

KING RAT

By

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First Draft

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OVER BLACK:

TAL (V.O.)  
You know how they say that it is  
better to have loved and lost than  
to never have loved at all?  
(beat)  
The bastards lied.

FADE IN:

EXT. PARK - DUSK

TALISON MURPHY, 17, or TAL sits on the ground in a park with a stunning view of the Sydney suburbs. He wears an seventies style leather jacket. Behind him is a middle-class house that we will come to know as the Murphy House.

TAL (V.O.)  
It is approximately eighteen hours  
and seven minutes into the second  
worst day of my life, assuming the  
worst day is the day I die.

RING! RING! Tal takes his mobile phone out of his pocket and holds it to his ear.

TAL  
Hello?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. MURPHY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DUSK

Looking out the window and holding a phone to his ear is ARTHUR, 40.

ARTHUR  
Tal, I'd like you to come inside.

TAL  
Why?

ARTHUR  
It's getting dark.

(CONTINUED)

TAL  
No it isn't. It's...

ARTHUR  
There's something I want you to see.

TAL  
(skeptical)  
Okay.  
(beat)  
Wait. Why did you ring me. You could have just opened the window and shouted.

ARTHUR  
This is easier. Just come inside Talison.

TAL  
All right. If I must.

Tal hangs up and puts the phone back in his pocket. He gets up and starts to walk to the house.

EXT. MURPHY HOUSE - DUSK

Tal kicks off his shoes and leaves them at the front door before going inside.

INT. MURPHY HOUSE - FRONT HALL - DUSK

Tal walks in and closes the door behind him. He seems jumpy and energetic.

TAL  
(calling)  
So what was it you wanted to show me?

Tal approaches the living room and turns into the doorway.

INT. MURPHY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DUSK

Arthur is standing on a chair with his neck in a noose, hanging from the roof.

Tal understandably, panics.

(CONTINUED)

TAL  
What are you doing?!

ARTHUR  
I'm sorry.

Arthur readies himself.

TAL  
No! Stop!

Arthur jumps. CRUNCH!

TITLE CARD: KING RAT

INT. MURPHY HOUSE - TAL'S BEDROOM - DAWN

The morning light wakes Tal up. He rolls around in bed, uneasily.

SUPERIMPOSE: One Month Later

Tal swings his legs over the side of the bed and sits up. He cradles his head in his hands.

Tal gets dressed into his messy school uniform. He slides his leather jacket over the top.

INT. MURPHY HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Tal slides an English muffin into the toaster.

Tal leans against the bench, eating the muffin.

INT. MURPHY HOUSE - FRONT HALL - DAY

Tal walks towards the door but stops, noticing something in the living room. He walks over to investigate.

INT. MURPHY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The living room is dotted with empty bottles of various alcoholic beverages. Tal is dumbstruck.

On the couch in the fetal position is ANNETTE, 40. Tal wanders over and taps her on the shoulder. She wakes up with a start.

ANNETTE

Jesus. Who... What...

TAL

Mum? Are you okay?

ANNETTE

Do I look okay?

TAL

I dunno. I guess.

Annette gets up with great difficulty.

ANNETTE

Shit. How much did I drink?

Tal looks around the room. Empty bottles.

TAL

Um...

ANNETTE

Holy shit! Why did you let me drink that much? You're being negligent.

TAL

You're my Mum.

ANNETTE

What's your point?

Annette staggers out into the hall and into the kitchen.

INT. MURPHY HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Tal follows her in.

Annette opens the fridge and takes out a bottle of wine. She starts to pour herself a glass.

(CONTINUED)

TAL  
Wait! You're having another drink?

ANNETTE  
Obviously.

TAL  
It's like eight in the morning.

ANNETTE  
You've never been to college.

She downs the glass and starts to pour another.

TAL  
Are you sure you're okay?

ANNETTE  
(annoyed, sarcastic)  
No, I'm obviously dying in  
agonizing fucking pain.

TAL  
Geez. Sorry.

ANNETTE  
(beat)  
Don't you have a school to go to?

TAL  
Yeah but... Are you sure there's  
nothing I can do?

ANNETTE  
I am very sure.

TAL  
Cause I can stay here if you need  
me to, they'll hardly miss me.

ANNETTE  
Tal, do what your mother says.

Tal goes to say something but then stops himself. He walks out.

EXT. MURPHY HOUSE - DAY

Tal slides on his shoes at the front door. He carries a bag with him. He gets on a bicycle and starts to ride away down the street.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Outside the school stand CHLOE and EMILY, chatting and laughing. They are both 17.

CHLOE  
How about Thursday?

EMILY  
Yup. I can do Thursday.

CHLOE  
I look forward to it.

Chloe spies Tal approaching the school.

CHLOE (cont'd)  
I've gotta talk to Tal.

EMILY  
It's okay.

Emily gives Chloe a kiss and walks off. Chloe approaches Tal.

CHLOE  
Hey Tal!

TAL  
Hey.

CHLOE  
How are you? Are you okay?

Tal doesn't respond.

CHLOE (cont'd)  
Oh my God, it's been ages. I'm so sorry.

She hugs him.

TAL  
Nice to see you too.

Chloe chuckles.

INT. SCHOOL - CORRIDOR - DAY

Tal and Chloe walk down the corridor. Chloe is ecstatic.

CHLOE

Oh! Mr. Ward wants to see you. He told me to tell you.

TAL

Why?

CHLOE

He said you organized tutoring or something.

TAL

Oh yeah. That's right.

CHLOE

What's that for?

TAL

History.

CHLOE

(beat)

Elaborate?

TAL

There's this essay writing competition Mrs. Ishiguro entered me in. But she said I should get tutoring before I do it. You know, get my writing up to scratch.

CHLOE

But you're good at history.

TAL

Yeah, but I'm shit at essays.

CHLOE

I hear you. But you've gotta see Wardy about it.

TAL

Will do.

INT. SCHOOL - OFFICES - DAY

Tal walks through the various teacher's offices until he comes to his destination. He knocks on the door.

INT. SCHOOL - MR. WARD'S OFFICE - DAY

MR. WARD sits at his desk looking over a paper. A sign on his desk says "VICE PRINCIPAL". KNOCK! KNOCK!

MR. WARD

Come in.

Tal enters.

MR. WARD

Sit down.

Tal sits down opposite Mr. Ward.

MR. WARD (cont'd)

Now, you expressed interest in tutoring for your...

(looks at paper)

...history. I assume that still stands.

TAL

Yes it does.

MR. WARD

Do you know where tutoring is?

TAL

Um, no.

MR. WARD

It's down the corridor from sick bay. Second door on the left. Your tutor's name is Mrs. Evans.

TAL

What time?

MR. WARD

The tutoring? Oh, it's at four o'clock.

(CONTINUED)

TAL  
Thank you. Um, can I...  
(gestures towards the door)  
I've got class.

MR. WARD  
Yes. Okay.

INT. SCHOOL - SICK BAY CORRIDOR - DAY

Tal walks down the corridor, checking the signs on all the doors he passes. He finds the door marked "TUTORING". He opens it.

INT. SCHOOL - TUTORING ROOM - DAY

Tal walks through the door.

Sitting at the desk is MRS. EVANS, 35. She has shoulder length blond hair and is very attractive. She gets up and shakes Tal's hand.

MRS. EVANS  
It's Talison Murphy, isn't it?

TAL  
I prefer Tal.

MRS. EVANS  
Okay then Tal, you can call me Christine.

TAL  
Why?

CHRISTINE (MRS. EVANS)  
I like to be familiar with my students. It's good for the atmosphere in here.

TAL  
Okay then Christine.

She walks back over to her desk.

CHRISTINE  
So you want to enter this essay competition?

(CONTINUED)

TAL  
That's the plan.

CHRISTINE  
You are aware of how much work this  
will involve?

TAL  
How much?

CHRISTINE  
Your other marks will probably  
drop.

TAL  
I can live with that. It's only  
year eleven.

CHRISTINE  
That logic right there, is the bane  
of all teachers. I swear.

TAL  
It's true!

CHRISTINE  
I can see how well we're going to  
get along.

She sits down and spins her chair around to face the  
couch. She gestures for Tal to sit down.

CHRISTINE (cont'd)  
Do you have a topic?

TAL  
I was thinking of doing the Ottoman  
Empire.

CHRISTINE  
Why?

TAL  
They seemed interesting.

CHRISTINE  
You want to know a secret?

TAL  
What?

She gesture for him to lean in closer. He does.

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTINE  
They're really not.

They both chuckle.

TAL  
(chuckling)  
Maybe a different topic then. How  
about the Russians? Like the  
revolution and Communism and stuff.

CHRISTINE  
Have you done that before?

TAL  
In like, year 9.

CHRISTINE  
There's not all that much to learn  
about it then.

TAL  
(dejected)  
Oh.

CHRISTINE  
Oh come on, we'll find something.

EXT. MURPHY HOUSE - NIGHT

Tal arrives home and walks up the front door.

INT. MURPHY HOUSE - FRONT HALL - NIGHT

Tal enters. Upon entering however, he realizes he still has  
his shoes on and quickly takes them off outside. He places  
his bag by the door and heads towards the living room.

He looks inside. Annette is sleeping on the couch again.

TAL  
Jesus.

He heads back towards the front door.

EXT. MURPHY HOUSE - NIGHT

Tal slides his shoes back on and starts to walk off down the street.

INT. TAKEAWAY FISH AND CHIPS - NIGHT

Tal walks in and up to the counter. A COUNTER GUY in his mid-twenties serves. He speaks in a dull monotone.

COUNTER GUY

What do you want?

TAL

Can I get some fish and chips please?

COUNTER GUY

You want to get some fish and chips at a fish and chips shop. Spectacular.

(sighs)

What size do you want?

TAL

I dunno, medium.

COUNTER GUY

Okay. That'll be ten minutes.

Tal walks over to a row of chairs and sits down. A BEARDED MAN, 30 sits down next to him. Tal nudges him.

TAL

You getting some fish and chips?

BEARDED MAN

It's a fish and chips shop.

TAL

I'm sorry?

BEARDED MAN

I was merely pointing the logical flaw in asking a man if he is buying fish and chips in a fish and chips shop.

TAL

You could have been buying prawns. Or scallops.

(CONTINUED)

BEARDED MAN

True.

(beat)

Everything is going to be fine Tal.

TAL

What?

The bearded man doesn't respond.

COUNTER GUY

Number 52!

Tal gets up and goes to get his fish and chips.

TAL

That's me.

Tal takes the fish and chips. He turns back around and...

The bearded man is gone.

EXT. MURPHY HOUSE - NIGHT

Tal walks back home, eating chips out of the bag.

INT. MURPHY HOUSE - TAL'S BEDROOM - DAWN

Tal wakes up in much the same way as he did earlier. He makes getting up look like the hardest thing in the world.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Tal walks in. Annette is already in there.

TAL

(sarcastic)

Oh, you're awake.

Annette looks at him, stunned by his frankness.

ANNETTE

Don't be rude.

She walks over to the fridge and starts to fiddle with its contents.

(CONTINUED)

ANNETTE (cont'd)

Oh yeah, could you get me a bottle  
of red on your way home?

TAL

What? I'm under eighteen. They  
won't sell it to me.

ANNETTE

Yes they will. Kids buying booze  
is like half their profit index.

TAL

I wouldn't be so sure about...

ANNETTE

See, you don't understand because  
you're a nice kid. I however, was  
not nice kid.

TAL

I'm not sure I want to hear the end  
of this story. Or any of it.

ANNETTE

I drank a lot.

TAL

Stop!

ANNETTE

I smoked weed.

TAL

Mum!

ANNETTE

Those were the good old days.

TAL

Jesus Christ.

He leaves. Annette doesn't even know what she did.

INT. SCHOOL - CANTEEN - DAY

Tal is sitting at a round table. Chloe comes over and sits  
next to him.

(CONTINUED)

CHLOE  
How are things in wonderland?

TAL  
My Mum... It's fucked.

CHLOE  
Why? What's she done now?

TAL  
I swear she hasn't been sober for at least a week. She wakes up each morning and proceeds to get smashed.

CHLOE  
Well, I can understand why.

TAL  
So can I. That doesn't mean she should do it.

CHLOE  
I guess she's not as good at coping with what happened as you.

TAL  
I'm not coping.  
(beat)  
And for the record, you can't keep calling it "what happened." You're gonna have to invent a codename or something.

CHLOE  
Like what?

TAL  
I don't know. Just not that.

CHLOE  
So you're not coping with 'that'? What could we call it?

TAL  
Gay.

CHLOE  
So you're not coping with gay?

She chuckles.

(CONTINUED)

CHLOE (cont'd)  
Oh my God. I'm so sorry. I  
shouldn't be laughing at  
that. That's seriously wrong.

TAL  
It's fine. If we can't laugh, what  
can we do?

CHLOE  
I guess. But seriously, how are  
you coping?

TAL  
I don't wanna talk about it.

CHLOE  
You sure?

TAL  
I'm sure.

CHLOE  
Okay.

They sit there in awkward silence.

INT. SCHOOL - TUTORING ROOM - DAY

Tal once again sits at the couch with Christine. This time  
they are both looking through through textbooks.

CHRISTINE  
You could do the French Revolution.

TAL  
As long as I don't have to write  
about Marie Antoinette.

CHRISTINE  
Why, what's wrong with Marie  
Antoinette?

TAL  
She was a massive bitch.

CHRISTINE  
I can see you're really thinking  
hard about this.

Tal lowers his textbook.

(CONTINUED)

TAL

I can't do something about the French. I'd end up insulting them the whole time.

CHRISTINE

The Boxer Rebellions? You could do the Irish.

TAL

Yeah, maybe. It's got to be interesting enough for me to stomach five-thousand words on though.

CHRISTINE

The Irish are interesting. They invented drinking songs. And fights.

TAL

I might do them.

CHRISTINE

When's the essay due?

TAL

April 27th. I've got like, a month.

CHRISTINE

Better get writing then.

TAL

A month though.

CHRISTINE

You'd be amazed at how long it takes to write five-thousand words.

TAL

Oh I definitely would.

Christine puts her book down.

CHRISTINE

Why are you even doing this?

TAL

Something to do.

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTINE

Huh.

Christine looks at him, perplexed.

INT. MURPHY HOUSE - FRONT HALL - DUSK

Tal enters and proceeds with his shoe-taking-off ritual.

ANNETTE (O.S.)

Tal?! Is that you?!

TAL

Yeah!

ANNETTE (O.S.)

Where the fuck have you been?!

Tal powers over to the living room.

INT. MURPHY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DUSK

Annette is drinking.

TAL

I've been at tutoring.

ANNETTE

What tutoring?

TAL

History tutoring. I would have told you but you were unconscious.

ANNETTE

Yes, that reminds me. Did you get the red I asked for?

TAL

(beat)

Oh shit.

ANNETTE

This morning I asked you to get me a bottle of wine. Did you or did you not accomplish this task?

(CONTINUED)

TAL

I'm not buying my mother  
booze. That's wrong in every sense  
of the word.

ANNETTE

I think I know what's appropriate  
Talison. And that is totally  
socially acceptable.

TAL

You weren't even sober in the  
morning. You're not even sober  
now!

ANNETTE

How dare you speak to me that  
way! I feed you! I wash your  
clothes! I take care of you!

TAL

No you don't! You haven't taken  
care of me since Dad died! You're  
like the most negligent parent of  
all time!

ANNETTE

Get out of my house.

TAL

What?

ANNETTE

Get out of my house.

TAL

Mum, don't you think that's a  
bit...

ANNETTE

Get the fuck out of my house!

Tal doesn't respond for the longest beat ever. He turns and  
heads upstairs.

INT. MURPHY HOUSE - TAL'S BEDROOM - DUSK

Tal grabs a duffel bag from against the wall. He goes to  
the cupboard and stuffs the bag with crumpled clothes. He  
grabs some books from his desk and puts them in too. He  
leaves.

INT. MURPHY HOUSE - FRONT HALL - DUSK

Tal walks towards the front door. Before he does, he stops at the entrance to the living room and addresses Annette.

TAL

If you ever need help, just call.

She doesn't respond.

Tal leaves.

EXT. MURPHY HOUSE - DUSK

Tal slides on his shoes for the last time. He walks down the drive and then turns to look at the house. One final look.

Tal starts to head off down the road.

FADE OUT.

(CONTINUED)

EXT. ABRAMS HOUSE - NIGHT

Tal approaches the house of a slightly higher class to his own. He knocks on the front door. Chloe answers.

TAL

Hey.

CHLOE

Hey.

(she notices his expression)

What is it?

TAL

Can I stay here tonight?

Chloe is taken aback for a beat.

CHLOE

Sure, I guess.

TAL

Thanks.

CHLOE

(confused)

Come in.

INT. ABRAMS HOUSE - FRONT HALL - NIGHT

The Abrams' front hall is noticeably nicer than Tal's. Tal slips off his shoes by the front door. These people actually have a basket for their shoes. Chloe leads him into the living room.

INT. ABRAMS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The living room is also nice. It features a big television. Tal and Chloe sit down on the couch.

CHLOE

Something wrong with your house  
this evening?

TAL

My Mum kicked me out.

(CONTINUED)

CHLOE  
Holy shit! Why?

TAL  
I still haven't figured that out myself. I promise I won't be here for too long.

CHLOE  
No, it's fine. Stay as long as you like.

TAL  
Thanks.

CHLOE  
(beat)  
Are you okay?

TAL  
I honestly don't know. I hope so.

CHLOE  
So do I.

She gives him a friendly hug.

CHLOE (cont'd)  
Are you happy sleeping on the couch? I'd let you stay in my room but I doubt it's appropriate. It's ridiculous. We've got this massive house but not one guest room.

Tal chuckles.

TAL  
Thanks.

CHLOE  
All right. See you in the morning.

Chloe walks off up the stairs. She's halfway up.

TAL  
Chloe!

CHLOE  
Yeah?

TAL  
Thanks. Really.

(CONTINUED)

CHLOE  
That's what friends are for.

INT. ABRAMS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (LATER)

Tal lies on the couch, sleeping terribly. He is shaking, obviously having nightmares.

INT. ABRAMS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAWN

Tal wakes up with a blurry figure standing over him.

TAL  
Shit!

He sits up with a start. The figure comes into focus. It's MARK ABRAMS, 40. He speaks with a startling enthusiasm.

MARK  
Morning Talison!

TAL  
Sorry. Good morning.

MARK  
You mind telling me what you're doing on my sofa?

TAL  
Chloe said I could stay. My Mum kicked me out of the house.

MARK  
Oh, okay. That's fine then.

TAL  
Thanks.

He starts to walk out. Tal adjusts himself.

MARK  
Say, you haven't been doing anything with my daughter, have you?

TAL  
Um...

(CONTINUED)

MARK

Because if you have, I will pull your intestines out through your neck.

TAL

You do know she's...

MARK

Know she's what?

TAL

Um...

MARK

(beat)

Just kidding sport! I know she's gay. She's gay as Freddie Mercury.

TAL

She's a girl, that doesn't even apply.

MARK

I'm willing to bet good money I've know a lot longer than you have.

TAL

(weirded out)

Okay.

MARK

Breakfast is in five minutes.

TAL

Oh, thanks.

MARK

Get changed in the bathroom, if you please. It's just down the hall.

TAL

Will do.

MARK

I don't want your sack to be the start of my day.

INT. ABRAMS HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Chloe, Mark and MICHELLE, 40 are sitting around the breakfast table. Tal walks in and sits down. Michelle gets up and starts to litter Tal's plate with food.

TAL  
Oh, thanks.

Michelle sits back down.

MICHELLE  
So Tal, what brings you here on this fine morning?

TAL  
My Mum kicked me out.

MICHELLE  
Oh, I'm sorry. If it's not an invasion, do you mind telling me why?

TAL  
You should probably ask her that.

MICHELLE  
Oh, why?

TAL  
I doesn't matter.

MICHELLE  
It means you're not allowed in your own home. I think it matters.

Tal reconsiders.

TAL  
Of course. Sorry. I honestly have no idea why. I think it was just her in a drunken stupor.

MICHELLE  
You could go back then. Ask if she'll take you back. I'm sure she wants you to live there. Every mother wants to be with her son.

MARK  
We don't even have a son.

(CONTINUED)

MICHELLE

It still applies. So?

TAL

I don't think I want to live there anymore.

MICHELLE

Well, feel free to stay here for as long as you like. We've got the space.

CHLOE

We don't actually.

MICHELLE

Chloe!

CHLOE

Why don't we have a spare room. We've got a room for developing photos and we don't have a spare bed.

MICHELLE

(to Tal)

I'm sorry about her.

TAL

I don't mind.

MICHELLE

You can stay here if you want to. Any friend of Chloe's is a friend of mine. Except for Michael.

MARK

Oh I hate that guy.

CHLOE

He's not even my friend.

TAL

(to Michelle)

Thanks.

CHLOE

(beat)

Oh yeah, do you guys mind if Emily comes over tonight?

(CONTINUED)

MARK

She stayed her on the weekend  
though.

CHLOE

Well I have a never ending sex  
drive.

Tal gags on his orange juice. The other three look at him  
strangely.

MARK

Why don't you ever stay at her  
house?

CHLOE

Trust me, it is nowhere near as  
nice as our house. And her Dad has  
this really creepy mustache. It's  
like that one Brandon Flowers had  
when he made Sam's Town.

Mark winces.

MICHELLE

Fair enough.

They all go about eating their breakfast.

INT. SCHOOL - CANTEEN - DAY

Tal and Chloe sit in the same place they sat last time,  
eating different food.

CHLOE

You know, you can't stay at my  
house forever.

TAL

I know. But I can't stay at my  
house at all.

CHLOE

You're gonna have to find somewhere  
to live. You could board here.

TAL

Have you ever boarded here?

(CONTINUED)

CHLOE  
No. Have you?

TAL  
I did in year 8.

CHLOE  
How was that for you?

TAL  
I got gang spooned.

CHLOE  
Gang what?

TAL  
It's where all the year 12 guys get into your bed and spoon you. I tell you, it is fucking scary when you're thirteen. Actually, it'd be scary at any age.

CHLOE  
Isn't that like, rape?

TAL  
No, it's just indecent assault. You'd be amazed at how many people in this place should have restraining orders against them. It's like a prison shower.

CHLOE  
So I take it, it's not an option.

TAL  
No. I'll find somewhere. I won't take too long. I promise.

CHLOE  
Take as long as you want. I don't mind. My parents might after a while though.

TAL  
Whatever happened to "Stay as long as you like"?

CHLOE  
Wow. Presumptuous much?

(CONTINUED)

TAL  
You said it.

CHLOE  
Yeah, but then I had a good night's  
sleep.

INT. SCHOOL - TUTORING ROOM - DAY

Tal walks in. As soon as he does, Christine gets up and  
puts her coat on.

TAL  
What...

CHRISTINE  
Come on. I'm taking you to my  
house.

TAL  
Why?

CHRISTINE  
It's easier to access sources at my  
house. I am a history teacher.

Tal isn't convinced.

CHRISTINE (cont'd)  
I do this with all my students.

TAL  
All right.

They leave.

EXT. SCHOOL - CAR PARK - DAY

Tal and Christine walk across the car park and to  
Christine's teacher salary car. They get in.

INT. CHRISTINE'S CAR - DAY

They sit in the car.

(CONTINUED)

TAL  
I like your car.

CHRISTINE  
Really? That'd be a first.

TAL  
It's nice. It's got  
personality. Not just some gay  
sports car.

CHRISTINE  
I'm glad you like it.

EXT. EVANS HOUSE - DAY

They park outside the modest house. It features however, a well maintained garden. The duo get out of the car.

TAL  
Do you garden?

CHRISTINE  
No. My husband does that.

They walk inside.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The sound of an opening door.

CHRISTINE (O.S.)  
Just head into the living  
room. I'm gonna get changed.

Tal walks into the living room and sits awkwardly on the couch.

After a while, Christine walks in in far more loose and casual clothes. She looks stunningly different, more open. She sits down beside Tal. He is visibly uncomfortable.

TAL  
So...

CHRISTINE  
So, these sources then.

She reaches across his lap to grab some books.

(CONTINUED)

TAL  
The Irish huh?

CHRISTINE  
Oh. The Irish.

TAL  
I presume that's what the books are  
about.

Tal looks at the books. They have nothing to do with  
history. One of them is by Robert Ludlum.

CHRISTINE  
Tell you what, we don't need those.

She places them on the table.

TAL  
For what?

CHRISTINE  
I think you know.

Tal gets really uncomfortable.

TAL  
Um...

CHRISTINE  
Wow. I'm really shit at this,  
aren't I?

TAL  
At what?

CHRISTINE  
Yeah, I definitely am.  
(beat)  
Screw it.

She grabs Tal and kisses him passionately. Tal reels back.

TAL  
Whoa!

He looks at Christine with a shocked face. She kisses him  
again. He's still not receptive. She kisses him a third  
time. This time, he lets her. She stops to check if it's  
all right. It is.

Tal lies Christine down on the couch. She pulls her top  
over her head, and then takes off his too. They stop for a  
second.

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTINE  
Is this okay?

TAL  
(beat)  
Yeah.

She kisses him again.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - FRONT HALL - DAY

Looking through the entrance to the living room, Tal and Christine are having sex on the couch.

EXT. ABRAMS HOUSE - NIGHT

Christine's car pulls up outside the house.

INT. CHRISTINE'S CAR - NIGHT

They awkwardly sit there.

CHRISTINE  
Until next time, huh.

TAL  
(beat)  
Yeah. See you.

Tal gets out in a rush.

EXT. ABRAMS HOUSE - NIGHT

Tal approaches the front door and heads inside.

INT. ABRAMS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Chloe and Emily are sitting on the couch together. They hear Tal come in. He walks in, noticing Emily.

TAL  
Oh. Right. Hello.

Emily smiles wryly.

(CONTINUED)

CHLOE

How come you're back so late?

TAL

Um... Christine took me to her place to go over some sources.

CHLOE

Christine? Ooh. On first name terms are we?

TAL

Don't you start.

Emily lifts a bottle of soft drink from in front of the couch.

EMILY

Come on Tal, have a drink.

TAL

(beat)

All right.

Tal wanders over and sits down in front of the couch. He pours himself a drink. He downs the cup and pours another.

EMILY

Hey Tal, you wanna know a secret?

TAL

What?

She gets him to lean in close.

EMILY

(whispering)

The drink is spiked with rum.

TAL

Oh. I thought it tasted weird. No harm done.

He downs his cup again.

EMILY

Chloe won't tell me why you're here. Will you?

TAL

My Mum kicked me out of the house.

(CONTINUED)

EMILY

Why, did you trash the car or something?

TAL

No. I didn't do anything. I think she blames me for my Dad's death somehow.

EMILY

I'm sorry.  
(beat)  
How did he die?

TAL

He hung himself.

EMILY

Hm.  
(beat)  
My Mum died when I was nine. At that age you're not old enough to understand it but you're old enough to feel it. I think I would say that was the worst few months of my life.

TAL

I'm sorry.

EMILY

Don't be. It wasn't you.

TAL

What was it, if you don't mind me asking?

EMILY

Leukemia. I don't regret a moment of it though. Sometimes you think, would it have been better to not have a Mum in the first place? So that I wouldn't have to go through that.

TAL

Would it?

EMILY

No.

They sit there for a beat, thinking.

(CONTINUED)

CHLOE  
Fuck me, you two are depressing!

They all laugh.

CHLOE (cont'd)  
Now, are we gonna get munted or  
what?

They all down their cups.

MONTAGE - PARTY

- Tal starts to play loud dance music on the speakers.
- They all dance.
- They drink.
- Chloe and Emily make out.
- They dance some more.
- They drink.
- They slump down onto the floor, exhausted.

INT. ABRAMS HOUSE - FRONT HALL - NIGHT

Mark and Michelle trudge out of the rain and inside. Michelle clumsily puts down an umbrella.

MICHELLE  
(calling)  
We're home!

They get to the living room and look in. Chloe and Emily are sleeping on the couch whilst Tal sleeps on the floor.

MICHELLE (cont'd)  
Jesus.

MARK  
They're cleaning up. I have no sympathy.

Mark and Michelle head upstairs.

INT. ABRAMS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Tal, Chloe and Emily are cleaning up the trashed room.

EMILY

Hey, do you guys wanna see a movie later? There's that new Judd Apatow movie on. I heard that they talk about dicks a lot.

Tal and Chloe share a glance. Agreement.

TAL

Yeah, all right.

EXT. EVANS HOUSE - DAY

Tal stands out the front. He takes a deep breath.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - FRONT HALL - DAY

Tal walks in. Christine steps out into the hall. This is awkward.

TAL

Um...

CHRISTINE

Yeah.

The longest, most awkward beat ever.

CHRISTINE (cont'd)

About yesterday...

TAL

It's fine.

CHRISTINE

No, that was completely inappropriate.

TAL

Really, it's okay.

CHRISTINE

Really?

(CONTINUED)

TAL

Really.

CHRISTINE

Because I was scared that you were gonna tell people. And then I'd be completely screwed because Alan would find out, and there'd be a scandal and...

TAL

(another long beat)

Can we do it again?

CHRISTINE

Most certainly.

Christine leads him into the living room.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

They walk in and Christine lies on the couch in an alluring pose.

TAL

It does beg the question though, why did you do it?

CHRISTINE

What, have sex with you?

TAL

Yeah.

CHRISTINE

You wouldn't understand.

TAL

Try me.

CHRISTINE

When you're married right, the days sort of blend together. It's hard to explain. Sometimes you just need to escape.

TAL

I do understand.

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTINE  
No you don't.

TAL  
I do.

CHRISTINE  
No you don't.

CHRISTINE (cont'd)  
Trust me. You don't.

Tal doesn't respond. He just moves onto Christine and starts to kiss her.

INT. MOVIE THEATER - DAY

The three of them watch the movie. They laugh and generally have a good time. They all share each other's food.

EXT. MALL - DAY

They walk down the mall, chatting and enjoying themselves.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Tal and Christine have sex on the bed. It's very passionate.

EXT. ABRAMS HOUSE - NIGHT

Christine's car pulls up outside. Tal gets out and goes inside.

INT. ABRAMS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tal, Chloe and Emily dance to loud disco music.

INT. NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

They walk through the crowd and out to the dance floor. They all start to dance. First Emily and Chloe together, but then they let Tal join in.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Tal and Christine sit at a desk, writing Tal's essay with the aid of a multitude of textbooks.

INT. SCHOOL - CANTEEN - DAY

Tal, Chloe and Emily are all sitting together, eating and chatting. They're happy.

INT. ABRAMS HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Tal, Chloe, Mark and Michelle sit around the breakfast table, eating and chatting. They're getting along really well.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Tal and Christine have sex again. Tal climaxes and rolls off her. They lay there for a while.

TAL

You know, when I'm here it's like the rest of the world isn't.

Christine rolls towards Tal.

CHRISTINE

What?

TAL

All the shit that's been happening in my life, this just makes it all go away.

CHRISTINE

It's called sex Tal. God invented it for a reason.

TAL

(chuckling)

Yeah.

CHRISTINE

I dunno, maybe there's something more to this.

(CONTINUED)

TAL

Maybe.

CHRISTINE

I mean, is it just about sex or...

TAL

Or what?

CHRISTINE

Nothing. It's nothing.

Christine rolls back over, visibly disappointed.

EXT. EVANS HOUSE - DAY

Chloe pulls up outside in a car, P plates attached.

Tal walks out with Christine and is surprised. He heads over to the car.

TAL

What are you doing here?

CHLOE

I got my P's.

TAL

I can see that.

CHLOE

Well I thought I'd pick you up. Is there a problem?

TAL

No. No problem.

Tal gets into the passenger seat.

INT. CHLOE'S CAR - DAY

Christine heads over and starts leans into the window.

CHRISTINE

It's Chloe right?

CHLOE

Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTINE  
Tal's told me about you.

CHLOE  
Has he?

CHRISTINE  
Yes. Do you have a boyfriend?

CHLOE  
He obviously didn't tell you much  
about me. I'm gay.

CHRISTINE  
(taken aback)  
Oh. Okay.

CHLOE  
Why? Is there something wrong with  
that?

CHRISTINE  
No! Of course not. It's just...  
Nothing.

Chloe angrily revs the engine and starts to drive away.

EXT. ABRAMS HOUSE - DAY

Chloe pulls up in the driveway. She gets out and slams the door behind her. Tal gets out, more calmly.

INT. ABRAMS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Chloe storms in, Tal following her. She stamps herself down on the couch.

CHLOE  
Can you believe that?

TAL  
Believe what?

CHLOE  
Believe what?! She's a homophobic  
bitch!

(CONTINUED)

TAL

What brought you to that impression?

CHLOE

I told her I was gay and she pretty much ran away.

TAL

Come on Chloe. She didn't.

CHLOE

She so did!

TAL

Even if she did, you get way worse shit than that every day at school.

CHLOE

And that makes it okay does it?! You can't even begin to comprehend what it's like Tal! This just gets to me sometimes.

TAL

What, you feel alienated? You feel isolated? No-one understands you? Welcome to the fucked. Everyone feels like that Chloe. I feel like that. That's just life.

CHLOE

What, you think because your Dad died that no-one understands you? Tal, that makes everyone understand you. We've all watched enough T.V. to know what it's like!

TAL

Because T.V. is such an accurate fucking representation of life.

CHLOE

Tal, you've got nothing on me! You've felt isolated for a month. I've felt isolated my whole life! You can't even imagine how I feel!

(CONTINUED)

TAL  
You can't even imagine how I feel!

CHLOE  
You're Dad died. So what. Get  
over it. Fucking pussy.

TAL  
(beat)  
I'm leaving.

Tal starts to gather his stuff into his bag.

CHLOE  
Tal, don't. I didn't mean it like  
that.

TAL  
No, I'm not putting up with this.

CHLOE  
I didn't mean it.

Tal puts his bag on.

CHLOE (cont'd)  
(pleading)  
Tal.

Tal walks out, leaving Chloe standing alone.

CHLOE (cont'd)  
(to herself)  
I didn't.

EXT. ABRAMS HOUSE - DAY

Tal walks out the front door and off down the  
street. Again.

FADE OUT.

(CONTINUED)

EXT. CITY PARK - DUSK

Tal sits on a park bench with all his stuff. The bearded man is sitting beside him.

BEARDED MAN

You've got to weigh up your options mate.

Tal looks at him like he didn't know he was there.

TAL

Sorry, do I know you?

BEARDED MAN

Yeah, we met at the fish and chip shop on Marvell Rd.

TAL

Oh yeah. I remember you. You disappeared into thin air.

BEARDED MAN

It's a rare gift.

TAL

Yeah, you were really odd. No offense.

BEARDED MAN

None taken.

TAL

(beat)

What were you saying about options?

BEARDED MAN

I'm assuming from your current state that you have nowhere to stay?

TAL

Correct.

BEARDED MAN

Have you got any friends that you could stay with?

TAL

Not any more.

(CONTINUED)

BEARDED MAN

Oh. You're fucked.

TAL

Thanks. That's really fucking helpful.

BEARDED MAN

Calm down man, it was just a joke.

TAL

Oh sorry.

(beat)

There are options but...

BEARDED MAN

You have to prioritize. What is more important, shelter or pride? I'd put my money on shelter.

TAL

I dunno...

BEARDED MAN

Have you ever been homeless?

TAL

No.

BEARDED MAN

Exactly. Trust me. It sucks.

TAL

I think I know somewhere.

BEARDED MAN

Then go. If it's wrong, leave.

TAL

Yeah. Okay.

Tal gets up and leaves. The bearded man smiles oddly.

EXT. EVANS HOUSE - NIGHT

Tal walks up to the front door and knocks. After a few seconds, ALAN, 38 answers it.

(CONTINUED)

ALAN

Hello?

TAL

(taken aback)

Hello. Is Christine here?

ALAN

Who are you?

TAL

I'm one of her students. Talison  
Murphy?

ALAN

Oh yeah! She likes you.

TAL

She does?

ALAN

Yeah. Sorry for being so  
intrusive, it's just that it's a  
bit late.

TAL

Yeah, I know. Sorry.

ALAN

No problem. Come inside.

Alan leads Tal into the house.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Alan leads Tal in.

ALAN

(gestures towards couch)

Sit down.

Tal obliges.

ALAN (cont'd)

I'll just go and get her.

He walks out of the room.

ALAN (O.S.)

Christine! Talison's here to see  
you!

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTINE (O.S.)  
What?

ALAN (O.S.)  
Talison!

CHRISTINE (O.S.)  
(beat)  
Okay!

Christine walks down the stairs and into the room. She moves close to Tal so that Alan can't hear.

CHRISTINE  
What the fuck are you doing here? We have a system. We stick to the system. Do you want Alan to find out about us?

TAL  
I can't stay at Chloe's place anymore.

CHRISTINE  
Why not?

TAL  
I just can't.

CHRISTINE  
(beat)  
And I take it you want to stay here?

TAL  
Yes.

Christine thinks for a bit. She turns and looks upstairs.

CHRISTINE  
Alan can't find out.

TAL  
Well should we stop or...

CHRISTINE  
God no. I don't want to stop. We just have to be more subtle.

TAL  
Okay.

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTINE

There's a spare room upstairs. You  
can stay there. For obvious  
reasons, we can't do anything  
tonight but... Maybe tomorrow.

TAL

Thank you so much. This is so  
helpful. Ever since...

Tal stops himself.

CHRISTINE

Ever since your Dad died?

TAL

I'm okay.

CHRISTINE

No you're not Tal.

TAL

I'm fine.

CHRISTINE

I you want to talk about it...

TAL

I don't wanna talk about it. I  
really don't.

CHRISTINE

You sure?

TAL

Yes.

CHRISTINE

(beat)

You'll like Alan.

TAL

Will I?

INT. EVANS HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Tal, Christine and Alan are sitting around the breakfast  
table.

(CONTINUED)

ALAN

So Tal, why are you staying in my house? Don't you have one?

CHRISTINE

Alan.

TAL

(re: Christine)

No, it's fine.

(re: Alan)

About a month and a half ago, my Dad killed himself.

ALAN

I'm so sorry. I had no idea...

TAL

It's fine. My Mum started drinking and one day she decided she wanted me out of the house.

ALAN

Don't you have friends to stay with?

CHRISTINE

Alan!

They both ignore her.

ALAN

I mean, living with your tutor is a bit odd.

TAL

No, I understand. I was staying with a friend but I think my presence became a bit much for her.

ALAN

Why? Were you...

(makes a sexual gesture)

You know...

CHRISTINE

Alan! That's hardly appropriate.

Tal shoots her a look.

ALAN

I was never good with appropriate.

(CONTINUED)

TAL  
No, she's gay.

ALAN  
That makes sense.

TAL  
(beat)  
You know, you are nothing like I  
expected.

ALAN  
How?

TAL  
Well I mean, you garden. And yet  
you can make jokes.

The pair of them laugh.

ALAN  
I'll have you know that gardening  
and comedy are closely related.

TAL  
How?

ALAN  
A good atmosphere stimulated the  
brain. Gets the comedy pumping.

TAL  
And you're an expert at this?

ALAN  
I'll have you know I am. I did  
some stand up when I was in  
college.

TAL  
Were you any good?

ALAN  
They booted me off the stage.

TAL  
Nice.

ALAN  
(beat, then to Christine)  
Hey, I'm gonna go and buy some  
mulch at 11, okay?  
(to Tal)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ALAN (cont'd)  
Actually, you could come if you  
want.

TAL  
Yeah. All right.

EXT. EVANS HOUSE - DAY

Alan leads Tal out of the house and out to his car. It's a  
good car, much nicer than Christine's.

TAL  
Nice car man.

ALAN  
Thanks.

They get in.

INT. ALAN'S CAR - DAY

Tal admires the car.

TAL  
This is a seriously nice car.

ALAN  
I know.

TAL  
(beat)  
So what do you do? Or do you just  
garden all day?

ALAN  
I own a landscaping business.

TAL  
Oh. How's that working for you?

ALAN  
It pays the bills.

TAL  
Do you enjoy it?

(CONTINUED)

ALAN

Well, I think it's important to enjoy what you do.

TAL

Fair enough.

Alan starts the car.

EXT. GARDENING STORE - DAY

They park in the car park. They start to walk towards the store.

TAL

So what does landscaping actually entail?

ALAN

It's pretty simple. You ever watched that show, landscape challenge?

TAL

Yeah. I fucking hate that show.

ALAN

Well it's actually a pretty decent representation of the job. We don't break the law as much though.

TAL

(beat)

So... You got any gardening tips for me?

ALAN

You have to get the amount of mulch right. If you don't then the plants wither.

TAL

It's just a garden.

ALAN

My garden is my image. It looks neat, so people think I must be neat.

INT. GARDENING STORE - DAY

They walk through the aisles, looking for stuff. Alan carries a bag of mulch under his arm.

TAL  
How long have you and Christine  
been married?

ALAN  
Ten years. Our anniversary's in a  
month.

The approach the counter. At the counter is ROB.

ALAN (cont'd)  
Hey Rob.

Alan heaps the mulch onto the counter.

ROB  
This all for today?

Alan hand him his credit card.

ALAN  
Yeah mate, I can't fit any more in  
the car. I might come back  
tomorrow.

Alan types in his P.I.N.

ROB  
Okay.

Rob completes the transaction.

ROB (cont'd)  
Looking forward to it.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Tal is sitting on the couch, working on his essay. Alan comes in.

ALAN  
Hey, I'm gonna go. Christine  
already knows.

(CONTINUED)

TAL  
Cool. See you.

He leaves. Suddenly, out of nowhere bursts Christine. She mounts Tal and they kiss passionately. Tal stands up, lifting Christine around his waist.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

The door flies open. Tal and Christine fall onto the bed, in embrace. They tear each other's clothes off.

On the bed, they kiss passionately. Christine maneuvers Tal into position. He thrusts. She moans.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY (LATER)

Tal and Christine lie in bed, looking at one another. They could be an actual couple.

TAL  
I feel kinda bad about Alan.

CHRISTINE  
How?

TAL  
He's cool. I like him. I'm not really sure I should be fucking his wife.

CHRISTINE  
Don't be. He may seem nice at first but...

TAL  
(beat)  
It's still kind of a betrayal.

CHRISTINE  
Look, Alan and I aren't in love, okay?

TAL  
Okay.

CHRISTINE  
Trust me. Never get married.

(CONTINUED)

TAL  
Not worth it?

CHRISTINE  
Not at all. They tell you that you  
can live happily ever after, like  
in a fairy tale. It's not  
real. My life is all fake.

TAL  
No its not.

CHRISTINE  
You haven't lived it.

TAL  
That's what everyone says. I open  
my mouth and people say, "You're  
too young to understand."

CHRISTINE  
They're right. Don't accept it  
though.

TAL  
I won't.

CHRISTINE  
That's what I love about you Tal.  
(beat)  
Do you love me Tal?

TAL  
I love the feeling you give me.

CHRISTINE  
What feeling is that?

TAL  
Escape.

Outside, a car pulls up.

CHRISTINE  
Fuck! Get your clothes. In the  
bathroom.

Tal gathers up his clothes as Christine pushes him into the  
en suite bathroom.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - EN SUITE - DAY

Tal quickly gets dressed. When done, he looks through the peep hole in the door.

Christine finishes getting dressed. She lies down on the bed, pretending to relax. Alan walks in.

CHRISTINE

Back so soon?

ALAN

Yeah, they didn't have any.

CHRISTINE

How can a gardening shop not have mulch?

ALAN

Rob says it's the time of the month.

CHRISTINE

You're shitting me.

ALAN

No I am not "shitting you".

CHRISTINE

What a shit shop.

ALAN

It's Rob's shop. It's a great shop.

CHRISTINE

How is it a good shop? They don't even have bare essentials.

ALAN

Rob's a mate.

CHRISTINE

That doesn't give him the right to do this.

ALAN

Do what? You make it sound like he's invading Poland.

CHRISTINE

Can we not be racist please?

(CONTINUED)

ALAN  
How is that racism?!

CHRISTINE  
It's offensive!

ALAN  
It's just a fucking joke!

CHRISTINE  
Oh, so now you're gonna swear at me?

ALAN  
This is so fucking stupid.

CHRISTINE  
I think I'm going to be sleeping on the couch tonight.

Christine storms out. Alan follows her.

ALAN (O.S.)  
You know we've got the spare room for a reason!

CHRISTINE (O.S.)  
Well there's someone it, isn't there!

ALAN  
Why is he even here?!

CHRISTINE (O.S.)  
He can hear you, you asshole!

Tal opens the door and steps out.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - HALL - DAY

Tal confronts the fighting couple.

CHRISTINE  
I'm so sorry about this Tal.

ALAN  
You're sorry?!

TAL  
Look, if you want me to leave...

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTINE  
No, you're staying!

ALAN  
(dumbstruck)  
Fuck this.

Alan walks down the stairs and out the front door. His car is heard leaving.

Christine is wiping tears away from her eyes.

TAL  
Will he be back?

CHRISTINE  
I don't know. But hey, we're alone again.

TAL  
Do you wanna...

CHRISTINE  
Please. I need to.

They start to kiss.

INT. SCHOOL - CORRIDOR - DAY

Tal walks down the school corridor and spots Chloe. He walks up to her.

TAL  
Hey.

CHLOE  
Hey. What do you want?

TAL  
I'm sorry.

CHLOE  
Thanks I guess.

TAL  
Look, I was really rude to you and I'm sorry.

CHLOE  
Good.

(CONTINUED)

TAL  
(beat)  
Are you gonna apologize?

CHLOE  
What?! I'm not fucking  
apologizing! I'm not the one who  
walked out on their best friend.

TAL  
I'm sorry.

CHLOE  
(beat)  
Where are you staying?

TAL  
A youth hostel.

CHLOE  
Is it good?

TAL  
No.

CHLOE  
Hm. Sucks to be you.  
(beat)  
See you Tal.

She walks off, leaving Tal looking quite alone.

INT. SCHOOL - MR. WARD'S OFFICE - DAY

Mr. Ward sits at his desk. KNOCK! KNOCK!

MR. WARD  
Come in.

Tal enters with his essay. He places it on Mr. Ward's desk  
and sits down.

MR. WARD (cont'd)  
What is this?

TAL  
My essay. The one you commissioned  
me to write.

(CONTINUED)

MR. WARD  
I don't really think commissioned  
is the right word.

TAL  
Whatever. Anyway, I've finished  
it.

MR. WARD  
What's it about?

TAL  
The Boxer Rebellions.

MR. WARD  
What was that? Sounds like a  
movie.

TAL  
It was the Irish independence  
campaign. It's where the I.R.A.  
came from.

MR. WARD  
Oh! Sounds interesting.

TAL  
It's really not.

MR. WARD  
Is the essay any good?

TAL  
I think so.

MR. WARD  
Okay then.  
(takes the essay)  
I'll send it to Canberra.

Tal gets up.

TAL  
Thanks.

He leaves.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - FRONT HALL - DAY

Tal walks in.

TAL  
(calling)  
Christine!

CHRISTINE (O.S.)  
One second!

Tal waits curiously at the door.

Christine jogs down the stairs in a lingerie outfit.

TAL  
Whoa. Holy shit.

CHRISTINE  
Nice huh. It's pretty old, Alan  
got it for me. You like it?

TAL  
Yeah!

CHRISTINE  
You wanna help me take it off?

TAL  
I'd love to.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Tal and Christine lay post-sex. Again.

TAL  
I submitted my essay today.

Christine chuckles.

TAL (cont'd)  
What?

She keeps laughing.

TAL (cont'd)  
What?

CHRISTINE  
I'm sorry. This is so  
weird. You're one of my  
students. I mean...

(CONTINUED)

An awkward beat.

TAL

I can't get through the day without you.

CHRISTINE

Really?

TAL

When I'm not with you I feel like shit. Ever since Dad... You help me repress that.

CHRISTINE

Is that all?

TAL

I dunno. When I'm with you, I'm happy. That's the important thing.

CHRISTINE

Are you sure it's happy. I could just be not sad.

TAL

Maybe. I can't explain.

CHRISTINE

Okay.

Tal rolls over. Christine looks him, concerned.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Tal eats breakfast. Christine walks in.

TAL

I take it Alan hasn't come back.

CHRISTINE

No he hasn't.

TAL

Do you want him to?

CHRISTINE

Sometimes. Sometimes no.

(CONTINUED)

TAL  
(beat)  
Fair enough.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tal and Christine have sex.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Tal and Christine eat breakfast together.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Tal walks towards the school amongst all the other teenagers.

INT. SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

Tal sits at his desk, not listening to the teacher.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Tal and Christine have sex up against the wall.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Tal eats breakfast as Christine walks in.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Tal once again approaches the school.

INT. SCHOOL - CORRIDOR - DAY

Tal walks down the corridor. Emily approaches him.

TAL  
Hey.

EMILY  
Chloe told me to tell you that Mr.  
Ward wants to see you.

TAL  
Why'd she get you to tell me.

EMILY  
She doesn't want to talk to you.

TAL  
Oh. Okay.

Tal turns to leave.

EMILY  
You hurt her Tal.

TAL  
(beat)  
I know.

He walks off.

INT. SCHOOL - MR. WARD'S OFFICE - DAY

This time Tal enters completely unannounced. He sits down.

MR. WARD  
Talison Murphy, I am impressed.

TAL  
Why? What did I do?

MR. WARD  
You were shortlisted for best  
essay!

TAL  
Oh wow. Really?

MR. WARD  
Apparently you made good  
observations or something like  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MR. WARD (cont'd)  
that. That's not important  
though. What's important is that  
you won!

TAL  
I didn't win though. I just made  
it to the finals.

MR. WARD  
Yeah, but you get a  
certificate. That's better than  
99% of the losers in the state.

TAL  
Do you have the certificate?

MR. WARD  
No, you have to go to Canberra to  
collect it.

TAL  
Well I don't have a car...

MR. WARD  
I'd be happy to take you. We'd  
improve the school's image.

TAL  
All right then. When would I be  
doing this.

MR. WARD  
The awards ceremony is  
Wednesday. We'd have to travel  
down the day before.

TAL  
It's Monday sir.

MR. WARD  
I do know that Talison. I figured  
you'd be at school tomorrow anyway  
so I wouldn't be interrupting  
anything important.

TAL  
Okay.

MR. WARD  
So you'll go.

(CONTINUED)

TAL  
Sure. Why not.

MR. WARD  
So have your stuff here tomorrow.

TAL  
Okay. Thanks.

Tal gets up and leaves.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Christine's car pulls up in front of Tal as he walks away from the school.

Tal leans into the window.

TAL  
Isn't this a bit conspicuous?

CHRISTINE  
Get in.

He does.

INT. CHRISTINE'S CAR - DAY (TRAVELING)

Christine starts to drive.

CHRISTINE  
I heard your essay did pretty well.

TAL  
How do you know?

CHRISTINE  
John told me?

TAL  
Who's... Actually, no I don't care.

CHRISTINE  
(beat)  
So?

TAL  
I'm going to Canberra tomorrow to collect an award.

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTINE  
Are you sure? Will you be okay?

TAL  
I'm not twelve.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - FRONT HALL - DAY

Tal and Christine walk in, still in mid-conversation.

CHRISTINE  
Are you sure? Because I can take  
you if you want.

TAL  
I really don't think that's  
necessary.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Post-sex. Still talking.

CHRISTINE  
You know how you said you feel shit  
when I'm not around?

TAL  
Yeah.

CHRISTINE  
Won't that happen in Canberra?

TAL  
I think I can stomach a few days of  
feeling shit.

CHRISTINE  
Are you sure?

TAL  
Jesus Christ, don't you know any  
other words?

Tal gets up and puts on his clothes.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tal lies asleep with Christine next to him. She stares up at the roof, troubled.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Christine drops Tal off outside the school. Mr. Ward is watching. Tal walks up to him.

TAL  
We gonna go?

MR. WARD  
Was that Mrs. Evans?

TAL  
Yeah, I just came from an early morning tutoring session.

MR. WARD  
Why are you still doing tutoring if you've finished the essay?

TAL  
(beat whilst Tal thinks)  
There's exams coming up, and I just though, "Why lose a good thing?"

MR. WARD  
All right, that makes sense. Come on.

He leads Tal to the car park.

EXT. SCHOOL - CAR PARK - DAY

He leads Tal over to his car and they get in. It is noticeably nicer than Christine's.

INT. MR. WARD'S CAR - DAY

They sit in the car.

MR. WARD  
Okay, let's go.

Tal looks out the window miserably.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

They drive down the highway, dotted with cars heading to the same place.

INT. MR. WARD'S CAR - DAY (TRAVELING)

Tal looks out the window, lost in his thoughts.

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

They pull up outside. They get out of the car and head inside.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Tal and Mr. Ward enter the room. Tal looks around. There's two bedrooms.

TAL  
This is flash.

MRS. EVANS  
(struggling with bags)  
Anything for school prestige huh.

Tal smiles.

TAL  
Yeah.

INT. AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY - HALL - DAY

Up the front is a OFFICIAL standing at a podium. He reads out the winners.

OFFICIAL  
David Chung.

Chung walks up and collects his award.

OFFICIAL  
Michael Stravinsky.

As does Stravinsky.

(CONTINUED)

OFFICIAL (cont'd)  
Martin Wong.

As does Wong.

Tal leans over to talk to Mr. Ward.

TAL  
We westerners really suck at  
history.

MR. WARD  
Come to the economics awards. It's  
so much worse.

OFFICIAL  
Talison Murphy.

Tal walks up to the stage and collects his award. The  
official shakes his hand.

OFFICIAL (cont'd)  
Good job son. I especially loved  
the title.

TAL  
You actually read it?

OFFICIAL  
King Rat. Brilliant.

TAL  
Thank you.

He walks back down to Mr. Ward. For once, Tal actually  
looks happy.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

They get back to the room.

MR. WARD  
I am really impressed. That's far  
better than I ever did in school.

TAL  
Why, what did you do in school?

MR. WARD  
I was the fat boy. And I liked to  
start fires.

(CONTINUED)

TAL  
You were a pyromaniac?

MR. WARD  
Yes. Other people were cool when  
they were kids. I was a  
pyromaniac.

TAL  
Okay.

MR. WARD  
(beat)  
If you want, you can go shopping or  
something. Whatever it is you  
teenagers do.

TAL  
Oh, okay. Thanks sir.

Tal heads out.

EXT. CANBERRA STREET - DUSK

Tal wanders down the street, gazing into shop windows. In  
the distance, he spies a big, glass mall.

EXT. GLASS MALL - DUSK

Tal walks up to the automatically opening door but they  
don't budge. He reads the sign. "OPEN 9AM TO 6PM".

Tal looks down at his watch.

TAL  
Shit.

Tal turns around, trying to find where he came from.

TAL (cont'd)  
Where the fuck...

He sees a tourist information center. He goes in.

INT. TOURIST INFORMATION - DUSK

Tal approaches the COUNTER GIRL, 18.

TAL  
Can I get a map.

She hands him one.

COUNTER GIRL  
What's a nice looking guy like you  
doing out at this hour.

TAL  
(studying map)  
Being lost.

COUNTER GIRL  
Where do you need to go?

TAL  
Quest Apartments.

COUNTER GIRL  
Oh, it's just on the corner of Mann  
St.

Tal looks down at his map. It's an incomprehensible maze.

TAL  
Thanks.

COUNTER GIRL  
Hey, do you have Facebook?

TAL  
Yeah, It's Talison Murphy.

COUNTER GIRL  
Thanks. Where are you from?

Tal is already out the door.

EXT. TOURIST INFORMATION - DUSK

Tal looks around, utterly lost.

TAL  
(resigned)  
Fuck.

EXT. CANBERRA STREETS - NIGHT

Tal wanders the streets in the dark, only illuminated by the street lights. He's in some sort of haze.

It starts to rain.

TAL

Jesus!

Tal runs under cover. Whilst walking down the street, he passes a BIG MAN sitting against the wall. As soon as Tal passes him, he gets up and follows.

Tal approaches a side street. As he does, the big man pushes him down it. The big man draws a knife.

BIG MAN

Gimme your wallet.

TAL

No.

BIG MAN

What did you say to me?

He brandishes the knife in Tal's face.

BIG MAN (cont'd)

Gimme the fucking wallet!

TAL

No.

BIG MAN

Do you wanna get stabbed?

TAL

If I give you my wallet, you'll stab me anyway. That way I can't testify against you. Chances are you've been convicted before. It can't be that hard for the police to identify you. I bet you leave a hair or something here. Then the police will do some forensic shit and you'll be fucked.

BIG MAN

Are you gonna give me the fucking wallet or what?

(CONTINUED)

TAL  
No.

BIG MAN  
All right then.

He smashes Tal in the face. He falls to the ground, bleeding.

BIG MAN (cont'd)  
Give. Me. The. Fucking. Wallet!

Tal gets up.

TAL  
No.

BIG MAN  
I! Will! Kill! You!

TAL  
No you won't. You don't have the balls.

BIG MAN  
You wanna a fucking bet!

They lunge at each other. Tal gasps. The big man pulls the knife out of Tal's gut.

Tal falls to the ground. The big man grabs the wallet and phone from Tal's pockets. Then he leaves. Tal lies on the ground, in a pool of his own blood.

FADE OUT.

(CONTINUED)

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Hazy figures hover in frame. They come into focus. It's a female NURSE, 25 and Mr. Ward.

Tal sits up, wincing as he does.

MR. WARD

Hey there. Are you okay?

TAL

Not really.

NURSE

You were stabbed Mr. Murphy.

TAL

Yeah I know. I was there.

MR. WARD

Now don't be rude. A stabbing isn't enough to justify that.

TAL

Sorry.

MR. WARD

Now you just rest, okay?

TAL

Okay.

Tal lies back down with considerable difficulty. He goes back to sleep.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Tal wakes up. He is the lone person in the room.

Out of the toilet walks the bearded man.

TAL

Holy shit! Are you stalking me or something?

BEARDED MAN

(beat)

Oh yeah, I remember you. The homeless guy. Did you find a place?

(CONTINUED)

TAL

What? Um, yeah. How are you here? That's like a one in eight million chance.

BEARDED MAN

My son won an essay competition.

TAL

And you just decided to pop into the hospital?

BEARDED MAN

I had a heart attack.

TAL

Oh my God. I'm sorry.

The bearded man walks over to the bed one along from Tal's and lies down.

BEARDED MAN

How come you're here.

TAL

I got knifed.

BEARDED MAN

(beat)

Fucking Canberra man.

TAL

(chuckles)

I know.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAWN

The sun rises.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Tal and the bearded man are talking, enthusiastically.

BEARDED MAN

You ever been in hospital before?

TAL

I had my appendix out when I was thirteen.

(CONTINUED)

BEARDED MAN

What was that like?

TAL

This difference between this and that, is that I was asleep for the appendix. I was very awake when some asshole tried to pull my intestines out with his knife.

BEARDED MAN

What did he want?

TAL

My wallet.

BEARDED MAN

Did you give it to him?

TAL

He took it.

BEARDED MAN

Why didn't you give it to him?

TAL

I'm not giving that bastard my wallet. I was gonna get stabbed either way.

BEARDED MAN

Are you sure? Could it have been because you didn't care about staying alive anymore?

TAL

What? No... How do you...

BEARDED MAN

Just a guess.

TAL

(skeptical)

Right.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY (LATER)

The nurse walks in.

(CONTINUED)

NURSE

Mr. Murphy, your teacher has returned to Sydney to tend to his affairs. He says you will have to catch the train back.

TAL

Oh. Okay.

The nurse leaves.

BEARDED MAN

Well that sucks.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

They're still chatting.

BEARDED MAN

You have a girlfriend?

TAL

In a manner of speaking.

BEARDED MAN

What's she like?

TAL

Hm. I hadn't really thought about that.

BEARDED MAN

I can see you really care about her then.

TAL

It's not like that.

BEARDED MAN

(beat)

You are the worst liar I have ever met.

TAL

I'm not lying!

BEARDED MAN

Okay. Touchy.

(beat)

Is she hot?

(CONTINUED)

TAL  
Oh for fuck's sakes.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAWN

Tal wakes up. The bearded man is gone. The nurse stands by his bed.

TAL  
Hey, where's the guy in that bed?

NURSE  
Who?

TAL  
The guy with the beard. Thirties.

NURSE  
There never was anyone in that bed.

TAL  
There definitely was.

NURSE  
I'm sorry sir, you're mistaken.

She walks off.

TAL  
Huh.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Tal has finished packing up his stuff. He slides on his jacket.

TAL  
(to nurse)  
Thank you. For everything.

NURSE  
Do you know how to get to train station?

TAL  
Yeah. I'll be fine.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

A taxi pulls up outside. Out of it steps Tal.

INT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Tal pushes through a turnstile. He then walks down to the platform.

Tal stands at the edge of the platform. The train arrives. He steps on.

EXT. TRAIN - DAY (TRAVELING)

Tal stares out the window, the landscape reflected in his face.

INT. SYDNEY TRAIN STATION - DAY

Tal gets off the train and starts to walk towards the exit.

EXT. EVANS HOUSE - NIGHT

Tal walks up to front door and knocks. After a moment, Christine answers it. She looks stunned.

CHRISTINE

Oh my God! Why didn't you  
call? How are you?

TAL

I'm fine.

CHRISTINE

Come in.

She lets Tal in.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - FRONT HALL - DAY

Tal places his stuff by the door. Christine is positively bouncing.

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTINE  
What happened?

TAL  
I got mugged.

CHRISTINE  
What?! Oh my God. How?

TAL  
I got lost. A guy asked me for my  
wallet. I said no.

CHRISTINE  
Why?

TAL  
Cause I am not going to bend down  
to everyone that tries to take shit  
from me. That's all I've done in  
ages: lose stuff. I wanna keep  
something for once.

CHRISTINE  
You can keep me.

TAL  
Thanks.

CHRISTINE  
(beat)  
Are you hurt, physically?

TAL  
Only a bit.

CHRISTINE  
Good.

She kisses him.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

They already have their clothes off when they get in. They  
fall onto the bed. Tal starts thrusting.

EXT. EVANS HOUSE - NIGHT

A car pulls up outside the house. A man gets out, but his face is obscured.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tal and Christine are going at it, as hard as they can.

EXT. EVANS HOUSE - NIGHT

The man opens the front door and walks inside.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tal builds up steam, approaching the end.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - FRONT HALL - NIGHT

The man walks up the stairs.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tal climaxes and rolls off Christine.

ALAN

opens the door and sees them.

ALAN

Holy fuck!

Tal and Christine start to gather themselves.

CHRISTINE

This isn't how it looks.

ALAN

Really, cause it looks pretty  
fucking bad! He's  
seventeen! Fuck!

Tal has his pants on. He pushes past Alan and out into the hall.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - FRONT HALL - NIGHT

Tal trots down the stairs, pulling his jacket on. He spies something on the table.

Alan's keys. He takes them and heads out the front door.

EXT. EVANS HOUSE - NIGHT

Tal walks out of the house and towards the car. He gets in the drivers seat and slams the door.

INT. ALAN'S CAR - NIGHT

Tal starts the engine. He takes off the handbrake, puts the car into drive and accelerates.

EXT. EVANS HOUSE - NIGHT

Tal speeds off down the street.

Alan comes out of the house and sees him.

ALAN  
Shit! That's my car! Bring me  
back my fucking car!

Tal is gone.

EXT. SYDNEY OUTSKIRTS - NIGHT

Tal drives as fast as he can, tearing up the road. He heads towards an abandoned car park.

EXT. ABANDONED CAR PARK - NIGHT

Tal skids the car to a halt. He gets out and spies a number of bricks beside the car park. He retrieves one of them and lobs it at the windscreen. SMASH!

## MONTAGE - TRASHING THE CAR

- Tal stands on the roof, kicking in the windscreen.
- Tal beats the bonnet with a plank of wood.
- Tal opens a door and kicks it, snapping it off.
- Tal smashes every window on the car with the plank.
- Tal hits the headlights with the plank.
- Tal stands atop it and beats it all.

Tal stands beside the car, beating it with the plank. After a while, the beating becomes more desperate, having less of an effect. Tal drops the plank and leans against the car, crying. He weeps as he slides to the ground. He just sits there, crying. Eventually he takes a new mobile phone out of his pocket.

## INT. ABRAMS HOUSE - CHLOE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Chloe sits at her desk, writing in a notebook. Her phone rings. She answers it.

CHLOE

Hello?

TAL (O.S)

(through phone)

I need help.

## EXT. ABANDONED CAR PARK - NIGHT

Chloe pulls up in the car park, a distance away from the wreck of Alan's car. She gets out. Tal heads over to her. She hugs him.

TAL

I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry.

CHLOE

It's okay.

She pulls away and leads him to the boot. She opens it.

Inside is a canister of petrol.

(CONTINUED)

CHLOE (cont'd)  
Are you sure about this?

TAL  
Yes. I'm sure.

Chloe pours petrol all over the wreck of Alan's car. She takes a step back, draws her lighter and throws it into the car. It bursts into flames.

Chloe and Tal sit atop her car, watching the burning wreck. Her head is on his shoulder.

CHLOE  
You can't just bury everything Tal.

TAL  
What do you think this was?

CHLOE  
I know. But this isn't all of it. You still need somewhere to live.

TAL  
I know a place.

CHLOE  
You could go home. I think your Mum would forgive you.

TAL  
That's the plan.

CHLOE  
Are you still going to that Evans woman?

TAL  
(beat)  
No. I'm not.

CHLOE  
Good. I didn't like her.

They sit, watching the wreckage burn for a while.

TAL  
Did I mention that I'm sorry.

CHLOE  
Yeah, you did. So am I.

(CONTINUED)

TAL  
(beat)  
Can I get a lift home?

CHLOE  
Sure.

EXT. MURPHY HOUSE - NIGHT

Chloe and Tal pull up outside the house. It looks exactly the same as when we left it. Tal gets out.

CHLOE  
Good luck.

TAL  
Thanks.

She drives off. Tal plucks up his courage and walks towards the front door. He knocks. No one answers. Tal starts to walk away, dejected.

Annette answers the door. Tal turns around.

ANNETTE  
Tal?

TAL  
Hi Mum.

ANNETTE  
Oh my God it's you!

She runs up to him and hugs him tighter than he's ever been hugged. She starts to cry.

ANNETTE (cont'd)  
I'm sorry. I'm so, so sorry.

TAL  
It's all right.

INT. MURPHY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tal and Annette sit on the couch.

ANNETTE  
What did you do?

(CONTINUED)

TAL  
Lots of stuff.

ANNETTE  
Do I want to know?

TAL  
I doubt it. And you?

ANNETTE  
I'm going to an Alcoholics  
Anonymous meeting tomorrow.

TAL  
Okay.

Annette looks at him, relieved.

ANNETTE  
Everything's going to be all  
right. Isn't it?

TAL  
Yeah. It is.

Tal looks around.

TAL (cont'd)  
You know what?

ANNETTE  
What?

TAL  
We should move. This place is  
filled with ghosts.

ANNETTE  
Yeah. I think that's a good idea.  
(beat)  
Would you come to my meeting  
tomorrow?

TAL  
Sure. I've gotta do something  
first though.

EXT. EVANS HOUSE - DAY

Tal approaches the front door. He knocks. Christine answers.

TAL  
Hey.

CHRISTINE  
Hey.

TAL  
Can I come in?

CHRISTINE  
Sure.

She leads him inside.

INT. EVANS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Christine sits down on the couch. Tal stands.

TAL  
I can't do this anymore.

CHRISTINE  
What?! Why?

TAL  
It's not good for either of us.

CHRISTINE  
Is this about Alan? He doesn't care.

TAL  
Actually, could you apologize about the car for me?

CHRISTINE  
Tal, I love you! There, I said it. I love you.

TAL  
Maybe. But this is wrong.

CHRISTINE  
How?

(CONTINUED)

TAL  
I'm seventeen! You're  
thirty-five! This is fucked up in  
so many ways!

CHRISTINE  
Other people don't understand. It  
doesn't matter what they think.

TAL  
This isn't about what they think,  
it's about what I think!

CHRISTINE  
But I fucking love you!

Tal turns to go.

TAL  
Well I don't love you.

He leaves. Christine starts to cry, sitting on the couch.

EXT. COMMUNITY CENTER - NIGHT

Tal and Annette approach the center. They stop for a  
moment.

TAL  
You sure about this?

ANNETTE  
Yes.

TAL  
Okay.

They head in.

INT. MEETING ROOM - NIGHT

All the people of varying backgrounds are sitting in a  
traditional circle. Tal and Christine are amongst them. A  
MEMBER is finishing his story.

MEMBER  
So um, thank you all for listening.

The ORGANIZER speaks.

(CONTINUED)

ORGANIZER

Okay.

(to Tal)

Would you like to go next sir?

TAL

(gestures to Annette)

No, I'm with her.

ORGANIZER

Oh, okay. Would you like to go now Miss...

ANNETTE

Murphy. Annette Murphy. Okay. My name is Annette Murphy and I'm an alcoholic. Two months ago, my husband... My husband killed himself. He hung himself from our ceiling fan. He always said it was bolted in well.

Annette's eyes start to water.

ANNETTE (cont'd)

So I started drinking. To dull the pain, you know. I did things, said things that I wish I hadn't. I wish to God I hadn't. And I'm sorry. I'm sorry. But that doesn't change what I did. I still did it. I kicked my son out. He's only just come back to me. And I love him. I love him so much. And I never should have done that to him.

Now she's just holding back tears.

ANNETTE (cont'd)

And my husband, Arthur. I don't know why he did it. Everything was okay. We were in love. We had a son, a house, everything. I just can't understand. He didn't even say anything. One day I just got home and the police were outside my house.

She can't hold it back anymore. Everyone looks at her, dumbstruck, even the Organizer.

(CONTINUED)

ORGANIZER

Thank you. Thank you for that.

Annette just keeps crying.

EXT. MURPHY HOUSE - DAY

Movers take furniture and load it into the back of a moving truck. Annette stands by watching. So does Tal.

From down the street walks Alan. Tal notices, surprised.

TAL

Oh.

ANNETTE

Who's that?

TAL

A guy I met.

ANNETTE

After you...

TAL

Yeah. I should talk to him.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Tal sits in the same place as he did in the very first scene. Alan sits beside him.

TAL

Did you find your car?

ALAN

I found what might be my car.

TAL

In a car park out west?

ALAN

Yup.

TAL

That's it. Sorry.

(CONTINUED)

ALAN

It's okay. I understand.

TAL

Do you?

ALAN

Yeah. Christine told me everything.

TAL

She doesn't know the half of it.

ALAN

She knows a lot more than you think. She sees things, that woman. Except for her. She doesn't see herself.

TAL

I'm sorry about that too.

ALAN

It wasn't your idea.

TAL

Yeah, but I didn't say no.

ALAN

(beat)

I didn't tell anyone.

TAL

Are you planning on it?

ALAN

What would that say about me? I couldn't even hold onto my wife. I don't want people to know that.

TAL

Are you and Christine...

ALAN

We're getting a divorce. It's for the best. It's been a long time coming.

TAL

Do you love her?

(CONTINUED)

ALAN

(beat)

I haven't loved her in  
years. Don't let anything I say  
stop you though. Get  
married. Live.

TAL

I feel like I have already.

ALAN

You've gone through stuff. That's  
not living. You're just a kid.

TAL

I'm really not.

ALAN

You really are. Stay a kid. It's  
the best time of your life.

TAL

Okay.

(beat)

Did I mention how sorry I am?

ALAN

You did actually.

They sit, looking out over the gorgeous vista of Sydney.

FADE OUT.

THE END