daddy! There's a unicorn!

JEREMY (V.O.)
I see it!

FADE OUT

THE END